

3-4
 Jack, Baker, Binky
 p.m., Binky

(JACK)
 GIANTS IN THE SKY!

(BAKER stirs; JACK bounds over to him)

Good fortune! Good fortune, sir! Look what I have! Here's five gold pieces.

BAKER

(Astounded)

Five gold pieces!

(Examines the gold)

JACK

I had more, but my mother made me surrender them. She allowed me these five to do with as I pleased.

BAKER

Oh, my...

JACK

(Looking around)

Where is Milky-White?

BAKER

Milky-White is back home with my wife.

JACK

Let's go find them!

(Grabs BAKER and starts to pull him away)

BAKER

Wait!

(Returns money to JACK)

I don't know that I wish to sell.

JACK

But you said I might buy her back.

BAKER

I know, but I'm not certain that five gold pieces would -

JACK

Are you saying that you wish more money?

BAKER

More money is always -

JACK

(Hands BAKER gold)

Keep this. I will go fetch more.

BAKER

Wait. I didn't say -

(JACK EXITS; BAKER looks at money)

Five gold pieces! With this money I could buy baking supplies for a year. I could buy a new thatched roof and a new chimney.

(MYSTERIOUS MAN APPEARS from nowhere)

MYSTERIOUS MAN

But could you buy yourself a child?

BAKER

(Startled)

Who are you?

MYSTERIOUS MAN

When first I appear, I seem delirious. But when explained, I am nothing serious. Could you buy yourself a child?

BAKER

I don't understand.

MYSTERIOUS MAN

How badly do you wish a child? Five gold pieces? Ten? Twenty?

BAKER

I've not thought to put a price on it.

MYSTERIOUS MAN

Exactly.

(Walks over and takes the gold away)

You've not thought about many things, have you, son?

BAKER

Give me back the money! It is not yours -

MYSTERIOUS MAN

Nor is it Jack's. The money is not what's important. What's important is the your wish be honored.

(Goes around a tree and DISAPPEARS; BAKER begins darting around looking for him)

BAKER

Come back here! Damn! Give me back -

(Sees BAKER'S WIFE, who ENTERS from around another tree)
What are you doing here now?

BAKER'S WIFE

(Quickly switching gears)

I see you've the red cape.

BAKER

Yes. I've the cape. Only two items left to locate.

BAKER'S WIFE

Three.

BAKER

Two. I've the cape and the cow.

BAKER'S WIFE

(Faking enthusiasm)

You've the cape!

BAKER

What have you done with the cow?!

BAKER'S WIFE

(Crying)

She ran away. I never reached home. I've been looking for her all night.

BAKER

I should have known better than to have entrusted her to you.

BAKER'S WIFE

She might just as easily have run from you!

BAKER

But she didn't!

BAKER'S WIFE

But she might have!

BAKER

But she didn't!!!

(WITCH DROPS from tree)

WITCH

WHO CARES! THE COW IS GONE! GET IT BACK! GET IT BACK!!

End

(All three settle down)

BAKER

(Walks over to WITCH)

We were just going to do that.

(Offers cape)

Here. I can give you this -

#24 - Fairies

WITCH

Don't give me that, fool! I don't want to touch that! Have you no sense?

(Suddenly, RAPUNZEL is heard SINGING in the background)

Listen to her beautiful music.

BAKER'S WIFE

Lovely.

BAKER

She's very gifted.

WITCH

(Tough)

By tomorrow's midnight - deliver the items or you'll wish you never thou to have a child!

(WITCH puts a SPELL on them. THEY double over in pain as WITCH leaves)

BAKER

I don't like that woman.

BAKER'S WIFE

(Contrite)

I'm sorry I lost the cow.

BAKER

I shouldn't have yelled.

(Beat)

Now, please, go back to the village.

(BAKER'S WIFE, annoyed, turns her back and begins to walk away)

I will make things right! And then we can just go about our life. No more hunting about in the Woods for strange objects. No more Witches and dim witted boys and hungry little girls.

BAKER'S WIFE

That direction. But you'll never reach them!

FLORINDA

We would have if that mongrel with the cow hadn't molested us.

BAKER'S WIFE

Cow?

(FLORINDA and LUCINDA giggle. BAKER runs ONSTAGE with MILKY-WHITE. THEY are both out of breath)

BAKER

(To STEPMOTHER, FLORINDA and LUCINDA, holding up an ear of corn)

Please, let me just compare this color with that of your own.

