

"<WESTVIKING>"

BASED ON THE NORSE SAGAS

and

FEATURING THE

MUSIC OF LED ZEPPELIN

Screenplay by

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FADE IN:

SUPER: 997 AD

EXT. NORTH ATLANTIC - DAY

The earth is seen turning through mist and we are drawn closer and down to the north Atlantic.

Wind and a faint but growing heartbeat are heard as we are drawn nearer and nearer to the Scottish Sea where a speck grows into a Norse longship.

The wind and waves grow louder as does the heartbeat. The heartbeat is slowly overtaken by the opening beat of *The Immigrant Song*.

The terrified STEERSMAN, (30) a bearded and bedraggled Norseman, fights the tiller. Fourteen CREWMEN struggle with their oars. The ship's master, Leif, (24) clean shaven and chiseled, braces the STEERSMAN and gazes nervously to the east, his tawny hair streaming in the wind. His billowing cloak clasped by a large silver BROOCH carved with intricate runes.

The music and the storm sound reach a deafening crescendo.

ROBERT PLANT

Ah ----- Ah

Silence falls as LEIF'S gaze seems to speed away, skimming the wave peaks and parting the mist.

EXT. HEBRIDES ISLAND - DAY

A distant land mass appears under a darkening sky and swiftly grows into a wooded and hilly island. A sheltered cove becomes clear.

The otherworldly gaze speeds into the cove and slams to a stops at, and slowly rotates around; THORGUNNA, (19) sultry and voluptuous.

The tinkling strains of *The Battle of Evermore* are faintly heard.

THORGUNNA stands thigh deep in the waves, thrashing them with a long twisted wand. THORGUNNA'S diaphanous gown is soaked through by the driving rain and her gypsy beauty is obscured by her wind whipped, long, raven hair.

THORGUNNA abruptly raises the wand and slowly bends it bow like over her head to an impossibly tight curve.

SNAP! The wand breaks as lightening CRACKS across the sky and thunder EXPLODES.

EXT. NORTH ATLANTIC - DAY

CRASH! LEIF'S eyes jerk up in shock as the ship's yard arm breaks and slowly tumbles to the deck in a tangle of sail and rigging.

EXT. GREENLAND FOREST - DAY

SUPER: 18 YEARS EARLIER

ERICKSFJORD
GREENLAND

OPENING CREDITS ROLL:

A spring sun shines on a lush forest path as THYRKER, (40) stout with short brown hair, limps slowly beside YOUNG LEIF, (6) serene with long tangled platinum hair. They pause often to examine plants and to kneel and view small creatures. YOUNG LEIF looks up at THYRKER often.

THYRKER stops short and gently stops YOUNG LEIF with a hand to his shoulder. YOUNG LEIF looks up at THYRKER who is pointing into a sun dappled glade. A young roebuck looks up from grazing to meet the gaze of YOUNG LEIF and THYRKER.

OPENING CREDITS END:

YOUNG LEIF
(in wonder)
He is so beautiful Thyarker.

THYRKER
As are all creatures Leif, in
their way.

LEIF looks up to THYRKER.

YOUNG LEIF
Why must father and the others
kill them?

The roebuck goes back to grazing. THYRKER touches
LEIF'S cheek tenderly.

THYRKER
We must eat lad -

THYRKER points to the roebuck.

THYRKER (CONT'D)
As they do.

YOUNG LEIF
(fiercely)
I won't do it. I won't hunt - ever.

THYRKER
There, there my boy. There's
plenty of time for that - we'll
not join the hunt today.

THYRKER appears to hear a sound and stares intently
into the forest. THYRKER looks back to the roebuck and
claps his hands sharply. The roebuck startles and
bounces away into the woods.

THYRKER (CONT'D)
And with luck, neither will he ...
but come, it is time we were for
home.

THYRKER takes YOUNG LEIF by the hand and they turn to
leave.

Hidden in the forest nearby, YOUNG LEIF'S father ERIC,
an aged 45 with a craggy grim demeanor slowly uncocks
his bow and looks to THYRKER,S back, his bow still
slightly flexed.

ERIC
German fool.

EXT. FRONT PORCH THYRKER'S HUT - TWILIGHT

THYRKER is seated on a rough bench carving a symbol into a flat disk of wood.

YOUNG LEIF

What are you making?

THYRKER hands the disk to YOUNG LEIF.

THYRKER

When I finish, it will be your
your rune.

THYRKER picks up his flute and begins playing a soulful melody. YOUNG LEIF, sinks down to THYRKER'S feet, listening and watching intently, clutching the rune and his own small flute while absently petting a small scraggly terrier laying at his side.

THYRKER finishes and sets the flute aside.

THYRKER

It is late and you are to see your
father tomorrow, time you were in
bed.

YOUNG LEIF

But it is still light out.

THYRKER

(chuckling)

Will you go to bed with the sun
this winter then?

YOUNG LEIF

Well ...no.

THYRKER

Off you go then.

YOUNG LEIF, head down, trudges into the hut. THYRKER watches YOUNG LEIF enter the hut with love in his eyes. THYRKER picks up his flute and stares at it pensively.

EXT. VILLAGE STREET GREENLAND - DAY

YOUNG LEIF walks slowly through the village. He stops to practice his flute, pauses, shakes his head and begins again. YOUNG RANNA, (6) slim and blond stops to listen.

MOTHER (O.S.)

Ran.

YOUNG RANNA looks to her MOTHER'S call, then looks back to YOUNG LEIF.

YOUNG LEIF notices her and immediately stops playing his flute and hurries on his way.

EXT. ERIC'S MANOR - DAY

YOUNG LEIF arrives at ERIC'S imposing stone house on a hilltop at the edge of the village. He hesitates at the heavy wood door before knocking timidly. He waits and as he moves to knock again the door opens.

INT. ERIC'S MANOR HOUSE - DAY

YOUNG LEIF is ushered into a large banquet hall by a MAN SERVANT. ERIC sits at the heavy wooden table surrounded by food, drinking from an over-sized silver flagon. ERIC slams down the FLAGON. YOUNG LEIF flinches.

ERIC

Ah, my young warrior...and where is your ax?

YOUNG LEIF

At home, father.

ERIC

At home? This is your home. You live with the German only until you reach the age, to harden you, to learn to fight, away from your mother's skirts.

YOUNG LEIF

Is mother here?

ERIC

At the market.

YOUNG LEIF looks away at a loss before brightening and gaining courage to meet ERIC'S gaze.

LEIF

I can count in German, and in
Russian too.

(Beat)

ERIC

Languages eh, good that's good, a
Viking has need of foreign
tongues. Trade and tribute. Yes
and learn to count well. We'll
count their gold for them eh?

ERIC cuffs YOUNG LEIF a little too hard on the
shoulder. YOUNG LEIF drops his flute and it clatters
to the stone floor. YOUNG LEIF stoops quickly to
retrieve it.

ERIC (CONT'D)

What have you there?

YOUNG LEIF shyly holds the flute out to ERIC.

YOUNG LEIF

It's my flute, Thyrker made it for
me ...for my birthday.

YOUNG LEIF gains confidence.

YOUNG LEIF (CONT'D)

It's just like his. Only smaller.
Thyrker is teaching me. I could
play it for you ...and for mother.

ERIC

You would be a skauld then? I need
warriors, not minstrels. No, no,
let the cripple strum his lute and
spin his words, let HIM sing of
our battles, the death we bring,
the plunder we take!

YOUNG LEIF is stricken, his eyes glisten and a single
tear rolls down his cheek.

THJOVILD, regal, beautiful and looking too young to be LEIF'S mother, appears unseen in the doorway and watches silently.

ERIC (CONT'D)
Tears! Now you shed tears?

YOUNG LEIF bolts from the room.

ERIC (CONT'D)
Come back! You run from your own
fa ...agh.

ERIC grabs his flagon and drinks deeply. ERIC looks to the door with some doubt then drinks again and slams the flagon down.

ERIC (CONT'D)
(shouting)
ALE!

THJOHILD turns away unseen.

EXT. VILLAGE STREET - DAY

LEIF runs through the street heedless of the stares of passersby. LEIF rushes past YOUNG RANNA. She stops in her tracks and turns to watch as he runs off.

EXT. ROCKY CLIFF OVERLOOKING THE SEA - DAY

YOUNG LEIF stares at the sea, his body wracked by his sobs. He forces himself to stop in a final convulsion.

YOUNG LEIF swipes his eyes with a sleeve and looks down at his flute.

(beat)

YOUNG LEIF rears back and flings his flute out to sea.

LATER:

YOUNG LEIF sits on a boulder, his head in his hands. THYRKER approaches quietly and lays a hand on YOUNG LEIF'S shoulder who seems to take no notice until slowly looking up with red-rimmed eyes.

THYRKER

It's alright lad, your father
meant you no harm.

YOUNG LEIF shakes his head angrily.

THYRKER (CONT'D)

He is a hard man in a hard world.
He wants you to grow hard like him
...as fathers will ... sentiment,
even love for you, his son is
weakness...in his mind at least.

YOUNG LEIF

(fiercely)

I don't want him for my father...

YOUNG LEIF looks into THYRKER'S eyes.

YOUNG LEIF (CONT'D)

I want you to be my father.

THYRKER

And I should be proud to have you
for my son Leif...but it cannot
be. In this, it is the gods who
choose.

THYRKER reaches into his pocket for the carved runic
disk.

THYRKER (CONT'D)

(brightening)

Look, your rune, I finished it
this morning.

YOUNG LEIF grudgingly accepts the rune.

THYRKER stands and holds a hand out to YOUNG LEIF.

THYRKER (CONT'D)

Come, we'll have a story tonight.

YOUNG LEIF takes THYRKER'S hand and looks up through
tear stained eyes.

YOUNG LEIF

What story?

YOUNG LEIF looks up at THYRKER as they walk off hand
in hand.

THYRKER

Oh, it's the story of the bravest
and most fierce Viking King who
ever lived. He traveled the whole
world gathering fame and riches
wherever he went.

YOUNG LEIF

(excited)

Who is it?

THYRKER looks down at YOUNG LEIF.

THYRKER

Why his name was Leif ...Leif
Ericson.

YOUNG LEIF smirks shyly and studies his RUNE closely.

The RUNE transforms into a silver brooch.

SUPER:

FIFTEEN YEARS LATER

EXT. VILLAGE SHORELINE - DAY

LEIF examines his silver runic brooch before thrusting
it into his pocket and jogging towards the beach.

LEIF pushes a row boat off shore and splashes on board
his eyes never leaving a young polar bear marooned on
a small iceberg.

RANNA, (21) a lithe Nordic beauty looks on. Her friend
HILDI, (20) with sturdy curves and pigtails looks up
to RANNA.

HILDI

What is he doing?

RANNA

Showing off ... as usual.

LEIF rows toward the polar bear.

HILDI

But he'll be killed!

RANNA

(disinterested)

Perhaps that is his aim. He is
bored with us mortals and has set
his sights on immortality.

HILDI
Ranna, you're awful.

LEIF reaches the polar bear who seems to greet him as a friend.

LEIF reaches out to the bear with one hand while deftly slinging a net over the bear with the other.

The bear is perplexed but not alarmed.

HILDI (CONT'D)
Oh ...he's trapped it! ...but what will he do with it!

RANNA
(affected blasé)
Tame it no doubt and ride it on market day.

(beat)

HILDI
(dreamy)
Oh, to be a bear...

Ranna looks to her friend in surprise.

RANNA
(droll)
HILDI, you shock me.

HILDI
(snide)
Only putting my voice to your daydreams RANNA.

RANNA cuffs HILDI gently.

INT. TAVERN - NIGHT

The dark and low ceiling tavern is noisy and overflowing. LEIF slips in, hooded and unnoticed by all but a busty young BARMAID who serves him, recognizes him and waves off payment as LEIF seats himself in a corner and drinks deeply.

Their backs next to LEIF, two garrulous PATRONS gesture broadly, spilling and drinking in equal measure.

PATRON 1

I'm to row with Eric, to the Thingvellir in ICELAND.

LEIF'S attention is immediately drawn.

PATRON 2

Ah...the Thing ...Skull!

The patrons crash their flagons together.

PATRON 2 (CONT'D)

And try to keep yours on your shoulders.

PATRON 1

What is your meaning?

PATRON 2

I know you're new to Greenland but even in the old country you must have heard the sagas and songs.

PATRON 1

Eric the Red? Of course, as all have. Where Eric goes plunder soon flows...and adventure ...and women of every creed.

PATRON 2

Yes, but plunder is not all that flows and the red is not just in Eric's beard.

PATRON 1

Sometimes blood must be spilled and what of it, Celtic, German ...as long as it us spilling it.

But we go to the Thing, the Chieftains Council, not on a raid.

PATRON 2

And Eric, and his clan have never been shy to talk or to spill blood wherever and to whoever it belongs.

LEIF begins to pull his broad knife. PATRON 2 leans in close to PATRON 1.

PATRON 1

What are you ...

PATRON 2

(interrupting)

ERIC'S clan is from Norway but
Eric's father Thorvald led them to
Iceland. Why?

PATRON 1

New lands?

PATRON 2

Banished for life. For murder.

LEIF sheaths his knife and strains to hear the PATRONS.

PATRON 2 (CONT'D)

As was his son in turn.

PATRON 1

Eric?

PATRON 2

The same and it was no Celt losing
his life was it, no my friend it
was his neighbor's sons... but
that was years ago ...

PATRON 2 raises his flagon.

PATRON 2 (CONT'D)

Enough talk, a toast, to your
voyage and to Eric Raude...and
adventure.

PATRON 1 hesitates, then joins in the toast.

LEIF is thoughtful.

EXT. HOT POOLS - DAY

LEIF begins to disrobe next to steaming hot pools.
Almost enveloped in the steam he pauses and cocks his
ear to a muffled giggle from the bushes.

