

Sondheim 102 • Class 4 • Into the Woods (1987) • Act II
Music & Lyrics by Stephen Sondheim • Book by James Lapine

**Act II: Once Upon a Time-Later-
in the Same Far-Off Kingdom**

“Prologue: So Happy” [excerpts]

CINDERELLA:

I never thought I'd wed a prince . . .

CINDERELLA'S PRINCE:

I never thought I'd find perfection . . .

BOTH:

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, 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, WIFE: I'm so happy!

STEPMOTHER:

Happy now,
Happy hence,
Happy ever after—

STEPMOTHER, FLORINDA, LUCINDA:

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, WIFE: Little gurgles . . .

CINDERELLA'S PRINCE:

Darling, I must go now . . .

JACK'S MOTHER: We should really sell it.

BAKER: 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: 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:

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, WIFE: Then to beget a child . . .

ALL:

That fortune smiled . . .
I'm so hap—

(A loud rumbling noise is followed by an enormous crash. The Witch enters.)

BAKER: Do you think it was a bear?

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

BAKER'S WIFE: Dragon?

WITCH:
No scorch marks—
Usually they're linked.

BAKER: Manticore?

WITCH: Imaginary.

BAKER, WIFE: Griffin?

WITCH: Extinct.

BAKER: Giant?

WITCH:
Possible.
Very, very, possible . . .

“Into the Woods” (reprise)

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.

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 RIDING HOOD:
Into the woods, to Grandmother's house . . .

BAKER:
Into the woods,
The path is straight,
No reason then
To hesitate—

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:
Into the woods,
To slay the Giant!

WIFE:
Into the woods
To shield the child . . .

LITTLE RED RIDING HOOD:
To flee the winds . . .

BAKER: To find a future . . .

WIFE: To shield . . .

JACK: To slay . . .

LITTLE RED RIDING HOOD: To flee . . .

BAKER: To find . . .

CINDERELLA: To fix . . .

WIFE: To hide . . .

LITTLE RED RIDING HOOD: To move . . .

JACK: To battle . . .

CINDERELLA: To see what the trouble is . . .

JACK: I miss . . .

CINDERELLA:
The time has come for a Festival . . .

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“Agony” (reprise)

CINDERELLA’S PRINCE:
High in a tower—
Like yours was, but higher—
A beauty asleep.
All ‘round the tower
A thicket of briar
A hundred feet deep.

Agony!
No frustration more keen,
When the one thing you want
Is a thing that you’ve not even seen.

RAPUNZEL’S PRINCE:
I’ve found a casket
Entirely of glass—
No, it’s unbreakable.
Inside—don’t ask it—
A maiden, alas,
Just as unwakeable—

BOTH:
What unmistakable
Agony!
Is the way always barred?

RAPUNZEL’S PRINCE:
She has skin white as snow—

CINDERELLA’S PRINCE:
Did you learn her name?

RAPUNZEL’S PRINCE:
No,
There’s a dwarf standing guard.

BOTH:
Agony
Such that princes must weep!
Always in thrall most
To anything almost,
Or something asleep.

CINDERELLA’S PRINCE:
If it were not for the thicket—

RAPUNZEL’S PRINCE:
A thicket’s no trick.
Is it thick?

CINDERELLA’S PRINCE: It’s the thickest.

RAPUNZEL’S PRINCE:
The quickest
Is pick it
Apart with a stick—

CINDERELLA’S PRINCE:
Yes, but even one prick—
It’s my thing about blood.

RAPUNZEL’S PRINCE: Well it’s sick!

CINDERELLA’S PRINCE:
It’s no sicker
Than your thing with dwarves!

RAPUNZEL’S PRINCE: Dwarfs.

CINDERELLA’S PRINCE: Dwarfs . . .

RAPUNZEL’S PRINCE:
Dwarfs are very upsetting.

BOTH:
Not forgetting
The tasks unachievable,
Mountains unscalable
If it’s conceivable
But unavailable,
Ah-ah-ah-ah-ah-ah-ah—

Agony!

CINDERELLA’S PRINCE: Misery!

RAPUNZEL’S PRINCE: Woe!

