SOFTWARE & TECH

Cinderella 2013 Broadway Script

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A Timeless Tale Reimagined: Inside the Cinderella 2013 Broadway Script

The year 2013 marked a watershed moment for Broadway musicals, offering a fresh and daring take on one of the most beloved fairy tales of all time. When the curtain rose on the new stage adaptation of Rodgers and Hammerstein's **Cinderella**, audiences were not simply treated to a nostalgic re-run of the classic story. Instead, they discovered a production that was both enchantingly familiar and thrillingly modern. At the very heart of this transformation was a carefully revised script—the **Cinderella 2013 Broadway script**—which redefined the prince and the scullery maid for a contemporary generation without losing the magic that made the story famous.

This production was not a straightforward revival of the 1957 television film. While it carried the same legendary musical score by Richard Rodgers and Oscar Hammerstein II, the book (the term for the spoken dialogue and plot structure in a musical) was completely overhauled. The result was a show that felt at once classic and brand new, breaking box office records and winning over critics and families alike. Let us explore what made this particular script so special, how it updated the narrative, and why it continues to be studied by theatre enthusiasts and students of dramatic writing.

The Evolution of a Story: From Television to the Great White Way

To understand the impact of the **Cinderella 2013 Broadway script**, one must first look at its origins. Rodgers and Hammerstein originally wrote *Cinderella* for a television special starring Julie Andrews in 1957. It was a live event, watched by over 100 million people. Unlike their other stage musicals such as *Oklahoma!* or *The Sound of Music*, this version was never intended for the Broadway stage. It was a television musical, and its script was simple, direct, and tailored to the small screen.

Over the decades, the show was revised several times for stage productions, but it was never a major Broadway hit. That changed when producers Robyn Goodman and Jill Furman decided to commission a complete overhaul. They brought in playwright Douglas Carter Beane to write the new book. Beane, known for his sharp wit and ability to blend comedy with social commentary, was tasked with making the story relevant to the 21st century while honoring the original score. The result was a script that retained the beloved songs—"In My Own Little Corner," "Ten Minutes Ago," "Do I Love You Because You're Beautiful?"—but completely reimagined the characters and their motivations.

A Deeper Dive into the Plot: What Changed?

For anyone familiar with the animated Disney version or the 1957 television film, the 2013 Broadway production offered several significant surprises. The **Cinderella 2013 Broadway script**did not simply present a passive girl waiting to be rescued. Instead, it introduced a heroine who was an activist at heart.

The Protagonist: Ella as a Dreamer with a Purpose

In Beane's version, Ella (she is never called Cinderella by her friends) is not just dreaming of a prince. She is dreaming of a better world. She reads books, she questions authority, and she believes in fairness and equality. Her famous song "In My Own Little Corner" is no longer just a whimsical daydream. It becomes a declaration of her desire to see justice and beauty in the world. This shift gave the character immense depth. She is not waiting for a man to change her life; she is actively preparing herself to engage with the world on her own terms. The script

emphasizes that her intelligence and kindness are her true assets, not just her physical beauty or her tiny feet.

The Prince: From Romantic Lead to Reformer

Prince Topher, as he is named in this version, is perhaps the most radically changed character. In the traditional tale, the prince is a one-dimensional figure—handsome, charming, and determined to find the girl who fits the slipper. The **Cinderella 2013 Broadway script**gave him a brain and a conscience. Topher is a well-meaning but naïve young man who has been poorly advised by his guardian, Sebastian (a new character). He is unaware of the suffering of his people. He does not know that his taxes are crushing the poor or that his kingdom is run with an iron fist.

Ella's influence on him is not just romantic; it is political. She teaches him to see the world from a different perspective. She challenges him to think for himself and to use his power for good. Their relationship is built on mutual respect and intellectual connection, not just a fleeting dance. This made the love story far more compelling for modern audiences who demand equality in their fictional relationships.

New Characters and Subplots

One of the most delightful aspects of the **Cinderella 2013 Broadway script**was the introduction of new characters that added depth and humor. Jean-Michel, a passionate young revolutionary, is a close friend of Ella. He is a firebrand who wants to overthrow the corrupt government. While slightly comical in his fervor, he provides the crucial political context for the story. He is the voice of the people, forcing both the prince and Ella to confront real-world problems.

Another significant addition was the character of Madame, the stepmother. In the original, she is simply cruel. In Beane's version, she is given a backstory. She is not just a villain; she is a woman who was scorned by the aristocracy and has become bitter. While she remains the antagonist, her motivations are slightly more fleshed out, making her a more complex figure. The stepsisters, Charlotte and Gabrielle, were also revised. One remains silly and vain, while the other, Gabrielle, is actually kind to Ella and has her own romantic subplot. This created a richer ensemble feel and gave the story more emotional texture.

The Role of the Fairy Godmother: Marie, the Madwoman

The Fairy Godmother in this production was named Marie. Far from being a wispy, ethereal being, Marie is presented as a charmingly eccentric homeless woman who wanders the streets. She is overlooked and dismissed by society, yet she holds the key to magic and transformation. This was a brilliant thematic choice. The script suggests that magic can be found in the most unexpected places and that the people society often ignores might have the most wisdom. Marie's transformation into the glittering Fairy Godmother for the ball scene was a spectacular visual moment, but her core identity as a marginalized person gave the script a social conscience. When she sings "Impossible," it is not just about pumpkins turning into carriages; it is about the very real possibility of changing the world through courage and faith.

