INTO THE WOODS
AND DOWN THE DELL,
IN VAIN PERHAPS,
BUT WHO CAN TELL?

INTO THE WOODS TO LIFT THE SPELL,
INTO THE WOODS TO LOSE THE LONGING.
INTO THE WOODS TO HAVE THE CHILD,
TO WED THE PRINCE,
TO GET THE MONEY,
TO KILL THE WOLF,
TO FIND THE FATHER,
TO CONQUER THE KINGDOM,
TO HAVE, TO WED,
TO GET, TO SAVE,
TO KILL, TO KEEP,
TO GO TO THE FESTIVAL!

INTO THE WOODS,
INTO THE WOODS,
INTO THE WOODS,
THEN OUT OF THE WOODS--

Narrator: To be continued...

(a giant beanstalk emerges from the ground and stretches to the heavens; the characters are oblivious to its presence)

Company: --AND HAPPY EVER AFTER!

(the parties head off to their respective homes as the lights dim to black)

END OF SCENE FIVE / END OF ACT 1

Act Two, Scene 1

(Downstage, three structures: Far left, the castle where CINDERELLA now lives. she sits on her throne. Center, the cottage—now dramatically improved—where JACK lives. JACK and JACK’S MOTHER are inside, along with MILKY-WHITE and the golden harp. Far right, the home/workplace of the BAKER and the BAKER’S WIFE. it is very cluttered with both baking supplies and nursery items. BAKER’S WIFE holds their BABY, who does not stop crying. NARRATOR steps forward)

Narrator: Once upon a time--

(music)

—later—

(light on CINDERELLA)

Cinderella: I WISH...

Narrator: --in the same far-off kingdom--

Cinderella: MORE THAN ANYTHING...

Narrator: --lived a young Princess--

Cinderella: MORE THAN LIFE...

Narrator: --the lad Jack--
(light on JACK)

Cinderella: MORE THAN FOOTMEN...

Jack: I WISH...

Narrator: —and the Baker and his family—

(light on BAKER and BAKER'S WIFE with their BABY)

Baby: WAAH!

Jack: NO, I MISS...

Cinderella, Baker: I WISH...

Baby: WAAH!

Jack: MORE THAN ANYTHING...

Cinderella, Baker, Jack: MORE THAN THE MOON...

Baker's Wife: (to the BABY) There, there...

Cinderella: I WISH TO SPONSOR A FESTIVAL...

Baby: WAAH!

Baker: MORE THAN LIFE...

Jack: I MISS...

Cinderella: THE TIME HAS COME FOR A FESTIVAL...

Baby: WAAH!

Baker's Wife: Shh...

Baker: (overlapping) MORE THAN RICHES...

Cinderella: AND A BALL...

Jack: I MISS MY KINGDOM UP IN THE SKY.

Cinderella, Baker: MORE THAN ANYTHING...

Baker's Wife: I WISH WE HAD MORE ROOM...

Jack: (to harp) PLAY, HARP...

Baker: ANOTHER ROOM...

(JACK strums the harp and it sings. STEPMOTHER, attended by the blinded FLORINDA and LUCINDA, enters the castle)

Narrator: But despite some minor inconveniences, they were all quite content...

(CINDERELLA'S PRINCE enters the castle)

Cinderella: I NEVER THOUGHT I'D WED A PRINCE...

Cinderella's Prince: I NEVER THOUGHT I'D FIND PERFECTION...
Cinderella, Cinderella's Prince: I NEVER THOUGHT I COULD BE SO HAPPY!

Cinderella: NOT AN UNHAPPY MOMENT SINCE...

Jack, Jack's Mother: I DIDN'T THINK WE'D BE THIS RICH...

Cinderella's Prince: NOT A CONCEIVABLE OBJECTION...

Baker, Baker's Wife: I NEVER THOUGHT WE'D HAVE A BABY...

Cinderella, Cinderella's Prince, Jack, Jack's Mother: I NEVER THOUGHT I COULD BE SO HAPPY!

Baker, Baker's Wife: (overlapping) I'M SO HAPPY!

