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A & H Cogs
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The Princess and The Sentinel

book by Michael R Harris
Music and Lyrics by Jim Desson

Synopsis

This is a pantomime in the English Pantomime^a genre tradition and all that entails except that it is Canadian in conception. The story, as with all pantomimes, is based on a fairy story except that this is an original story set in a hidden valley in the Canadian Rocky Mountains where the Kanakan elves live. The whole piece includes an original musical score and is adaptable to a range of production budgets. Approximate running time is 90 minutes plus intermission.

^a For those unfamiliar the English Pantomime has a long tradition in England commonly mounted around Christmas. It is a musical fairy story intended for a family audience. It usually includes:

- light hearted and corny humor including local references
- encouragement of audience participation including cheering the hero and booing the villain who must encourage this by reacting
- a "Dame", an important motherly female character usually played by a middle aged male actor
- a "Principal Boy", the male hero figure usually played by a young female.
- a "Princess", the main love interest and too good to be true.
- a "Villain", whose over the top campy acting offsets any darkness.

Cast

Sparko Talsun: young hero, blacksmith's son.

Moosense: Sparko's friend the (talking) moose.

Queen Bo: (Dame) Queen of the Kanakans. Mother of Princess Celeste.

Villagers: non speaking extras.

Percival Proper: Court Major Domo and Town Crier.

Princess Celeste: young; pretty.

Petal: Princess Celeste's maid.

Bloom: Princess Celeste's maid.

Courtiers: non speaking extras.

Petar Holdfast: Sparko's friend.

Shardrashmid: sorcerer; half mortal half spirit.

Ongreen: Siren, evil female spirit.

King Chi: King of the Kanakans. - Father of Princess Celeste.

Tanglehead: Princess' Pet Dog.

Toby: The Conditioner.

Elgrim and Elgrima: The Healers.

Spirit of Kusramis: ghost of Shardrashmid's old master.

Demons and Devilettes of Blackmar: - Shardrashmid's servants.

ACT 1 Scene 1

Lights up on Forge Village square.

*The busy villagers all sing and dance.
"The Princess and The Sentinel"*

*The Princess and the Sentinel
a Canadian Pantomime
The oldest story of all Kanaka
lost in the mist of time.
A land where the sun does ever shine
save rains each night at ten.
Where summer lasts all year round
gentle breezes now and again.*

Chorus.

*But evil lurks in Blackmar tower
in the Misinchinka Mountains
and when it tried to use its power
it caused young love to flower.*

*Kanaka guarded oh so well
with magic, not a gun,
hidden, a powerful Sentinel
hidden from the evil one.
Shardrashmid was that evil one
with the help from Ongreen
he came and stole the Sentinel
so nasty and mean.*

Chorus.

*A blacksmith boy named Sparko
must save Princess Celeste
save the land from destruction
by accepting an awful quest.
The King and Queen have placed their hopes
Sparko, Petar, Moosense
and old Egrim has given them
magic lantern as their defense.*

Chorus.

*The Spirit of Kusramis came
to lend the heroes a hand
'ere they could save the Princess,
Sentinel and hence the land.
The love that rests within their hearts
a love that stands so tall.
A valley that was once at risk
now safe for one and all.*

Chorus.

Villagers fall back for the Queen's entry. They interact in the following.

Queen Bo (The Dame) enters.

*This suggested dialogue is to break down the 'fourth wall'
and get audience interaction.*

QUEEN BO: Hellooee every one. Hellooee. *(Waving)* Well wave back then. Well that's better, I suppose. Hands up all the young people. Come on, come on. *(Gets all the children's hands up then points to a man without their hands up)* You sir, aren't you young at heart come on get your hand up. Your all behaving like members of *(a local political party or town council, etc.)* And you Ma'am. *(Continues this till everyone has their hands up.)* Well now that's better. Now I have something to say to all you young people. Uh-uh! No putting your hands down yet. This is a pantomime and in pantomimes you have to cheer when the good guys enter and boo when the villians enter. So. Let's hear some booing and hissing first. Come on, come on, louder. *(Keeps going at her discretion.)* Mmm not bad could be better. Now let's hear a rousing cheer. Hip-hip. Is that the best you can do. HIP-HIP. Well that makes me feel better. Doesn't it make you feel better, huh, doesn't it, doesn't it? O.k now we can get on with the show. See you later. *(exits).*

Enter Percival who sings.

"Hear Ye"

*Hear ye, hear ye, this is the news of the hour
Hear ye, hear ye, this is the news from the bower.
Cows in the barn and chickens in the shed
the wind is blowing and the clouds have fled
nothing every changes in a perfect land
unless you can whistle while you do a handstand*

*Hear ye, hear ye, this is the news of the hour
Hear ye, hear ye, this is the news from the bower.
We have food in our bellies and songs in our hearts
a solid thatched roof and a fire in the hearth*

*nothing ever changes in a perfect land
unless you can drink tea from a frying pan.*

*Hear ye, hear ye, this is the news of the hour
Hear ye, hear ye, this is the news from the bower.
The weather's always warm with a gentle breeze
the sun's always shining on our life of ease.
Nothing every changes in a a perfect land
unless you can clap with just one hand.*

*Hear ye, hear ye, this is the news of the hour
Hear ye, hear ye, this is the news from the bower.
Everyone I see has a smiling face
happiness here is a very common place.
Nothing every changes in our perfect land
the only news I have is that everything's just grand.*

PERCIVAL: Ladeeeese and gentlemeeeen please make way for Princess Celeste.

*Enter Princess Celeste with Petal and Bloom in attendance.
People all bow and show respect.*

PERCIVAL: The Princess is touring the Valley to present the prizes from last week's grand fair. As you all know because of a terrible storm the prize giving couldn't take place. The Princess decided that it wasn't fair for the winners not to have their prizes and so is presenting them herself. Three cheers for the princess. Hip-hip

ALL: Hooray.

PERCIVAL: Hip-hip (*Encourages Audience*)

ALL: Hooray

PERCIVAL: Hip-hip

ALL: Hooray

PRINCESS waves and smiles to everyone.

PERCIVAL: And the winner in Forge Village for the sledge pulling contest iiiii
SPARKO TALSUN AND MOOSENSE.

ALL: Yeah, hooray. Good old Sparko.

SPARKO leads MOOSENSE forward to where the PRINCESS stands and a medal is presented.

PRINCESS: Congratulations Sparko *(they gaze at each other as she hands him the medal)* Oh and Moosense. *(Pins ribbon on him.)*

MOOSENSE: *(Goes all silly)* Rooarruff. *(ALL laugh)*

MOOSENSE starts 'acting up'.

SPARKO: Hey there Moosense what are you doing?

SPARKO tries to restrain him and PRINCESS helps. They finish up very, very close to each other and back off a bit embarrassed.

I am so sorry your highness. I --

PRINCESS: *(Laughs gaily.)* Oh don't be sorry. What a nice Moose. *(Pats Moosense.)*

PERCIVAL: And that ladies and gentlemen is all the prizes won in Forge Village. The next stop on the tour is the Village of Mountside.

Entourage drags a reluctant Princess away and the crowd follows cheering the princess.

MOOSENSE: Aha!! What a little chickadee she is uh Sparko. Ahoohoo.

SPARKO: You shouldn't talk about the princess that way Moosense. It's disrespectful.

MOOSENSE: Yeah, is dat right. Well sure as my names Moosense, she really took a shine to you dat's for sure. Why the way she looked at you ah thought she was goin' to ...

SPARKO: MOOSEY!! That's enough. Go on. I have work to do.

PETAR: *(Enters)* Hi de ho Sparko.

SPARKO: What ya thar Petar.

PETAR: Saw you with the Princess then. Lucky, lucky, lucky.

SPARKO: *(Embarrassed.)* She's really nice Petar.

PETAR: You bet.

SPARKO: No I mean really nice.

PETAR: You haven't fallen in love have you.

SPARKO: Nooo!

PETAR: Uh-oh! Princess's don't mix with the likes of us Sparko you'd better forget her.

SPARKO: You don't fall in love just by meeting someone. She was really nice though.

PETAR: Well in love or not in love, there's all kinds of other girls. Princesses live in Palaces and have fancy clothes and all kinds of things regular working Kanakans like us never see. Forget her friend Sparko or you'll never be happy.

(They move in front of Tabs to allow scene change and sing counterpoint.)

"Petar's Advice."

*Forget her dear friend
it will never work
you are just a regular jerk.*

*But her laughter makes me happy
and her smile makes me warm
and she has a stunning charm.*

*Well she sure has you stunned
right out of your mind.
This is one path you'll never get to find .*

*I know what you mean
but I cannot forget her
and that's maybe how I'll feel forever*

*There are so many, many girls
all that you could wish
but you choose a Princess, so foolish.*

*She glides like a swan
I could watch for hours
her hands are like delicate flowers.*

*But Sparko you're dreaming
you're mind is in a mess
could a Blacksmith ever marry Princess*

*Her eyes are like dreams
where I lose my fears
Her voice is music to my ears.*

*Now Sparko I warn you
this will never never be
you've got to act more responsibly.*

*Her long lovely hair
soft as the air
and her skin so very very fair.*

*Now Sparko you listen,
unless you forget this girl so
that you're life doesn't end in woe.*

*But whatever happens
I can never be the same
even if we never meet again.*

SPARKO: You're right Petar. *(Sigh)* It's probably just a foolish dream. *(They exit)*

Lights down.

Scene 2

On stage apron with curtain closed.

