

PENDRAGON. Once again, may I present some of the most beautiful princesses in the world. Ladies and Gentleman, this is the Parade of Princesses.

(PRINCESSES enter in a ceremonial line and take extravagant poses. JEAN dances about them and PENDRAGON joins in. GRANNY stops the music with a whistle or hand clap.)

GRANNY. LADIES! Please! Hold everything! STOP!

(Music stops. PENDRAGON, JEAN, and PRINCESSES stop dancing.)

PENDRAGON. Is something wrong, Granny?

GRANNY. Nothing's wrong—except everything! This passel of princesses has no pizzazz. Puh-lease! If we're looking for a proper mate for Sonny Boy—

PENDRAGON. Your grandson—the Crown Prince of Paragonia.

GRANNY. He's just Sonny Boy to me. If we're looking for a proper princess, these girls need to lighten up. Shake a leg. They look as though they'd rather be sleeping on a big pile of mattresses. The only one with any style is this here girlie. What kingdom are you from, honey?

JEAN. Granny, you know me. It's Jean. I'm helping Lord Pendragon teach the princesses how to dance.

GRANNY. Good for you, honey. *(Aside:)* Some of them move like porcupines—

(JEAN giggles.)

Or penguins.

PENDRAGON. Forgive me, your ladyship—many of these princesses have traveled far and wide—

GRANNY. And many of them need to keep traveling.

JEAN. Granny!

GRANNY. It's too bad you're not a princess, Jeannie. You'd be perfect for Sonny Boy.

JEAN. That's silly. W
here—

GRANNY. Oh, I forgot

JEAN. What's the secre

GRANNY. It was actu
cause he wants the bes
cause—

JEAN. *(Patiently:)* What

*(GRANNY not
in for the secret.)*

GRANNY. I forget.

(Trumpets blare.

Lordy Lord, Pennywhi

PENDRAGON. Very
Pendleton and Queen F

*(KING and QU
and QUEEN pu*

QUEEN. Thank you...
gonia and...and his har

*(PETE and PE
PERCY is dres
PETE.)*

Ladies, please. If you t
man is the prince, I wo
The Peasant. *(Referring*
gonia. This is Percival.

PERCY. *(Enjoying his 'n
right, Lord Pendragon!*

(A confused PE

PENDRAGON. Your r

PANICHELLE. Me, too! Me, too!

GRANNY. Me three!

QUEEN. Not until the proper time, ladies. If you want to know the secret, perhaps you can sleep on it. Get it? Sleep on it?

(PRINCESSES are confused. GRANNY is tugging on her sleeve.)

Yes, Granny?

GRANNY. Why is Sonny Boy dressed like that?

QUEEN. He's a servant, Granny. Don't you remember?

GRANNY. No!

QUEEN. (Sighing?) Never mind. Let's see some more princesses.

GRANNY. And keep them moving. I need a nap.

PENDRAGON. Very good.

(PRINCESSES parade in character.)

All of our contestants are exceptionally lovely and very unique in their own special ways. We have Princess Parnassa the Tall, Princess Pymlika the Small, Paxine the Peaceful —

1 PAXINE. What's up, dude?

PENDRAGON. Princesses Priscinda and Prudelle —

212 PRISCINDA / PRUDELE. (Oddly choreographed.) Hello. It is nice to meet you, Prince Perc-i-val.

PERCY. (Overwhelmed.) Hi.

PENDRAGON. Going on, we have Palettina, who enjoys pink, purple, plaid and polka dots —

4 (PALETTINA winks by like a fashion model.)

Pozzoloni, the princess of pizza —

(PERCY takes offered slice. PETE takes it from him. JEAN takes it from PETE and wags her finger.)

The powerful Parthenia —

4 PARTHENIA. (Crushing PERCY's hand.) Yo!

PENDRAGON. Princess Phillippa —

(PHILIPPA does a cartwheel or split.)

PERCY. (To PETE.) I get it. She's a 'flippah.' Princess Phillippa is a 'flippah!' She likes to do flips.

QUEEN. Shhh...

