

Sleeping Beauty's Prince

By

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FADE IN:

EXT. BLACK FOREST NATURE RESERVE - DAY

SUPERIMPOSE: BLACK FOREST, GERMANY - OCTOBER 1615

The leaves of autumn dance through the air on a light breeze. Trees and boulders dot the landscape of the rolling countryside. The hills and valleys show signs of the approaching winter; gray skies, bare trees, grass losing its green.

PHILLIP DE VALOIS looks the part of a storybook prince... rugged physique, squared jaw and dark eyes to match his perfectly coiffed, short chocolate-colored hair. He carries himself nobly, but wears the browns, greens and blues of the Elizabethan-era lower-class. Royalty runs through his veins, but politics of the day deny him his noble status. He appears to be in his late twenties.

Phillip, mounted on a sturdy steed, rides confidently; a man on a mission. He crests a small knoll and halts his horse.

Phillip surveys the scenery with apprehension. Across a shallow dale, atop the next ridge, is a thirty-foot high impenetrable hedge dense with razor-sharp thorns and prickles. It stretches in both directions as far as he can see. He pulls his coat close to his chest and urges his mount forward.

Upon reaching the green wall, Phillip dismounts his horse, who paws the ground anxiously. A low bush proves to be a satisfactory hitching post.

Sword drawn, Phillip moves forward slowly. Reaching out, expecting the mini stab wounds of the spines, he is pleasantly surprised to feel the feathery, almost downy caress of the greenery. He proceeds into the hedge.

Several steps in, the gray daylight is blocked as the vegetation closes in on Phillip. His vision diminished, he continues cautiously.

CRUNCH!

Phillip stops short, searching for what he stepped on. Bending down slightly, a partially-decayed skeleton becomes visible. The former knight has hundreds of spiky thorns sticking in him.

Phillip jumps back in shock, dropping his sword. A knife-like barb rips a jagged gash the length of his left forearm. The pain makes him swing around again, where another barb tears a parallel gash in his arm. He quickly cradles his injured arm and stills himself, preventing more damage.

Phillip looks closely at the large thorn covered with his blood. With a cracking noise, the thorn suddenly explodes in a black cloud of wispy smoke that rises quickly through the canopy of the hedge. Another cracking noise a second later and the other thorn is gone too.

Collecting his sword, a deep breath gives Phillip the courage to move forward. He hacks at the bush, but hits nothing as the branches dodge and avoid his sword.

EXT. KINGDOM VILLAGE - DAY

A final slash meets air as Phillip falls through the other side of the hedge to the ground with a thud. The pain of his cut arm makes his recovery a bit slow.

Phillip opens his eyes to be face to face with a squirrel, poised on back legs, surveying the landscape. They stare at each other for a long moment, neither moving.

PHILLIP

Boo!

The squirrel doesn't move, doesn't blink, nothing.

Phillip blows on it. Nothing.

Phillip slowly gets up, eyes on the squirrel. After an expectant moment, he reaches down and knocks the squirrel over. It falls over without objection. He is perplexed by the odd behavior.

Phillip looks around. A quiet, bright, sunny spring day greets him. He looks around in awe. He is in a village just outside an open castle gate. There are people and animals who appear to be going about their daily business, except that no one or thing is moving. Everything is frozen in time, including the kingdom's flag flying high on a spire - a Triskelion design on a field of yellow.

Phillip takes a couple steps toward the gate, but stops. He quickly puts the squirrel back on its feet.

Phillip walks through the village, passing and avoiding sentinels, gentlemen and ladies in fancy attire, peasants and vendors, horses, dogs and chickens, all suspended in a frozen slumber. The only noises heard are Phillip's own footfalls and the occasional snore.

Phillip sneaks up on a woman and guiltily removes a light shawl from around her shoulders. He wraps it around his arm, as a bandage.

INT. KINGDOM CASTLE - DAY

Inside the castle, he crosses a court paved with marble. Winding through the hallways and stairways, he comes to a lavish apartment, gilded with gold. A bed fashioned of gold and embroidery stands in the center of the apartment.

On the bed, lies a sleeping woman, PRINCESS ROSE, 20, Grace Kelly features, porcelain skin, silky hair, dulled only by a thin layer of dust.

PHILLIP
(in a whisper)
The story is true.

Phillip approaches the bed and, struck by her beauty, instantaneously falls in love with her. He gazes at her for a long time.

He reaches out to touch her, but being a gentleman of the times, pulls back several times.

PHILLIP
If I may, your Highness.

Phillip bends down, as if to kiss her, but blows the dust off her face instead. He hovers slightly for a few moments, then delivers the most gentle true love kiss to the princess's plump, ruby lips.

Nothing. She still sleeps. He's confused.

He kisses her again.

Nothing.

Maybe he did it wrong. He kisses her forehead.

Nothing.

He quickly looks around to see if he has missed something and to be sure no one is looking, then kisses her several times all over her face.

Nothing.

PHILLIP
I'm not the one.

Dejected, he plops down on the bed. He stares at her still figure, disheartened.

Phillip stands, touches her hair lightly and turns to leave.

EXT. KINGDOM VILLAGE - DAY

Phillip walks, head down, disappointed, back to the hedge. He accidentally bumps into a snoozing sentinel.

PHILLIP
Pardon me - whoa.

The sentinel almost falls over. Phillip catches and steadies him back to his original position. A heavy sigh before continuing on.

Upon reaching the green wall, he stops. A glance at the squirrel and a swift kick sends the squirrel soaring across the yard.

Phillip proceeds into the brier, but is abruptly halted. His entire body is inside the hedge except his left arm. He tries to pull his arm in. It won't go past the thorny barrier. He pulls again. Stopped.

Phillip steps back out of the hedge. Studying his arm for a moment, he pulls the shawl off and tosses it to the ground. He tentatively puts his left arm into the brier. No problems.

Phillip steps into the hedge again. Nothing pulls at him and he moves through it quickly.

Upon exiting the hedge, the gray sky seems a bit darker and the chill hits him in the face.

EXT. BLACK FOREST - DAY

Two ANGELS, HOPE and JOY, pace back and forth outside the hedge. They are beautiful androgynous beings, similar in looks to each other, but not twins. They're dressed in swirled light pink and blue robes.

Upon noticing Phillip, they rush to him.

JOY
Where have you been? Are
you alright?

HOPE
We were worried. You've
been in there so long.

Phillip puts his hands up defensively at their questions.

JOY
Shush, Hope. Shush. Give him a
minute.

Both Angels take a step backward and a deep breath.

JOY
Hello, Dear.

HOPE
Yes, hello, Prince Phillip.

PHILLIP
(tentatively, on guard)
Um, hello?

JOY
We've been expecting you.

PHILLIP
(suspiciously)
You have?

HOPE
Oh, yes. You're Rose's prince.

PHILLIP
(shaking his head)
No. No, I'm not.

HOPE
Oh yes, you are.

JOY
We've been watching you.

PHILLIP
Then you know I failed.

JOY
You've just begun.

Silence as Phillip regards the Angels.

PHILLIP

Who are you?

JOY

We have been called many things.

HOPE

Fairies, Godmothers, Angels...

JOY

We have protected this kingdom for
a millennium.

HOPE

Is she safe?

PHILLIP

Safe?

HOPE

Yes. Rose. Is she safe?

PHILLIP

The princess? Her name is Rose.
Yes. She's safe. They all appear to
be safe. Dead, but safe.

JOY

Oh my!

HOPE

He's jesting, Joy. Of course, they
appear dead. They've been asleep
for a hundred years.

JOY

Oh, yes, of course. That wasn't
funny, Phillip.

Hope glares at the hedge.

HOPE

Of course, we would check
ourselves, if we could.

JOY

We can't get past the thorns. Only
you can. Nothing in. Nothing out.

PHILLIP

Me?

HOPE

Yes. You're Rose's prince.
 (to Joy)
 He doesn't listen very well, does
 he?

Joy guides Phillip to a large boulder and urges him to sit.

JOY

My sweet, valiant prince. Your fate
 has been predetermined for you.
 Rose and you are destined to be
 together.

PHILLIP

My fate?

HOPE

Future. Fate. Karma. Call it what
 you will. You now have a job to do.

JOY

Let's start from the beginning.
 When Princess Rose was born, the
 world stood still for a moment to
 drink in her radiance.

HOPE

She was such a precious child.

JOY

Her parents, the King and Queen of
 Baar held a grand celebration of
 her birth. All were invited.

HOPE

All, but one.

JOY

(to Hope)
 She was invited, Hope.
 (to Phillip)
 Only she was having a bad year. Our
 sister, Mallory, was not right in
 her mind.

HOPE

She was quite ill-tempered.

JOY

Mallory cast a spell upon little
 baby Rose, so that she would prick
 her finger on a spindle of a
 spinning wheel and die.

HOPE

See! She was cracked. Of all things
to die from, she chose a spindle?

JOY

We were able to counter the curse
with a sleep spell.

HOPE

And that's where you come in.

PHILLIP

Yes, I know. I must kiss the
princess to awaken her. But I have
tried that. I failed. I'm not the
one you're waiting for.

A white misty cloud suddenly swirls up from the ground a few feet away. From the mist, another Angel, PATIENCE, just as beautiful as the others, with bright purple eyes, materializes. She carries a grapefruit-sized object wrapped in white cloth. All attention goes to Patience.

Hope rushes to Patience and takes the object, unwrapping it quickly to reveal a crystal, broken in three pieces.

PATIENCE

Three.

HOPE

Three? Oh dear, this will take a
while.

Joy turns her attention to Phillip.

JOY

Are you hurt? Stand up!

Phillip doesn't move fast enough for her, so Joy takes his left hand and pulls him to his feet and spins him around, inspecting him. A quick pat up the inside of his leg makes him jump a bit.

JOY

Where are you hurt?

She looks at the arm she has been holding and stops to inspect it closer. The two gashes have become angry red.

Hope and Patience come in for a closer look.

HOPE

Oh my! Two.

JOY

Did this happen in the hedge?

PHILLIP

Yes, but they'll heal. I've had worse.

JOY

They may heal...

Joy turns to Patience, concerned.

JOY

Are you sure?

PATIENCE

Yes. I believe in him. Faith did too.

Joy turns back to Phillip.

JOY

Sit.

Phillips obeys. Hope fiddles with the crystal.

JOY

Our sister, Mallory, was unstable to say the least. When we were able to foil her plan for Rose's death, she got... irritated --

HOPE

Irritated? She was --

JOY

Hope! She is still our sister, bless her soul. There's no need to paint her as a monster.

Hope turns her back on Joy, disgusted. Joy sighs heavily.

JOY

(slowly, deliberately)

Mallory was jealous of the Queen and Rose more so. She did what she could to make things miserable for them. We were constantly on alert, waiting for Mallory's next curse or malediction. In the end, the only way to stop her was to destroy her.

PHILLIP

You killed your own sister?

HOPE

NO! We didn't kill her!

PATIENCE

Sadly, she destroyed herself.

HOPE

Along with Faith.

JOY

Our other sister, Faith, sacrificed herself for the greater good.

PATIENCE

She created this crystal to contain the magic that compels the curses.

JOY

Faith was able to figure out how to lock down the curses, so Mallory couldn't alter them any further. Unfortunately, the magic it took to create the crystal was more than Faith could handle. It was too much for her and she...

They lower their heads in honor and respect of their dead sister.

PHILLIP

(quietly)

My sympathies.

HOPE

The crystal wasn't what killed Faith. Mallory did. She found out what Faith was doing and, out of spite, concentrated all her magical power into the crystal, overloading it. Mallory was sick. She knew she didn't have long for this world. She wanted to go out with a bang.

PATIENCE

Hope. Peace. Please.

JOY

Mallory did cast one final curse before she... expired. In a final effort to prevent you from getting

JOY

to Rose, she planted evil thorns in the hedge. For every thorn that touched you, a piece of you would be torn away; shattering the crystal. If the crystal isn't whole, if you aren't whole, you can't fulfill your destiny.

PHILLIP

If I'm not whole?

PATIENCE

True love's kiss. Do you love Rose?

PHILLIP

With all my heart. From the moment I saw her.

PATIENCE

With all you are?

PHILLIP

Yes, my entire being.

PATIENCE

You are no longer an entire being.

PHILLIP

I don't understand.

HOPE

He's not listening again.

PHILLIP

I'm listening. I just don't know what you want from me.

JOY

Phillip, my dear, the two gashes on your arm were made by those evil thorns. They tore two pieces of your soul from you. You must find them and become whole again. You must make the crystal whole again, so you can kiss our princess Rose and fulfill your destiny.

PHILLIP

Where did they go?

HOPE

(waving an arm in the air)
Anywhere.

PHILLIP

Anywhere? That's what you've got for me? You're telling me I just lost a piece of my soul and all you can tell me is 'anywhere'?

HOPE

They're your soul. They're ethereal. They could be anywhere by now. They could be in a rock, a tree, the moon, a warthog --

JOY

The point is you must find them. They are part of you and you must be reunited with them.

PATIENCE

You are all part of a whole. You must become whole again. The body. The heart. The soul. Three must become one. The three of you have to come together in order to heal the crystal and break the curse.

PHILLIP

Let's, for conversation sake, say my souls haven't flown to the moon or embedded themselves in a warthog and are indeed human, how will I know them when I see them?

JOY

(pointing to his arm)
They will share your mark.

PHILLIP

So all I have to do is find two men with two gashes, just like this, on their arms. Okay. Then what? How do I get them to follow me?

JOY

They will be bound to you, tethered to you. They will follow. Their fate is yours and your theirs.

PHILLIP

Then what?

PATIENCE

You must go to Dragon Hole. A day's ride from here. In the center of the largest cavern, this crystal will wait, protected by a great dragon. The three of you must heal it.

PHILLIP

How?

PATIENCE

The crystal will know you. The fragments will accept you. They will allow you to heal them. You will all be one.

PHILLIP

What happens to them once we heal the crystal?

HOPE

You will be one. I swear, you don't listen.

PHILLIP

If we will be one, which one of us...? Oh.

(pause)

What if I don't want to do any of this?

HOPE

Fate will not be cheated.

JOY

You don't have a choice.

Hope hands the crystal fragments back to Patience, then pats Phillip lovingly on his cheek.

HOPE

Fare thee well, Prince Phillip. We eagerly await your return.

With a slight swirl, Hope disappears in a puff of white mist.

Patience pulls a vial of blue liquid from her pocket and offers it to Phillip.

PATIENCE

Drink this.

PHILLIP

For what?

PATIENCE

It will prevent infection in your arm.

Unquestioning, Phillip swigs it down.

