STARDUST
by
NEIL GAIMAN

Dramatised in two 60'00" parts
by
DIRK MAGGS

Studio Script
05-08-16

Plus two optional insert scenes
-- PART ONE --

1  EXT. STARSCAPE

FX: SPARKLING, LAMBENT SOUNDSCAPE.

NARRATOR (V.O.)
Time, the thief, eventually takes all things into his dusty storehouse, where the tapestry of the ages is kept.

2  INT. HUGE SPACE.

FX: BIG ACOUSTIC, UNA’S SLOW FOOTSTEPS UPON A HARD FLOOR. AS IF SHE’S DELIVERING TO SLOW TRACKING CAMERA.

NARRATOR (V.O.)
(in the acoustic)
To journey through the tapestry, we must first unpick a thread. But which thread do we choose? And where ... and when ...?

3  EXT. MOUNTAIN SCENERY

FX: ICY WIND BLOWING

NARRATOR (V.O.)
(voice over)
Consider the world of Faerie, where I was born. Faerie is not one land, one principality or dominion. Maps of Faerie are unreliable, and time passes differently there. A question like 'How Big is Faerie?' does not admit of a simple answer. Faerie is bigger than the world of humans – for each land that has been forced off the map by explorers going out and proving it wasn't there has taken refuge in Faerie. It is now a huge place indeed, containing every manner of landscape and terrain.

CROSSFADE TO:

4  INT. LORD STORMHOLD’S BEDCHAMBER

FX: SAME ICY WIND HEARD THROUGH OPEN CASEMENTS. A ROARING FIRE. DISTANT KEENING OF WOMEN, AS IF IN MOURNING.

LORD STORMHOLD
(slowly dying, throughout)
Hrrrrrrrr ... Hrrrrrrr ...
Here, high in the fastnesses of Faerie’s Mount Huon, a fortress is carved, like a hole in a rotten tooth. Inside, my father, the eighty-first Lord of Stormhold, lies dying in his bedchamber. He is not alone; his living sons Primus, Tertius and Septimus wait by the right side of his deathbed. And those unmoving grey figures on the other side are my dead brothers, Secundus, Quintus, Quartus and Sextus.

SEPTIMUS
(shiver)
It’s cold as the heart of an ice troll in here. Why doesn’t the old man just die?

PRIMUS
Septimus, please.

TERTIUS
Try a selfless act, for once.

SEPTIMUS
And you’re not here to find out who inherits the Power Of Stormhold, Primus? Tertius?

PRIMUS
Enough.

SECUNDUS
(dead)
Septimus, charming as ever. He probably poisoned our Father.

QUINTUS
(dead)
Very likely, Secundus. He poisoned me.

SECUNDUS
(dead)
We should have had our revenge, Quintus.

QUINTUS
(dead)
Well it’s too late now. We’re dead.

PRIMUS
(to Lord Stormhold)
Father. We are here. What would you with us ... father?
NARRATOR (V.O.)
This particular thread of our tapestry will keep, for a little. There are others to pull at. Come ...

EXT. SKY OVER FAERIE - DAY

FX: WE DESCEND FROM THE ICY WINDS OF STORMHOLD TO THE WARMER BREEZES OVER THE FORESTS OF FAERIE, WITH ITS VARIED BEASTS DIMLY AUDIBLE, UNDER:

NARRATOR (V.O.)
Look at the richness of the world of Faerie. Here there be Dragons, gryphons, wyverns, hippogriffs, basilisks, and hydoras. Also more familiar animals: cats, dogs, wolves and foxes, eagles and bears. But there are places where other, more fell, creatures lurk, away from the light.

CROSSFADE TO:

EXT. COTTAGE OF THE LILIM - DAY

FX: A FOREST SOUNDSCAPE, BUT CLAUSTROPHOBIC. A MOANING LOW WIND, THE SCREECHES OF CARRION BIRDS RATHER THAN BIRDSONG, THE SCURRYINGS OF VERMIN IN DANK UNDERGROWTH.

NARRATOR (V.O.)
... I had forgotten how dark it is here, this wood is so thick and deep. The clearing in which this cottage lies is so dank and fetid, one cannot imagine it was ever a pleasant, sun-dappled glade. But once upon a time it was, until the Lilim, the witch-queens, came to dwell in this place, and turned it to darkness.

INT. COTTAGE OF THE LILIM - DAY

FX: FIRE QUIETLY SMOULDER. A CAULDRON BUBBLES.

THE SNORING OF THREE HAGS, ASLEEP IN THEIR BEDS.

NARRATOR (V.O.)
Shh. Tread quietly now. These three sleeping hags are the witch-queens, and our presence may be detected. You nod. Your eyes have settled now? Good. Mark what you see. The cottage is one room, undivided. A peat fire burns in the large fireplace.

(MORE)

Dramatized by Dirk Maggs
NARRATOR (V.O.) (CONT'D)
There are three raised beds upon which the witches sleep.
Here, near the cauldron are cooking implements, and this large wooden cage.
It is empty, so we are spared the piteous whimperings of a child meant for the pot.

FX: BLEED IN ALTERNATIVE UNIVERSE SOUNDS HERE: NIGHT BREEZE, A DISTANT FOUNTAIN, HARP MUSIC OR SOMESUCH.

NARRATOR (V.O.)
Ah, your eye has been drawn to the only thing in the house that is not covered in dust and soot. The mirror of black glass, as high as a tall man, as wide as a church door. This is what I wanted you to see. Move closer. Look into it at the reflection of the room behind you - the beds, the hags ... Yes! Your eyes open in wonder.
In the mirror you see the three other women in this little house. They are slim, and dark. The hall they inhabit is many times the size of this cottage; the floor is of onyx, and the pillars are of obsidian. There is a courtyard behind them, open to the sky above. The three women in the mirror are also the Lilim: but whether they are the successors to these old women, or their shadow-selves, none but the Lilim can say - Shh!

MORWANNEG
(as Hag, disturbed in sleep)
Zzz ... Hmph. Cut its living heart out...

FX: SHE ROLLS OVER AND GOES BACK TO SLEEP

MORWANNEG (CONT'D)
... zzzzzz ....

NARRATOR (V.O.)
Hm. I do not think this is the place to begin our journey either. The first thread we must pick up lies deeper in the past ... in the world of humans.

CROSSFADE TO:

EXT. WALL - EVENING

FX: BREEZE. BIRDSONG. VOICES, HORSES, CARTS ETC., APPROPRIATE FX, RUNNING UNDER:

Dramatized by Dirk Maggs
NARRATOR (V.O.)

(voice over throughout)
It is the evening of April 29th, 1837.
Young Queen Victoria is on the throne of
Great Britain, and the evening sun shines
over the English village of Wall, which
has stood on this jut of granite for the
last six hundred years. There to the
north is the Inn, The Seventh Magpie.
Immediately to the east is a high grey
rock wall, from which the town takes its
name. Built of hewn granite, this wall
emerges from the woods and goes back into
the woods, with just one break in it; an
opening about six feet in width. For
hundreds of years, the villagers have
posted guards at the opening - like the
two lads you see here - to stop anyone
from going through, and otherwise have
done their best to put it out of their
minds.

DUNSTAN

Tommy.

TOMMY

What?

DUNSTAN

Something moved, in the trees on the far
side of the meadow.

TOMMY

Lots of things move about in those trees.
Best not ask what they are.

NARRATOR (V.O.)

But tonight is the eve of May Day. And
once every nine years, on May Day, the
guard is relaxed. Tomorrow the great
Fairy Market comes to the meadow. For on
the other side of the wall lies the World
of Faerie, and there is, for one day and
one night, commerce between the nations,
which packs the village with visitors of
all hues, from many countries.

TOMMY

It’s the Furriners I can’t stand. The
village is full of ‘em.

NARRATOR (V.O.)

- The lad with the black eye is Tommy
Forester -
DUNSTAN
It’s only every nine years. The village profits from it.

NARRATOR (V.O.)
- The lad with the nut-brown hair and freckles is Dunstan Thorn. He is eighteen years old, works on his father’s farm and owns nothing, save a small cottage in a far field his parents have given him.

TOMMY
The Inn’s packed out, so them furriners are taking rooms in farms and houses, paying with strange coins, even with herbs and spices. It’s a diabolical liberty.

(groans)
Oh, my noggin hurts.

DUNSTAN
It will do that, if you put it in the way of a stranger’s fist.

TOMMY
Filthy furriner in the Seventh Magpie. Trying to steal a kiss from my Bridget.

DUNSTAN
You can’t expect the pot wench at the Inn not to attract attention. Not on Market Day Eve.

TOMMY
She’s the loveliest girl in Wall.

DUNSTAN
Gah, not a patch on my Daisy.

TOMMY
Daisy Hempstock’ll be an old maid by the time you pluck up courage to wed her.

DUNSTAN
You want a matching pair of black eyes?

THE FOLLOWING LINES DELIVERED UNDER UNA’S NARRATION:

TOMMY
Look out, another stranger’s looking to trespass early.

FX: FOOTSTEPS APPROACH ON DIRT TRACK.

Dramatized by Dirk Maggs
VISITOR
(ornately bad English)
Good evening fine gentlemen, execute me please. I am curiously wondering if it might be permissible to convey myself through the wall this fine evening, to preambulate the adjoining meadow and dally among the charming Faerie folk?

OLDER UNA (V.O.)
Dunstan is not a romantic, though he professes a wish to gain his Heart's Desire - a wish that will lead to consequences far beyond his imagining. However, today he feels important: he has been given a wooden cudgel, and if any stranger comes up to the break in the wall, has instructions to say -

DUNSTAN
(to VISITOR)
Tomorrow, tomorrow. No one's coming through today, good sir.

NARRATOR (V.O.)
- Whilst holding the cudgel at a somewhat... ambivalent, angle -

VISITOR
(retreating, nervously)
I - I am infinitely obliged, fine fellow...

CROSSFADE TO:

INT. THE SEVENTH MAGPIE INN - EVENING.

FX: BUSY ALE-ROOM. CHATTER OF LOCALS AND 'FURRINERS'...

NARRATOR (V.O.)
At the end of the shift, another two able-bodied young men of the village arrive, carrying a lantern each, Tommy and Dunstan walk down to the Inn where Mr. Bromios the landlord gives each of them a mug of his best ale - which is very fine indeed - as their reward for doing guard duty.

MR. BROMIOS
There you are, boys.

FX: POTS OF ALE PUT DOWN. DUNSTAN AND TOMMY DRINK DEEP.

DUNSTAN
(smacks lips)
Ohhh, that ale is the stuff of life.

FX: TOMMY RISES

Dramatized by Dirk Maggs
TOMMY
I can see my Bridget at the bar.
(moves off)
I’m off to steal a kiss.

DUNSTAN
Don’t start any more fights.

STRANGER IN BLACK SILK TOP HAT APPROACHES.

BLACK SILK TOP HAT
(moving in)
This seat free?

DUNSTAN
That it is, sir.

DUNSTAN PULLS AT HIS PINT.

FX: BOWL SET DOWN IN FRONT OF HIM.

BLACK SILK TOP HAT
My friend was called away on business and left his pudden. Will you eat it?

DUNSTAN
With a ready will, sir.
(starts to eat - mouth full)
And may I say what a very fine black silk top hat that is.

BLACK SILK TOP HAT
Why thank you. Actually, I’m trying to find a place to set it for the night.
Every room in the village that can be let, has already been let.

DUNSTAN
(mouth full; unsurprised)
Is that so?

BLACK SILK TOP HAT
Would you know of a house that might have a room?

DUNSTAN
(eating)
Mm. Well, then. I have a cottage, on the edge of my father’s land. It was our shepherd's cottage, until he died, two years ago last lammas-tide, and they gave it to me.

BLACK SILK TOP HAT
Will you take me to it?

Dramatized by Dirk Maggs
FX: DUNSTAN FINISHES WOLFGING DOWN PUDDING, PUSHES BOWL AWAY.

DUNSTAN
(smacks lips)
Mm. Aye, why not.

EXT. DUNSTAN’S COTTAGE – NIGHT.

FX: NIGHT AIR. OWL. DISTANT DOG BARKS.

DUNSTAN
Want to look inside?

BLACK SILK TOP HAT
I’ve no need. Come, Dunstan Thorn, I’ll rent it from you for the next three days.

DUNSTAN
What’ll you give me for it?

BLACK SILK TOP HAT
A golden sovereign. More than fair rent, when a farm-worker might hope to make fifteen pounds in a good year.

DUNSTAN
True enough. But ... if you’re here for the market, then it’s miracles and wonders you’ll be trading in that meadow through the Wall tomorrow.

BLACK SILK TOP HAT
So, it would be miracles and wonders that you would be after. Your heart’s desire? Would that be it?

DUNSTAN
Aye. My heart’s desire. Sounds about right.

BLACK SILK TOP HAT
Hm.

FX: THUNDER. LIGHT RAIN BEGINS.

DUNSTAN
(eyebrow cocked)
’S raining.

BLACK SILK TOP HAT
Ye-es. Very well. A miracle, a wonder. Tomorrow, you shall attain your Heart’s Desire. Here is your golden sovereign –

Dramatized by Dirk Maggs
STARDUST
by NEIL GAIMAN

DUNSTAN

Hey - !

FX: A SWIFT GESTURE, COIN PULLED FROM BEHIND DUNSTAN’S EAR.

BLACK SILK TOP HAT
- hiding behind your ear. And that’s a true sovereign, not faerie gold. Till tomorrow.

FX: DOOR CLOSES.

FX: DUNSTAN’S FOOTSTEPS ON SODDEN PATH. COWS MOOING, GROWING NEARER.

NARRATOR (V.O.)
Dunstan walks to the cow byre, in the pelting rain.

INT. COW BYRE – NIGHT.

FX: RAIN OUTSIDE. MOOING OF COWS FROM BELOW. CREAKY LADDER, DUNSTAN ROLLING HIMSELF UP IN STRAW, UNDER:

NARRATOR (V.O.)
He climbs into the hayloft and is soon asleep.

DUNSTAN
(snores)
Zzzzzzz ...

FX: MORE THUNDER OUTSIDE, AND A SCRABBLING, THUMPING IN THE HAYLOFT WITH DUNSTAN.

NARRATOR
In the small hours of the morning, Dunstan is woken by somebody treading on his feet ...

DUNSTAN
(not really awake)
What - get off!

LITTLE HAIRY MAN
'Scuse me.

DUNSTAN
Who's that? Who is it?

Dramatized by Dirk Maggs
LITTLE HAIRY MAN
Just me. I'm here for the market. I was sleeping outside but the rain threatened to get into my baggage, and there's things in there must be kept dry as dust, so I was wondering if you'd mind me staying here under your roof. I'm not very big. I'd not disturb you or nothing.

DUNSTAN
Just don't tread on me.

FX: LITTLE HAIRY MAN GATHERS STRAW FOR BEDDING, UNDER:

LITTLE HAIRY MAN
I just hopes I'm not disturbing you.

DUNSTAN
(disturbed)
You aren't.

FX: THUNDER, LIGHTNING.

LITTLE HAIRY MAN
Strap up! That was bright.

NARRATOR (V.O.)
A flash of lightning illuminates the byre and for just a moment, Dunstan sees something small and hairy laying down on the straw, wearing a large floppy hat.

DUNSTAN
Goodness me, you're a very hairy little man.

LITTLE HAIRY MAN
Indeed, that I am sir. Good night to you.

DUNSTAN
Good night ... what's your name?

LITTLE HAIRY MAN
(snores)
Zzzzzzz ...

FX: LITTLE HAIRY MAN FARTS IN HIS SLEEP.

LITTLE HAIRY MAN (CONT'D)
(wakes briefly)
Beg pudden ... Zzzzzzzz ...

DUNSTAN
(settling back down)
Charming.
EXT. COW BYRE - DAY

FX: BREEZE, BIRDSONG. COWS MOOING. DUNSTAN WALKS DOWN PATH, UNDER:

NARRATOR (V.O.)
The day of the Fair dawns, bright and sunny. Dunstan wakes late, to find the cow byre empty. He walks up to the farmhouse, washes his face, puts on his very best jacket, and walks up to the village.

EXT. FAIRGROUND MEADOW - DAY.

FX: FAIRGROUND HUBBUB. STEAM CALLIOPES. PEOPLE TALKING, CHILDREN LAUGHING.

FX: VARIOUS STALLHOLDERS (AS REQUIRED):

EYES WOMAN
Eyes, eyes! New eyes for old! Trade in your tired peepers for shiny new ones!

MUSIC WOMAN
Penny whistles! Tuppenny hums! Threepenny choral anthems!

HERBAL LADY
Everlasting lavender! Bluebell cloth! Chive, Mint and Leek infusions!

COATS WOMAN
Coats of night! Coats of twilight! Coats of dusk!

INSTRUMENT MAN
Instruments of music from a hundred lands! Make mysterious and exotic tunes! Zithers, Citterns, Serpents and Crumhorns!

RIDDLE MAN
Try your luck! Step right up! Answer a simple riddle and win a wind-flower!

DREAMS MAN
Bottled dreams, a shilling a bottle! No more nightmares, just sweet sleepy nights!

MAGIC MAN
Swords of fortune! Wands of power! Rings of eternity! Cards of grace! Storm-filled eggshells, step this way!

MEDICINE WOMAN
Salves and ointments, philtres and nostrums! Cure it before you even know you’ve got it!

ALL THIS AROUND & UNDER:

Dramatized by Dirk Maggs
NARRATOR (V.O.)
At the stroke of midday Dunstan strides up to the wall and nervously walks through. After just a few paces, he feels a hand on his shoulder.

BLACK SILK TOP HAT
Ah. My landlord. Let us walk together.

DUNSTAN
Did you sleep well in my cottage, sir?

BLACK SILK TOP HAT
That I did, thank you. Are you looking forward to the market today?

DUNSTAN
In truth, I don’t know. Last market I went to, I was only a boy.

BLACK SILK TOP HAT
Well, remember to be polite, and take no gifts. You’re a guest here. And now, I shall give you the last part of the rent that I owe you. For I swore an oath. It is a gift for you, and your firstborn child, and its firstborn child ... a gift that will last as long as I live.

DUNSTAN
And what would that be, sir?

BLACK SILK TOP HAT
Your Heart’s Desire, remember? It is now granted.

DUNSTAN
Is it?

BLACK SILK TOP HAT
Indeed. And now I must away to business. (walks off)
Fare well, Dunstan Thorn.

DUNSTAN
(mutters)
Would help to know what it is ...

NARRATOR (V.O.)
Dunstan walks on through the throng, passing all manner of stalls, jingling his money, thinking what present he might take back to give Daisy Hempstock.

FX: BUSTLE CONTINUES, HURDY GURDY MUSIC WITH HEAVY BOOTS CLOMPING INTO BACKGROUND, WITH NEWS CRIER YELLING, UNDER:

Dramatized by Dirk Maggs
OLDER UNA (V.O.)
Dunstan walks past where Mr. Bromios has set up a tent to sell wines and pasties to the village folk, who, though tempted by the foods being sold by the folk from Beyond the Wall have been told by their grandparents that it is deeply, utterly wrong to eat fairy food—or sip fairy wine. Dunstan begins to think he will never find a present for Daisy. But then he hears something ...

NEWS CRIER (background)
Oh yay oh yay! Enquire here for the latest news from Faerie! The Master of Stormhold Suffers a Mysterious Malady! "The Hill of Fire Has Moved to the Fastness of Dene! The Squire of Garamond's Only Heir is Transformed into a Grunting Pig-wiggin! These and more stories expanded upon for a coin ... !

FX: MUSICAL TINKLY CHIMING, GROWING CLOSER

DUNSTAN
Hallo ...

NARRATOR (V.O.)
Dunstan sees a painted caravan with a brightly coloured bird chained to it. Nearby is a stall covered with flowers—bluebells and foxgloves and harebells and daffodils and a profusion of others. Each flower is made of glass or crystal, and they chime and jingle. He is enchanted, and examines them. There does not seem to be anyone attending the stall.

DUNSTAN (calls)
Hello?

FX: YOUNGER UNA DESCENDS CARAVAN STEPS.

NARRATOR (V.O.)
Dunstan does not notice the brightly coloured bird is no longer on its perch. He is transfixed by the person who descends from the caravan. It is a girl with deep violet eyes. Her ears, visible beneath her curly black hair, are those of a cat: curved, and dusted with a fine, dark fur.

YOUNG UNA
Can I help you, young sir?

FX: TINKLING SOUND AS HE PICKS UP A GLASS FLOWER.

Dramatized by Dirk Maggs
DUNSTAN
(gaping a bit)
Whu - uh - yes. Yes, these glass flowers
... say, this one, this snowdrop. Its um -
it's very lovely. How much is it?

YOUNG UNA
(amused)
Oh, the cost is never discussed at the
outset. It might be a great deal more
than you are prepared to pay; and then
you would leave, and we would both be the
poorer for it. Let us discuss the
merchandise in a more general way.

BLACK SILK TOP HAT
(passing)
Ah, there you are.

DUNSTAN
Oh, you again, sir.

BLACK SILK TOP HAT
(going)
There. My debt to you is settled, and my
rent is paid in full.

BLACK SILK TOP HAT MAN DEPARTS, CHUCKLING.

YOUNG UNA
What on earth did he mean?

DUNSTAN
Truly I have no idea.

YOUNG UNA
You were interested in the flowers. They
can be given to a loved one as a token of
affection, and the sound they make is
pleasing to the ear. Also, they catch
the light most delightfully. See? This
bluebell?

FX: FLOWER PICKED UP; TINKLES

YOUNG UNA (CONT’D)
A beautiful colour, don’t you think?

DUNSTAN
(smitten)
I think ... the colour of your eyes puts
it to shame. Um. I can’t help noticing -

YOUNG UNA
What?

Dramatized by Dirk Maggs
DUNSTAN
The chain that runs from your wrist to the ground, and into the Caravan.

YOUNG UNA
My silver chain? It binds me here. I am the personal slave of Madame Semele, the witch-woman who owns this caravan. She caught me many years ago, as I played by the waterfalls in my father’s lands, high in the mountains. She lured me in the form of a pretty frog, always but a moment out of my reach, until I had left my father’s lands, whereupon she resumed her true shape and popped me into a sack.

