

"DAMNED"

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"DAMNED"

FADE IN:

SUBTITLE: BOHEMIA, 10TH CENTURY

EXT. BOHEMIA - DAY

A German cohort marches through the lands of Bohemia. KING OTTO leads the cohort by way of carriage and personal guard. He is followed by an army over four-hundred strong.

Throughout the army and on the carriage are flags and marks of the Holy Roman Empire: a flag of yellow with a black bird in the center.

The cohort passes villages and rides through lush terrain and vast plains. In the distance are the castles of Prague, capital of Bohemia.

EXT. PRAGUE - DAY

The cohort arrives in the capital and marches straight for the central castle. The Bohemian flag battles with the high winds on the castle towers.

MSTISLAV looks on from the street crowd as the cohort passes by. He is cloaked, not wanting to be seen by others. He is a tall man, his face twisted in disgust at the site of the Germans.

The cohort is met at the gates of the castle by KING BOLESLAV I and a group of castle guards. King Boleslav is an average man with long hair and beard.

King Otto emerges from the carriage with official documents in hand. Guards accompany him on either side as he marches towards King Boleslav.

A clergy man runs up behind King Otto with a smooth tablet and jar of ink in hand. He kneels with it over his head between the two kings.

King Otto places the documents on the tablet.

KING OTTO

These documents already bear my
seal.

King Otto withdraws a quill pen from within his robes. He offers it to Boleslav. Boleslav accepts the pen and looks over the documents.

Otto looks around and sees a church with the Christian cross.

KING OTTO

I see you have already embraced the
religion of our empire.

Boleslav signs both documents.

BOLESLAV

One mustn't quarrel over religion,
but embrace it.

Boleslav hands the pen back to Otto.

BOLESLAV

Now we are at peace.

Otto places the pen back in his robes and takes both documents off of the tablet.

KING OTTO

The renewed cooperation of our
lands is at hand, King Boleslav.
And on behalf of the Holy Roman
Empire, I welcome you.

BOLESLAV

You have come far, King Otto, will
you rest with us?

KING OTTO

Thank you for your concern, but
there is much to do back in
Germany.

BOLESLAV

Understood.

The clergy man runs back to the army, and the kings turn separate ways.

Mstislav shoves his way through the crowd and leaves the city.

EXT. BOHEMIA - DAY

The German cohort passes by Mstislav on their departure. Mstislav steps off of the main road and watches them go. He pulls up his hood and continues walking.

Soon the cohort is beyond Mstislav's view and he withdraws his hood.

EXT. WALLERN - NIGHT

Night falls on the village of Wallern as Mstislav arrives. He hurries through the village and enters one of the huts.

INT. MSTISLAV'S HUT - CONTINUOUS

Mstislav slams the hut door shut. He grabs a sack and starts shovelling clothing and food in it unaware of the watching eyes behind the curtain divider.

An old hand slowly pulls the curtain aside to reveal Mstislav's FATHER sitting on a makeshift cot. His clothes look no more than rags draped over a brittle cage. His face dark with shadow from the wrinkles of time.

FATHER

So you will run away again, just like last time.

Mstislav doesn't stop. He keeps shoveling his stuff into the sack.

FATHER

I thought you gained some courage when you returned last, but I see the same coward as always. You are afraid, Mstislav, afraid of change.

Mstislav tosses his sack towards his own cot. Anger boils beneath his collar.

MSTISLAV

No, father, it is they who are cowards. Accepting all that is the Holy Roman Empire instead of standing up for the people. Are we not Bohemians? This is a betrayal.

FATHER

If you believe that, then you would stay and fight.

Mstislav retrieves his discarded sack.

MSTISLAV

Not one Bohemian protested the signing of the documents. There is no will to fight in Bohemia.

FATHER

Did you protest it?

A long silence. The father lets go of the curtain and it falls, dividing father from son again.

FATHER

You are the same as the rest.

Mstislav shakes his head.

MSTISLAV

No, father.

Mstislav yanks the hut door aside and is gone into the night.

ROLL TITLE

EXT. ALPS - DAY

Mstislav makes his way through the misty, damp forest. Visibility is poor as he ducks branches and pushes aside shrubs. It is eerily quiet.

Mstislav stops and looks around.

Suddenly he jerks his body 180 degrees and glares into the distance behind.

What appears to be an outline of a person disperses into the mist and is no more.

Mstislav starts walking backwards nervously. His steps are uneasy, his balance off.

He turns slowly back to the way he was going.

Mstislav is startled as he comes face to face with DARIUS standing directly in his path.

Darius is an average height male in his early twenties. His hair is tied back in a pony tail beneath the edge of his fur hat and his clothes are made of rich cloth.

DARIUS

You look as if you've seen a ghost,
traveller.

Mstislav takes a step back.

MSTISLAV

I thought I was being followed, but
it was the fog playing tricks on
me.

DARIUS

The fog does that. Are you lost?

MSTISLAV

Can one be lost if they don't know
where they are going to begin with?

Darius grunts.

DARIUS

The name is Darius, and you are?

MSTISLAV

Mstislav.

DARIUS

Well, Mstislav, since you obviously
have no idea where you are going,
you must be...

Mstislav gives him a stern look.

DARIUS

...My town is nearby. Why don't
you join me for a meal?

MSTISLAV

That would be nice.

Darius WHISTLES. Two men appear through the fog with horses
in tow.

DARIUS

Rest your legs.

Darius pulls a horse forward from one of the men and hands it
to Mstislav.

Darius jumps on the other horse. The men lead each horse
back into the fog.

INT. TAVERN - NIGHT

A small tavern, not overly crowded. Mstislav and Darius are
seated by a counter over mugs of ale.

MSTISLAV

It's been weeks since I had a good
meal. Thank you, Darius.

Darius downs the last of his ale.

DARIUS

Don't mention it. I needed an
excuse to come here anyway.

Darius shoots a fast glance at the waitress.

The waitress is FLAVIA. A short, good looking woman. She wears a dress and is passing out drinks to peasants. Her hair is in two braids tied together where her neck meets the head.

DARIUS

Where is it you are coming from,
Mstislav?

MSTISLAV

Bohemia.

Darius thinks for a moment.

DARIUS

You are escaping the grasps of the
empire?

Mstislav looks in shock.

DARIUS

News travels fast of their
expansion. I take it my assumption
is correct?

MSTISLAV

Bohemia is no longer the home I
knew it to be.

DARIUS

You are in luck, Mstislav. No
empire here. Welcome to Romania.

Darius stands up.

DARIUS

I'll get us another drink.

He weaves through a few people and takes up an empty spot by the bar. He waves down Flavia.

Flavia comes over, a comforting smile on her face.

FLAVIA

What will be, Darius?

DARIUS

Two more ale.

Flavia grabs two pints from under the counter and turns to the barrels. She fills them and places them on the counter.

FLAVIA

There you are.

DARIUS

You are looking wonderful as always.

FLAVIA

I'm busy, Darius. There are lots of customers.

Darius gently takes hold of her hand mindful of the drinks.

DARIUS

Please, I'm asking you again, marry me. I love you, Flavia, since the moment I laid eyes on you. How many more times must I ask before you say yes?

Flavia shakes his hand loose.

FLAVIA

At least another dozen, and a dozen more and a dozen more. Even that might not be enough.

DARIUS

Don't make me beg. I'm begging you.

She LAUGHS.

FLAVIA

The answer is no, Darius. I'm
busy.

Flavia gives him a playful smile and walks away.

Darius lingers a moment longer before taking up the ales and
leaving the bar.

EXT. TAVERN - NIGHT

The two men from the forest stand waiting as Darius and
Mstislav exit the tavern. Darius gets on one of the horses
and looks down at Mstislav.

DARIUS

Only a fool would continue onward
on a night like this. There is an
inn down the road near the edge of
town, and you look like you could
use a good sleep. Should I not see
you again, then have a safe
journey, Mstislav.

MSTISLAV

Thank you.

Darius is lead off by his two guards. Mstislav waits outside
the tavern and leans up against the building.

Lights blur in the distance through the mist. The faint glow
of a crescent moon is visible just over the mountain peaks.

FLAVIA (O.S.)

Mysteriously beautiful, isn't it?

Mstislav jumps forward away from the building.

MSTISLAV

(turning to Flavia)

Somehow it calms me.

Flavia walks up behind him.

FLAVIA

I believe a scenery that calms us
reflects our hearts.

Mstislav continues looking at the moon. Flavia glances up at
the tall man.

FLAVIA

So are you a good friend of the
Duke's?

MSTISLAV

I'm just a random traveller. We
bumped paths outside town.

FLAVIA

Where are you going?

MSTISLAV

I'll know when I get there.

He meets Flavia's eyes and gives his first smile.

MSTISLAV

Darius mentioned an inn down the
road. Might you be so kind as to
show me?

FLAVIA

I'll show you if you walk me home
after, and tell me your name.

Mstislav starts walking down the road.

MSTISLAV

A fair trade. The name is
Mstislav.

Flavia quickly jumps up next to him and hooks her arm through
his.

FLAVIA

I knew you were a gentleman. You
can call me Flavia.

EXT. ROMANIAN TOWN - NIGHT

Mstislav walks with a serious stride. Right next to him,
latched by the arm is Flavia acting like the happiest person
alive.

Suddenly Flavia calms down and removes her arm from the
crutch of Mstislav's.

FLAVIA

Well, this is my home. Thanks for
the escort.

MSTISLAV

What about the inn?

Flavia points a dainty finger to the building next to her
house. A sign reading 'THE HOLLOWS INN' dangles from the
front of the next building.

