

THE ONCE AND FUTURE NERD
Book II - MYTH MADE FLESH

Chapter 1
"A Cruel And Sullied World"

by
Christian T. Kelley-Madera

Created and Executive-Produced
by
Zach Glass &
Christian T. Kelley-Madera

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iordic.princes@gmail.com
onceandfuturenerd.com

1 NO AMBIENCE

1

NARRATOR

Hello, dear listener. My it's been a while. I'm sorry that you've been kept waiting. Some of the fault is mine, I'm afraid. I'll freely admit that my desire to, shall we say, "unwind" after the end of our first book led to not a few lost weekends with Yllodyk and her canib root-chewing friends. And then there was that spot of visa trouble. As a personal aside to my American listeners, I must say that compared to most of Northern Europe for instance, your country's immigration policies regarding fay creatures are rather backwards.

BEGIN TO FADE IN SCREAMS AND FIRE FROM THE END OF B1C10.

But I am here now. So I suppose we had best jump right back into--

--FX ABRUPTLY CUTS OUT AND RETURNS TO NO AMBIENCE.

Beg your pardon?

I see. Dear Listeners, it seems our Producers are insisting that I provide you with a "re-cap" of our last book's events. I know, I know. So little respect for audiences these days.

I'll do as I'm told of course, but I must first say this, and then no more: I've been a storyteller since before written language. Back then, all tales told were clumsily crammed in preposterous patterns so mortal minds could better master them.

(beat, then aside)

Still got it.

(back to the task at hand)

Anyway, my point is if those folk could keep a story straight, surely a modern audience - with their much-lauded computer machines - doesn't need their stories regurgitated to them half-digested like they're helpless baby birds.

I mean, by nature's blessing. The central theme I spent *thirteen hours* driving at was the importance of *engaging critically with stories*. Wouldn't this farce of a summary somewhat defeat that purpose? Why do the Producers think I do all this? It's not for their generous health and pension plan, I can assure you of that.

(MORE)

NARRATOR (cont'd)

You know what? I *do* take this personally. I do. I perform with all the skill I possess, which I am not bragging in saying is considerable.

All of the subtlety and nuance and, dare I say, poetry, that goes into telling our tale, they want me to toss out in favor of some highly truncated synopsis? Something which by its very nature must have the subtlety and nuance of a stampede of sexually excited elephants?

You know what? Fine. Producers want an elephant orgy, here it goes.

Deep breath.

Our tale begins in earnest when three humans called Billy, Jen, and Nelson, from a realm called Northeast Pennsylvania, find themselves in Iorden after enduring a magical event they cannot yet begin to understand.

PLAY SHORT SNIPPETS FROM LIBRARY SCENE IN CHAPTER 1.

After initially being met with suspicion, the Pennsylvanians' resemblance to a nearly forgotten prophecy leads the war hero Brennen and the King's Elvish advisor Yllowyyn to conscript them into a quest. The true purpose of this quest, though it is hidden from all but Brennen, is to find the King's sole surviving descendant: an illegitimate child living in the slums of the port city of Armstrungard. The party acquires this person, one Aeron Margaret Regan, along with an academic priest in training called Nia, and hopes to bring Regan back to Castle Guernatal to be legitimized by His Majesty King Gunther. Despite Regan's reservations about the whole thing.

NOTE: GREY ITALICS denote replayed clips from previous episodes.

REGAN

I'm a fucking princess?...Go fuck yourself, splinter-pole. Oh wait, that wasn't very ladylike. Excuse me. Hark! Verily I hereby decree that you all shall fuck yourselves. How's that?

NARRATOR

This never happens, however. Instead, a minor noble named Ardel Redmoor makes a treasonous play for the throne, resulting in the death of King Gunther.

REPLAY CROSSBOW HITTING GUNTHER AND GUNTHER COUGHING
FROM B1C4.

BRENNEN

Be quiet and help me move him.

REGAN

Brennen, you know damn well--

BRENNEN

--Shut up.

REGAN

He's dead, and we will be too if we don't leave right now.

NARRATOR

This of course leaves Regan with a very legitimate claim to the High Throne of the Human Realms of Iorden. It's also worth noting here that the traitor Ardel has a twin sister, Arlene, who is in mutual but unexpressed love with her handmaiden Gwen and that the two eventually flee Castle Guernatal to seek a life together on the frontier.