DUNSTAN
And you are her slave forever?

YOUNG UNA
Not forever. I gain my freedom on the day the moon loses her daughter, if that occurs in a week when two Mondays come together. In the meantime I do as I am bid. Will you buy a flower from me now, young master?

DUNSTAN
My name is Dunstan.

YOUNG UNA
And an honest name it is, too.

DUNSTAN
What is yours?

YOUNG UNA
I am a slave, and the name I had was taken from me.

FX: DUNSTAN PULLS OUT HANKY FILLED WITH MONEY, UNDER:

DUNSTAN
Oh. Um, let’s see how much I’ve brought - I think I might like to buy that snowdrop there.

YOUNG UNA
Oh - we do not take money at this stall.

DUNSTAN
No? What will you take?

YOUNG UNA
I could take a kiss from you. One kiss, here on my cheek.

Dramatized by Dirk Maggs
DUNSTAN
That I’ll pay with goodwill ...

FX: JINGLING AND TINKLING OF GLASS FLOWERS AS HE LEANS ACROSS THE STALL TO KISS HER ON THE CHEEK.

YOUNG UNA
There now. And here’s your snowdrop.

FX: TINKLING OF GLASS FLOWER HANDED OVER.

DUNSTAN
(admiring it)
My, my ... it’s perfect.

YOUNG UNA
And I’ll see you back here tonight, Dunstan Thorn, when the moon goes down. Come here and hoot like a little owl. Can you do that?

DUNSTAN
(stumbling away)
Yes ... yes I can ... thank you ...

FX: CARAVAN DOOR OPENS

MADAME SEMELE
(muttering)
Good for nothing, leaving me to sleep when customers are about.
(to YOUNG UNA)
Girl, where are you?

YOUNG UNA
Here, Madame Semele.

MADAME SEMELE
Well go, make me a posset while I polish the stock.

YOUNG UNA
(going off into caravan)
Yes, Madame Semele.

MADAME SEMELE
(mutters)
Wastrel. Now, where’s me pretty ruby rose ... oh! The snowdrop’s not here. Girl! Where’s the snow-drop?

FX: TINKLING OF FLOWERS AS SHE SEARCHES.

YOUNG UNA
(off)
The snowdrop? Was there a snowdrop?

Dramatized by Dirk Maggs
MADAME SEMELE
Was there - ?! What?! A precious piece
that is, gone! You ungrateful little good-
for-nothing! What times we live in, when
servants can’t be trusted with the
simplest jobs. I knew I should never have
taken you on, you vex me at every turn...

CROSSFADE TO:

EXT. FAIRGROUND - NIGHT

FX: BREEZE IN TREES. LOW HUBBUB OF VOICES. CRACKLE OF
DYING FIRE EMBERS.

NARRATOR (V.O.)
That night, the sun sets, and a huge
spring moon appears. A chill breeze
blows. Dunstan Thorn slips through the
gap in the wall, and into the meadow
raises his hands to his mouth, and hoots.

DUNSTAN
(imitating owl)
Hoo hoo! Hoo hoo!

A BEAT.

DUNSTAN (CONT’D)
Hoo hoo! Hoo hoo!

YOUNG UNA
(suddenly beside him)
That is nothing like a little owl.

DUNSTAN
(startled)
Wah!

YOUNG UNA
Come. Lie here on the grass with me,
where it’s quiet.

FX: THEY LIE DOWN ON THE GRASS. (FOLEY GRASS, AS REQ’D:)

DUNSTAN
Oh ... you ... intoxicate me ...

YOUNG UNA
Do you think you are under a spell,
pretty Dunstan?

DUNSTAN
I do not know.
YOUNG UNA  
You are under no spell, pretty boy. Lie back and tell me about yourself.

FX: THEY LIE BACK ON GRASS.

YOUNG UNA (CONT’D)  
What do you want from life?

DUNSTAN  
I don’t know. You, I think.

YOUNG UNA  
Well, I want my freedom from this chain.

FX: SILVER CHAIN TINKLES AS DUNSTAN TOUCHES IT

DUNSTAN  
What is it made of?

YOUNG UNA  
Cat's breath and fish-scales and moonlight, all mixed in with the silver. Unbreakable until the terms of the spell are concluded.

DUNSTAN  
Oh.

YOUNG UNA  
I miss my father's land. And the witch-woman is not the best of mistresses. (she sniffs) Mft.

DUNSTAN  
Why, you are crying. Come here ...

FX: HE PULLS HER TO HIM

YOUNG UNA  
Hmmm ... hold me.

FX: A RUSTLE OF CLOTHING

DUNSTAN (giving in)  
Mmmm. Oh ... oh my stars ...

MUSIC SWELL
NARRATOR (V.O.)
They lie together till dawn’s grey light 
breaks. Then the girl arises, and 
straightens her dress, and Dunstan 
arises, and fastens his best britches.

YOUNG UNA
Now, get along with you, pretty lad. 
Here’s a kiss to send you on your way.

FX: SHE KISSES HIM, THEN TURNS AND GOES.

NARRATOR (V.O.)
And with that, she walks back into the 
gypsy caravan behind the stall.

16 EXT. COW BYRE – DAY
FX: MOOING, BIRDSONG, UNDER:

NARRATOR (V.O.)
Dunstan returns to the cow byre, takes 
off his boots, and sleeps until he wakes, 
when the sun is high in the sky.

17 EXT. VILLAGE – DAY
FX: GENERAL ATMOS, UNDER:

NARRATOR (V.O.)
On the following day the market finishes, 
and the foreigners leave the village and 
life in Wall returns to normal. 
Two weeks after the market, Tommy 
Forester proposes marriage to Bridget 
Comfrey, and she accepts.

18 EXT. CHURCH – DAY
FX: WEDDING BELLS, CHEERING LOCALS, UNDER:

NARRATOR (V.O.)
And that June Dunstan Thorn is married to 
Daisy Hempstock. And if the groom still 
seems a little distracted, well, the 
bride is as glowing and lovely as ever 
any bride has been.

19 EXT. SOUNDSCAPE – CHANGING SEASONS – SEE FX NOTES:
FX: COUNTRYSIDE ATMOS. DISTANT HAMMERING & SAWING

Dramatized by Dirk Maggs
NARRATOR (V.O.)
They live in Dunstan's cottage, while their own little farmhouse is erected, and they are certainly happy enough.

FX: COLD WIND, RAIN, SHEEP BAA.

NARRATOR (V.O.)
First autumn comes, then winter; and it is at the end of February that a wicker basket is pushed through the gap in the wall.

FX: GUARDS SNORING

NARRATOR (V.O.)
The guards, on each side of the gap, do not notice the basket at first.

FX: BABY CRYING

TOMMY
(waking up)
Seth - Seth - wake up, man, somebody's pushed a basket through the gap.

FX: BASKET AND BABY PICKED UP.

SETH
Lord love us ... poor little mite, he'll freeze. Hang on, what's this say?

FX: NOTE UNFOLDED.

SETH (CONT'D)
It's a name.

SETH (CONT'D)
"Tristran Thorn".

MUSIC CLIMAX.

EXT. VILLAGE - DAY

FX: BREEZE. BIRDSONG. DISTANT HORSES SNORT, ETC.

NARRATOR (V.O.)
When the next Faerie Market is held, Tristran Thorn, who is eight years old, does not attend, finding himself packed off to stay with extremely distant relations in a village a day's ride away. His little sister, Louisa, six months his junior, is allowed to go, and this is a source of ranklement to the boy.

(MORE)

Dramatized by Dirk Maggs
His mother says nothing to him about the matter, as she says little to him on any subject.

So the days go by, and the weeks go by, and the years go by also. When he is fifteen Tristran hurts his arm falling from the apple tree outside Mr. Thomas Forester's house: more specifically, outside Miss Victoria Forester's bedroom window. She is, without any doubt, the most beautiful girl for miles around. Victoria is seventeen, she is pale, and utterly delightful, and used to getting her own way.

EXT. ORCHARD - DAY.

FX: BREEZE IN TREES, BIRDS SING.

FX: VICTORIA TAKES A BITE OF AN APPLE.

VICTORIA FORESTER
(recoiling)
Ugh. Sour. Your father's apples look juicy, Louisa, but they taste awful.

FX: SHE TOSSES AWAY THE APPLE.

LOUISA THORN
They're cookers. Boiled up with sugar, they make the sweetest pie.

VICTORIA FORESTER
I shouldn't judge on looks.

LOUISA THORN
Says Victoria Forester.

VICTORIA FORESTER
What does that mean?

LOUISA THORN
Every boy in the village is in love with you, and many a sedate gentleman with grey in his beard stares at you in the street, walking off with a spring in his step. They say that Mister Robert Monday himself is counted amongst your admirers.
Mister Monday is five and forty years of age if he is a day.

He is a widower, besides. I would not wish to marry someone who had already been married. It is like someone else breaking in one's own pony.

I would imagine that the advantage of a widower is that by the age of five-and-forty, their lusts would long since have been sated, which would free one from a number of indignities.

Oh, Victoria!

Tristran Thorn, at the age of seventeen, is half the way between a boy and a man. He seems to be composed chiefly of elbows and Adam's apples, and is painfully shy. Tristran's daydreams are strange, guilty fantasies, muddled and odd, of journeys through forests, to rescue Princesses from palaces, dreams of knights and trolls and mermaids. He is a gangling creature of potential, a barrel of dynamite waiting for someone or something to light his fuse; but no one does, so he works at Monday and Brown's, the Village Shop, as a clerk.

Dramatized by Dirk Maggs
FX: SHOP DOOR OPENS. BELL. WINDY EVENING OUTSIDE.

VICTORIA FORESTER
(entering)
Shop?
(waits, then)
Shop!

TRISTRAN
(muffled)
- oh help -

FX: MUFFLED CRASH FROM REAR OF SHOP.

TRISTRAN (CONT’D)
(emerging, nervous)
V-Victoria ... er - Good day, Miss Forester.

VICTORIA FORESTER
(unimpressed)
Tristran Thorn. Is Mister Monday not in?

TRISTRAN
Er - no - he is away fetching supplies, and Mr. Brown is doing accounts in the back office.

VICTORIA FORESTER
I see. Well, then. I have my Mother’s weekly shopping list.

FX: TRISTRAN LOOKING FOR PENCIL AND PAPER

TRISTRAN
(flustered)
Good, right - er - just find my stub of pencil -

VICTORIA FORESTER
You don’t need a pencil, it’s all on the list.

TRISTRAN
(stops looking)
Right. Um - so. What es she need?

VICTORIA FORESTER
(at speed)
Half a pound of sago, ten cans of sardines, one bottle of mushroom ketchup, five pounds of rice - Why don’t I just give you the list?

TRISTRAN
Yes. Yes, of course.

Dramatized by Dirk Maggs
FX: LIST HANDED OVER.

TRISTRAN (CONT’D)

Thank you.

(looks at it)

Five pounds of rice. You’ll be having rice pudding, then, Miss Forester?

VICTORIA FORESTER

Yes, Tristran.

TRISTRAN

Yes. Um - we can deliver most of the provisions tomorrow morning, and the rest of it will come back with Mister Monday, on Thursday week.

VICTORIA FORESTER

Yes. I must go -

TRISTRAN

- You know, Miss Forester, I get off in a few minutes. Perhaps I could walk you home. It’s not much out of my way.

A LONG BEAT.

VICTORIA FORESTER

Certainly.

TRISTRAN

I - I’ll just tell Mr Brown -

FX: HE SCURRIES OUT THE BACK.

VICTORIA FORESTER

(gazing around, hums to self)

Hm hmm hmmmm ...

MUFFLED VOICES, UNDER HER HUMMING.

TRISTRAN

I’ll be finishing up now Mr. Brown.

MR. BROWN

When I were a lad I had to stay, close up the shop and sleep under the counter with my coat for a pillow.

TRISTRAN

Yes. I’m indeed a very lucky young man, sir, and I wish you a very good night.

FX: TRISTRAN REAPPEARS, PULLING ON HIS COAT.

TRISTRAN (CONT’D)

Ready.

Dramatized by Dirk Maggs
EXT. VILLAGE - NIGHT

FX: NIGHT AIR, OWL, ETC.

FX: TRISTRAN AND VICTORIAN WALK TOGETHER UNDER THE STARS.

NARRATOR (V.O.)
The autumn twilight turns into deep and early night as they walk. The crescent moon hangs white in the sky and the stars burn in the darkness above.

TRISTRAN
Victoria.

VICTORIA FORESTER
Yes, Tristran.

TRISTRAN
Would you think it forward of me to kiss you?

VICTORIA FORESTER
(cold)
Yes. Very forward.

TRISTRAN
Will you kiss me?

VICTORIA FORESTER
No.

TRISTRAN
You kissed me when we were younger. Beneath the pledge-Oak, on your fifteenth birthday. And last May Day, behind your father's cowshed.

VICTORIA FORESTER
I was another person then.

TRISTRAN
If you will not kiss me, will you marry me?

A PAUSE.

VICTORIA FORESTER
Marry you? And why ever should I marry you, little shop-boy? I shall not kiss you; neither shall I marry you. Now, we should be getting along, or my father and mother will be wondering what has kept me, and they will leap to some entirely unjustified conclusions, for I have not kissed you, Tristran Thorn.
TRISTRAN
There is nothing I would not do for your kiss, no mountain I would not scale, no river I would not ford, no desert I would not cross.

FX: DISTANTLY, SOMETHING RIPS ACROSS THE SKY OVERHEAD.

THEY STOP.

VICTORIA FORESTER
Oh. Did you see that falling star? I believe they are not at all uncommon at this time of year.

A BEAT

TRISTRAN
For a kiss, I would bring you that fallen star.

A BEAT

VICTORIA FORESTER
Go on, then. And if you do, I will.

TRISTRAN
What?

VICTORIA FORESTER
If you bring me that star, the one that just fell, then I’ll kiss you. Who knows what else I might do?

TRISTRAN
What else? A kiss? Your hand in marriage? If I brought you the fallen star?

VICTORIA FORESTER
(amused)
Anything you desire.

TRISTRAN
You swear it?

VICTORIA FORESTER
Of course. Silly shop-boy. Let me go home.

TRISTRAN
(moving off)
I shall leave you here, my lady. For I have urgent business.

(Off, dramatically)
To the East!

Dramatized by Dirk Maggs
EXT. VILLAGE - NIGHT

FX: NIGHT AIR. TRISTRAN’S FEET RUN ON DIRT ROAD. BRAMBLES, BRANCES ETC.

NARRATOR (V.O.)
Tristran Thorn runs all the way home. Brambles snag at his clothes as he runs and a branch knocks his hat from his head.

TRISTRAN
(breathless)
Oh, bother ...

INT. KITCHEN, WESTWARD MEADOWS.

FX: POT BUBBLING ON HEARTH. CRACKLING EMBERS. DOOR BURSTS OPEN.

DAISY HEMPSTOCK
Goodness me.

TRISTRAN
(breathless)
Mother, father.

DAISY HEMPSTOCK
Look at the state of you!

FX: TRISTRAN TAKES HIS COAT OFF, UNDER:

TRISTRAN
I beg your pardon, father, mother, but I shall be leaving the village tonight. I may be gone for some time.

DAISY HEMPSTOCK
Foolishness and silliness. Give me that torn coat, so that I can sew it up.

TRISTRAN
Here.

FX: DAISY BUSTLES OUT

DUNSTAN
Where are you going?

TRISTRAN
East, through the wall.

DUNSTAN
And - and will you be coming back?
TRISTRAN

Of course.

DUNSTAN

And have you given any thought to getting through the wall? Past the guards?

TRISTRAN

I’ll fight them, if I have to.

DUNSTAN

You’ll do no such thing. Go and pack a bag, and kiss your mother goodbye, and I'll walk you down to the village.

EXT. WALL – NIGHT

FX: NIGHT AIR. DISTANT STREAM.

NARRATOR (V.O.)

Tristran tells his father his plan, packs a bag, and his mother brings him apples, a cottage loaf, and a round of cheese. He kisses her cheek and bids her farewell. Then he walks into the village with his father. On wall duty that evening are Harold Crutchbeck and Mr. Bromios, the Innkeeper.

DUNSTAN

Evening, Mister Bromios. Evening, Harold. I believe you both know my son Tristran?

MR. BROMIOS

Indeed. Good evening, Tristan.

HAROLD

Oh, aye.

TRISTRAN

Hallo Harold. Good evening, Mr. Bromios.

DUNSTAN

I suppose you both know about where Tristran came from.

HAROLD

Oh, aye.

MR. BROMIOS

They say he was found here, in the gap in the wall.

DUNSTAN

Well, now it's time for him to go back.

Dramatized by Dirk Maggs
A BEAT.

MR. BROMIOS
Very well.
(low, to Harold)
Harold. We’re letting Tristran through.

HAROLD
Oh, aye.

DUNSTAN
(low, to TRISTRAN)
That was easier than I expected. Now, Tristran. Before you go. Here’s a little something that might come in useful.

TRISTRAN
What is it?

FX: MUFFLED TINKLING OF GLASS SNOWDROP.

DUNSTAN
A snowdrop, all made of glass.

TRISTRAN
It’s beautiful.

DUNSTAN
Be gentle with it.

TRISTRAN
Yes, father.

DUNSTAN
Now. Go on with you, boy. Go, and bring back your star, and may God and all His angels go with you.

TRISTRAN
Thank you, father.

THEY EMBRACE.

DUNSTAN
(fighting tears)
Go on, you fool.

FX: TRISTRAN’s FOOTSTEPS WALK THROUGH GATE, AND ONWARD.

NARRATOR (V.O.)
Tristram walks through the gate, into the meadow on the other side of the wall. Then, his bag swinging in one hand, the glass snowdrop in the other, Tristram Thorn sets off towards the woods.
EXT. FAERIE WOOD – NIGHT.

FX: WIND IN TREES. TRISTRAN’S FOOTSTEPS ON UNDERGROWTH.

NARRATOR (V.O.)
As he walks, the chill of the night grows less, and he is surprised to realize the moon is shining brightly down on him: surprised because the moon set an hour ago, a slim, sharp silver crescent, but the moon that shines down on him now is a huge, golden Harvest moon. He places the crystal snowdrop in the top buttonhole of his coat, and, too ignorant to be scared, Tristran Thorn passes beyond the fields we know, and into Faerie.

MUSIC CLIMAX

EXT. MOUNTAIN SCENERY

FX: ICY WIND BLOWING

NARRATOR (V.O.)
Now Tristran would perhaps have never crossed the wall into Faerie if it had not been for the events which you will recall took place just hours earlier – the gathering at my father’s deathbed.

INT. LORD STORMHOLD’S BEDCHAMBER – NIGHT.

FX: SAME ICY WIND HEARD THROUGH OPEN CASEMENTS. A ROARING FIRE. DISTANT KEENING OF WOMEN, AS IF IN MOURNING.

LORD STORMHOLD
(dying)
Hrrhhhh .... Hrrhhhh ...

PRIMUS
Father. We are here. What would you with us?

LORD STORMHOLD
(wheezy but cogent)
What I have to say concerns Primus, Tertius and Septimus, the living.

SECUNDUS
(dead)
We, the dead, attend out of respect, Father.

Dramatized by Dirk Maggs
SEXTUS
(dead)
And in the hope you might throttle
Septimus as your last living act.

QUARTUS
(dead)
He can’t hear you, Sextus.

LORD STORMHOLD
Primus. Tertius. Septimus. This concerns
which of you will inherit my title.
Which, having been murdered one apiece by
you three, my dead sons cannot.

PRIMUS
That’s not quite correct.

LORD STORMHOLD
What?

TERTIUS
Septimus killed both Quintus and Sextus.

PRIMUS
He poisoned Quintus with a dish of spiced
eels. He pushed Sextus off a precipice.

SEPTIMUS
Oh, really.
(mutters)
I simply rejected artifice in favour of
efficiency and gravity.

LORD STORMHOLD
Quiet!

A BEAT.

LORD STORMHOLD (CONT’D)
I am dying. Soon my time will be done,
and you will take my remains deep into
the mountain, to the Hall of Ancestors.

SEXTUS
(dead)
Lucky you. My bones are scattered in the
foothills.

SECUNDUS
(dead)
I was gobbled up by eagles.

QUARTUS
(dead)
Waterfall, me. Whoosh, gone.

Dramatized by Dirk Maggs
LORD STORMHOLD

Primus.

PRIMUS

Yes sire.

LORD STORMHOLD

Go to the window.

PRIMUS

(crossing to window)

As you wish.

LORD STORMHOLD

What do you see?

PRIMUS

I see the evening sky above us, and clouds below us.

LORD STORMHOLD

Tertius. What do you see?

TERTIUS

(crossing to window)

It is as Primus told you, Father. The evening sky hangs above us, the colour of a bruise, and clouds carpet the world beneath us.

LORD STORMHOLD

Septimus. You.

SEPTIMUS

(sighs, crossing to window)

Window? Yes I’m going.

(mutters)

Pantomime.

LORD STORMHOLD

What do you see?

A BEAT

SEPTIMUS

I see a Star, father.

LORD STORMHOLD

Ahh. Now. Bring me to the window.

FX: THEY GO BACK TO THE BED, UNDER:

PRIMUS

(going back)

Come, Tertius.
SEPTIMUS
(mutter)
What a performance.

TERTIUS
Got him? Lift -

FX: THEY LIFT HIM, CARRY HIM TO THE WINDOW, UNDER:

PRIMUS
Steady now -

LORD STORMHOLD
Ow ... uhhh ... 

LORD STORMHOLD (CONT’D)
Ahh. Primus, you know the talisman that we call the Power Of Stormhold.

PRIMUS
It is the yellow topaz stone you wear upon the chain around your neck, father.

TERTIUS
He who wears that topaz is Stormhold’s Master, the eighty-second Lord.

LORD STORMHOLD
Septimus?

SEPTIMUS
(shrug)
I want it.

LORD STORMHOLD
Of course you do. But you forget.
(with a little of his old power)
I am the lord of Stormhold who had defeated the Northern Goblins at the battle of Cragland’s Head; who fathered eight children - seven of them boys - on three wives; who killed each of his four brothers in combat, before he was twenty years old.

