

Red Hood(ie)

by

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RED HOOD(IE)

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For Petra.

*I'd walk through the door and not give her a second thought until she
yelled,
"Hey! We don't sleep together!"
Beckoning me to give her a kiss hello.*

*Now, I'm the one who says it to her, playing it off as a joke...when she
doesn't remember me.*

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CAST OF CHARACTERS:

GRANNY: 70s, she forgets things.

DEMENTIA: Her patience is as short as her skirt, and she likes it that way. Granny's inner thoughts personified into a sarcastic, temperamental teenage girl.

WOLFIE (WESLEY): Who? Arthur's son. You remember. Wolfie?

TIME:

Early afternoon.

SETTING:

Granny's neglected living room.

DIALOGUE:

A "/" indicates when the next line of dialogue should begin.

Dialogue in brackets "[]" goes unsaid because of interruption, character gets lost in thought, etc. The text must be embodied.

A "-" at the end of a line of dialogue indicates an interruption from the next speaker. In the middle of a line of dialogue, it should indicate a quick shift in thought.

NOTES:

GRANNY can only hear DEMENTIA in her mind. DEMENTIA is only visible to the audience.

The staging of the actors should reflect how the dialogue is laid out on the page. DEMENTIA physically separates and disrupts the interactions between GRANNY and WOLFIE. GRANNY has

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NOTES con't:

coherent moments when DEMENTIA's dialogue is out of the way or absent.

The pronouns, "they/them/their" refer to GRANNY and DEMENTIA together.

There must be post-it notes with reminders of how to do things littered around the living room: "Green button ON," "Twist to open blinds," "You like channel 32," etc. Throw in a few that would make GRANNY smile: "Everything is okay." "Arthur will visit tomorrow."

CASTING:

A familial connection is stronger than resemblance. Therefore, cast the rainbow

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Special thanks to Donna DiNovelli and Shelby Fairchild

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An emerald, moldy-colored, plastic covered couch. Its memories make it as valuable as an heirloom, but that hasn't stopped the family from desperately trying to get rid of it. As its sitters became fewer, they eventually lost interest in more than just the couch. White foggy light pours in through a single living room window. Mail is on the floor. Photos could use a dust. It's hard to remember what color the wallpaper originally was. Sticky note reminders and instructions are littered about the room. DEMENTIA enters from the kitchen, and after a few obnoxiously squeaky adjustments, she's comfortable. She's chewing on the barely white string of her brown, formerly red, hoodie. GRANNY follows behind wearing a lived-in nightgown with its embroidered flowers unblooming at the seams. The pale-yellow socks she wore out of a hospital are ruffled around her ankles and their rubber stops shuffle against the shag carpet. Dementia jolts, she digs a hand behind her and pulls out the T.V. remote. Preoccupied with chewing, she sets the T.V. remote beside Granny to figure out. With an arcade claw, Granny lifts up the remote. Her opposite index finger presses a button. The stillness remains. Her finger hovers over another button, presses it, nothing changes. Another and another. Dementia makes a face with each attempt. Frustrated, Granny throws the remote face down on the couch, revealing a yellow sticky note stuck to the back. They look at it. Trusting the note, Granny lifts the remote again, follows its arrow and their faces are illuminated with an eye-numbing blue light as deep as the set it's coming from. "In the Arms of an Angel" fades out as the sizzling and chopping of the cooking channel begins to murmur. A knock. Dementia becomes annoyed, as Granny's eyes look around for the source of the startling noise.

DEMENTIA. *(Teeth still holding the string.)* Knock knock.

Another knock.

GRANNY. Who's there?

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KNOCKER. *(From the other side of the door.)* Granny? Open up.

DEMENTIA. *(Finishing the knock knock joke.)* "Granny open up / who?"

GRANNY. Who?

DEMENTIA. Good one.

KNOCKER. Granny, you home?

DEMENTIA. Granny?

KNOCKER. I have things for you.

GRANNY. I'm Granny.

Knocks continue.

DEMENTIA. Ugh, go away.

KNOCKER. It's Wesley.

DEMENTIA. Who names their kid Wesley?

More knocking.

DEMENTIA. Do we know a 'Wesley?'

GRANNY. Who?

KNOCKER. I'm going to let myself in.

They brace themselves in their own ways.

DEMENTIA. Wait, what?

GRANNY. *(Frightened.)* In?

Plastic bags bang against the door as a key finds its way into the lock.

DEMENTIA. They're trying to break in.

As the key turns, Dementia storms off the couch in a squeaky huff.

GRANNY. This is my house.

DEMENTIA. Hey girl scout, we don't want any cookies-

Dementia gets her hand on the doorknob as it's thrown open, key still in the lock while the others jingle against the door.

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STRANGER. (*Exasperated from the effort.*) Hey Granny.

