

# THE WOLF

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A MUSICAL

Written & Composed by  
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## **THE PITCH**

Four old friends go to a cabin in the wood to celebrate one of them completing chemotherapy. As they begin to drink, they discover there's a wolf outside stalking them. No problem—they're safe inside. However, as they get sufficiently drunk and one of them has had enough of being picked on, he grabs a knife and goes off to chase the wolf, leaving his friends no choice but to enter the wood to search for him.

It's meant for a small space—certainly not bigger than a 200-seat theater. There's a pianist on the side of the stage at an upright piano, invisible to the characters and yet obvious to the audience. The pianist spends a fair amount of time looking out at the audience, seemingly telling a story with their hands.

## **THE PLOT**

Emmett, Wyatt and Peter meet Donny at his family's small cabin. They have some shots and beers and catch up on romance and life. Notably, Peter is coming off a crushing heartbreak he'd rather not discuss. After celebrating the fact that they have the whole weekend ahead of them ("What Do You Want for the Weekend?"), Donny warns that they don't go outside after dark here. It isn't safe. He doesn't say more than that.

So they chill, they chat. They ask Emmett what finishing chemo was like. He brings up that facing death is difficult but something you have to do. ("Always Comes Back," as in, "It always comes back to get you in the end.") Donny argues that if death is inevitable, it makes more sense not to think about it. Emmett feels that both can be true. They sing about it, and dance a little.

And that's where we meet them, on page 43 to the end of this one-act. They're cozy inside, they've caught up and talked semantics. The audience has noticed that there's a piano on stage (let's say...downstage right), and has also noticed that the pianist sees the audience back.

Oh and one more thing: every time the boys have a shot, the pianist chimes an A-flat and then they sing a short hymn a cappella. Afterward the pianist chimes the number of shots they've taken thus far with a major chord.

*Holy spirits fill me up,  
Drinking from a tiny cup.  
And if I may swear it so,  
Motherfucker down you go.*

Thanks for reading. Enjoy! -Aaron

## THE SONGS

In the Cabin vs. *Abstract, Out of Time*

1. *Four Old Friends* *pg. 3 (All 4 Men)*
2. *The Mist* *pg. 6 (Emmett)*
3. What Do You Want for the Weekend? *pg. 18 (All 4 Men)*
4. *Tell Her I'm Fine* *pg. 32 (Wyatt)*
5. Always Comes Back *pg. 35 (All 4 Men)*
6. Wolf Outside *pg. 55 (All 4 Men)*
7. *Stare the Man Down* *pg. 58 (All 4 Men)*
8. *How I Miss the Morning* *pg. 61 (Donny)*
9. *I Tried* *pg. 65 (Peter)*
10. I Was There *pg. 71 (All 4 Men)*
11. Long Night *pg. 78 (All 4 Men)*
12. All Right Here Right Now *pg. 88 (Donny & Emmett)*
13. *Finally I Am Not Alone* *pg. 94 (All 4 Men)*

**THE WOLF**

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**THE CABIN**

Donny — The Host

Emmett — The Heart

Peter — The Asshole

Wyatt — The Runt

**THE RULE**

*The pianist can see the audience/characters and is fully present in the theater at large, particularly during the **ABSTRACT, OUTSIDE-OF-TIME** numbers.*

*The characters onstage do not see the audience while in the cabin. However, during the aforementioned songs (which are italicized in the song list) they can perhaps each sense that at least “God” is present, if not an audience.*

*But they never see the pianist.*

Holy spirits fill me up,  
Drinking from a tiny cup.  
And if I may swear it so,  
Motherfucker down you go.

PETER

What about you, Wyatt?

WYATT

Fire.

*(to Emmett)*

And cancer.

EMMETT

It's not so bad.

WYATT

Yeah?

EMMETT

Yeah, you burn to death in a matter of seconds.

*(note for pianist: modulate to C)*

**(CONT'D) ALWAYS COMES BACK**

EMMETT

All I need's a place to hang my hat.  
Keep the rest if you can give me that.  
You can keep your bellyaches,  
I'm alive and I strive to make big mistakes.

DONNY

You can keep your play-it-slow,  
I'm gon' keep showing you my do-si-do.

*Donny soft-shoes a little.*

PETER

You can keep your to-and-fro,  
I'm gon' keep scoring points with a give-and-go.

*Donny replicates the move and adds a little flare.*

If it's always coming back to get you in the end—

## DONNY &amp; PETER &amp; EMMETT

Then it's always coming back to get you in the end!

## WYATT

You can save your question mark,  
I'm gon' keep answering with my  
*(grabs his crotch)*

Central Park.

## EMMETT

You can keep, "There's always tomorrow."  
Today I'm living—steal, beg or borrow.

## PETER

Have your reasons—

## EMMETT

Keep your reasons  
And I'll always come home to you.

*Emmett dances a little, with Donny.*

*(note for pianist: modulate down to F)*

## DONNY

But If it always comes back to get you in the end,  
How are you still alive then, my old friend?  
'Cause if you beat it once,  
Then you can beat it any season.