PATIENCE

And it will provide you with faith, perseverance, vitality and zeal throughout your pursuit.

Phillip finishes the vial, wiping his mouth quickly.

PHILLIP

Liquid courage?

Patience smiles slyly.

PATIENCE

Patience.

JOY

(to Patience)

Are you certain?

PATIENCE

My honor.

Patience steps back and disappears in swirling spiral of white, misty smoke.

JOY

Patience will be your protector and see you through to the end.

Joy pulls Phillip to her in a quick hug.

JOY

She has beautiful eyes and a voice like a dove. And she loves to sing.

Joy starts humming an upbeat little tune. She turns to mist and disappears as the others had, but the tune can still be heard.

CUT TO:

INT. PARIS - CAFÉ - DAY

SUPERIMPOSE: PARIS, FRANCE - MAY 1694

Phillip and a friend sit in a café.

Phillip hasn't aged and his acquired wealth are obvious from his attire.

The other man is CHARLES PERRAULT. Age 66, author, Paris-native, sporting the upper class hair style of the era in 1694, he has a slight used-car salesman look to him.

Phillip reads out loud a story written on parchment. Many pages lay turned down on the table, indicating that he has been reading for several pages and this is near the end of the story.

PAN around the two men and the table, specifically focusing on the unfinished, ornate tattoo, the Triskelion design of the Baar Kingdom, on the back third of Phillip's neck, the Celtic knot peeking out from beneath his collar, close to his hairline.

PHILLIP

(reading)

The prince drew closer. On the bed he saw the most beautiful spectacle which he had ever seen: a princess lay before him, fast asleep. She glowed with beauty. For her beauty had not faded, her colors were still as sharp as dye: her cheeks were like carnations, and her lips like bright red coral.

Phillip looks up at Charles and smiles appreciatively, then silently scans a few more pages. On the last page...

PHILLIP

With much fanfare and gallantry, a wedding was held, for no one had ever seen a more perfect couple than that of the prince and his princess.
And they lived happily ever after.

Long pause.

Phillip looks about anxiously for another page to read.

PHILLIP
That's it? Happily Ever After?

CHARLES
Yes.

PHILLIP
But it hasn't ended yet. I have yet
to awaken her.

CHARLES
(tired)
Phillip, this story is intended for
children... to lull them to sleep,
not frighten them to death. I'm
afraid if we record the back and
forth curses and counter curses of
those witches, we may do just that.
(pause)
I only hope that your story ends as
I wrote it.

PHILLIP
(resigned)
As do I.

CHARLES
Phillip, it has been over 45 years
since we first met and you told me
your magnificent story. You're 40
years my elder, yet you look the
same as the day we met. But, my
dear friend, I'm an old man now. I
should like to have this published
before I die.

PHILLIP
I assure you, Charles, it gives me
no pleasure to know that you will
beat me to the grave.

Phillip scratches his left forearm, his sleeve rises enough
to reveal two parallel ragged and irritated scars, marring
his otherwise perfect skin.

CHARLES
An endearing thought, thank you.
(pause)
But you'll be leaving for Dublin
tomorrow?

PHILLIP

Midsummer's Eve is next month. What better time to find my missing soul than on the Night of the Fairies?

CHARLES

And I foresee this being a fruitful trip for you.

PHILLIP

Do you now?

CHARLES

Definitely.

PHILLIP

Taken to being a mystic nowadays, are we?

CHARLES

Considering my company, I believe anything is possible.

PHILLIP

(deflated)

The world gets bigger by the moment, it seems. I fear the longer I search, the more hopeless it is.

(long ponder)

Do you really think I'll ever find them?

CHARLES

Phillip, you're a man of conviction. I have no doubt that you will find what you seek.

PHILLIP

I appreciate your enthusiasm, my friend.

CHARLES

(raising his glass)

A proposal, then. I will hold off publishing this for one year. You break the curse and I will rewrite it as the real story.

CUT TO:

EXT. DUBLIN - STREET - DAY

Midsummer's day festival. Late June.

Huge bonfire within a circle of large stones. Townspeople dancing with much music, laughter and singing. Farmers carts loaded with fresh bread, hoops of cheese, casks of beer, strings of smoked fish.

Phillip moves through the crowds from cart to cart, stopping occasionally to watch minstrels and street entertainers.

Phillip comes upon a gathered crowd, attracted by excited shouting and cheering. In the center, a boxing contest between two shirtless men.

Although, the men appear to be equally matched physically, one is dominant... DECLAN O'FARRELL, 21, broad-shouldered, a man of the land; his muscles attesting that he is used to hard work. His left arm sports two elongated, ragged scars.

Declan wins, knocking his opponent to the ground. Much cheering, obviously a fan favorite.

Declan is congratulated by slaps on the back and cheers. One particularly cute YOUNG WOMAN plants a deep kiss on him. When done, he smiles at her lovingly.

Declan moves away from his immediate clump of people to his former opponent. A friendly bear hug between the two indicate all is in good, clean competition.

Through the people, Declan and Phillip catch each other's gaze. Phillip's reaction - a relieved smile, "I've finally found you" grin. Declan's reaction - "why is this stranger somehow familiar?", confused.

Declan attempts to ignore Phillip and leads the woman away, followed by several of the bystanders.

INT. DUBLIN - PUB - NIGHT

Later that evening, Declan sits with a group of friends, imbibing ale and mead, recounting the festivities of the day.

Phillip sits alone at a table, nursing a pint of beer. He has an unsettled, fidgety, on-edge air to him.

Upon spying Phillip, although leery of the stranger, Declan crosses the room to the table.

Phillip acknowledges Declan as soon as he is close.

DECLAN

I don't know you, brother, but
you've been looking at me like we
do. I've seen you lurking about all
day.

PHILLIP

Mmm-hmm.

DECLAN

You mind me askin' your business?

PHILLIP

Searching for someone.

DECLAN

There's plenty of someone's here.
Anyone in particular?

PHILLIP

You.

DECLAN

Me? And what would you be wantin'
with me?

PHILLIP

I've come to collect you.

DECLAN

Are you a constable now?
(defensively)
Cuz I told old McCarthy I'd fix
that fence next week.

Phillip shakes his head.

PHILLIP

You have my mark.

DECLAN

What mark?

PHILLIP

The mark I have been seeking all my
life.

DECLAN

And what mark might that be?

PHILLIP

What happened to your arm?

DECLAN
(incredulous)
My arm?

PHILLIP
I saw the scars today during
your... gentleman's disagreement.

DECLAN
That was no --

PHILLIP
How did you get them?

Declan regards Phillip with suspicion and curiosity. He glances at his left arm, currently covered by a sleeve.

DECLAN
I got caught up with some fishing
nets when I was a lad.

PHILLIP
And you remember getting caught up
in those nets?
(pause)
Or is that what your mother told
you?
(pause)
What *did* your mother tell you about
those scars?

Long pause as Declan lightly rubs his left arm through his sleeve.

DECLAN
(quietly)
They're birthmarks. She told me
they were marks of the Angels.

PHILLIP
Marks of the Angels?

DECLAN
That I had been blessed by their
wings.

PHILLIP
You have indeed been marked by
Angels. But I do not think I would
call it blessed.

DECLAN

Who are you?

Phillip stands to present his full noble height.

PHILLIP

I am Phillip, son of Marguerite de
Valois, Queen of France and
Navarre.

DECLAN

A prince now?

(snickering)

Certainly I may not be the most
educated man or even an expert of
French Royalty, but I'm pretty sure
King Louis only has but one son and
he's reported to be a dolt. Would
you be *that* dolt?

PHILLIP

I am not the Grand Dauphin and the
King is not my father.

DECLAN

Ahh, you're a bastard then.

Phillip looks down in shame, then up in defiance.

DECLAN

Regardless, you're either a liar or
completely daft.

PHILLIP

I only wish I was daft and I assure
you I am no liar.

(pause)

I am cursed, though.

DECLAN

(suspiciously, but curious)

Keep talking.

PHILLIP

There is a woman --

DECLAN

Why is there always a woman
involved when a man's in trouble?

PHILLIP

This woman is my love, my life. A
curse was laid upon her when she

PHILLIP
 was but a babe. She pricked her
 finger on a spindle and fell into a
 deep sleep and only I can awaken
 her.

DECLAN
 How?

PHILLIP
 With a kiss.

DECLAN
 Doesn't sound like much of a curse.

PHILLIP
 That is what I thought. It could be
 worse. She was originally to have
 died.

(pause)

I came upon a wall of thorns and
 although the brambles were as sharp
 as razors, I was able to pass
 through them unscathed, save two
 scratches. When I exited on the
 other side, I found a castle,
 captured in time. In a chamber high
 within the castle, I found her. The
 most beautiful creature I had ever
 seen. I kissed her, but nothing.

Declan glances down to Phillip's crotch.

DECLAN
 (raising his eyebrows
 doubtfully)
 Kissing her did nothing for her?

PHILLIP
 (shrugging off the insult)
 I returned through the hedge to
 find Angels waiting for me. I asked
 them why I could not awaken the
 princess. In preventing me from
 from succeeding, the abrasions I
 received on the way in tore two
 pieces of me away, my soul. I must
 reunite with those two parts before
 I may kiss my love, awaken her and
 break the curse.

A long pause while Declan considers Phillips' tale. He
 finally smiles, humored by Phillip's imagination.

DECLAN
 (snickering)
 A fine story, I'll give you that,
 but you are indeed daft, brother.

PHILLIP
 Perhaps.

Declan takes a long swig of beer, deliberating.

DECLAN
 (blurting)
 Curses are for the weak-minded.

The same congratulatory young woman from earlier comes up behind Declan, pulling on his sleeve.

Declan responds to her touch by kissing her passionately on the lips.

PHILLIP
 I am sorry.

DECLAN
 (concluding the kiss)
 Sorry?

PHILLIP
 You will have to leave her behind.

DECLAN
 Pog Mo Thoin. (*trans... Kiss my
 ass*)

Declan looks from Phillip to the woman and back to Phillip.

A long shared stare. Understanding dawning.

DECLAN
 Oh no, you don't! I'm not part of
 your mad yarn!

Phillip pushes his sleeve up to reveal his forearm and his scars. He remains silent, raising his eyebrows in affirmation.

Upon recognizing the marks as matching his own, Declan's expression turns defensive and hard.

DECLAN
 I believe you need to leave.

PHILLIP
Not that easy.

DECLAN
Sure it is.

Declan throws his beer stein to the floor and takes a swing at Phillip, connecting with his jaw.

Blood spurts as both Phillip's lip and Declan's knuckles split open.

Their blood mixes. They are united!

They look each other in the eye, shuddering as if receiving an electrical shock, as a physical connection is made. Their eyes pop wide open, both surprised by the sensation.

DECLAN
What sorcery is this? What have you done to me!?

PHILLIP
Do you believe in fairy tales?

A second third of Phillip's tattoo completes itself, leaving the front of the throat unblemished.

A tattoo, an exact copy of Phillip's, immediately paints itself around the back two-thirds of Declan's neck.

CUT TO:

INT. HODGKIN BUILDING LECTURE HALL - DAY

SUPERIMPOSE: GUY'S HOSPITAL, LONDON, ENGLAND - AUGUST 1830

JAMES BLUNDELL, eccentric physician and physiologist, stands behind a podium, addressing a full lecture hall, all fanning themselves. Windows are open. It's hot. Unusual for the era, Dr. Blundell has his coat off in public.

Phillip and Declan sit in the audience.

Dr. Blundell pushes his sleeves up slightly, revealing two scars running up his arm.

Declan notices and elbows Phillip.

DECLAN
His arm.

Phillip nods, squinting for a closer look.

DECLAN

You sure about this one?

PHILLIP

Considering how many times I've been wrong til now? Absolutely not. But he's a good candidate.

DR. BLUNDELL

(addressing the group)

In conclusion, the object of the Gravitator is to transmit the blood in a regulated stream from one individual to another, with as little exposure as may be to air, cold, and inanimate surface.

And I stand behind my original analysis that using water, infused or not with spirits of any kind, should not be introduced into the transfusion, regardless of the method administrated. Unless of course it's administered orally in a tall cold glass. If, that is, you can find anything cold on a day like this.

Dr. Blundell wipes his brow with a handkerchief from his shirt pocket.

A group chuckle emits from the audience.

DR. BLUNDELL

I thank you for your attention.
Good Day.

The audience applauds. Dr. Blundell dons his coat and gathers his papers as the crowd disperses.

Phillip and Declan linger until the crowd thins, then approaches Dr. Blundell.

PHILLIP

Dr. Blundell. Excuse us, might we have a moment?

Dr. Blundell stops, acknowledging Phillip and Declan. The hall is now empty, save the three of them.

DR. BLUNDELL

Yes, of course.

PHILLIP

Your lecture was impressive. The work you've done is quite enlightening.

DR. BLUNDELL

I'm glad you enjoyed it.

PHILLIP

We'd like to propose a supplemental experiment to you.

DR. BLUNDELL

For what hypothesis?

DECLAN

We want to test your theory that speed, not method, is key to a successful transfusion.

DR. BLUNDELL

I'm afraid the method is indeed more important.

DECLAN

We have a very unique method.

DR. BLUNDELL

Oh? And what do you expect for an outcome?

DECLAN

(mumbling)

Something electrifying.

PHILLIP

Instantaneous transfusion, of course.

DR. BLUNDELL

Very well. I'm always interested in testing the unknown. What method --

Declan pulls a knife from his coat, while grabbing Dr. Blundell's wrist. Turning his hand, Declan slices Dr. Blundell's palm. Blood spurts. Dr. Blundell is horrified and naturally tries to pull away. Declan holds tight.

DR. BLUNDELL

What on Earth?!?!

Declan passes the knife to Phillip, who in turn, slices his own palm. Bloods flows.

Declan forces Dr. Blundell's hand into Phillip's outstretched hand.

Blood mixes.

Dr. Blundell's face contorts in shock and disgust.

Phillip and Declan wait.

Nothing.

Phillip and Declan exchange disappointed glances.

DR. BLUNDELL
What in the hell do you think
you're doing?!

Declan pulls Dr. Blundell's handkerchief from his shirt pocket, as Phillip releases Dr. Blundell's hand. Declan shoves the handkerchief at Dr. Blundell, who grabs it and wraps his hand.

DR. BLUNDELL
You two are crazy! Get out of here!
Leave now!

Phillip, irritated, wiping the knife in his own handkerchief, turns to leave, flexing his hand as it heals instantaneously.

DECLAN
You were right. Apparently speed
doesn't matter.

