

SECOND SHIFT

Episode #15: The Return (v1.7)
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TEASER

FESMER

[chanting in Charendrean]

Now, the circle.

[chanting in Charendrean]

SFX: An ethereal, soft chiming sound.

FESMER

I am a little busy.

SFX: An ethereal, soft chiming sound.

FESMER

Exactly. I am preparing it now, as I have told you.

SFX: An ethereal, soft chiming sound.

FESMER

I know. I, too, wish we had some other way of achieving our goal,
but I can assure you-

SFX: An ethereal, soft chiming sound.

FESMER

Are they reliable? In truth I am uncertain. But, previously, they
came to me for a reason. I simply did not recognize it.

SFX: An ethereal, soft chiming sound.

FESMER

It is not that simple. We will assemble soon enough. Now, leave me
to do my part.

SFX: An ethereal, soft chiming sound.

FESMER

No, I am not yelling at you.

SFX: An ethereal, soft chiming sound.

FESMER

I miss you too. Now. It is time.

[takes a deep, slow breath]

Fai cthloll Odi: Shift. Fai cthloll Odi: Shift. Fai cthloll Odi: Shift.

SFX: Fesmer's chant builds and merges into the Shift effect.

END OF TEASER

ACT ONE

Scene One — Title

JARETH

[as if pontificating to a large audience]

Perhaps you think me strict, even ancient-minded, but as the world changes and our customs threaten to shift and even vanish, it is more vital now than ever before to hold to our ways, whatever the cost. To even risk seeming inflexible or self-righteous at times. Our ways have guided us true for many centuries, and, so long as we are not led astray by passing and ill-considered notions, they will serve us many more centuries still.

[beat]

That is why you received an unsatisfactory mark on your final exam, S1.

S1

Simply because I disagree with some of your teachings?

JARETH

University's teachings . This was a test of your comprehension, not your opinions. Additionally, you did not adequately cite your sources. Any other questions?

S2

Yet S1's point stands: University does not hold claim to Odi itself. Ritual magic and the Laws of Usage are how we access Odi, true, but by no means are they the only way.

KASHA

I suggest you tread lightly, S2.

JARETH

It is *nai-nai*, Kasha. S1, S2, and I are engaged in informal academic conversation only. Correct?

S1 and S2

Yes, [term of respect].

JARETH

The term has ended and they seek clarification, for they understand that their learning does not cease when their classes do. Though many of their contemporaries are celebrating the apex of Silver Night with excessive libations, S1 and S2 have chosen to remain here. That is to be commended.

KASHA

[knowingly]

As you say, Jareth.

JARETH

Good. Now then, what treasonous and addle-minded ideas are you two [jackels] proposing to me in my very office?!

[beat]

I jest. Please, speak.

S1

[hesitates]

Only this, [term of respect]: you have taught us that natural magic has existed long before ritual.

JARETH

Savage magic has, yes, and I should hope you did not only just learn that in my class, S1. Every child knows this.

S1

[pressing on]

The Seven brought ritual to the chaos and founded the Seven Universities. Ritual magic has proven to be more reliable and more easily regulated. This we understand.

S2

But why is na—... savage magic illegal? Children often employ it without rebuke, yet when an adult accesses Odi in that way, it is punishable by death.

JARETH

[an unwelcome memory]

Not completely without rebuke.

[returning to the argument]

It is a question of scale, S2. A child, even one who is highly attuned, has little hope of causing a powerful effect through innocent experimentation. This does not mean they cannot be dangerous though.

[beat]

Recall that the mind alone is used to guide Savage Magic. And the mind can be capricious. Simply because one intends no harm does not mean harm cannot be inflicted.

[Beat]

As for the punishment of Death, do not forget it is the maximum penalty for such an offense, reserved for cases where the caster's continued existence is a provable threat to innocent lives. Every life is sacred, yes, but that is not an excuse for putting the life of one, especially a criminal, above the many.

S2

Yet what if of other controlled methods of using odi? The Legion—

S1

[sensing a gaffe]

Not to suggest that we are advocating Legion methods, or the Legion itself, in any conceivable way...

KASHA

I should hope not!

S2

[annoyed at the interruption]

—*The Legion* is known to harness the energies of tae-oden for their strange technology.

S1

Strange and evil technology.

S2

Yes. Yet University collects and disposes of tae-oden. Why? Why not harness the energy as the Legion does, and best them at their own gambit!

KASHA

What? Absolutely not!

JARETH

Kasha, there is no cause to react so forcefully. It was a legitimate question. Tae-oden are foul things, S2. It is a great drain upon the resources of University to dispose of them safely. Are you suggesting we should not continue in this manner?

S2

Precisely! They proliferate our forests, our rivers. Over the past year alone, tae-oden recoveries have nearly tripled, which can only mean that they are appearing with much greater frequency. We need to study them, not simply dispose of them.

S1

What S2 is saying is that, to preserve our ways, *University's* ways, perhaps we must adapt to the times—perhaps seek alternative paths when the main road falters.

S2

The Hunters of Truth, however unsavory their methods, espouse precisely this. It is said that they advocate the combination of ritual magic with natural, and that the end result is—

KASHA

—is terrorism. They savagely attacked Prolau wo [other school] last month, or have you forgotten? You would do well not to preach their doctrine within these walls—

JARETH

[lightly]
Kasha, *senjen*.

KASHA

—however “academic” your argument.

