

PEGASUS RAMPANT

By

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FADE IN:

EXT. LANLOCH CASTLE WINDOW - NIGHT

PRINCESS CERWEN, a young girl of fourteen, climbs out of her bedroom window. Dressed in unassuming clothes, and with a bag slung over her shoulder, she drops from surface to structure with sure-footed leaps down to the courtyard.

She sprints across to the Gate, unhindered.

EXT. CITY GATES - NIGHT

Cerwen creeps by the Guards, who stand inattentive at their posts. As she sneaks through the arched Gate, through her tunic an image of a Pegasus glows on her shoulder. The magical protective shield shimmers with a subtle warp.

She scampers across the road to the forest glade.

EXT. LANLOCH FOREST GLADE - DAY

Keeping a careful eye on the road distracts Cerwen from looking where she's going. She stumbles onto a camp, where five brutish BRIGANDS are having their breakfast. WYRNVACH, the greasy-haired rat-faced leader, glares.

WYRNVACH

You're a long way from home, now,
aren't you Missy? But you've
found a new home, now, I fink.

Cerwen stands her ground, displaying an unusual degree of courage.

CERWEN

Don't you dare touch me!

WYRNVACH

Yeah? And what if I does? Huh?

Cerwen kicks Wyrnvach in the shin. He roars and goes to grab her, but she leaps back out of his reach.

WYRNVACH

Why you little...

CERWEN

Do you know who I am?

Leaping around to look behind her, Cerwen finds herself surrounded. She grunts with rage, and leaps towards one of the men. He grabs her by the arm and throws her to the ground.

WYRNVACH

I don't care if you is the Queen
of the Moon! You belong to his
Lordship Valan Ursus now!

Wyrnvach hits Cerwen across the face, knocking her out.

FADE OUT

FADE IN:

EXT. LANLOCH TOWN - DAY

Five years have passed.

Lanloch is a walled town. With the castle to its north, the subtle shimmer of the magical protective shield that spreads across the entire city, and its colourfully armoured troops, the KNIGHTS of the CRIMSON GUARD, it is a well fortified city.

The Square is alive with celebration, Pegasus pennants flap from every available pole. Vigorous music plays, the townsfolk dancing at its trills and twirls, the children playing games around their parents' feet. Market stalls fill the square, crowded with folk sampling wares.

Knights resplendent in their red and gold armour, wander through the town, not afraid to join in the revelry.

Lanloch Castle is a spectacular fortification. The walls of well cut stone gleam white in the bright sunlight. Flags, bearing the Pegasus Rampant insignia, fly on every tower, banners across every wall. It is a shining white jewel against the green of the springtime countryside.

INT. LANLOCH CASTLE GRAND HALL - DAY

The Grand Hall of Lanloch Castle is dazzling, with tapestries, displaying the Coat of Arms featuring the Pegasus Rampant, hanging in every corner.

KING REYBURN and QUEEN MEGHANNE sit at the middle table. To either side are ten year old PRINCE EDWYD, and thirteen year old PRINCESS LIANNE. Laden tables, down each side of the hall, are full of the town's local Lords and Ladies enjoying the celebrations.

Crimson Guard also attend, keeping a relaxed but careful eye on the festivities.

Everyone enjoys the Wizard ADENLIDE's dazzling performance of magic taking place in the centre of the room. At 60 years, the old man is still sprightly and energetic.

To the Wizard's side stands his apprentice, 18 year old QUINN, busy assisting the performance, mixing ingredients and anxiously trying to anticipate Adenlide's moves so that he will have the Spells ready for him.

Grasping a sprinkle of ingredients from the bowl proffered by Quinn, Adenlide cries out a word of power:

ADENLIDE

Hatana!!

His arms erupt in blue flames, running down his arms. Gasps come from the crowd.

ADENLIDE

Do not fear, Ladies and
Gentlemen, I am in no danger.

There is applause as it becomes clear the Wizard is speaking truthfully, his robes remain unharmed by the flame.

The troupe of musicians playing the music augments the Wizard's performance at the climax of his trick.

With a flourish Adenlide makes the fire vanish, then opens his arms wide and displays his voluminous sleeves.

ADENLIDE

Your Majesty, as you can see,
there is nothing in my hands, and
yet--

Butterflies appear out of Adenlide's hands, sparkling into existence out of nothing, changing their colours as they flutter around the Hall, interacting with the folk at their tables. They fade away with a splash of dust.

Quinn is struggling with holding several of the ingredients in his arms at once, and manages to drop one of the bowls, smashing it. A puff of sparks erupts from the mixture causing Quinn to sneeze, turning the puff into a small ball of green flame that dissolves the powder to nothing.

Members of the crowd laugh behind their hands at Quinn's clumsiness.

ADENLIDE

Don't hurt yourself, lad. Here,
pass me the red bowl.

Adenlide hesitates before he reaches the climax of his performance. He notices the Royal Family's muted reaction to his entertainments.

ADENLIDE

My Queen, your Majesty, young Highnesses. I know this is a difficult day for you all. I hope I am managing to lift your spirits.

QUEEN MEGHANNE

(smiling sadly)

Adenlide, we always appreciate your marvellous talents at such a time, they do cheer us so. Truly.

ADENLIDE

(nods)

I am glad, your Highness. Very well, for my final enchantment, if you will now look above you.

They look up, Adenlide claps his hands above his head, a flash of light explodes, illuminating the entire room, and turns into rainbow sparks trickling down in large sweeping swirls and clouds.

Prince Edwyd is so thrilled he leaps out of his chair to try and catch the falling sparkles.

INT. LANLOCH CASTLE GRAND HALL - DAY

The magic show has ended, and the crowds of nobles and Knights are mingling. Quinn packs away the equipment, piece by piece, into a large case, while a Knight, HAGAN, watches him resentfully.

Adenlide chats with the King and Queen.

ADENLIDE

I do apologise if my enchantments disappointed you at all, your Majesty.

KING REYBURN

Not at all, my friend, not at all. If anything I should apologise for our mood today. The memory of Cerwen, now five years since she was taken from us, affects us still.

ADENLIDE

It is understandable, my Queen. Her death affects us all on this day. It's a most interesting mix of mourning and celebration.

QUEEN MEGHANNE

Every year we intend this day to be a celebration of our daughter's life, but it all too often brings melancholy. You are a marvel, Adenlide, to manage to cheer us so on such a day.

ADENLIDE

It is my duty, my Lady.

Meanwhile, Quinn and Hagan are having an argument.

HAGAN

I could see the butterflies up his sleeves.

QUINN

Please, Sir Knight, it was not sleight of hand. Adenlide is a great Wizard, he performs genuine magic. He has no need to fool you with mere trickery.

HAGAN

(sneering)

Magic. Huh. What use is it?

QUINN

This was not true magic, it was just a show for the late Princess's birthday. Magic has many uses, for protection, or communication to distant lands-

HAGAN

Oh, how very magical! Talking to pompous dignitaries!

QUINN

For a King that's very important!

HAGAN

If I were King, you would be out selling lucky charms and love potions. Card tricks and doves would have little place in my Kingdom.

QUINN

But without the magic protecting this Castle we would be vulnerable to attack.

HAGAN

Valan Ursus himself is no threat to us while the Crimson Guard are

(MORE)

HAGAN (cont'd)
 here. I would kill him before he
 took one step into the Castle
 Grounds.

QUINN
 You say that now, but--

ADENLIDE
 Quinn!

KING REYBURN
 Hagan! What are you doing,
 antagonising the lad? Come away!

Quinn sees Adenlide approaching, and with one last frown
 at Hagan, stomps out of the hall carrying his case.

INT. WIZARD'S CHAMBERS - NIGHT

An impressive Spellbook sits, closed, on a podium.
 Adenlide stands before it, chants some words under his
 breath, and inscribes symbols with his fingers on its
 cover while murmuring an arcane language: the locks spring
 apart, and the book opens.

Adenlide takes a seat and watches as Quinn lays out four
 bowls.

ADENLIDE
 Now, young Quinn. About this
 discussion you had with Sir
 Hagan.

QUINN
 (sighs)
 I regret my behaviour, Master.
 But he accused you of being
 false!

ADENLIDE
 Now, now. I can handle my own
 battles, boy, I don't need your
 help in that regard. You must
 remember that this day opens up
 old wounds amongst the Crimson
 Guard. After Hagan was made guard
 to the King's family, he became
 very... single-minded. After all,
 he does not want to suffer the
 fate of poor Sir Wilbur after
 Cerwen was killed.

Quinn mixes a powder with water in a mortar and pestle,
 and pours the resulting mixture into each of the bowls.
 They spark bright green for a moment, then subside.

QUINN

Sir Wilbur should never have
blamed himself for her death.

ADENLIDE

Indeed. I did not expect the toll
it took upon him. Well, that is
for another time. We must first
reinforce the Protective spell.

Quinn opens a glass container filled with feathers and
counts them into the bowls.

QUINN

Remember I told you that we are
beginning to run low on Pegasus
feathers, Master? We now only
have enough for two more spell
casts.

Carefully Quinn places the bowls in their specific
locations, in the corners marked on the diagrams embossed
into the mosaic floor.

ADENLIDE

Yes, yes, I know you warned me
last month, and the month before
that. We have plenty! You'll find
more on the top shelf, behind the
jars of adder venom.

Quinn looks at Adenlide curiously, then goes to the
shelves. He finds the box of feathers and looks inside.

ADENLIDE

I am always well prepared, never
you mind young boy. After all,
the Royal Household cannot be
protected without them.

QUINN

Master, these are Phoenix
feathers.

ADENLIDE

Yes, that's right.

QUINN

Not Pegasus feathers.

ADENLIDE

(realising)
What? What!?

Quinn shows the contents of the box to Adenlide, who is
aghast at his mistake.

ADENLIDE

Oh my! No! Oh, goodness me, I'm
an old fool! Of course they are!

Adenlide dashes to the collection of jars and boxes above the fireplace mantel and starts to search through them desperately.

ADENLIDE

Well, don't just stand there,
boy! Help me find some Pegasus
feathers!

Quinn drops his bowl of ingredients and runs to the shelves of arcane powders and liquids in the corner of the room and delves in.

ADENLIDE

No, not here. Oh my, no!

QUINN

None here, either, Master.

Adenlide scrubs his wispy hair in agitation, then falls back into his chair, suddenly tired.

ADENLIDE

What a fool I've been! Well then,
I have no choice. I shall have to
make an expedition to the
Weatherford Markets. And as soon
as possible!

QUINN

I did warn you several times this
year we were getting low.

ADENLIDE

Indeed you did, boy, indeed you
did! I have no one to blame but
myself.

A maidservant, ENID, appears at the doorway.

ENID

Master Wizard sir, there is
someone here to see you. A woman,
if you please, sir.

ADENLIDE

Right now?

He sits up suddenly, realising.

ADENLIDE

Ah. Yes! Of course. Er, Quinn, I will be but a moment. Continue with the preparation.

Adenlide disappears down a corridor to the visitors' antechamber. Quinn hears the muffled conversation rapidly get heated, but fails to catch any words clearly so gives up and goes back to his work.

He refers constantly to the Spellbook, grasping clumsily at the vials of coloured liquids and jars of powders, and pours them into the bowls in arbitrary measures, sprinkling them over the feathers.

As he follows the instructions with his finger down the page, he fails to notice the green smoke emanating from the bowls behind him.

The fizzes and pops get louder, Quinn turns in alarm, yelps, and dashes over in a mad panic to the bucket to douse the spurting froth. He spills water all over the floor, quenching the reaction but making a bigger mess.

The feathers are destroyed. With a wail he goes back to the jar to extract another swatch of Pegasus feathers, but there are only a lonely few remaining.

QUINN

Oh no! He is going to kill me!

He frantically rights the bowls back into their places, and refills them with the feathers and powders again, all the while fretting and nervously checking for Adenlide's return.

There is an angry door slam. Quinn jumps, and leaps up from the floor. Nervous, he tries to look as innocent as he can. Adenlide returns, visibly agitated.

ADENLIDE

That insufferable woman will drive me to distraction!

QUINN

Who? Enid, Master?

ADENLIDE

What? Oh, no. Not Enid. I'm sorry, don't worry about me, I'm in a world of my own. Now, where were we?

QUINN

Er... We are ready to... begin the chant, Master.

ADENLIDE

Excellent. Are you all right, lad?

(sniffs)

What's that burning? Oh no, what have you done now?

QUINN

I... Oh, Master, I burned some of the feathers. And I had to get more, and now we have only a small few left. I'm so sorry, Master!

ADENLIDE

(sigh)

Oh my boy. Just when I think you're making real progress as a Wizard, something like this happens.

Quinn's shoulders sag, ashamed.

ADENLIDE

You are a worry, you really are. We shall speak of this later, my boy. Oh, it is not our day at all, is it? For either of us.

He smiles sadly, and ruffles Quinn's hair to elicit a smile from him.

ADENLIDE

Well, we have no choice, do we? I must go to Weatherford sooner than I had planned.

He looks down at the arrangement of bowls placed on the diagram.

ADENLIDE

Everything seems to be ready now, though. Yes? To our places, then.

They kneel within the centre of the circular diagram, back to back. They begin to chant, an ancient language of power, and the bowls flare with liquid energies.

Taking pinches of light from the bowls, they draw lines in the air from the floor to above their heads, enclosing themselves in a hemispherical cage of light.

Adenlide calls harsh incantations, each word increasing in volume, bringing forth a pulse of power, which expands out through the walls of the chambers, out past the castle boundaries, until they reach the fortified walls of the town. They shimmer with a subtle purple glow, and are rimmed with golden arcs.

Adenlide frowns, and heaves a mighty shrug, as he calls the spell into action. Shards of energy spin through the shield, lacing the beams together until they form a fully enclosed hemisphere of protection.

Quinn's nose twitches, and he sneaks a scratch at it.

The lapse in the Wizards' concentration sends through a tiny flaw in the cage of light, which goes unnoticed.

The spell now complete, Adenlide takes a deep breath as he comes out of his reverie. He goes to the Spellbook while begins cleaning up. Adenlide inscribes signs in the air above the book and locks it.

INT. URSUS KEEP BALCONY - NIGHT

VALAN URSUS stands on a balcony overlooking the courtyard of Ursus Keep, where some of his men are wandering around.

The moon is full, its silver light falling far beyond the 20 foot high walls of the Keep, onto the heavily armoured Guards who march upon the battlements, then on beyond, blanketing the dark twisted forest at the foothills.

Built between steep mountain rock on one side, and an unworldly black lake on the other, the Keep is an imposing edifice of obsidian that completely obstructs all passage into the Pass; a black shadow at the foot of the Spearhead Mountain Range.

INT. URSUS KEEP THRONE ROOM - NIGHT

Dressed in a long bearskin cloak and thick boots, Ursus shivers as he turns into the dark Throne Room, where many open fires line the walls, keeping it a harsh and hot environment.

KAGHARACH, Ursus's dark Sorcerer, approaches from a doorway in the shadows. His arrival causes the flames of the fires to momentarily turn green.

KAGHARACH

News. I have been monitoring
Lanloch's defences, and the
Wizard Adenlide has boosted their
protective spell again this day.

VALAN URSUS

This is not news, Kagharach. It
is their monthly ritual. Leave
me.

Ursus slumps onto his Throne, apparently bored.

KAGHARACH

There is more. I have detected a flaw in the spell. It appears to have not been chanted correctly. There is a small hole in their magical defences even as we speak. I feel this is an opportunity we should exploit.

VALAN URSUS

(piqued interest)

Hmm. How long will this flaw remain?

KAGHARACH

Unknown. We must strike swiftly. If I may make a suggestion, the Wizard's Spellbook would be a prime target - we would learn great things from such a prize.

