

THE EVER AFTER MURDERS

Written by

Ian Fried

Prolific
Will Rowbotham
(212) 412-9198

WME Entertainment
Mike Esola
(310) 285-9000

*"Come away, O human child: To the waters and the wild with a
fairy, hand in hand, For the world's more full of weeping than you
can understand."* -William Butler Yeats

Once upon a time...

FADE IN:

EXT. ALLEYWAY -- NIGHT

The moon floats across the sky like a milk-white cataract. Silver light shoots over a dense fog melting past the red-brick walls of a long, INDUSTRIAL ALLEYWAY.

Swollen storm clouds begin swirling overhead. A deep peal of thunder RUMBLES in the distance.

Suddenly, a brilliant pin of EMERALD LIGHT flits into frame.

It darts past rotted trash cans, sagging clothes lines and graffitied CAMPAIGN POSTERS plastered everywhere.

A gust of wind shoots the bright object

SKYWARD

where it whirls through the air, coming to a rest inside the toothed maw of a concrete GARGOYLE overlooking the alley.

We are now able to make out the light's hair-thin legs, gossamer wings and insect-like features.

It's a PIXIE.

The creature pushes off the gargoyle and makes its way to a shattered

WINDOW

on the upper level of a dilapidated APARTMENT COMPLEX.

The pixie carefully navigates through the opening, entering

INT. APARTMENT -- NIGHT

An eerie silence. Pitch black, save for the pixie's incandescent glow. Intermittent SHOCKS of lightning momentarily clarify the room's grimy insides.

It houses some sort of complex, bronze and glass STEAMPUNK LAB.

Shattered objects and chemicals are spilled everywhere. The front door has been slashed to splinters.

CLOSE ON

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

The pixie shooting to the ground, carefully stepping across the cold linoleum floor toward something cloaked in shadow.

The pixie's delicate feet finally stop. Ahead of them is thick pool of

STEAMING BLOOD, slowly spreading across the floor.

Another jolt of lightning reveals someone in a grimy labcoat, cheek down, splayed across the ground.

It's a woman. Piercing blue eyes with lustrous, short cropped flaxen hair. Beautiful, sad, DEAD.

Her body has been torn to pieces. Bone deep burgundy slashes are etched across her otherwise flawless skin. A star-like SYMBOL has been BURNED into her forehead.

As we slowly pull back from the corpse, more pixies appear out of the ether. A small SWARM hovers on her body like bees to a honey trap.

Outside the window, a white hot arc of lightning slices through the sky.

A loud BOOM finally gives way to a torrential downpour.

SUPER-UP: "THE EVER AFTER MURDERS"

CUT TO:

EXT. GRIMM CITY (AERIAL VIEW) -- NIGHT

A storm has erupted over the city, a crumbling metropolis of oxidized steel skyscrapers stretching to infinity.

We drift above the chimneys and smokestacks, where POLICE ZEPPELINS keep vigil, shooting spotlights over rain soaked cobblestone streets.

A thick forest of impossibly high conifers surrounds the city, each one shivering in the ice-cold wind.

SUPER-UP: "GRIMM CITY"

THUMB (V.O.)

Grimm City: a metropolis at the edge of forever. A sideshow, where man and monster have been cursed to roam. Where dark secrets kept by strung out fairies and doped up dwarves have rotted the apple to its core.

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CONTINUED:

We move through the city, settling on the outside of a moving, unmarked POLICE CRUISER.

INT. POLICE CRUISER -- CONTINUOUS

Driving is DETECTIVE LIEUTENANT TOM THUMB, lean, powerful, human sized.

He carefully removes a prescription bottle from his leather coat and pops MEDICATION into his mouth.

A white glint plays across a silver DETECTIVE'S BADGE fastened to his lapel. He speaks in a British accent.

THUMB (V.O.)

People like to say this place is filled with two kinds of people -- sippers and gulpers. As a cop, there's only one thing you need to know about policing an enemy who can turn metal cuffs into macaroons: a sip and gulp can be the difference between a splash...

Thumb gets a call on the radio.

THUMB (V.O.) (CONT'D)
...and a tsunami.

He picks up a receiver on the dash.

THUMB (CONT'D)
Go ahead.

RADIO
Break-in's been reported at the Cottage Apartments. Downtown.

THUMB
I'll be right there.

Thumb slams the gas, shooting his cruiser into the night.

EXT. COTTAGE APARTMENTS -- LATE NIGHT

Red-brick and mortar. Forty stories high. A stairwell inside illuminated by the soft glow of amber lanterns.

Thumb's cruiser glides through the rain and settles at the base of the building. He parks, checks his weapon and walks toward the entrance.

Hundreds of ADVERTISING BILLS for the race for mayor, some defaced, have been pasted onto the front of the building.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

On his way to the door, Thumb tilts his head up, taking note of several dozen pixies drifting through the air above him.

An OLD BEGGAR in rags suddenly appears out of nowhere. Pearl white skin, intense blue eyes and long, thin ears.

He's an ELF. Raving mad.

OLD BEGGAR
I saw it! The whole thing! Ten
stories tall with a dark cloak!

THUMB
Calm down.

Thumb notices a thin film of GOLD DUST rimming the elf's nose and mouth.

THUMB (CONT'D)
You're high. Get lost.

The elf waves Thumb off, muttering as it disappears into a nearby alleyway.

Thumb cautiously approaches the complex's entrance, when there's a

Blood curdling SCREAM from above!

Just as he looks up -

BANG!

The door in front of him SHOOTS open, throwing him off his feet and onto the curb.

A FIGURE, whose face we can't see, sprints out of the opening, past Thumb and into the street.

Thumb shakes off the cobwebs, grits his teeth and explodes into a sprint.

EXT. DOWNTOWN STREETS -- CONTINUOUS

Thumb huffs and puffs through the rain, darting between TRAFFIC and neon lit SHOPS, inching closer to his suspect with each labored step.

Just ahead, a crowd has formed in front of the window to an

ELECTRONICS SHOP

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

where dozens of televisions are all turned to a local NEWS REPORT on the city's ongoing MAYORAL ELECTION.

Thumb watches the figure quickly approach the crowd, plowing through it like an out of control locomotive.

People scatter in every direction, just as the suspect disappears into a

DARK ALLEYWAY

filled with rats, burning cars, fire escapes and tangled telephone wires.

Thumb unholsters his gun, points through the slums. Nothing.

Then, he sees a dark figure climbing up a rusted FIRE ESCAPE.

THUMB
FREEZE!!!

Thumb unloads a few rounds at the fire escape. Bullets skitter around the alley with a PING-PANG-PONG.

He hoists himself onto the escape ladder and quickly climbs hand over hand to the building's

ROOFTOP

where the night is illuminated only by shafts of moonlight, filtered through fog and steam.

The shadowy figure is waiting for Thumb.

Thumb pulls his weapon, out of breath and surprised.

THUMB (CONT'D)
You're fast.
(a beat)
Get on the ground.

The figure stands motionless, breath frosting.

Thumb CLICKS back the hammer on his gun.

The noise SCARES a flock of cooing pigeons, distracting him.

The figure suddenly appearing out of nowhere!

He kicks Thumb's gun out of his hands, then delivers a sickening PUNCH to his ribs with a CRACK!

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED: (2)

Thumb's body goes sailing across the roof and through an old wooden door, SHATTERING it to splinters.

Just as Thumb recovers, the figure leaps off the roof, descending through the endless murk without trace.

EXT. COTTAGE APARTMENTS -- LATER

Sheets of rain smack and plop onto the backs of BEAT COPS taking down witness statements.

Thumb is sitting on the hood of his car getting bandaged up by an EMT, staring off into space.

A young, intense woman with bright ruby hair, a crimson hood and pince-nez glasses, goes to greet him. DETECTIVE RACHEL RIDING.

RIDING
Lieutenant Thumb?

Thumb's still day dreaming.

THUMB
It's detective...
(making eye contact)
...Thumb.

The two shake hands. Thumb looks Riding over. He likes what he sees.

THUMB (CONT'D)
Have we met?

Riding rolls her eyes.

RIDING
I'm Detective Rachel Riding.

Thumb isn't listening.

THUMB
So that's a "no" to having met before? Or at least, remembering the great time we may or may not have had?

A beat. Riding's immune to his charms.

RIDING
You're taller than I expected.

Thumb goes quiet.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

THUMB
What can I do for you?

RIDING
I'm your new partner.

Thumb can't believe what he's hearing.

THUMB
You asked to be transferred here?

RIDING
Yes.

THUMB
From where?

RIDING
The suburbs.

THUMB
And the captain assigned you to
me?

He begins laughing.

RIDING
Is there a problem?

THUMB
I'm sure there will be.

INT. STAIRWELL, COTTAGE APARTMENTS -- NIGHT

Thumb charges ahead. Riding begins reading notes from a pad of paper.

RIDING
No I.D. on the guy you ran down,
but the owner of this apartment
complex is Happy Zwerg.

THUMB
Small seven?

RIDING
Dwarf brothers who co-manage these
buildings together. Friends of
the victim.

THUMB
Knew a few dealers when I was a
narc. They like to run farms in
this area for local traffickers.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

RIDING
Farms?

Thumb seems annoyed.

THUMB
Next time, try coming to class
prepared dear.

RIDING
Are you always this witty?

THUMB
(off her look)
Farms are brew houses for the
Zaubertrank narcotic.
Hallucinogen. Huge part of the
population's hooked and we've been
trying to locate a base of
operations for a while.

RIDING
Rumpel Stiltskin's racket, right?

THUMB
Oh you've heard of him? Great.

EXT. BUILDING HALLWAY DOOR -- NIGHT

Dozens and dozens of pixies drift through the air,
blowing past Thumb and Riding like lightning bugs as they
make their way to the scene.

Strips of yellow crime scene tape are being put up by ELF
COPS.

Two CSIs sprinkle silver powder across the wooden boards
of the hallway, illuminating on them dozens of CLAWED and
HUMAN footprints. One above the other.

Thumb quickly stops by one of the CSIs.

THUMB
Anything?

One CSI looks up, disgruntled.

CSI
A hundred people have walked down
this hallway. Half of them
Otherkin.

RIDING
Otherkin?

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

CSI
"Not human" around here.
(to Thumb)
Where'd you pick up the rookie?

Thumb turns to Riding.

THUMB
Boy, we're gonna have to get you a
tutor or something.

Thumb and Riding continue walking, settling at the door to the apartment in question. It's been torn to splinters.

THUMB (CONT'D)
Anyone been inside?

RIDING
Not since it happened.

Thumb snaps on a pair of green latex gloves and cautiously opens the door.

He moves to flip a light switch. Nothing.

Riding hands him a flashlight, which he clicks on revealing the

GRISLY CRIME SCENE

an apartment whose contents have been violently shredded to scraps.

Thumb sweeps his flashlight over the kitchen floor, casting an eerie blue glow over cockroaches skittering across a chilled linoleum floor.

Thick smears and spatters of BLOOD lead to a common area, where what remains of a body lies motionless.

The once recognizable corpse we saw earlier, has been reduced to a leather-skinned, bone-dry husk of a human being.

Hundreds of pixies buzz about it. Flies on a rotting piece of meat.

Riding looks sickened. She continues reciting information from her notepad.

RIDING (CONT'D)
Victim's name was Golda Locke.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED: (2)

Thumb approaches the body, batting away pixies from her skeletal face.

He sees the burned SYMBOL on her forehead.

THUMB
Witch's pentacle.

Thumb notices a series of deep marks torn across the victim's neck and arms.

Riding impatiently waits for Thumb to say something.

RIDING
So?

Thumb removes a small GLASS VIAL with blue liquid in it from his coat. He traps one of the pixies, corking the top.

RIDING (CONT'D)
Detective?

The light desperately thrashes and SQUEALS inside.

RIDING (CONT'D)
What're you doing?

Thumb motions to the dots of light all around them.

THUMB
Pixies. Like to feed on the blood.

Thumb nods to the test tube which suddenly glows a brilliant RUBY RED.

THUMB (CONT'D)
Killer was cursed. That complicates things.

RIDING
Meaning?

THUMB
Whoever did this could have been a human, elf, dwarf, fairy...

RIDING
(sarcastically)
That narrows it down some.

Thumb points to the scar on the victim's head.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED: (3)

THUMB

Witches curse thousands of people
a year. Expensive, but not
uncommon.

RIDING

What sort of curses?

THUMB

Usually things like an ex-wife
wanting revenge on her husband.
Curses him to an eternity of
blisters and body hair. Things
like that. Takes skill to turn a
person into something capable of
doing all this though.

RIDING

Well no offense, but it seems
pretty obvious whatever was cursed
wasn't human.

Thumb tosses the vial in her direction. She catches it,
quickly inspecting its contents.

Inside floats a small, pale-skinned, humanoid looking
INSECT with paper-thin gold leaf wings.

Glass crunches under Thumb's feet.

A large COMPLEX LAB has been smashed to pieces.

Orbs and beakers filled with odd liquids are splashed
across the floor.

Riding anxiously pushes up her glasses.

To Thumb, this sort of thing is fairly routine.

THUMB

Is it hot in here?

He picks and prods at what remains of the experiment,
noticing a few dozen NOTEBOOKS filled with scribbles.

THUMB (CONT'D)

Expensive equipment.

Thumb picks up a notebook, flips the pages.

THUMB (CONT'D)

Definitely looks like she was
doing a cook.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED: (4)

A small amount of SHIMMERING BLUE POWDER lines the outside of one broken beaker at his feet.

THUMB (CONT'D)

Not sure this is Z though.

RIDING

So she was dealing out of the house. Maybe an exchange gone wrong?

Thumb pinches the blue powder between his fingers, quickly bottles a sample. He doesn't answer back.

Riding's annoyed.

RIDING (CONT'D)

Listen, I don't wanna get off on the wrong foot here, but...

Thumb moves into the

KITCHEN

where he notices a dusty, candy-filled GIFT BASKET sitting on a countertop. He removes a GREETING CARD stapled to its outsides.

A portly CORONER waddles into the room, slapping Thumb on the back.

CORONER

Hey Tommy.

Riding motions to the fat man.

RIDING

I'll need a few more minutes with the scene.

The coroner takes one look around, doesn't like what he sees.

CORONER

Eeesh. I'm sorry, but a clean-up crew's gotta get in here right away.

He points to the pixies.

CORONER (CONT'D)

Before the body attracts something bigger.

EXT. COTTAGE APARTMENTS -- MOMENTS LATER

It's stopped raining.

Thumb's briskly walking to his car, Riding a few steps in tow.

RIDING

I don't know what the problem is here. I understand you aren't used to working with newly promoted detectives, but I earned mine.

THUMB

Judging by how knowledgeable you seem to be, I kind of doubt that.

RIDING

Listen, I'm not asking for special treatment, but if this is your idea of breaking me in, I --

Thumb become impatient.

THUMB

Just...
(finding the words)
...stay outta my way.

Riding stops walking, offended.

