

S E V E N S W A N S

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SCRIPT IN PROGRESS—DO NOT DISSEMINATE

Revision 7m

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Director's Note:

Seven Swans, with its striking visual style, is a film that ventures into new cinematic territory. We will create the story's entire world by combining footage shot through a variety of methods - including High Definition Digital Video, 35mm transferred to HD, and computer-generated imagery. The final product will be constructed through a technique called compositing, in which every element in the frame is layered on top of the other, much like cells in animation. A typical frame will contain an actor matted from a greenscreen background, objects shot separately and placed around her, and a background collaged from multiple shots and timeframes. In addition, the objects in the foreground and background, including landscapes, may not conform to reality in terms of motion and perspective. The overall effect will be live performance in concert with a visual style that reflects more upon collage, painting, and printmaking than traditional film. *Seven Swans* will broaden the scope of filmmaking in terms of storytelling and the idea of what a non-"animated" film can look like.

COLOR KEY:

RED: Needs to be shot.

BLUE: In different place than current edit.

PURPLE: Have footage but is not in the current edit or want different take.

GREEN: Needs to be created (visual or sound) or stock footage.

OLIVE: Slight line change or possible ADR.

GRAY: Sound effect.

FADE IN

0A EXT. MEADOW - MORNING

ELISE, 22 with dark hair and dark eyes, is walking through a forest towards a small lake. A shadow passes over her. She glances up and sees a swan flying towards the water.

The title "Seven Swans" appears as she continues walking, following the white bird.

1 DELETED

2 EXT. LAKE - MORNING

Elise approaches the lake and smiles.

CYGNUS, Elise's brother, is kneeling at the edge of the lake, trailing his hand through the water. He is 17,tall and flaxen, with light hair and light eyes.

ELISE

Cygnus!

He looks up as she approaches.

ELISE

Papa wants to leave soon. Hurry up!

CYGNUS

What's the rush, Elise? We know you don't want to leave before Sebastian gets here.

There is LAUGHTER OS. Elise turns to see Cygnus' five identical brothers nearby, lounging and playing beside the lake.

Elise turns back to Cygnus and gives him a playful punch on the shoulder.

ELISE

Just come on. You spend too much time in the water.

A shadow passes over them and they all look up as the swan sails over the lake.

Cygnus is entranced by the bird.

CYGNUS

I keep having this dream that I'm flying. It's incredible - I can see everything.

Elise eyes her brothers who continue watching the bird.

ELISE

I said, let's go!

She leaves and the brothers immediately follow.

3 DELETED (TITLE MOVED)

3A EXT. COTTAGE - DAY

A cottage sits isolated in the middle of a large meadow. A horseless wagon is parked out front.

4 EXT. COTTAGE - DAY

We see a close-up of the side of a wagon that says "Marion's Mysterious Medicines and Magical Materials".

ELISE

(OS)

Two Guilds, Marion, and that's final.

Sebastian, 23, comes into frame as she speaks and smiles. He then crosses out of frame towards the back of the wagon.

ELISE marches around the side of the cottage carrying a load of arrows. She is trailed by MARION (Sebastian's father), a gangly man in his 60's. Sebastian nonchalantly packs up the back of the wagon.

MARION

Elise, you know that crazy woman's lotions cost me twice that!

Elise sits on a barrel by the wagon. SEBASTIAN approaches, kneels beside her, and helps her with the arrows. She smiles at him.

MARION

My son will never have his own wagon the way you force me to do business. You ought to be ashamed of yourself!

ELISE
(rolling her eyes)

All right - three Guilds.

Marion hands her a jar with an old woman's face on it and the words "Baba's Enchanted Ointment". The face on the label winks at Elise. At the bottom it says "1 1/2 Guilds". Elise drops three coins into Marion's hand.

ELISE
You'd better leave quickly before Papa sees you robbing me.

ADAM (OS)
Before I see what?

Elise swipes the bottle, hides it behind her, and starts checking the arrowheads for sharpness.

ADAM rounds the cottage followed by the six brothers.

ADAM
Marion.

MARION
Adam!

He and Adam embrace.

ADAM
Collect your things, Elise - we're leaving.

Marion boards the wagon.

Sebastian rises and shakes Adam's hand. Adam gives him a stern look.

The six brothers chuckle as Sebastian climbs aboard.

MARION
We'll see you in a few days on our way back from Baba's.

Marion pats the wagon.

MARION
Let's go, Liza.

