

The (Mostly) Sleeping Princess

By Pete Malicki & Geraldine Aegerter

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Cast: The Sleeping Princess
An elf
A witch
A prince

Set: The tower of the Sleeping Princess. A bed is in the middle and a mirror to one side.

Scene One

The princess is asleep in her bed. The elf stands to one side of the stage wearing a green, floppy hat and green outfit.

ELF: Welcome to our story. This is a story about a sleeping princess who lives in a magic forest. Not *the* sleeping princess, mind you. No, Sleeping Beauty and that prince what's-his-name didn't work out. She went back to sleep after the divorce but no one wants to wake her up any more because she's fifty-something. She's living off the rent from a couple of investment castles.
Anyway, this is a story about *our* sleeping princess. This one, right here. Isn't she beautiful?

The Sleeping Princess lets out a loud snore.

ELF: *Our* sleeping princess was lucky enough to get cursed by a rather incompetent witch. See, once upon a time the princess was walking through the magic forest eating a chocolate bar when she bumped into a wrinkly old crone with frizzy hair and rotten teeth. "Give me some of that delicious chocolate bar," the crone groaned. The princess thought about it, but it was simply too delicious and she didn't want to share, so she just walked on by.

As it turns out, the old crone was a witch, and while she didn't have the power to brush her teeth or to buy a decent conditioner, she *did* have the power to curse our lovely princess. Ever since that day, she has slept for twenty out of every twenty-four hours and is known to all the creatures in her realm as the Sleeping Princess.

The obvious solution for our slumbering leader was a kiss from a handsome prince. Unfortunately, she has been looking far and wide and there is a real prince drought at the moment. Even singleprincecharming dot com hasn't helped.

Ah, but is that the time? The Sleeping Princess must be waking up soon. Let us sit back and observe her in her ordinary, everyday life.

The elf steps back to the side of the room as the witch enters. The witch cannot see him.

WITCH: Wake up, my dear. Today is no ordinary day. I have news for you. Wake up!

ELF: Ah, here is Snow White's stepmother. One of the most powerful witches in the magic forest and the princess's *second* favourite companion.

The princess wakes up, rubs her eyes and smiles at the witch.

PRINCESS: Oh, if it isn't my favourite companion! How are you this morning?

WITCH: Well, it's three in the afternoon, but yes. I'm grand. Listen princess, I have

some wonderful news for you.

PRINCESS: You do?

WITCH: Yes. Yes. I believe I have finally located someone who can lift your curse.

ELF: Snow White's stepmother is always searching through her old books to help the princess.

PRINCESS: Oh my. Have you found me another prince?

WITCH: Well, yes I have, but this one's a little special. This one is a were-prince.

PRINCESS: A *were*-prince?

WITCH: That's right. During the day he is known as Prince Anthony, but during the night he becomes... (an expectant pause) ...an Australian.

PRINCESS: Oh my.

WITCH: Yes, I know. It's a frightening thought. But this is the best shot we've had in years. He just might be able to break your curse.

PRINCESS: Well, I am rather desperate. Can we take a look at this Prince Anthony?

WITCH: Of course. Of course. Where's the magic mirror? Did that grotty little elf take it again?

ELF: Grotty?!

PRINCESS: No, it's over there in the corner. Let's take a look.

The princess walks over to the mirror on one side of the stage, with the witch behind her.

ELF: Did I mention that Snow White's stepmother is horribly malodorous?

WITCH: Oh look, it's all smudged. That little grub stands far too close when he admires himself.

ELF: And fat. Her thighs look like a pair of epileptic seals.

PRINCESS: Mirror mirror on the wall, show me Anthony, proud and tall. Let me see this handsome prince, and of his worth make us convinced.

The prince enters, well-dressed, and walks regally to centre stage. He speaks with a British accent and talks on his mobile phone. The dots (...) denote pauses.

PRINCE: But of course, mother. Would I ever do such a thing without informing you in advance? That would not be good and proper of me... Yes, indeed. A troll is a troll and we do not want one sullyng the image of our campaigns. Perhaps we would be better off employing him in administration. Out of sight on level four... Yes, I know...

The prince looks at his watch and gasps.

PRINCE: Oh golly, is that the time? Dearie me, I must bid you a good evening, mother. I shall speak to you again presently. Toodles!

ELF: (simultaneously) He's a ponce.

WITCH: (simultaneously) He's perfect.

The prince starts to transform. He twitches and writhes around and tears his regal dress off, to reveal shorts and a singlet and thongs. He messes up his hair and loses his erect posture. He now speaks like an ocker Aussie.

PRINCE: Struth. Where's a bloody tinny when ya need one? I'm starting to get a bit too much blood back into me alcohol-stream.

The prince wanders across the stage, scratching his crotch.

PRINCE: Wouldn't mind a bit a tucker while I'm up. I think some drongo left a couple of snags in the beer fridge. Reckon they'll be alright if I leave 'em on the electric blanket for a bit.

