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## **Cast of Characters**

HELGA, the receptionist

LITTLE RED, the one with the Riding Hood

SARAH, her daughter

GREGORY WOLF, son of the infamous “Big Bad”

CINDERELLA, now known as “Princess Ostentasia”

CLARISSE, her daughter

SERVANTS, to Cinderella (at least one)

BERTHA SWINE, one of the Three Little Pigs

FREDERICK SWINE, one of the Three Little Pigs

HORACE J. SWINE, one of the Three Little Pigs

SHAYNA, one of Horace and Bertha’s piglets

OTHER PIGLETS, (preferably two)

JACOB GRIMM, the famous teller of tales

## **Time**

Sometime after lunch.

## **Place**

The outer office of the Brothers Grimm, renowned storytellers.

## **Production Notes**

### *Staging Requirements:*

Unit set—a waiting room. Stage right is a reception desk for Helga. Stage left, there are a number of chairs arranged in rows around a coffee table. On the walls are pictures illustrating various fairy tales. Offstage right is the main entrance to the room; offstage left are the restrooms, the Grimm Brothers’ offices, and the Giant’s Entrance.

### *Lighting and Sound Requirements:*

General wash lighting—no special effects. Sound effects include a phone ringing (Helga’s intercom), a large crash (a Giant falling to

the ground), a smaller crash (Jacob Grimm falling), and a door slamming (when Cinderella reenters at the end). Some sort of music to open and conclude the play is very helpful.

*Costumes:*

HELGA wears contemporary business apparel. LITTLE RED and SARAH are dressed in matching outfits—red on top, black on the bottom. LITTLE RED also has a red hooded cape, which is later donned by SARAH. GREGORY is a gray wolf—you can get away with hooded sweats, provided that he has wolf ears, a tail, and whiskers. CINDERELLA wears a contemporary, “preppy” dress or skirt; CLARISSE has similar clothes. Naturally, CINDERELLA also wears a tiara and “glass slippers.” The SERVANTS are dressed in black suits with white shirts, black ties, and sunglasses—the “G Man” look. BERTHA and SHAYNA (and any other female PIGLETS) wear pink pants and a pink shirt with pig snouts and ears. FREDERICK and HORACE (and any male PIGLETS) wear a white shirt and white pants with brown patches sewn onto them (they are spotted pigs), along with snouts and ears. JACOB GRIMM wears a traditional German outfit—knickers, stockings, blouse with suspenders, and of course, a hat with a feather.

*Props:*

Bookbag containing carrots and a canned ham (Gregory), desk bell, desk phone, miscellaneous papers, sign-in clipboard, quill pen, key attached to magic wand, leash (Helga); earmuffs (Servants); fried chicken (Bertha); purse, “wolf’s paw” (Cinderella); bag of cookies, fancy-looking storybook, quill pen (Sarah); quill pen, fancy-looking storybook (Jacob); various magazines, “The Fairy Tale Tattler” newspaper (on the coffee table).

## **Acknowledgments**

*Happily Ever After* was first performed by students in the Iowa City Community School District on June 22, 2007, during the Summer Enrichment Creative Drama program.

# HAPPILY EVER AFTER

by George Halitzka

*(The lights rise on a waiting room. On the walls are posters depicting various fairy tales. A young wolf, GREGORY, sits nervously in one of the chairs, fidgeting as he reads a magazine. Off to one side, HELGA sits behind a desk, looking somewhat bored. LITTLE RED, with her daughter SARAH in tow, enters and approaches the desk.)*

**LITTLE RED.** We have an appointment?

**HELGA.** Last name?

**LITTLE RED.** Hood.

**HELGA.** *(Handing her a clipboard:)* Sign here, please.

**SARAH.** Mom, I'm scared—

**LITTLE RED.** Shh! *(Smiling at HELGA:)* No, she's not.

**SARAH.** Look!

*(SARAH points to GREGORY.)*

**LITTLE RED.** Grimms preserve us! Is that *him*?

**HELGA.** He has an appointment—

**LITTLE RED.** And you didn't cage him?

**HELGA.** Says he's a vegetarian.

**LITTLE RED.** Tell it to my Grandmother!

**HELGA.** Look, have a seat—

**LITTLE RED.** We are *not* waiting in the same room with that beast! Do the Grimms know about this?

**HELGA.** They *invited* him.

**LITTLE RED.** Are you serious? *(Righteous indignation:)* My daughter and I are going to *Andersen*.

**HELGA.** Good ol' Hans Christian. Well, don't say I didn't warn you.

**LITTLE RED.** What?

**HELGA.** Remember Little Mermaid?

*(LITTLE RED nods, regarding HELGA warily.)*

**HELGA.** Used to be Mr. Wilhelm's client; nice happy ending. But then she went to *Andersen*—

LITTLE RED. Did she find a wolf in the office, too?