The horseless carriage magically starts rolling by itself.

Elise gives a longing look towards the departing wagon.

5 EXT. FOREST - DAY

Adam leads the boys and Elise through a tall, shadowy forest. They all carry bows and arrows.

Adam holds up his hand and they all come to a stop. A large deer slowly appears in the trees ahead.

ADAM
(quietly)

This one's yours, Elise.

Elise approaches and draws the bowstring as Adam watches. He then turns to face the deer.

Elise sights her arrow on the deer (P.O.V.).

The deer, sensing something, lifts its head.

ADAM
(whispering)

Shoot!

Just as she lets the arrow fly, there is a brief flash of WHITE LIGHT before her. The arrow hits the tree next to the deer.

The animal takes off into the forest - Adam and the brothers immediately chase after it.

Elise looks up as a white feather floats down in front of her and lands on the ground. She picks it up and looks at it.

6 EXT. FOREST - DAY

Adam and the boys quietly chase the deer through the trees.

7 EXT. CLEARING - DAY

Elise approaches the tree and pulls the arrow out of the bark.

8 EXT. FOREST - DAY

The deer stands in a small clearing.

Hiding behind a row of scrub bushes, the boys draw their bows. Adam, peering back through the trees, signals them to wait.

9 EXT. CLEARING - DAY

Elise walks in the direction of the others, following their faint trail. It is very quiet.

10 EXT. FOREST - DAY

The deer, becoming more and more agitated, lifts its head and backs away.

ADAM
(whispering)

Come on, Elise...

The brothers keep a steady aim on the deer.

11 EXT. DENSE TREES - DAY

Elise walks more quickly through the trees.

ELISE

Papa?

Again, a flash of **WHITE LIGHT** brings her to a firm halt. She slowly turns around, but nothing is there. As she continues forward, the SWAN WITCH is directly in front of her. The Swan Witch is tall and radiant with silky hair, alabaster skin, and flowing white robes.

SWAN WITCH

Hello, Elise.

12 EXT. FOREST - DAY

Adam looks back over his shoulder.

ADAM
(agitated)

Damn.

He begins to walk out of the clearing.

ADAM

Take her, boys.

Adam disappears into the trees, bow in hand, to the sound of SIX BOW STRINGS letting go.

13 EXT. DENSE TREES - DAY

Elise looks curiously at the strange woman.

SWAN WITCH

Your father's looking for you.

ELISE

How do you know my father?

SWAN WITCH

He hasn't told you about me?

ELISE

No.

SWAN WITCH

I met him hunting a long, long time ago.

Elise gives her a questioning look.

14 EXT. FOREST - DAY

Adam moves quickly through the trees.

ADAM

Elise!

15 EXT. SMALL CLEARING - DAY

The brothers approach the dead deer.

Cygnus stops as he hears his father's calls, and peers through the trees behind him.

16 EXT. DENSE TREES - DAY

SWAN WITCH

I see you're a hunter too, Elise.

Elise glances at her bow.

SWAN WITCH

Then you know that if you're someone's prey, you should never stay in one place too long. Remind your father of that for me.

ELISE

Who are you?

SWAN WITCH

Someone who loves the same things you do. Remember that next time we meet.

ADAM
(OS)

Go back to the cottage, Elise.

Elise looks over her shoulder and sees her father emerging from the trees behind her.

16A EXT. SMALL CLEARING - DAY

Cygnus and the brothers stand over the deer.

CYGNUS

We'll clean this one later. Let's go find Papa and Elise.

The brothers exit the clearing, towards Adam.

16B EXT. DENSE TREES - DAY

The Swan Witch and Adam take each other in.

SWAN WITCH

So, my love, this is where you've been hiding.

ADAM

You can't have them back - they don't know you.

The Swan Witch returns Adam's hard stare.

SWAN WITCH

I said I would come for them, Adam.

17 EXT. FOREST - DAY

The six brothers move quickly through the trees.

CYGNUS

Papa! Elise!

18 EXT. DENSE TREES - DAY

Adam, Elise, and the Swan Witch look up as they hear Cygnus' call. Adam swiftly draws his bow and aims an arrow at the Swan Witch.

ADAM

Step back, Elise.

Elise remains between them.

SWAN WITCH
(to Elise)

Ask your father who I am.

ELISE

Papa?

Adam tightens his grasp on the bow.

ADAM
(sternly)

I said step back!

SWAN WITCH
(slyly)

Ask him about your mother.