Lights Up on King sitting in a chair drinking coffee.

QUEEN: (Enters) Good Morning 'Chi' and how are you today, you look as though you've just had bad news from (local mayor or well known official)

KING: Hello 'Bo'. I am well. Aah there is so much work to do or whole palace would run down and ----oh well. Thank heavens for (favorite local coffee shop.)
(*Holds up cup*) .

QUEEN: I wasn't meaning to be rude . The King's job is an exacting one. I was just trying to --- to lighten things up a bit.

KING: Yes. Yes thank you my dear. I was being uncharitable..

QUEEN: Is something wrong.

KING: No not any more than usual. Toby hasn't come to clean the Sentinel Room again and I've reminded him so many times. Let alone the whole business that Toby is really too old for the job now and I should be seeing about his replacement.

QUEEN: Cleaning the Sentinel is a huge responsibility.

KING: That is the whole reason for the Conditioner.

QUEEN: Yes. So much about the Sentinel is kept in secret kept in that special room, locked away like that and only cleaned once a year by a trusted Conditioner. You can't exactly issue a proclamation for Toby's replacement.

KING: The Sentinel places a magic umbrella over the whole of Kanaka Valley to keep us all safe, it is vital, we must find Toby's replacement in a discreet way.

QUEEN: Mmm! It must be done soon so that they can learn well the cleaning rituals from Toby. One mistake and

KING: ...it doesn't bear thinking about. In the power of Shadrashmid the sorcerer-- Ugh!. Ah if Toby had only had a son or daughter.

QUEEN: Well unfortunately he doesn't. We shall just have to look out ourselves for a candidate. Have you sent Percival to remind Toby again.

KING: Yes, he is overdue already.

QUEEN: Come let us walk in the garden and stop worrying. All that can be done has been done for now.

KING: Thank you Bo. Oh I will be glad when this mantle of responsibility is passed on when our dear daughter finds her true love and they become King and Queen.

QUEEN: Come stop worrying and wishing your life away. (They exit)

Lights down.

Scene 3

Lights up on Palace Ballroom (being prepared)

A scene of great activity as the Palace Ballroom is being decorated by servants including Petal and Bloom. Enter Sparko and Petar.

PETAL: *(seeing Petar runs to him.)* Petar.

PETAR: Petal *(they embrace)*

PETAL: What are you doing here?

PETAR: Being a palace guard has it's advantages.

PETAL: You're not on official business then.

PETAR: No I just came to see you.

PETAL: Hello Sparko.

SPARKO: Hi Petal.

PETAL: We are terribly busy.

SPARKO: What's going on?

PETAL: We are preparing for the Princess Birthday Ball

SPARKO: Wow! So that's what a Princess' Birthday is like.

PETAL: Not just any birthday. This year she comes of age and can choose who she will marry.

SPARKO: I'm sure she must have many suitors.

Tanglehead runs in and jumps around greeting everyone and creating confusion. The Princess enters in pursuit. Sparko shrinks back so as not to be seen.

PRINCESS: Oh Tangly! Come here. That is very naughty.

Tanglehead hangs his head and whines.

Oh how can I be cross with you. So sorry everyone. Come on you.

They exit.

SPARKO: *(Coming forward again.)* Yes I'm sure she must have many suitors.

PETAL: Petar the Ball is tonight and we have to get finished.

PETAR: Can we help?

"Preparation for The Ball"

*Tonight's the night of the palace ball
there is so much to do
to scrub and clean and cook and sew
and press their dresses new
The King and Queen will grace us
with their presence too
they will dance till the morning glow
under the light of the moon*

*Tonight's the night of the palace ball
banish all that's rude
moonlight will touch young hearts
and set their minds unglued
The young men will fall in love
and girls will all swoon.
Tonight's the night lovers need no shove
under the light of the moon.*

*See the Queen of Kanaka
her head is crowned with jewels
See the King, our dear old King
so smiling and bemused
See the lovely young Princess
beauty fill the room
see the man who'll fall in love
under the light of the moon.*

*The ladies in their glittering gowns
that flow, and jewels that flash
The Lords in their finest clothes
with purest silken sash
The all will look so beautiful
we'll hold our breath and soon
tonight's the night to fall in love
under the light of the moon.*

After the song Petar and Petal move down. Everyone else exits. Drapes close.

PETAL: Thank you for helping.

PETAR: Doing anything with you is a pleasure.

They sing "Friendship" in counterpoint.

*I remember when I first saw you there
the brightness of your smile truly warmed the air
laughter everywhere
everywhere you went
I felt so very happy to be next to you.*

*I remember when I did first see you there
you looked so handsome in your formal ware
You had lovely wavy hair
and a serious look
I thought you'd never notice me next to you.*

*Chorus together
Friendship is the water of life
for the flowers of our hearts
Friendship is the sharing of the bread
as we each play our parts.*

*I remember when I fell and bruised my head
you nursed me in my bed.
You made me feel so special
I quite forgot the pain.
To be with you I'd gladly fall again.*

*I had always dreamed of meeting one like you
so very smart and - a gentleman too
You spoke to me softly
the kindness I can't forget
you were the dearest man I had ever met.*

Chorus.

PETAL: Oh I wish you could be at the ball tonight and dance with me.

PETAR: You know I think I know a way. I'm sure Sparko would want to come too.

PETAL: For sure.

PETAR: We will dress up in our finest and gatecrash somehow.

PETAL: Oh I would love to see you.

PETAR: I think you will. I think you will.

Lights down. They exit.

Scene 4

*Lights up.
Shardrashmid enters.*

SHARDRASHMID: (To audience) Is that all you can do? You're supposed to boo the villain. Maybe I should have worn a (well known politician) mask. Come on lets hear you boo and hiss. That's better.

Ongreen enters and they back towards each other and bump.

SHARDRASHMID: Ongreen.

ONGREEN: Aaah (*Turns and makes large defensive gesture.*) Oh Shardrashmid it's you.

SHARDRASHMID: Heh! Heh! Heh! They must be wicked thoughts indeed to make you so jumpy.

ONGREEN: My wickedness pales in comparison to yours.

SHARDRASHMID: I take that as a compliment my dear.

ONGREEN: What brings you out here on the mountain. Why aren't you in your workshop working on your eternal quest for power and control of the Sentinel.

SHARDRASHMID: I have waited hundreds of years for the Sentinel and it will be mine, and mine alone, and my crystal says perhaps soon, perhaps very soon. (*Calms himself again.*) Anyway I have reached, shall we say an impasse in my work and I came to talk to you.

ONGREEN: What? You seek my advice on matters of magic. Has the world as we know it come to an end.

SHARDRASHMID: Sarcasm was always your strongpoint Ongreen. Your mind is as ugly as your body is beautiful. I shall leave you to dream of draining your victims emotions and leaving just a zombie, as is your way. (*Turns to go.*)

ONGREEN: Wait, I – I am - I am sorry. (*beat*) What did you want?

SHARDRASHMID: (*Pause*) Very well. (*Takes breath*) Some work requires to evoke mmm not so much hate as revulsion, not so much dislike as disgust, a physical reaction.

ONGREEN: Tell me more.

SHARDRASHMID: Perhaps in an incantation best.

ONGREEN: Please do.

SHARDRASHMID:

If you can listen,
 then listen to me,
 listen to questions of things that can't be,
 eyes that glisten,
 eyes that are bright,
 as I crush them in my fingers too tight,
 smells of rot,
 smells of gore
 smells of items that stick to your
 face and hands,
 tunic and hair,
 dripping and oozing gives mothers a scare
 whole addled eggs,
 half rotten peach,
 blended in recipe to make you reach
 a new plateau,
 in dainty grot,
 appearing in fashionable magazines it is not.

ONGREEN: Little white maggots,
 vanilla ice cream,
 makes everyone's nightmare out of a dream,
 silken dress,
 bonnet of lace,
 a mask of hornets instead of a face,
 country house,
 white picket fence,
 and little white skeletons row upon row,
 in the front garden,
 in the back yard,
 just imagine, it's not very hard.

SHARDRASHMID: bouquets of flowers,
 cellophane wrapped,
 but inside each a spirit is trapped,
 open them up,
 no wish comes true,
 the flowery spirit just grows into you,
 over your hand,
 over your arm,

till writhing and dying you scream an alarm,
 but nobody comes,
 and when you are found,
 black oozing fungus upon the ground.

ONGREEN:

So this is your need,
 I'll see what I've got,
 A delicious mix of beauty and rot,
 Such as.....Aha, like an open sore on a blushing cheek
 no - a smear of vomit on silken scarf.

SHARDRASHMID: You have the idea exactly, but they are not quite enough, it must be more, more pungent.

ONGREEN: Well then, a fresh salad of herbs and leaves with, as it's center piece, a nicely sliced black and maggot riddled egg.

SHARDRASHMID: Yes that is good. Evoking the appetite and yet causing the gall to rise at one and the same time. But still not good enough.

ONGREEN: Well, *(thinks long and hard)* A wedding cake, white icing with blue trim, three tiers, each more elaborate than the one below and on the top layer of course the bride and groom, she in white, he in black tie but as we watch the columns that support the upper tiers move, they are leeches, slimy, hairy mouthed blood suckers with brown doe like eyes with a little very red pupil.

SHARDRASHMID: That is very good indeed. But, aaah, it is so difficult, the call is for something really, really horrible.

