

The Great Colors

By

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Ain't No Sun Shinin'

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THE GREAT COLORS

A Hanging

SOUND: CRICKETS CHIRPING DURING AN OTHERWISE QUIET NIGHT. A FIREPLACE CAN BE HEARD CRACKLING IN THE BACKGROUND. THE SOUND OF A MAN WALKING WITH HEAVY BOOTS ON IS HEARD WALKING TOWARDS THE FIRE, AND THEN HE TOSSES ANOTHER LOG ON, CAUSING THE FIRE TO SHIFT AND CRACKLE ACCORDINGLY

NARRATOR

As the hollow night breeze whispered across the dusty streets of Snaggle Crick, CAPTAIN SAM, a bounty hunter, keeps a tight watch on his prisoner, as he waits for first light.

SOUND: THE PRISONER STIRS AWAKE AND JOLTS UP

PRISONER

Now just where in the hells am I?

CAPTAIN SAM

Looks to me you're in a cage.

SOUND: THE MAN IS IN PAIN AND VOCALIZES HIS DISCOMFORT

PRISONER

Did you hit me over the head?

CAPTAIN SAM

I did.

PRISONER

Why?

CAPTAIN SAM

So that you wouldn't try to run. (Pause) Are you alright?

PRISONER

I have got such an ache in my head right now.

SOUND: CAPTAIN SAM OPENS THE CORK ON A BOTTLE AND BEGINS TO DRINK IT

PRISONER (cont'd)

I don't suppose you could spare a drop or two of that whiskey? To aid with the pain.

SOUND: CAPTAIN SAM STOPS DRINKING, AND THEN WALKS THE BOTTLE OVER TO THE PRISONER, HANDING IT TO HIM.

PRISONER (cont'd)
Thank you, sir.

SOUND: THE PRISONER TAKES A DRINK FROM THE BOTTLE, AND THEN
LETS OUT AN 'AHHH'. CAPTAIN SAM THEN MOVES BACK TO WHERE HE
WAS INITIALLY POSITIONED

SOUND: THE PRISONER IS RUNNING HIS HANDS ACROSS THE BARS OF
HIS CELL

PRISONER (cont'd)
Would you mind telling me just what you brought me here
for?

CAPTAIN SAM
You've got a bounty on your head. I intend to collect.

PRISONER
Uh-huh. And just what would that bounty be for?

SOUND: CAPTAIN SAM STEPS CLOSER TO THE PRISONER

CAPTAIN SAM
That brand. On your forehead. What's that mean?

PRISONER
(Pause) Tell me what you think it means.

NARRATOR
CAPTAIN SAM, ever steady and able, stands firm and
upright.

CAPTAIN SAM
I had friends in Edinlaugh, that were cut down when The
Black Hearts attacked. That mark means you're gettin'
hanged.

PRISONER
This brand - means you don't get to take me to the
gallows. No matter how many dead lay behind me. In
Edinlaugh or Adanuir or Snaggle Crick or any other
fuckin' place.

CAPTAIN SAM
Just the one, directly.

NARRATOR
THE DESTRUCTION OF EDINLAUGH was terrible and
swift. Black riders skulked and surrounded the the
city on a moonless night. With one silent torchlit
arrow, an unrelenting hell rained down on the sleeping
city, and the men began their war. Raiding houses one
by one, viciously slaughtering entire lineages like
(MORE)

NARRATOR (cont'd)

pigs in a pen. The horde showed no mercy in their murder, torturing some with fire and steel and water, whatever was on hand. Edinlaugh, Capital city of The Northern Divide, which was still burning when the dawn rays reached it's walls, was in ruin, and with it, the entire stability of the North.

PRISONER

How much is that bounty on me anyways?

CAPTAIN SAM

Fifty, dead.

PRISONER

(Appalled) Fifty!? You gotta be kiddin' me! Say, maybe you got the wrong man?

CAPTAIN SAM

You're all worth the same amount of nothin' to me.

SOUND: A RUMBLE IS HEARD, QUIETLY IN THE DISTANCE

NARRATOR

Sam's prisoner knew the rumbling death that was galloping towards him.

PRISONER

I've got five hundred, more even, buried not half a day's ride from here. It's yours. All of it. All you gotta do is take me to it.

CAPTAIN SAM

That don't appeal to me.

