



PLAY SCRIPT

Adapted from the Midsummer Moon Story
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Characters

Count Owl
Mistress Grimsly Mushroom (Headmistress of the Mushroom Academy)
Master Stone
Marsha Mushroom
Forest Mushrooms
Forest Toadstools
Young Woodsman
Baker
Tailor
Cobbler
Parrot
Princess Sharma
Dame Grisholm (Governess to Princess Sharma)
Petrified Trees in the Enchanted Forest (Bewitched Young Men)
Duke de Vieux-Boisy
King (Father of Princess Sharma)
Forest Sorceress
Palace Courtiers
Palace Sentinel
Palace Minstrel
Palace Monk

Hint: *Place a little star beside your character's name on the page each time he/she speaks. This will help you to read your dialogue aloud.*

SCENE 1: {In the Forest} Count Owl, Mistress Grimsly Mushroom, Forest Mushrooms, Forest Toadstools, Marsha Mushroom, Young Woodsman, Master Stone. NB: LEFT, RIGHT stage directions refer to the audience's perspective.

Count Owl: (perched on a branch of an oak tree) Believe it or not, once upon a time, we were Lords of this forest!

Mistress Grimsly Mushroom: (sighing) That is true!

Count Owl: (wiping a tear from his eye) I can trace my family roots all the way back to the noble House of Kronenberg.

The pretty Forest Toadstools (dressed in bright colours) start grinning and whispering to one another.

Forest Toadstools: (giggling disrespectfully) Count Owl—Lord of the Forest! What a joke. Who does he think he is?

The Forest Mushrooms (dressed in bland colours) start giggling as well.

Mistress Grimsly Mushroom: Hush, girls, stop your giggling! Now, who remembers: what are the best colours for young ladies?

First mushroom: Woodbark brown.

Mistress Grimsly Mushroom: Very good. What else?

Second mushroom: Creamy satin for evening dresses.

Mistress Grimsly Mushroom: (smiling) Excellent. And occasionally, I might allow just a little rosy pink.

When the Forest Toadstools hear this, they start chattering excitedly.

Mistress Grimsly Mushroom: I said ONLY at the Feast of the Midsummer Moon.

Marsha Mushroom: (poking her head out of the ground) Oh, Mistress Grimsly Mushroom, what happens then?

Mistress Grimsly Mushroom: Well, we all dress up for a midnight feast to celebrate the coming of summer.

Marsha Mushroom: Oh, that must be such fun! When is the Feast of Midsummer?

Mistress Grimsly Mushroom: Not soon. The ground is bitter cold...

The Forest Mushrooms and Forest Toadstools all start shivering and nodding their heads in agreement.

Mistress Grimsly Mushroom: ...and spring is late again this year.

Count Owl: I remember when the forest was all ours. My ancestors used to—*Halt!* Who goes there?

Mistress Grimsly Mushroom: (frowning) A stranger.

Count Owl: A peasant. A nouveau riche, no doubt.

Enter the Young Woodsman, wearing ragged clothes.

Marsha Mushroom: (whispering to the pretty Forest Toadstool) What a handsome young man he is!

Mistress Grimsly Mushroom: Silence!

Marsha Mushroom: I beg your pardon, Mistress Grimsly, What is a nouveau riche?

Mistress Grimsly Mushroom: Look in your dictionary, Miss Marsha.

Count Owl: A nouveau riche is a vulgar peasant who steals his master's cloak, then wears it himself.

Marsha Mushroom: But look! That's not true. The young man's tunic is all torn...

Count Owl: *Whooh-Whooh!* Is that so, little mushroom?

Marsha Mushroom: I can even see holes in the soles of his shoes.

Count Owl: Well, let me tell you something! This young man may look like a peasant, but don't be fooled by looks...

Mistress Grimsly Mushroom: Good advice. I agree.

Count Owl: The truth is: deep in the heart of every peasant is the secret desire to be king!

The Young Woodsman trips over Master Stone and falls into the acorns.

Mistress Grimsly Mushroom: (shaking the soil from her skirt) Well, whether peasant or king, he's awfully clumsy!

