

Paladin (untitled)

By

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2016

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BLACK SCREEN

MOURNFUL MUSIC BEGINS TO PLAY

CREDITS ROLL OVER

FADE IN

EXT. THE VALLEY OF EYES - DAY

We are in a rocky valley - somewhere beautiful, cold, and green.

FLASH: A pair of BARE FEET - filthy and blistered - are making labored steps down the path.

RETURN TO BLACK

CARDINAL MASTER

(V/O)

The Pilgrim shall travel alone-

FLASH ON A WOMAN'S FACE: She is unkempt, worn out, and only nineteen - exhaustion makes her look older.

She has the half-pointed ears of a half-elf, an ocean of curly hair, and eyes that glow with determination.

Her name is MYRIN

RETURN TO BLACK

CARDINAL MASTER

(V/O Cont.)

With naught but a cloak of coarse weaving-

BACK TO MYRIN: Her only clothing is a tattered sheet of fabric which is neither comfortable nor warm, but she hangs onto it for dear life.

CARDINAL MASTER

(V/O Cont.)

And a sword broken before her birth.

She's carrying a rusty, worthless half-sword that looks like it's spent 25 years at the bottom of an ocean.

RETURN TO BLACK

CARDINAL MASTER  
(V/O Cont.)  
She may drink only thrice; She will  
not eat, she will not speak-

BACK TO MYRIN

She's crossing a shallow stream - it's cold, but the water  
feels wonderful on her ragged feet.

CARDINAL MASTER  
(V/O Cont.)  
And she will not rest

Myrin pauses and seriously considers taking a drink, but she  
only gets three of those-

- she decides against it.

CREDITS STOP

RETURN TO BLACK

CARDINAL MASTER  
(V/O Cont.)  
The Pilgrim shall wander the Sacred  
Valley-

CUT TO

EXT. THE VALLEY OF EYES - SUNSET

EX. WIDE SHOT: From a distance, we see Myrin cast off her  
cloak.

CARDINAL MASTER  
(V/O Cont.)  
Where the eyes of Fallen Ones  
watch-

She grips the broken sword as though it were a legendary  
relic, and begins practicing her SWORD FORM.

This is an elaborate choreography which Myrin has repeated  
many hundreds of times - the heart of her technique.

CARDINAL MASTER  
(V/O Cont.)  
Until she can wander no more.

Long beat while Myrin shows her prowess.

CARDINAL MASTER  
(V/O)  
When the Pilgrim falters-

Myrin's arm siezes

Her hand falls open

The half sword spins stupidly to the ground.

RETURN TO BLACK

CARDINAL MASTER  
(V/O Cont.)  
the Goddess shall appear.

BACK TO MYRIN

Our Pilgrim's silhouette is superimposed against the setting sun.

She collapses - finally broken by the ordeal.

CARDINAL MASTER  
(V/O)  
If the Pilgrim is worthy, she shall  
be called by name, a Paladin-

BLACK SCREEN FLASHES

FLASH MYRIN: Her eyes strain to keep the faith...

BLACK SCREEN FLASHES

FLASH MYRIN: Eyes drift shut

BLACK SCREEN FLASHES

BACK TO MYRIN

She lies motionless - barely breathing

CARDINAL MASTER  
(V/O Cont.)  
But if the Pilgrim is not worthy,  
she shall surely perish.

Myrin gets further and further away; we're leaving her to die.

FADE TO BLACK

BEAT

WOMAN'S VOICE  
 (distorted whisper)  
 Myrin!

EX. CLOSE: Myrin's eye bursts open - as if someone  
 in *Requiem for a Dream* just saw God.

RETURN TO BLACK

THEME MUSIC SWELLS

SHOW MAIN TITLE

FADE IN

INT. MONASTERY, GREAT SANCTUARY - DAY

This place was built for a congregation of giants;  
 everything is oversized and cut from stone. But the MONKS  
 who dwell here are our size - dwarfed by their own  
 sanctuary.

CREDITS ROLL OVER TO FINISH

MYRIN is at the front, dressed in a weathered shirt of mail,  
 canvas trousers, and the proudest smile she's ever worn.

The CARDINAL MASTER - in ceremonial robes - is an ancient  
 man with a kindly temperament.

CARDINAL MASTER  
 Myrin! We always knew you could do  
 it!

Everyone CHEERS!

Myrin struggles to say something but stumbles over the  
 words.

CARDINAL MASTER  
 (motioning for calm)  
 Take your vow

MYRIN  
 I, Myrin- a farmer's daughter and  
 servant of the Goddess do so make  
 an Oath: From this day I foreswear  
 What Was and become What Is.

For what is unjust in the world is  
 unjust in me, and where famine I am  
 hungry. If there is war I too  
 bleed, and where any soul suffers I  
 cannot rest.

For I am named Paladin from this  
day to the day my bones lay bare.

The crowd is predictably enthusiastic as the Cardinal Master  
presents her with a sword

Myrin triumphantly UNSHEATHS her new weapon - it's the  
broken sword from her vision quest, newly forged whole

FADE TO BLACK

SUPERIMPOSE "ONE YEAR LATER"

FADE IN

INT. A BARN - DAY

WHAM!

A MAN falls into the frame - beaten horribly

THREE NERVOUS THIEVES are catching their breath in a creaky  
barn with a bag of loot and a half-dead hostage.

ANIMALS mill about as though nothing is happening.

FIRST THIEF  
(to second)  
Fucking stop!!

SECOND THIEF  
(bleeding - indicates Man)  
This asshole stuck me!