HELGA. —Now she's foam on the sea.

(*A beat.*)

LITTLE RED. We'll wait.

(*HELGA nods smugly.*)

LITTLE RED. Under protest, of course.

HELGA. Protest away.

(*LITTLE RED and SARAH find seats, as far away from GREGORY as possible.*)

LITTLE RED. Let's practice again.

SARAH. Mom—

LITTLE RED. You think I got this red hood by chance? Listen—

SARAH. "Happily Ever Afters are never an accident." I know—

LITTLE RED. This is about the rest of your life! Jacob and Wilhelm Grimm are—

SARAH. —"The most powerful men in the world." I *know*; they write my story—

LITTLE RED. Which means you could be *wolf meat*—

SARAH. They would never—

LITTLE RED. What are you going to say first?

SARAH. *Mom*—

LITTLE RED. "Good morning, Mr. Grimm"—

SARAH. (*With a sigh:*) "Good morning, Mr. Grimm. I brought you these cookies that Grandma baked"... But Grandma's dead; you stopped at Wal-Mart®—

LITTLE RED. They don't know that. *Then* what do you say?

SARAH. "I'm really hoping for a Happily Ever After, just like Mother—"

HELGA. Excuse me, Mrs. Hood—

LITTLE RED. *Miss Hood*. That no-good woodcutter—

HELGA. Are you trying to bribe the Grimms?

LITTLE RED. Just a little gift—

HELGA. (*Snatching the cookies from SARAH:*) I'll take that.

**LITTLE RED.** I paid good money for those!

**HELGA.** (*Looking at the cookies:*) I love white chocolate.

(LITTLE RED, rather miffed, picks up a copy of the “Fairy Tale Tattler” and starts reading. SARAH looks around the room nervously; she catches GREGORY staring at her. He quickly looks away.)

**SARAH.** Mommy...

**LITTLE RED.** What?

**SARAH.** That wolf was staring at me. It looked hungry—

**LITTLE RED.** (*To HELGA—who ignores her:*) And she said it was safe!

(LITTLE RED walks over to GREGORY. She speaks slowly and loudly, using exaggerated hand gestures as though with a deaf child.)

**LITTLE RED.** Wolf understand people-talk?

(GREGORY nods, looking confused.)

**LITTLE RED.** This daughter—not dinner. Taste yucky.

**GREGORY.** (*Trying to imitate LITTLE RED’s mannerisms:*) Wolf vegan. Eat plants—leaves.

(LITTLE RED and SARAH draw back and whisper to each other.)

**LITTLE RED.** I think it’s trying to communicate!

**SARAH.** What’s a “vegan”?

**LITTLE RED.** It probably means “girl eater.” (*To GREGORY; pointing at SARAH:*) You touch—I call Woodcutter. Slice Wolf with ax.

**GREGORY.** I don’t mean to be rude, but can we speak in complete sentences?

(LITTLE RED and SARAH jump backwards.)

**SARAH.** It speaks English!

**GREGORY.** Look, ma’am—

**LITTLE RED.** Stay back!

**GREGORY.** I don’t even *like* meat—

**LITTLE RED.** I know your kind. Pretty soon you’ll head for Grandma’s house, crawl into a nightie, and eat us all!

**GREGORY.** I’m really sorry about my father’s behavior. In your story. But I eat carrot sticks.

*(To demonstrate, GREGORY pulls some carrots from a backpack under his seat.)*

**GREGORY.** See?

*(Unfortunately, as GREGORY tries to re-close his bookbag, a canned ham falls out.)*

