
Sc. 1 Start

HROLF

A housecarl?

(beat)

Yet neither of us was worthy.

(beat)

A thrall and a lame godi? Perhaps.

Yet you and I were bound for the
other place.

RIOGHAIN

The other place?

Everyone turns, astonished. Some distance from the fire,
where she was leashed, RIOGHAIN looks up from her huddled
position, considering HROLF where he squats.

RIOGHAIN

Tell me.

HROLF looks at her but it is TRYGGVI who speaks.

TRYGGVI

Valhalla.

(beat)

The Hall of the Slain. Where dwell
the heroic dead.

(beat)

Roofed by a thousand shields. Held
aloft by a thousand spears. There,
under Odin's watchful eye, the
victorious dead do endless battle
against the day the world ends.

HROLF

Ever in my dreams did I see them.

(beat)

The valkyries.

(beat)

Galloping down the Rainbow Bridge
to fetch the fallen and bear them
away to that golden hall.

(beat)

To fetch me.

They are once again plunged into silence. The fire cracks.

RIOGHAIN

There is no such place.

None dare speak at this blasphemy.

(CONTINUED)

RIOGHAIN

You speak a pagan fantasy.

(beat)

There is another place and that is the Kingdom of Heaven. No shields nor spears nor war are found there. There sits enthroned the Lord God with all his heavenly host of angels and saints.

(beat)

It is he who sits in judgment of the dead. Not some one-eyed heathen sorcerer.

A pause.

TRYGGVI

One wonders.

(beat)

What brings a Christ witch to Helheim with us pagans?

RIOGHAIN

(quietly)

Not even the pious are without sin.

(beat)

Mark me. I am not long for your company. Soon, Christ the Savior will lift me from this misty purgatory and I too, lowly as I am, shall ascend unto the abode of the Lord.

(beat)

You, however, shall eternal remain, among the ghosts and witches and heathens who-

As RIOGHAIN speaks, HROLF climbs slowly to his feet. He grabs RIOGHAIN'S chain and lashes her tighter against the tree trunk, constricting speech and mobility.

RIOGHAIN stares daggers and, across the fire, so does VIF. TRYGGVI simply stares at his stones.

Sc. 1 End

TRYGGVI

There is no rescue from death.

~~21 EXT. FOREST - DAY 21~~

~~Through thicker mist the group journeys. TRYGGVI appears uncertain of the path forward, stopping often and casting about. VIF is wary, spotting silhouettes here and there.~~

~~HROLF staggers. An intense weariness has overcome him and he lurches on his feet. He finally slumps against a tree and, too exhausted to continue, collapses to the ground.~~

~~HROLF
(gasping)
Rest.~~

~~His companions slow and consider him. As his head lolls, he spots something, further in the forest.~~

~~22 EXT. GRAYSCAPE 22~~

~~Swirled in more mist, HROLF sees a silhouette, a WOMAN, who carries a basket on her hip. This WOMAN turns to him and cocks her head curiously.~~

~~Then HROLF'S eyes shut.~~

23 EXT. FOREST - EVENING 23

Chained once again to a tree, RIOGHAIN sits miserably with her crucifix. All the while, he cannot take her eyes from HROLF, where he slumbers a short distance away.

Then VIF appears before her.

With her foot, VIF sweeps away the pine needles to make a place to sit. In one hand, VIF clutches a bundle of short sticks. In the other, a fistful of pebbles. Once she's cleared a space on the ground, she sits and starts to arrange both into a grid - something like a chessboard.

VIF
White or black?

RIOGHAIN
(beat)
White.

VIF
(smirks)
A harder road for you, then.

Next she produces her small carving - a female warrior, a valkyrie, carved from driftwood.

Sc. 2 Start

(CONTINUED)

VIF

This is your king. This is your throne.

(beat)

Your king has one aim. To escape to one of these four corners.

RIOGHAIN

Escape?

(beat)

From whom?

VIF holds up a dark pebble.

VIF

From me.

She smiles. After a moment, RIOGHAIN almost does too.

A short distance away, TRYGGVI sits, throwing his stones. At first, he pays them no attention, until he hears VIF laugh. He glances up at them, watches them for a moment, before returning to his stones.

After a moment, VIF speaks.

VIF

You have a husband?

RIOGHAIN

No.

(beat)

Christ and Christ alone have my devotion.

VIF

Nor do I.

(beat)

Have a husband. Save perhaps my shield.

RIOGHAIN

Sworn to another.

(beat)

You said.

She nods towards the king piece.

VIF

My jarl. My king.

(beat)

Always by their side was I. Even in the afterworld.

(CONTINUED)

(beat)
When-

She stops for a moment, her hand hovering over a pebble.

VIF
When Hel came, I-
(beat)
You saw me. I froze. I could not
fight. Same as when she came for
Gunnulf and Oddmarr. And Thorunn
and-

(beat)
From fear. From cowardice.

RIOGHAIN
Women are not warriors.

VIF
(smirks)
You must know my mother.
(beat)
It was her only wish. That I should
marry. My name, even, means wife.
(beat)
Why I took up axe and shield, I
suppose.

RIOGHAIN
In defiance?

VIF
Do not allow anyone to decide your
fate.
(beat)
Except me.

VIF moves something on the board.

VIF
Another?

Sc. 2 End

~~24 EXT. FOREST - MORNING 24~~

~~HROLF snaps awake.~~

~~Gray-blue morning has descended once again over the forest.
HROLF takes stock - he seems not to recognize his
surroundings. Then he starts.~~

~~There is a ring of silhouettes around him. Still distant,
still somewhat intangible, but there nonetheless. Perfectly
spaced, perfectly still.~~

(CONTINUED)