

MESSAGE FOR THE KING

A musical love story

By Brad Casper

Inspired by the Music of
BLackmore's Night

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CAST OF CHARACTERS

ESMERALDA: (40s, VOCAL)	A fortune teller and mother of Elsa Beth
ELSA BETH: (19, VOCAL)	Daughter of Esmeralda who sells flowers
WILHELM: (19, VOCAL)	An apprentice studying at the Grand Master's Library
KING: (mid-30s, VOCAL)	A young king
LORD MAYOR: (late-40s, VOCAL)	The seasoned village leader
HENRY: (20s, VOCAL)	The village baker with a patch on his eye
PRINCE OF THE NORTH: (mid-30s, VOCAL)	Appears as an old man in the King's throne room as well as with his father on the battle field
KING OF THE NORTH: (age 60s, VOCAL)	The King's nemesis who appears on the battle field. Father of the Prince.
STEWARD OF THE THRONE: (30, VOCAL)	The King's trusted assistant
SOLDIER: (20, VOCAL)	A soldier in uniform who gives advice to Wilhelm
VILLAGE GIRL: (19, VOCAL)	A young woman shopping at the market
VILLAGE GIRL 2: (19, VOCAL)	A young woman shopping at the market
Ensemble:	SOLDIER, SCHOLAR, NOBLE MAN, THE GRAND MASTER OF KNOWLEDGE, VILLAGERS, SOLDIER 1, SOLDIER 2, DANCERS, SUBJECTS, BARD, MINSTRELS, THE KING'S COUNCIL - two generals and a noble man - VILLAGE GIRL 1, VILLAGE GIRL 2, GUARD, NORTH ARMY, KING'S ARMY

SONG LIST*

1) Locked Within the Crystal Ball**.....	Esmeralda	1
<i>Ritchie Blackmore, Candice Night</i>		
2) Locked Within the Crystal Ball Reprise...	Esmeralda, Wilhelm	18
<i>Ritchie Blackmore, Candice Night</i>		
3) Ghost of a Rose.....	Elsa Beth	21
<i>Ritchie Blackmore, Candice Night, Edward Elgar</i>		
4) Temple of the King.....	Lord Mayor	22
<i>Ritchie Blackmore, Ronnie James Dio</i>		
5) Dancer and the Moon.....	Bard	27
<i>Ritchie Blackmore, Candice Night</i>		
6) Guess It Doesn't Matter Anymore.....	Wilhelm	36
<i>Ritchie Blackmore, Candice Night</i>		
7) Darkness.....	Esmeralda	44
<i>Ritchie Blackmore, Candice Night</i>		
8) Darkness Reprise.....	Esmeralda	46
<i>Ritchie Blackmore, Candice Night</i>		
9) King's song TBD.....	King	55
10) King's song TBD Reprise.....	King	60
11) Wish You Were Here.....	Elsa Beth	64
<i>Leskelä Teijo (Rednex cover)</i>		
12) Fires At Midnight.....	Wilhelm, Ensemble	68
<i>Alfonso X, Ritchie Blackmore, Candice Night</i>		
13) Under a Violet Moon.....	Esmeralda	78
<i>Ritchie Blackmore, Candice Night</i>		

*All songs are copyrighted by the recording artists in Blackmore's Night.
Song titles in this draft are references.

**By Theme from "Stella Splendens" from "Llibre Vermell de Montserrat", 14th century

SETTING

This play is set during the Age of Enlightenment, 1700s, with period dress and period-appropriate sets.

SETS

A large crystal ball DR.

The village with the city hall. There is a bell.

A cottage with trees surrounding it.

A foot bridge is set.

The King's throne is. A statue sits stage. The back of the stage is draped in gold draperies.

The battlefield. Fires along the top (stage left). The back of the stage is black.

The village market. Three tables and chairs. With flowers on one and bread on the other.

SCENE 1

Lights come up. There is a large crystal ball on stage DR. The stage is dark except for the crystal ball. **1. Locked Within the Crystal Ball.** *Music and Lyrics by Ritchie Blackmore and Candice Night.* Behind the crystal ball ESMERALDA, a fortune teller in her 40s, appears in the light. The crystal ball glows with an eerie light, casting shadows on ESMERALDA.

ESMERALDA

HERE IN THE SPOTLIGHT
THIS MOMENT IS OURS
NO ONE CAN STOP US
WE'RE ONE WITH THE STARS

*(ELSA BETH, a 19-year-old girl,
enters with a small dog on a
leash.)*

I FEEL THE WAVES BEGIN TO RISE
FAR ACROSS THE OCEAN
DEEP WITHIN YOUR EYES

SILENTLY WATCHING AS THEY FALL
I CAN SEE THE FUTURE LOCKED
WITHIN THE CRYSTAL BALL

STRIKE UP THE LIGHTENING
HEAR MY PRAYER
FEEL THE LIGHT ELECTRIC
DANCING THROUGH THE AIR

HERE BY THE ANCIENT CASTLE WALL
CAN YOU SEE THE FUTURE LOCKED
WITHIN THE CRYSTAL BALL

CAN YOU SEE THE FUTURE LOCKED
WITHIN THE CRYSTAL BALL

*(As the music moves into the
instrumental ELSA BETH walks toward
ESMERALDA. A light follows her.)*

ESMERALDA

Elsa Beth! Come quickly. I have seen a glimpse of the future.
I can see who you will love.

ELSA BETH

Oh Mother, the crystal ball again, really? Last time you
tried to show me my love it was a dog. So, I got a dog and
look at this, it's always tangled up in my feet.

ESMERALDA

This time it's different. I see a man.

ELSA BETH

You know I'm in no hurry. My heart will tell me when the time
is right. I think your fantasy--

(ESMERALDA cuts off ELSA BETH.)

ESMERALDA

Look at this.

*(In a column of light from above a
SOLIDER appears. He is dressed in
a period uniform with a sword. His
face is blacked out with a face
covering. ELSA BETH moves to
examine the figure.)*

ELSA BETH

Oh Look, it's a soldier. How is it I can not see his face?

*(In another column of light from
above a SCHOLAR appears dressed in
period clothing, holding a book,
wearing a hat. His face is also
covered. The SOLDIER remains. ELSA
BETH moves to the SCHOLAR.)*

This one's a scholar. But I still can't see his face. If you want this to be believable, show me their faces.

(In another column of light from above a NOBLE MAN appears. Dressed in period clothing. A hat and a sash. His face is also blacked out. The SOLDIER and SCHOLAR remain. ELSA BETH moves to the NOBLE MAN.)

Here's another. It's a Noble Man. This is ridiculous. If you can't show me their faces just show me another dog.

(As the music continues, ELSA BETH continues to walk around the SOLDIER, SCHOLAR and NOBLE MAN, examining each one.)

ESMERALDA

I'm having a time here. Oh! I see something.

(ESMERALDA stops waving her hand over the ball as she looks into it. She expresses shock. SOLDIER, SCHOLAR and NOBLE MAN abruptly disappear.)

ELSA BETH

Oh. They're gone.

(The music ends. ESMERALDA starts to walk across the stage toward the exit. A light follows her.)

ESMERALDA

(panicked)

We must go to the village, immediately! There's no time to waste!

ELSA BETH

Now what?

ESMERALDA

We must send a message to the King. I must see the Lord Mayor. I've seen the future.

ELSA BETH

Not again! Wait, I'm going to the village. I'll walk with you.

(ESMERALDA rushes off stage right. ELSA BETH hesitates for a moment before quickly following. Lights dim as ESMERALDA and ELSA BETH exit...)

The crystal ball is removed. The town hall is placed RC. Lights come up as WILHELM, a 19-year-old student who wears a hat and THE GRAND MASTER OF KNOWLEDGE, a scholar in his late 40's, start walking across the front of the stage from DL. ELSA BETH enters DR with a basket of flowers.)

WILHELM

I know I am ready. I have studied all the masters. I have studied Homer and Euripides. I have even studied Chaucer.

(THE GRAND MASTER OF KNOWLEDGE seems annoyed.)

I know you are the Grand Master of Knowledge, and I know you say I am not ready, but I am.

(WILHELM steps in front of THE GRAND MASTER OF KNOWLEDGE, facing him and walking backwards as he speaks to him.)

I am first in my class in studies of history and philosophy. I've met all the requirements you have made of me so far. I'm ready for senior advancement now. You must let me try. Give me a chance.

(THE GRAND MASTER OF KNOWLEDGE continues to ignore WILHELM. When they reach mid stage, WILHELM bumps into ELSA BETH. ELSA BETH drops the basket. Flowers fall out of the basket.)

*WILHELM immediately stops to help.
ELSA BETH reaches down to start
picking up her flowers. WILHELM
also bends down to help pick up the
flowers. Their hands touch as they
reach for the same rose. Their eyes
meet each other's. For a moment
They gaze into each other's eyes.*

*THE GRAND MASTER OF KNOWLEDGE waves
off WILHELM and continues to walk
off stage.)*

ELSA BETH

Wilhelm, it's me Elsa Beth.

WILHELM

I know.

ELSA BETH

Wow, you've grown up. I've seen you at the market a few times. I thought you forgot about me. Why would you not stop by to say hi?

WILHELM

Well, the older boys from the Athenaeum were always crowded around you. I didn't want to seem pushy around them. Besides that I also thought you forgot about me.

ELSA BETH

Oh Wilhelm, I haven't forgot about you. We were so close when we were young. I couldn't wait for you to come to the village. Playing with you in the town square was the highlight of my life.

WILHELM

(surprised)

Really? I always felt the same way.

*(WILHELM continues to pick up the
flowers and put them back into ELSA
BETH's basket.)*

These are all roses.

(After the roses are placed back into the basket, WILHELM stands and offers his hand to ELSA BETH to help her stand up. Again, ELSA BETH gazes into WILHELM's eyes.)

ELSA BETH

I sell these at the market.

WILHELM

I know, it's all the boys at the Atthey talk about. The beautiful maiden selling roses at the market.

ELSA BETH

(smiles at WILHELM)

Wilhelm, come and walk with me.

WILHELM

I need to catch up with the grand master.

(realizing what he just said)

You know, that can wait. I would love to. Would you like me to carry your basket?

ELSA BETH

That's what I remember about you, always so polite.

(As WILHELM and ELSA BETH walk across the stage, ELSA BETH hands WILHELM the basket. When they reach the end of the stage WILHELM and ELSA BETH stop.)

WILHELM

I, I'm really glad we bumped into each other, or should I say I bumped into you.

ELSA BETH

Yeah, Me too.

WILHELM

This might seem a little forward. Um, maybe we could meet at the bridge later and catch up.

ELSA BETH

That could be fun. I remember chasing around when we were kids. It could be just like old times.

(flirtatiously)

Tomorrow night? And maybe this time I'll let you catch me.

(As WILHELM and ELSA BETH are talking, LORD MAYOR steps out of the town hall. ELSA BETH and WILHELM exit. ESMERALDA enters and rushes towards LORD MAYOR.)