Count Owl: (looking down at the Young Woodsman and settling his ruffled feathers) It is below my dignity to speak to a peasant...and I'm sure he's a thief, as well.

Young Woodsman: (rubbing his scraped shin and looking around) *Hmm*, these mushrooms look delicious. (The Young Woodsman reaches down to pick up a Forest Toadstool.)

Forest Toadstool: (hissing and turning very bright red) Not me, young man! I promise if you taste me, I shall poison you.

Young Woodsman: *Ugh!* That one's much too bitter.

The Young Woodsman reaches to pick up Mistress Grimsly Mushroom.

Mistress Grimsly Mushroom: (screaming) Unhand me, you lout!

Young Woodsman: *Hmmm*, that one's too woody, too coarse. (The Young Woodsman pushes Mistress Grimsly aside and reaches for Marsha Mushroom.) Aha! I think I've found the tenderest one.

Marsha Mushroom: (looking frightened) Don't pluck me, kind Sir, I am not yet fully grown.

Young Woodsman: (looking amazed) What?

Marsha Mushroom: Spare my life...please...till the Feast of the Midsummer Moon. That's when I'll dance in my prettiest silks.

Young Woodsman: The Midsummer Moon? But I shall certainly die of hunger before then.

Marsha Mushroom: But aren't you rich?

Young Woodsman: What?

Marsha Mushroom: Count Owl said you were rich.

Young Woodsman: Look here, little mushroom, I'm just a poor woodcutter and I live in that broken down old cottage on the hill.

Marsha Mushroom: But why are you poor?

Young Woodsman: Because last winter I broke my cartwheel on a stone. So now I can't drag any more firewood into the village to sell. I have no more money and no more food. I must find something to eat or I shall die... (The Young Woodsman reaches down to pluck Marsha Mushroom.)

Marsha Mushroom: Stop! STOP! Let me live and I'll make you a promise.

Young Woodsman: What promise?

Marsha Mushroom: I promise to grant your most secret desire.

Young Woodsman: *Hah!* Since when can little mushrooms do that?

Marsha Mushroom: Nothing could be easier for me.

Young Woodsman: I don't believe you.

Marsha Mushroom: I can read your thoughts, young woodsman, I can read your heart.

Young Woodsman: (grinning) Oh, can you, indeed?

Marsha Mushroom: Yes, I can. Count Owl just told us... Listen—deep in your secret heart of hearts you're a king, dressed in rags of a slave.

Young Woodsman: What? A king? Me?

Master Stone: *Er—hum!* Hearts and secrets; secrets and hearts! What nonsense! Don't listen to silly little mushrooms, young man.

Young Woodsman: (turning toward Master Stone) And who are you?

Master Stone: I am Master Stone. You were clumsy enough to fall over me a moment ago, but I don't really mind. I'm just tired of sitting under this oak tree. Would you do me a little favour?

Young Woodsman: Surely.

Master Stone: Would you push me up to the crest of that hill?

Young Woodsman: But you look very heavy. I really don't think I'd be able to move you.

Master Stone: Well, please try, young man. I can't promise to make you a king. But you'll get a pair of strong arms and a sturdy back for your trouble, that's certain.

Count Owl: *(perched on the oak tree, glaring at the Young Woodsman)* Is that thief still here? Young rogue, give me back the forests you have stolen from my forefeathers—

All the Forest Mushrooms start giggling.

Count Owl: *(indignantly)* Pulp-brains. I meant forefathers, of course!

Young Woodsman: What have I stolen? This isn't my forest. I have no riches. Some days, like today, I don't even have a crust of bread for my breakfast.

Master Stone: Don't listen to Count Owl, young woodsman. He never stops complaining, and he's driving us all stone-mad.

Count Owl: *(sniffing)* You have no feelings for anyone, Master Stone. A long time ago, I was the Lord of all this forest. How can I forget the past?

Master Stone: What do I care? The Past, the Present, the Future—it's all the same to me. Once upon a time, I was a stone. A stone I am. A stone I shall forever be.

Young Woodsman: And what about me? I was hungry yesterday. Today I'm even hungrier, and tomorrow—

Mistress Grimsly Mushroom: *(severely)* Miss Marsha, do you know that you are NOT allowed to talk to passing woodsmen.