Themes of Social Justice and Agency

Perhaps the most praised aspect of the **Cinderella 2013 Broadway script**was its thematic focus on social justice. The phrase "the sweetest sound in the world is the sound of your own voice" became a central motto for the show. The script consistently encouraged the characters—and by extension, the audience—to speak up against injustice.

- Personal Agency: Ella refuses to accept her fate. She actively seeks change.
- Civic Responsibility: Prince Topher learns that being a leader means serving the people, not just being served.
- Empathy: The script asks us to look beyond appearances and see the inherent worth in everyone, from the ragged godmother to the poor villagers.

- Transformation from Within: The magic in the show is a metaphor for the power of believing in oneself. The slipper does not make Ella a princess; her character does.

These themes were woven so seamlessly into the dialogue that the show never felt preachy. Instead, it felt uplifting and inspiring. Parents found themselves deeply moved, and children were exposed to important ideas about kindness and justice in a way that was entirely entertaining.

The Language and Humor of the Script

Douglas Carter Beane brought a distinct, witty voice to the **Cinderella 2013 Broadway script**. The dialogue is peppered with clever one-liners and sarcastic remarks that keep the tone light, even when dealing with serious issues. For instance, the stepsister Charlotte might say something hilariously vapid, while Ella counters with a dry, intelligent comment. This blend of high comedy and heartfelt drama kept the energy of the show vibrant. The playfulness of the language prevented the political themes from feeling heavy. Beane trusted the audience to laugh at the absurdity of the court while simultaneously rooting for the revolution of kindness that Ella and Topher represent.

Musical Book Integration

Any great musical script must work in perfect harmony with its songs. The **Cinderella 2013 Broadway script**was masterful in how it set up each musical number. Because Ella was already established as an intelligent and socially conscious young woman, songs like "In My Own Little Corner" felt grounded in her character. When the Prince sang "Ten Minutes Ago," it was not just about love at first sight; it was about a man realizing that someone can see him as a person, not just as a title. The act one finale, "The Prince Is Giving a Ball," became an ensemble number full of excitement and anxiety, reflecting the stakes for everyone in the kingdom. The script ensured that every song emerged directly from a dramatic need, which is the hallmark of great musical theatre writing.

Stagecraft and the Script's Demands

It is also worth noting that the **Cinderella 2013 Broadway script**was written with a specific vision for stage magic. The dialogue frequently sets up moments of breathtaking theatrical illusion. The transformation of the pumpkin into a carriage, the appearance of the white dress, and the grand ballroom scenes were all meticulously described in the script's stage directions. These moments were not just spectacle; they were the physical manifestation of the emotional transformations happening within the characters. The script dictated that the magic should be visible and awe-inspiring, reminding audiences of the unique power of live theatre to create wonder.

Critical and Commercial Success

The impact of this revised script was immediate. The production ran for 770 performances on Broadway, a remarkable achievement for a revival of a lesser-known Rodgers and Hammerstein work. It was nominated for nine Tony Awards, including Best Revival of a Musical. Critics universally praised the book, noting that it had given the show a modern heart without sacrificing its classic soul. The **Cinderella 2013 Broadway script**became a gold standard for how to update a beloved property. It proved that audiences crave depth and relevance, even in a fairy tale. They want their princesses to have ambitions beyond marriage and their princes to be worthy of their respect.

Legacy and Influence

Today, the 2013 script is the definitive version of the stage musical. It is licensed for performance by amateur and professional theatres around the world. When schools and community theatres produce *Cinderella*, they are almost always using this version. It has influenced how other classic stories are adapted for the stage. The emphasis on character development, social themes, and strong female leads can be seen in subsequent revivals and new works. The success of this script demonstrated that there is a hungry audience for intelligent, family-friendly

entertainment that does not talk down to its young viewers.

Why This Script Matters for Writers and Readers

For anyone studying the craft of playwriting or adaptation, the **Cinderella 2013 Broadway script** is a masterclass. It shows how to take a beloved, simple story and inject it with contemporary values without breaking the original spell. Beane understood that the fairy tale structure—a downtrodden heroine, a magical helper, a crisis, a triumph—is timeless. What needed to change were the details. By giving Ella opinions and ambitions, he made her a heroine for the modern age. By giving Prince Topher a learning curve, he made the romance more satisfying. By adding social context, he made the story feel urgent.

It is a script that respects its source material while also challenging it. It does not shy away from the fact that the original story is, on its surface, about a girl finding a wealthy husband. Instead, it interrogates that premise and asks: What if she found a partner who helps her change the world? The answer is a show that is both familiar and revolutionary.

Conclusion: A Script That Gives You Wings

The **Cinderella 2013 Broadway script** is far more than a simple retelling of a children's story. It is a carefully crafted piece of literature that uses the framework of a fairy tale to discuss matters of the heart and society. It returns the word "dream" to its original meaning—not just a wish, but a vision for a better world. By giving Ella intelligence, the prince a conscience, and the kingdom a political reality, the script created a story that resonates deeply with anyone who has ever felt overlooked or yearned for change.

The magic of this script lies not only in the pumpkin and the glass slipper but in its profound belief that kindness, courage, and the sound of one's own voice can truly transform the world. It is a testament to the enduring power of a good

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