

THE ONCE AND FUTURE NERD
Book II - MYTH MADE FLESH

Chapter 6
"One For The Team"

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PART TWO:

5 EXT. FIELD ON THE PRAIRIE - DAY

5

We hear farm work - specifically, punching holes in cold dirt - over the sounds of prairie.

NARRATOR

Dear listeners, we now rejoin First Snow, the Signal-Sender of Three-Bridges, as she works the fields with a good portion of her town. The astute listener may notice that when we last left the young woman, her town was awaiting a vote on which fields to sow. I've jumped forward in our tale, for while the mechanisms of consensus and self-determination are incredibly important to the function of that society, they do not make for riveting storytelling.

(Beat)

I'm getting the sense you don't believe me. Fine, you're such a storytelling expert - here you go.

FLASHBACK WHOOSH:

We're indoors for a moment.

Papers rustle...

VILLAGER #1

One vote for Proposal A

*
*

VILLAGER #2

Noted. Currently twenty-seven for A, twenty-six for B.

*
*

VILLAGER #3

Confirmed.

*
*

...more papers...

VILLAGER #1

One vote for Proposal B

*
*

VILLAGER #2

Noted. Currently twenty-seven for A, twenty-seven for B.

*
*
*

VILLAGER #3

Confirmed.

*
*

...more papers

NARRATOR

Satisfied?

REVERSE WHOOSH:

We're back working the fields.

NARRATOR

Anyhow, I'm happy to report that the motion proposed by First Snow had won the day. Happy, not because I've any stake in quotidian politics, mind you. But rather because this decision will set off a chain of events which I vastly prefer to its alternatives. Ah, but I'm getting ahead of myself.

But in any case, as a result of this decision, every capable hand in the village was out in the fields on this day. In fact, just as First Snow had proposed, villagers could be found in every field surrounding the town. First Snow was working in one such field when the sound of frantically galloping hoof beats pounded down the road.

Several horses thunder towards us.

TYYMOS

Girl! Neighbor girl! What in the names of Galadon and Garedian are you doing?

FIRST SNOW (ACCENTED)

(in an exaggerated obsequious tone)

Hello Mister Tyymos. We are farming. Do you not recognize it?

NARRATOR

The Elf Tyymos Lo-Jyf reined his horse to a stop in front of First Snow.

The horses come to a stop.

NARRATOR

Behind him, a retinue of humans - three of Eastern descent, and one of the Black Mountain clans - pulled up behind. First Snow caught the eye of this last one, and held it for a few seconds until finally he looked away.

TYYMOS

I ride around this countryside, twenty miles in any direction. Every spare scrap of land has farmers on it. Do you care to explain?

FIRST SNOW (ACCENTED)

Mister Tymmos, I am obeying the law. The law which you described to me. These fields have been empty for more than two years. My village keeps the history of each plot of land. Your people certainly have not worked them. According to your law, a field which has lain fallow is free to claim. We have claimed them.

TYYMOS **SPITS** ON THE GROUND.

TYYMOS

(absolutely seething)

I'm sure you think you're quite clever.

NARRATOR

The Elf's jaw twitched and his fists clenched.

TYYMOS

Reynold!

NARRATOR

One of the men riding with Tyymos unfurled a bullwhip that he wore on his belt. Although most of the farmers could not understand the discussion, this gesture knew no language barrier. The farmers, more than thirty of them, and all bearing hoes and other farming implements, pulled close together into a tight knot.

A silence settled over the field. On either side of the stalemate, nervous eyes flitted and darted, to and fro.

There's a long beat of nothing but the
whistling wind.

After a few moments of scanning the assembled crowd, The Elf and his retinue came to understand their numerical disadvantage. And First Snow was the first to break the silence.

FIRST SNOW (ACCENTED)

(gently presses her advantage)

Mister Tyymos. My neighbors and I must work on our fields. If you have nothing else to say, please return to your own. Based on your difficulty in feeding your people, I'm sure they require attention.

TYYMOS

The White Forest shall hear of your impertinence. If you think they'll permit you to just...twist the law to your own advantage you are in for a rude awakening indeed! Within two weeks, I shall have a fully armed company of Knights at my disposal.

FIRST SNOW (ACCENTED)

Two weeks? Oh yes, the "latest technologies of the White Forest" must have not yet expanded from farming to communications.

We get the slightest whisper of a magic pad.

NARRATOR

Had you been looking at the ground below Tymmos' mount at just that moment, you might have noticed the slightest shift in the air, and that some thin dry grass was beginning to stand on end.

