

**Werewolf**  
By Jared McDaris

**SAMPLE: SCENE 1**

Lights rise on a Chicago café exterior. The sun has just risen. At a round table are seated VRAIMONT and BODKIN. VRAIMONT is scribbling furiously on a notepad in a seeming attempt to vanish into the table. Mousy, furtive, and rumped, VRAIMONT is precisely spoken and never afraid to back down from a fight. VRAIMONT is a passionate expert on a small array of topics, but on most issues is happy to demur to whoever is loudest. BODKIN, by contrast, is a Byronic brooder, and is currently practicing that very hobby: arms crossed over a decidedly non-contracted chest, legs crossed as far over the sidewalk as they'll go, eyes staring with horrible condemnation at nothing in particular. BODKIN, too, is an expert on a small array of subjects, but is passionate about nearly everything, never allowing a lack of knowledge to get in the way of a messianic opinion.

BODKIN'S tea is half drunk. VRAIMONT'S oversized mug, now empty, once held hot chocolate. They are clearly not speaking to each other. BODKIN is attempting to punish VRAIMONT with this silence. VRAIMONT is just hiding.

Time, as it so often does, passes.

SHELLEY enters, bearing a coffee in one hand and a paper in the other. SHELLEY is dressed well but relaxed, as though having finished a good day's work at an office: a loosened tie and collar, a dress and sneakers, that sort of thing. SHELLEY takes the CS chair at the round table and looks from BODKIN to VRAIMONT.

There is, as there so often is, a pause.

**SHELLEY**

So what's the count today, hey?

**BODKIN**

*(Icily outraged)* The count?

**VRAIMONT**

Just three.

**BODKIN**

*Just three?*

**VRAIMONT**

Twenty-two, seventeen, aaaaand... five.

**SHELLEY**

Five?

**BODKIN**

*"Just five,"* I suppose?

**SHELLEY**

Well that's encouraging, isn't it? Just five?

**BODKIN**

*Just three? Just five?*

**VRAIMONT**

It's only one.

**BODKIN**

There's nothing *just* about it.

**SHELLEY**

Still, that's something.

**VRAIMONT**

It's all something.

**SHELLEY**

As inscrutable as you are interminable, hey?

**VRAIMONT**

What?

**SHELLEY**

As inscrutable as you are interminable, right?

**VRAIMONT**

I just... I don't uh, "that's something." I don't really know what that means?

**BODKIN**

It doesn't mean anything; that's the point.

**SHELLEY**

Well it's an improvement, isn't it?

**BODKIN**

An improvement!?

**SHELLEY**

Isn't it? Better than seventeen, hey? Better than twenty-two, isn't it? Am I mistaken? Five is smaller than twenty-two, isn't it?

**BODKIN**

That's not the... (*swallowing a non-existent counterargument*).

**SHELLEY**

Well what is the point then, hey? Maybe I'm missing it.

**BODKIN**

It's not okay! It's not just—

**SHELLEY**

Excuse me to next century – Did I say it was okay? Did I say everything was over and done with? Did I say it's all rainbows and puppy dogs from here on out? Have you got a recording of that quote? Cause if so, bring it on down to the courthouse.

**BODKIN**

It's not just...

**SHELLEY**

Did I say everything is fine?

**BODKIN**

It's not just...

**SHELLEY**

Did I make any mention of puppy dogs, save in the hypothetical abstract? and a rather sarcastic hypothetical abstract at that.

**BODKIN**

It's not just—

**SHELLEY**

What!?

**BODKIN**

IT'S NOT... "JUST!"

*Everyone is looking. BODKIN has the grace to look embarrassed, then contracts a bit and broods. VRAIMONT continues to scribble and fail at disappearing. SHELLEY looks about, displaying to everyone a deliberate lack of discomfort, offering an insouciant "fuck you" with the eyes as often as possible.*

*Time, again, passes.*

**VRAIMONT**

How's work?

**BODKIN**

Fuck off.

**SHELLEY**

Whoa!

**VRAIMONT**

I was asking Shelley.

**BODKIN**

You were asking both of us, which means you were rather pointedly asking—

**SHELLEY**

Chill your respective extremities, Bodkin. (*an expletive*) Yezus Tour.

**BODKIN**

So what else—

**SHELLEY**

Probably just desperately trying to change the subject; am I right, Vraimont?

**VRAIMONT**

Um.

**BODKIN**

What are you writing?

**VRAIMONT**

Just recording my minutes.

**BODKIN**

What does that mean?

**SHELLEY**

Who cares. Boddy, when are you gonna come back to the help desk?

**BODKIN**

Never, jod willing.

**SHELLEY**

Where are you gonna work, that doesn't have assholes talking down to you all day? Show me that place.

**BODKIN**

*(indicates Vraimont)* I could work in a basement.

**SHELLEY**

When are you gonna learn coding, then? PS, even Vraimont has better people skills than you do.

**BODKIN**

Then I definitely shouldn't come back to the help desk then, should I?

**SHELLEY**

You gotta learn somehow! Trial by fire. If you can make it there, you can make it anywhere.

**BODKIN**

I'll settle for anywhere, then.

