

Ladies' Night at the Forest Bar

A Dark Farce

Charles Campbell

Cast

Gran	owner Forest Bar, charming, funny, fast-talking fraudster,
Red	Gran's grand-daughter and business partner in the Forest Bar, pimp
Goldie Lockett	rich, downtown lawyer, married to Big Bear
Cinders Rockingfiler	Park Avenue 'princess', shoe/foot fetishist
Snow White	fast-lane, fast-talking, operator arbitrage and offshore
Prince	dancer, - Princeton dropout, shoe salesman, very sensitive
Hands	dances as 'Copper' - recently paroled
Wolf	'dances as Wolf' - short order cook , struggling single parent,
Woody	dances as 'Woody' - casual labor / painter
Jack	the Giant Killer, formerly danced as the 'Marine'
Farm Boy	dances as 'Farm Boy'
Photographer	embedded with the troops <i>(can double up with Farm Boy or be an additional female part)</i>
[Offstage Voices]	
M.C. at Forest Bar	<i>(female voice best, but could be Farm Boy/Photographer)</i>
also	
Voice TV News A	
Voice TV News B	the very last TV news voice is different than the rest]
Narrator	Narrator
[Sounds	as indicated]
[Gretel	Gran's muscle - not a speaking part]

Act I	
Scene One	The Stage Door
Scene Two	A Dressing Room
Scene There	The Forest Bar
Act II	
Scene One	A Forest Clearing
Scene Two	The Fishing Camp
Scene Three	The Tailgate Party
Scene Four	The War Camp
Scene Five	The Forest Bar
Scene Six	Cinders Kitchen

Notes

The Set

Act I Scene One – Back door, laneway behind the Forest Bar. (This could be done in front of a curtain or scrim.)

Act I, Scene Two is a Dressing Room of the Forest Bar. The same. In front of scrim.

Act I, Scene Three and Act II Scene Five - The Forest Bar

A low life, strip club/ 'bar,' decorated with cheesy fake trees, branches, etc. A few bar stools, a big mirror behind bar and around it decorative liquor bottles including three elaborate German beer steins. A few tables and chairs. Tree stumps for chairs.

There is a small stage and entrance, center rear, gaudy lights, beaded curtains, for the dancers. Dancing could either be used and frozen or behind a screen so we see the shadow of the dancer only.

Exit to street, stage left. Internal washrooms, etc. are stage right.

There is a TV on the bar, which faces away from the audience.

Sign – “11 pm – To-Nite – ‘Wolf’, ‘Prince’, ‘Hands’, ‘Woody’”

Act II, Scenes Two, Three, Four - In ‘The Forest’

More cheesy fake trees = ‘the forest’. Various locales, requiring minimal changes - the same cheesy fake trees plus more cheesy fake trees.

Act II, Scene Five - is back in the bar.

Act II, Scene Six - no set required

Actors reading:

Italicized bracketed comments within a speech are stage directions – don't read.

Italicized un-bracketed words in a speech indicate emphasis or irony.

... in a speech indicates a pause, stumbling speech, one character interrupting another or hesitation as the character searches for a word or is afraid to say the word that comes to mind.

Underline in a speech indicates louder.

For a Reading with Audience

There is somewhat difference version with the Narrator describing what's happening on stage in more detail so the audience can better visualize the farce elements e.g. with the shoes.

ACT I - Scene One

Lights up Narrator, stage right, in a rocking chair.

Narrator Once upon a time, yesterday actually, on the wrong side of the tracks, on the outskirts of a big city, at the edge of a forest – and not just any forest, the edge of The Great Forest - there was a bar called the Forest Bar which catered to very rich women, Goldie Lockett and Snow White and Cinders Rockingfiler, among them, who all grew up in The Forest, as did Gran and her grand-daughter, Red, who operated the Forest Bar, which sells good times, visual and horizontal, to the rich women, which pleasures included Wolf and Woody and Hans and Prince.

Before we go further, I am required to read you a Trigger Warning, for sensitive people who might be disturbed by the foolishness which follows.

This play contains course and foul language, gluten, nuts and dairy products, gratuitous nudity and sex, gunshots, noxious smoke, wanton and needless violence, ridicule of machismo, war and brave soldiers, women who are in control of everything, and men who delight in serving them. It is performed by genetically modified actors.

Act One, Scene one.

Our play opens at the Stage Door in the laneway behind The Forest Bar, under a dim alley light, amid trashcans and cigarette butts.

Wolf and Woody pace, shiver, smoke and gulp coffee before reporting for work.

Woody wears paint-splattered work clothes and carries a small duffel bag. Wolf wears short order cook outfit under a scruffy jacket and carries a suit bag. He has a cane, for an apparent bad knee, but nevertheless is rather agile.

Woody Hey Wolfie, what time you got?

Wolf *(pacing, checks watch)* 10:15.

Woody Hands coming in tonight?

Wolf Said he was.

- Woody [Yawn] Fuckkkk! I've been up since five fuckin' thirty!
No work for two weeks. Nothin'! Then ...
'Pick up is at six, Paint Man'.
Fuckin' asshole! Don't even know my name!
- Wolf You got a problem with the hours, you shudda been, like, a professor.
- Woody Where the fuck is Hands?
It's not right I should be Copper! He's just out from the Joint!
- Wolf Red needs more guys.
- Woody Says she is checking the Port Authority every afternoon.
- Wolf But she's not yielding up the commercial product, speaking on the point you are making. Not to criticize.
- Hands enters, dressed in gym sweats and hoodie with a gym duffel bag.*
- Hands Hi, guys.
- Wolf [Sniffing] *(to Hands)* Don't you smell like a gym bunny!
[sniffing] *(to Woody)* Ugh. Not you, dude!
- Hands For the ladies. Which I am employed to please.
- Woody *(smelling Hands and then himself)* You're right, bud, I gotta do a shower.
- Woody exits into the Club.*
- Wolf So, how's it going for you? I mean, adjusting after being ... like *away* for so long?
- Hands Ya, well, I got this bouncer gig going, but it's really late, I mean *really* Good pay!
But it fucks up other arrangements, know what I'm saying.
Hey ... can you spot me \$200 till next week?
- Wolf Two hundred!
- Hands *(flexing a bicep)* This cost money.

Wolf *(giving him money)* You're *too* beefy, dude, which is my experienced personal advice.

Hands And you, little man, are definitely *not* too beefy.

Wolf I am ... a *wolf!*

Wolf gives him money.

Hands *(confidential)* Hey, you hear that Jack the Giant Killer bust outta the joint yesterday?

Wolf Really. Did not hear.
Know he used to work here? Before your time.

Hands No shit! I knew him in the Joint, from a distance. He's awesome.
(checking watch, opening the door) Let's do it!
Wolf and Woody stub out their cigs and share a breath spray.
Into the fiery pit!

Wolf WOOO.

End Scene

Scene Two

Backstage room inside the Forest Bar. We hear the 'sound check' upstairs as they get ready for the evening show. Stop /start with bump-and-grind music.
Jack and Red are locked in an embrace.

Red You should go. I'm going to get in trouble. ... You shouldn't be down here.

Jack Ah, com'on! You're a grown woman. You can love me.
Who cares what your Gran says?

Red I do!
How did you get out?

Jack I told you. I'm *paroled*. To fight the giants.

Red Bull shit.

MC *(off-stage)* Gran, we got no Prince! Where the fuck is the Prince?
Check ... check ... Prinnnce ... Woooody

Jack She set me up.

Red I don't want to talk about it.
I can't leave Gran. I have no money.

Jack I do. I will. Just turn on the television at 10:55.

Gran *(off stage)* Red, Red! You've got customers!

Red Go! Go!

Jack Come with me.

Red I hate it when you leave! Go Gran'll find you.

Jack I'm goin' to fight a war I didn't start.

Red Yes you did.

Jack You belong to me, babe!

Red I don't belong to anybody. But I like your ass! Now go!

MC *(off stage – sound check)* Ladies ... ladies ... check Check ...
Gran, we got no Prince! Who's going first?

End Scene

Scene Three

Lights up inside the Forest Bar. There's bar, with stools, duh, a couple of tables, a gaudy lite entrance for the dancers and scrim behind which the dancers can perform as shadows. There is an entrance stage left to the exterior and stage right to washrooms.

Goldie is setting up at the bar. Gran enters from dancers' door.

Gran (shouting back to the dancers, bossy)

I don't know where Prince is! I do not! I'll fire his pretty ass ...
 I'll ... Start with Copper.
 Hans, get your pants off!

Hans *(from off stage)* I'm not ready!

Gran Woody! Get Woody!

Prince rushes in with suit bag.
 Well, here's his royal ass now!
 You're late! You're gonna get deposed, if you don't watch it.
 Hurry up and get your Prince gear on.

Prince Sorry *(Exiting)* Blue or red?

Gran *(flustered)* Red. Red.
She turns, sees Goldie, and recognizing her, flips to 'nice' in a flash.
 Hello! Hello! Goldie Lockett ! Goldie Lockett!

Goldie Gran! Oh Gran!

Red Look at you! Look at you! The hair!
(calling) Red! Red!
 I haven't seen you since ... *(gesturing - 'little')*

Gran Were you the one who brought me the cookies?

Goldie No. That was Red.

Gran You married Big Bear! Very nice!
 How'd you do that, I mean after, you smashed up his house!
 Very nice. *(the jewels)*
Red enters, straightening her dress.
 Red, Look Goldie Lockett. All grown up. And rich!
Gran fingers her necklace.

Red Goldie! Goldie! I haven't seen you for years!
 Welcome to the Forest Bar!
 Gran, you remember Goldie.

Gran Of course. *(to Red)* Did she like Wolf or Woody?

Red Gran!
 Woody!

Gran Well ... I don't remember everything. Good thing for you girls! I liked Woody. But not *all* the time! A little Wolf, now and then. But not at the same time as Woody. How did that happen?

M.C. *And now ... Ladddieesand now I mean tonight ... I mean this very night ... I mean right now ...I mean right here ... on the stage of Gran's world famous - Forest Bar – before your very eyes - you are in for a treat! Get ready to scratch that itch and catch his pitch! For you, Gran's all time favorite! ... the one the only ... the original woodchopper ... the Woodsman! Our very own Woody!*

Woody enters or dances behind scrim as Goldie and Red look on.

Red pours her a drink. Goldie fusses over how much.

[More, less, more, less, more – just right]

Cinders enters left but no further than the door. She's wearing a rag dress, carries an apron, mop and pail in one hand and drags a huge garment bag by the other.

Music stops and dancer freezes.

Gran Cinderella! How good to see you, darling. Come on in. ... You don't usually see you on Thursdays. Would you like to clean the toilets before we get started? Lots of time.

Cinders *(shy nervous)* Do you have a Prince tonight?

Gran Do we have a Prince!

Every night, hon. Every night, a prince. What colour would you like? Blue or red?

Cinders checks in her garment bag.

Gran You got it!
(*Shouting bag stage*) - Blue - Prince Blue.

Cinders I'll just tell my driver.
When is he on? Not too late

Gran I understand completely.

Cinder I better change. I'll clean next time

Gran Whatever makes you feel good, hon.

Cinders leaves her cleaning gear and exists left, then returns and takes her garment bag and exits right.

A short burst of bum-and-grind music and shadow dancing, then a freeze.

Goldie is showing Red photos.

Red Look at you! Four I hear you have four! Mom! Four, in ten years! You *do not look it!* You look fab! Four! No wonder you never come in!
 What a horny bear you married!
(looking at the pictures)
 Ahhhh ... This one looks ... ah, fury. How was that?

Goldie Actually ... Two from his first marriage and two from the second.

Gran Pour her another.

Red pours for Goldie, who signals less, then more. Red pours some out, then back, according to Goldie's signals.

Goldie A little more ... less - just right.

Gran *(admiring her necklace)* We should put these somewhere safe.

Red Step-Mom! Trophy husband. Well, well, well.
 Still, the responsibility. How did you ever get away?