TYYMOS

When your farm tools are facing six score repeating crossbows, we shall see how clever you are, girl.

FIRST SNOW (ACCENTED)

Mind your horse, neighbor. She seems nervous.

We hear a few small static crackles.

NARRATOR

With this, a small current of power snapped up from the ground and into the hind legs of Tyymos Lo-Jyf's horse. It did not hurt the animal, but did startle it magnificently.

The horse bucks and whinnies.

NARRATOR

As the animal reared and whinnied, her Elven rider gracefully adjusted the movement into a wheel, turning the horse back down the road. This maneuver conveniently hid Lo-Jyf's face from all onlookers, preventing them from seeing the hue of embarrassment rising up his cheeks. As Tyymos and his retinue galloped away, the Elf shouted over his shoulder.

TYYMOS

Two weeks, neighbor girl! I advise you to reconsider your behavior!

NARRATOR

First Snow's eyes followed the interlopers down the road. She stood unmoving, continuing to stare long past when the dust cloud disappeared beyond the horizon.

WE HEAR SOME **EXCITED CHATTER** GROW.

*

NARRATOR

Behind her, the farmers were abuzz, those who understood the common tongue relaying the details of

(MORE)

NARRATOR (cont'd)

the confrontation to those who did not. As I understand both languages, I can assure you, the details were exaggerated shamelessly. First Snow's friend Capall Buí, the boy who had accompanied her on that first fateful meeting with the Elf, came to her side.

CAPALL BUÍ

First Snow, your courage in the face of that Elf and his weapon was incredible! Grandfather used to say "Everyone's a warrior until they stare down the sharp side of an axe". Matron knows, I've seen fighters twice your size panic the first time they see a practice weapon! And you chased his whole army away, without a drop of blood!

FIRST SNOW

First, that wasn't an army Capall Buí. And we're lucky it was not. Second, I did what had to be done. Speaking of "what had to be done"...

(magic pad and amplified voice pad)

Friends, thank you for standing with me. We must report this to Grandmother as soon as possible, but so too must we finish the work here. We just lost a lot of sunlight. So please, let us get back to the task at hand.

NARRATOR

Without a word of complaint - albeit plenty of gossip - the farmers returned to their chores.

*

CAPALL BUÍ

(flat admiration, absolutely no flirtation)

You act calmly under pressure, you reach clever and unique solutions to our town's problems, and the people listen to you. Have you ever considered throwing your name in for Representative? You'd certainly do a better job than that mewling Shrub Survives the Storm.

FIRST SNOW

(deflecting)

Don't bother flattering me. I've already told you I have no interest in "inspecting the fallow fields" with you. And there are no fallow fields left anyway.

CAPALL BUÍ

No, that's...I'm serious. You should give it some thought.

ROAN DOG

He's right, sister. You should think about it.

FIRST SNOW

And you should think about lifting that hoe and doing some work for once, second-born. There's lots to do.

NARRATOR

To prove her point, First Snow lifted her own tool and returned to the task at hand. The pensive look on her face proved that she could work and ponder at the same time.

Sounds of farming continue.

6 INT. CASTLE GUERNATAL - ARDEL'S CHAMBERS - NIGHT

6

We hear the sounds of someone hastily throwing things into a bag.

NARRATOR

It was late, and Ardel Redmoor - at long last cognizant of the wishes of his subjects - was hastily gathering his most essential possessions in preparation to flee.

Several pieces of silver tableware clank into the bag.

NARRATOR

Of course, this was a man who had never before needed to distinguish between essential and non-essential possessions. The process was...less than efficient.

ARDEL **MUTTERS** TO HIMSELF ABOUT WHAT TO TAKE, AD LIB.

ANTONIN
(*in the 'Whisperer' voice*)
We never had our duel.

ARDEL
Gahhhhhh!

NARRATOR

Antonin Mooncrest, who - if you've not yet guessed it - was very much alive and had been masquerading as a phantom about the castle, stepped out from a shadowed corner of the room.

Footsteps walk towards us.

ANTONIN

You never answered for your crimes. Your overall turpitude of character has not improved. Needless to say, I have not had satisfaction.

ARDEL

(frantic but trying to sound tough)
I knew it! I knew it was you. They didn't believe me
but I knew.

ANTONIN

Trust in a leader is earned. Too late for that now.

A blade is unsheathed.

ARDEL

I'm unarmed!

