

Beauty and the Beast

Ceremony of Innocence

INTRO

Vincent: 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: 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 1

Shots of NYC that continue to dissolve into Central Park and then into the tunnels.

CUT TO Vincent

He sits contemplating with his claws steepled. He grabs his cloak, travels through the tunnels to the Mirror Pool and stares down at his reflection.

FADE TO Catherine's bedroom. She gets up and goes to the door. A newspaper with a photo of Vincent and headline is seen. A kid watches her from across the hallway until she's ushered inside by her mother.

CUT TO the D.A's office where a group of reporters ambush her with questions.

REPORTERS

Miss Chandler, what about the Sentinel story? What does your father think? (all yelling at once) We'll pay \$10,000 cash for your exclusive story! Miss Chandler! Miss Chandler!

Catherine pushes through the crowd and closes the door to Joe's office. Joe sits at his desk with a newspaper open before him.

JOE

Just how far were you going to take these lies, chandler?

CATHERINE

Joe, you have to help me.

JOE

It's a little late for that, don't you think? I trusted you. Look at these pictures. Look at them! Didn't this ever make you sick? These are human beings, damn it! Which is more than I can say for your boyfriend!

CATHERINE

No, Joe, you don't understand. Vincent isn't like what you ...

JOE
Vincent is a monster!

CATHERINE
No.

JOE
He is an animal! And what does that make you, huh? What does that make you?! What does That make you?!

Catherine sits up screaming from a nightmare. She tries to calm herself.

CUT TO the Mirror Pool at dawn. Father enters to see Vincent.

FATHER
Vincent. You weren't in your chamber. I was worried. Have you been here all night?

VINCENT
Catherine dreamt. A nightmare.

FATHER
(seeing the water)
Dawn.

VINCENT
No. Only its reflection.

FATHER
Vincent, it's been four days. Long enough to hope. Perhaps this reporter has reached into his heart And realized the harm his story would do. Reconsider.

VINCENT
But as long as I go Above - as long as Catherine is in my life - there will always be another man waiting with a camera, a notepad or a gun. One day, one of them will not ... reconsider.

FATHER
It's been a wonderful dream, Vincent, but this is your home.

VINCENT
No, Father.
(stands and looks at hm)
This is my tomb.

FADE TO Inside Joe's office.

CATHERINE
Rita said you wanted to see me.

JOE
Yeah. You seen this morning's sentinel?

CATHERINE
No. What does it say?

JOE
You'd better sit down.

CATHERINE
Just let me see it!

Catherine grabs the newspaper worried, but headline is about a missing reporter.

JOE
What's going on, Radcliffe?

CATHERINE
I don't know.

JOE
How come I don't believe you?

CATHERINE
I can't help what you believe.

JOE
Hey, time out. I'm on your side, remember? I don't know what's going on here, but if you need a lawyer or a friend, I'm here. And I got to tell you, If you've got any idea why Spirko was knifed, I think you should tell the police.

CATHERINE
Knifed?

JOE
Well, yeah, the autopsy said ... Cathy, I don't think you need To see this.

CATHERINE
Go on, Joe.

JOE
The coroner said he was, um, killed with a double-edged blade. Razor-sharp, like some kind of a surgical tool. Entry wound was in the lower abdomen, but he was cut ... Are you sure you're okay?

CATHERINE
Yeah.

CUT TO to Elliot's office.

ELLIOTT
I hired you to get some answers out of Bernie Spirko for me. Now would you mind telling me why I had to buy a newspaper to find out he'd been fished out of the East River?

MAN

Floater's are tough to find, Mr. Burch. Even tougher to question.

ELLOIT

What about the story he was working on? Somebody was feeding Spirko information on Catherine Chandler, and I want to know who.

MAN

Problem is, Mr. Burch -- Spirko told his editor that you were his source.

ELLOIT

That's absurd.

MAN

Well, I figured that much out myself.

ELLOIT

Listen, I want you to find out everything Spirko did last week. I want you to find out where he went and who he talked to, who he telephoned. I want you to find out what he had for dinner, how much he paid for it and whether he liked it or not.

MAN

I'm going to need a lot more men.

ELLOIT

Put your whole agency on it, you just do it.

MAN

Done.

CUT TO Father's study. Mouse is climbs down the iron spiral staircase while Father talks.

FATHER

He feels trapped. His home has now become a prison, cutting him off from the world above.

(subway cars clanging)

He needs the night sky, the stars.

MOUSE

Not stars. Needs Catherine.

FATHER

Oh. If only I could make it so. Everything .. I ... everything I do, everything I say seems so small. Still, we must help, however we can.