Red You know, these would be better, just to be safe, in your purse.

Goldie So, there's this lady at the Daycare, who runs an overnight camp for under sevens, Miss Ginger, who brings ginger cookies, what else, and the little ones have been begging to go. But she's always full. Anyhow, yesterday, surprise, she had a last minute opening, for two, for the long weekend. And then, my big Appeal got put off for two weeks by the Judge. And Bear is away at Football Camp with the older two till Monday. And it hit me ... oh my God, I am a free woman! I haven't had a night

off since ... forever! The first thing that popped into my head, how is Red? And I said 'why not'? And so here I am! Why not!

- Red That ring! Wow! You look like ... like ... you make *a lot of money* downtown.
- Goldie Well ... well, *I do!* I'm the youngest partner in International Liquidations and Underwriting ever. *[Sigh]* It's ... intense.
- Red Why am I not surprised! You were always such a brain! 'Not too big and not too small, it was just right!' *(droll)* So good at math.
- Goldie He' a stay-at-home dad. He has a pension. I make a lot of money. An he's an artist ... Struggling. Makes jig saw puzzles.
- Red *(salacious)* So how is Big Bear! I tried to hire him here once. As a ... dancer. Didn't work out.
- Goldie *[sigh]* He gets tired. ... He snores ... *[sigh]* We have separate beds ... bedrooms.
- Red That's ... unexciting.
- Burst of bump-and-grind music and some dancing and then a freeze.*
- Goldie Remember ... remember who was that guy always hanging around at Gran's house?
- Red With the big axe? Remember!? Absolutely! Woody. *(salacious)* Did the *chopping*. *(gestures to Woody dancing behind the scrim)*
- Goldie *Woody.* Yesss ... I have just the faintest recall.
- Red Goldie! love you, doll, but you were so hot for Woody when you were twelve that you fainted. That's what you meant, right, by the 'faintest recall'?
- Red points to the stage, 'Woody', and nods.*
- Goldie *Woody!*
- Red *(gently chiding)* Oh, don't pretend You can fool some of the people some of the time but you could *never* fool Red, *ever*.

- Goldie *Gran! and Woody?*
 Your Gran was something else!
- Red *Is!*
 Woody still swings his axe pretty good. Gran ... gets hers.
- Goldie She must be ... 60!
- Red And he's (*stage whisper*) 38! In great shape. Gran's regular. Still as smart as a pine tree. (*shrugs*) Wood is wood!
- Goldie Woody! And I thought ... I always thought ... it was Wolf.
- Red You didn't think ... Wolf! Oh, *that* was strictly a one-night-thing.
 (*confidential, wistful, behind Gran's back*) Wolf was ... mine. Back then.
 Red points to the sign. 'Wolf.'
 Here's to 'why not'!
 They toast.
- Goldie (*bashful*) What do the dancers do ... exactly?
- Red Exactly? You mean other than *dance*?
- Goldie (*embarrassed*) Red, I go straight home after work, or I sleep at the office ... in the little cubicles ... upstairs. I'm a nun!
- Woody disappears as the shadow dancer and Wolf appears dancing but no music as Red talks. Mimes her sales pitch.*
- Red (*salaciously*) They do exactly what you wish Daddy Bear would do. Wolf could, for example, stay awake past ten o'clock. Wolf is a 'what-a-long-tongue-you've got, kind of guy. Red knows. And why not! Doll, they do what *you* want. That is the point of being rich! And ... how-much-money-have-you-in-your-bank-machine is *how long* they do it!
- Goldie Daddy B is very traditional.
- Red (*droll*) And letting you mind the little ones while he goes to football camp is so *sweet*.

Goldie (defensive) He took the older ones.

Red Honey, boring is only sexy when *he*'s rich and you're not!
And exactly how many jigsaw puzzles did he sell last month?
I'll bet you make more than him in a month!

Goldie In an hour! He pays his own gym fees.

Red Honey, You need something on the side, maybe both sides, and, you came to the right place!
(confidential) I could set you up with Wolf? For old times sake.

Goldie (evasion, naïve) This is delicious.

Red (Salacious) ... Yeessssss ... let's start you off ... with *Wolf*.
Mind you, he's a bit of rough trade but ... for old times sake.
Why not?
(Red does several voices here)
Red You could meet up *by accident*, just strolling in the forest.
Wolf - (basso) 'Hello, little girl'.
Red Or ... or ... he could follow you home ... In his pick-up truck. After choir.
Red Have another.
(Red pours, Goldie fusses again over how much)

Goldie Not too much ... There! Just right!

Red You pull into the drive ... the truck pulls in behind.
Goldie 'Oh my gawd! That truck's been *following* me since I left ... 'choir practice'!
Red Ha, ha!
... You want a black BMW? Red? We can do red. Same all-in price.
Wolf 'All the better to see you ... '
Goldie 'Who *is* that?' ... 'Oh, my! Oh, my! ... What a nice ...*voice* you have'.
Red ... Check out his tongue. Trust me!
Wolf 'All the better to lick you with, my dear.'
Red Daddy Bear's at football camp!! The big bed!
Do it in the big bed! Wicked!

Goldie In the big bed!?
(fingering her hair, hesitant)
Does Wolf shed?

- Red *(deflated)* Well ... I guess ... yes, he probably does.
(recovering) Wel could book you in upstairs. *(Checking her reservation book)* And what do you know ... Number 3 is free all tonight! 'The Bear Pit.
Honey, I swear. A total coincidence. Totally.
- M.C. Give it up for Wolfie!
- Applause.*
Gran enters.
- Red *(checks her watch)* Can we turn on the T.V. for 30 secs. I want to know what's happening in the war.
- Red turns on the T.V.*
- Gran What war?
- Red This is the only channel I'm getting.
(shocked) There ... I think I see *Jack*!
- T.V. Anchor [static, static] - gold Giants ... demanding[static]
- Gran Giants! Gold! *Demanding* gold! What is this 'demanding'?
- Goldie I heard they want their gold back.
- Gran *(sputtering)* You heard *that*? Really! Red, somebody is saying ... who says it's 'their' gold?
Well, whatever they want, they can't have it.
You'd think those giants would have learned the last time!
(to Goldie) One came round here the last time! I don't know why. I said, 'Moi'. 'What gold?'
(to Red) It can't be *Jack*!
(confidential, to Goldie) *Jack* is her only weakness.
- Gran The price of freedom is eternal vigilance. When a sacrifice is called for my boys will fight to protect my way of life! What are boys for?!
Red, pour me a short one. And for Goldie.
If they show up here, darling, don't worry, we'll hide your jewels. Don't worry.
It's so good to see you, Goldie.

Cinders enters and limps over to the bar.

Cinders sits at a table to watch the show.

M.C. *And now, Laddies, girls, women and chicks, gals and ... and ... any all you confused faggots out there ... you are welcome, welcome, welcome! The Forest Bar proudly presents ... the moment you have all been waiting for ... the humble ... the lovely ... the caring ... the daring ... the handsome ... the dashing ... on his knees ... at your feet ... the one ... the only ... the man of your dreams The gorgeous guy with the glitter slipperput your hands together for PRINNNNNNCE!*

Bump-and-grind music starts. Prince appears through the dancers' curtain, center rear, hobbling in one shoe and starts his routine behind the scrim. First thing he does is kick off his one shoe so he can dance! Slowly he strips off his blue Prince outfit. Prince comes out behind the scrim to try the shoe on some of the women. He has the (red) glitter slipper in a shoe bag. He teasingly takes it out to fit certain bar patrons, does vulgar things with it and them, then puts it away. He tries it on various women and of course there is no fit, no matter how much money they stuff in his jock. The glitter slipper is tiny.

Music stops and dancer freezes.

- Gran It's so good to see you! How do you like my place?
 Big Bear. My, my, my! What's he ... like? Not to pry.
 Now my grandmother, God rest her soul, she would never have
 let me marry a bear.
- Goldie (*distracted, hesitant*) It's ... lovely.
 Is that the Prince?
- Gran Yes, of course, it's the Prince. There are several but this is the
 Thursday prince. Also Tuesday.
- Goldie How did you find him?
- Red Macys. Shoe Department. On his knees. Perfect for us.
- Goldie But how did you know he was a Prince?
- Red He went to Princeton.
- Gran What do you get when a Prince gets kicked out of Princeton?
 Three guesses. Wrong! Wrong! A naked shoe salesman.
 It's so good to see you.
So many memories! I remember the day ... you broke into the
 Bears' and smashed up their dining room! It was in all the
 papers!
- Goldie I did not!
- Gran Really. It's on the Internet, darling. Too late to fuss about the
 truth. Embrace fame and all its consequences.
 Besides it wasn't your fault. You were left in the middle of the
 forest ... by your step-mother ... and you were hungry. And
 you're a girl! It's never your fault.
- Goldie I had a *mother*!

Music and dancing starts again.

*Cinders wiggles her naked foot at Prince. He ignores her.
 She takes out a patent leather loafer from a shoe box and
 waves it at him. She can't see, or just misses, Prince and
 the glitter slipper, not noticing the color.*

Goldie stares.

Music and dancer freeze.

- Red *(to Goldie, as they watch Cinders)* It's her *story*. She's living it.
(to Cinders) Go for it, hon.
- Gran A mother! Ha! Who do you think left you alone in the dark forest with a ridiculous basket of cookies? Your *mother*!?*I don't think so!* That *had* to be a stepmother! Had to be!
.... And *lucky* for you! Stepmothers see opportunity. Make you *tough* and ... *Look at you! Look at you!* A storybook life. You've got *everything*, perfect, well, almost sorry about the husband.
- Goldie But ... but ...
- Gran is fingering Goldie's necklace. Red takes it off Goldie and puts it in the purse.*
- Gran This is nice.
- Red *(apologetic, to Goldie)* We should put this in your purse with the ring.
- Gran Good hiding place.
- Goldie Who says I broke into the Bears?
- Gran You're a legend in your own time! Red, she's a legend in her own time and she doesn't even know it!
- Red With your hair you *have to be* famous, doll! You don't get to choose for what.
- Gran Exactly. Look at me! Play the hand you are dealt. Up from nothing! I started as a dwarf and then a witch! Then I was a stepmother. And now I'm Gran! I'm here to protect you.
- Goldie *(bewildered)* I knew Bear from high school.
- Gran *(to Red)* Pour us another. *(Red pours, Goldie fusses with exact size again).*
Hands is next! Do you like policemen?
(aside to Goldie, pointing to Prince) Look at *that ass!*
Do you know *Snow White*?
- Goldie I work with her a lot, downtown. On Liquidations.

- Red Now there is someone who really knows how to be famous.
- Gran A total liar and a complete fraud. Seven little dwarfs – my toosh! Sleep! Ha! Ha! Love her to pieces! Very smart. She looks after Gran. And Gran looks after her.
(pause) She has issues.
- Gran gestures – sniffing coke - and gives a knowing nod.*
- TV comes on suddenly. Gran signals imperiously that everything stop. It does. Prince waits dutifully.*
- T.V. Anchor *[static]* We're just getting the first footage of the invading giants. We'll have it on your screen in just a ... hold on ... hold on ... This is incredible. Uh ... Ah we're losing it ... No ... No ... Oh my God ... They're dropping from the tall trees. *[static, static]* Folks, there's some technical problem ...
Wait, I've got Captain Jack *[static]* ...
- Gran *(looking at the T.V.)* My goodness. There *is* Jack!
(to Goldie) He's supposed to be doing 25 to life! A very bad man! He killed one of the giants a while back. A very lovely gentle giant who came to visit me. That started this *whole* thing!
- Jack *(from TV)* *[static, static]* They're tearing up the forest, Frank, looking for their gold. I can't hold them ...
- T.V. Anchor ... *[static, static]* We're losing you, Jack ... Jack ...
Folks, we've lost contact.
We're going now to the Capital. *[static ...static]* The President ...
[static, static] ... This is incredible! *[static, static]*
- TV goes dead. Gran signals and the music resumes and Prince resumes his dance.*
- All 'Ahh'.
- Goldie What about your dancers? What if ... if they ... are ... are ... called up to fight?
- Gran The strong survive, darling. Think of it as a cull. Red can get more at the Port Authority.
- Red Or at Macy's.