ESMERALDA

Lord Mayor! I must speak with you. I've seen a vision in my crystal ball. We must send a message to the King.

LORD MAYOR

And a good morning to you Esmeralda. Now what?

ESMERALDA

You must listen to me.

(urgency)

I have seen a vision and it's important. The King is about to do something foolish.

LORD MAYOR

The King is about to do something foolish? Who's the fool? What about all those other foolish things you've brought to me?

ESMERALDA

Everything I have ever brought to you was real.

LORD MAYOR

Oh yeah, what about the time you told me the village would flooded from the large storm. And we weren't washed away. How was that?

ESMERALDA

You thought the storm would not be bad and you told me you had no intention of opening the floodgates. Yet you did.

(LORD MAYOR steps away from ESMERALDA and starts across the stage.)

LORD MAYOR

Speaking of that; I'm late for a meeting with the water master.

*(He stops and looks back at
ESMERALDA.)*

That's why we have floodgates. We would have opened them anyway. You were being absurd with your talk of a vision. And what about the time you told us that the village would be attacked by marauding wolves?

*(He continues to walk. ESMERALDA
follows.)*

ESMERALDA

You built fires around the village to keep the wolves away.

LORD MAYOR

It was harvest season. You know we had to build the fires.

ESMERALDA

Yes, BUT it was too early in the season for the harvest bonfires.

LORD MAYOR

*(He stops again to address
ESMERALDA.)*

It was a big crop. We were just getting an early start. It had nothing to do with your silly vision.

(He turns and continues to walk.)

ESMERALDA

Don't try and tell me you didn't know, you knew.

*(ESMERALDA grabs the LORD MAYOR's
arm and he stops and turns to her.)*

You must listen to me. The King is making a plan, and it will destroy the kingdom. But first he is going to call for an army. You will see. When he does, you will know my vision is real.

LORD MAYOR

Oh Esmeralda. I've heard nothing of an army. Now let go of my arm.

(She does.)

Every time you come to me with these wild tales, it disrupts the order of the village. Now go back into the woods and sell your fantasies and herbs.

ESMERALDA

(moves toward the exit)

You'll see, and when you do, you will know that I am telling the truth. You must believe me. We MUST send this message to the King.

LORD MAYOR

And you expect me to tell the King he's a fool?

(chuckles)

I like my head attached to my shoulders.

(ESMERALDA exits. VILLAGERS enter. The LORD MAYOR sees two SOLDIERS arrive. He goes to them and one hands him a parchment scroll. LORD MAYOR opens the parchment and looks down stage.)

ESMERALDA steps onto the stage. She is staring at LORD MAYOR. ESMERALDA exits. LORD MAYOR rings a loud bell then begins to read from the scroll.)

LORD MAYOR

(surprised)

Citizens of Wynnbrook. Hear Ye, Hear Ye all! By decree of the King, he has ordered that all able-bodied men assemble and follow these soldiers to the castle where they will join with the King's army. Prepare to leave in two days' time at sunrise. There will be no exceptions. Those who do not follow this decree will be imprisoned. For life.

(in a low voice)

Oh my.

(The stage lights go dark as LORD MAYOR walks into the town hall. The SOLDIERS and VILLAGERS exit.)

It remains dark for a short time to represent the night...

The stage lights rise to morning sounds.

EFFECT: A rooster crows.

LORD MAYOR walks out of the town hall. WILHELM runs to him.)

WILHELM

Lord Mayor. The Grand Master sent me. What did I miss? I've been up all night reading in the library. Is it something important?

LORD MAYOR

Have you been living under a rock? Now the King has called for an army, and you must join them. Now you're late. Now you only have one day to prepare.

WILHELM

But I'm no soldier; I'm going to be a scholar! My place is at the Athenaeum, not on a battlefield.

LORD MAYOR

I hate to disappoint you, but the King made no exceptions. Everyone must go, if you don't, your only other choice is prison, for the rest of your life. Now I'm late for a meeting with the bailiff.

(LORD MAYOR steps away from WILHELM and starts across the stage. WILHELM follows.)

WILHELM

But I just met a girl, and I'm supposed to meet her at the bridge. I can't leave. What if this works out? I can't leave before I meet the maiden Elsa Beth.

(LORD MAYOR stops and turns to WILHELM.)

LORD MAYOR

Elsa Beth? You too? Ha, every boy in the village thinks they're in love with her. Just let it go.

WILHELM

This is different. It's special. She said she would meet me.

LORD MAYOR

Get that out of your head. The King doesn't care. He demands your service. Now get your affairs in order so you can leave.

(ESMERALDA steps onto the stage.)

WILHELM

This timing couldn't be worse. How am I supposed to make this work?

*(LORD MAYOR sees ESMERALDA.
ESMERALDA gives him a stare then
exits. He stops to talk to WILHELM)*

LORD MAYOR

Lord help me.

(looking upward)

Ah, something has come up. I have a special assignment for you. You will still go to the castle. But listen, I want you to take a message to the King.

WILHELM

I'm not a soldier. And I'm not a messenger! I'm a student. And I just met a girl.

(slight pause)

What message?

LORD MAYOR

Well, the fortune-teller Esmeralda says she saw a vision. She has it in her head the King is taking a misstep that will harm the Kingdom. She says it's urgent, and to get her off my back I would like you to take it to him.

WILHELM

Are you kidding? The seer in the woods? Elsa Beth's mother?

LORD MAYOR

That would be her.

WILHELM

The one who saved us from the wolves?

LORD MAYOR

There were no wolves. She made that up.

WILHELM

(a slight chuckle)

That's not what the village hunters said. Besides that, if you don't believe her why are you going to send her message to the King?

LORD MAYOR

This feels different. Something about this is unsettling. I pride myself on knowing what is happening in the kingdom and I knew nothing about the call for an army. Yet she knew.

WILHELM

None of this seems right. I hope this doesn't take long; I need to get back to my studies.

LORD MAYOR

Unfortunately Wilhelm, this will not guarantee your return. You need to go see what Esmeralda has to say.

WILHELM

But I'm right in the middle of preparing for a history test.

LORD MAYOR

It's only because your father supplies my clothing, and they are fine clothes by the way, that I'll give you this opportunity. I don't want to put you in prison, but I will.

WILHELM

Really? All right. This better be worth it.

(WILHELM exits. Lights fade to black.)

SCENE 2

As the lights come up ESMERALDA is standing behind the crystal ball. ELSA BETH is standing close. The stage is dark except for a light on the two of them.

ELSA BETH

I've been thinking about that glimpse of the future you showed me. I find it confusing and frustrating. I only intend to ever have one man in my life. So what does that mean? I think your vision was wrong.

ESMERALDA

You shouldn't be in such a hurry to understand the vision. It will just lead to more questions than answers.

ELSA BETH

This is so puzzling.

ESMERALDA

You need to be patient.

ELSA BETH

Oh mother, the visions from that crystal ball are fantasy. I need to remain grounded. I'm going back to the market to see if I can salvage my flower business. With all the young men leaving there will be no one left to buy my roses.

ESMERALDA

Not all of them will leave with the soldiers.

ELSA BETH

(walking out)

Oh yeah? And which one weaseled his way out of that?

(WILHELM enters. He is wearing a hat.)

WILHELM

Oh, Elsa Beth. I wasn't expecting to see you.

ELSA BETH

Wilhelm. Are you not leaving with the soldiers?

WILHELM

No, not yet, the Lord Mayor sent me here. Something about a vision in a crystal ball. I'm to see your mother and I'm to take a message to the King.

ELSA BETH

Good luck with that. I'm beginning to think I can't trust anything she saw in that rock.

WILHELM

Oh, really?

(pause)

Well, we can still meet at the bridge before I go? Right?

ELSA BETH

It will have to be after I get back from the market.

WILHELM

I'll be there.

ELSA BETH

Meet me at the sound of the bells. Don't be late.

(ESMERALDA is standing next to the crystal ball. ELSA BETH exits. WILHELM walks toward ESMERALDA.)

WILHELM

Esmeralda! The Lord Mayor sent...

ESMERALDA

Come quick. I've been expecting you. Look here, look into my crystal ball.

(The crystal ball is glowing white as WILHELM steps up and looks at it.)

WILHELM

I can't see anything. What am I looking for?

ESMERALDA

Look deep and you will see it.

WILHELM

Still nothing! Can't you just tell me the message?

ESMERALDA

Be patient. Open your mind, let the spirits come to you.

WILHELM

I'm sorry, but this magic hat hocus-pocus just doesn't work for me. It's all nonsense. Just tell me the message or I'll be on my way.

(WILHELM turns and walks toward the exit. ESMERALDA pauses before responding.)

ESMERALDA

(calmly)

No Wilhelm. You mustn't leave. You must see this.

WILHELM

Why?

ESMERALDA

You are the chosen one. Only you can deliver this message.

WILHELM

Chosen by who? The Lord Mayor gave ME a choice. Even though I don't like it, I would rather be a messenger than go with the soldiers. Just give me the message.

*(ESMERALDA does not respond.
WILHELM continues toward exit UL.
ESMERALDA waves her hands in the air a few times and in a motion like she is throwing a ball UL. A large flash of lightning and a thunder crash outside the exit.*

WILHELM turns and goes toward exit DL. ESMERALDA waves her hand in the air and makes a motion like she is throwing a ball, this time toward DL. Another flash of lightning and a thunder crash outside the exit. WILHELM hurries back.)

WILHELM

What was that?

ESMERALDA

Are you going to come back?

(WILHELM is reluctant. He hesitates, glancing back at the exit before slowly stepping behind the crystal ball. He looks into the glowing orb. The ball begins glowing different colors. Lighting begins to swirl behind them creating a mystic atmosphere.)

WILHELM

(a slight shift in attitude)

Oh! Wow, I see something, but what am I looking at?

ESMERALDA

Keep looking, you will see, AND this crystal ball will let you feel it. It will be like you are there. Can you see it? It's a battlefield. Can you feel this place?

EFFECT: Sounds of a battlefield.

WILHELM

Yes, I can, but why am I standing on a battlefield?

(WILHELM takes off his hat and holds it in his hand as he looks into the crystal ball.)

ESMERALDA

Keep looking.

WILHELM

Yes, and I feel it. It's like I am there. I can see everything.

EFFECT: Sounds of a battlefield ends.

(After a few moments WILHELM stands up straight, puts his hat back on and turns to ESMERALDA.)

*The lights stop and the crystal
ball returns to white.)*

WILHELM

Wait. Wait. This is all about me. What about the King's message? Why am I alone on a battlefield? The Lord Mayor said I would not have to join the army if I take this message.

ESMERALDA

What he meant was if you take the message, you will not have to march with the soldiers. Alone you will travel faster.

WILHELM

Then, if I am to be a soldier, shouldn't I be with the army?

ESMERALDA

The crystal ball shows us the vision. Not always the answers.

WILHELM

But I'm not ready to be a soldier. I've never even held a sword!

ESMERALDA

It was important you see this. You cannot be afraid. You must be brave and confident.