The prince wanders over to the other side of the stage. The princess, staring into the mirror, is horrified.

PRINCESS: Oh my, he's repulsive.

WITCH: Yes, yes he is.

PRINCE: Bugger it. I'll grab a burger on me way. Better take a quick slash first though eh? Drain the ol' plumbing.

The prince walks to the back of the stage and puts his hand against the back wall, with his legs spread a foot apart. As he reaches into his pants, the princess squeals.

PRINCESS: I think I've seen quite enough. Quite enough for a lifetime. Mirror mirror on the wall, shut down.

The prince leaves the stage.

WITCH: Well, what do you think?

PRINCESS: What do I think? I am horrified. At first he was handsome and charming, but then he became so... Kyle Sandilands! How could you have thought I'd want to be anywhere near such an uncultured creature?

WITCH: He is only in his were-state at night, Princess. Maybe you can lock him in the dungeon at bedtime.

PRINCESS: Oh dear. This is no good at all. After all these years I'd about given up hope, then when you told me you had found a prince, I really, really thought things would finally be okay again.

The princess puts her head in her hands. The elf crosses his arms.

ELF: See, *I* would never do that to the princess. I love her too much. To raise her hopes just to dash them back down again is... is so... RSVP.

PRINCESS: We leave immediately.

ELF: What?

WITCH: What?

PRINCESS: It's my best shot, as you say. We will go to Prince Anthony and he will kiss me. I wish very much to have this sleeping curse lifted. Where is Percy?

Elf steps forward and clears his throat.

ELF: I'm here, Princess.

PRINCESS: Pack my bags. We're going on a trip.

ELF: A trip?

PRINCESS: That's right. To meet a handsome prince. And don't forget my favourite night table. I do so like to have my night table with me when I travel.

The witch and the princess leave the stage together. The elf, looking upset, steps forward.

ELF: And so, for five very short bursts of day and five very long nights, the princess, myself, and Snow White's smelly stepmother travelled all the way to the castle of Prince Anthony. Being the smallest and weakest of them all, I was the obvious choice to carry the bags and the night table. We arrived late one night, just before midnight, and went directly to the Prince's bedchambers.

The elf leaves the stage and the prince returns, regal and British again. He stands there brushing his clothes down. The princess and the witch burst onstage, breathless.

PRINCESS: Thank goodness! We made it.

PRINCE: Oh, hello. I don't believe we've met. My name is Prince...

The princess grabs Prince Anthony and kisses him. He looks surprised, and she looks expectant.

PRINCESS: Nothing happened. (to the witch) Did it work? Nothing happened. Surely I should *know* when the curse has been lifted.

WITCH: Yes, you'd definitely feel it.

PRINCE: My word. That's quite the first impression.

PRINCESS: Well why didn't it work?

WITCH: I'm not sure.

PRINCESS: And what do we do now? We've travelled all this way.

PRINCE: (baffled) Excuse me, ladies. It has been my utmost pleasure making your acquaintance, but I fear I will have to ask you to leave immediately. You see, it's almost midnight, and there is something...

WITCH: That's it! He can only break the curse in his were state.

PRINCESS: You must be joking.

PRINCE: Argh! Please leave!

The prince starts twitching, then undergoes his transformation as the others watch in horror. He takes his shirt off to reveal his singlet and messes up his hair. Becomes Aussie.

PRINCE: Crikey. There's *two* sheilas in me love shack. (to the witch) You're a bit of a hag, aren't ya? Shove off and cook me some of those snags. (to the princess) But *you're* a bit of alright. Wanna grab me a beer and join us on the bed?

WITCH: Go on dear. It's the only way to break the curse.

PRINCESS: I feel quite like sleeping forever, actually.

PRINCE: Don't be a stranger, love. Come give us a little smooch.

The witch pushes the princess towards the prince. She screws up her face as the prince reaches for her. He puts his tongue out for the kiss. She squeals. They kiss, her unenthusiastically, and break off after a few seconds.

PRINCESS: Oh my.

PRINCE: (British accent) Oh my.

PRINCESS: I feel so...

PRINCE: Different.

PRINCESS: So awake.

PRINCE: So noble.

WITCH: My dearies, I think both of your curses have been lifted.

PRINCE: Oh dear, what am I wearing? I look like Russel Crowe!

PRINCESS: It's okay. You're better now.

PRINCE: You have no idea how horrible that was.

PRINCESS: I think I do.

PRINCE: So...

PRINCESS: So...

The prince and princess look at each other, then slowly embrace and kiss. The witch crosses her arms, satisfied. The elf smiles and walks to the front of the stage.

ELF: And so our story comes to an end. After they kissed and the curses were broken, the prince and princess rented one of Sleeping Beauty's castles and moved in together. The both slept eight hours every night and never urinated on the neighbours' flowers. I hate to admit it, but Snow White's stepmother got it right. They both lived happily ever after.

The prince walks up to the elf and puts his arm around his shoulders.

PRINCE: Oy pixie. (beat) Get me a beer, will ya?