ANTONIN

As was I when your assassins came for me. But if you
prefer I can kill you with my bare hands. It will be
much, much slower.

ARDEL

What do you want?

ANTONIN

Justice. For your sister, and for everyone else you've
abused in your unworthy excuse of a life.

Antonin takes a few steps towards Ardel.

ARDEL

Wait! Please!

ANTONIN

This is what it feels like to be vulnerable.

NARRATOR

Antonin placed the edge of his dagger against Ardel's
throat.

ARDEL **GULPS.**

ANTONIN

Some people spend their entire lives at the wrong end
of a blade. Too many of them were put there by you. You
deserve to die.

NARRATOR

Antonin pressed in with his blade, just enough for a
bead of blood to pool against it.

He really milks this moment.

ANTONIN

Do you wish to live?

ARDEL

(faint)
...Y-y-yes?

ANTONIN

What was that?

ARDEL

(starting to cry)
Yes!

ANTONIN

There's a decree on your desk. It confesses your crimes, abdicates your regency, surrenders your lands and titles to your sister, forfeits your protection under the law, and begs Galadon and your subjects for mercy. Put your mark and seal upon it, and I'll spare your life. Even give you until dawn before I leave it for the deputy castellan.

ARDEL

My lands. That's what you were after all along. My sister's missing. Her inheritance will pass to her husband. You *did* help her escape!

*

ANTONIN

I didn't. But I'm glad she's rid of you. I only wish she were here to benefit from her birthright.

ARDEL

I suppose you think yourself a saint for robbing me of my lands.

ANTONIN

I think myself beyond judgment from the likes of you. Now I'm going to begin counting. When I reach ten, either your seal or your blood will be on that decree. One.

ARDEL **SHRIEKS.**

ANTONIN

Two.

As a pen scratches paper, we fade out...

7 EXT. GREY FOX TAVERN - DAY

7

We hear a late morning village crowd going about their business.

We're tracking two sets of footsteps.

YELLOWYYN

You think she'd go back to the Grey Fox?

REGAN

As far as she knows, we're still staying there. I think - I HOPE - she's smart enough not to just walk back in. But I don't know where else to start looking.

NARRATOR

We rejoin Regan and Yllowyyn, as they search for Nia. She was, as you recall, not where her Queen had expected her to be, earlier that morning.

YELLOWYYN

With respect, Your Grace, I think she's more clever than you sometimes give her credit for.

REGAN

Clever's one thing. Staying hidden in this city's another. Can you get up high and check out this square?

YELLOWYYN

I can.

8 NEARBY PUBLIC SQUARE - A FEW MINUTES LATER

8

NARRATOR

Not very far away at all - on the opposite side of the small public square from the Grey Fox tavern - Nia ambled nervously between various merchant stalls, neither staying in constant motion, nor stopping for long at any one.

A beat passes of just street sounds and Nia's footsteps.

Another dead beat.

WE PROBABLY HEAR NIA **SIGH** FROM TIME TO TIME DURING THIS.

Then...

A loud, firecracker-like POP!

...Followed by some gasps of surprise from the crowd...

And then, strangely, some splattering fruit.

NARRATOR

Nia looked across the square to see, oddly, a cascade of fruit, thrown up in a cloud of smoke from a vendor's cart and then dashed against the cobblestones. But before she had time to make sense of this...

A clay pot shatters at our feet, followed by a hiss of rapidly spreading smoke.

NARRATOR

...she was engulfed in a cloud of thick and pungent smoke.

NIA **COUGHS.**

NARRATOR

In light of this, she was not entirely shocked to feel someone grab her arm barely a moment later.

REGAN

Cover your mouth, we gotta move fast.

NIA

(still coughing a bit)
We're being watched.

REGAN

Oh you caught that, huh?

RY'Y

(shouts - very distant but has to be audible)
It's not too late, Yllowyyn!

NARRATOR

Regan was visibly jolted by the distant sound of Ry'y lo-Th'yyt's voice.

9 NEARBY CLOCK TOWER

9

We're above the crowd sounds but dead tight on Ry'y.

(She shouts to be heard.)

RY'Y

It's never too late to return to your true home!

NARRATOR

The Lord Commander was perched in a nearby tower, shouting down over the square and certain that Yllowwyn was hidden somewhere within earshot.

RY'Y

Put the thief dog down for me, and all is forgiven! *

FLY BACK TO:

10 PUBLIC SQUARE

10

REGAN

Gods dammit, what the fuck is she doing here? We gotta fucking move.