Smirking to himself he finishes undressing with flair
before slowly sliding into a pool, disappearing in the
steam.

EXT. HOT POOLS BUSHES - DAY

RANNA and HILDI are whispering and spying on LEIF through the bushes.

RANNA
HILDI cover your eyes, think of
your mother!

HILDI
You first.

INT. ERIC'S MANOR BANQUET HALL - NIGHT

ERIC, flagon at hand and LEIF are sitting at the banqueting table.

ERIC
You will come to the Thing with
me. It is time you take your
birthright.

LEIF
(nervous)
The Thing?

ERIC
Iceland, three days sail, if the
winds favor us and Ranna does not
cast her net.

LEIF flushes.

LEIF
RANNA?

ERIC
With all you have been taught,
THYRKER has not warned you of the
goddess RANNA ...lurking beneath
the sea,

ERIC leans in, relishing the fear in LEIF'S eyes.

ERIC (CONT'D)
watching ...waiting ...to pull you
into the deep if you are foolish
enough to be shipwrecked.

ERIC laughs roughly.

ERIC (CONT'D)

But not us eh? Not while the Gods smile on us. Not while you are on my right hand. Your real learning is about to start and none too soon.

LEIF looks nervously at ERIC.

ERIC (CONT'D)

Next summer you will be the master, and voyage to the High King,s court.

LEIF

Norway? But me? Why?

ERIC

There are reasons. You'll learn ... in time.

ERIC stands.

First we go to the Thing. You'd best pack and say your goodbyes to your playmates. We leave in two days. Fate awaits us, good or bad.

EXT. VILLAGE SQUARE - NIGHT

The whole village shout, laugh and dance around a huge fire. RANNA and HILDI clap and laugh.

LEIF spots RANNA and makes his way through the crowd towards her. As LEIF approaches, RANNA looks askance at LEIF and HILDI blushes.

LEIF

RAN, your mother has let you out after dark and on such a wild night?

RANNA

(disinterested)

It's Ranna and I go where I please.

LEIF executes a deep bow, HILDI giggles and RANNA shoots her a look.

LEIF

My apologies ...goddess, no
sailors to drown tonight?

RANNA stares LEIF down archly as HILDI stifles a laugh.

RANNA

Where's your bear?

LEIF breaks into laughter.

LEIF

I set him free. I had to... he
eats ...well... like a bear.

RANNA allows herself a small smile. Hildi laughs.

RANNA

You dance?

LEIF

Of course. Join me?

RANNA

I can't, I am forbidden.

RANNA pushes HILDI forward.

RANNA (CONT'D)

But Hildi will be your willing
partner.

HILDI

(protesting)

RANNA...

LEIF holds his hand out to HILDI with princely grace.

LEIF

As you wish...may I have the honor?

HILDI blushes prettily and shyly takes LEIF'S hand.
They move off to dance.

As LEIF whirls HILDI he catches RANNA'S eye.

RANNA quickly looks away.

EXT. ALLEY - NIGHT

LEIF pulls back from kissing RANNA who is backed against a dark wall. The street celebration can be heard in the distance.

LEIF
(serious)
There is great danger...

RANNA
(mocking)
At the Thing?

LEIF
(peaved)
Yes at the Thing. There is the sea voyage and there are many feuds ...

RANNA
And the speeches, the feasting ...

LEIF
Yes all that, but I ...may

Leif looks down in feigned sorrow.

LEIF (CONT'D)

not return.

RANNA
(breathless)
You mean you could ...you could die there?

LEIF
I could ... yes...

RANNA pulls LEIF to her and kisses him fiercely. She quickly pushes him away listening to a non-existent sound.

RANNA (CONT'D)
Did you hear that?

LEIF restarts the kiss only to be pushed away again.

RANNA (CONT'D)

There it is again! Don't you hear it?

LEIF

(becoming impatient)

I hear nothing.

RANNA

(alarmed)

It's mother, I must go.

LEIF'S face drops. RANNA bursts into a giggle and LEIF looks up sharply.

RANNA (CONT'D)

It must have been a cricket.

LEIF roughly pulls a willing RANNA to his chest and they kiss hungrily.

CUT TO:

EXT. ICELAND STREET - DAY

LEIF and a surging CROWD surround a fierce battle between ERIC and a FOE.

Swords clash and flesh wounds spurt blood.

The FOE gains the upper hand and sends ERIC'S sword spinning out of his hand.

The FOE'S victory smile dies on his lips as ERIC lunges and kills with lightening quickness and a knife seeming drawn from the air.

The CROWD is dumbstruck.

SNORRI, a Norse giant, pushes out from the crowd raising a massive battle ax and charges at ERIC.

SNORRI

(roaring in blind anger)

ERIC feints and ducks under the swooping ax to get behind SNORRI.

A CREWMAN passes a battle ax to ERIC as SNORRI wheels to charge again.

They swing broad axes wildly, stumbling and lunging with desperation and no finesse.

SNORRI'S ax handle shatters against ERIC'S. SNORRI backs away holding the broken handle out in defense.

ERIC moves in for the kill, relishing the moment.

ERIC raises his ax but stops in mid swing when he catches LEIF'S eye.

ERIC looks back to SNORRI and lowers his ax slowly.

ERIC

Join us Snorri, you fought well today.

ERIC turns to the crowd and raises his ax.

ERIC (CONT'D)

(shouting)

Valhalla can wait for this one, eh?

ERIC looks back to SNORRI.

ERIC (CONT'D)

(grandly)

The Valkyries AND their horses will be happy not to carry this warrior giant tonight.

The crowd laughs and cheers. ERIC gestures to his crew who surround and jostle SNORRI as they leave.

ERIC meets LEIF'S eyes and nods curtly as they both follow the crew through the crowd.

EXT. ERIC'S MANOR HOUSE - DAY

ERIC and LEIF stand talking in front of ERIC'S house. ERIC'S horse, a sturdy paint stands near them.

ERIC

What is so pressing that you won't join in the hunt?

LEIF

I am meeting ...Thyrker we are...

ERIC
(disgusted)
Thyrker, left to the two of you
we'd be eating roots and berries.

ERIC mounts his horse, wheels him away narrowly
missing LEIF and canters off.

EXT. FOREST - DAY

ERIC leads three other HORSEMEN, spears in hand,
CRASHING through the forest in hot pursuit of a wild
boar.

As they gain ground the boar stops short and wheels
to face the hunters.

ERIC is pitched to the ground as his horse braces and
jolts to a stop, nostrils flared, eyes bulging.

The three HORSEMEN dismount and rush to ERIC who
writhes in pain.

INT. ERIC'S BEDROOM - DAY

ERIC grimaces as he lays on a huge bed with his
bandaged leg pillowed. LEIF'S mother THJOHILD, is at
ERIC'S side. LEIF stands stiffly at the foot of the
bed.

LEIF
But you will heal soon and I have
never been the ship's master
...and to Norway.

ERIC
You were told, last year.

THJOHILD puts her hand to ERIC'S shoulder.

THJOHILD
Perhaps he is too young Eric.
Bjarni could pilot ...

ERIC
Should Bjarni also speak for me at
King Olav's court. And where is
Bjarni? Months overdue ...cannot
even find his way home from
Iceland.

THJOHILD

But ...

ERIC

(angrily)

Enough!

ERIC looks to LEIF.

ERIC (CONT'D)

This is no sentence, it is your
birthright, your chance to lead,
to earn the favor of the gods.

LEIF is downcast.

LEIF silently turns to leave.

EXT. FOREST STREAM - DAY

LEIF and THYRKER sit fishing beside a forest stream.

LEIF

I'll not go. They wouldn't listen
to me anyway.

THYRKER

You must follow your heart Leif.

LEIF

You agree then?

THYRKER

You hear what you want to hear.
You were born to lead but it must
be your choice in the end.

LEIF

But the crew, they're all older
than me.

THYRKER

Experience is important but there
is no practice field for those who
would lead...

THYRKER lays a hand on LEIF'S shoulder.

THYRKER (CONT'D)

Though surrounded by his company,
the leader is always alone. There
is no one he can call on, he must
decide.

LEIF

You would not advise me?

THYRKER

As long as I breathe, you will
have my counsel.

LEIF

You would come, if I did go to
Norway?

THYRKER is distracted as a fish strikes his line and
jumps and splashes.

LEIF watches THYRKER fight the fish until LEIF'S line
goes taught as well.

THYRKER looks to LEIF and they both burst into
laughter.

EXT. VILLAGE SHORE - DAY

A longship can be seen approaching. LEIF and RANNA and
a growing crowd watch excitedly.

RANNA

Who is it?

LEIF

It looks like Bjarni's ship but
why does it come from the west?

LEIF pulls free from RANNA'S hand.

LEIF (CONT'D)

I must meet them.

LEIF rushes toward the beach.

RANNA

I'll see you later?

LEIF pauses and looks back.

LEIF

The pools.

RANNA watches LEIF push his rowboat into the surf and begin rowing hard.

EXT. VILLAGE SHORE - DAY

BJARNI, a bearded, boisterous Norseman with tangled, dirty blond hair stands at the prow of his ship.

The crew rows right up onto the shore. The ship GRINDS to a noisy stop on the shore gravel.

The crowd surges forward.

ERIC watches coldly from afar, leaning on crutches.

CROWD MEMBER 1

What news from Iceland BJARNI?

BJARNI

I have not been there for months.

CROWD MEMBER 2

Where then?

BJARNI

Lost at sea.

The crowd oohs in surprise.

BJARNI (CONT'D)

Carried to the western shore...the very edge of the world.

The crowd is silenced.

BJARNI (CONT'D)

And I bring riches.

BJARNI reaches down and holds up glistening otter furs and throws them to the crowd.

The crowd shouts there approval.

BJARNI reaches down again and holds up two enormous sides of smoked salmon.

BJARNI (CONT'D)

Fish, fish so thick we could walk
on their backs!

The CROWD begins to chant BJARNI'S name exuberantly.

ERIC turns away and limps off.

EXT. THE HOT POOLS - NIGHT

A brilliant full moon illuminates the steaming hot
pools as LEIF and RANNA sit quietly beside each other.

RANNA

You go to Norway, in your father's
place?

LEIF

I havn't decided.

RANNA

You will, I know it ...and I will
be left here ...as women always
are.

LEIF

Bjarni may take my place.

RANNA

I doubt it ...he doesn't like
Bjarni

RANNA giggles.

RANNA (CONT'D)

better his whelp...

LEIF tugs RANNA'S hair as she continues to giggle,
trying to free herself.

LEIF

Whelp?

LEIF releases RANNA and is suddenly alert.

LEIF (CONT'D)

What was that?

RANNA

What?

LEIF

It is the wood nymphs...they
plague me.

RANNA

Wood nymphs?

LEIF

Yes, always here ...when I come
here for solitude ...to think
...to bathe ...I hear them...

RANNA begins to blush. LEIF grabs RANNA'S shoulders.

LEIF (CONT'D)

You do not fear them?

LEIF raises RANNA'S lowered chin and looks deep into
her eyes.

LEIF (CONT'D)

So brave ...and speechless ...at
last.

LEIF kisses RANNA gently.

EXT. FOREST - DAY

LEIF and THYRKER move silently through the forest,
spears at the ready. As a team, LEIF scans ahead while
THYRKER, head down, follows tracks.

THYRKER pauses and LEIF waits for him. THYRKER points
to the left and they move off in that direction.

LEIF stops abruptly with a hand in front of THYRKER
and listens.

LEIF points to the right and signals with an open
hand, then one finger to THYRKER before pointing to
his lips and the sky.

LEIF slips off to the left.

THYRKER is still until he hears a rustle followed by a
bird call signal from LEIF.

THYRKER begins to shout and thrash the bushes with his
spear.

A wild boar can be heard crashing through the brush.

The dying scream of a the wild boar is heard. THYRKER rushes towards the sound.

EXT. FOREST - DAY

THYRKER arrives at the killing scene. LEIF is covered in blood, holding the tusk of a massive wild boar.

LEIF has knife in hand, having just cut the boar's throat. LEIF'S spear juts from the boar's heart.

LEIF looks up to meet THYRKER'S eyes. LEIF'S stare is determined and solemn.

INT. ERIC'S MANOR BANQUET HALL - DAY

ERIC is seated at his banquet table, flagon in hand looking hard at BJARNI who drinks nervously.

ERIC
The land? Like ours?

BJARNI
No, wilder.

ERIC
Wilder how?

BJARNI
I ...can't explain ...untamed.

ERIC
(impatient)
Mountains? trees?

BJARNI is relieved to have the subject change.

BJARNI
(eager)
Yes, yes trees, trees that pierced
the clouds ...thousands
...countless ...and straight like
Thor's gaze.

ERIC
(thoughtful)
Masts ... yet you brought none.

BJARNI

(hastily)

No we thought it better to load
with furs ...

ERIC

We? Lost and led by your crew?

BJARNI

(embarrassed)

And fish ...you have tasted them.

ERIC

Yes the fish are good ...but we
have fish ...and masts, as you
know, are rare on our island ...

ERIC looks away and rubs his chin before looking back
to BJARNI.

ERIC (CONT'D)

And game ...there were deer?

BJARNI

Yes ...huge...with strange
towering horns ...like yew
trees ...

ERIC

Yet like the masts ...you brought
me none? Why? What do you withhold?

BJARNI stares at the floor.

ERIC (CONT'D)

(shouting angrily)

Out with it man!

BJARNI

(murmuring)

We did not go ashore.

ERIC

(incredulous)

You ...

BJARNI

We did not land ...we could
not ...there were beings ...wraiths

ERIC

Wraiths?

BJARNI

Draug ...undead ...painted ...like
men but not men ...as many as the
trees ...appearing and threatening
...then gone.

