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PREVIEW

B.B. Wolfe

GETS SCHOOLIED

BY
**GEORGE
HALTZKA**



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B.B. Wolfe
Gets Schooled

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PREVIEW

B.B. Wolfe Gets Schooled

By George Halitzka

Cast of Characters

B.B. WOLFE, *a fifth grade lupine bully*
PAPA WOLFE, *B.B.'s father*
MAMA WOLFE, *B.B.'s mother*
MS. FAHREE, *the no-nonsense principal of Fairy Tale Academy*
MS. GAHDMOTHER, *the assistant principal*
D.J. WOLFE, *B.B.'s friend and partner-in-crime*
K.C. WOLFE, *B.B.'s friend and partner-in-crime*
R.J. WOLFE, *B.B.'s friend and partner-in-crime*
RAPUNZEL, *an intelligent girl with long hair*
KATELYN, *her mother, a businesswoman*
MR. PRINCE, *Rapunzel's teacher*
COWORKER, *to Katelyn*
HANSEL, *a boy who lives in poverty*
GRETEL, *Hansel's cousin*
JENNIFER, *Hansel's mother, who has a chronic illness*
MRS. WITCH, *who runs the Candy Haus Food Pantry*
LITTLE RED, *a girl coping with the pain of parental neglect*
GRANNY, *Little Red's grandmother*
RENEE WOODCUTTER, *Little Red's teenage aunt*
TALIA WOODCUTTER, *Renee's twin sister*

Setting

Once upon a time in B.B. Wolfe's bedroom

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B.B. Wolfe Gets Schooled

(Tender music. B.B. WOLFE, age six, is lying in bed under the covers, holding a teddy bear. PAPA WOLFE is sitting on the edge of the bed, reading aloud from a book entitled Goldiwolf and the Three Humans.)

PAPA: . . . First, Goldiwolf sat in Papa Human's chair, but it was too hard. Then she sat in Mama Human's chair, but it was too soft. Finally, she tried Baby Human's chair, and it was Just Right.

B.B.: Papa? *(PAPA looks up.)* What if . . .

PAPA: B.B.?

B.B.: What if . . . *you're* not Just Right?

(PAPA sets the book aside and gives B.B. a penetrating look.)

PAPA: Is this about the call I got from your teacher?

B.B. (quickly): Little Red Riding Hood started it! *(PAPA gives B.B. another hard look.)* Ms. Swinehart read us *Goldiwolf* today. And *The Three Little Pigs*. Then Little Red said wolves are *too mean* 'cause they eat pigs, so she won't play with me anymore!

PAPA: I'll bet she also said pigs are *too nice* because they get eaten. She'll only play with humans because they're *Just Right*.

B.B.: How did you know?

PAPA: Humans have been saying it since I was a cub.

B.B.: Then you know why . . . *(realizing she's about to admit her sins)* . . . Nothing.

PAPA: Ms. Swinehart said you bit Little Red. Is that true? *(Ashamed, B.B. looks away from PAPA and nods.)* Bethany Blair Wolfe, it's never okay to use your teeth on someone who didn't touch you. Wolves get sent to the zoo for biting – ask your Grandpa Bigbahd!

B.B. (frustrated): Then what can I do when kids say I'm not Just Right?

PAPA: You can tell your Papa about it. 'Cause you know what? *(B.B.*

looks up at PAPA.) You're my very own cub. And no matter what, I think you're Just Right.

B.B.: Even if I bite somebody?

PAPA: Will you do your best to stop?

(A short pause, then B.B. nods.)

B.B.: Can I always tell you mean stuff that kids say?

PAPA: Cross my heart.

B.B.: And will you always think I'm just right?

PAPA: For as long as wolves howl at the moon. Which means . . .

B.B.: Always.

(B.B. and PAPA howl softly together. They stand and exit. Sudden change to energetic but ominous music. A group of STUDENTS enter and stand across the front of the stage to address the audience. When they speak, they're talking to the school principal. Meanwhile, B.B. WOLFE, now transformed into a fifth grader, enters and sits on the bed. She goes through a short bedtime routine, finally crawling under the covers holding her teddy bear.)

LITTLE RED: Did you know we were *friends* in kindergarten? A lot can change in five years.

HANSEL: I never do anything to her, but every time she sees me –

RAPUNZEL: – B.B. Wolfe –

GRETEL *(with a hand on HANSEL'S shoulder):* – That wolf and her friends won't leave my cousin alone!

RAPUNZEL: Yesterday I won the math trophy. For the highest grade in my class.

GRETEL: Hansel and his mom . . . well . . .

HANSEL: We're poor, okay?

LITTLE RED: I'm *glad* I live with Granny. My parents are kinda . . . bad news.

RAPUNZEL: But as soon as Mr. Prince left the room, B.B. took my math trophy! She wouldn't give it back, even when—

LITTLE RED: Mom and Dad love me; they just don't know how to show it. That's what my counselor says. But when B.B. Wolfe gets started . . . I think, "I must've done something really bad to make them leave."

GRETEL: B.B. and her friends follow us after school sometimes. It's scary.

HANSEL: Maybe for you. I'm brave.

(GRETEL rolls her eyes.)

RAPUNZEL: I did what Mr. Prince said. About bullies. I ignored the wolves, and it *kinda* worked: I got the trophy back.

HANSEL *(studying the floor)*: I guess B.B.'s never been poor. If she was, she'd stop saying I live under a bridge.

LITTLE RED: The wolf said . . . she actually said, "Your Mommy and Daddy don't care about you. That's why you hafta live with Granny."

GRETEL: Me and Hansel walked away from the bullies, just like you taught us. But they started following us!

RAPUNZEL: I told Mr. Prince what happened and B.B. got in trouble. But when I got off the bus after school . . . *(short pause)* I don't wanna talk about that part.

LITTLE RED: I've never had a lot of friends. But now, *nobody* hangs out with me. They're afraid the wolf will bully them, too.

GRETEL: We finally decided to tell you, Ms. Fahree.

RAPUNZEL: 'Cause you're the principal. And I hope you send *somebody* to the zoo.

LITTLE RED: I'm just trying to stay safe.

HANSEL: So please—

RAPUNZEL: Please—

LITTLE RED: *Pretty* please?

RAPUNZEL, HANSEL, GRETTEL, and LITTLE RED: DO SOMETHING ABOUT THAT WOLF!

(The STUDENTS exit. B.B. is left alone and asleep in her bed. MS. FAHREE and MS. GAHDMOTHER magically appear from offstage with a wave of their magic wands. MS. FAHREE speaks softly at first.)

FAHREE: B.B.? Wake up, sleepyhead . . . *(B.B. rolls over and mumbles in her sleep.)* B.B., it's Ms. Fahree . . .

B.B. *(muttering in her sleep):* What big teeth you have . . .

GAHDMOTHER: You can't sleep all day, young wolf.

B.B. *(more somnolent muttering):* I'll huff and puff and blow your house down . . .

(FAHREE and GAHDMOTHER trade a look, then shout in unison –)

FAHREE and GAHDMOTHER: BETHANY BLAIR WOLFE!

(B.B. abruptly sits up, still clutching her teddy bear. She sees MS. FAHREE and MS. GAHDMOTHER standing at opposite ends of her bed. B.B. yells aloud.)

B.B.: Ms. Fahree? Ms. Gahdmother? How'd you – my room –?

