

REAP & SOW

Written by

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Based on the Tale of Hades and Persephone

EXT. CITY BLOCK - TWILIGHT

Eerie whispers of dawn haunt the city of New Hollow. A few dreary lamps illuminate an empty street.

Somber, inevitable music mirrors the SHADOW of a PUPPY running across the sidewalk pavements. The silhouette races over asphalt, looking back.

A HOODED MAN in black chases close behind. Something about the gait is *inhuman*. Are his feet not touching the ground?

The pup picks up the pace, still obscured from full view.

Small slivers of sun begin to peak through alley ways across the pair's shadows.

The pup turns a street corner into the breaking day, stopping abruptly. We can finally see it's full form. It's... it's a skeleton?

The hooded figure turns the corner and bends over huffing, grabbing his chest. A chill in the air shows his heaving breaths.

Pale hands pull a sleeve back to reveal a wristwatch. He pushes a button. BEEP. The figure's hood falls away. We finally see him fully.

GRIM (20-30), is literally white as death. Short pale buzzcut and dark eyes. He wears a black sweatsuit. There's something still and quiet about him. He smiles.

The skelepup, BONE, jumps up, knocking Grim to his butt. He licks Grim's face, barking.

GRIM

That was pretty good. Ten seconds
better than yesterday.

BONE barks his cheers.

The watch BEEPs again.

GRIM (CONT'D)

Hell! But we're still gonna be late
if we don't get groaning.

CUT TO:

EXT. ROOFTOP GARDEN - MORNING

Birds CHIRP. It's sunny but visibly cold. Frost covers all but one of the garden boxes.

Someone in a SUNHAT tends to the sole lively box, HUMMING cheerily, maybe a little out-of-tune. Their face is obscured and they wear gloves.

An orange BUTTERFLY floats down from the sky. Fluttering around the garden, it pauses near the gardener's shoulder.

SPRING (20-30), removes her hat, wiping her brow. She is BRIGHT GREEN. The embodiment of a spring goddess, she seems to be made of flowers and vines.

She greets the butterfly with a boisterous twang.

SPRING
Hey there, friend!

She sweeps viney hair around her shoulder revealing a PLANT rooted to the other. It's pink and green. And moving?

The butterfly lilts, getting closer and then --

CHOMP. The plant, VENUS, a flytrap bites it clean out of the air. It swallows and begins panting contentedly like a dog.

SPRING (CONT'D)
That's an idea! C'mon, I'm
starving.

She rises and begins walking to the stairway entrance, HUMMING as she goes.

CUT TO:

INT. GRIM'S KITCHEN

Dressed for work, Grim stands in his gothic, art-deco, bachelor pad pouring a cup of... coffee? It's black and inky. The mug features a cheesy video game logo. Explosive lettering reads SHARDS OF FATE: PURPLE DREAM CONTINUUM.

INT. SPRING'S KITCHEN

Spring stands over a stove in a terrarium of an apartment. The room is basically a fairy greenhouse with ornate appliances and a MASSIVE wooden island carved from a tree trunk.

BEEP. She turns to a coffee maker/composter machine pouring muddy sludge into a MUG. She smiles and takes a sip of the sludge.

GRIM'S KITCHEN

Grim pours kibble in Bone's BOWL, marked "BONE". He kneels to ruffle Bone's ears.

GRIM

Eat up bud, we're gonna have to
make a house call on the way.

SPRING'S KITCHEN

Spring places various heaping wooden and clay plates and bowls of food along the island. Eggs, bacon, porridge, cake, pasta, egg rolls, burgers, you name it. The table is half-way full.

GRIM'S LIVING ROOM

Grim stands in front of a mirror tying a skull and cross bones BOW TIE, struggling and muttering to himself.

SPRING'S KITCHEN

Spring dips more platters. The island is three-quarters filled.

GRIM'S LIVING ROOM

A bow tie box and wrapping lays open next to Grim on the shelf. A NOTE reads "ALMOST ONE YEAR AT ABSTRACTIONS! CONGRATS ON THE PROMOTION! DRESS FOR THE JOB YOU WANT - LOVE, MOM"

SPRING'S KITCHEN

Spring sits down at the overflowing island. Venus sits on her shoulder, nodding approvingly. She pauses and then whimpers at Spring.

SPRING

No, the egg rolls are not spicy
this time. Pinky promise.

She says a quick blessing, gesturing to the food.

SPRING (CONT'D)

Breakfast. Most important meal of the day. Thank you kindly for your sacrifice. May your bounty bring us nourishment and growth.

Venus nods something that sounds like "amen"?

As soon as she says these words, Spring and Venus begin DEMOLISHING the cornucopia. Spaghetti noodles fly. Sauce splatters. Apples are reduced to stems and seeds. Not even a core is left behind.

Then SUDDENLY the bloodbath is over and the plates are all licked clean. Leaves float in the air and settle around them.

Venus BURPS loudly.

Spring giggles and BELCHES, shaking the glass of the greenhouse apartment.

SPRING (CONT'D)

(demurely)

Pardon me.

Venus makes a noise like she's excusing herself as well.

Spring peers at the clock on the wall. A leafy vine points to 8:40.

SPRING (CONT'D)

Bluebell! We're gonna be late for our first day back if we don't get growin'!

CUT TO:

EXT. CITY BLOCK

The chilly street is now bustling, mostly with regular humans in coats and jackets but a few brightly colored ABSTRACTIONS like Spring hurry amongst them.

Spring rushes to work. Humans smile at her as she passes, nodding cordially. She glances down at her wrist watch.

Dissatisfied, she scrunches her face as if focusing. Her vine legs slowly begin to stretch. They grow -- sprouting flowers and lengthening. As she gets taller, her stride gets longer. She moves faster through the crowd.

CUT TO:

EXT. CITY BLOCK - APARTMENT STOOP

Grim and Bone stand on the front step of a brownstone apartment. Grim RINGS the doorbell. An old woman, ROSE (70s-80s), opens the door with a sad smile and wordlessly invites them in.

The trio walks into a lived-in bedroom. Memories and pictures paper the walls. A bed stands in the center of the room covered in pillows and wires.

A GRAMOPHONE on the night stand plays Nat King Cole or something of the 1940s love song sort.

A small, frail OLD MAN sits up in the bed, waiting for them. He smiles warmly at Grim and his wife. He is attached to wires and an IV.

Rose walks over to the bed, carrying a bottle of champagne and two flutes. She pours two glasses and hands the first to her husband.

OLD MAN
(breathy)
Thank you, love.

He raises the glass in the air to toast. She lifts hers, trembling slightly.

OLD MAN (CONT'D)
I love you. My Rosie.

He searches for the words. A long pause. He decides on:

OLD MAN (CONT'D)
Thank you.

Tears spill over Rose's cheeks.

ROSE
I--I love you too. So. Much.

They cheers. The Old Man sips from his glass. Rose lifts the glass but can't quite bare it. He hands her his glass.

The Old Man looks at Grim and nods smiling, contentedly.

OLD MAN
I'm ready now.

Grim smiles sadly back and takes the Old Man's hand in his.

The old man looks at Rose while gently closing his eyes.

After a moment his chest stops moving and he passes. Grim takes the husbands hand and places it on his now still chest.

The gramophone starts SKIPPING with a somber effect.

Grim looks at Rose and opens his mouth to say something--

ROSE

Get. Out.

Her demeanor has shifted completely. Still holding the champagne flutes, she shakes with quiet rage, tears falling-- never taking her eyes off her husband.

Grim starts, taken aback. He nods, pained but resigned.

GRIM

(Whispering to Bone)

Come on.

The pair leave.

EXT. CITY BLOCK - CONTINUOUS

Outside of the apartment, people have gathered at the TROLLEY STOP to wait. Grim and Bone join them, solemn.

At the front of the crowd is Spring. She checks her watch. The trolley is late.

Next to her sits a frosty, barren planter. She eyes it for a second before sticking a pinky in. Tiny sprouts budge slowly out of the soil. She speaks softly to the plant.

SPRING

Hurry up, fella. Trolley'll be here
any minute.

She puts another finger in the soil, swirling the dirt, but not much else happens.

SPRING (CONT'D)

Oh it's gonna be like *that* is it?

She crouches down, shoving her whole hand in up to her forearm in the pot.

Vines and grass ERUPT from the planter, overflowing, splitting a CRACK down the side. The crowd GASPS looking on.

Spring giggles apologies and Venus cackles.

Grim sees her for the first time, looking on in awe.

At this moment, the trolley pulls up with a SCREECH and SIGH. People and Abstractions alike hop on and off.

CUT TO:

INT. TROLLEY

People shuffle and squeeze. Grim peeks around people to get a look at Spring. He is intrigued and unnerved.

The trolley begins moving, shoving them closer together.

Bone huffs, indignantly squished. Bone paws at Grim's knee, DEAD-LEGGING HIM and sending him INTO Spring with an OOF.

SPRING
WELL HELLO THERE!

GRIM
(red)
My apologies!

Spring sees him for the first time. Bone YAPS! Her eyes go wide. Spring launches toward him.