Marsha Mushroom: *(to the Young Woodsman)* Goodbye, I have to go now.

Young Woodsman: Wait, little mushroom, you made me a promise.

Marsha Mushroom: (whispering) Come back at the Feast of the Midsummer Moon. I promise I shall be waiting for you.

SCENE 2: {In the Forest} Count Owl, Young Woodsman, Baker.

The Young Woodsman walks back toward the village. He meets the Baker stealthily pulling his empty cart behind him.

Baker: Do you have your axe with you, young man?

Young Woodsman: Yes, I do.

Baker: Good, then help me cut some firewood. I have a hundred loaves of bread to bake today.

Count Owl: (perched on a branch of the oak tree and watching the Young Woodsman and Baker) Hark! Look at him! That rogue of a woodcutter is still stealing my timber.

The Young Woodsman chops down a lot of wood for the Baker and helps him to drag it into the village.

SCENE 3: {Baker's Shop, Porch} A few hours later that day. Baker, Cobbler, Count Owl, Young Woodsman.

Baker: (handing the Young Woodsman a sixpence coin and two loaves of bread) Here are your wages!

Young Woodsman: (eating a mouthful of bread) Thank you, I'm so hungry, I could faint.

Cobbler: (poking his head through the door of the Baker's Shop) Is that the woodcutter I hear? (To the woodsman) Oh, excuse me, young man, I need some maple wood.

Young Woodsman: Sorry, I can't go now.

Cobbler: But I have to carve a pair of clogs for Princess Sharma...

Young Woodsman: (ignoring the Cobbler, eating his bread) Impossible!

Cobbler: ...and deliver them to the Palace before sundown.

Young Woodsman: No, I'm eating right now.

Cobbler: But there's no time for that! It's urgent.

Young Woodsman: Look, Princess or no Princess, she shall wait until I finish my breakfast.

Cobbler: (staring at the Young Woodsman's old shoes) I beg you...please, please bring me what I need, young man. For your reward I'll make you a brand-new pair of clogs, too.

Young Woodsman: (looking down at his old shoes, and sighing) Oh, all right then, I'll go.

The Young Woodsman stuffs the loaves of bread into his pocket. He walks back into the forest, carrying his axe. He cuts down a large piece of maple wood.

Count Owl: (perched on a branch of the oak tree, watching the Young Woodsman) That thief is back here again! *Whooh! Whooh!* Go away, go away!

The Young Woodsman ignores Count Owl and trudges back to the Cobbler's Shop.

SCENE 4: {Inside the Cobbler's Shop} Cobbler, Tailor, Count Owl, Young Woodsman.

Young Woodsman: (handing the maple log to the Cobbler) Here's the best wood I could find, Master Cobbler... And now I need to rest.

The Young Woodsman sits down on a bench, pulls out the loaf of bread from his pocket and begins to eat.

Tailor: (calling from the shop next door) Young man, my brother, the Baker, says you can get me some firewood from the forest.

Young Woodsman: (still eating) No, I definitely can't go.

Tailor: Oh, please, it's just a small favour.

Young Woodsman: (still eating) Sorry, I'm too hungry and I'm too tired.

Tailor: (staring at the Young Woodsman's ragged clothes) Look, I promise to sew you some smart new clothes in return for your trouble.

Young Woodsman: (looking at his own ragged old clothes, and sighing) Well, all right then, but I must eat first.

Tailor: (shivering) I cannot wait for you to eat. My hands are so cold, I can hardly hold my sewing needle!

The Tailor takes out his tape and measures the Young Woodsman around the neck, the arm, the waist and the knee.

Tailor: Please bring me back some firewood, young man, before my fingers freeze into icicles.

Reluctantly, the exhausted Young Woodsman wheels the Baker's cart toward the forest.

Count Owl: (perched on a branch of the oak tree, watching the Young Woodsman as he cuts down a load of firewood) I can't believe it, that rogue is back here again for more of my timber! Begone, thief! *Whooh, Whooh!*

The Young Woodsman ignores Count Owl and drags the cart of firewood into the Tailor's shop

SCENE 5: {Inside the Tailor's Shop} Cobbler, Tailor, Baker, Young Woodsman.

