

The 13th Warrior: The Series
Episode 101: Pilot

Eaters of the Dead Created by Michael Crichton

Written by

Travis Olson

~~Copyright (c) 2024~~

First Draft

www.travisolsonwriter.com

EXT. FARMSTEAD- NIGHT

Three small cottages are tucked in a clearing; a small, wooded lot is nearby with a sight line of the river, quaint planted fields are adjacent. There is a pen for animals. Trampled over grass can be seen as a makeshift road.

EXT. FADLAN'S HOME- NIGHT

The door opens revealing Ibn Fadlan, he looks to the sky before he closes the door and begins walking toward the river. As he walks past the nearest cottage, 16-year-old Bul-Ezana rises up to the window frame and watches Ibn Fadlan as he walks away. Bul-Ezana yawns mightily and walks out of sight from the window, a beat later, and he is walking outside along the cottage.

Bul-Ezana walks to the edge of the farmstead and begins urinating. He looks about, sleep weary. Finished, he returns to the cottage and stops. His weariness leaves him instantly as he looks outward.

INT. EDGTHO'S COTTAGE- NIGHT

Edgtho is asleep in bed beside Sofya, 40's, Axumite. Bul-Ezana rushes in with a clatter and reaches for Edgtho but Edgtho grabs the hand before it touches him; Edgtho's eyes have opened in alert, his muscle memory has grabbed the hand but as soon as he sees it is his son, his eyes soften before they become inquisitive.

Sofya has yawned mightily and is watching the exchange.

BUL-EZANA
Father! The bear men have come!

Edgtho takes a second, his eyes go hard. Sofya takes more interest.

EDGTHO
Get Weath. Go.

Bul-Ezana rushes away as Edgtho rises from bed, he reaches under it and pulls a sheathed sword; Sofya sits up suddenly.

SOFYA
Edgtho?

Edgtho gives her a stern look, then tries to force a reassuring smile before he leaves the room.

EXT. EDGTHO'S COTTAGE- NIGHT

Edgtho walks through the open door with the sword still sheathed. He looks directly ahead, intended for battle, his hand closes around the hilt while his other pulls the sheath away.

Three figures wearing bearskin cloaks stand on the trampled over road leading to the farmstead; their faces obscured with the bear's faces for hoods. They don't move to attack but watch Edgtho, the cottage door of Weath's opens.

Weath rushes out with a sword, Bul-Ezana behind him. Weath stops suddenly as he sees the figures. He looks to Edgtho's serious composure, a smile creeps upon his. Edgtho's eyes never leave his adversaries.

WEATH

Looks like it'll be Valhalla after all?

(Looks about)

Where's Ahmed?

BUL-EZANA

Praying.

Weath looks back to Bul-Ezana, gives him a nod that says run away, Bul-Ezana hesitates but then rushes inside the cottage. Weath looks to Edgtho.

WEATH

It's like a reunion?

EXT. RIVER- NIGHT

The briefest sign of light caresses the hilly horizon squeezed between by the lone streaking clouds. The peaceful wide river reflects this image as it runs nearly soundlessly, a mist has formed at the far edge. A tranquil setting to be enjoyed by the man bowing on the shore.

Ibn Fadlan rises up and inhales deeply. He looks to the sky, he stares in wonder at the vastness of the heavens. He looks down to finish his prayer but sees the sand along the shore directly before him, it is writing being made by an invisible hand. The writing in the sand ceases and he stares at it, he nods to it like a patient teacher before he reaches forward.

IBN FADLAN

There is only one God and Mohammed is his...

(MORE)

IBN FADLAN (cont'd)
(Finishes the stroke
in the sand)
...Prophet.

Ibn Fadlan looks up with a smile. Buliwyf gives an approving nod as he stands before him in gleaming golden armor that illuminates the darkness. Ibn Fadlan's smile fades.

IBN FADLAN (cont'd)
But you are not really here.

Buliwyf steps toward him and kneels.

BULIWYF
I have wondered, if we will ever sup
together again.

Buliwyf's legs form into fog that pulls toward the river, his torso and head follow swiftly after, Ibn Fadlan watches as Buliwyf has become the fog and retreats on the wind away from him but then it stops and a massive wave of fog charges at him, it is nearly upon him before he even thinks to move-

Ibn Fadlan rises up and inhales deeply. Wild eyed, he scans the river but it is serene as it had been. He steadies his breathing but looks about until he has calmed. He pushes himself to his feet, he bows his head, then begins walking away from the river.

EXT. PLAIN- NIGHT

Ibn Fadlan walks through a field, small crops are rising up and there is a wooded area in the distance. He looks behind him and sees a mist forming. He continues on his way.

