

# SHREK - The Musical' - production/role information

## SYNOPSIS and songs

Shrek narrates the beginning of the story: on his seventh birthday, his parents send Shrek out of their house and into the world to make his living. They warn him that because of his looks, he will be shunned by the world. Fiona butts in to describe how her parents, the King and Queen, banished her to a tower as a child. Shrek continues, telling how a bunch of 'happy people' attempt to burn Young Shrek at the stake. Adult Shrek steps into the story, banishes the villagers and tells how he set up his own private world in the swamp, away from everyone ("Big Bright Beautiful World").

Some years later, Shrek's solitude is disrupted when a refugee caravan of fairytale creatures show up on his property (including Pinocchio, the Three Bears, the Three Little Pigs, the Big Bad Wolf, Peter Pan, etc etc). They explain of their banishment from the Kingdom of Duloc, by order of the evil Lord Farquaad, who sentenced them into penal transportation for being freaks, under penalty of death if they ever return ("Story of My Life"). Although hesitant, Shrek decides to travel to see Farquaad and try to regain his swamp, along with getting the Fairytale Creatures their homes back (but mostly to get his swamp back), with much encouragement from Pinocchio and the gang ("The Goodbye Song"). Along the way, Shrek rescues a talkative donkey from some of Farquaad's guards. In return for rescuing him, and offering his friendship, Donkey insists on tagging along to show him the way to Duloc ("Don't Let Me Go"), which Shrek reluctantly agrees to, if only because he has got himself lost.

Meanwhile, in the Kingdom of Duloc, vertically-challenged Farquaad is desperate to be crowned king and so needs a wife. He is torturing Gingy the Gingerbread Man into revealing the whereabouts of a princess who might marry him; Gingy tells of Princess Fiona, trapped in a castle surrounded by hot boiling lava and guarded by a terrible fire-breathing dragon.

Flashback to the tower.... a seven-year-old Fiona dreams of the brave knight who, as her storybooks tell her, will one day rescue her and end her mysterious curse with 'true loves kiss'. As she grows into a teenager, and then a head-strong woman, she becomes a little bit stir-crazy, but she never loses her faith in her fairytales ("I Know It's Today").

Shrek and Donkey arrive in Duloc where Farquaad expresses his love for his kingdom, accompanied by his cheerful cookie-cut army of Duloc Dancers ("Welcome to Duloc" / "What's Up, Duloc?"). Farquaad tells Shrek he has won the 'raffle' to rescue Fiona, and in return, he will give him the deeds to his swamp so he can reclaim it ("What's Up, Duloc? (Reprise)").

The two unlikely friends set off to find Fiona, with Shrek becoming increasingly annoyed with Donkey as time progresses ("Travel Song"). After crossing the rickety old bridge and arriving at the castle, Shrek sets off alone to rescue Fiona while Donkey encounters a ferocious female dragon who (accompanied by some imprisoned knights) threatens him with imprisonment - before falling head over heels with him ("Forever"). When Shrek finds Fiona, his lack of interest in playing out her romantic rescue scene annoys her, and he drags her off by force. They reunite with Donkey, and all three attempt to escape while being chased by the Dragon. Shrek traps Dragon and they get to a safe point ("This Is How A Dream Comes True").

Fiona insists that Shrek removes his helmet and is shocked that her rescuer is an ogre and not the Prince of her stories. Shrek explains that she is to marry Farquaad. The trio begin their journey back to Duloc, but Fiona becomes apprehensive as the sun begins to set. She insists that they rest for the night, choosing a nearby cave. Donkey and Shrek remain awake, with Donkey asking Shrek who he would be, if he did not have to be an ogre anymore. As Shrek opens up to Donkey, unseen by them, Fiona, transforms into an ogress as part of her curse that happens during sunset. All three privately sing of their hopes ("Who I'd Be").

The next day, Princess Fiona rises early and sings with a bluebird and a deer (before making the bird explode and throwing the deer off a cliff). She assists the Pied Piper in his rat-charming duties and the rats dance with her as she sings ("Morning Person"). Shrek brings down her mood by joking about her groom-to-be and mocking her tragic childhood. The two begin a contest of one-upmanship about their difficult upbringing ("I Think I Got You Beat"). Both admit to being thrown out by their parents; this connection, as well as bonding over a love of disgusting bodily noises, kindles friendship.

In Duloc, Farquaad is doing gym exercises, and reveals his own sordid heritage after a guard insists that Farquaad should invite his father. Farquaad refuses, explaining how his father abandoned him in the woods as a child ("The Ballad of Farquaad").

