

THE ONCE AND FUTURE NERD
Book II - MYTH MADE FLESH

Chapter 2
"What Used To Be Enough"

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PART ONE:

1 INT. TENT NEAR FREEHOLD - DAY

1

WE OPEN BY REPLAYING A SNIPPET OF 020104 SC. 22

JEN

Ooooookay let's calm down before we get hurt.

REGAN

Yeah someone's gonna get hurt. Answer my question you splinter-pole fuck! Did you know?

YLLLOWYYN

I don't know what it is you've--

JEN

--Okay clearly she's delirious. Just leave for now.

YLLLOWYYN

And leave you alone with her?

JEN

Send Billy.

YLLLOWYYN

I think Sir Brennen would be--

JEN

--Billy, okay? Just trust me.

REGAN

Fuck you! Stay right the fuck here and answer me.

DISSOLVE TO:

2 EXT. FREEHOLD CAMP - DAY

2

YLLLOWYYN IS WALKING THROUGH THE CAMP.

NARRATOR

You'll recall it was thus that Ylllowyyn was unceremoniously dismissed from the quarters of Queen he ostensibly served. To his credit, he did do as Jen asked him.

YLLLOWYYN STOPS WALKING AND OPENS A TENT.

YLLLOWYYN

Billy.

BILLY

You could knock, Weenie.

YELLOWYYN

It's a tent.

BILLY

One of these days you're gonna walk in on me and your mom.

YELLOWYYN

Jen's called for you. Seems urgent.

BILLY

Well what're you shittin around for then?!

BILLY SPRINTS OUT OF THE TENT AND AWAY FROM US.

NELSON

Yo wait up!

NELSON JOGS AFTER BILLY.

ANOTHER TENT OPENS, PANNED. NIA SPEAKS FROM HERE.

NIA

She's up? I must go to her, give me just a moment.

YELLOWYYN

If you wish. She's not forbidden you.

Ylloyyyn **sighs**.

YELLOWYYN RESUMES WALKING.

NARRATOR

Ylloyyyn spent a few minutes wandering the Freehold camp, aimless and frustated. At last though, he did bring himself to the tent where Sir Brennen slept, the old knight having watched over Regan through the night.

AFTER ANOTHER BEAT OF WALKING, YELLOWYYN STOPS AND OPENS ANOTHER TENT.

YELLOWYYN

Sir Brennen?

BRENNEN

(jolting awake)

Aye! Ah, Ylloyyyn. Is anything wrong with Her Majesty?

YELLOWYYN

I...thought you should know she's awoken.

BRENNEN

Ha! Excellent news indeed.

BRENNEN JUMPS OUT OF BED.

BRENNEN

I must go see her at once. How are her spirits?

BRENNEN BEGINS STRAPPING ON A BIT OF ARMOR AND A FEW WEAPONS.

YELLOWYYN

She is certainly spirited.

BRENNEN

Good good good. Let us go.

YELLOWYYN

Well, that is the peculiar thing.

(beat)

She was very agitated when she woke, I was sent away to fetch Billy, which I've done. But...when I politely suggested you might be of more help, frankly Jen insisted otherwise.

BRENNEN

That is odd...

NARRATOR

That was when Brennen saw the ash and soot on the bottom of his own boot, grim souvenirs of the fire in the forest.

BRENNEN

(remembers; tries to cover)

But if those are Her Majesty's wishes we had better heed them.

YELLOWYYN

They weren't, necessarily. It was Jen who gave me those instructions. And though the Queen did not object, we might still be within our rights to--

BRENNEN

--Nia says Jen has already surpassed in her in skills as a healer. Best to not interfere.

YELLOWYYN

Sir Brennen, I have tried to ask politely so now I must be blunt. Until Her Majesty declares herself there *is* no House Guernatal as far as the law is concerned, and therefore no Kalth'yr to House Guernatal. Which is to say I serve you and her at my own pleasure.

BRENNEN

Aye it's greatly appreciated.

YLLLOWYYN

I don't believe it is, and I must now insist that I be somewhat better informed as to Her Majesty's affairs.

BRENNEN

Your request is not unreasonable, Kalth'yr.

BRENNEN TAKES A FEW STEPS.

NARRATOR

Brennen approached Yllowyyyn and placed a strong but friendly hand on the Elf's shoulder.