INT. ERIC'S MANOR BANQUET HALL - DAY

ERIC takes a long drink from his flagon and stares at
a standing LEIF. LEIF is flushed with excitement.

LEIF

You are revenged father, we eat no
roots tonight.

ERIC stares with no response.

Your boar turns on the spit as we
speak, we feast tonight, enough
for the whole village.

ERIC

You are blooded then?...At long
last.

LEIF

And ...I will go to Norway ...for
you ...for Greenland
if...Iceship...

ERIC rises to his feet painfully.

ERIC

She is yours ...do not fail.

EXT. VILLAGE SQUARE - NIGHT

The boar roasts on a spit in the village square where
all are gathered. ERIC steps in front of the
boar, flagon in hand. ERIC throws his crutch on the
fire and turns to address the quieted crowd.

ERIC

Tomorrow my son leaves with the
Iceship for the old country.

The crowd turns to LEIF.

ERIC (CONT'D)

He will represent me ...and all of
you ... at the court of the High
King.

ERIC raises his flagon.

ERIC (CONT'D)

My son!

The CROWD cheers. RANNA looks proud but forlorn.

EXT. VILLAGE SHORE - DAY

The entire village has gathered to send LEIF and the
Iceship on the voyage to Norway. Last items are
loaded, couples embrace and wave. RANNA clings to LEIF
who is trying to pull away.

RANNA

You will come back to me?

LEIF

Yes, but I ...

RANNA

You must ...I lo...

LEIF presses a finger to RANNA'S lips and silences
her. LEIF kisses RANNA quickly and turns to go.

As RANNA opens her eyes, they are brimming. She
watches as LEIF jumps aboard the Iceship. LEIF turns
back waves briefly and then immediately turns away to
give orders as Iceship pulls off to cheers.

RANNA

(whispering to
herself)

I love you.

LEIF looks out to sea. His gaze has wings and speeds
across the sea to the surging beat of ***The Immigrant
Song.***

CUT TO:

EXT. NORTH ATLANTIC - DEEP DUSK

The storm and the music rage. LEIF shouts orders and the crew fights to free the ship from the fallen dun colored sail and broken yardarm as waves break over the bow.

CREWMAN

The sail?

LEIF

Overboard...NOW!

SNORRI chops a rope free with his ax and the crew struggles to heave the whole mess overboard. The Iceship rights herself.

LEIF (CONT'D)

To the oars!

The crew scramble to the oars. LEIF pushes the STEERSMAN aside and seizes the tiller.

LEIF (CONT'D)

Pull, Pull

The sound of the storm and LEIF'S voice cease as the opening screams from *The Immigrant Song* are heard and then:

ROBERT PLANT

"We come from the land of the land
of the ice and snow,

from the midnite sun where the
hotsprings blow,

CUT TO:

INT. THORGUNNA'S BEDROOM HEBRIDES CASTLE - DAY

Birds sing as THORGUNNA works on a tapestry

A LADY IN WAITING bursts into the room.

LADY IN WAITING

A ship my lady!

THORGUNNA continues on the tapestry, not looking up, but with a Mona Lisa smile unseen.

THORGUNNA
Yes ... the Viking.

LADY IN WAITING
(amazed)
You know my lady? ...but how?

THORGUNNA rounds on her LADY IN WAITING.

THORGUNNA
Go girl, fetch mead, we must greet
our guests, go.

The LADY IN WAITING hurries off but turns back as THORGUNNA turns back to the tapestry.

LADY IN WAITING
The sense ...she knows...all

The LADY IN WAITING crosses herself and quickly leaves.

THORGUNNA slowly slides a needle into the breast of a Viking figure in her tapestry.

EXT. HEBRIDES ISLAND COVE - ICESHIP - DAY

The Iceship is rowed, bare masted, towards the cove shore. THYRKER stands next to LEIF in the prow. LEIF points to a distant misted mountain top.

LEIF
That mountain, it has it's own
cloud and on a cloudless day.

THYRKER
It's smoke not cloud, the Fomoire.

LEIF
Mountain people?

THYRKER
Hardly, from under an ancient and
distant sea, the Dark Gods of
Chaos and Wild Nature.

LEIF
(smiling)
More Gods? From Germanica?

THYRKER

To the west, Eire and do not smile
their fire can burn as hot as
Thor's.

LEIF

How do you ...

THYRKER

I know this place.

LEIF looks away from the approaching shore to THYRKER.

LEIF

You have been here?

THYRKER

With your father. Many years
ago...there is much danger for us
here.

LEIF

Why?

THYRKER

There was looting, fire, and
worse...a Viking raid ... in all
its glory... No one must hear your
father's name, we are simple
traders.

THYRKER turns away.

THYRKER (CONT'D)

I will warn the crew.

LEIF

Thyrker.

THYRKER looks back to LEIF.

LEIF (CONT'D)

Stow the weapons.

THYRKER nods curtly and walks away.

INT. HEBRIDES CASTLE - HALL -NIGHT

LEIF is seated to the left of the BARON, (55) jovial and stout, THORGUNNA, her hair high and elaborate, is seated to the BARON'S right at the head table. The boisterous CREWMEN sit on the left of the main table, locals on the right, all are eating and drinking. The BARON and then THORGUNNA look to LEIF.

BARON

You are welcome to our island
LEIF. We get few visitors.

The BARON turns to THORGUNNA.

BARON (CONT'D)

My daughter, THORGUNNA.

All look to a disturbance at the main table where SNORRI is standing gesturing broadly with his drinking horn and a leg of lamb, while THYRKER attempts to subdue him.

LEIF stands quickly.

LEIF

(firmly)
Snorri ...you forget your manners.

THYRKER releases SNORRI and takes his seat. SNORRI looks to LEIF with good humored defiance.

SNORRI

I was just about to ...

LEIF'S eyes grow colder.

SNORRI

I ...

HJALMAR, (30) dark and quick witted, pulls at SNORRI'S arm.

HJALMAR

Am Snorri!

General laughter breaks out as all join the CREW in their mirth and SNORRI seats himself grumpily.

LATER:

THORGUNNA steps to LEIF'S side with a jug.

THORGUNNA

More mead fair Prince?

LEIF looks at THORGUNNA in question and quickly looks down.

LEIF

A trader only.

LEIF moves his cup toward THORGUNNA.

LATER:

The BARON notices LEIF'S eyes are glazed and turns to THORGUNNA.

BARON

THORGUNNA, now we forget our manners, our guests tire, have your girl show them their quarters.

INT. CASTLE HALLWAY - NIGHT

The LADY IN WAITING, carrying a torch leads LEIF and the CREW to a large open room.

The CREW stumble drunkenly and noisily in the door.

SNORRI

(loud)

And our bed warmers?

The CREW laugh with SNORRI.

As LEIF is about to follow them the LADY IN WAITING stops him.

LADY IN WAITING

Our guest room has been prepared my lord.

LEIF hesitates, pushes the door closed on the laughing CREW and then follows the LADY IN WAITING.

INT. GUEST ROOM - NIGHT

LEIF stares hard at a full moon. The moon changes to a luminous blue and grows.

As the moon continues to grow a red rim appears and slowly envelopes the entire moon and it swells to the width of the window.

LEIF
(in a whisper)
The Fomoire ...

Black runes begin to dance on the blood red moon face, LEIF'S own RUNE forms and deepens.

A rustle is heard.

LEIF is clearly drugged as he looks to the sound and slips a long knife from under his pillow.

LEIF sits up quietly and peers into the darkness.

THORGUNNA
No need for ... that blade, sweet
Prince.

THORGUNNA, sheathed in a transparent gown, her hair down, steps from the dark and into the moonlight.

THORGUNNA holds her arms up and slowly turns full circle.

THORGUNNA (CONT'D)
I come unarmed ...as you can see -

THORGUNNA moves to mount LEIF in the half light and force his shoulders back down.

LEIF jerks THORGUNNA off easily and moves to push her down.

LEIF pins THORGUNNA'S wrists above her head.

THORGUNNA (CONT'D)
Laughs.

THORGUNNA begins to force LEIF'S hands up or is he slowly releasing her?

THORGUNNA and LEIF seem to become one as a violent struggle abruptly ensues, thrashing and squirming like uncaged animals.

It is impossible to see whether it is a desperate fight to the death or primitive lovemaking from a time before love.

LATER:

THORGUNNA looks across the pillow at LEIF who seems to be fast asleep.

THORGUNNA slips stealthily from the bed.

LEIF'S eyes open immediately and are alert, he watches as THORGUNNA disappears.

LEIF waits and then rises and goes to the window opening. He finds the moon and watches as it sinks below a hillside.

EXT. HEBRIDES COVE SHORELINE - DAY

SUPER: THREE WEEKS LATER

The Iceship is beached the CREW work to hoist a new yardarm up the mast where HJALMAR is perched.

LEIF and THYRKER are looking up at the Fomoire's mountain where it's cloud is much larger and swirling slowly.

LEIF

The Fomoire grow restless.

THYRKER

It is no good omen for us. We should have been gone weeks ago.

LEIF

A new sail takes time.

THYRKER looks at LEIF sideways.

THYRKER

(suspicious)

Yes ...the sail-

THYRKER limps away. Unnoticed an OLD ISLANDER watches THYRKER closely.

LATER:

The CREW sit on the ground against Iceship, laughing and drinking. LEIF stands beside the CREW.

THORGUNNA approaches, her LADY IN WAITING at her heel.

All eyes are drawn to THORGUNNA who struts, hair and gown ornate.

Trailing are two YEOMEN lugging a heavy white bundle.

THORGUNNA reaches LEIF.

THORGUNNA
Your sail ...trader.

LEIF
White?

THORGUNNA
Like your heart.

LEIF
And yours?

LEIF notices the CREW eying THORGUNNA.

LEIF (CONT'D)
Well ...never seen a sail ...to work.

LEIF turns back to THORGUNNA.

LEIF (CONT'D)
I am in your debt.

THORGUNNA
Yes ...I have something else ... a trinket ...that you may remember your time on our small island.

THORGUNNA hands a silver AMULET to LEIF.

LEIF fingers the disk shaped amulet and turns it thoughtfully. It is engraved with his RUNE.

LEIF does not look up.

LEIF
(distracted)
You are too kind.

INT. CASTLE HEBRIDES - HALLWAY -NIGHT

THORGUNNA glides down the hall and opens the guest room door quietly and slips inside.

INT. GUEST ROOM - NIGHT

THORGUNNA slides under the covers and turns to reach for LEIF.

LEIF is not there!

THORGUNNA slams her fist into the pillow.

EXT. HEBRIDES COVE SHORELINE - DAY

The CREW strain to slide the Iceship down its slip back into the sea.

The ISLANDERS watch the activity laughing and milling about.

The CREW begin loading, THYRKER directs.

The OLD ISLANDER is whispering heatedly to ISLANDER 1, (30) with red hair.

LEIF and THORGUNNA stand near a bonfire

THORGUNNA
Out trading last night?

LEIF
I was restless...always before a voyage.

THORGUNNA
You don't wear my gift. It did not please you?

LEIF
I have it ...safe...

THORGUNNA
You must wear it...it binds us.

LEIF
Binds us?

(beat)

THORGUNNA
(blurting)
I want to come with you.

LEIF
And your father?

THORGUNNA

I don't care what he says...

I carry your child.

LEIF

(doubtful)

A child? ...How could you know?

ISLANDER 1 (O.S.)

(shouting)

You!

ISLANDER 1 strides toward the Iceship pointing at THYRKER who watches his approach calmly.

The crowd quiets and watches in surprise.

LEIF breaks away from THORGUNNA and moves toward Iceship.

The CREW stop loading and start to move toward ISLANDER 1.

ISLANDER 1 (CONT'D)

You ...the cripple...rapist
...murderer!

THYRKER

(calmly)

I am no murderer ...or rapist

LEIF has drawn close, watching tensely.

ISLANDER 1 wheels to the pressing crowd.

ISLANDER 1

He lies, he was here for the Raid,
children and women taken as
slaves....my father killed.

The ISLANDERS begin to look at each other and murmur louder and louder.

ISLANDER 1 (CONT'D)

I have a witness.

The ISLANDERS begin to shout out angrily.

ISLANDERS

Who is it? Revenge, Kill him!

ISLANDER 1 draws his sword.

The OLD ISLANDER pushes his way out to the front of the crowd.

OLD ISLANDER
It's true ... I was there ...fire,
death, children stolen ...and he
was there.

The ISLANDERS go berserk.

THYRKER
(shouting)
I too was a slave ...I still am!

The ISLANDERS drown out THYRKER'S shouts.

The ISLANDERS and ISLANDER 1 surge forward.

LEIF steps in front of THYRKER and raises a hand.

LEIF
HOLD. (beat)

The ISLANDERS stop cold.

LEIF (CONT'D)
(to the crowd)
It is true he was here ... as a
slave ...he still is a slave ...my
slave.

LEIF looks to ISLANDER 1

LEIF (CONT'D)
So take your vengeance here!

LEIF pounds his fist to his heart.

LEIF (CONT'D)
On a free man ...on a father's son.

ISLANDER 1
(in quiet anger)
What father?

(beat)

LEIF
Eric Raude.

The ISLANDERS howl for blood.

SNORRI passes a sword to LEIF.

As the swords clash, THORGUNNA slips away from the back of the crowd and places a leather pouch on the edge of the abandoned bonfire.

LEIF and ISLANDER 1 battle like titans, both are soon dripping blood.

The ISLANDERS and the CREW shout in turn as first one combatant and then the other gains advantage.

With a wild swing ISLANDER 1 slashes deep into LEIF'S right sword arm.

LEIF'S sword drops to the ground, before ISLANDER 1 can press his advantage, LEIF retrieves his sword with his left hand and continues the fight.