Cobbler: (to the Young Woodsman) *Aah*, you're back. Good. Now take off those rags you're wearing. You've got to deliver these to the Palace before nightfall. (The Cobbler points to an odd-shaped pair of clogs made of maple wood on a velvet cushion.)

Young Woodsman: Me? But I'm too tired to go!

Cobbler: Oh, but you must go, you must! Quick! Put on your new shoes.

Tailor: (helping the Young Woodsman into his new clothes) Stand still! (The Tailor brushes the tiny twigs from the Young Woodsman's hair.) There now, you're presentable enough to go to the Palace.

Young Woodsman: (looking into the mirror, talking to himself) To the Palace? So, the little mushroom in the forest did tell the truth after all. I really am as handsome as a king in my new clothes.

The Cobbler hands the Young Woodsman the odd-shaped pair of maple wood clogs on a cushion.

Young Woodsman: (looking haughtily at the three brothers) Why do I have to go?

Tailor: Because the young men from the village are too afraid.

Baker: *Shush!*

Young Woodsman: What are they afraid of?

Cobbler: Rumours, gossip, fairy tales!

Young Woodsman: What tales?

Cobbler: Some fool says the Palace is surrounded by an Enchanted Forest that is too dangerous to pass through.

Baker: And we've heard some silly stories about a Sorceress, but that's all nonsense! There's nothing to fear.

Young Woodsman: Are you sure?

Baker: Of course, now, if—I mean, as soon as you come back, young man, we promise to serve you a magnificent supper. A supper fit for a king!

Staring suspiciously at the three old men, the Young Woodsman picks up the cushion and maple-wood clogs and walks out of the shop.

SCENE 6: {Rock staircase leading to the Enchanted Forest}
Young Woodsman, Petrified Trees, Princess Sharma.

The Young Woodsman climbs up the rock staircase that leads to the Palace on the mountain top. A bright shining full moon lights his way to the top.

Young Woodsman: (staggering up the rock steps) Oh, I'll never reach the Palace in time.

Finally, when the Young Woodsman reaches the top of the rock staircase, he sees the dark Enchanted Forest. The Petrified Trees appear strangely human. Their trunks are twisted; their leaves are green and glossy, although late winter frost still covers the ground. Waxy white blossoms that look like giant teardrops hang from their branches. Moving quietly through the Petrified Forest, Princess Sharma appears suddenly in front of the Young Woodsman.

Young Woodsman: (nervously) Oh! Excuse me, Your Highness, here are the new clogs you ordered from Master Cobbler.

Princess Sharma limps toward him, staring at the odd-shaped wooden clogs and looking very sad.

Princess Sharma: Thank you, Sir, but those are just wooden clogs. Not at all what I ordered.

Young Woodsman: What!

Princess Sharma: The King will be furious again. Don't you know what happens to all the young men who do not keep their promises?

Young Woodsman: What promises?

Princess Sharma: To bring the Magick slippers for me to dance in.

Young Woodsman: But Master Cobbler sent me with these wooden clogs. I've never even heard of Magick slippers.

Princess Sharma: Oh, don't say that! I must have the Magick dancing slippers, so that I can dance at the Midsummer Ball.

Young Woodsman: But where can I find them, Your Highness? Tell me, and I'll bring them to you tomorrow, I promise.

Princess Sharma: I'm not sure, but I think they must be hidden somewhere deep in the forest, where the Sorceress used to live.

Young Woodsman: (shuddering) Who is this Sorceress that everyone's always talking about?

Princess Sharma: What! You've never heard of the Forest Sorceress?

Young Woodsman: Never...

Princess Sharma: Never?

Young Woodsman: Well, the Cobbler said that was all gossip, fairy tales...

Princess Sharma: Listen, young man! Many years ago, a tiny witch-hazel seed blew up from the forest and grew into a little tree.

Young Woodsman: Yes, and then?

Princess Sharma: At first, the King thought that it was beautiful. But then it began to grow...and grow...

Young Woodsman: And then?

Princess Sharma: ...it grew so huge and wild, by Midsummer, the King's Palace had almost disappeared behind a creeping forest of witch-hazel.

Young Woodsman: Go on.