BRENNEN

I'll voice your request myself, in the presence of everyone, as soon she's through this ordeal. Does that sound fair? That reminds me, Nia said she'd require willow bark to treat Her Majesty's pain. Come, let us go to the forest and gather--

YLLLOWYYN

--I will not!

NARRATOR

Yllowyyyn shrugged off Brennen's hand and backed away.

YLLLOWYYN

I did enough of your chores the other day atop General Riverfell's ramparts. The same day I saw you riding west as though Garedian's ghouls were on your tail. Now if you do not tell me what Her Majesty was doing out west, I shall go and ask her myself.

BRENNEN

Kalth'yr.

A long beat. Brennen might hem and haw here, but no matter what is clearly trying to stall.

BRENNEN

You must understand, before you act rashly--

YLLLOWYYN

(exertion of a kick)
Very WELL.

SAND AND GRAVEL FLIES UP AND YLLOWYYN STARTS SPRINTING AWAY.

Brennen **coughs**.

NARRATOR

Yllowyyn kicked a cloud of dust towards Brennen and took off in the other direction.

BRENNEN

Gods dammit!

BRENNEN RUNS AFTER HIM BUT A BIT SLOWER.

NARRATOR

The old veteran gave chase, but catching up to the famously nimble young Elf was a terribly tall task.

3 EXT. FOOTHILLS - DAY

3

THE SOUNDS OF SHOVELS DIGGING. GRUNTS OF MILD EXERTION.

NARRATOR

Meanwhile, In the foothills south of the ruined keep at Blackhold, Ry'y lo-Th'yyt - Lord Commander of the Elven Knights of the Wood - oversaw the digging of a large pit, filled with dry wood. Her usually stern features broke into a smile as she watched a small group of her out-riders approach. They lead a cart, loaded with the broken, mangled bodies of Orcs who had been lucky enough - I use the term loosely here - to briefly escape captivity and extend their lives by a few short hours.

A CART ROLLS UP.

RY'Y

Ahh, Sergeant Sa'amynn. I see you've had good hunting.

SA'AMYNN

Yes Th'ayyd. And might I say how these new horses earned their keep.

RY'Y

I should hope so, with how much I had to fight the High Council to get them.

SA'AMYYN

Ah, Th'ayyd...Far be it from me to question any of your orders. But might I inquire - purely for my own edification - why we did not march them back across the Black Mountains before the culling? To the unlearned, it would seem that would reduce the risk of escapees being found by the Memyet.

RY'Y

(snippy)

Because, *Sergeant*, I have the experience to know these are certainly not the only loose threads for us to cut after a battle such as we've had. It's a week's ride across the Mountains in perfect weather. Perhaps you'd prefer us to be stranded over there for a fortnight while the Eastern realms spiral out of our control?

SA'AMYYN

(cowed)

I...thank you for your tactical insight, Th'ayyd.

RY'Y

Now get these unloaded and throw them in with the rest.

SA'AMYYN

(with some exertion)

Yes, Th'ayyd.

A BODY HITS THE DUSTY GROUND. THIS KEEPS HAPPENING PERIODICALLY UNTIL THE NEXT SOUND CUE.

SA'AMYYN

Shame that these old Orcs are such poor sport. Hyuh! Our new recruits could use better target practice.

RY'Y

The time for sport has passed, *Sergeant*. We must always mind the hierarchy of objectives. This business was far too sloppy for my liking.

SA'AMYYN

It won't happen again...

(with a big strain)

...Th'ayyd.

ANOTHER BODY HITS GROUND BUT THIS ONE'S WATERLOGGED.

RY'Y

Why's this one all wet?

SA'AMYYN

Found her in the river east of Freehold. Perhaps she was fool enough to think the water would hide her stink.
(*very proud*)
Might have floated all the way to Brimshire if we hadn't ridden so hard.

RY'Y

Well then it seems you should have ridden harder still. Or was I unclear about the importance of discretion?

SA'AMYYN

Th'ayyd, she was already--

RY'Y

--Did I ask you to speak, Sergeant? Gods I ought to have the lot of you flogged, but I'll need your sore asses in a saddle every waking hour to fix this mess. Now please tell me her pup is in the pile with the rest.

SA'AMYYN

Her pup, Th'ayyd?

NARRATOR

Ry'y lo-Th'yyt's already-stern face curled into a snarl.

RY'Y

You left the pup behind?!

SA'AMYYN

She was alone, Th'ayyd.