FAHREE: Um, *magic?* You think my name's "Fahree" for nothin'?

(B.B. suddenly realizes she's holding her teddy bear. She hastily tosses it under the covers.)

B.B.: You didn't see anything . . . did you?

GAHDMOTHER: We saw no teddy bear.

(A short pause. B.B. decides to pretend nothing happened.)

B.B.: I shouldn't hafta see the principal when I'm suspended! *(to GAHDMOTHER)* Or the assistant principal!

FAHREE: We wanted a day off from you too. But since we can't reach your mother –

B.B. *(rolling her eyes):* She's at work, *duh.*

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GAHDMOTHER: – We’re here to talk to Dad.

B.B. (*staring at the floor sullenly*): I dunno where he is.

FAHREE (*gently*): B.B.? Are there . . . problems at home? (*B.B. crosses her arms and looks away, stonewalling. MS. FAHREE sighs.*) All right, B.B. All right.

GAHDMOTHER: Where’s your suspension homework?

B.B.: I shouldn’t *be* suspended! Not my fault Hansel’s too poor to pay attention.

GAHDMOTHER: Don’t start this again, young wolf –

B.B.: And Little Red! Back in kindergarten, she told me –

GAHDMOTHER: Let me get this straight: It’s okay to pick on Little Red in fifth grade for hurting your feelings when you were *five*. And it’s *Hansel’s* fault if you bully him?

B.B.: I didn’t say –

GAHDMOTHER: Oh, yes you did. So if you think you don’t deserve to be suspended –

B.B. (*covering her ears*): La, la, la, not listening . . .

GAHDMOTHER: *Excuse me?*

B.B. (*singsong*): I can’t *heeeaaaar* you . . .

FAHREE: Unless you want us to magically appear to your mother *right now* –

B.B. (*abruptly uncovering her ears*): I heard *that*.

FAHREE: – You’re going to march out of this bedroom, get your suspension homework, and start on it *immediately*. Am I understood, young wolf?

(*B.B. stubbornly crosses her arms and shakes her head vigorously . . . until B.B. sees FAHREE pointing her magic wand at B.B. threateningly.*)

B.B.: *Fine*. Whatever.

(B.B. exits, muttering under her breath.)

FAHREE *(to GAHDMOTHER)*: That wolf gives me more gray hairs . . .

GAHDMOTHER: Something has to change before she lands in the zoo!

FAHREE: Is it time to use our power?

GAHDMOTHER: It's the only way.

FAHREE *(to the audience)*: What do you think? Should we use magic to teach B.B. a lesson? *(Allow the AUDIENCE to respond.)* All right, let's— *(She looks off to see B.B. returning, then speaks to the AUDIENCE.)* Here she comes! Don't. Say. Anything.

(With a wave of their wands, FAHREE and GAHDMOTHER vanish into the wings.)

B.B. *(entering with a textbook)*: Okay, I got the homework. Are you . . . *(seeing the empty room)* Where'd they go? *(a devious grin appears on her face)* When the Fahree's away, the wolf will play!

(After flinging the book aside, B.B. dashes offstage howling with delight. Energetic transition music. FAHREE and GAHDMOTHER reappear, now sitting behind a table on the opposite side of the stage from B.B.'s bedroom. FAHREE and GAHDMOTHER both have spoons in their hands, and there are three bowls sitting in front of them. They each taste each bowl in turn.)

FAHREE *(tasting the first bowl and making a face)*: Too cold.

GAHDMOTHER *(tasting the second bowl and making a face)*: Too hot.

FAHREE *(tasting the third bowl and smiling)*: Mmm . . . Just Right! *(FAHREE and GAHDMOTHER set down their spoons and speak to the AUDIENCE. Meanwhile, RAPUNZEL, HANSEL, GRETEL, and LITTLE RED appear onstage. They're hanging out and enjoying each other's company.)* Once upon a time there was a school filled with students who were Just Right. They were smart, kind, hard-working, and even good-looking.

(D.J., K.C., and R.J. enter. They begin pushing and insulting the other STUDENTS.)

GAHDMOTHER: But then some bullies started comparing the students to each other.

D.J.: You're uglier than a Giant on a beanstalk.

R.J.: Dumber than a Troll under the bridge.

K.C.: Fatter than a Pig in a straw house.

(The STUDENTS look down, disheartened. The BULLIES laugh and trade fist bumps, then exit.)

GAHDMOTHER: Before long, the students didn't believe they were Just Right anymore.

FAHREE *(to the AUDIENCE):* Since you're in B.B.'s class, I'm sure that's happened to you. You thought you were Just Right . . . until a bully made you feel All Wrong. *(MRS. WITCH and GRANNY enter. They pantomime encouraging RAPUNZEL, LITTLE RED, HANSEL, and GRETEL.)* But remember, *you* are the only version of *you*. You're not a copy of some other kid; you're a one-of-a-kind original!

MRS. WITCH: Who cares what bullies think?

GRANNY: *I* think you're Just Right.

FAHREE: If you can believe that, you're on the way to living Happily Ever After.

(RAPUNZEL, HANSEL, GRETEL, and LITTLE RED share a hug with GRANNY and MRS. WITCH, then exit.)

GAHDMOTHER: Still, we understand bullying hurts. That's why we're going to teach B.B. Wolfe a lesson – and we need your help with the magic to make it work.

FAHREE: On the count of three, I want you to say "B.B. Wolfe." One . . . two . . . three!

FAHREE, GAHDMOTHER, and AUDIENCE: B.B. WOLFE!

(FAHREE and GAHDMOTHER wave their magic wands, then nod to each other and exit. From offstage, B.B. narrates the opening lines of her favorite video game.)

B.B.: When undead pigs try to take over the world, only one wolf can save the day in *Zombie Pig Destroyer 3!*

(RAPUNZEL runs onstage and strikes a pose with a video game controller. In

addition to her frilly pink shirt, blouse, and stocking cap, she's wearing a wolf tail and fuzzy paws. B.B. has now been transformed into RAPUNZEL. RAPUNZEL speaks to the audience.)

RAPUNZEL: Hey, how'd my room turn pink? (*picking up a mirror and looking into it*) And who put a picture of Rapunzel in here? (*RAPUNZEL lowers the frame, then does a double-take. She lifts the mirror again . . . looks into it . . . and drops the mirror as she screams.*) I'm RAPUNZEL! (*noticing that she still has furry paws and a tail*) But I still have . . . (*to the audience*) You do see I have a tail, right? (*to herself*) What am I—half Rapunzel, half wolf? B.B., you're dreaming. Wake up! (*RAPUNZEL slaps her own cheek, then immediately howls from the pain.*) Okay, not dreaming. (*pacing the floor*) But I live in a fairy tale, which means . . . *magic!* Yeah, like from a witch, the one with the candy house . . . how do you reverse magic?

(KATELYN calls from offstage.)

KATELYN: Honey?

RAPUNZEL (*startled*): Who's that?

KATELYN: Honey? Are you upstairs?

RAPUNZEL (*looking offstage and freaking out*): She's coming! I need protection . . .

(RAPUNZEL looks around and spots the teddy bear. She holds it at the ready like a club as KATELYN, Rapunzel's mother, enters.)

KATELYN: I just got your teacher's voicemail; are you okay?

(KATELYN enters the room looking down at her phone. RAPUNZEL is about to hit her on the head with the bear when KATELYN looks up. RAPUNZEL quickly hides the bear behind her back.)