THYRKER nods his head in approval.

With a spinning advance Leif charges.

ISLANDER 1 stumbles in retreat and falls backward losing his sword.

LEIF puts his sword to ISLANDER 1's throat and the crowd is silent but for the CREW who encourage the kill.

ISLANDER 1
Go ahead Viking, finish your
father's work.

BOOM a huge FIRE BALL bursts from the bonfire. There is shrieking, shouting and crying, children are gathered.

LEIF pulls back his sword and signals the CREW to the Iceship.

A RUMBLING is heard from the mountain top. Volcanic ash BOILS into the sky.

The CREW stare in awe.

LEIF
(screaming)
The oars!

ISLANDER 1 rises from the ground pointing to the Volcano.

ISLANDER 1
The wrath of the Fomoire ...

SNORRI is transfixed by the volcano as the CREW scramble into Iceship.

SNORRI
(in wonder)
Thor ...the destroyer ...saves us

ISLANDER 1 points to the Iceship.

ISLANDER 1
The Vikings brought this on us.
Your bows ...they escape

The CREW frantically trip and fumble their oars and slowly pull away from the shore.

LEIF
(shouting)
Shields.

The CREW fix their shields in place as arrows start to fall close into the sea, a few thud into shields.

The arrows begin to fall shorter.

The STEERSMAN at the tiller in the stern drops his shield to jeer.

STEERSMAN
Save your arrows island scum ...

ISLANDER 1 takes careful aim and looses a final arrow.

STEERSMAN (CONT'D)
for our return.

The final arrow HISSES until it sinks deep into the STEERSMAN'S chest.

The STEERSMAN slumps half overboard taking the tiller hard to port.

The Iceship responds turning back towards shore.

THE ISLANDERS
Shouting and cheering.

LEIF clambers to the stern to pull the dead STEERSMAN back aboard, freeing the tiller.

LEIF seizes the tiller and brings Iceship about to head for open water. An arrow thuds into the stern post, inches from LEIF'S head.

LEIF stares up at THORGUNNA who stands alone on the castle parapet.

THORGUNNA surveys the milling crowd shrouded in heavy black smoke, the calming volcano before fixing her gaze on LEIF.

THORGUNNA holds an AMULET in her palm, identical to the one she gave LEIF.

EXT. OPEN SEA - DAY

The CREW are silent. All eyes are on the STEERSMAN'S body, wrapped tight in his cloak, stiff on a plank and balanced across the prow of Iceship.

LEIF moves to the body and solemnly tips it over the side. The body slides under the sea's surface sinking very slowly. The CREW watch silently as the STEERSMAN'S corpse slowly drifts beside the Iceship into her wake.

(beat)

SNORRI

I need a drink.

The STEERSMAN'S corpse can barely be made out as it sinks.

CREW (O.S.)

(shouting)

VALHALLA!

CUT TO:

EXT. FAERGERNE ISLAND - DAY

SUPER - FAERGERNE ISLAND - ONE WEEK LATER

Iceship lies offshore of a small island.

SNORRI

What place is this then?

LEIF

Faergerne, we collect tribute here.

CREW

Rumbling with happy assent.

LEIF

For the Jarl, not us.

EXT. FAERGERNE ISLAND SHORE -DAY

LEIF jumps ashore as Iceship is beached. LEIF strides purposefully but stops when he spots two small ragged CHILDREN watching him. FATHER HALLORAN, (28) spare and severe, in a black cassock, appears behind the CHILDREN and walks toward LEIF.

FATHER HALLORAN

In the Lord's name, welcome to Faergerne traveller, I am Father Halloran.

LEIF

I am Leif ...Ericson. I am here on my father's behest ...Lord Protector and Jarl of this island.

FATHER HALLORAN

The one God protects us.

LEIF

You call on Odin?

FATHER HALLORAN crosses himself and looks to the heavens.

FATHER HALLORAN

There is but one God. All pagan pretenders are swept aside with his coming.

LEIF

Pagan?

FATHER HALLORAN

Odin and all of his ilk. All who worship their false idols shall perish in the fires of hell.

FATHER HALLORAN points inland.

Only the true believers will have
life everlasting.

(BEAT)

LEIF
Tribute is owed, I am here to
collect it.

EXT. FAERGERNE VILLAGE - DAY

FATHER HALLORAN struggles to keep up with LEIF who is walking briskly through a cluster of huts towards a church.

The CREW is fanned out coming in and out of huts. The ragged VILLAGERS huddle in fear.

FATHER HALLORAN
As I told you we have nothing,
nothing but our faith.

FATHER HALLORAN points to the two small CHILDREN from the beach.

FATHER HALLORAN (CONT'D)
Our children are hungry.

LEIF stops and turns to FATHER HALLORAN as they near the front of the church.

LEIF
And what of the mines?

FATHER HALLORAN
(hesitant)
...The mines ...they are
spent ...closed years ago, before
I arrived here.

SNORRI bursts from the church door raising gold chalices in one hand and a large jewelled cross in the other.

SNORRI
I knew I could smell gold.

LEIF looks at FATHER HALLORAN with contempt.

INT. ICESHIP - NIGHT

The Iceship is becalmed, oars are shipped, the CREW are drinking, LEIF is drunk and slouched over the tiller.

LEIF

What say you all to a visit to
Scotland.

CREW

Leif the Lucky!

LEIF

To Gold and Ale!

CREW

Gold and Ale!

LATER:

LEIF is at the tiller, THYRKER at his side, the CREW are subdued but still drinking.

THYRKER

We are only fourteen, is a raid
wise.

LEIF points to the CREW.

LEIF

They are willing. It will be our fortune and
it is their fate ... it is time I earned my
own tribute.

EXT. SCOTTISH MONASTERY - NIGHT

The monastery is on fire, LEIF leads the raucous CREW towards the beached Iceship, all but LEIF are heavily burdened with booty, laughing and marching to the
Immigrant Song;

ROBERT PLANT

*How soft your fields so green,
can whisper tales of gore,
of how we calmed the tides of
war ...*

The CREWMAN pass by a corpse with no regard.

LEIF glances briefly at the corpse and turns his ear to a distant shriek of despair before following the CREWMEN;

ROBERT PLANT (CONT'D)

We are your overlords ...

INT.OPEN SEA -ICESHIP - DAY

SNORRI comes up to LEIF who has the tiller in hand. Iceship's white sail is billowing.

SNORRI

We raid again tonight?

LEIF

My meeting with King Olav will keep ...We raid until the Scottish shore is picked clean.

THYRKER looks up at LEIF from a nearby seat.

EXT. SCOTTISH SEASHORE - NIGHT

HJALMAR

There it is ...the river mouth.

LEIF is at the tiller peering into the gloom.

LEIF

I see it, keep your voice low.

Iceship is rowed quietly up the river.

The dirge **No Quarter** begins;

ROBERT PLANT

Close the door ... put out the light,

you know they won't be home tonight

...

The music fades to a murmur.

HJALMAR

(loud whisper)

There is smoke ...and firelight.

EXT. RIVER SHORE -NIGHT

All except THYRKER slip quietly ashore and gather around LEIF.

LEIF

We are here and then gone ...for
plunder ...kill only those who
oppose ...

LEIF draws his sword and pushes forward through the
CREW.

LEIF (CONT'D)

To the light ...Now Snorri.

SNORRI

A guttural and blood curdling war
cry.

The CREW joins SNORRI in war cries and charge off
following LEIF.

No Quarter reemerges, louder than before;

ROBERT PLANT

the winds of Thor are blowing cold

they're wearing steel that's
bright and true,

THYRKER seated within Ice ship, stares at his flute as
he slowly turns it in his hands.

ROBERT PLANT (CONT'D)

they carry news that must get
through,

They chose the path where no one
goes,

THYRKER listens as distant high pitched screams and
cries mingle with the CREW'S war cries.

The clash of swords follows, and

No Quarter reaches a crescendo;

ROBERT PLANT (CONT'D)

they hold no quarter,

EXT. KING OLAV'S CASTLE - DAY - ESTABLISHING

SUPER - THREE WEEKS LATER - NIARDOS NORWAY

INT. COURT OF KING OLAV, NIARDOS NORWAY - DAY

SUPER - COURT OF HIGH KING OLAV

LEIF stands in front of KING OLAV, (45) well trimmed beard and wearing a plain silver headband and seated on a heavy and ornate wooden throne on a small dais.

LEIF

I bring a gift from my father, my
lord King.

LEIF passes one of the gold chalices from Faergerne to KING OLAV.

KING OLAV turns the chalice thoughtfully in his hands.

LEIF (CONT'D)

There is more ...much more ...

KING OLAV ignores LEIF and continues examining the chalice.

KING OLAV

Very fine work ...oddly familiar...

KING OLAV looks up at LEIF searchingly.

KING OLAV (CONT'D)

It will have a place of honor in
our Cathedral. We will present it
at mass ...you will join us?

LEIF

...Of course.

LEIF begins to pace before turning back to KING OLAV.

LEIF (CONT'D)

My father has asked me to speak to
your grace on his behalf.

KING OLAV

Yes.

LEIF

With all respect ...he seeks your
pardon ...for a past deed ...many
years ago.

KING OLAV

For which he was outlawed ...and
banished ...for life ...by his
fellow Jarls.

LEIF looks down.

KING OLAV (CONT'D)

for murder ...several murders.

LEIF takes a moment to gather himself before looking
into KING OLAV'S eyes with determination.

LEIF

There was a feud, a heated feud,
likely needless ... and there were
deaths ...on both sides.

KING OLAV

Undoubted, but your father's foes
are beyond my pardon. They are in
the hands of our Lord.

LEIF looks to his feet, defeated.

KING OLAV (CONT'D)

For me to interfere in distant
affairs...

After a long pause LEIF looks up somewhat defiant but
holds his tongue and looks down again.

KING OLAV (CONT'D)

Does he regret his actions?

LEIF looks up hopefully.

KING OLAV (CONT'D)

Is he truly repentant?

LEIF

(eager)

Yes my lord, very much, he is
changed. He has aged ...he would
like to see his homeland ... once
more.

(BEAT)

KING OLAV
I must think on this we will speak
again.

EXT. NIARDOS CATHEDRAL - DAY (WINTER)

SUPER - SIX MONTHS LATER

LEIF and KING OLAV stand outside the cathedral.

A solemn hymnal male chorus emanates from the
cathedral.

LEIF
It has been many months my
lord ...we are expected back this
year ...

KING OLAV
You will be missed ...you are so
like my son ...who was taken too
soon.

KING OLAV crosses himself and looks to LEIF.

KING OLAV (CONT'D)
You have a son?

LEIF hesitates and looks away.

LEIF
No my lord ...neither son or
daughter.

KING OLAV
Do not wait too long ...to be a
father ...there is no stronger
bond ...no deeper love ...

LEIF nods in agreement and interjects softly.

LEIF
My father ...his matter ...

KING OLAV stares off with a faraway, vacant stare his
eyes are rimmed with tears.

KING OLAV

...Yes, yes ...you have been
patient ...your father is well
served.

LEIF looks away and quickly brushes his eyes.

KING OLAV touches LEIF'S shoulder to turn him towards
a pathway beside the cathedral.

KING OLAV (CONT'D)

I would like to show you something.

EXT. GRAVEYARD - DAY - (WINTER)

LEIF and KING OLAV walk slowly through a huge, bleak
grave yard with mostly simple wooden crosses with a
few stone monuments interspersed.

On the overlooking hillside there is a stone mausoleum.

KING OLAV gestures broadly across the graveyard.

KING OLAV (CONT'D)

My subjects LEIF ...

KING OLAV points to the mausoleum.

KING OLAV (CONT'D)

and my family ...all of them ...
gone ... all but my grandson, now my
sole heir ...spared by the grace
of God.

KING OLAV looks hard into LEIF'S eyes.

KING OLAV (CONT'D)

A plague Leif ...touching every
fjord, every hut ...finally even
to the King's chamber ...

KING OLAV seizes LEIF by both shoulders.

KING OLAV (CONT'D)

Odin and his host were powerless ... if not for my
grandson, I would have gladly joined them all ...in
Valhalla ...

KING OLAV laughs with no mirth and turns away.

KING OLAV (CONT'D)

And then it stopped ...just
stopped ...first my grandson, who
had just been stricken ... rallied
...and then others.

KING OLAV turns back to LEIF. KING OLAV'S eyes glow
with religious fervor.

KING OLAV (CONT'D)

And then a small boat ...made of
skins ... and salvation.

EXT. SEASHORE - DAY - (SUMMER)

SUPER - SIX MONTHS LATER

THYRKER and LEIF walk the shoreline.

THYRKER

Time grows short ...if we are to
return home before the storms.

LEIF

I cannot leave without my answer.
All the gold in the world is
nothing against the pardon I am
sent for.

THYRKER

The King favors you ...is there
nothing ...

LEIF looks sharply to THYRKER.

LEIF

Yes ...my immortal soul.

EXT. SEASHORE - DAY - (SUMMER)

LEIF and KING OLAV relax on the seashore, seated in
low wooden beach chairs. KING OLAV'S GRANDSON(2) pudgy
and rambunctious, splashes at the water's edge.

A disinterested NANNY sits next to the GRANDSON.

The NANNY notices someone over the GRANDSON'S shoulder
and quickly stands and accentuates her ample bosom.

KING OLAV

More wine?

KING OLAV takes LEIF'S flagon and slowly extricates himself from his chair to turn away and busy himself with the wine.

LEIF'S P.O.V.

LEIF watches KING OLAV turning away and looks back at the GRANDSON splashing safely at the water's edge.

LEIF looks at the distracted NANNY and quickly back to the GRANDSON.

LEIF springs from his seat like a cat and knocks the NANNY aside on his way to the GRANDSON.

NANNY

Screams.

