



# THE BASTARD SWORD

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V1.3

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1 EXT. WOODS - NIGHT 1  
DARKNESS.  
A BOLT OF LIGHTNING lights the moody night sky above the forest.  
TITLE: THE BASTARD SWORD  
The camera pans up vertical to the stars. Twists and turns into the storm.

2 INT. ABANDONED ROOM - NIGHT 2  
The camera moves through the storm, through a window into a gloomy room.  
White sheets cover as if nothing may be touched. A woman sits staring out the side window, in a black mourning dress.  
A TEAR rolls down her face. Pan down to her hands.  
A LOCKET HELD - Her grip loosens, it falls to the floor with the thud of an Anvil...  
DARKNESS.

3 EXT. STREAM IN FOREST - DAY 3  
EYES OPEN FROM A DREAM. A single drop of blood run downs the temple of a man named TIAS.  
He crawls over to the stream, a sunny day. Looks into the reflection at his injury. Seems he was knocked out, rubs the back of his head. He blinks -

4 INT. ABANDONED ROOM - NIGHT 4  
ANOTHER MEMORY - The locket is picked up by the hands of a gentleman - his face not shown. It is opened. A photograph of the woman and her husband, happy together. A tear drips onto the picture...

5 EXT. STREAM IN FOREST - DAY 5  
TIAS OPENS HIS EYES - back to reality. He washes his face with the water in the stream to remove the blood. He stands up. His clothes are simple and tatty. He finds his balance and looks around.  
Sees a broad stick laying on the ground. Thinks maybe it hit him. Blood on it perhaps.

He wanders upstream...

6

EXT. CLEARING - DAY

6

Finds himself in a clearing. A sparkle on the floor. Approaches it carefully.

It appears to be a small pouch of coins. Untrusting, his eyes draw upwards. The focus pulls into the foreground.

A THIN THREAD is pulled taught between trees. A smirk of realisation on his face. He squats down to look at the pouch, but not touch it.

TIAS  
Fool's gold.

MARS  
A likely story.

TIAS turns quickly - the bandit - MARS - GRABS HIM!

Tias tries to break free, but two more appear from the bush. He's surrounded.

Tias breaks free and steps back. All the Bandits slowly approach.

MARS  
I can see there's no fooling you,  
boy. Better to do it the old  
fashioned way...

They circle him - knives in hand. Mars wields an AXE.

One of the knife bandits gets up behind - but Tias makes his move. Spins around the knifeman and disarms him, taking the knife and elbowing him in the stomach. He then punches him to the ground hard, winded and out of action.

TIAS TURNS TO FACE Mars and the remaining bandit - now armed with the knife, scared, cornered, but feisty.

MARS  
(tribute to Skye)  
Not bad.

The leader, Mars, nods at the remaining bandit to make a move. The bandit approaches Tias in single combat. It's a stand-off.

They circle around each other, ready to make their move whilst Mars nods in excitement.

THE BANDIT STRIKES - cuts Tias on the arm!

TIAS DROPS THE KNIFE - stumbles back into a tree.

The bandit continues to advance the unarmed wanderer. Focus pull to the wire spotted earlier, but it's behind the bandit.

THE BANDIT'S FEET, approaching near the fool's gold pouch. Tias makes his move -

TIAS MAKES A DASH - gets to the other side of the knifeman and yanks on the wire. As he turns to face Mars, the bandit in the background goes up into the air from the rope trap around his ankle, dangling and moaning.

BANDIT

Woahhh!!!

Now more challenging, Tias dips his head and stares out the final man, MARS.

The first bandit to get winded gets up in fear and runs off.

MARS

Coward.

Tias Bends down and carefully and picks up the dropped knife.

MARS

I'm surprised. But the game is over my friend. Give me all your silver!

Mars raises his axe into a two handed position, ready for anything. The axe has a long handle, could outreach the knife easily.

TIAS

I have nothing. You're wasting your time, and your men.

Tias looks around condescendingly at the remaining defeated man, then back to Mars.

Mars pauses to think - a little slow of wit. His eyes narrow. Holds his axe up high.

TIAS

I see we're not done yet.

Mars now angered, takes a swing, but not at Tias.

HE CUTS THE ROPE which is pulled against a tree. His friend falls down behind TIAS, startling him.

Tias quickly sprints towards Mars and pushes him away from the axe, left sunk in the tree.

TIAS HIGH-KICKS the axe, breaking the handle off the

blade, rendering it useless. Mars staggers to his feet, unarmed.

The knifeman bandit on the ground is beaten...

BANDIT

I'm done! I'm done!

MARS

You call yourself a thief.

The bandit attempts to run, but the rope still attached to his foot trips him after a few steps. Unable to move, he just lays there quietly, tangled up in rope.

MARS

Look at you!

Tias casually walks over to the fool's gold and picks it up. He tosses the pouch to Mars, who catches it.

TIAS

Why have silver when you can have gold? Now leave me be.

Mars swallows his pride and turns around to walk off. A final word...

MARS

You got lucky this time. I'd leave the forest quickly if I were you. What's a boy like you wandering around here for, anyway?

TIAS'S FACE - No answer, not that he refuses - but he can't find the answer.

MARS

Pfft. You don't even know yourself. Fool's gold? Hah! More like a fool's errand!

He tosses the pouch back to Tias. He catches it perfectly.

MARS

Pray we do not cross paths again.

A final glare from Mars, then leaves abandoning his friend.

Tias watches Mars until he is gone. Then turns around to the remaining bandit. Throws the knife into the ground near him, close to his head.

TIAS

Go.

The bandit slowly picks up the knife, climbs to his feet - close-up of his face - remember this face...

Scatters away, rope and all.

7 EXT. WOODS

7

Tias continues to travel to the woods. Stops to rub his head from the wound earlier. Looks around, lost, not know where he's supposed to go. He sits down on a log to take a breather, when suddenly -

He hears a noise from the bush. Oh no, could be more bandits...

He goes to investigate.

8 EXT. TREE

8

He cautiously approaches a tree that seems to be alive. Suddenly... a young girl falls from it, landing flat on her butt. She seems to look a bit like an elf. Simple tattered clothes, bare feet. Short hair, slight of build.

She looks at him confused.

TIAS

Are you, all right?

The elf just nods, gawping, nervous, mouth open.

She gets back to her feet and look to the top of the tree, trying to pretend he's not there.

TIAS

You're an... elf, aren't you?

She looks at him ... cross at first, then a slight smile. Gives a nod.

TIAS

I'm Tias. I'm lost in the forest,  
at least I think I am.

He goes to shake her hand, but she backs off, startled.

TIAS

Oh don't be scared. I crossed  
knives with bandits. I think  
they're gone now.

ELF

You could be one of them.

TIAS

Oh, you CAN talk!

The elf quickly closes her lips again, like a little child.

She goes back to the tree, jumping and trying to get something. Tias looks up at the tree. There appears to be a basket of fruit stuck up there.

He watches her struggle for a moment with no success. Pride and stubbornness getting the better of her. He smiles. Laughing inside.

TIAS

Want me to get it down for you?

ELF

Get what down?

TIAS

Your basket.

She ignores and tries a few more jumps, exhausted she gives in.

ELF

Yes... Please.

Without thought, Tias scales the tree, bends it down until the basket is in reach. She snatches it and begins to run away.

As his feet touch the ground, he stands there patiently. Eventually she stops and turns around. Takes a step towards him.

ELF

The name's Nyx.

NYX does an awkward boyish bow and a hand shake, he accepts.

NYX

...and I am a Pixie, thank you.

TIAS

Wonderful to meet you, Nyx. What was your basket doing all the way up in that tree?

NYX

I heard the bandits, so I hid my belongings in the one place bandits never seek -- Upwards.

TIAS

Cunning.

NYX

(proudly)

We pixies are well known for our cunning.

She struts around, hands behind her back.

TIAS

I've never met one before now.

NYX

Clearly you have never been to Soza.

She sits down on a tree.

TIAS

Is that where I am? Soza?

NYX

You mean you can't remember?

He sits opposite her on a tree.

TIAS

I know Soza. I have Been to the town many times, but not the forest...

NYX

That's not Soza. That's just a silly town on the edge that shouldn't even be there. Calls itself 'Soza'.

TIAS

Oh?

NYX

(very quickly, waffling)

So the forest is the REAL Soza. Not 'Soza forest'. Soza town is Soza town, not Soza. Not part of MY Soza, never will be.

TIAS

(tribute to Doctor Reason)

I stand corrected.

NYX

So...



TIAS

...za?

NYX

So what happened?!

TIAS

Oh. I was hit on the head... by those bandits I think. I woke up with naught but a grande headache.

NYX

(in sympathy, tilts her head)

A grande headache indeed.

She quickly steps towards him, more trusting and enthusiastic.

NYX

Can you remember why you're here?  
What you came for?

Tias thinks for a moment. Turns away.

TIAS

I'm on a quest. I'm looking for something. A relic, I think.

NYX in the foreground, looking away from Tias, shows a serious face of knowingness, hiding it from him.

NYX

(towards camera)

Your memory will return eventually, I'm sure.

TIAS

I remember bits. There was a woman I cared for. She was in mourning. She'd... lost someone she loved. I made her a promise, I -

He turns around at the rustling of the trees. The pixie has gone.

He stands confused, decides to follow into the woods.

9

EXT. DOOR IN THE WOODS - DAY

9

Tias approaches a hill in the woods, in a homely clearing with signs of a recent firepit. A wooden door is built into the hill like a makeshift hobbit-hole. A woodcutters' axe in a log with fresh cut wood nearby.

His face - drawn to it, as if this were the place he'd been searching for his whole life.

He knocks on the door.

A pause. Then a hermit-like bearded man opens the door. His name is ULYSSES.

Ulysses eyes Tias up and down, judging him. He thinks carefully before he speaks.

ULYSSES

Yes?

TIAS

I've lost my way in the forest.  
Can you help me?

Ulysses looks him again, closes his eyes and sighs. A deep breath.

ULYSSES

(with sincerity)

I don't think I can. What I mean  
is... I can't. Sorry. Bye.

Shuts the door gently. Tias takes a step away, but decides to head back and try again.

Knocks on the door. Ulysses opens. Raises an eyebrow as if he were awaiting a sales pitch.

TIAS

(assertive)

Look I really need your help and  
I truly believe this is the place  
to find it.

ULYSSES

Is that so? What were you even  
doing here in the forest in the  
first place?

TIAS

(not sure, remembering)

I was attacked by thieves, I  
think. It seems they took most of  
my possessions.

ULYSSES

SEEMS that way, don't it?

Tias raises an eyebrow - huh?

Ulysses gives one last look up and down. Notices the little cut on his arm.

ULYSSES

Come on in then, before I change  
my mind.

He enters, door shuts.

10

INT. CABIN - DAY

10

Trinkets, bottles, jars. Home-made art from woodland material. A couple of swords and ancient weapons on the wall.

Tias politely steps in and looks at all the decor.

ULYSSES

Here, sit down.

A chair waiting for him it seems. Tias takes the seat, while Ulysses prepares some drinks.

TIAS

Thank you.

ULYSSES

Nothing to thank. Haven't done anything for you yet. Still don't think I can.

Pours two cups of vodka. Offers one to Tias.

ULYSSES

Drink?

Tias takes it and drinks it quickly with no words. Stares at the empty cup a moment.

Ulysses sits down in his favourite chair, nearest the door.

ULYSSES

So you were attacked by bandits.  
You're sure of that?

TIAS

I'm not really sure of anything right now. I took a blow to the head.

ULYSSES

I can see that.

Leans over and checks Tias's wound and his head. Seems to have a caring nature for injuries and looking after people.

TIAS  
I'm all right.

ULYSSES  
Howd'ya cut your arm?

TIAS  
I just told you... thieves.

ULYSSES  
(bit baffled)  
Oh, right.

Ulysses leans back again. Gives Tias his attention.

ULYSSES  
Tell me what you can remember.

TIAS  
I was searching for something.  
Maybe something I lost.

ULYSSES  
(statement, not question)  
In the forest...

TIAS  
Yes... No... that can't be right.

Ulysses waits patiently for a true answer, glaring at Tias as if he knew the meaning of life.

TIAS  
I remember now. I'm searching for  
a relic, an ancient relic.

He looks around for inspiration, Spots the swords hanging on the wall.

TIAS  
A sword. THE sword. The Bastard  
Sword... have you heard of it?

Ulysses just stares through him as if he'd fallen asleep with his eyes open in a trance.

Tias notices, puts it down to 'years of solitude'.

TIAS  
I never caught your name, friend?

Ulysses comes back to reality and establishes eye contact.

ULYSSES  
Ulysses.

TIAS

My name is Tias. THAT I can remember.

TIAS

It's good to meet you, Tias.

Ulysses leans over, shakes his hand. Pauses. Gets up and prepares another cup of vodka. His back to Tias. Holds the cup up like a specimen in front of his eyes in awe.

ULYSSES

Fine spirit this is eh, friend?  
Pixies make it. Of course, THEY  
drink it like water off of a  
wheel... Don't even flinch! If  
only they knew, eh? Stubborn and  
greedy though, most of 'em. Takes  
something... big to realise the  
value of humility...

Ulysses appears to be talking to himself almost, lost in thought...

TIAS

So have you heard of it?

ULYSSES

Heard of what? Your name?

TIAS

No, the Sword.

Ulysses face, facing away from Tias towards the camera. A sigh, a secret, a thought...

ULYSSES

I don't think so, sorry.

Ulysses quickly drinks the cup.

He then prepares a wet cloth for Tias. Grabs some herbs nearby and puts them on the cloth. Walks to him and puts it on the back of his head.

ULYSSES

Here. This herb should help stop  
the swelling.

TIAS

Ouch. Thank you.

Tias takes the grip of the cloth as Ulysses sits back down.

ULYSSES

It's getting dark soon. Get some rest now. Spend the night here if you need to.

Ulysses goes to leave to a door to what must be his private quarters.

TIAS

Again, thank you.

Ulysses turns around...

ULYSSES

And good luck finding your relic.

A smile from Ulysses. Leaves the room to his private area. Tias's face - grateful, doubtful.

- 11 EXT. DOOR IN THE WOODS - NIGHT 11  
Night falls, all is calm.
- 12 INT. CABIN - NIGHT 12  
Tias sits alone in the chair, eyes closed sleeping. He twitches - a bad dream it seems.
- 13 INT. DREAM - ABANDONED ROOM 13  
Tias picks up the locket from the floor, and gives it back to the woman.  
He puts his arm around her as she sobs. She ignores him, as if he wasn't even there.  
He puts the locket in her hand and closes her hand on it.
- 14 INT. CABIN - NIGHT 14  
Tias wakes up suddenly. Eyes wide open, realisation.  
Gets up out of the chair and looks around. He goes for the door to the private quarters, but decides against it.  
He looks at the swords, judging them, evaluating if they could be the relic. They don't seem to be.  
Decides to leave, quietly.

- 15 EXT. CABIN IN THE WOODS - NIGHT 15
- Tias walks towards us, away from the cabin. Stops to look back, struggles... but continues to walk away, out of frame.
- A shot of the side of the cabin, peaceful, dark, quiet. Suddenly -
- Movement in the bush. A figure emerges...
- The figure moves towards the cabin door, tracing he his hand along the wall in awe and greed.
- He quietly opens the door and sneaks in.
- 16 INT. CABIN - NIGHT 16
- The figure enters, closes the door slowly. Listens carefully - hears the snoring of Ulysses. A wicked grin in his face - it's MARS, the thief.
- Mars looks to the shelves, spots some brass items.
- Grabs a couple of items and looks at them. SUDDENLY -
- A noise behind him, he turns around -
- Ulysses stands there, just looking at him. Mars looks back - a stand-off.
- After a pause of silence, MARS charges towards the man, and wrestles him to the ground. There's a struggle.
- 17 EXT. WOODS - NIGHT 17
- Tias has paused in thought. Decides to turn around and head back to the cabin.
- 18 INT. CABIN - NIGHT 18
- The struggle continues. Ulysses grunts and struggles, as he tries to fight back.
- Puts up a good fight, but Mars is stronger. They fall into some pots and pans, making a noise...
- 19 EXT. CABIN IN THE WOODS - NIGHT 19
- Tias hears the noise and a shout. Already walking towards the cabin, he sprints to the rescue...

20

INT. CABIN - NIGHT

20

Tias bursts in!

Spots the burglar restraining Uylsses. Runs right up to him and grabs him, pushes him aside.

Ulysses steps back, flumps into the chair.

Mars attempts to charge at Tias, but Tias is fast... and grabs his arm into an arm-lock.

Wrestles Mars straight to the floor, knee in back.

MARS

Argh! Get off me! Get off me!

Mars spins around with force and shoves Tias off.

He then pulls a knife from his belt, stands up, and goes to stab Tias with it.