VALAN URSUS

You have spoken of this book for many years, Kagharach. I have my doubts. I would much rather use this chance to attack King Reyburn himself.

KAGHARACH

Sire, you would not succeed in getting past the Crimson Guard. This vulnerability is only a small window of opportunity. I truly believe the book is the single greatest advantage they have over us. If we were to possess it, the shift in balance alone would gain us great momentum.

VALAN URSUS

Hmm. Very well. Contact Wyrnvach. Have his men take this book and bring it to me.

KAGHARACH

It will be done.

INT. WYRNVACH'S ROOM - NIGHT

Wyrnvach is sleeping in his rickety bed, an unattractive prostitute alongside him.

There is a quiet ringing of a bell, and Wyrnvach reluctantly rouses with a start, and grumpily looks over to a small cupboard sitting on a ratty old desk. It is unusually elaborate in design, looking quite out of place amongst his other possessions.

He kicks the prostitute out of his bed, who scampers to get her clothes and run out of the room as he goes to open the cupboard. Inside a small bell is ringing.

Some spidery writing slowly appears on a sheet of parchment, without the need for a pen. Wyrnvach reads it out loud, with careful and inaccurate enunciation.

WYRNVACH

Lanloch Castle has a br- bree-
breack... in its defences, on the
south west side. Bring me the
Wizard's book. K.

Wyrnvach screws the parchment up and throws it on the fire.

WYRNVACH

(shouting)

Trevick! We've got a job from old
high-and-mighty himself! Wake the
men!

INT. WIZARD'S CHAMBERS - NIGHT

Adenlide sits in his chair, exhausted. Quinn is clearing the bowls of their residue.

QUINN

You look tired, Master. Perhaps
you should get some sleep.

ADENLIDE

No, no. I'm fine. I just have
some things to think about,
that's all. Don't worry about me.

A noise grows louder. A clash of metal, and shouting.

ADENLIDE

Oh, what's happening now? Enid!

Enid comes running, panicking.

ENID

Master Adenlide, Mister Quinn, oh
my! Something terrible is
happening outside! We must hide!

ADENLIDE

What? What are you talking about,
girl?

QUINN

It sounds like a fight!

The front door bursts open with a crash. Enid screams, and runs up the stairs to the main Castle, but before Adenlide and Quinn can react, three armed men, Wyrnvach, TREVICK, and PUGGS, are at the doorway, brandishing crude knives.

Quinn staggers backward in surprise, but Adenlide stands guard in front of the Spellbook, still on its podium.

Quinn frantically grabs at things on the table, and manages to find something heavy, a pewter mug. He throws it at Puggs, but he just ducks to miss it and focuses his attention exclusively on Quinn.

PUGGS

Where's yer magic now, boy?

Quinn blinks. He speaks a word, and swirls his hand in a tight gesture. Puggs stops, cautious now, and is surprised to see his knife fly from his grip, and embed itself in the wall.

Trevick approaches Adenlide with more caution.

TREVICK

Nowhere to run, old man.

Adenlide grabs a poker from the fireplace and swings it clumsily. He jabs it at Trevick.

Puggs looks at his knife embedded in the wall, now far out of his reach.

PUGGS

You little bastard!

Before he can properly react, Quinn reaches down and grabs the rug, and yanks, causing Puggs to fall, hitting his head hard on the flagstones.

Trevick attacks Adenlide, who fends him off with the poker as best he can. Quinn leaps across and rolls into Trevick's legs, knocking him down to the ground.

Wyrnvach, who has been standing back, sneers in disgust at his men getting beaten by an elderly man and a weedy child.

WYRNVACH

Does I have to do everyfink
myself? Bloody incompetent louts!

With a grunt, Wyrnvach swings his machete with gusto at Adenlide. As he fends him off with his poker, the Wizard recites the same word of power he used before, but it fails to do anything.

ADENLIDE

Bugger.

He tries a different word, and this time there's a flash of bright light. The room fills with blinding white.

When it clears, Trevick and Wyrnvach are both gone, Puggs still lies injured on the floor.

Adenlide has collapsed, bleeding from his belly.

QUINN

Master! No!

Quinn rushes to cradle Adenlide, who is alive but weak.

QUINN

Guards! Guards!!

ADENLIDE

I'll be fine...

QUINN

Who were those men? What did they want? I don't understand!

ADENLIDE

They... they took the Book.

Quinn looks confused for a second, then looks up to see that the podium is empty.

The Spellbook is gone.

EXT. LANLOCH TOWN BOUNDARY WALL - NIGHT

Two Soldiers race to the city wall in pursuit. They look around the streets, but it's too dark. The Brigands have managed to slip away.

INT. WIZARD'S CHAMBERS - NIGHT

Adenlide lies in his bed, his breathing is weak. He is wrapped in bandages.

The PHYSICIAN is attending to him. Quinn has tears in his eyes as he looks down at him.

PHYSICIAN

The cut missed vital organs, but he will survive. However, Master Adenlide needs his rest.

QUINN

Oh, Master!

PHYSICIAN

Your Master may be old in years, but he is a fit and healthy man. He puts us all to shame. I will tend to him myself, and I am certain he shall be up again in no time at all.

King Reyburn arrives.

KING REYBURN

This is not good! Not good at all to see you like this, my friend. We could have lost you.

ADENLIDE

(very weak)

Thank you for visiting me, my Lord. It is very kind of you.

KING REYBURN

Nonsense. But what game is this? How did they get past the Protective Spell?

QUINN

I don't understand. We had only just reinforced the Spell an hour before. They shouldn't have been able to get anywhere near the Castle.

ADENLIDE

(coughing)

I think I know. I believe it was my own fault. I was... distracted this evening. I suspect you will find that there is a hole in the defences. One which we must patch up immediately.

QUINN

Distracted? Oh, this is my fault! I'm sorry, Master!

ADENLIDE

No, no. I was distracted by many other things more than just you, my boy. Indeed, you redeemed

(MORE)

ADENLIDE (cont'd)
yourself tonight, fighting off
those men as you did. You showed
great courage.

KING REYBURN
Did they take anything?

QUINN
The Spellbook, your Majesty. They
seemed to know exactly where it
was.

KING REYBURN
That will have some powerful
secrets inside, yes? We are
vulnerable.

ADENLIDE
Indeed, sire. The Book is locked
by my own Spell, but we must get
it back, that is for certain.

KING REYBURN
Valan Ursus. There can be no
doubt this time. We shall talk on
this in the morning, my friend.
But I must insist that you patch
up this hole in our defences. Is
young Quinn here able to look
after this himself?

ADENLIDE
Oh yes, I shall guide him through
the process.

QUINN
Master, do we have enough Pegasus
feathers?

KING REYBURN
Pegasus feathers? What's this?

ADENLIDE
Oh my, the boy is right. We have
too few. And we cannot heal this
breach without them.

KING REYBURN
There is no substitute?

ADENLIDE
No, my Lord. The Pegasus's
singular connection with the
Royal House is key to the spell's
power.

From under his tunic King Reyburn draws out an amulet, inscribed with the Pegasus Rampant in the Coat of Arms.

KING REYBURN

Symbol of the Royal Family for 800 years. But I have not heard of a Pegasus in these parts in forty years or more. Not since I was a boy.

ADENLIDE

Yes, their apparent absence is troubling. But their feathers are still found occasionally, collected and sold at Markets. We should have no trouble in sourcing some more.

QUINN

Master Adenlide, I volunteer. I will travel to Weatherford and get some.

ADENLIDE

Oh no, no. You cannot go, you are too young. And I need you here.

QUINN

Please, Master. I will be on my best behaviour. I feel responsible for putting you in this situation.

KING REYBURN

I can send an escort with the lad.

Adenlide rubs his chin doubtfully.

ADENLIDE

Hmm. It appears to be our only recourse. It must be done, and quickly. Very well.

QUINN

Thank you, Master. I will not let you down.

ADENLIDE

I hope not. The Kingdom's safety is on your shoulders, and that is quite a burden indeed for such a young boy.

KING REYBURN

It is settled. Lad, prepare for travel, then come visit me in the

(MORE)

KING REYBURN (cont'd)
Hall and we shall make
arrangements.

QUINN
Yes, Sire.

KING REYBURN
I shall post additional troops at
the source of this breach. And
you, my old friend, should get
some rest.

INT. KING REYBURN'S CHAMBERS - NIGHT

King Reyburn stands at a table, conversing with Sir Hagan.

Other dignitaries shuffle around in the background,
analysing maps and nodding sagely.

Quinn drinks in the maps, spread across the table.

KING REYBURN
It is imperative that we retrieve
this Spellbook. It is crucial to
our defences.

HAGAN
The dead man goes by the name of
Puggs. He's one of Wyrnvach's
crew, who was the leader of this
gang of thugs. This is Valan
Ursus's doing for sure, my Lord.
He must be stopped! I do not
understand how you can let that
man live in your Lands!

KING REYBURN
He is an unpleasant man, I grant
you that, and his Keep blocks the
Pass. But he has done nothing
wrong.

HAGAN
He murdered your own daughter! Is
that not enough for you?

KING REYBURN
As I have told you many times,
Hagan, we have no evidence he did
any such thing! She disappeared,
but we found nothing to suggest
she was ever in his Keep.

HAGAN

Ask any cut-throat from here to Port Weston and he'll tell you! My Liege, you are an honourable man, but I will never understand your behaviour in this matter!

KING REYBURN

Then perhaps these new events are an opportunity for justice to prevail.

Hagan bristles, but nods.

HAGAN

Your Majesty.

KING REYBURN

Now. You've met young Quinn here, of course.

HAGAN

Hmm. Yes, we did have a run in of sorts.

KING REYBURN

Indeed. He will be accompanying you on part of your journey.

HAGAN

What?! I must protest! I can move faster and with stealth alone!

KING REYBURN

Nevertheless, it is imperative he go along with you. He has an extremely important errand to attend to in Weatherford, and he needs your protection.

HAGAN

You've seen this boy at his work, your Majesty, he is a clumsy oaf!

Quinn opens his mouth to defend himself, but remembers where he is and shuts it again.

KING REYBURN

Sir Hagan! I am your King, and I command you!

HAGAN

(contrite)

Of course, Sire. I apologise. I will do this, but under protest.

KING REYBURN

Noted.

The King looks over to Quinn.

KING REYBURN

Quinn. This behaviour you demonstrated with Sir Hagan yesterday is not to be tolerated, do you understand me?

QUINN

Yes, your Majesty.

KING REYBURN

You are a young man still, but today you have a Kingdom relying on you. Hagan will be protecting your very life while out on the road. Listen to him. Trust him. Obey him.

QUINN

I will, your Majesty.

KING REYBURN

Hagan. You are to guard this boy with your life. He is young and inexperienced, but he has shown not a small amount of courage this evening, so do not dismiss him out of hand. You leave at dawn. Go.

Hagan and Quinn bow and exit the chambers. Standing at his table, the King sighs sadly.

KING REYBURN

I hope I know what I'm doing.

EXT. LANLOCH CASTLE COURTYARD - DAWN

Hagan, dressed in unassuming casual clothing, is mounted upon his horse, Century.

Quinn attempts to mount his horse, but is not managing it very successfully. A STABLE-HAND is nearby.

STABLEHAND

No, lad. Your other foot.

QUINN

I have not ridden in many years. And I was never very good at it then.

STABLEHAND

Don't you worry, young sir.
Pepperfoot is a fine horse, and
well suited to new riders.

Quinn tries once again to mount, and manages to tumble to the ground awkwardly. Hagan rolls his eyes, and turns to speak to a nearby Knight.

After some confusion, the stable-hand lifts Quinn into the saddle, managing to at last face him in the correct direction.

The horse, Pepperfoot, decides to prance nervously.

QUINN

What's he doing now? Make him
stop!

STABLEHAND

She's a girl, lad. You're
clenching too tight. Relax and
she'll follow where Sir Hagan
leads.

Disgusted, Hagan rides out the front gates. After some wrangling, Pepperfoot steadies herself.

Quinn spies Adenlide at a window, and waves farewell to him with a smile. Pepperfoot suddenly begins to trot, causing Quinn to lurch forward, and with a cry of surprise ride out, following behind Hagan.

Adenlide isn't so sure that he has done the right thing.

EXT. LANLOCH CITY GATES - DAY

The City Gates, in the main boundary wall of Lanloch Town, are guarded heavily. As the people of the city enter and exit, they pass through the Protective Shield set up by Adenlide to keep them safe from unauthorised trespassers.

A glowing image of the Pegasus Rampant, a mark of residency, briefly appears on the shoulders of every person as they travel through the shield.

After a careful screening process, visitors to the city are given tokens which allow them partial access to some parts of the town.

As Hagan and Quinn ride out through the City Gates, their shoulders light up with the Pegasus symbol, and the Protective Shield shimmers with gold.

EXT. LANLOCH COUNTRYSIDE - DAY

Racing through the countryside, Hagan taking the lead and Quinn often far behind, they travel through rolling hills, farmed fields, and winding roads.

At a crossroads, Hagan dismounts and crouches near some booted footprints in the mud.

QUINN

Sir. Where are we heading? This isn't the way to Ursus Keep.

Hagan does not reply. Quinn awkwardly clammers off Pepperfoot, and lands in a mud puddle, splashing his leggings.

He stands behind Hagan, peering over his shoulder.

QUINN

Sir? Did you hear me?

HAGAN

I heard you, boy.

QUINN

If we know it was Ursus, why are we travelling this way?

HAGAN

It wasn't Ursus himself. It was some group of thugs he hired.

QUINN

And?

HAGAN

And I already know where they'll be going. They were riding, but they've separated. One of them seems to be on foot, so I expect we'll get there before him.

QUINN

Get where?

Hagan grunts as he remounts Century.

HAGAN

Boy, I am honouring the King's request to let you accompany me. I did not agree to listen to your jabbering.

Quinn glumly stomps back to Pepperfoot, then realises he has to remount without any help from anyone. Under Hagan's sarcastic gaze, Quinn self-consciously tries to climb onto Pepperfoot's back.

After a couple of awkward and calamitous attempts, he manages to climb up, and with feigned dignity kicks his feet. Unfortunately, that was the wrong thing to do.

Unexpectedly, Pepperfoot races off erratically, and Quinn has to cling on for dear life as he is taken on a wild ride through the trees.

QUINN

Stop! Stop! Stop!!

Hagan makes a silent plea to the Gods, sighs, then chases after him.

EXT. PLOUGHED FIELDS - DAY

Quinn ducks under the low hanging branches as he flies through the trees. Pepperfoot explodes out of the forest into a ploughed field, passing a surprised Farmer.

Not far behind, Hagan soon follows, and gets the worst of the Farmer's wrath when he is hit by a thrown clod of dirt.

The field is bordered by a bramble hedge, which Quinn is alarmed to see he is now heading straight for.

QUINN

No, no, no!!! Woah! Stop! Argh!

With a graceful leap, Pepperfoot makes a successful jump over the hedge, landing in a stream on the other side, which splashes Quinn liberally.

They race through the second field, and disappear out of Hagan's sight around a corner.

EXT. COUNTRY ROADSIDE - DAY

When Hagan catches up with them at last, Pepperfoot has stopped.

Quinn is still upon his horse, but facing him is Trevick the brigand, on foot, threatening Quinn with a long bladed knife.

Without hesitation, Hagan races past them, draws his sword, and leaps off Century. He lands facing Trevick, his sword pointing at his head.

HAGAN

Quinn! Is this one of the men who attacked you?

Before Quinn can reply Trevick goes to run into the trees, but Hagan swings his sword, flat bladed against Trevick's legs, and trips him up with it.

