

Jo-Jo's Kingdom  
by  
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FADE IN

INT. MECHANICAL NICKELODEON (SPFX MONTAGE) - DAY

In the blackness we hear the SOUND of a coin sliding into a slot; a remote CHUGGING is heard, and suddenly we discover that we are inside a complex and intricate old nickelodeon, the kind that contain almost every imaginable type of instrument.

With violin, piano, and xylophone the mechanized behemoth churns forth a quaint medley of Stephan Foster tunes. SUPERED over this sequence are the MAIN TITLES.

Soon the MUSIC SEGUES from the sparse and somewhat non-human rendition of the machine to a more elaborately-orchestrated version of the same melody, Foster's Beautiful Dreamer. As the music changes we catch an occasional glimpse of ABSTRACT SHAPES, cascading in the darkness, perhaps representing what the music might look like if we could see it.

INT. RUBY PALACE -- LOBBY - DAY

As it begins its third verse the MUSIC returns to the version rendered by the machine while we PULL OUT to discover that the entire process is being carefully attended by a delicate pair of ears belonging to ADDIE ALEXANDER, a prim girl of twelve, perched on a velvet settee. As she listens, she fingers a small brass turtle on a nearby table.

It is 1894. We are in the main lobby of the primary entertainment establishment in the medium-sized town of Johnson's Ford, Connecticut: the *Ruby Palace*. A combination vaudeville theater and burlesque hall, it seems perhaps an unlikely place to find a proper young lady such as Addie.

As the final strains of Beautiful Dreamer are wafted into the afternoon, Addie's reverie is abruptly broken by a slight COMMOTION just outside that we hear but do not see:

A dog BARKS frantically. There is a SCREAM followed by a tense MOTHER's voice scolding her child.

MOTHER (O.S.)

Billy! Get away from him this instant.

The disturbance quickly quiets down and a moment later a pair of creaky shoes strides up the front steps and into the lobby of the *Ruby Palace*. The shoes are accompanied by a pair of gloved hands, one of which wields a satchel that is emblazoned: "Charles Reynolds presents JO-JO THE DOG-FACED BOY".

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CHARLIE REYNOLDS is closely followed, as advertised, by a purple-robed FIGURE whose countenance, though obscured by the robe's hood, is doubtlessly canine. Reynolds pauses a moment, taking the place in, especially Addie, who seemingly pays him no notice. He attempts to get her attention, tipping his hat with an air of theatricality.

REYNOLDS

Excuse me, sweetheart. Where might I find the owner of this fair establishment?

Addie turns toward him, yet from the fact that their eyes do not meet it becomes evident that Addie is BLIND. Reynolds is slightly taken off guard.

ADDIE

Papa's office is in the back.

She indicates the direction.

REYNOLDS

Uh...thank you.

Reynolds heads off down the corridor, Jo-Jo in tow. (The two are linked by a leash, one end of which is tightly held in Reynolds' hand.)

Addie's smile does not go un-noticed by the pair of brown eyes peering out from the darkened hood.

INT. EZRA'S OFFICE - DAY

EZRA ALEXANDER is tallying figures at his desk in the crowded office. A KNOCK at the door attempts to disturb him, but he doesn't look up.

EZRA

What is it?

The door opens revealing Reynolds who stands silently until Ezra finally glances up to discover him. Ezra's face breaks into a grin.

EZRA

(chuckling)

Charlie?!...Charlie Reynolds!  
You old theater rat! My god, how long has it been?

He steps around the desk to give Reynolds a back-slapping handshake.

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REYNOLDS

Ezra, my boy! This is *your* place?! I knew there was nothing could keep the greasepaint out of your blood.

EZRA

What ever brings you around here, Charlie?

Reynolds holds up his satchel marquee.

EZRA

Well I'll be... The booking agent never told me it was you! Come in, come in...

Reynold steps into the office, followed by Jo-Jo who emerges from the corridor.

EZRA

So this must be...

REYNOLDS

That's right ... "the famous Prince Jo-Jo, raised by wolves in the great Kostroma forest of czarist Russia." Come on in boy.

Jo-Jo obeys as we notice Addie, eavesdropping in the hallway just outside the door.

EZRA

Well then...let's have a look.

Reynolds tugs on the leash.

REYNOLDS

Uh, certainly, seeing as how you're a paying customer... Step into the light, Jo-Jo. It's all right.

As Jo-Jo does so, Reynolds approaches him and slowly lowers the hood that has kept Jo-Jo's face obscured. We only witness this action from behind, however, and can judge Jo-Jo's face only from the look on Ezra's.

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CONTINUED: (2)

EZRA

Extraordinary! You've really got something here, Charlie. If your act is as good as they say, we're gonna have a great run. How did you come to...?

REYNOLDS

Purely by accident, really. But then, Ezra my boy, that's a story that's best told as part of our performance.

Reynolds replaces the hood over Jo-Jo's head.

EZRA

All right all right; you're on at eight fifteen, right after the fan dancer.

REYNOLDS

(grinning)

Ah it's great to be together again after these many years Ezra. Although I must say I'm a bit surprised after Annabelle broke up the act and "stole" you away from the business. Speaking of Annabelle, where is she?

EZRA

Uh...she's dead Charlie. ...when Addie was born.

REYNOLDS

(shocked)

Oh I am sorry, Ezra. She was...uh...Addie?

EZRA

My daughter. She's just outside.

(raising his voice a bit.)

Addie...come in. I'd like you to meet a very *old* friend of mine.

REYNOLDS

(correcting)

But young of heart...

EZRA

(imitates a rim shot)

...ba dum,bum...

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED: (3)

REYNOLDS

Reynolds is the name my dear,  
Charlie Reynolds.

He extends a hand to shake, which of course she cannot see.  
She curtsies.

ADDIE

I'm very pleased to meet you  
mister Reynolds.

Embarrassed, he takes back his hand.

REYNOLDS

Likewise I'm sure, miss Adelaide.

ADDIE

Just Addie...thanks.

REYNOLDS

Lovely girl, Ezra. Reminds me of  
her mother...only more so.

Reynolds chuckles. Jo-Jo's eyes, peering out from the darkened  
hood, remain fixed on Addie.

EZRA

(to Addie)

Sweetheart, these gentlemen are  
going to be with us for...four  
days, Charlie?

REYNOLDS

...that's correct. Six  
performances including matinees.

EZRA

Would you show them to their  
dressing room. It's number five.

ADDIE

All right.

Using a light bamboo cane for guidance she steps over to a rack  
on the wall that contains the various keys, counts over and  
removes the key to number five.

ADDIE

Follow me, please.

As she exits, Reynolds glances at Ezra with an eyebrow raised.  
He's impressed at her skills. Ezra smiles proudly.

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EZRA

I'll see you tonight, Charlie.

Ezra turns back to his work as Addie, Reynolds, and Jo-Jo exit. They are not even out the door, however, when BERT, a gangly stage-hand in his twenties bursts into the room, out of breath.

BERT

Ezra! I've got one. Just listen to this.(chuckles) It's about an Irishman, a priest and a leprechaun...

Before he can say much more, two smirking showgirls, MARY and BRIDGETTE appear in the doorway behind him.

EZRA

Uh, not right now, Bert, I've got paperwork to catch up on.

Bert notices the girls.

BERT

(stopped dead)

Oh...sorry Boss. Uh, I'll tell it to you later.

He turns to leave as the girls enter, but is called back as Ezra recalls something.

EZRA

(remembering)

Bert...See that the stage is well swept, will you. The dancers are complaining.

BERT

(humbled)

Sure thing, Ezra.

Once again he turns to go as Ezra returns to his work. But Ezra looks up.

EZRA

(taking pity)

Hey...don't give up Bert. You'll make me laugh one of these days.

Bert really does exit this time.

INT. BASEMENT CORRIDOR - DAY

Addie leads Reynolds and Jo-Jo straight to dressing room number five. She unlocks the door and pushes it open.

ADDIE

Here you are. Number five. The bathroom is two doors down.

REYNOLDS

Simply amazing, child. You do so well considering...

ADDIE

Considering what?...Oh you mean I'm blind? (shrugs) I've always been this way.

She enters the room and turns up the gaslights. Jo-Jo desperately wants to speak to her but dares not.

REYNOLDS

But wouldn't you like to be able to see if you could?

ADDIE

I see things well enough. I just don't use my eyes. That's what Rachel says. Is there anything else you need?

She steps back toward the door as they enter.

REYNOLDS

(looking around)  
That'll be fine, my dear. Thank you.

JO-JO

(softly)  
Who's Rachel?

Reynolds shoots Jo-Jo a furious glance.

ADDIE

(matter of factly)  
Oh...she's my teacher.

Addie exits, not realizing the tense silence she has left behind.

EXT. RUBY PALACE - DAY

RACHEL, a plain but well-groomed woman of thirty (whose eyes seem to smile even when she is at her most solemn) stands gazing at the gaudy exterior of the *Ruby Palace*. She takes a deep breath and strides up the steps.

INT. RUBY PALACE LOBBY - DAY

As she enters, Rachel immediately encounters Addie.

RACHEL  
Hello Addie. How's my girl?

ADDIE  
Rachel! What're you doing here?

RACHEL  
I...need to discuss some things  
with your father.

ADDIE  
He's in his office. Same as  
always. This way.

She leads Rachel down the corridor towards the rear.

ADDIE  
Can I tell you about the dream I  
had?

RACHEL  
Was it a good one?

ADDIE  
Oh yes. I dreamed I was  
listening to music that was so  
sweet and beautiful that it spun  
itself into marmalade.

RACHEL  
(smiles)  
Delicious sounds? Sounds  
delicious. You *did* save me  
some...

Addie laughs. But hers isn't the only laughter we hear: Female GIGGLING is heard emanating from behind the closed office door.

ADDIE  
That's Papa's office.

Rachel stops smiling. She knocks on the door and the giggling subsides.

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CONTINUED:

EZRA (O.S.)

Come in.

INT. EZRA'S OFFICE - DAY

As Rachel enters, she discovers Ezra and the two showgirls, one of whom is just getting off of Ezra's lap.

EZRA

Rachel! This is a shock. We were just uh doing some rehearsing.

RACHEL

I'm sorry to disturb you, Ezra, but I need to discuss something important with you...in private.

EZRA

Yes...uh Mary, Bridgette, why don't you two run along and teach Addie the new song you've been working on. We'll pick this up later.

MARY

Sure thing Ezra. Come along Sweetie.

BRIDGETTE

See you later Ezra.

INT. CORRIDOR - DAY

Addie follows the two women as they leave the office.

ADDIE

So what sort of song is it, Mary?

MARY

Uh, listen honey I gotta get my makeup on.

ADDIE

Bridgette?

BRIDGETTE

Yeah, me too. Some other time, Addie huh?

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ADDIE  
(gets the idea)  
Sure.

INT. EZRA'S OFFICE - DAY

Ezra closes the door and returns to his desk.

EZRA  
So, Rachel. What brings you to this "den of iniquity"? I hope it's not my soul again. You know I already sold that.

RACHEL  
Ezra please, whatever differences you and I may have don't really matter at the moment. This concerns Addie.

Ezra gets a bit more serious.

EZRA  
Oh, what's she done?

