

LORD AVARICE—MARTHA—HEALER SAMUELS

Scene 3 The Next Day--back at court with LA .Steward, Jack (sitting as scribe) Jillian (who is sweeping) Martha and Healer Samuels, are pleading with Lord Avarice for help

Martha: The flower is the main ingredient in the tonic my sister needs for her fever. She is very sick.

Healer Samuels: Lord Avarice, if we had any other choice we wouldn't be asking you.

LA: Steward, is this true?

Steward: It is, my Lord. That particular plant has disappeared from the lands around here. Your gardens are the only place it still grows.

LA: Well, well, well. That makes it a very valuable flower indeed. I hope you are prepared to pay top dollar for it.

Martha: But we have almost no money! Everything cent we earn is paid to you for rent or taxes--

LA: And now you can add flowers to that list. \$30 a bucket is the price.

Martha: \$30 !? Where are we to get that kind of money?

LA: Oh I'm sure your friends would be willing to donate to such a worthy cause.

Healer Samuels: But a Mercy's life depends on that medicine! We need that plant or she might not survive this sickness.

LA: Well then you better get out there and start collecting. Steward, see these two out.

Martha: But— (Steward escorts them out but before they leave...)

Steward: Hold on, I may be able to talk him down from that price. I don't want to get your hopes up though. He can be difficult.

Healer Samuels: Well that's one way to put it! He cares more about money than a human life!

(Jack and Jillian have been staring, shocked, at Lord Avarice's words.)

LA: Well what's wrong with you two? Back to work!

Mary (also HARP) comes over to her father/mother. Root, Peddler

Mary: Look what Grace found! (she is holding a crown made of leaves on the doll's head)

Root: Well she must be a real princess then.

Mary: She is! She just never knew it.

Peddler: Come here, little one. I think I have something for your princess.

The Peddler opens his/her coat to reveal an array of small items in the front lining, takes a small carved frog and hands it to her

Mary: A frog? Is it her new pet?

Peddler: No, she has to kiss it.

Mary: *(laughing)* No way! Grace won't kiss a frog! She's much too delicate.

They all laugh at her use of such a grown-up word.

Peddler: Delicate, you say? Well If she doesn't kiss him, how will he turn back into a Prince?

Mary: Hmm...Grace will think about it. *She skips away*

Root: I envy that child--always happy. She was too young when her mother/father died to be sad about it.

Jack: I was too young when my parents died.

Jillian: She's lucky she has you, Root.

Root: I wish I had something to give her to remind her of her mother/father. There was a portrait of him/her done by that Rembrandt fellow before the sickness took him/her. But it was stolen.

JACK, JILLIAN, MILLER, TAILOR

Tailor: Jack, I don't know what you think those beans are going to do.

Miller: The old Peddler told you himself they didn't work.

Jack: But the story his father told him has to be true. These bean could give me my heart's desire. I wouldn't have to live in poverty any longer.

Jillian: The Peddler's had nothing but sadness and misery. That doesn't sound like anyone's "heart's desire."

Jack: I've got nothing to lose!

Jillian: Nothing? You gave up your mother's quilt! Your only real possession.

Miller: And how exactly do beans give you anything?

Tailor: Maybe you hold them and say a magic word.

Miller: Which word?

Tailor: I don't know—what are some magic words?

Jillian: Abracadabra?

Miller: Alacazam?

Tailor: Meatloaf?

Miller: Meatloaf? Really? Since when is meat—

Jack: (holding the beans) Abracadabra! I wish for a big chest full of gold!

Miller: Nothing. Maybe you need to form a circle with them—like a fairy ring
(They all line the beans up on the table in a circle)

Jack: (*Louder and more dramatic*) Abracadabra! I wish for a big chest full of gold!

Jillian: This is ridiculous

Tailor: I know! Maybe we need to rub them!

Jack: What?

Tailor: You know, like Aladdin and the lamp.

Jillian: You think a bean genie is going to come out if we rub them?

Jack: It's worth a try

(They all hold a tiny bean and rub them with one finger.)