KATELYN: There you are! Why didn't you answer me?

RAPUNZEL (*to the AUDIENCE, a dawning realization*): If I'm Rapunzel, this must be her mom!

KATELYN: You don't have to be brave; Mr. Prince told me what happened yesterday with the wolves. Do you feel up to going to school? Do you need to stay in your tower?

RAPUNZEL (*defensively*): It's no big deal; B.B. was just bein' funny.

KATELYN: Why would you stand up for that creature? And why are you wearing a hat? Rapunzel, let down your long hair!

(KATELYN reaches out her hand towards RAPUNZEL'S hair, but RAPUNZEL draws back and threatens KATELYN with the bear.)

RAPUNZEL: Leave me alone! *(KATELYN is taken aback.)* The hat's because . . . I don't remember.

KATELYN: Oh, no — there's brain damage. We'll call Dr. Merlin —

RAPUNZEL: NO! You *can't*, because I'm not — STOP! *(KATELYN suddenly freezes. RAPUNZEL waves a hand in front of her face and realizes that KATELYN isn't moving. RAPUNZEL speaks to the AUDIENCE.)* If she sends me to the doctor, he'll figure out I'm a wolf. Then I'll get blamed for the magic that turned me into Rapunzel, and it's straight to the zoo! I gotta convince this lady I'm her kid.

(RAPUNZEL looks at KATELYN, puzzled. She's not quite sure how to undo the freeze. She finally tries clapping her paws together twice. KATELYN abruptly unfreezes.)

KATELYN: I'm calling Dr. Merlin right now.

RAPUNZEL: No! I remember everything . . . "Mom."

KATELYN *(suspiciously):* Then tell Mommy how the bullying started.

RAPUNZEL: It's 'cause I think I'm *sooo* smart. I got this lame trophy —

KATELYN: Hold on, young lady. Remember last year when your grades dropped, and we had our conference with Ms. Fahree?

RAPUNZEL: . . . I guess?

KATELYN: Kids were making fun of you, and you thought if you quit trying they'd leave you alone. What did you promise me?

RAPUNZEL *(a guess):* That I . . . wouldn't put myself down anymore?

KATELYN *(nodding):* A trophy for the highest math score in fifth grade is not "lame"!

RAPUNZEL: Stop! *(KATELYN freezes. RAPUNZEL speaks guiltily to the AUDIENCE.)* I didn't know Rapunzel quit trying. She always seems so *confident*, that's why we . . . it's okay to pick on somebody when they're

tough enough to take it, right? *(responding to the AUDIENCE'S reaction)*
Who asked you?

(RAPUNZEL claps her hands twice. KATELYN unfreezes.)

KATELYN: Let me hear you say it, Rapunzel Ann. *(RAPUNZEL looks at her quizzically.)* "My math trophy isn't lame. It's wonderful!"

RAPUNZEL: "My trophy's wonderful"?

KATELYN: Now tell me what that wolf did.

(RAPUNZEL sighs. Pause. D.J., K.C., and R.J. enter and form a triangle around RAPUNZEL. RAPUNZEL can see and respond to the WOLVES, who are a part of her memories. KATELYN cannot see the WOLVES and remains focused on RAPUNZEL.)

RAPUNZEL: Mr. Prince had to go to the office. That's when B.B. Wolfe and her friends took my trophy.

D.J. *(snatching a trophy from the bedside table):* You only get a trophy 'cause you're the teacher's pet.

K.C.: You think you're *sooo* smart, but nobody likes showoffs.

KATELYN: I hope you ignored them.

RAPUNZEL: I tried. I took out my math work, but one of B.B.'s friends stole the book. Then she stood on it so I couldn't get it back.

(RAPUNZEL takes out her math book, but R.J. yanks it out of her hands.)

R.J.: Wittle nerd's too wimpy to fight, so she's gonna *study*. Only thing she's good at.

RAPUNZEL *(to KATELYN):* That's not true; I'm good at lots of things!

KATELYN: Of course you are!

RAPUNZEL: Like math, and drawing, and . . . braiding my hair. That's silly –

KATELYN: No, it isn't. "Rapunzel, let down your long hair!" It's your best feature.

RAPUNZEL: "Please give my book back." I said it like that, really nice.

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But the wolves laughed.

D.J.: Teacher ain't here, geekazoid.

R.J.: You want the book back? Make me.

KATELYN: Those wolves are wild animals!

(The WOLVES toss RAPUNZEL'S trophy to each other, playing Keep-Away. RAPUNZEL chases after it, but the WOLVES always hold it out of reach.)

RAPUNZEL: Then a wolf throws my math trophy to one of her friends. I run after it, but before I can get there, it's in the air again. They keep throwing it, over and over. I know I can't cry or they'll get even meaner, but I feel so *helpless*. I'm running in circles while they laugh . . . until finally, Mr. Prince comes back.

(MR. PRINCE enters. He sternly places his hands on his hips and glares at the WOLVES.)

KATELYN: Thank God!

MR. PRINCE: What are you wolves doing?

RAPUNZEL: Now that *he's* here, they give everything back.

D.J.: We were just messin' around, Mr. Prince.

K.C.: Here's your lame trophy.

(K.C. throws the trophy to RAPUNZEL. MR. PRINCE pantomimes reprimanding the WOLVES, then exits.)

KATELYN: I hope Mr. Prince punished them.

RAPUNZEL *(shaking her head)*: I wish he didn't. 'Cause after school . . . I don't wanna talk about that part.

KATELYN: Rapunzel Ann Towery, talk to your mother.

RAPUNZEL *(after a heavy sigh)*: The wolves got off the bus at my stop. When it drove away —

KATELYN: What? Mr. Prince didn't tell me —

(K.C. and R.J. grab RAPUNZEL'S arms and hold her. D.J. stands in front of

RAPUNZEL and taunts her.)

RAPUNZEL: – They grabbed my arms. I tried to get away, but they were too strong. And I tried to scream, but they covered my mouth. Then one of them said –

D.J.: This is what you get for bein’ a tattletale!

RAPUNZEL: LEAVE!

(The WOLVES drop character, lower their heads, and exit.)

KATELYN: What did they do?

RAPUNZEL: One wolf took scissors out of her backpack. And then . . .
(RAPUNZEL slowly takes off her hat to reveal her hair. Maybe she has one long pigtail and one cut jaggedly short. Maybe she just has a very short haircut. Either way, it should be apparent that something is terribly wrong. KATELYN’S hand involuntarily goes to her mouth in an expression of grief.)
They said, “Rapunzel, let down your long hair!”

KATELYN: Oh, honey . . .

(A long silence. RAPUNZEL sobs silently. KATELYN’s phone pings. She reluctantly checks the message.)

COWORKER *(voicing a text message from offstage):* “Katelyn, your session starts at nine. Harrison looks like he’s gonna fire somebody.”

KATELYN: It can’t be nine . . . *(She checks the time, then texts back.)*
Ohno . . . “On my way.” Honey, Mommy has to go back to work . . .

RAPUNZEL: Okay.

KATELYN: I’m so sorry –

RAPUNZEL: It’s okay.

KATELYN: I’ll call as soon as I can, and I’ll tell Daddy what happened . . . *(wrapping her arms around RAPUNZEL)* Extra hugs!

RAPUNZEL: Okay, Mommy . . .

