

The Balancia Chronicles:

Chapter 1-The Village

written by

Zak Keller

Address
Phone
E-mail

EXT. CABIN IN THE WOODS - NIGHT

Rain floods a dirt road in front of an isolated cabin.

A horse gallops closer.

A ROBED FIGURE lands in the mud.

SPLASH

INT. CABIN IN THE WOODS - NIGHT

A fireplace crackles in a one room cabin.

Rain pounds on the roof.

XAVIER, 58, reads a manuscript.

BANG BANG BANG

The door shakes violently with each hit.

XAVIER puts down his manuscript and crosses to the door.

He looks through the door's window.

Meeting him is a MARK OF THE RESISTANCE.

He flings the door open.

XAVIER

Why are yo--

The ROBED FIGURE enters the cabin.

A sleeping child, 10, in his arms.

XAVIER focuses on the child.

ROBED FIGURE

I need you to take the child,
Xavier.

XAVIER looks at the child.

XAVIER

Where did he come from?

ROBED FIGURE

The palace.

(beat)

XAVIER
I'm sorry I must be losing my
hearing.

He picks his ear.

XAVIER (CONT'D)
You said you took him from the
palace?

The ROBED FIGURE places the child on the bed.

ROBED FIGURE
Yes.

XAVIER
You took the King's child?

The ROBED figure stands and crosses to the window.

He looks through the curtain.

XAVIER (CONT'D)
You clearly know who I am, I'm not
a part of the resistance anymore.

ROBED FIGURE
I know.

XAVIER
Then why bring the boy here?

The ROBED FIGURE turns to XAVIER.

ROBED FIGURE
Look, old man, just keep the kid
safe.

He swallows his tone.

ROBED FIGURE (CONT'D)
He can't return to the city.

They both look at the boy.

XAVIER
What if the King comes looking for
him?

ROBED FIGURE
He won't.

XAVIER
How do you know?

ROBED FIGURE
Turpentine.

(beat)

XAVIER slowly lowers into his chair.

Disbelief washes over him.

(beat)

The ROBED FIGURE pulls out a letter.

He hands it to XAVIER.

ROBED FIGURE (CONT'D)
Do not disclose the contents of
this letter to the boy.

He opens the door.

XAVIER
Why? What's in it?

The ROBED FIGURE leaves, closing the door behind him.

XAVIER looks at the child.

He fiddles with the letter in his hands.

He opens the letter.

The child is sleeping.

XAVIER reads from the letter quietly.

XAVIER (CONT'D)
A man, removed from his home will
determine the Kingdom's future
through freedom or destruction...

XAVIER studies the boy.

On the bottom of the letter, the name "Dimitris" is
scribbled.

XAVIER (CONT'D)
What kinda name...

(beat)

XAVIER tosses the letter in the fireplace.

The letter burns.

XAVIER gets up.

Walks over to DIMITRIS.

Covers him with a blanket.

XAVIER sits back down in his chair.

The letter turns to ash as the fire crackles.

FADE TO BLACK.

EXT. WOODS - MORNING

DIMITRIS, now 17, and BAXTER, 15, his best friend crouch next to a fallen tree.

Armed with rifles, they do their best to be motionless.

Ahead of them, a deer in the clearing.

Sunlight shining through the leaves.

DIMITRIS slowly aims his rifle.

The deer flings it's head up.

DIMITRIS freezes instantly.

(beat)

Suddenly a wild boar jumps from nearby brush.

DIMITRIS stay still.

BAXTER

AHHHHH!

The boar charges into BAXTER.

He is knocked over the fallen tree into the clearing.

The boar turns to DIMITRIS.

DIMITRIS

What? Do something.

The boar snorts.

DIMITRIS huffs back.

It takes a step towards DIMITRIS.

CUT TO: CLEARING

EXT. WOODS - DAY

BAXTER is on the ground, rubbing the back of his head.

(beat)

BAXTER

D?

(beat)

He stands up trying to see through the brush.

BAXTER starts talking to himself.

BAXTER (CONT'D)

Ok. Just... jump in there.

He goes to jump and stops.

BAXTER (CONT'D)

Come on, D needs you...

He goes to jump again.

Suddenly DIMITRIS bursts through the brush riding the boar.

BAXTER (CONT'D)

AHHHHH!

BAXTER falls backwards.

He slowly opens his eyes.

He sees DIMITRIS riding the boar around the clearing as it squeals.

BAXTER laughs.

He yells to DIMITRIS-

BAXTER (CONT'D)

Why are you riding it?

DIMITRIS yells back-

DIMITRIS

I didn't like it's attitude!

BAXTER laughs again.

DIMITRIS (CONT'D)
Grab my gun!

BAXTER
Yeah yeah!

BAXTER climbs through the brush.

He reaches down for the rifle.

The brush the boar came from shuffles again.

BAXTER (CONT'D)
Nope.

BAXTER climbs back through the brush he came through.

DIMITRIS is riding the boar back to the village.

BAXTER (CONT'D)
How did he steer it?

CUT TO: CABIN IN THE WOODS

EXT. CABIN IN THE WOODS - MORNING

The boar charges towards the house.

DIMITRIS and BAXTER follow.

BAXTER
He's gunna--

DIMITRIS
Yep.

BAXTER
Are you--

DIMITRIS
Like what?

INT. CABIN IN THE WOODS - MORNING

XAVIER sits at the table reading.

(beat)

The boar burst into the cabin.

Running in circles.

Slamming into furniture.

DIMITRIS and BAXTER enter the cabin.

XAVIER lifts his tea from the table.

The boar, squealing, hits the table.

It runs back outside.

XAVIER

Why?

DIMITRIS

'Why' what?

XAVIER lowers his tea back onto the table.

XAVIER

Why did a wild boar just charge
through my cabin?

(beat)

DIMITRIS

What boar?

XAVIER looks at DIMITRIS.

(beat)

He turns to BAXTER.

XAVIER

Baxter? Any helpful information?

BAXTER

Sir, I was there and I don't know
how it happened.

XAVIER

As helpful as always, Baxter.

XAVIER sips his tea.

XAVIER (CONT'D)

Did you get any game?

DIMITRIS pauses.

DIMITRIS
Oh! Ya know, the craziest thing
happened...

XAVIER puts his book down and gives DIMITRIS his full
attention.

DIMITRIS (CONT'D)
We found a deer.

XAVIER
Yes.

DIMITRIS
Then right as I was getting my
rifle...

XAVIER closes his eyes and interlocks his fingers.

DIMITRIS (CONT'D)
This wild boar just jumped out!

XAVIER lowers his head.

XAVIER
And you didn't take the boar
instead?

DIMITRIS
Oh... I couldn't.

XAVIER
Why not?

DIMITRIS
I was on it.

XAVIER sighs.

He looks at BAXTER.

BAXTER
I got knocked through a bush.

XAVIER
Uh-huh.

XAVIER sighs and gets up.

He walks to a cabinet and grabs a small bag.

XAVIER (CONT'D)
Here, Baxter.

He tosses the bag to BAXTER.

XAVIER (CONT'D)
Take this and the boar wrangler
here, and get some food from the
village.

BAXTER
Yes, sir.

BAXTER and DIMITRIS go to the door.

XAVIER
Dimitris.

DIMITRIS
Yeah?

XAVIER
That's enough animals in my house
for one day.

DIMITRIS
I'll keep it in mind.

The boys leave.

EXT. CABIN IN THE WOODS - DAY

The boys walk away from the cabin.

The boar is running around the property.

DIMITRIS holds his hand out to BAXTER.

(beat)

BAXTER hands the money to DIMITRIS.

BAXTER and the boar see each other.

The boar stops.

(beat)

SNORT.

BAXTER speeds up.

(beat)

The boar takes off after him.

BAXTER sprints as fast as he can.

DIMITRIS laughs.

CUT TO: VILLAGE MARKET.

EXT. VILLAGE MARKET - NOON

DIMITRIS, BAXTER and THE BOAR make their way down the street.

BAXTER is keeping DIMITRIS between himself and THE BOAR.

THE BOAR is trotting in circles, following BAXTER.

DIMITRIS is unaffected.

BAXTER

Did I do something to it?

DIMITRIS

I'm the one that rode it.

BAXTER

That's my point! It hit me, you rode it, and it hates me!

DIMITRIS

Did you try ignoring it?

BAXTER stops in front of DIMITRIS, staring at him.

THE BOAR continues to trot.