RACHEL  
It's nothing like that. It's what I'm doing. Or going to do.

She takes a deep breath.

RACHEL (CONT'D)  
You see I've been offered a position managing a program for blind children at St. Johns hospital in upstate New York.

EZRA  
(solemn)  
I see. Opportunity knocks.

RACHEL  
It's a wonderful hospital, Ezra, and a chance to help lots of children. I don't see how I can ignore where the Lord is leading. But I have to be concerned about what this may do to Addie. She's had me all her life.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

EZRA

(scratching his head)

You are the closest thing to a  
mother she's ever had...

Rachel is getting a bit misty-eyed but her voice doesn't waver.

RACHEL

Yes, that was my promise to  
Annabelle before she died... But  
Addie has always been a joy,  
Ezra. She grows more like  
Annabelle every day. I would  
have cared for her purely out of  
Christian charity; you knew that.  
So I am truly grateful that  
you've always insisted on paying  
me as her teacher.

EZRA

(politely returning  
the compliment)

I don't know what I would have  
done without you all these years,  
Rachel.

RACHEL

But now Addie is nearly grown,  
Ezra. I've taught her most  
everything I know how. Other  
children need help now, and I can  
give it to them. Addie's a  
strong girl, but when I leave she  
is really going to need the  
strength of her father.

EZRA

What do you suggest?

RACHEL

For now give her all the comfort  
and love you can show her. Give  
her courage through your example.

EZRA

That's all well and good to say.  
Rachel, you know I love  
Addie...more than anything. But  
I've also got a business to run  
here...and what about her  
schooling?

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED: (2)

RACHEL

I'm sure you'll do what's  
absolutely best for her, Ezra.

There is a pause as they both consider the implications.

EZRA

How soon are you leaving?

RACHEL

In two weeks, as soon as I can  
get things in order here.

EZRA

When are you going to tell Addie?

RACHEL

Tomorrow, after church.

During this last exchange the CAMERA PANS to reveal Addie, standing in the shadows of the hallway just outside the office door. The tears welling in her eyes bear witness that she has heard every word.

INT. RUBY PALACE MAIN THEATER - NIGHT

The mostly-full theater erupts in occasional whistles and rowdy catcalls from individuals during the performance of (according to the sign at stage right) MISS JOANNA LINNETTE, who currently occupies the spotlight with her fan-dancing routine. She struts and sings Poor Wandering One from Gilbert and Sullivan to the accompaniment of a five-piece "orchestra". From the reaction of the crowd it seems her act is *risque*' but it is certainly tame by any more recent standards.

INT. RUBY PALACE MAIN THEATER -- BACKSTAGE

Addie makes her way past a cigar-smoking BAGGY-PANTS COMIC, a MAGICIAN, and a BALLERINA to a spot just inside the proscenium where stands Bert, hanging onto a rope and "admiring" Miss Linnette with a grin. Only when Addie bumps him slightly does his attention shift.

BERT

Addie! Where ya been? You never  
miss Saturday nights.

ADDIE

(pensive)  
I've been around.

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CONTINUED:

BERT

I saved your stool for you. Hey,  
what's the matter, Kiddo?

Joanna Linnette's number ends with a musical flourish. The limelite goes out and she exits the stage as the curtain closes.

BERT

Oops, there's my cue. Excuse me.

Bert steps out to the stage briefly and pulls the front sign from the easel, revealing the next act: "Jo-Jo, the Dog-Faced Boy."

A tuxedoed Reynolds steps into the footlights in front of the curtain accompanied by a brief FANFARE and polite APPLAUSE.

REYNOLDS

Ladies and gentlemen. My name is Charles Reynolds. I come to you straight from the great and dark Kostroma forest of central Russia. There my colleagues and I discovered wild creatures so fantastic that, were I not to see them with my own eyes I would scarcely believe our tale myself. Yet despite an immense and homeric struggle, we have brought one of them back here, to civilization, that you also, ladies and gentlemen, may see and believe.

Bert returns to his place in the wings where Addie sits on her stool, taking the performance in. Bert tries to cheer her.

BERT

Judging by his breath, I'll bet the closest this guy's ever been to Russia is the inside of a bottle of vodka.

Addie does indeed manage a hint of a smile.

REYNOLDS

...It is with great pride, therefore, that we present for your education and amazement, ladies and gentlemen, Jo-Jo, the Dog-Faced Boy!

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED: (2)

The curtain rises with a Russian musical FANFARE to reveal a dramatically-lit Jo-Jo, clad only in satin boxer shorts and a matching collar, squatting on a small platform snarling and growling fiercely. He is covered with long, shiny hair on virtually every inch of his body and is restrained by several stout ropes attached to his collar.

Addie winces at all the growling.

BERT  
(to Addie)  
He sure is a hairy brute.

REYNOLDS  
Although you may note his keen  
resemblance to a mere domestic  
Terrier, Jo-Jo was a prince among  
his kind...

Suddenly a HECKLER stands up in the audience shouting:

HECKLER  
Yeah I'll bet he was a prince all  
right...Here Prince, here boy!

The audience breaks up in laughter, causing Jo-Jo to snarl all the louder. Reynolds attempts to ignore the interruption.

REYNOLDS  
Local legends informed our party  
of an entire race of these  
creatures, a society closely  
intertwined with that of the  
mountain timberwolf. Our party  
struggled valiantly with a beast  
that we were told is Jo-Jo's  
father, a creature twice his  
size, with three times the  
ferocity. Alas, our attempt to  
bring not one, but two of these  
amazing creatures to your world  
was doomed to failure. For the  
larger creature was more than  
five mere mortal men could  
subdue.

HECKLER  
Aw it's a fake! Cut out the  
baloney mister. Anybody can  
paste hair on a kid.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED: (3)

REYNOLDS  
(snapping to the  
occasion)

My friend I'm glad you said that.  
It gives us an opportunity to  
prove for all our audience, the  
genuine veracity of this amazing  
tale. Step up here to the  
platform, if you will...

HECKLER  
Who, me?

The heckler tries to decline but the remainder of the audience  
goads him into compliance with Reynolds' request.

REYNOLDS  
(calling offstage)  
Gentlemen if you would be so  
kind...

Two burly stagehands emerge and forcefully subdue Jo-Jo into a  
prone position as the heckler timidly takes to the stage.

REYNOLDS  
(to the heckler)  
Sir if you would please confirm  
for yourself that Jo-Jo is no  
fabrication. Ascertain that any  
and all of his amazing hairy mane  
is as firmly rooted as yours and  
mine.

HECKLER  
You mean, like, pull on it?

The audience laughs.

REYNOLDS  
Certainly pull on it, my friend,  
to convince yourself and your  
neighbors of Jo-Jo's  
authenticity. Don't worry, as  
you can see he is fully  
restrained.

HECKLER  
Well, all right... if you say so.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED: (4)

There is anticipatory silence as he cautiously steps over to Jo-Jo, pausing for a moment to figure what piece of hair to grasp. Finally he reaches for a tuft on Jo-Jo's forehead. He gives it a good yank, causing, Jo-Jo to let out a howl, which in turn sends the heckler scurrying back to his seat.

HECKLER

(to his neighbors)

It's real all right! Jeeminy  
Christmas!

The audience rolls with laughter. The only one not laughing is Jo-Jo.

REYNOLDS

And now, ladies and gentlemen, a  
brief demonstration of the  
beginnings of domestication of  
this amazing creature.  
Gentlemen...

The Orchestra strikes up a waltz as the stage hands remove all of Jo-Jo's restraints except for a long rope leash. The other end of it they hand to Reynolds, who picks up a small buggy whip with his other hand.

With one crack of the whip Jo-Jo slowly rises from all fours to a standing position. (applause) Another crack and he does a handstand. (applause)

Reynolds continues to lead Jo-Jo through a series of minor acrobatics, one of which involves balancing a large bone vertically on his nose. After a count of two, Jo-Jo grabs the bone and begins to gnaw on it fiercely.

Out of the corner of his eye, however, Jo-Jo spots Addie, sitting in the wings, tears streaming down her face. This causes him to break character briefly as he looks on her compassionately. A crack of the whip and a glowering glance from Reynolds snap him back into the act.

As the stage hands bring on a hoop that Reynolds soon sets aflame, another glance to the wings reveals to Jo-Jo that Addie's stool now sits empty.

DISSOLVE TO:

EXT. RUBY PALACE - NIGHT

Audience members disperse into the night as the marquee lights of the theater are dimmed.

INT. RUBY PALACE CORRIDOR - NIGHT

A robed Jo-Jo exits the bathroom with a towel. Several other PERFORMERS avoid him as he pushes past and enters the dressing room where Reynolds sits at the dressing table, a bottle at his side. Reynolds looks up as the door is closed in our faces. As the CAMERA pushes slowly in on the closed door with the number five on it, we hear Reynolds' voice raised in anger on the other side.

REYNOLDS(O.S.)

You broke character tonight!  
What goes through that fur-  
bearing head of yours?!

JO-JO(O.S.)

But I didn't mean...

REYNOLDS(O.S.)

Doesn't this act mean anything to  
you? You want to blow the whole  
enterprise? You want to cut off  
all that nice money I've been  
sending to your parents?

JO-JO(O.S.)

I'm sorry, Charlie, I just saw...

There is the SOUND of a punch and stumbling against the wall.

REYNOLDS(O.S.)

I'll teach you sorry, you  
ungrateful...

JO-JO(O.S.)

(almost sobbing)  
It won't happen again, Charlie.  
Please don't...

More sounds of slaps.

REYNOLDS(O.S.)

You bet it won't happen again.  
Here's a little reminder.

More punches and scuffling.

JO-JO(O.S.)

(hysterical)  
Don't Charlie, please...please...

FADE OUT

FADE IN

EXT. ALEXANDER RESIDENCE - DAY

Rachel knocks on the splendid Victorian front door of the Alexander home. She's in her Sunday best.

Addie answers the door.

RACHEL  
Good morning Addie. All ready?

ADDIE  
Morning, Rache. Let's go.

Addie closes the door behind her and Rachel offers her arm as they make their way down the steps to the waiting horse and buggy.

ADDIE  
No thanks. I can make it all right.

And, using her cane, she does.

RACHEL  
(smiles)  
That's my girl.

They both climb into the buggy and are on their way.

EXT. RACHEL'S BUGGY - DAY

After having driven out of the heart of town into a more wooded area, Rachel glances over at a pensive Addie.

RACHEL  
You're awfully quiet this morning.

ADDIE  
Rachel, do you think Father will go to hell because he doesn't go to church with us?

Rachel sighs, thinks a moment.

RACHEL  
I prefer to think God has his own special plan for your father. Why do you ask?

ADDIE  
In the Kingdom of Heaven, when I can see with my eyes, I want to be able to see him.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

RACHEL  
(smiles)  
I'm sure you will, Sweetheart.

ADDIE  
Do you think he's handsome?

RACHEL  
Why...yes I suppose I do.

Addie seems satisfied as they ride on in silence.

EXT. COUNTRY CHURCH - DAY

Outside the quaint little church there are many buggies and wagons parked. We hear the PREACHER speaking, even out here.