THIRD THIEF  
Not lethal.

MAN  
\*groaaaaaan\*

THIRD THIEF  
(to first)  
I thought you had a plan!

FIRST THIEF  
We did the plan!

THIRD THIEF  
Which part!?

FIRST THIEF  
Come on - got the jewelry, didn't  
we?

SECOND THIEF

OK, but it's less than half a' what you said, and a fucking column of bounty hunters on our ass! We're gonna get done like dogs for a bag that idn't worth its weight in pigeon shit!

MAN

Please....pleeeeeeeeeeease...

SECOND THIEF

Fuck you!

FIRST THIEF

(to second)

Take my share, OK!? Just...don't kill him over something he got nothing to do with.

THIRD THIEF

Nobody got any share of any thing, fuckbrain! ...hear it?

Silence at first

Then a faint cadence of horse hooves

FIRST THIEF

Holy saint mother, I don't wanna die like this!

THIRD THIEF

Then you better figure out how you do wanna die - before they get here.

Second draws a dagger

First starts to weep

Third grabs a coil of rope from the wall

Second lets out a scream and STABS the hostage over and over...the man (mostly dead already) barely reacts

Third is tying a noose

FIRST THIEF

I shouldna taken nothing didn't belong to me...I knew I shouldna...

First notices a MULE nearby

THIRD THIEF

Pfft, people got enough money to wear it on their neck don't get no sympathy from me.

The sound of galloping hooves grows louder

First throws his arms around the mule for comfort. Second is still stabbing the dead man.

THIRD THIEF

(testing noose)

The fuck you doin' with that animal?

First cries into his new friend as though it were his own mother - Mule does not mind. Third is looking around for something...

A VOICE OF AUTHORITY calls from outside:

CAPTAIN

(O.C.)

Alright, ya shits! We're here in the law's name, so get out and face justice...or we'll come in and show it to ya!

Second freezes for a beat...

- Then begins burying himself in straw, dung, and whatever else is around.

Third fetches a BARREL and rolls it underneath a large rafter

CAPTAIN

(O.C.)

Come on now! Don't make me burn you out!

Third is balancing on the barrel, rigging the noose.

Second is not buried very well...but it's as good as it gets.

FIRST THIEF

(to third - quietly)

Should we go?

THIRD THIEF

(tugs the noose)

I'll hang right here, thanks - don't fancy spending a night

(MORE)



THIRD THIEF (CONT'D)  
 gettin' thumbscrewed 'fore I  
 dangle.

First shrinks into the mule. Third puts the noose around his neck.

CAPTAIN  
 (O.C.)  
 I'm startin' a fire, you  
 mouse-brained fucks!

The voice of a nervous FARMER pipes up

FARMER  
 (O.C.)  
 No, no, no! Can't burn my barn,  
 captain! That's my livelihood!

Third takes a deep breath

CAPTAIN  
 (O.C. to farmer)  
 It's the crown's business, ya  
 dragon shit

Third hops off the barrel

NOOSE TIGHTENS - he's hanging

SCARY BOUNTY HUNTER  
 (O.C.)  
 Not bloody necessary! Just go in!

CAPTAIN  
 Not the point!

WHAM - the doors fly open.

MYRIN is there, sword drawn. Four bounty hunters - call them SCARY, POSH, GINGER, and BABY - are behind her along with the CAPTAIN.

CAPTAIN  
 Lightin' a fire is safer for us.

FARMER  
 My animals are in there!

Myrin is CHARGING toward Third - everyone else (excluding Captain) is right behind her.

CAPTAIN

I'm a royal fuckin' guard! You know  
what that means!?

Second pops out of the hay - dagger ready - LUNGING at Myrin

FARMER

Don't mean you gotta burn up  
innocent livestock!

Myrin dodges the attack easily, and keeps her focus on Third

SLICE - the noose severs

Third is on the ground

Captain and the farmer are still arguing, but we can't make  
out what they're saying.

Myrin turns her attention to First. SECOND is already  
SURROUNDED-

- The bounty hunters hack him down without hesitation.

FIRST THIEF

(to Myrin)

Back, back back! You...you bitch -  
you get back! I have magic! I will  
blind you with it!

Second is a meaty pile by now

MYRIN

(shakes her head)

A sin to steal, a sin to kill...and  
a sin to lie.

Myrin SLASHES into the side of First's face

Another strike opens his belly

The last pierces his heart

She approaches Third

THIRD THIEF

(weak)

Why!? You kill them, but you gonna  
make me suffer!?

MYRIN

The life in your body - it is not  
yours to give or to take away.

THIRD THIEF  
So it's yours is it?

MYRIN  
(shakes her head)  
All things under the sky are  
Hers...I am but a sword.

SLASH!

CUT

FADE IN

EXT. COUNTRY ROAD - DUSK

The BOUNTY HUNTERS ride together after a successful day. Most of them are on HORSES, but MYRIN sits on her trusty donkey - a gentle creature called DAMAR.

THREE SEVERED HEADS are tied to the CAPTAIN's saddle.

CAPTAIN  
Well then, Paladin - you gonna  
celebrate with us?

MYRIN  
No money for that.

CAPTAIN  
Bullshit! We gettin' fifteen crowns  
each for this.

MYRIN  
And my vows permit me to keep one.

GINGER BOUNTY HUNTER  
Pfft - you can give me the other  
fourteen!

MYRIN  
The other fourteen are to the  
monastery and to the poor.

POSH BOUNTY HUNTER  
No wonder you dress like shit.

