

GRADED READERS

BEAUTY AND THE BEAST

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Student's Book

LEVEL 2

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CHAPTER 1

ONCE UPON A TIME IN A COUNTRY FAR AWAY, THERE LIVED A very rich merchant. In fact, the merchant was the richest man in town. The merchant and his wife had three sons and two daughters. The family lived in a very big house with many rooms and servants. The merchant's wife gave birth to another daughter. The youngest daughter was very beautiful, so everyone called her Beauty. Soon after Beauty's birth, her mother died. As she grew older, Beauty became prettier and prettier. Her sisters were very jealous because everyone admired her. They were very mean to her and never played with Beauty. Beauty's brothers were nice to her, but they were always busy, so they didn't play with her either.

The merchant's older daughters were very spoiled and always asked their father for gifts. Beauty never asked her father for anything, so she became his favourite. Beauty's sisters often went to parties, but Beauty stayed home with her father. Beauty loved books and enjoyed reading to her father. A lot of young men wanted to marry Beauty's sisters because the girls were very rich. However, Beauty's sisters were not interested in these young men. They wanted to marry a prince or a duke. So they waited.

Beauty was in no hurry to get married either. "My Prince will appear some day," she thought.

And so the years went by. Beauty's sisters became even meaner to her because they couldn't find good enough husbands. But Beauty never complained.

There was a young man in town called Pierre. He was very handsome but he also showed off a lot. Pierre wanted to marry Beauty because she was so beautiful and so rich. One day, he decided to visit her. He went to Beauty's house and knocked on the door. A servant opened the door.

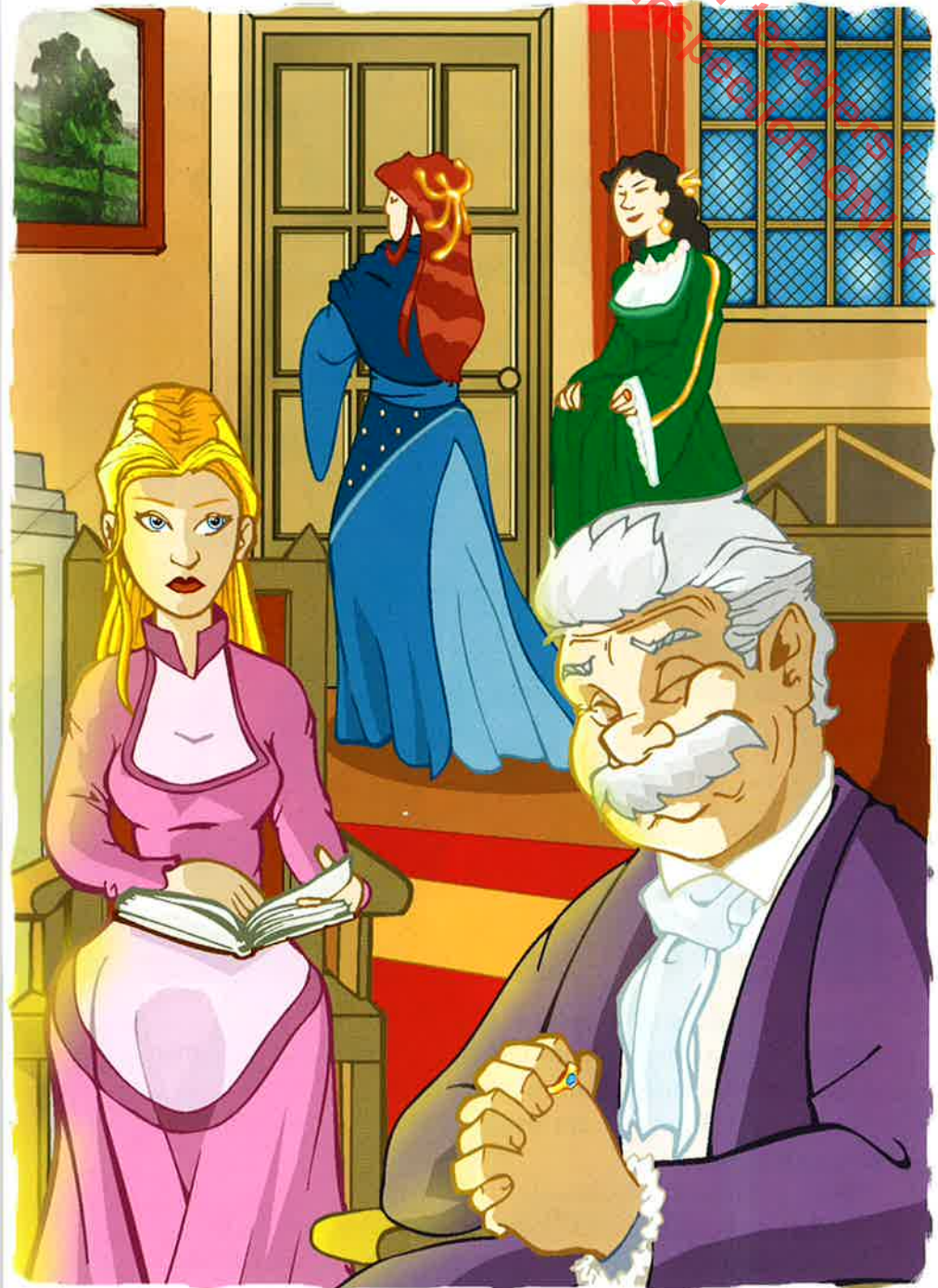
"Who are you sir and what do you want?" the servant asked.