Declan departs, leaving Dr. Blundell dumbfounded, cradling his bleeding hand.

CUT TO:

EXT. *RMS TITANIC* DECK - DAY

SUPERIMPOSE: *RMS TITANIC*, NORTH ATLANTIC OCEAN - APRIL 1912

Phillip, dressed in the First Class attire to which his ticket is issued, strolls the upper deck on a brisk April afternoon. He passes a lifesaver ring hanging on the wall. *RMS TITANIC* is printed on it.

Phillip hums Rose's song.

Declan catches up with him and falls into stride with him. Phillip barely acknowledges him with a glance.

DECLAN

I just finished an interesting game of squash.

PHILLIP

Win?

DECLAN

Yes, of course, but of more interest is my opponent. Jacques Heath Futrelle. He's a writer... from America. He writes detective novels.

PHILLIP

(not interested)

Interesting.

DECLAN

He's got two long scars on his forearm. Been there longer than he can remember.

PHILLIP

(piqued)

Interesting.

DECLAN

He and his wife boarded in Southampton.

PHILLIP

When do we meet Mr. Futrelle?

DECLAN

They've been reseated at our table for tonight's meal.

PHILLIP

This may turn into a very good evening.

EXT. RMS TITANIC DECK - NIGHT

JACQUES FUTRELLE, 37, round-faced and monocled, and his wife, MAY, both donning large white life jackets, hurriedly make their way through the hallways toward the lifeboats.

Phillip and Declan are waiting for them as they go on Boat Deck.

JACQUES
Mr. O'Farrell. Mr. de Valois. Odd
way to cement our new friendship.
Abandoning the 'Unsinkable'.

PHILLIP
It is indeed not what I envisioned
tonight was to hold.

A group of men with smoke-blackened faces stands silently,
staring at May as she passes. Their eyes seem to say 'at
least you have a chance, we have none'.

Further up the deck, fellow First Class passenger Col. John
Jacob Astor is settling his frantic wife into a lifeboat.

MAY
Oh my! This is serious!

JACQUES
Yes dear, it is. We must go.

Jacques urges his wife toward a waiting lifeboat.

The officer loading passengers into Collapsible D stops them
as they approach.

OFFICER
Women and children first, sir.

MAY
I'm not going without you, Jack!

JACQUES
You must!

MAY
Please! Get in the boat with me.
There's room.

JACQUES
You heard him. We must wait.

MAY
No! I won't go!

OFFICER
Madam! You must get in now!

JACQUES
For God's sake, go! It's your last
chance, go!

Jacques lifts May into the lifeboat.

JACQUES

Hurry up, May. You're keeping the others waiting.

Jacques kisses May tenderly before letting her go and stepping back to join Phillip and Declan.

JACQUES

Don't worry, my dear. There are enough lifeboats for all. I'll be along shortly in another boat.

The boat is launched. Jacques and May exchanging final silent farewells.

Col. Astor joins the three men. They watch as the boats move away from the doomed ship.

Col. Astor casually offers the men cigarettes from a gold-plated case. They each take one. They light them in cupped hands. They stare into the cold blackness, displaying the epitome of bravery.

After several moments of silence, the cigarettes are snuffed out on the deck.

ASTOR

I believe I shall go find myself a drink.

JACQUES

A fine idea.

They turn to start their futile search, but Phillip stops Jacques.

PHILLIP

Mr. Futrelle, we need you to do something.

JACQUES

Now?

PHILLIP

Unfortunately, yes.

DECLAN

We'd like to explain the details, but right now we need your blood.

JACQUES

My blood?

PHILLIP

Yes.

Declan pulls a pocketknife out of his coat and hands it to Phillip.

PHILLIP

We need a sample of your blood to mix with mine.

JACQUES

Under normal circumstances, I would think you two insane, but the detective in me wants to know what this is all about.

Jacques holds out his hand. Phillip slices into Jacques' palm. Phillip does the same. Jacques cringes slightly.

Phillip grasps Jacques' hands. Blood mixes.

Phillip's face contorts.

Declan's face lights up in excitement.

DECLAN

Phillip?

A long moment. Ambient panic noises.

PHILLIP

No. Nothing.

Looking down, water has suddenly overtaken their shoes as the ship lists during the final moments of its nautical life.

PHILLIP

But this water is fucking cold!
And this is quickly turning into a very bad evening.

Panic overshadows Jacques' face.

DECLAN

We're sorry, Mr. Futrelle.

CUT TO:

INT. OFFICE - NEW YORK CITY, NY - DAY

SUPERIMPOSE: NEW YORK, NY - PRESENT DAY

ERIN PETERSON, 28, travel researcher, attractive, somewhat mousy and book smart, concentrates on her computer screen. Behind her on the wall is the logo of the *Condé Nast Traveler Magazine*.

Erin's cube is decorated with cut-out pictures of Germany, France, Italy and UK destinations. Cluttered about her computer monitor are research books, file folders and a picture of her large orange tabby cat, sprawled across the floor on his back.

CONNIE HARDING, 29, administrative assistant, more gregarious than Erin, approaches Erin's cube and leans over the cube wall.

CONNIE

Hey, Sweetie!

ERIN

Beannachtaí!

Connie presents Erin a tote bag embroidered with an Irish peace knot.

CONNIE

Thanks for letting me borrow this.

ERIN

No problem.

CONNIE

That Celtic festival was really great.

ERIN

Didn't I tell you'd have fun?

CONNIE

And I loved that Dublin Coddle. We can probably make that ourselves, dontcha think? I know a place that makes some great Irish sausage.

ERIN

But we can't forget the bacon.

CONNIE

Oh my God! No way would I forget the bacon!

ERIN
How'd you make out with that caber
tossler?

CONNIE
Eh. He had a girlfriend.

ERIN
Yikes!

CONNIE
Can you imagine living back when
those games were the only
entertainment around?

ERIN
I think of it all the time.

CONNIE
I can see you in one of those wool
cloak-thingys.

ERIN
Brat.

CONNIE
I'm not --

ERIN
It's called a brat.

CONNIE
I can see you wearing one of those.
Maybe start a new trend.

ERIN
Yeah, right. Maybe if I lived in
17th-century Europe.

CONNIE
Oh wait, guess what I heard!
Jackson said Sylvia is going to
decide who's doing the Monaco
National Day trip in today's
meeting.

Erin's eyes perk up.

ERIN
Seriously?

CONNIE
Got your bags packed?

ERIN
Wouldn't that be great?

CONNIE
You've done your share of desk
duty. You've earned a field
assignment or two.

INT. CONFERENCE ROOM - CONTINUOUS

Several people, including Erin and Connie, gather for a departmental meeting.

SYLVIA, mid-40's, professional and seasoned research supervisor, strolls into the room, a commanding presence.

SYLVIA
Okay, settle down. First off,
whoever ate my cannolis from the
break room, you owe me. And I
expect them on my desk by
lunchtime.

A few guilty looks are exchanged.

Sylvia shuffles through some papers.

SYLVIA
Let's see. The Monaco Trip.

Connie and Erin exchange anticipatory and hopeful glances.

SYLVIA
I want Jeremy to cover this.
Julian, I want you to join him.

JEREMY, a young, cocky journalist, enjoys the congratulatory attention of his peers.

Erin's face drops in disappointment. Connie raises her eyebrows in surprise.

INT. OFFICE - CONTINUOUS

Back at Erin's cube.

CONNIE
Erin, I'm so sorry. That should
have been yours.

ERIN
(fake cheerfulness)
It's no big deal.

CONNIE
I know how much you were looking
forward to that.
(pause)
Let's go out for a drink tonight.

ERIN
I don't think so.

CONNIE
Oh, come on.

ERIN
Rick and I have plans.

CONNIE
What? Watch another DVD?

ERIN
He's somewhat of a homebody.

CONNIE
(disapprovingly)
Whatever. You deserve so much
better than him. If you change your
mind, give me a call.

CUT TO:

INT. ERIN'S APARTMENT - NIGHT

Erin opens the door to her apartment.

She stops short as she takes in the state of the living
area. It is half-furnished. There are obvious empty spots on
the wall and shelves, recently vacated.

She walks to the kitchen counter. Unceremoniously drops her
purse and bag.

A note is waiting...
*We both knew it was just a matter
of time.*

Rick

p.s. Tony's with me.

On the floor, an empty cat dish sits abandoned.

She sighs heavily and looks around dejected, and plunks down on a stool.

Minutes later, Erin digs her cell phone out of her purse and punches in Connie's number.

CONNIE (O.S.)

Hello?

ERIN

Drink offer still valid?

CONNIE (O.S.)

Of course. Everything okay?

Long pause.

ERIN

Rick left.

CONNIE (O.S.)

Oh Sweetie, I'm so sorry. When?

ERIN

Today. I came home and he was already gone.

CONNIE (O.S.)

He didn't say goodbye?

ERIN

He left a note.

CONNIE (O.S.)

Coward. Couldn't even do it in person. What a dick!

ERIN

He took Tony.

CONNIE (O.S.)

No! What an asshole!

(pause)

You definitely need a drink. I'll meet you down at The Tavern in 20 minutes, k?

The phone clicks dead.

Erin releases a heavy sigh. With determination, she picks her purse back up and heads back out the door.

CUT TO:

INT. PORTERHOUSE BREWING CO. AT FRAUNCES TAVERN
- NIGHT

The Tavern is bustling with the after-work crowd, busy but not packed. Several bar stools are open.

Phillip and Declan sit at the bar, drinks in front of them. They wear shirts that allows his tattoo to be seen.

Declan rises.

DECLAN
I'm hitting the loo.

As Declan heads to the restroom, Phillip stares at his drink, absently, finger doodling in the condensation on his glass, softly humming Rose's song.

Phillip shudders.

He stops doodling, stops humming, now fully alert. He turns to the right and urgently scans the bar, then scans to the left - searching.

Across the bar, Phillip's eye is caught by a well-groomed BUSINESS MAN staring back at him. The man smiles flirtatiously.

Erin enters the Tavern by herself and walks to an empty stool at the bar, a few stools from Phillip

Phillip's attention is briefly distracted by Erin selecting her seat, before returning his gaze to the man, who continues to flirt. Phillip does not return the flirt.

As Erin pulls her coat off, Phillip once more redirects his attention to her. His gaze switches, perplexed, between the man and Erin.

Erin's sleeveless blouse does nothing to cover up two parallel, ragged scars on her forearm. She sits and adjusts herself.

Realization strikes.

Inexplicably, Phillip is too shy to look at Erin, so returns to his glass and finger-doodling. He shifts uncomfortably in his seat, fidgety, restless.

PHILLIP
(mutters to himself)
Can't be.

The BARTENDER approaches Erin.

BARTENDER
Hey. How's it going?

ERIN
Huh? Oh. Okay.

BARTENDER
What can I get for you?

Erin hesitates, indecisive.

ERIN
Oh. I don't know. Um. I'm waiting
for someone.

BARTENDER
Something while you wait?

Erin noticeably slumps.

ERIN
What do you suggest?

PHILLIP
(casually, not turning)
A painkiller.

Erin turns to Phillip.

ERIN
Excuse me?

PHILLIP
(glancing in Erin's direction)
Painkiller. You should try a
Painkiller.

Erin looks back at the bartender.

ERIN
Is that a drink?

The bartender smiles and nods.

ERIN
Sure. Why not?

The bartender turns to make the drink as Erin finishes getting settled. Phillip watches from the periphery.

The bartender delivers the drink and Erin takes a long suck through her straw.

Connie walks in and makes her way over to the bar and Erin. She startles Erin by putting her arm on her shoulder.

CONNIE
Hey Sweetie.

She takes the glass out of Erin's hand and takes a sip.

CONNIE
Mmmm. This is tasty. What is it?

ERIN
He called it a Painkiller.

CONNIE
Okay. Sounds appropriate.
(signaling the bartender)
May I have one of these, too?
(focusing on Erin)
How you doing?

ERIN
Fine.

CONNIE
Really?

ERIN
He took Tony.

CONNIE
I know, Sweetie.

ERIN
Sad thing is, I'm going to miss the cat way more than I'm going to miss Rick.

CONNIE
You're better off without him.

Connie takes a big draw on the straw of the drink delivered to her.

CONNIE
And you should've gotten that
assignment.

ERIN
Maybe next time.

CONNIE
Are you kidding me?

ERIN
What?

CONNIE
You are the most forgiving person I
have ever known.

ERIN
I'm sure Sylvia had her reasons.

CONNIE
Doesn't it piss you off that she
assigned that snotboy Jeremy, when
that should have been yours?

ERIN
Well, yeah, but --

CONNIE
He's such a jerk.

They both drink hard from their cocktails.

CONNIE
Hell, all guys are jerks!

ERIN
Connie. Please. Can we not talk
about it?

CONNIE
But --

ERIN
I just... never mind.

Erin turns to Phillip.

ERIN
Thanks for the recommendation.

PHILLIP
 (turning, ready to engage)
 You're welcome.

ERIN
 Did I really look like I needed a
 Painkiller?

PHILLIP
 Yeah. A little. Didn't mean to
 eavesdrop, but sounds like you had
 a tough day.

CONNIE
 (leaning around Erin, to
 Phillip)
 Are all guys jerks?

Another long suck.

PHILLIP
 I'd like to think not. I'd like to
 think that there are a few of us
 that are not jerks.

ERIN
 (pushing Connie back to her
 seat)
 Connie...

Declan arrives and plops down next to Phillip, opposite side
 of Erin. He is oblivious to any conversation Phillip may be
 involved in.

Declan's button-down shirt allows his neck and tattoo to be
 visible.

DECLAN
 (to Phillip)
 Any chance you're ready to head
 back to the hotel? I'm feeling
 kinda weird. Kinda jacked up. Like
 I'm on speed or something. Must
 have been that cappuccino I had
 earl--

Declan notices Phillip's looking directly at him. He looks
 past Phillip to see the women.

DECLAN
 Oh sorry, man.

Phillip shoots Declan a 'shut up and pay attention' glare. He is unsettled, fidgety, on-edge. Declan's not getting the message.

DECLAN

What *is* wrong with you?

(pause)

Oy. Haven't seen that look since the day we first...

(hushed)

He's here.

PHILLIP

(nodding slightly toward Erin)

Mmmm-hmmm.

DECLAN

The bartender?

PHILLIP

No.

Phillip gestures again toward Erin. Declan looks past Phillip, searching.

DECLAN

Where?

PHILLIP

Look at her arm.

DECLAN

Whose...

Declan notices Erin's arm.

DECLAN

(loud urgent whisper to Phillip)

You never told me it could be a woman.

PHILLIP

It never occurred to me.