WILHELM

Why? I don't know anything about being a diplomat or a messenger.

ESMERALDA

No one really knows the first time out. Look for a sign, look for the stars known as the Seven Sisters. They will speak to you if you listen. Hear their voices. Use their wisdom. They will guide you on the battlefield.

WILHELM

Stars? What stars?

ESMERALDA

When you see them, you will know it's the right place.

WILHELM

How will I know which ones they are?

ESMERALDA

Well, there's seven of them. You can count, can't you?

*(Light appears on the ceiling same
as the Pleiades constellation.
ESMERALDA points to them.)*

WILHELM

Of course I can. But how am I to gain an audience with the King without an appointment?

ESMERALDA

You will find a way. Oh, But you must pay attention, and be aware of the statue of the old king.

WILHELM

Why is it I can see this magic in your crystal ball? I'm not a wizard.

ESMERALDA

Of course you are not, but you are allowed to learn from it. What matters now is what you do with the knowledge you gained.

WILHELM

I'm not sure I understand. Just tell me the message, I'll be on my way.

***(2. Locked Within the Crystal Ball
Reprise. Music and Lyrics by
Ritchie Blackmore and Candice
Night.***

*ESMERALDA and WILHELM appear to be
talking as she is pointing in
different directions. The dialog is
not audible over the music.
ESMERALDA and WILHELM join to sing
the last verse of the song.)*

ESMERALDA/WILHELM

I FEEL THE WAVES BEGIN TO RISE
FAR ACROSS THE OCEAN
DEEP WITHIN YOUR EYES
SILENTLY WATCHING AS THEY FALL
I CAN SEE THE FUTURE LOCKED
WITHIN THE CRYSTAL BALL

I CAN SEE THE FUTURE LOCKED
WITHIN THE CRYSTAL BALL

*(ESMERALDA and WILHELM exit. Lights
fade. Six bells ring in a quicker
order as...)*

*Lights come up. The crystal ball is
replaced by a small foot bridge.
ELSA BETH is standing at the bridge
pacing back and forth. After a
short time, WILHELM runs across the
stage to meet her.)*

ELSA BETH

Oh, there you are. You are late. I said six bells.

WILHELM

I ran the whole way. Besides that, time is not an exact
science.

ELSA BETH

Not yet.

(pause)

Wilhelm, I lost track of you. It seems like we were playing
in the square one day and you were gone the next. What
happened?

WILHELM

Well, you know my father is a textile merchant.

ELSA BETH

And that is why you always look so sharp.

*(ELSA BETH tugs on WILHELM's
shirt.)*

WILHELM

Well yes, and he supplies clothing to the Grand Master. So, he pulled a few strings. No pun intended, well, maybe, but anyway he got me an assignment in the Grand Master's library at the Athenaeum where I have been working hard and studying. It takes up all my time.

ELSA BETH

What will you do when you finish?

WILHELM

I plan to travel the kingdom and illuminate people's minds with the new knowledge we are learning. It's so fascinating. And so, tell me about the flowers you sell at the market.

ELSA BETH

I love flowers, especially roses. I like to share my passion with the village.

WILHELM

It must be going well. Some of the boys at the Athey say they buy your roses to give to their girls. I'm not sure about that.

(a slight chuckle)

The floor of the library is covered in roses. I think they have a different motive.

ELSA BETH

I agree, but I like to think they are buying them for their girls.

(changing the subject)

Wilhelm, you were my crush when my mother would bring me to town. I loved playing with you. Once, I even imagined you were my soul mate. But my mother told me no one finds their soul mate when they are twelve years old. But now, you stumbled, or should I say bumped back in my life.

WILHELM

Yes, it's been a while, but here I am, and I would always look forward to playing and chasing around with you. I too thought you were special.

ELSA BETH

I like that, but back then playing was fun. I was better at running and hiding than you were at chasing and finding.

WILHELM

That was then, but this is now.

*(3. Ghost of a Rose. Music and
Lyrics by Ritchie Blackmore,
Candice Night and Edward Elgar.*

*During the song, ELSA BETH and
WILHELM dance as if they're getting
to know each other.)*

ELSA BETH

THE VALLEY GREEN WAS SO SERENE
IN THE MIDDLE RAN A STREAM SO BLUE
A MAIDEN FAIR, IN DESPAIR
ONCE HAD MET HER TRUE LOVE THERE
AND SHE TOLD HIM, SHE WOULD SAY...

PROMISE ME, WHEN YOU SEE
A WHITE ROSE YOU'LL THINK OF ME
I LOVE YOU SO, NEVER LET GO
I WILL BE YOUR GHOST OF A ROSE

HER EYES BELIEVED IN MYSTERIES
SHE WOULD LAY AMONGST THE LEAVES OF AMBER
HER SPIRIT WILD, HEART OF A CHILD
YET GENTLE STILL AND QUIET AND MILD
AND HE LOVED HER, WHEN SHE WOULD SAY...

PROMISE ME, WHEN YOU SEE
A WHITE ROSE YOU'LL THINK OF ME
I LOVE YOU SO, NEVER LET GO
I WILL BE YOUR GHOST OF A ROSE

HE'D HEAR HER SAY...
PROMISE ME , WHEN YOU SEE
A WHITE ROSE YOU'LL THINK OF ME
I LOVE YOU SO, NEVER LET GO
I WILL BE YOUR GHOST OF A ROSE

(Fade to black.)

SCENE 3

As the lights come up WILHELM and ELSA BETH are walking along the front of the stage. The town hall is in view.

ELSA BETH

Wow, that was fun. Let's do that again.

WILHELM

I would like that, but you know I'm leaving for the castle soon.

ELSA BETH

We'll just have to pick up where we left off when you return.

WILHELM

That sounds great!

(in a soft voice to himself)

If I return.

(LORD MAYOR runs down from center stage.)

LORD MAYOR

Oh, there you are. Where have you been.

(a nod)

Elsa Beth. Now Wilhelm come up here. We must get you ready to go to the castle.

(ELSA BETH and WILHELM standing in front of the town hall. 4. Temple of the King Ritchie Blackmore, Ronnie James Dio.

As the song proceeds DANCERS from the village gather around WILHELM. Lights swirl around the stage as they dance to create a mystical setting.)

LORD MAYOR

ONE DAY IN THE YEAR OF THE FOX
 CAME A TIME REMEMBERED WELL
 WHEN THE STRONG YOUNG MAN OF THE RISING SUN
 HEARD THE TOLLING OF THE GREAT BLACK BELL
 ONE DAY IN THE YEAR OF THE FOX
 THE BELL BEGAN TO RING
 IT MEANT THE TIME HAD COME FOR ONE TO GO
 TO THE TEMPLE OF THE KING

THERE IN THE MIDDLE OF THE CIRCLE HE STANDS
 SEARCHING, SEEKING
 WITH JUST ONE TOUCH OF HIS TREMBLING HAND
 THE ANSWER WILL BE FOUND

DAYLIGHT WAITS WHILE THE OLD MAN SINGS
 HEAVEN HELP ME
 AND THEN LIKE THE RUSH OF A THOUSAND WINGS
 IT SHINES UPON THE ONE
 AND THE DAY HAD JUST BEGUN

ONE DAY IN THE YEAR OF THE FOX
 CAME A TIME REMEMBERED WELL
 WHEN THE STRONG YOUNG MAN OF THE RISING SUN
 HEARD THE TOLLING OF THE GREAT BLACK BELL

ONE DAY IN THE YEAR OF THE FOX
 WHEN THE BELL BEGAN TO SING
 IT MEANT THE TIME HAD COME FOR THE ONE TO GO
 TO THE TEMPLE OF THE KING

*(The LORD MAYOR walks to WILHELM
 and laces a sash with a pouch on it
 over his shoulder. ELSA BETH runs
 to WILHELM and takes his hand.)*

LORD MAYOR

Wilhelm, are you ready? You will leave in the morning.

ELSA BETH

That's too soon? Oh Wilhelm, I was just getting to know you,
 again.

WILHELM

(to LORD MAYOR)

Are you sure you can't send someone else?

LORD MAYOR

Ah! Prison, or march with the army.

WILHELM

Ok, I'll go, but I'm hoping this message brings a quick end to the conflict. I need get back to this beautiful girl I just met, again.

(HENRY, a young man in his late-twenties, approaches. He wears an eye patch.)

HENRY

(to ELSA BETH)

Oh, there you are. Come on now, I'll walk you home.

ELSA BETH

Henry, I'll be right there.

(ELSA BETH turns to WILHELM and hands him a white rose.)

ELSA BETH

The castle is so far away. Please be safe and so you will remember me take this rose. It has a certain spell, it won't die if you think about me, and I'll keep one for myself.

(ELSA BETH turns to walk away.)

WILHELM

(holding up the rose)

I will cherish this.

(ELSA BETH rushes back and gives WILHELM a quick kiss on the cheek.)

ELSA BETH

Look for me when you return.

WILHELM

I will.

(HENRY steps up and takes ELSA BETH by the hand. ELSA BETH turns to HENRY and starts to walk with him toward the exit. ELSA BETH drops his hand. WILHELM stares at HENRY.)

Elsa Beth. What's this? Does he have one of these?

(WILHELM holds up the rose.)

ELSA BETH

Don't worry about it, just keep it alive. Trust me, I'll see you when you get back.

(WILHELM stands staring at HENRY, holding his rose by his side.)

HENRY

How do you know him? Isn't he from the Athey? Should I be concerned?

ELSA BETH

Not at all, he's an old friend, someone I haven't seen for years.

HENRY

Well, I am concerned. You seemed awful friendly.

ELSA BETH

You are over thinking this.

HENRY

I don't think so, I saw how he looked at you.

ELSA BETH

Henry, I choose my own friends. Come on now, walk me home, it's late.

(HENRY and ELSA BETH exit. Lights fade to black.)

SCENE 4

Lights rise on the King's throne center stage right. STEWARD OF THE THRONE is standing in the center of the stage. There are subjects who appear to be talking standing there as well. The KING walks in.

KING

(to STEWARD OF THE THRONE)

What's going on here. How did all these people get in here? Get them out. Go and get my battle council.

(STEWARD OF THE THRONE points to the exit and starts to escort PEOPLE out.)

STEWARD OF THE THRONE

(to the subjects)

Now is not a good time, you must leave.

(STEWARD OF THE THRONE turns and rushes across the stage. KING goes to his throne and sits.)

KING

No! Wait, I am in a foul mood this morning. I have much to think about. I need some music to settle my mind. Bring me the Bard and his minstrels.

STEWARD OF THE THRONE

My Lord I am not an octopus, I cannot do eight things at once. What is it? Generals or music?

KING

Don't cross me. Do what you are told. Music first.

STEWARD OF THE THRONE

And which tentacle should I use to fetch the generals?

(The STEWARD OF THE THRONE turns to face the exit and claps his hands in the air. A BARD rushes in and a group of MINSTRELS follows.