DISSOLVE TO:

INT. COUNTRY CHURCH - DAY

Inside the church we do not see the PREACHER. Rather, we concentrate on Addie as she sits listening to his sermon.

PREACHER(O.S.)  
..."and I alone am left behind to tell thee." said the servant. Yet despite all of this, my friends; the loss of his family, the destruction of his property and even when his friends turned on him, Job remained upright and righteous in the eyes of God...

DISSOLVE TO:

Later in the service the congregation is standing, singing Amazing Grace. All eyes are buried in their hymnbooks except for Addie who sings solemnly from memory:

*...I once was lost, but now am found, was blind but now I see...*

DISSOLVE TO:

EXT. COUNTRY CHURCH - DAY

The services ended, Addie and Rachel are climbing into Rachel's buggy.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

ADDIE

Why do I smell muffins?

RACHEL

I brought lunch. Would you like to go on a picnic?

Addie smiles, but not as broadly as she might.

ADDIE

You have to ask?

RACHEL

(sighs coyly)

I suppose I should know better...  
I'll drop the food off at the  
boarding house and take you on  
home...

Addie gives Rachel a playful shove. They both laugh as the horse leads the buggy on down the road into the countryside.

EXT. GRASSY MEADOW - DAY

Addie and Rachel have spread out their feast in the grass, near a grove of trees. Rachel is finishing her meal and pats her mouth with a napkin. She settles back. Gazing at the sky, she inhales contentedly.

RACHEL

What a glorious day this turned out to be!

ADDIE

Tell me Rachel...Tell me what it looks like.

RACHEL

(waxing playfully  
poetic)

Well...the clouds...are like vast pillows drifting across the sky. The trees...they're like silent sentinels, arms held forever heavenward, praising God. And the sun...it's like a warm hearth fire that all creation tries to snuggle up to.

There is a peaceful silence as both of them bask in the spring sunshine.

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ADDIE

Rachel...why haven't you ever married?

RACHEL

(caught a bit off guard)

Well...no gentleman has ever asked me.

ADDIE

None at all?

RACHEL

I don't suppose too many gentlemen find me very attractive.

ADDIE

(indignant)

What's wrong with them? You're a wonderful person.

RACHEL

Men look on outside things, Addie. God is the one who looks on our hearts.

ADDIE

Sometimes I'm glad to be blind, rather than be like that...

RACHEL

(smiles)

I'm glad you are who you are.

Rachel sighs to herself. She knows she has to get this over with.

RACHEL

Addie I have something I need to tell...

ADDIE

(interrupting)

What about Father? Did you ever think about marrying him?

RACHEL

(startled)

What? Why Addie what ever are you talking about?

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED: (2)

ADDIE

Well...if you were to marry him  
then...then you wouldn't have to  
leave us... Oh Rachel!

Addie bursts into tears and collapses in Rachel's arms,  
sobbing. It finally comes clear to Rachel.

RACHEL

Oh so that's what this is all  
about! You must've heard us  
talking yesterday. Oh  
Addie...I'm so sorry, Shhh...

Rachel herself finds it hard to keep from crying. Words are of  
little use now. All she can do is cling dearly to Addie and  
comfort her.

INT. DRESSING ROOM FIVE - DAY

There is an empty bottle of bourbon lying on the dressing  
table. Next to it a sleeping Reynolds is collapsed in the  
chair. In the corner we find a cowering Jo-Jo, dressed in  
ordinary clothes. As Reynolds' snoring gets louder, Jo-Jo  
timidly approaches him. Upon confirming that he is truly  
asleep Jo-Jo slips out the door.

INT. BASEMENT DRESSING ROOM CORRIDOR - DAY

Jo-Jo looks around. The entire Ruby Palace is nearly deserted  
save for a few PERFORMERS gossiping or readying their acts for  
the evening's performance. They pay Jo-Jo little notice. He  
heads upstairs to explore.

INT. BACKSTAGE CORRIDOR - DAY

Jo-Jo wanders, aimlessly looking around. The few people he  
meets avoid or ignore him. One out-of-the-way door comes to  
his attention and he wonders where it leads. After a glance  
around he opens it and steps through.

INT. PROP STORAGE ROOM - DAY

It's a rather dark, musty "attic" of the theater where all manner of bizarre objects and mementos have come to find a home. From *papier mache'* angels to a flower-covered chariot to Christmas decorations and old banners and posters, it's all here: reminders and tokens of glories past. Jo-Jo gazes around with amusement. Beyond the walls we hear muffled SOUNDS of a piano and voices rehearsing in the main auditorium.

A mannequin of a handsome Victorian gentleman in a tuxedo catches Jo-Jo's attention. He stares at it admiringly for a moment until he notices a nearby mirror reflecting his own gaze back at him. He grabs the mirror and turns it away. It gives out a CREAK as he does so, and suddenly Jo-Jo is startled by a voice from the shadows.

ADDIE(O.S.)

Who's there?

Jo-Jo recovers from his surprise and sets out to find the voice.

JO-JO

It's only me.

He finds Addie, curled up in the corner of a once-spectacular throne.

JO-JO

Miss Addie? What a strange dark place to hide such a pretty face.

His voice is soft and melodic.

ADDIE

("looking" up,  
puzzled)

Your voice is familiar but I...

JO-JO

I'm sorry. It's me, Jo-Jo...the dog-faced boy?

ADDIE

(a hint of a smile)

I *knew* you weren't really ferocious.

JO-JO

(embarrassed)

Charlie says that's what the people pay to see...

He notices the marks of tears on her cheeks.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

JO-JO

You've been crying... What makes you sad all the time, Miss Addie?

ADDIE

Rachel...my teacher. She's going away.

JO-JO

She must be very special to bring such tears.

ADDIE

(sniffling)

She's practically my only friend in the whole world.

He hands her a handkerchief from his pocket and takes a seat on a nearby sofa.

JO-JO

(gently "scolding")

Ah now, Miss Addie, you have more friends than you know.

ADDIE

Oh, you don't understand. Nobody understands.

JO-JO

Is that why you came in here, away from everyone?

Addie nods.

ADDIE

I used to play here when I was little. Now I come when I'm feeling sad.

JO-JO

Feeling sad...In my kingdom, of course, *that* wouldn't be allowed.

ADDIE

(coming to life)

...Your *kingdom*? You mean you really are a prince?

JO-JO

(sadly)

I was once.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED: (2)

ADDIE

What happened?

JO-JO

The cares of the world can change things, Miss Addie. Sometimes even people who see can be quite blind.

ADDIE

Yes...I suppose that's true.

JO-JO

One day soon, though, I believe I'm going home...

ADDIE

You are?! Oh I wish I could go with you...How far away is it?

JO-JO

It's not so far as you might think.

ADDIE

Tell me what it's like there.

JO-JO

(looks around)

It's...something like this place, but as big as all imagination. It's as warm as a down comforter, and as fresh as snowflakes on your tongue.

ADDIE

It sounds so wonderful I can almost see it! But...why did you ever leave?

JO-JO

(sighs)

We had some troubles. My family needed money. Charlie came along. He promised something better, a better way of life. He...he didn't tell the truth.

ADDIE

He doesn't treat you very well, does he?

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED: (3)

JO-JO  
(softly)  
...he beats me sometimes.

ADDIE  
(shocked)  
Oh! How horrid!

JO-JO  
He's all right I suppose, when  
he's not drinking.

There is a KNOCK at the door. Bert's voice is heard outside.

BERT(O.S.)  
Addie...you in there?

The door opens and Bert steps in.

BERT  
Addie...?

ADDIE  
I'm here Bert.

Bert wanders in, following the sound of her voice. He speaks to her even though he doesn't see her yet.

BERT  
Your pop told me to tell you it's  
time for sup...

Suddenly he sees her and notices who she's with, shuddering that this particular bizarre prop is alive.

ADDIE  
Bert, this is Prince Jo-Jo...  
It's okay. He won't hurt you.

BERT  
Uh...how do you do?

JO-JO  
I am well, thank you.

BERT  
Addie, I...I'm s'posed to walk  
you home.

ADDIE  
(to Jo-Jo)  
I have to go. I'll come to your  
show tonight.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED: (4)

She gets up to go with Bert. Then she turns back to Jo-Jo.

ADDIE

...Do an extra special growl just for me?

JO-JO

I'll bark every time I see you smile.

EXT. RESIDENTIAL STREET - DAY

Addie (and Ezra) live only a few doors away from the Ruby Palace, in a Queen Anne style house on a side street. Bert and Addie are strolling along with no particular hurry.

ADDIE

Bert...why do you stammer so when you're around Jo-Jo?

BERT

I dunno. He's just such a strange lookin' fella.

ADDIE

He's really gentle when you get to know him.

BERT

I just feel like...he oughta be fetching my slippers or something.

ADDIE

(suppressing a giggle.)  
Bert, be nice!

BERT

So I got one for ya Addie...The doctor tells this fellow: "that pain in your leg is caused by old age." And the man says "But Doc, my other leg is the same age and it doesn't hurt."

ADDIE

(giggles)  
Oh Bert... I don't know why Father doesn't put you in the show.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

BERT

You know what he said: I've gotta make *him* laugh first. But gee whiz I never saw such a sourpuss!

ADDIE

Oh he is not!

BERT

Oh yeah? the other day I asked him "Ezra, have you heard my last joke?" and he said "I hope so!"

Addie laughs again.

ADDIE

Bert...

BERT

(more serious)

It's good to see you smiling for a change, Kiddo. You've been moping around here like you lost your last friend.

ADDIE

(getting melancholy)

Well, my first one anyway...

BERT

Huh?

ADDIE

Rachel's leaving us, Bert.

BERT

But...I thought you two were joined at the hip.

ADDIE

She got this wonderful opportunity in Syracuse. I *have* to be happy for her...

BERT

That's the spirit. Keep that ol' chin up.

Addie's chin is hardly up. But they have arrived at the Alexander front door.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED: (2)

BERT

Uh...Here we are...Hey I got an idea. Why don't we give Rachel a big sendoff bash? Whadaya say?

ADDIE

(faking enthusiasm)

Sure. Yeah, that'd be wonderful, Bert.

BERT

Well, I'll see you later, Princess.

ADDIE

Thanks for walking me home.

BERT

Anything for you, Kiddo. Hey Miz Kump...

He waves at MRS. KUMP, the housekeeper who has opened the front door for Addie, then turns to leave as Addie enters the house.

INT. ALEXANDER DINING ROOM - DAY

Addie and Ezra silently sip their soup on opposite ends of the table in the mahogany and crystal dining room.

ADDIE

Papa?

EZRA

Yes, sweetheart.

ADDIE

You know that Jo-Jo fellow?

EZRA

(doesn't look up)

Yes.

ADDIE

I think Mr. Reynolds is cruel to him.

EZRA

What makes you say that?

ADDIE

He told me so.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

EZRA

Look, Addie. In the first place it's none of our business. And in the second place...well, if a fellow *looks* like that, no telling what his mind is doing.

ADDIE

Looks like what, Papa?

EZRA

(suddenly flustered)  
All...hairly and...Listen, sweetheart. I've known Charlie Reynolds for a lot of years. He wouldn't do anything like that.

ADDIE

But Papa...

EZRA

That'll be the end of it now.

