

The Summer Garden

A Musical Play in Two Acts

By David Barrett

Abridged Version

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The Summer Garden – Dramatis Personae

Narrator 1
Narrator 2
Garmangarbis An old goblin
Oric the sorcerer

In the Village:
Athelstan a well-to-do merchant of Fritham
Wilda his wife
Nelda older daughter
Orva older daughter
Odelia younger daughter
Elvina Odelia's poor friend
Wilfrid, Sigbert Athelstan's Servants
Villagers

At the Castle:
Prince Wulfstan the beast
Servant 1
Servant 2
Servant 3
Hengist Wulfstan's footman
Horsa Wulfstan's footman
Lord Locksley a nobleman
Page
Waiters
Nobles and courtiers
Musicians
Dancers

Prologue

The lighting for this scene should be dim, and preferably backlit, so that the actors are mere shadows miming the action as if it were a dream. The narrator could be unseen off-stage, perhaps with the voice amplified, or standing downstage under a spotlight.

(Enter narrator.)

NARRATOR 1

Gather round and listen well as I tell a tell of magic, mystery and wickedness. Long, long ago there lived a mighty sorcerer named Oric. He lived in the magnificent castle Brocburg and kept a lowly goblin servant. Garmangarbis was the servant's name. One of the goblin's tasks was to tend the herbs and flowers in a magical garden created by the mighty Oric.

(Enter Garmangarbis, looking shabby and twisted.)

Not content with his situation, however, the wicked Garmangarbis stole from his master, the sorcerer. Oric dismissed him from his service but was compassionate enough to give the wicked goblin two parting gifts. One was a beautifully carved wooden chest which was said to contain the secret of eternal happiness; and the other, one wish to be used for the power of good. Before he went on his way, Oric hung the key to the chest on a chain around the goblin's neck.

(Exit Oric.)

NARRATOR 2

The key, however, was too large for the lock and, try as he might, Garmangarbis was unable to open the trunk to discover the secret of eternal happiness. In his hurry to open the chest, the goblin quite forgot about the one wish he was granted. Then one day, in frustration and anger, he struck out at the nearest living creature. This was Prince Wulfstan, son of Aldwulf, ruler of the Southern Kingdom.

(Enter Wulfstan.)

Poor Wulfstan, daydreaming as boys do, was wishing aloud for the most beautiful girl in the kingdom to be his bride as he picked a white rose from the garden. Garmangarbis, lying hidden in the bushes, was overcome by jealousy. He uttered a fearsome curse, thereby using the one wish granted by the Sorcerer. Poor Wulfstan was thus terribly transformed into a bear-like monster with sharp claws, a long, hairy snout and a terrible temper. The wicked goblin wove a reverse charm into the curse, but he chuckled to himself at the thought that any girl would fall in love with Wulfstan, let alone shed a tear for him. Since that day, Wulfstan has never left the castle and gardens but has lived alone with his army of servants.

(Exit Wulfstan and narrator.)

Scene 1: On the Green in Front of Athelstan's House in Fritham

(The curtain opens on a country village scene dotted with trees and simple buildings. In the background is a cloth or flat of Athelstan's house with an open doorway. In the foreground the villagers are dancing on the village green and singing.)

SONG 1, Chorus, Country Life

Chorus:

When you're tired of city life, of garbage smells and sewage,
Jump aboard a horse and cart and join us in our village.
When you need some country air to freshen up your lung,
Amble down to Giles's yard and breathe the scent of dung. So

If you love the great outdoors come down and try your luck,
Do not wear your finest clothes for wading through the muck.
Rustic life is full of fun if you prefer it laid-back,
Chewing on a piece of grass and lying on a haystack.

Verse 1:

We don't promise great hotels, just country mud and dung smells,
If you're posh then don't come here, bath-day comes just once a year.
Pigs manure between your toes and a clothes-peg on your nose.

Verse 2:

Rabbit stew and Daisy's moo a bucket for a loo,
Dancing on the village green, rubbing shoulders with the queen.
Leave behind the city toffs, take a bath in Daisy's trough.

(After the song the villagers drift back to their business upstage, leaving the principal characters downstage)

- ELVINA *(In a country accent.)* Oh, Odelia, that was such fun. Please let's do the dance again.
- ODELIA *(In a cultured accent.)* There's no time, Elvina. Father must leave for market at Burley or he will not get his stall set up in time.
- ATHELSTAN That's right my girl. I'm already late and must ride like the wind to make up time.
- ELVINA But Athelstan, you've only just returned from your last trip. How long will you be away this time?
- ATHELSTAN I should be only about three days, Elvina. And don't you worry. My wife, Wilda, is quite capable of running the house in my absence.
- WILDA *(Off-stage)* Athelstan! Athelstan, where the devil are you? I hope you've not left already.
- ODELIA Talk of the devil. Here's mother now.
(Enter Wilda, looking fierce)
- WILDA Ah, there you are, Athelstan. Now what did I tell you about that woollen tunic? Do I have to pack your trunk myself?

ATHELSTAN No Wilda, dear, I am quite capable.
 WILDA Yes, but you didn't pack your woollen tunic. That rough hemp will never keep you warm in these chill winter days, now will it?
 ATHELSTAN No dear, if you say not.
 ODELIA Mother, please don't fuss. Father has been away before. He knows what to pack.
 WILDA Oh does he? And have you forgotten that he came back with a fever last year. It nearly took him away from us it was that bad.
(Athelstan coughs)
 ELVINA I think she's right, Athelstan, you must be careful of your health.
(Enter Nelda and Orva)
 NELDA Why you young upstart. How dare you speak to my parents like that. Who do you think you are?
 ODELIA I...I...
 ORVA The daughter of a basket weaver. That's who she is.
 NELDA I don't know why you are always here, hanging around our house. Are you looking for some charity, or something?
 ODELIA The reason she's here is because she's my friend and I asked her to come. So what if her father is a poor, humble basket weaver. A touch of humility wouldn't come amiss around here.
 NELDA How dare you speak to us like that. We are your elders and deserve some respect.
 ODELIA Respect must be earned. Now just leave my friend alone, will you.
 ATHELSTAN Come now, my dears, there is no need for these harsh words. I will need you to work together to keep the household going while I am away. Now Elvina, go and ask Wilfrid and Sigbert to bring the trunk out as we must soon be on our way. *(Exit Elvina)*
 WILDA Tell them, Athelstan. You don't ask servants to do something, you tell them. *(She struts off upstage and harasses the villagers.)*
 ORVA That's your problem, father, you're too soft.
 ATHELSTAN Watch your tongue girl, or I'll find a new use for my belt.
 ORVA You wouldn't use your belt on me Daddykins, would you? Besides, if you took your belt off your trousers would fall down.
(Laughter from the others)
 NELDA Will you bring us back presents this time, Father? You often do.
 ORVA Oh, yes, I do so love having presents when you return.
 ATHELSTAN And if I did choose to bring you something, what would you wish for?
 ORVA Oh, I would love to have a necklace of pure silver.
 NELDA And I ... a bracelet of fine pearls from India
 ATHELSTAN Well, you don't ask much do you! And you, my precious youngest daughter, what would you wish for?
 ODELIA Oh, nothing, Father, except your safe return.
 ORVA *(Mimicking, aside)* Oh nothing, except your safe return.
 NELDA Oh Odelia – you are sooo boring!
 ATHELSTAN Make a wish, Odelia, and if it is in my power, I shall grant it.
 ODELIA Oh, very well! I wish.... I wish ... for a pure white rose in bloom.
(Nelda bursts into a fit of giggles)
 ORVA Why, that's ridiculous! It is midwinter and you know father cannot honour your wish.

ODELIA Well it's no more ridiculous than your asking for bracelets and necklaces. But, of course, being so ugly, you would both need jewellery to catch a man's eye.

NELDA How dare you, you precious little monster... *(aside)* Just you wait until father has gone. We'll show you!

(Enter Wilfrid and Sigbert, carrying the trunk, followed by Elvina.)

WILFRID It's your turn to carry the baggage, I did it last time.

SIGBERT You little liar! I did it last time. I carried that big heavy bag all the way up the hill, while you strolled up whistling one of your silly tunes.

WILFRED You have a short memory, Sigbert. That was not the last time. What about last Tuesday when we went to Brockenhurst market?

SIGBERT You always have to be right, don't you, Wilfred? Even when you're wrong.

WILFRED Just because you say I'm wrong that doesn't mean it's true, does it.

SIGBERT Why you little.....

WILDA QUIET! Now just get on with it without the constant bickering, you silly little men, or we'll be here all day.

(They exit with the trunk, grumbling and continuing the argument in undertones. Sigbert glowers at Wilda as he exits.)

ATHELSTAN And now, my dear people, I fear the time has come when we must take our leave.

ODELIA Goodbye, Father, and may you have a safe journey.

WILDA And bring us back lots of money...

ORVA And a silver necklace...

NELDA And a pearl bracelet...

ATHELSTAN And, of course, a white rose in bloom. Now Wilfred, Sigbert, if you would kindly bring the trunk.

WILDA Will you never learn, Athelstan...

(Wilda gives him a loud, smacking great kiss on the cheek.)

ATHELSTAN Adieu, one and all, adieu.

ODELIA Farewell, father.

ELVINA Goodbye, Athelstan, goodbye.

(Exit Athelstan and the two servants)

NELDA Now you shoo, Elvina! Go home, won't you!

ODELIA You can't talk to her like that. She's my friend.

ELVINA It's alright, Odelia, I can see I am not welcome here. I'll go.

(Exit Elvina.)

ODELIA Come back tomorrow, Elvina, please do.

ORVA *(To Odelia.)* And now **you** have work to do. There are dishes to wash...

NELDA And pans to clean...

WILDA And floors to scrub.

ORVA Sheets to hang...

NELDA And carpets to beat...

WILDA And silver to polish.

SONG 2, Chorus, Call Odelia

1 Monday morning wash day, who will wash the sheets, and
Who will do the ironing, who will make things neat?
Who will press the table cloths, who will beat the rugs, and
Who will scrub the floor and who will fill the washing tubs?

Call Odelia, she can wash and scrub and beat and shine and,
She can fold and press and darn and sweep and clean and iron.
Floors to scrub and shirts to rub, piles of washing in the tub.
Beds to make and cakes to bake, then tea to brew and serve the stew.

2 Nearly time for dinner who will wash the greens, and
Who will peel the carrots, who will slice the beans?
Who will scrub the table-top, who will carve the lamb? and
Who will stir the cooking pot and chop and boil the ham?

Call Odelia, she can cook, the table must be laid, and
She can fill the water jugs, the pudding must be made.
Floors to scrub and shirts to rub, piles of washing in the tub.
Beds to make and cakes to bake, then tea to brew and serve the stew.

End of Scene

Scene 2: On the Road Outside the Castle and in the Summer Garden

(The scene is a dirt track outside the town of Burley. There is a grassy bank on one side and an archway leading to the garden, slightly concealed on the other side. Enter Athelstan, followed closely by Wilfrid and Sigbert, who are pushing and shoving one-another. Wilfrid carries a very large bag and Sigbert a tiny one.)

ATHELSTAN Come, my friends, this seems a suitable spot to rest our legs. Let us sit down here on this grassy bank. *(He sits.)*

WILFRID Yes, and when we've had a rest, Sigbert and I can swap bags. I've carried this big one for long enough.

SIGBERT Rubbish! You've only taken that half a mile. I carried it for at least two.