PRISONER

Five hundred! You ain't never gonna see that much gold again in your whole life.

CAPTAIN SAM

Tell me, why are you so eager? What're you suddenly so afraid of?

SOUND: THE RUMBLING IS GETTING A BIT LOUDER

NARRATOR

Captain Sam hears the quiet rumbles, getting louder on the horizon.

CAPTAIN SAM

You hear that?

PRISONER

(Defeated) Yeah. I fuckin' hear that.

CAPTAIN SAM

What is it?

PRISONER

Death ridin'.

Which Way

SOUND: THE SOUND OF A MAN DRINKING A PINT OF ALE AND
SLAMMING THE GLASS DOWN ON THE TABLE IS HEARD

NARRATOR

On the other side of the small and largely forgotten about camp, the townsfolk go about their night like they did most, depressed and drunk. Lost in despair at what the world here in the North had become. What was once a beacon of prosperity, had now transformed into torment and destruction. Cities and towns that were once inexorable allies, soon became bitter enemies. Over the years, rule of the province fell to Lord Helmuth, in the Grey Mountains of Helgrind. Nestled on the southern edge of the Northern Divide, Snaggle Crick, however, was ruled by Alfric of Adanuir, virulent adversary of Helmuth and keeper of the peace in Dorenden.

DRUNKARD

Pour me a-fuckin-nother.

BARKEEP

You still owe on the first four.

SOUND: THE DRUNKARD GRUMBLES AND DROPS FOUR COINS DOWN ON
THE WOODEN TABLE

BARKEEP

You're one short for a fifth.

DRUNKARD

(Mumbling, but proud) I seem to have spent my vast and colossal earnings prior to entering this establishment.

BARKEEP

This bar is for payin' fuckin' customers. Find the coin or get out. I'm sick a listenin' to you.

DRUNKARD

I find that to be, exceptionally rude. Do you mind if I fucking collect myself, first? I'll get out of your hair just (TRAILING OFF) as soon as I start seein' one

(MORE)

DRUNKARD (cont'd)
of you. Is that okay with you, your
majesty? (Muttering) Prick.

NARRATOR
The cold demeanor of folks in the north had been well
established and was known throughout the lands.

SOUND: THE DRUNKARD GETS UP FROM HIS SEAT, STUMBLES, AND
THEN WALKS OUT OF THE SALOON, MUTTERING ABOUT THE BARKEEP
BEING AN ASS HOLE AS HE EXITS.

Rumbles

DRUNKARD
(Quietly muttering) Don't you tell me how to spend my
money, you dickless son of a whore.

BARKEEP
(Shouting in the distance) What'd you say?

SOUND: THE DRUNK STARTS RUNNING OFF, FINALLY COMING TO A
WALK.

HE CONTINUES WALKING DOWN THE QUIET STREET, THE SOUND OF
DRINKS BEING POURED FADING AWAY IN THE BACKGROUND. WHEN ALL
OF THE OTHER SOUND HAS FADED, THE DRUNKARD STOPS IN HIS
TRACKS

DRUNKARD
Now which fuckin' way is it...?

SOUND: THE DRUNKARD LOOKS AROUND FOR A FEW MOMENTS, HIS FEET
MOVING AS HE TURNS FROM SIDE TO SIDE. SUDDENLY, A SLIGHT
RUMBLING SOUND IS HEARD, AND IS SLOWLY GETTING LOUDER

DRUNKARD (cont'd)
What in the hells...

SOUND: ANOTHER PAIR OF FOOTSTEPS COMES WALKING TOWARDS THE
DRUNKARD

DRUNKARD (cont'd)
Hey! Who's there? Identify yourself, or prepare for a
blade up yer asses!

BLACK HEART 1
You ain't got no blade. This Snaggle Crick?

DRUNKARD
Who the fuck's askin? (Pause) Hey, what's that you got
there on your forehead?

SOUND: THE SOLDIER SWINGS HIS SWORD OUT FROM HIS SCABBARD, AND CUTS ACROSS, BEHEADING THE MAN. THE MAN'S HEAD FALLS TO THE GROUND. A TORCH IS HEARD WAVING, THEN THROWN TO THE GROUND. THE RUMBLING OF IS NOW GETTING LOUDER AND LOUDER, NOW OBVIOUS THAT IT IS HORSES RIDING UP IN THE DISTANCE.