**LITTLE RED.** Explain *that!*

**GREGORY.** *(Trying to shove it back inside his bag:)* I don't know how it got there—

**SARAH.** *(Appalled:)* He turned the Three Little Pigs into Spam!

**LITTLE RED.** Don't look, Sarah—

**GREGORY.** It's a present for Mr. Grimm! They say he loves ham—

**LITTLE RED.** *(To HELGA:)* Get me a leash! A muzzle! An ax—

**HELGA.** How about a *clue?*

**LITTLE RED.** Vegetarian, my Aunt Rapunzel! That animal's dangerous!

**HELGA.** Yeah, he could really hurt somebody with that can. *(Taking it from his paws:)* Sorry, Wolfie—no bribes.

**GREGORY.** But it's not—

**HELGA.** "Just a little gift;" I know. Good thing I didn't pack lunch.

*(The phone buzzes; HELGA picks it up.)*

**HELGA.** Yes, sir? ... I'll send her right in. *(To SARAH:)* Mr. Jacob will see you now.

*(LITTLE RED and SARAH both stand up.)*

**SARAH.** Mom, I don't think you should come—

**LITTLE RED.** Don't you want a Happily Ever After? *(Pointing at GREGORY:)* Or would you rather end up like a Wolf?

**SARAH.** Mom...

**LITTLE RED.** Come on. *(To GREGORY:)* I hope *your* story gets you chopped open, too. Just like your father!

*(LITTLE RED and SARAH exit. HELGA walks over to GREGORY, carrying the ham.)*

**HELGA.** This wasn't for Mr. Grimm, was it?

**GREGORY.** *(Downcast:)* People feel better around Wolves when we eat carrots.

**HELGA.** (*Trying to hand him the ham.*) I won't tell. Here.

**GREGORY.** I'm not hungry.

**HELGA.** I'm sorry about your Dad.

**GREGORY.** Well, he ate Grandma.

**HELGA.** Maybe you'll get a better ending.

**GREGORY.** Ever heard of a Wolf living Happily Ever After?

*(CINDERELLA enters, trailed by her daughter CLARISSE and a gaggle of SERVANTS. CINDERELLA is calling out a steady stream of orders.)*

**CINDERELLA.** —And I want a royal feast from the kitchens tonight. NO LEFTOVERS!

**A SERVANT.** Yes, Your Majesty.

**CINDERELLA.** Clarisse, stand up straight. (*Turning to a SERVANT:*) Tell my dear prince to get his royal tush home by five. We're celebrating our daughter's Happily Ever After!

**CLARISSE.** You hope—

**CINDERELLA.** Shh! Not in front of the help. (*Approaching HELGA:*) Madame, we have an appointment with Mr. Wilhelm...

*(She trails off, then suddenly points at HELGA.)*

**CINDERELLA.** It's YOU!

**HELGA.** (*With a wide grin of recognition—or retribution.*) Cinderella! Good to see you again.

**CINDERELLA.** You will address us as "The Princess Ostentasia—"

**HELGA.** No, you can take the girl out of the cinders, but—

**CINDERELLA.** Last I heard, you were headed for my prince's dungeon.

**HELGA.** That's what he told *you*—

**CINDERELLA.** But you've moved up in the world! Now you're a *lucky*—

**HELGA.** —Who controls your daughter's *doom*.

*(A brief pause.)*

**HELGA.** Do you have an appointment, Cinders?

**CINDERELLA.** (*Through clenched teeth.*) Three o'clock, Stepsister Dear.

**HELGA.** Have a seat. He's running behind.

**CINDERELLA.** Kindly inform Mr. Grimm that *royalty* has arrived.

**HELGA.** If you say so. (*Picking up the phone;*) Mr. Wilhelm?... My stepsister's here; she wanted you to know... Oh. I'll tell her... (*Approaching CINDERELLA;*) He was *planning* to write a happy ending, but since you bothered him, Clarisse will be crushed by a Giant—

**CLARISSE.** Mommy!

**CINDERELLA.** Give me that— (*Snatching the phone;*) Dearest Mr. Grimm; forgive my *horrible* rudeness... Hello? Hello? (*Slamming down the phone;*) There's nobody there.