Prince finally gets to Cinders. She takes out a foot sizer, gets his measurement and then finds the box with the correct size. He takes the red glitter slipper out of the shoe bag to goes to put it on Cinders. She is appalled by the color and has a fit, and takes back the loafer and stalks off, stage right, limping in her one blue high heel, taking her cleaning equipment with her.

Gran *(to Goldie) Don't mind her, dear. She's like this every time. Don't look at me that way. I did not make her up. I admit I bend the truth a little bit, to entertain my customers, but ... this is Cinderella!*

Prince finishes his dance, finds his one shoe, puts it on and takes the money from his jock, which he gives to Gran. He also hands over the red glitter slipper, which Gran puts on the bar. He exits through the dancers' curtain, center rear to applause and whistles.

M.C. *Let's hear it for PRINNNNCE!*

Red *(pouring) Have another. (the usual routine as Red pours, now done just with hand gestures.)*

Wait a minute! Holy snikerpoops! Watch out! Ladddddiesssss This is serious! You're in trouble! ... with Gran's latest discovery our next dancer ... the strong arm of the law ... abs of steel a wall of muscle ... Put your hands together for Copper - Officer HAAAAAANNNDS!.... Hey you! Don't touch! Don't touch! Don't touch Hands or Hands mightgive youuuuu a tickettttt! Give it up Hands!

Bump-and-grind music starts. Hands enters, stage right, as Copper, starts his routine behind the scrim. After a few moments the music and dancing freeze.

Gran *(continuing to Goldie) Now, there's something I want to ask you, which, of course, sweetheart, is technically none of my business and you don't to tell me ... unless you want another drink ... on a strictly confidential basis, unless you don't want to ... top that up, Red ... well, it's about your father.*

Red *Gran! Not this! It's none of your business.*

- Gran I have this project, about *fathers*. Somebody has to keep track.
(leaning in) Now, in your story ... there isn't one. Not a trace.
 Nada. Which is *probably* good. I'm just checking. The thing is ...
 if there's any chance he's around ... can't be too careful. ...
 Away on a trip? ... That's what they say. Dads have no place in
 the Great Forest, if you get my meaning.
- Goldie *(puzzled, thinking)* Red, that's something I've always wanted to
 ask you. Did you have a father?
- Red Gran, do I have a dad?
- Gran Well, yes and no ... I'd call it a 'source' ... technically ... darling.
(to Goldie) A private clinic in Basel. Cost a fortune! *(fingering
 Red's spectacular red tresses)* Nobody local, I assure you.
- Red *[Sighs to Goldie]*
 What I remember - when I opened my eyes, it was dark in the
 forest, I'm half way to Gran's ... and there was Wolf, looking at
 my boobies.
 Goldie, I never met *your* dad. *(Goldie sadly shakes her head)*
- Goldie There *are* no dads in the forest! I never thought of that! Gran,
 where *are* they? Where are all the dads?
- Gran Way, way down past the Pig's place, there's a shallow grave.
 That's where we dump them. Full of dads.
- Red Oh, Gran! Come on!
- Gran What do you need a dad for? When you have me?
- Red *(aside, sad, sarcastic)* I don't know! To buy me a hockey stick.
(hopefully) Build me a campfire.
- Gran Darling, I bought you a gas range.
- Red *(annoyed)* Gran! There is no shallow grave!
- Gran You are accusing me of literary license! Mythological
 manipulation. Your own Gran!
 Alright, *(menacing, witch like)* it's a *deep* grave. Centuries old.
 Centuries! Deep and dark secrets. Buried.
(to Goldie) What am going to do with this girl! Happy endings!
 That expensive college was a mistake. *What can you do?*

mine. The vine was mine. The gold was mine! The giants ... are Jack's! A guy thing. Let's leave it at that!

Red Grannnnn Think of his good side, Gran.

Gran Which was his backside, honey.
Goldie, he got sent '*up the river*' and not on a fishing trip!

Red It was self-defense!

Gran The excuses you make for him!
I weep for the money I could have made selling that ass.

Red Giants living in sky with lots of gold? Who knew?!

M.C. Let's hear it for Copper!!

Applause, whistles, Hands exits, stage right, handing over the cash to Gran. She comes back to the bar.

Gran That boy has the second best ass ... and the best of, what do
call them, pecs. His are bigger than mine.
(to Red) Goldie needs another.
(to Goldie) My cow! My beans! My vine! My gold!
What is that, Goldie? *What is that?*

Goldie (ironic) Root of title?

Gran (triumphant) Exactly! 'Root of title'! You can be my lawyer!
Red, get this girl another.
The giant was *his* problem. The war is *his* problem.
(to Goldie) So how do you like my place? You never said.

Prince comes out in street clothes with a gym bag and the blue glitter slipper, which he put on the bar. As Gran talks she frisks him for more money, finds some, takes it, talking all the while.

Prince, Prince, come to Gran, sweetie. Big kiss. Bigger.

(to Goldie) Just look at him! Look at *him*. You were fabulous.

(making the introduction) This is Goldie. Prince. Goldie. Prince

(making the introduction) This is Goldie. Prince. Goldie. Prince.
(to Goldie) You can touch, sweetheart. First time is free. After

that Put the money ... here. (She points out a pocket)

Red, pour Prince a stiff one. (She does)

(to Prince) You missed Goldie with the shoe, Snookums. *(an aside, deliberately loud enough to be overheard)* She's got lots of money and her husband is out of town.

Red Gran!

Gran I'm only trying to help.

Prince *(To Gran and Red) Can we talk? Privately?*

Gran Don't ask, Snookums. You *cannot* leave early. You're under contract. Can not!

Prince *(flirting)* Grannnnn, come onnn! Don't be a witch!

Gran Listen to him, my Snookums. (*she pinches his cheek*) A witch he calls me! A witch! Isn't that cute!

Snookums, you are my only Prince tonight. Please don't beg. I have two princes on the weekend but not tonite. I need you!

Prince *(He puts his bag on the bar and kneels)* I'm really worried about her. Please.

Gran Her! Her! Who is this 'her'? What about Me. ME!! Snookums. Me. Your Gran. There's *nothing* you can say, Everybody needs you. She'll get over it. There are lots and lots of short guys!.

(to Goldie, with delight) He's begging. He's begging!

(to Prince) Don't do this, baby. You know how it turns me on. Gran feels the muscles in the outstretched forearm.

Do some more like this. (*she indicated dumbbell curl*) We need some more meat, here and here before I can eat you.

Prince is upset. Red melts, gives Gran the eye.

Red (to Goldie) Will you excuse us for a minute. (Red tries to get Gran off stage) Gran! ... Gran! Can we talk *privately*.

Gran *(to Goldie)* The responsibilities that are piled on my aged back. The sacrifices I have made, have to make, daily. Why? To protect my baby! Gratitude? Not! Recognition? Not!

Red ('heard it all before') Right! 'The slings and arrows' ... GRAN!

Gran Fame! Ha! *The Life of the No-Name Granny*. Ever read that book! In the remainder bind. Walt never calls *me*! You have to ask yourself, very seriously, whether pretty boys are worth the trouble.

(Red drags her off stage, right)
Goldie, *(as she being dragged off) pour yourself a drink. And don't (teasing) let Hands take off his clothes again ... until I get back.*

Prince, Goldie is a nice girl, married to a rich bear, who is out of town, till Monday!

Red Gran!

*Exit, Red, Gran and Prince following through the
dancers' curtain.*

Prince leaves his gym bag on the bar.

Enter Cinders, stage right, now in her scullery ensemble and work boots and carrying a large shopping bag. She is wearing two flats. She drags her gown bag.

Enter Hands center rear, fully dressed as Copper. He comes over and stands officiously by Goldie.

While they talk Cinders sees the blue glitter slipper on the bar and puts it in her purse.

Goldie (fairly drunk, droll, to Hands) Your shirt is undone, officer.

While Goldie is distracted with Hands, Cinders puts a pair of penny loafers in Prince's gym bag.

Hands You said, she said she was '*full*'. Mamme, did she say, what she was full of?

Goldie Children. Why?

She has a fabulous, absolutely gorgeous house very deep in the forest. (*confidential*) I saw a picture in Gourmet Baking. It's quite far. I left the children at the Step-Mothers' Drop-Off, you know, down by the Pigs.

Hands Mamme, aren't you a little worried, leaving the children in the middle of the dark forest to get picked up a witch.

Goldie Don't be silly. I'm their stepmother.

Hands *(alarmed, to Cindy)* Tell Red, I had to go. Duty calls!

Hands exits stage left to street.
Prince enters stage right, with a suit bag, grabs his gym bag from the bar and exits stage left.
Cinders and Goldie are left on stage at the bar, looking at each other.

Goldie *(now behind the bar, now quite drunk)* Can I pour you a drink?

Cinders *(shocked, depressed, watching Prince flee.)*
 Thank you. Perrier ... with ... a sliver of celery heart and tiny twist of mango ... root ... and ... and ... three green olives ... no picks ... and ... dust it with stinging nettle pollen. If you have any.

Goldie plops a bottle of beer on the bar.

You're Goldie Lockett. I've heard of you. Tell me, is it true, what they say, in the newspaper?

Goldie That I broke into Bear's house and smashed up his dining room?
 No! I did not. False.

Cinders The story says ...

Goldie *(exasperated)* So ... do you have a dad?

Cinders No, I have a trust fund.

Goldie How about a step-mother?

Cinders Of course.
 Did you happen to hear where exactly that Prince was heading?

Goldie Don't quote me. Snow White.

Cindy What does he see in her?!

M.C. Ladddieees ... laddieees ... let's have a big welcome for the next ... the very famous ... Mr. All-the-Better-to-Eat-You-With. Mr. Nose! ... Don't look into his baby blues or you'll be supper! The one, the only, a very, verrry talentttted guuuuyMiisterrrr Wolf!

*Bump-and-grind music starts. Wolf doesn't appear.
Red and Gran enter stage right.
Exit Cinders to the street, stage left.
Gran sees there is no dancer, annoyed. She notices Prince's gym bag.*

Gran Red, Prince forgot his gym bag!
(to Goldie) Where is Cinders going?

Goldie She went looking for Prince.

Red (to Gran) And Prince is no doubt on the way to Snow's house!
We better warn him.

*Red exits stage left, running, with the gym bag.
Wolf comes out of the dances' door, center rear,
in his Jersey Shore gangster outfit – suit and tie.
He hobbles over to Goldie at the bar and sits beside her.
He still manages to gyrate to the bump-and-grind.*

Wolf (basso) Hello, little girl.
Do I know you from somewhere?

Gran Dance, for the lady, Wolfie. Show the lady your stuff.

Wolf Gran, Gran, baby doll, honey, I am busy! I am working! She can see, Gran, she can see the goods!
(to Goldie, flirtatious) She has very big, very beautiful eyes.
Gorgeous eyes. All the better to see me.

Gran (to Goldie) Don't fall for that line, sweetie! You'll be sorry.

Wolf (to Goldie) I love Gran, as a concept type of thing. But then aren't we all concepts.
Gran can be ... pushy. And I'm not that way. Besides, I'm not really into vertical dancing tonight.

Goldie (giggly) You have nice ears. My husband has nice ears. He's away.

