

The Poetry of Broadway Songs

"Children Will Listen" (Into the Woods) by Steven
Sondheim

How do you say to your child in the night?
Nothing's all black, but then nothing's all white
How do you say it will all be all right
When you know that it might not be true?
What do you do?

Careful the things you say
Children will listen
Careful the things you do
Children will see and learn
Children may not obey, but children will listen
Children will look to you for which way to turn
To learn what to be
Careful before you say "Listen to me"
Children will listen

Careful the wish you make
Wishes are children
Careful the path they take
Wishes come true, not free
Careful the spell you cast

Nor just on children
Sometimes the spell may last
Past what you can see
And turn against you
Careful the tale you tell

That is the spell
Children will listen

How can you say to a child who's in flight
"Don't slip away and i won't hold so tight"
What can you say that no matter how slight
Won't be misunderstood
What do you leave to your child when you're dead?
Only whatever you put in its head
Things that your mother and father had said
Which were left to them too
Careful what you say
Children will listen
Careful you do it too
Children will see

And learn, oh guide them that step away
Children will glisten
Tample with what is true
And children will turn
If just to be free
Careful before you say
"Listen to me"

Children will listen
Children will listen
Children will listen