Adam lets the arrow fly. It almost grazes Elise's arm. There is a sudden FLASH of WHITE LIGHT and a strange unnatural SCREAM as the Swan Witch, in swan form, disappears over the trees.

19 EXT. FOREST - DAY

The brothers, startled by the STRANGE SOUND, look up toward the sky.

20 EXT. DENSE TREES - DAY

Elise shoots a horrified look at her father. Adam, sadness on his face, runs after the Swan Witch. Elise follows.

21 EXT. FOREST - DAY

The brothers, seeing nothing above, begin a slow run through the trees.

22 EXT. FOREST - DAY

Adam and Elise continue to chase after the Swan Witch.

23 EXT. FOREST - DAY

The swan flies overhead, looking for the boys. Again, she emits a strange SCREAM. Cygnus holds up his hand and stops. They all draw their bows.

23A EXT. FOREST - DAY

Adam, having outrun Elise, approaches nearer to the boys.

23B EXT. FOREST - DAY

The flying swan suddenly comes right at the brothers. Startled, they let their arrows fly.

24 EXT. FOREST - DAY

Elise catches up to Adam. He is stopped amid the trees, suspended. Clutching his bow, he falls slowly backward. There are six arrows in his chest. The six brothers are before them, their bows lifted.

ELISE

Papa...

Elise rushes to Adam and kneels beside him.

Cygnus and the brothers stare in silent disbelief at what they have just done.

There is a faint SCREAM of pain and loss in the distance.

25 DELETED

25A INT. COTTAGE - NIGHT

Adam's body is laid out on a large wooden table in the center of the room. The arrows have been removed from his chest. Five

brothers are standing side by side, next to the body. Elise is on the other side of the table.

Cygnus, restless, is pacing back and forth.

Slowly, the five brothers one by one look to Elise, in need of comfort. Elise, struggling, is at a loss for words.

One of the brothers breaks down and leaves the room. Another follows to comfort him. Elise lowers her head.

Cygnus approaches.

CYGNUS

Tomorrow, three of us will hunt her down. The rest of you stay here and protect the house.

Elise looks up.

ELISE

Let her go - she's already wounded.

CYGNUS

She made us shoot him! We have to find her, Elise.

ELISE

Don't blame yourself - it was an accident.

CYGNUS

That's easy for you to say - you didn't kill both of your parents!

ELISE

(sternly)

Stop it, Cygnus! It's not your fault mother died when your were born.

Cygnus turns away and looks towards Adam.

CYGNUS

(determined)

We're leaving in the morning after we bury him.

Elise follows his gaze towards Adam.

25B EXT. COTTAGE - NIGHT

A bright moon hovers above the cottage.

25C INT. COTTAGE BEDROOM - NIGHT

The boys, still in their hunting clothes, lie sleeping on their beds.

26 INT. COTTAGE - NIGHT

Elise sleeps in a chair next to Adam's body.

26A EXT. COTTAGE - NIGHT

The Swan Witch, clutching her bloody side, walks slowly towards the cottage.

26B INT. COTTAGE - NIGHT

Elise, sensing something, shifts in her sleep.

26C INT. COTTAGE - NIGHT

The Swan Witch slowly enters and sees Adam. She approaches, closes her eyes, and lovingly caresses his face.

After a moment, she opens her eyes and walks toward Elise.

26D INT. COTTAGE BEDROOM - NIGHT

Cygnus sighs heavily in his sleep.

26E INT. COTTAGE - NIGHT

The Swan Witch leans down and begins to WHISPER in Elise's ear.

DISSOLVE TO

27 EXT. LAKE - DAY (FLASHBACK)

The landscape is plush and manicured. A young Adam, dressed richly in clothes for hunting, crouches by a large bush next to a lake.

A swan lands on the water, full of beauty and grace. Adam readies himself as it comes toward shore.

As the swan wanders into the shallow reeds, Adam jumps out and casts a net upon it.

There is a burst of WHITE LIGHT and he quickly lets go. The net now holds a young woman - the SWAN WITCH. She is very beautiful, and very angry. She yanks the netting off and looks up at Adam, cautious but curious.

She tentatively approaches and gently kisses his lips. He steps back for a moment, a bit afraid. He then passionately returns her kiss...

28 DELETED

28A INT. COTTAGE - NIGHT

The Swan Witch continues to WHISPER in Elise's ear. Elise's closed eyes quiver.