NARRATOR

The Black Heart Bandits had arrived.

Hearing the noises

SOUND: THE HORSES RIDING IN THE DISTANCE CAN NOW BE HEARD IN THE JAIL. CAPTAIN SAM WALKS OVER TO THE WINDOW AND LOOKS OUT

NARRATOR

CAPTAIN SAM walked to the window to see what he was dealing with. Snaggle Crick was a small town, but it could defend itself if need be, against a small enough force. (Pause) This didn't sound like a small force, though.

CAPTAIN SAM

They here for you?

PRISONER

I would imagine that to be the case.

CAPTAIN SAM

Why? What'd you?

PRISONER

I abandoned 'em. Ran off in the night, like a damned coward. And now they're here. All of 'em, are gonna be here. I'm afraid my apprehension is where we both part ways from this world.

CAPTAIN SAM

(Defeated sounding) How many of them will there be?

PRISONER

Too damn many.

SOUND: THE RUMBLING IS GETTING LOUDER AND LOUDER. THE PRISONER KEEPS LAUGHING. A HIGH PITCHED SQUEAL (INDICATING CAPTAIN SAM'S STRESS) IS HEARD

NARRATOR

It was too late to assemble any type of defense against the soon to be invaders. By his ears he'd say that they were probably a mile outside of town, and moving quick.

CAPTAIN SAM

(To the prisoner) Sounds to me they'll be here in about five minutes.

SOUND: CAPTAIN SAM WALKS ACROSS THE ROOM AND OPENS A CABINET. OUT FROM IT HE PULLS A ROPE AND TIES A KNOT, THEN WALKS BACK TO THE PRISONER

CAPTAIN SAM (cont'd)

I'm executing sentence now.

SOUND: KEYS JANGLE AND UNLOCK THE CELL. THE PRISONER DOES NOT FIGHT, AND CAPTAIN SAM REMOVES HIM FROM THE CELL AND TAKES HIM OUTSIDE, OPENING THE DOOR. THE SHACKLES ARE HEARD THE WHOLE TIME ON THEIR WAY OUT

Executing Sentence

SOUND: THE FOOTSTEPS OF THE TWO MEN ARE HEARD WALKING IN THE DIRT OUTSIDE. AFTER A FEW MOMENTS, HORNS ARE HEARD IN THE DISTANCE, STOPPING THE MEN IN THEIR TRACKS BRIEFLY, BEFORE HURRYING AGAIN.

CAPTAIN SAM

C'mon, hurry now. Pick up your damn feet.

NARRATOR

Determined to make the man pay for the transgressions of his people, Captain Sam rushes the man to the hanging tree, and knocks the man to his knees while he readies the noose.

SOUND: CAPTAIN SAM KNOCKS THE MAN TO HIS KNEES, AND THEN TOSSES THE ROPE UP THE TREE, THEN TIES THE KNOT TIGHT. THE PRISONER THEN GETS UP AND TRIES TO RUN.

NARRATOR (cont'd)

The prisoner makes an ill fated attempt to flee, but Captain Sam is quick with a blade, stabbing it into the man's knee.

PRISONER

Ahhh!

SOUND: CAPTAIN SAM PICKS UP THE PRISONER AND TAKES HIM TO THE ROPE, THEN PUTS THE ROPE AROUND HIS NECK, TIGHTENING IT. THE THUNDEROUS RUMBLINGS OF THE HORSES ARE NOW RIGHT UPON THEM, THEN IT STOPS AND THERE IS A WINDY, DUSTY SILENCE HEARD BEFORE IT'S BROKEN BY THE SOUND OF A MAN'S VOICE

BLACK HEART 1
That ain't your kill.

CAPTAIN SAM
I'm hangin' him. This man's got a death bounty on his head. I intend to make him pay it.

SOUND: LAUGHTER ERUPTS FROM THE INVADERS

CAPTAIN SAM (cont'd)
Git outta this town. Leave here, and never return!

BLACK HEART 1
3...

CAPTAIN SAM
I mean it! Leave!

BLACK HEART 1
2...

CAPTAIN SAM
Oh fuck it.

SOUND: CAPTAIN SAM KICKS OPEN THE FLOOR BENEATH THE PRISONER. THE PRISONER FALLS INTO THE NOOSE, BREAKING HIS NECK INSTANTLY.