FLAVIA

Right there.

Flavia takes a few steps towards her door before swinging
back in Mstislav's direction.

FLAVIA

I wish you well on your travels,
Mstislav. Perhaps you will find
what you are after through your
journey.

MSTISLAV

Maybe. Good night, Flavia, and
farewell.

Mstislav, tucks his head into his shoulders and walks to the
Inn.

Flavia takes light steps to her door before disappearing in the darkness.

EXT. ROMANIAN TOWN - DAY

It's almost noon, but you couldn't tell it by the darkness of day. Fog and mist block any sight of view.

Mstislav stands at the edge of the town just beyond the inn with bag on his back. His blank face gradually turns a sinister grin.

Engulfed in mist, Mstislav turns back to the town and makes his way through the street.

INT. TAVERN - DAY

Mstislav walks in and sits by a window. He places his sack on the chair next to him and looks out into the fog.

An outline of a person begins to appear deep in the fog. Mstislav's concentration is drawn to this apparition.

FLAVIA (O.S.)

Didn't expect to see you again.

The apparition disappears from sight as Mstislav turns to see Flavia sitting across from him.

MSTISLAV

The fog seems heavier today. I would lose my way.

FLAVIA

Does that matter to a nomad?

MSTISLAV

Aside from safety, it shouldn't.

Flavia stands abruptly.

FLAVIA

Can I get you a drink?

Before Mstislav can reply Flavia takes off to the bar.

Mstislav looks back outside and strains his eyes to try and make something out in the fog...NOTHING.

Flavia returns with the drinks and slams it down hard in front of Mstislav. She sits down and takes a peak outside.

FLAVIA

You see something out there?

Mstislav takes the drink in hand.

MSTISLAV

It's nothing.

He takes a sip.

MSTISLAV

I was thinking I might stay here a while.

Flavia gives a shocked smile.

FLAVIA

Why the change of heart?

MSTISLAV

I think it suits me.

FLAVIA

The town will have you needing a job.

MSTISLAV

I'll manage something. What I could use is a tour of the town to begin with.

Mstislav shoots an inquisitive glance at Flavia.

She recoils playfully.

FLAVIA

I could show you around town, maybe tomorrow? That is if you haven't changed your mind by then.

Mstislav grins and takes another drink.

The tavern door FLIES open. Darius walks in tall and proud. His guards trail close behind and close the door.

Darius removes his gloves and fur hat and looks around. His gaze stops on Flavia and Mstislav. He takes a step towards them.

DARIUS

The fog has kept you, it seems.

MSTISLAV

No sense in getting more lost than I already am.

DARIUS

The usual darling.

Flavia gets up half in disgust. Darius steps towards the seat Flavia just occupied.

DARIUS

Mind if I join you?

MSTISLAV

(motioning to the seat)

Please.

Darius sits and slaps his gloves down next to him on the table, then places the fur hat on them. His guards remain near the door.

DARIUS

Beautiful, isn't she?

Mstislav looks beyond the bar to see her hair haloed by the cooking fire. He nods.

DARIUS

I wish one day to make her my wife,
but she refuses me.

MSTISLAV

Does she say why?

DARIUS

No, she just walks away.

(pause)

I'd do anything for her, anything
to make her mine. What more could
a woman want?

MSTISLAV

I honestly don't know.

Darius looks back to watch Flavia work.

DARIUS

For as long as I've been here, I've
come to eat in this tavern just to
watch her.

(now, very serious)

It's as if I'm under her spell.

He turns back to Mstislav.

MSTISLAV

You believe in such things?

DARIUS

(laughing)

Not really. I'd think I could do
better than fall under to a witch,
my friend.

MSTISLAV

I thought not. You don't come
across as the type of person to
believe in witch craft or fairy
tales... Myself neither, mind you.

Flavia walks up to them and places plates before both of them. Each holds a chunk of rye bread filled with dried meat and vegetables.

FLAVIA

What's the topic of the day?

Darius looks up and smiles at her.

DARIUS

Nothing out of the ordinary.

Darius takes a big bite into the bread.

EXT. TAVERN - DAY

Mstislav stands away from the tavern. Darius and his guards ride up to him.

DARIUS

If you plan to stay, Mstislav,
you'd do well to find work. People
start to ask questions otherwise.

Mstislav nods as Darius kicks his horse up the street away from the tavern, his guards close on his heels.

Mstislav takes but a step before the tavern door opens. He turns back to see Flavia hanging out from the doorway.

FLAVIA

If you still want a tour, meet me
here shortly after sunrise.

MSTISLAV

I...

He gets no further as Flavia WINKS and closes the door.

Mstislav smiles to himself and turns back towards the Inn, the opposite direction of Darius.

EXT. ROMANIAN TOWN - CONTINUOUS

Mstislav walks down the baron street. SOUNDS of people walking and working seem distant through the mist.

He nears the Inn, candle light blurring through the windows. The Hollows Inn sign sways with a CREAK in the gentle breeze.

A stronger gust kicks up a swirl of mist into the distance. Mstislav follows its path towards the trees beyond the Inn. The mist calms down and reveals a SHADOW half hidden behind a large tree trunk.

Mstislav squints in disbelief but the shadowy figure remains.

MSTISLAV

Who are you?!

The shadow conceals itself a little more behind the tree.

MSTISLAV

Why are you following me?!

Mstislav takes easy steps towards the shadow. His slow steps soon become a full out dash.

The shadow flees into the woods.

EXT. FOREST - CONTINUOUS

Mstislav chases after the shadow relentlessly.

The shadow weaves through the trees and shrubbery with grace and speed.

Mstislav catches branches in the face in his pursuit.

Mstislav slowly closes the gap as they near a thick clump of trees following the roll of a small hill.

Mstislav can see that the shadow is but a black cloak. It seems to float above the ground, the earth untouched beneath its haste.

For a brief moment the cloaked figure leaves Mstislav's line of sight. Mstislav rounds the last tree and stops. He looks up the hill towards the thinning trees. Mist floats through the air in a haunting fashion.

A COLD gust of wind kicks up from behind Mstislav and a branch BREAKS beneath a heavy foot.

Mstislav turns slowly to see the cloaked figure, face hidden, standing twenty feet behind him.

CLOAKED FIGURE

(woman's voice)

What do you want?

MSTISLAV

You've been following me, haven't you?

CLOAKED FIGURE

What makes you say that?

MSTISLAV

A feeling I have.

CLOAKED FIGURE

And what if I am?

MSTISLAV

Why?

The cloaked figure takes one step forward. Mstislav leans on his back foot with caution.

CLOAKED FIGURE

Bold to answer a question with a question, Bohemian, but not unthinkable.

The cloaked figure withdraws her step.

CLOAKED FIGURE

My only interest in you is to see you find your place.

(MORE)

CLOAKED FIGURE(cont'd)
You were thinking of taking off
again this afternoon weren't you?

Mstislav's face displays his disbelief.

CLOAKED FIGURE
Your silence speaks your truth.
Why not stay a while? Afraid you
might like it here, or might fall
for her?

MSTISLAV
Why should I stay here?

CLOAKED FIGURE
Will you run all your life? Oh,
that is fun, questions with
question.

The cloaked figure LAUGHS softly.

MSTISLAV
I'm not running.

CLOAKED FIGURE
Then stay a while. This town
matches your very character.

The cloaked figure turns away.

CLOAKED FIGURE
You are a lot of fun. I hope to
see you again soon, Bohemian.

The cloaked figure turns her head as if to look back over her
shoulder.

CLOAKED FIGURE
Or shall I call you... Mstislav?

MSTISLAV
How...

The cloaked figure disappears in a wisp of fog before
Mstislav can finish his reply.

Mstislav stands still looking into the fog lost in thought.

Ground cover CRACKS with the approach of foot steps.

Mstislav turns cautiously.

ANDREI approaches Mstislav. He is an older man, graying hair and thick beard. He is dressed warmly and crouched over a walking stick bracing his right side. He bears a kind look.

ANDREI

Are you lost?

Mstislav relaxes.

MSTISLAV

No, I was just out for a walk.

ANDREI

I heard voices, a woman?

MSTISLAV

She's gone.

ANDREI

May I ask, who was she?

MSTISLAV

I don't know, but somehow she knew my name.

Andrei walks up next to Mstislav and stares into the mist behind him.

ANDREI

Perhaps it was her.

Mstislav looks down upon Andrei.

MSTISLAV

Who?

ANDREI

There are rumors of a gypsy roaming these woods. Although nobody has seen her face.

Andrei looks up at Mstislav and grins.

ANDREI

One can get lost in these woods even if they are careful. My cabin isn't far from here. You should join me there for a drink.

MSTISLAV

That's very kind, but...

Andrei begins walking back to where he came from.

ANDREI

Not at all. I could use the company, and you can tell me of this gypsy.

Mstislav grins and follows Andrei through the forest.

INT. ANDREI'S HOME - DAY

Andrei removes a pot of boiling water from the fire and walks over to a small wooden table. The pot shakes as he keeps balance with his walking stick.

Mstislav is seated at the table with his hands clasped before him. On the table are two cups with finely diced herbs in them.

Andrei pours hot water from the pot into both cups and places it on a rock by the fire. He props himself back up with his stick.

ANDREI

(walking back to the table)

You say this woman is watching you?

Mstislav nods as Andrei sits down.

ANDREI

That is definitely strange if that woman is indeed the gypsy. She must have an interest in you.

Mstislav plays with the cup, the heat repelling his hands.