5. *Dancer and the Moon.* *Music and Lyrics by Ritchie Blackmore and Candice Night.*

Throughout the song, MINSTRELS dance to the music. STEWARD OF THE THRONE stands by the throne.)

BARD

HERE IN THE TWILIGHT
UNDER THE MOONLIGHT
I FEEL YOUR HUNGRY EYES

DRUMS IN THE DISTANCE
ECHOES OF MADNESS
AROUND THE FIRELIGHT

IN THE HEARTBEAT OF THE NIGHT

HEY, HEY, HEY
TILL THE BREAK OF DAY
LA, LA, LA, LA LA, LA LA
LA, LA, LA, LA, LA

HEY, HEY, HEY
DANCE THE WHOLE NIGHT THROUGH
NOTHING GETS BETWEEN
THE DANCER AND THE MOON

FOLLOW ME CLOSELY
ARMS WRAPPED AROUND ME
LIFE IS A SWEET, SWEET WINE

GLITTERING GOLD AS
STORIES UNFOLD THOSE
SECRETS ARE LOST IN TIME

TO THE HEARTBEAT OF THE NIGHT

MASTER OF FATE HOW
YOU CAPTIVATE ME
FILLING MY ONE DESIRE

TWO OF A KIND WITH
ONE STATE OF MIND YOU'VE
SET MY WHOLE WORLD ON FIRE

(MINSTRELS and BARD exit.)

KING
That did not cheer me up like I needed; I have too much on my
mind. Go and get my council!

(A few VILLAGERS enter.)

STEWARD OF THE THRONE
But sire, it is your day to meet with the kingdom's poor and
hear their concerns.

KING
Hear their concerns. I don't need to hear theirs, I have
enough of my own. And how did they get in here anyway? Get
them out of here and tell them to come back next month. I
want to meet with my battle council. Now go and get them!

STEWARD OF THE THRONE
But my King, you said this was important and you commanded it
so you would get to know them. What am I to tell the
villagers?

KING
I don't care, make something up. Just get them out of here.

*(STEWARD OF THE THRONE waves off
the VILLAGERS. They exit.)*

STEWARD OF THE THRONE
(in a loud voice)
Presenting the noble council.

*(STEWARD OF THE THRONE motions. THE
KING'S COUNCIL, made of two
generals and a noble man, enter.
They stand in front of the KING.)*

KING
(addressing THE KING'S
COUNCIL)

We need to ease the fears of our citizens. I believe this War will be larger than we have anticipated. I want to be sure we are prepared. I want to see your reports outlining our strategy for war. Don't make me ask twice.

(WILHELM enters DL. He bumps into a large statue, knocking it over and making a commotion. He turns to pick it up. The STEWARD OF THE THRONE sees this and rushes toward him. WILHELM leaves the statue and rushes toward the center of the stage.)

STEWARD OF THE THRONE
How did you get in here? You can't be here. You must leave.

(STEWARD OF THE THRONE escorts WILHELM towards the door.)

WILHELM
(shouting)
You must let me see the King. I must deliver a message to him.

STEWARD OF THE THRONE
No! You must leave.

(This gains the KING's attention.)

WILHELM
But you don't understand. This is important. It's about the King taking his army to battle in the south.

(KING jumps up from his throne and steps toward center stage.)

KING
Wait, bring him to me.

(STEWARD OF THE THRONE escorts WILHELM to the KING.)

How do you know about my army going to the South? Only my battle council knows of this plan. How could you know?

WILHELM

The message was given to me by Esmeralda from the village of Wynnbrook. She says you are going to make a mistake, and things will not turn out like you think they will.

KING

Esmeralda? The fortune teller? I've heard of her. Something about wolves and bonfires.

WILHELM

Yea, that's her.

KING

So, what does that old bag have to say about me going to the South?

WILHELM

She wants me to tell you the spies you sent to the south have been compromised and the army in the south is not what you think they are. They are dangerous.

KING

What could she possibly know? I have these battle-hardened generals who I trust to give me advice.

(pointing to THE KING'S

COUNCIL)

You DON'T expect me to take the word of an old witch, do you?

WILHELM

She saw it in her crystal ball. She even showed me. She says, "you cannot have the army you want but you must fight with the army you have."

KING

Ha! This is ridiculous. Exactly what did she see?

WILHELM

She said you will not be able to accomplish what you want in the south and the army from the north will overrun the kingdom and bring devastation.

KING

All this in a piece of glass? And how does she say I'm supposed to defeat the army from the north? I must convince the army from the south through a show of force to join with my army to defeat them.

WILHELM

She really didn't say EXACTLY what you're supposed to do, BUT she did say a wise man would come to guide you.

KING

A magical wise man and a crystal ball? This is not how we fight wars. The north army is too large. Get him out of here.

(KING turns to walk back to THE KING'S COUNCIL as STEWARD OF THE THRONE is escorting WILHELM towards the exit.)

WILHELM

(confidently blurting out)

Wait! I am Wilhelm. I have come from the Atheneum where I study history. I've read books about wars, kings, and battles.

(KING pauses. He looks back at WILHELM.)

KING

So have I.

WILHELM

I have read about leaders who have defeated larger armies. Maybe there's a way you can work this out with the army you have.

KING

That's not what my generals say.

(showing curiosity)

So, you are a scholar? You look too young to be a scholar.

WILHELM

No my Lord, I am an apprentice at the Grand Master's library. But I have read the books, and I am studying so that someday I will be a master scholar.

KING

So, tell me something we don't already know?

*(Again, KING points to THE KING'S
COUNCIL.)*

WILHELM

Take for example the Spartan King Leonidas.

KING

I know of this story. Same as my plan. He had an alliance with another army. But Leonidas died in the battle. That doesn't work for me.

WILHELM

We learned location was central to his success. He was able to hold back the much larger Persian army while the people from the cities escaped the pending war.

KING

That's an old story everyone knows.

WILHELM

What about the time the freedom fighter William Wallace set up a battlefield at Sterling bridge where King Edward's calvary was defeated. They couldn't cross the narrow bridge fast enough.

KING

FREEDOM FIGHTER? Ha, he was a rebel. He was just in the right place at the right time. Surrey was a fool to send his army over the bridge. Wallace was just lucky.

WILHELM

I believe there was strategy involved, and if not, it was his luck and our lesson. The point is he used his knowledge of the land to trap King Edward's army, forcing them to fight as he wanted.

KING

I say it was mostly luck on Wallace's part.

WILHELM

It doesn't need to be. I recently read a book called "The Art of War," by an ancient Chinese general where he said "you must choose the battleground. You must use the knowledge of your kingdom to establish a battle plan."

KING

The Art of War? I know of that book. But it is by Machiavelli. He is Italian.

WILHELM

This is new. I just learned about it. It has a different philosophy. The Chinese general Sun Tzu is more concerned with avoiding war or winning it quickly and efficiently, while Machiavelli's philosophy is concerned with maintaining war and winning decisively and ruthlessly.

KING

How do you know of this Shun Too and my scholars have not told me about it?

WILHELM

That's Sun Tzu. It was recently translated. Into French.

KING

French?

WILHELM

Je lis et écris le français.

KING

And I too read and write French. My strategy is aligned with Machiavelli. Same as my battle council.

WILHELM

Well, your enemy also knows of his book.

KING

Of course he does, this is how we fight wars.

WILHELM

But it could be different.

KING

I'm not sure I understand.

WILHELM

Sun Tzu said you can make your enemy think that you have an army that is not what they believe it to be. AND they will be forced to change their battle plans on the fly.

KING

How is that possible?

WILHELM

My King, I am but an apprentice at the Athenaeum, I am not a battlefield strategist. I was only sent to deliver the message. I don't know how to lead an army.

KING

I have had had it with this nonsense. My battle plan is solid. Steward escort him out of here.

(KING walks away.)

WILHELM

But, my Lord, there is so much more. I have read so much more. And! And! You must heed the words of Esmeralda!

*(KING throws his hands in the air
and continues to walk away.)*

KING

(sarcastically)

Esmeralda? Ha! I think I'll just wait for that magical wise man to come tell me what the magic crystal ball says I should do. And how I can magically defeat the army of the north, without my magic army from the south. Now I'll just get back to real battle strategy, with my council.

WILHELM

(blurting out)

But My Lord, YOU must listen to me.

*(KING is steaming. He turns and
walks back to WILHELM.)*

KING

I must listen to you? I will say who I listen to. I am King. You are nothing more than a know-it-all welp speaking out of turn.

I WILL NOT LISTEN to this drivel about magic from a witch.
 Steward! Bring the guards and take this dog to the dungeon.
 I've had enough.

STEWARD OF THE THRONE

Yes My King. Yeah! Guards! Take his belongings and put this
 dog in the dungeon.

(KING turns back to his throne.)

KING

(saying to no one)

I am King, why am I just now hearing about Shun Too from a
 student. I'm not buying it.

*(Two SOLDIERS enter. They take the
 white rose from WILHELM and his
 hat. They escort him out.)*

WILHELM

OH no, this can't be happening. I must get back to Wynnbrook!
 Now I'll never get back to Elsa Beth.

*(KING is back on his throne. THE
 KING'S COUNCIL is assembled in
 front of him.)*

KING

And he thinks magic is the answer. He brought me stories of
 an old witch who says she knows more than you.

(turning serious)

He did tell me of a Chinese general I have not heard of him.
 I will learn more. Now let's get back to battle strategy.
 Where are the battle plans you promised me?

*(The two generals of THE KING'S
 COUNCIL hand the STEWARD OF THE
 THRONE several scrolls. He fumbles
 them and drops them. KING stands
 and throws his hands in the air and
 walks off as STEWARD OF THE THRONE
 scrambles to collect the scrolls.)*

*He follows KING off stage. THE
KING'S COUNCIL also follows.*

*The light on the throne darkens and
a dim light picks up on WILHELM
standing on stage DL. His hands are
bound in shackles. There is a storm
in the background with lightning
and the sound thunder. **6. Guess It
Doesn't Matter anymore.** Music and
Lyrics by Ritchie Blackmore and
Candice Night.*

WILHELM

STANDING IN THE RAIN
THE COLD AND ANGRY RAIN
SHE WORE A WHITE ROSE
I ALWAYS KNEW HER NAME

SHE STOOD BENEATH THE LIGHT
GLOWING LIKE A CANDLE BRIGHT
I GUESS IT DOESN'T MATTER ANYMORE
I GUESS IT DOESN'T MATTER ANYMORE

AS SHE TURNED AWAY
I HAD NO NEED TO STAY
SHE HAD FADED BACK INTO THE GREY

A WHISPER IN THE TREES
YOU COULD HEAR IT IN THE BREEZE
I GUESS IT DOESN'T MATTER ANYMORE
I GUESS IT DOESN'T MATTER ANYMORE

I BELIEVE SOMETHINGS CAN'T BE EXPLAINED
THEY ARE HIDDEN IN THE MIST
AND IN THE SILVER RAIN...

A WHISPER IN THE TREES
YOU COULD HEAR IT IN THE BREEZE
I GUESS IT DOESN'T MATTER ANYMORE
I GUESS IT DOESN'T MATTER ANYMORE

(Lights fade to black.)