"I am Pierre and I want to talk to Beauty," answered Pierre very rudely.

"Is she expecting you?" the servant asked.

"No, but that is not important," Pierre replied. "Just tell her I am here."

"I cannot do that," said the servant. She was about to close the door when Beauty appeared.





"Are you looking for someone, sir?" she asked.

"Yes," Pierre replied. "I am Pierre, the most handsome man in town, and I am here because I want to marry Beauty."

"Stop," said Beauty. "I am Beauty and I thank you, sir, but I am too young to marry."

"But...." Pierre started to say.

"Perhaps when I'm older," said Beauty and closed the door.

Pierre was angry and went away. However, he still wanted to marry Beauty.

CHAPTER 2

ONE DAY, THE MERCHANT GATHERED HIS CHILDREN AROUND HIM. "I have some very bad news for you, dear children. All my fortune is gone and we are no longer rich. I have worked many years to make a fortune. Now we are quite poor. We must leave this great house with its many servants."

The merchant's older daughters were very sad when they heard the news.

"What are we going to do now?" they cried. "How will we buy new clothes and go to fine parties? How will we marry a prince or a duke? Oh dear, this is terrible," said the girls and fainted.

Beauty was very calm.

"Do not worry, dear father," she said. "I will always be here to take care of you."



Soon the family sold their great house. The merchant owned a small cottage in the country far from the town. The family moved there.

Now they all had to work for a living. Beauty and her brothers woke up early every morning. The boys worked hard in the fields and Beauty did the housework. She was always cheerful and never complained. Now that she was poor, Pierre was no longer interested in marrying her. This made Beauty very happy, because she didn't like Pierre. Beauty's sisters didn't help at all. They woke up late every day and behaved as though they were still very rich. They always complained and they were very mean to Beauty. Beauty did all the work in the house because there were no servants and her sisters were so lazy. Every morning she milked the cows and cleaned the house. Then she cooked dinner for the whole family.

"If I work hard," she thought, "it will make life easier for father".

The family had to sell a lot of their possessions, but they didn't sell Beauty's books. Every evening after dinner, Beauty washed the dishes and put them away. Then, she chose a book and read a story to her father.

Weeks and months passed. One day, the merchant received a letter. When he read it, he gathered his family around him and shared the news with his children.

"My dear children, I have wonderful news. A ship with all my goods has arrived safely. I thought it was lost! Now I will sell the goods and we will be rich again."

Beauty's sisters jumped with joy when they heard the news.

"I must go on a long journey to claim my fortune," continued the merchant.

Beauty was happy for her father, but she was also a little sad because he had to go away.

"We will be rich again," exclaimed Beauty's sisters. "We will have beautiful clothes and a lot of young men will want to marry us. Go quickly, Father. Bring back our fortune and many presents for us."

Beauty didn't ask for anything.

"What would you like me to bring you, Beauty?" her father asked.

"All I want from you, Father, is that you come back home safe. But if you must bring me something, bring me a red rose."

And so the merchant set off on his journey.



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