

# WOLF CRY WOLF

A play by

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# WOLF CRY WOLF

## CHARACTERS

JANE	F	23, 13
STEPH	F	21, 11
GEORGE	M	15

## SETTING

Dickinson, North Dakota

## A NOTE ON THE SCRIPT

A dash at the end of a line ( — ) suggests a hard interruption. The character who speaks next should sharply interrupt the character delivering the dashed line.

A slash at the end of a line ( / ) suggests a soft interruption. The character who speaks next should begin his or her line early such that both characters speak briefly at the same time.

# WOLF CRY WOLF

## HISTORY

WOLF CRY WOLF was developed via readings at the University of Texas at Austin, at the Landing Theatre Company's New Play Festival in Houston, and at the New Theatre Project. Wolf Cry Wolf was originally produced by the New Theatre Project under the artistic direction of Keith Paul Medelis. It opened December 1st, 2012 at the Mix Studio in Ypsilanti, MI. The cast featured:

Jane ..... Ramona Lucius  
Steph ..... Meredith Deighton  
George ..... Kris Reilly

The play was designed and directed by Keith Paul Medelis.

## ABOUT THE PREMIERE PRODUCTION

In the New Theatre Project's premiere, the playing area consisted of grass turf and a real stump, with other settings suggested. Many of the effects described in the play were achieved through stylized performance. For example Kris Reilly (George) barked as Samson, and later both he and Ramona Lucius (Jane) hissed and mewed as the ghost cats. Also, Kris played George with a stutter, which is not indicated in the script but which was effective.

If you should choose to produce the play, I hope you will please find what works best for you, so long as you bark, yell, and howl.

Kevin Kautzman  
Austin, TX  
November, 2012

Everybody needs his memories. They keep the wolf of insignificance from the door.

- Saul Bellow

July. Sunshine. The front yard of JANE's family's home. A "For Sale" sign. GEORGE, fifteen, stands dressed in a long black coat, shorts, and black boots without laces. HE smokes a cigarette. A dog barks. GEORGE looks a little ruffled. HE wanders away as JANE enters. SHE is thirteen. SHE inspects the "For Sale" sign. SHE reaches into the box above it containing pamphlets about the property. SHE sits and begins to tear these apart, one by one, then in bunches. SHE puts them in her mouth and tears at them. SHE spits pieces and gnaws at the pamphlets, snarling convincingly as SHE does. STEPH enters, holding a box of matches. SHE is eleven.

STEPH

What are you doing?

JANE

What's it look like?

STEPH

My name's Steph.

JANE tears apart more pamphlets.

We just moved here. Is this your house?

JANE

This is where we live.

STEPH

So it's your house?

JANE

If we live here then it must be our house, right?

STEPH

I like it.

Me too. JANE

Want me to help? STEPH

No. JANE

I've got matches. STEPH

Is that your dog barking? JANE

Yeah. STEPH

Tell her to shut up. JANE

It's not a "her". STEPH

Tell him then. JANE

His name's Samson. STEPH

Sampson? JANE

Sammmmmson. STEPH

What kind of a name is Sampson? JANE

A dog's name. STEPH

JANE

Tell Sampson to stop barking. He's giving me a migraine.

STEPH

What's a migraine?

JANE

It's a big headache. My mom gets them. Usually when I'm around. She says I'm a trigger. Like on a gun. Bang!

Ugh. Tell that dog to shut up!

STEPH

Samson! Stop barking!

The dog barks.

JANE

That didn't work.

STEPH

He's nervous. It's a brand new place. There's that weird smell.

JANE

What smell?

STEPH

The sweet smell.

JANE

That's sweetgrass. It's a nice smell. It's my favorite smell actually. Ahh! If that dog doesn't stop barking, I'm going to scream.

STEPH

My dad can usually get him to stop.

JANE

How's he do it?

STEPH

He yells really loud.

JANE

Yell really loud then. Come on. He's driving me crazy.

STEPH

SAMSON! STOP BARKING! YOU'RE GIVING MY NEW FRIEND A MIGRAINE,  
WHICH IS A BIG HEADACHE!

JANE

See? It worked.

STEPH

What's your name?

JANE

Give me some matches.

STEPH hands JANE the box of matches.

How old are you?

STEPH

Eleven and a half.

JANE

I'm thirteen and a half.

STEPH

When's your birthday?

JANE

October.

STEPH

No way. Mine too.

JANE

What day?

STEPH

You first.



JANE  
I asked you first.

STEPH  
Say it at the same time.

JANE  
Thir... tenth.

STEPH  
Thir... d.

JANE  
Huh. Pretty close anyway.

STEPH  
Yeah.

JANE  
Give me a match, Eleven and A Half.

JANE lights the match and lets it burn to the pads of her fingers.

STEPH  
Doesn't that hurt?

JANE  
Nah. Look how far down the match I got. You try.

STEPH  
I don't know.

JANE  
Scared?

STEPH  
No! But my parents wouldn't like it.

JANE  
They're not gonna find out.

STEPH

They always find out! This town is so small. I feel like somebody's watching me all the time. It's creepy.

JANE

You're scared!

STEPH

Am not.

JANE

Try it then.

STEPH holds the match for about half as long as JANE did. SHE drops it and waves her hand from the pain.

STEPH

Ow ow ow.

JANE

Not too bad.

The dog barks.

JANE

SAMPSON! SHUT UP!

STEPH

SAMSON! SHUT UP!

A moment while THEY listen. The dog does not bark.

JANE (CONT'D)

My name's Jane.

STEPH

I'm Steph.

JANE

You told me already.

STEPH

So I told you twice. Are you going to move?

No. JANE

Are you sure? STEPH

Yes. JANE

How sure? STEPH

Very. JANE

What percentage? Out of a hundred? STEPH

Did you just learn percentages? JANE

Yeah. STEPH

Nobody likes a show off, Steph. JANE

I'm just wondering. STEPH

I'm ninety percent sure. Out of a hundred. JANE

What's the sign for then? The other ten percent? STEPH

It's just a stupid sign. JANE

STEPH

I've seen signs like that before. We had one in front of our old house before we moved here.

JANE

Just because there's a sign in our yard doesn't mean I'm moving.

STEPH

But it means the house is for sale. That's what it says. "For Sale."

JANE

Wow. Good for you! You can read too!

STEPH

You're angry.

JANE

I am not angry!

STEPH

We can still be friends even if you're going to move.

JANE

Who said anything about friends?

STEPH

I'm just saying.

JANE

I've got friends coming out my wanghole.

STEPH

Your what?

JANE

My wanghole. It's a hole in your wang. You'll figure it out when you're older.

STEPH

I'm just saying we can be friends even if you're going to move. Do you know where you're moving?

JANE

You're nosy, Eleven and A Half.

STEPH

My dad says I'm precocious, Thirteen and A Half.

JANE

So you live right there now, huh?

STEPH

Yeah.

JANE

That house used to belong to an old lady. She's dead. She died in that house.

STEPH

Really?

JANE

Yep. Which room is yours?

STEPH

That one.

JANE

Oh man.

STEPH

What?

JANE

That's the exact room she died in.

STEPH

Shut up. You're lying.

JANE

I'm not. The night she died an ambulance and a police car came. They brought her out in a yellow bag. I saw it out my window. She had all these cats, too.

SHE meows.

JANE (CONT'D)

Maybe that's why Sampson is going crazy. He can smell the ghost cats.

SHE meows, screeching.

STEPH

You didn't have to tell me all that. About the dead lady and her ghost cats. How am I going to sleep?

JANE

Oh relax! People die all the time.

STEPH

Not in my bedroom!

JANE

You should get used to it. This town is full of weirdos.

STEPH

It is?

JANE

Yeah. Like there's this kid always creeping around in this long black coat.

STEPH

I've seen him!

JANE

Total weirdo. But hey, look on the bright side: my room's right there.

STEPH

Yeah. So?

JANE

Since we're friends now we'll be able to talk at night.

STEPH

How?

JANE

(exiting)

Wait here.

STEPH picks up one of the remaining intact pamphlets. SHE puts it in her mouth and gnaws at it halfheartedly, then more assuredly. SHE snarls a bit. SHE spits some pieces and reaches for another pamphlet as JANE returns with two walkie-talkies.

JANE (CONT'D)

Stand over there and press the button.

STEPH

Hello?

JANE

Farther! Stand way over there!

STEPH

Hello? Jane?

JANE

Hello!

STEPH

It works.