BABY BOUNTY HUNTER  
Sounds fuckin' terrible. I do this  
work 'cause it pays...wouldn't have  
the heart to show a man his insides  
for less'n ten crowns.

There is a giggle of agreement

MYRIN

I didn't choose the world I live in  
- just the tool by which I change  
it.

CAPTAIN

Mmmm...tool's the sword, is it?

MYRIN

When necessary.

SCARY BOUNTY HUNTER

A troll's arse it's 'necessary'.

CAPTAIN

'course it's necessary! We're the  
king's justice.

MYRIN

Whatever it is, I'm not staying.  
Plenty of world to mend.

CAPTAIN

So you're not riding with us  
tomorrow!?

MYRIN

Captain, you sent for help, and you  
received it, but slaughtering horse  
thieves in the name of your king is  
hardly the vocation of a Paladin.

CAPTAIN

He's your king too! Treaty or no,  
that monastery sits in Therix -  
makes you Therixine citizens, and  
makes these dragon-shit brigands  
your neighbors!

MYRIN

(shrug)

I'm meant to be kind to my  
neighbors...

POSH BOUNTY HUNTER

Kinder to kill some neighbors,  
really....lot of suffering in the  
world.

GINGER BOUNTY HUNTER

Who knows - might even make two  
crowns this time.

Some laughs

SCARY BOUNTY HUNTER

Most monks have to beg for silver  
in the market, and here you're  
sending gold up the hill...bet your  
master'd appreciate if you rode  
with us.

MYRIN

A great threat to justice are  
they?...These 'brigands' of yours

CAPTAIN

(smiles)

Like I said a lot of dragon  
shits...

CUT

FADE IN

EXT. THESPIAN'S CAMP - DAWN

ESTABLISHING SHOT:

In a forest clearing - full bloom of summer - two brightly  
painted wagons marked "PLINTZ FAMILY TROUPE" are sitting by  
a cluster of make-shift tents

TWO DONKEYS graze and mill about; EIGHT sets of GNOMISH FEET  
are sticking out of the tent entrances.

All at once, TEN MASKED FIGURES surround the camp - armed to  
the teeth.

They creep closer to the sleeping actors.

FRITZ pulls his mask down: He is 35 and handsome, but a life  
of crime has left him frayed around the edges. He walks like  
a man who thinks highly of himself.

Fritz puts an animal horn to his lips and takes a deep  
breath

HONNNNNNNNNNNNNNNNNNK - the horn lets out a sour note

The thespians awake with a start - call them MOM, DAD, THE  
TRIPLETS, GRANDPA, ROSIE, and ROCKY.

FRITZ

Well good morning! I'm honored to  
be in the presence of the legendary  
Plintz Family Troupe...

Awkward silence - some of the troupe are shaking. Fritz puts the horn away.

FRITZ

Juggling, singing, drama, and acrobatics - it's really quite a show! Why, the people throw silver at your feet in every county of every kingdom in all the world. ....that's how the schtick goes, yeah? When you hold out your hats?

More silence - the troupe are huddling close together. Fritz draws a serrated sword.

FRITZ

Gnomes - a people of few words; I respect that. We're here on behalf of the crown - tax collectors, right?

The Bandits all mutter back in approval "Oh yeah" - "tax collectors" and the like.

FRITZ

Officers of the Royal Court!

ROSIE

You don't look like no soldier.

MOM

GRANDPA

SHH!

Quiet.

FRITZ

(to Rosie)

Questioning the crown?

ROSIE

No...it's just-

FRITZ

(to Rosie)

Show me to the silver, girl.

Mom takes a step toward one of the wagons, but Fritz waves his sword menacingly

FRITZ

(indicate Rosie)

I said her

DAD  
She doesn't have the key!

FRITZ  
Did I ask for a key?

DAD  
No, but-

FRITZ  
Shh!  
(back to Rosie)  
Coin.

Rosie walks nervously toward one of the wagons

Fritz' sword follows closely behind.

The girl disappears inside momentarily and returns with a large wooden chest.

FRITZ  
Shake it for me.

ROSIE  
Wha?

FRITZ  
Jingle it around.

Rosie does as instructed - we hear metallic objects clanking inside.

Fritz smiles and seems satisfied for a beat-

His look goes icy

Fritz LUNGES - putting a long, seeping cut on Rosie's arm

She cries out and drops the chest with a \*THUNK\* - its contents spill everywhere: Stage weapons and armor.

The thespians all start pleading on Rosie's behalf

Fritz motions for silence - they oblige him

PINNNNNNG - Fritz flips a silver coin

He catches it

FRITZ  
Hear that? Silver sings - and tin rattles.

(to Rosie)  
 ...Test me, I'll cut your fuckin'  
 arm off.

MOM  
 No!

FRITZ  
 Now pay your taxes.

Rosie retreats into the wagon, clutching her wound

ROSIE  
 (O.C.)  
 OW!

THUNK - she's dropped whatever she was carrying.

ROSIE  
 (O.C.)  
 Can't carry it! My arm's bleeding!

FRITZ  
 It can get a lot bloodier if you  
 don't pick up that fucking box and  
 bring it here!

\*SCRAPE, SCRAPE\* - she's dragging it

FRITZ  
 For the love of- MOVE IT! Squalling  
 little shitbag.

Rosie drags the box into view - she's bleeding everywhere,  
 and is generally a wreck of a person, but Fritz seems  
 pleased enough.

FRITZ  
 (to his bandits)  
 Load it up!  
 (to the troupe)  
 We're taking the donkeys too.

