Be a Wolf

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Based on the book by Héðinn Unnsteinsson

Chapter One:

THE LECTURE.

The audience takes their seats. The Wolf, a little insecure, wanders around the auditorium greeting the audience, very formal in his suit and tie. He wears a surgical mask, the kind that has become ubiquitous in these pandemic times.

The Wolf searches and finds a microphone at the front of stage, takes off his mask and then somewhat mysteriously removes his watch.

He taps the head of the microphone to make sure it is working - it's a little loud.

The Wolf:

Dear audience, welcome to the theatre. A place where you are invited to depart from reality for a while. Please turn off your mobile phones.

The Wolf puts the microphone to the side, walks to the center of the stage and creates a circle from sand he keeps in his pocket. The act feels ritualistic.

The Wolf:

Number one: breathe. Number four: exist in the Point. Number nine: be present. Number seven: remember to smile...

The Wolf, standing in the center of the circle he has just created, opens a pocket book, clears his throat and recites.

The Wolf:

According to legend a werewolf is a man - a male - who temporarily takes on the form of a wolf during which he acquires all its characteristics such as speed, strength and a keen sense. He transforms either by his own free will or is forced by spells or magic. For whatever reason, this man is banished from society and condemned to live like a wolf. Wargus esto... be a wolf!

The Wolf pauses and engages the audience, as if challenging them to grasp what he has just shared with them. Then tosses the book to the side and launches into a much more casual tone of speech.

The Wolf:

Good evening. How are you? Are you ready for this? Welcome.

He scans the masked audience who are sitting two meters apart as law commands, certainly a strange sight from his perspective.

The Wolf:

Wow! This is nuts. The theatre is sold out and the building is half empty. The world is upside down. Nothing is as it should be. Everything is off. A little bit like being insane. Everybody is so sensitive, right? *Crazy* sensitive. Really *insanely* fed up with this whole thing. But... at the same time it's *crazy* cool to be in the theatre again, eh? *Mad* times. C*razy* fun!

Chuckles slyly at his own play with words.

The Wolf:

I don't know about you guys, but I feel great. See, initially they gave us a much smaller stage. I mean, who puts a monologue on the big stage, give me a break! Then, poof, there's a pandemic. And here I am. By myself on the big stage. OWOOOOO!!!

He howls like a wolf.

The Wolf:

I am… a wolf. I can take on many forms. I'm excitable. I'm powerful. I'm quick. I'm provocative. I'm inspired. I'm a wolf. OWOOOOO!!!

The Wolf singles out audience members.

The Wolf:

...what, don't be scared… no need to be scared. I'm just kidding around. There's really no need to be alarmed, I'm not dangerous. I've never been violent. Just energetic. I'm sensitive. Inspired. And constantly fighting the label society has given me. That *you* have given me...

Crazy.

Mentally ill.

I'm not ill. Do I seem ill to you? But that's what we do, we label people.

He collects his thoughts.

The Wolf:

I was diagnosed with bipolar disorder when I was 22 years old. This verdict was hard on me. Particularly because I don't feel like there's anything wrong with me. I'm certainly excitable… I always have been… and sometimes I struggle to find the right rhythm. I'm fast. My frequency is different. I don't get ahead of myself - I'm just ahead of you, hah.

Anyway, with that diagnosis my family and the society I was a part of were given an easy explanation that nicely fit their values. That fits your values.

But I've never thought of bipolar disorder as a disease. It's simply an aspect of my personality. I have been sick two years combined, which is not a long time in the scheme of things. Still it has come to define my entire life.

I'm not willing to accept this label. I'm not ill, I'm free. You know what I mean? I feel fine. But what does it mean to feel fine? Do you ever feel vulnerable? Don't you sometimes feel vulnerable? What is mental health? We all experience ups and downs. You could say that life is a series of mood swings from the cradle to the grave. You can't judge me. It's unfair that you judge me. I'm just like you.

The Wolf pauses momentarily, as if he's expecting a reaction. Then resumes his stance.

The Wolf:

I'm going to tell you a story. The story of the wolf. From when it first snuck out of its lair, and its journey all the way up to this point. The Point, where peace and acceptance rule. The here and now. Exist in the Point.

The Wolf steps into the circle he created in the beginning.

The Wolf:

What must be stressed is the fact that I was violated against. Do you get it? The system coerced me. My family betrayed me. You as a society failed me. Some things cannot be forgiven. People keep saying you should forgive and you'll find peace. That is total bullshit! Some things are unforgivable.

The Wolf realises that he has strayed from the circle and quickly retreats. He finds the Point.

The Wolf:

You see, I used to work for WHO – the World Health Organisation, where I played an integral part in shaping its mental health policy. I would frequently write about mental health issues in the international media, I gave lectures all across the globe and I was a known figure within the field of mental health.

You can then understand the shock of suddenly finding yourself in a mental rehabilitation centre, medicated and totally out of it, struggling to put together a 1000 piece jigsaw puzzle when I had been working as a senior policy analyst at the Prime Minister's Office only a year earlier. That's where I work, at the Prime Minister's office. You don't believe me? Seriously, I've worked with seven prime ministers. I mean it. This isn't the mania talking.

The Wolf struggles to connect with the audience as if trying to charm them. Get them on his side. He is fighting to stay in the Point.

The Wolf:

Ever since my experience I've battled to change the system. I've pushed through reforms concerning mental health issues. I'm out to change the world. We can't keep violating these people! We must listen. You must listen. You must understand how I was violated against. You must understand my story to realise that I am not sick.