Tias picks up a vase and uses it to bash the knife out of his hand.

Hurting his hand he grabs the knife then stabs Mars in the arm.

MARS

ARGH!!!

Tias kicks Mars in the stomach and he goes flying back towards the far end of the cabin.

Mars is winded, breathless. Looks up at Tias.

Ulysses stands up behind Tias.

ULYSSES

Easy now. Easy. Friend?

Ulysses gestures towards the knife.. Tias puts the knife down onto the floor, with the wounded burglar in the background looking at him.

MARS

It's you.

TIAS

I know you.

MARS

Heh.

TIAS

The coward that robbed me yesterday.



Ulysses' face - they've met before? Interesting...

MARS

Could have been. But you were lucky that day. I didn't rob you.

TIAS

You knocked me out!

MARS

(confused, angry)  
I did nothing of the sort!

ULYSSES

Gentlemen. Tias, stand down.

Tias sits in the chair opposite the burglar. Ulysses goes over to Mars.

ULYSSES

Let me see that now.

Mars is uncomfortable to have his own victim see to his wound, but he lets him, whilst staring out Tias.

Ulysses checks the depth of the stab.

ULYSSES

You'll need to clean this, and treat it.

TIAS

What you're helping him?

ULYSSES

I helped you, didn't I?

TIAS

He just tried to rob you. He attacked you!

ULYSSES

(to Mars)  
Not going to attack me now, are ya?

Mars doesn't answer. Too proud to admit it.

Ulysses goes over to the table and gets a herbs, bandage, and a cup of vodka. Takes it all over to Mars.

Holds up the vodka to Mars.

ULYSSES

Pixie spirit.

Grins. Pours the vodka onto the wound. Mars hides the reaction of the sting. Ulysses then puts the herbs on the wound.

TIAS  
I don't understand.

ULYSSES  
It's my home, my rules. I decide  
who stays and who goes, right?

Tias thinks, but nods, respecting his wishes. Ulysses turns to Mars for an answer.

ULYSSES  
Well?

MARS  
Well what?

TIAS  
Oh, he CAN talk.

MARS  
Shut yer trap.

ULYSSES  
(shut up)  
Tias...

Ulysses goes back to the table and pours a secret formula. Tias's eyes widen in mystery at the liquid.

Ulysses offers the cup to the burglar.

ULYSSES  
I insist you drink this.  
Prevention is better than cure.

MARS  
Poison. Hermit's poison.

Ulysses rolls his eyes.

ULYSSES  
Seriously?

The burglar submits and drinks the foul potion quickly.

ULYSSES  
You got a name, burglar?

Mars hesitates. Looks at Tias with his response.

MARS  
Mars.

ULYSSES

Not gonna to ask what brings YOU  
to the forest. I think we already  
know that.

MARS

I don't know why you're helping  
me.

ULYSSES

Maybe that's just the kind of  
person I am...

MARS

Then we're nothing alike.

Ulysses looks up at Mars, then back to Tias, then back to  
Mars. A look in his eye as if he heard what he wanted to  
hear.

Finishes the bandage dressing.

ULYSSES

I'm glad we're not. Can you get  
up?

Mars tries to get up, refusing help from Ulysses. Sits in  
the chair, still winded and injured.

Ulysses picks up the knife that Tias put down, then takes  
a sword, gives it to Tias.

ULYSSES

(to Mars)

You'll have to stay the night.  
See how the wound is doing. Don't  
try anything or there'll be hell  
to pay.

TIAS

You can't be serious?

ULYSSES

(to Mars)

And don't spit on my hospitality.  
This is a gift. I'm giving you a  
chance here, burglar.

He gestures with one arm towards Tias.

ULYSSES

It's pretty obvious that this man  
here will kill you at first  
error.

MARS

Heh. He's no killer.

A pause, Ulysses thinks...

ULYSSES

He'll do what he has to do like any man would. Now I'm going to sleep. I'm tired. Give me some peace and quiet.

He leaves towards his private quarters. Tias goes to protest but decides to remain quiet.

He stares back at Mars who sits there, looking back at him with the sword.

MARS

Man's lucky to have a friend like you, huh?

Tias says nothing, hand tightens around the sword in malice.

MARS

You know, maybe I was wrong at first glance. You DO look like a killer. I can see it in your eyes.

TIAS

Sleep. Now.

Mars submits, lays back and stares into space.

21 EXT. CABIN IN THE WOODS - NIGHT 21

A long shot, pulling out as night falls.

Time passes into the night.

22 INT. CABIN - NIGHT 22

Tias's closed eyes.

SUDDENLY - LIGHTING strikes outside!

Light catching his face. He wakes up, slightly startled. Looks across.

Mars is still there, has also woken up, looks out the window.

He looks across at Tias. Growls, scoffs, goes back to sleep.

23 EXT. CABIN IN THE WOODS - DAY

23

An axe falls into a log on a stump. It's Tias, cutting wood.

Ulysses returns from round the side of the hill.

ULYSSES

How's your head? Good to see you feeling better.

TIAS

I'll be alright. I'm more concerned about you. You took quite a bashing last night.

ULYSSES

I'm tough.

TIAS

Glad to know it.

ULYSSES

Thanks for steppin' in back there. I'm not quite sure why you wandered off, but I'm glad you coming back.

Tias nods humbly.

Mars staggers out of the door, looks at them both in shame.

ULYSSES

Ah, sleep well did ya? I would ask you to help me out too but you're in no fit state yet.

MARS

Don't wind me up, fool.

ULYSSES

The fool that spared your life?

Mars goes quiet and sits down on the ground by the house.

ULYSSES

Call me Ulysses.

MARS

You're Ulysses?

ULYSSES

Know me do ya?

Tias puts the axe in the stump. Stops and looks at them both, confused.

MARS

I think I do. I don't know.

ULYSSES

What's a burglar doin' knowing  
someone like me?

MARS

I heard a story, I think.

TIAS

(challenging)

Pray tell.

Mars looks at Tias, defensive and angry. Goes quiet and looks away.

MARS

Ah, forget it.

Tias shrugs it off, pulls the axe out of the stump ready for another chop of wood, but then -

MARS

Well... it's nothing special. I  
just heard about a sword.

Tias aborts the chop and lowers the axe in interest.

TIAS

A sword?

ULYSSES

A sword?

MARS

The Bastard Sword.

Mars looks to Ulysses.

MARS

Well? Have you heard of it?

Tias's eyes widen. How could he possibly know of the sword, he thinks...

Tias steps forward, answering for him.

TIAS

He hasn't heard of it.

MARS

I wasn't asking you, anyway.

TIAS

Well I'm telling you. He hasn't  
heard of it.

Tias chops the wood again, erasing his thoughts on the matter.

Another bit of wood as Mars figures out Tias.

MARS  
YOU know about it...

Tias ignores, continues cutting wood.

MARS  
A fools errand... You're not actually searching for it, are you?

ULYSSES  
Actually, I did hear about it once, now that I've had time to think upon it.

They both turn to him.

Ulysses walks over to the stump, picks up the axe and cuts a couple of bits of wood.

ULYSSES  
They say it has the power to control people's thoughts. A magical sword.

MARS  
That's right. That's how I heard it.

TIAS  
Mars, who told you about the sword?

MARS  
Who cares? It's nonsense. Faery-folk tale...

TIAS  
(to Ulysses)  
Is it?

ULYSSES  
Well I've not seen it. Nor have I looked for it.

Tias sits down on a stump, a little hopeless.

MARS  
What? You believe that the sword exists? What a dire fool.

Tias scowls at Mars.

ULYSSES

He's not a fool. The man saved my  
life, remember?

Mars says nothing.

ULYSSES

Tias, fetch us some firewood,  
will ya?

Tias goes to pick up some nearby, when -

ULYSSES

Not here. Go further out ... in  
THAT direction. At least ten  
skareens yonder --

TIAS

I don't want to leave you alone  
with him.

ULYSSES

You won't be too far. I've got  
lungs, I can shout. You've got  
legs, you can run.

Tias nods, wanders towards the forest when -

ULYSSES

Oh, and er - take this.

He throws him a bottle of potion.

TIAS

What is this?

ULYSSES

Medicine, for our friend, Mars.

He looks at Mars, Mars looks back - what??

ULYSSES

(to Mars)

You'll need to keep taking this  
to fight any infections you might  
obtain from that wound. I hope  
you understand that this medicine  
right now, is more valuable to  
you than my tatty trinkets.

Mars nods, weakly, frustrated.



24

EXT. WOODS BY LAKE - DAY

24

Tias goes to collect wood by himself. Bends over to collect logs when -

A sound... like a whisp of wind, startles him.

Ignores it - but then again -

A hum, the sound of breath exhaling, echoing across the forest around him. It appears to be coming from the lake nearby.

FAINT VOICE

Tias...

He goes to the lake looks into the water slowly.

The reflection of a white ghostly figure appears in the reflection... he looks up -

BEFORE HIM - the figure floats, like a ghost of a maiden. White and fluid.

He steps back in fear.

TIAS

A ghost! By the Gods...

GHOST

Tias, do not be afraid.

He wants to step back, but looking around him, he can see the coils of the ghost circling around him as if to gesture him to stay.

TIAS

What is it? What is happening to me?

GHOST

I know that you seek the sword. But you don't remember, do you?

TIAS

No. I don't remember. I don't remember anything. I barely even know who I am!

GHOST

Tell me what you remember.

He submits, tries to think.

TIAS

I don't remember... I can't - ah!

The ghost penetrates through him, into his soul and he gasps. Closes his eyes, remembering -

25 INT. ABANDONED ROOM - NIGHT 25

Back to the room, he holds the mourning woman in his arms.

GHOST (V.O)  
Try to remember. Who was this woman?

TIAS (V.O)  
She was, somebody I cared about.

GHOST (V.O)  
A friend.

TIAS (V.O)  
A good friend.

GHOST (V.O)  
Why was she crying?

The picture in the locket, the locket in the hand...

TIAS (V.O)  
Someone died. Her lover... she lost her lover.

GHOST (V.O)  
Travel further back. Deeper...

The memory liquifies into another memory...

26 INT. GARDEN GLADE 26

A beautiful garden. The camera moves towards two lovers dancing. The woman from the vision - this time in white, bare feet, dancing around, in love.

She spins to a stop, looks towards us, sparkling eyes and besotted.

A man stands opposite her, smart and elegant. He offers her hand to a dance.

TIAS  
He was her husband, maybe? I don't know. She loved him so much.

GHOST (V.O)  
Yes. She did. Then what happened?

They dance around together...

Suddenly his face, very close-up in pain. His hand on his heart. Falls back - slow motion. Collapses to the floor.

Her face in fear - terror.

TIAS (V.O)

He died.

GHOST (V.O)

Yes. He died... you remember.

Her face turns sideways to look at someone else.

A close-up of TIAS in the vision, standing away, not knowing what to do. He looks towards his friend. A close-up of him looking up, dying.

TIAS (V.O)

I was there. He was my friend.

GHOST (V.O)

Yes. and then what happened?  
Travel forward...

The memory goes to another memory...

27 INT. ABANDONED ROOM - NIGHT

27

A little before she sits in the chair. She stands at the vanity, sobbing. He tries to help her, hold her.

She pushes him away. She takes the locket from the vanity.

She puts a white cover over the vanity. White covers over everything. Falls into the chair - slow motion.

TIAS (V.O)

She lost the will to live.

GHOST (V.O)

And she found the will to die.  
Now ask yourself this. Why do you  
seek the sword?

The memory ends.

28 EXT. WOODS BY LAKE - SUNSET

28

He opens his eyes and looks up at the spirit, who has now distanced herself back over the lake.

TIAS

I remember now. I want to use the  
sword to save her from herself. I  
know that it has special powers.  
It can end her sadness.

The ghost doesn't respond. It flies a circle around as he watches.

GHOST  
Ulysses will help you to find the sword.

TIAS  
He knows where it is?

GHOST  
He'll tell you when he knows that your reasons are noble...

The ghost slowly backs off across the lake and fades...

TIAS  
Wait - I have questions I need answered!

He doesn't know what to say. The ghost disappears. Light returns to the scene and all is quiet.

His face, determined and knowing.

29

EXT. CABIN IN THE WOODS - NIGHT FALLS

29

Tias races back to the cabin where Ulysses has set up a fire opposite Mars.

ULYSSES  
Wondered where you'd got to.  
What, no firewood?

TIAS  
I... uh -

ULYSSES  
No matter. Plenty here for now.

MARS  
You look like you've seen a ghost.

Tias looks back at Mars. Not a scowl, but fear... Ulysses notices too.

ULYSSES  
What is it?

TIAS  
I did. I saw a spirit across the lake...

MARS  
 (leaning back)  
 Oh this is going to be fun.

TIAS  
 Will you shut your mouth for  
 once, thief.

Ulysses offers a distraction to Mars - a loaf of bread.

MARS  
 What?

ULYSSES  
 That's fine bread right there.

MARS  
 I hate bread.

ULYSSES  
 Suit yourself. Tias, tell me what  
 you saw? Tell us.

Tias sits around the fire slowly, warms his hands up.  
 Ulysses offers him the bread instead. He takes it and has  
 a bite.

TIAS  
 It was a lady of the mist. She  
 helped me to remember why I came  
 here... to find the bastard sword  
 - to save my friends widow from  
 despair.

MARS shakes his head. Looks at Ulysses. Ulysses looks back  
 at Tias, serious, but not knowing how to respond.

TIAS  
 Come on, Ulysses. You know where  
 the sword is. You know what it  
 can do.

Ulysses looks back at Mars.

MARS  
 Oh please. Folk tale and  
 delusions. Water spirits and  
 rusalki. You said you hit your  
 head.

TIAS  
 I said YOU hit me on the head.

MARS  
 I told you it wasn't ME!

TIAS

Then it was your pathetic  
half-wit ...

ULYSSES

(interrupting)

Ok, hold on a moment - I'll tell  
you what I heard about the sword.

TIAS

(eager)

Go on.

Tias hands the bread back to Ulysses.

ULYSSES

What if I told you that person  
who possesses the sword - can  
control minds...

MARS

(not buying it)

You mean - command people like  
slaves... to do their bidding?

ULYSSES

Not quite.

TIAS

Well? What does it do? What CAN  
it do?

ULYSSES

It can control thoughts. It can  
change something a man knows, or  
it can take it away, and make it  
forgotten.

MARS

(sarcasm)

Well that's easy then. This  
mythical sword musta' given Tias  
here the false knowledge that the  
very sword exists in the first  
place. Given him delusions of  
ghosts and God knows what else  
next -

TIAS

No! - I mean... could it have?

ULYSSES

The sword exists. Ok?

He looks at both them, confessing the truth.

ULYSSES  
 ... and I believe the spirit you  
 saw, was real. The forest is  
 known for them

MARS' eyes narrow, confused and half-disgusted at Ulysses.  
 Ulysses casually continues to eat food.

TIAS  
 Then, will you help me find it?

ULYSSES  
 I don't know where it is.

TIAS  
 Oh come on, man!

He stands up in protest.

TIAS  
 You believe in the ghost and it  
 told me that YOU knew how to find  
 the sword.

He looks up at him, to Mars, then looks down. Chewing food  
 slowly to a stop.

ULYSSES  
 Mars needs his medicine.

Tias throw the bottle to Mars, who catches, aggressively.

ULYSSES  
 I'm cold, I'm going to hit the  
 hay.

He stands up and goes to walk into the cabin.

TIAS  
 Ulysses - the sword -

Ulysses turns around, holds his finger up to silence Tias.  
 Thinks for a moment, no eye contact -

ULYSSES  
 Let me sleep on it.

Tias nods. Lets it go for now.

30 INT. CABIN - NIGHT

30

It is morning.

Tias's eyes awaken - close up. He looks across at Mars who  
 still sleeps. Hears a whisper and creak. Looks to see  
 Ulysses at the door whispering to someone outside.

ULYSSES

Thank you. I have company right now. Come back in a few days or so.

Very quietly, he closes the door.

Ulysses walks into the room with a basket of fruit, berries and herbs. Puts it on the table. Tias pretends he was asleep.

Ulysses disappears to his room, camera still on the basket, then to Tias. Goes back to sleep.

31

INT. CABIN - DAY

31

LONG SHOT OUTSIDE.

Ulysses sits down in his favourite chair and stares across the room at Mars as he sleeps, with a worried look.

Tias enters quietly from outside. Pauses a moment.

TIAS

Why do you care for him? Why not even just, send him on his way and have naught to do with him?

ULYSSES

I have my reasons. Just as you have yours.

TIAS

(realisation)  
You're lonely.

ULYSSES

Yes. That I am.

TIAS

Who delivered the basket?

ULYSSES looks across at Tias.

ULYSSES

A friend.

The sound of Mars stirring and waking. Lets out a big manly yawn.