RIDING

Like hell I will. This is our case detective.

Thumb turns to her, removes his pills and slams a few down.

THUMB

Make contact with Happy Zwerg. See what he knows about Locke and who she may have hung out with. I'll meet you at the station when I'm done.

Riding isn't satisfied.

RIDING

That'll take 15 minutes Thumb.

Thumb buckles into his cruiser.

RIDING (CONT'D)

What're you gonna do?

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

Thumb slams his car door shut and speeds through the cold.

EXT. OLD MARKET, DOWNTOWN -- NIGHT

Ten ramshackle blocks of the city cut from wood and cobblestone. A living antique, covered in rusted green metal siding and twinkling orange lanterns.

Thumb's cruiser idles in front of HANSEL & GRETEL'S CANDY SHOPPE - a city landmark and confectionery literally constructed out of every sweet ever conceived.

Thumb eyes a strung out TEENAGE ELF, gold around his mouth, suspiciously pacing in front of the store.

Suddenly, the elf pulls a chisel from his coat, chips off a large chunk of a candy cane buttress and disappears into an alleyway.

INT. HANSEL & GRETEL CANDY SHOPPE -- NIGHT

Clogged wall to wall with shimmering sweets and chromed soda fountains.

Lemon drop lanterns swing above floors crafted from mahogany peanut brittle. Walls of swollen ginger bread are ornately decorated in frosting murals of Hansel & Gretel's famous exploits.

Thumb makes his way to the counter, but there's no one there.

He searches through the shop, finding an open door to a small

MANUFACTURING PLANT

dimly lit, save for a large furnace at its core. The furnace feeds power to sizable STEEL MACHINES crowding the oversized room.

Each machine quickly pumps liquid candy onto molds sliding over long conveyor belts.

Thumb takes a look around, notices someone in greased overalls, gloves and a welder's mask feeding wood into the furnace.

THUMB

Excuse me.

The fire feeder turns, flipping up her mask. GRETEL CASSEL, a graceful but homely looking young woman with coral eyes and a thick German accent.

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CONTINUED:

GRETEL
We're closed for the night.

Thumb pulls out the GREETING CARD he swiped from the crime scene.

THUMB
Golda Locke. You know her?

Gretel shoots him a concerned look.

GRETEL
Who's asking?

THUMB
I'll get to that.

Gretel takes off her gloves, knowingly looking over Thumb's shoulder.

GRETEL
How do you know Goldie? Is she in some sort of trouble?

THUMB
Yes.

Gretel's voice begins trembling.

GRETEL
What happened to her?

Her face tightens up, eyes now intensely focused on someone standing behind Thumb.

A nickel plated MAGNUM clicks at Thumb's head.

HANSEL CASSEL, a shock of tawny hair sitting atop a heavily muscled frame, has his finger on the hammer. Hansel too looks like he's been working the machines.

HANSEL
You've got about five seconds to get outta here before I turn your head into pie filling.

Thumb pulls back his leather coat. He's had his gun pointed at Hansel's groin the entire time.

THUMB
You've got three to decide if you ever wanna have kids.

Gretel notices Thumb's badge and calls Hansel off.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED: (2)

GRETEL

He's a cop.

Breathing a sigh of relief, Hansel clicks the safety on.

HANSEL

Thought you were a dealer.

Gretel turns to Thumb.

GRETEL

Is she alright?

THUMB

No. We found her murdered earlier
tonight.

Gretel breaks down, crumpling into Hansel's arms. Hansel
does his best to console her, turning to Thumb.

HANSEL

You always break good news to
people like this?

Thumb motions to the greeting card.

THUMB

You two were arrested for doing Z
cooks in your candy shop. Sent
out baskets laced with product. I
know because I trained the narco
who pinched you.

HANSEL

I think you'd better go now.

THUMB

I think you'd better listen to
what I have to say.

Hansel and Gretel are both taken off guard.

THUMB (CONT'D)

This' a nice shop. Expensive
equipment.

(a beat)

I remember reading about that
sicko who took you as kids. How
she tortured you for weeks in
those cabins. Did it to dozens of
others, but you two escaped.
Memories like that, I guess it
makes sense you two turned into a
couple of junkies.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED: (3)

Gretel looks disturbed.

GRETEL
What do you want?

THUMB
To explain it seems obvious you
were still slumming it with Locke.

GRETEL
What're you talking about?

THUMB
We found her lab. The basket you
sent her. What were you trying to
do, go into business for
yourselves?

Hansel tenses. He removes a large wrench from his side
and begins tuning up a broken piston.

Thumb moves to him.

HANSEL
The truth is we were all hooked.
But that was a long time ago.
After Gretel and I got busted,
Goldie helped clean us up.

Thumb notices a few smears of blue powder on the
machinery. The same kind he saw at Golda's apartment.

THUMB
What do you mean? Like, she was
on bathroom duty? You don't think
I'm dumb enough to buy she turned
Mother Goose when you two tried to
kick the habit?

Hansel looks to Gretel, who looks to Thumb.

GRETEL
You are an asshole.

Gretel storms off. Thumb watches her go.

THUMB
I'm used to it.

Thumb turns to Hansel.

THUMB (CONT'D)
So you don't know who could've
done this to her?

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED: (4)

HANSEL
Listen Detective...?

THUMB
Thumb.

HANSEL
Being clean means my sister and I
have had our hands full just
trying to keep the shop afloat.
Drug money paid for things an
honest living doesn't. You see
how things are out on the streets.
Getting sober meant things just
got worse for us.

THUMB
So you wouldn't know if she was
seeing someone?

Hansel goes back to work on the piston.

HANSEL
She had an on again off again
boyfriend. Not sure if she was
still seeing him.

THUMB
Who?

HANSEL
Some dealer. Otherkin.

THUMB
Name?

HANSEL
I dunno. Hard to keep up.

A tense beat. Thumb slips his card into Hansel's
overalls.

THUMB
You get your memory back, gimme a
call.

EXT. HAPPY ZWERG'S LODGE -- LATER, NIGHT

The fringes of Grimm. A thick pall of ice fog has
settled around GIGANTIC PINES standing guard over the
timberland.

A metal gate clinks behind Riding's cruiser. It coasts
past a mailbox, tires crunching gravel before coming to a
rest.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

The LODGE is something out of a storybook. Heavy raw logs stacked one over the other, branches uncut. Melted candles lit inside large cast iron lamps.

Riding exits her vehicle and slowly approaches the house.

Suddenly, the cottage begins to

SHAKE and RATTLE. Something enormous is moving around inside.

Riding quickly pulls her weapon and heads for an open window, curtains fluttering.

At the window, rasping Hisses, bones CRACKING and a SIZZLING noise. Screams inside dwindle to a hoarse MOAN.

Riding sums up the courage to quickly peek inside of the COTTAGE WINDOW

where the hulking, cloaked silhouette of something TERRIFYING is hunched over HAPPY ZWERG, its back turned to us.

Happy's on the floor, mouth agape, stocking cap torn above eyes rolled deep into his head. A PENTACLE suddenly BURNS itself into his forehead.

The creature drops the dwarf with a THUD, revealing blood splashed everywhere. Bookshelves. The fireplace.

Riding quickly looks away, green with sickness. She tries to sum up the courage to enter through the window just as -

Something GROWLS through the opening. Hot breath shooting smoke just above her head.

She is absolutely petrified.

The creature releases a deep, spine tingling GROWL. Riding covers her mouth, desperately muffling her own terror.

Then, the growling stops. A sense of relief washes over her.

An emerald pixie floats down from the window.

Carefully backing up from the lodge, Riding notices a trail of pixies leading from outside the cottage to the forest behind the house.

She decides to follow the trail into

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED: (2)

THE FOREST

dark, primordial, brimming with life. The burping of toads and cooing of owls slowly fills the air.

Riding navigates through the maze, following hundreds of pixies now drifting through the trees.

A torn YELLOW RIBBON flutters off a low hanging branch. A few smears of blood on the trunks of saplings are thick with feeding pixies.

Riding passes a SMALL POND, gun pointed.

There's a SPLASH.

The forest goes silent. A predator is nearby.

Riding tries to stay strong. A twig CRACKS a few feet from her ahead of a small

CAVE

which Riding cautiously approaches. There are no pixies here.

She aims her gun into the cave, when there's a LOUD growl!

Something races toward her out of the darkness!

Riding reacts, CRACKING gunfire into the cave, illuminating what may be the creature in full view, but -

It's a BEAR.

Bloodied from gunfire, crashing to the ground mere feet from Riding where it sadly MOANS in its death throes.

CUT TO:

EXT. HAPPY ZWERG'S LODGE -- EARLY MORNING

A HELICOPTER hovers like a buzzard overhead.

Black and white POLICE CRUISERS now line the perimeter of the lodge, each one casting red and blue winks of light over the forest.

Thumb is talking to his older, Irish POLICE CAPTAIN JOHN MACCOOL.

A GIANT. Tall and thick with pulsing veins snaking across his bumpy skin, MacCool's colossally muscled presence seriously intimidates.

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CONTINUED:

CAPTAIN MACCOOL
Almost had the bastard.

Thumb seems annoyed with MacCool. He looks over to Riding, who's breaking the news to Happy Zwerg's SIX BROTHERS. Wrinkled old men in wool hats and buckskin boots.

CAPTAIN MACCOOL (CONT'D)
Pixies around the body?

Thumb tosses MacCool a vial filled with one.

THUMB
Same kind. Same pentacle scar.

MacCool exhales with concern.

CAPTAIN MACCOOL
Listen Tom, been meaning to have a chat with you. Election's in three days. Department's already getting calls from the mayor's office. Wants to look tough on crime ahead of the vote. Word on the street is there's a fat prize for whoever gets this wrapped up neatly.

Thumb looks regretful, pulls out a bottle of pills and downs a couple.

THUMB
Just let me do my job.

Riding finishes with the dwarves and walks to meet Thumb and MacCool.

CAPTAIN MACCOOL
How'd they take it?

RIDING
Still in shock.

Thumb turns to Riding.

THUMB
What'd you find?

RIDING
Blood. Lots of it.

MacCool lets out a sigh.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED: (2)

CAPTAIN MACCOOL
Another junkie killing.

RIDING
Guy looked pretty healthy to me.

Riding tosses Thumb a baggy. Inside is a laced RIBBON.

RIDING (CONT'D)
Found it on one of the branches.

THUMB
This when you were playing hide
and go seek around back?

RIDING
Yeah. Hide and go seek. With a
bear.

Captain MacCool breaks things up.

CAPTAIN MACCOOL
Please continue detective.

RIDING
Nothing unique about the ribbon.
It's sold in a thousand shops
throughout the city.

THUMB
This is a waste of time. There's
nothing here.

Thumb begins walking to his cruiser. Riding quickly follows him.

MacCool shouts out.

CAPTAIN MACCOOL
Where are you going Thumb?

THUMB
To check on something.

Thumb prepares to get in his car. Riding puts her hand on his shoulder.

RIDING
Listen to me. We have to work together on this. These people deserve justice.

Thumb looks at Riding's hand on his shoulder, thinking.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED: (3)

RIDING (CONT'D)

All I want is stop whoever's doing this. Why can't you understand that?

Thumb sees something in her eyes. A look he once had.

He opens his car door and signals for her to get into the CRUISER.

INT. THUMB'S CRUISER -- MOMENTS LATER

Where he explains himself.

THUMB

So do I.

Thumb buckles in and turns to her.

THUMB (CONT'D)

You really want to find out who did this, we have to keep MacCool and anyone else asking questions, out.

RIDING

I think we can trust the captain.

THUMB

We can't trust anyone. Not when these sort of forces are at work.

RIDING

So what do we do?

THUMB

Fly under the radar.

Riding looks confused.

RIDING

How?

Thumb takes a moment to think.

THUMB

I'm gonna do something I don't normally.

RIDING

What's that?

THUMB

Trust you.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

RIDING
You just met me.

THUMB
Puts you at an advantage. Means
you don't know how things work
here.

Thumb removes a bottle from his pocket. Inside is a shimmering BLUE POWDER.

THUMB (CONT'D)
Recovered it from Locke's lab.
Found some at Hansel and Gretel's
candy shop and just took a sample
from Happy Zwerp's cabin.

Riding rolls the bottle in her hands.

RIDING
What is it?

THUMB
Dunno. It's what Golda Locke was
cooking at her lab. Could be a
new, more powerful form of Z she
and Stiltskin were planning to
roll out.

RIDING
So we run it through forensics.

THUMB
No. It turns out to be something
big and we'll get dropped from
this case. We need to take it
somewhere else.

RIDING
Where?

Thumb hesitates for a moment.

THUMB
The Black Market.

Riding shakes her head in disbelief.

RIDING
You've got to be joking. You know
how many people get killed there a
day? Even in the suburbs we know
about that place.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED: (2)

THUMB

I know someone there who can help us.

RIDING

You.

Thumb shakes his head "yes."

RIDING (CONT'D)

Know someone at the Black Market?

THUMB

How badly do you want to solve this case detective?

EXT. CITY HALL -- DAY

A golden sun meanders through jade clouds drifting overhead. This city hall is as Gothic as they come, even during the day. Huge spires jab into the sky, sandwiched between baroque frescos.

There's a sizable CAMPAIGN RALLY underway. Humans and Otherkin stand side by side, holding political posters of their beloved incumbent, MAYOR ADAM PRINCE.

Both the mayor and his wife, BELLE PRINCE, step out from behind a satin curtain to cheers and applause.

The mayor, a ROSE on his lapel, approaches the podium.

MAYOR PRINCE

Thank you! Thank you all!

He turns to Belle.

MAYOR PRINCE (CONT'D)

Belle and I can't tell you how much your support means to us.

Someone begins chanting "FOUR MORE YEARS."

MAYOR PRINCE (CONT'D)

(smiling)

Help us make that a reality!

A group of supporters quickly hoist signs in opposition to the mayor's opponent, SNOW WHITMORE, who we'll see later.

We move down from the posters, past the supporters feet, below the steam floating above manhole covers, into the

INT. SEWERS BENEATH GRIMM -- DAY

We're deep underground. A maze. Endless concrete tunnels rimmed with rust. Honeycomb metal grating and lead piping on all sides.

A few shafts of daylight shoot down onto a shallow river of murky runoff.

Thumb and Riding are moving down the side of a tunnel. Riding does not look pleased.

RIDING

Where the hell is this place?

THUMB

Just a little bit further dear.

Thumb pulls a pill bottle from his coat, pops a few.

RIDING

What are those anyway?

THUMB

Beans.

RIDING

So what is that for, reverse farts?

THUMB

Funny.

RIDING

You got those at the market?

THUMB

Yep.

RIDING

What do you take them for?

THUMB

My vertical. Jack Jacobs sells 'em.

They turn a corner into a

LONG CORRIDOR

leading to a circular enclosure.

RIDING

The giant killer? Is that who're we going to see?