MOUSE

(subway cars clanging above)

Okay, good. Okay, fine. Bring down the sky. Something better than the Mirror Pool. Sun and stars and stuff, all moving, alive.

JAMIE (entering the study)
Father, one of the helpers sent this down.

FATHER
Oh, thank you.

Mouse turns to leave

JAMIE
(to Mouse)
Where are you going?

MOUSE
Making plans.

JAMIE
What kind of plans?

MOUSE
Secret plans.

JAMIE
Father, are you all right? What is it?

FATHER
Just a bit of news, nothing to concern you. Thank you, Jamie.
Jamie leaves and Father pulls out photos with images of Vincent. He unfolds a note from Paracelsus.
He burns the photos.

FADE TO Father in his suit taking a gun from a drawer.

CUT TO Father entering the office building where Spirko was killed.
He enters a large room.

FATHER
John?

PARACELSUS
I'm here, Jacob. I've been waiting for you. I trust you enjoyed the photographs.

FATHER
I burned them.

PARACELSUS
Pity. I thought they showed the boy in a an interesting light. But your appetite for truth was always rather limited as I recall.

FATHER
There was nothing of truth in those photographs.

PARACELSUS

The camera does not lie, Jacob. But we're not all strong enough to look upon the face of the Medusa, are we?

FATHER

You wanted me? Well, I'm here. What is this all about?

PARACELSUS

What it's always been about ... You, me, the child.

FATHER

I will not allow you to publish those photographs.

PARACELSUS

Oh. And how do you propose to stop me, old friend?

(Father pulls out the gun)

So this is what it's come to in the end, huh? All your fine talk of love and turning the other cheek.

(gun cocking)

PARACELSUS

Kill me, then. You'll find me quite unarmed.

(The curtains are drawn back)

Does the light offend your eyes? Forgive me. You've spent too long in the dark, Jacob. Perhaps we all have.

FATHER

(gun uncocking)

What is it you want of me, John?

PARACELSUS

It's a small thing really.

FATHER

For god's sake Tell me.

PARACELSUS

(opens a drawer and retrieves a golden locket)

It's time for the boy to claim his birthright.

Paracelsus lets a golden locket dangle from his hand, swinging it back and forth.

END OF ACT ONE

ACT TWO

FADE TO the elevator as Catherine leaves. Turning the corner, she sees Father slumped in a chair outside her apartment.

CATHERINE

(Goes and kneels down at his side, surprised)

Father? Something's wrong?

FATHER

Yes, I'm afraid so.

FADE TO to the opened locket in Vincent's palm. It's an old black and white photo of a young woman with dark hair.

FATHER

On the way down, I thought it might be better to drop it into the Abyss, as if it had never been.

VINCENT

Why would you even consider such a thing?

FATHER

To protect you. Vincent, no one ever wanted to lie to you. It's just that there were some things I thought you had no need to hear.

VINCENT

Who was she, Father?

FATHER

Her name was Anna. She was one of us. A good woman. She liked to go Above. She loved to walk the streets, meet the people. One night it was the coldest night of the year ...

VINCENT

Anna was the one who found me.

FATHER

Uh, no. That was a story. You were never found. Anna was your mother.

VINCENT

(confused)

My ... What happened to her?

FATHER

She died. It was, um, an accident. So long ago. We buried her down in the catacombs. Vincent, Vincent, please, Let it go.

VINCENT

No. How could you even ask that?

Vincent turns and walks out of the room, distressed. Catherine follows soon after.

FADE TO nighttime shot and then cut inside to Elliot's office.

MAN

We got lucky. Seems that Spirko didn't believe That no-parking signs applied to him. In the last month, he was cited four times In the same two-block area. I put 20 legmen Out on the street, flashing his picture. He made regular visits to a penthouse on sutton.

ELLIOT

Whose penthouse?

MAN

Good question. The place was leased a month ago. No name on file for the tenant.

ELLIOT

Isn't that a little irregular?

MAN

Yeah. But when you pay a year's rent in advance at double the normal rate, in gold, you're allowed to be a little irregular.

ELLIOT

He paid in gold? Mm-hmm.

I want full surveillance on the building, I want a 24-hour stakeout. I want cameras, audio, phone taps, The works.

MAN

You got it. You think I should call in the police on this?

ELLIOT

No. No. We keep it under wraps for now.

MAN

Okay.

CUT TO Father's study. Father is contemplative when he speaks. Mouse, William, and Pascal are sitting around a table.

