

"THE GIRL WITH THE RED RIDING HOOD"

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FADE IN:

EXT. DARK FOREST - NIGHT

FLAMES fill the SCREEN. Then: the gentle voice of an OLD WOMAN, barely more than a whisper...

OLD WOMAN (V.O.)

I am a common woman. I was born in a common cottage in a common village. My life would likely be no different from yours, were it not for the most uncommon events that occurred during the winter of the Year of Our Lord Thirteen Hundred and Twenty-five. I learned many things that winter. About people. About love. But mainly, I learned about loss.

A MAN tosses a piece of wood into the flames, which turns out to be a LARGE CAMPFIRE.

OLD WOMAN (V.O.)

To this day, I am the only person that I know to be living who knows the whole truth about that horrible time. This is my tale.

CAMERA PULLS BACK, revealing THREE KNIGHTS, beleaguered, scarred, returning from the Crusades. Their armor is in disarray, adorned with souvenirs from the Middle East. They're camped in a clearing, their cart pulled to a nearby roadside. LIGHTNING flashes in the distance.

One of them, a TEENAGE BOY who looks like his sword might weigh more than he does, hitches a nervous HORSE to a tree. He strokes the horse's neck, calming.

Then: A WOLF HOWLS in the distance. The Boy suddenly looks nervous, too. He quickly joins the others at the campfire -- a FAT KNIGHT (30s) and an OLD KNIGHT.

TEENAGE BOY

Did you hear that?

FAT KNIGHT

Hear what?

The wolf HOWLS AGAIN. The Boy shivers, fearful.

TEENAGE BOY

The innkeeper told me --

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FAT KNIGHT

I know what he told you. He told you about the Wolf. The Beast of Villiers la Croisée.

(off Boy's look)

The people of that village have been spreading that nonsense since before you were a tickle in your daddy's prick. I'd give you a whipping for believing it if I thought it would do any good.

The Old Knight stares into the fire, then speaks.

OLD KNIGHT

I used to travel these woods. They told the same stories then that they do now. Only I heard them from a man who actually saw the beast with his own eyes.

FAT KNIGHT

Half the people in these parts claim to have seen it.

OLD KNIGHT

This man claimed it was the last thing he ever saw. The Wolf took his eyes. And half his face.

(off their looks)

I saw his scars and empty eye sockets. His skin looked like it was on inside-out. It didn't seem to me like the kind of thing a man would make up a story about.

He shrugs. His companions exchange an unnerved look.

EXT. DARK FOREST - NIGHT (LATER)

It's raining now. The Knights sleep underneath the cart for shelter. Lightning FLASHES.

Then, from O.S., the horse gives a series of frightened NEIGHS. The Boy stirs, but by the time he awakens, there is only the sound of the RAIN. *Did he imagine it?* He reluctantly decides to venture out to investigate.

The Boy hurries over to where he tied the horse... but all he finds is the empty rope blowing in the wind. In a FLASH of lightning, he sees that the horse is gone.

Then he hears something. A strange GNAWING sound. TEARING and POPPING. He slowly turns...

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Not far away, he makes out a shape in the darkness. The horse is on its side, WHEEZING helplessly. And there's something crouched next to it. We can't make out what it is, only a MAN-LIKE SHAPE, shrouded in shadow.

Whatever it is, it's eating the horse alive.

The Boy steps away in horror, then hurriedly stumbles back to his companions and frantically shakes them awake.

FAT KNIGHT

What the devil are you --?!

TEENAGE BOY

Wait, wait! Be quiet!

He raises a hand. He's heard something. They listen. FOOTSTEPS. Approaching through the mud. The Boy's hand clutches a dagger, but the Fat Knight reaches out and stays him, terrified. The Boy follows his look.

We never get a good look at THE FIGURE walking toward them. But what the men see scares them shitless. It stops near the cart. The men huddle together, watching as it slowly starts to walk around the cart --

-- then suddenly jumps atop it. The Figure is now above them. With each step it takes, the boards of the wooden cart CREAK and bend under its weight. A long beat.

Then the Figure jumps down again, landing behind the men, startling them. It pauses. The men cower, shivering...

Suddenly, the cart is flipped over as if it weighed nothing, revealing the terrified Knights beneath it. Lightning FLASHES. A shadow falls over them.

The men scramble to their feet, but the Old Knight slips in the mud. The Boy stops to help him, but then the Old Knight starts screaming, something GROWLS, and the Boy stops short at what he sees. The Fat Knight runs.

TEENAGE BOY

Wait! We have to help him!

The Fat Knight ignores him. The Old Knight shrieks. We hear the same TEARING and POPPING that this thing made while eating the horse. The Boy quickly looks around...

... sees a curved Arabian scimitar lying in the mud, fallen from the overturned wagon. He grabs it and as the Fat Knight runs, the Boy stands his ground. He hefts the blade. He's young, but he has used this before. A lot. Rain beats down on his face and lightning FLASHES as he confronts the thing that is devouring the Old Knight.

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The Fat Knight runs through the forest without looking back. He hears a loud HOWL behind him and runs faster. Then he hears the Boy SCREAMING and blind panic sets in, his head filled with the sounds of his HEAVY BREATHING and RUNNING FOOTFALLS in the mud and crashing THUNDER.

He's running so fast he nearly falls into the RUSHING RIVER that crosses his path. He quickly looks for a way to cross. The river is gorged and the water is moving fast. Then, in a flash of lightning, he spots it --

A fallen tree spans the river. The Knight hurries to it. The bark is smooth and slick from the rain. He can't stand on it. He has to crawl. He edges out on his hands and knees, his eyes flicking nervously at the waters surging underneath him. He has almost made it across...

... when he hears a LOW SNARL. He freezes. Looks back. Lightning FLASHES. The Figure, still obscured to us, stands on the riverbank behind the Knight. It GROWLS.

The Knight tries to crawl away, but slips and nearly falls in the river. Then suddenly, the tree beneath him begins to move. He hangs on for his life and looks back. The Figure is on the tree behind him, slowly closing in.

He starts to crawl, slips again. No way he can get away. He looks down into the racing river waters. Then back at the Figure closing in. The choice is clear. The Fat Knight dives headfirst off the tree --

-- but he never hits the water. Something grabs him by the legs and stops him short. He cries out and looks up at the thing that is dangling him helplessly above the water. He weeps. Then, abruptly --

-- he is yanked up out of sight.

EXT. VILLAGE - DAY

A BUTCHER quickly and expertly cuts the throat of a pig that has been hung upside down by its hind legs. It kicks and squirms as it bleeds out into a pan.

VILLAGERS bustle along a muddy road. A MERCHANT sells his wares. Dogs run and BARK. A DISHEVELLED MAN locked up in the stockade. A BLACKSMITH's hammer CLANGS.

On the surface, a typical medieval village. But something is wrong here. A pall hangs over the place. The people are subdued, beaten. A TITLE comes up:

FRANCE
1324

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There's a SIGN in the village green. Hanging from it is a wood plank with a crude drawing of a moon on it, three-quarters full. The moon has a vaguely sinister face...

INT. ISABELLE'S FAMILY COTTAGE - LOFT - DAY

A tiny spider spins its web. CAMERA RACKS FOCUS to a pretty 17-year-old GIRL gazing up at it. Her name is ISABELLE. She scoops the spider up, watches it crawl around on her hand, fascinated.

EXT. ISABELLE'S FAMILY COTTAGE - DAY

The home of a medieval peasant. Isabelle's mother, SUZETTE (late 30s), and sister, LUCIE (18, plain-looking), work in the garden. They look up as Isabelle emerges from the cottage, daintily carrying the spider.

LUCIE

Honestly, Isabelle. Just kill it.

ISABELLE

I can't. It's the fifth commandment. Thou shalt not kill.

Lucie rolls her eyes. Isabelle crouches, letting the spider crawl off her hand. She watches it skitter away, then calls to Suzette, feigning nonchalance:

ISABELLE

I'm going to take Father some water.

SUZETTE

All right. Don't be long.

Isabelle smiles, grabs a bucket and ladle, and anxiously heads toward the village. Lucie watches her go, dubious.

EXT. VILLAGE - DAY

Isabelle struggles to draw water from a well. Even toiling and sweaty, Isabelle's beauty stands in stark contrast to her squalid surroundings.

A CARPENTER building a timber-framed structure notices his TWO YOUNG APPRENTICES (late teens) casting distracted glances in her direction. He calls out to her, smiling.

CARPENTER

Hey, there! Let one of these young lads get that for you.

(CONTINUED)

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ISABELLE

I can do it myself.

The Carpenter smiles. Of course she can.

EXT. NEW FIELD - DAY

The village WOODCUTTERS are chopping down trees and hauling away the lumber. A GROUP of them are in the midst of what looks like a serious conversation.

Isabelle approaches them with the bucket of water. One of them turns and sees Isabelle. His name is CESAIRE (handsome, 40s). He hides his dour expression and gives Isabelle a big smile. She smiles back.

ISABELLE

Mother thought you might be thirsty.

CESAIRE

That was very thoughtful of her.

He gives her a knowing look as he ladles a drink from the bucket. Isabelle's gaze drifts from him to another woodcutter, working off by himself. His name is PETER (21, darkly handsome, almost dangerous-looking).

He makes eye contact with Isabelle for a moment, then wipes his brow and calls out to the WOODCUTTER BOSS.

PETER

I'm taking a break.

WOODCUTTER BOSS

A break? Does that mean you're going to start working?

The other Woodcutters LAUGH. Peter walks away. Isabelle's gaze lingers on him too long. Cesaire notices, not entirely comfortable with what he sees...

EXT. WOODS - PATH - DAY

Not far from where the Woodcutters work, Peter waits, impatient. Soon Isabelle approaches, smiling. He takes her in his arms, kissing her. She holds him tight.

PETER

I was afraid you weren't coming.

ISABELLE

You should know better than that.

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He kisses her again, nibbling her neck. Isabelle opens her eyes, smiles up at him. Touches his face.

ISABELLE

I think my sister's starting to suspect something.

PETER

Do you think she'll tell your father?

ISABELLE

I don't care. I wish she would tell him. I want everyone to know. Besides, my father likes you.

PETER

Of course he does. Right up until the point where he figures out what I'm doing with his daughter.

Peter glances back and Isabelle follows his look. Through the trees, she sees her father and the group of grim Woodcutters, still in serious conversation.

ISABELLE

What's going on?

PETER

You haven't heard?

(off her look)

Three men. They found them this morning just off the Center Road. At least they think it was three men. There wasn't enough left to piece them back together.

A long beat as Isabelle takes this in. Then:

ISABELLE

Was it the Wolf?

PETER

Could it have been anything else?

Isabelle shudders. No, it couldn't have been.

PETER

We should have killed that monster a long time ago.

ISABELLE

I know. You say that every month.

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He gives her a grim smile, then kisses her. She kisses him back, then tries to stop kissing him. It's not easy.

ISABELLE

I'd better go.

PETER

Same time tomorrow?

ISABELLE

Don't get used to this. I start my sewing lessons next week.

PETER

You really think you can go all day without seeing me?

ISABELLE

I'll manage somehow. Pride is a cardinal sin, by the way.

PETER

I can think of worse sins I could be committing.

She gives a cautioning look, then leaves with a smile.

EXT. VILLAGE - SQUARE - DAWN

The VILLAGE HERALD is changing the plank on the moon sign. He replaces the picture of the three-quarters moon with a picture of a half moon, its face indifferent.

HERALD

Half full! Half full!

INT. ISABELLE'S FAMILY COTTAGE - COMMON ROOM - DAWN

Suzette is putting bread and cheese into a basket. Isabelle pulls on a drab hooded cloak.

SUZETTE

You mind your grandmother, understand? You're her student now, the same as the other girls.

ISABELLE

Yes, Mother.

Suzette hands her the basket with a proud look.

SUZETTE

My last baby has grown up.

EXT. VILLAGE - CROSSROADS - MORNING

Isabelle watches a DEAF BOY perform simple sleight of hand magic tricks. His name is CLAUDE (14). She applauds his performance and hands him a coin. He makes it "disappear," then smiles big and runs away.

A crazy old woman, LUCRECE, shoots Isabelle a look.

LUCRECE

You're only encouraging him.

ISABELLE

I know.

THREE GIRLS (ages 16-18) approach: ROXANNE (round-faced, cheery and instantly likable), PRUDENCE (practical, serious), and ROSEMARIA (pretty, arrogant, flirtatious). A playful PUPPY tags along. Prudence and Rosemaria look tired, but Roxanne greets Isabelle with a big smile.

ISABELLE

You look happy.

ROXANNE

Aren't you excited?

PRUDENCE

It's too early to be excited.

ROXANNE

I'm just trying to look on the bright side.

ROSEMARIA

Well, stop it before somebody hurts you.

The girls have a laugh at Roxanne's expense.

EXT. VILLAGE - OUTSKIRTS - MORNING

The girls leave the village on a trail that leads through the dark forest. The puppy stops at the edge of the forest. Then it WHINES and refuses to follow.

EXT. DARK FOREST - PATH - MORNING

The trail stretches out in front of the girls as far as they can see. Rosemaria walks with Roxanne. Prudence hangs back with Isabelle, brimming with juicy gossip.

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PRUDENCE

Did you hear about her and the
Darley brothers?

ISABELLE

Oh, no! Which one?

PRUDENCE

Both! On the same night!

Isabelle gives an incredulous look and Prudence tries to contain her laughter. Rosemaria hears and looks back at them. She scowls at Isabelle.

ROSEMARIA

Why does your grandmother have to
live so far away?

ISABELLE

What's the matter, Rosemaria?
Having trouble walking?

Prudence laughs. Roxanne frowns, disapproving.
Rosemaria shoots Isabelle a dirty look.

EXT. GRANDMOTHER'S COTTAGE - DAY

The girls cross a little wooden bridge that spans a
BABBLING brook and follow the trail to a large cottage,
well past its prime. Chickens CLUCK and peck around it.

An OLD WOMAN opens the door and waves to them. She's
stooped and withered, but her eyes are bright and
beautiful. She wears a blue belted gown and a necklace
with a crucifix on it. This is Isabelle's GRANDMOTHER.

GRANDMOTHER

Well, stop dawdling. Come on,
come on.

The girls hurry inside, but Grandmother stops Isabelle.

GRANDMOTHER

Your mother has warned you not to
expect any special treatment from
me?

ISABELLE

Yes, ma'am.

Grandmother eyes her a moment longer, then breaks into a
smile and surreptitiously hands her a bright red apple.

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GRANDMOTHER

Well, then your mother doesn't
know me very well, does she?

Isabelle smiles as Grandmother ushers her inside.

INT. GRANDMOTHER'S COTTAGE - DAY

Grandmother works a pair of knitting needles, casting loops of red wool yarn onto one of them, a BLACK CAT resting on her lap. Her bedchamber is hidden by a beautiful veil embroidered with palms and pomegranates. The girls sit facing her, watching as she knits. Then:

GRANDMOTHER

There. This is going to be my
foundation. Everything I do now
will build off of this.

She shows the row of stitches to Roxanne.

GRANDMOTHER

Roxanne, is this a good
foundation?

ROXANNE

I don't know.

GRANDMOTHER

Why not?

ROXANNE

Well... you haven't told us what
you're making.

GRANDMOTHER

There's something else I haven't
told you. I haven't told you why
I'm making it. Before you begin
any task, you must first always
ask yourself why.

ROSEMARIA

Why?

The girls laugh. Grandmother gives her a patient smile.

GRANDMOTHER

Because understanding why you are
doing something is the key to
doing it successfully. So, before
we begin today, let's be certain
that we have a good foundation.
Who can tell me why you are here?

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

PRUDENCE

To become seamstresses. To learn
how to sew and mend clothes.

GRANDMOTHER

That's what you are doing. But
why are you doing it?

Blank looks. None of them have ever considered this.

GRANDMOTHER

Isabelle, your sister studied with
me last winter. What does she do
now?

ISABELLE

She works with the women.

GRANDMOTHER

Why don't you work with them?

ISABELLE

I don't know how to yet.

GRANDMOTHER

And how does that make you feel?

Isabelle thinks for a moment, then has an insight.

ISABELLE

Like a child.

Grandmother gives her a smile, then continues.

GRANDMOTHER

You will be coming here every day
for the next three months. During
that time, I will teach you
everything you need to know to be
productive members of our
community. But there is something
far more important that will also
be happening here.

All the girls are paying close attention now, but
Grandmother seems to be speaking directly to Isabelle.

GRANDMOTHER

You will be proving your worth and
learning your place in the world.
And I promise you, when you leave
here for the last time, you will
never feel like a child again.

EXT. VILLAGE - OUTSKIRTS - DUSK

The four girls return to the village along the forest path. Waiting for them is Peter. Isabelle pretends to not notice him. As they pass, he calls out to her:

PETER

I need to talk to you.

Isabelle turns to face him, trying to stay nonchalant.

ISABELLE

What about?

Peter just looks at her for a beat. Isabelle turns and sees that the other girls have stopped to watch. Isabelle shoots them a look. The girls take the hint and leave. When they've gone, Peter walks up to Isabelle.

PETER

When were you planning on telling me?

ISABELLE

Telling you what?

PETER

That you're engaged to be married to Henri Smith.

Isabelle gapes at him, stunned and confused.

ISABELLE

Henri Smith? Is this a joke?

PETER

Look at me. Just look at me and tell me you didn't know.

She looks at him and sees it in his eyes. He's serious.

ISABELLE

Who told you this?

PETER

Your father.

Off Isabelle's look...

INT. ISABELLE'S FAMILY COTTAGE - COMMON ROOM - NIGHT

The family is gathered around the table. Isabelle and Lucie listen to their parents in stunned silence.

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CONTINUED:

SUZETTE

It's all been arranged. Your marriage to Henri will settle our debt to his father.

Isabelle nods, shaken. Cesaire sees that she's upset.

SUZETTE

We know that you and Peter have become friends. But you have adult responsibilities now. That means putting your family's interests ahead of your own.

ISABELLE

So Henri Smith is in the family's interest and Peter is not?

CESAIRE

Peter is a fine young man.

ISABELLE

But what? He's poor? He's an orphan?

SUZETTE

He's not one of us. His parents were outsiders.

ISABELLE

Why? Because they hadn't lived here since Noah built the ark?

SUZETTE

You mind your tongue.

Isabelle is about to respond, when she notices something. Lucie is crying. A beat. Lucie looks up at her parents.

LUCIE

Do you realize how this makes me look? I'm older than her by more than a year. If anyone should be getting married in the spring, it's me.

Everyone is taken aback. Lucie storms out of the cottage, angrily wiping tears. Isabelle watches her go.

INT. ISABELLE'S FAMILY COTTAGE - COMMON ROOM - NIGHT

Cesaire smokes his pipe, troubled. Suzette sits nearby.

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CESAIRE

This was your idea. Now I have
both of them hating me.

In the loft, Isabelle and Lucie are in bed... but
Isabelle only pretends to be asleep so she can eavesdrop.

SUZETTE

We knew Isabelle was going to be
stubborn. It wouldn't be like her
to simply do as she's told. She's
too much like her grandmother.

CESAIRE

That she is. What about Lucie?

SUZETTE

She's a good girl, but she's still
a child. Talk to her. You're her
father. She'll listen to you.

Isabelle glances over at Lucie... and sees that she's
been eavesdropping, too. Lucie turns away, embarrassed.
Isabelle gives her a sad look.