SCENE 5

The scene opens with ELSA BETH and HENRY behind tables at the village market. ELSA BETH has flowers and roses on the table in front of her. She also has a wilted rose on the table. At the table next to her is HENRY with several loaves of bread on his table. There is a third table next to HENRY with a merchant and goods on the table.

ELSA BETH

This is getting ridiculous. I haven't sold enough today to buy a loaf of bread. With all the young men from the Athey gone to join the King's army there's no one left to buy my roses. I'll be out of business soon. I don't know what I'll do then.

HENRY

You can always come be my partner in the bakery.

(A VILLAGER enters and walks to HENRY's table to buy a loaf of bread.)

ELSA BETH

Your partner? I know where you're going with this and I'm not ready for that kind of commitment.

HENRY

It will help you through the tough times. I care about you, and I want to help you through this.

ELSA BETH

We really haven't talked about it.

HENRY

We went out and talked about it. Remember?

ELSA BETH

We didn't talk about us. You or me. What we talked about is how the miller leaves the flour too course and the short supply of the yeast. We have never talked about us.

HENRY

I told you how I can provide you with a good life here in the village.

ELSA BETH

BUT we don't talk about us.

HENRY

Sure we do.

ELSA BETH

You don't even know where I get the roses I sell. You have never asked or even shown interested in finding out.

(ELSA BETH stands and faces HENRY.)

And you just showed up from who knows where and opened your bakery. I don't even know where you came from, how you became a baker or how you lost your eye.

HENRY

I'll explain everything once we're together.

(VILLAGE GIRL 1 stops at HENRY's table.)

VILLAGE GIRL 1

Henry, can I buy a loaf of bread?

(HENRY smiles and hands her a loaf in exchange for payment.)

See you around.

(flirtatiously)

Henry.

ELSA BETH

(sitting down)

Explain everything? That's something we should talk about as we get to know each other. We can't assume we are a good fit.

*(ELSA BETH again stands and faces
HENRY.)*

I need someone who shows an interest in me and the things I do.

HENRY
I'm interested in what you do.

ELSA BETH
Yeah, that's not what I see.

*(ELSA BETH sits. VILLAGE GIRL 2
stops by for a loaf of bread.
Without saying anything HENRY hands
her a loaf of bread and exchanges
payment.)*

VILLAGE GIRL 2
(flirtatiously)
Thank you Henry.

ELSA BETH
See that, you can have any girl in the village, but you only want the one thing you can't have.

(ELSA BETH looks away.)

VILLAGE GIRL 2
Henry, do you know what's going on? Have you heard any news from the castle?

HENRY
A little, I've heard rumors the army is going south. I have a sick feeling in my gut it could mean trouble. Then there is talk of a big battle with the King of the north. That really scares me.

VILLAGE GIRL 2
The King of the North? I heard he was on his death bed. The prince of the north has not yet ascended?

HENRY
No, the old King is still alive and kicking. I hear he's meaner than ever. I don't know much about the prince.

VILLAGE GIRL 2

I believe I met the prince once. Some say he was here attending the Athey; Incognito.

HENRY

A master of disguise? Just rumors. Spread to stir up trouble.

VILLAGE GIRL 2

(swooning)

He was spellbinding. There was something mystical, about him. Then he was gone.

HENRY

He might seem charming and magical to you, but remember, appearances can be deceiving, especially when it comes to royalty in the north.

VILLAGE GIRL 2

If the north King is still alive, well, do you think we should prepare for the worst?

HENRY

Possibly, the north has always been a looming threat, and with his insatiable hunger for our lands, our fears are not unfounded. But I am worried about our King.

VILLAGE GIRL 2

But Henry, do you think he is wise enough to lead us through these troubling times?

HENRY

Wisdom comes with experience. I hope he is not in over his head. He's just so, uh, untested.

(The VILLAGE GIRL steps to the merchant's table but remains within ear shot of HENRY.)

ELSA BETH

(turning to HENRY)

You have never talked to me about those things.

HENRY

You never ask.

ELSA BETH

I sit here next to you all day. You won't talk about anything other than your bakery. I too want to know what's happening in the world.

HENRY

It just never seems like the right time. With everything happening I didn't want to worry you.

ELSA BETH

Worry me? And how was it the right time to tell her.

*(ELSA BETH points at VILLAGE GIRL
2.)*

HENRY

Well...

ELSA BETH

Henry, can I be honest with you?

HENRY

Honesty always works.

ELSA BETH

What you want for your life just isn't going to work for me.

*(ELSA BETH stands and walks around
to the front of the table.)*

I feel like I'm waiting for my life to begin, and you would want me to stay right here. In this village. If I commit to you then my life will end HERE. In this village. I have a dream of seeing more. And I want to find my soulmate to share it with me.

HENRY

Is that the guy from the Athey? Who you told me was just an old friend. The one for which you keep that dead rose on your table hoping it will come back to life.

*(HENRY points to the wilted rose on
the table.)*

ELSA BETH

Yeah, well maybe. I'm not sure about that.

HENRY

Didn't your mother send him to the castle to tell the King he's a fool.

ELSA BETH

It was just a message, not that he's a fool.

HENRY

(sarcastically)

Well, if he does tell him he's a fool, that won't go over well. Isn't he a hot head?

ELSA BETH

A little bit, but he has a lot of spirit, and he can be fun.

HENRY

I can be fun.

ELSA BETH

Fun just isn't enough for my heart Henry.

*(VILLAGE GIRL 2 steps to the table
after hearing this.)*

VILLAGE GIRL 2

(flirting with HENRY)

Oh, fun is good for me, Henry. Any time, any place.

*(HENRY smiles at VILLAGE GIRL 2 but
addresses ELSA BETH.)*

HENRY

And if he does tell the King he's a fool, you will just have to deal with your new headless boyfriend. And then I'm back in.

*(HENRY points to himself. VILLAGE
GIRL 2 smiles at HENRY, walks out.)*

ELSA BETH

I didn't think about that. It's getting late. I need to go home.

HENRY

Here take a loaf of bread for your mother.

(ELSA BETH stands up and takes the loaf of bread from HENRY. She reaches back and takes the dead rose.)

ELSA BETH

Thank you.

HENRY

You are welcome. Now I'll just sit here with my broken heart.
In the dark.... Alone.

*(HENRY watches ELSA BETH exit.
Lights fade to black.)*

SCENE 6

As the lights come up on the cottage set in the woods ESMERALDA steps out. The lighting represents night. A muted light follows ESMERALDA as she walks in front of the trees. **7. Darkness.** *Music and Lyrics by Ritchie Blackmore and Candice Night.*

There are DANCERS on the right side of the stage.

ESMERALDA

ONCE UPON A DARK AUTUMN NIGHT
I WAS SO VERY FAR FROM SLEEP
I LONGED TO WALK BENEATH THE STARS
INTO THE WOOD SO DARK AND DEEP

NEITHER MYTH NOR FAIRY TALE
COULD KEEP ME FROM THE PATH TO THE MAZE
BUT EYES UPON ME I COULD FEEL
HIDDEN IN THE SHADOWS WATCHING ALWAYS

SOMETHING IN THE DARKNESS PULLED ME DEEPER
SOMETHING IN THE MADNESS EASED MY MIND
WAS I AWAKE OR WAS I DREAMING
CUT THE STRINGS THAT BIND ME TO MANKIND

*(As the music goes to instrumental
ELSA BETH steps out of the cottage.
She is carrying a loaf of bread and
the rose.)*

ELSA BETH

Oh, there you are.

ESMERALDA

What's on your mind, my child?

ELSA BETH

Did you really send Wilhelm to tell the King he's a fool?

ESMERALDA

I sent him to take a message to the King. Hopefully he will use some tact.

ELSA BETH

And if he doesn't, the King will put him in the dungeon! Or worse.

ESMERALDA

Ah, maybe he already has. But the King needs to hear my message. Even if it's just a crumb. Wilhelm needs to plant a seed of doubt in his head. His plan will not work.

ELSA BETH

I'm worried.

ESMERALDA

Wilhelm is strong and I hope he has enough sense to stick to what he knows.

ELSA BETH

Well, if he relies on what he saw in the crystal ball he will surely be thrown in the dungeon.

ESMERALDA

That's not how it works. The magic is not in what you see but what you do with the knowledge you gain.

ELSA BETH

Then tell me why my rose has died.

(holding up her rose)

I followed the spell you gave me, and I think about Wilhelm often. Could it be your magic doesn't work?

ESMERALDA

It works; the roses are united. You both must think about each other to keep them fresh.

ELSA BETH

Does this mean he's forgotten about me? Or something even worse?

ESMERALDA

He must keep it with him to make the connection. Same as you.

ELSA BETH

Then he must have thrown it away. Does this mean none of the men you showed me in the vision are Wilhelm? It was a waste of time to give Wilhelm a rose.

ESMERALDA

Now you are over thinking it. Stick to what you know. Be strong and independent.

ELSA BETH

I'm trying to be independent. Is that not why I sell flowers at the market? Unfortunately, that's not going well. Here.

(ELSA BETH hands her mother the loaf of bread.)

Henry sent this.

ESMERALDA

Of course. Henry is a reliable man. Maybe you should consider his intentions.

ELSA BETH

Besides all that, I just don't see a path in this existence where a messenger can become a noble man.

ESMERALDA

You are changing the subject.

(ESMERALDA hesitates to see if ELSA BETH returns to the subject of HENRY.)

There are realms in this existence you are not yet aware of my dear. If only you could see through my eyes, you'd understand.

ELSA BETH

Oh mother, your life of magic and fantasy doesn't make sense to me. I'm going to bed.

*(ESMERALDA gazes as her daughter retreats. 8. **Darkness Reprise.** ESMERALDA begins to hum the last verse of the song "Darkness," then sings.)*

ESMERALDA

SOMETHING IN THE DARKNESS PULLED ME DEEPER
SOMETHING IN THE MADNESS EASED MY MIND
WAS I AWAKE OR WAS I DREAMING
CUT THE STRINGS THAT BIND ME TO MANKIND

*(ESMERALDA gathers her plants and
places them in a small satchel.
Lights fade to black.)*

SCENE 7

Lights come up with the KING sitting on his throne. He is standing up and then sitting back down. He is a man with a lot on his mind. The STEWARD OF THE THRONE slowly approaches the KING.

STEWARD

My King, I have something to tell you.

KING

So, tell me.

STEWARD

But my lord I've seen what you do with messengers who tell you something you don't want to hear.

KING

Just tell me now!

STEWARD OF THE THRONE

Promise me you won't put me in the dungeon, it's dark down there.

KING

I will not promise. I'm growing impatient. TELL ME!

(STEWARD OF THE THRONE steps up and whispers something in the KING'S ear.)

That is concerning. I feared this might happen. Um,
(pause)

go and bring me that skinny boy with the tales of a magic crystal ball and the old witch.