- Wolf All weekend, as the rumor tells it.
 Say, didn't you use to live in the Great Forest?
 Gran, you weren't going to tell me! You weren't! You old witch!
 It's been years! You've grown your hair! And ... *Gretel* ...
- Goldie *(correcting)* Goldie.
- Wolf Of course, Goldie, Goldie, honey, baby, I meant Goldie.
 (admiring the whole package). You look ... what's the word ...
 there's a word, there's a word ... delicious.
- Goldie *(rising, drunk)* I have to go ...
- Wolf *(rising)* Do you want me to follow you?
- Goldie *Not* to the bathroom.
- Gran points right - to the washroom - and Goldie staggers off.*
Wolf sits defiantly - not dancing. Gran is annoyed and cues the M.C. to bring on another dancer.
- Gran What is this, a strike?
- Wolf I'm waiting for my lady love.
- M.C. *He's back! ... Ladddieesare you still itchy? Gran's all time favorite! ... the one the only ... the original woodchopper ... the woodpecker, the woodsman! Our very own Woody!*
- Music starts. Woody comes out dressed as a Lumber Jack, with a cardboard axe and starts his bump-and-grind behind the scrim.*
Red enters stage right, out of breath.
Snow White stamps in. stage left. She is high on something.
- Red Oh my god, Snow, what are doing here! Prince went looking for you.
- Snow He's looking for me! *Looking!* That's lovely!
 Well, he didn't find me! The Prince gets lost in forest on the way to Snow White's. Give me a break!
 Same place every time. I was freezing.
 He knows I can't sleep. I pay good money and I expect, I expect - on time! *Is it too much to ask?*

I have a six am conference call with Singapore tomorrow. So where is he?

Red *(humoring her, trying to calm her down)* Absolutely. No question. Where is he, that Prince. *(from under the counter, a bottle of pills)* One of these blue ones ... two ... it'll help you sleep.

Snow I don't want a pill. I want a Prince.
Have my cheques ever bounced? *Ever!*
I want the prince ... now!

Gran We'll find you another. Blue or Red?

(It is evident they bargain like this often, it's a game.)

Snow *(her bargaining button has been pushed)* Gold. \$200. Tops.

Gran Snow, my darling sweetie ... \$200, \$200 ... \$200 ... is not a number that I have heard spoken in the Forest Bar. We are not that kind of place. \$500.

(Aside to Red) Who have we got available?

Red checks the appointment book, searching, searching ...
(continuing to Snow) We are looking, searching, desperately, for a *prince!* For Snow. A rare and priceless, priceless, commodity, such a man! It's hard to even think of such a *thing* in such vulgar terms as two ... two ... *(choking on the word)* *Money!* What is *money*!

Snow Money, Gran, is the universally recognized means of exchange by which all market transactions are measured and cleared.
Don't fuck with me, I'll eat you for breakfast!

Gran *(defiant)* Been there. Done that!

Red Woody! For right now, on an emergency basis, I can give you Woody. \$500. A glorious hunk of ...

Snow *(scornfully)* Woody! That old axe! It takes two hours to get him started! Then he falls a sleep. Two fifty.

Gran Three fifty.

Snow \$300. And I'll send him home in a taxi.

Gran *(accepting, as an auctioneer)* Sold for \$350 to the lady in

the first row.

Snow Where is he?

Woody is dancing behind the scrim or stop action on the other side of the stage.

Red *(beckoning to) Woody, honey.*

*Woody tries to ignore her. Snow gives a little wave.
Woody, oh Woody. Honey, baby.*

Woody *(annoyed, stops his dance and under his breath.)* Fuck! Fuck!
Fuck! Why! Why me! Not fuckin' Snow Storm! Why me!

Red goes over to him. They have a private conversation as Snow waits.

(to Red, obsequious) You called.

Red Woody, we love the work you do here. Love it! And your loyalty all these years!

Woody And I love my work and my job and Gran and you the opportunity to get ahead and do the right thing for nice people. Yes, mamme.

Red I need a favor.

Woody Let me guess. Prince is AWOL and Snow can't sleep and

Red Smile.
For me, baby. For me. For old times.
Sugar.
I'll owe you for this!

Woody *(under his breath) Could we discuss how much!*

Red What!

Woody *(to Red) Love to, Red. Love to.
(to Snow) Hey, Snow, how ya doin'?*

Snow You know where Prince went? I really wanted a Prince.

Woody You look especially lovely tonight. Let's go find Prince! Chop some logs.

Woody guides her off stage left. She flounces.

Yo, Prince, yo ... We're coming to find you, Prince!
(to Snow) You like French. Missionary. Doggy? What you like, baby doll?

Goldie comes back on from stage right, weaving. She has out her car keys. She can barely stand. Wolf takes them from her gently.
Gran exits stage right.

Wolf *(to Goldie) Why don't I drive. (looking to Red)*

Goldie I could follow you!

Wolf You think? Let's leave your car here, sweetheart.

Goldie *(fumbling in her purse) Want a cookie? Red, lend me a cookie.*

Wolf Not before supper.

Wolf guides Goldie out, stage left.

Red Last call! Last call.

Jack enters from the street, stage left. He's dressed as a commando with a pirate bandana and is hefting a big infantry pack. As he enters he looks to see who's around. Sees it's only Red at the bar.

Jack Psst.

Red *(not noticing who) We're closing.*

Jack One last kiss? I'm shipping out.

He puts down his pack, moves slowly and sexy to the bar.

Red *(finally noticing who it is, she is annoyed but still smitten) Get out of here. Gran will find you.*

Jack Gonna miss me?

They embrace. Then Red tears herself away.

- Red Try not to.
- Jack Goin' to war, babe, Called up and headin' out. A man's answers the call ... got to make the world safe ... for football and, and, Christmas ... and you, babe.
- Red You're always headin' out, Jack.
- Jack I get a lot of calls.
There are giants, doll. Big ones, great mother f - n', towering, big ones, jumpin' from the tall trees, in the north and the east ... *(loudly, looking around for Gran) Lookin' for their gold, Gran.*
This could be forever, babe.

Gran enters stage right.

- Gran Jack! You're looking fit. Free at last? Does the Warden know you're wandering about? I *don't think so.*
I got that letter from your lawyer, Jack, darling. It was *very, very* funny. Have your boy call my *attorney* – Ms. Goldie Lockett. She's an expert, darling, on root of title.
- Jack Not wandering, Gran. Not *wandering!* Paroled to fight the giants.
More giants than you ever dreamed, Gran!

[Sound *Noise of trucks revving, military helicopters]*

They're come for their gold Gran! *Their* gold! I'm paroled back to my Unit, to fight the war to end all wars ... and make the world safe for ... Red, here.

- Gran The giants, Jack, are your department! You killed the first one, you can kill the rest.
What's the first thing I taught you, lunk head? Don't get caught! What did you learn? Nothing! If you hadn't got caught when you were bonking his wife, none of this would have happened! None!

[Sound *More noise of trucks revving, military helicopters etc.]*

- Jack If I hadn't been bonking his wife, Gran, *like you told me*, you wouldn't have got out the back window with his gold!
Remember?

- Gran Entirely and completely separate operations, Jack.
Whose cow? Whose beans? Whose vine. Whose gold? Eat me, Jack! What gold? How do you like my place?
- Jack They got Geiger counters, Gran, and steam shovels and bulldozers, they're gonna rip up the forest till they find that gold. They will or I will!
- Hands (sticks head in, very quick) Captain, we're ready to roll! The troops are waiting.
- Gran (calling his bluff) Time for the big sacrifice, Jack! We'll watch on the television.
- Jack (turning to Red) Dream of me, doll. (sniff) I'll be dreamin' of you.
- Gran You leave her alone! She's mine!
- Jack exit Stage Left. Gran comforts Red. Pours her a drink. Red belts it back. Then another.*
- Red (calling after him, choking back the tears) Jack! Jack!
- Gran Awwww, honey bun. He'd rather go to war. We'll find you another one.
- Gran refills her glass. Red belts back.*
- Red He just needs some money.
- Gran Well, he can't have yours. Or mine. He's much too crude for you, darling. But if you like that sort ... then ... why not ... How about a sailor? We haven't had a sailor for a while. They're always shippin' out. Can't do that much harm.
- Red (bitter) Right. Or a drifter! 'Tm tumble weed, babe. Any tumbling in this town?
- Gran Or a trucker!? We've never had a trucker!
- Red You want I should have a trucker!

Gran

Well, for a night! It's an idea. We could do the whole place over as a truck stop. 'Breaker, breaker! Gotta roll, babe!'

Red stamps off.

You go to bed, Honey. I'll close up. You need some *sleep*.

After Red leaves Gran wipes the bar, then takes Goldie's purse from behind the bar, empties the jewels onto the bar, admires them and pockets them and tosses the purse into the trash can. She gestures to Gretel to turn out the lights. Gretel does and exits. Gran fades to black.

End Act I

Act II

More fake trees make a fake forest.

Scene One - In the Forest

NARR

It's dawn, deep in The Forest. Woody and Wolf are having their wake up coffee.

Wolf

(showing pictures from his wallet) and this is my little guy when he is three. And his big sister, when she is four.

Woody

Awwww She is gorgeous!

Wolf

Look at this one! Seven! Two goals last game and two the game before! Look't the shoulders on that kid! And ... *she* is absolutely fucking amazzing! Soccer goalie. Five shut outs this season!

Woody

Wow!

Wolf

It's nose, I tell ya! She'll be on the National Team next season, *for sure*. Fucking amazing! It's the wolf gene, quick, quick, quick! And look at those eyes!

Woody

You get to go to the games and stuff?

- Wolf Fuck, yes! I'm Assistant-Assistant Coach for his team ... and backup driver for the girls' team, if I can borrow a van. It's been one tournament or another almost every weekend ... fuck! These kids are expensive. Hockey! Hockey is bankruptcy!
- Woody Like, how can you afford it? Man, kids' equipment is outta sight! Which I can't afford.
- Wolf The thing is ... I get by. With the extra ...about which you are fully informed with me.
- Woody 'Get by'! Fuck, man, you got it made! I wish I could get my kids back. I'm not even allowed into their games. The Judge says I'm '*unfit*'!
- Wolf 'Unfit'! That's crazy! You're in fantastic shape!
- Woody No! I'm '*unfit*' because I'm '*doin' it*' for money.
- Wolf What's the fuuuckkk! When's the last time you made enough as paint man to pay your rent? What's the guy thinking!
- Woody She. She is like, is saying ... we are supposed to do it for *free*! It's *bad character*. '*Moral inturpratude*'.
- Wolf looks askance at his mispronunciation.*
- Wolf That's crappola! You are a very, fine guy and always have been that! ...*(teasing)* well, except for that night at Gran's when you clubbed me with that f-g axe!
- Woody That was an exceptional situation, which was strictly professionalism, like you know, right!
- Wolf Whattt! Whatt! *What she said* ... *she said* ... 'Eat me!' So, I, like, I ate her. That's consent. What was the big deal? Then you fuckin' club me! That's not right!
- Woody You weren't suppose to be there.
- Wolf So what! Event, circumstances ... and I was there. Andshe *said* ... *to me*.
- Woody She meant *me*!

- Wolf She did (*he stops himself*) Whatever.
 It *does not mean* you're not, like, great with little kids!
 Absolutely. Which I would say to the Judge on your behalf, any day, any fuckin' day of the week!
- Woody I appreciate that.
- Wolf But ... but ... just between you and me, the thing is, I did *not* see it coming! Did not! And I have to say, I have to say it still hurts, bud, you know what I'm saying, not here (*fist on head*) but right *here!* (*fist on heart*).
- Woody Really? Really? Here? (*hand on heart*) But that was years ago! You never said. And we're workin' mano-mano together all this time. I never knew you felt this way. Never! You really keep your shit bottled up. Not healthy, dude.
- Wolf It's hard, I mean ... the expectations of people put on me for being a wolf! You can't know what's it's like.
 But I am sincerely appreciating your solidification with me. I am. Deeply.
 Hey, why don't you come to my little guy's game next week. I'll lend you ... I'll lend him to you ... for the second period.
- Woody Really, you'd do that! For me! (*choking back some tears*) You are so fine!
- They hug.*
- Wolf Remember the time that rich lady who bought us both for a three way? The one with red Volvo.
- Woody *Fuuuuucccccckkkkkkk!*
- Wolf Then *she* didn't want to get fucked! She wanted to *watch us fuck each other!* *Watch!*
- Woody Perverted. Fuckin' *watch!* Two guys doin' it! ... Sick! Like we're fags!
- Wolf I almost quit!
- Woody Fuckin' *beast-i-philia!* Gross!
 How much did she give you?