STEPH presses the device to her ear.

JANE

(yelling)

Fun, right?!

STEPH

(wincing)

Gah.

JANE

Here, turn it off to save the batteries. This one's yours.

STEPH

Really?

JANE

Just hide it from your folks. I don't want them taking it away. Okay?

STEPH

Okay.

JANE

I read palms too. Want to learn?

STEPH

Umm. Sure.

JANE

Your whole life is in your palm. Show me your hand.

A bell rings nearby.

STEPH

That's my mom.

JANE

Umm... no, that's a bell.

STEPH

My mom is ringing the bell.

JANE

What's she doing that for?

STEPH

It's dinnertime. I have three minutes to get inside and sit at the table or else I'm in trouble.

JANE

Oh.

STEPH

My mom collects bells.

JANE

Right.



STEPH  
That's her Saturday bell.

JANE  
I get it.

STEPH  
She's a little eee err.

JANE  
Who isn't? You better get inside. You don't want to get in trouble, do you?

STEPH  
I'll talk with you tonight?

JANE  
What time do you go to bed?

STEPH  
Nine.

JANE  
Psshhh. I go to bed at ten.

STEPH  
Wow.

JANE  
Turn your walkie-talkie on at nine o'clock sharp, all right? Say it back. Nine o'clock sharp/

STEPH  
Nine o'clock sharp. You can keep the matches.

JANE  
Are you sure?

STEPH  
Yeah. Friends share everything, right?

JANE

Right. Yeah. Thanks.

We shift. Ten years later inside a coffee and gift shop on the main floor of an old house. There is a table with three chairs, a stand with postcards, and a display with cheap gemstone necklaces. It is December. A blizzard happens outside, turning the world out the windows blue and white. JANE tallies receipts. STEPH enters. A bell on the door rings.

JANE (CONT'D)

I'm sorry. We're closed.

STEPH snarls.

Steph? Oh my God. It's... we thought you were/

STEPH barks.

You look like I remember.

STEPH

You don't.

JANE

I meant that as a compliment.

STEPH

So did I.

STEPH barks again.

JANE

Do you want coffee?

STEPH

No. I take these pills to stay awake. I had a bunch already.

JANE

Have a decaf.

STEPH

I'm going to be a lawyer. I'm at school in New York. City.

JANE

Do your parents even know where you/

STEPH

It smells nice in here.

JANE

If you're looking... They moved years ago. After you/

STEPH

You own this place?

JANE

There's a mortgage. I live upstairs. I work for the Parks Department too.

STEPH

You always liked being outside.

JANE

It wasn't so much that.

STEPH

So what is this place? Like a gift shop?

JANE

Coffee and gifts.

STEPH

(snarling, barking)

Grrrrrrrrr! Ruff! Ruff! Rrrrrrrrrr.

JANE

It's a tax thing.

STEPH

Why don't you bark back, huh? This is your spot! You've got to protect it. I'll huff and I'll puff and I'll blow your house in. Come on! Bark! Howl!

JANE

I'll get that decaf.

JANE pursues coffee. STEPH flips through the postcards on the stand, letting them fall to the floor as SHE goes. JANE returns with a cup.

JANE (CONT'D)

You look cold.

STEPH

I walked.

JANE

From where?

STEPH

The bus station.

JANE

It's a blizzard.

STEPH

These postcards. Tacky.

JANE

Maybe I like tacky.

STEPH

Maybe that's why you never bothered to leave this dump.

JANE

If everybody smart and attractive and interesting leaves, how will it get any better?

STEPH

I'm amazed at how backwards everything is out here. The haircuts. You know how everybody here looks to people out east?

JANE

I like it here. Fresh air. Quiet.

STEPH

You look like hicks.

JANE

You can see the stars. Bet you can't see the stars in New York. City.

STEPH

Yeah. No. But it's a good place to get lost. Just another face.

(tearing the postcard to pieces)

Look, it's snowing inside now too! How magical.

JANE

Is everything all right?

STEPH

And the fashion! Wow! Look at all this authentic, hand-made jewelry. Oh, is this real agate?

JANE

How do I look to you?

STEPH

What do you want me to say?

JANE

The truth.

STEPH

Ugg. Look at these stupid postcards. I've always hated this kind of thing. The wolf howling. The purple sky. The sky never looks like that.

JANE

I painted that. That's my signature. The J gives it away. They don't sell.

STEPH

Of course they don't! It's Dickinson, North Dakota! There aren't any tourists. Nobody wants to remember they've been here. Or tell anyone they've been here. So why buy a postcard!

JANE

What do you want?

STEPH  
Huh.

JANE  
What?

STEPH  
I can't remember the last time anybody really asked me that.

JANE  
Well I'm asking.

STEPH  
Gee. Let's see. Maybe I blame you. Maybe I'm here to hurt you. And maybe I've got a knife and I'm going to cut you into little pieces and gobble you up.

JANE  
That's a lot of maybes, Steph.

STEPH  
Yeah. Well. Tonight I feel like one big maybe.

JANE  
I'm not afraid of you.

STEPH  
Liar.

JANE  
You're angry. I get it. I left you alone when you needed—

STEPH  
I was always alone.

JANE  
That's not true.

STEPH  
I've gotten really good at alone.

JANE  
How long has it—

STEPH  
Ten years. I was eleven.

JANE  
I thought you were older.

STEPH  
Eleven and a half.

JANE  
Yeah. Huh. I was into reading palms.

JANE reaches for STEPH's hand. SHE lays it flat on the table and opens it finger by finger. STEPH resists at first but then relaxes. JANE traces her finger over a line in STEPH's open palm.

JANE (CONT'D)  
This is your heart line. This is your head line.

STEPH  
Don't touch me.

JANE  
Hmm. What are these? Scars? They look like two sides of a triangle. That was the idea, wasn't it? We still match. Both missing that third line.

STEPH  
I said don't touch me!

JANE  
Fine. I'm not. Relax.

STEPH  
(rubbing her scarred hand)  
Children do stupid things.

JANE  
It wasn't stupid.

STEPH  
We scarred our hands.

JANE  
Small scars.

STEPH  
Still, scars. It was crazy.

JANE  
It was holy.  
Everybody thought you were dead.

STEPH  
I'm not.

We shift. The young JANE and STEPH lie on opposing mattresses in their respective bedrooms. Small lamps light them beneath their blankets. THEY speak into their walkie-talkies.

STEPH (CONT'D)  
Jane. Jane?

JANE  
It's nine o' five.

STEPH  
I can barely hear you.

JANE  
It's nine o' five!

STEPH  
My clock says "nine."



JANE

Your clock is wrong. Over.

STEPH

Over?

JANE

You say "over" when you're done talking. And then when you're done you say "over and out." Over.

STEPH

Okay. Umm. Why are you whispering?

Over?

JANE

My parents are fighting. Listen.

JANE raises her walkie-talkie. There is the sound of a fight: first raised voices followed by loud thumps.

You hear that? Over.

STEPH

It sounds bad. What's wrong? Over.

JANE

My mom drinks. Then my dad starts into her. She never used to fight back. Now it's a mess. Over.

STEPH

What happened? Over.

JANE

My dad lost his job. That's why the sign's out there. Over.

STEPH

Oh. Over.

JANE

You don't care, do you?

STEPH  
No. It's okay. I understand.

JANE  
You understand?

STEPH  
Sure.

JANE  
Has your dad lost his job?

STEPH  
No.

JANE  
You've got a nice new house, don't you?

STEPH  
Yeah.

JANE  
So you can't understand. Don't say you understand when you don't.

STEPH  
I'm sorry. Over?

JANE  
It's okay. You didn't know any better. Can you turn your light on?

STEPH  
Yeah...

STEPH stands and turns on the light.

JANE  
Wave to me.

STEPH waves.

You wear pink pajamas?

STEPH

Yeah?

JANE

They have unicorns on them, don't they? Bet you money.

STEPH

Rainbows.

JANE

And unicorns too! Am I right?

STEPH

There's a single unicorn. On the pocket.

JANE

Pssshhh, Eleven and A Half wears unicorn jammies!

STEPH

I like unicorns.

JANE

You would.

STEPH

We stopped saying "over."

JANE

Ahh ha ha ha. Pink unicorn jammies!

STEPH

Turn your light on!

JANE

Wait! Somebody's coming.

JANE turns off her small lamp. One of her parents opens the door to her room, and a yellow fang of light creeps across the floor: first a sliver, then a thick triangular wedge.

