

ONCE UPON A HIGHLINE

"Wolves in Hay Houses"

(Pilot)

Written by

Elliott Maya

August 16th, 2021  
elliolor@gmail.com

COLD OPEN

**EXT. OUTDOOR BRUNCH SPOT - NYC - MORNING**

A small PIXIE SERVER struggles to fly a mimosa pitcher to a table of boozy "Karen" types.

PIXIE  
[LABORED BREATHING] Your mimosas...

The pixie sets the pitcher down and collapses into it.

The LEAD KAREN stirs the pixie into the pitcher, swirling pixie dust around. The pixie GARGLES HELPLESSLY.

KAREN #1  
I think it's like, super fucked up  
to give dogs plain water. It's  
basically animal abuse. Drink up  
Woof Bader Ginsburg.

The Karen pours mimosa in a doggy bowl. Her dog isn't there.

KAREN #1 (CONT'D)  
Ginsie? Where are you?

WOOF BADER GINSBURG  
<BARKS>

Woof Bader Ginsburg, an overbred Chipoodle, is several yards away sniffing at a RUSTLING BUSH. A low GROWL rumbles within.

KAREN #1  
Ginsie! You have no idea what could  
be over there. What if it's a  
filthy homeless?

KAREN #2  
Woah, that is NOT okay.

KAREN #1  
You're so right. I meant filthy  
*unhoused* person.

Ginsie lifts his leg to pee. His face softens with pre-piss bliss -- when a MASSIVE PAW yanks him into the bushes.

The Karens SCREAM -- and keep screaming as SOMETHING MASSIVE steps out of the bushes off-screen.

They fall silent as their eyes track up in horror at...

REVERSE POV: A WEREWOLF WOMAN holding Ginsie in her arms. Towering, muscular, Black Creole, golden-eyed, handsome. Basically she's everything Brienne of Tarth wishes she was. She smiles uncomfortably. It's toothy and threatening. Her ill-fitting and over-sized hoodie, muddy joggers, large wolf ears, and hunched posture don't help. She tries to make herself smaller by crouching to the Karens' level.

This is RUE GAROU BEAUREGARD (late 20s, early 30s), Beau to her friends, and THE BIG BAD WOLF to her enemies -- large in size, now small in confidence.

BEAU

Sorry ladies. Last time I was in New York this was a park. Or maybe it was a slaughter mill? They were sort of the same to me back then.

Beau sets a shaking Ginsie on the table. Ginsie pisses all over their deconstructed avocado toasts.

BEAU (CONT'D)

Which way to Fairytale Village?

The Karens silently point. Beau throws her hoodie up.

BEAU (CONT'D)

I'd appreciate you keeping this run in between us. Or I'll kill all of you in your sleep! Haha! Kidding!  
(checks watch)  
Ah, I'm running late to my meeting.

She stuffs her tail back in her sweatpants and jogs off.

KAREN #2

I voted Democrat, but this country really is going to the dogs.

The Karens pack up in a tizzy and march off.

The pitcher falls over. The pixie stumbles out drunkenly.

PIXIE

That's no dog. That's the Big Bad Wolf.

The pixie falls on its face. It vomits glitter and mimosa.

PIXIE (CONT'D)

...I need a new job.

OPENING CREDITS. "NOW YOU KNOW MY NAME" BY THE DEREVOLUTIONS PLAYS.

ACT I**EXT. FAIRYTALE VILLAGE - RESIDENTIAL - MORNING**

Beau walks through a historic fairytale neighborhood mid-gentrification.

Gastro-pubs replace brownstones. A homeless gnome holding a "**Ghomeless, please help**" sign holds his hat out for change.

Beau steps forward with some bills, but tourists and move-ins crowd the gnome and snap selfies with him like he's an art installation.

She wanders between tourists and locals, no longer sure which one she is.

**EXT. FAIRYTALE VILLAGE - BUSINESS SECTOR - LATER**

Beau stops in front of an office building to look up at a magical moving billboard. It cycles through snapshots of PRISSILA WIMPLE (late 30s-40s), a fairy godmother with Elle Woods vibes, doing "charitable" deeds:

- Shaking hands with seven dwarf veterans.
- Cutting a plastic ring from around a mermaid's neck.
- Having a poor family of Trolls evicted for human tenants.

## BILLBOARD

Fairytale Village: now refurbished  
and restored! Call today to find  
YOUR happily-ever-after home.

A phone number flashes on the bottom of the billboard. The neon pink light of the billboard illuminates Beau's thoughtful expression.

Beau grabs a crumpled flier off the ground and writes the number down. She neatly folds the flier into squares, sticks it in her pocket, and enters the office building.

**INT. DRAB OFFICE BUILDING - CONTINUOUS**

Beau approaches the receptionist desk. The receptionist scrolls through Timber (a Tinder knock off) on her phone. Beau politely knocks on the desk and reads her namecard.

BEAU  
 Good morning Amber Nellson. I'm  
 looking for Junebug Jim--

The receptionist sees her tail poking out of her pants.

RECEPTIONIST  
 (dismissively)  
 We're closed.

BEAU  
 Closed? I have an appointment. And  
 it's 10:00 AM. On a Tuesday.

RECEPTIONIST  
 Try again tomorrow, fairy.  
 (beat)  
 Not the gay kind. I'm not a bigot.

Beau clenches her fists. A growl rumbles in her chest. Her eyes FLASH. She suddenly seems larger, sharper, more feral.

She HUFFS sharply and sucks in a quick PUFF of air. ZIP! The cell phone flies out of the receptionist's hands into Beau's.

BEAU  
 (sharply)  
 I could turn you into carne asada  
 with a sneeze --

The receptionist trembles. Beau shuts her eyes. Breathes.

BEAU (CONT'D)  
 (sotto)  
 Granny Guadelupe said to stick with  
 'I feel' statements.

Beau exhales slowly. Air scoots the desk back. She taps the cell phone against the desk. Trying to be nice.

BEAU (CONT'D)  
 Why don't we start over? I feel  
 like I am being ignored. I do not  
 like being ignored. When the old me  
 didn't like something, she tended  
 to bite, fight, and/or maim people.  
 (talking rapidly)  
 Sorry, that sounded like a threat.  
 Old habit. Being in the city makes  
 me nervous, and when I'm nervous, I  
 get toothy. I'm working on it. My  
 sponsor said understanding  
 emotional triggers is crucial to  
 anger management.