ANDREI

The rumors of the gypsy started about two months ago. There has been much discussion among the townsfolk about why she would come here and who she really is.

Mstislav scratches his chin.

MSTISLAV

Two months..? I left Bohemia right about that time. Maybe her home fell to the power of the Roman Empire as well?

Mstislav takes the cup in his hand and sips at it, the steam shadowing his face.

MSTISLAV

Or rather the timing is just coincidence.

Andrei blows gently on the heat of his tea.

ANDREI

Perhaps. Or maybe she could sense your coming here. Gypsies are said to have the third eye, with which to see the future. Regardless, she remains a mystery.

MSTISLAV

What more do you know of her?

ANDREI

Men have gone looking for signs of her: hunted wildlife, a hut or house, footprints... but they couldn't find anything.

Mstislav takes a big drink of the tea, burning his tongue in the process.

MSTISLAV

Well she is definitely real. She will show herself again, I'm sure of it.

Andrei sips his tea and blows on it some more.

ANDREI

You say you are from Bohemia. Where are you going?

MSTISLAV

I didn't set out with a destination in mind. I've heard of great trade routes and flourishing cities in the south-east. I thought I might find something worth devoting myself to there.

ANDREI

And now?

MSTISLAV

I kind of like it here. But I will need to find work.

Andrei drinks a decent portion of his tea down.

ANDREI

You don't say? I might have a use for a strong young man like you.

Mstislav carelessly chugs the rest of his tea.

MSTISLAV

Doing what exactly?

ANDREI

Everything in and including this home I built. As you can see I'm but a trace of the man I once was and I could use someone to help me complete the requests of the townsfolk. Everything is done for a trade and in exchange I will help you to build your own home within this town and pay you a share.

Mstislav looks beyond the small window in the wall at the foggy town beyond. He smiles.

MSTISLAV

(looking through window)

You have yourself an apprentice old man.

Andrei CLACKS the stick on the ground. Mstislav watches as Andrei quickly rises up to stand.

ANDREI

Let's get started then.

EXT. TAVERN - DAY

Flavia waits patiently outside the tavern. It is still the grey of early morning, less fog and mist than usual hugging the earth.

Flavia looks down the street towards the Inn. Her hands are folded into her sleeves. The fog and sky begin to part, giving way to the orange glow of a new day sun.

Mstislav walks up next to her from beyond the tavern.

MSTISLAV

It's kind of nice, this town in the sunlight.

FLAVIA

It does happen from time to time.

She looks up at him.

FLAVIA

You came. I wasn't sure you would.

MSTISLAV

I'm going to stay. It appears
there is something for me here
after all.

FLAVIA

I'm glad.

She takes his arm and leads him down the road.

EXT. ROMANIAN TOWN - STREET - CONTINUOUS

Houses stretch up the street. It is very quiet aside from
the odd peasant getting an early start to the days work.

FLAVIA

Most people here work for
themselves and grow their own food.

MSTISLAV

What about you?

FLAVIA

My father, he is friends with the
owner and persuaded him to give me
the job.

The street slopes up steeply.

MSTISLAV

This town is larger than where I
lived... Much nicer.

FLAVIA

It has its moments.

Up ahead an iron fence bars the street and a fence continues on in either direction.

They stop a short distance from the gate.

MSTISLAV

(looking up the trail)

What's up there?

FLAVIA

Darius' castle. It has passed through many generations of his family. It lies in the shadow of the mountain and is rarely seen because of the fog. Can't say that I complain.

The shadow of the mountain moves just enough to reveal the castle up in the mountain.

MSTISLAV

Rather large for one person.

FLAVIA

Well, he almost always has two of the family guard with him, so don't feel him any ill will. He also wants me to become his wife and fill it with children.

She LAUGHS.

MSTISLAV

He told me you keep saying no.

FLAVIA

Truth is Darius is not what I'm looking for in a husband, and he doesn't love me as he says.

MSTISLAV

There must be others that would jump at the occasion to wed royalty.

FLAVIA

Not when he is so narrow minded.
He wants a woman to obey him, not
love him.

Flavia turns from the gate and walks away. Mstislav looks at the castle a moment longer and then follows.

EXT. ROMANIAN TOWN - FOREST PATH - CONTINUOUS

Flavia and Mstislav walk down a path between streets. The sunlight illuminates the forest beautifully in contrast to the usual fog.

FLAVIA

What will you do for money?

MSTISLAV

I met an older man yesterday,
Andrei. I'm going to help him with
his work.

FLAVIA

You have a place to stay?

MSTISLAV

Andrei is letting me stay with him
until my place is built.

FLAVIA

Where will you build?

MSTISLAV

Andrei gave me a plot of his land.
Would you like to see?

Flavia answers with a smile.

EXT. ANDREI'S HOME - CONTINUOUS

Mstislav leads Flavia off the street and past Andrei's house.

EXT. ANDREI'S PROPERTY - CONTINUOUS

They pass through a patch of trees and shrubbery to a small grove.

EXT. MSTISLAV'S GROVE - CONTINUOUS

A pond is centered among a ring of trees.

Mstislav stops by the edge of the pond.

MSTISLAV

It is a little off the beaten path,
but I like the seclusion.

FLAVIA

When do you start building?

MSTISLAV

It will be a few days. Today we
are going to start clearing a path
back to Andrei's house and then
clear the area for mine.

Mstislav walks around the pond clockwise until he reaches a flat, almost cleared area. It is the high point of the pond shore, about ten feet above the water.

MSTISLAV

My door will be right here facing
the path.

FLAVIA

It will be lovely.

They stand there together as the sun catches the pond with a dazzling glare through the trees.

EXT. MSTISLAV'S GROVE - DAY

The plot of land is now cleared and chopped timbers are stacked by the trees.

There is a large square pit in the center of the cleared area. It is about two feet deep. Stacks of flat stones lie on either side.

Mstislav and Andrei toss another log onto the stack of timbers.

ANDREI

That should hold us for now.

Andrei walks to the pit and climbs into it. Mstislav follows him to the pit but doesn't go in.

ANDREI

Start digging the steps in the front wall.

Mstislav nods agreement and walks around to the closest edge to the pond. He grabs hold of a curved piece of wood with a sharp point.

Andrei begins securing stones into the wall of the foundation.

Mstislav uses the curved piece of wood to dig into the dirt and tosses the dirt aside.

EXT. MSTISLAV'S GROVE - LATER

Mstislav scrapes along the edge of what is now three clearly carved steps in the side of the pit. He gently smooths the sides with the curved wood.

He grins to himself and gently tosses the curved wood aside.

MSTISLAV

Finished.

Andrei glances back at him.

ANDREI

Good. Now help me.

Andrei grins.

Mstislav looks over to see the little progress Andrei has made. He walks into the pit and grabs a flat stone from the stack.

MSTISLAV

Why don't you have a rest?

ANDREI

Thank you.

Andrei walks out by way of the new steps and sits at the edge of the pit.

ANDREI

The walls and roof will be after
the stones are set.

Mstislav begins placing the stones for the steps.

Down the path Flavia approaches. She has a basket covered with a cloth clutched to her chest.

Mstislav finishes setting his stone and steps out of the pit.

Flavia walks over to a log separated from the pile.

FLAVIA

I thought you boys might like some
lunch.

She sits on the log and places the basket on the ground. She pulls the cloth off and places it on the log next to her. The basket is filled with fruits and bread.

Mstislav sits next to Flavia and Andrei next to him. She hands a piece of bread to Andrei and then Mstislav.

FLAVIA

You're working hard. You need to
keep up your strength.

MSTISLAV

(still chewing)

Tell that to him.

Andrei hits him on the back of the shoulder.

ANDREI

I'm twice your age, boy. I'm
allowed to let you do all the work.

The three share in a LAUGH.

FLAVIA

How long until it is finished?

ANDREI

A few weeks.

Mstislav finishes his bread.

MSTISLAV

Then I have to make some things for
inside.

Flavia hands Mstislav an apple.

Mstislav takes a big bite out of the middle.

Flavia looks at the calm water on the pond.

FLAVIA

Darius has been asking about you.

MSTISLAV

Why?

FLAVIA

I'm not sure. Darius has always
taken interest in newcomers, but
the way he asks, it is almost as if
he is jealous.

Mstislav turns the apple over and over in his hands.

MSTISLAV

Royalty are always so blinded by
their power. Just a duke, yet he
seems no different.

FLAVIA

What do you mean?

MSTISLAV

Don't you see? I am competition to him. The sight of you spending time with me must really wrench at his heart.

ANDREI

He is that kind of man. You should both be careful. A man of his position seeks only personal gain at any cost.

Mstislav takes an apple from the basket and hands it to Andrei.

MSTISLAV

I'd like to think he is different than that. But I can't help but feel you are correct, Andrei.

FLAVIA

Will you go after him?

MSTISLAV

I think I won't have to. He'll come looking for me.

Mstislav takes another large BITE from his apple.

EXT. MSTISLAV'S GROVE - LATER

The darkness creeps ever closer on the grove as night approaches. In the distance Andrei lights the torches back through the path. Mist haunts the flames as it drifts on the ground.

Mstislav places another stone in the dirt and stretches his back. He pulls a flint out of his pocket and sparks it a few times on a rock. A nearby lantern flickers into view with each spark.

Mstislav reaches into the darkness and pulls the lantern closer. The rusty hinges of the lantern door CREAK open and Mstislav sparks the flint again. The lantern dances to life as the spark grows to flame.

He continues to lay stones in the dirt.

Andrei approaches with his own lantern lit.

ANDREI

I'm done for the day, Mstislav.
Want me to cook you anything?