ADDIE

But...

(reluctantly)

Yes, Papa.

INT. RUBY PALACE THEATER - NIGHT

Reynolds stands by with his buggy whip in hand as Jo-Jo goes through his routine, launching into a handstand as the MUSIC plays.

Out of the corner of his eye Jo-Jo notices Addie arriving and taking her stool in the wings. As she does so he lets out a non-ferocious BARK, more of an affectionate "yip" than anything else.

Addie recognizes that his utterance is aimed at her. A smile grows on her face. This of course precipitates more of the same kind of bark, fulfilling Jo-Jo's promise. The barking, in turn causes Addie to grin even more broadly, which leads to...more barking. Soon Addie is giggling hysterically to a constant barrage of the strange barks, bringing the performance temporarily to a yipping halt.

The audience too is amused by Jo-Jo's odd behavior and laughs abound from all quarters...except a furious Reynolds who seemingly has lost control of his charge. His futile attempts at regaining Jo-Jo's attention bring humiliating guffaws from the gallery.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

Reynolds storms around the stage, cracking his whip in vain, bringing ever more laughter...and barking... from all around. In his fury Reynolds attempts to plant himself in front of Jo-Jo to regain his attention, but, in doing so stumbles over a stage brace, dislodging a large FLAT which begins to TEETER.

Jo-Jo notices this and ceases his outcries immediately as he observes that the swaying flat is heading toward an unsuspecting Addie. Panicked, Jo-Jo cries out:

JO-JO  
Addie, look out!

He dives for her, grabbing her and pulling her out of the way as the flat falls to the stage with a CRASH.

The music abruptly halts as many in the audience rise to their feet with a gasp. A murmur goes up from the crowd.

CUSTOMER #1  
Did you hear that? He spoke  
English! He ain't no dog-boy.

CUSTOMER #2  
It's a fake! I knew it. FAKE!

In the wing opposite the mishap, a horrified Ezra growls to his employees.

EZRA  
Bring down the main curtain!  
Now!...and get Miss Linnette back  
up here.

Bert hurriedly complies with the first request, pulling on the rope for all he's worth as another STAGE-HAND scampers off to find the fan dancer. Once the curtain has closed Ezra rushes out into the footlights.

EZRA  
Ladies and gentlemen! Please  
don't be alarmed. Everyone is  
all right and damage is...uh  
minimal. We apologize for the  
slight mishap, but please stay  
with us as we'd like to continue  
this evening's performance with  
an encore performance from Miss  
Joanna Linnette. Maestro if you  
please...

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED: (2)

The band members quickly shuffle their sheet music and strike up Miss Linnette's cue just as she appears in the wings, still fastening her last button. On cue she struts into the footlights and the low-brow audience settles back into their seats in perfect accordance with Ezra's quick-thinking plan.

INT. BACKSTAGE - NIGHT

A group of performers is gathered around Addie as the stage hands restore the scenery to order and set up for the next act. Ezra rushes over toward his daughter.

EZRA

Sweetheart are you okay?

ADDIE

I'm fine Papa.

Seeing that she is indeed unscathed, Ezra rushes over to intercept Reynolds who is re-assembling his props as Jo-Jo stands timidly by.

EZRA

(furious)

Charlie that's it. I'm cutting the run short. I can't have...

REYNOLDS

Don't be foolish Ezra! When word of this gets around the crowds'll be twice as big. Look, I'm dreadfully sorry about all this, but how can you pass up such an opportunity? Everyone will want to see if the "wild man" is going to go berserk again.

EZRA

Him or you?

REYNOLDS

(lowering his voice)

Look, Ezra. It won't happen again.

He glares at Jo-Jo.

REYNOLDS (CONT'D)

...He just got a little carried away is all. What do you say?

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

Ezra runs his hand through his hair as he contemplates the situation. Unfortunately Reynolds is right. The crowds *will* get bigger.

EZRA

All right. One more performance.  
But tomorrow night is it.

Ezra walks away as Reynolds calls after him.

REYNOLDS

Spoken like a true Solomon, Ezra  
my boy!

Reynolds' cheerful expression recedes as Ezra departs.

CUT TO:

INT. DRESSING ROOM FIVE - NIGHT

With a crash, Jo-Jo is shoved through the door and across the room, landing in a pile of laundry. Reynolds stands over him in the doorway.

REYNOLDS

(angrily)

Stay in there till I get back.

He slams the door and stomps up the stairs as Jo-Jo collapses, whimpering.

INT. HALLWAY OUTSIDE DRESSING ROOM - NIGHT

As Reynolds disappears up the stairs, Addie steps out from the shadows under the staircase. She cautiously approaches the recently-slammed door and knocks.

JO-JO (O.S.)

Come in.

Slowly she does so.

INT. DRESSING ROOM - NIGHT

ADDIE

Jo-Jo?

JO-JO

(sniffling)

Miss Addie!

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

ADDIE

I...I just wanted to say thank  
you...for saving me.

She enters the dimly lit room and gently closes the door behind  
her.

JO-JO

(softly)

I suppose I should say the same  
to you.

ADDIE

But I haven't done anything...

JO-JO

Yesterday *you* were crying. It  
was because you were feeling  
terribly terribly alone, and you  
felt you were the only one who  
would ever know what you were  
feeling, because you knew that  
you were different from all of  
them. Isn't that right?

ADDIE

Yes...yes that's right! How did  
you know?

JO-JO

Because that's the same feeling  
that has always been inside *me*,  
...until now. You've freed me,  
Miss Addie! Your...blindness is  
a special gift that lets you see  
me more clearly than any other  
person ever has. You have no  
idea what it means to...

ADDIE

...to have someone else who  
understands? Yes, I think I'm  
beginning to have some idea.

Addie smiles and steps toward him. He takes her outstretched  
hand and guides her to a seat next to him.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED: (2)

JO-JO

But that was what got me into trouble tonight...during the show. I couldn't get over how...free your smile made my heart feel and I...I just couldn't stop. It was like I would do almost anything to see your smile again.

ADDIE

(embarrassed)

I...wish I could see yours.

Jo-Jo doesn't say a word. Instead he slowly takes her hand and lifts it to his face. The texture of his ample hairiness is a bit of a surprise to Addie, but not unpleasant.

ADDIE

(smiles nervously)

...soft.

She gently strokes his face. Jo-Jo's eyes well with tears of joy at the gentle touch of another human being.

He takes her hand and kisses it.

She leans nearer to give him a kiss. Just as their lips are about to meet, however, a loud KNOCK comes on the unlatched door, which swings open as Ezra steps through.

EZRA

Charlie, I just wanted to...

He sees the two huddled closely and a look of horror comes over his face.

EZRA (CONT'D)

Get away from her you brute!

Ezra strides over and shoves Jo-Jo away.

ADDIE

But Papa! He's not...

EZRA

Addie leave here this instant!  
Go upstairs to my office and wait.

ADDIE

(sobbing)

But Papa...

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED: (3)

EZRA

I said go...NOW!

Ezra is in no mood to be argued with and Addie tearfully rises to depart.

JO-JO

Please sir, you don't understand.

EZRA

I understand all too well.  
Where's Charlie?

REYNOLDS (O.S.)

(half sloshed)

Do I hear someone mention my  
name?

Reynolds enters from the corridor, a partially full bottle in one hand. He almost stumbles over Addie as she exits. Ezra is repulsed by his breath.

EZRA

(angry, to Reynolds)

I came down here to reconsider  
and offer to let you stay a few  
more days, Charlie. Looks like I  
came at just the right time.  
Your...your ...whatever-he-is had  
his paws all over Addie!

REYNOLDS

("shocked")

Ezra, you must be joking. Jo-Jo  
would never...

EZRA

Look, Charlie, I've got ad space  
booked so unfortunately you're  
still on tomorrow night. After  
that you'd better be on the first  
train. And in the mean time keep  
that...creature locked up! I  
don't want him ...or you anywhere  
near my daughter again.

Ezra storms out, slamming the door behind him.

FADE OUT

FADE IN

INT. ALEXANDER HOUSE STUDY - DAY

It is the next day. Addie has a large braille book spread out on the desk and is avidly poring over it. Rachel enters the room through the open doors, carrying two more of the imposing braille books. She knocks politely on the door frame.

RACHEL

Good morning, Addie! I got some new books for today's lessons...What're you reading?

ADDIE

The story of how Jesus healed a blind beggar man. Afterwards he told the man not to tell anyone! Why do you suppose he did that, Rache?

Rachel puts the large books down.

RACHEL

Well...I think that it's because our Lord knew that if word got around that he was performing miracles, the Pharisees might seize him before his ministry was complete.

ADDIE

So God had a plan all worked out for him?

RACHEL

Uh huh. For all of us.

ADDIE

Does He have a plan for Jo-Jo?

RACHEL

I'm sure He does...but who's Jo-Jo?

ADDIE

A boy in the show. He has some terrible problems, yet he's so kind... Rachel, why does God let bad things happen to people like him?

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

RACHEL

(sighs)

A lot of folks ask that question, Addie. They think misfortune is one of the most confusing things about life. But I think it helps us to understand our lives better.

ADDIE

(skeptical)

How?

RACHEL

Well, if there were no such thing as sadness, how would you know what happiness was? Or beauty...how could we appreciate something beautiful if nothing was plain or distasteful?

ADDIE

It still doesn't seem fair.

Rachel opens a satchel of papers and begins shuffling books as she replies:

RACHEL

No, I suppose not. Life sometimes isn't fair...like right now when we have to begin our lessons. We've got a lot to cover in the few sessions we have left, you and I. Did you finish your arithmetic?

ADDIE

Yes'm.

Addie feels her way to a shelf where she takes her math book and removes her braille assignment sheet. As she hands it to Rachel, Ezra appears at the open door with a brochure in his hand.

EZRA

Excuse me ladies but I have some good news. Addie, how would you like to attend a school with other children just like yourself?

ADDIE

You mean other blind children?

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED: (2)

EZRA

That's right, but they say the emphasis is on education, not blindness.

RACHEL

It sounds wonderful, Ezra!

Ezra hands the brochure and letter to Rachel.

ADDIE

What's it called?

EZRA

It's the Mary Helen Mattison Academy. It's down in Gordon county.

RACHEL

(less enthused)

Ezra it's a boarding school.

EZRA

...and Addie'll be with lots of other boys and girls her own age. It'll do her a world of good.

Suddenly it doesn't seem so wonderful to Addie.

ADDIE

You're sending me away? You mean I couldn't live here with you anymore, Papa?

EZRA

Oh it's not as bad as all that Sweetheart. We'll still see each other...at least once a quarter.

Addie is overwhelmed with emotion.

ADDIE

(almost hysterical)

Everyone just wants to be *rid* of me! Even God must hate me!

She rushes out of the room and up the stairs, headed for her bedroom. Ezra calls after her.

EZRA

Wait, Sweetheart. I didn't mean...

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED: (3)

Exasperated, he lets her go, turning to Rachel.

EZRA(CONT'D)

It'd be the best thing for her.  
I should think she'd be grateful.  
What do I do, Rachel?

Rachel sympathetically takes his hand.

RACHEL

Just keep loving her with all  
your might, Ezra. If you do  
that, whatever you do will be  
what's right.