EXT. FARMSTEAD- NIGHT

Ibn Fadlan travels along trampled road, he sees the doors of the cottages are open and this seems unusual to him. He continues toward his cottage but alert. He can see a flickering light as he approaches.

INT. FADLAN'S COTTAGE- NIGHT

Ibn Fadlan stands in the open doorway looking inside. The flickering light is coming from a partitioned room farther in; Ibn Fadlan knows the room. He takes a deep breath, he intertwines his fingers before him and then advances with confidence. Ibn Fadlan stops at the partition briefly before he turns to face the room.

Several planks of smoothed wood have been stacked upon each other to create a canvas, upon that canvas are carved figures and words telling the chronicles of Buliwylf and the fight against the Wendol. A journaling desk with sheaths of paper is also in the room. Engrossed in viewing the canvas is a figure cloaked in a bearskin.

Ibn Fadlan lets out a startled squeal as he was not expecting the bear figure; he falls back as the figure turns to him, the bear hood looks down at him.

OLGA

That is a woman sound.

Ibn Fadlan's eyes narrow as the fearful energy is leaving upon hearing that voice and that context.

IBN FADLAN

...Olga?

The bear hood is lifted and Olga looks down at him.

OLGA

You remembered my name?

IBN FADLAN

(Compassion)

Why would I forget you...

(Outrage has caught

up with an

accusatory finger

point)

Why are you dressed as a bear!

Olga smiles at the memory returned of Ibn Fadlan.

OLGA

Herger thought it would be funny.

Ibn Fadlan hears this name.

IBN FADLAN

Herger. Herger is here?

Olga smiles.

INT. WEATH'S COTTAGE- NIGHT

A stone hearth is the centerpiece of the room, hot coals strobe illuminating their warmth. Benches with blankets and pillows align the centerpiece. Bul-Ezana sits beside Edgtho and Sofya who lean into each other, holding hands.

Weath sits beside his daughter Ragna, 14; Asma, Persian, 30's; stands behind Weath while resting her hands on his shoulders.

They are all entertained while looking to Herger, dressed in bear skin cloak with hood down, a freshly bloodied lip gets wiped periodically by the cloth in his hand.

HERGER

So for Twenty days, we ride and tell stories every night at the fire as is our ways, though we all know each other's stories, things get changed along the way, the battles get more formidable, the seas become deeper, and the women... Well, it just so happens that this day, Skeld...

(Wiggles finger disapprovingly)

Skeld doesn't believe the story. He calls us out and in so doing, he makes a comment, a disparaging comment about "Eben's" mother... Thinking that "Eben" has no clue what is being said...

Ibn Fadlan and Olga are entering the cottage. Olga stops, Ibn Fadlan steps more but stops out of sight.

HERGER (cont'd)

...And we're laughing cause Skeld is right, we are embellishing but also because we agree with Skeld... And then it happens, I will never forget it... This quiet, whisper of a voice, comes...

(Whispers)

"My mother was a pure woman..."

(Trying to remember)

"...from a noble family." And then the whisper goes away, and I see these eyes, they narrow, they are the eyes of beast ready to pounce, and he continues. "And at least, I know who my father is... You pig eating son of a whore!"

(Burst into laughter)

Ahh, I tell you Skeld was up and ready to murder "Eben" had the others not gotten there first...

(MORE)

HERGER (cont'd)

But as fast as Skeld was to anger, I was as fast to ask him how he had known our language, and in that defiant tone, he says "I listened"... As if that explained anything...

(Laughs to himself
but dies down as he
is reflective)

...I've been alive longer than I thought I would... And the long learning you get from such a life, you can see where the gods put their hands, only after of course, only then can you understand it... But they leave clues, clever gods, and that night when "Eben" spoke up... That was a hint, that this little Arab was chosen to change my life... Isn't that right, little brother?

Herger turns and looks at Ibn Fadlan; the two share the moment, saying I love you like brothers would without speaking it.

WEATH

Not to be an asshole, but I figured it out when the Angel of Death chose him.

The group erupts in laughter.

EXT. RIVER- NIGHT

The bow of a ship skimming across the water; the background scenery is where Ibn Fadlan had prayed.

INT. WEATH'S COTTAGE- NIGHT

IBN FADLAN

(Outrage)

I did not!

WEATH

You did!

Ibn Fadlan looks to Edgtho who defiantly nods "yes". Herger is enjoying the discussion.

IBN FADLAN

I would never force upon you what...

WEATH

(Interrupts)

Clearly you didn't bring back any wine cause you forgot, not that your God forbids it and that we should obey, sorry, suffer for it... So nay, Herger, we have no drink to celebrate our guests...