MARS

Ah. What are you looking at?

TIAS

How can you live with yourself, doing what you do?



MARS

Talking about me again. Good morning to you, too.

Mars takes the cover off and flexes his arm - now healed. Still arrogant, ungrateful it seems.

ULYSSES

Feeling stronger?

MARS

Strong as an ox.

ULYSSES

Then you can go.

Ulysses tosses Mars an apple. [tribute to Deathwriter] He catches - freezes, looking up at him.

MARS

Go?

TIAS

Go.

ULYSSES

Maybe our act of kindness will inspire you in future not to rob and attack decent men.

Mars thinks. Takes a bite of the apple. Stares into space a moment -

MARS

Well, I won't steal from YOU again.

A smirk. Tias looks at Mars in disgust.

MARS

Or your deluded friend.

He gets up biting the apple and goes for the door without much thought or remorse, pushing past Tias slightly.

ULYSSES

Well it's a start.

Mars opens the door, closes it behind him hard.

Ulysses goes to the window and watches him strut off. Mars pinches an old grape or bit of meat from a plate left out last night by the fire.

Ulysses turns back to Tias.

TIAS  
Glad to be rid of him.

ULYSSES  
Heh.

Doesn't agree nor disagree.

Ulysses sits back in his favourite chair. Pauses a moment.

ULYSSES  
How's the memory?

TIAS  
I don't remember anything else.

ULYSSES  
Must be frustrating. Having only  
a few pieces of the puzzle,  
unable to see the full picture.

TIAS  
It's so vague that I'm starting  
to believe that none of it is  
actually real.

ULYSSES  
How do you mean?

TIAS  
Well maybe it's just bits of  
dreams I've had. If the woman and  
her husband were that important  
to me, surely I would remember  
more about their entire existence  
than just those figments.

ULYSSES  
What about your past? Your  
childhood?

TIAS  
You know, I haven't even thought  
of that until now.

Tias looks at Ulysses with a revelation.

Ulysses pours him a cup of vodka, and one for himself.

ULYSSES  
You don't remember? You must have  
had a strong occupation with  
muscles like that.

TIAS  
I worked a farm with my father.  
Grain, mostly. It was hard work.

ULYSSES

That's the route of your strength?

TIAS

Not really. I learned to fight.

ULYSSES

A soldier?

TIAS

I wanted to be.

Tias downs the vodka.

TIAS

When I was younger, there was a conflict going on between the townsfolk around the citadel and the country men outside. Farmers stopped trading out of protest. I never fully understood why.

ULYSSES

Sounds like it was complicated. I never cared much for politics.

TIAS

Nor did I. I think it was a simple matter of a tyrant taking over leadership, and not paying enough money out for hardworking men.

ULYSSES

That's typical.

TIAS

Even years later when it was mostly resolved, the whole thing left a sour taste in the mouths of the kings' guard. I had trained myself for half my lifetime how to fight for my good of the city, only to be rejected and unwelcome to fight among their ranks.

ULYSSES

All because your father was a farmer?

TIAS

Yes.

ULYSSES

You couldn't fight for something else?

TIAS

I started fighting for myself. In taverns and streets for money.

ULYSSES

You honestly don't seem the type.

TIAS

I fought clean and honourably, regardless of the dirt beneath my feet.

ULYSSES

I don't doubt that. You've already demonstrated your skills. You're a dangerous man.

TIAS

Am I?

Tias looks up at Ulysses almost like an insecure child seeking an answer as he doesn't trust himself with it.

ULYSSES

We're all dangerous. People are dangerous. That's why I stay away from 'em.

Ulysses pours another vodka and offers it to Tias. Gestures with his eyebrows.

32 EXT. WOODS - LONG SHOT 32

Time has passed throughout the day.

Animals, trees, squirrels.

33 EXT. FISHING POND - DAY 33

Mars finishes a make-shift fishing pole from an old twig. Pops a bit of meat or grape on there and starts fishing in the lake.

A long shot with subtle chilling sounds of the deathly still waters. Silence.

He thinks he has a bite - yanks up the pole to look - nothing on there. Disappointment in his eyes - looks up across the lake.

Moving into his eyes - we see the horror as everything around him starts to go dark...

34 EXT. CABIN - SUNSET 34

A long shot of the cabin as time has passed.

A shot of the sun low across the tops of trees.

35 INT. CABIN - SUNSET 35

Ulysses is preparing food or herbs or something with his back to Tias.

TIAS

You said you would tell me how to find it.

Ulysses turns around and raises an eyebrow.

TIAS

...The sword.

ULYSSES

Ah... the sword.

He sits back down.

ULYSSES

Don't think that the sword would solve all your problems. Let's just say that, even if it DOES exist, ask yourself, do you really want to control people's thoughts?

TIAS

Only to stop someone from dying... from a broken heart.

ULYSSES

It's unnatural.

TIAS

It's a noble cause. Is that not good enough?

Ulysses thinks. A close-up of his face.

CUT TO:

36 EXT. WOODS - SUNSET 36

POV - the camera SWOOPS THROUGH the woods frantically, like the eyes of a wolf darting through the forest.

37 INT. CABIN - NIGHT

37

Ulysses goes back to whatever he was doing at the table.

TIAS

The spirit at the lake, you told me it was real.

ULYSSES

I believe so. There are spirits and all sorts out there in the forest, by the lakes, in the ponds.

TIAS

Was it toying with me?

Ulysses looks at Tias up and down and judges him. Weighs it up in his mind.

ULYSSES

No. It was not toying with you at all. You really want to find the sword?

TIAS

Yes. Tell me.

Tias stands up. A stand-off.

CUT TO:

38 EXT. WOODS - NIGHT

38

POV - the camera is now racing towards the door of the cabin like a monster, panting and stumbling...

39 INT. CABIN - NIGHT

39

Ulysses leans on the table, not giving much eye contact. Almost talking with shame and defeat, regret.

ULYSSES

The Bastard sword is... a powerful treasure. It never truly belongs to anyone or anywhere.

TIAS

Is it nearby?

ULYSSES

It's a days journey away... or so.

TIAS

Is it in the town? Why has it not  
yet been claimed?! Tell me!

Just as Tias starts to get a little too eager -

THE DOOR BURSTS OPEN.

MARS stands there puffing and panting, in the doorway,  
looking at them both. Gets his breath back, then  
approaches Ulysses.

MARS

You...

He walks right up to him.

MARS

The sword... tell me where to  
find it, it must be mine!

TIAS

Mars?!

MARS

Shut up, you!

Turns back to Ulysses.

MARS

Wizard! You know where it is.  
Take me to it now!

ULYSSES

I am not a wizard, Mars.

Mars puts his hand on Ulysses' shoulder.

TIAS PUSHES MARS aside to protect Ulysses.

Mars pushes Tias back onto the floor in reflex.

Mars then goes and picks up Tias by the scruff of his  
neck.

MARS

I let you off easy last time,  
boy. And the time before that.  
Now you're pushing your luck.

Tias shoves Mars's hands off him assertively. Ulysses  
stands behind.

ULYSSES

Picking on people isn't going to  
find you the sword.

Mars and Tias turn to Ulysses, both eager to find it.  
Ulysses comes out with it straight.

ULYSSES

The sword is buried in the  
forest, not far from here.

MARS

How far?

TIAS

A day... or so...

Tias looks at Ulysses realising he's confessed  
information. Goes quiet.

MARS

So you two have already  
conferred? You sought to steal  
the sword without me!

ULYSSES

Nobody needs to steal anything.  
Now you listen to me. Both of  
you.

Ulysses pours a vodka and sits in his chair, tries to  
chill out and take control back.

ULYSSES

We'll find the sword... together.  
Since you're both eager to have  
it, and I'm the only one who  
knows where it is, then I'm  
willing to make a deal with you.

MARS

Well, name it.

ULYSSES

I will take possession of the  
sword... HERE, on behalf of both  
of you. We'll share it.

MARS

Argh no! You'll use it to control  
my mind. Turn me into a madman!

ULYSSES

The sword will always be in plain  
sight. I'm the only one that will  
know how to use it. It's my way,  
or it's no way. Your call. Talk  
about it amongst yourselves. I'm  
going outside for some air. In  
the peace! and the quiet! Away  
from all demanding and greed ...



He leaves the room, slams the door behind him leaving Tias and Mars together with almost nothing to say.

TIAS

He's right. Look at us and what we're doing. The sword is controlling us by its reputation alone.

Mars looks zoned out and unable to respond. Disturbed still.

TIAS

What happened to you?

MARS

Why should I tell you?

TIAS

Maybe I can help.

MARS

Argh.

Mars storms out now. Tias follows.

40

EXT. CABIN - NIGHT

40

Tias follows Mars outside, where Ulysses has started building a small fire.

Ulysses looks up but just leaves them be. Continues to chill out and do his task.

TIAS

It was the spirit, wasn't it. You saw a spirit in the forest and it told you about the sword.

Mars stops and hangs his head in shame - hiding his face from Tias with his back to him.

TIAS

At least we know now, that the spirit is real. We BOTH saw it.

Mars discreetly puts his hand on the handle of his dagger.

MARS

This hermit has played enough mind games with us already. I won't be taken for a fool.

Ulysses turns around and calls across to them.

ULYSSES

Are you two ready to listen? To  
the voice of reason?

Tias looks at Mars waiting for his move.

TIAS

I'm ready.

Mars lets go of the knife.

MARS

I'm listening.

Tias sits by the small fire. Mars sits at a distance in  
the darkness, antisocial. Plays with a rock on the ground.

ULYSSES

We rise early tomorrow and travel  
east. The three of us. We take a  
shovel and we dig it up.

TIAS

As simple as that? I'm not buying  
it.

MARS

Simple enough for me.

Mars fondles the rock in his hand. Simple-minded.

TIAS

Well?

Ulysses looks up at Tias.

ULYSSES

We'll also take some weapons. You  
two have try not to kill each  
other.

TIAS

Why do we need weapons?

A pause. And then -

ULYSSES

A creature of the night guards  
the sword.

MARS

Here we go AGAIN!

Mars throws the rock into the fire in anger, sending  
sparks and embers into the air, lighting up all their  
faces. Stands up. Ulysses stands up too.

ULYSSES

Will you just listen to me?

Tias talks to himself, a hint of madness and paranoia.

TIAS

A magical sword, lake spirits...  
demons of the night...

ULYSSES

Tias!

MARS

Can it be beaten? Can it be cut?

ULYSSES

I don't think it can. It is bound  
to the sword. It watches over it.  
As long as we play by it's rules,  
it shouldn't cause us any grief.

TIAS

Then why tell us to take weapons?

A stand-off Mars looks at Tias - fair point, looks at  
Ulysses.

ULYSSES

Better safe than sorry. It might  
play tricks on us. Test us.

Awkward silence. Mars looks to Tias.

MARS

Admit it Tias. You're beginning  
not to trust him.

Tias shakes his head, but can't bring himself to reply  
with words.

TIAS

What are the rules?

ULYSSES

You don't have to worry about  
that. I'll be the one holding the  
sword, remember? The demon won't  
show any interest in you.

Ulysses takes a bite out of a loaf of bread and passes it  
to Tias. Tias looks at Mars then takes a bite, hands it to  
Mars.

MARS

You know I don't like it.

TIAS  
Suit yourself.

Tias looks at Ulysses then laughs. Looks back at Mars. Mars sits down carefully trying to keep his cool. Long shot of the fire.

Camera pans up to the stars.

41 EXT. DREAM - STARS 41

The stars become denser and more surreal. A female voice is heard, distraught, crying and screaming...

VOICE  
Please come back to me! Don't  
close your eyes, don't ever close  
them, please!!!

The screams echo...

CUT TO:

42 EXT. OUTSIDE CABIN 42

Tias's eyes open, almost blinded by the sunlight. Looks over.

Blurry then focusing slowly, A strange dream-catcher like trinket is being constructed. Tias looks up at Ulysses tying the last pieces together.

TIAS  
Ulysses... I had another dream.

ULYSSES  
You seem to have a lot of those.

TIAS  
Not really.

Tias sits up. Long shot - Ulysses and Tias outside, the fire burned to embers.

TIAS  
Where is Mars?

ULYSSES  
Inside. Getting food for the  
journey.

Tias pauses a short moment, then instinctively tries to get up fast as if a crime had been committed.

ULYSSES

Calm down. There's nothing in there worth stealing, really.

Tias goes again to make a move towards the cabin when -

ULYSSES

Tias. I've got to win the mans trust somehow. Let him do his thing.

Tias calms down. Pays attention to the trinket.

TIAS

What is that?

ULYSSES

Protection against bad spirits.

TIAS

You ARE a wizard.

ULYSSES

No. Just a hermit. Here...

Ulysses takes another dream catcher from his pocket.

ULYSSES

Maybe it will help stop your bad dreams. Keep it on you.

Passes it to Tias. Tias accepts. Smiles at him.

43 INT. CABIN - DAY

43

Mars looks around at the trinkets and items in the house, like a burglar would, cautiously. Glances out the window to see the others at a distance.

Turns his head to the doorway to Ulysses' private room. Decides to investigate.

44 INT. ULYSSES ROOM - DAY

44

Mars walks carefully through the hanging beads and string decorations in the doorway. Looks around then at the floor. A simple bed on the ground made of rags.

Looks across on the shelf and sees more bottles of the pixie vodka.

Sneakily fills his water skin with the vodka, grinning to himself.

45 EXT. OUTSIDE CABIN - DAY

45

Ulysses has two swords in hand. Hands one to Tias.

ULYSSES  
Here you are, fighter. You need  
no lessons from me.

Tias ties the sword to his belt. Ulysses hands him a water skin, also.

TIAS  
I could teach you a thing or two.  
How to defend yourself better.

ULYSSES  
I'm sure you could.

Mars emerges from the door.

ULYSSES  
Are you ready?

MARS  
Let's just get going, eh?

ULYSSES  
Here.

Hands Mars the other sword. Tias looks on and bites his tongue as Mars holds it up aggressively examining the sharpness and quality.

ULYSSES  
Don't upset the spirits, Mars.

Mars looks at Ulysses in disgust.

MARS  
Pfft. Spirits.

He sheaths the sword. Ulysses offers him a water skin.

MARS  
I've got my own.

Ulysses puts a travellers' bag on his shoulders with pots, pans, skins and all sorts of items. Picks up a shovel.

ULYSSES  
All right, then.

He closes the door of his home and starts walking east.

TIAS  
That's it? What about bandits  
robbing your house?

ULYSSES  
There are no bandits.

TIAS  
(pointing to Mars)  
What about him?

ULYSSES  
(turns around)  
He's just a one-off.

46 EXT. JOURNEY - MONTAGE - DAY 46

A montage of travelling through the woods. Ulysses leading the way.

Journeying through fields, over streams and dead forest.

Mars sipping his 'water'. The others sipping water.

47 EXT. WOODS - JOURNEY - DAY 47

Ulysses walks to the foreground - low shot angle, and puts his shovel into the ground and stops.

TIAS  
Is this it? Right here?

ULYSSES  
What? No... I just need to get something.

TIAS  
Oh.

Ulysses picks up a strange ornament of sticks hanging off strings.

TIAS  
What's that thing you got there?  
More protection?

ULYSSES  
This is a guiding stick.

MARS  
A magic wand.

Ulysses turns his head over his shoulder and looks at Mars condescendingly.

ULYSSES  
Yeah. It's a magic wand. Simply due to the fact that YOU have never seen one before, thus do  
(MORE)

ULYSSES (cont'd)  
 not understand it, thus it MUST  
 BE a magic wand. Your logic is  
 impeccable.

Mars screws his face up baffled and belittled.

Ulysses turns around slowly and points the wand at Mars.

MARS  
 What are you doing?

ULYSSES  
 Casting a spell to stop you from  
 ever stealing again. Ha ha!

MARS  
 Stop it now!

TIAS  
 Ulysses?!

ULYSSES  
 (to both)  
 Oh lighten up. You take things so  
 seriously. Both of you.

Ulysses breathes in deeply and contently.

ULYSSES  
 Breathe in. Smell that?

Mars and Tias sniff feebly a few times, confused. They  
 shake their heads.

ULYSSES  
 That's the smell of beauty. The  
 beauty of nature. The smell of  
 the world being as close to how  
 it should be as it could ever  
 get. Appreciate it while it  
 lasts. Be one with it.

MARS  
 Is this why you dragged us out  
 here? To give us a lesson on  
 paganism and tree-hugging?

Ulysses sighs. Shakes his head giving up.

ULYSSES  
 Whatever.

He picks up the shovel and continues walking.



TIAS  
Where are you going?

ULYSSES  
(calling back)  
Taking you to your precious  
sword. It's this way.

They quickly try and catch up with him.

48

EXT. DEAD FOREST - SUNSET

48

Mars smashes his way through dead trees with his sword,  
letting out anger and using all his might.