BOTH: Not to know what you miss

CINDERELLA’S PRINCE:
While they lie there for years—

RAPUNZEL’S PRINCE:
And you cry on their biers—

BOTH:
What unbearable bliss!

Agony
That can cut like a knife!
Ah, well, back to my wife . . .

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“Lament” (“Children Won’t Listen”)

WITCH:

This is the world I meant.
Couldn’t you listen?
Couldn’t you stay content,
Safe behind walls,
As I
Could not?

Now you know what’s out there in the world.
No one can prepare you for the world.
Even I.
How could I, who loved you as you were,
How could I have shielded you from her?
Or them!

No matter what you say,
Children won’t listen.
No matter what you know,
Children refuse
To learn.

Guide them along the way,
Still they won’t listen.
Children can only grow
From something you love
To something you lose . . .

“Any Moment”

CINDERELLA’S PRINCE:
Anything can happen in the woods.
May I kiss you?
Any moment we could be crushed.

BAKER’S WIFE: Uh—

CINDERELLA’S PRINCE: Don’t feel rushed.

WIFE:

This is ridiculous,
What am I doing here?
I’m in the wrong story.

CINDERELLA’S PRINCE:
Foolishness can happen in the woods.
Once again, please—
Let your hesitations be hushed.
Any moment, big or small,
Is a moment, after all.
Seize the moment, skies may fall

Any moment.

Days are made of moments,
All are worth exploring.
Many kinds of moments,
None is worth ignoring.
All we have are moments,
Memories for storing.
One would be so boring.

WIFE: But this is not right!

CINDERELLA’S PRINCE:

Right and wrong don’t matter in the woods,
Only feelings.
Let us meet the moment unblushed.
Life is often so unpleasant—
You must know that, as a peasant—
Best to take the moment present
As a present for the moment.

*[The Prince picks her up and carries her into
a glade. Time passes. Later:]*

CINDERELLA’S PRINCE:

I must leave you.

WIFE: Why?

CINDERELLA’S PRINCE: The Giant.

WIFE:

The Giant. I had almost forgotten. Will we
find each other in the woods again?

CINDERELLA’S PRINCE:

This was just a moment in the woods.
Our moment,
Shimmering and lovely and sad.
Leave the moment, just be glad
For the moment that we had.
Every moment is of moment
When you’re in the woods . . .

“Moments in the Woods”

BAKER’S WIFE: What was that?

Was that me?
Was that him?
Did a prince really kiss me?
And kiss me?
And kiss me?

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And did I kiss him back?

Was it wrong?
Am I mad?
Is that all?
Does he miss me?
Was he suddenly
Getting bored with me?

Wake up! Stop dreaming.
Stop prancing about the woods.
It's not befitting.
What is it about the woods?

Back to life, back to sense,
Back to child, back to husband,
No one lives in the woods.
There are vows, there are ties,
There are needs, there are standards,
There are shouldn'ts and shoulds.

Why not both instead?
There's the answer, if you're clever:
have a child for warmth
And a baker for bread,
And a prince for whatever—
Never!
It's these woods.

Face the facts, find the boy,
Join the group, stop the Giant,
Just get out of these woods.
Was that him? Yes, it was.
Was that me? No it wasn't,
Just a trick of the woods.

Just a moment,
One peculiar passing moment . . .

Must it all be either less or more,
Either plain or grand?
Is it always "or"?
Is it never "and"?
That's what woods are for:
For those moments in the woods.

Oh, if life were made of moments,
Even now and then a bad one—!
But if life were only moments,
Then you'd never know you had one.

First a witch, then a child,
Then a prince, then a moment—

Who can live in the woods?
And to get what you wish,
Only just for a moment—
These are dangerous woods . . .

Let the moment go.
Don't forget it for a moment, though.
Just remembering you've had an "and"
When you're back to "or"
Makes the "or" mean more
Than it did before.
Now I understand—
And it's time to leave the woods!

"Your Fault"

BAKER (To Jack):
It's because of you there's a giant in our
midst and my wife is dead!

JACK:
But it isn't my fault,
I was given those beans!
You persuaded me to trade away
My cow for beans!
And without those beans
There'd have been no stalk
To get up to the Giants
In the first place!