EXT. ISABELLE'S FAMILY COTTAGE - DAY

There's a knock at the door. Isabelle answers, revealing
HENRI (18). He's tall and good-looking, but still
awkward in his body. Isabelle eyes him, a little aloof.

HENRI

Hello, Isabelle.

ISABELLE

Hello, Henri.

EXT. VILLAGE - ROAD - DAY

Isabelle and Henri walk in awkward silence. Then:

HENRI

So I suppose you've heard.

ISABELLE

Yes. My parents are very pleased.

HENRI

And you? Are you pleased?

ISABELLE

It's a very generous arrangement.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

Not the answer he was hoping for. Another awkward beat.

HENRI

Do you have any other feelings
about it? About me?

ISABELLE

I'm not sure. We've never really
talked that much.

HENRI

I know. That's why I asked you to
walk with me. I wanted to talk.

ISABELLE

What for?

HENRI

Well... because we're going to be
husband and wife soon.

ISABELLE

Not until the spring festival.
That's months away. A lot can
happen in a few months.

Henri seems disappointed. She sees this and reconsiders.

ISABELLE

All right. What would you like to
talk about?

HENRI

I'm not really sure. I brought
you this.

He reaches into his pocket and offers Isabelle a flower.
She takes it, suddenly blushing. But just then, she sees
Peter walking toward them with another WOODCUTTER.

ISABELLE

Well, I'm glad we had this
conversation.

Isabelle abruptly turns and walks away, leaving Henri
surprised and a little hurt. She passes Peter, her eyes
averted. He glances back at her as she and walks away...

INT. ISABELLE'S FAMILY COTTAGE - NIGHT

Isabelle is helping Suzette prepare dinner, but she's
purposefully ignoring her mother. Suzette notices.

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CONTINUED:

SUZETTE

You know, I had a sweetheart when
I was your age, too.

Isabelle looks up, intrigued in spite of herself.
Suzette smiles slyly at her reaction.

ISABELLE

What happened?

SUZETTE

Nothing happened. My parents
arranged for me to marry your
father and that was the end of
that.

ISABELLE

Didn't you want to marry your
sweetheart?

SUZETTE

Of course, I did. But there's
more to marriage than being in
love. Love doesn't always last
and it certainly doesn't fill your
children's bellies in the winter.

ISABELLE

You've never wished you could have
married that other boy?

SUZETTE

Not even once.

Isabelle eyes her, still uncertain.

INT. CHURCH - DAY

Isabelle prays in front of an altar with prayer candles
on it. Peter kneels next to her and lights one of them.

PETER

We need to talk.

EXT. CHURCH - DAY

Isabelle and Peter stand behind the church, out of sight.
Peter looks off toward the woods, his back to Isabelle.

PETER

You have to go through with it.
You have to marry Henri.

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CONTINUED:

Isabelle takes a step toward him. She hesitates, gathering her nerve to speak. Then:

ISABELLE

I don't care what my parents want.
They don't own me. I love you.

PETER

That doesn't matter.

ISABELLE

It does to me. Doesn't it matter
to you?

PETER

It's not our decision to make.

ISABELLE

You sound like my mother.

PETER

Then maybe you should start
listening to your mother.

(off her look)

It's over. They had to find out
eventually. Don't turn this into
something that it's not. We had
our fun, but that's all it ever
was.

Isabelle looks up at him, shocked and confused.

ISABELLE

I don't believe you.

PETER

Go home, Isabelle. Go home and
grow up.

Isabelle gapes at him. Peter walks away.

ISABELLE

I don't believe you!

He doesn't look back. She watches him go, heartbroken.

EXT. CREEK - DAWN

Cesaire bathes in a cold stream. The sun is just barely
rising, rays of light shining through the trees. He
smiles. It looks like the start of a beautiful day.

EXT. VILLAGE - SQUARE - DAWN

The village is bustling with activity, but there's a palpable tension. The picture on the moon sign is of a three-quarters moon... but then the Herald changes it to a picture of a FULL MOON with a cruel, malevolent face.

HERALD

Full moon! Full moon! Full moon!

INT. ISABELLE'S FAMILY COTTAGE - MORNING

Isabelle emerges from the cottage. Roxanne, Prudence, and Rosemaria are outside waiting on her. They all start toward the village, but then Isabelle sees something...

In the shadows next to the cottage, Cesaire is giving Lucie a stern lecture. Lucie turns and sees Isabelle. Her face is ashen and there are tears in her eyes. Isabelle starts toward them, but Cesaire stops her.

CESAIRE

This doesn't concern you,
Isabelle.

ISABELLE

Yes, Father.

Isabelle reluctantly turns and walks away. The girls follow her. Roxanne gives Lucie a concerned look.

EXT. VILLAGE - MORNING

The girls walk through the village. Isabelle is lost in thought, stung by her father's brusque dismissal.

ROXANNE

What's wrong with Lucie?

ROSEMARIA

How would you feel if you were in
love with your sister's fiancée?

Isabelle stops short and gives Rosemaria a sharp look.

ISABELLE

Lucie is not in love with my
fiancée.

ROSEMARIA

Really? So she's just had a crush
on him since she was ten?

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

ISABELLE

As if she would really tell you
something like that.

ROSEMARIA

She didn't. She told my sister.
(off Isabelle's look)
Did you honestly not know?

Isabelle clearly had no idea, but tries to hide it. Just then, they walk by the blacksmith's shop where Henri works with his father, ADRIEN. Henri smiles at Isabelle.

ISABELLE

Come on. We're going to be late.

She turns away. Rosemaria gives her a smug look.

EXT. DARK FOREST - PATH - DAWN

The girls are walking down the path to Grandmother's cottage. Rosemaria lags behind, tired and grumpy.

There's a fork in the path and Rosemaria stops at it. A SMALLER PATH branches off into the forest, overgrown and narrow. Rosemaria looks at it for a beat...

Roxanne suddenly notices that Rosemaria isn't with them. She looks back and sees her start down the other path.

ROXANNE

Rosemaria...?

The other girls stop and hurry back to the fork, dismayed to find Rosemaria headed down the overgrown path.

ISABELLE

What are you doing?

ROSEMARIA

What does it look like?

ISABELLE

You can't go that way. You have
to stay on the path.

ROSEMARIA

This way is faster.

PRUDENCE

But it's not safe. My brother
says the bridge is rotten.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

ROSEMARIA

I don't care. It's bad enough working all day in that smelly cottage. It's not reasonable for them to expect us to walk that far every day on top of that.

She walks away, defiant. The girls look nervous. Then:

PRUDENCE

If you get lost, nobody will come looking for you. Not tonight.

This last part gives Rosemaria pause. She looks down the narrow path. It suddenly seems a little ominous. Grudgingly, she returns to the group. The other girls exchange quiet looks of relief. They continue on.

The wind blows leaves across the abandoned path...

INT. GRANDMOTHER'S COTTAGE - DAY

The girls are busy with sewing and knitting projects. Grandmother helps Roxanne at the spinning wheel. Then:

GRANDMOTHER

Everyone finish what you're working on. Your parents will be worried if you're not home before it starts to get dark.

The girls begin packing up their work. Prudence sighs.

PRUDENCE

I wish someone would just kill that stupid wolf.

ROXANNE

You can't just kill it. It's not an ordinary wolf. It's a devil-wolf. A servant of Satan himself.

Prudence rolls her eyes. Whatever.

ROSEMARIA

Who cares what it is? It's only one night a month. You stay inside, lock up the animals, and you don't go into the forest. It's never killed anyone from the village and as long as we leave it alone, it never will.

(CONTINUED)

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GRANDMOTHER

My goodness. I had no idea our young people were so woefully uneducated these days.

(off their looks)

Our village was not always like this. When I was young, this was a very special place. Traders and merchants came here from lands I'd never heard of selling things I had never seen. King Philip the Bold even visited here once. But that, of course, was before the Wolf came.

The girls listen attentively.

GRANDMOTHER

Your parents fear the Wolf because they remember when it did kill people from the village. Break down doors in the middle of the night and snatch children right out of their beds. Rumors began to spread that we were cursed. That was when our village began to die. And that was why my husband led a group of men into the woods to kill the Wolf. But instead, it killed him.

Isabelle reacts. She has never heard this story before.

GRANDMOTHER

After that, people here didn't have much stomach to go hunting for it anymore. But something had changed. The Wolf stopped killing in the village. Even our livestock were usually safe as long as they were brought inside. So we decided it was safer to compromise. We gave the Wolf its one night a month, the night of the full moon, and it has left us alone ever since.

ISABELLE

People still die.

ROSEMARIA

Yes, but nobody we know.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED: (2)

GRANDMOTHER

Everyone knows what should be
done. But it's not always easy to
do what you know is right.
Sometimes it's easier to settle
for being safe.

Isabelle frowns, unsatisfied.

EXT. VILLAGE - VARIOUS - DAY

Villagers hurriedly bring their sheep and pigs into their
homes. Doors are shut and barricaded. Cesaire is
outside the family cottage, nailing the shutters closed.

INT. ISABELLE'S FAMILY COTTAGE - COMMON ROOM - DUSK

Isabelle's family sits at the dinner table in silence.
Cesaire sets mugs of beer out for everyone. Lucie numbly
picks at her food, doesn't touch her beer. Isabelle
works up her nerve to say something and turns to Suzette:

ISABELLE

You were right. About Peter. I
was being childish.

(beat)

But I'm not going to marry Henri.

Cesaire and Suzette stop eating. Suzette levels a cold
look at Isabelle.

SUZETTE

You'll do as you're told. It's
all been arranged.

ISABELLE

The family gains the same no
matter which one of us marries
him. And I don't love Henri.
Lucie does.

Lucie looks up, surprised to be dragged into this.

ISABELLE

She's right. It's not fair. I
will gladly trade places with her.

A beat. Then, without looking up, Lucie whispers:

LUCIE

Shut up.

Isabelle is stung, the smile wiped from her face.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

ISABELLE
I'm sorry... I...

LUCIE
Please. Just shut up and mind
your own business.

A tense beat. Isabelle looks away, hurt and confused.

INT. ISABELLE'S FAMILY COTTAGE - LOFT - NIGHT

Isabelle is fast asleep. Next to her, Lucie looks over at her. She's wide awake. She sneaks out of bed...

INT. ISABELLE'S FAMILY COTTAGE - NIGHT

Lucie carefully sneaks down from the loft and quietly puts on a RED RIDING HOOD. She accidentally kicks a pan on the floor and puts a hand down to silence it. She listens to hear if anyone has awakened. Nothing.

EXT. VILLAGE - VARIOUS - NIGHT

Lucie slips out of the house. She shivers in the cold, pulls the riding hood around her. FULL MOON in the sky.

The village looks deserted, a ghost town. Eerie, still, dark. The moon-sign swings in the breeze, CREAKING on its rusty hooks. Lucie hurries away toward the woods...

EXT. DARK FOREST - NIGHT

Lucie nervously walks along the road leading away from the village. She startles at every sound. She looks up. The full moon is visible in the sky above her through the skeletal branches of the dark trees...

She comes to the overgrown path that the girls stopped at earlier. Lucie takes a deep breath and starts down it...

EXT. GULLY - NIGHT

Lucie reaches an OLD ROPE BRIDGE. It spans a deep gully and a fast-moving river strewn with jagged rocks. Lucie gives the bridge a nervous look and starts across it...

The boards CREAK loudly under her feet. The bridge sways in the wind. She carefully makes her way across, only breathing when she is safely on the other side.

EXT. WOODS - CLEARING - NIGHT

Lucie comes to a grassy meadow bathed with moonlight. She stands in the middle of it, next to a large rock, and looks all around. She's alone, cold and afraid. Then...

... she takes off her riding hood, folds it, and places it on the rock. She begins to disrobe, folding her dress and her undergarments and stacking them in a neat pile.

Soon she's standing naked, her arms clutched around her breasts, shivering with cold. And fear.

CAMERA PULLS BACK from this lonely naked figure until the dark branches of the trees obscure her from view. Then, somewhere, a WOLF HOWLS in the night...

INT. ISABELLE'S FAMILY COTTAGE - LOFT - DAWN

Isabelle wakes up, groggy. Lucie's bed is empty.

EXT. DARK FOREST - DAY

Children are playing, a BOY chasing several giggling GIRLS, growling and waving his hands like claws.

BOY
I'm the Wolf! I'm going to eat
you up!

EXT. DARK FOREST - CLEARING - DAY

One of the Girls runs into the meadow and sees something that makes her stop short. The other Children gather behind her, all frozen by what they see...

CROWS are picking at a bloody carcass. All we can see of it is a human hand. A crow gnaws on one of the fingers.

INT. GRANDMOTHER'S COTTAGE - DAY

The girls are at their lessons. Suddenly, there's an urgent KNOCK at the door. Everyone stops, surprised. Grandmother answers it. It's a YOUNG MAN, sweaty and out of breath from running.

GRANDMOTHER
What on earth --?

The Young Man glances at Isabelle. Something about the look in his eyes makes Isabelle go pale...

EXT. DARK FOREST - CLEARING - DAY

Isabelle hurries into the clearing with Roxanne, Prudence, and Rosemaria trailing behind her. A crowd has gathered. She pushes through it, then stop short.

Lucie is dead. We don't see what's been done to her, but Roxanne turns away and vomits. Cesaire and Suzette are already here. He holds her as she cries on his shoulder. Isabelle just stares at Lucie's body, shattered.

INT. ISABELLE'S FAMILY COTTAGE - BEDROOM - NIGHT

Isabelle is curled in a fetal ball on the bed, clutching Lucie's cloak to her chest. She's cried her eyes out. Grandmother sets down a cup of tea. As Isabelle watches, Grandmother sprinkles a pinch of dark herbs in the tea.

GRANDMOTHER

It's my little secret. A pinch
will help you rest. A little more
and you'll sleep through the end
of the world.

Grandmother smiles. Isabelle smiles back, weak.

ISABELLE

I think I'd like that.

EXT. VILLAGE - DAY

Two men, the Merchant and the REEVE, gossip by the well.

MERCHANT

She had it coming, if you ask me.
What the hell was she doing out
there?

Then they notice that Isabelle is right behind them, drawing a water from the well. Both men shift uncomfortably, but she pretends she didn't hear.

INT. ISABELLE'S FAMILY COTTAGE - DAY

Lucie's body lies on the table. Isabelle watches as Suzette and Grandmother bathe the body. Suddenly, Grandmother stops. She's found something clutched in Lucie's hand. A troubled look comes over her...

ISABELLE

What is it?

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

GRANDMOTHER

Nothing.

Grandmother curtly wraps what she's found in a washcloth.

INT. CHURCH - DAY

Lucie's funeral. Cesaire and Suzette sit with Isabelle, who holds Grandmother's hand. The other girls are here, too. Roxanne sits with her mother, MARGUERITE, and Claude, the deaf boy we saw performing magic. The priest, FATHER AUGUSTE, conducts the service.

FATHER AUGUSTE

Wherefore each man and woman that
is wise, make him ready thereto;
for we all shall die, and we know
not how soon...

EXT. CHURCH - DAY

Villagers leave the church. Claude is playing in the cemetery. Father Auguste frowns, disapproving. Marguerite sees this and angrily pulls Roxanne aside.

MARGUERITE

Take your brother home.

Embarrassed, Roxanne quickly grabs Claude and drags him away, but he fights her, crying and kicking.

Isabelle's family is met by Henri and his father, Adrien.

ADRIEN

She was a good girl. We all loved
her.

He's looking at Cesaire and shakes his hand, but he briefly glances at Suzette. Isabelle notices the look, but then she spots Peter leaving the church. She makes brief eye contact with him before Henri interrupts.

HENRI

I'm here for you, too.

But her gaze follows Peter as he walks away...

INT. MANOR HOUSE - GREAT HALL - DAY

ATTEWATER, the town bailiff, presides over a gathering of the Villagers. Isabelle, Suzette, and Grandmother sit with Cesaire, who is angrily addressing the crowded room.

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CONTINUED:

CESAIRE

A line has been crossed. The
beast must be destroyed!

MERCHANT

Your daughter crossed the line.
She went into the woods.

CESAIRE

She was taken. She must have
been!

MERCHANT

So the Wolf broke into your home
and stole your daughter without
waking anyone or leaving any sign
at all?

REEVE

It's been almost thirty years
since someone here was killed by
the Wolf. We've left it alone.
Why would it suddenly come and
take one of us now?

Grandmother gathers her nerve and stands up.

GRANDMOTHER

I know something.

Cesaire and Suzette give Grandmother surprised looks.
She walks up to the table and hands Attewater the wadded
up washcloth we saw her with earlier.

GRANDMOTHER

I found this. I believe it must
belong to her attacker.

Attewater unfolds the washcloth. There are a few strands
of hair inside. He gives her a sharp look.

ATTEWATER

This is not animal hair.

GRANDMOTHER

No, it isn't. It's human.

A stunned silence comes over the room.

ATTEWATER

No man could have done the things
that were done to your
granddaughter. It must have been
the Wolf.

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CONTINUED: (2)

GRANDMOTHER

Yet she was holding a man's hair
in her hand when she died.

ATTEWATER

What are you suggesting?

GRANDMOTHER

That the man and the Wolf may be
one and the same.

A low MURMUR works its way through the crowd.

ATTEWATER

A werewolf.

FATHER AUGUSTE

It would explain much. The Pope
himself has declared that such
creatures exist.

The thought gives everyone pause.

MERCHANT

Even if you're right, it doesn't
help us. The woods are filled
with hermits and strangers. If
there's a werewolf among them, how
will we find it?

ATTEWATER

There are experts in these
matters. Men who find and try
witches and werewolves. We could
request the Church to send
someone.

Grandmother gives him a sharp look.

GRANDMOTHER

Not someone. You're talking about
Father Solomon.

This sends a ripple of comment through the room.

ATTEWATER

He is the Church's most successful
werewolf hunter.

ADRIEN

But what of his methods? The man
once burned down an entire village
just to root out one witch.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED: (3)

ATTEWATER

Unsubstantiated rumors. The Church has appointed him the Witchfinder General of all Christendom.

FATHER AUGUSTE

That is also unsubstantiated.

Attewater eyes him, but Father Auguste stands his ground.

ATTEWATER

I have the utmost confidence in the ability of the Witchfinder General to determine the nature of the beast and put an end to it. I will dispatch a messenger in the morning.

CESAIRE

Even if Father Solomon agrees to help us, it will take weeks for him to get here. That means another full moon. Maybe two. We must defend ourselves.

A long, silent beat. Then, Henri stands.

HENRI

He's right. The beast broke the peace, not us.

(to Cesaire)

I will help you kill it.

Henri's father gives him a surprised look. But after another long beat, the Reeve stands up, too.

REEVE

As will I. We all will.

Henri is nervous, but tries to appear brave for Isabelle.

INT. ISABELLE'S FAMILY COTTAGE - COMMON ROOM - DAWN

Isabelle is about to leave when she sees Lucie's red riding hood. She gives it a solemn look.

EXT. DARK FOREST - PATH - DAWN

A light snow has fallen. The girls are walking to Grandmother's house, but Isabelle sadly lags behind, lost in thought. She's wearing Lucie's red riding hood.

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Roxanne waits for Isabelle and offers her hand. Isabelle smiles sadly and takes it. Prudence and Rosemaria let them catch up, then they continue on together...

INT. ISABELLE'S FAMILY COTTAGE - NIGHT

Isabelle returns home. Suzette is making dinner, but stops short when she sees Isabelle in Lucie's red cloak.