LEIF scoops the GRANDSON up and flips himself to splash into deeper water, landing on his back.

LEIF holds the GRANDSON up above his chest as the dazed GRANDSON begins to cry.

The NANNY stumbles to her knees and begins to crawl toward LEIF and the GRANDSON.

KING OLAV drops the wine flagon and reaches LEIF and the GRANDSON just as the NANNY reaches for him.

KING OLAV pushes her aside and picks up the GRANDSON from LEIF'S chest and hugs him tightly.

KING OLAV

Thank God ...

KING OLAV looks down to LEIF.

KING OLAV (CONT'D)

and you LEIF.

The NANNY stands and reaches for the GRANDSON.

NANNY

Majesty ...I ...

KING OLAV

Out of my sight girl.

INT. CATHEDRAL - NIGHT

LEIF kneels in front of KING OLAV who stands in front of an elaborate altar which is backed by a towering stained glass window.

THYRKER and a PRIEST stand off to the side.

KING OLAV taps both of LEIF'S shoulders with a heavy and ornate sword.

KING OLAV

From here forward, you are my
Liege man ...where you are ...I am
...there ... at your back.

LEIF

My Liege ... from here
forward ...where I am ...I am your
right hand.

The PRIEST steps forward and lifts a basin before turning to the kneeling LEIF.

INT. COURT OF KING OLAV - DAY

LEIF and KING OLAV sit at a side table, the throne is empty.

KING OLAV pushes a thin silver tablet across the table to LEIF.

KING OLAV

Your father's pardon ...as
promised.

LEIF takes the pardon, examines it and tucks it inside his tunic.

LEIF

Thank-you my Liege.

KING OLAV

You have been a faithful son
...and you bring your father more
than a King's pardon ...you bring
the Almighty's pardon the Lord's
forgiveness and life
...everlasting.

KING OLAV stands and walks to a window before turning back to LEIF.

KING OLAV (CONT'D)

I have one request.

Leif looks up, nervous and disconcerted.

KING OLAV (CONT'D)

Passage for a monk ... to assist
you ...in bringing the living word
...to all your kinsmen.

LEIF hesitates, begins to speak and then hesitates
again.

LEIF

As you wish my Liege.

EXT. NIARDOS SHORELINE - DAY

LEIF and THYRKER approach the Iceship where the CREW
are gathered. LEIF addresses the CREW.

LEIF

We leave in two days time.

The CREW raise a happy cheer.

SNORRI

The season is short now but still
time to raid eh?

LEIF

We return home.

HJALMAR

Best say your goodbyes then Snorri
or will you bring your new lass to
meet Hildi.

LEIF joins the CREW in laughter. SNORRI is jostled.

CREW

Always room for another, eh SNORRI?

Your nights will be warm.

HJALMAR

And your ears.

Fresh laughter erupts. Even SNORRI and THYRKER join in.

LEIF holds up a hand to quiet the CREW.

LEIF

We will have a rider, a monk.

Some of the CREW groans, a few cross themselves.

SNORRI

I've had my fill of monks and their chatter.

HJALMAR

They speak the truth SNORRI.

SNORRI

We'll have no peace and no luck ...mark me.

INT. ICESHIP - OPEN SEA -DAY

The monk, the FATHER(28) lean and intense, is speaking to HJALMAR and three others in the bow. SNORRI and the rest of the CREW watch them warily.

LEIF, at the tiller, looks at the darkening sky with THYRKER.

LEIF

A storm will be on us in the hour ...

LEIF looks to the FATHER.

LEIF (CONT'D)

Odin may test our new savior.

LEIF (CONT'D)

(shouted)

Shorten sail.

LATER:

A storm is at full strength, the CREW are at their oars.

The FATHER stands in the spray holding a lanyard for support and a small wooden cross out over the bow.

SNORRI leans to his rowing mate and nods toward the FATHER.

SNORRI

We should feed him to the fish ...let him preach to Ranna.

A large wave breaks over the bow, drenching the FATHER and tumbling him back onto the front rowing pair.

SNORRI
(chuckling)
The sea god greets the monk, Ho
Aegir!

EXT. ERICSFJORD - GREENLAND - DAY

SUPER - ERICSFJORD - GREENLAND - THREE WEEKS LATER

THJOHILD stands on the village shore beside ERIC, they are surrounded by the whole village.

THJOHILD
Is it him ...is it Leif?

ERIC
It is the Iceship.

As the Iceship draws near the white sail drops and immediately fills with a loud SNAP.

The jabbering VILLAGERS fall silent and stare in wonder at the huge crimson cross painted on the sail.

VILLAGER
I see him, it is Leif!

Leif the Lucky!

VILLAGERS
Leif the Lucky!

THJOHILD
What is that symbol?

ERIC
(darkly)
Our doom.

Thjohild looks to ERIC in question.

LATER:

The CREW stack more and more treasure on the dock.

SNORRI is hugging HILDI.

HILDI

Did you miss me Snorri?

HJALMAR

Chuckles.

SNORRI starts at the chuckle and begins a gallant response.

SNORRI

I missed you more than ...

SNORRI can think of no closing comparison.

HJALMAR

(quickly
interjecting)
more than you'll ever know.

HILDI pulls SNORRI close.

SNORRI looks back over his shoulder at HJALMAR with a thankful but warning glance.

HILDI

Oh Snorri ...

RANNA stands alone on the edge of the crowd

RANNA'S P.O.V.

RANNA watches SNORRI and HILDI hugging.

RANNA then looks at LEIF who is surrounded by admirers of all sorts.

ERIC watches from far back with obvious envy.

ERIC stomps off with a noticeable but proud limp.

EXT. ERIC'S MANOR HOUSE - DAY - ESTABLISHING

INT. ERIC'S BANQUET HALL - DAY

ERIC, with flagon at hand, is seated across from LEIF.

ERIC

So you are a rich man ...and your
blade has tasted more than boar's
blood.

LEIF

And you will have your taste of
all, as Jarl ...and your tribute
from Faergerne ...it is collected.

ERIC

You forget your living
plunder ...no slaves but a monk.

LEIF looks down momentarily.

LEIF

The King ... it was
...complex ...he insisted.

ERIC

He is weak.

LEIF

He may be ...but he is the High
King.

LEIF slides the silver plaque of Pardon across the
table to ERIC.

ERIC picks up the plaque and examines it closely.

ERIC

The King's Pardon ...safe
passage ... to my home ...my
father's home.

ERIC'S seems to soften and then abruptly pushes away
from the table, stands and turns away.

ERIC (CONT'D)

Should never have happened
...never been needed ...it was a
fair fight ...

ERIC, flings the plaque CLATTERING it against the
stone hearth.

ERIC (CONT'D)

Now I am in his debt!

LEIF is defeated as he looks at ERIC'S back. LEIF
stands quietly and leaves.

ERIC turns and stares at the door when he hears it
close.

Favoring his injured knee, ERIC kneels painfully to retrieve the plaque.

ERIC begins to stand but drops the plaque and drops back to his knees, his head in his hands.

EXT. VILLAGE SQUARE - DAY

LEIF walks across the village square disconsolate and oblivious to the bustle and the numerous greetings.

RANNA spots LEIF from across the square and hurries towards him.

RANNA hesitates as she reaches LEIF and falls quietly into step with him.

(beat)

LEIF notices RANNA.

LEIF
(unexcited)
Ranna.

RANNA
(flirty)
The hero returns.

LEIF
Still the tease ...

RANNA immediately regrets her jibe.

LEIF (CONT'D)
nothing changes here.

RANNA
I meant no ...I am sorr ...

LEIF hears the hurt in RANNA'S voice and stops her with a hand to her arm.

LEIF
No, forgive me RANNA ...I ...

LEIF looks away.

LEIF (CONT'D)

I have much in my mind ...none of
it gives me peace ...but you
...you are more beautiful than
even I remember. How have you
been?

RANNA

Waiting ...as women do ...and

LEIF

What is it?

RANNA

It is since you left ...I have
missed you ...

LEIF

(interjects)

And I you RANNA but ...

RANNA

There is someone else.

LEIF

No, no, there is no one ...it's
just ...I feel I am being pulled
apart ... from every side, I can't
explain ...not even to myself, but
it's not you, it's not you.

RANNA

I would help you ...in ...anything.

LEIF

No ...I ...

RANNA

I'll leave you now, we could talk
later ...at the pools?

LEIF

(distracted and

relieved)

Yes, if you like.

INT. TAVERN - NIGHT

LEIF is smiling, seated around a large table with
SNORRI and the other CREWMEN who were not listening to
the FATHER on Iceship. They are drinking and laughing.

SNORRI

Good to be home ...where is the
maid ...she must sail again.

LEIF

No, I'm going, take my share
Snorri.

SNORRI

One more chief, Ranna will wait.

CREWMAN 2

Watch your tongue Snorri ... or it
may be trimmed.

LEIF

That's alright ...yes Snorri we'll
have another then, I'm interested
to see the color of your gold
...it is a rare sight.

The table unites in raucous laughter with SNORRI
laughing loudest.

EXT. THE HOT POOLS - NIGHT

LEIF, hidden in the bushes watches RANNA sipping from
a bottle and up to her neck in the hot pool, steam
swirling. LEIF sees a blanket laid out with RANNA'S
gown next to it.

LEIF turns to leave before stopping for one last look
at RANNA and then slipping away.

LATER:

RANNA startles, raises herself partly from the pool
and peers out fearfully toward the sound as a CRASHING
in the bushes is heard. A low GROWL can be heard from
the bush

RANNA'S fear disappears as she sees LEIF burst from
the bush.

LEIF

Aha, trapped at last Wood Nymph.

LEIF walks up to the pool and picks up RANNA'S gown.

LEIF (CONT'D)

And without your armor ...you are
disadvantaged.

LEIF throws the gown aside and begins to undress.

LEIF (CONT'D)

The battle must be fair.

LATER:

LEIF and RANNA recline in the hot pool.

RANNA

You have changed.

LEIF

Better?

RANNA

Different ...more serious.

RANNA looks to LEIF with a slight smile.

RANNA (CONT'D)

Harder, more like your father.

LEIF

No ...

RANNA

is of no matter ...I want change
too ...I want my name sung in the
halls, as yours will be ...as it
already is ...to do something
...of note and not in the shadows.

LEIF looks at RANNA with some surprise.

EXT. ERIC'S MANOR HOUSE - NIGHT - ESTABLISHING

INT. ERIC'S MASTER BEDROOM - NIGHT

ERIC is sitting up in bed admiring THJOHILD'S back as
she sits on a stool, sensuously brushing her long hair.

Without turning Tjohild speaks.

THJOHILD

The days grow colder and there are
more new faces at mass every week.

THJOHILD looks back over her shoulder.

THJOHILD (CONT'D)

We need a church.

ERIC

A church ...it would save me a lot
of sailing ...

THJOHILD

(sharply)

You mock me? ...And the one God.

ERIC

No, only a little joke ...come to
bed Thjoey.

THJOHILD

And my church?

ERIC

(grandly)

We'll begin tomorrow.

THJOHILD springs up and giggles as she moves toward
the bed.

THJOHILD

You swear to it?

ERIC catches THJOHILD by her wrist and pulls her off
balance and to him. They embrace and kiss.

ERIC

You have my word lady.

THJOHILD pushes away

THJOHILD

(giggling)

And a bell, we must have ...

ERIC quiets THJOHILD with a long kiss.

EXT. THYRKER'S HUT - DAY

THYRKER is sitting on his front porch as LEIF walks up
with a fishing rod.

LEIF

Up Thyrker, the fish await.

THYRKER

You have just missed Snorri.

LEIF

Will he meet us?

THYRKER

No, but he brought news...she is here.

LEIF

Who?

THYRKER

(savoring)

Your Hebrides princess.

(BEAT)

LEIF

Thorgunna? But how?

THYRKER

In a boat ... made with animal skins and rowed by monks ...quite an entrance ...

LEIF is perplexed and considers the news.

LEIF

Why ...what does she want?

THYRKER

The Gods know ...not I ...and there was another small traveler ...

LEIF looks hard at THYRKER.

EXT. THJOHILD'S CHURCH - DAY

The Post and Beam church is well underway. Two dozen CHRISTIAN VILLAGERS are hard at work, digging, pushing barrows and standing timbers.

THJOHILD and the FATHER are off to the side gesturing grandly and directing the work.

ERIC can be seen watching from a hillside.

LATER: SUNSET

The CHRISTIAN VILLAGERS and ERIC are gone. THJOHILD and the FATHER are still animated, inside the church shell and looking up through the unfinished roof.

Four MONKS with THORGUNNA following, file towards the church. THORGUNNA has THORGILS (1 ½), longish black hair, coal black eyes, in her arms.

RANNA is following at a distance and steps behind a tree as the MONKS and THORGUNNA reach the church.

RANNA watches intently.

THJOHILD and the FATHER see the MONKS and THORGUNNA arrive and hasten to greet them.

THORGUNNA stays back as the others hug and cross themselves and then hug again exuberantly.

THJOHILD notices THORGUNNA and rushes to greet her.

Almost right away THORGUNNA passes THORGILS to THJOHILD

THJOHILD holds THORGILS at arms length.

RANNA slips away

THJOHILD looks over THORGILS shoulder to compliment THORGUNNA.

THJOHILD

He is just beautiful.

THJOHILD draws THORGILS close, kisses him and hugs him to her chest.

THJOHILD (CONT'D)

Thorgunna ...I've heard that name before ...at my home in Iceland.

THORGUNNA

My grandmother, she left the Hebrides long before I was born.

THJOHILD

There were many stories ...of her great beauty ... and her ...powers.

Thorgunna looks away to the church.

THORGUNNA
You must tell me ...sometime.