CUT

FADE IN



EXT. BANDIT CAMP - NIGHT

This is not a permanent hideout; it's a one-night squat for a BAND OF THIEVES and their small FLEET OF PACK ANIMALS.

A large woman named VIOLET is hacking at the loot box with a battle axe while her compatriots share ale around the campfire.

The atmosphere is tense - no one is speaking.

A surly goblin called RUFUS breaks the silence:

RUFUS  
I told you I could pick it!

VIOLET  
(HACK!)  
Mal already tried - lock's weird or  
shit.

RUFUS  
Ugh, people can hear that hackin'  
for miles!

VIOLET  
(HACK!)  
You got a better plan!?

RUFUS  
I said - let me pick it!

A twitchy young woman responds:

MAL  
I said the mechanism's weird.

RUFUS  
Pfft - to you

MAL  
Hey - I'm good with locks, Rufus.

RUFUS  
You're shit with locks!

FRITZ  
Enough already! You two drink -  
it's a fucking celebration.  
(to Violet)  
Violet, stop that 'til morning,  
huh?

VIOLET  
 (tossing the axe aside)  
 Yeah, yeah - you coulda got the  
 keys, Fritz. The man even said  
 about keys!

FRITZ  
 I didn't think a wagon of mee-maw  
 and pee-paw carnie trash could  
 afford a lock like that

MAL  
 It's a gnomish lock - they're  
 gnomes!

FRITZ  
 Are we prejudicializing now? Drink!

Violet snatches Fritz' cup and takes a big, defiant gulp

They stare for a moment

Violet finds a seat around the fire - Fritz stands up and  
 walks toward the ale keg.

VIOLET  
 A song, maybe?

BIRT - the group musician - is only too happy to oblige. He  
 readies his instrument.

Fritz finds an empty cup, wipes the dirt off, and fills it  
 from the keg

BEGIN BIRT'S SONG

The tension seems to dissipate; the leader rejoins his crew,  
 and our merry bandits seem MUCH merrier.

CUT TO

EXT. FOREST - NIGHT (CONTINUOUS)

BIRT'S SONG PLAYS FAINTLY

The forest is thick around us - a BANDIT CAMP glows faintly  
 ahead.

Our BOUNTY HUNTERS slink into the frame

POV MYRIN (NIGHT VISION): Myrin can see in the dark, but not  
 terribly well

Everything has a 'shadow play' quality as our hero presses forward.

BACK TO SCENE

GINGER sets down a large bag, opens it, and produces a BEAR TRAP - one of those horrible "mouth-on-a-chain" contraptions.

Ginger begins cranking the trap open

SCARY goes to work loading a group of CROSSBOWS one by one.

BABY is CLIMBING a tree

POSH is busily mixing REACTIVE LIQUIDS in little clay pots

CAPTAIN

(to Myrin - whisper)

They're gonna scare 'em a bit - you n' me mop up.

GINGER BOUNTY HUNTER

(to Myrin - whisper)

Be right behind you - won't know what's fuckin' em 'til they're good n' fucked!

Myrin nods

CUT TO BANDIT CAMP

EVERYONE SINGS the last few bars of Birt's Song.

FRITZ

(raising his glass)

To all of you.

General approval

The bandits drink

POV BABY: We're in the trees, aiming a LONGBOW directly at VIOLET

BACK TO SCENE

MAL

(to Fritz)

So you're takin' first watch, yeah?

Some laughter....but she kind of means it

FRITZ

Yeah yeah...If you'll peek at that lock again.

MAL

Told you, fuckin' thing's weird!

VIOLET

We ain't startin' with this.

MAL

I gotta sleep anyhow...somebody gotta be sober if the law crawls up.

POSH BURSTS OUT LAUGHING

A chorus of 'SHHHHHH!'

The bandits FREEZE

A moment of silence

A single ARROW cuts through the quiet, BURROWING into VIOLET'S SHOULDER

VIOLET

(severe agony)

Merciful shiiiiiiiiiiiiiiiiittt!!!

PANIC IN THE RANKS

Posh TOSSES a jar -

- it BURSTS and IGNITES, like a molotov cocktail

FIRE IS SPREADING QUICKLY

ANIMALS START TO SCATTER

Baby is SHOOTING a steady stream of arrows.

Scary's CROSSBOW BOLTS join in the carnage -

- So do more of Posh's concoctions

There is BURNING, BLEEDING, FLEEING, and DYING

SURVIVORS ARE ALL RUNNING (some crawling)

CAPTAIN

Quit it ya lunatics!

Scary, Baby, and Posh cease momentarily

Captain, Ginger, and Myrin CHARGE, and the slaughter continues

Mal, Violet, Birt and Rufus have ESCAPED-

Fritz is RUNNING into the forest - Myrin RIGHT BEHIND

ALL OTHER BANDITS ARE EITHER DYING OR DEAD

CUT TO FOREST

MYRIN CHASES FRITZ

Our brigand gains a little distance -

- He HIDES behind a tree, smooth as a snake

POV MYRIN (night vision): She's looking around, confused

ON MYRIN

Searching for any sign of her foe...but she's a monk, not a huntress.

BACK TO FRITZ

The bandit gives a sly little smile and begins to slip away....then-

SNAP!

Fritz SCREAMS

CLOSE ON FRITZ' LEG: The BEAR TRAP has him all the way up to the knee, and it's literally crushing his bones

FRITZ  
(such pain)  
AHHHHH!!! AHHHHH!!! Mercy! MERCY I  
SAY!! Mercyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyy!!!

He's on the ground

Myrin is there now - her eyes go from the trap to Fritz' eyes and back....