FX: LITTLE TINKLY ‘SNAP!’ , UNDER:

LORD STORMHOLD (CONT’D)
It is that man who -
(effort)
- breaks this chain, holds up this Topaz and utters the incantation -
(quavery shout into wind)
(MORE)

Dramatized by Dirk Maggs
Est! Quia! Omnes! Appetunt!
(‘Power Is All I Crave’—Latin)
And then—
Flings this stone into the sky—!

FX: TINKLY SWISH OF CHAIN BEING FLUNG ALOFT (KEEPS GOING, UNDER:)

SEPTIMUS
- No—!

PRIMUS
- What—?

TERTIUS
- But—!

FX: SOARING SOUND OF THE TOPAZ GETTING HIGHER AND HIGHER, UNDER:

NARRATOR (V.O.)
The brothers watch as their father flings the stone into the air. It arcs up over the clouds, and then, defying all reason, it continues to rise into the air, towards the very stars overhead, until it is lost to sight...

LORD STORMHOLD
To him who retrieves the stone, which is the Power of Stormhold, I leave my blessing, and the Mastership of Stormhold and all its dominions.

TERTIUS
And should we capture eagles, and harness them, to drag us into the heavens?

FX: FALLING STAR EFFECT (AS IN EARLIER SCENE), UNDER:

PRIMUS
(still watching the sky)
No. Look. A star is falling.

TERTIUS
The first star of the evening.

SEPTIMUS
It’s dropping somewhere to the south and the west of us.

LORD STORMHOLD
(dying)
There. It is done...

FX: BODY FALL.

PRIMUS
He’s gone.

Dramatized by Dirk Maggs
TERTIUS
Right. You take the head end.

PRIMUS
(effort)
Septimus, lend a hand, he’s a dead weight.

SEPTIMUS
I’m busy.

FX: PRIMUS AND TERTIUS LABOURING TO CARRY THE BODY TO THE BED UNDER REST OF SCENE:

NARRATOR (V.O.)
The four dead brothers watch Septimus as he continues to gaze out of the window.

QUINTUS
(dead)
What do you think he’s thinking, Secundus?

SECUNDUS
(dead)
How to murder Primus and Tertius.

QUARTUS
(dead)
How to make it look like an accident.

SEXTUS
(dead)
You’re all wrong. He’s wondering where that stone fell, and how to reach it first.

LORD STORMHOLD
(dead)
I damned well hope so.

QUARTUS
(nervously)
Oh - hallo, father ...
But it is not only Tristran and Victoria and Lord Septimus who mark its descent. In the dark cottage in the dark woods, where the three sisters dwell, their eldest, Morwanneg, who has just retrieved a stoat from a snare, and slit its throat, looks up and sees it too...

FX: FALLING STAR EFFECT (AS IN EARLIER SCENE), UNDER:

MORWANNEG
(hag, calling)
Sisters! Sisters! Come quickly!

FX: DOOR IN COTTAGE OPENS. THE OTHER TWO BUSTLE OUT.

LILIM 1
(approach)
What, sister?

LILIM 2
(approach)
What is it?

MORWANNEG
Look ...

THEY LOOK AS THE STAR BLAZES OVERHEAD.

LILIM 1
At last ...

LILIM 2
About time.

LILIM 1
Which of us, then, to find it?

MORWANNEG
I’ll open the stoat.

FX: STOAT SKINNED IN ONE DEFT MOVE. GUTS SQUIDGING, UNDER:

MORWANNEG (CONT’D)
Now each take her knife, close her eyes, and stab.

FX: THREE STABS INTO FLESH

MORWANNEG (CONT’D)
Eyes open.

LILIM 1
I’ve the kidney.

Dramatized by Dirk Maggs
LILIM 2
I’ve his liver.

MORWANNEG
(triumphantly)
I’ve his heart.

A BEAT

LILIM 1
How will you travel?

MORWANNEG
In our old chariot, drawn by what I find at the crossroads.

LILIM 2
You’ll be needing some years. Come into the cottage.

INT. COTTAGE OF THE LILIM - DAY

FX: FIRE QUIETLY SMOULDERS. A DRAWER PULLED OPEN. A METAL BOX PULLED OUT, CARRIED TO KITCHEN TABLE.

LILIM 1
(setting it down)
Here is the box.

LILIM 2
Open it, then.

FX: LITTLE CREAK – LID OPENED. SLIGHT SQUIDGY NOISE.

MORWANNEG
How the tiny morsel shines and wriggles.

LILIM 1
Hmm. Not much left.

MORWANNEG
Then it’s a good thing that we’ve found a new one, isn’t it. Here, let me have it.

FX: SHE REACHES IN, GRABS SQUIDGY THING, POPS IT IN HER MOUTH, SWALLOWS.

MORWANNEG (CONT’D)
Mm. Mmmm ...

FX: A SWIRLING SOUND, MAGICAL TRANSFORMATION AS MORWANNEG BECOMES YOUNG AGAIN, UNDER:

LILIM 1
Oh my.
LILIM 2
Lucky thing.

EFFECT STOPS

MORWANNEG
(young, slightly breathless)

LILIM 1
You’re young again, Morwanneg. As you are through the looking-glass.

LILIM 2
Would that we were. The sisterhood of the Lilim, young again.

LILIM 1
We will be, if she succeeds.

MORWANNEG
When I return with her heart, there will be years aplenty for all of us.

LILIM 1
A star.

LILIM 2
A Fallen Star.

MORWANNEG
The first in two hundred years. And I'll bring it back to us.

FX: SHE SWEEPS OUT OF THE COTTAGE. DOOR SHUTS.

EXT. POOL GLADE, FAERIE - NIGHT.

FX: QUIET NIGHT AIR. WATER TRICKLING. POOL LAPPING. CRICKETS & TREE FROGS CHIRRUP. A FIELD MOUSE SQUEAKS.

NARRATOR (V.O.)
And what of that Fallen Star? You must understand that in the World Of Faerie, a fiery fallen star from the heavens is no more ‘just’ a piece of rock than this little creature before us, gnawing at a hazel nut, is ‘just’ a field mouse. In fact this mouse is a prince under an enchantment, who cannot regain his outer form until he eats the Nut of Wisdom –

FX: OWL SWOOP. LITTLE PLOP! IN WATER. MOUSE SCREAMS AND IS CARRIED AWAY.

Dramatized by Dirk Maggs
NARRATOR (V.O.)
- oh. He has been taken by that owl, and
dropped the nut in the stream -

FX: WATER DISTURBED, ANOTHER PLOP!

NARRATOR (V.O.)
Ah. A salmon has eaten the nut.

FX: OWL SCREECH. FALLING STAR, UNDER:

NARRATOR (V.O.)
And the owl is disconsolate, herself
being under a curse, and only able to
resume her rightful shape if she consumes
a mouse who has eaten the Nut of Wisdom.
Or perhaps a small bear ... Where was I?
Oh, yes. The light in the glade by this
pool grows in brightness to the point
that each of these fireflies is convinced
that this at last is love, but instead -

YVAINE
(falling)
Waaaaaaaaah!

FX: A CRASH OF FOLIAGE AND UNDERGROWTH AS YVAINE HITS THE
GROUND AT SPEED.

YVAINE (CONT’D)
- Oof!

A MOMENT, AS THE DUST SETTLES.

NARRATOR (V.O.)
It is a Fallen Star, in the World Of
Faerie.

YVAINE
Ow. Fuck. Ow.

EXT. FOOTPATH, FAERIE - NIGHT

FX: NIGHT AIR. CRICKETS. TRISTAN’S FOOTSTEPS.

NARRATOR (V.O.)
Now it is hours since the star fell, and
Tristran Thorn has left October in
England behind and is surrounded by a
soft Summer’s night, the stars glittering
and a Harvest Moon shining golden yellow
overhead.

FX: TRISTRAN STOPS, PUTS DOWN HIS GLADSTONE BAG AS A
PIILLOW AND LIES DOWN, UNDER:

Dramatized by Dirk Maggs
NARRATOR (V.O.)
He is sleepy, and lays with his head on his bag, and covers himself with his coat. And as he begins to dream of his schooldays in the village of Wall, and tries to remember the dates of the Kings and Queens of England, he drifts off...

TRISTRAN
Zzzz ...
(sleepy)
Whah - ?

FX: HE IS POKED, HARD

LITTLE HAIRY MAN
'Scuse me, but would you mind dreamin' a bit quieter, only your dreams is spillin' over into my dreams, and I can't be doin' with kings and such. William the Conker, that's as far as I go, and I'd swap that for a dancing mouse.

TRISTRAN
(not really awake, under:)
Mm ... I didn't ... I mean ... Eh?

NARRATOR (V.O.)
You will recognise at once the little hairy man who once shared a hayloft with Tristran's father...

LITTLE HAIRY MAN
Just keep it down, if you don't mind.

TRISTRAN
Sorry ... Zzzzzzzzzzzzzzzz.

35 EXT. FOOTPATH, FAERIE - MORNING 35

FX: BIRDSONG. BREEZE. BREAKFAST FRYING ON A CAMP FIRE.

TRISTRAN
Zzzz ...

LITTLE HAIRY MAN
Breakfast.

TRISTRAN
Eh?

FX: TRISTRAN SITS UP.

TRISTRAN (CONT’D)
Who are you?
LITTLE HAIRY MAN
A friend.

TRISTRAN
What is that delightful smell?

LITTLE HAIRY MAN
Breakfast, lad. It's mushrumps, fried in butter, with wild garlic. Here. Eat up while I tidy away.

FX: TIN PLATE PUT DOWN IN GRASS BY TRISTRAN.

TRISTRAN
Ooh. That looks good.
(eats)
Tastes good.

FX: LITTLE HAIRY MAN TIDIES COOKING IMPLEMENTS INTO HIS BAG, UNDER:

LITTLE HAIRY MAN
You says that now, but wait an hour. I knowed a man in Paphlagonia who'd swallow a live snake every morning, when he got up. He used to say, he was certain of one thing, that nothing worse would happen to him all day. 'Course they made him eat a bowl-full of hairy centipedes before they hung him, so he was a bit presumptive.

TRISTRAN
My name is Tristran Thorn.

LITTLE HAIRY MAN
Charmed. If not enchanted, ensorcelled and confusticated.

TRISTRAN
I beg your pardon?

LITTLE HAIRY MAN
Well, I used to be confusticated, but you know how these things go. Ready to move on? Good.

INT. WOODLAND, FAERIE - DAY

FX: WIND IN TREES. NO BIRDSONG. TRISTRAN AND LITTLE HAIRY MAN WALKING.

NARRATOR (V.O.)
And so Tristran and the Little Hairy Man walk forward into a patch of woodland, and Tristran tells his companion of his quest.

Dramatized by Dirk Maggs
TRISTRAN
I come from the village of Wall, where there lives a young lady named Victoria Forester, who is without peer among women. Her face is -

LITTLE HAIRY MAN
Usual complement of bits? Eyes? Nose? Teeth? All the usual?

TRISTRAN
Yes -

LITTLE HAIRY MAN
Well then, you can skip that stuff. So what damn-fool silly thing has this young lady got you a-doin' of?

TRISTRAN
I saw this falling star, and I promised to bring it to her. And it fell over there, towards that mountain range.

LITTLE HAIRY MAN
(sighs)
Look. I'd not mention why you're here if I were you. There's those as would be unhealthily interested in such information. Best keep mum. But never lie.

TRISTRAN
So what should I say?

LITTLE HAIRY MAN
If they ask where you've come from, you say 'Behind me,' and if they asked where you're going, you'd say 'in front of me.'

TRISTRAN
I see. Do you think it will be far? To the star?

LITTLE HAIRY MAN
(rhetorically)
How many miles to Babylon?

TRISTRAN
(recites)
How many miles to Babylon?
Three score miles and ten.
Can I get there by candlelight?
Yes, and back again.
Yes, if your feet are nimble and light,
You can get there by candlelight.

Dramatized by Dirk Maggs
LITTLE HAIRY MAN
That’s the one.

TRISTRAN
It’s only a nursery-rhyme.

LITTLE HAIRY MAN
Only a nursery - ? Bless me, there's some
on this side of the Wall would give seven
year's hard toil for that little cantrip.
And back where you come from you mutter
'em to babes alongside of a rock-a-byebaby or a rub-a-dub-dub, without a second
thought - hang on.

FX: HE STOPS. TRISTRAN STOPS TOO.

TRISTRAN
What?

LITTLE HAIRY MAN
Where’s the path gone?

TRISTRAN
Eh?

LITTLE HAIRY MAN
Look around you. Can you see the path?

TRISTRAN
Not any more.

A BEAT.

LITTLE HAIRY MAN
Now we’re for it.

TRISTRAN
What? Should we run?

LITTLE HAIRY MAN
Not much point. We've walked into the
trap, and we'll still be in it even if we
runs. Look, up in the tree, here.

TRISTRAN
There’s a bird. A dove?

LITTLE HAIRY MAN
Hand me a pebble.

FX: PEBBLE PICKED UP

TRISTRAN
Here.

FX: PEBBLE THROWN, UNDER

Dramatized by Dirk Maggs
LITTLE HAIRY MAN
(effort)
Unf - !

FX: PEBBLE HITS BRANCH. WHAT SOUNDS LIKE A COLLECTION OF STICKS FALLS TO THE GROUND.

TRISTRAN
Oh. It wasn’t a dove.

LITTLE HAIRY MAN
It’s the skellington of a bird.

TRISTRAN
Picked clean, while roosting?

LITTLE HAIRY MAN
(figuring odds)
Tchah. There's no escape by flying, not judgin' by that thing. And your sort of people never could learn to burrow - not that that'd do us much good...

FX: THE SOUND OF WIND IN TREES BUILDS, WITH A SINISTER RUSTLING UNDERTONE ...

TRISTRAN
Should we arm ourselves?

LITTLE HAIRY MAN
Against the trees themselves? We're in a Serewood.

TRISTRAN
A Serewood?

LITTLE HAIRY MAN
Now you'll never get your star, and I'll never get my merchandise. One day some other poor bugger lost in the wood'll find our skellingtons picked clean as whistles and that'll be that.

FX: FLUTTERY LEAF - TRISTRAN JUMPS

TRISTRAN
Ow! A wasp stung me ... no - it was a falling leaf.

LITTLE HAIRY MAN
Now it begins. If only we knew where the true path was ... even a Serewood couldn't destroy the true path. Just hide it from us, lure us off of it.

Dramatized by Dirk Maggs
TRISTRAN
I... I do know where the path is. It's down that way.

LITTLE HAIRY MAN
How do you know?

TRISTRAN
I - I just - know.

LITTLE HAIRY MAN
Well, come on then, run!

FX: THEY RUN, BRAMBLES AND TANGLES CLUTCHING AT THEIR CLOTHES.

TRISTRAN
(breathless)
No not that way - ow! - over to the left!

LITTLE HAIRY MAN
Blooming trees - ah! - they've arranged themselves into a wall - ow!

TRISTRAN
Buck up, we’re nearly there - ooh!

LITTLE HAIRY MAN
Yes I see it - quickly, before this gap closes -

FX: THEY CRASH THROUGH A THICKET AND INTO A CLEARING.

EXT. WOODLAND CLEARING, FAERIE - CONTINUOUS

FX: RUSTLING AND SURGING OF TREES STOPS. BIRDSONG RETURNS. AIR. THEY RUN OUT INTO THE OPEN AND STOP, PANTING.

TRISTRAN
Are we safe now?

LITTLE HAIRY MAN
As long as we stay on the path. We can stop here a moment, though. There's stuff we needs to talk about. Sit down.

FX: THEY SIT. LHM RUMMAGES IN BAG. CORK OUT OF BOTTLE.

LITTLE HAIRY MAN (CONT’D)
Here, have a sip.

TRISTAN SWIGS.

Dramatized by Dirk Maggs
TRISTRAN
(coughs)
Ooh - strong ... but nice.

LITTLE HAIRY MAN
It's a crime to drink something as rare and good as this out of the bottle, but needs must.

FX: HE RE-CORKS THE BOTTLE AND STOWS IT AWAY AGAIN, UNDER:

LITTLE HAIRY MAN (CONT'D)
Now. There's something here I'm not properly gettin'. Where are you from?

TRISTRAN
Wall. I told you.

LITTLE HAIRY MAN
Who's your father and mother?

TRISTRAN
My father's name is Dunstan Thorn. My mother is Daisy Thorn.

LITTLE HAIRY MAN
Mmm. Dunstan Thorn. Mm. I met your father once. He put me up for the night. Not a bad chap. Still doesn't explain ... there isn't anythin' unusual in your family, is there? Enchantresses, or Warlocks?

TRISTRAN
None that I know of.

LITTLE HAIRY MAN
All right. Which direction is the village of Wall?

TRISTRAN
(points)
There.

THE FOLLOWING Q&A IS QUITE BRISK:

LITTLE HAIRY MAN
Where are the Debatable Hills?

TRISTRAN
There.

LITTLE HAIRY MAN
The Catavarian Isles?

TRISTRAN
That way.

Dramatized by Dirk Maggs
LITTLE HAIRY MAN
His Vastness the Freemartin Muskish?

TRISTRAN
There.

LITTLE HAIRY MAN
His Vastness the Freemartin Muskish's Transluminary Citadel?

TRISTRAN
(doubt)
Um ... a shade more that way?

LITTLE HAIRY MAN
And where's this star you're lookin' for?

TRISTRAN
(confident, points)
It's that way.

LITTLE HAIRY MAN
Good. How far, d'ye think?

TRISTRAN
Six months' walk ... How did I know that?

LITTLE HAIRY MAN
You just knows, it seems. And I'll wager you're not the only one'll be lookin' for it. Now look. You've saved my life, laddie, back there in the Serewood, and your father, he done me a good turn back before you was born, and let it never be said that I'm a cove what doesn't pay his debts. Now, where is it - ?

FX: LITTLE MAN RUMMAGES IN BAG

LITTLE HAIRY MAN (CONT'D)
You remember what I told you before? 'How many miles to Babylon'?

TRISTRAN
'Can I get back by candle light', and so on?

LITTLE HAIRY MAN
Exactly. It's the candle-wax, you see. Most candles won't do it. This one took a lot of findin'.

FX: HE PULLS OUT CANDLE STUB.

TRISTRAN
There's not much of a candle left. What do I do with it?

Dramatized by Dirk Maggs
LITTLE HAIRY MAN
All in good time. Take this silver chain, too. You’ll need it.

FX: LONG THIN SILVER CHAIN HANDED TO TRISTAN.

LITTLE HAIRY MAN (CONT’D)
You’ll be needin' it to bring your star back with you.

TRISTAN
What do I do with it?

LITTLE HAIRY MAN
Take up the candle in your right hand. I'll light it. Then you walk to your star. Then tie it to the chain, and bring it back here. There's not much wick left, so you'd best step lively.

TRISTAN
I suppose so, yes.

LITTLE HAIRY MAN
Did I see a box of lucifers in yer pack?

TRISTAN
Here.

FX: HE PULLS BOX OF MATCHES FROM PACK. MATCH STRUCK. CANDLE LIT.

LITTLE HAIRY MAN
Candle’s lit.

TRISTAN
Won’t it blow out?

LITTLE HAIRY MAN
Not unless you want it to. Or it runs out, whichever’s first. Ready?

TRISTAN
I - I think so.

LITTLE HAIRY MAN
Off you go. Take one step at a time.

TRISTAN
Just a step?

LITTLE HAIRY MAN
Go on.

FX: WHOOSH

Dramatized by Dirk Maggs
EXT. RIVER’S EDGE

FX: RUSHING WATER

TRISTRAN

Bye bye - oh, he’s gone. No - I’ve gone - miles and miles in one step ... So if I take another -

FX: WHOOSH

EXT. DESERT

FX: HOWLING WIND, CAMEL IN DISTANCE

TRISTRAN

- I’m in the Desert -

FX: WHOOSH

EXT. MOUNTAINS

FX: SNOWY WIND, THUNDERSTORM

TRISTRAN

Mountains ...

FX: WHOOSH

INT. CAVE, UNDERGROUND

FX: DRIPS; ECHOEY ACOUSTIC

TRISTRAN

Oo-er, it’s night already. No ... this must be a cave ...

FX: SOMETHING GROWLS IN THE DARKNESS

TRISTRAN (CONT’D)

- best not stay here -

FX: WHOOSH

EXT. POOL GLADE, FAERIE - NIGHT.

FX: QUIET NIGHT AIR. WATER TRICKLING. POOL LAPPING. CRICKETS & TREE FROGS CHIRRUP

TRISTRAN

Hm. Nice little glade. But I must press on -

Dramatized by Dirk Maggs
FX: HE TAKES A STEP, IN THE GRASS

TRISTRAN (CONT’D)
Oh. Didn’t work. Try again.

FX: HE TAKES ANOTHER STEP IN THE GRASS.

TRISTRAN (CONT’D)
So ... the candle is still burning. I must have reached my destination.
(calls)
Hello?

YVAINE IS SNIFFLING, OFF.

TRISTRAN (CONT’D)
Excuse me? I’m looking for a star - ouch!

FX: HE IS HIT WITH A CLUMP OF EARTH.

YVAINE
(off)
Go away.

CHANGE ANGLE:

TRISTRAN
(off)
I won’t hurt you.

YVAINE
(close)
Go away.
(effort)
Unh!

FX: ANOTHER CLOD THROWN AT TRISTRAN

TRISTRAN
(off; approach)
Hey - Please don’t throw any more mud at me.

YVAINE
Just go away and leave me alone.

TRISTRAN
(words tumbling out)
Look. I didn’t mean to disturb you. It's just there's a star, fallen somewhere around here, and -
(stops)
Why are you sitting there like that?

YVAINE
I broke my leg.

Dramatized by Dirk Maggs
TRISTRAN
I’m sorry. But there’s a star -

YVAINE
I broke my leg, you idiot. When I fell.

TRISTRAN
Oh. You’re the star?

YVAINE
And you’re a clodpoll. And a ninny, a numbskull, a lackwit and a coxcomb!

TRISTRAN
Yes ... I suppose I am at that. Here.