Hagan points his sword at Trevick's throat.

HAGAN
Do you work for Valan Ursus?

TREVICK
N-no. No, I was workin' fer
Wyrnvach.

HAGAN
Wyrnvach! Damn that man, I should
have killed him years ago!
Where's the book?

TREVICK
Book? Wyrnvach has the book.
Takin' it far away from 'ere.

HAGAN
Damn. Well, you've outlived your
usefulness.

Hagan swings his sword. Quinn winces and looks away.

Finished, Hagan cleans his sword and climbs onto Century, while Quinn swallows distastefully.

HAGAN
To Foxes Cross, I think.

As they ride away, Quinn looks back at Trevick's body doubtfully.

INT. FOXES CROSS TAVERN - DAY

The tiny village of Foxes Cross is a waystation for travellers. Situated inland from the lake, midway between the towns of Lanloch and Weatherford, it's a popular spot for quiet conversation and a mug of ale.

Inside the Tavern a fire burns in the huge hearth, and the mouthwatering aroma of spit-roasted mutton fills the air. Lined with tables and benchseats, it may not be busy at midday, but the room boasts a few patrons, keeping to themselves and nursing an ale or two.

Hagan strides in, ducking under the low door, and points to a corner table.

HAGAN
Sit there. Don't talk to anybody,
don't do anything, don't move. Do
you hear?

QUINN

Yes, Sir. I will not say a thing.
I promise I won't--

Hagan hold up his hand to stop him.

HAGAN

Shut up. Get over there. Sit.
I'll be back soon.

Quinn opens his mouth, then stops himself. He humbly makes his way to the corner table.

Shaking his head in disbelief, Hagan heads to the bar, where the rosy-cheeked Tavern owner, OGDEN, is overseeing the spit-roast.

OGDEN

By the Gods, is that who I think
it is? Hagan? My friend! It's
been so long!

HAGAN

It's good to see you, Ogden.
Sorry for the long absence, I've
been rather busy - protecting the
King's family, you know.

OGDEN

Protecting...? The King!?
Goodness! It wasn't that long ago
you were the young lad stealing
apples from my trees. And now you
serve the King? Well now, what
can I get you today?

HAGAN

Two ciders, and some of that
mutton I can smell would be most
welcome. But a quiet word, if I
may.

OGDEN

Certainly, certainly! This way,
my boy.

Hagan and Ogden disappear into a back room.

Sitting at the next table over from Quinn is a young woman, WREN, dressed in light leather armour and chainmail, enjoying a tankard of ale.

Lean and strong, her hair is dirty and cut short, though under the rough appearance she is boyishly attractive.

WREN

I must say, you make an unusual couple.

QUINN

Couple? Er, he's not... And we're not...

Quinn's attempts to dispel any suggestion of what Wren is implying, just brings a twinkle to her eye.

WREN

Oh? Are you not? And yet he's such a handsome fellow, I'm sure he has a boy at every wayside.

QUINN

Um. No. He... He's...

WREN

Are you sure?

QUINN

Well... Yes! I mean, no, he's not, I mean he's... Um.

Hagan returns, causing Quinn to jump nervously. He stops at the sight of Wren, who is smiling broadly up at him.

Sneering with distaste, Hagan snatches his chair and sits.

HAGAN

Ogden says Wyrnvach was here earlier today, passing through. We aren't far behind, I think we can catch him before day's end.

WREN

Wyrnvach will be hard to track. You've got no chance of finding him now.

Hagan turns to Wren with a snap, a sneer of disgust marring his features. She looks back, proudly smiling.

HAGAN

This is none of your concern, Mercenary.

She holds up a hand to placate him.

WREN

All right. Just offering advice. I know a thing or two about tracking. And about Wyrnvach, too, come to that.

HAGAN

I do not need advice from a sword-for-hire who cannot keep her nose out of another's business.

WREN

Hmm. Let me guess. You're Crimson Guard, am I right? No one else would be so arrogant as to start a fight with a friendly stranger.

HAGAN

You...

WREN

Me? What? What about me?

Hagan controls his anger.

HAGAN

You are a waste of armour.

WREN

Ooh, a sharp tongue! You'd better watch yourself, boy! I bet that can hurt when he snuggles up with you at nights.

Quinn doesn't know where to turn.

QUINN

No, he... what? We're not...

Ogden appears over Hagan's shoulder, serving up a board laden with steaming mutton. Hagan is distracted by its arrival, angrily jabbing his fork into a slice.

HAGAN

Shut up, woman. I am not in the mood to pick a fight.

WREN

Ah, well then. If you don't want trouble, then don't look at me like I'm lower than snake crap.

HAGAN

You're a Mercenary. Working for money! You disgust me. Where is your loyalty to your King? If you had any decency, you would train to be a real Knight instead of a posturing pretend-soldier!

WREN

Posturing? Me? Who wants to be a Knight? Parading around in their shiny armour and feinting at straw sacks? I go where the real action is, in the gutters and alleyways where your dainty feet refuse to tread, where the people desperately in need of real help are living, hand-to-mouth.

HAGAN

Oh, and do you think I haven't been there? I have saved more people's lives in one day, than you could save in a lifetime!

Wren shakes her head.

WREN

You just don't understand.

HAGAN

Do I not?

WREN

The problem, of course, if you'd been paying attention, is I am a woman. And women, as you well know, are not permitted to be Knights.

Hagan hesitates. He considers for a moment.

HAGAN

Well... Fine. Be an archer, or a pikeman, then.

WREN

No. Are you not listening? I cannot. The law is plain. If I want to fight, I have to take up a Mercenary's sword.

Hagan is left momentarily speechless. He downs some cider. Quinn is dumbfounded by the exchange.

Two rough men enter the Tavern. KARNEK has a cruel sneer, MANGEL a stupid one. They swagger to the bar, deliberately calling attention to themselves.

WREN

Not that I'd want to be a Knight. Dumbest bunch of muscle-headed idiots around, preening themselves and flexing their muscles for the girls. No, thank you.

HAGAN

Really? I would have thought girls would be right down your alley. You surprise me.

Quinn interjects.

QUINN

You could be a Sentry. They allow women as Sentries.

WREN

True. The boy is right, I could be a Sentry. I did consider it. Except that would mean standing at the front gate, waiting around, watching people go in and out, all day, every day. Over and over. I couldn't bear that.

HAGAN

You are never satisfied. Sentries are fine soldiers.

WREN

Ha!

QUINN

At least Mercenaries do honest decent work.

HAGAN

You stay out of this, Quinn.

WREN

No, Quinn, please. Continue. You seem like a thoughtful and intelligent young man, with much to say that's worth hearing. While your friend, here, is a lumbering idiot stuck in the past.

HAGAN

You insufferable-- I ought to--

Standing right behind Hagan, and staring lasciviously at Wren, is the rough, scarred, and unshaven Karnek.

KARNEK

Now, what has we here? Hello my darlin'! This fella givin' you trouble, is he Missy? Eh? Tell ya what, I'll take care of him for ya, and you can give us a kiss, all right?

MANGEL

Yeah, and the rest. Hur hur.

Without turning to him, Hagan holds up a peaceful hand.

HAGAN

There's no trouble. The lady is with me.

KARNEK

Is she now? It don't look it to me. You wif him, darl'?

WREN

Well, now. Depends on what you mean by "with".

KARNEK

Yeah? Well then, you ain't wif him, then, are ya. You're wif us.

WREN

I'm not "with" anybody.

KARNEK

Oh yes you are, lady, you jus' don't know it yet.

Hagan stands up, showing himself to be six inches taller, and considerably broader, than Karnek.

HAGAN

You heard her. She's not with anybody.

Karnek draws a long bladed knife.

KARNEK

Look mate, what I 'eard was that she's not wif you. So you...

Karnek runs the blade gently down Hagan's tunic.

KARNEK

...can bugger off. You hear?

Hagan grabs Karnek's hand, and, faster than he can blink, smashes it on the table. The knife goes flying, and Karnek falls to the floor in pain.

OGDEN

Oh no! Not in my tavern!

HAGAN

If anyone is bugging off, friend, it's you.

Karneki is on the ground, holding his head, but as Hagan stands, Karnek hooks Hagan's ankle and he drops.

Wren gives Quinn a cheerful grin.

WREN
Well now, this looks like fun!

She leaps onto the table, and dives onto Mangel. They crash to the floor and into the furniture, then Wren rolls to her feet to face Mangel. He takes a swing at her, she ducks under, and tackles him.

OGDEN
Hagan! Stop this!

HAGAN
Sorry, Ogden! Needs must!

Hagan has Karnek by the throat, against the bar. Karnek manages to grab a mug of ale, hit Hagan in the face, and knock him away.

As Hagan shakes his head clear, Wren is thrown beside him.

WREN
I notice you enjoy committing violent acts. Have you been this way long?

HAGAN
Oh, you know. Since childhood.

Wren knocks Mangel down, but this puts him in reach of Karnek's dropped knife. He thrusts it towards her.

Wren grasps his wrist and, with a dizzying twisting manoeuvre, grabs the knife from him so it becomes her own weapon.

Quinn observes the differences in fighting style. While Hagan uses brute aggression to overpower his opponent, Wren gains advantage with a lithe economy of motion.

Hagan backs into Wren, brandishing a chair leg against Karnek. Wren and Hagan fight back-to-back.

WREN
As expected. I picked you for a puppy-kicker.

HAGAN
Never! I loved my dog.

WREN
Indeed? I suppose altar boys every night can get dull. You need variety!

Eventually Wren bores of Mangel's clumsy fighting and knocks him out with the knife's butt.

Karneki climbs awkwardly up onto the bar, where Hagan follows with a confident leap.

Hagan goes to kick Karneki's feet from under him, but Karneki leaps over the sweep, and reaches up to hang onto the chandelier.

Quinn, hiding behind an upturned table, sees an opportunity to contribute. He recites a few words, gestures with his hand, and the chandelier breaks. Karneki falls onto a table with an ungainly crash.

Hagan and Wren survey their handiwork.

HAGAN

These aren't Wyrnvach's men.

WREN

Of course not. I could have told you that.

HAGAN

Damn, what a waste of time.

WREN

You mean this wasn't the result of a brilliantly conceived plan? I stand amazed.

Hagan surveys the wreckage. Patrons cower in the corner, while Ogden emerges from his back room upset.

WREN

Come, Quinn. As much as I'd love to watch him talk his way out of this, best we wait outside.

Quinn and Wren head out the door.

HAGAN

Ogden, I'm sorry for this mess. I'll pay for it, of course.

OGDEN

Yes, you bloody well will!
(sigh)
I can hardly say this is unexpected. These things do seem to follow you around.

EXT. FOXES CROSS VILLAGE SQUARE - DAY

Quinn stands by Pepperfoot and Century, while Wren leans on the hitching rail near her own horse, Deacon.

QUINN

Thank you for helping us, that was impressive fighting in there.

WREN

I like an excuse to exercise my muscles. It keeps me on my toes.

QUINN

Muscles. Yes.

Quinn distractedly looks at Wren. She smirks, but warmly. Quinn shakes his head from his reverie.

QUINN

I liked how you did that knife swap thing. You were so fast!

WREN

It's a tidy trick. Doesn't always work, though. You have to pick your targets carefully.

Hagan appears in the doorway, looking distracted. He mounts Century.

HAGAN

Come, Quinn. We have an appointment in Weatherford.

WREN

Heading south? You're going my way, mind if I tag along?

HAGAN

I'd like to thank you for your effort, Mercenary--

WREN

Wren.

Hagan nods.

HAGAN

Wren. But if it's all the same to you, I'd rather we went our separate ways.

QUINN

Oh no! But I like her, Sir. I think Wren would be excellent company.

WREN

I'll be no trouble.

HAGAN

Every word you speak is an invitation to trouble.

WREN

You say the sweetest things.

HAGAN

We have an important mission. Having someone along with us will only slow us down.

QUINN

Slow us down? Did you see what she did in there? She can only be a help to us.

WREN

I like the way this boy talks.

Hagan looks from Quinn to Wren and back. He acquiesces.

HAGAN

All right! All right. Just to stop Quinn whining, you can accompany us. For a time.

QUINN

Huzzah!

WREN

Thank you, Sir Knight. I appreciate it. Truly.

HAGAN

Hmph. Don't make me regret it.

Quinn goes to mount Pepperfoot. Hesitant, after past experience, he manages to make the horse skittish. Wren watches, concerned, while Hagan disappears ahead, uninterested.

Quinn's struggles are almost comical, but Wren grabs Pepperfoot's reins and comes in close behind Quinn. He is immediately aware of her proximity.

WREN

Put your left foot here, while holding here. Got it?

Quinn takes a breath, then follows her guiding hand.

WREN

Now quickly, without worrying
about your balance, lift yourself
up and swing your right leg over
her back.

With gentle pressure on his back, Wren lifts Quinn onto his saddle.

QUINN

(embarrassed)

Thank you.

WREN

New to riding?

QUINN

Not since I was a boy. Horses
don't seem to like me much.

WREN

Once you get accustomed she'll be
a great friend to you.

Wren mounts Deacon, winks at Quinn, and they ride up alongside Hagan.

HAGAN

Don't bother me, woman. The last
thing I need is you nagging me
senseless.

WREN

Charming. And I was so looking
forward to doing just that. Then
Quinn and I will leave you to
your manly solitude, does that
suit you?

HAGAN

Very much.

Wren makes a sour face and gestures rudely behind his back, making Quinn laugh.

EXT. LANLOCH WALLS - DAY

The boundary walls of Lanloch Town have towers spaced evenly apart. The Protective Shield that encircles the town shimmers, but a periodic crackle surrounds one heavily guarded tower in particular.

Atop the battlements two Knights, WALTyr and ARNALD, are pacing between two of the towers. As they cross, one speaks.

WALTYR

Arnald.

ARNALD

(sigh)

What is it this time, Waltyr?

WALTYR

Why are we doing this? There's nothing happening here.

ARNALD

There is a hole in the magic shield that protects Lanloch.

WALTYR

Yes, you said. But where is it?

ARNALD

It's right here. This is where the men got in to attack Master Adenlide the Wizard.

WALTYR

But I can't see a hole.

ARNALD

Of course not, only Wizards can see magic.

WALTYR

Then how did the robbers know where to get in? Were they Wizards?

ARNALD

No, of course not. I expect they were told where to get in, by another Wizard.

WALTYR

Oh. Right. What other Wizard?

INT. KAGHARACH'S TORTURE CHAMBER - DAY

Kagharach's eyes snap open. He is standing at a candlelit altar, and the flames flare green as he returns to consciousness.

Valan Ursus is leaning on a table, suspiciously watching him.

VALAN URSUS

I do not like it when you are in a trance, Kagharach. It makes me nervous.

KAGHARACH

My apologies, my Liege. I do not mean to disturb you.

VALAN URSUS

What have you discovered?

KAGHARACH

The breach in Lanloch's defences remains. Something has prevented the Spell's completion.

VALAN URSUS

What would cause such a thing? Defences are of paramount importance to Reyburn.

Kagharach walks around the altar, running his fingers along the runes inscribed on its rim as he gets lost in thought.

KAGHARACH

Hmm. Adenlide was wounded in the attack. Perhaps he has succumbed. Though, I would have felt it if he had died. And his apprentice should have the skills to repair the shield anyway.

He stops and turns to Ursus, who has a sarcastic eyebrow raised.

VALAN URSUS

Then we have another opportunity. If the breach remains, we must exploit it once more.

KAGHARACH

Agreed. What do you have in mind?

VALAN URSUS

Simple. Reyburn must die. Gather all our men from far and wide. This Kingdom will be mine!