WILFRID You little liar! You know that's not true. Why do you always have to tell fibs?

SIGBERT Hark who's talking. It's a fine thing to be called a liar by you!

ATHELSTAN Oh, do be quiet – both of you! You've been arguing since we left Burley. Can't a man have some peace for a while?

WILFRID Sorry Master. I'll just ignore him from now on **and hope he'll go away.** *(sits)*

ATHELSTAN This journey has been very successful. We have sold a whole trunk of goods and made a big profit. You will be rewarded well for your help.

WILFRID Why thank you, Master, you are most generous.

SIGBERT *(Aside, mimicking)* Why thank you, Master, you are most generous. *(Scowls at Wilfrid).* Creep!

ATHELSTAN And I have spent some of my profits on gifts to please the women upon our return: a necklace of pure silver for Orva, a bracelet of fine Indian pearls for Nelda and for Odelia ... now what was it I got for Odelia?

SIGBERT A pure white rose in full bloom.

ATHELSTAN Oh my goodness, the rose. I forgot the rose.

WILFRID But Master, I saw no such thing in the market, it's the middle of winter.

ATHELSTAN But, what am I to do? I cannot disappoint my youngest and loveliest daughter. How can I find such a rose?

(Enter Garmangarbis, carrying his trunk.)

GARMAN I know where you can find a rose!
(The two servants draw their daggers and advance towards the goblin threateningly.)

ATHELSTAN Hold on a moment, you two. Who are you, sir? Identify yourself.

GARMAN I am Garmangarbis, the peddler and I know this region's flora and fauna like the back of my hand.

ATHELSTAN Well, good day to you, peddler. You have surely arrived at a good moment and may be able to assist me with a conundrum.

WILFRID Flora and fauna? Conundrum? What on earth are they talking about?

SIGBERT Let's have a look in your trunk, Garban....garban....garbage....PEDDLER, and see what you're selling.

GARMAN *(Sharply)* No! No-one touches my trunk...ever!

SIGBERT Oh sorreee! I just wondered what kind of a peddler you are. The trunk is locked anyway, so why are you getting so stressed?

GARMAN The trunk will remain locked until the time is right for the opening.

SIGBERT You mean, such as on market day?

GARMAN I peddle more than earthly goods, young man. But I wouldn't expect you to understand.

WILFRED But is this the key? Why, surely it is too large for this lock. No wonder the trunk stays locked.

ATHELSTAN But what about my rose?

WILFRID My lord Athelstan needs the rose to please a young lady.

ATHELSTAN How can I find such a thing in this season? Winter is almost upon us. Do you have such a thing in your trunk?

GARMAN The earthly seasons have no effect in the Summer Garden. It is there that you will find your rose.

ATHELSTAN And where may I find this garden?

GARMAN I can show you the way, provided that you are generous to me.

ATHELSTAN Very well, here is a piece of gold for your trouble.
(Garmangarbis snatches the gold greedily and pockets it.)

Now, perhaps you will tell me where I can find the rose.

GARMAN That is easy, Sire. You see that archway?

ATHELSTAN Yes, of course I can see it!

GARMAN That is the entrance to the Summer Garden. Very few people have witnessed the wonders of the garden. It lies within the grounds of a castle owned by the prince, Wulfstan. It is forever summer in the garden. I have heard that Prince Wulfstan is a generous man. He surely would not miss a single rose.

WILFRID I can see from here how green it grows and it is so full of blossoms and blooms, even in this winter season.

SIGBERT But tell us peddler, why do few people go there? Is the garden enchanted? Is it dangerous?

GARMAN That's for you to decide. I merely point the way.
(He picks up his trunk and exits.)

ATHELSTAN We thank you, peddler for your kind assistance. *(Garmangarbis is already gone.)*

WILFRID Hey, where did he disappear to in such a hurry?

ATHELSTAN And now, farewell my good servants. Wait here until I return, so that we may hurry home to Fritham. *(He exits)*

(The action changes to the Summer Garden. Athelstan passes through the arch and is astonished by the verdant lushness of the garden. He wanders in a daze, bending to smell a variety of blooms and eventually sitting on a low bench while he ponders the situation.)

ATHELSTAN This is wonderful – truly amazing. What magic can possibly be at work to create this paradise in the middle of winter? And what have we here? A pure white rose-bush in bloom. This surely is my lucky day.
(He bends down to choose and pick a single rose bloom. No sooner has he plucked the flower from its stem than a great roaring sound fills the air, scaring Athelstan out of his wits.)

WULFSTAN Who dares to enter my garden without my permission? Who has the nerve to pick one of my best white roses?
(Athelstan is beside himself with fear, shaking uncontrollably.)

ATHELSTAN I..I'm very sorry, I thought a single rose would not be missed..

WULFSTAN That rose was not yours to pick. Do you not realise to whom you speak?

ATHELSTAN Why, yes. I..I..I believe the castle and garden belong to a Prince Wulfstan. Are you his...his gardener.
(Wulfstan roars loudly and then throws back his head in laughter.)

WULFSTAN It is true that I am the gardener. But the Prince does not need a servant, he looks after his own garden.

ATHELSTAN My Lord, I beg your forgiveness. I was unaware who you were. I did not expect the prince...

WULFSTAN To look like an ugly old bear. No, nobody does.

ATHELSTAN I beg you, my Lord, let me just have this rose and go and I swear I will never trespass in your garden again.

WULFSTAN Ha! It is easy to say that now. You should never have committed the crime in the first place.

ATHELSTAN But I am expected home. My servants await me outside the garden.

WULFSTAN Tell me, you foolish merchant, how did you find the way into the garden.

ATHELSTAN The way was pointed out to me by an old peddler. He said it would be alright as you were known to be generous.

WULFSTAN And would this peddler have been carrying anything?

ATHELSTAN Why yes, a sort of chest, so big? *(He shows the measurement.)*
(Wulfstan roars again and goes as if to swipe Athelstan with his claws. Athelstan ducks to avoid the blow.)

WULFSTAN You fool. That was no peddler. That was the evil goblin Garmangarbis. He is the most wicked creature ever to walk this earth.

ATHELSTAN I'm sorry, Sire. I had no idea. Please let me go free. My youngest daughter, Odelia, awaits me. She asked me to bring her a rose such as this as a gift.

WULFSTAN And you agreed? In midwinter?
(Athelstan nods shamefully.)
 Then you are more of a fool than I thought. *(He ponders awhile.)*
 I shall let you go... *(Athelstan breathes a sigh of relief)* but only on one condition.

ATHELSTAN Certainly, My Lord, anything you say.

WULFSTAN You will return in eight days time and bring to me this daughter, Odelia. She will be my companion for a full year. During this time she may not leave my castle or garden, but may pick as many roses as she desires.

ATHELSTAN But, but, My Lord, I cannot agree to your request....

WULFSTAN It is not a request... it is a demand. Now go.. before I change my mind and have you for supper. *(He roars loudly and takes a step towards Athelstan.)*

ATHELSTAN Very well! I will do as you command. *(Backing away towards the archway.)*

WULFSTAN Eight days merchant. You have eight days.
(Athelstan exits weeping.)

(The action changes back to the grassy bank where Wilfrid and Sigbert await Athelstan.)

WILFRID Hark! I hear footsteps without.

SIGBERT Without what? Without shoes on?

WIFRID No, I mean without – as in out there, afar, approaching.

SIGBERT Well then say what you mean. I cannot abide it when people speak in riddles.

WILFRID Well that's easy. I won't speak to you again and then you can't complain.

SIGBERT Good!

WILFRID That's settled then. I'm not speaking to you.
 SIGBERT Well you just did didn't you.
 WILFRID I never did, you liar!
 SIGBERT I'm not a liar. You are. You said you weren't talking to me. You lied about that didn't you!
 WILFRID Shut up!
 SIGBERT You shut up yourself!
(Enter Master Warburton, the Baker, dressed in white and wearing a baker's hat.)
 BAKER Good day to you, young sirs, on this most marvellous magical morning.
 SIGBERT No it's not! Who said it's a good day?
 BAKER I just said so myself, young fellow.
 WILFRID And who are you?
 BAKER I am Master Warburton, the Baker. I have travelled for many days to this market, to sell my freshly baked pies, cakes and pastries.
 SIGBERT And did you cook the pies, cakes and pastries while you were walking?
 BAKER Well no, of course not, I cooked them before I left.
 SIGBERT Well then they're not fresh are they. They're at least a few days old.
 BAKER Well, of course, I.I.I...
 WILFRID Tell him he should not be so cantankerous.
 BAKER He says you should not be so.....
 SIGBERT I know what he said, I'm not deaf! Tell him to mind his own business.
 BAKER He says you should mind your own business. Look, why can you not simply tell one-another what you wish to say?
 SIGBERT 'Cos he's not talking to me, that's why.
 BAKER Goodness, why on earth not?
 SIGMUND Because he always argues with everything I say.
 WILFRID No I don't, you liar!
 SIGMUND There you are, you see. He did it again.
 BAKER Well, I fear I must leave you to your worthless wrangling and antagonistic altercations.
(They both stare at Warburton, open-mouthed.)
 WILFRID I must go and persuade these people to purchase my produce.
 But Master Warburton, I fear you have been too long travelling and have missed the market. There is no-one here to sell your wares to.
 BAKER On the contrary, young man, there are plenty of hungry customers – out there.
(pointing to F.O.H.)
 SIGMUND Oh them! Well, you won't get much out of them, most of them have been asleep so far tonight.
 BAKER Leave this to me, young sir, I will apply all my skills as a respectable retailer and tip-top trader in order to gain convenient coinage.
 Gentlemen, I bid you good day!

(Warburton sings the following song to the audience. During the song he goes front of house and hands out goodies.)

SONG 3 The Baker's Song, Master Warburton and Chorus

Solo:

1 Now I woke up this morning with a rumble inside
So then I went down the stairs to see just what I could find.
When I looked on the shelf I found that nothing was there,
Just like that Old Mother Hubbard my cupboard was bare.

Chorus:

'Cos he's the baker man,
Yea, baby, he's the baker man,
Ooh, ooh, ooh,
King of the bloomers and the master of the rolls,
Yea, he can fry a mean pancake and he's loaded with dough,
'Cos he's the baker.

Solo:

2 So I walked down the street and picked a handful of corn,
And when I'd ground for an hour I had a handful of flour.
Then I went down to town to find myself a new chick,
And when she laid me an egg I flew home really quick.

(Chorus)

3 So I threw all the flour and all the eggs in a bowl,
And beat it into a dough real quick to fill up the hole.
Then I put all the mixture in a pan on the fire,
And watched the size of my dough rising higher and higher.

4 Well now after a moment you could see my surprise,
When a big crusty brown loaf appeared in front of my eyes.
Then the smell brought the neighbours and the start of my fame,
Because the taste of my loaf brought the greatest acclaim.

(After the 4th chorus there is an instrumental interlude.)

5 Now if you come to town and see my bakery shop,
Where you can taste all my wares, I guarantee you won't stop.
Tasty pies, crusty croissants are the best of their kind,
But twenty flavours of doughnuts will quite blow your mind.

(During the song Warburton goes front of house and hands out goodies to the audience.)

(Exit Warburton)

WILFRID
SIGBERT

I say, that baker certainly talks funny.
It's called obliteration! It's a literary style.

WILFRID I think you mean alliteration. And anyway, I thought you weren't talking to me.

SIGBERT I'm not.

WILFRID Well you just did, didn't you?