FX: SILVER CHAIN BOUND ROUND HER WRIST

YVAINE
What’s this?

TRISTRAN
A chain, slipped round your wrist.

YVAINE
(fury)
What do you think you are doing?

TRISTRAN
Taking you home with me. I made an oath. This is honestly nothing personal. I do it for love. Her name, that is, the name of my love, is Victoria. Victoria Forester. She promised me anything I desired were I to bring her the star that we saw fall the night before last. I was looking for a diamond or a rock. I certainly wasn’t expecting a lady.

YVAINE
And, having found a lady, you have to drag her into your foolishness? For what?

TRISTRAN
(shrug)
Love.

YVAINE
Well I hope you choke on it.

FX: FMPT! CANDLE GOES OUT

TRISTRAN
Oh. The candle’s gone out.

YVAINE
So?

Dramatized by Dirk Maggs
TRISTRAN
“Can I get there by candlelight? There, and back again”.

YVAINE
Oh shut up.

TRISTRAN
Without candlelight, the village of Wall is six months hard travel from here.

YVAINE
Listen. I want you to know, that whoever you are, and whatever you intend with me, I shall give you no aid of any kind, nor shall I assist you, and I shall do whatever is in my power to frustrate your plans and devices.

TRISTRAN
Um - can you walk?

YVAINE
No, my leg is broken. Are you deaf, as well as stupid?

A BEAT.

TRISTRAN
(sighs)
Do your kind sleep?

YVAINE
Of course. But not at night. At night, we shine.

FX: TRISTRAN LIES DOWN ON GRASS.

TRISTRAN
(slight efforts)
Well, I can't think of anything else to do. I'm going to try to get some sleep. It's been a long day. Maybe you should try to sleep, too. We've got a long way to go. Goodnight ...

A BEAT

TRISTRAN (CONT’D)
.... Zzzzz.

YVAINE
(sighs)

FX: SILVER CHAIN TUGGED AT FRUITLESSLY, UNDER:

Dramatized by Dirk Maggs
EXT. FOOTHILLS, STORMHOLD - NIGHT

FX: COLD WIND. A COACH AND HORSES TRUNDLES ALONG.

NARRATOR (V.O.)
Many leagues away, the three Lords of Stormhold ride in a coach pulled by six black horses. Each of the lords is dressed in mourning. They say nothing. There is nothing to be said; no alliances can be made.

FX: HORSES SLOW, UNDER:

COACHMAN
(calling back inside)
Nottaway Inn, my Lords. Whoaa.

FX: COACH HALTS. DOOR OPENS. THE THREE LORDS DESCEND.

INNKEEPER
(coming out of door)
My Lords, this is an honour. Come in, come in.

INT. NOTTAWAY INN - EVENING

FX: FIRE BURNING, SOUNDS OF DINING FOLLOWED BY FEET ASCENDING WOODEN STAIRS AND DOORS BEING BOLTED, UNDER:

NARRATOR (V.O.)
The chambermaids are instructed to prepare three beds for the night, even though Letitia swears she thought she saw seven Lords alight from the coach.

INT. TERTIUS’S ROOM - CONTINUOUS

FX: QUIET ATMOS. A HORSE HEARD DISTANTLY GALLOPING OFF.

NARRATOR (V.O.)
Tertius has slipped a silver coin to Letitia, so he is not surprised at all when, shortly before midnight, when all is still, there comes a tap-tapping on his door.

FX: TAP-TAPPING. DOOR OPENS

LETITIA
I’m here to warm yer bed, m’Lord Tertius.

Dramatized by Dirk Maggs
STARDUST
by NEIL GAIMAN

FX: BEDCLOTHES, ETC. AS SUITABLE – ! – UNDER:

NARRATOR (V.O.)
She holds a bottle of wine in her hand.

FX: CORK OUT OF WINE BOTTLE. Poured.

NARRATOR (V.O.)
Tertius leads the girl to the bed, and, after undressing her, extinguishes the candle. After some time, he grunts, and is still.

FX: HIS BODY FLOPS BACK ON THE BED, DEAD.

LETITIA
(disappointed)
Why, sir, are you finished already? Sir? Sir!

INT. UPSTAIRS LANDING, NOTTAWAY INN – EVENING

FX: FIRE BURNING DOWNSTAIRS. LETITIA SCREAMING. DOOR OPENS.

PRIMUS
(emerging)
Landlord! Landlord, a light here!

FX: HE CROSSES TO TERTIUS’S ROOM AND OPENS THE DOOR.

INT. TERTIUS’S ROOM – CONTINUOUS

FX: PRIMUS ENTERS. LETITIA’S SCREAMING NOW LOUD.

PRIMUS
Compose yourself, girl.

LETITIA SUBSIDES INTO SOBS.

LETITIA
He’s dead, my Lord Primus ...

PRIMUS
What’s this bottle?

LETITIA
Your other brother gave it me. Said it was a fine stiffener, and would provide me with a night I would never forget.

PRIMUS
(gazing on the scene)
Ahh, Septimus.

(MORE)

Dramatized by Dirk Maggs
LETITIA
‘E’s gone, my Lord. Left an hour back.

SHE DISSOLVES INTO SOBS AGAIN.

PRIMUS
Damn him.

LETITIA
What about your other brothers, sir?

PRIMUS
What other brothers?

LETITIA
The grey, ones standing at the end of the bed.

PRIMUS
(leaving)
Don’t be ridiculous. Where’s that Landlord - ?

HE EXITS. SHE REMAINS, SOBBING, BUT STOPS FOR:

QUINTUS
(dead)
I thought Septimus had more imagination. That was the self-same preparation of baneberries he slipped into my dish of eels.

LETITIA
Oh my stars, they are ghosts - !

SHE FLEES THE ROOM, SCREAMING.

SECUNDUS
(dead)
What a thumpingly stupid girl.

SEXTUS
(dead)
Enthusiastic, though. Enjoy yourself, Tertius?

TERTIUS
(dead)
Oh, shut up.

EXT. NOTTAWAY INN - MORNING

FX: COACH DRAWS AWAY, UNDER:

Dramatized by Dirk Maggs
NARRATOR (V.O.)
The next morning Lord Primus orders Letitia to accompany Tertius's body back to the castle of Stormhold. Then, alone in the coach, he leaves the village of Nottaway, in a significantly worse temper than when he arrived.

EXT. CROSSROADS, FAERIE

FX: COLD WIND. CROWS IN DISTANCE. GOAT COMPLAINING.

BREVIS
Come on, Billy, stop your grumbling. I've got to fetch a florin for you and not a penny less, or we'll starve.

FX: GOAT COMPLAINING CONTINUES, UNDER:

NARRATOR (V.O.)
Some considerable distance from the Inn stands a crossroads. Approaching it is a dull-eyed boy dragging his unwilling goat to market. Waiting at the crossroads is a tall woman. Recognise her? It is the witch-queen, the elder of the three sisters of the Lilim, who has used the last of the heart they cut many years ago from a living star to become young again. Now she is in search of a fresh supply. She is cold, beautiful and terrifying. Beside her is a goat cart, its shafts empty.

BREVIS
Oh ... hallo.

MORWANNEG
What do they call you, boy?

BREVIS
(a bit overawed)
Brevis, Ma’am.

MORWANNEG
Indeed. And will you sell me your goat, boy? As you see I have nothing to harness to my cart. I cannot go far like this.

BREVIS
My mother told me I was to take the goat to the market and to sell her for a hen, and some corn, and some turnips.

Dramatized by Dirk Maggs
MORWANNEG
Why, I will give you a golden guinea.
Enough to buy a coop-full of hens, and a
hundred bushels of turnips. Will that do?

BREVIS
Y-Yes. Here is his halter.

FX: THE GOAT BLEATS.

MORWANNEG
Thank you. Hm. Now I consider this fine
beast you have sold me, I think that a
matched pair would be so much more
impressive than just one. Don’t you?

BREVIS
I do not know what you mean, lady - I
baaa - baaaaa - baaaaa -

FX: HE IS TURNED INTO A GOAT. LEATHER AND BUCKLES, UNDER:

MORWANNEG
There. Two fine goats, to draw my cart.

FX: WOOD CREAKS AS SHE GETS IN THE CART.

MORWANNEG (CONT’D)
Forward!

FX: WHIP CRACK. THE GOATS BLEAT AND WALK FORWARD, THE
CART TRUNDLING BEHIND THEM. FADES.

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EXT. MEADOW, FAERIE

FX: BIRDSONG, WIND IN LONG GRASS. YVAINE STRUGGLING ALONG
ON A MAKESHIFT CRUTCH, GRUMBLING.

YVAINE
I can’t walk far on this leg.

TRISTRAN
I’ve made you a splint, and a crutch.
We’ll get you to a proper doctor at the
next town.

FX: THEY STRUGGLE ON, UNDER

NARRATOR (V.O.)
Tristran and the Star have struggled out
of the dell and find themselves walking
towards a broad open meadow.

TRISTRAN
So why did you fall? Did you trip over
something?

Dramatized by Dirk Maggs
YVAINE
I did not trip. I was hit. In the side. By this.

FX: SHE PULLS OUT THE LORD OF STORMHOLD’S TOPAZ, ON ITS CHAIN.

TRISTRAN
That looks like a topaz. They’re quite valuable.

YVAINE
And now I am obliged to carry it about with me.

TRISTRAN
Why?

YVAINE
Shhh. Listen.

FX: THE DISTANT ROARING OF A LION, AND WHINNYING OF A UNICORN.

TRISTRAN
(moving off)
That’s coming from up ahead.

FX: CHAIN GOES TAUT.

YVAINE
Ow! Wait for me, the chain’s not that long.

FX: THEY MOVE CAUTIOUSLY FORWARD, UNDER:

NARRATOR (V.O.)
They move forward to a meadow between two banks of trees.

FX: LION & UNICORN BATTLE, UNDER FOLLOWING NARRATION. SCUFFLING ON GRASS, GROWLS AND ROARS FROM LION, WITH SNORTS, WHINNIES AND NEIGHING FROM UNICORN, UNDER:

NARRATOR (V.O.)
On the meadow lies an ornate golden crown, studded with red and blue stones. Fighting over it are two enormous beasts - a white horse and a huge lion. Tristran realises that the horse has a long, ivory horn jutting from the centre of its forehead.

FX: A PAUSE IN THE BATTLE. THE CREATURES PANTING, HARD.

Dramatized by Dirk Maggs
TRISTRAN
(in wonder)
“The Lion and the Unicorn were fighting
for the crown. The Lion beat the Unicorn
all about the town ...”

YVAINE
Please, do something. The unicorn is
hurt. The lion will kill it.

TRISTRAN
And let him kill me, too?

YVAINE
Quickly, while they are getting their
breath back.

TRISTRAN
(sigh)
Stay there, then.

(he walks out into the
meadow)
Here, kitty. Here. Look, here’s your nice
crown ... 

FX: CROWN PICKED UP FROM GRASS.

TRISTRAN (CONT’D)
Fetch!

(effort)

Unh!

FX: CROWN FRISBEES AWAY INTO DISTANT UNDERGROWTH.

FX: THE LION ROARS AND RUNS OFF AFTER IT. DISTANT ROAR OF
TRIUMPH.

TRISTRAN (CONT’D)
(to UNICORN)
How about you, old fellow?

FX: UNICORN SNORTS, WHINNIES.

YVAINE
(approaching)
Poor creature. We can’t leave it.

TRISTRAN
His wounds aren’t too deep. You could
probably ride him. That would speed us
up, and help your leg heal more quickly.

YVAINE
Ride a Unicorn?

FX: UNICORN HARRUMPHS, STAMPS ITS HOOF.

Dramatized by Dirk Maggs
TRISTRAN
(to UNICORN)
Will you carry the lady? Please.

FX: UNICORN SNORTS, KNEELS.

YVAINE
My, my.

TRISTRAN
It kneels before you. Climb up.

FX: YVAINE CLIMBS UP ON THE UNICORN’S BACK, WITH A LITTLE DIFFICULTY.

YVAINE
(groans)
Uhhh ... Ooh ... Almost ... Yes, I’m on.

FX: UNICORN SNORTS AGAIN.

TRISTRAN
There. I can walk beside you both. (groans)
Ohhh. My stomach.

YVAINE
What’s wrong with you?

TRISTRAN
I’m hungry. Aren’t you hungry?

YVAINE
We stars eat only darkness, and we drink only light. So I'm not hungry.

TRISTRAN
Look. There’s a village on the other side of that hill. I'll go and get some food. You wait here. The unicorn will protect you, if anyone comes.

FX: UNICORN SNORTS

YVAINE
Wait here? With this chain binding us?

TRISTRAN
Oh - give me your hand.

FX: CHAIN TINKLES, UNDER:

YVAINE
It’s not coming off. Try your end.

TRISTRAN
Hm. No good.

Dramatized by Dirk Maggs
YVAINE
Perhaps there's a magic word or something.

TRISTRAN
I don't know any magic words ... unless I just say "Please" - ?

FX: CHAIN TINKLES, RIPPLINGLY ...

YVAINE
Oh. That worked.

TRISTRAN
Here. Wrap it round your wrist till I return. I'll try not to be too long. I'll have to trust you, on your honour as a star, not to run away.

YVAINE
On this leg? I will do no running for quite some time.

TRISTRAN
(walking off)
I will be back presently.

EXT. FOREST PATH, FAERIE - EVENING

FX: WIND IN TREES, CROWS CAWING. A CRACKLING FIRE, SPIT-ROASTING A HARE.

MADAME SEMELE
(sniffs, smacks lips)
Mm. Smells not too rank. Though I may have overdone the rosemary.

NARRATOR (V.O.)
Do you recognise Madame Semele, with her brightly painted gypsy caravan and the brightly coloured bird she keeps tethered on a silver chain? Of course you do. It is some nineteen years since that bird - in human form - sold a certain Dunstan Thorn a glass snowdrop at the Faerie Market, and nine months later bore him a son. Madame Semele has stopped to eat, and her spell-enslaved servant - robbed of speech in her feathered state - espies someone approaching, in a cart drawn by two fine billy-goats.

FX: CART DRAWN BY GOATS HEARD APPROACHING. BIRD SCREECHES
MADAME SEMELE
(low, to bird)
I sees her, I sees her, girl.

FX: THE CART PULLS UP. GOATS BLEAT. MORWANNEG ALIGHTS.

MADAME SEMELE (CONT’D)
(voice up, wheedling)
Before you says anything, I should tell ye that I'm just a harmless old biddy who's never done nothing to no-one, and that the sight of a grand and terrifying lady such as yourself fills me with dread and fear.

MORWANNEG
(approach)
I will not harm you.

MADAME SEMELE
That's what you says. But how am I to know that it's so?

MORWANNEG
I swear that, by the rules and constraints of the sisterhood to which you and I belong, that I mean you no harm, and shall treat you as if you were my own guest.

MADAME SEMELE
That's good enough for me, dearie-ducks. Come and sit down beside me. Supper'll be cooked in two shakes of a lamb's tail.

FX: WITCH-QUEEN SITS BY MADAME SEMELE.

MORWANNEG
With good will.

FX: GOATS GRAZING, OFF. A BLEAT OR TWO.

MADAME SEMELE
Now, my dear, would I be correct in supposing that one of those fine goats started life walking on two legs, not four?

MORWANNEG
Such things have been heard of. That splendid bird of yours, for example.

MADAME SEMELE
That bird gave away one of the prizes of my stock to a good-for-nothing, near twenty years ago.

(MORE)

Dramatized by Dirk Maggs
STARDUST

by NEIL GAIMAN

MADAME SEMELE (CONT’D)
So these days, she stays a bird, unless there's work that needs doing.

FX: FORLORN CHIRRUP FROM THE BIRD.

MADAME SEMELE (CONT’D)
They call me Madame Semele.

MORWANNEG
They called you Ditchwater Sal when you were a young chit of a thing.

MADAME SEMELE
Now, now.

MORWANNEG
You may call me Morwanneg.

MADAME SEMELE
Yet now I feel you truly mock me, lady, for 'Morwanneg' means wave of the sea.

MORWANNEG
Indeed. My true name was long since drowned and lost beneath the cold ocean.

FX: PLATES PICKED UP, HARE REMOVED FROM SPIT AND CUT IN HALF, UNDER:

MADAME SEMELE
Would you partake of a little roast hare with me? I have a spare bowl.

MORWANNEG
That I will.

MADAME SEMELE
Heads or tails?

MORWANNEG
Let it be your choice.

MADAME SEMELE
Head, then, for you, with the luscious eyes and brains. And I'll have the rump, with nothing but dull meat to nibble. Here.

FX: PLATED UP HALF HARE HANDED OVER.

MORWANNEG
I thank you. Salt?

MADAME SEMELE
Oh, there's no salt, my dear, but if you shake this on it will do the trick. (MORE)

Dramatized by Dirk Maggs
MADAME SEMELE (CONT'D)
A little basil, a little mountain thyme - my own receipt.

FX: HERBS SPRINKLED ON. MORWANNEG EATS A LITTLE.

MORWANNEG
Mm.

MADAME SEMELE
How is it, my dear?

MORWANNEG
Perfectly palatable. I can taste the basil and the thyme, but there is another taste I find harder to place. A most uncommon taste.

MADAME SEMELE
That it is. It's a herb that grows only in Garamond, on an island in the midst of a wide lake. It is most pleasant with all manner of meats and fishes. It is good for wind and the ague, and has the curious property of causing one who tastes of it to speak nothing but the truth for several hours.

FX: PLATE DROPPED, HALF HARE ROLLS AWAY INTO GRASS.

MORWANNEG
Limbus grass ... You dare to feed me limbus grass?

MADAME SEMELE (cackling)
That's how it would seem, dearie. So, tell me now, Mistress Morwanneg, if that's your name, where are you a going-of, in your fine chariot?

MORWANNEG
I am on my way to find a star, which fell in the great woods on the other side of Mount Belly. And when I find her, I shall take my great knife and cut out her heart, while she lives, and while her heart is her own. For the heart of a living star is a sovereign remedy against all the snares of age and time. My sisters wait for me to return.

MADAME SEMELE
The heart of a star, is it? Hee! Hee! Such a prize it will make for me. I shall taste enough of it that my youth will come back.

(MORE)

Dramatized by Dirk Maggs
Then I shall take all the heart that's left to the Great Market at Wall. Hee!

MORWANNEG
(calmly)
You shall not do this thing.

MADAME SEMELE
No? You are my guest, my dear. You swore your oath. You've tasted of my food. There is nothing you can do to harm me.

FX: THUNDER IN DISTANCE

MORWANNEG
Oh, there are so many things I could do to harm you, Ditchwater Sal. For you have stolen knowledge you did not earn, but it shall not profit you. For you shall be unable to see the star, unable to perceive it, unable to touch it, to find it, to kill it.

MADAME SEMELE
(frightened)
Who are you?

MORWANNEG
When you knew me last, I ruled with my sisters in Carnadine, before it was lost.

MADAME SEMELE
You? But you are dead, long dead.

MORWANNEG
They have said that the Lilim were dead before now, but they have always lied. The squirrel has not yet found the acorn that will grow to the oak that will be cut to form the cradle of the babe that will grow to slay me.

FX: MORWANNEG RISES, UNDER:

MORWANNEG (CONT'D)
A moment after I leave, you shall forget that ever you saw me.

(walks away)
You shall forget all of this, even my curse, although the knowledge of it shall vex and irritate you.

FX: SHE CLIMBS INTO HER CART, WHIPS THE BLEATING GOATS, AND TRUNDLES AWAY.

Dramatized by Dirk Maggs
MADAME SEMELE
(dazed)
My goodness. Whatever possessed me to cut that hare in two and then throw half away? Whatever was I a-thinking of?

FX: SHE RISES

MADAME SEMELE (CONT’D)
I must be getting old, bird.

FX: BIRD CHIRRUPS.

MADAME SEMELE (CONT’D)
And as stupid as that squirrel. Look at him.

FX: SQUIRREL SQUEAKS. RAPID LITTLE PAWS, DIGGING.

MADAME SEMELE (CONT’D)
Digging that acorn he’s found into this grassy bank. He’ll forget he put it there, you know. It’ll just grow into another oak tree ...

FX: SQUIRREL STOPS DIGGING, SQUEAKS, SCAMPERS OFF.

MADAME SEMELE (CONT’D)
Hey ho. Let’s be on our way before I fergets where we are a-going.

***** INSERT SCENE ‘A’ GOES HERE IF TIME PERMITS *****

EXT. MEADOW, FAERIE

FX: BIRDSONG, WIND IN LONG GRASS. HOOFBEATS DISAPPEARING IN DISTANCE.

FX: TRISTRAN’S FOOTSTEPS IN GRASS, RETURNING FROM VILLAGE, EATING AN APPLE.

TRISTRAN
(distant, mouth full)
Hallo? I have hay for the unicorn. Do they eat hay?

NARRATOR (V.O.)
Tristran returns, well fed, from the Village.

TRISTRAN
(approach us)
Hallo? ... Star?

HE STOPS.

Dramatized by Dirk Maggs
TRISTRAN (CONT’D)

Oh.

NARRATOR (V.O.)
At first, he thinks that he must have made a mistake. But this is the same oak tree, the one beneath which he had left the Star on the Unicorn. Then, leagues away, across the valley, he sees a light, moving rapidly away.

TRISTRAN
But ... she promised ...

NARRATOR (V.O.)
The star is to the southwest of him, travelling faster than he can ever run.

TRISTRAN
She was right. I am a numbskull. A clodpoll. I have let the Fallen Star escape. I am lost, and alone, in the land of Faerie.

EXT. MOUNTAIN PASS

FX: WIND. GOAT-DRAWN CART SLOWS TO A HALT. GOATS BLEAT, UNDER:

NARRATOR (V.O.)
But in the distant mountains, as the sun sets on their southernmost slopes, the witch-queen reins in her goat-drawn chariot and sniffs the chilly air. Her red, red lips curve into a smile of such beauty, such pure and perfect happiness that it would freeze your blood to see it.

MORWANNEG
I smell it on the wind ... The Star travels West ... and it is coming here - to me.

SHE LAUGHS, CHILLINGLY.

END OF PART ONE.