HERGER

(Chuckles)

What about honey?

Ibn Fadlan and Herger lock eyes. Weath and Edgtho look to each other and look to Ibn Fadlan.

EDGTHO

(Stern)

What about honey?

Ibn Fadlan looks to his three friends, his expression turns sheepish.

IBN FADLAN

I am not saying that there may be a cask...

Sounds of outrage overtake his confession. Ibn Fadlan begins to get up.

IBN FADLAN (cont'd)

Alright, alright, I will go see if, if, perhaps I have overlooked such an item.

Sofya and Asma watch as Ibn Fadlan gets up and turns to leave, they are concerned whereas no one else is.

EXT. TRAMPLED ROAD- NIGHT

Hooves of multiple horses galloping fiercely along the trampled road.

INT. FADLAN'S COTTAGE- NIGHT

Ibn Fadlan enters and walks directly for his scribe room, he stops as he sees a candle is lit, the room flickers from it. He advances normally but stops as he is seemingly trying to remember why it was still lit.

Ibn Fadlan turns, startles but not as bad as before, and sees a figure wearing a bear skin cloak, the bear hood is pulled back and the long black hair of a woman is visible. The woman is looking at the canvas.

IBN FADLAN

Who... who are you?

Dog, Arab, 20's, turns to Ibn Fadlan. She looks at him for a mere second before she hears something, something dire to her. She rushes past him and out of the cottage.

Ibn Fadlan stands speechless as the identity of the woman has come to him. Slowly he walks to his journal bench and lifts it up, consumed by thoughts, he picks up the cask and turns to leave the cottage.

EXT. FARMSTEAD- NIGHT

Ibn Fadlan exits cottage and looks to see bear cloak tossed to the ground. He looks to Weath's cottage and the door closes hard. Clutching the cask in uncertainty, he looks about the farmstead and can see figures moving in the darkness.

Nervously, he begins to walk backwards toward Weath's cottage. The sun is beginning to lighten the sky as he gets to the door, he tries to open it, but it won't budge. He gives it a knock as his sees the figures are big, carrying weapons, and approaching quicker.

He knocks harder and the door opens, he falls backward.

INT. WEATH'S COTTAGE- DAWN

Ibn Fadlan falls to the ground.

WEATH

Feet!

Ibn Fadlan lifts his legs and rolls out of the way as Weath shuts the door and begins barricading it; the room was in a flurry before Ibn Fadlan entered. Edgtho grabs his shoulders.

EDGTHO

How many?

IBN FADLAN

It was dark, maybe six?

Edgtho releases and looks to the group.

EDGTHO
Probably more... Bul.
(Gives nod)

Bul-Ezana smiles as he goes to the chest and pulls out a sword. Ibn Fadlan still holds cask as he sees Herger has disrobed the bear cloak and is wearing armor, Dog is helping tie down something on his wristguard, she is obscured from sight. Ibn Fadlan looks to Olga, also disrobed and wearing armor, more confusion but she sees him.

Ibn Fadlan makes a nod to Olga, she nods "yes". Ibn Fadlan tries a smile but then pounding on the door startles him to whirl around. Weath rushes past Ibn Fadlan to check on Asma, who is lifting floorboards with Sofya, for Ragna to hide in. Ragna sees Ibn Fadlan and rushes to another room, Asma calls to her but she doesn't stop.

Ibn Fadlan sets the cask down on the hearth edge and looks at everybody else with weapons in hand. He looks to his hands feeling embarrassed and then looks to Edgtho, who gives a disapproving look; Weath smirks at Ibn Fadlan as Ragna is approaching from behind carrying a curved sword.

Ragna taps Ibn Fadlan and he looks at her, she hands him the curved sword. Ibn Fadlan raises his hands to his face to say bless you, then takes the sword; Ragna smiles. Ragna rushes to the floorboards and gets in, Asma begins covering it; Sofya has a spear and is positioned at the windows.

Ibn Fadlan takes the sword in his hand, he likes the feel of it and gives it a slight spin. He sees the sword beside him is relatively bigger, then follows the blade to see Dog is holding it; he sees her truly for the first time. Muscular arms and wearing armor, she is bigger than him, she is a warrior.

Ibn Fadlan looks just past Dog and sees Herger smiling huge, with great pride; he points at Dog and mouths "She's yours". Ibn Fadlan gives a nod in response; the pounding on the door has turned to splintering cracks and everyone now stands ready.

The door splits first, then the foot kicks through it but gets stuck as the door hasn't fully given way yet. An arrow whizzes past Ibn Fadlan's face and impacts into the foot; great swearing of annoyance is heard as the foot tries to withdraw with more haste from the door. Ibn Fadlan looks back and sees Asma with the bow, she is drawing another arrow back.

