

# *Wyrdwood*

"The Endless Night"

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Second Draft

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WYRDWOOD

"The Endless Night"

ACT I

FADE IN:

1 EXT. THE WOODS - MIDNIGHT 1

At the forest's edge, the wind WHIPS through old growth trees. Trunks GROAN. Branches FLAIL...almost seem to reach out to...

2 INT. STEFAN'S RV - CONTINUOUS 2

...STEFAN (15, bone thin, wearing a grubby RED BANDANNA). He listens to the Woods. He shakes off his fear and squeezes into his sleeping loft in his family's broken down RV. The side door has been left open for a little air.

Through the screen Stefan sees...

3 EXT. CAMPGROUND - CONTINUOUS 3

...his FATHER (45) and another man, KARL (30s) hunched around a small campfire, cradling coffees. The two men wear rough denim. Their cabled arms are tattooed. Other RVs and campers are parked in the distance.

STEFAN'S FATHER

Coffee just doesn't cut the cold.

Stefan's Father throws his coffee into the fire. It HISSES.

KARL

We could go for a little warm up.

STEFAN'S FATHER

Yeah. Lemme tell the kid.

(calls into the RV)

Stefan...

STEFAN (O.S.)

Yeah, Dad?

STEFAN'S FATHER

We're heading down into town. Keep an eye on things.

4 INT. STEFAN'S RV - CONTINUOUS 4

Stefan stares up at the prefab ceiling.

(CONTINUED)

4 CONTINUED:

4

STEFAN  
Sure. 'Night, Dad.

ANGLE ON the ceiling. Taped above his bed are photos of places Stefan has been, his family and especially his friends. There's a well worn snapshot from last summer of Stefan, MATT, EMILY and CONNOR (more on them soon) goofing on the steps of a High School.

KARL (O.S.)  
What's this town like?

STEFAN'S FATHER (O.S.)  
(fading in the distance)  
Small. Pretty quiet. Not much here.

Stefan traces his finger around Emily's picture.

As Stefan turns on his side to sleep...

DISSOLVE TO:

5 INT. STEFAN'S RV - LATER

5

Stefan drifts in and out of sleep. The wind picks up.

TAK TAK TAK. Leaves and twigs blow up against the RV's windshield.

Branches SCRAPE across the RV's roof. Stefan stirs.

STEFAN  
What...?

The campfire FLARES up into the night sky. It HOWLS.

STEFAN (CONT'D)  
Dad?

Winds BUFFET the RV from side to side.

Stefan is tossed from his bed. He hits the floor hard.

STEFAN (CONT'D)  
OW! DAD!

Stefan pulls himself up. He braces himself against the dinette table, tries to keep his footing.

The door BANGS open and shut.

WHOOOOSH! The air gets sucked from the room like an emergency decompression of a jet plane.

(CONTINUED)

5 CONTINUED:

5

Stefan clings to the dinette as paper, crap and clothes swirl past him.

And then it's quiet. It's over. Stefan exhales.

Curious, he needs to see outside. Wipes at a window with his fist and --

BOOM! Some **THING** SMASHES through the safety glass, snakes itself around Stefan's forearms...

STEFAN (CONT'D)

Wait!

...and yanks Stefan away through the broken window.

STEFAN (CONT'D)

NO!

And Stefan disappears. Just. Like. That.

HOLD ON the RV's ravaged interior. Scraps of Stefan's photos float down to earth and we...

FADE OUT:

END OF ACT I

ACT II

FADE IN:

6 EXT. THE WOODS - NEXT MORNING 6

EMILY FEYLOCK (15, bright, headstrong) watches Stefan's Father. Bereft, the man picks through the wreckage left from the attack.

Their eyes meet. Emily does not know what to say. \*

Determined, Emily gets on her bike, heads down the hill to...

7 EXT. MERRYWEATHER BY THE SEA - CONTINUOUS 7

A hard luck town jammed in the narrow strip between the bay and wooded and rocky hills rising into thick mists. A fishing town after the fish are gone. As the TITLES RUN...

Emily bikes through...

8 EXT. TOWN SQUARE - DAY 8

...and past its failing cinema, the dusty bookstore and the High School from Stefan's photo.

Emily turns onto...

9 EXT. COAST ROAD - DAY 9

...and zips past the Church, Merryweather's one hotel, other small businesses and homes scattered up and down the coast. This is the one road which winds out of town when it isn't closed due to landslides, fog or ice.

Emily dodges a geezing delivery truck.

EMILY

Watch it!

Emily peddles past the last few homes and skids onto --

10 EXT. FAIRGROUNDS - CONTINUOUS 10

A faded banner proclaims: "Merryweather by The Sea - Summer Solstice Fair."

ROUSTABOUTS (including Karl) toss railway ties onto a pile. They are building a bonfire. (END TITLES)

The Midway is part way assembled. Some early lookie-loos from town poke around.

(CONTINUED)

10 CONTINUED:

10

TAFFIN (45) an acrobat, plays his routine to this thin CROWD. Long-haired, scruffy, Taffin is freakishly flexible.

TAFFIN

Now, do not try this at home! Not at my home! Wouldn't want the neighbors to see the likes of you in my backyard! I have standards!

Standing on his right foot, Taffin grabs his left heel. He pulls his left leg straight, draws his heel past his ear and then with a - CRACK - as his hip dislocates he pulls his heel two feet above his ear (CGI enhanced effect).

TOWNIE

That was so gross.

\*

Taffin concludes his act with a back flip and a flourish.

TAFFIN

But worth the price of admission.

He passes the hat around.

TAFFIN (CONT'D)

Support the arts!  
(no takers)  
Support the martial arts?

Taffin does a wicked Bruce Lee Ninja style kick.

TAFFIN (CONT'D)

Whooo!

Still no takers. OFF Taffin, amused --

CUT TO:

11 EXT. FAIRGROUNDS: MIDWAY - MOMENTS LATER

11

Emily dogs the MAYOR (31, energetic, warm). The Mayor keeps on the move inspecting Midway booths.

MAYOR

So your friend...

EMILY

...disappeared. What are you going to do about it?

MAYOR

Me? Emily, I know you're worried about...

(CONTINUED)

11 CONTINUED:

11

EMILY

Stefan...

MAYOR

Yes but as Mayor he's not my responsibility. The Fair and its crew come through town twice a year. They don't have ties here.

\*

EMILY

That's not true. Stefan stayed with us.

\*

\*

MAYOR

For a month? Two months?

\*

EMILY

Almost three. Just when his Dad couldn't take care of him.

\*

\*

MAYOR

(gently)

When his Dad was in jail. Emily, what your father and you tried to do for Stefan was...kind. But your friend's a little rough around the edges. Maybe he blew into town and just kept going.

\*

\*

\*

\*

\*

\*

EMILY

Stefan wouldn't do that. Not without saying goodbye.

\*

MAYOR

This is a small town. If he's here he should be easy to find.

\*

EMILY

That's what the police said.

MAYOR

And didn't Officer Lee also tell you that she looked everywhere in town?

\*

\*

EMILY

Yes.

MAYOR

Okay then.

\*

The Mayor thinks their conversation is over but --

(CONTINUED)

11 CONTINUED: (2)

11

EMILY

(mostly to herself)

In town...if he's not in town...Maybe  
Stefan's in the Woods.

\*

(decided)

We have to search the Woods.

\*

MAYOR

What? Why...why would he be anywhere  
near the Wyrddwood?

\*

EMILY

The Fair workers are camped near  
there.

\*

\*

MAYOR

(back peddling)

You know what? Why don't we just  
give Stefan some time? His Dad makes  
good money off the Fairs. Our Solstice  
Celebration is a big deal for them.  
Stefan will be back. I promise you.

\*

\*

\*

\*

The Mayor hustles off.

Emily watches the Mayor go, concerned.

Taffin sidles up with a friendly - too friendly - smile.

TAFFIN

Girl, you shouldn't be getting too  
involved in other people's affairs.

(introduces himself)

Taffin. Acrobat, entertainer, notary  
public.

Emily tries to push past with her bike. Taffin blocks her.

TAFFIN (CONT'D)

You should be listenin' to me, girl.

With a quick bit of sleight of hand, Taffin pulls a Queen of  
Staves from behind her ear.

EMILY

Why should I listen to you?

Emily snatches the card. In her hand the image of the Queen  
shifts, COMES ALIVE (CGI enhanced effect).

The card bursts into FLAMES.

(CONTINUED)



11 CONTINUED: (3)

11

TAFFIN

Neat trick. If it was a trick.

EMILY

Excuse me. I have to go...

TAFFIN

Show me how it's done.

EMILY

A magician never reveals her secrets.

Emily pushes off. Taffin lets her go.

Taffin considers her with more than a little respect...

TAFFIN

Never say never...

REVEREND WISEMAN (40s, distinguished) plods past, looking down his nose at Taffin.

TAFFIN (CONT'D)

Reverend.

REV WISEMAN

Taffin. You need a bath.

TAFFIN

This be the sweat of honest labor,  
Mr. Reverend Sir. But I thank you  
for your concern for my health and  
hygiene.

Taffin salutes and then, deftly, he picks Wiseman's wallet. \*

Oblivious, Reverend Wiseman moves on.

Taffin notices that a small CHILD saw him at "work". Taffin lifts a finger to his thin, reedy lips.

TAFFIN (CONT'D)

(to the child)

Shhhh. Magic.

CUT TO:

12 EXT. COAST ROAD - LATER

12

Emily and her pal, MATT TETHER (15, smiling black eyes, a shit disturber) walk back into town.

(CONTINUED)

12 CONTINUED:

12

MATT

The Mayor could be right.

EMILY

(surprised)

You agree with the Mayor?

MATT

First time for everything. Maybe Stefan did take off. Look, I can't wait to get out of here. Merryweather By The Sea. Merry-weather. There's nothing to do here except watch it rain.

\*

EMILY

So why is the Mayor so spooked by the Woods?

MATT

What about the Wyrds? Don't they live there?

EMILY

That's so last century. I've never believed in fairy tales. Like the Wyrds. Or the Endless Night.

\*

MATT

(bit uneasy)

So you say.

\*

EMILY

(a challenge)

Why don't we take a walk on the Wyrd side?

\*

MATT

That would really bug Mr. Mayor.

EMILY

(lightly, teasing)

And impress me. In or out?

MATT

In.

(teasing her)

But mostly to bug the Mayor.

\*

\*

\*

Emily gives Matt a playful shove and --

CUT TO:

13 EXT. MERRYWEATHER - MOMENTS LATER 13

Emily and Matt pass CONNOR MOSS (16, athletic, darkly handsome). He's the local bad boy that the good girls don't introduce to their Dads. And the boy that the Moms check out when they think no one is watching. \*

Connor carries a brace of rabbits. Emily waves.

EMILY  
Hey Connor!

CONNOR  
Hey Em.

Connor waves back and moves on.

MATT  
Two syllables. Impressive. For him.

EMILY  
He's a shy guy. \*

OFF Matt's jealousy --

CUT TO:

14 EXT. HOTEL SERVICE ENTRANCE - DAY 14

The CHEF stands on the steps leading into the kitchen.

CHEF  
Deal. Done.

Connor hands his rabbits over to the hotel's Chef.

CHEF (CONT'D)  
You got a very good price.

CONNOR  
You didn't overpay. Not by much.

Connor pockets the money.

MICK CLEAVER(50, stocky, small mean eyes and a small mean mouth) spots Connor.

MICK CLEAVER  
You! Moss! Don't move! Have you been hunting again? \*

CONNOR  
I don't hunt.

(CONTINUED)

14 CONTINUED:

14

MICK CLEAVER

You mean your shiftless father hasn't  
taught you his trade?

The Chef turns to go into the kitchen. Cleaver stops him.

MICK CLEAVER (CONT'D)

Don't you go anywhere. Those are my  
rabbits.

CHEF

No, they're not. I paid for them.

MICK CLEAVER

It's out of season and my land is  
posted.

CONNOR

I raised these rabbits myself, Mr.  
Clever.

MICK CLEAVER

"Mr. Cleaver." Listen to him.

CONNOR

Do you know how hard this was for  
me? That was Bugs and Roger and  
Jessica and ah...

(falters)

Thumper and...um...Dumper...Boy, did  
he ever...dump.

\*

The Chef SLAMS the kitchen door shut. LOCKS it.

MICK CLEAVER

HEY!

Cleaver rushes to the door. BANGS on it.

MICK CLEAVER (CONT'D)

Open up!

While Cleaver's distracted, Connor bolts.

MICK CLEAVER (CONT'D)

HEY! I'm going to get you, Moss!

\*

But Connor's already gone down the alley.

OFF Cleaver's frustration --

CUT TO:

15 EXT. CAMPGROUND - DAY 15

Stefan's RV looks trashed. Emily and Matt survey the damage.  
Matt would whistle in amazement (if he could whistle). \*

MATT  
What did this?

Emily, cautious, looks around. No sign of Stefan's Dad. \*

EMILY  
Let's have a look.

So they sneak into..

16 INT. STEFAN'S RV - CONTINUOUS 16

Trashed. They poke around.

MATT  
What are we looking for?

EMILY  
I'm not sure.

Emily picks up the snapshot of Stefan, Emily, Matt and Connor  
on the steps of the High School.

MATT  
Last day of school. I look good.

EMILY  
You look goofy.

MATT  
But goofy in a good way. \*

Emily considers the photo. \*

EMILY  
(soft) Stefan told me he liked it here. \*

MATT  
Check out the window. Wicked. \*

Emily goes over to where Stefan was grabbed. She discovers  
a drippy smear of mucous-y liquid on the broken frame.

EMILY  
What is that? \*

(CONTINUED)

16 CONTINUED:

16

MATT

I don't know. It looks like sap.

EMILY

It does. It does look like sap.

Matt prods it with his finger.

MATT

Feels like sap.

Matt plunges his finger in his mouth.

MATT (CONT'D)

Tastes like sap.

EMILY

Ewwwwww. Can't believe you did that.

MATT

Switched hands.

Emily punches him on the shoulder.

EMILY

Matt. You just...I can't believe you did that.

Matt now tastes the sap for real.

EMILY (CONT'D)

Ewwwwww.

MATT

Sap.

EMILY

Let's be professional.

MATT

Professional what?

Emily grabs a drinking glass and a pencil. She scrapes sap into the glass. Emily looks up out the broken window at --

THE WOODS

Did something move out there?

EMILY

Did you see that?

(CONTINUED)

16 CONTINUED: (2)

16

MATT

See what?

EMILY

Come on.

As Emily pulls Matt out of the RV....

CUT TO:

17 INT. MERRYWEATHER HOTEL: SPRUCE ROOM - DAY

17

70s style conference room. Town Council meets. RON GREENACRE, balding and sweating, confronts the Mayor and Rev Wiseman.

\*  
\*

GREENACRE

The boy disappeared near the Woods.

\*  
\*

REV WISEMAN

We don't know that for sure.

\*  
\*

GREENACRE

What if the Wyrds are back?

\*

REV WISEMAN

Don't panic.

GREENACRE

It's happening again...

\*

REV WISEMAN

(explodes)

It is NOT...

(catches himself)

We are not supposed to even discuss what happened in the Woods fifteen years ago. Everyone agreed to that.

\*  
\*  
\*  
\*

The Mayor takes charge.

MAYOR

Agreements are made to be broken.

(beat, firm)

The town must build the road. We can't back out now.

\*  
\*

GREENACRE

But what about the Pact? What about --

\*

MAYOR

(cuts him off)

The Wyrds are more legend than fact. I've never seen one. Have you?

(CONTINUED)

17 CONTINUED:

17

Greenacre and Rev Wiseman exchange a guilty look. Maybe they have but they do not want to talk about that.

MAYOR (CONT'D)

Don't worry about the Wyrds. Worry about Emily. She's Wem's daughter. And she's asking the wrong questions.

OFF the Mayor's concern --

CUT TO:

18 EXT. WOODS: EDGE - DAY

18

Matt and Emily stand on the brink, just outside, the woods.

MATT

You sure you saw something?

EMILY

Uh huh.  
(gathers herself)  
Here we go.

And they venture into...

\*

19 EXT. WOODS: FRINGE - CONTINUOUS

19

They pass through beams of sun glistening off the warm moist air of the forest.