Tias and Ulysses trail behind.

ULYSSES  
You're wasting your energy. We'll  
have a lot of digging to do when  
we find the spot.

Mars stops a moment to get his breath back. Swigs some of  
the stolen vodka with his back to them.

MARS  
It's all right. I've got plenty  
left.

He then resumes hitting the trees and moving forward. Tias  
turns to Ulysses quietly.

TIAS  
Something doesn't feel right. Him  
making all that noise like that.

Ulysses nods and calls to Mars.

ULYSSES  
Mars. Give it a rest will ya?

Mars wrestles a rotten tree with his bare hands just to  
annoy the others.

MARS  
Arrrrrghh!!!

ULYSSES  
You'll disturb the spirits. Don't  
break the rules.

MARS  
Oh come on, wizard! They're dead!

He kicks one over.

MARS

Doesn't mean anything, just a bit of fun.

ULYSSES

Trees never die. They just change form. Become something else.

MARS

More rules. More useless facts in an attempt to control me.

ULYSSES

It's not like that at all. It's merely principle. A lack of respect for the serenity of the land.

Mars picks up a little twig and walks right up to Ulysses.

HOLDS THE TWIG up to his face and SNAPS IT with his fingers.

MARS

Come on then, spirits!

Mars steps back. Clearly drunk, opens his arms up and calls to the forest sarcastically.

MARS

I call upon the spirit of the grim forest. Come spirits! Come dryads! Emerge from the rotten trees and punish me!

He stands there and stares at the others waiting, arms open.

MARS

Nothing. They don't care. They've moved on.

He calms down, lowers his arms and his sword.

MARS

And so should we.

He hears a snap in the distance - quickly turns around sober and alert.

MARS

(tribute to the granary)  
What was that?

Tias moves his eyes left and right, mouth gawping.

MARS  
You heard it too, boy.

TIAS  
I did.

ULYSSES  
Couldn't be spirits and dryads  
now, could it Mars?

A stand-off. Mars decides to sheath his sword in defeat.

ULYSSES  
Let's find a place to build a  
fire.

TIAS  
Are we not close yet?

ULYSSES  
We're pretty close. But it's  
getting dark and I won't be able  
to find the spot.

TIAS  
Not even without the magic wand?

Ulysses looks at Tias.

ULYSSES  
It's a guiding stick.

TIAS  
Sure.

49 EXT. CAMPFIRE - NIGHT

49

A nice campfire is set. Ulysses prepares food over the fire with his pots and pans etc.

The three of them around the fire, like a triangle, not too close to each other. Darkness behind them as the dark forest speaks with wild animals.

TIAS  
(to Ulysses)  
What will YOU do with the sword?

ULYSSES  
Shhh.

TIAS  
What is it?

Ulysses pauses a moment and eyes roll left and right, like a fisherman waiting for a bite. He picks up an unused pan

as a weapon and creeps towards the edge of the light, looking into the blackness. Stands there.

MARS  
(eating like a pig)  
Playing more games?

Ulysses turns around to face Mars with no expression. Camera moves into him fast... suddenly -

A NOISE SCURRIES behind Mars - like an animal.

Mars gets up quickly and draws his sword. Tias does the same.

ULYSSES  
Easy, now.

TIAS  
What is it?

ULYSSES  
Something knows we're here.

TIAS  
The demon?

ULYSSES  
Yes. I think so.

MARS  
Then it must be slain, quickly!

Mars takes a step forward and raises his sword.

ULYSSES  
Is there an ounce of wisdom in that thick skull of yours, Mars?

MARS  
Don't mock me -

Something scurries behind Mars again, a close rustling in the night. He U-turns quickly sword at the ready.

THEN - it scurries behind TIAS. He turns around too. They all back towards the fire, afraid of the darkness.

TIAS  
Will it strike? Will it hurt us?

ULYSSES  
Could do. If someone angered it by say, making lots of noise and smashing down trees.

MARS

All right! All right! It was just a bit of fun. YOU take things too seriously.

Mars creeps towards an area raising his sword silently.

TIAS

What are you doing?

MARS

Wait for it -

Approaches a bush, hears a tiny rustling sound - and then STRIKE!

He cuts into the bush with all his might, repeatedly, paranoid and unfocused.

MARS

Argh!! begone!

Ulysses approaches carefully behind him. The noise has stopped.

ULYSSES

Move aside.

Mars lets him investigate the outcome of the bush. Reaches in slowly - towards the camera... creating tension on purpose to tease Mars...

He then quickly turns around - startles Both of them to reveal a DEAD ANIMAL! A pheasant or rabbit, perhaps.

MARS

Arghh!! Don't do that.

Tias laughs. Mars is scared out of his wits.

ULYSSES

I don't know about you, Mars but I quite fancy a bit of Demon for dinner tonight. What do you reckon?

After Tias stops chuckling and Ulysses returns to the fire preparing the animal -

TIAS

So there was no demon?

ULYSSES

Demons have no permanent form.

TIAS

So it's a shape-changer.

ULYSSES

Nor do they have one permanent host. They can manifest themselves in many ways.

TIAS

What are you trying to say?

Ulysses turns to them both in seriousness.

ULYSSES

I'm saying consider this a warning, to be on the safe side. It wanted to scare us - and it did. Job done. Put it behind us and learn from it.

Mars settles down and puts his sword away.

ULYSSES

RIGHT, Mars?

Mars humbly nods. Nothing to say.

Ulysses looks at Tias and smiles. A smile back.

Long shot of the camp fire to close the scene.

50 EXT. MARSHLAND - DAY

50

The adventurers continue their journey through different sorts of woodland and meadows.

They approach a dense and misty area near marshland. Ulysses leads, then Tias, then Mars at the back. Mars this time behaving, quiet.

POV SHOT - something stalks them from between the trees in the distance, hiding and keeping up with them.

51 EXT. CLEARING - DAY

51

Ulysses comes to a stop in the middle of a dirt clearing.

MARS

What is it this time, wizard?

TIAS

The wand -- the guiding stick...

ULYSSES

Nope. The shovel.

Ulysses stabs the shovel into the earth casually.

MARS

What about it?

Ulysses turns around to face them.

TIAS

The sword... it's here?

ULYSSES

Yep.

TIAS

But we've hardly travelled at all. We could have gotten here by yesterday... easily.

Tias turns to Mars also, almost siding with him a moment.

ULYSSES

I was hungry. Damn it boy, you really are eager to claim the sword aren't you? ...

Ulysses takes the shovel from the ground and hands it to Tias. Tias stands there looking at him.

TIAS

I'm sorry. No, I would not deprive a man of food and rest.

Mars steps forward.

MARS

I would.

Mars takes the shovel instead and goes to the point where Ulysses stood before.

MARS

Here?

Ulysses nods to him.

Mars foots the shovel and begins. A shot like raiders of the last ark as the shovel head pulls into focus.

A MONTAGE OF DIGGING. Tias and Mars share turns. Ulysses looks on...

A big hole has been dug. Mars is still digging, but Tias has been digging too. They both have worked up a sweat.

MARS  
(to Tias)  
Your turn again.

Gives Tias the shovel. Looks up at Ulysses who plays with trinkets, ropes and sticks, sitting by a tree.

MARS  
Not going to even bother to help?

ULYSSES  
I don't want it.

MARS  
Why not?

Tias looks at Ulysses, curious to his answer.

Ulysses leans forward.

ULYSSES  
You both came knocking on MY door. I didn't invite you. OK, so one of you knocked, the other just barged in. I owe you nothing.

TIAS  
He's right, Mars.

MARS  
Fair. But still you have not answered my question.

A pause. Ulysses looks up again.

ULYSSES  
You want to know why I don't care about the sword?

Tias and Mars standing there with a nod, waiting like two little kids asking the meaning of life.

ULYSSES  
I don't NEED the sword. Who's mind am I going to control? Yours? The birds? The badgers?

MARS  
I still don't trust you, wizard. All this digging could be for nothing. The sword could even be

-



ULYSSES  
 - and just when did I betray your  
 'trust', Mars?

Mars shuts up. Ulysses stands up and approaches him. Tias in the background with the shovel, looking up.

ULYSSES  
 Was it when I DIDN'T poison you  
 with medicine? Was it when I  
 didn't banish you out in the  
 rain? Was it when I didn't run  
 you through with the sword I  
 DIDN'T lend you?

MARS  
 Now just wait a minute -

Ulysses has already picked up the sword Mars left by the tree and has approached even closer. Points the sword at him like a lecturing stick.

ULYSSES  
 You wanna learn some damn  
 respect, thief. Talking to me and  
 Tias the way you do.

MARS  
 What are you doing?

Mars backs off. Ulysses slowly corners him towards a tree and a some dense foliage.

ULYSSES  
 Maybe I SHOULD kill you. Both of  
 you... and take the sword for  
 myself. Why would I be a fool to  
 share it, eh?

Ulysses looks at Tias in a way to almost say 'trust me on this'. Raises his sword at Mars.

MARS  
 You're mad! Stop!

Raises the sword higher - ready to strike...

ULYSSES  
 Ahhh!!!

BUT THEN -

ULYSSES PUSHES MARS to the side, then reaches around  
 behind the tree with sword held high...

Pulls out ANOTHER BANDIT! One that ran away earlier,  
 VIKTOR. Grabs him by the scruff of the neck, pulls him  
 into the clearing and slams him to the floor.

TIAS

Ulysses!

Tias runs over and helps. A struggle as Ulysses and Tias wrestle Viktor to the ground.

ULYSSES

(to Viktor)

Who are ya! Why were you hiding behind that tree?!

Viktor, the coward, struggles and is too scared to reply.

Mars steps behind and sees his face...

MARS

Viktor?

The others look up at Mars - huh? Mars smiles.

MARS

Viktor!!

Mars intervenes and grabs Viktor himself, puts him to his feet. The others back off and let Mars do his thing.

ULYSSES

You know him?

TIAS

Sadly, so do I.

Mars hold him up by the scruff of his collar.

MARS

My old friend the deserter. The rabbit come back to steal the carrots.

VIKTOR

Now, now Mars... I didn't leave you.

MARS

Oh yes you did.

VIKTOR

The odds were against us. I -

MARS

The odds were against you?! Three on one?

VIKTOR

Well uh... I didn't mean those kinds of odds.

TIAS  
 (folding his arms like  
 Sagat)  
 Oh how the table have turned.

They all stand there looking at Viktor, lined up three on one.

VIKTOR  
 I'm sorry, Mars. Really... I  
 panicked.

Mars looks at him as if he was going to kill him. Tension rises... the others look at him. He draws breath as if to strike but then -

He lets him go and slaps him on the back.

MARS  
 Ah it's great to see the face of  
 a friend, even one sought but  
 only in fair weather.

He walks off and goes to sip his 'water' skin. Viktor brushes himself off. and straightens out his rags. He looks around at everyone and realises how they're suddenly working together on something.

VIKTOR  
 What's going on here? Why are you  
 not killing each other? And who  
 is this strange man? He looks  
 like a wizard!

[Audience laughs]

Mars finishes sipping his vodka. Looks up at Ulysses with an idea, then back to Viktor.

MARS  
 That's because he is.

VIKTOR  
 You're under his command! Oh my  
 this can't be good.

Viktor steps back as if he were thinking of running away again.

MARS  
 Don't be a fool, Viktor. Not  
 twice in this man's presence.

Talking about Tias.

VIKTOR  
I'm sorry. What, then?

MARS  
Ulysses?

He looks at Ulysses to complete the 'story'. Ulysses has a think, rubs his chin, then steps forward.

ULYSSES  
Might as well tell him the truth.

TIAS  
(worry)  
The truth?

A pause, Ulysses glares at Tias as if to say 'look past my lying eyes'.

ULYSSES  
Yes. The truth. We're digging to find a treasure.

Viktor's greedy eyes light up a moment. A hint of a smile.

VIKTOR  
No... Right here??

TIAS  
No, not right here. We just thought we'd dig a hole for practise.

Viktor nods, unaware of any kind of joke.

MARS  
Of course it's here, you grim idiot!

VIKTOR  
Well, what is it?

ULYSSES  
A very rare and valuable sword.

TIAS  
The bastard sword.

The others look at Tias a little shocked at how much truth he carelessly mentioned, but go with it. He walks past Viktor.

TIAS  
Ever heard of it?

Mars is curious to the answer. Viktor pauses and searches his simple mind.

VIKTOR  
(has no clue)

No.

MARS

Then you'll care naught about it.

Mars grabs the shovel and starts digging. Viktor watches him through the earth thrown into the air.

VIKTOR

How will you divide the value of  
one sword? Three ways, I mean?

They look up at him. Mars stops digging. Ulysses answers.

ULYSSES

I have employed them to help me.  
They will gain their share  
through other treasures I have  
already shown to them.

Mars and Tias seem to agree with the story A nod. Mars goes back to digging.

VIKTOR

I can help dig. Employ me too,  
will you er... Ulyson?

ULYSSES

Ulysses. This is Tias.

Viktor makes a mental note of their names, as an effort to show more interest than he actually care for.

ULYSSES

I'll let your friend, Mars decide  
if he wishes to split his share  
with you. It's up to him.

Mars looks at Ulysses. His face hides a bit of anger - cornered now - doesn't know what to say.

ULYSSES

Mars is a fair man. Once you get  
past that brash, defensive  
exterior. Still, don't let him  
leave you short. It's your  
decision too. Don't let him...  
control your... mind...

Ulysses looks at Mars right in the eye.

Mars receives the message. Holds the shovel up towards Viktor.

MARS

A quarter of my share - if we find the sword.

VIKTOR

A half.

MARS

A QUARTER.

Viktors eyebrows first say it's unfair but... after a moment he smiles and realises it's the best he can do - for now. Nods.

VIKTOR

I'll find us the sword.

Viktor starts digging. Mars looks at him secretly, like an animal hunting its prey. Camera pans down past the shovel into darkness.

53

EXT. CLEARING - NIGHT

53

A fire is made in the clearing beside the now-bigger hole in the ground. The shovel stuck in the ground.

Ulysses and Tias sit on one side of the fire whilst Mars and Viktor - the bandits - share the water skin of stolen vodka and catch up on old times.

MARS

Ha ha! If he could see us now, eh?

VIKTOR

He probably wouldn't even get the shovel into the ground. Or better yet - listen to this - he would find the sword... no! It would find him. He'd be the sort to trip and fall and land on it gut-first!

MARS

With his arms and legs dangling in the air, ha ha! Slowly sinking down like fish on a pike! I can see it now!

VIKTOR

Oh... poor Lars... he had his moments... he did...

They laugh and share more vodka. Focus pull from those two into the foreground where Ulysses and Tias watch in disgust at the thieves.

TIAS

Look at him. Thinks he's a man worthy of title. Six foot tall, arms like tree-trunks and hair of elemental fire. A real 'grande warrior'.

ULYSSES

The way this all works out will mainly depend on you, friend.

TIAS

Why me?

ULYSSES

The decisions you make. How you choose to handle whatever people like Mars and Viktor will throw at you.

TIAS

Mars is just a bully. He has no real intellect. Goes by instinct. Maybe we could use the sword to turn him into a better man.

Ulysses's face, looking at Tias as Tias looks at Mars. Like a mother caring for her child in a fleeting moment. Ulysses looks away before Tias turns back to him.

Back to the bandits - Mars stands up drunk, swaying a bit. Grabs a sword.

MARS

Come on Viktor, come and show us what you're made of!

VIKTOR

What? Noooo! I wouldn't stand a chance and you KNOW it.

MARS

I'll go easy, heh heh, really...

He goes over to Tias and picks up his sword. Tias just looks up at him. Eye contact between them, but Mars, empty-eyed like a shark, turns away and staggers back to Viktor.

Passes Viktor the other sword.

MARS

Over here, come on!

They go off to the digging area, further away from Tias and Ulysses. Start play-fighting on the edge of the hole.

MARS  
Strike, man!

Viktor, the obvious light-weight drinker of the two goes to swing. Mars steps aside, and Viktor trips and falls down into the hole.

Mars stands there laughing proud, like Sagat.

MARS  
Ha ha ha!

[Mars and Viktor continue to mess around and spar in the background as Tias and Ulysses have a talk...]

Back to Tias and Ulysses looking on.

TIAS  
Fickle. Both of them. Yet so tense, before.

ULYSSES  
They're drunk.

Ulysses casually sips his own drink - whatever it may be.

TIAS  
What? How? ... Oh.

Tias realises. A little angry on behalf of Ulysses.

ULYSSES  
They'll feel it in the morning.  
That's justice enough for me.

TIAS  
Heh. 'Never steal from you again'.

ULYSSES  
I can get more pixie spirit. It's not a problem.

TIAS  
You seem able to get anything you want.

ULYSSES  
Anything I NEED, pretty much.  
'Need' and 'want' are two very different things.