(Stepsisters chortle)

LUCINDA, FLORINDA

He wants to compare our hair to corn!

STEMOTHER, LUCINDA, FLORINDA

Ah! Ah! Ah! Ha, ha, ha.

STEMOTHER

Over there!

(THEY exit laughing hysterically. There is a long moment of SILENCE. BAKER'S WIFE and BAKER stare at one another)

BAKER

(Dejected)

I thought you were returning home.

(Angry)

I've had no luck.

BAKER'S WIFE

You've the cow!

BAKER

Yes, I've the cow. I've only two of the four.

(MILKY-WHITE continues to breathe heavily)

BAKER'S WIFE

Three.

BAKER

Two!

BAKER'S WIFE

(Pulls the hair from her pocket)

Three! Compare this to your corn.

(BAKER does so and smiles)

BAKER

Where did you find it?

BAKER'S WIFE

(False modesty)

I pulled it from a maiden in a tower.

BAKER

(Looking at hair)

Three!

BAKER'S WIFE

And I almost had the fourth, but she got away.

BAKER

We've one entire day left. Surely we can locate the slipper by then.

#28 - It Takes Two

BAKER'S WIFE

We? You mean you'll allow me to stay?

BAKER

(Embarrassed)

Well... perhaps it will take the two of us to get this child.

BAKER'S WIFE

~~YOU'VE CHANGED~~

~~YOU'RE DARLING.~~

~~YOU'RE DIFFERENT IN THE WOODS.~~

~~MORE SURE.~~

~~MORE SHARING~~

~~YOU'RE GETTING US THROUGH THE WOODS.~~

~~IF YOU COULD SEE -~~

~~YOU'RE NOT THE MAN WHO STARTED,~~

End

LITTLE RED RIDINGHOOD

Don't go too far, please.

BAKER'S WIFE

I will only walk one hundred paces. If I don't find the boy, I'll come right back.
1-2-3-Jack! Jack!

(SHE takes off calling JACK'S name as the set changes.)

(We follow the BAKER'S, as CINDERELLA'S PRINCE enters, crossing her path.)

81... 82... 83... 84...

(Sees CINDERELLA'S PRINCE and bows. SHE is nervous and excited in his presence)

Hello, sir.

CINDERELLA'S PRINCE

(Continuing to walk)

Hello.

BAKER'S WIFE

You must be here to slay the Giant.

CINDERELLA'S PRINCE

Yes.

BAKER'S WIFE

Have you come upon the Giant yet?

CINDERELLA'S PRINCE

No.

BAKER'S WIFE

I have.

CINDERELLA'S PRINCE

(Stops)

You have?

BAKER'S WIFE

Yes.

CINDERELLA'S PRINCE

And why are you alone in the Woods?

BAKER'S WIFE

I came with my husband. We were... well, it's a long story.

CINDERELLA'S PRINCE

He would let you roam alone in the Woods?

BAKER'S WIFE

No, actually, it was my choice.

#56 - Any Moment, Part 1

I'm looking for the lad.

CINDERELLA'S PRINCE

(Moves closer)

Your choice? How brave.

BAKER'S WIFE

Brave?

CINDERELLA'S PRINCE

(Next to her)

Yes.

ANYTHING CAN HAPPEN IN THE WOODS.

MAY I KISS YOU?

(BAKER'S WIFE blinks)

ANY MOMENT WE COULD BE CRUSHED.

BAKER'S WIFE

Uh

CINDERELLA'S PRINCE

DON'T FEEL RUSHED.

(Kisses BAKER'S WIFE. SHE is stunned, turns to us)

BAKER'S WIFE

THIS IS RIDICULOUS,

WHAT AM I DOING HERE?

I'M IN THE WRONG STORY.

(Resumes the kiss, then pulls away. MUSIC stops)

Wait one moment, please! We can't do this! You have a Princess.

CINDERELLA'S PRINCE

Well, yes, I do.

BAKER'S WIFE

And I have a... baker.

— End

(Distracted)

This is ridiculous. I'll never get that red cape, nor find a golden cow, or a yellow slipper — or was it a golden slipper and a yellow cow? Oh, no...

BAKER'S WIFE

(Softly, APPEARING behind a tree)

THE COW AS WHITE AS MILK,
THE CAPE AS RED AS BLOOD,
THE HAIR AS YELLOW AS CORN,
THE SLIPPER AS PURE AS —

BAKER

(Overlapping)

What are you doing here?