BAXTER notices and climbs onto a crate.

BAXTER

I think I'll just wait here.

DIMITRIS stops and looks at him.

THE BOAR is trying to climb the crate, it's too short.

DIMITRIS talks to THE BOAR-

DIMITRIS

Keep an eye on him for me.

(beat)

SNORT.

BAXTER

No... w-wait!

DIMITRIS starts walking away.

DIMITRIS
I'll be back!

CUT TO: MARKET SQUARE

EXT. MARKET SQUARE - NOON

DIMITRIS is at a stall.

He gives the vendor money as he grabs a large sack from the counter.

DIMITRIS
Thanks.

VENDOR
Thank you!

A TOWN CRIER steps into the center of the square.

TOWN CRIER
Hear ye, hear ye! A decree from
Lord Protector Ursa!

DIMITRIS stops and listens.

TOWN CRIER (CONT'D)
Due to an increase in bandit
activity, all travel to Balancia is
hereby restricted to traders, and
The Protector's Guards.

DIMITRIS turns to head back to BAXTER.

TOWN CRIER (CONT'D)
Furthermore! A bounty of 100,000
gold coins is offered for the vile
bandit lord, Discon!

DIMITRIS stops dead in his tracks.

TOWN CRIER (CONT'D)
Slay the terror of the highway and
collect your bounty at the Kingdom
Gates! Long live the Lord
Protector!

The TOWN CRIER leaves the square.

DIMITRIS
A hundred thousand...

DIMITRIS continues back to BAXTER

CUT TO: VILLAGE MARKET - BAXTER

EXT. VILLAGE MARKET - AFTERNOON

BAXTER is sitting on the crate.

THE BOAR is sitting.

Waiting.

BAXTER

Don't you have some mud to roll in?

THE BOAR stares at BAXTER.

There is an unexplainable tension.

BAXTER (CONT'D)

Seriously, why me?

SNORT

BAXTER (CONT'D)

Oh, that's helpful...

DIMITRIS approaches carrying the sack of groceries.

DIMITRIS

Did it stay there the whole time?

BAXTER

Yes!

DIMITRIS laughs and pets THE BOAR.

BAXTER (CONT'D)

Don't act like he's domesticated!

DIMITRIS

He listened to a command. I don't need to act.

BAXTER

That is so not how that works.

DIMITRIS looks at THE BOAR.

DIMITRIS

Tell him that.

BAXTER looks at THE BOAR.

BAXTER
You're not a pet!

THE BOAR stands up.

SNORT

And drags its hoof across the ground.

BAXTER turns back to DIMITRIS and points at THE BOAR.

DIMITRIS
What?

BAXTER
'What' he says.... Do something
about your new pet!

DIMITRIS looks at THE BOAR.

DIMITRIS
Go home.

(beat)

THE BOAR leaves, trotting out of the village.

BAXTER
No...

DIMITRIS
Huh... I didn't think that would
work.

BAXTER
Why did that work?

They watch the boar leave the village.

DIMITRIS
Anyway--

BAXTER
Yeah just move on, it's fine.

DIMITRIS
Town crier at the square said the
roads are closed.

BAXTER
Huh? Why?

DIMITRIS
I don't know, wasn't really
listening.

BAXTER
Why do you say things?

DIMITRIS
But I also heard about a 100,000
gold bounty.

BAXTER
Ah. There it is. Did you hear who,
why, or what? Or did you short
circuit at 'money'?

DIMITRIS
Just take out a bandit, get paid at
the kingdom gates.

BAXTER
And I'm sure its a totally random
bandit, right?

DIMITRIS
I think it was something like 'Fish
on'...

BAXTER
DISCON!?

DIMITRIS
Yeah! That's it!

BAXTER
No. No no no no no... No.

DIMITRIS
I didn't even say anything!

BAXTER
You said money first.

DIMITRIS
That doesn't mean anything...

DIMITRIS avoids eye contact.

BAXTER
We are NOT going to fight Discon.

DIMITRIS
Fine. Let's just head back to
Xavier.

They leave the market area, following the boar.

CUT TO: CABIN

INT. CABIN - AFTERNOON

XAVIER is sitting at the table reading.

He sips his tea.

The door opens.

DIMITRIS and BAXTER walk in.

DIMITRIS puts the sack of groceries on the table.

He hands XAVIER the change.

XAVIER looks at BAXTER.

XAVIER
How long did it take?

(beat)

BAXTER
That boar was chasing me...

(beat)

DIMITRIS smiles.

XAVIER
End of the road.

BAXTER
I was in danger!

XAVIER
It's a pig.

BAXTER
It's smart...

XAVIER stares at BAXTER.

XAVIER
Don't you have to go home soon?

BAXTER
Yes, sir.

DIMITRIS chuckles.

BAXTER (CONT'D)
See ya, D.

DIMITRIS
See ya tomorrow bud.

BAXTER reaches the door.

DIMITRIS is in a cupboard putting away groceries.

BAXTER touches the doorknob.

DIMITRIS snorts.

BAXTER jumps, hitting the door with his hand.

XAVIER chuckles.

BAXTER stares intently at DIMITRIS.

DIMITRIS is putting away groceries.

He turns to BAXTER.

DIMITRIS (CONT'D)
What?

BAXTER
That's so not cool.

DIMITRIS
What?

BAXTER leaves.

XAVIER laughs.

XAVIER
Why do you torment the poor boy?

DIMITRIS
The boar started it this time!

XAVIER just looks at him.

DIMITRIS (CONT'D)
He watched Baxter while I went shopping.

XAVIER tries to process.

(beat)

XAVIER
Anyway, other than the pig and
Baxter's... issues... how was the
village.

DIMITRIS
Pretty normal.

XAVIER sips his tea.

(beat)

DIMITRIS (CONT'D)
Roads to the kingdom are shut down.

XAVIER
Oh?

DIMITRIS
Yeah, some bandit named Discon.

XAVIER stops.

XAVIER
What was the bounty?

DIMITRIS
A hundred...

XAVIER
Oh..

DIMITRIS
Thousand.

XAVIER
Don't.

DIMITRIS
What?

XAVIER
You're not going.

DIMITRIS
Didn't say I was.

XAVIER
You didn't have to.

DIMITRIS finishes putting the groceries away and grabs an
apple.

DIMITRIS
Whatever...

XAVIER sighs.

XAVIER
I just need you to think before you
do things.

DIMITRIS
I will.

XAVIER
What?

DIMITRIS
Would! I would.

XAVIER reads his book.

CUT TO: FOREST PATH

EXT. WOODS - EVENING

BAXTER is walking home.

BAXTER
Where is he...

The woods are quiet.

(beat)

(beat)

SNORT

BAXTER freezes.

(beat)

SNORT

BAXTER looks around.

(beat)

(beat)

SNORT

BAXTER (CONT'D)
(quietly)
No...

BAXTER looks up slowly.

Two beady eyes peer down from a branch.

BAXTER (CONT'D)
How? Why? HOW?!

SNORT

BAXTER (CONT'D)
What are yo--

JUMP

SQUEAL

FADE TO BLACK.

INT. BAXTER'S ROOM - EARLY MORNING

BAXTER is sound asleep.

The birds are chirping outside.

The sun and breeze are flowing through the curtains on the window.

(beat)

Something disturbs the dried fallen leaves outside.

CRUNCH

(beat)

CRUNCH

(beat)

(beat)

A shadow creeps from the window across the wooden floor.

(beat)

(beat)

The figure at the window begins to push through the curtains.

(beat)

The curtains fall, revealing a snout.

(beat)

(beat)

(beat)

SNORT

BAXTER's eyes shoot open.

SKITTER-SKITTER-SKITTER

CUT TO: CABIN

INT. CABIN - MORNING

XAVIER is drinking tea at the table.

DIMITRIS is making eggs.

XAVIER
You're not going.

DIMITRIS
Ok!

XAVIER
I mean it, Dimitris.

DIMITRIS
I understand that, Xavier.

XAVIER stares at DIMITRIS over his cup of tea.

DIMITRIS plates the eggs.

He gives one plate to XAVIER, and sits down with the other.

XAVIER
Thank you.

DIMITRIS
No problem.

They begin to eat.

BANG

The door flies open.

BAXTER, flushed appearance.

DIMITRIS and XAVIER look at him.

BAXTER is huffing like he ran the whole way here.

DIMITRIS (CONT'D)
You good?

BAXTER
The... pig...