JARETH

S1 and S2, I do take your point. Yet—your knowledge is limited. Tae-oden consume life, and any energy they might provide can only do likewise. But, S2, if, after the end of the coming class cycle, you are still interested in studying them, we can discuss a temporary transfer to one of our sister Universities where methods of disposing and preventing them are actively studied. Such as Prolau wo Veliadi. I have heard it is quite a beautiful school.

[beat]

As for combining ritual magic with savage... well...

SFX: Very, very faintly: the Shift effect. Almost a whisper.

S1

[after an uncomfortable pause]
[Term of respect]?

JARETH

Ah. Well, yes... the end result may great, perhaps more powerful than either alone. But the cost is very high, especially to the health and general well-being of the user. Loss of sleep, erratic moods, hallucinations. [trailing off] Alienation of friends. Loved ones...

KASHA

Jareth, what...?

JARETH

[laughing at himself]
Apologies, there is much on my mind.

S2

So, if it can be done, then—

SFX: A sharp double-tap on Jareth's door.

JARETH
Targonone! You remain here at this late hour?

TARGONONE
Greetings, Jareth. Kasha. Students.

S1 & S2
[Term of respect].

TARGONONE
Jareth, when you have a moment, I would speak with you.

JARETH
Of course, [term of respect].

S1
The hour is late. Excuse us, and [thank you, formal] for your indulgence, [term of respect].

S2
Yes, [thank you.]

SFX: Their voices fade as they walk away.

S2
You defer to him, always!

S1
I told you that he would not alter my score!

JARETH
[calling after them]
S1, S2. I trust these discussions do not leave my office in any significant way.

S1
[from a short distance]
Of course not, [term of respect].

JARETH
You would do well to remember that, whatever its apparent ease, savage magic is dangerous and unpredictable. Use of it can bring only incalculable harm.

Scene Two — Title

SFX: Twigs snapping with footfalls.

FESMER

...And then I “insert” it directly into your mind! Simple yet brilliant, yes?

MIKE

Vio...vio...let.

KATHERINE

Mike’s right. You violated our personal space.

ARKAHN

Is Meek OK?

FESMER

He may require time to adjust.

KATHERINE

You should have *told* us that was what you were doing.

FESMER

I thought you would be impressed. Now you two do not have to depend on these trinkets.

MIKE

My Brian huts...

KATHERINE

But Fesmer, I was trying to *learn* your language! The old fashioned way.

FESMER

And now you know it! I do not understand...

ARKAHN

I do not think Meek does, either.

MIKE

It’s arriving to myself leisurely.

FESMER

See. He just needs time for his brain to acclimate to my spell.

ARKAHN

Too bad there are no Ce Es El classes here, right Meek?

FESMER

What is that?

ARKAHN

Charendrean as a Second Language.

MIKE

Heh.

KATHERINE

Hey, I would have preferred that than having some weird voodoo in my language center.

MIKE

Now that I can talk... sort of... Hey Kath, check it out: Laundi.

KATHERINE

Yep. [small beat] What’s your— oh, no.

MIKE
I'm going to say it. Again.

FESMER
Say what?

MIKE
In Charendrean!

ARKAHN
[moans]
Meek, do not.

KATHERINE
Mike....

MIKE
In three...two...one...Told. You. So.

KATHERINE
There'll be no living with him now.

ARKAHN
[with humor]
It is true, living with Meek can be a trial.

MIKE
Hey....

ARKAHN
I am surprised, Kath, that you did not hear his snoring all the way in Jay Pee.

MIKE
Oh Kath's no stranger to snoring. That girl knows her snoring.

KATHERINE
Fesmer, is there any way you can undo your spell? No, then I'd still understand him. Is there any way you can make him speak only a language no one can understand?

FESMER
I hope that you are joking.

MIKE
I don't suppose you could place Klingon into my language core. I've always wanted to learn, but it takes so much time...

ARKAHN
"Is there a word in Klingon for loneliness?"

MIKE
"Ah, yes."

MIKE + ARKAHN
"Gardachk!"

MIKE
Nice. High five.

SFX
High five.

FESMER
I have no idea what any of you are talking about. Perhaps I miscalculated.

KATHERINE

No no. The spell worked fine. They're quoting an old episode of... Wow, is that Zana's?

SFX: They stop walking.

ARKAHN

Woah.

MIKE

Unreal.

FESMER

Much has changed in the year you have been gone.

SFX: They start walking.

KATHERINE

It's so... so...

ARKAHN

Like Mikey Double D's, no?

MIKE

Uh, that's "Mickey Dee's." But yeah, talk about a renovation. Look, there's Mr. Ham! He's totally on Zana's sign. See, Katherine? I *told* you Mr. Ham was a great scheme! You could have been a celebrity.

KATHERINE

I liked it the way it was.

FESMER

I stopped here before going into the woods. It has changed so much in the months I have been away, I scarcely recognized it. Zana was not even there! She was visiting her second store, near University.

KATHERINE

What do you mean "away?"

FESMER

I have been gone from Laundi for nearly a year.

ARKAHN

That pen over there—does that sign read "goat rides?"

MIKE

Wait—is that? No, it couldn't—Umbra?

FESMER

Perhaps they have younger, stronger goats to pull the carts. Or perhaps she has finally purchased horses.

KATHERINE

Heaven forbid...

FESMER

Come, we must see Zana.

ARKAHN

There are people in there. Is Zana's still open?

KATHERINE

I thought everything was closed on Silver Night.

MIKE
More business for Zana. I'd like to think *I* taught her that.

FESMER
You did.

SFX: Door opens into Zana's busy restaurant.

EMPLOYEE
[rehearsed]
Hello-and-welcome-to-Zana's-home-of-Mr. Ham-and-his-
pungent-pig-pies-the-wait-will-be-about—

FESMER
We are actually here to see Zana. On business.

