Into the Woods

Music and Lyrics by Stephen Sondheim

Book by James Lapine

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Act One, Scene 1

(Downstage, three structures: Far left, the home of Cinderella. She is in the kitchen, cleaning. Center, the cottage where Jack lives. He is inside, milking his pathetic-looking cow, Milky-White. Far right, the home/workplace of the Baker and his Wife. They are preparing tomorrow's bread. Behind these homes, a drop depicts a large forest which separates them from the rest of the kingdom. A Narrator steps forward.)

Narrator: Once upon a time--

(Music, sharp and steady. Light on Cinderella)

Cinderella (singing to us): I WISH

Narrator: --in a far-off kingdom--

Cinderella: MORE THAN ANYTHING

Narrator: --lived a young maiden--

Cinderella: MORE THAN LIFE

Narrator: --a sad young lad--

(Light on Jack and the cow)

Cinderella: MORE THAN JEWELS

Jack: (to us) I WISH

Narrator: --and a childless Baker--

(Light on the Baker and his Wife)

Jack: MORE THAN LIFE

Cinderella, Baker: I WISH

Narrator: --with his wife.

Jack: MORE THAN ANYTHING

Cinderella, Baker, Jack: MORE THAN THE MOON

Baker's Wife: I WISH

Cinderella: THE KING IS GIVING A FESTIVAL.
Baker, Baker's Wife: MORE THAN LIFE

Jack: I WISH

Cinderella: I WISH TO GO TO THE FESTIVAL-

Baker, Baker's Wife: MORE THAN RICHES

Cinderella: --AND THE BALL

Jack: I WISH MY COW WOULD GIVE US SOME MILK.

Cinderella, Baker's Wife: MORE THAN ANYTHING

Baker: I WISH WE HAD A CHILD.

Jack: (to cow) PLEASE, PAL--

Baker's Wife: I WANT A CHILD

Jack: SQUEEZE, PAL

Cinderella: I WISH TO GO TO THE FESTIVAL.

Jack: (overlapping) I WISH YOU'D GIVE US SOME MILK OR EVEN CHEESE

Baker, Baker's Wife (overlapping): I WISH WE MIGHT HAVE A CHILD.

All Four: I WISH...

(Cinderella's STEPMOTHER and stepsisters, FLORINDA and LUCINDA, enter.)

Stepmother (To CINDERELLA): You wish to go to the festival?

Narrator: The poor girl's mother had died--

Stepmother: You, Cinderella, the festival?

You wish to go to the festival?

Florinda (overlapping): What, you, Cinderella, the festival?

The festival?!

Lucinda (overlapping): What, you wish to go to the festival?!

All Three: The festival?!

The king's festival!!!!??

Narrator: --and her father had taken for his new wife--

Stepmother: The festival!!!!??

Narrator: --a woman with two daughters of her own.

Florinda (To CINDERELLA): LOOK AT YOUR NAILS!

Lucinda: LOOK AT YOUR DRESS!

Stepmother: PEOPLE WOULD LAUGH AT YOU--
Cinderella: NEVERTHELESS--

Cinderella, Stepsisters, Stepmother: IF YOU/ SHE STILL WISH/WANT/WANTS TO GO TO THE FESTIVAL--

Stepsisters, Stepmother: AND DANCE BEFORE THE PRINCE?!

(They chortle with laughter musically, then fall about out of control. Music stops)

Narrator: All three were beautiful of face, but vile, and black of heart.

(Music Resumes)

Narrator: Jack, on the other hand, had no father, and his mother--

Jack's Mother (entering): I WISH

Narrator: Well, she was not quite beautiful--

Jack's Mother: I WISH MY SON WERE NOT A FOOL
      I WISH MY HOUSE WERE NOT A MESS
      I WISH THE COW WERE FULL OF MILK
      I WISH THE WALLS WERE FULL OF GOLD--
      I WISH A LOT OF THINGS

(To JACK, music continuing under)

You foolish child! What in heaven’s name are you doing with a cow inside the house?

Jack: A warm environment might be just what Milky-White needs to produce his milk.