ONGREEN: Perhaps these could help us. *(Indicates audience.)* O.k. everybody I want you to think of something really horrible, really, really horrible. Put up your hand if you have something. *(After some hands go up)* O.k. now when I ask you to shout out what you have we shall judge the winner by the groans and sounds of disgust from everyone. You first. *(Points to an audience member; repeats what they say to get a good reaction; continues round encouraging more and more disgusting, but socially acceptable, items)*

SHARDRASHMID: Well I have lots of ideas now that is excellent, excellent. I can use those ideas in completing my magic to enslave Canada and have the whole land in my power. Ha, ha, ha, ha, ha. What a lot of suckers they have helped in their own destruction. *(Laughs and points at the audience. Revels in boos.)* Fools, dolts.

ONGREEN: Silly little humans, what fun it will be to eat your souls on that delightful day when we have control.

*ONGREEN and SHARDRASHMID laugh and goad the audience with shouts of fools, idiots, for as long as it gets good response and then exit.
Lights fade to black.*

Scene 5

*Lights up on Ballroom reception.
Sparko and Petar enter a side door dressed as nobles and mingle.*

PERCIVAL: My Lords, Ladeeeeese and gentlemeeeen. His royal highness King Chi, King of all Kanaka and his queen Queen Bo.

*Enter King and Queen with courtiers in attendance.
People all bow and show respect.*

PERCIVAL: My Lords, Ladeeeeese and gentlemeeeen please welcome way for Princess Celeste the Birthday girl.

*Enter Princess Celeste with Petal and Bloom in attendance.
People all bow and show respect.*

PERCIVAL: My Lords, Ladeeeeese and gentlemeeeen please hear now your King

KING CHI: My faithful Lords, You lovely Ladies and my gallant gentlemen. Today is a very happy day for it is not only Princess Celeste birthday but it is her coming of age and all that it entails. Please show the princess your support.

Very enthusiastic applause and cheers from all.

PERCIVAL: Ladeeeeese and gentlemeeeen. As a warm up to the festivities we will now have the ladies excuse me waltz.

Band plays "The Royal Ball" and all dance.

Petal asks Petar to dance.

Princess Celeste is dancing with someone else and sees Sparko. She breaks off to dance with him.

PRINCESS C: *(to Sparko)* You dance so well, working in the forge isn't all you do obviously.

SPARKO: No Your Highness, I learned at the village dances but it was never such pleasure before.

PRINCESS C: Please! Call me Celeste

SPARKO: It would not be respectful, what would people think?

PRINCESS C: They will think nothing of it, all my friends are allowed to call me Celeste. I can count you as a friend can't I?

SPARKO: OH YES (*too loud*) I mean, yes of course your -----Celeste.

PRINCESS C: That's all settled then. If you would like I will get one of the servants to bring torches for us to go and see my own little private garden, it is so pretty with all the flowers in bloom. It was given to me by Mamma and Pappa as a birthday present.

SPARKO: That would be wonderful.

PRINCESS C: Come on then.

They exit

PETAL: (*Looking after Sparko and the Princess*) I think the Princess is falling in love.

PETAR: Surely not, she knows what a fuss it would make. But you may be right.

PETAL: Poor Princess. It must be hard to have to train your heart.

PETAR: She has known since she was a little tyke what is expected. It is her duty.

PETAL: Her duty. I can choose you. Nobody telling me - not him! No Yes that one's o.k. No not him.

Waltz ends.

PETAR: Your right! If I couldn't have you - I don't know what I would have done - I would wish to be dead.

PETAL: Dead? Really?

PETAR: You doubt me?

PETAL: Of course not. Of course not. Well now have some sympathy for the Princess.

PETAR: I have sympathy for the Princess, just as you do, you know that, it's just -

PETAL: just what?

PETAR: it's just I don't want to see her hurt or my best friend. (*beat*) Oh why are things so complicated when they could be so simple.

PETAL: I don't know but simple things often don't seem to stay that way, at least in affairs of the heart. Come let's go and find your friend and the princess. I can guess where they have gone.

They exit.

KING CHI: Should we have another dance before we eat?

QUEEN BO: I don't think so. People seem to be mixing well. Some music maybe. ---
(*Calling*) Minstrels!!

BAND reprises "The Royal Ball".

KING CHI: Shall we? (*Takes Queen Bo in arms and they waltz alone while rest watch*)

QUEEN BO: Where did Celeste go?

KING CHI: I don't know (*lying*) She was here a moment ago. Shall I send someone to look for her.

QUEEN BO: No! It's her party, let her do as she pleases. (*beat*) You know it was at a ball just like this one that we met. Do you remember?

KING CHI: (*Not paying attention.*) Huh! What? Oh yes of course.

QUEEN BO: Yes what?

KING CHI: Yes I remember.

QUEEN BO: Remember what?

KING CHI: er I've forgotten.

QUEEN BO: I said it was at a ball like this that we met.

KING CHI: Yes, a birthday ball.

QUEEN BO: It was a Christmas Ball.

KING CHI: You can't have Christmas Balls in August.

QUEEN BO: It was in December.

KING CHI: Ah yes December. I remember now. You came in a horse drawn sleigh.

QUEEN BO: You do remember. (*Goes a bit coy*)

KING CHI: A pair of pure black horses.

QUEEN BO: Yes that's right, that's right.

KING CHI: You had a dress covered in yellow sequins that clung to your body.

QUEEN BO: That was Elmira Goodstock your old girlfriend.

KING CHI: Oh! well -er - well - er green (*checks Queen Bo's face*) no pink, yes you had a pink ball gown and a diamond tiara.

QUEEN BO: You just about climbed out of that one.

KING CHI: YES - er - No - er -What do you mean?

QUEEN BO: I'm thirsty again let's go and recharge our glasses.

They move off. SPARKO enters and with PETAR.

PETAR: Well you look taller than Mount Kinchinka

SPARKO: Oh Petar! Princess Celeste. She is wonderful. In her own little garden by torchlight. At night it looks really special, little water fountains and wonderfully scented roses.

PETAR: Your not falling in love again are you?

SPARKO: I think I am Petar, and you know what?

PETAR: What?

SPARKO: I don't care, let people think what they like.

PETAR: Uh-oh! This calls for emergency measures.

SPARKO: Such as?

PETAR: I go running round the room waving my underpants and shouting. "Sparko is in love with Princess Celeste. Sparko is in love with Princess Celeste."

SPARKO: Sshhh! (*Puts hand over Petar's mouth*) Petar! How old are you?

PETAR: You know how old I am, 24.

SPARKO: Well if you want to live to be 25 I suggest you do nothing of the kind.

PETAR: Just a joke Sparko.

SPARKO: Hmm! In poor taste.

PETAR: Have you ever been in the palace before?

SPARKO: No. It is magnificent. Imagine living like this every day.

PETAR: You would soon tire of it.

SPARKO: That is a tiredness I could enjoy.

PETAR: Maybe, but

SPARKO: but nothing Petar, it would be wonderful. To be rich, never to have to worry about the next meal, snacking on the horses doofers.

PETAR: Horses --- You mean Hors D'oeuvres.

SPARKO: Whatever, it would be – mmm heaven.

PETAR: And if you had to make public speeches every day.

SPARKO: That wouldn't be so good. Every day? Really?

PETAR: Almost everyday the King has to attend some official function and 'say a few words'. People expect it.

SPARKO: Celeste - er The Princess told me.....

PETAR: Celeste! So your on first name terms already?

SPARKO: Stop making fun Petar, she said I was allowed. This girl is different. And Celeste said that when she is made Queen she will have to attend all kinds of public functions and that the schedule is so busy they hardly have a day off.

PETAR: Oh well! And the thought of all that good food and silk sheets was so tempting.

SPARKO: *(Stares at Petar.)* Are you trying to make a point here Petar.

PETAR: Me! No, no of course not. Just making conversation.

SPARKO: Hmm! Anyway talking of food it must be almost time to eat.

PERCIVAL: My Lords, Ladies and Gentlemen. Dinner is served.

Lights down as everyone exits.

Scene 6

On stage apron in front of curtain.

Simply set as the princess' dressing room. Princess Celeste is with her maids Petal and Bloom who are helping her undress.

QUEEN BO: *(Off)* May I come in.

PRINCESS C: Come in Mamma.

QUEEN BO: Well that was quite a party.

PRINCESS C: Oh yes I haven't enjoyed a birthday party as much since.. since...

QUEEN BO: ... since we gave you Lego Princess and you made us all help you assemble it and everyone was worn out by the time it was done.

PRINCESS C: *(Laughs)* I was only a little girl..... but this was just so, so fantastic.

QUEEN BO: Celeste we need to talk. *(motions to maids and they bow and leave.)*
Celeste we need to talk about this Sparko Talsun.

PRINCESS C: Oh Mamma do we have to talk now. I am so tired.

QUEEN BO: Yes my little one, no wonder you are tired you must have danced every dance and sang every song with that boy until - well far too late. Everyone was worn out, your father, the guests, me, but you didn't seem to notice. You haven't changed much in some ways.

PRINCESS C: Oh Mamma I'm sorry but don't you think he is wonderful. Oh don't you.

QUEEN BO: *(takes the princess' offered hands y.)* He is a lovely boy my little one but
.....

PRINCESS C: ... but nothing Mamma he is - as you say - a lovely boy. What more could I want in a friend.

QUEEN BO: *(firmly turns away, in some anguish.)* Friend!!

PRINCESS C: Mamma what is wrong.

QUEEN BO: You know what is wrong Princess Celeste. You know what is wrong.

PRINCESS C: Princess!! Why

QUEEN BO: Why do you make it so hard for me, and for your dear father.

