



Credit: Carol Rosegg - Original Broadway Production

PLOT SYNOPSIS

ACT ONE

Once upon a time in a faraway forest, a young woman named Ella does chores for Madame, her stepmother, while wishing the world would be as beautiful as it appears (*The Hills Are Every Shade of Yellow*).

In another part of the land, Prince Topher is having a hard time finding his purpose in life, even though he is to become king soon (*Me, Who Am I?*). After defeating a giant in battle, Prince Topher stumbles upon Ella in front of her home. He commends Ella after he witnesses her kindness towards a homeless woman named Marie. Prince Topher and his advisor Sebastian head back to the palace, just as political radical Jean-Michel arrives, sharing his ideas about the problems between the rich and the poor.

Madame and her daughters, Gabrielle and Charlotte, return from shopping. Jean-Michel offers a book to Gabrielle, whom he loves, but Madame quickly rejects it. Jean-Michel instead offers Ella the book, and through the pages, Ella dreams of life beyond her rags (*In My Own Little Corner*).

Miles away at the palace, a ball is held to find Prince Topher a wife (*An Announcement*). While the upper crust of society are excited about the ball (*The Prince is Giving a Ball*), Jean-Michel rallies the poor to do something (*Now Is the Time*). Meanwhile, Marie witnesses all the frantic excitement while mumbling something nonsensical to herself (*Folderol*). As the Stepsisters get ready for the ball, the Lord Chancellor Sebastian visits

Madame's house and discusses plans for Gabrielle and Prince Topher to marry. Jean-Michel visits afterwards, this time with flowers for Gabrielle, but Madame throws him out.

After Madame and the Stepsisters leave, Marie magically reveals herself as Ella's Fairy Godmother and sets a plan in motion for Ella to go to the ball. With beautiful glass slippers, animals magically transformed into royal attendants, and a carriage made from a pumpkin, anything is possible (*Impossible / It's Possible!*)

Ella arrives just in time, completely transformed and unidentifiable. "Ridicule", a royal game where people trade insults and complaints, is played at the ball. She plays against Madame, but instead of swapping insults, she compliments Madame. The court is surprised and confused by this concept of kindness, and the palace fills with warmth and joy.

Prince Topher becomes smitten with this beautiful stranger (*Ten Minutes Ago*). Just as they are going to share a kiss, the clock strikes twelve, and Ella tells Prince Topher that his people are suffering and that he must do something. Ella hurriedly leaves but drops one of her glass slippers.

ACT TWO

While Prince Topher and his royal guards search for Ella (*The Pursuit*), Charlotte is left at the palace (*The Stepsister's Lament*). Eventually, Madame and her daughters return home, and as they rehash the evening, Ella describes how she would imagine the evening (*When You're Driving Through the Moonlight*). Charlotte, Gabrielle and Madame join in, dreaming about a true love (*Lovely Night*). After

Madame and Charlotte head to bed, Gabrielle and Ella bond over their secrets: Ella was the girl at the ball, and Gabrielle is in love with Jean-Michel.

At the castle, Prince Topher is sullen (*Loneliness of Evening*) and demands a banquet be held to find Ella. News spreads, and as the women head back to Madame's cottage to quickly prepare, Gabrielle pretends to be sick so she can help Jean-Michel at a soup kitchen. She also offers her dress to Ella for the banquet. Madame and Charlotte race off to the banquet, while Jean-Michel arrives to pick Gabrielle up. They are unexpectedly interrupted by Madame returning home. She banishes Gabrielle from the house and rips up Ella's borrowed dress.

Marie visits Ella and encourages her to truly believe in herself (*There's Music in You*). Marie transforms Ella's torn-up dress, once again, into a beautiful gown and sends her off to the banquet. There, Ella finds Prince Topher and shares with him that the poor are heading to the palace soon. Quickly after the poor arrive, Prince Topher finds himself inspired by their concerns and decides that there will be an election to elect the first Prime Minister of the kingdom. With all this excitement, Prince Topher and Ella question their newfound love (*Do I Love You Because You're Beautiful?*), but the clock strikes twelve, and Ella must run again.

A day later, Lord Pinkleton announces that both the election and search for Ella are in full swing. Ella appears in her normal, ragged clothes, and Prince Topher permits her to try on the slipper. He is ecstatic when it fits and proposes to Ella. And of course, everyone lives happily ever after!