**Cinder / 732**

Once upon a time there was a girl born to a rich family. She was very happy and loved to wear elaborate dresses and accessories. Her favorite pastime (besides looking at herself in the mirror that is) was to order the servants and maids about. This girl's name was Cinder.

One day Cinder’s mother heard an announcement the king was holding a ball to find his son (the prince) a wife. As soon as Cinder heard the news she said “I must be the princess! If I am not engaged to the prince by midnight on the night of the ball I shall fire every servant and maid in this house!” The servants looked at each other wordly.

On the night of the ball Cinder walked into the garden and breathed in the cool night air. She sat there for some time before she noticed that it was silent completely and unnaturally silent. The crickets had stopped chirping and the frogs had stopped croaking even the breeze had stopped. All at once Cinder heard a soft whistling she looked around and to her great surprise saw a woman standing before her the woman spoke “Cinder you are selfish vain and cruel and as punishment you shall wear the rags you have forced others into” and with that she snapped her fingers turning here rich dress into rags. “Wait! Cinder cried "you can't leave me like this!” she wailed but too late the woman had already disappeared and the only fine garment she had left Cinder with was a pair of glass slippers.

Cinder sat there crying for a long time before deciding to go for a walk. She had been walking for a while when a stagecoach pulled up to her a man jumped out and said

“ho there! stranger, how would you like to attend the princess ball and possibly become his wife?”the man asked and Cinder answered.

“Alas I would love to but I have nothing to wear” to which the man said

“The prince can’t find anyone to marry so he sent me to find someone. So what do you say?” he asked

“Well I guess it wouldn’t hurt to go” she mused “very good!” the driver exclaimed.

“Get in the coach”

“Okay” Cinder decided and got in.

At the palace Cinder climbed out of the stagecoach and walked up the stairs to the palace doors. Inside there were many people dancing and laughing. Cinder saw the prince sitting on his throne; he looked weary and somewhat frustrated. Cinder walked towards him nervously twisting the frayed sleeve of her ragged clothes. But as she walked up to the prince she became very aware that she was in rags and everyone else was in very fine gowns and suites. Cinder became too embarrassed to present herself to his majesty so she turned around and ran out of the ballroom. The prince however did catch a glimpse of her and immediately fell in love; he jumped up and ran after Cinder. Cinder in her haste to escape tripped, got up and kept running leaving behind one of her glass slippers. Devastated that she had run, the prince decided that the next day he would travel around the kingdom to find the woman to whom the slipper belonged.

The next day Cinder was sulking in the house when she heard a knock on the door and her mother answered it. It was the prince

“Oh!” Cinder's mother said in surprise “hello your highness to what do we owe the pleasure?”.

“I am on a quest to find my love. She ran when I saw her and left this on the stairs” the prince answered, flourishing the glass slipper. Cinder immediately recognized the slipper. She ran forward and pulled out the other glass slipper and said “that was me and I am sorry I ran but I was afraid that I would be laughed at for my clothes”. To that the prince proclaimed “If you had been wearing the finest gown in all the lands it would not have made me love you more! Will you marry me?” And with that Cinder and the prince were married and they lived happily ever after.

Cinder learned a very important lesson that day that it doesn't matter what you look like as long as you have a good heart.

The end