

Beauty and the Beast

What Rough Beast

AIR DATE: MAY 12, 1989

VINCENT (Voice over)

This is where the wealthy and the powerful rule. It is her world, A world apart from mine. Her name is Catherine. From the moment I saw her, she captured my heart With her beauty, Her warmth and her courage. I knew then, as I know now, She would change my life Forever.

CATHERINE (Voice over)

He comes from a secret place, far below the city streets, Hiding his face from strangers, Safe from hate and harm. He brought me there to save my life. And now, wherever I go, he is with me in spirit, For we have a bond stronger than friendship or love. And although we cannot be together, We will never, ever be apart.

ACT I

Shots of NYC at night. Two police motorcycles ride through the streets.

CUT TO Catherine walks through the park. The two policemen run toward Catherine. Roaring is heard before Vincent comes to the rescue. He dispatches the two men. Vincent, seeing Catherine is fine, moves to her side.

VINCENT

Come.

Cut to Below as Vincent tends to Catherine's arm.

CATHERINE

They weren't policemen. They couldn't have been.

VINCENT

Do you have any idea who might've sent them?

CATHERINE

Do you really think they were sent by someone?

VINCENT

Well, Catherine, what happened in the park hardly seemed random.

CATHERINE

But who would've done such a thing? Why?

CUT TO a man capturing the crime scene up in the park. A reporter is seen standing next to the cameraman playing with a cigarette.

REPORTER

Nasty stuff.

CAMERAMAN

How'd you beat the meat wagons, Spirko?

SPIRKO
Lucky guess.

CAMERAMAN
Yeah.

SPIRKO
So what's my story?

CAMERAMAN
You tell me. A bear from the bronx zoo Who's got a thing against cops.

SPRIKO
Hey, not bad. Only these guys weren't cops.

CAMERAMAN
What?

SPIRKO
Talk to me, Jesse. What happened here?

JESSE
How should I know? And even if I knew, I wouldn't tell you.

SPIRKO
Listen, Jesse. My instamatic busted on me. I could use a good negative for tomorrow.

JESSE
You know I can't do that.

SPIRKO
Who's gonna miss one lousy snapshot?

JESSE
Come on, Spirko.

SPIRKO
I got tickets for the Knicks game, Night after tomorrow. Tenth row on the floor.

JESSE
I don't follow basketball.

SPIRKO
You will in these seats.

JESSE
I can't do it, Spirko.
SPIRKO

Why the hell not? It didn't stop you last time.

JESSE
That was different.

SPIRKO

Not to the captain it wouldn't be. Why don't you just take the tickets, Make it easier on both of us?
Cut to a dark office at night. A tape recorder plays as Spirko types.

OAKES (on tape) Claude Oakes. Oakes with an "e". Incurred by deep wounds of some unknown nature.

SPIRKO (on tape)

Like an animal did it.

OAKES (on tape)

What do you know about animals, Spirko?

SPIRKO (on tape)

I know what I see. Look at the faces on these people. No one knows what the hell is going on here.
Camera pulls away to show Spirko in his cubical at night.

CUT TO Catherine reading a newspaper, the following day) in a diner. The headline reads: What did this? In regards to the men killed the previous night.

ELLIOT

Hi, Cathy.

CATHERINE (looking up from the paper)

Elliot, well, this is the last place in the world I would expect to find you.

ELLIOT

What are you talking? I'm an old aficionado of greasy spoons.

CATHERINE (smiling)

Really. Why are you here?

ELLIOT

I just wanted to see you, Cath. I just want you to know that I'm here for you. Waiting.

CATHERINE

I don't want you to wait for me.

ELLIOT

Cathy, I don't want to either. But the way things seem to be, I don't have much choice, do I? I mean, you said to me that there's somebody else in your life.

CATHERINE

I can't do anything about that.

ELLIOT

And I can't change how I feel about you.

FADE TO a penthouse. Spirko wanders inside, lighting his cigarette and observing the portraits. A noise draws his attention and he goes into a darkened office. Across a desk, a man is kept in shadow even as Spirko moves toward the desk.