Meanwhile Jen, to the surprise of her comrades, finds herself both willing and able to kill. Bad men, I assure you, but still.

JEN

Powerful. I felt powerful...I didn't want to think about it because I knew once I thought about it...Oh my God. I killed somebody.

NARRATOR

Thus beset by the forces of Ardel Redmoor on one side and the constables of Armstrungard on the other, our Party of seven seeks refuge with Yllowyyn's parents in the White Forest, then the seat of Elven power in Iorden. Brennen petitions the Elves and their mighty Knights of the Wood - Th'ar lo-Hyyl in the speech of Elves- to help him dethrone the usurper Ardel. But he is frustrated again when Regan refuses to publicly stake her far more legitimate claim to the throne.

So Brennen, Regan, Nia, and Yllowyyn leave the three Pennsylvanians behind as they seek to earn favor with the Knights of the Wood by means of a quest. This quest leads to both the uncovering of an ancient and undeciphered source of knowledge, and a confrontation with a former suitor of Nia's.

REPLAY BATTLE SOUNDS FROM CH. 8.

"Former" in the sense that he had ceased to be alive, not in the sense that he had ceased pursuing Nia. Indeed death had done nothing to cure this undead horror's insufferable personality.

MAG UIDHIR

So you've resolved not to learn anything from this then?

RENAULT

Oh, eat a dick, Mag Uidhir.

NARRATOR

With their comrades thus occupied elsewhere, the three young Pennsylvanians are abducted by the Templars of Discord - a militant cult of the chaos god Garedien - and are forced to endure visions of their greatest fears, intended to break their psyches. But all three rise to the challenge, much to their own surprise.

NELSON

Stories matter. You wanna understand people, understand their stories. You wanna change people, change their stories. People are the stories they tell. Power is who gets to tell the stories.

BILLY

I'm done! I'm done not being a human. I wanna feel feelings. I'm tired of hurting everyone else 'cause I'm scared. Yaah!

JEN

It's not even really a choice is it?

DADDY

You can try pretending you're someone someone you're not.

JEN

But not forever. Do I have some time to think about it?

DADDY

There's whatever little world you grow up in, and then there's the darkness all around.

JEN

It's scary.

DADDY

That's how you know you need to go there.

NARRATOR

No sooner do they wake, however, than they are thrust into battle. For while the Iordic nobility had been feuding for power, an army of the folk from west of the Black Mountains - then known as "Orcs" - had been invading the East to an extent not seen in millennia. This invasion was led by a half-Orc General called Traft, who had been trained in warfare by the Elves some years prior as a sort of experiment, which now *seems* to have backfired.

REPLAY SOME OF CH. 10 COLD OPEN.

The fortress at Freehold, with its Civic Guard garrison commanded by General Bryce Riverfell, is the last major stronghold between Traft's Orcish armies and the entire eastern realms of Iorden. It also happens to be where our three young heroes have been taken to recover following their encounter with the Templars.

REPLAY SOME BATTLE FROM CH. 10

The Freehold garrison fights bravely, aided in no small part by the three Pennsylvanians. Jen especially is a force to be reckoned with, using magical abilities she is just beginning to discover within herself.

REPLAY OR FIND SOME GOOD JEN LIGHTNING SPELL SOUNDS.

But the numbers are stacked badly against them. And Traft's army, aided by the Templars of Discord, have some formidable abilities of their own.

REPLAY THE WALLS OF FREEHOLD COLLAPSING.

Just as the keep seems likely to fall, and our young heroes seem likely to be slaughtered, Brennen and the others enter the fray with several hundred Knights of the Wood riding beside them and turn the tide. His armies routed, the war chief Traft flees in the chaos. And thus is our Party reunited to share in a moment of triumph.

REPLAY KNIGHTS OF THE WOOD RIDING IN.

Their happiness seems doomed to be short-lived however. After the battle, Regan secretly followed the Knights of the Wood. When last we left her, she had just witnessed the horrific slaughter of hundreds of Orcish women and children at the hands of the very Elf-Knights who had so recently seemed the heroes.

(MORE)

NARRATOR (cont'd)

...And that should just about catch us up. I may interject from time with the odd detail I need you to recall but that's the core of the thing.

Honestly though, it was much better in the initial telling. Metaphors about rabbits and all that. It was beautiful. Worth your revisiting, I promise.