A big smile creeps across DIMITRIS' face.

XAVIER
It is barely sunrise, Baxter.

BAXTER
Yeah?

(beat)

BAXTER (CONT'D)
Try having a pig as an alarm clock.

DIMITRIS bursts into laughter.

DIMITRIS
What?

XAVIER
It's a pig, Baxter.

BAXTER
IT WAS IN A TREE!

They both stare at BAXTER

(beat)

XAVIER
A pig...

BAXTER
Yes!

XAVIER
In a tree...

BAXTER
Look, don't ask for an
explanation...

(beat)

XAVIER sips his tea.

DIMITRIS is in stitches.

DIMITRIS
Ya know... I bet it won't follow us
to a bandit camp..

XAVIER spits out his tea.

XAVIER
NO!

BAXTER whispers to himself-

BAXTER
What if it's working for Discon...?

They look at BAXTER.

(beat)

XAVIER
The tree pig?

BAXTER
Hear me out!

XAVIER
No... Dimitris, you are not going
after Discon.

DIMITRIS
A hundred thousand, Xavier!

XAVIER
That's not a reason to risk your
life.

DIMITRIS talks under his breath.

DIMITRIS
I'd win...

XAVIER stares at him.

DIMITRIS finishes his eggs.

XAVIER
Don't.

DIMITRIS
But poor Baxter needs to know if
the tree pig is working with
Discon.

XAVIER stares at him.

DIMITRIS (CONT'D)
We could have a real problem with
bandit tree pigs running around.

BAXTER
I'm a joke to you, aren't I?

XAVIER
You cannot use Baxter's new pig
obsession to justify this!

BAXTER
It's the one obsessed with me...

DIMITRIS tries to hold himself together.

He stands up from the table and walks to the door.

XAVIER
Dimitris...

DIMITRIS
I'm just going to look.

XAVIER
No.

DIMITRIS
I'm not gunna start a fight.

XAVIER
Yeah, because you're not going.

DIMITRIS
What are you going to do? Chase me?

XAVIER stares.

Then sighs.

XAVIER
Just... don't get seen...

DIMITRIS
Heard that!

The boys leave the cabin.

EXT. CABIN - MORNING

BAXTER scans the area.

He sees nothing.

DIMITRIS leaves the cabin.

They start walking.

BAXTER
Good... I think I'm safe.

DIMITRIS
This pig is really getting to you,
huh?

BAXTER
It was in my window, D!

DIMITRIS
What?

DIMITRIS laughs.

BAXTER
This is not funny.

-snort-

The boys both stop.

They look back towards the cabin.

One boar sits on the roof.

DIMITRIS
How?

BAXTER
THAT'S MY QUESTION!

(beat)

DIMITRIS keeps walking.

BAXTER (CONT'D)
W-wait... help me figure this out!

DIMITRIS
See, Bax, here's the thing... You
care. And that's really nice. I,
however, don't. It's just a weird
pig.

BAXTER
ON THE ROOF!

DIMITRIS
I see this.

BAXTER
It doesn't bother you?

DIMITRIS
No. Come on let's go find Discon.

THE BOAR sits on the roof, watching the boys leave.

They exit THE BOAR's line of sight.

POP

THE BOAR has vanished.

CUT TO: VILLAGE MARKET

EXT. VILLAGE MARKET - NOON

The streets are busy.

Sales, announcements.

VENDOR #1
Fish!

VENDOR #2
Jewelry!

DIMITRIS
Alright... we need a lead.

BAXTER
You say that like you know what
you're doing.

DIMITRIS
I do.

BAXTER
Really?

DIMITRIS
Yeah... finding a lead.

BAXTER stares at DIMITRIS.

(beat)

BAXTER
So, no plan.

DIMITRIS
I have the concept of a plan.

BAXTER
WHAT DOES THAT EVEN MEAN?!

The TOWN CRIER from yesterday is walking through the square.

DIMITRIS runs over to him.

DIMITRIS
Hey! Excuse me!

TOWN CRIER
Yes?

DIMITRIS
That bounty you said about
yesterday?

TOWN CRIER
Hm? Oh! Discon?

DIMITRIS
Yeah fish on, can you tell me where
his camp is?

TOWN CRIER
Aren't you a little young to take
on a bandit lord?

BAXTER
Dimitris...

BAXTER is focused behind the TOWN CRIER.

DIMITRIS
What?

DIMITRIS and the TOWN CRIER turn.

SNORT

TOWN CRIER
Good lord!

DIMITRIS laughs.

DIMITRIS
So about that bandit camp.

The TOWN CRIER hesitates, processing.

(beat)

He reaches into his garb, while maintaining eye contact with the boar.

He pulls out a flyer, passing it in DIMITRIS' general direction.

TOWN CRIER
Is he yours?

Yes. DIMITRIS NO! BAXTER

The TOWN CRIER looks down at the boar.

Nods .

SNORT

The crier walks away.

See? DIMITRIS (CONT'D)

BAXTER
What just happened...?

DIMITRIS
We got a lead.

DIMITRIS smiles.

BAXTER
No... don't act like you planned
that.

BAXTER is fixated on the boar.

The boar sits calmly.

DIMITRIS
I planned to find a lead.

BAXTER
That is NOT what just happened...

DIMITRIS
Then why do we have a lead?

BAXTER slowly turns to DIMITRIS.

(beat)

BAXTER
Don't...

DIMITRIS
What?

BAXTER
Use the pig... to justify yourself.

DIMITRIS
Hey, if the pig wants to bully
someone into giving me what I
want... Who am I to argue the pig?

BAXTER
I...

BAXTER swallows his sentence.

BAXTER (CONT'D)
Just... can we go?

BAXTER turns back to the boar.

It is gone.

BAXTER (CONT'D)
WHAT?!

DIMITRIS
See? No pig, no Baxter issues.

BAXTER
You say that like it's my fault!

DIMITRIS
No... but you are the only one that
see it as a problem...

BAXTER processes.

BAXTER
Open the flyer...

DIMITRIS opens the flyer.

It reads; "BOUNTY: Discon the Bandit Lord, One mile west of
main road." Then a picture of a hulking man, followed by;
"100,000 Gold pieces, Payable at Kingdom Gates"

DIMITRIS
Well that's not far..

BAXTER
Bandit... Lord.

DIMITRIS
100,000 gold.

BAXTER
Band-It... LOR-DUH!

DIMITRIS looks at BAXTER.

(beat)

DIMITRIS
SNORT

BAXTER
DON'T DO THAT!

DIMITRIS starts to walk out of town.

BAXTER (CONT'D)
How do you win debates without an
argument?

BAXTER watches watches as DIMITRIS walks away.

(beat)

SNORT

BAXTER jumps and looks down.

THE BOAR.

BAXTER (CONT'D)
DIMITRIS!!!!

BAXTER runs after DIMITRIS.

THE BOAR does not move.

The nearby Villagers watch a boy run from a stationary pig.

CUT TO: BALANCIA HIGHWAY

EXT. HIGHWAY - AFTERNOON

The boys are walking down the highway.

BAXTER
I'm serious, it just appeared!

DIMITRIS
Sure, bud. It's a magic pig.

BAXTER
Don't patronize me.

DIMITRIS
No no, it makes sense!

BAXTER
Really...?

DIMITRIS
Yeah, I mea--

A caravan is overturned.

The horses that once pulled it are motionless on the ground.

Goods are scattered across the road.

A man lays bleeding from the stomach. Shot.

DIMITRIS rushes to the man.

BAXTER
Oh, we're not going back to that
conversation are we?

(beat)

BAXTER (CONT'D)
Probably not...

DIMITRIS reaches the man.

MAN
Go home boy... It's not safe...
Discon's men are...

He winces.

MAN (CONT'D)
Nearby...

DIMITRIS looks at the wound.

His face flushes with helplessness.

DIMITRIS
I'm sorry...

The man passes.

BAXTER
Still think it's worth the gold?

DIMITRIS
I don't think this is about gold...

BAXTER
What? That's all you focused on! He was literally a merchant! What do you mean 'not about the gold'?!

DIMITRIS
I don't know. Let's go look at the camp.

BAXTER
Oh! Yeah! 'Hello murderous bandits, just thought we'd pop by for a spot of tea'!

DIMITRIS examines the area.

BAXTER (CONT'D)
What are you doing?

DIMITRIS
Hunting.

DIMITRIS looks around the edge of the road.

BAXTER
You're hunting bandits? Are you insane?