Jack's Mother (Beat: flabbergasted): It's a she! How many times must a tell you? Only "she's" can give milk.

(Two knocks on the BAKER'S door; BAKER'S WIFE opens door; it is LITTLE RED RIDINGHOOD)

Little Red Ridinghood: I WISH
      IT'S NOT FOR ME,
      IT'S FOR MY GRANNY IN THE WOODS.
      A LOAD OF BREAD, PLEASE--
      TO BRING MY POOR OLD HUNGRY
      GRANNY IN THE WOODS
      (Insistent)
      JUST A LOAF OF BREAD, PLEASE

(BAKER gives her a leaf of bread.)

Narrator: Cinderella's stepmother had a surprise for her.

(STEPMOTHER throws a pot of lentils into the fire-place.)

Stepmother: I have emptied a pot of lentils into the ashes for you. If you have picked them out
again in two hours' time, you shall go to the Ball with us.

(STEPMOTHER and STEPSISTERS exit.)

Little Red Ridinghood: AND PERHAPS A STICKY BUN?
      OR FOUR?
      (Smiles sheepishly)
Cinderella: BIRDS IN THE SKY,
      BIRDS IN THE EAVES,
      IN THE LEAVES,
      IN THE FIELDS,
      IN THE CASTLES AND PONDS

Little Red Ridinghood: AND A FEW OF THOSE PIES

Cinderella (Overlapping): COME, LITTLE BIRDS,
      DOWN FROM THE EAVES
      AND THE LEAVES,
      OVER FIELDS,
      OUT OF CASTLES AND PONDS

Jack: NO, SQUEEZE PAL

Cinderella (Falling into a trance): AHHH
    (Music continues as birds descend into the fireplace.)
    QUICK LITTLE BIRDS,
    FLICK THROUGH THE ASHES.
    PICK AND PECK, BUT SWIFTLY,
    SIFT THROUGH THE ASHES
    INTO THE POT

    (Birds start picking at the lentils and dropping them into the pot, each one landing with a clang; music continues under.)

Jack’s Mother: Listen well, son. Milky-White must be taken to market.

    (Clangs continue as the birds work.)

Jack: But, Mother, no—he’s the best cow—

Jack’s Mother: Was. Was! She’s been dry for a week. We’ve no food nor money and no choice but to sell her while she can still command a price.

Jack: But Milky-White is my best friend in the whole world!

Jack’s Mother: Look at her!
         THERE ARE BUGS ON HER DUNGS.
         THERE ARE FLIES IN HER EYES.
         THERE’S A LUMP ON HER RUMP
         BIG ENOUGH TO BE A HUMP—

Jack: But—

Jack’s Mother: Son,
         WE’VE NO TIME TO SIT AND DITHER,
         WHILE HER WITHERS WITHER WITH HER—

    (Two clangs)
    AND NO ONE KEEPS A COW FOR A FRIEND!
    Sometimes I fear you’re touched.

    (LITTLE RED RIDING HOOD has been compulsively eating sweets at the Baker’s house; she now swallows, wiping her hands and mouth.)
Little Red Ridinghood: INTO THE WOODS,
IT'S TIME TO GO,
I HATE TO LEAVE,
I HAVE TO, THOUGH.
INTO THE WOODS--
IT'S TIME AND SO
I MUST BEGIN MY JOURNEY.

INTO THE WOODS
AND THROUGH THE TREES
TO WHERE I AM
EXPECTED, MA'AM,
INTO THE WOODS
TO GRANDMOTHER'S HOUSE-
(Mouth full) INTO THE WOODS
TO GRANDMOTHER'S HOUSE--

Baker's Wife: You're certain of your way?

Little Red Ridinghood: THE WAY IS CLEAR,
The light is good,
I have no fear,
Nor no one should.
The woods are just trees,
The trees are just wood.
I sort of hate to ask it,
But do you have a basket?

Baker: Don't stray and be late.

Baker's Wife: And save some of those sweets for granny!

Little Red Ridinghood: INTO THE WOODS
AND DOWN THE DELL,
The path it straight,
I know it well.
INTO THE WOODS,
AND WHO CAN TELL
WHAT'S WAITING ON THE JOURNEY?