As Shrek and Fiona's newfound camaraderie grows into love, Donkey insists, with the help of the Three Blind Mice from his imagination, that Shrek should gather his courage and romantically engage Fiona ("Make a Move"). Shrek, finally beginning to come out of his caustic, protective shell, privately tries to find the words to explain his feelings to Fiona ("When Words Fail").

While Shrek is out finding a flower for Fiona, Donkey discovers that she turns into an ogress at night, and she confesses that she was cursed as a child, which is why she was locked away in the tower. Only a kiss from her true love will return her to her proper form, and she asks Donkey to promise never to tell. Shrek arrives and hears the end end of the conversation from outside. He misunderstands Fiona's description of herself as an ugly beast, and thinks she is talking about him. Hurt by her presumed opinion, Shrek storms off.

The next day, transformed back to her human form, Fiona decides to tell Shrek about her curse ("Morning Person (Reprise)"). When she tries to explain, Shrek rebuffs her with his "ugly beast" overhearing, causing Fiona in turn to misunderstand. Then Farquaad arrives to claim Fiona and tells Shrek he has cleared the swamp of the Fairytale Creatures, and now belongs to Shrek again. While not very impressed with Farquaad, Fiona agrees to marry him and insists that they have the wedding before sunset. As Farquaad and Fiona ride back to Duloc, Donkey tries to explain the misunderstanding to Shrek (who is too angry and upset to listen), and Shrek rejects him as well, declaring that he will return to his swamp alone and build a wall to shield himself from the world ("Build a Wall").

Meanwhile, the Fairytale Creatures are on their way to a landfill which is to be their new home, since they were forced to relocate from the swamp. After dealing with the fact that Shrek broke his promise to them, however, Gingy rants that Farquaad's treatment of them is intolerable; just because they are freaks does not mean they deserve to be hated, so Gingy rallies the fairytale creatures into staging a coup d'état against Farquaad's rule. Unfortunately, a bitter Pinocchio (remembering they are not allowed back to Duloc), doesn't want his friends to get hurt, suggesting they should just keep going, and wait until everything gets better, all the while, wishing to be a real boy. Exasperated by Pinocchio's turndown, Gingy convinces him to join the protest, inspiring him to accept who he is, as all of them have accepted who they are; they gather new confidence and strength in themselves, as they declare that they'll raise their "Freak Flag" high against their tormentors ("Freak Flag"). Now realizing that they have become something more than friends, and have become a family, Pinocchio now leads his gang back to Duloc to overthrow Farquaad once and for all.

Shrek has returned to his once again private swamp, but he misses Fiona. Donkey shows up attempting to seal off his half of the swamp with stone boulders, which Shrek rebuffs. In turn, Donkey angrily berates Shrek for his reclusive and stubborn habits, even to the point of driving off Fiona. An angered Shrek reveals he heard her talking about a hideous creature the night before, and Donkey retorts that they were not talking about him, but of "someone else". When a confused Shrek inquires who it was, Donkey, wanting to keep his promise, and still cross with Shrek, refuses to talk. When Shrek apologizes and extends his friendship, Donkey forgives him.

The two then go back to Duloc, where, at the wedding ceremony, Shrek objects to the marriage before Farquaad can kiss Fiona, and Fiona convinces him to let Shrek speak with her. Shrek finally finds the words to express his feelings for Fiona, and he declares his love for her ("Big Bright Beautiful World (Reprise)"). However, his declaration of love is mocked by Farquaad. Caught between love and her desire to break the curse, Fiona tries to escape the event. Just then, the Fairytale Creatures storm into the wedding and protest their banishment. They are accompanied by Grumpy, one of the Seven Dwarfs, who reveals that he is Farquaad's father. He thinks that his invitation got lost in the mail, and he kicked Farquaad out at the age of 28 when he wouldn't move out of the basement, revealing Farquaad is a freak as well. During the scuffle, the sun sets, causing Fiona to turn into an ogress in front of everyone. Farquaad, furious and disgusted over the change, orders for Shrek to be drawn and quartered along with the Fairytale Creatures, with Fiona banished back to her tower. As Farquaad proclaims himself the new King, Shrek whistles for the Dragon, who has now escaped the castle (and is the reason Shrek and Donkey got to the wedding just in time). Dragon then crashes through the window with Donkey and incinerates Farquaad with her fiery breath.

With Farquaad dead, Shrek and Fiona admit their love for each other and share true love's first kiss. Fiona's curse is broken, and she takes her true form: an ogress. At first, she is ashamed of her looks, but Shrek declares that she is still beautiful. The two ogres begin a new life together (along with Donkey and the Fairytale Creatures) as everyone celebrates their liberation against Farquaad's rule ("This Is Our Story"). In the end, Shrek and Fiona (in association with Donkey and Dragon) host their post-wedding party ("I'm A Believer")