Princess Sharma: Well, on Midsummer Eve, my father had the enormous tree chopped down. But that was wrong; he should never have done that.

Young Woodsman: Why not?

Princess Sharma: Well, everyone knows that Midsummer Eve is a sacred night.

Young Woodsman: Is it?

Princess Sharma: Yes, and when they chopped down the witch-hazel tree, the Forest Sorceress herself was trapped inside.

Young Woodsman: But I don't understand. I've chopped down hundreds of trees and I've never seen the Forest Sorceress.

Princess Sharma: Of course not. She's a prisoner. Because now she's trapped inside the King's wooden throne and footstool.

Young Woodsman: What!

Princess Sharma: But every year, on Midsummer Eve, she conjures up a terrible storm, trying to break free. It's terrifying!

Young Woodsman: (shuddering again as he looks around, while a weird creepy wind starts to blow within the Enchanted Forest of Petrified Trees) This is a horrible place, Your Highness. Why do you stay here?

Princess Sharma: (wiping away a tear) I don't know. I have tried so many times to escape into the forest, but I can't. The Sorceress took her revenge on me. Can't you see? I am lame.

Young Woodsman: (holding out his arm) Never mind, I shall help you.

Princess Sharma: (pulling away) No! Beware the curse of the Sorceress!

Young Woodsman: What?

Princess Sharma: If anyone tries to help me escape, the Sorceress turns them into trees. Look! (Princess Sharma points to the Petrified Trees—the Bewitched Young Men—imprisoned in the Enchanted Forest.)

The Young Woodsman stares at the Petrified Trees. He looks horrified.

Princess Sharma: Please search in the forest for the Magick slippers, but if you don't find them before Midsummer Day, you must promise me *never*, never to return.

SCENE 7: {The Tailor's Shop} Baker, Tailor, Cobbler, Young Woodsman, Parrot.

The Young Woodsman arrives at the Tailor's shop. He hears the sound of a grand feast still going on. He stops to listen at the door.

Cobbler: What good luck we had to meet that foolish woodsman. I rather liked him, though. It's a pity we'll never see him again. (Sighs)

Tailor: Remember all those young men who brought slippers to the Palace for Princess Sharma to dance in? They've never been seen again.

Baker: (looking grave) What do you think happened to them?

The Tailor and the Cobbler look at each other, lift their chins, and trace a forefinger across their throats.

Cobbler: (raising his eyebrows) Yes, that's what I think too! Besides, they say, at Midsummer, the King is going to marry off Princess Sharma to the old Duke de Vieux-Boisy.

Tailor: How cruel! Can that be true?

Baker: The Duke has promised to give the King half his forest lands at the foot of the mountain.

Cobbler: What! That means we won't be able to borrow any more firewood from the Duke's forest.

Baker: We shall have to pay the King's taxes for our timber.

Tailor: *(screeching with indignation)* Next winter, we shall all perish from the cold—*(A sharp noise is heard)* Oh! Who's there!

The Young Woodsman slips into the room.

Young Woodsman: Good evening, gentlemen. I have just returned from the Palace. May I join you, as you promised?

Baker: *(looking surprised and shocked)* Why, of course, young man. A promise is a promise!

Cobbler: *(also looking shocked at the sight of the Young Woodsman)* Sit down, young man. Do have some bread and cheese—and taste our home-made jam.

Young Woodsman: *(sitting down at the head of the table and helping himself to the best of their food)* Listen, gentlemen, I promise to bring you enough logs and firewood for the rest of your lives—

Three men all together: Oh, thank you!

Young Woodsman: —in exchange for a small gift.

Baker: A gift? What gift?

Young Woodsman: You, Master Cobbler, must make me a pair of fancy leather boots...and YOU, Master Tailor, must sew me some more elegant clothes. *(The Young Woodsman points to his new clothes)* These hardly do honour to a king!

Three men all together: A king!

Parrot: *(screeching from inside its cage)* A KING!

Young Woodsman: Yes, I said a king. Why not a king?

Tailor: (mumbling and nodding his head) *Hmm*, a king.

Cobbler: (looking at the Young Woodsman) He looks rather like a king to me.

Baker: And his table manners are quite polite, I must say.