FATHER

(sighs)

I fear this assault on Catherine and Vincent may be just the beginning. But how or where the next attack may come ...

MOUSE

Only one man. Mouse isn't scared.

PASCAL

Maybe Mouse should be.

WILLIAM

Paracelsus has always had his followers down Below us.

FATHER

Yes, now he has dangerous allies in the world Above.

PASCAL

We'll have to change all the entrances to the tunnels.

FATHER

John Pater discovered half of these tunnels. A few false walls won't fool him.

MOUSE

Mouse can build new traps! Ropes, chutes. One wrong move

(slams desk)

Up he goes!

FATHER

He'd just cut through your ropes.

WILLIAM

How about deadfalls, pits?

PASCAL

Someone might get hurt.

WILLIAM

We're talking about Paracelsus here. He murdered Lou.

MOUSE

Killed Winslow, too.

WILLIAM

I still have the scar from where he cut me. And you're worried he might get hurt? I say we should arm the sentries.

PASCAL

I don't know, William.

FATHER

William. What kind of weapons do you suggest?

CUT TO Vincent strolling to a tunnel where Catherine is waiting.

CATHERINE

Vincent?

VINCENT

Catherine, I must go.

CATHERINE

To her tomb?

(sighs)

Maybe you should give yourself some more time.

VINCENT

Too much time has passed already.

CATHERINE

Then I'll go with you.

VINCENT

No.

CATHERINE

Why? Don't you see What you're doing, Vincent? You're throwing up walls. You're Isolating yourself from the people who love you.

VINCENT

This is something I must face alone.

END OF ACT TWO

ACT THREE

FADE TO Vincent walking through the tunnels. He grabs a torch and walks down into the catacombs.

NARCISSA

(wind howling)

Let her sleep, Vincent. It is not good to wake the dead.

VINCENT

Narcissa.

NARCISSA

So far from home, Vincent. There is nothing for you down here. What is it you seek?

VINCENT

Anna.

(Narcissa looks away)

You know these catacombs. Show me the way, Narcissa.

NARCISSA

Her bones have no answers. Go back, Vincent.

VINCENT

It's too late for that now.

NARCISSA

There is nothing here but cold stone. Death. Her spirit is gone, Child.

VINCENT

Once you told me you could summon spirits.

NARCISSA

Some who walk in death are fearful, cold, bitter as the wind that roars up from the abyss. Evil.

VINCENT

But Anna was a good woman.

NARCISSA

In life, but death can twist a heart, poison it. And Anna's death was terrible.

VINCENT

How did she die, Narcissa?

NARCISSA

Ask the father.

Vincent wipes away the cobwebs and reads the name: John Pater.

VINCENT

Paracelsus.

Fade to black. Fade back in slab of stone with the words: Anna Pater beloved wife of John Pater.

VINCENT

Paracelsus.

Vincent holds his head as memories swirl through his mind. Images overlap as Paracelsus and Father's words circle through his mind.

FATHER

(V.O)

And then he was brought to me And he was wrapped in rags.

PARACELSUS

(V.O)

Or you can attempt to accept Father's story. Don't you see, Vincent? He wouldn't let me take you. When I was exiled, he made me leave you behind.

FATHER

(V.O)

Nobody wanted him.

PARACELSUS

(V.O)

You were mine.

FATHER

(V.O)

Nobody wanted him.

PARACELSUS

(V.O)

You were mine. Or you can attempt to accept Father's story. Or you can attempt to accept Father's story.

FATHER

(V.O)

Vincent, no one ever wanted to lie to you.

PARACELSUS

(V.O)

Do you really believe that? Do you really believe that?

Vincent roars and growls in disbelief.

FADE TO Elliot's office.

The phone buzzes.

ELLIOT

Yes? Send her right in.

(Catherine enters)

If you came here to make more accusations, you can turn right around, go out the door you just came in.

CATHERINE

(sighs)

I came to apologize, Elliott. I was very wrong about you, and I'm sorry.

ELLIOT

Well, apology accepted. I've given you enough reason to doubt me in the past, aside from which even Spirko thought he was dealing with me.

CATHERINE

How do you know that?

ELLIOT

I had to try to clear my good name. Such as it is. I had a private detective try to find Spirko's source.

CATHERINE

(sighs)

You should be careful. I know the man you're looking for. He's very dangerous.

ELLIOT

Why didn't you call the police?

(Catherine remains quiet)

More secrets.

CATHERINE

If you find him

ELLIOT

You'll be the first to know.

Catherine leaves as Elliot smiles.

FADE TO Catherine climbing down the small staircase into Father's study.

CATHERINE
Father?