BAKER:
Wait a minute—
Magic beans
For a cow so old
That you had to tell
A lie to sell
It, which you told!
Were they worthless beans?
Were they oversold?
Oh, and tell us who
Persuaded you
To steal that gold!

LITTLE RED RIDING HOOD (To Jack):
See, it's *your* fault!

JACK: No!

BAKER: So it's *your* fault.

JACK: No!

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LITTLE RED RIDING HOOD: Yes, it is!

JACK: It's not!

BAKER: It's true.

JACK:
Wait a minute, though—
I only stole the gold
To get my cow back
From you!

LITTLE RED RIDING HOOD (To Baker):
So it's *your* fault!

JACK: Yes!

BAKER:
No, it isn't!
I'd have kept those beans,
But our house was cursed.
She [WITCH] made us get a cow
To get the curse reversed!

WITCH (referring to Baker):
It's your father's fault
That the curse got placed
And the place got cursed
In the first place!

LITTLE RED RIDING HOOD:
Oh.
Then it's *his* fault!

WITCH: So.

CINDERELLA: It was *his* fault . . .

JACK: No.

BAKER:
Yes, it is,
It's his.

CINDERELLA: I guess . . .

JACK:
Wait a minute, though—
I chopped down the beanstalk,
Right? That's clear.
But without any beanstalk,
Then what's queer
Is how did the second Giant get down here

In the first place?
Second place . . .

CINDERELLA: Yes!

LITTLE RED RIDING HOOD: How?

BAKER: Hmm . . .

JACK:
Well,
Who had the other bean?

BAKER: The other bean?

CINDERELLA: The other bean?

JACK (To Baker):
You pocketed the other bean.

BAKER:
I didn't!
Yes I did.

LITTLE RED RIDING HOOD: So it's *your*—!

BAKER:
No, it isn't,
'Cause I gave it to my wife!

LITTLE RED RIDING HOOD: So it's *her*—!

BAKER: No, it isn't!

CINDERELLA: Then whose is it?

BAKER: Wait a minute!

(To Cinderella)
She exchanged that bean
To obtain your shoe,
So the one who knows what happened
To the bean is you!

CINDERELLA:
You mean that old bean
That your wife—? Oh, dear—
But I never knew,
And so I threw—
Well, don't look here!

LITTLE RED RIDING HOOD:
So it's *your* fault!

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CINDERELLA: But—

JACK: See, it's *her* fault—

CINDERELLA: But—

JACK: And it isn't mine at all!

BAKER (To Cinderella):
But what?

CINDERELLA (To Jack):
Well, if you hadn't gone
Back up again—

JACK: We were needy—

CINDERELLA:
You were greedy!
Did you need that hen?

JACK: But I got it for my mother—!

LITTLE RED RIDING HOOD
So it's *her* fault then!

CINDERELLA:
Yes? And what about the harp
In the third place?

BAKER: The harp—yes!

JACK (referring to LITTLE RED):
She went and dared me to!

LITTLE RED RIDING HOOD:
I dared you to?

JACK
You dared me to!
She said that I was scared—

LITTLE RED RIDING HOOD: Me?

JACK:—To. She dared me!

LITTLE RED RIDING HOOD: No, I didn't!

BAKER, CINDERELLA, JACK
So it's *your* fault!

LITTLE RED RIDING HOOD:
Wait a minute—!

CINDERELLA: If you hadn't dared him to—

BAKER (To Jack):
And you had left the harp alone,
We wouldn't be in trouble
In the first place!

LITTLE RED RIDING HOOD (To Cinderella):
Well, if you hadn't thrown away the bean
In the first place—!
It was *your* fault!

CINDERELLA:
Well, if she hadn't raised them in the first
place—!

JACK (To Witch):
Yes, if you hadn't raised them in the first
place—!

LITTLE RED RIDING HOOD, BAKER:
Right! It's you raised them in the first place!

CINDERELLA:
You raised the beans in the first place!

JACK: It's your fault!

CINDERELLA, JACK, BAKER, LITTLE RED
RIDING HOOD:
You're responsible!
You're the one to blame!
It's your fault!