(MORE)

BEAU (CONT'D)

(beat)

She wasn't really my sponsor. She was more like my adopted grandma.

(beat)

She's dead now.

(beat)

You aren't scared, are you Amber?

Beau gives Amber her best nervous smile. It's terrifying. Amber stiffly shakes her head no.

BEAU (CONT'D)

Great! So, Junebug Jim?

RECEPTIONIST

Fourth floor.

BEAU

Thank you Amber!

Beau sets the cellphone on the desk and jogs up the stairs.

RECEPTIONIST

Fucking fairy freaks.

Amber checks her phone. The phone case is partially crushed and her cracked screen is auto-swiping right on ugly guys.

RECEPTIONIST (CONT'D)

Ew, not Jeremy! He looks like an abortion!

**EXT. SHODDY LAW OFFICE - MOMENTS LATER**

Beau stands in front of a cheap glass door labelled "**Junebug Jim, Estate Management.**" A small post-it note has been added to the end: "**And Photo-copying Services.**"

Beau firmly addresses her reflection for a pep talk.

BEAU

You control how you feel. Right now you feel sad that Granny's gone, but confident you can handle what comes next.

She scrubs away a tear. Points at her reflection.

BEAU (CONT'D)

You can do this. For Granny Guadelupe.

She takes a deep, self-assured breath, and exhales.

And her breath accidentally SHATTERS the glass door.

BEAU (CONT'D)  
Oh chutes and ladders.

REVEAL PINNOCHIO COLLODI (25), a Hollyweird club kid twink in a man-sized marionette body -- think slutty David Rose, but a puppet. He wears his marionette strings as a mesh croptop with a paralegal blazer on top. He sits at a make-shift desk wearing headphones crooning R&B and polishing his wooden nose in a masturbatory way over a working photo-copier.

PINNOCHIO  
(singing)  
I look hot. I'm smoking. I'm  
kindling. I'm a nasty puppet bitch  
and you can pull my streeeeeeeeengs~

The copier shoots prints at Beau. She examines it. Yup, his nose looks like a dick. It's kind of mesmerizing.

Pinnocchio finally notices Beau. They stare at each other. Caught in the world's worst social impasse.

BEAU  
(politely)  
This is... nice. I think.  
(coughs)  
I don't really "get" art.

Pinnocchio clears his throat. Gingerly presses the intercom.

PINNOCHIO  
Mr. Junebug, your 10:00 is here.  
(pointedly)  
Early.

**INT. JUNEBUG'S OFFICE - MOMENTS LATER**

Beau is squished into a ridiculously tiny desk. Pinnocchio sits in the equally tiny desk near hers with his headphones in, taking notes and singing profane lyrics under his breath.

JUNEBUG JIM (O.S.)  
Well huff and puff and blow my  
thorax right off, it's really you.  
The Big Bad Wolf herself.

Beau squints at the full-sized desk across the room. On top of it, seated at a matchbox desk, is JUNEBUG JIM, a small, shady-looking Madagascar hissing cockroach with slicked back antennae. He's our nasty, sleaze-ball Jiminy Cricket. He sips whiskey with a straw from a human-sized glass.

BEAU  
 (uncomfortable)  
 No title necessary. That's not me  
 anymore. It's just Beau now.

Junebug Jim winks conspiratorially.

JUNEBUG JIM  
 Sure, *sure*. I'm shocked old Granny  
 Lupe didn't turn you into a rug.

BEAU  
 She wanted to at first. I was a  
 lot. I had, uh, *have*, anger issues.

JUNEBUG JIM  
 Guadelupe loved freaks with  
 problems. That's probably why she  
 liked you so much.

BEAU  
 I -- thank you?

JUNEBUG JIM  
 Look at me gabbing like a regular  
 gabbipillar. You're here to talk  
 about the inheritance.  
 (to Pinnochio)  
 Pinnochio. Pinnochio!

PINNOCHIO  
 (singing to himself)  
*Your abs are made of rock. My  
 body's made of wood, just like my--*

JUNEBUG JIM  
 (to Beau)  
 Smack the boy. He don't listen.

Beau taps Pinnochio's shoulder. He removes a headphone.

PINNOCHIO  
 What! I'm working or whatever.

JUNEBUG JIM  
 Give her the documents.

Pinnochio hands Beau a bug-sized binder and a magnifying  
 glass. She opens the binder. A single page is inside.

JUNEBUG JIM (CONT'D)  
 Your abuela Guadelupe was an  
 adventurous gal.  
 (MORE)

JUNEBUG JIM (CONT'D)  
 Sexually and financially.  
 Unfortunately most of those  
 adventures went south.

PINNOCHIO  
 Oooooo, *purr!*

BEAU  
 What exactly does this mean for me?

JUNEBUG JIM  
 (to Pinnochio)  
 Tell my 11:00 to meet us on-site.  
 (to Beau)  
 It means all her assets were  
 seized. Except that one.

Beau examines the tiny page.

BEAU  
 This is the Monday crossword. The  
 only word used is 'anus.'

JUNEBUG JIM  
 Damn it Pinnochio, a man's  
 crossword is sacred! Here.

He SPRINGS into her hands and holds a tiny PICTURE up. She  
 peers through the glass at an old picture of a chic jazz bar.

On Beau's nostalgic expression.

BEAU  
 The Ever After? I loved this place  
 growing up. What's there to worry  
 about?

MATCH CUT TO:

**EXT. THE EVER AFTER BAR - AFTERNOON**

On Beau -- her nostalgic expression withering to ash.

JUNEBUG JIM (O.S.)  
 Ta-da. Ain't she a beaut.

REVERSE POV: the EVER AFTER, falling apart and in disrepair.  
 Pink signs reading "**Prisilla Wimple Realty**" coat the lawn.

LAWN SIGN  
 Reduce, reuse, recycle this  
 eyesore! Contact Wimple Realty now!

PINNOCHIO

This looks like a club bathroom  
post Bachelorette party favors.

Junebug Jim (on his shoulder) gives him a "cut it out" look.

PINNOCHIO (CONT'D)

I mean, it's not *not* **not** that bad?

