

STEPS OF THE PALACE BLOCKING (begins page 78)

A bit of theory: the whole mystery of the play regarding Cinderella is, given how rotten her home life is and how great one might imagine it being a princess, why doesn't she leap at the chance? Why does she keep running away, even though her carriage – in this story – is **not** turning into a pumpkin?

This song makes Cinderella's conundrum crystal clear – "Even though they don't care you are better off there where there's nothing to choose and so nothing to lose." In a previous song "he's a very nice prince" she has expressed the fear "if he knew who I really am" he might change his mind and she would be the subject of the ridicule that her step-mother and step-sisters have always said she would suffer.

So what Cinderella decides is basically as old as the hills – put the dude's "love" to the test. She decides if she can get him to jump through enough hoops for her that she can feel confident that his feelings are genuine, and it will work out as she hopes and dreams. If he gives up too easily, she will resolve herself to live happily with her rotten family, or at least wait for another day. If on the other hand he passes all her tests, she will let herself become his.

[Cinderella, sitting, a bit frustrated] He's a very smart prince

[look back] "he's a prince who prepares"

[strain against the pitch] "knowing this time I'd run from him"

[give up] "he spread pitch on the stairs"

[try again] "I was caught unawares"

"and I thought well" [one shoe pops free!] " he cares!"

[frees the other foot, other shoe remains stuck in pitch.] "this is more than just malice!"

[rise to a stance, holding one shoe] "better stop and take stock while your standing here stuck on the steps of the palace"

[turn to face home, SR.] "better run along home"

[look over shoulder to imaginary prince in pursuit, SL.] "and avoid the collision"

[look back at home, SR.] "even though they don't care"

[step forward DSC] "you'll be better off there"

[sit on steps] "where there's nothing to choose so there's nothing to lose"

[try to pry up remaining shoe, straining] "so you pry up your shoes..."

[rest. Beat] “then from out of the blue”

[lie on top of steps looking at shoe] “and without any guide you know what your decision is”

[get up on knees] “which is not to decide. You’ll just leave a clue”

[break the wall] “for example, “ [point to shoe] “a shoe”

[stand up] and then see what he’ll do? [you really want to know. This is THE question]

[rapid pointing quick: indicate him (left), then you (right), the shoe (left)] “now it’s he and not you that is stuck with a shoe ... “ [make circle motion near forehead] “in a stew” [indicate steps] “in the goo ... “ [you now understand something about your mother and father] “and you’ve learned something too. Something I never knew” [step forward slightly, raising arms] “on the steps of the palace!”