PRISONER
No!

BLACK HEART 1
That was a mistake.

SOUND: AN ARROW GOES WHIRRING AND HITS CAPTAIN SAM, KILLING HIM INSTANTLY. HE DROPS TO THE GROUND. THE BLACK HEART JUMPS OFF HIS HORSE AND WALKS FORWARD IN THE DIRT A FEW PACES.

NARRATOR
The arrow whirred past the lifeless hanging man, piercing through Captain Sam's forehead before he heard the bow release, killing him instantly.

BLACK HEART 1
Skin 'em. We're gonna need a bridge. Burn the rest.

The Town's a burnin'

SOUND: WOMEN AND CHILDREN SCREAMING, FIRE RAGING THROUGHOUT THE WHOLE TOWN. SWORDS ARE OCCASIONALLY CLANKING TOGETHER, AND MEN SHOUT AS THEY ATTACK EACH OTHER.

NARRATOR

The townspeople fought the invaders on horseback, as hard as they possibly could. Down to the very last child. The unyielding host was devastating in their mercilessness. There was to be no shadow on the dawn for the ancient town. And with the protector of the Eastern crossing now lying in a heap of ash and dust, The South was vulnerable.

SOUND: FIRE RAGES THROUGH THE TOWN AS DARK MUSIC FADES IN HARD AND THEN CUTS HARD

'Er Grerran (The Haunted Forest)

(INTRODUCE GREGORRAN)

SOUND: A BANSHEE SCREAMING FOLLOWED BY A MAN RUNNING AND BREATHING HEAVILY

NARRATOR

'Er Grerran. The Haunted Forest. A relic of an ancient world, a more terrible world. A world where the myths and legends and tall tales that fathers would tell their misbehaving children at night were the horrifying reality for the previous inhabitants. A darkness has been imprinted into the very roots of the trees. Ghouls and ghosts and banshees, demons and shadow, some even would say death, lives here. No reasonable person would attempt to navigate the ever-changing paths that would wander and divert, changing sometimes by the minute.

SOUND: TREE ROOTS MOVING FOLLOWED BY THE HOWN OF A GHOUL, THEN THE MAN GETS UP AND RUNS

NARRATOR (cont'd)

But this was not a reasonable man and he had no reasonable plan. For what he estimated to be three nights he lingered in the darkness of the trees. Having lost his horse nearly as soon as he entered the western border, he was forced to walk, without supply and only a sword. Dressed in a knightly but ragged regalia, his blade drawn and ready, this was a man foolishly determined to reach his home; Efelefen. His rash decision making took him on the most direct path, sailing across the Vesian Sea from the Silitrian Islands and across the endless plains of

(MORE)

NARRATOR (cont'd)

Braille, before reaching his current occupancy. He attempted to hide under the cover of shadow, his eyes furiously searching for both some hint of sun and a passage through, beneath the dreary canopy. He knew of the doom that lie within the boundaries of the accursed woodland, having heard stories growing up from Valak, his guardian for so many years, before he rushed off to find riches and glory on the battlefield of the tribal wars on the Isle of Ithel, but he found neither. The years of war stole his youthful innocence and replaced it with almost nothing. The dangers that lurked amidst the lingering fog were grave and always fatal, if one is unable to find the eastern border.

SOUND: GREGORRAN CONTROLLING HIS BREATHING

NARRATOR (cont'd)

Gregorran steadied his breathing and swiped some of his dark brown hair that was obstructing his vision, out of the way. (Pause) He waited, quietly, ceasing to breathe entirely. Listening for any sign, any sound. (Long pause)

SOUND: THRASHING FOOTSTEPS COME RUNNING THROUGH THE FOREST

GREGORRAN

Oh fuck.

SOUND: GREGORRAN SLASHING ACROSS THE TREE BRANCHES

NARRATOR

With no clear path to be found, he was forced to carve his own route, through the thick brush. He swung his blade as fast and hard as he could, desperately trying to escape whatever vile creature had his scent. The swinging branches swung back, cutting his face and forcing him to close his eyes as he chopped. As he dismembered the limbs of the archaic giants, to his relief, the thick began to rescind and a sparkle of light could be seen in the distance. With his blade still in tow, he began running faster. Unfortunately, the path hadn't just cleared for just him, and now a ghoul could be seen sprinting towards Gregorran. With it's mouth agape, blood red slop slithered across it's face. His sword was no good against a primeval such as this. The beast was closing in, almost as if it were piercing holes in the darkness at twice the speed of reality. It reached out it's grotesque hand, mere inches away from Gregorran.