INTO THE WOODS
TO BRING SOME BREAD
TO GRANNY WHO
IS SICK IN BED.
NEVER CAN TELL
WHAT LIES AHEAD.
FOR ALL THAT I KNOW,
SHE'S ALREADY DEAD.

BUT INTO THE WOODS,
INTO THE WOODS,
INTO THE WOODS,
TO GRANDMOTHER'S HOUSE
AND HOME BEFORE DARK.

(The birds have helped CINDERELLA with her task and are flying off.)

Cinderella: FLY, BIRDS
BACK TO THE SKY,
BACK TO THE EAVES
AND THE LEAVES
AND THE FIELDS
AND THE—

(FLORINDA and LUCINDA enter, dressed for the Ball.)

Florinda: HURRY UP AND DO MY HAIR, CINDERELLA!
(To LUCINDA, and CINDERELLA fusses with her hair.)
ARE YOU REALLY WEARING THAT?

Lucinda (pointing to her sleeve): Here, I found a little tear, Cinderella!
(To FLORINDA, eyeing her hair)
CAN'T YOU HIDE IT WITH A HAT?

Cinderella: YOU LOOK BEAUTIFUL.

Florinda: I know.

Lucinda: She means me.

Florinda (to CINDERELLA): Put it in a twist.

Lucinda: Who will be there?

(LUCINDA and FLORINDA continue babbling underneath.)

Cinderella (To herself): MOTHER SAID BE GOOD,
FATHER SAID BE NICE,
THAT WAS ALWAYS THEIR ADVICE.
SO BE NICE, CINDERELLA,
GOOD, CINDERELLA,
NICE GOOD GOOD NICE—

Florinda: Tighter!

Cinderella: WHAT'S THE GOOD OF BEING GOOD
IF EVERYONE IS BLIND
ALWAYS LEAVING YOU BEHIND?
NEVER MIND, CINDERELLA
KIND CINDERELLA—
(Accenting each word with a twist of a strand of hair)
NICE GOOD NICE KIND GOOD NICE—

Florinda: (Screams and slaps CINDERELLA) Not that tight!

Cinderella (Backing away): Sorry.
Florinda: Clod.

(A beat)

Lucinda: Hee hee hee-

(Florinda glares at her.)

Hee hee--

(She stops. Music continues under.)

Narrator: Because the Baker had lost his mother and father in a baking accident—well, at least that is what he believed—he was eager to have a family of his own, and concerned that all efforts until now had failed.

(A knock on the BAKER's door)

Baker: Who might that be? (He looks off to see)

Baker's Wife: We have sold our last loaf of bread.

Baker: It's the witch from next door.

(The WITCH enters; music resumes)

Baker's Wife, Baker: We have no bread.

Witch: Of course you have no bread!

Baker: What do you wish?

Witch: It's not what I wish. It's what you wish. (points to WIFE's belly) Nothing cooking in there now, is there?

Narrator: The old enchantress went on to tell the couple that she had placed a spell on their house.

Baker: What spell?

Witch: In the past, when you were no more than a babe, your father brought his young wife and you to this cottage. They were a handsome couple, but not handsome neighbors. You see, your mother was with child and had developed an unusual appetite. She took one look at my beautiful garden and told your father what she wanted more than anything in the world was

Greens, greens, and nothing but greens:
Parsley, peppers, cabbages, and celery,
Asparagus and watercress and
Fiddlefarns and lettuce—!

(Falling into "rap" style)

He said, "All right,"
But it wasn't, quite,
"Cause I caught him in the autumn
In my garden one night!
He was robbing me,
Raping me,
Rooting through my rutabaga,
Raiding my arugula and
My champion! My favorite!—
I should have laid a spell on him
("Spell" chord)
Right there,
Could have turned him into a stone
Or a dog or a chair
Or a sn-
(Drifts off into a momentary trance)
But I let him have the rampion-
I'd lots to spare.
In return, however,
I said, "Fair is fair:
You can let me have the baby
That your wife will bear.

And we'll call it square."