SPIRKO

The door was open.

ELLIOT

Sit down. You're late. Your cigarette, please. The smoke bothers me. You were also late last night.

SPIRKO

Hey, I got there as soon as I could. Not every guy that calls me is on the level.

ELLIOT

And you're convinced at this point that I'm on the level?

SPIRKO

Sure.

ELLIOT

Had you arrived at the park sooner, you would have seen something extraordinary.

SPIRKO

Like what?

ELLIOT

Patience, Mr. Spirko. You're only at the very beginning.

SPIRKO

Do I get to see you Or are we just going to sit here in the dark?

ELLIOT

My one and only condition Is that I remain anonymous.

SPIRKO

And if I refuse?

ELLIOT

You're a fool.

SPIRKO

My editor won't print a story without a verifiable source.

ELLIOT

Which is why I won't be your source. I'll give you the information, but you will have to discover the truth yourself.

SPIRKO

Either you show your face, Or I'm walking.

Spirko gets up to leave.

ELLIOT

Spirko. You were chosen with great care. For your tenacity. For your singular character. I don't think you could Walk away from this story if you wanted to. Now sit down. Take out your notebook. The pattern of killings began about two years ago. It's a gruesome pattern of evisceration, throat puncture wounds, deep slashings. The victims are generally left to bleed to death.

SPIRKO

You mean, last night wasn't the first time?

ELLIOT

No. Nor will it be the last.

SPIRKO
You're saying you know the killer?

ELLIOT
Not exactly. But I know why he kills.

SPIRKO
Why?

ELLIOT
To protect someone.

SPIRKO
Who?

ELLIOT
A beautiful woman. A very beautiful woman. She's the key. You find her, she'll lead you to the killer.

SPIRKO
What's her name?

ELLIOT
She is an assistant district attorney. Her name is Catherine Chandler.

Cut to Spirko waiting by Catherine's desk in the D.A's office. Catherine walks up to her desk.

SPIRKO
How'd the trial go?

CATHERINE
Fine.

SPIRKO
I'm Bernie Spirko. New York Sentinel. Can I talk to you for a minute?

CATHERINE
Actually, now is not a very good time.

SPIRKO
I'd appreciate it. It's important. (Holds up the paper and shows it to her) What do you know about this?

CATHERINE
About what?

SPIRKO
Remember?

CATHERINE
Remember what?

SPIRKO
I think you know. I've been in this long enough to know when someone's lying.

CATHERINE

I am not a liar, Mr. Spirko. Excuse me.

Catherine slaps the paper into Spirko's chest and leaves. The shot lingers on Spirko at the desk.

SPIRKO

Everyone's a liar. (Catches up with her as she walks) Hey, I'm just trying to find out what happened that night. It's my job.

CATHERINE

What makes you think I know anything?

SPIRKO

Come on. I'll show you. (Opens the door to a nearby room and goes inside. Pulls out a cigarette) Mind if I smoke?

CATHERINE

Actually, I do.

SPIRKO (pulls out another paper)

This you remember, right? And the police report on Carol Stabler, the woman who was set to testify against those men Who attacked you two years ago.

CATHERINE

The safe house was compromised. She was murdered before she could testify.

SPIRKO

That's right, and that same night, someone killed those men who attacked her. Literally tore them apart. Not very pretty, huh?

CATHERINE

No, it isn't. What does this have to do with me?

SPIRKO

There are other, similar incidents connected to you. October 9, 1987. You investigated a complaint filed by some elderly people, claimed they were being harassed by a developer. The investigation resulted in the termination of that prospective project. As well as the lives of four of the developer's leg men.

CATHERINE

You are speculating.

SPIRKO

There is more. If you want, I'd be happy to review it all for you. I'm a reporter, Miss Chandler. I find things out, I dig up secrets. That's what I do.

CATHERINE

What do you think you're going to find?