KATELYN: I love you, sweetheart! I love you so much!

(KATELYN blows a kiss, then rushes out of the room. RAPUNZEL exits in

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the opposite direction, trying to dry her tears. B.B. enters as she exits.)

B.B.: Please tell me I'm a wolf again . . . *(She looks in the mirror with fear and trembling. When she sees her appearance, she sighs with relief. Then she looks out at the AUDIENCE.)* Why're you lookin' at me like that? Me and the Wolfpack, we didn't know Rapunzel would . . . *(pacing back and forth)* She's got a nice *house*, and parents who both *live* with her, and she always gets good *grades*. How could we know she'd get hurt? I gotta talk to the Wolfpack. *(B.B. whips out her phone and touches a button.)* C'mon, pick up . . .

(The WOLFPACK enters and sprawls across chairs surrounding the table where Ms. Fahree and Ms. Gahdmother appeared earlier. The phone rings a couple of times before K.C. finally answers on speaker phone.)

K.C.: 'Sup, B.B.?

B.B.: Boy, am I glad to hear your voice! *(a momentary pause)* It is you, right? K.C.? R.J.?

D.J.: And D.J. We're the only Wolfpack I know.

(The WOLVES howl in unison and exchange a special handshake.)

B.B.: Has anything . . . *weird* happened to you guys today?

D.J.: Other than bein' suspended?

B.B.: Uh-huh. *(The WOLVES look at each other and shake their heads.)* Question . . . just for pretend. Say you found out you hurt somebody's feelings.

R.J.: Then she can get over herself.

B.B.: No, hurt them *bad*. Like, so bad she can't go to school?

D.J.: Well, Ms. Fahree hurt *my* feelings when she suspended me . . .

K.C.: . . . And now I can't go to school.

(The WOLVES laugh and trade fist bumps – er, paw bumps.)

B.B.: I'm not messin' around! What should you do?

R.J.: Remember the Wolfpack motto: "Bite 'em before they bite you."

B.B.: That's your advice? Go hurt people?

K.C.: No, go protect yourself!

R.J.: You let somebody get too close, he'll bite you in the end.

D.J.: Remember what happened with your dad? (*K.C. elbows D.J.*)
What?

B.B.: I . . . I gotta go.

K.C.: B.B., she didn't mean—

B.B.: It's cool, I just . . . gotta go.

(*B.B. hangs up and sets down her phone, then speaks to the audience. The other WOLVES exit.*)

B.B.: Whatta you do when . . . you didn't mean to, exactly . . . but you made somebody hurt. Like, *bad*. How can I show Rapunzel I'm sorry? (*B.B. asks a few people from the AUDIENCE to share their thoughts. She settles on the idea of an apology.*) Yeah, an apology! I want all of you at the same time to say "the wolf is sorry." Annd . . . go. (*B.B. is already shaking her head as the audience responds.*) No, I gotta do it myself . . . I'll text Rapunzel. I don't *think* I'm her anymore. (*tapping out an apology on her phone*) "Rapunzel, I'm really sorry the Wolfpack took your trophy and cut your hair. I know we hurt you. Please forgive me." (*B.B. hits send.*) I bet she doesn't get many apologies. Maybe . . . I don't know, we could be friends. And she could teach me how to be smarter at math. 'Cause maybe . . . I could be a different kinda wolf.

(*A text message comes in.*)

RAPUNZEL (*offstage*): "Never text me again, you nasty creature."

B.B. (*flinging down her phone*): Oh, yeah? I wasn't sorry anyway. I'm glad I cut your hair! R.J. was right: bite 'em before they bite you. (*Pause.*) I need lunch. Hey . . . I ate *people*-food last night! Maybe that triggered the magic. So if I eat *wolf*-food, I won't turn into anybody else. (*looking offstage hungrily*) Hope Mom put some raw meat in the freezer.

(*B.B. howls as she exits. Energetic music. FAHREE and GAHDMOTHER appear again behind the table on the other side of the stage.*)

FAHREE: Once upon a time there was a girl named Rapunzel who was

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Just Right. (*RAPUNZEL enters happily. However, the WOLVES enter waving a pair of scissors in front of her tauntingly. She buries her head in her hands.*) Unfortunately, bullies were jealous of her good grades. They did some cruel things . . . and before long, Rapunzel didn't feel Just Right anymore.

(*MRS. WITCH and GRANNY enter. They stand between RAPUNZEL and the BULLIES.*)

GAHDMOTHER: But what if Rapunzel's story had a different ending? Suppose someone came to help.

MRS. WITCH: Rapunzel's my friend. You need to stop.

(*The WOLVES look at each other, then turn their backs and exit. RAPUNZEL turns to her protectors in gratitude.*)

GAHDMOTHER: When the bullies saw that Rapunzel had support, there's a good chance they would've left her alone.

GRANNY: Come on: let's go live Happily Ever After!

(*RAPUNZEL, MRS. WITCH, and GRANNY exit.*)

FAHREE: If you see a bully coming after someone, don't let her get away with it! Step in and tell that bully to stop. You might just give someone a happy ending.

GAHDMOTHER: Now, it's time for us to turn B.B. Wolfe into someone else she's bullied so she can learn her lesson.

FAHREE: On the count of three, say her name to help with the magic. One . . . two . . . three!

FAHREE, GAHDMOTHER, and AUDIENCE: B.B. WOLFE!

(*FAHREE and GAHDMOTHER exit.*)

B.B. (from offstage): Why do humans cook food? Sucks all the flavor out of it. Raw wings are so good . . .

(*HANSEL enters, dressed in suspenders and knickers along with a wolf tail and wolf paws. He also wears large glasses and is munching on chicken wings.*)

HANSEL: Did it happen *again*? (*He looks down at his outfit and*

immediately moans.) Ughhh . . . I'm in "Hansel and Gretel"! Hansel's poor. Like, so poor he wears the same clothes to school every day. And he's weird! (*pointing to an adult in the AUDIENCE*) These glasses are so thick I can see your nose hair. (*HANSEL'S phone dings with a message. He looks down to see a text from his cousin Gretel.*) Text from . . . Cousin Gretel?

GRETEL (*offstage*): "Did you show Ms. Fahree the videos?"

HANSEL (*texting back*): "What videos?"

GRETEL (*offstage*): "You know what videos. Unless you show Ms. Fahree, the Wolfpack will keep bullying you."

HANSEL (*to the AUDIENCE*): If you were Hansel and you were hiding videos, where would they be? (*HANSEL allows the audience to reply, then responds to their suggestions by saying –*) Yeah, his phone! (*HANSEL taps an icon on his phone and finds the videos.*) "Video 1: Wolfpack Attack"? That must be what the other wolves did when I was absent Friday. I'll destroy the evidence for 'em. (*HANSEL is about to hit the delete button, but thinks better of it.*) Nah, I better watch it first. If this video's what I think it is, Ms. Fahree's gonna kill 'em.

(HANSEL presses the play button. GRETEL appears on one side of the stage holding a video camera. She and HANSEL will now reenact the video stored on Hansel's phone that was recorded earlier.)

GRETEL: Hansel, come on! I'll hide the camera . . . they're almost here!

HANSEL: But if they notice we're recording –

GRETEL: This is *evidence*, Hansel. Ms. Fahree never sees when you get bullied.