SUZETTE

Who gave you permission to wear that?

ISABELLE

Nobody. I just --

SUZETTE

Your Grandmother made that for Lucie. Take it off.

Isabelle hesitates, then does as she's told. Suzette snatches the cloak away from her. A beat.

ISABELLE

It was folded when they found her. Her clothes, too. Did you notice that?

SUZETTE

Someone must have folded them.

A beat. Isabelle is reluctant to voice her thoughts...

ISABELLE

She was so unhappy.

Suzette turns, her eyes narrowing dangerously.

SUZETTE

What are you saying?

ISABELLE

Maybe she went into the woods on purpose. Maybe she wanted to die.

Suddenly: Suzette slaps her across the face. Hard.

SUZETTE

Lucie's soul is at peace with God. Don't you ever again suggest otherwise.

Suzette turns away in tears. Isabelle is stunned speechless.

EXT. PETER'S COTTAGE - DAY

Isabelle trudges through the mud toward a ramshackle cottage. If there had been train tracks in the fourteenth century, this place would have been on the wrong side of them.

Isabelle gathers her nerve and knocks on the door. A long beat. The door opens. It's Peter. He gives her a surprised look. She looks up at him, choking back tears.

PETER

Are you all right?

ISABELLE

I'm sorry. I just need to talk to someone. Can I come in?

Peter balks. Just then, a figure appears. Isabelle can't believe her eyes... It's Rosemaria. She's standing behind Peter, but it's clear that she's naked.

ROSEMARIA

No. You can't.

She wraps an arm around Peter's waist. Isabelle gives him a stricken look and runs away. Peter watches her go.

INT. GRANDMOTHER'S COTTAGE - DUSK

Lessons are over. The girls are ready to leave except for Isabelle, who sits alone by the fire. Rosemaria gives her a sly look as she leaves. When the girls have gone, Grandmother sits down next to Isabelle.

ISABELLE

I hate the cold. Why can't we have lessons in the summer?

GRANDMOTHER

I suppose that would be easier. But then that would defeat the purpose. People only change when things are difficult.

Isabelle gives her a look, understanding, then turns away. Grandmother puts a hand on her shoulder and then leaves her alone. Isabelle stares into the fire...

INT. ROXANNE'S FAMILY COTTAGE - NIGHT

Roxanne comes home to a shocking scene: her mother, Marguerite, half-naked and wrapped in a blanket,

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viciously beating Claude with a switch. Roxanne hurriedly pulls her off of him and he runs away.

MARGUERITE

I caught the little bastard
watching us!

ROXANNE

Watching what?

Just then, the Merchant enters from the bedroom, adjusting his clothes. He hesitates when he sees Roxanne, then drops a handful of coins on the table and leaves. Marguerite puts the coins in a leather purse. Roxanne glares at her.

MARGUERITE

It's money, isn't it? You could
make twice this your first time.
They pay more for virgins.

Roxanne recoils in disgust and storms out in tears.

EXT. VILLAGE - DUSK

The full moon sign swings in the wind, a few flakes of snow whipping through the air around it.

INT. BLACKSMITH'S COTTAGE - DUSK

Adrien picks up a hammer and a pickaxe. He hands the hammer to Henri, fixing him with a serious look.

ADRIEN

Don't do this for Isabelle. She
can't marry you if you're dead.

HENRI

(lying)
I'm not doing it for her.

ADRIEN

Your mother would be proud to see
the man you've become.

Henri is moved. He nods, at a loss for words.

INT. TAVERN COTTAGE - DUSK

Not so much a tavern as the home of someone who decided to brew some beer and sell it. Cesaire stands before a group of men. They've all had too much to drink.

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CONTINUED:

CESAIRE

My father died trying to kill the Wolf. For forty years, we have lived in fear of it. But no more. And never again. We don't need a Witchfinder General to rid of us this hell-hated beast. Because by God and all that is holy, the Beast of Villiers la Croisée shall die tonight!

The men CHEER.

EXT. VILLAGE - DUSK

Cesaire leads the drunken group through the streets. The rest of the Villagers line the streets, watching them go. Claude tries to join the hunters, thinking it's a game, but Roxanne quickly catches him. Peter shakes his head at the dubious spectacle. Henri sees him.

HENRI

You're not coming with us?

PETER

Are you joking? These fools are as likely to kill each other as they are anything else.

Henri shoots him an angry look before moving on.

Isabelle and Suzette say goodbye to Cesaire. Isabelle sees Peter through the crowd and quickly looks away.

Just then, Henri and Adrien pass by. On impulse, Isabelle runs up and kisses Henri on the mouth. When she's sure that Peter has seen this, she quickly walks away. Henri gives Peter a gloating look. Peter scowls.

EXT. DARK FOREST - DUSK

The Men have taken up positions just inside the treeline, one of them every twenty feet, surrounding the village. They each have lit torches. CAMERA FINDS Henri crouched in the brush. Cesaire walks along the line of men.

CESAIRE

Get that torch out.

Henri douses his torch.

EXT. DARK FOREST - NIGHT

The full moon is high in the night sky. Snow is falling.

CAMERA SLOWLY MOVES over the anxious face of the hunters. Adrien, clutching his pickaxe. The Reeve. The Merchant. The Carpenter. Shivering from cold and jangled nerves, staring wide-eyed into the dark and silent woods...

INT. ISABELLE'S FAMILY COTTAGE - NIGHT

Isabelle lies in bed, but still awake. Suddenly... a wolf HOWLS outside. Her eyes widen.

EXT. DARK FOREST - NIGHT

The Reeve hears it. He clutches an old sword. Nearby, the Merchant cowers in the brush. Adrien listens as the wolf HOWLS over and over, louder each time. The Carpenter nervously peers out from his cover...

INT. ISABELLE'S FAMILY COTTAGE - LOFT - NIGHT

The HOWLING is getting closer. Isabelle goes to the window, opens the shutter, cautiously peers out... and is startled by a HORRIBLE SCREAM in the distance.

EXT. DARK FOREST - NIGHT

The Carpenter hears the SCREAM, too. He runs toward it and finds an extinguished torch on the ground. There are footprints in the snow. And blood. The brush around him RUSTLES and he jumps to his feet, axe held at the ready --

-- but it's just the other Men, led by the Reeve.

REEVE

Who was that screaming?

CARPENTER

I don't know.

MERCHANT

Look.

He's gone pale. The others follow his look. There's a LARGE PAW PRINT in the snow. The Men stare at it.

Suddenly, the same SCREAM pierces the night, this time coming from deeper in the woods. The Men exchange a wary look, but then start after it.

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They run into a still clearing where the snow-covered brush is as high as their waists. They pause and listen. Only silence. They carefully make their way in the direction of the screams, quiet. Frost-brittle leaves CRUNCH under their feet...

Suddenly -- something is moving in the brush. All they can see is the snowy brush violently shaking as it darts off, almost faster than it can be followed with the eye. It races right by the Merchant, knocking him on his ass, but it's gone before he can get a look at it.

He startles as the Reeve pulls him to his feet.

REEVE

Which way did it go?

The Merchant points a trembling finger. The Reeve plunges into the brush after it and the Men follow.

EXT. DARK FOREST - HILLSIDE - NIGHT

The Reeve leads the Men to the foot of a steep and rocky hill. It's a dead end. But then they hear the SCREAMS again. The Men look up at the hillside.

CARPENTER

The caves. It's in the caves.

INT. CAVE - NIGHT

The Men stand in the mouth of a wide cave, relighting their torches. The SCREAMING echoes from inside. The Carpenter raises his torch. The cave is as deep and dark as a monster's throat. The Men crowd start inside...

The SCREAMING continues, unnerving the Men as they approach. Then they come to a fork in the tunnel. The SCREAMS bounce off the stone walls. Impossible to tell where it's coming from.

REEVE

Split up. Two groups.

Half the Men take one fork, half the other. We follow the Reeve's group down a narrowing passageway. The Men crowd together, hunched low. The SCREAMS seem to be getting louder. The Reeve stops, listening.

He turns toward a low crack in the cave wall. The SCREAMS are coming from inside. He shines his torch inside, lowers his head, and walks toward it. The cave

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floor takes a steep dip. He has to keep one hand on the wall to keep from falling...

Then suddenly, his feet skid on a patch of loose pebbles and he loses his footing. He slides down the steep floor, drops his torch, hands flailing, unable to stop himself, and then --

-- he finds himself falling off a low cliff into the darkness. He tumbles head over heels down a rocky slope and splashes hard in a shallow underground river. The torch rolls off the ledge above and falls on the shore amidst a shower of grit and pebbles.

The Reeve gets up, grimacing in pain, grabs the torch. He shines it around... and sees Adrien. He's leaning against a rock, the ground beneath him wet with blood spreading from a dark wound between his legs.

Reeve rushes to his side and crosses himself when he sees the wound. Then: a low, menacing, GROWL. He turns...

There's a huge, SNARLING GRAY WOLF behind him. Adrien's pickaxe juts from between its shoulder blades.

Reeve freezes, suddenly realizing that he's dropped his sword. He splashes around in the river, blindly feeling for it in the water. The wounded animal growls, blood bubbling from between its teeth. Reeve finds the sword --

-- just as the wolf attacks.

EXT. VILLAGE - OUTSKIRTS - DAWN

Silence. The sun is starting to light the sky, revealing a peacefully glistening blanket of snow on the village.

The Men are returning from the woods. Isabelle and Suzette are among the Villagers breathlessly awaiting them. No way of telling whether they met with success or failure. But as they near...

... we can see Reeve leading the group, carrying a pike with the wolf's severed head on it. The Villagers CHEER, but the Men are weary and subdued. Suzette and Isabelle find Cesaire. He hugs them tight.

Suddenly, a woman GASPS. Then they see: the Men are carrying Adrien's body on a travois. Suzette chokes back her reaction. Henri walks with the body, eyes red and cried out. He passes Isabelle without looking at her.

EXT. BLACKSMITH'S COTTAGE - DAY

Henri hammers at a red-hot iron horseshoe. Isabelle enters. Henri doesn't seem to notice. A hesitant beat.

ISABELLE

I heard your father wounded the beast. He was a brave man.

HENRI

Did you hear what it did to him? It chewed off his private parts.

Isabelle had not heard this. Henri doesn't stop working.

HENRI

And I did nothing. I was too scared. I couldn't move. I just let my father be eaten alive.

She moves toward him, but he shrugs her away.

HENRI

No. I don't want you here.

Isabelle gives him a sad look, then leaves. Henri just keeps hammering away on the anvil.

EXT. CHURCH - DAY

A coffin is lowered into a grave. Father Auguste blesses it. Henri stands at his side. Isabelle is here with Roxanne. Lucrece eyes Isabelle, then whispers to her:

LUCRECE

I thought your mother would be here. They used to be quite close.

Isabelle gives her a sharp look, but Lucrece says nothing more. Isabelle looks down at the coffin with a sudden realization...

EXT. ISABELLE'S FAMILY COTTAGE - DAY

Suzette is soaking clothes in a bucket of lye, crying as she works. Isabelle approaches. Suzette quickly wipes her eyes. A beat. Isabelle gathers her nerve, then:

ISABELLE

You told me you had a sweetheart before you were married. It was Henri's father, wasn't it?

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Suzette freezes. She faces Isabelle, but doesn't answer.

ISABELLE

Lucie was in love with Henri. She
could have married him.

(off Suzette's look)
Couldn't she have?

SUZETTE

We arranged for you to marry him.

ISABELLE

But you gained the same no matter
which one of us married him. So
why did it have to be me?

SUZETTE

I think you know the answer to
that question.

ISABELLE

No. You say it.

Suzette's eyes well up. Then:

SUZETTE

Lucie was Henri's half-sister.
She was not your father's
daughter.

Isabelle suddenly looks ill. Reluctant, she asks:

ISABELLE

Am I? Do you even know?

SUZETTE

Yes. I was already pregnant when
your father and I married.

ISABELLE

Does he know?

SUZETTE

No. And he must never know.

Tears spill down Isabelle's cheeks. She walks away.

SUZETTE

Isabelle!

(beat)
Promise me you won't tell him.

Isabelle gives her a look that doesn't promise much. She
leaves without answering.

INT. GRANDMOTHER'S COTTAGE - NIGHT

Grandmother ladles soup into a bowl and brings it to Isabelle. Isabelle's eyes are red from crying.

GRANDMOTHER

I've found that there's no burden
that doesn't at least seem a
little lighter on a full stomach.

ISABELLE

I don't know what to do. She
wants me to pretend like I don't
know. How am I supposed to go on
living in that house?

GRANDMOTHER

You have a right to be angry with
her. But try not to hate her.
Too much hate will eat you alive.

Isabelle nods and rests her head on Grandmother's shoulder.

EXT. VILLAGE - NIGHT

As Isabelle enters the village, she hears LAUGHING and CAROUSING. Every cottage in the village is dark. Except one. Isabelle gathers her nerve and turns toward it...

INT. TAVERN HOUSE - NIGHT

Isabelle tentatively enters. There aren't many people here, just Marguerite and a few ROWDY MEN making a lot of noise. Isabelle instantly sees what she's here for:

Cesaire is slumped in a corner, drunk and passed out.

INT. ISABELLE'S FAMILY COTTAGE - BEDROOM - NIGHT

Isabelle steers Cesaire through the doorway and drops him into the bed next to Suzette. He's already half-asleep. Suzette gives Isabelle a silent look, then turns away.

Isabelle sighs. She sits next to Cesaire and kisses his forehead. As she stands, he clumsily takes her hand.

CESAIRE

You're a good girl.

Isabelle allows a sad smile, places his hand back on his chest, and leaves.

EXT. VILLAGE - SQUARE - DAY

The wolf's head has been placed atop a stake. Children throw rocks at it. Isabelle watches with Roxanne and Prudence.

PRUDENCE

I heard there's going to be a festival on the night of the next full moon. To celebrate.

ROXANNE

A festival? I've never been to one!

PRUDENCE

My father says he hasn't seen one since he was a boy.

ROXANNE

It's strange, isn't it? You think because things have been a certain way your whole life that they'll always be the same. Then overnight everything just changes.

But Isabelle is distracted. Amidst the morning bustle, she sees Rosemaria laughing with Peter. Roxanne notices.

Just then, they hear HORSES approaching. A lot of them. Everyone stops what they're doing, listening, suddenly apprehensive. The girls turn toward the sound and see...

... A DOZEN SOLDIERS in identical armor, silver helmets gleaming in the sun, riding into the square atop armored steeds. The Villagers gape at them in awe.

The Soldiers ride escort to a WHITE COACH with a red cross on it, drawn by two horses: one white, one black. A FIGURE rides inside, cloaked in darkness. Isabelle gives it an uneasy look.

Leading the Soldiers is the CAPTAIN OF THE GUARD, his helmet adorned with a blood-red plume. He brings the caravan to a halt in front of the Merchant's shop.

CAPTAIN

This is Villiers la Croisée?

MERCHANT

Yes, my lord.

CAPTAIN

Summon your bailiff. My master would speak with him at once.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

MERCHANT

Of course, my lord. May I ask to what does he owe this honor?

CAPTAIN

He requested the services of His Eminence, the Witchfinder General. You may tell him that he has arrived.

All eyes turn to the figure in the coach. Only a bejeweled hand is visible, resting on the coach's window.

EXT. VILLAGE - SQUARE - DAY (LATER)

A Soldier places a wooden step next to the coach and another opens the door. The whole village has turned out, but they're keeping their distance. Even Attewater, standing front and center, seems uneasy.

The figure emerges from the coach. A grizzled man with penetrating eyes and a black beard, wearing a strange amalgam of priestly white robes and decidedly un-priestly battle armor. A broadsword hangs from his hip, the hilt depicting Christ on the cross. With the sword sheathed, the cross is upside-down. This is FATHER SOLOMON.

ATTEWATER

This is indeed an honor, Your Eminence.

Solomon makes no response. His eyes are on the severed wolf's head on display. Attewater smiles proudly.

ATTEWATER

As you can see, our werewolf problem has been dealt with.

SOLOMON

That is no werewolf.

Surprise and outrage ripple through the crowd. Isabelle and Roxanne exchange a shocked look.

SOLOMON

When a werewolf dies, it returns to its human form. If what you killed was a werewolf, then you would have a human head skewered atop that pole.

REEVE

And I suppose you've seen this? A wolf turning into a man?

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

Solomon levels a look at the Reeve and slowly walks toward him. The Reeve is taller, but Solomon is, without doubt, the bigger man. The Reeve's eyes flick nervously to the armored Soldiers and their swords. A beat.

SOLOMON

My wife's name was Pénélope. She was very pretty. And we were very happy.

The Reeve tries to keep the confusion off his face. Attewater and Father Auguste exchange uncertain looks.

SOLOMON

We lived in a village not unlike this place. And not unlike this place, our village was plagued by a werewolf. I went out with some men to hunt it. It never even occurred to me that we might actually find it. But we did.

He has everyone's attention now. All eyes are on him.

SOLOMON

It attacked me. All I saw were yellow teeth. I hacked at it with an axe and suddenly it was gone. There was blood on my axe. I had cut off one of its paws. I picked it up and put it in my sack.

(beat)

When I returned home in the morning, I found my wife with a bloody rag tied around her left wrist. And when I opened my sack, the werewolf's paw was gone. This is what I found in its place.

Solomon takes an old leather sack from his belt, reaches inside... and pulls out a WOMAN'S MUMMIFIED HAND wearing a wedding ring. There are gasps from the crowd.

SOLOMON

Her name was Pénélope. She was very pretty. And we were very happy. Until the day I killed her.

Solomon turns and gives Attewater a hard look.

SOLOMON

Your werewolf is still alive. And I promise you, it will kill again.

INT. MANOR HOUSE - GREAT HALL - NIGHT

Soldiers stand at every door. Solomon and Attewater sit in front of the gathered Villagers. Solomon's Captain stands behind him. Isabelle nervously notes that the Captain wears a spiked flail. The black iron ball is shaped like a skull with spikes coming out of it.

SOLOMON

I have examined the body of your blacksmith. There were bruises on his neck from where the beast held him in its jaws, squeezing his throat so that he could not scream.

CESAIRE

But he did scream. We all heard him.

SOLOMON

Only when it wanted you to. It used him as bait to lure you into the bit of theater it had prepared.

HENRI

Theater? My father is not playacting. He is dead.

REEVE

And I killed the beast that did it.

SOLOMON

That's what it wants you to think. It did kill your blacksmith. But the animal that you killed was not the werewolf.

REEVE

There was blood dripping from its teeth.

SOLOMON

The blood was its own. The werewolf most likely wounded it earlier in the evening and left it in the cave for you to find and kill.

CESAIRE

"Most likely," he says. Have you ever heard anything more unlikely in your lives?

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

The Villagers laugh. Lucrece eyes them, disapproving.

ATTEWATER

Your Eminence, if what you say is true, that we were somehow fooled by this thing, it could not have done so without foreknowledge of our plan to hunt it.

SOLOMON

That's correct. The werewolf does not live in the forest as you have rather naïvely assumed. It lives here in the village. Among you.

There is a moment of shocked silence. Then mounting anger. Cesaire stands up and gestures to Henri.

CESAIRE

You come here and tell us that this boy's father died for nothing. You accuse us and call us fools. Well, I believe what I can see with my own eyes. That wolf is dead. And I know it's dead because I was with the brave men who killed it.

MERCHANT

And what of the festival?

ATTEWATER

The festival was to celebrate the death of the Wolf.

