

# Cobble Me This



By Deb Meyer

COBBLE ME THIS

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A Comedy

by

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## COBBLE ME THIS

### Synopsis

When should you help someone out, and when should you step back and let them solve their own problems? Introducing Mais and Fern, two mythical woodland creatures known as Bryndals. Humans can't see or hear them. Fern loves to fish. Mais is a peace-at-any-price, incessant enabler, fixated on problem solving issues for Fergus, a cranky injured cobbler. Panic sets in when Mais discovers not only have they run out of leather, to cobble shoes, but Fergus' wife, Emelia walks out on him. Mais wants to fix it all. Fern tries to keep him balanced. Add Sydney the Snitcher to the mix, and shenanigans abound. Comedy, 85-90 minutes.

Time: Mid-1700's.

Place: A Scottish village.

## Cast of Characters

- MAIS: A mythical woodland creature known as a Bryndal. Bryndals can't be seen or heard by humans. Mais is an incessant enabler and people pleaser. He's also fashion conscious. Bryndals have pointy ears, wear paisley vests, knickers and colorful socks. This character may be played by an actor of any gender. Feel free to change the pronouns in the script to fit the actor.
- FERN: A Bryndal and Mais' life-long friend. Fern is a sceptic and sarcastic. He loves to fish. This role may be played by an actor of any gender. Feel free to change the pronouns in the script of fir the actor.
- EMELIA: Female. 40-50+ years old. Married to Fergus. Scottish accent. She's exhausted and fed up. She wants a break. She wants to travel.
- FERGUS: Male. 40 - 50+ years old. Scottish accent. A cranky, injured cobbler with a load of debt.

ACT 1 SCENE 1

SETTING: A quaint cobbler's cottage.

TIME: Morning. Mid-1700's.

NOTE: MAIS AND FERN often soft freeze when FERGUS and EMELIA are speaking and vice versa.

AT RISE: FERN and MAIS are sewing shoes. There is a bamboo fishing pole leaning against the cobbler's bench. Fern pokes his finger on a needle and throws the shoe he's working on.

Ouch! That's it. I'm done.

FERN

Great. Let's see it.

MAIS

No. I mean, I'm done cobbling. I'm going fishing.

FERN

FERN grabs his fishing pole.

Put the pole down, Fern. We need to finish these before they get up.

MAIS

FERN shrugs and signs in disgust and picks up the shoe.

Fine. (pause) You think this really helps?

FERN

Absolutely.

MAIS

MAIS holds up the shoe he's working on.

Look at this. Stunning, don't you think?

FERN

Eh.

MAIS

You don't find it stunning?

FERN

I'll tell you what's stunning, a hefty brook trout fighting a mayfly.

MAIS

The shoes are exquisite. A brilliant work of Bryndal craftsmanship.

FERN

It's a shoe. (*sighs*) What about Fergus?

MAIS

What about him? He broke his arm. He's recovering.

FERN

Four to six weeks. Isn't that what they said?

MAIS

Yes.

FERN

It's been eight.

MAIS

No. Seriously?

FERN

Yes. It was eight weeks on Tuesday. I distinctly remember, because that's the last time we went fishing.

MAIS

Oh, right. You caught that cute little brown trout.

FERN

There was nothing "cute" about that trout. It was at least this long. (*he gestures size*)

MAIS

If you say so.

FERN

Fergus.

MAIS

We'll give him a few more days.

FERN

Then, we can go fishing?

MAIS

As long as he's ready to get back to work.

FERN

They're shoes. We're cobbling stinkin' shoes, which by the way are giving my hands the knobblins'.

MAIS

Fairest shoes in the village.

FERN drops the shoe.

FERN

Look! Look at my hands. They're gnarly as an old oak. I'm not sure I can even tie a hare's-ear nymph.

MAIS

The shoes bring in good money. Emelia and Fergus' pantry is pathetically bare. You know as well as I, they can't buy food with their looks.

FERN

No. No, they certainly can't. Humans. Yuck. Small round ears. Hairy, from head to toe. Have you seen him without his shirt?

MAIS

I have.

FERN

It's like...massive ant colonies, head to toe.

MAIS

I know. I know.

They shudder.

FERN

And don't get me started on his stench. He smells like a mash of wet beavers and pond slime.

MAIS

All right Fern, I get it. Tell you what. We'll cobble till the end of the week. By then Fergus should be able to get back to work.

FERN

And, Emelia?

MAIS

What about her?

FERN

What's her excuse?

MAIS

Buggers, Fern. What are you talking about?

FERN

I get we're cobbling shoes for Fergus, while his arm heals. But Emelia, what's her story?

MAIS

Her story?

FERN

She doesn't lift a finger around here. Stumbles about half asleep, like a wobbly wet calf.

MAIS

She takes care of Fergus, as well as the gardens and animals.

FERN

If their daughter, Fiona, didn't stop in and clean once a month, the place would be disgusting.

MAIS

A few new candles and a bowl of lemon peels wouldn't hurt either.

FERN

Excuse me?

MAIS

Fiona helps them out. Nothing wrong with that.

FERN

Of course not, but-



MAIS

Look. There's no way Fergus can sew through this tough leather one-handed.

FERN

All I'm saying is, *Emelia* could be doing more.

MAIS

Give her a break. She works around the cottage all day, then scurries out at night to forage herbs for tea. It's no wonder she's exhausted.

FERN

Foraging herbs? Ha. So you think.

MAIS

What do you think she's doing?

FERN

Doesn't matter what I think. Sydney the Snitcher told me *Emelia* spends most of her nights at the Boar's Tusk.

FERN makes a drinking gesture.

MAIS

No.

FERN

Yes indeed.

MAIS

The Boar's Tusk? That's where she goes every night? I thought she was collecting lavender and sage by moonlight.

SYDNEY the SNITCHER enters.

SYDNEY

Mais. Fern. I figured I'd find you guys here.

MAIS

Sydney? What are you doing here? And, where's your purple cape?

SYDNEY

I was passing by and my ears started twitching. A sure sign someone's talking about you. My cape is at home. I only wear it when I need to talk with a mangy mortal.

FERN

Oh right.

SYDNEY

Geezers. You're still cobbling for Fergus? How long you gonna keep this up?

FERN

Thank you.

MAIS

Just a few more-

FERN

Hey Syd. Mais thinks Emelia's foraging herbs by moonlight.

SYDNEY

Oh, you callow shallow Bryndal. Always believing the best in these scabby mortals.

FERN

Yeah. Tell him what she's really doing after the sun sets.

MAIS

Hold back. Sydney, why are you following Emelia?

SYDNEY

Fern asked me to keep an eye on her. Said he doesn't trust her.

MAIS

Fern?

FERN

What?

SYDNEY

Anyways, like I told Fern, she's not foraging herbs in the moonlight.

FERN

Because-

SYDNEY

'Cuz, every night for the past four weeks I've followed Emelia from here, straight to the Boar's Tusk.

FERN

Told ya.

MAIS

She's tossing back pints, at the Boar's Tusk? I had no idea.

FERN

Well, now ya know.

MAIS

You're sure?

SYDNEY

And that ain't all. When she is actually foraging, which, like I said, ain't all that often, she's been collecting nightshade.

FERN

I'm telling you, Mais, I don't trust her. She's hiding something. Something shifty and shady. Night-shady.

MAIS

The only thing shifty and shady around here is you asking Sydney the Snitcher to stalk Emelia while she's-

FERN

Collecting nightshade and getting blooterred?

MAIS

Stop. You're so judgy. Always jumping to conclusions. She's probably using the nightshade to poison mice.

FERN

There are no mice in Dulsek Glen. Chipmunks. Squirrels. A few moles, maybe. No mice.

MAIS

Well, I'm sure she has a good reason.

FERN

Such as?

SYDNEY

Okay, okay. You two can fight this out. I'm heading to the creek for a morning dip. Now, stop talking about me. I hate it when my ears twitch.

SYDNEY exits. Offstage SFX of rooster crowing.

FERN

Hurry up. It's almost morning.

MAIS

Knotting my last stitch.

FERN grabs his fishing pole.

FERN

Come on. Let's go.

MAIS

Relax. They can't see, or hear us. There. Done.

MAIS sets the pair of shoes down on a small table. They scamper to one side of the stage to observe. An exhausted EMELIA enters, followed by FERGUS who has his arms in a sling. He slips it out of the sling and tries to move it.

FERGUS

Ouch. Ouch. Ouch!

EMELIA

Just sit. I'll make tea.

FERGUS

I don't know how I'm going to pay Rupert for that last hide when I can't cobble.

MAIS

I told you. He's not ready.

EMELIA picks up the shoes from the table.

EMELIA

(*yawns*) Look Fergus, the mysterious midnight fairies came through again.

FERN

(*annoyed*) Did she just call us *fairies*?

MAIS

Shh. She doesn't know.

FERN starts strutting around the stage.

FERN

Do you see wings on me? Do you? No! No wings lady!

FERGUS

What? Let's see.

EMELIA hands FERGUS one shoe. She holds the other.

EMELIA

Of course they're too small for me. But they'll be lovely for the Duchess.

FERGUS

Women's shoes? The fairies made women's shoes?

FERN

Bryndals, 'ya twit. We're freakin' sneakin' woodland Bryndals. Not fairies. Not elves. Bryndals. Pointy ears. Paisley vests. Knickers. Colorful socks.