His nose grows. Junebug Jim GROANS.

BEAU

Chutes and mother*stinking* ladders.  
What happened to it?

LAWN SIGN

The same thing that happened to  
your outfit: a total lack of  
interest in self-preservation!

ALL LAWN SIGNS

<PETTY LAUGHTER>

Beau GROWLS. In a flash of anger she stomps the sign to  
pieces. The other signs go silent in fear. Pinnochio vomits  
woodchips. Beau, panting, adopts a Zen pose. Centers herself.

BEAU

I'm sorry you had to see that. But  
this bar used to be the center of  
the fairytale community! Why wasn't  
anyone taking care of it?

JUNEBUG JIM

Ask management. Nochio--

PINNOCHIO

I'm going, don't yell at me!

Pinnochio examines a keyring for far too long. Grabs the key--

The door FLIES OPEN. ETIENNE (30s-40s), a spindly French frog-  
man in a patchwork green peacoat with a lopsided curly  
mustache and rusty royal crown, sways out into Beau's arms.

ETIENNE

Beauy Beau Beauie, my favorite  
killer! You have returned home from  
zee war! You remember me yes? It is  
I, Etienne Joachim Pierre Florimond  
Grenouille the 14th! Your lovable  
froggy prince!

Beau tries to hug him without touching his soiled peacoat.

BEAU

Good to see you too Etienne. I  
wasn't in a war, I was in  
unofficial rehab with Grandma Lupe.

ETIENNE

Same difference, no? In we go!

He grabs everyone with his giant tongue and yanks them into --

**INT. THE EVER AFTER BAR - SHOWROOM - CONTINUOUS**

Etienne slams the door behind them. It's utterly dark.

ETIENNE

Where is my matches? Ou es-tu, aha!

He lights tea candles on the bar. Beau, Pinnochio, and  
Junebug Jim sit on broken bar stools.

Beau looks around. The inside is as bad as the outside. An  
ornate bathtub is inexplicably in the middle of the floor.

PINNOCHIO

Kitschy.

Pinnochio puts his headphones in and sings more to himself.

BEAU

Why is there a bathtub in here?

ETIENNE

Where else would I sleep silly?  
Ohhh, but I am being a bad host!

Etienne dusts grime off his coat, revealing a pin reading  
**"Hospitality Services Management."** He BELCHES. An entire mini  
bar flies out of his throat onto the dirty main bar. He pours  
everyone drinks. Junebug Jim sits in his like it's a sauna.

ETIENNE (CONT'D)

Will you be having wine, beer, or--  
(pointing at poison sacs)  
My hallucinogenic frog venom?

Beau looks at her drink. Tadpoles swim in it. She pushes it  
away and explores the bar interior.

BEAU

I'm good. I just want information.

ETIENNE

Eh. More for me.

Etienne licks his own venom sacs and shudders with ecstasy.

Beau picks a photo off the wall and goes to blow the dust off. She thinks better of it, and rubs it clean. We see:

A MIDDLE-AGED GRANDMA GUADELUPE "LUPE" CAZADORA HAS HER ARMS AROUND TWO GIRLS: a young, grumpy-but-secretly-pleased Beau in a leather jacket, and a MISCHIEVOUS GIRL with dyed red hair wearing a rose-gold locket beaming right at camera. They hold hatchets and wear placement ribbons. A sign above them reads "**Annual Hatchet Throwing Contest.**" Beau smiles sadly.

BEAU

What happened here?

Her smile fades as she notices a deep claw mark scored into the wood beside the photo. Beau swallows. Looks away.

BEAU (CONT'D)

Everything's changed. It's not supposed to be like this.

ETIENNE

Nonsense, she is in tip-top shape!  
Lookie look, eyes on me!

He confidently hops on the bar. CRACK! He falls through it.

ETIENNE (O.S.) (CONT'D)

I'm okay! Going to nap here and wait for the pain to stop... zzzz.

BEAU

What am I supposed to do with this?

JUNEBUG JIM

My advice is to sell this dump.

BEAU

(defensive)

It's not a dump. Granny loved this bar. Maybe it can be renovated.

JUNEBUG JIM

Sure, if you wanna turn it into a termite love-hotel. Repairs alone would put you in the red. Plus, you got enemies. Plenty of people remember Big Bad Beau terrorizing the streets, busting up whoever pissed off the Straw-man that week.

Pinnocchio gyrates on the bar.

PINNOCHIO

Even the Puppets Guild put a hit on you after what you did to Gepetto's beautiful, beautiful hands.

JUNEBUG JIM

You heard the signs. You're better off taking Prisilla's pennies and skipping town before folks like the Straw-man hear you're back.

BEAU

I can handle Rumpelstiltskin.

Pinnocchio SHRIEKS and pops his limbs inside his shell like a turtle. Junebug Jim HISSES.

JUNEBUG JIM

Don't say his name! He'll hear us.

BEAU

No he won't. I worked for him. That's a rumor he spread to spook people into paying up faster. I wish it had worked more. I'd've broken fewer legs.

Beau forces herself to touch the clawed hand mark on the wall. Her hand's bigger now, but it's definitely hers.

She pulls the flier with Prissila's number from her pocket.

BEAU (CONT'D)

Is selling really my only option?

JUNEBUG JIM

It's a financial sinkhole. You can't change broken things. You certainly can't save 'em. Trust me. I used to lease hay houses. They kept blowing away.

His words resonate. She touches the locket in the photo.

Etienne stands and SLOW-CLAPS, weeping.

ETIENNE

C'est magnifique. I'm tripping testicles right now.

BEAU

...alright Jim. I'll sell.

JUNEBUG JIM  
 Fantastic news! Let's sign.

Junebug Jim JUMPS onto her shoulder in car salesman mode. He SNAPS. Pinnocchio boredly sets a legal binder on the bar. Jim uses Beau's hair to steer her to the bar, Ratatouille style.

JUNEBUG JIM (CONT'D)  
 She already wants to sell so once I get both signatures it's all yellow brick road from here! Sign here.

BEAU  
 "She"? Who's she?

JUNEBUG JIM  
 My 11:00 appointment. The other co-inheritor of Granny's estate.

