

BETWEEN: PILOT EP. 1-1 "GAMBRIAL'S BREAK"

by

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FADE IN:

EXT. LAKE - DAY

Secluded.

Bare toes, wrinkled and worn, cling to the edges of tired leather sandals as someone shuffles along the water's edge.

GAMBRIAL looks over the calm waters. His beard, long as it is grey, blows gently in the wind, as does his flowing wizard's robe. He's majestic.

At least, he used to be. Today, he's tired and he MUMBLES, barely audible, in an uninterrupted conversation with no one in particular.

He glances nervously over his shoulder.

Gathering his strength, he turns to the water. Slowly, he raises his arms, forces the words out...

GAMBRIAL

The creature beneath shall --

He looks at his right hand. It's empty.

He turns: Halfway up a hill, a staff leans against a rock.

Frustrated, he shuffles, slowly, back toward the staff.

LATER

Gambrial again stands at the edge of the water. Staff in hand, he raises his arms.

GAMBRIAL

The creature beneath shall rise
before!

He swings the staff in a large circle over his head, finishing with a forceful jab towards the lake's water.

GAMBRIAL

Rise -- rise and protect!

A tiny fish jumps, barely breaking the water.

Gambrial slumps.

A branch CRACKS behind him. He spins. No one there.

With new urgency, he presses on.

EXT. HILLSIDE - DAY

Gambrial walks along a ridge. From a distance...

SOLDAIR THE WATCHER (O.S.)
Gambrial?

Gambrial slinks low, finds a hiding spot.

A lumbering dark figure moves through the woods below him, his black robe sweeping behind him. SOLDAIR THE WATCHER, a beast of a man, scans the forest, searching.

Gambrial silently slides from his hiding spot, continues on.

EXT. OPEN PLAIN - DAY

Gambrial fights his way through a field of tall grass.

SOLDAIR THE WATCHER (O.S.)
Gambrial. You must go back.

Gambrial spins. Soldair gains quickly.

GAMBRIAL
I will not!

Gambrial spreads his arms, staff in hand as Soldair closes the gap.

Gambrial flashes his hands forward, as if casting a spell.

GAMBRIAL
I repel thee.

But, nothing happens to slow Soldair's advance.

Soldair reaches for Gambrial.

Out of options, Gambrial raises his staff over his head and brings it down, hard.

SMASH CUT:

INT. RETIREMENT HOME - ADMINISTRATION OFFICE - DAY

Eric Soldair, 30s, in medical scrubs, rubs his head.

Seated in front of him...

Gambrial, rumped from his capture, wizard hat bent, sulks.

ERIC
I need a raise.

Behind a desk, MEL, female, 40s, accountant-type, waves Eric from the room.

HALLWAY

On his way out, Eric passes THEODORE, 40s, businessman, sharp, but in a greasy kind of way. Theodore works a potential client -- an elderly woman in a wheelchair...

THEODORE
That's a sweet ride, for sure. But,
I can get you into an EasyGlide 550
if you're interested. Snap of the
fingers.

He leans in, whispers.

THEODORE
Medicare will pay for it -- if you
know the magic words.

Theodore drops a business card onto the woman's lap.

THEODORE
Which I do.

He spins into the...

ADMINISTRATION OFFICE

Mel waves him to a chair. Theodore declines.

Theodore, seeing Gambrial, shakes his head in disapproval.

MEL
(to Theodore)
Mr. Gambrial, we need to talk.

THEODORE
Theodore. And, yes, we do. I'm
paying you a lot of money to make
sure this stuff doesn't happen.

MEL
Mr. Gambrial, I'm not sure that
assisted living is the best place
for --

Theodore disappears into the hallway, almost immediately returns with a wheelchair.

THEODORE

Let's go, Dad. We need to get you
back to your room.

MEL

No -- Mr. Gambrial -- Theodore --
what I'm trying to say --

Theodore, a whirl of motion, spins his father into the
wheelchair.

THEODORE

It's great we didn't have to call
the media -- bring attention to the
lack of security around here.

GAMBRIAL

I'm perfectly capable of walking.

As he wheels his father for the door, Theodore drops a card
onto Mel's desk.

THEODORE

Call me. I can get you a great deal
on restraints.

A stunned Mel can only stare as Theodore yanks the
wheelchair, and his father, out the door.

ASSISTED LIVING WING - HALLWAY

Theodore, pushing the wheelchair, nearly sprints down the
long hallway.

THEODORE

She gives you any trouble, you call
my secretary, okay?

Reaching a door at the end, he stops.

GAMBRIAL

You want to come in?

Theodore checks his watch.

GAMBRIAL

Never mind.

Gambrial, leaving Theodore and the chair behind, shuffles
into his apartment.

Theodore fidgets. Sighs.

INT. GAMBRIAL'S APARTMENT - DAY

Theodore, alone, surveys the room: It's small and full of books -- all the classics -- heavy on fantasy. Mixed in: a crystal ball, gems, drawings of elves, orcs, etc.

It's a fantasy-lovers dream room.

A certificate hangs on the wall: "Harvard University. Professor Emeritus. Robert Gambrial, PH.D."

Theodore runs his fingers along a shelf of books. He stops at one. Pulls it out: "The Hobbit. J.R.R. Tolkien"

GAMBRIAL (O.S.)

You remember.