(HANSEL reluctantly walks out to face the Wolfpack. Gretel hides. The WOLVES approach HANSEL, talking and joking ad lib.)

D.J.: Hey, look – it's our favorite little German boy!

(D.J. grabs one of HANSEL'S suspenders and lets it snap back.)

R.J.: I wanna play, too!

(R.J. reaches towards HANSEL'S suspenders, but HANSEL backs away.)

HANSEL: Why do you always pick on me?

K.C. (*pretending to ponder the question*): I guess . . . 'cause you're there?

D.J.: And 'cause you're so ugly, the monsters under the bed are scared of *you*?

R.J.: And 'cause your mom's too lazy to get a job, so you live under a bridge?

HANSEL: We don't live . . . leave my mom out of it!

K.C.: Whattaya think? Should we leave Hansel's mom alone?

(*D.J. and R.J. pretend to think for a moment.*)

D.J. and R.J.: Nahhh!

(*They laugh.*)

HANSEL: At least I don't hafta bully people to feel important.

K.C. (*sarcastically*): Ooh, that was a good one.

HANSEL: Leave me alone!

D.J. (*getting in his face*): Or what?

HANSEL (*terrified, but standing his ground*): Or . . . I'm gonna tell.

R.J.: You say one word to Ms. Fahree — *one word* — and we'll beat you up at recess. (*taking a threatening step towards HANSEL*) Or maybe now!

(*HANSEL steps backward, startled by R.J.'s sudden move. The WOLVES laugh at him.*)

K.C.: And if you tell Ms. Fahree we're bullies, we'll tell her you and your cousin sneak into the forest after school.

HANSEL (*a desperate lie*): We . . . we do not!

K.C.: We've *seen* you! And once they're in the forest, I bet they're the ones who paint graffiti on the troll bridge.

R.J. (*under her breath*): Didn't we do that?

K.C. (*elbowing R.J.*): You tell on us, we tell on you.

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(D.J. shoves HANSEL as the WOLVES walk away. HANSEL walks back to where GRETEL is hiding with the camera.)

HANSEL: Did you get it all?

GRETEL *(nodding)*: Now we need a video showing where we go in the forest. In case they talk to Ms. Fahree.

HANSEL *(nervously)*: Maybe we shouldn't go today.

GRETEL: Then what're you gonna do for dinner?

(HANSEL shrugs hopelessly. End of video reenactment. HANSEL returns to the other side of the stage where he left his phone.)

HANSEL: That sneaky little . . . can't believe Gretel recorded my friends! When I get my paws on her . . . *(justifying himself to the audience)* She hid a camera when the Wolfpack didn't do *anything!* I mean, not *much* of anything. Hansel's so annoying it's like he's asking to get picked on. It's okay to make fun of somebody annoying until they leave you alone, am I right? *(responding the AUDIENCE)* Yeah? Next time I want your opinion, I'll give it to you! Forget it. I wanna see what happens after Hansel and Gretel sneak through the forest.

(HANSEL taps his phone screen. Once again, he joins GRETEL to reenact the video.)

GRETEL: Glad the wolves left before we got here.

HANSEL: Yeah, think what they'd say if they knew . . .

(MRS. WITCH enters. She greets HANSEL and GRETEL.)

MRS. WITCH: Hansel! Gretel!

HANSEL: Do you have food for us?

GRETEL *(under her breath)*: Hansel, that's rude.

HANSEL: The fridge is empty!

MRS. WITCH: We'll fill it up for you.

HANSEL: And you better have candy!

GRETEL: Hansel!

MRS. WITCH: Is this the Candy Haus Food Pantry or what? How's your mom?

HANSEL (*hanging his head*): She has to use a wheelchair now.

MRS. WITCH: I'm sorry, honey. Multiple Sclerosis is a hard thing . . . especially when she's so young. (*HANSEL shrugs with downcast eyes.*) Well, what are you waiting for? Let's get some food!

HANSEL: And candy!

MRS. WITCH: Naturally.

(*GRETEL stops HANSEL before he can follow MRS. WITCH any further.*)

GRETEL: Remember: your mom gets to eat first.

(*HANSEL nods, then takes a bag of food from MRS. WITCH. As tender music plays, GRANNY pushes JENNIFER onstage in a wheelchair. GRANNY exits. HANSEL and GRETEL approach JENNIFER, Hansel's mother, who is dozing. HANSEL gently wakes her and hands her an apple from the bag of food he received from Mrs. Witch. JENNIFER smiles gratefully. HANSEL selects an apple as well, then gives JENNIFER a big hug. He wheels her offstage, holding her hand tightly; GRETEL walks beside them. B.B. reenters.*)

B.B.: Please tell me I'm a wolf . . . being human is *creepy!* (*She crosses her fingers on both paws and shuts her eyes as she picks up the mirror. When she dares to open them, she sighs with relief.*) Look . . . I know the thing with Hansel makes the Wolfpack look bad. But how were they supposed to know? We only talk about people's moms to be *funny*. Not like Hansel *told 'em* his mom is sick. Or that she's only poor 'cause it's hard to get a job in a wheelchair. The Wolfpack makes fun of people who *deserve* it, not the ones . . . how were they supposed to know? (*B.B.'s phone rings; she checks the caller ID.*) Wolfpack *again?* Are you guys that bored? (*answering the call*) Hello?

K.C.: We're still bored. When school gets out, you wanna follow Hansel and Gretel?

D.J.: He's *such* an easy target.

B.B.: Quit!

D.J.: I'm providing a public service: motivating geeks to improve their appearance.

K.C.: You're such a good citizen.

(The WOLVES laugh.)

B.B.: Just . . . leave Hansel alone. I found out, okay?

R.J.: You mean . . . where he goes in the forest? Is it someplace weird?

B.B.: Remember second grade, when my mom couldn't find a job? *(The WOLVES shrug.)* And we didn't have money, so she went to the Candy Haus Food Pantry to get groceries from Mrs. Witch?

R.J.: Were you as poor as Hansel, livin' under a bridge?

B.B.: That's not funny.

R.J.: It is if you have a sense of humor . . .

B.B.: Just . . . quit. You don't know what's goin' on with Hansel.

R.J.: Like you do?

B.B.: Don't laugh at people for bein' poor!

R.J.: I'll laugh at whoever I want. If you don't like my jokes, maybe I don't like *you*.

K.C.: Stop, you two.

B.B.: Maybe I don't talk to people who don't like me.

R.J.: So?

K.C.: B.B. . . . R.J. . . .

R.J.: Later.

(R.J. hangs up the call. The WOLVES exit. B.B. speaks to the audience.)

B.B.: It's no joke when somebody doesn't have food. Or when his mom's in a wheelchair. When *my* mom couldn't find a job . . . well, that's the only time I saw her cry. 'Cause she didn't have money to feed her cubs. The other wolves were jerks. If I was there . . . *(She shrugs. Clearly, she would have joined right in the bullying if she'd been present. She speaks aloud to herself.)* How can I help Hansel? *(B.B. ponders this for a moment, then hits on an idea and speaks to the AUDIENCE.)* I'll be extra

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nice to Hansel! I want everybody to call out kind stuff I can say, so Hansel knows I wanna be friends. Annnd . . . go. *(B.B. listens carefully to the audience for a few seconds, then composes a message to HANSEL on her phone based on their suggestions.)* Got it: "It's okay not to have a lot of money, Hansel. You're still a great guy. Maybe we can hang out sometime." *(B.B. hits send, but then immediately looks discouraged.)* He's probably like Rapunzel – he won't believe it. Y'know, that I'm trying to change? I don't think *anybody's* gonna believe it.