DIMITRIS
Says Mr. Bandit-Tree-Pig.

BAXTER
HE WAS IN THE TREE!

DIMITRIS points to a mud spot with footprints.

DIMITRIS
See? They went this way.

BAXTER
Ok... so, what? Just go knock on the door?

DIMITRIS
No, I want to see how many there are.

BAXTER is stunned.

DIMITRIS follows the tracks into the trees.

BAXTER looks at the slain merchant.

(beat)

He follows DIMITRIS.

CUT TO: BANDIT CAMP

EXT. BANDIT CAMP/WOODS - EVENING

The boys emerge from the brush.

In front of them, rocks overlooking the camp.

Small figures are moving in the camp.

BAXTER
Let's stop here.

DIMITRIS
Yeah.

They lay down and crawl onto the rocks.

DIMITRIS pulls the flyer out.

He places it between them.

Then places a small rock on the paper.

DIMITRIS (CONT'D)
Do you see him?

They both squint at the figures.

Like a fiery beacon, a girl is dancing.

She's on a makeshift stage.

DIMITRIS (CONT'D)
Wait...

BAXTER
You see him?

The girl finishes her dance.

The details are impossible, but she was dragged by her arms.

DIMITRIS
They have a prisoner.

BAXTER
I mean they're bandits... probably,
yeah.

DIMITRIS counts as many figures as he can see.

DIMITRIS
Twelve.

BAXTER
Prisoners?

DIMITRIS
Just remember 'twelve'.

DIMITRIS gets up and heads back through the brush.

BAXTER watches DIMITRIS, processing.

Both stop.

THE BOAR is sitting in front of the brush.

BAXTER
D-D-D-Dimitris... it's back...

DIMITRIS
Yeah, I see that...

He looks at THE BOAR.

DIMITRIS (CONT'D)
Friends?

BAXTER is paralyzed by anticipation.

(beat)

SNORT

BAXTER
No. No, no, no.

DIMITRIS
Well I guess you need a name then,
huh?

THE BOAR shakes it's body as it stands up.

BAXTER
Don't name it!

DIMITRIS
Tell ya what, pig... I'll think of
one on the way back.

SNORT

THE BOAR goes into the brush.

DIMITRIS (CONT'D)
Come on, Bax.

BAXTER
Oh, it's just a friend now?

DIMITRIS
Having a tree climbing pig might
help our chances.

BAXTER
HOW?!

DIMITRIS
Were you prepared?

BAXTER is stunned by flawless logic.

CUT TO: MARKET SQUARE

EXT. MARKET SQUARE - EVENING

The boys enter town, pig in tow.

BAXTER is consistently looking over his shoulder at THE BOAR.

DIMITRIS
What was that number?

BAXTER
For the third time; TWELVE!

DIMITRIS is deep in thought while walking.

BAXTER (CONT'D)
Are you plan--

DIMITRIS
BOARIS!!

BAXTER
No...

SNORT

DIMITRIS spins around and gets eye level with BOARIS.

DIMITRIS
Will you help me?

(beat)

SNORT

DIMITRIS smiles.

DIMITRIS (CONT'D)
Good, I think you'll get the plan.

BAXTER
What? Help? Plan? What? Can you
communicate with ME instead of the
pig?

DIMITRIS
Once you use his name.

BAXTER
You want me to call the boar
Boaris?

DIMITRIS
It's only respectful.

SNORT

DIMITRIS (CONT'D)
See?

BAXTER is completely lost.

DIMITRIS (CONT'D)
Come by the cabin tomorrow. Let's
get some rest.

BAXTER
Y-yeah... that's what'll help...

DIMITRIS heads towards XAVIER's cabin.

BAXTER is still reeling.

SNORT

BAXTER (CONT'D)
AHHHHHHH!

A village mother covers her child's eyes and shuffle past
BAXTER

BAXTER runs home.

BOARIS walks off.

CUT TO: CABIN

INT. CABIN - EVENING

XAVIER is at the window.

He rushes to his chair at the table.

He settles with his book and sips his tea.

DIMITRIS walks in.

XAVIER
Well?

DIMITRIS
Made a friend.

XAVIER
Oh? At the bandit camp?

DIMITRIS chuckles.

DIMITRIS
No. That boar from the other day
keeps showing up, so I named it.

XAVIER sighs.

XAVIER
What's the name?

(beat)

DIMITRIS
Boaris.

XAVIER freezes.

XAVIER
You're a special kind of special,
aren't ya?

DIMITRIS smiles.

DIMITRIS
Boaris liked it!

XAVIER
This is the tree pig, right?

DIMITRIS
Yeah!

XAVIER
How is Baxter doing?

DIMITRIS
Exactly what I need.

XAVIER
What does th-- I don't want to
know...

DIMITRIS lays down in his bed.

XAVIER (CONT'D)
because I'm not going to agree, and
then you won't listen.

DIMITRIS
Good talk, Xavier.

XAVIER
Always is, Dimitris.

FADE TO BLACK.

INT. CABIN - MORNING

XAVIER sips his tea.

DIMITRIS wakes up.

Rubs his eyes, and sees XAVIER.

DIMITRIS
Do you ever sleep, old man?

XAVIER
And miss a second of your little
adventure? Never.

DIMITRIS
I not on an adventure...

XAVIER
Hmmm...

XAVIER puts his book down.

XAVIER (CONT'D)
Two boys from a village with a pig.

DIMITRIS
Ok, wait....

XAVIER
Go to take on the Evil Bandit
Lord...

DIMITRIS
Listen...

XAVIER
And let me guess... there's a
damsel in distress?

DIMITRIS stops talking and looks away.

XAVIER (CONT'D)
Does this adventure have a planning
phase?

DIMITRIS
Ye--

XAVIER
Does everyone involved know?

DIMITRIS goes silent again.

XAVIER (CONT'D)
Right. So, half-baked rescue plan
that may or may not involve
challenging a Bandit Lord, because
you saw a pretty girl.

DIMITRIS
Listen, if I told Bax the plan, it
seriously won't work.

XAVIER
So you built your plan on a
variable?

DIMITRIS
A well educated variable.

XAVIER
A variable.

DIMITRIS goes quiet.

XAVIER sips his tea.

XAVIER (CONT'D)
What if it goes wrong?

DIMITRIS
It won't.

XAVIER
That's the kind of thinking that
gets friends killed, Dimitris.

DIMITRIS
Baxter will be fine, that is part
of the plan.

XAVIER stares at him.

DIMITRIS (CONT'D)
Just don't say anything.

XAVIER
It's your responsibility to say
something, not mine.

He sips his tea again.

XAVIER (CONT'D)
If a general leads his men to their
deaths, educated or not, that's not
a lesson they forget.

XAVIER looks through DIMITRIS.

XAVIER (CONT'D)
Don't learn that lesson the hard
way, Dimitris.

The room goes still.

(beat)

XAVIER (CONT'D)
Have you considered obstacles?

DIMITRIS
Like what? Discon?

XAVIER
No. Things that stop your plan mid-
execution.

DIMITRIS
Um, kill any bandits that show up?

XAVIER
Your goal is to save this girl,
right?

DIMITRIS
And secure a big bounty.

XAVIER
Focus on the girl. How did you see
her?

DIMITRIS
She's a prisoner.

XAVIER chuckles.

XAVIER
Well, I would hope she wasn't a
bandit.

DIMITRIS glares at XAVIER.

DIMITRIS
They had her dancing on a stage,
then they dragged her away.

XAVIER
Ok, where is she kept?

DIMITRIS is quiet.

XAVIER (CONT'D)
Do you plan for her cell to be
unlocked?

DIMITRIS
I...

Realization hits DIMITRIS.

DIMITRIS (CONT'D)
Won't have to! I've got it!

DIMITRIS rushes out of the house.

DIMITRIS (CONT'D)
Thanks, old man!

SLAM

XAVIER
Oh... this child...

CUT TO: WOODS

EXT. WOODS - MORNING

BAXTER is walking down the wooded path.

(beat)

Suddenly, DIMITRIS drops from a tree.

BAXTER
AHHHHHHHH!

DIMITRIS starts belly laughing.

BAXTER (CONT'D)
DON'T DO THAT!

DIMITRIS gets close to BAXTER, looking him in the face.

BAXTER (CONT'D)
What ar--

DIMITRIS
SNORT

BAXTER falls back.

BAXTER
Why am I friends with you?