PRINCESS C: Pappa! What ...

QUEEN BO: You know you cannot marry a commoner Celeste. You know the rules. There are so many good boys in the Aristocracy why do you choose to fall in love with a commoner.

PRINCESS C: Fall in love, who said...

QUEEN BO: I'm sorry, I take that back. But your intentions are very clear young lady, I know you well, as do all the palace staff. The place is a buzz with the talk.

PRINCESS C: Let them talk, they love it. *(beat)* I shall do as I please.

QUEEN BO: You shall remember that you are the Princess Celeste, heir to the Kanakan throne, eventually to be crowned as Queen Celeste, to rule over the all the Kanakan, the highest office in the land.

PRINCESS C: How can I ever forget .

QUEEN BO: *(Making as to leave.)* As you say, you are tired, and I am too. Maybe this was not a good time but I felt something had to be said before this thing went any further. Your Pappa and I only want what is best for you, you know that. Goodnight. It would seem that those happy little chats we would have when I could just let you have..... - your own dolls house - your own Lego Princess..... - and we could all be -- so happy - have come to an end. *(Exits)*

PRINCESS C: Oh no Mamma

PETAL and BLOOM re-enter.

A few hours ago, a few minutes even, I was so happy. And now.....

PETAL: What is wrong your highness, what is wrong.

BLOOM: Tell us your highness. Why tears. Oh please stop.

PRINCESS C: I don't think I like growing up any more my sweet maids.

PETAL: How can such happiness of a few minutes ago be transformed in to such sadness.

BLOOM: It is like the morning sun which even now was rising has suddenly been covered by a black rain cloud.

PRINCESS C: So! I am just another day's weather to you am I.

BLOOM: Your highness

PRINCESS C: *(Sobbing.)* Oh Bloom I am so unhappy.

BLOOM: How can we help Mistress.

PETAL: Yes just tell us and we will fly to the task and all will be well again.

PRINCESS C: Oh I wish that there was something that you could do but there isn't.
Nobody can. MammaThe Queen has forbidden for me to see Sparko Talsun
again.

PETAL: Forbidden.

PRINCESS C: Well she didn't say so in so many words but that is what they are going
to do.

BLOOM: Surely not.

PRINCESS C: Oh yes I'm sure they will.

PETAL: Why?

PRINCESS C: They see that I am falling in love with Sparko, I wish I could deny it but
it makes me so happy to admit it. And the future Queen Celeste cannot
marry a commoner. You would think wouldn't you that a future Queen, the
future most powerful person in the whole of Sun Valley could do as they
please. But no it is as ever, I am only to do what my position allows. It is very
frustrating. Like being trapped in a...a.....

BLOOM: Cage?

PRINCESS C: Sort of but ... it is as though as I grow up more and more rules get
added to my life. Don't do this You can't do that.*(beat)* I want to break those
rules and why can't I, why can't I,

"Why Can't I" (QUEEN BO re-enters for counterpoint duet)

*Why can't I do whatever I please
why can't I go where my heart leads
my guiding star my be too dim to see
but I've only one life and my life to lead.*

*You have responsibilities
to your father and to the throne
you will one day become the queen
you have no choice
you can not marry him.*

*Why can't I choose if I am to be queen
just follow my heart, don't have to be mean
to be true to myself, I must follow this dream
if I can't be with him I think I'll just scream.*

*He has no title nor land nor means
to provide for a queen
he has no training to be a king
you have no choice
you cannot marry him.*

*He makes my heart fly like the wings of a dove
if I am to love, it is he that I love
my sky may be darkened by clouds above
but I've only one life and it's my life to give.*

*Your young sweet heart will be broken
young love is fickle, just like the wind
it blows one day and gone the next.*

But it's my life, why can't I marry him.

PRINCESS: Oh Mamma. *(Weeps in her mothers arms.)*

(PETAL, BLOOM AND QUEEN BO console the PRINCESS as Lights Down)

Scene 7

Palace reception room
KING CHI seated; TOBY is announced by Percival

PERCIVAL: Your Highness may I present Toby, The Conditioner.

KING CHI: Welcome back Toby.

TOBY: Always happy to be of service to your highness.

KING CHI: How many years is it you have been the royal conditioner, Toby

TOBY: I am an old man your highness and my memory is not as good as it used to be but if you'll forgive me it will be fifty seven years this year - or is it seventy five - no sixty -- er --- sixty --.

KING CHI: Mmm!! A goodly many anyway. There are many things we should discuss. There comes a time for everyone, after a life of faithful service when we must think of retirement.

TOBY: I am still -----

KING CHI: *(Holding up hand to silence Toby)* Yes you are still able Toby and you shall perform the service for me this year. But your replacement has to be shown the job and you deserve some help. The responsibility has been on your shoulders for many years now.

TOBY: It is true the responsibility wears on me more and more as the years pass. There are certain sequences of movements that must be made when cleaning the Sentinel and my memory has begun to fail. My hands are not as steady as they used to be ..and one slip could ----

KING CHI: Please let's not consider such an awful thing. *(beat)* I understand you don't have any children.

TOBY: No Your Highness. Candice and I....

KING CHI: It's o.k. Toby I understand but we need to find a replacement.

TOBY: It is hard we need a young person with old values.

KING CHI: Things as they were.

TOBY: Someone who works hard and always makes a good job of anything he does, just like the old days.

KING CHI: Ah yes the old days, when you could just do an honest days work for and honest days pay. They were the good days.

TOBY: The modern way even affects the royalty then, here in the palace.

KING CHI: Yes. I sometimes wish things could be as they were. They seemed so much simpler and everything got done just the same.

TOBY: We say such things over an ale at the end of the day but I always just thought of the farmers and workers.

KING CHI: And why should you concern yourself with my problems. Would you like some ale?

TOBY: Very kind of you.

KING CHI: Not at all (*Gestures to Percival who leaves*) But things change even here in the palace and not always for the better.

TOBY: Us simple folk know nothing of such things but out there in the fields there's talk of using machines to completely replace the horses. That's all very well but the machines need fuel and parts and while horses just eat the stuff your growing any way and don't wear out half as fast.

KING CHI: I shall have to pass a law to make sure the horses are well treated.

TOBY: That's the sort of good things your mother, beg pardon, Queen Hanslot used to do.

KING CHI: Ah mother! Dear Mother! Oh that she were here now to guide me. Sun Valley was a happy place under her rule.

TOBY: We do very well now if it please your Majesty.

KING CHI: Oh yes, yes passably, but Mamma had a deft hand at making useful laws and seeing that things always changed for the better.

TOBY: As we said, times were simpler.

Percival enters with ale and serves.

KING CHI: To simpler times Toby.

TOBY: To simpler times.

"Reminiscense"

*Do you remember back when we were young
we were strong, good hunters and stand tall as a tree.*

*Do you remember back when we were young
we would ride fast horses and race to be free.*

*Oh what a wonderful time
A man was honest and worked for a dime
Oh what a wonderful time
a spade was a spade and all of the time
Oh what a wonderful time.*

*Do you remember back when we were young
we were strong good looking and we had so much fun.*

*Do you remember when we were young
the women all loved us, yes every one.*

*Oh what a wonderful time
when honesty wasn't a crime
Oh what a wonderful time
singers would sing and poems would rhyme
Oh what a wonderful time.*

*Do you remember back when we were young
when we played stone toss, we beat everyone*

*Do you remember back when we were young
we would work hard all day and at night still have fun*

*Oh what a wonderful time
we lived a life sublime
Oh what a wonderful time
we lived a life sublime
Oh what a wonderful time.*

Lights down.

Scene 8

Lights up on Sentinel Room

Toby is painstakingly starting to set up and clean the Sentinel. He starts to lock the door but gets distracted then forgets. He takes the cover off the Sentinel.

TANGLEHEAD carrying a large ball rushes into the Sentinel Room chased by The Princess, Petal and Bloom. They bang into TOBY knocking him and the Sentinel over. There is an almighty bang and flash and SHARDRASHMID appears. With a shout he grabs the Sentinel.

Toby: Put that down; What do you think you're doing.

SHARDRASHMID: Ahaa fool! I am Shardrashmid. And now at long last I have the Sentinel. Thank you so much for looking after it so well for all these years but I must be going now. Goodbye.

PRINCESS C: *(Rushing at him.)* NOOOO

SHARDRASHMID: Well my pretty young lady. Can you not resist my charms. Come with me. *(Grabs the Princess.)* Goodbye for now my silly Kanakans. *(Starts his magic)*

Toby: Somebody stop him.

Petal rushes to grab the Princess but all three are gone amid a crack of thunder and flashes of lightning. There is a stunned silence and then Bloom helps TOBY up.

Bloom: Are you alright Toby.

TOBY: I will be alright. But Bloom the Sentinel, the Princess. *(Extremely upset.)*

Bloom: It looks very black Toby.

TOBY: Oh what am I to do, what am I to do.

Bloom: It wasn't your fault Toby.

TANGLEHEAD: Whimpers.

Bloom: It wasn't really your fault either old fella. We – we all got a bit carried away.

Toby: We'd best go tell the King and have done with it. Do they still have beheading?

Bloom: What!!

Toby: Well whatever we can't keep it a secret so we might as well own up and let justice take it's course.

Bloom: What will happen now Toby, I'm frightened.

TOBY: This is a black day for the Kanakan People. Our Sentinel, the source of all our good luck gone and our one and only Princess gone too.

Bloom: And Petal too, what will the King do to us.