EXT. RUBY PALACE MARQUEE - DAY

The sign out front proclaims "JO-JO THE DOG FACED BOY". A pair of hands with a hammer tacks a smaller sign onto the larger one: "FINAL PERFORMANCE!"

INT. PROP STORAGE ROOM - DAY

Addie has sobbed herself to sleep in her usual spot on the shabby throne, tightly clutching a stuffed turtle in the silent, musty attic.

A shadow slowly grows over the sleeping Addie as a figure approaches.

It is Bert. He gently tries to rouse her.

BERT

Psst. Hey Addie. Wake up. I've  
got somethin' for ya.

ADDIE

(coming around)  
Mmm...Bert? What is it?

He hands her a cluster of peppermint sticks, wrapped in paper and tied with a ribbon.

BERT

It's from that Jo-Jo fella. He  
asked me to give it to you.

ADDIE

Peppermint? How sweet!

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

BERT

Looks like there's a note. You want me to read it to ya?

ADDIE

(sitting up)

Oh yes, please!

Bert takes the piece of paper and reads:

BERT

"My dearest Miss Addie; Some day, somewhere I pray these will be the only 'sticks' I'll ever have to fetch and the only 'canes' you'll ever need. Thank you for your friendship. I'll never forget you. Love, Jo-Jo. P.S. We shall be leaving on the late train to-night."

ADDIE

Oh Bert he writes as if he's already left and I didn't even get to tell him goodbye. I *have* to tell him goodbye!

BERT

Well wait a minute there Princess. Your Papa gave strict orders. You're not even s'posed to catch his show tonight.

ADDIE

Oh what does Papa care...Hey wait. I've got an idea. But I'll need your help, Bert. Can I count on you?

BERT

I...I dunno Princess. Your Pa's my boss.

ADDIE

He'll never even know. And it would mean so much to me... and Jo-Jo...Bert?

BERT

(starting to cave in)

What's your plan, Princess?

She hugs him and smiles.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED: (2)

ADDIE

Well, they're leaving on the late train. That's the ten-o'clock, right?

BERT

Yeah.

ADDIE

And the show gets over when, nine thirty or so?

BERT

That's about right. A little later last couple of shows.

ADDIE

Well, Papa usually stays in his office till about midnight. Even later sometimes.

BERT

What are you gettin' at?

ADDIE

Don't you see, Bert? After the show lets out you'd have just enough time to hitch up your wagon and take me to the train station so I could say goodbye to Jo-Jo. We could be back here, I could be in bed and you'd be safe before Papa ever left his office.

BERT

What about your housekeeper, Mrs. Kump?

ADDIE

It's her night off.

Bert rubs his eyebrows.

BERT

Hmm...it *sounds* like it oughta work.

ADDIE

Then you'll do it for me, Bert?

BERT

Well, seein' as it's you...

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED: (3)

ADDIE

(hugs him tight)

Oh Bert you're wonderful! You'll never know how much this means to me.

BERT

I'll get Lulu hitched up during the show so we'll be all set when the show lets out. I'll come knockin' at your door about nine forty-five. If you're ready to go we oughta just make it.

ADDIE

Don't worry. I'll be ready.

INT. RUBY PALACE THEATER - NIGHT

On stage an IRISH TENOR is crooning out a heartfelt version of Beautiful Dreamer as Bert looks on from the wings.

The song ends to APPLAUSE and Bert steps out to change the card, announcing "The Belgian Bell Choir". As soon as the curtain closes on the tenor a dozen *lederhosen and dirndl*-clad MEN & WOMEN carrying various sized hand bells take their positions center stage.

As the curtain opens and the bell choir starts clanging out a melody, Bert immediately rushes off and out the rear stage door.

INT. ALEXANDER HOME ENTRYWAY - NIGHT.

Addie sits in the near-darkness on a *settee* near the big Grandfather clock, the ticking of which is the only sound to be heard. She is clutching her stuffed turtle, listening intently, keeping a vigil for Bert's eventual knock at the front door.

Sure enough the clock strikes...eight times.

INT. STABLE ADJOINING THE RUBY PALACE - NIGHT

Bert straps a harness on the horse and preps her.

BERT

Here ya go Lulu old gal. We're doin' a favor for the princess tonight. Just make sure you don't tell Ezra, huh? That's a girl.

He gets her hitched to the wagon, then secures her reins to a nearby post and heads back to the theater.

BERT

I'll be back after the show old girl. Remember, not a word to Ezra.

INT. RUBY PALACE THEATER - NIGHT

Reynolds and Jo-Jo are finishing up their act for the evening: Jo-Jo balances a ball on his nose as he steps through a hoop of fire.

The satisfied look on Ezra's face as he looks on from the wings bears witness that the performance has gone without a hitch.

With a fanfare from the orchestra the curtain closes to APPLAUSE from the audience.

INT. ALEXANDER HOME ENTRYWAY - NIGHT

Addie continues her vigil. The clock now reads 9:18. Her eyelids are getting heavy, however.

INT. RUBY PALACE THEATER - NIGHT

A BARBERSHOP QUARTET is belting out the refrain of Good Night Ladies as four DANCING GIRLS perform around them.

With a final rousing chord, the group strikes an appropriate tableau for this, the closing of the evening's performance.

The curtain is brought down and immediately back up for curtain calls. The orchestra splashes out play-off music as each of the performers rushes on an off for a quick bow.

Bert is just gathering up his showcards, about to head out to pick up Addie, when he is approached by Ezra. Reynolds and a hooded Jo-Jo stand nearby, packed and ready for travel.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

EZRA

Bert I've got a job for you.

BERT

Uh...sure, whatcha got, Boss?

EZRA

I want you to hitch up the wagon and make sure Mr. Reynolds and his companion get to the station in time for the ten-o'clock train. Can I trust you with that?

BERT

(in torment)

Uh, look Ezra I...

EZRA

(firmly)

Is there a problem?

BERT

Er, no Ezra. No problem. I'll get 'em there.

EZRA

They're going to need help with their luggage so I suggest you get moving.

BERT

Yes sir.

Ezra heads off to his office, leaving behind a frustrated and perplexed Bert.

INT. ALEXANDER HOME ENTRYWAY - NIGHT

Addie is now sound asleep, lulled into slumber from the gentle TICKING of the great clock.

But the clock now erupts to life, belting out its CHIMES. Addie is jolted back to wakefulness and sits up with a start, counting. The last of the clock's ten chimes is accompanied by the distant mournful blast of a TRAIN WHISTLE.

ADDIE

(heartbroken)

Bert...The train! Oh no! Jo-Jo!

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

It's the last straw. Addie quickly puts on her coat, grabs her cane and rushes out the front door.

EXT. STREET - NIGHT

Tears streaming from her eyes, Addie moves quickly down the street toward the edge of town.

ADDIE  
(sobbing)  
Jo-Jo...

Though illuminated by gas streetlights, the thoroughfare is still rather dimly lit. As a result when she passes through a shadow she is nearly run down by a rapidly moving horse and wagon: Bert and Lulu speed past her, never knowing of the near-collision.

EXT. STREET IN FRONT OF ALEXANDER HOME - NIGHT

Bert pulls up in the wagon, jumps down and rushes to the front door.

BERT  
(calling)  
Addie...I'm sorry...

He knocks on the unlatched door which pushes open before him.

INT. ALEXANDER HOME ENTRYWAY - NIGHT

Bert enters the darkened house.

BERT  
Addie?...Your pa threw a wrench  
in the works...ADDIE?

He runs up the stairs to her room...no one there. He rushes back down and checks the umbrella stand.

BERT  
No cane...she must've...Oh my  
goodness!

Panicked, he dashes back outside.

EXT. STREET IN FRONT OF ALEXANDER HOME - NIGHT

Realizing what has happened, Bert jumps back in the wagon and sets off to look for Addie.

EXT. ROAD NEAR THE EDGE OF TOWN - NIGHT

The lights of the town are mostly behind Addie now as she steadfastly continues her lone quest to find Jo-Jo.

The tears on her cheeks are dry now, but the WIND is kicking up and flickers of LIGHTNING are beginning to appear on the horizon.

EXT. ANOTHER PART OF THE ROAD - NIGHT

Bert mumbles to himself between calls for Addie. He holds up a lantern, peering off into the dense darkness of the road ahead of him as streetlights are left behind.

BERT

ADDIE?!...boy is Ezra gonna burn  
my tail when he...ADDIE!... finds  
out about...

Suddenly he spots a dim figure off in the far reaches of the lantern's light.

BERT

Wait a minute...giddap Lulu.

THUNDER begins to rumble across the sky, and as Bert pulls up beside the dark figure, a flash of LIGHTNING reveals that it is indeed Addie.

BERT

Addie! Hey listen Kiddo; I'm  
awful sorry about the train thing  
but your pa kinda...Addie what're  
you doin' way out here?

ADDIE

Leave me alone Bert. I'm going  
to find Jo-Jo.

BERT

In the dark?

She stops briefly.

ADDIE

It doesn't make any difference to  
me, Bert.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

She continues down the road. Bert follows along side.

BERT  
I s'pose it doesn't...But, but  
there's a storm blowin' up here.  
You could catch your death.  
What's your pa gonna say?

ADDIE  
(straight ahead)  
He doesn't care. He wants to be  
rid of me anyway.

BERT  
Addie, Addie come on now. How  
you ever gonna find this Jo-Jo  
fella anyway? His train's miles  
from here by now.

ADDIE  
I'll find him.

She doesn't break her stride.

BERT  
(flustered)  
Addie, you're...you're bein'  
silly now. Come on and get in the  
wagon and I'll take you on home  
to your pa.

She ignores him.

BERT  
Addie!...ADDIE!

He's getting nowhere. Bert pulls up on the reins and stops the wagon. He climbs down and approaches Addie on foot.

He takes her hand, pulling her toward the wagon.

BERT  
Come on now. I can't let you...

ADDIE  
(starting to cry)  
Leave me alone, Bert! I know  
what I'm doing.

She pulls her hand away and keeps walking. THUNDER echoes across the sky.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED: (2)

Bert, even more determined, grabs her bodily and starts to move her toward the wagon. She struggles.

ADDIE

Bert don't!

BERT

I'm sorry, Kiddo, but I can't let you do this to yourself.

He struggles with the sobbing girl until she is finally forced to use her cane as a weapon: She smashes Bert over the head with it, breaking the cane in two in the process.

The blow stuns Bert long enough for Addie to break and run. She heads into the thick trees that line the road, running with all her might.

But with her cane of no use, Addie stumbles frequently, frustrating her and bringing further sobs. She is near hysteria.

Bert runs into the woods after her, but she has a solid lead on him and, as the deep darkness is broken only by the ever-increasing FLASHES of lightning, his progress is slow too.

BERT

Addie! Please...ADDIE!

Addie continues to run, reason far behind her now.

ADDIE

(sobbing, to herself)

Jo-Jo!...

Suddenly she trips...but there is no ground to meet her! Addie plunges over an embankment, tumbling helplessly into the blackness. A lightning bolt FLASHES, giving us a last glimpse of her as she flails, screaming. And then there is only darkness. The THUNDER echoes into silence.