RY'Y

Are you ignorant or willfully stupid? Orcs wear that garment for one purpose only: nursing their young.

NARRATOR

Ry'y gestured towards a strip of cloth, slung from the dead Orc's shoulder to her waist.

SA'AMYYN

With all due respect, Th'ayyd, we detected no others nearby, and were quite thorough in our search. If she had a child, we would have heard it. They may be savage, but surely not even a savage would run without her babe.

RY'Y

Surely?

NARRATOR

Ry'y walked briskly towards her underling, drawing her shining sabre from the sheath across her back.

A SWORD IS QUICKLY UNSHEATHED.

SA'AMYNN
(surprised)
 Th'ayyd!

NARRATOR
 And then she knelt by the corpse.
(sighing)
 Sweet listener, I should very much prefer to spare you the gruesome particulars of what happened next. But if there is one thing I hope that you have learned from our story thus far, it is that sometimes, the less one wants to know how the sausage gets made...well, the more one needs to learn it.

SOUND OF METAL RIPPING THROUGH CLOTH

NARRATOR
 In one smooth motion, the leader of the Th'ar lo-Hyyl sliced through the cloth that covered the Orcish woman's naked chest, held up a breast in a mailed fist and roughly cut it from the woman's corpse.

A HORRIBLE WET SLICING

NARRATOR
 She tossed the appendage to her lieutenant, who caught it fluidly.

RY'Y
 Now what say you?

SA'AMYNN
 The flesh is waterlogged, Th'ayyd, but...you are correct. Her mammary glands are engorged. I shall go back to the river at once. The child could not have gotten far on its own.

RY'Y
 No, Sergeant, I'm certain your bungling has done enough harm for one day. I'll return to the river and find the little wretch myself. You go south to that cave. Bring me back this shield of so-called legend and perhaps you can keep your rank.

SA'AMYNN
 I'm...to go alone, Th'ayyd?

RY'Y
 Take a recruit with you. If you die I'd have some reconnaissance on the trap that killed you.

SA'AMYYN
 (gulp)
 Th'ayyd, if I may...

RY'Y
 What is it?

SA'AMYYN
 We passed a memyet inn, upriver of this corpse,
 perhaps--

RY'Y
 --Yes, yes. I know the one. A good suggestion, Sa'amyyn,
 though not enough to outweigh your errors today.

SA'AMYYN
 Yes, Th'ayyd.

Beat.

RY'Y
 Were my orders unclear?

NARRATOR
 Sergeant Sa'amyyn saluted his commander, then scurried
 away.

FOOTSTEPS SCURRY AWAY.

NARRATOR
 Ry'y lo-Th'yyt gathered the fabric she had torn from
 the Orc's body. She studied the cloth - adorned with
 clumsily stitched yellow birds, frayed, worn, loved.
 She brought it to her nose and breathed deep.

4 EXT. THE HORSE'S HEAD INN - CONTINUOUS

4

NARRATOR
 Not far away, at least not nearly far enough for my
 liking, Arlene and Madam Bailey worked outside the
 Horse's Head. Arlene, somewhat awkwardly attempted to
 fold sheets, while Bailey, also awkwardly, held the,
 mercifully, sleeping child.

BAILEY
 I tell you, Anna, another night like that and I'll have
 to put you in the stables. I can't have my guests kept
 up all night with this one's caterwaulin'. Course, now
 he sleeps, the little monster!

ARLENE

I'm so sorry, Ms. Bailey. I'm sure Gayle will be back by tomorrow, at the very latest. We'll secure a better place for him.

BAILEY

Galadon's Grapes, girl! You'd think you never did laundry a day in your life! You don't roll it into a ball; you lay it out flat and - argh! Here take the wee one, let me do this.

NARRATOR

Arlene gingerly accepted the swaddled, sleeping bundle from Madam Bailey.

Bailey **grumbles** ad lib.

THE BABY STARTS TO CRY.

ARLENE

(murmuring)
Oh Gayle, please, please hurry.

Arlene **sings** a new lullaby.

ARLENE

(singing)
For she's gathered her skirts above the knee.
And she's gone to the wishing well to see
If the man that she loves waits for her
All alone at the wishing well.

MAGICAL REVERB DRIFTS INTO THE SONG AS THE BABY CALMS.

NARRATOR

And as Arlene sang to child, utterly ignoring the finer points of linen care, she absently fingered the embroidery on its blanket - adorned with clumsily stitched yellow birds, frayed, worn, loved.