Phillip turns back to Erin, who is sucking the last of her drink.

PHILLIP

I'm sorry, you were saying?

CONNIE
 We were saying how much
 guys sucked... in general,
 you know.

ERIN
 We were saying how good
 these drinks are.
 (to bartender)
 Could I have another,
 please?
 (to Phillip)
 Want one too?

PHILLIP
 Ah. Sure. Why not?

ERIN
 I'm Erin, by the way. This is my
 girlfriend, Connie.

PHILLIP
 Phillip. And this is Declan.

Declan gets off his stool to move between Erin and Connie.
 He invades their personal space.

CONNIE
 (flirtatiously)
 Well, hello.

ERIN
 (uncomfortably)
 Hello.

CONNIE
 Okay, so maybe all guys aren't
 jerks.

Declan acknowledges Connie, but is more interested in Erin.

PHILLIP
 Declan, don't crowd the poor girl.

DECLAN
 I'm rather impatient.

PHILLIP
 Try.

DECLAN
 (somewhat lounge-lizardy)
 Don't I know you from somewhere?

CONNIE
 That's your line?

ERIN
 Er. No. I don't think --

DECLAN
Actually, we do.

ERIN
Excuse me?

PHILLIP
Declan.

DECLAN
What?

PHILLIP
Please excuse him. His social
skills are still developing.
Declan, come sit down.

Defiant and hesitant, Declan returns to his seat.

ERIN
Actually you guys do really seem
familiar. Have we met before?

CONNIE
I think we'd remember them.

DECLAN
We haven't officially met, but we
know each other.

CONNIE
That was kinda cryptic.

PHILLIP
What he meant to say was I'm sure
we have a lot in common. We
probably know each other's type.

CONNIE
Oh, really? What type is that?

PHILLIP
Well, for example, what do you do
for a living?

CONNIE
We work for *Traveler Magazine*.

PHILLIP
Well, there you go. We're
journalists. I do the words. He
does the pictures. You know, that
kind of thing.

CONNIE
Really? Newspaper? Magazine?

PHILLIP
Freelance. Travel articles, mostly.

ERIN
You travel quite a bit then?

PHILLIP
Yeah, you could say that. We have several projects that keep us moving.

DECLAN
One in particular.

ERIN
Oh?

DECLAN
You.

Phillip smacks Declan in the arm.

ERIN
Me?

PHILLIP
He means women... Where they like to holiday, what they like to do.

ERIN
Oh, well, that's not a topic I've done any research on, you know, personally.

Another round of drinks arrive.

DECLAN
(muttering)
Phillip.

PHILLIP
(turning to Declan, quietly)
Her boyfriend just left her.

DECLAN
Good. No strings.

PHILLIP
Will you let me handle this, please?

DECLAN
Whatever. Just do it.

PHILLIP
We can't just drop this on her. We should take it slow.

DECLAN
Like you did for me? Tell her now.

PHILLIP
We don't want to scare her off --

DECLAN
She doesn't have a choice.

PHILLIP
Women are different these days. She can make this very difficult.

DECLAN
Tell her.

Connie leans in close to Erin's ear.

CONNIE
(quietly to Erin)
Get a load of the matching tats.

Erin tries to look, very un-stealthy.

ERIN
Do you think --

CONNIE
(confidently)
Definitely. Bummer. Why are all the hot ones gay?

They giggle, inhibitions loosened.

Phillip turns back to Erin, just finishing her drink with a slurp.

PHILLIP
Sorry. Another?

Erin debates the offer for a moment, then nods. Phillip signals the bartender.

CONNIE
Holy cow, Sweetie. Slow down.

ERIN
These are really good.

CONNIE
(to the guys)
So how long have you two been
together?

Erin chokes on the ice cube she just put in her mouth.

ERIN
Geez, Connie.

PHILLIP
Well, it feels like an eternity,
but I actually found him --

DECLAN
I think she's asking how long we've
been *together*.

PHILLIP
Yeah...

DECLAN
As a couple.

PHILLIP
A couple of what?

DECLAN
(slightly exasperated)
A married, gay couple, I suspect.

PHILLIP
But we're not married... wait,
we're not gay, either. You thought
we were gay?

ERIN
Ahh...

CONNIE
It was the tats.

PHILLIP
Tats?

CONNIE
Your tattoos.

ERIN
I've never seen matching tattoos on
guys before.

PHILLIP
Oh no, that's not, I mean, that
would be... well... that would be
like marrying... me.
(pause)
Or you.

DECLAN
Phillip is definitely a one-woman
man.

CONNIE	ERIN
(dejected)	(interested)
Oh?	Oh?

PHILLIP
Rose. Her name is Rose.

ERIN
That's a beautiful name.

Phillip appears a bit dreamy.

PHILLIP
She's a beautiful woman.

Declan lip-syncs Phillip. He's heard this a million times.

PHILLIP
Skin like fine porcelain, lips that
shame the red red rose and her
hair...
(breathing in, smiling in
remembrance)
Her smile will brighten the room.
You'll love her when we wake her.

ERIN	CONNIE
Wake her?	You sound like D.H. Lawrence.

PHILLIP
She'll love you too.

ERIN
What do you mean wake her?

Phillip is back in the present.

PHILLIP

Do you want another drink?

ERIN

No, I'm good.

(pointing toward the
bartender)

What do you mean wake her?

Connie's cellphone rings, attracting everyone's attention.

Connie digs it from her purse and answers it.

CONNIE

Hello? What? When? Yes. I'll be
right there. Calm down, I'm leaving
now. Right. Bye.

She shuts down the call.

CONNIE

Oh Sweetie. I'm so sorry. I need to
go. That was my mother. My Dad just
backed over our dog.

ERIN

Oh my God! Is he all right?

CONNIE

He's dead.

ERIN

Oh my God!

CONNIE

He was a pain in the ass anyway.

ERIN

I meant your Dad.

CONNIE

Oh yeah, he's fine, but my mother
is all freaked out. I've gotta head
over to the house. Wanna come?

Erin gives an 'are you serious?' look, as her third drink
arrives.

CONNIE

(hushed)

Will you be okay here?

ERIN
Yeah, I'll be fine.

CONNIE
You sure?

ERIN
Yes, of course. Go take care of
your parents. I'll head home in
just a bit.

CONNIE
Okay, if you're sure.

Connie gives Erin a quick hug.

CONNIE
I'll see you tomorrow.

She gives a quick wave to Phillip and Declan.

CONNIE
Nice meeting you two.
(to Erin)
You're definitely safe with the
lovesick puppy, but watch out for
the other one. Be careful... And I
want details.

With a wink, Connie leaves.

PHILLIP
(calling after Connie)
It's okay, she's safe with us.

Erin hesitates before turning her attention back to her
drink and the men.

ERIN
What did you mean? Wake her up?

Phillip looks to Declan for reassurance. Declan nods.

PHILLIP
Have you ever heard of *Sleeping
Beauty*?

Declan moves to Connie's empty stool, next to Erin.

ERIN
(puzzled by the subject
change)
Yeah, of course, I have, everyone
has. Princess Aurora. Brier Rose...

ERIN

wait... Rose? Brier Rose? You're in
love with a fairy tale princess?

DECLAN

It's a helluva fairy tale.

(pause)

Once upon a time --

PHILLIP

HEY --

DECLAN

Tais-toi! Je lui raconte
l'histoire.

PHILLIP

hmmph.

DECLAN

Once upon a time --

ERIN

Wait, I know this one. The wicked
fairy godmother,
(air quotes)
the mistress of all evil,
(air quotes)
curses the princess to prick her
finger on a spinning wheel and die,
but the three good fairies change
it so she would sleep for a hundred
years instead, until Prince
Charming can awaken her with a
kiss. I saw the movie.
Bibbidi-Bobbidi-Boo.

PHILLIP

Pfffttt.

ERIN

Oh wait. Not Prince Charming. What
was his name?

PHILLIP

Phillip.

ERIN

No, that's not it. Connie would
know. She loves this stuff. Oh, I
can't remember.

PHILLIP
Phillip.

ERIN
Phillip? You sure.

PHILLIP
Pretty sure.

ERIN
Mmm. Anyway. And they lived happily
ever after.

DECLAN
Not yet.

ERIN
Not yet? What, you don't believe in
happily-ever-afters?

DECLAN
He does, but we're sick of waiting
for it.

ERIN
(to herself)
I hear ya.

Erin finishes off her drink.

PHILLIP
I am *that* Prince.

ERIN
You think you're Prince Charming?

PHILLIP
No, Prince Phillip.

ERIN
(playing along)
And you need to wake your princess?

PHILLIP
Yes.

DECLAN
But it takes more than just him.

Erin's attention is split between the two men.

PHILLIP

You said you worked for a travel magazine.

ERIN

Yeah, I'm a research assistant.

PHILLIP

Do you travel often?

ERIN

Unfortunately, no. I'm stuck in a cube all day.

DECLAN

Would you like to?

ERIN

Well, yeah, of course I would.

DECLAN

You can travel with us. Ever been to the Black Forest?

PHILLIP

We would like you to come with us.

ERIN

We just met.

PHILLIP

We need you to come with us. We need you to help awaken my princess.

ERIN

You need me?

DECLAN

We need you to complete us; to unite us. It's important that you come with us.

ERIN

I don't think --

DECLAN

Don't think.

PHILLIP

Come with us.

Erin, increasingly uncomfortable, pulls money out of her purse to pay her bill.

PHILLIP
Please.

ERIN
I'd better get going.

DECLAN
What about your arm?

ERIN
Excuse me?

DECLAN
The scars on your arm.

Erin pulls her coat off the back of the chair and quickly puts it on, covering her arms. They're creeping her out.

DECLAN
We have scars.

ERIN
I think I've had enough. I should go!

Erin gets up to leave.

DECLAN
Please, don't go.

Erin beelines for the door, pushing her way through the other patrons.

EXT. OUTSIDE

The moment Erin exits the restaurant, she speeds up, walking quickly up the sidewalk.

Declan follows closely behind her.

DECLAN
Erin! Wait!

Phillip is out the door too.

In an effort to put some distance between them, Erin darts across the street.

SCREECH!

BAM!

Hit by a car!

Horrified, Declan rushes to Erin's motionless body. Quickly kneeling beside her, he turns her over to reveal her blood-soaked face, a large gash along her hairline.

Phillip is immediately beside them.

DECLAN
(to Phillip)
You've condemned us!

Seeing the blood, ignoring Declan's anger, Phillip instantly grabs a shard of the broken headlight lens. He slices his hand.

Blood gushing, he places his hand against her open wound; their blood mixes.

Erin's body shudders briefly. Phillip's eyes pop as the bio-electrical pulse shocks through his body. They are united!

A crowd gathers.

CUT TO:

INT. HOSPITAL - EMERGENCY ROOM - NIGHT

Erin lies in a hospital bed in a curtained area, bandaged, asleep.

The johnny does nothing to cover the tattoo that now encircles her neck, identical to Phillip's and Declan's; a permanent choker.

The circle is complete now, attested by the tattoos around their necks.

Declan sits close to the bed.

Phillip sits in a chair across the space, looking through Erin's cell phone.

DECLAN
(heavy sigh)
How long's it going to take?

PHILLIP
I don't think her injuries are any worse than when you ran a sword through yourself. Or jumped from that bridge in Michigan. Or that time you decided to stand still during the Running of the Bulls --

DECLAN
Okay, okay.

PHILLIP
Not your smartest decision, by the way.

DECLAN
Yeah, yeah, yeah.

PHILLIP
How long did those take to recover?

DECLAN
I hate waiting.

PHILLIP
(for the millionth time)
I know.

Silence.

DECLAN
(quietly)
I like her.

PHILLIP
Of course you do. She's you. She's me.

DECLAN
But I hate you.

PHILLIP
No, you don't.

DECLAN
Yeah, I really do.

PHILLIP
You hate what I represent.

DECLAN
No, I'm pretty sure I hate you.

PHILLIP
You hate that I didn't give you a choice.

DECLAN
Like you gave her.

PHILLIP
I was trying.

DECLAN
That was you trying to give her a
choice, that wasn't yours to give?

PHILLIP
I asked. I could have demanded.

DECLAN
Yeah, that worked well, didn't it?

PHILLIP
She's in now, isn't she?

DECLAN
Means to an end, huh?

PHILLIP
Just don't get too attached.

DECLAN
You're going to tell her
everything, right?

Erin stirs as she awakens. As her eyes open, Declan moves a bit closer. Erin focuses on him. She is serene, until her memory rushes to the surface.

ERIN
Stay away from me!

DECLAN
It's okay.

ERIN
No. Go away... Now.

Phillip joins Declan at her bedside.

PHILLIP
We're sorry if we frightened you.

ERIN
Get out!

DECLAN
Look, we just --

ERIN
I'll scream.

She searches around for a nurse call button.

PHILLIP
No need. We're leaving.

DECLAN
What?!?

PHILLIP
Come. She needs her rest.

Phillip turns to leave. Declan, albeit slower, leaves too.

Erin searches around the hospital room, getting a grip on her current situation.

Erin scratches the bandage on her head. After a moment, she lift the bandage up. She scrapes off a few dried blood flakes, but otherwise, she finds no wound. She pulls the bandage completely off.

She slowly rises from the hospital bed, waiting for pain. She moves her legs, arms, neck - nothing.

Erin hops out of bed, almost stumbles. She has an air cast on her foot. She wiggles her foot. No pain. She reaches down and takes it off. Gingerly, she puts weight on her foot. No pain.

She spots her clothes in a bag in the corner. Moving away from the bed, she is pulled backward by the IV line attached to her hand. She pulls the needle out and watches in amazement as the puncture heals immediately.

As Erin quickly dresses, she catches herself in a mirror.

ERIN
(panicked)
What the...?

She touches the tattoo cautiously. She tries to scrub it off frantically with a towel. It doesn't come off. She quickly realizes the futility of the action and tosses the towel aside. She rubs her head, where the bandage-but-no-wound was, trying to recall recent events.

ERIN
I didn't think I drank that much.

Shaking her head clear, she exits the room toward the nearest hospital exit.

EXT. OUTSIDE

Erin hails a cab.

Once in the cab, Erin turns her head to see Phillip and Declan, seated on a bench outside the ER entrance. Horror and anger cross Erin's face as the cab departs.

When she is out of sight, both men wince and cover their mouths, holding back vomit.

DECLAN

Oh cacamas... I forgot about this part...

CUT TO:

INT. ERIN'S APARTMENT - DAY

Erin wakes and makes an extra effort to get out of bed. She's moving slow.