**HELGA.** Oops—forgot to dial.

**CINDERELLA.** I'm telling my Prince. He'll boil you in oil—

**HELGA.** Temper, Cinders—

**CINDERELLA.** —Chop off your head—

(*HELGA yawns.*)

**CINDERELLA.** —Fire your husband.

(*Finally, CINDERELLA has HELGA's attention.*)

**CINDERELLA.** I know you only married a *footman*, but maybe the power's gone to your head. I'll find him another job. Mucking out the stables—

**HELGA.** So help me Grimm, I'll...

**CINDERELLA.** You'll *what*?

**HELGA.** Get Clarisse's story changed—

**CINDERELLA.** They don't listen to *secretaries*.

**HELGA.** Better hope you're right—

**CINDERELLA.** So how did it feel—when I got the prince, and you got the loser?

**HELGA.** I love my husband—

**CINDERELLA.** And once upon a time, you had a shot at royalty. If your story was better—

**HELGA.** The prince only married you for Fairy Godmother.

**CINDERELLA.** That's a lie—

**HELGA.** He wanted magic, not *you!* Seth loves me—

**CINDERELLA.** Better hope Clarisse gets a happy ending. I *might* forget to fire your darling. (*To the SERVANTS;*) Privacy, please.

(The SERVANTS form a line between HELGA and the seats. CINDERELLA and CLARISSE sit down to talk.)

**HELGA.** Like I can't hear you.

(A SERVANT puts a huge pair of earmuffs on HELGA.)

**HELGA.** Cute, Cinders. Real cute.

**CLARISSE.** Mom, why is *that* here?

**CINDERELLA.** Helga, there is a *wolf* in the waiting room.

**HELGA.** (*Sing-song:*) I can't hear you...

(A SERVANT removes the earmuffs.)

**CINDERELLA.** (*Loudly:*) There's a *wolf* in the waiting room!

**HELGA.** The better to eat you with, my dear.

**GREGORY.** I wish you wouldn't joke like that—

**CINDERELLA.** (*To GREGORY:*) You look familiar.

**GREGORY.** I don't think we've met, ma'am...

**CINDERELLA.** (*To HELGA:*) Is the beast safe?

**HELGA.** Far nicer than you.

**CINDERELLA.** Fair enough.

(*She makes a hand gesture, and a SERVANT returns the earmuffs to HELGA's ears.*)

**CINDERELLA.** Now, what does Mommy's little girl want?

**CLARISSE.** A Happily Ever After.

**CINDERELLA.** And what does that mean?

**CLARISSE.** A man who's *nothing* like Daddy.

**CINDERELLA.** Good girl. Make sure you mention Fairy Godmother; it worked for me—

**CLARISSE.** My prince has to be my best friend. And he has to come home from the castle on time. And he can't yell at me—

**CINDERELLA.** (*Patting her on the head:*) That's my girl.

**CLARISSE.** But what if I get a prince like Daddy?

**CINDERELLA.** Then "Happily Ever After" might be—*temporary.*

(*Suddenly, LITTLE RED and SARAH reappear from the direction they exited. SARAH is carrying an ornate leather-bound book and wearing her mother's red cape. HELGA takes off the earmuffs.*)

**LITTLE RED.** My little girl got the red hood!

**SARAH.** Mom! You're embarrassing me, and I hafta—

**LITTLE RED.** Show everyone your new story...

*(With a grimace, SARAH reluctantly holds up the book.)*

**LITTLE RED.** Listen to this! *(Taking the book; flipping to the last page:)* "And she lived happily ever after. The end." Just like her mother!

