

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!!

(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 – Fanfares

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 thought 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)

(BAKER'S WIFE begins to move back towards him)

Go!

(THEY EXIT in opposite directions.)

TWO FANFARES.

Another part of the forest. CINDERELLA'S PRINCE, somewhat bedraggled, crosses the stage. HE is met by RAPUNZEL'S PRINCE)

RAPUNZEL'S PRINCE

Ah, there you are, good brother. Father and I had wondered where you had gone.

CINDERELLA'S PRINCE

I have been looking all night... for her.

(BAKER'S WIFE APPEARS behind a tree and eavesdrops)

RAPUNZEL'S PRINCE

Her?

CINDERELLA'S PRINCE

The beautiful one I danced the evening with.

RAPUNZEL'S PRINCE

Where did she go?

CINDERELLA'S PRINCE

Disappeared, like the fine morning mist.

RAPUNZEL'S PRINCE

She was lovely.

CINDERELLA'S PRINCE

The loveliest.

RAPUNZEL'S PRINCE

I am not certain of that! I must confess, I, too, have found a lovely maiden. She lives here in the Woods.

CINDERELLA'S PRINCE

(Incredulous)

The Woods?

RAPUNZEL'S PRINCE

Yes! In the top of a tall tower that has no door or stairs.

CINDERELLA'S PRINCE

Where?

RAPUNZEL'S PRINCE

Two leagues from here, due east, just beyond the mossy knoll.

CINDERELLA'S PRINCE

And how do you manage a visit?

RAPUNZEL'S PRINCE

I stand beneath her tower and say, "Rapunzel, Rapunzel, let down your hair to me." And then she lowers the longest, most beautiful head of hair — yellow as corn — which I climb to her.

(BAKER'S WIFE reacts)

CINDERELLA'S PRINCE

(Starts laughing hysterically)

Rapunzel, Rapunzel! What kind of name is that? You jest! I have never heard of such a thing.

(Defensive)

I speak the truth! She is as true as your maiden. A maiden running from a Prince? None would run from us.

(Sober)

Yet one has.

RAPUNZEL'S PRINCE**CINDERELLA'S PRINCE**

DID I ABUSE HER
OR SHOW HER DISDAIN?
WHY DOES SHE RUN FROM ME?
IF I SHOULD LOSE HER,
HOW SHALL I REGAIN
THE HEART SHE HAS WON FROM ME?

AGONY!
BEYOND POWER OF SPEECH,
WHEN THE ONE THING YOU WANT
IS THE ONLY THING OUT OF YOUR REACH.

RAPUNZEL'S PRINCE

HIGH IN HER TOWER,
SHE SITS BY THE HOUR,
MAINTAINING HER HAIR
BLITHE AND BECOMING,
AND FREQUENTLY HUMMING
A LIGHTHEARTED AIR:

(Hums RAPUNZEL'S theme)

AH AH-AH AH AH-AH AH --

AGONY!

FAR MORE PAINFUL THAN YOURS,
WHEN YOU KNOW SHE WOULD GO WITH YOU,
IF THERE ONLY WERE DOORS.

BOTH

AGONY!

OH THE TORTURE THEY TEACH!

RAPUNZEL'S PRINCE

WHAT'S AS INTRIGUING --

CINDERELLA'S PRINCE

OR HALF SO FATIGUING --

BOTH

AS WHAT'S OUT OF REACH?

CINDERELLA'S PRINCE

AM I NOT SENSITIVE,

CLEVER,

WELL-MANNERED,

CONSIDERATE,

PASSIONATE,

CHARMING,

AS KIND AS I'M HANDSOME,

AND HEIR TO A THRONE?

RAPUNZEL'S PRINCE

YOU ARE EVERYTHING MAIDENS COULD WISH FOR!

CINDERELLA'S PRINCE

THEN WHY NO -- ?

RAPUNZEL'S PRINCE

DO I KNOW?

CINDERELLA'S PRINCE

THE GIRL MUST BE MAD!

RAPUNZEL'S PRINCE

YOU KNOW NOTHING OF MADNESS
TILL YOU'RE CLIMBING HER HAIR
AND YOU SEE HER UP THERE
AS YOU'RE NEARING HER,
ALL THE WHILE HEARING HER
"AH-AH AH-AH-AH AH-AH-AH-AH-AH-AH —"

BOTH

AGONY!