The Wolf has wandered outside the Point and is walking aggressively around the front of the stage. He tries to relax and gets into the circle again.

The Wolf:

I'm sensitive. I'm full of fire. I´m inspired. And being inspired is a gift. I may have lost my way for a while but you have to give me a chance. Will you? Are you willing to listen? Will you give me a chance? Will you listen to me?

Ok, are you ready? Let's begin.

The Wolf explodes into conducting an imaginary orchestra. Music. Beethoven's 9th symphony washes over us and the curtain opens onto a completely empty stage. This catches the Wolf by surprise and he runs off stage through the auditorium. We can hear the Wolf mumbling. "Where is everybody?! Is there someone here?! Hello??" After a while

he reappears at the back of the big stage, having run a full circle through the theater. He rushes around, looking for props that aren't there. He finally finds a suitcase, opens it and takes out an iphone. He puts it in the middle of the stage and turns it on. We hear a tape recording of his voice.

A voice recording of the Wolf:

I remember I was driving to my hometown, miserable and depressed after everything that had happened. One year after everything happened. After the violence happened. And I was going to see my father. And I drive on. I'm going to talk to dad. Go over the whole thing. And I'm driving along the coast outside the city and... I'm driving along the coast when I get this idea in this deep misery and depression that I'm going to… I'll just kill myself. Just so broken. So, I decided to cross lanes. There's a big truck coming from the opposite direction. Yeah, I'll just crash into the next big truck. They're coming from the opposite direction on the other lane and I just decide to swing over. I'm driving a small car and I know I'll be killed instantly. I take off my seatbelt and that's when it happens…

Chapter two:

THE STORY.

The wolf enters the back of the stage. The stage is still completely empty. He's all alone.

The Wolf:

It all began in 1989….

The Wolf suddenly notices the lights are not "right". He runs to the back of the stage and turns on more light. Then continues.

The Wolf:

I'm 19 and just finishing college, the future a blank and exciting page. It's all been going well so far. I had a happy childhood with both parents and a warm extended family. I did well in school. Top of my class. I had friends. Had dreams. I dreamt of becoming a professional football player. Like most young boys. I was always much closer to my mom than dad. She understood me.

Throughout, he uses a piece of chalk to draw circles on the front stage. The main circle stands for himself and the circle around him stands for his network, mother, father, friends, girlfriend etc.

The Wolf:

At the end of the fall semester I was overcome with depression and anxiety for the first time in my life, so badly that I barely functioned. The head directly affects the stomach. I had problems keeping down food, stayed mostly in my room, was anxious about the smallest things and felt awful in every way.

During this state I could clearly feel my powerlessness, I was hypersensitive, no matter where I went or what I did. A GP encouraged me to make better lifestyle choices in order to gain control of my own life. Which I did and for the next couple of years I was ok. I did everything 20-year-old boys do. I drank beer. I dated girls. I had a bunch of girlfriends. Enrolled in the university. Yeah, that was around the time things took a more complicated turn.

Eventually I was given a leave of absence and went home to the centre of any young man's existence, the mother. It was mostly her support that helped me regain the strength I needed to go on.

I felt loved just the way I was.

The essence of our existence revolves around this feeling our whole lives, this certainty of acceptance. If this certainty isn't there, we spend our lives looking for it.

...hang on, where did I put it..?

The Wolf takes up his suitcase and looks for a pamphlet, then finds it.

The Wolf:

Yes, here. This is mom, you see. You know? We were very close. She got me. She didn't judge me. This is a pamphlet about bipolar disorder that was first published in 1995. We were trying to raise awareness and understanding of bipolar disorder. Nobody talked about these things back then. It was a different time. Me and mum, we were trying to change the world, you know?

So, my mom writes: "He was a wonderful child, his mother's first born, loved and cherished by everyone who cared for him. He was his mother's pride and joy and always a healthy child growing up. When he started medical school at the University, I began noticing changes in his behaviour. We have always had a very close relationship. He became more excitable, restless and

self-involved. I was concerned. Deep down I knew something was wrong. He had good friends from college. One of them phoned me one night and said: “I think he’s ill.” This came as a shock to me. He came home, was prescribed medication - neuroleptics - by a psychiatrist. It was difficult. He couldn’t eat because of the side effects and I had to feed him. We would take walks every day. I couldn’t leave him alone at the house. I would arrange for a “sitter” whenever I needed to step out because I couldn’t let myself get shut in. Friends and family were very understanding. I would never be ashamed of my son.”

I would never be ashamed of my son...

It made all the difference in the world that my mother’s reactions were characterised by an understanding of this illness that many people, even some in my own family, were ashamed of. My mother simply possessed such deep insights that she realized that all this energy was a gift, if it could be controlled.

Anyway, at this point I’m very hyper and energetic. Almost unable to sit still. I’d take off my seatbelt long before I reached my destination. The spirit faster than the matter, hah. I’d be so excited about waking up in the morning that I could hardly be bothered with going to bed. No, really? Why wait for life’s waking hours when one can experience them right now!

Eventually I needed help.

Chapter three:

THE PSYCHIATRIC WARD.

The Wolf:

I‘m in the car with my dad and looking out at the mirror-smooth ocean.

The Wolf requests a chair. When nobody responds he jumps off stage and with great effort rips out one of the chairs from the auditorium. He excuses himself and takes the chair on to the stage to use as a prop for “the car ride” scene. He sits in the chair.

The Wolf:

I wonder if the birds drifting peacefully offshore understand my anguish. It’s a beautiful summer’s night in August, one of those nights that make you stop

and listen to nature breathe. I'm on my way to the city to be admitted to a psychiatric ward for the very first time.