SPIRKO

I don't know yet, but you do. Come on, what is the big secret? Why not just tell me? Because with or without you, I'm going to find out. Believe me.

Spirko leaves the office.

FADE IN on the tunnel entrance below Catherine's apartment. Catherine and Father stand facing each other.

FATHER

You're hesitant about telling Vincent?

CATHERINE

The memory of those moments is painful to him.

FATHER

Catherine, he should be told. Every time you meet, every moment you spend together now, increases the risk.

CATHERINE

I know.

FATHER

You mustn't blame yourself. This was inevitable. I knew from the moment he first brought you to us.

CATHERINE

I do blame myself, Father.

FATHER

Well, don't.

CATHERINE

It's me he protects. What he does, he does in my name.

FATHER

He protects all of us. He protects the people he loves.

CATHERINE

It's a feeling of shame, Father. I have watched. I have seen him when he loses himself.

FATHER

Yes, I know. It's terrifying.

CATHERINE

No.

FATHER (Overlapping)

Anyone would feel the same.

CATHERINE

No. Part of me shares that with him. In some deep way, I wonder (sighs) Have I been reckless? Have I put myself in danger, knowing that he would come to me?

Fade to the darkened penthouse.

ELLIOT

I never expected to see you so soon.

SPIRKO

I'm nowhere on this story.

ELLIOT

Would you care to speculate?

SPIRKP

On what? I got half a dozen police photographs/ All telling me the same thing, only I can't figure out what. And your Assistant DA

ELLIOT
You saw Catherine?

SPIRKO
What about it? You gave me her name.

ELLIOT
You're thinking too literally. It's my fault.

SPIRKO
Then talk to me.

ELLIOT
Mr. Spirko, this is not some crazed vigilante fixated on Catherine chandler. This is something entirely different. This is something that has never been.

SPIRKO
You keep saying cryptic stuff like that.

ELLIOT
You should hear the sounds.

SPIRKO
The sounds?

ELLIOT
Of his killings. Sounds you will never forget.

SPIRKO
Who is he?

ELLIOT
As I told you before, Mr. Spirko, You'll have to discover that for yourself.

SPIRKO
I'm at a dead end here.

ELLIOT
Open your mind, mr. Spirko. Imagine.

Fade to a classical music concert playing. The orchestra is seen before the camera flows down to under the grate beneath the park. Catherine

(footsteps approaching)

CATHERINE
Vincent

VINCENT.
The reporter. Father has already told me.

CATHERINE

I'm sorry.

VINCENT

No need to apologize. We will not let this defeat us. Come. They've only just started.

Fade to Catherine and Vincent laying together, listening to the music playing.

FADE TO the inside of a hospital where patients are walking and relaxing. The camera flows through the room until it lands on Steven Bass sitting in a wheelchair.

STEVEN BASS

Cathy still loves me. I know she does. I'd do anything for her. I told her that. I promised her. Do you believe me?

SPIRKO

Sure, I believe you. I wouldn't be here if I didn't.

STEVEN

She ran away.

SPIRKO

Why did she run? You can tell me, Steven. Why did she run?

STEVEN

(Flashback to Steven crying out in rage as thunder rumbles.) Cathy!

(Cut back to the hospital)

Because she knew he would come.

SPIRKO

Who did she know would come?

STEVEN

(Steven remembering Vincent tearing into him)

He ruined my legs.

SPIRKO

I'm sorry, I really am, And I want you to know that I'm trying to help. He ought to be punished.

STEVEN

Not for me - I don't care about me - But for Cathy.

SPIRKO

I can't do anything about that. We can't (moves closer to Steven) until you tell me what happened.

(Flashback to Vincent roaring over him. Catherine comes up and pulls him back. Catherine - No, Vincent!

You'll kill him, no! It's Over! It's over.)

CUT BACK to Steven at the hospital.

STEVEN

She called him Vincent.

SPIRKO

Vincent?

STEVEN
That's his name.

SPIRKO
What does Vincent look like? Tell me anything you can about him.