CINDERELLA'S PRINCE

MISERY!

RAPUNZEL'S PRINCE

WOE!

BOTH

THOUGH IT'S DIFFERENT FOR EACH.

CINDERELLA'S PRINCE

ALWAYS TEN STEPS BEHIND —

RAPUNZEL'S PRINCE

ALWAYS TEN FEET BELOW —

BOTH

AND SHE'S JUST OUT OF REACH.

AGONY

THAT CAN CUT LIKE A KNIFE!

I MUST HAVE HER TO WIFE.

(EXIT)

BAKER'S WIFE

Two Princes, each more handsome than the other.

*(Begins to follow CINDERELLA'S PRINCE and RAPUNZEL'S PRINCE;
SHE stops)*

No! Get the hair!

(Heads in the other direction frantically.)

JACK'S MOTHER ENTERS)

#26 – Jack, Jack/Rapunzel

JACK'S MOTHER

Excuse me, young woman. Have you encountered a boy with carrot-top hair and a sunny, though occasionally vague, disposition, answering to the name of Jack?

BAKER'S WIFE

Not the one partial to a white cow?

JACK'S MOTHER

He's the one.

BAKER'S WIFE

Have you seen the cow?

JACK'S MOTHER

No, and I don't care to ever again.

(Confidential)

Children can be very queer about their animals. You be careful with your children...

BAKER'S WIFE

I have no children.

(Beat)

JACK'S MOTHER

That's okay, too.

BAKER'S WIFE

Yes... well, I've not seen your son today.

JACK'S MOTHER

(Annoyed)

I hope he didn't go up that beanstalk again. Quit while you're ahead, I say.

(Begins to EXIT)

Jack...! Jack...!

(BAKER'S WIFE, after a moment's pause, EXITS in the other direction; BAKER ENTERS, looking for MILKY-WHITE)

BAKER

(Forlorn)

Moo... Moo...

(MYSTERIOUS MAN APPEARS from nowhere)

MYSTERIOUS MAN

Moo! Looking for your cow?

(Signals OFFSTAGE and MILKY-WHITE ENTERS)

BAKER

Where did you find her?

(MYSTERIOUS MAN ducks back behind a tree as BAKER goes to MILKY-WHITE.)

BAKER turns, and sees the old man is gone)

Hello?

(Takes MILKY-WHITE and EXITS. MYSTERIOUS MAN REAPPEARS and watches after BAKER. WITCH surprises MYSTERIOUS MAN and touches him with her cane. HE falls to the ground, groaning)

WITCH

What are you doing?

I am here to make amends.

MYSTERIOUS MAN**WITCH**

I want you to stay out of this, old man!

MYSTERIOUS MAN

I am here to see your wish is granted.

WITCH

You've caused enough trouble! Keep out of my path!

(ZAPS him; HE runs off. SHE follows him.)

BAKER'S WIFE ENTERS, approaches RAPUNZEL'S tower)

RAPUNZEL

AHHH...

BAKER'S WIFE

(To herself)

I hope there are no Witches to encounter.

(BAKER'S WIFE)

(Calling up)

Rapunzel, Rapunzel? Let your hair down to me.

RAPUNZEL

(Dubious)

Is that you, my Prince?

BAKER'S WIFE

(In a deep voice)

Yes.

(RAPUNZEL lowers her hair)

Excuse me for this.

(Yanks hair three times. RAPUNZEL screams more loudly with each pull. On the third yank, some hair falls into BAKER'S WIFE'S HANDS.)

#27 – A Very Nice Prince (Reprise)

BAKER'S WIFE runs away to another part of the Woods.

CINDERELLA ENTERS, as if pursued; SHE falls at the feet of the

BAKER'S WIFE, losing one slipper)

You do take plenty of spills, don't you?

(Picks up the slipper)

CINDERELLA

(Recognizing BAKER'S WIFE)

Hello. It's these slippers. They're not suited for these surroundings. Actually, they're not much suited for dancing, either.

BAKER'S WIFE

I'd say those slippers were as pure as gold.

CINDERELLA

Yes. They are all you could wish for in beauty.