STEPH watches, frozen. The light creeps back into itself and disappears.

STEPH

Jane? Jane?

JANE

It smells like a Christmas tree. Have you ever had gin? It's terrible!

Are you there? Steph?

STEPH

Yeah?

JANE

Tell me a secret.

STEPH

Umm. My family doesn't do Christmas.

JANE

Why not?

STEPH

We do Hanukkah. We're Jewish.

JANE

That's not much of a secret.

STEPH

I guess that depends. Your turn.

JANE

My turn what?

STEPH

To tell me a secret.

JANE

I told you! The drinking is a secret.

STEPH

I guess we're even then.

JANE

What's being Jewish like?

STEPH

The holidays are different. What are you?

JANE

We're supposed to be Catholics.

STEPH

What's that like?

JANE

My dad says Catholics believe in guilt and art in that order. Oh, and every week we drink blood.

STEPH

Wow.

JANE

What will you give me to tell you another secret?

STEPH

What do you want?

JANE

I want your dumb unicorn jammies.

STEPH

I don't think they'll fit you.

JANE

I don't care. That's what I want.

STEPH

What are you going to do with them?

JANE  
None of your business!

STEPH  
What'll I tell my mom?

JANE  
Tell her you're eleven and a half, you figured out unicorns are stupid, and you want a new pair of pajamas.

STEPH  
I don't want a new pair of pajamas.

JANE  
Do you want to hear another secret or not?

STEPH  
Is it a big secret?

JANE  
Huge.

STEPH  
Does anybody else know?

JANE  
Nobody.

STEPH  
Fine. You can have my pajamas. What's the secret?

JANE  
Bring me the pajamas first!

STEPH  
Right now?

JANE  
Yeah! Come over.

STEPH  
I don't know...

JANE

I'm not going to tell you this secret over the walkie-talkie. Somebody could be listening.

STEPH

Oh.

JANE

You've never snuck out before?

STEPH

No.

JANE

Then what do you do after dark?

STEPH

I read. Sometimes I listen to the radio. Usually I sleep like a normal person.

JANE

You have thirty seconds. Starting/

STEPH

Wait!

JANE

Now!

STEPH considers the situation. SHE turns off her walkie-talkie and hurriedly stuffs a couple pillows under her blankets to give the appearance of a body. SHE turns off her lights, changes into something plain in the dark, and opens her window. SHE crawls out and runs to JANE's window, which JANE has opened.

The dog barks.

STEPH

Samson!

JANE

That stupid dog's going to wake everybody up!

STEPH  
Samson! Shush!

JANE  
That's not going to work.

STEPH  
I'm going to get in so much trouble.

JANE  
That dumb dog's the problem.

STEPH  
Take the pajamas! So what's the secret?

JANE  
I can turn into a wolf.

STEPH  
You what?

JANE  
I can turn into a wolf. I taught myself. I can teach you too. You better get back! The lights are on! I bet they think you're a raccoon. Or a robber! Does your dad have a gun?

STEPH  
A shotgun. It's ginormous!

JANE  
You better hurry!

JANE closes the window. STEPH dashes to her room just in time to settle herself back in bed as one of her parents opens the door and a fang much like the one earlier appears, except it is purple - a sliver, a wedge, a sliver and gone.

A moment.

THEY return to their walkie-talkies.



STEPH

That was crazy.

JANE

If by crazy you mean fun!

STEPH

By crazy I mean crazy!

JANE

Shh. Listen. Feel the way your heart's pounding?

STEPH

Yeah.

JANE

That's nothing. Wolves' hearts beat really fast. Faster than human hearts. You can't imagine what it feels like. It's like a rollercoaster but better. Because it's in you. You feel powerful and free, and that feeling is just... it's the best thing in the world.

STEPH

You can't turn into a wolf. You're making it up.

JANE

Nope. I do it when the moon's full. It's easier then.

STEPH

You're playing a trick on me.

JANE

Tomorrow night I'll show you.

STEPH

Can you show me some now?

JANE

Umm. I can show you what it's like. A bit.

STEPH

Okay.

JANE

Close your eyes. Now imagine you're running through the snow. Kick your feet in the air. We're going to lope a bit.

STEPH

Lope?

JANE

That's how wolves walk. Kick your feet. Now your forepaws.

STEPH

My what?

JANE

Your hands. Now run! Now imagine you're chasing after the moon. Really see the moon. Do you see it?

STEPH

I don't see anything.

JANE

You're not looking hard enough!

The same moon appears in both their rooms.

STEPH

I think I see it now.

JANE

You think you see it or you see it?

STEPH

I see it. I really see it.

JANE

I see it too. Now chase it! Fast. Faster! Faster faster faster!

The moon vanishes.

STEPH

It got away.

JANE

It always gets away. And we always chase it. That's what wolves do.

STEPH

That was fun.

JANE

That was nothing. Compared to the real thing.

STEPH

You have to show me.

JANE

Yeah. Sure. I will. But once we start we can't stop. You understand? No running back to mommy and daddy. And no telling if you get caught. Okay? If my parents find out, they'll kill me. You promise? You still there?

STEPH

Yeah.

JANE

No telling! You promise?

STEPH

I promise.

JANE

Say I promise on my heart. Cross my heart and hope to die.

STEPH

I promise on my heart. Cross my heart and hope to die.

JANE

Good night, Eleven and A Half.

STEPH

Night.

JANE

Over and out.

Over and out.

STEPH

We shift. Night becomes day becomes night. A full moon over a field. There is a tree stump. GEORGE enters. HE stands near the stump. HE smokes a cigarette. A semi-truck passes on the highway: two bright lights and a rumbling sound. GEORGE exits. JANE enters followed by STEPH.

JANE

Here's the spot.

STEPH

Where?

JANE

This stump.

STEPH

We walked an hour for a stump?

JANE

We didn't walk for an hour.

STEPH reveals a stopwatch.

STEPH

One hour, three minutes, and five seconds.

JANE

You slowed me down.

STEPH

I had sand in my boots.

JANE

Three times!

STEPH

Why'd we go through the golf course?

JANE

We can't let anybody see us!

STEPH

Oh.

JANE

They'll send us to jail.

STEPH

Jail?

JANE

Probably.

STEPH

It smells like smoke.

JANE

It's your imagination.

STEPH

I want to go home.

JANE

Relax. If anybody's going to get in trouble, it's me. I'm older. I ought to know better.

STEPH

Yeah, you ought to.

JANE

But I don't. I'm rambunctious.

A semi-truck passes.

STEPH

What's that? Ahh! It looks like two yellow eyes.

JANE

It's just a truck. The highway's right over there.

I want to go home.

STEPH

JANE opens her backpack and reveals a flashlight, which SHE turns on and props on the stump. SHE withdraws a canteen.

JANE

Oh relax. Have you ever had wine?

STEPH

No.

JANE

It's great.

STEPH

I don't want any.

JANE

Scared?

STEPH

My parents will know.

JANE

How?

STEPH

I'm a bad liar.

JANE

I always have wine before I turn into a wolf. There's a whole bunch of things I have to do before.

STEPH

Like what?

JANE reveals two scarves made from the rainbow and unicorn pajamas. SHE hands one to STEPH.

JANE

Oh, hey! I brought you a present. It's a scarf. For when it gets cold.

STEPH

You ruined them!

JANE

I made them into something new.

STEPH

I liked those pajamas.

JANE

It was a fair trade. Look, I even put the unicorn on yours. See?

STEPH

That's kind of nice.

JANE

You're welcome.

STEPH

Quiet! Did you hear that?

JANE

Somebody followed us. You were too loud.

STEPH

It wasn't me.

JANE

Turn off the flashlight!

STEPH grabs the flashlight, turns it off, and sets it on the ground.

STEPH

If we get killed out here, my parents are going to kill me!

JANE

That doesn't make any sense!

STEPH  
Shh.

A silhouette of a doe appears.

JANE  
Ahh!

STEPH  
It's just a deer.

JANE  
Hold still or you'll scare it. It might attack.

STEPH  
It isn't scared. We're scared.

JANE  
I'm not scared.

STEPH  
Aren't you supposed to be a wolf? You should hunt it or something.

JANE  
I'm not a wolf right now.

STEPH  
So turn into one already!

JANE  
It doesn't work like that.

STEPH  
How does it work?

JANE  
I told you! There's a whole bunch of things I have to do!

STEPH  
What are we so scared of?



JANE  
I'm not scared of a stupid deer!