BAKER'S WIFE

(Coming forward, takes a scarf and tries to put it around his neck)

You forgot your scarf —

BAKER

(Taking scarf off)

You have no business being alone in the Wood. And you have no idea what I've come upon here. You would be frightened for your life. Now go home immediately!

BAKER'S WIFE

I wish to help.

BAKER

No!

THE SPELL IS ON MY HOUSE —

BAKER'S WIFE

OUR HOUSE.

(JACK ENTERS, dragging MILKY-WHITE by a rope on its neck)

BAKER

ONLY I CAN LIFT THE SPELL,

THE SPELL IS ON MY HOUSE — !

BAKER'S WIFE

(Overlapping)

WE MUST LIFT THE SPELL TOGETHER —

BAKER

THE SPELL IS ON —

(BAKER'S WIFE, seeing JACK at other side of stage, puts her hand across BAKER'S MOUTH)

BAKER'S WIFE

A COW AS WHITE AS —

(BAKER sees JACK takes BAKER'S WIFE'S HAND away)

BAKER, BAKER'S WIFE

— milk.

(BAKER'S WIFE pushes BAKER in JACK'S direction, then follows)

Hello there, young man.

JACK

(Looks at BAKER, scared)

Hello, sir.

BAKER

What might you be doing with a cow in the middle of the forest?

JACK

(Nervous)

I was heading toward market — but I seem to have lost my way.

BAKER'S WIFE

(Coaching BAKER)

What are you planning to do there — ?

BAKER

And what are you planning to do there?

JACK

Sell my cow, sir. No less than five pounds.

BAKER

Five pounds!

(To BAKER'S WIFE)

Where am I to get five pounds!

BAKER'S WIFE

(Taking over)

She must be generous of milk to fetch five pounds?

JACK

(Hesitant)

Yes, ma'am.

BAKER'S WIFE

And if you can't fetch that sum? Then what are you to do?

JACK

I hadn't thought of that... I suppose my mother and I will have no food to eat.

(BAKER has emptied his pocket; HE has a few coins and the beans in hand)

BAKER

(To BAKER'S WIFE)

This is the sum total...

BAKER'S WIFE

(Loudly)

Beans — we mustn't give up our beans! Well... if you feel we must.

BAKER

Huh?

BAKER'S WIFE

(To JACK)

Beans will bring you food, son.

JACK

Beans in exchange for my cow?

BAKER'S WIFE

Oh, these are no ordinary beans, son. These beans carry magic.

JACK

Magic? What kind of magic?

BAKER'S WIFE

(To BAKER)

Tell him.

(MYSTERIOUS MAN enters behind a tree)

BAKER

(Nervous)

Magic that defies description.

JACK

My mother would —

MYSTERIOUS MAN

... You'd be lucky to exchange her for a sack of beans.

(BAKER'S WIFE and BAKER hug, frightened by MYSTERIOUS MAN'S VOICE. MYSTERIOUS MAN EXITS before anyone sees him)

JACK

How many beans?

BAKER

Six.

BAKER'S WIFE

Five! We can't part with all of them. We must leave one for ourselves. Beside I'd say they're worth a pound each, at the very least.

JACK

Could I buy my cow back someday?

BAKER

(Uneasy)

Well... possibly.

#13 — I Guess This Is Goodbye

End

(Hands JACK the beans, counting out five and keeping one for his pocket; BAKER'S WIFE then takes MILKY-WHITE)

Good luck there, young lad.

JACK

(Tearful; to MILKY-WHITE)

I GUESS THIS IS GOODBYE, OLD PAL,
YOU'VE BEEN A PERFECT FRIEND.
I HATE TO SEE US PART, OLD PAL,
SOMEDAY I'LL BUY YOU BACK.
I'LL SEE YOU SOON AGAIN.
I HOPE THAT WHEN I DO,
I WON'T BE ON A DATE.

(EXITS, overcome with emotion.)

MUSIC (continues under)

May I take a look at it?

BAKER

(In panic)

I don't like to be without my cape. Please, give it back.

BAKER

(Frustrated)

I want it badly.

LITTLE RED RIDINGHOOD

Give it back, please!

LITTLE RED RIDINGHOOD

Forget the little girl and get the cape!

(BAKER suddenly dashes away with the cape under his arm. LITTLE RED RIDINGHOOD stands numb for a moment, then lets out a bloodcurdling scream, followed by hysterical weeping.)

BAKER

(Sheepishly returning with cape, placing it on LITTLE RED RIDINGHOOD'S SHOULDERS)

I just wanted to make certain that you really loved this cape. Now you go to your granny's — and you be careful that no wolf comes your way.