FADE OUT

<A>

FADE IN

EXT. MAGICAL ENVIRONMENT - DAY

Addie awakens slowly as the sun warms her face. Its brilliance hurts her eyes...

Her eyes?!

Yes! She opens them to discover that the miracle of sight has come upon her.

ADDIE  
 (gasps under her  
 breath)  
 I...I can see!

She basks in the wonder of it, examining her hands, her feet, and the world around her.

But that world is like no environment we've ever seen before. It's solid enough. But everything is strange in color. Rocks, grass, trees, and a gently flowing stream are recognizable to us, but their forms are quirky with unexpected textures and simplified shapes.

The tops of the trees are somewhat truncated, as if they couldn't exist past as far as you could reach. But their limbs reach steadfastly skyward like human hands.

The sky is full of pillows and the sun is not so much a sphere as a strangely undulating fire in the heavens.

As Addie pulls herself upright, a dozen little flickering lights (the IDGITS) start swarming about her merrily. They are too small to have faces, but Addie can hear them whisper to each other.

IDGIT #1  
 (excited)  
 Is it her?

IDGIT #2  
 Yes! Yes it is!

Addie is amazed and delighted by these frenetic creatures.

ADDIE  
 Who are you?

IDGIT #1  
 Quickly, we must tell the others.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

They chatter among themselves, circle Addie briefly, then quickly disappear over the next hill. Addie calls after them.

ADDIE

Wait! What others? Where are you going?

But they are gone. Puzzled, Addie begins to explore her environment further.

She wanders over to the nearby stream and gazes in wonder at her own reflection as it swirls and distorts around the stones.

To her surprise, however, one of the stones in the stream sits up to reveal that it's not a stone at all but a friendly-looking TURTLE.

TURTLE

Welcome, your Highness.

Addie is startled to realize that he is not only speaking, but addressing her.

ADDIE

"Your Highness"!? Why do you call me that? What happened to Bert?

TURTLE

I don't know, your Highness. Uh...he's *real* isn't he?

ADDIE

What do you mean real? Of course he's real!

TURTLE

(shaking his head)  
Well I don't suppose we'll be seeing him, then. But then, you were running away from him anyway...

ADDIE

You mean you're not real?

TURTLE

(almost boastful)  
Nope. None of us are real here.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED: (2)

ADDIE

Nonsense. You're as real as I am...*I'm* real at least...aren't I?

TURTLE

(rolls his eyes)

Well yes, but you've got a right...after all you're the Princess, or...will be.

ADDIE

Princess? Princess!!

TURTLE

Yes'm. It has been decreed that as soon as you arrive you're to be taken to Prince Jo-Jo and be crowned Princess...

ADDIE

(gasps, interrupting)

Jo-Jo! You mean *this*...is his Kingdom?!

TURTLE

Why yes, your Highness.

ADDIE

Where is he? Oh I can't wait to see him!

TURTLE

The palace is a long way from here, your Highness.

ADDIE

Will you take me to him?

She plucks him out of the water with both hands and sits him on dry land. He bows.

TURTLE

(uneasy)

I am your loyal subject, your Highness, but...

She steps back and looks at him with a grin.

ADDIE

I never had a turtle for a subject before.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED: (3)

TURTLE  
(insecure)  
Do...do you want to *change* the  
subject?

ADDIE  
Oh no...Who'd want to change a  
fine handsome turtle like  
yourself?

The turtle beams with pride.

ADDIE  
But if we're going to be  
traveling together I'd like to at  
least know who you are. What's  
your name, mister turtle?

TURTLE  
Don't have one yet. What would  
you like it to be?

ADDIE  
Well...I always wanted a brother  
to play with. How about if I  
just call you..."Brother"?

BROTHER  
Brother it is, your Highness.

ADDIE  
You can call me Addie.

BROTHER  
Sure thing, Addie.

ADDIE  
Well now, Brother, which way to  
Prince Jo-Jo's palace?

BROTHER  
(squirms)  
I'm afraid I...um...don't  
really...

Suddenly a myriad of the little glowing Idgits appears again,  
swirling around Addie, making sounds that resemble melodic  
giggling.

BROTHER  
The Idgits! I think they want to  
tell us something.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED: (4)

The Idgits fly over and attach themselves to the face of a large nearby rock. Their light fades away as they become mere bumps on the surface.

Addie recognizes the bumps' pattern.

ADDIE  
Braille! A message in Braille...

BROTHER  
What does it say?

ADDIE  
(staring at it)  
I...I can't read it with my eyes.

BROTHER  
Use your hands then. Call out  
the letters and I'll write them  
here.

Brother picks up a white rock to use as chalk. Addie closes her eyes and steps over to run her hands over the bumps.

ADDIE  
D...O...N...O...T...T...O...  
U...C...H.

BROTHER  
"Do not touch"?

Addie opens her eyes and breaks out laughing at the absurdity of a Braille sign with such a message. The Idgits leap off the rock and swirl around her giggling.

Brother is a bit indignant at the way the Princess is being treated.

BROTHER  
(scolding the Idgits)  
Very funny. I thought you were  
going to help. Idgits!

ADDIE  
(trying to be stern)  
Yes, which way to the palace?

Immediately the Idgits snap back to the rock, this time forming an arrow pointing to Addie's right. She nods her approval to them with a smile.

ADDIE  
That's much better, thank you.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED: (5)

They immediately set out traveling over the landscape. Addie merrily takes in the many wonders of this strange environment.

EXT. OBJECT GARDEN - DAY

Addie and Brother pass through a garden where all the plants and trees bear fruit that consists of household objects. Addie takes note.

ADDIE  
 (to herself)  
 I always wondered where things  
 like these came from.

She admires several shrubs that contain nothing but little opened umbrellas.

ADDIE  
 Brother, what do you call these?

BROTHER  
 That's a stand of umbrella  
 trees...and over there is a tree  
 of umbrella stands...

He points and sure enough, that's just what Addie sees.

ADDIE  
 ...And just look at this.

She plucks the fruit of another small tree. It resembles a jewelry case.

ADDIE  
 What do you suppose is in these  
 boxes?

She cracks open the lid and peals of silly LAUGHTER pour out of the box. Addie can't help but chuckle at the sound.

BROTHER  
 It's just a case of the  
 giggles...Come on now. The  
 Prince is expecting us.

He turns and heads on past the garden to continue their journey. Addie smiles with amusement, shakes her head and follows.

EXT. FIELD OF TOYS - DAY

As Addie and Brother continue their journey they find themselves in an area where much of the landscape has small toys lying about.

Curious, Addie stoops to pick up a small rubber ball.

ADDIE

What a wonderful place this is!

To Addie's surprise a VOICE comes from the ball in her hand.

VOICE

It's all for you, your Highness.

Suddenly the ball leaps from Addie's hand and flies to a point in space not far away, hovering there.

ADDIE

(startled)

Oh!

No sooner has the ball found its place in the air than many more of the nearby small objects jump up to join with it, until finally the mass of colorful blocks, spinning tops, jacks, and marbles comes to form a shape that resembles a man.

Addie watches in amazement. Brother cowers behind Addie, his head half-buried into his shell.

Once completed, the MAN OF TOYS bows to Addie.

TOYBOX

Welcome, your Highness.

Addie can hardly believe what she is seeing.

ADDIE

Who...who are you?

TOYBOX

You can call me Toybox. Won't you stay and play awhile, your Highness?

He juggles three brightly-colored balls as he speaks.

ADDIE

I'm afraid I'm not your Highness yet. We're on our way to Prince Jo-Jo's palace.

Brother steps out from behind Addie.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

BROTHER

She's to be crowned by the Prince  
himself, Toybox, so don't you try  
to hold us up now...

ADDIE

Yes I'd love to stay but  
I...what is that?

A strange passing procession has caught Addie's attention: A line of half a dozen robed FIGURES, all about Addie's size, but they hover two feet off the ground. The lead figure holds a beautiful and brilliant BEACON in outstretched hands. All their faces are hidden in their hooded robes and they pass by fairly quickly, taking no notice of Addie and company.

BROTHER

Those are the Keepers...personal  
assistants to the Prince.

ADDIE

What's that he's carrying, the  
one in front?

BROTHER

That's the royal flame; it's...

ADDIE

They must be going to see the  
Prince...come on, we can follow  
them!

Addie starts to run after them with Brother following as best he can.

Addie stops and looks back at a motionless Toybox.

ADDIE

You coming, Toybox?

TOYBOX

(brightening)

Am I!

Elated that he too has been invited on the adventure, Toybox elongates his legs so he can take longer strides to catch up with Addie and Brother.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED: (2)

Unseen by any of the three, however, is the fact that, not long after they leave the spot where they met Toybox, a violent WIND howls through the area and the landscape fragments into BLACK DUST that dissolves into black sludge as it settles, finally disappearing altogether into:

DARKNESS

<A>

FADE IN

INT. HOSPITAL ROOM - DAY

Addie's real body lies unconscious in the starkness of a hospital room. There is a rather substantial bandage on one side of her head, with a few other minor scratches and abrasions on her face. She is alone except for Ezra, who sits sullenly at her bedside.

There is a gentle knock at the door. Ezra looks up to see that it is Rachel.

RACHEL

Hello Ezra. I came as soon as I heard.

EZRA

Rachel, come in please.

He gets up to offer his seat. She steps over to Addie's side.

RACHEL

How is she?

EZRA

No change, really. It's maddening. She just doesn't respond! The doctors say she may never...

Ezra gets choked up and cannot finish his sentence. He turns to the window so that Rachel doesn't see his tears.

EZRA

I just feel like this would never have happened if I hadn't...

RACHEL

Oh nonsense. There's no point in assigning blame or worrying about what might have been.

Rachel steps back over to Addie's bedside and gently strokes her forehead as Ezra looks on.

RACHEL

Poor troubled angel. She's just a sleeping beauty, Ezra. She'll wake soon.

Softly, Rachel begins to hum a familiar song to Addie: Beautiful Dreamer. The emotion of hearing one of Addie's favorite melodies is almost more than Ezra can take. He has to turn to the wall as he weeps.

EXT. JO-JO'S KINGDOM - DAY

Addie and her new-found friends continue their pursuit of the Keepers, oblivious to either the destruction that has occurred behind them or the somber hospital room.

ADDIE

Wait please! We want to come too!

But soon the Keepers are far beyond what Addie can hope to catch up with. She finally has to stop and catch her breath as she watches the Keepers disappear over the horizon.

Addie sits down to rest on a nearby brightly-colored sphere--in fact the entire landscape seems to be composed of various-sized spheres now.

TOYBOX

Looks like we can have a ball here! Are you ready to play now, your Highness?

Toybox juggles another fancy pattern as he speaks. Just as Addie is about to reply, however, she notices something: the distant strains of many instruments playing Beautiful Dreamer.

ADDIE

Listen!...What's that?

Toybox stretches himself to be much taller in order to see over the hill. He calls down to Addie.

TOYBOX

It's the music of the spheres! They're having a festival just over this hill.

Addie notices colorful "music" flowing like honey into the sky from a point just beyond the steep hill composed of spheres.

Toybox shrinks back down to normal height.

TOYBOX

If the music can play, so can we! What're we waiting for?