Young Woodsman: (smiling grimly) Thank you, Master Baker. I would like YOU to bake me a royal wedding cake in the shape of a mountain palace.

Baker: (sounding worried) But that's exactly like the wedding cake I'm supposed to be baking for Princess Sharma and the Duke de Vieux-Boisy.

Tailor: And the Duke has ordered a black silk frock coat. It must be for his wedding day.

Cobbler: That's right, and yesterday I measured his foot for his new wedding shoes.

Young Woodsman: (gruffly) What do I care about the old Duke? Do as I ask. You have my solemn promise, I said.

Exit the Young Woodsman.

SCENE 8: {The Baker's Shop} Baker, Tailor, Cobbler, Young Woodsman, Parrot.

The Young Woodsman arrives with another huge load of timber and firewood.

Tailor: (stitching the hem of a silk shirt for the Young Woodman) Our sheds are already full of firewood. When will the woodsman stop his chopping?

Cobbler: (cobbling a leather boot for the Young Woodman) He really is as ambitious as a king!

Baker: (preparing cake dough with a wooden rolling pin for the Young Woodman) I'm getting very worried. What do you think will happen when the Duke finds out his forest is being all chopped down?

Three men all together: We didn't know that young woodsman was such a rogue!

Parrot: (screeching from inside its cage) I always said he was a rogue. He's a ROGUE, a ROGUE, a ROGUE!

SCENE 9: {In the moonlit Forest} Count Owl, Mistress Grimsly Mushroom, Marsha Mushroom, Forest Mushrooms, Forest Toadstools, Master Stone, Young Woodsman.

Count Owl: *Whooooh!* Midsummer Eve. Look at the silvery moon! Listen to the wind. It really is a magical night.

Master Stone: *Hmm,* so it is!

Count Owl: This Midsummer night reminds me of olden times, long ago, when I was Lord of the Forest!

Master Stone: *(wistfully)* Well, you're lucky you can fly, Count Owl. I can't move. I can hardly see anything where I am!

Marsha Mushroom: *(appearing suddenly, looking quite tall and grown-up, all dressed up for the Woodland Ball and whispering to a Forest Toadstool)* Listen, I think I hear the woodsman coming closer. Time to get ready for the Feast!

Mistress Grimsly Mushroom: Marsha, there you are! What have you been doing?

Marsha Mushroom: I've found some pearls to embroider to my gown.

Mistress Grimsly Mushroom: I see, and what's that you have in your hair?

Marsha Mushroom: Just a few rose blossoms I picked.

Mistress Grimsly Mushroom: And in your hands?

Marsha Mushroom: These are my dancing slippers, Madam.

Mistress Grimsly Mushroom: Dancing slippers! No, no, no! Mushrooms are NEVER permitted to dance!

All the pretty Forest Toadstools groan in disappointment.

Marsha Mushroom: But the Witch-Hazel gave me the secret. It's Magick.

Mistress Grimsly Mushroom: Magick? What Magick! Who has ever seen a mushroom dancing?

Marsha Mushroom: But I want to try. I think I can dance.
I know I can.

Forest Mushrooms all together: (giggling) Can you imagine
Marsha dancing in her Magick slippers at the
Woodland Ball?

Silence. Then there is the sound of cracking branches.

Count Owl: Hark, is that the woodsman I hear again?

Marsha Mushroom: (tugging at her stump) Yes, it is him! He
has come back, just as he promised.

Young Woodsman: (whispering) Where are you, little
mushroom? I can't find you.

Marsha Mushroom: (calling out loud) Here—I'm here, behind
the oak tree.

Mistress Grimsly Mushroom: (sharply) What are you doing?
Marsha, come back at once.

The Forest Mushrooms and Forest Toadstools murmur in surprise and shock as Marsha Mushroom pulls free from her stump, steps into her Magick slippers. Magically, she appears taller than ever as she rushes toward the Young Woodsman.

Marsha Mushroom: (to the Young Woodsman) I knew you
wouldn't forget me.

Young Woodsman: But I can't believe it! You're all grown
up now. Almost as tall as a lady in your new dress and
your ... ! (The Woodsman stares in amazement at Marsha's shining
Magick slippers)

Marsha Mushroom: Yes, I'm wearing my Magick
slippers...and so I can dance—I'm sure I can!