*(LITTLE RED gives SARAH a sloppy kiss. SARAH wipes it off.)*

**HELGA.** Congratulations! Red hoods make great targets.

**SARAH.** What?

**CINDERELLA.** Ignore the *secretary*; she's jealous—

**HELGA.** You wish—

**LITTLE RED.** Oh, my Grimm! It's a *Princess*!

**SARAH.** Are you the one with the glass slippers?

*(CINDERELLA pulls up her dress just far enough to reveal the famous shoes.)*

**SARAH.** Can I have your autograph? In my story?

**LITTLE RED.** Sarah—

**CINDERELLA.** Fear not; I *always* have time for my subjects.

*(She takes the proffered pen and book.)*

**CINDERELLA.** "To my loyal subject Sarah: May all your endings be happy. Love, Princess Ostentasia."

**SARAH.** No—your *real* name!

**CINDERELLA.** That *is* my name, child.

**SARAH.** I mean "Cinderella"!

*(HELGA suddenly has a coughing fit—which sounds suspiciously like laughter.)*

**CINDERELLA.** *(To HELGA:)* Jealousy does not become you. Not *all* of us are blessed with Happily Ever Afters.

**LITTLE RED.** That's right! *(Turning to GREGORY:)* Did you hear, Wolf? My daughter got the hood.

**SARAH.** So can you sign? "Cinderella"?

**CINDERELLA.** *(To a SERVANT:)* Keep this deluded child away from us.

**LITTLE RED.** *(To GREGORY:)* So listen carefully—

**SARAH.** (To CINDERELLA:) But you said you always have time—

(Using the hood, LITTLE RED yanks SARAH to her side.)

**LITTLE RED.** —Your days are numbered, Wolf. My daughter’s story is just like mine. And that means...

(She makes a slashing motion across her throat.)

**GREGORY.** Ma’am, I don’t know why you’re so angry—

**SARAH.** Because your Daddy ate Grandma!

**GREGORY.** I’m really sorry, but it wasn’t me—

**LITTLE RED.** “Sorry” doesn’t bring back the cookies, does it?

**HELGA.** Well, these are pretty good—

(Suddenly, CINDERELLA interrupts forcefully.)

**CINDERELLA.** Wolf! What was your father’s name?

**GREGORY.** Gregory, ma’am. Like me—

**CINDERELLA.** Was he missing a paw?

**GREGORY.** Yes. I don’t understand—

**CINDERELLA.** He killed my mice!

**HELGA.** Your *what*?

**CINDERELLA.** Your father was a royal pet. Lived a pampered life in the palace—

**GREGORY.** Ma’am, the Vermin Control Officer wasn’t a *pet*—

**CINDERELLA.** —Until he showed how ungrateful he could be! A week after I married the prince, he killed my mice!

**HELGA.** *Mice*?

**CINDERELLA.** Yes! The ones Fairy Godmother turned into horses, and coachmen, and—

**GREGORY.** That was his job. When he saw vermin—

**CINDERELLA.** *Vermin*?

**GREGORY.** Mice; rats; traveling salesmen—

**CINDERELLA.** My precious mice were *vermin* to you?

**GREGORY.** He didn’t know! It was a mistake—

**CINDERELLA.** Oh, there was no mistake! I gave my huntsman the orders personally. (Taking something from her purse:) He paid dearly for his appetite.

**GREGORY.** *You gave the order?*

**CINDERELLA.** Yes; banished from the castle forever. Do you like my lucky Wolf's Paw?

*(She holds aloft a wolf's paw. Suddenly, GREGORY rears back on his haunches and begins to growl and bark fiercely. He looks as though he may attack.)*

**CINDERELLA.** *(To the SERVANTS:)* Oh, my Grimm! Restrain that wolf—

**GREGORY.** That's Dad's paw!

**CINDERELLA.** It's more than he left of my mice—

*(The SERVANTS quickly move forward and lay hands on GREGORY.)*

**LITTLE RED.** *(To HELGA:)* I told you it was dangerous—

**GREGORY.** My father couldn't hunt on three legs! My family almost starved—

**CINDERELLA.** Helga, I want this beast on a leash!

**HELGA.** Cinders, you can't—

**GREGORY.** He was reduced to hunting pigs! *Grandmothers—*

**LITTLE RED.** You should've killed him when you had a chance!

**CINDERELLA.** The price we pay for compassion—Helga, *leash!*

**HELGA.** No way! The Grimms said—

**CINDERELLA.** Do you want to be married to a *stable boy?*

*(HELGA reluctantly goes to her desk and takes out a leash. She throws it at CINDERELLA, who holds it out to her SERVANTS, with distaste. She passes off the wolf's paw along with the leash.)*