**SHELLEY**

Come on.

**BODKIN**

That's not an argument.

**SHELLEY**

What does... what?

*Time does what it does.*

**VRAIMONT**

Where do you think they're coming from?

**SHELLEY**

Oh who gives a shit.

**VRAIMONT**

If we want to prevent this from—

**SHELLEY**

How?

**VRAIMONT**

I don't know. That's my point.

**SHELLEY**

*(brandishing newspaper)* "Hessenger shown to be a wolf." What else's there to say?

**VRAIMONT**

I don't know.

**SHELLEY**

Then shut it.

**VRAIMONT**

I was only trying—

**SHELLEY**

"Only." You were only trying to masturbate your own self-importance all over us. Rubbing yourself off is nice and natural, but don't expect a standing ovation from me, thank you very much.

**BODKIN**

I wonder if our children will ask why flagpoles are twice as tall as they need to be.

**SHELLEY**

Hessenger was a wolf. Simmons was a wolf. And I'll bet you a thousand dollars that Irving was a wolf too. Wait and see.

**VRAIMONT**

Yes, but—

**SHELLEY**

Butts are for slapping, Monty, what is it?

**VRAIMONT**

Shouldn't we...

**SHELLEY**

What? ... Make like a condom machine and spit out something useful. What is it?

**VRAIMONT**

They're werewolves, dammit!

*Silence. VRAIMONT, though not scribbling, is attempting to shrink into the pad and pencil. BODKIN broods. SHELLEY again makes a show of not caring.*

**SHELLEY**

*(to everyone)* Well they are, aren't they? What would you call it? ... Huh? A'right, fuck off then. *(A pause as things calm down, then back to Vraimont)* What's your fuckin' point?

**VRAIMONT**

They are, aren't they?

**SHELLEY**

What about the full moon?

**VRAIMONT**

What about—

**SHELLEY**

It's happening every day, Monty, not just the full moon. Werewolves are on the full moon or whatever, not every day.

**BODKIN**

Except in December.

**SHELLEY**

Oh piss on your mom's puss, Bodkin; who cares! *(to Vraimont)* Who gives a shit what they're called?

**BODKIN**

You do, apparently.

**SHELLEY**

Bodkin, take your unemployed ass to the green grocer and get it chopped into gluten-free soy burgers and get fucked.

**BODKIN**

What the hell does that—

**SHELLEY**

It means shut your shithole, Boddy... it means shut your shithole. *(to Vraimont)* Who gives a shit what they're called?

**VRAIMONT**

If we want to know how to stop this, then...

**SHELLEY**

Then what? You gonna go buy a stake? Or silver bullets or whatever? If the moon thing doesn't work, then it doesn't really matter what they're called, does it?

**VRAIMONT**

I... *(pause)* I guess not.

**SHELLEY**

Yeah, how 'bout that. Shelley was right, whooda thunk it.

*Silence.*

**VRAIMONT**

But shouldn't we do something?

**SHELLEY**

What? What are we gonna do? They're fuckin' werewolves, Vraimont; they eat people. Or eat their hearts or stomachs or whatever. It's not like they're walking around half-man-half-beast or something. They're normal people, and then they... change...

**BODKIN**

Of course, they don't really change.

**SHELLEY**

*(Just sorta sick of Bodkin)* Oh eat your own ass, Bodkin.

**VRAIMONT**

*(to Bodkin)* What do you mean?

**BODKIN**

I mean... they're werewolves. It's not that they're people, then they become wolves, then they're people again. They're werewolves, the whole time. We just don't... realize it.

*Silence.*

**SHELLEY**

*(Checks watch)* Fuck. Welp, some of us gotta work for a living. Have fun at the Dickensian breadline, Boddy. Vraimont, when you going in?

**VRAIMONT**

*(looks at Bodkin)* Well, uhhhh...

**BODKIN**

No, go on. I should go to the "breadline."

**VRAIMONT**

All right. See you tonight?

**BODKIN**

Probably. Wait, is there a game tonight?

**SHELLEY**

Nope.

**BODKIN**

Cause I don't wanna deal with that traffic.

**SHELLEY**

We're two miles away, Boddy.

**BODKIN**

The placement center goes right through Wrigleyville.

**SHELLEY**

You poor bastard. Anyway, see ya.

**VRAIMONT**

Peace out.

*SHELLEY walks off. Silence.*

**BODKIN**

Micah's playing tonight.

**VRAIMONT**

Mm.

An open-mic. **BODKIN**

Ah. **VRAIMONT**

Are you gonna go? **BODKIN**

I dunno. *(Pause)* Think I might go work from home. **VRAIMONT**

That is the dream. **BODKIN**

Yeah... yeah... **VRAIMONT**

*BODKIN watches VRAIMONT work briefly, then gets up and leaves. VRAIMONT continues working in silence, then looks up to make sure BODKIN is gone. Suddenly, VRAIMONT lets out an exhausted breath, as though they've been holding their breath in this whole time. VRAIMONT shudders, looks about to cry, then calms down, stands up, looks around to see if anyone is watching, takes a deep breath, and leaves.*