

WOODHOLLOW'S BANE

Pilot Episode - "Pale Eyes"

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COLD OPEN

EXT. WOODS - NIGHT

A crow perches against the pale moonlight. It squawks, takes flight -- feathers drift down around ABIGALE (12) as she sprints through the trees.

She looks back -- a murder of crows swarm after her, dive-bombing, relentless in their pursuit.

She trips over a fallen tree. The moonlight dies. Silence.

A low growl from deep in the dark.

A creature emerges -- two pale eyes like twin moons. The beast bellows, lunging for her.

She screams.

SMASH-CUT TO:

EXT. COUNTRY TRAIL - NIGHT

Abigale screams awake from her nightmare.

JEBEDIAH

Another nightmare, Abigale?

Her father JEBEDIAH (late 30s, pale) sits at the reins of a supply wagon hitched to four horses -- traveling down a dark country trail.

JEBEDIAH (CONT'D)

Sounded like a spooky one!

ABIGALE

I was being chased by a bunch of crows... and then-

JEBEDIAH

A murder!

ABIGALE

No, I woke up before the monster murdered me.

JEBEDIAH

I mean a 'murder' of crows. That's what a group of crows is called. Isn't that neat?

ABIGALE

No... it's weird.

He reaches into the supply wagon for something out of her sight.

JEBEDIAH
Weird, huh? As weird as-

He whirls around -- wearing a plague doctor mask.

JEBEDIAH (CONT'D)
This?!

Abigale stares, unimpressed. Jebediah wiggles his fingers, spooky in the lamest way.

ABIGALE
You're gonna scare the horses again.

He removes the mask -- a playfully sad face hidden underneath. She laughs.

JEBEDIAH
Me? I think you're the one who has Unicornelius' tail in a tizzy with your... cryptozoology project.

UNICORNELIUS, the large white stallion in front, has a pine cone wedged in his halter, resembling a unicorn.

UNICORNELIUS
disgruntled snort

Abigale snuggles into her blanket -- rests her head against her father's arm.

ABIGALE
Are there kids my age in Woodhollow, Dad?

JEBEDIAH
Yes. I'm told the Bane hasn't affected a single one.

ABIGALE
Maybe I'll finally be able to make friends there...

JEBEDIAH
I'm sure of it, dear. Try and get some rest.

She shuts her eyes -- drifts away.

END OF COLD OPEN

ACT ONE**EXT. COUNTRY TRAIL - NIGHT**

JEBEDIAH

Abigale. Abigale, darling, wake up.

Abigale wakes up. Stretches. Yawns.

They're surrounded by fog and woods.

ABIGALE

Are we there yet?

JEBEDIAH

No. Up ahead.

Fog parts to reveal a bridge up ahead -- faint lights, distant chatter, unease.

ABIGALE

Maybe they're friendly? Or ghosts?
Or friendly ghosts!

JEBEDIAH

Maybe. But we can't take any
chances. I need you to hide in the
wagon and not make a sound.

ABIGALE

But-

JEBEDIAH

No buts, Abigale. These parts
aren't safe for children. Just do
as I say, please.

She sighs, crawls into the wagon, vanishes behind crates.

JEBEDIAH (CONT'D)

Oh, and please be a lamb and hand
me my crossbow?A CROSSBOW sticks out from the crates, knocking the PLAGUE
DOCTOR MASK towards the front of the wagon.

Jebediah hides the CROSSBOW under Abigale's blanket.

Abigale reaches for her SLINGSHOT.

EXT. COUNTRY TRAIL BRIDGE - NIGHT - CONTINUOUSThe wagon approaches the bridge -- Two LAWMEN wait on
horseback, lanterns swaying in the fog.

One is a lanky, sickly YOUNG LAWMAN. The LEAD LAWMAN appears rough around the edges - scarred and brute.

LEAD LAWMAN
What have we here?

JEBEDIAH
Good evening, gentlemen. M'lady.

The Lead Lawman's MARE whinnies.

JEBEDIAH (CONT'D)
Just on my way to Woodhollow,
looking to sell some pelts.

The Lawmen inspect the wagon's exterior.

YOUNG LAWMAN
Woodhollow? I'd avoid that
settlement like the plague, what on
account of their plague and all.