(Takes the slipper back)

BAKER'S WIFE

What I wouldn't give for just one.

CINDERELLA

One is not likely to do you much good.

(Giggles)

BAKER'S WIFE

Was the Ball just as wonderful as last evening?

CINDERELLA

OH, IT'S STILL A NICE BALL.

BAKER'S WIFE

(Spoken)

YES--?AND--?

CINDERELLA

(Spoken)

AND --

(Sung)

THEY HAVE FAR TOO MUCH FOOD.

BAKER'S WIFE

(Spoken)

NO, THE PRINCE --

CINDERELLA

(Spoken)

OH, THE PRINCE...

BAKER'S WIFE

(Spoken)

YES, THE PRINCE!

CINDERELLA

(Sung)

IF HE KNEW WHO I REALLY WAS --

BAKER'S WIFE

(Spoken)

OH? WHO?

CINDERELLA

(Sung)

I'M AFRAID I WAS RUDE.

BAKER'S WIFE

(Spoken)

OH? HOW?

CINDERELLA

(Sung)

NOW I'M BEING PURSUED.

BAKER'S WIFE

(Spoken)

YES? AND — ?

CINDERELLA

(Sung)

AND I'M NOT IN THE MOOD.

BAKER'S WIFE

He must really have taken a liking to you.

(STEWARD ENTERS the Woods with black lantern and staff searching. CINDERELLA'S PRINCE follows)

CINDERELLA

I have no experience with Princes and castles and gowns.

BAKER'S WIFE

Nonsense, every girl dreams —

STEWARD

Look, sir! Look!

CINDERELLA'S PRINCE

Yes, there she is! Move! Move! Move!

CINDERELLA

I must run.

(BAKER'S WIFE grabs a shoe)

BAKER'S WIFE

And I must have your shoe.

CINDERELLA

Stop that!

(The two engage in a tug-of-war over the shoe, dialogue overlaps)

I need it to have a child!

BAKER'S WIFE

CINDERELLA

(Through clenched teeth)

And I need it to get out of here!

(CINDERELLA wins the battle over the shoe, and desperately runs

OFFSTAGE; BAKER'S WIFE is embarrassed by her own behavior. SHE straightens herself up as CINDERELLA'S PRINCE with STEWARD bound ONSTAGE, only to curtsey deeply again)

CINDERELLA'S PRINCE

Where did she go?

BAKER'S WIFE

Who?

STEWARD

Don't play the fool, woman!

BAKER'S WIFE

Oh! You mean the beautiful young maiden in the ball gown? She went in that direction. I was trying to hold her here for you...

CINDERELLA'S PRINCE

I can capture my own damsel, thank you.

(Begins to go OFFSTAGE towards CINDERELLA)

BAKER'S WIFE

Yes, sir.

(CINDERELLA'S PRINCE and STEWARD dash OFFSTAGE. We hear FLORINDA, LUCINDA and STEPMOTHER. THEY ENTER, first looking behind them, then looking towards CINDERELLA'S PRINCE)

STPMOTHER

(To BAKER'S WIFE)

Where did he go?

BAKER'S WIFE

Who?

LUCINDA

The Prince, of course!

FLORINDA

Yes!

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 choke)

LUCINDA, FLORINDA

He wants to compare our hair to corn!

STEMOTHER, LUCINDA, FLORINDA

Ah! Ah! Ha! 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.

Two!

BAKER

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 DARING.

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,

(BAKER'S WIFE)

AND MUCH MORE OPEN-HEARTED
THAN I KNEW
YOU TO BE.

BAKER

IT TAKES TWO.
I THOUGHT ONE WAS ENOUGH,
IT'S NOT TRUE:
IT TAKES TWO OF US.
YOU CAME THROUGH
WHEN THE JOURNEY WAS ROUGH.
IT TOOK YOU.
IT TOOK TWO OF US.

IT TAKES CARE,
IT TAKES PATIENCE AND FEAR AND DESPAIR
TO CHANGE.
THOUGH YOU SWEAR
TO CHANGE,
WHO CAN TELL IF YOU DO?
IT TAKES TWO.

BAKER'S WIFE

YOU'VE CHANGED.
YOU'RE THRIVING.
THERE'S SOMETHING ABOUT THE WOODS.
NOT JUST
SURVIVING,
YOU'RE BLOSSOMING IN THE WOODS.