EMPLOYEE
ZANA! UP FRONT!

ZANA
Ai, what is it now? I—oh my.

MIKE
We're baaack.

KATHERINE
Zana....

ARKAHN
...*shi schwa*...

ZANA
What happened? Why are you here?

FESMER
I brought them back.

ZANA
And Fesmer? Oh, *Ainorem*, let me take hold of you all, so I am
certain you are not a phantasm of Silver Nights past.

KATHERINE
[tenderly]
Zana.

MIKE
You got anywhere we can set down our gear? These packs are
kinda bulky.

ZANA
[to employee]
We shall be in the office if I am needed.

EMPLOYEE
Yes, *shi schwa*.

ZANA
[to cast]
Come, you must tell me everything.

Scene Three — Title

TARGONONE

I must tell you something, Jareth.

JARETH

Of course, [term of respect].

TARGONONE

Perhaps you wish to first dismiss your task mage?

JARETH

Kasha is familiar with all of my many failings, Targonone. And speaking of which, is this regarding the year-end faculty meeting?

KASHA

[mocking, fondly]

Ah yes. The faculty meeting.

JARETH

It did not proceed quite so poorly as that!

KASHA

You did have much to say about the Laws of Usage. Much more, perhaps, than the administrators would have liked to hear.

JARETH

Well—

TARGONONE

But much less than you could have said, it is true. Remind me later to console you on selecting which battles to fight and when to fight them, Jareth. But that is not why I came.

TARGONONE (CONT'D)

We have confirmed a massive Odi surge to the [west?] of Laundi. Did you sense it?

JARETH

No, [term of respect].

TARGONONE

Of course, you are not attuned. Kasha?

KASHA

I do not know, [term of respect]. I suppose there was something, but I thought at the time it was moral outrage. Oh, Targonone, if you had but heard the things these students were saying—

JARETH

They were merely attempting to learn, albeit in a confrontational way. Not unlike another former student of mine, Kasha.

KASHA

Apologies, Jareth.

JARETH

Why do you tell me of this, [term of respect]?

TARGONONE

It felt similar to the surge that occurred over a year ago, shortly before our last major Undying attack. This surge originated from the same location, as well.

JARETH

[stunned]

...Ah.

KASHA

That is most interesting. Do you believe this heralds another attack from Undying?

TARGONONE

I could not say. What do you think, Jareth?

JARETH

I... would not presume to know, [term of respect]. As you said, I am not attuned.

TARGONONE

I thought perhaps you might have some insight.

JARETH

Apologies, [term of respect]. I do not.

[awkward beat]

Would you both excuse me? The hour grows late, and there is a small matter in town that requires my attention.

TARGONONE

Of course, Jareth. Do not hesitate to call on me, should you require anything at all.

JARETH

No. I mean, yes, of course, [term of respect]. [Thank you, formal.]

SFX: Targonone walks away.

KASHA

[after a beat]

Is something wrong, Jareth?

JARETH

It is of no concern, Kasha. Look over next term's curriculum by tomorrow, *senjen*. I would like to submit it to the committee soon and it must be reviewed by another's eyes.

KASHA

Certainly. My friends and I are cooking tonight, if you wish to join us later.

JARETH

Cha grendi, but likely not. Some other time?

KASHA

Some other time.

JARETH

Farewell, Kasha.

SFX: Jareth walking away

JARETH (cont.)

[to self]

I could not possibly eat right now.

Scene Four — Title

FESMER & ARKAHN
[loudly eating]

MIKE
[munching]
I didn't realize how much I missed your cooking, Zana.

ZANA
It is merely my recipe—thanks to your “marketing” I have cooks who do all of the real work now.

MIKE
And these new toys are excellent. Maybe they don't have the charm of the ones Fesmer and I made but—

SFX: Squeaky toy.

MIKE
Woah. Squeaky toys? How'd you manage that?

KATHERINE
Here, Zana, try this.

ZANA
This is from Boston? It smells very....

MIKE
Is that *coffee*?

SFX: Squeaky toy.

KATHERINE
What do you think the bottom of my pack is full of?

ZANA
[slurps, coughs]
It is... different.

KATHERINE
I guess it's something of an acquired taste.

ZANA
So, tell me: why have you returned? I thought more than anything you wanted to go home.

MIKE
We have to find Shauna. We wanted to go home, yeah— but together.

ZANA
I had guessed as much.

SFX: Squeaky toy.

ARKAHN
Enough, Meek.

FESMER
Yes, one can only take so much.

MIKE
I can't help it.

SFX: Squeaky toy.

MIKE (cont.)
These goat toys are ingenious.

ZANA
[Thank you.] Keep it.

KATHERINE
[groans]
Now we'll never get a moment's peace.

ZANA
In fact, you may all take one.

KATHERINE
Ooo...really?

SFX: Squeaky toy.

FESMER
Meek....

MIKE
Mike, and I swear that wasn't me.

KATHERINE
Mike's right about these.

SFX: Squeaky toy.

KATHERINE (cont.)
They're neat.

ARKAHN
[Oy].

MIKE
OK, now that I've eaten, I can think again.

KATHERINE
[under her breath]
Is that all it takes?

MIKE
Zana, you always seem to know crazy things—have you heard something that could help us?

KATHERINE
Yeah, do you know anything? Anything at all?

ZANA
I know only what Jareth told me

FESMER
For whatever that is worth.

MIKE
Which was what exactly?

ZANA
She was alive.

ARKAHN
Praise *Ainorem*!

