

**THE ONCE AND FUTURE NERD**  
**Book II - MYTH MADE FLESH**

Chapter 9  
"A Handful of Bodyguards"

**Part One** by Gregory M. Schulz and  
Christian T. Kelley-Madera

**Part Two** by Gregory M. Schulz and  
Christian T. Kelley-Madera

**Part Three** by O. Carciente and  
Christian T. Kelley-Madera

**Part Four** by Gregory M. Schulz and  
Christian T. Kelley-Madera

**Part Five** by Gregory M. Schulz and  
Christian T. Kelley-Madera

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

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iordic.princes@gmail.com  
onceandfuturenerd.com

## PART FOUR:

16 INT. LULU'S ALEHOUSE - LATE NIGHT

16

Same setting as the end of the last episode,  
except now there's probably a fireplace lit.

NARRATOR

We now rejoin Queen Regan's court in the barroom where we left them. They were scheming, you'll recall, on how to remove the town's two bosses, sever the loyalty of their men, and install Regan in their place. And the hour was already quite late.

BILLY

What about a pizza party?

BRENNEN

A...pizza party?

BILLY

Remember when they took us on a field trip to that state park to see the big hole in the ground?

JEN

Oh yeah! And they forgot Joey Cannavale and left him behind at the park until after dark.

BILLY

Yeah and then they threw us a pizza party and told us not to tell our parents. Nobody snitched. So maybe that's the move.

LULU

Coffee? Anyone for coffee?

REGAN

What the fuck is coffee?

JEN

Extremely diuretic is what it is. Maybe you should skip it.

JANEY

*(stunned out of concentration)*  
Oh, gally! How long has it been dark out?

LULU

Coupla hours now.

JANEY

Damn! My rabbits need to eat. Do you...I hate to ask, but do you think one of your men might walk me home? Bill's probably waiting for me.

REGAN

I'll walk you home.

O'AN

You might wanna take your men too. Bill's a horse's ass, but you can get your skull kicked open crossing a horse's ass.

REGAN

Sends the wrong message if a bunch of us go. Besides, I watched Bill try to draw on Vanderberg. If *both* my arms were broken I could still take him.

JANEY

(*considers...*)  
All right then.

17 EXT. STREET IN PACIFIC RIDGE - NIGHT

17

REGAN AND JANEY ARE WALKING ALONG TOGETHER.

JANEY

(*rambling*)  
A dog or a cat can miss a meal here or there and it's no harm done. But a rabbit's more like a horse, they need to graze all the time or they can get really sick. They're also prey, not hunters, which a lot of people don't understand. You try to play with them or pet them like you would with a dog, you'll scare the sweet things half to death.  
(*gets self-conscious*)  
I'm sorry, I don't know why I'm talking so much.

REGAN

I think you're nervous.

JANEY

...Reckon I am.

REGAN

Look, you hardly know me, so there's no harm if I just say this. Bill sounds like a real piece of shit. All offense.

JANEY

Lulu's been trying to get me to leave him for years, but...I don't know. He can be so sweet sometimes too.

REGAN

Anyone can be sweet when they want something from you.

JANEY

*(a little testy)*

And I guess all your sweethearts have all been saints, that right?

NARRATOR

This flicker of an outburst prompted a turned head and cocked eyebrow from Regan.

JANEY

Sorry...Sorry, it just gets tiring sometimes, everyone talking like they know what's good for you.

REGAN

Yeah, well...that we agree about. I'll leave it be. Tell me more about your rabbits.

JANEY

...It gets tiring to cry all the time too. To be scared in your own home.

*(beat)*

But I don't know. My daddy had a temper too. And him and my momma made it work. Besides, you seen the other fellas in this town?

REGAN

You mean you're not gonna strike silver digging in shit?

THAT GETS A **BELLY LAUGH** OUT OF JANEY.

JANEY

Good Gally, you said it.

JANEY CONTINUES TO **GIGGLE** FOR A BIT.

JANEY

You're fun. I'm glad you're here.