- Wolf \$500.
- Woody Me too. See, we're equal.
- Woody Equal buds.
- Wolf And me, a Wolf! (*He starts to choke up.*)
So, what'd you do with that *blond lawyer chick* last night?
- Wolf Which one?
- Woody *Which one!* The *one* you were fuckin' *carryin' ... carryin' her outta the bar!* *Goldie, like, Lockett!*
- Wolf Oh ya. Her. Classy lady. Very nice.
(*confidential*) I'm on for the *whole* weekend the next time her husband's out of town. We're goin' to a spa!
- Woody You don't know who he is? You don't! You don't know ... !!!!
It's *Bear!* Big Bear! Stealers. Tackle, dude! *Tackle!*
- Wolf I did not know that.
- Woody He'll *smell* you! In his *bed*. '*Someone's been fucking in my bed!*'
You're toast!
- Wolf Won't happen. Relax. Nothing happened. We didn't do anything, except talk and ...
She's just ... nice, very intelligent, needs to relax. I'm adaptable.
She so much money! ... And I can offer a service.
- Woody Nothing happened! '*Nice!*' Oh, come on, I am talking to *Wolf*
- Wolf (*confidential*) This is a situation ... calling on a long term perspective. Slow and easy.
And you know her Bear makes these awesome jigsaw puzzles in maple wood. Little football players who match up to the wood grain! A true artist of The Great Forest. Really! Who knew a tackle could be so good with sand paper. She's real proud of him. But the thing is ... the opportunity ... he's just ... he's just ... not much of a fuck. Which is, like, a situation worth developing ... with some delicacy. I mean the carnal act is not everything! Ya, it's a speciality but ... we can just talk, I mean if the price is right. So ... I bought one of the puzzles from her.
- Woody Dude, you are too much!

I should get going. Hey, don't forget, we got Tail Gate and the game tonight.

Wolf Oh, fuck! Fuck! And I'm cooking! Good thing you reminded me. So, what'd you do with Snow last night? You never said.

Woody Oh ... took her back her house. She gets so *wired!* It takes forever to get her to sleep. I'm exhausted. She's a pill but the pay is very fine.

Wolf Well, you *are* the man!
I gotta split.
You painting today?

Woody Oh, fuck! Fuck! Fuck! Fuck! I forgot. Shit. Fuck.
I fuckin' forgot! Oh shit!

Woody runs off. Wolf watches him go. End Scene.

Scene Two - The Fishing Camp

In another corner of The Forest a little campfire is burning beside a pup tent.

*Hands is at the fire heating and pouring two coffees.
Prince is moving around in the tent.*

Prince *(from the tent)* Where is my hat? Do you know where my hat is?

Hands Coffee's ready. Fish are jumping!

Prince Fish? Fish? I don't eat sushi.

Prince crawls out the tent, dragging his sleeping bag and his gym bag, his Prince jacket half on and his hat falling off his head. He is a klutz. He stands and fusses extravagantly as he does up the buttons. Hands hands him a fishing rod and a coffee.

Prince I'm not dressed for fishing.

Hands grabs his hat and throws it off stage.

Hands I see that. If you take *off* the fuckin' prince coat, you'd be dressed for fishing!
... *Where did you get that stupid fucking hat!! ...*

- Prince In my underwear? What if Snow sees me in my underwear?
 Why did you throw my hat away? Whyyyy?
- Hands It's your day off! Fish like guys in underwear.
 Where are your shoes?
- Prince A Prince never has a day off.
 (*taking the coffee*) Thanks. I needed that!
- Prince looks for his shoes. He pulls out first one then another elegant penny loafers from his gym bag. He is puzzled then pissed and puts them on the ground in front of him but does not put them on.*
- Hands Did you ever connect with Snow last night? You know after you left, she showed up, looking for you. I think Woody took her home.
 What's with you and Snow anyhow?
- Prince Woody! Thank God for that.
- Hands Woody could put anybody to sleep.
- Prince Something must have upsetting her at work. Oh dear. She's very sensitive. If she doesn't get proper sleep, she doesn't, she can't, be productive and positive at work. Which is essential. She can never get to sleep unless the Prince copulates with her in his particularly sensitive way. I mean, after I take off the costume.
- Hands 'Sensitive' is one word. Sounds more like 'fucked up' ... from what I seen, from my distance, which is not close up, like you, not being in her league, as you are.
- Prince I would *never* say 'fucked up'. You could say 'stressed'. (*Prince only reluctantly gives ground up his gallant defense*.) She is all alone, she's lonely. 'Needy', at a very high level. (*abandoning the cause, resigned*) She's fucked up. But all the more reason to ...
- Hands She lives with seven dwarfs. Sounds a bit ... kinky, at a very high level. Definitely ... *not lonely*!
- Prince No dwarfs. *N'exist pas!*

- Hands What the fuck! I read it!
- Prince They're made up. She lives alone. She can't boil water!
- Prince No shit!
(pause) So how much she paying you each time? Four? *(Prince is silent)* Five? *(silence)* Seven?
- Prince Nine ... and a tip. And I do the dishes and vacuum. All included.
- Hands *(pause)* I am now understanding the richness of your deep sympathy.
- Prince She trades Euros, which starts at six.
- Hands I understand about getting up early. Like we did in the joint. Hey, I like to fuck in the morning. She need like a wake up fuck? I could be available, including cab fare.
- Prince She can't get to sleep without ... *(confidential)* strenuous copulation. I go by week nights before going to the club ... and we ...
- Hands Fuck ... how many times a week ... you're fuckin' makin' out like a bandit!
- Prince My own place is pretty expensive.
(confidentially) I run a group home.
- Hands Fuck me!
- Prince Fucking is easy part.
Last week Beauty showed up with her suitcase. Again. Run away. Very difficult.
- Hands Really. Sleeping Beauty moved into your place! Fuck, Wow!
- Prince Not *Sleeping Beauty!* *Beauty!*
- Hands Oh.
- Prince They're totally different.
- Hands *(faking)* I knew that.
- Prince She just wants to look at me.

- Hands Well fuck me!
- Prince *Sleeping* Beauty is totally different. She has her own place. She never *wakes up* unless I'm there to copulate with her. One hundred per cent opposite of Snow White.
- Hands I knew that.
- Prince And then when I get home I have to attend to Beauty.
- Hands (*digesting*) O.K.
Beauty at home? Not *Sleeping* Beauty?
- Prince Right.
- Hand So Beauty, *not Sleeping* Beauty, she just, like, moved in?
Hot looking babe! I seen her picture. Congratulations!
- Prince Well, actually ...
- Hands She doesn't pay!
- Prince She won't even kiss me. She thinks if she kisses me I'll turn into a frog. She just wants to look.
So far, I've got her to admits I look like I Prince. But she thinks I'll turn into a frog – if we ... you know.
And she wants me to quit seeing Snow. I try to tell her it would be irresponsible, given Snow's delicate condition, not to mention the compensation situation.
She thinks inside I'm a frog.
She doesn't even know about *Sleeping* Beauty.
- Hands Really. Beauty thinks *the Prince* is a frog!? Now that is stupid!
Your cheekbones are perfect man, perfect! And your ass! If you were in the joint with an ass like that you'd be a Queen!
(*Prince is shocked.*) I mean, depending on ... a lot of things.
(*pause, questioning, sly*)
Say, is there, like, any serious chance you could turn into a frog? We're out of bait.
- Prince Ha. Ha.
It hurts, to love someone who thinks you're really a frog!
- Hands Seriously, dude, I really think ... I mean there is pattern here.
I had no idea, none at all. None of us did.

- What about that Cinders chick who's always chasing your ass at the club?
- Prince Man, she is beyond difficult.
- Hands But I hear she has a trust fund. How difficult is that?
- Prince Well, you have to copulate her uncle to get paid.
- Hands I could cope.
- Prince She, Cinderella, follows me sometimes. She knows my shoe size.
Who'd you end up with last night?
- Hands *Nobody!*
Copper (pointing to himself) went out to save the little bears.
Turned out to be nothing. They were asleep at the Step-Mother Drop-Off. Asleep! 'Fuck me! I can't do good for trying.
- Prince But you are so good as a person.
- Hands I learned in jail.
- Prince Gee, I never had your opportunities. I went to Princeton.
- Hands Red is my parole officer.
- Prince Really?
- Hands Ya. She's pretty cool. Giving me a lot of opportunities to get myself properly into reintegration with society. A life of service to the greater good.
That's about it. My ex got my boys. No access ... because of my thing with the witch, which was totally self-defensive. And I still gotta pay which is really unfair.
- Prince Right on.
- Hands What can you do? Hence my part-time employment.
- Prince Hey, I have an idea. You could handle some of my clients on the busy nights.
- Hands You serious?

- Prince Try on the jacket. You're about my size.
- Hands Me, a prince!
- Prince Go on. Wear it, dude! Seriously, I need help. It's all in the costume.
- Hands struggles to get into the jacket. He is much larger and it barely fits. Prince admires him.*
- Prince Perfect! Perfect! It fits. You look good. Really. Goood ass!
Where's the hat?
I can't handle all the work. Red'll be o.k. if she gets her cut. I'll steer a couple of the Princess's your way. You'll be doing me a big favor.
Cinders! Can you handle the collection issue? I mean, if you can ... major, major, pay day. Big time.
Want to try on the shoes.
- Hands thinks, nods. Prince grins and kneels to put the shoes on Hands. They fit. (An absurd tableau.)*
- Hands *(admiring himself in a make believe mirror)* Me? A prince! Do I look alright?
- Prince It's you! Perfect.
- Hands Really?! I'm a Prince! I'm a Prince! It's like a fairy tale.
So, what do you – I – say before you, fuck, a princess?
- Prince What do you *usually* say?
- Hands *(hesitates, embarrassed)* 'Look at that sausage, baby!'
(suddenly worried, confidentially,) How big is yours?
- Prince *(laughing at his patter)* Say, 'Madam, no one but you has ever before seen this wild thing.'
Or ... 'there is no measure of my love'.
- Hands You say shit like that?
- Prince I went to Princeton.
- Prince *(giving him another 'Prince' line)* 'Just you and me, just you and me, my darling!'

Hands *(trying it)* 'Just you and me, ... babe! Unless you wanna bring your sister.'

Prince *(laughs)* Dude, let's go catch some fish!

Hands Yeah!

Prince Leave the jacket here.

Hands No! I like it. I'm a Prince!
Why?

Prince Fish like guys in their underwear.

Hands takes off the jacket and the shoes. He and Prince exit left.

Cinders enters right and comes center stage through the fake forest to their campfire. She is wearing her scullery ensemble and wears rubber boots. She carries a blue glitter slipper.

She holds up the glitter slipper and picks up one of the Prince's loafer (her failed gift from Act I).

She holds the two shoes aloft like 'alas-poor-Yorick's skull.

She looks from one to the other and at her own, confused, as she composes her mad soliloquy.

She speaks slowly and thoughtfully as if dictating into a mini-recorder. She pauses, repeats, voices over etc. as she thinks, composes, corrects and edits. The two shoes 'speak' to each other, like puppets. Cinders speaks three voices – her own (C) and the red shoe (RED) and the black shoe (BLACK)

Cinders

C The beautiful ... the handsome ... Prince ...
... haunted by a ... by *his* vision ... of loveliness ...
... hunting ... through the dark night for the feet he
once ... the shoes he could love forever ...

R > C Cinders, come on! The guy is a gold digger. He wants
your money, not your feet.

C > R You are sooo cynical ... about human nature. I have lots
of money. I could marry him.

B Now you're talking!

B Now you're talking!

C He brought me a ruby slipper. He loves me.

R You give him money and of course he loves you.