The doe runs off, replaced by the long silhouette of a crow.

GEORGE  
That wasn't a deer.

JANE  
Is that crow talking?

STEPH  
I don't see a crow.

GEORGE  
It was a doe.

JANE  
It's right there!

GEORGE  
Do, a deer, a female deer...

STEPH  
It's just a kid.

JANE  
It's a crow.

GEORGE appears. The crow vanishes.

GEORGE  
Re, a drop of golden—

STEPH  
It's the kid with the jacket!

GEORGE  
Which one of you thinks I'm a crow?

Jane?

STEPH

JANE

Whoa whoa whoa! Stay right there. I've got a knife.

STEPH

You do?

JANE

Shut up, Steph.

(to GEORGE)

Who are you?

GEORGE

Why should I tell you?

STEPH

Because you snuck up on us!

GEORGE

It's pretty late, isn't it?

JANE

You followed us!

GEORGE

This is my territory.

STEPH

Jane! We should go!

JANE

This is my spot. Territory.

GEORGE

You can't have a spot here without asking me first.

JANE

I'm not asking some freak for anything.

GEORGE  
Did you call me a freak?

STEPH  
Jaaaaaane!

GEORGE  
Hey! Did your friend call me a freak?

STEPH  
I'm going to throw up.

GEORGE  
You think you're tough, don't you?

JANE  
Try me!

GEORGE  
Maybe I will!

STEPH  
(screaming)  
Ahhhhhhhhhhhhhhhhhhhh!

JANE  
What I meant to say is that we're all freaks. I'm always saying that, aren't I, Steph?

STEPH  
Yes. Everybody's freaky deeky!

GEORGE  
How'd you know I'm a crow?

STEPH  
He's not a crow.

JANE  
Yes, he is.

GEORGE  
Yes, I am.

JANE

Look at him. It's obvious. He might as well be covered with black feathers.

GEORGE

You must be something too then. What are you?

JANE

I'm a wolf.

GEORGE

What's she?

JANE

She doesn't know what she is.

GEORGE

She's probably a wolf too. Wolves go in packs.

JANE

Probably. I used to be a lone wolf. Now I guess I'm stuck with her.

GEORGE

You're the alpha then?

JANE

Well she's not, obviously.

STEPH

Stop talking like I'm not here!

JANE

I'm definitely the alpha.

GEORGE

That's cool.

JANE

I'm Jane. This is Steph. What's your name?

GEORGE

Crow of Night.

JANE & STEPH

What?

GEORGE

Crow of Night.

JANE

Okay. Umm. I read palms. I can read yours. Here. Put your hand on the stump, Mister Fancy Pants Crow of Night. Hey. Where are your shoelaces?

GEORGE

I don't believe in them.

JANE

That's ridiculous.

GEORGE

Says the palm reader.

JANE

Hey! It took me a whole week to learn how to do this. Let me see. This is your heart line. This is your head line...

GEORGE

That itches.

JANE

You've got nice eyes. They glow in the dark. Very crow of you. I can't see. Steph, hand me the flashlight.

GEORGE

I've been looking for you.

JANE

What? Hey. Let go!

GEORGE

I've been looking for two wolves.

STEPH

Come on, Jane. This guy's trouble.

GEORGE

I'm Crow of Night. Of course I'm trouble.

JANE

That makes sense.

GEORGE

But I'll tell you who's worse! My brother, Crow of Dawn. He's my nemesis.

JANE

That means he's his enemy.

STEPH

I know what "nemesis" means!

GEORGE

My mother's the Moon. His mother's the Sun. Our father's Crow of Earth. We're enemies because he wants to eat the Moon.

STEPH

You can't eat the Moon!

GEORGE

My brother can. If I don't stop him by the next full moon, he'll eat the Moon and there will be no more night, he'll eat our shadows, and it'll be really bad.

STEPH

Whoa.

GEORGE

I've been looking for two wolves. I found you just in time.

STEPH

But I'm not a wolf.

JANE

Yes, you are. You just don't know it yet.

STEPH

I'm scared.

GEORGE

You should be! Crow of Dawn is watching us right now. His eyes burn like two suns. When he flies he's covered in flames and leaves a trail of smoke in the sky. You can see the trails at night, see... there, those long wispy clouds. He's always chasing the Moon, and if he catches it, it'll be bad. He wants to destroy night forever. Imagine a world without night.

STEPH

When would we sleep?!

GEORGE

Exactly! You're pretty smart for somebody who doesn't even know what she is.

STEPH

He's crazy. You're crazy. This is a stupid game. I'm going home. Are you coming? Jane?

JANE

I'm gonna stay.

GEORGE

I saw two wolves. It has to be two, otherwise...

STEPH

Otherwise what?!

JANE

Otherwise Crow of Dawn will eat the Moon! Pay attention! He needs us both.

STEPH

I don't care what he needs! I need things too. I need to go home. I need to go to bed.

GEORGE

You need to learn what you really are.

STEPH

You don't know me.

GEORGE

Leave then.

JANE

She's scared to go alone.

STEPH

I am not!

JANE

Stay. I'll show you how to turn into a wolf, and we can help him.

STEPH

People can't turn into wolves. Or crows.

GEORGE

Maybe I'm a crow who turns into a person.

STEPH

You're making it up. Jane. Isn't he?

JANE

Maybe he is. Maybe he isn't.

STEPH

Fine! Show me. Right now. I want to see you turn into a wolf.

JANE

It's not like snapping your fingers!

STEPH

Go ahead then.

JANE goes to the stump and prepares herself rather theatrically. SHE drinks wine. SHE messes her hair. SHE shakes herself a few times. SHE yips and barks and snarls.

JANE

Rrr. Yip. Rrr. Grrrrr... ruff! Ruff!

STEPH

What if my parents check on me? They'll ground me forever.



JANE  
I can't do it when you're watching.

GEORGE  
Do you want some advice?

JANE  
No! Ugh. Yes.

GEORGE  
Be a wolf.

STEPH  
This is stupid.

JANE  
Go home then!

STEPH  
It's true. I don't want to go alone.

GEORGE  
See! That's totally a wolf thing. You want to be with your pack.

STEPH  
Where's your crow-pack then, huh? Crows have packs too.

GEORGE  
They're called murders.

STEPH  
What?

GEORGE  
A pack of crows is a murder.

STEPH  
Who's getting murdered?!

JANE  
(exiting)

Gah! I need some space.

STEPH  
Wait a second. Why are you looking for wolves again?

GEORGE  
I saw it. In a dream.

STEPH  
Really?

GEORGE  
Yep. Waking life is only half the story. The rest happens in shadows... and in dreams. Most people don't see, so they wander around half alive. But some of us see things the way they really are. It's a curse and a blessing.

STEPH  
How old are you?

GEORGE  
Crow years or people years?

STEPH  
You're not a crow.

GEORGE  
Caw! Caaaaw!

STEPH  
People years.

GEORGE  
Fifteen.

STEPH  
She's can't turn into a wolf.

GEORGE  
Give her a chance.

Ugh. This is so stupid...

STEPH

A silhouette of a wolf appears.

JANE

Check me out!

STEPH

She did it.

GEORGE

You can see that?

STEPH

Yeah.

GEORGE

You're one of us for sure then.

STEPH

What if I don't want to be one of you?

GEORGE

It doesn't work like that.

JANE

(off.)

Hey hey hey. Watch me!

GEORGE

Three makes a pack. And we're going to fight Crow of Dawn.

JANE

(off.)

I'm totally a wolf right now! Do you see? Hey! Awoooooooooooooooooooooooooooooo!

STEPH

She's really a wolf!

We shift. The bedrooms. JANE sleeps.  
STEPH crawls out her window and comes to stand in the yard, sleepwalking, murmuring.

## STEPH (CONT'D)

here pretty kitty pretty kitty so nice  
nothing to be scared of scaredy cat fraidy cat kitty cat

Ghost cats swirl around her in a luminescent force. SHE marshals these with her arms, raising them above her waist on either side, as if petting the streaking feline shapes.

STEPH turns upward and opens her eyes wide. Just as SHE does, two eyes like suns appear overhead. STEPH cowers from these as they burn down on her.

## STEPH (CONT'D)

don't don't don't want want want you you you  
I'll I'll I'll eat eat eat you you  
I'll I'll I'll wolf wolf wolf your  
eyes  
I'll I'll I'll crow crow crow your  
heart  
don't don't don't  
ahh ahh ahh ahh/

The dog barks. JANE stirs. SHE looks out her window. SHE sees STEPH. SHE opens her window.