A mental hospital!

"A place where you are invited to depart from reality for a while."

He winks to the audience as he references the sentence from the beginning of the play.

The Wolf:

My dad is driving with a worried look on his face. "Dad?...Dad? Dad? Talk to me Dad….Why won't you talk to me?" Nope, no answer.

He thinks it's best to leave the radio off to soothe the atmosphere and have a tranquil effect on it, but I want to amplify the moon with sound waves. He thinks it would be best to listen to the public radio station because it has a slow tempo. But that makes no difference to me. I feel like everything is being directed at me personally. You see, my dad isn't as insightful as my mother when it comes to my mood swings. He simply doesn't understand The Wolf and is completely powerless when faced with it.

When we get to the city my father has trouble locating the psychiatric ward. He has never had anything to do with it before and has no idea where to find it. He hangs his head as he walks in and a little while later we're sitting in an interview room where two psychiatrists and a nurse lead the way.

I'm sleep-deprived and exhausted. I've lost more than a stone over this chaotic summer and now, looking at my father's struggle to explain my condition to the experts, I realise this is the end of the road.

This was the first and last time my dad accompanied me to the psychiatric ward.

The Wolf suddenly gets insecure looking at the audience.

The Wolf:

You're not bored, are you? Just you wait! This is about to get really exciting.

The Psychiatric Ward! TADAAA!

The Wolf suddenly runs to the back of the stage and disappears into the dark. He returns with a huge, white duvet.

The Wolf:

Ward 32C is one of two admission wards in the hospital's psychiatric wing. I'm given a room on one of the ward's two corridors, the longer one. It's meant for patients that psychiatrists have assessed as not dangerous, neither to themselves nor others, and so they can move freely within their space. The other corridor is half as long and always locked, and meant for the most difficult patients.

"Are you my new roommate?" says a friendly voice coming from a red-faced man that seems to be in his thirties.

"I'm Steve."

"Hi Steve!"

I introduce myself as… Hamlet, Prince of Denmark.

"It's dinnertime. Should we go out there?"

"Excellent idea," I say, put down my skull and head out to the dining room."

There are seven patients sitting at the table and Steve introduces me to every single one. Some are manic like me while others are depressed or schizophrenic. Over the next few months, I will get to know these people intimately. I will share my life with them, through disease and recovery, madness and sanity.

Look, I'm just gonna say it. Depressed people are constantly moaning and complaining while the manic ones never stop yapping. And the schizos are either dead quiet or lost in their own fevered mind and delusions. But the best bit is that no matter what the problem is, the only solution that seems to occur to the doctors is to alter the dosage. Isn't that interesting? They never try to understand the problem, what caused this feeling. They just study their diagnostic manual - such as the DSM diagnostics bible... Do you know it? And then they tick the boxes, nod their heads and write prescriptions. Always looking at symptoms. The effect. Never the cause.

Some people, like gay George, get hardly any attention from the staff. George is around forty and homosexual but he's also seriously ill. He's in a constant state of fear and anxiety and it doesn't take much to rattle his nerves. George had been a married family man but then he came out and everything fell apart.

Harold is also at our table. Harold is a holy man. Even when doing simple chores like collecting the food cart from the staff - which, by the way, he

always did - he seems to radiate holiness. Harold is a large older gentleman with long white hair and a large kind face which undeniably denotes a colourful life. He's always very well dressed, shoes polished, black suit and a waistcoat. On top of the waistcoat hangs a large silver cross. In the tempest that is life on the psychiatric ward, Harold is the rock we cling to.

The most beautiful person at that table is Elisabeth. Elisabeth is a few years older than me, she's from the capital and simply gorgeous. She is very ill, sometimes she doesn't seem to have the faintest idea what's going on. Elisabeth had been a model, and lived a fast life as such, but suddenly she lost her mind, without any obvious reasons. It later emerged that it was of course related to childhood trauma. She maintained that she had gotten a brain infection from toxins due to excessive use of cosmetics. But nobody believed that but her. She once invited me to her room and asked me to play the drums while she played a small mandolin. This little band practice ended in quite the scene because she became very excited playing and started laughing like crazy which soon turned into these roaring screams... At first, I think it's fun and even try to approach her in a sexual manner at which point she explodes into a frenzy and turns into a wild animal. She rips the clothes off my body, me, Hamlet, the Prince of Denmark, and I'm lucky to escape with my life.

The Wolf collects his thoughts. Music.

The Wolf:

I have now spent the last two months at the hospital and am quickly recovering. My alternative perception of reality has sadly returned to mundane normality and I can now sleep fairly well without sleep medication. But something's missing. The natural and powerful force of insanity is missing, you know? It's been suppressed with medication. In its way this force is a gift.

I am a little scared to be discharged too soon. I don't want to go too far down after this upswing. I am now afraid of the price you so often pay for the mania. The depression. It can be horrific. You don't understand how horrific it can be.

I've known a few clinically depressed elderly women who have lost their purpose in life and can barely get out of bed in the morning and need electric shock therapy to release the body from the crippling depression. I myself am familiar with the sharp bite of this black dog and I know its destructive power. So I am afraid. I don't want the darkness.

The Wolf walks slowly into the darkness of the stage. Music. After a while he walks to the middle of the duvet as if he is trying to "exist in the Point".