A bright full moon shines overhead. The sound of music begins as Marsha dances around the moonlit pond with the Young Woodsman. But then, little by little, the music fades away, the silvery moon wanes and disappears, the sun begins to rise.

Young Woodsman: (staring at the rising sun; appearing tired and
sad) Do you remember your promise?

Marsha Mushroom: My promise?

Young Woodsman: Will you lend me your Magick slippers
for Princess Sharma to dance in?

Marsha Mushroom: (looking shocked) My Magick dancing slippers?

Young Woodsman: I must bring her the slippers before noon.

Marsha Mushroom: I know...I know I promised, but that means I have so little time.

In the silence, all the little forest creatures stare and become still, like stones, as Marsha dances for the very last time with the Young Woodsman.

Young Woodsman: (staring at the rising sun) It's time. I have to go now—I'm sorry.

Marsha Mushroom: (resting her head on the Woodsman's arm) Yes, I know, I remember.

Young Woodsman: Goodbye, little mushroom, goodbye. Today Princess Sharma must dance in your Magick slippers—or I will die.

SCENE 10: {The Tailor's Shop} Baker, Tailor, Cobbler, Young Woodsman.

Young Woodsman: (calling out in a loud tone) Master Tailor, have you finished your stitching?

Tailor: Heavens! Where have YOU been? The Duke de Vieux-Boisy just came to get his wedding coat. It wasn't ready!

Cobbler: Then he tried on *your* new leather boots, but they didn't fit!

Baker: And when he saw YOUR initials on HIS wedding cake...

Three men all together: (looking frightened, each running a finger across their throats) *Oooh*, now we're all in trouble!

Young Woodsman: (dressing in his new clothes) Trust me, honest gentlemen, you will be safe.

Three men all together: But where are you going?

Young Woodsman: To the Palace, of course. This Midsummer day may well be my last—so I shall spend it as rashly as a king.

SCENE 11: {Rock staircase leading to the Mountain Palace and Enchanted Forest}. LEFT OF STAGE: Sentinel at the Gate, Young Woodsman.

The sound of a weird hollow wind; the Young Woodsman enters the Enchanted Forest.

Enchanted Forest: (branches whispering) Beware, foolish woodsman.

Sentinel at the Gate: Halt! Strangers may not enter.

Young Woodsman: (dropping a coin in the sentinel's hand) I bring a wedding gift for Princess Sharma.

Sentinel: (bowing to the Young Woodsman) Enter!

The first sound of trumpets is heard.

SCENE 12: {The Mountain Palace} RIGHT OF STAGE: {Princess Sharma's dressing room} Dame Grisholm, Princess Sharma.

Dame Grisholm: (patting powder on Princess Sharma's cheeks) You MUST stop crying, Princess Sharma.

Princess Sharma: I don't care if the Duke finds me ugly. I hope I frighten him away.

Dame Grisholm: Nonsense!

Princess Sharma: But I can't marry the Duke. He's an old, old man!

Dame Grisholm: Why the Duke is barely fifty-seven!

Princess Sharma: No, no, Madam, I am sure he is at least sixty-seven.

Dame Grisholm: Never mind, we'll just have a limping Princess and her bow-legged Duke to lead the Wedding Ball.

Princess Sharma: Oh, how can you be so cruel!

The second sound of trumpets is heard.

Dame Grisholm: Hide your tears now. It's too late. The Wedding March begins!

SCENE 13: {The Mountain Palace} CENTRE OF STAGE {Royal Chapel} FAR LEFT OF STAGE {Petrified Forest} King, Dame Grisholm, Princess Sharma, Duke de Vieux-Boisy, Young Woodsman, Courtiers, Minstrel, Monk, Forest Sorceress, Bewitched Young Men from the Petrified Forest.

Young Woodsman: (standing at the entrance to the Royal Chapel)
Pardon, Your Majesty! I bring a gift for Princess Sharma.

The Palace Courtiers giggle, chatter and stare at the unknown Young Woodsman dressed in his fine clothes.

King: Thank you, noble Sir!