SIGBERT Don't start this again.
(Enter Athelstan.)

WILFRID Why, my Lord Athelstan! Hey, you got the rose. That's wonderful, but why the glum face?

ATHELSTAN What have I done? What **have** I done?

SIGBERT What troubles you, my lord?

ATHELSTAN What kind of a father am I? I am not worthy of a daughter so fine as Odelia.

SIGBERT But you have the rose.

ATHELSTAN But at what cost? I have given her away to a monster.

WILFRID What on earth do you mean, a monster? You talk in riddles.

ATHELSTAN That garden is not what it appears. There is a monster calling himself Prince Wulfstan. He found me picking the rose and I was afraid for my life. I ... I made a foolish promise.

SIGBERT I have heard tales of a prince with the body of a bear who has had a spell cast upon him. Until now, I thought it was just a story.

WILFRID But what did you promise, my lord?

ATHELSTAN I promised that my little Odelia would go to live in the castle with the prince for a whole year. *(The servants gasp in horror.)*
I am so foolish. I deserve to be struck down by lightning!
(He sobs.)

SIGBERT Then we must return to your house in Fritham to see what can be done.

ATHELSTAN Perhaps he will forget my promise and not take Odelia from me.

WILFRID Perhaps he will, my lord. Perhaps he will.

SIGBERT Let us go at once - to Fritham.

(Sigbert exits, followed by Athelstan, who appears near to collapsing and is supported by Wilfrid.)

End of Scene

Scene 3: Outside Athelstan's House in Fritham

Elvina sits on the green outside Athelstan's house, weaving a basket. Odelia is with her. Nelda and Orva are arguing as they hang out the washing.

ELVINA Cheer up, Odelia, life can't be so bad. You live in a lovely big house and your father is wealthy and respected.

ODELIA Oh, Elvina I do so envy you.

ELVINA You – envy me?

ODELIA To you life is so simple. Your family is poor but you are rich in happiness. I have wealth but I have to suffer a nagging mother and two horrible bullies as sisters. Oh, how I long for father to return. Life is so much better when he is around.

NELDA What's that you say, little sister?

ORVA Stop whispering. Don't you know it's rude to whisper.

NELDA What are you saying about us? I heard you mention your sisters.

ODELIA Oh, nothing much. Just that I expect you will be pleased to see father return home. That's all.
(Wilda calls from the door of the house.)

WILDA Oi! Stop gossiping and get on with the work. I want that washing dry by nightfall.

ORVA Yes, mother.

NELDA *(Noticing Athelstan in the distance)* Father! Father's home, everyone. And do look at the bag of presents he has brought for us.
(They all run to greet Athelstan as he enters with Wilfrid and Sigbert. The two servants put down the bags and then lurk in the background, anxious to keep out of the family business. Elvina also withdraws but to the other side. Much hubbub as they all call out words of greeting and rush to surround Athelstan and to give him hugs.)
(Enter Wilda)

WILDA And what about the most important woman in the house? Have you no greeting for her?

ATHELSTAN Of course I do. *(He gives Wilda a bear-hug.)*

WILDA Tell me, Athelstan, what troubles you. I can see you have something on your mind. Was the business not good?

ATHELSTAN No, honestly, Wilda, the market went well. We sold all our wares.

ORVA What about the presents, Daddy? The presents!

ATHELSTAN Oh yes, I quite forgot. For Wilda – a lovely new smock.
(Wilda takes the somewhat oversized smock with glee and gives him a kiss.)
For Orva a necklace of pure silver.
(He holds up the necklace and the others gasp at its beauty.)

ORVA Why father, it's beautiful. Thank you, father. It's just perfect.
(She goes to put the necklace on but struggles with the clasp. Odelia tries to help but is pushed away roughly. She looks dejected.)

ATHELSTAN For Nelda - a bracelet of the finest pearls from the Indian Ocean.
(Nelda holds out her hand like royalty and Athelstan slips the bracelet onto it.)

NELDA Oh, father, this is the most gorgeous thing I have ever seen. Thank you.
(She gives him a quick kiss.)

ORVA And what about Odelia's flower? *(Spoken with contempt.)*

NELDA *(Aside)* Even if father found a rose, it is quite likely withered and brown after the journey.

ATHELSTAN Odelia – this is for you.
(He reaches into his pocket and produces a perfect white rose bloom.)

ODELIA Oh father, that is simply perfect. How can I ever thank you?

WILDA Athelstan, you sly old fool. I might have guessed that you would have achieved the impossible. Where on earth did you find such a rose in winter?

ATHELSTAN It is a long story, Wilda.

ODELIA But father, why are you so unhappy. We are so pleased that you're home and the whole family is together again.
(Cynical laughter at this from the two sisters.)

ATHELSTAN The rose was far more costly than the other gifts and I fear I have made a terrible mistake.
(The sisters are outraged.)

ORVA More costly. How can this be?

ATHELSTAN Oh, Wilda, I have been such a fool. I have done a thing that cannot be undone – and all for the sake of a single rose bloom.

WILDA Explain yourself, dear. We are all bemused.

ATHELSTAN I found the rose in a magical summer garden. But in picking the rose I angered the owner, a prince with the body of a beast.

NELDA How disgusting!

WILDA Never mind dear. That's in the past. You're home safely now.

ATHELSTAN But Wilda, in order to escape with my life I made a foolish promise on the spur of the moment....
(Athelstan breaks down and sobs. He is comforted by Wilda.)

NELDA Father! What did you promise.

WILFRID He promised that in eight days time, he will give Odelia to the ugly prince to live in his castle for a year.
(The sisters look delighted, Elvina is distressed and runs to Odelia to comfort her, Athelstan sobs some more and is led into the house by Wilda.)

WILDA *(As she exits, to Odelia)* Don't you worry, my dear, we will find a way out of this dilemma.

ORVA *(Aside, smiling)* A whole year without precious little Odelia under our feet.

ELVINA *(Forlorn)* I would rather be dead than live without her friendship for a year.

NELDA *(To Orva)* Just think, it will be so much easier for us to find ourselves husbands without that pretty little brat around.

ELVINA You will never find husbands. Who would want to marry you?

NELDA Go home, Elvina, you have overstayed your welcome here.
(Elvina gathers up weaving and begins to exit pouting ferociously. She then throws the basket at Nelda and struts off.)

NELDA Ooh, better watch out, Orva, there's a little tiger on the loose.
(She claws the air and makes a hissing sound.)

ORVA And as for you *(to Odelia)*, as you'll only be here for another eight days you can do our share of the chores as well. Starting with the washing.
(She throws the pegs at Odelia who flinches and winces with pain and hurt. Odelia drops the rose and Nelda purposefully stamps it into the ground as she and Orva exit. Sigbert rushes forward and picks up the crushed rose. He gives it to Odelia, who regards it with great sadness.)

SONG 4 **Just a Rose**

Odelia and chorus of villagers, servants and Elvina, who all enter during the song.

Odelia:

One single rose,
One mighty flower,
Will you not leave us be?
You have the power.
My father is a troubled man, broken by my pride.
Why can't we flee from this place and find a lonely place to hide
From this rose.

Chorus:

One humble rose,
One pure white bloom.
How you toy with our lives,
Decree our doom.
Oh how foolish a girl can be, acting on a whim.
Now peoples' lives have been broken
By a harmless little thing;
Just a rose.

(After the song the villagers freeze in place as the narrator [one of the villagers in this case] comes forward.)

NARRATOR

And so, a blanket of gloom covered Fritham as the villagers fearfully awaited the consequences of Athelstan's rash promise. This lasted for the whole eight days until, finally, the appointed day arrived. Secretly, each person had kept a track of the passing days but no-one wished to be the one to mention the approaching deadline. That is, except for Orva and Nelda, who awaited the moment with glee.

(Straight into next scene.)

Scene 4: Eight Days Later, Outside Athelstan's House in Fritham

The villagers are going about their business but, in place of the normal vibrant atmosphere of the village, each person walks slowly with head hung and no-one smiles as they greet one-another in passing. Elvina and Odelia sit together downstage.

ODELIA

Elvina, I'm so pleased for you that your father has been appointed official basket-maker to Lord Burley. He is such a clever craftsman.

ELVINA

It is very kind of you to say so, Odelia. I'm pleased for Father too. He works so hard and deserves to be rewarded for his work.

ODELIA But tell me, Elvina, why on earth you are dressed in your best clothes? It is not Sunday.

ELVINA I know but I wanted to look my best today. I am tired of dressing like a basket-weaver's daughter.

ODELIA Well that's most unlike you, Elvina. I've never heard you complain about anything before.
(Enter Orva and Nelda, seriously strutting and with mischief in mind.)

ORVA Well Odelia, ready for your holiday then?

NELDA It'll be much more pleasant around here with you out of the way.

ORVA For a whole year as well. There will be much more room in the house.

ELVINA Leave her alone. You can see she's upset. Why do you have to bully her all the time.

ORVA That's what little sisters are for – tiger!

NELDA Anyway, why are you here again, you little waif? Oh, of course, I forgot – your cottage is so small there is not room for you and your seven brothers and sisters all day.

ODELIA Be quiet, can't you! Just be quiet!

ORVA Oooh! Just listen to her. We're really scared, aren't we, Nelda?

NELDA Yes, really scared, Orva.

ODELIA *(Standing to confront them.)* Someone really ought to teach you a lesson and show you what it's like to be treated like dirt. You never stop, from dawn till dusk. Nagging, moaning and bullying – and I've had enough!

NELDA Who's going to teach us a lesson then, little sister? You?

ODELIA Yes, me!
(She slaps Nelda's face and then Orva's before strutting off, head held high. Elvina jumps up, looking dumbfounded, covering her mouth with her hand. Once they have recovered from the initial shock the sisters follow after her, furiously. Other villagers follow to see the fun.)

ORVA How dare she slap us!

NELDA Where is the little animal? Let me get my hands on her.

ELVINA Now there's going to be trouble. I'd better go and rescue Odelia, before they kill her.
(She goes as if to exit but is stopped in her tracks by the sound of horses and a carriage arriving.)

Oh my, it's him! He's come for Odelia. What a stroke of luck she has just run off like that.
(Enter Hengist and Horsa, dressed in elaborate footmen's livery.)

HORSA Good day to you Miss.

ELVINA Good day! Can I help you?

HORSA Well, perhaps you can. We are strangers in these parts and are looking for the village of Fritham.

ELVINA Then you are in the right place.

HENGIST We seek the house of Athelstan, the merchant.

ELVINA Then you are looking at the right house.

HENGIST We have come from the Prince Wulfstan to collect his companion for a year. Her name is Odelia.

ELVINA Then...then...then you have found the right person.

HORSA Excellent! Now if you would say goodbye to your family we will take you to Castle Brocburg in the royal coach.

ELVINA I am ready now. I do not wish to make this more difficult with sad goodbyes.

HORSA Excellent! Then, please step this way.
(Elvina exits with Hengist and Horsa. This is followed by a sound effect of horse and carriage leaving.
Enter Wilfrid and Sigbert in time to see Elvina wave from the carriage window.)

WILFRID Why Sigbert, surely that coach bears a royal coat of arms.
SIGBERT Yes and those are the footmen of a nobleman. But that was Elvina waving at us from the carriage.

WILFRED You don't think. . . .
SIGBERT Oh yes I do, Wilfred. They have come to collect Odelia and have taken Elvina by mistake – or she has tricked them.

WILFRED Oh horror!
(Momentary silence.)
This is your fault.