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

THUMB
 Do you ever stop asking questions?
 (a beat)
 No. This guy's much stranger.
 Even for me.

RIDING
 That's comforting.

Thumb motions for Riding to stop at the enclosure.

They're at the feet of a perfectly calm, ink-black POOL OF WATER.

THUMB
 Alright, ready for a swim?

Riding looks to the filthy surroundings. A dead rat floats across the surface. She turns to leave.

RIDING
 Forget it. I'll meet you back at the station.

Thumb shrugs his shoulders.

THUMB
 Your loss.

Without hesitation, he leaps off a concrete walkway to the center of the pool, sliding into the water and disappearing with effortless grace.

Riding hesitates for a moment, staring into the depths.

RIDING
 Thumb?

Only echoes.

She watches the pool, waiting for an answer. Nothing. Riding pinches her nose and leaps in.

INT. WATER -- MOMENTS LATER

We swim along with Thumb and Riding, into an impossibly beautiful

UNDERWATER SANCTUARY

Pockets of light filter in through walled grating. SEAWEED sways in the current. FISH move with ethereal elegance past SUNKEN SHIPS lit up by glowing JELLYFISH.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

Something quickly swims past Riding. She stops in the water for a moment, face to face with a

MERMAID - more fish than human. Super reflective scales catching the light, shimmering like buried treasure.

Riding blinks, and the haunting creature is gone as quickly as it appeared.

She sees Thumb swim up to the surface and follows.

EXT. THE BLACK MARKET -- CONTINUOUS

Thumb and Riding both bubble up to the surface of a large well. Thumb swims out and helps Riding to her feet, revealing

THE BLACK MARKET

impossibly huge and totally cramped. The Kowloon slums of Hong Kong on acid.

Hundreds and hundreds of people are buzzing about. Humans. Trolls. Goblins. Everything.

Thumb signals for Riding to walk with him down an aisle.

THUMB
Be very careful here. Eyes forward.

Riding is shell shocked. Awestruck.

THUMB (CONT'D)
We're going to meet a man named Oscar Zoroaster. Owns a shop a few stalls down.

Riding looks to her side, sees a stall selling ornate GOLDEN EGGS.

THUMB (CONT'D)
We get to this guy, get what we need, then get the hell out of here.

An outrageously ugly, WARTED HAG thrusts one of the eggs into Riding's face.

WARTED HAG
Freshly laid from a Golden Goose!
Two for one!

Riding waves her off, turning to Thumb.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

RIDING
Where'd you meet this guy,
Zoroaster?

THUMB
Was an engineer. Built zeppelins
for the department. Accidentally
crashed one right into city hall.
Hard not to know him.

Riding gets distracted again, this time by a shopkeeper
selling bloodied UNICORN HORNS. She points, thinking
she's misunderstood what they are.

RIDING
Umm... Those aren't...?

Thumb turns to her.

THUMB
Try paying attention.

RIDING
Sorry.

THUMB
This guy specializes in the
ridiculous. He can change your
oil or turn your head into a
lollipop. Very powerful
alchemist. Not to be trifled
with.

Thumb stops ahead of an

EMERALD TENT

being guarded by a heavily muscled, LION-FACED OTHERKIN.
He's tall and imposing, golden fur and primrose eyes.

Both Riding and Thumb approach the beast.

THUMB (CONT'D)
We're here to see Oz.

The creature snarls, puffing up its chest.

GUARD
No one sees Oz.

THUMB
We have business with him.

Thumb flashes his identification. The creature slaps his
clawed hand at the badge and enters the tent.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED: (2)

Waiting, Thumb turns to Riding.

THUMB (CONT'D)
Remember when I said I knew this
guy?

RIDING
Yeah?

THUMB
I knew of him.

RIDING
Great.

The guard parts the curtain to the tent and motions them in.

GUARD
Come with me.

INT. OZ TENT -- CONTINUOUS

Polished brass and glass tubing curved around every surface, like MECHANICAL INTESTINES. Things bubble and churn.

The guard leads Thumb and Riding over to a LAB STATION.

Sitting with his back to us is man in a lab coat and Victorian clothing, soldering a half completed TIN ROBOT.

MAN
Leave us.

The guard disappears behind a curtain. The man's head lifts, his back still turned.

MAN (CONT'D)
What business do we have?

Thumb removes the blue powder from his coat.

THUMB
I need an alchemist. Someone skilled.

The man swivels around in his chair, revealing himself to be DR. OSCAR ZOROASTER. The Wizard of Oz. Skin pale and purple veined. Emerald eyes, heavily magnified by phoropters.

Oz looks crazy. A man lost and confused by his own madness.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

(NOTE: Oz continually mumbles when he's not speaking, his mind seeming to operate in two different realities.)

OZ

Then you've come to the right place.

A smile creeps across his face as he recognizes Thumb.

OZ (CONT'D)

Thomas Thumb.

He turns to Riding.

OZ (CONT'D)

And Little Red Riding Hood.

(winking)

Both grown up I see.

There's something unsettling about Oz. Riding becomes visibly uncomfortable.

Oz looks to the vial in Thumb's hand.

OZ (CONT'D)

What've you brought me today good sir?

Thumb hands over the bottle.

THUMB

Need you to tell me whatever you can about this substance.

Oz jiggles the blue powder inside the bottle.

OZ

An interesting find indeed. Let's see what we can learn, shall we?

He straps on a pair of ORNATE GOGGLES, hands Thumb and Riding each a pair of the same.

Oz moves to middle of the room, placing the bottle at its center. There, it LEVITATES, as if held by some invisible force.

Oz moves to a handle on a brass GENERATOR. The generator is connected to a HIGH-TECH ORGAN. He flips it to the "ON" position.

In a flash, fingers of EMERALD LIGHTNING appear from the ether, stabbing spidery jolts of electricity at the bottle, now GLOWING with all the colors of the rainbow.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED: (2)

Different SYMBOLS drawn from smoke begin forming inside the glass tubes of the organ. Oz carefully reads them, noting each.

Thumb and Riding watch in amazement.

THUMB

What can you tell us?

Oz strokes his chin.

OZ

Curiouser and curiouser. Elusive compound you have here.

Oz moves to the generator and turns it off.

The lightning at the center of the room dissipates, the smoky symbols inside the organ vanishing.

Oz removes his goggles, makes some calculations to himself, then turns to them.

OZ (CONT'D)

It appears you've discovered a very rare antidote. Its primary component: keratin.

Riding's confounded.

RIDING

Hair?

OZ

Correct.

THUMB

You said it was an antidote. To what?

Oz stares the floating bottle, inspecting it as if some long lost treasure.

OZ

Zaubertrank of course.

The news hits both Thumb and Riding hard. Thumb's suddenly in a big hurry.

THUMB

Thank you very much for your help doctor.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED: (3)

OZ

It's been a pleasure. Life is all
swings and roundabouts.

Thumb waits for Oz to return the compound. An awkward
beat of silence passes between them all.

THUMB

I'll just take the antidote, then
and...

Oz smiles.

OZ

I'm afraid that will not be
possible Thomas.

Thumb and Riding look confused.

RIDING

Why not?

OZ

What you have here is very
valuable. An important find to be
sure. I thank you for bringing it
to my attention.

(a beat)

Now, it's time for me to
apologize.

THUMB

For what?

OZ

My associate.

Oz motions to his Otherkin guard behind them, who Thumb
accidentally backs into. The creature lets out a DEEP
GROWL.

OZ (CONT'D)

He's not been fed.

Thumb's eyes dart around the room.

Without hesitation, he pulls his sidearm and FIRES!

Right into the HIGH TECH ORGAN.

Chaos ensues.

Oz SCREAMS in horror, rushing to his machines.

Smoke shoots across the room. Sparks fly.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED: (4)

The antidote falls to the ground, about to shatter until Riding snatches it from the air.

Thumb double punches the guard who ROARS in pain, just as he and Riding escape into

EXT. BLACK MARKET -- MOMENTS LATER

Thumb takes Riding by the hand. Both detectives sprint through the market, running for their lives.

AT OZ'S TENT

The injured Otherkin guard EXPLODES through the curtains, bellowing. People scatter. Take cover.

The guard leaps about the market, desperately searching for Thumb and Riding, swiping its clawed hand at anyone and everything in its way.

Thumb and Riding move to a

MARKET STALL

The owner is long gone. Riding is panicking.

RIDING

What the hell do we do now!?!?

THUMB

Don't panic!

They can both hear the guard fast approaching. Shrill SCREAMS and the sounds of destruction getting nearer.

Thumb sees what looks like a SPICE CART beside them. One of the jars on it is labeled "WINTER WIND." He grabs the bottle and prepares to toss it like a grenade.

Things go quiet.

RIDING

Where is that thing?

In a startling instant, the crazed, toothed jaws of Oz's guard

BURSTS out of a nearby wall!

Thumb SHATTERS the winter wind into its face, FREEZING the creature's terrifying muzzle rock solid.

The creature YELPS in horrifying pain, icicles falling from its jowls.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

Thumb grabs Riding and runs toward the WATER WELL they came from. It's only a few dozen yards away.

AT THE MARKET STALL

the Otherkin guard slowly becomes unfrozen, chunks of ice CRASHING to the ground as its pupils dilate with absolute rage.

OTHER SIDE OF THE MARKET

Thumb and Riding are almost to the well. Suddenly, the Otherkin guard appears, sprinting quickly behind them.

Riding jumps feet first into the well, disappearing in a SPLASH of bubbles. Thumb is fast behind her, just about to do the same when he

SLIPS!

The Otherkin tackles Thumb, desperately pounding its razor clawed fists at anything it can hit. Thumb struggles to free himself.

The creature gets a hold of Thumb, slowly lifting him by the neck, positioning the detective just above the well.

The Otherkin prepares to deliver a lethal blow to him, just as Thumb unexpectedly begins

Laughing.

The creature looks confused, following Thumb's eye-line to his gut.

THUMB
Surprise.

Thumb's clutching his gun.

A CRACK of fire gives way to a bright FLASH!

The Otherkin guard is thrown off its haunches and into a stall, releasing Thumb feet first into the well.

EXT. STREETS -- MOMENTS LATER

A manhole cover lifts from the asphalt. Riding and Thumb both appear, soaking wet and out of breath.

Thumb turns to Riding, relieved.

THUMB
Hungry?

EXT. DOWNTOWN -- LATER, NIGHT

Just outside a historic diner, THE MOTHER GOOSE GREASE PIT.

A newspaper vendor unloads bundles of TABLOIDS from a truck. The papers have a front page headline that reads "DWARF DEATH: EVER AFTER MURDERS CONTINUE."

INT. THE MOTHER GOOSE GREASE PIT -- NIGHT

STUBBY WOMEN in lard stained bonnets sling hot pancakes and steaming cups of sludge across the room. FAIRIES no larger than the palm of your hand zip about taking orders.

Sitting at a red leather booth beside stacks of Locke's notebooks are Thumb and Riding.

RIDING

So Golda Locke made an antidote.
That explains the weird equipment
in her apartment.

Thumb's looking through the books.

THUMB

Yep.

Riding sighs, looks around.

RIDING

This place have good food?

THUMB

Imp who runs it used to traffic.
Owes me a favor.

Thumb looks up from a notebook and sees a MOHAWKED FAIRY buzzing through the booths.

As if by instinct, he plucks her directly from the air, pinching tightly onto her butterfly wings.

MOHAWKED FAIRY

Hey! Watch it asshole!

The fairy squirms uncomfortably between his fingers.

THUMB

I'll take a pot of coffee and...

Thumb awkwardly dangles the fairy to face an embarrassed Riding.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

RIDING
Toast and jam, if it's not too
much trouble.

MOHAWKED FAIRY
Trouble is your prick boyfriend.

Riding's quick to correct her.

RIDING
Oh! No! We're not...
(stumbling)
...definitely not that.

THUMB
Sure you don't need a drink to go
with that toast, Detective Riding?

The fairy's harsh demeanor softens as she notices who
she's speaking to.

MOHAWKED FAIRY
Oh, Detective Thumb. Didn't
recognize you.

Thumb lets go of the fairy. She quickly streaks through
the air and over to her rotund, profusely sweating
manager, COBB.

RIDING
You can't do stuff like that.

Cobb saunters over to their table. He's a fully grown
IMP. Pink rutted skin. Beady METALLIC eyes. Pinched
off ears.

COBB
Detective Thumb.

Cobb extends his hand for a shake.

COBB (CONT'D)
Great to see you again! Can't
thank you enough for catchin' that
chump who held us up.

THUMB
It's what we do.

COBB
Yeah, but that crazy bastard was a
madman. Came in guns blazin'.
(to Riding)
Tried to take one of the girls.
(MORE)

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED: (2)

COBB (CONT'D)

Thumb here tosses him off a roof.
Talk about goin' the extra mile.

THUMB

That's not exactly what happened.

COBB

You don't see me complainin'.

A beat.

THUMB

Need some information Cobb.

COBB

I don't do that anymore.

THUMB

You do for me. Heard anything
about the Locke killing?

Cobb hushes Thumb. He awkwardly stuffs himself into the seat next to Riding, obnoxiously rattling silverware in the process.

COBB

What do you need to know?

THUMB

Whatever you can tell us.

COBB

Knew a guy who used to date her.

Cobb grabs a handful of napkins and begins frantically dabbing his forehead.

COBB (CONT'D)

Why so interested? I'm not in
trouble am I?

THUMB

Relax. He might know something
about a case we're working on.

COBB

This about the dwarf too? Heard
you're gunnin' for Otherkin now.

RIDING

We can't talk about that.

COBB

Sure, sure. Last time I seen him
was a few days ago.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED: (3)

THUMB
What's his name?

COBB
Lex Hemming. Lycan.

Riding shifts uncomfortably.

COBB (CONT'D)
Used to make deliveries for the
underground, back when I was still
into that sort of thing.

THUMB
What else?

COBB
Got popped for slingin' Z. Heard
he was layin' low at one of
Stiltskin's joints waitin' it out.

THUMB
You remember which one?

Cobb becomes visibly uncomfortable.

COBB
I can't really...

THUMB
Give me what I need and we'll call
it even.

Cobb hesitates for a moment, then moves close to Thumb,
speaking in whisper. A small bead of sweat hangs from
the tip of his nose.

COBB
The Three Little Pigs. Corner of
7th and Bower.

Cobb quickly peels himself out of the booth and reverts
to his more bubbly, managerial persona.

COBB (CONT'D)
Anyway, order'll be right up guys.

THUMB
We appreciate it Cobb.

Cobb waddles away.

RIDING
So we go pick up Hemming.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED: (4)

THUMB

You've never walked the beat at
7th and Bower.

RIDING

No, but how bad can it be?

Thumb pulls out a cellphone.

RIDING (CONT'D)

Who're you calling now?

THUMB

Help.

CUT TO:

EXT. 7TH AND BOWER -- LATE NIGHT

A seedy area of town. Shifty eyes. People everywhere. Trash clogging the gutters.