STEVEN
They have a sick relationship. He is not a man. I mean, he is not human.
(Steven unbuttons his shirt to reveal gashes) You see now?

FADE TO the exterior of the office and then inside the office. A man sits behind a desk as Spirko paces the office.

MAN
How far back do we go, Spirko?

SPIRKO
I don't know, what, nine years?

MAN
Ten. You think you'd learn something in that time.

SPIRKO
Bill, give me a break.

BILL
You got some incredible stuff here, don't get me wrong, but none of it fits together right. You're missing pieces.

SPIRKO
You heard the tape.

BILL
Yeah. Of a certified psychotic. I'd go over to Bellevue right now and come back with a much better story than this.

SPIRKO
I have another source. A good one.

BILL
Who's that?

SPIRKO
Elliot Burch.

BILL
You're kidding me.

SPIRKO
Names, places, dates, you name it.

BILL
Burch?

SPIRKO

On my mother's grave. He's had a thing going with Chandler, On and off for almost two years now. I don't know what their story is, but he's got her number down.

BILL

You think he'd go public?

SPIRKO

What do you think? And I'm not going to push it either.

BILL

Well, I think you better start. 'cause that's your story. Unless he speaks up, I can't print a word.

SPIRKO

Even though I'm telling you it's clean?

BILL

What do you want me to say? Go sell it to the Inquiring Star if you're so damn anxious. They pay better.

Spirko frowns and leaves the office. Fade to the NYC streets. Spirko comes up beside Catherine as she walks along the street.

SPIRKO

Hi. How about some lunch?

CATHERINE

Are you crazy?

SPIRKO

Maybe. I spoke to an old boyfriend of yours yesterday. He told me this very interesting story. (recorder clicks on) Bass (on tape): I don't know. They have a sick relationship. He's not a man. I mean, he is not human. (recorder clicks off)

CATHERINE

How could you do that to Steven?

SPIRKO

I told you: I am just after the truth.

CATHERINE

Steven does not know the truth.

SPIRKO

What about those scars Vincent left him with? I got pictures, if you're interested.

CATHERINE

This is harassment, Mr. Spirko. And if you continue, I will have you arrested.

SPIRKO

Steven Bass and I are not the only ones who know about Vincent. There's someone who knows a hell of a lot more than either of us.

Catherine turns away

FADE TO Vincent's chamber. Father enters carrying a book.

FATHER
Vincent, am I disturbing you?

VINCENT
No. Please.

FATHER (coming and sitting beside Vincent)
I found an old favorite poem I'd long since forgotten. Let me just read this to you.

VINCENT
(sighs)
No poetry.

FATHER
Just listen to the first few lines.

Vincent stands up, walks across the chamber and turned back.

VINCENT
If I asked you, would you tell me the truth, Father?

FATHER
Of course.

VINCENT
Am I a man?

FATHER
Part of you is.

VINCENT
And the part that is not? The part that takes over? The man in me cannot forget, cannot close his eyes in peace.

FATHER
I don't know the answer to that, Vincent. I honestly don't know.

VINCENT
You have educated the man. You have nurtured the man, read him poetry. Taught him to love, but the other you don't understand. You don't understand its power.

FATHER
Vincent?

VINCENT
Father, I cannot control my thoughts. Father, I'm afraid.

Father embraces his son.

FADE TO Catherine searching through newspapers. The machine clicking rhythmically

CATHERINE
Bernie spirko.

FADE TO Elliot's office.

CATHERINE

You said you came to me out of concern. And the whole time, you've been undermining everything that meant anything to me.

ELLIOT

Cathy, calm down. Would you mind telling me what it is I'm supposed to be I'm doing.

CATHERINE

You know damn well.

ELLIOT

Why don't you believe me? The only time that I've seen Bernie Spirko's name's in a byline for the New York Sentinel.

CATHERINE

You leaked the Corrales story to him last year. And for all I know, he is still on your payroll.

ELLIOT

I never paid him a penny.

CATHERINE

How can you deny it?!