FERGUS

Manky fairies.

MIAS

Hey, that's not very nice.

FERGUS

I wonder why they made women's shoes.

EMELIA

(yawns) Once the Duchess struts about the village in these, every woman will want a pair.

FERGUS

Aye, but, I only had enough leather fer one pair of shoes, and they were supposed to be fer men.

MAIS

I didn't know that. Did you?

FERN

What? That his leather supply had dwindled down to scraps, or that he wanted manly shoes?

MAIS

Either.

FERN

I told you last week the stash was low.

MAIS

Low yes. Scraps, no.

FERN

So, I guess our work here is finished. Let's go fishing.

MAIS

No. We can't leave them like this. With no leather and a single pair of feminine shoes. We've got to fix this. We must make manly boots.

FERN

No. No, we musn't.

FERGUS

I promised Rupert I'd pay him by week's end. Now what am I gonna do?

FERGUS begins pacing around.

MAIS

We've got to get more leather.

FERN

This is *not* our problem.

MAIS

As stylish and trendy as these are, we can't leave him with a single pair of women's shoes.

FERN

Hello Dingleberry, in case it slipped your mind, we're invisible Bryndals. We can't just stroll into Rupert the Tanner's shop and buy a leather hide.

MAIS

No, but we *do* have magic capes. You create a distraction. I'll tuck a freshly tanned hide under my cape. We'll grab and dash.

FERGUS

An' Stubby, the Butcher. He bumped me money fer new boots.

EMELIA

When did he do that?

FERGUS

Two days before I fell 'en broke me arm.

MAIS

Boots. Stubby needs boots.

FERN

And I need fresh fish for dinner. Preferably trout. Or a couple of tasty perch. They're brainfood.

MAIS

What?

FERN

Fish. My Granny Ebs always said, "eat your fish Ferny. It'll save you from having a muddled mind." Brainfood.

MAIS

Forget the fish. We need to make Stubby's boots. See if you can sneak into his butcher shop and measure his feet.

FERN

What? NO! Not a chance. Have you seen those hairy canoes? No way am I touching or measuring anything in that place.

EMELIA

Fergus. The money, from Stubby, where is it?

FERGUS

I gave it to ya, last week, fer flour and beans.

MAIS

Come on Fern. It's just a pair of boots. You make one boot. I'll make the other. He can pay off his debt and start fresh.

FERN

One pair? That's it?

MAIS

Yes.

FERN

Fine. As long as you measure Stubby's feet.

MAIS

If that's what it takes.

EMELIA

Anything else I should know about?

FERGUS

Cormac. The Wizard, from Berwick. He gave me six pence to sew 'em a new wizard's hat 'n boots.

FERN

Clearly there's money to be made in spells and potions.

EMELIA

An' where's that money?

FERGUS

It went fer yer new plow. Fer our tater field. Ya said it would make plantin' easier.

EMELIA

You should have paid Rupert back first.

FERGUS

I didn't plan on fallin' outta no tree.

MAIS

Alright, so, two pair of boots and a wizard's hat. We can do that.

FERN

No. No. I agreed to making one boot. One boot. These are not our problems.

FERGUS

Eh, I suppose I could sell off a few chickens.

FERN

There you go.

EMELIA

So, no meat or eggs?

FERN

Granny Ebs claimed eatin' carrots gives you eagle eyes.

MAIS

Shh! We've got to help them.

FERN

Fine. I'll catch them a few fish.

FERGUS

I could trade the goat fer a hide.

EMELIA

Maggie? You want to trade me Maggie?

FERN

Great idea. I hate that thing. It stinks. And, it's always butting me.

MAIS

The goat can't see you.

FERN

I know. But every time I walk past it, *bam!* Bony horns to my tender buttocks.



EMELIA

No. We're not selling me Maggie. Wait...let me check somethin'.

EMELIA walks over to the kitchen and pulls out a small jar. She opens it and holds up a coin.

Look Fergus, a shilling.

FERN

Did you put that in there?

MAIS

No. Where would I get a shilling?

FERGUS

Last we looked, the jar was empty. Where'd it come from?

EMELIA

I'm not sure. I just had a strange feeling maybe we overlooked something.

FERGUS

Well, it ain't enough to buy a whole hide, but I should be able to get a piece of leather big enough to cobble a few things.

MAIS

Great. We'll start with the boots.

FERN

Hold on. She just pulled a shilling out of a previously empty tin. You don't find that a wee bit suspicious?

MAIS

She had a premonition. It happens.

FERN

Shifty and shady.

EMELIA

Feeling better Fergus?

FERGUS

A little. Did you say tea was ready?

EMELIA

The tea, of course.

FERGUS studies the shoes that the elves made.

FERGUS

These stitches are precisely spaced. The curves and balance of the soles...exquisite. Those fairies 'er bloody brilliant.

FERN walks over and holds out his hands.

FERN

Bryndals! Bry-ndals! And look at my hands. See these callouses? That's from all those perfect bloody stitches.

MAIS

Knock it off. He can't see you. Come on. I'm hungry. Let's go get something to eat.

FERN

Not yet. I want to keep my eye on her.

MAIS

Emelia? Why?

FERN

I told you. There's something going on. I don't trust her.

MAIS

She's making a cup of tea.

EMELIA walks over to a small stove where there's a tea pot. She takes a vial out of her pocket and adds it's contents to the pot of tea. FERN follows and watches. She pours tea into a cup.

FERN

Did you see that? Did you see that?

MAIS

What?

FERN

That vial. She poured something from that vial in her pocket into the teapot.

MAIS

It's probably an herbal sweetener.

FERN

Or, *nightshade*. To poison him.

MAIS

Why? Why would she do that?

FERN

What do we do? What do we do?

MAIS

Nothing. It's tea, You're overtired Let's go.

FERN

We can't let him drink that!

EMELIA walks back to FERGUS to give him the tea.

EMELIA

Here you go Fergus, one cup of steamy hot tea.

FERN walks in front of her and knocks a candlestick off the table. EMELIA trips, yelps and spills the tea.

Ahhh!

MAIS

What are you doing?

FERN

Saving him from *nightshade* death.

MAIS

No. You're jumping to senseless conclusions.

FERN

You don't know what she put in there.

MAIS

Neither do you.

EMELIA

Cripes and crickets Fergus. Did you knock that candlestick off the table?

FERGUS

No, of course not.

FERGUS gets up.

Here, let me help you.

FERGUS stubs his toe on the table and shrieks.

FERGUS

Ahh! Buggers. Bloody bullfrogs, an' burnt biscuits.

EMELIA

Here, take my hand.

FERGUS

No. Don't touch me.

FERGUS sits back down on a chair.

Me foot. Help me with me foot.

EMELIA picks up the tea cup, sets it on the table, then helps him rest his foot on a chair.

FERGUS

Ow! Easy there woman.

EMELIA

I'll clean this up. Then get you another cup.

FERN  
Watch her Mais, watch her.

MAIS  
Fine.

MAIS walks over and watches EMELIA repeat the process of pouring a cup of tea. In the process MIAS reaches into EMELIA'S pocket, takes out the vial and sniffs it. He turns to FERN.

MAIS  
Creepers, you're right. That's nasty.

FERN picks up a shoe and tosses it to MAIS.

Here, whack her.

MAIS  
What? No! I'm not going to whack her.

FERN  
We can't let him drink that.

MAIS  
I know, I know.

EMELIA sets the cup of tea on the table in front of FERGUS.

EMELIA  
Here you go Fergus.

FERGUS  
Aye. Thank ye.

FERGUS picks up the cup of tea.

FERN  
He's going to drink it. Stop him! Stop him!

MAIS  
How?

FERN grabs a shoelace that's lying on the table. He walks behind FERGUS and starts tickling him on the back of his neck with it. FERGUS hops up, shrieking and drops his cup of tea.

FERGUS  
Ahh! Ahh! Ahh!

EMELIA comes running over.

EMELIA  
What? What's wrong? Rapid heartbeat? Muscle twitches? Ear wiggles? Persistent toe tapping? Projectile snotballs?

FERGUS  
What?

FERN  
Interesting questions, don't you think?

FERGUS  
Somethin' just creeped up the back of me neck. A spiders. An' ya know I hate spiders.

EMELIA  
We don't have spiders.

FERGUS  
Aye. I felt at least eight legs, maybe more.

EMELIA  
And, you spilled your tea.

EMELIA grabs a rag and wipes up the tea.

FERGUS

Look. Look at the back of me neck. Do ya see anythin'?

EMELIA walks behind him to look at his neck. She leans down and blows on it.

EMELIA

Nope. No spiders. Just a long hairy centipede.

FERGUS shrieks, and jumps up, slapping the back of his head. EMELIA laughs.

FERGUS

Very funny woman.

EMELIA

Sit down and relax. Let me get yet another cup of tea, and a bite to eat. Then I'd like to talk to you about something.

EMELIA goes back to the kitchen area. She pours another cup of tea, then puts some bread and cheese on a plate. FERGUS looks over the shoes again.

FERGUS

You know, if these midnight fairies-

FERN

If he calls us fairies one more time.

MAIS

Shhh, listen.

FERGUS

If they'd make one good pair of sturdy boots, I may be able to convince the Duke to outfit his ranks with 'em.

