

KNOWING WHERE TO LOOK

Written by

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Setting: The story is set in a post-apocalyptic world where war has been raging for centuries which has reduced civilization to the equivalent of 18th century technology (i.e. flintlock rifles, horses and buggies, candles, etc.)

EXT. FOOTHILLS BELOW A TALL MOUNTAIN - DAY

The mountain Lothring towers above the valley and village that RAINE calls home. There is a river that flows down from the glaciers of Lothring and forms a lake in the valley. The village is perched on its shore. Upward Raine climbs through meadows and forests until he arrives at a particularly dark forest. Inside the air is still and cold and the river slows and becomes murky black. He enters with some trepidation. He moves quickly along the bank, looking around. Beams of light fall from the canopy above and flicker as he passes through them. The trees become tangled and twisted into one another. He stops and looks around. He senses movement behind and then beside him. The trees begin to sway banging against one another, branches fall with a crash. A cloud covers the sun and almost all is dark except for a light at the end of the long awning of trees that spread out on either side of the stream. Raine races for the light and just as he reaches it his foot catches a root and he tumbles to the ground.

SARRIFF

Are you okay? You're not hurt?

Raine looks up at his grandfather with outstretched hand

RAINE

I'm okay. Those are the strangest woods

Raine stands and to his astonishment looks up at the massive ruins of an ancient stone building behind his grandfather. The stream passes from what was once it's arched entrance.

Oh my!

SARRIFF

For centuries this has been the first stop on the journey to a Byerman's ordination.

They walk inside.

SARRIFF (CONT'D)

Well the second stop for you. Are you sure you're okay?

INT. ANCIENT STONE BUILDING - EVENING

RAINE

Positively.

Sarriff smiles. Raine looks around at the walls covered in carvings.

SARRIFF

The pool is at the far end.

A large boulder has caved in the far end of the structure and a waterfall pours over the boulder and into a pool from which the stream emanates.

RAINE

Yes, of course.

Raine strips to shorts and climbs in. The water glitters with many colors.

RAINE (CONT'D)

It's warm.

SARRIFF

The mountain is a sleeping volcano.

RAINE

You came here with my father when he was ordained?

SARRIFF

I did.

Sarriff pauses.

SARRIFF (CONT'D)

He is in my heart here more than anywhere, but there will be plenty of time later to discuss the past and this ancient place. Now is your time, so let us proceed. The sun is beginning to go down and it will be dark soon.

Raine stretches his hands out onto the surface of the water and closes his eyes.

RAINE

The spirit and the water are the same. They are the creators and sustainers of life.

(MORE)

RAINE (CONT'D)

They are within us and all around us, flowing and falling. I am the vessel that holds the water; the catcher of the rain. When others thirst, I will offer my cup...

Raine scoops up some water with his cupped hands and pours it over his face.

RAINE (CONT'D)

...and they will be refreshed and renewed.

SARRIFF

There are colored pebbles on the bottom. Pick one and hand it to me.

Raine picks a yellow pebble and hands it to Sarriff.

SARRIFF (CONT'D)

Why yellow?

RAINE

I guess it reminds me of my father. He was so cheerful. What color did my father pick?

SARRIFF

Blue.

RAINE

Why blue?

SARRIFF

He said it reminded him of his young son.

RAINE

I wish he was here.

SARRIFF

So do I. Now it is time for you to dress.

Raine dresses in a robe that he had in his backpack.

EXT. FOOTHILLS BELOW A TALL MOUNTAIN - EVENING

They move quickly along paths to an open area within a wood. There in the clearing men in similar robes mill about until they see Raine and Sarriff. All gather around them patting Raine on the back and wishing him their best.

Sarriff crows the group into a line. Banners and torches are raised as Raine takes his place at the front with Sarriff behind him. Sarriff nudges his grandson forward and the line begins to move. Sarriff begins to sing and is soon joined by the others as they move out of the wood and into the open hills below a huge jut of stone that extends out over the hills and valleys. Speckling the hill sides are a multitude of bonfires surrounded by hundreds of people. All go still as the procession goes by. Raine looks around nervously. He waves shyly to friends and relatives. At the base of the stone stairs that will take him to the top of the jut of stone Raine stops to hug his mother. She won't let go.

R A I N E

Mom...I have to go.

S A R A H

(Smiling with tears
running down her cheeks)

They can wait. I love you Raine.

R A I N E

I love you too mom. I should...

He points up

S A R A H

Okay. But be careful on those
steps.

Raine nods and smiles.

EXT. ON TOP A LONG STONE PLATFORM - NIGHT

Raine and the procession move to the top of the jut of stone. At the top is a large flat platform. Carved in the walls where the platform meets the mountain are chairs which are occupied by the Grand Counsel of Byerman. In the center is an imposing figure who Raine recognizes as the Great Byerman by his purple robe. Raine walks out to nearly the end of the platform. He can see for miles over the valley below. He turns and faces Sarriff and the crowd of Byerman behind him.

S A R R I F F

A Byerman has but one purpose. It is for him to devote his life to ensuring the well-being of the people. Through such devotion we become the spreaders of the gifts of love and hope that were passed to all of us by the Great Spirit.

(MORE)

SARRIFF (CONT'D)

We become the bridge that allows these gifts to flourish in our souls giving the Spirit life. We are the holders of the cup and catchers of the rain so that none shall thirst. Raine, do you accept and commit your life to this purpose?

RAINE

I do until my dying breath.

SARRIFF

It is time to offer your first gift as a Byerman.

Raine turns around and looks out over the valley which is now covered in darkness except for the bonfires and the light of the moon and stars. He begins to sing. His voice pure and clear. Every note perfect and beautiful.

SONG

Raine turns around. There is silence for several moments. The pipe in one of the Byerman's mouths falls to the ground as all stand stunned by the beautiful song.

RAINE

(Whispers)

Was that okay?

SARRIFF

It was very good.

Cheers rise from the valley below. Sarriff tries to smile but it fades quickly. He hugs Raine. The other Byerman race over and offer congratulations. They whisk him down the steps and into the hands of the waiting crowd who throw him up on their shoulders. Sarriff looks over at the Great Byerman. The Great Byerman nods.

GREAT BYERMAN

He is the one.

INT. SARRIFF'S HOME - MORNING

The next morning Raine goes to Sarriff's home in the center of town. He finds the house a mess. He stops at the door of his grandfather's office. Sarriff sits at his desk behind a mountain of books and papers. His hair and clothes are disheveled. He is reading a large book.

RAINE

Pop?

SARRIFF

Oh...Raine. Come on in. I have something for you.

Sarriff pulls from his pocket a silver pendent on a chain. The pendent is in the shape of an Eagle with a mountain above, a town in the center and river flowing from the town. In the center of the town is the stone Raine had picked from the pool. He hands it to Raine.

SARRIFF (CONT'D)

The symbol of a Byerman since the days of Istal. Every Byerman wears one and none ever take it off. The bird is the songs we sing and the carrier of the message of love. The town is the people we serve. Always put them first in your heart. The stone is you. Its shape and color are unique from every other Byerman's stone, but we all come from the same pool and are made of the same stuff.

RAINE

Thank you.

Raine puts it around his neck.

SARRIFF

No thanks necessary. You've earned it. I am very proud of you.

Sarriff pauses for several moments.

RAINE

Is everything okay?

SARRIFF

No, Raine, everything is not okay. Despite the law forbidding anyone to contact the outside world, I have been corresponding with friends on the far side of the mountains. The world beyond these mountains, their world, has been at war for centuries. Those wars have so diminished the Great Spirit that a horrible beast has come upon the earth. They call him the Dark Lord.

(MORE)

SARRIFF (CONT'D)

He stands on the bridge between us and the Great Spirit allowing nothing to pass. We are on our own with only the gifts the Spirit has given us. The Dark Lord's armies have conquered all the lands of the world except the peninsula that we live on. Now they are coming for us. City after city has fallen despite the armies of the peninsula throwing everything they have at the enemy. My friends believe it is only a matter of a few months before the peninsula is taken.

RAINE

What are we to do? Where do we go?

SARRIFF

I have shared with you all of the prophecies but one. It's time you knew everything.

Sarriff turns a few pages in the book in front of him.

SARRIFF (CONT'D)

The Profit Yenisoff spoke on his dying bed "The Earth will dry, crack and burn in a circle around me as I lay like a stone at the bottom of the last remaining pool. When the fires burn out the darkness will follow and with it the children of bitterness and cold. But the pool is warm and in the faint reflection of the fading light I see what they cannot see. He too was once one of the children and will be reborn in the dark womb of despair. He is the nightmare that knows them and will draw from the sheath of his tomb a great weapon, the last gift that was left to us. And the rains will come and with them the children of hope and love. The pool will grow until all is immersed and death will drown in a sea of tranquility."

Sarriff looks up.