- C** (*ignoring them*) Barefoot, lost in the cruel forest ...
 stones, his gorgeous feet ... penniless ...
- R** Bare foot! Exactly. Where are the perfect shoes you gave him? Where? Abandoned in the forest.
- B > R** Not so! They were re-purposed.
 Marry him. The guy is broke. You saw his ass ... feet ...
 perfection.
- C** The feet are the window on the soul.
 The perfect shoe he brought me. Perfect!
 Just a matter of fit.
- R** Perfect!? Perfect!
 What color was your dress? Color! Blue? What color am I? Did I hear 'red'?
 How hard is it to tell red from blue?
- B** Red and blue go well together.
- R** Pleaaaze!
 He just wants money. Give him money now and he'll be back for more. Men are like stray dogs.
 You worked hard for your daddy's trust fund.
- C** (*back to her dream*) The beautiful princess the tears rolled down through the ash and dust of, of, of the fire place ash that coated her ...
 (*interrupting her reverie*) Maybe I could be free to see other feet?
- B** Now you're talkin'.
- C** (*sadly, back to the dream*)
 ... a ghost of her past, her hidden beauty ... to be released, set free, set on high, by, by, by his, his, charm, his smile, his love, their feet together, forever, their shoes together ... to give his total, complete and utter devotion to her beautiful shoes ... no ... her feet, no shoes! Feet!
- B > R** Look at you! Look at you! Her feet wouldn't fit into you if we chopped the toes off!
- R > B** Me! Me! Six hours out of the shoe box and you look like the last Chevy at the demolition derby.
- B** Which is it ...
- R** ... shoes or feet?
- B** Feet or shoes?
- C** (*finally deciding*) No, *feet*. I will marry the man with the biggest feet. *Feet!*
- B** (*sad*) So close So close ...
- R** Two shoes passing in the night.

Cinders stumbles off stage right.

*Lights***Scene Three - The Tail Gate Party**

NARR That evening in another part of the forest Woody, Wolf, Prince, Hands gather for their regular tailgate barbecue and to watch 'the game'.

Wolf is at a fancy gas barbecue cooking in two large pans, stacks of meat to one side. A portable T.V. faces away from the audience from which we hear the roar and chanting of a football game.
Hands wears his new Prince jacket, Prince wears Hands' gym sweats and hoodie.
Prince is offering wine and Hands passing out beers.
Woody (in his lumberjack costume) is reading aloud from a newspaper, hesitant and clumsy.
Wolf smells his own cooking with delight. The guys ignore his entreaties to enjoy the meat.

Prince as Hands *(with the manners of a well trained waiter is offering wine)* The Red is a very fine Californian Merlot, fruity, oaky ... or this Australian Sauvignon Blanc by Kanga Roo ... very dry .

No takers.

Hands as Prince Hey! Second Quarter's startin'. Who wants a Coors? Miller?
(bellowing) Stella! Drink up!

Wolf Got something dark, bud?

Woody *reading from a newspaper* "Witnesses say, the Prince was seen pursuing an unidentified black-haired beauty with ala ... ala ... alacaster skin (*sic*) ... and ruby lips ... through the forest, ... with a shoe ..."

Wolf *(checking the pans and oven)* Who's for medium rare?

Prince as Hands *(looking over Woody's shoulder)* That's not accurate! It is false. Totally incorrect. Who wrote that!

Woody ... "crying out, 'Stop, stop, come back, my darling!' He told sources, who have not be identified, 'That is the girl I have promised to marry. The black-haired beauty with the glass slipper. I will marry the girl with the matching glass slippers'. Other witnesses described him as deliriously in love."

- | | |
|---------------------|---------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| Wolf | Guys, <u>guys</u> Burgers are aged Angus, extra lean, slightly, ever so slightly singed. Barely stopped bleeding! |
| Prince as Hands | 'Witnesses!' What witnesses! This is ... (<i>he can't say it</i>) |
| Hands as Prince | (<i>helpfully</i>) A load of crap. Pile of horse shit. |
| Prince as Hands | If Snow reads this she'll be ... very <i>annoyed</i> . |
| Wolf | (<i>shouting over the T.V.</i>) <u>Guys!</u> <u>Guys!</u> <u>Guys!</u> Pork chops! Got tons of <i>pork</i> chops! Pork chops! Three little pigs. Only one left. |
| | <i>They ignore him</i> |
| Hands as Prince | (<i>helping Prince curse</i>) She'll be <i>pissed</i> , not <i>annoyed</i> ! <i>Pissed!</i> |
| Prince as Hands | (<i>puzzled, stumbling with the swear word</i>) Pissed? |
| Wolf | So ... more for me. |
| Hands as Prince | <i>Fuckin' pissed!</i>
(<i>grabbing the paper, reading, taunting</i>) "Witnesses say he said ...'I will marry the girl who fits the shoe ...' |
| Prince as Hands | (bursting) F -- f -- ... damn... <i>hell</i> ! |
| Hands as Prince | (<i>taunting</i>) "... deliriously in love ..."
(<i>Hands is egging him, teasing the words out of his mouth</i>) Fuu ... fuuu ... fuu ... uuuCK! |
| Prince as Hands | <u>Fucking</u> <i>turd</i> ... <i>shit</i> |
| | <i>Hands gives Prince the thumbs and holds up a string of fish.</i> |
| Wolf | I could put on some lamb chops? ...Fresh? ... Alright. No takers. More for me.
(<i>sarcastic</i>) Mr. Prince, your fuckin' Highness ... if you want to eat those fish things, <i>you gotta cook 'em yourself! In your own pan only</i> . And keep that arugula crap away from my pork chops! |
| Woody
night just | You know what else? I heard that Jack came into the Club last |

before closing. He's out!

Wolf You're shittin' me! Is he out? Already?

Woody You think he'll come up for the game?

Hands as Prince Ah-hemmm! How many steaks did I bring, guys?

Woody I see ... six.

Wolf Four for (*fingering the group*) And two for ... for ???
You know something we don't?

Hands as Prince I hear things, being *both* a Prince and a cop. And in the Reserves.

Wolf In your dreams!

Jack (off stage) Fee! Fi! Foe! ... Fee! Fi! Foe ...

All (*jumping up, cautious, in unison*) Fummmm!

Jack (off stage) OO-RAH! OO-RAH!

All AH-Ch00-Rah! Ah-Ch00-Rah!

Jack Cha-ROOOOOO-RAH!

Wolf It's Jack! It's Jack!

Woody The fuckin' giant killer!

All (*joyous*) Jack! Jack! Jack!

*Jack enters. Followed by Photo Guy, loaded with gear.
They gather round, hugging and mugging for
Photographer.*

Lights

Scene Four

*A clearing in the cheesy forest, tailgate barbecue gone,
replaced now with several large crates, rear left, off fancy*

guns and military equipment, with football and hockey gear mixed in.

The guys are outfitting themselves from the crates as Jack draws battle maps in the sand, (or on a large blackboard) center stage. They gather round listening to their battle direction, although mightily distracted by the cool military equipment in the nearby crates. As Jack speaks, Photographer records his words with a mic and a camera on a tripod. Jack directs him on what's the best angles etc.

- Jack *(speaking into the camera)* With my own eyes, I have seen these beady-eyed, hunchback mother fuckers The one thing I know for sure about the giants, is they are *hungry!* For them, a human being is a *pretzel. A hot dog!!* Especially women and children. And ... Men, we have the sacred duty to serve and protect and defend and save the women ... and protect ... and get the gold.
- All OOOO-RAH!
- Jack They rappel down from the sky into the tall trees, and then fuckin' *jump the last thirty feet.* Jump, dudes, jump. They are fast and they are strong and they are mad! H.Q. thinks it's an advance party for an invasion force. Oh, so I don't forget, this brave photo journalist is embedded here from HQ PR ... to show the world ... what a bunch of real studs can do!!
- Photographer Just pretend I'm not here, guys.
- Woody How big are they, more or less ... exactly.
- Jack Ten ... twelve ... fourteen feet, meters ... What the fuck ... who can count so high!
- Woody *(aside, worried)* How many feet in a meter?
- Wolf Well, at least we know they're not vegetarians.
- Jack Men, it is my duty to be frank and honesty about the danger we face. I got lucky the last time. The invasion ... just one. Just one of them ... chased me. I have no apologies ... no apologies for stoppin' him ... dead
- All OOOO-RAH! OOOO-RAH! OOOO-RAH!

- Jack And, men, no matter what that fancy pants, crap-faced lawyer with the tiny pecker said in court that it was self-defense! Bull shit! No way! It was defense of women! And little children! And football! And Christmas! And to get the gold!
- All OOOO-RAH! OOOO-RAH! OOOO-RAH!
- Jack So yesterday ... so yesterday ... we ... had the first encounter. It was scary, guys. I don't mind sayin' fuckin' *scary*! This time, it's not just one! There are herds of them. Herds. They got bulldozers! They got back hoes! They're ripping up the forest! They're looking for gold!
- All *Ahhhhh!*
- Jack I'm sayin'.... sayin' ... hear me, dudes ... I've lived with them, I fucked their women, I know their language ... They are saying it's *their* gold! ... *Their!* How could that be!? How? ... Unless ... unless ... somebody ... some dastardly, sneaky, conniving ... *semi-human...* scumbag ... stole it from them! ... behind my back!
- All *Noooo!*
- Jack Men, it falls on us ... each and every one ... put on our armour
As he speaks they scramble for weapons in the bins
to take up our weapons ... to be ready to die ... to defend The Great Forest ... and all it stands for ... even that very scumbag who stole the giants gold ... from me ... and hid it somewhere.
- All OOOO-RAH! OOOO-RAH! OOOO-RAH!
- Jack turns to the map.*
Photographer is framing a picture and backs off stage for a long shot.
- Jack *(now urgent and intense as he explains strategy)* Now Intelligence has intercepted encrypted messages from the Giants HQ to the League of Step-Mothers. With whom ... this is dangerous ... with whom - they have formed an Alliance.
- Prince as Hands Holy fuck!
Hands as Prince is (mock offended by the foul language).

- Hands as Prince (*mock*) Hey, no foul language in the presence of a Prince! Say ... 'my goodness' ... ohmy!
- Prince as Hands Fucking pussy!
- Wolf There're still some pork chops, if anybody ...
- Jack (*drawing in the sand, for the camera*)
And they are advancing here ...
Giants here ... and here ... and here and here .. and here ...
And here's where we lost contact with the last of the dads, way,
way down past Pig's place. All we know for sure is that they are
unemployed ... and running out of food stamps.
- Photographer returns and whispers to Hands and Prince.
They confer in whispers. Prince as Hands pulls the hoody
down over his eyes. Hands as Prince takes off the shoes
and tosses them into the bin, shakes out his legs, rotates
his ankles and wiggles his toes.*
- Jack Bears and Pigs advancing, here. Only one pig left. Five bears.
Two under seven. Men, we're all alone!
Wolf, Woody, you circle round to the east.
- Woody To the east. Check.
- Jack Me and Hands will come in from the left.
- Hands as Prince Right.
- Jack (*correcting him*) Left!
- Hands as Prince Right! ... Check.
- Jack Wolf, you ready to blow!
- Wolf Ah, ah ... actually ... that's a different Wolf.
(*gesturing to himself blowing faintly*) Emphysema.
- Jack (*imperious*) Blow!
- Wolf [*Blowing*] Trying. Trying. [*Blowing*]
- Jack Prince, I want you to attack straight on.
- Prince as Hands Right. Charge, straight on!