EMILY

Stefan! Stefan!

MATT

You have to be so loud?

EMILY

He has to hear us. Stefan!

Matt finds a rusted sign. "No hunting. No trespassing."

MATT

This is bad. This is Cleaver's land.

EMILY

(points)  
But that's not.

REVEAL the boundary of the WYRDDWOOD. The trees are scarred with a Celtic symbol of a KNOTTED ROPE grown into the wood.

(CONTINUED)



19 CONTINUED:

19

EMILY (CONT'D)  
Wyrddwood. Cool.

MATT  
You know...my Mom...when I was little  
told me this story that anyone who  
goes in there is never seen again.

EMILY  
That's just a story.  
(calls out quietly)  
Stefan....? Stefan...?

MATT  
No one's supposed to...

Matt steps across the border, goofs around.

MATT (CONT'D)  
...step over the line. The dangerous  
line...into the Wyrddwood.

\*

As Matt steps back and forth across the border:

MATT (CONT'D)  
Woods. Wyrddwoods. Woods.  
Weeeeiirrdwoooooods. Woods. Wyrdd --

And FLAP FLAP FLAP - something scatters deeper inside the  
Wyrddwood.

Emily and Matt jump back, spooked.

EMILY  
Birds.

MATT  
It is getting late.

EMILY  
We'll come back tomorrow with a  
compass and map.

MATT  
Like the professionals we are.

As they turn and head back out....

MATT (CONT'D)  
You jumped.

(CONTINUED)

19 CONTINUED: (2)

19

EMILY

Did not. Okay, maybe a little.

CUT TO:

20 EXT. EMILY'S HOUSE - DAY

20

Matt drops Emily off at the modest, clapboard home. Matt hesitates. He wants to ask her out.

EMILY

See you tomorrow.

MATT

Yeah. Maybe at the Fair. If you're going I mean. We could hook up there unless you're already busy.

Matt reverses himself to avoid probable rejection.

\*

MATT (CONT'D)

But you know what...it is a busy time...with the Fair in town and everything going on.

\*

\*

\*

EMILY

You okay?

\*

MATT

(checks his forehead)

No fever. I'm fine. Perfect even.  
Bye bye!

\*

\*

EMILY

'Night.

\*

\*

Emily goes inside. Matt exhales, SIGHS.

\*

MATT

"Bye bye." Could I be any lamer?

\*

CUT TO:

\*

21 INT. EMILY'S HOUSE: KITCHEN - NIGHT

21

Emily and her father, WEM FEYLOCK (45 but looking older, wiser and sadder than he should be) finish dinner. The room is choked with books - even the oven stores graphic novels.

\*

\*

\*

As usual, Wem reads while he eats. And, as usual, Emily SNAPS his book shut.

\*

(CONTINUED)

21 CONTINUED:

21

WEM

(good natured)

Em, I was just getting to the good part.

\*  
\*

EMILY

*The Fall of the Roman Empire?* You know how it ends, Dad. Rome falls.

\*  
\*

Wem plays the Befuddled Dad and rereads the back cover.

\*

WEM

You sure?

\*  
\*

EMILY

Yes.

\*  
\*

Wem buries his nose back in his book.

WEM

If no one's going to buy it I might as well read it. Why don't you get some of your friends to come by the store? We could use the business.

EMILY

My friends don't read.

WEM

Then you need new friends.

\*

Angry this time, Emily SNAPS the book shut again. Catches Wem's finger.

\*

WEM (CONT'D)

Hey!

\*

Emily gets up.

\*

EMILY

I'll clear.

\*  
\*

WEM

Sweetheart, I didn't mean...I wasn't thinking. I'm sorry.

(no response)

They'll find Stefan.

\*  
\*  
\*  
\*  
\*

EMILY

If they bother to look.

(a challenge)

I went to the Wyrddwood today. To see if he was there.

\*  
\*  
\*  
\*  
\*

(CONTINUED)

21 CONTINUED: (2)

21

WEM  
(concerned)  
You did?

\*  
\*

EMILY  
I didn't go in.

\*

WEM  
Good. Plates.

Emily passes him the plates. He starts to wash up.

EMILY  
What's the deal with Wyrddwood anyway?

\*

WEM  
No big deal. Dry.  
(beat)  
It's federal land. I think there's  
an old mill. Some deer. A lot of  
urban legends. Like Area 56...

\*  
\*  
\*

EMILY  
51. It's Area 51.

\*

WEM  
Right. 51. I was close.

\*  
\*

EMILY  
Dad, be serious. You told me that  
all myths are based on truth.

\*

WEM  
I didn't know you listened to anything  
I said. I think I said some truth.

\*  
\*

EMILY  
And....?

\*  
\*

WEM  
Okay. You know the "Endless Night"?

\*  
\*

EMILY  
Uh huh.

WEM  
Based on an actual real life almost  
true incident. Three idiots got lost  
in the Wyrddwood, wandered around all  
night and thought they saw something.

\*  
\*  
\*

EMILY  
Like what?

(CONTINUED)

21 CONTINUED: (3)

21

WEM

Shadows. Creepers blowing in the breeze. Nothing. But it scared them silly.

Wem puts up the plates.

WEM (CONT'D)

You know the rules, Em. No one goes in the Woods. We all agreed.

\*

OFF Emily's frustration --

CUT TO:

22 INT. EMILY'S HOUSE: 2ND FLOOR LANDING/SPARE ROOM - NIGHT

22\*

Emily looks into the spare room. Wem joins her. She picks up a CORN HUSK DOLL from a table.

\*

\*

EMILY

Stefan's stuff.

\*

\*

WEM

We'll keep it for him.

\*

\*

Wem gently puts the doll back.

\*

WEM (CONT'D)

Let's go. Go go go go.

\*

\*

Wem places his hands on Emily's shoulders. And directs her out to...

\*

\*

23 INT. SECOND FLOOR LANDING - CONTINUOUS

23\*

...and down the hall...

\*

EMILY

He made that for me.

\*

\*

WEM

Uh huh. Time for bed.

\*

\*

...and into...

\*

24 INT. EMILY'S ROOM - CONTINUOUS

24\*

Teen girl untidy. Cluttered with schoolbooks, unfolded laundry and cherished stuffed animals. One framed poster on the wall advertises "Thurston The Great Magician." The vintage one sheet asks: "Do the Spirits Come Back?" Maybe.

\*

(CONTINUED)

24 CONTINUED:

24

WEM

\*

'Night.

EMILY

Dad, you know if you don't want to talk we don't have to talk.

WEM

\*

We talk.

\*

EMILY

Not about important things.

\*

WEM

Like?

EMILY

Like why we moved here.

WEM

You know why. I wanted to open my bookstore. Not the best career move.

\*

Wem opens her window for some fresh air.

EMILY

Or about my Mom.  
(trying to be mature)  
If it's too painful I understand.

\*

WEM

That's one of those single Dad things we single Dads don't talk about. Maybe another time. When it's not so late.

\*  
\*  
\*  
\*

EMILY

(disappointed)  
Sure.

\*  
\*  
\*

To change the subject, Wem picks up a Tarot card from her night table.

\*

WEM

What's this?

EMILY

Something I got from the Acrobat at the Fair.

WEM

Taffin?

(CONTINUED)

24 CONTINUED: (2)

24

EMILY

You know him?

WEM

He comes every year with the Fair.

EMILY

He thinks I torched it. But instead  
I used my sleight of hand. Just like  
you taught me.

WEM

You may want to stay away from Taffin.  
He's a little...over imaginative.

(firm)

Good night, Emily.

\*  
\*  
\*

And Wem is gone.

ANGLE ON EMILY as she thinks things through.

\*

PAN DOWN TO the Queen of Staves card. It looks just like --

MATCH CUT TO:

25 EXT. THE GLEN - NIGHT

25

THE QUEEN OF THE WYRDS. Elegant, graceful, a fury. Framed by  
the forest around her, she steps from the shadows and  
levitates across the forest clearing to Stefan.

The images in the Glen flow with the logic of a dream.

A WYRD shoves Stefan forward. The Queen considers the boy.

QUEEN

Hello.

STEFAN

...hello....

Almost tenderly, she removes his red bandanna. Tosses it to  
two bloated, tumor-ridden Wyrds, SCRAGG and BAGG.

BAGG

Mine!

Their skin resembles the knots on the bark of an old maple  
tree that has grown around a post.

SCRAGG

No! Mine!

(CONTINUED)

25 CONTINUED:

25

They squabble over the prize slashing at each other with their extended nails.

Stefan watches them, warily.

Scragg wins. He hoists his prize into the air.

SCRAGG (CONT'D)

Hah!

QUEEN

Don't mind them. They're harmless.

But Stefan...stiffens. Sensing something in the trees just beyond the glen, he freezes. Steps back. Then he sees --

Something BIG. Darker than the forest shadows which conceal it. Something with WIDE, GLEAMING EYES.

Stefan swallows. Afraid to look. Afraid not to. It is...

SKINNY TWIG MAN

Perfectly camouflaged until now, until it moves, SKINNY TWIG MAN slithers through the woods. Reaches out from the dark of the forest grabs the red bandanna from Scragg. This is the creature that snatched Stefan last night.

STEFAN

Don't hurt me...

\*

QUEEN

Shhh...shh...shhhhhh....

\*

The Queen caresses Stefan's cheek. Abruptly, she draws back.

\*

QUEEN (CONT'D)

This is NOT him!

\*

STM emerges from the trees, shambles over to Stefan and runs a sharp thorny talon under Stefan's neck.

We still see very little of STM except through the fear reflected in Stefan's eyes.

SKINNY TWIG MAN (O.S.)

No?

QUEEN

You will have to keep looking.

STM's thorn draws blood. It beads on Stefan's neck.

(CONTINUED)



25 CONTINUED: (2)

25

QUEEN (CONT'D)

No!

The Queen steps in to protect Stefan. STM shrugs, the bark on his shoulders CREAKING.

QUEEN (CONT'D)

Just find the child.

SKINNY TWIG MAN

I will do what I have to do, my Queen.

He slinks back into the brambles.

The Queen turns back to Stefan and smiles.

QUEEN

Don't worry.

Stefan exhales, relaxes.

QUEEN (CONT'D)

We will find another use for you.

OFF Stefan's fear --

SMASH CUT TO:

26 INT. EMILY'S ROOM - NIGHT

26

Emily turns over, pulls the covers close.

A grey NIGHTJAR flits onto the windowsill. It flaps and stretches out its long pointed wings and tail. Its short, sharp talons SCRATCH the wood of the sill.

Emily stirs. Does not wake.

The Nightjar tilts its head. Considers its prey.

The Nightjar skips closer to Emily. It hops down onto the headboard, near Emily's face.

She turns and her hand flops on the pillow next to the bird.

The Nightjar CHURRRRRRS and jabs at Emily's palm. Just misses. Hops closer.

The Nightjar suddenly lunges for Emily's face.

EMILY

No!

(CONTINUED)

26 CONTINUED:

26

Emily lashes out. Contact! The Nightjar tumbles across the room. Rights itself. Launches into the air. Arcs back.

Its talons slash out at Emily. She dodges.

The Nightjar slashes a Teddy Bear instead. Stuffing scatters.

EMILY (CONT'D)

Dad!

Emily steps back. The Nightjar circles for its next attack.

Wem is at the door just in time to see --

Emily raises her hands and --

FLASH! A PHOSPHORESCENT BLAST FLARES from Emily's hands. \*

The Nightjar SQUAWKS and flees out the window.

Wem rushes in.

WEM

Emily!

He SLAMS the window shut. Emily hugs her Dad.

EMILY

It was horrible.

WEM

You're okay now.

EMILY

It happened so fast. How did I...?

WEM

Shhh. You're safe now. It's okay. \*

It's okay. \*

But Wem knows that it's not.

OFF Wem's deep concern --

FADE OUT:

END OF ACT II

## ACT III

FADE IN:

27 EXT. MERRYWEATHER SQUARE - DAY 27\*

Emily and Matt head to school. \*

EMILY \*

I think it was sent as a warning. \*

MATT \*

Because you went into the Woods? \*

EMILY \*

Because we went into the Woods. \*

MATT \*

Okay. Bird as harbinger of doom. \*

Got it. If someone is trying to scare you, who is it? The Mayor? \*

EMILY \*

Or Taffin. Or it could be the Wyrds. \*

MATT \*

Great. You want to see something really scary? \*

With a nod, Matt points out... \*

28 EXT. HIGH SCHOOL: FRONT STEPS - CONTINUOUS 28\*

...CHLOE (15, bit too cute) holding court with her GAL PALS on the top of the steps. They laugh and gossip. \*

GAL PAL \*

I heard he was arrested up the Coast. Five finger discount. \*

CHLOE \*

Okay but if he was arrested, wouldn't his father know where he was? \*

GAL PAL #2 \*

Yeah. The Dad came by my Mom's store with these flyers. Too creepy. \*

GAL PAL \*

He better show soon. My Dad's driving me everywhere now. And then he hangs around to make sure I get home. It's so annoying. \*

(CONTINUED)

28 CONTINUED:

28

Chloe spots Emily.

\*

CHLOE

(aimed at Emily)

\*

You know what? I think Stefan has a girlfriend. That's why he took off. Broken heart.

\*

\*

GAL PAL

Who'd wanna hook up with him?

CHLOE

No clue. Emily, what do you think?

EMILY

I don't know.

CHLOE

He crashed at your place.

\*

Emily turns to face Chloe.

EMILY

So?

\*

CHLOE

Did anything go missing? Anything happen we should know about?

\*

\*

\*

EMILY

No. He was my friend.

\*

\*

CHLOE

A friend with privileges?

\*

The Gal Pals LAUGH at that bon mot.

\*

As Emily and Matt push past them on the stairs:

\*

MATT

(sarcastic)

Real funny.

\*

\*

\*

CHLOE

I thought so.

\*

\*

CUT TO:

\*

29 INT. CLASSROOM - LATER

29\*

An ordinary home room with scuffed desks, atlases taped to the walls. One warm touch: window boxes of herbs and flowers.

(CONTINUED)

29 CONTINUED:

29

Our two conspirators, Matt and Emily, whisper as the rest of the CLASS files in.

EMILY

Here's what we'll do. We go back for Stefan. Only this time we don't wimp out and we go into the Wyrddwood.

\*  
\*  
\*  
\*

MATT

We do?

\*  
\*

EMILY

The three of us. Right after school.

MATT

The three of us?

Matt follows Emily's gaze to...

CONNOR

Slouching in the back row, Connor flirts with Chloe as she jiggles past his desk.

MATT (CONT'D)

Oh right -- Romeo. I hear he's shy.

EMILY

We need him. He lives just outside the Woods. His Dad's a hunter...

MATT

Poacher...

EMILY

...who's taught him a lot. Who do we know who knows more about the Wyrddwood than Connor?

\*  
\*

Before Matt can answer that --

MISS MAPLE (O.S.)

Okay people. Settle. Books open, mouths closed.

\*

CUT TO:

30 INT. WEM'S BOOKSTORE - DAY

30

Stefan's Father shakes Wem's hand. Stefan's Father hands Wem a stack of paper.

(CONTINUED)

30 CONTINUED:

30

STEFAN'S FATHER

Thank you. I have to get back to the  
Fair now...I need the work.

Stefan's Father leaves. The door JINGLES as he goes.

ON Wem as he considers --

THE STACK OF FLYERS

They read: "Have you see my son?"

Wem broods on this. He strides into the...

31 INT. BACK OFFICE - CONTINUOUS

31

...where Wem unlocks a glass cabinet. He pulls out  
moldering, leather bound books. He piles up six or seven.

WEM

Please let me be wrong.

OFF WEM frantically flipping through his reference books --

MISS MAPLE (V.O.)

(pre-lap)

Today, eager young minds, we are  
going to read --

CUT TO:

32 INT. CLASSROOM - SAME TIME

32

MISS MAPLE (mid-forties, a variation on a Maine spinster  
circa 1907) CLICKS on her laptop. The projector hanging  
from the ceiling HUMS to life.

MISS MAPLE (CONT'D)

-- you all know how to read - and  
analyze - not so sure about that -  
the tale of the Skinny Twig Man.

The Class GRUMBLES.

MATT

(to Emily)

How old does she think we are?