SARRIFF (CONT'D)

It is believed that the Prophet is speaking about Istal's book buried in his tomb somewhere in the underground city of our ancestors and that this book may hold the key to how to defeat the Dark Lord. The Great Byerman and the Counsel believe that you are the second coming of Istal.

RAINE

Me? Why me...?

SARRIFF

Your singing voice. It is like none anyone has heard. Istal was known to have the most incredible singing voice. It was the sign they were looking for.

RAINE

But what does that mean? What can I do?

SARRIFF

They believe that you and only you can return to the underground city and find the book.

RAINE

What do you believe?

SARRIFF

I believe that if nothing is done the west will fall in a few months and the enemy will find our valleys. I believe that you and only you have a decision to make. Take some time to think about it.

RAINE

I don't need any time to think about it. I don't really think I have any choice. I can't stand by and do nothing knowing that there is some small chance..

Raine pauses for several moments.

RAINE (CONT'D)

My father knew about this prophecy, didn't he?

SARRIFF

He did.

RAINE

He went to the outside world to look for the book.

SARRIFF

It was very clear early on that you had a gifted voice. He became obsessed with the thought that you would one day be asked to go. He couldn't bear that. I told him that it wasn't for him to find, but he wouldn't listen.

RAINE

Why didn't you tell me this before?

SARRIFF

I had hoped that this day would never come, that the Dark Lord would be driven back by the western armies.

RAINE

I um...I will prepare to leave. How will I...?

SARRIFF

I will arrange for you to meet a guide on the far side of the mountains in a few days. There is no time to waste. You must leave early tomorrow morning before sunrise. That way you will not draw attention within town. We wouldn't want to cause a stir. Here is a list of things to pack.

Sarriff hands Raine a piece of paper.

SARRIFF (CONT'D)

I will have a map for you in the morning.

RAINE

Will they be upset with you and mom like when dad left?

SARRIFF

You need not worry about that.

Raine leaves. Sarriff goes into the upstairs loft, attaches a note to a pigeon's leg and sends it out the window. He pulls an old trunk out from under his bed and opens it. From it he extracts various articles of clothing and a sword which are discarded on the floor until he gets to a map. He opens it briefly and then places it on a nearby table. He hastily puts the items on the floor back into the chest and slides it back under the bed. He no more than gets back to his office, with the map in hand, when the door to his home is thrown open by SARAH (Raine's mother) and she charges into his office.

SARAH

He's not going!

SARRIFF

Sarah, please calm down...we can...

SARAH

(Shouting)

Calm down? You just sentenced my son to death. Evidently, it isn't enough that your son is missing and probably dead. And for what, huh...some myth you filled his head with?

SARRIFF

Do you think I want this? There is no choice. There is nowhere left to run. They are coming, Sarah, and there will be nothing left of these valleys when they get here! If you want to save your son you had better start right now by giving him your support. If you can't do it honestly, then fake it. His survival depends on his belief in what he is about to do.

SARAH

(Upset)

I'm sorry but I don't believe any of this nonsense. I can't believe you would do this.

Sarah stomps out and slams the door.

INT. SARAH'S/RAINE'S HOME - EARLY MORNING

SARRIFF

Have you packed everything I told you?

RAINE

I just checked the list and I have everything.

SARRIFF

When you get to the far side of the pass you will see a pair of distant hills on the plains below. Go to those hills and you will find the town of Brin. There you will be met by someone who will guide you to the underground city.

RAINE

How will I find him?

SARRIFF

Your guide will find you. I was told no more than that. Okay, time to go.

Sarriff looks out the window - the street is filled with people.

SARRIFF (CONT'D)

There is a crowd outside. What's going on?

SARAH

Sarriff. It's okay. I told them.

Sarah opens the door.

SARAH (CONT'D)

Good morning.

EXT. OUTSIDE SARAH'S/RAINE'S HOME - EARLY MORNING

MAN1

Good morning. We are here to say goodbye, Raine.

MAN2

(Yelling from the back)
God's speed to you, Raine!

WOMAN1

Thank you for what you are doing.

RAINE

You're welcome.

WOMAN2

Listen, you take care of yourself.

Raine is surrounded by well wishers - the crowd follows him to the edge of town.

SARRIFF

Remember who you are and what you have been taught. Draw your strength from love not hate and never ever give up.

Sarriff gives him a hug.

RAINE

I won't. I mean I will...you know what I mean.

Sarah hugs Raine.

SARAH

Be careful. I love you.

RAINE

I'm coming back.

SARAH

I know you will.

Sarah fights back the tears - Raine walks down the path toward the mountains. Sarriff begins to sing - everyone but Sarah joins in. She is crying in Sarriff's arms.

SONG

EXT. MOUNTAINS/SMALL WOODS - DAY

For the next two days Raine traverses the mountains. Along the way he is startled to find groups of tall poles with skulls stuck on top. He is not detoured but moves quickly by them. On the far side of the range when the plains below come into view he spots the two peaks his grandfather spoke about. He descends the far slope to a dirt road that appears to head toward them. At the end of the day he moves into a small wood nearby to find shelter to sleep.

BEN

Hello in there! What say you so that I can find you?

Raine remains silent. Twigs crackle and snap under the weight of someone walking to the wood.

BEN (CONT'D)

Oh, there you are. Ben Tallton is the name and who might you be?

RAINE

I am Raine.

BEN

It's a pleasure to meet you Raine. I saw you back a ways and thought you might want some company for the evening. Are you hungry? I've got a bunch of rabbits in the bag. This country is full of them. I can't get over it. Back where I come from, you nary see but one or two.

Ben dumps them out.

RAINE

I'm fine but thank you anyway.

BEN

Well let's get a fire going and get properly acquainted.

Ben starts a fire.

BEN (CONT'D)

You going to Brin to join up?

RAINE

Join up?

BEN

The Army. Word is the Dark Lord is knocking on the front door and they'll take anyone at this point, even a fat ass like me. But I'll tell you what, when they see me shoot, they'll wish they took me sooner. I am the best shot in three counties. What's your story? Why did they reject you?

RAINE

Even with these glasses I can barely see.

BEN

Oh yeah. Even in the Army you've got to be able to see. Well, maybe they will take you anyway. You let me know if I can help. I'm here for you. So what's your story? I saw you come down from the slope. What were you doing up there?

RAINE

I was just trying to get my bearings.

BEN

Well, I wouldn't recommend that you do it that way. You know the word. People who go into those mountains never come out. There are head hunters in there. Word is that they put your skull on a stake when they are done eating you. If that Dark Lord ever got this far, those people would eat his army for lunch.

RAINE

Head hunters. That's good to know.

Ben roasts the rabbits over the fire.

BEN

You sure you don't want some of this rabbit? My wife makes this special seasoning. You can put it on just about anything and oh my.

RAINE

I'm sure. Thank you.

BEN

You married?

RAINE

No. I really haven't had time to..

BEN

Don't you worry. When the time is right it'll happen for you. You'll never see it coming. It's like you can't really try. You know what I mean? It sneaks up on you and the next thing you know, you're married and got a couple kids. I got four kids, all girls and one on the way.

(MORE)

BEN (CONT'D)

I don't mind saying that I hope this one is a boy. Don't get me wrong, I love my girls and I want a healthy baby more than anything but a boy would be nice. You know, carry on the family name and all that sort of stuff.

RAINE

We have never had that problem in my family. For generations all of children on my dad's side have been boys, no girls.

BEN

Well, isn't that odd?

RAINE

For sure. I think I am going to turn in now.

BEN

Oh..Okay. Well, good night Raine.

RAINE

Good night, Ben.

EXT. OUTPOST TOWN OF BRIN - MORNING

The next day Raine and Ben arrive in Brin. They part ways when Ben applies for the sharpshooters. Raine watches as Ben qualifies with his rifle to join that unit. Ben is an incredible shot and amazes everyone with his bullseyes at four hundred yards. As night falls, Raine joins a number of others on the hay in a large stable as there are no accommodations left in town. He listens to their conversations.

INT. STABLE IN TOWN OF BRIN - NIGHT

A man enters the stable. He is out of breath.

MAN3

(Out of breath)

Alton City has fallen. A rider just came in.

MAN4

Impossible!

MAN3

It's true I heard it myself.

MAN5

But there were two entire divisions
defending that city.

MAN3

They walked in the front door like
there was nobody home! Two days max
to breach.

MAN5

Were finished! It's game over.

MAN3

God help us.

MAN4

God is dead. There ain't no one
listening up there. We're on our
own.

MAN6

Enough of this talk! We'll hold
them at the Gap.

MAN5

Did you hear what he said? Two
days! It only took them two days!

MAN6

I heard him. That don't mean
nothing. That mountain pass can't
be breached. Everyone's going to be
on the line. Everyone! Let them
come. They will melt away in front
of us line by line as they push in.

MAN4

Tough talk from a man who has never
seen combat.

MAN3

We're all going to see it pretty
soon. May death come quick.

MAN5

I'll second that.