MSTISLAV

(securing a stone)
Thanks, but I'm going to the tavern
this evening.

ANDREI

Don't work too late.

Andrei turns back to his house. Mstislav continues to work diligently.

INT. TAVERN - NIGHT

The tavern is decently packed. Peasants sit throughout and some stand by the counter. Among them is Darius.

Flavia slides a mug to Darius from a few feet away. He puts out his hand and catches it. He takes a quick drink and puts it down.

The door opens and Mstislav comes in.

Darius looks over to the door. Seeing Mstislav he straightens up and approaches him.

DARIUS

Come, have a drink.

He puts his arm around Mstislav and semi-drags him over to the counter.

They reach the counter and Darius waves to Flavia.

DARIUS

Bring him a drink.

Mstislav looks at Darius suspiciously.

Flavia flicks the latch on the barrel and fills a mug. She brings it over and places it gently in front of Mstislav.

Mstislav takes the mug in hand.

MSTISLAV

I hear you were looking for me.

DARIUS

I thought I would welcome you to our town. Flavia tells me you found a job and are building a house with the old man.

MSTISLAV

Yes.

Mstislav looks around the tavern.

MSTISLAV

No guards with you today.

DARIUS

They have families. Not like I can have them work all day every day.

MSTISLAV

Really?

DARIUS

Of course, during the day they are with me at the castle. Their nights are to tend to their own. Surely you don't think I rule with such an iron fist?

Darius looks at Flavia work further down the counter.

DARIUS

You should come for a tour of the castle. Take a break from your hard work.

MSTISLAV

I could use one.

DARIUS

Great, come by tomorrow. If the mist clears you should be able to see the whole town from the balcony.

Mstislav takes a quick swig from the mug.

MSTISLAV

That would be a sight.

Darius nods.

MSTISLAV

I'm going to get some food and take a seat.

DARIUS

Alright.

Mstislav makes his way passed a few peasants.

The door to the tavern BUSTS open. A MIDDLE-AGED MAN breathes heavily in the doorway. All attention turns to him.

MIDDLE-AGED MAN

Andrei's house is on fire.

SHOCK passes through the tavern. In moments peasants stream passed the news bearer.

Mstislav pushes and squeezes his way out.

Flavia follows close behind.

Darius finishes his ale and leaves the bar last.

EXT. ANDREI'S HOME - CONTINUOUS

Andrei's home is engulfed in flames. The roof starts to fall in as it loses support.

Mstislav stands front row. Flavia stands close next to him. All they can do is watch as the house continues to deteriorate from the flame.

Flavia looks down and sees Mstislav's hands clutched into fists.

Darius looks upon the flames from the back of the crowd. He watches a moment and then walks away.

EXT. ANDREI'S HOME - LATER

The peasants have vacated the premise. Ashes and glowing coal are all that remain of Andrei's home.

Flavia watches Mstislav make his way down the torch lit path towards his grove. He disappears beyond the glowing flames.

EXT. MSTISLAV'S GROVE - CONTINUOUS

Mstislav steps down heavily into the pit of his would-be home. He sits on the edge of the pit and runs his fingers over the stones.

MSTISLAV

I never really got to know you old man. Never asked of your ancestors or whether you had family. So much I wanted to ask and learn from you.

Flavia approaches from the path. Tears appear in the instances of torch light on her face.

FLAVIA

He was my father. It was only a few weeks but he saw something in you. A desire that reminded him of when he was young.

She sits down next to him.

FLAVIA

Helping you start this house was the happiest I had seen him since I helped him with my own.

MSTISLAV

Why didn't you tell me?

FLAVIA

You met before I would have thought to even introduce you. We didn't want to spoil the surprise until...

She puts her arms around him and rests on his shoulder.

FLAVIA

I'm sorry, Mstislav.

MSTISLAV

No, I am sorry. This must have been Darius' doing and it is my fault for it.

FLAVIA

He can't control me and the hell if I'm going to let him scare me into playing his game.

Up the path a shadow disappears into the woods.

MSTISLAV

I'm going to his castle tomorrow. I will confront him.

FLAVIA

His guards will be there.

MSTISLAV

I don't care. If Darius is behind this, then I must stand up to him. If I confront him, then perhaps we can expose him.

Flavia holds him tighter.

FLAVIA

You are the only friend I have here now. Don't leave me.

Mstislav's eyes glow with intensity in the faint light.

MSTISLAV

I have no such intentions.

His eyes shift to the dark, moonless night.

Flavia's hands shift slightly. She reaches up and brushes one against Mstislav's cheek.

He looks down into her eyes. Slowly their lips come together for a gentle kiss.

EXT. TOWN CASTLE - GATE - DAY

Mstislav walks up to the gate of Darius' town castle. He looks up the hill towards the castle. It is barely visible through the mist.

He puts on a serious face and opens the gate. He eases the gate shut and makes his way up the stone path.

INT. TOWN CASTLE - DINING ROOM - DAY

Mstislav and Darius circle slowly around the room. A long table with high back upholstered chairs is centered beneath a candle chandelier. The walls are covered in portraits and lit candles.

Mstislav and Darius stop in front of a painting by the head of the table. It is of a family tree. Darius appears down at the bottom off to the far side.

DARIUS

My family extends back hundreds of years. I don't know the full history of it, but I'm told that we've always been royalty.

Darius points to a lower bracket of the tree.

DARIUS

It was a little over a century ago that my ancestors founded this town. This very castle was the first building. This spot was picked so that the lords could watch over their people.

Darius walks towards the doorway.

DARIUS

Come, I'll take you to the patio. Maybe we can catch a glimpse of the town.

EXT. TOWN CASTLE - PATIO - CONTINUOUS

A patio of stone paths lined with hedges extends beyond the open space with stone benches and small trees.

Darius leads Mstislav down through the path. The mist is thinner than usual and the faint rays of sunlight can be seen as the mist moves with the wind.

Darius takes Mstislav down a short flight of steps and onto another stone area. It is suspended above the mountain slope by stacked log supports.

The area is edged with finely carved stone rails.

Darius walks up to the stone rail and leans on it.

Mstislav walks up a few steps beside him.

DARIUS

How fortunate. We can see the shadows of the town today.

Mstislav looks over the edge. Below the town shifts in and out of view with the blowing mist.

MSTISLAV

It is more spread out than I realized.

DARIUS

This town has grown surprisingly well for this sort of atmosphere.

They continue to look down at the town in silence.

DARIUS

You've been very quiet since you got here, Mstislav. Something you want to talk about?

Mstislav turns his attention to Darius.

MSTISLAV

You don't like Flavia and I being friends do you?

DARIUS

How do you mean? Of course, I can't fathom how she became interested in a total stranger, but aside from that, there is no way I can control her or any of you. I'm a duke, not a king or emperor.

MSTISLAV

You're telling me you had nothing to do with Andrei's death?

DARIUS

The thought of such a thing is an insult to my character, Mstislav. I would never try to harm Flavia's father.

MSTISLAV

You knew?

DARIUS

Every one in town knows. Don't think you are privy to any information here. You've been here nigh a month and you presume to know it all? Please, stop kidding yourself.

MSTISLAV

Then tell me, where were your guards last night, truly?

DARIUS

I invited you here in good faith, Mstislav. I see I was wrong to do so. I thought you could be a friend, someone I could confide in. Instead you turn out like the rest of this despicable village.

Darius spits on the ground.

DARIUS

Much like my family they all turn their cheek when I pass. I got stuck here a simple duke with none of the normal pleasures of my line; the arranged marriage, the parties. I am a social outcast.

Darius tugs his coat tight over his shoulders.

DARIUS

Forgive me if I don't see you out,
Mstislav. I'm sure you know the
way.

Darius turns from Mstislav and heads back to the castle.

Mstislav takes a last look down at the town. He turns a hate
filled snarl and goes back towards the castle.

EXT. FLAVIA'S HOME - NIGHT

Flavia walks up to her door in the faint light of night. A
movement in the dark startles her.

MSTISLAV

Sorry, didn't mean to startle you.

Mstislav steps out from the black shadow.

INT. FLAVIA'S HOME - CONTINUOUS

Flavia walks to her window. A small table with candle and
flint rest closer to the window sill. She grabs the flint
and sparks the candle to life.

INT. FLAVIA'S HOME - LATER

Mstislav is sitting on a make-shift bed on the floor. A few
blankets piled above one another and a rolled one for a
pillow.

Flavia hands him a steaming cup and sits down next to him
with her own.

MSTISLAV

I was too demanding of Darius. He
wouldn't give me any sort of
confession.

FLAVIA

He's a terrific fake.

MSTISLAV

I think it would be best to try and
avoid him.

Mstislav sips gently at the hot tea in the cup.

FLAVIA

Hard to do when you work at the
tavern.

MSTISLAV

I can be there every night.

FLAVIA

Well, inside won't be necessary.
If you would walk me at the end of
the night though, that would be
nice.

Flavia puts her cup down on the hard floor. She lies down
and rests her head on Mstislav's leg.

MSTISLAV

I'll do it for as long is
necessary.

Mstislav puts his cup down and takes Flavia's hand in his
own.

EXT. FLAVIA'S HOME - BACKYARD - DAY

It is late fall. The trees are bare of leaves. Empty
branches RATTLE together in the wind.

THWACK. The axe head sends two halves of a log in either
direction.

Mstislav props up another log and raises the axe over his
head. THWACK. Another split log. He wipes at his brow.

Mstislav lodges the axe in the chopping block and picks his
coat up from the ground. He puts it on and picks up an arm
full of cut logs from his messy pile. He stacks them on the
pile behind the house.