Suddenly she runs to the bathroom and vomits. She then washes her face in the sink. Looking in the mirror, looking horribly sick - not the green of a hangover, but instead the paleness of the flu, she studies the tattoo.

ERIN

I'm gonna kill those guys...

She wraps a scarf around her neck, which, once on, adequately covers the tattoo.

Erin gets ready for work - dresses, gathers belongings, fixes her hair, etc. She leaves her apartment.

As she makes her way to the subway, she has a sick look on her face and grabs her stomach. She recovers and proceeds to work.

CUT TO:

INT. OFFICE - LATER

Erin excuses herself after a meeting, rushes to the restroom and vomits.

Upon exiting the bathroom, she runs into Connie.

CONNIE
Sweetie? You okay?

ERIN
Yeah.

CONNIE
So what happened after I left?

ERIN
Nothing.

CONNIE
Nothing?

ERIN
Yeah, nothing. We chatted for a few minutes longer, then I left.

CONNIE
They were gay after all, weren't they?

ERIN
No.

Erin throws up in her mouth a little.

CONNIE
You sure you're okay? 'Cause you're kinda pale.

ERIN
Eh. It's nothing.

CONNIE
You just threw up, didn't you?

ERIN
What? No.

CONNIE
In the bathroom?

Connie raises her eyebrows dubiously.

CONNIE
How much did you drink last night?

ERIN
Not much... or at least I didn't think I did.

CONNIE
You're hungover. Good for you.

ERIN
It doesn't like a hangover. My head
is fine. Just my stomach.

Connie eyes Erin, concerned, then a light bulb.

CONNIE
Oh my God! You're pregnant.

ERIN
What? No. No! I'm not pregnant.

CONNIE
It's not out of the realm of
possibilities, is it? You and Rick
--

ERIN
I'm not pregnant, Connie!

CONNIE
Right. Why don't you go home? I'll
cover for you.

Erin ponders the offer for a second, nods, turns and leaves.

CONNIE
(calling after her)
Nice scarf, by the way.

CUT TO:

INT. PHILLIP AND DECLAN'S HOTEL SUITE - DAY

Declan wakes abruptly, rushes to the bathroom and vomits. He comes out a few moments later, wiping his mouth.

Phillip is lounging on the couch, a large bottle of *Pepto Bismol* next to him, flipping through a magazine.

DECLAN
This sucks.

Phillip holds up the *Pepto* bottle.

Declan winces at the offering.

PHILLIP
At least you knew it was coming.

DECLAN
Why are we waiting again?

PHILLIP
Times have changed. We have to give
her free will.
(pause)
Or at least the illusion of it.

DECLAN
But you're going to tell her
everything, right?

PHILLIP
(returning to his magazine)
Mmm-hmm.

CUT TO:

INT. SUBWAY - DAY

Seated on the subway, Erin looks horrible, rubbing her eyes,
obviously not feeling well.

LADY
Excuse me, Miss, but are you
feeling all right?

ERIN
Yes, I'm fine, thanks.

LADY
If you'll pardon me for saying so,
but you don't look so good. You
know, if you're ill, you shouldn't
travel and pass it on to the rest
of us.

ERIN
Oh no, it'll pass.

The lady looks at Erin suspiciously, then a thought dawns.

LADY
Oh! I see. Ginger ale and saltines.

ERIN
Excuse me?

LADY

That's what got me through and let me tell you, I ate a hell of a lot of saltines. Should've bought stock in *Keebler*. I had morning sickness with all four of my boys... nine months... well, except my youngest, Benjy, he only troubled me for seven months. And I don't know why they call it morning sickness. I had it all day.

(pause)

So when are you due?

ERIN

Ah, well. I'm not sure.

LADY

We can figure it out. When do you think you conceived?

The train car comes to a stop. Erin jumps up.

ERIN

Sorry, this is my stop.

LADY

Safe travels, then... and remember, ginger ale and saltines.

CUT TO:

INT. ERIN'S APARTMENT - NIGHT

A knock on the door. A key in the lock. Door opens.

Connie walks in, looks around, disgusted, then walks to Erin's bedroom.

Erin is dozing, but Connie wakes her.

CONNIE

Erin? You awake?

Erin groans into her pillow.

ERIN

Am now.

CONNIE

Just stopped by to check in on you to see if you were feeling any better.

Connie turns Erin over. Erin, wrapped up in a robe, looks ragged and sleep-deprived. Erin covers her eyes from the street light coming in from the window.

Erin hurriedly strips away her bed covers, bolts from bed and rushes to the bathroom. Vomit and retching noises follow.

Erin slowly exits the bathroom, looking pathetic.

CONNIE

Well, what did the test say?

ERIN

Test?

CONNIE

The pregnancy test.

ERIN

Haven't taken one yet.

CONNIE

Shit! You need to! Do you have one?
I should've brought one.

Erin shakes her head again.

CONNIE

Want me to go get one?
(picking up her purse)
I'll run down to Casey's on the
corner. They should have one,
right?

ERIN

(nodding)
I'd think so.

CONNIE

I'll be right back. Do you need
anything else? Ginger Ale?
Saltines? Tums?

Erin shakes her head as she turns back to her bed, seeking the underside of her comforter.

Connie leaves.

Erin's cell phone rings. Head buried, she fumbles around for it on the nightstand and answers it without looking.

ERIN
Lost already? It's less than a
block.

PHILLIP (O.S.)
Erin?

ERIN
Who's this?

PHILLIP
Phillip.

ERIN
Why the hell are you calling me?

PHILLIP
I'm calling to make sure you're --

ERIN
Stay away from me! Don't call me
again!

Erin quickly pushes the END key to disconnect the call.

A few moments later, it rings again. She angrily answers it.

ERIN
I said don't call me again!

DECLAN
Erin. It's Declan. Please don't
hang up. Please. I need you --

ERIN
Stop. You two are... not right.

DECLAN
I know we sound as we've gone
mental, but... I just wanted to
make sure you were okay.

ERIN
You just saw me last night. I'm
fine.

DECLAN
A lot's changed since last night.
Please.

ERIN
No.

Erin disconnects the call. She covers her head with her pillow.

The phone rings again.

She answers.

ERIN

I said no.

DECLAN

Then why do you keep answering?

ERIN

(flustered)

I... I... No.

DECLAN

(calmly, but pained)

Erin. Listen. I feel like shite. My guess is that you feel like shite, too.

ERIN

That's none of your business.

DECLAN

It's not what you think. We can help you.

ERIN

Help me? What's that supposed to mean?

DECLAN

Please, Erin. We need to see you.

(quietly)

I need to see you.

ERIN

No.

She hangs up and buries herself in her bed covers again.

Connie returns from the store with a small bag. She eagerly extracts a pregnancy test with a smile. She tosses it to Erin.

CONNIE

Go pee.

Reluctantly, Erin slowly gets up from bed and heads to the bathroom.

Connie pulls a kitchen timer out of the bag.

Erin's cell phone rings.

ERIN (O.S.)
(yelling from the bathroom)
Don't answer that!

Connie shrugs, then crosses to the bathroom.

CONNIE
You have to wait three minutes.

ERIN (O.S.)
Why so long?

CONNIE
I don't know, that's what the
instructions say. Did you pee yet?

The phone stops ringing.

ERIN (O.S.)
I'm trying.

Connie paces in front of the door.

The phone starts ringing again.

ERIN (O.S.)
Don't answer that.

CONNIE
Why? Who is it?

ERIN (O.S.)
Those guys from last night.

The phone stops ringing.

A flush.

Erin opens the door.

CONNIE
Well?

ERIN
You said three minutes.

Connie harrumphs and sets the kitchen timer. Erin crawls back in bed. Connie follows her.

CONNIE
Which one?

ERIN
Which one what?

CONNIE
Which one is calling you? Phillip
or Darren?

ERIN
Darren?

CONNIE
Wasn't that his name?

ERIN
Declan.

CONNIE
Declan, right. So --

ERIN
Neither of them. I don't want to
talk to either of them.

CONNIE
They turned out to be jerks, after
all, didn't they?

Erin pauses for a long moment, then sighs.

ERIN
No. Worse. Crazy. After you left,
they told me this crazy story about
Sleeping Beauty.
(pause, then very fast)
Then I got hit by a car, nearly got
killed, ended up in the hospital --

CONNIE
What --

ERIN
But woke up with nothing, not even
a scratch.

CONNIE
What --

ERIN
I'm fine.

CONNIE

What the hell are you talking about?

ERIN

They wanted me to go to Germany with them. They said they needed me to wake up a sleeping princess. They started getting really bizarre.

The kitchen timer goes off. They look at each other, suddenly nervous.

CONNIE

(smiling reassuringly)
Rick and you were planning on having kids anyway someday, right?

ERIN

Things have definitely changed.

CONNIE

I know. Go check.

Erin rolls her eyes. Connie nudges her.

Erin goes into the bathroom.

The phone rings again.

Connie looks at the phone, toward the bathroom, then the phone again. She picks it up.

CONNIE

Hello?

DECLAN (O.S.)

Erin?

CONNIE

No. Who's this?

DECLAN (O.S.)

Declan. May I please speak with Erin?

CONNIE

No. She's busy.

Rustling noise on the line, as the phone is being transferred to another person.

PHILLIP (O.S.)
(sternly)
Who's this?

CONNIE
Who's this?

PHILLIP (O.S.)
This is Phillip. I need to speak
with Erin.
(softly)
Please.

CONNIE
No.

Long silence.

PHILLIP (O.S.)
Can you give her a message at
least?

CONNIE
Maybe.
(pause)
What?

PHILLIP (O.S.)
Sleeping Beauty is not a fairy
tale.

CONNIE
Sleeping Beauty is not a fairy
tale?

Erin sticks her head out the bathroom door, a pregnancy test
stick in her hand.

She snatches the phone from Connie.

ERIN
Nice try.

PHILLIP (O.S.)
You're not pregnant, are you?

Erin looks at the stick.

Negative.

PHILLIP (O.S.)
Erin, please. We know you're
feeling ill and we know it's not
morning sickness --

ERIN

How did you -- what did you do to me?

PHILLIP (O.S.)

Please know we didn't hurt you, if that's what you're thinking. If you'll let us come see you, we'll explain everything.

Erin hesitates, confused.

ERIN

Look. I don't know what funky shit you two are into, but --

PHILLIP (O.S.)

I am Prince Phillip and I need you to help me awaken my Princess Rose.

Silence.

ERIN

I can't help you.

PHILLIP (O.S.)

Are you near a mirror? Did you look at your neck?

ERIN

Yeah, I saw. When did you do that?

The phone shuffles again. Declan's on the line again.

DECLAN (O.S.)

Ours are complete now, too.

ERIN

Whatever you put in my drink --

DECLAN (O.S.)

Nothing, I swear.

ERIN

Then how --

DECLAN (O.S.)

You're the one we're looking for. We're part of each other. You, me, Phillip. We need to be together.

Erin ponders the situation for a long time, looking from the pregnancy test to the mirror.

The phone shuffles one more time.

PHILLIP (O.S.)
Erin? Please come to Germany with
us. It won't take long.

ERIN
You're crazy.

PHILLIP (O.S.)
Is your stomach feeling better?

ERIN
What?

PHILLIP
Your stomach. It is feeling better?

ERIN
(taking a quick physical
inventory of herself)
Ah...Yeah. I guess.

PHILLIP (O.S.)
Would you like to know why?
(pause)
Open your door.

Erin looks around, very uneasy. A siren wails by in the street below. It echoes in the earpiece of her phone.

ERIN
(urgently whispering to
Connie)
Check the door.

Connie rushes to the apartment door and peers through the peep hole. Erin stays a few paces behind her.

Phillip and Declan are right outside the door, Phillip on his cell phone.

CONNIE
(hushed yell)
It's them. Those guys.

ERIN
(mouthing silently)
What the fuck?

PHILLIP (O.S.)
Want to know about the markings on
your neck?

Erin storms over to the door and swings it open. Connie jumps out of the way.

Erin's about to lay into both of the guys, until the door is open and they're standing in front of her... the most welcome sight... her destiny.

Connie gasps as she sees their tattoos, now complete.

Phillip puts away his cell phone.

PHILLIP

May we come in?

Dazed, Erin stands aside to grant entrance.

Phillip passes her with a slight smile. Declan takes her phone out of her hand and disconnects the call.

Phillip surveys the barren apartment with unspoken disapproval. He carries an old leather satchel.

Declan peers around the apartment, apparently more interested than Phillip, also disapproving.

DECLAN

Bastard took everything, huh?

ERIN

Yeah, well, I don't need a lot.

(pause)

How the hell did you know where I lived?

Phillip lifted a eyebrow, as if the answer was obvious.

ERIN

How did you know I wasn't pregnant?

Phillip takes a seat on the couch. All follow.

PHILLIP

How do you feel now?

Erin ponders a bit.

ERIN

Pretty good, I guess.

(deep breath)

Really good, actually.

PHILLIP

As do we.

Connie sidles up next to Erin.

CONNIE

You're looking a lot better, too.

PHILLIP

So long as you stay close to
us, you will continue to vraitment
bien.

ERIN

What does that mean?

PHILLIP

We are connected now. We are one.
We must stay close to each other to
work as one.

ERIN

Stay close?

PHILLIP

About a thousand feet.

DECLAN

Nine hundred 'n eighty-three.

PHILLIP

(corrected)

Nine hundred eighty-three feet.

DECLAN

I've measured.

PHILLIP

If we are apart by any more than
that, we physically feel the
separation.

ERIN

Meaning --

DECLAN

We feel like shite.

ERIN

Until --

PHILLIP

We are in close proximity again.

Contemplating.

ERIN

What about my neck?

Connie gasps again as she notices Erin's neck for the first time.

PHILLIP

It's the mark of the Angels. An identifier, if you will.

ERIN

For what?

Phillip pulls open the satchel and extracts what appears to be a leather-bound journal. He hands it to Erin.

PHILLIP

Take a look.

Erin carefully opens the book to expose the ancient parchment. She sounds out the French pronunciation, reading aloud.

ERIN

La Belle au bois dormant?

PHILLIP

The Sleeping Beauty in the Woods.
It was written by a friend of mine.

CONNIE

Sleeping Beauty? That was written
in the 17th century.

PHILLIP

Yes.

CONNIE

By... um... Perrault, I think?

PHILLIP

Yes. Charles Perrault.

ERIN

You were friends with Charles
Perrault?

PHILLIP

Yes. Quite good friends. If you go to the middle, you'll see he translated it to English for Declan. I think that will be easier for you.

Erin gently turns the pages until she finds the beginning of the English translation. With Phillip's prodding, she reads aloud...