She's frozen for a moment

SNAP! - something in Fritz' leg gives (probably a bone)

FRITZ  
(may or may not be crying)  
Fuck! Ahhhhhhh noooooOoooOooO!!  
Saint mother's tits!...You deformed  
(MORE)

FRITZ (CONT'D)  
 me!! A fuckin' woman! It's in cold  
 blood, I say! Cold  
 bl0o00oo0o00o0o00o0od!!!!!!!

Fritz' HEAD SEPARATES from his body

CUT TO

EXT. BANDIT CAMP - NIGHT

CAPTAIN is trying to PUT OUT one of the burning corpses

CAPTAIN  
 (WHAP!)  
 Ahhh, noooo!! Troll cocks n' gravy!

POSH sniffs the air and glances down at a different corpse.

POSH BOUNTY HUNTER  
 (sniff, sniff)  
 Ugh...you smell rotted already, big  
 fellow.

Posh TAKES OFF the big fellow's HEAD

CAPTAIN  
 (to Posh)  
 What kinda piss-thinkin' idea is  
 it, burnin' up our trophy like  
 that.  
 (indicates corpse)  
 Can't get the reward from this  
 fucker, given his grandma couldn't  
 recognize what's left.

SCARY - trying to PICK the LOCK on Fritz' loot chest

SCARY BOUNTY HUNTER  
 Looks exactly like his poster to me

POSH BOUNTY HUNTER  
 (collecting heads)  
 We're each getting thirty crowns  
 for this pile - why be greedy,  
 captain?

GINGER BOUNTY HUNTER  
 'Cause thirty six is a bigger  
 number.

SCARY BOUNTY HUNTER  
This fuckin' lock!!!

POSH BOUNTY HUNTER  
A gnomish lock is guaranteed...

SCARY BOUNTY HUNTER  
What?

CAPTAIN  
True!

Baby has not been paying attention - he's COLLECTING a VIAL OF BLOOD from one of the victims

GINGER BOUNTY HUNTER  
(to Baby - disgusted)  
Yechhh! Thought only priests and old ladies did that.

BABY BOUNTY HUNTER  
(shrug)  
I like tradition.

POSH BOUNTY HUNTER  
Pretty old 'tradition'

MYRIN returns from the forest - carrying FRITZ' HEAD

GINGER BOUNTY HUNTER  
(notices first)  
Lookie there! Forty crowns.

POSH BOUNTY HUNTER  
(to Captain)  
See?

SCARY BOUNTY HUNTER  
The sanctuary brat has killer's heart after all.  
(back to lock)  
Advice on this, brat?

Myrin DROPS the head

CAPTAIN  
(actually impressed)  
Ehhhh, now! Chief himself. They say Fritzy here's stole a silver coin from every man on earth.

GINGER BOUNTY HUNTER  
 Only 'cause they don't know no  
 other thief's name.

CAPTAIN  
 Great victory for the law, Paladin!  
 You did yer Gods proud.

MYRIN  
 Goddess...only one.

GINGER GIGGLES

CAPTAIN  
 I'm tryin' to give ya  
 congratulations in the King's Name,  
 but you can stick it in a troll's  
 twat if yer in a correctin' sort of  
 disposition.

GINGER LAUGHS

MYRIN  
 I'm staying at a shrine two miles  
 west - bring my pay there.

CAPTAIN  
 Just leaving!?

SCARY BOUNTY HUNTER  
 (thinks the lock is turning)  
 Eh now, don't miss out on all this  
 sh-  
 (nope)  
 ...shit - lots of keepsakes for  
 all.

POSH BOUNTY HUNTER  
 And we're staying in some petty  
 noble's guesthouse - feather beds  
 and wine, wine, wine...won't cost  
 you a dot.

MYRIN  
 (walking away)  
 Thanks, no need

BABY BOUNTY HUNTER  
 (going after her)  
 Wait a sec! I'm goin' there too.

Myrin turns



BABY BOUNTY HUNTER  
 Shrine - goin' there too. Hang up a  
 tick.

CUT

FADE IN

EXT. COUNTRY SHRINE - NIGHT

Built of thick, rotting wood, this tiny sanctuary is practically falling down. Nonetheless, it is both ancient and beloved; holes have been lovingly patched by generations of the faithful.

MYRIN and BABY BOUNTY HUNTER are riding toward it

They reach the shrine, dismount, and head for the front door, leading their animals.

Baby gives a "wait a moment" gesture and digs through his bags

A MASSIVE STATUE stands near the door

It is the stone effigy of a Dwarven man - beautifully armored and grotesquely muscular. His feet and lower legs are caked with DRY BLOOD

Baby has located his vial of blood - he approaches the statue and pulls out the cork.

Baby SPLASHES BLOOD on the idol's feet

BABY BOUNTY HUNTER  
 (looks down reverently)  
 Norsa deík - Donapha. Eit vrecht  
 yült sueng mig y'negéz.  
 (looks up, exhales)  
 ....Okie.

MYRIN  
 (trying not to be offensive)  
 This is common to your people?

BABY BOUNTY HUNTER  
 (has heard it before)  
 Not exactly...Therixine gods are  
 war gods, and Donapha  
 (indicates the statue)  
 gives my family a blessing if I  
 gift him blood from a battle. Least  
 what my grandmommy told me.

(short pause)  
 Not wise to disagree with her...

Myrin is trying to figure out the most polite way to knock  
 She TAPS TIMIDLY on the door

BABY BOUNTY HUNTER  
 (indicating)  
 Bell

It's hanging just above Myrin's head

She SHAKES THE BELL gently....