Stepmother: HAPPY NOW,
    HAPPY HENCE,
    HAPPY EVER AFTER--

Stepmother, Stepsisters: (to CINDERELLA) WE'RE SO HAPPY YOU'RE SO HAPPY,
    JUST AS LONG AS YOU STAY HAPPY,
    WE'LL STAY HAPPY...

Cinderella, Cinderella's Prince: NOT ONE ROW...

Jack's Mother: POTS OF PENCE...

Jack: WITH MY COW...

Baker, Baker's Wife: LITTLE GURGLES...

Cinderella's Prince: (to CINDERELLA) DARLING, I MUST GO NOW...

(exits)

Jack's Mother: (to JACK) WE SHOULD REALLY SELL IT.

Baker: (to Baker's Wife) WHERE'S THE CHEESECLOTH?

All others: WISHES MAY BRING PROBLEMS,
    SUCH THAT YOU REGRET THEM.

All: BETTER THAT, THOUGH,
    THAN TO NEVER GET THEM...

Cinderella: I'M GOING TO BE A PERFECT WIFE!

Jack: (overlapping) I'M GOING TO BE A PERFECT SON!

Baker's Wife, Jack's Mother: I'M GOING TO BE A PERFECT MOTHER!

Baker: I'M GOING TO BE A PERFECT FATHER!
    I'M SO HAPPY!

Cinderella, Jack, Jack's Mother, Baker's Wife: (overlapping) I'M GOING TO SEE THAT HE (SHE) IS SO HAPPY!

All: I NEVER THOUGHT I'D LOVE MY LIFE!
    I WOULD HAVE SETTLED FOR ANOTHER!
Cinderella: THEN TO BECOME A WIFE...

Jack, Jack's Mother: THEN TO BE SET FOR LIFE...

Baker, Baker's Wife: THEN TO BEGET A CHILD...

All: THAT FORTUNE SMILED...
    I'M SO HAPPY!

Wife: (hands the baby to BAKER, who is very awkward in holding the child) If only this cottage were a little larger.

Baker: I will expand our quarters in due time.

Baker's Wife: Why expand when we can simply move to another cottage?

(BABY cries)

Baker: We will not move. This was my father's house, and now it will be my son's.

Baker's Wife: You would raise your child alongside a witch?

Baker: (edgy) Why does he always cry when I hold him?

Baker's Wife: Babies cry. He's fine. You needn't hold him as if he were so fragile.

Baker: He wants his mother. Here.
(Baker carefully passes BABY back to BAKER'S WIFE. BABY stops crying)

Baker's Wife: I can't take care of him all the time!

Baker: I'll take care of him when he's older.

Baker, Baker's Wife, Jack, Jack's Mother: WE HAD TO GO THROUGH THICK AND THIN.

Stepmother, Florinda, Lucinda: WE HAD TO LOSE A LOT TO WIN.

Cinderella: I VENTURED OUT AND SAW WITHIN.

All: I NEVER THOUGHT
    I'D BE SO MUCH I HADN'T BEEN!
    I'M SO HAPPY...

(The song is suddenly interrupted by a loud rumbling noise followed by an enormous crash. the BAKER's house caves in. HE is caught underneath the rubble as the BAKER'S WIFE runs forward with their BABY. Action stops. JACK and JACK'S MOTHER look concerned. CINDERELLA sends her STEPMOTHER out to investigate. we should be momentarily uncertain as to whether there has truly been an accident onstage)

Baker's Wife: Oh, my goodness.

Baker: (stunned) Are you all right?

Baker's Wife: I think so.

Baker: And the baby?

Baker's Wife: Yes, he's fine. Are you all right?

(BAKER nods; WITCH enters)

Baker: (to WITCH) You! Have you done this to our house?
Witch: Always thinking of yourself? Look at my garden.

Baker’s Wife: What of your garden?

Witch: Look!

(BAKER and BAKER’S WIFE move to window)

Baker: Destroyed.

Baker’s Wife: What has happened?

Witch: I was thrown to the ground. I saw nothing.

Baker’s Wife: What could do such a thing?

Baker: An earthquake.