(A text message arrives.)

HANSEL *(offstage)*: "Is this a trick? Leave me alone."

B.B.: I tell the Wolfpack to back off, and this is the thanks I get? I'm done stickin' up for you! *(typing on her phone)* "Don't mess with me, Freakazoid. Not my fault your mom's in a wheelchair." Should I hit send? *(Based on the audience's response, B.B. looks unsure. She finally flings down her phone.)* You're right. I've been a bully for so long, nobody's gonna believe I'm nice. But why do I get like this? I'm tired of bein' ferocious; I don't wanna hurt people . . . it's like I can't help it.

(B.B. exits, discouraged. Energetic music. FAHREE and GAHDFATHER appear at the table. HANSEL enters on the other side of the stage.)

FAHREE: Once upon a time there was a boy named Hansel who was Just Right.

(The WOLVES enter. K.C. points and laughs at HANSEL. He tries to walk away, but R.J. and D.J. are waiting behind him. They scare him with menacing gestures. Feeling trapped, HANSEL sinks to the floor and puts his head down. The BULLIES exit.)

GAHDMOTHER: But then some bullies started making fun of him for not having much money.

FAHREE: Hansel knew that being poor wasn't his fault, but the bullies wouldn't quit. Eventually, Hansel stopped feeling Just Right. He decided he must be All Wrong.

(MRS. WITCH and GRANNY enter. They help HANSEL to his feet as MRS. WITCH hands him a snack.)

GAHDMOTHER: But what if he found some real friends?

GRANNY: I don't care how much money you have, Hansel. We're

cool.

FAHREE: What if someone took the time to encourage him?

MRS. WITCH: Don't listen to bullies. They don't go to the food pantry every week for their moms.

GAHDMOTHER: After a while, Hansel might discover that he didn't care what the bullies thought! Then he could live happily ever after.

FAHREE: If you know someone who's being bullied, why not make friends with him?

GRANNY (*to HANSEL*): You're Just Right, no matter what the wolves say.

FAHREE: Remember: the best cure for cruelty is *kindness*.

(HANSEL, GRANNY, and MRS. WITCH exit together.)

GAHDMOTHER: B.B. Wolfe's starting to learn her lesson, but she's not there yet. She needs to turn into one more person.

FAHREE: On the count of three, say her name to make the magic work. One . . . two . . . three!

FAHREE, GAHDMOTHER, and AUDIENCE: B.B. WOLFE!

(FAHREE and GAHDMOTHER vanish with a wave of their wands.)

B.B. (*from offstage*): Please let me be me again . . . please let me be me again . . .

(LITTLE RED enters with her eyes squeezed shut and her fingers crossed, afraid to discover her new identity. She has short black hair with a red bow in it, a black t-shirt, and torn jeans. Over it all she wears a red hooded cape.)

LITTLE RED Who am I this time? (*She looks down at her outfit.*) Arrrgggh . . . anybody but her! Little Red Riding Hood's the weirdest kid in the school! She has funky hair; she listens to creepy music; she doesn't even *talk* to people . . . can't I be somebody else? (*A knock at the door.*) I better pretend nobody's home!

(LITTLE RED dives under the covers.)

TALIA (*offstage*): Red? Are you in there?

LITTLE RED (*under her breath*): Don't come in, don't come in, don't come in . . .

RENEE (*offstage*): Granny said Red's here. We better make sure she's okay.

(*A key turns in the door.*)

LITTLE RED (*still under her breath*): They can't see me, they can't see me, they can't see me . . .

(*RENEE and TALIA enter.*)

RENEE: Red, are you . . . ? (*TALIA points to the lump under the covers. RENEE walks over and pulls them back.*) What are you doing?

LITTLE RED: . . . Testing pillows?

TALIA: Granny told you we were coming, remember?

LITTLE RED: Say I'm not myself today. Who're you?

RENEE: Ha-ha, very funny. Granny's worried: she found the picture you drew in your backpack.

(*RENEE holds up a sketch of a ferocious-looking wolf drawn on notebook paper. A brief pause.*)

LITTLE RED: Looks like a wolf?

TALIA: Granny also *heard* you. Like, in your sleep? (*LITTLE RED looks at her nervously.*) You said, "The wolf's biting me," and "Granny, don't leave!"

LITTLE RED: Stop! (*TALIA and RENEE freeze. LITTLE RED speaks to the audience.*) Red's got two aunts who aren't much older than her. They're sisters; Aunt . . . Renee Woodcutter! Can't remember the other name. (*LITTLE RED is about to resume the scene when she's stopped by another thought. She makes up her mind to confide in the AUDIENCE.*) Look . . . there's *another* reason I don't wanna be Little Red – besides she's weird. Me and the Wolfpack have been mean to her for *years*. I don't wanna be Little Red 'cause . . . I don't wanna *hurt* the way she does. (*clapping twice*) B.B. Wolfe feels really guilty for bullying me and won't do it again. So we don't hafta talk about it.

(LITTLE RED dives back under the covers. RENEE pulls them off again.)

RENEE: Red, we don't know what this wolf *did*. Was she hurting you?

LITTLE RED: She just said stuff.

TALIA: Stuff that hurt you? *(LITTLE RED shrugs.)* Maybe you better start at the beginning.

(LITTLE RED takes a deep breath. During the next few lines, B.B. enters and waves enthusiastically to LITTLE RED, who waves back when it's indicated by the dialogue. At the appropriate time, B.B. pantomimes howling. LITTLE RED does a silly dance, which makes RENEE and TALIA laugh. As in Rapunzel's scene, LITTLE RED can see the characters in her memories, but RENEE and TALIA cannot.)

LITTLE RED: I guess kindergarten's the beginning, 'cause back then B.B. Wolfe was my best friend. She taught me how to howl like a wolf. I taught her how to dance like a human.

RENEE: I remember: you two played together every day. You never told me what went wrong.

(During the next line, LITTLE RED snottily turns her back on B.B., who pantomimes biting LITTLE RED'S hand.)

LITTLE RED: Well . . . we didn't *always* get along. One day I told B.B. we couldn't be friends anymore, 'cause only humans are Just Right — and she bit me! But we were friends again the next day.

RENEE *(with an encouraging nod):* Friends know how to forgive each other.

(D.J., K.C., and R.J. enter. B.B. pantomimes growling at LITTLE RED, then joins the other WOLVES with paw bumps.)

LITTLE RED: I guess . . . until second grade. That's when my Daddy moved to Texas . . . and something bad must've happened to B.B. She got *mean*, growling all the time. Instead of hanging out with me, she only spent time with wolves.

TALIA: Sounds like she took off when you needed a friend.

(The WOLVES gather in a semicircle around LITTLE RED to taunt her.)

LITTLE RED: Yeah, like when Daddy had another little girl with a

different mommy in Texas. B.B. wouldn't stop talking about it.

B.B.: Hey everybody, Little Red's Daddy is GONE!

K.C.: Don't play with her, or *your* daddy might leave too.

D.J.: Daddy must not like Red, or he wouldn't move to Texas.

(The WOLVES laugh, then turn their backs on LITTLE RED.)

LITTLE RED: I know that's not true! But it made the other kids stay away. So I couldn't make new friends.

