

Wife Steward Baker, Mysterious Man, Cinderella's Prince Jacks Sondheim & Lapine

Stewart
WIFE: Does it make sense that you're running from a Prince?
STEWARD (Off): Stop!
WIFE: Here. Take my shoes. You'll run faster.

Wife gives Cinderella her shoes, and takes the golden slipper. Cinderella exits. Steward bounds onstage; looks about.

STEWARD: Who was that woman?
WIFE: I do not know, sir.
STEWARD: Lying will cost you your life!

Baker enters with another cow.

WIFE: I've done nothing . . .
BAKER: I've the cow.
WIFE (Sees the cow; excitedly to Baker): The slipper! We've all four! (She runs to the Baker)

STEWARD (Goes to Wife and takes the shoe): I will give this to the Prince and we will search the kingdom tomorrow for the maiden who will fit this shoe.
WIFE (Tries to grab the slipper back): It's mine!

They begin to struggle; Mysterious Man comes from around a tree.

I don't care if this costs me my life—
MYSTERIOUS MAN (Simultaneously): Give her the slipper and all will—

Suddenly there is a long sound of crackling wood, followed by an enormous thud. This noise is frighteningly loud: very bass, with the kind of reverberation that will shake the audience. All action on stage stops. There is a moment of stunned silence. Cinderella's Prince races onstage.

CINDERELLA'S PRINCE: What was that noise?
STEWARD: Sir. Just a bolt of lightning in a far-off kingdom.
CINDERELLA'S PRINCE (To Steward): How dare you go off in search without me!

STEWARD: My apologies, sir. I thought that I might—
CINDERELLA'S PRINCE: Enough of what you thought! I employed a ruse and had the entire staircase smeared with

INTO THE WOODS

pitch. And there, when she ran down, remained the maiden's slipper. (He produces the slipper)

STEWARD: Brilliant!

CINDERELLA'S PRINCE: I thought so. It did create quite a mess when the other guests left.

STEWARD: And sir, I have succeeded in obtaining the other slipper!

MYSTERIOUS MAN (To Steward): Give them the slipper, and all will come to a happy end.

STEWARD: Who are you, old man?

MYSTERIOUS MAN: When first I appear, I seem deleterious—

STEWARD: Shut up!

CINDERELLA'S PRINCE: Do as he says. He's obviously a spirit of some sort, and we only need one.

STEWARD: Oh . . .

He hands slipper back to Wife. Loud scream. Jack's Mother comes running onstage, still screaming.

JACK'S MOTHER (Hysterical; she howls): There's a dead giant in my backyard!

Cinderella's Prince shoots Steward a look.

(More hysterical) I heard Jack coming down the beanstalk, calling for his axe. And when he raced to the bottom he took it and began hacking down the stalk. Suddenly, with a crash, the beanstalk fell, but there was no Jack. For all I know, he's been crushed by the ogre.

She cries; long pause; Cinderella's Prince goes to her.

CINDERELLA'S PRINCE: Worrying will do you no good. If he's safe, then he's safe. If he's been crushed, well, then, there's nothing any of us can do about that, now is there? (To Steward) We must be off. I need my rest before tomorrow's search is to commence.

Prince and Steward begin to exit.

JACK'S MOTHER: Doesn't anyone care a giant has fallen from the sky?

Sondheim & Lapine

CINDERELLA'S PRINCE (Stops): He is dead, isn't he?

JACK'S MOTHER: With such a thud, I would suppose.

Cinderella's Prince nods, and exits with Steward. Witch appears, frantic; looks up to the sky.

WITCH (Unpleasant): The third midnight is near. I see a cow. I see a slipper.

BAKER (Pulling items from his bag): And the cape as red as blood.

WIFE: And the hair as yellow as corn.

WITCH (Amazed): You've all the objects?

WIFE: Yes. (She brings the cow forth)

WITCH: That cow doesn't look as white as milk to me.

WIFE (Moving towards cow): Oh, she is. (Patting cow) She is!

White powder flies about as Wife puts the cow. Baker pulls her away as Witch approaches.

WITCH: This cow has been covered with flour!

BAKER: We had a cow as white as milk. Honestly we did.

WITCH: Then where is she?

WIFE: She's dead.

BAKER: We thought you'd prefer a live cow.

WITCH: Of course I'd prefer a live cow! So bring me the dead

BAKER: You could do that?

WITCH: Now!

Witch zaps Baker with lightning; Witch, Wife and Baker scamper onstage towards Milky-White's grave and we see dirt flying into the air as they dig into the grave; Jack comes running onstage with a golden harp that sings.

JACK'S MOTHER (Relieved): There you are! (She hits him) I've been worried sick.

JACK: Mother, look. The most beautiful harp. (He hands harp to her)

JACK'S MOTHER: You've stolen too much! You could have been killed coming down that plant.

BAKER (Off): She's too heavy.

JACK: What's happening?