

BAKER

THE SPELL IS ON —

(BAKER'S WIFE, seeing JACK at other side of stage, puts her hand across BAKER'S MOUTH)

BAKER'S WIFE

A COW AS WHITE AS —

(BAKER sees JACK takes BAKER'S WIFE'S HAND away)

BAKER, BAKER'S WIFE

— milk.

(BAKER'S WIFE pushes BAKER in JACK'S direction, then follows)

Hello there, young man.

JACK

(Looks at BAKER, scared)

Hello, sir.

BAKER

What might you be doing with a cow in the middle of the forest?

JACK

(Nervous)

I was heading toward market — but I seem to have lost my way.

BAKER'S WIFE

(Coaching BAKER)

What are you planning to do there — ?

BAKER

And what are you planning to do there?

JACK

Sell my cow, sir. No less than five pounds.

BAKER

Five pounds!

(To BAKER'S WIFE)

Where am I to get five pounds!

BAKER'S WIFE

(Taking over)

She must be generous of milk to fetch five pounds?

JACK

(Hesitant)

Yes, ma'am.

BAKER'S WIFE

And if you can't fetch that sum? Then what are you to do?

JACK

I hadn't thought of that... I suppose my mother and I will have no food to eat.

(BAKER has emptied his pocket; HE has a few coins and the beans in hand)

BAKER

(To BAKER'S WIFE)

This is the sum total...

BAKER'S WIFE

(Loudly)

Beans — we mustn't give up our beans! Well... if you feel we must.

BAKER

Huh?

BAKER'S WIFE

(To JACK)

Beans *will* bring you food, son.

JACK

Beans in exchange for my cow?

BAKER'S WIFE

Oh, these are no ordinary beans, son. These beans carry magic.

JACK

Magic? What kind of magic?

BAKER'S WIFE

(To BAKER)

Tell him.

(MYSTERIOUS MAN enters behind a tree)

BAKER

(Nervous)

Magic that defies description.

JACK

My mother would -

MYSTERIOUS MAN

... You'd be lucky to exchange her for a sack of beans.

(BAKER'S WIFE and BAKER hug, frightened by MYSTERIOUS MAN'S VOICE. MYSTERIOUS MAN EXITS before anyone sees him)

JACK

How many beans?

BAKER

Six.

BAKER'S WIFE

Five! We can't part with all of them. We must leave one for ourselves. Besides, I'd say they're worth a pound each, at the very least.

JACK

Could I buy my cow back someday?

BAKER

(Uneasy)

Well... possibly.

#13 - I Guess This Is Goodbye

(Hands JACK the beans, counting out five and keeping one for his pocket; BAKER'S WIFE then takes MILKY-WHITE)

Good luck there, young lad.

JACK

(Tearful; to MILKY-WHITE)

I GUESS THIS IS GOODBYE, OLD PAL,
YOU'VE BEEN A PERFECT FRIEND.
I HATE TO SEE US PART, OLD PAL,
SOMEDAY I'LL BUY YOU BACK.
I'LL SEE YOU SOON AGAIN.
I HOPE THAT WHEN I DO,
IT WON'T BE ON A PLATE.

(EXITS, overcome with emotion.)

MUSIC continues under)