MERCHANT

And we say that it's dead! We've spent every full moon for the past forty years cowering in our homes. We've earned a celebration.

REEVE

And paid for it in blood!

Attewater gives Solomon a nervous look. Solomon shrugs.

SOLOMON

Have your festival. I will stay on here until then to ensure that you have the celebration you all so richly deserve.

The Villagers seem appeased, especially the smug Merchant. A look passes between Solomon and his Captain. Isabelle catches it... and finds it unsettling.

EXT. VILLAGE - SQUARE - DAY

The moon sign displays the angry full moon, but it has been decorated with ribbons and mistletoe. Despite the cold, the mood in the village is happy and excited.

INT. CHURCH - DAY

Solomon is anointing each of his Soldiers with holy water from a basin held by Father Auguste...

SOLOMON

Gloria Patri, et Filio, et
Spiritus Sancto. Sicut erat in
principio, et nunc, et semper, et
in saecula saeculorum. Amen.

INT. ISABELLE'S FAMILY COTTAGE - COMMON ROOM - DAY

Isabelle wears her best dress, her hair decorated with ribbons. Cesaire is asleep, a flask in his hand. Suzette knits.

ISABELLE

I'm going to the festival.

SUZETTE

All right then.

She doesn't look up from her knitting. Isabelle leaves.

INT. CHURCH - DAY

Solomon kneels in prayer, lit by flickering candlelight. He kisses the image of Christ on the hilt of his sword...

EXT. VILLAGE - SQUARE - DAY

The festival is in full swing. A bonfire ROARS. The Villagers sing and drink. A MAN in a wolf costume jumps out and startles the women and children. The children chase him with sticks and he comically runs away.

Isabelle watches their antics with Roxanne and Prudence. Claude is laughing and chasing the man in the wolf costume, but an OLDER BOY purposefully trips him. Another BOY steals his cap and teases him. Marguerite is too busy carousing to notice. Roxanne frowns.

ROXANNE

I'm sorry...

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

She hurries to help Claude. Isabelle and Prudence watch.

PRUDENCE

She acts more like a mother to him
than a sister.

ISABELLE

Someone has to look after him.

PRUDENCE

I know. But who looks after her?

Isabelle gives Roxanne a sad look.

EXT. CHURCH - BELLTOWER - DUSK

The Captain of Solomon's guard stands watch. The sounds
of the FESTIVAL can be heard in the distance...

EXT. VILLAGE - SQUARE - DUSK

Men play MUSIC and couples dance. Roxanne dances with
Claude, Prudence with an OLDER BOY... but Isabelle sits
alone, watching Peter dance with Rosemaria.

Just then, Henri stumbles toward Isabelle with a beer,
clearly the latest of many. He follows her look and sees
that she's watching Peter. Henri glares at him...

... then abruptly pushes his way toward Peter and grabs
him roughly by the shoulder, spinning him around. Peter
is surprised, but ready to laugh it off.

PETER

Take it easy, friend.

HENRI

You didn't come with us. The
night my father died.

Peter's smile fades. Isabelle rushes to pull Henri away.

HENRI

You stayed here and let real men
do the work you didn't have the
belly for.

ISABELLE

Please, don't do this --

Henri brushes her aside, but too hard and she stumbles.
Peter instantly grabs hold of Henri's wrist. Henri

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

overreacts and punches Peter in the eye. Peter falls on his ass, but the Villagers just laugh.

Peter slowly stands, staring Henri down. He could easily lay Henri out... but decides against it. He leaves. Rosemaria reaches out to him, but he ignores her. Isabelle shoots Henri a look of contempt, then hurries off after Peter. Henri watches her go, ashamed.

EXT. VILLAGE - ROAD - DUSK

Peter storms off. Isabelle runs after him.

ISABELLE

Peter! Wait!

PETER

Why? So you can hit me, too?

ISABELLE

I just want to make sure you're all right.

Peter stops. He whirls on Isabelle, incredulous.

PETER

Why can't you just leave me alone?

ISABELLE

You're bleeding.

PETER

So what? What's the matter with you? What do I have to do to make you stop caring about me?

Isabelle is taken aback. A beat.

ISABELLE

You think I want to feel like this? You think I enjoy feeling like a fool every day because I can't stop loving you?

Peter's bravado falters. He can't completely hide what her words do to him. She looks up at him, realizing...

ISABELLE

Why are you with Rosemaria? You hate Rosemaria.

PETER

I don't have to like her to get what I want from her.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

ISABELLE

You're a terrible liar.

Isabelle takes a step closer and presses the palm of her hand against his chest. A beat.

ISABELLE

There. Your heart is starting to beat faster. And the little black circles in the middle of your eyes still get bigger when I touch you.

She gazes up at him. He tries not to look in her eyes, but can't stop himself.

ISABELLE

You can tell me you don't love me, but I know what you're really feeling. I can feel it with my hand and see it with my eyes.

Peter hesitates, then covers her hand with his own.

PETER

I thought being with Rosemaria would be the one thing you would never be able to forgive. I wanted you to hate me.

(off her look)

Isabelle, you are the best thing that could ever happen to me. And I am the worst thing that could ever happen to you.

ISABELLE

How could you think that?

PETER

I wasn't born here. You and I both know what that means. I will always be a stranger to these people. Your parents will never let us be together.

ISABELLE

That means less to me now than ever. We can leave here. We can go someplace where we'll both be strangers.

PETER

I can't let you do that. You have something here that I will never have. You have a place. You have
(MORE)

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED: (2)

PETER (CONT'D)

a family. With Henri you have a future. I'm not going to let you ruin that over me.

ISABELLE

The only life I want is with you.

PETER

Isabelle... I'm wrong for you.

ISABELLE

I know you are. I just don't care.

She kisses him on the mouth, then quickly steps back, as if she did it before she could change her mind. Then he takes her in his arms and they kiss, long and hard.

INT. BARN - DUSK

A door opens and Peter and Isabelle enter, still kissing. He closes the door, pushes her against it with his body.

He lowers her to pile of straw in an empty stall. She looks up at him, surprised, then pulls him tightly to her, kissing him hard. She grabs his hand and guides it to her breast. Now Peter looks surprised. He hesitates.

ISABELLE

I don't want to wait.

PETER

But not like this.

(a beat)

I want to marry you.

She searches his face and sees that he's serious.

PETER

I can pack the cart tonight and we can leave in the morning.

(off her look)

Is that too soon?

ISABELLE

It's not soon enough.

She pulls him to her and kisses him.

EXT. BARN - DUSK

Peter looks outside. The coast is clear. He and Isabelle slip out and close the door behind them.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

PETER

You'd better get back before
someone misses you.

She gives him a lingering kiss. When she pulls away from him, he sees that she's crying.

PETER

What's wrong?

ISABELLE

This feels like a dream. I'm
afraid if I leave you I might wake
up.

He kisses her and holds her tight. Neither of them notice Henri, angrily watching from the shadows...

EXT. VILLAGE - SQUARE - NIGHT

Isabelle returns to the festival. She sits next to Roxanne, who notices a piece of straw in Isabelle's hair. Isabelle quickly brushes it away, embarrassed.

Isabelle's eyes go to the sky. The sun has finally set. The moon has risen, silver and full. Isabelle gazes up at it, transfixed. Roxanne looks over at her, curious.

ISABELLE

I've never seen it full before...

Suddenly -- the CHURCH BELLS start to ring. Everyone falls silent. Confused looks all around. Then, somewhere in the dark...

... a WOLF HOWLS. The Villagers gasp. A WOMAN screams. People start to panic. Claude is knocked down.

ROXANNE

Claude!

Then something massive pushes its way through the surging crowd, bursting from the darkness...

It's THE WOLF. The Villagers gape in horror. It makes the wolf that they killed look like a chihuahua. But there's something about its face that isn't canine at all, but ghoulishly human as it HOWLS at the moon.

Suddenly, a group of Villagers throw off their cloaks, revealing themselves to be Solomon's armored Soldiers. Each of them draws a gleaming sword and points it at the Wolf. They've been lying in wait and now they have it surrounded. The Wolf SNARLS at them.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

A moment later, Father Solomon gallops into the square on his armored steed, wearing a helmet adorned with a golden eagle. He tugs the reins and his horse rears back.

SOLOMON

Get to the church, you fools!

The Wolf SNARLS up at him. Solomon gives a battle cry:

SOLOMON

DIE, BEAST! AND LONG LIVE GOD'S
HOLY LOVE!

The Wolf ROARS. Solomon and his men charge toward it. The Villagers caught between them trample one another to get away. A MAN gets knocked into the bonfire. Flaming logs fall off the pyre and set a cottage ABLAZE.

The Wolf swipes Solomon's Soldiers aside like rag dolls. They bravely press the attack, but they're no match for the beast. It swats one of them right through the wall of a nearby cottage. The ambush has backfired.

The Carpenter sees Claude on the ground and picks him up, trying to help. Claude fights and screams, but the Carpenter carries him away. Roxanne starts toward him --

-- and is bowled over by Solomon's horse. Solomon grabs the stake with the wolf's head atop it and charges at the Wolf, wielding the stake like a lance. The Wolf catches the stake in its jaws, throwing Solomon off his horse.

Just as the Wolf is about to pounce on him, but more Soldiers join the fight. The Wolf sees them coming. It attacks Solomon's horse, biting its neck and dragging it to the ground. As the Soldiers close in --

-- the Wolf spins around, hurling the injured horse at them, knocking them down like bowling pins. Another Soldier tries to attack the Wolf from behind, but it smacks him aside with its tail and then smashes him to the ground with one enormous paw.

Isabelle hurriedly helps Roxanne to her feet and drags her away from the ongoing battle.

ROXANNE

Where's Claude? Where is he?!

EXT. VILLAGE - ROAD - NIGHT

The Carpenter runs away with Claude in his arms, but Claude bites his hand and wriggles free. Claude falls to the ground and dashes back toward the square.

EXT. VILLAGE - VARIOUS - NIGHT

Roxanne runs through town like a rat in a maze, jostled by the fleeing Villagers. Isabelle races after her.

ROXANNE

Claude! Claude!

Roxanne spots Rosemaria and grabs her, begging for help.

ROXANNE

Have you seen my brother? Please!

But Rosemaria just pushes her aside, panicked. An instant later -- the Wolf appears out of nowhere, jumping on Rosemaria. She screams, then -- CRUNCH. The screams stop. Isabelle and Roxanne gape in horror, then run.

EXT. CHURCH - BELLTOWER - NIGHT

The Captain RINGS the church bell. People are fleeing the village and running toward the church.

EXT. VILLAGE - VARIOUS - NIGHT

The few Villagers left hurry into their homes and bolt the doors behind them. TWO SOLDIERS search the nearly empty streets for the Wolf, swords drawn.

Soldier #1 looks down... and sees bloody paw prints in the snow. He points them out to Soldier #2. They follow the tracks to a corner, carefully peer around it...

The Wolf is about ten feet away, loudly tearing meat from Rosemaria's body. Soldier #1 gestures for his companion to approach from the other side. They split up.

Soldier #1 peers out at the Wolf... but it's gone. The street is empty. Only Rosemaria's body lying in the bloodstained snow. He ducks back around the corner...

... and we see that the Wolf is now right behind him.

Meanwhile, Soldier #2 is stealthily making his way into position... when he suddenly hears Soldier #1 SCREAMING. Soldier #2 quickly ducks inside a nearby cottage...

INT. COTTAGE - NIGHT

... and peers out the window. He sees Soldier #1 painfully crawling through the snow, clutching a mangled and bloody wound on his shoulder.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

SOLDIER #1

Help... Help me...

Soldier #2 ducks back from the window. No way. He's not going out there. Then: *SNIFF. SNIFF.*

There's a shadow visible under the crack of the cottage door. And a big black snout pressed up against it, *SNIFFING* out its prey. Soldier #2 readies his sword...

... but then the Wolf moves away. A long beat. The Soldier edges toward the door. The shadow does not return. He slowly reaches out a hand to open the door...

Suddenly, the door is blasted off its hinges and the Wolf bursts inside. It stands on top of the door, pinning the Soldier beneath it. The Soldier tries to raise his sword, but can't. The Wolf *SNARLS* down at him, drooling.

EXT. VILLAGE - VARIOUS - NIGHT

The Wolf is dragging Soldier #2's body out of the cottage by the ankles when its ears suddenly prick up. It's heard something. It's being watched. It looks up...

... and sees Claude standing at the end of the street, paralyzed with fear. The Wolf *GROWLS*, blood dripping from its chin. Claude runs. The Wolf leaps after him.

Claude turns a corner, looks back, sees the Wolf headed right for him. Claude ducks into an alley and the Wolf follows him...

EXT./INT. BARN - NIGHT

... only to find Claude has disappeared. The Wolf follows Claude's tracks in the snow to the door of a barn and peers inside. The barn appears to be empty...

... but Claude is hiding in a hayloft. The Wolf *SNIFFS* the air. Pushes the door open with its nose and pads inside. Looks around. Claude shivers. But just then:

ROXANNE (O.S.)

Claude! Claude!!

The Wolf cocks its ears toward the voice, listening...

EXT. VILLAGE - ROAD - NIGHT

Isabelle and Roxanne are the last stragglers, Roxanne looking for Claude, Isabelle trying to stop her.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

ROXANNE

Claude! Where are you?!

Isabelle drags her to the ground and covers her mouth.

ISABELLE

You have to stop it. He can't
hear you and you are going to get
us killed. Do you understand me?

Roxanne nods, crying. Isabelle helps her up -- and finds herself face-to-face with the Wolf. Roxanne screams. They run back the way they came, turn another corner --

EXT. VILLAGE - ALLEY - NIGHT

-- but the narrow alley is blocked by a high stone wall.

ISABELLE

Come on!

Isabelle climbs the wall, but Roxanne's not going to make it. Isabelle jumps down to help her...

... just as the Wolf's shadow falls over the alley. The girls watch helplessly as the Wolf slowly walks toward them, SNARLING and glaring at them with its strange, near-human eyes. Then, inexplicably... ***the Wolf speaks.***

THE WOLF

Well, well. You look very pretty
this evening, my dear. Good
enough to eat.

The Wolf's voice is sonorous, seductive. The Devil's voice. Isabelle stammers, unable to believe her senses.

THE WOLF

It's considered polite to thank
someone when they pay you a
compliment. Are you being
impolite, Isabelle?

ISABELLE

How do you know me? Who are you?

ROXANNE

Isabelle...?

The Wolf GROWLS, cutting her off, and turns back to Isabelle. It moves closer. Isabelle looks into its eyes. They suddenly seem very big and deep, almost hypnotizing. She seems to fall into them...

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

ISABELLE

What big eyes you have...

THE WOLF

The better to see you with, my dear.

ISABELLE

Are you going to kill us?

THE WOLF

Kill you? Why would I kill you?

ISABELLE

Then what do you want?

THE WOLF

I want you, Isabelle.

Isabelle gapes, dumbstruck and dismayed.

THE WOLF

We are the same, you and I. We are both wild things. You show one face to the world, but there is another face that you hide. A fire burning inside you, waiting to be released.

The Wolf sniffs her, starting at her feet and working its way up. It SNARLS with satisfaction, savoring her scent.

THE WOLF

Yes. I can smell it on you even now.

Suddenly, the Wolf jumps onto its hind legs, puts its forepaws on the wall on either side of Isabelle, its muzzle only inches from her face. She recoils.

THE WOLF

Leave with me tonight. Run with me. The only shackles binding you are of your own making. Slip them and I can show you the world and every pleasure in it.

Isabelle hesitates, then finds the strength to speak:

ISABELLE

I don't know who you are, but we are not the same. I would rather die than go with you.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED: (2)

THE WOLF

What about your fat friend here?
Do you think she would rather die?
(off Isabelle's look)

Come away with me. Or I will kill
her. And I will keep killing
until you agree to leave with me.

Suddenly, the sound of MEN SHOUTING. The Wolf leans in,
SNARLING. Isabelle turns away from its foul breath.

THE WOLF

Choose now. Quickly.

Isabelle trembles. She looks down at Roxanne's terrified
face, torn. Isabelle closes her eyes. She can't do it.

THE WOLF

Your silence has doomed them all.

Just then, Solomon and two Soldiers turn the corner. The
Wolf leaps atop the wall and growls down at Isabelle:

THE WOLF

Come the next full moon, their
blood will be on your hands.

Then it jumps over the wall. Solomon scrabbles up after
it, but the Wolf is already too far away. It looks back
at him. A silent challenge passes between them. And
then the Wolf is gone.

INT. CHURCH - NIGHT

Solomon and his Soldiers bring Isabelle and Roxanne
inside. A crowd of panicked Villagers swarms to Solomon.

SOLOMON

We are safe here. God protects
his own house and those within it.

Isabelle finds Prudence.

ISABELLE

Is Peter here?

PRUDENCE

Peter? I don't think so.

ISABELLE

What about Claude? Or my parents?

PRUDENCE

I haven't seen any of them.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

ISABELLE

Would you look for them? Please?

Prudence nods and rushes off. Roxanne slumps in a corner, a dazed look on her face. A beat.

ROXANNE

You talked to it.

ISABELLE

It talked to us.

A chill runs down Roxanne's spine. A long beat.

ROXANNE

No. It only growled.

(off Isabelle's look)

You heard it talk to you?

Isabelle doesn't know what to say. She glances around to see if anyone has overheard. Then:

ISABELLE

Do not speak of this to anyone.

Roxanne nods, but eyes Isabelle warily. Isabelle turns away, afraid and confused.

EXT. CHURCH - DAWN

Silence. The door CREAKS open and the Merchant peers out. A blanket of new snow covers the village. It's as if the massacre of the night before never happened.

INT. ISABELLE'S FAMILY COTTAGE - COMMON ROOM - DAWN

Isabelle hurries inside. Embers burn in the fire pit. A chair has been overturned. The room is empty.

ISABELLE

Mother! Father!

INT. ISABELLE'S FAMILY COTTAGE - BEDROOM - DAWN

Isabelle bursts in to find Suzette lying in bed and Cesaire leaning over her, crying. Isabelle stops short.

ISABELLE

Is she dead?

CESAIRE

No, thank God.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

He sits up, revealing Suzette's face, which has been horribly slashed from scalp to chin. Isabelle recoils.

EXT. VILLAGE - SQUARE - DAWN

The Villagers slowly gather. Dead bodies litter the snow. Roxanne clutches Prudence's arm. Henri joins them. Father Auguste crouches next to Soldier #1.

FATHER AUGUSTE

This man is alive!
(to Henri)
Bring me water! Hurry!

Henri nods and quickly turns -- but is stopped cold by Solomon's iron grip on his arm. Solomon and his Captain go to Soldier #1. Solomon kneels at his side.

SOLOMON

Are you bitten?

Shivering, the Soldier nods. The Captain closes his eyes. Solomon stands and turns to Father Auguste.

SOLOMON

Step back.

Confused, Father Auguste does as he's told. Then, before anyone can react, Solomon draws his sword and plunges it into the Soldier's heart. Everyone startles.

SOLOMON

The werewolf's bite is the same as death to a man.

Stunned silence. Solomon turns to the Villagers.

SOLOMON

The dark days have returned to your village. Your homes are no longer safe. The Wolf will return. Again and again. And it will not stop until it has sucked the marrow from all your bones. Unless you stop it.