GREGORRAN
Ahhhhh!

SOUND: THE MUSIC STOPS AND ONLY A SLIGHT BREEZE IS HEARD, ALONG WITH GREGORRAN SWINGING HIS SWORD VIOLENTLY THROUGH THE AIR AND SHOUTING AT THE GHOUL THAT HE THOUGHT HAD HIM

NARRATOR
And suddenly, he was no longer in danger with the forest a league away in the distance, as if he passed through a day ago.

GREGORRAN
(Very confused) What the...

SOUND: GREGORRAN IS BREATHING HEAVILY, AND SUDDENLY A HORSE COMES WALKING UP TO HIM

GREGORRAN (cont'd)
You! What in the hells were you thinkin'? Runnin' off like that. Git over here.

SOUND: GREGORRAN EXHALES

NARRATOR
Not one to dwell, Gregorran decided to accept his incredible turn of fate and inquire no more.

GREGORRAN
Think we can make it to Dorende by dark?

SOUND: THE HORSE NEIGHS

GREGORRAN (cont'd)
No? Well too damned bad, you're runnin' the whole way there. That's your punishment, ya shit.

SOUND: GREGORRAN MOUNTS HIS HORSE AND THEY RIDE OFF

GREGORRAN (cont'd)
H'yah!

Dorende

(INTRODUCE ASHLEE, HE AND GREGORRAN MEET)

SOUND: PEOPLE LAUGHING INSIDE OF BUILDINGS AS GREGORRAN STROLLS THROUGH TOWN.

NARRATOR
Dorende is an old town, not known for its warmth to strangers passing through, but that didn't phase Gregorran. He was used to cutthroats and bandits and
(MORE)

NARRATOR (cont'd)

the like, growing up in Efelefen, which ain't exactly better than Dorende. (Pause) His journey home had been long and arduous. He was taken aback by the dusk that his homeland felt trapped in. In the days of his youth, the colors were more vivid and the light shone bright upon the mountains in the distance. But now, he has trouble sometimes seeing the very path before him. But that would not dissuade him. And as he entered the ruffian town of Dorende, he felt relief, as he knew here he could find a, mostly, soft bed to put his head to pillow.

LEATHER VENDOR

Hey, you there! You look like you could use a fresh pair of boots! The finest leather around! Straight from Khandar!

OYSTER VENDOR

Fresh oysters! Plucked from the bottom of the Ethemon Sea!

MISTRESS

Hi there, soldier. Why don't you come and spend some time with me

NARRATOR

But Gregorran wasn't interested in the wares of street merchants and whores. His gaze remains steadfast upon the gaudy sign that was blocking the the inn that lie not a hundred paces before him, belonging to The Wolf's Head Pub.

GREGORRAN

(Scoffs) What an ugly fuckin' sign.

SOUND: GREGORRAN RIDES CLOSER TO THE PUB, AND AS HE DOES, LAUGHTER AND SHOUTING AND MUSIC IS HEARD FROM INSIDE. HE DISMOUNTS HIS HORSE AND TIES IT UP.

GREGORRAN

Now listen, I suppose I've earned a drink. (Pause while he looks at his horse) Don't look at me like that, just the one. You just wait here at the ready in case trouble jumps out.

SOUND: THE HORSE NEIGHS. GREGORRAN WALKS ON A WOODEN SIDEWALK TO ENTER THE PUB

The Wolf's Head Pub

SOUND: GREGORRAN WALKS INTO THE RAUCOUS PUB. SHOUTING IS HEARD

BACKGROUND MAN 1

You stole her! She was mine! I'll kill you, you son of a bitch!

BACKGROUND MAN 2

Serves you right, you gutless bastard!

SOUND: A FIGHT BREAKS OUT BETWEEN THE TWO MEN, GREGORRAN MOVES HIS ATTENTION ELSEWHERE AND WALKS TO THE BAR. HE HEARS WOMEN LAUGHING

NARRATOR

Gregorran had been away from the lawlessness of The Southern Divide, and particularly that of South Dorenden, for so long that he had almost forgotten how raucous and rowdy the people could get.