The narrator **SIGHS**.

Truthfully I suppose that wasn't so bad. I'm sorry you had to hear me get so cross. It's just...well if stories really do so profoundly shape the way we see the world then it follows that the storyteller has an enormous responsibility. Sometimes it can be very overwhelming, you know? But if I promise to do my best in the telling, you must promise not to become complacent in your listening. And in that we'll approach truth. All right? All right.

FADE IN:

2 EXT. FROSTY PINE BARRENS - MORNING

2

WE RETURN TO THE SOUNDS OF THE FOREST FROM THE END OF BOOK 1 AS THE SCREAMS ARE DYING DOWN.

NARRATOR

We must resume our tale, I think, with Regan, who as I said has just uncovered a grisly secret.

WE REPLAY THE DEATH OF THE INFANT, AND LET IT SIT IN THE DEAD AIR FOR A BEAT.

NARRATOR

Even to someone such as Regan, the brutality which just transpired was shocking. And she couldn't help but express as much, with all of her typical eloquence.

REGAN

(whispers)
Mother fucker.

RY'Y

Lieutenant. Bring the oil.

NARRATOR

General Ry'y lo-Th'yyt, the Lord Commander of the Knights of the Wood, spoke in the Elven tongue of course, which I'm translating for you. Regan did not understand the Elf's words...

WE HEAR LIQUID BEING SLOSHED ONTO THE GROUND.

NARRATOR

...But she certainly knew what building a bonfire looked like. She began searching for some way of stealthy escape from her precarious perch in the tree. Nothing presented itself.

RY'Y

Styyma!

NARRATOR

I'm hoping you've picked that word up by now. It means something like "halt."

RY'Y SNIFFS THE AIR SUSPICIOUSLY.

NARRATOR

Regan held perfectly still as Ry'y took in her surroundings, with the great vigilance that her mighty Elvish senses allowed. Clearly the Elf detected something amiss.

RY'Y WALKS FROM DISTANT CENTER TO HARD LEFT.

NARRATOR

Ry'y walked to a tree at the edge of the clearing, which mercifully was not hiding Regan just then, but on which Regan had accidentally left behind some of the mud which she was using to mask her scent from Elvish noses. The irony was not lost on our besieged thief queen.

RY'Y SNIFFS AS SHE WALKS FROM HARD LEFT TOWARDS CENTER. THE PACE BORDERS ON AGONIZING.

NARRATOR

With pounding heart but steady hands, Regan inched her fingers towards the repeating crossbows she wore on her belt. A gift from Ry'y lo-Th'yyt, you recall.

RY'Y ARRIVES AT CENTER AND HER FOOTSTEPS STOP. SHE SNIFFS AGAIN. THE TENSION HOLDS FOR A BEAT, THEN--

ELF-KNIGHT

(off mid-right)

--Th'ayyd! I've found tracks. Some have escaped.

RY'Y

Where?

ELF-KNIGHT

Just over this way.

RY'Y WHISTLES FOR HER HORSE, WHICH TROTS OVER TO HER. SHE MOUNTS IT.

RY'Y
You six. With me!

SIX MORE ARMORED ELVES MOUNT HORSES.

RY'Y
The rest of you, burn this all. I needn't restate the need to be thorough.
(beat)
Your houses are depending on you.

RY'Y CLICKS TO HER MOUNT, AND SEVEN ARMORED HORSES GALLOP OFF TO HARD RIGHT.

There's a beat of just the forest sounds, then more LIQUID being SLOSHED on the ground.

NARRATOR
As the Elves resumed building the fire, an old proverb newly remembered made Regan choke back a very grim sort of laugh.

STEEL STRIKES FLINT. THEN AGAIN. AGAIN. THEN THE HOT WHOOSH OF FUEL IGNITING.

NARRATOR
I believe it was something about frying pans and fires.

3 EXT. FIELD OUTSIDE FREEHOLD - JUST BEFORE DAWN

3

THE INSECTS OF THE NIGHT ARE QUIETING DOWN BUT THE MORNING'S BIRDS ARE NOT UP YET.

NARRATOR
You'll recall that Jen was the last of our Party to speak with Regan before she snuck off to follow the Elf-Knights.

What? Yes, this was indeed a few days ago in the timeline of our tale. Very good! You are paying attention. I admittedly introduced a lack of temporal realism towards the end of our last book for sake of giving events their due weight. But I'll get us back on track, don't worry.