## JANE

Steph! What are you doing?

JANE grabs STEPH, shaking her. STEPH opens her eyes and stares at JANE. The glowing eyes vanish. The dog barks.

## STEPH

ahh ahh ahh ahh ahh/

## JANE

Steph! You're going to wake everybody up! Hey! Hey! It's me. It's Jane.

STEPH

Jane Jane Jane

JANE

Shh shh shh. It was just a dream. Come on.

JANE holds STEPH, stroking her hair. The dog goes silent.

STEPH

A dream.

JANE

Just a dream. Shh.

STEPH

It was real! I saw the ghost cats. And two eyes like suns. I saw him. He's watching.

JANE

Who?

STEPH

Crow of Dawn.

JANE

It was a dream.

STEPH

Dreams are where you learn to fight Crow of Dawn.

JANE

Maybe. I don't know. It's not even—

STEPH

He'll wolf wolf wolf our eyes. Crow our hearts. He's hungry. He doesn't want to eat Moon. He wants to eat our shadows! And if that happens, then we'll stop seeing things the way they really are, and we'll be half dead and—

JANE

It's just a game, Steph!

STEPH

It's not! I saw you. You turned into a wolf.

JANE

Okay. Fine. But there's no Crow of Dawn.

STEPH

If you can turn into a wolf, then there can be a Crow of Dawn.

JANE

But there isn't.

STEPH

Then you aren't a wolf!

JANE

Yes, I am!

STEPH

How can it be both?!

JANE

It just can!

STEPH

You're not a wolf! Not not not.

JANE

You want me to bite you? I'll bite you!

STEPH

Ow. No. Hey! Stop.

JANE

I'll tear out your jugular. I'm not afraid of you.

STEPH

He's real. I saw him. You have to teach me to turn or I won't be safe. People can't fight him. You've got to be a wolf, or you're too weak and—

JANE

Steph! He made it all up! You really think the Moon is his mother?

STEPH

If Crow of Dawn isn't real, then you can't turn into a wolf. And I saw you! He's real.

JANE

Did you eat something weird before bed? Tuna or something?

STEPH

I saw the ghost cats. They were all around me. And these eyes were right above me like two suns! Why would I make this up?

JANE

To scare me.

STEPH

You're scared?

JANE

Yeah. A little. Aren't you?

STEPH

You have to teach me how to turn into a wolf.

JANE

I told you. The next full moon.

STEPH

I can't wait that long!

JANE

It's just a week! He's going to meet us there, and we're going to fight Crow of Dawn. We're bringing stuff for smores, remember?

STEPH

I won't sleep until you teach me. I'll stay awake all night staring out my window into your room.

JANE

Be my guest.

STEPH

I'll tell my parents we snuck out and drank wine! You're a bad influence!

JANE

Fine! Whatever! We'll go tomorrow night. Bossy.

STEPH

Good.

JANE

We better get inside.

STEPH

Tomorrow. You promise.

JANE

I promise.

STEPH

It has to be a blood promise.

JANE

A what?

STEPH

A blood promise!

JANE

You're crazy.

STEPH

You started this! You didn't have to tell me you can turn into a wolf! Now I've got Crow of Dawn after me. It's your fault!

JANE

What's a blood promise?

STEPH reveals a large pocketknife.

STEPH

Here.



What am I supposed to do? JANE

Cut yourself. STEPH

Go back to bed. JANE

Fraidy cat. STEPH

I'm not a fraidy cat. I'm a big bad wolf. JANE

Some big bad wolf, scared of a blood promise. Give it back. STEPH

Fine. Ugh. I can't. You do it. JANE

Where? STEPH

Here. JANE

JANE holds out her hand and looks away.

You have to look. STEPH

STEPH presses the knife to JANE's palm.  
JANE winces.

Ahh. Ow. JANE

Now do me. STEPH

STEPH holds out her hand. JANE cuts a line into STEPH's palm. STEPH does not wince. SHE takes the knife back from JANE.

JANE  
Ugh.

STEPH  
Now we shake.

JANE  
I don't want your blood on me.

STEPH  
You think I want yours on me?

JANE  
Yes!

STEPH  
I followed you to that stupid stump. Now I want to learn how to turn into a wolf. Shake. Now we've got each others' blood forever. You can't break that promise.

JANE  
What happens if I do?

STEPH  
You don't want to know.

We shift to the coffee house. STEPH holds the knife.

You broke your promise.

JANE  
I'm sorry.

STEPH  
Just words, Jane.

JANE

What do you want? You want me to get on my knees and beg?

STEPH

Yeah! Yeah I do!

JANE gets on her knees.

JANE

George is going to be here any minute.

STEPH

You're a liar.

JANE

I'm not. It's true. He lives here on the weekends. During the week he works the oil. I rent him a—

STEPH

No. You're as alone as I am.

STEPH extends the knife and stalks toward JANE.

JANE

Look. If we can just... let's talk this through... Steph. Please. Hey. If George sees us like—

STEPH puts the knife to JANE's throat.

STEPH

George isn't even real. You made him up. Another one of your stories.

JANE

Steph, come on...

STEPH

You broke your promise. But you get a chance to fix things. Tonight.

JANE

How?

STEPH

We're going to finish what we started/

JANE

Steph, this is crazy.

STEPH

We're going to kill Crow of Dawn.

JANE

Would you put down the knife?

STEPH

What are ten years worth, do you think?

JANE

Steph, please.

STEPH

How deep a cut? How big a scar?

JANE

You're scaring me.

STEPH

(stepping back)

Good.

JANE

Steph, I'm so, so sorry.

STEPH

Not good enough.

JANE

What do you want me to do?

STEPH

Bark. Go ahead. Bark like a dog.

JANE does.

That's good. Now beg. Beg!

JANE

Steph...

STEPH

Beg! Do it!

JANE does.

STEPH (CONT'D)

Now howl. Howl!

JANE howls tentatively.

You call that a howl? Come on! I don't believe you! Howl. Come on. HOWL!

JANE howls plaintively and for a long time.  
Sincere.

There it is.

Now tell me a story, Jane.

Help me see the shadows again.

We shift. JANE's family's front yard. The "For Sale" sign is gone. The sound of hammering. The dog barks. JANE sits near the sign and with the pocketknife cuts firecrackers from a chain. Having gathered some five or six firecrackers, SHE lights a match, allows it to burn down to her fingers, lights the firecracker, and throws it. SHE repeats this as STEPH enters. THEY each have a bandage over the cuts from the previous night.

STEPH (CONT'D)

It's August.

So?

JANE

So firecrackers are illegal now.

STEPH

So sue me.

JANE

You're going to hurt yourself.

STEPH

What do you care? You sliced my hand open last night!

JANE

That was for a reason.

STEPH

JANE throws a firecracker in STEPH's vicinity.

Hey, watch it!

JANE

Gotcha. Scaredy. I didn't even light it.

STEPH

Don't be mean.

JANE

How'd you sleep?

STEPH

Fine.

JANE

See any more ghost cats?

STEPH

No.

JANE

I couldn't sleep. My hand hurt too much.

STEPH

Sorry.

JANE

You better figure out how to turn into a wolf quick tonight. I've got a migraine.

JANE throws another unlit firecracker at  
STEPH. STEPH does not flinch this time.

STEPH

I learn fast. I'm smart.

JANE

It's not about smarts.

STEPH

What's it about?

JANE

What's with that noise?

STEPH

Hammering.

JANE

I know it's hammering! What are they hammering?

STEPH

A new deck.

JANE

Oh great. You get a new deck, and I get to move into a crappy apartment! Fantastic. I'm so happy for you. You can spend your dumb Jewish holidays out on it. Light some candles. Talk to your God.

STEPH

There's only one God.

JANE

Yeah. I'm sure he's got a white beard and everything. What do you want?

I saw you out here.

STEPH

And?

JANE

And I wanted to say “hi.”

STEPH

Say “hi” then.

JANE

JANE throws a lit firecracker in no particular direction. It explodes.

Hi.

STEPH

The sign's gone.

JANE

Yeah.

STEPH

They sold the house, huh?

JANE

The bank's taking it back.

STEPH

Oh.

JANE

Whatever.

STEPH

When are you moving?

JANE

Soon.

STEPH

Oh.



JANE throws another firecracker, this one closer to STEPH. The dog barks.

JANE

Tell your stupid dog to shut up.