ZANA

She was taken by Porec out of the trading post. They left in a wagon together.

MIKE

So what's she doing with your brother, Fes?

FESMER

How should I know, Meek?

KATHERINE

Cool it guys.

MIKE

What else? Did she go willingly? Were there guards?

KATHERINE

What kind of state was she in? Did she have any bad injuries?

ARKAHN

[timidly]

What of the Undying?

ZANA

Of these things I cannot tell you. You will have to wait for Jareth.

MIKE

No. We cannot wait for Jareth. I'm not wasting minutes we don't have.

KATHERINE

Wait—Fesmer, if she's alive, couldn't you Farspeak with her?

FESMER

Believe me, Kath, it is something I have attempted. While recovering from my injuries I did hear her faintly, but Farspeaking has its limits, and she had reached them by the time I was well enough to attempt contact.

KATHERINE

But you contacted Arkahn in *Boston*!

FESMER

But only in the faintest possible way, through her dreams. There are three limits to Farspeaking: distance, attunedness, and personal experience. Arkahn is attuned and we have spent many years together, so it was possible for me to find her. Also, there was something peculiar about trying to reach Boston. It wasn't like distance. It was something else...

KATHERINE

So what about Shauna. Why didn't she try to reach us?

FESMER

Perhaps she could not. Neither of you are attuned. And she had enough difficulty trying to contact her brother.

MIKE

So she couldn't contact us. And you can't contact her?

FESMER

That is correct.

MIKE

Well, that sucks.

KATHERINE

[to Mike]

We knew it wouldn't be easy.

ZANA

That raises a point: how *do* you intend to find Shaena?

MIKE

Do you guys have any other info you can give me?

KATHERINE

Us.

FESMER

The only thing I know with certainty is that she was still alive for the days occurring after Silver Night. Anything further would only be speculation based on rumor. Hardly anything useful.

ZANA

Jareth was not able to find any information either.

FESMER

He did not try very hard.

ZANA

[Be still], Fesmer. No two people are the same. He followed his own path, as you have followed yours.

MIKE

So, what you're telling me is that neither of you can tell me a city to look in or a person to go to. Or even a direction to go in?

ZANA

You are accurate.

MIKE

Then it's time for plan B. I'll go to Draenmer.

ZANA

Are you certain?

KATHERINE

Yeah, didn't they kick you out last time?

FESMER

Are you truly ready to ask your one question, Meek?

MIKE

Mike. This is about finding Shauna. Not about my dad's dream for me. I can do this.

ZANA

Do as you wish, Mike. But you should know that *Ainorem* tell you what you need to know, not what you want to hear. Often their meanings can be vague. And there are many possible ways to interpret their message.

MIKE

It's the only way at this point. They told Shauna how to get us home, and she did that. I'm sure with all of us combined, we'll be able to figure out what they have to tell me.

KATHERINE

Mike's right... actually. If this is the only way, then so be it.

ZANA

Well, Kath, if you support him, who am I to argue?

MIKE

Woo-hoo, mark it on the calendar: Katherine thinks I'm right!

KATHERINE

Mike, don't ruin the moment.

ZANA

Yes, Mike. Rather, make a list of any supplies you think you will need on your way to Draenmer. Then find [employee]. S/he will procure the supplies for you.

[beat]

Kath, please follow me.

MIKE

Hey, Fesmer, is that a new sword?

FESMER

It is.

MIKE

Cool. Is it a real one this time?

FESMER

You will not allow me to forget that, will you.

ARKAHN

C'mon, Meek. I will assist you with your list-making.

SFX: Squeaky toy.

SFX: A door opening and closing.

KATHERINE

What is it, Zana?

ZANA

I have something to give you.

KATHERINE

But you've given me so much already. I don't know how I could—

ZANA

Quiet. "Return to you" is perhaps a better way of phrasing it.

SFX: Crinkling paper.

ZANA

For you.

KATHERINE

My bow! I mean your—

ZANA

It is *your* bow, Kath. I gifted it to you. It is yours until you pass it to another.

KATHERINE

Zana... Thank you.

[beat]

I thought I'd never see it again after the Legion captured us.

ZANA

Jareth investigated the site the next day and recovered it.

KATHERINE

You must have been relieved.

ZANA

Perhaps. Sometimes I think this bow chooses its own path.

KATHERINE

Wish I could say the same about its owner.

ZANA

How so?

KATHERINE

Zana, I just— ... I fell. Hard. I did everything wrong in Boston. I was too ashamed to come back and... face you. I thought you'd be disappointed in me.

ZANA

Oh, Kath. I am simply overjoyed to see you again! What possible cause could I have to be disappointed in you?

KATHERINE

[tearing up]

I... I acted badly. I failed Shauna and— ...

ZANA

Come here, [love.] Quiet now. Twilight is behind you, and there is dawn ahead. Let us greet it.

KATHERINE

Yes, *shi-schwa*.

ZANA

Come now, and bring your bow. Let us see if Meek has your supplies yet.

SFX: Door opens and closes.

MIKE

Well finally. Now we're *all* ready to go.

ARKAHN

I helped.

KATHERINE

Wait, we're going *now*? But it's sundown! It'll be middle of the night when we get there!

ZANA

The Draenpeno are not accustomed to taking pilgrims on the middle of Silver Night.

MIKE

Well, too bad. Like I said, I'm not wasting any time. And it works out perfect. We leave our packs here and go there tonight. We come back here in the morning, use the afternoon to get any other stuff we need, and start off on the road to wherever the next morning.