REGAN

I've been called a lot of things, but fun is new.

JANEY

Well...goes to show what passes for fun around here I guess.

REGAN

You could leave, you know.

JANEY

Pff. Where would I go?

REGAN

This world's fulla towns that aren't this one.

JANEY

Maybe. But I reckon it's also full of Bills. At least this one, I know.

BILL

*(several yards away)*  
--Janey?

*They stop walking.*

BILL

Janey, honey, I'm sorry.

REGAN

*(sotto voce)*  
You don't have to cry tonight. Or be scared.

JANEY

*(meek)*  
I don't wanna talk to you right now.

BILL

That's all right, I just want you to listen. Now I know I ain't perfect and I know I ain't always treat you how you deserve.

REGAN

*(sotto voce)*  
Stop me if you heard this one before.

BILL

But you know how folks around here is. I think I just get so scared sometimes of someone else mistreating you.

NARRATOR

But Janey could not quite meet Regan's eyes.

BILL

It's about the only thing I am scared of. And I let it spin me all up 'til I can't even think straight. And then I--

JANEY

*(stronger this time)*  
--I just wanna be left alone, Bill.

BILL

Now Janey, listen. I don't work my ass off keeping you safe just for you to be so gods damned stubborn.

REGAN

You got your answer. Now step away from the door.

BILL

Yeah, and who the fuck are you?

REGAN

*(almost jovial)*

Me? I'm nobody. I just gave this nice lady my word I'd see her safe to feed her rabbits. And she said she wants to be left alone. So you're gonna do the gentlemanly thing and step aside.

BILL  
Or what, you're gonna make me?

REGAN  
If I have to.

BILL **LAUGHS UPROARIOUSLY.**

REGAN  
(okay, now she's out for blood)  
I don't know what the fuck you're laughing at.

BILL **SUDDENLY STOPS LAUGHING.**

A high dissonant orchestral note starts building.

NARRATOR  
With a flare for the dramatic that I did not know she possessed, Regan chose this moment to flip open her cloak and reveal the truly staggering number of armaments concealed within.

A cloak flips open. There are two short footsteps as Regan squares up.

REGAN  
'Cause I didn't tell any fucking jokes. See when people laugh, and I don't know what the joke is, I start to get the crazy idea that maybe they think I'm a joke. And where I grew up, if someone thinks you're a joke, then someone's gonna rob and kill you. Which means I treat being laughed at like it's a threat on my life. So now you have ten seconds to tell me that you just... thought of a funny thing that happened last week or something. Like I dunno, maybe you got mule shit on your cock and it wouldn't wash off. Is that what it was? Five seconds now, mule fucker.

BILL  
You fixin' to draw on me with that busted-ass arm?

REGAN  
You got a busted arm too. And mine's getting better. Yours is swollen and you're sweating like a pig. Three. Two.

BILL  
Fffffffuck!

The orchestra cuts out.

NARRATOR  
Bill held up his empty hands.

BILL  
You got lucky this time, caught me while I'm ailing.  
But this shit ain't over.

He starts to walk away.

BILL  
(under his breath)  
Crazy fucking bitch.

JANEY  
(genuine)  
You really should get that arm looked at Bill. You  
don't look well.

NARRATOR  
Only once Bill was out of sight did Regan relax her  
free arm and close her cloak.

JANEY  
Gods, you really are something else. Thank you - again.

REGAN  
Believe me, pleasure was mine on that one.

JANEY  
I'm shaking.

REGAN  
Come on. We'll walk it off.

They start walking again.

JANEY  
Look at you. You're steady as a seamstress' hands. I  
wish I could be like you.

REGAN  
I actually don't recommend it. But sometimes it comes  
in handy.



The footsteps stop.

JANEY

*(shaky, but...a different type)*  
Here she is. My humble abode.

REGAN

I can keep watch while you feed the rabbits.

A moment of decision for Janey.

JANEY

I think...maybe I was hoping you'd come inside.

