

SEASONS

PART 1

SPRING

WRITTEN BY
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(DRAFT 1)

EXT. GARDEN/COTTAGE — MORNING

A little cottage stands on a hill. There's a meadow out front and a forest beyond.

Bursting out the door: MADDIE, (10-12) a curly haired girl in a cotton dress. Maddie descends the porch steps, racing forward. She hops on a picket fence to admire the meadow.

MADDIE

Look, Grandpa! The ice is all melted!

GRUNTING SOUNDS as a trowel digs out a trough. Sweating in the garden: GRANDPA, (60's) grey beard, wide-brimmed hat and a workman's button-down. He wipes sweat from his brow.

GRANDPA

You know what that means, right?

Maddie drops off the fence.

MADDIE

No, what's it mean?

Grandpa groans, straightening up with a hand on his back.

GRANDPA

(Pointing aside)

Maddie, hand me that gunnysack, would you?

The girl hurries over to a BURLAP BAG. She carries it to Grandpa in earnest, hovering over his shoulder.

GRANDPA (CONT'D)

Your Grandmother always put it best.

(Reaching in the Burlap Bag)

She'd say ...

(Dropping seeds into the trough)

When the light rays burst from behind the clouds, when the songbird's hymn is heard aloud; I'll hang up my coat and wait and pray, that the flowers would return one day.

As Grandpa buries the seeds, Maddie smiles down with a gleam in her eye.

EXT. MEADOW — DAY

Maddie and Grandpa are crossing the meadow. They saunter slowly toward the forest...

SUPER:

"SPRING"

EXT. TRAIL/FOREST — CONT'D

A trail winds through the outskirts of the forest. Maddie frolics and hums as Grandpa leads with his WALKING STICK.

MADDIE

Hey Grandpa, what would happen if we went off the trail?

GRANDPA

Exploring can be fun, but never wander off alone - you could get lost.

MADDIE

I would not.

The girl halts, peering into the woods. Grandpa turns back.

MADDIE

Do you hear that?

A faint CHANTING grows.

MADDIE (CONT'D)

Sounds like singing.

Grandpa surveys the woods as the CHANTING becomes louder. A figure passes from behind a tree and Grandpa pulls the girl into the brush.

GRANDPA

Get down!

In the woods ahead: THE DRUIDS, a group of men wearing white robes and GREEN LEAF MASKS. They're marching single file and CHANTING IN A FOREIGN LANGUAGE.

(CONT'D)

(CONT'D)

Grandpa and Maddie peek out from behind the brush. They study the Druids who continue on their march.

MADDIE

What's with those outfits?

GRANDPA

... They're Druids.

MADDIE

They're weird.

GRANDPA

Not a lot is known about the ancient Druids of Gaul. They were said to keep to themselves. The Greeks called them magicians, who performed ceremonial rituals in secret. They worship nature, I think... I'm sure they're harmless.

MADDIE

I wonder what those masks are for.

GRANDPA

It's best to just leave them be. Too many strange stories have come out of these woods.

The Druids pass out of sight. Grandpa ushers Maddie back the way they came. The girl steals a glance into the woods.

INT. KITCHEN/COTTAGE – EVENING

OLDIES PLAY ON THE RADIO as pork chops sizzle in a pan.

Grandpa leaves the pan on the stovetop. He moves to the counter and starts chopping carrots and celery.

A SMOKE ALARM BEEPS and Grandpa turns sharply...

He grumbles as smoke rises from the pan. Grandpa grabs a towel, waving away the smoke. He turns toward the window-

GRANDPA

(Goaded)

Maddie! Supper's in five!

EXT. GARDEN/COTTAGE — CONT'D

Maddie reels in her YO-YO with a SNAP —

MADDIE

Okay!

The girl plays in the garden. Grandpa's GROANING SOUNDS are heard through the kitchen window.

She walks along, doing tricks with her Yo-Yo.

MADDIE

(Singing)

Walk the dog. Walk the dog.

Maddie stops abruptly. The girl lets her Yo-Yo drop, noticing something ahead...