**CINDERELLA.** Tie this beast.

**A SERVANT.** Yes, Your Majesty.

*(The SERVANTS tie GREGORY to his chair. The phone beeps.)*

**HELGA.** Yes, Mr. Wilhelm? ... Right away. *(To CINDERELLA:)* He's ready for you. *Princess.*

**CINDERELLA.** Finally! Come, Clarisse—your Happy Ending awaits.

**CLARISSE.** Can my prince have blue eyes?

*(CINDERELLA and CLARISSE exit.)*

**LITTLE RED.** Well! I feel much safer now.

**SARAH.** Mom, I gotta use the bathroom.

**LITTLE RED.** I'm not waiting alone with that Wolf—

**SARAH.** It's an emergency!

**LITTLE RED.** Hold it.

**SARAH.** *(With a dangerous look in her eye:)* Uh-uh.

**LITTLE RED.** *(With a frustrated sigh:)* Is there a restroom?

**HELGA.** Third door past the Giants' Entrance.

*(She hands SARAH a key, attached to a big magic wand. SARAH hurriedly exits. LITTLE RED looks around; finds a chair. A moment of silence.)*

**HELGA.** I'm real sorry, Wolfie.

**GREGORY.** It's fine—

**HELGA.** We can't afford Seth getting fired—

**GREGORY.** It's not your fault. I acted like Dad.

**HELGA.** What?

**GREGORY.** After the palace. He always growled and snarled at humans—

**LITTLE RED.** Don't I know it—

**HELGA.** Can't blame him.

**GREGORY.** But it's not right.

**HELGA.** You want me to loosen your leash?

**LITTLE RED.** Don't you dare!

**GREGORY.** My Dad was a really nice Wolf, ma'am. Honest.

*(LITTLE RED snorts in disbelief.)*

**GREGORY.** But when he couldn't hunt for his cubs anymore...

**HELGA.** I believe you, Wolfie.

**GREGORY.** He just wanted us to have a Happily Ever After. That's all.

*(The SWINE FAMILY enters. HORACE, BERTHA, and FREDERICK are the famous "Three Little Pigs." HORACE and BERTHA are the parents of the PIGLETS who trail behind them—SHAYNA included. BERTHA is munching on fried chicken as they enter.)*

**BERTHA.** —I can't believe he called me a porker!

**FREDERICK.** Where's he get off blaming us? Just because his silly bus tipped over—

**HORACE.** It could've been the Three Blind Mice. They were riding, too.

**BERTHA.** I've never been so insulted. I take Slimfast® with my slops!

**HELGA.** (*Clearing her throat:*) Can I help you?

**HORACE.** (*Flirting with HELGA:*) Horace J. Swine. Sorry we're late; our bus was, ah...

(*BERTHA is giving him the evil eye. He tries to dig himself out.*)

**HORACE.** Don't worry, darling—I'll always love you, hamhocks and all.

**BERTHA.** Hamhocks? You think I have *hamhocks*?

**HORACE.** Ah, figure of speech—

**HELGA.** Have a seat. Mr. Grimm will call you.

**SHAYNA.** (*Pointing to GREGORY:*) Daddy, look!

(*The PIGS all huddle together in fear.*)

**HORACE.** Excuse me...there's a *wolf* in the waiting room.

**HELGA.** He's on a *leash*; isn't that enough?

**HORACE.** It's a *wolf*! You know; sharp teeth; loves pigs—

**FREDERICK.** —For dinner?

**HELGA.** The Grimms *invited* him.

**FREDERICK.** Surely you jest! He doesn't need a story written—

**BERTHA.** Yeah, it's always the same with wolves. Steals cookies from little girls; eats helpless pigs—

**FREDERICK.** His father blew down my house!

**HELGA.** So nothing changes? Like father, like son—

**FREDERICK.** Couldn't have said it better myself.

**LITTLE RED.** Do you know how many generations the Red Hood has been passed down?

**HELGA.** You geniuses keep walking alone in the forest—

**LITTLE RED.** Which would be safe if it wasn't for beasts like that—

**HELGA.** Gotta be just like Mommy—

**LITTLE RED.** Like you're *so* different! The "Wicked Stepsister"—

**HELGA.** I've changed!

**LITTLE RED.** Uh-huh. Your story was the same last time *I* read it.

**HELGA.** And that's it? We're just stories?

**HORACE.** What else is there? *Everybody* wants a Happily Ever After.

**LITTLE RED.** (*Pointedly, to HELGA:*) Some of us just don't get one.

**HORACE.** (*Crossing resolutely towards GREGORY:*) Piglets, I want you to look closely at this wolf. See its evil, beady eyes?