REGAN

Meaning?...Yeahhhh thought as much. Look, you've VERY fucking cute but I don't think I'm good for you right--

JANEY

--Thought I already told you.

*(walks closer while talking until she's right up on the mic)*

Stop talking like you know what's good for me.

18 INT. JANEY'S BEDROOM - LATER

18

JANEY LETS OUT A **VERY CONTENTED SIGH**.

JANEY

Good Gally in Selbirin, I needed that.

REGAN

Like any good Queen, I live to serve.

JANEY

Oh, right, did you...want me to--

REGAN

--Get me back another time.

*(quietly to herself)*

Once I stop with that damn stew.

JANEY

Guess that's three I owe you.

REGAN

Well I always try to be a magnanimous leader.

*(beat)*

You should feed your pets, and we should get back before my knight starts to panic.

*Sounds of Regan standing and getting dressed.*

JANEY

Right. I should show you something before we do. Tell you something, really.

REGAN  
(*ready for anything*)  
Okay...

JANEY  
See those two big books on the desk over yonder? Take a look inside.

*We hear Regan walk across the room.*

REGAN  
I uh...Reading's never been my strong suit but I think this is a book full of numbers.

JANEY  
Those are the ledgers for the Rosebuds and the Mulberrys.

REGAN  
They're what?

JANEY  
That's how I make a living. Not many people good with sums in a town full of bowslingers it turns out.

REGAN  
Right. And I'm guessing there's numbers in there that'd be very embarrassing to Misters Weston and Vanderberg.

JANEY  
You guess right.

REGAN  
Hm.  
(*Processing*)  
I know why you didn't tell me before, and I don't blame you. Why are you telling me now?

JANEY  
'Cause I decided I can trust you.

REGAN  
Pff. Look, I got no plans to double-cross you. But free advice for this shitheap world - one good lay is no guarantee of anything.

JANEY  
(*that's not what she meant*)  
I decided I can trust you to keep Bill away from me.

REGAN  
Well, yeah...that you can.

JANEY

That's my offer to you then. You keep him away from me and my babies.

REGAN

We're talking rabbit babies, right? Just checking I know what I'm agreeing to.

JANEY

Yes, my beautiful little bun-buns. And I'll tell you everything you need to know from those there books.

REGAN

...I got a counter-offer. And I think it's better for everybody.

19 INT. LULU'S ALEHOUSE - A LITTLE LATER

19

Batwing doors fly open.

REGAN

All right, listen up, new plan!

NARRATOR

...Bellowed Regan, into the barroom of Lulu's inn. And then, upon seeing the faces looking back at her, particularly Nia's raised eyebrow and Jen's eye patch...

REGAN

*(saving face with a dash of sass)*  
Which I submit to my council. For approval.

NARRATOR

And right behind her was Janey of course, carrying a blanketed basket containing four rabbits. She and Lulu nodded an unspoken understanding to each other.

JEN

Tell us.

REGAN

We're putting Janey in charge. Or more like making people realize she's been in charge.

BRENNEN

Er...she has?

REGAN

*(to Janey)*  
May I?

LULU

*(knows what's coming)*

Janey. You sure you're willing to burn Les and Cliff?

JANEY

They've been in charge since I was a little girl. And aren't things just *dandy* on account of it? No, I figure this town could use a change.

O'AN

I'm...lost, I think.

JANEY

I've been keeping the books for both gangs, going on ten years now. I know everything they don't want each other to know.

REGAN

And no matter how you shake it, you two were right. Nobody knows me here. But Janey - everyone seems to know her. Everyone seems to trust her. And nobody else can do what she does for the town.

NARRATOR

Consideration crossed the faces of Regan's co-conspirators.

O'AN

And where would your crew fit into this new order?

REGAN

At first, we're putting up funds. That statue we've got could be a real juicy sign-on bonus for anyone on the fence about the transfer of power. And it'll fill the town's larders while we ride out the winter. We'll take some contracts in the spring, and come summer we collect; Janey gives me leave to take any Rangers who'll come on a damn fool suicide mission across the mountains. We all good with that?