WITCH
Shhhhhhhhhhhhh!

“Last Midnight”

WITCH:
It's the last midnight.
It's the last wish.
It's the last midnight,
Soon it will be boom—
Squish!

Told a little lie,
Stole a little gold,
Broke a little vow,
Did you?

Had to get your Prince,

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Had to get your cow,
Have to get your wish,
Doesn't matter how—
Anyway, it doesn't matter now.

It's the last midnight,
It's the boom—
Splat!
Nothing but a vast midnight.
Everybody smashed flat!

Nothing we can do—
Not exactly true:
We can always give her the boy.

No?
No, of course what really matters
Is the blame,
Somebody to blame.
Fine, if that's the thing you enjoy,
Placing the blame,
If that's the aim,
Give me the blame—
Just give me the boy.

THE OTHERS: No!

WITCH: No . . .

You're so nice.
You're not good,
You're not bad,
You're just nice.
I'm not good,
I'm not nice,
I'm just right.
I'm the Witch.
You're the world.

I'm the hitch.
I'm what no one believes,
I'm the Witch.
You're all liars and thieves,
Like his father,
Like his son will be, too—
Oh, why bother?
You'll just do what you do.

It's the last midnight,
So goodbye, all.
Coming at you fast, midnight—
Soon you'll see the sky fall.

Here, you want a bean?

Have another bean.
Beans were made for making you rich!
Plant them and they soar—
Here, you want some more?
Listen to the roar:
Giants by the score—!
Oh well, you can blame another witch.

It's the last midnight.
It's the last verse.
Now, before it's past midnight,
I'm leaving you my last curse:
I'm leaving you alone.
You can tend the garden, it's yours.
Separate and alone,
Everybody down on all fours.

All right, Mother, when?
Lost the beans again!
Punish me the way you did then!
Give me claws and a hunch,
Just away from this bunch
And the gloom
And the doom
And the boom
Cruunch!

“No More”

BAKER:
No more questions,
Please.
No more tests.
Comes the day you say, “What for?”
Please—no more.

MYSTERIOUS MAN:
They disappoint,
They disappear,
They die but they don't . . .

BAKER: What?

MYSTERIOUS MAN:
They disappoint
In turn, I fear.
Forgive, though, they won't . . .

BAKER:
No more riddles.
No more jests.

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No more curses you can't undo,
Left by fathers you never knew.
No more quests.
No more feelings.
Time to shut the door.
Just—no more.

MYSTERIOUS MAN:
Running away—let's do it,
Free from the ties that bind.
No more despair
Or burdens to bear
Out there in the yonder.

Running away—go to it.
Where did you have in mind?
Have to take care:
Unless there's a “where,”
You'll only be wandering blind.
Just more questions,
Different kind.

Where are we to go?
Where are we ever to go?

Running away—we'll do it.
Why sit around, resigned?
Trouble is, son,
The farther you run,
The more you feel undefined
For what you have left undone
And, more, what you've left behind.

We disappoint,
We leave a mess,
We die but we don't . . .

BAKER:
We disappoint
In turn, I guess.
Forget, though, we won't . . .

BOTH: Like father, like son.

BAKER:
No more giants
Waging war.
Can't we just pursue our lives
With our children and our wives?
Till that happier day arrives,
How do you ignore
All the witches,
All the curses,

All the wolves, all the lies,
The false hopes, the goodbyes,
The reverses,
All the wondering what even worse is
Still in store?

All the children . . .
All the giants . . .

No more.

“No One Is Alone”

CINDERELLA:
Mother cannot guide you.
Now you're on your own.
Only me beside you.
Still, you're not alone.
No one is alone, truly.
No one is alone.

Sometimes people leave you
Halfway through the wood.
Others may deceive you.
You decide what's good.
You decide alone.
But no one is alone

LITTLE RED RIDING HOOD:
I wish . . .

CINDERELLA (To LITTLE RED):
I know . . .

Mother isn't here now.

BAKER (To JACK):
Wrong things, right things . . .

CINDERELLA: Who knows what she'd say?

BAKER: Who can say what's true?