## PETER

Since he beat it once,  
Let him have his reason.

EMMETT

Thank you, Peter—life is sweeter,  
But it's always coming back for you.

*Dance break with all four men. Perhaps it's a little  
competitive at first but entirely joyful and  
celebratory.*

*Company front, slower tempo. (note for pianist:  
music modulates to Bb)*

ALL FOUR MEN

Always comes back to get you in the end!  
Always comes back to get you in the end!

PETER

Take your time and give it hell!  
When you go, make 'em wonder, "What's that smell?"

WYATT

If life's for the living, then don't look back!  
Do it wrong, do it strong with a big nutsack!

EMMETT

Classic Wyatt—not so quiet,  
But he always comes home to you.

WYATT

I'll always come home to you.

DONNY

Always come home to you.

PETER

Always come home to you.

EMMETT

Have your reasons, keep your reasons  
And I'll always come home to you!

*Song ends. They laugh and sit.*

WYATT

At least we sweat that last shot out.

EMMETT

We'll make up for it later, I'm sure.

PETER

Or now. Right? After a smoke?

DONNY

Let's take a minute to recoup now that it's dark out.  
*(seriously, to Peter)*

We stay inside.

WYATT

Why?

DONNY

Just till the morning.

PETER

*(quickly)*

*All right.* What is this about? Because it's not just the dark. So what's out there? No more metaphors.

EMMETT

He's right, Don. Specifically what are you being weird about?

DONNY

It's dangerous.

*Pause.*

A wolf.

PETER

A wolf?

WYATT

What?



Outside.  
DONNY

I mean, that part is implied.  
PETER

There's a wolf that has been stalking the cabin. I've seen it a couple times, it's huge. Legendary. Like something from a book. And we're loud and bright, and it's not worth screwing around. So we're on lockdown after dusk, but just till the morning. Okay? Let's drink and have some snacks and we'll chill.  
DONNY

Like a whole pack?  
WYATT

No, by itself. I think that's why it's being...menacing.  
DONNY

It attacked you?  
EMMETT

No. It's just out there. First time I saw it, I was having a drink outside. It was just standing there. I ran in, figuring it would move on. But an hour later, still there. Then the next night, same thing. It's gone during the day, and I haven't seen any carnage or anything. ...It's just out there.  
DONNY

Shit.  
WYATT

Whoa.  
EMMETT

A wolf.  
PETER

Yeah.  
DONNY

So there *is* a monster outside.  
EMMETT

Wow.  
WYATT

Menacing. PETER

Yes. DONNY

*Pause.*

What do you call it? PETER

It's a wolf. DONNY

You know what I mean. It's not *just* a wolf. PETER

What? WYATT

Donny. You're a writer. Come on. PETER

Why. DONNY

It's bigger than a wolf. It's terrorizing the wood, it's keeping us from going outside...it's got a whole narrative. We gotta give it a name. PETER

So that what? WYATT

*So that's the story.* PETER  
*(explaining thoroughly)*

It's a wolf. And if this were a story, isn't it more menacing to have it be an abstract rather than have a name? DONNY

It's fun. EMMETT

PETER

Well that's an interesting question: if we name it, doesn't that contextualize it?

DONNY

How so?

PETER

It diminishes it. Like tricks for public speaking, or rollercoasters.

WYATT

We should call it "Wyatt."

PETER

That's perfect—if you want it to be completely innocuous, let's call it "Wyatt."

EMMETT

Death is scarier without a name.

DONNY

Who says it's Death?

EMMETT

No one, but if we're putting limitations on it by staying inside, isn't that scary enough? Since we can't go outside and just scream, "Wyatt."

WYATT

That's ridiculous. Why would you go scream at a wolf?

PETER

Now we're getting somewhere.

DONNY

*(he's had enough)*

There's a wolf outside, that was my point for staying inside. There's a wolf outside.

EMMETT

*(beat, then to Wyatt)*

Go out and check.

DONNY

Stop. No drunken night hikes.

PETER

We name a lot of things—why not the wolf?

EMMETT  
We don't *name* a lot of things.

DONNY  
We don't.

EMMETT  
*(explaining differently, slower)*  
A lot of things have names.

DONNY  
Thank you, Emmett.

PETER  
*(re: using the name "Emmett")*  
See?

DONNY  
*(exasperated)*  
Peter.

WYATT  
"Wyatt."

DONNY  
We're not calling it that.

PETER  
So...

DONNY  
We're not calling it anything. It's the wolf. It's a wolf outside, we're staying inside.

EMMETT  
Death is scarier without a name, I'm telling you.

PETER  
Nobody's arguing with you, buddy. I just want a cigarette.

EMMETT  
What do you call it?

PETER  
Captain Smoke Break.

DONNY

I'm serious, no smoking.

PETER

Come on, Donny. A lot of people smoke when they drink.

WYATT

It's true.