Bone is delighted at the attention and jumps on her, licking her face. Spring GIGGLES.

Grim stares astonished at the outburst.

GRIM (CONT'D)
Well... Hello there?

Spring notices him again. And SPRINGS to her feet at Bone's displeasure,

SPRING
My apologies! Where are my manners!

Spring laughs heartily, snorting. She sticks out her hand. Or tries to. It's pretty crowded.

SPRING (CONT'D)
Hi! I'm Spring! A pleasure to meet ya!

GRIM
Heh-- Uh... Um yes. Hi. Grimothy.
Uh-- just Grim.

He shakes the very end of her hand. She might bite for all he knows. Spring doesn't notice, looking back at Bone.

SPRING
So what are you?

GRIM
Um. That's forward.

SPRING
I meant the dog, sweet pea...
Grim blushes, rubbing the back of his neck.

GRIM
(sheepishly)
Oh,. This--This is Bone.
She bends over to pet him again.

SPRING
(with a laugh)
You are just the sweetest thing
this side of New Hollow!
At this remark, Venus pulls back a curtain of Spring's hair
to reveal herself. She chomps at Bone and let's out a
HARUMPH.

SPRING (CONT'D)
Venus! I said 'this side'!
She gestures vaguely in front of her.
The trolley jolts as it turns. Grim, Spring, and the crowd
sway with it. Grim's Abstractions neck badge flies up
briefly.

SPRING (CONT'D)
I'm headed to Abstractions too!
She flashes her badge.

GRIM
Oh? You--You're States &
Afflictions too?

SPRING
Oh, well yeah. That's just where
they put us.
Bone yaps.

GRIM
Umm...How come I've never...we've
never seen you before?

Spring shrugs, smirking.

SPRING

Seasonal worker. I'm in charge of
the Vernal Equinox!

Grim is rubs his neck.

GRIM

Oh, right... I guess that makes
sense. I--uh transferred in a
little less than a year ago now.

The street car SCREECHES to a halt, jostling the standing crowd. The trio move to exit.

A kid stands nearby with his mother. He reaches out to touch Spring's petal skirt as she passes. Spring sees and crouches down, pulling off a flower and handing it to him with a smile. He shows his mom.

Spring gets off the trolley. Grim follows. The mother sees Grim and SNATCHES her son toward her, away from Grim.

Grim marks this but doesn't say anything. The mom sees Grim's stare and her face reddens. She tries to play it off, straightening her son's collar.

Grim steps off to see...

EXT. ABSTRACTIONS CORP. - CONTINUOUS

Our first look at Abstractions. Spring takes her time walking, taking it in. Grim takes his time walking, taking Spring in.

Out of the nearby skyscrapers, Abstractions is the tallest with 60 stories. It's a colorful glass cylinder with various terraces and turrets.

Flying employees land and take off from the terraces. And the building's fantastical contents spill out into them. Hordes of brightly colored PIXIES and goblin-like "FEAR-IES" zoom by.

A river feeds into a lagoon at the base of the tower, leading to tunnels inside. Canal boats carrying employees float towards the entrances. MERFOLK and SELKIES swim by.

The plaza leading to the entrance is covered with different abstractions milling about and heading into the office.

A few blue WILL-O-THE-WISPS float together, glowing as they chat. Nearby, CUPID trips, his briefcase hits the ground and arrows fly everywhere. A YETI walks in deep conversation with a HOUSE on giant chicken legs.

TITLE: REAP & SOW

DISCORD, a tall, pixelated form walks quickly, passing through other abstractions. A mish-mash patchwork of unorganized patterns fluctuate on Discord's skin -- checkerboard, stripes, camo, etc. He passes through Spring and her flowers become checkerboard pattern.

Spring absent-mindedly shakes her hair. The flowers return to their normal pastels.

She smiles, taking it all in.

SPRING

I missed this.

Bone, walking between them, looks from Spring to Grim.

GRIM

Heh- Yeah, I guess it's pretty cool. How long have you been doing this?

SPRING

Umm... I guess this is my third season now -- just shadowed the first time though... You?

GRIM

Oh. I only just got promoted to the team last year.

SPRING

Team?

GRIM

Oh -- like the reapi -- wait do you not know who I am?

Still walking, Spring lets out a huge GUFFAW.

SPRING

HA! Mister, you're sounding a little big for your britches. Should I?

Grim blushes.

GRIM

Sorry! No, not who I am-- but what
I...That's not what I meant. Just
that --

He is all chokes up.

SPRING

Just what?

She honestly has no idea what he's talking about.

GRIM

We just kind of have a little bit
of a reputation I guess.

Spring looks at him expectantly. He opens his mouth but then
changes his mind as they approach the doors.

SPRING

You know, you're pretty jumpy, Mr.
Grimothy Just Grim.

They walk through a large entry-way into...

INT. ABSTRACTIONS CO.

The beautiful atrium of the skyscraper boasts balconies on
every level over-looking a HUGE POND in the center of the
building. Two giant KOI FISH circle one another in the pond.

Tiny WATERFALLS and streams connect the floors to one
another. Interdepartmental memos travel to and fro' in
miniature boats. Selkies direct traffic in the waterways.

SPRING

Where to?

The quartet step up on to a platform. Spring punches a circle
marked "50" on a podium with an array of elevator buttons.

GRIM

...60.

She hits another. It's the top floor.

DING! A geyser beneath the platform erupts, shooting it
upward like a kind of elevator.

Grim looks to her nervously like he's going to say something
but keeps changing his mind.

DING! The platform stops.

Spring waves goodbye cheerily.

SPRING

Nice meetin' ya! See ya 'round!

GRIM

Yes. Bye.

She walks off, before that's it. He turns around to ask her something but WOOSH!

More water jets the platform up and away.

Grim looks back down at the panel of buttons. Dejectedly, he presses "8".

Bone whines.

CUT TO:

INT. THE REAPING DEPARTMENT - GRIM'S DESK

On a pink dog bed, BONE snores loudly beneath Grim's desk, dribbling drool onto the floor. Above him, Grim CLACKS away at a monitor screen with a typewriter keyboard.

A vase of dried marigolds and a framed picture of Grim and a vibrantly-dressed skeleton woman decorate his space. His mother. She wears a mariachi hat of pink and orange marigolds and a matching skirt. A couple of tea candles and tiny sugar skulls line the desk.

The room is mostly dark wood and black filing cabinets with bright pops of color, but the room is covered with a distinct thin layer of dust.

A shelf totes colorful paper Obon lanterns and various sizes of candles. Another shelf is covered with books on grieving and loss.

A random MARBLE PEDESTAL stands in the middle of the floor holding what looks like a FISH BOWL filled with water.

Two other reapers chat mindlessly from their desks while Grim works.

DIE-ANNA, (50s) dressed like a nun, knits a prayer shawl and SKULLY (60-70s), wearing a coffin-printed sweater vest, tosses a skull up and down in the air like a baseball. Both are ghostly pale like Grim.

DIE-ANNA
Would you stop that? I can't
concentrate.

SKULLY
(with a long island
accent)
Why do you think I'm throwing it?
(mocking the needles)
All I hear all day is TAP TAP TAP.
TAP TAP TAP. Give it a rest, you
have so many!

DIE-ANNA
(sternly)
That's the thing about death,
Skully. You never know when you
might need one.

Skully stops throwing the ball--I mean skull--and looks
skeptically to a pile of overstuffed boxes labeled "PRAYER
SHAWLS".

DIE-ANNA (CONT'D)
At least I'm being helpful with my
time.

SKULLY
(grumbling)
I'm still helpful.

Grim rolls his eyes at them still typing. With a final CLICK
CLACK CLICK, he finishes something.

WOOSH! Grim watches a slew of water fall from the ceiling,
carrying a little wooden boat. It falls in to the fish bowl
pedestal with a SPLASH!

GRIM
(grimacing)
That was fast.

Die-Anna looks on with raised eyebrows.

DIE-ANNA
Did you submit your report?

GRIM
(flatly)
Yep.

He stands and pulls a little roll of paper out of the bobbing
boat. He unrolls it and squints. He sighs and walks towards
the door.

SKULLY
 (mimicking a walkie-talkie)
 CKKK Grim to report to the
 principal's office! *CKKK*

Die-Anna pokes him sharply with her needle.

SKULLY (CONT'D)
 OUCH!

DIE-ANNA
 This concerns you too, you know!

CUT TO:

EXT. MADAME WISP'S OFFICE

Grim walks up to a desk outside the door where the SECRETARY, a human with cat-eye glasses, doesn't look up.

SECRETARY
 She'll see you in just a minute.

SHOUTING can be heard from inside Madame Wisp's office. Grim turns to sit and finds Spring listening uncomfortably on a love seat.

GRIM
 Oh! Hi!

He sits.

SPRING
 Hi again!

OLD MAN WINTER
 (off-screen)
 Just give me a little longer! I can
 ease up a bit if you like! But it's
 STILL WINTER!

Spring cringes.