TOBY: The King is a just man but whatever he does will be little compared to all the suffering that will follow.

Bloom: Oh Toby and everything was so - so happy and fun. *(Starts to weep.)*

TOBY: Don't cry little Bloom.

There is a noise outside and KING CHI enters along with some courtiers.

KING CHI: What has happened Toby?

TOBY: Your Majesty *(bows)* I must beg your forgiveness. I dropped the sentinel and in that moment there was a great bang and a flash and the Sorcerer Shardashmid appeared from nowhere. He took the Sentinel. Our beloved Princess tried to intervene and stop him but he simply grabbed her and took her with him into - into nowhere. *(Throws himself at the King's feet.)* Oh your Majesty forgive me, have mercy on me.

BLOOM: It was my fault your Highness. If Petal and I hadn't been chasing Tanglehead this would never have happened. Punish me not Toby.

TOBY: But it was I that left the door to the Sentinel room open.

KING CHI: Where is Petal?

BLOOM: She was taken too when she tried to save the Princess. OH Your Majesty I was much to blame. Punish me.

TANGLEHEAD: Whimper and Bark and prostrate in front of King.

KING: This is a black day indeed. *(Holds up his hand for silence and then walks over and picks up the ball they had been playing with and inspects it.)* But who is to blame. Shall I blame the ball for being a ball and allowing itself to be in a

game for which it was designed. Shall I blame the Sentinel room door for being a door and letting people, and dogs, in. Shall I blame a poor dumb animal who was giving some fun to the people I love so much. Shall I blame brave Petal, or perhaps Bloom for playing with the Princess and her pet and giving her so much fun over the years. Maybe I should blame the Princess for being young and full of youthful energy and for being silly and brave enough to try and stop a disaster. Perhaps I should blame Toby for all the years he has cared for the Sentinel and makes one simple mistake. Or maybe I should blame myself for letting things go and putting everyone at risk. No! No! No! My people, my subjects, my loved ones. There will be no blame, no punishment. Get up everyone. Get up. What you must do is to help me work out what is to be done. How can we put right what has gone wrong. How can we get our Sentinel, the source of all our good fortune and our beloved Princess back again?

Toby: Your Majesty is – is most ----- Oh thank you, thank you, thank you.

KIND T: But what is to be done Toby.

Toby: Your Majesty could issue a proclamation , asking for somebody, a hero, to take up a quest to rescue the Princess and get the Sentinel back.

KING CHI: Hmm! My subjects are loyal and hard working but why would anyone want to go up against a powerful Sorcerer, we are mere mortals, it would risk death or worse.

BLOOM: The Princess' hand in marriage would be incentive enough.

ALL: Gasp!

KING CHI: *(Long silence)* A proclamation. A quest to rescue our dear Princess and retrieve the Sentinel and the successful volunteer gets the Princess' hand in marriage. *(Bends and puts hand on Tanglehead.)* What do you thing old fella? Do you thing it stands a chance of getting my dearest daughter back and saving our lovely valley.

TANGLEHEAD: Bark, bark. Bark, bark bark.

KING CHI: I think I agree with you. Percival draw up the proclamation for my signature and make haste for every hour without the Sentinel is an hour that courts disaster.

PERCIVAL: At once your majesty. *(bows and exits)*

KING CHI: Well come on then everybody go about your business, what's done is done and we must make the best of it. Toby you clear up in here everyone else look to your own affairs.

Enter QUEEN BO as everyone else except TOBY exits.

QUEEN BO: What has been going on here.

KING CHI: There has been a terrible accident my dear.

QUEEN BO: Oh no they haven't elected (Unpopular politician) again.

KING CHI: No my dear much worse than that. We had better go to our rooms and I can tell you there.

QUEEN BO: It's about Celeste isn't it?

KING T: I'm afraid so. Come along and I'll tell you everything.

QUEEN BO: Oh dear! Oh dear! My poor, poor Celeste. Oh dear! Oh dear!

The KING leads the QUEEN off as TOBY places the Sentinel's Case on it's Base. Lights Down.

Intermission

*ACT II Scene 1**In the village. PERCIVAL enters.*

PERCIVAL: (*Unfurls proclamation Ringing hand bell.*) Gather round for a message from the King of Kanaka Valley, King Chi, Ruler of the Kanakan, Holder of the Great Mace, Father of Celeste, etc., etc.,

(A crowd has gathered including Sparko and Moosense and Petar.)

(Unfurls a proclamation.) My subjects, my friends, my supporters today a dark cloud has come over Kanaka Valley. My daughter, the Princess Celeste has been abducted along with one of her maids. *(All gasp)* And the Sentinel, the source of all good fortune in Kanaka Valley has been stolen from the Sentinel Room where it has remained for as long as anyone can remember. *(Crowd murmurs.)* The Princess' abduction and the stealing of the Sentinel were both done with powerful magical means by a Sorcerer, one Shardashmid, who arrived and departed in great flashes of light and claps of sound. *(Crowd Oooos)* Because of this I am declaring a National Emergency. As of today I am offering the Princess' hand in marriage to anyone who can rescue her and bring back the Sentinel. Anyone wishing to take up this most honorable quest must present themselves to me and if accepted they will be properly equipped and given what information we have.

Bless you all. Peace and happiness to you and your families in these troubled times..

Signed King Chi.

(Percival rolls up the proclamation and makes as though to leave.)

Villager 1: When did this thing happen?

PERCIVAL: Only hours ago.

Villager 2: Somebody should do something.

PERCIVAL: Perhaps you would like to take up the quest.

Villager 2: Who me - er - I can't I - er I've got my shop to keep.

PERCIVAL: Anybody??

(There is a long uncomfortable silence.)

SPARKO: *(Stepping forward)* I would take up the Quest. What should I do??

MOOSENSE: Chees Sparko you 'ave gone off your rockerr. Guys who arrive in flashes of light and t'under are dangerous you might get killed.

PERCIVAL: I will take a message to the King that we have a hero.(exits)

Villager 1: Hooray for Sparko.

Villager 2: Yes hooray for Sparko.

(Crowd cheer and shake hands with Sparko and leave Sparko and Moosense on stage alone)

MOOSENSE: Now, as my old mamma used to say, your up to your neck and one step away from bein' over yer 'ead.

SPARKO: We have to rescue the poor Princess?

MOOSENSE: We? We? What's dis we t'ing? Sounds to me like the Princess was abducted by a mighty powerful fella who might see mah future in terms of cans of dog food if ah was foolish enough to annoy him. No I didn't like de we part at all. I t'ink you should have said I. I has a much better ring to it, all in all. I like my body the way it is, I don't really want it rearranged into tasty chunks small enough to fit into pet food cans. Anyway you don't need me, I can' t climb mountains and know beans about magic.

SPARKO: Are you afraid?

MOOSENSE: Yes

SPARKO: Oh!! Well don't you want to be a hero and get the Sentinel back.

MOOSENSE: No

SPARKO: Oh!! Wouldn't you like some adventure; a break from the everyday; a chance to see and hear new things; a journey into the unknown; the final frontier; to go where no man -er - Moose has gone before.

MOOSENSE: Well now put like dat ---- No!

SPARKO: I can't do it alone Moosey. Please come with me - please.

MOOSENSE: We-e-ell!

SPARKO: Please, please, please, please, ten thousands pleases?

MOOSENSE: Oh maybe.

SPARKO: Oh thank you, thank you. You won't regret it.

MOOSENSE: I probably will.

enter Petar

PETAR: I just heard. You are going to rescue the Princess.

SPARKO: And get the Sentinel back.

PETAR: They say that Petal was taken too.

SPARKO: Yes. I'm so sorry Petar.

PETAR: I want to come too.

SPARKO: It will be very dangerous.

PETAR: I would die for my sweet Petal.

SPARKO: To have you by my side would be terrific Petar.

PETAR: Consider it done then.

SPARKO: Not so much rush Petar. I still have to get the King's permission.

Enter Percival.

PERCIVAL: Ladies and Gentlemen show your allegiance to The King and Queen of Kanaka.

Enter King and Queen and courtiers and guards.
Villagers gather.

PERCIVAL: Your Highness this is Sparko Talsun of Forge Village who has offered to accept the quest to save the Princess and bring back the Sentinel.

Sparko steps forward and kneels before the King.

QUEEN: (aside to the King) That's the young man who was entertaining the Princess at the Ball. I do believe the Princess is in love with him.

KING: Rise Sparko Talsun, my brave son. Do you understand that this will involve grave danger. The journey alone is arduous and you may die at Shardashmid's hands in the Misinchinka Mountains.

SPARKO: I would rather die than live long without my Princess.

GUARD: Ooh he is bold.

SPARKO: I have a bequest your Highness.

KING: Speak.

SPARKO: (beckons Moosense and Petar) I would take my faithful Moosense and my best friend Petar.

QUEEN: (aside to the King) Petar is Petal's sweetheart, he must be in anguish thinking of what may have happened to her.

KING: You have my permission Sparko Talsun and I grant your bequest to take your friends. There is not a moment to waste. You must go immediately to the palace where I have ordered preparations to equip you. And you must see Toby before you leave, he will provide you with much intelligence. He is also at the palace. Go swiftly and all our good wishes go with you all.

Lights down.

Scene 2

On stage apron in front of curtains.

Somewhere on the road. ENTER SPARKO and MOOSENSE looking weary. Sparko leads Moosense who has provisions on his back. Sparko will be much better dressed and equipped than we have seen him so far. They are armed. PETAR brings up the rear.