ELLIOT

Listen to yourself! You're supposed to be an attorney. Whatever happened to innocent until proven guilty?

CATHERINE

This is not a court of law.

ELLIOT

Cath ...

(Takes a breath) Okay, Cathy, I know you've got secrets in your life, okay? I know what's happening is very real to you, and it's causing you a lot of pain, but you can't ...

CATHERINE

Stop it, Elliot. Just stop it.

She leaves

ELLIOT

Get me Manning.

(gate creaks)

VINCENT

What is it, Catherine?

CATHERINE

It's Elliot Burch. Elliot is the one who's been feeding information to the reporter.

VINCENT

Elliot?

CATHERINE

They know your name, Vincent. Somehow they got to Stephen Bass. Father's right. The risk has become too great. We can't see each other until this is over.

VINCENT

Perhaps if Elliot understood

CATHERINE

No.

VINCENT

But he is a man who could understand.

CATHERINE

I thought so, too, once, but he's shown himself. He's out to condemn us, to destroy us. Condemn us? He knows that we are different, that we are beyond his experience, and that must threaten him.

VINCENT

It is I who is different.

CATHERINE

No, Vincent. It's us. I've learned that. We share the responsibility of who we are together.

VINCENT

My mind is filled with thoughts beyond imagining.

CATHERINE

If they ever found you

VINCENT

They would never find me. I would vanish. Bury myself deep inside the earth.

CATHERINE

And you would be lost to me.

VINCENT

Without you, I would be lost to myself.

FADE TO the dark penthouse.

ELLIOT

Well?

SPIRKO

His name is Vincent. His face is deformed in some way. Grotesque. And so are his hands.

ELLIOT

Tell me about his hands.

SPIRKO

They're incredibly strong. He uses them to kill. And this may sound strange, But I think they're more like claws.

ELLIOT

Is he human, mr. Spirko?

SPIRKO
What else could he be?

ELLIOT
I'm asking you.

ELLIOT
He walks, he talks. He loves. Catherine Chandler.

ELLIOT
Have you seen her?

SPIRKO
This morning.
She was pretty shaken up by what I knew.

ELLIOT
Would a picture be useful to you, Mr. Spirko? You've done a very good job. I think you've earned the privilege. I think it's time I arranged a little introduction.

Spirko nods and tries to light a cigarette, sees the reaction from behind the desk, and put it in his pocket.

FADE TO the entrance beneath Catherine's apartment. Spirko investigates the area.

SPIRKO
(Hitting his head)
Ow! Shoot!
(exploring a little more)
Hell of a way to make a living, Spirko.

CUT TO Catherine sitting in her apartment.

CUT TO Spirko exploring more of the tunnels.

CUT TO a man coming out of a bathroom. He walks down the hall and sees two servicemen.

MAN
Hey. Can I help you guys?

SERVICEMAN
Yeah, we, uh, we're, uh, we're doing some work for Catherine Chandler.

MAN
Oh, yeah. Uh, service elevator's around the corner there. (turning to show them) Here, I'll show you.

SERVICEMAN
Hey, thanks.

Serviceman shoots the guy in the back.

CUT TO Catherine on her balcony when the two 'servicemen' enter and kidnap her.

CUT TO to Spirko

SPIRKO
That's nice.

MAN
We'll do it here. This is where he said.

Vincent comes roaring in and dispatches the men while Spirko takes pictures. Vincent turns and advances on Spirko who steps back afraid.

CATHERINE
Vincent.

SPIRKO
(stepping away, afraid)
No, no, please. I didn't have anything to do with this. Here. Come on, take it. Take it. Come on. Please? Come on. I had nothing to do with this. No! Please!

Catherine moves to Vincent's side as he stands over Spirko. After a moment, Vincent turns and moves around a corner.

SPIRKO
(collecting himself)
All right. I'm outta here.

CATHERINE
You set up this whole thing.

SPIRKO
I didn't set up anything.

CATHERINE
Those men are dead because of you.

SPIRKO
I was just following a lead.

CATHERINE
Elliot Burch.