(STEWARD OF THE THRONE exits. He returns with WILHELM. He has chains on his wrists and he looks haggard.)

KING
(dismisses STEWARD OF THE
THRONE)

You can leave now, and before you go, take the chains off of him.

(STEWARD OF THE THRONE does so and hands WILHELM the rose and his hat. He exits. When WILHELM takes the rose it returns to life.)

WILHELM
Thank you, my King. I thought you would never let me out of there, it's dark and cold, the view is awful and there's no entertainment. Now, what do you want?

KING
What do I want? You dare question me? Address me as your King or face the dungeon once more. Now you say it. "How can I serve you my King."

WILHELM
(with little enthusiasm)
Ok, how can I serve you, my King.

KING
Well, that's somewhat better. Entertainment in the dungeon? Ha.

(KING becomes serious.)

I have just received word that the spies I sent to the south have been caught lying. Now I cannot trust the information that my generals are providing me. This is a problem.

WILHELM
(excited)
That's what I was trying to tell you.

KING
Now, tell me more about this Chinese general and how I can defeat an army that is larger than mine.

WILHELM

Not like I haven't had time to think about this.

(pause)

Well, one thing you could do is make your army appear larger.

KING

How is that possible?

WILHELM

He says you should secure the high ground. You will want to lead the army of the north to the valley. And set up camps on the hills as far as the eye can see. And then!

(excitedly)

Use the women and others from the villages to dress as soldiers and stand around the large fires in the camps. You will create an illusion of overwhelming force. The army, seeing what appears to be an insurmountable threat, will hesitate or retreat.

KING

Don't be ridiculous. We would need an awful lot of that magical Hoo-ee to pull that off.

(pause)

Tell me, did the old witch say anything useful?

*(KING throws his hands in the air
and turns back to his throne.)*

Maybe we should just wait to hear from the "Magical" wise man.

WILHELM

Well, she told me not to leave until I have told you everything.

KING

And have you?

WILHELM

I believe so, my King. Can I leave now? I have a girl I must go to.

KING

A girl?

WILHELM

Yes, Elsa Beth. She's beautiful and fun, and he gave me this.

(WILHELM holds up a white rose.)

KING

A fresh white rose. How long have you had that?

WILHELM

Since I left Wynnbrook.

KING

How is it still alive and so fresh? Let me see that.

*(WILHELM hands the rose to KING.
The rose wilts. KING quickly hands
it back to WILHELM. The rose comes
back to life.)*

What's going on here? This is strange.

WILHELM

I'm not sure. But Elsa Beth is the daughter of Esmeralda.
(mocking the KING)
Maybe it's just some of that magical Hoo-ee.

KING

That's very interesting...

(pause)

And odd. Now you stay put until I say you can leave. I'll
hang on to this.

(KING takes the rose. It wilts.)

WILHELM

But she said I'm the only one who can keep it alive.

KING

I want to have the alchemist examine this.

WILHELM

She gave it to me and said it has magical properties that
only I can unlock.

(KING is dismissive of WILHELM and walks back to his throne with the wilted rose and sets it on the floor next to his throne. There is silence in the throne room. WILHELM asks him a question that he was not expecting.)

WILHELM

Have you ever met the King from the North?

KING

Of course not. What kind of question is that?

WILHELM

Well, I was just wondering what his motivation is for wanting to conquer your kingdom?

KING

That's simple. He is a bloodthirsty barbarian and wants to control all the land.

WILHELM

But WHY does he want your land?

KING

(annoyed with the question)

He wants our land because we have fertile ground and a seaport that he doesn't have. Besides that, my great grandfather took back our land from the north many years ago. Now he thinks he is entitled to it and wants it back.

WILHELM

Oh, I've heard those stories.

KING

Our kingdom is strategically placed, it would give him power and leverage over neighboring lands. He is driven by a lust for dominance.

WILHELM

The Grand Master teaches us "the true sum of our existence is founded on peace."

(shyly)

Maybe you could talk to him.

(A pause, KING glares at WILHELM before responding.)

KING

A diplomatic solution? Huh! Are you out of your head? He does not talk. His ambitions are rooted in conquest, the only conversation he wants is to see you begging for mercy. Then he will remove your head from your shoulders.

WILHELM

If you have never met him, how do you know?

KING

Don't be ridiculous. By reputation he has a cold ruthless heart and I don't need to meet him to know of this.

WILHELM

Oh! I just remembered. There is another thing Esmeralda said I should tell you.

(pause)

"There is another heart."

(raising his palms to the sky)

Whatever that means.

KING

Yeah, how could there be two? I do not believe there is one heart in the north.

(WILHELM pauses again as he appears to be thinking about something.)

WILHELM

Surely there must be something in the north that you desire? Resources that could strengthen our kingdom.

KING

They are rich in ores and metals. They use them for making weapons. That is why he is stronger.

WILHELM

What if, instead of conflict, we could find a way to trade with them?

KING

If you think I would try and talk my way out of this, well, the people of the kingdom would think of me as a coward. I cannot jeopardize my reputation. Here, power is measured in steel and blood. Diplomacy is foolish!

(KING looks away.)

WILHELM

We shouldn't quit. Maybe there is a future where strength and peace can walk hand in hand.

KING

That's not what Machiavelli says.

WILHELM

Yes,

(pause)

But the grand master teaches us how the civilized world has changed. He encourages us to apply what we know and look to the future, to see what can be.

KING

Like what?

WILHELM

Well, I can see a time when a new kind of leader will rise and find different ways to fight wars. AND make peace.

KING

Yes, but I'm NOT that guy.

(pause)

I only know of the old ways.

(KING walks back to his throne.)

WILHELM exits. KING sits. The stage is dark except for a light on him.

9. King's Song. Music by Larry
Burnett Lyrics by Nicholas Casper.)

KING

LYRICS

Verse 1

Now from the lowest place I know
There's a whisper rising up from below
She speaks of seance and sorcery
And things these mortal eyes just can't see

Verse 2

Her words are ringing in my ears
They speak to me of my worst fears
Is it a fool who trusts in a hope
In this magical realm that she's invoke

Chorus

What is this world where truth is not what it seems
Does logic fall short of all that we dream?
Is this fantasy what I'm meant to believe?
Between reality, illusion, can I see beyond what I perceive.

(KING stands, loudly.)

NOW! WHERE IS THAT WISE MAN?!

(Soft voice.)

Oh, what am I thinking?

(KING slowly walks back to his throne and sits. The light is on the KING. The rest of the stage is dark.)

There is a flash of light exit UL and the loud sound of thunder. KING startled jumps up and looks at the exit.

As this is happening PRINCE OF THE NORTH enters DL. He is in his 30s wearing a peasant robe with a hood. KING looks at the exit UL.)

KING

Who's there?

(KING returns to his throne. PRINCE OF THE NORTH is rushed to put on a disguise. He is brisk in his actions and his robe is disheveled. He puts on a fake white beard and pulls the robe up around his neck. He has a sword in a gold sheath strapped to his waist which is visible to the audience but not KING. He notices this and adjusts his robe to cover his sword. He then starts to shuffle like an old man as he makes his way toward KING.

KING sees him and runs, over to him.)

KING

(talking fast)

It's about time you showed up, my battle plan is uncertain, as my spies in the south are compromised. My council is basing their strategy on information they return. Then there is a young man who brought me tales of a fortune teller who talks of mistakes I'm going to make, and he talks of Sun Tzu, and Leonidis. Thank God you are here.

PRINCE OF THE NORTH

(speaking in the voice of an old man)

I believe you have me confused with someone else, I am but a poor shepherd. I have come to ask you to put a bounty on the wolf that ravages my flock.

*(KING addresses PRINCE OF THE NORTH
with authority.)*

KING

Shepherd, How did you get in here? I cannot entertain these requests now. My kingdom is at stake. I am expecting a wise man to bring promised wisdom. I don't believe you are the wise man I seek.

PRINCE OF THE NORTH

Well, maybe I am, my wife calls me a wise ass. The mayor calls me a wiseacre.

(pause)

And my daughter says; enough with the wise cracks, Father! So, maybe I am a wise man.

KING

Just a wise ass I would say. I seek a sage with magical inspiration to guide me.

(in a low voice)

Oh, how foolish can I be to believe that.

(KING turns back to his throne.)

PRINCE OF THE NORTH

Oh, magical? If that's all, I know of magic; I can tell you what to do.

KING

And how would you know of magic? You are a shepherd.

PRINCE OF THE NORTH

Well, my father called my mother a witch. Maybe it's in my blood.

(pause)

You see, magic is woven into the very fabric of our world, often hidden in plain sight. It guides those who know where to look.

KING

You really expect me to believe that?

(PRINCE OF THE NORTH steps closer.)

PRINCE OF THE NORTH

Indeed. My knowledge of magic is not limited to mere folklore. I can feel its presence.
I can see the future, it weighs heavy on you. There is darkness on not just one, but two fronts.

KING

I am aware of the forces bearing down on me.

*(KING raises his hands and turns to
his throne.)*

Tell me something I don't know, or leave my chamber.

PRINCE OF THE NORTH

You question what you have learned and felt inside. Examine the new knowledge that has been presented.

KING

(pacing slowly)

What more is there to learn? You are hinting at secrets. Speak plainly, my patience wears thin. And how did you get in here?

PRINCE OF THE NORTH

Your door was open.

*(before the KING can
respond)*

Have you wondered why the boy speaks to you of the things he does? Why he sees what he sees? Destiny binds us. The boy is a part of it, whether you wish to acknowledge it or not.

KING

Why do you know of this? What do you know of the boy? He just showed up in my hall, uninvited. Like you. Now you say he is the key to my future. Ha! A mere boy, a trespasser, advising me on matters of war? How absurd!

PRINCE OF THE NORTH

Look further, true wisdom is not found within a crystal ball. The clamor of armor may present solutions, not the answers you truly seek.

KING

Your words are riddles, old man. How am I to trust in these shadows and whispers?

PRINCE OF THE NORTH

You should not trust in the shadows, but in the light they conceal.

KING

And what Light would that be?

PRINCE OF THE NORTH

The light I speak of is a beacon that will guide you. One that will reveal, as men of authority we are capable of more than destruction.

KING

Why should I listen to you? What of my council? These are men of authority. War is what we know. These men have fought and have sacrificed for my kingdom.

PRINCE OF THE NORTH

Yes, but they are warriors, bound by honor and tradition. Wisdom of the heart eludes them. I can only open doors to see what can be.

(PRINCE OF THE NORTH then lifts his hand, palm to the sky and shrugs his shoulders.)

KING

(speaking firmly)

I will seek counsel from my advisors and from within. Not you and not the boy.

You are wasting my time. Now leave.

PRINCE OF THE NORTH

I will leave, but know this, your kingdom will falter under your reign of arrogance and shortsightedness. Now is the time to rise. DO NOT let the darkness of the past cloud your vision.

(PRINCE OF THE NORTH talks over his shoulder as he exits.)

Oh, and I will be looking for the bounty on that wolf.

(Another flash of light outside the exit and the sound of thunder.)