JEBEDIAH
Ah, I figured that was mere tavern
hearsay.

LEAD LAWMAN
Woodhollow's surrounded by the
Wilds. Think they're short on
pelts? Guess a sheltered man from
the capital wouldn't know that.

Jebediah stealthily slides his hand under the blanket --
grabs the loaded CROSSBOW.

YOUNG LAWMAN
Oi-yeah, think you're better than
us with your fancy 'indoor
plumbing' and 'toothed-brushes'?

The Young Lawman smiles, reveals his rotten, missing teeth.

LEAD LAWMAN
You ain't got a toothbrush, mate?

A beat.

YOUNG LAWMAN
Uh... Look at his horse! He's gone
and made it look like a unicorn! We
should shift our focus to that!

JEBEDIAH
What? I like unicorns. I'm not
afraid to admit that.

Another beat.

LEAD LAWMAN
We're just razzin' ya, friend.
You're free to cross.

A subtle sigh of relief. Jebediah slides his hand away from
the crossbow.

JEBEDIAH
Have a good night, gentlemen.
M'lady.

The mare neighs. Unicornelius winks at her. She blushes.

JEBEDIAH (O.S.) (CONT'D)
You still got it, Unicornelius.

The wagon's horses trot past the Lawmen on horseback -- but
the Young Lawman spots the PLAGUE DOCTOR MASK.

YOUNG LAWMAN
(whispering)
Hey boss, wait a tick...

Moments later, the wagon crosses to the other side.

Jebediah looks back -- hushed whispers from Lawmen bounce off
the moonlit river.

Abigale scoots towards the front of the wagon.

ABIGALE
They were pretty rude for Lawmen!

JEBEDIAH
Those weren't Lawmen, Abigale. Stay
back there for now.

ABIGALE
Huh?

Abigale peaks through the back of the wagon.

On the other side of the bridge, the Lawmen stash their
uniform coats -- reveal themselves as BANDITS.

The Bandits hook their lanterns onto the saddles. The YOUNG
BANDIT unsheathes his SCIMITAR. The LEAD BANDIT readies his
BOW AND ARROWS -- kicks his mare.

LEAD BANDIT

HYAHH!

The bandits charge full speed through the fog.

Back to the wagon:

ABIGALE

Dad! They're coming!

Jebediah snaps the reins -- Unicornelius and the other horses gallop onward.

Jebediah looks down and finds his PLAGUE DOCTOR MASK.

JEBEDIAH

Oh, Jebediah, you hilarious fool...

Abigale crawls through to the front of the wagon with her slingshot.

ABIGALE

I want to help!

JEBEDIAH

Abigale, please get back. Dad's got this.

CROSSBOW locked and loaded.

ABIGALE

I can do this, Dad! I can protect the horses. I can protect you!

JEBEDIAH

Abi.

She knows that tone. Reluctantly returns to the wagon.

The Bandits aren't far now.

YOUNG BANDIT

Where you going, doctor? I got a rash that requires your immediate medical attention!

JEBEDIAH

Take one of these and call me in the morning!

An ARROW zips past the Young Bandit -- barely misses.

The Lead Bandit makes his way to the side of the wagon -- eyes on the prize up front.

The Young Bandit stands up on his horse -- prepares to leap on the back of the wagon. Abigale parts the covers.

YOUNG BANDIT
What the?

ABIGALE
Eat rock, loser!

Fires her SLINGSHOT -- the rock knocks out what few teeth are left of the Young Bandit.

YOUNG BANDIT
NO! MY REMAINING TEETH!

The Young Bandit falls off his horse -- Lead Bandit sees. Leaves him behind.

LEAD BANDIT
Pathetic! I'll handle this myself!

The Lead Bandit fires an arrow through the wagon -- just barely misses Abigale.

The trail is surrounded by woods.

JEBEDIAH
Hang tight, Abigale. We're taking the scenic route!

He yanks left -- the wagon careens off trail.

EXT. WOODS - CONTINUOUS

It's a bumpy ride -- Abigale peaks out, terrified.

ABIGALE
I thought you said I'm not allowed in the woods?

JEBEDIAH
The first of many exceptions today. Can you take the reins for me?

Abigale nods -- Jebediah lifts her to the front seat and hands her the reins.