MISS MAPLE

(heard that)

Don't underestimate the power of  
fairy tales. They tell us things

(MORE)

\*

(CONTINUED)

32 CONTINUED:

32

MISS MAPLE (CONT'D)  
about ourselves and our world that  
we want to deny.

\*

Miss Maple hits return...

ON THE SCREEN a crude storybook woodcut of STM. Vaguely  
humanoid, blackened wood, with spikes and thorns extruding  
from his knuckles and spine.

MISS MAPLE (CONT'D)  
The Skinny Twig Man. A familiar  
character to us from our town's  
history. The Lieutenant of the Queen  
of the Wyrds, the Twig Man is sent  
out by her into our world to steal  
children for her army. And who can  
stop the Twig Man?

\*  
\*  
\*

No answer from the class.

\*

Miss Maple stares at Emily but asks:

\*

MISS MAPLE (CONT'D)  
Matthew?

\*  
\*

MATT  
The One.

\*  
\*

MISS MAPLE  
Who is...?

\*  
\*

Again Miss Maple stares at Emily but calls on:

\*

MISS MAPLE (CONT'D)  
Connor.

\*  
\*

CONNOR  
(wakes up)  
Um, the One. Right.  
(from past classes)  
A chosen young person of infinite  
power. Someone with a deep connection  
to the world of the Green.

\*  
\*  
\*  
\*  
\*

MISS MAPLE  
So then why do we burn an effigy of  
the Twig Man each year?

\*  
\*

A few hands go up including ZACK COX's (thin, glasses,  
permanent denizen of the front row).

(CONTINUED)

32 CONTINUED: (2)

32

MISS MAPLE (CONT'D)

Zack?

ZACK

Tradition.

MISS MAPLE

But why is it a tradition? Emily?

Emily looks startled. She did not have her hand up.

EMILY

Okay. The Skinny Twig Man represents our fears and by destroying him, we confront our fear.

\*

\*

MISS MAPLE

Our fear of the unknown. Our fear of going where no one is meant to go. Right, Emily?

\*

\*

EMILY

Sure.

HOLD ON EMILY, intrigued. Was that a warning?

MISS MAPLE (O.S.)

Chloe, page twenty-seven. Read the first paragraph please.

CUT AHEAD TO:

33 INT. CLASSROOM - LATER

33

Class breaks up. Emily goes over to Miss Maple as Miss M. waters plants in the window box.

MISS MAPLE

Yes, Emily?

EMILY

About the class...is the Skinny Twig Man really part of our history? Or just a bogeyman?

MISS MAPLE

Did I say history? What an odd way to put it. Nice attention to detail. You have been working hard and that should be rewarded.

(CONTINUED)



33 CONTINUED:

33

Miss Maple rummages through her desk and hands Emily a length of KNOTTED STRING with five IRON NAILS attached to it by nuggets of tree sap.

EMILY

It's...charming.

MISS MAPLE

Now don't tell the other girls I gave you this. They may get jealous.

EMILY

Thank you. I...ah...don't know what to say. What is it?

MISS MAPLE

It's a necklace, Emily. Let me put it on for you.

Miss Maple fastens it around Em's neck.

MISS MAPLE (CONT'D)

And now don't you take it off. Ever.

CUT TO:

34 INT. HIGH SCHOOL: HALLWAY - MOMENTS LATER

34

Emily leaves, uneasy.

Miss Maple watches her go. She turns to look at...

35 INT. CLASSROOM - CONTINUOUS

35

THE WINDOW BOX

The plants have suddenly BLOOMED.

OFF Miss Maple, fascinated --

CUT TO:

36 EXT. FAIRGROUNDS: MIDWAY - DAY

36

The booths are now up and running. Emily hangs with Connor at the Bottle Toss. Matt lingers in the background. While they chat, Connor casually fires softballs and nails every shot. The BARKER grudgingly feeds Connor more balls.

CONNOR

(an answer for Emily)

I don't know, I don't know.

(CONTINUED)

36 CONTINUED:

36

MATT

Scared?

CONNOR

No. Just not stupid enough to be dared into doing something that's stupid. "Scared?" That's how you got me to jump off your roof.

MATT

Into a major snowbank.

CONNOR

Which was mostly ice. I was on crutches for six weeks. The cast was really itchy.

Emily laughs.

\*

CONNOR (CONT'D)

And you didn't try to stop me.

\*

EMILY

Hey, I jumped first. If you knew how to land...

\*

\*

\*

CONNOR

But I was not scared.

\*

\*

MATT

We were eight. That was...  
(can't do the math)  
Years ago...Let it go, man.

\*

CONNOR

Em, Stefan's a good guy. But Wyrddwood?  
You don't want to go there.

\*

\*

EMILY

(realization)  
But you have.

CONNOR

(beat)  
Don't tell my Dad, okay?

EMILY

(sing songy)  
I see potential for blackmail.

\*

Emily smiles. Connor smiles back. Matt tries not to puke.

Connor tosses another ball. Another three bottles do down.

(CONTINUED)

36 CONTINUED: (2)

36

BARKER

A winner.

CONNOR

Going again.

\*

Connor winds up and -- BANG -- the bottles go down.

CONNOR (CONT'D)

You check out Stefan's place? See anything...strange?

EMILY

(too carefully)

It was a total mess. Like he left in a hurry.

\*

\*

Matt shoots Emily a look. What is she doing?

Emily signals Matt to Shut. Up. Now.

CONNOR

(decides)

Okay. Let's do it.

One last pitch and - BANG - the bottles go down.

CONNOR (CONT'D)

Whoooo!

BARKER

And we have a winner. Again.

The Barker takes down a huge STUFFED BLUE DEVIL off its hook.

BARKER (CONT'D)

For your young lady...

CONNOR

Yah. Sure.

\*

Emily's delighted. For Matt, this totally sucks.

CUT TO:

37 EXT. FAIRGROUNDS - MOMENTS LATER

37

Our three teens pass --

STEFAN'S FATHER

Building the bonfire. He hands a railway tie up to Karl who clings halfway up the structure.

(CONTINUED)

37 CONTINUED:

37

WIDEN TO REVEAL

The bonfire takes shape. It resembles a Wicker Man, a human figure -- and the Skinny Twig Man from Miss Maple's storybook illustration.

MATT

Spooky.

CUT TO:

38 EXT. WOODS: FRINGE - LATER

38

Emily, Matt and Connor stand at the border of the Wyrdwood. Matt considers the CELTIC KNOTS burned into the trees. Emily fiddles with her necklace.

MATT

Those knots look like your necklace.

EMILY

(intrigued)  
They do. Huh.

\*  
\*  
\*

CONNOR

Any idea which way Stefan went?

EMILY

Maybe.

Emily shows Connor the sap in the glass.

CONNOR

Where'd you get this?

\*

EMILY

(too casually)  
Off Stefan's backpack.

Matt shoots Emily another look. Another lie. Emily glares back at him.

Connor spits into the glass. Swooshes sap and spit around. Considers it scientifically and determines..

CONNOR

Black Locust. I know where there's a grove of those. We'll have to move quick if we want to get there and back by nightfall.

(CONTINUED)

38 CONTINUED:

38

MATT

Okay. How do you know it's that...  
Black Locust tree thing?

CONNOR

The viscosity. It's not like I'm  
going to lick the sap. It's toxic.

MATT

...Really?

CONNOR

It could kill your tongue. You'd  
spend the rest of your life drooling. \*

Matt tests his tongue with his finger unsure whether Connor  
is pulling his leg or not.

Emily pulls out her compass.

CONNOR (CONT'D)

That's okay. I know where I'm going.

And they venture into....

39 INT. WYRDDWOOD - CONTINUOUS

39

...where Emily and crew walk through streams of light beaming  
down through the trees... Beautiful.

Emily steps forward, entranced. Connor grabs her.

CONNOR (CONT'D)

Stop.

Connor points out a STEEL TRAP hidden in the ground cover.  
Its TEETH gleam.

EMILY

Oh.

MATT

What's that for? More rabbits?

CONNOR

No. Wyrds.

Emily considers Connor. Is he joking? No.

CONNOR (CONT'D)

Doesn't hurt to be careful. \*

(CONTINUED)

39 CONTINUED:

39

Connor springs the trap with a dead branch. SNAK! The trap SPLINTERS the branch.

CUT TO:

40 INT. WEM'S BOOKSTORE - DAY

40

JINGLE. MRS ELAINE BAUER (85, pinched, frail) eases her way into the store. Wem does not see her as he flips frantically through his journals.

MRS BAUER

Afternoon, Wem. I am looking for a good romance. And what's on sale?

WEM

Nothing, Mrs Bauer. Nothing's on sale. In fact it's closing time.

MRS BAUER

It's barely four o'clock.

WEM

That's why we moved here. Relaxed pace of life. Out out out.

CUT TO:

41 EXT. WEM'S BOOKSTORE - MOMENTS LATER

41

Wem hustles a sputtering Mrs Bauer out the door.

MRS BAUER

B...b...but....

WEM

Careful you don't fall and break your hip again. Sorry.

Wem closes the door. LOCKS it.

Mrs Bauer looks around dazed. What just happened?

The door swings open. Wem dashes out and dumps a few paperbacks into her arms.

WEM (CONT'D)

No charge. That one's not bad.

And - WAM - Wem slams and LOCKS the door.

CUT TO:

- 42 EXT. HILL TRAIL - DAY 42
- Wem rifles through his notes as he strides up from Coast Road. Wem looks up. Spots something. Something wrong.
- Wem examines the trunk of an old tree. Near its base, there are a series of NEW SHOOTs rising out of the bark. \*
- WEM \*
- That can't be right... \*
- He reaches towards the shoots... \*
- The SHOOTs DRAW AWAY from Wem, DART BACKWARDS like sea anemones \*
- OFF Wem's shock -- \*
- CUT TO: \*
- 43 EXT. CAMPGROUND - LATER 43
- Wem pauses at Stefan's wrecked RV. He bites his thumbnail.
- He hears something, a HIGH EERIE WHINE, in the distance.
- Skirting the edge of the woods, Wem follows the sound.
- CUT TO:
- 44 EXT. CONSTRUCTION SITE - SOON AFTER 44
- As Wem approaches, the noise becomes more distinct. Wem realizes it is a CHAINSAW. Wem discovers...
- Bobcats, construction equipment and WORKERS rolling into the Woods. A tractor hauls out two felled trees. A FOREMAN (African Canadian, professional) directs the tractor.
- OFF Wem's growing alarm --
- CUT TO:
- 45 EXT. WYRDDWOOD: AREA 1 - SAME TIME 45
- Emily and crew push deeper. Connor moves easily over the rough terrain. He takes out a small HATCHET and cuts an opening wider on the path.
- Connor reaches back, offers his hand to help Emily through the opening. They move on. \*
- ON MATT, bringing up the rear.

(CONTINUED)

45 CONTINUED:

45

MATT

A little help please.

And WHACK! A branch swings back into Matt's face.

EMILY (O.S.)

Sorry!

CONNOR (O.S.)

Don't get lost back there.

MATT

Don't get lost up there.

And they've reached...

46 EXT. WYRDDWOOD: THE OLD MILL - CONTINUOUS

46

....a derelict OLD MILL overgrown by a wild tumult of trees and creepers like a lost Mayan ruin.

EMILY

Wow.

With a GRUNT, Emily shoulders the door open.

As Emily leads Connor and Matt inside...

CUT TO:

47 INT. SPRUCE ROOM - AFTERNOON

47

The Mayor stands by an open window feeding sparrows with crumbs from his lunch. Wem is in his face.

WEM

Please tell me you're just going to widen the Coast road.

MAYOR

I can't tell you that, Wem, because it's not true. We're building a road. A highway...to the outside world.

The Mayor goes into his stump speech.

MAYOR (CONT'D)

We can't keep shipping in everything we need by water. Even by truck it takes four hours to get goods and supplies down Coast Road.

\*

(CONTINUED)



47 CONTINUED:

47

REV WISEMAN

Longer when it ices up.

\*

MAYOR

A new road means business, tourists...

WEM

But don't build it through the  
Wyrddwood. You cutting right through  
the heart of her kingdom.

\*

MAYOR

Do you want to have a rational  
discussion or not?

WEM

There's nothing rational about  
Wyrddwood.

MAYOR

That's a dead issue.

WEM

No, look at the signs. Trees are  
growing living moving shoots...

\*

\*

MAYOR

(bursts out laughing)

Shoots? That's so...serious.

\*

WEM

A boy has disappeared.

\*

That sobers the Mayor up. Wem makes his appeal.

WEM (CONT'D)

Maybe you don't remember. You were  
young - younger than Emily is now.  
On the Endless Night I went into the  
Woods. With two friends. One night  
for the town felt like a year for  
us. But when we came out we had an  
agreement, the Pact with the Wyrds  
that we have respected...

REV WISEMAN

We only have your word, Wem, about  
what happened...a long time ago.

MAYOR

Some of us live in the present.

\*

Something twigs for Wem. He scans the clock on the wall.

(CONTINUED)

47 CONTINUED: (2)

47

REV WISEMAN

Wem?

Wem grabs the phone. Dials home.

WEM

Emily didn't come by the shop after school.

It takes an eternity for the phone to RING. And RING.

OFF Wem, heartsick --

CUT TO:

48 INT. OLD MILL - SAME TIME

48

Emily considers the ruin, amazed. Vines and creepers form a soft green carpet over the floor and envelop the old machines. In the center of the room a giant willow stretches up through the (now open/missing) ceiling.

EMILY

This must have been abandoned after the Pact. Years and years ago.

MATT

It's only been fifteen years. How could stuff grow this fast?

Through the window, Connor and Emily catch a glimpse of Taffin.

CONNOR

You saw that?

MATT

See what?

EMILY

Uh huh. Why's he following us?

CONNOR

You tell me.

CUT TO:

49 EXT. HIGH SCHOOL - AFTERNOON

49

Wem and Miss Maple.

MISS MAPLE

She left after school. Maybe she's at the Fair...

\*  
\*  
\*

(CONTINUED)

49 CONTINUED:

49

WEM

Let's hope so.

MISS MAPLE

What have you told her?

WEM

Not enough. Yet. She's not ready to deal with any of this. She's as strong willed as her mother. I can't tell her what to do. I can but it's not like she'd listen.

MISS MAPLE

In other words, she's a teenage girl.  
(beat, hesitant)  
I gave her an Amulet of Five Nails.

WEM

Helen, you shouldn't have done that.

MISS MAPLE

It will protect her.

WEM

Or mark her.

CUT TO:

50 EXT. BLACK LOCUST GROVE - AFTERNOON

50

Emily, Connor and Matt stand in a clearing. The Black Locusts are huge, gnarled trees. Hanging trees.

CONNOR

This is it.

EMILY

STEFAN! STEFAN!

No answer. Except for the echoes.

MATT

(swatting)

Love the nature. Love the mosquitoes.  
Love the black flies.

The three teens spot Taffin again moving through the trees.

MATT (CONT'D)

Okay. That time I saw him.

(CONTINUED)

50 CONTINUED:

50

EMILY  
(under her breath)  
But did he see that we saw?

INTERCUT WITH: \*

51 EXT. BLACK LOCUST GROVE: IN THE TREES - SAME TIME

51

ON TAFFIN. He moves closer for a better view of the three teens. Smiles. He enjoys the cat and mouse.

TAFFIN'S POV

The teens huddle as if they're behind a line of scrimmage prepping their next play. Clearly, Emily is their QB.

EMILY  
On two and...!

They CLAP their hands like a football team.

\*

EMILY & MATT & CONNOR  
Break!

\*

\*

Emily and Matt and Connor run at Taffin.

\*

MATT & EMILY  
Nyaaaaaaaaaaaaaaaaah!

Taffin dodges back into the trees.

Emily plunges into the black locasts.

Matt trips but follows right after her.

Taffin leaps over a stump.

Emily runs around the stump.

Matt catches up and passes her. He makes up ground on Taffin.

Taffin half turns back, smiles and --

WHOOOMP! Taffin runs right into Connor.

Connor holds Taffin in a tight bear hug.

CONNOR  
Hold still.

Connor switches to a full nelson.

Emily and Matt catch up to them.

(CONTINUED)

51 CONTINUED:

51

TAFFIN

Nice necklace, Miss. You are stylin'.