ZANA

I see you are resolved in this. I will not stand in your path. But if you are leaving tonight, I should provide you with a container of hot soup. Arkahn would you assist me?

ARKAHN

Yes shi shwa.

SFX
Door

KATHERINE

Tonight? You really want to be walking there at night? What if there's bandits or something, like Jareth said last time.

MIKE

Eh, he was just showing off. Besides, it's Silver Night. It's gonna be practically as bright as day. Fesmer, you've been quiet, any objections?

FESMER

Well, I—

SFX: Door bangs open

JARETH

[makes a sound indicating surprise, shock, etc.]

KATHERINE

Jareth!

JARETH

[finding his words]

Kath! Meek. Fesmer? This is your doing again?

FESMER

It could be.

JARETH

There was a huge odi surge, even for Silver Night. They could feel it at University.

SFX
Door

ARKAHN

Zana has kindly provided us with some of her delicious—... oh [goat balls].

JARETH

You.

MIKE

Wow, dramatic tension. Is there any possibility that we could talk about this *on the way* to Draenmer?

[beat]

Just... y'know... asking.

END OF ACT ONE

ACT TWO

Scene Five — Title

SFX: Two people walking

SFX: Muffled MAF talking up ahead.

JARETH
The sun is setting.

KATHERINE
Yeah.

JARETH
I am concerned.

KATHERINE
About Arkahn? Or Fesmer?

JARETH
The Laundi you left is not the Laundi to which you returned.

KATHERINE
Yeah, I know. Especially Zana's, right?

JARETH
There is more unrest as of late. More Legionnaires. More bandits. People have begun locking their doors at night. I am concerned about traveling the road to Draenmer this late at night.

KATHERINE
Oh.

KATHERINE (CONT'D)
Where did you go earlier?

JARETH
Hmm?

KATHERINE
Right before we all left?

JARETH
Oh, that. I had to contact Targonone, my mentor—you remember—with the *charepuenofai*. He is holding an end of the semester faculty party. I told him that circumstances beyond my control have made it impossible for me to attend...but I *had* wished to go. Fortunately he did not sound too displeased with me.

[beat]

KATHERINE
So, I hear you recovered my bow.

JARETH
Yes. I found it while I was looking for other things: clues. I wanted to see if there was *anything* I could find that could lead me to wherever Porec took Shaena.

KATHERINE
Cha grendi. This bow means a lot to me.

JARETH
[You're welcome.] I wish I could have found more regarding Shaena, yet it was little but a burnt ruin crawling with Undying.

KATHERINE

You tried.

JARETH

Some people would disagree with you.

[beat]

She meant something to me too.

KATHERINE

If my therapy sessions have taught me anything, it's that sometimes we transpose our own guilt onto other people.

JARETH

Are you saying that *I*—

KATHERINE

Oh no! I mean maybe Fesmer may feel guilty about what happened last year. And he blames you because it's easier.

JARETH

Sometimes I feel as if Fesmer will *never* forgive me.

[beat]

I was only trying to protect him. I was... It pains me when Fesmer acts as if I do not care. I *do*. I wanted to find Shaena. I wanted to heal Fesmer. But I could only do so much. There were no leads and after Fesmer healed, he left. I did not know what to do.

KATHERINE

I know.

JARETH

With no concrete leads...and no one to help...I had no choice but to go on with my life.

KATHERINE

I understand.

JARETH

My work seemed to be the only thing that I had left. You two went home. Arkahn *betrayed* us. Shaena was lost to me. Fesmer was so wrathful that he disappeared...my work seemed the only thing I had left in my life that mattered. But that was no excuse.

[beat]

KATHERINE

I know how you feel—I almost didn't come. Arkahn insisted, but I refused to believe her. Five more minutes, and I wouldn't be here.

JARETH

Why *are* you here?

KATHERINE

I couldn't really say. But it hit me that even if there was the *smallest* hope that Shauna was alive and rescue-able...

[beat]

We all have coping mechanisms. Mine was to alienate the few family and friends I had left.

[beat]

You see, your family left. I pushed mine away. It's not the same thing, but I can definitely understand the position you were in.

JARETH

Kath, thank you for the sentiment. You, and perhaps Zana, are the only ones who feel this way.

Scene Six — Title

SFX: The group tramping through the woods.

FESMER
How was it, Meek, being home?

MIKE
Mike. It was less pleasant than I expected.

ARKHAN
In Boston buildings go up and up and up. As high as the birds.
Meek took me up into the Prudence once.

MIKE
The Prudential.

FESMER
What were you expecting?

MIKE
Relief.
[beat]
But I spent the whole year worrying about Shauna, and how we could get back here. Thanks to you and Arkahn—

FESMER
Thanks to me.

MIKE
Excuse me? Don't you owe Arkahn some credit?

FESMER
If I could have brought you back without her, I would have.

ARKAHN
I thought—

FESMER
You were a means to an end; that is all. You were the only person I could connect to, but we are not friends. Not anymore.

Mike
It wasn't easy for her there, you know.

FESMER
And I am supposed to feel sympathy? She did not have to go.

MIKE
You wouldn't say that if you were there. She was sick—

ARKAHN
Meek....

MIKE
She had to learn English from scratch; no translation pendants, no one to do weird things to her brain—

ARKAHN
Meek....

MIKE
Do you know how fast Boston is compared to this backwater place? She had to keep up with that after living here her whole life—

ARKAHN

Meek!

[beat]

Boston was very fast, but I did OK. And I know that I may not be welcome back here—

FESMER

You are not.