ABIGALE
Just like we practiced?

JEBEDIAH
Just like we practiced.

He loads his crossbow, peaks to the side of the wagon -- barely dodges an arrow.

LEAD BANDIT

You got lucky on that one, doc!
Give me the wagon and I might spare
you and your daughter!

A battle of dueling arrows -- close calls, torn clothes, but no direct hits.

The horses follow every direction Abigale pulls them in without hesitation, **perfectly in sync with her.**

CAW! -- a crow perched in front of the moon, just like her nightmare.

The crow takes flight -- joins in with a MURDER OF CROWS.

JEBEDIAH

Hey! A murder! Just like in your...
never mind.

He sees the fear in her eyes -- takes over the reins and pulls her close.

JEBEDIAH (CONT'D)

It's okay, Abi.

The crows fly past the wagon, up towards the sky -- turn around towards the Bandit.

LEAD BANDIT

Out of my way, pests!

Dive-bombing -- pecking -- scratching.

LEAD BANDIT (CONT'D)

I SAID OUT OF MY WAY!

He grabs his lantern -- swings it haphazardly at the crows -- they dodge and fly above the trees.

The Lead Bandit is down to his last two arrows.

LEAD BANDIT (CONT'D)

IF I CAN'T HAVE THAT WAGON THEN
NOBODY GETS IT!

The Lead Bandit pierces his lantern with an arrow -- fires the FLAMING ARROW.

The wagon sets ablaze.

JEBEDIAH

No!

The horses panic. Firelight flickers across Abigale's frightened face.

Jebediah grabs her, jumps off the wagon -- lands on Unicornelius. Grabs his knife -- releases the horses.

The three wagon horses flee. The bandit's mare flees.

The burning wagon comes to a halt -- Jebediah scrambles for supplies -- saves the mask and a few books.

An arrow pointed to the back of his head.

LEAD BANDIT

ENJOY THE VIEW, DOC. IT'S ABOUT TO
GET DARK.

A ROCK strikes the back of the bandit's head -- misfires his last arrow into the burning wagon.

ABIGALE

Leave my dorky dad alone!

Enraged, the bandit turns around, sees Abigale, slingshot in hand, riding Unicornelius.

WHAM! -- The bandit is bucked by the mighty stallion -- flies straight into a tree.

He stumbles to his feet, twitching -- Jebediah rushes to his family, then turns back, horrified by what he sees.

The bandit's eyes glow like twin moons. Pale and distant. His mouth agape, breathing heavily.

With cracking, rigid movements he flees into the deep woods.

ABIGALE (CONT'D)

W-what was that?

JEBEDIAH

It must be Woodhollow's Bane.

The burning wagon begins to smolder as Jebediah leads Unicornelius and Abigale back to the country trail.

The creature from Abigale's nightmare observes -- breath fogging the cold air.

END OF ACT ONE

ACT TWO**EXT. COUNTRY TRAIL - MORNING**

Abigale and Jebediah ride atop Unicornelius toward a quiet settlement -- wooden walls towering over the countryside.

They pass a weathered sign:

WELCOME TO WOODHOLLOW

POPULATION: 200 173 138 ???

ABIGALE

Can I borrow your lame mask?

JEBEDIAH

So far it hasn't affected any children, so no -- I'll be keeping my very cool mask.

Abigale pulls out one of the books salvaged from the fire.

ABIGALE

You think the other kids'll like my bestiary?

She flips through the pages -- cats, dogs, birds, rats... and a beautifully detailed, anime-esque drawing of Unicornelius.

JEBEDIAH

Absolutely.

Jebediah grabs one of his books.

JEBEDIAH (CONT'D)

I hope the other adults will like my book of ailments.

He flips through the pages of detailed notes and occasional rough sketches -- measles, mumps, lumps, warts, leprosy, etc.

ABIGALE

Ewww!

JEBEDIAH

Well, it's not for kids.

EXT. WOODHOLLOW - MOMENTS LATER

They approach the settlement. A large, brown shire horse awaits them -- atop it sits the big, burly THADDEUS (40). A rugged but proud mountain of a man.

THADDEUS
 Doctor Jebediah Jameson, I presume?

JEBEDIAH
 That's correct. You must be
 Thaddeus Stone?