EMILY

Why are you following us?

TAFFIN

Looks more like you're chasing me when you're not chasin' after your tails, that is.

EMILY

Where's Stefan?

TAFFIN

He's with the Wyrds.

EMILY

(prepared to listen)  
Really?

TAFFIN

Stefan was captured by the Twig Man for his Queen.

MATT

Man. He is so full of it. \*

TAFFIN

The Queen is no fairy tale. Her associate took your friend. Just as he intends to take you, boy. If you are The One. \*

Taffin considers Matt closely.

TAFFIN (CONT'D)

Are you?

MATT

No. \*

Taffin grabs Matt by the back of the head and peers close into his eyes. \*

TAFFIN

Skull seems human. But the irises have flecks of green. Are you certain you don't have otherworldly powers, boy? \*

MATT

Oh I dunno... \*

(CONTINUED)

51 CONTINUED: (2)

51

Emily gets the discussion back on her track.

\*

EMILY

Can we please focus? Is Stefan okay?

\*

Taffin looks away.

\*

EMILY (CONT'D)

Is he...dead?

\*

TAFFIN

Not dead. Dead is so final. More likely...turned.

CONNOR

What do you mean -- turned?

\*

TAFFIN

I can't be telling you everything.  
Where's the fun in that?  
(loses his smile)  
You best be going, girl.

\*

Taffin looks past them. Sees something.

\*

CONNOR

Now what?

Something careens towards them. Fast.

\*

TAFFIN

Now...we run.

Taffin slips through Connor's grasp like quicksilver (CGI enhanced effect.)

CONNOR

Hey!

And with a bound and a handspring, Taffin is free.

The Skinny Twig Man attacks. He swipes his arm. Connor goes flying.

CONNOR (CONT'D)

Oomph.

Now, for the first time, we see the Twig Man in all his horror. Blackened bark, crooked claw, shards and sticks. The Twig Man is a nightmare with skeletal limbs that stretch from his thin-ribbed chest. His evil eyes glimmer from two thin slits of bark pulled taut across his face.

(CONTINUED)

51 CONTINUED: (3)

51

STM waves his hands and --

VINES snake around Emily's legs.

They pull her into the brambles.

THWACK! Connor cuts off a vine with his hatchet.

STM HOWLS in pain.

Matt watches, helpless, useless.

STM reaches for Emily but then --

\*

STM spots Emily's NECKLACE. Hesitates. In fear? OR anticipation?

Taffin takes advantage of STM's hesitation. Grabs Emily. Yanks her free.

\*

TAFFIN

This way!

Connor hacks away at another sinuous vine.

EMILY

Get away from me!

\*

Emily grabs a branch from the ground. Magically ignites it.

SKINNY TWIG MAN

(furious)

WITCH!

STM lurches away from the flames.

The teens and Taffin gather behind Emily for the protection of her torch.

TAFFIN

...and...NOW!

They scatter.

CUT TO:

52 INT. OLD MILL - LATER

52

The three teens and Taffin spill into the ruin, gasping for breath.

MATT

Did...did we lose him?

(CONTINUED)

52 CONTINUED:

52

CONNOR

Maybe.

Matt checks on Emily.

MATT

You okay?

EMILY

I'm fine.

CONNOR

This was stupid.

\*

Connor throws his pack down on the ground.

TAFFIN

We can't stay here long. The Twig  
Man will be back -- and at night  
when he is all the more powerful.

MATT

Not to worry. Emily's got our back.  
Big time.

\*

\*

(to Emily)

\*

How did you do that fire thing?

EMILY

It just happens.

\*

CONNOR

It just happens? Right.

\*

\*

EMILY

When I'm scared.

\*

CONNOR

When are you ever...?

\*

\*

(looks around)

\*

Where's Taffin?

\*

The teens whirl round.

CONNOR (CONT'D)

And where's my pack? Typical. He  
played us. He could have gotten  
away from me any time.

\*

EMILY

He was feeding us information.

\*

CONNOR

More like misinformation.

(CONTINUED)



52 CONTINUED: (2)

52

Just then, Emily finds Stefan's bandanna snagged on a branch. \*

EMILY

This is Stefan's. This proves he was here. We show this to the Mayor, tell him what happened today and the Mayor has to listen to us.

CONNOR

Good. You can take it from here. \*

EMILY

What is your problem?

CONNOR

My problem? You weren't straight with me.

EMILY

(tinge of regret) \*  
Connor... \*

CONNOR

You told me nothing strange happened at Stefan's place. And that the sap came off his backpack. Like maybe he accidentally brushed against a tree. Or he was just lost in the woods. \*

(cuts Emily off)

That's what you let me think.

EMILY

I thought if I told you everything you wouldn't have come.

CONNOR

I would have if you had asked. \*

(beat) \*

Let's go. \*

OFF Emily's guilt -- \*

CUT TO:

53 EXT. THE WOODS - AFTERNOON

53

Connor leads them out of the Woods. Emily and Matt tramp a few paces behind him to talk.

MATT

I'm sorry.

(CONTINUED)

53 CONTINUED:

53

EMILY

For what?

MATT

I could have done more when...Twig  
Guy attacked.

Emily brushes that off.

EMILY

All you and Connor can think about  
are your own bruised egos. What about  
Stefan?

They trudge on.

CRANE UP TO STEFAN. Or, rather what's left of Stefan. He's  
been transformed, warped. Half human, half creeping vine.

Unseen, with deep regret, Stefan watches his old friends  
leave the Woods.

FADE OUT:

END OF ACT III

ACT IV

FADE IN:

54 EXT. WOODS: FRINGE - NEXT DAY 54

Mick Cleaver, and his dog, BRACKEN, patrol his land.

Cleaver spots Connor ahead of them, filling a sack with grouse from his father's traps.

Connor does not see Cleaver. Cleaver smiles. Good.

Bracken GROWLS. Cleaver kicks the dog.

MICK CLEAVER

Quiet.

Cleaver shoulders his crossbow. A sick GIGGLE escapes his pursed lips. Cleaver lines up Connor in his sights and --

Vines whip down from the trees' canopy. Ensnare Cleaver. And ZWWIPPP - he's gone. Yanked up into the forest canopy.

The crossbow falls to the mulchy floor. Bracken BARKS.

Connor bolts.

CUT TO:

55 EXT. HIGH IN THE TREES - MOMENTS LATER 55

Cleaver, bound by vines, swings sixty feet up. Nose to nose, Stefan stares deep into his eyes.

STEFAN

No one hurts my friends...

(ominous)

Except me.

\*

\*

\*

SKINNY TWIG MAN

Or me.

STM picks his teeth with a thorny talon.

SKINNY TWIG MAN (CONT'D)

Watch and learn...

OFF Cleaver's screams --

CUT TO:

56 EXT. MERRYWEATHER SQUARE - DAY 56

Stefan's Father identifies the red bandanna. \*

STEFAN'S FATHER  
Yes. That's my son's.

He hands it back to Emily. Wipes his hands on his jeans.

WIDEN TO REVEAL an impromptu Town Hall meeting. Attending: \*  
Emily, The Mayor, Taffin, Mrs Bauer, Greenacre, other  
TOWNSFOLK.

EMILY  
We found that in the Wyrdwood. \*

MRS BAUER  
Oh Emily, you should know better.

EMILY  
Stefan is in there. Somewhere. We  
have to organize search parties.

MAYOR  
We have to -- how old are you? No.  
No one goes into the Woods.

EMILY  
(shoots back)  
Except to build your road.

TAFFIN  
Listen to the girl. I was there with  
her. I saw the Twig Man.  
(to Stefan's Father)  
I'm sorry but the Wyrds do have your  
boy. \*

STEFAN'S FATHER  
I'm going to go find him. \*

MAYOR  
(re: Taffin)  
Why are you listening to him? He's  
completely unreliable. \*  
(to the townsfolk) \*  
He and his "associates" drift through \*  
town twice a year to pick your  
pockets.

Stefan's Father looks away, ashamed. \*

(CONTINUED)

56 CONTINUED:

56

TAFFIN

(shrugs)

Keeps me limber.

(beat)

I know what I saw.

Wem pushes forward through the growing crowd. Emily looks at her father unsure of what Wem will say.

MRS BAUER

Wem. Did you hear what happened?

\*

GREENACRE

What do you think we should do?

WEM

I think...

(off Emily's look)

...search parties make sense.

GREENACRE

I have to say...I agree.

MAYOR

This is a mistake.

WEM

Start at first light.

TAFFIN

(a challenge)

Will you lead the search then, Wem?

Like you did during the Endless Night?

WEM

(thrown, beat)

No, no...

EMILY

Dad?

WEM

Maybe someone else could...

Wem turns to Stefan's Father.

\*

STEFAN'S FATHER

They, they won't listen to me.

\*

\*

MAYOR

(sees his chance)

How about you Ron...?

(CONTINUED)

56 CONTINUED: (2)

56

GREENACRE

I'd...I'd get lost in the woods.

Some LAUGHS from the crowd. Without a leader, the townsfolk drift away.

TOWNIE

Maybe we should wait. This is all about a boy from away, after all.

MRS BAUER

(nods)

He's not from Merryweather.

MAYOR

Exactly. This isn't our problem.

Stefan's Father steps into the Mayor.

STEFAN'S FATHER

Why not?

Wem keeps them apart.

MAYOR

Hey!

WEM

Take it easy. This won't help Stefan.

STEFAN'S FATHER

(backs down)

Okay...I'm okay.

MAYOR

We will keep an eye out for your son. Won't we?

General MURMURS of assent.

MRS BAUER

Sure we will.

MAYOR

Now I've got to get to the office. We all have things to do. Okay?

The crowd drifts off.

Wem waits for a moment.

TAFFIN

Why don't you go open your shop? Dust some books?

(CONTINUED)

56 CONTINUED: (3)

56

Wem opens his mouth to say something. Decides not to. Turns. \*  
Heads down the street. \*

Emily stares after her father - deeply disappointed.

CUT TO:

57 EXT. WOODS EDGE - LATE AFTERNOON

57

Connor checks the grouse traps. He hears an unnerving WIMPER. \*

Connor exhales, gathers himself...parts a curtain of branches \*  
and sees --

BRACKEN, caught in a leg trap. Bracken SNAPS at Connor.

CONNOR

Hey, boy. You got yourself in a  
mess. Who's a good boy?

Bracken GROWLS.

CONNOR (CONT'D)

Maybe not you. I've got something  
for my good boy. Yes I do.

Connor reaches into into his new pack. Takes out a BLT.  
Extracts a piece of bacon. Dangles it before the dog.  
Bracken snatches it. Nuzzles Connor for more.

CONNOR (CONT'D)

Okay now I'm just going to get you  
loose and...I hope you...remember  
this...

Using his hatchet as a wedge, Connor pries open the jaws of  
the trap. Bracken's free.

With a SNARL, Bracken leaps at him.

Connor falls backwards.

KU-CHUNG! The trap snaps shut again -- just missing Connor's  
fingers. Connor spins around looking for the dog, ready to  
ward off an attack but --

Bracken stands placidly by an old log, blood dripping from  
his wounds, balanced on his three good legs, PANTING.

CONNOR (CONT'D)

Good dog.

CUT TO:

58 INT. EMILY'S HOUSE: KITCHEN - NIGHT

58

Wem and Emily. Emily wheels on her father.

\*

WEM

\*

I can't go into the Woods. I'd be a target. I'd do more harm than good.

\*

EMILY

\*

So the Wyrds do exist.

WEM

\*

Yes. Not you've seen them.

EMILY

They're horrible.

WEM

\*

That's what I thought. At first. Fifteen years ago, someone - doesn't matter who - logged some trees from the Wyrddwood. The Wyrds started coming into town at night. Taking things. Then people. So I went to talk to them. And when I met the Queen, I could see their beauty too. They trusted me. So I arranged the Pact that trapped the Wyrds in Wyrddwood.

\*

\*

\*

\*

\*

\*

(beat)

\*

I betrayed them. I lied to them.

\*

EMILY

\*

Like you lied to me.

\*

WEM

Yes.

EMILY

You lied to me my entire life.

WEM

To protect you. You should never have gone into the Woods.

EMILY

But I...

Wem cuts her off. He's had enough.

WEM

You had no right to take that kind of risk.

(CONTINUED)



58 CONTINUED:

58

Emily finishes her thought.

EMILY

...I did it for my friend.

OFF Wem's guilt --

CUT TO:

59 EXT. CONNOR'S HOUSE - NIGHT

59

A modest two story house with a patchwork of DIY additions just outside the Woods at the end of the rutted dirt road.

FRANK (V.O.)

(pre-lap)

Hold him steady, Connor.

60 INT. CONNOR'S HOUSE: DINING ROOM - CONTINUOUS

60

Connor and his Dad, FRANK MOSS (55, solid, hardworking when he can find work) bind Bracken's wounds on the dining table. Bracken squirms, YELPS.

\*  
\*  
\*

CONNOR

Sorry, dog.

\*  
\*

CONNOR'S MOM passes and notes the dog bleeding on the table.

\*

CONNOR'S MOM

I guess we're eating in the kitchen tonight.

\*  
\*  
\*

FRANK

Won't be a minute.

(after she goes)

He was out there a long time. That can change an animal. Or a person.

\*  
\*  
\*  
\*

Connor has heard this a million times before.

CONNOR

I know, Dad. I'll be careful.

FRANK

From now on, you take your bow.

\*  
\*

Connor glances up at a beautiful longbow and arrows mounted on the wall.

\*

CONNOR

I'm not hunting.

\*  
\*

(CONTINUED)

60 CONTINUED:

60

FRANK

Not asking you to. I know you've always had this connection with the Woods. Like you belong there. I just...

\*  
\*  
\*  
\*  
\*

CONNOR

I said I'll be careful.

\*  
\*

As Connor pets the dog:

\*

CONNOR (CONT'D)

There's a good boy. I know what I'm doing.

\*  
\*  
\*

FRANK

Tell me this. If his dog's here, where's Mick Cleaver?

\*  
\*  
\*

Connor has no answer for that. He finds...

\*

STRANGE PODS/BURRS tangled in Bracken's fur.

Connor pulls a mutated burr out. Bracken SNAPS at him.

\*

FRANK (CONT'D)

Burn those.

\*  
\*

OFF Connor's nod --

CUT TO:

61 INT. THE FIX-IT FIND-IT SHOP - NIGHT

61

CLANG! Matt works in the back of his family's repair shop trying to straighten out a bent blade of an old lawnmower.

His mom, MARGARET TETHER (warm, worn and worried) stands at the top of the stairs leading down to the workshop.

Tether's Fix-it Find-It is a spooky mix of lost and broken objects: vacuum cleaners, cathode ray tube TVs, metal guts, levers and coils disgorged from dissembled machines.

MARGARET

I appreciate the help, Matt. But it can wait.

MATT

You said this needed doing.

(CONTINUED)

61 CONTINUED:

61

MARGARET

Why don't you call one of your  
friends? Maybe Emily. Go out.

\*

Matt GRUNTS. The blade...just...won't...move.

\*

MATT

There's nowhere to go, Mom.

\*

Matt bangs away at it, taking out his frustration on the  
broken machine.

CUT TO:

62 EXT. ST. PHOCAS CHURCH - NIGHT

62

The weathered wooden Church sits hard by the Coast Road.  
Its steeple overlooks both the town and its Fairgrounds.

VINES MULTIPLY and CLIMB its sides, CURL around the steeple.

As the MOON PASSES BEHIND A CLOUD --

CUT TO:

63 EXT. HIGH SCHOOL: FRONT STEPS - DAY

63

Connor hangs with Chloe (and her posse of Gal Pals).

CHLOE

It's so weird. I can't get any radio.  
The signals are completely blocked.

GAL PAL

And did you see the Church? It's  
like covered in vines.

\*

\*

GAL PAL #2

From nowhere.

CHLOE

(flirty to Connor)  
And I heard a cool story about you.  
If it's true.

\*

\*

\*

CONNOR

Could be.

\*

\*

ANGLE ON MATT AND EMILY

Watching this disgusting display.

(CONTINUED)

63 CONTINUED:

63

MATT  
Someone's hitting it off.

\*

EMILY  
So?

MATT  
Just observing.  
(changes the subject)  
How mad was your Dad?

