The True Story of Cinderella

or

"Evil" Stepsisters Tell All

by Richard L. Conlon

This play was developed in part
at Chicago Dramatists Workshop.

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DEDICATION

For Emma Conlon, who already looks at life in her own special way.

The Playwright, Richard Conlon

STORY OF THE PLAY

Boy, did the "evil" stepsisters and stepmother get a bum rap. They tell their side of the story ... about how little Cinderella martyred herself into subservience and squalor, about how she gave up control of her life waiting for the right man to take care of her, and about how her two stepsisters, Anastasia and Drizella, used education (Master's degrees in finance and chemical engineering, respectively.) to come out on top. Cinderella has made herself so hapless, hopeless, and helpless that when the big ball comes, Mama has to pretend to be a fairy godmother ("Whatever that is.") to convince her to go. Then they have to try to make sparks fly between Cinderella and the Prince so they can finally get her out of the house. A delightful twist on an all-time favorite story!

CAST OF CHARACTERS

(1 M, 4 W)

ANASTASIA: Stepsister with master's in finance.
DRIZELLA: Stepsister with master's in chemical engineering.
MAMA: Their mother, a practical, level-headed woman.
ELLA: Makes herself a victim.
PRINCE: Handsome but dumb.

Playing Time: About 45 minutes.

SETTING

There are three representational sets. USL is Ella's bedroom, a dainty little girl's room in pink with a bed, a closet filled with dresses, and lots of stuffed animals and dolls scattered about. SR is a large fireplace in which Ella can sit. A sword hangs above it. In Scene 2, the ballroom is represented DSL by a tacky chandelier and several perimeter chairs.

COSTUMES

Anastasia and Drizella first wear tattered dresses, while Ella wears a beautiful one. All wear big bows in their hair to look very young. Later, the sisters wear nice dresses while Ella is dirty and dusty wearing tattered clothes. Mama adds a tiara, wig, and wand for her stint as a godmother. Ella puts on a gown and clear shoes for the ball. Prince looks handsome in some kind of regal uniform or formal tuxedo.

PROPS

For Ella's room - Stuffed animals and dolls, armful of dresses on hangers.
For Ella - *People* magazine and box of chocolates, ball gown and glass slippers.
For Sisters - Free-standing chalkboard with football-like play markings, large gong and padded hammer.
For Anastasia - Smoke bomb and cellular "flip phone."
For Drizella - 2 extremely powerful flashlights and wristwatch.
For Mama - Tiara and wand.
For Prince and Drizella - 2 swords.
For Sisters and Mama - 3 lounging chairs.
For Ella and Prince - 3 drinks *(with umbrellas)* on a tray.

ACT I
Scene 1

(AT RISE: ANASTASIA and DRIZELLA stand at the foot of the stage and talk directly to the audience. They are dressed in tattered rags.)

DRIZELLA: Once upon a time ...
ANASTASIA: There lived two nice little girls ...
DRIZELLA: *(Pointing to ANASTASIA.)* Named Anastasia ...
ANASTASIA: *(Pointing to DRIZELLA.)* And Drizella.
DRIZELLA: Now, these names were kind of funny-sounding to most people.
ANASTASIA: But they were the names of our two grandmothers.
DRIZELLA: So, we liked them.
ANASTASIA: A lot.
DRIZELLA: The names.
ANASTASIA: The grandmothers, too.
DRIZELLA: Oh, yes. Of course.
ANASTASIA: Actually, as we got older …
DRIZELLA: We thought our names were …
ANASTASIA: Cool.
DRIZELLA: Way cool.
ANASTASIA: We lived alone with our dear Mama in a place called Squalor.
DRIZELLA: In the county of Bare Cupboard.
ANASTASIA: It means we were poor.
DRIZELLA: Way poor.
ANASTASIA: We were so poor that the only toys we could play with were air toys.

(LIGHTS up on side of stage. The GIRLS skip there, kneel or sit and mime that they're playing with dolls.)

ANASTASIA: *(Making a manly voice.)* Princess Barbie?
DRIZELLA: What is it, Prince Ken?
ANASTASIA: Do you know what time it is?
DRIZELLA: Now?

ANASTASIA: Yes, now.
DRIZELLA: Midnight.
ANASTASIA: In that case, I love you.
DRIZELLA: I know.
ANASTASIA: Will you marry me?
DRIZELLA: No.
ANASTASIA: How come you don't want to marry me?
DRIZELLA: Because I'm going to be a chemical engineer.
ANASTASIA: What about you, Skipper?
DRIZELLA: *(Holding up another imaginary doll; changing HER voice.)* I'm going to be a pirate.
ANASTASIA: *(Again talking to audience.)* Until one day ...
DRIZELLA: One fine day ...

(LIGHTS up on a side of the stage. MAMA stands in the LIGHT.)

MAMA: Anastasia! Drizella! Come here, my dear girls. *(The GIRLS go to her.)*
ANASTASIA: Yes, Mama?
DRIZELLA: What is it, Mama?
MAMA: I have some wonderful news.
ANASTASIA & DRIZELLA: What? What is it? Tell us, Mama.
MAMA: Girls, we're going to have a new father.
DRIZELLA: We are?
MAMA: And live with him in a new house.
ANASTASIA: What about Daddy?
MAMA: He will not be coming with us.
ANASTASIA: Why not?
MAMA: He has not fulfilled his fiscal responsibility to his family.
DRIZELLA: What does that mean?
ANASTASIA: He's a deadbeat.
MAMA: You're going to have a new father, a new house, and a new sister.
DRIZELLA: A new sister!
ANASTASIA: Yippee!
DRIZELLA: Yay!

End of Freeview

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