Hanging on the trunk of a tree: THE CLAY MASK, it's hidden in the shadows on the adjacent side of the garden.

She approaches the tree, taking the mask from a nail in the trunk. It depicts a green face made of leaves.

Maddie turns as Grandpa storms out the door. He's coughing on the front porch with a cloud of smoke at his back.

GRANDPA

... Better give dinner a minute to cool.

Grandpa takes a seat on the porch steps. Maddie walks the Clay Mask across the garden.

MADDIE

What's this, Grandpa?

Grandpa takes the Clay Mask, glancing it over.

GRANDPA

This was your Grandmother's. I'd almost forgotten about it.

MADDIE

Looks kinda like the masks those Druids were wearing.

(MORE)

(MORE)

GRANDPA

You're right, it does...

Grandpa takes a closer look. The back of the mask is revealed to Maddie. She leans in.

MADDIE

There's something on the back!

GRANDPA

(Flipping the mask over)

It's an inscription ...

(Puts on his glasses)

I come back at the beginning, when the sun is aligned. To reset the cycle, since the dawn time. I am waiting in slumber, underneath the ice. Soon I'll find my beloved, and breathe new life.

A SUDDEN WIND carries through the trees. All becomes still.

MADDIE

What does it mean?

GRANDPA

Your Grandmother used to collect all sorts of mythical things. She was a very superstitious woman.

(Chuckles)

She used to tell me she'd spot fairies on her walks through the forest.

MADDIE

(Smiles)

I bet Grandma didn't stay on the trail.

GRANDPA

(Big grin)

No, she certainly didn't.

(Juxtaposition)

Maddie watches Grandpa stare down at the floor. She sits beside him, putting her arm around his shoulder. She lays her head against him.

A quiet moment on the porch...

INT. COTTAGE — MORNING

Light breaks through the windows.

MADDIE'S BEDROOM — CONT'D

The blankets and sheets on Maddie's bed are unturned.

HALLWAY — CONT'D

SHUFFLING FOOTSTEPS on the wood floor as a blur in PAJAMAS speeds by.

GRANDPA'S BEDROOM — CONT'D

Grandpa is snoring; his face is contorted against the pillow. A PATTERN OF FEET and Maddie lunges onto the bed like a spider monkey. She bounces up and down, shouting —

MADDIE

Wake up — wake up — wake up — wake up!

Grandpa moans, pulling the pillows over his head.

MADDIE

Grandpaaa ...

(Stops bouncing)

EXT. GARDEN — MORNING

Maddie steps onto the porch. She regards the Clay Mask on the railing and puts it in her dress pocket.

The Girl moves across the garden, bouncing her Yo-Yo, with a hop in her step.

The picket fence door SWINGS SHUT behind Maddie as she speeds down the hill, flying toward the meadow.

EXT. TRAIL/FOREST — MORNING

Maddie ambles on the trail. She does tricks with her Yo-Yo.

MADDIE

(Singing)

Walk the dog. Walk the dog.

(CONT'D)

(CONT'D)

The girl's Yo-Yo breaks from the string. She gasps as it bounces off the trail and rolls down the slope.

Hurrying over, Maddie waits at the edge of the trail. Down the slope, her Yo-Yo rests in some foliage.

Maddie sighs, peering back. The girl takes sudden flight down the slope. She pounces on her Yo-Yo, scooping it up.

MADDIE

Gotcha!

A RUSTLE AHEAD and Maddie perks up. Her eyes widen...

Carrying a BUNDLE through the undergrowth: THE BUDS, two infant size plant humanoids with green skin and flower buds for heads. They wear overalls and little wicker shoes.

Maddie ogles the Buds as they vanish in the thicket. The girl looks back at the trail. She follows into the thicket.

EXT. THICKET/FOREST - CONT'D

Maddie pushes through the dense brush, staggering as her clothes are snagged on thorns. Her shoes sink in the mud, but she trudges on into gloomy depths.

Emerging from a tangle of twigs, she catches a glimpse of the Buds up ahead. They scurry along on the forest floor, disappearing into the scrub.

MADDIE

Hey, wait!