MAIS

That's an ambitious goal.

EMELIA enters and sets the tea and plate of food down in front of FERGUS.

EMELIA

Cobbling boots fer all those men? That could take years. I was hoping we could-

FERGUS

Aye, Emelia, we'd be rich. We could buy more chickens. Another goat er two. A horse an' wagon.

FERN

No way am I stitching boots for anyone's stinking-

MAIS

One pair. He just wants one pair to show the Duke. We can do that.

FERN

So, that's instead of the boots for Stubby?

MAIS

Okay, two pair. One for Stubby. One for the Duke.

FERN

No. Nope. Nada. Not gonna do it.

FERGUS

Just think Emelia. Me boots, marching a'bout our village, keepin' watch.

EMELIA

No. No. No. That's it Fergus. I'm done.

FERN

Told ya, there's something going on with her.

MAIS

She always seems so happy.



EMELIA

Fer 29 years I've been the supportive wife. Cookin', cleanin', gardenin', bakin'. I've been catering to yer every whim an' broken arm for weeks. I'm exhausted. It's time fer a break, Fergus. I want a break.

FERGUS

Eh. What er ya talking a'bout?

EMELIA

I'm talkin' about a holiday. A long, overdue holiday. There's a whole big beautiful world out there, Fergus, an' I want to see it.

FERN

Can't blame her for that.

FERGUS

Eh, yer talkin' nonsense. The sun rises and sets here same as everywhere. I got debts to pay. I can't go ramblin' off on no holiday.

EMELIA

Fine. Then I believe you've left me no choice.

Do Not Copy

EMELIA starts picking up random pieces of clothing and stuffs them into a large sack.

FERGUS

What er ya doing?

EMELIA

I'm packin' a bag.

FERGUS

Fer what?

EMELIA

Clueless, Fergus. Yer completely clueless.

FERGUS

Once me arm heals and I get back ta work, I'll pay off our debts, then maybe we can talk a'bout a holiday.

EMELIA

Debts. Leather. Shoes. Stitches. Work, work, work. That's all ya care a'bout. How much are we in debt?

FERGUS

'Tis no concern of yers.

EMELIA

Fine. There's your tea and breakfast.

FERN

I wouldn't drink that if I were you.

FERGUS stands up and FERN knocks the tea and plate of food off the table. EMELIA turns around.

EMELIA

Fer cryin' out loud, Fergus.

FERGUS

I didn't do it. I swear.

EMELIA

An' I swear I've had enough.

EMELIA takes off her apron, tosses it on the couch and heads for the door. FERGUS follows.

FERGUS

Emelia, wait. 238 pounds and a few merks here an' there. But if I can outfit the ranks with boots-

EMELIA stops.

EMELIA

Goodbye Fergus. I'm going to me sister, Effie's. If you won't holiday with me, perhaps she will.

FERGUS

Emelia!

EMELIA exits.

FERGUS

Wait! Emelia! Wait!

FERGUS follows her.

FERN

Well, that was quite unpleasant.

MAIS

You know what we've got to do?

FERN

Yes. Go home. Brew a strong cup a tea and massage rosemary oil into my swollen knobby knuckles. Take a nap, then head to Stoney Creek to to snag a few tasty trout.

MAIS

No.

FERN

Right. Lavender oil is much more soothing. Then the a nap and head to Stoney Creek to snag a few tasty-

MAIS

We've got to make boots.

FERN

I know the perfect honey hole. It's under that big old willow, where the branches drape and sway over the rocks, and-

MAIS

We'll stop at Rupert's on our way home and-

FERN

Hold up.

MAIS

What?

FERN

How long have we been friends?

MAIS

I don't know. A long time.

FERN

86 years. *Eighty-Six* years. Ever since my brother, Ian, and I pulled your soggy bum out of Bertrum's Creek.

MAIS

Bertrum's Creek. 86 years? Bleezers, that long?

FERN

Indeed. So trust me when I say, STOP IT!

MAIS

What? Stop what?

FERN

Stop trying to fix these mangy mortals lives. Stop trying to solve all their problems. I get that you like to help them, but-

MAIS

Hey, after Rupert's let's sneak into Stubby's and measure his footprint.

FERN

Are you even listening?

MAIS

His feet can't be that gross.

FERN

I swear, this is just like last month's Flora the Weaver's, nightmare.

MAIS

What are you talking about? It's nothing like that. She was a weaver, who fell and twisted her knee.

FERN

Yes, and she had a *temporary* limp, resulting in blankets with a knobby lump on the left side.

MAIS

Exactly. Which is why we snuck in and rebuilt the foot pedal on her loom. Remind me, in a couple of weeks, we'd better go back and fix that.

FERN

We've talked about this before. Princess Weeglia. Remember that fiasco?

MAIS

That psycho witch turned Prince Yewdl into a clucking chicken. What were we supposed to do? Let her get pecked to death?

FERN

And, lest we forget, Wendall, the one-armed woodsman.

MAIS

So, we chopped a little wood for him.

FERN

Five cords. We chopped and stacked five cords of frozen twisted firewood. In a freakin' blizzard.

MAIS

Invigorating, wasn't it? Probably kept him warm for months.

FERN

My toes were numb for weeks. It was insanely cold.

MAIS

Which is exactly why he needed wood. Face it, I'm a helper. An easer of burdens.

FERN

No. No. *YOU, my friend, Mais*, are an excessive enabler. A facilitator of fixing things that should be left undone.

MAIS

That's cold.

FERN

Look. Mortals got issues. Always have. Always will. It's not our job to sneak into their pathetic lives and fix everything.

MAIS

But, if we don't help them-

FERN

They'll learn.

MAIS

No they won't.

FERN

Yes, they will. They'll figure things out for themselves.

MAIS

On their own? That's ridiculous.

FERN

No. It's not. If we keep fixing things for every stinking mortal in Dulsek Glen, they'll start to rely on us. They'll never figure problems out for themselves.

MAIS

We'll just cobble a few pair of boots for Fergus. Four or five pair. Just to hold him over until-

FERN

No. We will not.

MAIS

Three or four pair?

FERN

No. Two. Two pair of boots. You make one. I'll make one. That's it. We're done.

MAIS

But what if he can't cobble again? Or pay off his debts? What if they run out of food.

FERN

Stop. Just stop. *(pause)* Ahhh. I know what this is about. This isn't just about Fergus.

MAIS

Fergus and Emelia.

FERN

No. It's about way more than Fergus and Emelia. It's about that old woman, Oona. *(pronounced Oo-nah)*

MAIS

What are you talking about?

FERN

You know exactly what I'm talking about. Oona, the old widow who lived just outside the village. Her garden was destroyed by the blight, leaving her with a measly supply of food.

MAIS

*(remorseful)* I didn't know that was all she had.

FERN

Ever since she passed you've been ridden with guilt and spellbound on fixing every stinking mortals' problem.

MAIS

If I hadn't taken her acorn squash.

FERN

She still would have passed. She was old. Her heart gave out.

MAIS

It was my fault.

FERN

No, it wasn't. And there's little to do about it now. That was two years ago. You've got to move on.

MAIS

But, what about Fergus' debt?

FERN

He'll figure it out.

MAIS

And, Emelia? We need to find her. Get them back together.

FERN

No. We do not.

MAIS

It's our fault she left.

FERN

She left because she's tired of working all the time and she wants a holiday.

MAIS

I'm going to look for her. Maybe I can explain.

FERN

Hello. Bright and shining star. We're Bryndals. She can't see us. She can't hear us.

MAIS

There must be *something* we can do to get them back together. Come on. We'll start by going to Rupert's, to snatch a hide.

FERN

Hold up. Let me get this straight. You're ridden with guilt for taking an old woman's squash, yet it's fine to steal a leather hide from Rupert the Tanner?

MAIS

Yes. His grandfather trapped my Uncle Ernie, in a well and left him there for two weeks.

FERN

Bryndals are invisible. How would Ruppert even know your Uncle Ernie was in the well?

MAIS

I don't know. But I'm sure he did, and for that transgression, I will snatch a hide, and feel no shame.

FERN

Crikey. Clearly the grudge factor runs deep in your veins. Fine. We'll go after dark, when the shop is closed. Right now I'm going home.

MAIS

If we must.

FERN

And you're going to massage rosemary oil into my swollen knuckles.

MAIS

Fine.

FERN  
And then, I'm going fishing.

MAIS  
Alright. Alright.

FERN and MAIS exit.

LIGHTS DOWN.

END SCENE.

Do Not Copy



ACT 1 SCENE 2

SETTING: Same as Scene 1.

TIME: Evening.

AT RISE: Cue night time sound effects. MAIS and FERN run in, out of breath, carrying a large piece of leather and laughing. They toss it onto a table towards the back of the stage.

FERN

That was crazy! Just our luck Rupert was working late.

MAIS

Your pet snake, Randi, on his butcher block. Genius.

FERN

I haven't heard a shriek like that since Sydney caught his pinky toe on that tree root.

Do Not Copy

*FERN jumps around mimicking Sydney's pain.*

You happy now?

MAIS

It's a start. We should be able to cobble a few pairs of boots out of this.

FERN

Two. Our deal is two pair of boots.

MAIS

Yeah, yeah.

FERN

How long before Rupert discovers he's missing a hide?

MAIS

Who cares.