In the near silence that follows, Raine falls asleep. He is
awakened in the middle of the night by a hand over his mouth
and the whisper of a female voice.

AZRIN

(Whispers)

Do not speak. Come with me.

EXT. COUNTRYSIDE - NIGHT

Quietly they leave the stable. No one stirs. They wade across a small creek to horses on the far side. Raine notices a nearby bridge and is puzzled that she didn't use it to cross. They ride until morning arriving at a complex of long buildings surrounding a large white house.

EXT. IN FRONT OF A LARGE WHITE HOUSE - MORNING

MOORLAND:
Everything go okay?

Azrin dismounts.

AZRIN
(disgusted tone)
It went fine except he needs to learn how to ride. We should have been here an hour ago.

RAINE
Hello. I am Raine.

Raine climbs down from the horse and has some difficulty walking. Azrin ignores him and takes the horses to the stables.

MOORLAND
Moorland. Papa to everyone at my station.

They shake hands.

MOORLAND (CONT'D)
Azrin brought you in. Come on inside you must be hungry.

INT. MOORLAND'S HOME - MORNING

RAINE
Thirsty actually. I would greatly appreciate a drink of water.

They sit at the kitchen table. Moorland brings him some bread and fruit and a glass of water.

RAINE (CONT'D)
Thank you.

MOORLAND

How's your grandfather?

RAINE

He is well. Sir if I may...

MOORLAND

Papa.

RAINE

Papa. If you don't mind me asking, how do you know my grandfather?

MOORLAND

He and I go way back. Probably twenty five years when he attempted to do what you are trying now.

RAINE

He made this trip?

MOORLAND

He never told you?

Raine shakes his head no.

MOORLAND (CONT'D)

Not to put a scare into you son but we gave him a runner and your grandfather barely made it back alive. The runner wasn't so lucky. Silter was a good man. I hated to lose him.

RAINE

Did you know my father?

MOORLAND

No. Sarriff told me that your father refused to have a runner. He didn't want to risk someone else's life.

RAINE

I don't want to risk anyone's life.

MOORLAND

I promised Sarriff I would provide a runner for you and I will be keeping my promise so you have no choice. Your runner is going to be Azrin. And while we are on that subject there are a few things you need to know before you leave.

(MORE)

MOORLAND (CONT'D)

The runner system is to get people out of occupied territory. It is not to take people in but we are making an exception in your case. Now you are to do everything Azrin tells you to even if it doesn't seem right to you. You're on our playground now, so you play by our rules. I will be issuing you weapons before you leave. I know how you feel about them but take them anyway. That will ease Azrin's mind. I want my runner back so don't do anything stupid and don't try to be a hero. There will be many things out there you can't control so don't try to - just keep pressing on to your objective. If Azrin should fall, leave her and if you are captured never give up the network you are going to go through. If you think you will talk, then use the small boot pistol I am going to give you to blow your brains out. Do you understand?

RAINE

Yes sir...Papa.

MOORLAND

Okay. Now I'll take you to your room where you can get a few hours sleep before leaving.

After several hours Moorland wakes up Raine. Moorland is carrying a large pistol, a small one and a short sabre. He helps Raine put them on. They walk outside together. Azrin is waiting.

EXT. IN FRONT OF MOORLAND'S HOME - MORNING

MOORLAND

Be careful both of you.

AZRIN

This had better be important.

MOORLAND

It is.

Moorland turns to Raine and shakes his hand.

MOORLAND (CONT'D)

Good luck to you. I hope you find
what you are looking for.

RAINE

Thank you for everything.

EXT. COUNTRYSIDE - LATE AFTERNOON

Azrin and Raine mount their horses and ride off. Raine glances back a few times. Moorland watches them until they disappear over a hill. Azrin and Raine ride through the afternoon and into the night. Azrin stops in a small wood.

AZRIN

(Whispers)

Wait here.

She disappears for a minute and then returns and leads Raine quickly into a small stable near a log cabin.

INT. TUNNEL ROOM - LATE AFTERNOON

They climb down a rope ladder into a well. The well has only about a foot of water at the bottom. They step out of this shallow pool and follow a tunnel to a dimly lit room. Inside are several disheveled looking people, including a young girl, gathered around a table devouring the food in front of them. Azrin notices that the young girl is not eating and is shaking.

AZRIN

(To the young girl)

You should eat something.

YOUNG GIRL

(Whispers)

I am not hungry.

AZRIN

Why are you shaking?

MAN1

Her mother was killed. She fell
behind with a bad horse and
couldn't make it to the river.
Spectres... nothing we could do for
her. The girl has been shaking ever
since.

AZRIN

(To the girl)

I am sorry about your mom honey.
You are safe now. Try to eat
something. I need to go up top for
a few minutes. We'll talk when I
get back, okay?

The young girl nods yes. Azrin disappears down the tunnel.

RAINE

(To the young girl)

What's your name?

YOUNG GIRL

Holly.

RAINE

Holly, I am Raine. It is nice to
meet you. Listen, I think I know
how we can get you to stop shaking.
Whenever I have been afraid, I sing
a song and it helps me to not be
afraid anymore. Do you know any
songs?

HOLLY

I know a few.

RAINE

Great, can you sing one for me?

HOLLY

I can't.

RAINE

That's okay... I will sing one for
you.

Raine begins to sing. Everyone at the table stops eating.
Their mouths fall open in wonderment. Holly starts to sing
along and Raine stops to let her finish alone.

SONG

RAINE

(Puzzled)

How do you know that song?

HOLLY

(No longer shaking)

Everyone knows that one silly.

R A I N E
Put your hand out.

Holly does as he asks.

R A I N E (CONT'D)
You're not shaking anymore silly.
Now eat something okay?

Raine smiles. Holly pulls the bowl of soup up close and begins to eat.

M A N 2
I'll be damned.

Azrin returns to find the girl eating.

A Z R I N
Everything's okay?

H O L L Y
Mr. Raine made my shaking stop.

A runner appears at the door.

R U N N E R
Okay. Now that we have eaten we must move on. Grab your gear and follow me. There are fresh horses in the woods waiting for us. (To Azrin) Stay close to the water.

The group gets up and leaves - each looks at Raine as they pass through the door.

A Z R I N
You too.

Azrin turns to Raine.

A Z R I N (CONT'D)
We will rest here awhile and make our way into the mountains in the early morning. They cannot be traversed at night because the horses may lose their footing.

They lie down in beds next to one another.

A Z R I N (CONT'D)
What did you do to stop her from shaking?

RAINE

A song.

AZRIN

A song?

RAINE

Yes. what are Spectres?

AZRIN

How do you not know?

RAINE

I just don't.

AZRIN

Ask me tomorrow if you want to be able sleep tonight. A song?

RAINE

Yes. Good night.

Raine closes his eyes. Azrin keeps looking at him for several moments.

EXT. MOUNTAINS - MORNING

In the early hours of the morning they mount white horses and put white coveralls in their saddle bags and proceed into the mountains. Azrin and Raine ride as far as they can and then have to walk with their horses when the trail becomes thin and rocky across the face of a mountain. They come to an area where the trail widens.

AZRIN

This is odd. There is no snow up here. I've never seen it like this.

RAINE

There is a storm coming. We'll need to find shelter soon.

AZRIN

The sky is clear.

RAINE

Trust me on this. I've spent a lot of time in the mountains.

AZRIN

We will be at the next station soon.

They begin a fast walk.

RAINE

So what are Spectres?

AZRIN

They are the Dark Lord's angels and they are what hunt us. They search for our routes and stations. They don't see well so they mostly hunt by sound. They wear round purple glasses under a hooded veil. And they are nearly impossible to kill. Their only weakness appears to be an aversion to naturally occurring water like lakes and streams. They won't go in or over them. The ancients tried using moats and canals but that didn't work. Nobody knows why.

RAINE

Have you ever seen one?

AZRIN

I've seen them.

The wind begins to kick up. The trail opens into a small forested plain. The sound of a roaring stream can be heard in the distance. A hard snow starts to fall. Azrin motions for Raine to stay where he is. She disappears into the woods and returns a few minutes later with strained look on her face.

AZRIN (CONT'D)

They're all dead. The Spectres found them. The house has been burned down. Put on your coveralls! We can take shelter in the basement.

RAINE

I am sorry.

AZRIN

Yeah...so am I. Bill and Carol were good managers. This was a good station.

RAINE

Could the Spectres still be around?

AZRIN

No chance with this snow coming
down.

Azrin grabs blankets from her saddle bag. Raine does the same. The bloody bodies of a man and woman are hanging from a tree near the remains of the home. Raine looks away. They race down stone stairs to the basement as the snow comes down even harder.

INT. CELLAR OF THE BURNED DOWN HOUSE - MORNING

The basement is covered with dismembered bodies. Raine runs back up and throws-up. He returns to find Azrin huddled in a corner. The basement offers some protection but the wind and snow whip down the stairs. Raine sits next to her.