ARKAHN

—but I am glad to where I belong. I will have to face the consequences of my actions, but I would rather do so with clarity here, then sick and lost Boston. I am thankful for that at least.

FESMER

Do not think your “thanks” will earn my forgiveness.

ARKAHN

I do not.

MIKE

Soo... Fesmer, I hadn't known you were gone from Laundi for a whole year. What did you do? Please tell me it involved warm springs and hot chicks.

FESMER

[uncomfortable]

I sought knowledge. Of myself. I was not strong enough last year. Watching Shaena's growth, Arkahn's betrayal, the revelation about my family all showed that I still had much to learn. So I left in hopes of finding myself and Shaena if I could.

[beat]

[I am sorry] that I could not find her.

MIKE

Did you at least find some clarity about yourself?

FESMER

Yes. I believe I have found my path.

ARKAHN

I am glad to hear that. I am glad for you. I see my fate clearly as well. In order to return, I have resigned myself to whatever fate lies in store for me.

MIKE

Arkahn, not to go all philosophy professor on you, but nothing is preordained. We make our own fate.

ARKAHN

Then what of Draenmer?

MIKE

It's just a place to start. I mean, how wise can they be if they died?

FESMER

[sighs]

You have such a unique way of phrasing things.

ARKAHN

Meek, you should be more respectful... even if they are—as you put—dead people.

SFX: Large men jumping out from behind the bushes.

BANDIT ONE

We have you surrounded!

MIKE
What the hey?

ARKAHN
Bandits!

SEVERAL BANDITS
Derisive laughter

BANDIT TWO
Leave us your money and valuables and we leave you in peace.

BANDIT THREE
And if you do not, we will leave you in peace.

SEVERAL BANDITS
Derisive laughter

FESMER
Two to one? My preferred odds. Fai Cthloll Odi, push!

BANDIT FIVE
Oooph!

BANDIT TWO
That one is a mage!

BANDIT ONE
Get him!

FESMER
Bring it! This sword is not for show.

SFX: Battle sounds.

ARKAHN
Meek! Tackle them!

MIKE
I... uh...

FESMER
[panting]
What are you waiting for? Help me!

MIKE
Uh... I....

BANDIT TWO
Restrain the other two!

KATHERINE
MIKE!

JARETH
Arkahn! Behind you!

ARKAHN
Ahh!

[SFX: Arrow whistling]

BANDIT TWO
Ow!

KATHERINE
There's more where that came from! Hey, ack! Lemme go!

BANDIT FOUR
Well, are you not feisty!

ARKAHN
Meek, *do* something!

MIKE
I... can't....

FESMER
Jareth! Help!

JARETH
I am coming Fesmer!

BANDIT ONE
Hold it right there, friend. You fancy yourself a swordsman?

JARETH
A better one than you!

SFX
Sword fighting.

SFX: Legionaire hoverbikes.

KATHERINE
What's that? Oh no.

BANDIT ONE
The Legion? Men! To the woods!

LEGIONAIRE A
Halt scum!

MIKE
Aw *c'mon!* Legionnaires, too?!

SFX: Hoverbikes rev.

BANDIT THREE
Take that sword!

BANDIT FOUR
[Idiot], we need to move!

LEGIONAIRE A
You three! After them!

LEGIONAIRE B
Yes [Sir]!

SFX: Bandits run, followed by hoverbikes.

KATHERINE
Fesmer, are you ok?

FESMER
Ughh... [weakly] Looks like we showed them...

KATHERINE
Mike?

MIKE
Whaaaaat is happening...? And where'd Arkahn go?

LEGIONAIRE A

You there, are any of your party hurt? We have medical supplies.

KATHERINE

Fesmer?

FESMER

I am *ra-na*. Flesh wounds and bruises. I do not need any help from Legion scum.

LEGIONAIRE A

We could ask the bandits to return if you would like.

LEGIONAIRE C

What about you?

JARETH

I am also fine. I may have a large bump there tomorrow, however...

LEGIONAIRE A

What are you doing out here? Do you not know what hour it is?

MIKE

We have to get to Draenmer.

LEGIONAIRE C

[Pilgrims]? Even on Silver Night of all nights, it is not safe to travel down this secluded path.

KATHERINE

But Draenmer is sacred ground.

LEGIONAIRE A

Draenmer is. This path is not. Would you care for further escort?

JARETH

[Thank you] for the assistance, but I think we can take care of ourselves from here.

LEGIONAIRE A

As you wish.

SFX: Hoverbikes return.

LEGIONAIRE A

Report.

LEGIONAIRE B

We lost track of them in the thicket.

LEGIONAIRE D

But I expect they will not return this night.

LEGIONAIRE C

They are becoming more brazen. But we shall get them all in time.

JARETH

[Thank you]

LEGIONAIRE A

[No problem]

Come on men, we have fifty more acres to patrol.

SFX: The hoverbikes whirl off.

MIKE

That was weird.

[beat]

That was really weird.

JARETH

As I have said, many things have changed in a year. The Legion has seen fit to begin putting Laundi under their “protection.” It is all we can do to slow their expansion. And people thought the Red Circle was territorial...

SFX

Bushes rustling

ARKAHN

Are they gone?

KATHERINE

Are you really OK?

FESMER

I think so.

JARETH

Let me see to you. I am quite the adept now at first aid.

FESMER

I do not need help from you. Where is that vial...

SFX: Fesmer uncorks and drinks potion

MIKE

You have *healing potions* now?

FESMER

No, it is just [poppy tea].

MIKE

What's that?

ARKAHN

It is a “killer of pain.” A strong one... Fesmer—

FESMER

Enough! I need no assistance. I will simply need to “walk it off.”