THADDEUS
 No, Thaddeus Stone was my
 grandfather. I'm Thaddeus Stone the
 Third.

A smug smile.

JEBEDIAH
 But of course. This is my daughter,
 Abigale.

Abigale enthusiastically waves to Thaddeus. He glances at
 her, then back to Jebediah.

THADDEUS
 Quite the complexion she's got. Is
 she Wild?

Confusion from Abigale, a subtle hesitation from Jebediah.

JEBEDIAH
 No, just tans well. Much like her
 late mother. Me on the other hand?
 Oh, I burn up something crisp if
 I'm in the sun too long!

THADDEUS
 Do you see much sun up in that
 cloudy capital? Well, let me be the
 first to welcome you to my village,
 Woodhollow!

Thaddeus stretches his arms out as if welcoming them to the
 pearly gates of paradise, but the only thing in worse shape
 than his town are its residents -- poor, paranoid, dirty.

Window shutters slam shut as a woman hocks a loogie; nearby,
 a man growls, foam spilling down his chin.

Thaddeus motions them to follow him down the dirt road.
 Abigale's head rotates on a swivel, taking in the sights.

ABIGALE
 Where are the kids? All I see is
 gross, old adults?

Jebediah laughs.

THADDEUS

Gotta say, Jeb, I'm surprised the capital sent a doctor of your caliber down to little ol' Woodhollow. Looks like our tax dollars may pay off yet.

JEBEDIAH

I insisted on going. The reports on this bane truly piqued my interest. I dealt with a similar case when I was just starting in this field.

THADDEUS

Oh? Did you cure it?

JEBEDIAH

Eventually, but... there were many I couldn't save in time.

Abigale squeezes her father's hand. He smiles reassuringly back at her.

JEBEDIAH (CONT'D)

I'm afraid we lost our supply wagon to bandits on the way down here.

THADDEUS

As long as we don't have to foot the bill for your mistake. Here's where you'll be staying.

They stop in front of a two-story doctor's office cabin.

ABIGALE

Whoah! Cool!

THADDEUS

Should have some supplies in there, try not to waste them. Living quarters upstairs. My wife Tiffany has been 'working' all week getting it ready for you. She'll stop by once you get settled in.

Jebediah hitches Unicornelius to a post and sets Abigale down. **She strokes his mane, murmuring gently as the stallion's eyes drift closed.**

Thaddeus and his horse turn around.

JEBEDIAH

Heading off?

A small posse of hunters and trappers ride past them.

THADDEUS

Yep, me and what remaining men
we've got are headed out on a hunt.
I'd let you tag along, but I doubt
a city boy could handle anything
bigger than a rat. You wouldn't
believe how big the game gets in
these parts.

ABIGALE

Hey! My dad can do anything!

JEBEDIAH

Abigale.

She rolls her eyes, sighs.

THADDEUS

I'm sure. I got a boy around your
age, girl. Maybe you two can play
Soldiers and Wildlings sometime.

Another twitch of hesitation from Jebediah.

ABIGALE

Around my age? Is he nice?

Thaddeus stops to ponder. Rubs the chin beneath his beard.

THADDEUS

Uh... you know, I'm not actually
sure... you two take care now.
Hyah!

Digs his spurs into the shire -- catches up with the men.

ABIGALE

Why does that big, hairy jerk keep
calling me wild? What does he mean?

JEBEDIAH

Oh, I don't know, dear. I guess
he... maybe that's just how they
talk down here.

ABIGALE

You're lying! You think I don't see
how everyone stares at me? Like I'm
different, weird!

JEBEDIAH
I'm weird too, Abigale! There's
nothing wrong with being weird!

ABIGALE
I've never seen anyone who looks
like me! What am I?!

Jebediah freezes -- eyes dart to the townsfolk, their stares
heavy on Abigale. A tense silence.

JEBEDIAH
You're human.

INT. DOCTOR'S CABIN - MOMENTS LATER

A door swings open, rings the bell.

MARIE (11) a small, timid girl with thick, magnifying glasses
-- drops her book "Mollusk Lust: Snail and Slug's Forbidden
Love" as Abigale and Jebediah enter.

Abigale lights up -- finally another kid.