A scruffy STRANGER, arms full of plastic bags, pushes his way through the door. He makes his way into the living room to get the bags off his arms and onto the floor.

DEMENTIA. / Who are you!

GRANNY. Who are you? AHh AhHHh!

STRANGER. Whoa, Granny / it's me-

Granny is frozen on the couch.

GRANNY. AHH/ AhhH!

STRANGER. Wesley!

GRANNY. I don't know you! / Get out, get out!

Granny continues to scream, grabbing a pillow for protection. He doesn't know what to do.

DEMENTIA. Dude, who the hell/ are you?

GRANNY. Imposter! Fire! / FIRE.

STRANGER. No fire, it's / only me

GRANNY. AhhHHH ahHHH no no Ahh!

DEMENTIA. I'm gonna call the cops! / Where's my phone?

Dementia starts searching around the room. Granny continues screaming.

STRANGER. Granny stop! It's / just me.

He tries to lower Granny's pillow by gently pulling at her wrists, but she gives him a fight and keeps yelling.

GRANNY. Let me go, let me go! / Noo!

DEMENTIA. Hands off, pervert!

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Dementia grabs the other couch pillow and joins Granny in trying to beat him away. He turns his face to protect himself from her hits. Granny's grip remains firm on her pillow, shielding her face.

STRANGER. Granny, I called you-

GRANNY. I don't have a phone! / Liar, liar!

DEMENTIA. Shit, my phone!

Dementia drops her pillow and runs off into the kitchen.

STRANGER. OKAY, okay!

He retreats, hands up in surrender. GRANNY cowers behind her pillow.

GRANNY. Don't hurt me. Don't hurt me. / Don't hurt me? Don't hurt me.

STRANGER. Granny, calm down. I'm not-

His eyes scan the room for a solution, something familiar. Granny continues to whimper. His eyes land on a kindergarten graduation photo of himself. As he pulls it off the wall, Granny's eyes peek above her shield.

GRANNY. NO. That's mine!

STRANGER. I know, I have / to show you.

GRANNY. Put that back!

STRANGER. Granny look-

He emphasizes the photo.

GRANNY. (Still holding up the pillow.) It's Mine!

STRANGER. Look, Granny. It's me.

Holding the photo up to his face.

GRANNY. That's my Wolfie, put it / back.

STRANGER. Wolfie?

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GRANNY. (*Trembling.*) I don't know you.

STRANGER. Granny, please just look. I need-

GRANNY. I don't have any money.

STRANGER. I don't- Granny.

GRANNY. (*Meek.*) ...please.

He slowly kneels in front of her and talks to her like a frightened child.

STRANGER. (*Referring to the picture.*) That's me. I'm him,
(*Realizing.*) but older.

Granny's nose makes its way above the barricade, still not convinced. Slowly, to not rile her up again, he reaches for another photo. A family barbecue.)

GRANNY. No more pictures!

STRANGER. (*Soft by stern.*) I'll put them back, I'll put them back.

GRANNY. I don't like it.

He kneels before her again.

STRANGER. Him. Right there, is Arthur. You know Arthur? Your son? Arthur is my dad. I'm his son. See the resemblance? I'm Wesley.
(*Swallowing his pride.*) You called me Wolfie.

She lowers her shield for a better peek.

GRANNY. Wolfie?

DEMENTIA. (*From the kitchen.*) Did he say Wolfie?

GRANNY. Why?

Putting aside enough of his pride as a grown man to revisit his childhood.

STRANGER. You'd read me Little Red Riding Hood when I'd spend the night. Remember? You'd do the voices? (*Off her face.*) Anyways. I wore this red hoodie, and you called me Wolfie because, (*Realizing he doesn't know another reason why...*) I guess "little red" was too girly-

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GRANNY. *(Faint. Remembering.)* Little Red takes care of her hood. You wore it like a wolf.

STRANGER. *(Bottling his hope.)* Yeah. Yeah. I'd bring you my hoodie snagged or stained with who knows what I got into, and you always fixed it up for me. Granny, it's me. Wolfie.

Granny is no longer hidden. Hopeful in her recognition.

GRANNY. Wolfie?

Dementia sulks into the living room with a sticky note dangling from her finger.

DEMENTIA. Oooh, "Wolfie."

WOLFIE. Hi Granny.

DEMENTIA. Whoops.

GRANNY. Wolfie!

Granny leans forward and gets her arms around his the best she can. WOLFIE stands bringing GRANNY up with him. Awkwardly bent at the knees he gently hugs her while her arms aggressively lock him into place. DEMENTIA waves the sticky note.

DEMENTIA. Forgot we wrote it down. My bad.

Dementia crumples the note and tosses it over her shoulder. Wolfie frees himself from her grip and sharply exhales.

WOLFIE. Yup. It's me.

GRANNY. Wolfie!