On a calm November morning, I'm standing outside the psychiatric ward with my things, having been discharged to life itself. If people only knew what kind of world these walls contain. I've seen a man cut his wrists. A mad man has attacked me. I've gotten to know people who really have it bad. I've known the loyalty and sincerity of patients' loved ones, people who visit regularly, no matter what. I've witnessed people's desperate attempts to hold on to their autonomy and how that struggle tears families apart. I've gotten to know hospital food, good and bad staff, IV nutrition. I've gotten to know nearly the entire spectrum of human emotions. I've gotten to know faith, faith in God and faith in the good in people. I've sensed how a frenzied human being can become unpredictable and frightening. I have experienced a journey from acclaimed reality into the world of layered ideas/illusions and hallucinations and back again. But the most magnificent introduction was with the kindness and warmth that seems to be the essence of every person. And this human resource shines through on the psychiatric ward, despite the people there being in the throes of insanity, in the eye of the storm of utter unmanageability.

The Wolf walks to the front of the stage, attempting a connection with the audience.

The Wolf:

Yeah, so this is when I was diagnosed with bipolar disorder. A 22-year-old standing on crossroads with his head full of dreams and his entire life ahead of him. This was the first time I experienced the level of stigma in our society, and even discrimination, towards people with mental health problems. I experienced acquaintances and even people I considered my friends stopping contact with me and giving me a dark look. Can you imagine? Unbelievable! What is wrong with people?

He suddenly gets emotional and starts to erase the chalk circle of his network on the stage floor. Almost crying.

Chapter four:

LITHIUM.

The Wolf collects his thoughts. He gets a little embarrassed.

The Wolf:

Do you find this uncomfortable? I´m sorry. Let's just fast forward. 16 years forward! It's the year 2008. The year everything happened. The year the violence occurred. The height of the economic boom… Everybody is in overdrive. Business vikings conquering new worlds. The hubris. Top of the world. Crazy times. Greed is good. Blindly insane! And only minutes from total collapse.

I'm standing in front of the mirror on the fourth day of February in 2008. I'm examining the piece of white tablet in my hand. I had been taking lithium for 16 years to balance my mood swings. Ever since I was discharged from the psychiatric ward. Simply to function. I had a successful career. Travelled the world with my friends. But now it seems the creatine-levels in my kidneys are too high because of the lithium intake which is threatening my kidney function. Me and my doctor decide that I should reduce my intake until I can eventually stop. I realise I'm taking a chance but I have no grasp of the looming consequences.

The Wolf swallows the pill.

The Wolf:

Slowly but surely the lithium levels in my blood were reduced but at the same time it was as if my body was growing weaker. I got flu after flu and was both increasingly sluggish and uncomfortable.

Eventually I was diagnosed with hyperthyroidism. The thyroid gland seemed to have gotten addicted to lithium. Think about it. All these pounds of lithium, over a 16-year period, a sack of cement over the years, had left a mark. The hormonal balance was out of whack. There was a hole in my thyroid gland. The endocrinologist I met, Dr. Doctor I called him, said it was customary to prescribe heart medication for hyperthyroidism, so-called beta-blockers. He said that if I got enough rest and took these blockers, the odds of the thyroid healing itself were great. I decided to trust the beta-blocker idea without question.

The Wolf takes a beta-blocker.

The Wolf:

Dr. Doctor, however, forgot to mention the possible side effects on my central nervous system which are: disorientation, dizziness, mood changes, nightmares, psychosis, hallucinations, hypersensitivity and dyssomnia.

He reads the side effects from a paper on the pillbox. As he draws the paper out it gets longer and longer and...longer. Everything starts to fall apart. The lights, music and sound falls into a psychedelic mood.

The Wolf:

The thyroid was a mess, the hormonal shield had fallen, the blockers were amplified in my bloodstream and had begun to seriously affect my central nervous system. The disorientation increased, as did the nightmares and the hypersensitivity. In this vortex I felt the closeness of God and the message became clearer:

“There is but one God for all men, many prophets have roamed the earth but only one God.”

God was everywhere, in the love between all people. I am a stripped electrical wire in a well-insulated society of the other wires. I am travelling fast en route to depart with human understanding but God rode with me. The veil was broken. I was off to another world. Life slowed down like a vinyl record spinning slowly on a turntable. The record revolved in the slowest possible motion around that central point and as it did, everything changed. Inside a person, where the inner pendulum swings at a steady pace, the record revolves at around 78 rpm and everyone sees the world going by at the same speed, at the same frequency. Now I am turning at 47 rpm and am beginning to sense all kinds of phenomena that those who revolve faster will never experience.

The stage starts to turn.

The Wolf:

I am haunted by memories. Bittersweet, plaintive memories. Memories of my childhood. The gates of the past flung open. The horses are my soulmates, they are so sensitive. Wow, can you see it? Can you feel it? I’m out in the field. I’m going to give the horses some bread. Here is peace. The frequency is natural. The weather outside is calm and the horses are perfectly still in the dew of the summer’s night. I sneak up on them, quiet as a samurai. There are four of them. I am a samurai.

Suddenly I see a farmer in the field. I walked up to him. He tells me that his son once experienced sensations outside the normal realm.

“And what did you do?”

“Me and my wife just tucked him into our bed.”

Wow, isn't it amazing how different people's dispositions are to their surroundings? The farmer's insights were greater than those of many professionals I have encountered in the mental health field. The pendulum of his inner clock swung slowly and evenly. People are surely shaped by their surroundings.

He starts to run in circles on the stage. Getting more energegic.

The Wolf:

I get a message. It is threefold: A) A man with rust-brown hair moves with you, most likely Grim, your Viking forefather, B) You should lie down in the boat and trust God and C) the woman you can be silent with will be your wife.