LITTLE RED RIDINGHOOD

I'd rather a wolf than you, any day.

(Stomps BAKER'S FOOT and EXITS)

#16 — Baker's Reprise

BAKER

(In pain)

IF YOU KNOW
WHAT YOU NEED,
THEN YOU GO
AND YOU FIND IT
AND YOU TAKE IT.
DO I WANT A CHILD OR NOT?
IT'S A CLOAK,

(BAKER)

WHAT'S A CLOAK?

IT'S A JOKE,

IT'S A STUPID LITTLE CLOAK.

ALL A CLOAK IS WHAT YOU MAKE IT.

(Nods, convincing himself)

SO YOU MAKE IT.

(With resolve)

THINGS ARE ONLY WHAT YOU NEED THEM FOR,

WHAT'S IMPORTANT IS WHO NEEDS THEM MORE —

(MUSIC continues under as HE EXITS.)

NARRATOR ENTERS)

NARRATOR

And so the Baker, with new-found determination, went after the red cape. For the little girl, she was surprised to find her grandmother's cottage door standing open.

#17 — Grandmother's House

(We see GRANNY'S cottage with WOLF [Wolf #1], dressed as GRANNY in bed, covers up and hands near his mouth. The walls of the cottage are made of scrim. LITTLE RED RIDINGHOOD ENTERS)

LITTLE RED RIDINGHOOD

(To herself)

Oh, dear. How uneasy I feel. Perhaps it's all the sweets.

(Towards the bed)

Good day, Grandmother.

(Moves to the bed)

My, Grandmother, you're looking very strange. What big ears you have!

WOLF

(In a GRANNY voice)

The better to hear you with, my dear.

LITTLE RED RIDINGHOOD

But Grandmother, what big eyes you have!

5 or 6

Narrator!

Little Red,

WOLF!

Baker's

5

WOLF

The better to see you with, my dear.

LITTLE RED RIDINGHOOD

But Grandmother, what large hands you have!

WOLF

The better to hug you with, my dear.

LITTLE RED RIDINGHOOD

Oh, Grandmother — what a terrible, big, wet mouth you have!

WOLF

The better to eat you with!

(Bloodcurdling scream from LITTLE RED RIDINGHOOD, who DISAPPEARS)

NARRATOR

And scarcely had the Wolf said this, than with a single bound he was devouring the little girl.

(In clear)

Well, it was a full day of eating for both. And with his appetite appeased, the Wolf took to bed for a nice long nap.

(WOLF snores; BAKER is outside cottage. NARRATOR EXITS)

BAKER

That grandmother has a mighty snore.

(Goes up to the window and looks in)

Odd. Where is the little one? Eating, no doubt.

(Turns to walk away.)

WOLF belches.

BAKER suddenly stops)

Or eaten!

(Enters the house and timidly goes over to the bed, his knife stretched before him. HE lets out a yelp when he sees the WOLF with his swollen belly)

Grandmother, ha!

(Draws the knife back, then stops)

What is that red cloth in the corner of your mouth? Looks to me to be a piece of — ah ha! I'll get the cape from within your stomach.

(Slits the WOLF'S stomach. The WOLF howls in pain. BAKER then recoils in disgust)

LITTLE RED RIDINGHOOD

(Stepping out of the WOLF, bloodied)

What a fright! How dark and dank it was inside that wolf.

(GRANNY emerges from WOLF, also bloodied)

GRANNY

(Wheezing, tries to strangle WOLF)

Kill the devil! Take that knife and cut his evil head off? Let's see the demon sliced into a thousand bits. Better yet, let the animal die a painful, agonizing hideous death.

LITTLE RED RIDINGHOOD

(Shocked)

Granny!

GRANNY

Quiet, child. This evil must be destroyed.

BAKER

(Faint)

Well, I will leave you to your task.

GRANNY

Don't you want the skins?

BAKER

No. No! You keep them.

GRANNY

(With disdain)

What kind of a hunter are you?

BAKER

I'm a baker!

(GRANNY pulls him into the house as LITTLE RED RIDINGHOOD goes DOWNSTAGE, as if to gather stones. LIGHTS change)

End

#18 - I Know Things Now

LITTLE RED RIDINGHOOD

MOTHER SAID,

"STRAIGHT AHEAD,"

NOT TO DELAY

JACK'S MOTHER

(Livid)

Only a dolt would exchange a cow for beans!
(Throws the beans to the ground on stage)

JACK

Mother, no -

(Goes to pick them up)

JACK'S MOTHER

To bed without supper for you!