Wolfie drops his arms and the two frames in his hands softly clack together. Dementia clocks them immediately.

DEMENTIA. What are you doing with those?

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Granny's attention snaps to the frames.

GRANNY. *(Scolding him.)* My pictures!

WOLFIE. *(Calming a distressed horse.)* I got it, I got it. I told you I would.

They watch over Wolfie's shoulder as he puts the pictures back on the wall.

DEMENTIA. That's-? Oh, come on, you're like what...five in this picture? How were we supposed to know what you look like now?

Wolfie's fingers slowly brush off of the frames as he hangs them back on their respected nails. He takes a moment to look at the black and white photo of his Grandpa on his prized motorcycle.

DEMENTIA. You don't look like him.

On their way to sit down, GRANNY trips up on a pillow.

DEMENTIA. Guess we weren't prepared for company.

Granny, suddenly aware of the mess, struggles to bend down and catch a pillow on the floor with her fingertips. Wolfie beats her to it and tosses it back on the couch. Dementia abruptly catches it.

GRANNY. I wasn't ready for visitors.

WOLFIE. Oh Granny, it's okay...

Wolfie takes his first good look at Granny. Her condition doesn't resemble how his youth remembers her, or what he's been told. Dementia becomes self-conscious at Wolfie's prolonged gaze.

DEMENTIA. What're you looking at?

DEMENTIA looks at her reflection in the glass of the nearest frame. She quickly uses it as a mirror to tussle with her hair. Granny begins

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to finger comb through the coarse, gray springs on top of her head to lay them flat.

DEMENTIA. My god. My hair.

GRANNY. *(Asking the room.)* Brush my hair?

WOLFIE. Oh, um. Actually, I'm not-

GRANNY. If I had known- I would've-

WOLFIE. It's fine, really. I mean, I called, but anyways.

Dementia abandons her hair and whips around.

DEMENTIA. You-?

Their eyes fall onto the plastic bags still on the floor.

DEMENTIA. What're those?

WOLFIE. Oh. I brought you your groceries. I wasn't sure what / you needed so-

GRANNY. Arthur brings me groceries.

DEMENTIA. When he remembers. / Or cares.

WOLFIE. Yeah. He couldn't this month, so he- I offered.

Granny claps her hands together, admiring the garden of plastic bags.

GRANNY. Thank you. Thank you.

DEMENTIA. They really add something to the room. The carpet will keep them cold.

Dementia, squeakily, takes her place on the couch. She digs out of her sock, a pack of cigarettes and a lighter. Granny's attention is stolen by the T.V. Granny lowers herself down besides Dementia sparking up. Wolfie stands awkwardly, debating whether to speak, or commit to sitting and staying. He comes to a decision and joins the seated silence in his Grandpa's lazy chair. They sit for a few moments. Wolfie must break the silence if he's ever going to get what he came for.

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WOLFIE. Grandpa always said the man of the house needs his own chair.

GRANNY. (*Sweetly.*) That's not your chair.

WOLFIE. I know. / I'll be needing my own.

DEMENTIA. And you're not the man of the house.

Seeing what he said has gone over Granny's head, he tries again.

WOLFIE. Good saying of his. He always had good sayings. You know about marriage-

Granny turns to the black and white wedding photo on the couch's side table. Her bottom lip tucks away her upper lip as she her eyes, a little glassy, return to the T.V.

WOLFIE. So... What are you watching?

Their eyes don't leave the screen.

DEMENTIA. The, whatsitcalled.

GRANNY. Cooking channel.

DEMENTIA. That.

WOLFIE. Cool, cool.

He sniffs the air.

WOLFIE. Still cooking?

GRANNY. I like the cooking channel.

WOLFIE. / Oh.

DEMENTIA. If- well when. When we fall asleep, we don't miss much.

GRANNY. (*Eyes not moving from the screen.*) Are you hungry?

DEMENTIA. I'm hungry.

WOLFIE. I'm okay Granny, I'm here to-

DEMENTIA. / I'm hungry.

GRANNY. I'm hungry.

WOLFIE. (*Suspicious.*) Well...What's for lunch?

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DEMENTIA. What do we make? Cookies? Are we just supposed to constantly have cookies in the oven?

Granny is in her own world. Wolfie sniffs the air again.

WOLFIE. *(Trying to get her attention.)* Um. Granny?

Dementia's smoke clouds Granny as her eyes are set on Wolfie.

DEMENTIA. Who is this guy again?

Dementia sits up on her knees and looks at the family barbecue photo. Granny looks up from the T.V.

GRANNY. *(Uncertain.)* Wolfie?

WOLFIE. Yes, Granny?

He is met with a blank expression.

WOLFIE. *(Reminding her.)* Wolfie, your grandson?

GRANNY. Yes.

DEMENTIA. And?