FERN

Your vindictive quirkiness is truly staggering.

Offstage you can hear FERGUS and EMELIA talking.

MAIS

Shh. Quiet. You hear that?

FERGUS and EMELIA enter.

FERGUS

Thank ya for coming back.

EMELIA

Didn't have much of a choice with ya making such a scene.

FERGUS

Can we talk? Just sit down an' talk 'bout this?

EMELIA

Talk about what? Shoes? Boots? I told you, I-

FERGUS

Who was the guy at the well that ya were talkin' to?

EMELIA

What guy?

FERGUS

The guy. Short. Long purple cloak. Pointy ears.

FERN

Buggers. Sounds like Sydney.

MAIS

Shhh.

EMELIA

Eh, just a traveler. Asking fer directions.

FERGUS

Ya called em by name. Ya called em, Sydney.

FERN

Twitching Wizard-toes. Sydney's supposed to shadow her. Not talk to her.

EMELIA

Oh, Sydney, aye. I walk out an' leave ya and this is what ya want to talk about? Sydney, at the well, with the purple cloak?

FERGUS

He looked like an elf.

EMELIA

He's not. I believe he's half Bryndal. Half human.

FERGUS

Blimey. How does that happen?

FERN

Full moon.

MAIS

Too much beer

FERN

Poor judgement.

EMELIA

I don't know.

MAIS

You'd better go find Sydney. See what he's up to.

FERN

Only thing Syd's up to is snitching.

MAIS

What if he's scheming something with her?

FERN

For what? Goat's milk?

FERGUS

Emelia, 'ya said 'ya wanted to travel. Go on a holiday?

EMELIA

Aye, Fergus. I want ta see the world. I've got me one life, and I don't want to live out all my days in this musty little cottage, working me fingers to the bone, whilst you cobble endless piles of shoes.

FERGUS

I thought ya liked it here.

EMELIA

Of course I like it here. It's me home. But, I want... I want, more.

FERGUS

More? More what?

EMELIA

More than this. More than leather an laces. More than makin' tea. Bakin' bread. Weedin' the gardens. Week after week. Year after year. More, Fergus. I want more. I want a holiday. A dead brilliant holiday.

FERGUS

Eh, leather an' laces buys yer food, yer chickens and let's not forget feed fer yer precious Maggie.

MAIS

We can't let her go.

FERN

This is not our pail of wiggly worms.

MAIS

This is your fault.

FERN

Me? Why is this my fault?

EMELIA

Honestly Fergus, don't ya ever want more out of life? More than cobblin'? More than workin' sunrise to sunset? More than - this?

FERGUS

I, I -

EMELIA

It stinks ya know. All this leather, it stinks up the whole cottage.

FERN and MAIS gasp.

MAIS

Did she just say his cobbling stinks?

EMELIA

Hard as I've tried, I can't find a scent to mask that dank leathery stench. It oozes from me skin. Me hair. Me clothes.

FERGUS

Eh. I don't smell nothin'. It's all in yer head.

FERN

Ohhh. Bad choice of words my friend. Very bad.

COBBLE ME THIS

MAIS

I hate it when people argue. It stresses me out. Makes my toes curl up. Tea. I need a cup of calming tea.

EMELIA

"It's all in me head?"

MAIS

Where'd she put that teapot?

MAIS walks over to the stove and pours himself a cup of tea. MAIS goes off to one side and sips tea. FERN sits on the floor to watch the argument unfold.

FERN

This outta be good.

FERGUS

It stinks? Me leather? Me work? Yer telling me it stinks?

EMELIA

Aye. Stinks. Stinks. Stinks. Like, a musty old mule.

FERN and MAIS gasp again. FERGUS gets up and begins pacing around. MAIS madly sips his tea making loud slurping noises.

FERGUS

Well let me tell ya 'bout that stink, me dear Emelia. That stink, as ye so callously refer to it, has bought us everythin' in this cottage, not to mention all them fancy teapots, tins an' potions you collect, an' -

He stops when he sees the cowhide.

Bloody bullfrogs an biscuits?

FERN

Eww.

EMELIA  
Now what?

FERGUS  
This. This hide?

EMELIA walks over to where FERGUS  
is standing.

EMELIA  
Another dead animal skin. So?

FERGUS  
So, where'd it come from? Last time I looked all I had was  
wee scraps an' bits.

MAIS dances around and take a bow.

MAIS  
You're welcome.

EMELIA  
I don't know. The fairies?

FERN  
Bryndals.

FERGUS  
Only one I know who tans hides like this is Rupert.

EMELIA  
Aye. Maybe he dropped it off.

FERGUS  
No. He wouldn't.

EMELIA  
Well then, I guess yer little fairies are thieves. Sneaky,  
little cobblin' thieves.

FERN  
That's it. I'm done. Let's go.

MAIS  
Nope. Nope. Nopsies.

FERGUS

How'm I gonna explain this?

MAIS

No explanation needed ninny-hammer. Just start making yer flippin' boots.

FERN

Whoa. Mais, you okay?

FERGUS holds up the hide to stretch it out.

FERGUS

Ouch! I just can't.

MAIS begins dancing and singing.

MAIS

We'll make the first few, all shiny and new, then Master Fergie-Wergie, it's all up to you.

FERN

Croaking crickets. Why are you singing? And doing, whatever that is?

MAIS

Two. Two. Two. Zippity do. Peachy keen. Peach fuzz. Fuzzy peaches. Zippy do-dah!

FERN

Gimme that cup.

FERN grabs the teacup from MAIS smells it and tosses the remaining tea out. He helps MAIS over to a chair and sets him down.

MAIS

Hey Fernie. You took my tea. Why'd ya take my tea? That's not very nice.

FERN

Just sit.

FERGUS

Maybe Rupert did drop it off. I'll go back 'ta town and ask 'em.

MAIS hops up.

MAIS

No! Bad idea. Very, very bad idea!

FERN sits MAIS back down. EMELIA picks up her bag to leave.

EMELIA

Fine. Ya go to town. Cobble yer boots. I'll be at me sister's fer a few days before we leave for the coast.

FERGUS

We? We who? You're running off with that Sydney fellow, aren't ya.

EMELIA

No Fergus. I told you. I'm going to try and go on a holiday with my sister, Effie.

MAIS jumps up and begins pacing around.

MAIS

Effie? Who is going to watch all those kids? We'd better-

FERN

No. No. Don't even think about it.

MAIS

But, who will-

FERN sits MAIS back down.



FERN

Sit. Hush.

FERGUS

Two women traveling alone? Where'll ya lodge? How'll ya buy food? Who'll keep ya safe?

EMELIA

We'll travel by day. We'll be fine. Good bye Fergus.

FERGUS

Emelia, wait. Please, don't go. I, I need ya, here... with me.

EMELIA

Fer what, ta cook? Clean? Roll the sheets with you at night?

MAIS begins walking around wringing his hands and sniveling.

MAIS

Don't go Emelia. Please don't go. He needs you.

FERGUS

What? No. I mean, well, I do like to-

Soft freeze FERGUS and EMELIA.

MAIS

He doesn't mean it. Come on man. Tell her you love her. Tell her she puts the snap in your bean. Tell her she's the perfect stitch in your sole.

FERN

Wow. Wow. Okay Mais. Calm down. Take a few deep breaths.

MAIS takes a few deep breaths then begins to pass out.

Oh no you don't. Here, Mais, sit here.

MAIS

Here? On this?

FERN

Yes. Just sit.

MAIS wobbles on the chair and waves his arms around.

MAIS

Hey. You look funny Fernie. There's two of you. Why's there two of you?

MAIS hops up and begins to dance.

I feel frolic-eee Fernie. You feel frolic-eee? Come on, Fernie, let's frolic.

FERN sets MAIS back down.

Do Not Copy

FERN

Buggers, Mais. Sit down and gag it!

MAIS sits.

MAIS

What, like? (*makes gagging sounds*)

FERN

Fergus and Emelia.

MAIS

Oh, right. I love them. Do you love them Fernie?

FERN

Cripes! That tea's turned yer brain to puddin'.

Soft freeze MAIS and FERN.

FERGUS

Emelia, ya think me work stinks?

EMELIA

It's not yer work, Fergus. The hides stink. Ya want to stay in this musty cottage an' cobble yer life away, fine. I don't.

FERGUS

Cobbling is me life. It's me calling. It's who I am. I'm the Dulsek Glen Cobbler.

EMELIA

Aye. I know. Yer the Dulsek Glen Cobbler, an', everywhere I go, I'm the cobbler's wife. Not Emelia. Not Goodwife Emelia. Just, the cobbler's wife.

FERGUS

'Ya say that like it's a bad thing.

EMELIA

No, of course not. It's just that...I want to be more than yer add-on. I want to be Emelia...I don't know, maybe Emelia, the explorer. I want to see new things. Taste new foods.

FERGUS

With Effie? Ya want to do that with Effie? Ya two can't get along fer an afternoon, let alone on a holiday.

EMELIA

I want to go on holiday with you, Fergus. But since you'd rather stay here and cobble, I'll go with Effie.

FERGUS

Yer gonna fall off the edge of the earth.

EMELIA

Nonsense.

FERGUS

Stubby said his brother-in-law, Mort, went off exploring, never returned. They're sure he fell right off.

EMELIA

Aye. I heard he ran off, with that young redhead bar maid at Brady's.