Ibn Fadlan looks back to the door as the foot is pulled through, the next second two bodies come through the door as though the man in front was tackled from behind into the door. Four Northmen Warriors enter in a rush nearly trampling the two downed men.

The next arrow goes by but misses the target; Dog steps in front of Ibn Fadlan as a Northman comes at them with a swing. Dog clashes with the Northman's sword but he is stronger and she can only hold the parry briefly but Ibn Fadlan understands and he uses the curve of his blade to go around the parrying blade and stab into the Northman's face.

Edgtho throws a knife into his Northman as he charges forward; he has an antler-like war hammer that he uses block the Northman's reaction swing before he takes a small sword and pushes into the man's chest.

Weath stands back defending Asma as she sinks an arrow into the Northman coming toward them. Sofya is guarded by Bul-Ezana but she is stabbing and making contact with an unseen adversary through the window.

Herger shoulders into a charging Northman at an angle that trips the Northman and Olga is there to swing down with a sword; arrows from the busted door opening begin to zip through wildly and the group try to hide from the line of sight.

Weath looks to the wall and can see smoke breathing through the walls.

WEATH

Ah, you bastards... The house is on fire!

Asma sees this and begins making her way toward the floorboards where Ragna is hiding but the arrows fly through that spot; Dog sees this and grabs a Northman's body and drags it to take the arrows.

The smoke is getting thick, the door Northmen have begun crawling backward and no more attackers rush in.

Edgtho looks to Asma as she has opened the floorboards, he gives a whistle that Weath looks over. Edgtho points at the floor as he pulls an ax from a fallen Northman and throws it to Weath, Weath understands and as soon as Ragna is out, he jumps in and begins hacking further.

Herger sees what is happening and begins to roll his eyes as he begins taking off his armor; Ibn Fadlan sees this and rushes to help Olga remove her armor.

OLGA
I remember this differently...

An arrow strikes nearby; Ibn Fadlan gives a cheeky smile and works faster. Dog drags another body over for cover; Sofya and Bul-Evana are kneeling for air; Edgtho is maintaining watch on the doorway with Asma and Ragna behind him; Herger has finally dropped his armor and walks by the cask, he picks it up as Weath has broken through the floor.

Edgtho looks to Ibn Fadlan as Olga's armor has loosened enough for her to manage, he nods to him to go first. Ibn Fadlan lifts his sword and rushes to the hole. He goes in.

INT. CRAWL SPACE- DAWN

Ibn Fadlan looks about but it is very dark; he begins crawling toward an opening and sees the feet of a fallen adversary. Sofya drops down behind him, he looks and she points. He crawls in that direction and exits the crawl space.

EXT. WEATH'S COTTAGE- DAWN

Ibn Fadlan gets to his knees and readies his sword once out; he looks about but sees no one directly there except the dead Northman with a spear in his neck. Sofya crawls out until she gets to the spear, pulls it out and then backs up beside Ibn Fadlan.

IBN FADLAN
I don't see them.

Sofya puts her hand to his mouth and listens.

SOFYA
You hear that?

Ibn Fadlan listens and hears the sound of several horses approaching; Bul-Evana crawls out next. Ibn Fadlan crawls beside the cottage and looks out from the burning corner. Six Northman are facing the opposite direction of the cottage as Twelve Arabs riding horses with swords drawn are making a show power as the swarm about the Northmen.

Edgtho has arrived beside Ibn Fadlan and he looks out assessing the situation.

EDGTHO
Are they?

IBN FADLAN

I don't think so.

Edgtho moves back from the corner as Weath arrives and looks, he eyes the riders.

WEATH

Not Hanbali? I think I recognize some of them...

IBN FADLAN

Yes. But why are they here?

WEATH

Go ask them.

Weath slinks away. Ibn Fadlan watches for a beat, he glances back and sees that everyone has gotten out of the cottage. The immediate sounds of galloping whirls Ibn Fadlan back to the corner of the cottage as a mounted Arab has spotted them; another has ridden up and blocked their exit.

The Riders circle in place and stomp to keep the warriors in place. Edgtho stands ready to defend Asma and Ragna but does not intimidate the rider; Herger, Dog and Olga are prepared to fight but Sofya and Bul-Ezana try to calm them; Weath steps before them and looks to the Arab Rider he knows as Abu.

WEATH (cont'd)

(Calls out)

Abu!

The rider Abu sees Weath and the mood changes, the horse slows and Abu nods to the other Rider.

WEATH (cont'd)

(Sloppy/Arabic)

Friend. We are attacked. Will you help my family?