Witch: No earthquake! My garden has been trampled. Those are footprints!

Baker’s Wife: Who could do such a thing.

Witch: Anything that leaves a footprint that big is no “who.”

(the following spoken in rhythm)

Baker: Do you think it was a bear?

Witch: A bear? Bears are sweet. Besides, you ever see a bear with forty-foot feet?

Baker’s Wife: A dragon?

Witch: (shaking her head) No scorched marks—Usually they’re linked.

Baker: Manticore?

Witch: Imaginary.

Baker, Baker’s Wife: Griffin?

Witch: Extinct.

Baker: Giant?

Witch: Possible. Very, very possible...

(music fades under)

Baker: A Giant...

Baker’s Wife: Maybe we should tell someone.

Witch: Who are you going to tell?

Baker: The royal family, of course.
Witch: (lets out a loud cackle) The royal family? I wouldn't count on that family to snuff out a rat! With a Giant, we'll all have to go to battle! (change of tone) A Giant's the worst! A Giant has a brain. Hard to outwit a Giant. A Giant's just like us—only bigger! Much, much bigger! So big that we are just an expendable bug beneath its foot.

(suddenly steps on a bug)
BOOM...CRUNCH!
(we hear it crunch as she grinds it into the floor and then eats it. WITCH exits)

Baker's Wife: We are moving!

Narrator: And so, the Baker proceeded to the castle, but not before visiting Jack and his mother.

(knock on JACK's door; BAKER enters)
Jack: Look, Milky-White. It's the butcher.
Baker: The baker.
Jack: The baker...
Jack's Mother: What can we do for you, sir?
Baker: I'm here to investigate the destruction that was wrought upon our house today.

Jack's Mother: (defensive) Jack has been home with me all day.

Narrator: The Baker told Jack and his mother that he feared there was a Giant in the land.
Jack: I can recognize a Giant's footprint! I could go to your house—

Jack's Mother: You'll do no such thing!

Baker: Any help at all—

Jack's Mother: I am sorry, but you'll get none from us.
(opens the door for the BAKER)
No one cared when there was a Giant in my backyard! I don't remember you volunteering to come to my aid.

Baker: A Giant in your backyard is one thing. A crushed home is quite another.

Jack's Mother: (change of tone) Look, young man. Giants never strike the same house twice. I wouldn't worry.

Baker: I am taking this news to the castle, nonetheless.

(exits)

Narrator: When the Baker reached the castle, it was the Princess who greeted his news. The story unfolds.

(fanfare; STEWARD enters)

Steward: Excuse me, Madame. This small man insists on seeing you.

(BAKER enters. NARRATOR exits)

Baker: (kneels, kisses CINDERELLA's hem) Princess, I've come to report the appearance of a Giant in the land.

Cinderella: Where did you see a Giant?
Baker: Well, I didn't exactly see it.
Steward: Then how do you know there is a Giant in the land?

Baker: Our house was destroyed and there are footprints--

Steward: That could have been caused by any number of things. I will show you to the door.

Cinderella: Wait.

Baker: A nearby household was visited by a Giant not long ago...descending from a beanstalk--

Cinderella: Yes, I remember.

Steward: That Giant was slain. Now come along--

Baker: (apologetic) Wait, please. We have a young child. Princess, our child was very difficult to come by. His safety is of great importance to me.

Steward: Are we entirely through now?

Baker: Yes.

Cinderella: I will take this news up with the Prince when he returns. Thank you.

(BAKER and STEWART exit. CINDERELLA, BAKER and BAKER'S WIFE freeze)

Jack's Mother: (with her coat on) I'm going off to market, Jack.

Jack: Goodbye, Mother.

Jack's Mother: Now, I want you stay inside.

Jack: But I haven't been outside all day!

Jack's Mother: Jack. Listen to me! I don't want you out when there might be a Giant on the loose.

Jack: But I know how to kill a Giant!

Jack's Mother: Please! We've had our fill of Giants!

Jack: But Mother, if I could help--

Jack's Mother: Enough! Promise me, son, you won't leave your surroundings!

Jack: But Mother, I'm a man now.