STEPH

Be nice and I will.

JANE

SAMPSON! STOP BARKING!

The sound of hammering. The dog barks.

I hate that dog.

STEPH

Don't say that.

JANE

What's his problem?

STEPH

He's older than me. He's blind in one eye, and the other eye's lazy. They're going to put him to sleep soon.

JANE

Why don't they already?

STEPH

I don't know. He's my dad's dog really.

JANE

You know what "put him to sleep" means, don't you?

STEPH

Yeah.

JANE

They turn them into glue.

STEPH

No, they don't!

JANE

Yeah, they do! They put all the dead dogs and cats in a big vat and make glue out of them. You ever use glue? That's gonna be your dog.

STEPH

I'm never using glue again.

JANE

You know what wolves do when one gets old or sick? The pack chases it away. They can't have any weak links. Not like humans. Humans try and take care of everybody all the time. Especially the weak and the sick. It's unnatural. That's why everybody's always lying. Nobody wants to see the world the way it really is. Mean.

STEPH

What if you were sick?

JANE

I'd get better fast. Because I'm strong.

STEPH

What about when you aren't strong anymore?

JANE

Then I'll die, and I'll stay dead. Everybody will be sad for a couple weeks, then they'll pretend to be sad for a few months, and then they'll forget all about me. People are horrible. That's why I'm happier when I'm a wolf. Everything's more real. Because wolves don't lie. It's not in their nature. They're pure. Not like people.

We should kill your dog.

STEPH

That's terrible!

JANE

He's in pain, isn't he? You'd rather have some stranger do it? It's going to happen. It might as well be us.

SHE throws another firecracker, this one dangerously close to STEPH.

STEPH

Stop that!

JANE

Make me. Yeah, I might kill that dog tonight. It'll be fast. I'll cut his throat. Yrrrk!

STEPH charges JANE, and after a scuffle JANE pins her. The dog barks.

STEPH

Get off! That hurts!

JANE

What? This? Does this hurt? How about this?

STEPH

Ow! Ahh! Ow! Stop! Ow! I can't breathe. Hey.

JANE

Say "please."

STEPH

Please.

JANE

Bark. Bark like a dog.

STEPH barks.

Beg. Come on! Beg!

STEPH

Please. Please please please.

JANE

No! Beg like a dog. Whine.

STEPH whines like a dog.

JANE (CONT'D)

That's all you are, a stupid dog! I bet you won't turn into a wolf! You'll turn into a dumb Chihuahua or a wiener dog!

STEPH

Ow! Get off! That hurts!

JANE

Show me your wolf then! Come on! Howl.

STEPH

I can't. Ow! I'm not—

JANE

Howl!

STEPH howls.

Louder!

STEPH howls more loudly.

LOUDER!

STEPH howls convincingly. The silhouette of a crow appears, unseen by JANE and STEPH. The dog goes quiet. JANE crawls off STEPH. STEPH curls up in pain.

JANE (CONT'D)

There you go.

STEPH

That really, really hurt.

JANE

Baby.

STEPH

I'm going to tell on you.

JANE

Go ahead. Go!

What? No? Liar. You shouldn't cry wolf. People will stop believing you.

Ow. My hand really hurts.

STEPH

Mine too.

JANE

Why'd we cut ourselves?

STEPH

It's not a blood promise without blood.

JANE

It's stupid.

STEPH

You're stupid.

JANE

That was a pretty good howl.

STEPH

Thanks.

JANE

I knew you could do it.

STEPH

I'm gonna get a bruise.

JANE

Shh! Listen!

STEPH

I don't hear anything.

JANE

That's what I mean! Your stupid dog finally shut up! He really thought you were a wolf.

STEPH

I hate that dog. He smells. He forgot all his tricks. It's pathetic.

JANE

You love that dog.

STEPH

Sometimes I think my dad loves him more than me.

JANE

That's not true.

STEPH

You should see them together. I think he wanted me to be a boy.

JANE

Admit it. You love that dog.

STEPH

Yeah. A lot.

JANE

I'm sorry I hurt you.

STEPH

Yeah.

JANE

Where'd I get you? Let me see. Hmm. I don't think it's gonna be too bad... Ticklish? Yeah, you are!

STEPH squirms. THEY laugh a bit until JANE stops pressing. A moment.

STEPH

Can I...

JANE

What?

STEPH

Your face.

(touching JANE's face)

I just like your face.

JANE leans into STEPH and smiles. THEY cuddle a bit. STEPH runs her hands through JANE's hair. A moment passes. STEPH puts her hand on JANE's mouth. THEY kiss. JANE starts, grabs STEPH's hand, and pushes her away.

JANE

Hey.

STEPH

Huh?

JANE

Don't.

STEPH

I'm sorry.

JANE

What are you, sick?

STEPH

No.

JANE

I don't know what it was like where you came from, but you can't be like that here. People will think we're freaks.

STEPH

Okay. I know. Your hair's just soft, and I—

JANE

Anyway wolves aren't like that.

STEPH

I know.

JANE

It's boy wolves and girl wolves. That's the way it is.

STEPH

I just wanted to touch your face.

JANE

That's stupid. We're friends. Friends aren't like that.

STEPH

I know.

JANE

If my mom saw us, she'd lock me in the basement or something.

STEPH

I'm sorry.

JANE

Stop saying you're sorry.

STEPH

Okay. I've stopped. I just like your—

JANE

Forget about it okay?! I'm just angry.

STEPH

Why?

JANE

I don't want to move.

STEPH

Oh.

JANE

We're moving into a stupid apartment.

STEPH

I'm sorry.



JANE

And you're getting a new deck. You can sit right there and watch the new people move into our house.

STEPH

If they have kids, I'll be their nemesis. I promise. It's okay, Jane.

JANE

It's not fair.

STEPH

Life isn't fair. Do your parents ever say that?

JANE

Yeah. And my mom's always saying family has to stick together. No matter what. That if you lose your family, a part of you withers up and dies, like a plant without water.

STEPH

Unless you find another family.

JANE

You only get one family.

STEPH

Don't some wolves go from pack to pack? Like a pack will adopt a lone wolf?

JANE

Have you been reading about wolves?

STEPH

Yeah.

JANE

Show off. You still want to go out tonight?

STEPH

Yeah.

JANE

Okay.

The bell rings.

STEPH

I have to go to swim practice. I'm a Flying Fish.

JANE

Lame.

STEPH

It's fun.

JANE

I quit after Guppy.

STEPH

I'll see you tonight?

JANE

Yeah.

STEPH exits. The silhouette of the crow disappears and GEORGE enters. The hammering stops.

GEORGE

What's going on tonight?

JANE

Ahh! Man. You're a total creep. You can't sneak up on people like that.

GEORGE

I just did.

JANE

You know what I mean.

GEORGE

Are you going out?

JANE

Yeah.

GEORGE

Without me?

JANE

Since when do we have to tell you every time we go out?

GEORGE

That's what a pack does.

JANE

You are so weird. We are not a pack.

GEORGE

Yes, we are.

JANE

Wolves and crows don't go together.

GEORGE

Sure they do. Wolves go after the weak and the sick. They kill for mercy a lot of the time. And crows follow and watch. And when the wolves are done eating, they pick the scraps.

JANE

You want to pick our scraps?

GEORGE

Maybe. Hey. You know the match game? You light matches and see who can hold on the longest.

JANE

Everybody knows that game.

GEORGE

Want to?

JANE

Sure.

GEORGE

Here. On three. One, two, three.

THEY light their matches and hold them.  
GEORGE flinches first, and JANE blows out  
her match. THEY share a look.

Eyes like two burning suns.

JANE

You let me win.

GEORGE

Neesh, you lie.

JANE

What are you anyway? An Indian or something?

GEORGE

I'm a bunch of things.

JANE

What's that like?

GEORGE

You're moving soon, huh?

JANE

Yeah.

GEORGE

Do you want to move?

JANE

No.

GEORGE

It's like that.

JANE

Huh. So what do your parents do?

GEORGE

Not much.

JANE

What's that mean?

Oh. I'm sorry.

GEORGE

What happened to your hand?

JANE

A cut. Steph did it. We made a blood promise.

GEORGE

What, like you cut your hands and pressed them together?

JANE

Yeah.

GEORGE

Like some movie! You two are so funny.

JANE

Shut up.

GEORGE

Funny!

JANE

She's just lonely.

GEORGE

Let me see. Oh. That's gonna scar.

JANE

I don't care.