He leaps to the top of a good-sized spherical "boulder", holding out a hand for Addie to grab.

ADDIE

(looking up at the steep hill)  
But...it's such a long climb.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

She glances at Brother who, to her astonishment and his, begins rising into the air like a balloon.

TOYBOX

Don't worry about the hill.  
Gravity's optional when there's  
music around. Come on!

Toybox takes Addie's hand and they both float skyward as well. For Addie it's exhilarating. She can scarcely believe what's happening. As they ascend, Addie and Toybox pass by Brother who is holding back.

BROTHER

But Addie, Prince Jo-Jo is...  
Hey, wait for me!

Addie takes Brother's hand and pulls him along into the sky.

ADDIE

Don't you see, Brother? We can  
get there faster this way.

Toybox's form metamorphoses as all his bits and pieces rearrange to form "wings", which he flaps to keep up with the other two.

As they rise above the ridge, a magnificent MUSICAL VALLEY is revealed, with huge pieces of instruments jutting out of the landscape. A gigantic Nickelodeon is the center of it all, from which flows a steady stream of rainbow-like color along with dozens of bright spheres that float like bubbles into the sky.

Addie, Brother, and Toybox joyously explore the valley: swimming through the air, splashing through the colorful harmonies, and playfully accompanying the melody on the oversized instruments.

Dozens of the SPHERICAL INHABITANTS of the valley join them in their revelry.

Soon, however, the music comes to a close, the colorful river of harmony streaming into the sky ceases, and our heroes drift back to the ground. Toybox transposes back into his humanoid form.

TOYBOX

Aww...we were just starting to  
have some fun.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED: (2)

BROTHER

And we haven't gotten any closer  
to the Palace...

ADDIE

Oh but it was wonderful!

Luckily a new melody begins almost immediately. It is an ornate and barely recognizable version of Amazing Grace. The threesome are elated at the resumption of freedom from the confines of gravity.

ADDIE

(looking puzzled)

I...I know that I *know* this song.

BROTHER

Oh; what is it then?

ADDIE

Somehow I...just can't seem to  
remember the words.

TOYBOX

Aw who cares? You're having fun  
aren't you?

BROTHER

I'm sure they'll come to you.  
Try humming. Maybe the music  
will lead you to the words.

Addie notes the musical river of color and its accompanying spheres flowing overhead. It is now flowing in a single direction, heading over the horizon.

ADDIE

Maybe it can! It's flowing the  
same way we were going anyway.  
Let's follow it.

With that the three companions leave the LAND OF MUSIC behind and swim through the air, soaring with the RIVER OF HARMONY toward its destination beyond the horizon.

On their journey, they pass through clouds, (all of which resemble PILLOWS) over several types of landscape until the ground far below them begins to look very much like...no *exactly* like a down QUILT.

ADDIE

(to Brother, pointing)

What do you call that?

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED: (3)

BROTHER  
 (whispering)  
 Shhh...The sooner we're passed it  
 the better...It's called Bedlam.

ADDIE  
 (whispering)  
 Bedlam?

TOYBOX  
 (shouting)  
 The land of PILLOW FIGHTS!

Toybox grabs a "cloud" and whacks Brother with it, sending him tumbling end over end into another "cloudbank" of pillows. Addie giggles along with Toybox who is laughing so hard he doesn't even notice that a pillow-wielding Brother is barreling back at him at high speed.

Brother impacts Toybox, shattering him into his respective pieces. Brother discards his pillow and turns to Addie.

BROTHER  
*That* ought to teach him. Toybox  
 simply has to learn that  
 aggression just leads to more  
 aggression...YAAH!

Brother notices that the pieces of Toybox have quickly re-assembled to form a multi-spoked "pillow fight machine" with half a dozen pillows whirling around its rim, headed straight for him.

Brother begins running (which in a weightless condition is rather awkward). A bemused Addie looks on as they chase each other around her.

BROTHER  
 Addie! Your Highness...heelp!

Suddenly, though, Addie notices something in the distance.

ADDIE  
 Brother, Toybox, look!

She points and they cease their conflict to discover that the river of Harmony is now flowing downward (them with it) and its end is in sight.

EXT. LAND OF SWEETS - DAY

The threesome descend to discover that the musical river is condensing and coalescing to form delicious-looking, if somewhat oddly-colored FOODSTUFFS, which are so large as to re-configure the landscape as the descending river sweeps over it: Meringue pies loom as hills; huge pastries of all sorts dot the horizon; tree-sized candy-canes are all around, with countless cookies and gumdrops of all sizes and colors scattered over the ground.

ADDIE

Oh how wonderful! And just in time, too; I'm dreadfully hungry.

TOYBOX

Me too!

Toybox tosses some bits of hard candy into his "mouth".

BROTHER

(to Toybox)

How can you be hungry? You don't even have a stomach.

Sure enough the candies just bounce around off the bits and pieces that comprise his mid-section, finally dropping to the ground.

TOYBOX

(stopped in his tracks)

Oh yeah...

Addie pulls off a chunk of a nearby cupcake and begins to nibble. She offers a piece to Brother.

ADDIE

How about you, Brother? Wouldn't you like some?

BROTHER

No thank you. I'm just a bit thirsty.

TOYBOX

There's a soda fountain over there...

And so there is: a great purple bubbling one. Brother steps over to it.

BROTHER

(guiltily)

Just a quick bit of refreshment before we move on...

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

He sips from the pool of sparkling soda. Addie, meanwhile sits down at the base of a large candy-cane.

ADDIE  
(stifling a yawn)  
Couldn't we rest just a little while? It's so peaceful here.

BROTHER  
But Addie, we have to...

Too late, her eyes are already closed. Brother looks at Toybox.

TOYBOX  
(shrugs)  
She's the boss.

Toybox too settles in under a large lollipop, leaving only a frustrated Brother standing by. Shaking his head, Brother throws up his hands.

FADE OUT

FADE IN

INT. HOSPITAL ROOM - NIGHT

Ezra is sound asleep in the chair by Addie's bedside. Across the room, Rachel is doing needlework by the dimmed light of a kerosene lamp. She is interrupted by the arrival of Bert, who steps in, removing his hat.

BERT  
(whispers)  
It's me.

RACHEL  
Hello Bert. Come in.

BERT  
The show just got out and I came right over. I...I brought this for her...

He takes Addie's well-worn stuffed turtle from beneath his coat and places it next to her in the bed. He kneels helplessly at her side.

Addie's body remains motionless.

DISSOLVE TO:

EXT. LAND OF SWEETS - DAY

Here too Addie sleeps peacefully with a turtle at her side, Brother having finally given in.

But a brilliant light begins to shine on Addie's face, so bright it wakes her. She squints into the brilliance to discover the Keepers, the Royal Beacon in hand, hovering over her, silently.

ADDIE  
(groggy)  
Hello?

As soon as they realize she has discovered them, they quickly retreat, gliding off into the distance.

Addie gets up quickly and rouses the others.

ADDIE  
Brother! Toybox! It's the  
Keepers. We must be close to the  
palace!

They immediately begin chasing after the Keepers, dodging and leaping over the candied landscape. Soon the Keepers are again in sight as our group has nearly caught up to them.

BROTHER  
Look! It's them! We must be  
almost there!

All of a sudden, however, the abundance of edibles comes to an abrupt end, The group passes out of a forest of candy-canes and halts at the edge of the Land of Sweets to look out across:

EXT. EMPTY LANDSCAPE - DAY

Addie stops to catch her breath as the group takes note of the immense change in their environment: Before them lies a nearly-vacant expanse of relatively FLAT LAND.

Some distance away, a lone, small STRUCTURE stands in the center of the broad valley. The Keepers are distant specks that appear to be headed for the tiny building. Brother points.

BROTHER  
There they are...

ADDIE  
Why are they going *there*?

Brother and Toybox shrug.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

ADDIE

Well, I suppose there's one way  
to find out.

She sets out across the plain. Brother follows.

BROTHER

Maybe whoever is there can tell  
us the way to the Palace.

Finally, reluctantly, Toybox who longingly glances back at the land of sweets, falls in behind Addie and Brother as they continue their trek.

TOYBOX

(pouty)

This isn't going to be any fun.  
I just know it.

EXT. SMALL STRUCTURE - DAY

The group approaches the modest building. Though very plain, it is not run down. Even though the architectural style is obscure it appears to be a dwelling. It could hardly contain more than one room, however.

ADDIE

(looking around)

Who do you suppose lives here?

TOYBOX

Someone pretty lonely, I'll bet.

BROTHER

...not with the Keepers in there.  
It doesn't even look like they'd  
all fit.

ADDIE

Well let's ask them.

Addie steps up to the door and knocks, but her knocks sound more like ornate door CHIMES. The others cower behind her.

BROTHER

How curious.

There is no answer to Addie's knock. She tries the door. It is not locked. She and her companions cautiously step inside.

INT. THE SAME STRUCTURE - DAY

What greets the group inside is the same simple austerity they found on the outside of the building...except that it is IMMENSE inside!

ADDIE

(gasps)

My goodness!

BROTHER

Hey wait a minute...

TOYBOX

Looks like they got an *outside* a few sizes too small for their *inside*.(shrugs) I suppose these things happen...

Our travelers find themselves in a great hall, very sparsely furnished and not at all decorative, nearly monochromatic in its simplicity. The slightest sound ECHOES in the vast emptiness.

At the far end of the hall is a pair of very tall draped doors through which now emerge the Keepers.

ADDIE

Oh, here they come. Please sirs!  
We were wondering if you could tell us...

The mysterious hooded figures quickly traverse the hall and exit out the door Addie and her friends have just entered, paying them little notice.

In their leaving, however, the Keepers have left the huge draped doors open, and a flickering white light can be seen in the chamber beyond. The group approaches slowly.

INT. REAR CHAMBER - DAY

With Addie in the lead, the threesome cautiously peek through the doorway into the rear chamber.

There, sitting in a simple chair against one wall is a warmly GLOWING LUMINESCENT FIGURE, his crowned head bowed in his hands.

Sensing the presence of the group, the figure slowly looks up, *but we can only vaguely discern a face in the brilliance.*

ADDIE

Excuse me, I...

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

The figure speaks with a soft melodic voice:

JO-JO  
Addie? Miss Addie?

Addie recognizes the voice. She approaches him quickly, leaving Brother and Toybox standing in the doorway.

ADDIE  
Jo-Jo! It's you!

What she sees is certainly not the Jo-Jo we've seen before. But it's Jo-Jo all right.

She rushes into his arms and they embrace.

JO-JO  
Ah my princess! I'm so grateful  
you've come.

She steps back to look at him, still clinging to his hands.

ADDIE  
You're just as I imagined!...

JO-JO  
You've got your eyes!

ADDIE  
...and so is your kingdom... But  
Jo-Jo...is this your palace? It  
seems so...empty.

JO-JO  
Not so long as you're here.

ADDIE  
Oh Jo-Jo!

She hugs him again. But their embrace is interrupted by the sound of someone clearing his throat:

BROTHER  
Ahem...

ADDIE  
Oh, excuse me. Prince Jo-Jo I  
want you to meet my friends:  
Brother...

The turtle bows.

BROTHER  
I'm truly honored, your Highness.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED: (2)

ADDIE  
...and Toybox.