Abu looks to the warriors, then points for them to walk out from the cottage to the opening where the other Northmen are. Weath is uncertain about this but compliant.

WEATH (cont'd)

He wants us to go out.

HERGER

We go out there and they'll slaughter all of us.

WEATH

I know this man.

Abu is watching Herger intensely; Herger isn't hiding his reluctance. Weath looks to Herger.

WEATH (cont'd)
This is my family.

HERGER
It's my family, too!

Abu's horse lifts up and stomps. Herger stands more defiant at the stomping; Ibn Fadlan reaches for Herger's shoulder, Herger looks. Dog listens; is watching for Herger's signal.

IBN FADLAN
If it is written that it ends here...
Then I am glad it is with you...

Herger nods to Ibn Fadlan.

HERGER
Come on...
(Smiles)
Buliwyf is waiting for his friends.

Ibn Fadlan hears this. Herger leads the way as the warriors drop their weapons and move out from the cottage, followed by the Riders.

The Northmen are surrounded but have not relinquished their desire to fight; the Arabs keep their distance but know they can trample and end this battle; Ibn Fadlan walks beside Herger to keep him apprised of the situation; the warriors surround the children as they follow. Abu rides away suddenly to talk with his Captain.

Abu and the Captain talk, Ibn Fadlan and Weath listen as best they can. Herger looks to Ibn Fadlan. The Northmen eye the warriors and the Arabs now.

HERGER (cont'd)
What are they saying?

IBN FADLAN
He is saying... he knows us, that we weren't the ones who...
(Looks to Herger)
...There was a village attacked, by Northmen?

HERGER
Wasn't us.

Ibn Fadlan looks to the Captain as he is very animated in his reply to Abu; Herger deadpans as he looks to Ibn Fadlan.

HERGER (cont'd)
Well. Seems like we are free to go.

Ibn Fadlan shushes as he listens in. He watches the Northmen as they are also watching the interaction; they are confused. Ibn Fadlan gets an idea.

IBN FADLAN
(Arabic/To Captain)
Sir! Sir. I am Ahmed Ibn Fadlan. This is my home. These are guests of my home.
(Signals behind him)

Captain watches Ibn Fadlan more when he announces his name.

IBN FADLAN (cont'd)
(Arabic/Points to Northmen)
These men have attacked us. I do not know these men. If they have attacked a village as well, then you are welcome to them.

Captain rides toward Ibn Fadlan and Herger.

CAPTAIN
(Arabic)
I know of you, Ahmed Ibn Fadlan, your name does not give you the privilege you think it does...
(Leans forward)
I am charged with finding the Northmen. I see a lot of Northmen before me. I can see no difference between those behind and those beside you.

The Captain sits upright and looks to his men to give the order. Ibn Fadlan is about to speak again when-

WEATH
(Arabic)
Wait! We speak your language, they don't! We have paid the tax to live here, they have not! We are friends, they are not!

Captain smiles at Weath; a thought occurs to him.

CAPTAIN
(Arabic)
Very well. All that can ask for mercy, shall get it.

Weath and Ibn Fadlan are about to speak but the Captain waves his hand.

CAPTAIN (cont'd)
 (Arabic)
 No more words from the two of you...

Captain looks down at Herger.

CAPTAIN (cont'd)
 (Arabic)
 Mercy?

Herger looks to Ibn Fadlan; Ibn Fadlan eyes the Captain's arrogant expression and Herger understands he's on his own.

CAPTAIN (cont'd)
 (Arabic)
 ...Mercy?

HERGER
 (Winging it)
 Sho...kran?
 (Horrible
 pronunciation of
 Thank you)

Captain starts laughing, he looks to his men very amused. Ibn Fadlan looks relieved to Herger, he then sees Herger had his dagger palmed the entire time. Ibn Fadlan shakes his head "no".

CAPTAIN
 (Arabic/Joking)
 The dirty people have manners.

Some of the Arabs chuckle but they are very serious; Captain rides slowly to the Northmen and looks at one.

CAPTAIN (cont'd)
 (Arabic)
 You are the ones we are after?

Northman looks to his Northmen and then to the Captain.

NORTHMAN
 I do not know what you speak. We
 needed time and the All-Father gave
 it to us.

Captain starts laughing. Herger and Ibn Fadlan react grimly to this statement, Abu is nearby looks to Weath. Edgtho begins looking about in the distance.

WEATH
(Arabic)
Fight!

An arrow strikes Captain off his horse; several arrows begin landing all about and the farmstead becomes chaos. The Northmen rush away from the Arabs who have begun galloping about, several are struck by arrows.

Ibn Fadlan and Herger turn and try to rush the group back to the cottages for cover; Weath wants to watch out for Abu but must help his family retreat; Edgtho runs for the fields. Dog rushes to the front of the group to protect the way forward.

