

THE FIRE FADES

By

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Based on FROM SOFTWARE's acclaimed series, DARK SOULS

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1 EXT. FOREST - DUSK

The sun is low, barely peeking above the horizon. Very little light penetrates the thick trees.

It has rained recently, the stagnant puddles on the forest floor an indication of such.

A LEATHER BOOT stomps through one such puddle.

LORAINÉ - 30's, bright blue eyes, clad in a chest plate and leather greaves and boots - trudges through the trees, a rapier at the ready in her right hand and a wooden, wolf-crested shield in her left.

She stops, catching her breath, and listens.

A GURGLING HISS to her right catches her attention, and she snaps to a guard stance.

Methodically, she moves through the trees towards the direction of the sound.

2 EXT. FOREST - CLEARING - DUSK

TWO FIGURES shamble closely together in the clearing. They've seen better days.

Their leather armor is in tatters, revealing flesh that is shriveled and in the apparent early stages of decay. One drags an ax behind in its wake and the other clutches a sword and shield.

They groan and gurgle and hiss.

Lorraine steps into the clearing.

LORAINÉ
Who goes there?

The two figures turn to her and hiss in response, their eyes briefly flash a dull red glow.

LORAINÉ
Can you understand me? Can you speak? Say something, or I'll cut you down where you stand.

The two figures rush her in response.

The ax-wielding fiend sluggishly swings his ax and Lorraine side-steps out of the way with little effort.

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As the ax buries into the earth, Lorain kicks the assailant in the face, sending it sprawling to the ground.

The sword-wielding fiend swings its sword wildly at Loraine, and using her shield, she parries the swing, knocking the fiend off balance.

Loraine seizes the opportunity and plunges her rapier through its chest, and using her leg for leverage, pushes the fiend to the ground while removing her rapier from it in a fluid motion.

As the ax-wielding fiend struggles to get back up, Loraine buries her rapier through its skull, slaying it.

She swiftly pulls her rapier from its brain and flicks the remnants off onto the ground before wiping the rapier with her leg and sheathing it.

LORAIN

Damn it.

She examines the bodies of her opponents and shakes her head solemnly.

She stands in the clearing, contemplating something, before looking up towards the heavens.

Night is falling fast. She moves.

3 EXT. FOREST - CAMPFIRE - NIGHT

A fire crackles amid a circle of trees.

A CRESTFALLEN WARRIOR - 40's, chainmail, helm - sits before the fire, staring blankly into it. He seems consumed by the flames, as though nothing else matters.

His eyes are grey, his skin gaunt and ashy, as though sick.

CRESTFALLEN WARRIOR

I know you're there in the trees,
watching me. Why not warm yourself
by the fire? Or is your intention
to plunge your sword into my back?

Loraine steps out of the trees, fight ready.

The Crestfallen Warrior doesn't even so much as glance her way, his attention fixed on the flames.

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LORAINÉ

Have you your wits about you?

CRESTFALLEN WARRIOR

In a manner of speaking, I suppose
you could say that. It matters
little, anymore.

Lorraine looks him over and relents, sheathing her rapier.

CRESTFALLEN WARRIOR

Go on. Have a seat. Get warm.
There's no rush. None of it
matters, anymore.

Lorraine sits across from the Crestfallen Warrior. He offers
her a green glass bottle with a sparkling orange liquid in
it.

CRESTFALLEN WARRIOR

Drink?

Lorraine takes the bottle from him and eyes it.

CRESTFALLEN WARRIOR

It burns like fire, but it's not
poison, I assure you.

She takes a swig and hands the bottle back to him. He does
the same.

CRESTFALLEN WARRIOR

Have you journeyed far?

LORAINÉ

I came from the Southlands.

CRESTFALLEN WARRIOR

Ah, surely you've had quite the
adventure thus far. But you might
as well turn back now.

LORAINÉ

Why would I do that? I've come so
far, already.

CRESTFALLEN WARRIOR

No doubt you heard the legends that
we all did. But it matters not.
This...curse, this plague, whatever
it is...there's no stopping it.

(CONTINUED)

LORAINÉ

I'm sorry, but I have to believe differently.

CRESTFALLEN WARRIOR

I was the same as you, once upon a time.

LORAINÉ

What changed?

The Crestfallen Warrior looks up from the fire and Loraine sees his dead eyes and ashen skin. She grips the hilt of her rapier.

The Crestfallen Warrior smirks at her and returns his gaze to the fire, taking something out of his small satchel.

A Pendant. He stares at it and then closes his eyes and grips it tightly.

Loraine relaxes.

CRESTFALLEN WARRIOR

No doubt you've faced unspeakable horrors on your journey thus far, but you've not seen the things that I have. But if you press on, you will. And you'll see there's no hope. It just gets worse and worse and harder and harder. And what's the point? Why bother? Why not just let it consume us all?

LORAINÉ

Because I believe in something greater than myself. I believe that this world is worth saving. I will fight until there isn't a breath left in my body.

CRESTFALLEN WARRIOR

And if the legends prove false?