Anyway, Jen, having watched Regan stalk off into the night returned to the tent where Billy slept.

4 INT. TENT - CONTINUOUS

4

A TENT FLAP IS PULLED OPEN. A SMALL FIRE DWINDLES DOWN INSIDE.

NARRATOR

There she saw her paramour sleeping, albeit fitfully.

BILLY

(sleep talking)
What the fuck?

SOUND OF JEN LAYING DOWN.

JEN

Billy?

BILLY

(stirring awake)
Uh?

JEN

You up?

BILLY

I was having the weirdest goddamn dream.

JEN

(soothing)
Your dad again?

BILLY

No, Nelson actually. You sleep OK? What time is it?

JEN

Early still, really early.

BILLY

(drifting back off)
Hm.

JEN

Regan just like fucked off into the woods.

BILLY

Yeah, well, you know...sometimes you gotta go.

JEN

She's chasing the Elves I think. I'm trying to decide if I should tell Brennen and Nia.

BILLY

Snitches get stitches dude.

With a **SIGH**, Jen **KISSES** Billy.

JEN

Get some more rest, okay? We could all use some.

JEN RISES.

BILLY

Love you.

Jen lets herself think a beat. In light of everything, good and bad...

JEN

I love you too.

THE TENT FLAP OPENS AGAIN INTO THE STILL AIR.

5 INT. ANOTHER TENT - NEARLY CONTINUOUS

5

A DIFFERENT TENT FLAP OPENS.

NARRATOR

And thus did Jen make her way to the nearby tent where Nelson slept. She placed a very tentative hand on the boy's shoulder.

JEN

Hey Nelson?

NELSON

Ah!

NARRATOR

But Nelson jolted awake as if roused from the sleep of the dead.

JEN

Sorry, I know it's really early. I needed--
(beat)
--Are you okay?

NELSON

(catching his breath)
Huh? Oh, yeah, I'm fine.

JEN

Having a bad dream? I think all of ours are getting pretty messed up.

NELSON

I never remember mine. What's uh...going on?

JEN

I kinda needed your advice actually.

NELSON

You do?

JEN

Regan ran off chasing the Knights of the Wood.

NELSON

The Elves were pretty clear about not doing that.

JEN

Yeah. But seems like a thing Brennen and Nia would definitely wanna be told.

NELSON

And Regan would definitely not want that. You really wanna get on her bad side?

JEN

No. But the Elves are--

--THE TENT FLAP OPENS AGAIN.

NIA

Nelson, are you--Oh. Good morning. I hope I'm not intruding.

JEN

You're fine.

NIA

I think it's time we spoke.

NELSON

About what?

NIA

To begin with, your latest dream.

NARRATOR

Though Nelson could still not remember a moment of his recent dream, the look on Nia's face made clear the gravity of the situation. A situation...

(playful)

...Which I'm afraid we must return to when next we meet!

CROSS-DISSOLVE TO:

6 EXT. STREAM NEAR THE HORSE'S HEAD - MORNING

6

NARRATOR

Sorry, sorry, simply too much else to cover this week.

A BROOK BABBLES, JUST WHERE WE LEFT GWEN AT THE END OF 11003.

NARRATOR

Well I told you I would correct some of my earlier time-jumping. How do you expect me to do it except by jumping around just a little bit more? You'll recall we last left Gwen of Ruefield in the unenviable position of having stumbled upon an infant child and its mortally wounded mother.

THE INFANT SHE FOUND COUGHS AND CRIES.

GWEN

Shh shh shh.

THE CRYING SLOWS JUST A LITTLE.

NARRATOR

To make matters worse, the now deceased mother gave every outward appearance of being an Orc. And Gwen had very little time indeed to think through her circumstances.

FOOTSTEPS DRAW CLOSE

ARLENE

(starts panned but moves towards center)
Gwen? Are you--Oh my gods.

THE INFANT RESUMES CRYING.

NARRATOR

As she was approached by the woman who until recently had been called Arlene Redmoor.

ARLENE

Galadon's green garden, what's happened? Whose child is that?

GWEN

(to the baby)

Shh shh.

(to Arlene)

I...I don't know where to start. Look in the creek.

ARLENE'S FOOTSTEPS APPROACH THE WATER.

GWEN

And we've talked about our names, Anna. I really prefer to be called Gayle.