WOLFIE. Arthur is my / dad. Your son.

Granny turns to the photo.

GRANNY. Dad.

WOLFIE. Your son, yes.

DEMENTIA. Is this him? Who's the lady with the horse teeth?

GRANNY. How is she?

DEMENTIA. Any dental work since / we last-?

WOLFIE. Granny, she um. She passed.

GRANNY. I'm sorry.

DEMENTIA. Ho can we be?

WOLFIE. It's not a big deal-

GRANNY. When?

WOLFIE. Last year, before Christmas.

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DEMENTIA. Nobody told us.

GRANNY. Christmas? -

WOLFIE. It's okay Granny. It's been a while, it's not so fresh. I'm okay, promise.

Dementia's attention goes from the photos to the wall they hang on. Granny's eyes follow.

DEMENTIA. This wallpaper is gross.

GRANNY. And Arthur...

WOLFIE. For him, some days are-

GRANNY. ...when are you going to finish the wallpaper?

WOLFIE. The- come again?

Dementia's eyes are glued to the wall.

DEMENTIA. Promised he'd replace this god-awful wallpaper.

GRANNY. You haven't finished it. I want it done by Christmas. / Family comes over.

WOLFIE. He'll do it eventually. Probably forgot.

GRANNY. You do it Arthur!

WOLFIE. Granny. (*Remember me?*) Wolfie?

DEMENTIA. Yeah sure, bring that kid of his.

GRANNY. (*Lighting up.*) Please bring Wolfie. I haven't seen him in...

WOLFIE. I'm not Arthur.

DEMENTIA. We're talking about the wallpaper.

WOLFIE. I'm Wes- Wolfie.

GRANNY. You said you'd finish it.

WOLFIE. My dad said that.

Dementia tears her eyes away from the wall and takes a reminding look at him.

DEMENTIA. (*Covering his mistake.*) What difference does it make? You've still got two hands.

Dementia sits back down, taking a long drag.

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GRANNY. Arthur?

Hoping this is the last time he'll have to say this.

WOLFIE. I'm the son of your son. Arthur's son. I'm Wolfie.

Dementia exhales more smoke.

WOLFIE. (*Sniffing the air again.*) Are you sure you're not making something?

DEMENTIA. Oops.

GRANNY. Want some oatmeal?

Wolfie bolts to the kitchen.

DEMENTIA. (*Oh right.*) That's what we were doing.

WOLFIE. (*From the kitchen.*) Damn it!

DEMENTIA. Don't get your panties in a twist.

GRANNY. Add cinnamon!

WOLFIE. Granny!

DEMENTIA. Help yourself, I guess.

GRANNY. Save some for Arthur!

Wolfie storms back into the living room.

WOLFIE. You left the stove on.

DEMENTIA. / For oatmeal.

GRANNY. For oatmeal.

WOLFIE. Granny, you left the stove on!

DEMENTIA. / For oatmeal. Duh.

GRANNY. For oatmeal.

WOLFIE. Granny / you can't-

DEMENTIA. We sat down to let the water boil. But those damn ASPCA commercials just get you. Got a lil distracted / that's all.

WOLFIE. You need to be more careful! You can't be leaving the stove on. Don't you know you could've burned the house down?

GRANNY. I'm sorry.

DEMENTIA. Yeah, yeah, yeah.

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GRANNY. I'll write it down so I don't forget.

Granny grabs a sticky and pen from the couch's side table and delicately crafts herself a note. Wolfie is suddenly aware of the little notes scattered around the room. Dementia instructs Granny over her shoulder.

DEMENTIA. Leaving. Stove on. Equals house. In flames. Got it.

WOLFIE. No, you have to do more than-

Ringling/beeping fire alarm fills the home. GRANNY's eyes light up. Dementia quickly puts out her cigarette.

DEMENTIA. Shit!

WOLFIE. Great. Just / great.

GRANNY. My phone is / ringing.

DEMENTIA. See my phone /anywhere?

Dementia jumps up from the couch and frantically tries to find her ringing phone.

WOLFIE. No, you set off the fire alarm.

DEMENTIA. I need to find my phone.

GRANNY. Where's my phone?

Wolfie scans the ceiling, fingers in his ears.

WOLFIE. It's not your phone.

They become more and more irritated, as if the alarm is getting ever so slightly louder.

DEMENTIA. I know what my phone sound like.

GRANNY. It's ringing. / It's ringing.

DEMENTIA. I can hear it.

GRANNY. Where did I put it / last?

DEMENTIA. I just had it.

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GRANNY puts her hands over her ears.

GRANNY. Make it stop!

WOLFIE. I'm trying. You have / to help me!

DEMENTIA. Quit shouting!

GRANNY. It's so loud! Stop!

Wolfie, spotting the smoke alarm, stands on the lazy chair.

GRANNY. NO!

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