FATHER
Catherine, Vincent's not back yet, I'm afraid.

CATHERINE
I need to talk to both of you. Elliott Burch's got some men looking for ...

VINCENT
(enters the room)
Catherine, leave us.

CATHERINE
Vincent.

VINCENT
(to Father)
Anna was John Pater's wife.

CATHERINE
(sighs)
I'll wait in your chamber.

VINCENT
Is it true then? Was Paracelsus my father? Father what have you done?

FATHER
It was done out of love.

VINCENT
The greatest crimes are always committed in the name of love.

FATHER
At the time it seemed so obvious. But now, dear God, sometimes I feel so lost.

VINCENT
Tell me.

FATHER
The beginning was John. He and Anna had tried for so long to have a child, but it was impossible. The fault was in John, he was unable to father a child.

VINCENT
Yet Anna became pregnant.

FATHER
To Anna, it was a miracle. But John just smiled, as if he knew what was.

VINCENT

Go on.

FATHER

Vincent, please

VINCENT

Go on!

(Father turns away, but Vincent spins him back around)

Why didn't you tell any of the others?

FATHER

I didn't think there was any need. I thought it best not to frighten them.

VINCENT

I was an infant. What could they have feared?

FATHER

The unknown. Vincent, men are afraid of what they don't understand. And they hate that which is different.

VINCENT

Someone must have known Anna was pregnant.

FATHER

No. No one knew. You see, Anna was ... Vincent, Anna was only in her third month when she went into labor.

VINCENT

Her third month?

FATHER

As soon as it began, I knew something was wrong, but I could never have imagined ...

VINCENT

Paracelsus.

FATHER

John was a genius in his own way, but unorthodox. Even so, no one would of dreamed that he would perform medical experiments on his own wife.

VINCENT

Did Anna know what he was doing?

FATHER

Right at the end when she was too weak to scream anymore. She looked up at John, and I saw the knowledge in her eyes.

VINCENT

So, Anna died in childbirth like Devin's mother.

FATHER

No. No ... not, uh, not like Devin's mother.

VINCENT

Well, then how? How?

FATHER

Vincent, you were you were not born Like other children. You ripped your way out of your mother's body.

FADE TO Vincent's chamber where Catherine is waiting.

Vincent's screaming is head off screen.

END OF ACT THREE

ACT FOUR

CATHERINE

Vincent? What is it?

VINCENT

Catherine, you must leave me.

CATHERINE

No.

VINCENT

Yes.

CATHERINE

What did Father tell you?

VINCENT

Go back to your world. Go back to the life you once lived. Put all your memory of me behind you.

CATHERINE

Tell me what he said. I love you, Vincent. Whatever it is, we can face it together.

VINCENT

What you love is only part of me.

CATHERINE

No, Vincent, I love all of you.

VINCENT

How can you know that? There are darkneses inside of me that you cannot even imagine.

CATHERINE

Whatever Father said, it doesn't matter. You haven't changed. You're still kind and gentle and strong ...

VINCENT

Stop! You and Father. You wouldn't admit the truth even if it stood right in front of you. Look at me, Catherine. Look at me. What do you see?

CATHERINE

I see the man that I love.

VINCENT

There are no mirrors in this chamber. But there are mirrors in the soul, and I cannot live with what I see there.

(Catherine goes to comfort him, but Vincent stiffens)

Don't Touch me.

(sighs)

It is not safe to love me, Catherine. I killed Anna. These hands ripped apart my mother's flesh, tore me from her womb. I was born in blood.

CATHERINE

(quietly)

No. I don't believe it.

VINCENT

Believe whatever you like, only leave me.

(He spins around and growls menacingly, Catherine screams)

Don't look back.

Catherine leaves.

CUT TO Elliot's office.

ELLIOT

Patience isn't one of my virtues, Manning.

MANNING

How long is it going to take us to get some answers on this Mr. Burch?

Catherine enters

ELLIOT

Cathy, what are you doing here?

CATHERINE

(door closes)

Is this your detective?

ELLIOT

Yeah.

CATHERINE

The Spirko source ... how much have you found out?

MANNING

Well, we traced him to a penthouse on Sutton, but the man seems to have vanished.

CATHERINE

He's good at that. I need to get inside that penthouse.

ELLIOT

Uh, that shouldn't be too difficult to arrange. Should it, Mr. Manning?

MANNING

Mr. Burch, you're talking about breaking and entering. I could lose my license.

ELLIOT

Cleon I will buy you a brand-new one.

MANNING

Let's go, Elliott.

Fade to the penthouse door.