TIAS  
Well then... what makes you WANT to live here all alone in a place like this?



ULYSSES

Don't you think it's a nice place?

Long shot of the two. The trees, the sky...

TIAS

Well, yes it is.

ULYSSES

It's beautiful. It's got everything I need. Listen to those sounds, breathe the air. There's nobody around. The world is mine... or OURS you could say.

TIAS

Good answer. I can't disagree. Don't you visit the town?

ULYSSES

No... no... well, not for many years now.

TIAS

Something happened?

ULYSSES

This forest has been around longer than that nasty little town.

TIAS

Well, obviously.

ULYSSES

It was never meant to BE, but they built it anyway. People, spreading like a virus. Consuming, destroying, devouring everything. They'll get here in the end. One day there won't be any forests, or pixie spirit... or ancient relics in the ground. Just people packed together in this infinite Oubliette.

TIAS

That's a long time away. Won't happen in your lifetime, nor mine.

ULYSSES

But it WILL happen. They'll build cities so dense they'll run out of space to make 'em and start building upwards into the clouds.

(MORE)

ULYSSES (cont'd)

The people on top will forget  
about the people underneath and  
nobody will ever know of the  
world's true beauty.

TIAS

I would never have thought that  
far ahead. It's good that you  
care.

ULYSSES

I care, somewhat.

TIAS

But?

ULYSSES

But there's nothing I can do  
about it. I am but one man.

Tias - a melancholy smile, as Mars approaches, with a  
sword in his hand, full of energy and pumped up.

MARS

Want to spar, friend?

Tias looks up at Mars - want's to question the word  
'friend' but is wiser not to.

TIAS

I require no practise, but thanks  
for the offer.

AS THEY SPEAK - Viktor in the digging hole crawls drunk  
and bubbly. Another sip of the water-skin tangled around  
his neck on a leather strap.

Sword in his hand, bored of it, throws it down. Finds the  
shovel. Yanks it awkwardly out of the ground. Throws the  
water-skin down and starts trying to dig...

MARS

One can not improve upon  
perfection eh? Oh come on, man.  
Your pride will do you no good.  
Come and show us your skills.

TIAS

With respect... 'friend' ... I'll  
not cross swords with with a man  
unless I need to.

VIKTOR CONTINUES to dig... His determination and focus  
increasing.

MARS

Then come and have a drink.  
Viktor! Pass us it!

Viktor doesn't hear. Just digs.

TIAS

You stole the vodka from Ulysses.  
It's not even yours to give.

Just as Mars' face begins to screw up with a hint of drunken anger... Ulysses speaks quickly -

ULYSSES

I let him take it, Tias. I told him... you didn't hear... you were asleep. I told him he could help himself to any food or drink...

TIAS

But I thought you meant earlier that...

VIKTOR strikes something harder than dirt. His eyes light up and he draws breath to shout - but holds his tongue.

ULYSSES

It's all just misunderstanding.  
Have a drink by all means.

Tias looks at Mars - wishing he could be angry. No answer.

Ulysses offers his own water skin of vodka.

ULYSSES

Here, have some of mine, then.

Seems everyone is sporting vodka except Tias.

TIAS

Not tonight, thank you.

Ulysses takes it back and has a sip.

VIKTOR has managed to clear away the mud from a sword-like shape wrapped in material. He starts to unravel the material like a child opening a Christmas present...

MARS

I know you're a fighter, boy. A good one. You're a dangerous man. You MUST be. Do you remember, yet?

Tias looks up at Mars in denial. Before he can respond -

VIKTOR

Aha! I have it! I have the sword!

Viktor stands up and holds - THE BASTARD SWORD high above his head!

It is beautiful - elegant, etched and jewelled. Not a sword that has seen combat at all.

The others stand up and approach slowly, staring in awe and anticipation.

TIAS

It's beautiful...

MARS

It looks so... powerful...

ULYSSES says nothing. Behind them, he has no shock in his face, only the look of 'here we go again', rolling his eyes.

Mars approaches Viktor, almost grabbing it, but fighting the temptation. Tias turns to Mars.

TIAS

Mars. You remember the plan.

Mars has a think. Composes himself. Steps back - a hint of forced honour. Delivers his command.

MARS

Viktor, give the sword to Ulysses.

Ulysses looks up mysteriously behind them in the shadow and waits, as if he were watching a performance.

VIKTOR

Just a moment.

Viktor looks closer at the sword.

VIKTOR

A quarter of a third... that's that?

ULYSSES

A twelfth.

VIKTOR

A twelfth, right.

TIAS

Viktor. Give Ulysses the sword.

Viktor looks to Mars, suddenly becoming his henchman again.

VIKTOR

Mars...?

Mars screws his face up in confusion - whatd'ya want?

TIAS

Viktor...

VIKTOR

Mars you have a sword in your hand. Think... quickly.

Mars' face - looking down in thought, fighting himself within his mind, the sword in hand held low.

MARS

(staring down into space)

So do you, Viktor.

Viktor steps back carefully until he finds the other spare sword that was dropped earlier (the one lent to Tias). Picks it up in the other hand.

VIKTOR

This sword was not meant for battle. It must not be scratched.

Viktor thrusts the bastard sword into the ground behind him. Holds onto the handle for a moment in awe.

VIKTOR

It seems... magical. There's something about it. It looks... priceless.

ULYSSES

It IS priceless.

Viktor looks quickly at Ulysses like an old witch glaring at a child.

He leaves the sword in the ground then slowly advances back towards Mars and the others with the regular sword.

He moves into a position beside Mars, making his mind up for him. It ends up two armed bandits looking towards two unarmed men. Mars doesn't even realise until he looks up.

Mars looks between Viktor and the others like Vader between Luke and Palpatine. Deciding in his mind what to do.

VIKTOR

Back off, now. That's it.

Ulysses and Tias take a few steps back, giving Mars and Viktor more space.

VIKTOR  
What now, Mars?

Mars looks down. Thinks. Looks at the others, looks back down again until he finally gives his command.

MARS  
Viktor... Give the sword to Ulysses.

VIKTOR  
You call yourself an expert THIEF? You're a beginner!

Mars turns to face Viktor in the eye now, breathing heavier, psyching up. Hand tightens on the sword, ready.

MARS  
Viktor. GIVE THE DAMN SWORD TO ULYSSES! NOW!!

Viktor cowers - a few steps back...

VIKTOR  
I... I don't have it.

Tias goes to take a step forward, but Ulysses puts his hand on his shoulder - no... leave them be.

ULYSSES  
(whispering)  
Wait.

MARS  
Then I will give it to him.

He marches towards the sword. In a swift and reckless reaction, Viktor takes a swing at Mars before he can get to it.

Mars - suddenly sober and focused, ducks the attack and shoulder barges him, pushing him flat onto his back. Losing no balance, he gets to the bastard sword.

He takes a moment before touching it to take it out of the ground. Just before he touches it - POV over his shoulder -

He senses an attack from behind. Side-steps, blocks.

He fights Viktor effortlessly. Literally blocking and circling him. Repeatedly bashes Viktor's sword.

As Viktor is standing with his back to the deepest part of the hole, Mars bashes the sword out of his hand.

It's a stand-off. Mars armed - Viktor helpless.

VIKTOR

What has happened to you? This was an opportunity! It was in the bag, couldn't have been easier!

Mars lowers his sword.

He then bends down and carefully picks up the spare sword beside Viktor. Throws it down towards the others, landing in the ground.

Mars still facing the others, has his back to Viktor. He stands in silence listening...

Tias takes the sword that was throw to him and holds it, prepared for what might happen next.

VIKTOR

All right. All right! A twelfth. Can't blame a man for trying to make a living.

Mars ignores, his back still to Viktor.

VIKTOR

Mars? A twelfth? Of the sword?

MARS

Aye. A twelfth of the sword.

Mars looks at the others - almost possessed in the eyes, takes a breath then suddenly -

STABS VIKTOR with the end the end of the sword!

Looks him in the eye as he squirms and writhes in agony.

Ulysses and Tias stand in shock. Tias wants to intervene but Ulysses gestures to stop him.

MARS

A twelfth of MY sword, you weak little man.

VIKTOR

Ackkk! Mars! ...

MARS

Better yet, take it ALL!

Mars plunges the rest of the sword through Viktor, sealing the deal.

He then boots Viktor into the hole as he pulls the bloody sword out.

Mars takes a moment to breathe in the moment, proudly and

sinister. Plunges the bloody sword into the ground - which pulls back to focus against Ulysses.

Mars approaches the bastard sword.

TIAS

You didn't have to kill him. We had control.

MARS

We would have never kept it. Sooner or later he would have daggered us in our sleep.

TIAS

You don't know that.

MARS

Oh, I know it well. 'Twas I that taught him so.

Mars carefully puts his hand around the handle of the bastard sword and draws it up to the sky. Holds it and admires it.

TIAS

Mars. Give the sword to Ulysses.

Mars looks at Tias over his shoulder. A brief pause then approaches Ulysses.

MARS

Of course.

Tosses the sword so that it's handle faces Ulysses. Ulysses accepts.

Ulysses immediately takes a cloth from his pack and wraps the sword up, ties it with string.

TIAS

What now?

ULYSSES

What now? What do you think?

Ulysses uses his bag as a pillow, sets it by the fire and puts the sword underneath, lays down.

TIAS

What are you doing?

ULYSSES

I'm tired. I'm going to sleep.



TIAS  
What about the sword?

Ulysses sits up.

ULYSSES  
What about it? It's right here.

Ulysses lays back down and gets comfortable.

ULYSSES  
We'll head back tomorrow, but not  
before I bury your friend, Mars.

MARS  
Why bother? Let him to the wolves  
to pick him clean.

ULYSSES  
Because it's important to me...  
that he is returned back to the  
earth from whence he came.  
Respect my wish. It's the least  
you could do for everything I've  
had to put up with.

TIAS  
It will be done, Ulysses.

ULYSSES  
Very well.

Closes his eyes.

The others put a final log on the fire. A long shot to  
close the scene as the night passes.

54 EXT. CLEARING - DAY

54

Tias wakes up to sight of burnt-out embers. looks up at  
the others.

Ulysses has finished burying Viktor. Mars stands beside  
him and watches.

Tias gets up.

TIAS  
I slept late.

ULYSSES  
It's all right. Didn't wanna wake  
ya. All done now.

Ulysses picks up some powder from a pouch and throws it  
onto the earth, mumbling inaudible words to himself like a  
little chant.

The others don't question it. Ulysses turns around and picks up his bag, and the bastard sword, ready to leave.

Mars walks down the hill past Tias, eager to leave.

TIAS  
Just like that?

Ulysses approaches Tias. Tias calls to Mars -

TIAS  
Well aren't you going to say a few words at least? He was your friend.

Mars stops, thinks. A subtle nod.

MARS  
You're right I suppose. There was something I needed to say before we leave.

Tias smiles and nods, looking at Ulysses. Thinking to himself he got some goodness from Mars.

Mars approaches the mound, back to them.

Starts taking a piss over the grave of his friend.

Tias, shocked and angry. Shakes his head and turns away.

ULYSSES  
Leave him to it, boy.

Mars comes back down, relieved.

ULYSSES  
Feel better for that?

MARS  
Sure do. Come on wizard!

Mars bounds past them full of energy, almost leading the way back. Ulysses and Tias look at each other, sighing, then follow.

55 EXT. WOODLAND JOURNEY - DAY - LATER

55

Mars is ahead a bit. Tias and Ulysses stroll slowly behind.

TIAS  
Do you think he knew the truth about the sword?

ULYSSES  
Who, Viktor? Naw...

TIAS  
How can you be so sure? He must  
have heard us speaking about it  
the night before?

ULYSSES  
The night before?

TIAS  
You remember... when Mars killed  
that [animal]?

Ulysses stops walking.

ULYSSES  
Viktor wasn't there, Tias.

Tias doesn't know what to say. Mouth open, realisation.

Ulysses starts walking again without him.

ULYSSES  
Keep up, now. We'll need to camp  
one more night before we get back  
home.

Camera stays on Tias's face. Eventually composes himself  
and follows the others.

56 EXT. WOODS CAMP - NIGHT

56

It's the middle of the night. The fire burns dim and Mars  
is asleep. Ulysses sleeps on the other side leaning by a  
tree. The bastard sword sits next to him - but not  
touching him.

TIAS STARES at the sword, wide awake. The fire glowing in  
his eyes. Takes the dream catcher from his pocket, looks  
at it a moment. Puts it back.

HE SLOWLY BEGINS to rise... looks at Mars midway, who  
snores. Continues to rise to his feet.

Tip-toes towards the sword and crouches down, his shadow  
passing over Ulysses' sleeping face.

Tias carefully picks up the sword - wrapped in cloth. He  
unravels a part of the cloth to reveal the shiny  
immaculate sword, the flame reflecting against it  
perfectly.

Camera moves in towards Tias's face. The temptation.

With the sword in hand, and squatted down, he turns behind him, checking Mars. Still asleep. Checks Ulysses, still asleep.

He can see the tiredness and the trust in the face of Ulysses. Decides... to cover the sword back up and return it.

Wanders back to where he was sleeping, lays down and turns his back.

ULYSSES SLOWLY OPENS HIS EYES. Smiles to himself, then goes back to sleep - not that he ever was...

57 INT. CABIN - DAY

57

The door opens. Ulysses, Mars, then Tias, enter.

Ulysses lets out a sigh and leans the sword against his favourite chair. Sits down.

The others sit down too, always more tense than Ulysses.

MARS

Well come on. Let's try it out.

ULYSSES

Be my guest.

Ulysses picks up the sword and hands it to Mars. Mars walks over and takes it as Tias looks on uncomfortably.

Mars sits back down in his chair and uncovers the sword. Holds it up and looks at it.

MARS

Incredible.

TIAS

Be careful.

Mars pretends to go and stab Tias. Tias doesn't flinch. Mars laughs.

MARS

Give me all yer silver.

Tias looks at Mars condescendingly.

MARS

(to Ulysses)

How does it work, then?

ULYSSES

Not like that.

MARS  
Go on. Show us.

Mars offers the sword back to Ulysses.

Ulysses gets up and takes the sword, puts it back against his chair then prepares some drinks and bread.

ULYSSES  
Let me relax for a moment at least.

TIAS  
What can we test it on? It's not fair to control each others' minds.

ULYSSES  
Let me think of something.

Offers the drinks to the guys. They both accept.

Then offers bread to Tias, who accepts. Tias offers some of his bread to Mars.

Mars screws his face up.

MARS  
Stop offering me that nasty bread.

ULYSSES  
We just went on a quest to find a magical sword, resulting in you murdering your own friend and pissing on his grave, and you still lack the sense of adventure to try my bread?

MARS  
It's not my fault I don't like it. It's the texture.

ULYSSES  
What can I do to make you change your mind, eh?

Ulysses looks at Tias and raises an eyebrow. Tias gets the hint and his face lights up.

TIAS  
The sword.

ULYSSES  
Right, the sword.

Ulysses picks up the sword and holds it towards Mars at a distance.

MARS

Now hold on a minute... What good would come of this?

ULYSSES

You could learn to like my pixie bread.

TIAS

Pixie... 'bread'?

ULYSSES

(to Tias, jokingly)

I've got pixie-everything.

MARS

Why does it have to be tested on me? Why not make Tias dance around like a chicken or something? That'll be a laugh.

ULYSSES

OK so we'll use the sword to make Tias think he's a chicken. Once he starts dancing around and trashing my home with his elbows, you'll look upon the sword and think 'Yep I am certain the myth is true' without a doubt in your mind?

MARS

I don't get ya.

Tias leans in towards Mars, savouring the moment to belittle him.

TIAS

He means I could just pretend to act like a chicken and you'd never know.

MARS

(like Lester Sludge)

Oh... Ahhhh!

ULYSSES

Now you get me.

MARS

All right. Pixie bread it is. Don't betray me.

ULYSSES

Would'a done that a long time ago if I felt the need to, Mars.

A bit of discomfort from Mars.

ULYSSES RAISES THE SWORD.

ULYSSES

Let's see. Hmm. Ok I'll try this:

He closes his eyes and tries to get into a spell-casting trance.

ULYSSES

BY THE MIND-CONTROLLING POWERS OF THIS ANCIENT RELIC, THE BASTARD SWORD, I COMMAND THEE NOW THAT MARS SHALL NO LONGER DESPISE MY PIXIE BREAD. INSTEAD HE WILL DESIRE IT AND CONSUME IT HAPPILY HENCEFORTH.

He mumbles and makes funny sounds, points the sword at Mars. Finishes then opens his eyes again.

Nothing seems to happen.

TIAS

Is that it? The sword doesn't talk back?

ULYSSES

Maybe it does, but we can't hear it.

MARS

Argh. It's impossible.