LORAINÉ

At least when I face judgment, I can say that I did all that I could.

The Crestfallen Warrior looks into her eyes.

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CRESTFALLEN WARRIOR
You will fail.

LORAINÉ
So be it. I will gladly die trying.

CRESTFALLEN WARRIOR
The fate of us all...what a burden
to bear.

LORAINÉ
And bear it I shall.

There's silence between the two.

The fire pops, the flames diminishing. It's slowly dying.

LORAINÉ
I am Loraine of the Southlands.
From where do you hail?

The Crestfallen Warrior loses himself in the fire once more.

CRESTFALLEN WARRIOR
A name. I had a name...Before I set
off on this endless journey. Before
the countless horrors that I faced.
Before I lost everything and
everyone that I cared about. Before
I realized that I had no hope. I
had a name. Before this damned
curse took hold. Isn't it funny? So
many things lost, yet it's the
smallest things that we cling to so
desperately for hope. I simply
cannot recall...but I had a name.

The Crestfallen Warrior opens his hands and looks at the
small pendant resting in them. He closes his eyes and smiles
once more.

LORAINÉ
What's that?

The Crestfallen Warrior opens his eyes, the smile fading
from his face.

CRESTFALLEN WARRIOR
Hmm? Oh, this? Just a simple
pendant.

LORAINÉ

It means a lot to you.

CRESTFALLEN WARRIOR

I can't be sure. It brings me warmth and reminds me of home, wherever that is. When I hold it, I feel like all of me is not yet lost.

LORAINÉ

Small comforts are needed on such arduous journies.

The Crestfallen Warrior puts the pendant back in his small satchel.

CRESTFALLEN WARRIOR

Well, I feel sleep coming to take me. Stay as long as you like.

The Crestfallen Warrior curls up beside the fire and rolls over, placing his back to Loraine.

Loraine props herself up against a tree and, after assessing the situation, slowly closes her eyes.

4 EXT. FOREST - CAMPFIRE - DAWN

The light of dawn barely peeks through the trees.

The campfire is all but out, leaving behind nothing but embers.

Loraine suddenly snaps awake and unsheathes her rapier, looking around, alert but confused. She climbs to her feet.

LORAINÉ

Hello? Sir?

The Crestfallen Warrior is nowhere to be seen, but Loraine notices his small satchel is still by the campfire.

LORAINÉ

Sir!

Birds caw in response.

Loraine looks around the campfire for signs of where he went.

A familiar, gurgling hiss emits quite suddenly from behind her and she turns.

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The Crestfallen Warrior stands before her. His face has taken on the same zombie-like appearance of her previous attackers and briefly, his eyes emit the same dull red glow.

LORAINÉ

Easy. Easy, there. We don't have to do this. You can fight it. Snap out of it. Come back. Come back to this world. Remember your pendant. Remember home.

The Crestfallen Warrior takes a few steps towards her and stops.

CRESTFALLEN WARRIOR

(guttural)

Home...

Lorraine watches him, ready for an attack but hopeful it won't come.

The Crestfallen Warrior suddenly lunges at her, swinging his sword aggressively.

Lorraine deflects the blows with her shield but is unable to parry.

As the Crestfallen Warrior continues his assault, Lorraine attempts a lunge with her rapier and the Crestfallen Warrior deflects it with his sword and slashes her arm, causing her to drop the rapier.

The Crestfallen warrior swings wildly at her with his sword and she spins out of the way to avoid the blows.

The Crestfallen Warrior charges forward with a plunging attack and Lorraine sidesteps out of the way, causing him to bury the blade into a tree trunk.

Lorraine kicks at his wrist and he drops the blade. Lorraine quickly scoops it up.

They stare each other down.

LORAINÉ

Don't you remember? Come on, remember. My name. My name is...

Lorraine hesitates, as though confused.

LORAINÉ

Lorraine. My name is Lorraine.

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CRESTFALLEN WARRIOR
(guttural)
I...had...name...

The Crestfallen Warrior charges Loraine once more, and with a swift slash of the sword, she beheads him.

She stands a moment, gasping and clutching her wounded arm.

She moves to the small satchel and opens it, sorting through its contents. She takes out the small pendant and examines it.

CRESTFALLEN WARRIOR(O.S.)
It brings me warmth and reminds me
of home. When I hold it, I feel
like all of me is not yet lost.

Loraine closes her right hand around the pendant and shuts her eyes, gripping it tightly.

She then slams the Crestfallen Warrior's sword into the ashes of the fire, kicking up small flames and embers.

She looks at her left hand. There's a dark mark in the palm of her hand, almost like the branding of a ring of fire.

One of her eyes is now the same milky grey as the Crestfallen Warrior's.

Resolutely, she picks up her rapier and sets out once more through the forest.

Up above, the skies have turned a redish hue, as though the very heavens themselves are on fire. The sun sits centered, eclipsed, a beam of light shooting down from it to something unseen on earth.

A tower looms ahead.

LORAINE(O.S.)
I am Loraine of the Southlands. I
have a name.