OPERATIVE

(opens door)

Nobody home, Mr. Manning.

MANNING

All right, toss this room. I want to know who lives here and where they've gone.

Manning notices a stain

CATHERINE

Bloodstains.

MANNING

This makes it a police matter. You want to do the honors, or should I phone in an anonymous tip?

OPERATIVE (knocking on wood)

Manning. I think we got something here.

Operative and Manning move a large table and find a hidden room.

MANNING

Who the hell are you?

FATHER
Please help me.

CATHERINE
(surprised)
Father?

ELLIOTT
Is this the man?

CATHERINE
No. Help me get him out of here.

FATHER
Vincent - warn him. Paracelsus is below.

CUT TO Father sitting in the study, reading a book. The camera circles around him.

CUT TO the landing, as Vincent enters at the top of the staircase.

VINCENT
Jacob.

CUT TO the tunnels.
Father, helped by Catherine to walk, tells the true narrative.

FATHER
Anna lost her baby in the third month and something seemed to happen to John. Shortly afterwards, she found a child in the snows outside St. Vincent's hospital, and things seemed to get very confused in John's mind.

Father, exhausted, leans against the tunnel wall.

CATHERINE
Are you all right?

FATHER
Thank you.

CATHERINE
How did it become confused? He began to see Vincent as the son he'd lost?

FATHER
Yes. Anna loved Vincent, but she could see that John's obsession with the child was becoming unhealthy. It broke her heart, but she thought it best if the child stayed with me.

Catherine and Father continue on their journey.

CATHERINE
Didn't she know how Paracelsus would react?

FATHER

Well, in spite of everything, she still loved John and she thought in time the grief would pass, that he'd forgive her. Instead, he gave her poison in a glass of wine. Afterwards, he told me it was the hardest thing he'd ever done, that he'd done it for Vincent.

CUT TO Vincent standing in at the entrance to Father's chamber.

VINCENT

Why did you let me live?

FATHER

You don't know what you're saying.

(sighs)

Vincent, I remember the first moment I held you in my arms. You were so tiny, drenched in blood. But I could feel the life in you.

VINCENT

Death has its own power. Perhaps that is what you felt.

FATHER

You opened your eyes and you looked at me. You knew me. And I knew that something new had come into the world, that you were destined for unimaginable things.

VINCENT

And it was up to you to see that nothing stood in the way of that destiny.

FATHER

Yes. Oh, yes.

VINCENT

No matter who you hurt. No matter how many lives were warped and destroyed, by your lies.

FATHER

But they didn't matter. Can't you understand that? I mean, they were ordinary, unimportant. But you (Vincent turns to go. Father' gets up)

No. No, you have to listen. You have to understand.

(snarls)

Do you think it's been easy for me? You don't know the price I paid for you. For years afterwards, I could see her face, Hear her screaming. Sometimes, as I pass through the chamber of the winds, I hear it still. The screaming and the sound you made as you tore your way into the world.

VINCENT

(moves away, holding his hands to his ears)

Stop it, stop it.

FATHER

No, you must hear this.

VINCENT

No more.

FATHER

Why do you resist your own nature? No! Where are you going, Vincent? You can't run away; you know that.

(laughs)

Oh, yes. They've tried to smother it with their piety, chain it with their little moralities. But you can still hear the singing in your blood, can't you? Huh? Can't you?

(breathing heavily)

Don't fight it, Vincent. It's you. It's who you are. It's what you've always been since the moment you were born. Good and evil - these are human concepts. Let go of them, Vincent. Let the power fill you, make you its own. All your victims know the truth. Couldn't you see that in their faces? Couldn't you remember their eyes as they beheld you for the last time?

(Vincent snarling)

The smell of their blood in your hands. Oh, Vincent, Imagine the taste of it. Like copper and fire on your tongue.

Vincent growls and lunges at father, ripping his chest open on the table.

FATHER

(lifts his head.)

It's all right.

The mask is pulled off to reveal Paracelsus

PARCELSUS

(looking at Vincent)

Don't be afraid. At last you are my son.

Paracelsus dies on the table.

Vincent turns as Catherine and Father enter the chamber, looking at the scene.

FADE TO Vincent sitting almost catatonic in silence in his chamber.

CATHERINE

Will he be all right?

FATHER

I don't know. I hope, in time. Catherine, I'll sit with him if you have to, uh ...

CATHERINE

No. I'll stay as long as he needs me.

(bends down)

Vincent. It's finished. You did what had to be done and we're free. The nightmare is over.

VINCENT

No. It's not over.

END OF ACT FOUR

THE END