SIGBERT How can it be my fault?
WILFRED Well, you weren't here, were you. You could have prevented this.
SIGBERT So could you have. You just wanted to see a fight between the three sisters.
WILFRED So did you.
(Enter swiftly Odelia pursued by her sisters with a crowd following, making a great deal of noise. They stop when they see the carriage disappearing into the distance.)

ODELIA Miss Odelia, I fear there has been a misunderstanding.
ODELIA What kind of misunderstanding? Whose was that carriage – and where is Elvina?

SIGBERT We believe that the prince has mistaken Elvina for you and has taken her to his palace.

ODELIA Oh no!
ORVA/NELDA *(Loudly)* **Oh no!**

ODELIA How can this be – mistaking Elvina for me? The poor girl. But I don't understand.

ORVA The little tiger did this on purpose didn't she!
NELDA Why else was she dressed up in her best clothes?
ODELIA Oh, my dear friend, Elvina. She has sacrificed herself for me.
(Orva wails in distress at the thought that Odelia will not be leaving after all.)
(Enter Athelstan, hurriedly and sees the crowd. He fears Odelia has gone.)

ATHELSTAN Odelia, my dear Odelia!
(Catching sight of Odelia)
But I..I don't understand. The carriage.... I thought you were....were....

ODELIA Elvina has tricked the footmen and gone in my place, father.
ATHELSTAN This cannot get any worse. Through my own stupidity I have given away another man's daughter. How can I ever make amends?

ODELIA That is obvious, father. Night is falling and it is too dangerous to ride, but in the morning you must take me to the prince so that Elvina may be released. And in the meantime, I will go to her family and explain what has happened.
(She exits and the others freeze.)

ATHELSTAN *(Aside)* How this plot twists and turns. A foolish promise, the sacrifice of friendship, mistaken identity, and I, surely, am the villain in all of this. If only one could look into the future and see how this will turn out.

SONG 5 Wand'ring Through a Labyrinth, Athelstan and Chorus

(The longer version of this song begins and ends with the same chorus.)

Athelstan:

Twists and turns of destiny, the lottery of fate
Take a chance to save your skin and sow the seeds of hate.
Gamble with your daughter's life,
Things turn sour, you pay the price.
Act of mercy by her friend and who knows how this thing will end?
Now another's daughter's gone and I'm to blame for all this wrong.

(Athelstan sinks to his knees and buries his head in his hands.)

Chorus:

Wand'ring through a labyrinth we try to find our way,
Turning down blind alleyways we seek the light of day,
Fingers burnt and lessons learnt,
Each new day along life's way.
On the roller-coaster ride
With luck and fortune by your side.
God grant that he live so long to make amends for all this wrong.

End of Scene

Scene 5: The Great Hall, Castle Brocburg

The scene opens on a magnificent castle hall, bedecked with rich wall hangings and illuminated by numerous chandeliers and candelabra. Knightly shields hang on the wall and there are portraits of past Lords. In the centre is a long table with places laid in silver for two at either end for dinner. The two footmen Hengist and Horsa, show Elvina into the room and bid her sit one end at the table to await the prince. They stand motionless either side of the door. She sits awhile, toying with the silver cutlery and examining the craftsmanship of a woven fruit basket. Soon there is a shuffling sound and a creature, Wulfstan bursts through the door. The footmen bow deeply as he enters. Hengist immediately exits to fetch the meal. Elvina stands and lets out an involuntary gasp of astonishment.

- WULFSTAN Ah, my guest has arrived. *(Advances towards Elvina offering his hand, who shrinks away slightly.)*
Very pleased to meet you. *(Taking her hand and keeping it.)* But, how rude of me. I fear I do not even remember your name.
- ELVINA O..O..Odelia. My name is Odelia.
- WULFSTAN A charming name, meaning, I believe, little wealthy one. And I – am Prince Wulfstan and I am delighted to share your company.
(Elvina struggles to free her hand from his grasp.)
Miss Odelia, let us take dinner. If you please.
(Wulfstan gestures for her to sit and takes his place at the other end. He then picks up a beater and bangs a huge gong. Immediately Hengist enters with an enormous tray. He has clearly been waiting directly outside the door for the gong.)
Ah, Hengist, bang on time, as ever.
(Hengist lifts the large silver cover off the serving dish and Wulfstan inspects the meal.)
Wonderful, smoked trout from my own trout pool – and perfectly prepared by cook. *(Hengist serves Wulfstan and then Elvina.)*
Now, tell me, young lady, have you ever been to Burley before.
- ELVINA No, sire, I have not.
- WULFSTAN Well, what about Brockenhurst – a lovely market town. Surely you have been to the market?
- ELVINA Well, no actually I have not yet been there. But I know that Odel...*ahem* ...my friend's father sometimes goes there.
(She picks up her knife and fork but the table is laid for several courses and she is uncertain about which cutlery to use.)
- HENGIST Allow me miss. I regret the table is not perfectly laid.
(He helps her select the correct knife and fork from the outside.)
- WULFSTAN But your father is a merchant. Surely you have accompanied him on his travels. He has a duty to show his daughter the world.
- ELVINA *(Bristling)* My father is very dutiful. He has paid great attention to my upbringing.
(She plays with her food but does not eat.)
- WULFSTAN Of course, I apologise. But why do you not eat, my Dear? Have you no appetite?
- ELVINA I'm sorry, I'm not hungry.

WULFSTAN Horsa, don't just stand there, clear the table. What do I pay you for?
HORSA Forgive me, sire, I had not realised you were finished.
WULFSTAN And you, Hengist, don't lounge around - help him.
 (Wulfstan's temper is frayed and the footmen nervously clear the table. This makes them clumsy and Horsa drops a plate.)

WULFSTAN Why, you idiot, you complete fool. Is this the result of years of training. You throw plates at me in front of my guest.
HORSA S..s..sorry, my lord.
WULFSTAN Get out of here. *(They hesitate.)* Get out – NOW. Both of you. Leave us in peace for goodness sake. *(He roars loudly and, in a blind panic, Hengist and Horsa bow deeply and back away gracefully out of the door.)*
I am so sorry, my dear. I had tried to make this a perfect occasion for you. I suppose I am simply out of practice at entertaining guests. I tend to be something of a recluse these days.

ELVINA Oh really? I can't imagine why!
WULFSTAN Now my dear, tell me, what do you think of my castle. Do you think you can be happy here for a year.
ELVINA Why, y..y..yes, I'm sure. Not that you have given me any choice in the matter!
 (Wulfstan is regarding Elvina with curiosity.)
Here, why are you staring at me like that? Is it something I said.

WULFSTAN No, Odelia, not at all. It is the way you said it. It is most unusual for a girl like you to speak with a country accent. Your father's speech is rather more cultured. I simply wondered why this was.
ELVINA Oh, I get it from my friends, some of them are country folk. I'm not proud. It's the personality that counts, not the way someone speaks.
WULFSTAN Quite so, my dear - a very noble sentiment.
 (Elvina idly picks up the fruit basket.)
How rude of me not to offer you some fruit. Please – be my guest.

ELVINA Thank you, sire, but I am not hungry. I was simply admiring the basket. It is most delightful.
WULFSTAN Certainly, and bought from a local market I believe.
ELVINA It is a most unusual style. My father weaves in the old Saxon style with a cross.... *(She stops in her tracks as she realise her mistake.)*

WULFSTAN Your father, but your father is a merchant – not a craftsman. Is he not?
ELVINA I...I...I.
WULFSTAN Is your father a merchant or is he not?
ELVINA NO! He is a basket weaver.
WULFSTAN Then you have deceived me. *(Becoming ever angrier.)*
You do not know how to use your cutlery.
You have never travelled beyond your village.
Your speech gives you away.
You are an imposter.
You are nothing but a basket-weaver's daughter.

ELVINA So what? What's wrong with a basket-weaver's daughter?
WULFSTAN Where is the girl, daughter of Athelstan the merchant?
ELVINA At home in Fritham. I took her place.
WULFSTAN How dare she treat me so dishonourably? I made a bargain with her father.
HENGIST! HORSA! Come at once. *(He bangs the gong furiously and the footmen burst through the door to see what the fuss is about.)*

ELVINA She is not dishonourable. She knows nothing of this. I took her place without her knowledge. And who are you to talk of honour? You who treat people like goods in the market. You're nothing but a monster!
(Elvina jumps up and throws the fruit basket at Wulfstan. He roars loudly like a lion. She rushes past him and out of the door before he can say another word. The footmen try to restrain her but she shoves them aside in temper and they are dumbfounded.)

WULFSTAN *(Shaking with rage.)* Don't just stand there gawping – go and catch her. Take her home. *(Shouting now as they exit.)*
 And bring me back the real daughter of Athelstan, at once.
(Alone in the room, Wulfstan beats his fist on the table and sends the candelabra flying with a sweep of his arm. Slowly, he sinks to his knees, and buries his head in his hands, sobbing.)
 What has happened is no more or no less than I deserve. I have the body of a beast and a temper to match. The girl is right, I am nothing but a monster.
(Enter Hengist, out of breath. Wulfstan pulls himself to his feet.)

HENGIST Sire, the girl has disappeared. We fear she has gone into the forest. It was too dark to follow her.

WULFSTAN Then she is in serious danger. I cannot leave her at the mercy of wild beasts and evil spirits. Bring me a lantern. I will search for her myself. And you – you will ride to Fritham to collect the real Odelia.

HENGIST But, Sire, night has already fallen....

WULFSTAN Go NOW! Ride through the night and bring me back the girl.

HENGIST As you wish, Sire. *(Exits)*
(Wulfstan sinks into a chair head in hands, sobbing.)

Song 6, A Monster Who is Foul of Face, Wulfstan

Chorus:

A monster who is foul of face, whose countenance brings much disgrace,
 Whose looks cause men to run away and hide.
 His sharpened claws and furry paws, the ultimate in fear will cause
 Men's blood runs cold, both young and old when they hear Wulfstan's cries.

Wails of anguish loud resound through palace walls and castle ground
 As he regards his mirror once again.
 His beast-like looks he can't abide, his true self's trapped inside,
 Till the day dawns which will take away his pain.

Wulfstan:

One day I hope my heart will find a loved one who is true and kind
Who loves me for the person locked within.
She will not mind my furry paws and never fear my monster roars,
She'll think I'm sweet with clumsy feet and hairy werewolf skin.

We'll attend the finest balls in palace rooms and castle halls
My bear-like steps will grace the ballroom floor.
We'll dance till dawn's light fills the sky and then like birds we'll fly,
And our friendship will remain for evermore.

Yet, even though I dream,
Locked deep in my domain,
A monster I remain.

End of Scene

Scene 6: The Forest of Bearlow

MUSIC

(It is night in the forest and the trees grow so close together that they blot out all but a few shafts of silvery moonlight. In the darkness the trees take on grotesque shapes which alarm Elvina. She is running this way and that through the trees, searching for some sort of pathway to lead her home. Eventually, she slumps exhausted in front of a large tree, sobbing uncontrollably with her head in her hands. The goblin, Garmangarbis steps out from behind the tree and observes her curiously. She does not notice him and so, after a while, he leans forward and prods her arm with a spiny finger. She screams and backs away in fear and trembling.)

ELVINA

Who are you? What do you want?

GARMAN

Don't be afraid, little girl, I mean you no harm. I am Garmangarbis. I am a friendly soul who helps people who are lost in the forest at night.

ELVINA

Oh, thank goodness for that. I'm lost myself.