5 INT. TENT NEAR FREEHOLD - DAY

5

NARRATOR

Now I needn't remind you that while Yllowyn had been wandering the Freehold camp, Billy and Nelson had arrived at Regan's sickbed and heard her tale of grisly slaughter. Nia had arrived shortly thereafter. The queen was understandably loathe to repeat her story for the third time in an hour, but her hand had quite literally been tipped when Nia discovered a skull-shaped burn-mark on her palm. And so we'll pick up the tale with Nia having just heard of the horrors of that western forest. She sat wide-eyed, as the color left her face.

NIA

Galadon's mercy. Such wanton cruelty.

Regan is still **struggling** to speak
from her damaged throat.

REGAN

Yeah, well, those fuckers don't know *me*. I'm gonna show 'em wanton cruelty. Now someone go get me that pointy-eared piece of shit.

NIA

Yes, we must ask Yllowyyn to tell his parents on the High Council.

REGAN

What? Nia, are you--did you hear what the fuck I just said?

NIA

Surely such barbarism, such butchery, is not condoned by the Elven leadership.

NELSON

Why not?

NIA

Nelson, the Elves are...they are agents of order and blessed among the peoples of this world.

NELSON

What order? The order where hundreds of kids get shot?

NIA

No! That's my point. Ry'y lo-Th'yyt's actions are clearly some monstrous perversion of the High Council's intentions. And if they know about it they can put a stop to it.

REGAN

Or more likely they can put a stop to us, to keep us quiet. Now I'm serious, somebody go get me that splinter-pole fuck. You're squeamish about killing him? Fine. We could use a hostage. But keep him the fuck here.

NIA

Your Grace. You were quick to point out Ry'y lo-Th'yyt's secrecy regarding this sortie. Wouldn't that indicate her not wanting the High Council to know?

REGAN

Or more likely the High Council not wanting any of us sorry sonsabitches to know.

NIA

What need would the High Council have of secrecy? When dealing with external threats to the Human Realms - which is to say Orcs - the Council's will is law.

REGAN

(straining to get up)
Oh fuck it.

SHE CRASHES TO THE FLOOR.

REGAN

(Fresh pain)
Cock wart!

NIA

Where in Galadon's name are you going, Your Grace?

REGAN

Since I'm the only one who seems to care about keeping us alive, I have to go get that two-faced asshole myself.

CUT TO:

6 EXT. FREEHOLD CAMP - SIMULTANEOUS

6

DAYTIME SOUNDS THAT WERE MUFFLED THROUGH THE TENT IN THE LAST SCENE ARE NOW VERY VIVID.

NARRATOR

At that exact moment, Regan would not have needed to look terribly far for Yllowyn.

YLLOWYYN RUNS TOWARDS US.

For after his futile argument with Brennen, he was sprinting towards their tent, and was just now close enough that his Elvish ears could more or less make out the proceedings.

TAIL END OF THE LAST SCENE SHOULD WAFTS TOWARDS US.

REGAN

(muffled through tent; distant but getting closer)
Since I'm the only one who seems to care about keeping us alive, I have to go get that two-faced asshole myself.

YLOWYYN STOPS RUNNING. WE SHOULD NOW GET THE EFFECT OF YLOWYYN'S TELESCOPIC HEARING.

REGAN

(telescoped)

Yllowyyn's been lying to our faces all this time while his buddies murder children.

NELSON

(telescoped)

Yeah, while crying mothers watched.

REGAN

(telescoped)

If it was up to me I'd cut his cock off and feed it to him, but one way or another we gotta keep him here before he rats on us to his friends. Cause if I was them, I'd be thinking about tying up loose ends right about now, starting with the dumbass humans poking around my shit.

NIA

(telescoped)

Fine. So we keep the Kalth'yr here. But I must say he may surprise you with his loyalty.

REGAN

(telescoped)

I doubt that.

NARRATOR

I need not tell you the look of dejection that came over Yllowyyn's face as he heard this all.

FOOTSTEPS RUN UP TO US.

BRENNEN

(out of breath)

Kalth'yr. Let us please talk through this.

REGAN

(telescoped)

Billy, get Brennen. Tell him I'm alive but he needs to shackle Yllowyyn right now.

BILLY

(telescoped)

On it.