A Northman runs out from the beside the cottage and Dog leaps into them; she headbutts repeatedly while holding them down to the ground with her arms. Ibn Fadlan sees this, Herger smiles as they scoop her up to continue the escape.

As they pass through the smoke of the cottage, they pick up their discarded arms and look to where they will run. Weath checks on his family before he steps to Ibn Fadlan and Herger.

IBN FADLAN
The river?

WEATH
Nay, the Northmen probably have a boat.

HERGER
We'll be cut down by the archers if we go through the fields...

A loud whooshing sound erupts; Weath looks to Ibn Fadlan. Plumes of black smoke can be seen going to the sky.

HERGER (cont'd)
What is that?

SOFYA
Edgtho!

ASMA
Sofya, no!

Asma can't stop them as Sofya and Bul-Ezana rush into the open and see the fields toward the river have erupted into flames. A figure can be seen burning in the fields. Several saddled but riderless horses flee from the fire.

The remaining Northmen have found the warrior's position and are advancing; Weath pulls Ragna away and dispatches the Northman with brutality; Ibn Fadlan steps in front of Dog but Herger throws his dagger into the Northman's thigh, dropping him in mid-charge to bleed out at Olga's feet.

Sofya has turned from the blaze and sees the final Northman advancing; she lifts her spear and throws it. The Northman can see it coming and he moves aside to dodge, but this just puts him in the path of Olga's swinging ax.

Herger looks about for more before he starts walking toward the burning field; Ibn Fadlan follows. Weath checks on Asma and Ragna in the background.

HERGER

What is that?

EDGTHO (O.S.)

Greek Fire.

Edgtho is walking up from cottages; he briefly hugs Sofya and clinks Bul-Ezana's sword with his as he passes to get to Herger.

EDGTHO

We needed the cover...

Edgtho throws a "Wiglif" engraved armband in the dirt before Herger, Ibn Fadlan bends down to pick it up, he turns it in his hands.

IBN FADLAN

What is this?

EDGTHO

What have you brought to our door, Herger?

Edgtho's stern gaze never leaves Herger; Herger looks to everyone for a long beat; he then sees the burning house behind.

HERGER

You guys never came back.

EXT. RIVER- DAY

HERGER (V.O.)

You were supposed to go to the encampment and bring Prince Wulfgar back. I waited, but you guys never returned...

Dog and Olga hide in a wooded area looking down upon the river. Three Northmen push off the Viking boat to the middle of the river where a second Viking boat waits. Olga taps Dog on the shoulder to let her know she's leaving, Dog stays watching.

EXT. FIELDS- DAY

HERGER (V.O.)

And there's only so long a person can wait before they get restless, and that was even less so for me...

Edgtho stares at the smoldering, black scarred dirt where the Greek Fire burned. He turns and looks at the farmstead, raising plumes behind him block all views.

EXT. FARMSTEAD- DAY

HERGER (V.O.)

King Rothgar enjoyed my... personality, and Queen Weilew appreciated my presence, cause it made Prince Wiglif behave. Having defeated the Wendol, our little lesson paid off, he stopped trying to kill...

Weath drags the dead body of Abu; he rests him beside four other Arabs. Weath rests his hand on his head before he stands up and looks to Asma who is carrying a bowl of water to Captain, he is gravely injured and leaning against his fallen horse. She kneels before him and helps him to drink.

EXT. FADLAN'S COTTAGE- DAY

HERGER (V.O.)

He was learning how to hurt...

Herger stares at the wooden canvas, he reaches his finger to touch Buliwyf on the throne.

INT. WEATH'S COTTAGE- DAY

HERGER (V.O.)

Olga had been hiding her pregnancy but when the Queen discovered who the father was, she convinced the King to give her her freedom and a place among the nobles...

Ragna has her face covered with scarf as she avoids still burning wood and walks to find unburnt items that are salvageable.

EXT. ANIMAL PEN- DAY

HERGER (V.O.)
 She was the newest centerpiece, Hell,
 I was excited, and that... That was
 the mistake I made!

Bul-Ezana opens the broken wooden gate and the animals rush out except one, he sees a goat is dead with an arrow.

INT. EDGTHO'S COTTAGE- DAY

HERGER (V.O.)
 Wiglif made it his mission to make
 sure he was always near Olga, never
 doing anything but showing he could
 get close, he was giving me my own
 example... I nearly went mad trying
 to keep Olga safe! But the day Dog
 was born...

Sofya stands on bed and is reaching into an opening near the ceiling; she pulls out a rolled up piece of fabric and brings it to the floor. She carefully unwraps the fabric revealing and unseen object. She saddens the more she views it.