(beat)

But to kill a monster, you must become one yourself. A wolf caught in a trap will chew off its own leg to save itself. Will you do the same? What sacrifice will you make to save your families and your way of life? Will you do whatever it takes? Or will you

(MORE)

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

SOLOMON (CONT'D)

cower in your beds and die like
sheep?

A long beat. The Villagers shiver and not just from the cold. But no one speaks. Solomon turns to Attewater.

SOLOMON

It appears my expertise is not as
appreciated as I was led to
believe.

He turns to leave. Suddenly, Attewater steps forward.

ATTEWATER

Wait!

Attewater drops to one knee. Solomon stops and gives him an appraising look. Then Solomon turns to the Villagers. After a moment, the Reeve drops to his knee. One by one, the Villagers kneel to Solomon. Henri and Father Auguste are among the last, but they reluctantly kneel as well.

ATTEWATER

We will do what must be done.

A beat. Then Solomon offers his hand. Attewater kisses Solomon's ring. Henri and Roxanne exchange uneasy looks.

INT. PETER'S COTTAGE - DAY

There's an urgent knock at the door. Peter quickly opens it. It's Isabelle. He ushers her inside. As soon as the door is shut, he takes her in his arms. She gives him a concerned look. He looks tired, drawn and pale.

PETER

I was up all night worrying about
you. Thank God you're safe.

But something about her expression gives him pause. She looks up at him, struggling with what she has to say.

ISABELLE

Peter... My mother's hurt. I
can't leave. Not now.

PETER

I thought you didn't want to wait.

ISABELLE

I don't have any choice. It's not
just my mother. Something else
happened last night.

(off his look)
(MORE)

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

ISABELLE (CONT'D)

I can't tell you about it. I just have to stay.

Peter nods, but his face darkens. A long, tense beat.

ISABELLE

I meant everything I said. This isn't what I wanted.

PETER

Of course not. You'd better go home and see to your mother.

She gives him a sad nod, then turns to go. She pauses at the door, but he doesn't look at her. She leaves.

INT. MANOR HOUSE - GREAT HALL - NIGHT

Solomon places his silver sword on the table in front of Attewater and Father Auguste.

SOLOMON

Silver. This is our most potent weapon. One blow will kill it.

(beat)

That sword has tasted the blood of many such creatures. But never one as powerful as this.

ATTEWATER

If it's that powerful, how can we possibly hope to stop it?

SOLOMON

We must find it in its human form. Who among you do you suspect?

Attewater and Father Auguste trade uncomfortable looks. Neither of them wants to speak up first.

SOLOMON

It has not survived this long by being obvious. The signs will be subtle. Insomnia. Restlessness. Strange behavior. Strange smells.

(off their looks)

Well, none of them smell good, but we must start somewhere.

FATHER AUGUSTE

What about the hair Madame Ordeville found on Lucie's body? It was dark. The person we are looking for must have dark hair.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

SOLOMON

Perhaps. Unless it planted the hair to make us think that.

ATTEWATER

Yes, it's trying to trick us again. This has been happening for forty years. It must be an old man by now. The hair should have been gray.

SOLOMON

Not necessarily. It may be the child or grandchild of the werewolf that first struck here.

FATHER AUGUSTE

The curse is hereditary?

SOLOMON

It is. But it effects men and women differently. A man can inherit the curse. Or he can be turned simply by being bitten.

Solomon turns toward the fire and stares into it.

SOLOMON

But women are immune to the werewolf's bite. In order for a woman to be turned, she must inherit the curse. But even then it will lie dormant unless she eats human flesh. Only then will the bite of a male werewolf change her. Only then can she become a werewolf and capable of passing the curse on to her own children.

ATTEWATER

But it could be a woman.

SOLOMON

Of course. It could be any one of you.

Attewater and Father Auguste exchange a wary look.

EXT. VILLAGE - CROSSROADS - DAWN

The mood of the village is grim. Isabelle meets Roxanne at the crossroads. Roxanne eyes her warily. A beat.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

ISABELLE
Has Claude come home?

ROXANNE
No. Nobody has seen him.

ISABELLE
He's run away before. He'll be
all right.

Roxanne nods, unconvinced. Prudence joins them. They
all exchange a sad look.

PRUDENCE
Well. I suppose this is all of
us.

The three of them turn and start toward the woods...

INT. GRANDMOTHER'S COTTAGE - NIGHT

Isabelle and Grandmother sit by the fire.

GRANDMOTHER
It talked to you. And you
understood it?

ISABELLE
As clearly as I do you now.

Grandmother fixes her with a serious look. A beat.

GRANDMOTHER
Word of this cannot be allowed to
spread. Do you understand me?

ISABELLE
Roxanne will never speak of it.
She won't even talk to me about
it.

A long beat. Isabelle is working up her nerve. Then:

ISABELLE
I have to do what it wants.
(off her look)
I have communed with an unholy
beast. What does that make me if
not cursed?

GRANDMOTHER
I don't know. But I won't allow
you to go with this devil and live
as its concubine.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

ISABELLE

But if it comes back for me and I don't go with it, then it will kill again. If I have the power to save even one life, aren't I compelled to do so?

GRANDMOTHER

This is why it chose you. You're a good girl with a gentle heart. It's using that against you.

ISABELLE

But how could it? Unless it really does know me?

Isabelle and Grandmother exchange an anxious look...

EXT. ISABELLE'S FAMILY COTTAGE - DAY

Isabelle is walking home through the snow. Henri is waiting for her. A beat. Then:

HENRI

I spoke with your father. I broke off our engagement.
(off her look)
I saw you with Peter. Don't worry, I didn't tell anyone.

Isabelle can't hide her shock. She shifts anxiously.

ISABELLE

What about my family's debt?

HENRI

I have no interest in ruining your family. I will have you out of love or not at all.

Isabelle is dumbfounded. Henri turns and walks away...

INT. ISABELLE'S FAMILY COTTAGE - COMMON ROOM - NIGHT

Isabelle is cooking, lost in thought. Suddenly, there's a KNOCK at the door. Isabelle opens it. It's Prudence.

PRUDENCE

They've caught the werewolf!

EXT. VILLAGE - ROAD - NIGHT

Prudence leads Isabelle and Cesaire through the village.
There are SHOUTING VOICES up ahead.

PRUDENCE

He's been hiding in a hayloft.
They caught him trying to steal
food.

ISABELLE

But who is it?

An angry crowd has gathered. Solomon's Soldiers are all
that's stopping it from turning into a lynch mob.
Isabelle finds Roxanne in tears, trying to force her way
through the crowd.

ISABELLE

What's wrong? What's happening?

Roxanne doesn't answer, just plunges into the crowd.
Isabelle goes in after her. Cesaire tries to stop her.

CESAIRE

Isabelle! Get away from there!

She follows Roxanne to the front of the crowd, just as
two Soldiers haul a figure out of a barn -- it's Claude.

ROXANNE

Claude!!

ISABELLE

It's not him! It can't be!

LUCRECE

If he's not the werewolf, then why
was he hiding? What's he afraid
of?

The Soldiers carry Claude off and Roxanne stumbles after
them. Isabelle tries to follow, but Cesaire stops her.
She can only watch helplessly as Claude is dragged away.

EXT. MANOR HOUSE - DAY

Villagers are gathering. The whole town must be here.
As Attewater approaches the entrance:

GRANDMOTHER (O.S.)

Salus populi suprema est lex.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

He turns and sees Grandmother walking toward him. She nods to the inscription above the entrance. "SALUS POPULI SUPREMA EST LEX."

GRANDMOTHER

The good of the people is the chief law.

ATTEWATER

You read Latin.

GRANDMOTHER

And write. I was studying to be a nun when I met my husband.

ATTEWATER

He must have been some man.

GRANDMOTHER

He was a priest.

She grins. Is she being serious? Attewater bristles.

GRANDMOTHER

You know the boy is innocent. He's being tried because he's different. Because Father Solomon knows he can turn us against him.

ATTEWATER

Father Solomon is here to protect us.

GRANDMOTHER

A wolf hunting sheep picks off the weakest ones first.

(off his look)

This is just the beginning.

She enters the manor hall. Attewater watches her go.

INT. MANOR HOUSE - GREAT HALL - DAY

The room is crammed with Villagers. Isabelle sits with Cesaire and Grandmother. Attewater sits behind the table. Claude is shackled and guarded by Soldiers. He looks afraid, confused. Solomon questions Lucrece. A SCRIBE records the proceedings.

SOLOMON

You say you saw the accused perform magic?

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

LUCRECE

In broad daylight with my own eyes. Everyone here has seen it.

SOLOMON

So it was common knowledge that the accused was a conjurer?

LUCRECE

Yes, Your Eminence. I saw it for the Devil's work, but they laughed at me and paid him money.

Isabelle and Grandmother exchange a concerned look.
Through a SERIES OF CUTS, more witnesses are questioned:

FATHER AUGUSTE

shifts uncomfortably as Solomon interrogates him...

SOLOMON

Are you aware that it is the custom of witches and devil worshippers to hold their black sabbaths in cemeteries?

FATHER AUGUSTE

Yes, Your Eminence.

SOLOMON

And do you know of their practice of dancing with invisible devils during these rituals?

FATHER AUGUSTE

I have heard it said so, yes.

SOLOMON

Is there one here today who you have seen dancing in your cemetery?

FATHER AUGUSTE

(hesitant; a beat)
Yes. But I don't believe he meant anything by it. It was in jest.

SOLOMON

So you consider the black mass to be a jest?

There are suspicious WHISPERS among the Villagers.
Father Auguste eyes them nervously. A beat.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

FATHER AUGUSTE
No, of course not.

SOLOMON
Then point him out.

Father Auguste reluctantly points to Claude.

MARGUERITE

Roxanne weeps as her mother testifies against Claude.

SOLOMON
What is your relationship to the
accused?

MARGUERITE
I am his mother.

SOLOMON
And where is his father?

MARGUERITE
I don't know, sir.

SOLOMON
Well, what is his name?

She pauses. The crowd eyes her, disapproving. A beat.

MARGUERITE
I never learned his name, sir.

SOLOMON
You say a man whose name you
cannot recall is the father of
your child? What can you tell us
about him?

MARGUERITE
Not much, sir.

She lowers her eyes, ashamed. Solomon considers her.

SOLOMON
Almost as if it were a dream?
(off her look)
Certain devils called incubi can
collect human semen and then
transfer it to women as they
sleep. A woman who unwittingly
conceives in this manner would not
be a whore. She would be
blameless in the eyes of God.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

Marguerite's eyes spark, suddenly hopeful...

SOLOMON

You remember almost nothing of the man who impregnated you. Is it not possible that there was no man? That the accused is not the product of your own sin, but the foul offspring of a werewolf whose semen was placed in you by an incubus while you slept?

MARGUERITE

Yes! Yes, I remember now! He came to me in my sleep! It wasn't my fault! God save me, it wasn't my fault!

Roxanne buries her face in her hands.

INT. MANOR HOUSE - GREAT HALL - DAY (LATER)

Solomon addresses the gathered Villagers.

SOLOMON

We have proven here today that behind this veil of feigned idiocy is the fiend that has plagued your village. However, in order for the sentence of death to be carried out, the Church requires either a confession or the testimony of a witness who has seen the accused in his transformed state. Since the accused has refused to confess, this court calls upon its final witness. Isabelle Ordeville.

Isabelle is stunned. All eyes turn toward her.

INT. MANOR HOUSE - GREAT HALL - DAY (TIMECUT)

Isabelle stands before Solomon. Claude waves. She ignores him.

SOLOMON

On the night of the last full moon, you were attacked by the Wolf. You looked it in the eye. And the one thing a werewolf can never change is its eyes.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

He gestures to the Soldiers. They grab Claude and force him to look at her.

SOLOMON

Look into his eyes, my child. Do
you see the beast in them?

Isabelle gives Claude a pitying look. Solomon watches, expectant. Then:

ISABELLE

It isn't him. It can't be. He
was with us when the Wolf
attacked.

Solomon is taken aback. Surprised MURMURS in the room.

SOLOMON

Is this true? Is there another
here who can speak to this?

ROXANNE

I can! It's true! I saw him!

LUCRECE

She's his sister! She'll say
anything!

The suspicious Villagers agree. Roxanne gives Isabelle a desperate look. Then Isabelle spots the Carpenter.

ISABELLE

He was there! He carried Claude
away! He saved his life!

Suddenly, all eyes are on the Carpenter. He shrinks back. He glances at his WIFE. She stares at him. Hard.

CARPENTER

She is mistaken. I did no such
thing.

Isabelle is shocked. She looks to the other Villagers, but no one will speak up. Solomon frowns.

SOLOMON

Very well. Since no one here can
bear witness, we must extort a
confession. This court shall
reconvene tomorrow at dawn.

Solomon leaves. Claude is dragged out of the room by Soldiers. Isabelle gives Grandmother a helpless look.

INT. ISABELLE'S FAMILY COTTAGE - COMMON ROOM - DUSK

Isabelle and Grandmother sit at the table. Cesaire is in the other room feeding Suzette.

ISABELLE

Why wouldn't Father Solomon listen to me? Doesn't he care that Claude isn't guilty?

GRANDMOTHER

He'd rather let an innocent boy die than risk letting the Wolf go free.

ISABELLE

But the Wolf is free. And the moon will be full in two days.

The full weight of this hits home. Grandmother leans close, lowers her voice.

GRANDMOTHER

We both know it will be coming for you. You must leave here tomorrow and never return.

A long beat. Isabelle reluctantly shakes her head.

ISABELLE

I cannot leave.

GRANDMOTHER

You have no choice. The alternative is unthinkable.

ISABELLE

What is unthinkable is that I should be responsible for the deaths of everyone that I love. I'd rather spend a lifetime of misery than let that happen.

GRANDMOTHER

The Wolf's sins are on its own twice-damned soul, not yours.

ISABELLE

But what if it was you it wanted? Would you go with it to save me? Or would you leave me to die?

Grandmother doesn't have a fast answer for that. Suddenly, a HIDEOUS, INARTICULATE SCREAM echoes in the night. Isabelle and Grandmother exchange a grave look.

EXT. ISABELLE'S FAMILY COTTAGE - NIGHT

Grandmother and Isabelle step outside, followed by Cesaire. The SCREAMING can be heard more clearly.

GRANDMOTHER

Father Solomon. Extorting his confession.

Claude's screams sending chills down their spines.

CESAIRE

You should have condemned him today. At least it would have been quick.

Cesaire turns and goes back inside. Isabelle and Grandmother continue to listen.

INT. ROXANNE'S FAMILY COTTAGE - NIGHT

Roxanne weeps with her hands clamped around her ears, trying to block out the SCREAMING. Her mother sits by the fire as if nothing unusual is going on.

ROXANNE

How can you just sit there and listen to this?

Marguerite ignores her. Furious, Roxanne stands up and grabs Marguerite's coin purse.

MARGUERITE

Where are you going with that?

Roxanne doesn't answer, just pulls on her cloak. Marguerite grabs her, but Roxanne turns and shoves her to the ground. Marguerite starts to get up, but Roxanne snatches a knife from off the table and points it at her.

ROXANNE

Don't you touch me again. Ever.

Roxanne angrily throws the knife aside and leaves.

INT. MANOR HOUSE - DUNGEON - NIGHT

A fire burns underneath a "Brazen Bull," a hollow, life-size bull made of brass. The fire heats the metal to almost red-hot. Claude's screams come from inside it. Solomon glowers, frustrated. Attewater looks sick.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

SOLOMON

Enough of this. Let's eat.

He gestures to the Scribe, who hands Attewater a document.

ATTEWATER

What is this?

SOLOMON

A statement declaring that you heard the boy confess. All it requires is your signature. Or your mark, if you cannot write.

ATTEWATER

But he has not confessed. How could he have?

Solomon studies Attewater. A beat. Solomon shrugs.

SOLOMON

Very well. Listen more carefully this time.

He gestures for the Soldiers to throw more wood on the fire. The FLAMES leap higher. Attewater goes pale. All he hears are screams. Solomon stands next to the bull. The flames gleam off the brass, casting him in hellfire.

SOLOMON

Listen to how he sings of his love of Satan. How he despairs that he will never again copulate with the dead or sink his teeth into the flesh of pregnant women and eat their unborn children.

Attewater gives Solomon a horrified look, suddenly realizing. Father Solomon is insane.

ATTEWATER

Stop this.

SOLOMON

No. You stop it.

(off his look)

We both know he is guilty. But I cannot legally execute him without a witness or a confession. Sign this and we have a confession.

Attewater glares at Solomon, then angrily signs the document. Solomon gestures to his Soldiers, who open the bull and pull Claude out. Attewater has to look away.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED: (2)

Suddenly, Solomon grabs Attewater by his collar, drags him across the room, and forces him to look at Claude. Thankfully, we do not see him, except in deep f.g. His naked flesh is actually smoking. Attewater cringes.

SOLOMON

This is the business of werewolf hunting and you had best develop a stomach for it. Because where there is one werewolf, there are two. And where there are two, there are more.

(beat)

This is only the beginning.

Solomon throws him to the floor and leaves. Attewater trembles helplessly as Claude is dragged out of the room.

INT. MANOR HOUSE - GREAT HALL - NIGHT

Solomon is eating dinner. The Captain enters.

CAPTAIN

A girl to see you.

SOLOMON

Well, I've yet to come across a girl I wouldn't at least look at.

The Captain ushers Roxanne inside. She meekly steps forward. A beat.

SOLOMON

I assume you came here with a purpose.

She hurriedly empties Marguerite's purse on the table in front of Solomon. A mere handful of coins.

ROXANNE

I would like to bargain for the release of my brother.

SOLOMON

Your brother has just confessed.

ROXANNE

What? That's not possible!

SOLOMON

It has been witnessed and notarized. He will hang in the morning.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

Roxanne stands frozen, gathering her courage for what she is about to say. Realizing that she has no choice.

ROXANNE

I have more than money to offer you.

She raises a trembling hand and starts to open her bodice, but Solomon interrupts.

SOLOMON

What do you think you are doing?

(off her look)

Do you have any idea who I am? I am the Witchfinder General. I have fought in the Holy Land. I have waded hip deep in blood and resisted all the temptations of the infidels. And you seek to stay the hand of justice with such a tawdry bribe? Leave here, girl, before I have you whipped.

Solomon gestures for the Soldiers and they forcibly drag her away. Roxanne struggles against them.

ROXANNE

Wait! I have something else! I know the name of a witch!

Solomon looks up sharply. The Soldiers stop. Solomon crosses the room and stands glaring down at Roxanne. She cringes. This is the hardest decision of her life...

ROXANNE

Spare my brother and I will tell you her name.

INT. ISABELLE'S FAMILY COTTAGE - VARIOUS - NIGHT

SMASH! Isabelle and her parents are jolted from their sleep by Soldiers barging into their home. One of them climbs into the loft and yanks Isabelle out of bed.

Cesaire leaps to his feet, but is viciously beaten down. Suzette screams. The Soldiers drag Isabelle away.

INT. MANOR HOUSE - DUNGEON CELL - NIGHT

Isabelle is thrown to the floor, the door SLAMMED behind her. She huddles against the wall, shivering.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

Then: A low MOAN in the dark. Isabelle startles. She looks up, her eyes going wide in disgust and horror...

It's Claude. He's locked in a man-shaped cage, his body covered with hideous burns. He moans again. Isabelle chokes back her disgust and goes to him. She lightly takes his hand, shaken to her soul at the sight of him.