GEORGE

You should do it to me too. Like a sign.

JANE

Really?

GEORGE

Yeah! We'll each do it to each other. We'll make triangles. It'll look sweet.

JANE

It'll hurt.

GEORGE

Everything hurts. Even love hurts. You ever been in love?

JANE

No.

GEORGE

Me neither. Here. You do me.

GEORGE hands JANE her pocketknife. JANE presses it into GEORGE's palm. HE does not flinch.

JANE

Do it to me.

GEORGE

Now?

JANE

Yeah. Ahh. Ow.

GEORGE

I saw you two.

JANE

Yeah? What'd you see?

GEORGE

You know what.

JANE

Whatever. You're crazy.

Crazy like a fox. GEORGE

I thought you're a crow. JANE

I told you: I'm a bunch of things. GEORGE

But mostly a crow. JANE

Definitely. GEORGE

Peck me then. JANE

Like this? GEORGE

Here. Use your teeth. JANE

Your folks will see. GEORGE

That feels good. Don't stop. JANE

You're going to get in trouble. GEORGE

I kind of like trouble. JANE

How much trouble? GEORGE

Just enough I guess. JANE

GEORGE

Trouble like your folks catching you making out with an older guy?

JANE

Who said anything about making out? You were pecking me. Peck. Peck. Peck peck peck.

Oh. Hey! I got you a present. Here. Laces for your boots. They're red. It's stupid you don't wear shoelaces.

GEORGE

It's kind of my thing.

JANE

Well make these kind of your thing then.

GEORGE

I'll think about it.

JANE

Have you got any other friends?

GEORGE

Have you got any other friends?

JANE

Of course I do.

GEORGE

I mean friends who get you. Your stories. Your wolf thing.

JANE

You know it's a game, right? Shadows and moonlight and make believe.

GEORGE

Yeah. What isn't?

(handing her a match)

Here. Let's go again.

JANE

You going to stop letting me win?



Okay. This one's for real.

GEORGE

Shouldn't we play for something?

JANE

We already are.

GEORGE

What?

JANE

To find who's stronger.

GEORGE

Or who's crazier.

JANE

Same difference. Ready? On three.

GEORGE

One, two, three!

GEORGE & JANE

THEY light the matches.

We shift. Day becomes night. A gibbous moon hangs over the field. JANE, GEORGE, and STEPH are there with flashlights. A truck passes.

I don't want to!

STEPH

You started it!

JANE

My hand still hurts from the first one!

STEPH

We're going to make a symbol. Like a tattoo.

JANE

STEPH

I don't want a tattoo.

GEORGE

It's not really a tattoo.

JANE

It's just three cuts. See? I have two already. You have to cut George too. And then we'll cut ourselves once we get Crow of Dawn. Put your hand on the stump.

STEPH

No.

GEORGE

She's afraid.

STEPH

I am not!

GEORGE

You look afraid.

STEPH

I'm not afraid!

JANE

Let him do it then.

STEPH

I don't want him to!

JANE

He has to. That's how it works. It's a pack thing.

GEORGE

You don't like the way I look or something? I don't think she likes me.

JANE

She's just scared.

STEPH

I'm not scared!

JANE

Do it or I won't show you how to turn!

STEPH

You made a blood promise. You can't break it! You can't!

JANE

Or what? What, Steph?

STEPH

I... you... it'll be bad!

GEORGE

Maybe she's too young for this.

STEPH

I am not!

JANE

You're probably right.

STEPH

I'm not too young!

JANE

Then play along! You're the one who started this with the blood promise!

STEPH

Yeah. And you can't break it.

JANE

Or what? Tell me! What's gonna happen if I break your little blood promise, huh?

GEORGE

She's going to cry.

STEPH

I am not!

JANE  
Why don't you go home?

STEPH  
We're supposed to be a pack.

JANE  
It's just a game.

STEPH  
No, it's not! I saw him.

GEORGE  
Who?

STEPH  
Crow of Dawn!

GEORGE  
That's because he's after you! He's going to eat the Moon! And then he'll eat your shadow! Oooooo!

STEPH  
You're so mean!

GEORGE  
You're just a kid.

STEPH  
I thought we were friends!

JANE  
We're more than friends.

STEPH  
Really?

JANE  
Come on. It'll be over in a second.

STEPH  
And then you'll show me?

JANE  
Yeah.

STEPH  
And we'll be a pack?

JANE  
Yes, Steph.

STEPH  
Okay.

STEPH puts her hand on the stump. GEORGE  
crouches across from her. JANE hands him the  
pocketknife.

GEORGE  
you know what I like about this field  
this field has all kinds of history  
like you can come out here  
and dig one or two feet  
and more often than not  
you'll find a bone  
it's not marked  
you have to know this is a bone field  
like a secret  
you ever dig for bones out here?

STEPH  
No...

GEORGE  
we'll come out  
after we've killed  
crow of dawn  
and we'll dig round here  
we'll put together a whole buffalo  
can you imagine  
a buffalo made of bones  
the way it would move

GEORGE (CONTD)

how it'd sound  
 buffalo used to mean something  
 so did wolf  
 and crow too  
 the earth has its own  
 gods  
 they live in places like this  
 they won't teach you that  
 in school or church  
 but it's real  
 and it scares people  
 so they try and forget about it  
 but that doesn't mean it's not true  
 don't look away

JANE

George...

GEORGE

Look!

GEORGE cuts STEPH's palm. SHE does not  
 flinch.

JANE

What was that about?

GEORGE

You don't even know what's under your feet.  
 (handing STEPH the knife)

Now do me.

Now we're really a pack. You better show her how to turn into a wolf, huh?

STEPH

Yeah, show me!

JANE

I can't teach her. You have to be fearless. Look at her! She's terrified. She just wants to go home.

STEPH

You can teach me at home.

JANE

That's not how it works.

STEPH

Come on, Jane. It's really late.

JANE

Get on your knees and I'll show you.

GEORGE

She's just a little kid.

STEPH

I am not! Show me. I'm not afraid!

JANE

Fine. Get on your knees then! Close your eyes. Keep your eyes closed for thirty seconds. And you'll turn into a wolf. Starting... now.

GEORGE and JANE sneak away.

STEPH

Jane? Jane? Am I a wolf? I'm totally a wolf.

Awoooooooooooooooooooooooooooooooooooooo...

Hey! Hey! I feel it! Do you see? Can I open my eyes? Jane? I'm going to open my eyes. Wolf eyes! I wonder what color they'll be? Probably the same, huh? But wolfy. I'm opening them. Three. Two. One. Jane! Where'd you go? Jane! Hey! Jane! Jane! I'm not a wolf. But I feel like a wolf. I feel it right here. Rrrrr! Rrrrruff! Grrr! Awooooo! Grrr! Jane! Are you hiding? Come on! We have to fight Crow of Dawn! Jane! Stop playing around. Come on. I know you're there.

A truck passes on the highway.

She left me. I can't believe she.... Grrrrrrrrrruff! Ruff! Ha. I don't care. You better be afraid of me, cuz I'm not afraid of you.

## STEPH (CONTD)

Awoo!

Night becomes day becomes night. The bedrooms. STEPH taps at JANE's window. JANE opens it.

JANE

Go away!

STEPH

Let's go!

JANE

I'm grounded. My parents would kill me if we get caught.

STEPH

You think mine wouldn't? Come on! Crow of Dawn! We've got to stop him. George needs us.

JANE

I can't.

STEPH

Then Crow of Dawn wins and there won't be any more night and he'll eat our shadows and when will we turn into wolves if there isn't a night!

JANE

You don't even know how!

STEPH

I taught myself.

JANE

No, you didn't.

STEPH

I'm a wolf right now. See. Rrrr! Grrrr!

JANE

Steph, stop.



STEPH

I'm so angry at you. You left me out there! Grrrrrrr!

JANE

You're gullible.

STEPH

You lied. You broke your promise. It was a blood promise.

JANE

Go to bed.

STEPH

Is somebody in your room?

JANE

What? No.

STEPH

I heard something.

JANE

It's your imagination.

STEPH

If you won't come, I'll fight Crow of Dawn alone.

JANE

It has to be two wolves.

STEPH

One is better than none!

JANE

Steph, listen to me. It's just a game.

STEPH

What happened to your face?

JANE

Go to bed.

STEPH

Did somebody hit you?

JANE

I'm fine.

STEPH

Your eye's all black. Was it Crow of Dawn?

JANE leaps out her window and charges at  
STEPH.