EXT. ERICSFJORD SHORE - DAY

LEIF is looking over BJARNI'S longship, the Gull as Thorgunna comes up behind him.

THORGUNNA
You avoid me ... and your son.

LEIF looks over his shoulder at THORGUNNA and then back to the Gull.

THORGUNNA (CONT'D)
I have told no one, it is your choice to accept him ...or not.

LEIF
And yet you are here.

THORGUNNA
I came for you Leifr.

LEIF
Armed with new potions no doubt.

THORGUNNA looks away to gather herself.

THORGUNNA
I bring you my love ...not potions.

LEIF
(with disdain)
Love? ...I need it not ... from you or anyone.

THORGUNNA
But your son ...

LEIF
And what spawn is he?

THORGUNNA
No, no, I swear on ...

LEIF
You swear ...on what, on what dark spirit do you call?

THORGUNNA reaches for LEIF but is pushed away.

LEIF (CONT'D)
Better to be unloved.

EXT. ERIC'S MANOR HOUSE - NIGHT - ESTABLISHING

INT. ERIC'S KITCHEN - NIGHT

There is a roaring fire in the hearth.

THJOHILD is feeding THORGILS on her lap from a small bowl, THORGUNNA watches the doorway expectantly and well before ERIC appears in the doorway.

ERIC stops short, he is obviously drunk and surprised.

ERIC gives THORGUNNA a lingering once over.

THORGUNNA enjoys his lustful look and calmly sets her bowl aside.

ERIC
(warmly)
And who do we have here!

THJOHILD turns to ERIC.

THJOHILD
ERIC, you are home early ...we
have guests ...delivered safe from
across the sea.

THJOHILD turns back to THORGUNNA.

THJOHILD (CONT'D)

This is THORGUNNA ...from the
Hebrides.

THJOHILD looks down to THORGILS.

THJOHILD (CONT'D)
And this is ...

ERIC snatches THORGILS up and swings him full circle.

ERIC
Yes, and who is this small warrior.

THORGILS gurgles with glee

THORGUNNA watches, smiling as THJOHILD explodes.

THJOHILD
(screeching)
Eric! Be careful ...

THJOHILD gets up to retrieve THORGILS.

THJOHILD (CONT'D)
he is not your flagon to swing
about.

ERIC
Be calm woman ...

THJOHILD bristles at ERIC'S condescension but holds her tongue with a quick sidelong glance at THORGUNNA.

ERIC (CONT'D)
Every boy, no matter his age,
needs a man's hand to toughen him.

ERIC tussles THORGILS hair and he gurgles again. ERIC notices THJOHILD'S anger and quickly looks to THORGUNNA to change the subject as THJOHILD takes THORGILS to her breast.

ERIC (CONT'D)
The Hebrides eh ...you know the
Baron then?

THORGUNNA
I know him well ... he is my
father.

INT. TAVERN - DAY

LEIF and BJARNI talk earnestly at a corner table.

LEIF
So it's settled then.

BJARNI
Yes, I have no need of her ...I've
had enough of unknown waters
...and unknown lands.

LEIF and BJARNI spit on their right hands and slap them together.

LEIF

I'll bring you the silver tomorrow.

As BJARNI leaves, LEIF signals for drink.

EXT. ERIC'S HOUSE - DAY - ESTABLISHING

INT. ERIC'S KITCHEN - DAY

ERIC sits at the table downtrodden, his food untouched.

THJOHILD stands over ERIC.

THJOHILD

You are so stubborn.

ERIC

I know Thjoey ...but what if you are wrong ...what if the monks are wrong.

THJOHILD

I am not wrong!

ERIC

(beaten)

But how can you be sure?

ERIC'S becomes sullen and his face darkens in anger.

ERIC stands in stifled anger and heads for the door.

At the door ERIC turns back.

ERIC

Have your priest pray for your bell then. I've had enough.

ERIC leaves with a slam of the door.

INT. TAVERN - DAY

ERIC bursts through the tavern door and surveys the room. All eyes turn warily to watch ERIC.

ERIC spots LEIF and pushes his way towards him.

ERIC

More monks ...and what do you know of this?

LEIF

(coldly)

Nothing, it is none of my doing.

ERIC

Humph, we are overrun ...monks,
strange women

LEIF looks up at this.

ERIC (CONT'D)

...and you were there.

LEIF

And now I am leaving...to sea.

ERIC

Leaving? For where? No, no, not
with Iceship ...not with my
ship ...I'll see her burn first.

LEIF

I have my own ship.

ERIC

What, that fool Bjarni? And ...for
where then, more fame, more
riches ...never enough eh? Or is
it just to escape the chaos you
have brought down on my head
...and on my house.

LEIF stands in anger.

LEIF

And you? How much death? ...How
much blood? ...Before your thirst
is slaked.

LEIF tries to leave but ERIC with his hand on his
sword hilt, blocks his way.

(BEAT)

LEIF pauses and looks down at ERIC'S sword hand and
then into ERIC'S eyes with cold anger.

LEIF steps around ERIC and leaves.

EXT. VILLAGE SQUARE - DAY

LEIF strides purposefully through the village, his
face set.

RANNA spots LEIF and moves to intercept him.

LEIF
(brusque)
Not now RANNA.

LEIF pushes past RANNA who turns to stare at his back.

THORGUNNA watches from across the village square with THORGILS on her hip. THORGUNNA moves toward LEIF'S path.

LEIF stops short as THORGUNNA steps in front of him. They begin to talk as RANNA looks on from across the square.

RANNA turns and runs off, tears streaming.

EXT. ERIC'S HOUSE - NIGHT - ESTABLISHING

INT. ERIC'S KITCHEN - NIGHT

ERIC bursts into the kitchen, flushed and drunk. The SERVANT GIRL looks up fearfully.

ERIC
Where is my wife?

SERVANT GIRL
She is gone sir.

ERIC
Gone where?

SERVANT GIRL
I don't know ...She took
clothes ...and she left ...

ERIC'S face blazes with anger.

The SERVANT GIRL cringes.

ERIC'S anger drains from his face as he slumps into a chair and dissolves into heartbreak.

EXT. CLIFF EDGE - NIGHT

RANNA stands at the cliff edge disconsolate. She looks down at the swirling white sea and the crashing waves.

RANNA raises her arms and looks to the heavens.

EXT. SEASHORE - NIGHT

The CREWMAN load the longship GULL under the eyes of LEIF and THYRKER.

RANNA, her hair in beaded corn braids, and HILDI, in pigtails, appear with bundles in hand.

RANNA

We are coming.

The CREWMEN and LEIF look speechlessly at RANNA and HILDI.

RANNA (CONT'D)

I call on the Goddess Freya.

HILDI

And I call on ...Ranna ...my friend.

SNORRI

But ...it is bad luck

CREWMEN

General muttering.

LEIF holds up a hand.

LEIF

We search for the western shore ...in strange seas ...we need all brave souls ...and their goddesses.

THYRKER looks at LEIF in question.

HJALMAR

Well its settled then ...at least we won't have to eat Snorri's cooking.

RANNA

I don't cook.

LEIF

What then?

RANNA

I can steer, even the great Leif
Ericson must sleep sometime.

HILDI

I will cook ...I've tasted
Snorri's concoctions.

SNORRI hesitates before joining the others in laughter.

EXT. NORTH ATLANTIC - DAY

RANNA is at the helm in a calm sea as LEIF points to
the horizon and reaches to guide her hand.

RANNA pushes LEIF'S hand away.

EXT. NORTH ATLANTIC - NIGHT

LEIF holds the tiller firmly in a strong sea.

RANNA comes to relieve LEIF who refuses her help.

As RANNA turns away LEIF relents, taps her on the
shoulder and gives her the tiller.

EXT. NORTH ATLANTIC - DAY

The CREWMAN are slumped exhausted at their oars
passing an almost empty water skin.

EXT. BAFFIN ISLAND OFFSHORE - DAY

A barren shoreline can just be glimpsed through a
heavy fog.

BOWMAN

Land!

LATER:

The Gull is much closer to shore. ALL stare hard at
the sheer rock of the inhospitable Baffin shoreline.

LEIF

It is just as Bjarni
described ...we will find fresh
water and go south.

EXT. VINLAND - DAY - ESTABLISHING

A fine gravel beach, lush meadows and dense forest.

EXT. VINLAND SHORE - NIGHT

ALL are gathered around a roaring fire where two giant salmon are spitted at the fire edge, roasting and dripping.

SNORRI lugs a large dry log to the fire and drops it with a CRASH onto the fire. A cloud of sparks erupt.

LEIF

Easy Snorri, you'll destroy our supper.

SNORRI

More where they came from, they outnumber the stars.

HJALMAR

Off you go then ...get tomorrow's catch...while we eat.

HILDI

(worried)

Don't go Snorri, Bjarni said there were ...draugs here ...the undead.

The boisterous CROWD goes silent, some looking with fear into the dark.

INT. VINLAND HUT - DAY

HILDI looks nervously at RANNA.

HILDI

I'm so scared Ranna.

HILDI looks down at her baby bump.

HILDI (CONT'D)

And he is kicking already.

RANNA

He?

HILDI

It is a boy , I know it ...and Snorri is so big ...I can't do it.

RANNA

You'll be fine ...you are meant to be a mother. I'm jealous you know.

HILDI

I wish it was you.

RANNA

(laughing)

Too late for that.

HILDI is on the edge of tears, which RANNA notices.

RANNA touches HILDI'S arm gently.

RANNA

I'll be with you.

SUPER - SIX MONTHS LATER

EXT. VINLAND FOREST - DAY

RANNA walks quietly in the forest. She stops short at the sound of;

INDIAN CHILD (O.S.)

Laughter.

RANNA tiptoes forward and peeks through the bushes.

The INDIAN CHIEFTAIN, (25) light skinned and noble with rusty tints in his hair, laughs as the INDIAN CHILD, (6) gorges on a bounty of wild grapes.

RANNA makes a small rustle which the INDIAN CHIEFTAIN hears but acknowledges only slightly.

The INDIAN CHIEFTAIN cuts two large bunches of grapes with his stone knife and places them carefully on a fallen log and turns to the INDIAN CHILD.

INDIAN CHIEFTAIN

SUB-TITLE: Come little grape face.

The INDIAN CHIEFTAIN glances quickly at RANNA'S hiding place and takes the INDIAN CHILD'S hand to leave.

EXT. VINLAND HUT - DAY

SNORRI paces nervously outside the hut.

INT. VINLAND HUT - DAY

RANNA and THYRKER attend to HILDI who is half sitting up sweating and straining with tousled hair.

HILDI
(screaming)
Snorriiii ...

EXT. VINLAND HUT - DAY

SNORRI presses his ear to the door.

SNORRI
Yes my love.

HILDI (O.S.)
I will kill you.

SNORRI jumps back from the door.

LATER:

The hut door opens and THYRKER steps out quickly and closes the door.

SNORRI looks nervously at THYRKER.

THYRKER
You have a son.

SNORRI
Thank-you oh thank-you THYRKER.

THYRKER
And Snorri ...your luck has no
shores ...he favors his mother.

SNORRI bear hugs THYRKER until he breaks free gasping.

THYRKER (CONT'D)
Come it's time we tried our first
wine ...fetch the keg.

EXT. VINLAND SHORE - DAY

SNORRI and HJALMAR stand on the shore watching as CREWMEN 1 and 2 clumsily paddle a birch bark canoe toward the settlement.

EXT. VINLAND SHORE -DAY

CREWMEN 1 and 2 beach the canoe and tumble out laughing and clapping each other on the back.

SNORRI

Where did you get it?

CREWMAN 1

It was a gift ...from the Skraelings.

CREWMAN 1 looks at CREWMAN 2 conspiratorially.

CREWMAN 1

They had no more need of it.

CREWMAN 2

Laughs.

EXT. VINLAND SHORE - NIGHT

CREWMAN 1 and 2 stand in front of the canoe facing an angry LEIF.

CREWMAN 1 points down the beach.

CREWMAN 1

We found it ...abandoned

LEIF

Yet you talked of Skraelings.

CREWMAN 1

Just talk ...

LEIF backhands CREWMAN 1 viciously. CREWMAN 1 stumbles back touching his split lip.

CREWMAN 2 falls back as well.

LEIF

You lie! ...Out with it ...the truth.

CREWMAN 1

There were three of them ...sleeping.

LEIF

And you killed them?

CREWMAN 1 looks at his feet.

CREWMAN 1

Yes.

LEIF

All of them?

CREWMAN 1

All but one ...and likely he too ...he was cut deeply.

CREWMAN 2

They were only Skraelings chief.

LEIF rounds on CREWMAN 2 and shoves him violently to the ground and steps over him.

LEIF

(shouting)

Skraelings! ...like the north people back home ...who kill the whales that crush our ships ...who die in weeks rather than live as our slaves.

LEIF grows calmer and his head and voice sink.

This is their land ...we are the Skraelings here.

EXT. VINLAND FOREST - DAY

THYRKER whistles as he walks through the forest, a rabbit over his back. His limp is more pronounced, he has aged

THYRKER enters a sunny glade and stoops to collect a snared rabbit.

THYRKER thinks he hears something. Looking about and seeing nothing, he shrugs and kneels to the rabbit.

The bushes erupt with painted INDIAN WARRIORS screaming war cries.

THYRKER looks about in terror rising to flee. Seeing no escape THYRKER drops back to his knees, his face calms.

The INDIANS fall on THYRKER and he disappears under a flurry of vicious club blows, his blood sprays.

EXT. VINLAND SETTLEMENT - DUSK

LEIF and SNORRI stand at the edge of the settlement.

LEIF

He should have been back.

SNORRI

Probably chasing ...

SNORRI pauses as he looks over LEIF'S shoulder.

The INDIAN CHIEFTAIN appears on the forest edge with THYRKER'S bloody corpse draped over his shoulder.