RAINE

(yelling over the wind)
We are going to have to huddle
together to keep warm.

AZRIN

(Shivering)
I'm fine.

RAINE

(Yelling)
The temperature is dropping.
Neither one of us is going to be
fine in a few minutes!

Raine pulls in close to her and wraps the blankets around them. She pulls away a little.

RAINE (CONT'D)

(Yelling)
You're gonna have to do better than
that if we are going to make it.

He pulls her in tight and warps his arms around her. She reluctantly does the same.

RAINE (CONT'D)

(Yelling)
You think this is bad, try doing it
with your grandfather.

Raine begins to sing. His song can be heard above the howling wind.

SONG

They both close their eyes. The scene shifts to the two of them in white formal clothing dancing in a great hall. White confetti gently falls. They are surrounded by others in white, dancing - the spirits of the people who died in the basement - and on thrones at the far end of the hall are Bill and Carol.

RAINE

Are you cold?

His song continues in the background.

AZRIN

Not anymore. What is this place?

RAINE

It is the place in between but I'm not sure how we are both here.

AZRIN

I don't know but I don't want to leave. I'm so tired.

CAROL

Raine!

Everyone stops dancing. The crowd parts and Azrin and Raine turn toward Carol and Bill.

CAROL (CONT'D)

The song must stop and you must take her back now.

RAINE

We want to stay.

BILL

It is time for you to go back.

The confetti stops falling. Raine wakes with a start. He shakes Azrin.

RAINE

Wake up.

She wakes and they uncover. The storm is over.

AZRIN

That was weird.

RAINE
Was it that bad?

AZRIN
The storm. It was a freak storm...the
horses!

EXT. OUTSIDE BURNED DOWN HOUSE - MORNING

They race out of the cellar to find one of the horses dead
and the other one standing under the remains of an out
building.

AZRIN
Damn. That'll slow us down.

RAINE
We need to get down off this
mountain. There is another storm
coming. It's like something keeps
holding back the weather but only
for so long.

AZRIN
(climbs onto the horse)
Get on.

EXT. MOUNTAINS/VALLEY - MORNING

They make their way down the mountain and into a forested
valley below. Above them the mountain becomes engulfed in a
storm. Raine notices movement on the cliff side.

RAINE
Above us on the cliffs there was
movement.

AZRIN
(Wheels around and looks
with binoculars)
Oh Shit! Hang on...haa, haa!

She yells to the horse which takes off in a gallop.

RAINE
(Yells)
What is it?

AZRIN
(Yells)
Spectres! They spotted us! Our only
chance is to make it to Reston.

As they race at full gallop Spectres on horseback appear behind them. They are gaining.

RAINE

(Yells)

They're gaining!

AZRIN

(Yells)

Use your pistol. Shoot the horse in front.

RAINE

(Yells)

I don't know how!

AZRIN

(Yells)

What? Give it to me.

Azrin spins around and fires. The front horse tumbles to the ground sending its rider flying and causing several horses and riders behind it to crash to the ground. The remaining Spectres veer around. Again they close in. Azrin steers the horse down a thin path. Just as the Spectres are within feet of reaching them, Azrin pulls a cord on her saddle which opens a bag behind Raine. Caltrops spill out on the path behind them which once again sends horses and riders tumbling. Azrin and Raine break out into an open field. Reston is in sight but columns of enemy troops are marching down roads toward it. Some of the soldiers open fire on them kicking up the dirt all around them. Cannon shots from the walls of the small city start raining down on the enemy troops in an effort to keep them from shooting at Azrin and Raine. Enemy cavalry charge toward Azrin and Raine and are gaining fast when a troop of cavalry spills out of the city and intercepts them. Azrin and Raine race through the city gate to relative safety.

EXT. WITHIN CITY WALLS OF RESTON - MORNING

AZRIN

What the hell was that? What do you mean you don't know how to use a pistol? Everyone knows how to use a pistol. You could have gotten us killed!

RAINE

(Bent over and out of breath)

I'm sorry.

AZRIN

You certainly are. Moorland told me not to ask questions, but I need to know who you are and why I am taking you inside when I should be on my way to the Gap like everyone else.

A crowd gathers around them.

RAINE

Not now.

MILITIA SOLDIER1

Are you messengers from the Capital. Is help on the way?

AZRIN

We're not messengers.

MILITIA SOLDIER1

(Agitated/panicky)

We have heard nothing. How can they abandon us like this?

AZRIN

They've got no one to spare. They've called everyone to the Gap.

MILITIA SOLDIER2

Who are you then?

AZRIN

Your guests until I can figure out how to get out of here.

MILITIA SOLDIER2

Good luck. No one's getting out. They are circling the city as we speak.

AZRIN

(To Raine)

Follow me. I know someone who might be able to help us.

They walk through the city streets into a large brick building near the city wall.

INT. OLD BRICK WAREHOUSE CONVERTED TO HOSPITAL - AFTERNOON

The building is an old warehouse now a makeshift hospital with several hundred wounded soldiers lying everywhere.

Doctors and nurses scurry around trying to tend to their wounds.

AZRIN

Doctor Papus.

DOCTOR PAPUS

Azrin...what are you doing here? I mean it's good to see you, but it's not...you know what I mean.

AZRIN

I know what you mean. This wasn't in the plan, and now I need to figure out how to get us out of here.

DOCTOR PAPUS

(Looking at Raine)

And this is?

RAINE

I am Raine. It is nice to meet you.

DOCTOR PAPUS

Likewise, but I wish it was under better circumstances. I've got to finish up here and then we can talk some more. In the meanwhile we could sure use some help.

RAINE

What can we do?

DOCTOR PAPUS

Bed pans need to be changed.
Patients need to be moved.
Dressings changed. Stop any of the nurses and ask them what they need.

Raine helps the nurses for several hours.

RAINE

(To Doctor Papus)

Have you seen Azrin? I haven't seen her for a while.

DOCTOR PAPUS

I haven't. Take a rest Raine. You've earned it.

RAINE

I'm okay.

DOCTOR PAPUS

It is going to be a rough night. We
ran out of morphine about two hours
ago.

The Doctor walks away.

PATIENT1

I'm in a lot of pain. Can you give
me something?

RAINE

I'll get the doctor.

PATIENT1

No. Don't go. Please don't go.

RAINE

Okay. I'm not going anywhere.

PATIENT1

I don't want to die.

RAINE

It's okay. You just hang in there.
You're going to be fine.

PATIENT1

(Whispers)
I'm afraid.

RAINE

There is no reason to be afraid.

PATIENT1

(Whispers)
Are you still there?

RAINE

(Tears stream down his
cheeks)
I'm here. You're not alone.

The soldier closes his eyes and dies. A nurse stops by,
checks his pulse and covers him with a sheet.

NURSE1

Orderly! We got another free bed!

Raine steps out of the way. He stands on his chair and begins
to sing.

SONG

The cries of pain stop. The ward is quiet except for a few doctor and nurses milling about. Mostly everyone stares at Raine. Raine sits down in a corner and falls asleep. He is surrounded by spirits. The young man who he had just been speaking with gives him a hug.

AZRIN

Raine!

Azrin shakes him.

AZRIN (CONT'D)

Get up. I have a plan.

They move into a back room. Doctor Papus is sitting in a chair behind a desk. His head in his hands. He looks up.

DOCTOR PAPUS

(To Raine)

I have never in all my years seen anything like that. I have never felt anything like that.

RAINE

I am glad I could help.

AZRIN

What happened?

RAINE

I'll tell you later. What's your plan?

DOCTOR PAPUS

Anything you need from me, you got it.

AZRIN

There is a squadron of cavalry that are going to try to break out. The word is that the enemy is for some reason pulling back from the area behind the hospital walls so their line is disorganized and there are holes. We are going to follow the cav out but we need fresh horses.

DOCTOR PAPUS

No problem, but wouldn't it be better to be with them rather than go after them?

AZRIN

Of course. How can we do that? They don't let civilians ride with them. They say we get in the way.

DOCTOR PAPUS

A lot of the wounded are cavalry and we have their uniforms. There have to be some that aren't too bloody.

AZRIN

Come with us.

DOCTOR PAPUS

I can't. I have to stay and help the wounded. I know what you are thinking but a day or two can make all the difference for some of these kids.

They sort through the uniforms and come up with two clean outfits that fit.

EXT. OUTSIDE THE HOSPITAL - MORNING

They mount fresh horses and line up with the cavalry as they are starting to move to the city gate. A Colonel rides up alongside and glances over at Raine. Then he looks at him again.

COLONEL

Column hold fast!

The column stops. The Colonel rides up to Raine and looks at him.

COLONEL (CONT'D)

What's your name trooper?

RAINE

It's Raine sir.

COLONEL

Normally we shoot infiltrators Raine. But you look very familiar to me. Does this mean anything to you?

He pulls open his tunic to reveal a tattoo that is identical to Raine's Byerman pendent except that it has blue for the stone. Raine pulls his necklace from his tunic.