TALIA: Was that the same time, y'know . . . your mom . . . ?

(LITTLE RED looks worried. She hesitantly tells her story to the WOLVES, but they listen uncaringly. Finally, they surround LITTLE RED to taunt her again.)

LITTLE RED *(shaking her head)*: Not exactly . . . I got worried about Mommy in *third* grade. She would stay out late, and some days she didn't wake up to take me to school, and once she didn't come home for two whole days. I told the kids at school, but it got B.B. started again.

B.B.: Your Mommy is GONE, just like Daddy!

RENEE: And that's when you went to live with Granny?

LITTLE RED *(nodding sadly)*: When Mommy couldn't take care of me anymore. *(The WOLVES make threatening gestures to LITTLE RED.)* Granny says Mommy still loves me, but it's hard to remember 'cause B.B. Wolfe never quits. I don't know why, but it's like she and the Wolfpack keep getting meaner and meaner . . . right up till last week.

TALIA: When you drew the wolf and had bad dreams?

(LITTLE RED nods to TALIA. The WOLVES stand in front of LITTLE RED to block her path.)

LITTLE RED: Thursday the Wolfpack stops me on the way to school.

R.J.: You haven't paid the Wolf Tax. Give us your lunch or we'll hunt you down.

(LITTLE RED dodges the WOLVES and runs across the stage. The WOLVES

give chase, but LITTLE RED gets back to her bedroom before they can catch her. Disappointed, they look at each other, shrug, and exit.)

LITTLE RED: Well, I run for it. We're almost to school, so I get inside before the wolves can catch me.

RENEE: Did you tell the principal?

LITTLE RED *(with a shrug):* I got away.

RENEE: But they threatened you!

(LITTLE RED shrugs again.)

TALIA: Red, when bullies don't get consequences, it's like you're *asking* them to attack you again!

LITTLE RED: They were bluffing. The Wolfpack never came after me.

RENEE: But B.B. did . . . didn't she? *(LITTLE RED looks at the floor.)* Aunt Renee's pretty smart, Red. I don't think some kid threatening a "Wolf Tax" gave you nightmares.

LITTLE RED: Stop! *(RENEE and TALIA freeze. LITTLE RED speaks to the audience.)* I don't wanna talk about this part. You're cool with that, right? *(LITTLE RED reluctantly continues with a heavy sigh when she hears the AUDIENCE'S response.)* What I did . . . I was *mad*, okay? Mad that a little girl could outrun me. Mad that Red has somebody to pack her lunch, and my mom never has time. Sometimes you tell yourself that stuff you say, it's just *funny*, and you realize later you were a bully. But this time . . . I *knew* I was gonna hurt Red. And you know what makes it worse? I didn't care. *(GRANNY enters. She's wearing an old-lady wig, wire-rimmed glasses, and a long nightgown. She sits or lies on the bed and covers herself with the sheet. LITTLE RED claps twice and resumes her narrative, approaching GRANNY in the bed.)* Thursday I walk into the house after school. Granny has the flu, so I go to her room. But she looks *seriously* weird. "Granny, your eyes are kinda . . . big. Do they hurt?"

GRANNY: Your eyes are big, too, but they'd be smaller if they weren't looking in Granny's business.

TALIA *(visibly taken aback):* I guess Granny was having a bad day.

LITTLE RED *(nodding):* Then I notice . . . sometimes, old ladies have a

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little mustache, but Granny looks downright *hair*y. “Granny, you look a little . . . fuzzy.”

GRANNY: Well, I’d have more time to take care of myself if I wasn’t cleaning up after you.

TALIA: That was harsh.

LITTLE RED (*nodding*): And not only does she *look* funny, she *sounds* funny. “Granny, your voice sounds kinda gruff.”

GRANNY: Because I have the flu, you little germ factory! I always catch what you bring home. Maybe I shouldn’t let you live with Granny.

TALIA: She *said* that?

LITTLE RED: Granny *never* talks that way. She gets angry, but never . . . “Granny, did I do something wrong?”

GRANNY: Just messed up my whole life coming to live here. Your Mommy and Daddy are GONE; that’s why you hafta stay with Granny!

RENEE: Red, I’m so sorry! I guess she was really mad –

LITTLE RED: I feel like I wanna yell and cry at the same time. I tell her, “Granny, you have a really big mouth sometimes!” She says –

GRANNY: The better to eat your lunch with!

(*GRANNY jumps up from the bed and dashes offstage.*)

LITTLE RED: Then she jumps outta bed and runs from the house!

RENEE: Wait . . . *what*?

LITTLE RED: It was B.B. Wolfe! She snuck in disguised while Granny was out, climbed into bed, and when I got home . . .

TALIA: Why didn’t you tell somebody? That wolf should get suspended from school –

LITTLE RED: B.B. said if I told, she’d bite me!

TALIA: –Or maybe go to the zoo! (*Pause. TALIA has a realization.*) Wait . . . this isn’t about the wolf, is it? (*LITTLE RED reluctantly shakes*

her head, staring at the floor.) In your dream . . . “Granny, don’t leave”?

LITTLE RED (*softly*): After what B.B. said . . . I thought, “Maybe Granny will leave like Mommy and Daddy.”

(B.B. enters. She stands mutely behind the bed.)

TALIA: So that’s why you drew this on the back of the wolf?

(TALIA holds up a sketch of a heart broken in two pieces.)

LITTLE RED: This wolf . . . she *knows* she’s broken people’s hearts. But she doesn’t *mean* to! She feels like . . .

(LITTLE RED and B.B. speak the following line in unison. As they speak, they trade places – B.B. sits on the bed by RENEE and TALIA, while LITTLE RED comes to stand behind them.)

B.B. and LITTLE RED: . . . Like she isn’t Just Right, which makes her angry and sad all the time. When she sees somebody with a good life . . .

B.B.: . . . She wants to make them hurt..

RENEE: Does bullying make the wolf feel better?

B.B. (*eyes downcast*): Only for a little while. Then she feels *really* guilty.

(Pause. LITTLE RED exits quietly.)

TALIA: Well . . . it’s okay to be angry and sad; you can’t help how you feel.

RENEE: But it’s not okay to take your feelings out on other people. You’re breaking their hearts.

B.B.: The thing is, the wolf can’t *stop*. She tried. She’s a bully forever.

RENEE: No, she *was* a bully. You can’t change the past, but you can change the future.

B.B.: That’s not true! When I was nice, nobody believed me.

RENEE: There hasn’t been time to see you’re a new wolf.

B.B. (*nervously*): Why’d you call me “wolf”? I’m Little Red . . .

(RENEE hands B.B. the mirror.)

RENEE: We can see who you are, B.B. *And* who you want to be. *(Pause. B.B.'s phone rings, but she doesn't move. The WOLFPACK enters and sprawls in their usual positions around the table.)* You should answer that.

(B.B. shakes her head. RENEE and TALIA stand to exit.)

B.B.: Wait, why're you . . . don't leave, Aunt Renee! Aunt—Other Lady!

RENEE: You need time to think, young wolf.

B.B.: No, I need *help!* Come back and tell me—

TALIA: Be patient with people who aren't sure you changed, B.B. *And* with yourself.

B.B.: Aunt Renee, come back! I need help! Please? *(They're gone. B.B. looks down at her caller ID.)* The Wolfpack again? You guys need a life! *(answering the call)* Hello?