I take this seriously, it feels good knowing I have a large, trustworthy rust-brown haired man to my right side. Icelandic viking Grim of Hålogaland is my 30th great grandfather. For this mission we need nothing less than the most powerful protectors.Grim is one of them. My bags were all ready to go, including the shoulder bag with the seven compartments.

The existence starts breaking up in sound and lights. The Wolf gets insecure.

The Wolf:

Mom? Mom? No, she died. Mom had died. Two years prior my mom had passed away. She died suddenly, long before her time. It was difficult. Around the same time, my psychiatrist broke up with me. Or was that before? What? Oh, I'm sorry. A series of rejections and traumas affect one's mental health. Makes you sensitive. Like an egg without a shell. Have you never felt like that? Oh, I'm sorry.

He starts to notice a light in his hand. The light starts to move. He follows the movement of the light. "The Title Song" of "Be a Wolf" is being played. We follow the Wolf around the stage. The light suddenly disappears. He lights a cigar in the darkness. Walks slowly to the chair from the auditorium, sits down and smokes for a while. Suddenly the music stops.

The Wolf:

Look, I've been thinking. For those diagnosed with mental health issues, is it possible that being designated as a "patient" at some point in your life, follows you for the rest of your existence? To what extent does a mental health diagnosis shape a person's image of oneself? Catching a disease doesn't make me the disease, does it? Disease… dis-ease. Words also have their effect. Lunacy, or lunar disease if you will, became derangement which

became madness which became mental disorder which today is referred to as mental health problem. What a rigmarole and all so subjective.I believe the fundamental paradox of the healthcare system and indeed all marketing systems, is that there is more money to be made from ill health and dis-ease than health and ease. There's a lot more money in sickness than in health. It's called a health system, not an ill health system. We should in fact pay doctors for being healthy, not sick. How bad do we have to feel to be considered sick? No objective measures, no thermometer, no blood test, no x-ray, nothing but a feeling. I quit my job at WHO because I was sickened by the force of capitalism and its need for dis-ease, sickened by the endless medicalisation. Everybody had some sort of diagnosis.

The Wolf gets insecure. Then he looks at the audience.

The Wolf:

Oh, I'm sorry. Where was I? Oh, yes, my psychiatrist dumped me and my mom died and now I've stopped taking lithium, started taking this heart medication, all around the same time and oh, I'm sort of losing focus here.

Oh, am I getting this wrong? Yeah, I'm getting this wrong. I don't remember my lines at all. Sorry.

The Wolf takes a deep breath and tries to calm down.

The Wolf:

Number One, breathe. It's one of the Mental Health Commandments. They were printed on refrigerator magnets and distributed across the country. Don't you remember? I wrote them. You didn't know that, did you? Number four, exist in the Point. Number six, forget yourself. Number seven, remember to smile.

All kinds of things like that. It's like survival tools, you know? Don't you have this on your fridge?

The Wolf walks slowly to the duvet in front of the stage. He lies down. He breathes.

The Wolf:

"This is a moment of pain…….I'm ok the way I am right now."

They're like guidelines. To live a better life. To survive.

He breathes for a while. Wrapped tightly in the duvet. Then total silence. Suddenly he jumps up.

The Wolf:

I need to get to the pool. I feel so good in the water. It has a de-electrifying and earth-binding effect. It's as if the water pulls all the blood to my skin, leaving the bloodless brain relaxed in the process.

The Wolf finds a hose in the corner of the stage and turns the water on, sprays it all over the stage as if to water it. The water gushes out and gradually creates a shallow pool on the stage as the play moves forward.

The Wolf:

I'm in the swimming pool. AAHHHHH. When I get home, I take my evening dose of the heart medication, 40 mg. An assault from the dark side begins with psychosis. I am unwillingly lowered down the cliffside of my past. The assault comes with fear. Panic attacks. I have to hold on to the walls to feel safe. The feeling is indescribable. Am I losing my mind? HELP!

The Wolf looks around as if totally lost in what's going to happen next. Then he wanders off to the corner of the stage, he rigs up a waterfall with the hose. He is getting more energetic.

The Wolf:

The dog awakes from his sombre sleep

wandering, waiting, grunts and grins

Places his heavy paw in the deep

the lights go out, the haunting begins.

The black dog rages, a foaming hog,

with burning eyes, he stares me down.

My own mind soon is lost in fog

the mental state about to drown.

Go back to hell, you blackest dog

and burn for all eternity.

Sink down into your foulest bog

get lost along with my misery

I‘m stuck. Help. I am about to lose my mind but I’m still clinging to my senses. My apartment has become a prison. I close the curtains, crawl weak into the bathroom, wet every towel I have and wrap them around my head. I’m burning within. I lie alone on the floor of the shower in the dark.

He crawls into the waterfall and lies down in the middle of it.

The Wolf:

I am full of electricity. I need to leave the city, get back to my ancestors. Where is Grim the Viking now? I head for the countryside.

The Wolf runs to the front of the stage.

The Wolf:

I’m standing on the well cover in the middle of the farmyard. I’m so electrified now that the iPod keeps crashing. Perhaps I should check in to the psychiatric ward in the city? This heart medication is really killing me. Or saving me? I’m not sure. I get in the car. I’m going back to the city. The road is dry, my car is followed by a steady cloud of dust. I reach the bottom of the valley and look up at the ridge. I’m going to admit myself. You think I’m crazy, don’t you?

The Wolf gets paranoid. Music.

The Wolf:

I turn on the radio in my car. After the first 20-30 seconds of every song, I switch over to the next song. Most of the songs are about love, sorrow and life itself but my mind adds its own meaning to them. Wow, these songs were written about my life. This is amazing!

