

VIF

(beat)

~~There are no thralls here.~~

~~TRYGGVI disappears into the structure. VIF holds her ground as HROLF approaches.~~

HROLF

~~What colony is this?~~

VIF

~~Colony?~~

HROLF

~~Somewhere strange and far-flung.~~

(beat)

~~Iceland, perhaps, or Greenland.~~

(beat)

~~I hear tales that Vinland is haunted by mists and monsters both.~~

VIF

(beat)

~~He did not tell you.~~

TRYGGVI

(from inside)

~~Why should he?~~

~~Inside the shelter, TRYGGVI hunkers before the fire.~~

TRYGGVI

(from inside)

~~It matters not.~~

Start

Before HROLF can answer, a third figure rounds the shelter.

This is THORUNN. As soon as she sees HROLF, she drops her bundle of firewood with a clatter on the beach.

THORUNN

No.

HROLF stares.

HROLF

Thorunn?

(beat)

How-

THORUNN

No. No.

(beat)

(MORE)

(CONTINUED)

THORUNN (cont'd)
Not here. Not you.

Passing RIOGHAIN'S chain to VIF without a glance, HROLF runs to THORUNN. Both RIOGHAIN and VIF are frozen, however, watching this scene unfold.

HROLF
How can this be?
(beat)
How comes you here? To this foreign shore?

THORUNN'S legs give out beneath her and HROLF catches her before she falls to the shingle.

THORUNN
You must go. You cannot be here.
(beat)
This is no place for you. I thought, I prayed to every god that-

VIF
Thorunn.

VIF is suddenly nervous and scanning the treeline.

HROLF
My honeycomb. Slow down.
(beat)
Speak sense. Tell me how you are here. Tell me what dream is this.

THORUNN
No dream.
(beat)
I am here. And you-
(beat)
-are here.

HROLF
Where is here?

THORUNN
There is another place for you.
(beat)
The roof is made from shields. The pillars from spears. There is a wolf above the door and-

VIF
 Thorunn. Stop this.

Back and forth VIF scans, as though expecting something to spring upon them at any moment.

THORUNN
 -an eagle above the wolf.

HROLF
 All is well, my honeycomb.
 (beat)
 I am here now.

THORUNN
 I prayed to every god-
 (beat)
 -that you never would be.

Inside the shelter, TRYGGVI stares into the flames.

TRYGGVI
 Too late.

End

Something changes. The world stills, goes quiet, drips like molasses. Something - someone - is here that wasn't here before and it pulls all focus up the shingle.

There stands a figure.

The mist spools around them like a cloak in the wind. There they stand, demanding to be reckoned with, refusing to be ignored.

TRYGGVI
 She is come.

This is HEL.

The goddess of the unmarked grave. She appears as a blue witch, both living and dead. She does not speak; she only looks. Her gaze, though, is implacable - a gaze that has seen nine realms and the tree of world and the ending of all things.

VIF is frozen in terror. RIOGHAIN's lips move but she does not speak. HROLF tenses and clutches THORUNN protectively.

It is THORUNN who catches HEL's gaze.

Her panic quits her. She smiles sadly at HROLF and rises to her feet. For a moment, she simply stares at HROLF.

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