(music stops)

Baker: I had a brother?

Witch: No. But you had a sister.

Narrator: But the witch refused to tell him any more of his sister. Not even that her name was Rapunzel. She went on:

(music resumes)

Witch: I thought I had been more than reasonable, and that we all might live happily ever after. But how was I to know what your father had also hid in his pocket?! You see, when I had inherited that garden, my mother had warned me I would be punished if I were ever to lose any of the Beans.

Baker, Baker's Wife: Beans?

Witch: The special beans. (getting worked up)
I let him go
I didn't know
He'd stolen my beans!
I was watching him crawl
Back over the wall-

"(Tap)"
And the bang! Crash!
And the lightning flash!
And--well that's another story,
Never mind--
Anyway, at last the big day came
And I made my claim.
"Oh don't take away the baby,"
They shrieked and screeched,
But I did,
And I hid her
Where she'll never be reached.

And your father cried,
And you mother died
When for extra measure--
I admit it was a pleasure--
I said, "sorry,
I'm still not mollified."
And I laid a little spell on them--
("spell" chord)
You too, son--
That your family tree
Would always be
A barren one.

(WITCH levitates in her chair, laughing as she goes; BAKER and WIFE gasp in disbelief.)

So there's no more fuss
And there's no more scenes
And my garden thrives-
You should see my nectarines!
But I'm telling you the same
I tell Kings and Queens:
Don't ever never ever
Mess around with my greens!
Especially the beans.

(Her chair returns to the ground; music continues under; Jack has his cap and coat on.)

Jack's Mother: Now listen to me, Jack. Lead Milky-White to market and fetch the best price you can. Take no less than five pounds. Are you listening to me?

Jack: Yes.

Jack's Mother: How much are you to ask?

Jack: No more than five pounds.

(she pinches his ear hard)

Jack's Mother, Jack: Less! Than five!

(she lets go)

Jack's Mother: JACK, JACK, JACK,
   HEAD IN A SACK,
   THE HOUSE IS GETTING COLDER,
   THIS IS NOT A TIME FOR DREAMING.

CHIMNEY-STACK
STARTING TO CRACK,
THE MICE ARE GETTING BOLDER
THE FLOOR'S GONE SLACK
YOUR MOTHER'S GETTING OLDER,
YOUR FATHER'S NOT BACK,
AND YOU CAN'T JUST SIT HERE DREAMING PRETTY DREAMS.

TO WISH AND WAIT
FROM DAY TO DAY
WILL NEVER KEEP
WOLVES AWAY.
SO INTO THE WOODS,
THE TIME IS NOW.
WE HAVE TO LIVE,
I DON'T CARE HOW.
INTO THE WOODS
TO SELL THE COW,
YOU MUST BEGIN THE JOURNEY.
STRAIGHT THROUGH THE WOODS
AND DON'T DELAY—
WE HAVE TO FACE
THE MARKETPLACE.
INTO THE WOODS TO JOURNEY'S END—

Jack: INTO THE WOODS TO SELL A FRIEND—

(Music continues under.)

Jack's Mother: Someday you'll have a real pet, Jack.

Jack: A piggy?

(JACK'S MOTHER shakes her head in disbelief)

Narrator: Meanwhile, the witch, for purposes of her own, explained how the baker might lift the spell:

Witch: You wish to have
    The curse reversed?
    I'll need a certain
    Potion first.

    Go to the wood and bring me back:
    One: the cow as white as milk,
    Two: The cape as red as blood,
    Three: The hair as yellow as corn,
    Four: The slipper as pure as gold.

    Bring me these
    Before the chime
    Of midnight
    In three days' time,
    And you shall have,
    I guarantee,
    A child as perfect
    As child can be.

    Go to the wood!

(disappears after throwing spell at BAKER's groin BAKER and BAKER'S WIFE double over. fanfare. STEPMOTHER enters)

Stepmother: Ladies,
(fanfare)
    our carriage waits.
(CINDERELLA shows her the plate of lentils.)