SPRING
 (awkwardly)
 Just waiting on my formal
 assignment.

MADAME WISP
 (off-screen)
 I'm done having this discussion!
 (MORE)

MADAME WISP (CONT'D)
You know the rules. I will see you
next year.

Beat.

MADAME WISP (CONT'D)
(off-screen)
And LEAVE the keycard.

BOOM. The door FLIES open. OLD MAN WINTER (70s) frosting at the mouth with anger storms out. He carries a cardboard box of belongings -- snow globe, thermometer, hot chocolate packets, a potted evergreen plant. Hoarfrost clings to him.

He sees Spring and HARUMPHS loudly at her, stomping away. His foot prints leave slushy puddles.

SPRING
Heh... He doesn't like this part...

GRIM
(smirking)
I'm used to a cold shoulder.

Spring stares at him. Grim blanches.

GRIM (CONT'D)
-uhh... is that offensive?

Spring lets out a HUGE LAUGH, SNORTING violently. Grim smiles at this before BOOM!

MADAME WISP (40s-50s) now bursts through the door. Though roughly half Grim's height, the director of Abstractions New Hollow has a towering demeanor -- even as a short cloud stuffed into a pant suit. She points to Grim.

MADAME WISP
You!

Spring and Grim exchange a confused look.

MADAME WISP (CONT'D)
Sorry to keep you waiting, Spring,
dear.

Grim makes no move.

MADAME WISP (CONT'D)
NOW!

CUT TO:

INT. MADAME WISP'S OFFICE

Books shelves and windows line the walls and a thin layer of glowy fog mists the wood floor of the grand study. Behind a comically large wooden desk sits Madame Wisp.

Grim sits across the desk from her.

GRIM

The look on her face, it was awful.
It's always been... But this is
just--

He stares at his hands. Madame Wisp gets down from her seat and walks around the desk. She places a motherly hand on his shoulder.

MADAME WISP

Remember what we talked about.
You're not the enemy here.

GRIM

Yeah, but--

She holds up a wispy hand.

MADAME WISP

That doesn't mean this isn't a
problem though. I've been reviewing
the data from the past few
quarters...

She picks a file off her desk

MADAME WISP (CONT'D)

Service invitations, house call
requests, everything. All the
numbers are down. The current
climate is making it that much
harder for Reapers do to their
jobs. And it's not just us. The
other branches are seeing it too.

GRIM

So... What does that mean?

MADAME WISP

It means we have a PR issue on our
hands.

GRIM

I don't know if it's just a PR
thing...

MADAME WISP
Nonsense. There's nothing that some
good publicity can't fix.

GRIM
(skeptical)
Um... okay--

MADAME WISP
(loudly)
SPRING! Get in here!

GRIM
Wha-

Spring cautiously opens the door and smiles at the pair
nervously. She takes a seat by Grim.

SPRING
Heya Madame! Lookin' puffy as
always!

Madame Wisps brushes this off, smiling.

MADAME WISP
You look well yourself! Spring,
have you met Grim? He's the team
lead for our Reaping squad--

Spring whips to him. Grim cuts her off.

GRIM
We've met.

He'd rather be anywhere than here.

GRIM (CONT'D)
(urgently)
What's going on Madame Wisp? What
about our problem?

MADAME WISP
Spring is going to fix it for us!

GRIM
Wait, what?

He looks between them frantically. Grim isn't sure what's
happening here but he knows he doesn't like it. Spring looks
mildly concerned.

MADAME WISP
Spring, how would you like an
assistant this season?

SPRING

Oh!

(taken aback)

Well! Th-that would be super helpful Madame!

(pause)

Wait, is this about the chill in the air? If Mr. Winter was more fervent this season I can still do it myself--

MADAME WISP

As I suspected! And not to worry Spring, I have the utmost faith in you. I just want Grim to get some experience outside his wheelhouse.

(meaningfully to Grim)

It'd be good for him, I think.

(beat)

Grim, Spring is here to herald the Vernal Equinox here in New Hollow.

Grim might barf.

GRIM

(weakly)

So I've heard.

MADAME WISP

(cheerily)

And I'm temporarily assigning you to her case.

Grim is speechless. Spring looks thoughtful.

MADAME WISP (CONT'D)

In addition to your current tasks, I'd like for you to shadow Spring and help her prepare the city for the Equinox Festival.

GRIM

But what ab-

MADAME WISP

This shouldn't be a problem given your already lighter workload lately. If it is, then I'll offload some stuff to Skully and Die-Anna.

Grim gawks. Spring tries to reassure him.

SPRING
(whispering)
Don't worry, it's easy stuff.

MADAME WISP
Exactly! Spring, here's the book
but you know the drill! Let's liven
things up around here.

She hands her a HUGE bright green accordion folder.

MADAME WISP (CONT'D)
If you don't mind, I need a quick
word with Grim. Oh and you can use
the same office. It probably needs
some attention after Old Man
Winter.

Spring stands, taking it. Madame Wisp sits down behind the desk.

SPRING
Thanks Madame!
(to Grim)
And um... excited to be workin'
with you!

She exits. Grim snaps too, exploding with concern and jumping to his feet.

GRIM
Madame Wisp, with the utmost
respect... you can't be serious! I
don't know anything about spring! I
have no idea what's going on here,
but I really don't know how this is
going to help with our prob--

Madame Wisp stands on her chair and climbs on to the desk, walking over to Grim. They are now eye level. She yells, forcing him to meet her gaze.

MADAME WISP
Grim! Calm down! Look, right now we
need to focus on shifting your
image. People need to see the
"comfort you can bring to our loved
ones during a"

She gestures at Grim for him to finish the sentence.

GRIM
(earnestly)
"Difficult transition." But--

MADAME WISP

Exactly. It's a transition. One we can't fight. You know what else is a transition we can't fight?

GRIM

(getting the idea)
Spring?

MADAME WISP

You got it.

GRIM

(skeptically)
People don't really feel the need to fight Spring.

MADAME WISP

That's the point. Life is full of changes we can't stop, and the seasons are perhaps the most visible and accepted ones we have.

She turns to the window.

MADAME WISP (CONT'D)

I want New Hollow to see you and the Reaping Team like that: just another one of life's transitions. Go on the city tour with her. Help her out if you can, but mostly I just need people to see you together.

He stares at her for a long time.

GRIM

PR, huh?

MADAME WISP

PR. Let's give it the old college try, shall we?

(sigh)

Grim, without numbers to sustain the reaping program, *I have to cut it*. And neither of us want that. So I'm giving us until the Equinox.

The gravity of this sinks in. Grim thinks for a moment and then nods, determined.

GRIM
Okay. Let's try.

CUT TO:

INT. ABSTRACTIONS STUDIO

Somewhere in Abstractions, employees and actors tap dance in unison on a sound stage, filming a commercial.

An absurd jingle plays over over speakers.

COMMERCIAL
*It's Love! It's Rain! It's the
things we can't explain!
Abstractions gets us through the
day. It's Time! And Space! We run
the show so you can save face!*

Father Christmas missteps and buffalo shuffles right into Grief, a blue La Llorona-esque woman. Her skin melts as she literally BURSTS into a PUDDLE OF TEARS.

Her eyes float on the floor, in a pool of clothes and tears.

DIRECTOR
CUT!
(sighs, defeated)
Ugh, can we get the mop out here again?

DISSOLVE TO:

INT. SPRING'S OFFICE

Spring's reflection in an icy desk. Spring stands over the surface, defrosting it bit by bit. Life slowly blooms across the room. Venus shivers on her shoulder.

Spring works while chatting with TRULY (30s) an embodiment of truth. A free spirit covered in necklaces, gauzy chiffon scarves, and tie-dye pants, Truly hovers a foot or so above the ground. Her hair is flowy and her voice is breathy. She wears rose-colored glasses.

TRULY
You look well though! You looked positively dreadful the last time I saw you.

Spring rolls her eyes, smiling at this. Venus shivers in the chilly room.

SPRING

Thanks Truly. I'm bushels better now. You look well too.

TRULY

No I don't. As a matter of fact, I'm off color.

SPRING

Yeah, well mama always said to stick to the niceties.

TRULY

They have a way of making themselves known.

Grim sheepishly pokes his head in the room. Spring greets him shyly.

SPRING

Hey there.

GRIM

Hey there.

TRULY

Hey there!

She takes him by surprise.

GRIM

Oh! Truly! Um-- hi. Didn't see you there.

TRULY

(grinning)

I know.

Grim walks in, taking in the half-frozen, half-verdant room almost cautiously.

Spring looks back at her work. She melts and blooms. She's focusing very hard on the task. And very hard on not looking at Grim.

A long pause. Truly smiles.

TRULY (CONT'D)

Well, I know when I'm not wanted.

Spring looks up confused, watching Truly float away. After she's gone, she shrugs and continues working in silence.

Spring and Grim quickly break the silence at the same time.

SPRING I know this isn't your fir-- GRIM Sorry if I seemed up--

The pair meet eyes and blush.

Grim motions to her hands, now rubbing life into foxglove sprouting from the walls.