FERGUS

That is also possible. But, Emelia-

EMELIA

Oh, Fergus, I want to traverse the highlands. See the coast. Stand where craggy cliffs drop into the sea an' waves hurl

salty mists into the air. I've heard you can taste it, Fergus. You actually can taste the salt in the air.

MAIS raises his hand, waving it madly.

MAIS  
Oh, Oh, Oh, me too. Me too. I wanna see craggy rocks and taste salty waves and, and, touch the air.

MAIS hops up. FERN shoves him back down.

FERN  
Shhht.

FERGUS  
Ya can taste salt in the air?

EMELIA  
Aye. It's what I've heard, an' the coast is supposed to be smashing, especially in spring.

FERGUS  
Spring? Spring is me busy time. Everyone wants new shoes for Dulsek Glen Days.

EMELIA  
Aye. And, they're wantin' new shoes fer Gaiety Days, an' the Harvest Fair, an' pretty much every other holiday throughout the year. (*she looks around*) Where are me hightop boots? Ah, I believe they're in our bedroom.

Emelia exits to their bedroom.  
Fergus follows.

FERGUS  
Emelia, wait.

MAIS abruptly stands up.

MAIS

It's okay. You two kids go. Have fun. We'll cobble, won't we Fernie?

FERN

No. We will not.

MAIS

Weezers. What a buzz.

FERN

Where'd you get that tea?

MAIS

From her teapot. It tasted kinda nutty. Finished with a slow burn in the back of my throat.

MAIS open his mouth wide.

Look. Is it burned?

FERN looks into his mouth.

FERN

It's fine.

FERN walks over and picks up the teapot.

FERN

You drank the same tea she tried to give Fergus.

MAIS

I am happy, confident and feel no pain. Not only that but I'm quite sure I can fix this. All of it. Shoes. Boots. Emelia. Fergus. Bing. Bang. Boom.

FERN pulls down one of MAIS's eyelids, holds up his hand to check his pulse, then drops it. MAIS hops up. He acts out the following dialogue with drunk gestures.

MAIS

First. I'll make Emelia happy and famous. Villagers will bow. Maidens will sing sweet ballads of prose as they dance before her, tossing soft dusty pink rose petals at her feet, as she glides through town in layers of glistening purple silk robes, atop a fierce, yet friendly, humble white steed, with a long flowing tail. The kind of tail that shimmers and dances like a school of tiny silver minnows in the shallows, on a cool summer morn.

FERN

Sure ya will.

MAIS

An, ya know why? Cuz I'm Mais. I'm Mais, the fixer. The mortal fixer. Cuz, mortals, they're hairy, smelly, humans, who need fixin'. They need fixin' bad.

FERN

Come on Mais. Time to head home for a nice long nap. Maybe a cool dip in the creek along the way.

MAIS

Then I will fix Fergus. His shoes will be famous. From here to... everywhere. He'll be known as Fergus, The Awesome Cobbler Guy. I'll make it happen Fernie. I'll make it all happen.

FERN

Of course you will.

FERN tries to drag MAIS out.

MAIS

Indeedy I will. And you know why?

FERN props MAIS up against something.

FERN

Here. Stand.

MAIS

Fernie. You know why?

FERN

No, but I'm sure you're gonna tell me.

MAIS

They'll call her, Emelia the Great. Or, maybe Countess Emelia, the Regal Lady. I dunno, what do you think? How bout Emelia the Magnificent?

FERN

Come on, Mais, let's walk it off.

FERN helps MAIS walk as they exit.

MAIS

I'll be back. I'll be back to fix it. I'll fix it all. You'll see. Hey, where we going?

FERN

You're going home to sleep. I'm going to find Sydney the Snitcher and see what he's up to.

MAIS

Sleep? Sleep sounds nice.

FERN and MAIS exit. FERGUS and EMELIA enter from a different entrance.

FERGUS

Emelia. Ya got ta understand. This is me life. I can't just leave and head out on a grand holiday because yer bored and want more.

EMELIA

Yes. I know.

FERGUS

So? That's it? Yer just going to leave me?

EMELIA

For a wee bit, yes.

EMELIA exits.

FERGUS

Emelia, wait! Stop. We can work this out.

FERGUS paces around.

FERGUS

She left. She actually left. Eh, once she enters the black chill of the night and hears the howls of the coyotes she'll turn back.

He tries to take his arm out of the sling and tries to move it around.

Uhh, buggers, that smarts.

He pour himself a cup of tea, smells it and winces.

Pissers, that's scabby.

He sets the cup down, grabs a piece of bread and starts walking around, looking for something.

Where'd I put that bottle? Ah, I believe it's right back here.

He walks over and reaches behind a stack of firewood pulling out a bottle of whiskey.

Bread and whiskey. That'll do.



As he eats and drinks, the whiskey relaxes him and he begins to move his arm around. He walks over to his cobbler bench and straightens things up a bit.

Aye. Perhaps I can cobble. Seems all I needed was a wee bit of whiskey to loosed things up. Indeed, the Dulsek Glen Cobbler is armed, hahaha, Armed an ready to cobble.

He takes a few more sips resulting in him being quite relaxed. He begins moving various body parts around and starts to dance and sing.

Oh, I am the Dulsek Cobbler. I cobble. I cobble. Need a shoe? Need a boot? Need a cover for a snoot? I'll cobble it. I'll cobble it. Cuz I am the Dulsek Cobbler. I cobble. I cobble. You've never seen a stitch like mine, tight, precise and perfectly in line. Oh, I am the Dulsek Cobbler. I cobble. I cobble. Need a shoe, need a boot, need a cover for a snoot? I'll cobble it. I'll cobble it.

He sits on a stool and begins working on a shoe.

LIGHTS OUT

END SCENE

INTERMISSION

Act 2 Scene 1

SETTING: The woodlands.

TIME: Early morning.

AT RISE: Morning sound effects, birds chirping, etc. Lights fade up. MAIS is buried under several large branches under the base of a tree. He's wearing way too big and baggy green pants. His mouth is dry and his head pounding. FERN is sitting by a campfire cooking a fish and making tea. The branches over MAIS begin to move as he wakes up.

MAIS

What the? Hark. Hark. Uh, help. Anyone?

FERN uncovers MAIS, tossing the branches to one side.

FERN

Well, look who's decided to join the land of the living.

MAIS slowly gets up and stumbles around.

MAIS  
Ugh. What happened? Where am I? Why was I covered in, branches?

FERN  
How ya feeling?

MAIS  
What?

FERN hands him a cup of tea.

FERN  
Here. Drink this.

MAIS pushes it aside.

MAIS  
No.

FERN  
Drink it. It'll help you feel better.

MAIS  
What is it?

FERN  
One of Sydney's potions.

MAIS smells it.

MAIS  
Forget it. Why was I buried under a tree?

FERN  
You weren't buried. You were covered. Just try it.

MAIS takes a sip and spits it out.

MAIS  
Yuk. Tastes like squirrel pee.

FERN  
It's supposed to clear your head.

MAIS  
My mouth feels peculiar. Fuzzy. Like, thistle fluff.

FERN  
I'm sure it does.

MAIS  
And, the sun. Why's it so bright?.

MAIS gets up and looks around.

Where are we?

FERN  
We're hiding.

MAIS  
Hiding? From who? Oww. My head. It's pounding. Did I fall?

FERN  
From grace. Yes. You skanky little Bryndal. My lofty opinion of you is now completely shattered.

MAIS  
Last thing I remember, we were listening to Fergus and Emelia argue.

FERN  
Indeed. That was three days ago.

MAIS  
Bleezers. I've been sleeping for three bloody days?

FERN  
Sleeping. Sweating. Mumbling. Accented with thunderous snoring and excessive drooling.

MAIS walks around in circles. He's still dizzy and his left arm is still weak and twitching.

MAIS

Oof. My head. And my arm? Why's it doing that?

FERN

Ahh. Where should I begin? Let's see, do you remember-

MAIS notices his pants.

MAIS

Ahhh! Whose pants are these!? They're green and baggy and completely hideous. I don't wear green. I wear black. Black makes a statement. Where are my black knickers? Salty squirrel snot! Did you undress me?

FERN

As I was saying, it all began at the cobbler's cabin, with a seemingly innocent cup of tea.

MAIS

I spilled tea on my pants?

Soft, yet distinct sound of an owl hooting. MAIS and FERN freeze in place.

FERN

Shhh! Quick, hide!

MAIS

Hide? Why? Where?

FERN shoves him back under the tree he was sleeping under and covers him with branches.

Hush. Don't move.

FERN

(*whispering loudly*) Branches. Leaves. Itchy! Itchy! Itchy!

MAIS

Clam up.

FERN

SFX of owl again, louder.

Halt. Who goes there?

FERN

SYDNEY answers from offstage.

It's me. Sydney.

SYDNEY

MAIS peeks out.

Who is it? Who is it?

MAIS

SYDNEY enters with a basket of food.

How's he doing?

SYDNEY

Take a look.

FERN

SYDNEY uncovers MAIS. MAIS hops up and begins frantically scratching his arms and legs as best he can with one arm.

MAIS

Ahh. Itch. Itch. Itch. Scratch my back! Scratch my back.

FERN grabs a small branch and scratches MAIS' back.

SYDNEY

Does he remember?