MUSIC & CREDITS

Dramatized by Dirk Maggs
EXT. FOREST ROAD, FAERIE

FX: NIGHT AIR. OWL SCREECH.

NARRATOR (V.O.)
On a forest road, deep in the world of Faerie, the Lord Primus, having halted his coach to sup on baked dormouse and hard cheese, casts the rune stones that will tell him where to find the Topaz which will make him Lord of his father’s kingdom - if his surviving brother, Septimus, does not find and murder him first.

FX: RUNE STONES - LITTLE TILES - CAST, ON DIRT.

PRIMUS
Ah. Whomsoever carries Power Of Stormhold is moving into these mountains. I can intercept it there ...

EXT. MOUNTAIN PASS

FX: WIND. GOAT-DRAWN CART SLOWS TO A HALT. GOATS BLEAT, UNDER:

NARRATOR (V.O.)
High above him, the witch-queen Morwanneg pursueth the same quarry - but not for a precious stone. She wants to cut out the living heart of a freshly Fallen Star, and take it back to her sisters, so all three will once more be young.

MORWANNEG
Yes, I am right. The Star comes this way.

EXT. MEADOW, FAERIE

FX: GALLOPING UNICORN HOOVES

NARRATOR (V.O.)
The Fallen Star herself, with the Topaz which is The Power of Stormhold about her neck and within her breast the golden heart that makes witches young again, is riding away upon a Unicorn, having escaped her erstwhile captor.

YVAINE, BREATHING HARD, SOBBING A LITTLE ...

Dramatized by Dirk Maggs
EXT. WOODLAND, FAERIE

FX: WIND IN TREES, BIRDSONG

NARRATOR (V.O.)
Is the Star fleeing some mighty prince, some dread warlock?

TRISTRAN
(snores loudly)
Zzzzz ...
(burps)
Beg pudden.

NARRATOR (V.O.)
No. It is a lad from the world of humans, Tristran Thorn, fast asleep.

EXT. MOUNTAIN PASS

FX: WIND. DISTANT THUNDER.

FX: KNIVES ON A WHETSTONE, UNDER:

NARRATOR (V.O.)
Morwanneg the witch-queen sharpens her knives, knives with hilt of bone and blades of volcanic glass. The smaller knife is a cleaver, for cutting through the rib-cage; the other a dagger-like blade, for cutting out the heart.

FX: SHARPENING STOPS.

MORWANNEG
(inspecting knives)
Sharp enough for my guest. Now to prepare a welcome, with what little I have to hand ... You goats. You will become an innkeeper and a pot maid.

FX: BLEATING, THEN - FOOM!

INNKEEPER
(bleating voice)
Your servant, ma’am.

BREVISSE
(maid; bleating voice)
But where is our Inn?

NARRATOR (V.O.)
Morwanneg moves to the goat cart, and for a while, she gestures at it, without result.
MORWANNEG
(efforts; mutters to self)
Mm! Unh! Tsk. I am getting old. Things inanimate have always been more difficult to change than things animate. Their souls are older and stupider and harder to persuade - Urhhh!

FX: FOOM! A WOOD-FRAMED BUILDING DROPPED BESIDE HER.

MORWANNEG (CONT’D)
(panting)
That’s better.

NARRATOR (V.O.)
The little chariot has gone, and she stands in front of a small inn, with a stable to one side, at the edge of the mountain pass.

MORWANNEG
(breathless)
I am getting old again.

FX: THUNDER IN DISTANCE

INNKEEPER
What shall we do now. Mistress?

MORWANNEG
Get inside. My quarry is riding this way. We simply have to ensure that she will come inside. You are Billy, the owner of this Tavern. I shall be your wife, and this dull-eyed girl is Brevisse, the pot-maid. Come.

FX: THUNDER. INN DOOR OPENS/CLOSES.

EXT. COPPER BEECH GLADE - MORNING

**** INSERT ‘B’ AVAILABLE - LONGER SUBSTITUTE SCENE ****

FX: WIND IN LEAVES. BIRDSONG, THUNDER, OFF.

TRISTRAN
Zzzzz ...
(wakes up)
Uhhh -

FX: HE SITS UP.

NARRATOR (V.O.)
The next morning, Tristran awakes under a beautiful copper beech tree, which has been glad to shelter him for the night. (MORE)
Thinking of a way he might make up the miles between himself and the escaped star, he hears something in the distance.

**FX: DISTANT COACH AND HORSES.**

**PRIMUS**
(distantly)
Yah!

**TRISTRAN**
That’s a coach and horses on the forest road ...

**FX: HE GETS UP, RUNS OFF.**

**** INSERT ‘B’ SUBSTITUTE SCENE ENDS HERE *****

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**EXT. FOREST ROAD - CONTINUOUS**

**FX: CARRIAGE AND HORSES APPROACHING.**

**NARRATOR (V.O.)**
The coach, of course, belongs to the Lord Primus, travelling hard. But the copper beech tree has whispered to its neighbours, and Tristran will have his chance to catch up with it ...

**FX: A HUGE CREAK AND CRASH AS A TREE FALLS. HORSES NEIGH.**

**PRIMUS**
(driving the coach)
Whoaa, whoaa, there ...

**FX: COACH GRINDS TO A HALT. PRIMUS JUMPS OFF THE DRIVING SEAT. FOOTSTEPS RUNNING UP PATH.**

**PRIMUS (CONT’D)**
Damndest thing ...

**TRISTRAN**
(breathless, runs up)
Hello? Hello, coachman?

**PRIMUS**
There was no wind, no storm. This branch simply fell. Terrified the horses.

**TRISTRAN**
I will help you move it.

**PRIMUS**
Eh? Oh - Thank you.

**FX: THEY MOVE THE BRANCH, WITH MUCH EFFORT.**
FX: BRANCH CRASHES INTO HEDGEROW.

PRIMUS (CONT’D)
(effort)
There.

TRISTRAN
(effort)
Sir. Would you give me a ride through the forest?

PRIMUS
I do not take passengers.

TRISTRAN
But without me you would still be stuck here.

PRIMUS
Hmmm ... Perhaps there will be more fallen branches to move.

FX: PRIMUS CLIMBS UP ONTO DRIVER’S SEAT.

PRIMUS (CONT’D)
(effort)
You can sit up front, on the driver’s seat beside me, and keep me company.

FX: TRISTAN CLIMBS UP BESIDE HIM.

TRISTRAN
(effort)
Thank you.

FX: HORSES SLAPPED WITH REINS, UNDER:

PRIMUS
Yah!

FX: THE COACH MOVES OFF.

EXT. MOUNTAIN PASS

FX: THUNDER, RAIN.

NARRATOR (V.O.)
Up in the mountains above, the star, cold, wet and tired, finds herself unable to go on.

FX: UNICORN’S HOOVES ON DIRT ROAD SLOW TO A HALT.
YVAINE
(shivering)
I can ride no more, dear Unicorn; I’m soaked to the skin, freezing and tired, and you must be too. Ahead of us stands an Inn, with shelter and warmth. Will you approach no closer?

FX: UNICORN SNORTS AND STAMPS. DISTANT DOOR OPENS.

MORWANNEG
(distant)
Hello there, dearie. Will you be coming in? There’s a fire blazing in the hearth, and enough hot water for a tub that’ll melt the chill from your bones.

YVAINE
I ... I will need help coming in... My leg ...

MORWANNEG
You poor mite. I’ll have my husband Billy carry you inside. There’s hay and fresh water in the stables, for your beast.

NARRATOR (V.O.)
Out of the Inn comes her supposed husband, the innkeeper.

INNKEEPER
(bleating voice)
Where shall we put the beast?

MORWANNEG
In the stable with the Unicorn, Billy, then carry our young guest into the Inn. (moving off)
I’ll draw her a lovely bath, so I will.

YVAINE
Thank you, kind lady ...

INT. INN – CONTINUOUS

FX: FIRE CRACKLING. MUFFLED RAIN OUTSIDE. JUG OF WATER POURED INTO TIN BATH AND SWIRLED ABOUT. DOOR O/C.

INNKEEPER
(entering, effort)
Where shall I put the young lady?

MORWANNEG
(swirling bathwater)
Just here, Billy, by the fire.

Dramatized by Dirk Maggs
FX: BILLY DEPOSITS YVAINE BY THE FIRE. YVAINE DRIPPING.

INNKEEPER
(going off)
The Unicorn’s a-laid down in the furthest stall in the stable.

MORWANNEG
Very good. Now, you poor dear. Let’s have that dress off you and pop you in this nice tin bath.

FX: YVAINE’S DRESS TAKEN OFF AND WRUNG OUT, UNDER:

YVAINE
(efforts)
Ooh - yes - just mind my leg - ah, thank you.

MORWANNEG
There, and we’ll wring it out good as new ... There. Goodness, look at this jewel around your neck, and the chain about your wrist. So pretty.

YVAINE
(embarrassed)
Um - thank you, um -

MORWANNEG
In you pop, now. Leave your bad leg hanging over the edge, so as to keep that splint dry.

FX: YVAINE STEPS INTO BATH, SITS.

YVAINE
(settling in)
Thank you.

MORWANNEG
There’s a love. How’re you feeling now?

YVAINE
Much much better, thank you.

MORWANNEG
And your heart? How does your heart feel?

YVAINE
My heart? Er - um - it feels ... happier. More easy. Less troubled.

MORWANNEG
Good. That’s good. Let us get it burning high and hot within you, eh? Burning bright inside you.

(MORE)

Dramatized by Dirk Maggs
STARDUST
by NEIL GAIMAN

MORWANNEG (CONT'D)
go (goes off)
Just give us a shout when you want to hop out of the tub and I'll come and give you a hand.

FX: SHE GOES OUT TO KITCHEN

YVAINE
(starts to call after her) It's all right, I really don't ... eat food.
(to self,) Ahhh. There are good people in this benighted world.

FX: SHE LEANS BACK IN THE BATH

YVAINE (CONT'D)

Ahhhhhhh.

EXT. MOUNTAIN ROAD

FX: DISTANT THUNDER. LIGHT RAIN. CARRIAGE AND HORSES ON ROCKY ROAD.

NARRATOR (V.O.)
Lord Primus's coach is now approaching the Inn. But Tristran has been diverted by something curious.

TRISTRAN
Sir, who are the five grey gentlemen who sit and bicker inside your Coach?

PRIMUS
There is no-one sitting inside this coach.

TRISTRAN
(effort, as he turns to look) Really - ?
(turns back, puzzled) As you will.

INT. COACH - CONTINUOUS

FX: TRUNDLING WHEELS, UNDER:

SECUNDUS
(dead) Primus, self-important as ever.

TERTIUS
He ignores his late brothers.

Dramatized by Dirk Maggs
SEXTUS
(dead)
He won’t when he joins us.

PRIMUS
(outside, to horses)
Yah!

EXT. MOUNTAIN ROAD

FX: THUNDER, RAIN AS BEFORE. THE COACH TRUNDLES ON,
UNDER:

PRIMUS
The horses are reluctant to take this
mountain road. But that is where I will
find what I seek.

TRISTRAN
If it is not too forward of me to
enquire, might I ask what it is that you
are in search of?

PRIMUS
My destiny. My right to rule. And you?

TRISTRAN
There's a young lady that I have offended
by my behaviour. I wish to make amends.
She is a little way ahead of us, and I
hope to catch her up.

PRIMUS
Hm.

TRISTRAN
(at the view)
Such mountains!

FX: THUNDER. HEAVY RAIN STARTS.

PRIMUS
Such rainfall. You could go inside the
coach. No point us both getting wet.

TRISTRAN
I shall stay here. Two pairs of eyes and
two pairs of hands may well be the saving
of us.

PRIMUS
You're a fool, boy. But I appreciate it.
I am known as Primus. The Lord Primus.

TRISTRAN
Tristan. Tristan Thorn.

Dramatized by Dirk Maggs
PRIMUS
Listen, Tristan Thorn. There is a man. He looks a little like me, but thinner, more crow-like. He is called Septimus, for he was the seventh boy-child our father spawned. If ever you see him, run and hide. He will not hesitate to kill you if you stand in his way, or, perhaps, to make you his instrument with which to kill me.

TRISTRAN
He sounds a most dangerous man.

PRIMUS
He is the most dangerous man you will ever meet. Hm. If you ask me, there is something unnatural about this storm.

TRISTRAN
Is that a light ahead, on the road?

PRIMUS
Yes, you are right ...

TRISTRAN
Look, a sign - “the Chariot”. It’s an Inn.

PRIMUS
We’re in luck. And there’s a stable. I’ll pay for a pair of rooms.

TRISTRAN
Then I’ll stable and groom the horses. They’ll catch a chill otherwise.

PRIMUS
You’re a good lad. I’ll send out some burnt ale for you.

INT. INN - CONTINUOUS

FX: FIRE CRACKLING. YVAINE GETS OUT OF THE BATH, DRIPPING, UNDER:

YVAINE
That bath was so warming - thank you.

MORWANNEG
Let’s have this robe snug about you, and sit you here and make you comfortable.

FX: YVAINE LIMPS TO A CHAIR.

Dramatized by Dirk Maggs
YVAINE
(sitting)
Goodness, such sharp-looking knives. The blades look like glass.

MORWANNEG
Oh, nothing misses your eye, does it, dearie? These are very old, very old indeed, made of obsidian. Let me show you-

FX: BANGING ON DOOR.

PRIMUS
(outside)
Service! Food! Wine! Fire! Where is the stable boy?

MORWANNEG
Damn ... er ... the knives will keep, for a moment. After all, you are not going anywhere, my duck? Not until the rain lets up, eh?

YVAINE
(genuinely)
I appreciate your hospitality more than I can say.

FX: MORE BANGING ON DOOR

PRIMUS
Innkeeper! Open up!

MORWANNEG
Of course you do.
(moves off)
Plenty of time when these nuisances have gone, eh?

FX: SHE OPENS THE DOOR. RAIN SHEETING DOWN OUTSIDE. PRIMUS STEPS IN, DRIPPING.

PRIMUS
At last. Did you not hear me, woman?

MORWANNEG
So sorry, it’s such a noisy night. Wine, milord?

PRIMUS
I am afraid not. Until the day I see my brother’s corpse cold on the ground before me, I shall drink only my own wine, and eat only food I have prepared myself. So if I might trouble you to put this bottle of mine near the fire to take the chill from it?

(MORE)

Dramatized by Dirk Maggs
Now, I have a companion on my journey, who is attending to the horses; he has sworn no such oath, and I am sure that if you could send him a mug of burnt ale it would help take the chill from his bones. I’ll pay.

MORWANNEG
I’ll send the pot-maid. Brevisse?

BREVISSE
(entering; bleating voice)
Yes, mum?

MORWANNEG
A burnt ale to the lad in the stable, and be quick about it

BREVISSE
Yes mum.

INT. STABLES - CONTINUOUS

FX: WIND & RAIN OUTSIDE. HORSES BREATHE AND STAMP. HISSING OF A LAMP.

NARRATOR (V.O.)
Out in the fetid stable, Tristran grooms the horses.

TRISTRAN BRUSHING DOWN THE HORSES.

TRISTRAN
Hold still, you brute, I can’t get you dry if you shift about so.

FX: BREVISSE ENTERS

BREVISSE
Burnt ale, sir?

TRISTRAN
Oh - thank you - here, I’ll take it.

FX: THE UNICORN WHINNIES, OFF. HE PAUSES.

TRISTRAN (CONT’D)
You have another guest? I hear a fifth horse in here.

BREVISSE
(going out)
Funny looking horse if you ask me.

FX: UNICORN WHINNIES AND KICKS, OFF.

Dramatized by Dirk Maggs
TRISTRAN
(moving off)
Hey now, lad. Let’s be seeing what your problem is.

CHANGE ANGLE.

NARRATOR (V.O.)
Tristran is about to receive two surprises. One is pleasant.

FX: UNICORN NOW IN FOREGROUND

TRISTRAN
(approaches)
Settle down, fellow, I’ll see if I cannot find warm oats and bran for -

FX: UNICORN SNORTS

TRISTRAN (CONT’D)
Unicorn - !

FX: UNICORN WHINNIES, MOVES TO BLOCK HIS EXIT.

TRISTRAN (CONT’D)
The Star is here. She is the other guest! Let me back past, so I can go and speak with her -

FX: UNICORN SNORTS

NARRATOR (V.O.)
The Unicorn blocks his way, sniffing at the pot he carries.

TRISTRAN
What is it? Is something wrong?

FX: UNICORN SNORTS

NARRATOR (V.O.)
Tristan’s second surprise would be deadly, save for the Unicorn’s presence.

TRISTRAN
No, that’s my ale - no -

NARRATOR (V.O.)
The Unicorn puts the tip of his horn into the ale pot.

FX: SIZZLING.

TRISTRAN
No - ... Oh, that’s a waste.
FX: UNICORN WHINNIES. SIZZLING.

NARRATOR (V.O.)
As he watches the ale foam and turn a sickly green, Tristran remembers one of the tales his mother told him as a child ...

DAISY HEMPSTOCK
(reverb)
‘The horn of a Unicorn is sovereign against poison ...’

TRISTRAN
Poison ... my drink was poisoned ... and Lord Primus - and the Star - are inside the Inn -

*** INSERT ‘C’ HERE, IF INSERT ‘B’ USED *****

FX: UNICORN WHINNIES.

TRISTRAN (CONT’D)
Let me through - please.

FX: UNICORN SHIFTS. TRISTRAN MOVES PAST IT.

NARRATOR (V.O.)
At this moment of betrayal, Tristran remembers what he carries in his pocket.

FX: HE RUMMAGES IN HIS POCKETS

TRISTRAN
Where is it ... Ah. Yes. I had forgotten this gift ...

INT. INN - CONTINUOUS

FX: FIRE CRACKLING. WINE UNCORKED AND POURED.

NARRATOR (V.O.)
At the Inn’s fireside, the Lord Primus warms himself ...

MORWANNEG
Your wine, m’lord.

PRIMUS
Thank you. Oh - I see you have another guest. Well met, milady.

YVAINE
How do you do, sir.

Dramatized by Dirk Maggs
PRIMUS
Very well ... but ...

NARRATOR (V.O.)
Primus has now seen the glittering stone upon the Star’s breast.

YVAINE
Yes?

PRIMUS
You have around your neck my Topaz. My father's stone. You carry the Power of Stormhold.

YVAINE
Well, then. Ask me for it, and I can have done with the stupid thing.

MORWANNEG
I'll not have you bothering the other guests now, milord.

NARRATOR (V.O.)
A desperate surmise arises in Primus’s mind. He and his young companions are in great danger.

PRIMUS
I recognise other things here, too. Those knives on the table-top. There are tattered scrolls in the vaults of Stormhold in which those knives are pictured, and their names are given. They are from the first age of the world.

FX: DOOR BANGS OPEN, RAIN AUDIBLE OUTSIDE. UNICORN WHINNY FROM OUTSIDE. TRISTRAN RUNS IN.

TRISTRAN
Primus! They have tried to poison me!

NARRATOR (V.O.)
Tristran and the Unicorn are in the doorway, wild-eyed. Primus turns on the witch-queen - his hand flying to his belt and finding nothing.

PRIMUS
My sword - it’s in the coach -

NARRATOR (V.O.)
Without hesitation, the witch reaches for one of her knives -

FX: MORWANNEG PICKS UP AN OBSIDIAN KNIFE

Dramatized by Dirk Maggs
MORWANNEG
Here’s an edge for you, meddler –

FX: SHE CUTS PRIMUS’S THROAT. SPRAY OF BLOOD

NARRATOR (V.O.)
- and slices his throat in one swift movement.

PRIMUS
(wetly)
Arrrggghhhhh!

YVAINE
You cut this throat!

MORWANNEG
Your turn next, girl. Billy, get the brat!

YVAINE
Unicorn! Help us!

FX: UNICORN WHINNIES, CHARGES INTO THE INN.

NARRATOR (V.O.)
The unicorn charges. As the innkeeper was a goat only an hour ago, instinct makes him lower his head and charge back –

MORWANNEG
No –

FX: UNICORN SPEARS BILLY WITH ITS HORN

INNKEEPER
Argh!

FX: BODY FALL

NARRATOR (V.O.)
- And the Innkeeper falls, his skull riven by an ivory horn.

MORWANNEG
Stupid goat –!

FX: UNICORN WHINNY

NARRATOR (V.O.)
The Unicorn turns to face the witch. Tristran runs to the fireplace, kneading what looks like a dirty ball of wax in his hand.

TRISTRAN
Star – get to me – to the fire –

Dramatized by Dirk Maggs
FX: UNICORN SNORT

YVAINE
I’m trying -

NARRATOR (V.O.)
The maid attempts to shield the witch from the Unicorn’s horn.

BREVISSE
(off)
Look out for the horse thing, mum -

MORWANNEG
Get out of its’ way, you fool -

FX BREVISSE STABBED

BREVISSE
(scream)
Aaaah!

NARRATOR (V.O.)
The maid dies instantly.

CHANGE ANGLE TO:

FX: NEAR THE FIRE

MORWANNEG
(off)
You stand between me and my quarry, vile beast -

FX: UNICORN SNORT, OFF

MORWANNEG (CONT’D)
That horn is long, but this knife is sharp -

RUN BUSINESS OF MORWANNEG TRYING TO GET PAST UNICORN IN BACKGROUND, UNDER

YVAINE
(foreground)
What’s in your hand?

TRISTRAN
(foreground)
Our way out of here. A candle.

YVAINE
(foreground)
But there is nothing of it left.

Dramatized by Dirk Maggs
TRISTRAN
(foreground; efforts)
There may be just enough, if I can -
squeeze it around this piece of bootlace
for a wick.

YVAINE
I’m frightened.

MORWANNNEG
(off)
Even the heart of a star who is afraid
and scared is better by far than no heart
at all - uh! Get out of my way, beast -

FX: UNICORN WHINNY

TRISTRAN
(foreground)
Stand up.

YVAINE
(foreground)
I cannot.

TRISTRAN
(foreground)
Stand, or we die now.

YVAINE
(foreground, effort, standing)
Uh .. Uhhh ...

MORWANNNEG
Oh, you die now, children, standing or
no. It is all the same to me.