D.J.: Hey, we're tryin' to figure out whose lunch to steal tomorrow. I say Bryc Pigg, 'cause he's a monster wimp.

K.C.: And I say Little Red, 'cause her Granny packs the best stuff.

B.B.: How 'bout if you pack your *own* lunches?

(The WOLVES look at each other, then burst into laughter.)

R.J.: Seriously . . . Bryc or Red, whattaya say?

B.B.: You remember second grade? When my parents, um . . .

K.C.: Got divorced?

B.B.: Yeah, and—

(B.B. shrugs reluctantly.)

K.C.: *I* remember. 'Cause that's when you stopped hangin' with dorkmonkeys like Little Red—

R.J.: —And started hangin' with the Wolfpack!

(The WOLVES howl in unison.)

D.J.: It's also when I found you cryin' in the bathroom.

K.C. (chortling): Yeah, B.B. was a crybaby 'fore she got tough.

B.B.: That's not funny. Why isn't it okay to cry?

R.J.: 'Cause it means you're weak. And when you're weak, you get hurt.

B.B.: I only cried when Papa . . . you know he still calls every week?

R.J.: You don't talk to him, do you?

B.B.: Well . . .

D.J.: He moved out and left like *my* dad! You wanna give him a chance to hurt you again?

B.B.: He never *meant* to hurt me!

R.J.: Don't be a wimp! Bite 'em before they bite you.

B.B.: So you never let anybody care about you?

R.J.: And you never get hurt. Simple.

B.B. (a sudden outburst): But then you feel angry and sad all the time, which means you hurt people 'cause you're miserable and wanna make them hurt like you. But then you get so guilty you wanna curl up and disappear, and even your "friends" don't care about you unless you're *tough*. And you would do *anything* to change, *anything*, but kids think you're evil and don't believe you're different 'cause you've bitten 'em so many times!

(The WOLVES stare at B.B. with open mouths. Silence.)

K.C.: So . . . how 'bout those Wildcats?

R.J.: What's got your fur in a bunch today? First you call me out for sayin' Hansel's poor; now you think we don't care?

B.B.: I'm just sayin', you called about whose lunch to steal –

D.J.: We care! If somebody comes after you, we got your tail.

B.B.: But you never do . . . like, *positive* stuff.

D.J.: Stealin' Red's food is positive . . . for my belly!

(The WOLVES laugh.)

B.B.: Maybe I should tell Ms. Fahree about that.

(The WOLVES' jaws drop. Silence.)

D.J.: Lemme get this straight: if we take Red's lunch, you're gonna turn from a wolf into a *rat*?

B.B. (taken aback): Wait . . . what?

D.J.: Sounds like the Wolfpack just lost a member.

B.B.: No! D.J. —

R.J.: You got a choice to make: you wanna hang with Hansel and Little Red, or you wanna stick with us?

B.B.: I don't wanna lose . . . can't I do *both*?

D.J.: One or the other. Wolfpack . . . or dorkmonkeys?

(She abruptly hangs up the call. B.B. approaches the audience.)

B.B.: What am I supposed to do? I'm tryin' to change and nobody I picked on believes me. Only the Wolfpack knows I'm for real, and they don't wanna be friends unless I'm a bully! *(B.B. approaches the audience.)* Who thinks I should keep tryin' to change and be a different kind of wolf? *(responding to the audience)* But then I'll lose all my friends! Who thinks I should keep bein' tough with the wolfpack? *(responding to the audience)* But then I'll still be hurting people! I . . . I gotta go. I gotta think.

(B.B. exits. MS. FAHREE and MS. GAHDMOTHER reappear behind their table as we hear the usual energetic music. LITTLE RED enters, looking mournfully at the ground, dragging her feet.)

FAHREE: Once upon a time there was a girl named Little Red who was Just Right.

(The WOLVES enter. They surround LITTLE RED.)

GAHDMOTHER: But then sad things happened in her family. And to make it worse, bullies kept telling her cruel things that weren't true!

D.J.: Your mommy and daddy don't care about you.

R.J.: You'll never be Just Right again.

(LITTLE RED turns her back on the WOLVES, but they continue to point and laugh. MRS. WITCH and GRANNY enter. They strides over to the WOLVES. GRANNY threatens them by pounding a fist in her palm.)

FAHREE: There's only one difference between a kind person and a bully.

GAHDMOTHER: It isn't that the bully has mean thoughts.

MRS. WITCH: Trust me: kind people think mean stuff.

(MRS. WITCH reaches out to grab R.J.'s tail, but restrains herself.)

FAHREE: It isn't that the bully gets angry, either.

GRANNY: Trust me: kind people get angry all the time.

(MRS. WITCH and GRANNY talk to each other supportively.)

GAHDMOTHER: The only difference is that a kind person *controls* her mean thoughts and angry feelings. She doesn't let them come out in ways that hurt people.

FAHREE: Maybe she writes or draws about what's making her mad. Maybe she tells an adult she trusts.

(MRS. WITCH and GRANNY walk over to LITTLE RED. They wrap her up in a group hug. LITTLE RED gratefully returns the hug.)

GAHDMOTHER: Kind people like that can help other kids find a happily ever after.

(LITTLE RED, GRANNY, and MRS. WITCH exit together.)

FAHREE: B.B. Wolfe knows she *should* keep her mean thoughts and angry feelings under control.

GAHDMOTHER: But now, we have to see if she'll *do* it.

FAHREE: Let's work some magic to bring B.B. back by calling her name. One . . . two . . . three!

FAHREE, GAHDMOTHER, and AUDIENCE: B.B. WOLFE!

(B.B. reenters. FAHREE and GAHDMOTHER quietly take their places beside B.B.'s bed, as at the beginning of the play. However, since B.B. is standing in front of them, she doesn't see them yet.)

B.B.: Don't tell me: I changed into somebody else. Who am I this time? *(B.B. picks up the mirror. She can hardly believe her eyes.)* That can't be right. I look . . . I look . . . *(touching her wolf ears and face)* I'M A WOLF! I'M A WOLF! *(B.B. howls with pleasure.)* Now I gotta figure out who did the magic so it never happens again! *(pointing at a STUDENT in the audience)* Was it you? *(FAHREE clears her throat. B.B. looks up and suddenly points at her in an accusation.)* It was you!

FAHREE: Me?

B.B.: You did this! You turned me into Hansel and Rapunzel and . . . everybody!

FAHREE *(with a slight bow):* Guilty as charged.

B.B.: But you're the principal!

FAHREE: And I have to protect my students from bullies like you!

B.B.: Why'd you turn me into humans?

FAHREE: So you'd understand how you hurt them, young wolf!

B.B.: Well, I get it! *(a sudden, horrible thought)* Please don't turn me into a cat!

GAHDMOTHER: Don't worry, B.B. We're done changing you into other people. It's time to see if you can change *yourself*. Will you become a different kind of wolf?

(A long pause.)

B.B.: I don't know.

GAHDMOTHER: Well, there's only one person in the universe who can decide.

(B.B. points to herself silently: "Me." GAHDMOTHER nods. Silence. Finally, B.B. seems to reach a decision and speaks to MS. FAHREE.)



END OF FREE PREVIEW

The ending of the play has been omitted from this preview. Purchase a full copy of the script and license performance rights at dramabygeorge.com/store.

PREVIEW