JARETH

Fesmer, why are you *still* vexed with me?

FESMER

Because you betrayed my trust!

KATHRINE

Guys....

JARETH

How can I prove to you I did not betray you? You would put me in the same category as Arkahn?

MIKE

Hey now—

JARETH

What is it that you want from me?

FESMER
I want the truth!

ARKAHN
Oh—I know this! “You cannot handle the truth!”

MIKE
[tenderly]
Arkahn....

FESMER
Why did you think it be better to let me think my brother was dead?

JARETH
Better than being burdened by what he truly was!

KATHERINE
Guys!

FESMER
He’s the only family I have left. I think it was my right to know.
Were you afraid I would run off to join him?

JARETH
We were your family!

FESMER
Great family. A liar and a spy.

MIKE
ENOUGH.
[beat]

This isn’t about your issues with each other. This is about Shauna.

FESMER
[cowed]
Meek—

MIKE
Mike.

FESMER
—is right. We should be on our way before more bandits, or Legionnaires come this way.

JARETH
For Shaena’s sake, then. Let us depart.

SFX: The party collecting themselves and moving on.

MIKE
Fesmer, what’s the matter?

KATHERINE
Did the potion not kick in yet?

FESMER
[pouting]
No, it is not that—it is...they stole my sword.

MIKE
Aww, we’ll get you a new one.

[FADE OUT]

FESMER

But that was a brand-new sword.

Scene Seven — Title

ARKAHN
We are here.

KATHERINE
I don't think Fesmer's doing too well.

FESMER
It is nothing.

MIKE
[deep breath]
I'm going in.

JARETH
Wait! Meek—

MIKE
[under his breath]
Mike—

JARETH
Before you go in, we should practice the ritual.

MIKE
Jareth dude, I got it covered.

FESMER
Mee...ike, you should at least—

KATHERINE
Don't excite yourself, Fesmer.

JARETH
Humor me, please. Let me hear you recite it.

MIKE
I...I...want to enter so...uh...please let me?
[beat]
OK, OK. Maybe I could have my memory refreshed.

JARETH
You must say, "I humbly ask permission to enter."

MIKE
But I'm the one entering.

JARETH
Aye, you must say "you" ask permission to enter.

MIKE
Ok so, "you ask—"

KATHERINE
Mike, stop messing around. Just say the words.

JARETH
Right. You must then say,
[awkwardly]
I respect this place and what it represents, and I know the sacrifices
you make by abiding my entry. I am honored by your indulgence.
Now you.

MIKE
Look. I get it okay. I'm not as dumb as everyone thinks I am.
SFX: Gravel crunching, two people approach

DRAENPENNO ONE
What business does your party have here?

DRAENPENNO TWO

It is very late. Pilgrims and visitors must wait for the morning to come.

KATHERINE

My friend here needs medical attention!

FESMER

Kath—

KATHERINE

We were attacked by bandits.

DRAENPENNO TWO

No wonder; to travel so late at night is foolishness.

FESMER

I am perfectly *ra-na*.

JARETH

No, he is not.

[to Fesmer]

You should go and be healed.

FESMER

I will be fine tomorrow.

JARETH

[pointedly]

If you do not go, I do not think you will be fine tomorrow.

FESMER

[hushed]

What are you scheming?

JARETH

Nothing. All the blood loss has made you paranoid. Stop asking questions and go with the Draenpeno.

DRAENPENNO ONE

Come with me. We can heal your wound.

MIKE

Now's my chance!

ARKAHN

Meek, no! What about the rites?

MIKE

Excuse me, Draenpeno?

DRAENPENNO TWO

Yes, what is it?

MIKE

I respect you and your sacred place, and I would like permission to enter and ask my question, humbly, before the *Ainorem*.

ARKAHN

He would also be honored by your indulgence.

DRAENPENNO TWO

This is most unusual.

MIKE

Look, a friend is in trouble, and this may be our only chance of finding out how to help her. It's a matter of life and death, otherwise we would not have come so late and disturbed you.

ARKAHN

He seeks what is lost and so invokes his right to find his truth.

MIKE

Senjen.

DRAENPENNO TWO

Customs should be upheld... but I see that your need is truly great. You may enter.

MIKE

Thankyouthankthankyou!

ARKAHN

Lay ken draen wair cha, jola mteneren, Draenpeño. Cha grendillo fai. [I am full of thanks.]

MIKE

Arkahn, drum roll, please.

ARKAHN

Meek, have some reverence. This *is* sacred ground.

SFX: Gravel crunching.

MIKE

Well, I already used my dramatic line and everything way back there....

DRAENPENNO TWO

[clears throat]

MIKE

[echoy]

I am so humble right now.

DRAENPENNO TWO

Lay ken draen wair cha. [May you find the truth you seek.]

ARKAHN

Do not forget to drink the water!

Scene Eight— Title

SFX: The constant sound of water dripping and a soft river sound running in the background. We should be able to hear the torch's flame ruffling every now and then.

MIKE

INSERT MIKE'S SOLILOQUY HERE.

[clears throat]

To the fall—oh right, the water.

SFX: Mike making loud slurping noises as he drinks the water.

MIKE (cont.)

Right then. To the fallen peoples of Laundi, I humble myself and ask you this favor. How I can find Shauna Brown?

[beat]

Speak to me in the words of one who knew truth.

[Beat]

AINOREM

[SFX: same voice effect as in episode two]

Go. West.

SFX: The voice abruptly stops.

MIKE

[beat]

...Uh. Go west? That's it? That's all I get? You gotta be kidding me!

