

**SCENE 4: The Manor House – one week later**

*(CINDERELLA exits as the STEPMOTHER, JOY and GRACE enter, all decked out for the ball; music out.)*

STPMOTHER

Tonight my girls will be the envy of everyone at the ball!

JOY

Do you really think so, Mother?

GRACE

She said so, didn't she?

STPMOTHER

Why, our family has always been known for its fascinating women. I might have married a prince myself if I'd had the advantages you've had.

*(With growing bitterness.)*

If I'd had someone to push me like you girls do, someone to sacrifice everything for me!

*(She collects herself.)*

Now tell me, Grace – what will you say when you meet the prince?

*(GRACE is a bundle of nerves, anxious for her mother's approval, and when she's nervous, she itches uncontrollably.)*

GRACE

Well, you said to show him there's more to me than mere beauty, so I'm going to recite a poem.

JOY

Poetry? Bor-ing!

GRACE

Is not!

JOY

Is so!

GRACE

Not!

JOY

So!

GRACE

STPMOTHER

So much bickering, so little time! For heaven's sake, Grace, stop scratching yourself.