GREGORRAN

(Ordering from the barkeep) Whiskey.

SOUND: A SMALL BIT OF WHISKEY IS POURED IN A GLASS AND SLID TO GREGORRAN, WHICH HE TAKES DOWN QUICKLY, AND THEN KNOCKS HIS KNUCKLES ON THE BAR TO ORDER ANOTHER. THE BARKEEP, ASHLEE, TALKS TO GREGORRAN.

ASHLEE

You ain't familiar.

GREGORRAN

Neither are you.

NARRATOR

Ashlee had come to Dorende eighteen months ago. A man, roughly in his mid thirties, tall with thick black hair and steely grey eyes, he presented a formidable appearance to patrons of his establishment. He purchased the lot to build the pub and brothel from the innkeeper next door for ten gold coins and twelve loaves of bread. Before he came, the town was in it's final throws. Families were leaving in droves, heading for greener pastures up north, where the sun would shine more and crops had an easier chance of breaking soil. But now, the town was bustling and thriving. His pub had become famous for it's wide selection of high end women, and the ale that Ashlee would brew, he claimed to be the strongest in the south.

SOUND: ASHLEE POURS ANOTHER SHOT OF WHISKEY AND SLIDES IT TO GREGORRAN, AND THEN MOVES HIS ATTENTION ELSEWHERE. HE WALKS TO ANOTHER PATRON

ASHLEE

(Grumbles)

BALANION

Oh, it was a frightful battle! Storm clouds surrounded us. Me and twenty good men left, against a whole horde of Silitrian Savages, must have been a hundred of 'em. We knew we was all but doomed...so we started hootin' and hollerin', loud as we could, bangin' our blades against the bows, and we took off runnin' straight for them heathens! Boy, I've never seen so many bare asses shit themselves! (Laughs hysterically)

NARRATOR

Ashlee knew the stories Balanion, who had been his friend since he first made camp and broke ground, were lies, but he always liked hearing a good story, regardless of it's accuracy.

BALANION

Another ale, my good man!

NARRATOR

Ashlee leaned in close.

ASHLEE

(Slightly softer) If horseshit was currency you'd own the fuckin' world.

BALANION

(Laughs, drunkenly)

SOUND: HEELS WALKING ACROSS THE ROOM, AS OTHER SOUNDS SEEM TO FADE INTO A BLUR IN THE BACKGROUND. MUSIC PLAYS FOR ESCWYNNE

NARRATOR

Escwynne's descent down the staircase was a nightly attraction. Men gawked and sat stupified by the great beauty as she seemed to hover above the floor as she'd glide across the room. The woman, originally from Efelefen, was familiar to Gregorran. He positioned himself far enough away from her destination that she didn't see him as she seduced the men on her walk to the bar and greeted her boss, Ashlee.

ASHLEE

Darlin'.

ESCWYNNE

I miss anything excitin'?

ASHLEE

Nah. Usual ruckus.

NARRATOR

Ashlee leaned in close to Escwynne.

ASHLEE

(Softly) There's a fella, at the end of the bar. Soldier type. Wa-

BALANION

The gods, in all their infinite wisdom, could not have created a more outstanding work of art as she who stands before me.

ESCWYNNE

It ain't ever gonna be free, Balanion.

BALANION

(Merrily) I've got coin tonight.

NARRATOR

Escwynne looked at her boss, who nodded in approval.

ESCWYNNE

Well alright then. Follow me upstairs.

SOUND: BALANION'S CHAIR SCOOTs OUT AND FOOTSTEPS BEGIN TO WALK AWAY FROM THE BAR

NARRATOR

The two exited through the room, to the disdain of every man who bore witness to the events that had just transpired. As she walked through the room with Balanion, Escwynne looked back in Gregorran's direction, unable to see him while he was shrouded in shadow. But Ashlee, curious as he was, made his way back to Gregorran, determined to discover the stranger's identity.

SOUND: ASHLEE ATTEMPTS TO WALK DOWN THE BAR, WHEN A LOUD SWORDFIGHT BREAKS OUT BETWEEN A COUPLE OF PATRONS. SWORDS CLANGING, MEN SHOUTING AND GRUNTING AT EACH OTHER

ASHLEE

(Shouting) Oh give me a fuckin' break!