GRIM (CONT'D)
You're pretty good at that.

SPRING
(blushing)
Occupational hazard. But Winter left me a bluebell of a mess to clean up.

Grim surveys the rest of the room and walks over to the DESK. He pulls a wallet out of his pocket. He takes out a card, replacing the wallet. He chips ICE off the desk with little success.

SPRING (CONT'D)
Sooo...

GRIM
Sooo...

They talk as they work.

SPRING
So you're a... reaper?

GRIM
Isn't it obvious?

SPRING
Well, I didn't want to be rude.

GRIM
It's not rude, it's true.

SPRING
Ah.

GRIM
Sorry, *that* was rude.

Spring smiles.

SPRING

But it's true.

(pause)

How'd you get into this?

GRIM

Well, I wanted to be a chef but they thought whatever I made would be poisonous so no one would hire me.

Spring blanches and turns quickly to find a smirking Grim.

GRIM (CONT'D)

Heh. No this is what my mom did.
Family business.

Spring smiles.

SPRING

My dad taught me how to garden.

They both stop working for a brief moment, gazing at one another, until Grim snaps back.

GRIM

That-- and I *really* couldn't be anything else looking as scary as I do.

SPRING

(earnestly)

You're not scary!

He looks at her in disbelief.

GRIM

(good-naturedly)

Look I know we just met but it appears we're going to be working very closely together over the next few weeks. No need to lie out of politeness.

SPRING

I'm serious! I've seen Madame Wisp look way scarier!

GRIM

HA! That's not saying much. You didn't see her when she overheard Clarence from AR calling her a 'blow over'.

CUT TO:

BEGIN FLASHBACK.

A collection of cubicles labeled "ABSTRACTION RESOURCES" are darkened by a thunderous indoor storm. Lightning CRACKS and drenched employees hold files over their heads.

END FLASHBACK.

CUT TO:

SPRING'S OFFICE

GRIM

(lost in thought)

The office stormed for a week straight.

Grim is almost haunted.

GRIM (CONT'D)

10 floors are still mildewy...

Spring laughs LOUDLY. Heartily. It catches Grim off guard. He stares at her.

SPRING

Wh-What?

He seems to focus much harder on the desk.

GRIM

Nothing... You're just kinda...
(shrugs)
loud.

SPRING

(amused)

Would you rather me be quiet?

GRIM

No! I just didn't expect it. Sorry, I just thought that 'spring' would be... softer?

SPRING

Not a chance! You gotta be strong-willed to fend off winter!

With this last remark, she's finished crafting the room back to life. Hyacinth, tulips, daffodils. The shelves and floor are bedecked in blooms. Organized chaos sprouts in every corner.

Grim admires her work, nodding.

GRIM

I suppose you do.

SPRING

Now,

She gives him a wicked grin.

SPRING (CONT'D)

Let's have some fun!

DISSOLVE TO:

INT. SPRING'S OFFICE

Later, the now-green office bears more furniture: shelves of seeds and pots, a desk with a purple laptop, lamps, a fridge, a microwave, and a bright purple futon.

In the middle of the room is a circular wooden table, where Spring and Grim sit pouring over the contents of the green accordion folder. Venus lounges in a pile of dirt between them on the table.

Spring holds a box of Chinese food. Eating with chopsticks, Spring explains the finer points of well... "spring" to Grim.

SPRING

(mouth full)

The job mostly consists of growing, *obviously*. Then there are the pollinators and the hibernators.

A map of New Hollow hangs on the wall. Spring rises and gestures to the different zones.

SPRING (CONT'D)

We need to conduct a tour of the city. Really just facilitating the season as we transition to full bloom!

She holds out a piece of kung pao chicken.

SPRING (CONT'D)
Sure you don't want any?

GRIM
Uh, fine thanks.

She shrugs, popping it into her mouth and gesturing to the map.

SPRING
I go to the major parks and green spaces and begin the thawing and blooming process, just to get the ball rolling so nature can take it's course.

She turns back to Grim.

SPRING (CONT'D)
Aside from that, we need to train the bee colonies and other pollinators. And then wake up the hibernating critters in some of the outlying forests around New Hollow!

She smiles triumphantly at Grim. Grim is thoroughly unconvinced.

GRIM
Righhht.

CUT TO:

INT. MEMORY RETRIEVAL DEPARTMENT

Somewhere in Abstractions, a human woman, HYSTERICAL, sits in a cubicle with bloodshot eyes sobbing desperately to the RETRIEVAL ASSOCIATE across the desk, an old white cloud in an argyle vest and half-moon glasses with a long wispy beard that seems to be typing notes for him.

HYSTERICAL
(half-crying, half-shouting)
I-I can't eat. I can't SLEEP. I'm drowning. It's just like a fly in my ear keeping me up all night! ALL BZZZ BZZZ just BUZZING ABOUT!

RETRIEVAL ASSOCIATE
We'll find it ma'am. Please, just
calm down. When did you last
remember forgetting it?

HYSTERICAL
Calm DOWN?! I can't calm DOWN. IF
I'D *REMEMBERED* what I'd *FORGOTTEN*
THAN I WOULDN'T BE HERE.

The retrieval associate sighs.

INT. CUBICLES - CONTINUOUS

Over the cubicles, we see Grim's and Spring's heads bob by.
We follow them.

CUT TO:

INT. ABSTRACTIONS WAREHOUSE

DING! The elevator opens to reveal Spring and Grim inside.
The pair walk long rows of storage marked with different
departments.

Humans and cloud abstractions in safety vests tote boxes on
forklifts.

The pair come to a row marked "SEASONAL".

SPRING
Here!

He follows as she turns the corner. She points to boxes.

SPRING (CONT'D)
Those, and uhh where are the-- Oh!
We need hyacinths. Oh that one too!

Grim obediently gathers the various boxes in a collection on
the floor. Spring scans the shelves.

SPRING (CONT'D)
(muttering to herself)
Okay but where the bluebell are the
crocuses...Ooh!

She grabs another box of the shelf. The pair start opening
the boxes and tallying their contents.

Egg cartons of various flower bulbs and bags and bags of
seeds. Pansies, tulips, daffodil, crocuses, hyacinth.
Everything. The duo take inventory.

While they work...

SPRING (CONT'D)

Tomorrow we can start planting at
the green way.

GRIM

Sounds good.

SPRING

You should probably wear clothes
you don't mind getting dirty.

GRIM

Sure thing.
(under his breath)
12, 14, 16...

A pause.

SPRING

Can I ask you a question?

GRIM

(mindlessly)
Uh, sure.

For the first time, Spring looks genuinely concerned about
something.

SPRING

Why did Madame Wisp assign you to
this?

GRIM

Oh!

He's caught off-guard.

GRIM (CONT'D)

You heard what Madame Wisp said! I
just want some--

SPRING

-- "experience outside your
wheelhouse?"

She eyes him expectantly, maybe a touch suspiciously.

GRIM

Uh-heh yeah! Spring's interesting
to me!

SPRING

We're going to be working very closely together over the next few weeks. No need to lie out of politeness.

Grim grimaces.

GRIM

I didn't mean-

SPRING

Look, I know it's been a pretty intense winter, but I can handle it!

GRIM

(earnestly)

No! It's not like that! Madame Wisp doesn't doubt your work, I'm sure of it!

Spring snaps at him.

SPRING

Then why are you here?

A little vulnerably,

GRIM

I just -- I need... a change, sort of.

Not the whole truth but it's no lie for sure. Now Spring is caught off-guard.

SPRING

Oh. Sorry! That was presumptuous of me. I just -- it took longer than anyone expected last year.

GRIM

Don't worry about it.

Spring keeps counting, mouthing numbers but glancing back up at Grim. Her curiosity is piqued.

CUT TO:

EXT. NEW HOLLOW GREEN WAY - DAY

The next morning, the pair wear new but similar outfits, perhaps intended for getting dirty.

On a sidewalk surrounded by frosty greenery, they set to work springing things back to life.

Grim and Spring pull carts that carry boxes from the warehouse as well as spades and shovels. Spring carries a picnic basket. Bone wags his tail, prancing contentedly behind them, tongue out.

SPRING

Here is good!

GRIM

Right-o boss.

Spring walks up and down the path, running her fingers over frosty leaves of various bushes. The crystals retreat. A few snow patches melt underneath her feet.

Bone runs after her. She breaks into a run. They chase one another back and forth as she laughs.

Nearby Grim has placed tulip bulbs lining the path intermittently, every foot or two. At the first bulb, he tries to dig a whole.

THUNK! The shovel can't break through the cold ground. THUMP! THUMP! THUMP! Grim tries to break into the soil to no avail.

This get's springs attention.

SPRING

HA! That's never gonna work!

She walks over to the line of bulbs and gets down on her hands and knees, crawling through the melting slush.

GRIM

What are-

She begins huffing and puffing at the earth, crawling towards him.

GRIM (CONT'D)

What the...

Bone yaps and mimics her. Following behind her he pants at the ground, crouching lower.