DISSOLVE TO

29 EXT. LAKE - SUNSET (FLASHBACK)

Adam embraces the Swan Witch in the reeds. She gazes up at the SOUND of birds migrating for the winter.

SWAN WITCH

Come south with me, Adam. We can't spend all of our days in hiding.

She places Adam's hand over her womb. His eyes brighten and he looks at her longingly. Slowly he draws back and removes his hand from her belly.

ADAM

I can't leave Rose and Elise.

SWAN WITCH

You can - but you won't.

The Swan Witch, scorned, exits through the reeds, taking flight as a swan when she comes out the other side.

Adam looks distraught.

30 DELETED

30A INT. COTTAGE - NIGHT

The Swan Witch visibly becomes upset as she continues to WHISPER.

DISSOLVE TO

31 EXT. MANSION - MORNING (FLASHBACK)

ROSE, Adam's wife, is on the doorstep with two large baskets that hold three babies each. Young five-year old Elise stands behind her, peeking around the door.

Rose reaches into one of the baskets, finds a letter, and opens it.

It reads: "Adam, We have a baby for each month we spent together. Care for them while I'm south. I will return for them."

Rose - devastated - sees Adam approaching. He stops and looks at her when he sees the baskets. Rose, heartbroken, drops the letter.

ADAM

Rose...

He runs towards her.

ADAM

Rose!

ROSE

Come inside, Elise.

Rose, closing the door, disappears into the house.

The Swan Witch, hidden, tearfully watches from the trees.

31A INT. COTTAGE - NIGHT

Elise bolts upright. The Swan Witch is no longer in the room.

ELISE
(to herself)

Oh, Papa...

32 INT. COTTAGE BEDROOM - NIGHT

Cygnus lies undisturbed as the Swan Witch enters the bedroom.

Her long gown leaves a trail of blood on the floor.

She gazes at the boys, then brings a handful of white feathers up to her face and blows them into the room. There is a burst of WHITE LIGHT.

Cygnus awakens and shields himself with his arm from the light.

33 DELETED

33A INT. COTTAGE - NIGHT

Elise, still groggy from deep sleep, walks toward the bedroom.

ELISE
(whispering)

Cygnus! I had a dream...

Suddenly the DEAFENING SOUND of flapping WINGS is heard.

Seven swans soar out of the bedroom and over Elise. She is momentarily caught in the mad rush of feathers and wings, their strength causing her to slowly fall to the floor. The swans fly out of the door and into the night.

33B EXT. SKY - NIGHT

Seven swans fly in formation against the moon.

33C INT. COTTAGE - NIGHT

ELISE
Cygnus?...

33D EXT. LAKE - MORNING

The lake is still, silent, and empty.

34 DELETED

35 EXT. COTTAGE - DAY

Behind the cottage, Elise is furiously digging a grave.

The sun is unbearably bright.

36 EXT. COTTAGE - SUNSET

Elise, covered in dirt and physically exhausted, places the sixth deadly arrow at the head of a fresh mound of earth.

36A EXT. COTTAGE - DAY (FLASHBACK)

Elise sees a quick flash of Adam, smiling at her in the forest.

36C EXT. COTTAGE - SUNSET

Elise turns away from the arrows and buries her head in her arms.

37 DELETED

38 DELETED

39 INT. COTTAGE BEDROOM - DAY

Elise, dressed for traveling, is putting a bag over her shoulder. She glances at the beds, laden with white feathers, then heads for the door. She spots the bows on the way out and reaches for hers.

39A EXT. FOREST - DAY (FLASHBACK)

Elise sees a quick of Adam being shot by her brothers.

39B INT. COTTAGE - DAY

Elise quickly pulls back her hand and leaves the bow on the wall.

40 EXT. ROAD - DAY

Elise, following wagon tracks, walks down a long road.

41 EXT. ROAD - SUNSET

Elise, tired, is still walking. Up ahead she sees the wagon and begins to run towards it.

42 EXT. ROAD - SUNSET

Marion is greasing a wheel as Sebastian stands nearby. Elise approaches and both men look up.

ELISE

Marion - please, I need your help.

43 EXT. ROAD - NIGHT

Elise, Sebastian and Marion sit around a fire by the wagon.

MARION

Perhaps you should wait for them to come back.

Elise rises.

ELISE

They're not coming back! She's their mother - she's not going to give them up.

SEBASTIAN

Well, the only way to undo a spell is to kill the spellcaster.

MARION

We don't know her power so forget it.

Elise crosses to Sebastian.

ELISE

(to Sebastian)

I can't kill her.