GARMAN

Really?

ELVINA

Oh, I suppose that's rather obvious isn't it. But what sort of creature are you – I mean, you're not a man, are you?

GARMAN

I am a...a goblin!

ELVINA

A g..g..goblin? *(She swallows hard.)*

GARMAN

That's right, girl. But, if you are lost, then you are fortunate to have met me.

ELVINA

C-can you help me? Can you show me the way home? I've been wandering around for hours and I'm scared. I keep hearing the howling of wolves. I'm sure they must be following me.

GARMAN

You tell me where home is. If I know it, I can show you the way.

ELVINA

I live in a village called Fritham. It's somewhere over the other side of the forest.

GARMAN

I know Fritham. I even know a person who lives there – a certain merchant. But how do you come to be here alone in the Forest of Bearlow at night.

ELVINA

Oh, it's a long story.

GARMAN

I'm in no hurry. *(Sits down.)*

ELVINA

You see, a merchant picked a rose from some-one else's garden and it turned out it belonged to a prince.

GARMAN

What?

ELVINA

It's true! And then in order to escape he made a foolish promise and gave away his daughter.

GARMAN

What an amazing co-incidence. *(Stands)* So you are Odelia, the daughter!

ELVINA

No, I am her friend. But how do you know she is called Odelia? I never mentioned her name.

GARMAN

Oh, it's just goblin magic.

ELVINA

Wow, that's clever! But you see, I couldn't bear to see Odelia sent away from her family so I secretly took her place.

GARMAN

You sacrificed yourself to save a friend?

ELVINA

Yes I suppose so. But, Wulfstan found me out and he was really angry. I threw a fruit bowl at him and ran away...so...so...here I am...lost, tired, hungry...and... and homesick!

(She breaks down and sobs wildly.)

GARMAN

(Aside) My oh my, what a state of affairs.

(To Elvina) Do not be afraid, little girl. I mean you no harm. The time has come for Garmangarbis to pay for his wrong-doings. He has hurt too many people.

ELVINA Why, what on earth do you mean? Who have you hurt?

GARMAN Never mind, girl. It need not concern you. Wait here! I will return.

(He disappears behind a tree.)

ELVINA What a strange little man. I wonder if he really is a goblin. I've never met one before. But can I really trust him? Perhaps he wants to eat me for supper. How would I know?

(Enter Garmangarbis carrying his trunk.)

GARMAN Here we are, little Missy.

ELVINA Goodness, what on earth have you got in there?

GARMAN I...I...don't really know, little one, but it is a treasure. The trunk holds the secret of eternal happiness – so it must be lots of gold.

ELVINA *(Lifting one end of the trunk.)* But it does not feel that heavy. It would surely be really heavy if it were full of gold.

GARMAN But it must be gold – or silver – or jewels. I have been carrying this trunk for years. It was given to me by an old sorcerer when I ... left his employment.

ELVINA Well, why don't you open it and see? *(She inspects the lock.)*

Have you a key? Is that it around your neck?

GARMAN Yes, I certainly have the key, but it will do you no good. You'll see.

(He takes the key from around his neck and gives it to her. She tries it in the lock.)

ELVINA Why, it is much too big! This cannot be the right key.

GARMAN It is the key but it grows, you see. It has become bigger and bigger since I was first given it by the sorcerer.

ELVINA But why? There must be a reason.

GARMAN I don't think the trunk was meant for me – and...and...I want you to have it.

ELVINA I couldn't possibly.....

GARMAN YES, little one, you must take it. I must repay you for your distress. I must make everything right again.

ELVINA *(Aside)* How can I accept this gift. Is it safe to accept gifts from goblins? And what does he mean about repaying me?

GARMAN It would mean a great deal to me if you would accept my gift.

ELVINA Then I will accept it, if it means so much to you.

(Garmangarbis sets the trunk down at her feet, an act which clearly causes him great pain, and places the key around her neck.)

Thank you Garber ... Graman Grabbergam goblin. That was very kind of you.

GARMAN And now, little friend, Garmangarbis will show you the way out of the forest.

ELVINA Thank you.

GARMAN You see that gap in the bushes just there.... *(points)*

ELVINA Where?

GARMAN Just...just... *(points again)*

ELVINA Oh yes, I see it.

GARMAN If you squееeeze through the gap you will find yourself standing on a track.

(she nods) Follow the track in the direction of the moon.

ELVINA *(Memorising the instructions.)* The moon.

GARMAN After a while you come to a crossroads.

ELVINA A crossroads.

GARMAN Take the path that leads you to the west wind.
 ELVINA The path to the west.
 GARMAN When you pass the old oak tree turn onto the north road
 ELVINA North road.
 GARMAN And follow the track to Fritham.
 ELVINA Oh goblin, how can I thank you for your kindness. You have saved my life.
 GARMAN No thanks needed, friend. Garmangarbis must make amends.
 ELVINA *(Bending down, she kisses him lightly on the cheek. He is astonished and puts his hand to his cheek at the place where he she kissed him.)*
 Goodbye, Garmangoblin...and..and thank you. *(Exits)*
 GARMAN What kind of human magic is this? She has put a spell on Garmangarbis.
(He rubs his cheek and looks at his fingers as if he can see the kiss.)
 Farewell, little girl.
(He falls to his knees and appears deep in thought.)
 Human kiss, human spell. Why should pretty human girl kiss an ugly old
 Goblin. She said Garmangarbis is...is...is kind! She said it twice.
(Becoming angry)
 Garmangarbis not kind – he is evil, *(each time louder)* wicked, selfish, hateful!
(Pause)
 But he does not hate the little girl. She was kind to him. He was kind to her.
 I'm glad I gave away that old chest. It brought me nothing but misery.
 But the secret! Will Garmangarbis ever live to discover its secret?
 But what is this? I hear footsteps. I must be gone!
(Exit Garmangarbis.)

(Enter Master Warburton carrying his wares.)
 BAKER Oh me oh my! This situation is lamentably ludicrous. It is strange the way the
 darkness plays tricks on one. I could have sworn I heard voices just then. Oh
 well, it must have been an owl.
(Sound effect of an owl hooting.)
 It's important not to panic in these situations you know. I must control my
 breathing: in 2,3 out 2,3 in 2,3, out 2,3.
(Enter Wulfstan, unseen. He stands behind Warburton.)
 I am in control of my situation. I am lost in the middle of a strange forest, in
 the middle of the night, but I am not afraid.
(He turns and notices Wulfstan.)
 Aaargh! It's a wicked werewolf! Aaargh! Help.
 WULFSTAN Oh, do be quiet you silly little man..
 BAKER Aaargh, it talks!
 WULFSTAN I'm not a werewolf. I'm a man just like you. *(Looks at Warburton.)* Well,
 maybe not quite like you. Have you seen a girl?
 She is running away from me. I need to find her.
 BAKER Now I wonder why she would want to run away from you!
 WULFSTAN You're not being very helpful, are you! Perhaps I should eat you up. I am
 rather hungry – my dinner was interrupted tonight.
 BAKER Go on then! Put me out of my misery.
(He stands still with his eyes shut and fists clenched. Meanwhile, Wulfstan sits on the ground, takes a pie from Warburton's basket and starts to eat it.)
 WULFSTAN Hey, this pie is delicious. Where did you get it from?

(Opening his eyes and snatching his basket, outraged that Wulfstan should help himself.)

BAKER Hey, you leave those alone, you petty pilferer. Those are my pies, I baked them myself.

WULFSTAN Did you now? They're very good. Hey, would you like a job as head chef in my castle?

BAKER C..c..castle! What castle?

WULFSTAN Castle Brocburg, of course.

BAKER Wilbur Warburton, Head Chef, Castle Brocburg. I like it! Yes, I'll take the job. When do I start?

WULFSTAN How about now, I could do with some breakfast. *(Looking up at an imaginary meal table.)* Do you do bacon, eggs, sausage, baked beans, and fried bread.

BAKER Yes, and I could also serve a superb starter and a delicious desert. But what about the girl?

WULFSTAN No, I don't think she'd fit on the fried bread.

BAKER No, I mean the one who's running away from you.

WULFSTAN Oh, she'll wait. I'll get the servants to find her later. Come on. Let's go and have breakfast.

Song 3, Reprise *(Warburton sings as they exit.)*

'Cos I'm the baker man,
Yea, baby, I'm the baker man,
Ooh, ooh, ooh,
King of the bloomers and the master of the rolls,
I can fry a mean pancake and I'm loaded with dough,
'Cos I'm the baker.

End of Scene

Scene 7: The Great Hall, Castle Brocburg, a Few Days Later

The castle is buzzing with activity with courtiers dancing a regal dance to the accompaniment of musicians in a gallery. Odelia sits in one corner looking forlorn. Hengist, Horsa and servants 1 and 2 stand motionless at the back, awaiting orders.

DANCE 1 Prince Wulfstan's Round Dance

(After the dance, Wulfstan comes forward, glass in hand, to propose a toast.)

WULFSTAN My Lords, ladies and trusted servants, I would like to propose a toast in honour of my new companion, Odelia. May she find peace and happiness during her stay here in castle Brocburg. She will live in my castle like a princess. She shall go where she pleases and I will try to give her happiness beyond her wildest dreams.

(Raising his glass.) My Lords, a toast to Odelia!

(She rises, reluctantly, unsmiling.)

ALL *(Raising their glasses.) Odelia! (Odelia sits.)*

WULFSTAN And now, Odelia, please be gracious enough to join me in the next dance. *(Everyone applauds politely as Odelia rises to her feet and steps onto the dance floor. She is still pouting and looking rather sour-faced.)*

Gentlemen, the music, if you please. I think a slow waltz would be suitable.

SONG 7/DANCE 2 Waltz

Wulfstan takes Odelia's hand and they begin a slow waltz. Other couples join them on the floor. Wulfstan tries to pull Odelia close to him but she repeatedly pulls away so there is a gap between them, although he still holds her hand and has the other arm partially around her waist in waltz fashion.

Come take my hand again,
Let's waltz some more, polish the floor.
Let's step and whirl for a while,
In the new Viennese style.

Just hold your partner tight,
Gentleman, Lord or Earl.
Let's dance till morning light,
Come, give me one more twirl.

It goes well at first but Wulfstan is terribly clumsy and after a few bars he begins to flounder and is clearly stepping on Odelia's toes. She cries out in pain. The courtiers continue to dance as Wulfstan seeks to blame the musicians.

Instrumental Interlude

WULFSTAN *(Over the instrumental interlude.)*
You fools, why do you have to play your music so fast. I asked for a slow waltz. You should know that I cannot keep up with a fast tempo. I've a good mind to dismiss you but I do not wish to disappoint my guests.
(He looks around for a lone male nobleman.)
My Lord of Locksley, please do me the favour of finishing the dance with Odelia.
(He gives her hand to Locksley and the pair begin to dance gracefully. Odelia looks much happier. The dance continues, almost in slow motion, and Wulfstan makes his speech over the music.)

I'll choose a waltz today,
Three in a bar, better by far.
Let's try that number by Strauss,
It's from his Die Fledermaus.

Who'll pay the band tonight?
Certainly won't be me.
I've spent my last gold crown,
I can't afford their fee.

WULFSTAN *(Aside)* Oh what a sorry state! I cannot dance on these oversized bear's paws. How can I ever expect a lady to fall in love with a monster such as I?
(Glances at Odelia and Locksley.)
Just look at the graceful pair. And I had hoped to charm Odelia and to make her my wife. Oh, how I curse that wretched creature Garmangarbis for his evil spell.
But, just a moment. Perhaps there is a reverse spell. But only the wretched goblin would know. I will find the wicked creature and make him tell me, even if I have to throw him in the dungeon first.