ARLENE

Yes, of course. How silly of--Ah!!

ARLENE SCURRIES BACK TO GWEN. THE INFANT CRIES HARD AGAIN.

ARLENE

Gods, that's an Orc! What are you standing here for? There are likely to be others!

GWEN

Wait. That's what I thought too. But the grey ain't supposed to wash off, is it?

ARLENE

Wash off?

GWEN

Look where the water's touched her. Don't look like Orc skin to me.

A FEW TENTATIVE FOOTSTEPS ; THE LAST COUPLE SPLASH .

NARRATOR

"Anna" walked to the water once more, and saw with her own eyes just what "Gayle" had told her about the corpse.

ARLENE

Gods did you ever? But then, the dead one's eyes are still red as the evening sun. Just like in the songs. Perhaps the skin is part of some ruse or glamour to steal that child?

GWEN

The child's hers.

ARLENE

What? How do you know?

GWEN

She spent her last breath begging me to save it.

ARLENE

It could talk?

GWEN

Well enough to say that.

ARLENE

My gods, does that mean it's an Orcling you're holding?
Put it down! Be careful.

GWEN

No, this...this can't be what an Orcling looks like.
It's so sweet.

*THE BABY BABBLES AND COOS AS ARLENE WALKS BACK TOWARDS
GWEN.*

ARLENE

Let me see the babe's eyes.

GWEN

They're lighter than its mothers'. Almost brown.

ARLENE

But not quite.

GWEN

Maybe they get darker as it grows?

ARLENE

You are right though. It's hard to believe that this
could grow into some foul savage brute.

MORE BABY NOISES.

ARLENE

Yet whatever happened out here is nothing good. We
should get inside.

GWEN

What about the child?

ARLENE

What do you...Oh, my darling, we can't take it. You
know we can't.

GWEN

We can't leave it out here neither.

ARLENE

(sympathetic, but...)
Gayle, there's been a war. Wars are evil things and
they make many orphans. But that cannot be for us to
fix.

GWEN

It's so helpless.

ARLENE

So it seems right now. What's to say it doesn't, I don't know, transmute overnight and cut our throats as we sleep?

GWEN

Oh, that's...Look at it!

ANOTHER BABY NOISE.

ARLENE

We must be sensible here.

GWEN

I can be sensible, but I can't be heartless.

ARLENE

Heartless? You think I'm heartless?

GWEN

No, that's not what--

ARLENE

--And where should it end, then? This is a cruel and sullied world full of helpless little creatures. Shall we care for them all?

GWEN

Care for--I didn't say that and you know it! We ain't gonna care for them all, just this one right in front of us.

THE BABY BEGINS CRYING AND CONTINUES UNTIL SPECIFIED OTHERWISE.

ARLENE

What place do we have caring for anyone? We only just barely have food and a roof over our heads.

GWEN

Aye, but we have. And it doesn't. You want to just leave it out here to die?

ARLENE

I want us to live in peace for once! Is that too much to ask out of life? Haven't we been through enough? Or is it just our lot to live in turmoil and terror until death finally takes us?

THE CRYING IS REALLY INTRUSIVE NOW.

ARLENE

Which will be very soon indeed if this imp does not pipe down!

GWEN

(to the baby)
Shh. Shh. Shh.

THAT DOES NOTHING.

ARLENE

Why will it not stop?

GWEN

Try singing to it.

ARLENE

What?

GWEN

That's what lullabies is for, ain't they?

ARLENE

This is absurd, and we're in danger.

CRYING CONTINUES.

ARLENE

Oh, very well!

Arlene hums a verse and chorus of
"The Singing Sister."

THIS SOOTHES THE BABY AND STOPS ITS CRYING.

After a moment of peace...

GWEN

My love. Life ain't ever fair. But if we leave this wee thing out here to be eaten by wolves or worse, I'll never sleep again. And I don't think you will neither. Look at it.

THE BABY COOS AGAIN.

ARLENE

I don't...

A beat as Arlene softens.

ARLENE

Yes. Yes, you are right.
(*resigned*)
Gods send all their hosts to help us. What do we tell
Bailey?

GWEN

There's been a war. Wars are evil things and they make
many orphans.

A slow, difficult beat.

GWEN

It's not forever. It's just until someone can take it.