INT. MANOR HOUSE - GREAT HALL - DAY

The chamber is full again. Cesaire, Grandmother, Prudence, and Henri are here. Peter sits in the last row. Isabelle is in the seat of the accused. Roxanne stands witness. She's trying not to look at Isabelle.

SOLOMON

How are you acquainted with the accused?

ROXANNE

We were friends.

SOLOMON

And how long did this friendship last?

ROXANNE

All my life.

SOLOMON

And in this time, have you ever known the accused to converse with devils?

ROXANNE

Yes, Your Eminence. On the night of the last full moon, she talked to the werewolf. And later she told me that it also talked to her.

Isabelle gives Grandmother a frightened look. Cesaire clenches his fist. Solomon turns to Isabelle.

SOLOMON

What of this? Do you deny having conversed with a werewolf?

She looks to Roxanne, who trembles with emotion. Then:

ISABELLE

No. I do not deny it.

The crowd REACTS. Solomon quiets them with a look.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

SOLOMON

Describe this encounter.

ISABELLE

It spoke, just as a man speaks.

SOLOMON

And what was the nature of your conversation with it?

Isabelle hesitates. Grandmother holds her breath.

ISABELLE

It told me... It promised to leave here and never return. But only if I leave with it.

Roxanne gives her a stunned look. A heavy silence falls over the room. Even Solomon is surprised. Then:

REEVE

But who is it? Make her tell us who the werewolf is!

ISABELLE

I don't know! I swear I don't know!

MERCHANT

It doesn't matter who it is anymore. It wants her, not us. Let's just give it what it wants.

A long, tense beat. Heavy silence. Nobody speaks.

FATHER AUGUSTE

We should not allow ourselves to even consider this.

REEVE

I think we already are.

GRANDMOTHER

What's the matter with you? You know her. You all know her.

REEVE

Do we? Did we know she could talk to werewolves?

GRANDMOTHER

She could have run away. She could saved herself, but she stayed here because she cares more about you than she does herself.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED: (2)

Peter reacts. He and Isabelle exchange a look. Now he understands...

MERCHANT

If she stayed, she did so because
she is in league with it. Let
this be her punishment.

The crowd loudly AGREES. Solomon considers. Grandmother gives Attewater a dark look. Then:

SOLOMON

Very well. Isabelle Ordeville, in
light of your willing confession,
it is the decision of this court
that on the night of the next full
moon, you be left to the mercy of
the werewolf.

Cesaire silently buries his face in his hands.

HENRI

No!

Henri bursts to his feet, turning heads. Isabelle is led away. Roxanne can only watch, helpless and ashamed.

EXT. VILLAGE - SQUARE - DAY

Lucrece has drawn a small crowd around the well.
Prudence pauses to hear what she's saying...

LUCRECE

The first victim was her sister.
The second was her fiancée's
father. Then Rosemaria, who
everyone knows she hated. And
don't forget her mother, with half
her face missing. All this death
around one girl...

Prudence has heard enough. She turns away.

EXT. MANOR HOUSE - DUSK

Roxanne approaches. The Captain eyes her, questioning.

ROXANNE

I'm here for my brother.

He gestures. Roxanne turns... and sees Claude's body
dangling from a makeshift gallows. He's been hanged.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

Roxanne falls to her knees. The rope around Claude's neck CREAKS as his body sways in the wind.

INT. MANOR HOUSE - DUNGEON CELL - NIGHT

Isabelle stands at the barred door. Grandmother is on the other side. They speak in furtive whispers.

GRANDMOTHER

I'm not going to let these worthless shits sacrifice you to save themselves. We have to find the real werewolf before tomorrow night.

ISABELLE

That's impossible. Even Father Solomon doesn't have the first clue.

GRANDMOTHER

Father Solomon doesn't know the things that I know.

(off Isabelle's look)

I am the oldest person in this village who was here when the Wolf first came. I remember the old days. And what is happening now is much worse.

ISABELLE

What was it like in the old days?

GRANDMOTHER

The Wolf never used to attack in the open like it did at the festival. It's a coward at heart. It would kill whole families in their homes, but it always stayed in the shadows. It never would have shown itself in the old days.

ISABELLE

It's grown bold.

GRANDMOTHER

Or perhaps it made a mistake.

(beat)

You're at the center of this. At least two of the victims can be tied to you. What if it had to kill so many at the festival to hide the fact that the first two killings weren't random?

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

Isabelle considers this. A beat as she realizes...

ISABELLE

But who would want to kill Lucie?

GRANDMOTHER

Your parents said that the Wolf
broke into the house and took
Lucie. We both know that's not
true. What really happened?

Isabelle hesitates, reluctant.

ISABELLE

My mother made me swear I would
never speak of it.

(beat)

Lucie went to the Wolf willingly.

Grandmother reacts, horrified.

GRANDMOTHER

Why would you think such a thing?

ISABELLE

She was in love with Henri.

GRANDMOTHER

She took her own life over a boy?

ISABELLE

What other explanation is there?

Grandmother thinks. The pieces are fitting together...

EXT. STABLE - NIGHT

Grandmother knocks on a door. Henri answers.

GRANDMOTHER

Hello, Henri.

INT. STABLE - NIGHT

Henri is in the midst of shoeing a horse. Grandmother
stands by the door, watching him.

GRANDMOTHER

You spoke up very loudly in
Isabelle's defense today. That
was very brave.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

HENRI

I just said what I felt.

GRANDMOTHER

You're under no obligation to stand in her defense. You broke off your engagement to her.

HENRI

I never stopped caring about her. I would do anything for Isabelle.

GRANDMOTHER

As her sister would have done anything for you.

(off his look)

Lucie was in love with you. But you knew that, didn't you?

HENRI

I had no control over the way she felt.

GRANDMOTHER

She kept it secret from almost everyone. Even Isabelle didn't know. Did you tell anyone?

HENRI

Never.

GRANDMOTHER

Not even your father?

HENRI

I didn't have to tell him.

GRANDMOTHER

So he knew your secrets, did he?

Henri picks up a hammer and goes back to work. Angrily nailing a shoe to the horse's foot. BANG! BANG! BANG!

GRANDMOTHER

You were the only one who could have lured Lucie out on the Wolf's night. And none of the men who went hunting for the Wolf remember seeing you after the sun set on the night your father died.

Henri faces her, clutching the hammer...

HENRI

Why are you doing this?

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED: (2)

GRANDMOTHER

Because I want you to confess.
You killed Lucie. And your
father. And God only knows how
many others. And if you won't
admit it, then I will tell Father
Solomon and we will lock you up
until the moon rises tomorrow
night and you can no longer hide
your guilt.

As she says this, a slow look of dawning realization
comes over him. Realization and horror.

HENRI

It's you.

Henri steps closer to her, menacing. Grandmother steps
back and finds herself bumping against the closed door.

HENRI

My God, it's you. You're the
Wolf. I can smell it on you now.

GRANDMOTHER

Smell what? What are you talking
about?

HENRI

The night my father died. I saw
the Wolf pass by, dragging him by
the neck. I was so terrified I
couldn't move or make a sound. I
remember every detail of that
moment. The way the moonlight
gleamed off the Wolf's coat. The
soundless way it moved. I even
remember the way it smelled. A
thick, greasy, musky stink.

(beat)

And I can smell it on you right
now.

A beat. They stand frozen. Glaring at one another.

GRANDMOTHER

You accuse me and I'll bring you
down with me. All they can do is
take my life. You have more to
lose.

HENRI

But who do you think they'll
believe? I'm the blacksmith.
(MORE)

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED: (3)

HENRI (CONT'D)

They know me. You're the crazy
old woman who lives in the woods.

GRANDMOTHER

Then I'll have to prove it.

HENRI

Unless you can, you'd best keep
your mouth shut.

Another beat. A stand-off. Grandmother's hand finds the
door handle. She turns it, stumbling outside --

EXT. STABLE - NIGHT

-- and practically runs right into Cesaire. She
startles, gives him a surprised, flustered look.

CESAIRE

Are you ready for me to take you
home?

She looks back. Henri stands in the doorway, still
holding the hammer. She eyes him, measuring, suddenly
hesitant. Cesaire gives them both an uncertain look.

EXT. VILLAGE - ROAD - NIGHT

Cesaire and Grandmother ride in a horse-drawn cart. The
moon is almost full. Up ahead, Grandmother sees Prudence
with a group of Villagers listening to Lucrece.

GRANDMOTHER

Stop the cart.

Cesaire pulls the reins. Grandmother calls out:

GRANDMOTHER

Prudence, come with me. I have
some blankets I want you to mend
for Father Auguste.

Prudence sighs and climbs up into the cart.

EXT. GRANDMOTHER'S COTTAGE - NIGHT

The cart stops out front. Grandmother turns to Prudence.

GRANDMOTHER

You take these blankets to Father
Auguste the moment you're
finished. Understand?

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

PRUDENCE

All right.

Cesaire helps Grandmother out of the cart.

INT. GRANDMOTHER'S COTTAGE - NIGHT

Grandmother hands Cesaire a stack of knitted blankets.
He has tears in his eyes.

CESAIRE

Will you want a ride into town
tomorrow? To say goodbye to her?

GRANDMOTHER

Yes. First thing in the morning.

He nods shakily and leaves. She closes the door behind him and lets the façade of calm fall from her face. She puts a trembling hand to her mouth, mind racing...

EXT. VILLAGE - SQUARE - DAWN

The Villagers go about their daily activities, but nobody speaks. The Herald hangs the full moon sign.

HERALD

Full moon! Full moon! Full moon!

EXT. GRANDMOTHER'S COTTAGE - DAWN

Morning sunlight glints off the frozen brook. A flock of CROWS are startled from their roosts and take flight.

INT. GRANDMOTHER'S COTTAGE - DAWN

Grandmother sits at the table, writing a letter in Latin with a quill. She doesn't notice the veil that separates her bedchamber rippling, as if in a gentle breeze...

Suddenly, she hears MOVEMENT. She looks up. The veil is still. She stands and pokes the ashes of the fire with her cane, her back to the veil...

... and changes her grip on the cane. To wield it as a weapon. Glancing back, she sees the veil move again...

Suddenly, she whirls around and swings her cane at the veil, sweeping through it three times without hitting anything. A beat.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

GRANDMOTHER

Show yourself! Coward!

Another beat. The veil settles and is still. Then:

A FIGURE lunges out of the veil with its arms reaching out at us. It grabs Grandmother's throat in one hand and wrestles the cane from her grip with the other.

She struggles, but she's far too weak for her attacker. The Figure whips out a knife. Grandmother sees it, but can do nothing. The knife flashes.

Fat drops of blood splash on the floor. Then the Figure drops Grandmother and she crumples, lifeless. A pool of blood slowly spreads out from underneath her.

The Figure steps over the widening pool and picks up the letter Grandmother was writing. He quickly scans it and angrily tosses it in the fire...

Then he hears something. FOOTSTEPS, crunching through the snow. He hurries to the window and peers out...

It's Roxanne and Prudence. Roxanne looks like hell, but here for lessons as usual. The Figure ducks out of sight. A moment later, they're KNOCKING on the door. Their feet are visible under the crack.

The Figure sidles alongside the door, BREATHING heavily. Another KNOCK. On the floor inside, the pool of blood is expanding toward the door...

The Figure sees it. He puts a hand on the hilt of his knife... *then whispers to the girls through the door, disguising his voice with a dry, old woman's rasp:*

THE FIGURE

Go away.

Outside, Roxanne and Prudence exchange a curious look.

PRUDENCE

Are you all right?

THE FIGURE

I'm sick. You can't come in.

PRUDENCE

You sound awful. Would you like us to make you something?

THE FIGURE

No. You mustn't come in. Go home, now. I want to sleep.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED: (2)

The blood is flowing right toward the door. In about thirty seconds, the girls will be standing in it. Outside, Prudence and Roxanne exchange a look...

... then turn and walk away. The Figure breathes a sigh of relief and takes his hand away from the knife.

But then Roxanne stops. And looks back. The Figure secretly watches from the window.

Roxanne walks back to the cottage. The blood is about to run under the door. The Figure grabs the door handle and readies the knife. Roxanne stands on the doorstep.

ROXANNE

Are you sure you don't want us to bring you something?

THE FIGURE

No, my dear. Come back tomorrow.

The blood is seconds away from hitting her feet. The Figure stands poised to throw open the door... but at the last instant, Roxanne turns and walks away. She doesn't see the blood pour outside under the door behind her.

INT. MANOR HOUSE - DUNGEON CELL - DAY

Isabelle has fallen asleep on the bed of straw. She's startled awake by the sound of her CELL DOOR opening. It's Father Auguste.

FATHER AUGUSTE

I've come to hear your final confession.

Isabelle nods shakily and sits up. He enters.

ISABELLE

Has there been any word from my grandmother?

FATHER AUGUSTE

None that I have heard. Why?

Isabelle doesn't answer. She turns away, troubled...

EXT. MANOR HOUSE - DAY

Peter anxiously waits outside, half-hidden in a copse of trees. A SERVANT BOY runs up to him from the house.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

SERVANT BOY

She's still in the dungeon.
They're going to move her at
sunset.

Peter tosses the Boy a coin. The Boy runs off. Peter
looks at the stone house, his eyes hard and determined...

INT. MANOR HOUSE - CORRIDOR - DAY

Attewater walks with Father Solomon.

ATTEWATER

We've hanged the werewolf. Why
not let the girl go free?

SOLOMON

I told you, Bailiff. Where there
is one werewolf, there are more.
And the girl is the bait for our
trap.

Father Solomon strides off. Attewater watches him go...

EXT. VILLAGE - SQUARE - DAY

Villagers are already gathering. The Merchant looks up
at the sun. It's now dipping beneath the rooftops...

EXT. BLACKSMITH'S COTTAGE - DAY

Peter knocks on the door. Henri opens it. He eyes Peter
dubiously.

PETER

I need your help.

Off Henri's look...

INT. TAVERN HOUSE - DAY

Attewater hurriedly enters and looks around. Nobody here
except the BARMAN and Cesaire slumped in a chair, a jug
of beer in his hand. Attewater goes to Cesaire.

ATTEWATER

Where is your mother?

CESAIRE

I don't know. I went to pick her
up this morning and she was gone.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

Attewater reacts, concerned. Cesaire takes another drink. Attewater angrily knocks it out of his hand.

ATTEWATER

Stop pouring that swill down your
gullet listen to me!

Cesaire emerges from his drunken fog and shoots him a dangerous look, but Attewater doesn't shy from it.

ATTEWATER

She was trying to find the
werewolf. If she figured out who
it is, I need to know now.

Suddenly, the door bursts open and the Captain enters, flanked by Soldiers. They drag Cesaire to his feet.

ATTEWATER

Wait! What has he done?

CAPTAIN

It's just a precaution. Father
Solomon doesn't want the girl's
family interfering.

Suddenly, Cesaire pulls a club out of his boot and hits the Captain across the back, knocking him to his knees. Cesaire hits him again, then he's wrestled to the ground.

The Captain kicks Cesaire in the face and knocks him out. The Soldiers drag him away. Attewater watches them go...

INT. MANOR HOUSE - DUNGEON CELL - DAY

Soldiers haul Cesaire's unconscious body downstairs. Isabelle watches as they throw him in another cell.

ISABELLE

What have you done to him?!

Then: Isabelle's cell is opened. The Captain is holding iron manacles. Isabelle looks at them, horrified. The Soldiers clap her in irons. This is really happening...

CESAIRE (O.S.)

Isabelle...

He's coming to. Isabelle breaks away from the Soldiers, runs to his cell, and holds his hands through the bars.

ISABELLE

I love you so much. Tell Mama and
Grandmother that I love them.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

CESAIRE

I love you, my angel. You don't
know how much.

The Soldiers pull Isabelle away and lead her up the stairs. Cesaire shakes his cell door with impotent rage.

CESAIRE

Bastards!

EXT. MANOR HOUSE - DUSK

Isabelle is chained to the back of Solomon's coach. The Captain approaches with a "humiliation mask": an iron mask that locks in place over the head with only tiny holes to see out of. This one is shaped to look like a wolf's head. Isabelle goes pale at the sight of it...

... then the Captain puts it over her head. Inside the mask: almost total darkness. The Captain locks it on.

EXT. VILLAGE - ROAD - DUSK

Solomon's coach lurches through the snow and slush. Isabelle trudges along behind it. The Villagers line the road to watch as she is dragged stumbling through the streets in her horrific iron wolf mask. Lucrece sneers.

LUCRECE

Not so pretty now, is she?

The Villagers do not answer. Henri is here, silently fuming. Prudence stands next to him. She looks around.

PRUDENCE

Where's Peter?

HENRI

I haven't seen him.

EXT. VILLAGE - SQUARE - DUSK

Solomon, Attewater, and Father Auguste stand next to the stocks. As a crowd of anxious Villagers watches, Isabelle is placed in the stocks with the mask still on.

SOLOMON

We, Bailiff Attewater, Father
Auguste, and Father Solomon of
Avignon, having in mind that you,
Isabelle Ordeville of Villiers la
Crois  e in the Diocese of Saint-
(MORE)

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

SOLOMON (CONT'D)

Flour, by your own confession,
have committed acts of vulgar
heresy, convict you of the sins of
witches and condemn you to the
mercy of werewolf. This is the
sentence given.

Solomon walks away and Attewater reluctantly follows.
Through the holes in the mask, Isabelle sees Father
Auguste make the sign of the cross and sadly turn away.

ISABELLE

Help...

Father Auguste stops. The Villagers shift uncomfortably
as her helpless voice calls out from inside the mask.

ISABELLE

Help me... Please... Help me...

The Villagers start to leave, ashamed. Isabelle sees
them going... and suddenly SCREAMS.

ISABELLE

HELP ME! PLEASE! WHY WON'T
SOMEBODY HELP ME?!

The Villagers startle. She SCREAMS again, struggling
against the stocks. But no one comes to her aid.

INT. ROXANNE'S FAMILY COTTAGE - BEDROOM - DUSK

Isabelle's SCREAMS can be heard from here. Roxanne lies
in her bed, sobbing her heart out...

EXT. VILLAGE - SQUARE - DUSK (LATER)

Almost everyone has left. Isabelle slumps in the stocks,
silent and exhausted. Father Auguste sadly walks away,
leaving only Prudence. She nervously approaches.

PRUDENCE

Isabelle? Can you hear me?

ISABELLE

I can hear you.

PRUDENCE

Roxanne wanted you to know how
sorry she is. She only said those
things to save her brother.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

ISABELLE

I know. Will you tell her that I
forgive her?

PRUDENCE

Of course.

(beat)

I wanted to say... I don't know
what to say.

ISABELLE

You don't have to say anything.

PRUDENCE

I want to.

(beat)

I want you to know that you may
have fooled Roxanne, but you don't
fool me. Not anymore. You were
always too good. Too pretty.
Nobody could be as perfect as you.
You tricked us. And now you're
going to get what you deserve.

A beat. Isabelle responds, surprisingly gentle:

ISABELLE

I think you'd better go now.

Prudence looks up. The sun has almost set.

PRUDENCE

Yes. It won't be long now.

ACROSS THE SQUARE

The Captain crouches in the shadows of a nearby barn. He
watches Prudence leave. Solomon and Attewater join him.

SOLOMON

No one shoots until I give the
order.

Attewater glances outside and sees Soldiers armed with
longbows hidden all around the square. The Captain draws
an arrow from his quiver. It's tip is made of silver.

EXT. VILLAGE - OUTSKIRTS - NIGHT

The streets are empty. The FULL MOON has risen...