SPARKO: We have to camp soon Moosense, it's getting dark. There's here grass for you to nibble at, some shelter from those trees, a flat place to put up my bivouac and I think I can hear a stream over there a bit.

MOOSENSE: This place looks just fine, just fine. My feet are killin' me. Seems like hours since we saw a lake or some grass.

PETAR: It is hours.

MOOSENSE: That would explain it then. How much furreder is it to dis grim and grimy place.

PETAR: Elgrim and Elgrima!!! Another days travel at least. We may get there tomorrow night or perhaps the morning after.

MOOSENSE: Boy dis is a long walk.

SPARKO: It's not the walk that bothers me but what's at the end of it. *(Starts unpacking Moosense.)*

MOOSENSE: What did you say? I couldn't hear.

SPARKO: Do you think taking on this quest was a bit, well, rash?

MOOSENSE: Rash!! No, no, not at all. Shardrashmid is immortal and you are mortal; yes; aaaaand he has tremendous powers of magic that can move whole mountainsides while you can't do any magic but can swing a hammer and crack big rocks; aaaand ---

SPARKO: Thanks a lot!! Some friend you are. Now I feel really depressed.

MOOSENSE: Oh ah'm sorry Sparko. You'll make it t'rough just fine. I was only razzin' you.

SPARKO: What you say is really true though. Shardrashmid is a great sorcerer, very, very powerful. And what have I got. *(Slumps down and sits on floor)*

MOOSENSE: Hey, hey, what would de little princess think if she saw you like this.

SPARKO: *(Sits up)* The princess!!

MOOSENSE: Yeh the princess. Ya know, that girl who you came to save, you remember, the one with the long hair and pretty...

SPARKO: *(Jumps up)* Alright, alright that's enough already.

MOOSENSE: Well that was a sudden change.

SPARKO: Yes. One part of me wants to rush up there and beat the bejeebers out of Shardrashmid but another part is - is -

MOOSENSE: scared stupid.

SPARKO: Well I wouldn't have put it quite like that but - er - yes.

MOOSENSE: Me too. That guy will make road kill of us. *(Starts off)* Let's get the hell back to Forge Village, have a good hot meal and get a good nights sleep. I'm already tired of all this

PETAR: Hold it! Hold it! Not so fast Moosense. Who said anything about going back.

MOOSENSE: Well I thought...

SPARKO: You thought wrong. I might be - yes - scared stupid, but a coward isn't somebody who feels fear it's somebody who runs away from danger. Abandons a wonderful person in their time of need. Leaves a friend in distress and goes to a party.

MOOSENSE: Ah think your takin' the point a bit far.

PETAR: We're not going back.

MOOSENSE: Ah never t'ought for a moment we were.

SPARKO: Your just trying to make me feel better.

MOOSENSE: If you'd prefer you could bend down and ah could suddenly accelerate you about two feet in the air with my hind legs.

SPARKO: *(Mutters trying to figure it out)* bend down....accelerate two foot in the air... Oh! You mean give me a good kick in the seat of my pants.

MOOSENSE: More or less.

SPARKO: I think I'll pass on that. Thanks for the offer all the same. *(beat)* So what do you do when you're scared stupid.

MOOSENSE: When I was just a little calf me and mah ma, for the first few months of my life, lived together in the forest. Most of the time mah looked after me, bein' a little tike an all, but sometimes she would have to go off for a few hours.

SPARKO: Go off?

MOOSENSE: Yeah, to look for better forage and 'tings like dat. And when she went away and I was left on my liddle ownsome ah would get very frightened. The woods can be a scarey place for a little calf on it's own. And I was sure I smelled a grisly bear once. I was scared stupid.

PETAR: scared stupid. So that's how it happened.

MOOSENSE: Smarty pants.

SPARKO: So what did you do.

MOOSENSE: Singing always made me feel better.

SPARKO: Singing, Hmmm!

"Do you think we can make it."

*Do you think we can make it, do you think we can
do you think we can make it if we have a good plan
can we thump him on the head can we stomp him on the toe
can we fill him up with lead and throw him out the window.
Hold on, he is very powerful, Hold on he is very magical
He is very evil, so diabolical
But I have a love, a good heart and a soul
We are the best, here we stand
We can save the whole land
We can save Princess Celeste
bring her home and all the rest
----- on the other hand-----*

*Do you think we can make it, do you think we can win
do you think we can make it if we hit him on the chin
can we lay him out flat with a wooden roller pin
can we pin him to a mat and use him for a bearskin
Hold on, he is truly largo, Hold on he is supremo
He is very sinister, so very powerful
But I have a love, a heat and soul*

*We are the best, here we stand
 We can save the whole land
 We can save Princess Celeste
 bring her home and all the rest
 ----- on the other hand-----*

*Do you think we should do this, do you think it would be wise,
 do you think we should do this, what would you advise
 can we sneak up behind him if we wear a disguise
 can we scare him half to death with an explosive noise
 Hold on, he is very maximize, hold on, he can truly brutalize
 He can turn us into dust, make us vaporize
 But I have a love, a good heart and a soul
 We are the best, here we stand
 We can save the whole land
 We can save Princess Celeste
 bring her home and all the rest
 ----- on the other hand-----*

MOOSENSE: Hey that was fun, let's do it again.

SPARKO: I think we should be going to sleep. According to Toby's map have another hard days walking ahead of us to get to Elgrim and Elgrima's Cabin and who knows what else after that.

MOOSENSE: Ya know you would do good as a funeral director or no, no – one of those guys that they used to have on a Roman galley with a whip.

SPARKO: A slave driver?? You're calling me a slave driver.

MOOSENSE: Na, you're right we need to sleep, I suppose. Good Night. *(Starts to settle down)*

SPARKO: Good Night. Goodnight Petar. *(Also getting ready for sleep.)*

PETAR: Good night all. See you bright and early.

MOOSENSE: Early anyway.

end of scene

Scene 3

*Inside a simple one room cabin.
Elgrim is seated cross legged on the floor, his back to the door..*

SPARKO: *(Off)* Hello, *(Knocks)* anybody home.*(Pause)* Hello. *(Enters)* Hello, hell----
Oh! *(Sees Elgrim)* Excuse me I didn't know anyone was here. I would have
(Notices that Elgrim hasn't moved. Walks over and taps him on the shoulder.)
Hello.

PETAR enters behind him. MOOSENSE: (Pokes head inside door.)

ELGRIM: *(Jumps)* Huooff!! What the - who are you?

SPARKO: I'm sorry to startle you. I'm Sparko.

ELGRIM: Sparko, I don't remember anyone called Sparko making an appointment.

SPARKO: I didn't make an appointment. I'm not sick I just want a bed for the night.

ELGRIM: This is not an Inn.

SPARKO: I know but they said that you would help if you knew why I was here.

ELGRIM: Oh!

SPARKO: Yes, you see I am here to rescue the Princess Celeste and recover the
Sentinel from Shardrashmid.

ELGRIM: Ooooh! Your that Sparko.

SPARKO: You've heard of me.

ELGRIM: Yes we heard of your quest. You are welcome. Who is your companion?

SPARKO: This Petar.

ELGRIM: *(Getting up)* Oh my poor aching bones!!

ELGRIMA: *(Enters)* I still think it should have been put the other side of the.....
Who's this.

ELGRIM: This is Sparko we've been told of, come to rescue our Princess and recover
the Sentinel with his friend Petar.

ELGRIMA: Welcome Sparko, welcome Petar.

SPARKO: You're very generous, thank you.

MOOSENSE: And I'm Moosense.

ELGRIMA: Welcome too Moosense. There is a strong and warm hut along back with some clean straw and moist leaves to eat.

MOOSENSE: Now you're talkin' (*exits*)

ELGRIMA: Do you know the dangers you face?

SPARKO: Yes I ---- Well no not really, except that I know that Sorcerer's are not to be messed with.

ELGRIM: Amen to that.

ELGRIMA: And double Amen when the Sorcerer is Shardashmid. But we are lacking in our duties as hosts. Have you eaten. Are you thirsty.

SPARKO: I have some rations and my water bottle ----

ELGRIMA: Ptcha. At least for one night you shall eat and drink well here to prepare you for the dangers ahead. This at least we can do and maybe much more.

ELGRIM: Yes let's eat and drink while we tell you what we know about Shardashmid.

ELGRIMA: Sit here and rest while I prepare a meal.

Elgrima furnishes table..

ELGRIM: So you have traveled long and hard.

PETAR: Yes three days already. But it is a worthy cause. You know do you the story of what happened to the Sentinel and how the Princess Celeste and Petal were abducted.

ELGRIM: Even up here in the mountains we heard of the terrible events. And you accepted the quest. You are very brave to pit yourself against the mighty Shardashmid. A mighty force.

SPARKO: Yes I accepted the quest to bring back the Sentinel. A decision much easier in the safety of my village but up here seems a different thing. Very different.

ELGRIM: Now is not a time for faint hearts.

SPARKO: No you are right I must have courage. I must be strong

ELGRIM: Strong and brave but not fool hardy. Shardrashmid is very powerful.

SPARKO: How powerful. *(Drawing sword and feeling edge.)*

ELGRIM: Shardrashmid can make a landslide with muttered incantation.

SPARKO: No!!

ELGRIM: He can cause lightning strikes by pointing his finger.

SPARKO: Ohhh! *(Groan)*

ELGRIM: And he will have the assistance of the evil Siren Ongreen who consumes men's souls to lengthen her own life.

SPARKO: Stop, stop. How foolish I am to even think of confronting him.

