

SCENE TWO: THE BROTHERS' BOOKSHOP

The inside of the bookshop is dim, dark, and full of mystery. There are two old men behind a counter, but they don't react when Red enters.

WILHELM

May I help you?

RED

(startled)

Oh my goodness!

JACOB

Are you looking for something...?

RED

(a cautious beat) No, I'm...well, I'm hiding. I mean, not *hiding*...what I mean to say is...

Jacob turns and faces her, bright-eyed.

JACOB

Ah yes, I can see it in your face. You *are* looking for something.

RED

I'm so sorry, I didn't mean to interrupt...*(trailing off)* Whatever it is you're doing here.

Red turns to leave, but what Wilhelm says stops her.

WILHELM

There aren't any happy endings out there, you know.

Red pauses at the door, and slowly turns to face them.

RED

What did you say?

JACOB

(changing the subject, covering for his brother)

Er...these books! All of these have happy endings, and they're inside this shop!

RED

Oh! Yes. Hmm. *(holding up her book)* Well, I've already got one, and...

WILHELM

Ooh! A classic! Have you gotten to the part about the prince?

RED

(suddenly alive and excited)

The prince? Yes!

WILHELM

When he comes upon the castle?

RED

When he finds the cave, and the rock slides back...

WILHELM

Revealing the hidden passage...

RED

...and there stands...

RED/WILHELM

The DRAGON!

They both laugh. Wilhelm crosses back to Jacob.

WILHELM

(to Jacob, an 'I told you so')

DRAGON.

JACOB

(Brushing him aside with a wave of his hand)

Pfft, that's been done so many times! Before you go, young girl, take a look at our trinkets. You might find this shelf interesting.

He points to a shelf full of knick knacks from the various stories. There's a glass slipper. A shiny red apple. A tiara. A spindle. A crown. A broomstick. A pearl. A rusty key. A bunch of straw.

RED

(Surveys it for a moment)

What's so interesting about...

She pauses and picks up the tiara.

WILHELM

(over her shoulder)

I have a suspicion that you see more than meets the eye...when you look hard enough.

Embarrassed, Red places the tiara back.

RED

(a beat, as if to wonder how this man knows this about her) I really must be going.

JACOB

If you must. But before you go...take one more peek. if you look a little closer, a happy ending could be yours!

Red turns away for a moment, enraptured by the objects on the shelves. The brothers disappear inside an old grandfather clock. As the clock closes, it chimes once, loudly, then is silent. Red spins around startled at the clock, but only sees an empty room.

RED

Hello? Hello? Where did you go?

Red feels the sides of the clock, but finds nothing. She looks around but begins to get a little scared being by herself now. She turns to leave abruptly, and in her clumsiness, she bumps the shelf of knickknacks and nearly knocks the glass slipper to the floor.

She puts it back and studies the objects.

RED

A glass slipper. A bunch of straw, a rusty key, a golden apple...it looks like someone is a little too obsessed with fairy tales.

She crosses to the spindle, picks it up and turns it over in her hand. As she does, she pricks her finger on it.

RED

Ouch! *(She starts to feel dizzy, stumbles.)* I feel...so strange. Why is...everything...spinning? I can't remember...what to do...for an earthquake.

She stumbles back and lands into a chair. As she does, the set pieces begin to spin and turn. A shift in the music as the set is changed. Red remains Centerstage as the land of Happy Ever After comes to life around her.

#3: INTO THE LAND OF HAPPILY EVER AFTER (UNDERScore)

The set transforms into a fairytale land. Suddenly, everything is vibrantly colored, from the backdrop to the costumes to the set pieces. It should be a startling contrast from the opening scene. In a very prominent, elevated place we see a scroll, inkwell and pen on display at the town's center. Above, a banner of sorts directing attention to these magical objects.