EXT. VILLAGE - SQUARE - VARIOUS - NIGHT

Isabelle is now alone. The streets are empty. Around the square, Soldiers stand in tense silence, ready with arrows strung on their bows. Attewater shifts nervously.

Suddenly: a long, ululating HOWL. Isabelle gasps. The Soldiers ready their bows. Attewater shrinks back. Another HOWL. Closer now. Isabelle tries to pull her hands out of the stocks. Then: Solomon spots something.

SOLOMON

There.

The Captain and Attewater follow his look. A BLACK SHAPE is stealing through the shadows toward Isabelle...

SOLOMON

Hold your fire...

Isabelle frantically tries to free herself, her wrists torn and bleeding, but it's no use. Then, suddenly --

-- something SLAMS into the stocks. BANG! She can't see what it is. The stocks are hit again. Isabelle screams. *Suddenly, the Shape moves into her field of view:*

HENRI (O.S.)

Hey! Stop it! It's me!

Isabelle's eyes go wide. The Black Shape crouches and looks in at Isabelle through the eyeholes. It's Henri.

ISABELLE

Get away from me!

HENRI

I'm not the Wolf! The moon is out! Look, I haven't turned!

Isabelle realizes. He's right. It couldn't be him.

HENRI

I'm trying to get you out of this.

ISABELLE

Yes! Yes, please hurry!

Solomon and his men watch as Henri uses a hammer and chisel to break open the stocks. BANG! BANG!

CAPTAIN

He's going to free her.

Then: another HOWL. Almost on top of them.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

SOLOMON

Patience. It's close now...

Henri brings the hammer down again and again and -- BANG!
The lock is cleaved in two. Henri throws the stock open
and helps Isabelle out of the mask. She looks like hell.

HENRI

Can you stand?

Isabelle nods. In the loft:

SOLOMON

Kill him.

Attewater gives Solomon a horrified look. The Captain
strings an arrow and draws it back, taking aim...

Suddenly, Attewater pushes him aside, spoiling the shot.
The arrow whizzes by Henri's head. Attewater calls out:

ATTEWATER

RUN!

Isabelle and Henri see him -- just as Solomon plunges a
dagger into his back. Henri drags Isabelle to her feet
and they run away, arrows ZIPPING all around them.
Solomon scowls as he watches them escape.

EXT. VILLAGE - ROAD - NIGHT

Henri leads Isabelle as they run through the village.

HENRI

We have to get to the stable.
Peter left his cart for us.

ISABELLE

Peter? Where is he --?

HENRI

It doesn't matter. Come on!

EXT. VILLAGE - NIGHT

The Captain and his Soldiers have picked up a few
followers. They're raising the alarm. A MOB is forming.

CAPTAIN

The witch has escaped! The witch
has escaped!

EXT. STABLE - NIGHT

Henri leads Isabelle around the back and helps her into a cart that is waiting for them and unhitches the horse.

EXT. VILLAGE - ROAD - NIGHT

Henri and Isabelle take off through the village in the cart... but then they hear a HOWL behind them.

They look back. The Wolf emerges from the darkness, chasing after them. Henri whips the horse, urging it to go faster. They start to pull away from the Wolf, but then it veers off into the village and disappears.

HENRI

It's gone.

ISABELLE

I don't think so...

Just then, they pass by the Reeve and a group of Villagers. The Villagers start to give chase, but Isabelle and Henri quickly leave them behind.

Meanwhile, the Wolf is shortcutting through the village, racing after the cart. It comes to a sheep pen and smashes through it. It comes to a large barn and leaps onto its roof, then leaps off again --

-- and lands within striking distance of the cart. Henri drives the horse, but it's no use. The Wolf lunges, wrestling the horse to the ground. The horse cries out, its body twisting as it falls, sending the cart flying.

Isabelle falls out and lands hard. Henri lies on his side, clutching his wrist. Isabelle pulls herself together and goes to him. She looks at his arm. It's visibly broken. She helps him to his feet --

-- just as the overturned cart is SMASHED apart. The Wolf bursts through it, breaking it to pieces. It glares at them with bloodthirsty eyes.

Isabelle and Henri back away from it, but their escape is blocked -- the Villagers have caught up. They freeze at the sight of the Wolf, but stand their ground. Isabelle and Henri are trapped. The Reeve shouts:

REEVE

Take her! Take her and leave us
in peace!

The Wolf SNARLS at him and turns to Isabelle.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

THE WOLF

You can't outrun me, my dear. And
there is no place you can hide
that I cannot smell you out.

(beat)

So what is your decision? Will
you take your place with me?

ISABELLE

My place will never be with you.

THE WOLF

Where do you belong then? Here?
With the cowards who so gladly
sacrificed you to save themselves?

ISABELLE

They're still good people.

THE WOLF

They are sheep. We are not like
them. Let me show you what you
are.

The Wolf steps closer... but suddenly, Henri pushes
Isabelle aside, pulls his hammer from his belt, and
raises it to hit the Wolf.

HENRI

Get away from her!

The Reeve quickly grabs him. Henri struggles futilely,
but Isabelle seizes the distraction. She snatches a
Villager's torch and jabs it into the Wolf's side. The
Wolf leaps back with an eerily human YELP of pain.

Before it can react, Isabelle waves the torch at the
Villagers, grabs Henri and they run away.

The mob chases after them. Three Soldiers appear and
join the mob. Figures silhouetted against the snow,
angry faces lit by torchlight. It's like a nightmare.

Suddenly, a cottage in front of the mob EXPLODES into
pieces and the Wolf bursts out of it. It turns on the
Villagers and Soldiers. It picks up a fallen roof beam
in its powerful jaws, clenches them, trembling with rage,
and snaps the wooden beam in half like a twig.

The Villagers run away in fear, but the Soldiers stand
their ground and the Wolf attacks.

Meanwhile, Isabelle and Henri escape... but there are
more Soldiers up ahead. Isabelle and Henri quickly hide.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED: (2)

HENRI

I need to tell you something. In case I die.

(off Isabelle's look)
Your grandmother is the Wolf.

Isabelle recoils in disbelief. She shakes her head.

ISABELLE

The Wolf is a man. It told me.

HENRI

You believe it?

Isabelle hesitates. He has a point. Henri peers out. The Soldiers are closing in on them...

HENRI

They're coming.

ISABELLE

Follow me.

She takes his hand and leads him away.

EXT. ROXANNE'S FAMILY COTTAGE - NIGHT

Isabelle knocks at the door. Roxanne answers. She gives Isabelle a stunned look.

ISABELLE

We need to come inside. Quickly.

INT. ROXANNE'S FAMILY COTTAGE - NIGHT

Isabelle and Henri enter. Roxanne shuts the door. Marguerite gasps when she sees Isabelle.

MARGUERITE

Have you lost your mind? If they find her here, they'll kill us, too!

ROXANNE

Then shut up so they don't find her.

HENRI

We have to get out of town.

ROXANNE

You'll never make it. You can hide here until morning.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

ISABELLE

They're searching everywhere. We have to keep moving.

ROXANNE

You might make it to the church. Even the king cannot violate the protection of sanctuary.

HENRI

And the Wolf cannot cross onto holy ground.

The three exchange a look. Sounds like a plan.

ISABELLE

Can we go out your back window?

Roxanne nods. They hurry toward the window, but then:

ROXANNE

Wait! I have an idea.

EXT. ROXANNE'S FAMILY COTTAGE - NIGHT

A group of Villagers walks by. As they do, the Reeve hears something coming from behind the cottage...

HENRI (O.S.)

Come on!

The Reeve follows the voice and sees two figures that look like Henri and Isabelle climb out the back window.

REEVE

They're here! Over here!

The two figures run and the Villagers chase after them.

EXT. VILLAGE - FIELD - NIGHT

Henri and Isabelle hide behind a shed, just as the Villagers appear and spread out, trying to find them. Henri turns to Isabelle... only it's not Isabelle. It's Roxanne wearing Isabelle's clothes.

HENRI

Can you keep going?

ROXANNE

I can if you can.

They run off, chased by the Villagers.

EXT. ROXANNE'S FAMILY COTTAGE - NIGHT

Isabelle climbs out the back window undetected, dressed in Roxanne's clothes. The coast is clear. She runs off.

EXT. VILLAGE - VARIOUS - NIGHT

Isabelle can see the church steeple over the rooftops and races toward it. But then she hears a low GROWL ahead of her. Dark eyes peer from an open barn door. She turns and runs down an alley. The Wolf chases after her.

As Isabelle nears the end of the alley, the Wolf suddenly appears in front of her, blocking her path. She races back the way she came, then darts into a gap between two outbuildings, barely big enough for her to pass through, too narrow for the Wolf to follow.

But as she runs, she hears a LOUD CLAMORING above her. The Wolf is chasing her on the roof of one of the buildings. It's right over her. It shoves its head through the narrow space above her, SNAPPING its jaws, but can't quite reach her. Then suddenly --

-- the gap between the buildings closes further and the Wolf is stopped short, choking, its head caught in the narrow space. But Isabelle slips through, emerges from between the buildings, and is startled by a VOICE:

CAPTAIN (O.S.)

There!

The Captain is pointing at her. He has another Soldier with him. Isabelle runs. They chase after her...

... just as the Wolf frees itself. From the rooftop, it sees the Soldiers chasing Isabelle. It races after them, running across roofs and jumping from cottage to cottage.

Isabelle runs into an alley that dead-ends at a low wall. There's firewood piled against the wall and Isabelle quickly scrabbles up it, but at the last second --

-- the Captain reaches out and grabs her ankle. She grabs a log and hits him over the head until he lets go. Then she jumps down to the other side.

The other Soldier starts to climb after her, but is suddenly lifted right off his feet. The Captain looks up. The Wolf is standing on the adjacent roof and has picked the Soldier up in its jaws. It glares down at the Captain. It flings the Soldier in its mouth away like a dirty sock. The Captain gapes up at it in fear for a moment too long and then the Wolf is on him.

EXT. VILLAGE - SQUARE - NIGHT

Isabelle's route has taken her right back to where she started. She spots the steeple and starts toward it...

But there is someone here. Father Solomon. He's holding his silver sword. Isabelle freezes. For a moment, they just stand there, looking at one another. Then --

Isabelle turns to run. Solomon is on her in an instant. He grabs a fistful of her hair and throws her to the ground. She tries to get away, but he puts a knee in her back and ties her hands together with a length of rope.

SOLOMON

At least you won't die alone now.
Your friends will all hang with
you.

Suddenly... a long, hideous SNARL. Behind them. Father Solomon turns. Isabelle cranes her neck and sees... the Wolf emerge from the alley she just came out of. Solomon picks up his sword and stands to face it.

SOLOMON

If you come for her, you come
through me.

The Wolf GROWLS and raises its hackles. Solomon raises his sword. Just then, Henri and Roxanne run into the square, followed by a group of Villagers.

SOLOMON

Stay back!

Henri hurries to Isabelle's side. The Villagers watch, breathless, as Solomon and the Wolf circle one another. Solomon's sword starts to tremble. Sweat breaks out on his brow. The Wolf SNARLS with an almost mocking leer.

Then, with a loud battle cry, Solomon charges. The Wolf leaps at him. Solomon raises his sword...

... and the Wolf's jaws clamp onto his wrist. Solomon screams. The Villagers watch, horrified, as the Wolf twists back and forth, like a dog with a chew toy --

-- biting off Solomon's hand. The hand falls into the snow, still clutching the silver sword. Solomon cries out in agony. The Wolf turns toward Isabelle and SNARLS.

THE WOLF

There is your mighty werewolf
hunter. Who will save you now?

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

Isabelle trembles. The Wolf slowly steps toward her, menacing... and is struck in the head with a rock. The Wolf stops, surprised to find Henri standing in its way. Henri picks up another rock and throws it.

HENRI

You bastard! You killed my father!

ISABELLE

Henri, what are you doing?

HENRI

I'm not letting it take you.

He throws another rock and another. One hits the Wolf in the eye, tearing a gash in its face. The Wolf GROWLS.

HENRI

Look! It bleeds! We can kill it if we stand together!

The Villagers waver. Henri beseeches them:

HENRI

Father Solomon was one man. His soldiers were mercenaries. But we are a village!

The Wolf SNARLS at him, but comes no closer.

ISABELLE

He's right. It's a coward at heart. Look at it. Why doesn't it attack?

The Wolf SNARLS louder and takes a step toward her... but then the Merchant picks up a rock and throws it.

MERCHANT

You killed my daughter!

Then another Villager joins them. The Wolf looks around. Villagers are emerging from the shadows all around it. It's surrounded. And not by a dozen soldiers, but by a solid wall of angry, determined men and women.

The Wolf raises its hackles, trying to scare them, but they start closing in, jabbing at it with weapons and farm implements. It snaps and SNARLS at its attackers, but there are too many of them.

Someone drives a spear into the Wolf and it screams in agony. It lurches around, biting at the spear, but can't reach it. Then Henri sees something in the snow...

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED: (2)

Solomon's sword. He pries it out of Solomon's severed hand and turns to face the Wolf, the angry Villagers gathered behind them. The Wolf trembles, blood dripping from its many wounds... then it turns to Isabelle.

THE WOLF

I will come for you again.

And with that, it turns and flees into the night. The Villagers CHEER. The Reeve chases after it and the rest of the angry mob follows him. Henri turns to Isabelle.

HENRI

Are you all right?

Isabelle nods, shaky. Then...

SOLOMON (O.S.)

This isn't over.

They turn. Solomon kneels, holding his bloody stump.

SOLOMON

I am bitten.

Henri and Isabelle exchange a look. A long beat. Henri walks over to Solomon, sword in hand. Solomon crosses himself and closes his eyes, unafraid. Roxanne turns away. Isabelle doesn't.

Then Henri swings the sword. There is a soft THUMP as Solomon's head hits the snow. Henri throws the sword aside. Isabelle puts a reassuring hand on his shoulder.

INT. ISABELLE'S FAMILY COTTAGE - LOFT - DAY

Isabelle awakens in her bed. She looks around. She's still dressed in Roxanne's clothes from the night before.

INT. ISABELLE'S FAMILY COTTAGE - COMMON ROOM - DAY

Isabelle enters to find Suzette putting food in a basket. Suzette stops when she sees Isabelle and gives her a hug.

ISABELLE

It's past noon.

SUZETTE

I know. I didn't want to wake you.

Isabelle smiles up at her. The wounds on Suzette's face are still bad, but healing. She's scarred for life.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

ISABELLE

Where's Father?

SUZETTE

He'll be home soon. They have no reason to hold him any longer.

ISABELLE

Did they catch the Wolf?

SUZETTE

No. They lost it in the forest.

This gives Isabelle pause. A beat. Then:

ISABELLE

What about Grandmother?

Suzette hesitates. Isabelle is suddenly concerned.

SUZETTE

Roxanne came by. She said your grandmother has fallen ill. I was hoping you could look in on her.

Off Isabelle's troubled look...

EXT. VILLAGE - VARIOUS - DAY

Isabelle walks through the village wearing Lucie's red riding hood and carrying a basket of food. People lower their eyes as she passes. She spots Prudence gossiping with Lucrece. Prudence sees her, then looks away.

The same pup we saw at the beginning is now a grown dog. It playfully follows Isabelle along the path, but stops as she enters the dark, fog-shrouded forest...

EXT. DARK FOREST - PATH - DAY

Isabelle walks through the snow. A thick fog gives the forest a strange, dream-like feeling. A cold wind blows. Soon Isabelle becomes aware of FOOTSTEPS behind her. She stops and turns. Slowly, a figure appears. It's Peter.

PETER

Thank God you're all right.

He tries to take her hand, but she pulls away. A beat.

ISABELLE

I'm fine. You sent Henri to help me.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

PETER

What did he tell you?

Isabelle gives him a hurt look.

ISABELLE

Those people back there. I know they mean well, but they're just people. I didn't expect anything from them. I expected something from you.

PETER

I just need to talk to you.

ISABELLE

I'm going to see my Grandmother. She's sick. Please don't follow me.

Isabelle starts walking again. Peter just stands there, watching her go. When she looks back, he's gone. She sighs, wiping tears from her eyes. She continues on...

Then: FOOTSTEPS behind her again. She stops and looks back. Listens. Nothing. She keeps walking. But then she HEARS them again. Looks back. A dark figure follows her in the fog. She walks faster.

She reaches the fork in the path. She pauses. The FOOTSTEPS are still behind her. She makes a decision.

She breaks off a tree branch and backs toward the abandoned path, using the branch to sweep away her tracks in the snow. When she's far enough away from the main path, she throws the branch aside...

... and turns to face the abandoned path. It looks ominous. She gives it a wary look, then starts walking.

EXT. GULLY - DAY

Isabelle reaches the rope bridge. More of the rotten boards have fallen out during the winter. Isabelle looks down. It's a long drop to the river below. She edges out, stepping carefully on the snow-covered boards, holding onto the rope with both hands...

Suddenly -- CRACK! A board SNAPS under her weight. At the last instant, she regains her balance. The broken board SPLASHES into the water. She takes a moment to catch her breath before continuing...

EXT. GRANDMOTHER'S COTTAGE - DUSK

Isabelle crosses the little bridge and knocks on the front door. The fog still hangs over everything. She doesn't notice the dark stain under her feet...

ISABELLE
Grandmother? Are you awake?

She listens at the door. A long beat. Then:

THE FIGURE (O.S.)
Pull the bobbin. The latch will
open.

We recognize the thin, raspy voice. Isabelle hesitates, then pulls the bobbin and opens the door...

INT. MANOR HOUSE - DUNGEON - DUSK

The Reeve and a GUARD examine something O.S.

REEVE
You're certain nobody has seen him
since last night?

GUARD
The Wolf must have taken him.
What else could have done that?

They're looking at the cell where Cesaire was locked up. The metal door has been ripped off its hinges...

INT. GRANDMOTHER'S COTTAGE - DUSK

Isabelle closes the door. A pot is cooking over the fire. The cat lounges in its heat, grooming itself. It looks up at Isabelle as she enters. Isabelle stops.

The veil that has always been closed is now open. Beyond it, we see Grandmother propped up in bed. The light is too dim to see her very well, just a candle by her bed. She's wearing a nightgown and cap. She doesn't move.

THE FIGURE
I've been expecting you.

Isabelle starts toward the bedroom with the basket...

ISABELLE
Mother sent some food. There are
cakes and a pot of butter --

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

THE FIGURE

Don't come in here.

Isabelle stops short. Grandmother's face is cloaked in darkness. Isabelle gives her a questioning look.

THE FIGURE

I'm not hungry right now.

ISABELLE

Are you sure? You sound so weak.

THE FIGURE

I just made myself a stew. I left it over the fire for you.

Isabelle glances back at the pot BUBBLING over the fire.

ISABELLE

I came here to take care of you.
Not the other way around.

THE FIGURE

Don't be silly, my dear. You've been through so much. Sit down.

Isabelle considers for a beat, then places the basket on the table, next to a ball of yarn with Grandmother's knitting needles sticking out of it.

THE FIGURE

There's no burden so heavy that it doesn't seem a little lighter on a full stomach.

ISABELLE

(smiles)
You always say that.

She ladles some soup into a bowl and sits down. The cat looks up from its grooming, watching her...

THE FIGURE

That's right. Eat up, my dear.
Eat up.

Isabelle takes a bite of the hot soup. The cat jumps up on the table and lies down next to her, licking its paw.