REGAN **STRAINS.**

We hear a metal grate slid over stone.

REGAN

Little hop, then some water.
(*impatient*)
Go, go, go!

We hear one set of feet splash into shallow water, followed shortly by a second. The metal grate gets pulled into place.

11 INT. ARMSTRUNGARD SEWERS - CONTINUOUS

11

Two sets of feet slosh quickly through shallow water - jogging.

(Regan keeps her voice low but is pissed. Nia matches her volume. They are both moving quickly and out of breath.)

REGAN

What the fuck, Nia? I turn my back for thirty minutes, and you don't just run off - you manage to get made by Ry'y lo-shittin'-Th'yyt.

NIA

I'll explain when we're back with our friends.

REGAN

Yes you will. *If* we get back. Keep moving.

Another set of footsteps approaches from our flank.

Regan levels a crossbow in that direction.

REGAN'S **BREATH CATCHES** FOR A SPLIT-SECOND.

REGAN

Hold it!

Approaching footsteps stop.

YELLOWYYN

It's me!

REGAN

Just you?

YELLOWYYN

(stung by the implication)
Yes, of course just me!

REGAN

Come out slow.

As footsteps slowly resume approaching.

NIA

(disappointed admonishment)
Your Grace...

REGAN

You heard what Ry'y lo-Th'yyt said.

NIA

She intends to sow discord between us. Do not let her succeed.

The approaching footsteps come to a stop a few feet away from us.

REGAN

We good?

YELLOWYYN

Well, you've a bolt aimed at my heart...

A deeply uncomfortable moment passes by.

Finally Regan lowers and holsters her crossbow.

YELLOWYYN

I'm "good," Your Grace. Are you?

REGAN

We gotta move. I'll bring up the rear.

Three sets of footsteps depart.

12 INT. WHISKEY CHURCH - LATER

12

We hear the jovial sounds of a pub, only this space is more echoey than most pubs. Almost like it's a...church. Get it?

BRENNEN

Er...living a modest and austere life in service to Galadon.

JEN

For you, Brennen, I'm gonna call that a jack.

BILLY

Nice one, babe.

JEN

My turn.

NARRATOR

Brennen and his three youngest traveling partners were in the basement of the ertswile church turned drinking establishment.

We hear a card get drawn.

JEN

Okay, let's do...clearance rack accessories.

NELSON

Are you sure you don't wanna do undead abominations that may *appear beside us at any moment*? You know, because we're hanging out *around a bunch of coffins*? In a world where we know that necromancy for sure exists.

*
*

JEN

(*why'd you have to make it awkward*)
Nelson...we said we weren't gonna talk about that.
(*beat*)
Okay. Clearance rack accessories.

NELSON

Uhhhh Jen? Your hair is moving. Are you charging up some magic?

NARRATOR

Jen placed a hand behind her head and, despite her profound desire not to, felt an undeniable movement of stale air coming from a coffin.

JEN

(not even convincing herself)
Old buildings are usually pretty drafty.

Some creaks and groans come from the coffin.

BILLY

Probably just the...wood settling? That's a thing, right?

Then there are three knocks from the coffin.

NELSON

Gah!

JEN

Ack!

BRENNEN

Stand back!

Everyone jumps up from their seats and some weapons are drawn.

NARRATOR

The lid of the coffin began to jitter and shake, as our heroes looked on in stunned horror.

We hear some wood rumbling.

NARRATOR

Until finally it popped loose.

Some hinges break as a big slab of wood crashes to the floor.

NARRATOR

By now, the other patrons of the pub had begun to notice the spectacle of the open coffin, and of the hooded woman climbing out of it.

We hear a few gasps of shock from the crowd, which then goes silent - stunned as well.

REGAN

Knock knock knock means help me out, dipshits.

NARRATOR

But Regan was quickly aware of the dozens of eyes trained on her.

A beat for her to think.

REGAN

(what are you looking at!?)

What? Me and the bouncer used to fuck and I didn't feel like chit chat.

(to her party)

I gotta check the area. Get ready to split real quick if I say. Yllowyyn! Need your eyes.

She starts walking.

NARRATOR

And if the crowd was shocked by the rude-mouthed vagabond emerging from the coffin, you can only imagine what they thought of the finely-armored Elf who followed after her.

REGAN

(over her shoulder)

And help Nia out of there.

NARRATOR

And thus did a thief, an Elf, and a cleric enter the tavern.