A pair of humans walk by, pointing and smiling at the scene. Grim flushes and starts to pull his hoodie up over his head. He looks back at Spring and Bone to see...

The earth behind her is soft and tilled, warm and ready for planting.

He stops and crouches as she crawls right up to him. Her cheeks are flush from blowing.

SPRING
That--oughta--do it.

He cautiously touches the soil with a single finger. He nods his approval, dusting off his hand.

GRIM
Cool!

Grim sets the shovel aside and grabs a spade.

SPRING
We won't need that.

She digs through the dirt with her fingers, getting even dirtier. Grim seems unwilling to get dirty, still crouching on his feet.

GRIM
But why get all-

Plop. She softly drops the bulb into the whole and gently, almost motherly, tucks it in. A sprout POPs out.

SPRING
Lookin' good little guy!

They shift to the next bulb about a foot or two over.

SPRING (CONT'D)
You do this one.

GRIM
Just dig and drop?

SPRING
All there is to it. That and use
your hands.

He freezes, having reached for the spade again. He grimaces.

GRIM
That's a requirement?

SPRING
(giggling)
That's an order!

GRIM
Seriously?

SPRING

Seriously.

Grim reluctantly puts his hands to the earth, digging a small hole.

SPRING (CONT'D)

(smiling)

My dad taught me this stuff. He always used his hands. Said things grow greener when we connect with them. It's true, ya know? It's like they root better when they know we are rootin' for them.

Grim seems to soften at this. As he picks up the bulb, he shifts to his knees, becoming one with the mud. PLOP. He drops the bulb in.

The pair tuck the bulb in bed together. As they push dirt into the hole their hands meet for a brief moment. Their eyes meet. Before...

POP! This sprout emerges taller and straighter than the last.

SPRING (CONT'D)

(awkwardly)

Heh... Uh right, lots of ground to cover!

GRIM

(quickly standing)

Yep! I'll go over here!

CUT TO:

EXT. ABSTRACTIONS BALCONY - MORNING

A new day. The pair wear BEEKEEPING SUITS. On one of the Abstractions terraces sits an apiary, overlooking the city. A din of BUZZING can be heard. Bee boxes are stacked in columns and a few bees fly between them. A BOOMBOX sits on the ground nearby.

GRIM

So... how exactly do we train bees?

SPRING

Bees inform one another where to collect nectar and pollen through an intricate and ancient communication ritual.

GRIM
(thoroughly impressed)
Wait, you speak bee???

SPRING
You betcha!

BEEP! She hits a button on a remote and tosses it on the table. DISCO MUSIC begins to play.

Spring begins GYRATING and twerking. And not in a sexy way. In an utterly absurd way.

GRIM
Oh no. What-- what are you doing?

He is mortified.

Spring kicks her feet and shimmies her hips widely. A few bees swarm near her, swaying around her.

GRIM (CONT'D)
Dear gods.

SPRING
C'mon! Get into it!

GRIM
Don't say it.

SPRING
Bees DANCE to talk!!

GRIM
You said it.

This is his worst nightmare. Grim looks at his feet and tries shuffling them to the music. A few bees BUZZ near him, expectantly.

Grim sloooooowly, BEGRUDGINGLY, follows her movements. The pair start to sync up.

SPRING
Now you're getting it!

GRIM
I'm asking Madame Wisp for a raise.

The colony in it's entirety joins in the dance in a kind of silly bee flashmob.

Despite himself, Grim seems to be having a good time, shaking his head and smiling at Spring. Spring is laughing heartily at his attempts.

Abstractions employees, humans, walk by the balcony windows peering out at them.

DISSOLVE TO:

ABSTRACTIONS BALCONY - AFTERNOON

TWEEEEEEET! Spring blows a whistle and directs groups of bees in flight with marshaling wands. TWEET! TWEET! Bees fly to and fro' in organized arrays.

She directs a group behind her without looking, just as...

Grim walks by carrying a bee box. Bees SWARM him suddenly!

He DROPS the box in surprise and a HUGE CLOUD OF BEES ERUPTS! They chase him around the terrace.

DISSOLVE TO:

EXT. ABSTRACTIONS BALCONY - MOMENTS LATER

Out of their suits, Spring puts aloe on some of his stings. They are laughing.

SPRING

For the millionth time I didn't see
you there! I really feel like this
isn't my fault.

CUT TO:

EXT. PARK - AFTERNOON

In front of a wall of shrubs and flowers, Grim and Spring stand wearing gardening gloves and carrying watering cans. They pose unnaturally, showing off their props.

FLASH. SNAP! A human PHOTOGRAPHER takes their picture nearby.

SPRING

What are you doing??

FLASH. SNAP! Grim, distracted, remains looking at the camera. Grimacing. Like a sociopath.

GRIM
(through gritted teeth)
What? Smiling? What are you doing?
They're about to take it!

Spring drops all pretenses of posing, crossing her arms and laughing.

SPRING
I take it back.

GRIM
What?

SPRING
You are scary. Terrifying in fact.

She drops the watering can and sweeps an arm around him, catching him a little off-guard. Her viney arm sprouts mini-vines that begin to tickle him lightly.

GRIM
Hey! What are- I'M TICKLISH!

She smiles broadly at him. He cracks up and starts laughing, showing his real smile.

FLASH. SNAP! The picture freezes showing the photo. Both of their inner lights are shining through and together they seem to glow brighter.

DISSOLVE TO:

EXT. PARK - LATER

The pair have ditched the gloves and watering cans and are now tending to the park more earnestly. They sprinkle BAGS OF FERTILIZER on the ground around patches of flowers. The photographer lingers nearby SNAPPING the occasional pic.

The park is scattered with a few people, joggers and such, milling about. Some observe Grim and Spring with mild interest.

SPRING
Are you finally gonna to tell me
why Wisp reassigned you?

Grim twitches but keeps working.

SPRING (CONT'D)
And are you gonna to tell me what
the camera has to do with it?

He sighs.

GRIM

The Reaping team isn't... uh doing
so well right now.

Spring listens intently, but keeps working, trying not to
spook him.

GRIM (CONT'D)

Without people requesting and
utilizing our services, Wisp is
going to disband the department.

Spring whips her head to him.

SPRING

She can't do that!

GRIM

Well, yeah she can. But it's not
like she wants to.

(pause)

Our numbers have been dwindling for
years but they're at an all time
low. Skully hasn't had a house call
in months. Die-Anna only does
church services now. I only really
got the job because Wisp is friends
with my mom. It's not like they
need me here.

SPRING

(thoroughly confused)

So... you're transitioning into
seasonal work?

GRIM

What? No. Just that Wisp thinks
exposure might help our reputation.
And it's all I can do so I might as
well try.

Spring listens expectantly.

GRIM (CONT'D)

Exposure... like... people seeing
me with you.

He says this with a cringe. Spring stares blankly for a
moment.

SPRING

Oh... OH! Well why didn't you just say so?

(chuckling)

Though I don't think Wisp is taking into account how many people blame me for their allergies...

GRIM

I'm serious, look around us.

He gestures to the blooming park.

GRIM (CONT'D)

You did all this! It's amazing.
You're amazing!

This comment takes himself by surprise.

SPRING

I think you're pretty amazing too.

(pause)

Even if you can't dance.

GRIM

WOWWW, we're back to that are we?

Spring shrugs.

SPRING

It bears repeating.

(beat)

Do you think this'll work?

GRIM

What?

SPRING

Helpin' me thaw New Hollow.

GRIM

I don't know. But people are definitely paying attention, that's for sure.

Nearby, an outdoor yoga class is collectively gawking at the pair. A TREE-POSER loses focus and face-plants.

CUT TO:

EXT. ABSTRACTIONS PLAZA - MORNING

A new day. The pair walk away from Abstractions heading to another task.

GRIM
So what kinds of critters are we
waking up, exactly?

CUT TO:

EXT. CAVE MOUTH

The pair stand at the opening of a dark cave in a forest. Grim gawks, terrified. Spring bounces, excitedly.

GRIM
BEARS?!?

Cue an upbeat fiddle and plucky guitar duet. A jaunty, hopeful tune.

BEGIN MONTAGE that spans several days:

1. In a cave a black bear YAWWWWWNS in Grim's face, and he gags at the 6-month long morning breath. Spring CACKLES, practically ROLLING ON THE FLOOR.

2. They play with marmots and chipmunks. Spring climbs trees, gathering nuts for them. Grim stands below catching. One hits Grim on the head and they get into an acorn war.

3. Grim and Spring hang out together outside of work. In Grim's apartment, Spring sprouts exotic, bulbous flowers in his window box.

4. Back in the cave they play with little bats! They are so freaking CUTE. Just fluffy little balls with big eyes and little leathery wings.

5. They walk around the city. Spring blooms around parks.

6. They play a fighter-style video game; SHARDS OF FATE 2: PURPLE DREAM CONTINUUM. Grim wins.

7. Grim tries to feed Venus while Spring eats, watching nearby.

8. They move boxes and boxes of bulbs around the Abstractions warehouse.

9. Spring tends to her rooftop garden while Grim sits on a lounge chair nearby, typing on a keyboard.

10. They eat together in Spring's office.

11. They play more Shards of Fate. Spring can't beat him. Bones licks her face.

12. Spring leans on the edge of Grim's desk gesturing wildly with her hands, telling a story. Grim sits in his chair listening intently.