Gambrial enters from the bathroom, buttons the last button of a fresh, modern shirt.

Theodore quickly replaces the book.

Gambrial opens a closet, places his wizard hat on a shelf next to several others of different styles. He sets his sandals on a lower shelf, notices an empty spot.

GAMBRIAL

Dammit. My staff.

Theodore turns to him.

GAMBRIAL

She took it.

THEODORE

I heard you nearly killed someone.

GAMBRIAL

They're just being dramatic.

Again, Theodore checks his watch. Noticing, Gambrial gives him an out...

GAMBRIAL

You don't have to stay. I'm tired.

THEODORE

Yeah, I should go.

On his way out...

THEODORE

Try to stay out of trouble.

INT. RETIREMENT HOME - ASSISTED LIVING WING - HALLWAY - DAY

Theodore closes the apartment door, bumps into Eric who drops a cup full of pills.

THEODORE

Sorry.

As he picks up the pills...

ERIC

Dr. Gambrial's son, right?

Theodore nods.

ERIC

We're increasing his meds.

THEODORE

Any idea what we're dealing with here?

ERIC

I just give what they tell me.

Theodore starts down the hall. Eric points.

SOLDAIR

Shorter if you go this way. Ignore the sign. Alarm's broke.

Theodore nods, heads that direction.

INT. GAMBRIAL'S APARTMENT - DAY

Gambrial pushes the cup of pills away. Eric persists.

ERIC

Doc's orders.

GAMBRIAL

And just when did I start taking orders?

Eric doesn't budge. Defeated, Gambrial takes the cup. He tips the pills into his mouth, careful to leave one in the cup.

He takes a drink of water, holds the cup out.

ERIC

Missed one.

Gambrial smiles, looks.

GAMBRIAL

It appears I did.

He tips the cup to his mouth. The pill bounces down his chin, off his chest, to the floor.

GAMBRIAL

Oops.

As Eric reaches to pick it up, Gambrial pulls his own shirt collar open, spits the pills inside his shirt.

Eric hands Gambrial the last pill. The old man pops it in his mouth, swallows. Then, opens his mouth to show: no pill.

Satisfied, Eric turns for the door.

ERIC

I'll be back in the morning.

GAMBRIAL

We shall spar once more, my friend.

Instead of Eric, it's now Soldair The Watcher who stands at the door -- the figure that was chasing Gambrial earlier.

SOLDAIR THE WATCHER

That we will.

He closes the door.

Gambrial spits out the last pill.

INT. RETIREMENT HOME - SKILLED NURSING WING - NIGHT

ARLENE GAMBRIAL, 76, sleeps in a medical bed.

Gambrial reads to her by the light of a single lamp.

GAMBRIAL

"Then they drew their swords, and side by side went down into the forest, still seeking Carcassonne. I think they got not far; for there were deadly marshes in that forest, and gloom that outlasted the nights, and fearful beasts accustomed to its ways. Neither is there any legend, either in verse or among the songs of the people of the fields, of any having come to Carcassonne."

He sets the book aside: "A Dreamer's Tales by Lord Dunsany"

GAMBRIAL

We'll read another one tomorrow.

Gambrial kisses Arlene. She wakes, smiles the weakest of smiles, motions, as if to say: "You and me, go home."

GAMBRIAL

I'm afraid my powers are diminished.

She whispers something. He leans in, listens.

Gambrial strokes her hair.

GAMBRIAL

I'll try.

HALLWAY

Gambrial closes Arlene's door, looks around. It's dark, quiet. He strides down the hall, a man on a mission.

Gambrial reaches the administration office door, casts a quick spell on the handle, pushes the door open.

SECONDS LATER

He emerges with his staff.

INT. RETIREMENT HOME - ASSISTED LIVING WING - HALLWAY - NIGHT

Gambrial, in fresh wizard's gear, closes his apartment door, slinks along the wall, staff in hand, eventually reaching a locked exit. A sign reads: "Alarm Will Sound."

He looks at an alarm hung high on the wall.

He motions the staff toward the alarm, casting a spell. Whispers...

GAMBRIAL

Silence.

He pushes the door open. No alarm sounds.

EXT. FIELD - NIGHT

The same field as earlier.

Gambrial forges a path through the tall grass.

LATER

Gambrial stands, stares at an old house. Modern, but rundown.

INT. GAMBRIAL'S HOUSE - NIGHT

LIVING ROOM

Gambrial passes a dusty picture: GAMBRIAL AND ARLENE - PROBABLY 10 YEARS YOUNGER, ALONGSIDE A YOUNG GIRL. Happy.

GAMBRIAL

Where'd you put it, honey?

He looks around, heads upstairs.

HALLWAY

Gambrial pulls down an attic ladder.

ATTIC

Gambrial picks through old boxes.

Frustrated, he stands, holds his arms out. He slowly spins a circle. Eventually, he stops. Points.

Gambrial climbs over a pile of junk, finds a box.

LIVING ROOM

Gambrial opens the box.

He pulls out a beautiful amulet. Ancient. He kisses it, slips it over his neck.

Behind him, the room glows. Brighter and brighter.

Gambrial turns.

The light blocks her face, but a YOUNG ELF, 23, stands amidst the brilliant glow.

YOUNG ELF

Come quickly, we need your help.

Gambrial smiles, steps toward her.

FADE OUT.