SEBASTIAN

You're a hunter, Elise.

She looks away. Marion lowers his head.

Elise rises and turns away.

MARION

You'll have to go see Baba.

Elise, surprised, turns back towards Marion.

MARION

She's a little bit further down the road.

SEBASTIAN

I can take you.

Sebastian rises and Elise looks towards him, curious.

44 EXT. BABA'S HUT - NIGHT

A large tree towers above as Sebastian and Elise approach. From its enormous trunk hangs a sign lit by hundreds of fireflies.

It reads:

Traditional Custom Formulae

One Day Turnaround!

No Refunds

As they approach, a door magically swings open.

45 INT. BABA'S HUT - NIGHT

Baba huddles over a cauldron, her back towards the door.

BABA

Hello again, my dear boy. Go back to your father at the wagon and leave the girl with me.

Elise looks to Sebastian. He motions that it's okay and exits the hut. Elise, frightened, turns to follow him, but the door shuts as she nears it.

BABA

You look like your mother - she was not much older than you when she died.

Elise slowly turns back inside.

ELISE

Can you help me save my brothers?

Baba rises and leaves the cauldron.

BABA

Only if you're willing to do what it takes.

She unsheathes a dagger hidden under her robes, waves it close to Elise's face then hands it to her.

Elise tests its deadly edge. GASPING, she brings her cut finger to her mouth to stop the bleeding.

BABA

You already know what you have to do. Finish your father's work.

Elise looks up at Baba, then places the knife on the table between them.

ELISE

(quietly)

I'm not like my father.

BABA

Then be like your mother, child, and let your
grief kill you!

ELISE
(taken aback)

What do you know about my mother?

BABA

She was weak.

ELISE

Did she come to you?

BABA

She couldn't be helped either. Now get out - out
I said!

Baba attempts to back her towards the door, but Elise stands her
ground.

ELISE
(defiantly)

Whatever you think of her - I'm not my mother.

BABA
(sharply)

Is that right?

Baba sternly eyes her.

BABA

Well, let's find out exactly who you are, Elise.

Baba retrieves something from a large cupboard and hides it in
her robes. She sits Elise down in a chair and kneels beside her.

Baba reaches into her robes and reveals a beautiful Golden Apple.
It sparkles and radiates a golden light. Elise gasps.

BABA

You listen carefully, Elise. This Golden Apple
holds great power - it will grant its taster one
wish.

Elise reaches for the Apple.

BABA

But you beware, Elise. It is poisonous.

Elise tries to hide her horror.

ELISE

You want my life?

BABA

It is the price for tasting the Apple. But - it will grant whatever you ask.

Elise, defeated, looks at the Apple.

BABA

You hold life so dear that you are unwilling to take it to save those you love. Are you willing to give it?

Baba carefully places the Apple in one of Elise's hands, then the dagger in the other. *Elise looks long and hard at each.*

BABA

Take them both, child. And think carefully before you decide - even good intentions have their consequences.

Baba returns to her cauldron.

Elise safely tucks the Apple away in a red bag at her waist, rises, sheathes the dagger, and slowly heads for the door.

46 EXT. BABA'S HUT - NIGHT

Elise, the dagger clutched at her chest, gazes off in the distance then walks determinedly towards the wagon.

47 EXT. ROAD - NIGHT

Elise approaches Marion and Sebastian at the wagon. Marion is finishing the wheel while Sebastian loads up the back.

ELISE

(to Marion)

Can you take me to her?

Marion sees the dagger tied at her waist. He shoots a quick look to Sebastian, then hesitantly nods.

48 DELETED

48A INT. MANSION - NIGHT

The Swan Witch lies peacefully on a large elegant bed. Blood from her wound stains her silky white robes. The swans stand in a row beside her. One swan nudges her with his beak. *She weakly opens her eyes.* There is a faint, low, GRIEVING SOUND.

49 EXT. PLAINS - MORNING

Marion is sleeping on the front seat of the wagon. Elise sits on the ground, contemplating the dagger, which lies in front of her. Sebastian comes around the wagon.

SEBASTIAN

You're up early.

He sits beside her.

SEBASTIAN

You should learn to use that dagger so you don't hurt yourself.

ELISE

I already know how to use it. My father taught me.

SEBASTIAN
(unconvinced)

Really?

He quickly grabs the dagger and jumps up. Elise follows.

ELISE

Hey!

Sebastian brandishes the knife offensively.