BEAU  
*What?*

We hear CAR WHEELS BURNING RUBBER outside. A car door SLAMS.

JUNEBUG JIM  
 I told you that. Didn't I? I did.

BANG! The front door flies open. Dust obscures a FIGURE.

Beau's nose twitches. Her ears flatten. She hides her face, frustrated and uncomfortable.

BEAU  
 Ohhhh my God. Not *HER*.

CLICK. A red thigh high boot steps over the threshold.

WOMAN (O.S.)  
 That's my line. Because what I want to know is...

A short Afro-Dominican woman in a red dress swaggers in. Everything about her is vibrant and in-your-face. She pulls off heart sunglasses and shakes out her dark red hair.

This is CARMINE "ROSE" CAZADORA-REDD (late 20s), the girl from the photo. She is a walking, talking L'oreal commercial.

Until she breaks a bottle on the bar and points it at Beau.

CARMINE  
 Why the FUCK this backstabbing bitch is on MY goddamn property?

ACT II**INT. THE EVER AFTER BAR - MORNING - MOMENTS LATER**

On the photo of Granny Lupe, Beau, and Carmine on the wall.

BEAU (O.S.)  
Carmine, let's talk like adults.

SMASH! A bottle shatters the photo, narrowly missing Beau.

BEAU (CONT'D)  
What is your problem?!

She ducks another bottle. It embeds in the wall like a knife.

CARMINE  
It's not a what. It's a who. What the fuck are you doing here? Did you get tired of bumming off of old women and ruining their granddaughters' lives?

Every sentence is punctuated by another smashing bottle.

CARMINE (CONT'D)  
Get out!

PINNOCHIO  
KK, brunching for two hours, bye!

Pinnocchio heads out. Etienne fondly addresses his bathtub.

ETIENNE  
I'll be back before bedtime, my dear Antoinette.

Etienne tiptoes out behind Pinnocchio. Carmine points at the open door. Beau's werewolf features sharpen with frustration.

BEAU  
I'm good enough to care for your dying, aging grandmother but not good enough to step in her bar?

<LOUD HISSING>. Junebug Jim rattles his wings on a piano.

JUNEBUG JIM  
I asked you both of you here to do one thing and one thing only: sign Prisilla's sale agreement.

He points at the sale binder on the bar. Carmine skims it.

BEAU  
When did you talk to Prissilla?

JUNEBUG JIM  
Earlier. Anyway, it's a good deal.  
Take it and you'll never see each  
other again.

Beau deflates slightly. Unhappy with this possibility.

BEAU  
Can we talk about this, Rose?

CARMINE  
(sharply)  
Don't call me that.

Carmine signs the paperwork. She rips a page from the binder.

CARMINE (CONT'D)  
If signing gets you out of here  
I'll be doing the Village a favor.

She pushes the document across the bar to Beau.

CARMINE (CONT'D)  
Your turn.

BEAU  
...Who said I was selling?

JUNEBUG JIM / CARMINE  
What?! / Excuse me?

BEAU  
Fairytale Village used to be a  
vibrant loving community--

CARMINE  
When you weren't tearing it apart!

BEAU  
When it stuck together. I don't  
know Prissila Wimple, but I know  
this neighborhood is being scalped  
by developers. The neighborhood  
needs a new focal point. Maybe  
that's the Ever After. Guadalupe  
would have loved that.

CARMINE

Better idea: give me your cut and  
I'll donate it to charity.

JUNEBUG JIM

Girls, why don't we all regroup  
here tonight to go over details  
when the estrogen levels drop?

He trails off as Carmine slowly saunters toward Beau.

CARMINE

(sultry)

You rebuild the bar, and then what?  
Everyone forgets what you did? The  
people you hurt? We *forgive* you?

Carmine trails the pen up Beau's arm. Beau's hackles drop.  
She fights a shudder. They share a look heavy with history.

Carmine smiles. It's stunning... before it twists into a  
SNEER. She shoves the legal document against Beau's chest.

CARMINE (CONT'D)

(normal)

Cut the act. You haven't changed.  
You're the same selfish person who  
tore apart the Village and my life.

<APPLAUSE>. Carmine checks her ringing phone's caller ID.

CARMINE (CONT'D)

I don't have time for this, I have  
a show. Figure this b.s. out before  
I come back here tonight Jim.

(to Beau)

And you... I missed you.

Beau's frustration melts into surprise and confused hope.

Then Carmine throws one last empty bottle at her.

CARMINE (CONT'D)

Next time I won't. Ciao bitch.

(on phone)

Calm your tits Frankie, I'm coming.  
I can't be late to my own show.

Carmine strides out. A car door SLAMS. Wheels PEEL OUT.

BEAU

(desperately Zen)

You are not your anger. You are  
just angry. So very, VERY angry.

(MORE)

BEAU (CONT'D)  
 (livid)  
 GOD Carmine makes me so - UGH!

JUNEBUG JIM  
 So sign and be done with her!

BEAU  
 I CAN'T!

Beau HOWLS ANGRILY. The howl blows a hole in the ceiling. The blast knocks Junebug Jim onto his back like a turtle.

BEAU (CONT'D)  
 I'll be back. I'm going for a walk.

Beau HUFFS a hole in the wall. She storms out.

JUNEBUG JIM  
 Shit. She's not going to like this.

Junebug Jim dials on a tiny cellphone and speaks into it.

JUNEBUG JIM (CONT'D)  
 Heyyyyy Prisilla, it's me, your  
 buddy Jim! Listen, I got bad news.

**INT. LIMOUSINE - AFTERNOON - SIMULTANEOUS**

The pixie from the cold open (wearing a pink servant uniform) struggles to hold a large book of campaign logos. Each logo is a riff on **"A vote for Prisilla is a vote for you!"**

A slender hand with long pink acrylics flips through pages. We travel up it to the shapely form of Prisilla Wimple. Her fluffy chiffon dress is a Guo Pei haute couture wet dream. ANOTHER PIXIE holds her hot pink cellphone to her ear.

PRISILLA  
 What do you mean she said no?! How  
 am I going to clean up this city if  
 you can't do your job?

She rests her hand on the book. The pixie's forehead veins bulge as it strains to stay aloft. Prisilla watches, unmoved.