JANE

Leave me alone!

STEPH

If we don't do something, Crow of Dawn will eat the Moon and there will no more night forever and—

JANE

It was a dream! It's a game! It's a dreaming game, Steph! There's no such thing as Crow of Dawn.

STEPH

But I saw him. In a dream.

JANE

Exactly! It was a dream. You imagined it. Just like we imagine we turn into wolves. We're not wolves. We're human girls. It's make believe. All of it. You're still just a child.

STEPH

No. I turned into a wolf. I felt it.

JANE

Not everything you feel is real.

STEPH

I thought you were my friend.

JANE

I am your friend.

STEPH

Then why do you keep lying to me?

JANE

I'm bored. Hey. I get lonely too. And scared. I like feeling my heart race. I like being outside late. Just not alone. So I make up stories. And they're better when you really believe them. And become them. When I'm pretending, I get... it's a charge. Right here. You know? You ever feel that way?

STEPH

You make me feel that way.

JANE

Steph...

STEPH

I'm scared or worried almost all the time. It's in my chest like a big cockaburr. It goes away when I'm with you.

JANE

It feels good, right?

STEPH

Yeah.

JANE

But it's just a feeling.

STEPH

Feelings are real.

JANE

People make believe with each other. It's how we get through the night: stories in the dark. It's better than being alone.

STEPH

I don't want you to move.

JANE

I have to.

STEPH

You're the only friend I've made since we moved here.

JANE

You'll make more friends when school starts.

STEPH

Nobody like you.

JANE

Steph, go to bed.

STEPH

I really am a wolf.

JANE

Yeah. It's fun. Wolves are great.

STEPH

Yeah.

(quietly)

Awooooooooooooooooooooo...

Come on. Jane. Howl with me.

JANE

No.

STEPH

Just once? Please. Awooooooooooooo...

JANE

Go to bed.

STEPH reaches toward JANE's black eye.

JANE pulls away.

STEPH

Who hit you? Was it George? He's in your room, isn't he?

JANE

Nobody's in my room.

STEPH

I'll scream if he is!

JANE

Shh! You're going to wake everybody up.

STEPH

Stop lying to me! I'll scream! I will I will I will!

JANE

Be quiet!

JANE slaps STEPH very hard. STEPH stands frozen with her hand on her cheek. SHE whimpers once, an animal noise.

Steph, you can't just... it's... I'm... I don't know what to—

STEPH squints, sets her jaw, and growls. SHE bares her teeth and snaps them. SHE snarls and growls. SHE stalks toward JANE. JANE backs away, afraid.

It was my mom, all right? She hit me with a broom.

STEPH

Oh.

JANE

She saw us together. When we... you know. I told you if she saw she'd freak out. You were right. Somebody's always watching.

During the day I don't make the rules. The night's our place. With the shadows. You think it's more dangerous at night, but it's safer when people can't see.

Everything's backwards. You'll figure it out when you're older.

STEPH

No. I've got it figured out.

JANE

No, you don't. You don't know. Your family's normal. You don't—

STEPH

We're not normal.

JANE

Nobody hits you or—

STEPH

You have no idea what goes on in our house.

JANE

I'm just saying...

STEPH

You don't have any idea.

JANE

Does something... what is it? What happens?

Steph?

STEPH

What?

JANE

What is it?

STEPH

Never mind.

JANE

Just... go to bed. You'll feel better tomorrow.

STEPH

No. I'm gonna go out and get Crow of Dawn on my own. Then I'll be alpha.

JANE

Forget about Crow of Dawn. It's just a story.

Yeah...

STEPH

Stories can't hurt you.

JANE

Liar.

STEPH

STEPH returns to her room. JANE returns to hers. GEORGE lies in her bed.

Boo!

GEORGE

Ahh!

JANE

I totally got you.

GEORGE

You are such a creep!

JANE

Is she gone?

GEORGE

Yeah. She was going to scream and I slapped her.

JANE

Did you say sorry?

GEORGE

No.

JANE

You'd better say sorry.

GEORGE

Yeah.

JANE

GEORGE

You know it's a circle.

JANE

What?

GEORGE

Your mom hits you. You hit Steph. A circle.

JANE

Yeah.

GEORGE

You have to break it or you'll end up like them. You have to stand up for yourself. And if you can't stand up, you have to scream, and bark, and yell, and howl. You've got to put fear into them, otherwise...

JANE

Otherwise what?

GEORGE

They hit you till you break. And once you're broken you don't recognize your own shadow. And you walk around half a person.

JANE

I like you.

GEORGE

I noticed.

JANE

Do you...

GEORGE

What? Do I like you?

JANE

Yeah.

GEORGE

I'm in your bed.



JANE

Yeah, you kind of are.

Hey, you're still not wearing any laces.

GEORGE

Nope. Can I stay here tonight?

JANE

I don't know if that's a good idea.

GEORGE

I'll leave before dawn. Just set your alarm.

JANE

If my parents find out, I don't know you. You snuck in my window and crept into bed and—

GEORGE

I get it. I don't exist.

JANE

Don't say that. Of course you exist.

GEORGE

But not really.

JANE

Crow of Night.

THEY lie down, hold hands and raise them into the air.

GEORGE

Night.

JANE

Night.

Later. STEPH stands by the stump in the field of bones. SHE has the knife and a dog collar. A truck passes.

STEPH

Come on, Samson. That's a good dog. Shh. It's okay. You're tired and you're sick and this is the right thing to do. Don't be afraid. Really I'm a wolf. It's a secret. It's a shadow secret. You'll be happy here. This field is full of bones. And the bones come alive. There's even a whole buffalo made of bones. I've seen it. I really have. You won't be alone. Shh. Shh now.

There is a yelp as SHE stabs the dog in the throat.

STEPH

Shh. It's okay. No more sick. No more pain. Shh.

A truck passes. STEPH stands, steadies herself, and goes toward the highway. SHE waves. A truck stops.

Hey! Hey! I need a ride. I don't care where. Just anywhere. Anywhere but here.

I have a secret.

We shift. The coffee house just before dawn. STEPH stands clutching the knife.

JANE

You were so young.

STEPH

Yeah.

JANE

How did you...

STEPH

Survive?

JANE

Yeah.

STEPH

Barely.

JANE

But you did.

STEPH

I clawed. And snarled. And howled. I've done things you wouldn't... you don't want to hear about it.

JANE

I'm so sorry. I blamed myself. You know? And I couldn't remember why. But now I... Look ,it was... I wasn't a good friend. But I was just a girl, though. Thirteen and a half. You can't blame me. It was... the game was never meant to be real.

STEPH

It was always real.

JANE

You're not in school, are you?

STEPH

No.

JANE

You lied.

STEPH

Things are... I thought I had things figured out. I mean I had to... run. Sometimes it's like my whole life has been...

JANE

A lie?

STEPH

A story.

JANE

Give me the knife. Please.

STEPH hands JANE the knife. JANE sets it aside.

GEORGE appears as HE did all those years ago: black coat and, for the first time, boots with red laces. HE ties them.

JANE (CONT'D)

You didn't come here to hurt me.

STEPH

I don't know why I... I think I came here because... we never finished... I'm so angry at everything.

Jane, I really don't have anywhere to... be.

JANE takes STEPH's scarred hand and holds it to her face.

JANE

You can be here, Steph.

STEPH

Really?

JANE

Yeah. Really.

(taking her hand)

This is your heart line.

STEPH

Jane...

JANE

This is your head line.

STEPH

Come on.

JANE

Your face.

SHE touches STEPH's face.

I just like your face.

STEPH relaxes and allows JANE to hold her.

A still, silent moment passes.

STEPH

It's really late.

JANE

It's early. The sun's coming up. See?

STEPH

Yeah.

JANE

When's the last time you just watched the sun come up?

STEPH

I don't remember.

JANE

Memories are tricky.

STEPH

Yeah, they are.

GEORGE watches JANE and STEPH. THEY in turn watch the creep of the sun as night erodes.

STEPH (CONT'D)

Huh. Look at that. The sky's purple.

JANE

Yeah. Sometimes it is.

The sky is purple.

The sun casts their shadows: two wolves and a crow.

STEPH quietly howls.

Awooooooooo...

STEPH

JANE joins her.

Awooooooooo...

JANE

THEY howl. This may last a long while, or not.  
Whatever the case, it is real.

GEORGE lights a match and lets it burn as long  
as HE is able. When HE flinches...

End of Play