COLONEL (CONT'D)

You are the spitting image of your father.

RAINE

How do you know my father?

COLONEL

He saved my life. This was several years ago. I was leading a column over by Kenkildor when we were ambushed by enemy irregulars. I took four bullets and was left for dead. Then I heard someone singing. I figured it was an angel coming to get me so I called out to provide my precise location. It was your father. Well long story short. He pulled the balls and patched me up good and tight.

RAINE

Do you know what happened to him?

COLONEL

No idea. He told me he had something to do that would save his son from getting into this mess. That's all I know. He obviously didn't meet his objective because here you are in this mess...but I'll tell you what. I owe him one, so you and your girlfriend there are riding behind the spearhead of this squadron and we will cut you a path out of here. You stay tight with me.

RAINE

Yes sir.

COLONEL

Alright, it's showtime.

They move up to front of the column behind a number of large men with lances on massive steeds. Azrin looks over at Raine.

AZRIN

(Voice a little shaky)
Just push through and do not stop for anything.

Raine nods nervously.

COLONEL

Charge!

EXT. FOREST BELOW THE CITY WALLS - MORNING

The column rockets out of the gate and down a hill to a forest below. Shots ring out ahead of them and horses tumble. Hordes of soldiers rush them, but Raine is able to dodge them and push through the lines. He looks around, but Azrin is nowhere to be found. Shots smash into trees around him. He turns back and finds her swinging her sabre as soldiers try to pull her from her horse. A Spectre is closing in on her. Raine dashes at the Spectre on an intercept course, pulls a lance from the ground and smashed it into the Spectre throwing him from his horse. Raine charges at the soldiers surrounding Azrin and kicks them off. Another Spectre races toward Raine and is cut down by the Colonel with a shot to the head. The Spectre starts to get up.

COLONEL

(Yells)

Get out of here!

Azrin and Raine race from the fight at full gallop. They look back to find scattered cav troopers riding about but no enemy in pursuit. After several miles they slow down.

AZRIN

Don't ever do that again. I told you to push through and I expect you to follow my orders.

RAINE

(Sarcastically)

You're welcome, and by the way I am getting a little bit tired of being treated like this. Do you think I want to be here? I didn't ask for this and I'm pretty sure that I am in way over my head!

AZRIN

Why are you here? Why am I here? I think I deserve to know.

RAINE

You're right. I don't even know if this big secret even matters. That mountain range you call the Skull Mountains, that's where I'm from. We're not head hunters or cannibals. That must be a myth to keep people away.

(MORE)

RAINE (CONT'D)

Are you ready for this? I am here to find an ancient book that supposedly holds the secret to protecting the Western Peninsula from the Dark Lord. I have no idea if that book even exists but some ancient prophecy says it does and that I am the one who can find it.

AZRIN

You're making this up.

RAINE

I wish I was.

AZRIN

Why have you gone along with this?

RAINE

How can I not go along with it? What if there is some truth to it? If you've got a better secret weapon I would love to hear about it and if you want to leave, I wouldn't blame you. But I have to keep on going.

They look at each other for several moments.

AZRIN

The sun is going down. We're going to be entering a swamp soon, and it's easy to get lost in there when it's dark so we must move quickly.

EXT. SWAMP - EVENING

At the edge of the swamp Azrin uncovers a canoe. They row into a vast forest of flooded timber. It is quiet except for the occasional bird calling.

AZRIN

Does that thing around your neck have something to do with all this nonsense? Are you in a cult or something?

RAINE

A cult? I don't know what that is.

AZRIN

You know like someone that still believes in God or something.

RAINE

You don't believe in God?

AZRIN

You um...see any signs of God around here? Any signs in that hornets' nest we just went through? I must have missed them because I just saw a lot of people dying. Soon they will breach the city walls and start killing anyone that looks like they (she pauses)...looks like they have a brain.

There is a long pause.

RAINE

There was an old man in my village whose son accidentally drowned in the lake. Everyone in town came to the funeral. They hugged and cried. They brought food and spoke about what a wonderful young man he was. My grandfather sang and people cried some more. The man thanked my grandfather but told him that there is no God because if there were, he would not have let this happen. My grandfather hugged him and told him if he needed anything to let him know. Years later a fire swept down from the mountains and set fire to the man's home. His neighbors pulled him out just in time. The whole town came out and rebuilt his home and gave him furnishings. He told us that there is no God because if there was, he wouldn't have let this happen. Last year the man took ill and lay dying in his bed. The town came out to comfort him in his final moments. His hand was held. He spoke softly. He looked around and said that he had been wrong about God, that God had always been with him. He just hadn't known where to look.

AZRIN

Tell me more about this place you come from. What is it like?

RAINE

What do you want to know?

AZRIN

I don't know, whatever.

RAINE

My mom and me live in a small house on the outside of town. I was thinking about getting my own place now that I am eighteen but I'm not sure how she would take that and besides she is a great cook. Her vegetable soup is second to none. She has won prizes for it at the fair every year I can remember... I really feel stupid talking about this given everything...

AZRIN

Don't...what else? Tell me about other people.

RAINE

Well my grandfather, my father's father, is kind of like the leader of the village. People go to him for advice all the time. He's quiet, not like my father. I think I am a lot like him that way. I watch him and listen and try to think like he thinks but he knows stuff that I just don't know how he could know. Well, enough about me...so is Moorland your father?

AZRIN

What about your friends? What are they like?

RAINE

I really haven't had a lot of time for friends. Now and then I go fishing with Pete and Jim and they are great fun to...

AZRIN

Is there a girl you like?

RAINE

There is this one girl...Robin. But she doesn't even know that I exist. She is so pretty. But I can't talk when I am around her. I say the stupidest things.

AZRIN

You don't have a problem talking to me.

RAINE

That's different, I don't like you...I mean I like you but not like...

AZRIN

You say stupid things to me so you must like me

She smiles but it fades quickly.

RAINE

(Smiling)

Was that a smile?

AZRIN

Shut up.

RAINE

I think it might have been.

AZRIN

We need to pay attention to what we are doing. We are in the land of the invisible people. They will appear soon to escort us. Moorland is not my father. My father was the mayor of a small town called Trid. When the Spectres came, my mom and dad hid me and my brother. They killed my parents and found my brother. A runner found me and took pity so he brought me to the west, to Moorland's station. Runners don't usually waste their time on children unless they belong to someone useful who they are bringing back. I don't know why he risked it. Kids will get you killed.

RAINE

Do you ever see him?

AZRIN

He was killed on the next run. Guys like that never last long.

RAINE

I'm sorry.

They are suddenly surrounded by men in loin cloths and feathers in their hair. They motion for Azrin and Raine to follow them. They abandon the canoe and follow them into the thick bush. The men move silently while Azrin and Raine crash through the brush. After about an hour they arrive at a village with homes made from the living trees whose branches form the structures. A crowd comes up and touches Raine over and over.

Raine (CONT'D)

What is going on? What are they saying?

AZRIN

I'm not sure but I think you are some kind of celebrity.

Raine

I've never seen these people in my life.

The crowd draws back as the chief appears. Azrin hands him a bag of steel arrow points. He nods and then turns to Raine. He stares at Raine. Raine looks away.

AZRIN

Don't look away.

Raine stares back. This lasts several long moments.

Raine

(whispering)
What does he want?

AZRIN

He is sizing you up.

Raine

For what?

The chief puts his hand on Raine's chest and says something.

AZRIN

Your gift. He wants you to share it.

Raine

What gift? I don't have anything.

Raine searches his pockets and pulls out a pocket watch. The chief shakes his head no and pushes it back to Raine. He puts his hand on Raine's chest and speaks again.

RAINED (CONT'D)

Azrin?

AZRIN

Your wind...your breath. I think he
wants you to sing.

Raine begins to sing. The chief smiles.

SONG.

The invisible people dance around the campfire in the central part of their village. After Raine is done, they invite him and Azrin to sit with them around the campfire. A pipe is passed around but the Chief passes it over Raine and shakes his head no as he pats Raine on the head. There is a chuckle. The Chief speaks. Azrin softly tries to translate.

AZRIN

(Translating softly a few
seconds after each of the
Chief's sentences)

It is of great comfort that angels
walk among us in this dark hour. It
is to my shame that I doubted the
resilience of the Great Spirit. It
is an old man's feeble mind that
forgets that there are flowers that
bloom at night. But this old man
has not forgotten whose shoulders
he stands upon. This old man has
not forgotten the oaths taken by
his forefathers. We were the
ancient Oaks on the line. We were
the unbending and the unbreakable
and we will take our place once
again among the free tribes of men
and we will stand our ground.

There are cheers, howls and dancing around the fire. Late into the night Azrin and Raine are lead to a small house where they are to sleep.

INT. SMALL HOUSE - NIGHT

RAINED

Do you know what the Chief was
talking about?

AZRIN

I have no idea. I was thinking you might since you're so popular around here.