KAGHARACH

It shall be done.

EXT. FOREST PASS - DAY

Passing through the forest, Wren chats with Quinn while Hagan rides a few paces ahead of them.

WREN

So, what is this book?

QUINN
It's a Spellbook.

HAGAN
Quinn! Don't tell her!

QUINN
Why not?

HAGAN
The first rule of working for the King is not to reveal our mission to strangers!

WREN
You're working for the King?

HAGAN
Oh, damn it!

QUINN
Ha! Yes. The Royal Wizard's Spellbook was stolen, and we are going to get it back.

WREN
Adenlide's Spellbook? Wyrnvach took it?

QUINN
Hagan thinks he is working for Valan Ursus.

WREN
For his Sorcerer, Kagharach, I have no doubt.

HAGAN
He has sent in local thugs, keeping his own hands clean. Again.

WREN
And the King has sent one Knight and a Wizard's Apprentice against Kagharach and Valan Ursus? Do you even know what you're up against?

HAGAN
Oh, and you do? Dined with them, I'm sure.

WREN
We've had our encounters. He is not to be underestimated.

HAGAN

What!? You have worked for that
evil bastard?

WREN

I didn't say that. But I am
familiar with the inside of Ursus
Keep.

HAGAN

Familiar? Oh! Now I understand!
Well yes, you have certainly
gotten closer to him than I ever
would.

Hagan shakes his head in disgust. Wren glowers back.

EXT. LANLOCH WALLS - NIGHT

Bored, Arnald and Waltyr face the rolling hills of Lanloch
Forest, eyes unfocused.

A movement in the trees catches Arnald's gaze.

ARNALD

Alert. I think I saw something.

WALTYR

A sheep?

ARNALD

I know what sheep look like,
Waltyr.

WALTYR

A ghost? They say they walk the
night through Lanloch forest.

ARNALD

Who says?

WALTYR

(shrugs)
...People.

ARNALD

It's not a ghost, Waltyr. Someone
was approaching across the field.
Alert Sir Lexhurst.

Waltyr darts off. Arnald signals the Soldiers on the
ground guarding the Tower door, but, before they can act,
an arrow hits one Soldier and he goes down. Four BRIGANDS
rush out of the shadows, storming the remaining Soldiers.

ARNALD

Alarm! Alarm!

Sir Arnald leaps over the wall and crashes down on top of one man, snapping his neck with the weight of his armour.

More Knights and Soldiers come running in to aid, but the Brigands smash the door to splinters and slip through.

EXT. LANLOCH TOWN STREETS AND ALLEYS - NIGHT

Two Soldiers inside manage to strike down another of the Brigands. The remaining two get past and keep running, slipping down into the shadows of a side alley.

Soldiers and Knights alike chase them down the narrow cobbled streets, but fail to cut them off.

The Brigands split up, one over the back fence of a property. The other zigzags down random alleys.

Knights and Soldiers call out, filling the chill evening air. Flaming torches cross the cobbled streets, trailing through the maze of alleyways and lanes.

SOLDIER

Here! Down this way!

With a Knight blocking the entrance of a dead end alley, the Brigand is cornered. Forced to fight, he brandishes his knife and charges, roaring.

Facing him is Sir Arnald. After a single swing of the Knight's sword, blood splashes the wall, and the Brigand screams his last.

Leaping over fences, scaring dogs, and frightening townsfolk, the other Brigand dashes through the darkness. He crashes through a garden gate and out into the main thoroughfare, heading right up it to the Town Square.

Where he is surprised to see ten Knights already waiting, including SIR LEXHURST and Sir Waltyr, their swords drawn.

SIR LEXHURST

Halt!

BRIGAND

You won't be getting' anythin' from me, yer royal bastards.

The Brigand slices his knife across his throat and falls to the ground.

The Knights are disgusted.

SIR LEXHURST

Damn him!

Lexhurst runs up to the Brigand to stem the flow of blood, but it is far too late. He's dead.

SIR LEXHURST

Waltyr, summon the King and the Wizard Adenlide. We have need to meet.

WALTYR

Sir.

EXT. TOWER RUINS - NIGHT

The ruins of an old tower, set back from the roads, deep amongst the trees, is the perfect shelter for Quinn, Wren, and Hagan to set up their camp.

Hagan cleans his sword. Wren returns from checking the horses.

WREN

You handled yourself well on Pepperfoot today, Quinn. I don't know why you're so nervous.

Quinn smiles, but it's soured by Hagan's retort.

HAGAN

You should have seen him yesterday. Out of control, squealing like a girl. Embarrassing.

Sullen, Quinn sparks a flint for the campfire. It begins to flame.

HAGAN

Why can't you start the fire with magic? I thought you were a mighty Wizard.

QUINN

(mutters)

It's not possible to create real flame with magic.

HAGAN

Your Master Wizard created flame on Cerwen's Day.

Wren pokes at the fire to get the flames to catch.

QUINN

That was an illusion, not real
fire.

Quinn recites under his breath, and a purple flame appears
in his hand. It changes colour as he flips it from one
palm to the other. He proffers it to Hagan.

QUINN

Here, put your hand through it.

HAGAN

What?

QUINN

Go ahead, it's safe.

Hagan hesitates, then slides his hand quickly through the
flame. Not feeling anything, he does it again.

HAGAN

No heat.

QUINN

It can light my way, but it's not
any good for a campfire.

HAGAN

Huh. Useless. Pity. Sending flame
towards an enemy would win us
wars!

QUINN

Magic has too many limitations to
be a weapon.

Wren places a new branch on the flames.

WREN

Most spells have to be constantly
reinforced to have any strength.
Good for long term use, but not
for short range Spells.

HAGAN

And how do you know so much about
magic?

WREN

I didn't get this far in the
world with my sword alone, you
know. I have it up here.

HAGAN

And down there, no doubt.

Wren kicks Hagan in the shin.

WREN

Unlike some people I could mention, I take the time to educate myself.

HAGAN

I'm educated! I know my numbers.

WREN

And how are you at letters?

HAGAN

Letters. Well... Carry on, Quinn, you were saying?

QUINN

I was saying that I can only use a personal spell once, before I have to chant a new one again. Each morning I chant a selection of spells, storing them up to be called at my command. But if I need one that I haven't prepared, I have to locate ingredients, chant it, then use it or store it. That's no way to fight a battle.

HAGAN

We would have no fear of any enemies if we had magic as a weapon.

QUINN

Yes, well, the Sorcerer Kagharach agrees with you, at least.

HAGAN

Ursus's wizard is making weapons of magic?

QUINN

So it's said. But then, we haven't had any used against us, so...

HAGAN

Then magic is a waste of time. If you could have us travel faster, that would be something. Otherwise, keep it away from me.

WREN

Bah. Thinking like a Knight, as usual. Magic has countless uses. Master Adenlide is the Kingdom's saviour in more ways than you could know.

QUINN

Oh, my poor Master. I hope he has recovered some.

WREN

Recovered? What do you mean?

QUINN

He was wounded by Wyrnvach's men when they invaded our chambers.

WREN

Wounded! No!

QUINN

I feel so helpless being out here, I ought to be with him.

WREN

If Master Adenlide sent you here, then this is where you should be.

Quinn smiles sadly.

WREN

Oh, Adenlide. Such a good man. I hate to hear of him being in pain.

QUINN

(frowning)

You speak as though you know him.

WREN

(uncomfortable)

Who doesn't know the Royal Wizard of Lanloch? He is the Kingdom's greatest asset!

Quinn gives a doubtful nod.

INT. URSUS KEEP THRONE ROOM - NIGHT

Valan Ursus is standing at one of the fireplaces that line the walls of the chamber.

Kagharach has Adenlide's Spellbook in his arms when he emerges out of the shadows. He rushes up to Ursus urgently, an eager smile playing upon his face.

KAGHARACH

The word has been sent. A hundred men will be arriving by tomorrow evening.

VALAN URSUS

Excellent.

KAGHARACH

And, Sire. I have the Spellbook.
I will start work on it
immediately.

VALAN URSUS

Give it here, let me look at this
troublesome beast.

KAGHARACH

It has Protective spells, but I
anticipate little problem with
solving them. I am a Master.

VALAN URSUS

And you still believe that this
book answers all our problems?
That we can take control of the
Kingdom at last?

KAGHARACH

I would stake my life on it.

VALAN URSUS

(eyebrow raised)

Don't tempt me, Kagharach. Such
words may return to haunt you.
Very well, I expect progress by
tomorrow.

KAGHARACH

Tomorrow? I... As you wish, my
Lord. Tomorrow.

INT. WIZARD'S CHAMBERS - NIGHT

King Reyburn stands with Sir Lexhurst. Adenlide lays
beside them in his bed, awake but in pain.

SIR LEXHURST

We must boost our numbers at the
breach, your Majesty. The Castle
is in great danger if we do not
take this threat seriously.

KING REYBURN

I agree. I had hoped that a
minimal presence would not draw
attention to the problem, but now
that seems not to matter.

ADENLIDE

(wavering whisper)

There is no doubt in my mind that the Wizard Kagharach is behind this. Only he could actively detect the flaw.

KING REYBURN

I fear you are right, old fellow. Sir Lexhurst, assign six Knights at ground level, and six Soldiers inside. And build a reinforced door.

SIR LEXHURST

At once, your Majesty. Master Adenlide.

Sir Lexhurst bows and exits.

ADENLIDE

(coughing)

I hope my boy Quinn will be back soon. I need those feathers.

KING REYBURN

He is with my finest Knight! He will come to no harm. Now get some rest, my friend.

EXT. TOWER RUINS - NIGHT

Hagan, Quinn, and Wren sleep, the banked camp fire smoulders. The tower's collapsed walls manage to shield them from the wind.

Wren suddenly wakes, and leaps up onto her haunches, short sword drawn. She looks around, her head darting like a bird as she detects sounds.

WREN

(whisper)

Alarm!

Hagan wakes instantly, and is up and armed in seconds.

HAGAN

(whisper)

Where?

Hagan nudges Quinn, who wakes slower but is soon as alert as the others.

WREN

(whisper)

Over there.

Five armed men emerge out of the darkness, surrounding their camp. Two are those they fought in Foxes Cross, Karnek and Mangel, now joined by three others: WARYN, DUVALL, and ARAN.

KARNEK

You fink you're tough? You fink
you're bloody clever? I'll slice
your bleedin' nuts off!

Hagan charges straight for Karnek with a guttural roar, and swings for his head, but his blow is stopped by Karnek's unexpectedly swift parry.

Wren ducks under a swing from Waryn, and while down there slices his leg clean off. Waryn screams, and falls to the ground, instantly despatched.

Hagan leaps up onto the wall of the ruined tower to gain a height advantage as he battles Karnek. They fight upon the stones, stepping higher, until they're ten feet off the ground, balancing along the narrow walls.

Wren's balletic skill with the blade lets her fight two at once. She knows where to place her blade before they can react, creating a virtual circle of protection.

Duvall gets too close and, with a subtle thrust of her blade, is impaled.

Quinn has climbed up into a tree for safety, but Mangel follows him up. Quinn drops down, hangs from the branch, and it snaps under his weight.

He crashes to the ground, but Mangel falls too, knocking the wind out of him, his weapon thrown out of his hand and into the shadows.

Quinn brandishes the branch as his own weapon. Mangel gets up, staggering around and limping, giving Quinn the advantage. He strikes Mangel once, twice, thrice, beating him senseless.

Hagan leaps off the high wall and swings on an exposed metal bar, allowing him to leap up onto a second wall. Karnek isn't brave enough to try the swing himself, but instead leaps over the gap.

He almost misses, but manages to grasp an edge. Before he can steady himself, Hagan is there, and slices off Karnek's arm. He screams, and falls to the ground with a sickening crunch.

Wren leaps over the swing of Aran's crude weapon, and brings her sword down upon it, snapping his blade at the hilt. She takes a step back, expecting to now have the advantage, but unexpectedly Aran whips out another machete from his belt.

Aran strikes while her guard is momentarily down, pushing Wren back to the stone wall, managing to cut her down her side. She drops her sword.

Just as Aran is about to strike the killing blow, Hagan leaps down off the wall, knocks Aran down, rolls over the top of him, and brings his elbow down onto Aran's throat, snapping his neck.

The battle is won.

Quinn staggers back to where Hagan looks down at Wren, sees her wound, and instantly runs to her to check her health.

Hagan shakes his head clear. Behind him Karnek appears. The stump of his arm gushes blood, while his other brandishes a blade.

WREN

Hagan!

Hagan turns, but it's too late. With a swift, lucky blow, Karnek decapitates Hagan.

Quinn cries out, and with a burst of anger grabs a huge heavy rock, throwing it with all his strength. It crashes into Karnek's skull, staving it in. He goes down like a sack of grain.

Wren is stunned.

Quinn is shaking.

There is silence.

Quinn falls to his knees. He screams, and a burst of magical power explodes out of his body, a wave of light briefly turning the night into day, spreading through the trees.

EXT. URSUS KEEP TOWER WALL - NIGHT

Kagharach stands atop his tower overlooking the dark lake, listening to the night.

He has the Spellbook laid in front of him, within a pentacle diagram inlaid on the floor. His arms are tensed as he absorbs the power of the stars.

Far beyond, a burst of shimmering white light appears in the distant forest.

He leaps up and, eyes narrowed, glares at the unusual event.

INT. WIZARD'S CHAMBERS - NIGHT

The injured Adenlide lies in his bed. He is instantly awoken by the pulse of energy, that he can feel has been called into existence. He cries out.

ADENLIDE

Quinn!

But, not completely awake, he drops back into his pillow, and resumes his slumber.

EXT. TOWER RUINS - NIGHT

The light fades again, rapidly.

Quinn falls backward, where the wounded Wren is there to cradle him.

FADE OUT:

FADE IN:

EXT. TOWER RUINS - DAY

Quinn is still in a mental fog. Before him is a newly filled grave. He reverently places Hagan's helmet at its head.

QUINN

Goodbye, Sir Hagan. Though your life has ended, your journey continues. May you travel in the company of the Gods with honour.

He sniffs away impending tears.

Turning to Wren, who is solemnly tying Hagan's horse to her own, he notices she is cradling her side carefully. He stands.

QUINN

How are you feeling? Did you sleep well?

WREN

A little restless. It's healing already, thanks to your salve.

Quinn sighs heavily and goes to Wren.

QUINN

Here, let me check your bandages.

Quinn lifts Wren's tunic, with a feigned confidence.

She watches curiously as he runs his hand gently down her side and over her bandages.

QUINN
You're fit. And... and you're
strong.

Wren raises an eyebrow.

QUINN
You'll heal fast, is what I mean.
I didn't--

He hides his reddening face from her. He lowers her tunic, but his hand lingers at her waist just a moment too long.

QUINN
You'll be fine.

WREN
I'm more concerned about you.
What was that last night?

Quinn shakes his head, saddened again. He sits back down, and Wren returns to the horses.

QUINN
I released all my stored magic.
That's never happened to me
before, I feel... drained.

WREN
You have no more magic?

QUINN
Oh, I will chant some more. But
it has exhausted me.

WREN
I think I should take you back to
Lanloch.

QUINN
Lanloch? No! I can't. Not yet. We
need Pegasus feathers.

WREN
(head whips round)
What did you say? Pegasus
feathers?

QUINN
For the Castle's Protective
spell. My mission was to go to
Weatherford and purchase
feathers.

A series of conflicting expressions cross Wren's face.

WREN

Then... in that case, I'll take you to Weatherford.

QUINN

But what of Hagan's mission, and the Spellbook?

WREN

The King will have to deal with that another way. I only care about you.

Quinn looks at Wren, surprised.