VERY LOUD "RING-A-DINNNNNNNNNNNNG"

A moment passes

The door opens a crack, and an OLD DWARF with one eye  
 (PWIRK) is peeking out

PWIRK  
 Who's there then?

MYRIN  
 Uh...I'm Myrin...Paladin of Mookah;  
 the big monastery up-

PWIRK  
 (door opens wider)  
 That old place! Eyesore if you ask  
 me. Too fat for that little hill  
 \*COUGH\*.  
 (appraises Myrin)  
 Woman Paladin...funny people up  
 there...always were. Both from the  
 hill then?

BABY BOUNTY HUNTER  
 No sir, here on my own volitionism.  
 (shows empty vial)  
 Payin' homage

Pwirk looks Baby up and down

PWIRK  
 (nods)  
 Young fellow respectin' the ways of  
 his elders! Don't see much-a that  
 nowadays...not with that... "music"

Pwirk swings the DOOR WIDE OPEN and starts to walk inside

PWIRK  
 Alright; get in, get in.

They follow

CUT TO

INT. DONAPHA SHRINE - NIGHT (CONTINUOUS)

Numerous stone figures - all covered in burning candles and melted wax - form a permanent congregation in this otherwise empty shrine.

The room is dominated by an ENORMOUS STONE FOOT at the front

BABY immediately removes his shoes

MYRIN is oblivious

PWIRK - already barefoot - gives her a very stern look

She quickly starts pulling off her boots

PWIRK  
 Against our ways to refuse lodgings  
 to a Paladin...still, not used to  
 foreigners in this house.

Baby starts reverently toward the giant foot

MYRIN  
 There's a saying - 'no strangers  
 among the faithful'

PWIRK  
 Huh...we got a different one  
 'strange gods for strange folks'

Baby's in a sort of trance - kissing the idol and mumbling a Dwarvish prayer

INSERT: Damaged armor, torn clothes, blood stains, bruised knuckles

Pwirk notices - seemingly for the first time - that his guests are filthy from a fight

PWIRK  
 Still...I 'spect even strange folk  
 like a bath after...guard duty is  
 it?

BABY BOUNTY HUNTER

(done praying)

No, Elder sir - it's the bounty business for us.

(to Myrin)

Idn't it, right?

MYRIN

(reluctant)

Well...mister Elder

PWIRK

Pwirk

MYRIN

Pwirk, sir, I go where the Goddess calls.

PWIRK

mmm calls for good work then - king's enemies are the Gods' enemies - says that on the First Stone.

BABY BOUNTY HUNTER

Aye it does!

PWIRK

(calling to someone O.C.)

BOY! Guests - need a bath. And put some clothes on; got a woman here!

CUT

FADE IN

INT. GUEST ROOM - NIGHT

The room is modest but cozy; a place which has received many travelers for many years.

BABY sits in a tub of steaming water

BABY BOUNTY HUNTER

(singing)

Oh if I was a dandy, I'd have a dandy elf - we would dandy in the kitchen, we would dandy on the shelf - So dandy every day 'til she said "go dandy yourself" - OooOoO if I was a dandy, I'd have a dandy elf! HEY!

MYRIN'S VOICE - there's a privacy curtain between them

MYRIN

(O.C.)

Oy! Can you sing the tavern songs a bit faster? Water's gonna be cold by time I get in!

BABY BOUNTY HUNTER

Not tavern songs, elf girl - sailing songs.

(starting another)

OoOoOoO-

MYRIN

Whatever they are, be quick about it...and - not it matters - but I'm half elf

BABY BOUNTY HUNTER

Which half?

MYRIN

Not your business

BABY BOUNTY HUNTER

(snicker - washing)

Mom's side then...ones from mom's side always got a snake up their arse about it...elf magic lives through father's blood, right?

MYRIN

No proof of that!

BABY BOUNTY HUNTER

Hey, I got no dog in this.

MYRIN

Anyway, I don't need a certificate from the Elvish Union to tell me what is or isn't in my blood...you and them can both stuff it sideways!

Baby's on his way out of the tub - sees a mirror

BABY BOUNTY HUNTER

(admiring himself)

Hey, hey - you brought it up; I just asked a question. But like I said, fat fuckin' snake in your twat.

(doing his hair)

....And not no greeny shit grass snake neither - talkin' about a

(MORE)

BABY BOUNTY HUNTER (CONT'D)  
 colossus ass monster...a mud  
 strangler or something.

Myrin APPEARS behind him - looking sour

BABY BOUNTY HUNTER  
 (covering himself)  
 OY! Not done here, you peepy little  
 bitch.

She starts to strip - genuinely uninterested in him

MYRIN  
 Get done

Baby is frantically gathering his things

BABY BOUNTY HUNTER  
 (trying not to look at her)  
 We are in a sacred house! Men and  
 women aren't even supposed to touch  
 in here, you adulturescent  
 madwoman!

Myrin's in the tub

Baby rushes BEYOND THE CURTAIN and dresses quickly

BABY BOUNTY HUNTER  
 No...you're right - Elvish Union  
 got no idea how much elf you can  
 fit in a cunt little half-breed.  
 Got your whole fuck-ass outlook  
 from the pointy side of the tree!

MYRIN  
 (calm)  
 This little half-breed has a sword  
 - should you care to say it twice.

BABY BOUNTY HUNTER  
 (walking away)  
 Jeez, when ya open your heart to a  
 fuckin' elf...