Young Woodsman: But tell us...what gift does the Duke de Vieux-Boisy offer to Princess Sharma?

Duke de Vieux-Boisy: (indignantly) What is your name, Sir? Who invited YOU to my wedding feast?

Young Woodsman: I am the son of the Transylvanian House of Kronenberg.

Duke de Vieux-Boisy: (solemnly) Indeed? Well, I gave Her Highness one-half of my finest woodland.

Young Woodsman: You lie, Sir! There are hardly any trees left in your forest. Some rogue must have cut them all down.

Duke de Vieux-Boisy: What?

King: (furiously) Is this true?

Young Woodsman: (reaching into his pocket for Marsha's Magick slippers) Yes, it is true, but look—here are the Magick slippers for Princess Sharma to dance in. (Marsha's silvery Magick slippers now look like floppy rags.)

Duke de Vieux-Boisy: (staring at Marsha's Magick slippers) Rags! A gift of rags? Throw him into the dungeons, Your Majesty!

Courtiers all together: (giggling) Rags! Our Princess is going to dance in dusty rags!

Princess Sharma: (putting on Marsha's Magick slippers) I—I don't think I can.

Young Woodsman: You can dance. Just try.

Princess Sharma: (stumbling in Marsha's Magick slippers) I can't.

Young Woodsman: Try again.

Princess Sharma: I'm trying.

Young Woodsman: (desperately) You can dance. Believe me, you shall dance.

The Minstrel begins to play his lute. The Princess takes a few steps forward; then with a great effort she begins to dance with the Young Woodsman.

Courtiers all together: Look at her! Just look at our Princess!

Monk: (gazing up into the sky) It must be a miracle.

Duke de Vieux-Boisy: (staring at the Young Woodsman) Impostor! Don't let him escape!

King: No, leave them. At last, the Princess dances!

A deafening crack, then a loud whooshing sound is heard. Everyone looks around in awe, as the wicked spell is broken. The Forest Sorceress escapes from the Palace, howling furiously all the way down the mountain slope back into the forest.

Followed by Palace Courtiers, Princess Sharma and the Young Woodsman exit the Palace. They dance together around the Petrified Trees of the Enchanted Forest.

The Petrified Trees (previously Bewitched Young Men) in the Enchanted Forest are now released from the Sorceress's spell. The Young Men open their eyes, move their fingers, hands and toes; they begin to talk and then to laugh. One by one, the freed Young Men follow the Woodsman and Princess Sharma offstage.

SCENE 14: {In the Forest. By now, many of the trees have been cut down by the Young Woodsman} Count Owl, Mistress Grimsly Mushroom, Forest Mushrooms, Forest Toadstools, Master Stone.

Count Owl: (perched on the oak tree) What happened to my forest? Where are all the trees? Where is Marsha Mushroom?

Mistress Grimsly Mushroom: (staring grimly at the Forest Mushrooms) Let this be a good lesson to you all. This is what happens to little mushrooms that don't do as they are told.

The Forest Toadstools groan loudly in sympathy for Marsha Mushroom.

Forest Mushrooms: (whispering to one another) Well, we knew Marsha was no better than a common toadstool!

Mistress Grimsly Mushroom: Come on, everyone, pack up your things. We'll have to move away to a safer place.

Count Owl: (sounding outraged) This is all Marsha's fault! Making friends with thieving peasants! That rogue of a woodsman has cut down all my forest! Soon, he'll come back and chop down this oak tree, I know he will.

Master Stone: *Hmm*, it's upsetting, I agree. Don't you wish you were all stones?

Mistress Grimsly Mushroom: Yes, indeed!

Master Stone: It's wonderful to be a stone. Really! I promise you'd never be hungry or happy or frightened or sad.

Mistress Grimsly Mushroom: That's true!

Master Stone: You'd have hundreds of Yesterdays, thousands of Todays, and millions of Tomorrows—just like me.

Mistress Grimsly Mushroom: You're so fortunate, Master Stone.

Master Stone: (wistfully) Still, I shall miss you when you're gone. It gets so dull here, and I'm so bored. If I could just roll up to the crest of that faraway hill—they say there's a most spectacular view!

THE END

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