They go to sleep. Raine is visited by frantic spirits that shake him. He can't understand anything but the word Spectres!

RAINE

Azrin. Get up! Spectres. They're coming!

AZRIN

Raine. You had a bad dream. They would never come into the swamp. Go back to sleep.

RAINE

Azrin, you have to trust me on this. It wasn't a dream. Get up! I've got to warn them!

EXT. STREET IN FRONT OF SMALL HOUSE - NIGHT

Raine races into the street.

RAINE

(Yelling)
Spectres! Spectres!

AZRIN

You'd better be right! Spectres!

Warriors stream out of their homes. Suddenly Spectres start pouring into village and are immediately attacked by the warriors. Horns sound and more warriors fill the streets. Several warriors surround Azrin and Raine and move them toward a very large tree with stairs around its trunk. One of the Spectres races toward them. Azrin fires her pistol into his chest. He staggers and then keeps coming. Several warriors dive on him from the trees and drag him to the ground. Azrin and Raine scramble up the tree. Arrows rain down from the canopy on Spectres as they try to climb. The stairs are cut loose and the remaining Spectres fall to the ground. They are immediately attacked by warriors. Then as suddenly as it started, the fight ends. Azrin and Raine use ropes to repel down the tree. There are bodies everywhere. Raine and Azrin tend to the wounded. They spilt up. Raine comes across a Spectre sitting up against a tree. He is mortally wounded but still alive. Raine approaches with caution.

SPECTRE

(Whispers)

So the traitor still lives but not for long. My brothers will find you and your clan and you will all die slow, painful deaths. You can't hide in the water forever.

RAINE

What do you mean traitor? Who do you think I am? I have done nothing to you.

The Spectre dies. Raine removes his clothing and dagger and puts them in his backpack. He returns to find Azrin and others kneeling around the Chief's body. Many are crying. Azrin looks on stone faced.

AZRIN

He is dead. I don't get it. That was a suicide mission. They never enter water like this.

RAINE

What is it about water?

AZRIN

I don't know. It weakens them to be on large bodies of water. That is why they died so easy here.

RAINE

Easy? That was easy?

AZRIN

Yes...How did you know they were coming?

RAINE

Maybe it was just a lucky nightmare.

A number of warriors escort Azrin and Raine to the far edge of the swamp. A canoe is uncovered and the two set out on a large river. Raine looks back and the warriors are gone.

EXT. ON A RIVER - EARLY MORNING

Azrin looks around and spots Spectres following them along the hillsides.

AZRIN

(Her voice a little shaky)
There are Spectres following us.

RAINE

(Looks around)
What are we going to do?

AZRIN

I'll let you know as soon as I figure it out. The problem is that there are falls just a half mile down. Take your pack off. We're going to have to go over. No matter what stay in the water.

They round a corner in the river. There in the water and on the bank are figures dressed in black from head to toe.

AZRIN (CONT'D)

Oh shit.

RAINE

Who are they?

AZRIN

Black Riders. This just keeps getting better and better. Just stay cool. Don't make a move for your weapons. Not that you would anyway. I'll do all of the talking.

RAINE

The Spectres are gone.

AZRIN

I'm not surprised. Black Riders hunt Spectres.

RAINE

So they are on our side?

AZRIN

They aren't on anyone's side.

RAINE

Have you spoken to them before?

AZRIN

I've never seen them this close before, but I've seen their handy work. It isn't pretty. They're into torture. And don't expect them to speak. They live in total silence.

The Black Riders catch their boat and pull it into shore. They look at Raine's green eyes. They all have green eyes (all of Raine's people have green eyes). Azrin notices the resemblance between Raine and the Black Riders.

AZRIN (CONT'D)

(Whispers)

You look like them.

Suddenly one of them puts his hand over Azrin's mouth. She pulls away.

RAINE

(Yells)

Leave her alone!

EXT. BLACK RIDER CAMP - MORNING

Several Black Riders grab them both and haul them up the hill to a small encampment. The Lead Rider walks over with his entourage. He looks at Raine and motions to his people. A circle of Riders forms and Azrin is pushed into the center. Her sword is thrown on the ground in front of her. A warrior steps out with his sword. He appears to be twice her size.

AZRIN

Well, this doesn't look good.

RAINE

No! What are you doing? She has done nothing to you. Let her go! Take me instead! I'm the one you want.

Raine tries to pull away but can't. Azrin picks up her sword and faces off against the large Rider. He lunges at her and she parries the blow but stumbles back. She charges at him their swords clashing over and over. Back and forth the fight goes until suddenly Azrin's sword flies from her hand and lands near Raine. She is on her knees and out of breath.

AZRIN

(Short of breath)

Raine. Just keep on going. Put this behind you. You don't need me.

She looks at the Rider.

AZRIN (CONT'D)

(To the Rider)

Just do it!

RAINE

(Yells)

Do not do this! Get off of me!

The warriors let him go. Raine picks up Azrin's sword.

RAINE (CONT'D)

Get away from her! You want to
fight someone then fight me!

The warrior puts away his sword and offers Azrin a hand up. When she is on her feet the warrior smacks her and points at Raine. The crowd ushers Raine and Azrin to a large tent filled with food.

RAINE (CONT'D)

(Whispering)

I think we just passed a test.

AZRIN

(Whispering)

I think I just got scolded.

Riders come into camp covered in blood and dragging two Spectre bodies. One holds up two fingers.

RAINE

(Whispering)

I think we should refrain from
eating this meat.

AZRIN

(Whispering)

What would you have done if he
hadn't put his sword away?

RAINE

(Whispering)

I would have been killed trying to
save your butt. I have no idea how
to use one those things.

AZRIN

(Whispering)

I can't get over how much you look
like them.

RAINE

(Whispering)

I am pretty sure I am related to
them. I think they are descendants
of the other group that escaped
from the underground city.

AZRIN
(Whispering)
What do you mean?

RAINE
(Whispering)
When the Dark Lords forces attacked the city of my ancestors, the only people who escaped were those that could get to boats and cross the lake to the tunnels on the far side. There were two tunnels. My ancestors went into one and their ancestors went into the other. Neither group ever saw the other again, until now.

The Rider that fought Azrin taps her on the shoulder and motions for her to follow him. He hands her a sword and draws his. He shows her in slow motion how to parry an attack. They practice together faster and faster. The Lead Rider puts a pendent around Raine's neck. It is in the shape of a wolf's head. Raine nods. The next morning when Azrin and Raine wake up the Black Riders have already pulled up their camp and are leaving. There are two horses left for them. Azrin and Raine ride past miles of monuments to war heroes. Many are very old and crumbling. In the distance several mausoleums stand stories tall. As night falls the shadow of a large wall looms ahead of them. There are lights clustered against the wall to the south. A few dwellings can just be made out dead ahead. Azrin stops and dismounts. She motions for Raine to stay where he is. He dismounts and holds the horses. She moves swiftly to one of the dwellings and slips inside. To Raine's horror he watches as a group of enemy secret police charge out of one of the dwellings and into the house that Azrin went in. Shots are fired.

INT. SMALL DWELLING - NIGHT

Azrin presses the wound on a young man's stomach. They pull her away and jack her up against the wall.

AZRIN
He'll bleed to death. What are you doing? Why are you here?

POLICE CHIEF
Shut up! Search the place.

A Spectre walks in. He looks around.

SPECTRE (RAINE IN DISGUISE)
 (Whispers to the police
 chief)
 You and your men are to leave. I
 will take it from here.

POLICE CHIEF
 But sir...this is highly unusual.

The Spectre turns toward the Police Chief.

SPECTRE (RAINE IN DISGUISE)
 (Whispers)
 I won't ask you again.

POLICE CHIEF
 Yes sir. Alright, everyone out now!

The Police leave. The Spectre closes the door.

WOMAN
 (Frightened)
 No...please.

Azrin rushes the Spectre. He catches her punch just short of
 his nose.

SPECTRE (RAINE IN DISGUISE)
 Azin, it's me Raine!

Raine pulls the veil back and takes off the purple glasses.

AZRIN
 What the hell? You scared the shit
 out of me. Where did you get that...?

RAINE
 Later. We need to get out of here.

AZRIN
 Mary start screaming.

Mary screams. Azrin and Raine rush over to the young man.

YOUNG MAN
 (Labored breathing)
 I'm screwed.

AZRIN
 No, you're not. Give me a hand
 here.

Raine starts to pick him up. The young man yells in pain.

YOUNG MAN

(Labored breathing)

No, Azrin. I will cover for you. I will holler as long as I can. Pull me into the tunnel.

AZRIN

But then...

RAINE

What's he talking about? We can't leave him...

AZRIN

He's right...we don't have any choice.

Raine looks at Azrin. She shakes her head no (he's not going to make it). Azrin and Raine pull him into the tunnel. The young man continues to scream. Raine, Azrin, Mary and the others race down the tunnel that goes under the wall. They can hear the young man's hollers fade. At the far end of the tunnel Mary pulls a lever which fills in the tunnel. Raine stands dumbstruck.