ELGRIM: All is not lost for they have weaknesses and you will have help.

SPARKO: Help? What help?

ELGRIM: *(Opens chest and takes out a covered lantern.)* Here take this?

SPARKO: What is it?

ELGRIM: Take off the cover.

*When Sparko removes the cover the scene is covered in a strange light.
He puts the cover back again.*

ELGRIM: This is Kusramis' Lamp. It has many powers. It can sense danger, it will expose evil and drain it's power.

SPARKO: Who is Kusramis?

ELGRIM: A very old and good sorcerer. Shardrashmid was his apprentice who later turned to evil ways.

PETAR: Does it come batteries included?

ELGRIM: It's power source is inexhaustible.

PETAR: So we will be able to fight magic with magic.

ELGRIM: I have given you a tool, it alone will not win the day but with courage and wit and your quick thinking you have a chance. Here! Here is some wine, it is distilled from alpine flowers. Drink, it clears the head wonderfully and relaxes the body.

They raise their glasses to a toast.

SPARKO: The wine lifts my heart and dispels my black mood. I feel now we have a chance.

"Raise Our Glasses".

*There are three of us as you will have seen
we'll defeat the wizard and Ongreen
with the help of Kusramis Lamp
we'll win the day, why don't you wait and see.*

Chorus

*Raise our glasses to the open sky
may the sun guide us on our way
here's to all the brave, strong hands
who go forth into evil lands.*

*There's a Sentinel in a Crystal Case
mounted on a magic base
the evil one may have stolen it easily
but we'll get it back and set our people free.*

Chorus

*We will climb that hill, we will ford that stream
we do whatever we must do
wind, nor snow, nor evil can stop us
with Kusramis' Lamp we can do it all.*

Chorus

*With a glass of wine and a merry cheer
banish darkness, ne'er do wells and fear
through the haze of boisterous fun and laughter
we will all live happily every after.*

ELGRIMA: Well I need my beauty sleep.

ELGRIM: Do you ever!!

ELGRIMA: Sparko, Petar here are some blankets. Make yourselves comfortable wherever you can.

SPARKO: You are most kind. *(Glances at Petar who nods)* We shall sleep with Moosense, our true and faithful friend has kept us warm till now and will again. Goodnight to you both.

ELGRIM: Goodnight Sparko.

SPARKO: Till the morning.

Exit Sparko and Petar.

ELGRIMA: They are so brave but so young and inexperienced. Can they do the job.

ELGRIM: Have faith Elgrima. Young Sparko has hidden strengths . All will be well.

ELGRIMA: It is good to hear you say so. Perhaps you are right.

ELGRIM: Perhaps, what do you mean perhaps.

ELGRIMA: Well you were wrong about the humungous tree.

ELGRIM: I was not.

The lights go down as they argue.

ELGRIMA: Oh yes you were. It didn't bloom till late may and you said ---

ELGRIM: Nonsense, it was because you forgot to dig the roots and fertilize in the previous year, that is why

ELGRIMA: Oh my fault as usual.

Scene 4

*On stage apron. A dark rocky, barren, windy, cold mountainside scene.
The heroes enter Sparko leading a laden Moosense with Petar behind.
Their swords are drawn.*

SPARKO: We are nearly at Blackmar Tower. I do not want to arrive during the night.
We should camp and continue tomorrow.

PETAR: This is a barren place but we have little choice

They stop and begin the business of setting up camp.

MOOSENSE: Dat wind is freezing.

SPARKO: At least you've got a fur coat.

MOOSENSE: Very funny. Very, very funn ----- What's that.

SPARKO: What.

MOOSENSE: Someone's coming.

SPARKO: *(Takes cover off Kusramis Lamp)* Are you sure?

MOOSENSE: Well pretty well. Don't now though it seems to have ----- no there it is again.

SPARKO: What do you hear.

MOOSENSE: Scary.

SPARKO: Scary!! You're giving me the

(Sort of sighing and rustling sound.)

creeps. (squeaky voice)

SPARKO, PETAR AND MOOSENSE become more and more agitated as the sound gets louder and louder till it is like a continuous sort of moan with rustling background.

Show yourself and be accounted for.(Holds Lamp high.)

A cloaked figure in the light of the lamp appears.. MOOSENSE grunts in fear and backs away. PETAR brandishes sword.

W-w-who - what are y-you?

S OF K: I am the Spirit of Kusramis. *(Throws off cloak to reveal a white figure glowing in the lamp light)*

SPARKO: Kusramis?.

S OF K: I see Elgrim has given you my lamp. That is good. You will need it.

SPARKO: Why do you come in this ghostly form and frighten me?

S OF K: I am the Spirit of Kusramis. How else would you expect a spirit to appear.

SPARKO: I dunno. I've never seen a spirit before.-----

S OF K: I have come to help you and against Shadrashmid and Ongreen you will need my help.

PETAR: How do we know you are not one of Shadrashmid's tricks or even Shadrashmid himself in disguise.

S OF K: Bravely spoken. You have only to listen to what I have to tell you. Leave my lamp uncovered it is good to see its light again and it may reassure you of my good intentions.

SPARKO: Very well.

PETAR: *(Sheathing sword)* We must continue to make camp Sparko or we will freeze here without fire or shelter from the wind.

S OF K: Carry on making camp. I will talk and help where I can.

*While S OF K talks Petar and Sparko make camp.
Opportunity for S of K to do helpful magic such as starting fire*

S OF K: When I was near the end of my life, 950 years old I took Shadrashmid as my apprentice.

PETAR: 950 years old.

S OF K: Sorcerers live exactly one thousand years till Energol and have a duty to apprentice a replacement.

SPARKO: Energol?

S OF K: When we pass from mortal into spirit form. So. I took him as my apprentice in my 950th year. A sorry mistake.

SPARKO: That you took Shardrashmid.

S of K: Oh no! He was a good boy and became like a son to me.

SPARKO: So what went wrong.

S of K: Shardrashmid almost went crazy with grief when Energol came on me but that was not the worst. A sorcerer's apprenticeship usually last at least a hundred years or more and without the guiding hand of the master the apprentice will often go astray.

PETAR: So Shardrashmid went astray.

S of K: Yes.

SPARKO: But why does he want The Sentinel.

S of K: I created the Sentinel to protect Kanaka valley and its people. It is one of my most powerful creations. Shardrashmid want's its power and knowledge.

SPARKO: The Sentinel.

S of K: Yes. But what he doesn't know is that the Sentinel, its base and its case are all parts of the one device and without being together they have little power.

SPARKO: We have the base and case with us.

S of K: Yes I know. You must hide them here somewhere on the mountain in case you get captured. They must not fall into Shardrashmid's hands while he has the Sentinel.

SPARKO: And if we fail.

S of K: Unless The Sentinel is restored with its base and case to the palace then Kanaka Valley will gradually go back to being a snowy wilderness as it was before the Sentinel was created.

SPARKO: Can you not just restore the Sentinel yourself?

S of K: As a spirit, my powers are limited, unlike (current Prime Minister). *(Goes to leave.)* Courage Sparko. I will be with you to help you. If you hear my voice take heed. Goodbye for now

SPARKO: Goodbye and thank you. *(Puts cover on lamp)*

PETAR: We need a good night's rest to prepare ourselves for the road ahead tomorrow.

SPARKO: First I must hide the Sentinel Base and Case. There was a crevice a little way back that will do nicely.

(Sparko takes the base and case off while Petar prepares the beds. The wind rises.)

MOOSENSE: Fur coat or no fur coat a moose could freeze in this place.

PETAR: I'll be glad when we move on. I see evil behind every rock.

Sparko returns and they all bed down as lights fade to black.

PETAR: Did you find a good place?

SPARKO: It is in a crevice covered in some rocks and dirt. It is safe.

PETAR: Goodnight then.

SPARKO: Goodnight.

After a few moments there is an eerie green glow.

.ONGREEN: *(Enters)* Oh what a lovely spot! What a gorgeous little spot! Just the place for the renewal of Ongreen the Siren and the end of Sparko Talsun and Petar Holdfast his friend. Oh I am so looking forward to consuming them, it has been so long since I ate and drank, I am so hungry. I can smell the sweet scent, feel the rush of power as I drain out all of the strength coursing through their bodies which will be left as zombies, te-he-he-he-he.
(Starts.) What's that.

MOOSENSE: *(Waking)* Whoaaar

(ONGREEN hides.)

SPARKO: *(Waking)* What's the matter Moosense.

MOOSENSE: Dere's somet'ing not right 'ere master. Got a bad feelin'

SPARKO: Who is there?

(ONGREEN appears in the same cloak as S of K.)

ONGREEN: It is I Spirit of Kusramis.

MOOSENSE: Dat's not him Sparko. Dat's not him.

S of K (sound effect): The lamp Petar. Use the lamp quickly.

(ONGREEN throws off the cloak and fixes Sparko in her gaze. PETAR covers his eyes and takes the cover off the lamp. ONGREEN is brought

to her knees but makes a magic sign. There is a flash that drops SPARKO, PETAR AND MOOSENSE unconscious. She struggles and just manages to cover the lamp then drops herself.)

ONGREEN: *(After a few moments she recovers.)* My powers are all drained. My meal will have to wait. At least I have some prisoners for Shadrashmid.

ONGREEN uses magic to get the heroes to stand up. She tries to pick up the lamp but it will not budge.

Curses. The Lamp will not go with me. Shadrashmid will know what to do.

She throws a cloak over it and leaves with her prisoners.