EMILY  
Pretty mad. I'm grounded. No Solstice  
Fair. No boys.

MATT  
Any exceptions?

\*

EMILY  
No. And after school, straight home.

\*

EMILY'S POV

Chloe GIGGLES. She snuggles up to Connor.

BACK TO EMILY AND MATT. Emily has had enough and she strides  
up to Connor just in time to hear...

CHLOE  
You can tell us.

CONNOR  
Nothing to tell.

EMILY  
Hey Connor.

CONNOR  
(cool)  
Yeah hi.

CHLOE  
Come on. Did you really fight the  
Skinny Twig Man?

Connor and Emily exchange a long look.

CONNOR  
Yeah. Kinda. It happened fast.

CHLOE  
That is so sick.

(CONTINUED)

63 CONTINUED: (2)

63

MATT

I know I could lose my lunch. How about you, Em?

EMILY

Connor, can I talk to you?

CONNOR

Go ahead.

EMILY

I mean...in private?

CONNOR

Ah...

CHLOE

Connor, I thought that after school we could go for a walk...in the Woods.

EMILY

Yes, Connor. Show her the Old Mill. She'd find that exciting.

CHLOE

Would I?

CONNOR

Maybe we could check out the Fair instead. Catch you later, Emily.

\*  
\*

Connor puts his arm around Chloe, the classic move of teen possession. Hips bumping, they turn into the school.

Matt secretly smiles. Maybe he still has a chance with Em.

OFF Emily, crushed by her crush --

CUT TO:

64 INT. CLASSROOM - DAY

64

As Miss Maple drones on, Emily stares at the window box with its now gi-normous plants.

MISS MAPLE (O.S.)

And what does Bereskin represent in the Grimm story? He represents faith and charity. The old man accepts his charity...

\*

(CONTINUED)

64 CONTINUED:

64

OFF Emily, SIGHING. Won't school ever end?

\*

CUT TO:

65 INT. HALLWAY - DAY

65

Matt catches up with Emily.

MATT

Where are we going?

EMILY

Straight home.

SMASH CUT TO:

66 EXT. FAIRGROUNDS - AFTERNOON

66

The neon of the rides shine against the sky. A calliope WAILS. As Matt and Emily cut through the Fair --

EMILY

Can I help it that the best way home goes right through the Fair?

MATT

Not exactly in a straight line...

EMILY

But I am heading home...

MATT

Looking for Connor?

EMILY

(covering)

Taffin. He knows more than he's telling.

Emily slows to a stop. Something is wrong.

MATT

What?

EMILY

Look. Where are all the kids?

MATT

(gets it)

At home. Under armed guard in case Skinny Twig Dude drops in. No one wants to admit that the Wyrds are back but everyone's scared.

(CONTINUED)

66 CONTINUED:

66

EMILY  
Except Connor.

MATT  
I guess.

Emily watches TOWNSFOLK taking in the Fair.

EMILY  
If one of their kids disappeared --  
someone from Merryweather -- everyone  
in town would be out looking.

MATT  
Yeah.

Matt gets an idea. Turns it over in his mind.

MATT (CONT'D)  
Yeah, that could actually...  
(beat)  
You know what? You talk to Taffin.  
We'll hook up later.

EMILY  
Sure?

MATT  
Totally sure.

And Matt takes off.

CUT AHEAD TO:

67 EXT. FAIRGROUNDS: BACKSTAGE - DAY

67

Emily finds Taffin behind the staging area/tents. Taffin is eating his fine dinner of blue cotton candy.

TAFFIN  
Ah, she's back.  
(offers to share)  
Dinner?

EMILY  
(shakes her head no)  
I want to know more about the Endless  
Night. And how to stop the Twig Man.

TAFFIN  
(laughs)  
Well, get to the point, girl.

(CONTINUED)

67 CONTINUED:

67

EMILY

Do you know anything or not?

TAFFIN

Trade you a story for your necklace.  
It's not worth the spit that's holding  
it together.

EMILY

If it's not worth anything, why do  
you want it?

Taffin smiles. Small bow. Point taken.

TAFFIN

Show me a card trick then. Magician  
to magician and I'll tell you a tale.

Taffin hands her a deck. Emily hesitates.

TAFFIN (CONT'D)

What are you afraid of?

EMILY

Pick a card, any card.

Taffin picks...

TAFFIN

The Fool, my personal fave.

Emily puts it back in the deck and FLINGS the deck into the  
air. The cards rain down -- ALL FOOLS. Taffin CLAPS.

TAFFIN (CONT'D)

Good one. Now pick one up.

Emily does. Taffin quickly grabs her wrist.

EMILY

Hey! That hurts!

Taffin twists her wrist to turn the card so its face shows.  
The Fool on the card - LAUGHS (CGI effect).

TAFFIN

You have the gift to manipulate  
physicalities. Nothing major. It's  
not like you could transfigure  
yourself into a fire plug. But you  
can bend cards, pens, glass, small  
objects to your will. Hand magic,  
(MORE)

(CONTINUED)



67 CONTINUED: (2)

67

TAFFIN (CONT'D)

it's called. You probably need direct physical contact with the object. That's a weakness.

Emily breaks his grip.

TAFFIN (CONT'D)

You know you have...abilities.

EMILY

I don't know that.

TAFFIN

If you want to delude yourself, that's your choice.

EMILY

We had a deal. Now tell me about the Endless Night.

TAFFIN

I'll tell you that it happened. I know because I was one of the three who went into the Wyrddwood to negotiate the Pact. Lead by your Daddy, brave buyer and seller of books. It was Wem who cut down the Skinny Twig Man and put the Queen to sleep these past fifteen years.

\*  
\*  
\*  
\*

EMILY

With a spell?

TAFFIN

You mean like abracadabra? No. What Wem did was much cleverer than that.

\*  
\*

EMILY

Is he The One?

\*  
\*

TAFFIN

(feigns innocence)

The one what? Oh, The One. No. Because the Twig Man came back, now didn't he? If you want to know more ask your Daddy. Or read his journals.

\*  
\*  
\*  
\*  
\*

OFF Emily, thinking that through --

CUT TO:

68 INT. EMILY'S HOUSE: SECOND FLOOR LANDING/LIVING ROOM - NIGHT 68\*

From above, Emily watches Wem write in his journal. She steps back into...

69 INT. EMILY'S ROOM - CONTINUOUS 69

Emily swings open the window. She twists Stefan's bandanna around in her hands, thinks things through and --

Matt pops his head up into the window. Emily jumps, startled.

EMILY

Matt! I'm going to kill you.

MATT

No, you won't. Because I've got a plan. Actually, it's your plan but I'm running with it.

EMILY

My plan?

MATT

Yes. I'm gonna hide in the Old Mill Then, like you said, the town will think I've been caught by Twig Dude. They come to get me. And while they look for me, they find Stefan.

EMILY

I wasn't serious.

MATT

But you were brilliant. In the morning tell your Dad I went into the Woods.

EMILY

Don't go. Not on your own

MATT

You want to come?

Emily glances back out her door towards her Dad.

EMILY

I can't. Maybe you should get Connor.

Matt rolls his eyes. Drops from the window into the dark.

EMILY (CONT'D)

Matt! You don't have to do this for me. Matt!

(CONTINUED)

69 CONTINUED: 69

No answer. Emily runs from her room to tell Wem.

70 INT. SECOND FLOOR LANDING/ LIVING ROOM - CONTINUOUS 70

She looks down the stairs at her father. Emily seems torn. Can she rat out her friend? Emily decides. No.

CUT TO:

71 INT. EMILY'S ROOM - CONTINUOUS 71

Emily returns to her window.

EMILY

Matt!

Emily looks down at the sill. The red bandanna is gone. In its place...an offering of a CORN HUSK DOLL. What?

VOICE (O.S.)

For you.

For a FLASH Stefan hangs in the window, his vines entwining around himself. His heavy gnarled head twitches on the end of a thin, reedy neck, as if looking upon the world for the first time with bright, black beady eyes.

Emily steps backward, trips, SCREAMS.

CUT TO:

72 EXT. OLD MILL - NIGHT 72

Matt ventures inside.

MATT

(to himself)

Well this is a stupid plan. Why do I listen to Emily?

(answers own question)

Well, Matt she is kinda hot and you're kinda hopeless. In space no one can hear you whine.

\*  
\*

REVEAL the Skinny Twig Man, lurking.

Matt blinks. Swallows. Now what?

\*

OFF Matt's fear --

\*

FADE OUT:

END OF ACT IV

ACT V

FADE IN:

73 INT. EMILY'S ROOM - NIGHT

73\*

Wem and Emily. Wem looks out the window.

WEM

And you're sure it was Stefan?

\*

EMILY

(nods)

He didn't hurt me. I just got scared.

\*

\*

\*

WEM

He has turned.

\*

\*

Wem shuts the window tight. Turns the latch with a CLICK.

\*

WEM (CONT'D)

I'll lock up. You stay here.

\*

EMILY

Dad.

They fall into father-teen daughter banter:

\*

WEM

(warning)

Emily.

EMILY

(counters)

Dad.

\*

WEM

Emily.

\*

\*

EMILY

Dad.

\*

\*

WEM

Stay. Here. Emily. Stay here.  
Stay here. Stay. Here. Here.

Wem leaves her room and heads into...

\*

74 INT. SECOND FLOOR LANDING - CONTINUOUS 74

...where Wem shakes his head.

WEM

(to himself, wry)

No way she's stays. I'm going to be  
up all night.

\*  
\*  
\*

CUT AHEAD TO:

75 INT. LIVING ROOM - NIGHT 75

Wem fights to stay awake and loses that fight...

76 INT. SECOND FLOOR LANDING - CONTINUOUS 76

Emily looks down at her dozing Dad and...

SMASH CUT TO:

77 INT. CONNOR'S ROOM - NIGHT 77

Emily shakes Connor. Connor jumps.

CONNOR

What?

EMILY

Shhh.

CONNOR

Emily?

EMILY

It's me.

A pretty girl in his bedroom? Connor is in teen-boy heaven. \*

CONNOR

My parents will kill me if they catch  
you here. So we have to be very quiet.

EMILY

(clueless)

What are you talking about? \*

CONNOR

(covers up)

About...not waking up my parents. \*

Emily turns her back to him.

(CONTINUED)

77 CONTINUED: 77

EMILY  
Get dressed. Matt's in trouble. \*

CONNOR  
(denied and grumpy) \*  
Why? Did you wake up his folks?

CUT TO:

78 INT. CONNOR'S HOUSE: DINING ROOM - NIGHT 78\*

Connor and Emily sneak out. Bracken limps beside them. \*  
Connor looks at his long bow on the wall. Decides. \*  
He leaves the weapon behind. \*

CUT TO: \*

79 EXT. CONNOR'S HOUSE - MOMENTS LATER 79\*

Connor turns on his FLASHLIGHT. \*  
They melt deeper into the Woods, their LIGHT BOBBING between \*  
the trees.

CUT TO:

80 EXT. WYRDDWOOD: AREA 1 - NIGHT 80\*

Connor and Emily cut through the woods. Connor looks grim \*  
and determined. \*

EMILY \*  
We can talk, you know. If you want \*  
to. If we're still friends. \*

CONNOR \*  
I'm here, okay? \*

EMILY \*  
How was your walk in the Woods? \*

CONNOR \*  
Chloe in the Woods? \*  
(laughs) \*  
Em, there are bugs here. \*

Something RUSTLES in the woods. \*

EMILY \*  
Really. Big. Bugs. \*

(CONTINUED)

80 CONTINUED:

80

They freeze. Listen. Whatever is out there, moves off.

\*

CONNOR

\*

I wouldn't take just anyone here.  
The Woods are special. This is where  
I can really think, you know?

\*

\*

\*

EMILY

\*

So, Nature Boy, why do you hunt?

\*

CONNOR

\*

I don't hunt.

\*

EMILY

\*

Everyone says...

\*

CONNOR

\*

(sharp)  
Everyone's wrong.

\*

\*

\*

EMILY

\*

(bit hurt)  
Okay. Don't talk.

\*

\*

\*

Emily moves forward to take the lead.

\*

Beat. Connor wants to kick himself. He exhales and follows  
Emily down the path.

\*

\*

CUT TO:

\*

81 INT. OLD MILL - NIGHT

81\*

Connor and Emily search by their flickering torch light.  
Bracken SNIFFS around.

CONNOR

Someone was here.

\*

EMILY

Matt?

\*

\*

CONNOR

Maybe. There was a fight. Ground's  
disturbed...

\*

\*

And Emily finds something smeared against the wall --

\*

EMILY

Sap.

SWOOSH. Something shifts around outside the mill.

(CONTINUED)

81 CONTINUED:

81

Bracken GROWLS, low in the back of his throat.

Emily and Connor look around, following the sounds. \*

Connor rushes to the rotted door. Pushes it shut. Looks around, scrambles. Finds an old broom. JAMS that between the door and the floor as a barricade. \*

CONNOR

There!

They hear the thing as it CLAMBERS up the wall outside.

Emily glances up again, following the sound with her eyes. \*

Connor looks up too see -- \*

THE GAPING HOLE IN THE ROOF

So much for the barricade.

Connor and Emily back up against a wall, slide down to sit. Try to make themselves small. Connor kills the flashlight.

CONNOR (CONT'D) \*

What is he waiting for?

EMILY

If it was the Twig Man he wouldn't wait. It must be some other Wyrdd. The Giggler. Or Scragg. \*

Outside, the thing SCUTTLES across the roof. \*

CONNOR

Before we die could we talk about something else? \*

EMILY \*

Okay. Like what? \*

CONNOR \*

I dunno. With me, mostly it's the girls who talk. \*

EMILY \*

Okay, I'll start. Why can't you hunt? \*

CONNOR \*

It's not that I can't. I'm a good shot. I point. Visualize. That's where the arrow goes. \*

(CONTINUED)



81 CONTINUED: (2)

81

EMILY

That could be useful right now.

CONNOR

One day I was goofing around and I shot a deer. I go to get it and the doe, she looks right up at me...

(trails off)

So I give my longbow back to my Dad. He hangs it up on the wall. Like some trophy. He can be such a jerk. I can't point an arrow at anything now. There. That's my secret.

EMILY

Oh.

(listens)

I think it's moving off.

CONNOR

(listens)

Yeah.

(beat)

You got any secrets?

EMILY

You wouldn't be interested.

CONNOR

Why not?

EMILY

It's a girly girl thing.

(beat, then)

Okay, I miss my Mom. I mean I miss having a Mom. My Dad told me that she died when I was small. But I think I remember seeing her once. She had long hair...like mine. And she sang...But maybe that's not a real memory. Maybe I'm just remembering a bedtime story.

CONNOR

It's a nice story.

EMILY

(softly)

I'm really sorry.

CONNOR

About what?

(CONTINUED)

81 CONTINUED: (3)

81

EMILY

About not telling you the truth.  
The other day. To get you out here.

\*  
\*  
\*

CONNOR

You never look before you leap. And  
I have to keep up to you. I know  
that's the deal.

\*  
\*  
\*

EMILY

I just wanted you to be with me.

\*  
\*

They kiss.

\*

DISSOLVE TO:

82 INT. OLD MILL - DAWN

82\*

Emily wakes up with Connor's arm around her. He looks  
gorgeous. Until he SNORES, of course. And SNORTS. Emily  
moves away. Connor YAWNS and stretches.

Emily finds a CORN HUSK DOLL.

\*

EMILY

Stefan was here.

CONNOR

While we were sleeping?  
(creeped out)  
That's so wrong.

Bracken is curled up and still SNOOZING.

\*

CONNOR (CONT'D)

(to Bracken)  
You're no help.

\*  
\*  
\*

EMILY

(realization)  
That's why we weren't attacked.  
Stefan was watching us the whole  
time.  
(beat, creeped out)  
Oooh.

\*  
\*  
\*  
\*  
\*  
\*

CUT TO:

\*

83 INT. EMILY'S ROOM - SAME TIME 83

Wem discovers Emily is gone.

WEM

Emily?

\*

OFF Wem's anger and worry --

CUT TO:

84 EXT. FAIRGROUNDS - DAY 84

Wem hands out maps to Fair crew and townsfolk.

\*

WEM

There are three kids out there ...