DOOR SLAMS

Our heroine breathes a sigh of relief

She relaxes for a beat

POV MYRIN: We go under the water....we come back up

Everything is as we left it

We go under the water...we come back up

A FRIGHTENED MAN HAS APPEARED IN THE TUB

It's FRITZ - fully clothed, seemingly unharmed, and confused beyond description.

ON MYRIN: She startles, covers herself, and stares in disbelief

MYRIN

(almost a whisper)

A...are you a messenger?...from the Goddess?

FRITZ

(closes his eyes)

No...no no no no no no...I'm just here - just fuckin'...here. Not from a goddess. ....Ah tits! is this the here-and-after? Sittin' in a lukewarm bath with...who the fuck?

MYRIN

(still covering)

What!? No!...this is just a bath - my bath, and you're getting the heck out of it right now, you - you...you... diseased apparition!

FRITZ

(covers his eyes and stands up)

Not no "aporation" - just a man, confused as you are; here in the old tub. Gotta keep it rational.

MYRIN

Ratonal!?

FRITZ

(looking away and stepping out)

Yeah, well- must be a goddess, like you said...kay - gimme just a..

(deep breath)

I thought I was dead - right - but with my dying breath, I called out to the saint mother, and she healed me. True tale!

MYRIN  
 (indignantly washing)  
 I heard you cursing, not praying.

Fritz opens his eyes, looks at Myrin, does a double take,  
 and speaks

FRITZ  
 Wait, wait wait wait wait...you  
 fuckin' cock-fizzly little

Fritz DIVES at her -

Myrin tries to DODGE - not enough room

They're both flailing stupidly in the tub

Fritz gets a GRIP ON HER THROAT

INSERT: Myrin's sword is with her clothes

INSERT: Fritz' GRIP TIGHTENS

INSERT: Fritz' neck - BRUISES ARE APPEARING as if he too is  
 being strangled

THUD: Myrin's knee hits his stomach - hard

THEY BOTH FEEL IT

Myrin ROLLS BACKWARD - out of the tub and out of danger

A beat while they recover

Myrin retrieves her SWORD

MYRIN  
 (winded)  
 I don't know...anything here...but  
 it's not the Paladin's way to kill  
 a man twice  
 (gestures him out)  
 so...

FRITZ  
 Oh, you're the generous one, eh?  
 Lucky I don't strip your mom's skin  
 off with a pair of sheers, you cold  
 blooded bitch! Some fucking  
 'Paladin'...hope you sleep light,  
 'cause I'm coming to stick that  
 shitty sword in your belly.



Fritz tries to storm out, but - when he reaches a distance of FOUR METERS - a MAGICAL TETHER appears around both of their necks.

THEY ARE JOINED AT THE THROAT

A BEAT while they process this new information

Fritz TUGS HARD at the tether

Myrin is JERKED FORWARD

She PULLS BACK

Fritz FACEPLANTS - his nose is bleeding

Blood is dripping down Myrin's face as she hastily dresses

FRITZ

Ahhh shit on my mother's grave!  
This is it? This is eternity!?

THE TETHER VANISHES

MYRIN

(wipes the blood)  
No no...we're keeping rational,  
right?

FRITZ

Rational!?

MYRIN

(still dressing)  
Dead men can't bleed.

FRITZ

OK, why not?

MYRIN

They're called 'dry ones' - in the  
Old Scrolls, I mean

FRITZ

Oh, well "the Scrolls" say it, must  
be true! Let's hit Fritzy again,  
let's pop out his eyes - "the  
Scrolls" say he'll be dry at the  
end, so fuck it!...you know, I  
want to be chained to a smarter  
twelve year old!

MYRIN  
 (wringing out her hair)  
 Nineteen, thanks. And - given my  
 choice - I wouldn't take a middle  
 aged silver hoarding ph-phallus!

FRITZ  
 Barely thirty....and you fuckin'  
 killed me, "paladin"!

Myrin leaves the bathing area and stands FACE TO FACE with  
 Fritz

MYRIN  
 Way you been all your life, someone  
 had to - I did it clean!

FRITZ  
 Don't know how it's clean to  
 cripple a man!

MYRIN  
 Trap wasn't mine.

FRITZ  
 The fuck it wasn't!

MYRIN  
 The fuck it wasn't.

FRITZ  
 Sayin' I believe you - even if -  
 you still clipped my head off when  
 I was calling for mercy with tears  
 in my eyes....that's a Paladin's  
 mercy!?

MYRIN  
 I mean you have to- ...Mercy is  
 relative!

FRITZ  
 So the glowing-ass paragon of  
 goodness on earth is a book-humping  
 philosopher now!? You chose today  
 to get fuckin' relative??

Awkward silence

MYRIN  
 OK...so I'm not...you know...look,  
 you said: I'm not exactly the most  
 'seasoned' Paladin

FRITZ

It ain't about seasoning, cunt -  
it's about good. I may not be the  
bookiest fellow out there, but I  
know Paladins are meant to do good!

MYRIN

Coming from a man who-

FRITZ

Killed his brother, ate the king's  
horse, and swiped a coin from every  
man in the world!? Yeah - I'm a bad  
fucking guy. I'd wipe my ass with  
your 'scrolls', slit your throat,  
light you on fire, and fuck  
whatever's left. I'm a  
bad fucking guy, and I live up to  
that.

(beat)

The fuck you living up to, little  
girl?

CUT

FADE IN

INT. GUEST ROOM - DAWN

Goat skin covers the windows instead of glass, and it glows  
a pleasant yellow as the sun rises.

MYRIN - seemingly alone - is asleep on a straw mat.