FERN

I'm not sure. Mais, what's the last thing you remember?

MAIS

Hmm. I vaguely recall Fergus and Emelia arguing. I remember getting nervous and drinking a cup of tea. After that it's all kind of a blur. These green pants. Why am I wearing these disgusting baggy green pants?

FERN

Let's clear things up for him shall we?

SYDNEY

Oh, please. Let me tell him.

FERN

It'll be more fun if we tell him together.

FERN motions for MAIS to sit.  
SYDNEY and FERN act out the following events.

SYDNEY

I believe it all began with an innocent cup of tea.

FERN

Right. Which led to a positively hugger-mugger moonlight escapade, beginning with you prancing about Dulsek Glen pie-eyed and-

MAIS

Pie-eyed? I don't drink!

SYDNEY

We know. However, the tea you drank at Fergus and Emelia's greatly clouded your moral judgement.

MAIS

My moral judgement?

SYDNEY

Yes. After leaving Fergus and Emelia's, cottage, you decided it would be fun to stroll into the Boar's Tusk.

FERN

Where you downed two pints of frosty, foaming, still fermenting, root beer.

MAIS

No. Not root beer.

FERN

Yes.

MAIS

Bryndals can't drink root beer. It makes us dizzy and ditzzy.

SYDNEY

Right. And combine that with Emelia's tea concoction, and let's just say things got interesting.

MAIS

What kind of inte?resting?

SYNDNEY

Well, after quenching your thirst, you lost your balance, fell, and began crawling on the floor.

MAIS

Eww. That floor's filthy.

FERN

True. And, while you were down there crawling about, you started looking under tables and chairs for loose peanuts and spare change.

MAIS

No one saw me right? Cuz, I'm invisible.

FERN

No one but me and Sydney, who by the way, then vowed to tell all the Bryndals in our quaint little Glen that you and he share a mother.

MAIS

That's a lie.



SYDNEY

*(laughing)* Yes, I know. But you were in such a state of mind that you started blubbering like a baby, which then evolved into an angry rant-

FERN

Followed by you knocking large men off their bar stools, and since they couldn't see you, they assumed others started the fight.

SYDNEY

It was quite the robust brawl.

SYDNEY and FERN pretend to fight.

MAIS

My pants? What about my pants?

FERN

We're getting there.

SYDNEY

Once the brawl escalated to the point of fury and folly, we took off running for the Humming Woods in the northern woodlands.

FERN

Where we encountered the lovely, elfin Princess, Pia.

MAIS

Oh no.

SYDNEY

Oh yes.

MAIS

Please tell me I didn't say anything stupid.

FERN

I wish I could, but -

MAIS

I didn't mention her nose. Please tell me, I didn't say *anything* about her nose.

SYDNEY

Again, I wish we could, but you insisted on bowing, curtsying and making up a little song and dance about her nose, protruding skyward, like a blooming, blown-out rose.

MAIS

I didn't.

FERN

You did. And you know know what rhymes with nose?

MAIS

Nose? I don't know, bows? Lows? Shows? (*gasps*) T-t-toes. No! No! Please tell me I didn't-

SYDNEY

Yes, you make up a jolly little jingle about her elfin-

MAIS

Webbed toes?

FERN

Exactly. At which point *she* began foaming at the mouth like a rabid raccoon and commanded her royal guards to immediately arrest us.

MAIS

So, the guards took my pants?

FERN

No. We took off running and dropped your pants to divert the snarling dogs. We ran all the way here.

SYDNEY

Those are my Uncle Benny's gardening pants. We wrestled them onto you.

FERN

Not an easy task.

MAIS

And, that was three days ago?

FERN

Yes.

MAIS

Fergus and Emelia. We've got to get back. We've got to-

FERN

Wait. We've got to wait right here. If you ever want to go home again or help anyone with their pathetic mortal issues, you'll stay right here until we get an all clear.

MAIS

We're going to prison aren't we? I'll never see the light of day. I'll be surrounded by flea-infested rats. I'll never eat a fresh melon or smell the fragrance of the pines. And, these pants, I can't be forever imprisoned in these hideous, disgusting, baggy green pants!

SYDNEY

Actually, you're both free to go.

FERN

What? Seriously?

SYDNEY

Yep. When I headed back to town, I was *temporarily* arrested by the royal guards. I begged one of 'em to let me speak to Princess Pia. I explained the whole situation and apologized profusely for your comments and state of mind. I told her you think she's the most beautiful princess to have ever graced Dulsek Glen.

FERN

That's laying it on a little thick.

MAIS

That worked? So, that's it?

SYDNEY

Not quite.

FERN

I figured there's a catch. What? What do we have to do?

SYDNEY

*WE* don't have have to do anything. However, Mais has to provide Princess Pia with a double portion of his homemade sanding pumice, for her feet.

MAIS

I can do that.

SYDNEY

Scented with fresh lavender.

MAIS

No problem.

SYDNEY

Which, you will apply to her feet once a week for the next year.

MAIS

(*gagging sounds*) Have you seen her feet?

FERN

I have.

SYDNEY

And, you'll groom her horse, Angus, once a month. For the next two years.

MAIS

That thing bites.

FERN

And kicks.

SYDNEY

So I've heard. Nevertheless, this is your penalty for insulting the princess. The search has been called off and yer reputation is mostly in tact, provided you fulfill your obligations.

MAIS

She has webbed toes.

FERN

Yes, most elfins do. Now, let's see if you can walk straight enough to make it home.

MAIS starts scratching his legs and backside.

Ugh, these pants itch. MAIS

SYDNEY

Stop it. The pants are fine. The itch is likely from the tics and ants in those branches.

MAIS

Tics and ants?!

FERN

Stop scratching. It'll just make it worse. Oh, and, you know that wacky tea you drank at Fergus and Emelia's-

MAIS

Yes.

FERN

Turns out Sydney sold the potion in that vial to Emelia a few weeks ago. It's supposed to trigger increased bone restoration.

SYDNEY

In mortals.

MAIS

So, it wasn't nightshade, and she wasn't trying to poison him?

FERN

Nope. Only thing is, if it's steeped too strong, it can produce all those strange side effects she was rambling on about.

MAIS

Interesting.

FERN

And, now I also know the *real* reason Emelia's been stumbling around the cottage half asleep.

SYDNEY

She was working nights, cleaning the Board's Tusk to earn extra money while Fergus was recuperating.

MAIS

You said she was drinking.

SYDNEY

A completely innocent assumption on my part.

MAIS

So, that's how she knew there was a shilling in that pot.

FERN

Exactly. I expect she's hiding the rest of the money away for a holiday.

MAIS

I still feel strange.

SYDNEY

Lucky for you that tea doesn't affect Bryndals the same as humans, or we'd be dodging snotballs.

MAIS

The tea. That's why my arm is loose and I've been walking in circles?

FERN

Yes.

MAIS

How long until it wears off?

SYDNEY

Hard to say. Maybe a couple more hours.

FERN holds up three fingers.

FERN  
How many fingers do you see?

MAIS  
Three.

FERN  
Good. And can you do this?

FERN walks straight across the stage. MAIS struggles but ends up walking in a circle. SYDNEY opens the basket of food and passes some out.

SYDNEY  
Here, eat something. Maybe it will help.

MAIS  
What is this? It's not anything weird is it? I know you eat weird stuff.

FERN sniffs it, takes a bite.

FERN  
It's fine. Try it. Tastes like venison. Maybe wild boar. No, definitely venison.

MAIS eats some of the food.

MAIS  
Huh, not bad.

SYDNEY  
When you're finished you can go.

MAIS  
I still can't walk a straight line.

MAIS walks around in a circle  
dragging his left leg.

We wait till sundown.

SYDNEY

You'll make better time when you can see where you're going.

MAIS

I know my way through the woods.

FERN

You're stalling. You're afraid someone will see you in those pants.

MAIS

What? No. Why would I care about that?

FERN

I know you, Mais. Always color coordinated. Mixed textures for variety.

MAIS

That's absurd.

FERN

Really? Who was it that wouldn't leave our cabin for two weeks while he was waiting for Samara the seamstress to drop off a matching paisley coat and hat ensemble.

MAIS

We were expecting snow. You know how easily I catch a chill.

SYDNEY

What I know, is that you are consumed by the latest Bryndal fashion trends.

MAIS

I am not. Okay fine. I like to look nice when I go out. What's wrong with that?

FERN

Nothing wrong with looking nice, but-

MAIS

Look at me! Would you look. I can't. I can't be seen in public in these hideous, disgusting baggy green pants. Go if you want, but I'm not leaving until Dulsek Glen is cloaked in black.

FERN

You stink and need a soak in the creek. The water's frigid at night.

MAIS

I don't care. I'd rather be cold and wrinkled than seen in green.

FERN

Stubborn as a one-eyed billygoat.

SYDNEY

Will you two can it? Your bickering is giving me indigestion.

FERN

Fine.

MAIS

Fine.

LIGHTS OUT

END OF SCENE

Do Not Copy

ACT 2 SCENE 2

SETTING: Evening in FERGUS' cottage. The place is in shambles and it stinks.

AT RISE: Cue evening sound effects. MAIS and FERN enter. Lighting is dim. FERN starts gagging. MAIS starts looking around.

FERN

Holy skunk squirt!