ABIGALE
(hushed whisper)
A girl my age!

MARIE
Mom! More sick people!

JEBEDIAH
Oh, we're not sick. We're here from
the capital.

MARIE
Mom! More tax collectors!

ELIZABETH (mid 30s) steps out from the backroom.

ELIZABETH
Take it down a notch, Marie. That's
the Jamesons. They're here to help.

Abigale's initial excitement wanes.

ABIGALE
Yeah, Marie. Take it down a notch.

MARIE
You take it down a notch!

ABIGALE
No, you take it down a notch!

ELIZABETH
They're off to a great start.

She's over it. Jebediah offers his hand.

JEBEDIAH
Jebediah Jameson, at your service.
This is my lovely daughter Abigale.

Elizabeth shakes his hand.

ELIZABETH
Elizabeth Harper. My sunshine and
bundle of joy Marie.

Abigale and Marie stare daggers at each other.

JEBEDIAH
A pleasure to meet you both. I
didn't realize Woodhollow already
had a medical doctor.

ELIZABETH
It doesn't. He was one of the first
to go. I'm just a veterinarian.
That's how bad things are. I'm
hoping you're my ticket out of this
cabin and back to my barn.

JEBEDIAH
'Just' a veterinarian? Doctor to
doctor, don't sell yourself short!
Why, young Abigale here has always
wanted to become a veterinarian.

ABIGALE
Maybe when I was six. Now I just
want to be a witch.

JEBEDIAH
What?! Since when?

ELIZABETH
Daughters, am I right? Marie, would
you show Abigale around Woodhollow?
Doctor Jameson and I have much to
discuss.

MARIE
Are you asking me or telling me?

ELIZABETH
Telling you.

Marie sighs -- the bell rings as the kids wander out.

ELIZABETH (CONT'D)
Marie isn't, uh, great with people.

JEBEDIAH
Abigale is, uh... yeah, same.

EXT. WOODHOLLOW - LATER

The girls go for an awkward stroll around the village.

The occasional townsfolk stops to stare at Abigale.

MARIE
You're drawing attention away from
my glasses. There may be use for
you yet.

ABIGALE
I'm used to it.

Marie points towards a barn.

MARIE
That's where my mom usually works.
I don't think she likes being a
human doctor. When I grow up I want
to be a bug doctor. I like bugs.

ABIGALE
I don't actually want to be a
witch. I want to be a magic animal
doctor. Like on unicorns, mermaids,
maybe wendigos?

MARIE
Did you have a lot of friends in
the capital?

ABIGALE
No. Do you have friends here?

MARIE
No... well, one, actually. My
friend, Dale. Do you want to meet
him?

Abigale nods her head. Marie reaches into her pocket -- pulls
out a SNAIL.

MARIE (CONT'D)
This is Dale.

ABIGALE

Hi, Dale!
(beat)
Snails aren't bugs.

MARIE

I know that! They're mollusks. But
I still like him.

ABIGALE

... I like him too.

MARIE

Cool. Uhm. Do you want to hold him?

Abigale lights up -- **Dale eager to meet her as well.**

ABIGALE

More than anything.

As Marie picks Dale up and reaches out to place him on
Abigale's palm, TED (12) swoops in and snatches the snail.

ABIGALE (CONT'D)

Hey!

MARIE

Ted, no! Give Dale back!

TED

If you want him back so bad, come
and get him, bug-eyes!

WHAM! Ted is hit right between the eyes with a rock.

He squeals -- sees Abigale with her SLINGSHOT.

ABIGALE

He's a mollusk! Give him back!

Ted looks back towards a gap in the wall of wood.

TED

Sorry, but Dale's taking an express
trip to the Wilds!

He sneaks through the gap -- laughing as he trips and
stumbles into the forest.

Abigale pockets her slingshot and creeps towards the gap --
Marie grabs her arm.

MARIE

We can't. Kids aren't allowed in there!

ABIGALE

You stay behind if you want, but I'm not letting him take my new friend. I'm going in... for Dale!

Marie takes a deep breath and nods.

MARIE

For Dale.

They sneak through. A brief hesitation of momentary fear -- they look at each other a moment before running into the woods together.