The girl quickens pace, shielding her head with her forearms. She barrels through a cluster of branches.

EXT. SACRED GLADE - CONT'D

Maddie stumbles from the thicket with leaves in her hair. She arrives at a sacred glade and marvels at the sight...

The place is lush with HIBERNATING FLORA. Light trickles from gaps in the trees, forming sunspots on the grass.

(CONT'D)

(CONT'D)

At the center: THE GIANT FLOWER, its ruddy pedals are shut.

The girl halts as the Buds step into sight, carrying their Bushel. She ducks into the lilac beside her and spies as the Buds approach the Giant Flower.

The Buds: PUCE, tall and lanky, with a muted violet head. STRAW, short and stubby; his head is light yellow.

They unravel the Bushel by the Giant Flower, looking over trinkets inside - a TRIANGULAR BAR made of copper, a lightweight CHAIN, a MALLET and a ROD with a hook on top.

Puce and Straw start to bicker in squeaky voices, waving their arms and pointing fingers. Maddie watches intently.

The Buds lift the Rod, wavering under its mass. They plunge it in the ground by the Giant Flower and stand it upright.

Straw collects the Chain attaching it to the hook on the Rod. Puce lifts the Triangular Bar and hangs it from the Chain. The Buds steps back... They've assembled a BELL.

Puce moves back to the Bushel to find Straw holding the Mallet. Puce squeaks in spite. Straw shrugs his shoulders. They bicker in a tug of war over control of the Mallet.

The girl giggles. Puce and Straw carry the Mallet over. They RING THE BELL and the Giant Flower throbs a bit.

Maddie ducks into the lilac. The Buds RING THE BELL AGAIN and the Giant Flower opens up. The Buds RING A THIRD TIME... The pedals peel back, revealing a body cuddled up inside.

Sleeping peacefully: BLOOM, a winged nymph. She looks young and beautiful, with wavy amber hair, pallid skin, a dress made of ivy and furry moth wings protruding from her back.

Maddie's jaw drops. Bloom's eyes flutter open. The nymph rouses briskly, yawning and stretching her arms. She turns as the Buds jump and squeak - trying to gain her attention.

BLOOM

Oh, my little buds!

(CONT'D)

(CONT'D)

Bloom flutters down from the Giant Flower, kneeling in the glade. The Buds hurry over and she strokes their heads.

BLOOM

I've missed you both terribly. What have you been doing all this time on your own?

The Buds squeak, overlapping each other. Bloom giggles as they start to bicker. The nymph's attention is brought to a patch of Hibernating Flora nearby.

BLOOM

(Gasp)

I'd almost forgotten...

She flutters over to the patch of Hibernating Flora and crouches over it.

BLOOM

Wake up, my lovelies, you've been asleep for long enough.

The Buds rush over as Bloom motions for the Hibernating Flora to rise. Their stems tilt up and their pedals open.

BLOOM

That's more like it. Show us those pretty faces.

Maddie is rapt. She leans on the lilac and its branch snaps. Maddie falls and Bloom and the Buds turn sharply.

BLOOM

Well, hello there.
(Smiling)

The girl stands up swiftly. She pauses. All at once, Maddie rushes off. Bloom flutters forward, kneeling in the grass.

BLOOM

Oh, don't go! Please!

Maddie halts. The girl turns back, looking at Bloom as the Buds huddle behind.

(CONT'D)

(CONT'D)

BLOOM

Come closer. It's alright.

Bloom holds her arms out to Maddie. The girl approaches reluctantly. She gasps as the Nymph embraces her.

BLOOM

Welcome to my glade. Let's have a look at you.

The Nymph pulls away, holding Maddie by her shoulders.

BLOOM

Such a beautiful little girl; what's your name?

MADDIE

(Smiling)

Maddie.

BLOOM

Maddie. My name is Bloom. I look after this forest. And these are my brave little Buds.

The Buds shrink behind Bloom and Maddie waves down at them.

MADDIE

Hi.

Puce waves back. He nudging Straw, who remains shy. The yellow Bud waves too. Maddie titters then looks at Bloom.

MADDIE

Bloom? Are you a fairy?