PRISILLA (CONT'D)  
 I don't need someone who "can't" on  
 my future city council. Do it or  
 I'll find someone who can.

Prisilla snaps her fingers. The second pixie hangs up the phone and the two pixies start buffing her fingernails.

PRISILLA (CONT'D)  
 <HUFF> Like I'm going to let a  
*roach* on my city council after I  
 run a campaign focused on  
 powerwashing this disgusting city.

MAN (O.S.)  
 People around here are small  
 minded, Ms. Wimple. It's why new  
 blood like you is what we need.

PRISILLA  
 I appreciate your flattery, Mr...

REVEAL: Sitting on the opposite end of the limousine is a handsome, slender man with long elven ears, dark wavy hair, and artful gold-rimmed eye-glasses balanced delicately on his nose. He speaks with a soft Germanic accent and wears a long sleeve shirt. THIN GOLDEN RINGS cover long, spidery fingers.

He rubs a ring. A champagne bottle with an identical ring on it floats out of the bar coozie and tops up their glasses.

RUMPLESTILTSKIN  
 Rumplestiltskin, please. You're  
 easy to flatter, Miss Wimple.

He brushes Prisilla's golden hair behind her ears with a reverence bordering on hunger. He subtly sniffs her hair.

RUMPLESTILTSKIN (CONT'D)  
 Don't stress. You'll go gray before  
 your time.

PRISILLA  
 I'll take the price of a touch up  
 out of my offer on that Ever After  
 eyesore. This wolf girl won't sell.  
 No doubt she wants more money.

Rumplestiltskin perks up at "wolf girl." The limousine stops.

RUMPLESTILTSKIN  
 Oh, I wouldn't worry. These things  
 tend to sort themselves out.

The chauffeur opens Prisilla's door. She pats Rumples' hand.

PRISILLA  
 Rumpy, once I'm mayor, we're going  
 to remodel this icky wasteland.

RUMPLESTILTSKIN  
 You have my vote.

As she steps out, he kisses her hand.

RUMPLESTILTSKIN (CONT'D)  
Auf Wiedersehen.

She exits with her pixies. Rumplestiltskin wipes his mouth with a handkerchief, then pulls something from his sleeve -- a strand of Prisilla's hair. It GLOWS and weaves itself into his thumb ring. We now see all of his rings aren't made of gold, but of blonde hair... except his pinky ring, which contains a single black hair among the blonde. He kisses it.

RUMPLESTILTSKIN (CONT'D)  
Let's go see an old friend, mm?

The ring GLOWS. The car rolls off into the night.

**EXT. FAIRYTALE VILLAGE - RESIDENTIAL - MUCH LATER**

A light drizzle falls as Beau, hood up, mumbles to herself while eating a red popsicle and walking moodily down a crowded sidewalk. At 8'0", she's two feet taller than everyone else, but no one notices her. Because New York, fairytale or otherwise, is like that.

BEAU  
I've changed. I've changed every  
day for the past five years!

BOOMF! Beau accidentally knocks over the homeless gnome from before. She coughs out the popsicle stick and stops to help.

BEAU (CONT'D)  
I'm so sorry! Here, let me--

She grabs his hand. Her hood falls back. Big black ears. Big sharp teeth. The gnome snatches his hand back. Horrified.

GNOME  
Y-you're the Big Bad Wolf.

BEAU  
I -- yes, but I'm nice now! See?

She gives him a double thumbs up and a bloody, toothy grin. The gnome scrambles back and starts SCREAMING.

GNOME  
Get away from me! It's the Wolf!  
The Big Bad Wolf is back! Help!

BEAU  
I am helping you! Stop screaming!

A crowd gathers. Sees her crouched menacingly over the gnome. They point and whisper darkly. Snapping pictures of her.

BEAU (CONT'D)  
It's not what it looks like. I'm better now! This is the proof!

She yanks the gnome to his feet -- and sends him flying.

BEAU (CONT'D)  
No no no! That was an accident!

The crowd moves toward her. On the verge of becoming a mob. A police officer heads her way. Beau yells toward the gnome.

BEAU (CONT'D)  
I'm sorry!

Beau puts her hood back on, drops the last of her money into the gnome's hat, and runs away into the night.

**EXT. FAIRYTALE VILLAGE - BUSINESS SECTOR - LATER**

Beau squeezes into a phonebooth and pretends to make a phone call. A police vehicle drives past. Beat. She rests her head against the phone box. Tired. Resigned to the truth:

BEAU  
...I don't belong here anymore.

SQUISH. ABC gum sticks to her hair. She GROANS and tries pulling it off, but the gum just spreads all over her hair. She hangs her head in defeat and notices --

A pink fluorescent glow illuminating the floor. She looks up. The billboard across the street flashes: **"Call Prisilla NOW!"**

Beau pulls the folded paper out of her pocket. Unfolds it. The numbers stare back at her. She punches them into the payphone. The phone dials. She flips the paper over.

And Carmine grins back at her.

Beau throws the paper in surprise, then catches it again. It's a flier advertising **"The Red-Hot Comedienne Carmine Redd TONIGHT at the Star Struck Theater!"**

PRISILLA (O.S.)  
(over phone)  
Hello, you've reached Prisilla Wimple of Wimple Reality, how can I add magic to your day? Hello?

Beau looks at the Prisilla billboard. Then the flier.

PRISILLA (O.S.) (CONT'D)  
This better not be the wing pic guy-

Beau hurries out of the phonebooth toward --

**EXT. STAR STRUCK THEATRE - MOMENTS LATER**

A doorman turns people away and points at a sign: "SOLD OUT."

Beau jimmys open the back entrance and slips inside.

**INT. STAR STRUCK THEATRE - BACKSTAGE/WINGS - MOMENTS LATER**

Beau ducks a frantic busy stage-crew and hides out of sight.

Behind the curtain, an <AUDIENCE CHEERS>.

CARMINE (O.S.)  
I talk shit but I love New Yorkers,  
I do. You have to. Because...

Beau peeks through the curtains at --

**INT. STAR STRUCK THEATRE - STAGE - CONTINUOUS**

Carmine, radiant, performs her heart out, the crowd wrapped around her finger. She downs her gin and tonic and continues.

