

## SCENE TWO: BRIAR ROSE

*Lights up on the woods. There is a section on one side of the stage that is covered in large thorns. In front of the patch is a stone bench, and there sits a prince.*

*Red stumbles onto the other side of the stage, seemingly coming right from the magical passageway through the clock in the Brothers' Bookshop. The Prince doesn't notice her.*

**RED**

Whew! Traveling by clock, not the smoothest of rides. *(looks around)* Where am I now?

*Red sees the Prince, and hesitates going over to him, unsure if he's been changed by the witches. She begins to move toward him, hidden by the trees. A stick cracks underneath her foot and the prince gasps, drawing his sword.*

**THE COWARDLY PRINCE**

Who goes there?

*He flings the sword around, but it's clear he is horribly untrained.*

**COWARDLY PRINCE**

Show yourself, vile beast!

*Red steps out from behind the trees.*

**RED**

I'm sorry, Your Highness. *(bows)* I...

**THE COWARDLY PRINCE**

*(terrified)* Are you a witch?

**RED**

*(frowning)* No. I'm just a girl. I'm just passing through to find. . .

**THE COWARDLY PRINCE**

*(holding the sword out)* Stay back!

**RED**

*(talking a step back)* Okay, okay. I won't hurt you.

**THE COWARDLY PRINCE**

That's what IT said!

**RED**

It? It who?

*The Cowardly Prince makes another terrified noise and points toward the forest. Red creeps over in the direction he pointed, thinking there is something terrifying about to jump out.*

**THE COWARDLY PRINCE**

Don't! It's...*horrible!!*

*A small bunny hops out. The Cowardly Prince screams in terror, and both Red and the animal turn to look at the Cowardly Prince. Red scratches the animal's ear, which makes it kick its hind leg – causing the Prince to scream again.*

*The animal scurries past the Prince, who holds out his sword at it the whole time, and off into the forest.*

**RED**

That was the cutest little bunny. Not scary at all!

**THE COWARDLY PRINCE**

It had *sharp...pointy...teeth!* (*animatedly showing "teeth" with his fingers up to his mouth*)

**RED**

Wait. You're a prince. I saw you with your brothers when I first arrived. Aren't you supposed to be brave?

**THE COWARDLY PRINCE**

Yes! I *am* supposed to be brave!

**RED**

Well, what happened?

**THE COWARDLY PRINCE**

*I don't know!* But now I'm afraid of everything. I'm even afraid of my terribly good looks!

*The Prince holds up a mirror cautiously, then yells in terror when he sees his reflection.*

**RED**

(*to herself*) The witches. (*To the Prince*) What are you doing here?

**THE COWARDLY PRINCE**

I heard there's a princess inside this castle.

**RED**

I don't see a castle.

**THE COWARDLY PRINCE**

It's behind all the thorns. One hundred years ago, the entire kingdom was cursed and everyone inside fell into a deep, deep slumber.

**RED**

(*almost to herself*) Oh! I know this one! It's Sleeping Beauty!

**THE COWARDLY PRINCE**

Her name is Briar Rose. I came here to rescue her. To make her my wife.

**RED**

How romantic! So, what are you waiting for?

**THE COWARDLY PRINCE**

(*pause*) Thorns are sharp.

**RED**  
And...?

**THE COWARDLY PRINCE**  
Sharp things cut you and draw...*(he throws up in his mouth a little)* blood.

**RED**  
In the story, you're not afraid of anything. You can do this. Go on up there and wake your princess with a kiss.

*The Cowardly Prince looks up at the thorns.*

**THE COWARDLY PRINCE**  
But it's dark up there.

**RED**  
Are you afraid of the dark too?

**THE COWARDLY PRINCE**  
Yes!! *(he breaks down in sobs)* And spiders. And mice. And snakes. And apparently. . .*(he lets out a dribble-y sniffle)* small woodland creatures too!

**#25: YOU CAN DO THIS**

**RED**  
Okay. But you won't find any small woodland creatures inside that castle.

**THE COWARDLY PRINCE**  
You can't promise that!

**RED**  
You're right, I can't. . .but I *can* promise that they won't hurt you. I've been learning a lot about bravery myself lately. I think I can help.