The Wolf starts to smile. He walks towards the back of the stage. He slowly starts to scale the wall. It is like a dream. Music. After a while climbing the wall he gets down. He is smiling and laughing.

The Wolf:

There's a sensitive, hypersensitive chord in my chest that is struck. It's as if the slightest little thing, that doesn't strike a chord with people in a "normal" state of mind, causes profound emotional reactions in me. WOW! Can you feel that? Do you hear this song? Is it me singing? WOW!

He runs around the stage. Music is getting higher. He finds a stage person and starts to yell at them, asking for things.

The Wolf:

I want more electricity! More lights! This is like being in love! Love is mania, so good… so good. Do you feel it? If other people are emotional double basses, I am a harp with a hundred strings.

The music gets really loud. It is as the Wolf is controlling everything now, the music, the lights, the mood. The Wolf smiles and starts dancing to the song, inspired. He grabs a fire extinguisher and starts to spray it all over the stage. The stage is filling up with sound, water and smoke. It is total mania. The Wolf suddenly gets paranoid when the stage people begin to take all the props off the stage as if they are trying to get rid of him. He grabs the microphone from the beginning of the play. And screams.

The Wolf:

You can't coerce people! You cannot use violence. Some things are simply unforgivable. I did nothing wrong. Stop looking at me like that!

The Stage people have now cleared the stage. They grab the microphone from his hand. Suddenly the curtain is being closed. He runs off stage to the auditorium, very desperate. Just before he exits the auditorium he screams.

The Wolf:

THIS ISN'T THE END!!! THIS IS NOT THE END!!!

As The Wolf disappears , we see a recording on the curtain of what is happening in the foyer of the theatre. We see the Wolf wandering around in the bar, tired, afraid and wet. He is alone. He gets a drink and walks around. Then suddenly he starts to dance in the staircase of the foyer. The song is blasting. The audience watches from their seats. He is dancing around the lobby, on the bar, in the elevator. He smokes a cigar, plays the piano etc. The scene has a strong reference to the music video from Fat Boy Slim with Christopher Walken dancing in a hotel lobby.

Chapter five:

UPPERWORLD.

The Wolf suddenly appears again, exhausted and sweaty, coming through a door to the auditorium behind the audience. His hair is combed back slick and he‘s wearing a pink suit. He is very energetic, fast spoken.

The Wolf:

I’m really feeling much better! I hear on the radio that Mel Gibson is in the area, staying at the Marriott Hotel right next to my house! I’m now flushing the toilet at least five times before I’ve finished peeing. I’ve been taking the heart medication for a month and my energy is growing by the day. I decided not to go to the psychiatric ward. I am a heart patient, the psychiatric mob ain’t got no authority over me. Authority… Authority… Do you have a pen?

The Wolf finds a black felt-tip pen in his pocket and starts to write onto the old wooden walls of the theatre: “Authority”.

The Wolf:

Look, if you cross out the -ity you’re left with Author… you are the AUTHOR! You are in control. See?

He runs down the staircase of the auditorium very fast and jumps up to the front of the stage. The curtain is still closed.

The Wolf:

I need physical touch. A massage is the easiest way to get that. My cousins are connected to people in Eastern-Europe, they are real business magnate Vikings, seriously! I’ll have to rely on their protection now. I’ve decided to find Mel Gibson and challenge him to a duel but first, a massage at a Chinese massage parlour.

He jumps into the Presidential box on one side of the auditorium. The scene at the Chinese massage parlour takes place there.

The Wolf:

This is a clever masseuse. She's middle-aged and strong. I follow her commands. I lie on the table face down wearing only this special loincloth and she begins the massage. She speaks no English and so the owner has told me to tap her lightly once if I want a softer massage but give her two taps for a firmer treatment. She has strong hands, she's a good masseuse. I can hardly lay still. I tap her arm twice and then twice again. I never tap her once. I can't get enough of her touch. She massages my shoulders and I reach up and grab her. First her arms, then her hips and I begin to return the powerful massage. Thus begins a circulation of energy between two individuals. This energy circle lasts for nearly two hours. I can't handle my energy and massage this Chinese woman back and forth while she massages me using all of her skills. When she tells me to turn around, my excessive energy has burst out of the loincloth. My energy points are filled to the brim and my confidence is soaring but my powers of deduction and the premises I use to evaluate reality and myself are askew. Or should we rather say different? The woman giggles while she throws me a towel.

The Wolf jumps back to the front of the stage.

The Wolf:

I'm at the Marriott Hotel looking for Mel. Despite a convincing pitch on the values of Asian martial arts and energy channels meant for Gibson, the hotel staff refuse to let me approach him. They pretend like Mel Gibson isn't staying there but I know better.

The Wolf starts an intimate connection to one audience member.

The Wolf:

What? Why are you laughing? What is the matter with you?

He continues the play.

The Wolf:

Wow, everything has changed in just one month. I've gone from the consultation office of the Ministry of Health to challenging Mel Gibson to a duel in Japanese martial arts. I still have an erection. I need to get my hair cut!

He looks at the audience intensely. Almost aggressively.

The Wolf:

Yeah, you're enjoying this, aren't you? Aren't you? Mania is so sexy, so fun, so adventurous. Nobody wants to listen to the heavy rumbles of depression. It's so boring. This is fun.

I can't sleep. This is my 13th sleepless night in a row. I go downtown and suddenly four people are standing in front of me. I give them a shove and they jump to the side. One of the girls falls down. They come at me. They all come at me. They're attacking me!

The Wolf reenacts the fight.