Toybox bows briefly.

TOYBOX  
Likewise I'm sure.

JO-JO  
Well done, my friends! You have served the kingdom well. For escorting the Princess here, you shall be honored guests at her coronation.

TOYBOX  
(to Brother but for  
all to hear)  
Good thing I knew the way, Huh?

As Jo-Jo turns back to Addie, Brother gives Toybox a discrete jab in the ribs.

ADDIE  
Jo-Jo...surely this isn't the place for my coronation. It's so...plain.

JO-JO  
Of course. My Princess must have a truly royal palace. Would that bring you happiness?

ADDIE  
(beaming)  
Oh yes.

JO-JO  
Then it shall be built at once.

BROTHER  
Excuse me, your Highness, but...do you have an architect for this new palace?

JO-JO  
(kindly)  
Have someone in mind, Brother turtle?

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED: (3)

BROTHER  
 (bashful)  
 Well, I do have a design I'm  
 rather fond of...

JO-JO  
 (to Addie)  
 Does it please Miss Addie?

ADDIE  
 Oh yes! I'm sure Brother will do  
 a wonderful job.

Toybox rolls his eyes jealously.

JO-JO  
 Very well. You, Brother Turtle  
 are hereby appointed the royal  
 architect.

TOYBOX  
 (to Brother)  
 Prince's pet, Prince's pet...

ADDIE  
 (under her breath)  
 Toybox, behave yourself!

JO-JO  
 ...and you, Toybox,...

Toybox snaps to attention, ("who me?") not expecting the Prince  
 to be addressing him.

JO-JO(CONT'D)  
 ...you are to see that it is done  
 with all good speed.

TOYBOX  
 (worried)  
 But, your Prince-ness...how can  
 we build it all by ourselves?

JO-JO  
 All the help you need is waiting  
 just outside.

EXT. SMALL STRUCTURE - DAY

Addie, Brother, and Toybox emerge from the front door of Jo-  
 Jo's "palace" to be greeted by rank upon rank of small glowing  
 creatures hovering a few feet off the ground.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

ADDIE & BROTHER  
 (in unison,  
 discouraged)  
 The Idgits??

TOYBOX  
 (elated, applauding)  
 The Idgits!

BROTHER  
 (takes a deep breath)  
 Don't you worry, Addie. Just  
 leave them to me. You'll have a  
 palace like there never was.

ADDIE  
 I'm sure of that!

Brother reaches into his shell, draws out a roll of blueprints, and marches into the midst of the legions of Idgits. Toybox follows Brother, playfully mimicking his stride. He glances back at Addie who looks on in amusement.

As Brother unfurls the blue-prints, the glowing Idgits swarm around him, massing over the plans. After a moment they leave Brother, break into several smaller groups and zip to their proper respective places several yards away.

One group begins about a hundred feet in the air. Once they reach their spot they begin swarming furiously. As their group descends, it reveals the top of an ornate spire. The more this swirling mass of lights descends the more of the building comes into existence.

Elsewhere on the site much the same is occurring. Various groups are swarming to bring different parts of the edifice and its surroundings into being. All of them begin at the top and build downward.

Off to one corner of the grounds, one group of Idgits is under Toybox's control--he lounges in a hammock rocked by Idgits as another group of Idgits fan him.

Brother takes a moment from consulting and inspecting to stroll over to on-looking Addie. He points to Toybox.

BROTHER  
 (disgusted)  
 Would you just look at him?

ADDIE  
 (shrugs)  
 At least he's out of trouble...

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED: (2)

Brother strides over to Toybox, hollering.

BROTHER

Toybox! Do something with  
yourself!

Toybox is disturbed from his reverie. He leaps from the  
hammock, trying to put on an air of efficiency.

TOYBOX

All right Boys, time to get back  
to business.

Brother walks away, shaking his head. As he does so, Toybox's  
Idgits gather together in a swarm, GIGGLING. They then descend  
to a height a few inches off the ground and begin to create a  
curved line in space from the center outward. It vaguely  
resembles a smile. But soon it starts rotating. Toybox jumps  
in...it's a whirling jumprope.

Addie laughs at the silliness, causing Brother to glance back  
at the scene. He throws up his hands in disgust and gets back  
to work.

DISSOLVE TO:

EXT. LAND OF MUSIC - DAY

The instrument-covered landscape where our heroes frolicked  
earlier is now vacant. Worse, the screaming wind is sweeping  
through the valley. It fragments the landscape into black dust  
that soon becomes black sludge just before everything in the  
valley descends altogether into nothingness.

EXT. ADDIE'S PALACE - DAY

The palace has at last come together, along with the grounds  
and even the barren landscape. Not surprisingly, the overall  
form of the palace building itself resembles nothing so much as  
a huge, ornately-adorned CRYSTALLINE TORTOISE SHELL.

Brother and Toybox approach Addie as she gazes on the  
magnificent structure admiringly.

BROTHER

Are you ready, Addie?

TOYBOX

...to survey your new place?

Addie nods excitedly.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

BROTHER

This way, your Highness.

They each offer Addie their arm, which she accepts and the threesome approach the front entrance.

INT. ADDIE'S PALACE MAIN HALL - DAY

Addie enters the crystalline structure in rapt wonder. It is in distinct contrast with Jo-Jo's palace and its stark austerity. This hall is beautifully ornate, with virtually everything comprised of GLASS or JEWELS.

Two crystal thrones sit on a platform at the far end. On either side of the hall is a line of beautiful glass ROCKING CHAIRS.

ADDIE

(gasps)

Brother! It's...it's more beautiful than words can tell!

Brother jumps up and down and claps with delight.

BROTHER

I'm so glad it pleases you, your Highness.

As he says this, the rocking chairs all begin rocking randomly. Addie notices that each has a face...and they're alive, chanting as they rock:

ROCKING CHAIR COURTIERS

...Yes, your Highness. Yes, your Highness...

Addie smiles at the sight of all this agreeability.

Toybox, meanwhile, is eyeing two gracefully-curving STAIRCASES that line the left and right walls.

TOYBOX

Wow, would you look at that!

ADDIE

Yes, they are beautiful!

TOYBOX

Perfect for sliding!

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

Toybox sets off for the stairway. Addie grabs his arm to stop him but giggles nonetheless; the highly-polished bannisters *do* look tempting.

ADDIE

I'm not sure what Prince Jo-Jo  
might think, Toybox.

(then, to Brother)

What is up there?

BROTHER

Why don't you take a look?

They start to climb the stairs, Toybox playfully fingering the carved bannister as they ascend.

EXT. ADDIE'S PALACE OBSERVATION PINNACLE - DAY

The three emerge from ornately-carved french doors onto a balcony of sorts that looks out over the land from the highest point of the palace.

Addie surveys the land peacefully as a breeze blows through her hair.

ADDIE

How can I ever thank you,  
Brother?

BROTHER

You don't have to, your Highness.  
All we ask is that you stay here  
and be happy with us.

She hugs him.

ADDIE

With friends like you, how could  
I ever want to leave?

TOYBOX

(looking down)

I wonder how high a ball would  
bounce from up here...

Addie suddenly notices something on the horizon.

ADDIE

Brother, what's that?

She points to what appears to be a huge dark wall in the distance. It is so huge, its top is lost in the clouds.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

BROTHER

That's the "Wall of Knowing".

ADDIE

What's on the other side of it?

BROTHER

It's hard to say. It's supposed to be very dark, but none of us have ever been there.

TOYBOX

(insulted)

"They" don't want us.

BROTHER

You see, Addie, only real things are allowed beyond that wall. None of us can ever go there.

TOYBOX

...but we don't know if the wall is to keep us *in* or to keep "them" out.

Toybox gives the wall the razzberry.

ADDIE

Well, they can just stay on their side. We're all perfectly happy right here.

BROTHER

There's something else I want to show you...this way.

Brother leads the way back down the stairs.

INT. THE CRYSTAL PARLOR - DAY

They enter a chamber in the midst of which sits a single massive CRYSTAL on an elaborate pedestal.

ADDIE

What is it?

BROTHER

This is your view crystal. It's like a window to things far away. With it you can watch over all your realm without ever having to leave your palace.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

ADDIE

You mean I can see things as they're happening...somewhere else?

BROTHER

Uh huh...try it. Just touch the place you want to see on this map of the land and wherever you touch you see in the crystal.

Addie touches the map and the crystal lights up instantly, displaying a landscape somewhere in Jo-Jo's kingdom.

BROTHER

...and if you want to look around, just walk around the the crystal and you can see in any direction.

Addie circles the crystal as the view within it changes accordingly.

ADDIE

How marvelous!

She chooses another spot on the map, and another.

ADDIE

Ooh here's the Land of Sweets!

Sure enough, the edible landscape is a familiar one. Addie turns to Brother.

ADDIE

Oh Brother I could do this all day!

As Toybox looks into the crystal, his gaze suddenly turns to terror.

TOYBOX

Hey...wh..what's happening?

Addie turns to discover with terror that the Land of Sweets is suffering the same fate we observed in the Musical Valley: the violent wind that shatters everything and dissolves it into blackness.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED: (2)

ADDIE  
 (horrified)  
 The Land of Sweets...it's gone!  
 Brother, what's going on? What's  
 happening?

BROTHER  
 (swallows hard)  
 I...I don't know, your Highness.  
 Try another spot.

Addie touches the map. Another landscape is being dissolved out of existence. She tries yet another location--it's already gone.

BROTHER  
 (getting panicky)  
 There's nothing there! Please,  
 your Highness, make it stop!

He withdraws his head into his shell.

ADDIE  
 But, what can I do?

JO-JO(O.S.)  
 I wasn't going to tell you of  
 this until after your coronation,  
 Miss Addie.

Addie turns to see a glowing Jo-Jo entering the chamber.

ADDIE  
 (worried)  
 Tell me of what, Jo-Jo?

JO-JO  
 I wanted you to to at least have  
 a short time of joy in my  
 kingdom.

ADDIE  
 But...you once told me that  
 sadness wasn't allowed here.

JO-JO  
 Things...have changed with your  
 coming, Addie. That destructive  
 force out there...that darkness  
 seems to have come at the same  
 time you arrived in this land.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED: (3)

ADDIE

Are you saying that I...?

JO-JO

I don't know, my darling. What I do know is that you are our only hope of stopping it.

ADDIE

Me?! What can I do?

JO-JO

The Wall of Knowing; you must travel to the other side. Help can only come from there.

ADDIE

But why me? Why not send a messenger...one of your Keepers?

JO-JO

None of my subjects may leave this kingdom or they cease to exist. As for me, I must remain to give them light and comfort until your return.

ADDIE

(getting emotional)

But I don't want to leave you. There must be some other way!

BROTHER

Perhaps your Highnesses could issue a decree...

ADDIE

(grabbing at straws)

Yes...there's two of us. Maybe a joint decree could stop it.

She turns to Jo-Jo, who sighs.

JO-JO

I...I don't know. Perhaps. But time grows short...Here...

Jo-Jo removes the crown from his own head and places it on Addie's. She gazes into his eyes for a moment, gives him a kiss, then determinedly marches out of the crystal room into the adjoining throne room.

To read the rest of this script, please contact:

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