MIKE (cont.)

[beat]

Hello? HELLOoOo! That's it?!

[beat]

...Guys?

Scene Nine— Title

KATHERINE

So do you all stay here?

DRAENPENNO TWO

Not all. Here we meditate on the truth of things. Out there we seek it.

KATHERINE

And then you ask your question?

DRAENPENNO TWO

It all depends. Some leave after their question is answered. Others spend the rest of their lives trying to unravel *Ainorem*'s answer.

KATHERINE

What do you, the Draenpenno, believe in?

DRAENPENNO TWO

We believe in truth. We believe there are many truths yet to be found, and that every discovered truth makes our world clearer and easier to live in.

KATHERINE

How long have you been here? Seeking your truth?

DRAENPENNO TWO

Time is not as important here. We are to spend as much time as is necessary seeking our truth. Perhaps fifteen Silver Nights? Sometimes less; often more.

SFX: Crunching gravel.

ARKAHN

Meek.

KATHERINE

Mike! Mike?

JARETH

What is it, Meek?

MIKE

Mike.

KATHERINE

Well, what happened? What did they say about finding Shauna?

MIKE

We're going west.

JARETH

West? Why west? What did they say?

MIKE

[through clenched teeth]

They said to "go west."

KATHERINE

That's it?

MIKE

Yep.

KATHERINE

Well, whadaya know. *Ainorem* have a sense of humor.

DRAENPENO TWO
That was all they said to you?

MIKE
[mad at himself]
I should've been more specific.

ARKAHN
It is ok, Meek.

DRAENPENO TWO
Ainorem have their reasons. Though I cannot imagine why it would be so short. And direct.

KATHERINE
Probably to give Mike a taste of his own medicine.

DRAENPENO TWO
Ainorem only speak the truth. If you go west, then you shall find that which is lost.

JARETH
Please do not tell me you engaged them in witty banter.

ARKAHN
Did you, Meek?

[beat]

KATHERINE
Mike—you did say the ritual words, right?

MIKE
[his best Bruce Campbell impression]
“Look. Maybe I didn't say every single little tiny syllable, no. But basically I said them, yeah.”

KATHERINE
Uh...? Was that supposed to be a reference to something, 'cause...?

ARKAHN
Some things are for joking, Meek.

DRAENPENO TWO
If you offended them, that might explain their answer.

JARETH
Even after we practiced the words!

MIKE
[Sighs] That was hilarious and y'all suck. [annoyed] Yes, I said the ritual words correctly and with “reverence.”

DRAENPENO TWO
Then that does not explain it....

JARETH
So. We go west.

KATHERINE
Which way is west?

JARETH
It is that way.

MIKE

Jareth, out of curiosity, what exactly is west of here?

JARETH

The Great Westerly Road.

KATHERINE

Let me guess, it goes due west?

ARKAHN

It does. Many of the greatest cities lie along it.

MIKE

Well, then I guess we're all getting compasses, cuz west is the direction we're going.

DRAENPENNO TWO

I would advise that you not always take it that literally. The wisdom of *Ainorem* is in the layers of their words.

MIKE

They sounded pretty clear and layerless to me.

[beat]

With all due respect, of course.

ARKAHN

It is at least a place to start.

SFX: The sound of foliage being destroyed as the University guards come out of the woods.

GUARD

HALT. We have you surrounded.

MIKE

What the?

KATHERINE

Oh sh—

MIKE

Jareth, you didn't!

JARETH

I am truly sorry. There was no other way.

ARKAHN

Meek!

TARGONONE

You did the right thing, Jareth.

[to Arkahn]

Arkahn of Laundi, you are accused of being a member of the Legion of Oren and an enemy to the people. Under the power vested in me by the [magistrates] of the Seven, I place you under arrest. I ask that you come willingly.

DRAENPENNO TWO

Senjen! This is sacred ground. *Neutral* ground. We desire no part in your conflict. Do not desecrate this holy place!

TARGONONE

Draenpeno, I do not wish to violate your hallowed earth—but that woman is a traitor against University and the peoples of Laundi. That includes you. If she does not surrender herself I will be forced to move my [militia] in after her.

KATHERINE

Ohhh no. If you think for one minute you can just waltz in and desecrate—

ARKAHN

No, Kath—it is OK. I do not wish for this place to be defiled. I knew this might be my fate when I chose to return.

[to Targo]

I will surrender myself to you.

MIKE

Arkahn!

GUARD

Shackle her.

SFX: Rustling chains.

ARKAHN

It is OK, Meek. Go find Shauna.

JARETH

Meek. Kath. We must leave now and return to Zana's.

MIKE

This isn't over. We WILL have words.

TARGONONE

[I am sorry] Meek. Kath. I must put you into protective custody.

KATHERINE

Protective what? Hey! Get off!

MIKE

Jareth, you son-of-a—ow, hey! Leggo!

JARETH

Targonone! This... was not supposed to happen.

TARGONONE

Just be happy you are free to go without an escort, Jareth. Despite your cooperation, you are clearly embroiled in this, and it is only by my indulgence that you will not be joining your... unusual friends. Assist the [milita], Jareth.

JARETH

[defeated]

Yes, [term of respect].

MIKE

We're screwed again. Why are we always screwed?

KATHERINE

Jareth! What's going to happen?

JARETH

Arkahn will be tried as a Legionnaire and, if found guilty... sentenced to death.

[KATHERINE and MIKE gasp, act dismayed, etc.]

JARETH (cont.)

[to self, torn]

We must hold to our ways, whatever the cost.

END OF SHOW