A group of OTHERKIN, some in rags, stand around a bank of TVs glimmering through a window display.

A re-run plays of Mayor Prince's news conference. He's surrounded by dozens of REPORTERS, Belle by his side.

REPORT BEGINS.

MAYOR PRINCE

I've just come from a meeting with law enforcement officials and they assure me Happy Zwerg's killer will be brought to justice.

REPORTER #1 (O.S.)

How do you address rumors that your office hasn't been cooperating with the investigation?

The question takes the mayor off guard.

MAYOR PRINCE

That's preposterous. And I can't comment on any specifics except to say Captain MacCool expects to have those involved apprehended any day now.

REPORTER #2 (O.S.)

Is it safe to say you're taking a personal interest in this case ahead of the coming election?

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

Belle speaks up.

BELLE

If what little time he's spent at home is any indication, I'd hope so.

The press pool lets out a nervous chuckle.

MAYOR PRINCE

Belle doesn't like excuses. And frankly, neither do I. This city has continued to place its trust in me and I don't take that responsibility lightly. We will get to the bottom of this. I promise you all.

REPORT ENDS.

Suddenly an unusually large, blacked out ARMORED TRUCK pulls past 7th and Bower, dispersing the onlookers from the front of the shop.

INT. ARMORED TRUCK -- LATE NIGHT

A group of MERCENARY GIANTS, GOL, ELLU, VOTAN, and their commander, BROB, are dressed in full TACTICAL GEAR. Each man is 10FT tall. Furrowed brows. Thick arms.

VOTAN removes a series of super-powerful, SILVER WEAPONS from a weapons cache and begins distributing them.

Thumb and Riding pull bullet-proof vests over their coats.

RIDING

You know a lot of people.

THUMB

Saved a lot of ass. Even ex-SWAT like Brob here get knee deep in shit sometimes.

Commander BROB approaches them.

BROB

Lucky I owe ya one.

Brob points to the firearms.

BROB (CONT'D)

Hemming's a lycan. It's why we use silver. Can't handle the gun.

(MORE)

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

BROB (CONT'D)
Can't survive a hit from the
bullet it fires.

Riding becomes impatient.

RIDING
Believe it or not, I have some
experience with these things.

The air is sucked out of the van. Everyone goes quiet.

BROB
Remember hearing about that.
Arbor killings. I'm sorry.

Thumb turns to Riding.

THUMB
You've got an edge then. Use it.

Brob chuck's Riding one of the weapons as Thumb addresses them all.

THUMB (CONT'D)
Just remember, he's to be brought
in alive. We can't question
pieces of him guys.

The vehicle comes to a rest in front of the club.

BROB
Lycans aren't what worries me.
Rumpel Stiltskin's not a guy you
mess with.

THUMB
Plan's to avoid him at all costs.
(to Riding)
You ready?

Riding cocks her gun. Thumb shoves a silver clip into his.

Brob signals his men to move out.

EXT. THREE LITTLE PIGS -- LATE NIGHT

The doors of the vehicle clank open. The truck's axel creaks as each giant STOMPS onto the cracked sidewalk.

Thumb motions the team to follow him to the

CLUB ENTRANCE

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

bathed in the warm glow of classy signage. A pair of LYCAN OTHERKINS with name tags stand guard over the door.

The first is SWIFT. He has fur in the pattern of a husky, white skin, tapered blue eyes.

The second is LON. He has a brown and black coat with dark skin and round yellow eyes.

Lean and tattooed, with thick tufts of hair pushing through openings in their clothing, the men stare into the team with eyes like burning embers.

Thumb produces a badge.

THUMB

Detective Thumb. Grimm PD. We're here to see Alexander Hemming.

SWIFT

Never heard of him.

Riding produces a WARRANT.

RIDING

We have.

Swift reads over the warrant. Lon turns to Thumb.

LON

Y'all ain't supposed to come 'round here man.

THUMB

Tonight's an exception.

Swift looks up from the warrant, barring his sharp, rotted teeth at Riding.

RIDING

Pee you! Somebody ate shit for dinner.

Swift lunges at Riding. She puts her weapon to his temple and chambers a round. The side of Swift's head SIZZLES.

RIDING (CONT'D)

You open these doors or my friends will.

The giants cock their weapons and grumble. Swift signals Lon to open the door.

Thumb looks to the giants, impressed with Riding.

INT. THREE LITTLE PIGS -- LATE NIGHT

Loud music. A bar. Dozens of fully grown trees reaching to the ceiling. Tables and stools whittled from the redwood stumps. Small fires kick up swirls of embers.

Dozens of female employees are costumed as sexy woodland RABBITS, each in skimpy costumes serving drinks.

A pair of ENORMOUSLY FAT MEN, identical triplets, are crammed into a booth, each shoveling plates of food down their throats. These are the THREE LITTLE (BIG) PIGS.

Thumb and Riding go to greet a beautiful, clueless HOSTESS.

Riding looks her up and down, scoffing in disgust.

Thumb can't resist.

THUMB

Nice outfit.

The giants all roll their eyes.

HOSTESS

How many?

THUMB

We're here to see the owners.

HOSTESS

Oh. Please follow me.

The hostess leads the team over to the Pigs. Thumb address the men collectively.

THUMB

We're here to see Alexander Hemming.

No answers.

One of the men BELCHES. None of them are worried enough to look up from their seafood plates.

PIG #1

Don't work here no more.

Thumb notices an IRON DOOR across the room being guarded by an Otherkin.

Riding gets impatient again, shoves her warrant into Pig #1's mouth.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

RIDING
We'll take a look all the same.

Thumb leads the team toward the iron door across the restaurant, weaving in and out of tables, drawing concerned stares and whispers from CUSTOMERS.

AT THE DOOR

A FOX-FACED OTHERKIN with grass green eyes, refuses Thumb entry. He puts his clawed hand to Thumb's chest, tearing at his shirt, hissing his words.

FOX LYCAN
Can't let you in here...

The creature looks down to Thumb's detective badge.

FOX LYCAN (CONT'D)
...dick.

Riding grabs the Fox's fingers and twists them with a sickening crunch.

RIDING
Step aside asshole.

Brob kicks down the door and the group hurries down

A CORRIDOR

covered in leaky rusted pipes and light bulbs swinging from chains. The vestibule stretches for several meters, dead-ending into a viridescent door.

The team reaches it. Locked.

Votan heaves his body into the door, which EXPLODES off its hinges, shooting through

THE ZAUBERTRANK LAB

where one of Rumpel Stiltskin's own drug manufacturing farms has been hidden.

Scum ridden counters have on them thousands of small glass GLOBES emblazoned with cursive Zs.

Each is connected to thin clear tubing pulsing with a viscous METALLIC LIQUID. ZAUBERTRANK.

Once the liquid enters a globe, it's vaporized, instantly transforming into glittery gold mist.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED: (2)

A dozen SMALL ELVES in soiled lab coats and GAS MASKS collect and package the globes. Others move about the operation, twisting KNOBS and checking READOUTS.

SIX LYCAN ENFORCERS in suits and GAS MASKS stand guard over the operation.

One of them is ALEXANDER HEMMING. Trim. Gelled back hair. Pink and yellow speckled eyes.

THUMB

Hemming!??

Hemming immediately bolts out of an exit. The wolves pull weapons grade PLASTIC PISTOLS and open fire on the team.

Workers scream and scatter as bullets rip into a few hundred orbs. Large puffs of GOLDEN GAS begin spiraling through the room.

Thumb and Riding try to bat the vapor away, but it's too late.

Both of them are deeply under the influence of the drug.

BEGIN MONTAGE -- THUMB'S HALLUCINATIONS

Time slows. The laws of physics bend. Pockets of golden haze permeate a terrifying vision.

-- Bottles of Zaubertrank glow like light bulbs. Each float to the ceiling as if balloons.

-- The giants and Otherkin transform into macabre exaggerations of themselves. Colossal leviathans swinging metal battle axes at four-legged wolves who smack chops thick with drool.

-- Both groups of creatures crunch together in a sickening show of violence, howls and screams mixing into a symphony of horrors.

-- A group of elves cackle, eyes pulsing with energy. Their gas masks dissolve into rotting caterpillars. Hands clapping.

-- Blood spills from the neck of a giant, splashing onto the floor and mutating into thousands of red ants, which quickly scatter in every direction.

-- Riding's body morphs into bright ribbons of flame. She screams. Points a fiery finger to the exit, glowing like an emerald.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED: (3)

-- The green door becomes larger. A small fissure grows at its center then spiders before shattering it to pieces.

BACK TO SCENE

Thumb looks like he's in a fog. He pulls the ANTIDOTE BOTTLE from his pocket and takes a taste, quickly bringing him down from the high.

ALLEY BEHIND THE THREE LITTLE PIGS

It's drizzling.

Thumb stumbles out of an exit. He shakily wrenches a SILVER PISTOL from his waist and points down the alleyway, vision blurred.

Sanity returns.

He calls into the night.

THUMB (CONT'D)
Hemming! Come out!

Thick droplets of rain smack hard onto the pavement.

Quick shadows play across the brick sides of both walls.

Thumb unloads an entire clip at the them. Chips of mortar SPLASH into rain puddles collecting on the street.

Thumb quickly shoves another clip into his gun when -

He's suddenly thrown off his feet!

A deep gash opens up across his eye, gushing red.

Lex Hemming stands over him. Tall, imposing, rain soaked. A body backlit by silver moonlight pushing through shifting clouds.

Thumb has a FLASH of the night he chased someone on Golda Locke's roof. It was Hemming.

Hemming crouches to meet Thumbs face. Grimacing, the lycan snarls at Thumb, eyes wild, pupils constricted to pinpricks.

HEMMING
Time to die.

Hemming bares the pink of his gums and tightly wraps a pair of clawed hands around Thumb's neck.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED: (4)

Thumb throws a punch and both men roll through the rain, each fighting to stay alive.

Thumb pulls his gun. Hemming grabs the weapon in a fit of rage, the silver finish SEARING into his hand.

Hemming's fingers SIZZLE and STEAM in the rain. He tosses the gun down the alley and HOWLS to the pale moon overhead.

Thumb desperately throws a series of jabs directly across Hemming's face, but it does little good.

Hemming thrusts Thumb's head into a pothole now filled with water. Thousands of bubbles float to the surface as Thumb struggles to breath.

He's mere moments from dying when -

A SILVER BULLET rips through Hemming's shoulder, throwing him to the ground!

As the lycan howls in pain, Riding pulls Thumb from the pothole, gun smoking, eyes wild. She collapses into a ball on the ground.

Thumb gasps for air. He takes a moment to recover, then approaches Hemming, who's badly injured and fading fast.

THUMB

Why'd you kill her!??!

A runnel of black blood pours from Hemming's mouth.

HEMMING

I didn't.

THUMB

Bullshit! I saw you on the roof!

Hemming winces from the pain.

HEMMING

I loved her once. Made a mistake.
Told Stiltskin what she was doing.

THUMB

The lab?

HEMMING

I went to her apartment. Tried to
warn her what I'd done. She was
already dead.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED: (5)

The revelation hits Thumb hard. He watches the exit wound left by Riding's bullet start to CRACK and CRUMBLE the flesh around it.

THUMB
Who killed her!?!?

Hemming's whole body begins slowly decomposing. The rain washes away tufts of hair from his face, revealing the gaunt and pathetic visage of a broken man.

Hemming's once commanding voice turns hoarse.

HEMMING
The powerful...

Hemming passes out. Thumb shakes his body in desperation.

The lycan's corpse suddenly wilts, transforming into a lifeless frame of leathery flesh and bone.

EXT. THE THREE LITTLE PIGS -- LATER, NIGHT

AMBULANCES flash crimson light over the front of the club, now cordoned off in police tape.

OFFICERS in rain slickers lead a group of badly wounded lycans from the entrance into HEAVILY FORTIFIED patrol cars.

Thumb's eye is getting stitched up by a TRAUMA NURSE when Riding brings Captain MacCool over to see him. He's pissed.

CAPTAIN MACCOOL
What the hell did you do Thumb!?!?

Thumb flinches as the nurse cuts the thread from a final stitch.

THUMB
What I do best.

MacCool can't believe his arrogance.

CAPTAIN MACCOOL
You destroyed half the club!
Where the hell did you get a warrant this time of night?

Two EMTs load what's left of Hemming's body into the back of an ambulance.

Riding turns to MacCool in disbelief.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

RIDING

Sir, we just uncovered a huge Zaubertrank lab. This could give us the leverage we need to get answers from Stiltskin. Maybe even get Z off the streets for good.

MacCool isn't having it.

CAPTAIN MACCOOL

Point is you conducted an illegal search and seizure of a private premises. Nothing you found's gonna stick!

Thumb gets a call on his cell phone. He answers, talks to someone quickly, gets off.

THUMB

District attorney seems to think otherwise.

EXT. OBSERVATION ROOM, POLICE HEADQUARTERS -- NIGHT

Thumb and Riding stand behind a thick plate of two way, mirrored glass.

Both patiently wait, peering into a BRICK ROOM. A metal table and a chair sit, empty.

THUMB

Nice work back there Riding.

RIDING

(smiling)
Thanks. We make a pretty good team.

THUMB

Well, you're getting good at saving my ass.

Thumb pulls the antidote from his pocket.

THUMB (CONT'D)

I need you to have this delivered to the address on this paper.

He hands Riding the bottle along with a note.

THUMB (CONT'D)

Think you can handle it?

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

RIDING
Absolutely.

Just then, the DISTRICT ATTORNEY, a bronze skinned, blue eyed ELF in a pinstripe suit, enters the room.

He straightens his tie, nervously slicking back his hair before turning to Thumb and Riding.

DISTRICT ATTORNEY
It was a nightmare arranging this detectives. The Pigs fingered Stiltskin and everything checks out. They were getting kickbacks for letting him use their club as a farm.

(a beat)
Stiltskin's well connected, so make every moment count.

THUMB
When will he be here?

DISTRICT ATTORNEY
His lawyer said to flip the lights on and off three times. Between the second and third he's promised to show.

Riding watches Thumb quickly enter

THE OBSERVATION ROOM

where he moves to a light switch. He flips the lights on once, twice and on the third time -

Thumb disappears.

The D.A. and Riding look on in shock.

RIDING
Where's Thumb?

The D.A. sighs in disappointment, pinching the bridge of his nose for relief.

DISTRICT ATTORNEY
Shit.

EXT. CITY DOCKS -- MOMENTS LATER

An abandoned THEME PARK, the beam of a lighthouse intermittently bathing it in ghostly halo.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

An oily tide slaps the rotted planks of a dock where a glossy LIMOUSINE is idling.

Detective Thumb stumbles down the dock toward the limo, fighting against motion sickness. Out of luck, he hurls down to the curling waves below.

The car door opens. Out step two imposing GOBLINS in suits and earpieces. Yellowed teeth and oily skin.

Thumb wipes the vomit from his mouth and turns to see -

RUMPEL STILTSKIN step a gilded foot onto the dock. He pulls his slight frame from the inside of the vehicle revealing himself in full glory.