A BEAT - BIRDS ARE CHIRPING

Myrin Stirs

She opens her eyes, stares at the ceiling for a moment,  
sighs, and begins to work her way out of bed.

She dresses, puts on her sword belt, and begins to  
leave...then -

The TETHER appears along with FRITZ - he's sleeping on the  
floor

FRITZ

(grabbing the tether)

ACK! The fuck!

MYRIN  
I have to pray

FRITZ  
(rolls over)  
Do it in here

As he begins to sleep, he begins to DISSOLVE

MYRIN  
I have to pray under the open sky

FRITZ  
Well la-tee-da and tu-tu-blu. Not  
now!

MYRIN  
(jerks the tether)  
Hey! You might sleep all day, but I  
have more to do than cut purses and  
hand the contents to local whores.

FRITZ  
You know, it's a shitload of work,  
stealing. You gotta learn fast, use  
your head, stay moving. Impatient  
cunts don't make it for long.

MYRIN  
Well la-tee-da and tu-tu-blu. Get  
up!

Fritz makes a RUDE GESTURE and rolls over

Myrin grabs the tether and DRAGS HIM by his uncooperative  
neck

CUT

FADE IN

INT. DONAPHA SHRINE - DAY

PWIRK and BABY are deep in prayer, and a YOUNG DWARF is  
lighting and replacing candles all over the sanctuary

MYRIN and FRITZ slip in from the guest area and try to make  
their way outside without being seen

Pwirk looks up - directly at Fritz - but it's not the Fritz  
we're used to

WHEN PEOPLE (other than Myrin) SEE FRITZ, THEY DO NOT SEE  
HIM AS HE WAS - THEY SEE A MAN WE WILL CALL **MUGGLE FRITZ**

Pwirk looks back at Myrin...back to Muggle Fritz...back to Myrin

PWIRK

(snort)

Didn't see him come in. ...Y'know,  
I was led to think Paladins  
are...virtuous

FRITZ

(to Myrin)

The Elder agrees with me

MYRIN

(worried they recognize Fritz)

Uh I mean...this is just...NO! He's  
just - he's...

PWIRK

(worried they fucked in his  
guest room)

Oh we all know who he is!

Myrin and Fritz are frozen

BABY BOUNTY HUNTER

Troll-quim on toast, girl!

(to Pwirk)

She was like this with me too! All  
"nakey nakey tub time"...and I  
wouldn't have none of it, no sir.

MYRIN

Wait, I-

PWIRK

Good lad.

FRITZ

Just what do I look like to you!?

INSERT: MUGGLE FRITZ

BABY BOUNTY HUNTER

Like the type o' dick I'd expect to  
see in an elf

MYRIN

(to Baby)

Obsession, duly noted!

Muggle Fritz throws his ARM AROUND MYRIN

She recoils at first

FRITZ  
 (to Baby)  
 That's right - we're in love!

Myrin tries to play along - she's a bad actress

MYRIN  
 Yes?

FRITZ  
 My mom was like you...told me the  
 elvish sold their souls to a tree

MYRIN  
 What!?

FRITZ  
 Shh.

MYRIN Hey, I- FRITZ  
 (raised voice)  
 The point!

FRITZ  
 The point is - darling - our love  
 is poetry, and I will not have it  
 impu-tated in a Holy Shrine!  
 (walking to the door)  
 Come on. Let's leave these fools to  
 their...foolery.

PWIRK  
 Wait, but how'd he get in!?

CUT TO

EXT. COUNTRY SHRINE - DAY (CONTINUOUS)

As soon as the door closes, MYRIN immediately SHOVES FRITZ  
 away

MYRIN  
 I'm unbelievably sick of everyone  
 having a ha-ha on my heritage! So  
 if we're gonna get through this, I  
 need you to stop.

FRITZ  
 Not my fault elves are  
 superior-acting as all fuck

MYRIN

Half elf - I'm half elf! And the only difference between humans and elves is which half they say I am.

FRITZ

You are one miserable little girl, aren't you?

MYRIN

(draws her sword)

Shut up

FRITZ

Hey now -

MYRIN

Shhh!

She looks away from Fritz and toward the open sky, throwing her arms open as if to embrace the whole of it.

Fritz sits down - looking bored

Myrin begins her SWORD FORM with a calm and fluidity we've never seen from her.

FRITZ

What in the holy...did I get beat by a dance-hall bitch?

MYRIN

Shh!

She continues her form

FRITZ

So I been thinking about this - you know, the whole thing we're in now, and I'm thinking it doesn't have to be bad, right?

MYRIN

(still moving)

Not right now.

FRITZ

Look, I know you were doing your job, I was jobbing my job, and we had a natural ass, unavoidable conflict - like a scorpion and a wasp kind of thing

Myrin is still doing her form

MYRIN

Um?

FRITZ

It's a famous fucking thing where the scorpion needs a ride, and the wasp stings it and they both die.

MYRIN

Uhh, never heard about it

FRITZ

Well anyway, moral is that nature sets shit up so certain things gotta kill each other, and that's how it was with us...so I'm trying to say I don't want grief as much about what's past...I'm trying to get acquainted, you know?

Myrin finishes her form, sheathes her sword, and looks much more calm than she did before

MYRIN

Me too...and you're right - I took a vow...and that vow has nothing to do with sell-swording around the countryside. Whatever it means to be a Paladin...it wasn't that.

(beat)

Come on. If we make good time, we can get there by tomorrow.

FRITZ

Get where?

MYRIN

Home. The Cardinal Master knows everything - he'll know what to do.

CUT