PENDRAGON. Princess Pomburlaine the Pouter and finally, this lovely lady is Princess Pzpopa — Pzpopa — I can't pronounce your name. Can you help me?

4 PZPOPALLENKA. (After prompting from INTERPRETER.) Miso Pzpopo-Pa-Len-Kal.

PENDRAGON. And where are you from?

4 PZPOPALLENKA. (Same prompting.) Pzpo-Pa-Lenk-A-Vitch-Nee-Vay-Nee-A!

PERCY. (To PETE.) We were there, remember? (Loudly.) You have a beautiful country. Lots of hills and valleys and hills... and valleys...

4 PZPOPALLENKA. Wattney? Miso Nacho formekkey Da Pinzezz!

PERCY. What did she say?

(PETE shrugs.)

INTERPRETER. Allow me to translate.

4 PZPOPALLENKA. (Bowing oddly.) Ik sobe gatt do meetch ya, Pinz Pochva.

INTERPRETER. How are ya, Princey?

4 PZPOPALLENKA. (Romantically.) Ik dink Ik coot loffen Dapinz.

INTERPRETER. I'm not really interested in seeing anyone right now, but my lovely interpreter is available. Whaddya say, Prinnie?

PZOPALENKA. Dop zat lawg! Ik mam de goo Dapinzeez ad Ik veel das too —

INTERPRETER. Dapinzeez! Peaz! Iv doo veel das oon finkledubney —

(PZOPALENKA and INTERPRETER scream in PERCY's car.)

PZOPALENKA. Dapinzeez!

INTERPRETER. Finkledubney!

PERCY. Help me... somebody! Pete!

PETE. (Stifling a laugh.) It's all up to you, your majesty.

JEAN. Let me try. (To PZOPALENKA and INTERPRETER:) Dop zor arwin. Ve aven das oonky-jachy. Footenfaffer!

(They stop fighting.)

PZOPALENKA/INTERPRETER. Ah! Das en gotten footenfaffer.

(They hug.)

PETE. Jean, you're amazing.

JEAN. I speak a little Pzopalenkish.

GRANNY. (Nudging PETE.) Is there anything she can't do?

(PETE and JEAN are speechless. PRINCESSES start to talk at the same time, promoting their cause.)

KING. Ladies, please! My son needs you to talk one at a time.

1 **POMBURLAINE.** (Tearfully.) It doesn't matter, really.

PENDRAGON. Princess Pomburlaine.

QUEEN. (Checking book.) She's the Pouting Princess.

PERCY. I can see that.

POMBURLAINE. (Crying.) It doesn't matter what we do. Everyone knows that the Prince is destined to be with Princess Primonetta of Porloo. She's the perfect princess. The rest of us are going to be passed over. (Stamping her foot.) And it's just not fair!

KING. Oh, you poor baby!

(KING holds out his hands to POMBURLAINE. QUEEN steps between them.)

QUEEN. Who is this Princess Primonetta? Check the book, Pen-dleton. Check the book!

PERCY. Yeah. Check the book! Check the book!

(PENDRAGON gives PERCY a finger wag and the 'hero prince' wags his finger back. An 'image' of PRIMONETTA appears as KING describes her.)

KING. It says here that Princess Primonetta is popular, poised, has a positive profile and is particularly pretty.

QUEEN. (Tearful.) Oh, Pendleton. She sounds perfectly perfect for our son.

(QUEEN tries to squeeze PETE's cheek and he turns her to PERCY, but she recoils in disgust.)

PERCY. I can just imagine her. She's... pretty great.

(PERCY sighs and PRIMONETTA vanishes.)

GRANNY. (Writing her scores.) Sure, if you like all that perfection and stuff. Anyway, she's not here.

POMBURLAINE. Not yet. Waahhh!!!

QUEEN. Enough! Are we ready for the decision?

KING/GRANNY. Ready.

PETE. What about me?

ALL. Huh?

QUEEN. What?

PETE. (*Referring to PERCY:*) I mean, doesn't the Prince get to make his own decision who to marry?