The Wolf:

I am the Wolf. I throw them off, one by one and back out of the battlefield. "Call the police!" But the police were actually looking for me at that point. My friends had reported me. They want to detain me and get me to a doctor. I am considered a menace to society. What do you think about that? Me?

My friends' phone is constantly ringing because of me. My doctor knows that I don't want to be admitted in the city because of my friendship and connection with the chief physician. The psychiatric hospital in the nearest city refuses to admit me because of my professional views and opinions! Are you hearing me!? The doctor there disagreed with my professional opinion on mental health issues. Articles I had written. Ideology. So he refused to accept me as a patient at their psychiatric ward! Human rights violation!

My new psychiatrist was a gentle soul. He didn't want to strip control from his patients and preferred not to commit people against their will.

The Wolf gets into the circle of sand he made in the beginning of the show. The mania briefly subsides as he plays out the conversation.

The Wolf:

"And you don't want to be admitted to the psychiatric ward here in the city?"

"No, I've worked too closely with the psychiatrists who work there, in some cases on reforms on mental health policies and other related issues, not to mention the fact that I am suffering from a heart condition and just need care and nourishment. Tender, love and caring – that's all"

“Since the psychiatric ward in the next city won’t admit you, your only option is to go to either of the two county hospitals in the countryside. But those hospitals have no psychiatric wards,” he said.

Wouldn’t the one up West be a better choice, it being closer? I said.

“Yes,” said my psychiatrist. “Drive west and wait for me to contact you in a few days. Don’t you have family in the area?”

“Yes, but my dad doesn’t understand me. He never has.”

“Can’t you stop by though?”

“I can stop by in my hometown but I’m not staying at my dad’s.”

Chapter six:

THE VIOLENCE.

The Wolf:

My brother is standing in front of me, ready to drive me to our hometown. I trust him.

However, what I’m unaware of is the fact that my dad had spoken to a psychiatrist in the family who advised him to have me committed to a hospital in the city as soon as possible.

To take away my autonomy and coercively treat me there – what an oxymoron. He blindsided me.

I wanted to stay with a friend in town, an old friend of my mom. I definitely don’t want to stay with my father. In the Upper World, mania exposes the soul and so words and actions are never as true. I don’t want to meet my father in this state. He never understood me.

The curtain opens and the Wolf slowly walks into the stage which is now covered in water.

The Wolf:

My friend’s flat is in a terraced house sitting at the edge of a cliff with spectacular views of the bay.

My friend is home and gives me a warm welcome. I tell her about my situation and that I'm waiting for my doctor's phone call about getting admitted at the county hospital. She sees that I'm more tattered, slimmer and overall sicker than I had been the last time I saw her. I storm the apartment and for some reason I don't feel confident.

The next day I rush out with my bag with the seven compartments on my shoulder and my hair wet. I'm a bit like this bag now, I can take on many forms like a chameleon. I rush to the banks. They've just opened. Mammon's temples. I had to warn them. They were all about to go bankrupt. I withdrew all of my money.

"Please tell the manager about the looming bankruptcy," I called to the teller on my way out. Outside the bank, I see two women on a bench enjoying the sun.

"Women, are thee not aware that thy banks and funds are to go under? Something must be done. The Matter is collapsing too quickly."

It's summer, August 14th, 2008. Think about that for a minute! Sometimes insanity is a sane response to an insane society. We were all in mania. The entire world!

I can't sleep. Fuck.

I'm back in my friend's flat. I've decided to take a bath and relax.

The Wolf lies down in the bathtub. The central point.

The Wolf:

My dad had received a phone call earlier that day from a concerned woman in town who had met me and listened to my prophecies about the banks going under.

She was very concerned and told my dad that his son was very ill. "We can't have him storming around town like that."

After the phone call he realised he had to take action and get me admitted to the psychiatric ward in the city.

The only thing he could think of was to handle the situation like he handled his horses. When one of the horses in a pack goes out of control there's only one thing to do.

Their attack was poorly planned and badly executed. NOTE: FIND AN EQUIVALENT IN ENGLISH HISTORY TO THE ICELANDIC VERSION (AÐFÖRIN AÐ SNORRA).

You see, a mental health problem isn't the worst or an alleged mental health problem. It's the violence and the coercion. The violence is the worst.

I'm still in the bathtub. I breathe deep down into the Point.

Sand falls from the ceiling. The lighting rigs start collapsing. The Wolf takes it in. The Wolf takes deep breaths and tries to calm down.

The Wolf:

Suddenly I hear loud noises. It sounds like someone is trying to break in. Then there's a forceful knock on the bathroom door.

"Come out now!"

It sounds like the door is about to cave in. I slouch out of the tub. Open the door. There they stand, my father, my two tearful brothers, the young medical intern, the chief of police out of uniform, my friend's son and the horseman. Familiar and unfamiliar men barging into my territory, into the central point, intending to take control. My father and brothers are nervous:

"You have to come with us to the city. You are very ill and don't know what you are doing. You're manic! Come with us now!"

I sit down. My father tries to pick me up by the shoulder from where I'm sitting. This is the exact opposite of what I need. A calm and collected person using loving kindness would have been the most effective partner for me in that state.

The young intern stands impatient in front of the chair with his syringe ready and next to him stands the horseman with his arms crossed. His eyes beam with eagerness. I look up at the chief of police and ask to speak with him. He seems to be the most grounded of this ensemble and the most reasonable. We walk out of the den, through the narrow kitchen and washroom and out to the balcony on the north side of the house.