NARRATOR (V.O.)
The fire is now burning Tristran’s hand
grievously, but the bootlace wick is at
last alight ...  

TRISTRAN
(foreground, pain)
Ready? Aaaaah!

YVAINE
(foreground)
Your hand is burnt -

IN BACKGROUND, MORWANNNEG MAKES A DECISIVE FEINT -

MORWANNNEG
(off)
Hah! Now you’re mine - !

Dramatized by Dirk Maggs
FX: UNICORN SPEARS HER SHOULDER

NARRATOR (V.O.)
The Unicorn spears the witch’s shoulder as she attempts to dash past. But in doing so its upturned eye is too easy a target -

MORWANNEG
Ahhh! - but I can stab too - unh!

NARRATOR (V.O.)
The witch stabs deep into its eye, and the creature is mortally wounded -

FX: KNIFE THRUST IN UNICORN’S EYE - IT SCREAMS.

MORWANNEG
Die, cursed beast - !

FX: UNICORN BODY FALL.

NARRATOR (V.O.)
The witch turns to Tristran and the Star. It is now or never.

TRISTRAN
(foreground)
Can you take a step?

YVAINE
(foreground)
Just a step?

MORWANNEG
(approach)
You’re mine ... 

TRISTRAN
(foreground)
Yes - 

MORWANNEG
(charging towards them)
No!

TRISTRAN
Go - !

FX: WHOOSH.

FX: MORWANNEG STAGGERS FORWARD INTO THE EMPTY SPACE WHERE THEY WERE JUST STANDING. JUST THE CRACKLING FIRE IS HEARD, AND THE RAIN BEATING OUTSIDE.

MORWANNEG
No - No ...

Dramatized by Dirk Maggs
NARRATOR (V.O.)
With the departure of her prey, the witch’s powers crumble. Around her the Inn becomes a humble cart again...

FX: THE INN SUDDENLY TURNS BACK INTO A CART, AND SHE IS BACK OUTSIDE -

EXT. MOUNTAIN ROAD

FX: - RAIN BEATING DOWN ON MORWANNEG, OUTSIDE, ALONE, SURROUNDED BY CORPSES. HORSES SNORT IN BACKGROUND, UNDER:

MORWANNEG
... Nooooooo!

NARRATOR (V.O.)
And Morwanneg, the witch-queen, eldest of the Lilim, her hair grey once more, her face lined, her clothes bloodied and torn, stands on a mountain pass, in the rain, bent and aged. She is alone, bar some horses, a coach, and the corpses of a man, a boy, a goat and a Unicorn.

MORWANNEG
(sobbing)
No ... no ... uhhhhh ...

FX: RAIN EASES, UNDER:

NARRATOR (V.O.)
At her feet a pool of rainwater has mixed with the blood of the Unicorn. Within it, the faces of her two sisters look up at her with contempt.

LILIM 1
(in mirror)
Where is the Star?

LILIM 2
(in mirror)
What have you done with her?

MORWANNEG
I came so close...

LILIM 1
(in mirror)
You failed?

LILIM 2
Look at you! You took the last of the youth we had saved - you've squandered it.

Dramatized by Dirk Maggs
MORWANNEG
(casting around)
I cannot find her in my mind. It is as if
she were no longer in Faerie.

LILIM 1
(in mirror)
Hmmm ... No. She is still in Faerie. But
she is going to the Market at Wall.

LILIM 2
(in mirror)
Were the star to cross the wall and to
enter the world of things as they are,
she will become, in an instant, cold and
dead and of no more use to us.

A BEAT.

MORWANNEG
Hm. Then I shall go to Diggory's Dyke and
wait there, for all who pass on the way
to Wall must go by way of Diggory's Dyke.

LILIM 1
(in mirror)
Then what are you waiting for?

EXT. RIVER’S EDGE
FX: RUSHING WATER

NARRATOR (V.O.)
While the sisters argue, Tristran and the
Star travel by candlelight, one step at a
time.

FX: FOOMP! TRISTRAN AND THE STAR APPEAR

YVAINE
Where are we?

TRISTRAN
Hopefully miles and miles away from that
woman, but let’s be sure and take another
step -

FX: WHOOSH

EXT. DESERT
FX: HOWLING WIND

Dramatized by Dirk Maggs
YVAINE
(shouts over it)
We can’t stay here. No shelter.

TRISTRAN
(shouts over it)
Quickly then, the candle is guttering -

FX: WHOOSH

EXT. CLOUD

FX: AIR

YVAINE
And this place is dark, damp and foggy.

TRISTRAN
One more step?

YVAINE
Yes -

FX: FLPPT.

TRISTRAN
Too late. The candle’s exhausted.

YVAINE
(sigh)
As am I.

TRISTRAN
Let’s rest for a bit. It feels like the ground here is soft to lie on. When the sun comes up we will see where we have ended up.

EXT. MOUNTAIN ROAD - LATER

FX: WIND GUSTS. FOOTSTEPS

SEPTIMUS
(arriving)
What is this ... ?

NARRATOR (V.O.)
Back on the mountain road where the witch-queen stood not long ago, a tall, dark, angular man stops and surveys the bloodstained ground. To one side is a small, battered goat-cart, tipped onto its side. Nearby it lie the bodies of the goat and the young man.

Dramatized by Dirk Maggs
SEPTIMUS
Curious ...

NARRATOR (V.O.)
Some yards away is the corpse of a man in his middle years, face down, dressed in dark clothes.

SEPTIMUS
Ah. Primus ... your throat expertly cut.

NARRATOR (V.O.)
The ghost of Primus, standing with his five grey and transparent brothers, watches grimly, with no satisfaction.

PRIMUS
(dead)
I was ready for you, Septimus, but not for the witch.

SEPTIMUS
So I am to be the eighty-second Lord of the Stormhold, and all the rest of it.

QUINTUS
(dead)
Not without the Power of Stormhold about your neck he’s not.

PRIMUS
(dead)
And then there's the matter of revenge. he must take revenge upon my killer before anything else, now. It's blood-law.

SEPTIMUS
Primus, Secundus, Tertius, Quartus, Quintus and Sextus - your spirits no doubt surround me now. I know I must revenge this sad carcass, and all for the honour of our blood and the Stormhold. But then I shall assume the title I now legally inherit. And you will still be dead.

QUINTUS
(dead)
Septimus would do well to remember the proverb which warns against relying upon the numerical value of unhatched chicks.

PRIMUS
(dead)
Popinjay.
SEPTIMUS
(chuckles)
I cannot hear your impotent curses,
Primus, but I can imagine them.
Oh. What’s this in your pocket - ?

FX: BAG OF RUNE TILES HANDLED.

SEPTIMUS (CONT’D)
Ah. Thank you for the runestones, my
brother. They will help me find your
killer.
(walks off)
Best foot forward ...

FX: SEPTIMUS’S FOOTSTEPS LEAVE

EXT. CLOUD – DAY

FX: AIR

NARRATOR (V.O.)
As dawn breaks over the World of Faerie,
Tristran and the Star awake to find their
last stop – foggy, soft and damp – is in
fact a thick, white cumulus cloud.
Tristran pushes his burned hand as far as
he could down into it. The cloud cools a
little of the pain.

TRISTRAN
Ahhh ....

YVAINE
What now?

TRISTRAN
Well. I’m afraid I’ve made rather a mess
of everything.

YVAINE
I hate you. I hated you for everything
already, but now I hate you most of all.

TRISTRAN
(resigned)
Mm-hm. Any particular reason?

YVAINE
Because now that you have saved my life,
you are, by the law of my people,
responsible for me, and I for you. Where
you go, I must also go.
TRISTRAN
I'm honestly not that bad, not when you get to know me. Look, I'm sorry about all that chaining you up business.

YVAINE
It is a mighty joke, is it not? Whither thou goest, there I must go, if it kills me.

TRISTRAN
Perhaps we could start all over again, just pretend it never happened. Here now, my name's Tristran Thorn, pleased to meet you.

YVAINE
(sighs)
Oh, very well. My sisters called me Yvaine. For I was an evening star.

FX: DISTANT THUNDER

TRISTRAN
We're a fine pair. You with your broken leg, me with my hand. There's no food, no water, we're half a mile or so above the world with no way of getting down, and no control over where this cloud is going. Did I leave out anything?

YVAINE
You forgot the bit about clouds vanishing into nothing. They do that. I could not survive another fall.

TRISTRAN
You know, I've been thinking. After we're got you back to Wall, to Victoria Forester - perhaps we could do what you need.

YVAINE
What I need?

FX: THUNDER, CLOSER. WIND IN SHIP’S RIGGING AND THE CREAKING OF TIMBERS BECOMES AUDIBLE, UNDER:

TRISTRAN
Well, you want to go back, don't you? Up into the sky. To shine again at night.

YVAINE
Stars fall. They don't go back up again.

TRISTRAN
You could be the first.

Dramatized by Dirk Maggs
YVAINE
It will never happen. What is that sound?

TRISTRAN
Oh my goodness - overhead - and behind us - it’s a ship ... a ship of the air!

CAPTAIN ALBERIC
(off)
Ahoy there!

TRISTRAN
(calls)
Ahoy! Hello!

CAPTAIN ALBERIC
Parties in need of assistance?

TRISTRAN
Yes! In need of assistance!

CAPTAIN ALBERIC
Right-ho - get ready to grab the ladder - handsomely now!

FX: ROPE LADDER UNROLLS, SWOOSHES DOWN.

TRISTRAN
Er - my friend has a broken leg and I've hurt my hand.

CAPTAIN ALBERIC
Just get on and hold tight, we can pull you up.

FX: CREAKING OF ROPE LADDER AS TRISTRAN AND YVAINE GRAB HOLD.

TRISTRAN
Got it?

YVAINE
Yes.

TRISTRAN
(calls)
Ready.

BOSUN
(off)
Haul, bullies! Haul!

SAILORS
Two-Six-Heave! Two-Six-Heave!

SAILORS HEAVING CONTINUES UNDER:

Dramatized by Dirk Maggs
FX: TRISTRAN AND YVAINE BORNE ALOFT

TRISTRAN

Hold tight!

YVAINE

I am!

EXT. FREE SHIP PERDITA, DECK - CONTINUOUS

FX: WIND THROUGH RIGGING. CREAKING TIMBERS. TRISTRAN AND YVAINE PULLED UP OVER GUNWHALE.

BOSUN

(off)

‘Vast hauling, you lot. Let ‘em down gentle now. And - belay.

FX: ROPES CREAK. BOSUNS WHISTLES. SAILOR HUBBUB, OFF.

TRISTRAN

Poof! That was wonderful.

YVAINE

Thank you.

CAPTAIN ALBERIC

Welcome aboard the Free Ship Perdita, out of the Northern Harbours on a lightning-hunting expedition. Captain Johannes Alberic, at your service.

YVAINE

We are very -

CAPTAIN ALBERIC

(yell)

Meggot! Meggot! Blast you, where are you? Over here! Passengers in need of attention.

MEGGOT

(arrives)

I’m coming, I’m coming. Keep your beard on.

CAPTAIN ALBERIC

There young lady, young lad, Meggot’ll see to your leg, and your hand. We eat at six bells. You shall sit at my table, and tell me your stories, if you feel at liberty to do so.

FX: THUNDER AND LIGHTNING NEARBY

Dramatized by Dirk Maggs
BOSUN
Lightning cloud on the port beam, Cap’n!

CAPTAIN ALBERIC
(moving away, yells)
Bring her into the wind! Break out the mains’l conductivators! Wake up, you lubbers, where do you think you are, sitting in a dinghy, flying a ruddy kite?

BOSUN
Aye aye, Cap’n. Look lively there!

FX: BARE FEET RUN ABOUT. ROPES HAULED, YARD ARMS CREAK.

TRISTRAN
What’s happening?

MEGGOT
Oh, there’s a rare amount of lightning in this cloud coming up. We’re trawling for lightning bolts.

FX: THUNDER CRASH, OTHER SIDE. CREAKING OF SHIP & RIGGING THROUGHOUT:

CAPTAIN ALBERIC
(off, yell)
Cloud’s shifting south! Bring her about!

BOSUN
Bringin’ her about, sir.

CAPTAIN ALBERIC
(off)
Steady with those conductivators there - bring ‘em a tad to the lee - steady - and - clap on - hold hard!

FX: HUGE THUNDER CLAP. LIGHTNING STRIKES, A METALLIC TWANG, A FIZZING, SHOOTING SOUND AND THEN A THOOM! AS IF A GREAT CHEST BEING SLAMMED SHUT.

BOSUN
We got it sir! A beauty!

CHEERS FROM THE CREW

MEGGOT
Ooh, that was a good ‘un -

CAPTAIN ALBERIC
Good work, bullies! That’ll be double grog all round at sippers!

MORE CHEERS.

Dramatized by Dirk Maggs
MEGGOT
The excitement’s over for a bit. Let’s get you below and find you a bite to eat.

TRISTRAN
Oh, thank you. I’m famished.

YVAINE
(shivering)
H-Have you any warm clothes?

MEGGOT
Lord, you’re freezing girl! Then it’s the slops chest we’ll stop off at first. (goes off)
This way ...

EXT. DIGGORY’S DYKE

FX: MOORLAND, ROOKS, AIR.

NARRATOR (V.O.)
Diggory’s Dyke is a deep cut between two grassy Downs, like a white chalk gash on green velvet. The road to Wall leads through it, and in the middle of the Dyke, beside the path, is a hut, built of sticks and twigs, which Lord Septimus is closely examining, from the slope above, through a spyglass.

FX: SEPTIMUS LYING IN THE GRASS. A TELESCOPE SLID OPEN.

SEPTIMUS
(peering, to self)
It is her dwelling place. Smoke rises from the chimney. And there she is again.

NARRATOR (V.O.)
Out of the hut limps a woman of advanced years. During the last few hours Septimus has noted how she stops every traveller that passes through the Dyke, to pass the time of day.

SEPTIMUS
She seems harmless enough, but I have not become the only surviving male member of my family by trusting appearances. This woman slit Primus’s throat, I am certain of it. And the obligations of revenge demand a life for a life.

Dramatized by Dirk Maggs
NARRATOR
Septimus is one of nature's poisoners. Unfortunately the old woman seems to take no food she does not gather or trap herself, and while he contemplates leaving a steaming pie at the door to her house, made of ripe apples and lethal baneberries, he soon dismissed this as impractical.

SEPTIMUS
No oven. But I do have a box of lucifers, and a flask of brandy.

CROSSFADE TO:

EXT. DIGGORY’S DYKE - NIGHT

FX: NIGHT AIR. DISTANT OWL. SEPTIMUS’S QUIET FOOTSTEPS ON GRASS.

NARRATOR (V.O.)
Time passes, and it is past the mid-hour of the night, moonless and dark. Septimus creeps up to the hut.

SEPTIMUS
(to self)
Steady, steady ...

NARRATOR
Hanging from his belt is a club of oak-wood, its head studded with brass nails. He listens at the door.

MORWANNEG
(in hut, asleep)
Zzzzzzzzz ...

SEPTIMUS
(close to us)
Ah ha.

FX: BRANDY UNCORKED AND POURED; MATCH STRUCK, AS REQUIRED, UNDER:

NARRATOR (V.O.)
He uncorks the brandy, pours it onto a wall of the hut, strikes a lucifer, and in moments the the hut is flickering with the ghost-blue light of brandy-flame.

FX: WHOOMF! FIRE CRACKLES FIERCELY, UNDER:

Dramatized by Dirk Maggs
NARRATOR (V.O.)
Septimus returns to the door of the hut, hefting his wooden club on high.

SEPTIMUS
(muttering)
Either the hag will burn with her house, in which case my task is done; or, she will run from the house, whereupon I shall beat her head with my club. Either way I will be revenged.

NARRATOR (V.O.)
Some way off, in the leaping shadows thrown by the fire, Septimus’s dead brothers watch with interest.

FIRE FX DOWN A BIT

TERTIUS
(dead)
It is a reasonable plan. And once he has killed her, he can go on to obtain the Power of Stormhold.

PRIMUS
(dead)
We shall see. He has to find the girl who is wearing the stone first.

FIRE FX BACK UP AGAIN

NARRATOR (V.O.)
Soon the little hut is an inferno. Septimus lowers the club, a smile upon his face.

SEPTIMUS
Burn, witch ... oof ...

FX: FOOTSTEPS BACK, UNDER:

NARRATOR (V.O.)
It is now so warm that he has to step backward, away from the heat. Then he feels a sharp, stabbing pain to the heel of his foot.

SEPTIMUS
Ah! Ahhhh damn it!

NARRATOR (V.O.)
He turns, and sees a small bright-eyed snake, crimson in the fire's glow, its fangs sunk deep into the back of his boot.

Dramatized by Dirk Maggs
SEPTIMUS
(agony)
Blast you!

NARRATOR (V.O.)
The little creature pulls back and loops, at great speed, away behind one of the while chalk boulders.

SEPTIMUS
(agony, getting paralysed)
Ahh ... uhhh ...

NARRATOR (V.O.)
As the poison sweeps through his system, Septimus's muscles clench and he is immobile. And it is now that the old woman emerges from behind the boulder where the snake went, and walks to him.

MORWANNEG
So. You thought that you would warm yourself at the burning of my little cottage.

SEPTIMUS
(unable to talk)
Uhh ... Urrhhh ...

FX: FIRE DISSIPATES UNDER THESE LINES ...

NARRATOR (V.O.)
Septimus would answer her, but his jaw-muscles are clenched, his teeth gritted hard together.

MORWANNEG
You should be ashamed of yourself. Attempting arson and violence upon a poor old lady living upon her own.

FX: SHE WALKS AWAY

NARRATOR (V.O.)
She walks back into the hut - miraculously unburned, or restored, Septimus does not know which, and does not care. His heart judders inside his chest, and if he could scream, he would.

SEPTIMUS
Urhhhhh ..... 

FX: BIRDSONG AS SUN RISES. MORNING BREEZE BLOWS. BODY FALL.

Dramatized by Dirk Maggs
NARRATOR (V.O.)
It is dawn before the pain ends and the older brothers welcome Septimus to their ranks.

PRIMUS
(dead)
Septimus, you have paid for your deeds.

SECUNDUS
(dead)
None of us can bear you a grudge now.

TERTIUS
(dead)
Welcome, brother.

QUARTUS
(dead)
We have waited to be reunited.

QUINTUS
(dead)
Our time here is done.

SEXTUS
(dead)
You are the last.

SEPTIMUS
(dead)
Indeed, brothers. There are none left to take revenge on her, and none will be Lord of Stormhold.

SEXTUS
We are past the cares of the world.

SEPTIMUS
I’m not. Damn that bloody witch.

FX: A BREATH OF WIND.

NARRATOR (V.O.)
There is a breath of wind through Diggory’s Dyke, and the seven brothers are gone.

EXT. FREE SHIP PERDITA - DAWN

FX: WIND, SAILS FLAPPING, SHIP CREAKING, UNDER:

YVAINE IS SINGING, A WORDLESS MELODY, BUT PRETTY …

YVAINE
Laa … la la …. (etc)

Dramatized by Dirk Maggs
NARRATOR (V.O.)
In future years Tristran will look back on his time on the Free Ship Perdita as one of the happiest periods of his journey through Faerie. His hand is healing, Yvaine’s leg is growing stronger, and she seems happier. He wakes one morning to the sound of singing, and comes up on deck to find Yvaine, alone at the quarterdeck rail.

YVAINE FINISHES SINGING.

TRISTRAN
(approach)
That was wonderful.

YVAINE
(startled)
Oh! It’s you. I got up early to watch the sunrise, and see my sisters to bed. I suppose that I have not felt like singing until now.

TRISTRAN
I have never heard anything like it.

YVAINE
Some nights my sisters and I would sing songs like that, all about the lady our mother, and the joys of shining and of loneliness.

TRISTRAN
I’m sorry.

YVAINE
Don't be. I am still alive. I was lucky to have fallen in Faerie. And I think I was probably lucky to have met you.

TRISTRAN
Thank you.

YVAINE
You are welcome ...

FX: DISTANT BOOTS ON DECK

CAPTAIN ALBERIC
(calls)
Ah, Tristran, young Miss.

TRISTRAN
Hallo?

Dramatized by Dirk Maggs
YVAINE
Good morning, Captain Alberic.

CAPTAIN ALBERIC
(approaches)
We'll be weighing anchor shortly, to take provisions, and a little cargo. Might be best if we were to let you off.

TRISTRAN
Oh. Thank you.

CAPTAIN ALBERIC
You'll be closer to Wall.

FX: MATCH STRIKE, PIPE LIT & PUFFED, UNDER:

CAPTAIN ALBERIC (CONT’D)
(puffing)
Hm. You know, it wasn't entirely fortune that we found you. Well, it was fortune that we found you, but I was keeping half an eye out for you. I, and a few others about the place.

TRISTRAN
Why? And how did you know about me?

CAPTAIN ALBERIC
Oh, I'm a member of a – what shall I say – Fellowship?

TRISTRAN
Really. Oh! Do you know a little hairy man, with a hat and an enormous pack of goods?

CAPTAIN ALBERIC
Aye, and he's not the only member of the fellowship with an interest in your return to Wall.

BOSUN
(off, hails)
Mooring Tree ahead, sir!

TRISTRAN
I can see it! It must be ten fathoms tall!

CAPTAIN ALBERIC
That, and more, lad.
(calls back)
Thank you, Bosun.
(to Tristran and Yvaine)
Well, you two had best be getting ready to disembark, and with our blessing.

Dramatized by Dirk Maggs
TRISTRAN
Thank you Captain Alberic.

YVAINE
We are much obliged.

CAPTAIN ALBERIC
(going off)
Oh, pshaw, get along with you.
(yell)
Look lively you lot! Stand by with the mooring lines! Have yer hooks ready for the aerial buoys!

SAILORS
Aye Aye, Cap’n ... etc.

