



One of the many absolutely beautiful songs written by Rodgers and Hammerstein is “If I Loved You” from *Carousel* (1945). Oscar Hammerstein’s lyrics, which were set to music by Richard Rodgers, are pure poetry:

If I loved you,
Time and again I would try to say
All I’d want you to know.
If I loved you,
Words wouldn’t come in an easy way
Round in circles I’d go!
Longin’ to tell you but afraid and shy.
I’d let my golden chances pass me by!
Soon you’d leave me,
Off you would go in the mist of day.....

What? “Mist of day” – Isn’t it “midst” of day?

The following is an article from the Merriam Webster Dictionary (online):¹

Clearing the Air on ‘In The Midst/Mist’

Are you in the middle of something or surrounded by fog?

The word *midst* is sometimes misinterpreted as *mist* in the expression *in the midst of*—e.g., “a city in the midst of a desert,” i.e., Las Vegas . . . or “I was interrupted in the midst of reading the first sentence of this article.” In both examples *midst* implies being in the middle of something, which *mist* does not, which brings us to the terms *mondegreen* and *eggcorn*; it’s really your call on which to use to describe the mix-up.

Both *mondegreen* and *eggcorn* are used to describe the phenomenon of misinterpreting a word or phrase for another, as in *very close veins* for *varicose veins* and *for all intensive purposes* for *for all intents and purposes*—or, here, *in the mist of* for *in the midst of* (when there is no atmospheric or figurative haziness, just a state of being in the middle or among something or someones, such as “in the midst of a forest/tea/traitorous coup”).

¹ <https://www.merriam-webster.com/grammar/usage-in-the-midst-vs-in-the-mist>