(If the dance is still in progress, Wulfstan should sit with head in hands until the music stops. If the dance finishes before the end of Wulfstan's speech, the dancers should drift silently back to their places and sit.)

WULFSTAN *(Wulfstan roars and everyone jumps to their feet.)*
You two, servants, come here at once!
(They come downstage.)
SERVANT 1 My Lord?
WULFSTAN Take a pair of strong horses and ride through the kingdom in search of the goblin, Garmangarbis.
(Gasps of horror and shock from the crowd.)
SERVANT 2 But M...M..My Lord, what would we want with such an evil creature.
WULFSTAN Do not question my orders. Bring him here, alive. Go! Now!
SERVANT 1 At once, my Lord.

(He grabs Servant 2 by the collar, sensing that he is about to argue with the prince and they exit. There is a hubbub now in the crowd as they speculate on what the prince may want with the goblin.)

(Wulfstan is now in a temper at the disobedience of his servants.)

WULFSTAN Hengist, Horsa, come here at once!
HENGIST Sire, you called?
WULFSTAN Pay the musicians and then kick them out of the back door. I never wish to see them again.
HORSA But, Sire, surely the musicians have played well.
WULFSTAN *(Shouting)* I shall be the judge of that – not you. Now do as I ask.
(They do so, kicking the musicians out unceremoniously, violins and cellos flying.)
(Wulfstan roars and rants in a high temper.)
People refuse to do as I command. They question my judgement.
(The courtiers shrink away, fearful of Wulfstan's mood. Odelia lurks in the corner, shocked.)
This is my castle, I am the prince and my subjects must obey me without question.
(He roars again. The guests are beginning to gather their cloaks and leave.)
Oh that's right, you just leave. Have you had enough of my hospitality?
ODELIA This is simply outrageous! I cannot bear to stay here and listen to you insult one person after the other. I shall retire to my chamber.
WULFSTAN You cannot do that, Odelia. I have not dismissed you. You cannot simply walk out.
ODELIA Why not? Am I not to live like a princess and go wherever I please? Well, I'm going to bed. GOODNIGHT, Wulfstan. *(Exits)*
(The last of the guests are still leaving and Wulfstan hurries them along with a loud roar.)
WULFSTAN Leave then, all of you! Leave me alone, why don't you. I am merely your host and you my guests.
(He sits in a chair and puts his head in his hands. Pause.)
But how can I blame them. Who would want to spend an evening with a bad-tempered monster. This spell can surely not be undone. Oh, what a wicked punishment for simply picking a rose and wishing myself a beautiful bride. Why did the goblin not just kill me. I would rather be dead!

Song 6, Reprise

Wulfstan:

One day I hope my heart will find a loved one who is true and kind
Who loves me for the person locked within.
She will not mind my lion's paws and never fear my monster roars,
She'll think I'm sweet with clumsy feet and hairy werewolf skin.

We'll attend the finest balls in palace rooms and castle halls
My bear-like steps will grace the ballroom floor.
We'll dance till dawn's light fills the sky and then like birds we'll fly,
And our friendship will be sealed for evermore.

Yet, even though I dream,
Locked deep in my domain,
A monster I remain.

End of Scene

Scene 8: The Summer Garden, a Few Months Later

(Odelia is idly passing time in the Summer Garden, delighting in sampling the fragrances of the various flowers.)

ODELIA Such a variety of colourful flowers and unusual shrubs, how wonderful. And the perfume is simply glorious.
(She plucks a white rose from the very same bush as Athelstan.)

ELVINA Pst!

ODELIA My, a talking bush! How curious.
(She picks another rose and looks from rose to bush in wonder.)

ELVINA Pst!

(And another)

ELVINA Pst!

ODELIA Well, this garden is certainly magic.

ELVINA Hello, it's me you idiot!

ODELIA Hello, rose bush. There is no need to be rude to me, you know!
(The rose bush rustles and heaves, the branches part and Elvina clammers out and dusts herself down.)

 ELVINA, it's you!

ELVINA Hello, Odelia.

ODELIA And I thought

ELVINA What did you think?

ODELIA Oh never mind. How lovely to see you *(they embrace)* but what are you doing here?

ELVINA I've come to rescue you, of course.

ODELIA But Elvina, I don't need rescuing. I'm quite alright.

ELVINA But...but I thought.....

ODELIA You thought that I would be unhappy and at the mercy of a monster, but it's not like that that, Elvina. Wulfstan has a terrible temper but underneath he has a heart of gold

ELVINA You're not in love with that overgrown bear of a man are you, Odelia?

ODELIA No, of course not. I don't think I am, anyway. But I am really pleased to see you. It was really noble of you to pretend you were me. I am so lucky to have a friend like you.

ELVINA But don't you want to come home? Don't you miss your family?

ODELIA Of course I miss Father and Mother greatly and I think about them every day, but I know that this is only for one year.

ELVINA But, Odelia, you must simply hate it. One evening was too much for me.

ODELIA At first I was very unhappy and hated it here, but I began to feel sorry for Wulfstan and now I want to help him.

ELVINA I see! You won't be coming home with me, then?

ODELIA Not until the year is up.
(Enter Wulfstan, unseen)

ELVINA Well, I suppose there are consolations; like the servants and the food.

ODELIA Yes, but although Wulfstan is a nobleman, he never has visitors anymore, on account of his temper, and he never goes outside the castle and garden. He does so love the garden.

WULFSTAN I have good cause to appreciate this garden.
(Elvina backs away in fright.)

Ah, Odelia, I see your friend has come to visit you.

ELVINA I.I... I'm sorry, I should not have come. I'd better be going...

ODELIA Elvina, it is quite alright, Wulfstan means you no harm. You are my guest.
(She gives Wulfstan a fleeting embrace.)

WULFSTAN Of course, you are welcome here.

ELVINA W..w..why, thank you.

WULFSTAN I have the greatest admiration for a friendship which causes a girl to sacrifice herself for her friend in the way you did.

ODELIA But Wulfstan, you said you have good cause to love the garden. Why is that?

WULFSTAN This garden has a certain magic. You see, it was created for my ancestors by a powerful sorcerer. Not one of these plants is poisonous. In fact, many of them have healing powers and can make powerful medicines.

ELVINA Wow, that's fantastic!

ODELIA But why a summer garden?

WULFSTAN Many of the plants only flower or produce fruit in the summer. Seeds can be ground, and fruits squeezed for their juices. This can only happen in season.

ELVINA So the sorcerer cast a spell making eternal summer in the garden.

WULFSTAN Exactly! But there is an extra ingredient in every potion. The real secret is in the love and care put into the preparation, together with a wish for the recovery of the sick person.

ODELIA That's wonderful!

WULFSTAN And so, you see why the garden is so special to me. But it was also in this place that a dark deed was done..... an evil goblin....by the nameof.... Garmangarbis..... *(Wulfstan collapses in a faint.)*

ODELIA Oh no, Wulfstan. Wulfstan, wake up!

ELVINA What on earth is wrong with him?

ODELIA He has become rather sick these last few weeks. It may be an illness, but I feel it is simply sadness. He keeps becoming weak and collapsing. Oh Elvina, I don't know what to do.

ELVINA But Odelia, he mentioned the name Garmangarbis. I know of such a creature. He showed me kindness in the forest when I was lost. I...I don't understand. Wulfstan called him evil.

ODELIA We cannot ask him now. He is too weak.
(Wulfstan begins to come round.)

WULFSTAN *(Moaning and groaning as he comes to.)* Odelia! Where is Odelia?

ODELIA *(Stroking his brow.)* I am here Wulfstan. Don't try to stand yet. I will get the servants. Elvina, I'm sorry, but I must get Wulfstan back into the castle. Forgive me.

ELVINA Yes, of course. I should go now.

ODELIA Please give my good wishes to Mother and Father and tell them I am not unhappy here and that it will not be too long before we are re-united.

ELVINA I'll tell them.

ODELIA And please come back soon and visit me.

ELVINA I will – I promise.
(They embrace and Elvina exits.)

ODELIA Come now, Wulfstan. Let's get you into your bed.
(She helps him to his feet and he begins to walk off, very shakily .)
Hengist, Horsa, please help me. *(They exit.)*

End of Scene

Scene 9: Wulfstan's Bedchamber, At Night, Some While Later

The lighting is dim, only a few candles light the bedchamber. Wulfstan lies very sick in bed and is in a deep sleep. The two footmen stand to attention at the head and foot of the bed and Odelia sits on the far side, mopping Wulfstan's brow with a cloth. There is a gentle knock at the door.

ODELIA *(In a whisper.)* Enter!
(Enter the two servants)

SERVANT 1 My lady, we have been....

ODELIA Shhh, for pity's sake, not so loudly. Can you not see he's asleep?

SERVANT 1 Sorry, my lady.

ODELIA Now, what news? Have you found the goblin?

SERVANT 2 Alas, although we have searched high and low we have found no trace of this Garmangarbis.

ODELIA Then all is lost. Whatever magical powers he possesses, Wulfstan seemed to think that they would save him.

SERVANT 2 We are truly sorry, my lady.

ODELIA I'm sure you did your best. Now go and rest and in two days time continue your search, although it may be too late for Wulfstan by then.

SERVANT 1 But surely, you don't mean...

ODELIA Wulfstan is near the end of his life's journey. Soon he will be at peace. My only regret is that he will leave one stone unturned. Wulfstan was convinced that the goblin could end his misery. I do not know why but it almost seems as if he has lost the will to live – as if his heart is broken in two. Now go and rest!
(As they exit she slips them each a small bag of gold. The door closes behind them with a clatter and Wulfstan opens his eyes.)

WULFSTAN *(Feebly)* Odelia. Dear, gentle Odelia. You do not have to stay any longer. You may go.

ODELIA Don't be silly, Wulfstan – I'm not going anywhere. I'm staying here to care for you.

WULFSTAN Well, don't worry, it will not be for much longer. I sense the end is near. Hengist, Horsa leave us in peace. *(He dismisses them with a weak wave of the hand.)*

ODELIA Wulfstan, don't be ridiculous. You will soon recover and get strong again.

WULFSTAN Odelia, you do not need to keep up the pretence. I am not a child!
(Odelia begins to sob and puts her head on his chest. He pats her head.)
But there is something I must tell you. I am leaving all my lands and wealth to you, Odelia.

ODELIA *(Sobbing)* But why, Wulfstan. I am not family. I do not deserve this.

WULFSTAN You are closer than family and you have shown me such kindness. When I am gone you can bring your family to live here and take a husband. Should you be blessed with a son, you shall call him Wulfstan. *(He coughs feebly and has difficulty finishing his sentences.)*
Odelia – I love you

ODELIA *(She clasps his hand in hers.)*
Oh Wulfstan, I love you too. And you must stop this talk of dying. Why, you are still young. You used to be strong and you will again, Wulfstan. I will certainly marry and have a son, but it will be you I'll marry – if you'll have

me. We'll show our little Wulfstan the wonders of your lands and the secrets of the summer garden. He'll grow up a proper little prince – just like his father.
(Wulfstan's hand goes limp and drops as he passes away.)

Wulfstan! WULFSTAN! Don't leave me – please! Please no, no!
(She sobs uncontrollably. Enter Hengist and Horsa.)