LEIF follows SNORRI'S gaze and watches in shock as THYRKER'S corpse slips lifeless to the ground. The INDIAN CHIEFTAIN'S buckskins are drenched with blood.

LEIF scrambles clumsily to draw his sword. When it is drawn LEIF looks back to a misty and vacant forest edge.

The sword falls from LEIF'S hand and he drops to his knees.

LEIF looks to the heavens and;

LEIF

(like a dying
animal)

SCREAMS.

EXT. VINLAND SHORE - DAY

LEIF stands at the center of all the CREWMEN and HILDI and RANNA lined up along the shoreline facing out to sea.

A small wisp of smoke winds its way above LEIF'S head.

A faint crackling can be heard as the smoke thickens and darkens.

The fire roars and black smoke billows as LEIF turns away slowly leaving a gap in the crowd.

Through the gap the Indian canoe is visible, piled high with burning branches, the body of THYRKER is just visible in the flames.

LEIF walks slowly away, his eyes are dead.

Only RANNA turns to watch LEIF walk away.

EXT. VINLAND FOREST - DAY

LEIF, hair disheveled with a new and unkempt beard, stumbles through the forest looking wildly all about.

EXT. VINLAND SETTLEMENT - DAY

SNORRI and HJALMAR sit on a seashore log.

HJALMAR

He is not himself ... I hardly know him.

SNORRI

He is still our leader ...he needs time.

HJALMAR

He can lead no one like this ...how will we get home?

SNORRI

We wait.

EXT. VINLAND SHORE - DAY

HJALMAR looks on as LEIF heats an iron to red hot in a small fire beside the prow of the Gull.

LEIF

Gulls are carefree ...it is no
name for my ship.

HJALMAR

But you were forgiven ...in
Niardos when you accepted the one
God.

LEIF looks coldly at HJALMAR before taking the hot iron and burning the last letter on the ship's prow; UNFORGIVEN.

EXT. VINLAND SHORE - NIGHT

LEIF stares into the fire where his AMULET is glowing.

LEIF looks at his scarred arm and picks up the redhot amulet by its chain.

LEIF slowly brings the glowing amulet to his shoulder and brands himself with it.

As LEIF'S skin burns there is only a slight tightening of his jaw.

EXT. GREENLAND FOREST - NIGHT

ERIC stumbles along the church path tripping and falling repeatedly while clutching a glowing firepot.

ERIC comes to a wobbly stop as he spots the church silhouette.

ERIC drinks deeply from a flask and flings it aside.

ERIC plunges toward the church with renewed determination.

LATER:

ERIC lights a torch from his firepot and stretches to reach the thatch roof before stumbling back and falling.

ERIC regains his feet and manages to set the roof smoldering. A small flame begins to lick higher into the roof.

ERIC drops to his knees exhausted.

INT. THJOHILD'S CHURCH - NIGHT

ERIC rolls onto his back and watches the flames roar through the roof boards overhead.

A CLAP of thunder sounds and rumbles in the distance.

ERIC
(murmuring)
Valhalla, I am coming.

ERIC'S head falls back unconscious.

INT. VINLAND HUT -NIGHT

HILDI looks earnestly into RANNA'S eyes.

HILDI
You must go to him Ranna ...he
needs you.

RANNA
It is not so simple.

HILDI
But he loves you ...and you love
him ...don't you?

RANNA
It is so easy for you Hildi
...with little Snorri.

HILDI
But it was always you Ranna ...you
had everyone's eye ...especially
Leif's.

RANNA
Maybe then but we were innocent,
we are not so now ...he embraces
his grief ..and I ...

INT. THJOHILD'S CHURCH - NIGHT

ERIC'S eyes open as rain drips through the burnt roof unto his face. He has no idea where he is or how he got there.

ERIC painfully raises himself to his elbows looking around and starts as he recognizes the church and as his memory returns.

ERIC quickly gains his feet and scuttles for the door.

EXT. VINLAND FOREST - DAY

RANNA hurries through the forest nervously.

EXT. VINLAND - WILD VINYARD - DAY

RANNA emerges from the forest and places THYRKER'S knife on the fallen log where the INDIAN CHIEFTAN had left grapes for her.

RANNA quickly retreats to a hiding place where she can watch the knife.

LATER:

RANNA is drowsy but still watching the knife from her hiding place.

RANNA startles with terror as a white fox fur drops over her shoulders. She looks fearfully back over her shoulder but melts under the laughing eyes of the INDIAN CHIEFTAIN.

EXT. THJOHILD'S CHURCH - DAY

THJOHILD and the FATHER stand gazing at the burnt roof of the church.

The FATHER raises his hands to heaven.

THE FATHER
(beatific)
It is a miracle! we have been
spared ...by his grace.

The FATHER drops to his knees deep in prayer.

THJOHILD looks down at the FATHER with disdain.

EST. VINLAND SHORELINE - DAY

The CREWMEN are gathered around a bearded LEIF who is girding weapons and hefting packs.

LEIF

He has gone unavenged too long.

CREWMAN 1

Yes, you are your father's son, we leave today then?

LEIF looks hard at CREWMAN 1 who cannot meet his eyes.

LEIF

I go alone.

SNORRI

It's not safe chief ...they are many.

LEIF

I go alone ...not to take his life
...but his hope ...his soul ...he
will beg his gods for death ...as
I do ...

LEIF pushes through the CREWMEN and walks off down the beach.

Unnoticed RANNA watches LEIF leave before she hurries off into the forest.

INT. TAVERN - DAY

ERIC has dyed his hair with streaks of black and tied it in a tangle of silver and gold ornaments.

ERIC has one arm around the buxom 20ish BARMAID who is perched laughing on his knee.

A drunken and noisy crowd of aging VIKINGS surround ERIC.

ERIC

Who's with me?

VIKINGS

Eric Raude, Eric Raude etc.

ERIC kisses the BARMAID'S cheek. She returns the kiss with enthusiasm.

EXT. VINLAND ISOLATED SHORE - DAY

LEIF walks down the beach listening and watching. A wind rustles the trees and he looks up in fear as the trees move and the wind speaks;

THE WIND

Leifr, Leifr ...etc.

LEIF spins around looking for the source or an attacker, his sword half drawn.

The wind suddenly stops and LEIF waits before resheathing his sword and moving on cautiously.

LATER:

LEIF stops short looking up into the hills where a spiral of smoke has appeared.

LEIF adjusts his pack but when he makes ready to head inland the smoke is gone.

LEIF rubs his eyes and the smoke reappears.

LEIF plunges into the forest.

EXT. INDIAN CAMP - DAY

LEIF, bow in hand, crouches in hiding as he spies on the bustling Indian camp.

LEIF'S eyes are drawn to the two high burial scaffolds that hold the bodies of the MURDERED INDIANS.

The INDIAN CHIEFTAIN and the INDIAN CHILD appear on the forest edge and walk toward the center of the camp and LEIF'S hiding place.

LEIF'S eyes are riveted on the INDIAN CHIEFTAIN.

LEIF is stealthy as he fits an arrow and takes careful aim at the INDIAN CHIEFTAIN'S chest.

(BEAT)

LEIF slowly moves his aim down and over to the smiling INDIAN CHILD.

(BEAT)

LEIF relaxes his aim as sweat drips into his blinking eye.

LEIF brushes his eyes clear and begins to redraw his bow.

THUD! LEIF loses consciousness.

EXT. NORTH ATLANTIC - DAY

ERIC has the helm of Iceship.

The white sail has been crudely repainted with a black spear and sword crossed over Thor's hammer, also black and overlaid on and highlighted by, the original red cross

EXT. INDIAN CAMP - DAY

LEIF'S world is still black but he slowly becomes aware of guttural conversation of INDIAN BRAVES and the background noise and chatter from the camp.

SPLOOSH, LEIF is doused and fully awakened. His eyes are bleary and unfocused.

LEIF'S vision clears and he begins to understand the INDIAN tongue which also slowly becomes clear.

INDIAN 1

He lives Chieftain ...we can give him the slow warrior's death now.

INDIAN CHIEFTAIN

No, take him to the lodge.

INDIAN 1

But he ...

INDIAN CHIEFTAIN

Now!

LEIF is yanked roughly to his feet and dragged off.

EXT. HEBRIDES COVE SEASHORE - NIGHT

ERIC and his VIKINGS fight a vicious pitched battle on the Hebridean shore against the BARON and his ISLANDERS.

ERIC is merciless as he kills his way toward the BARON.

The BARON is driven to his back as the ISLANDERS break from the battle and run for their lives.

The BARON composes himself for death as ERIC casually places his sword to the BARON'S throat.

ERIC

Your bell.

INT. INDIAN SWEAT LODGE - DAY

LEIF, sweating and dazed, sits across a fire from the INDIAN CHIEFTAIN who glistens serenely.

The INDIAN CHIEFTAIN reaches for a water gourd and WHOOSH, the lodge is enveloped by steam as water hits the fire stones.

As the steam clears the INDIAN CHIEFTAIN lays a kinickinick bush on the fire.

LEIF coughs fitfully as the lodge fills with smoke.

The INDIAN CHIEFTAIN breathes in deeply and signals LEIF to do the same.

As LEIF begins to breathe deeply and evenly the smoke moves in pattern and color.

Through the smoke LEIF can just barely make out the INDIAN CHIEFTAIN but it is not him it is THORGUNNA with a knowing smile. Her smile fades and then she is gone.

LEIF blinks and looks down into the smoky fire where the Hebridean ISLANDER 1, sword point at his throat, defiant and challenging;

ISLANDER 1

Finish your father's work, Viking.

LEIF recoils as the sword plunges and blood spurts from ISLANDER 1'S throat.

ISLANDER 1'S dead staring eyes transform to the beautiful face of the CHIEFTAIN'S WIFE. A hand closes her dead eyes.

LEIF hears a hiss pass his ear and an arrow seems to pierce the smoke beside his ear and sink into the INDIAN CHILD'S chest.

LEIF'S hands go to his face and his head sinks.

A huge full moon is slowly coated in blood and then blackness.

INT. TAVERN - NIGHT

The VIKINGS are in full form, riotously drunk and fighting over party girls.

ERIC, his black hair dye faded, silently contemplates a huge brass bell at the center of the table.

The BARMAID, spilling from her bodice, leans in to whisper in ERIC'S ear.

As ERIC stands the BARMAID is brushed aside.

ERIC seizes the bell and bulls his way out of the tavern.

EXT. INDIAN CAMP - DAY

The INDIANS are grouped in the camp center laughing and feasting.

LEIF and the INDIAN CHIEFTAIN are seated alone.

The INDIAN CHIEFTAIN draws THYRKER'S knife and sets it between them.

LEIF reaches toward the knife but is blocked by the INDIAN CHIEFTAIN.

LEIF

It was Thyrker's

INDIAN CHIEFTAIN

Yes, but he waits on the waves now.

The INDIAN CHIEFTAIN gestures to the funeral scaffolds.

INDIAN CHIEFTAIN (CONT'D)

As they wait in the trees.

The INDIAN CHIEFTAIN takes up the knife, makes an incision in his forearm and holds the knife out to LEIF.

INDIAN CHIEFTAIN (CONT'D)
We kill no more.

(BEAT)
LEIF takes up the knife and makes a matching cut in his own arm.

The INDIAN CHIEFTAIN and LEIF reach to grasp forearms.

CUT TO:

INT. THJOHILD'S CHURCH - DAY

ERIC, fresh shaved with hair tied back, bangles gone, holds the bell.

THJOHILD is suspicious.

The FATHER eyes the bell covetously.

THE FATHER
It is magnificent. All will heed
its call.

THJOHILD
Where did you get it.

ERIC
Trading.

THJOHILD looks away from the bell to ERIC'S hair.

THJOHILD
So many changes ...

EXT. THJOHILD'S CHURCH - DAY

ERIC looks deep into THJOHILD'S eyes.

ERIC
Come home Thjoey ...I miss
you ...I ...I need you.

THJOHILD seems about to speak but turns and walks away.

EXT. VINLAND SETTLEMENT - DAY

LEIF emerges from the forest edge with an enormous backpack of furs. He is clean shaven and strong.

LEIF wears a sleeveless tunic and leather armbands.

SNORRI rushes to meet LEIF and all the Norse gather around.

LEIF swings his pack to the ground.

SNORRI

Chief.

LEIF and SNORRI clench forearm, hug and thump each others backs. As they break apart, SNORRI points at the furs.

SNORRI (CONT'D)

Vengeance and booty?

LEIF

We will talk later.

EXT. THJOHILD'S CHURCH - DAY

ERIC'S bell is RINGING as the CHRISTIAN NORSE file into the church.

ERIC watches from a distance.

As the door closes ERIC limps down the path toward the church and stops outside and looks up at the burnt roof corner.

MONKS CHOIR

A medieval choral chant.

ERIC listens intently before looking down at the hammer emblem on his chest, turning and hobbling sadly away.

INT. VINLAND SETTLEMENT HUT - NIGHT

LEIF and SNORRI talk by the fire.

LEIF

We raid no more Snorri ...We trade. We'll leave this shore in peace and when we return it will be as friends not invaders.

SNORRI

What happened out there?

LEIF

Everything we have seen, all we have done ... right and wrong has meaning now.

SNORRI

You mean the White Christ?

LEIF

No, a small part only...and my father, well, if I have disappointed him ...

EXT. VINLAND SETTLEMENT - DAY

The Norse settlement is alive with the NORSE and the INDIANS mingling freely, trading and feasting. INDIAN CHILDREN run to and fro.

The INDIAN CHIEFTAIN and RANNA watch the trading fair, openly together.

LEIF and SNORRI are in serious conversation beside the longship, Unforgiven.

SNORRI

Our minds are made up, we are staying.