Mstislav picks up the last few logs in one arm and grabs the axe.

INT. FLAVIA'S HOME - CONTINUOUS

Flavia looks out the window. Mstislav walks by it. She goes over to the door and opens it. Mstislav lowers his hand from the door.

MSTISLAV

You are back from the tavern
already.

He picks up the axe resting against the house and steps in.

Flavia takes the axe from him and a piece of wood from his arm.

MSTISLAV

Thank you.

They walk over to the fire and place the axe and wood next to it.

Flavia helps him with his coat.

MSTISLAV

Still no sign of Darius? Nigh a
word?

FLAVIA

Nobody has really seen him or knows
what he has been up to. I think I
fear this more than if I had to see
him in the tavern every night.

Mstislav takes off his boots and tosses them to the door. He comes up behind Flavia and wraps her in his arms. She holds her hands up on his arms and closes her eyes.

MSTISLAV

You don't deserve that worry.
Clear it from your thoughts.

Mstislav kisses the back of her head.

MSTISLAV

Feels like it might snow. I like winter, how barren the world becomes and then gets painted white. It makes me feel calm and at home.

FLAVIA

Was there much snow in Bohemia?

MSTISLAV

Mostly around January. I liked it best when the snow stayed for weeks. I would just roll around in it and lie down staring at the sky.

Flavia opens her eyes.

FLAVIA

Even in the winter there is rarely a sky to see here.

MSTISLAV

Then it must be imagined.

Mstislav loosens his grip on Flavia and walks her over to the window. They look up towards the sky together as the first snow flakes begin to fall.

EXT. FLAVIA'S HOME - NIGHT

The snow falls heavily and coats the ground in white.

INT. FLAVIA'S HOME - DAY

Mstislav walks up to the window and looks outside. The ground is covered in a foot of snow. He smiles and goes to the door.

He puts on his boots and coat and opens the door.

EXT. FLAVIA'S HOME - CONTINUOUS

Mstislav steps outside and looks around. He looks off to his left just in time to see a snow ball shoot passed his face.

Mstislav looks back to his left and sees Flavia making another snow ball.

MSTISLAV

I was wondering where you went.

Flavia gets up from her knees with a good size snow ball in hand.

FLAVIA

(big grin)

I won't miss this time.

Mstislav LAUGHS as he runs after her.

Flavia throws the snow ball and hits him square in the forehead.

Mstislav shakes it off and tackles Flavia to the ground with care.

FLAVIA

I'm sorry. Are you alright?

Mstislav rolls her around on the ground and stops with her pinned beneath him.

MSTISLAV

I'm fine.

He picks up a hand full of snow and playfully rubs it in her hair.

FLAVIA

Hey!

Mstislav rolls off to the side and lies down. He looks up at the clouds.

MSTISLAV

It's been so long since I last
played in the snow.

Flavia tosses a hand full of snow on him and lies down next
to him. She holds his arm close to her.

MSTISLAV

I can see the blue sky. The
brightness all around. It's just
as I remembered it.

FLAVIA

There is no blue sky.

Mstislav tosses some snow on her.

MSTISLAV

Imagine it.

Flavia looks to the clouds and closes her eyes. She grips
Mstislav's hand tighter.

FLAVIA

Thank you...

Mstislav turns to her.

FLAVIA

...for staying with me.

Flavia leans into Mstislav and rests her head on his chest.

FLAVIA

I love you, Mstislav.

MSTISLAV

In the spring, when the leaves
begin to grow again, let's get
married.

Flavia pushes herself up with her arms on Mstislav's
shoulders.

FLAVIA

Really? You mean it?

MSTISLAV

Of course.

Flavia lowers herself and kisses him.

Mstislav embraces and holds Flavia.

MSTISLAV

I love you too.

EXT. ROMANIAN TOWN - DAY

The sun shines through the clouds and clears away the mist. The snow is gone. The trees have buds, some partially grown into leaves. The grass is beginning to green.

INT. TAVERN - DAY

Flavia serves meals to a table of bearded men and walks back behind the bar.

She readies a few drinks and places them on a tray. She rounds the end of the counter again as the door opens.

Darius steps in and closes the door gently.

Flavia stops in half shock.

DARIUS

The usual.

Flavia delivers her tray of drinks and returns to the fires behind the counter.

Flavia says something around the corner and grabs a mug from the shelving. She fills the mug from one of the kegs and turns to see Darius at the counter.

DARIUS

So you are getting married?

FLAVIA

You heard?

Flavia hands him the drink.

DARIUS

It is the talk of the town.

FLAVIA

We thought you had disappeared.

Darius takes a long swig of the ale.

DARIUS

In a way I had. Went to stay with
my parents in Alba Iulia for the
winter. Needed to escape the
misery of this place.

FLAVIA

Then why did you come back?

DARIUS

I was put in charge of this town.
One can't so easily abandon duty.

Flavia wipes off a spill on the counter.

DARIUS

When is the wedding?

FLAVIA

Tomorrow.

DARIUS

Oh joyous day.

Darius downs the rest of his ale.

Flavia goes behind the corner and returns with his food.

FLAVIA

Try not to choke on it.

She places it in front of Darius and walks away.

DARIUS

You could take it to my table.

Flavia looks back.

FLAVIA

You have hands. I have orders to take.

Darius picks up the food and goes to a nearby table. He takes a bite of his bread and chews a bit.

He spits it out and stands.

He tosses some coins on the table and leaves the tavern.

INT. TAVERN - LATER

It is late afternoon. Only one table of people remain. Flavia is cleaning up behind the bar. An OLDER MAN can be seen cleaning up near the fire in back.

Mstislav enters and comes to Flavia at the bar. He looks around the tavern and waves to the table in the corner.

Flavia smiles to him and pours him a drink.

FLAVIA

Darius is back. He already knows of the wedding.

MSTISLAV

How did he seem?

FLAVIA

Not the least bit happy about it. But then, how should I expect anything less from him?

Mstislav takes a glance out the window.

FLAVIA

He left without finishing his meal. He always finishes it.

MSTISLAV
Will he be a problem?

FLAVIA
I don't know.

Mstislav takes a few big gulps of his ale.

MSTISLAV
Everything is ready for the
wedding.

FLAVIA
Great.

Mstislav chugs the rest and passes Flavia the mug.

MSTISLAV
I'm going to clean up.

He leans across the counter and kisses Flavia.

FLAVIA
I'll be home soon.

Mstislav leaves the tavern.

INT. FLAVIA'S HOME - BEDROOM - DAY

Mstislav lies awake in the bed. Flavia is still asleep next to him. He looks out through the semi-transparent curtain. The early light of dawn encroaches on the world.

INT. FLAVIA'S HOME - LATER

Mstislav and Flavia are both dressed in their wedding clothes.

Flavia wears a straight, pink dress.

Mstislav wears a black, knee length, coat-like garment. It is buttoned at the front and accented with light blue trim.

MSTISLAV

Almost time.

FLAVIA

I still have to get my hair done.

MSTISLAV

Shall I walk you?

FLAVIA

I should be alright.

Flavia opens the door and steps outside.

EXT. FLAVIA'S HOME - CONTINUOUS

Mstislav closes the door as he steps out behind Flavia.

MSTISLAV

I'll see you at the church then.

Mstislav gives Flavia a kiss.

Mstislav walks off to the left and Flavia straight ahead.

EXT. ROMANIAN TOWN - STREET - CONTINUOUS

Flavia walks along with a half smile on her face. She glances around periodically, her path unwavering.

The sun tries to peek through the high fog. There is no sign of wind.

Flavia rounds the corner of the street. She stops dead in her tracks. Coming towards her is Darius on horseback.

DARIUS

A beautiful day for a wedding.

FLAVIA

What do you want?

DARIUS

I've tried so hard to allow you happiness, Flavia. But the more I think about it, the more I want you by my side.

He stops next to her. Flavia takes a step back.

DARIUS

(extending his hand)

Please, take my hand. I can give you everything you could ever wish for.

FLAVIA

Mstislav already has. Just go, you are wasting your time.

Flavia steps past Darius and continues down the street.

DARIUS

I'm afraid I can't.

Darius turns his horse around. He follows Flavia.

Flavia looks back and starts walking faster.

Darius matches her speed.

Flavia starts running.

Darius kicks the horse into speed and cuts her off.

FLAVIA

What are you doing?!

Flavia tries to dodge him.

Darius jumps down from the horse and grabs a hold of her. He tosses Flavia onto the horse and jumps on. Flavia kicks and tries to fight her way loose.

Darius takes off towards the woods.

A COUPLE dressed for the wedding see Darius ride passed with Flavia flailing like crazy.

EXT. ROMANIAN TOWN - FOREST BORDER - CONTINUOUS

Darius' guards join him as he rides out of town.

EXT. CHURCH - LATER

The couple come running towards the church. Mstislav stands by the door. People are talking in small groups. Others walk into the church.

The couple stop right before Mstislav. The man, MARIN, steps forward.

MARIN

Mstislav.

MSTISLAV

Marin, what's wrong?

MARIN

Flavia, Darius took Flavia.

Mstislav's eyes go wide.

MSTISLAV

Where?

MARIN

He was riding towards the Eastern forest.

Mstislav takes off.

MARIN

Mstislav! Wait!

The crowd outside the church goes QUIET. All eyes are on Mstislav as he runs away.

EXT. ROMANIAN TOWN - FOREST BORDER - CONTINUOUS

Mstislav runs out of the town into the forest.