CINDERELLA: Nothing's quite so clear now.

BAKER: Do things, fight things . . .

CINDERELLA: Feel you've lost your way?

BAKER:
You decide, but you are not alone,

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CINDERELLA:
You are not alone,
Believe me.
No one is alone.

BAKER:
No one is alone,
Believe me.

CINDERELLA: Truly . . .

BOTH:
You move just a finger,
Say the slightest word,
Something's bound to linger,
Be heard.

BAKER:
No one acts alone.
Careful, no one is alone.

BOTH:
People make mistakes.

BAKER: Fathers,

CINDERELLA: Mothers,

BOTH:
People make mistakes,
Holding to their own,
Thinking they're alone.

CINDERELLA: Honor their mistakes

BAKER: Fight for their mistakes—

CINDERELLA: Everybody makes—

BOTH:
One another's
Terrible mistakes.

Witches can be right,
Giants can be good.
You decide what's right,
You decide what's good.

CINDERELLA: Just remember:

BAKER: Just remember:

BOTH: Someone is on your side.

JACK, LITTLE RED RIDING HOOD:
Our side.

CINDERELLA, BAKER:
Our side.
Someone else is not.
While we're seeing our side—

JACK, LITTLE RED RIDING HOOD:
Our side—

CINDERELLA, BAKER]
Our side—

ALL FOUR:
Maybe we forgot:
They are not alone.
No one is alone.

CINDERELLA: Hard to see the light now.

BAKER:
Just don't let it go.

CINDERELLA, BAKER:
Things will come out right now.
We can make it so.
Someone is on your side—

“Finale: Children Will Listen”

BAKER'S WIFE:
Sometimes people leave you
Halfway through the wood.
Do not let it grieve you,
No one leaves for good.
You are not alone.
No one is alone.

Hold him to the light now,
Let him see the glow
Things will be all right now.
Tell him what you know . . .

BAKER:
Shhh. Once upon a time . . . in a far-off
kingdom . . . there lived a young maiden . . .
a sad young lad . . . and a childless baker . . .
with his wife.

WITCH (to the audience):
Careful the things you say,
Children will listen.

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Careful the things you do,
Children will see.
And learn.

Guide them along the way,
Children will glisten.
Children will look to you
For which way to turn.
To learn what to be.

Careful before you say,
“Listen to me.”
Children will listen.

ALL:
Careful the wish you make,
Wishes are children.
Careful the path they take—
Wishes come true,
Not free.

Careful the spell you cast,
Not just on children.
Sometimes the spell may last
Past what you can see
And turn against you . . .

WITCH:
Careful the tale you tell.
That is the spell.
Children will listen . . .

ALL (in groups):
Though it's fearful,
Though it's deep, though it's dark
And though you may lose the path,
Though you may encounter wolves,
You can't just act,
You have to listen.
You can't just act,
You have to think.

There are always wolves,
There are always spells,
There are always beans,
Or a giant dwells
There,
So:

Into the woods you go again,
You have to every now and then.
Into the woods, no telling when,
Be ready for the journey.

Into the woods, but not too fast,
Or what you wish you lose at last.

Into the woods, but mind the past.
Into the woods, but mind the future.
Into the woods, but not to stray,
Or tempt the Wolf
Or steal from the Giant.

The way is dark,
The light is dim,
But now there's you,
Me, her and him.
The chances look small,
The choices look grim,
But everything you learn there
Will help when you return there.

BAKER, CINDERELLA, LITTLE RED RIDING
HOOD, JACK:
The light is getting dimmer—

BAKER: I think I see a glimmer—

ALL:
Into the woods—you have to grope,
But that's the way you learn to cope.
Into the woods to find there's hope
Of getting through the journey.

Into the woods, each time you go,
There's more to learn of what you know.
Into the woods, but not too slow—
Into the woods, it's nearing midnight—
Into the woods to mind the Wolf,
To heed the Witch,
To honor the Giant,
To mind,
To heed,
To find,
To think,
To teach,
To join,
To go to the Festival!

Into the woods,
Into the woods,
Into the woods,
Then out of the woods
And happy ever after!

CINDERELLA: I wish . . .