(Grabs JACK and marches him back into the house)

NARRATOR

Little did they know those beans would grow into an enormous stalk that would stretch into the heavens.

(EXITS)

#20 - Cinderella Coming from the Ball

(BAKER'S WIFE ENTERS UPSTAGE, tugging at MILKY-WHITE. A lantern hangs from MILKY-WHITE'S HORN; HOUSE CUTOUT DESCENDS.

BALL MUSIC in the distance, growing louder.

CINDERELLA dashes ONSTAGE, looking over her shoulder.

SHE falls.

MUSIC stops)

BAKER'S WIFE

(Leaves MILKY-WHITE to help)

Are you all right, miss?

CINDERELLA

(Breathless)

Yes. I just need to catch my breath.

BAKER'S WIFE

What a beautiful gown you're wearing. Were you at the King's Festival?

2-2
Baker's Wife
Cinderella
Prince + Prince's
Steward

CINDERELLA

(Preoccupied)

Yes.

BAKER'S WIFE

Aren't you the lucky one. Why ever are you in the Wood at this hour?

(BALL MUSIC in the distance, growing louder.

We hear MEN'S VOICES OFFSTAGE. CINDERELLA signals to BAKER'S WIFE to keep quiet, then ducks behind a tree.

FANFARE. CINDERELLA'S PRINCE runs ONSTAGE, followed by his STEWARD. THEY look about for a moment, notice BAKER'S WIFE, who curtsying deeply)

CINDERELLA'S PRINCE

Have you seen a beautiful young woman in a ball gown pass through?

BAKER'S WIFE

(Breathless)

I don't think so, sir.

STEWARD

I think I see her over there.

(CINDERELLA'S PRINCE signals STEWARD off in that direction, then takes another look at BAKER'S WIFE before following.

MUSIC continues under)

BAKER'S WIFE

I've never lied to royalty before. I've never anything to royalty before!

CINDERELLA

(Comes out)

Thank you.

BAKER'S WIFE

If a Prince were looking for me, I certainly wouldn't hide.

CINDERELLA

(Defensive)

Well, what brings you here - and with a cow?

BAKER'S WIFE

Oh, my husband's somewhere in the Woods.

(Proud)

He's undoing a spell.

Start

BAKER'S WIFE

(Spoken)

GOES?

CINDERELLA

(Sung)

I DON'T MEET A WIDE RANGE.
AND IT'S ALL VERY STRANGE.

BAKER'S WIFE

Are you to return to the Festival tomorrow eve?

CINDERELLA

Perhaps.

BAKER'S WIFE

Perhaps? Oh, to be pursued by a Prince. All that pursues me is tomorrow's bread.

(We hear the first CHIME of midnight)

What I wouldn't give to be in your shoes.

(Second CHIME; CHIMES continue under)

CINDERELLA

Will you look over there.

(MILKY-WHITE stands and looks)

An enormous vine growing next to that little cottage.

BAKER'S WIFE

(Looking down at CINDERELLA'S FEET)

... I mean slippers.

CINDERELLA

It looks like a giant beanstalk rising into the sky.

BAKER'S WIFE

(Excited)

As pure as gold?

CINDERELLA

I must get home.

(Begins to leave)

BAKER'S WIFE

Wait!

(CINDERELLA EXITS)

I need your shoes!

(BAKER'S WIFE starts off after CINDERELLA; MILKY-WHITE lets out "MOOI" and takes off in the other direction; BAKER'S WIFE stops, turns between MILKY-WHITE and CINDERELLA.

To CINDERELLA)

Hey!

(To MILKY-WHITE)

Come back here!

(Takes off after MILKY-WHITE.

Final CHIME of midnight.

End

#22 - First Midnight

MUSIC continues under.

One by one, each of the characters APPEARS moving through the Wood, darting in and out of the trees and paths, pursuing his or her errands, not oblivious to the others.

The night turns gradually into dawn. The following lines are spoken rhythmically as each character APPEARS and DISAPPEARS)

BAKER

(Spoken)

ONE MIDNIGHT GONE...

MYSTERIOUS MAN

(Spoken)

NO KNOT UNTIES ITSELF...

WITCH

(Spoken)

SOMETIMES THE THINGS YOU MOST WISH FOR
ARE NOT TO BE TOUCHED...