(*FREDERICK speaks in a spooky voice from behind the PIGLETS, frightening them.*)

**FREDERICK.** "The better to see you with, my dear."

**HORACE.** (*Lifting one of GREGORY's paws with clinical detachment:*) Its cruel, massive paws?

**FREDERICK.** "The better to grab you with, my dear."

**HORACE.** (*Prying GREGORY's mouth open:*) Its sharp, wicked teeth?

**FREDERICK.** "The better to EAT you with, my dears!"

(*The PIGLETS all squeal and hide behind BERTHA.*)

**BERTHA.** Horace! Don't tell them horror stories—

**LITTLE RED.** That's no story, lady—it's true!

**HORACE.** They need to be warned! Now Piglets, what do you want in your stories from Mr. Grimm?

**PIGLETS.** (*In unison:*) A dead wolf!

**HORACE.** And what else?

**PIGLETS.** (*In unison:*) A brick house!

**HORACE.** That's right! If it wasn't for my architectural genius, Uncle Frederick and your mother would be pork chops!

**FREDERICK.** Get off it, Horace! The brick house was mine—

**HORACE.** No, you had the sticks—

**BERTHA.** Sticks were mine; Freddy was straw—

**HORACE.** Fine, but I had bricks!

**FREDERICK.** Only the ones in your head—

**HORACE.** What ingratitude! Taking credit for another pig's work—

**BERTHA.** I remember, Freddy; Horace was bricks—

**FREDERICK.** You're missing the point—

**LITTLE RED.** (*Clearing her throat loudly:*) The point is...if it wasn't for the Wolf, you wouldn't *need* bricks.

**FREDERICK.** That's right!

**LITTLE RED.** And if it wasn't for the wolf, I would be safe in the forest.

**BERTHA.** How true.

**LITTLE RED.** And the Princess' mice would still be with us—poor dears.

**GREGORY.** But that was my father—

**LITTLE RED.** (*Picking up the wolf's paw that CINDERELLA left behind:*) Of course it was. I still remember when I met him in the forest, with three paws—

**HELGA.** Why don't you butt out?

**LITTLE RED.** He ate my Grandmother in cold blood. He would've devoured me, too—

**GREGORY.** Our whole family was hungry—

**LITTLE RED.** Thank Grimm the woodcutter came along when he did!

**HORACE.** Did he *really* chop the beast open?

**LITTLE RED.** In a heartbeat! And Grandma was good as new.

**GREGORY.** My father wasn't! He spent weeks in bed; we were living on slops—

**FREDERICK.** Cry me a river—

**GREGORY.** —And by time he recovered, he *hated* humans!

**LITTLE RED.** (*Playing with the wolf's paw:*) Except on a plate! Did he hate pigs, too?

**GREGORY.** Me and the cubs were howling from hunger—

**HORACE.** He almost ate my wife and brother!

**GREGORY.** I'm sorry, sir; he didn't know you were Talking Pigs—

**BERTHA.** Yeah, and I'm Miss Piggy.

**GREGORY.** He didn't! I swear to Grimm—

**HELGA.** Get it through your pork rinds! Gregory is *not* his father!

**HORACE.** He slid down my chimney!

**HELGA.** So you killed him!

**HORACE.** What; you wanted me to feed him my Piglets?

**FREDERICK.** This little piggy went to market,  
This little piggy stayed home—

**HORACE.** (*Grabbing the wolf's paw from LITTLE RED and shoving it in GREGORY's face:*) —And this little piggy boiled your father—

(GREGORY suddenly lunges out from his chair.)

**GREGORY.** LEAVE MY DAD ALONE!

(*The characters all draw back in fear.*)

**HORACE.** See, Piglets? Wolves never change.

**GREGORY.** (*To HELGA, with resolution:*) Ma'am, please unleash me.

**LITTLE RED.** Is he kidding?

**GREGORY.** She can walk me to the door. I'm leaving.

**BERTHA.** So you can study up on your butchering—

**LITTLE RED.** Not a chance! You're staying right there—

**GREGORY.** I don't want to eat Piglets. And I don't care about Grandmas—

**HELGA.** You can't leave without a story!

**GREGORY.** Will you please untie me?

**LITTLE RED.** It's a trick.

**HELGA.** What's he gonna do? I'll be next to him—

**LITTLE RED.** He has teeth! You take that leash off and I'm telling the Princess.

**HELGA.** Wolfie, if I go with you, can you—

**GREGORY.** I'll wear the leash. I don't care; I just wanna go home.

**LITTLE RED.** Well, if she walks him out...

**HORACE.** Don't know why he's here—

**HELGA.** (*To HORACE:*) Look, Bacon Bits—

**GREGORY.** He's right, ma'am. I know already how my story ends. It's in their books. (*Handing HELGA the end of the leash:*) Would you take that? I don't want to scare anyone.