WREN

I mean, your safety. And to protect the Kingdom.

Quinn considers for a moment, and then nods.

QUINN

You're right. Weatherford.

EXT. WEATHERFORD MARKETS - DAY

Weatherford is a bustling market town. Colourful and busy, crowds of people enter and exit it every day.

The Market Square is lined with stalls and shops, crowded by a hundred people bartering with stallholders, the air filled with lively cries to sample various exotic wares.

Wren and Quinn leave their horses at a public stable, then fight their way through the crowds to the Square.

QUINN

The person we're looking for is Raemyl. She's called the Witch of Havenmoor.

WREN

Let's split up and search.

Immediately after they separate, Quinn is swept away in a crowd rushing by. Flailing his arms as he is caught up in their rush, swept backwards, he soon finds a short wall, and steps up onto it as the sea of people continue past.

His eyes trained on Wren, he watches as she bullishly pushes her way to a stallholder, who points her towards a small quiet alley.

WREN

Quinn! This way!

Quinn braces himself, then dives in amongst the crowds again, trying desperately to push against the tide to reach Wren. But she's already further down the alley, turning into a side alcove.

Quinn ducks into the alley, free of the crowds at last, where he sees, hidden in the shadows under a covered bridge, the small shop that Wren has entered.

INT. RAEMYL'S SHOP - DAY

The shop is filled with esoteric items. Glass jars, cages, crates, tubs, and carved boxes fill every corner. Shelves overflow with stuffed birds and lizards, some pickled in jars, some hanging from rafters.

RAEMYL is a thin elderly woman, dressed in warm woollens, despite the pleasant spring weather. She sits on a rocking chair in the corner, quietly muttering to herself as she crochets.

QUINN

Raemyl? Are you Raemyl, the Witch of Havenmoor?

RAEMYL

Eh. I haven't lived in Havenmoor nigh on forty winters! Nobody calls me such any longer. Who are you to name me so?

QUINN

My name is Quinn, I'm Apprentice to the Wizard Adenlide.

RAEMYL

Adenlide? Oh, now. There's a name I've not heard in these walls for quite some time. Is the old rascal well?

ADENLIDE

He has been injured, but is on the mend. He sent me in his stead.

RAEMYL

Quinn is it? And your companion. Her name is... hidden from me.

QUINN

This is Wren.

RAEMYL

Is it now? Hidden from us both, I think.

WREN

(warning tone)

Don't mind me, old mother.

RAEMYL

Truth will out, I can tell you that. So what can I do for you, young Wizard?

QUINN

We have run short of Pegasus feathers, and I would like to buy some more.

Raemyl stops rocking her chair, looks at Quinn intently, then at Wren with narrow eyes.

She turns back to Quinn, wariness on her face.

RAEMYL

There are no Pegasus feathers here, lad.

QUINN

What? But... we need them! Why not?

RAEMYL

There are none to be found. Believe me, I have looked far, and beyond far.

QUINN

Then who else sells them? Where can I get some?

RAEMYL

You do not understand me, boy. You cannot. There are none to be had. The Pegasus have vanished, gone these past twenty winters. Indeed, it has been ten or more since any feathers were last gathered.

Wren's distrustful glare turns into a confused frown.

QUINN

That can't be! My Master himself bought some from you, not five years ago.

RAEMYL

Indeed he did, my lad, I remember the day well. Old stock. The last feathers I have had. None have been seen since.

QUINN

Well, when will they come back?

RAEML

I cannot say. Perhaps never. A tragedy, indeed, that this should have come to pass. But it is clear to me, Pegasus are extinct.

WREN

Are you... certain of this, old mother?

RAEML

(with suspicion)

Do you doubt my mind? Sharp as an axe's edge, it is.

Wren considers her reply.

QUINN

No! No, no, no! This is terrible news! I cannot go back empty handed! We must have feathers!

RAEML

I cannot help you, boy. Your spell will have to be adjusted.

QUINN

You don't understand - this is the Protective Spell for Lanloch Castle! Pegasus feathers are crucial! Oh, this is awful! Just awful!

Raemyl turns to Wren and gives a subtle indication towards Quinn.

RAEML

You have many secrets, young Wren, many burdens. I can see a weight rests upon your shoulders. It is past time that you found another to trust, I think.

WREN

Old woman, this... I...

She hesitates at Raemyl's wise gaze.

Wren looks at Quinn, who is walking in circles and burbling to himself about Kings, Castles, and Pegasus.

WREN

Thank you, old woman. You have been... very helpful. Come,

(MORE)

WREN (cont'd)

Quinn. We should leave this woman to her crochet.

QUINN

But - the feathers! Wren, we need the feathers!

Wren grabs the incoherent Quinn and rushes him out the door hastily.

RAEMLY

Heed my words, young one.

WREN

Good day, old mother.

EXT. WEATHERFORD LAKE - DAY

As the afternoon wanes, Wren and Quinn sit together on the shore of the dark, rough Weatherford Lake.

Wren stares at the waves, lost in thought, while Quinn is running his hands through his hair constantly, consumed.

QUINN

I cannot believe this. Hagan is dead! No Spellbook! And now no Pegasus feathers! This has been nothing but disaster! Disaster!

WREN

Quinn. There's something--

QUINN

I have failed him, Wren! Failed! He trusted me with everything, and I have achieved nothing! Nothing!

WREN

(hesitant)

There may be some way that I can help you.

QUINN

Yes! You can take me home and lock me in the stocks! That's what you can do! That's what they'll do to me, Wren! Put me in the stocks!

WREN

Quinn! Calm down. Don't give up yet. I can help! I have some information. But...

QUINN

What? What? Help? What?

Quinn stops, and looks at Wren, who is cradling her head in her hands.

QUINN

Wren, what's wrong?

WREN

I made a promise. Not to tell.

QUINN

A promise? To who? About what? I don't want you to betray someone's trust.

Wren looks at Quinn, his face streaked with dirt and tears. She brushes a lock of his hair back, and smiles sadly.

WREN

Quinn. I know where we can get some Pegasus feathers.

Quinn blinks.

QUINN

You do? Where? How?

WREN

I don't understand why the old woman would think Pegasus are extinct. Because I know they're not. There is at least one Pegasus still alive, she lives in the Spearhead Mountains, at a place called Morningstar Vale.

QUINN

What? But... how can you know this? Raemyl said they were all gone. Surely she would know.

WREN

Believe me. There is a Pegasus alive.

Quinn impulsively grabs Wren in a tight hug.

QUINN

Oh, but this is wonderful! Oh, Wren! Thank the Gods!

The hug's intimacy rapidly becomes uncomfortable. They awkwardly separate.

QUINN

Um. But the Spearhead Mountains.
They're beyond Ursus Keep.

WREN

Yes. I know. Oh, how I know.

QUINN

We can't just march up to Ursus
Keep.

WREN

There are ways. But you're going
to have to trust me.

There is a brief pause.

QUINN

(quiet)

I do trust you.

Quinn's sincerity takes Wren aback. She smiles.

WREN

Then we go.

EXT. URSUS KEEP COURTYARD - NIGHT

Evening draws in, and the sky is streaked with orange as the sun sets. Ranks of men on horseback, brandishing ragged edged weapons, fill the courtyard of Ursus Keep.

Valan Ursus parades up and down in front of them, ranting his orders at them, every sentence greeted with a roar of slavering blood-lust.

VALAN URSUS

Lanloch Castle has a weakness in its magical defences. We will exploit this opportunity for all it is worth. We have sent an opening volley, but now we plan a full assault. I have but one command for you, and one command only. Kill King Reyburn. If you achieve this single goal, then you have freedom to do as you wish with the remaining rabble.

With a roar that shakes the ground, two hundred mounted men, rabid with the taste of death in their mouths, race out of the Keep as Valan Ursus screams:

VALAN URSUS

When I am King, you will all be rewarded with riches beyond your

(MORE)

VALAN URSUS (cont'd)
dreams! Reyburn must be
destroyed! Free us from his weak
rule, so we can take the Kingdom
and wield the ultimate power!

EXT. URSUS ROAD - NIGHT

The tree-lined road that Wren and Quinn walk along runs
alongside the dark waters of Weatherford Lake.

QUINN
It's a shame we had to stable the
horses. I was just getting used
to riding.

WREN
We need to be stealthy. We can't
get past the Keep on horseba--

Wren stops. A rumble of hoof beats begins to pound,
rapidly getting louder.

WREN
Off the road. Now!

QUINN
What is it?

WREN
No time. Go, go!

They rush into the trees, and hide amongst some foliage.

A rampaging charge of mounted men stampedes past, their
swords raised, as they howl into the darkness with
blood-lust.

Quinn is afraid.

WREN
Those men have a dark purpose.
The air already smells of spilled
blood.

QUINN
And we're going...?

WREN
Where they came from. Get ready.

EXT. URSUS KEEP FRONT GATE - NIGHT

The black granite walls of Ursus Keep are imposing. Bordered on one side by the lake, on the other by sheer mountains, the Keep has harsh shards of obsidian scattered at the base of its walls, the sharp edges of the broken stones enough to ward off armies.

Wren leads Quinn along the shore of the lake. They step carefully, just below viewing range of the Main Gate.

WREN

Not many people even remember
Spearhead Pass since Valan Ursus
blocked it with his Keep.

QUINN

Then how do you know about it?

WREN

I've been within the Keep before,
remember?

QUINN

Oh yes. Hagan said. You were his
concubine.

WREN

Concubine! I most certainly was
not! Ugh!

QUINN

Then how..?

WREN

I've... bargained with Ursus in
the past. Now come on. Step where
I step. And go carefully.
Concubine! I don't think so.

The sharp edges of the obsidian shards around the base of the walls are difficult to negotiate.

Wren guides Quinn slowly through a maze of darkness, until they reach a large drain with a putrid mess of bones and effluent trickling from it.

QUINN

(shocked)

Those are human bones!

WREN

Sshh. Yes. Victims of Kagharach's
experiments.

QUINN
Why are we letting that monster
get away with this?

Wren indicates the presence of a sentry on the wall above them and Quinn immediately keeps quiet as they wade through the revolting sludge oozing from the drain.

EXT. URSUS KEEP BACK GATE - NIGHT

The back gate to Ursus Keep is guarded by two slovenly men, who parade past the entrance irregularly.

WREN
We'll duck across at the first
opportunity.

QUINN
I don't think we'll get a chance.
We are too visible.

WREN
Damn, you're probably right.

QUINN
But I have an idea.

Quinn grabs some ingredients from his pouch, quickly mixes them together in his hand, and recites a chant. The mixture glows a little as it develops, and Wren immediately stands over Quinn to shield the light from the Guards' sight.

She watches, transfixed, as he chants, the tension in his brow relaxing as the spell nears completion.

Quinn whispers into his hands, then throws the ball of energy into the air and far behind him. The light dissipates instantly, but a ripple in the air shows its path as it reaches the furthest wall up against the mountainside, far across the courtyard.

A few seconds pass, then a loud "Hey! Over here!" echoes at great volume all around the courtyard, in Quinn's voice.

The two Guards stop and look, and one immediately runs towards where the noise came from. The other remains, but faces away from the Gate.

WREN
Hey, not bad!

Quinn and Wren dash right across the road, making it safely into the trees.

INT. URSUS KEEP - NIGHT

Valan Ursus and Kagharach are striding purposefully through a hallway lined on one side with tall windows, the moonlight streaming in.

VALAN URSUS

You have had no luck with that damnable book at all?

KAGHARACH

My Liege, there are two Protective spells, and both are fiendish in their design.

VALAN URSUS

Don't tell me you are admiring that old fool's work.

KAGHARACH

Credit where it is due, Master. We may have our differences, but Adenlide has proven to be one of the finest Wizards of our time.

VALAN URSUS

I want that book open and all its secrets spilled to me by the end of the week, do you hear me?

There is a shout from outside. Quinn's voice calling "Hey! Over here!" reverberates loudly through the open windows.

They look out, to see a Guard running toward the noise.

VALAN URSUS

What in the name of the Gods? Am I surrounded by fools? Look at them, abandoning their posts.

Out of the corner of his eye Ursus detects motion. Beyond the Wall, shadows flicker across the Rear Gate. Ursus narrows his eyes suspiciously.

VALAN URSUS

Hmm. Come, Kagharach. Let us see what this is about.

They exit the hallway down a set of wide stairs.

EXT. SPEARHEAD PASS - NIGHT

Keeping to the trees, Wren and Quinn try to keep out of sight of anyone patrolling the road this close to the Keep.

QUINN

I hate walking uphill. How far is it to the Vale?

WREN

Not far. A full day's travel at least. It's not a very well maintained road, I'm afraid, Ursus isn't very civic minded, so we may encounter landslips.

QUINN

How do you even know this place? If you weren't his concubine or one of his men, how can you know Ursus Keep?

Wren stops walking. Quinn is not looking where he's going, and bumps into her. Wren's face is turned away from Quinn as she replies.

WREN

I was his prisoner. Quinn. All right? I was Valan Ursus's prisoner.

Quinn frowns, confused. He blinks a few times as he tries to understand.

QUINN

His prisoner? But... No, that cannot be. He let you go? Ursus doesn't release prisoners.

WREN

That's because I escaped.

QUINN

Escaped? But--

Wren turns back to look at him, haunted by the memory.

QUINN

Nobody has ever escaped from Ursus Keep. Everybody knows that. He won't shut up about it.

WREN

Well, he's not going to admit it, is he? Especially when it was me, a woman. Can you imagine his reputation amongst his cronies if they knew?

QUINN

Then why didn't you tell? Ruin him?

Wren sighs. She looks away, off to a distant memory.

WREN

When they captured me I was running away from home, heading as far from Lanloch as I could. The last thing I wanted was attention on me.

A tear falls from her eye, but she scrubs it away.

WREN

So I kept running. Found a new home, and a new life. I haven't been back since.

QUINN

Never? What brought you back to Lanloch now?

Wren regains focus and looks at Quinn, his trusting eyes filled with sympathy.

WREN

I heard a call.

QUINN

A call? What do you--

Wren shakes her head to ward off his query.

WREN

Let's keep going. We'll make camp soon.

EXT. URSUS KEEP COURTYARD - NIGHT

Valan Ursus strides back and forth in front of his Guards, who are nervous while they stand in loose formation.

Kagharach hovers behind Ursus's shoulder.

VALAN URSUS

So you all heard a voice, you didn't know who it was, and you left your posts!?

GUARD #1

It sounded important.

VALAN URSUS

Kagharach. Take these fools down to your chamber, where you can re-educate them on how I want my Keep to be run.

KAGHARACH

With great pleasure, my Liege.

VALAN URSUS

Now. I saw something beyond the
Gates that these fools missed.
You, and you. Come with me.

Ursus gathers some men and they head to the Rear Gate.

EXT. FOXES CROSS VILLAGE - DAY

Early morning.

The people of Foxes Cross are starting their day.

A farmer is out in the fields, ploughing behind a
Clydesdale horse.

A young woman is filling buckets of water from a well.

Ogden the Tavern Keeper is sweeping his front stoop.

The thunderous roar of hoof beats shake the ground.

Two hundred horsemen race through the Square, roaring and
screaming as they stampede past the frightened villagers.

The road is torn up by their passage.

The riders' screams fade into the distance as they thrash
their horses beyond the Village, and disappear down the
road.

EXT. SPEARHEAD PASS - DAY

A new day.

Wren and Quinn leap from rock to rock, following an
overgrown path, pushing past trees and scrub.

They round a corner on a track, where they encounter a
large landslip. Tons of rock and clay completely block
their way, and they can go no further.

With a rock face on one side, and a sheer drop into a
rushing river on the other, they have no choice but to
stop.