RAINE

You...you just buried him alive.

AZRIN

(To Raine)

Believe me when I tell you that she did him a favor. They would have tortured him. Now get moving! It isn't going to take them long to figure this out.

MARY

Get him somewhere to rest if you can Azrin.

AZRIN

Stay close to the water.

MARY

Same to you.

EXT. WOODS - NIGHT

They part ways. Azrin and Raine travel through the night. There are horses already saddled in a remote clearing in the woods.

EXT. MASSIVE CEMETERY - MORNING

They pass through the ancient ruins of an even bigger wall. The monuments to the dead become ever more sparse until there are no more. Raine checks his map. There should be a stream but it isn't there anymore. They follow the dry stream bed to a lake that borders a cave in the side of the mountain. They wade through the shallows of the lake and enter the cave.

INT. CAVE - MORNING

Not far in they discover that it has been blocked solid.

Raine

This was where they came out centuries ago. There must have been a cave-in at some time.

Azrin

The Spectres did it. The other cave will be the same.

Raine

How do you know?

Azrin

The word is that there is a Spectre monastery somewhere in these mountains. It all makes sense. When they took the city, they never left. If we find their monastery, we find the entrance.

Raine sits down. Azrin sits next to him.

Raine

I can use the Spectre suit to get inside their monastery.

Azrin

That's crazy.

Raine

I know, but what is even more crazy is that the Spectre who I took it from in the swamp knew who I was. Before he died he called me a traitor like I was one of them at some time. I can do this. With the veil and glasses, they won't know who I am. I haven't come this far to turn back now.

AZRIN

Let's get some rest. You'll need to
be fresh to pull this off.

She lays down next to him and puts her arm around him.

AZRIN (CONT'D)

(Whispers)
For warmth.

EXT. WOODS ACROSS THE VALLEY FROM MONASTERY - MORNING

Azrin and Raine find the Spectre monastery but keep a safe distance. Raine puts on the Spectre outfit and turns to Azrin.

RAINE

How do I look?

AZRIN

Good enough to kill. Don't talk if
you don't have to. If you have to,
remember to whisper. Are you sure
you want to do this?

RAINE

I'm sure I have to. Don't worry,
I'll be fine.

AZRIN

I'll wait here.

RAINE

If I am not out in a few hours, get
out of here. Well, here I go.

AZRIN

(Azrin gives him a hug.)
Be careful.

RAINE

I'll want another one of those when
I get back.

Raine walks down to a path that takes him to the monastery.

INT. SPECTRE MONASTERY - MORNING

Spectres are milling around but say nothing to him. The monastery is dark and silent. Figures pass him in the hall.

SPECTRE

Brother, are you coming to the ceremony?

Raine turns around and nods. He follows the Spectre into a large round domed room. The room is filled with Spectres. On the walls hang the necklaces of Byerman. A large chandelier is made up of skeletons. A large round door opens in the center of the room and the Spectres grab torches from the walls and walk down a stone staircase. The stairs seem to go on for miles. Raine follows their lead. Then before him appears a massive cave and the underground city perched on the edge of a dry lake bed. The two tunnels can just be made out in the distance.

INT. UNDERGROUND CITY - MORNING

The Spectres gather beneath a tall tower. Raine stays back a little. From atop the tower we can just barely hear a Spectre speaking. Then they start throwing people from the tower. The victim's screams pierce the silence. Raine repels in horror but keeps from making a sound. The blood sprays on the Spectres who put out their arms to catch as much of it as they can as they sway back and forth in their revelry at each horrible death. Raine backs into a house unseen as the Spectres are engaged in their ritual. Once the ceremony ends, they leave the underground city and close the large round door behind them. Raine sits for a while trying not to get sick. He pulls off the veil and glasses and makes his way up to the top of the tower to look out over the city and try to figure out where the book might be. He looks down at the bodies. Softly he sings.

SONG

Hundreds of shadowy spirits surround him and join in the song. Afterward they surround him but he can only hear faint whispers. He hears the word Istal over and over. Then the spirits of those that were just killed appear.

SPIRIT1

Are you God?

RAINE

No...I am not God. I am sorry for what happened to you.

SPIRIT2

Who are you? Can you help us find our way?

RAINE

I don't know. I am here to find a book written ages ago and with it I may be able to help you. But I don't know where to begin looking. I can hear the spirits of my ancestors all around, but I can't make out what they are saying. It will be in the tomb of Istal. He was the founder of my people.

SPIRIT1

They have been dead for so long and their souls so repressed by the Spectres that they have passed into shadow.

RAINE

I've got to find the book. There has to be a way.

SPIRIT1

We will look for you. We can move through the rocks as swiftly as the air.

SPIRIT3

Don't go anywhere.

RAINE

I'll be right here.

One of the ancient spirits (a shadow) takes him by the hand. It is cold but somehow comforting. Visions come to Raine of the attack by the Dark Lord's forces that destroyed the underground city. He watches the boats make their way to the safety of the two tunnels at the far end of the lake.

RAINE (CONT'D)

(Whispers)

I will do what I can.

SPIRIT1

We think we found what you are looking for. Follow us.

RAINE

What did you find? Is it a book?

The spirits don't reply. They lead Raine to a shallow pool of water deep within the earth.

SPIRIT3

Under the water is a passage to a great hall with a large book at its center. There is no body buried there. There is no spirit that inhabits that chamber.

RAINE

It has to be his book. How do I get to the passage?

SPIRIT2

We don't know. We can see the passage and the book beyond, but we can't go there.

RAINE

Why can't you go there?

SPIRIT1

We can't go beyond a certain distance from where we died. I don't know why. It's like we are inside a bubble.

RAINE

Well that's a stupid rule. I'd like to know who comes up with this stuff.

Raine wakes with a start next to the pool of water. His torch is nearly extinguished.

RAINE (CONT'D)

(To himself)

This looks familiar.

Raine walks into the pool and looks down. A yellow stone glimmers below his feet. He picks up the stone and suddenly, all of the water rushes from the pool and reveals a stone staircase to a passageway. He walks down a hallway and into another huge cave. In the center is a large columned building.

RAINE (CONT'D)

(Reading inscription on the door to himself)

To the memory of Istal. The only one of the fallen to drink the water. May he now find peace with his beloved Evelyn who was murdered by his brothers.

INT. ISTAL'S TOMB - LATE MORNING

Raine enters. The chamber is filled with ancient weapons and armor. At the center on a marble table is a large book.

Suddenly several Spectres enter the room.

SPECTRE1
(Whispers)
What have we here?

Raine grabs the book and runs for the entrance. A Spectre grabs him, pulls the book from his arms and throws him to the ground.

SPECTRE1 (CONT'D)
(Whispers)
Better yet, what are you doing here? Well, all answers in good time.

The Spectre looks in the book.

SPECTRE1 (CONT'D)
(Whispers)
Burn it!

RAINE
(Yells)
No!

A spectre slugs Raine knocking him out. They gag him.

SPECTRE1
(Whispers)
Go easy brother. The Dark Lord will want to speak with him.

The Spectre takes Raine's necklace off and puts it around his own neck.

SPECTRE1 (CONT'D)
(Whispers)
He won't be needing this anymore.

EXT. OUTSIDE THE MONASTERY - AFTERNOON

Raine is tied up and loaded into an iron caged wagon. Azrin sees this and becomes distraught. She rides away. The wagon moves west toward the Gap. The column of wagons Raine is in is attacked by Black Riders.

Several attempts are made by Spectres to get into the iron bar wagon and kill Raine but each Spectre is cut down during their attempt. A hooded Rider climbs in and unlocks Raine's shackles. The hood is drawn back to reveal that it's Azrin. She has a bruised cheek.

AZRIN

Let's get out of here!

RAINE

I'm right behind you!

EXT. MOUNTAINS - AFTERNOON

Azrin has a horse for Raine. They ride up into the mountains. In the distance the enemy's armies can be seen massing at the Gap. A city upon a hill in front of the Gap is where the road Raine had been on leads. Behind them, Spectres are in pursuit. They cross several streams and no longer see the Spectres behind them. Azrin stops after another stream crossing. Raine is covered in blood.

AZRIN

Are you okay?

RAINE

No...I'm not okay. I had the book in my hands. I had it in my hands. I didn't even get a look inside. We are lost...

AZRIN

We are not lost. You are alive. They don't usually take prisoners! We can disappear.

RAINE

I have failed. There is no hope now.

AZRIN

So all that talk about God was just a bunch of crap? Well you had me starting to believe that crap.

Raine looks at her. His face is covered in blood.

AZRIN (CONT'D)

Let's wash your face off.

Raine pours water on his face.

RAINE

(Softly to himself)

The spirit and the water are the same. They are the creators and sustainers of life. They are within us and all around us, flowing and falling. I am the vessel that holds the water; the catcher of the rain. When others thirst...