DIMITRIS
Cuz otherwise your life would be boring.

BAXTER
I think you meant to say 'safe'.

SNORT

BAXTER (CONT'D)
HOLY CR--

BAXTER cuts himself off.

BOARIS is right behind him.

DIMITRIS hands BAXTER a flintlock pistol.

BAXTER looks at the gun.

BAXTER (CONT'D)
I thought you liked the p--

DIMITRIS
You hurt Boaris, we are having a
whole different conversation.

BAXTER
Then why did you give me a gun?

DIMITRIS
Hopefully, for no reason.

BAXTER
What?

DIMITRIS looks at BOARIS.

DIMITRIS
You coming with?

SNORT

BAXTER
Are you going to explain this plan
at any point?

DIMITRIS
Yeah, you're going to distract
them, I'm going to save the
prisoner, and then we all go home.

SNORT

BAXTER looks at BOARIS.

BAXTER
Don't snort like you know what's
going on.

BOARIS shakes his body.

BAXTER (CONT'D)
I didn't hear anything about him,
so I know you're leaving something
out.

DIMITRIS
Ah, that's where the plan gets
good...

(beat)

BAXTER is waiting for an explanation.

DIMITRIS (CONT'D)
What?

BAXTER
Why does it get good?

DIMITRIS
Spoilers.

BAXTER
What does that mean?!

DIMITRIS
It means when it's time for your
part, you'll know.

BAXTER
You hand me a gun and say 'you'll
know'?!
SNORT

BAXTER (CONT'D)
Don't back him up!

DIMITRIS
Look at you, already friends with
him, what a turn around!

BAXTER
That is NOT what this is.

DIMITRIS begins walking towards the market.

DIMITRIS
Yet you're sitting there talking to
him!

BAXTER looks at BOARIS.

BAXTER
We are not friends...

SNORT

BAXTER (CONT'D)
I don't know if I should be
concerned...

(beat)

BOARIS follows DIMITRIS.

BAXTER watches them.

Then scurries after them.

CUT TO: EDGE OF VILLAGE

EXT. VILLAGE ENTRANCE - NOON

The boys are leaving the village.

BAXTER

Can you please tell me why I have a gun?

SNORT

DIMITRIS

What he said.

BAXTER

Dude...

DIMITRIS

Alright, you're going to cause a distraction.

BAXTER

What? How?

DIMITRIS

I've got that handled.

BAXTER

I'm lost...

DIMITRIS

Good. That's how I know it'll work.

BAXTER

So, me NOT knowing is how the plan works?

DIMITRIS

Yeah, it'll happen while she's dancing, the guards will run towards you, you run home.

BAXTER

My part is running away?

DIMITRIS

Yep. I'll handle the rest.

BAXTER

I mean...

DIMITRIS
Do you want involved more?

BAXTER
NO NO NO NO! Not at all, I don't
think YOU should be involved.

DIMITRIS
Then yeah, you just need to run
home.

BAXTER
When?

DIMITRIS
Oh, you'll know.

BAXTER
So why the gun?

DIMITRIS
In case anything goes wrong.

BAXTER
You've thought something through?

DIMITRIS
Listen... I'm just trying to cover
bases. I'll be inside the camp, I
won't be able to be there. Once you
give me the signal, run.

BAXTER
The one you're going to cause?

DIMITRIS
Yes. Boaris you get what I'm
saying, right?

SNORT

BAXTER
That's not confirmation.

DIMITRIS
Close enough.

CUT TO: BALANCIA HIGHWAY

EXT. HIGHWAY - NOON

They reach where the merchant died.

BOARIS goes up to the spot and sits.

DIMITRIS also looks in that direction. Solemnly.

BAXTER
How does he know?

DIMITRIS
I don't know, maybe he saw it.

BAXTER
Ya know, I still haven't ruled out
that he's working for Discon.

DIMITRIS
Yeah Bax, the bandit lord employed
a wild boar.

BAXTER
Didn't you?

(beat)

DIMITRIS
Fair... but still, I highly doubt
it.

BAXTER
But you still don't KNOW.

DIMITRIS
If that was what's going on, it'd
be crazy.

BAXTER
The pig. Was in. A tree!

(beat)

DIMITRIS
Ya know, I don't like the
implications you're implying.

BOARIS turns to BAXTER.

SNORT

DIMITRIS (CONT'D)
I agree.

BAXTER
To what?!

DIMITRIS
SNORT indeed.

BAXTER
Can we do the life-threatening plan
now?

DIMITRIS grows a smile on his face.

He turns to BAXTER

DIMITRIS
That's what I like to hear! 'K, you
remember where we were last time?

BAXTER
Yeah, that overlook.

DIMITRIS
Yeah, I need you on the opposite
side of the camp.

BAXTER
Yeah, that makes sense...

DIMITRIS
Don't think about the signal, it'll
happen. Once it does, run.

BAXTER
Yeah, I get that part.

DIMITRIS
Bax, I'm serious, you don't stop
until you're in your room.

BAXTER
Ok! Geez, what's with you?

DIMITRIS
Just... something Xavier said...

(beat)

DIMITRIS (CONT'D)
It's not important. Just stick to
that plan and we will get this girl
out of there.

BAXTER nods and walks away.

BAXTER
'Stick to the plan' he says...
what's the plan, Dimitris? 'oh I
can't te--

As he fades into the trees.

DIMITRIS
Right... Boaris, you ready?

BOARIS looks up at him.

SNORT

DIMITRIS (CONT'D)
Good, let's get ready.

CUT TO: BANDIT CAMP

EXT. BANDIT CAMP/WOODS - AFTERNOON

DIMITRIS crawls onto the rocks, looking over the camp.

DIMITRIS
Crap... how many guards were there?

He counts them.

DIMITRIS (CONT'D)
10... that sounds right.

The girl is brought out to the stage.

DIMITRIS (CONT'D)
Boaris, there she is.

SNORT

DIMITRIS (CONT'D)
Alright, go find Baxter and scare
him, do the tree thing again, he
screams every time.

SNORT

BOARIS heads into the woods.

DIMITRIS gets closer the the camp.

EXT. BANDIT CAMP - EVENING

DIMITRIS huddles near the log wall.

He starts walking along the wall.

A small break between some of the logs.

DIMITRIS bunkers down in tall grass.

Primed and ready to launch.

(beat)

(beat)

(beat)

Very faintly;

-snort-

In the distance;

BAXTER
AHHHHHHHHHH!

DIMITRIS
Perfect.

He chuckles to himself.

DIMITRIS (CONT'D)
Now run home.

He gets up and peeks through the hole.

One bandit.

Another.

Two more.

They are all running towards BAXTER's scream.

(beat)

(beat)

DIMITRIS enters the camp.

Sneaking through, sliding against walls and tents.

He finally reaches the center, where he saw the girl.

EXT. BANDIT CAMP CENTER - EVENING

DIMITRIS peeks around a tent.

There is one bandit watching the girl continue to dance.

A red-headed young woman, dancing.

Her eyes catch DIMITRIS.

She continues to dance.

DIMITRIS looks around.

A pile of firewood lays near the tent.

DIMITRIS grabs a piece and slowly approaches the bandit.

The girl is doing her best to not draw attention.

DIMITRIS moves as quietly as possible.

The bandit notices the girl's attention.

He starts to turn around.

CRACK

DIMITRIS smacks the bandit square on the temple with the firewood.

The bandit collapses to the ground.

GIRL

What the bloody hell are you doing?

DIMITRIS

Helping you.

GIRL

Oh, well pardon me fair knight.
Here I thought you were some daft
twat stumbling through a bandit
camp. Glad to know you're a daft
twat focused on a girl!

DIMITRIS is visibly confused.

DIMITRIS

Do you want me to save you or not?

GIRL

I don't need savin'.

DIMITRIS

Really?

Her chains seem to fall off.

GIRL

I just needed an opportunity.

DIMITRIS

That was cool.

GIRL

Oh for the love of-- go!

They both head to where DIMITRIS entered the camp.

CUT TO: VILLAGE ENTRANCE

EXT. VILLAGE ENTRANCE - NIGHT

DIMITRIS and the girl reach the village.

They are both out of breath.

She falls to the ground laughing.

DIMITRIS looks at her, confused.

GIRL

So, what was that scre--

DIMITRIS

BAXTER!!

DIMITRIS runs through the village.

GIRL

Hmm...

She gets up and brushes herself off.

She walks after him.

The walking slowly turns into dancing.