TENT OPENS AND LITERALLY TWO FOOTSTEPS

NARRATOR

As Billy stepped out of Regan's tent, he came face-to-face with Yllowyn and Brennen, standing a mere twenty yards away. For a brief, tense moment, Billy and Yllowyn locked eyes.

BILLY

(playing it cool)
Yooooooooo, Weenie. Been out here long?

BRENNEN

What is going--uupf!

A QUICK HIT AND THEN RAPID FOOTSTEPS

NARRATOR

Yllowyn threw an elbow into Brennen's gut and darted away.

BILLY

Shit.

BILLY STARTS RUNNING.

BILLY

(while running)
We're supposed to shackle him!

BRENNEN GRABS BILLY'S ARM AND STOPS HIM SHORT.

BRENNEN

(wind knocked out of him)
Save your breath, lad. You'll not catch him on foot.
Gods help us.

7 INT. TENT - NEARLY CONTINUOUS

7

NARRATOR

In a frantic near-sprint, Brennen all but dragged Billy back into Regan's tent.

BILLY AND BRENNEN BURST INTO THE TENT.

BRENNEN

What has Yllowyn just heard?

REGAN

I'll tell you later, first get him.

BRENNEN

He's gone.

REGAN

He's--well fucking go get him! Now!

BRENNEN

He's a faster runner and rider than any of us. We'll need to out-maneuver rather than out-race him. But I must know what he's heard to do that.

(whispers)

Does he know you were spying on the Th'ar lo-Hyyl?

REGAN

Not unless he's been there a while.

BRENNEN

That is well.

REGAN

But he knows we know about his friends being child-killers and that I intend to make 'em pay for it.

NIA

And he probably did hear Her Majesty threaten to dismember him.

BRENNEN

(a verbal double-take)

Dis--What do you mean, "child-killers"?

REGAN

Short version? What Ry'y lo-Th'yyt didn't want us to see out west was she was marching hundreds of Orc women and children until they couldn't walk and then shooting them all to death.

BRENNEN

Ah. Clearly there's been a grave misunderstanding, which I think I can explain. Would...you like help off of the floor?

REGAN

(struggles immensely to hoist herself into bed)

There's...no...mis...understanding. Fuck me!

(catches her breath)

No misunderstanding. Saw it with my own damn eyes.

BRENNEN

To start, there is no difference in the savagery of male and female Orcs, both are equally vicious.

NELSON

Uh, can I push back on that just a little?

REGAN

Yeah, I'll push back: You're fucking wrong, Brennen. These women were unarmed, and they were trying to protect their children. And I'm short on time and patience for you to second-guess me.

BRENNEN

I would not second-guess Your Grace. Only offer hard-earned wisdom to better inform your decisions. Now, you say "children," but I must wonder--

REGAN

--Chil. Dren.

NARRATOR

To emphasize her point, Regan held up the palm of her burnt hand for Brennen to see. It still bore the unmistakable impression of the infant Orc's skull seared into her flesh. Despite himself, Brennen recoiled slightly.

BRENNEN

What is Galadon's name is that?

NIA

It struck me too. It appears to be the visage of one of their young. A...babe, it seems.

BRENNEN

No, you're mistaken. A smaller breed perhaps, but Orcs don't have wee little babes. They are pulled nearly fully grown from pits of mud.

JEN

Okay that's obviously not true. There's a lot I don't know about this world, but...flies don't spontaneously generate from meat. I really doubt that sentient humanoids just pop out fully grown from mud.

BRENNEN

I know it beggars belief.

REGAN

But my eyes fucking don't! And I know what a grieving mother looks like, Brennen.

BRENNEN

Of course the summary execution of unarmed prisoners of war is troubling.

REGAN

It's a GODS DAMNED SIGHT more than troubling but sure, close enough. We need a plan and fast.

BRENNEN

Aye, this is where your decision to spy complicates matters. That will make very hard to explain how you came by this knowledge, but I'll think of something.

REGAN

Hard to explain to who?

BRENNEN

The Elven High Council of course. A petition should be made for redress.

REGAN

Oh come the fuck on!

NIA

Thank you, Sir Brennen.

BRENNEN

Obviously, Commander Ry'y lo-Th'yyt has to be made to give an account of herself. Provisions for prisoners of war are made very clear in the second Concordat.

REGAN

Is *anybody* fucking listening to me?!