\*

Wem sees Stefan's Father, corrects himself.

WEM (CONT'D)

Four. Stefan....

STEFAN'S FATHER

(takes a map)

Thank you.

WEM

Margaret's boy, Matt. Connor Moss  
and...Emily.

\*

\*

Taffin saunters over.

WEM (CONT'D)

We divide up and enter into the Woods  
at these points.

TAFFIN

You sure about this, now? It's not  
too risky, is it, Wem?

WEM

I'll lead the first team.

TAFFIN

(salutes)

And I'll follow you, Sir.

OFF Wem's irritation --

\*

CUT TO:

85 EXT. WYRDDWOOD: NARROW PATH - DAY 85

Connor and Emily push through the brush. It's tough sledding. Bracken trails after them.

Connor pauses. Wipes sweat off his brow.

CONNOR

Which way?

Emily spots a CORN HUSK DOLL in a fork in a tree.

EMILY

That way. Stefan's guiding us.

CONNOR

To Matt? Or a trap?

OFF Emily's concern --

\*

CUT TO:

\*

86 EXT. WYRDDWOOD: AREA 1 - DAY 86

Wem, Taffin, Stefan's Dad and Karl trod past. They trip across...THE ROAD. Or, rather, the brutal clear-cut through the woods where the road will run.

\*

\*

TAFFIN

Someone's been...industrious.

WEM

The road work is still going.  
Unbelievable.

\*

\*

Wem plunges back into the brush.

TAFFIN

Wem.

WEM

What?

TAFFIN

Won't it be easier if we take the  
cleared path? Just asking.

Grudgingly, Wem changes direction and heads down the cut.

\*

CUT TO:

87 EXT. WYRDDWOOD: END OF THE CUT - LATER 87\*

Road Workers HACK away at the undergrowth.

A Worker spots a SPRITE. Eight inches tall, it flits about like Tinkerbell.

WORKER  
Hey. You see this? Guys!

FOREMAN  
What is it?

Sunlight glimmers of the Sprite's wings like diamonds.

WORKER  
...it's beautiful.

The Worker offers his finger out for the Sprite as a perch. The Sprite SNARLS revealing sharp, shark-like teeth. Nasty.

WORKER (CONT'D) FOREMAN  
Whoa. Look out.

The Worker swats at the Sprite.

WORKER  
Get away! Get away!

The Sprite BUZZES off. The worker exhales.

WORKER (CONT'D)  
I'm okay. It's all under control.

He turns to see --

SCRAGG AND BAGG

They half lurch, half shamble towards the workers, GURGLING.

The workers flee.

Bagg hunches down to eat a worker's lunch.

CUT TO:

88 EXT. WYRDDWOOD: ON THE CUT - MOMENTS LATER 88

The workers and their foreman run past --

WEM'S SEARCH PARTY.

(CONTINUED)

88 CONTINUED: 88

FOREMAN  
Get out of here!

Karl looks like he really wants to run away with the road workers. Taffin YAWNS. \*

Wem presses forward, pulls back a branch to see --

INTERCUT WITH:

89 EXT. WYRDDWOOD: END OF THE CUT - CONTINUOUS 89\*

Scragg and Bagg tear apart workers' lunches.

90 EXT. WYRDDWOOD: ON THE CUT - CONTINUOUS 90

BACK TO the Search Party. \*

TAFFIN  
Best give our gourmands a wide berth. \*

WEM  
(reassures Karl) \*  
Don't worry. Scragg and Bagg will  
nap after their lunch.

STEFAN'S FATHER \*  
What are they? \*

TAFFIN  
Old friends.

WEM \*  
Wyrds in full daylight? \*

TAFFIN  
(nods)  
The Queen is mobilizing her forces.

WEM \*  
(urgent) \*  
Emily! Matt!

CUT TOE

91 EXT. WYRDDWOOD: NARROW PATH - DAY 91

Emily, Connor and Bracken listen to....

STEFAN'S FATHER (O.S.) \*  
Stefan! \*

91 CONTINUED:

91

WEM (O.S.)  
Emily! Connor!  
(and so on)

\*  
\*

CONNOR  
Hear that?

EMILY  
Nope.

\*

CONNOR  
(uncertain)  
Emily...

\*

Emily picks up another CORN HUSK DOLL.

\*

EMILY  
Let's keep moving.

CONNOR  
Oooo...kay.

As they press forward the CALLS from the search party FADE  
OFF in the distance. Connor and Emily break through into...

\*

92 EXT. WYRDDWOOD: HANGING TREE - CONTINUOUS

92\*

...a large clearing with a single Black Locust at its center.

CONNOR  
(too calm)  
Oh.

\*  
\*  
\*

EMILY  
Have you been here before?

CONNOR  
No. But my Dad told me about this  
place. That's the Hanging Tree.

EMILY  
Charming. MATT!

CONNOR  
Matt! MATT!

No answer.

CONNOR (CONT'D)  
Nada. We should go.

\*

(CONTINUED)

92 CONTINUED:

92

EMILY

No.  
(points)  
Look.

A corn husk doll sits propped on the tree's bloated root. \*

CONNOR

The end of the trail. Where now? \*

Bracken snarls, BARKS. He runs forward. Starts scratching at the bark of the root, insane.

CONNOR (CONT'D)

What is he digging at?

Connor pulls the dog off.

Emily leans down. She hears something. Leans closer.

The root SHIFTS (CGI enhanced effect).

EMILY

OH!

Startled, Emily steps back.

EMILY (CONT'D)

Something's inside. Or...someone?  
Matt. MATT!

CONNOR

MATT!

Barken lunges back and forth, BARKING and SNARLING.

EMILY

(a warning)  
Connor...

Connor follows her gaze and sees --

Two STRIPLINGS approach from the tree-line. The young willow-like Wyrds extend their impossibly long branches (arms). \*

EMILY (CONT'D)

Remember Miss Maple's storybook...? \*

CONNOR

Striplings.

Pause. A stand off. Wyrds and humans consider each other.

(CONTINUED)



92 CONTINUED: (2)

92

EMILY

Now what?

Connor raises his hatchet to HACK open the tree's root.

The Striplings HISS, spring to attack.

Bracken shoots forward and gets between the Striplings and Connor and Emily...Bracken SNAPS. SNARLS. Keeps the Wyrds at bay.

INTERCUT WITH:

93 EXT. WYRDDWOOD: NEARBY - SAME TIME

93

Wem, Taffin and the others hear Bracken's BARKS...

WEM

That way!

They rush through the woods trying to reach --

INTERCUT WITH:

\*

94 EXT. WYRDDWOOD: THE HANGING TREE - SAME TIME

94\*

Connor takes his hatchet to the Hanging Tree root.

The Striplings try to flank Bracken.

EMILY

Hurry!

CONNOR

Do that fire thing!

EMILY

I...can't. I have to be touching them. Or something.

CONNOR

So not helpful.

\*

Connor hacks the tree open enough a wide to see --

MATT INSIDE THE ROOT

Trapped in a gelatinous membrane, like an egg sac.

EMILY

What is that! CONNOR! Get him out.

\*

Connor grapples with the membrane but --

(CONTINUED)

94 CONTINUED:

94

CONNOR

Can't get a grip.

Emily pitches in to help.

Bracken is on top of one Stripling #1.

Stripling #2 flanks the dog. Advances on Emily and Connor.

The wound in the root closes, stitches itself back together.

The first Stripling throws Bracken off. The dog lands hard.  
WHIMPERS in pain.

The Striplings extend their long fingers around Emily and  
Connor's necks BUT --

\*

Wem pulls one Stripling off.

\*

Stefan's Father and Taffin tackle the other monster.

\*

WEM

EMILY!

Wem, Taffin, the others plant themselves between the Hanging  
Tree and the Striplings.

\*

\*

The Striplings LASH OUT at the men.

\*

TAFFIN

I suggest we move with alacrity.

With one last urgent effort, Connor and Emily plunge deep  
into the tree's stomach and pull Matt out.

CONNOR

Got him!

Emily tears her fingers into the sac, clawing the hideous  
film from Matt's body. She quickly clears his airways.

Matt COUGHS. Spews GOO, taking in GASPS of air into his lungs.

WEM

MOVE!

Connor scoops up Bracken.

And Emily and the others drag Matt out as they fight off the  
WHIPPING, slashing arms of the Striplings...

The search party and the teens stumble into...

\*

95 EXT. WYRDDWOOD: NARROW PATH - CONTINUOUS 95\*

...and down through the trees. \*

Everyone focuses on Matt, pulling him along... \*

WEM \*

Hurry! \*

STEFAN'S FATHER \*

What are those things? \*

TAFFIN \*

Losing my grip. Grab his other arm! \*

WEM \*

Got him! \*

The Search Party rounds a corner on the path. \*

And so Wem loses track of -- \*

EMILY \*

She stands dead still in the path watching -- \*

STEFAN HANG FROM THE TREES \*

Stefan tilts his head, stares at her like she's an alien. \*

EMILY \*

Stefan? We came to bring you home. \*

STEFAN \*

Home? Thisssss isssss my home. \*

EMILY \*

Your Dad misses you... \*

STEFAN \*

I can't go back. Look at me. \*

EMILY \*

I am. \*

STEFAN \*

You screamed when you saw me. \*

EMILY \*

I was startled. \*

STEFAN \*

LOOK! AT! ME! \*

(CONTINUED)

95 CONTINUED:

95

Emily holds out her hand. \*

EMILY \*

It's okay. It will be okay.... \*

Stefan takes her hand. \*

Emily involuntarily FLINCHES. Instantly regrets that. \*

Stefan shrinks back. \*

STEFAN \*

(soft, a warning) \*

Don't come back. \*

Stefan SHOOTS UP into the trees. \*

EMILY \*

No! STEFAN! \*

OFF Emily's defeat -- \*

CUT TO: \*

96 EXT. OLD MILL - LATER

96\*

The scratched and bloodied search party rests for a few minutes. Matt RETCHES in a corner. \*

TAFFIN \*

That's it, boy. Let the poison out. \*

But not on my shoes. \*

MATT \*

Leave me alone. \*

TAFFIN \*

Happily. \*

(to Wem) \*

You ever think you'd see the inside of this place again? \*

WEM \*

No. \*

STEFAN'S FATHER \*

What do we do now? \*

WEM \*

We catch our breath. We get the kids out of here. Then we... \*

Wem spins around, looking for -- \*

(CONTINUED)

96 CONTINUED:

96

WEM (CONT'D)

Emily? EM!

\*  
\*

REVEAL Emily at the doorway.

\*

WEM (CONT'D)

Oh God.

\*  
\*

Wem goes to hug her. She does not respond.

\*  
\*

TAFFIN

Emily, are you okay?

\*  
\*

EMILY

I saw Stefan.

\*

STEFAN'S FATHER

Is he okay?

\*  
\*

OFF Emily, gathering her courage to answer him --

\*

SMASH CUT TO:

\*

97 EXT. WYRDDWOOD: END OF THE CUT - NIGHT

97\*

STEFAN mourning the damage made by the road so far.

\*

The Queen surveys the site, heartsick.

\*

The STM lurks in the shadows just into the trees.

\*

The Queen runs her hand over a stump. A tear courses down her cheek.

STEFAN

They did thisssss.

\*  
\*

QUEEN

They don't understand.

SKINNY TWIG MAN

They understand.

\*  
\*

STEFAN

They jussst don't care.

\*  
\*

QUEEN

If we had the One, they would respect us.

\*  
\*

(CONTINUED)

97 CONTINUED:

97

SKINNY TWIG MAN

They should respect you now, my Queen.  
Why are you holding me back?

QUEEN

I made a promise.

SKINNY TWIG MAN

Which they broke. Why are you holding  
me back?

QUEEN

Because we are better than they are.

SKINNY TWIG MAN

Release me and I will find your child.

\*  
\*

Long pause. The Queen decides.

QUEEN

Go.

And with a satisfied smile, STM slides back into the shadows.

\*

QUEEN (CONT'D)

(to Stefan)

Go with him.

\*  
\*  
\*

Stefan scrambles after STM.

\*

HOLD ON the Queen's pain as we --

FADE OUT:

END OF ACT V

## ACT VI

FADE IN:

98 EXT. TOWN SQUARE - NEXT DAY 98\*

Matt walks quickly. Connor and Emily struggle to keep up.

CONNOR

You can't rescue someone who doesn't  
want to be rescued.

EMILY

We can't just do nothing!

MATT

(sarcastic)

You're right. We can go to school.  
And sleep through class. You know,  
like normal? And then after study  
hall...

(mean, a dig at Emily)

...we could go back into the Wyrddwood  
and screw things up some more.

As Matt absently rubs his forearm:

MATT (CONT'D)

There's no going back to normal.

EMILY

If you want to give up...

MATT

(glowers)

You just don't get it.

EMILY

Get what?

MATT

Stefan is gone. The Wyrds are coming.  
And we can't stop them. We've invaded  
their home. Now, they'll invade ours.

CONNOR

(re: Matt's arm)

What is that?

MATT

I got cut when you freed me. Next  
time be more careful when you swing  
your little hatchet.

(CONTINUED)

98 CONTINUED:

98

EMILY

It healed over that fast?

\*

CONNOR

It looks like bark.

MATT

It's just a scab.

CONNOR

Dude, it looks nasty.

EMILY

Matt, we're worried about you.

MATT

So you two are a "we" now? I'll alert the media.

Connor swings Matt round. Gets in his face. Matt stops dead.

EMILY

Guys.

CONNOR

Back off.

MATT

You back off.

EMILY

Stop it. Both of you. You're friends. We've been friends since forever.

MATT

No, we've been your friends since forever.

(at Connor)

We've never been friends.

EMILY

Matt! What happened to you?

MATT

The Twig Man happened...

OFF Matt --

FLASHBACK TO:

(CONTINUED)



Wyrddwood "The Endless Night" Second Draft v3 88.

98 CONTINUED: (2) 98

MONTAGE IN TRIPLE TIME FAST FORWARD

99 INT. OLD MILL - NIGHT (PAST) 99

Matt's eyes widen in fear --

STM slithers down the willow --

STM wraps his tendrils around Matt --

Matt FLIES OUT OF FRAME --

FLASH TO:

100 EXT. WYRDDWOOD - NIGHT (PAST) 100

Matt SCREAMS as he's dragged through the woods --

MATT'S POV. Branches and leaves SLAP at his face --

Matt WHIPS by Scragg and Bagg --

Matt WHIPS by Cleaver who's strung up like a trussed bird --

MICK CLEAVER  
(mouths)  
Help me...

FLASH TO:

101 EXT. THE GLEN - NIGHT (PAST) 101

The Queen examines Matt --

Rejects him. Throws him to Scragg and Bagg --

They drag Matt from the Glen fast --

FLASH TO:

102 INT. WYRDDWOOD - NIGHT (PAST) 102

-- back through the forest even faster --

FLASH TO:

103 EXT. WYRDDWOOD: HANGING TREE - NIGHT (PAST) 103\*

-- across the clearing to --

THE HANGING TREE

(CONTINUED)

103 CONTINUED: 103

Its root is KNOTTED in the same Celtic symbol as on Wyrddwood's border, the same knot/symbol as Emily's necklace.

The knot in the root UNTANGLES.

The root opens into a GAPING MAW to receive Matt and --

MATT'S POV as he falls into the darkness.

END MONTAGE

SMASH CUT TO BLACK:

104 EXT. TOWN SQUARE - MOMENTS LATER (PRESENT) 104

Matt continues his story.

MATT

I couldn't move. I couldn't breathe.  
But I was okay with that. Because  
it was like I was part of the Wyrdd.  
I almost turned. And then I saw...

FLASH TO:

105 EXT. WYRDDWOOD: THE HANGING TREE - DAY (PAST) 105

MATT'S POV

From inside the root, through the membrane, the wood splinters. LIGHT STREAMS IN.

Emily reaches down for Matt.

Her AMULET dangles from her neck, CATCHES THE LIGHT and --

SMASH CUT TO:

106 EXT. TOWN SQUARE - CONTINUOUS (PRESENT) 106

Matt reaches out and grabs Emily's necklace.

EMILY

Ow!

CONNOR

(protective)

Hey!

EMILY

It's okay. Matt..?