*(10. KING's song Reprise. Music by
Larry Burnett Lyrics by Nicholas
Casper. The KING stands next to the
throne.)*

KING

Verse 3

There's logic in the words he speaks
There's knowledge in these new techniques
With fewer men there are fewer lives
There is only loss in what we have tried

Verse 4

Bring to me all that his magic reveals.
Show the other side, show me what is real.
Beyond the gilded mist is there a new way?
Can I open my eyes and bring a new day.

Chorus

What is this world where truth is not what it seems
Where logic fall short of all that we dream?
Is this fantasy what I'm meant to believe?
Between reality and illusions, can I see beyond what I
perceive.

*(KING sits in silence for a few
moments.)*

Wilhelm!

(WILHELM enters.)

Against every bone in my body, I will heed this new knowledge you have presented. I will learn more and apply it to my strategy. Hum.

WILHELM

Yes my King.

KING

Now, you will carry a sword, and you WILL stand next to me on the battlefield. Excuse the pun, but if this goes south, you will be among the first to die.

WILHELM

But I can't die. I'm not a soldier, I can't go to war!

KING

Find the courage within you. Recognize your duty to this kingdom. No exceptions, and no more sniveling.

(Lights fade to black.)

SCENE 8

The next spring. WILHELM stands alone on a dark stage illuminated by a single spotlight. A dim light highlights the throne. A light comes on the left side of center stage. There's a cottage. The lighting splits the stage showing the KING's throne room and the cottage.

ESMERALDA steps out of the cottage. ELSA BETH follows her out. She has a basket with bread in it.

ELSA BETH

Oh mother, it' been such a long time, I still think of Wilhelm often. I need to forget about him, and just when I think I'm over him, the rose will come back to life. But only for a moment. And now, it has not been fresh for some time.

(ELSA BETH holds up a wilted rose.)

ESMERALDA

Maybe he lost his or worse.

ELSA BETH

Oh my. Can you check with the crystal ball?

ESMERALDA

I'm sorry my dear, the crystal ball doesn't work like that. I can only see what it is willing to show me.

ELSA BETH

I am worried. If anything comes up you will be sure to let me know.

(pause)

Oh, and Henry sent this.

(ELSA BETH hands the basket to her mother.)

ESMERALDA

He might just be having a hard time at the castle.

*(ESMERALDA examines the bread in
the basket.)*

Maybe you should really consider what Henry has to offer. He is still here. As the village baker he's stable. He would be good for you.

ELSA BETH

No Mother Wilhelm's the one, I know it. I may have bumbled this.

*(holding up the wilted rose
again)*

I told Henry I wasn't interested in a romantic relationship. I think I hurt his feelings.

ESMERALDA

I already knew that.

ELSA BETH

How could you know? I haven't said anything to you.

ESMERALDA

Sometimes I'm allowed to see things. But I believe it was your place to tell me.

ELSA BETH

Does that mean you and that crystal ball spy on me? That's not right!

(pause)

I feel betrayed.

ESMERALDA

Well, I don't see everything.

ELSA BETH

(upset)

I hate that rotten rock. I don't want anything to do with it.
*(turning away and with a
long pause)*

Now I've lost Wilhelm and chased Henry away. Now what? Is he even alive?

(ESMERALDA turns and goes back into the cottage. 11. Wish You Were Here. Music and Lyrics by Leskelä Teijo.

In some parts of the song, ELSA BETH is joined by WILHELM standing in the throne room on the left side of the stage.

Suggestion: Here they could meet in the center of the stage and dance not touching because they are in different parts of the kingdom.)

ELSA BETH

WISH YOU WERE HERE
ME OH, MY COUNTRY MAN
WISH YOU WERE HERE
I WISH YOU WERE HERE

DON'T YOU KNOW THE SNOW IS GETTING COLDER
AND I MISS YOU LIKE HELL
AND I'M FEELING BLUE

WISH YOU WERE HERE
ME OH, MY COUNTRY MAN
WISH YOU WERE HERE
I WISH YOU WERE HERE

DON'T YOU KNOW THE SNOW IS GETTING COLDER
AND I MISS YOU LIKE HELL
AND I'M FEELING BLUE

I'VE GOT FEELINGS FOR YOU
DO YOU STILL FEEL THE SAME?

FROM THE FIRST TIME I LAID MY EYES ON YOU
I FELT JOY OF LIVING
I SAW HEAVEN IN YOUR EYES
IN YOUR EYES

WISH YOU WERE HERE
 ME OH, MY COUNTRY MAN
 WISH YOU WERE HERE
 I WISH YOU WERE HERE
 DON'T YOU KNOW THE SNOW IS GETTING COLDER
 AND I MISS YOU LIKE HELL
 AND I'M FEELING BLUE

I MISS YOUR LAUGH
 I MISS YOUR SMILE I MISS
 EVERYTHING ABOUT YOU
 EVERY SECOND'S LIKE A MINUTE
 EVERY MINUTE'S LIKE A DAY
 WHEN YOU'RE FAR AWAY

THE SNOW IS GETTING COLDER, BABY
 AND I WISH YOU WERE HERE
 A BATTLEFIELD OF LOVE AND FEAR
 AND I WISH YOU WERE HERE

I'VE GOT FEELINGS FOR YOU
 FROM THE FIRST TIME
 I LAID MY EYES ON YOU

WISH YOU WERE HERE
 ME, OH, MY COUNTRY MAN
 WISH YOU WERE HERE
 I WISH YOU WERE HERE
 DON'T YOU KNOW THE SNOW IS GETTING COLDER
 AND I MISS YOU LIKE HELL
 AND I'M FEELING BLUE

(ELSA BETH goes back into the cottage and the light fades from the cottage. The cottage is removed. WILHELM is left on a dark stage with a light on him. There is a dim light on the throne.)

EFFECT: door opening.
EFFECT: wind blowing.

KING walks in. A light picks up on him. He talks to him from the corner of the stage.)

KING

Wilhelm, it's been a long winter, and the spring is here. Prepare yourself. The north army is pushing south. The battle will soon be upon us.

WILHELM

But my King, isn't there more you can do to avoid this conflict? I have too much to do with my life to be lost in battle.

KING

Are you kidding? Wilhelm, have you not been paying attention. I'm risking the lives of the people in the kingdom based on your words.

WILHELM

My words?

KING

Yes, your ideas are in motion and my decision is final. The army of the north is too large. They can taste blood. This is no time to back out, now get yourself ready.

(KING exits.)

EFFECT: door slams shut.

SOLDIERS 1 and 2 enter, put a uniform on WILHELM and strap a sword on him.)

WILHELM

I'm not a soldier. I don't know what to do. What's it like? You know, going to war.

SOLDIER 1

Well, you will have nothing to worry about. You should be honored to stand with the King. Only a few are chosen to stand with him, and it will never be one of us, the rank and file soldiers.

WILHELM

But what if something goes wrong. I can't bear the thought of never seeing Elsa Beth again.

SOLDIER 2

You poor fool, we all have girls back home and we all want to see them again. But if something does go wrong, take out that sword and swing it as hard as you can like so.

(SOLDIER 2 takes out his sword and demonstrates to WILHELM how to swing a sword.)

And keep swinging until you win.

(SOLDIER 2 puts his sword back in it's sheath.)

Or not.

WILHELM

Is there any way to get out of this?

(The SOLDIERS exit. Lights fade to black.)

SCENE 9

The stage is dark with a spotlight
on WILHELM. **12. Fires at Midnight.**
Music and Lyrics by Music and
Lyrics by Alfonso X, Ritchie
Blackmore, Candice Night.

As WILHELM sings, fires appear
along the top of the stage right
above and behind him and the stars
begin to appear above him.

WILHELM

I STOOD OUT HERE ONCE BEFORE
WITH MY HEAD HELD IN MY HANDS
FOR ALL THAT I HAD KNOWN OF THIS PLACE
I COULD NEVER UNDERSTAND

ON THE HILLS THE FIRES BURNED AT MIDNIGHT
SUPERSTITION PLAGUED THE AIR
SPARKS FLY AS THE FIRES BURN AT MIDNIGHT
THE STARS ARE OUT AND MAGIC IS HERE...

I WISHED ON THE SEVEN SISTERS
BRING TO ME WISDOM OF AGE
ALL THAT'S LOCKED WITHIN THE BOOK OF SECRETS
I LONGED FOR THE KNOWLEDGE OF THE SAGE...

ON THE HILLS THE FIRES BURNED AT MIDNIGHT
SUPERSTITION PLAGUED THE AIR
SPARKS FLY AS THE FIRES BURN AT MIDNIGHT
STARS ARE OUT AND MAGIC IS HERE
THE STARS ARE OUT AND MAGIC IS HERE...

SO THE SISTERS SMILED TO THEMSELVES
AND THEY WHISPERED AS THEY SHONE
AND IT WAS FROM THAT VERY INSTANT
I KNEW I WOULD NEVER BE ALONE

WHILE ON THE HILLS THE FIRES BURNED AT MIDNIGHT
SUPERSTITION PLAGUED THE AIR
SPARKS FLY AS THE FIRES BURN AT MIDNIGHT
STARS ARE OUT AND MAGIC IS HERE
THE STARS ARE OUT AND MAGIC IS HERE...

(As the song goes into the instrumental, The scene is underscored. KING OF THE NORTH and a GUARD wearing a red sash step onto the stage opposite of the fires. KING OF THE NORTH is in shock as he sees the massive fires on the hills. He is wearing a crown and a battle gear tunic. PRINCE OF THE NORTH arrives with two SOLDIERS wearing gold sash. He has a sword on his waist in a gold sheath.)

KING OF THE NORTH
(pointing to the fires)

Did they align with the army from the south? They appear much larger. How did I not know of this? Are we prepared?

PRINCE OF THE NORTH
No father. We were not expecting this. This presents a problem we did not foresee. We must swiftly change our strategy.

KING OF THE NORTH
Then we must command our warriors to summon courage to defeat this massive army. They must fight to the death so we can retake our land.

PRINCE OF THE NORTH
Other solutions evade you. Battle is not the only way to resolve this.

KING OF THE NORTH
Ever since you returned from that Athenaeum, you've lost your taste for battle. You do not show backbone. There is no other way. We must fight for what is ours.

(PRINCE OF THE NORTH makes a drastic decision.)

He grabs his father and firmly pulls him to the ground, shocking the KING OF THE NORTH who struggles against his son's strength. PRINCE OF THE NORTH binds his father's hands.)

PRINCE OF THE NORTH

There is a different way. I cannot let you lead us into a war we cannot win.

(PRINCE OF THE NORTH signals to his SOLDIERS and they step forward to escort KING OF THE NORTH. As they turn to the exit the KING OF THE NORTH's GUARD draws his sword. He engages one of the SOLDIERS. Their swords strike each other's.)

KING OF THE NORTH

Stop this, we will not fight amongst ourselves. Let this foolish prince learn for himself, war is the only way.