EXT. WOODS - AFTERNOON

The girls push through the trees, deeper and deeper into the forest -- the brush thickens, fog curling between roots and trunks as if alive.

Wildlife scurries out of sight -- wings flutter, twigs snap.

TED (O.S.)

You're almost as slow as your boyfriend Dale!

His voice echoes from all directions. Abigale squints into the fog -- lifts her slingshot -- fires.

A beat. Then -- THUD.

TED (O.S.) (CONT'D)

OW!

They push through the brush and find him: Ted, red-eyed and sniffing, sitting in the dirt -- clutching his forehead.

TED (CONT'D)

I let that rock hit me!

ABIGALE

Sure you did.

MARIE

Why?

Ted pulls Dale out of his pocket.

MARIE (CONT'D)

Dale! Your shell is intact!

Abigale aims her loaded slingshot at Ted. He flinches.

ABIGALE

Hand over the snail and no one gets hurt... again.

TED

Fine! I was just messing around anyway! No need to get so emotional about it!

He hands Marie the snail and gets back on his feet.

ABIGALE

So... which way's Woodhollow?

TED

Pff, you should know. Aren't you a Wildling?

ABIGALE

A 'Wildling'? What's that even mean?

BOOM! -- The ground quakes.

MARIE

What was that?

BOOM! Louder, closer. Dale retreats into his shell.

Trees crack. A shadow looms over the children.

BOOM! A low growl follows -- A creature emerges -- two pale eyes like twin moons.

Now visible in the light of day, the monster from Abigale's nightmare is revealed to be a gigantic, dark brown BEAR with tusks and other boar-like features.

Crows perch on the mighty tusks. Her pale eyes closely observe the frightened children -- **locks eyes with Abigale.**

The Bear bares its teeth and bellows, swiping the forest floor, ripping chunks of earth as if ready to charge.

The crows disperse. The children slowly back away -- until-

Ted SCREAMS and bolts through the underbrush.

The Bear ROARS, shaking the forest with each thunderous step, giving chase.

END OF ACT TWO

ACT THREE**EXT. WOODS - AFTERNOON**

Leaves fall around a perched crow as the forest rumbles. It takes flight -- Ted bursts into frame, Abigale and Marie close behind. They approach a clearing.

Abigale looks back -- the Bear takes a sharp turn to the side and maneuvers around the trees in front of the kids.

They stop dead in their tracks, backs against a thick tree at the edge of the clearing, as the Bear slowly inches towards them. Marie takes what may be her last look at Dale.

MARIE

I always had a feeling we'd go out
in a blaze of glory together, Dale.

Dale proudly accepts his fate.

The Bear's exhales sway the children's hair. Dale's eye stalks wave -- fogging Marie's glasses.

TED

If I'm gonna die, at least it'll be
with friends.

ABIGALE

We are not 'friends'! It's
your fault we're gonna die in
the first place!

MARIE

Excuse me, 'friends'? Friends
don't steal their friend's
snail.

The Bear's mouth twitches as her jaw widens, sharp teeth ready to chomp.

Abigale and Marie look at each other.

MARIE (CONT'D)

But we're friends now, right?

ABIGALE

Yeah... yeah, we're friends.

They join hands, Abigale holding tight -- a newfound determination in her eyes.

The forest is quiet -- waiting, watching.

Abigale meets the Bear's gaze. A reflection in the beast's pale eyes -- recognition.

The Bear hesitates, its growl fading into a low, rumble -- not angry, not scared, but... mournful?

Abigale takes one step between her friends and the Bear.

The Bear snorts, confused. Searching.

Marie's eyes wider than ever. Ted unsure what's happening.

ABIGALE (CONT'D)
You're... looking for-

Then -- a huge net is cast over the Bear.

The children scatter as she resumes her rampage, thrashing about in the net.

The hunters and trappers on all sides of the net struggle to keep it steady, even with their horses doing the heavy lifting.

Thaddeus readies his MUSKET.

TED
Dad?!

THADDEUS
Thaddeus Stone the Fourth?! What
are you doing out here?!

With Thaddeus distracted, the Bear rips through the net -- thrashes her tusks, knocking the hunters off their horses.

Thaddeus turns back to take his SHOT, but it merely grazes the beast's ear -- still, she cries out.

Abigale feels her pain. Steps out from hiding.