Cinderella: NOW MAY I GO TO THE FESTIVAL?
Stepmother: The festival?
   DARLING, THOSE NAILS!
   DARLING, THOSE CLOTHES!
   LENTILS ARE ON THING BUT
   DARLING, WITH THOSE,
   YOU'D MAKE US THE FOOLS OF THE FESTIVAL
   AND MORTIFY THE PRINCE!

(CINDERELLA'S FATHER enters)

Cinderella's Father: The carriage is waiting.

Stepmother: We must be gone.

(They exit with a flourish.)

Cinderella: Goodnight, father.
(He grunts and exits.)
   I WISH

(CINDERELLA sits dejected, crying. music continues under. The BAKER, having gone off, returns in hunting gear.)

Baker: Look what I found in Father's hunting jacket.

Baker's Wife: Six beans.

Baker: I wonder if they are the--

Baker's Wife: Witch's beans? We'll take them with us.

Baker: No, you are not coming.

Baker's Wife: I know you are fearful of the woods at night.

Baker: THE SPELL IS ON MY HOUSE.
   ONLY I CAN LIFT THE SPELL,
   THE SPELL IS ON MY HOUSE.

Baker's Wife (overlapping): NO, NO, THE SPELL IS ON OUR HOUSE.
   WE MUST LIFT THE SPELL TOGETHER,
   THE SPELL IS ON OUR HOUSE.

Baker (overlapping): No. You are not to come and that is final. Now what am I to return with?

Baker's Wife (annoyed): You don't remember?
   THE COW AS WHITE AS MILK,
   THE CAPE AS RED AS BLOOD,
   THE HAIR AS YELLOW AS CORN,
   THE SLIPPER AS PURE AS GOLD—

Baker (Memorizing): THE COW AS WHITE AS MILK,
   THE CAPE AS RED AS BLOOD,
   THE HAIR AS YELLOW AS CORN,
   THE SLIPPER AS PURE AS GOLD

Narrator (overlapping): And so the baker, reluctantly, set off to meet the enchantress's demands. As for Cinderella:
Cinderella: I STILL WISH TO GO TO THE FESTIVAL.
BUT HOW AM I EVER TO GET TO THE FESTIVAL?

**Baker (simultaneously, muttering as he gets ready to leave):** THE COW AS WHITE AS MILK,
THE CAPE AS RED AS BLOOD,
THE HAIR AS YELLOW AS CORN—

**Baker’s Wife (prompting):** The slipper—

**Baker:** THE SLIPPER AS PURE AS GOLD

**Cinderella (overlapping):** I KNOW!
I’LL VISIT MOTHER’S GRAVE,
THE GRAVE AT THE HAZEL TREE,
AND TELL HER I JUST WANT TO
GO TO THE KING’S FESTIVAL.

**Baker:** THE COW, THE CAPE,
THE SLIPPER AS PURE AS GOLD—

**Baker’s Wife:** THE HAIR—!

**Baker, Cinderella, Baker’s Wife:** INTO THE WOODS,
IT’S TIME TO GO,
IT MAY BE ALL
IN VAIN, YOU’LL KNOW.
INTO THE WOODS—
BUT EVEN SO,
I HAVE TO TAKE THE JOURNEY.

**Baker, Cinderella, Baker’s Wife:** INTO THE WOODS,
The PATH IS STRAIGHT,
YOU (I) KNOW IT WELL,
BUT WHO CAN TELL—?

**Baker, Baker’s Wife:** INTO THE WOODS TO LIFT THE SPELL—

**Cinderella:** INTO THE WOODS TO VISIT MOTHER—

**Baker’s Wife:** INTO THE WOODS TO FETCH THE THINGS—

**Baker:** TO MAKE THE POTION—

**Cinderella:** TO GO TO THE FESTIVAL—

**Baker, Baker’s Wife, Cinderella, Jack, Jack’s Mother:** INTO THE WOODS
WITHOUT REGRET,
The CHOICE IS MADE,
The TASK IS SET.
INTO THE WOODS,
BUT NOT FORGET—
TING WHY I’M YOU’RE ON THE JOURNEY.
INTO THE WOODS
TO GET MY/WISH,
I DON'T CARE HOW,
THE TIME IS NOW.