MAIS

Something must have died in here. Oh no! Fergus.

FERN

Alrighty then, our work here is done. Let's go before I lose my stew.

MAIS

What? No. We can't go. We can't leave him dead in his bed.



FERN

Sure we can. It will be like a Viking funeral...without the sea, raft and flaming arrows.

MAIS

No. What's wrong with you?

They walk towards his bedroom, open the door and hear loud snoring.

FERN

Well, he ain't dead. Just smells like it.

MAIS

Go open the front door. Get some fresh air in.

FERN opens the door to the cottage.

MAIS

Lamps. We need to light lamps.

They walk around and light some flickering lamps. Bring lighting up to reveal the mess. MAIS picks up an empty whiskey bottle.

Look.

FERN sniffs one of the bottles.

FERN

Knock yourself out. I'm going fishing.

FERN starts to leave.

MAIS

Wait. What's wrong?

FERN

Is your sniffer oblivious to the stink? Not to mention, the disgusting filth.

MAIS

Emelia did keep things tidy. A bit outdated, but still, a lot cleaner than this.

FERN

He's flippin' blootered.

MAIS

Maybe he's been depressed since Emelia left.

FERN

That's no excuse for living like this.

MAIS

Come on. We'll clean it up.

MAIS starts picking up trash and stacking it in a pile.

FERN

No.

MAIS

Lest you forget, we have two pair of boots to make.

FERN

Yeah. Have fun with that.

MAIS

Hang on. We've worked in messy cottages before. What's your problem?

FERN

I have no problem. I'm simply disgusted by his lack of hygiene and the mess he's choosing to dwell in.

MAIS

The weavers cottage was a mess. Piles of yarn everywhere. We could barely walk from one side of the room to the other.

FERN

True. But, it smelled nice. Lemony.

MAIS

The princess and the clucking prince. You can't tell me that place smelled good.

FERN

No. It was disgusting. But all we had to do was get in, mix the potion into his food and get out.

MAIS

Come on Fern, what's the real issue?

FERN

Why does there have to be a *real issue*? I told you. I can't deal with the smell and filth.

MAIS

I don't buy it.

FERN

I'll see 'ya later.

MAIS

Hold up. This isn't just about Fergus. This is about your brother, Ian.

FERN

No. This is about a smelly cobbler who dwells in rubbish and consoles his pathetic soul with a bottle of cheap whiskey.

MAIS

First, we both know he's not a drunk. Second, just because he's currently dumfungled doesn't mean we walk out.

FERN

Dumfungled?

MAIS

Yes. Dumfungled, mentally and physically spent.

FERN

Huh.

MAIS

He fell out of a tree. His wife left him, he's in debt and-

FERN

He's pickled.

MAIS

Your bother, Ian. He hasn't been gone that long.

FERN

I don't want to talk about it.

MAIS

It might help.

FERN

It won't change anything.

MAIS

The for-get-me-nots, in the woods, on our way here. They were blooming. They always bloomed around his birthday.

FERN

He would have been 72 next week.

MAIS

72. So young.

FERN

Why'd he do it Mais? Why'd he drink so much?

MAIS

I don't know. Life gets, rough. You lost your parents in that fire.

FERN

That was six years ago.

MAIS

You handled it better. You fought through your pain. You leaned into your friends, the folks in our glen. Ian didn't. He isolated himself. He avoided any help. Even from you. He-

FERN

He gave up. Why did he give up? I would have helped him.

MAIS

I know you would have. Some people don't want to admit they're struggling. They think it makes them look weak.

FERN

But, they're fine with drinking too much, lying and acting like a dobber?

MAIS

I, uhh-

FERN

I'd do anything to see him again. Help him. Give him a second chance. You're always telling me, give people a second chance.

MAIS

Huh. So, you do listen.

FERN

Yeah. Sometimes.

MAIS

All right. So, how 'bout we give Fergus a second chance? With Emelia gone, and his arm injured, he seems to be swallowed up in gloom.

FERN

I see what you're trying to do.

MAIS

You couldn't help Ian battle his pain, but maybe we can help Fergus fight through his.

FERN

So, now we're back to saving the world?

MAIS

No. Not the world. Just helping out one. Maybe we do for one, what we wish we could do for everyone.

FERN

Like fixing foot pedals on a weaver's loom, chopping piles of firewood, or changing a clucking prince into a charming one?

MAIS

Something like that.

FERN

What if he doesn't change?

MAIS

Then I guess things will get worse. In the end, he'll have to decide how he wants to live his life.

FERN

This is where I wish we were fairies, with magic wands.

MAIS

But we're not. Come on. We'll do this once.

FERN

Do what?

MAIS

We'll take the hide home and cobble the boots.

FERN

Seriously?

MAIS

Yes.

FERN

Won't he wonder where the hide is?

MAIS

Probably.

MAIS walks around and takes the  
whiskey bottle.

And, we'll take this with us.

FERN

Maybe you do know what you're doing.

MAIS

Come on. Grab that hide and let's go.

FERN grabs the hide.

FERN

Got it. Hey, seeing that we're passing the creek on our way  
home, how 'bout we stop and-

MAIS

Fish? You want to stop and fish?

FERN

It is on the way.

MAIS

Where's your pole?

FERN

At home. Never mind.

MAIS

When we're done with the boots you can fish to your heart's  
content.

FERN

Promise?

MAIS

You catch 'em. I'll fry 'em.

They exit. A few seconds later you  
can hear rumbling noises coming  
from FERGUS' bedroom. He stumbles  
in.

FERGUS

Uhh, my head.

He walks over to the doorway and sticks his head out calling for Emelia.

Emelia? Emelia?

He closes the door.

I thought she might be back. Eh, who cares. Who needs a woman watching yer every move. "Fergus, wash yer hands. Fergus, comb yer beard. Fergus, bring in some wood." Eh, I'm the Dulsek Glen Cobbler. Cobble for the Duke I will.

Me old man warned me 'bout getting married. "Yer asking for trouble." he barked. "She'll get bossy an stubborn as a mule, just you wait and see." She never did. Kept me in line alright, but always with that smile. I miss 'er smile. The way she strutted about here, keeping me on task. Her garden, a bounty and weedless, sure as the sun sets.

I 'member when we met. We were just kids. Twas a bone-chillin' night, half the Glen was standing 'round a fire, listening to storytellers weave their tales. The edge of 'er blanket caught a spark and lit up. I snatched it quick, settin' 'er spinning, and landin' 'er into a soggy patch of mud. She got up an stood there staring at me like I was mad. I saw those deep green eyes and froze. She burst out laughin' and I knew then and there, I wanted 'er as my wife.

29 years. 29 bloody years. Now, she wants more. Wants to see the world. Wants to experience the mighty sea in all its glory. Taste the salt in the air. Eh. I've got work to do. Hmm. Time for a snip of whiskey. Then I'll cobble. I'll cobble for the Duke. Once he gets a look at me new boots-

He wanders around looking for the bottle of whiskey.

Aye. What the? Twas was right here. Eh. Buggers.

He walks passed his cobbler bench.

COBBLE ME THIS

The hide? Where's me hide? Sneaky fairies must have stole it during the night. And took me whiskey. Didn't stitch a boot er leave a drop.

He picks up some scraps of leather and tosses them around.

Scraps. Worthless scraps. Scabby little thieves. Well, guess I'll have tea and a biscuit. Now where's me bloody cup?

He starts tearing the place apart looking for his tea cup. In the process he knocks a ceramic cup onto the floor, and it breaks.

Ahh! Cripes!

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He looks around at the mess, then stoops down and picks up a piece of the broken cup. In the process he accidentally cuts his hand on a piece of the cup.

Ouch. Ouch. Ouch. That smarts.

He pours some water over his hand then grabs a scrap of leather and wraps it around his hand and fingers. He struggles to tie it in place, then stands staring at it.

Huh. Huh! I got an idea.

After wrapping his hand he goes to his workbench and picks up some scraps of leather. He forms what looks to be a glove and holds his hand up proudly.



Needs a bit of refinin' but I believe I have a new idea for the Duke, and all I need are these wee bits and scraps.

Fergus sits down on his cobbler's bench with his back to the audience and works.

LIGHTS DOWN

END SCENE

Act 2 Scene 3

Do Not Copy

SETTING: Same interior cottage as previous, but now it's neat and clean.

AT RISE: Morning sound effects, rooster crowing etc. Fergus enters whistling, he is well dressed and clean shaven. FERN and MAIS enter carrying the boots they made under their capes. They set them down on the workbench and look around.

MAIS

Well, butter my biscuits and pour the gravy.

FERN

You cleaned, didn't you? You snuck over while I was fishing and cleaned the whole place.

MAIS

I did not.

FERN

Come on, look at this place, the flowers. The candles. This place has Mais the Fixer, embroidered all over it.

MAIS

I assure you, I had no part in this.

FERGUS walks over to a table, takes a pouch out of his pocked and pours out a pile of coins out, then begins singing and dancing.

FERGUS

Oh, I am the Dulsek Cobbler. I cobble I cobble. Not a shoe. Not a boot. Not a cover for your snoot. It's a glove. It's a glove. It's my glove that they love! Oh I am the Dulsek Cobbler, I cobble, I cobble-

FERN

What's a glove?

MAIS

Where'd he get all those coins?

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Emelia calls out from offstage..