HENGIST

My lady, is everything alright.

ODELIA

He's ... he's dead!

HORSA

Then there's nothing more to be done, my lady.

(Hengist covers Wulfstan's head with the sheet. Horsa takes Odelia by the hand.)

Come, my lady, we must inform the household of Wulfstan's death.

ODELIA

No, no! Please just leave me alone with him – for a few minutes – please!

HORSA

Very well. As you wish.

(They exit silently.)

Song 8, Do Not Close the Door, Odelia Solo

Twilight dims the evening,
Lighted candles flicker,
Still the daylight lingers,
Do not close the door!

Just another evening,
Just a normal day,
Do not shut the light out,
Please don't go away.

When you find the one to share your dreams,
Light a candle flame and do not let it die.

Do not close the door,
Do not steal our light,
Dear Wulfstan let our flame burn bright.

(Instrumental)

Darkness dims the mem'ry,
Faces blur and fade,
People are forgotten,
Friendships we once made.

Now's a special evening,
Not a normal day,
Do not let my mem'ries
Ever fade away.

Now I found the one to share my dreams,
Fate has intervened and tried to close the door.

Do not close the door,
Do not steal our light,
Dear Wulfstan let our flame burn bright.

(Instrumental)

Twilight dims the evening,
Shadows growing higher,
Still the mem'ry lingers,
Do not let it ever die.

(At the end of the song Odelia bends low over Wulfstan's body and weeps. As she does this, her tears fall onto Wulfstan's face, through the sheet. There is an enormous flash of lightning and crash of thunder which causes her to shrink back against the wall with a scream. Wulfstan groans and begins to rise. Odelia screams all the more loudly only becoming dumbstruck when the sheet falls from his face and, instead of the previous bear-like figure, there sits a handsome prince.)

WULFSTAN Do not be afraid, Odelia, it is I – Wulfstan.
ODELIA But, but, you can't be. I mean, how can this be.
WULFSTAN *(Jumping off the bed, standing rather shakily, and putting his hands on her shoulders.)*
You unlocked the real Wulfstan with your tears and your love for me. It seems so obvious now that the reverse spell would be something simple such as that. Simple, but impossible for an ugly bear-like man with an evil temper.
ODELIA But, but I don't understand.
WULFSTAN It does not really matter now, my dear. Just a spell cast by a wicked goblin. *(He begins to faint and Odelia supports him and sits him down. Enter Hengist and Horsa and stare at Wulfstan in disbelief.)*
HENGIST My Lord, we thought you were...were ...dead.
HORSA And how you are transformed! What a miracle!
HENGIST Then the legend of the goblin's curse is true – and somehow the curse is undone.
WULFSTAN *(Standing again.)* Exactly right, Hengist, and now we can get on with our lives. Go and spread the good news to the kingdom. Prince Wulfstan will ride through his realm greeting his subjects.
HORSA Certainly, Sire. *(They exit.)*
ODELIA But Wulfstan, you must rest. Why, after all, only a few minutes ago you were dead.
WULFSTAN And now, I feel quite well. Pass me my coat, if you please. And perhaps you had better change into something more suitable for riding before we set off.
ODELIA But...but...but....
WULFSTAN Well, Odelia. What are you waiting for?
ODELIA Oh Wulfstan!
WULFSTAN Odelia!
(They embrace.)

ODELIA I was so frightened. I thought I had lost you, forever.
WULFSTAN Odelia, I had no idea that you cared about me so much.
ODELIA Well it was hard to explain. Not every girl falls in love with ... with a bear!
WULFSTAN Steady now, girl.
(She takes a hand mirror and a brush and begins to brush her hair. Suddenly she screams and drops the mirror.)

WULFSTAN Why, Odelia, whatever is the matter?
ODELIA The mirror ... I ... I saw my father in it.
WULFSTAN Extra-ordinary!
ODELIA He..he was very sick on his deathbed. He called my name, Wulfstan. He was calling 'Odelia'. Oh Wulfstan what does this mean?

WULFSTAN It is an omen. Your father is sick because he misses you. That is my fault and mine alone. I shall go to your father, in disguise, and cure his sickness.

ODELIA But how?
WULFSTAN You remember what I told you about the herbs in the Summer Garden?
ODELIA Why, yes, of course.
WULFSTAN I have become very skilled in the preparation of medicines for all sicknesses. I will disguise myself as a travelling herbalist. Fear not, my precious, your father will recover.

ODELIA Oh, Wulfstan!
WULFSTAN But I must go swiftly.
ODELIA Of course. But do be careful, you have not yet recovered.
WULFSTAN I feel fine. Do not worry about me. Come, we must gather the necessary herbs for the potion. You must help me. Remember, the potion must be prepared with love and care and a wish for the sick person's recovery.

ODELIA I remember.
WULFSTAN And when I return, I shall take you as my wife and there will be celebrations lasting for weeks. Your family may come and live here in the castle with us.

ODELIA Oh Wulfstan, that would be wonderful. Although, I'm not sure I want to live with my sisters again.

WULFSTAN Farewell my love, and do not worry – everything will turn out well in the end. You'll see.
(Exit Wulfstan.)

ODELIA Farewell, and take care, Wulfstan.
(Odelia puts the candles out one at a time. Blackout.)

End of scene

Scene 10: Athelstan's House, the Next Day

(One side of the stage is outside the house and the other side is the entrance and the main room where Athelstan lies. Wilfrid and Sigbert are off-duty and playing jacks outside the house. Enter Wulfstan, carrying a leather bag, in disguise as a herbalist, except for his riding boots, which he forgot to change.)

WULFSTAN Good day to you young men!
SIGBERT Is it?
WILFRID Yes, it is. Good day to you, sir!
WULFSTAN Tell me, my good man, is this the dwelling place of Athelstan, the merchant.
WILFRID Yes it is.
SIGBERT No it isn't.
WULFSTAN My goodness, we seem to have a difference of opinion here. Is one of you lying?
WILFRID Yes.
SIGBERT No.
WULFSTAN *(To Wilfrid)* Is it you then?
WILFRID No, it's him.
SIGBERT It's not me, it's him.
WULFSTAN Well then, let's try something else. Is Miss Odelia at home today?
SIGBERT No, she's been away many months.
WULFSTAN Then I have come to the right place. Thank you.
SIGBERT No, you haven't!
WILFRID Yes, he has!
WULFSTAN Well, thank you for your help.
(He gives Wilfrid a coin for a tip and knocks on the door of the house.)
WILFRID Wow, it's a gold coin. He must be a very important person.
SIGBERT How come I didn't get one?
WILFRID 'Cos you're stupid! And he knew it was you who was lying. He's not daft.
SIGBERT I'm not stupid!
WILFRID Hey, look at that! It's a four-leafed clover.
(Sigbert bends down to look and Wilfrid kicks his backside making him fall flat on his face. Wilfrid laughs aloud at this.)
(Wulfstan enters the doorway of the house.)
WULFSTAN Good day, mistress.
WILDA Good day, sir. *(Noticing the bag)* But we did not send for a doctor.
WULFSTAN I am no doctor, I am Alfred, the herbalist. And you must be Athelstan's wife. I heard you husband was sick and I have come to offer a cure.
WILDA What makes you think you can offer anything different from all the others.
They take our money but we never see them again. Be off with you!
WULFSTAN Madam, I do not wish for any payment. I offer my services for no charge.
WILDA Here, how come you knew my Athelstan's name, anyway?
WULFSTAN I was sent by someone who cares about his well being.
WILDA Well then, you'd better come on in. Anything's worth a try.
(They enter the house and Athelstan lies on the couch, very pale and weak, with his eyes closed. Orva and Nelda administer to him and Elvina is helping out by doing the chores, cleaning pots and pans.)
WILDA My dears, this is Alfred, the herbalist. He will try to help father recover from his illness.

ORVA *(Whispered to Nelda)* Well, this is our lucky day, Nelda. It's not every day such a handsome young man visits our house.

NELDA You keep your hands off him. He's here to help father

WULFSTAN Now, is Athelstan able to eat and drink?

WILDA He eats nothing. He will only sip warm drinks.

WULFSTAN And, how long has he been in this state?

ORVA For months. Ever since our little sister was kidnapped by an evil monster. He blames himself, you see.

ELVINA No, no it was not like that at all.

NELDA Yes, it was. She was kidnapped.

ELVINA But he is not a monster. He suffers a disability and...and he can't help it!

NELDA Who asked you for your opinion anyway?

ELVINA Well, at least in the castle she does not have to put up with you two.

ORVA How dare you, you little upstart!

WILDA Stop this nonsense, you three. Elvina, thank you for your help but I think you'd better go now.

ELVINA But, mistress....

WILDA *(Shooing her out like a hen.)* Off you go ... shoo, shoo, shoo! *(Exit Elvina.)*
You see, young man, he is suffering from grief at the loss of his daughter, Odelia.

WULFSTAN I see, then I have just the cure for him.
(He opens his bag and searches through the jars. Orva and Nelda stand very close to him and peer over his shoulder into the bag. Wulfstan turns away to conceal his movements. He takes out a bottle and pulls out the stopper.)
I believe this potion will revive him immediately.
(He touches the bottle to Athelstan's lips and he opens his eyes, slowly sitting.)
(Overjoyed.) Athelstan, you've come back to us.

WILDA *(Looking at Wilda.)* Odelia!

ATHELSTAN No, it's me, you fool, Wilda. The one you married, remember?

WILDA But I felt Odelia's presence very strongly. It seemed as though she were here in this very room.

WULFSTAN Fear not, Athelstan, you will be re-united with your daughter sooner than you think.

ATHELSTAN And who the devil are you?

NELDA *(Standing cosily shoulder to shoulder with Wulfstan.)* This, is Alfred. He's a herbalist and he seems to have cured you of your sickness.

ATHELSTAN Well, then I owe you my gratitude, young man. Wilda, a bag of gold for the young man. *(She starts to go and fetch the gold....)*

WULFSTAN That's a kind gesture, sir, but I cannot accept your gold. I am here as a favour for a friend, but I cannot tell you who.

ATHELSTAN Then you must thank him for me when you see him.
(Nelda is still rubbing shoulders with Wulfstan.)

WULFSTAN Alas, I fear I must now be on my way. My future wife awaits me. I will make a point of seeing you soon Athelstan, just in case you need more of the potion.
(To Wilda)
Madam, my card.
(Handing Wilda a printed card)
And now, good people, I bid you farewell. *(Exits swiftly.)*

WILDA Farewell, Alfred, and thank you.