EXT. COUNTRY ROAD, FAERIE - DAY

FX: AIR, BIRDS, TRISTRAN AND YVAINE’S FOOTSTEPS

NARRATOR (V.O.)
It is many days of walking for Tristran and the Star before the harbour-tree disappears over the horizon. They travel West, toward the sunset, along a wide and dusty road. They sleep beside hedgerows. Tristran eats fruit and nuts from bushes and trees and he drinks from clear streams. When they can, they stop at small farms, where Tristran works in exchange for food and some straw in the barn to sleep in. Once, thanks to Yvaine’s quick-thinking and sharp tongue the evade a Goblin Press Gang, and in Berinhed’s Forest Tristran outfaces one of the Great Tawny Eagles, who would otherwise have carried them both back to its nest to feed its young. Finally they are on the road that leads to the village of Wall, through Diggory’s Dyke, and something bright catches Yvaine’s eye.

FX: MADAME SEMELE’S BIRD, DISTRESSED, CHIRRUPING & FLUTTERING, UNDER SCENE.

FX: FOOTSTEPS STOP.

YVAINE
What’s that fluttering in the hedgerow? It’s very colourful.

TRISTRAN
It’s a bird – it’s trapped, or something ... oh.

(DMORE)

Dramatized by Dirk Maggs
It has a silver chain attached to its foot, which has tangled in this briar. Keep still, bird, I’ll free you -

FX: BIRD SQUAWKS AND FLUTTERS. CHAIN TINKLING, ALL UNDER:

YVAINE
It looks very exotic. Perhaps it belongs to that caravan. Over there, with two mules.

FX: CHAIN UNTANGLED. BIRD CHIRRUPS, STOPS FLUTTERING.

TRISTRAN
There you go. Fly away home.

FX: BIRD CHIRRUPS.

YVAINE
I think it likes you.

TRISTRAN
Nonsense.

(to bird)
Go away. Someone will be worrying about you.

FX: FOOTSTEPS, FROM OFF, HURRYING UP TO THEM.

MADAME SEMELE
Thief!

TRISTRAN
Eh?

MADAME SEMELE
I shall turn your bones to ice and roast you in front of a fire! I shall pluck your eyes out and tie one to a herring and t’other to a seagull, so the twin sights of sea and sky shall take you into madness!

TRISTRAN
There is no need to belabour your point, old woman. I did not steal your bird. Its chain was snagged upon a root, and I had just freed it.

MADAME SEMELE
Give it to me.

FX: A COUPLE OF WING FLUTTERS AS THE BIRD CHANGES HANDS.

TRISTRAN
There. I don’t want it.
MADAME SEMELE
Mmmm. Perhaps what you say is not a complete pack of lies.

TRISTRAN
It’s not pack of lies at all.

MADAME SEMELE
(going off)
Wait there.

MADAME SEMELE MUTTERING TO BIRD, OFF.

YVAINE
How do you get into these scrapes?

TRISTRAN
By trying to do the right thing, mostly.

MADAME SEMELE
(returning)
Seems I owe you an apology. Seems you were telling the truth.

TRISTRAN
Yes.

MADAME SEMELE
Let me look at you. Hmm. You look honest enough. I'm on my way to Wall, for the market. Now. I was thinking that I'd welcome a boy to work my little flower-stall - I sells glass flowers, you see, the prettiest things that ever you did see. What d'ye say?

TRISTRAN
What do I say?

YVAINE
Say you accept, and we can ride in her caravan, look.

FX: DISTANT MULE SNORT.

TRISTRAN
Oh, good idea.

MADAME SEMELE
You going to talk to yourself all day, boy?

YVAINE
We have discussed your offer, Madame, and we accept.

A BEAT.

Dramatized by Dirk Maggs
MADAME SEMELE
Don't just stand there like a dumb thing. Speak.

TRISTRAN
I have no desire to work for you at the market, for I have business of my own there. However, if we could ride with you, my companion and I are willing to pay for our passage.

MADAME SEMELE
Companion? What companion?

TRISTRAN
What companion?

YVAINE
Tristran - shhh. She can’t see me or hear me.

MADAME SEMELE
Whatever. Passengers are no use to me, just more weight for Faithless and Hopeless to pull.

TRISTRAN
I would pay you. You sell glass flowers, you say. Would you be interested in this one?

FX: GLASS SNOWDROP PULLED FROM HIS POCKET.

A BEAT.

MADAME SEMELE
(gasp)
Where did you get that? Give it to me! Give it to me this instant!

TRISTRAN
On the other hand ... it occurs to me now that I would be better off keeping the flower, and my companion and I can walk to Wall.

FX: DISTANT FLUTTERING AND CHIRRUPING FROM BIRD.

YVAINE
Tristran look – the bird recognises the flower ...

TRISTRAN
(low)
We have stumbled upon something here.
MADAME SEMELE
(fighting inwardly)
No need to be hasty. I am certain that a deal can be struck between us.

TRISTRAN
Oh, I doubt it. It would need to be a very fine deal, with guarantees of safe-conduct and that we shall arrive in Wall in the same manner and condition and state that we are in now, and that you will do us no harm, and give us board and lodging upon the way. Well?

MADAME SEMELE
I will transport you to Wall, and I swear upon my honour and my true name that I will take no action to harm you upon the journey.

(spits on her hand)
Spit on your hand.

TRISTRAN
(spits)
Eww.

MADAME SEMELE
Shake.

FX: THEY SHAKE HANDS ... WETLY.

MADAME SEMELE (CONT’D)
There. A bargain’s a bargain. Give me the flower.

FX: GLASS FLOWER HANDED OVER

TRISTRAN
There.

MADAME SEMELE
Thank you ... Now, tell me young man, do you know what manner of thing you have been wearing in your buttonhole?

TRISTRAN
It is a flower. A glass flower.

MADAME SEMELE
(laughs)
It is a frozen charm. A thing of power. Keep still and I will show you. I touch it to your head, thus -

FX: TINKLE
MADAME SEMELE (CONT’D)
And you become a mouse, thus.

FX: SHOOMPF! A MOUSE, SQUEAKING.

YVAINE
What have you done! What have you done, woman?!

MADAME SEMELE
(bends to pick up the mouse)
Let’s pick you up before you get trod on. 'Tain't the biggest of caravans. But I shall keep to the letter of my oath, for you shall not be harmed.

FX: MOUSE SQUEAKS

FX: MADAME SEMELE’S FEET UP WOODEN STEPS, INTO:

INT. CARAVAN – CONTINUOUS

FX: OUTDOOR SOUNDS MUFFLED. CLOSE ACOUSTIC. CREAKY STRUCTURE. MUFFLED TINKLING OF MANY GLASS FLOWERS IN SHOWCASE.

MADAME SEMELE
(effort, climbing inside)
Here. I have a nice little drawer in my sideboard all lined with thistledown for the flower ...

FX: LITTLE DRAWER O/C.

MADAME SEMELE (CONT’D)
... and a little cage with food and water for you, my lad. Board and lodging, as promised.

FX: LITTLE CAGE OPENED. MOUSE SQUEAKS AS IT IS POPPED IN. DOOR CLOSED.

MADAME SEMELE (CONT’D)
There, bird, see? I have kept my word - to the letter.

FX: BIRD CHIRRUPS

MADAME SEMELE (CONT’D)
And after we comes to Wall, and I have turned the boy back into a human, I shall do the same for you, for I still have to find a better servant.

Dramatized by Dirk Maggs
YVAINE  
(climbing in the caravan)  
And what do you propose to do to me?  
Hallo?

MADAME SEMELE  
(moving through to drivers seat)  
Come on, Faithless, Hopeless. Walk on.  
Diggory’s Dyke is just around the bend.

FX: MADAME SEMELE SITS OUT FRONT, SLAPS REINS ON MULES

MADAME SEMELE (CONT’D)  
(off)  
Move, you good-for-nothings!

FX: MULES SNORT, CARAVAN STARTS TO TRundle ALONG. YVAINE SITS ON BED.

YVAINE  
(calls forward)  
Would I be correct in concluding that you can neither see me nor hear me?

MADAME SEMELE  
(off, cackling to self)  
Oh, they have to get up pretty early in the morning to put one past Madame Semele. And I do believe that that flower was even finer than the one that girl lost to me, all those years ago. Oh la la....

FX: BIRD CHIRRUPS, NEAR TO YVAINE

YVAINE  
(close)  
Brightly coloured bird. You are more than you see.? You are a human, under a curse, or charm of enslavement?

FX: BIRD CHIRRUPS

YVAINE (CONT’D)  
Let us hope the old woman keeps her word.

FX: BIRD MAKES A WISTFUL SOUND.

EXT. DIGGORY’S DYKE

FX: MOORLAND, DISTANT BIRDS. TRUNDLING CARAVAN.

NARRATOR (V.O.)  
Presently Madame Semele’s Caravan lumbers through the chalk cut of Diggory’s Dyke.  
(MORE)

Dramatized by Dirk Maggs
STARDUST
by NEIL GAIMAN

NARRATOR (V.O.) (CONT'D)
They halt beside a soot-blackened wooden hovel where a bent old woman waves them to a halt. The woman's hair is white as snow, her skin is wrinkled, and one eye is blind.

FX: CARAVAN TRUNDSLES TO A HALT. MULES SNORT. HARNESS JINGLES.

MADAME SEMELE
Good day, sister. What happened to your house?

MORWANNEG
Young people today. One of them thought it would be good sport to fire the house of a poor old woman, who has never harmed a soul. Well, he learned his lesson soon enough.

MADAME SEMELE
Aye. They always learn. And are never grateful to us for the lesson.

MORWANNEG
There's truth for you. Now, tell me, dear. Who rides with you this day?

MADAME SEMELE
That is none of your never-mind, and I shall thank you to keep yourself to yourself.

MORWANNEG
I know you, Ditchwater Sal. None of your damned lip. Who travels with you? For the spell of honesty you placed upon me when we last met I now place upon you.

MADAME SEMELE
I - Uhh - There are the two mules who pull my caravan, myself, a maid-servant I keep in the form of a large bird, and a young man in the form of a dormouse.

MORWANNEG
Anyone else? Any thing else?

MADAME SEMELE
No-one and nothing. I swear it upon the sisterhood.

A BEAT.

MORWANNEG
Then get away with you, and get along with you.

Dramatized by Dirk Maggs
MADAME SEMELE
(to horses)
Get along, you two.

FX: CARAVAN TRUNDELS OFF.

CHANGE ANGLE? - CARAVAN IN DISTANCE TRUNDLING ACROSS LANDSCAPE:

NARRATOR (V.O.)
And inside the caravan Yvaine the star sleeps on, unaware how close she has come to her doom, nor by how slim a margin she has escaped it.

FX: CARAVAN TRUNDELS OFF.

EXT. FAIRGROUND MEADOW - EVENING.

FX: CONVERSATIONS. MALLETS BANGING IN STAKES. BACKGROUND BUILDING ACTIVITY AS MARKET IS PREPARED. CARAVAN TRUNDELS ACROSS FRAME.

NARRATOR (V.O.)
The sun is low in the western sky as they arrive in the market meadow by the town of Wall.

FX: CARAVAN STOPS, MULES SNORT, HARNESS JINGLES.

MADAME SEMELE
(background)
Whoa now ... 

NARRATOR (V.O.)
As the market-folk set up their stalls all over the meadow, Madame Semele fetches the mouse cage from the caravan, opens the door and picks out the sleeping dormouse with bony fingers.

MADAME SEMELE
Out you come.

FX: MOUSE SQUEAK. MADAME SEMELE FUMBLING IN HER POCKETS.

MADAME SEMELE (CONT’D)
Where’s that snowdrop - ah -

FX: GLASS FLOWER TINKLES

MADAME SEMELE (CONT’D)
Just a touch, and -

FX: GLASS TINKLE. FOOMF! TRISTRAN IS RESTORED.

Dramatized by Dirk Maggs
TRISTRAN
(yawns)
Why, you evil old crone -

MADAME SEMELE
Hush your silly mouth. I gave you board
and lodging. I got you here, safely and
soundly, and in the same condition I
found you in. Now, be off with you, Shoo!
Shoo!

TRISTRAN
(walking away)
Hmph.

MADAME SEMELE
(wanders off, muttering)
Ungrateful little so and so.

CHANGE ANGLE

FX: STREAM RUNNING NEARBY. BUSY ATMOS NOW FARTHER OFF.

MADAME SEMELE (CONT’D)
(off)
Where’s that bird now? I need my servant.

FX: BIRD CHIRRUPS AND FLUTTERS, OFF

YVAINE
(approaching)
Tristran?

TRISTRAN
Yvaine - are you all right?

YVAINE
Yes, thank you. I do not believe that she
knew that I was there at all.

MADAME SEMELE
(off)
Keep still now, bird.

TRISTRAN
What is she doing now? That poor bird.

YVAINE
Watch. I do not think that is a bird, any
more than you were a mouse.

FX: DISTANT FOOMF!

TRISTRAN
A woman ... ?

Dramatized by Dirk Maggs
YOUNG UNA
(off)
Oh, at last.

TRISTRAN
Her ears, like a cat ... and those violet eyes ... they seem familiar ...

MADAME SHEMELE
(off, under T&Y)
Come along, girl, help me set up the stall.

YOUNG UNA
(off, under T&Y)
Yes, mistress ...

YVAINE
So, that is the bird's true form. But she still wears the chain that the bird wore. She is a prisoner of the old woman, as I was of you.

TRISTRAN
Yes, I can see. I'm just not sure there's much that we can do about it.

YVAINE
So. What now, that we have arrived at your village?

TRISTRAN
We shall go through the gap in the wall, and pay our visit to Victoria Forester. Come.

FX: FOOTSTEPS IN GRASS AS THEY WALK. THEN HE STOPS.

TRISTRAN (CONT’D)
You know, something terrible has occurred to me ...

YVAINE
Really?

TRISTRAN
I was trying to remember the colour of Victoria’s eyes, but I cannot.

YVAINE
Oh.

FX: THEY START WALKING AGAIN.

TRISTRAN
Never mind, I’ll soon see her.
YVAINE
Tristran. Do you really want this? For I have misgivings.

TRISTRAN
Don’t be nervous. You shall feel so much better when you are sitting in my mother’s parlour, drinking her tea — well, not drinking tea, but there will be tea for you to sip. Now. Here is the gap, and there is my old schoolfellow Wystan Pippin, and Mr. Brown, my old employer, on guard duty.

YVAINE
(quietly, ruefully)
Whither thou goest ...

TRISTRAN
Good evening, Wystan. Good evening, Mr. Brown.

FX: THEY STOP AT THE GAP IN THE WALL AS THEY ARE CHALLENGED:

MR. BROWN
Stay where you are!

TRISTRAN
Do you not know me? It is Tristran Thorn.

WYSTAN
Naaah, can’t be. He was just a squirt.

MR. BROWN
Whoever you are, you can’t come through. No-one comes through from the Lands Beyond.

WYSTAN
(sniggers)
Off yer go, yer pixie.

YVAINE
Tristran. Let it go for now. If the fair is in this field tomorrow, no doubt this passageway can be used from either side.

TRISTRAN
(sigh)
Yes. All right.
(to Wystan & Brown)
I’ll see you two tomorrow in the Seventh Magpie, and I won’t be buying either of you a pint.

FX: HE WALKS OFF, WITH YVAINE.
FX: BUSY BUILDING ATMOS GIVES WAY TO NIGHT AIR. OWL. DISTANT DOG BARKS, UNDER:

NARRATOR (V.O.)
Together they walk back up the slope of the meadow, while around them a hodgepodge of creatures and people erect their stalls, and it comes to Tristran in a wave of something that resembles homesickness that these might as well be his own people, for he feels more in common with them than with the pallid folk of Wall in their worsted jackets and their hobnailed boots. Tristan is tired, and he falls asleep, with Yvaine sitting nearby watching her sisters shining high overhead.

TRISTRAN
(asleep)
Zzzzzzz ...

FX: FOOTSTEPS IN GRASS

YOUNG UNA
Hello again.

YVAINE
It is you. You were the bird in the caravan. Have you slipped your chain?

FX: CHAIN TINKLES

YOUNG UNA
Not yet. You become used to it, in time.

YVAINE
Do you really?

YOUNG UNA
No ... How is the lad?

YVAINE
Sleeping.

TRISTRAN
(stirs in sleep)
Murmb ... Flrbl ...

YOUNG UNA
He seems good-hearted.

YVAINE
Yes, I suppose he is.
YOUNG UNA
I must warn you, that if you leave these lands for - through there ... 

YVAINE
Through the wall?

YOUNG UNA
Yes. If you go through, then you will be, as I understand it, transformed into what you would be in that world: a cold, dead thing, sky-fallen.

YVAINE
(shivers)
Brrrr. You know, Tristran once caught me with a chain much like yours. Then he freed me, and I ran from him. But he found me and bound me with an obligation, which binds my kind more securely than any chain ever could.

YOUNG UNA
But you are under a prior obligation, are you not? You have something that does not belong to you, which you must deliver to its rightful owner.

YVAINE
Who are you?

YOUNG UNA
I know who seeks you and why she needs you. Also, I know the provenance of the topaz stone you wear upon a silver chain. It is the stone they call the Power Of Stormhold.

MADAME SEMELE
(off)
Girl! Where is she. Girl! Here!

YOUNG UNA
I must go.

YVAINE
(moves off)
Look after that boy. But cross into his world at your peril.

FX: YOUNG UNA WALKS AWAY.

EXT. FAIRGROUND - DAWN

FX: DAWN CHORUS. PEOPLE STIRRING IN BACKGROUND. BADGER APPROACHES TRISTRAN, SNUFFLING & WHEEZING.

Dramatized by Dirk Maggs
NARRATOR (V.O.)
Dawn breaks, and Tristran is awoken by a snuffling, wheezing sound.

TRISTRAN
(waking)
Eh? Wha - ?

BADGER
Begging your pardon, sir.

TRISTRAN
Ah!

NARRATOR (V.O.)
It is a Badger, walking upon its hind legs and wearing a heliotrope silk dressing gown.

BADGER
Party name of Thorn? Tristran of that set?

TRISTRAN
Ah - yes. That’s me.

BADGER
They’re arskin’ for yer. Down by the gap in the wall. Young lady wants to have a word with yer.

FX: HE AMBLES OFF.

TRISTRAN
Thank you ... Yvaine? Wake up.

YVAINE
Oh ... I nodded off. Most unlike me.

TRISTRAN
Victoria must be here. By the gap, asking for me. I'm off to see her. Look. Well. Probably best if you stay here. I wouldn't want to confuse her or anything.

YVAINE
(sarcasm)
Oh no, that would never do.

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EXT. WALL, DAWN.
85
FX: AIR, BIRDSONG, DISTANT HUBBUB. TRISTRAN’S FEET ON GRASS APPROACH.

TRISTRAN
Victoria ... ?

Dramatized by Dirk Maggs
LOUISA THORN
Don’t you recognise your own sister?

TRISTRAN
Louisa? You – you have grown ... into a fine young lady.

LOUISA THORN
And you have turned into a mop-haired raggle-taggle gypsy. We are going into the Seventh Magpie. Mr Bromios said that you could use his sitting room. There’s somebody who needs to talk to you.

FX: THEY WALK OFF TOWARDS THE VILLAGE.

EXT. VILLAGE - DAY

FX: SOME HORSEDRAWN TRAFFIC, VOICES ETC.

NARRATOR (V.O.)
They walk to the Inn, where Louisa shows Tristran up the narrow stairs behind the bar to the landing.

INT. INN, LANDING - DAY

FX: CREAKY CLOSE SPACE

NARRATOR (V.O.)
Louisa’s lip trembles; she hugs Tristran.

LOUISA THORN
Through there.

FX: SHE DESCENDS STAIRS, UNDER:

NARRATOR (V.O.)
Then, with not another word, she flees down the wooden stairs.

FX: TRISTRAN KNOCKS ON DOOR.

VICTORIA FORESTER
(inside)
Come in ...

INT. SITTING ROOM, INN - CONTINUOUS

FX: DOOR OPENS. CLOCK TICKING. TRISTRAN ENTERS.

TRISTRAN
Victoria ... I kneel before you –
HE KNEELS

VICTORIA FORESTER

Oh, please don't. Please get up.

HE GETS UP.

VICTORIA FORESTER (CONT'D)

Look at you. You became a man. And your hand. What happened to your hand?

TRISTRAN

I burnt it. In a fire.

A PAUSE.

VICTORIA FORESTER

(clears her throat)

Ah'hm ...

TRISTRAN

Yes?

VICTORIA FORESTER

There are a number of things I must say, Tristran: Firstly, I must apologise to you. It was my foolishness, that sent you off on your journeyings. I thought you were joking, that you were too much of a boy, ever to follow up on any of your fine, silly words. It was only when you had gone, and the days passed, that I realised that you had been in earnest, and by then it was much too late.

TRISTRAN

Too late.

VICTORIA FORESTER

(having rehearsed this many times)

I have had to live each day with the possibility that I had sent you to your death. And I did not play you fair, since I thought that your quest was just foolishness. Ask me why I would not kiss you that night, Tristran Thorn.

TRISTRAN

It was your right not to kiss me. I did not come here to make you sad, Vicky. I did not find you your star to make you miserable.

VICTORIA FORESTER

So you did find the star we saw that night?

Dramatized by Dirk Maggs
TRISTRAN
Oh yes. I did what you asked me to do.

VICTORIA FORESTER
Then do something else for me now. Ask me why I would not kiss you that night.

TRISTRAN
Very well, Vicky. Why would you not kiss me, that night?

VICTORIA FORESTER
Because -
(deep breath)
- the day before we saw the shooting star, Robert had asked me to marry him. That evening, when I saw you, I had gone to the shop hoping to see him, and to talk to him, and to tell him that I accepted.

TRISTRAN
Robert?

VICTORIA FORESTER
Robert Monday. You worked in his shop.

TRISTRAN
Mister Monday? You and Mister Monday?

VICTORIA FORESTER
Exactly. And then you had to take me seriously and run off to bring me back a star, and I promised you my hand, if you returned with the star.

TRISTRAN
And you love Mister Monday?

VICTORIA FORESTER
I do. But I gave you my word, Tristran. And I will keep my word, and I have told Robert this. If you want me, then I am yours.

A BEAT.

TRISTRAN
Victoria. I am responsible for all that I have done, not you. And you did not promise me your hand if I came back with the star.

VICTORIA FORESTER
I didn't?
TRISTRAN
No. You promised me Anything I Desired.

