

**Red, Briar-Rose, Cowardly Prince**

*There is a thrum, music and a lighting change, kind of like the one before, but backwards. Something is being undone. The Prince is no longer acting cowardly.*

**RED**

*(looking up and around)* That's odd.

**BRIAR-ROSE**

You! I was dreaming of you!

**THE COWARDLY PRINCE**

You were?

**BRIAR-ROSE**

Yes. You've saved me! *(sighs)*

**THE COWARDLY PRINCE**

I have? *(then realizing)*. Oh! I have! Yes, I'm feeling much more like myself now.

*She throws her arms around him and hugs him again.*

**BRIAR-ROSE**

I was dreaming of a hero. I admit, I thought you'd be taller.

**THE COWARDLY PRINCE**

I admit, I always thought I would be too.

**BRIAR-ROSE**

But you are handsome, and so very brave. Tell me, how does it feel to save someone's life?

**THE COWARDLY PRINCE**

Princess. I couldn't have done it on my own. *(indicates Red)* This girl here helped me find my courage! *(confused)* Courage that seemed to disappear on my journey here . . .

*Red curtsies.*

**BRIAR-ROSE**

In that case, the entire kingdom is indebted to you too, Miss. You saved us. Please, if there is ever anything you need . . .

**RED**

Anything?

**BRIAR-ROSE**

Anything at all.

**RED**

Actually, there is something. I have some friends who've been captured by three evil witches.

**BRIAR-ROSE**

Oh, Heavens!

**RED**

It is quite upsetting. They're rewriting the endings to all of the stories in Happily Ever After. (*To the prince*) It's why you lost your courage.

**THE COWARDLY PRINCE**

Ah-ha. That would explain it. Is it also why I'm not taller?

**RED**

Um, no. I think that's probably just genetics.

**THE COWARDLY PRINCE**

Well, drat.

**RED**

Do you know where I could find these witches? Where they might be holding my friends?

**BRIAR-ROSE**

I've been sleeping for quite a while, but the last I remember, the witches have a castle in the woods.

**RED**

(*bemused, to herself*) So many castles in the woods. . .

**BRIAR-ROSE**

Houses, too!

**RED**

Ah.

**BRIAR-ROSE**

And my cousin Rapunzel might be your only way in.

**RED**

Rapunzel? The girl with the very long hair?

**BRIAR-ROSE**

That's her! But I have no idea where her tower is.

**COWARDLY PRINCE**

(*announcing this as if it's a huge revelation*) It's probably in the woods!

**RED**

That does seem like a safe bet.

**BRIAR-ROSE**

(*to the Prince*) Oh, you're so handsome! And smart!

**RED**

So, what now? Is there anything else that could help?

**BRIAR-ROSE**

We can start with the Gingerbread House. A witch used to live there, we might find a clue. I can take you.

**RED**

You'd do that?

**BRIAR-ROSE**

It's the least I can do! You brought me my prince! (*swoons*) Although if we find Rapunzel's tower, I'm not sure how you're going to get in. Rapunzel doesn't let down her hair for just *anyone*. We girls have to be cautious, you know. Are you coming, my Prince?

**THE COWARDLY PRINCE**

(*with bravado*) Certainly! I wouldn't miss another journey through the woods. Bunnies or no bunnies, it will be an adventure unlike any other.

**BRIAR-ROSE**

And we'll hurry back so we can get married and live happily ever after.

*Briar-Rose places her hands in the Prince's and kicks up her leg as she says this with another pronounced sigh.*

**RED**

People fall in love so quickly in these stories. I never realized it before.

**BRIAR-ROSE**

That's because time works differently here. And also because love is *wonderful*. Why, you could be in love right now and not even know it.

**RED**

(*pauses*) Me? Don't be silly. You can't be in love with someone you just met, and it's barely been a day.

**COWARDLY PRINCE**

(*looking at Red closely*) A day since you met who?

**RED**

Nobody! I mean. . .oh, good grief, do we have to talk about this?

**BRIAR-ROSE**

The rules of love are different here in Happily Ever After. People are always falling in love. You're not immune to its powerful effects.

**RED**

But I'm not from here.

**BRIAR-ROSE**

Pish-posh. That doesn't matter. Remind me, who are we saving again?

**RED**

The Fairy Godmother, Prince Charming. . .

**THE COWARDLY PRINCE**

My brother? And his Gallant Steed?

**RED**

You mean. . .his *bike*? Wendell, the 8<sup>th</sup> dwarf. And the. . .uh (*a slight pause*) the Frog Prince.

**BRIAR-ROSE**

Ah, yes. The Frog 'prince,' is it? Tell me, is he handsome?

**RED**

He's a frog.

**BRIAR-ROSE**

Hmm. I hear it's a phase. (*cheerily*) Come on, we better hurry. Your friends —and your frog—need you.

*Red shoots her a look, then takes a deep breath. They exit.*