Tias leans over and grabs a bit of bread, holds it in front of Mars.

TIAS

Well, what do you think, hmm?

Tries to waft it around like tempting a mouse with cheese.

Mars tries to force himself into a trance to enjoy the smell of the bread but can't keep it up for long.

MARS

Argh it's horrid, take it away!

Pushes his arm away.

MARS

The damn sword must be broken.

TIAS

Maybe it lost it's power when it was buried for so long.

ULYSSES

Or maybe... it just takes  
practise.

MARS

Practise? To cast a spell?

ULYSSES

Why not? Took you practise to  
wield a sword.

MARS

Nah. I'm a natural. Born with a  
sword in my hand.

TIAS

Riiight.

Mars scowls briefly towards Tias.

58 EXT. CABIN - NIGHT 58

A long shot of the cabin. The trees... an eerie silence.

59 INT. CABIN - NIGHT 59

Close shot of Mars, snoring.

Then camera moves over slowly through the clutter of the  
cabin to the face of Tias, who sleeps also.

A flash of light against his face - followed by

CRACK!!! LIGHTNING STRIKES outside.

He wakes up, looks around. Looks at Mars, who has also  
awoken, but he can't tell because it's dark. An  
uncomfortable pause as they stare at each other  
unknowingly.

MARS

Don't you ever sleep?

Tias is startled. Mars speaks calmly but is strangely  
intimidating. Just a shadow.

TIAS

Not like I used to.

MARS

Can't stand to be in the same  
room as me.



TIAS

That, too.

MARS

Don't worry. I wasted enough time here. Won't be sticking around.

Tias sits up.

TIAS

You're leaving?

MARS

The sword might be worth half its weight in gold at best. Nothing more. The wizard is playing games with us.

TIAS

Why do you say that?

MARS

The bastard sword doesn't exist. It's him who's controlling our minds with his clever tricks. Can't you see it for yourself? Or are you still cut up about that woman in mourning?

Tias looks away in denial. Does not respond.

MARS

It's not fair, the way he's treating you.

Tias turns to Mars.

TIAS

How did you know about the woman, Mars?

A long shot of silence. Mars calmly responds.

MARS

We've had our talks too, me and him.

Tias shakes his head, argh.

MARS

But hey listen... we make a good team, you and I?

TIAS

What about Ulysses?

MARS

Well I -

The door opens. They both pretend they're asleep, startled.

It's a man in a hood come in with the sword wrapped up in material.

He steps into the light - it's Ulysses. looks across at them - sleeping... good. Turns his back to return to his quarters when -

MARS

Out walking again, wizard?

Ulysses stops in his tracks. Doesn't face them yet.

MARS

You'd make a good thief, yourself.

Mars turns away as if he didn't care and would go back to sleep.

TIAS

Ulysses, why do you have the sword?

Ulysses turns around to face him with the sword in his arms, wrapped up. Acting a little defensive and unsure.

ULYSSES

Because... the sword was appointed to me. We all agreed upon it.

TIAS

Why... where have you been?

ULYSSES

I go for walks in the night, just as Mars said. Gives me space to think and solve problems. I took the sword with me so that you two wouldn't have anything to fight over.

TIAS

How thoughtful of you.

They look at each other. Tias shows distrust as he tries to read Ulysses' eyes. Ulysses turns away and heads off.

ULYSSES

I brought it back, didn't I? I'm going to sleep.

He goes. Tias stares into space, thinking.

60 EXT. OUTSIDE CABIN - DAY

60

Mars does press-ups outside the cabin on a sunny day.

Tias emerges from the cabin with a loaf of bread in his hand and watches. Smirks to himself.

TIAS  
Didn't know you had it in you.

Mars stops, catches his breath. Focus pull to Mars as he turns around to face Tias.

MARS  
I'm tougher than I look.

TIAS  
Sure.

MARS  
Is that a challenge?

TIAS  
Yes.

Tias walks over to a tree stump and knees down. Puts the bread down on another stump or table. Puts his elbow onto it in the arm wrestling position.

Mars pauses and looks. Smiles, and walks over.

They lock arms, ready and fast, like the Predator handshake.

TIAS  
Want me to start off easy?

MARS  
What would be the point in that?

TIAS  
Very well. Ready?

MARS  
Of course.

TIAS  
Go!

It's an even match for a while as both of them struggle with all their might. Looking into each others eyes at first trying to use mental power, but it's not enough.

They break eye contact and concentrate on pure brute force... Mars starts to win, but Tias gives it more focus.

Mars then starts to fall behind... eventually Tias wins by a scrape.

TIAS

Hah!

MARS

All right then. How about this...

Mars gets up, not willing to accept defeat yet.

Tias stands up and picks up the loaf of bread, takes a bite of it.

Picks up a heavy stump and lifts it up above his head.

MARS

Arghh!!!

Then slams it down. Looks across at Tias.

MARS

Try that!

Tias looks down at it - not too confidently. Walks over ready to grab it. Passes Mars the bread.

Mars holds the bread for him. Tias tries to get a grip on the stump.

MARS

Go on!!! Go on!!!

Tias gets the stump up to his waist - just about but can't go any higher.

MARS

Don't quit now, boy!

Nope, it's too much. Drops the stump on the ground in defeat.

Mars takes a bite of the bread.

TIAS

That's one-all, then.

MARS

Aye. One-all.

Mars speaks with his mouthful. Tias takes a moment to realise...

TIAS

(with horror)

Mars...

MARS  
 (oblivious)  
 What's that?

He takes another bite.

MARS  
 Oh, here.

Gives the bread back to Tias.

They both realise at the same time. All eyes light up!

Run back to the cabin as fast as they can!

61 INT. CABIN - DAY

61

They burst into the cabin, Tias first, then Mars.

Ulysses looks up, eyes wide open at the table.

ULYSSES  
 Another ghost?

TIAS  
 Better. Look...

Tias puts the bread back into Mars's hands.

TIAS  
 (to Mars)  
 Go on, show him.

Mars looks at them, then takes a bite of the bread.

Ulysses stands up immediately.

ULYSSES  
 By the spirits...

TIAS  
 The sword is real! It worked!

ULYSSES  
 (confounded)  
 He likes my pixie-bread.

Tias grabs Ulysses shoulders.

TIAS  
 How did you do it, Ulysses? Tell  
 us, what words did you recite?

ULYSSES  
 Well hang on a moment. Let's  
 think this through.

TIAS

Don't take too long. My friend desperately needs my help.

ULYSSES

I'm not sure if it would work that far away.

TIAS

What do you mean?

ULYSSES

Well, the sword is here and she's... wherever she is.

MARS

What about me? You made a promise to me that I could use the sword.

ULYSSES

I did.

TIAS

What use is the sword if it stays here?

They all look at each other, without an answer.

Tias walks over to the chair where the sword lies, picks it up and removes the cloth.

MARS

What are you doing?

Tias holds the sword and admires it for the first time.

TIAS

The key to everything is right here, in my hands.

ULYSSES

Now, now, Tias. I heard a myth that the sword can never leave the forest.

TIAS

Never leave the forest?!

MARS

Since when?

ULYSSES

I'm not sure if it's true or not...

TIAS  
Why did you not tell us before?

No answer.

TIAS  
You let me believe this whole  
time that I could use this sword  
to help someone I love... who  
needs it desperately, and the  
whole time it was never  
possible??

MARS  
Tias -

ULYSSES  
Wait... love?

Tias shakes the cobwebs out of his mind.

TIAS  
Care about. Deeply.

MARS  
Tias -

ULYSSES  
This is getting out of hand. We  
need to test it more. Take our  
time.

TIAS  
You're right. I'll test it right  
now. See how far I get.

ULYSSES  
Wait -

Tias leaves with the sword. The others follow.

62 EXT. OUTSIDE CABIN - DAY

62

Tias marches towards the camera away from the cabin.  
Ulysses and Mars step outside. Mars calls to him.

MARS  
Tias!!

Tias turns around to face Mars at a distance. Sword in  
hand, determination and psyched up emotionally.

TIAS  
What?

MARS

Give the sword to Ulysses.

Ulysses stands there, doesn't want to intervene. Genuine worry in his eyes.

TIAS

I'll bring it back, I promise. I only want to see how far it can go.

He goes to walk off again when -

ULYSSES

Tias.

He stops again.

ULYSSES

Give me the sword, you stupid man.

Tias thinks, calms down, sighs. Turns around and marches back towards them.

PLUNGES THE SWORD into the ground.

TIAS

I've had enough. I'm done.

He turns around and walks off again. Out of sight.

Mars takes the sword from the ground.

Ulysses looks at him, now completely defenceless.

ULYSSES

Mars...

Points the sword towards Ulysses, in the same manner as the spell before.

MARS

By the power of this bastard sword, I command YOU Ulysses to... LEND me the sword as I wish, henceforth!

He shakes the sword, widens his eyes and tries to summon his entire imagination into the control of the sword.

Nothing happens. Ulysses looks at him as if he just tried to shoot him with an empty gun.

ULYSSES

Idiot.



Marches up to Mars, takes the sword from his hand and walks back towards the cabin door.

ULYSSES

Always was. Always will be...

Mars accelerates towards the door first and blocks it with his arm, standing there looking at Ulysses who stops dead in his tracks...

63 EXT. WOODS - A SHORT DISTANCE AWAY 63

Tias stops too. Realisation and temptation strike him again. That magnetic force as before causes him to turn around and head back towards the cabin...

64 EXT. OUTSIDE CABIN - CONTINUED 64

ULYSSES

What now? burglar?

MARS

You said I could use the sword.  
You promised me.

ULYSSES

Whatever.

Mars gets close to Ulysses, right in his face.

MARS

Give me a reason not to kill you  
and take the sword for myself.

ULYSSES

You got me there.

Ulysses looks Mars in the eye for a few seconds, then suddenly -

HE DROPS THE SWORD AND STRIKES

Wrestling Mars and pushing him against the cabin.

After a struggle, Mars overwhelms him and ends up on top of him.

MARS PULLS THE KNIFE FROM HIS BELT and tries to stab Ulysses.

But Ulysses holds his wrist, struggling for his life, the knife inching closer to his face. Mars' eyes filled with blood-lust.

TIAS appears, watching them.

ULYSSES

Tias! Help me, boy!

Tias by instinct goes to help Ulysses but no... he stops.

MARS

Listen to me, Tias. This man is a fraud.

ULYSSES

He's a criminal, a killer. Don't listen to him!

MARS

Aye, that I am, but at least I'm honest about it.

Tias's face, confused, doesn't know which side to pick.

MARS

Whereas you, wizard... why don't you tell him more about yourself, eh?

ULYSSES

There's nothing to tell, I'm just a hermit in the woods. Nothing more.

TIAS

Mars! let him go or I swear I'll will kill you.

MARS

Do it. Claim your prize. A false sword. Tell him Ulysses. Tell him how I've always liked your pixie-bread.

ULYSSES

What? You're lying! You're making that up!!

MARS

Go on.

Tias is now even more confused.

ULYSSES manages to weaken Mars' grip on the knife and it drops. He knees him in the stomach and overthrows him.

They switch places - Ulysses grabs the knife and holds it up high. Mars flinches for his life as the position is held.

ULYSSES

There's nothing to tell. Tias is my friend. You trust me, right Tias?

Tias nods - with a bit of doubt. Feels he MUST trust him.

ULYSSES

And I'm not a killer. Damn it!

Ulysses tosses the knife far away and gets up. Looks down at Mars.

ULYSSES

I swear to you, Tias. By the spirits of everything I believe in and all my heart. What we did with the sword really happened. That's the truth.

TIAS

(nods)

I believe you.

Ulysses steps back, still looking down at Mars, strutting around and angry.

ULYSSES

Everything that happens to us. Every problem we encounter, Tias always turns out the better man, eh Mars?

MARS

Get off my back, will you? He's had it easier than I have.

ULYSSES

Tell him that what you said was a lie. Tell him, now!

Mars can't lie too well. Sighs, looks down.

MARS

All right. I always hated your stupid bread.

Mars has a look in his eye - faking it, then suddenly -

MAKES A DASH FOR THE SWORD -

Half way running towards it, Tias knocks him over onto the ground. Ulysses takes the sword.

ULYSSES LOBS THE SWORD as far as he possibly can over towards the back of the cabin.

Mars gets up, angry, looking at Tias.

MARS

I've just about had enough of  
you, boy.

He pushes Ulysses aside and enters the cabin briefly.  
Comes out with one of the small swords and approaches  
Tias.

HE SWINGS AT TIAS

Tias dodges and weaves, swift and unarmed. Mars uses all  
his might but has no speed.

TIAS PUNCHES MARS, winding him. Mars steps back and growls  
at Tias.

MARS RUNS OFF - over the hill to search for the sword,  
taking the small sword with him.

TIAS goes to chase after him when Ulysses stops him -

ULYSSES

Tias.

TIAS

What?

ULYSSES

Let it go. Let him have the  
sword.

TIAS

No, he can't be trusted with it.

ULYSSES

Please -

Tias look at Ulysses in the eye for a moment, then ignores  
and walks on.

ULYSSES

Wait.

Ulysses reaches into the cabin and grabs the other spare  
sword. Tosses it to Tias who catches it by the handle.

ULYSSES

You're not a killer. But don't be  
killed.

Tias nods.

ULYSSES

I mean it. I do. You are NOT a  
killer.

Tias runs after Mars.

Ulysses sighs and closes his eyes. Takes a deep breath.

65 EXT. UPPER CLEARING - DAY

65

Mars is searching through leaves and foliage trying to find where the sword fell. Using the small sword to poke through and lift shrubs.

Takes swipes at it in anger and frustration. Turns around to - FOCUS PULL - Tias standing there waiting.

Mars gets up from the bush and looks at Tias.

MARS

You won't win this contest, boy.  
I'm an expert.

TIAS

It doesn't count when you don't  
play by the rules.

MARS CHARGES TOWARDS TIAS - Roaring and striking.

They fight - an epic sword battle.

Ulysses approaches from afar, watching in fear of what will happen.

A SHOT OF ULYSSES - his face, concerned, looking away.

CUT TO:

66 EXT. OUTSIDE CABIN - DAY

66

Nobody around, just the faint sound of swords clashing in the background. A hooded figure approaches the DOOR of the cabin.

Like riding hood with a basket, knocks on the door.

Moving in towards her back... she hears a sound.

She hears the sounds and puts the basket down. We see in the basket, food, vodka, supplies etc.

Camera pans up to her FACE - it's the pixie, Nyx.

She wanders off out of shot to see what's going on...

The fight continues.

Ulysses notices in the corner of his eye - the sword in a bush hidden - just a glimpse. Says nothing, turns his attention back to the fight.

Takes a step forward.

ULYSSES

Stop this, now! Nobody has to die!

MARS

What do you know about anything, you fraud?

Tias overwhelms Mars, on top of him, sword pushing against sword.

NYX appears across the side of Mars. He notices her as he is held down.

HE SHAKES OFF TIAS and gives him a kick. Then runs towards the pixie and grabs her.

HOLDS HER FROM BEHIND WITH THE SWORD against her neck.

Tias backs off, out of breath.

MARS

Drop it now.

Tias drops the sword without thought.

TIAS

You are making a grande mistake.

ULYSSES

Now you've gone too far. There's no way back from this.

MARS

I care not. Find me the sword.

ULYSSES

It could be anywhere.

MARS

Find it, or I take her away from here. I'll harm her, I swear to you... by your forest spirits!

Tias and Ulysses look at each other - out of options.

Ulysses comes clean.

ULYSSES

All right, you win. Once a thief,  
always a thief.

Ulysses walks over to the bush and picks up the bastard sword.

ULYSSES

You know for a moment there I  
thought I'd seen a change in you,  
Mars. I thought there was hope. I  
almost trusted you.

MARS

I almost trusted myself, too.

ULYSSES

Then what happened?

MARS

(pointing his sword to Tias)  
HE happened.

ULYSSES

It's not all his fault.

MARS

True enough. You played us  
against each other. Now give me  
the damn sword!

Ulysses throws the sword into the ground in front of Mars.

Mars grabs the sword, whilst keeping the Nyx hostage with  
the other one, playing it safe.

He then backs off again, two swords.

MARS

Right then, that's better.

TIAS

Walk away from her, Mars. The  
sword is yours.

MARS

Not going to chase me for it,  
then?

TIAS

Not this time. It's not worth it.

MARS

Wisest thing you've ever said.

Mars slowly lets the pixie go. Backs off. Holds the small  
sword out -

MARS

I said I wouldn't steal from you  
again, wizard. I kept my word  
thus far.

He throws the small sword to the ground, Camera pans down  
to it in the foreground. He now has only the bastard  
sword.

MARS

... but this here, this never  
belonged to you. It never  
belonged to anyone. It's a  
bastard.

ULYSSES

Go.