(CONTINUED)

106 CONTINUED:

106

MATT

(re: the necklace)

I saw this...the knots...When I was part of the Wyrdd, this scared me.

CONNOR

Why?

MATT

I don't know. It just did.

EMILY

(re: necklace)

Maybe we can use this against the Twig Man.

MATT

(sarcastic)

And you know how.

\*

Matt releases the necklace.

EMILY

No, I don't. But my Dad does. He stopped the Twig Man before. Taffin said to look in my Dad's journals. I'll get them. They're in his store.

\*

\*

CONNOR

Why don't you just ask him?

\*

EMILY

Like he ever tells me anything. Catch you later.

\*

She heads back the way they came.

CONNOR

I'll come with you.

EMILY

No. You guys better get to school. We can't all go missing. Again.

Emily breaks into a run.

CUT TO:

107 EXT. FAIRGROUNDS - DAY

107

The Fair. The Mayor surveys his Kingdom.

Empty. Dead. No one is there. Except...

(CONTINUED)

107 CONTINUED:

107

TAFFIN. He juggles two balls, badly.

TAFFIN

(sarcastic)

In terms of business incentives,  
your new highway really did the trick.  
Turned this town right around.

Taffin deliberately drops a ball. It bounces higher than it possibly should and ZOOMS towards the Mayor. (CGI effect).

The Mayor catches the ball inches from his nose.

Taffin LAUGHS.

OFF the Mayor's fury --

CUT TO:

108 EXT. WEM'S BOOKSTORE - DAY

108

Wem's handwritten sign reads: "Closed for a while."

Emily tries the door. Locked. Looks around. No one's watching.

Emily grabs the doorknob again. Concentrates.

\*

The knob GLOWS WHITE HOT and - CLICK - the door swings open.

\*

EMILY

Very cool.

Emily slips inside...

109 INT. WEM'S BOOKSTORE - CONTINUOUS

109

...and closes the door behind herself. Emily pulls down the blinds. She crosses the room and goes into...

110 INT. OFFICE - CONTINUOUS

110

...where Emily examines the glass cabinet holding Wem's special collection. It's locked.

EMILY

(psyches herself up)

Okay. You can do this.

She grabs the handle and... nothing.

Emily tries again and...nothing.

(CONTINUED)

110 CONTINUED:

110

She grabs a heavy paperweight and --

EMILY (CONT'D)  
Abracadabra.

Emily SMASHES the glass, old school.

She opens the cabinet. Thumbs through Wem's leather bound journals.

\*

CUT TO:

111 EXT. WYRDDWOOD: END OF THE CUT - DAY

111\*

The Mayor checks out the road. No one's there. Work has been abandoned.

MAYOR  
Hey! Rajkowski? Fielding?

The Mayor hears something... wanders off the cut, through some trees and to...

112 EXT. WYRDDWOOD: POND - CONTINUOUS

112

A beautiful brook BURBLES into a small pond.

The Mayor relaxes, smiles. Draws closer to the water. The Mayor kneels down to take a drink and...

Wem puts a hand on his shoulder.

WEM  
Don't drink that. See those?

Wem gestures at a tangle of dark green weeds with small white flowers floats along the pond's surface.

WEM (CONT'D)  
Corpseweed.

MAYOR  
You can't scare me the way you scared the rest of the town.

WEM  
(mild)  
I know.

\*

Wem takes out a sandwich. Pulls off a piece of bread.

(CONTINUED)

112 CONTINUED:

112

WEM (CONT'D)

It's an unusual plant, corpseweed.  
The smell of its flowers attracts  
insects and animals to the water.  
And then just below the surface...

\*

Wem tosses the crust above the plant. "SNAP!" A TENDRIL  
SNAKES UP and takes down the hunk of bread, quick as a flash  
leaving only a ripple (CGI enhanced effect).

The raft of Corpseweed bobs silently along the surface.

WEM (CONT'D)

I've seen it take down a rabbit,  
birds. Sometimes bigger game. Like  
politicians.

\*

\*

Wem eats his sandwich.

MAYOR

Can we go now?

WEM

No. I want you to meet someone.

\*

\*

OFF the Mayor's fear --

\*

CUT TO:

113 INT. OFFICE - SAME TIME

113

Emily finds exactly what she is looking for in a journal.

EMILY

Huh. That could actually work...

\*

Someone KNOCKS on the door. Someone wants in.

114 INT. WEM'S BOOKSTORE - CONTINUOUS

114

Without being seen, Emily sneaks low, skirts around the book  
displays and makes sure the front door is locked.

She bangs through the emergency exit. The fire alarm TRILLS.  
Emily emerges out at...

115 EXT. SIDE ENTRANCE - CONTINUOUS

115

Emily rounds the back of the building, turns a corner into...

116 EXT. THE ALLEY - CONTINUOUS

116

Emily runs down the alley and plows into --

(CONTINUED)

116 CONTINUED:

116

MISS MAPLE.

MISS MAPLE  
Shouldn't you be in school?

EMILY  
(shoots back)  
Shouldn't you?

\*

OFF Miss Maple's glare --

CUT TO:

117 INT. CLASSROOM - DAY

117\*

Miss Maple sits Emily down for detention.

EMILY  
How long will this be?

MISS MAPLE  
Detention? Until your parents pick  
you up.

\*

EMILY  
Parents?

Just then, Connor shuffles into the room.

MISS MAPLE  
Take a seat, Mr. Moss.

\*

EMILY  
What's going on?

MISS MAPLE  
No more dress code violations for  
you, young man. Hair above the collar.

\*

CONNOR  
Whatever.

\*

MATT (O.S.)  
...but what did I do?

Principal Greenacre firmly pushes Matt into the room.

\*

GREENACRE  
You showed lack of respect.

MATT  
I always show lack of respect.

(CONTINUED)

117 CONTINUED:

117

GREENACRE

But this time you really meant it.

MISS MAPLE

Thank you, Mr. Greenacre.

\*

\*

Greenacre closes the door behind himself. LOCKS IT.

\*

MISS MAPLE (CONT'D)

Your parents thought this would be best for your own safety.

EMILY

As long as there's no fire.

\*

MISS MAPLE

Good point. Maybe you should keep your hands on your desk where I can see them.

\*

\*

(bright)

\*

Now who's up for some trig?

\*

OFF the teens' stony looks --

CUT TO:

118 EXT. WYRDDWOOD - DAY

118

Wem shoves and manhandles the Mayor through the brush.

\*

WEM

Pick up the pace.

\*

MAYOR

Let me go.

\*

\*

WEM

Move!

\*

\*

Wem shoves the Mayor. He trips over a root. Falls down.

\*

MAYOR

This is crazy. The Wyrds don't exist. There is no Twig Man!

\*

\*

\*

WEM

Then what are you scared of?

\*

\*

A curtain of creepers laces through the trees and cuts Wem off from the Mayor (CGI effect).

\*

(CONTINUED)



118 CONTINUED:

118

MAYOR (O.S.)  
(distant, muffled)  
Wem!

NO!  
WEM

\*  
\*

Wem finds himself alone in...

119 EXT. THE GLEN - CONTINUOUS

119

The Queen glides through the green.

QUEEN  
Hello, Wem. You're looking...old.

WEM  
It's been fifteen years.

QUEEN  
Yes. How strange. For me the time  
slipped by like a midsummer's night.

\*

WEM  
I'm here for Stefan.

\*

QUEEN  
Not for me?

WEM  
You need to let him go.

\*

QUEEN  
While your friends destroy my home?  
No no no.  
(shudders)  
You know I feel every hack and slice  
of their machines.

\*  
\*  
\*  
\*  
\*

WEM  
You've made your point. Just talk to  
the Mayor. We can stop the road...

\*  
\*

QUEEN  
(overlapping)  
You've made promises before.

\*  
\*

WEM  
...so long as we keep things between  
the Wyrds and the town from getting  
any worse.

\*  
\*

(CONTINUED)

119 CONTINUED:

119

QUEEN  
We haven't done anything.

WEM  
The Twig Man took Stefan. \*

QUEEN  
He belongs to us now. \*

WEM  
And Matt. \*

QUEEN  
AND YOU TOOK MY CHILD!

Long pause. Wem chooses his words carefully.

WEM  
Your child died. It was a difficult,  
terrible labor. \*

QUEEN  
I lost consciousness. I don't know  
what happened.

WEM  
The midwife...

QUEEN  
Yes, the midwife you brought me told  
me the baby died. She never even  
told me whether it was a boy or girl.

WEM  
That was wrong....

QUEEN  
Do you know how much that hurt? In  
my grief I took to my bed and slept.  
And as I slept so did my subjects.  
Fifteen years. Was that your plan?

WEM  
No.

QUEEN  
I would have slept forever...

FLASH TO:

120 EXT. THE GLEN - DAY (PAST)

120

The Queen lies in state on a bed of moss, eyes closed.

(CONTINUED)

120 CONTINUED: 120

QUEEN (CONT'D) (V.O.)  
...if it hadn't been for the road...

CUT TO:

121 EXT. WOODS' EDGE - DAY (PAST) 121

The worker raises his axe back ready to swing...

CUT TO:

122 EXT. THE GLEN - DAY (PAST) 122

The Queen's eyes snap open.

QUEEN(CONT'D) (V.O.)  
And as I awoke I sensed my child was  
out there.

\*

BACK TO:

123 EXT. THE GLEN - DAY (PRESENT) 123

As the Queen levitates above Wem:

QUEEN (CONT'D)  
Lost. Needing me. Fifteen years I  
was kept from my child. Give me back  
my child.

WEM  
I can't do that.

QUEEN  
I WANT MY CHILD!

The Queen SHOOTS a shower of THORNS from her fingertips.

\*

Wem holds up his forearms to protect his face and eyes.

QUEEN (CONT'D)  
I trusted you. And you lied. Maybe  
you thought it would save your town.

\*

WEM  
(a final appeal)  
Ilyia...

QUEEN  
Leave.

\*

As Wem retreats, the Queen considers him carefully:

\*

(CONTINUED)

123 CONTINUED:

123

QUEEN (CONT'D)  
 (suspicious)  
 Do you have a son, Wem? Or a daughter?  
 (off Wem's look)  
 A daughter. Yes. How old is she?  
 About fifteen?  
 (a threat)  
 I would like to meet her some day.  
 Some day soon.

\*  
\*  
\*  
\*  
\*  
\*  
\*

OFF Wem's fear --

CUT TO:

124 INT. HIGH SCHOOL: DETENTION - DAY

124

Emily and Connor.

EMILY  
 (whispers)  
 It's in the books. Taffin was right.  
 The Amulet of Five Nails can separate  
 a Wyrd from the Wyrdwood. I've got  
 an idea.

\*  
\*

CONNOR  
 To stop the Twig Man?

\*

EMILY  
 Yeah. I need your help. Matt's too.

\*

CONNOR  
 He's kinda useless.

MATT  
 You know I can hear you.

MISS MAPLE  
 So can I. I want quiet contemplation.

\*

Emily spots --

THE KEY TO THE DOOR on the corner of Miss Maple's desk.

Emily looks over to --

THE WINDOW BOX

And then over to the DOOR TO THE HALL.

Emily formulates her plan for escape. She raises her hand.

(CONTINUED)

124 CONTINUED:

124

MISS MAPLE (CONT'D)

Yes.

EMILY

May I water the plants please?

\*

MISS MAPLE

(suspicious)

That's very considerate of you, Emily  
but no I think I can handle it.

Miss Maple checks out the mutated flowers in the window box.

Emily readies herself for her dash for the key and the door.

Does she have enough time? Emily reaches for the key. Miss  
Maple turns. She starts towards Emily and --

The PLANTS SPRAY POLLEN into Miss Maple's face.

MISS MAPLE (CONT'D)

Wha....?

Drugged by the pollen, Miss Maple slumps to the floor.

CONNOR

(to Emily)

Good job.

EMILY

That wasn't me.

Connor and Emily look over at Matt.

\*

MATT

(shrugs)

Side effect.

(beat, smirks)

Or maybe I'm just realizing my  
potential.

\*

\*

\*

\*

OFF Emily and Connor's reaction. Whoa --

\*

CUT TO:

125 EXT. TOWN SQUARE - DAY

125

Wem and Taffin talk on the move. Wem has just told Taffin  
about his encounter with the Queen.

TAFFIN

(reacts to the news)

So tonight Twiggy takes another child.

\*

(CONTINUED)

Wyrddwood "The Endless Night" Second Draft v3 101.\*

125 CONTINUED: 125

WEM  
Unless we stop him. \*

TAFFIN  
How? \*

WEM  
Still working that out. \*

They reach... \*

126 EXT. HIGH SCHOOL - CONTINUOUS 126

As Wem and Taffin take the steps two at a time... \*

WEM  
No matter what we do, we have to be  
careful. \*

TAFFIN  
Not like in the olden days when we  
risked all. \*

CUT TO: \*

127 INT. HIGH SCHOOL: STAIRWELL - MOMENTS LATER 127

As Wem and Taffin move up, their footsteps ECHO through the  
empty building.

WEM  
That's because we had no idea what  
we were doing. No sense of the  
consequences. \*

Taffin claps Wem on his back.

TAFFIN  
Nothing to lose but our lives. \*

Taffin slips Wem's wallet into his pocket.

The two head into...

128 INT. HALLWAY - CONTINUOUS 128

Wem spots the classroom. \*

WEM  
This way. \*

They rush forward, \*

(CONTINUED)

128 CONTINUED:

128

WEM (CONT'D)

If we don't do this right, I could  
lose everything. I could lose Emily.

\*  
\*

TAFFIN

What if she is the One?

Wem slows, stops. Glares at Taffin.

TAFFIN (CONT'D)

Then you'll lose her anyway.

(beat)

It is a possibility, Wem. There's  
no hiding her powers any more. Have  
you told Emily about her mother?

\*  
\*  
\*  
\*

WEM

It's not the right time.

\*

Wem swings open the door to the...

129 INT. CLASSROOM - CONTINUOUS

129\*

...where Wem and Taffin find Miss Maple asleep on the floor.

\*

TAFFIN

(impressed)

Emily is a bright girl. She'll figure  
it out soon enough.

\*  
\*

WEM

I have to find her.

\*

Wem rushes out.

Taffin moves to help Miss Maple.

\*

TAFFIN

Nah.

\*  
\*

Taffin decides against that and runs after Wem.

\*

CUT TO:

130 INT. THE FIX-IT FIND-IT SHOP - DAY

130

Matt, Emily and Connor confer on Emily's plan.

MATT

Okay, I'm in.

EMILY

Great.

(CONTINUED)

130 CONTINUED:

130

MATT

But I'm not doing this for you, Emily.  
Or to be a hero.

\*  
\*

CONNOR

So what's in it for you?

MATT

The road. I'll go for anything that  
makes this town less of a backwater.

\*

EMILY

But it will destroy Wyrddwood.

\*

MATT

Works for me.

Emily, looks at Matt, concerned. He's really changed.

EMILY

Okay we meet up at Connor's.  
(checks her watch)  
It's really getting late.

\*

CUT TO:

131 EXT. FAIRGROUNDS - EVENING

131

Emily checks out the base of the bonfire. The wicker man  
effigy of the STM is complete. Satisfied, Emily walks away.

\*

To her surprise, Wem falls into step with her.

\*

WEM

You're coming home with me.

\*  
\*

EMILY

So you can lock me up again?

\*  
\*

WEM

If that keeps you safe. Now, Emily.

\*

EMILY

No. What if I had a plan to stop  
the Twig Man? Would you listen to me  
then?

\*  
\*  
\*

WEM

I listen.

\*

EMILY

Dad, I have to fix this.  
(MORE)

\*

(CONTINUED)



131 CONTINUED:

131

EMILY (CONT'D)

I can't let the Twig Man take someone else. Stefan will never come back.

\*  
\*

WEM

(gentle)

What happened to Stefan wasn't your fault.

\*  
\*  
\*  
\*

EMILY

I was his friend. I let him down.

\*  
\*

WEM

(quiet)

Now you have to let him go.

\*  
\*

EMILY

Like you let Mom go?

\*

WEM

That was different.

\*

EMILY

How? Stefan disappears. Mom disappeared. They leave your life and no one wants to talk about them. No one.

\*  
\*  
\*  
\*

WEM

We talk about your Mom.