EXT. FOREST - STREAM - CONTINUOUS

Darius and his guards arrive at the edge of the forest by a shallow pool. At the mouth of the stream leaving the pool are sharp rocks.

Darius jumps off of his horse and pulls Flavia off of it. He drags her into the open while she fights to get loose.

Darius stops by the pond and locks her arms so she can't move.

DARIUS

This is the last time I will say
this. Take my hand in marriage and
have all that you could ever hope
for. Live a life of royalty. Be
my wife!

Flavia SPITS in his face.

FLAVIA

I will never be your wife.

Darius' face twists in rage. He throws Flavia down on the rocks. The rocks cut into her back and she SCREAMS in pain.

EXT. FOREST - CONTINUOUS

Mstislav stops at the distant SCREAMING. He takes off even faster into the woods.

EXT. FOREST - STREAM - CONTINUOUS

Blood runs into the stream from the cuts opened up by the rocks.

Darius pins Flavia on the ground and loosens his garments.

Flavia struggles as he forces himself upon her.

FLAVIA

No! Get off of me.

She tries to push Darius off but is unable to get leverage.

Darius chokes her as he continues his act of rape.

EXT. FOREST - CONTINUOUS

The forest seems a blur as Mstislav runs with complete disregard for his own safety.

EXT. FOREST - STREAM - CONTINUOUS

Flavia's breathing stops, her face begins to pale with lack of oxygen.

Tears fall from Darius' face as he cries in silence.

EXT. FOREST - CONTINUOUS

Mstislav hurdles small bushes and crashes through bigger ones. The CRACKLE of loose branches ECHOES through the growth.

EXT. FOREST - STREAM - CONTINUOUS

Darius finishes as Flavia's eyes roll over.

EXT. FOREST - QUARRY - LATER

Mstislav emerges from the forest in a small quarry. Down just past the quarry is a fair sized stream.

Mstislav looks at the stream and makes his way through the quarry.

EXT. FOREST - STREAM - CONTINUOUS

Mstislav stops right at the edge of the stream. In the stream is an evident trail of blood. His heart jumps.

He nearly loses his footing as he kicks off into a run up stream.

Ahead of Mstislav the stream curves around to the left behind a small mound.

Mstislav rounds the corner. He immediately recognizes Flavia lying at the mouth of a pond.

He rushes to her and falls to his knees in the shallow water. He cradles her in his arms. Tears flow as Mstislav grieves in SILENCE. His mouth motions to say 'Flavia'.

Deep impressions of choking hands are on her neck.

DARIUS (O.S.)

This would not have happened if you
just continued on your way,
Mstislav.

Mstislav looks behind him.

Darius and his guards are standing at the edge of the forest. Their horses are tied to trees a little further in.

Mstislav lowers Flavia's body gently to the ground and stands up.

MSTISLAV

You murdered her. It was nothing
to do with me staying or moving on.
You would have been jealous of any
man she chose over you.

Mstislav takes a few steps forward.

MSTISLAV

And like a child it was either your
way or nobody else's.

Darius just stands there with his guards, his face unchanging.

DARIUS

To be in my position, Mstislav.
Just look at you. You are no
different in this moment than I
was. The jealousy in me sparked a
rage and you are experiencing that
same rage right now.

MSTISLAV

We are nothing alike, you and I!

Mstislav charges at Darius.

He gets nowhere close to him as the two guards hold him back by the arms.

DARIUS

You'd be wise to leave and keep
this to yourself. Or else you
could end up like her.

The guards toss Mstislav to the ground. Darius turns around and mounts his horse.

Mstislav gets back up and tries to run after Darius.

The guards toss him down again.

DARIUS

Do yourself a favor and stay down.

The guards walk towards their horses.

Once again Mstislav rises to his feet. He charges towards one of the guards and TACKLES him to the ground.

They wrestle each other around a bit before the other guard gets a hold of Mstislav and tosses him aside.

Darius SNAPS his fingers.

The two guards hold no bounds as they proceed to POMMEL Mstislav to oblivion.

Before long the guards withdraw from their fury.

Mstislav lies still, his face a BLOODY mess.

The two guards get on their horses.

Darius maneuvers his horse next to Mstislav's beaten body. He removes his fur cap and tosses it perfectly to cover Mstislav's face.

Darius and his guards ride away from the scene.

After they disappear from the scene the gypsy appears from the woods. She still has her cloak and hood on concealing her face.

She looks at Mstislav's body lying still and comes to him. She picks up the hat to have a look at his face.

GYPSY

They sure made a mess of you.

She places the hat back on Mstislav's face. With seemingly inhuman strength the gypsy picks Mstislav up like a feather and carries him off.

INT. GYPSY'S HUT - NIGHT

It's a small hut. Not much inside besides some blankets, a small fire and cloths. There is a small wooden chair by the door. The door is just a big fur blanket tied to the roofing.

Mstislav is laid out by the fire beneath blankets. His face is covered in cuts.

The gypsy takes a cloth out of a pot above the fire. She wrings the water from it and wipes up whatever blood is still spilling out.

Next to Mstislav on the ground is Darius' fur hat.

INT. GYPSY'S HUT - DAY

Mstislav still lies by the fire. His cuts have crusted over. The gypsy isn't in the hut.

INT. GYPSY'S HUT - LATER

Mstislav slowly opens his eyes. Everything is BLURRY.

The fire is still going strong. Something moves next to him.

Mstislav squints to try and clear his vision.

His vision slowly clears. The person soon appears as a woman wearing a familiar dark robe. Not just a woman, a very beautiful woman. She is wringing a cloth from the hot pot of water.

Mstislav sees her smile. It is a FRIGHTENING smile.

He passes out as she places the cloth on his forehead.

INT. GYPSY'S HUT - DAY

Mstislav wakes up. His wounds look much better. Sitting in the wooden chair by the door is the gypsy woman.

GYPSY

How are you feeling?

Mstislav moves slowly into an upright position.

MSTISLAV

Better, thank you.

GYPSY

Lucky I found you. You would have died out there.

MSTISLAV

How long has it been?

GYPSY

Nearly a week now. Your wounds are nearly healed but you must eat and recover your strength.

Mstislav recognizes the robe.

MSTISLAV

You're the gypsy. Or at least that's what the townsfolk call you.

GYPSY

There is some truth in what they say, Mstislav. I'm a fortune teller of sorts, a seer.

She stands up.

GYPSY

Flavia will need a proper burial. I'll take you when you're strong enough.

MSTISLAV

Thank you.

Mstislav lies back down.

GYPSY

Get some more rest. I'll be back soon.

The gypsy leaves the hut.

EXT. FOREST - STREAM - DAY

The gypsy carries the shovel as she and Mstislav arrive at the stream. Flavia's body is still in the stream already seeing decay.

The gypsy hands Mstislav the shovel.

GYPSY

I'm sorry to say I can't help you
with any of this.

Mstislav takes the shovel, tears building up as he looks at Flavia's corpse.

He picks a spot near the edge of the forest and begins digging.

EXT. FOREST - STREAM - LATER

Mstislav tosses aside one last shovel of dirt and steps out from the dug grave.

He jams the shovel into the ground and walks to Flavia's corpse.

He picks it up with ease and walks back to the grave and places the corpse in it. He straightens out the body and clasps the hands together on the abdomen.

Mstislav drops to his knees and CRIES. He curls up with his head in his palms.

The gypsy stares at him with a blank expression.

EXT. FOREST - STREAM - LATER

Mstislav finishes packing the soil of the grave and sits down at a nearby tree.

He wipes the sweat off of his forehead and puts the shovel on the ground.

GYPSY

Aren't you going to mark the grave?

MSTISLAV

Nobody knows she is here. I'd
rather let her be in peace.

The gypsy walks up to the side of the grave.

GYPSY

Can she really be in peace while
that man lives?

Mstislav shakes his head, anger building up inside.

MSTISLAV

Darius will pay for this. I won't
rest until his last breath is
taken.

He clenches his hand around the shovel handle. The gypsy
gives a satisfied grin.

INT. GYPSY'S HUT - NIGHT

The gypsy is sitting in her chair. Mstislav is sitting on
the blankets by the fire.

Mstislav looks at the hat on the floor.

MSTISLAV

Your seer abilities, they allow you
to see places?

GYPSY

Sometimes. You are thinking of
revenge?

MSTISLAV

I like to call it retribution, but
yes.

The evil smile returns to the gypsy's face.

GYPSY

I could tell you how to find the
duke, but it will cost a hefty
price.

MSTISLAV

I would pay with my soul if you
asked it of me.

The smile broadens.

GYPSY

I assure you the price is fair.

The gypsy stands and approaches the fire.

She bends down and takes a small hand full of dirt and tosses it into the fire. The fire dances angrily at the disturbance.

The gypsy puts her hands in position as if to hold a giant ball. The fire licks at her hands with no effect.

Her hair dances in the air as if a ferocious wind blew upon her from the fire.

Mstislav looks on in wonder at the spectacle.

After a moment everything calms down.

The gypsy sits back in her chair.

GYPSY

You will find the duke in his mountain fortress. If you follow the mountain to the northeast you will come upon a trail that leads into the mountain pass. At the end of the pass you will find him.

MSTISLAV

And the price?

The gypsy LAUGHS gently.

GYPSY

First... Collect your act of retribution.

An eerie moment of SILENCE passes.

MSTISLAV

Thank you.

GYPSY

No need to thank me, Mstislav. It
is I who should thank you.

MSTISLAV

Why is that?

Again the evil smile crosses her face.

GYPSY

As I said, the price is more than
fair.