13. Grim, earbuds in, holds an "iPod" in his hand and dances the Bee dance around his kitchen. Bone covers his eyes, cringing.

14. In her apartment, Spring eats. A lot.

15. At his desk, Grim makes a delicate, lace-like, fossil NECKLACE out of butterfly wings.

16. As Spring dances around New Hollow, bringing life to every corner, we see it start taking a little toll on her. She has to work harder to make things grow. Gradually, she has changed. She's a little bit darker green than she used to be with fewer pastel petals and more jewel tone ones.

17. Madame Wisp sits in her office. She clicks through Grim and Spring's photo op pictures on her computer. She smiles, but it quickly fades into something like worry.

18. Spring finally beats Grim at Shards of Fate.

19. In funeral attire, Grim supervises an intimate burial service while Spring stands to the side, somber, also in black. She wears the butterfly wing NECKLACE. Grim sets a handful of dirt on the coffin. Some family members watch with disdain. An OLD WOMAN grabs his elbow as he turns to leave. She mouths "thank you", smiling sadly.

19. The sun begins to dip.

END MONTAGE

CUT TO:

EXT. HILLTOP - DUSK

Grim and Spring sit together, still in their funeral service attire. Crickets CHIRP. Breeze ruffles the grass.

They lean on the trunk of a large willow, looking out over the cityscape that glows in the dimming light. The last rays of sun dip behind Abstractions in the distance. A few stars twinkle in the periphery.

Spring, looking thoughtful, breaks the silence.

SPRING
How do you do it?

GRIM
What?

SPRING
How do you do *this*? How-- can you
bear it? Everyday.

Silence. Grim looks up. Spring looks to him for an answer.

GRIM
It's can be hard.
(sigh)
It can be *really hard*. But
honestly, on the whole, I love it.
(beat)
It's more like guiding, really. If
someone's going to die I can't stop
it. No one can do that. But... I
can make it easier, and that feels
really important.

Spring looks up, following his gaze. In the night sky, stars
blink into existence. A galaxy is forming.

GRIM (CONT'D)
That... And I think about the
stars.

SPRING
"The stars"?

GRIM
Yeah. My mom says we're all just
star dust. Just star dust mushed
together by love and coincidence.

He smiles, contemplative.

GRIM (CONT'D)
She thinks when we die, we turn
back into stars.

He turns to look back at her. The stars are reflected in her
eyes.

GRIM (CONT'D)
(softly)
And how can something so beautiful
always be a bad thing?

She runs her fingers over the grass in front of her and grows a SMALL PLANT with large leaves and 3 beautiful WHITE FLOWERS.

She plucks one from it's stem and hands it to Grim.

SPRING

It's a starflower.

He smiles and spins it between his fingers. In an almost reverent gesture he tucks it behind her ear.

He looks back to the cityscape. She looks on with a kind of awe.

She spots A SHOOTING STAR out of the corner of her eye.

She whips back to Grim with something like concern? Panic? It fades into longing.

SUDDENLY, Spring BURSTS to her feet.

SPRING (CONT'D)

I've got an idea!

Grim raises an eyebrow.

GRIM

What's that?

Before he's finished the question, she's bounding down the hill calling back.

SPRING

GOT TO GO! MEET ME EARLY TOMORROW!
8 AM!

Grim shakes his head to himself, grinning. He remains sitting, content to look at the stars.

CUT TO:

INT. ABSTRACTIONS LOBBY - MORNING

The next day, a cloud secretary sits at the front desk, typing away. DING! They look up.

Old Man Winter is back and he's rung the desk bell. He looks a little worse for wear. Maybe it's the heat.

SECRETARY

Oh, Mr. Winter! You're not supposed to be here!

OLD MAN WINTER

Oh, not to worry! Just... uh...
forgot some stuff! Yeah, down in
the warehouse. Mind lending me a
keycard?

The cloud is not buying it.

SECRETARY

Sir, I'm going to have to ask you
to leave the building. If you've
forgotten something, Madame Wisp
will follow up with you.

OLD MAN WINTER

Oh no! Let's not bother Wisp!
C'mon, it'll be quick!

SECRETARY

Security!

Two gruffer looking cumulonimbus clouds wearing guard
uniforms look over and begin walking towards the desk.

OLD MAN WINTER

Alright! Alright! I'm going! No
need to get all frosty.

He turns and heads to leave, muttering to himself.

SECRETARY

Right...

He's about to exit when he looks back, still skulking, until

OOF! He walks straight into Skully, who is doing the
crossword.

SKULLY

Whoa! Watch where you're-

He notices Winter's melt-y and haggard appearance. Water
drips on Skully's paper.

SKULLY (CONT'D)

You okay, chief? Need some help?

OLD MAN WINTER

(sourly)
You can't help me.

SKULLY
(affronted)
I'll have you know I'm very
helpful! I'm capable and productive
and I still have a lot left to give
to this company!

This catches Winter's attention.

OLD MAN WINTER
Oh, I'm so sorry! Forgive me! I'm
not myself at the moment. I seem to
have misplaced my keycard, and I
really need to get into the
warehouse. Lots to do, you know.

SKULLY
(clearly fronting)
Oh, I do. I also have a lot to get
done. Speaking of which--

He stuffs the newspaper into his back pocket and begins to
walk away. Winter stops him.

OLD MAN WINTER
You wouldn't be able to lend me
your card just this one time, would
you, friend?

Skully makes a show of checking a pocket watch.

SKULLY
Much to do. Much to do. But, I
never say no to being *helpful*.

He pulls the keycard badge from his neck. Before he can even
finish removing it, Winter snatches it from the air and
flurries away.

OLD MAN WINTER
Thank you, SO MUCH! What a helpful
guy!

Stunned but pleased, Skully pulls the crossword back out and
keeps walking, now smiling to himself.

SKULLY
Why, I *am* a helpful guy.

CUT TO:

INT. THE REAPING DEPARTMENT

Grim walks into his office carrying a to-go coffee cup. Bone on his heels. Spring sits at his desk talking animatedly to a human, sitting at Die-Anna's desk.

Bone runs up to her and she whips around to see Grim.

SPRING

There you are! Come on!

She gestures to the other person, NELLY (50s), wearing scrubs.

SPRING (CONT'D)

Grim, this here is Nurse Nelly! She works at New Hollow Hospice just down the road.

(she gestures to Grim)

Nelly, Grim.

GRIM

Uh, hello there! It's nice to meet you.

He shakes her extended hand.

NELLY

Wonderful to meet you as well! I've heard a lot about you from Spring, here.

GRIM

Is that so?

He darts a concerned look to Spring. Spring stands and gestures for him to take her seat. He does.

SPRING

I was telling her about your work around town. And how you're lookin' for more opportunities to help the folk of New Hollow!

NELLY

And I think I might have the very opportunity for you! Grim, I'm the head nurse at the center and I know better than anyone the struggle that my patients go through day-in and day-out. It's my job to provide comfort to them so you can understand why I jumped at Spring's offer.

GRIM

Offer?

SPRING

After the service yesterday and our talk last night, I was trying to figure out a way for you to provide comfort to more people. And then I had the idea!

Nelly and Spring share a look, then turn back to Grim.

NELLY

We would like to start a Reaper counseling program!

GRIM

What?

NELLY

I want to work with the Reaping Department of Abstractions to implement a Reaper-led bereavement and grief support group at New Hollow Hospice! For patients, family members, loved ones! Anyone who wants it!

GRIM

Oh! Wow! Um, I don't know what to say!

SPRING

Duh! Say yes!

GRIM

Well--I'm flattered, and this sounds amazing. It sounds... *important.*

SPRING

But?

GRIM

Well, shouldn't someone more experienced helm this?

SPRING

Grim, you're the team lead here! Madame Wisp knows how talented you are.

Grim doesn't say anything.

SPRING (CONT'D)
BUT I thought you might say that.
Which is why...

She gestures to...

TRULY
Hello!

GRIM
AH!

Shocked, Grim WHIPS around at the greeting. Truly appears from seemingly no where? Or maybe she's been here the whole time?

GRIM (CONT'D)
Why do you *DO* that??

TRULY
Do what?

SPRING
Never mind --

GRIM
(under his breath)
Every time!

SPRING
Truly, tell Grim what you told me!

TRULY
(matter-of-factly)
A cow eats a cabbage like the
brassiest tacks get down.

SPRING
No, the other thing! About reaping!

TRULY
(dreamily)
Fear lies in what we do not know
and cannot understand.

Beat. She turns to Grim.

TRULY (CONT'D)
(matter-of-factly)
That's why no one likes you.

SPRING

The other-other thing!
(cringing)
Oh, gods.

TRULY

Oh. You, Grim, understand the gravity of the weight that loved ones carry when people die. If they accepted your counsel, you could be just as valuable to them as you are to those in passing. Creating more substantial relationships with people will demystify their grief.