From the dancing, laughter.

Her first free smile in a long time.

CUT TO: BAXTER'S HOUSE

EXT. BAXTER'S HOUSE - NIGHT

DIMITRIS runs up to BAXTER's window.

DIMITRIS
Bax! You in there?

(beat)

(beat)

DIMITRIS is getting antsy.

The curtains separate.

BAXTER (O.S.)
I-i-is the pig still out there?

DIMITRIS gives a massive sigh of relief.

He looks around.

DIMITRIS
No, boaris isn't here.

BAXTER (O.S.)
I really don't like that you named
it.

DIMITRIS
Well, maybe you'll feel better
about it in the morning.

BAXTER (O.S.)
Did you get the girl out?

DIMITRIS
Yeah, everything went well enough.

BAXTER (O.S.)
Enough?

DIMITRIS
One bandit stayed back.

BAXTER (O.S.)
Did you shoot him?

DIMITRIS
Firewood.

(beat)

BAXTER (O.S.)
What?

DIMITRIS
I hit him with firewood.

BAXTER (O.S.)
Ya know what, maybe I'll feel
better about things in the morning.

DIMITRIS laughs.

DIMITRIS
Alright bud. And hey...

BAXTER (O.S.)
Yeah?

DIMITRIS
I'm glad you got home. Thanks for
helping.

(beat)

BAXTER (O.S.)
No problem, D.

DIMITRIS heads home.

CUT TO: CABIN

INT. CABIN - NIGHT

XAVIER is pacing.

He checks the window.

Continues to pace.

Checks the window.

(beat)

He rushes to the table.

Settles into his book.

Sips his tea.

(beat)

(beat)

The cabin door opens.

DIMITRIS enters quietly.

He sees XAVIER at the table.

DIMITRIS
What are you doing up?

XAVIER
Do you have any idea what time it
is?

(beat)

DIMITRIS processes the question.

DIMITRIS
Night? That's how you welcome me
back?

XAVIER
Honestly, what you did today was
idiotic...

DIMITRIS walks to his bed.

XAVIER (CONT'D)
But I can't deny that you came
home.

A smile crawls over DIMITRIS' face.

DIMITRIS
Is that the 'wise' way of saying
'your plan worked, I was wrong'?

XAVIER
That's me saying you did something
dumb and you got lucky it worked.

DIMITRIS
Yeah, that sounds about the same.
Night, Xavier.

XAVIER
Goodnight, Dimitris.

FADE TO BLACK.

EXT. WOODS - EARLY MORNING

BOARIS trots up a path.

He stops at a tree.

(beat)

SNORT

(beat)

SNORT

(beat)

BOARIS rams the tree,

BOOM

The tree shakes violently.

BOARIS looks up at the branches.

(beat)

The red-headed girl pokes her head through the leaves.

GIRL

Oi! I'm trying to sleep, ya beast.

SNORT

She disappears back into the tree.

(beat)

BOARIS shakes.

SNORT.

(beat)

POP

BOARIS vanishes.

The girl is trying to sleep on a branch, leaned against the trunk.

(beat)

SNORT

She opens her eyes.

BOARIS has joined her on the branch.

They make eye contact.

(beat)

(beat)

SNORT

(beat)

GIRL (CONT'D)
How did you...

SNORT

GIRL (CONT'D)
Yeah a'ight. Starting the day
questioning a pig... ya lost yer
head Pugs...

She jumps out of the tree.

THUMP

She lands solidly.

GIRL (CONT'D)
Now get down beast!

SNORT

BOARIS walks out from behind the tree.

They make eye contact.

(beat)

She laughs hardily.

PUGS
Well, yer just a tad special, ain't
ya?

SNORT

PUGS (CONT'D)
I'm Pugs.

SNORT

SHAKE

PUGS (CONT'D)
Well, I don't think that's yer
name. Wanna go get in some trouble?

SNORT!

PUGS laughs.

PUGS (CONT'D)
Let's go then beast.

They walk off toward the village.

PUGS (CONT'D)
You wouldn't happen to know the
blockheads, do ya?

SNORT

PUGS (CONT'D)
Interesting...

CUT TO: BAXTER'S HOUSE

INT. BAXTER'S HOUSE - MORNING

BAXTER is sound asleep.

PUGS (O.S.)
Which one of 'em lives here beast?

BAXTER's eyes shoot open.

He rushes out of bed, over to the window.

He flings open the curtains.

PUGS is outside with BOARIS.

BAXTER
No... no, no, no...

He heads outside.

EXT. BAXTER'S HOUSE - MORNING

BAXTER exits his house and rushes to where he saw them.

(beat)

Nothing but trees.

SNORT BOARIS SNORT PUGS

(beat)

 BAXTER
 Oh dear god...

He looks up.

BOARIS and PUGS are looking down at him.

(beat)

 BAXTER (CONT'D)
 Please don't jump...

PUGS smiles.

Her and BOARIS disappear into the tree.

(beat)

 BAXTER (CONT'D)
 Why is that worse?!

THUMP

PUGS pokes out around the base of the tree.

 PUGS
 Ya really got a problem with the
 beast, huh?

 BAXTER
 No! It's got a problem with me.

From behind BAXTER;

SNORT

 BAXTER (CONT'D)
 AHHHHHHHHH!

PUGS covers her ears.

 PUGS
 Oi! Ya scream like a lass!

(beat)

 PUGS (CONT'D)
 Yer the forest screamer!

(beat)

BAXTER covers his face.

BAXTER
Is that really my reputation?

PUGS
Is now!

BAXTER attempts to adjust to his new reality.

PUGS (CONT'D)
So, where's the dumb one?

BAXTER
What?

PUGS
Yer friend I'd guess.

(beat)

BAXTER
Oh! Dimitris?

PUGS
Dimitris? Dumb name.

BAXTER laughs.

BAXTER
Oh... you wanna meet him?

SNORT

PUGS
Aye, what the beast said.

BAXTER
Don't... Don't do that...

PUGS
What? Jealous of our connection?

BAXTER
None of what you just said is
what's happening.

PUGS looks at BOARIS.

PUGS
Oi, he's a bit thick ain't he?

SNORT

BAXTER looks at BOARIS.

BAXTER
Don't agree with he-- Oh god no...

PUGS laughs.

PUGS
See, you talk to him too!

BAXTER
I wish I didn't...

PUGS laughs again.

PUGS
What's yer name, forest.

BAXTER
Baxter. What's your name?

PUGS
Pugs.

BAXTER
What? What kind of name is that?

PUGS
Oi! It's my name, ya blockhead!

She pops him in the shoulder.

BAXTER
Ow! Sorry! I didn't mean it like that!

(beat)

PUGS
Good. 'Cause 'Baxter' is just as weird.

BAXTER
What? No it's --

She raises her eyebrows at him, with crossed arms.

BAXTER (CONT'D)
Fine, we both have weird names.

(beat)

PUGS laughs.

PUGS
Come on, let's find the daft one.

BAXTER
Yeah, I'll take you to Xavier's.

PUGS
Who's Xavier?

BAXTER
Well, about 7 year ago--

CUT TO: CABIN

INT. CABIN - MORNING

DIMITRIS wakes up.

XAVIER sits at the table with his book and tea.

DIMITRIS gives a solid stretch.

DIMITRIS
Rrrrrggggghhhhh-ah!

XAVIER
Sleep well?

DIMITRIS
Oh, yeah.

He jumps up out of bed.

XAVIER
Well, since you're so energized,
maybe you'd be in a mood to share
last night's events?

DIMITRIS moves to sit at the table.

DIMITRIS
The plan worked perfectly!

XAVIER
Good.

DIMITRIS
Good?

XAVIER
You're alive, and that's good.

DIMITRIS

Oh...

DIMITRIS looks at the table.

XAVIER

But do not underestimate what cou--

DIMITRIS

I know... I worried about Bax the whole time, but he made it home more scared of Boaris.

XAVIER

Well, I guess that was a good sign.

(beat)

XAVIER (CONT'D)

And the girl?

DIMITRIS looks up at XAVIER.

DIMITRIS

Oh! I don't know, I ran off to Baxter's when we made it to the village.

XAVIER's eyebrows launch above his tea cup.

XAVIER

Really?

DIMITRIS

Yeah, so I'm not sure where she went. But she's free.

XAVIER

Good...

(beat)

XAVIER (CONT'D)

So, what's the next grand adventure?