(As the SOLDIERS take KING OF THE NORTH out, the rest of the NORTH ARMY steps onto the stage. PRINCE OF THE NORTH stands and addresses them. WILHELM silently stands alone on the right side of the battlefield observing.)

PRINCE OF THE NORTH

(pacing before his army)

Warriors. My father has taken ill. He will return to our kingdom. We face an enemy much larger than we have anticipated. It is now up to me to follow my strong and brave father's dreams. I am destined to lead us into this grand battle. But first I will persevere forward to look our enemy in the eye.

(KING and the KING'S ARMY move in from under the fires to meet PRINCE OF THE NORTH in the center of the stage. There is a space between them. WILHELM is standing next to KING.)

SOLDIERS of both armies wave their swords in the air. He notices PRINCE OF THE NORTH has not drawn his sword.

KING holds his hand in the air without a sword and steps toward PRINCE OF THE NORTH.

After a hesitation, PRINCE OF THE NORTH also moves toward KING. KING recognizes him as the old man in the throne room. The two men meet in the center of the stage. The music softens and the dialogue becomes paramount.)

KING

How is this? You are the prince? You disguised yourself as a wise man to enter my chamber? I will take your head for this deception.

(PRINCE OF THE NORTH stands calmly. SOLDIERS slowly lower their swords, their eyes fixed on KING and PRINCE OF THE NORTH.)

PRINCE OF THE NORTH

Indeed, I did what was necessary to bring us to this moment. We can continue the cycle of bloodshed of our fathers, or we can forge a new path. My disguise was to understand the heart of my adversary.

(KING still believing he has deceived the NORTH ARMY.)

KING

With this large army behind me a simple wave of my hand and you will fall. I have not been presented with a way to understand your heart.

PRINCE OF THE NORTH

Sure you have. As it told you in your chamber, as men of authority we are capable of more than destruction. With that you see into my heart, we share the same burden and the same hope.

KING

You sound just like the boy.

PRINCE OF THE NORTH

Of course, we have a common teacher. The Grand Master of Knowledge.

You see, my father's vision was clouded by the shadows of past conflicts. Many of those were with your father. He only sees the world through the eyes of war. He could never see the good in this world.

(PRINCE OF THE NORTH shrugs his shoulders with a knowing smirk, mirroring the old man's gesture in the throne room.)

KING

Good in the world? Maybe. Good in the north? I'm not so sure.

PRINCE OF THE NORTH

Well, I too have a magical fortune teller. And I have seen a vision illuminated by the promise of peace. A realm where the sword is not the only path to power. I stand before you now, unarmed and resolute.

(PRINCE OF THE NORTH removes his sword and drops to the ground.)

With the new knowledge you have gained, the future does not have to reflect the brutality of our past. I'm searching for a strong hand reaching from the darkness. One I can firmly grasp.

The boy was right, there is a leader who can guide us into this new era. And yes, you are THAT guy.

(The volume of the music returns. They appear to be talking and pointing back and forth in the direction each came from. Just as the instrumental music reaches a climax, (Time stamp 6:22) the two men shake hands.)

WILHELM/ENSEMBLE

I STOOD OUT HERE ONCE BEFORE
WITH MY HEAD HELD IN MY HANDS
FOR ALL THAT I HAD KNOWN OF THIS PLACE
I COULD NEVER UNDERSTAND

ON THE HILLS THE FIRES BURNED AT MIDNIGHT
SUPERSTITION PLAGUED THE AIR
SPARKS FLY AS THE FIRES BURN AT MIDNIGHT
STARS ARE OUT AND MAGIC IS HERE

THE STARS ARE OUT AND MAGIC IS HERE
THE STARS ARE OUT AND MAGIC IS HERE
THE STARS ARE OUT AND MAGIC IS HERE
THE STARS ARE OUT AND MAGIC IS HERE...

(Lights fade to black.)

SCENE 10

LORD MAYOR is standing in front of the town hall. A few VILLAGERS are in view in the town square. The small foot bridge is visible.

A SOLDIER enters. A few more VILLAGERS enter, including ELSA BETH and THE GRAND MASTER of KNOWLEDGE. WILHELM enters. WILHELM is dressed in his uniform. ELSA BETH runs to him and stops short.

ELSA BETH

What's this? You're alive?

WILHELM

Elsa Beth.

ELSA BETH

Dressed as a soldier?

WILHELM

Well, the King...

ELSA BETH

This must mean you have forgotten about me. I waited for you every day. Where is the rose I gave you? Did you throw it away?

WILHELM

The King took--

ELSA BETH

I thought you were dead. You could have sent a message. People go back and forth to the castle all the time. You could have let me know.

WILHELM

But Elsa Beth, the last time I saw you, you were with Henry. As much as I wanted it to be real, I was concerned you weren't interested in me.

(HENRY and VILLAGE GIRL 2 arrive together holding hands. HENRY gives ELSA BETH a shy wave.)

ELSA BETH

Henry? There's Henry. See, I told you not to worry about that. I said trust me. Wilhelm you need to pay attention to what's going on.

WILHELM

Well, But, Elsa Beth, I never stopped thinking about you.

(KING enters with STEWARD OF THE THRONE and walks to WILHELM.)

KING

Now that you are here in the village, you can have this back.

(STEWARD OF THE THRONE hands the wilted rose to WILHELM. He takes it and it becomes fresh.)

My alchemist tells me this is nothing more than a dead rose.

(looking at the rose)

That's still very odd.

(KING turns to LORD MAYOR. ELSA BETH takes out her rose and holds it up. It also becomes fresh.)

Good afternoon, Lord Mayor. Would you be so kind as to read this decree to the village.

(STEWARD OF THE THRONE attempts to hand the scroll to LORD MAYOR but fumbles and drops it. As he scrambles to pick it up KING puts his hand on his forehead and looks away showing his frustration with STEWARD OF THE THRONE's clumsiness. STEWARD OF THE THRONE picks up the scroll, gathers himself and hands it to LORD MAYOR. LORD MAYOR raises his hand to command silence.)

*He opens the scroll, rings the bell
and begins to read.)*

LORD MAYOR

Citizens of Wynnbrook. Hear Ye, Hear Ye all! The King has decreed that Wilhelm of Wynnbrook will be named an HONORARY scholar of the Master's Library. BUT he must finish his studies under the Grand Master of Knowledge.

(pointing to THE GRAND

MASTER of KNOWLEDGE)

He has also decreed that Wilhelm will become a member of the King's council as a source of new knowledge and will join the King's noble council upon his arrival at the castle.

*(VILLAGERS cheer. ELSA BETH runs
with WILHELM to center stage.)*

ELSA BETH

Wilhelm, are you a soldier?

WILHELM

I guess I am. The King had me stand next to him on the battlefield.

*(KING walks over to ELSA BETH. They
are both holding the roses.)*

KING

You must be the maiden, Elsa Beth.

*(looking at and pointing to
the roses)*

One day, you will enlighten me on the significance of these roses. I've heard so much about you. You are all he has talked about. You may not be aware, but I have bestowed upon Wilhelm a royal favor, granting him nobility. This honor shall take effect at the castle once the Grand Master approves his graduation.

ELSA BETH

*(taken aback by KING's
generosity)*

Thank you, my King. But what does that mean?

KING

It means that, should you choose Wilhelm, you will be welcome to live in the castle.

ELSA BETH

Can I open a flower shop in the castle village? I've always dreamed of sharing my flowers with more people.

KING

Of course, my dear Elsa Beth. The castle village would be honored to have a flower shop tended by such a passionate soul. You can even bring some of those strange roses to the royal hall.

ELSA BETH

I would like to think it over.

KING

My dear, you are more than welcome to consider it as long as you need.

ELSA BETH

(to WILHELM)

Wilhelm, you're a soldier, a scholar and now a nobleman. Wow, I'm surprised how this unfolded from the vision mother showed me. It was you all along. I have to re-think how I feel about her crystal ball.

(ELSA BETH holding WILHELM's hand, she snuggles up to him, addresses the KING.)

OK, I thought it over. I'm certain. It's Wilhelm.

(ELSA BETH turns to WILHELM. They embrace and kiss. WILHELM removes his uniform and drops it on the ground. ELSA BETH acknowledges it. They run off toward the bridge. ESMERALDA rushes into the center of the village.)

ESMERALDA

Lord Mayor, I must speak with you. I've seen a vision.

LORD MAYOR

Well, if it's a message for the King, you can deliver it yourself. He's right here.

*(LORD MAYOR points to KING.
ESMERALDA looks to the KING. KING
looks at ESMERALDA and gives her a
nod of approval. She returns the
nod.)*

ESMERALDA

No no, It's s message for...

*(Before she can say anything else a
loud bell rings.)*

KING

(to the crowd)

The Kingdom has had a great success and made a new friend, we must celebrate, just like we did in the old days. Come and join in the celebration.

*(13. Under a Violet Moon. Music and
Lyrics by Ritchie Blackmore and
Candice Night.*

The VILLAGERS join in and dance.)

ESMERALDA

DANCING TO THE FEEL OF THE DRUM
LEAVE THIS WORLD BEHIND
WE'LL HAVE A DRINK AND TOAST TO OURSELVES
UNDER A VIOLET MOON

TUDOR ROSE WITH HER HAIR IN CURLS
WILL MAKE YOU TURN AND STARE
TRY TO STEAL A KISS AT THE BRIDGE
UNDER A VIOLET MOON

RAISE YOUR HATS AND YOUR GLASSES TOO
WE WILL DANCE THE WHOLE NIGHT THROUGH
WE'RE GOING BACK TO A TIME WE KNEW
UNDER A VIOLET MOON

CHEERS TO THE KNIGHTS AND DAYS OF OLD
THE BEGGARS AND THE THIEVES
LIVING IN AN ENCHANTED WOOD
UNDER A VIOLET MOON

FORTUNETELLER, WHAT DO YOU SEE?
FUTURE IN A CARD
SHARE YOUR SECRETS, TELL THEM TO ME
UNDER A VIOLET MOON

RAISE YOUR HATS AND YOUR GLASSES TOO
WE WILL DANCE THE WHOLE NIGHT THROUGH
WE'RE GOING BACK TO A TIME WE KNEW
UNDER A VIOLET MOON

RAISE YOUR HATS AND YOUR GLASSES TOO
WE WILL DANCE THE WHOLE NIGHT THROUGH
WE'RE GOING BACK TO A TIME WE KNEW
UNDER A VIOLET MOON

CLOSE YOUR EYES AND LOSE YOURSELF
IN A MEDIEVAL MOOD
TASTE THE TREASURES AND SING THE TUNES
UNDER A VIOLET MOON

'TIS MY DELIGHT ON A SHINY NIGHT
THE SEASON OF THE YEAR
TO KEEP THE LANTERNS BURNING BRIGHT
UNDER A VIOLET MOON

RAISE YOUR HATS AND YOUR GLASSES TOO
WE WILL DANCE THE WHOLE NIGHT THROUGH
WE'RE GOING BACK TO A TIME WE KNEW
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UNDER A VIOLET
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THE END