

Into The Woods Play Script

Act Two, Scene I

(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--

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--

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!

Into the Woods Play Script is a celebrated musical that intertwines various fairy tales, exploring themes of ambition, desire, and the consequences of one's actions. Written by Stephen Sondheim (music and lyrics) and James Lapine (book), the show premiered on Broadway in 1987 and has since become a staple in musical theater. The play's intricate narrative weaves together familiar characters like Cinderella, Little Red Riding Hood, Jack (of Jack and the Beanstalk), and the Baker and his Wife, creating a rich tapestry of storytelling that challenges audiences to reflect on their own lives and choices.

Overview of the Musical

"Into the Woods" is structured in two acts, each presenting a different perspective on the

characters' journeys. The first act focuses on the characters achieving their individual desires, while the second act delves into the consequences of those desires, leading to moral dilemmas and existential questions. The musical is not only a retelling of classic fairy tales but also serves as a commentary on the nature of wishes and the reality of life.

Characters

The characters in "Into the Woods" are a blend of well-known fairy tale figures and original creations. Here is a list of some of the key characters:

1. The Baker - A central figure who desires to have a child.
2. The Baker's Wife - Supportive and ambitious, she seeks fulfillment beyond her domestic life.
3. Cinderella - Yearns to escape her oppressive home life and find true love.
4. Jack - A young boy who sells his cow for magic beans, leading to a fantastical adventure.
5. Little Red Riding Hood - A brave girl on her way to visit her grandmother.
6. The Witch - A complex antagonist who curses the Baker's family, prompting their quest.
7. Rapunzel - The Witch's daughter, who longs for freedom from her tower.
8. The Prince - Charming yet self-absorbed, he represents the ideal of romantic love.

Each character's journey is interwoven with others, leading to moments of connection, conflict, and growth.

Thematic Elements

"Into the Woods" explores several profound themes that resonate with audiences of all ages. Here are some of the most significant themes:

Desire and Ambition

At the heart of the musical lies the idea of desire—what it means to want something and the lengths one will go to achieve it. The characters' ambitions drive the plot, from the Baker's longing for a child to Cinderella's quest for happiness. However, the musical illustrates that achieving one's desires can lead to unforeseen consequences.

Consequences of Choices

One of the most striking aspects of "Into the Woods" is how it tackles the consequences of choices. The characters realize that every action has repercussions, often leading to unexpected outcomes. This theme is poignantly expressed in the second act, where characters face the fallout from their initial pursuits, forcing them to confront the reality of their wishes.

Community and Isolation

As the characters navigate their individual journeys, the importance of community becomes evident. The first act showcases the characters working towards their desires, but the second act reveals the necessity of support and connection. Isolation can lead to despair, while collaboration can create strength.

Musical Composition

Stephen Sondheim's score is a hallmark of "Into the Woods." His complex melodies and innovative lyrics elevate the storytelling, allowing characters to express their innermost thoughts and struggles. The musical features a mix of whimsical and somber tones, capturing the essence of the fairy tale world while grounding it in reality.

Notable Songs

Several songs stand out in the score, each contributing to character development and thematic depth:

1. "No One is Alone" - A poignant reflection on the importance of community and the shared human experience.
2. "Agony" - A humorous duet between the princes expressing their frustrations in love.
3. "On the Steps of the Palace" - Cinderella's internal conflict as she contemplates her desires and fears.
4. "Witch's Rap" - A dynamic piece that establishes the Witch's character and her motivations.

These songs not only advance the plot but also deepen the audience's understanding of each character's journey.

Production History

"Into the Woods" premiered at the Old Globe Theatre in San Diego in 1986 before making its Broadway debut in 1987. The original production was directed by James Lapine and featured an ensemble cast that included Bernadette Peters as the Witch and Joanna Gleason as the Baker's Wife. The show received critical acclaim and won several Tony Awards, including Best Score and Best Book.

Film Adaptation

In 2014, "Into the Woods" was adapted into a film directed by Rob Marshall. The film featured a star-studded cast, including Meryl Streep as the Witch, James Corden as the

Baker, and Anna Kendrick as Cinderella. The adaptation brought the musical to a broader audience, introducing the intricate storytelling and themes to those who may not have experienced it on stage.

Impact on Musical Theatre

"Into the Woods" has had a lasting impact on the world of musical theatre. Its innovative approach to storytelling—blending fairy tale elements with real-life challenges—has influenced countless productions. The musical's exploration of complex themes resonates with audiences, making it a beloved classic.

Educational Significance

The play is often used in educational settings to teach students about character development, storytelling, and the intricacies of musical composition. Its rich narrative and complex characters provide ample material for analysis and discussion, making it a popular choice for school productions and theater programs.

Conclusion

"Into the Woods" remains a significant work in the canon of musical theatre. Its clever intertwining of fairy tales, profound thematic explorations, and Sondheim's masterful music create a compelling experience for audiences. The play challenges viewers to reflect on their desires, the nature of choices, and the importance of community, making it a timeless piece that continues to resonate with generations. As new productions emerge and adaptations are created, "Into the Woods" will undoubtedly remain a vital part of the theatrical landscape, inviting audiences to step into the woods and explore the complexities of life and longing.

Frequently Asked Questions

What are the main themes explored in the 'Into the Woods' play script?

'Into the Woods' explores themes of desire, consequence, and the complexity of human relationships, blending fairy tale elements to highlight the moral dilemmas faced by the characters.

Who wrote the 'Into the Woods' play script?

The play script for 'Into the Woods' was written by Stephen Sondheim, with a book by James Lapine.

How does 'Into the Woods' reinterpret traditional fairy tales?

'Into the Woods' reinterprets traditional fairy tales by merging multiple stories and showing the characters' journeys beyond their happy endings, emphasizing the struggles and realities of life.

What is the significance of the song 'No One is Alone' in 'Into the Woods'?

'No One is Alone' serves as a poignant reminder of the shared human experience, addressing themes of loneliness and connection amidst personal struggles, making it a central emotional moment in the play.

Are there any notable adaptations of the 'Into the Woods' play script?

Yes, 'Into the Woods' was adapted into a feature film in 2014, directed by Rob Marshall, which brought the musical to a wider audience while retaining much of the original script and score.

What is the structure of the story in 'Into the Woods'?

'Into the Woods' is structured in two acts; the first act follows the characters as they pursue their wishes, while the second act deals with the consequences of those wishes, leading to deeper character development and moral lessons.

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