(beat)

(beat)

DIMITRIS

There's still that bou--

XAVIER
DIMITRIS!

DIMITRIS
What?! It's a lot of money!

XAVIER
Whereas that is factual, it doesn't
make your decision logical.

The room goes silent.

(beat)

DIMITRIS
I need a few days anyway.

From outside BAXTER is heard.

BAXTER (O.S.)
DIMITRIS!

DIMITRIS
Save one girl, and everyone yells
at you...

From outside PUGS chimes in.

PUGS (O.S.)
OI! DAFT TWAT!

XAVIER chokes on his tea.

He looks at DIMITRIS.

XAVIER
My friend, you saved a problem.

DIMITRIS
What do you mean?

DIMITRIS gets up to go outside.

XAVIER
A good problem, but a problem.
You'll learn this lesson at your
own speed.

DIMITRIS exits the cabin.

XAVIER chuckles to himself.

EXT. CABIN - MORNING

BAXTER, PUGS, and BOARIS are waiting.

PUGS has her arms crossed with her weight on one hip.

BOARIS is rolling in dirt.

DIMITRIS comes outside.

DIMITRIS
Hey!

BAXTER
Boaris found a friend.

BOARIS stands, shakes, and--

SNORT

DIMITRIS laughs.

DIMITRIS
That's awesome.

BAXTER
Debatable.

PUGS
Oi! I'll 'ave you know, I'm a
treat!

BAXTER looks at DIMITRIS.

DIMITRIS
I'm Dimitris.

PUGS
No, you're daft.

DIMITRIS is stunned.

PUGS (CONT'D)
Who the bloody hell sees someone in
a bandit camp and goes 'aye, I'll
save the wee lass'?

DIMITRIS
I just thought...

PUGS
No you didn't. You're a daft twat,
you don't think.
(MORE)

PUGS (CONT'D)
For lord's sake, you smacked a
bandit in the head with a piece of
wood!

BAXTER
What?

DIMITRIS
It worked didn't it?

PUGS
It shouldn't 'ave.

(beat)

PUGS (CONT'D)
You may be thick... but thanks.

Life returns to DIMITRIS' face.

DIMITRIS
No problem.

She glares at him through her eyebrows.

DIMITRIS (CONT'D)
I mean... you're welcome.

She approaches him.

She stops within arm's reach.

(beat)

She sticks her hand out.

PUGS
Pugs.

DIMITRIS
W--

BAXTER is behind her signaling very hard to shut up.

DIMITRIS (CONT'D)
Good to meet ya.

Xavier steps outside.

XAVIER
I believe I heard you say your name
is Pugs?

PUGS

Yep.

XAVIER

It's nice to meet you, Pugs. I'm Xavier, caretaker of the 'daft twat'.

PUGS laughs.

PUGS

I like you!

DIMITRIS

That's cuz he's not trying to mentor you.

XAVIER

The difference is, she doesn't need mentored.

PUGS

He gets it! You probably told him that was a stupid idea, didn't ya?

XAVIER looks away.

DIMITRIS

Go on, tell her how your 'mentorship' helped me figure out my plan.

PUGS

You helped him!

XAVIER

I didn't mean to!

PUGS

Lord help me, you're all daft, just different flavors...

(beat)

XAVIER

I won't argue with you on that, young lady. However, if you don't have any serious adventures planned, would you all mind doing some hunting for me?

The trio share nods.

PUGS starts walking to the woods, BOARIS in tow.

PUGS
I'll bring them home at a decent
time!

The boys look at each other.

XAVIER
You two saved a good kind of
problem.

He laughs as he goes back into the cabin.

They boys hurry off to the woods.

CUT TO: WOODS

EXT. WOODS - NOON

The trio walk through the woods, BOARIS running around
nearby.

DIMITRIS
So, what's your story, Pugs?

PUGS
What do ya mean?

DIMITRIS
Why were you at that bandit camp.

PUGS
It's not like I was on vacation.

DIMITRIS
I mean, where were you before that?

PUGS stops.

Then the boys stop.

PUGS
Nowhere important.

(beat)

BAXTER
Well that's not ominous.

PUGS
It wasn't meant to be explanatory.

(beat)

BAXTER

Fair...

DIMITRIS chuckles.

PUGS

Just forget it, I had a rough past
and I don't like thinking about it.
That's all.

DIMITRIS

I get that.

PUGS

No--

She remembers what BAXTER told her.

PUGS (CONT'D)

Aye. I suppose so.

BAXTER

So, 'Pugs' isn't your real name?

PUGS

It's the only name that matters.

DIMITRIS

How about we find some deer.

PUGS

Aye! That's what we're here to do!

She starts dancing through the grass.

The boys let her go ahead slightly.

BAXTER

She's kind of weird.

DIMITRIS

I like her attitude.

SNORT

BAXTER

Oh my-- stop doing that!

BOARIS runs off, following PUGS.

BAXTER (CONT'D)

What is with that pig?

DIMITRIS
His name is Boaris, human.

(beat)

BAXTER
Fine... What's the deal with
Boaris.

DIMITRIS
Oh, he's a pig.

(beat)

Up ahead, PUGS crouches suddenly.

BOARIS stops.

The boys notice then stop.

(beat)

PUGS slowly moves forward, staying crouched.

She climbs a tree and disappears into the leaves.

With the wind, there's no way to see her.

BAXTER
What is she doing?

DIMITRIS
I have no idea...

(beat)

Suddenly, a deer jumps towards the boys from brush.

Around it's neck is PUGS, squeezing with her arms.

DIMITRIS is laughing.

BAXTER is confused.

The deer drops at the boys' feet.

PUGS sticks the deer with her knife.

DIMITRIS (CONT'D)
Ya know, we brought a rifle.

PUGS
And you have the same amount of
bullets, don'tcha?

DIMITRIS
Yeah...

PUGS
Plus one deer.

She stands up.

She smiles ear to ear.

(beat)

PUGS (CONT'D)
Well, I hunted it, you boys carry
it back.

BAXTER
What?

DIMITRIS
Come on.

DIMITRIS motions for BAXTER to help him carry the deer.

PUGS skips off back to XAVIER's.

BAXTER
She's weird.

DIMITRIS
I like her attitude.

CUT TO: VILLAGE ENTRANCE

EXT. VILLAGE ENTRANCE - AFTERNOON

THUMP

THUMP

THUMP

A hulking man walks into the village.

Some villagers run.

Some hide.

Some shut their stores.

He picks up a trade wagon.

He throws it across the market square.

A scarred face with a white eye.

(beat)

THUMP

THUMP

He crosses the square to the wagon.

He sits down on it.

(beat)

DISCON
I'd like to file a report...

CUT TO: CABIN

INT. CABIN - AFTERNOON

XAVIER sits at the table with his tea.

(beat)

The door swings open.

PUGS walks in.

Then BOARIS.

XAVIER looks at BOARIS.

(beat)

BOARIS sits next to PUGS.

XAVIER sips his tea.

DIMITRIS and BAXTER enter the cabin.

DIMITRIS
One deer... outside...

DIMITRIS and BAXTER are catching their breath.

XAVIER
What, did you run after the deer?

DIMITRIS
No... she...

DIMITRIS points at PUGS' general direction.

PUGS
I jumped on it and made them carry
it.

(beat)

XAVIER starts laughing.

XAVIER
I like you child, you make them
work.

PUGS
Aye, just making sure everyone does
their fair share.

BAXTER slumps to the floor.

He looks at BOARIS.

BAXTER
Couldn't you have helped?

SNORT

BAXTER (CONT'D)
Yeah... I thought you'd say that...

XAVIER
Accepted the pig, Baxter?

BAXTER
No... just stopped expecting
reason.

XAVIER laughs.

DIMITRIS laughs through his exhaustion.

XAVIER
Oh! Could you kids head down to the
market and get me some more tea.

XAVIER puts some gold on the table.

He slides it to PUGS.

PUGS
Not a problem!

She heads towards the door.

PUGS (CONT'D)
Come on boys!

DIMITRIS and BAXTER sigh and grumble.

PUGS (CONT'D)

Would you like to file a report?

DIMITRIS

No...

BAXTER

No . . .

PUGS

Right, let's go!

PUGS exits the cabin, gold in hand, BOARIS in tow.

The boys pick themselves up.

BAXTER

Why does Boaris like her so much?

XAVIER

You sound jealous.

BAXTER

No, I'm confused.

DIMITRIS

Why do you keep asking questions?