BLOOM

(Bows her head)

I'm afraid that's a very long story...
What brings you to the forest, Maddie?

MADDIE

I'm just visiting my Grandpa. He lives real close by.

(MORE)

(MORE)

BLOOM

That's wonderful; and you couldn't have chosen a better time to stopover. Things are about to get awfully busy around here.

MADDIE

Busy?

BLOOM

It seems the entire forest is sleeping in; and it's time someone woke it up.

MADDIE

Really? I can help! I wake up my Grandpa every morning!

BLOOM

(Giggles)

And I bet he just loves it when-

The nymph turns aside, alert.

BLOOM

(Touching Maddie's shoulder)

I think you'd better run along now, Maddie?

MADDIE

(Dispirited)

But-

BLOOM

-No questions. Off you go.

Bloom steers Maddie back the way she came. The girl is hurried to the edge of the glade. She pauses by the thicket and turns back. Bloom and the Buds are nowhere to be found.

MADDIE

Bloom?

A TWIG SNAPS and Maddie turns. Entering the glade: SHAEMUS, (40's) a Druid, tall and wiry; wears a white cloak over a gray suit. He's balding with a silvering, frayed goatee.

(CONT'D)

(CONT'D)

SHAEMUS

Good morning.

Maddie regards THE WHITE BUNNY in Shaemus' hand. He strokes it gently on his entrance toward the Giant Flower.

SHAEMUS (CONT'D)

Strange place to find a little girl...

Shaemus kneels at the Hibernating Flora that Bloom had awoken. He sets the White Bunny before the patch.

SHAEMUS (CONT'D)

Are you lost?

Maddie looks down as the Bunny eats the Hibernating Flora.

MADDIE

No.

SHAEMUS

Who were you talking to?

MADDIE

... What?

Shaemus grabs the Bunny by its back fur, lifting it as he rises to a stand.

SHAEMUS

Just now, as I was coming in you called out to someone. You said... bloom.

MADDIE

(Steps back)

No, I didn't.

SHAEMUS

(Glancing aside)

It's obvious that I've startled you. And I apologize. My name is Shaemus, high priest of the Druids of Gaul.

(Waits)

Aren't you going to tell me your name?

(CONT'D)

(CONT'D)

Maddie shakes her head "no".

SHAEMUS

(Stepping forward)

Suppose your parents taught you never
to talk to strangers.

Maddie shakes her head "yes" as she backs away slowly.

MADDIE

I should get back home now.

Shaemus' attention is brought down to the Clay Mask that is peeking out of Maddie's dress pocket. His eyebrow lifts.

SHAEMUS

Í a fháil!

The girl takes another step back and bumps into two Druids. They grab her by either arm.

She screams as Shaemus strides up, snatching the Clay Mask from her pocket. The priest paces away from Maddie and the Druids, studying the mask with intrigue.

SHAEMUS

(Manic)

At last! We've been blessed with a sign
from the Green Man. He has chosen this
girl; our pilgrimage has been sanctified!

He wheels around, addressing the Druids.

SHAEMUS (CONT'D)

Bind her wrists!

Maddie screams and kicks as the Druids carry her off.

MADDIE

Bloom! Bloom!

Shaemus scans the glade one last time. He turns away, following after Maddie and the Druids.

The Buds lean out from behind the Giant Flower as Shaemus diminishes into the woods. They look to each other.

EXT. GARDEN/COTTAGE — DAY

Grandpa is snoring away. He's fast asleep, swinging back and forth in a hammock under the shade of a tree.

Nearby, the Buds sneak in through the picket fence. Straw takes point, marching through the garden. Puce is close behind, nudging him to hurry up. Straw picks up the pace.

They arrive at the hammock, looking up at Grandpa as he snoozes. The Buds start jumping up and squeaking, but Grandpa's slumber is undisturbed.

The Buds contemplate for a moment. Straw bounces up with an idea. He removes his LEAF BACKPACK and drops it on the ground. Puce paces over as Straw uncovers a BIG SLINGSHOT.