Short and lean, the goblin is dressed in elaborately designed formal wear spun from golden thread.

His cracked face, hooked nose and gold teeth catch the moonlight as he calmly walks toward Thumb - cane in hand.

Stiltskin offers his handkerchief and speaks in a mellifluous, perfectly calm Welsh accent.

STILTSKIN

Dear boy, you will accept my apologies.

Thumb takes the handkerchief and empties his nose.

STILTSKIN (CONT'D)

Someone in my position must keep ever vigilante.

Thumb goes to hand it back to Stiltskin, who politely declines.

STILTSKIN (CONT'D)

Yours. I've many more.

Stiltskin recognizes Thumb.

STILTSKIN (CONT'D)

Say, I remember you. Thomas Thumb.

(winking)

Good to have a man on my side.

Thumb goes to place the scrap of cloth into his coat pocket. He notices his weapon is missing and turns to the little man.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED: (2)

STILTSKIN (CONT'D)
It will be returned when our
business is concluded.

Thumb gets right to the point.

THUMB
You killed Golda Locke.

Stiltskin pulls back, offended.

STILTSKIN
Dear boy, is that what you think
of me?

THUMB
The evidence is pretty hard to
refute.

STILTSKIN
You and I both know if you had
anything substantial linking me to
these horrible crimes, I would
be...

(thinking)
...well, more than likely still
here. Point taken. But I tell
you, I had no hand in what
happened to dear Ms. Locke.

Thumb becomes impatient.

THUMB
Why am I here?

STILTSKIN
To listen to the information I
have to share with you.
Information which could, if used
correctly, help put you on the
right track.

Stiltskin claps his hands together, delighted.

STILTSKIN (CONT'D)
And since you know I had no part
in these horribly unfortunate
events, let us get on with it!

He snaps his fingers. Two body guards remove an enormous
CRYSTAL HOOKAH from the trunk.

The men quickly place a glass ORB inside the hookah's
center chamber.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED: (3)

THUMB
What're you doing?

STILTSKIN
A sordid little detail I must confess. My memory is not what it used to be.

Stiltskin hesitates for a moment.

STILTSKIN (CONT'D)
You wouldn't separate an old man from his pipe, would you? Helps me to think. To gather those precious facts which you so desperately require.

Thumb looks skeptical.

STILTSKIN (CONT'D)
No different from those little pills you pop from time to time.

Thumb thinks for a second, nods the "okay."

A bodyguard uses a jet torch to heat the outside, of the hookah, SHATTERING the orb at its center and releasing the Zaubertank gas into the pipe.

Stiltskin pulls a long, flexible tube to his lips. He draws a large drag of smoke into his mouth.

Thumb patiently waits for him to finish.

Fingers of gold Zaubertank vapor creep from the little man's mouth. His eyes glaze.

STILTSKIN (CONT'D)
Proceed with your line of questioning detective.

THUMB
How did Alexander Hemming come into your employ?

STILTSKIN
He was Otherkin. Creatures, like men, have a way of being drawn to that which runs counter to their own interests.

THUMB
How did you know Locke?

A twisted smile curls across Stiltskin's face.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED: (4)

STILTSKIN
Whatever are you implying?

THUMB
What was your relationship?

STILTSKIN
Strictly professional. I supplied her with the tools necessary to climb through the ranks of my little organization, and in return, she helped attract her constituents to my potion.

(smiling)
Starting with her closest friends.

THUMB
And I'm assuming Hemming introduced you two?

STILTSKIN
Because of their romantic relationship, Mr. Hemming was indeed the first to arrange for us to meet.

Thumb lets what he's discovered settle.

THUMB
Hemming said he told you about Locke's experiments.

Stiltskin takes another long drag from his pipe. He stays silent for a moment, then decides to speak.

STILTSKIN
Indeed.

THUMB
So you knew what she was trying to create?

STILTSKIN
What she was attempting, yes. Experimented with the very friends she first addicted. All with fruitless results.

Stiltskin looks up at the sky, star twinkling in the night sky like a diamond canopy.

STILTSKIN (CONT'D)
What you must understand is, once such a magical elixir takes hold of you...

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED: (5)

He exhales a long cloud of smoke across the sky,
obscuring its beauty.

STILTSKIN (CONT'D)
...few other things become of
interest.

Thumb thinks to himself.

THUMB
How do you explain her getting
clean?

STILTSKIN
(coyly)
Magic. I suppose.

THUMB
What if I told you I'd found an
explanation a little more real.

Stiltskin's demeanor shifts. He becomes more serious.

STILTSKIN
Then I would say you are in over
your head, detective. The
Zaubertrank potion helps my own
constituents keep a watchful eye
over this city. Who are you to
disrupt such a delicate balance?

Thumb knows Stiltskin's right.

THUMB
Why should I believe anything
you've just told me?

Stiltskin puts down his pipe and moves to within a few
inches of Thumb's face.

STILTSKIN
I'm afraid our time is just about
to expire, and because I do not
wish to join those savaged at the
hands of your killer, I will pose
a final question to you detective.
(a beat)
What sort of secret would drive a
sheep to dress in wolf's clothing?

Stiltskin sees a line of POLICE INTERCEPTERS speeding
down the dock toward them.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED: (6)

STILTSKIN (CONT'D)

I believe in your search for the answer, you will find what I've said to hold considerable truth.

(a beat)

It's been a pleasure catching you up detective.

Stiltskin smirks and a bodyguard opens the rear of the limo which he carefully hops into.

Before closing the door, the guard aims a REVOLVER at an overhead light and SHOOTS!

SPARKS shower the dock, forcing Thumb to shield his eyes.

A dozen CRUISERS pull up moments later, guns drawn.

Riding runs to Thumb, who is searching the darkness for Stiltskin.

He's gone.

RIDING

Stiltskin's lawyer said you'd be here. Everything alright?

Thumb's in a trance.

RIDING (CONT'D)

Thumb, you okay?

He snaps out of it.

THUMB

We've gotta take a trip.

RIDING

Where?

THUMB

Upstate.

EXT. CAMPAIGN RALLY -- EARLY MORNING

Mayoral candidate SNOW WHITMORE is in the midst of wrapping up a speech. Raven hair. Blue eyes. Skin as white as snow. Stunning.

She's addressing a large crowd of CHEERING supporters.

WHITMORE

What I promise, is to rid this city of the crime and corruption which has plagued it for too long.

(MORE)

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

WHITMORE (CONT'D)
 To those leeches endlessly feeding
 on the lifeblood of Grimm, I say
 this: A harsh winter is coming.

The crowd ERUPTS!

Whitmore is ushered off the stage by her SECURITY to an area

BEHIND THE RALLY

There, an AIDE hands her a PACKAGE with a note which reads:

"KEEP THIS SAFE. WE NEED TO BE READY. --TT"

Whitmore opens the package. Reflected in her eyes is the shimmering blue bottle of Z ANTIDOTE.

EXT. HIGHWAY -- AFTERNOON

The sun is just cresting over the horizon, spilling light onto highway twisting through a desert dotted with large SAND DUNES. Pine trees slowly fade into palm trees.

INT. THUMB'S CRUISER -- CONTINUOUS

Thumb's at the wheel.

Riding's staring out the window, hypnotized by swirls of sand dancing across the road.

THUMB
 So what's your story Riding?

RIDING
 What do you mean?

THUMB
 I mean, what're you really doing here?

Riding shrugs.

RIDING
 Outgrew the suburbs I guess.
 Graduated the academy. Made
 detective. Grimm seemed like the
 next logical step.

THUMB
 What about your family? Anyone
 left?

Riding exhales, disappointed.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

RIDING
No.

Thumb feels bad.

THUMB
I'm sorry. I didn't mean to...

Riding looks to him, surprised by the softness in his voice.

RIDING
Don't be.

THUMB
If I'd recognized you from the papers, I never would have had you go on the Stiltskin raid.

RIDING
Thumb, it's fine. Dealing with these things is part of my job.

THUMB
Takes a strong woman to decide she wants to help people after a thing like that. Lycans killed my entire family, you better believe I'd be gunning for every one of 'em.

Riding changes the subject.

RIDING
What about you? Why'd you become a cop?

THUMB
Left the airforce and needed work.

Thumb removes his pill bottle, downs a few.

THUMB (CONT'D)
Got it in my head that anyone, even the smallest person, could make a difference.

Riding smiles.

RIDING
(sarcastically)
That why you take those pills?

Thumb chuckles.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED: (2)

THUMB

Found out the hard way not
everyone listens to a guy three
feet tall.

Something comes over Riding, attraction.

RIDING

You're a good man Thumb.

Something stirs in Thumb, but not before Riding can
change the subject.

RIDING (CONT'D)

So where are we?

THUMB

Flats. Hundred miles outside of
town. There's an asylum not far
from here.

RIDING

What did Stiltskin say at the
docks?

THUMB

Double-talk. Mostly bullshit, but
one thing he said stuck with me.
Made an obvious reference to Peter
Shepard, "A sheep in wolf's
clothing."

RIDING

The Boy Who Cried Wolf.

THUMB

Shepard's been known to consult on
active cases. I want to see what
he knows.

The cruiser ZOOMS past the dunes.

EXT. POLICE AIRSHIP HANGAR -- AFTERNOON

Enormous. Skeletal metal insides. No windows. Six
helium-filled POLICE ZEPPELINS the size of football
fields cast long shadows onto a concrete floor.

The ships form a ring around a STEEL BRIEFCASE.

Captain MacCool enters the hangar, makes his way to its
center. Even he appears dwarfed by the large ships.

MacCool gets to the briefcase, looks around.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

CAPTAIN MACCOOL

Hello?

Echoes.

He notices writing on the briefcase's LUGGAGE TAG. It reads: "SOMEONE NEEDS TO FALL FOR EVER AFTER."

MacCool twists around the center of the hangar, looking for someone.

A CLOAKED FIGURE, obscured by the shadows, steps forward. We don't see their face, only MacCool's reaction.

CAPTAIN MACCOOL (CONT'D)

Won't be a problem.

MacCool opens the briefcase. Inside are stacks and stacks of CASH. He smiles, snaps the case closed and walks off.

EXT. GRIMM FORENSIC ASYLUM -- NIGHT

Sand sweeps across an ARABIAN PALACE. A tall, alabaster fortress with golden spires cutting through a twinkling sky.

Thumb's Lincoln pulls across a sandstone driveway and rests at the entrance.

INT. DIRECTOR'S OFFICE, ASYLUM -- NIGHT

Parchment walls with gold leaf molding. Satin red curtains. Ivory floors covered in richly detailed Persian rugs.

Thumb and Riding sit across from hospital director, DR. ALAH-DIN MUSTAPHA, dignified and sleek with smooth sand skin, drawn back black hair and square glasses.

Around his neck hangs a bronze LAMP MEDALLION.

Standing behind Alah-Din is a 7FT TALL MAN dressed in a suit and turban, royal blue skin so dark it's nearly black. Around his entire body hang feet of gold chain connected to piercings on his face.

ALAH-DIN

I understand you've come to question Peter Shepherd.

Thumb is distracted by the large man, whose frozen stare looks dead ahead.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

THUMB
That's correct Dr. Mustapha.

ALAH-DIN
Please, call me Alah-Din.

The doctor turns around, regarding the man behind him.

ALAH-DIN (CONT'D)
How rude of me.

He calmly motions to the man.

ALAH-DIN (CONT'D)
This is my Djinn.

RIDING
Come again?

ALAH-DIN
You'd call him a genie. He makes
what we do here possible.
(a beat)
You must understand this facility
houses the area's most dangerous
minds. Only the power of my Djinn
can restrain the horrors contained
within it.

THUMB
Is he alright?

ALAH-DIN
You'll have to pardon his stare.
Right now my Djinn is monitoring
the inmates, patrolling the fences
and preparing meals for the day.

Thumb's impressed.

Alah-Din chuckles to himself, then turns to Riding, more
serious.

ALAH-DIN (CONT'D)
You've been made aware of how
dangerous a man Shepherd is?

RIDING
We understand. We're not looking
to upset his rehabilitation.

Alah-Din laughs to himself.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED: (2)

ALAH-DIN

Detective, this asylum's primary directive is containment. Other than the horrible nature of their crimes, being past the point of rehabilitation is the only link which binds our inmates.

(a beat)

Shall we?

INT. UNDERGROUND PASSAGEWAY, ASYLUM -- NIGHT

Torch sconces illuminate a long limestone hallway dotted with several shimmering rose gold PRISON GATES. Each is attended by a ghostly, ethereal manifestation of Alah-Din's Djinn.

Alah-Din, Thumb and Riding walk down the Arabic inscribed hallway, moving through each locked barrier.

ALAH-DIN

I'm curious what aspect of Shepherd's crimes most interests you?

THUMB

Their style.

ALAH-DIN

Would you mind elaborating?

THUMB

His string of killings were unique in their execution.

ALAH-DIN

Yes of course. The wolf skin he wore.

THUMB

That, and the care he exercised in staging and arranging each murder.

ALAH-DIN

He's a very knowledgable man when it comes to that.

They get to a heavily reinforced steel door with a HANDPRINT SCANNER.

Thumb jokingly motions to the pad.

THUMB

"Open sesame?"

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

Alah-Din smiles.

ALAH-DIN

Not quite. Despite its antiquated appearance, this facility is absolutely state of the art.

He turns to both detectives.

ALAH-DIN (CONT'D)

Before you question him I should warn you, Peter's appearance may startle you.

Riding looks concerned.

RIDING

What do you mean?

ALAH-DIN

You remember he was badly scarred the night police apprehended him. As I said before, our goal here is containment. However, that doesn't preclude us from doing what we can for the inmates. Peter has been with us for over a decade. With that comes certain privileges. He requested my Djin remake his appearance into something more comforting to him. We obliged.

Riding looks nervous.

ALAH-DIN (CONT'D)

Not to worry.

He places his palm on the scanner and the door CLANKS open.

Alah-Din smiles reassuringly.

ALAH-DIN (CONT'D)

You'll do fine. Go down the hallway, past the first two cells and Peter will be on your left.

He points to a series of CCTV cameras affixed to the ceiling.

ALAH-DIN (CONT'D)

My Djin and I will be watching.

INT. INMATE CORRIDOR -- NIGHT

The door clinks closed behind Thumb and Riding, revealing
THE PRISONER GALLERY

a series of glass, concrete enclosed boxes, each illuminated by a shaft of overhead light.

Bronze NAME PLAQUES have been affixed to the outside of each room.

Thumb and Riding pass the first cell.

Inside is GILLES DE BLEUE aka BLUE BEARD. Enormously overweight with a shaved head, milk white eye and braided, azure facial hair grown to his feet. He sits on a metal chair, catatonic.

Thumb and Riding pass over his cell and hear SCREAMS coming from the next.