Mars slowly turns his back to leave, takes a step but then  
turns back to say a final word towards Tias -

MARS

We could have shared this. But  
you ruined it... No. No, I would  
have never shared it, I take it  
back. The sword is mine, and the  
woman you love will ne'er awaken  
from her misery for as long as  
she decides to keep on living. Ha  
ha ha!

He turns his back. TIAS, now furious, runs towards him!

MARS TURNS and swings at TIAS - who ducks, doing a slide.

TIAS GRABS THE FALLEN SWORD on the ground and STABS MARS  
THROUGH THE STOMACH!

MARS

Arghhh!!!

Mars falls to the ground as Tias pulls the bloody sword  
out of him.

Mars looks up at Ulysses, blood coming out of his mouth.

MARS

Killer...

He falls down dead, on his front.

Nyx stares in horror. Camera pans beside her to Ulysses  
who stares in even more horror.

Tias stands there, almost proud with blood lust, waiting  
for a comment.



ULYSSES SUDDENLY CHANGES - to despair and frustration, breaking all character from before.

ULYSSES

No!!! What have you done you fool! You weren't supposed to kill him!

TIAS

What? He was a danger to everyone.

ULYSSES

You have no idea what you've just done. You idiot! You've ruined everything!

Ulysses marches over and picks up the bastard sword, showing no sign of value to it.

ULYSSES

I thought you were better than this. Take your stupid sword. It's yours. I don't want to see it, or YOU ever again!

The pixie stands on the horizon watching everything.

Ulysses offers the sword but Tias doesn't want it.

ULYSSES

Take it! Damn it!

Tias shakes his head, refuses to take it.

ULYSSES

Useless.

Ulysses takes the bloody sword from Tias's hand, walks over to the other small sword and picks that up. Walks past the pixie with the three swords.

Gives her the bastard sword. She just holds it clumsily, doesn't move.

ULYSSES

I don't want it. Get rid of it.

Turns to Tias.

ULYSSES

Leave me be. I mean it.

He walks off with the two swords back over the hill, out of sight towards the cabin.

Tias just stands there looking at the pixie.

TIAS  
What just happened?

NYX  
I don't understand. I did  
everything he asked me to do. He  
was so happy before.

Tias walks up to her, interrogating more.

TIAS  
Did what?

NYX  
I buried the sword, just like he  
told me to. I didn't ask why, I  
just... Oh...

She looks up at him, in the eye. Realises she's said too  
much.

Tias narrows his eyebrows. Quickly runs back towards the  
cabin. Nyx turns around and watches him.

Shot of her face, worried. She then walks off in the  
opposite direction.

68 EXT. CABIN - DAY 68  
Ulysses dumps to two bloody swords outside and marches  
straight into the cabin.

69 INT. CABIN - DAY 69  
Ulysses goes straight for his private room.  
A short moment and then -  
Tias bursts in. Nobody there.  
Goes straight for the private area too.

70 INT. SECRET ROOM 70  
Ulysses has an item in cloth in front of him, kneeling  
away from the door.  
Tias appears behind him. Ulysses turns around.

ULYSSES  
I told you to leave me be. Now  
scram!

TIAS

What have you got there, Ulysses?

ULYSSES

Nothing of your concern.

TIAS

Tell me!

Ulysses realises he is caught. Sighs, and stands up.

The cloth falls from - THE TRUE BASTARD SWORD.

It is huge, plain, dark and undecorated.

He turns to face Tias with the sword in both hands.

TIAS

The bastard sword.

Ulysses nods, weakly.

TIAS

The true sword. You had it the whole time.

ULYSSES

I did.

TIAS

Let me see it...

He goes to touch it when -

ULYSSES PUSHES HIM AWAY - HARD.

Seriously this time with genuine concern.

ULYSSES

DON'T TOUCH IT! You fool, it's cursed.

Tias stumbles into the side of the room. Slows down and looks back at Ulysses.

TIAS

How is it cursed?

ULYSSES

It is bound to me. I claimed it. I took the responsibility and I can't get rid of it.

TIAS

More mythical lies...

Tias grabs the sword but -

IT BURNS IN HIS HAND! Smoke rising!

ARGH! HE BACKS OFF, hands burned.

He looks up at Ulysses.

TIAS

My God. It really is cursed.

ULYSSES

It is. And the only way to get rid of it, is for someone to fight me for it.

TIAS

To defeat you? You have to give up your life?

ULYSSES

No. I have to defeat them. I have to win with the sword to earn my freedom.

TIAS

Freedom? The forest...

ULYSSES

I cannot leave the forest until the sword is claimed by someone else.

TIAS

You wanted ME to claim it.

Ulysses nods again, with regret, tight-lipped.

TIAS

What kind of cruel game are you playing?

ULYSSES

That's not what was supposed to happen. But damn come the day you ever listen to anything I say.

Ulysses pushes past Tias and leaves the room. Leaves the whole cabin with the true sword.

71

EXT. OUTSIDE CABIN - SUNSET

71

Ulysses walks towards the camera with the true sword in his arms. Tias appears behind at the door.

ULYSSES

Where's Nyx? Did she head back?

TIAS

I think so.

Ulysses turns around and notices the basket by the door.

ULYSSES

Bless her. She left her basket behind. Will have to get it back to her another day.

TIAS

She... helps you.

ULYSSES

She's a good friend. A good person. But I don't know about you.

ULYSSES holds the sword by the handle and uses it as a pointing stick whilst talking to Tias.

ULYSSES

Say, why are you still here? You still want this thing?

TIAS

(unsure, shaking his head)

No.

ULYSSES

Yeah, right. Not gonna fight me for it, then?

Ulysses goes and sits on a stump, with the sword, back facing Tias. TIAS pulls into focus.

TIAS

I could never fight you, Ulysses. You've been a good friend to me and no magic is worth the power of that.

Ulysses looks up to the spirits with realisation in his face. It softens, like he wants to cry but has no tears. Closes his eyes and makes a difficult decision to himself.

He then turns around to Tias.

ULYSSES

Why did you have to be such a good person, huh?

Tias - confused... no words. Ulysses turns around to face him.

ULYSSES

It was so simple. You agreed with  
all your heart. But you don't  
remember... of COURSE you don't  
remember...

Ulysses stands up.

TIAS

(softly)

No.

ULYSSES

Do you want to remember? Do you  
REALLY want to?

TIAS

Yes.

Ulysses looks at him in the eye, takes a moment to make  
the correct judgement.

ULYSSES

Then remember, you shall.

Ulysses takes position with space around him and looks  
Tias in the eye, whilst raising the sword high.

TIAS

What are you doing?

ULYSSES

SWORD, I COMMAND THEE NOW... TO  
RETURN THE MEMORY OF THIS MAN  
STOOD BEFORE ME THAT WAS TAKEN  
BEFORE, SO THAT HE MAY REMEMBER  
ALL THAT HE SHOULD!

A pause of nothing - and then suddenly...

BANG!!!

A CRACK OF LIGHTNING STRIKES THE SWORD!

The wind howls and whistles, and ghost-like energy enters  
from the sky, to the sword, and into the mind of Tias.

TIAS STEPS BACK - as if he were in pain, as the memory  
fills his mind. He holds his head, stumbling back and  
losing balance as if he were in agony.

TIAS

Arghhh!!! What is happening to  
me!?!?

A FLASH OF WHITE.

Peaceful, serene and calm. The woman in a white gown barefooted walks across to the grass to greet her lover. A wealthy and kind looking man. His name is NIKOLAI.

They stare each other in the eye. In love, nervous. Her name is LILIYA.

LILIYA  
Nikolai...

NIKOLAI  
Liliya...

He raises her hand up to kiss it.

LILIYA  
Don't. Not yet.

NIKOLAI  
Why?

LILIYA  
You promised you would tell him.

NIKOLAI  
And I will. Today.

LILIYA  
You know I love you. He's a good man, really.

NIKOLAI  
He's a killer.

LILIYA  
He's a fighter.

NIKOLAI  
Are they not the same thing?

She disconnects, and turns away.

NIKOLAI  
Liliya... you have not given yourself to him, have you?

LILIYA  
No. I have not.

NIKOLAI  
Then you have done nothing wrong.

LILIYA  
Have I not? He told me he loved me.

NIKOLAI

And did you... say it back?

She looks away further for an answer. Close-up of her face.

LILIYA

I did not.

Nikolai nods. She turns back to him.

NIKOLAI

Don't be afraid to love me.

LILIYA

I'm not afraid of you... it's just...

NIKOLAI

I know. I can't lie to you. He's a dangerous man.

TIAS STANDS WATCHING - beside a bush from a distance. A close-up of his face and the sound of war drums. Anger filling his eyes with every sharp breath. Hatred, shock and devastation.

LILIYA

He wouldn't hurt me.

NIKOLAI

I know I wouldn't.

They kiss. As they part, looking each other in the eye, they turn sideways to notice - TIAS standing there, closer. Tears running down his face.

Shock in their face, fear in the face of Liliya as Nikolai backs away.

LILIYA

(to Tias)

I'm so sorry.

Tias says nothing. Can't even speak. Stares into space between them.

LILIYA

Tias, please...

She approaches him carefully and touches his arm. The touch alone is agony that he hides the best he can.

He slowly pushes her away. Nikolai steps forward to protect her.



NIKOLAI

She was going to tell you,  
friend.

His eyes snap to his. Head dipped, malice.

NIKOLAI

Don't look at me like that. She  
has not given herself to you. You  
have no right to be angry.

TIAS

How long have you felt this way,  
Liliya?

He speaks to her but won't stop looking at Nikolai.

LILIYA

A... a long time, Tias.

TIAS

I see.

His emotions increase, from anger into despair.

Nikolai takes her away from him.

Tias falls to his knees on the ground, covers his face  
with his hands, breathing harder.

TIAS

You told me you loved me!

LILIYA

I ...

She looks at Nikolai. There is no denying it any more.

NIKOLAI

She did not.

Tias looks back up at him.

NIKOLAI

This ends now. Pull yourself  
together. You live completely  
different lives. Let Liliya do  
what is best for HER.

TIAS

What do you know of what is BEST,  
'friend'?

NIKOLAI

I don't know. But I know it's not  
a man who comes home with another  
man's blood upon his knuckles.

Tias looks down at his worn-callused knuckles.

TIAS  
I earn a living. Same as anyone.

NIKOLAI  
And I do respect that. How long  
have we known each other? It's  
what you feel you must do, but  
she can not bear to see it any  
longer.

TIAS  
Would it be any different if I  
was a real soldier?

NIKOLAI  
I don't know.

TIAS  
Liliya. Do you love me?

She takes her time at the stand-off.

LILIYA  
Not like I love Nikolai.

NIKOLAI  
There is only room for one.  
Accept it, and move on.

Tias takes time to process, a meaningless mumble of an  
answer -

TIAS  
As you wish.

Tias looks at him. No expression and then suddenly -

JUMPS FOR HIM - wrestling him to the ground.

There is a fight - Liliya screaming at them to stop.

Nikolai is no match for Tias. He literally BEATS HIM TO  
DEATH...

A POV view from Nikolai and TIAS - slow motion punches him  
until he is covered in blood.

LILIYA screams.

LILIYA  
Nikolai!!!

She pushes Tias away and collapses in despair besides  
Nikolai.

Tias just falls down with no strength left. Liliya holds

Nikolai up against her and the dress gets covered in blood. The tears stream down her face.

TIAS'S FACE - realising what he has done. Awakens from his frenzy.

LILIYA  
Please come back to me! Don't  
close your eyes, don't ever close  
them, please!!!

Nikolai is dead.

She looks at Tias, broken.

LILIYA  
Evil. I wish you were dead. I  
wish you were dead...

Tias's face again and then -

A FLASH OF WHITE

73 EXT. OUTSIDE CABIN - NIGHT - CONTINUED

73

Tias wakes up on the floor from the impact of the memory. Tears down his face. Looks up at Ulysses who stands with the sword lowered, shamefully.

TIAS  
Liliya... Nikolai...

Ulysses nods slowly.

ULYSSES  
You remember.

TIAS  
I do. My God... it hurts..

ULYSSES  
Do you remember what happened  
next? ...

Tias closes his eyes.

74 INT. ABANDONED ROOM - NIGHT

74

Back to the room, zooming in at the woman like in the beginning sitting in the chair weeping. Locket already on the floor.

ULYSSES (V.O.)  
The room...?

TIAS (V.O)  
 No. That never happened. Only  
 ever in my dreams.

Tias approaches the woman, picks up the locket. Hands it to her.

She does not accept, so he drops it into her open hands, slowly.

TIAS  
 Liliya. Please speak to me.

She ignores him, looking down.

TIAS  
 Liliya...

Her hand closes over the locket.

TIAS  
 What can I do? I will do  
 anything.

He kneels before her. Wide angle, moving in.

She looks up at him. Hatred. Her eyes tell him she wants him dead.

He understands, falls back slowly like he was stabbed in the heart. He stands up slowly and backs away in horror.

ULYSSES (V.O.)  
 Now I understand. You remembered  
 her through your dreams. The  
 sword couldn't take it all away.  
 Nor could it dispel the true  
 power of love...

A FLASH OF WHITE.

75

EXT. MEMORY OF WOODS BY STREAM - DAY

75

Tias washes his hands in the stream. Puts water on his face.

Crawls over to a clearing and collapses with despair. He takes a knife from his belt and goes to stab it into his heart.

He closes his eyes as he draws a breath...

ULYSSES  
 Wait.

Ulysses appears in front of him. Looking down at him.

Tias looks up.

TIAS

What do you want? Leave me be.

ULYSSES

I will not stand to watch a man  
take his own life.

TIAS

Then don't watch. Be-gone.

He goes to stab himself again but then -

ULYSSES KICKS HIM OVER.

Knife falls from his hand. Ulysses quickly grabs the  
knife.

Tias gets up.

TIAS

What gives you a say on who lives  
and who does, traveller?

ULYSSES

Heh. 'Traveller'.

Ulysses sits down on a log nearby. Plays with the knife.

ULYSSES

That's something I have not done  
in a long time.

TIAS

Give me back the knife.

Stops twiddling the knife, turns to him. Simple answer.

ULYSSES

No.

Tias holds in the anger and waits to see what he has to  
say.

ULYSSES

What happened that was so  
terrible, that it made you want  
to take your own life, hmmm?

TIAS

None of your concern.

ULYSSES

Oh come, now. I've been around  
long enough now to know the face  
of guilt when I see it.

Tias looks at his own hands, then looks up at Ulysses.

TIAS  
I killed a man.

ULYSSES  
In defense?

TIAS  
Out of jealousy.

Ulysses stands quiet, thinking.

ULYSSES  
And you want to die for it?

TIAS  
I must. I am a killer. I must pay  
the price.

ULYSSES  
By taking another life... the  
life of your own?

TIAS  
It is the only option. I am  
unable to give a life back.

Ulysses stares into space for a moment.

ULYSSES  
Maybe you can.

TIAS  
What?

ULYSSES  
What is your name?

TIAS  
Tias. What's yours?

ULYSSES  
It doesn't matter. Tell me, have  
you ever heard of the bastard  
sword?

TIAS  
No.

ULYSSES  
It is an ancient relic of  
unspeakable power. The power to  
control a man's thoughts.

TIAS  
Folk-tale.

ULYSSES  
Aye, 'tis. But there is a price  
for the one who bears it.

TIAS  
And that is?

ULYSSES  
They may never leave the forest.  
Not until they win a fight  
against another who wishes to  
claim the sword.

TIAS  
Then what use is it? What reason?

ULYSSES  
None. Well... there is one.

TIAS  
I care not.

Tias stands up, uninterested.

ULYSSES  
Wait a moment. Let me finish.

TIAS  
Give me the knife, you strange  
wizard.

ULYSSES  
I am not a wizard. I'll give you  
the knife after I finish my  
story. Unless you want to kill me  
for it?

Tias stands back and waits.

ULYSSES  
Whoever has control of the sword  
is the only one who can command  
it. It's power is tamed. The  
sword is protected.

TIAS  
And if a cruel man should own the  
sword?

ULYSSES  
I am not a cruel man, Tias.

Ulysses looks at him in the eye. Chilling music.

ULYSSES

I have no use for it. But I am tired of it's burden. I want my life back.

TIAS

What are you saying?

ULYSSES

Fight me for the sword. Please... I have waited for someone like you for so long. Don't take your own life. Give it to me, instead.

TIAS

I won't fight you. I'm done fighting. Never again.

Ulysses turns away in thought.

ULYSSES

Think of a purpose for it. Find a desire. You have to want it.

TIAS

I don't know. Oh, God...

He puts his head in his hands and curls up into a ball on the ground.

ULYSSES

Who could you save?

TIAS

Liliya... I have ruined her life. I can not undo it.

ULYSSES

How?

TIAS

I killed the man she loved. If only I could take it back.