**HELGA.** You *could* get a Happily Ever After...

**GREGORY.** (*Shaking his head:*) I don't think so, ma'am. It's not in a wolf's genes.

(HELGA shrugs helplessly, then exits with GREGORY, holding his leash.)

**LITTLE RED.** Well! Good riddance.

**FREDERICK.** He'll be back. "The only good wolf is a dead wolf," I say.

**HORACE.** Piglets, you must always be on your guard!

**BERTHA.** He could be lurking outside our house tonight.

(Suddenly, a cry from SARAH is heard offstage.)

**SARAH.** Mommy—HELP!

(Also offstage, HELGA screams.)

**LITTLE RED.** It's Sarah!

**HORACE.** And that stepsister—

**LITTLE RED.** See where trusting a wolf gets you? MOVE!

(All of the characters, except the PIGLETS dash offstage. The PIGLETS huddle in fear. We hear GREGORY growling; HELGA and SARAH scream again. The following lines are heard from offstage—)

**LITTLE RED.** STOP HIM!

**SARAH.** MOMMY—

**HORACE.** He's so big—

**BERTHA.** Save me! I'm too cute to die—

**FREDERICK.** Somebody, HEEEEELP!

(Another scream. Suddenly, there is a huge crash! The PIGS and SARAH reenter. Behind them come HELGA and LITTLE RED, who are carrying a limp GREGORY between them.)

**SHAYNA.** Did you kill the wolf?

(The characters all look at each other, embarrassed.)

**BERTHA.** Well...

**HELGA.** I told them to seal that Giant's entrance!

**LITTLE RED.** This brave wolf clamped his teeth on the giant and wouldn't let go!

**SHAYNA.** (Confused by this turn of events:) You mean his sharp, wicked teeth?

**HORACE.** (Embarrassed:) "Wicked" is such a harsh word—

**HELGA.** Wolfie, speak to me!

**GREGORY.** (*Woozily lifting his head:*) Did anybody get the license number on that giant?

**HELGA.** He's okay!

**LITTLE RED.** Mr. Wolf, I don't know how—I mean—

**HELGA.** She means she's really sorry.

**LITTLE RED.** Sarah, what do you say?

**SARAH.** I don't think you want to eat me any more?

**HELGA.** She means thank you.

**LITTLE RED.** We better get you home...

**SARAH.** That was a really big giant.

(*LITTLE RED puts her arm around SARAH, and they begin to exit. LITTLE RED turns back.*)

**LITTLE RED.** Maybe when you're feeling better, you could stop by? I think I have some cookies.

**GREGORY.** Only if they're from Wal-Mart®.

(*LITTLE RED and SARAH exit.*)

**FREDERICK.** So! I guess the bricks don't matter after all.

**HORACE.** Say *what?*

**FREDERICK.** If the wolf isn't a threat, I can live in the sticks!

**HORACE.** Then you *admit* the bricks were mine!

**FREDERICK.** I admit nothing.

**BERTHA.** (*Trying to defuse the argument:*) Maybe we should come back tomorrow. When there's less giant blood on the floor.

**FREDERICK.** It's a slipping hazard.

**HORACE.** But around here, the truth is pretty slippery—

**FREDERICK.** I don't know what you're talking about—

(*The PIGS exit, still arguing. Suddenly, there's another crash—much smaller—offstage. HELGA stiffens in alarm.*)

**HELGA.** Another one?

**JACOB.** (*From off:*) Helga, there's giant blood all over the floor!

**GREGORY.** (*Eyes wide:*) Is that Mr. Grimm?

**HELGA.** (*Nodding to GREGORY:*) I'll mop it up, Mr. Jacob—

**THIS PLAY IS  
NOT OVER!**

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