The buds squeak in excitement. Puce rushes away as Straw plunges the handle of the Slingshot into the dirt. He aims it at Grandpa. Puce returns, carrying an acorn in his arms.

The Buds laugh. Puce loads the acorn into the Big Slingshot and together they draw back the string. The Buds unleash the acorn into the air and they fall backwards to a seat.

The acorn smacks Grandpa in the forehead. The Buds rise and rejoice. Grandpa mumbles, stirring a bit, but doesn't wake. The Buds shrink in disappointment.

LATER

The Buds draw back another acorn. They release the string, watching it soar. The acorn bounces off the top of Grandpa's head and he moans, waving at the air above him.

Straw laughs and Puce scolds him. They see that Grandpa's still sleeping. Puce grumbles, marching over to Straw's Leaf Backpack. He reaches in as Straw moseys up behind him.

Puce pulls a KNIFE and Straw gasps. He goes to hand Straw the Knife. Straw squeaks, nervously, running his finger under his neck. Puce shakes his head "no" in irritation.

He hands the Knife over and squats, waving for Straw to get on his shoulders. The yellow Bud nods excitedly. He climbs up on Puce's shoulders. Puce grunts, standing up.

(CONT'D)

(CONT'D)

Straw holds the Knife as Puce carries him toward Grandpa. They stagger toward the tree where the hammock is fastened. Straw bumps into the tree and squeaks down at Puce.

Puce squeaks back. Straw hacks at the rope to the hammock. The rope begins to fray as Straw teeters, chopping with the Knife. Below, Puce grunts as his knees begin to buckle.

Grandpa stirs at the commotion. Puce huffs and puffs; he squeaks up at Straw, inciting the yellow Bud to swing harder. With a mighty yell, Straw cuts the hammock's rope.

The rope unravels. Puce is knocked off balance and the Buds topple over. Grandpa hollers, waking up as the hammock drops. He sits up quickly in surprise.

GRANDPA

Flimsy thing!

The Buds are squeaking and jumping for Grandpa's attention. Grandpa looks at them and shouts in shock. He scrambles up, fleeing. The Buds squeak pleadingly, chasing after Grandpa.

GRANDPA

Keep away from me!

Grandpa charges up the steps to the porch, entering the cottage, he slams the door on the Buds.

INT. ENTRYROOM/COTTAGE – CONT'D

Grandpa leans against the door as the Buds squeak outside.

GRANDPA

Scram, you little monsters!

BLOOM (O.S.)

Now's not a time for fear.

Looking back, Grandpa sights Bloom in the hall. He gasps as she hovers steadily toward him.

BLOOM (CONT'D)

Your Granddaughter needs your help.

(MORE)

(MORE)

GRANDPA

Maddie...

Bloom leans in, touching Grandpa's forehead.

BLOOM

Sleep.

EXT. PARALLEL DIMENSION — CONT'D

Grandpa is crouched in a world of night sky. Stars are gleaming all around him.

GRANDPA

Where am I?

Bloom saunters through the night sky.

BLOOM

Tonight's a night unlike any other. It will be shared across the world. To my kind it's called the reunion.

The nymph is touching stars. They become brighter for a moment as she does.

GRANDPA

(Standing up)

What's happened to Maddie?

BLOOM

She's been taken by men who believe they serve the forest.

GRANDPA

The Druids.

BLOOM

I fear that she's in terrible danger. These men are meddling with forces they don't understand.

GRANDPA

How can I find her?

(MORE)

(MORE)

BLOOM

You must go to the heart of the forest.

GRANDPA

But... won't you show me the way?

BLOOM

I have matters to attend to. Seek out
the reunion... there you will find me.

BACK TO SCENE

Grandpa stirs awake on the floor with a stammering breath.

LATER

The front door opens slowly on the Buds. They're looking up
at Grandpa. He stands before them in the entryway.

GRANDPA

Well, are you coming in or aren't you?

EXT. MURKY WOODS/FOREST — DAY

The Druids are marching through the forest. A rope is tied
around Maddie's wrists. She's tugged along by: GRUFF DRUID,
(30's) tall, husky, with long, wet hair and a shaggy beard.