NARRATOR

Ashlee, never one to shy away from a brawl, hopped the height of the bar, sliding across it to reach the men

(MORE)

NARRATOR (cont'd)

attempting to kill each other. Brandishing long knives that he unsheathed from his persons, Ashlee swiftly moved in, using his left hand to stab the aggressor in his hand, pinning it to a table, then with his right, throwing the blade into the defenders foot.

SOUND: BOTH MEN SCREAM

ASHLEE

(Shouting) Now, do I have your fuckin' attention? Yeah? Good. Everyone. Listen up fuckin' good. The only bloodlettin' that's to be done in my joint, is to be done by my fuckin' hand. You come in here, swingin' your swords around like a dick that found it's scent; you deal with me.

SOUND: ASHLEE PULLS THE BLADES OUT OF THE MAN'S HAND, HE SCREAMS

ASHLEE (cont'd)

You shitheads understand?

NARRATOR

With his back turned to the man whose foot was the current owner of a dagger, he wasn't able to see that the man was lining up to throw his own blade, straight into Ashlee's back. Seeing this, Gregorran drew his bow and released an arrow into the man's skull.

SOUND: THE BAR GASPS

NARRATOR (cont'd)

Ashlee turned to the stranger who had just saved his life, his face angry that he had to clean up another bloodstain, and confounded by the man who had just saved his life. But his demeanor remained firm, keeping up the rough and tumble appearance that one needed to in order to properly survive as a proprietor in Dorende.

ASHLEE

I'm gonna let that one go. (Pause) Free drinks to anyone who helps clean this shitheel and his blood up.

SOUND: THE CROWD CHEERS AND MEN BEGIN TO WALK ABOUT THE PUB TO CLEAN UP THE MESS

SOUND: FADE OUT

In The Morning

SOUND: MORNING BIRDS ARE SINGING OUTSIDE

NARRATOR

Gregorran awoke to another cloudy and dark morning, made all the worse by the headache he contracted last night. It had been years since he'd had Dorenden whiskey, and had forgotten how strong it was. He'd moan and groan for a while, before getting moving for the day.

SOUND: GREGORRAN IS SADDLING HIS HORSE, PATTING HER, AND PUTTING ON HIS PACK

GREGORRAN

What're you lookin' at? I only had the one bottle.
(Pause) Yeah, yeah, next time I'll clarify.

SOUND: GREGORRAN GETS UP ON HIS HORSE, AND BEGINS TROTTING OFF.

NARRATOR

He took the eastern road out of town, but not before seeing Escwynne standing on the veranda of The Wolf's Head Pub, looking down at him. The two made eye contact and smiled softly at each other, before it was broken by the entrance of Ashlee, exiting the front of his pub and walking to Gregorran.

ASHLEE

Say, we never got the opportunity to properly introduce ourselves last night. I'm Ashlee, owner, and proprietor of this establishment.

NARRATOR

Ashlee turned and pointed to the gaudy sign.

ASHLEE

Nice sign, huh?

GREGORRAN

It's...noticeable.

ASHLEE

Say, where you headed? I ain't seen you round here before.

GREGORRAN

Efelefen.

SOUND: ASHLEE BEGINS TO WALK AWAY, BACK TOWARDS HIS PUB

GREGORRAN (cont'd)

Ya know, I knew her. Back in Efelefen.

ASHLEE

Yeah? She looks to know you too. (Pause) Hey, I never got to properly show my gratitude last night. Thanks for the bowin'. You look the soldier type. There ain't no wars in the South, far as I know. So, I have to ask, you some scout or some other type ass hole, here to fuck up our day?

GREGORRAN

I'm headed home from Silitri. I ain't lookin' for no fights.

ASHLEE

Good. Anyways, I've got a piss pot callin' my name.

NARRATOR

Gregorran and Escwynne look at each other again briefly, before Gregorran rides off, towards his home.

GREGORRAN

H'yah!

SOUND: GREGORRAN GETS HIS HORSE MOVING AND IT BEGINS TO RUN FASTER OUT OF TOWN, HEADING DOWN THE ROAD

The Black Pillar

NARRATOR

Efelefen resided in the south-central portion of South Dorenden. It was protected by the Twin Peaks, a series of razor sharp switchbacks that could drop a man a thousand feet to his death if he weren't careful. It was once a bustling and vibrant city, in the Age of Valor, thousands of years before Gregorran rode home. But now, overseen by the decays of time and famine and plague, it was home to only a little over a thousand people. Larger than Dorende, but far smaller than Adanuir, Capital of The Southern Divide. No armies had ever been able to capture the city, as the path was far too dangerous. But for all it's history and strength of times past, it was not, like any other place in the south, dying.

