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Design for The Departure Scene in "The Monarch of the Glen"

The story *Monarch of the Glen*, by Neil Gaiman, featured in his book 'Fragile Things' is a short fictional story that intertwines the modern world with the legends of Norse and Greek gods. As a work, it integrates mystery, myth, magic, action, and romance, making it a perfect story to convert to film. One of the more touching scenes is towards the end when Jennie, a barmaid and hulder, says her final goodbye to Shadow. The scene demonstrates an impossible love between the two characters. However, it also alludes to an uncertain, possibly hopeful future for both of their lives.

Summary

The story's narration revolves around the protagonist, who calls himself Shadow. Displayed as a wanderer from America, he seems to be nothing more than an uncomfortably tall man. Nevertheless, Shadow is somehow not normal. The protagonist appears to be in a self-conflict. While he wants to remember where he belongs, he simultaneously shows signs of denial when confronted with evidence of his monstrous and immortal characteristics. Through dreams, Shadow's present "human" self is connected to mysterious figures in the mist, who seem familiar to Shadow, but whom he cannot remember. While staying in a town on the north coast of Scotland, Shadow meets Jennie. Working as a barmaid at his hotel, Jennie first comes off as someone annoyed and tired of living in the middle of nowhere. She acts aloof to most things, but for some reason, she takes an interest in Shadow. Her physique borders the unnatural. She is described as too pallid, too thin, and too sulky, and her hair is so

blond, it is almost white. Still, she contains an unexplainable beauty. During various encounters throughout the story, Jennie's true mythical identity becomes increasingly evident.

In the third meeting between the two characters, Jennie shows up in Shadow's dreams. Because of the way dreams are used throughout the work to connect to the supernatural, Jennie's mythical identity becomes more apparent. She warns Shadow about the danger he is in and promises him that if he needs help, he should call for her, and she will come. In the dream, Jennie reveals that she is hollow from behind and has a tail. Both characteristics were used to describe hulders in an earlier part of the story. By including these details, the author affirms all previous suspicions that Jennie is a hulder. As promised, when Shadow is in dire need and calls on Jennie, she appears to save him. The day after his rescue, Shadow goes to Jennie's house. Only there is no trace of her cottage. When he gets back to his hotel room, Jennie is there waiting for him, and she sadly declares how she had hoped he would have loved her. Simultaneously, Shadow realizes that he is attracted to her. However, hulders have to love a man, which Shadow is not. This reality separates the two characters. Before vanishing, Jennie mentions that she may finally be able to go home. After squeezing his hand, she is gone.

Message

The last scene between the characters has two facets. On the one hand, the relationship between Jennie and Shadow is full of unspoken wishes. They are two creatures who will never truly be human. They are attracted to one another, but can never be together. On the other hand, this final scene between the two is not without hope. Because Shadow has broken the ritual, which had kept the mythical realm in bondage, Jennie and Shadow are free. Although the two characters cannot find their joy in one another, their newfound freedom leaves them with hope for the future.

Intent

The primary feeling of this scene is the tragic love between Jennie and Shadow, which can never be realized. However, the scene should also create an heir of potential toward the end. The centuries of being stuck in time are over; there is a new era in the breeze. In conclusion, the scene is bitter-sweet. Love is not an option, but that does not mean there will be despair.

The people most interested in this specific aspect of the film would be those who love romance and mystery. However, I do not believe that the relationship between Jennie and Shadow would be the focus of the entire film. Instead, their relationship would be comparable to that of Arwen and Aragorn in the movie "Lord of the Rings."

Cast



For Jennie, I believe Elizabeth Debicki would be a perfect match. As described in the book, Jennie's "hair was so blond, it was almost white" (291), and she is "too pallid, too sulky, too thin" (269). Her voice should be quieter, but since she smokes (293), her voice could be slightly raspy. Elizabeth's voice and features fit well with the appearance of Jennie. She has also taken on roles in works such as *The Great Gatsby* (2013) and *Everest* (2015), which both hold a serious tone like this film. In the scene, I imagine Jennie wearing a crème colored blouse, pale blue shawl, and a flowy, knee-length skirt. Her long brown coat is hung over the back of the armchair. Her hair has crisp, curly waves. She is also wearing make-up, red lipstick, and attractive heels. In this last scene, the book describes her as "a wild thing" (336), which is what Shadow is

attracted to. However, it is not easy to translate that sentiment without words. Therefore, I would like to communicate her freedom and change, as well as Shadows' newfound attraction to her, by making her look more groomed.



While there are not many hints towards Shadow's appearance in the book, he is described as reasonably tall. We also know that he has worked as a bodyguard and been in prison (109). Deducting from this information, a rugged, tall, and relatively muscular appearance would suit him well. Since he has been everywhere with many rough experiences, he should look weathered, and his features should be rough, but he is not overly tanned. Shadow does not seem to be overly concerned with looks, so a five-day beard and tousled hair would emphasize his outdoor, traveling character. Shadow is quiet and mistrusting, but not heartless. I believe Thomas Beaudoin would be a good fit for Shadow. While he is better known for his role in romance movies, this actor is not a stranger to darker films. His deep voice and naturally serious look give him the perfect features to portray Shadow. In the scene, Shadow should wear a white t-shirt with an olive-green shirt over the top, unbuttoned, sleeves rolled up. Beige or black cargo pants, and sturdy boots would match well. One could make injuries or from the fight evident either through bruises or actual bandages.

Scene Design

In the book, the Departing Scene takes place in Shadow's room. However, I would like to have this scene play in the small cottage, in which Jennie lived in order to bind the movie's scenes closer together. For the intent of creating a more logical and natural flow within the

movie, I would like to have the entire furniture in the cottage disappear when Jennie vanishes. By doing so, one can leave out the scene when Shadow finds that Jennie's house has vanished. The magical effect of Jennie's cottage disappearing will still be integrated, but it is better tied in with the other scenes.

I would like to set up the scene without any explanation as to how Shadow got to the cottage. This way, it is not clear whether the experience is a dream or reality. The scene should start with Shadow sitting in the cottage in a dark purple armchair (293). Since her cottage is small (292), armchairs would work better for the scene. In front of him is a coffee table and a second armchair is on the opposite side. The room itself will be dimly light, and there will be a dying fire.

Shadow is looking into the dying fire across the room. While staring, we see a short flashback of Jennie's disappointed face when she saved him. "Hello, Jennie." Jennie is suddenly in the armchair across from him, knees crossed, and hair glowing in the firelight with a glass of wine in hand. "Hello." Her voice is very quiet. "Thank you," says Shadow. "You saved my life." "You called," she says dully. "I came." She looks at him, "I could have been yours," she says, and there are tears in her eyes, and her voice softens. "I thought you would love me. Perhaps. One day." She shakes her head. "Well," he says. "maybe we could find out. We could take a walk tomorrow and maybe." She shakes her head. Her tail twitches. "The hardest thing about being a hulder, even a hulder very far from home, is that, if you don't want to be lonely, you have to love a man." "So love me. Stay with me," Shadow insists. "Please." "You," she says with a sad smile, "are not a man." She leans forward, breathes in, and puts her glass down. "Still, everything's changing. Maybe I can go home again now. After a thousand years, I don't even know if I remember any Norsk." She takes his hand and strokes his cheek. He closes his eyes, and we hear a breathy sound. A few quiet, airy notes from *My Bonnie lies over the Ocean* is played softly. When Shadow opens his

eyes, the fire is out, and the room is empty. There is no furniture or any signs that someone has lived there in a while. The camera zooms out while you see Shadow standing in the middle of an empty, dusty room.

Works Cited

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