ULYSSES

You killed the man she loved...

Ulysses turns away, thinks. Turns back -  
You can't save him, Tias. But if your true desire is to die, then fight me for the sword. If I win, you will die anyway...

TIAS

Enough about this damn sword!

He walks off.



ULYSSES  
Tias... please.

TIAS  
Leave me alone, you dirty man!  
Keep the knife. Throw it at my  
back if you wish.

ULYSSES  
But, the sword!

Tias turns around, now angry.

Marches up to Ulysses and grabs him by the shoulders.

TIAS  
Maybe I should kill you, you  
crazy fool. Put you out of your  
deluded misery.

He pushes him and turns his back to leave.

Ulysses thinks quickly - anger enters him - grabs a heavy  
stick.

WHACKS TIAS OVER THE HEAD -

All goes BLACK.

76 EXT. OUTSIDE CABIN - NIGHT - CONTINUED 76

Tias looks up at Ulysses.

TIAS  
It was you. You took advantage of  
me.

ULYSSES  
You me told yourself... You came  
here to die, when you could have  
saved me instead.

77 FLASHBACK - ULYSSES WITH THE SWORD 77

Ulysses takes the sword from the secret room.

78 EXT. MEMORY OF WOODS - LATER THAT DAY 78

Goes back to Tias who is knocked out and holds the sword  
up.

ULYSSES  
SWORD, I COMMAND THEE NOW. MAKE  
THIS MAN BEFORE ME FORGET THAT HE  
IS A KILLER.

Energy builds up and lightning strikes the sword.

ULYSSES  
GIVE HIM THE DESIRE TO FIND YOU.

The sword was generating power but suddenly it flings itself out of his hand in protest.

ULYSSES  
No?

He picks up the sword again.

ULYSSES  
You can't give a man false  
desire? Only knowledge. THEN GIVE  
HIM THE KNOWLEDGE THAT YOU CAN  
HELP HIM SAVE THE WOMAN WHO  
MOURNS HER LOSS.

Lightning strikes.

ULYSSES  
Make him forget he met me. Make  
him forget everything from the  
moment he entered this damned  
forest, only that he knows of the  
sword!

A final strike of lightning.

INTO WHITE.

79

EXT. OUTSIDE CABIN - NIGHT - CONTINUED

79

TIAS  
I can't believe it. You  
controlled my destiny. You  
planned it all. Mars was right!

ULYSSES  
I only wanted my freedom, Tias.  
And you wanted to die. I couldn't  
talk you out of it. You ARE a  
killer, after all.

Tias looks away. Nods.

TIAS  
Then it's true. I deserve the  
burden of the sword.

ULYSSES  
Then do what I asked of you  
before... Fight me for the sword.

TIAS  
I can't fight you.

ULYSSES  
Please. I want to see the world.  
I've been here for so long, I  
can't even remember, I've lost  
count of the years.

Tias looks up at him.

TIAS  
Do I have to try and kill you?

Ulysses raises his sword.

ULYSSES  
I don't know. I think so.

TIAS  
Do you kill me?

Ulysses nods, subtly.

TIAS  
Mars... why did you bring him  
into this?

ULYSSES  
Because... I...

He look away.

ULYSSES  
Because I saw that you were good.

A FLASH OF WHITE

80 FLASHBACK - ULYSSES MEMORY

80

A montage of moments when Tias said good things. The thought in Ulysses face softening around the fire, at his front door. Saving him from Mars. Looking across at him every time he said a good thing from his chair.

ULYSSES (V.O.)  
And the more I learned of you, I  
more I wanted to undo what I  
planned. Mars was a horrible  
man... a TERRIBLE man. He  
deserved nothing. I had to think  
of a way to change things.

A flashback of NYX knocking at the door with the basket in the night.

ULYSSES (V.O.)

I needed more time. I needed to be sure to do the right thing. I couldn't reveal the true sword to either of you - not yet.

Ulysses opens the door to the pixie, in the dark of night. Her eyes against the moonlight in her hooded cloak.

Ulysses passes her the false sword wrapped in cloth.

ULYSSES

(whispering)

I need you to do something for me. Bury this sword in the ground, as if it were a treasure to be claimed.

NYX

Why?

He turns to the sleeping guests, Mars and Tias to check they aren't awake. Turns back to the pixie.

ULYSSES

I can't explain now. Take it to Tariqs clearing, past the Deadwood. You know the place...

She takes it, like she has no choice. He takes the basket from her.

ULYSSES

(as before)

Thank you. I have company right now. Come back in a few days or so.

He turns to look at Tias who is looking at him.

A FLASH OF WHITE

81

FLASHBACK - NYX MEMORY - TOWARDS THE CLEARING

81

Nyx runs through the woods with the false sword. Slow motion towards the camera as we hear the voices of Tias and Ulysses. Tilted camera.

TIAS (V.O)

You helped Mars just so that he could die.

ULYSSES (V.O.)

Yes.

TIAS (V.O)  
 You had no interest in redeeming  
 him.

ULYSSES (V.O.)  
 I was never sure of anything.

The flashback ends.

82 EXT. OUTSIDE CABIN - NIGHT - CONTINUED

82

TIAS  
 And now that I desire to end my  
 life once again... you want me to  
 fight you for the sword.

ULYSSES  
 Yes.

Tias gets up. Picks up the spare sword, but with no  
 enthusiasm and stands opposite Ulysses in the position of  
 a trained fighter.

ULYSSES  
 You have to want it. You have to  
 fight me because you want the  
 sword.

TIAS  
 But I don't want the sword. I  
 only want you to have your  
 freedom.

ULYSSES  
 Then do it for me. Demand the  
 sword for my freedom. I am your  
 friend.

Tias nods slowly.

ULYSSES  
 Come on.

They raise their swords. Slowly start circling each other.

It is clear that neither of them want to fight.

Tias makes a few warning swings. Ulysses tries to find  
 determination in his eyes.

TIAS  
 This isn't going to be easy.

ULYSSES  
 Make it easier. Pretend I am  
 Mars...

TIAS

He means nothing to me.

ULYSSES

Then think about how I set you  
both up. Try to hate me.

TIAS

Still not enough.

A few more swings. Ulysses backs off.

ULYSSES

Then look upon me as if I were  
your very self. The target.  
Strike me like you would strike  
your own heart. For just this  
moment, dwell on what you have  
done!

Tias tenses up...

ULYSSES

Do it!

TIAS SWINGS - a mighty earth-shattering clang as Ulysses  
blocks with the powerful bastard sword.

Flashes and flickers of memories as Tias re-lives the  
murder of Nikolai, and the kiss he saw...

The skies rumble faintly, speaking to them.

Tias focuses more.

ULYSSES

I am Tias! I tried to love a  
woman, but instead I crushed her  
whole world!

Another strike - CLANG!!! More anger...

They fight!

They use all their surroundings in the fight [improvised],  
the log pile, the old fire-pit and so on. The fight moves  
on through the woods.

83

EXT. WOODS AWAY FROM CABIN

83

The fight escalates to a greater distance from the cabin,  
into a different part of the forest...

It is an epic battle between good... and good...

Between each blow, Tias tries to find false anger from inside himself, and blanks out everything else from his mind. We see the killer inside him again.

MORE FLASHBACKS of when he killed his friend, the hate in his eyes.

TIAS

Arghhh!!

Starts to put all his might into it. Ulysses defends and handles the mighty sword as if he were a master of the art.

Eventually they are tired, with massive pauses between each swing. Neither can win or lose.

Ulysses bashes the sword out of Tias's hand.

ULYSSES

Pick it up!

TIAS

I can't!

ULYSSES

Do it, damn you boy!

Tias picks it up, but another swing and the sword flies out of his hand again.

ULYSSES

Pick it up!

TIAS finds his anger again, picks it up and strikes.

Ulysses repeatedly strikes until Tias can block no more.

Tias is the better fighter with no will to fight it seems, whilst Ulysses is a desperate man with determination and desire...

Tias left wide open, Ulysses holds the sword high above his head. Doesn't want to strike, but doesn't know what to do.

TIAS

This is it. You've won.

Ulysses can't find it in his heart to strike. A stand-off... BUT THEN SUDDENLY -

ULYSSES

ARGHHH!!

ULYSSES IS STABBED IN THE BACK BY MARS!

Mars is revealed behind him, holding the knife in, bleeding and wounded, half on the ground. Blood coming out the corner of his mouth. Black eyes like a shark.

MARS

The sword is mine! It's MINE!

Ulysses looks at Tias for a moment, deep into his eyes, and then -

Turns around and slashes Mars across the belly.

Mars falls down to his hands and knees.

Tias sits back and watches, out of breath, unable to comprehend or find the strength to intervene.

ULYSSES nods at Mars, gritting his teeth.

HE THEN STABS MARS - all the way through, and pulls the sword back out as Mars collapses into a bloody pile.

Lightning and thunder strikes around them. The winds blow and whistle, then they calm down as Ulysses stands there. Camera moving towards him as his coat and beard move come alive with the elements.

Ulysses looks at Mars and what he's done. Suddenly...

HIS HAND BURNS on the sword.

ULYSSES

Arghh!!

He drops the sword. Smoke rises from the handle and his hand. It falls on the ground with an anvil like thud, in slow motion.

He looks at his hand, then turns to Tias.

Tias stands there.

TIAS

You did it. You're free of the sword.

ULYSSES

I am.

He looks down at the sword. POV from the sword looking up at him.

ULYSSES

It no longer belongs. it is bound to nothing but the earth upon which it lay.

He turns around to Tias.



ULYSSES

... but it can't stay here.  
Anyone could claim it. It is  
cursed and unsafe...

TIAS

Then I must claim it.

Tias goes to grab it. Ulysses stops him.

ULYSSES

No, wait! Don't touch it. The  
next person that touches it...  
will end up like me. ARGH!

He collapses to one knee in pain, from his back.

TIAS

Ulysses -

Ulysses holds his hand up -

ULYSSES

Only now do I feel the true pain  
of mortality.

He looks up at Tias.

ULYSSES

The sword can not stay here. One  
of us must claim it.

Tias listens, no words.

ULYSSES

If I claim the sword, I will most  
likely be bound to it forever. If  
YOU claim it, then you may never  
feel an end to your despair.

TIAS

I... I could do it.

ULYSSES

No...

TIAS

But if I do, then you'll die,  
won't you?

ULYSSES

I will die a free man, Tias.

He looks up at him.

ULYSSES

I would rather die by a knife in my back, than live by the eternal manacles of this damned bastard sword. I would belong to the earth, that I love so dearly. This place never wronged me.

TIAS

How did this happen to you, Ulysses? How did you end up with this poisonous thing?

ULYSSES

I don't remember. I... I think I used the sword to make me forget.

A close-up of Tias as he realises he could do the same.

Ulysses stumbles lower onto the ground in pain, gasping. Tias goes to hold him.

ULYSSES

You know... maybe you COULD just, walk away. Leave the sword. Let some poor bastard claim it and learn about it the hard way.

TIAS

That would be a terrible thing to do, and you know it. It could be anyone. It could be Nyx. You couldn't leave her with the burden.

ULYSSES

Oh trust me. Nyx wouldn't touch the thing. Never again.

He looks up at him.

TIAS

(realising something...)  
Nyx...

Ulysses stumbles onto his back now, all the way. Tias runs to catch him. A final moment...

ULYSSES

We are what we choose, friend. The only thing left when we're gone are the stories we leave behind, and what we did for others. There are no possessions. We own nothing.

TIAS

Ulysses...

Ulysses falls out of consciousness... his final words are near...

ULYSSES

From what I've learned from you... you often do what is right. Regardless of a few mistakes. Maybe you took something once... but you can always.... give it... back....

He falls and dies. Closes his eyes.

Tias looks at him, then looks up.

He gets up and faces away from Ulysses. Stands beside the sword looking at it. Looks ahead.

Has visions again of Liliya... when he asked if there was anything he could do...

Looks at the sword again, then looks away. Takes a step away - but something makes him stop - not the curse of the sword this time, but his genuine heart.

He takes a deep breath and closes his eyes, and turns to grab the sword when -

THE SWORD IS GONE.

Turns to Ulysses.

ULYSSES LAYS DOWN BARELY ALIVE... with the sword in his hand. Epic music.

Horror in the face of Tias. Shakes his head...

TIAS

(a whisper)

No...

Ulysses stares at him. A sudden pain in his face, then the light returns to his eyes. He breaths again. Staggered to his feet. The sword has given him immortality.

He stands there looking at Tias.

ULYSSES

Live your life. Accept the burden of your choices just as I have...

A close-up of his hand on the sword. Looks down at the sword.

ULYSSES

Don't run from your mistakes.  
Learn from them and give  
something back. Two deaths will  
not create a life.

TIAS

But... what of you?

ULYSSES

My duty is to the forest, and all  
the good people that would  
stumble upon it. It does not  
deserve to be abandoned by me.

Ulysses turns slowly to head back towards the cabin.

TIAS

What about your freedom?

He stops. Back turned to Tias.

ULYSSES

My time will come.

He turns and smiles to Tias. Walks off towards the  
direction of the cabin.

Camera slowly moves towards Tias as he watches in awe and  
respect. Camera moves up into the trees, and into the  
light...

FADE TO BLACK.

84 INT. CABIN - TIME HAS PASSED

84

Quick close-up of the door outside, as somebody moves  
towards it, POV.

Ulysses drinks vodka and finishes making another trinket  
from sticks and feathers.

KNOCK KNOCK.

He looks up - gets up and opens the door.

It's Nyx.

NYX

Here.

She hands him the basket. He takes it and puts the food  
and items on the table.

NYX

Are you all right? I haven't seen you for a while... in the forest. I wondered what had happened.

ULYSSES

I'm okay. Just resting. I thought I might write a book.

NYX

That's a good idea.

He looks at her.

ULYSSES

Well, come in then.

NYX

Oh?

He pulls her gently by the arm and closes the door.

ULYSSES

Here take my chair.

She carefully sits down, as if this had never happened before.

Pours two vodkas, an extra large one for her, actually. Gives it to her.

He leans by the table. Gives her a look as if something were on his mind, but a spark in his eye.

NYX

What is it?

ULYSSES

Do you still remember that time we first met?

NYX

Yes.

He takes a moment. Raises the vodka to his lips but doesn't drink. She drinks hers like it was water.

ULYSSES

Do you remember that promise you made me?

NYX

Oh I've tried my hardest to keep it, honest I have. Have I?

ULYSSES

Yes. You most definitely have. I don't know what I'd do without a friend like you.

NYX

You DID save my life.

The music changes as the camera moves into Ulysses' face, thinking to himself, leaning against the table.

Puts the vodka down, untouched. Takes a loaf of the pixie bread and smells it.

Just as he's about to take a bite -

KNOCK KNOCK.

Who could it be? They look at each other cautiously. He opens the door.

It's Tias, who has returned, with a dead rabbit on his back.

TIAS

Old friend.

ULYSSES

Tias! Come in, boy.

Gives him a warm welcome. Sits him down and closes the door.

ULYSSES

You two met before, briefly.

TIAS

Actually... we crossed paths in the forest before I came here. I helped her to retrieve her basket.

ULYSSES

Well I'll be.

Offers him some bread.

TIAS

Of course. Don't let it ruin your appetite tonight, though.

He puts the rabbit on the table on the side.

ULYSSES

Looks good.

Nyx finds it a bit grotesque it seems. They laugh and banter.

TIAS

I thought we could take a journey, the three of us if you like. Show me the forest. All your favourite places.

ULYSSES

Yep. We could do that.

TIAS

A little weary of those demons though.

Ulysses looks at Nyx as if to say... oops.

TIAS

What? There aren't any, are there?

ULYSSES

Our demons follow us whenever we go, friend.

Suddenly during the banter -

KNOCK KNOCK.

They all look at each other - a huge uncomfortable pause.

Ulysses goes to the door.

Tias slowly puts his hand round a sword nearby, just in case. Nyx hides behind him and they wait in anticipation.

Ulysses opens the door... to a STRANGER - out of breath...

His face - looking towards us at the door.

ULYSSES

Who are you?

STRANGER

Let me in, please. I need your help.

Ulysses looks at Tias. Then back to the stranger.

ULYSSES

Go on.

Stands aside and lets him in. We see the back of him.

Door is shut. Stranger sits down, looking around at them all - his POV.

ULYSSES  
Tell me what happened?

STRANGER  
I'm not sure. I think it was  
bandits from the town. I don't  
remember much.

ULYSSES  
Well, tell us what you DO  
remember.

STRANGER  
I was searching for something. A  
treasure.

All their faces, looking at each other, speechless.

ULYSSES  
A treasure?

STRANGER  
Yes... An ancient relic. A sword.

The strangers face, revealed...

STRANGER  
The bastard sword... Have you  
heard of it?

CUT TO BLACK.

THE END.