Inside is CLAUDIA GRIMHILDE aka THE QUEEN. Thin and utterly plain looking, Grimhilde paces, muttering to a floor littered with half eaten apples.

Festooned to a wall is a beautifully ornamented, cracked MIRROR.

Riding stops for a moment to watch her. Grimhilde explodes into a rage, shouting at the mirror.

GRIMHILDE
Show me the fairest or nothing at all!

She bolts in front of the mirror, which reflects a HORRIBLY DISFIGURED rendering of herself.

Thumb pulls Riding to the next cell.

PETER SHEPHERD aka THE BOY WHO CRIED WOLF is inside. Back turned, body laying on a cot mostly obscured in shadow.

The inside of his room is wallpapered with macabre CHARCOAL DRAWINGS of wolves. A faucet drips, echoing through the silence.

Thumb cautiously approaches the glass.

THUMB
Mr. Shepherd?

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

Peter gets up. The shadow of his head is unexpectedly large.

THUMB (CONT'D)
We're detectives Thumb and Riding.
We'd like to speak with you.

Peter picks up a piece of charcoal and begins sketching on one of his walls.

THUMB (CONT'D)
Peter.

The charcoal briquet SNAPS in Peter's hands. He turns to face them, still in shadow, then slowly moves toward the glass.

The light above spills over his body revealing -

Peter's face. A horribly stitched, awkward merging of JACKAL AND HUMAN. Eyes, snout and ears belonging to an animal. Mouth and neck of a man.

Riding is deeply unsettled. Thumb remains calm.

THUMB (CONT'D)
We need your help.

Peter's ears fall back, his amber eyes squinting as he whines a high pitched snicker.

PETER
What is it you think we can help you with detective?

THUMB
We?

PETER
The wolf and I.

THUMB
Oh...

Thumb looks to Riding, confirming things.

THUMB (CONT'D)
...right, both of you. We want to talk about the crimes you two committed together.

Peter scoffs, waving Thumb off. He turns his back to him.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED: (2)

PETER
Of what interest could they
possibly be to you?

Riding decides to speak up.

RIDING
We're working on a case we hoped
you'd help us with. Maybe give us
your expert opinion?

Peter turns to face Riding, intrigued.

PETER
What sort of case?

THUMB
Involves a cursing.

PETER
Have the killings continued?

THUMB
Yes.

Peter smiles. He points his snout into the air inhales a deep breath in Riding's direction.

PETER
And they'll keep going. 'Till the
spell has run its course.

THUMB
We'd like to get your thoughts on
the evidence. See who you think
this cursed person could be.

Riding removes a MANILA FILE from her bag. She places it into an EXCHANGE WAY inside the cell and pushes it to Peter.

He flips through the folder, casually inspecting EVIDENCE and PHOTOGRAPHS.

Riding examines Peter's drawings while they wait. Each more surreal and horribly violent than the next.

Peter uses his snout to sniff the documents.

Suddenly, his eyes widen. He carefully places the file down and moves to his drawings.

THUMB (CONT'D)
Peter?

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED: (3)

Nothing.

THUMB (CONT'D)
What do you think?

Another long beat of silence passes between them.

PETER
Witch is involved.

THUMB
Yes, we know that.

Peter turns to face them again, eyes wild.

PETER
But do you know this one placed a hex on her cursed?

THUMB
A hex? Are you sure.

PETER
Absolutely. A brand. Helps her to control the cursed after she's transformed it. Keeps them from knowing they've ever been damned.

THUMB
You think the witch used the cursed to commit murder? Two killers?

PETER
One cursed to slaughter, the other to cast the spell.

THUMB
How can you be sure?

PETER
When the wolf and I committed our crimes we tried to show the city something.

THUMB
What?

PETER
That I was right to cry wolf. It was the city's fault for failing to recognize what was inside me.

Peter removes a photograph from his envelope.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED: (4)

PETER (CONT'D)
Don't make the same mistake with
these two. They're trying to show
you something.

Peter motions to the photos.

PETER (CONT'D)
See the burn?

Peter slaps onto the glass a photograph of the PENTACLE
burnt on Happy Zwerp's forehead.

PETER (CONT'D)
Transfers from the cursed to its
victims. The witch and her damned
are marking their territory.
Signing their work. Warning you
not to pursue them like you are.

RIDING
How will we find who she cursed?

PETER
A hex on the hands.

THUMB
How do we stop them?

PETER
This black widow? Only spilling
her blood can undo the damage
done.

Peter turns to Riding and yawns, exposing a long tongue
and terrifying rows of SHARP TEETH.

PETER (CONT'D)
Tired. Time to count sheep.

He strokes his long ears and winks at Riding.

PETER (CONT'D)
Good luck to you both.

Peter disappears into the shadows and returns to his cot.

INT. THUMB'S CRUISER -- NIGHT, CONTINUOUS

Deep in the forest. The very fringes of the city. High
beams shine onto a road twisting through dense pines.

Thumb switches the RADIO on, turns through static until
something registers. A news program.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

ANNOUNCER (V.O.)

Ahead in the polls and with only a few hours left until Grimm's race for mayor is decided, the Whitmore campaign has been on the offensive.

WHITMORE (V.O.)

"The mayor's continued lack of cooperation with the Ever After Murders is just one item on a laundry list of failings which seem to sum up his administration."

Riding speaks up.

RIDING

Race is getting pretty intense.

THUMB

Prince has been running things for a long time. My guess is, a few dozen ballot boxes get dumped into the river before the night's over.

RIDING

I don't know, Prince seems like a pretty nice guy.

THUMB

That's what they count on. Truth is those people are nothing like the rest of us. They've run this city into the ground and we all gave them the tools they needed to do it.

Thumb stays quiet. He goes to check his mirror and sees a BLACKED-OUT SEDAN racing up fast behind them.

Squinting hard, Thumb sees a CHERRY TOPPER begin twirling above the car. SIRENS wail.

The car pulls up next to them, it's a GRIMM POLICE CRUISER. There are two officers inside. GOBLINS.

Thumb waves. They don't wave back.

One of them suddenly pops out of the sunroof, TOMMY GUN in hand.

THUMB (CONT'D)

Get down!

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED: (2)

Both he and Riding hit the deck as the shooter BURPS a line of ammunition in the direction of Thumb's cruiser.

Thumb SLAMS the gas with just enough time for the shooter to miss.

The shots sail through the air, SKINNING huge chunks of bark from surrounding trees.

THUMB (CONT'D)
Get out your gun Riding!

She's embarrassed.

RIDING
I left it in my sock drawer.

Thumb rolls his eyes, tosses her his.

The road merges into a

ONE WAY STREET

The pursuing cruiser pulls back, and both cars twist down a

STEEP DECLINE

ZOOMING past more trees, small cottages and red woodsheds.

Thumb pushes the car to 90MPH, it's engine screaming.

The shooter behind them SPRAYS gun fire in every direction, splintering trees to sawdust.

Riding rolls down her window and takes turns delivering return fire.

A series of BULLETS spider through Thumb's windshield.

THUMB
How we doing back there?

RIDING
We're screwed. They have a Tommy Gun!

THUMB
Check the center console!

Riding flips the console up, pulls out a jar labeled "DRAGON'S BREATH." Inside are thousands of small, translucent orange beads.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED: (3)

RIDING
What the hell is this?

THUMB
Swiped it from the market.

Thumb sees their pursuers fast approaching.

RIDING
You've had this the whole time!?!?

THUMB
Just toss the jar out the back and
make sure to hit the road.

Riding rolls down the window, hurls the jar out of the car.

We watch the jar float through the air, end over end
until it finally

SHATTERS onto the road behind them!

It instantly transforms into a bright, GLOWING ORANGE
CLOUD OF GAS. Tiny sparks floating throughout.

The gas quickly spreads across the road behind them,
setting the forest aflame and INCINERATING everything it touches!

The pursuing cruiser tries to avoid the cloud, but it's too late. Its occupants SCREAM in terror as the car shoots into the fog.

Riding watches from the back window, just as the goblin cruiser pulls out of the cloud, now a MELTED frame of steel and glass - two glowing corpses inside.

Thumb navigates the car past the forest and into a

CLEARING

where the road straightens. GRIMM CITY twinkles in the distance ahead of them.

OUTSIDE THE CAR

Suddenly, a large object rises into view. Its shadow slowly obscures the city ahead.

It's a POLICE ZEPPELIN. Its SPOTLIGHTS focus on Thumb's cruiser.

INSIDE THE CAR

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED: (4)

Thumb looks to Riding, concerned.

Just then, flashes of HIGH-CALIBER AMMUNITION begin shooting from the zeppelin's TURRET, tearing ENORMOUS HOLES through the asphalt ahead of them.

The shooting continues in a straight line, directly for Thumb's cruiser!

He SCREAMS to Riding.

THUMB (CONT'D)

Jump!

OUTSIDE THE CAR

Both detectives open their doors and leap out of the cruiser, quickly

BISECTED by the zeppelin's fire!

On the two halves of the cruiser SMASHING to the ground...

CUT TO BLACK

EXT. GRIMM CITY (AERIAL VIEW) -- NIGHT

Police zeppelins float just above the neon city, only a few hundreds yards from the tops of skyscrapers. Half a dozen others can be seen hovering in the distance.

INT. CONTROL ROOM, POLICE ZEPPELIN -- NIGHT

A large open space beneath the ship's overhead balloon. Steel girders. Rivets. A CONTROL PANEL ahead of a wide windshield.

Captain MacCool steps out of the shadows. One of his dirty GOBLIN COPS is clutching a Tommy Gun and wearing a PARACHUTE beside him. Both stand over Thumb and Riding.

The detectives are tied to chairs at the center of the room, mouths taped. Thumb's sweating bullets. He looks sick.

CAPTAIN MACCOOL

Wanted to have a little chat with the both of you. Keep you from doing any more damage to yourselves.

MacCool has the tape ripped from Thumb's mouth.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

THUMB
He's dirty Riding.

MacCool signals to his officer, who PUNCHES Thumb across the face. A runnel of blood flows from his nose.

CAPTAIN MACCOOL
I didn't ask a question.

MacCool turns to Riding.

CAPTAIN MACCOOL (CONT'D)
Thumb here didn't lead you to believe he was squeaky clean, did he? No different than any other cop on the force I'm afraid. Took payments from Ali Baba to enforce the docks a few years back. Almost had his badge for it, 'till we struck a little deal.

THUMB
He's lying.

CAPTAIN MACCOOL
You were to stay outta things that don't concern you.

Thumb shakes off some stars.

THUMB
Whoops.

The goblin cop hits Thumb again. MacCool gets deadly serious.

CAPTAIN MACCOOL
Where's the rest of the antidote?

THUMB
I don't know what you're talking about.

The goblin officer hands MacCool a stack of PHOTOS. He flips through them in front of Thumb and Riding.

The photos are of HANSEL AND GRETEL CASSEL. Murdered. Pentacles burned deep into their foreheads. Pictures obscured by the glow of feeding pixies.

CAPTAIN MACCOOL
Neither did they. Too bad someone else got to 'em first.
(a beat)
(MORE)

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED: (2)

CAPTAIN MACCOOL (CONT'D)

Give me what you found at Locke's place.

THUMB

Stiltskin's got deep pockets.
Have him make you some.

MacCool SLAMS his fist into the metal siding to the zeppelin, right above Thumb's head. It makes a perfect impression of his fist.

Thumb doesn't flinch. He looks feverish. MacCool takes note.

CAPTAIN MACCOOL

You don't look so hot Thumb.

MacCool reaches into Thumb's coat pocket, pulls out his MEDICATION.

CAPTAIN MACCOOL (CONT'D)

Not so tough without your little beans.

MacCool taunts Thumb, shaking them in front of his face.

CAPTAIN MACCOOL (CONT'D)

Just like any other drug. Stay on it long enough, you'll grow to need it.

We watch as Thumb's body contracts. His clothes appear bigger. A ring on his finger falls to the ground. His bindings loosen, but he doesn't have the energy to move.

CAPTAIN MACCOOL (CONT'D)

Or in your case, shrink.

MacCool rips the tape from Riding's mouth.

He opens an AIRLOCK, letting the wind RUSH inside the cabin as he addresses Riding.

CAPTAIN MACCOOL (CONT'D)

Tell you what we're gonna do. I'm gonna give you a chance to help your new boss, Rumpel Stiltskin, locate the antidote you two found. You know how well he's connected, and I know you've got what he needs.

Riding's stays silent.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED: (3)

CAPTAIN MACCOOL (CONT'D)

No?

(motions to Thumb)

See your partner over there? In about ten minutes, he's gonna be no taller than a playing card. Thick tressed boots I'm wearing will make quick work of the little shit, if you don't tell me what I need to know.

Riding's attitude suddenly changes. She looks to Thumb, then back to MacCool.

RIDING

What's in it for me?

MacCool softens. Pleased, he pulls back and turns to Thumb.

CAPTAIN MACCOOL

You see that Thumb? Quick study.

(to Riding)

I untie you, we gonna make a deal?

RIDING

Depends on what you're willing to offer.

CAPTAIN MACCOOL

That's my girl.

MacCool has Riding untied. Thumb's clothes are sagging as he withers away.

CAPTAIN MACCOOL (CONT'D)

Anything you want.

RIDING

That's a good start. Where do I fit in?

CAPTAIN MACCOOL

Simple. We keep Z on the streets. Stiltskin gets rich and the rest trickles down.

RIDING

So Stiltskin killed Locke?

CAPTAIN MACCOOL

No. Had good reason to, but that's not what the little guy does. He just sets the stage.

(MORE)

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED: (4)

CAPTAIN MACCOOL (CONT'D)

Let's the bigger fish know that if it doesn't get taken care of, the water stops flowing from the well. And some people draw a hell of a lot of water in this town.

RIDING

So who did kill her?

CAPTAIN MACCOOL

Part of being cursed a mischievous little prick means keeping the rest of us in the dark. Stiltskin didn't tell me and I didn't ask.

MacCool looks over to Thumb chuckling to himself. He cracks his knuckles, moving toward the detective.

Thumb's almost disappeared entirely into his clothes.

Riding uses the opportunity to unexpectedly grab the goblin, twisting him into a headlock!

In the process, the creature SPRAYS bullets all long the inside of the cabin with a PING-PANG-PONG!

A few dozen bullets hit MacCool in the chest. He drops Thumb's pills and goes stumbling back into the control panel, which SPARKS and FLAMES.

The balloon above is puncture. Air SCREAMS as it whizzes out of the blimp!

The zeppelin begins quickly descending, only a few hundred yards from the spires of buildings below!

Riding and the goblin throw a wild punches at one another.

The goblin is positioned perfectly in front of the airlock. Riding sees a "PULL TO REMOVE" strap on its parachute.

She immediately pulls it.

The parachute slides right off the goblin, who she mercilessly kicks out of the airlock with a WHOMP!

BENEATH THE ZEPPELIN

The creature tumbles through the sky, then gets SKEWERED by the spires below.