Quinn leans against a boulder, analysing the mass of rock
before them.

QUINN

I think I can help with this. I
know a spell, but I shall need to
prepare.

WREN

How long?

QUINN

I will need some plants, but I should find them growing nearby.

WREN

All right. If you want me for anything, find me at the falls.

They trek back off the path, where Quinn explores the grasses with a practised eye, locating some of his needed plants and lichens immediately.

Wren is by a stream that feeds into a waterfall that drops over the steep cliff to the rushing river below.

Looking between the branches of a tree, Quinn catches sight of her as she crouches to the water. Lifting her top, Wren gently touches her bloodstained bandages. The play of muscles across her back as she twists to reach has Quinn mesmerised.

Wren senses him watching, turns, and smiles at him, genuinely.

WREN

What are you looking at?

QUINN

You are so beautiful.

Neither of them expected that answer, and they both are taken aback.

QUINN

Um. Um. I... I'll get back to what I was... I'll be... um, over here.

Quinn races back to the path, embarrassed.

QUINN

Stupid! Stupid! Stupid! What were you thinking, saying that out loud?

He stops, takes a breath, closes his eyes, then lets the breath out again.

He looks at his collection of leaves and moss. He spies another plant at the side of the path, rips it out with the clumsy aggression of embarrassment, then makes his way back to the landslip.

He sits down on the boulder, lays back against the rock face, and glowers for a moment.

QUINN
You are a fool, Quinn.

After a moment, Wren quietly returns and waits. Quinn sits up, and busies himself with preparing the Spell. They deliberately avoid looking at each other.

Then, as if on cue, they speak at the same time.

WREN
Quinn, I... don't know what
to... I've never--

QUINN
Wren, I didn't mean to...
you were just... and then
I--

They stop, hesitate, then Quinn smiles shyly, peeking up at Wren under a lock of his hair.

The sun is behind her, causing a halo around her own hair, taking his breath away. He gasps, then quickly turns back to his ingredients.

QUINN
I should probably start this
Spell.

WREN
Yes, good idea.

Quinn stops, and looks up at her again.

QUINN
Um, actually, I'm going to need
your help for this one.

WREN
Oh. What do you need?

QUINN
Climb up to this boulder, and
I'll tell you when to push.

WREN
This one? But it's enormous!

Wren clambers up the landslip to the huge boulder, five feet high and ten feet wide, that is blocking their path. Quinn scrambles up and places some of the Spell ingredients at its base.

He sits and begins the incantation.

He chants, repeatedly bringing his hands together. The ingredients glow, brighter at each motion. Then with a clap, he motions a push upwards.

Cracks form in the clay, the boulder breaks free, and it fractionally lifts from the pile.

QUINN
 (straining)
 Wren! Push! Hard as you can!

Wren leans back on the boulder, braces her feet, and pushes against it.

Dust and dirt sprinkle around her. The boulder starts to move, easier than she expected now it has no resistance.

Quinn visibly relaxes, opens his eyes, and then runs to assist.

QUINN
 I've got a little time before the
 Spell expires.

He heaves against the boulder, and another cascade of pebbles falls. They push it far enough to open up a way past the slip, leaving the boulder to hover.

And then the rocks beneath their feet slide away.

WREN
 Uh oh.

Down slope from Wren, Quinn is the first to tumble, back against the rock slide, his feet towards the sheer drop.

Wren, behind him, dives forward. She manages to grasp hold of Quinn's arm as they slide, rocks tumbling around them.

Wren is spun around, and grabs a hold of a jutting rock, which stops them from sliding further.

The rockfall thins out to a stop.

Quinn is on his back, clasping onto Wren with his right hand, while she is face down against the pile, clinging to the jutting rock with her other hand.

Both of them have their legs dangling precariously over the edge, tentatively balanced on the shifting stones.

Silence again, with only the rushing of the river far below them.

WREN
 Are you all right?

QUINN
 Yes. I think so. You?

WREN
 Could be better. My side hurts.
 Can you move?

QUINN

Uh, too late. I think the boulder
is about to--

There's a creak, and they both look back up at the enormous hovering boulder as the glow from the Spell fades. It drops down onto the path with an enormous ground-shaking crash.

The rock slide starts again.

WREN

Oh, shit!

Wren starts to lose her sure grip, and slides with the rocks.

The large boulder topples, tumbling right beside them, over the drop, narrowly missing them.

Sliding off the edge, Quinn scrambles his feet around, finding purchase on a ledge. Rocks drop from beneath and above him.

His back to the cliff, Quinn grabs at the lip, balancing on the narrow ledge, his right hand still clinging to Wren's arm, as she lies face down, spread-eagle, her left fingertips sliding free of the jutting rock.

Rocks tumble, bounce, and spin around them, going over the drop.

WREN

Argh! Aaaaargh!

The strain on Wren's arm is causing her wound to open. Her grip on the jutting rock gives way.

She falls.

But Quinn still has hold of her forearm.

As she drops, Quinn lets his other hand go, spins on the narrow ledge, and uses Wren's momentum to fling her around and up enough for her to reach the ledge on his other side.

Flung high enough to get within reach of the path, Wren flails her hand wildly, scrambling for something to grip onto.

The rock slide trickles to a stop.

Silence.

Quinn is now facing into the cliff, his head pressed tightly against the stony surface amongst the dry clay. He still has a tight hold of Wren's arm.

Grasping behind her awkwardly, Wren clammers backward, sliding herself onto the path on the far side of the slip, grimacing with pain as blood trickles under her tunic.

Then with an exhausting heave, she pulls at Quinn, tugging him up to lie beside her.

They cling to one another in a tight hug. Shaking, shivering, breathless, wrapped in each other's arms.

WREN

Ow.

Quinn giggles.

WREN

Quiet you. It's not funny, I think my wound has opened up.

QUINN

(smiling)

Sorry.

He giggles again.

QUINN

Good thing we didn't bring the horses.

Wren laughs.

WREN

Ow! Hurt!

With crazed relief, laughter fills the river valley.

They look over to the landslip, and laugh even louder. The slip has completely cleared the path, leaving a safe way through.

INT. KING REYBURN'S CHAMBERS - DAY

Sir Lexhurst enters the King's Chambers and stands at his desk.

KING REYBURN

Yes, Lexhurst?

SIR LEXHURST

My Lord, a legion of armed men are on their way. I believe they came from Ursus Keep, and are here to storm the Castle.

KING REYBURN
What's this? What?

Sir Arnald races in, out of breath.

ARNALD
Your Majesty! Sir Lexhurst,
they're approaching Lanloch Town!

SIR LEXHURST
Triple the Soldiers at the Spell
Breach. Gather all the Knights,
we'll meet them on the fields.
Don't let them into the town, we
must protect the townsfolk.

ARNALD
Sir!

Arnald dashes out again.

KING REYBURN
This is outrageous! I'm sure
Ursus himself isn't present,
cowardly bastard that he is.
Come, let us meet their
Commander.

INT. OUTSIDE KING REYBURN'S CHAMBERS - DAY

Lexhurst and the King exit the Chambers and head along the
corridor, followed by two Sentries.

SIR LEXHURST
My Lord, I fear this rabble will
have no Commander. They are
vicious men with no honour,
attacking only with brute force.

KING REYBURN
Good. Then we shall have the
advantage. The Protective Spell
will still stand up to the
majority of their attacks. Damn
it, I wish Hagan was here.

EXT. MORNINGSTAR VALE - DAY

Wren and Quinn reach a widening of the path.

QUINN
How is your wound now?

WREN

Better. What's in that salve? It works so fast.

QUINN

A numbing agent, mostly. It's not even magic.

WREN

Ah, a Wizard that reveals his tricks. You're a rare one.

They crest a rise. And stop.

QUINN

Oh my...

Wren smiles proudly.

WREN

Quinn. This is Morningstar Vale.

Quinn's mouth is agape. Spread before them, cradled in a valley of snow tipped mountains, is a wide meadow filled with blue and red flowers, alive with buzzing insects, all in a pocket of trapped Spring.

Quinn turns to Wren, eyes bright, and smiles.

QUINN

I love it!

Wren reaches out her hand, and Quinn takes a hold of it, letting her guide him as they wade through the long grasses.

WREN

Junnehir will be here somewhere. Come on! Lets go find her!

Wren runs off, laughing, and Quinn dashes to catch up.

Stripping off their outermost garments and weapons, which they toss aside in a clear spot, they start to play.

Wren splashes through a stream. Quinn climbs up on some rocks. They chase each other around the meadow.

Quinn finds something in the long grass, and cries out in triumph.

QUINN

A Pegasus feather! And another one! Wren, you were right!

WREN

I told you!

QUINN

Adenlide will be so pleased!

WREN

I can't see Junnehir anywhere,
though. I'll call her.

QUINN

(amazed)

What? You can speak to Pegasus?

Wren stands in an open part of the meadow, looks to the sky, and calls out in an ancient language.

Quinn is in awe.

There is no response. She calls again, but nothing.

QUINN

Don't worry. You can try again in
a few minutes.

Quinn invites Wren to sit in the grass with him, near where they left their packs. They lay back and gaze at the cloudless sky, smiling.

QUINN

Thank you for bringing me here,
Wren. It's heaven, I love it.

WREN

It's been different travelling
with someone. I've only ever
travelled alone before. If I'd
had someone like you along, I
would've done this much sooner.

Quinn looks at her, stunned.

QUINN

Really?

Wren turns and looks back into Quinn's eyes, with an intensity he's never seen before. She smiles.

WREN

Really.

There is a moment.

And they kiss.

EXT. LANLOCH TOWN BORDERS - DAY

Gathered in a field just outside the walls of Lanloch Town, standing in neat rows, are fifty Soldiers and eighty mounted Knights, armed with swords and pikes. The sun shines on their armour, flashing off their helmets.

Across from them stand two hundred mounted men dressed in dark dirty ragged and mismatched armour, and armed with brutal rough hewn swords, axes, and hammers. Though they stand in full sunlight, they reflect almost no glare, as if they live in shadow. They emit a rumble of grunts, gurgles, and roars as they sit waiting.

King Reyburn appears, on horseback.

KING REYBURN
Who commands this force?

One of the enemy immediately throws a spear at the King. It falls short and sticks in the ground several metres from him.

Reyburn does not move. He glares back at the rabble with disgust.

KING REYBURN
Sir Lexhurst!

SIR LEXHURST
Your Majesty!

KING REYBURN
This ends here. Destroy them.

Sir Lexhurst raises his sword.

SIR LEXHURST
Knights of the Crimson Guard!
Ready your weapons! Charge!

With a noble roar, the Knights charge along the field.

And with a guttural scream that rends the sky, the enemy savagely scramble to meet them.

EXT. MORNINGSTAR VALE - DAY

Quinn and Wren are laying back in the long grass, at offset angles from each other, watching the clouds.

They are holding hands, fingers interlaced.

QUINN
I can't believe you know the
language of the Pegasus. Where
did you learn that?

WREN

(hesitant)

Oh... Junnehir taught me it. She said whenever I needed her help I should come here and call.

QUINN

And you can talk to her? That's unheard of.

WREN

Um. In a way. It's not that hard. If you know how. I'm going to call her again.

She leaps up and calls once more.

EXT. MORNINGSTAR VALE - DAY

At the entrance to the Vale, a shadow falls across the grass.

Valan Ursus sits astride his horse, flanked with six of his men, watching Quinn and Wren from afar.

EXT. MORNINGSTAR VALE - DAY

Quinn gazes appreciatively at Wren's slender silhouette against the sun as she leans back and calls.

And then a noise is heard in the sky, a distant whinny.

Quinn sits up, and far in the distance he can see a winged shape gliding in: JUNNEHIR.

Wren's smile transforms her face, like Quinn has never seen it before.

WREN

Junnehir! It's her! Quinn! Look!
It's Junnehir! Isn't she just magnificent?

She waves at Junnehir and jumps for joy as the Pegasus glides around in a circle, and comes in to land nearby.

Gleaming white, larger and broader than a regular horse, with enormous powerful wings, feathers white with a hint of gold, Junnehir gracefully steps up to Wren, who embraces her around her sleek equine neck.

Quinn is amazed at the way Wren and Junnehir clearly have a connection, and then the elusive ideas that had been swimming through his thoughts rapidly fall into place with heart-stopping logic, and, like dawn breaking, realisation spreads across his face.

His jaw drops.

In a daze, Quinn steps towards Wren, who is murmuring to Junnehir. He hesitates for just a moment, but then finally blurts out:

QUINN
You're Princess Cerwen.

There is a sudden stillness in Wren's body.

Slowly she turns to him, apprehensive.

QUINN
Aren't you? You are. You must be.

Wren says nothing, but her eyes are fearful and sad. Quinn paces back and forth, thinking out loud as he puts it all together.

QUINN
You've... seen inside Ursus Keep.
You escaped... and ran away.
But... you clearly have a
spiritual connection with a
Pegasus, which is just... it's
unheard of, except... there's one
case, one legend, 800 years ago,
when a Pegasus saved the King's
life. Which... is why the Pegasus
is the symbol on the Royal Coat
of Arms... And why only the Royal
Family have ever had a connection
with the Pegasus at all!

WREN
Quinn. Please.

QUINN
You are, you must be. You're
Princess Cerwen!

WREN
Quinn. Don't... don't tell
anyone. Please?

QUINN
Why not? This is... unbelievable
news! I mean, you're the
Princess! Your family, they think
you're dead!

WREN
Quinn! No, please!

Suddenly Junnehir rears and screams a whinny, interrupting their conversation.

They turn to see a series of horsed figures bearing down on them.

WREN

Ursus!

The horses come to a stop, spread out in a half circle.

VALAN URSUS

Princess Cerwen. A face I thought
I would never see again.

Her instincts kicking in, Wren spins and draws her sword with a feline grace.

WREN

Quinn. Behind me.

With his back to Wren, Quinn drops to a defensive crouch.

Dark horses snort and paw the earth. Valan Ursus, an arrogant sneer upon his dark visage, looks down on Wren, Quinn, and Junnehir, as he and his men form a ring right around them.

WREN

Take one step more, and I will
kill you where you stand.

VALAN URSUS

Brave words from one in your
position. You cannot possibly
believe you could defeat me,
here, now, like this.

WREN

I'm not a little girl any more.

VALAN URSUS

Oh, I can see that.
(signals his men)
Take them.

A horseman takes a single step towards Wren, and with a blindingly fast balletic sweep, she slices up and into the man's torso.

He falls from his horse and dies with a sickening gurgle, blood staining the meadow flowers.

VALAN URSUS

My, you have grown up.

A second horseman steps forward, and, with a similarly brutal swing of her sword, Wren renders the man dead.

VALAN URSUS

Don't attack one at a time,
fools! This is battle!

Suddenly Junnehir screams and leaps into the air, coming down towards Valan Ursus himself.

Ursus rears back, enough to fend Junnehir off, and a rope flies in from one of the men to loop round Junnehir's neck, pulling her away and tying her down.

Several men throw more ropes to ensnare Junnehir.

One man, on foot, attacks Quinn, bringing his sword down hard towards Quinn's neck. Quinn raises his hand and shouts one word, and the sword flies out of the man's hand away out of reach.

Stunned, the man looks around, confused. Quinn sweeps in, hooks his leg around the man's and trips him to the ground.

Wren fights two men on foot. Their rough swings are no match for her dynamic athleticism. Her sword work like an oiled machine, and her footwork a dance, she manages to kill one.

Quinn uses a flash Spell, a brief blinding light beaming out of his palm, but though it disorients their opponents a little, in the midday sunlight it loses potency.

The fight is futile. Junnehir is captured and tied down, and they are still surrounded. As the tips of three blades point to her throat, Wren lowers and drops her sword.