BRENNEN

Aye. A just bargain if ever I've heard one.

NELSON

Good deal.

YELLOWYYN

I'll abide by it.

O'AN

I want a say on the contracts.

A beat - of something like surprise.

JANEY

No offense, Henry, but I'm not really sure that's yours to claim.

O'AN

I think my help's been valuable and I didn't have to give it. Don't have to keep giving it, in fact. I think some stake in the outcome is only fair.

REGAN

I'm open to it, but why that? Why not just some of the money?

O'AN

Because not a few of the contracts that come through this town are to kill people like me. Nelson here said you all aren't fond of Elves and their lap dogs, led me to believe things would be different with you in charge. I helped you because I believed him. So I'd appreciate you not making a liar of him or a fool of me.

REGAN

Did Nelson tell you why we're not fond of Elves?

O'AN

A bit of it.

REGAN

It's kind of a long story. We can fill you in later. But if we valued Elf-gold more than your people's lives I promise we wouldn't be here.

NELSON

(to O'an)

She ain't lying, bro.

(To the rest)

And I don't wanna take any contracts he doesn't like anyway. I trust him to know who's on the level around here.

JANEY

If you all think it's a good idea, then we'll ask Henry before we take any contracts. That sound fair?

NARRATOR

There were nods of agreement all around.

REGAN

So that's settled then. Now we just gotta take what Janey knows and use it against Vanderberg and Weston.

LULU

Right, that's what we were talking about when you came in. Henry had a good idea, didn't you?

O'AN

I figure the whole town hates at least one of them already, and there's a lot of blood been spilt defending one or the other. If you make it seem like they've been working together, that'd be an unforgivable betrayal to both their gangs.

REGAN

Oh, that is good.

LULU

And mine's the only watering hole in the whole town, so if there's gossip, it's gonna come through here.

REGAN

I knew I liked you guys.

FADE OUT.

20 INT. HORSE'S HEAD INN - EVENING

20

*It's a pretty good crowd for a Saturday.*

NARRATOR

I take you now back East, to another tavern. Maeve Bailey's establishment - where we've already spent quite a bit of time - was bustling this evening. But the proprietor's mind was not on business.

*A door opens to the outside, and footsteps approach the bar.*

In her current state, she was quite relieved to see the soldier you know as The Professor darken her doorway.

*(They speak in hushed tones throughout this scene.)*

BAILEY

Thank you for coming.

THE PROFESSOR

I told you you need only call, Maeve. Am I to understand that your suspicious guest is of The Forest?

BAILEY

Aye. She took pains to cover her ears but I caught a glimpse. And here's what struck me even more. She came

(MORE)

BAILEY (cont'd)

in, sat where you're set right now and asked for a private room. Then she took out the biggest sapphire I've ever fecking seen and put it on the bar like it was a few coppers. Asked if it would be enough for a fortnight! Enough for a fortnight! It'd probably pay for fourteen years if she found an inn-keep fool enough to take it. I just pray nobody saw it before I shoved it back in her purse.

THE PROFESSOR

Gauging your reaction, perhaps?

BAILEY

I've a decent nose for guile and I didn't get a whiff. She's either got the mind of a child or she's very good at pretending.

THE PROFESSOR

Or, she's never left The Forest before.

BAILEY

So why leave now and why come here of all places?

THE PROFESSOR

Mm. Is she in a room now?

BAILEY

Aye. End of the hall on the right when you go up the stairs. Here's the key.

*A key clinks onto the bar.*

THE PROFESSOR

I'll ring the service bell if I need you.

21 INT. PRIVATE ROOM IN THE INN - CONTINUOUS

21

*Yllodyk is writing on a small escritoire.*

YLLODYK (V.O.)