The gypsy stands up.

GYPSY

Get some rest. You'll need it.

The gypsy goes outside.

Mstislav stares into the fire. He takes a deep breath and
lies down.

INT. GYPSY'S HUT - DAY

Mstislav wakes up. The ever-burning fire is now just glowing
coals.

He looks around. The gypsy isn't inside. He gets up and
notices the fur hat on the floor.

After a moments hesitation he leans down and picks up the
hat. He walks to the entrance.

EXT. GYPSY'S HUT - CONTINUOUS

Mstislav steps out of the hut to see the gypsy looking off
into the distance.

The gypsy turns and holds out a dagger in her hand.

GYPSY

It isn't much, but I'm sure you'll
make use of it. Consider it part
of the trade.

Mstislav takes it from her without hesitation. He pulls his
cloak aside and secures the dagger in his belt.

MSTISLAV

I thank you, for everything.

The gypsy just gives a rather evil grin.

Mstislav puts the fur hat on and walks off into the forest.
He soon disappears beyond the hill and into the trees.

The gypsy's hut VANISHES into a dark puff of smoke and the
gypsy walks off.

She passes a few trees and then DISAPPEARS.

EXT. MOUNTAIN - LATER

Mstislav walks along the mountain side. The forest has
thinned into a few trees and barren rock.

The occasional bird CRY startles him. He stops and looks off
into the distance.

He looks back as if he was being followed. Seeing nothing he
continues on his way.

EXT. MOUNTAIN - LATER

Mstislav arrives at the mountain pass.

Again he checks to see that he isn't followed. A crow lands
on the path he walked. It CAWS a few times in his direction
and then flies off.

Mstislav shrugs it off and enters the pass.

EXT. MOUNTAIN PASS - DAY

Mstislav makes his way hastily through the mountain pass. Rock cliffs guide him down the rocky path.

His eyes flash with the thirst of revenge every step he takes. The low fog passes swiftly, rising and falling with the wind.

Soon the fog thins out, torch lights visible in the distance beneath a towering cliff that overhangs the pass. A few steps closer and the fortress comes into view.

Mstislav moves closer to the cliff walls of the pass and slows his pace. He pulls the fur hat lower on his head to cover his forehead. His eyes are just visible below the edge.

EXT. FORTRESS - CONTINUOUS

One of Darius' guards keeps watch outside the fortress gate. His eyes are fixed on the mountain pass, the gate walled in by the cliffs at a bottleneck. In hand a spear stands at attention.

Towering above on either side of the fortress wall are two drum towers with arrow loops.

EXT. MOUNTAIN PASS - CONTINUOUS

Mstislav lowers his profile and hides behind a large fallen boulder. He peers out from behind the rock and watches the guard.

He pulls back behind the boulder and takes deep breaths. He reaches underneath his cloak and fiddles in his belt a moment. He withdraws the DAGGER.

Mstislav takes up a small hand full of rocks in his other hand and with it one more deep breath. He quickly tosses the hand of rocks out into the open.

EXT. FORTRESS - CONTINUOUS

The guard jerks to attention with the sound of SCATTERED rocks. He spots a few of the rocks still in motion by the bend in the pass.

The guard readies his spear and cautiously steps away from the gate.

EXT. MOUNTAIN PASS - CONTINUOUS

The guard steps quietly, his eyes darting back and forth up and down the cliff walls.

He nears the boulder that hides Mstislav. He re-doubles his grip on the spear, sweat beading his brow.

The guard rounds the boulder and despite his cautious steps disturbs the rocks giving away his position.

In a flash Mstislav is upon him. They tumble along the ground into the opposite cliff. The guard loses his spear and struggles to keep the dagger away from his throat.

Mstislav pours all of his weight behind the dagger. The guard struggles as the blade inches ever closer to his jugular.

In a wild flailing the guard knocks the fur hat from Mstislav's head. His last vision before death, the anger and hatred behind the mangled face of Mstislav.

The dagger cuts deep, life drained from the guard as blood spills in buckets to the earth.

Mstislav retrieves the fur hat as he rises from his kill.

Mstislav wipes the blade clean on his coat.

He takes long, heavy strides towards the fortress gate.

EXT. FORTRESS - CONTINUOUS

Mstislav removes the wooden cross bar from the gate and tosses it aside. He pushes with force and the door gives in.

With the door open about a foot Mstislav darts into the castle entrance. Low to the ground he swiftly makes his approach over the stone path and up a flight of steps sided by two gryphon statues.

To the left is a flight of steps leading to a doorway in the stone by one of the spy windows and the wall-walk.

To Mstislav's surprise, the main doors weren't locked. He slowly pushes aside one of the doors and enters.

INT. FORTRESS FOYER - CONTINUOUS

Mstislav steps into the gaping emptiness of the foyer, his footsteps echo down the doorways. The door CREEKS to a halt.

Mstislav stands at attention and looks around cautiously. Ahead a long stairwell transcends the depths of the castle, hallways to either side.

Hurried FOOTSTEPS come from above. Mstislav braces himself as his eyes trail up the steps.

INT. FOYER STAIRCASE - CONTINUOUS

Darius emerges from the darkness with a sword in his belt, candle light flickering ghostly shadows about the foyer. Close behind him is his other guard with a sword at the ready.

He comes to a stop half way down.

DARIUS

Who are you? How did you get here?

INT. FORTRESS FOYER - CONTINUOUS

Mstislav struggles to maintain his calm.

MSTISLAV

Who I am is not what I was. How I
found you is through vengeance
alone.

INT. FOYER STAIRCASE - CONTINUOUS

Darius takes another few steps down the stairs.

He points at the hat.

DARIUS

That hat. Are... Mstislav?

He puts his hand on the rail.

DARIUS

How are you not dead?

INT. FORTRESS FOYER - CONTINUOUS

Mstislav flashes the dagger and takes a step closer.

MSTISLAV

By the graces of god I still live.

(pause)

In the name of justice I've come to
bring you the death you so
rightfully deserve.

INT. FOYER STAIRCASE - CONTINUOUS

Darius composes himself. He CHUCKLES to himself.

DARIUS

You are going to play the hand of
justice, Mstislav? You are too
amusing.

INT. FORTRESS FOYER - CONTINUOUS

Mstislav takes a few more steps toward Darius to see him in a better light.

MSTISLAV

I will do just that.

Mstislav extends the dagger towards him and begins up the stairs.

INT. FOYER STAIRCASE - CONTINUOUS

Darius takes a few steps back up the stairs.

DARIUS

You are insane, Mstislav.

Mstislav quickens his steps up the stairs.

Darius turns and motions for his guard to intercept, then continues back into the ascending darkness.

The guard descends upon Mstislav and readies his sword to strike.

Mstislav starts moving to the side. He ducks to the left under a vicious swing and falls back against the railing.

Mstislav jumps up the stairs to dodge a downward swing.

The guards sword slides clumsily down the rail.

Mstislav STABS the guards right shoulder with his dagger and CUTS out. Blood spills black in the shadow.

The guard loses control of his sword in pain. The sword tumbles down the stairs. He gives chase with Mstislav right behind him.

INT. FORTRESS FOYER - CONTINUOUS

The guard retrieves the sword and in one smooth motion wheels and slices to where Mstislav should have been.

The guard looks up only in time to see Mstislav fly through the air.

Mstislav raises the dagger above his head as his knees make contact with the guards shoulders.

Before the guard hits the ground, Mstislav's dagger is lodged in his skull.

Mstislav tumbles across the tiled floor and sprawls, the dagger still in the guards head.

Mstislav regains his feet and limps toward the twitching corpse.

Mstislav places his foot on the guard's face and reaches for his dagger. He jerks it free of the skull, blood soaking the guard's hair.

Mstislav takes up the guards sword and kicks his face as he limps for the stairs.

INT. FORTRESS - MOUNTAIN HALL - CONTINUOUS

Darius walks briskly through the rocky hall way. Dim candle light fades behind him. His path in front lit by the small torch at hand.

He arrives at a solid wooden door bound by iron bars and bolts. It is blocked by a wooden log set into the stone on either end.

Darius rests the torch in the bracket cast into the rock wall.

Darius lifts on the log but it is jammed. He looks behind him.

INT. FORTRESS - UPPER LEVEL - CONTINUOUS

Mstislav moves quickly with his limp. He kicks in door after door peering in and moving on.

INT. FORTRESS - MOUNTAIN HALL - CONTINUOUS

Darius continues to heave on the log with no give. He kicks at the log where it is set into the stone.

INT. FORTRESS - UPPER LEVEL - CONTINUOUS

Mstislav kicks in one last door on the left side of the hallway and looks in. The room is bigger than most with a large king bed that looked like it wasn't used in years.

On the other side of the room is an open stone wall.

INT. FORTRESS - LORD CHAMBER - CONTINUOUS

Mstislav limps up to the open wall and sees a recess into the stone from a sliding door. The track is free of dust. He continues into the mountain hall.

INT. FORTRESS - MOUNTAIN HALL (DARIUS) - CONTINUOUS

Darius looks back and sees the flicker of a torchlight approach. He gives one last hard kick at the log. He flinches in pain and grabs his ankle as the log knocks loose.

Darius removes the log and pulls open the door. He retrieves his torch and stumbles into the room beyond.

INT. FORTRESS - MOUNTAIN HALL (MSTISLAV) - CONTINUOUS

Mstislav is at a run fighting through his pain. The torchlight ahead disappears around the corner.

EXT. FORTRESS - WALL-WALK - CONTINUOUS

Darius comes through the door in the stone onto the wall-walk. He makes his way for the flight of steps.