SPIRKO
Come on, Miss Chandler.

CATHERINE
You can't do this.

SPIRKO
Why not?

CATHERINE
'Cause you don't know

SPIRKO
Hey, lady, don't tell me what I know! I earned every word of this story.

CATHERINE

You have no idea what this story is about!

SPIRKO

I think I've seen enough, don't you?

CATHERINE

If you print that, It'll destroy Vincent and myself. Doesn't that mean anything to you?

SPIRKO

It's not a personal thing, Miss Chandler. It's news.

Spirko leaves and Catherine goes around the corner to Vincent.

CATHERINE

I'm shaking.

VINCENT

What you said was true, Catherine. It must end now. We must end. They know everything.

CATHERINE

No.

This man will never stop ... Elliot. He'll never stop. They will hunt me till they find me or until I'm dead.

CATHERINE

Then I'll come with you.

VINCENT

It's no life for you.

CATHERINE

Or for you.

VINCENT

But it is my life.

CATHERINE

(soft sobbing)

I don't know what to do.

VINCENT

We must face what we both feared might come to pass from the beginning.

CATHERINE

Vincent.

VINCENT

It is all we can do. Remember our love. Let it guide you, give you courage. Know that what we had can never be taken away from us.

CATHERINE

Vincent, don't!

VINCENT
Catherine, go. Quickly, please.

CATHERINE
(sobbing)
Hold me. Just hold me one last time.

Vincent turns back and he and Catherine embrace. Fade to the darkened penthouse, Spirko stands before the desk.

SPIRKO
I know who you are.

ELLIOT
Do you?

SPIRKO
Yeah. Elliot Burch.

ELLIOT
Mr. Spirko, you surprise me.

SPIRKO
I was there. I got the pictures. Now I want the rest.

ELLIOT
The rest?

SPIRKO
Everything you know: Where he lives, who he is, what he is. You have a lot to answer for, Burch.

ELLIOT
Such as?

SPIRKO
Those bikers in the park. Those two guys tonight. You sent them to their deaths.

ELLIOT
It would have been far better for you, Mr. Spirko, if you hadn't figured that out.

SPIRKO
Don't threaten me. My editor knows I'm with you.
(Sees a cigarette being lit. Surprise and a little startled)
You're smoking.

PARACELSUS
(deeper voice, cultured accent)
It's Elliot Burch who doesn't smoke.
(Flips on the light set on the desk)
Sadly, I have become addicted.
(rounds the table, seeing Spirko's surprise)
Oh, trick of the throat. Something I learned as a child. Most useful.

SPIRKO
Who are you?

PARACELSUS

That is of no consequence. Remember what you saw tonight, Mr. Spirko, the glory of it. Now you can print your photographs and your hypotheses. Or you can print the truth; always a much larger story. Let me, um, show you something in the light. Come look.

SPIRKO (steps closer, seeing the burns)

PARACELSUS

He did this.

SPIRKO

Vincent.

PARACELSUS

Yeah. He left me to burn in the fire.

(chuckles)

SPIRKO

Now you want me to crucify.

PARACELSUS

Turn your tape machine on, Mr. Spirko.

SPIRKO

It's already on. I asked you before if he was a man.

PARACELSUS

Well, now you've seen for yourself. He's beyond man. In his own right, he's a god, a warrior. But you see, he ... he tries to be a man. And in that, denies his own greatness. He is a source of primal rage And secret urging; instinct. He's a killer. That is his greatness. That is his nature.

(tape machine clicks. Spirko goes to turn over the cassette. Paracelsus stabs him when he turns around)

But if he'd have killed you tonight, Mr. Spirko, as I hoped/

(Spirko gasps)

If he'd killed an innocent man, I believe he would finally have understood and shed the false skin of his humanity.

(Spirko groans)

He would have become what I always dreamed for him. He would have become my son.

CUT TO Below, the camera scrolls across the room until it settles on Vincent. A dark, foreboding look is on Vincent's face as the camera fades to black.

THE END