SEBASTIAN

Since you're the expert, why don't you show me some moves?

He swipes the dagger dangerously close to her face.

ELISE
(sternly)

Hey! All I need is for you to get me to my brothers.

Sebastian, hurt, tries to cover his feelings. Angry, he hands her the knife.

SEBASTIAN

You're going to have to kill the witch, Elise.

Elise, grabs the dagger, sheathes it on her waist, and turns away.

On the wagon, Marion gazes off into the distance, thinking.

49A EXT. ROAD - AFTERNOON

Elise, Sebastian, and Marion sit on the front seat of the wagon as it travels down the road. Elise looks at the landscape to the trees in the distance.

DISSOLVE TO

49B EXT. MANSION- DAY (FLASHBACK)

Five-year old Elise flings open the door to a large opulent house and stumbles upon two baskets padded with white feathers. They hold three babies each. They look up at her with big bright eyes. She gently takes one of the baby's hands.

ELISE

Mine.

The babies innocently look up at her.

49C EXT. ROAD - AFTERNOON

Elise adjusts the dagger at her waist and looks down the long empty road ahead.

49D INT. MANSION - SUNSET

The Swan Witch slowly sits up and rubs her hand along her wound. It is free of fresh blood.

A swan approaches, nuzzles close, and WHISPERS in her ear.

SWAN WITCH

You must come back once she knows you are safe.

There is a great flurry of white wings as the swans lift off and head for the window.

49E EXT. SKY - SUNSET

Six swans fly against the horizon.

49F EXT. ROAD - NIGHT

Elise, carrying a jug of water, walks along the road. She hears VOICES ahead.

50 DELETED

50A EXT. ROLLING HILLS - NIGHT

Marion and Sebastian sit by a fire. Marion is furious.

MARION

I don't like this business - we're going back.

SEBASTIAN

But we said we would take her there.

MARION

It's too dangerous!

Elise quietly approaches and stays out of sight.

SEBASTIAN

(sternly)

That's why we can't let her go alone.

Marion rises.

MARION

Well you can walk the rest of the way because I'm not going to watch you get yourselves killed!

Marion storms off. Elise slowly approaches Sebastian. He, embarrassed, looks away.

ELISE

Don't worry, Sebastian. I can continue on my own.

SEBASTIAN

No you can't.

ELISE

She's wounded - I can handle her.

Sebastian glances at the knife at her waist, then at her.

SEBASTIAN

(firmly)

I'm going with you, Elise.

51 EXT. ROAD - DAY

Elise and Sebastian are walking up the road. Elise glances back and sees Marion traveling away from them in the wagon.

52 EXT. SKY - SUNSET

The sun begins to disappear below the horizon.

52A EXT. COTTAGE - NIGHT

We see an extreme close-up of a swan as it wanders onto Adam's grave. It rears up its head and emits an OMINOUS LOW GRIEVING SOUND.

53 EXT. ROAD - NIGHT

Elise is sleeping next to Sebastian by the fire - the Apple clutched tightly in her hand. She dreams.

54 DELETED

55 MOVED (TO SCENE 62A)

56 DELETED

DISSOLVE TO

57 EXT. LAKE - DAY (FLASHBACK)

Young Elise is standing by the lake eating a bright green apple. She sees Rose floating in the water.

ELISE

Mama? Papa's looking for you.

The water gently rocks Rose.

58 EXT. ROAD - NIGHT

Elise sits up, careful not to wake Sebastian. She gazes at the Apple, then clutches it tightly to her chest.

ELISE

(quietly)

Mama...

She lays back down and stares into the fire.

58A EXT. ROAD - DAY

Elise walks along the road, towards camera. Sebastian trails behind her. Elise clutches the red bag tightly to her chest. She wears a hard, determined look on her face.

58B EXT. SKY - SUNSET

Six swans fly at top speed. Their WAILING grows more agitated and sorrowful.

59 EXT. MANSION - SUNSET

Elise and Sebastian look down a long tree-lined road to a large dilapidated house far in the distance.

SEBASTIAN

No one ever comes here.

Elise looks curiously at the mansion.

DISSOLVE TO

60 EXT. MANSION - DAWN (FLASHBACK)

We see young Adam's face, straining as he pulls.

A small wagon wheel rolls along the snowy road.

Young Elise, swaddled in a blanket, sits on the back of a cart as it rattles away from the mansion.

61 EXT. MANSION - SUNSET

Elise determinedly walks down the road towards the house. Sebastian follows.