VALAN URSUS

Well. You have managed to make
quite the mess. So unnecessary.
You could never win against me,
girl. Tie them up.

EXT. LANLOCH TOWN BORDERS - NIGHT

The battle wages on. Chaos reigns on the field.

A line of Soldiers guard the Main Gates of the city, and further along the wall at an unassuming door, another flank of Knights protect the breach.

On the fields in front of the city walls, littered by bodies from both sides, the fighting continues.

Hobbling along an upper wall, supported by the maidservant Enid, Adenlide is overlooking the battle.

He approaches King Reyburn, who is talking with one of his Knights, while also glancing down at the battle out on the fields below.

KING REYBURN

What are you doing out here? Get back up to the Castle at once. This is no place for a man in your state!

ADENLIDE

Nonsense. Sire, I needed to see you, for I have news. The Protective Spell is rupturing further. We are quite vulnerable.

KING REYBURN

Are you suggesting it needs Magical repair? I seem to recall your apprentice has been sent on an errand. And a lack of feathers.

ADENLIDE

Indeed. I have enough for some repair, but it won't be a permanent fix.

KING REYBURN

You are in no fit state to do any such thing! I forbid you.

ADENLIDE

My Lord, I didn't come here to ask your permission.

KING REYBURN

I know you didn't, you mad old fool. Good luck with your work, my friend.

ADENLIDE

And you, Reyburn.

INT. URSUS KEEP DUNGEONS - NIGHT

Wren and Quinn are in neighbouring cells, separated by a stone wall, with only the moonlight and the distant flicker of a torch for light.

The incessant whinnying of Junnehir can be heard coming from the Courtyard.

Quinn sits dejected, slumped in the corner, while Wren paces back and forth, agitated.

The only way they are able to communicate is through the barred cell doors.

WREN

Quinn! Are you hurt?

QUINN

I'm all right. You? How's your wound?

WREN

Sore. It's not bleeding.

QUINN

Junnehir sounds unhappy.

WREN

They've got her tied down in the courtyard. It's heartbreaking.

QUINN

Did they take everything?

WREN

My weapons. You?

QUINN

The Pegasus feathers. And I'm all out of useful pre-charged spells. I used them up in the fight.

WREN

You don't have any spells at all?

QUINN

Well, one, but it's an echo spell, it won't be any use.

Junnehir's screams are incessant and painful to hear.

QUINN

So. Princess.

Wren winces.

WREN

Oh, Quinn. What a mess I've made.

QUINN

What happened? Where have you been all this time?

Wren stares up out of the single narrow window, high on the wall beside her.

WREN

When I ran away, before I even got a day from home, I was found by Ursus's men. They dragged me here to the Keep.

QUINN

Did they hurt you?

WREN

Not at first. They knew who I was. Later, well...

Wren closes her eyes and shudders.

WREN

A week passed. I escaped. Through the sewers. They chased me up Spearhead Pass, but waiting for me was the strangest sight! It was Junnehir. Just standing there.

QUINN

She knew?

WREN

Until that day I'd never even seen a Pegasus! And there she was. We flew, far away, to where Ursus would never find me.

QUINN

Why didn't you let your parents know you were safe?

WREN

I couldn't. I was happy! I started a new life, the one I'd always wanted. I found work at a farm, then later as a deckhand. Eventually, a Mercenary.

QUINN

Your family has been in mourning for five years!

WREN

When I heard that Ursus was taking the credit for my death, it was my chance. I never had to return.

QUINN

But something called you back to Lanloch? What brought you here again?

WREN

Adenlide.

QUINN

What!?

WREN

He and I have kept in contact ever since I left. He was the only one I trusted my secret to. He wanted me to return to my family, on my birthday. And, this time, I thought he might be right. I was on my way, but I lost my nerve. I met up with him, told him I wasn't ready. He got quite upset, so I left him be. Two days later I met you. And Hagan.

QUINN

Two days... The night of the attack, that was you! Adenlide said he was distracted when we were chanting the Protection Spell. He was distracted by you!

WREN

What? No! I caused the failure of the Spell? And his injury! The Spellbook! Oh, I can't believe it, I feel such a fool!

QUINN

You? What about me? I really thought I couldn't muck this up. Go to Weatherford, pick up some feathers. Simple. I was going to make Master so proud.

WREN

I led Ursus to Morningstar Vale, I put Junnehir at risk. And I've dragged you through this whole disaster!

Quinn laughs, dismissive.

QUINN

We make quite a pair, don't we?

WREN

(smirking)

Huh. Yes, I suppose we do.

QUINN

What a mess. I should never have asked you along on this fool's errand.

WREN

Saving your Kingdom is not a fool's errand, Quinn.

QUINN

I'm not saving much right now.

Junnehir's screams of fury continue. Wren suddenly stops pacing as a thought enters her head.

WREN

Wait. I have a spell of my own!

QUINN

A spell? You do?

WREN

I told you that Adenlide and I are still in contact? We use a spell he taught me. I always have one charged up.

QUINN

That's fantastic! Call him now! Oh, Wren, this could be our answer out of here - he'll ask the King to send the Crimson Guard and we'll be free!

Wren's face falls.

WREN

Oh. Father isn't going to send out the Guard without asking why. Adenlide will have to tell him all about me.

Quinn winces sympathetically, but then sits up.

QUINN

Perhaps it's time, your Highness.

WREN

Quinn! My name is Wren!

QUINN

Your name is Cerwen. And you are a Princess of Lanloch.

There is a quiet moment as Wren considers.

WREN
You're right, Quinn. It's time.

QUINN
(standing)
Good luck. I'll keep an eye out
while you chant.

Wren sits cross-legged on the floor, and begins to concentrate.

INT. KING REYBURN'S CHAMBERS - NIGHT

Sir Lexhurst and King Reyburn discuss strategies while looking at a map of the Castle.

KING REYBURN
We have them overpowered, I
think. Victory is at hand.

SIR LEXHURST
Yes, my Lord.

KING REYBURN
Rally the men around the breach,
and concentrate most of the
defence between there and the
main Gate.

SIR LEXHURST
On my way, my Liege.

KING REYBURN
But be careful, Lexhurst. There
are sure to be scavengers lurking
in the fringes.

Sir Lexhurst leaves. Reyburn scratches at his beard as he sits back on a bench.

Behind him, a curtain twitches.

A light flashes as it runs along a blade, slowly emerging from between the curtains.

It's Wyrnvach.

As he raises the blade high behind the King, Reyburn stands up suddenly, and Wyrnvach stumbles backward, making enough noise for Reyburn to look behind him.

With a cry of surprise, Reyburn raises his arm to fend off the blade. It skims across his forearm, drawing blood.

Reyburn shoves against Wyrnvach, slamming him against the wall. Grabbing at Wyrnvach's wrist, and gripping it tight, is enough to cause Wyrnvach to grimace and struggle.

Trapped behind Reyburn, Wyrnvach brings his knee up between the King's legs. Reyburn cringes and stumbles away, but manages to put the table between him and Wyrnvach.

Wyrnvach goes to leap onto the table, but Reyburn tips it first. Wyrnvach loses his purchase, and slides back onto the floor in a sea of papers.

INT. URSUS KEEP DUNGEONS - NIGHT

Wren inscribes a ring in the air. It leaves a glowing trail, and encircled within is a faint image.

It shows Adenlide in his Chambers, kneeling within the Diagram on his floor. He is deep in the midst of chanting a Spell.

WREN

Adenlide! Adenlide! It's me,
Cerwen!

There is no response from the Wizard. His eyes are closed, and he's deep under a trance.

WREN

He's busy. It looks like he's
chanting a Spell.

QUINN

A Spell? He must have recovered
some. It won't be possible to
interrupt him while he's
concentrating.

WREN

What should I do? We need to send
for help!

QUINN

We can't risk restarting the
Spell. You'll have to move the
view to a new room through the
Castle and find someone else.
Repeat this phrase: "Thanaka
Langana Terrana."

WREN

Thanaka. Langana. Terrana.

QUINN

Good. It should feel loose. Try
pushing it through the walls,
using just your thoughts.

The image within the Circlet moves forward, heading out of the room.

Wren closes her eyes for a moment as she concentrates, her hands shifting back and forth as she guides the image through. She opens her eyes.

QUINN

Is it working?

WREN

It's gone dark. I can't see anything.

QUINN

A Privacy Restriction. It only allows you to see within certain rooms. You should be able to see doors. Head for the Grand Hall.

INT. URSUS KEEP - NIGHT

Kagharach has the Spellbook in his hands, and is talking with Valan Ursus.

KAGHARACH

The boy will be of great use to me, my Liege. He is Adenlide's Apprentice, he will have the Spell to unlock it.

VALAN URSUS

Kagharach, I am sorely running out of patience. If you do not open this damnable book I will have your head on a spike, do you understand me?

KAGHARACH

I promise you it will be done, if I can just have the boy for a few hours.

VALAN URSUS

Very well. I need to interrogate the Princess, anyway. And will someone shut that damnable horse up?

INT. URSUS KEEP DUNGEONS - NIGHT

Wren is alarmed by the imagery the circlet shows.

WREN

Oh, Quinn! It's my Father! I can see him! He's... He's fighting off someone! It looks like Wyrnvach!

QUINN
Call out to him!

WREN
Father!

INT. KING REYBURN'S CHAMBERS - NIGHT

The long-bladed knife is on the floor, some distance away, but Wyrnvach has Reyburn cornered.

WREN
Father! Can you hear me? Father!

Wyrnvach stops and looks around, confused.

WYRNVACH
What..?

Reyburn pushes hard against the distracted Wyrnvach, who stumbles back against the tipped table, and flips back hard onto the stone floor.

Reyburn grabs the knife, and with a triumphant stab, pins it through Wyrnvach's shoulder.

Wyrnvach screams, and then collapses. He is alive, but unconscious.

WREN
Father!

Reyburn blinks, and sits back on his heels.

KING REYBURN
Lianne? Is that you? Where are you? I cannot see you.

WREN
No, Father! Not Lianne. It's me!
Cerwen!

King Reyburn notices the glowing disc hovering in the air. His expression turns to anger.

KING REYBURN
Cerwen!? What tomfoolery is this?
Cerwen is long dead, do not taunt me with such foolishness!! Who is this?

WREN
Really, Father! I'm not dead! You must help me, I'm in Ursus Keep!

KING REYBURN

Ursus Keep? This is a trick!
Kagharach's work, I'll wager! I
will not stand for this! Who are
you?

The image within the circlet clarifies for an instant, and Wren can be seen, but it is dark and she is older, dirty, unrecognisable as the daughter he remembers.

But there is a hint of something that makes his memory twitch...

INT. URSUS KEEP DUNGEONS - NIGHT

Quinn is still on lookout, and hears steps approaching.

WREN

Father, please! I'm here with
Quinn! You must--

QUINN

Wren! Someone's coming. I think
it's Ursus.

The communication spell wavers as Wren's concentration is interrupted. It vanishes just as Valan Ursus and Kagharach arrive at the cell doors, accompanied by a Guard each.

VALAN URSUS

Boy, you belong to Kagharach now.
I pity you your poor short life.
The Princess comes with me.

The cells are opened and they are dragged out, their hands tied. Each are led away in different directions, Kagharach with Quinn, and Ursus with Wren.

WREN

Quinn! No!

QUINN

Don't worry, Wren. Don't worry,
I'll be all right.

The screams of Junnehir continue to wail through the night.

INT. KING REYBURN'S CHAMBERS - NIGHT

King Reyburn stands with Queen Meghanne, both distraught.

KING REYBURN

It was her. I'm sure of it. I do
not understand what I saw, but it
was Cerwen!

QUEEN MEGHANNE

After all these years. Alive!

KING REYBURN

She said the boy Quinn was with her, the Wizard's Apprentice. I don't know how this could be. Or why he was not with Hagan.

QUEEN MEGHANNE

Where has she been all this time?

Adenlide, looking wan and exhausted, appears in the doorway. With a grunt of pain, he collapses onto a chair.

ADENLIDE

I was alerted when I felt the Communication Spell dissipate. I knew I had to come. I fear I have been foolish.

KING REYBURN

What? You have knowledge of this? You knew my daughter was alive?

ADENLIDE

Cerwen had confided in me her secret. Against my better judgement, I agreed to keep silent. Now look what has happened.

KING REYBURN

Master Adenlide, you have betrayed your King! Friend or no, this cannot go unpunished.

ADENLIDE

I am inclined to agree, my Lord.

KING REYBURN

We will talk of this another time. Right now, my daughter must be returned, and that evil son of a bitch dealt with at last.

ADENLIDE

Agreed. It is time, and past time. Can you spare the men?

KING REYBURN

She is my daughter.

EXT. LANLOCH TOWN BORDERS - NIGHT

The battle still wages, but it is considerably weakened. Bodies, from both sides, litter the field.

A troop of the Crimson Guard is called from the ranks. Led by Sir Lexhurst, they ride out along the road towards Ursus Keep.

EXT. URSUS KEEP COURTYARD - NIGHT

Quinn is manhandled through the Courtyard by the Guard. They pass Junnehir, pinned down beneath chains tied across her back, her wings strapped back, and her struggling body bent into a painfully unnatural position. Her keening cries fill the air.

A few men guard her, affected badly by her wails. A dead body nearby of another Guard proves Junnehir maintains her fighting spirit even while chained.

Kagharach directs the Guard, who shoves Quinn violently through the door to the Torture Chamber.

INT. VALAN URSUS'S PRIVATE CHAMBERS - NIGHT

Ursus's chambers are dark, lit only by the two open fireplaces on opposite walls. Unlit candelabras on stands are in the corners, a bench full of unusual implements and weapons, and a bed layered with bearskin blankets.

Wren is thrown onto the bed. Ursus stands and watches her as she sneers back.

VALAN URSUS

Your Father was here, you know.
All those years ago. He thought
he was going to find you in my
dungeons.

Ursus hangs Wren's tied hands onto a hook above the bed.

VALAN URSUS

Of course, there was nothing to
see. Just as I had told him.
"Capture you? Kill you? Certainly
not," I said. "I am outraged and
disgusted you would think me so
low."

He straps Wren's ankles to the foot of the bed.

VALAN URSUS

And of course, I was telling him
the truth. I didn't capture you

(MORE)

VALAN URSUS (cont'd)
 at all, I never do my own dirty
 work. And I certainly had no
 intention of killing you. Why
 destroy my bargaining chip?

He leans in close to her, and she reels back at his
 breath.

VALAN URSUS
 I am most displeased indeed by
 what you cost me that day. The
 power I could have gained is
 immeasurable. Now that
 opportunity is lost forever. I
 cannot use that trick again.

He strokes Wren's hair.

VALAN URSUS
 You're no use to me any more.
 Well, not in that way, at least.

Ursus rips open Wren's jerkin, revealing her chainmail
 vest beneath.

Wren spits in Ursus's face.

INT. KAGHARACH'S TORTURE CHAMBER - NIGHT

Quinn is strapped to a frame by the Guard, who then leaves
 to stand outside the room.

Kagharach brings out the Spellbook and places it on a
 stand, situated right in front of Quinn.

KAGHARACH
 This book has presented myself
 with quite the challenge. I find
 myself admiring your Master's
 thorough work.

QUINN
 You can't unlock it? You? A great
 Wizard?

KAGHARACH
 I have only had it in my
 possession for three days. I do
 not perform miracles. But you
 will open this book for me.

QUINN
 Me? Do you think I would
 willingly place my Kingdom's
 powers in your hands

KAGHARACH

And do you think I would strap you to my torture device if I thought you'd be willing?