ISABELLE

I've been worried about you. When you didn't come back yesterday, I was afraid...

(beat)
You were wrong about Henri.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED: (2)

THE FIGURE

Was I now?

ISABELLE

Yes. He saved my life.

Isabelle takes another bite of soup, then pauses. She puts the bowl down and loosens her collar...

ISABELLE

I feel hot all of a sudden.

THE FIGURE

It's just the stew warming you.

Isabelle hesitates, but keeps eating. Then she takes a closer look at the cat. There's blood on its paw. That's what it has been licking this whole time.

Suddenly, Isabelle feels faint. She breaks out in a sweat. She looks at the soup. A thick broth with chunks of white meat...

ISABELLE

What is this...?

THE FIGURE

If you don't like it, there's wine on the table to wash it down.

Isabelle reaches for the bottle with an unsteady hand and pours herself a cup. She takes a sip... and freezes. It's not wine. It's blood. She gags and drops the cup, spilling blood everywhere. The cat jumps away.

She looks at the bottle, turns it over. More blood pours out. Isabelle screams and throws it, knocking over the pot and spilling the soup. The Figure laughs.

THE FIGURE

Oh, what pretty red lips. Come and give your Granny a kiss, my dear.

ISABELLE

I don't think I want to.

THE FIGURE

Then I will come to you.

And with that -- *Grandmother slowly starts to move.* She groans. She's hurt. She stands up. She's much taller now than she was. As Isabelle watches in mute dread, the Figure pulls off Grandmother's nightgown and cap, hobbles into the firelight, revealing its face...

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED: (3)

It's Cesaire. Isabelle quickly stands, startled.

ISABELLE

What is this? Where's
Grandmother?

CESAIRE

I'm afraid I ate most of her.
(beat)
You ate the rest.

Isabelle gives the spilled stew on the floor a horrified look. For a moment, she looks like she may pass out.

CESAIRE

I didn't want to kill her. But
she finally realized what I was.

EXT. CREEK - DAWN (FLASHBACK)

Cesaire bathes in a cold stream...

CESAIRE (V.O.)

The hardest thing to hide has
always been the smell. The
werewolf musk is strong,
especially close to the full moon.

EXT. DARK FOREST - NIGHT (FLASHBACK)

The night of the wolf hunt. Henri crouches in the woods, clutching his hammer... then freezes with terror. He sees the Wolf slink by in the dark, dragging Adrien along by his throat. It happened just as Henri said it did.

CESAIRE (V.O.)

Henri smelled it the night he saw
me. And he recognized the smell
later.

EXT. STABLE - DUSK (FLASHBACK)

Grandmother's confrontation with Henri. She stumbles outside and practically runs right into Cesaire...

CESAIRE (V.O.)

He thought it was your
Grandmother. He didn't know he
was smelling me. But she did.
She'd lived with the smell her
whole life, she just had no way of
knowing what it was.

INT. GRANDMOTHER'S COTTAGE - NIGHT (FLASHBACK)

Grandmother hands Cesaire a stack of knitted blankets.

CESAIRE (V.O.)

Once she realized what it was, of course, she knew the truth. She tried to sneak a message to Father Auguste last night.

EXT. GRANDMOTHER'S COTTAGE - NIGHT (FLASHBACK)

Cesaire carries the blankets back to the cart. He quickly looks inside them and finds a note: "MEUS FILIUS EST LUPUS." Subtitle: "My son is the wolf."

CESAIRE (V.O.)

Luckily, she'd taught me how to read.

BACK TO SCENE

Isabelle shakes her head, tears streaming down her face.

ISABELLE

You're not the Wolf. You can't be...

CESAIRE

Look into my eyes. The one part of me I can never change.

Isabelle looks into his eyes... and recoils in horror.

ISABELLE

Oh, dear God... You killed Lucie? You killed my sister?

CESAIRE

I did more than that to her.

Isabelle steps away from him, mind reeling. He snarls.

CESAIRE

I only wish your mother could have known what I did to her. The girl she passed off as my daughter.

EXT. ISABELLE'S FAMILY COTTAGE - NIGHT (FLASHBACK)

The night of the festival. SCREAMS can be heard coming from the village square. Suzette runs outside...

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

CESAIRE (V.O.)

I was made a cuckold by your mother. But I paid her back.

She hears a LOW GROWL. She turns, startled. It's the Wolf. It lunges at her, raking her face with its claws.

EXT. WOODS - NIGHT (FLASHBACK)

The wolf hunt. Adrien hears SOMETHING move in the brush. He looks toward it... and sees the Wolf staring at him from the darkness.

CESAIRE (V.O.)

I paid her lover back, too.

BACK TO SCENE

To Isabelle's dismay, Cesaire has tears in his eyes.

CESAIRE

Lucie was the joy of my life. But she wasn't mine.

ISABELLE

Yes, she was. In every way that matters, she was.

CESAIRE

No. Not in every way that matters. My father sired me. I am a werewolf because it was in his blood. Because I was his.

ISABELLE

Did Grandmother know?

CESAIRE

No. And neither does your mother.

INT. ISABELLE'S FAMILY COTTAGE - DUSK (FLASHBACK)

The night Lucie died. Cesaire pours mugs of beer, but this time we see him sprinkle something in the beer before serving it -- Grandmother's sleeping herb.

CESAIRE (V.O.)

I put an herb in the beer to make you sleep whenever the moon was full. One of your Grandmother's old remedies.

EXT. GRANDMOTHER'S COTTAGE - DUSK (FLASHBACK)

Many years ago. Grandmother is in her 40s, asleep in a chair, holding an empty cup. Isabelle's GRANDFATHER takes the cup from her hand and quietly leaves. Grandmother sleeps peacefully by the fire...

CESAIRE (V.O.)

That's how my father got away with it. Your grandmother never learned the truth. Until last night.

EXT. DARK FOREST - NIGHT (FLASHBACK)

Still many years ago. A werewolf runs through the woods... followed by a smaller werewolf.

CESAIRE (V.O.)

I began to turn when I was fourteen. My father and I ran together. We hunted freely. Killing at will.

The two werewolves are chasing a FRIGHTENED PEASANT, moving in for the kill...

EXT. DARK FOREST - DAY (FLASHBACK)

The mangled body of the Peasant has been discovered. A group of MEN stands around it.

CESAIRE (V.O.)

Our only mistake was that we gorged ourselves too often on the fat flesh of the villagers.

EXT. DARK FOREST - NIGHT (FLASHBACK)

The two werewolves are running through the woods again, this time chased by VILLAGERS with torches and weapons.

CESAIRE

They killed my father.

Suddenly, the larger werewolf falls into a pit filled with sharp stakes. It CRIES OUT in agony. The smaller werewolf looks down and WHIMPERS...

... watching as the larger werewolf begins to change before our eyes. It's reverting to its human form...

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

By the time the Villagers reach the pit, what they find is Grandfather's naked body skewered on the stakes. The smaller werewolf GROWLS at them and runs away.

CESAIRE (V.O.)

The fools thought my father had been thrown in the pit by the Wolf. They never suspected that he was the Wolf.

SERIES OF SHOTS (FLASHBACK)

Cesaire labors in a field. He goes to church. He thatches the roof of his cottage in the hot sun...

CESAIRE (V.O.)

I tried to live as my father did, but I came to realize that I did not belong here. The Wolf was my true self. It wasn't something to be hidden. It was a gift. I had to leave here and never return.

EXT. CHURCH - NIGHT (FLASHBACK)

Cesaire stands in the cemetery, looking down at his father's grave...

CESAIRE (V.O.)

But I did not want to go alone. My father and I were part of a long and powerful bloodline. It was up to me to see that it did not die out. I had hoped for a son to pass my gift on to.

EXT. ISABELLE'S FAMILY COTTAGE - DAY (FLASHBACK)

Cesaire mends a fence, but keeps glancing at something...

CESAIRE (V.O.)

Instead, God gave me daughters.

He's looking at Lucie and Isabelle. They help Suzette hang clothes to dry. He smiles as he watches them...

CESAIRE (V.O.)

But female werewolves are not born. They are made. And I chose my eldest.

Lucie catches him watching. She waves. He waves back.

EXT. ISABELLE'S FAMILY COTTAGE - DAY (FLASHBACK)

Another day. Cesaire is giving Lucie a stern lecture. Lucie's face is ashen and there are tears in her eyes.

CESAIRE (V.O.)

When I finally decided to leave, I told Lucie the truth. And I gave her a choice. She could come with me. Or I would take you instead.

Lucie turns and sees Isabelle approaching. We realize that we've seen this moment before.

CESAIRE

This doesn't concern you, Isabelle.

ISABELLE

Yes, Father.

Isabelle walks away. Cesaire watches her go...

CESAIRE (V.O.)

She agreed to come with me. She did it to protect you.

INT. ISABELLE'S FAMILY COTTAGE - LOFT - NIGHT (FLASHBACK)

Isabelle is fast asleep. Lucie sneaks out of bed...

CESAIRE (V.O.)

We arranged to meet on the night of the next full moon.

EXT. DARK FOREST - CLEARING - NIGHT (FLASHBACK)

Lucie stands naked, arms clutched around her breasts. Then, a NOISE in the brush. She turns and sees...

CESAIRE

She was not a werewolf yet. I had to turn her.

... the Wolf emerge from the forest with a scrap of bloody meat dangling from its jaws.

EXT. DARK FOREST - CLEARING - NIGHT (FLASHBACK)

Later. Lucie weeps as she forces herself to eat the raw meat scraps. The Wolf watches, panting...

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

CESAIRE (V.O.)

First, she had to eat human flesh.
I fed her from a kill I had made
the month before. But the ritual
was not yet complete. She had to
be bitten by a male werewolf.

INT. GRANDMOTHER'S COTTAGE - NIGHT

Isabelle looks like she's going to be ill.

CESAIRE

The bite should have changed her.
It should have made her like me.
But it didn't. That's when I
knew. There was no werewolf blood
in her. I was not her father. I
was so angry. I killed her before
I even realized I was doing it.

INT. TAVERN COTTAGE - NIGHT (FLASHBACK)

*Cesaire sits slumped in a corner, too drunk to move. A
hand reaches in to help him. It's Isabelle.*

CESAIRE (V.O.)

Afterwards, I thought about
killing myself. The only thing
that kept me alive was you.

EXT. ISABELLE'S FAMILY COTTAGE - NIGHT (FLASHBACK)

Isabelle helps drunk Cesaire into bed...

CESAIRE (V.O.)

You were so beautiful. So kind.
And I knew you were mine. That's
why you could understand me when
no one else could. You were mine.

INT. GRANDMOTHER'S COTTAGE - NIGHT

Cesaire takes Isabelle's hand and won't let it go. She
backs into the wall. He looms over her...

CESAIRE

Do you see now? This is your
heritage. This is what you are.
Everything I have done has been to
insure the future of our
bloodline. We will run together
(MORE)

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

CESAIRE (CONT'D)

like my father and I once did.
You are the next generation. You
have had your first taste of human
flesh. Now one bite from me is
all that is needed to change you.
It will only hurt for a moment.
And then you will be as I am.

ISABELLE

There must indeed be a God. For
you are surely the Devil...

CESAIRE

I will give you a choice. Come
with me now. Or refuse me and let
your friends suffer in your place.
I will kill them one by one. Your
mother. Roxanne. Peter.

Isabelle shudders. She slowly pulls away and he releases
her. She walks over to the table, her back to him. She
eyes the ball of yarn with Grandmother's knitting needles
in it. A long beat. Isabelle chokes back tears.

ISABELLE

Father...?

He approaches her. Stands behind her and places his hand
on her shoulder. Her skin crawls.

CESAIRE

Yes, my dear?

ISABELLE

You gave me two choices.

She turns to face him. Looks up at him.

ISABELLE

But I have thought of a third.

*Suddenly -- CRUNCH! Isabelle drives something hard into
Cesaire's jaw. He gasps, choking. He puts his hand to
his throat. Blood spills out through his fingers.*

CAMERA FINDS Grandmother's ball of yarn on the table.
The knitting needles aren't sticking out of it anymore...

*They're sticking out of Cesaire's neck. He falls to his
knees, gagging. Then he flops over dead. Eyes open.*

Isabelle gazes down at him. She looks like she might
have just lost her mind. Then she sits on the floor,
staring at his body... and screams. An eruption of
rage, betrayal, and heartbreak. She screams.

EXT. GRANDMOTHER'S COTTAGE - NIGHT

The cottage is dark and quiet.

INT. GRANDMOTHER'S COTTAGE - NIGHT

It's pitch black in here. There's a KNOCK at the door.

PETER (O.S.)

Hello?

No response. The door CREAKS open. It's Peter. As he opens the door, moonlight spills inside to reveal Isabelle huddled and trembling in the corner. She's screamed and cried herself out. All that's left is anger and a grim resolve. She did what she had to do.

INT. GRANDMOTHER'S COTTAGE - NIGHT (LATER)

Isabelle and Peter sit at the table. A dim candle provides the only light. A long beat.

ISABELLE

People should know what he was.

PETER

We can't tell anyone. If they don't believe you, they'll hang you for this. And if they do believe you, they'll hang you for being the daughter of the Wolf.

ISABELLE

Then I'll run away. I was ready to run away last night.

(beat)

Why didn't you come for me?

Peter gives her a long look. But instead of speaking, he rolls up his sleeve. Isabelle's eyes go wide. There's a huge scar on his arm. In the shape of a bite mark.

PETER

I was bitten at the festival. I spent last night in the woods because I was afraid of what might happen...

(a beat)

I changed. I'm like him now.

ISABELLE

No, you're not. You could never be like him.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

Isabelle's tears fall, the full implications of what he's saying starting to sink in. He takes her hand.

PETER

I can't stay here.

ISABELLE

Yes, you can. We can still be together. My father lived here. My grandfather lived here.

PETER

Your father and your grandfather killed people. They couldn't help themselves. If I stay here, I won't be able to control myself.

(off her look)

I have to be alone.

Isabelle rests her head on his and they just sit like that, leaning against one another in the candlelight...

INT. GRANDMOTHER'S COTTAGE - NIGHT (LATER)

Isabelle and Peter crouch next to Cesaire's body. The candle is on the floor, casting weird shadows.

PETER

We could take him to the river.

ISABELLE

I don't want him ever found.

PETER

We'll weight him with rocks.

ISABELLE

No. We'll put the rocks inside him.

(off his look)

Cut him open. I will sew the rocks inside him.

Peter is taken aback. She's serious.

INT. GRANDMOTHER'S COTTAGE - NIGHT (LATER)

Peter and Isabelle have placed several heavy rocks next to Cesaire's body. Peter opens Cesaire's shirt and takes out a hunting knife. Isabelle gives Peter a nod. Peter somewhat reluctantly lowers the knife, his shoulder moving up and down as he goes about his unseen task...

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

Moments later, Isabelle threads a needle and coldly stitches begins stitching. We don't see what she's doing, but there's blood on her needle and thread. There's a spot of blood on her cheek, too.

EXT. RIVER - FERRY DOCK - NIGHT

Low mist hugs the ground. There's a wooden A-frame pontoon raft tied to a ferry dock. A guy-rope runs through the A-frame to a pier on the opposite shore.

Isabelle and Peter nervously approach. He pushes a wheelbarrow onto the raft, its contents wrapped in burlap. Peter unties the moorings and is about to shove off, but Isabelle stops him:

ISABELLE

Wait.

She pulls back the burlap, revealing Cesaire's dead body. His belly is lumpy and misshapen, an ugly red line in his torso stitched together with black thread. The knitting needles still jut out of his jaw. Isabelle yanks them out, then pulls the burlap back over Cesaire's body. Peter gives her a questioning look.

ISABELLE

These belonged to my grandmother.

The knitting needles are covered in blood. Peter takes out a rag and wipes the blood off for her. And as he does... something begins to shine through in the moonlight. Peter gives Isabelle a stunned look.

PETER

They're silver.

EXT. RIVER - NIGHT

Peter uses a long pole to push the raft across the water. Isabelle gazes out at the moonlit mist. They stop the in the middle of the river. They exchange a look...

... then each take a side of the wheelbarrow and dump the body into the water. It sinks instantly and is gone.

PETER

Death was too good for him.

ISABELLE

I can live with it.

EXT. RIVER - OPPOSITE BANK - NIGHT

Isabelle and Peter stand on the shore. He kisses her and she holds his face in her hands, wanting the kiss to last forever. When they part, she gives him an aching look.

ISABELLE

Where will you go?

PETER

I don't know. I need to
understand what I've become.
Maybe I can learn to control it.
(off her look)
I'll take my own life before I
take another's.

ISABELLE

I know.

PETER

I'm not coming back. I don't want
you to wait for me. This is the
last time you'll ever see me.

ISABELLE

No, it isn't. You'll be in my
dreams until the day I die.

Peter turns and starts to walk away. But then he pauses.

PETER

You know, Henri is a good man.

ISABELLE

Yes, he is.

Then Peter continues on until he vanishes in the fog.
CAMERA PUSHES IN on Isabelle as she watches him go...

OLD WOMAN (V.O.)

I never saw him again.

EXT. VILLAGE - VARIOUS - DAY

SPRINGTIME. The leaves have returned to the forest with explosions of green. Crops grow in the fields. Flowers bloom. The village is vibrant with life and beauty.

OLD WOMAN (V.O.)

Life in my village was changed
forever. There were many
questions and few answers. In the
(MORE)

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

OLD WOMAN (V.O.) (CONT'D)
end, the Wolf did not return. And
that was answer enough for most.

EXT. CHURCH - DAY

Isabelle and Henri stand before Father Auguste. They're getting married. Roxanne, Suzette, and other friends and neighbors watch as Isabelle and Henri exchange rings.

OLD WOMAN (V.O.)
Henri and I were married. He was
a good man and a good father. I
loved him very much. But I never
loved him the same way that I
loved Peter. That was the one
secret in our marriage.

EXT. FIELD - DAY

Isabelle laughs as she watches Henri run around, playing with their three young children -- TWIN GIRLS and a BOY. Isabelle gives Henri a warm, loving smile.

OLD WOMAN (V.O.)
I only tell you now because he is
dead. And if he knows now, I
believe that he forgives me, for
he must also know that I never
loved him falsely.

EXT. BLACKSMITH'S COTTAGE - NIGHT

Isabelle's Girls are in bed asleep. Isabelle enters, carrying the sleeping Boy. She gently places him in bed next to the girls and covers them with a blanket.

OLD WOMAN (V.O.)
This is my story, not that I
expect you will believe it. In my
own village, the events of that
awful winter have already passed
into legend. Parents tell their
children to be good or else the
Wolf will come and gobble them up.

Isabelle smiles as she watches them sleep.

OLD WOMAN (V.O.)
They've already forgotten. A
simple children's story is all
that remains.

EXT. BLACKSMITH'S COTTAGE - NIGHT

Isabelle opens the door and strolls outside, looking up at the sky. The moon is full.

OLD WOMAN (V.O.)
But sometimes, when the moon is
full, my thoughts still turn to
Peter. He promised me that I
would never see him again. And I
never have.

Somewhere, a wolf HOWLS. Isabelle smiles.

OLD WOMAN (V.O.)
But I often wonder if I hear him.

EXT. DARK FOREST - NIGHT

High on a hilltop, CAMERA PULLS BACK to reveal a WOLF
staring down at the distant village. It's hard to tell
in the moonlight whether it's a normal wolf...

Or something else.

It looks up at the bright full moon and HOWLS as we

FADE OUT.

THE END