AT HOME I'D FEAR
WE'D STAY THE SAME FOREVER.
AND THEN OUT HERE
YOU'RE PASSIONATE, CHARMING, CONSIDERATE, CLEVER —

BAKER

IT TAKES ONE
TO BEGIN, BUT THEN ONCE
YOU'VE BEGUN,
IT TAKES TWO OF YOU.
IT'S NO FUN,

(BAKER)

BUT WHAT NEEDS TO BE DONE
YOU CAN DO
WHEN THERE'S TWO OF YOU.

IF I DARE,
IT'S BECAUSE I'M BECOMING
AWARE OF US
AS A PAIR OF US,
EACH ACCEPTING A SHARE
OF WHAT'S THERE.

BOTH

WE'VE CHANGED.
WE'RE STRANGERS.
I'M MEETING YOU IN THE WOODS.
WHO MINDS
WHAT DANGERS?
I KNOW WE'LL GET PAST THE WOODS.
AND ONCE WE'RE PAST,
LET'S HOPE THE CHANGES LAST

BEYOND WOODS,
BEYOND WITCHES AND SLIPPERS AND HOODS,
JUST THE TWO OF US —
BEYOND LIES,
SAFE AT HOME WITH OUR BEAUTIFUL PRIZE,
JUST THE FEW OF US.

IT TAKES TRUST.
IT TAKES JUST
A BIT MORE
AND WE'RE DONE.
WE WANT FOUR,
WE HAD NONE.
WE'VE GOT THREE.
WE NEED ONE.
IT TAKES TWO.

*(We hear the slow CHIMES of midnight begin; a HEN dashes ONSTAGE,
closely followed by JACK)*

JACK

STOP HER! STOP THAT HEN,

(BAKER grabs HEN)

Oh, Providence! My Milky-White.

(Gives MILKY-WHITE a kiss)

And the owners. *And* my hen!

BAKER

(Squeals)

Look what this hen has dropped in my hand!

BAKER'S WIFE

(Excited)

A golden egg! I've never seen a golden egg!

#29 – Cow Death

JACK

You see, I promised you more than the five gold pieces I gave you, sir.

BAKER'S WIFE

Five gold pieces?

JACK

Now I'm taking my cow.

BAKER'S WIFE

Five gold pieces?

BAKER

(To JACK)

Now, I never said I would sell —

JACK

But you took the five gold pieces.

BAKER'S WIFE

You took five gold pieces?!

BAKER

I didn't take, you gave.

BAKER'S WIFE

Where are the five gold pieces?

An old man -

(JACK goes to take MILKY-WHITE. BAKER holds her rope from him)

BAKER

JACK

(Getting upset)

You said I could have my cow!

BAKER

(Overlapping)

Now, I never said you could. I said you might.

BAKER'S WIFE

You would take money before a child?!

(MILKY-WHITE lets out a terrible YELP, and falls to the ground, dead. SILENCE. JACK runs to her, puts his ear to her chest. SILENCE)

JACK

Milky-White is dead...

BAKER, BAKER'S WIFE

(Exasperated)

Two!

(BLACKOUT.)

#30 - Second Midnight

(Last CHIME of midnight.

MUSIC under.

One by one, the characters APPEAR and DISAPPEAR, as in the "First Midnight", speaking their lines in rhythm, as night changes into dawn)

WITCH

(Spoken)

TWO MIDNIGHTS GONE!

CINDERELLA

(Spoken)

WANTING A BALL IS NOT WANTING A PRINCE...

CINDERELLA'S PRINCE

(Spoken)

NEAR MAY BE BETTER THAN FAR,
BUT IT STILL ISN'T *THERE*...

RAPUNZEL'S PRINCE

(Spoken)

NEAR MAY BE BETTER THAN FAR,
BUT IT STILL ISN'T *THERE*...

CINDERELLA

(Spoken)

THE BALL...

CINDERELLA'S PRINCE

(Spoken)

SO NEAR...

RAPUNZEL'S PRINCE

(Spoken)

SO FAR...