QUINN

And what if I cannot? I don't know how to unlock the book.

KAGHARACH

You expect me to believe that?

QUINN

My Master is no fool. He wouldn't entrust such an important secret to his Apprentice.

KAGHARACH

I know how a young boy's mind works. The thirst for knowledge. The desire to have access to all magic, to use at his own whim. He would find ways to learn those secrets; the truths of the universe. Oh yes, boy, I know how you think. I know that you know all of your Master's words of power - do not even try to deny it.

QUINN

I think... that says a lot more about you than it does me.

Kagharach glowers at Quinn's flippant response. He raises a single finger, tipped with a long nail.

He gently drags it down Quinn's tunic, which tears open, then jabs it into Quinn's chest. Blood wells at the wound, and Quinn gasps.

Kagharach's eyes light up.

KAGHARACH

Do not deny me your knowledge, boy! Tell me those words of unlocking, or you will suffer the pain of a thousand suns!

He splays his hand and thrusts.

Quinn cries in wrenching agony.

INT. VALAN URSUS'S PRIVATE CHAMBERS - NIGHT

Wren has a new bruise on her face.

VALAN URSUS

I never did find out how you managed to escape.

WREN

And you won't find out now.

VALAN URSUS

You fascinate me, still now as you always have. Your skill to get past my walls is rare in anyone, let alone a young girl.

WREN

I just wish I had been strong enough to kill you when I had the chance.

Quinn's screams of agony are heard, causing Wren to cry out in alarm.

WREN

Quinn!

Ursus looks back towards where Quinn's screams are coming from.

VALAN URSUS

Ah. Your little lover is calling for you. Well, don't get your hopes up there, my Lady. When Kagharach has finished, there won't be much left for you to play with.

Ursus climbs onto the bed, takes out his knife, and holds the flat of it against her cheek. He draws the blade down her neck, over her chainmail between her breasts, down her stomach to her navel. A trickle of blood appears during its journey.

VALAN URSUS

I think I shall enjoy interrogating you.

He reaches down and slices the ankle tie, then forcefully spreads Wren's legs.

WREN

I think you should know, it's my first time.

VALAN URSUS
Oh! Well now! Really?

Wren knees Ursus in the nuts, and he falls off the bed.

WREN
No, you disgusting filthy
bastard!
Ursus is enraged when he stands.

VALAN URSUS
Right, bitch. That was your last
chance at getting any pleasure
out of this. I was going to let
you live, but when I'm done here
you'll be nothing but strips of
meat!

INT. KAGHARACH'S TORTURE CHAMBER

Kagharach hands drip with blood.

Quinn has collapsed in the rack, tears covering his face.
Blood is streaming down his chest, arms, and legs.

KAGHARACH
I grow increasingly impatient,
boy. If you do not open this book
for me, you will be dead, your
stupid girl mercenary will be
dead, that damnable flying horse
will be dead. I do not think you
understand how it is in your best
interests to cooperate.

QUINN
F... Flyin'... Fly'n' horse!

KAGHARACH
What?

There is silence as Quinn slowly tries to raise his head.

His eyes can't focus, but he manages to make a fist.

QUINN
Flying. Horse. Quedara! Musana!
Elvana!

KAGHARACH
At last, boy. Words of power!
Unleash their energies! Unlock
this book and I promise you that
you will live to see another day!

Quinn struggles to recite the words. He has to shout them out to be heard.

QUINN

Thesana! Olaga! Berana!

KAGHARACH

Yes! Yes! ... Wait, that's not an unlocking spell. What are you doing?

QUINN

Sarana!!

With the last word of the chant, the glow in Quinn's hands ignites and flies out of his hand and through the window grille behind him.

EXT. URSUS KEEP COURTYARD - NIGHT

The spell reaches Junnehir, whose cries instantly get deafeningly louder, and echo around the courtyard, out and across the mountains, spreading throughout the skies.

INT. KAGHARACH'S TORTURE CHAMBER

His upturned finger still resting against Quinn's chest, Kagharach cringes at the intensity of the volume of Junnehir's cries.

A reflex action causes Kagharach to crush his hand into a fist, which, as he collapses to the floor, slices Quinn down his belly.

Quinn has never felt such pain, and his guttural scream drowns out even Junnehir's.

A flash of Power explodes out of Quinn's body, brilliant coloured beams of light flaring throughout the chamber.

It blasts Kagharach backward across the room, slamming him against the bench, knocking the wind out of him.

Tubes and jars shatter, sending splinters of glass flying.

The rack disintegrates beneath Quinn, and as the light dissipates he collapses on the floor.

The Spellbook topples, to lay at rest next to him.

The Book is open.

INT. VALAN URSUS'S PRIVATE CHAMBERS - NIGHT

Ursus's fires turn green, and blast out in columns of flame. They reach the furniture, tongues of fire flickering along the dry wood.

Valan Ursus stands up, and turns away from Wren on the bed.

VALAN URSUS
What is that hellish noise?

Her wrists still suspended above her, Wren leaps up and unhooks herself.

With an exchange too fast to see, she grabs Ursus's knife from his hand, and thrusts it through his throat from behind, splashing a spray of blood.

Gurgling with surprise, Ursus falls to the ground.

WREN
It's a cry for help.

Fire spreads rapidly, filling the room with smoke.

Wren cleans off the knife as she clambers out of the room.

EXT. URSUS KEEP COURTYARD - NIGHT

The unending noise and excessive volume of Junnehir's cries have caused chaos throughout the Keep.

Men are laying on the ground, writhing in pain, clutching at their ears as blood trickles between their fingers.

Some lie dead from getting within reach of Junnehir's wild stamping hooves.

Wren races to the nearest body, grabbing the key from his belt. She unlocks some of the chains holding Junnehir down, and the Pegasus wrenches herself free from the rest. Her cries stop.

They embrace.

Junnehir looks to the sky, inviting Wren to follow her gaze.

The moonlit clouds obscure and then reveal fifty Pegasus streaming through the air, gliding and diving with purpose.

The Echo Spell fades as the air is now filled with the flap of Pegasus wings.

Thrilled at the sight, and a little crazed, Wren laughs.

INT. KAGHARACH'S TORTURE CHAMBER

Kagharach stumbles to his feet, dazed. His eyes slowly regain focus, landing on Quinn, his blood soaked body shivering, and the open Spellbook.

KAGHARACH

By the Gods, boy. Where did you learn that?

Quinn lifts his head slightly and blinks at Kagharach, confused.

QUINN

It's... Echo Spell.

KAGHARACH

No, not that, you idiot.

He frowns.

KAGHARACH

Hmm. Interesting.

Kagharach limps over to the Spellbook, and kneels down next to it.

With great awe, he strokes the book with a gentle hand, brushing the dust and debris from its pages.

KAGHARACH

At last. The power of Lanloch's Wizards is mine to control.

Quinn whimpers, lifts himself slightly, then slumps.

Kagharach barely notices, his eyes lit with avarice.

So he doesn't notice the sharpened metal spike until it is thrust through his chest.

Quinn pushes hard on the twisted metal piece that had broken off from the torture rack. It penetrates further into Kagharach's innards when Quinn leans his whole weight onto it.

The blood stains the pages of the Spellbook, and then burns away by the magical protection on the paper.

The light goes out of Kagharach's eyes.

Quinn slides back from him, and slumps against the wall.

Wren appears in the doorway.

WREN
Oh Quinn. Quinn!

She runs to him, cradles him in her arms, and kisses his cheek.

EXT. URSUS KEEP COURTYARD - NIGHT

The courtyard is now filled with the chaos of Pegasus fighting off Ursus's men. Smoke billows from the tower windows.

Clutching the Spellbook, Quinn is limping badly, supported by Wren. They make their way to Junnehir.

Wren whispers in Junnehir's ear, who bows her head.

WREN
Quinn, we're going for a ride.
Can you hear me?

QUINN
(nods)
Ride.

WREN
Climb up on Junnehir's back, I'll
be right behind you.

Quinn manages to steady himself enough to be sat forward on Junnehir's back, and Wren climbs up behind.

Junnehir leaps up into the air, and cries out a gathering call.

Twenty of the Pegasus break away from their diving and fighting to follow her.

Ursus Keep is alive with flame.

EXT. LANLOCH SKY - NIGHT

Flying low over the lake, past Weatherford town, and above the trees, they approach Foxes Cross village.

They can see a troop of Knights of the Crimson Guard riding towards them at a fast gallop, led by Sir Lexhurst.

EXT. LANLOCH COUNTRYSIDE - NIGHT

The Knights gape up at them. They stop in a chaotic swirl.

SIR LEXHURST

Ho! Arnald, what is that I spy?

ARNALD

Sir, it looks like... flying horses.

SIR LEXHURST

Hmm. That's what I thought. Do you think they're Pegasus?

ARNALD

I find it hard to imagine that they could be anything else.

SIR LEXHURST

Quite. By the Gods!

Junnehir lands with a graceful glide. Wren dismounts as the other Pegasus land behind her. Quinn, left on her back, is barely conscious, but tenaciously clutches the Spellbook.

Wren approaches Sir Lexhurst.

SIR LEXHURST

Mercenary, who are you that can command these beasts?

WREN

They are not under my command, Sir Knight, they are my friends. I am Cerwen, Princess of Lanloch.

There are gasps and cries from the troops.

ARNALD

What deception is this? Princess Cerwen died many years past. This pretence will fool nobody.

Sir Lexhurst calms him with a hand.

SIR LEXHURST

Arnald. The King himself informed me our mission was to rescue the Apprentice Wizard, Quinn, but also the Princess Cerwen.

ARNALD

No! Can it be true?

Quinn slides down from Junnehir's back, and takes a few dizzy steps.

QUINN

Sir Lexhurst, Sir Arnald. It is me, Quinn. This is the Princess Cerwen. Who else could befriend the Pegasus?

Arnald gapes, while Sir Lexhurst smirks.

SIR LEXHURST

Are you all right, lad? You look like you're on death's door!

QUINN

I think I'll be well, Sir, thank you.

SIR LEXHURST

Where is Sir Hagan? Is he not with you?

QUINN

(shaking his head sadly)
Sir Hagan... was slain by Ursus's men.

SIR LEXHURST

No! Not Hagan!

WREN

Sir Lexhurst, I suggest you ride to Ursus Keep. There is still much to clean up. But if you will indulge me, I have a suggestion.

The Knights look at each other, wary.

EXT. LANLOCH COUNTRYSIDE - NIGHT

The Pegasus relaunch into the sky, now with the troop of Knights mounted on their backs. Whoops of joy mix with wails of fear.

Half go west to Ursus Keep, Wren and Junnehir lead the rest north to Lanloch.

EXT. LANLOCH TOWN BORDERS - DAY

As dawn rises, the fighting is continuing, though noticeably thinned out and tiring. Every time the Knights believe a lull will lead to ceasing the fight, the enemy rise up again with another burst of bloodthirsty energy.

As the brigands are charging across the field, the Knights stand ready once more, but now they are distracted by the approach of winged shapes in the pink sky.

The Pegasus are coming.

They land in the field, facing the enemy. The brigands charge peters out with a weak confused squeak. Slowly they back up, but behind them are more Pegasus still.

Surrounded.

EXT. LANLOCH CITY GATE - DAY

Quinn and Wren fly over the battlefield, and land at the City Gate.

Knights of the Crimson Guard are scattered around, exhausted. The Pegasus are standing to the sides, having drawn crowds of curious onlookers.

At the Gates stand King Reyburn, Queen Meghanne, Prince Edwyd and Princess Lianne. The King and Queen are momentarily dazed by the sight of their daughter, now grown up, almost unrecognisable, but also wounded and dirty, a seasoned warrior.

Wren looks to Quinn, who, though weak, smiles encouragingly at her.

She turns back to her family, and then runs to embrace them.

WREN

Mother! Father!

QUEEN MEGHANNE

Oh, my girl! My sweet girl. She has come back to us.

WREN

I'm so sorry! I'm so so sorry!

KING REYBURN

It's so good to have you returned to us.

They hug and cry.

And then Quinn sees Adenlide, leaning on a stick, wounded but smiling.

ADENLIDE

My boy!

QUINN

Master! You are recovered!

Quinn limps to him and they embrace, but in such pain it becomes an amusing exchange of aches and laughter.

INT. LANLOCH CASTLE GRAND HALL - DAY

The Royal Family are sitting at a table at the head of the Grand Hall. Decorated with Pegasus regalia, the rooms are filled with crowds of people enjoying the celebration.

Wren, now formally dressed, sits with her family. She is showing all the outward signs of being pleased to be in front of her People.

Quinn, at the next table down, tries to catch Wren's eye, but fails. She is constantly in conversation with others.

King Reyburn stands.

KING REYBURN

My People of Lanloch Kingdom. We are here today to celebrate the safe return of someone we all believed lost to us - my daughter, Princess Cerwen.

There is a roar from the crowd.

KING REYBURN

As we all believed, she was captured by Valan Ursus, but managed to escape. Though I wish we had known of her safe haven, we accept that her reasons for maintaining her anonymity were heartfelt.

The crowd murmurs.

KING REYBURN

What Father cannot be charmed by his own wayward daughter? She has me wrapped around her little finger.

A cheer.

KING REYBURN

Valan Ursus, that tyrant, is dead, and by my daughter's own hand.

A gasp.

KING REYBURN

Kagharach, his Sorcerer, also has perished, at the hands of a remarkable young man, the Wizard's Apprentice Quinn.

Quinn stands, shyly nodding in acknowledgement.

As the crowd cheers, he looks to Wren, smiling radiantly back at him. He smiles back, genuinely happy.

KING REYBURN

The return of the Pegasus, symbol of the Royal Line for generations, is something none of us expected in our lifetime. There is one amongst them who has been friend and guardian to my daughter, and we salute her today. The Pegasus, Junnehir!

A whinny, and at the end of the hall stands Junnehir, her wings outspread in salute. The crowd cheers.

KING REYBURN

And we must acknowledge those who are lost to us. A brave Knight, without doubt the best in my regiment, we honour him today also - Gods Rest Him, Sir Hagan.

The crowd salutes in response.

KING REYBURN

And to those Knights and Soldiers who died to defend our town, we salute you. Gods rest your souls.

A solemn salute and murmur of prayer.

KING REYBURN

And now, let the celebration continue. I hunger for a feast!

INT. WIZARD'S CHAMBERS - NIGHT

Adenlide and Quinn are in their chairs in front of the open fireplace, nursing mugs of cider.

ADENLIDE

Dear me. You've had quite an adventure indeed. More than I've had in a lifetime, I'd say.

QUINN

It was more than I could ever have expected.

ADENLIDE

You've matured, boy. You've earned responsibility, beyond anything I could give you. I think you've earned some... freedom, shall we say.

QUINN

Thank you, Master, but...

Quinn looks glumly into his cider.

ADENLIDE

You long for a certain travelling companion, perhaps?

QUINN

It's strange, Master. I see Cerwen every day. From afar, at least. But... I miss Wren.

Adenlide looks at Quinn sadly. Then up at the person standing behind Quinn's chair.

ADENLIDE

You hear that? He says he misses you.

Quinn turns around sharply to see Wren standing there. He staggers to his feet.

QUINN

Wren. I...

He hesitates, shrugs, helpless.

WREN

Quinn. I'm sorry. My life is not my own, any more. I can't just drop everything and go when I want to. I am my Father's Daughter. And... well...

They grasp each others' hands.

WREN

Father has asked me to help him. A mission. I have to go to Port Weston, and I leave in five days.

QUINN

Oh.

WREN

And I was wondering... if you'd like to join me?

Quinn gasps, then laughs. Wren smiles dazzlingly back at him.

And they kiss.

FADE OUT