Jack's Mother: INTO THE WOODS TO SELL THE COW--

Jack: INTO THE WOODS TO GET THE MONEY--
(Leads Milky-White into the woods.)

Baker's Wife: INTO THE WOODS TO LIFT THE SPELL--

Baker: TO MAKE THE POTION--
(He sets off for the woods.)

Cinderella: TO GO TO THE FESTIVAL--
(He sets off for the woods.)

Little Red Riding Hood (skipping by): INTO THE WOODS TO GRANDMOTHER'S HOUSE
INTO THE WOODS TO GRANDMOTHER'S HOUSE

All: THE WAY IS CLEAR,
THE LIGHT IS GOOD,
I HAVE NO FEAR,
NOR NO ONE SHOULD.
THE WOODS ARE JUST TREES,
THE TREES ARE JUST WOOD.
NO NEED TO BE AFRAID THERE--

Baker, Cinderella (apprehensive): THERE'S SOMETHING IN THE GLADE THERE

All: INTO THE WOODS
WITHOUT DELAY,
BUT CAREFUL NOT
TO LOSE THE WAY,
INTO THE WOODS,
WHO KNOWS WHAT MAY
BE LURKING ON THE JOURNEY?

INTO THE WOODS
TO GET THE THING
THAT MAKES IT WORTH
THE JOURNEYING.
INTO THE WOODS--

Stepmother, Stepsisters: TO SEE THE KING--

Jack, Jack's Mother: TO SELL THE COW--

Baker, Baker's Wife: TO MAKE THE POTION--

All: TO SEE--
TO SELL--
TO GET--
TO BRING-
TO MAKE-
TO LIFT-
TO GO TO THE FESTIVAL-

INTO THE WOODS!
INTO THE WOODS!
INTO THE WOODS,
THEN OUT OF THE WOODS,
AND HOME BEFORE DARK!

(blackout)
END OF SCENE ONE

Act One, Scene 2

(the wood, late afternoon. The stage is filled by trees of all variety. Many twisted and gnarled—others going straight forward to the sky without a branch. Bright sunlight streams through, creating a wonderful light maze. As the scene progresses, the sunlight is gradually replaced by moonlight, and the stage gets alternately light and dark, suggesting a windy/cloudy night. The foliage rustles in the breeze, with an occasional gust blowing about low-lying fog, giving an eerie feeling. CINDERELLA kneels before a tree filled with birds)

Narrator: Cinderella had planted a branch at the grave of her mother and she visited often, and wept so much, that her trees watered it until it had become a handsome tree.

(exits)

Cinderella: I'VE BEEN GOOD AND I'VE BEEN KIND, MOTHER,
DOING ONLY WHAT I LEARNED FROM YOU.
WHY THEN AM I LEFT BEHIND, MOTHER,
IS THERE SOMETHING MORE THAT I SHOULD DO?
WHAT IS WRONG WITH ME, MOTHER?
SOMETHING MUST BE WRONG.
I WISH—

(suddenly, the ghost of CINDERELLA'S MOTHER appears within the tree. SHE is a collection of remembered mannerisms and sayings)

Cinderella's Mother: What, child? Specify. Opportunity is not a lengthy visitor and good fortune, though bad, can befall when least expected.

Cinderella: I wish...

Cinderella's Mother: DO YOU KNOW WHAT YOU WISH?
ARE YOU CERTAIN WHAT YOU WISH
IS WHAT YOU WANT?
IF YOU KNOW WHAT YOU WANT,
THEN MAKE A WISH.
ASK THE TREE.
AND YOU SHALL HAVE YOUR WISH.

Cinderella: (rising) SHIVER AND QUIVER, LITTLE TREE,
SILVER AND GOLD THROWN DOWN ON ME.
(a gold and silver dress and fancy slippers drop down from the tree)
I'M OFF TO GET MY WISH.

(picks up the clothes and dashes offstage. JACK is walking through the woods, leading MILKY-WHITE. he stops and sits on a tree stump)

Jack: Quiet. Silence everywhere, Milky-White. Not to my liking...