INSIDE THE ZEPPELIN

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED: (5)

Riding slides on a parachute, desperately searching everywhere for Thumb's pills.

She finds them, lodged between one of the girders.

Thumb has now shrunk to HALF THE SIZE of a normal man!

Moving quickly over to Thumb, Riding pops the top of the bottle, shoveling pills into his mouth.

The pills don't immediately take effect.

Riding looks through the windshield. The zeppelin is hopelessly free falling!

RIDING

C'mon, c'mon!

Color begins returning to Thumb's face as he slowly grows to normal size. Clothes tightening across his body.

He looks up at Riding, regarding the parachute strapped on her back, confused.

THUMB

You were going to try to parachute out of this thing?

RIDING

You got any better ideas?

Thumb immediately moves to the control panel. MacCool is slumped over. DEAD. Thumb pushes him off the controls.

RIDING (CONT'D)

You know how to fly one of these?

THUMB

How hard can it be? I was in the airforce. A cook, but still...

The zeppelin is picking up speed, headed for the buildings below.

Thumb positions himself at the controls.

RIDING

(incredulous)

You're not thinking of landing this thing!?!?

Thumb points to the long roof of a building ahead.

THUMB

Right there.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED: (6)

He pulls on the controls with everything he has, hands shaking, the building coming up fast. They need a bit more clearance.

THUMB (CONT'D)

Help!

Riding joins in.

The zeppelin is just about to make contact with the building when

Its bottom GUN TURRET is sheared clean off!

The airship SCREECHES across the roof, exploding away cable dishes and phone lines in a maelstrom of destruction!

THROUGH THE WINDOW

We see the ship coming to the edge of the building. It's just about to fall over the edge when

The deflated BALLOON snags on a roof shed, bringing the ship to a grinding halt - with only FEET to spare!

EXT. BASE OF THE BUILDING -- MOMENTS LATER

Thumb and Riding quietly exit the building. Thumb moves toward a parked car, BREAKS the driver's side glass. The two get into the car and speed off into the night.

INT. THUMB'S NEW CAR -- CONTINUOUS

Thumb's driving like a madman. Parked cars and buildings STREAK by. No one is out this late.

RIDING

Where are we headed now Thumb?

THUMB

We've gotta keep moving. Not sure how long it'll take for people to notice a crashed zeppelin with a dead police captain inside.

RIDING

Good point.

THUMB

What we need to do is reason this out. MacCool gave us a lot to work with up there.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

RIDING

Well, we know Stiltskin's been spinning his web across this whole thing.

THUMB

Stiltskin's involved. But someone else is pulling the strings. Both Hemming and MacCool made mention of something bigger. Even Stiltskin said something about someone other than him using Z to control the city.

RIDING

So the question is, who stands to benefit from Z staying on the streets other than him? Who does Stiltskin have access to who would've wanted Golda Locke dead?

THUMB

I don't know.

Thumb stops at a light, frustrated. They both think.

Riding's thumbs through an evidence folder. She's distracted by one of the photographs.

RIDING

The pentacles are the answer. They always have been.

THUMB

I know, but they're not specific enough. Witches use dozens of variations.

Riding gets out of the car, a PHOTOGRAPH of the PENTACLE in her hand. Thumb follows.

She slowly moves toward a brick wall, covered with Adam Prince CAMPAIGN POSTERS.

THUMB (CONT'D)

It's too big Riding.

The posters depict Adam Prince, bravely pointing ahead into the future, his beautiful wife Belle beside him.

Riding puts her photograph beside one of the posters.

THUMB (CONT'D)

I don't see it.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED: (2)

Riding motions to Belle Prince's NECKLACE.

We slowly ZOOM into the PENDANT she's wearing.

It's IDENTICAL to the PENTACLE burned into each victim's forehead.

RIDING
Belle Prince.

Thumb immediately takes out his phone, dials someone.

THUMB
Brob. Meet Riding and I outside
the mayor's mansion. Bring the
heaviest stuff you've got.

EXT. MAYOR'S MANSION -- LATE NIGHT

A Victorian GOTHIC MANOR surrounded by sprawling rose thorn gardens and dribbling fountains.

Valets hurry to park the cars of anxious, well dressed party attendees waiting to get in.

INT. MAYOR'S MANSION -- LATE NIGHT

A wide open ballroom filled with winding staircases and brass candelabras. An enormous collection of VICTORY BALLOONS have been festooned with rope to the ceiling.

WAITERS holding silver platters loaded with rich food move past silken curtains drawn past gigantic windows.

Hundreds of GUESTS yap on, sliding hors d'oeuvres and champagne down their throats.

Adam and Belle Prince travel down a red velvet staircase. The mayor is wearing a blue and gold coat and vest. Belle gracefully floats about in a canary yellow gown and hood.

The crowd goes quiet.

MAYOR PRINCE
I'd like to thank everyone for
being here tonight. These days,
it isn't often I'm able to hold
court.

The crowd laughs.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

BELLE

But seriously, we can't thank you all enough for the support you've given us over the years.

A DRUNK GUEST shouts out.

DRUNK GUEST

Well deserved!

Everyone erupts in clapping.

EXT. ROAD -- LATE NIGHT

A dirt road right below the mayor's mansion, where we can just see the festivities taking place about a half a mile away.

Thumb and Riding are waiting by their parked car beneath the shade of an ELM.

An ARMORED TRUCK pulls its headlights across them and comes to a stop.

Out steps BROB, GOL, ELLU and VOTAN, along with a few other MERCENARIES in body armor. Thumb moves to Brob.

THUMB

Thanks for coming.

BROB

You're running out of favors.

THUMB

Don't remind me.

A beat.

BROB

So you wanna crash the mayor's party on the eve of the election?

Riding steps forward.

RIDING

Plan's simple. Do whatever we have to, to capture and neutralize Belle Prince.

Gol laughs to himself and the others.

GOL

You had us bring all this firepower for that little lady?

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

RIDING
That "little lady" killed four
people.

Thumb turns to Brob.

THUMB
She's a witch.

Everyone goes silent.

THUMB (CONT'D)
This isn't going to be easy.

BROB
Most things in this town aren't.

Votan and Ellu begin removing WEAPONS from the cab of the truck and passing them out. SHOTGUNS. GATLING GUNS. A ROCKET LAUNCHER.

Brob throws Thumb and Riding bullet-proof vests and a couple human-sized versions of their weapons.

THUMB
Let's move out.

INT. MAYOR'S MANSION -- NIGHT

A waiter hands the mayor a champagne glass, which he raises along with his guests.

MAYOR PRINCE
I know the results of tonight's election haven't been made official, but here's to expecting another four years of...

The mayor's attention suddenly shifts to Brob and his team moving through the crowd - Thumb and Riding leading the pack.

Nervous whispers spread as people disperse around them.

Thumb and Riding get to the stairwell where they confront Adam and Belle.

MAYOR PRINCE (CONT'D)
May I ask what you and your friends are doing here detectives?

THUMB
You may.

The mayor becomes uncomfortable, leans in.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

MAYOR PRINCE
What are you doing here Thumb?

THUMB
We have a few questions we wanted
to ask.

The mayor pulls back.

MAYOR PRINCE
Go ahead.

Riding looks to Belle.

RIDING
Your wife.

The mayor looks concerned.

MAYOR PRINCE
We don't have time for this right
now. I'd be happy to have one of
my aides contact you about
arranging a meeting.

Riding looks to Belle.

RIDING
Where were you the night of Happy
Zwerg's murder?

The mayor takes Riding by the hand.

MAYOR PRINCE
I think you'd better go now.

Belle waves her husband off.

BELLE
It's alright Adam. I have nothing
to hide.
(to Riding)
I can't recall. With my husband
I'm sure.

THUMB
You two pretty avid hikers?

The question throws the mayor off.

MAYOR PRINCE
Please. We hardly have time to
breathe, let alone...

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED: (2)

The mayor watches as Riding removes an EVIDENCE BAGGY from her coat. Inside is a torn ribbon. She lifts it to Belle's drawn up hair. It's an exact match.

RIDING

Get caught when you left Happy
Zwerg's cabin?

MAYOR PRINCE

Just what the hell are you saying?

Belle addresses Riding.

BELLE

You're being ridiculous. I'm not the only one in the city with a fashion sense.

The crowd chuckles.

THUMB

True enough. Hundreds of people could've worn a ribbon like the one we found.

Thumb turns to the mayor.

THUMB (CONT'D)

Do you know what a pentacle is?

Belle's eyes widen.

MAYOR PRINCE

A what?

RIDING

A pentacle. It's an ancient pagan symbol used by witches as a mark of power.

MAYOR PRINCE

What does this have to do with my wife?

Riding pulls out a photo showing the SCARS on the Ever After victims.

She walks up to Belle. She's wearing the PENTACLE NECKLACE seen in the campaign posters.

Riding rips the JEWELRY from Belle's neck, dangling it in front of the photograph so the mayor can see.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED: (3)

THUMB
Your wife is the Ever After
killer.

The crowd GASPS.

MAYOR PRINCE
This is outrageous!

THUMB
Is it?

RIDING
How do you explain the pentacles
burned into the victims' heads?
They match your wife's necklace
exactly. The ribbon? You keep
tabs on Belle 24/7?

Thumb turns to Belle.

THUMB
Stiltskin told you about the
antidote Locke discovered, didn't
he? You knew he couldn't take her
out himself, so you took things
into your own hands. And you
didn't stop there.

RIDING
None of the victim's looked strung
out when we found them, despite
being known drug addicts.

THUMB
You had to get rid of all the
evidence that she cured them, so
you killed anyone she helped get
clean.

(a beat)
Even tried to have MacCool take
Riding and I out when we got too
close.

The mayor looks confused, distressed.

MAYOR PRINCE
Why would she do such a thing?

THUMB
Because she made a deal with
Stiltskin. He keeps Grimm voters
under control with Zaubertrank,
and you two keep running things.
The way it's always been.

(MORE)

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED: (4)

THUMB (CONT'D)
If Locke's cure were to hit the
streets, the stranglehold you have
on the city would be lifted.

There's stunned silence. Belle turns to the mayor
calmly.

BELLE
They're right. It's over.

No one can believe what she's just admitted to. The
mayor's in shock.

MAYOR PRINCE
What?

Belle drops her bubbly persona, exchanging it for
something more menacing.

BELLE
Don't be so naive Adam. You
honestly think the city kept
electing you because of what a
great job you did? I just did
what you never had the guts to.

Belle points around the room.

BELLE (CONT'D)
Look around! There isn't a person
here who isn't under Stiltskin's
finger. At least I had the balls
to get my hands a little dirty...

The mayor slaps Belle across the face. She recovers,
then moves in close.

BELLE (CONT'D)
And don't think you didn't have a
part to play, husband.

Thumb and Riding both shoot knowing looks at each other.

Belle moves like a serpent around the mayor, whispering
something into his ear. She finishes.

Suddenly, his VEINS turn black, quickly twisting around
his entire body. The mayor throws his head back,
SCREAMING in pain!

Everyone is thrown off guard.

Thumb watches the palms of the mayor's hands as they
begin SIZZLING, PENTACLE SCARS identical to the ones
we've seen earlier taking shape.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED: (5)

He is the hexed!

Belle runs off, unfurling the balloons overhead. The falling decorations distract everyone as she disappears up the stairs and out of sight.

Riding pulls her weapon and immediately chases Belle up the staircase.

Adam Prince flails about, screaming in HORRIFYING agony, desperate to end the searing pain shooting through his entire body.

He raises his SMOKING hands and shouts to anyone who will listen.

MAYOR PRINCE
Help me! I beg of you! What's
she done to me!?!?

He runs to the center of the room and collapses. Guests look on in terror.

Suddenly Adam's whimpering ends. His body calms.

The giants go to help him, but Thumb stops them.

THUMB
Wait.

The veins on the back of the mayor's hands THROB. Tiny hairs begin sprouting from the base of his neck. He doubles over, SHRIEKING.

His voice suddenly deepens.

MAYOR PRINCE
Please... Get back...
Everyone...

He cries out once more, hyperventilating, trembling as the TRANSFORMATION BEGINS.

Adam's hands squeeze tight as tufts of hair spring up across his growing body. His clothes rip to shreds.

Fingers stretch to sharp nailed paws, feet doing the same.

The hair covered flesh of his face ripples as two CURVED HORNS split from his forehead, curling to the contour of his skull.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED: (6)

Adam throws his head back. He WAILS as each of his teeth mutate into fangs - voice gargling into the bellow of an animal as they do.

The metamorphosis is complete. Adam Prince turns to reveal himself.

Thumb looks on, petrified.

THUMB
Beast.

The creature is 10FT of absolute fury. A human body transmuted into a feral amalgam of wild animals.

He HOWLS up at Thumb and his men, announcing his arrival. Slimy saliva spills from his tongue onto the floor.

Everyone inside the mansion heads for the exits, SCREAMING past the animal. The creature looks around enraged and confused.

It runs toward Thumb and his team, violently swiping at guests who get in its way - hurling them across the room.

Thumb immediately grabs a NET GUN from one of his mercenary's backs.

He aims for Beast's head and FIRES!

A web of TITANIUM NETTING shoots across the ballroom. It envelopes the animal, wrapping tight around its ankles and forcing it to the ground.

The creature SCREAMS and struggles, tumbling around the ballroom, toppling BOOKSHELVES and shattering ANTIQUES.

Wrestling inside the netting, it inadvertently overturns a CANDELABRA. Candles fall onto the carpet, igniting the ground and walls in bright flame.

The remaining guests look on in horror.

The creature watches Thumb through the holes in the metal netting, SHRIEKING something primal into the air.

Thumb signals for his men to surround the animal.

The team runs down the stairs and encircles Beast, flames creeping up curtains around them.

IN THE MIDDLE OF THE ROOM

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED: (7)

TWO MERCS pull HOSES from their backs and prepare to fire into the netting. Another aims a ROCKET LAUNCHER directly for the creature.

Thumb begins loading rounds into a BOLT-ACTION REPEATER. He slowly travels down the stairs, pumping his SHOTGUN in warning.

Beast becomes furious. Balloons pop in the heat around him.

Thumb motions the two mercs with hoses to fire into the animal.

They each flip on BACKPACKS and begin shooting EXPANDING FOAM into the netting. It swirls around Beast, who SNAPS and CLAWS at it in confusion.

Thumb joins his team, brushing past balloons and debris. He aims for the creature's center and signals the remaining mercs to do the same.

Beast is completely covered in foam. Everything locked in place save for its fiery eyes.

Things seem to calm.

THUMB (CONT'D)
That wasn't so bad.

Beast summons all of its strength. Tiny fissures begin appearing in the foam encasing him.

Thumb notices the foam CRACKING and SCREAMS at his men.

THUMB (CONT'D)
Get back!

Suddenly the foam SHATTERS! Beast bursts through the netting, infuriated.

Like a mad dog, the animal's eyes dart around the room, desperate to find an exit. It turns its back to Thumb and BELLOWS in frustration, raising its arms to the sky.