IBN FADLAN (V.O.)
 (Interrupts)
 Excuse me?

EXT. FARMSTEAD- DAWN

Behind Herger is the still burning fields, Edgtho's arms are crossed as he sternly looks at Herger. Weath holds Ragna's shoulder as Asma leans her head on his shoulder. Sofya and Bul-Ezana stand behind Edgtho looking at the fields. Dog and Olga face the farmstead for any dangers.

Ibn Fadlan's hand is raised as he looks to Herger.

IBN FADLAN
 Who is Dog?

Herger points to Dog.

IBN FADLAN (cont'd)
 You... You named my daughter Dog?

HERGER
 (Smiles)
 Yeah. Well, it was funny at the time.

Ibn Fadlan is too outraged to compute this statement; Edgtho actually snickers at this, Weath is impressed and points at Edgtho and begins laughing. Asma smiles but is tired, Ragna laughs to relieve the tension. Sofya and Bul-Ezana are stoic, a smirking Edgtho turns and looks to them and sees it; his demeanor returns and he looks to Herger.

EDGTHO
 So the Prince is after you...

HERGER
 He's not the Prince anymore, but yes,
 he is coming for Dog.

Ibn Fadlan looks to Dog and Olga; Dog points at trees near the river and Olga nods to her, they begin walking away.

HERGER (cont'd)
 We didn't mean to bring him to your home. It was just chance that at a market, we heard of an Arab living with two Northmen... I couldn't resist finding out if my friends were still alive...

Ibn Fadlan looks to Herger at this statement, he looks to Dog and Olga walking off, then back to Herger but before he can ask-

EDGTHO
 Well he's here now. We leave.

WEATH
 Where! It was a miracle we got this land...

Asma pats Weath's arm and he softens looking to her as she looks to Ragna.

WEATH (cont'd)
 ...Yeah. We leave.

Herger watches Weath and Edgtho as they turn to their families; Ibn Fadlan walks to Herger and stands beside him, also watching. A beat passes.

HERGER

Little Brother... I've fought beside those men against Greeks, Turks... the cursed Wendol...

(Spits)

I saw them kill today, like it was those days gone by, but look at them... There'll be no revelry, no celebration... and it has left me, too... My first thought is to look upon mine child...

Herger's eyes are angry; Ibn Fadlan looks to him as a murderous beat passes.

HERGER (cont'd)

...And it's all your fault.

Herger storms off; Ibn Fadlan can only watch him go.

EXT. FARMSTEAD- DAY

Captain leans against fallen horse, he looks down at his wound and then looks Ibn Fadlan holding the reins of his men's remaining horses, Edgtho is inspecting them; Olga is walking up with three Clydesdales in tow.

Herger is at field watching as Dog is returning with haste; Sofya, Bul-Ezana, and Asma have carried items to a pile and cast them aside.

Weath and Ragna, holding goblet, are approaching. Ragna places goblet beside him and gives him a smile, Captain nods to her, she rushes away to join her Asma. Captain looks to Weath.

CAPTAIN

(Arabic)

You're leaving.

WEATH

Aye.

(Arabic)

We can't take you. The Northmen will be returning and we must go. You are badly hurt. We will send for help.

Weath kneels, looks to the fallen Arabs as does Captain, returns to Captain.

WEATH (cont'd)

(Arabic)

Abu was my friend. He taught me more words than Ahmed... mostly so that I would argue with him better... He would tell me things, he once told me, that all things had been balanced, that it was already written...

(Looks to Herger)

...My people also say that our deaths have already been written... It was always something that made me think there was more to all of us... I cannot tell my friends this, but I can tell you...

CAPTAIN

(Arabic)

Why do you tell me this?

WEATH

(Arabic)

When the Northmen come. Tell them where we go. They may kill you or they may leave you as you are...

(Stands)

...I do believe that we will meet again.

EDGTHO (O.S.)

(Calls out)

Weath! We go.

Captain watches as Weath rushes to his mounted companions. He climbs up on a horse and follows the group as they leave the farmstead. The sounds of horses galloping away fades and Captain is all alone, the sounds of flies comes in and Captain looks to his wound and then to the water beside him. Captain rests his head on the horse.

Flies have increased in number, Captain's eyes are closed. A boot kicks Captain's foot and he opens his eyes to see Twelve Northmen before him, Wiglif looks down at him.

WIGLIF

(Slavic)

Where have they gone?

Captain does not understand Wiglif; Wiglif kneels and looks into the Captain's eyes. Wiglif smiles as he reaches and takes the goblet, he holds it before Captain.

WIGLIF (cont'd)

(Slavic)

Where?