I fear this must all sound like the ravings of a lunatic. But if you've ever believed me about anything, believe me about the contents of this letter. For reasons which I hope are obvious, I cannot tell you where I am or how to contact me. But know that I miss you terribly. You must admit it's dreadfully romantic for us to be separated by circumstance such as we are. It reminds me of Lady Greenwich and her Mathias from *Duel of Crones*. My...

*(feels weird even as she says it)*

...my loins ache for you?



She stops writing.

YLLODYK (DIAGETIC, OUT-LOUD)

Euchk. They say that all the time in *Duel of Crones* but does anyone alive actually find it appealing?

She crosses that out and resumes writing.

YLLODYK (V.O.)

You are...in my thoughts?

Writing stops...

YLLODYK (OUT-LOUD)

No, *that's* too chaste. Hmm.

(*thinks for a moment*)

Ah, yes.

...Writing resumes quickly.

YLLODYK (V.O.)

You are in my thoughts, some but not all of which are sexual in nature.

She stops writing and puts her quill down.

A beat...

(*We're diagetic for the rest of the scene, no more VO.*)

YLLODYK

Well...it's factually accurate.

(*one more moment of reflection*)

You know, I'm resolved to choose gratitude they've finished as many *Duel of Crones* books as they have. Writing is difficult!

There's a KNOCK at the door.

YLLODYK

(*blurts out in a panic*)

WHO'S THERE?!

THE PROFESSOR

(*through door*)

I'm a friend of the inn-keepers. Are you decent?

YLLODYK

What do you want? Go away! I requested privacy!

THE PROFESSOR

(*through door*)

I know, but we must speak. I'm coming in.

YLLODYK

I'll scream!

The Professor opens the door and shuts it  
behind him.

THE PROFESSOR

But that wouldn't be very private, now would it? I do  
regret the terribly rude intrusion, but there's nothing  
for it you see.

YLLODYK

Who are you? Can I pay you to go away?

THE PROFESSOR

(a dry chuckle)

I'd have a much more comfortable life if you could. But  
sadly for me, I've learned that I'm quite a loyal  
friend.

YLLODYK

...Friend to whom?

THE PROFESSOR

Well the inn-keeper, for one. A bit of a bind an inn-  
keeper finds herself in, wouldn't you agree? Discretion  
is essential if they're to attract and retain a  
clientele. Yet these total strangers are literally  
sleeping in her home. There comes a point when her need  
for safety must come before her patrons' need for  
privacy. Do you see what I mean?

YLLODYK

No. Well--yes, but not what it has to do with me.

THE PROFESSOR

Here's the crux of it - I need to know whether any  
trouble is liable to come following you.

YLLODYK

(unnerved)

Why would trouble come following me?

THE PROFESSOR

I don't know. But it's hard to imagine you left the  
White Forest to come here because things were going  
well for you.

YLLODYK

(scrambling)

I've always been fond of Memyet music. I wanted to hear  
it in an authentic setting.

THE PROFESSOR

And that's why you've secluded yourself up here demanding privacy, is it? Instead of downstairs in the barroom where music is played?

A long beat. She's busted.

YLLODYK

I...just need to be somewhere that no one will think to look for me for a while, all right? I don't want any trouble. I apologize for the deceit but - how did you say? - there's nothing for it I'm afraid.

THE PROFESSOR

And why is it so important that you not be found?

YLLODYK

If I respectfully refuse to say any more, you'll throw me out in the middle of the night to freeze to death, will you? To say nothing of refusing my money.

THE PROFESSOR

There's a crisp breeze tonight *at worst*. And the kind of money you're carrying is far more trouble than it's worth. Gods, you've really never left the Forest before, have you?

*(more serious)*

And yes. This may shock someone of your background but I would gladly inconvenience you to protect my friend's life. So tell me a story that makes some sense, or else gather your things.

A loonnnng beat...

YLLODYK

...As you wish. My parents are dead. All evidence points to murder. And until I know more, I can't very well hang around the Forest waiting for the murderers to find me too.

THE PROFESSOR

I'm terribly sorry for your loss.

YLLODYK

People with duplicitous motives keep saying that to me.