At the front, Shaemus halts, looking back to his men.

SHAEMUS

Glac sos!

The company splits apart. Gruff Druid pulls Maddie to a
ROTTED LOG, tossing her down beside it. He treads off. The
girl sits up as Shaemus approaches with a GREEN APPLE.

SHAEMUS

Hungry?

Shaemus sits down on the Rotted Log beside Maddie.

SHAEMUS

You probably think we're wicked.

(MORE)

(MORE)

SHAEMUS

(Eating the Green Apple)

But each of us has our role to play...
You see, I have been ordained to live
a life of service. A practice that seems
to have been forgotten.

The priest gazes outward. Maddie reaches into her pocket.

SHAEMUS (CONT'D)

People these days... they only serve
themselves. And tell me, what could be
more wicked? There is virtue in what
we are doing.

He looks over. Maddie tenses with her hand in her pocket.

SHAEMUS (CONT'D)

But sometimes, in order to serve...
(Drippy bite)
Sacrifices must be made.

Rising from the log, Shaemus steps out addressing the men.

SHAEMUS

Sinn ag!

The Druids gather quickly behind Shaemus. Gruff Druid lifts Maddie, tugging her along. The girl peers over her shoulder. Her Yo-Yo is sitting on the Rotted Log.

INT. KITCHEN/COTTAGE – LATE DAY

Grandpa is in the kitchen on the HOUSE PHONE. The Buds are looking at his books on the table.

GRANDPA

Like I said, they were wearing white
cloaks.

INT. SHERIFF'S OFFICE – CONT'D

On the phone with his feet on the desk: SHERIFF (40'S)
overweight, with a mustache and a tan police uniform.

(CONT'D)

(CONT'D)

SHERIFF

Ah, come on, Theo. Druids? On the night of the Vernal Equinox? Don't you think that's just a little cliché?

BACK TO SCENE

GRANDPA

What did you say?

SHERIFF (PHONE)

I said it was cliché, I mean-

GRANDPA

-No the other part.

SHERIFF (PHONE)

Oh, the equinox. You know, when the Earth's axis is aligned with the sun.

GRANDPA

A night shared across the world.

INT. SHERIFF'S OFFICE - CONT'D

SHERIFF

Yeah, that's right. Next I thought you were going to tell me they were headed to Stonehenge Clearing.

GRANDPA (PHONE)

Stonehenge Clearing?

SHERIFF

You know the place, right?

GRANDPA (PHONE)

Well... actually, no.

SHERIFF

It's just a couple of standing stones, really. Kid's used to go out there and Spray paint... practice voodoo, I don't know. I'm surprised you've never heard of the place, it's practically in your backyard.

BACK TO SCENE

GRANDPA

Would you say it's the heart of the forest?

SHERIFF (PHONE)

That's a funny way of putting it, but yeah. Are you sure you're alright?

GRANDPA

Thank you, sheriff.

SHERIFF (PHONE)

Theo?

Grandpa hangs up the House Phone.

SERIES OF SHOTS

- The Buds wait by the door as Grandpa strides passed.
- Grandpa grabs his hat from a hanger on the wall.
- He grabs his SATCHEL and Walking Stick from a corner.
- Grandpa holds the front door open as the Buds exit.

EXT. FOREST – SUNSET (MONTAGE)

- Grandpa and the Buds are traveling through the forest.
- The sun is setting behind offset rows of trees.
- The Buds cross a stream. Grandpa's boots splash through.
- Grandpa is veering off. The Buds wave for him to follow.
- The Buds are climbing. Grandpa uses his Walking Stick.
- Grandpa removes his hat, sweating at the top of the hill.
- Grandpa and the Buds are silhouetted in the fading light.

EXT. MURKY WOODS/FOREST – TWILIGHT

The Buds lead Grandpa into the murky woods. They slow, looking around standoffishly. Grandpa catches his breath.

The Buds squeak and Grandpa turns. They've found Maddie's Yo-Yo on the Rotten Log. He rushes over, taking the Yo-Yo.

GRANDPA

Smart girl! But it's too dark follow tracks...