SUPERIMPOSE: Animated interpretation of the story being read.

ERIN

Once upon a time, there was a King and a Queen who very much wanted a child. After much waiting, the Queen gave birth to a baby girl. A joyous celebration was declared. As custom in the land, seven Angels descended from the throne of God, to the throne of the King and Queen, and stood before the royal princess.

One by one, the Angels bestowed their gifts to the baby princess. The first gave her the gift of beauty and radiance; the second - the gift of philanthropy and compassion; the third Angel - grace, charm and patience. Talent for dance and music was presented by the fourth. And the fifth gift was the voice for song and the tongue for dialogue. The blessing of curiosity and intelligence was the sixth birthday wish.

As each Angel presented their gift, there appeared an eighth Angel. This eighth Angel was not dressed in garments of lights, as were the other seven, but instead, was cloaked with a garment of darkness. Since all the eyes of the court were upon the royal princess, no one seemed to notice as the eighth Angel took its place in line. However, one Angel did notice, and becoming nervous, slipped behind a tapestry.

ERIN

The eighth Angel stepped before the infant princess. It stretched out its dark hand over the baby and pronounced its gift. The princess would prick her finger on the spindle of a spinning wheel, and die.

And with that proclamation, in a great cloud of white smoke, she turned into a large dragon with bright purple eyes.

At this moment, the good Angel who had concealed itself, stepped forward. Gathering its courage, in a loud voice, the good Angel declared, "Be assured, King, and be assured Queen, your daughter will not die. However, the princess will fall into a deep sleep. Her sleep will last a hundred years, upon which she will be awakened by a prince's true love's kiss."

Erin looks up from her reading.

PHILLIP

Charles was indeed a storyteller and tended to exaggerate a bit.

ERIN

You really are him?

Phillip nods.

CONNIE

Wait a minute. You're saying that you're the prince in Sleeping Beauty?

Phillip nods again.

CONNIE

Somethings's not right with that story.

PHILLIP

You're right. Charles took creative license and edited some key elements. He and I were dear

PHILLIP

friends for years. He knew who I was and what I was destined to do. But he also knew business and what type of story would sell at the time. For instance, there were only five Angels, not seven. Although one was sacrificed.

ERIN

Sacrificed?

PHILLIP

Yes. As you can probably imagine, the Dark Angel was not happy after that little party. The curses didn't stop on that day either. They flew back and forth for years. Most were petty and benign, but they always came back to that initial act of defiance. First it was about how the kingdom would live out the hundred years... plague, fire, earth-shaking... all were possible fates for the castle.
(pause)

My destiny was changed several times. Only by that Angel sacrificing herself, was my path secured.

CONNIE

You still get to kiss the princess, right?

PHILLIP

Yes, it is my providence to awaken the princess with true love's kiss.
(pause)

The scars on our arms...

Erin grabs her arm. Phillip pushes up his sleeve to show his.

PHILLIP

...were left on me the first time I attempted to awaken her.

ERIN

What happened?

PHILLIP

The castle wall was covered by a hundred years growth of thorny brambles and brier. Although, I was allowed to pass through, where so many other valiant men failed, I was left with these two scars, to be shared with the two incarnations of my torn soul. I can not awaken the princess until I reunite with them. I have been searching ever since. The Dark Angel's final obstruction to breaking the Angels' counter-curse. That was almost four hundred years ago.

Silence.

ERIN

You've been looking for us for four hundred years?

PHILLIP

For you, yes. I found Declan over 300 years ago.

ERIN

All this time...

PHILLIP

The Angels said that Patience would be my protector; see me through to the end.

CONNIE

Jesus! You're immortal.

DECLAN

Sorta. But that is why you healed so quickly. We can't die.

PHILLIP

And he's tried. Believe me.

DECLAN

Only for the first hundred years.

ERIN

But the neck...

PHILLIP

To ensure we were true, they gave us an outward sign. One that couldn't be denied once reunited.

ERIN
 (rubbing her neck,
 thoughtfully)
 So now what?

DECLAN
 We need you to come to Germany with
 us.

ERIN
 That's where she is?

Both Phillip and Declan nod.

Erin mulls over all she's heard. A quick shake of the head.

ERIN
 This is crazy!

CONNIE
 Go!

ERIN
 (surprised)
 What?

CONNIE
 Go!

ERIN
 But this is --

CONNIE
 Erin, for as long as I've known
 you, you've always been ready for
 something bigger, something more.
 You've always wanted to get out and
 see the world. Christ, you carry
 your passport around in your purse.
 But something's always holding you
 back... work, money, boyfriend...
 pfftt... here's your opportunity to
 be part of something bigger. Every
 girl dreams of living in a fairy
 tale. Even if you're not the
 princess this time, here's your
 chance to be a part of a Happy Ever
 After. Go for it.
 (to Phillip and Declan)
 And I'm trusting you two to bring
 her home safe and sound.

They hesitate.

ERIN

This is so crazy... but... you're right.

(pause)

Okay, I'll go.

PHILLIP

Splendid.

ERIN

When?

DECLAN

How's now?

CUT TO:

INT. ZUR ALTEN BRÜCKE - SCHILTACH, GERMANY - NIGHT

The Zur alten Brücke, located in Schiltach, Germany in the Black Forest Nature Reserve, is a traditional guesthouse in a quaint, historical town.

Declan is sitting at the small bar, alone, sucking on a lime, an empty shot glass in front of him, a bottle of tequila on the bar. Erin comes up behind him.

ERIN

Would you mind some company?

Declan acknowledges her, but says nothing. The BARTENDER is prompt.

BARTENDER

Möchten Sie etwas trinken?

ERIN

I'm sorry?

BARTENDER

(heavy German accent)

Do you want a drink?

ERIN

Oh. Ah. Yes, please. Whatever he's having.

Declan's interest is piqued.

The bartender is quick about getting another shot glass filled, while Erin climbs onto her stool.

Erin hesitantly swigs the shot and promptly chokes and gags, as she sucks on the sour lime.

Declan chuckles lightly to himself as she's not an experienced drinker. He slides a salt shaker towards her.

Erin recovers ungracefully.

ERIN

You don't like me much, do you?

DECLAN

What gives you that idea?

Erin shrugs.

ERIN

I don't know, it's just...

DECLAN

Is there reason for me to not like you?

ERIN

Uh, I don't think so. I think I'm pretty likable.

DECLAN

Do you, now?

ERIN

Yeah. I'm smart. People have told me I'm funny on occasion.

(proudly)

I'm bó thorthúil.

DECLAN

Bó thorthúil? Who called you bó thorthúil?

ERIN

This guy Connie and I met at the Celtic Festival last weekend.

DECLAN

Did he tell you what it meant?

ERIN

Pretty?

Declan laughs and shakes his head, pitifully.

DECLAN
He called you a fertile cow.

ERIN
Really? Well, that sucks.

Erin, dejected, plays with her sucked lime. The bartender fills their shot glasses.

DECLAN
Tá tú álainn.

ERIN
(sadly)
Another cow comment?

Declan offers a small smile.

DECLAN
Beautiful.

Erin smiles back shyly.

Another shot to fill the silence that falls.

ERIN
So... you're probably a pretty big history expert, huh?

DECLAN
Not really.

ERIN
But you're like a thousand years old. You've lived through everything.

DECLAN
Three hundred 'n thirty-eight.

ERIN
What?

DECLAN
I'm three hundred 'n thirty-eight. Not a thousand.

ERIN
Seriously? Three hundred and thirty-eight?
(pause)
Whoa.
(pause)

ERIN
But you've still lived through some amazing times, met some fascinating people, I bet.

DECLAN
Not really.

ERIN
Do you know Colin Farrell?

DECLAN
Nope.

ERIN
How about Graham Norton? He's Irish, right? I just love him. He's hilarious.

DECLAN
Nope.

ERIN
Oooh. Robbie Keane?

Puzzled look. Salt, Shot, Lime.

DECLAN
Nope.

ERIN
Robbie Keane? Striker for the Los Angeles Galaxy? He's Irish.

DECLAN
Just because I'm Irish doesn't mean I know all Irishman living or dead. You follow football?

ERIN
Yeah. I love watching him. I mean the game.

DECLAN
You a Beckham fan too?

ERIN
Well, sure, he's great, but I like Robbie better. What I wouldn't give to see him play in the World Cup. Have you been to the World Cup?

DECLAN

Nope.

Declan pours another shot for each of them. He downs his quickly. She takes a few extra moments, but this one goes down smoother than the first.

ERIN

Did you know Isaac Newton?

DECLAN

Nope.

ERIN

Louis XIV?

DECLAN

Nope.

ERIN

Winston Churchill?

DECLAN

Nope.

ERIN

Were you at the storming of the Bastille?

Declan is increasingly humored by Erin's tequila consumption and line of badgering.

DECLAN

Nope. Wasn't there.

ERIN

The signing of the Declaration of Independence?

DECLAN

Nope. Wasn't there either.

ERIN

The Rise of the Berlin Wall?

DECLAN

Nope.

ERIN

The Fall?

Another shot. She's getting better at this.

DECLAN

Nope.

ERIN

What about the 'shot heard round
the world'?

DECLAN

Nope.

ERIN

Oh come on, around the world...
everyone heard it.

DECLAN

You do know that wasn't an actual
noise, right?

ERIN

Yeeess.

DECLAN

Nope.

ERIN

Then where were you all that time?
What were you doing?

Pause. Another shot.

DECLAN

Looking for you.

This catches Erin off balance, as she realizes just how long
Phillip and Declan have been on this search... for her.

Long pause as Declan regards her silently, sincerely and
Erin struggles on how to respond next. She plays with a lime
wedge, absently.

ERIN

You're a bonehead!

DECLAN

Excuse me?

ERIN

(defensively)

You've spent your entire life
looking for me, but didn't take in
anything along the way?

DECLAN
I wouldn't say --

ERIN
All the history I can only read
about, you could've lived.

Another shot.

ERIN
I mean, what I wouldn't give to
have seen Versailles in its day or
to meet the Brontë sisters --

DECLAN
You're a romantic.

ERIN
Of course, I am. And you're --

DECLAN
Not.

ERIN
I don't believe that. I think deep
down you're a softy.

DECLAN
Don't count on it.

The lime wedge pops out of Erin's fingers and flies across
the bar. Declan flinches as it skims his nose.

Erin lifts another shot to her lips.

DECLAN
I did sleep with Marie Antoinette
though.

Erin spits out tequila.

ERIN
What? No way, you man-whore!

DECLAN
Man-whore? Wow.

ERIN
(mopping up the bar)
Yeah.

DECLAN
I experienced history a bit
differently than you expect and I'm
a boneheaded man-whore.

Erin stops wiping, embarrassed.

ERIN
I did call you that, didn't I?

DECLAN
Don't get me wrong, I've been
called worse.

ERIN
Can they be said in public?

Phillip enters the bar, but stops at the door. He sees
Declan and Erin sitting at the bar, laughing and having a
good time.

Phillip leaves.

INT. ZUR ALTEN BRÜCKE - LATER THAT NIGHT

Several spent limes sit on a napkin... Erin is obviously
drunk.

ERIN
So you're sticking with that? Felix
is better than Garfield?

DECLAN
Without question.

ERIN
You're delirious.

Erin slips off her stool and starts laughing.

DECLAN
I think we better get you somewhere
a bit more stable.

ERIN
Did you see that? It slipped right
out from under me.

Declan helps Erin to the stairs to her room in the Inn, but
she stumbles, so Declan carries her.

ERIN

You know, if you weren't so grumpy,
I could see the two of us being
pretty good friends.

DECLAN

You think I'm Grumpy?

ERIN

Dopey?

(laughs at herself)

Can you be Happy tomorrow?

DECLAN

I'll try.

ERIN

I'd like that.

Declan opens the door to Erin's room.

ERIN

Are we really going to meet a
princess tomorrow?

DECLAN

That's the plan.

ERIN

Bibbidi, Bobbidi - Can I be a
princess?

DECLAN

Sure.

ERIN

I'd like to be Cinder, no, wait,
Snow White... surrounded by seven
little men.

(laughs at herself again)

Right now, I'm Sleepy though.

Declan gently deposits Erin into her bed, tucking her in.
She falls asleep immediately.

DECLAN

(whispering)

Good night, Snow White.

Declan quietly leaves her room.

Declan runs into Phillip in the hallway. Declan and Phillip
lock eyes, saying nothing.

DECLAN
Don't read into this. I was just
being chivalrous.

As Declan proceeds down the hall, Phillip looks after him with a suspicious, but knowing expression. Usually when Declan's leaving a woman's room, it's for other not so chivalrous reasons.

INT. ZUR ALTEN BRÜCKE - DAY

Erin, bright-eyed and bushy-tailed, enters the Inn's dining room. Declan, already seated at a table, sips coffee. A plate of muffins, danish and croissants are on the table. Two backpacks rest on the floor.

ERIN
(cheerfully)
Good morning!

DECLAN
Good morning. How're you feeling?

ERIN
Surprisingly good, considering the amount we drank last night. I slept like the dead. I'm ready for a brand new day.

DECLAN
One of the perks of our...
condition. Juice?

ERIN
Ooh, a croissant.

DECLAN
It's all yours.

ERIN
Where's Phillip?

DECLAN
He said he had a few errands. He'll be back soon, then we'll set out.

ERIN
You know I'm not that much of a hiker, right?

DECLAN
It's not far. Maybe five miles from
where we'll park?

ERIN
How's that translate into city
blocks?

DECLAN
No clue.

ERIN
Those packs better have some
chocolate in them.

DECLAN
Don't know. Phillip packed them.

ERIN
So probably not. I'll be back. I'm
going in search of chocolate.

DECLAN
But --

ERIN
Any woman who's been asleep for
five hundred years will need
chocolate when she wakes up... lots
of chocolate.

Erin turns to leave on her quest, taking a big bite from her
croissant. With a revolting expression, she grabs a napkin
and spits it out.

ERIN
BLECH! This is disgusting!

Declan has the same expression on his face.

DECLAN
It's not the croissant.

ERIN
What?

DECLAN
It's Phillip. He's out of range.

ERIN
Well, get him back into range, cuz
this sucks.

Erin plops down into a chair, dropping her head on the table.

CUT TO:

EXT. SCHILTACH, GERMANY - DAY

With a committed stride, Phillip approaches and enters an apothecary, apparent in any language by its signage. The DRUGGIST, an old man, sitting on a stool behind the counter, looks up from his paper, upon hearing the door open. He nods a grumbled greeting.

PHILLIP
Verkaufen Sie Arsen?