QUEEN. Oh, my no. That's just the way it is.

(PERCY is enjoying the attentions of several PRINCESSES.)

We make the decisions. I'm sure he won't mind whom we select.

JEAN. That doesn't seem fair.

QUEEN. That's enough, Jean. Remember your place.

(JEAN turns away. KING joins PENDRAGON to discuss their final choices of GRANNY and QUEEN. PETE watches PERCY enjoying the attention of the PRINCESSES. GRANNY turns to QUEEN.)

GRANNY. You know, Pandora, seeing all of these princesses makes me think of something.

QUEEN. What's that, Granny?

GRANNY. None of them can hold a candle to Jean.

QUEEN. Jean? My lady-in-waiting?

GRANNY. One and the same. She's smarter than them, nicer than them, prettier... Maybe she should be up here.

QUEEN. But she's not a princess, Granny. She's meant for someone like Percy. At least that's what I told Pete.

PENDRAGON. Your majesties, the results are in. As we perform our next song, remember if you are touched by the purple plume, you are eliminated. Musicians, play!

(Music plays and PENDRAGON uses purple plume to eliminate the runners-up. PARTHENIA threatens anyone who gets near her. Seven remain at the end of the song.)

The seven finalists for the hand of Prince Peter — I mean, Prince Percival — have been selected. Please hold your applause until I name all the names. (*Opening a scroll:*) Princesses Priscinda and Prudelle.

TWINS. Yeah!

PENDRAGON. Princess

PARTHENIA. (*Flexing n*

PENDRAGON. Princess

(PHILIPPA does

Very nice, your majesty.

(PHILIPPA bows

Princesses Parnassa and you?

(PYMLIKA is hi

There you are. And final

(Other PRINCES

Jean!

ALL. What?

JEAN. Me?

PENDRAGON. Hold th
finalist.

(JEAN accepts P

*A wonderful choice. Pr
carnial!*

PEZOPALENKA. Oosh

INTERPRETER. Shanol

QUEEN. And to all of
may all retire to your h
the west courtyard.

GRANNY. Remember what I told you.

PRIMONETTA. I promise.

JEAN. Excuse me, Granny.

(GRANNY exits with a flourish.)

Time for bed, your majesty.

PRIMONETTA. Oh, Jean, I could never feel comfortable sleeping on that beautiful bed after all the work you've done here. Why don't you take it?

JEAN. Me? No. That's a bed fit for a princess. My bed is that hard one in the next room.

PRIMONETTA. I'll take that one. I've had such a lovely walk with Percy. It will be good for me to sleep on a firm surface before my wedding day. I want to be up bright and early.

JEAN. If you insist.

(PRIMONETTA exits.)

Okay. *(Viewing the bed:)* It's pretty tall. Wow. It's really tall. But I can climb it. I climbed Mount Paragon in half the time. Here we go...

(JEAN gets to the top.)

Wow. This is beautiful. Living like a—I wonder how Princess Primonetta will feel when she meets her real husband. I bet she'll be perfectly pleasant and perfectly — perfect and live happily ever after. That's just how it is for people like her. Not Jean. Pathetic Jean. Poor Jean. Too many words begin with a P. Perfection and pizza and pink. What's my special word? Something. I can't remember. And I can't sleep. Ouch. What is this?

(Pulls out the periodical.)

Princess Periodical Volume One. Hmmm... Bedtime reading. I bet this will put me to sleep. So many stories of the perfect prince and the perfect life and the perfect ending.

(Music plays as JEAN tries to fall asleep. FAIRY TALE CHAR-

ACTERS act out silly tableaux to lure JEAN to sleep. Finally, JEAN and the bed vanishes from sight and we are back in the royal hall. QUEEN enters searching for something. KING, PETE, GRANNY, and PRINCESSES enter from the opposite side.)

QUEEN. Pendleton, have you seen Lord Pendragon? There are so many details to be tended to.

KING. No, my dear. I was explaining to the princesses about our little trick.

QUEEN. Oh...that.

PETE. Yes. That.

