

WOLF CRY WOLF

A play by

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WOLF CRY WOLF

CHARACTERS

JANE	F	23, 13
STEPH	F	21, 11
GEORGE	M	15

CASTING OPTIONS

2F / 1M or 4F / 1M

WOLF CRY WOLF can be played with three or five actors. For a cast of three, the same actors play JANE and STEPH as both adults and adolescents. The actors should be in their twenties and inhabit the memory. For a cast of five, split the parts of the adult and adolescent JANE and STEPH and cast age-appropriate actors.

SETTING

Dickinson, North Dakota

Everybody needs his memories. They keep the wolf of
insignificance from the door.

- Saul Bellow

July. Sunshine. The front yard of JANE's family's home. A "For Sale" sign. Firecrackers. GEORGE, fifteen, stands dressed in a long black coat, shorts, and black boots without laces. HE smokes a cigarette. A dog barks. GEORGE looks a little ruffled. HE wanders away as JANE enters. SHE is thirteen. SHE inspects the "For Sale" sign. SHE reaches into the box above it containing pamphlets about the property. SHE sits and begins to tear these apart, one by one, then in bunches. SHE puts them in her mouth and tears at them. SHE spits pieces out and gnaws at the pamphlets, snarling convincingly as SHE does. STEPH enters, holding some firecrackers and a matchbook. SHE is eleven.

STEPH

What are you doing?

JANE

What's it look like?

STEPH

My name's Steph.

JANE tears apart more pamphlets.

We just moved here. Is this your house?

JANE

This is where we live.

STEPH

So it's your house?

JANE

If we live here then it must be our house, right?

STEPH

A dog's name.

JANE

Tell Sampson to stop barking. He's giving me a migraine.

STEPH

What's a migraine?

JANE

It's a big headache. My mom gets them. Usually when I'm around. She says I'm a trigger. Like on a gun. Bang! Ugh. Tell that dog to shut up!

STEPH

Samson! Stop barking!

The dog barks.

JANE

That didn't work.

STEPH

He's nervous. It's a brand new place. Plus the fireworks are noisy. And that smell.

JANE

What smell?

STEPH

The sweet smell.

JANE

That's sweetgrass. It's a nice smell. It's my favorite smell actually. Ahh! If that dog doesn't stop barking I'm going to scream.

STEPH

My dad can usually get him to stop.

JANE

How's he do it?

STEPH

He yells really loud.

JANE

Yell really loud then. Come on. He's driving me crazy.

STEPH

SAMSON! STOP BARKING! YOU'RE GIVING MY NEW FRIEND A MIGRAINE,
WHICH IS A BIG HEADACHE!

JANE

See? It worked.

STEPH

What's your name?

JANE

Give me some firecrackers.

STEPH approaches JANE and hands her some
firecrackers, which JANE sets in the pile of
shredded pamphlets.

How old are you?

STEPH

Eleven and a half.

JANE

I'm thirteen and a half.

STEPH

When's your birthday?

JANE

October.

STEPH

No way. Mine too.

JANE

What day?

STEPH
You first.

JANE
I asked you first.

STEPH
Say it at the same time.

JANE
Thir... tenth.

STEPH
Thir... d.

JANE
Huh. Pretty close anyway.

STEPH
Yeah.

JANE
Give me the matchbook, Eleven and A Half.

JANE lights the match. SHE holds it as the fire burns toward the pads of her fingers.

STEPH
You're going to burn yourself.

JANE brings the flame to the firecrackers. The pile of pamphlets explodes.

JANE
Ha!

STEPH
Doesn't that hurt?

JANE
Nah. Look how far down the match I got. You try.

STEPH
I don't know.

Scared? JANE

No. STEPH

Try it then. JANE

STEPH holds the match for about half as long as JANE did. SHE drops it and waves her hand from the pain.

Ow ow ow. STEPH

Not too bad. JANE

The dog barks.

JANE STEPH
SAMPSON! SHUT UP! SAMSON! SHUT UP!

A moment while THEY listen. The dog does not bark.

My name's Jane. JANE (CONT'D)

I'm Steph. STEPH

You told me already. JANE

So I told you twice. Are you going to move? STEPH

No. JANE

STEPH
Are you sure?

JANE
Yes.

STEPH
How sure?

JANE
Very.

STEPH
What percentage? Out of a hundred?

JANE
Did you just learn percentages?

STEPH
Yeah.

JANE
Nobody likes a show off, Steph.

STEPH
I'm just wondering.

JANE
I'm ninety percent sure. Out of a hundred.

STEPH
What's the sign for then? The other ten percent?

JANE
It's just a stupid sign.

STEPH
I've seen signs like that before. We had one in front of our old house before we moved here.

JANE

Just because there's a sign in our yard doesn't mean I'm moving.

STEPH

But it means the house is for sale. That's what it says. "For Sale."

JANE

Wow! Good for you! You can read too!

STEPH

You're angry.

JANE

I am not angry!

STEPH

We can still be friends even if you're going to move.

JANE

Who said anything about friends?

STEPH

I'm just saying.

JANE

I've got friends coming out my wanghole.

STEPH

Your what?

JANE

My wanghole. It's a hole in your wang. You'll figure it out when you're older.

STEPH

I'm just saying we can be friends even if you're going to move. Do you know where you're moving?

JANE

You're nosy, Eleven and A Half.

STEPH

My dad says I'm precocious, Thirteen and A Half.

JANE

It's funnier when I do it. So you live right there now, huh?

STEPH

Yeah.

JANE

That house used to belong to an old lady. She's dead.

STEPH

Oh.

JANE

She died in that house.

STEPH

Really?

JANE

Yep. Which room is yours?

STEPH

That one.

JANE

Oh man.

STEPH

What?

JANE

I'm pretty sure that's the exact room she died in.

STEPH

Shut up. You're lying.

JANE

I'm not. The night she died an ambulance and a police car came. They brought her out in a yellow bag. I saw it out my window. She had all these cats, too. Maybe that's why Sampson is going crazy. He can smell the ghost cats.

STEPH

You didn't have to tell me all that. About the dead lady and her ghost cats. How am I going to sleep?

JANE

Oh relax! People die all the time.

STEPH

Not in my bedroom!

JANE

You should get used to it. This town is full of weirdos. But hey, look on the bright side: my room's right there.

STEPH

Yeah. So?

JANE

Since we're friends now, we'll be able to talk at night.

STEPH

How?

JANE

(exiting)

Wait here.

STEPH picks up one of the remaining intact pamphlets. SHE puts it in her mouth and gnaws at it halfheartedly, then more assuredly. SHE snarls a bit. SHE spits some pieces and reaches for another pamphlet as JANE returns with two walkie-talkies.

Stand over there and press the button.

STEPH

Hello?

JANE

Farther! Stand way over there!