- 'Die, mutherfuckers!' [Kung Foo kicks] Pow! Bam!
- Hands as Prince Easy, killer. Easy!
- Prince as Hands Don't you love being a guy!
- Wolf We need to be back at the bar by eleven.
- All OOO-RAH!!!! OOO-RAH!!!!
- All rise, start gather their guns and equipment to head out.*
- Jack One more thing. One more thing.
Best behavior, MEN! The whole world is watching!
- Photographer Hey, guys, group photo! Group photo! For the history books.
- They scramble in the box of equipment for something more to wear or hold for the group photo. (They should look super silly.)*
- Photographer *(for the photo)* Short in front.
- Hands as Prince That's you Wolfie.
- Wolf Fuck you, potato head. Prince, you get in here.
- Photographer Squeeze in. Squeeze in!
They mug with their guns
OO-RAH, everybody. One, two, three
- All OO-RAH! OO-RAH!
- The picture completed, the group loads up with gear and all exit, except Hands, Photographer and Prince. Hands as Prince is bare foot. He come center stage and set up for an interview. Prince as Hands in his hoodie, moves back, rear right, and hides behind a fake tree to watch. Cinders enters, rear left, seemingly unnoticed and watches. Photographer videos and interviews Hands as Prince.*
- Photographer Prince, first let me ask, do we know the whereabouts of your twin brother?

- Hands as Prince Yes. My twin brother has gone to Lithuania, answering a desperate call for volunteers from Princes Without Borders.
- Photographer And you're stepping into his shoes for the war with the giants?
- Hands as Prince Not really. He wore his own shoes to Lithuania. He doesn't need any shoes. He doesn't want any shoes. But, I, need shoes. I have great feet. I'm looking for new shoes as we speak. Something that goes with this blue serge. If any of your viewers can help I'd be grateful. Size 14.
- Photographer Will you be filling in for him at the palace.
- Hands as Prince Yes, everywhere. Everything. Any one with a trust fund can call me directly, Cell, 647 990 5272. Leave a voice or a text message and I'll get back to you. No blocked calls. I think I can promise some very pleasant surprises.
- Photographer Did he leave any message for the viewers.
- Hands as Prince Yes. *(reading)* I hate to miss the war on the Giants but duty calls. It is a far, far better thing I do today than I have ever done before. A far, far better place I go to than I have ever been before'.
- Jack *(from off stage - shouting)* Prince, get your f-g ass in the truck. We need a sacrifice!
- Hands as Prince *(alarmed, rushing off, last words to camera)* Got to run! Size 14.

Hands, Photo Guy and Prince exit. Lights fade on Cinders. Then out.

End Scene

Scene Five - The Forest Bar

Red and Gran are seated at the bar before opening, and reading the newspaper.

There are now six elaborate beer steins behind the bar. Cinder is in her scullery ensemble and rubber boots, cleaning.

Her garment bag hangs on the hook, stage right. Shoe boxes are piled on a chair.

- Red *(reading a newspaper)* 'A far, far better thing I do today than I have ever done before. A far, far better place I go to than I have ever been before.'
- Gran Lithuania! That boy! What could be 'better' than Gran's bar? What?
- Red I'm happy for him, I really am.
- M.C. Check. Check. Prinnnnnce. Woooodyyyyy.
- Cinders Size 14 is big. Did you get that number. 647 – 99 ?? ... *(coy)* Is the new prince coming here tonight?
- Gran His twin brother. You'll love him. Get to work! They'll be here soon.
- Red Absolutely identical ... except he's totally different. Bigger ... and better. I know him well.
Tonight ... red or blue?
- Cinders Red.
- Cinders takes a red glitter slipper from Gran who prompts her to take it back stage to the dancers. She does and returns.*
- Gran Cinders, *(sweet and supportive)* you would feel much better if you go downstairs and clean some toilets before you meet the new prince. I promise. Which ever you chose. We'll call you. We're family. The boys will be back soon. They're just out having fun.
- Snow enters left.*
- Gran *(alarmed)* Is Goldie with you, dearie?
- Snow She's just parking. She'll be in in a minute.
- As Gretel helps Snow off with her mink coat Gran quickly hides the three additional fancy beer steins behind the bar.*
- Red You're early. What'll it be?
Snow, do you know Cynthia Rockingfiler?

Snow Of course. Good to see you. (*eying her dress*) This is fabulous, darling! (*checking her watch*) Is it after midnight?

Cinders No. (*looking at Gran who nods*.) There's lots of time. Maybe I Should change.

Cinders exits right.

Snow (*grandly*) What will it be? What will it be! The best moment of the day! (*grandly*) Single malt, double. Neat. Three. We sold Iceland today! Made a killing! I'm buying. ... Sweden. Tomorrow. Something for Gran? My new best friend.

Gran (*to Red*) I'm with her. (*i.e. same drink*.)

Snow I hear your Prince has gone on a mission to Lithuania. Very noble. But I think I can afford a new prince! (*grandly*) Two!

Red sets up a row of shot glasses for Gran and Snow. They toast each other.
Goldie enters and joins them at the bar.

Gran The new Prince will be here tonight!

Snow A toast for Goldie. She was sensational today. There are no assets left in Iceland. Nada. Nada! Striped to the bare rock! To Goldie!

Goldie To Snow!
 Gran, did you find some costume jewelry lying around from the last time I was here.

Gran *Costume!* Costume? Why, no, lovey, you took those home in your purse.
 Maybe Wolf took them.

Goldie Wolfie? He'd never do that. He's such a gentleman.

Red/Gran *Wolf?*

Snow (*to Red*) When do we see this new prince?

Red (*to Snow*) We're doing a line-up at 11.

Not only do we have a new prince we have a brand new, fresh off the farm ... Farm Boy. Very large feet.

Cinders re-enters stage right, in a chic red cocktail dress, ruby slippers.

Voice – M.C. *Five minutes to show time, ladies. Five! Five! The Linnne-Up!*
Get ready. Get set. To Takkkkkke your Pickkkkk!

Snow *(quickly back to Goldie)* Who was that blond puppy who delivered the closing documents?

Goldie Isn't he *nice*.

Snow 'Nice'! Goldie, he's better than nice.

Red Snow, you should leave the boys alone ... at work.

Snow They *love* me! I'm the only sexual harassment they get!
So serious!
 Pour Gran another. Steady. Steady. Things are under control.

Red is quite the recruiter! Very good taste. *(teasing)* Where did you get *her*?

Gran Her. Truck Stop, on I – 85.

Snow laughs

(to Red) Hear that, honey. Snow thinks you have good taste!

Red I do.

M.C. *Laddddiessssss, girrrrls, babes babbby dolllllllls and now ... Gran's Forest Bar is pleased to introduce, for your viewing pleasure ...the latest ... the greatest ... the freshest ... the best ... and the biggest*

The M.C. has started the music but Gran gestures to her to stop.

Gran *(to Red, a touch of sarcasm)* What do you think happened in the war today? With your boy, Jack?

Snow Yes, *(sarcastic)* Let's hear the news.

The TV monitor faces the bar, not the audience. Red flicks on the remote.

We hear exactly what we heard at first in Scene Three.

- T.V. Announcer *(static, static)* We're just getting the first footage of the invading giants. We'll have it on your screen in just a ... hold on ... hold on ... This is incredible. Uh ... Ah we're losing it ... No ... No ... Oh my God ... They're dropping from the tall trees. *[static, static]* Folks, there's some technical problem ... Wait, I've got Captain Jack *[static]* ...
- Jack (from TV) *[static, static]* They're tearing up the forest, Frank, looking for their gold. I can't hold them ...
- T.V. Announcer ... *[static, static]* We're losing you, Jack ... Jack ... Folks, we've lost contact. We're going now to the Capital. *[static ...static]* The President ... *[static, static]* ... This is incredible! *[static, static]*
- All are shocked. Snow takes the T.V. controller. Looks triumphant.*
- Snow That's yesterday performance. Let's hear what they're feeding us today.
- Snow changes channel.*
- T.V. - Anchor We have Captain Jack by live feed in the deep forest. Captain Jack, can you hear me? *(static)* ...
- Jack (T.V.) *(static)* ... everywhere. A massive kill. At least twenty. The few giants still on their feet are fleeing north. Hard to tell how many. I counted *(static)* seven, ten ... *(static)*
- T.V. Anchor Yes, tell what's happened to them? *(static)* *(static)* ... What can you actually see right now?
- Jack (T.V.) Right now, I can see ... *(static)*
- T.V. Anchor You're fading ... Captain Jack? What's that? Behind you? The gold! Captain Jack has recovered the gold. Just behind Gran's cottage in The Big Forest. *(static, static, static)*
- Goldie *(straining to hear, repeating)* 'Behind Gran's cottage!'

- Gran What!
Gran and Snow confer nervously.
- T.V. Anchor Folks we've lost our signal. We'll try to re-connect with Captain Jack as soon as we can.
 Here it is. Yes. (*reading*) Captain Jack has recovered the gold stolen from the giants before the last war! It is safe
(static, static)
 He is leading a force of bears to the west.
 Gotta love those bears! We'll be right back, after this.
- Red switches off the TV.*
Gran signals to get the dancers started.
Gran, Red, Snow confer urgently, indignantly.
- Goldie Bears? That's cute.
- Gran *(shocked)* Recovered?
- M.C. Ladddddiesssss, girrrrls, babbby dollllllls Gran's Forest Bar is pleased to introduce, for your viewing pleasure and all your other pleasures the team, the guys, the men, the boys, the gods, the fantassiesssss Gran's pick of the litter ... for YOU! Tonight On our stage
- As he calls their names the dancers come out and do a little turn, mug, wink, flirt, show their wares and stand in a line.*
- Wolf!
Same flashy suit as Scene One, no cane, same shtick
- Goldie He's nice. (*She waves*)
- M.C. Woody!
- Gran And he stays in very good shape ... chopping.
- Goldie He looks nice.
- M.C. Farm Boy!
- Farm Boy comes out looking utterly bewildered, not dancing, carrying a beat up old suitcase but he smiles*

winningly at the women. He puts it down the suitcase and stands shyly with his hands in his pocket.

Red *(to the women at the bar)* Now he is ... I just pick him up at the Port Authority. I mean just. So fresh, he's not on the playbill. *Caveat emptor!*

Snow *(aside to Snow)* Look at that basket!

Snow *(aside to Red)* What a corn cob, Red! Good work!

Goldie Poor baby.

M.C. *Prince!*

Hands comes out in the Prince costume, bare foot and waving the glitter slipper.

Snow Darling, he needs some shoes!

Cinders I can handle that.

Goldie He has the nice butt.

M.C. *Ladies, take your pickkkkk!*

Bump and grind music starts. Women and dancers cruise and mingle.

Snow is first off the mark, cruises Hands/Prince stuffs a few bills in his pants. He ignores her and waves his bare foot at Cinders.

Snow *(to Hands as Prince)* Nice threads.

Wolf *(sly wink, to Goldie)* Say, don't I know you?

Goldie and Wolf kiss and slide off to one corner.

Hands waits, smugly looking at Cinders, waving the slipper. Cinders ignores him. Hands is shocked.

Cinders takes Farm Boy to a corner table, makes him sit. He seems befuddled, clutches his suitcase but loves the attention. She kneels and takes off his old runners, get out a shoe box and takes out some flashing fluorescent orange high tops. Others stop and come over to watch the fitting.

Cindy I'm pretty sure these are your size. I just *guessed* you have very, very large feet. I've been looking *forever* for the man who can

wear these. How do they feel? Walk around in them. Would you prefer lime green?

Farm Boy gets one on, then the other, he stands, bounces a bit, his crotch suggestively close to her face. Wiggles his hips. Walks tentatively, starts to boogie.

Farm Boy Fits pretty good. (*He walks a few steps, then struts.*) Pretty good. Fantastic! (*as he starts to bump/grind, a little.*) I wish my momma could see me. Don't ya just love life in the big city! But it's hot, know that? *Hot!* (*off with T-shirt*) Where'd my suitcase get to? (*Cinders grabs it.*) You know a place I can crash ... while I'm lost and helpless? (*Bump and grind gets serious.*) *Goldie applauds.*

M.C. And our spppecccial guesssssst, the one, the only, fresh from the front and fresh from the rear Captaaaainnnn Jack!

Jack enters stage left, in full-dress, spit-and-polish Uniform, with medals. Bump-and-grind music goes flat.

Snow Now, I absolutely love *his* accessories.