Just as Darius is about to descend Mstislav forcefully grabs him by the collar and heaves him back towards the door.

Darius scurries on the ground as Mstislav forces him back with his sword. Darius collides into the parapet and Mstislav lunges at him.

Darius rolls to the side and scrambles to his feet. He continues to back onto the wall-walk.

DARIUS

You should be dead. I left you for dead!

MSTISLAV

Lucky for me not everyone is evil.

Darius is backed half-way across the parapet. He pulls out his sword and Mstislav stops his advance.

DARIUS

And what townsfolk took pity of you? I shall like to deal with them when I'm done with you.

MSTISLAV

A gypsy.

Darius' eyes widen with a worried realization

DARIUS

A high price just for me, Mstislav.

MSTISLAV

No price is too high for the likes of you. You took my love from me.

DARIUS

Not before you took her from me.

MSTISLAV

She was never yours to love!

Mstislav strikes at Darius, but is easily blocked.

DARIUS

I spent my life loving Flavia. I
would have given anything for her.
You destroyed that.

Darius swings back. Mstislav knocks the blow aside.

MSTISLAV

We choose who we love. We can't
choose who loves us back in return.
Or are you too heartless to
understand that?

Darius re-grips his sword.

DARIUS

We'll both go to hell for this.
One cannot wash away their sins.

MSTISLAV

This is not sin. It's retribution,
for the life you stole from Flavia.

Mstislav puts all his weight into his swing. Darius barely blocks it and stumbles back further.

The two exchange blows back and forth, each blocking and returning with equal force not giving an inch.

Mstislav continuously tries to push Darius back as he tries to get around Mstislav.

After a quick dash to the outside of the wall Darius doubles back for the gap by the parapet.

Mstislav swiftly turns and swings his sword towards the parapet and cuts Darius off.

Darius raises his sword and makes a cut for Mstislav's torso.

Mstislav ducks underneath and steps behind Darius.

Darius is caught off guard and Mstislav slices into his back. He falls dangerously close to the edge of the wall-walk.

Mstislav just stands with his sword resting on his shoulder. Blood drips from the blade onto his fur hat.

MSTISLAV

Get up!

Darius squirms in pain. Blood spills from the gash in his back.

Mstislav takes a few quick steps towards Darius and kicks him in the side.

Darius CRIES out. He struggles with his sword as he crawls away from Mstislav.

MSTISLAV

I said, get up.

Darius uses his sword for support and trembles to his feet. Darius readies his sword. He tenses his face to hide his pain and fear.

DARIUS

Please, this is madness.

MSTISLAV

This is justice.

Mstislav swings fiercely and sends Darius's sword flying into the entrance courtyard. His follow through comes down right before Darius, just missing him.

Darius turns tail and tries to run, but his back hinders him.

Mstislav catches him in no time and grabs hold of his shoulder.

Darius' face goes to shock as Mstislav tosses him in one swift motion off the edge of the wall-walk.

Darius SCREAMS as he flutters through the air and lands in the courtyard.

EXT. FORTRESS - CONTINUOUS

Darius is in tears, his body broken. He looks towards the steps coming down from the wall-walk. Mstislav takes easy steps down with the sword dragging down behind.

Mstislav stops inches from Darius' face. Darius shakes his head as if to plead for his life. A sinister grin befalls Mstislav's face.

EXT. FORTRESS - WALL-WALK - CONTINUOUS

Where Darius and Mstislav were fighting minutes before the GYPSY materializes.

EXT. FORTRESS - CONTINUOUS

Mstislav proceeds to smash Darius' face with his foot before finally taking the sword up in both hands and PIERCING his heart.

Mstislav let's go of the sword and looks at his hands. The shock of what he has done hits him.

In turn Mstislav smiles.

A slow CLAP from behind him.

Mstislav turns on the dime and comes face to face with the Gypsy now down at ground level.

GYPSY

You are looking pale, Mstislav. Is this not what you wanted?

Mstislav nods slowly.

MSTISLAV

It is.

The Gypsy takes a step towards Mstislav. Mstislav backs away a step in exchange.

GYPSY

No sense in having any regrets now,
for I have come to collect.

MSTISLAV

I said you could have anything as
payment.

GYPSY

You did.

The Gypsy's beautiful face turns a twisted smile.

MSTISLAV

Then name it.

The Gypsy starts to morph into a DEMON.

Small horns protrude through the slick, long black hair.
Fangs extend beyond the lower lip. The ears extend to points
behind the horns and a long blood red overcoat drops to the
ground. Eyes of orange and gold shimmer in the dark of day.

DEMON

(voice altering from woman
to demon man)

I'll take your soul and an eternity
of servitude to the devil.

The DEMON places his right hand over the heart of Mstislav.
Suddenly he withdraws it.

Mstislav turns and runs through the fortress gates.

The demon disappears.

EXT. FORTRESS - WALL-WALK - CONTINUOUS

The demon re-appears on the wall-walk and watches Mstislav
run and stumble down the mountain pass beyond his sight.

DEMON

What brings you here angel?

An ANGEL steps up to the parapet beside the demon. A snow white overcoat drapes his shoulders, silver long hair hides most of his face. A faint glow emanates from his body.

ANGEL

You directly influenced a living human and tried to make him a servant of the devil.

DEMON

Nonsense. He would have killed Darius regardless of my help. I just sped up the process.

ANGEL

Still, God is furious and wants his soul cleansed of this. Mstislav will go to heaven.

The demon mock LAUGHS.

DEMON

God wants a murderer in heaven? Have the gates of the afterlife become so lax?

ANGEL

He should be in heaven with his love. His heart is good.

DEMON

We both know he can't go back from this. He crossed the line of good and evil when he murdered the first guard. I will have him on his death bed. He already agreed to give me anything, and for it I am taking his soul.

ANGEL

It is a rotten game you play demon.

DEMON

It's a rotten world. Too many
sinners and not enough Mandrakes to
bring down the hand of retribution.
We all must play our part.

The angel says nothing, his face betraying a sense of sorrow.

ANGEL

Then make him a Mandrake. At least
he will be working for both heaven
and hell.

The demon shrivels his face at having mentioned Mandrake.

DEMON

I suppose that could be arranged.
Mandrakes are servants of the
devil, after all. A double edged
blade cleansing the earth of filth
and bringing peace to the souls in
heaven.

ANGEL

Then we have a deal?

The demon nods.

The angel sweeps aside his left arm to open his overcoat. A
giant silver wing flashes out to the side. He plucks a fair
sized feather from it.

ANGEL

Leave your mark to bind this
agreement.

DEMON

Sounding a little bitter are we?

The demon reaches forward and grabs hold of the feather. He
removes his hand and where it was now lay OOZING black finger
prints on the feather.

The angel conceals his wing again and places the feather inside his overcoat.

DEMON

(playfully)

Shall we negotiate his time of death as well?

The demon awaits reply. None. The demon turns to walk off the wall-walk.

DEMON

Farewell, angel.

The angel turns in time to see the Demon fall off the wall-walk and disappear through the earth.

The angel turns back to the mountain pass.

ANGEL

God will find a way, Mstislav. You will be in heaven.

The angel opens its coat and flaps its wings. He takes off into the sky, a shimmer of light against the dark day.

SUBTITLE: BERLIN - APRIL 30, 1945

EXT. BERLIN STREET - DAY

The sound of ROLLING TANKS and MACHINE GUNS FIRING echo throughout a smoke filled, war-torn street.

German soldiers emerge from an abandoned building as Russian soldiers engage from across the street.

EXT. ANOTHER BERLIN STREET - DAY

More intense street-to-street combat continues. BOMBS detonate inside buildings and send glass windows exploding over the street.

At the far end of the street a Russian TANK comes into view. Following the tank is a legion of RED ARMY troops.

EXT. REICH CHANCELLORY - DAY

A huge stately building decorated with SWASTIKA flags. It bears a large sculpture of a spread eagle standing aloft the Nazi emblem.

The building slowly gets engulfed in smoke from the neighboring streets.

Behind the building lies an undisturbed, tranquil garden.

INT. FUHRERBUNKER - DAY

A dark, remote hallway leads off to various rooms of a lower bunker area. The droning of the bunkers VENTILATION system ECHOES throughout the hallways.

At the far end of the hallway a light shines forth from an open door.

INT. FUHRERBUNKER - OFFICE - CONTINUOUS

The room is void of life. At the far side of the room is an open door leading to another room.

INT. FUHRERBUNKER - SITTING ROOM - CONTINUOUS

The only sound is the VENTILATION system. On the floor lies a lifeless German Shepherd. By the door is a coat stand with a Fedora hat on it.

Along the back wall is a couch occupied by two people. On the left side is a woman slumped over, no sign of life.

To the right of the woman a man sits alone. He looks pained, a shell of the man he once was. A small moustache protrudes from under his nose.

In his right hand he holds a 7.65 mm PISTOL. He slowly opens his mouth and places a small capsule on the tip of his tongue. He closes his mouth and bites into the capsule.

His pain intensifies as he raises the pistol to his head and FIRES off a shot to his temple.

As his lifeless body slumps forward the blurred image of MANDRAKE sitting at a table next to the couch comes into view.

He looks to be wearing a trench coat and a fur hat. Half of his face is hidden in shadow from the light. The other half of his face generates a sinister grin.

He stands and walks to the coat rack. He takes the Fedora in hand and places his fur hat on the rack. He puts on the fedora, the rim low over his face and he leaves the room.

His smile FLASHES.

FADE OUT:

THE END