KING. So you see, ladies, we agreed to fool you by saying that Percy the Peasant was Prince and Peter the Prince was the Peasant.

PRINCESSES. What?

PETE. It's hard to explain. First of all —

(PRIMONETTA and PERCY come running on.)

What's going on?

PERCY. Hi, everybody!

(PRIMONETTA giggles.)

QUEEN. Princess Primonetta, can you explain yourself?

PRIMONETTA. Of course. I had such a wonderful night's sleep that I got up early and convinced my love that we had to elope. Isn't that right, Val?

ALL. Val?

PERCY. That's what she calls me. Perci-Val. And she's Netty.

ALL. Netty?

QUEEN. But my dear Princess, you have been misled. Percy is not—

PRIMONETTA. I know who he is. He told me everything. But I love

him and when that happens, your station in life doesn't matter. The answer is love. Or pizza. Remember that, Pete.

PETE. I'll remember.

QUEEN. You look so rested.

PRIMONETTA. I feel wonderful!

QUEEN. I was sure you would have felt the pea through those twelve mattresses. That was my test to find Pete's bride.

PRIMONETTA. Oh, but I didn't sleep there. Jean did.

QUEEN. Jean?

PRINCESSES / KING. Jean...

PETE. Jean!

(JEAN staggers in, looking as if she hasn't slept a wink.)

JEAN. I'm here! I'm here. I'm sorry I'm late, your majesties. I tried to fall asleep. I really did. The bed was so soft and so high, but there was something that kept me from sleeping. Why is everyone looking at me?

PETE. We're just glad to see you. Especially me.

KING. What kept you awake, Jean?

GRANNY. Did it have anything to do with a pea?

QUEEN. Granny!

JEAN. It began with a P. Yes. I tossed and turned all night.

GRANNY. See!

PETE. See!

KING. Pandora, this is the bride for our son. And to think, she was here all the time.

PETE. Yes, she was.

QUEEN. But she's not a princess and I thought that a princess would sleep on the mattresses and the pea would keep her awake and —

PETE. Oh, but if Jean marries me, then she'll be a princess. Right, Granny?

GRANNY. Positively!

QUEEN. Oh! Well, then — Jean! Remember your place.

(QUEEN puts JEAN next to PETE.)

It's right beside Peter.

KING. Dory, you are truly remarkable.

JEAN. Thank you, your majesties. Thanks, Pete.

PETE. No problem.

GRANNY. That's good enough for me. On with the wedding!

(GRANNY, PRIMONETTA, and a few PRINCESSES usher JEAN off to get ready for the wedding.)

PERCY. Your majesties, now that Pete and Jean have found each other, we'd love to have you, Old Penny and his new wife over for dinner.

KING. That sounds delightful.

QUEEN. Oh, but Lord Pendragon is not married.

(PENDRAGON enters with PZPOPALENKA. They are giggling and INTERPRETER follows them with presents.)

PERCY. He is now. May I present Lord Pendragon and his wife — her ladyship Princess Pzpopalenka Pendragon of Pzpopalenka-vichnivania.

(PZPOPALENKA giggles and shows off her ring.)

Crum gadaysha, Pinzezz. Crum gadaysha.

PZPOPALENKA. *(Giggling:)* Crum gadaysha!

*(Handshakes and h
DRAGON to the*

QUEEN. Lord Pendragon

PENDRAGON. She spea
mookie tushna?

PZPOPALENKA. Mooki

PERCY. Granny introduc

KING. That's amazing. Y

QUEEN. My mother? I th

KING. She's not my mot

QUEEN. Well, then —

KING / QUEEN. Who is

*(GRANNY enters
or carrying a wana*

GRANNY. Oh, my dear
ryone's granny. And a th
fell asleep behind a castle
I should know. I was th
now — although times ha
dozen mattresses can bri

*(The wedding gu
PERCY stand at a
enter followed by
the bride.)*

Peter, do you have some

PETE. *(Turning to JEAN*
friend, your servant and
me?

JEAN. I do.

(Everyone applau