A podium appears from stage right in front of him and the scene is instantly transformed to a Press Conference. All gather round to hear Jack. He hushes the crowd. He is ramrod straight – maybe a few slight twitches. He speaks 'above' the folks in the bar into the camera and imaginary audience. We hear but don't see him on the T.V. screen in the bar.

Jack At 0-800 the combined Allied forces on kill patrol rendered the last known giants of the invasion force nugatory and apparently non-functional.
(hubbub, flash bulbs etc.)
 But I stress, nothing is certain. Fear is the order of the day. Stay close to a marine.
 Nevertheless, it's safe to express your gratitude in any four figure denomination of your personal choice. Provisionally, only provisionally, Operation Save Humanity is declared effective. We're going from Code Red to Orange. Still ... still ... take extreme caution. Giants, while extremely large, can hide in

the glove compartment of your car or the produce section of your supermarket.

If you go down in the woods today ... take a marine.

All Guys WHOO RAW!

Cinders What exactly should we be afraid of?

Jack Anything unfamiliar. Foreign languages. Baseball statistics ... which often containing coded terrorist instructions. Most things. But ... but marines will protect you, whatever you're afraid of.

Cinders What about the gold?

Jack Ah yes, We've recovered the gold stolen from the giants the first war. Behind Gran's cottage. And it's safely buried really deep in the forest.
That is all I am authorized to disclose at the moment. Viewers should stay turned AND above all ... *stay frightened!* Stand by your man!

Podium disappears and the bump-and-grind music starts up again, faintly. Cinders takes Farm Boy's suitcase and leads him off stage. Hands dances. Snow cruises him again.

Red How could you! How dare you!

Gran So, you finally got the gold! From a defenseless little old lady!
Are you proud of yourself?

Jack Yes, mamme.
Buried it, Gran. Buried it all. Got the map right here.
Gold is safe. Where it belongs. Red'll be safe with me!

Gran and Jack each take one of Red's arms and a tug of war starts. Lights dim on that. Freeze frame it. Lights up on Narrator sitting in her rocker, stage right.

Narrator Well, well, well! Isn't this a pickle!
She holds up the book she appears to have been reading from, to show there are no more pages.
The writer didn't finish the story! He chickened out! And

who can blame him.

Well, it isn't exactly true he didn't finish. He left three ending. And since this is modern times and boys and girls are so mature and get a say in *everything*, you get to chose ... which one you want to hear before we turn off the lights. Listen carefully and then we'll vote.

Ending Number One. The Walt Disney ending. Jack turns out to be a long lost and very rich Prince, suitable for Gran's little darling, ... a prince who loves gardening, cooking and shopping.

Ending Number Two. The Oedipus ending.

Gran kills Jack with a machete. Red garrotes Gran. Snow poisons Red. Woody gets liver cancer. And Wolf dies in a motorcycle accident, off stage. And Goldie catches Big Bear and Snow together in the big bed and machine guns then.

Voice (off stage) No! No. Not tonight.

Techie walks on stage and whispers to Narrator. Then exits.

Narrator Sorry. Number Two is not available tonight. Problems with the machine gun..

And Number Three. The Hard Ball ending.

Gran and Snow out smart Jack and save Grans gold. Jack gets what he deser... ... what is necessary in the circumstances. Red isn't exactly happy but then bread is only buttered on one side.

Hands up for Number One.

Hands up for Number Two.

Hands up for Number Three.

Number One and Number Three are tied!

Tell you what, if you promise to go right to sleep, we'll do both.

Here's Ending Number One.

Lights off Gran, back to the Bar.

Jack Yes, mamme.

Buried it, Gran. Buried it all. Got the map right here.

Red'll be safe with me.

Jack reaches for Red and starts to pull him toward her. Gran takes her other arm. A tug of war is about to begin. Snow hears 'map', drops Hands-as-Prince and sweeps Jack away from Gran and Red to the bar. She casually picks the map out of his pocket and spread it on the bar and examines it.

Snow Ah – humm. Ahhh. Ummm. Well, well.
Here Goldie ... look at this.

Goldie comes over and looks, points.

Goldie Ummm.
This says ... have you got the ...

Jack takes out another document from his inner pocket and hands it over. Goldie and Snow examine it.

Who's Gerrod, Prince of Belgravia, Transluttannia and the Outer and Inner Borealis? Dwarf son of Olaf the Huge! Heir and Ruler of the Land Below!

Cinders *(hearing 'prince')* Prince!

Cinders comes over and tries to get him into one of her shoes. He ignores her.

Snow And this shows Gold mines in fourteen different places.
Which one is Gran's?.

Gran comes over. So does Red.

Red *(reading)* What's, *Bedtime Tales for Dads and Lads?*
And ... *One Hundred Recipes for Organic Puff Pastries?* By Prince Gerrod?

Jack They're my books.

Gran Prince Gerrod! And you wrote a book.

Jack Two.

Gran Dads and Lads!? In the Great Forest! Well, I never!
Where's my gold?

Jack You can have any mine you want. If I can have Red.

Jack goes to his knees before Red. Red looks to Gran.

Gran (pause) Three gold mines and I'll pay for the wedding.

Red and Jack embrace.

*Gran sets up shot glasses on the bar.
Bump-and-grind music starts again.*

M.C. (shouting over the music)

Wolfie! (Goldie takes him away)

Hans! (as Prince) (Snow takes him away)

Farm Boy! (Cinders takes him away)

Woody! (Gran takes him away)

Jack!

*(music changes to Wedding March.
All drink a toast.
Red leads Jack off stage left. Others follow.
Lights down. Then up on Narrator.*

Narrator Isn't that sweet. Alright, and now Ending Number Three.
Give us a moment.

Actors go back to their page 61 positions.

*Jack reaches for Red and starts to pull him toward her.
Gran takes her other arm. A tug of war is about to begin.
Snow hears 'map', drops Hands as Prince and sweeps Jack
away from Gran and Red to the bar.*

Snow Red, a special drink, for this darling man! The sacrifices you
have made! We are so grateful, aren't we Gran? And you've
recovered the gold! Thank God for that!

*Red has a drink ready under the bar. And then another.
She gives them to Jack. Snow guides Jack to a chair.
Gran sits in the back corner, watching Snow.
Gran signals Gretel to 'gets ready'.
A few bars of bump and grind music.*

Goldie and Wolf are dancing then start to exit.

Goldie *(drunk, to Woody)* I'm following you!

Wolf exits with Goldie.

Hands and Woody exit through dancers' curtain.

Gretel exits, stage left. Music stops.

Red give Jack another.

Stage lights focus on Snow and Jack at the bar.

Snow toasts Jack. Urging him to drink up. He does.

Snow *What would we do without you brave boys!*
We all do our part, but you! You are magnificent! I am totally in love with the sacrifice you boys make. For us!
Oh, I'm making a such fool of myself.
(handling his army duffel bag) And where did you get this? It's really fabulous!
I think we went at Forest High about the same time. I remember you from there. You were the quarterback!

Jack I was it.

Snow *(coyly) Every girl remembers that.*
I am so glad you won the war. And we ... the women and children ... are safe from the giants. They are so awful!
Glad, is too weak a word!

Jack It was my duty, mamme. Glad to do my duty.

Jack is getting woozy.

Snow *Drink up, drink up, my hero.*
More important, the gold is safe! Thank God!
(leaning in) Now, my view ... my professional view, is that assets like that need to be in safe hands, not just on broad shoulders.
Responsibilities! Is such a bore, for a real man. Who has other things on his mind. As you should.

Jack is very woozy.

We want to help you there. Repay you, in a small, small way, for your sacrifice. Our firm, you'd know the name, offers very discrete banking services. Very confidential. Off-shore. Tax management, strategic planning, transfers, liquidations, that sort of thing. We ensures that *your* wealth, is perfectly protected, With some minor emoluments for the trustee, of course.

Jack is almost passed out, slumped in his chair. Snow reaches into his pocket and takes the map.

What we can do is take *this* and put it someplace very safe ...

Jack

Thank you, mamme. Thank you.

Jack slumps over, fading fast. Gretel enters stage left. Red comes over with a document from under the bar.

Snow

(to Red) Is that the Transfer Deed Goldie did up?

(Red hands it to her)

(to Red) Already witnessed! (Red points to a page) Very professional.

Snow puts the document in front of Jack and a pen in his hand. Red moves his hand for a signature. Snow speaks soothingly to Jack.

Snow

Very, very safe ...

Gretel comes over with some rope and a gag. She and Red tie him hand and foot and put a black hood over his head as Snow maliciously whispers what she'll do with his money. Jack struggle.

.... in a numbered account ... held by a blind trustee ... controlled by five Directors ... without addresses ... who work for my firm ... under assumed names ... in a foreign country ... you've never heard of ... where no one answers the phone

Jack passes out.

Don't ever fuck with Gran!

Gran gestures and Gretel hauls the chair with faintly struggling Jack off stage left.

Snow

(calling after him) We'll do lunch, next week.

Gran, Red and Snow go the bar, holding up the map. Red pours. Snow presents the map to Gran. They toast.

Gran

That's was close. Love you, doll. Love you.

Can I pay you in princes? Over time. I'm not a rich woman.

Snow Oh yes you are! But I'll take a Prince as a down payment.

Red Good work, doll. You were hot! *You deserve a Prince.*

Snow I do! I deserve a Prince.

Red goes to the dancers' curtain and calls inside.

Red New Prince, get your muscle butt out here. You got work.

Gretel appears at the door – asking – without words – what to do with Jack. Gran and Snow gesture thumbs down. Gretel exits.

Hands as Prince appears at the curtain, shoe-ed. Snow snaps her fingers and motions for him to wait for her outside. He meekly obeys. Lights fade. Suddenly the TV flashes on. It is the only light on the stage.

[static, static]

Snow Channel Four. The real news.

T.V. Anchor *(a different Announcer)* This just in shocking news – Jack ... Jack the Giant Killer, recently escaped from The Forest Prison, considered armed and dangerous and the central player in a cartel putting nuclear waste in powdered baby formula. Jack the Giant Killer has been reported shot by Security Police ...
 [Static ... static]

We hear a short burst of semi-automatic rifle fire.

Jack *(off stage, muffled)* Uhhh.

Sound *[static, static]*

Gretel sticks her head in the door. Gives the thumbs up – 'job done'.

Gran *(check her notebook, to Gretel)* Back row. Number seventeen is empty.

Red, Gran and Snow clink glasses.

T.V. Anchor. This is Fear TV. Stay tuned ... and stay in your basement. Men are everywhere.

- Voice / Sound [Static, static]
- T.V. goes black. Lights fade on women at the bar.*
- Applause.*
Audience is about to get up, house lights go down again and then suddenly the spot light comes on stage.
Farm Boy enters- in his ridiculous sneakers and Cinders follows carrying two gaudy, prince-like, sports jackets.
- Cinders I thought they'd both look good with the shoes, but I didn't know your size. I want you to come with me when I shop. So you don't need to take things back that don't fit. Saves you time. Besides shopping is fun.
- Cinders holds out a jacket for him to try on. He is reluctant. The first one fits. The other is obviously too large.*
- Cinders Very nice! For Snow's party! She won't sleep for a week! Don't pout.
- Farm Boy Honey doll, I really, really, need a truck. Could I have a truck instead.
- Cinders I don't want you driving a truck in the city. This costs more than a truck. Oh, alright. But if my step-sister asks you to play tennis, what do you say?
- Farm Boy What if ... she says she'll buy me a ranch?
- Cinders hands him a wad of cash. He grins and heads off stage.*
Cinders notices he has forgotten the larger jacket that has to be returned. She dog whistles for him sharply. He returns obediently for the jacket.
- Cinders Berdorfs. Fifth floor. ... And the Opera starts at 7:30 tonight. It's Seigfried.
- He kisses her politely and flees.*
Lights dim and shift to the Narrator.
- Narrator Now, that's *not* the end of the story. But it is the end of the

story, *for tonight* ... and you can all go home. But a word of advice. If a Wolf follows you, don't offer him a cookie. And what ever you do, don't, don't, tell him, he's got nice eyes.

Lights

The End-End