62 MOVED (TO SCENE 63F)

62A EXT. ROAD - SUNSET (WAS SCENE 55)

Marion hurries the wagon down the road. The low WAILING SOUND passes over him. He slows down to a stop, looks up, and sees the swans.

MARION
(quietly)

Damn.

He abruptly turns the wagon around and follows the swans in the direction of Sebastian and Elise.

63 BROKEN UP INTO 63A-63K

63A EXT. MANSION - NIGHT

Sebastian tries the front door, which doesn't budge.

63B INT. MANSION - NIGHT

The Swan Witch, turns towards the SOUND, slowly rises, and leaves her bed.

63C EXT. MANSION - NIGHT

Sebastian and Elise walk around to the side of the house where they see a partly boarded up window. They take off their packs and Sebastian gives Elise a boost up onto the window frame.

Elise's cloak catches on the dagger handle, causing the Apple to fall. She GASPS as Sebastian catches it.

63D INT. MANSION - NIGHT

The Swan Witch, gathering force, walks towards camera.

63E EXT. MANSION - NIGHT

Elise reaches down toward Sebastian.

ELISE
(quietly but firmly)

Sebastian, throw that back up here!

Confused, he looks up at her.

SEBASTIAN

Did Baba give you this?

She quickly drops down and tries to grab the Apple.

SEBASTIAN

Wait - my father told me about the Golden Apple.
You can't use it - it's poisonous.

ELISE

Give it back, Sebastian!

SEBASTIAN

No!

He pulls the Apple farther out of her reach.

63F EXT. ROAD - NIGHT (WAS SCENE 62)

Marion races wildly along the road, the wagon shaking madly.

63G EXT. MANSION - NIGHT

Sebastian continues to hold the Apple out of Elise's reach.

SEBASTIAN

Why won't you do it?

ELISE
(slowly)

I'm not going to kill their mother.

Sebastian takes a deep breath.

SEBASTIAN

I love you, Elise and I'm not going to let you
sacrifice yourself.

Elise's look hardens.

ELISE

This is my decision, not yours.

Sebastian looks at her, taking it in.

SEBASTIAN

I brought you here and if you don't kill her, I will.

Sebastian grabs the dagger handle at Elise's waist. As she tries to stop him from removing the knife, **she reaches up to grab the Apple from his outstretched hand.** They struggle and Sebastian forcefully pins Elise against the wall of the house. He suddenly stops and looks into Elise's eyes.

ELISE

Sebastian?

He slowly releases his grasp and they both see that the dagger has deeply pierced his chest. He staggers back and falls to the ground - the Apple clutched in his hand.

Elise rushes to his side.

ELISE
(frantic)

Sebastian!

SEBASTIAN
(barely audible)

Please...don't use the Apple.

His eyes become lifeless. She begins to weep.

ELISE

Oh no...

Distraught, her head collapses onto his chest.

The SOUND of Marion's wagon is heard and Elise lifts up her head. **Horrified, she quickly rises - dagger in hand - backs slowly away from Sebastian's body, and runs off into the nearby trees.**

63H EXT. FOREST - NIGHT

Elise, sobbing, is running quickly through dark sinister trees. There is a montage of images: branches blocking her way, dark skies, Sebastian's face, leaves whipping her face.

Suddenly a FLASH of WHITE before her forces her stop.

SWAN WITCH
(OS)

I thought you might come.

She quickly turns around looking for the Swan Witch, holding the knife protectively in front of her. Several times she catches glimpses of white between the trees (sometimes feathers,

sometimes flowing robes), all around her. Elise begins to follow the Swan Witch as she is led deeper into the trees.

63J EXT. MANSION - NIGHT

A hand closes Sebastian's eyes. The camera pans up to reveal Marion, distraught, holding Sebastian's hand.

The Golden Apple rests lightly in Sebastian's other palm. Marion's hand slowly reaches in and retrieves it.

63K EXT. FOREST - NIGHT

Elise, searching, bolts around a tree but no one is there.

SWAN WITCH

Leave the boys in peace - they're happy as they are.

She sees a glimpse of white in the trees beyond and slowly stalks in that direction.

ELISE

My brothers were happy with me and my father. You abandoned them - you had no right to take them back!

The menacing trees close in on her.

SWAN WITCH

Adam hid them away so they'd never know about me, Elise.

A realization spreads across Elise's face. Suddenly she is very small among the towering trunks that surround her.

ELISE

You *meant* for them to kill my father.