Wiglif makes a rotating hand gesture above his head with his index finger extended. Captain looks at it and grimaces as he lifts his arm to point where the group had departed from. Wiglif looks to a Northman that rushes to find the trail; Wiglif returns his gaze to Captain and begins to move the goblet toward Captain.

NORTHMAN (O.S.)

(Slavic)

Yah. Trail is here.

Wiglif smiles brighter as he hears this and then pulls the goblet away, he stands and drinks the goblet fully, spilling generously down his chin. He drops the goblet before Captain as he turns away.

Captain watches as Wiglif shouts orders to the Northmen. Ten Northmen begin to follow the trail while Wiglif and the remaining Two Northmen begin walking toward the field. Captain watches as all leave him again. Captain looks to the goblet overturned on the ground and then looks to the sun. Captain leans head back and scatters flies, he closes his eyes.

Captain wakes. He is alone but the buzzing is loud and he begins to be disgusted by the smell. He tries to move and the pain is immense, so much that he passes out from the effort and collapses beside the horse.

Captain wakes as the sun is beginning to set, he makes to move but is dehydrated, tired and sweat drenched. He closes his eyes.

EXT. FARMSTEAD- NIGHT

Captain opens his eyes and sees a concerned Ragna, she is holding the goblet to his lips as there is fresh water. Weath and Bul-Ezana are rushing over with a blanket, they lay it down beside Captain and, as gently as possible, they move his body upon it; Asma holds a bow and arrow, she is keeping watch. Captain grunts loudly and Weath raises a finger to his lips to suggest silence.

Weath and Bul-Ezana lift the makeshift stretcher and begin to follow as Asma leads them and Ragna follows behind. They rush to the burnt field where Herger, Dog, Olga, Sofya, and Ibn Fadlan are waiting in a cautious battle formation with the supplies cast aside from earlier.

They gently lay Captain down, Weath nods to Bul-Ezana as he departs after Herger, Dog, Olga and Ibn Fadlan who have begun moving away.

EXT. RIVER- NIGHT

Herger and Dog look down upon the river from the wooded area. A boat is anchored near the opposite shore while one is perched on their side, three Northmen are sitting near a fire; talking loudly and drinking.

Herger and Dog back away and then face Olga, Weath, and Ibn Fadlan.

HERGER

Wiglif is anchored across the river.
Three on the shore, we take them,
take the boat and we end this
tonight.

WEATH

That's not the plan, Herger.

HERGER

We have the opportunity...

WEATH

Edgtho waits for us.

Herger is visibly annoyed, Dog reaches out and touches his shoulder, Herger softens his resolve but not his annoyance. Dog looks to Weath and nods. Ibn Fadlan watches this, Olga watches Ibn Fadlan.

WEATH (cont'd)

Quieter the better.

EXT. SHORE- NIGHT

Three Northman sit in a triangle formation, with a fire before them. Northman moves to reach down and pick up a new piece of wood, a whizzing sound past his ear is heard and perplexed the Northman looks behind him.

NORTHMAN

What was that?

As the Northman looks to his friends, he hears squelches first and then sees Herger cutting the throat of one and Weath chopping into the neck of the other but the final thing he sees is a forward leaping Dog over the fire stabbing ferociously into his chest.

Dog finishes stabbing and looks back to Herger and Weath; they are all looking at each other but are listening. A beat passes, they are successful, they begin to position the bodies. Olga and Ibn Fadlan walk up; Dog gives look at Olga, who simply shrugs.

OLGA
(Whispers)
He moved.

Dog simply snorts her retort. Weath rushes from the shore and returns with Ragna, then Asma and Sofya carrying one end of the stretcher with Bul-Ezana on the other end.

Everyone is in the boat as Dog and Herger help push it out. They clamber on board, trying to be silent, as the boat pushes away from shore with help of the oars from Weath and Ibn Fadlan; Asma and Sofya watch across the river.

EXT. RIVER- NIGHT

The fire on shore gets smaller, as quiet rows are executed. The fire fades from view, Weath and Dog are rowing. Herger is listening for a long beat but hears nothing, he steps to Weath.

HERGER
(Whispers)
How well do you know this river?

WEATH
The current will keep us...

ASMA
(Interrupts)
Quiet.

All are silent as they listen, faintly in the air, the sound of men's voices shouting in alarm. Herger looks to Weath.

HERGER
Do we ditch? Send them chasing
another false trail?

Weath looks to Captain but Sofya speaks up.

SOFYA
We stay the course. Edgtho meets us
in two days.

Weath nods to Herger. Herger sits beside Ibn Fadlan near the back, the two look at the others as they are helping to row now or watching the river.

HERGER