ABIGALE
Stop it! You're hurting her!

THADDEUS
The Wildling?!

The Bear gets a good look at Thaddeus, perhaps recognizing the man. Her ROAR so guttural and visceral it shakes the forest -- scares some of the younger men.

The Bear charges toward Thaddeus -- not enough time to load the MUSKET, he drops it -- readies his AXE.

THADDEUS (CONT'D)
Cowards! I'll take you on myself,
beast!

He swings -- she swipes -- axe flies -- Thaddeus slams into a tree trunk -- it splinters -- air knocked out of him.

THADDEUS (CONT'D)

ARGH!

The tree falls and pins Thaddeus down. Strong as he is, he's unable to free himself.

The men watch in horror as the Bear approaches her victim. One of them lifts his MUSKET.

THADDEUS (CONT'D)

Stand down! The kill is mine!

The Bear looms over him, lifts her paw up to strike.

Then -- a man in a singed plague doctor mask jumps out from the bushes.

JEBEDIAH

Boo!

A beat. Nothing.

ABIGALE

Dad?!

JEBEDIAH

Abigale! Thank goodness you're o-

WHAM! The Bear backslaps Jebediah out of the way.

ABIGALE

DAD!

Abigale runs to her father.

ELIZABETH (O.S.)

Abigale, don't!

Elizabeth rides atop Unicornelius, lifts Marie up.

MARIE

Mom!

The frenzied Bear sets her sights on Jebediah -- motionless on the ground. The mask fallen, shattered.

The men rush to Thaddeus -- free him from the tree.

Abigale kneels beside Jebediah. The forest holds its breath.

The Bear approaches. Abigale rises, hand out -- calm.

They lock eyes. The Bear's fury fades to sorrow.

The onlookers freeze -- Ted's jaw drops. Marie can't blink.

ELIZABETH
Incredible.

MARIE
That's my friend!

Even Thaddeus can't believe his eyes.

THADDEUS
Wildling...

He eyes a musket -- fingers twitch.

She niffs Abigale's hand. Abigale reaches further and pets her snout.

Jebediah jolts awake -- battered, breathing hard.

He sees his daughter standing between him and the beast.

JEBEDIAH
(weakly)
Abi...

ABIGALE
Your... cubs? You're looking for
your cubs?

A mournful grumble from the Bear.

ABIGALE (CONT'D)
Taken... by-

A GUNSHOT cracks the stillness -- Thaddeus, trembling, smoke curling from the barrel.

The Bear howls in pain. Her connection to Abigale broken.

ABIGALE (CONT'D)
No!

Blood trickles down the Bear's shoulder -- she makes her escape through the woods and fog, shaking the Earth beneath her feet.

The fog swallows the path left behind her.

Silence.

Abigale turns to her dad.

ABIGALE (CONT'D)
Dad?! Are you okay?

JEBEDIAH
Some broken ribs, but... might need
a second opinion.

Unicornelius trots over. Elizabeth, Marie, and Dale hop down.

ELIZABETH
You're lucky to be alive. Come on
kids, let's get him out of here.
We'll decide your punishment after
we patch him up.

MARIE
Punishment?! But Abigale saved
everyone!

ELIZABETH
You know you're not allowed in the
woods...

Elizabeth and Marie bicker as they help Jebediah atop
Unicornelius.

JEBEDIAH
(whispering to Abigale)
You'll help with some chores around
the office, but no punishment. You
were very brave today.

ABIGALE
You mean it?

Jebediah smiles, then winces, grabbing his sides.

Abigale stares at the Bear's massive footprint left behind.

ABIGALE (CONT'D)
I hope she finds her cubs...

She glances at her family, then the fading fog.

ABIGALE (CONT'D)
And I'll help her find them.

MARIE
... but it's his fault we're out
here in the first place!

She points at Ted as he runs to his father's side.

TED
Father! You're okay!

Thaddeus doesn't even look at him.

THADDEUS
Thaddeus Stone the Fourth... You
shouldn't be out here, boy.

He walks away from his son. Returns the musket to its owner.

HUNTER
You want us to track her, Mr.
Stone? There's some blood over-

THADDEUS
No. We failed today, but she'll
return.