GRIM

That's a pretty big if.

NELLY

She's right! I see it all the time. If you could just give support to those who ask for it, I know you could make a huge difference for those battling with loss, or those confronting uncertainties.

Grim considers this for a minute. He looks to Spring. Holding her breath, she nods encouragingly.

GRIM

Why don't we begin just by gauging interest? Seeing how many people at the center might want a program like this?

NELLY

I knew we could count on you!
Spring spoke so highly of you!

Grim looks to Spring while she and Nelly begin talking logistics.

CUT TO:

INT. ABSTRACTIONS WAREHOUSE

Ding! The elevator door opens to reveal Spring and Grim again entering the warehouse, but something's off this time. Their noses both crinkle.

GRIM

Oh, gods! What is that smell?

Spring looks around confused and then pales.

SPRING
My babies!

She runs down the rows of shelves.

GRIM
Hey, what? Wait!

He runs after her.

They stop abruptly at the Seasonal supplies. The boxes are turned over and rotting flowers and bulbs lay in mushy piles on the floor.

Spring is horrified. Grim covers his mouth.

SPRING
Oh-- Oh, gods. Who would do something like this?

Grim spies something shiny on the floor and bends down to inspect it. Ice.

GRIM
I think I might know.

He looks back to her.

GRIM (CONT'D)
Spring, I'm so sorry!

She might cry.

SPRING
Those poor babies.

GRIM
Hey it's okay.

Tears well up.

SPRING
What are you talking about? It's not okay! This is horrible! We still have so much to do and now we don't have enough flowers.

GRIM
No... but maybe we can still use this stuff.

SPRING
What are you talking about?

GRIM
Give me an hour. And some bags. A
lot of bags.

Spring looks worried, but nods.

CUT TO:

EXT. ABSTRACTIONS BALCONY

PLOP! Grim drops sacks and sacks of fertilizer on the ground.

Spring walks out onto the terrace. She's no longer crying but not doing much better. Grim sees her and shifts to display the piles.

GRIM
TA-DA!

SPRING
...Oh wow... Dirt! Thanks...

GRIM
No, not just dirt! Super, nutrient-
rich fertilizer from freshly
decomposed flowers!

Spring crinkles her brows, and then...

SPRING
Gods, that's brilliant! You're a
genius!

She flings her arms around him. He blushes.

GRIM
Oh it wasn't that hard. Most of the
decomposing was done for me.

She pulls back to look at him.

SPRING
You are a *natural* at spring! If you
ever want a career change, you can
be my assistant full-time!

GRIM
The hope is that won't be
necessary, but I'll keep that in
mind.

(MORE)

GRIM (CONT'D)

(beat)

We don't have enough flowers to cover the parks, but maybe with this stuff we can supplement what we've already planted so the flowers will spread on their own.

SPRING

It's worth a shot!

EXT. FOREST - AFTERNOON

The pair walk in a wooded clearing. Spring leads Grim somewhere.

GRIM

What are we doing over here? I thought we were going to East New Hollow today...

SPRING

You're fertilizer plan -- it gave me an idea. I thought we could try something.

(beat)

Working together.

He laughs.

GRIM

What? We work together all the time!

SPRING

No, we do *my* work *together*. There's a difference.

GRIM

I don't get it.

SPRING

You will.

LATER, the pair are laughing and chatting mindlessly about everything and nothing. They work together, using their distinct powers IN TANDEM.

Grim breaks down logs and decomposes leaves, decaying matter quickly. Spring follows behind, ERUPTING mushrooms in his wake.

GRIM

--the second one though!

SPRING

Okay, like the graphics are good
but the plot just totally lost
focus!

GRIM

You're just saying that because you
think Lucid is a better avatar than
Tea Pot.

SPRING

Her super power is steam!

GRIM

(exasperated)
Scalding steam!

Spring cackles at him.

GRIM (CONT'D)

You don't believe me? Fine. Day
after tomorrow we are having a
tournament. I'm taking out your
whole line up with Tea Pot.

SPRING

But tomorrow's the party.

GRIM

So?

Spring doesn't answer, watching him with concern. Grim
doesn't notice, carrying on with the logs.

DISSOLVE TO:

Later, it's magic hour. The pair are finishing their work.
Unique and colorful fungi have bloomed around them.

SPRING

Should do it!

GRIM

Are we done?

SPRING

Yep! Now come'ere!

She waves him over, walking away from the mushrooms. She
stops at the base of a large tree. She scrunches up her nose
and reaches her arms up towards the branches. He follows,
watching.

GRIM
What are you doing?

SPRING
New perspective, yaddah-yaddah, all
that stuff.

Her arms lengthen and she jumps up, grabbing hold of a low branch. Quick as a monkey, she swings herself up.

Grim looks up, asking a question until WOOSH!

GRIM
New perspec-- WOAHH!

She swings an arm down, grabbing him and pulling him up.

She laughs and shakes her arms back to their normal length. He situates himself next to her on the branch before looking down to see...

It's breathtaking. On the ground, we only saw patches of colorful mushrooms, but zoomed out from above we get a clear picture. A MURAL OF MUSHROOMS on the forest floor creating a beautiful portrait of GRIM AND SPRING sitting on the hill overlooking New Hollow, surrounded by stars.

He's speechless. Spring smiles in awe, admiring their work. Tears well up in her eyes.

SPRING
Wow. I knew it'd look cool but this-

He cuts her off. He turns back to her.

GRIM
-- I ... love it.
(beat)
I love it.

He gets a little choked up.

GRIM (CONT'D)
It's so--
(beat)
No one's ever--
(beat)
Thank you, Spring.

A few tears roll down Spring's cheek. She shakes her head. Their faces are very close together.

SPRING
(whispering)
No. Thank you.

Grim slowly, cautiously begins to raise a finger to her cheek to wipe away her tear. Until...

CLOSE ON Spring's eyes. Grim's own narrow. Something's wrong.

Spring's eyes, and her face as a whole looks tired. *Really* tired. A little rougher. Not as smooth as it was moments ago.

Concern plasters his face.

GRIM
Spring, what's wrong?

SPRING
What?

She touches her face and feels the thin lines now etched on her green skin.

SPRING (CONT'D)
Oh-heh. I'm fine. Just-just tired.
It can be a lot of work to bring
Spring.

His eyes narrow, unconvinced.

SPRING (CONT'D)
Yeah, it's just a lot. I'll be fine
tomorrow... It's just harder
nowadays. My dad...
(beat)
My dad used to tell me stories
about bringing spring. Back when it
was easy as breathing or counting
stars. It's just harder than that
now is all...

She trails off, not meeting Grim's eyes.

GRIM
That's how you know Nurse Nelly.

SPRING
What? Oh, yeah. She used to take
care of my dad... He's gone now
though.

When she looks back to Grim, he's shocked and hurt.

GRIM
Oh. Oh--sorry.

Spring looks horrified.

SPRING
No! Gods! I'm sorry--that's not--
I didn't mean it like that. It's
not your fault--
(exasperated sigh)
Sorry, I really am tired. This is
normal.

She gestures to herself.

SPRING (CONT'D)
The colder the winter, the harder
the job is.
(under her breath)
It's never this bad though.

She shakes her head and speaks to him matter-of-factly.

SPRING (CONT'D)
I just need to eat something and
get some sleep.

GRIM
(panicked)
Is... is it me?

SPRING
What?

Grim's composure seems to shatter.

GRIM
(more forceful)
Is it me?!

SPRING
No! This is just what happens!

GRIM
What do you mean?

Spring loses it too. Tears fall freely. She can't tiptoe
around it anymore.

SPRING
(exasperated)
What do you mean, *what do I mean?*
(she yells)
Grim, Spring doesn't last forever!

She reels back, stunned at her outburst. Grim is stricken.

SPRING (CONT'D)

I--I have to go!

Just like that she jumps out of the tree.

Grim is processing her words. He looks hurt and mad.

GRIM

(yelling)

Where are you going?

She's already gone.

CUT TO:

INT. SPRING'S KITCHEN - NIGHT

Spring sits at her massive table, with a single light on. Venus rests in a pot on the table with a plate in front of her. On the plate sits a SLICE OF CHOCOLATE CAKE with a fork in it.

Spring looks -- for the first time ever -- dull. She sits with her knees tucked to her chest and stares out the window at the cityscape. She's lost in thought.

Venus nudges the plate towards her with a SKKKRT SKKRT.

Spring looks down at the cake then back to the window.

SPRING

No thanks, sugar. Not hungry.

Beat. Spring is over-ripening.

INT. ABSTRACTIONS PLAZA - GROUND FLOOR

Spring is here! It's the day of the Vernal Equinox and the office is having a party to celebrate.

Cheesy paper flowers dangle from rope strung overhead. Abstractions and human employees alike mingle with drinks and paper napkins of cookies and snacks. Your typical office party, with a not-so-typical assortment of guests.