Scene 5

Blackmar Castle

*In Shadrashmid's Laboratory deep in his castle.
The stage is arranged such that a lighting shift
reveals a dungeon area.*

Shadrashmid joins the Demons and Devilettes as they sing and dance.

"The Dance of the Demons and Devilettes."

*Here we are, demons and devilettes
we torture teddy bears and terrorize your pets
live in fear if we're in your room
we're evil and we're nasty and we lurk in dark and gloom*

Chorus:

*He ha, hoo ha, he ha, ha hoo
Run and tell your mother, there's no knowing what we'll do
He ha, hoo ha, he ha, ha hoo
Run and tell your mother and we'll make you into stew.*

*If milk turns sour just as you drink the cup
you'll know we are near and quake with fear, your time is nearly up
If eggs crack, turning completely black
you'd better run, you'd better hide and look behind your back*

Chorus

*We see you sitting fit and well
We foster strife and turn your life into a living hell
We are here, hateful and heartless too
We cut up those who stand opposed and there are very few.*

Chorus

*Here we are Demons and Devilettes
When we're around what will abound no bookmaker takes bets
Lock your doors, better check 'neath the bed
'cos something's there, to give a scare, it's oozing and bloody red.*

Chorus.

Ongreen enters.

SHADRASHMID: Aaaah Ongreen! You siren! What Devil's work brings you?

ONGREEN: You flatter me Shardrashmid, you flatter me. But the Devil would have to stoop down very low to notice a mere siren like me.

SHARDRASHMID: Maybe! Maybe! Did you come here to talk of the Devil or for more immediate purposes.

ONGREEN: What could be more immediate than the Devil?? But ---Yes! We are in danger and must make plans for our defense.

SHARDRASHMID: Danger! Us! Impossible! *(Laughs heartily)*.

ONGREEN: Do not take it so lightly Shardrashmid? The threat is very real.

SHARDRASHMID: Ahh!! What threat?

ONGREEN: A Kakan has come to take back the Sentinel, one Sparko Talsun.

SHARDRASHMID: Sparko Talsun! *(Laughs even harder.)* He's a striker. All muscle from the neck down and all muscle from the neck up. A trit. A nothing. I vanquish bigger things than him by clapping my hands so. *(Claps)*.

ONGREEN: ELgrim has helped Sparko.

SHARDRASHMID: *(Still jocular.)* Elgrim and Elgrima are healers. They know a little magic but mostly all they can do is mix their herbs and cure people of their ills. Here they're not strong, my magic will crush them.

ONGREEN: They have given Sparko Kusramis' Lamp.

SHARDRASHMID: *(Less jocular)* Mmmm! Still! This brings you in panic?

ONGREEN: He has hidden the Sentinel base and case..

SHARDRASHMID: Leaving them behind was a mistake but not a serious one I think.

ONGREEN: The Spirit of Kusramis is helping Sparko and Petar.

SHARDRASHMID: *(Countenance changes.)* My master would work against me. Can't be? This must be -- Why yes!! This must be the work of The Sentinel. I will understand this thing yet. *(Shouting at Sentinel.)* Why? Why? Why can't you give up your power to me? Kusramis never intended this.

The Sentinel glows bright. Shardrashmid and Ongreen cower back and shield themselves then look apprehensive..

How know you these things?

ONGREEN: Last night, on the mountain path, I confronted them. *(Sneers)* Them and their stupid moose.

SHARDRASHMID: Moosense gave you problems.

ONGREEN: Stupid moose. If it hadn't been for that moose they never would have suspected who I was till it was too late and I would have had their souls.

SHARDRASHMID: But he was and you didn't.

ONGREEN: Yes but I did the next best thing. Bring them in.

Sparko, Petar are led in in chains.

I took them prisoner. The magic lantern resisted me.

SHARDRASHMID: You said that the spirit of Kusramis was with the boy.

ONGREEN: Yes I felt his presence heard his voice.

SHARDRASHMID: You heard his voice?

ONGREEN: Yes. They used his lamp to thwart me.

SHARDRASHMID: Aah! no matter. I have the Sentinel. Take the prisoners and chain them in sight of the Princess and her maid. Let them despair. Hahaha!

Ongreen and guards take prisoners and exit.

Lights shift to show the dungeon.

The prisoners are chained. Guard leaves.

PRINCESS: (in prison cell) Sparko! Oh Sparko!

SPARKO: Princess. *(Reaches for Princess .)* You are alive and well, we were so worried, - we all were but - Oh Princess I am so happy you are alive, so very happy.

PETAL: Petar

PETAR: Oh Petal. You are here too.

PRINCESS: It is good to see you both, I knew you would come for us, somehow I just knew, you are so brave and so strong but - .

SPARKO: but what my love - I mean - Princess - I mean Celeste,

PRINCESS: Oh Sparko I have dreamed of you every night I have been here and hoped and wished and prayed to see your face again. Oh if only you knew how much better I feel now than a few moments ago when hope was fading. Oh to be able to touch you to know it is really you that would be heaven.

SPARKO: Princess, my princess.

PRINCESS: Sparko, my Sparko.

"I Have Dreamed"

*All the flowers bow their heads for you
and the birds in the maple tree sing their songs anew
the wind is calling, calling out your name
Princess Celeste, for you my heart's aflame.*

*The tall sacred maple tree whispered your name
The little brown sparrow told me of your fame
Your are like that maple tree, brave and strong and sure
your heart is like that sparrow, gentle, kind and pure.*

Chorus:

*All the days and all the nights
I have dreamed of someone like you
All the days and all the nights
I have dreamed of someone like you.*

*The sun it rises to see your face
the moon shines it 's light with angelic grace
each night the stars dance to memories of you
a loon's nightly call, a yearning for you.*

*Each night I fell into a sacred dream
in a forest by a silver stream
I stood beneath the shelter of a maple tree
it promised me that love would rescue me.*

Chorus:

*Together:
I now give you my heart
'twas all I wished for from the start
whatever and forever our hearts will beat as one
we'll ride the winds of everlasting love.*

Chorus:

Scene 6

*Lights shift back.
Ongreen returns*

ONGREEN: The prisoners are secure. Even as we left we heard their song of despair.

SHARDRASHMID: It is time for a little celebration I think. *(claps)* Bring out the wine, bring out the beer. Let us rejoice in our victory.

*Libations are furnished as
all dance and sing
"Rock n' Roll Evil"*

*I'm Shadrashmid
and I'm Ongreen
We're evil, cruel and really mean
just for you we'll set the scene.
Tonight the kingdom will be ours
we'll have it all in a few hours*

*Chorus:
All right, all night
tonight we're gonna rule the land
all right, all night
tonight you'll be at our command.*

*The wind is howling
the moon it is shining bright
so stay behind you locked doors
'cos evil's gonna cause a fright
the wolves they are hungry
they're gonna eat their prey tonight.*

*Chorus:
We'll cast a spell, black magic
you're life will be tragic
hail, rain and thunder
every day the weather
we'll banish love from every heart
hate and fear will take it's part.*

Chorus: repeated.

*All sleep
in drunken stupor.*

*Lights shift.
S of K appears and wakens Sparko signaling silence.*

S of K: *(Releasing their chains and opening the cell doors with magic signs) Shhh!*
Quietly, quietly. Now is your chance. *(Gives Petar the Lamp)* Fair maidens
Moosense is outside the castle ready. Go there ready to leave as soon as our
heroes appear. Sparko now is your chance to take the Sentinel. Petar if they
awake you know what you must do.

*Lights shift.
Sparko and Petar enter and creep to the Sentinel which Sparko takes
but as they are leaving suddenly*

ONGREEN: *(Scream)* Awake, everyone awake. *(Runs towards heroes.)*

SHARDRASHMID: *(Roar)* What treachery is this. *(Makes a magic sign)*

*Petar takes the cover off the lantern.
Ongreen and Shardrashmid are drained of their power in it's light.
S of K enters.*

S of K: *(Taking the lamp from Petar)* Make good your escape my brave ones. Do not
stop till the Sentinel is safe back in the palace inside its case. I will clean up
here. An unfinished apprenticeship for one and Ongreen. Mmm. She needs
some professional help. Go now. Quickly, quickly.

Lights down.

Scene 7

*Fill scene on the apron to allow set change.
Tanglehead plays tag with Moosense
around audience and engage children asking them
what they think of the show.*

MOOSENSE: (Stops exhausted.) You know my life has been much more fun since we met.

TANGLEHEAD: (Flops beside him panting) Mine too. Are we best friends.

*Tanglehead and Moosense sing
"Friendship"*

*I remember when I did first see you there
your big brown eyes and tangled hair
laughter everywhere, everywhere you went
I felt so happy to be near to you.*

*I remember when I did first see you there
was it a moose or was it a bear
laughter everywhere, everywhere you went
I felt so happy to be near to you*

*Chorus:
Friendship is the water of life
for the flowers in our hearts
Friendship is the sharing of the bread
as we each play our parts.*

*Chorus tune reprise:
We are so different you and I
yet somehow we think the same.
joy of life, the fun of life
I'm so happy to be near to you.*

Scene 8

*Lights on empty Palace Ballroom.
Band strikes up "**Wedding March**"*

With a roar of the crowd the stage is flooded with extras who all bow.

Egrim and Elgrima enter and bow.

Tanglehead and Moosense enter and bow.

Toby and Bloom

S of K and Percival.

Shardrashmid and Ongreen

King and Queen.

Petar and Petal

Sparko and Princess.

End