ARLENE

You make it sound as if it's just any old child. "Here,
have this baby, it might turn into an Orc but we're not
certain. Best of luck!"

GWEN

Maybe it won't. And it sure looks like any old child,
innit? You said yourself, its eyes are nearly brown.
Its clothes are ragged but they don't look Orcish, far
as I can tell. Looking at it, you'd never think twice,
unless...

NARRATOR

Both turned to look at the ashen corpse, motionless but
for the swaying of the water.

ARLENE

No one must see that body anywhere near us.

They're quiet for a second, and
then...

THEIR TWO SETS OF FOOTSTEPS APPROACH THE WATER.

ARLENE

Her arm's hooked on this rock.

SOME GENTLE SPLASHING.

NARRATOR

The women watched, uncertainty in their eyes, as the
bloodied body drifted downstream. All-in-all, the
moment was oddly serene.

SMASH CUT TO:

7 FROSTY PINE BARRENS - DAY

7

A HUGE, TERRIFYING FIRE BLAZES.

REGAN

Gods damn ass-licking son of a fucking shit!

NARRATOR

Ah yes, how could I forget? We must return to Regan's decidedly un-serene circumstances.

ARMORED RIDERS TAKE THEIR MOUNTS.

NARRATOR

Though the Knights of the Wood had finally begun to leave, the fires they had set had already grown into a roaring conflagration.

A KNIGHT WHISTLES AND SEVERAL DOZEN OF THEM TROT OFF.

NARRATOR

Acrid smoke hung in the air, sickly and sweet. It was, in fact, one of very few odors in this world with which life in Armstrungard had not acquainted Regan. And though it was not terribly unlike the appetizing aroma of a roasting pig, the memory of screaming mothers and children made the smell unspeakably vile to Regan's nose. She choked back a gag as she looked down the tree.

REGAN GAGS. FIRE CREEPS CLOSER.

NARRATOR

To her dismay, tongues of flame were already lapping at the tree which concealed her. She looked to the ground for any sign of a soft spot, but found none.

REGAN

You fucking dumbass, Maggie. *This* is where your luck dries up?!

NARRATOR

She gave a hasty inspection of the branches around her, hoping one might be both strong and flexible. One potential option presented itself.

WOOD CREAKS PRECARIOUSLY.

NARRATOR

She dropped down and, pumping her arms and legs, she sought to bend the branch low so that she might safely drop to another beneath it.

WOOD GROANS AS REGAN BENDS THE BRANCH.

NARRATOR

Unfortunately...

A BIG BRANCH SNAPS.

NARRATOR

...it gave way too early. Regan tried to grab the branch beneath but was falling too fast.

ANOTHER CRACKING BRANCH

NARRATOR

She managed to get her arms out in front of her to save her skull and chest.

HER BODY HITS WITH A SICKENING CRUNCH.

REGAN

Nnnnnnnggh!

NARRATOR

But she knew the stronger of her wrists was broken as soon as she hit the ground. And then, as she raised herself on the other elbow to more easily stand...

ANOTHER BRANCH CRACKS.

NARRATOR

...a third branch gave way right above her, and pinned her legs.

NARRATOR

I understand of course why, in the moment, she cursed that second branch with all her considerable rage.

REGAN

Oopf! You mother fucking dripping cock wart piece of fuck.

NARRATOR

Mortals are quick to disregard and disrespect nature when they're only looking in front of their own noses. But had the branch not pinned her, she would have very likely been struck and killed by the massive log that fell a moment later.

A BIG TREE CRASHES DOWN.

REGAN

(through pain)
C'mon Maggie. Upper body strength.

NARRATOR

With her healthy arm, Regan reached out for purchase to pull herself forward.

FLESH SIZZLES.

REGAN

Aaaaaaaaaaagh!

NARRATOR

But burnt her hand on what felt like a rock. She tried scooting forward on her elbows, but it was around this time she became aware that she was having quite a hard time indeed catching her breath.

Regan **coughs hard** and **gasps**.

NARRATOR

The air around her was more smoke than anything else.

ALL AMBIENCE GETS REVERB-Y AND DISTANT AS IT BEGINS TO FADE, LIKE WE'RE LOSING CONSCIOUSNESS.

NARRATOR

Her vision blurred, then greyed, then narrowed.

AMBIENCE HAS FADED TO NOTHING BY NOW.

NARRATOR

Then all was black.

END OF PART ONE.