BRENNEN

Your Majesty, they will be the first to condemn and to discipline her for her troops' overreaction in the field.

REGAN

Overreaction?

BRENNEN

Aye, my Queen.

REGAN

This was a well-planned massacre!

BRENNEN

Did Ry'y lo-Th'yyt give an order to kill them all?

REGAN

She didn't say it out loud, but that's not--

BRENNEN

--Then what you witnessed was a tragic failure of discipline. For which the Lord Commander must answer.

Regan is now doing her best to
scream through a wounded throat.

REGAN

You're not hearing me! They were disciplined. They didn't look panicked. They looked like their dicks were hard for anyone to do something so they had an excuse to start shooting.

BRENNEN

I understand that what you witnessed seems callous, Your Grace. But I speak from experience when I say that these things can get out of hand. To be in close quarters with such dangerous creatures as the Orcs are will put the best soldiers in the world on edge.

REGAN

How in the FUCK have I become the moral guidepost of this outfit? Tell me something, Brennen, if you're such an expert in combat. You see a little mewling thing that can't even walk latched onto its mom's tit. Under what circumstances is that thing gonna scare you enough to shoot it? Anything?...Nothing coming to you? Good! Because if you have an answer for that you're an awful soldier and a gods damned coward to boot.

BRENNEN

Your Grace, it is right and good for a Queen to be outraged by needless violence. But that outrage must be properly directed and right now the proper course is to tell the High Council and let them tend to their own affairs. With your leave, I'll go to them and--

REGAN

--Fuck no, do you have a death wish?

BRENNEN

If I go quickly I can lessen the harm of your... misunderstanding with Yllowwyn.

REGAN

Brennen, listen to me. I know right in my guts the second the Elves find out we know what we know, we're gonna have the world's biggest bulls-eyes on our backs. You go there you're just gonna get yourself killed first. So no do you not have my leave.

BRENNEN

What would you have me do then, Your Grace?

REGAN

If you can't stop Yllowwyn getting to the White Forest, then draw me up a battle plan.

BRENNEN

A battle plan?

REGAN

What's my first move, last resort and end game if I wanna survive a war against the Elves?

BRENNEN

Why in Selbirin would we go to war with them?

REGAN

I'd go to war with them 'cause they're fucking monsters and 'cause fuck 'em. But we're gonna be at war whether we like it or not once Yllowwyn rats.

BRENNEN

I can't do that, Your Grace.

REGAN

You can't?

BRENNEN

To start with, it's not a winnable fight.

REGAN

Then make it a survivable fight.

BRENNEN

You survive it by not fighting it!

REGAN

We survive it by not sitting around waiting to die!

BRENNEN

Your Grace...The Elves are the keepers of Order in this world. And the Orcs are agents of chaos. This is the one fight in which I will not back you.

REGAN

I command it.

BRENNEN

Aye, I feared you might. I'll not do it.

REGAN

Nia, my memory's hazy. Would you please remind us all of the vow Brennen of Greyfield took when I knighted him.

BRENNEN

I know what I vowed, Your Grace.

REGAN

Say the words, Nia.

NIA
Perhaps we should all let our hearts and tongues cool before--

REGAN
--Say the fucking words.

NIA
(*gulp*)
Sir Brennen, you swore you would bring honor to your liege in all you do, and obey her every order, may Galadon help you.

BRENNEN
Aye why don't you go on, Nia.

NIA
Your Grace, in exchange you vowed you would never give your Knight a command which would bring disorder or disgrace.

BRENNEN
This command of yours would bring untold disorder. And to the memory of all my fallen kin, and to all the people - armed and unarmed - who I've seen savaged and brutalized by the Orcish hordes, it would bring intolerable disgrace. And so I must refuse.

REGAN
Leave, Brennen. Get out of my tent.

NIA
Please let us not do this. Whatever we are about to face we need each other more than ever.

BRENNEN
It is Her Majesty's right to dismiss me if I--

REGAN
--I ain't dismissing you from shit. At least not yet. I want you to think, Brennen. I'll give you until dawn tomorrow, and I hope you realize how much that means I value your help. But whatever you say to me when you come back in here, you better be gods damned fucking sure you mean it.

BRENNEN
Aye. That I shall.

THE TENT OPENS. BRENNEN'S FOOTSTEPS RECEDE.

NARRATOR
And then Brennen was gone, a dread silence filling the tent in his formidable wake.

END OF PART ONE.