SOUND: GREGORRAN IS RIDING HIS HORSE ALONG A ROAD AS THE NARRATOR SPEAKS

NARRATOR (cont'd)

As he rode along the final stretch of his long and eventful adventure, across the sea, he thought of the heathen warriors he fought in the western deserts of Silitri.

SOUND: SWORDS CLANKING AGAINST EACH OTHER, MEN SHOUTING AND DYING

NARRATOR (cont'd)

He thought of the raging waves in the Vesian Sea, that tossed men overboard and swallowed them below the depths, that tried to capsize the stubborn boat, but falling short.

SOUND: A THUNDERSTORM AND WAVES CRASHING AGAINST THE BOAT, MEN SCREAMING AS THEY FALL OFF, AND THEN SHOUTING FOR SOMEONE TO HELP THEM BEFORE GOING SILENT

NARRATOR (cont'd)

And of the Braellian slaves, bound, whipped, and sold into a life of destitution and utterly lacking meaning. He thought of the helpless eyes that stared at him as he walked through the golden streets, molten from the riches the elites made, trafficking in human lives. Dealing in death.

SOUND: MOSTLY SILENCE AS HE WALKED THROUGH THE STREETS, SOME WHISPERING, BUT A SURPRISING SILENCE.

NARRATOR (cont'd)

And of the haunted forest of 'Er Grerran, which lies in the south and to the east of Braellie. A place so feared and reviled that entire armies have long opted to take the long road to the north, adding months of travel, as they marched through the lands. Banshees and ghouls and demons roam the never-ending night found within.

SOUND: BANSHEE CALLS AND TREES STOMPING AROUND, BRANCHES MOVING, SHOUTING HEARD, A HOWLING WIND

NARRATOR (cont'd)

But for all the years he'd been gone, removed from his home, he always tried to keep the lessons Valak had tried to teach him, close by. He was both excited and hesitant to return home. When he left, the terms weren't the greatest, and he didn't know where Valak stood yet. Alas, he felt his heart swell at the familiar sights and smells of Efelefen, and couldn't wait to get there.

GREGORRAN

Almost home.

(FADE OUT)

Death Followed

(INTRODUCE DORTH UNGOL)

SOUND: SCREAMS OF BURNING PEOPLE ARE HEARD IN THE DISTANCE,
FOOTSTEPS OF A FEW MEN ON A RICKETY BRIDGE, AND A MAN
STRUGGLING

PRISONER 2

You'll hang for this! All of you! You don't know the
giant you've just awoken. Alfric will avenge this!

BLACK HEART 1

I'm afraid it's you, who gets to witness the sleeping
giant of The Northern Divide.

SOUND: LOUD FOOTSTEPS, ECHOING, WITH METAL RATTLING AS THE
FOOTSTEPS WALK TOWARDS THE PRISONER

NARRATOR

The footsteps seemed to echo throughout all of The South. Unrelenting in their power as the culprit made his way towards the terrified prisoner. As if stepping out of the darkness itself, a giant appeared before the man who was now pissing himself. Disfigured and terrible he was, blocking the dim moonlight in the night sky. He stood two heads taller than the captive, with long black hair that looked as though it had permanent blood streaks in it. His face was slashed and scarred, with only one good eye left, but it didn't hinder his abilities, and he used it to stare deep beyond the man in the mortal realm. Without uttering a single word, the giant raised his blade and sliced through the the prisoner's neck like a hot knife through butter, removing his head from his body. The head fell deep and far below the bridge, into the void. For what felt like an eternity, the men waited; watching their leader, waiting for his command. Finally, from within the empty came a single spark of grey. The giant turned to his men behind him, who quickly fell to their knees. He turned back to the south that now lie before him. He lifted his boot and stepped forward defiantly, powerful and absolute.

SOUND: LOUD FOOTSTEP THAT ECHOES ACROSS THE PLAINS

NARRATOR (cont'd)

Dorth Ungol and The Black Hearts had arrived in The Southern Divide.