THE PROFESSOR

As I said, I've no motive beyond protecting my friend. And suffice it to say, there's reason to believe someone in the White Forest might bear you ill will.

YLLODYK

I suppose I can't deny it.

(MORE)

YLLODYK (cont'd)  
(*vulnerable*)  
Are you going to kick me out?

THE PROFESSOR  
Not my decision.

*The Professor rings a service bell installed in the room.*

They wait for an uncomfortable moment.

YLLODYK  
I imagine there's no point in my asking. But why is your friend the inn-keeper's safety in question?

THE PROFESSOR  
She can tell you herself if she chooses.

*The door opens, and then quickly shuts.*

BAILEY  
So. What have we learned?

THE PROFESSOR  
Your guest here believes her parents were murdered.

BAILEY  
(*to herself*)  
Gods.  
(*to Yllodyk - detached but courteous*)  
I am sorry to hear that, dear.

THE PROFESSOR  
She came here to hide from the murderers. Whoever those might be.

BAILEY  
I see. So all's to say, there are some Elves who bear you ill will and might come looking for you.

YLLODYK  
What would you like me to say? I'm doing all I can think to do to steer clear of them.

A beat - Bailey considering her next play.

BAILEY  
You got a fella? Back in the forest?

YLLODYK  
A what?

BAILEY

A beau, a boyfriend, a paramour.

YLLODYK

Oh. ...Yes?

BAILEY

What's the worst he's ever let you down?

YLLODYK

*(knee-jerk)*

He hasn't let me down!

BAILEY

Good. You're as shitty a liar as I'd hoped. So here's a few of the cards I'm holding.

*(beat)*

You see, me and him? We lost someone very dear to us, not too long ago. And we think the White Forest had something to do with him as well. We don't know much more than that, but we're trying to figure it out. So here's the deal I'll make you. First - and this should go without saying, but I find those are the first things you ought to say - if we're all alive long enough for you to get some actual, spendable coin together, I expect to be paid a fair market rate for your room and board.

YLLODYK

*(genuine and confident)*

Of course.

BAILEY

Plus interest. For the back pay *and* the risk I'm taking.

YLLODYK

*(a little less confident)*

That's...only fair.

BAILEY

And don't even think of waving that sapphire around my barroom. You'll need to find some other way.

YLLODYK

*(the least confident yet)*

Right.

BAILEY

Second - and this one I have to insist on receiving immediately - you're going to tell my friend and I everything you know about the inner workings of the

(MORE)

BAILEY (cont'd)

Forest. Until something gets us closer to our friend's killer.

YLLODYK

You shouldn't overestimate my station within the Forest. There's much I don't know. But I'll answer you honestly and as best I can.

BAILEY

Then I think we've reached a deal. Roy?

THE PROFESSOR

Seems reasonable to me. Shall we get right to it?

YLLODYK

Where would you like to start?

BAILEY

Sorry for starting indelicately. But might you know the means of your parents' murder?

YLLODYK

I should say so. They died of poison before my very eyes.

NARRATOR

Maeve and Royne made no effort to conceal the widening of their eyes, or the look that passed between them.

THE PROFESSOR

Poison, you say.

YLLODYK

Yes.

*(figures it out)*

Oh. Your friend as well.

BAILEY

Already getting somewhere. Roy, fetch us a few cups of cider.

22 EXT. STREET OUTSIDE LULU'S ALEHOUSE - EARLY MORNING

22

NARRATOR

And back West, the sun was just cresting the horizon as Weston and Vanderberg approached Lulu's Alehouse. Regan leaned against a post, looking alert and on edge in spite of her bloodshot eyes. Billy sat on a step, leaning on the opposite post, and lightly snored. As the gang leaders drew near, Regan prodded Billy with the toe of her boot.

BILLY

*(shooting awake)*  
I didn't do it!

REGAN

Wake up, kid. It's showtime. Hope you got enough sleep.

BILLY

*(yawning and stretching)*  
Oh yeah. I'll be good.