STEPMOTHER

(Spoken)

YOU CAN NEVER LOVE SOMEBODY ELSE'S CHILD --

FLORINDA, LUCINDA

(Spoken)

TWO MIDNIGHTS GONE!

STEPMOTHER

(Spoken)

-- THE WAY YOU LOVE --

CINDERELLA'S PRINCE

(Spoken)

SO NEAR...

STEPMOTHER

(Spoken)

-- YOUR OWN.

CINDERELLA

(Spoken)

THE PRINCE...

CINDERELLA'S PRINCE

(Spoken)

SO FAR...

GRANNY

(Spoken)

THE GREATEST PRIZE CAN OFTEN LIE
AT THE END OF THE THORNIEST PATH...

CINDERELLA'S PRINCE,

STEMMOTHER,

GRANNY

RAPUNZEL'S PRINCE

FLORINDA, LUCINDA

(spoken)

(spoken)

TWO MIDNIGHTS

GONE!

TWO MIDNIGHTS,

TWO MIDNIGHTS

TWO MIDNIGHTS

GONE!

GONE!

TWO MIDNIGHTS

GONE!

END OF SCENE THREE

SCENE THREE

#23 – *Giants in the Sky*

(BAKER sleeps beneath a tree.

JACK APPEARS suddenly from the trees, carrying an oversized money sack)

JACK

(Softly, but intense)

THERE ARE GIANTS IN THE SKY!
THERE ARE BIG TALL TERRIBLE GIANTS IN THE SKY!

WHEN YOU'RE WAY UP HIGH
AND YOU LOOK BELOW
AT THE WORLD YOU LEFT
AND THE THINGS YOU KNOW,
LITTLE MORE THAN A GLANCE
IS ENOUGH TO SHOW
YOU JUST HOW SMALL YOU ARE.

WHEN YOU'RE WAY UP HIGH
AND YOU'RE ON YOUR OWN
IN A WORLD LIKE NONE
THAT YOU'VE EVER KNOWN,
WHERE THE SKY IS LEAD
AND THE EARTH IS STONE,

YOU'RE FREE TO DO
WHATEVER PLEASES YOU,
EXPLORING THINGS YOU'D NEVER DARE
'CAUSE YOU DON'T CARE,
WHEN SUDDENLY THERE'S

A BIG TALL TERRIBLE GIANT AT THE DOOR,
A BIG TALL TERRIBLE LADY GIANT SWEEPING THE FLOOR.
AND SHE GIVES YOU FOOD
AND SHE GIVES YOU REST
AND SHE DRAWS YOU CLOSE
TO HER GIANT BREAST,

(JACK)

AND YOU KNOW THINGS NOW THAT YOU NEVER KNEW BEFORE,
NOT TILL THE SKY.
ONLY JUST WHEN YOU'VE MADE
A FRIEND AND ALL,
AND YOU KNOW SHE'S BIG
BUT YOU DON'T FEEL SMALL,
SOMEONE BIGGER THAN HER
COMES ALONG THE HALL
TO SWALLOW YOU FOR LUNCH.

AND YOUR HEART IS LEAD
AND YOUR STOMACH STONE
AND YOU'RE REALLY SCARED
BEING ALL ALONE...

AND IT'S THEN THAT YOU LONG
FOR THE THINGS YOU'VE KNOWN
AND THE WORLD YOU'VE LEFT
AND THE LITTLE YOU OWN —

THE FUN IS DONE.
YOU STEAL WHAT YOU CAN AND RUN!
AND YOU SCRAMBLE DOWN
AND YOU LOOK BELOW,
AND THE WORLD YOU KNOW
BEGINS TO GROW:

THE ROOF, THE HOUSE, AND YOUR MOTHER AT THE DOOR.
THE ROOF, THE HOUSE, AND THE WORLD

YOU NEVER THOUGHT TO EXPLORE.
AND YOU THINK OF ALL OF THE THINGS YOU'VE SEEN,
AND YOU WISH THAT YOU COULD LIVE IN BETWEEN,
AND YOU'RE BACK AGAIN,
ONLY DIFFERENT THAN BEFORE,
AFTER THE SKY.

THERE ARE GIANTS IN THE SKY!
THERE ARE BIG TALL TERRIBLE AWESOME SCARY WONDERFUL

(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 that your wish be honored.

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