BAXTER

I don't know anymore...

Then walk out the door.

XAVIER laughs.

CUT TO: MARKET SQUARE

EXT. MARKET SQUARE - AFTERNOON

PUGS is ahead of the boys.

She is skipping and dancing through the streets.

BAXTER

Why is she always so happy?

DIMITRIS

Because she wasn't happy as a prisoner.

(beat)

BAXTER
That's fair. I still don't get
Boaris...

DIMITRIS
Just let Boaris be Boaris.

PUGS reaches the corner to the market square.

She turns.

Stops.

BAXTER
What?

(beat)

DIMITRIS rushes up to PUGS.

DISCON sits, patiently.

DISCON
THERE SHE IS!!

DIMITRIS PUGS
Discon... Ah... fuck...

BAXTER catches up.

BAXTER
THAT'S NOT A BANDIT! THAT'S A
MOUNTAIN!

DISCON
Now, that's a fine hello.

PUGS
Aye! I'll give ya 'a fine hello' ya
gobshite.

PUGS starts approaching DISCON, determination in every step.

DISCON is smiling.

BAXTER
Dimitris do something!

DISCON's smile fades immediately.

DISCON
Dimitris?

PUGS reaches DISCON.

She starts hitting him.

DISCON swats her like a fly.

PUGS slides across the market square.

DISCON stands and walks to DIMITRIS.

PUGS

Oi! I'm not done with you Father!

BAXTER

WHAT?!

DISCON

Quite child. The adults need to talk.

PUGS

I'm older than he is!

DISCON

That may be true, daughter, but his story is older than even myself.

DIMITRIS

What?

DISCON

Oh-ho, yes Prince Dimitris. I worked for your father.

(beat)

BAXTER

WHAT?!

DIMITRIS

Stop, Bax.

He turns to DISCON.

DIMITRIS (CONT'D)

Forgetting my past for a second, why are you here?

DISCON

Ha-ha! A man of action! No time for prophecy when there's a damsel to sa-- You stole my daughter.

DIMITRIS

I rescued your chained prisoner.

DISCON
Who are you to question my
parenting?

DIMITRIS
A normal person!

DISCON
I feel like the word 'normal' is
pretty subjective.

BAXTER
NO! Chaining up your daughter is
NOT normal...

DISCON turns to BAXTER.

BAXTER (CONT'D)
Mr. Mountain...

DISCON turns to PUGS

(beat)

He turns back to the boys.

DISCON
Have you seen this firecracker? I
did what I had to to keep her safe
from herself.

DIMITRIS
That's not how a father should act.

DISCON
Oh! The orphan wants to give me
parenting advice?

DIMITRIS
I... just...

DISCON
Listen boy, and listen well. You
are needed in Balancia. Ursa is
tearing apart the city for his own
gains.

DIMITRIS
What does that have to do with me?

DISCON
There are people who wish to put
you back on the throne.

DIMITRIS
I don't want a throne!

DISCON
Well, destiny already has plans for
you... but you know that don't you.

(beat)

DIMITRIS
Yes.

BAXTER
What?

DIMITRIS
A man, removed from his home will
determine the Kingdom's future
through freedom or destruction.

DISCON
Yes, child. You are that man.

(beat)

BAXTER
WHAT?! YOU KNEW!?

DISCON turns to BAXTER.

DISCON
You like questions, don't ya?

BAXTER
Yes, Mr. Mountain. Sorry.

DISCON laughs.

DIMITRIS
There's still the matter of your
bounty. I could use that kind of
money.

DISCON
Money? HA! I'll just give you
money, how much is required?

DIMITRIS
The bounty is 100,000 gold pieces.

DISCON
Woah... Ursa really doesn't like me
does he?

BAXTER
Sir, you're a bandit lord.

DISCON
But why, question boy?

(beat)

DISCON (CONT'D)
Take this money--

He drops a sack of gold coins.

DISCON (CONT'D)
And my daughter, and go to
Balancia. Look for The Old Guard.
They will help you.

DIMITRIS
Why should I listen to you?

DISCON
Because I could kill you right
now... Instead I'm giving you
directions and money.

(beat)

DIMITRIS looks at the gold.

Then back at DISCON.

DIMITRIS
This will get me to the--

DISCON
Yes. Find The Old Guard, they will
help you on your mission.

They stare at each other.

PUGS
So, just like that I'm 'allowed' to
go?

DISCON gets and thumps his way to PUGS.

DISCON
Sera, if that boy doesn't make it
to the throne, you won't see the
next day.

(beat)

The market is silent.

DISCON raises.

DISCON (CONT'D)
Go prepare boys, and sera, the road
ahead will not be easy.

He starts walking out of the village.

DISCON (CONT'D)
Consider my report rescinded.

BAXTER
What... WHAT?! What just happened?

DIMITRIS
A lot...

(beat)

DIMITRIS and BAXTER rush over to PUGS.

DIMITRIS (CONT'D)
You ok?

PUGS
Yeah...

BAXTER
YOUR DAD IS DISCON?!

PUGS
See why I don't like talking about
it?

BAXTER
Yeah... let's head back to Xavier.

DIMITRIS
Yeah...

PUGS walks up to a stall.

The merchant is hiding behind the stall.

PUGS grabs a bag of tea.

PUGS
Do ya mind?

MERCHANT
O-o-of course...

PUGS
Appreciate it...

They leave the market as villagers start cleaning up the destruction.

CUT TO: CABIN

INT. CABIN - EVENING

XAVIER sits at the table sipping his tea.

The door opens.

PUGS walks in.

She puts XAVIER's tea and gold down on the table.

XAVIER
Thank you chi--

He sees the mark on her face.

A hand print the size of her face.

XAVIER (CONT'D)
What the hell happened?!

PUGS turns away.

DIMITRIS and BAXTER walk in.

XAVIER (CONT'D)
Explain!

DIMITRIS
Discon was in the market. He was
looking for her.

XAVIER lowers into his chair.

XAVIER
What happened? What did he say?

(beat)

BAXTER
He's known the prophecy the entire
time.

XAVIER looks at DIMITRIS.

(beat)

XAVIER
Right... I should've known as much.

(beat)

XAVIER (CONT'D)
So what are you going to do,
Dimitris?

DIMITRIS
We're going to Balancia.

XAVIER
I was concerned about that...

BAXTER
But we're going with him to keep
him safe!

XAVIER
He might not be the one needing
protecting.

DIMITRIS
I'm going to free the kingdom.

XAVIER
Not today, you're not.

DIMITRIS
Xavier! I--

XAVIER
It's time to sleep. We will head
out in the morning...

He turns to BAXTER and PUGS.

XAVIER (CONT'D)
You two are welcome to stay
tonight.

BAXTER
Thanks, but I should tell my
parents.

XAVIER
Fair point. Pugs?

PUGS is slumped against the wall, sleeping.

XAVIER laughs.

XAVIER (CONT'D)
Everyone follow her lead. Get rest.

BAXTER
See you in the morning...

DIMITRIS
Yeah, see ya...

BAXTER leaves.

(beat)

XAVIER
How long did you know?

DIMITRIS
I was awake that night.

(beat)

Realization washes over XAVIER.

Then he laughs.

XAVIER
I really read the bloody thing
straight to you?

DIMITRIS
Yep.

XAVIER is in stitches from laughing.

DIMITRIS chuckles.

DIMITRIS (CONT'D)
What can you actually tell me?

(beat)

XAVIER
What exactly are you asking?

DIMITRIS
Who brought me here?

XAVIER
I didn't recognized him, but a
member of the old resistance.

DIMITRIS
Why bring me here?

XAVIER

I've been asking the same thing for years.

(beat)

DIMITRIS

Why did you take care of the old king's son?

(beat)

XAVIER

At that point you were just a child. Your lineage hadn't defined you.

(beat)

DIMITRIS

Are you coming with us?

XAVIER

Why?

DIMITRIS

I--

(beat)

DIMITRIS (CONT'D)

What if I don't find my father?

XAVIER

Now is not the time to spiral. Rest, your answers will come. I know that much.

DIMITRIS

How?

XAVIER

You've never stopped because you didn't know something.

A smile grows on XAVIER.

XAVIER (CONT'D)

I don't see this ending any other way.

DIMITRIS chuckles.

DIMITRIS
Alright... sleep it is.

XAVIER
Goodnight, Dimitris.

DIMITRIS
Goodnight, Xavier.

FADE TO BLACK.