(CONT'D)

(CONT'D)

The Buds are standing by a tree. They look up to a hole in the trunk, becoming excited. Grandpa approaches behind.

GRANDPA

Alright, what's the all fuss about?

Puce nudges Straw aside. He leans on the tree listening in. The violet Bud knocks on the tree like it was a door. In a moment, RUMMAGING is heard in the trunk.

Peeping out the hole: SNICKLEFRITZ, the tree sprite, he's got goblin ears and a rust and white colored coat of fur.

SNICKLEFRITZ

Yeah, what do yah want? Can't you see I'm hibernating?

Grandpa's stunned. The Buds are squeaking at Snicklefritz.

SNICKLEFRITZ

What? That time already? Guess I overslept.

(Listening)

Mhmm...

(Listening)

Druids?

(Listening)

Ha! The arrogance...

(Listening)

Well, ole leaf head sure aint gonna like that.

(Listening)

Yeah, I heard 'em rustlin' around... But why should I tell you where they went?

Grandpa stomps over vexed. He grabs Snicklefritz, pulling him out of his hole.

GRANDPA

(Shaking Snicklefritz)

Just you listen to me, you furry worm! Those men have my Granddaughter. Now, you're going show us the way or so help me God!

Snicklefritz shrinks sheepishly.

EXT. STONEHENGE CLEARING — NIGHT

The Druids are gathered at a grassy clearing beneath the stars. DEEP CHANTING resounds off the surrounding trees.

Shaemus stands at a STONE ALTAR in the center. Two druids tie Maddie to a STANDING STONE behind the priest. The girl whimpers as the rope is pulled taught, spreading her arms.

The Priest sets a SAUCER and a DAGGER on the Stone Altar. Gruff Druid brings the White Bunny over to Shaemus.

SHAEMUS

Ullmhú againn an dóiteán in onóir an
Tiarna na foraoise.

Shaemus strokes the Bunny as the surrounding Druids CHANT. The Priest takes the Dagger from the Stone Altar, bringing the blade under the Bunny. He slits it down the belly.

SHAEMUS

In onóir an fear glas!

He squeezes the Bunny, draining its blood into the Saucer. Maddie turns her head, trying to break from her bonds. The Priest lifts the Saucer toward the sky with bloody hands.

SHAEMUS

Fear glas, fear glas, fear glas...

Shaemus brings the Saucer to Maddie, setting it on the ground. He places her feet into the blood.

SURROUNDING TREES — CONT'D

Grandpa and the Buds reach the border of the clearing. They squat down, keeping out of sight.

GRANDPA

She's alive! We've got to get down there.

A HORN ROAR erupts from the forest ahead of the Druids.

BACK TO SCENE

The Druids become silent looking toward the sound.

(CONT'D)

(CONT'D)

Shaemus steps forward in awe. Maddie jerks her arms, trying to escape. She peers up at the sound of another HORN ROAR.

FOREST AHEAD

Something massive walks in shadow; passing through trees.

BACK TO SCENE

A Druid stands guard beside Maddie. He's fixed ahead. He turns sharply at RUSTLING FOOTSTEPS behind. Grandpa cracks the Druid over the head with his Walking Stick.

He hurries over to Maddie, trying to untie her.

MADDIE

Grandpa!

GRANDPA

Keep quiet, girl.

FOREST AHEAD — CONT'D

Narrow legs made from bushes of leaves are striding forward.

BACK TO SCENE

The Buds bicker behind the Standing Stone. Puce squats down. Straw leaps onto Puce's shoulders. They waver a bit. Straw draws his Knife and begins hacking at the rope.

FOREST AHEAD — CONT'D

An arm made from bushes of leaves swings behind the trees.

BACK TO SCENE

SHAEMUS

At last, he has come... The Green Man!

Stomping out of the woods: THE GREEN MAN, a nine-foot tall plant humanoid. His body and head are made of leaves. His arms and legs are tall and narrow. He lets out a HORN ROAR.

(CONT'D)

(CONT'D)

Puce shrinks at the sound. Straw swings hard and cuts the rope. Grandpa and Maddie fall back as the rope unravels. Shaemus steps away as the Green Man approaches the Altar.