ATHELSTAN Goodness did you see his boots? Those are costly riding boots of the finest leather. Our friend must make a good living as a herbalist.
 WILDA And how strange to wear riding boots when one is on foot. I feel that there is more to that herbalist than meets the eye.
 NELDA He's mine, Orva. You keep your hands off.
 ORVA Are you deaf? He said he is already promised to a woman.
 NELDA I don't care. He also said he would return, didn't he.
 WILDA Oh, Athelstan!
 ATGHELSTAN Oh, Wilda!
(Athelstan and Wilda embrace. The action moves to outside the house, where Elvina has been waiting and Wilfrid and Sigbert continue their game.)
 WULFSTAN *(Noticing the key around Elvina's neck.)* Elvina, where did you get that key? It is strangely like one I have seen before, only rather larger.
 ELVINA *(Aside)* Strange! He knows my name.
(To Wulfstan) I was given it as a present by a stranger who showed me kindness in an hour of need.
 WULFSTAN How thoughtful, but what an unusual gift.
 ELVINA He also gave me the chest which the key opens, but, strangely, the key is too large for the lock.
 WULFSTAN How curious.
 ELVINA The most curious thing is that the key seems to be shrinking. I would swear it was so big *(she shows the size with a hand gesture)* when the goblin first gave it to me.
 WULFSTAN Goblin! I wonder.....
 ELVINA And how is Athelstan? Has there been any change?
 WULFSTAN There certainly has. Athelstan is awake, sitting up and talking.
 ELVINA That's wonderful. That must be powerful medicine? It must be costly. You must allow me to pay you for it.
 WULFSTAN My dear, your generosity in offering to pay when you have so little is worth more than all the riches in the world. Besides, the ingredients are rare but not dear. The secret of the cure is in the love and care put into the preparation, together with a wish for the recovery of the sick person.
(Elvina gasps at the memory of that phrase. She turns towards the audience. Meanwhile, Wulfstan silently vanishes.)
 ELVINA But your voice – it is so familiar. And your words I have surely heard those phrases spoken before, but where? I wonder..... *(She turns.)*
 Sir, sir.... But where did he go? I wanted to ask him something.
 WILFRED He went that way. *(Gesturing.)*
 SIGBERT He went that way. *(Gesturing the other way.)*
 ELVINA Oh, never mind.
(Moving downstage and taking the key in her hands.)
 My goodness, the key is shrinking. If this continues it will soon be small enough to open the chest!
 WILDA *(Coming out of the house.)*
 Elvina, do look, the herbalist left this card. *(Shows the card.)*
 ELVINA But I don't understand! How did he get hold of this?
 WILDA It's an invitation to a wedding, Elvina. A wedding between my daughter Odelia – and ... and the PRINCE!!!
(She faints and is caught by Elvina) *Blackout*
End of Scene

Scene 11: The Great Hall, Castle Brocburg. The Wedding Feast

The hall is decorated for the wedding feast and a dance is in progress. The guests are dressed in their finest clothes. Just before the end of the dance Athelstan, Wilda and the two sisters enter. The sisters are carrying wedding gifts. Elvina follows, carrying the chest with the key around her neck.

DANCE 3 Irish Dance

(After the dance, the guests form groups and chat in the background.)

ORVA Well, where is she?
SERVANT 3 I beg your pardon, my lady?
ORVA The bride, where's the bride?
SERVANT 3 The bride and groom will be arriving shortly, my lady.
ORVA Hear that, Nelda? He called me 'my lady'.
NELDA Don't worry, Orva, it is a simple mistake. He forgot to put his glasses on this morning.
ATHELSTAN Put the gifts on that table, my dears, with the others. *(They do so.)*
WILDA Just look at all that sumptuous food. They have certainly prepared a banquet for us.
ATHELSTAN Well, she will only be married once, my dear. The occasion must be fitting.
NELDA Odelia is so lucky. Fancy living in this wonderful castle and having all these servants to wait on you.
ORVA I would not wish for it if I had to marry an ugly, hairy monster to get it.
ATHELSTAN Girls, do stop your incessant chatter!
(A fanfare sounds.)
PAGE My lords, ladies and gentlemen, it is my pleasure to announce the arrival of the royal wedded couple; Prince Wulfstan and Princess Odelia of Brocburg. *(Another fanfare as they enter upstage and process downstage. There are gasps of astonishment from the crowd at the beauty of the princess in her wedding gown. All bow deeply as they enter, except the sisters, who are dumbfounded. A quick slap by Wilda brings them to their senses and they also bow, grudgingly.)*
NELDA Oh my, just look at Odelia – she looks just like a real princess.
ORVA She is now!
(Odelia rushes forward and fondly embraces her parents.)
ODELIA Mother Father!
WILDA But look at the prince, surely that is Alfred the herbalist!
ELVINA *(Aside)* I knew I recognised that voice.
WULFSTAN That is correct, my lady. Or should I call you – mother?
(Wilda giggles slightly and looks embarrassed. Wulfstan embraces Wilda followed by Athelstan, Orva, and Nelda. This is all too much for Nelda, who faints.)
PAGE Page, a glass of water for the lady, if you please.
PAGE Certainly, sire.
(Someone passes the page a glass of water who promptly throws it over Nelda. She wakes up, spluttering, and slaps the page on the face.)
WULFSTAN I had intended for her to drink it, page, not swim in it.

PAGE I'm sorry, Sire.
WULFSTAN Wilda, Mother, please accept my sincere apologies for the disguise, but I felt it was for the best.

WILDA Well, that explains the boots anyway!
ATHELSTAN But what happened to you? When I met you, you were a ... a ...
WULFSTAN A beast? Well, it is a long story, but it has something to do with a wicked goblin and a curse, which was happily undone by your own daughter.

NELDA That wretched Odelia! She has all the luck.
ODELIA *(Noticing Elvina in the crowd.)* Elvina, oh, Elvina, I'm so glad you could come to share in our happy day. *(Embracing Elvina with difficulty as she is still carrying the trunk.)*

ELVINA I have brought you and Wulfstan a wedding gift.
WULFSTAN My goodness, it's the trunk!
ODELIA Oh, Elvina, you should not have – you have no money.
ELVINA Please accept this chest – it was given to me by an old goblin. He says it holds the secret of eternal happiness. And here is the key. *(She takes the key from around her neck and gasps.)* My, it has become even smaller. *(She holds out the trunk, which is taken by a page who rushes forward to take it. She gives Odelia the key.)*

ODELIA And I have a gift for you. If you agree, you shall be my lady-in-waiting. You shall live in the castle and attend to me every day. Your family can come and live here too.

ELVINA Oh, Odelia! I should like that more than anything. But I shall have to ask father.

ODELIA Of course.
(There is a commotion from the back of the room and the guests part and turn curiously to see what is happening. Two servants enter, dragging in a struggling Garmangarbis. All goes silent and some gasp in horror.)

SERVANT 1 Sire, we found this creature peering into the upper windows. *(He gestures towards the roof.)*

SERVANT 2 Shall we have him thrown into the dungeon, My Lord?
WULFSTAN Maybe, but first he must explain himself. Garmangarbis, come forward. *(The goblin shuffles forward and throws himself at Wulfstan's feet.)*
Pray, tell us what more mischief you intend. How many more lives are you to ruin before you are satisfied?

GARMAN Sire, please forgive me. I...I meant no harm... I was angry.
WULFSTAN Meant no harm! MEANT NO HARM? And now I am angry. You put a curse on me. And why? Because I was in the wrong place at the wrong time, picking a white rose from the Summer Garden.
(All gasp.)

GARMAN I know, master, and I am sorry for it. Give me the chance to make amends. I am sorry for the curse and glad that it is now broken. I helped to bring you and Odelia together.

ELVINA And he showed me an act of kindness. He helped me find a way out of the forest when I was lost.

WULFSTAN Is this true, goblin? Did you show kindness to Elvina in the forest?
GARMAN Yes, master, I suppose I did.
WULFSTAN I see.
ATHELSTAN If I may speak, your lordship...
WULFSTAN Certainly, Athelstan...DAD!

ATHELSTAN I too committed the same crime of picking a white rose from the garden .. and you yourself punished me by demanding my daughter in return.
(Gasps of horror that Athelstan should address the prince in this way.)

ORVA She's not done badly out of it though, has she!
(The prince paces up and down, deep in thought.)

WULFSTAN Elvina, the key to the chest. Let us see what secrets it holds.
(She gives him the key.)
 GARMANGARBIS – open the chest.
(The goblin looks astonished and then rubs his hands together with glee as Wulfstan throws him the key. As he fumbles with the lock everyone cranes forward to see what will happen.)

ELVINA It is no good – the key is still too large!
 GARMAN You must try, mistress. It may work for you.
 ELVINA *(Trying the key.)* It fits – it fits the lock.
 WULFSTAN Well, go on then, open it.
(The lock creaks as Elvina attempts to lift the lid.)

GARMAN It is stuck, master.
 WULFSTAN Here, let me help you, Elvina.
(Suddenly, the lid opens.)

GARMAN *(Looking inside.)*
 But, I don't understand, where is all the gold and the jewels?

WULFSTAN *(Laughing.)* Did anyone actually ever say there was gold inside? You've been carrying this trunk around for years and all it contained is simply – a stone!
(Wulfstan holds up the stone. The crowd repeat his words 'a stone', mocking and laughing. Garmangarbis looks from one to the other in shame and bewilderment, eventually sinking to his knees and covering his ears with his hands.)

ELVINA But look, there is an inscription on the stone. What does it say, Wulfstan?
(Wulfstan examines it.)

WULFSTAN It's written in the old language. Send for the translator!
 GARMAN *(Rising)* No, wait! I can understand the old tongue. I have lived for nearly five hundred years.

WULFSTAN Then translate at once – and save yourself.
 GARMAN It says: whosoever is able to unlock this chest is blessed with the gifts of generosity, unselfishness and compassion. Use these gifts fully and you will discover true happiness. Thus, the secret on this stone is entrusted to those who are worthy. Signed, Oric, The Sorcerer.
(When he gets to the end, he hangs his head in shame. The hall is silent.)
 I carried the secret with me but was unworthy. The secret of happiness was so close. I am truly sorry.

WULFSTAN *(Stepping forward.)* Here, Garmangarbis, you may have the stone. It may guide you in the future.

ODELIA You may go free.
(He takes the stone and, cradling it tenderly in his hands, withdraws, smiling. The crowd applaud.)
(Enter Wilfrid and Sigbert in their finest clothes, arguing loudly. All turn to look.)

WILFRID Hey, if it isn't young Alfred, the herbalist. How's it going, Alf?
 SIGBERT I think that's the prince, you fool.
 WILFRID *(Aside)* No wonder he tipped me a gold coin.

(*To Wulfstan.*) Sire, I am sorry we are late. Sigbert took a wrong turning on the way.

SIGBERT You told me to, you idiot. I told you to go east at the crossroads and you went west.

WILFRED You said go WEST.

SIGBERT I never did.

WILFRID You did too...

(*The crowd laugh at these antics.*)

WULFSTAN (*Clapping his hands*) Enough! (*Sigbert and Wilfred back away, bowing.*)
 We have delayed the feast too long. Let the banquet begin.
 (*He claps again, three times, and Warburton enters, followed by a throng of servants carrying the most tasty dishes. There is a buzz of excitement as the guests see the wonderful food. Wine waiters hand out drinks to the guests, or at least the principals.*)
 And, before we eat, I would like to propose a toast to my new wife, Princess Odelia!

ALL Princess Odelia!

WULFSTAN And just as our dreams have come true, so may yours if you wish hard enough.
 (*All cheer wildly and throw their hats into the air.*)

SONG 9 Far Beyond Horizons, Chorus

1 Far beyond horizons is a world we want you to share.
 Chances will come rolling your way, if you only would follow us there.
 And this world exists in all of our lives if we just believe it's true.
 You'll find the chances to change your life,
 Don't let them pass by, give it a try.
 Hold your head high, reach for the sky.

Chorus: So let's turn those tears into smiles,
 Let there be no more pain.
 Never stray from the path you choose and
 Trust in your friends, stay together till the end.

2 Daylight follows darkness just as sunshine follows the rain.
 If you could just turn back the clock, would you live your life over again?
 You must recognise your own destiny when you meet it face to face.
 You have the power to make it real.
 And you can achieve all you believe.
 Don't change your mind, don't look behind.

Chorus

The End