CARMINE  
We never give up on what we want.  
Take the guy I met on the M on the  
way here. This guy was busking for  
his life even though everyone else  
was pressed against the car like  
sardines just to get away from him.  
Finally he yelled--  
(acting out)  
I don't care if I don't make a  
single dollar. I'm not giving up on  
my dream to be a star! I-- I...

Carmine stammers as she notices something in the audience.  
Beau tracks her gaze to TWO FIGURES in black coats at the  
back of the crowd. Silent. Still. Watching. Carmine recovers.

CARMINE (CONT'D)  
I said, "That attitude will get you  
far.

(MORE)

CARMINE (CONT'D)

It'll get you even further once you  
put your dick back in your pants."  
You've been great. Mwah! Goodnight!

The audience <CHEERS>. Carmine abruptly exits the stage.

**INT. STAR STRUCK THEATRE - WINGS - CONTINUOUS**

Carmine hurries past crew members toward the dressing rooms.

Beau sneaks ahead. As she sneaks past a stage manager sniffs.

STAGE MANAGER

Who smells like wet dog? Tina, are  
you using crystal deodorant again?!

**INT. STAR STRUCK THEATRE - DRESSING ROOMS - MOMENTS LATER**

Carmine hurriedly shimmy's out of her dress, and checks the  
sale tag. It's still attached.

CARMINE

You are going back to the store.

Carmine puts on leggings and stuffs her things into a bag.  
She sips two fingers of whiskey while she packs.

CARMINE (CONT'D)

And I'm laying low tonight.

BEAU (O.S.)

Laying low?

Carmine whirls around, brandishing a ring light as a weapon.  
Beau shuts the door and raises her hands in surrender.

CARMINE

What the hell are you doing here?

BEAU

I want to talk. Earlier, things got-

Beau notices Carmine is shirtless. Carmine resumes packing.

BEAU (CONT'D)

...heated.

CARMINE

There's nothing to talk about. You  
have the document. Sign it and go.

BEAU

I wanted to say you were right. I don't belong here. So I'll sign. You can use my share for charity.

(beat)

I am trying to be better.

CARMINE

Try somewhere else.

A long beat. Beau struggles to get her words out.

BEAU

Why didn't you come to the funeral?

CARMINE

No. I'm not doing this.

BEAU

I know you two argued sometimes, but I was the *only one* there--

WHIMSICAL KNOCKING ON THE DOOR. Carmine pales and covers Beau's mouth. Beau tries not to look at Carmine's breasts.

GRETEL (O.S.)

Guten Abend, Carmine! Open up.

CARMINE

*Fuck.*

Carmine shoves Beau under the dressing table.

CARMINE (CONT'D)

Don't speak. Don't breathe. Choke and die if you can. Okay? Okay.

Carmine throws a cloth over the table as the door opens. Beau cuts a small hole in it with a claw to see--

HANSEL (20) and GRETEL (20) HUMPERDINCK, fraternal twins, enter. They both have perfectly coifed blonde hair, one gold hoop earring, and plastic mask-like smiles. Under their coats are all-black Berghain outfits. Gretel is clearly the leader.

CARMINE (CONT'D)

Hansel. Gretel. Rumpbutt must be at the bottom of the new hire barrel to send the identical idiots.

HANSEL

We're *fraternal*, bescheuert.

GRETEL

Your payment is overdue. No more extensions.

Underneath the table, Beau drags a hand down her face. Shit.

CARMINE

I told you I'd have it by tonight.

GRETEL

Do you?

Silence. Gretel TUTS and wags a finger.

GRETEL (CONT'D)

Naughty naughty. If you can't pay the Straw-man, he owns you.

Hansel's smile is uncomfortably tight. Almost pained.

HANSEL

Forever and ever and ever. Jaja!

CARMINE

I'll have it when the bar sells.

Gretel puts her hands on her hips, revealing a CROSSBOW.

CARMINE (CONT'D)

[SCOFF] Am I supposed to be scared?

Gretel's smile twitches. CLACK! Crossbows train on Carmine.

HANSEL

(sweetly)

Yes.

GRETEL

No more extensions. Money. Tonight.

(sniffs)

And get this checked for mold. It smells like wet hund in here.

The twins exit. Carmine grabs her bags and hurries out.

**INT. EVER AFTER BAR - NIGHT - HOURS LATER**

Etienne is asleep in his bathtub with a drink in his hands and an open wine bottle between his legs. Every time he nods forward he sips from his glass like a Drinking Bird desk toy. Carmine storms in, steals his wine bottle, and sits at the bar chugging straight from the bottle. Beau enters after her.

BEAU

You can't run from me forever. You lied to me three times! You lied about the bar money. It's not going to charity. It's for Rumpel--

Carmine covers Beau's mouth.

CARMINE

Are you crazy? Don't say it!

Beau glares at her. SLURP. Carmine yanks her hand back.

CARMINE (CONT'D)

Did you just lick my hand?!

BEAU

You even lied about taking the M train! Who does that?!

Carmine finishes her wine and pours herself some tequila. She's flushed and clearly tipsy, on her way to drunk.

CARMINE

That's two. What's the other one.

Beau sits at the bar beside her. Carmine scowls and pushes Beau's stool back with her foot. Beau holds three fingers up.

BEAU

You promised me you would never make a deal with Rumpelstiltskin.

CARMINE

I guess we're both liars now.

BEAU

Why would you do that? You remember how I was when I worked for him.

Carmine blows a raspberry at her. Definitely drunk.

CARMINE

Yeah. You sucked. The leather jacket was a nice look though.

(sniffs)

Ugh, you *do* smell like wet dog. And why is there gum in your hair?

Beau twists sharply toward the hole in the wall. Ears up.

BEAU

Shh. Someone's here.

Hansel and Gretel waltz cheerfully through the hole in the wall, crossbows ready. Carmine hides two beer bottles behind her back. Hansel and Gretel walk around Beau, examining her.

HANSEL

So you're the Big Bad Wolf. I have to say, I'm whelmed. Not overwhelmed, or underwhelmed. Just--

Hansel makes a "meh" gesture with his hands.

BEAU

Rude.

CARMINE

Meet Hansel and Gretel.

Beau steps forward, chest puffed. Carmine pushes her back. Gretel turns to Carmine. Removes the safety on her crossbow.

GRETEL

The money.