EMILY

But you never say anything.

\*

WEM

Letting your Mom go was the hardest thing I ever did.

\*  
\*

EMILY

Why? Tell me.

\*

WEM

No. No, I can't. Not now.

\*  
\*

EMILY

Not ever, right?

\*

WEM

You are so like your Mom. So determined. Tell me your plan. I promise I'll listen.

\*  
\*  
\*

CUT TO:

132 INT. THE FIX-IT FIND-IT SHOP - EVENING 132

Matt works on his project for the mission. He welds something out of steel. Done. Matt flips up his helmet. Sweat pours down his face.

Matt manhandles his construct to the side. It CLANGS against --  
A SECOND METAL GRID, eight feet by eight feet.

MATT

Two down. Two to go.

CUT TO:

133 INT. CONNOR'S HOUSE - EVENING 133

Connor stares at something, unsure. \*

FRANK \*

You don't have to do this, Connor. \*

CONNOR \*

I know. \*

Connor decides. He grabs his longbow and arrows from off the wall. Connor steps outside to join... \*

134 EXT. CONNOR'S HOUSE - CONTINUOUS 134

...Emily, Wem, Matt, and Taffin. This is the last briefing.

EMILY \*

We have to draw the Twig Man out.  
Before dusk. We need a decoy. \*

CONNOR

I'll do it. I know the Woods.

EMILY

(shakes her head) \*

It has to be Matt. \*

MATT

Me? Okay. Why me? \*

WEM

Matt, you almost turned.

MATT

Yeah. So?

(CONTINUED)

134 CONTINUED:

134

WEM

So you stand a better chance of  
getting deep into the Woods before  
you're spotted.

MATT

(sardonic)

I'm the best bait you have. Great.

CONNOR

Scared?

Matt looks evenly at Emily while he admits:

MATT

Yeah.

TAFFIN

Scared is good. It keeps you sharp.

MATT

Let's do this.

Emily smiles at Matt.

EMILY

(impressed)

Thank you, Matt.

Matt and Emily head into the woods.

ANGLE ON CONNOR. He feels a real twinge of jealousy.

Emily breaks from Matt, runs back to Connor and kisses him.

ON MATT. Deflates. Man, he just can't catch a break.

Emily runs back to Matt.

ON WEM AND CONNOR.

Connor smiles a shit eating grin. Wem catches that. Glares.

Connor shrugs off the Death-Ray look from Dad.

As Connor lopes down the hill towards Merryweather...

CUT TO:

135 EXT. WOODS: FRINGE - CONTINUOUS

135\*

Emily and Matt stalk up to the border of the Wyrddwood. Matt  
traces his finger along the knot.

(CONTINUED)

135 CONTINUED:

135

WEM

Matt, do you mind?

MATT

I'll be right over there. Preparing  
for my sacrifice. Right over there.

Wem pulls Emily aside.

WEM

I don't like this.

EMILY

Dad, I'm the only person who can do  
this.

\*

WEM

Now about the Twig Man...

\*

EMILY

(rolls her eyes)  
Dad...

\*

\*

WEM

Emily...

\*

\*

EMILY

Dad...

\*

\*

WEM

Emily. It's just...I can't lose you.

\*

\*

They hug.

\*

EMILY

You better get into position.

\*

\*

Wem breaks the hug and heads off and out of sight.

\*

Matt and Emily stand together at the border.

\*

MATT

Okay.

\*

\*

And Matt steps over the line and into...

\*

136 EXT. WYRDDWOOD - CONTINUOUS

136

Matt ventures forward.

(CONTINUED)

Wyrdwood "The Endless Night" Second Draft v3 108.

136 CONTINUED: 136

MATT  
Here Twiggy Twiggy Twiggy.

CUT TO:

137 EXT. OLD MILL - SAME TIME 137

STM and Stefan lurk in the forest shadows. \*

SKINNY TWIG MAN  
Feel that?

Stefan tilts his head.

STEFAN  
Yessss.....

SKINNY TWIG MAN  
One of your friends searches for  
you, stripling.

They move off through the trees. \*

CUT TO: \*

138 EXT. CHURCH STEEPLE - LATER 138\*

Connor takes his position.

He gently puts down a bucket of liquid, careful not to spill.

He rips apart an old shirt into strips.

CUT TO:

139 EXT. WOODS: FRINGE - SAME TIME 139

Emily in position. She peers into the Wyrdwood.

She can't stand waiting. She takes off her NECKLACE. She  
fingers it nervously like a rosary.

CUT TO:

140 EXT. OLD MILL - MOMENTS LATER 140

Matt creeps round. Stefan clammers down the side of the  
ruin into view. \*

STEFAN  
Hi Matthew. Whatsss up? Did I missss  
anything important in English classsss? \*

(CONTINUED)

140 CONTINUED: 140

MATT \*  
...not really.... \*

Matt spots the Skinny Twig Man. \*

The Skinny Twig Man spots Matt.

MATT (CONT'D) \*

Shit.

Matt runs. \*

STM takes after him. \*

HOLD ON Stefan laughing, an inhuman HOWL -- \*

CUT TO: \*

141 EXT. WOODS: FRINGE - SAME TIME 141

Emily hears the HOWL. She swallows.

EMILY \*

Here we go.

CUT TO:

142 EXT. CHURCH STEEPLE - SAME TIME 142

Connor hears the HOWL. Looks up. Gets right back to work.

He wraps an arrow with cloth. Dips it into the bucket.

CUT TO:

143 EXT. THE WOODS - MOMENTS LATER 143

Matt CRASHES through the woods.

The Skinny Twig Man lopes right behind him.

CUT TO:

144 EXT. WOODS: FRINGE - CONTINUOUS 144

BANG. Emily drives the nails from her necklace into a tree \*  
on the border of the Wyrddwood. \*

The necklace now encircles -- \*

THE CELTIC KNOT \*

carved into the trunk. \*

(CONTINUED)

144 CONTINUED:

144

Matt races from Wyrddwood.

\*

MATT

He's right behind me. Let's go.

\*

Emily drives the last nail in.

\*

MATT (CONT'D)

What are you doing?

\*

EMILY

Now Twig Man can't hide in the Woods.

The STM bursts from the Wyrddwood. Towers over Matt and Emily.

\*

MATT

Who's hiding?

STM extends his thorns to attack but pulls back.

SKINNY TWIG MAN

(realization)

Wait. You....you did something.

\*

STM shambles back to the Wyrddwood border.

\*

ANGLE ON THE CELTIC KNOT

\*

It TWISTS and WRITHES.

\*

STM tries to reach past the tree back into the Wyrddwood.

\*

STM's hand explodes in FLAMES.

SKINNY TWIG MAN (CONT'D)

No!

\*

EMILY

He's totally exposed. He can't go back to the Woods. He can only go forward.

\*

\*

\*

SKINNY TWIG MAN

Fine.

\*

\*

And Emily runs BACK INTO the Woods.

\*

MATT

Wrong way!

\*

\*

EMILY

Short cut. This gets me to the Fairgrounds way faster.

\*

\*

\*

(CONTINUED)

	Wyrldwood "The Endless Night" Second Draft v3	111.*
144	CONTINUED: (2)	144
	Emily disappears in the Woods. And that leaves...	*
	MATT STANDING IN THE OPEN	*
	STM FOCUSES ON MATT	*
	BACK TO MATT	*
	<p style="text-align: center;">MATT</p> <p style="text-align: center;">Oh. Just. Great.</p>	
	Matt runs down the hill. STM SNARLS after him.	*
	INTERCUT WITH:	*
145	EXT. WYRDWOOD - CONTINUOUS	145*
	Emily WHIPS through the woods and...	*
	WHAM! STEFAN drops from the canopy. Blocks her path.	*
	<p style="text-align: center;">STEFAN</p> <p style="text-align: center;">(a hiss)</p> <p style="text-align: center;">I told you not to stay away.</p>	* * *
	OFF Emily's fear --	*
146	EXT. MERRYWEATHER BY THE SEA - SAME TIME	146*
	Matt runs for his life.	
147	EXT. WYRDWOOD - SAME TIME	147*
	Stefan coils his vines around himself...	*
	Emily takes a step backwards...	*
	<p style="text-align: center;">EMILY</p> <p style="text-align: center;">Stefan...</p>	* *
	And Stefan ATTACKS -	*
	Leaps at Emily -	*
	Springs past her -	*
	SLAMS INTO Scragg and Bagg. The two Wyrds go flying.	*
	<p style="text-align: center;">STEFAN</p> <p style="text-align: center;">GO! NOW!</p>	* *
	Emily gathers herself and runs through the trees...	*



148 EXT. TOWN SQUARE - MOMENTS LATER 148\*

Matt runs under the cinema's marquee.

STM crawls over it.

Matt keeps going. He reaches --

\*

149 EXT. COAST ROAD: MERRYWEATHER HOTEL - CONTINUOUS 149\*

Matt glances back. That's a mistake. Matt trips, stumbles.

\*

STM looms over him.

THWAK. A flaming arrow misses STM and embeds itself in the hotel porch -- inches from Matt's face.

\*

\*

MATT (CONT'D)

Oh come on!

The arrow came from --

CUT TO:

150 EXT. CHURCH STEEPLE - CONTINUOUS 150\*

Connor calmly ignites another arrow --

\*

151 EXT. COAST ROAD: MERRYWEATHER HOTEL - CONTINUOUS 151\*

STM readies himself for the kill.

\*

MATT

Connor....?!

\*

\*

THWAK. The porch post. Right between Matt and the monster.

\*

STM SCREECHES in rage.

\*

While he's distracted, Matt pulls himself up and runs off.

\*

STM lurches after Matt.

\*

STM picks up speed and breaks back into his loping run.

\*

CUT TO:

\*

152 EXT. CHURCH STEEPLE - SAME TIME 152\*

Connor ignites the next arrow.

\*

He watches STM close in on Matt.

\*

(CONTINUED)

Wyrddwood "The Endless Night" Second Draft v3 113.\*

152 CONTINUED: 152

He targets STM. Lowers his bow. He just can't do it -- he \*  
can't shoot STM. \*

CUT TO: \*

153 EXT. FAIRGROUNDS - SAME TIME 153\*

Wem, Taffin, Stefan's Father and Frank stand at the base of \*  
the wicker man effigy. \*

STEFAN'S FATHER \*  
Where are they? \*

WEM \*  
I knew I shouldn't have let her... \*

TAFFIN \*  
Here she is. \*

Emily runs in. \*

EMILY \*  
Ready? \*

WEM \*  
Where were you? We agreed -- \*

EMILY \*  
Dad. Can we discuss it later? \*  
(glances up) \*  
Here he comes. Everyone set? \*

Matt runs through the legs of the unlit bonfire.

MATT \*  
Nyaaaaaaaaaaaaaaaaaaaaaaaaaaaa! \*

And as Twig Man follows, the men swing closed the metal grids. \*

STM is CAGED, trapped. He shoots his arm through the grid, \*  
slashing at Emily. \*

Emily signals to... \*

CUT TO:

154 EXT. CHURCH STEEPLE - CONTINUOUS 154

Connor raises his flaming arrow. Aims. Lowers it again.  
Shakes his head. He can't do it.

CUT TO:

155 EXT. FAIRGROUNDS - CONTINUOUS 155\*

STM smashes himself against the cage walls. The men  
desperately try to hold him in. \*

WEM \*

(re: Connor) \*

What is he waiting for?

FRANK \*

Come on, boy.

TAFFIN \*

The cage won't hold. \*

Emily grabs the edges of two of the cage walls... \*

She holds them together...The walls glow WHITE HOT and FUSE  
together under her touch. \*

SKINNY TWIG MAN \*

Witch! \*

Emily races to another corner. FUSES that shut. \*

CUT TO:

156 EXT. CHURCH STEEPLE - CONTINUOUS 156

And Connor decides. He lets fly.... \*

CUT TO:

157 EXT. FAIRGROUNDS - CONTINUOUS 157

And his arrow hits its mark...right in the STM's back. \*

SKINNY TWIG MAN

Noooooo....

STM and the bonfire and ignite in a swirl of FLAMES. \*

WEM \*

Get back. \*

Emily turns her head away. She cannot look. Instead -- \*

She hugs her Dad. \*

FADE OUT: \*

END OF ACT VI \*

ACT VII

\*

FADE IN:

158 EXT. FAIRGROUNDS - NIGHT

158\*

Connor and Matt watch the bonfire.

\*

MATT

Good shot. Except when you nearly hit me.

\*

\*

CONNOR

I'm out of practice.

MATT

(sarcastic)

Nice.

CONNOR

You did okay.

\*

\*

The Mayor passes the two teens.

\*

MAYOR

Great work, Connor. I really really want to thank you. Getting rid of that monster. Brilliant.

\*

\*

\*

And the Mayor is gone. Matt calls after him.

MATT

You're welcome.

CUT TO:

\*

159 EXT. FAIRGROUNDS: BONFIRE - MOMENTS LATER

159\*

The Mayor catches up with Wem and Emily.

\*

MAYOR

Thank you, Wem. Emily.

\*

\*

WEM

You're...welcome?

\*

MAYOR

The Wyrds have been defeated. And work on the road can start up again.

\*

\*

WEM

Mayor.

(CONTINUED)

159 CONTINUED:

159

MAYOR  
After the appropriate time of course.

\*

WEM  
What's appropriate?

MAYOR  
I think that's for me and the Town  
Council to decide.  
(and so on)

\*  
\*  
\*  
\*

EMILY  
Excuse me.

\*

As Wem and the Mayor continue to argue in the background,  
Emily makes her way to...

\*  
\*

STEFAN'S FATHER

\*

EMILY (CONT'D)  
I'm so sorry.

\*  
\*

STEFAN'S FATHER  
Stefan might come back. On his own.

\*  
\*

EMILY  
Sure. He could.

\*  
\*

STEFAN'S FATHER  
It's just...I have to go on the road.  
Work, you know. If I'm not here...

\*  
\*  
\*

EMILY  
We'll keep a spare room for him.

\*  
\*

STEFAN'S FATHER  
Thank you.

\*  
\*

OFF Emily's compassion --

\*

DISSOLVE TO:

\*

160 INT. EMILY'S ROOM - NIGHT

160

Emily has a question for Wem.

\*

WEM  
Big day.

\*  
\*

EMILY  
Yes.

\*  
\*

(CONTINUED)

160 CONTINUED:

160

EMILY (CONT'D)

Dad, about the Twig Man. Taffin  
told me that you destroyed him before.

\*

WEM

Yes. Just before you were born.

EMILY

But he came back.

Wem considers his answer carefully.

WEM

Well you know the story.

\*

EMILY

He can only be defeated by The One.

\*

\*

WEM

Yup. And so he grew back. The green  
world is resilient.

\*

\*

CUT TO:

161 EXT. THE WOODS: GLEN - CONTINUOUS

161

The Queen assembles her troops...Bagg and Scragg, the  
Striplings and Cleaver, now transformed into the HUNTSMAN.

\*

\*

WEM (CONT'D) (V.O.)

A weed will find the smallest crack  
in a road to grow. If you cut down  
a tree, a sapling sprouts from its  
roots. The Queen and her Wyrds won't  
go away.

\*

\*

BACK TO:

162 INT. EMILY'S ROOM - CONTINUOUS

162

WEM

At least...I hope they don't.

\*

\*

Wem kisses Emily on the top of her head.

WEM (CONT'D)

Good night.

EMILY

Night.

(CONTINUED)

162 CONTINUED:

162

WEM

One day we really should talk about  
your Mom.

EMILY

But now it's late.

WEM

Well, not that late.

Wem gently closes the door and sits on the bed.

WEM (CONT'D)

She loved you very much. Of course.  
I mean who couldn't...?

As Wem tells a story, the MUSIC SWELLS....PULL BACK and --

\*

CRANE TO:

163 EXT. EMILY'S HOUSE - CONTINUOUS

163

Stefan perches hunched double and silent on a fence post.  
Fingers, sharp as shattered twigs, flex and play over the  
fence-posts surface; nails dig in and SCRATCH deep and dirty  
furrows into the wood.

Tied roughly around its throat, the tattered red bandanna.

Stefan stares at the house. Stares at the light. And he  
watches. And waits.

\*

\*

FADE OUT:

END OF ACT VII