SUBTITLE: Do you sell Arsenic?

DRUGGIST
Zu welchem Zweck?

SUBTITLE: For what purpose?

PHILLIP
Ich habe viele Unkraut in meinem Garten.

SUBTITLE: I have many weeds in my garden.

The druggist eyes Phillip suspiciously, measuring him up.

Reluctantly, the druggist rises from his stool, puts down his newspaper and shuffles to a shelf behind him. He pulls a jar of white powder down from a high shelf.

DRUGGIST
Wie viel willst du?

SUBTITLE: How much do you want?

PHILLIP
400 mg

A quick swallow shows the druggist's surprise.

DRUGGIST
Sie müssen viele Unkraut im Garten sehr wohl.

SUBTITLE: You must have many weeds in your garden indeed.

PHILLIP

Ja.

Phillip stands, stone-faced, waiting. The druggist unhurriedly fills a small envelope with the powdery substance.

CUT TO:

EXT. KINGDOM VILLAGE - DAY

Back-pack clad Phillip, Declan and Erin approach the thirty-foot high impenetrable hedge dense with needle-sharp thorns and prickles, that stretches in both directions as far as they can see.

Phillip knows exactly where he is going and, not looking back, assuming the other two will follow, heads into the hedge.

Declan also disappears into the hedge.

Erin looks around, scared. Reluctantly, she inches closer to the thorny mass.

DECLAN (O.S.)

Erin! Com'on!

ERIN

They look painful!

DECLAN

You'll be fine.

Erin takes a deep breath of courage, plunges into the hedge and is pleasantly surprised and immediately relieved to feel the feathery-soft foliage welcome her.

Erin emerges into a spring-morning sunlit courtyard. She smiles in appreciation of the tranquil setting.

A squirrel, awkwardly propped against a nearby tree, elicits a perplexed reaction from Erin.

Moving forward, she gawks at what appear to be dead bodies littered about.

Declan startles her by grabbing her shoulder.

ERIN

(slightly hyperventilating)

Are they...?

DECLAN
They're fine. They're all sleeping.
This way.

ERIN
This is freakin' spooky, don't you
think?

DECLAN
I try not to think of it.

Declan walks through the village, Erin trailing further and further behind, surveying the scene.

A bird sleeps on a nearby branch of a bush. People frozen mid-conversation, asleep. She steps around a sleeping dog, a partially chewed bone in his mouth.

Crossing a small footbridge, Erin stops to peer into the stream below. Fish float silently, not dead, but peaceful and at rest.

Erin is startled, as Declan touches her arm again.

DECLAN
Com'on.

ERIN
He was telling the truth all along.

DECLAN
Mmm-hmm.

ERIN
You've been here before?

DECLAN
Yes. We've been here several times.
Phillip likes to visit her. He says
she can hear him in her sleep and
knows when he's here.

Declan starts off again, but Erin stops him.

ERIN
Are you afraid?

DECLAN
Of what?

ERIN
What happens next?

DECLAN
Meaning?

ERIN
You've spent your whole life on
this. Once we wake up the princess,
what will you do?

DECLAN
I don't think about it.

ERIN
All this time, and nothing planned?

DECLAN
I had a plan once.
(pause, staring at the fish)
Before Phillip found me, I was a
blacksmith. I had a plot of land
that was left to me by my father.
My only plan was to farm my land
and have a wife and family.

ERIN
Sounds nice.

DECLAN
Phillip took that away from me.

ERIN
At least you *had* a plan. More than
I can say.
(pause)
Did you have a girlfriend?

DECLAN
Yeah.

ERIN
What was she like?

DECLAN
She was... Actually, she was a lot
like you.

ERIN
Like me?

DECLAN
Well, you know...you remind me of
her.

Declan turns away from Erin and continues walking slowly.
Erin follows.

DECLAN

There's a young boy buying a flower from the flower vendor on the next street over. I imagine he's buying it for his mother or grandmother. They'll love it, appreciating his thoughtfulness. In the grove over there, there's a dog chasing a rabbit. He's just about to catch it, but I'm betting that the rabbit will escape.

(pause)

And down that alley, there's a couple caught in an intimate moment. He has such a yearning expression on his face, as if he knows how long it's been... waiting for her sweet lips.

Erin admires Declan's softened expression until he notices. He quickens his pace. She matches his pace and entwines her arm in his. He doesn't mind.

DECLAN

(passing the rabbit-dog grove)

I always want to move them, give that poor dog a better chance.

ERIN

But?

DECLAN

Phillip would kill me... or at least try.

They pass the alley Declan mentioned. The two people are exactly as he described.

INT. KINGDOM CASTLE - DAY

Declan and Erin enter a large chamber apartment, brightly lit by sunlight. In the center of the room is a large four-post mahogany bed, adorned with gold details and brilliant embroidery. Phillip sits on the edge on the bed, closest to the door, holding Princess Rose's hand.

They approach slowly, making their way to the opposite side of the bed, cautiously stepping over the princess's little spaniel dog, asleep on the floor.

ERIN
Oh, Phillip... she's beautiful.

PHILLIP
Yes, isn't she.

ERIN
So what now?

DECLAN
True love's kiss.

Erin reaches out for Declan's hand. This makes Declan happy.

ERIN
We're ready. Go ahead.

Phillip hesitates for a long moment.

ERIN
(excitedly)
Well? What are you waiting for?
Kiss her already.

Phillip looks up at them, worried, uncertain.

DECLAN
(reassuringly)
It's time. It's why we're all here.

Phillip stands to face them.

PHILLIP
Thank you. Both of you.

Phillip leans down to kiss Rose. A long-awaited, gentle kiss. Erin squeezes Declan's hand, anticipating, preparing.

Phillip pulls away, expectantly.

Nothing.

They all exchange confused looks.

After a long moment, Declan suddenly bends down and kisses Rose, surprising Phillip, but smiles as Declan's plan hits him.

Nothing.

Both Phillip and Declan turn toward Erin, expectantly.

ERIN
What?

DECLAN
Your turn.

ERIN
For what?

DECLAN
To kiss her.

ERIN
Kiss her?

PHILLIP
You must.

ERIN
I'm not kissing your girlfriend.

PHILLIP
Erin. Please.

DECLAN
It's okay.

ERIN
This wasn't the plan.

PHILLIP
Please.

ERIN
(under her breath)
You've got to be kidding me.

Heavy, resigned sigh.

Erin leans forward quickly to kiss Rose. She lingers.

Erin pulls away slowly, but when she's a few inches above Rose's face...

BOOM!

A concussive energetic blow explodes from Rose. Erin and Declan are blown across the room, knocked unconscious.

Phillip is flattened to the floor, but recovers quickly and is beside Rose immediately.

Rose opens her eyes to see Phillip and smiles.

ROSE

Is it truly you, my prince?

Phillip nods, all smiles, sits down on the bed and takes her hands in his.

ROSE

You've been in my dreams, my sweet Phillip.

PHILLIP

And you in mine.

ROSE

I feared you would never come.

PHILLIP

I'm sorry it took so long.

ROSE

No matter. You're here now. You were worth the wait.

Rose attempts to rise. Phillip reaches to steady her.

PHILLIP

Are you sure, my love?

ROSE

I am quite ready to leave this bed. I want to feel the sun on my face. Please.

Phillip helps her from bed, unsteady, to the window.

GASP!

Out the window, the courtyard is silent and still. Nothing has changed.

ROSE

What has happened?

PHILLIP

(quietly)

I cheated.

Behind them, movement attracts their attention. They turn to see Declan stirring. They rush to him. As Declan shakes off his unconsciousness, he focuses on Rose.

DECLAN
Glad to see you awake, m'Lady.

ROSE
It is good to be awake, Sir Declan.

Erin stirs. Declan scrambles to her side.

ERIN
Are we...?

Erin notices Rose with a gasp.

ERIN
You're even more beautiful awake.

ROSE
How kind of you! You are quite handsome yourself. Pray tell, what is your name?

ERIN
Erin.

ROSE
Welcome, Lady Erin.

DECLAN
Are you hurt?

ERIN
No, I think I'm good.
(to Phillip)
So it worked? Curse broken?

As Erin gets to her feet, exchanged looks provide a negative response to her question.

She moves to the window only to be crestfallen upon looking out the window to witness the silence.

Declan comes up behind Erin, hands on both shoulders.

ERIN
What's this mean?

DECLAN
It's not over.

ROSE
Phillip, I should like to see my mother and father.

PHILLIP

Of course. They're in the throne room, but --

ROSE

I know, but I should like to see them nonetheless, if you please.

PHILLIP

Certainly.

Phillip takes Rose's hand and leads her to the door.

At the threshold, Rose is stopped short; an invisible barrier preventing her from crossing through it.

Phillip also stops short and pulls her hand again, only to be stopped again.

ROSE

What trickery is this?

PHILLIP

Merde!

Rose sniffs the air and checks her feet, obviously looking for something offensive.

Phillip pulls her hand to the threshold again and again, each time a bit more forceful... same result.

ROSE

Ow! Phillip, stop. Please.

Phillip steps back into the chamber, letting go of her hand. He punches the door, losing his cool, swearing.

Rose flinches. Erin pulls Rose away from Phillip.

Declan restrains Phillip.

DECLAN

Phillip! Hey brother! Calm down!

PHILLIP

(settling down)

What more do I need to do?

DECLAN

You know what needs to be done. You can't cheat it.

PHILLIP

You knew?

DECLAN
I knew it wouldn't be this easy.

A long silence.

PHILLIP
(regaining his composure)
I can't do it.

DECLAN
Yes, you can.

PHILLIP
No, I can't. I can't take it away
from you again. I won't.

DECLAN
Yes, you - wait, what?

PHILLIP
It's my fault you had no life of
your own. I know you never forgave
me for that. I never wanted to see
how selfish that was --

DECLAN
I resolved a long time ago, it's
not your --

PHILLIP
I can't be responsible for you
losing Erin.

DECLAN
(whisper)
Erin?

Phillip calmly crosses to Rose and takes her in his arms. He holds her tight for a long moment.

PHILLIP
Declan, I want you to take Erin
outside the brier.

DECLAN
But --

PHILLIP
The Angels can't come through the
hedge, but they should be waiting.

DECLAN
Then what?

PHILLIP
They'll know why this didn't work.

DECLAN
But --

PHILLIP
Declan, please! I'd like a few
minutes with Rose. Now. Go.

Declan hesitates, then leads Erin from the chamber.

EXT. KINGDOM VILLAGE - DAY

Joy and Hope wait outside the brier.

Declan and Erin emerge from the thorns.

The Angels are confused, anxious, excited.

JOY
Why are you here? Where's
Princess Rose? This is all
wrong!

HOPE
Where's Prince Phillip?
How dreadful! These are the
wrong two!

DECLAN
Whoa! One at a time.

The Angels settle themselves and wordlessly decide who will
speak.

JOY
You are all part of a whole. You
must become whole again. The body.
The heart. The soul. Three must
become one.

ERIN
What are you talking about? We are
all here together as one. We woke
Princess Rose as one. What do we
have to do to be *more* one?

HOPE
(to Joy)
Oh Dear! Phillip didn't
tell them.

JOY
(to Hope)
They don't know.

HOPE

(to Joy)

I told you he didn't listen.

(to Declan and Erin)

The three of you have to come together in order to break the curse.

ERIN

And...

HOPE

I mean literally.

JOY

We mean physically.

ERIN

How is that possible?

DECLAN

Recall any of your physics lessons? No two objects can occupy the same space at the same time. It's not possible.

ERIN

What does that mean to us? What happens to us?

HOPE

It means you will cease to exist.

ERIN

Cease? Like de-ceased? As in dead? We have to die?

JOY

You must go to Dragon Hole. In the center of the cavern, there lies a crystal, splintered in thirds. It must be repaired.

DECLAN

How do we put it back together?

HOPE

The crystal will know you. The fragments will accept you. They will allow you to repair them.

ERIN
Sounds easy enough.

JOY
Fate will not be cheated.

HOPE
Your fate is Phillip's.

JOY
We assumed you would have done that
before coming here. Phillip knew --

ERIN
He knew about this? Why wouldn't he
tell us?

DECLAN
Phillip has had a change of heart.

JOY
That's unfortunate.

HOPE
He won't want to go now.

JOY
He must go.

HOPE
You must convince him.

DECLAN
He doesn't want to sacrifice us.

HOPE
He doesn't have a choice.

JOY
He'll sacrifice himself instead.

HOPE
No, he won't.

JOY
Now that he's awakened Rose, he
won't want to leave her.

HOPE
He doesn't have a choice.

DECLAN
He thinks he does.

JOY
Makes no difference. You are bound
to him.

HOPE
Your fate is his.

JOY
He doesn't have a choice.

ERIN
Did you know about this?

DECLAN
Yes. But he said he would tell you
everything.

ERIN
Well, he didn't, did he? You should
have told me!

DECLAN
It wouldn't have changed anything.

ERIN
Wouldn't have changed anything? I
would have liked a say in that! So
what? He's allowed to live three,
four, five lifetimes and I'm not
allowed to live even one? What
gives him the right?

DECLAN
Nothing. Nothing gives him the
right. He doesn't have any more
control over this than you or I do.

Declan takes off at a full run toward the hedge.

ERIN
Declan? Declan! Wait!

Erin turns to leave, but Hope stops her.

HOPE
Save Patience.

JOY
Yes, please. Save Patience. Please.

Confused, Erin takes off after Declan.

INT. KINGDOM CASTLE - DAY

Declan bounds up the stairs to the chamber. The room appears empty at first. Frantically, Declan searches the room for Phillip and Rose.

On the love seat, near the hearth, Phillip and Rose sit close.

DECLAN

Phillip! No!

Phillip and Rose turn their attention toward Declan. Phillip and Rose each hold a small vial. Erin enters the room, winded.

DECLAN

You can't!

PHILLIP

(very calmly)

It's the only way.

ERIN

What are you doing? What is that?
Poison?

DECLAN

This won't work. It won't spare any of us, including your parents, Princess Rose.

PHILLIP

When we die, the curse will be broken. If we're gone, you will be safe. The kingdom will awaken.

ERIN

What are you thinking? This is ludicrous.

PHILLIP

Knowing the two of you will --

DECLAN

That's not your call. It never was. You know that.

ERIN

All this time, and you're checking out with poison?

DECLAN

Phillip, please, this isn't the way.

ERIN

Phillip, I can't believe I'm saying this, because I'm pretty pissed off finding out about this at the eleventh hour like this, but apparently it's our destiny. We all must become one. You need to finish this thing properly, so you can live your lives. Together.