EMELIA

Fergus? Fergus?

EMELIA enters and runs toward him and hugs him. MAIS claps and dances.

MAIS

She's back! She came back! I knew she'd come back.

FERN

I'm not blind.

EMELIA

Oh Fergus. I missed you. I'm so sorry. You were right. I should have known better than to try and travel with Effie.

FERGUS

Emelia.

EMELIA

Once I got there Effie informed me that she'd be bringing the twins and Ronan.

FERGUS

The squawker?

FERN

Only thing stranger looking than a human, is a fresh one. Bald. Smelly. Founts of drool.

EMELIA

I wanted to go on relaxing holiday. As much as I love my sister, there's no way I wanted to travel with her and those kids.

MAIS

She probably needs a break. She's got five or six kids. Maybe we could-

FERN

Don't even think about it.

EMELIA

I swear that baby, Ronan was attached to her like a bloated leech.

FERN

Thank you for that delightful image.

FERGUS

Did 'ya make it to the coast, to see the cliffs?

EMELIA

No. Once she came clean about bringing her kids, I faked the plague, and said I needed to go home.

FERN

Genius. The woman is a genius.

EMELIA hands him a pouch of coins.

EMELIA

Here Fergus, take this.

He pours them out onto a table.

MAIS

Crivens and crikies.

FERGUS

Emelia. There must be 50 shillings here.

EMELIA

56 to be exact. Oh Fergus, I'm so glad to be home. I missed you.

She hugs him.

FERN

She's only been gone a week.

FERGUS

I missed 'ya too. But, Emelia, these shillings? Where'd 'ya get 'em?

EMELIA

Those are from the nights I was working at the Boar's Tusk.

MAIS

Hear that. Working. Not drinking.

FERN

Ya, ya, I know.

EMELIA starts looking around.

EMELIA

Fergus. The cottage is immaculate. There are new candles. And, this bread?

She picks it up and smells it.  
SYDNEY enters wearing his purple cape.

This is fresh bread.

FERGUS

When was ya workin' nights, at the Boar's Tusk?

SYDNEY

This outta be good.

MAIS

Sydney, what are you doing here?

FERN

Shh. Just watch.

EMELIA

After you broke your arm. I took a night job there, cleaning. Just for a few weeks, you know, to help out. Fergus, who made this bread?

FERGUS

Bloody bullfrogs woman. What else were ya up to?

FERN

Yes Emelia, tell him, what else you were up to?

MAIS

Nothing. She was up to nothing else. Was she?

SYDNEY

Maybe. Maybe not.

MAIS

What? What else was she up to?

SYDNEY

Nothing. I was just messing with ya.

EMELIA

Fergus, the cottage is spotless. My garden is weed free and this is a fresh loaf of bread. I've only been gone a week. What's going on?

SYDNEY

She'll never guess.

FERGUS

Nothing. Why? Oh, wait, I got 'ta show ya somethin'.

FERGUS walks over to his cobbler's bench and sees the boots. He holds them up.

Jumping' Jehoshaphat. Where'd these come from?

FERN

(bows) You're welcome.

MAIS

Some of our finest work.

EMELIA

Obviously the fairies have been here.

FERN starts fuming.

MAIS

Let it go, Fern. Just let it go.

FERGUS

Huh. Didn't need to. Oh well, I can probably sell 'em to someone.

FERN

Probably sell 'em?! To someone?

FERGUS holds up the larger pair.

FERGUS

These are huge. Only one I know with feet this big is Stubby. Emelia, fix yer eyes on these.

He sets down the large boots and picks up a pair of leather gloves. EMELIA takes a glove from him and looks it over.

EMELIA

What is it?

FERGUS puts the glove on his hand and holds it up.

FERGUS

It's a hand cover. A leather hand cover. I call it a glove. I made a pair of 'em from scraps and brought them to the

Duke. He wants 'em for all his couriers...to keep their hands warm when they're out scouting.

FERN

Intresting.

MAIS

It's kind of genius.

EMELIA

A gl-ove? That's a funny word.

FERGUS

Aye. But, I made an' sold 70 of 'em this past week. In half the time it takes me ta cobble a boot.

FERGUS walks over to his pile of money.

Look. Emelia, Look at this! I paid off all our debt and just collected these shillings from the castle treasury.

EMELIA

That's wonderful Fergus. I'm so happy for you, but that doesn't explain why the cottage is clean, my garden is weeded and who baked this bread.

FERN

Here we go. This should be good.

EMELIA

Fergus, has there been another woman in my house?

FERGUS

What? No. Of course not.

EMELIA

The Sander's widow. Has she been here? She baked this bread didn't she? I've seen the way she looks at you.

FERGUS

Emelia. No other woman has entered this house. I swear on my mother's grave.

EMELIA

And I swear you didn't clean, or bake this bread.

MAIS

They're arguing again. I'm getting nervous. My toes. I can feel my toes starting to curl.

FERN

Relax. I'm sure there's a simple explanation.

SYDNEY

Of course there is, just listen.

FERGUS

Emelia, honestly if you'd stopped in a couple of days ago you'd a seen the cottage in shambles.

EMELIA

And?

FERGUS

An me looking like a filthy morlock. I was in a bad way. I stopped eatin', started drinkin' and likely smelled like the compost heap.

FERN

Yeah, pretty much.

EMELIA

You were in a bad way? Because I left?

FERGUS

Because ya left. Because me arm was hurtin'. Because I felt like I let you down. Didn't give you the life you was wantin'.

EMELIA

Oh Fergus. It wasn't you.

FERGUS

Anyway, after drinkin' meself into a foul mind and cuttin' me hand.

EMELIA

You cut your hand? Let's see.

She grabs his hand and looks it over.

FERGUS

It's fine now. That cut was actually a good thing.

FERN

Since when is oozing blood a good thing?



FERGUS

It got me ta thinkin'. Thinkin' 'bout what I was doin'.  
Numbing meself with whiskey. Lettin' this place go. Loosing  
the one person I cherish most.

SHE hugs him.

EMELIA

I'm sorry. I shouldn't have left like that.

FERGUS

I got up Tuesday morning, brewed a strong pot of tea and  
cleaned the whole place.

EMELIA

YOU cleaned the whole place?

FERGUS

A bit later Fiona stopped over, weeded the garden and baked  
the bread.

EMELIA

YOU cleaned the whole place?

FERGUS

Indeed, I did.

EMELIA

It wasn't the Sander's widow?

FERGUS

Of course not. Emelia, ever since the night yer blanket  
burst into flames and ya looked me with yer deep green eyes,  
I knew you were the only woman I ever wanted.

EMELIA

Oh Fergus. I can't believe you cleaned the whole cottage.

FERGUS

Aye woman. Cleaned the cottage. Cobbled boots. Made gloves,  
an paid off our debt.

FERN

How 'bout that.

EMELIA

All of it?

FERGUS

Aye. Every bit.

EMELIA

That's amazing.

FERGUS

What's amazing, is that yer back here with me.

MAIS

Looks like our cobbling days are over.

SYDNEY

So now what do we do?

FERN

We go fishing.

EMELIA

Fergus, I promise, I'm here to stay.

FERGUS

No.

EMELIA

No?

MAIS

Uh oh. Now what?

FERGUS

Next week we leave for the coast.

EMELIA

The coast? Really? What about your work? The garden? All the animals? Who'll take care of everything?

MAIS

Better block out the next few weeks. Looks like we'll be spending more time here.

FERN

But, but-

MAIS

You heard him. They're going on holiday. Who else would take care of the place?

FERGUS

Finoa's coming to stay for two weeks so we can take a holiday together.

FERN

Let's hear it for Fiona.

EMELIA

But, how did you know when I'd be back?

FERGUS

I didn't. Not fer sure. I was just a hopin', and when I was talkin' to 'er she said, she'd gladly come an' take care of the place if I wanted to take a holiday with you.

EMELIA

Oh Fergus, that's marvelous. There are so many extraordinary places to see, and explore.

FERGUS takes a compass out of his pocket and gives it to her.

FERGUS

Here, I bought this for ya.

EMELIA

What is it?

FERGUS

It's a compass. Look here. See that arrow?

EMELIA

Yes.

FERGUS

It always points true north, towards the coast. It'll help us stay on course.

EMELIA

Even in the woods?

FERGUS

Even in the woods. Come on, let's go out fer a walk. I'll show ya how it works.

FERGUS and EMELIA exit.

MAIS

Well, it looks like our work here is done.

FERN

Indeed. And, what did we learn?

MAIS

He doesn't need anymore help cobbling.

And? FERN

It pays to have kids. SYDNEY

That's it? FERN

Fine. He figured it all out. Came up with a new idea that is less work and makes him more money. Paid off all his debts and has shillings to spare. MAIS

All without your help. Imagine that. FERN

Alright. I get it. Stepping in and solving humans issues isn't *always* the best solution. MAIS

Because? FERN

Because then they don't think for themselves and figure things out on their own. MAIS

Exactly. Now, let's go dig up some fat worms so we can snag a few tasty trout. FERN

I prefer mayflies. SYDNEY

Fine. Whatever. FERN

You two go ahead. I can't go. MAIS

Why not? SYDNEY

It's Thursday. I've got to pumice Princess Pia's feet. MAIS

SYDNEY and FERN laugh.

Okay, have fun with that. FERN



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