AZRIN

So what happened in there? The spectres all came rushing out holding their heads and then not five minutes later they all ran back in.

Raine looks up at her.

RAINE

I will offer my cup and they will be refreshed and renewed.

AZRIN

You sang didn't you?

RAINE

Yes.

AZRIN

Oh my God!

RAINE

Get me to the Gap!

They race to the Gap at top speed. The cannon fire in the distance grows louder and louder.

EXT. THE GAP (IN THE MOUNTAINS) - LATE AFTERNOON

At the edge of a cliff that overlooks the Gap, the devastation of the western army shocks them both. The army is in disarray. All of their cannons have been destroyed. Western soldiers are streaming away from their breast works. The enemy is forming their lines for a final assault. The enemy cannons stop as the enemy infantry begin their advance. Raine begins to sing.

SONG

The western troops stop and reform their lines. In unison they pound the butts of their muskets on the ground giving the song a percussion beat. The enemy stops and begins to disassemble. The song slows and in the quit a soldier yells "Charge!" The western troops charge. They smash into the enemy ranks who retreat in confusion toward the city on the hill. The city is surrounded by the western army.

RAINE

I've got to get down there.

AZRIN

What do you mean, it's a route? The city is surrounded. It's over.

RAINE

The Dark Lord is in that city.

AZRIN

You're feeling a little full of yourself aren't you? Do you think you really have a chance against him? Let's just go now. The army will finish this.

RAINE

It is my place to be with them.

AZRIN

Then our contract is over. I have taken you to the book and brought you back. If you want to get yourself killed now, that's up to you but I won't be around to watch it.

She storms away.

RAINE

(Yells to her)

Azrin wait...would you please wait?

She doesn't turn back. Raine looks into the Gap. The fighting continues in the hills below the city. He races down from the cliff. On the way he runs into a unit of snipers and spots Ben.

BEN

Was that you?

RAINE

It was. I am glad to see that you are well.

BEN

Likewise, Raine. These are the members of my sniper unit. Peggy, Alex, Turtin and Bendo.

RAINE

It's very nice to meet you all. I must go...

BEN

We're going with you.

RAINE

Ben. That is not a good idea. I will be a target...

BEN

That is why you need us. We're going.

EXT. HILLS BELOW THE GREEN CITY - LATE AFTERNOON

They move down the cliffs to the valley floor and catch up with the army on the hills below the city. Raine begins to sing.

SONG

Raine's voice can be heard over the thunder of the guns. The western army pushes up the hill. Spectres descend in waves on horseback directly at Raine. Ben and his snipers cut them down one by one. They walk near one of the dead Spectres and Raine notices his Byerman necklace around his neck. He removes it and puts it on without skipping a note. The western army pours into the city. Raine, Ben and the others stop just inside to catch their breath.

EXT. GREEN CITY - EARLY EVENING

The fighting continues street by street. A soldier runs up to Raine. Ben stops him short.

BEN

Hold it. State your business.

SOLDIER

There is a gravely ill man among the freed prisoners that heard you singing and told me to fetch you. He says he's your father.

RAINE

Take me to him.

SOLDIER

We found them in the bowels of the building. They had been tortured.

BEN

Your father has been missing?

RAINE

He left about 10 years ago and never returned.

They race through the city streets. The soldier leads them into a huge building with massive columns running its length that bend inward to form a peaked ceiling.

INT. MASSIVE ANCIENT STONE STRUCTURE - AFTERNOON

At the far end a number of emaciated men and women are being tended by medics.

BEN

That's a long time to be away. Will you recognize him?

RAINE

I'm sure I will.

SOLDIER

That is him.

He points to a man sitting against the wall.

RAINE

Dad?

MAN

Raine? Oh...son I am so glad to see you. Come and give me a hug.

The man reaches his hands out. There is a wedding ring on his finger. Ben grabs Raine and pulls him back. He cocks his rifle.

RAINE

Ben, what are you doing? It's my father.

MAN

What is going on? Let my son go.

BEN

(To Raine)

Ask him something that only your father would know.

RAINE

It's him Ben.

BEN

Do it!

MAN

(The Man starts crying)

I don't have that long...

RAINE

Dad. I'm sorry. Please tell me the color of the stone in Sarriff's Byerman necklace.

MAN

What have they done to you?

RAINE

Dad, please answer the question.

MAN

I don't remember the color. They tortured me.

RAINE

Dad, do you remember his necklace?

MAN

Yes, with the mountain and the bird, but I can't remember the color of the stone.

Raine starts to back away.

BEN

What's wrong?

RAINE

My grandfather is the only Byerman who never had a necklace.

Ben points his rifle at the man who stands up and pulls a knife from under his shirt. Ben shoots him between the eyes.

BEN

(Yells)

Run!

Raine and the others run as fast as they can. Raine turns to look back and sees Ben facing off against the man who is standing up despite the hole in his forehead. Ben takes his rifle by the barrel and repeatedly slams it into the man's head, but the man keeps coming at him. With one blow, Ben sinks to the floor. The Dark Lord looks at Raine. Soldiers pour into the hall as it begins to rain.

RAINE

I think I have had just about
enough of this.

He begins to sing.

SONG

The Dark Lord stammers back and then as if walking slowly against a hard wind he moves toward Raine. The soldiers standing around start to sing along. The Dark Lord shutters but still pushes toward Raine. Raine stands his ground. The Dark Lord's face distorts to the faces of souls crying out. Azrin walks in, stands beside Raine and begins to sing just as the Dark Lord is about to reach him. The Dark Lord stops and quivers. Raine hugs Azrin and turns her away from the Dark Lord as the Dark Lord suddenly explodes in a burst of blue flame that blows the roof off the building. The dust slowly clears. Soldiers mill about. Azrin stands up and looks over at Raine. He is not moving. She runs to him.

AZRIN

Raine...Raine!

She shakes him.

AZRIN (CONT'D)

Come on Raine.

She feels for a pulse.

AZRIN (CONT'D)

Don't do this to me. Medic! Medic!

Two medics race over and check him.

MEDIC1
I've got no pulse.

MEDIC2
Starting CPR.

MEDIC1
Back up Miss. Give us some room to
work.

They perform CPR but he does not revive.

MEDIC2
I'm sorry, he is gone.

AZRIN
No...that can't be. You're wrong. Now
do something!

The medics back away. Azrin kneels next to Raine. Tears slip
down her cheeks.

AZRIN (CONT'D)
(Deeply sorrowful)
Oh Raine...no.

An elderly soldier in a colorful uniform (who looks like
Sarriff) steps to the front of the crowd that has gathered.

ELDERLY SOLDIER
Tell him Azrin. Tell him what you
have wanted to say.

AZRIN
I love you, Raine.

Raine takes a deep breath and opens his eyes.

AZRIN (CONT'D)
Oh my God!

RAINE
I had the strangest dream. In it
you told me you loved me.

He smiles. Azrin hugs him and they kiss. Ben walks over to
them rubbing his jaw.

BEN
What happened? Where's the Dark
Lord?

RAINE

Destroyed. But how did you know it was him?

BEN

The idiot left a ring on. That is the first thing that gets taken off prisoners.

Ben and Azrin help Raine up. They walk out into the pouring rain. They lift their hands and faces to the sky.

BEN (CONT'D)

(In a thundering voice)
Let it rain!

EXT. RAINE'S VILLAGE - MORNING

Raine returns home and brings Azrin with him. They are engaged. The town is there to greet them. Raine's mom gives him a big, long hug.

SARAH

I was so worried.

RAINE

It's good to be home. There's someone I want you to meet. Mom, this is Azrin. Azrin this is my mom.

Sarah hugs Azrin.

AZRIN

It's a pleasure to meet you.

RAINE

I've asked her to marry me.

SARAH

(She gives Azrin another big hug.)
You must be hungry and exhausted, come to the house and I will fix you some vegetable soup.

Sarah pauses for a few moments.

SARAH (CONT'D)

Raine, there is something I need to tell you...

RAINE

It's okay. I know. Pop is with Dad
now.

EXT. TOWN COMMON - DAY

The wedding is held. Moorland gives Azrin away. Ben is the best man. At the wedding and reception are Dark Riders and Invisible people. The Dark Rider leader tears up. At the reception Ben gives the toast.

BEN

How do you find the words to toast
the man and women who...who saved me
and everyone else from a life of
pain and misery? You can tell them
thank you, but that is not enough.
You can tell them you love them
both, but they know that already.
So what I will tell them is that my
wife could not be here because she
is nursing our new-born son and his
name is Raine Azrin Tallton. May
you both live in peace all the rest
of your days.

A cheer goes up. After dinner Azrin and Raine dance as
Byerman sing.

AZRIN

There is no white confetti like the
first time we danced.

RAINE

(Smiling)

I was wondering if you... (She kisses
him)

Nine months later Azrin gives birth to their first child. It
is a girl.