(long pause)

What are you--Oh, yes, I see. That sentence construction is typically the beginning of a joke in your tongue. No joke here, I'm afraid. Perhaps I'll think of something later. No promises. Moving right along.

13 INT. WHISKEY CHURCH - BELL TOWER - CONTINUOUS

13

Footsteps approach us on stairs.

NARRATOR

Regan and Yllowyyn ascended the tower that had held bells, back when the Whiskey Church was a church.

REGAN

We got any friends tagging along?

YLLOWYYN

None to the west...none to the south...none to the-- wait. Dead ahead north, three hundred yards. Can you see them?

REGAN

No.

YELLOWYYN

They're walking this way.

REGAN

How fast - do we need to bail?

He doesn't respond.

REGAN

Yllowyyn.

YELLOWYYN

(relief)

No. They've turned.

REGAN

You sure?

YELLOWYYN

They're going the other way. No one to the east either.

NARRATOR

Regan made no attempt to hide her scanning of the Elf's eyes.

REGAN

(convinced juuuuuuust enough)

All right.

14 INT. WHISKEY CHURCH - PRIVATE ROOM - NEARLY CONTINUOUS

14

NARRATOR

While news that these "friends" were no longer on their tails provided a hair's respite, it did nothing to quell Regan's rage that they were in said predicament in the first place.

Regan storms into the room.

REGAN

What the fuck Nia?! Shit for brains of me to expect a bunch of children to use theirs, but I expected more of you!

NARRATOR

Indeed, Regan stormed in in such a fury that she didn't initially notice the group huddled around Nia.

NIA

(tail end of a cry, switches to Cockney)
They have my mum and dad.

MUDDLED KNEE JERK **RESPONSES FROM THE PARTY:** "HUH?" "WHAT?"
"SHIT" "OH NO."

NIA

(tries to collect herself)
They are holding my parents captive in exchange for you.

NARRATOR

Where she might otherwise have instantaneously rebuffed, Regan - surprised herself by the impact of her comrade's state - stumbled to respond in a way that was both empathetic and expedient.

REGAN

Gah. Nia. FUCK. SHIT.

NARRATOR

This was...unfamiliar territory for her as a leader.

REGAN

Gods dammit.
(takes a breath, but blurts out..)
Why didn't you tell me you had parents?

NIA

Everyone has parents!

JEN

(incredulous)
Seriously?

REGAN

Not where I'm from.
(something clicks)
Wait. Hey. Hey! Look at me. Did you set me up in that square?

NIA

(still collecting herself)
No!

JEN

Oh, Jesus, Regan.

NIA

I wouldn't do that.

JEN

Can we take a time out here?

REGAN

Did you know they were on to you?

NIA
I suspected they might be.

REGAN
And you still tried to meet me. Some people might call that a fucking setup.

JEN
Seriously, before we say things we can't take back.

NIA
I would have warned you if I'd had the chance!

REGAN
We'd be dead right now if we'd waited for your chance. Only reason we got out is 'cause Yllowwyn made the lookouts a second before they made him.

NIA
And what was I supposed to do? Throw myself off a bridge?

REGAN
Look.
(calms herself down)
You did the best you could with the cards you had. I get it. I'm just saying - yours ain't the only life on the line here.

*

NIA
Yes. As I said, my parents are in danger. And I have the beginnings of a plan to get them back.

NELSON
(no hesitation)
We're in.

JEN
Totally.

BILLY
Right on.

NARRATOR
In what I'm told is a Pennsylvanian gesture of camaraderie, our three young friends held an arm out towards each other so that one of each of their hands was held stacked.

Beat.

NARRATOR
And then, after a moment passed, they looked around the table, expecting others to do the same. For their part, Brennen and Yllowwyn shot glances to their Queen, who was frustratingly blank. The Elf and the Man both
(MORE)

NARRATOR (cont'd)

reached out their hands, but Regan - with a wince of regret - grabbed their wrists to stop them.

REGAN

Nia...Gods, I'm sorry. I really fucking am. But we can't do it.

NIA

As I said, I have the beginnings of a plan. If you'll--

REGAN

(exasperated)

--Nia, No offense - I know you're smart and shit - but have you planned many reverse kidnappings before?

NIA

I smuggled three people out from under the noses of a veteran knight and a master thief.

NELSON

Gotcha there.

REGAN

All right, let me explain this to you. If we--

NIA

(with conviction we've never seen before)

--No let me explain this to you. With respect, Your Grace. They are my parents. They raised me, made me who I am. Perhaps the pain of their loss is not something you can conceive of, but--

REGAN

(flares)

--HEY! I know what it's like to lose family! Don't you dare say otherwise.