THUMB (CONT'D)
Fire!!!

The team unloads everything they have. ROCKETS and BULLETS sail through the air like a weapons fireworks show.

The animal YELPS in pain, a few rounds boring bloody holes into its thick skin.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED: (8)

The creature leaps across the hall onto a banister, pushes off and sails through the air toward Thumb.

Thumb jumps out of the way, but the men behind him aren't quick enough!

Beast crashes headlong into the crowd of mercs. The animal explodes with feral rage, throwing two men across the room!

One CRUNCHES into a marble column and collapses. The other CRASHES into a chandelier overhead.

Beast grabs another officer and body hugs him. The pressure is so great, every bone in the man's body SNAPS.

Thumb shouts out to the animal.

THUMB (CONT'D)
Adam! I know you can hear me!
Stop!!!

Beast GROWLS at Thumb. He looks to the limp corpse of the merc he's just killed, lifts it above his head and chuck's it at the immense window behind them.

OUTSIDE

glass shatters into a thousand pieces. A cold wind whips through the blazing inferno that was the mayoral mansion.

The clouds outside begin rumbling. Lightning crackles as a POLICE ZEPPELIN whirls through the night, shining its spotlight into the manor.

INSIDE

Thumb looks on as Beast howls, then leaps through the fire, out of the window and down to the FOREST below.

INT. ARMORY, MAYOR'S MANSION -- LATE NIGHT

A vast space filled with every arcane implement of death the human mind has ever devised.

EXOTIC WEAPONS hang from the walls beside several suits of CHAIN MAIL. A roaring FIREPLACE is set into the far wall.

Riding carefully navigates through the room, gun drawn.

Belle suddenly pops out of the shadows, hood drawn. MENACING.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

She waves her hands through the air and begins speaking in tongues, as if calling some SUPERNATURAL FORCE. A bright pentacle BURNS itself into her forehead.

The air crackles. RED SPARKS explode around her, each one drawn to a GLOWING ORB forming at the center of her hands.

Riding immediately FIRES on Belle!

But her bullets and gun are SUCKED right out of the air, all melting into the SWIRLING sphere forming inside Belle's hands.

Finally, Belle's work is complete. The glowing ball of SUPERNATURAL ENERGY glimmers. A PLASMA BOLT.

Riding has no where to go.

Suddenly, Belle parts her hands. The energy SURGES from her palms, SWIRLING around the room and into the hanging SUITS OF ARMOR around them.

Riding watches in horror as the suits CREAK and CRUNCH, coming to life as ruby SPARKS of energy CRACKLE from each.

The suits each reach to the walls, pulling MEDIEVAL WEAPONS to their hands like metal to a magnet.

Belle begins cackling, watching on as the suits of armor break free of the walls and come at Riding weapons drawn!

EXT. WOODS -- LATE NIGHT

Torrential downpour. Toads belching. Cicadas singing their sad songs.

Thumb and his team navigate the dense forest, SQUISHING muck underneath their feet.

Thumb signals to his men to follow him into a nearby

SWAMP

They're all waist deep in water. Rain PLOPS onto the surface of the lake, sporadically revealing its ink black contents.

As they skim across the surface, Thumb notices a PIXIE floating through the air.

Wading further through, more pixies begin appearing. More still.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

Just ahead of the men, hundreds of pixies light up the night, each circling above a calm section of the lagoon.

Thumb signals for the men to encircle the area around the pixies.

Suddenly the surrounding forest goes quiet.

Thumb removes a flashlight from his jacket and sweeps across the water beneath the pixies. A few bubbles rise to the surface.

Each man cocks his weapon, preparing when -

A DEAD DEER floats to the surface, the antlers and flesh of its face mostly stripped clean.

The team sighs collectively. Thumb motions for them to go back to the riverbank when -

Beast EXPLODES out of the water behind them, eyes on fire. Pixies squeal in fear, scattering into the night.

The animal SLASHES at the group, GNASHING at the air hoping to find something to sink its teeth into.

Giants fire their GATLING GUNS, shooting GLOWING BULLETS at the creature, desperately trying to injure it.

Beast lunges at the remaining team, RIPPING men in half, SEVERING necks and CRUNCHING bones. A macabre dance of violence.

During the melee, Thumb gets clipped, throwing his body UNDERWATER

where flashes of lightning illuminate the contents of the lake. FISHES dart around. INSECTS zoom through water.

Thumb watches in horror, dazed, as Beast's fur-covered hind legs leap about, clawing deep into the silty bottom.

As boots and paws SWISH and struggle around him, copious amounts of crimson blood pirouette down through the green water.

Then, the water goes calm again. Thumb can no longer hold his breath.

THE SWAMP SURFACE

Thumb bursts forth, heaving. He gets his bearings. Looks around. Floating calmly across the top of the swamp is his ENTIRE TEAM. Torn apart. Bloodied. Dead.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED: (2)

The giants are gone.

He hears rustling from a far, a few birds CAWING. Across the swamp is a trail of displaced algae.

Thumb unclips an ASSAULT-RIFLE from the back of a merc and pushes on, following the trail.

INT. ARMORY, MAYOR'S MANSION -- LATE NIGHT

The suits of armor have begun encircling Riding. Each under Belle's spell. Puppets to her fingers.

Riding sees the glint of two metal HAND SCYTHES hanging on the wall.

One of the suits lunges forward, swinging a BATTLE AXE right at Riding's head.

She leans into the swing, guiding the weapon into the oncoming suit behind her with a CRUNCH!

The suit goes WHIZZING across the room, SMASHING through a wooden beam and CRASHING to the ground.

In the confusion, Riding heads for the wall, grabbing the TWIN SCYTHES.

The two other armored suits begin sprinting toward her, one swinging a BALL AND CHAIN, the other a SWORD!

Riding takes a battle stance, preparing for the onslaught.

Both she and the armored suits SLICE and JAB at one another. Metal crunches against metal as SPARKS fly and artifacts are destroyed all over the room.

One of the suits manages to land a punch to Riding's face. She's thrown to the ground, sliding across the floor, blood pouring from her nose.

The suits prepare to deliver the final blow, when Riding pulls herself up.

She calls out to Belle.

RIDING

What's the matter Belle? Afraid to get blood on your own hands?

Belle flicks her wrist. The suits of armor freeze, weapons mere inches from Riding's face.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

Belle walks across the room, eyes alight. She looks down at Riding.

BELLE
In your case, I'll make an exception.

Belle turns, pulling FLAMES from a ROARING FIRE across the room.

Time slows.

Belle manipulates the blaze, swirling plumes of flame around her body with delicate precision. A phoenix of limitless power.

Riding uses the distraction. She leaps from the ground, removes her scythes and digging them into Belle's shoulders!

Belle let's out a HORRIFYING scream!

With one pull, Riding uses her scythes to lead Belle's hands to her own face, pulling the flames to it!

Belle's screaming continues. Flames and energy swirl around her body, illuminating the entire room in SUPERNATURAL ENERGY.

Riding quickly backs away, watching as the energy transforms Belle's face into a shriveled, hooked nosed, boil-ridden

WITCH - small strands of brittle silver hair peaking out from her charred clothing.

Riding looks down at the gaunt, pathetic body that used to be Belle Prince, sickened.

RIDING
Witch.

EXT. WOODS -- LATE NIGHT

The rain has begun to subside. It's drizzling.

Thumb carefully moves across the roots of an enormous redwood and passes into clearing. He spins around the muddy ground to see he's in

A CONSTRUCTION SITE

for a half-built suburb community surrounded by tree stumps and needled pines.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED: (2)

BUILDING FRAMES jut out of concrete foundations. A soil path twists around PALLETS of COLOSSAL REDWOOD LOGS at separate ends of the site.

Thumb carefully searches the grounds. Again he sees a pixie floating in the wind. He follows it around a junk pile to see -

BEAST, hundreds of pixies BUZZING around him like flies around a rotted corpse. Each creature TWITCHES and FLUTTERS about, feasting on Beast's gooey wounds.

Beast digs his feet into the mud, hunched over, burying his snout into the bloodied corpse of a fallen merc.

Thumb can't stand the sight. He carefully flips the safety off his weapon, then summons the courage to confront Beast. He turns the corner to see -

The animal is a half foot from his face! EYES STARING INTENSELY. Jaws dripping with blood and caked in mud.

Thumb's shaking. He slowly backs up, weapon pointed into the creature's gaping maw. The animal follows him SLASHING through the air.

CONSTRUCTION CENTER

Beast snaps at Thumb as a warning. Thumb moves several yards away from him.

THUMB

Don't do it Adam. I know there's still some of you left in there.

The creature bares its horrible teeth, lips trembling.

THUMB (CONT'D)

We can help you. It wasn't your fault. Belle used you.

Suddenly the sound of weapons CLICKING can be heard in the forest around them.

Beast looks to the pines, confused, then back to Thumb with a menacing grimace.

Beast immediately charges toward Thumb, a freight train of flesh and fur. Thumb gives chase.

Beast leaps from the ground, soaring into the air, TALONS stretching from its paws, when -

Two giants BURST out of the forest and tackle animal to the ground. BROB and VOTAN!

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED: (3)

The three creatures slide across the mud and SLAM into a half-built house, shattering it to pieces.

The two remaining giants, GOL and ELLU, trudge out of the forest and into the mud, guns aimed. Both enormous men encircle Thumb.

IN THE RUBBLE

Brob and Votan wrestle Beast across the ground. The earth shakes and shivers. Beast SNARLS at the giants, wildly SLICING at them.

Brob picks up a CONCRETE BLOCK and SMASHES it over Beast's head. The cement detonates in a cloud of rock and powder, barely inflicting any damage.

BEHIND THE CONSTRUCTION

Thumb is at the center of a huddle of giants. They both tower over him, waiting to hear the plan.

Thumb motions to their guns.

THUMB (CONT'D)
Might as well toss those.

Gol cracks his knuckles.

GOL
How do we kill it?

Thumb looks at the two enormous PALETTES of REDWOOD LOGS stacked on opposite sides of the site.

IN THE RUBBLE

Votan grabs Beast by the head and twists him into a choke hold. The creature struggles to breathe, wheezing and gargling spit.

Out of options, Beast savagely claws a series deep red GASHES across Votan's back, slicing through his body armor.

The wounds sizzle and bubble. A PENTACLE burns itself into his forehead. Votan screams in agony, crumpling into a heap.

Beast immediately climbs over the corpse and pushes off a pile of debris toward Brob.

Before Brob can react, the creature sinks its jaws into the flesh of his neck.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED: (4)

Brob struggles to tear Beast away from him, but it's too late.

Beast twists his jaws and SNAPS Brob's neck with a sickening CRUNCH! The giant's body goes limp and crashes to the ground.

The air becomes still. Beast's ears perk up. It hears a voice echoing outside.

CONSTRUCTION CENTER

Beast emerges from the wreckage to find Thumb waiting for him 50 yards away.

Beast digs his heels into the mud, then races toward Thumb. The creature stomps across the ground, picking up speed.

Thumb turns to run, Beast eating up the space between him.

Just then, he motions overhead to -

Gol and Ellu, each standing atop awnings on top of two separate log palettes. They tug and pull on the METAL CHAIN wrapped around the logs with all their might.

ON THE GROUND

Beast is only a few yards from Thumb and the chains still haven't been cut!

Thumb turns to Beast and fires quick BURPS of ammunition into his chest. The creature immediately falls to the ground winded.

Thumb sprints into the woods with what little energy he has left, just as -

Gol and Ellu successfully RIP THROUGH the metal chains with a

SNAP!

An avalanche of rolling timber RUMBLES across both sides of the development, leveling everything in sight.

Beast comes to, shaking off the cobwebs. He pulls himself from the ground to see -

The MAELSTROM of destruction careening toward him!

Beast accepts its fate, letting out one final ROAR in protest!

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED: (5)

The logs roll over his body, the impact CRUSHING him with SICKENING force!

His roar quickly shifts into a shrill YELP before fading away completely. He's DEAD.

EXT. MAYOR'S MANSION -- EARLY MORNING

FIRE FIGHTERS douse what remains of the charred manor with their powerful hoses.

Thumb and Riding are cleaned up and bandaged next to flashing AMBULANCES and POLICE CRUISERS.

Thumb watches Belle being loaded into an ambulance. He turns to Riding.

THUMB

Alah-Din's gonna have his hands full with that one.

A LIMOUSINE cruises up in front of the detectives. SNOW WHITMORE steps out.

Thumb gets up to shake Whitmore's hand, taken aback by her beauty.

THUMB (CONT'D)

Wow.

Riding kicks him.

RIDING

So, it's official.

WHITMORE

Well, mayor-elect. Returns just came in. Made it by a wink.

THUMB

You get our little package?

WHITMORE

Already have my people working on making more. It's a shame what happened to Locke and the others. It's people like them who offer hope to those fighting to improve things for the rest of us. Just like you two.

She regards both Thumb and Riding with a smile.

WHITMORE (CONT'D)

You make a great team.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

THUMB
So what's next?

WHITMORE
We'll have plenty of time to talk
about the future.

She winks at Thumb and Riding.

WHITMORE (CONT'D)
I have a feeling you two have more
interesting things to discuss at
the moment.

Whitmore gets back into her limo. Thumb and Riding watch
her pull away.

THUMB
So...

Riding smirks. She quickly kisses Thumb on the cheek and
walks off. Thumb's instantly smitten.

The sun spills over the horizon, blanketing the area in
pink dawn light. The faint beginnings of a RAINBOW
appear over the scene.

We see Thumb in silhouette, Riding walking off as the
orange sun rises into the crisp blue sky.

EXT. DIRT ROAD -- MORNING, CONTINUOUS

We move through different sections of the forest. Shafts
of soft golden light cut through the dense foliage. Dew
hangs from pinecones.

Deeper into the woods, a family of DEER gallops past a
SWAMP filled with DUCKS and GEESE. BIRDS chirp.

Past the pond is what remains of the HOUSING DEVELOPMENT
from earlier.

We move past the logs now blanketing it to find a glossy
black LIMOUSINE idling in the mud.

Suddenly, a CARAVAN of blacked-out sedans followed by
POLICE ESCORTS creeps out of the woods, encircling the
limo.

Out of the LEAD SEDAN steps an ELF body guard wearing an
earpiece. He opens the passenger door and out steps -

SNOW WHITMORE. She looks around, taking in the broken
surroundings, then approaches the tinted window of the
limousine.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

She stares deep into the glass, her reflection shining in the bright light of early morning.

After a moment, the window rolls down, revealing -

RUMPEL STILTSKIN inside.

He winks at her. She hands him the shimmering blue ANTIDOTE to Zaubertrank.

STILTSKIN
Oh the tangled webs we weave.

The door to Stiltskin's car opens and she gets inside.

The caravan follows the limo as it glides back into the forest, gray STORM CLOUDS gathering from the afar...

TO BLACK

FADE OUT.

THE END