PETER

And I smoke *without* drinking—so how do you think I feel? Real quick, no dawdling, right outside the door, and I'll hold the knife instead of my phone.

WYATT

And we can go in pairs.

PETER

*(nevermind)*

Actually I'm okay.

DONNY

Just chill.

EMMETT

Things with names have feelings.

WYATT

How's that?

EMMETT

Because it humanizes them. Or, what: 'illuminates' them? Civilizes them?

WYATT

I like 'illuminates,' that's weird.

EMMETT

Like Peter said, it's contextual.

PETER

I say give it a name—hell, give it an ex-girlfriend!

DONNY

The scorned wolf!

I'd buy it.

EMMETT

Why scorned? What happened?

WYATT

She dumped him for being himself.

PETER

Why?

DONNY

For being himself.

PETER

Donny  
*(more rhetorically, as in why is he himself)*

No—why?

Peter  
*(as if it's his assumption, not her actual reason)*

Oh. Exactly. He was just being himself.

DONNY

She didn't like that he stays out too late.

EMMETT

He's loud at night.

WYATT

Eats too fast.

PETER

He's boring!

DONNY

He's too private.

EMMETT

He's not serious enough.

PETER

*(loudly)*

He sucks, he just sucks!

*They look at Peter.*

Metaphorically.

DONNY

So it's a loud, lingering, listless, lonely wolf!

EMMETT

*(aware of Donny showing off)*

Nobody likes you.

PETER

So it's Wyatt.

WYATT

I was joking about the name.

PETER

*(confident)*

Oh, it's Wyatt.

EMMETT

Poor Wyatt.

WYATT

At least "Wyatt Two"—can it at least be Wyatt Two?

DONNY

That doesn't make any sense.

PETER

Exactly—its name is Wyatt, you can't just change it.

WYATT

Come on.

DONNY

Categorically it wouldn't make any sense to call it "Wyatt Two." It would require us to call you "Wyatt One"—which we're not going to do—and it implies that in some way it's aware of your existence. Which we can't know.

EMMETT  
*(enjoying this)*

Interesting.

PETER

Unless.

DONNY  
*(re: outside)*

No.

WYATT  
It's out there *for us*, isn't it? It knows I exist.

DONNY  
But it doesn't know you as Wyatt One—it doesn't know you at all.

EMMETT  
Which makes you more scary.

PETER  
Also we don't know which Wyatt came first. For all we know, *you* could be Wyatt Two.

DONNY  
You could be Wyatt Four Hundred.

PETER  
God, what a nightmare.

WYATT  
*(sarcastic)*  
Take that cigarette and go ask it, then.

PETER  
I should.

EMMETT  
Ask it what?

WYATT  
Ask it if it's named us.

DONNY  
Ridiculous.



Why not?

WYATT

You think it's out there, naming us.

DONNY

Might be. Is it any different than what we're doing? Names and numbers. Maybe Wyatt Two is like that.

WYATT

It's just "Wyatt."

PETER

Right, there's two of you—not one, two. Just two separate Wyatts. One is inside, one is outside, but they're both called Wyatt.

DONNY

Well then what's the difference?

WYATT

Exactly.

DONNY

He gets it.

PETER

Are you scared yet?

EMMETT

You do seem scared and confused.

DONNY

You never said there'd be a wolf outside.

WYATT

If it's outside, we'll be fine.

DONNY

You're being a coward.

PETER

Am not!

WYATT

EMMETT  
*(to the room, especially Peter)*

Okay, relax.

WYATT

How am I a coward.

PETER

It's fun, it's not scary.

WYATT

It's unnerving, that's all.

PETER

You should have a cigarette.

WYATT

We have no idea what it's doing out there—

PETER

See, that's what's scaring you. It could be plotting something.

EMMETT

Or just waiting to be friends.

DONNY

What?

WYATT

You don't scare me, you bore me. Shots.

*Donny goes to pour more shots.*

EMMETT

Just because something *can* kill, doesn't mean it *does*. That might just be a lonely shadow out there, drawn to the light of the cabin like Donny said.

DONNY

If I said that, I should've.

PETER

There's a lot of things nobody should've said.

WYATT

Why would it be drawn to light at night but then be gone in the daytime?

DONNY

I'm sure Wyatt's just drawn to you, Wyatt.

PETER

That'd be a first.

WYATT

Shut up, loser.

EMMETT

Guys.

PETER

Maybe you should go check on him.

DONNY

No.

PETER

There can be only one!

DONNY

Stop. Now these are peace offering shots, okay? Let's get back to celebrating Emmett. Okay? Say "okay."

WYATT, EMMETT, PETER

Okay.

**Donny snaps and points upward. The pianist plays an A-flat.**

ALL FOUR MEN

*Holy spirits fill me up,  
Drinking from a tiny cup.  
And if I may swear it so,  
Motherfucker down you go.*

## **6. WOLF OUTSIDE**

*The Pianist plays five E-major chords and begins a vamp in Eb-minor.*