SHAEMUS

We come but to worship, oh Lord; with
an offering of blood and flesh!

Beside the Standing Stone, Gruff Druid sees Maddie is gone..

GRUFF DRUID

Tá an cailín imithe!

Shaemus whips around, spotting Grandpa and Maddie.

SHAEMUS

Stop a chur leo!

The Druids are enclosing around Maddie and Grandpa. The Priest strides over as the Green Man approaches. Grandpa stands before Maddie, gripping his Walking Stick.

SHAEMUS

Out of my way, old man!

GRANDPA

Let's find out what this forest really
thinks of you.

Grandpa opens his Satchel. Snicklefritz leaps out squealing. Shaemus jolts as the tree sprite scampers. Snicklefritz crawls up Shaemus' pant leg. The Priest shouts backpedaling.

Grandpa and Maddie are pulled away by Druids.

GRANDPA

Take your hands off her, you heathens!

Shaemus collides with the Standing Stone. Snicklefritz pops out of his shirt, biting the priest's neck. Shaemus yells, stumbling over the Saucer, spilling blood onto his shoes.

The Green Man ROARS at Shaemus. The Druids back off timidly. Snicklefritz leaps from the Priest's shirt, scurrying off.

(CONT'D)

(CONT'D)

Shaemus drops to his knees as the Green Man looms over him.

SHAEMUS

All I ever wanted was to serve you.

The Green Man takes Shaemus by the head lifting him off the ground. He ROARS and Shaemus cries out. Plants and flowers sprout from the priest's eyes, ears and mouth.

Shaemus' body goes limp and the Druids flee in terror. The Green Man ROARS up at the night sky, with Shaemus in his grasp. The Druids let go of Grandpa and Maddie, retreating.

Maddie climbs into Grandpa's arms. They sit together as the Buds rush over from behind the Standing Stone.

Our friends are huddling together. The Green Man drops Shaemus' body to the floor and sets his sights on them. The Plant humanoid ROARS. Grandpa tugs at Maddie.

GRANDPA

We've got to go!

The girl's eyes are drawn aside.

MADDIE

Wait!

Grandpa turns around. The Buds peer outward. The Green Man musters. Maddie smiles...

Bare feet travel across the grass. Bloom crosses the clearing with a WILDFLOWER BOUQUET. She walks with poise; head held high and wings folded back.

The Green Man steadies as she approaches. He slouches a bit, arms hanging limp. His gaze fixed onward at the nymph.

Our friends watch silently as Bloom steps passed. The Nymph doesn't look at them. Her eyes are locked on the Green Man. She stops before him and the two stare at each other.

The Green Man peers at Bloom, breathing heavily, like a snoring bear. A slight smirk is gathering on Bloom's face.

(CONT'D)

(CONT'D)

The Nymph leaps up, fluttering her wings; she kisses the Green Man with gentle force. The Green Man's leaves shake and tremble, growing with intensity as the kiss is held.

Bloom pulls off, mid air, and the Green Man EXPLODES. His leaves are shooting all around. A multitude of SEEDS and DANDELIONS, his innards, fall off and carry in the breeze.

Our friends stare on, entranced, as Bloom lands softly in the grass. The Nymph kneels down, picking up a Dandelion. She brings it solemnly to her lips.

BLOOM

Till next year, my prince.

(Blowing seeds into the wind)

The Buds rush over as Bloom rises. She's looking away as the Dandelion seeds take flight. The nymph turns at the squeaking of her Buds. She pets them, squatting down.

Grandpa puts an arm around Maddie, sitting in the grass.

MADDIE

(Smiling)

Grandma was right about the fairies.

Grandpa looks on, grinning. Bloom and the Buds wave goodbye as they make their way into the forest. Maddie and Grandpa are watching them go.

MADDIE

Will we ever see them again?

They vanish into the trees.

GRANDPA

When the light rays burst from behind
the clouds, when the songbird's hymn
is heard aloud; I'll hang up my coat
and wait and pray, that the flowers
will return one day.

END