Thaddeus watches as Abigale, her family, and newfound friends
vanish into the fog.

He glances toward the trees -- blood on the leaves, the
forest breathing, watching.

THADDEUS (CONT'D)
We'll have use for you, Wildling.

The last crow takes flight.

EXT. WOODHOLLOW - NIGHT - ESTABLISHING

All is quiet in Woodhollow, save for the tavern and the
injured men stumbling home from their night out.

INT. STONE RESIDENCE - MOMENTS LATER

Thaddeus enters his luxurious cabin.

The walls are covered in mounted taxidermy trophies. Common
big game and mythological beasts abound.

Still injured, he limps towards a large vaulted door. As he
spins the lock combination dial, he's approached by his wife
TIFFANY.

TIFFANY
You're home awfully late.

THADDEUS
Hmm.

TIFFANY
Teddy told me what happened out
there today.

THADDEUS
Oh, will you stop calling him
that?! His name is Thaddeus the
Fourth! He's not some stuffed bear!

INT. TED'S ROOM - CONTINUOUS

Ted lays awake in his room, unable to tune out another
argument.

TIFFANY (O.S.)
He's still a child, Thaddeus!

THADDEUS
And he'll remain one if you keep
babying him the way you do!

Ted turns over on his side. Closes his eyes, covers his ears
with the pillow.

INT. STONE RESIDENCE - CONTINUOUS

Thaddeus finishes dialing the combination.

THADDEUS
I'll be in my study-

TIFFANY
Thaddeus! We're your family! You
can't keep shutting us out!

He slams the door, shutting them out.

INT. BASEMENT STAIRCASE - CONTINUOUS

Thaddeus grabs a lantern off the wall to light the long
staircase down. Shadows flickering over his gruff face.

INT. STUDY - MOMENTS LATER

Thaddeus walks through another door into his study.

THADDEUS
Nothing more detrimental to a child
than an overbearing mother. Don't
you agree?

He shines his lantern over a cage with two huddled,
whimpering BEAR CUBS. The Cubs have small, round tusks
growing.

THADDEUS (CONT'D)
 You two and the Wildling will bring
 her and the other beasts to me.

Thaddeus shines the lantern on a painting of his father,
 Thaddeus Stone the Second -- proud, strong, dignified. The
 same cruel ambition gleams in his own eyes.

THADDEUS (CONT'D)
 The woods belong to man... To me.

EXT. DEEP WOODS - NIGHT

Hushed whispers in the deep forest.

A gathering of GIANT BEASTS illuminated by fireflies:

-- The giant tusked Bear.

-- A large grey FOX with the pattern and paws of a raccoon.

-- A black CROW with owl-like features the size of a man,
 perched on a thick, low-hanging branch.

-- At the center, a giant white WOLF with mighty antlers and
 other stag-like features. He's nearly as large as the Bear,
 but slender. Five parallel scars run across his face.

The Lead Bandit from earlier lays at the center of the
 meeting. His eyes still white, his body now motionless.

The beasts speak without moving their mouths, their words
 carrying weight and gravitas.

BEAR
 The Forest delivers this man to
 us... yet Stone lives? Is his heart
 not impure?

CROW
 The Forest will deliver Stone...
 when the cubs are safe.

FOX
 We cannot enter their territory.
 The Forest forbids it.

BEAR
 'Our' territory! They stole it from
 us like they stole my cubs! And
 there is another Stone, a cub. Saw
 him, smelled him. It is no mistake.

CROW
You wish to cull the Stone cub?

BEAR
Not the cub... we are not like man.

FOX
Perhaps we take the cub? Next time
he enters The Forest?

BEAR
Another cub with him... different.
A child of The Forest.

The Wolf's ears twitch. He lifts his head, sniffs.

WOLF
Silence... we are not alone.
Something stirs beyond our sight.

The beasts all turn in unison towards the direction of-

SMASH-CUT TO:

INT. ABIGALE'S ROOM - NIGHT

Abigale jolts awake, cold sweat clinging to her brow. The room is dark and unfamiliar, yet the vision lingers.

On her nightstand, her bestiary glows softly in the moonlight -- the newly sketched tusked Bear staring back at her. She flips the page and begins a new drawing.

ABIGALE
Child of The Forest?

END OF EPISODE