I look at him and in a state of panic I try to explain everything:

"I'm on my way to be admitted to the county hospital, to get help. I want to get help. I'm not dangerous. Neither to myself nor others. We have a plan. I am to

be admitted to the county hospital. I know I need help. It will be alright. Trust me. You can't justify this type of attack. This isn't ok. You can't do this. I am an adult. I am a human being." He listens but gives no reply. As if he's dealing with a child.

The chief of police opens the door and inside waits the horseman, my father and the medical intern, all nervous.

"I don't want to go with you. I'm not going with you. You're interfering with my psychiatrist's proposed treatment. I can call him so you can confirm this. Let me make the call!"

That's when it happened. The pendulum broke. You see, I've never been violent, you know?

My father walked toward me, hit my hand that held the phone which was thrown to the floor. There was no more listening.

I barge into the kitchen on the verge of tears. I feel the grip of the horseman's paws on me like a sledgehammer. I lie down on the mat in the den. I am already crying before any scuffle has occurred:

"You don't know what you're doing."

Where was my mom? Where is my mom now?

Same light appears as when his mother passed away. He looks up into the light.

I go to the central point of any young man's existence, the mother. I feel loved just the way I am. Our whole lives the essence of our existence revolves around this feeling, this inner certainty of acceptance. If this certainty isn't there, we spend our lives looking for it.

He goes back to the story.

The Wolf:

Despite my immense energy I have enough insight not to fight back. I have never been violent. I told you that.

The horseman pins me down on one side and twists my arm back with force despite the fact that I am not fighting back. The intern begins pulling my trousers down to give me a shot of sedatives in my backside.

I lie there paralyzed, my eyes full of tears. Disgraced and humiliated.

When I step outside, I see an ambulance waiting. Now this is a bit much. Don't you think?

Silence.

The Wolf:

Do you understand now? Huh? Do you get it? The Wolf was cornered.

Ooooohhhh.

The Wolf was cornered.

The Wolf walks slowly out of the water and to the front of the stage.

Chapter seven:

FORGIVENESS.

The Wolf creates a circle from sand he keeps in his pocket. Just like in the beginning of the show.

The Wolf:

I'm always trying to... well, I'm always trying to do the right thing. I watch my sleep, make plans, work on myself. Face different aspects of myself with humility. Different things work for different people but this is kind of my way to harmonise different parts of myself… and I use my tools – the Words of Life.

I couldn't take a bath for years without leaving the bathroom door open and staying on full alert – I remember how difficult it was taking a bath – since the attack happened while I was in the bathtub.

Silence

The Wolf:

And a year after the violence I remember driving to my hometown, still feeling miserable and depressed after everything that had happened with the coercive treatment and all that. Remember I told you I was driving up to see my dad? And that I was going to talk to my dad? I needed to talk to him about all of this. I needed to forgive him. He never wants to talk about anything.

Long pause. As if the Wolf is realising something.

The Wolf:

And I drove up to see dad. I'm driving to see dad and I'm driving along the coastline and I get this idea in the midst of this state of misery and depression, that I'm going to… I'm just going to kill myself. The little boy inside me was completely broken. That post-mania, post-violence pain is so horrific, you don't understand. You'll never be able to understand.

And I decide to cross lanes over to oncoming traffic and there's a big truck coming towards me. I'm just going to hit the next truck head on. They're coming towards me on the other lane and I decide to just cross over. I'm driving a small car and I know I'll be killed instantly. And I take off my seatbelt……that's when it happens, I don't know what it is but it's some kind of miracle, I hear the words…

"I live, you also shall live!!!"

This wasn't the radio, it wasn't a voice but it was some kind of voice from inside that spoke to me and called out to me. It was so strong that it lasted for nearly the remainder of the trip, 40-50 km:

"I live, you also shall live!"

It was an intense conviction that it was worth it to live a little longer. So, I park at the side of the road and lay my head on the steering wheel. I just had to get my bearings.

Silence.

The Wolf:

Do we ever really grow up? Aren't we always walking around with that little boy or little girl and all those different parts within us that need to be taken care of every single day? Parts that never grow up? Never will be complete. All of us?

You see, you have to have trust and faith. I think a rowboat is a good symbol for life. You sit in the rowboat and then you spend your life rowing. And you're always rowing and going somewhere and acting as if you know where you're going. But you're obviously faced backwards and don't really know what's ahead. But sometimes in life you have to be able to trust and trusting means being able to rest on your oars, lie down and trust that your boat will drift where it's meant to drift.

He looks at the audience.

The Wolf:

Trust that it will all go well. That people are generally doing their best.

Something is dawning on him.

The Wolf:

And yeah, maybe forgive…

Why don't we concentrate more on the things that unite us rather than the things that make us different? What we all have in common, whether we have blond or dark hair, whether we're bald or fat or thin or black or white… or… depressed.

Yeah, or mad.

The Wolf stands at the front of the stage, he pauses, looks up and gazes deep into the eyes of the audience. He is humble and silent.

The Wolf:

I will forgive.I will forgive you. I forgive… I forgive… forgiveness… please forgive me.

We have to be able to lie down and trust that the boat will drift where it's meant to drift.

He starts to walk again into the water. While he speaks he finds the center Point.

The Wolf:

I'm ok the way I am right now. I live, you also shall live. I live, you also shall live.

The Wolf recites his Mental health commandments quietly as he turns off the stage light and walks off stage.

Stand by yourself….serve in humility….be present….find yourself in others….Have faith and trust…..Long for what you have….Forget yourself……

The Wolf walks to the same door he entered in the beginning of the show. The only light left is the EXIT signs. Just before he walks out he whispers with fulfillment:

The Wolf:

Remember to smile.