CARMINE

It's right -- here!

She HURLS the bottles. They fly expertly toward the twins-- Who easily shoot them out of the air. Gretel aims at Carmine.

GRETEL

You belong to the boss now, but I don't think he'll mind a few holes!

The crossbows FIRE at Carmine. Beau jumps in front of her and HOWLS. The howl blows Hansel and Gretel into the wall. A crossbow bolt cuts Gretel's cheek. Blood spatters on Beau's hands. They tumble under the larger piano's bench, out cold.

Carmine, rattled, hugs herself. Beau stares at the blood on her hands, salivating a little. Carmine sees the delighted, mad gleam in her eyes and backs away from her. Unnerved.

CARMINE

So much for "changed." You're not under control at all, are you? You're still addicted to it.

Beau snaps back to herself. Shuts her eyes. Deep breaths.

BEAU

(sotto)

You are in control. Not the Wolf.

She opens her eyes and wipes the blood off on her pants.

BEAU (CONT'D)

I'm fine. You're safe. Promise.

Carmine says nothing. Beau gestures at the twins. Hansel's weirdly thick drool drips into Gretel's mouth.

BEAU (CONT'D)

It's going to get worse, Rose. Let me help you. I *want* to help you.

CARMINE

(incredulous)

Help me? You're the reason I'm in this situation! Why do you think Yaya Lupe suddenly left New York to live in the middle of bumfuck nowhere? Because when you ditched Rumpley-tits and booked it she was worried about *you*. She went looking for *you*. She stayed out there and took care of *you*. What about me? I was eighteen and she was my only family. I had no one.

Carmine finishes her glass. Pours another to the brim.

CARMINE (CONT'D)

Fuck your help. You weren't there when I needed it. The deal was.

Beau rests her face in her hands.

BEAU

I didn't know. I'm sorry.

CARMINE

Good. Now shut up and wait *quietly* for Cockroach McGee to show up.

Beau notices Carmine's tipsiness and takes the bottle.

BEAU

You need to make a new deal.

CARMINE

I need you to drop it.

BEAU

He said he'd give you low interest if you gave him something sentimental as collateral, didn't he? Something he could use his magic on to keep you from leaving.

Carmine shifts uncomfortably.

CARMINE

He said it was temporary.

BEAU

Nothing is temporary with him. Once you can't pay, he *owns* you.

CARMINE

I feel like the world is owning my ass right now. How bad can he be?

Beau rubs her wrists. MAGIC SYMBOLS are burned into her skin.

BEAU

Pretty bad. How many extensions do you have?

Carmine stares at the countertop. She raises three fingers. They sit in silence as this sinks in.

BEAU (CONT'D)

How much do you owe?

CARMINE

More than the bar is worth.

BEAU

Then selling it won't fix anything. To pay Rumpelstiltskin off, we'll need revenue--

Carmine stands abruptly, drunk and angry.

CARMINE

Stop it! Stop saying his name!

BEAU

He's not Beetlejuice. He's a mobster. Look-- Rumpelstiltskin, Rumpelstiltskin, Rumpelstiltskin--

RUMPLESTILTSKIN (O.S.)

You rang?

They turn. There, sitting at the larger grand piano...

His gold-tipped shoes resting on Hansel and Gretel's faces...

...is RUMPLESTILTSKIN.

CARMINE

I *fucking* told you.

ACT III**INT. THE EVER AFTER BAR - CONTINUOUS**

Rumplestiltskin tests a few keys before carefully lowering the key cover. He neatly steps over the piano bench, disdainfully prodding the twins' faces with his shoe.

RUMPLESTILTSKIN

It's just so hard to find good help these days.

He rubs a ring. The twins' hoop earrings GLOW and wash the screen in white light. When it fades the twins are gone and he's just feet from Carmine. Beau stands between them.

RUMPLESTILTSKIN (CONT'D)

Imagine my surprise when I heard the Big Bad Wolf was in town. Imagine my sorrow and *hurt* when I had to hear this from... a nobody.

Rumplestiltskin daintily wipes the piano dust on his hands on Etienne's sleeping face. He reaches toward Beau.

Beau SNARLS, hackles raised, chest puffed. His gold hoop earrings and gold necklace flutter in the wind.

BEAU

Do. Not. Touch me.

RUMPLESTILTSKIN

Settle. I'm here for Miss Redd.

He turns his hand over. His palm skin elongates and breaks off into a rolled up parchment. It unfurls... and unfurls... and unfurls... until it finally unspools at Carmine's feet.

RUMPLESTILTSKIN (CONT'D)

Your contract and your collateral.

Something floats out of the contract. The ROSE-GOLD LOCKET. Beau turns sharply toward Carmine. Carmine doesn't notice.

RUMPLESTILTSKIN (CONT'D)

Upon repayment, with interest, the contract shall be voided and the collateral returned. Miss Redd, do you or do you not have my money?

CARMINE

I... I can get it, end of the week.

RUMPLESTILTSKIN  
That is not what I asked.

BEAU  
You gave her a bad deal.

RUMPLESTILTSKIN  
Hurtful. But also not what I asked.

The parchment disappears in his skin. He dangles the locket.

RUMPLESTILTSKIN (CONT'D)  
Sans payment, I'm afraid Miss Redd  
and her collateral now belong to  
me, as stipulated in her contract.

CARMINE  
You didn't tell me that you fucking  
TOADSTOOL!

He rubs another ring. Carmine's mouth magically seals shut.

RUMPLESTILTSKIN  
(mildly)  
Language.

Carmine SCREAMS THROUGH HER LIPS, grabs a chair, raises it  
over her head to SMASH DOWN ON RUMPLESTILTSKIN--

He rubs a ring. FLASH! Carmine turns into a GOLD STATUE.

BEAU  
ROSE!

Beau frantically touches Carmine's face looking for life.

BEAU (CONT'D)  
What did you do to her, you monster?!

RUMPLESTILTSKIN  
Those in hay houses should not huff  
and puff.

He strokes Carmine's now-golden hair.

RUMPLESTILTSKIN (CONT'D)  
I think it's an improvement. Maybe  
I'll keep her like this. After all,  
she's mine to toy with now.

BEAU  
Turn her back. Now.