REGAN

Morning.

NARRATOR

Vanderberg and Weston simply spat on the dirt as a greeting.

REGAN

Okay. One last item to address - you'll both be leaving your crossbows here for this trip.

WESTON

Ha. And why would we do that?

REGAN

I'm sending you with my unarmed squire. I saw how fast one of you can draw on a man, I'd rather Billy here have a chance on the trip back.

VANDERBERG

I don't like it, but she's right. Might make the trip a bit more comfortable if I'm not watching my back all the time.

NARRATOR

Vanderberg began unbuckling his crossbow holster but stopped short when he realized Weston hadn't moved.

REGAN

*(after a beat)*  
You wanna get with the show here? You're burning daylight and you've got a long trip ahead of you.

NARRATOR

At that prompt and with a sigh, Weston began working the buckle on his holster.

REGAN

Good. Now Billy here is your guide-

NARRATOR

As Vanderberg's holster came fully free and hung loose at his side, Weston drew on him in a flash. As he leveled on his rival, an arrow hit his crossbow, throwing the weapon from his grip and its shot well wide.

WESTON

Gah!

NARRATOR

Realizing what just happened, Vanderberg reached for the crossbow sitting in his now limp holster, but the leather was cut by another arrow, causing the crossbow and holster to fall on the ground. As Vanderberg reached down for the weapon, Regan placed her foot on the crossbow, as Billy retrieved Weston's empty crossbow from the street.

REGAN

Well that could've gone better for the two of you. I know you're fast, but I doubt either of you could outdraw an Elf.

NARRATOR

Regan nodded toward a window on the second floor of Lulu's, where all but the hands and bow of Yllowyyn were obscured by the reflection of the rising sun. Billy deposited Weston's crossbow in Regan's hand.

REGAN

Anyways, now that you've got that out of your system, you ready to start the trip? Billy'll be your guide, I'd prefer you don't kill him in the process. Do what you will to each other for all I care.

NARRATOR

Vanderberg and Weston sneered at each other until Billy awkwardly walked between the two of them.

BILLY

Hey dudes. We're heading that way, and if it's alright with you, I think I'd prefer if you two walked in front of me.

NARRATOR

The two gang bosses stood awkwardly, neither wanting to make the first move after the attempts both had made just moments before.



BILLY

Oh my god, we get it! You guys hate each other! You're definitely gonna try some shit on the trip! We all know how this goes, no one is impressed or surprised so let's goooooooooooooowah!

NARRATOR

Finally, at Billy's outburst, Vanderberg and Weston seemed to relax a little bit, at least enough to start walking in the way Billy indicated.

REGAN

Get back quick as you can once you've made the pick up!

NARRATOR

Billy as a reply turned back to Regan with a wink and what I believe are referred to as "finger guns".... before nearly tripping over his own feet.

REGAN

*(under her breath)*  
This is who I'm supposed to lean on.

NARRATOR

Just then, Jen and Nia emerged from the ale house, each with a pack on their back.

JEN

That seemed to go alright, yeah?

NIA

While I don't think it was necessarily the ideal departure, all three of them are still alive...for now.

JEN

Is he gonna be safe?

REGAN

Look. You know I'm not Iorden's biggest Billy fan. But I wouldn't have given him this job if he wasn't very well suited to it. You two work out a signal like I said?

JEN

Kind of.

NARRATOR

Regan looked at Jen with exasperation.

JEN

What? He said to be on the look out for "when I come running like I'm being chased by a zombie bull or some shit."

REGAN

*(sigh)*

Sure. You two ready?

NIA

We have the necessary provisions and should be able to follow stealthily enough to avoid detection.

REGAN

Good. I'd wait until they get a bit further along to set out. You'll have the advantage of the sun at your back so they probably won't be looking too closely behind them. Yllowyyn will cover your ass and make sure no one else is trying to tail them, but we'll need him back here before too long.

JEN

Got it.

REGAN

All right, now we just gotta do our part.

**END OF PART FOUR.**