NIA

(still strong)

I am sorry to hear that, but then surely you understand that to abandon them to torture and death - after my actions put them in danger to begin with - would be unlivable. So I *will* find a way to rescue them. Because I must. There is no choice here.

(Regroups)

Now. Once again, I have the beginnings of a plan but it cannot be carried out alone. If you value me, or any of my contributions to your endeavors so far, you will help me with the rest of it. If not, then I shall depart your company forever, and find a way to do it alone.

BRENNEN

We won't let that happen, Nia.

A pause. It's not clear what Brennen's implying...

REGAN

I hear what you're saying, okay? This is your hill to die on? I can respect that. You wanna call in your favors here? Fair enough, you've earned 'em. But you've gotta look everyone at this table in the eyes and tell them you'll trade their lives for your parents'. Because that is without a doubt the most likely outcome. Are you willing to do that?

NARRATOR

Nia looked around the table at a group of friends - whom trial and trauma and triumph had bonded into a family of its own sort - and took a deep breath. But before she could speak...

JEN

Oh come on, I'm sure we can think of something.

REGAN

No. Don't bail her out by deluding yourselves. That doesn't help anybody.

NELSON

We've made a way this far, together...

*

BILLY

Yeah I mean aren't we even gonna try? Aren't you supposed to be like the greatest thief ever or some shit?

REGAN

Don't forget assassin and watch your tone accordingly.

NIA

Your Grace, can you at least explain to us what exactly makes it more dangerous than anything we've done before?

REGAN

Ry'y lo-Th'yyt's gonna control the when, where, and how of this. And she's gonna have all her best knights with her. Shit's gonna be locked down tight.

NIA

And what if my plan would allow us to choose the time and location.

REGAN

How's that?

NIA

(kinda proud of herself)

Because...in my fear and abject desperation, I revealed to the Lord Commander where the Thief Queen Aeron Regan would be in three day's time.

REGAN

(intrigued)

And where will the Thief Queen Aeron Regan be in three day's time?

NIA

Well, it's the Feast of the Harvest Moon, so naturally, you'll be stealing the grand--

REGAN

(Finishing her sentence, maybe...impressed?)

--The grand purse from the horse race.

NIA

I figured large crowds, fast horses...

REGAN

(nodding along)

And our turf. ...But if I'm Ry'y lo-Th'yyt, I leave your parents somewhere safe and show up to the race in full force.

NIA

That's why I was very insistent about the next part.

QUICK FLASHBACK WHOOSH TO:

15 INT. MONASTERY - EARLIER

15

NIA

(crying, generally putting on a pretty good show)

To save my parents, yes I will give you my comrades. Regan will wear a disguise of course. I shall kiss her on the cheek to show you who she is.

RY'Y

That will be acceptable.

NIA

(swallowing her crocodile tears)

But if I'm to do this, I must ask that I see them first. To know they are safe.

RY'Y

I assure you, you will be reunited with them the moment I have the others.

NIA

Oh, Lord Commander. Let us be honest with each other. Save for my parents, you've absolutely no reason to trust me. But likewise, I've no reason to trust you. If I do not see my parents alive and well at the race, I'll be forced to assume--
(stifles another big sob)
 --assume you've already killed them. And then I will give you *nothing!*

Beat.

RY'Y

(through gritted teeth)
 Very well.

WHOOSH BACK TO:

16 WHISKEY CHURCH

16

NARRATOR

The tugging at the corner of Regan's mouth and eyes was *almost* permitted to turn into grin.

REGAN

(Okay, she's definitely impressed)
 That's not bad, Nia. Really. You upgraded our chances from complete suicide to just bugfuck crazy. Now personally, I've done bugfuck crazy before. For a big enough take. But I can't make that call for anyone--

BILLY

--Let's do this shit.

JEN

Hell yeah.

NELSON

We got you, Nia.

YELLOWYYN

Honor requires it.

BRENNEN

Tell me who needs killing.

Beat.

REGAN

Well that's that, then. Somebody go talk to the lovebirds. This involves them too.

BRENNEN

I'd not put promises in her mouth, but the lady Arlene was once known as a fine rider.

YELLOWYIN

To *that*, I can attest.

REGAN

Good. Let's see what she's up for. And get me something to draw on. We got three days to plan and we're gonna need all of them.

END OF PART TWO.