RUMPLESTILTSKIN

You've forgotten how things work in  
my city. You want something, you  
make a deal for it. For example.

SNAP! A new parchment unfurls from his other hand.

RUMPLESTILTSKIN (CONT'D)

You want more time on Miss Redd's  
contract.

Beau ROARS at him. Wind whips everywhere, shoves the pianos  
back, throws Etienne into his tub then flips the tub and  
table over. Etienne curls up in his sleep, happily buzzed.

Utterly unmoved by the wind, Rumpelstiltskin lifts an  
eyebrow and waits. Beau finishes and falls to her knees.

BEAU

What do you want from me?

He looks at Beau with something too sharp to be love.

RUMPLESTILTSKIN

You know what I want, old friend.

Beau tears her eyes away from Carmine. She pricks her finger  
with the pen. Fighting a tremble, she signs the contract in  
blood. He kisses the contract. It refurls.

BEAU

...I'm not your friend.

RUMPLESTILTSKIN

No no no, of course not.

He rubs the pinky ring. The locket BECOMES a GOLD COLLAR.

On Rumpelstiltskin's cordial, too-sharp smile --

RUMPLESTILTSKIN (CONT'D)

You're my pet.

**INT. THE EVER AFTER BAR - NIGHT - SOMETIME LATER**

On Carmine's frozen expression. She GASPS and comes to life.

CARMINE

GAAAAAAAHH!

She swings the chair in her hands down -- SMASH -- on Beau.

BEAU

OW! Why would you do that?!

Beau shakes woodchips out of her fur. For a split second we see something BLACK around her neck beneath her fur.

Carmine looks around. No Rumpelstiltskin.

CARMINE

Where'd he go?! I'm going to beat him until he crawls back to whatever bog he slithered out of!

Beau gently takes what's left of the chair from her.

BEAU

He left.

CARMINE

Left? How'd you get him to leave?

BEAU

I told you, I know Ru-- him. Except for the name thing. That was news to me.

CARMINE

Wait. He's like... gone gone?

BEAU

For now. I renegotiated your contract and got you more time.

CARMINE

More time isn't going to help. You won't believe this, but I didn't go into comedy for the money.

Beau gestures at herself and the bar.

BEAU

That's where we come in. It's hard to see now but if we get the bar running again I think we can make enough money to pay off your debt.

CARMINE

Why are you doing this?

BEAU

You were right, before. All that stuff I said earlier about turning the bar into a community center or something, that wasn't about helping people. That was... I don't know. Me trying to buy forgiveness.

Beau fondly straightens Etienne's crown.

BEAU (CONT'D)

If I'm going to give back what I stole, it has to start here, with the Ever After. And you...r debt.

Carmine steps forward.

CARMINE

You really want to help me.

BEAU

I do.

CARMINE

I meant what I said last night.

BEAU

I know. So did I.

Carmine narrows her eyes, sizing Beau up. A strange moment.

<DUBSTEP BASS>. Pinnocchio moonwalks through the hole in the wall with Junebug Jim on one shoulder, and a small speaker playing JAPANESE DUBSTEP on the other. He bounces in place.

JUNEBUG JIM

Sorry I'm late. It's hard to steer Pinnocchio when he's rolling. Now, let's sign that contract!

Beau looks at Carmine. Hopeful. Carmine scowls... but the edge of her lip curls upward with faint amusement.

On Junebug Jim's cheerful and slightly nervous face--

JUNEBUG JIM (CONT'D)

What's everyone smiling about?

MATCH CUT TO:

**INT. THE EVER AFTER BAR - NEXT MORNING**

On Junebug Jim's horrified and dismayed face.

JUNEBUG JIM  
You're making a huge mistake!

REVEAL: He's watching Beau and Carmine cleaning up the bar.

He ANGRY COCKROACH HISSES at them as Pinnochio rave steps back out of the bar (without his speakers).

BEAU  
What do you think the hisses mean?

CARMINE  
Dunno. I was busy stealing that kid's speakers.  
(holding up speakers)  
Stay on your side. I don't want fur on my nice sweatpants.

She plugs her phone into the speakers. "HANG ME OUT TO DRY" BY THE COLD WAR KIDS PLAYS over a CLEANING MONTAGE:

- Beau cleans counters while Carmine steals unopened bottles.
- Carmine holds a trashbag open. Beau HUFFS and PUFFS dust toward it but gets it everywhere *but* the trashbag.
- Beau hoses Prisilla's picket signs off the lawn.
- Carmine removes a sprite hive inside the wall. They sting her. Beau laughs -- until they start stinging HER.
- Carmine hoses Beau down like the picket signs. Beau does the wet dog shake all over her.
- Beau props up Etienne while Carmine squeegees him clean.

END MONTAGE

Beau balances on a ladder and sheepishly tapes plastic bags over the holes she huffed and puffed in the wall and ceiling.

BEAU  
Maybe if we call it a sunroof no one will notice?

Carmine kicks the ladder. Beau falls off. Carmine pours two drinks. Beau declines hers. Carmine shrugs and downs both.

CARMINE  
Seriously, what'd you trade to make Rumples renegotiate?

Beau looks at the broken bottle shards. In its glassy reflections, HER BLACK COLLAR GLEAMS GOLD.

BEAU  
 ... Nothing important.

As Beau returns to cleaning, we zoom out to --

**EXT. EVER AFTER BAR - CONTINUOUS**

The pixie from the limousine watches them, then flies away.

CUT TO:

**INT. PRISILLA'S OFFICE - SOMETIME LATER**

Prisilla sits in an all-pink office with too many shag pillows freshening her mascara. On her desk is a miniature copy of Fairytale Village. Prisilla points her mascara wand at different miniature buildings, magicking them pink.

PRISILLA  
 This little building sold at market. This little building's tenants no longer own. And this little building...

Prisilla picks up the mini Ever After.

PRISILLA (CONT'D)  
 Is getting bulldozed to the ground.

The pixie flies in and whispers in her ear. Prisilla SQUEALS and squeezes the pixie like a stress ball.

PRISILLA (CONT'D)  
 They're doing WHAT?

She waves the mascara wand and disappears in a violent burst of FAIRY DUST. The pixie falls face first on the desk.

PIXIE  
 Fuck it. I'm moving to Jersey.

**END OF EPISODE.**