SWAN WITCH

Did you mean to kill Sebastian?

A stone look comes over Elise's face.

SWAN WITCH

I loved Adam, but in the end, we do what we must to protect our family.

The Swan Witch, unseen behind Elise, slowly glides towards her.

SWAN WITCH

(menacing)

I will not let you have them, Elise.

Elise, sensing something, whips around and is paralyzed by the witch's eyes boring into her.

The sound of the swans approaching is heard - FLAPPING WINGS and a HIGH-PITCHED CALL.

The Swan Witch, startled, gasps and looks towards the birds.

Elise quickly regains herself and lunges at the Swan Witch with the dagger. There is a burst of WHITE LIGHT and a shrill inhuman SCREAM.

Elise backs away as the Swan Witch slowly and gracefully collapses. She looks up at Elise and starts to WHISPER.

DISSOLVE TO

63K EXT. SKY - DAY (FLASHBACK)

A swan is flying serenely, high above the clouds. Another swan sails into view - and another - and another - and until there are six swans, circling and playing. They dive and scatter like leaves, into the clouds...

64 DELETED

64A EXT. FOREST - NIGHT

The sound of WINGS comes up behind Elise. She turns to find her brothers, human again, before her. They stand in formation with Cygnus in front.

Cygnus takes a long moment and surveys the scene - the lifeless swan and the dagger in Elise's hand.

Elise drops the dagger.

ELISE
(quietly)

You can come home now Cygnus - you're free...

CYGNUS
But we were free, Elise.

Cygnus slowly looks up and gestures towards the sky.

CYGNUS
There's our home.

Elise looks at each of the brothers, sadness in their eyes.

65 MOVED TO 69A

DISSOLVE TO

65A EXT. LAKE - DAY (FLASHBACK)

Cygnus, entranced, is looking up at the sky.

CYGNUS

I keep having this dream that I'm flying. It's
incredible - I can see everything.

66 DELETED

66A EXT. FOREST - NIGHT

The brothers each look at Elise, saying nothing.

Elise, full of sorrow, lowers her head.

MARION

(OS)

Bring my son back to life.

Elise and the brothers turn and see Marion approach.

The brothers, eyes wide, look at Elise.

Marion tosses the Apple and both Elise and Cygnus catch it.
Neither lets go.

Cygnus looks curiously at the Apple.

ELISE

Don't - it's poisonous.

67 DELETED

67A FLASHBACK

Looking at the Apple, Cygnus sees rapid-fire images of the dead:
Rose, Adam, Sebastian, the Swan Witch.

68 DELETED

68A EXT. FOREST - NIGHT

Cygnus looks up at Elise.

CYGNUS

This never should have happened..

Cygnus pulls the Apple out of Elise's hand and steps back into
formation with his brothers.

ELISE
(commanding)

No, Cygnus!

Cygnus takes a bite out of the Apple. There is a sudden, overwhelming burst of GOLDEN LIGHT.

DISSOLVE TO

69 DELETED

70 DELETED

71 MOVED (NOW SCENE 72B)

69A EXT. MANSION - DAY (FLASHBACK) (WAS SCENE 65)

Young Elise bursts out of the mansion, a look of joy on her face.

72 BROKEN UP 72A-72_

72A EXT. LAKE - DAY

Young Adam, dressed for hunting, crouches by a large bush next to a lake. A swan lands on the water, full of beauty and grace. Adam readies himself as it comes towards shore.

72B EXT. MEADOW - DAY (WAS SCENE 71)

Elise runs toward the lake, her hair flying behind her.

72C EXT. LAKE - DAY

The swan wanders into the shallow reeds. As young Elise bursts through the bushes next to Adam, the look changes from FLASHBACK to PRESENT.

ELISE

Papa!

The commotion surprises the swan into flight.

ADAM

Elise, you must never play nearby when I'm hunting! Do you understand? It's dangerous.

Adam lifts Elise onto his shoulder.

The swan looks back at them as it flies higher.

73 EXT. REFLECTION IN WATER - DAY

In the reflection of the water, Elise sees seven swans flying in formation.

74 EXT. LAKE - DAY

She points to the image.

ELISE

Mine.

Elise and Adam turn to see Marion and six-year old Sebastian walking towards them.

ELISE

Hi Sebastian. Mama!

Elise wiggles off of her father to the ground and runs towards Rose with outstretched arms.

Adam glances back at the single fading swan in the sky, a curious look in his eye.

FADE OUT