DECLAN

When did you plan this?

PHILLIP

Just after finding Erin.

DECLAN

I have been following you around for over 300 years, living your life. Now you're changing the plan? The only thing that's been keeping me going is knowing that someday this will end. Now you're taking that away from me. You owe me.

PHILLIP

You're right.

DECLAN

Then why are you doing this?

PHILLIP

I owe you a life. You and Erin.

DECLAN

What are you talking about?

PHILLIP

You and Erin... deserve to be together.

DECLAN

You're crazy. Anything you see as attraction between Erin and me is you. We're together only because of you. And you need to finish this.

Erin looks heartbroken at Declan's comments.

PHILLIP

I'm trying.

ERIN

Phillip, what Declan's trying to say is that this must be finished like it was written. You can't cheat it. You control our fates, all our fates.

ROSE

(regarding the poison vial in her hand)

Is that true? If we die, everyone dies?

DECLAN

Yes.

ROSE

(turning to Phillip)

But you said doing this would save my parents.

ERIN

You two staying alive will save your parents.

DECLAN

We need to go to Dragon Hole. All of us.

PHILLIP

I can't leave Rose.

ERIN

We know, but you must.

DECLAN

If all goes well, you'll be back to her in no time. But we must go.

PHILLIP

No.

DECLAN

Then you've killed us all.

ROSE

We won't take the poison.

DECLAN

That's not what I'm talking about.

ERIN

We're with him. Wherever he goes,
we go. If he stays, we must stay.
If he dies, we die.

ROSE

(to Erin and Declan)

You are bound to him?

DECLAN

Yes.

ROSE

(to Phillip)

You control their lives. Their
existence.

DECLAN

All of ours. Yours too.

ROSE

I remember Dragon Hole. It's a
day's ride from here. My parents
would never allow me to travel to
it, but the stable boys used to
speak of it. They made up such
stories. You could be back within
the week.

ERIN

We have faster horses now. He
should be back sooner.

ROSE

You need to go.

PHILLIP

(softly)

You understand what this means for
Declan and Erin?

ROSE

And you know what it means for my
parents... and kingdom.

PHILLIP

They're my family.

ROSE

As are mine.

DECLAN

The difference is we know what's to happen. Her family doesn't... didn't.

Erin kneels down in front of Phillip.

ERIN

Phillip. We were all dealt a lousy hand here, but we can't finish the game until you play your hand. You can't fold. You can't bug out. You must play. We're all in this together and we know the rules now. It's your move...

After much hesitation and thinking, Phillip takes the vial from Rose's hand and tucks both into his shirt pocket. He rises, kisses Rose on both cheeks.

PHILLIP

Erin, would you be so kind as to please unpack the food we brought to leave behind for Rose? Declan, would you mind finding a blanket in case she gets chilled?

Declan and Erin open their packs as requested. Rose rises to Phillip's outstretched hand.

PHILLIP

I will return to you within the week, my sweet.

ROSE

I will count the moments.

Another quick kiss on each cheek and Phillip departs.

Declan presents Rose with the blanket.

DECLAN

You'll know we've succeeded when you can walk out that door.

A quick kiss on each cheek and Declan departs.

Erin lays out several food items on a side table.

ERIN

Phillip picked out most of these, hoping you'd find them close to what you were used to. I brought the chocolate though. I don't care what century you were born in, what woman doesn't like chocolate?

(pause)

It was really nice to meet you. I only wish we had more time to get to know each other, but --

ROSE

I love you too.

ERIN

Yeah, well...

ROSE

You and Declan will always be a part of my Phillip. Fare thee well.

Rose hugs Erin, kisses her on both cheeks.

Erin starts to leave, but stops at the door.

ERIN

Happy Ever After, your Highness.

CUT TO:

EXT. DRAGON HOLE - BLACK FOREST - DAY

A large boulder, at the base of an old pine tree, moves, revealing a dark crevice. Phillip withdraws a long, leather bundle from within.

Unwrapping it reveals three heavy swords. Phillip inspects one before handing it to Declan, who then turns it in his hands in admiration. Declan steps back and swings it with the skill of a warrior.

Phillip inspects a second sword, then hands it to Erin.

ERIN

What's this?

PHILLIP

A sword.

ERIN

I know it's a sword. What am I supposed to do with it?

PHILLIP

Kill the dragon.

ERIN

I'm sorry, the what?

PHILLIP

What do you think lives in Dragon Hole?

ERIN

Seriously? A dragon? Dragons don't exist.

DECLAN

Neither do sleeping villages or centuries-old princes.

Erin looks back and forth between the cave and the sword.

ERIN

I would think one would have been a bit more imaginative in naming a hole where a dragon lives.

DECLAN

It's accurately descriptive, don't you think?

Erin rolls her eyes and clumsily attempts to imitate Declan's moves.

ERIN

You really think there's a dragon living down there after all these years?

PHILLIP

Yes.

ERIN

Have you seen it?

DECLAN

He says he has.

ERIN

But you haven't?

Declan shakes his head.

DECLAN

You'll need to hold it tight. Both hands.

ERIN

I can barely pick it up.

PHILLIP

When I procured these, I expected --

ERIN

Three guys. I know.

PHILLIP

Yes. I'm sorry.

(pause)

You'll have to do your best --

DECLAN

And hope you don't need to use it.

ERIN

I'm all for that, thank you.

Phillip stands in front of Erin, demanding her full attention.

PHILLIP

If you thrust, aim for the eyes. If you slice, aim for the throat. Beware of the teeth and beware of the claws. Watch your footing. The tail will take your legs out from beneath you before you know it.

ERIN

Good advice. Got it.

DECLAN

Just stay behind me.

ERIN

Better advice.

INT. INSIDE

Phillip leads them into the hole, Erin behind Declan as instructed. It's a cavernous decline with unstable soil.

Erin slips with a yelp. Phillip and Declan shush her.

As she regains her balance, she notices the walls of the cave... familiar triangular symbols and circles... their tattoos... are etched in the rock, along with what appears to be the story of their journey.

ERIN
Declan?

DECLAN
SHHH.

ERIN
But --

DECLAN
SHHH.

Phillip and Declan continues further into the cave. Erin continues to study the drawings.

ERIN
Hey guys! Take a look at this!

Declan and Phillip return to her and flank her.

PHILLIP
SHHH.

ERIN
No shushing. Look, it's us. See?
Body. Heart. Soul. It's us.

They all look at the symbol for a long time. Declan places his arm around Erin. Phillip gives Erin a gentle kiss on the cheek.

Phillip and Declan move away back into the cave. Erin stays behind.

The drawings continue on to show three circles converging into a large ball of light.

As she examines the drawings closely, a DRAGON, 15 feet in height, 20 feet in length, bright, purple eyes, dry and scaly, slinks up behind her, silent.

Feeling Dragon's presence, Erin turns around just in time to catch Dragon's clawed paw across her chest, her shirt collar tearing away, completely revealing her tattoo.

Dragon advances for another strike, but stops short upon seeing the tattoo.

Erin, paralyzed by fear, bleeding, stares in horror. Erin regains her composure and tries to raise her sword. It doesn't gain much altitude.

Dragon steps back several steps. Erin's fear subsides slightly, so she lowers the sword.

Declan backtracks to Erin's location and upon seeing Dragon, advances to strike it, but Erin stops him.

ERIN

No! Wait!

Dragon cautiously moves closer toward Erin, its eyes focusing on her neck.

ERIN

It knows us. Or rather our markings. Marks of the Angels.

Erin turns to Declan and pulls his shirt aside far enough for his tattoo to become fully visible.

Dragon is watching their every move. Its expression changes; friendly, smiling, welcoming.

Erin points back at the drawings.

Phillip comes back and upon seeing Dragon, immediately raises his sword in an attempt to strike.

ERIN

Phillip! No! Put your sword down!
It won't hurt us.

PHILLIP

We must slay it!

ERIN

Says who?

PHILLIP

It's how it's supposed to be done!

DECLAN

So now you're going by the book?

Phillip circles the cave toward Erin and Declan, sword ready. Dragon watches his every move.

Phillip stumbles. Dragon flinches. Sword is raised higher.

DECLAN
Whoa!

ERIN
Put it down!

Declan grabs the sword from Phillip. Erin roughly turns Phillip around and pulls his collar down, revealing his tattoo.

PHILLIP
What are you doing?

ERIN
Shut up!

Erin steps to the side enough so Dragon can see Phillip's tattoo.

Dragon steps closer and pleased with the validity of this trio, nudges Erin on the shoulder.

Releasing Phillip, Erin turns him around, so he is eye-to-eye with Dragon. They stare at each other for several minutes, as if having a mental conversation.

PHILLIP
I'm supposed to kill it.

DECLAN
Why? Its just doing its job.

ERIN
Do you have to?

Phillip ponders that, still staring into Dragon's eyes.

DECLAN
Let it live.

PHILLIP
I see no chains. I don't know if I have the power to release it.

Dragon nudges Phillip, hard enough to push him off balance, making his feet move deeper into the cave.

ERIN
Perhaps you do.

The four move further into the cave, Dragon bringing up the rear, guiding them at the forks and turns.

A sharp turn reveals a dim light at the end of a tunnel. As they traverse the rocky path, the light grows brighter.

The tunnel opens to a cavernous room. At the center of the room, a grapefruit-sized globe of light sits waiting.

As they move closer, the boulder defines itself as three separate shards, splintered from the center core, each glowing from within. They appear very heavy.

Declan reaches out to touch a shard, but an arc of electricity lashes out at him. He recoils.

DECLAN

Ow!

Erin reaches for the same shard.

DECLAN

No, don't!

No shock.

Erin smiles widely... pure happiness.

ERIN

It's so warm... and...
comfortable... and mine. What a
weird... and fantastic sensation!
It knows me. It's been waiting for
me.

(pause)

You've got to feel this. Declan,
try that one.

Declan, reluctantly, touches the next shard over, only to feel the same sensation. He smiles bigger than ever at Erin.

Dragon and Phillip watch them intently, as they enjoy the bliss emitted by the crystal-like rock.

ERIN

Phillip. It's going to be okay.
Everything's going to be okay.

Dragon nudges Phillip forward again. He steps in front of the remaining shard.

Dragon moves to be behind and between Erin and Declan.

Phillip regards the three of them for a long time... love, gratitude, sadness.

PHILLIP

I'm sorry you two were dragged into
this.

ERIN
I wouldn't have it any other way.

DECLAN
Nor would I.

Phillip slowly touches his own shard. A content smile settles on his face.

ERIN
(calmly)
Ready?

DECLAN
Make her happy, brother.

PHILLIP
I love you both. Thank you.

DECLAN
On the count of three, then?

ERIN
One.

Declan takes Erin's hand.

DECLAN
Two.

Dragon lays its head against Erin's back.

PHILLIP
Three.

They all effortlessly push their shards inward, connecting them together, never losing contact.

The crystalline rock heals itself from inside, light building from the center, sealing the fissures, with a prismatic array of colors, shooting out in rays.

Brilliant light. Brighter. Brighter.

Flash of blinding light.

Darkness.

CUT TO:

EXT. BLACK FOREST - DAY

Phillip blinks his eyes open. The sun shines brightly. Birds chirp. He sniffs the air and smiles contentedly, as a cool wind delivers fresh scent of wildflowers. He sits on the ground, leaning against a huge pine tree in a meadow.

As if shaking off a dream, he surveys his surroundings urgently.

He is in the same field as before, but what was once the Dragon Hole entrance is now a rocky, moss-covered hillside.

He scrambles to his feet.

Patience approaches from up the hill, slowly making her way down the slope. He watches, curious. She is beautiful and ageless.

There are no words before the embracing hug she eagerly delivers, like a mother greeting a son returning from war. He returns the sentiment, it feeling very natural.

They part slightly.

PATIENCE

My dear sweet Phillip. Thank you.
You finally did it. Thank you, my dear.

PHILLIP

You're welcome, but who are you?

PATIENCE

Why, don't you remember? I'm Patience, my dear. We met at the hedge. I have been waiting for you so long, but I knew you would come and reward me. Thank you.

PHILLIP

Yes, you're welcome. But I'm not --

PATIENCE

Oh, don't be so modest. Most others would have given up long ago. Most would have succumb to selfish thoughts. But you, you, my dear sweet Phillip de Valois persevered and fulfilled your destiny. You put the many before your own. You should indeed be rewarded.

PHILLIP
But Declan... and Erin --

PATIENCE
Are exactly where they belong.

PHILLIP
I don't understand --

PATIENCE
I have been protecting the crystal
shards until your return.

PHILLIP
Protect?

PATIENCE
I am the dragon you mercifully
spared.

PHILLIP
But --

PATIENCE
To live as a dragon for a short
time was an honor.

PHILLIP
Patience will be your protector and
see you through to the end.

Patience nods and smiles.

PATIENCE
And now it is time to take you
home. Princess Rose is waiting.

Patience entwines her arm in his, to start him walking.

CUT TO:

EXT. KINGDOM VILLAGE - DAY

The brier and bramble hedge is gone from the wall. Only living, blooming ivy and morning glories climb the wall. The castle gates are open, welcoming. The village is alive and bustling with noise and movement.

Phillip approaches the gate in awe of the change.

Rose runs through the gate, and upon seeing her, Phillip runs to meet her. They embrace and kiss in greeting.

As they walk back through the gate into the village, Rose and Phillip are greeted by the townspeople and finally, Rose's parents, the King and Queen.

Patience is embraced by her sister Angels.

CUT TO:

EXT. DUBLIN 1694 - STREET - DAY

Midsummer's day festival. Late June.

Huge bonfire within a circle of large stones. Townspeople dancing with much music, laughter and singing. Farmers carts loaded with fresh bread, hoops of cheese, casks of beer, strings of smoked fish.

A gathered crowd, attracted by excited shouting and cheering. In the center, a boxing contest between Declan and his shirtless opponent.

Declan wins, knocking his opponent to the ground. Much cheering, obviously a fan favorite. Declan is congratulated by slaps on the back and cheers.

The crowd parts a bit to allow Erin to advance to Declan. As soon as he sees her, he moves toward her quickly and embraces her tightly. Erin plants a deep kiss on him. When done, he smiles at her lovingly.

CUT TO:

INT. BOOK STORE - PRESENT DAY

FOCUS on an old copy of the original Charles Perrault's *Sleeping Beauty* sitting on a shelf. A female hand pulls it down.

PAN back to see Connie opening the cover slowly. On the dedication page, under the Triskelion Celtic knot from the tattoo. It says:

For Declan and Erin

Rolling across the screen, in a fairy tale font...

THE END

FADE OUT