Spring stands alone by the snack table but doesn't eat anything. She's still tired, and off-color. Maybe even more so now. Her viney hair is limp and void of any flowers. The lively music mocks Spring's state.

This is a different Spring than we've come to know.

Venus sits perched on her shoulder. Spring quietly speaks to her. Venus frowns with concern.

SPRING

I told you, I'm fine. I'm just not really hungry right now.

Madame Wisp POOFS beside her, startling her.

MADAME WISP

Spring you've done a marvelous job!

SPRING

OH! Madame! Uh--thank you!

Wisp takes notice of her condition. She softens.

MADAME WISP

Oh dear, getting to be that time?

Spring doesn't look very focused. She's breathing hard.

SPRING

What? Oh. Yeah. I'm going to go lie down in my office for a few minutes. I'll be back.

MADAME WISP

(motherly)

Really great work, Spring. New
Hollow thanks you. And so do I.
Take all the rest you need.

Spring walks away, slowly, gingerly.

CUT TO:

INT. GRIM'S LIVING ROOM

Bone nudges at Grim's shoe, trying to get his attention. Grim sits on the couch. His phone is in his hand like he's been scrolling but he's staring off into space.

Bone WHINES.

GRIM

What? Not right now, bud.

DING DONG! He turns to the door and walks over. His brow is furrowed. Bone hurries at his feet.

CUT TO:

EXT. GRIM'S DOORWAY

We see the exterior of his door, and we see it open to reveal Grim, answering the doorbell.

He looks around in confusion. No one's there.

He shakes his head and as he begins to close the door...

CUT TO:

INT. GRIM'S LIVING ROOM

As Grim walks back in he notices...

GRIM

AHHH!!

TRULY is standing in his living room! Bone BARKS loudly. He jumps behind Grim. He peaks out from behind Grim again and runs over to Truly jumping on her excitedly.

TRULY

(calmly)

Hello, Bone.

GRIM

TRULY! What the *hell* are you doing here? Uhh -- now's not really a good time.

She doesn't acknowledge him. She walks around the room taking it in. Bone trots behind her happily.

TRULY

(talking to herself)

The party's started but I'm needed elsewhere. Too bad. Madame Wisp made the little cookies with white chocolate sprinkles.

GRIM

Hey, Truly, I don't know what you're doing here, but I think you should go.

Truly meanders over to the window box inspecting it.

GRIM (CONT'D)

Truly? I don't want any comp--

He walks toward her until --

Something she's looking at has caught his attention.

He rushes to where she's standing to see that Spring's flowers have wilted and are losing their petals. Suddenly he's stricken again.

Truly's eyes float upward. Even though it's daytime, the moon hangs in the sky.

TRULY

The moon is waning.

GRIM

Wh-what?

For the first time she looks a Grim, talking to him directly.

TRULY

Soon you'll be out of light. It'll be dark for awhile. But I promise it will wax again.

He stares at her, trying to process her words.

TRULY (CONT'D)

I suggest you spend what little light you have left talking to Spring.

She floats towards the door, leaving him contemplating this.

TRULY (CONT'D)

I'm going to have a cookie.

Distraught, Grim looks back towards the fading flowers.

CUT TO:

INT. ABSTRACTIONS PLAZA

Grim walks into the party, he scans slowly but doesn't see Spring.

Guests congregate in crowds and the bright colors everywhere begin to blend. His head swivels back and forth.

GRIM
(under his breath)
Where is she?

Cut between Grim approaching different groups looking for her. Pixies chatter hovering. A black-hole shaped like a person vacuums food off the table as if eating. Truly stands by the pond in the center of the plaza eating a cookie. She watches two massive koi fish circling each other in the center.

Grim spots Madame Wisp. He runs over to her. She spots him heading her way.

MADAME WISP
Oh, good! Grim, you're here! Just
wonderful work! I want to--

GRIM
(urgently)
Madame, where's Spring?

Wisp's face falls.

MADAME WISP
Oh, Grim. I thought you knew. She's
leaving soon.

GRIM
Where is she?

MADAME WISP
If she's still here, in her office,
but--

He's already gone.

CUT TO:

INT. SPRING'S OFFICE

Spring stands over the futon, looking down at it. She's lost in thought until

BOOM. Grim bursts in. Spring whips around to the door.

GRIM
(relieved)
Oh, thank gods!

He rushes forward and grabs her in a tight hug.

SPRING

Grim!

GRIM

You haven't left yet!

SPRING

I--well, no! What -- what are you doing here?

GRIM

I just had to tell you before you left.

He pulls back to look at her, holding her shoulders. Spring's eyes crinkle with concern.

SPRING

Don't make this harder than it has to be. You should leave now.

GRIM

No! You can leave if you want but I have to tell you this first!

Spring cracks a little, softening.

GRIM (CONT'D)

Before I met you, I was living the same day. Over and over again.

(beat)

I was stuck. I was trapped. I--I guess living isn't really the right word.

She scans his face, struck.

GRIM (CONT'D)

But at some point, I started to feel like I deserved all the dirty looks. Like maybe everyone was right to stay away.

(beat)

But then I met you.

She starts to cry.

GRIM (CONT'D)

Then I met you, and you were so... weird.

He laughs, smiling at the thought.

GRIM (CONT'D)

You were so weird and so you. So loud and unapologetic about who you are. It's amazing -- and I thought maybe I could be like that too. I've never met anyone so strong-willed.

(beat)

Spring, you're such a special kind of beautiful.

Pause.

GRIM (CONT'D)

And I -- I love you.

Spring gasps and grabs him again, hugging him tightly, still crying. But now she's smiling. Grim holds her just as tightly until...

She gasps again. SHARP. And begins COUGHING VIOLENTLY.

GRIM (CONT'D)

Hey?

Grim's smile is replaced with intense concern. She falls to her knees, and Grim kneels down to catch her. They are sitting on the floor. Spring coughs and pants.

GRIM (CONT'D)

Hey--hey what's going on?! Spring?!

Spring falls silent, and slowly looks up at Grim. He seems far more distressed than she does.

SLOWLY, her greenery, her leaves and vines, begin to EFFERVESCE. They seem to EVAPORATE IN TO THE AIR AROUND THEM.

To Grim's horror. He sputters. At a loss for words, and tries to hold her tighter, to no avail.

Spring is overcome with calm, still smiling sadly at him.

SPRING

I'm sorry I was too chicken to tell you.

She laughs gently, in contrast with Grim's despair.

SPRING (CONT'D)

I think I've loved you since that first day. Since that first moment right in here.

She puts a paling, green hand on his cheek, and wipes away a single tear before it can fall. Her voice is weaker.

SPRING (CONT'D)

Hey, it's okay.

She's almost gone.

SPRING (CONT'D)

Grim, I'm so lucky.

(cough)

Thank you.

She withers away completely. There's nothing left.

Grim is frozen in the sudden silence.

CUT TO:

INT. GRIM'S LIVING ROOM

Grim walks in alone. He looks out the window. The barren window box mocks him.

DISSOLVE TO:

TIME PASSES IN NEW HOLLOW. BEGIN MONTAGE:

1. Grim sits in front of Madame Wisp's desk. She rubs his arm. He cries into his hands.

2. Grim, walking into work, stares at SUMMER warily, a bright yellow young man, chatting unaware with a few other abstractions.

3. He goes on a morning run with Bone.

4. Grim attends a funeral service.

5. He eats cereal with Bone on the couch, petting him absent-mindedly.

6. He knocks on doors, making house-calls with Bone.

7. He sits at his desk, working, with Die-Anna and Skully now working more fervently at their own desks.

8. He reads under the tree where he and Spring watched the stars. Bone chases squirrels nearby, making him laugh.

9. We see Grim counseling a support group.

10. He holds a woman's hand while listening to her. She lays in a hospice bed.

11. He runs more.

12. Grim walks through a cemetery, throwing a ball for Bone who continuously chases it and brings it back. A few family members from the earlier service with Spring stand nearby, visiting the headstone. One of the family members who once looked at him with disgust now gives him a soft smile and a brief nod.

13. In the hospice ward hallway, an OLD WOMAN hugs Grim tightly. This catches him off-guard but he holds her tightly back.

END MONTAGE.

CUT TO:

INT. GRIM'S LIVING ROOM

Grim sits on the couch, reading a comic book. SUDDENLY, he looks up at the TV and the gaming console below it. He stares for a minute.

He walks over to it. The console is dusty. He presses the power button. He grabs one of the controllers sitting on top, wiping it off.

The TV BLINKS on. A MENU with a few apps appears. He toggles over to the SHARDS OF FATE logo and hits select.

A notice appears. "UPDATE REQUIRED. PROCEED?" He clicks "CONFIRM". While he waits, he stares out the window but SOMETHING green catches his eye.

He walks over to the sill and sees a small green bud in the window box. His brows crinkle.

DING DONG! He turns to the door.

CUT TO:

EXT. GRIM'S DOORWAY

We see the exterior of his door, and we see it open to reveal Grim, answering the doorbell.

He gasps, tearing up. We see it on his face.

It's springtime again. <3

FADE TO BLACK.

THE END.