VICTORIA FORESTER
Yes ...

TRISTRAN
Then ... Then, I desire that you should marry Mister Monday.

VICTORIA FORESTER
Oh.

TRISTRAN
I desire that you should be married as soon as possible - why, within this very week, if such a thing can be arranged. And I desire that you should be as happy together as ever a man and woman were.

A BEAT.

VICTORIA FORESTER
Do you mean it?

TRISTRAN
Marry him with my blessing, and we'll be quits and done. And the star will probably think so, too.

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INT. BAR, SEVENTH MAGPIE - LATER

FX: HUBBUB OF DRINKERS

NARRATOR (V.O.)
On a normal day it would be unheard of for the Seventh Magpie to be so crowded before breakfast, but this is market day. As Tristran descends the staircase he finds his father, Dunstan Thorn, waiting in the bar.

TRISTRAN
Hello, father.

FX: THEY EMBRACE

DUNSTAN
(laughs)
So you made it back without hurt.

TRISTRAN
I hurt my hand a bit.
DUNSTAN
Your mother has breakfast waiting for you, back at the farm.

TRISTRAN
Breakfast would be wonderful. And seeing mother again, of course. Also, we must talk.

DUNSTAN
Come along, then.
(going off)
You look taller ...

EXT. VILLAGE, DAY

AS BEFORE

NARRATOR (V.O.)
Tristran goes home to breakfast with his mother and father, and on the way relates his adventures and raises a matter that has been vexing him, which is the question of his birth. His father answers him as honestly as he is able.

INT. COTTAGE KITCHEN

FX: TRISTRAN, DUNSTAN, DAISY & LOUISA EATING AND LAUGHING

NARRATOR (V.O.)
And then they are at Tristran's old home, where his sister waits for him, and there is a steaming breakfast on the stove and on the table, prepared for him, lovingly, by the woman he had always believed to be his mother, and Tristran spends a happy morning with them.

EXT. FAIRGROUND MEADOW - DAY.

FX: FAIRGROUND HUBBUB. MUSIC, CHILDREN LAUGHING.

VARIOUS STALLHOLDERS DRUMMING UP BUSINESS (see earlier scene), INCLUDING:

OLDER UNA (V.O.)
In the Market Fair meadow, Madame Semele eyes the field in dismay as she arranges her glass flowers to attract a buyer.

MADAME SEMELE
(yells)
Beautiful flowers made of finest crystal! Forget-Me-Nots, Buttercups, Daisies! Enchant your beloved with a token of your devotion!

Dramatized by Dirk Maggs
MADAME SEMELE (CONT’D)
(to YOUNG UNA, sighing)
Fewer of them and fewer of them, every nine-year. Mark my words, slave, soon enough this market will be just a memory.

YOUNG UNA
Perhaps. But it does not matter to me. This is the last of these markets I shall ever attend.

MADAME SEMELE
I thought I had long-since beaten all of your insolence out of you.

YOUNG UNA
It is not insolence. Look.

FX: CHAIN TINKLES

MADAME SEMELE
What have you done? That chain is almost dissolved to nothing!

YOUNG UNA
I have done nothing that I did not do eighteen years ago. I was bound to you to be your slave until the day that the moon lost her daughter, if it occurred in a week when two Mondays came together. And so it is coming to pass. My time with you is almost done.

MADAME SEMELE
Nonsense. Get back to work.

EXT. FAIRGROUND – LATER

FX: STEAM CALLIOPE PLAYING. HUBBUB & LAUGHTER

NARRATOR (V.O.)
It is three in the afternoon. The star sits upon the meadow-grass beside Mr Bromios’s wine-and-ale-and-food stall, and stares across at the gap in the wall to the village beyond it where Tristran went and has not returned.

YVAINE
(sighs)
Hmmm.

VICTORIA FORESTER
(approach)
Are you waiting for someone, my dear?

Dramatized by Dirk Maggs
YVAINE
I do not know. Perhaps. I am called Yvaine.

VICTORIA FORESTER
A young man, if I do not mistake my guess, Yvaine. I'm Victoria. Victoria Forester.

YVAINE
So. Victoria Forester. Your fame precedes you.

VICTORIA FORESTER
Oh, the wedding, you mean?

YVAINE
A wedding, is it? Oh.

VICTORIA FORESTER
Oh you poor thing! Why do you not go through, and look for your lad?

YVAINE
Perhaps I shall. I wish my mother were out, I would say goodbye to her, first.

VICTORIA FORESTER
Oh, there he is.

YVAINE
Who?

VICTORIA FORESTER
My husband-to-be.
(calls)
Robert!

YVAINE
(calls after her)
Then you are not marrying Tristram Thorn?

VICTORIA FORESTER
(off, laughing)
Oh, no, no.

YVAINE
(to self)
Oh ... Good.

TRISTRAN
(arrives, out of breath)
Oh, Yvaine. I’ve said my goodbyes.

YVAINE
Goodbyes?

Dramatized by Dirk Maggs
TRISTRAN
Are you having a nice time?

YVAINE
Er - Not particularly.

TRISTRAN
I'm sorry. I should have taken you with me, into the village.

YVAINE
No. You shouldn't have. I live, as long as I am in Faerie. Were I to travel to your world, I would be nothing but a cold iron stone, pitted and pocked and fallen from the heavens.

TRISTRAN
(horrified)
But ... I would have taken you through with me. I tried to, last night. And you would have let me?

YVAINE
Yes. Which goes to prove that you are indeed a ninny, a lackwit, and a - a clodpoll. And perhaps I am, too.

TRISTRAN
I'm sorry. And I won't leave you again.

YVAINE
No. You will not. To tell the truth, I was happy to discover that you are not marrying Victoria Forester.

TRISTRAN
So was I.

YVAINE
You know ... a star and a mortal man -

TRISTRAN
Only half-mortal, according to my father. Everything I ever thought about myself, who I was, what I am, has turned out to be a lie. Or sort of. You have no idea how astonishingly liberating that feels.

YVAINE
Whatever you are, I just wanted to point out that we can probably never have children. That's all.

TRISTRAN
Kiss me.

Dramatized by Dirk Maggs
YVAINE
Just so you know, that's all.

TRISTRAN
Please.

THEY KISS.

CHANGE ANGLE. STREAM NOW A BIT LOUDER, UNDER:

NARRATOR (V.O.)
Tristran and Yvaine kiss, and their troth is plighted. And, beside Madame Semele’s stall of glass flowers, the young woman with the cat-like ears and violet eyes finds her silver chain is now nothing but smoke and vapour, and a sharp gust of wind blows it away into nothing at all.

FX: TINKLY SWOOSHLY WIND GUST ...

MADAME SEMELE
What!

YOUNG UNA
There. The terms of my servitude are fulfilled, and now you and I are done with each other.

MADAME SEMELE
You are an evil, foolish slattern, so to desert me like this.

YOUNG UNA
Your problems are of no concern to me. I shall never again be called a slattern, or a slave, or anything else that is not my own name. I am Lady Una, firstborn and only daughter of the Eighty-first Lord of Stormhold, and the spell you bound me with is over and done. Now, you will apologise to me, and pay me for my services. For these things have their rules.

MADAME SEMELE
And what do you choose in payment? The caravan? The mules? My liver?

YOUNG UNA
You will give me your most prized glass flower.

MADAME SEMELE
My ruby rose? Never.

Dramatized by Dirk Maggs
YOUNG UNA
You cannot refuse me. The debt must be paid.

MADAME SEMELE
Grrr! Damn you. Here.

FX: TINKLY GLASS FLOWER HANDED OVER.

CHANGE ANGLE: MUSIC LOUDER

TRISTRAN
So, where shall we go, once market is done?

YVAINE
I do not know. But I have one obligation still to discharge.

TRISTRAN
You do?

YVAINE
Yes. The thing I showed you. The topaz stone that caused me to fall when it hit me. I have to give it to the right person. The last time the right person came along, that innkeeper woman cut his throat, so I have it still. But I wish it were gone.

FX: FOOTSTEPS APPROACH, IN GRASS

YOUNG UNA
(approach)
Ask her for what she carries, Tristran Thorn.

TRISTRAN
Oh - hello, um -

YOUNG UNA
Yes. Who exactly am I, do you suppose?

TRISTRAN
You were the bird, in the witch’s caravan, when I was -

YOUNG UNA
When you were the dormouse, my son. Yes. But now I have my own form again, like you, and my time of servitude is over. Ask Yvaine for what she carries. You have the right.

TRISTRAN
I do?

Dramatized by Dirk Maggs
Go on.

TRISTRAN

Yvaine?

YVAINE

Yes.

TRISTRAN

Yvaine, will you give me what you are carrying?

FX: YVAINE TAKES TOPAZ ON CHAIN OFF AND GIVES IT TO TRISTRAN.

YVAINE

Here, I gladly give it.

YOUNG UNA

That stone was your grandfather's, Tristran.

TRISTRAN

But he was a farmer.

YOUNG UNA

Wrong parent. You are the last of the line of Stormhold, on your mother’s side. Go on. Put it about your neck.

FX: TRISTRAN DOES SO.

TRISTRAN

There ... It’s ... very nice.

YOUNG UNA

It is the Power of Stormhold. You are of the blood, and now all of your uncles are dead and gone, you will make a fine Lord of the Stormhold.

A BEAT

YOUNG UNA (CONT’D)

Well?

TRISTRAN

But I have no wish to be a lord of anywhere or of anything, except perhaps my lady’s heart. This lady’s heart.

YOUNG UNA

Since you were born, Tristran Thorn, I have not demanded one thing of you. And now, the first simple request that I make, you say me no?

(MORE)

Dramatized by Dirk Maggs
STARDUST
by NEIL GAIMAN

YOUNG UNA (CONT’D)
Now, I ask of you Tristran, is that any way to treat your mother?

YVAINE GASPS

TRISTRAN
Mu - mu - mu ...

YOUNG UNA
Well? Is it?

TRISTRAN
(agape)
... No, mother.

YOUNG UNA
It will do you young people good to have a home of your own, and an occupation.

TRISTRAN
But - we were going to go travelling.

YOUNG UNA
Well, if it does not suit you, you may leave. There is no silver chain that will be holding you to the throne of Stormhold.

A BEAT

YOUNG UNA (CONT’D)
You could say thank you.

TRISTRAN
Yes, um - thank you.

YVAINE
Might I have the honour of knowing what you are called, my lady?

YOUNG UNA
I am the Lady Una of Stormhold.

FX: SHE PULLS CRYSTAL ROSE FROM HER POCKET

YOUNG UNA (CONT’D)
And this ruby rose was my payment for more than sixty years of servitude. I plan to barter it for a palanquin to take us back. We must arrive in style with bearers, and outriders, and perhaps an elephant - nothing says 'Get out of the way' quite like an elephant -

TRISTRAN
No, mother.

Dramatized by Dirk Maggs
YOUNG UNA

No?

TRISTRAN
No. You may travel by palanquin, and elephant and all that, if you wish to. But Yvaine and I will make our own way, and travel at our own speed. Won’t we, Yvaine - Yvaine?

CHANGE ANGLE

FX: MUSIC & HUBBUB SOFTER; STREAM LOUDER

MORWANNEG
(a hag, approaching)
How now dearie, what a pretty face to find at the Market Fair. Stop a while here under the trees, and talk.

YVAINE
About what?

MORWANNEG
I came here to fetch your heart back with me.

YVAINE
Is that so?

MORWANNEG
Aye. I nearly had it, at that, up in the mountain pass. D'ye remember?

YVAINE
That was you? You, with the knives?

MORWANNEG
Mm. That was me. But I squandered away all the youth I took for the journey. Every act of magic lost me a little of the youth I wore, and now I am older than I have ever been.

YVAINE
If you touch me lay but a finger on me, you will regret it for evermore.

MORWANNEG
No. I can no longer find you, in my mind, you see. Not long ago you burned - your heart burned - in my mind like silver fire. But after that night in the Inn it became patchy and dim, and now it is not there at all.

Dramatized by Dirk Maggs
YVAINE
Could it be that the heart that you seek
is no longer my own?

MORWANNEG
In what way?

YVAINE
I have given my heart to another.

MORWANNEG
The boy? The one in the Inn? With the unicorn?

YVAINE
Yes.

MORWANNEG
He will break it, or waste it, or lose it. They all do.

YVAINE
Nonetheless, he has my heart. I hope that your sisters will not be too hard on you, when you return to them without your prize.

MORWANNEG
My sisters will be harsh, but cruel. However, I appreciate the sentiment. You have a good heart, child. (walking off) A pity it will not be mine.

TRISTRAN
(approach)
All sorted out. Nothing to worry about. I had to promise the Lady U – my mother – that we’d get to the Stormhold sooner or later, but we can take our time on the way. There are so many places we have not yet seen. So many people still to meet. Not to mention all the wrongs to right, villains to vanquish, sights to see ...

YVAINE
And she acceded to this?

TRISTRAN
In the end. Who was that old biddy? She seemed a bit familiar. She was anything wrong?

YVAINE
Whatever was wrong, everything is right, now.
TRISTRAN
Oh. Good. We can go.

YVAINE
Don’t you want to spend more time with your family?

TRISTRAN
No. I’ve said my goodbyes to them all. Including both my mothers. So. Shall we walk together?

YVAINE
Yes please. Where?

TRISTRAN
Well ... East.

YVAINE
I’d like that.

FX: THEY WALK OFF, LAUGHING.

EXT. STORMHOLD - LATER

FX: CHEERING CROWDS, RUNS UNDER:

NARRATOR (V.O.)
And here, at the end of our tale, I must make a confession. I have always been partial to a palanquin. In all the years of my abduction by the witch, when she trapped me in the body of a brightly coloured bird, and made me serve her, I dreamed nightly of returning to Stormhold, restored as the Lady Una, long-lost and believed to be dead, riding in a palanquin, with bearers, and outriders, and an elephant in the procession through cheering crowds. And so it came to pass.

FX: ELEPHANT TRUMPETS

NARRATOR (V.O.)
And when I announced that, in my time away, I had given birth to a son, who was the next heir to the throne and wore the Power of Stormhold about his neck – the celebrations went on for a week.

FX: FIREWORKS, CHEERS

Dramatized by Dirk Maggs
NARRATOR (V.O.)
It was eight more years before two travel-stained wanderers arrived in the lower reaches of the Stormhold proper, dusty and tired; and it was not until the man displayed the topaz stone that hung about his neck that he was recognised as the true Heir.

FX: FANFARES, CHEERING, ETC.

NARRATOR (V.O.)
After the investiture and celebrations, the young Eighty-second Lord of Stormhold got on with the business of ruling. He made as few decisions as possible, but those he made were wise ones. He and his wife, the Lady Yvaine were happy - not forever-after, but for a long while. And when Death came in the night, and whispered her secret into his ear, he nodded his grey head and said nothing more, and his people took his remains to the Hall of Ancestors where they lie, alongside mine, to this day. Yvaine became the Lady of Stormhold, and proved a better monarch, in peace and in war, than any would have dared to hope. She does not age as her husband aged, and her eyes remain as blue, her hair as golden-white, and she walks with a limp to this day. Each night, when the duties of state permit, she climbs, alone, to the highest peak of the palace, where she stands and stares upward into the dark sky and watches, with sad eyes, the slow dance of the infinite stars.

MUSIC & CREDITS.

THE END

ADDITIONAL SCENES
OVERLEAF:

Dramatized by Dirk Maggs
EXT. HARBOUR, SCAITHE’S EBB – GENERAL

FX: SEAWASH, SHIPS CREAKING AT ANCHOR, SEAGULLS

NARRATOR (V.O.)
This is Scaithe’s Ebb, a small seaport
town of chandlers and carpenters and
sailmakers.

FX: HORSE AND CARRIAGE PASSES, FOREGROUND

NARRATOR (V.O.)
You recognise the black carriage drawn by
four black horses which is arriving in
the town. And you will see that it bears
Lord Primus on his quest to make the
Topaz which will make him Lord Of
Stormhold his own. He takes lodgings in
the top-most room in the Seaman’s Rest,
drinks with the sea-captains with ships
in port, making great show of inspecting
their ships. Soon it is made known that
he will be sailing on the morning tide
aboard the ‘Heart Of A Dream’ Primus also
bribes the locals to watch out for a a
tall, angular, dark-haired visitor. For a
man who is tired of looking over his
shoulder for Septimus is tired of life...

FX: VILLAGE ATMOS. SEAWASH BG.

BOY
Good master! There’s a man in town as you
described him, come by land. He lodges
with Mistress Pettier. He is thin and
crow-like, and I saw him in the Ocean’s
Roar, buying grog for every man in the
room. He says he is a distressed
seafaring man, seeking a berth.

FX: COINS INTO BOY’S HAND

PRIMUS
Here’s two farthings for you, lad.

BOY
Cor, thank you sir.

FX: BOY SCAMPERS OFF.

NARRATOR (V.O.)
Primus walks down to the quay, dispensing
small coins to the urchins.

(DRAME)

Dramatized by Dirk Maggs
He enters his cabin on the Heart of a Dream and gives strict orders that none is to disturb him until they are at least a week out of port.

FX: DISTANT MERRIMENT/HUBBUB

DRUNKEN SAILOR
(foreground)
S’very kind of you to show me back to me berth, shipmate ...

SEPTIMUS
We Maintopmen must stick together, old cha - cha - chum.

NARRATOR (V.O.)
That evening an unfortunate accident befalls an able seaman who crews the rigging in the Heart of a Dream. He falls, when drunk, off the quay at dead of night.

SEPTIMUS
Whoops a daisy.

DRUNKEN SAILOR
(slips)
Urp - !

FX: SPLOSH. BUBBLES.

NARRATOR (V.O.)
Luckily there is a replacement at the ready: the very sailor with whom the unfortunate man has been drinking this evening.

SEPTIMUS
So easy ...

NARRATOR (V.O.)
And this sailor, tall, dark and crow-like, is on deck at dawn when the ship sails out of the harbour, in the morning mist. The Heart of a Dream sails east.

FX: CARRIAGE AND HORSES IN OPPOSITE DIRECTION TO TOP OF SCENE

NARRATOR (V.O.)
And Lord Primus of Stormhold, his beard freshly trimmed, watches it sail from the cliff-top until it is lost to view. Then he rides off, on the coast road, in a dark coach pulled by four black horses.
FX: WIND IN LEAVES. BIRDSONG, THUNDER, OFF.

TRISTRAN

Zzzzz ...
(wakes up)
Uhuh -

FX: HE SITS UP.

COPPER BEECH
You were dreaming.

TRISTRAN
(sleepy)
I was in an apple tree, watching Victoria Forester undressing, but the bough broke...
... Yes, I was dreaming. Oh!

FX: HE JUMPS UP WITH A START.

TRISTRAN (CONT’D)
Who am I talking to - ?

NARRATOR (V.O.)
Tristran is alone, under the Copper Beech tree ...

COPPER BEECH
You are talking to me.

TRISTRAN
You are the tree?

COPPER BEECH
I didn’t always used to be a tree. A magician made me a tree. I was a wood-nymph.

TRISTRAN
Well, I do not know what you were like as a wood-nymph, madam, but you are a magnificent tree.

A BEAT

COPPER BEECH
I was pretty cute as a nymph, too.

TRISTRAN
I’m sure.
COPPER BEECH
I had a dream last night, too. In my
dream, Pan was walking through this
forest. He owns all of this.

TRISTRAN
Pan owns the forest?

COPPER BEECH
Of course he does. It’s not hard to own
something, like he does. You just have to
know that it’s yours, and then be willing
to let it go. And in my dream he came
over to me and told me you had come on a
guest, and that you had captured a star
on a chain, and she was sad. And Pan told
me to help you.

TRISTRAN
Me?

COPPER BEECH
And I woke up, and there you were, fast
asleep with your head by my trunk,
snoring like a pigwiggin.

TRISTRAN
What kind of help did Pan say you should
give me? Not that I am grumbling. I mean,
right now I need all the help I can get.

COPPER BEECH
Well, first I must make something clear.

TRISTRAN
Please do.

COPPER BEECH
If you kept that star chained, and she
had escaped her chains, then there is no
power on earth or sky could ever make me
help you. But you unchained her, and for
that I will help you.

TRISTRAN
Thank you.

COPPER BEECH
I will tell you three true things. Two of
them I will tell you now, and the last is
for when you need it most. You will have
to judge for yourself when that will be.

TRISTRAN
Ye-es ...?
COPPER BEECH
First, the star is in great danger. What occurs in the midst of a wood is soon known at its furthest borders, and the trees talk to the wind, and the wind passes the word along. There are forces that mean her harm, and worse than harm. You must find her, and protect her.

TRISTRAN
I will.

COPPER BEECH
Secondly, there is a path through the forest, off past that fir-tree (and I could tell you things about that fir-tree that would make a boulder blush), and, in a few minutes a carriage will be coming down that path. Hurry, and you will not miss it.

TRISTRAN
Right.

COPPER BEECH
And thirdly, hold out your hands.

FX: LEAF FLUTTERS DOWN INTO HIS HANDS.

TRISTRAN
A leaf?

COPPER BEECH
Keep it safe. And listen to it, when you need it most.

FX: DISTANT COACH AND HORSES.

PRIMUS
(distantly)
Yah!

TRISTRAN
I can hear the carriage!

COPPER BEECH
Run! Run!

FX: TRISTRAN RUNS OFF A LITTLE, RUNS BACK.

TRISTRAN
Thank you - !

FX: HE RUNS OFF AGAIN.

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Dramatized by Dirk Maggs
FX: UNICORN WHINNIES.

TRISTRAN (CONT’D)
Let me through - please.

FX: UNICORN SHIFTS. TRISTRAN MOVES PAST IT.

NARRATOR (V.O.)
At this moment of betrayal, Tristran
remembers The Copper Beech Tree’s third
gift.

TRISTRAN
Wait Tristran. Look in your pocket ... 

FX: HE RUMMAGES IN HIS POCKETS

TRISTRAN (CONT’D)
Where is it ... Ah. Stuck to the candle
stub ... 

FX: LEAF, HANDLED, UNDER:

TRISTRAN (CONT’D)
Leaf, whisper in my ear - advise me in
this hour of danger ...