Jack's Mother: You're still a little boy in your mother's eyes. I want you to promise. (pause) Promise!

Jack: (reluctantly) I promise.

(JACK'S MOTHER gives JACK a peck on the cheek and exits. LITTLE RED RIDINGHOOD knocks on the BAKER's doo and enters, suitcase in hand; BAKER and BAKER'S WIFE are sitting)

Little Red Ridinghood: What happened to your house?

Baker's Wife: We've had a baking accident.

Baker: Baking accident?

Baker's Wife: (whispers to him) No use frightening the young thing.
Baker: (whispers back) You can't frighten her.

Little Red Ridinghood: Well, I guess Granny will have to do without the bread and sweets. Besides, I have all I can carry.

(drops suitcase)

Baker's Wife: (trying to lift suitcase) Why such a load?

Little Red Ridinghood: Oh, I'm moving in with Granny. We had an accident, too. I came home to find our house collapsed. As if a big wind blew it in. I couldn't find my mother anywhere.

Baker's Wife: Oh, no.

Little Red Ridinghood: So I salvaged what I could, and now I'm off.

(music continues under. Birds descend, chirp to CINDERELLA)

Cinderella: Oh, good friends. What news have you?

(listens)

What of Mother's grave?

(listens)

what kind of trouble?

(listens)

Oh, no. I can't investigate. A Princess is not supposed to go into the woods unescorted.

(CINDERELLA begins to cry birds chirp)

Good ideal! I will disguise myself and go to see what's wrong. Thank you, birds.

(birds ascend. CINDERELLA exits)

Baker's Wife: We'll take you to Granny's.

Baker: What?!

Baker's Wife: (whispers) We're not going to let her go alone!

Baker: All right. I will take you.

Little Red Ridinghood: I don't need anyone to take me. I've gone many times before.

Baker: But not when there have been such winds blowing.

Baker's Wife: That's right. We'll all take you.

Baker: No!

Baker's Wife: I'm not about to stay here with the baby when a "wind" might return to this house, too.

Jack: I know Mother made me promise, but I'm going to find that Giant anyway!

(CINDERELLA, JACK, BAKER, BAKER'S WIFE, LITTLE RED RIDINGHOOD all make their way into the woods)

Baker: INTO THE WOODS,

IT'S ALWAYS WHEN
YOU THINK AT LAST
YOU'RE THROUGH, AND THEN
INTO THE WOODS YOU GO AGAIN
TO TAKE ANOTHER JOURNEY.
Baker’s Wife: INTO THE WOODS,
    THE WEATHER’S CLEAR,
    WE’VE BEEN BEFORE,
    WE’VE NAUGHT TO FEAR...
    INTO THE WOODS, AWAY FROM HERE--

Jack: INTO THE WOODS, TO FIND A GIANT--!

Little Red Ridinghood: INTO THE WOODS TO GRANDMOTHER’S HOUSE...

Baker: INTO THE WOODS,
    THE PATH IS STRAIGHT,
    NO REASON THEN
    TO HESITATE--

Baker’s Wife: INTO THE WOODS,
    IT’S NOT SO LATE,
    IT’S JUST ANOTHER JOURNEY...

Cinderella: INTO THE WOODS,
    BUT NOT TOO LONG:
    THE SKIES ARE STRANGE,
    THE WINDS ARE STRONG,
    INTO THE WOODS TO SEE WHAT’S WRONG...

Jack: (picking up a huge pair of broken eyeglasses) INTO THE WOODS TO SLAY THE GIANT!

Baker’s Wife: INTO THE WOODS TO SHIELD THE CHILD...

Little Red Ridinghood: TO FLEE THE WINDS...

Baker: TO FIND A FUTURE...

Baker’s Wife: TO SHIELD...

Jack: TO SLAY...

Little Red Ridinghood: TO FLEE...

Baker: TO FIND...

Cinderella: TO FIX...

Baker’s Wife: TO HIDE...

Little Red Ridinghood: TO MOVE...

Jack: TO BATTLE...

Cinderella: TO SEE WHAT THE TROUBLE IS...

(music fades)

END OF SCENE ONE