LEIF

But we only go back for more trade goods, livestock and settlers. We will be back next spring.

SNORRI

And we will be here waiting for you. There is nothing there for us. This is our home now.

LEIF looks over to RANNA and the INDIAN CHIEFTAIN.

LEIF

And Ranna?

SNORRI follows LEIF'S gaze.

SNORRI

She is happy here.

LEIF

Well it is your choice, I wish you
happiness ...all of you.

LEIF looks back at RANNA.

EXT. NORTH ATLANTIC - DAY

LEIF is at the tiller of Unforgiven with a large raft
of logs in tow. He and the CREWMEN stare intently at a
SHIPWRECKED CREW huddled on an exposed reef and waving
furiously.

LEIF

Take her upwind of them.

FEARFUL CREWMAN

We'll be wrecked there's rock
everywhere.

LEIF

To your oar.

LATER:

Unforgiven is much closer to the SHIPWRECKED CREW. The
CREWMEN strain at their oars.

LEIF

Where's the bottom.

The BOWMAN swings a leadline out with a splash.

The BOWMAN reels the leadline in quickly.

BOWMAN

Three fathoms.

LEIF

Bring her in closer.

FEARFUL CREWMAN

I see the bottom.

BOWMAN

A fathom and a half.

LEIF

Ready anchor.

The BOWMAN seizes the anchor and looks back fearfully at LEIF.

LEIF

(shouting)

Anchor!

The anchor lands with a SPLASH and its heavy rope goes taut.

LEIF

Ease it out ... two of you.

The log raft draws closer and closer to the SHIPWRECKED CREW as the anchor rope is paid out.

A SHIPWRECKED CREWMAN reaches for the raft but slips and slides thrashing under the logs.

(BEAT)

The SHIPWRECKED CREWMAN surfaces gasping and drags himself onto the logs.

A rope is tossed to him and the rest of the SHIPWRECKED CREW scramble onto the logs after loading two large chests.

EXT. NORTH ATLANTIC - UNFORGIVEN - DAY

LEIF and THORER, early thirties, the shipwrecked captain, look into two chests of silver and gold.

THORER

It is yours, without your rescue
we and the treasure would be lost.

LEIF

You are very generous Thorer.

LEIF looks up from the treasure to THORER.

LEIF (CONT'D)

You visited our home in Greenland,
what news have you?

THORER is uncomfortable and looks away.

THORER

There are troubles and your
father, he is not well.

LEIF

What troubles?

THORER

Not all have embraced the White
Christ. There has been dispute,
fighting.

LEIF

And my father?

THORER

I do not like to say this to you,
a Liegeman of the High King.

THORER meets LEIF'S eye.

THORER (CONT'D)

Your mother has left the great
hall. You are much needed ...by
all.

EXT. NORTH ATLANTIC - OFFSHORE GREENLAND - DAY

A gray whale is breaching off the bow of Unforgiven.

BOWMAN

Whale!

HJALMAR points behind the whale where four INUIT in a
large skin kayak are being dragged by a harpoon line.

HJALMAR

(incredulous)

He is pursued.

LEIF

Hold here, they are north people,
hunters.

LATER:

Unforgiven is pulling close to the dead whale where
four INUIT are feasting on raw blubber on the far side
of the whale.

The FEARFUL CREWMAN begins to draw his sword which is noticed by the INUIT and LEIF.

LEIF

No weapons.

The FEARFUL CREWMAN sheaths his sword.

The HEAD INUIT nods to LEIF and tosses LEIF a chunk of bloody blubber.

LEIF studies the blubber and then takes a bite.

LEIF passes the blubber to the NEAREST CREWMAN.

LEIF

Enjoy ...everyone.

The NEAREST CREWMAN grimaces before tasting the blubber and passing it on.

LEIF smiles at the INUIT who return the smile. Leif reaches into his tunic and tossing some coins to the INUIT.

The INUIT laugh and gesture as they examine the coins.

The HEAD INUIT reaches down into the kayak and produces a nine foot ivory narwhal tusk.

LEIF

(in wonder)

Narwhal ivory, Aegir's lance, the sagas are true.

LEIF opens a chest and gathers two handfuls of coins which he shows to the INUIT.

The head INUIT shakes his head no and points to the FEARFUL CREWMAN.

LEIF nods in agreement.

LEIF

Your sword.

FEARFUL CREWMAN

But Chief?

The FEARFUL CREWMAN reluctantly passes his sword back to LEIF.

LEIF and the HEAD INUIT exchange the sword and the ivory tusk.

EXT. NORTHERN SETTLEMENT FARM - NIGHT

Two rough looking MONKS, GUDLEIF and THANGBRAND threaten a small NORSE FARMER who is tied to tree.

FARMER'S WIFE (O.S.)

Crying.

GUDLEIF thrusts a huge open ended drinking horn in the terrified NORSE FARMER'S mouth.

THANGBRAND produces a small snake and laughs as he dangles it in the NORSE FARMER'S face.

The NORSE FARMER'S eyes start out of his head.

FARMER'S WIFE (V.O.)

No - o - o ...We accept the CHRIST.

THANGBRAND looks toward the FARMER'S WIFE with no pity.

THANGBRAND puts the snake into the drinking horn and quickly caps it.

FARMER'S WIFE (V.O.)

SCREAMING hysterically.

The NORSE FARMER struggles desperately.

GUDLEIF steps forward with a small glowing firebrand and slowly, slowly puts it to the drinking horn

EXT. ERICSFJORD - VILLAGE SQUARE - DAY

LEIF and his CREWMEN along with the SHIPWRECKED CREW stride from the beach toward a near riot where Eric's VIKINGS jostle VILLAGERS with two MONKS at the center.

LEIF pushes toward the MONKS while his CREWMEN and the SHIPWRECKED CREWMEN surround the VIKINGS.

When the VIKINGS start pushing and then realize they are outnumbered they calm down.

LEIF reaches the two MONKS and escorts them through the crowd.

LEIF

Best keep your preaching to the church.

As the crowd disperses LEIF grasps a VIKING by the arm.

LEIF (CONT'D)

What was that about?

VIKING

There are stories ...

LEIF

What stories.

VIKING

Some say that two of the new holy men are no more than thugs, sent from the High King's court.

The VIKING hesitates and looks down before meeting LEIF'S gaze.

Those that resist the White Christ have been tortured ... or even killed.

LEIF is thoughtful.

LEIF

Not here?

VIKING

Just stories likely ...but they have been up to the north settlement and have many converts.

EXT. VILLAGE SQUARE - DAY

THJOHILD and LEIF sit on a bench in the Village Square.

THORGILS, (about 3) plays at their feet.

THJOHILD

He is so like you at that age ...so happy. And THORGUNNA she is a delight to have here, she has been such a help ...a fresh breeze.

LEIF begins to play distractedly with THORGILS.

THJOHILD (CONT'D)

You must remember her when you were at her father's court.

LEIF

She had her ladies weave us a new sail.

THJOHILD sniffs with disgust.

THJOHILD

The sail! And have you seen it now. Desecrated with you father's pagan symbols.

LEIF

Is that why you left the longhouse?

THJOHILD looks sharply at LEIF.

THJOHILD

I can't talk to him ...and the feuds, the raiding, all the killing.

LEIF

Sometimes a leader must be hard. For better and worse he has not changed has he?

THJOHILD

(angered)

You take his side against me?

LEIF picks up little THORGILS and begins to bounce him on his knee.

THJOHILD'S anger fades as she watches THORGILS.

LEIF

Has father met this little man?

THJOHILD

(grudging)

Yes ...he dotes on him ...just as he was with you.

LEIF

(doubtful)

With me?

THJOHILD eyes glisten and she looks wistfully at LEIF.

THJOHILD

You were the light in his eye. He took you everywhere ...anyone would think you were the first born in all of Iceland.

THJOHILD brings herself back to the present.

THJOHILD (CONT'D)

It was a long time ago, and then ...it all went away.

INT. THJOHILD'S CHURCH - DAY

The FATHER stands nervously in front of the altar, facing LEIF.

LEIF

And is Gudleif among your holy men?

THE FATHER

(surprised)

Yes, a zealous servant of our Lord.

LEIF

And Thangbrand as well.

THE FATHER

(cautious)

Yes, yes, they have gathered many souls for Christ here...you know them?

LEIF

I would ask you that, Father?

THE FATHER

They are here at the behest of the High King.

LEIF

Where are they now?

THE FATHER

At the Northern Settlement, they are due back soon ...for the Midsummer Mass ...you wish to meet them.

LEIF

What do you know of horning?

The FATHER blanches.

THE FATHER
H-horning?

LEIF
(glaring)
The Ordeal of the Snake?

THE FATHER
(panicking)
I ...I don't understand.

EXT. ERICSFJORD SHORE - DAY

Two TRAVELLERS load a small wooden boat.

THORGUNNA moves toward the boat and hands a bundle to a TRAVELER for loading.

As THORGUNNA turns to leave LEIF steps in front of her.

LEIF
What are you doing?

THORGUNNA looks down.

THORGUNNA
It is time I was ... gone. I leave tomorrow. There is nothing for us here.

LEIF
Where is ...?

THORGUNNA hesitates and looks at LEIF sharply.

THORGUNNA
His name is Thorgils.

LEIF
Yes, I ...

THORGUNNA
He is with your mother ...she has been very kind.

LEIF
She speaks well of you too.

INT. THJOHILD'S CHURCH - DAY

THJOHILD bounces little THORGILS on her knee as
ERIC'S SERVANT GIRL bursts through the door.

SERVANT GIRL

There is great trouble my lady.

THJOHILD

Calm yourself, what is it, speak
slowly.

SERVANT GIRL

(stuttering)

Th - the Monks are coming back.

THJOHILD

Yes, for the Midsummer Mass, they
are expected.

SERVANT GIRL

But you don't see my lady
...They ..they mean to kill them.

THJOHILD

Who?

SERVANT GIRL

Your husb ...the Jarl my lady.

The SERVANT GIRL wrings her hands.

SERVANT GIRL (CONT'D)

His men have been gathering all
morning.

THJOHILD

To kill the Monks?

SERVANT GIRL

He is in a rage ...like never
before my lady...they all are.

THJOHILD passes THORGILS to the SERVANT GIRL.

THJOHILD

Take him in the back and stay
there.

THJOHILD rushes out the door.

EXT. THYRKER'S HUT - DAY

THJOHILD is breathless as she speaks to LEIF who is seated on the porch bench.

Leif stands.

THJOHILD

He's mad ...you've got to stop him.

LEIF

Where is THORGILS?

THJOHILD

At the church.

LEIF

Bring him here ...and Thorgunna.

EXT. FOREST PATH - DAY

ERIC on his paint pony followed by ten mounted VIKINGS thunder down a forest path.

INTERCUT TO:

EXT. VILLAGE SQUARE - DAY

LEIF and HJALMAR and six other CREWMEN mount their horses, wheel and charge out of the Village Square as startled and curious VILLAGERS turn and stare.

BACK TO:

EXT. FOREST CLEARING - DAY

Lead by THRANGBRAND and GUDLEIF a small crowd of NORTHERN SETTLERS enter the forest clearing as ERIC and the VIKINGS CRASH into the same clearing.

BACK TO:

EXT. FOREST PATH - DAY

LEIF and HJALMAR and the CREWMEN pull up as the trail seems to end.

LEIF leans off his horse to examine the hoof prints.

LEIF points off on an angle and ALL follow him.

BACK TO:

EXT. FOREST CLEARING - DAY

ERIC paces in front of the kneeling THANGBRAND and GUDLEIF.

ERIC

You deny it?

THANGBRAND

All in the name of the White
Christ. We serve and obey the High
King Olav.

THANGBRAND looks up at ERIC in defiance.

THANGBRAND (CONT'D)

As you will.

ERIC

(bristling)

I am King here.

ERIC draws his sword.

ERIC (CONT'D)

And here you die.

The VIKINGS force down the heads of THANGBRAND and GUDLEIF for beheading.

The NORTHERN SETTLERS murmur and gasp. Small children's eyes are covered.

ERIC moves forward.

And CRASH;

ALL eyes turn to the forest edge where LEIF and HJALMAR and the CREWMEN burst from the forest wall and dismount.

LEIF moves toward ERIC.

LEIF

There must be a trial. They are
the King's chosen.

ERIC

(scornful)

And you the King's Leigeman.

LEIF

Only at your bidding.

ERIC

(anger rising)

You would champion this scum? And
take my seal then?

Eric raises his sword.

Leif draws his sword.

The VIKINGS and the CREWMEN draw their swords

ERIC (CONT'D)

Then die with them.

ERIC charges LEIF, their swords clash.

The VIKINGS fall on the CREWMEN.

LEIF and the CREWMEN slowly fall back, fighting
defensively.

LEIF is wounded by ERIC.

LEIF looks down and becomes enraged and attacks ERIC
in a suddenly released fury.

First the VIKINGS and then the CREWMEN stop battling
at the spectacle of a son about to kill his father.

ERIC stumbles back under LEIF'S attack and finally
falls backward.

LEIF is in a blind rage determined to kill ERIC and
stops short as if breaking free from a violent seizure.

LEIF drops his sword, turns and slowly walks away in a
daze.

ERIC scrambles clumsily to his feet.

ERIC

Fight ...Coward!

LEIF turns wearily back to face ERIC.

ERIC raises his sword high over his head.

ERIC'S world is misted in red as he moves forward in a
trance to kill LEIF.

ERIC brings his sword down on LEIF as his world goes black.

LEIF is taken back to the vision of THYRKER'S lifeless body dumped from the shoulder of the INDIAN CHIEFTAIN and seen through the smoke of THYRKER'S funeral pyre.

ROBERT PLANT

Valhalla I am coming ...

The sea becomes clear through the smoke and LEIF is drawn skimming faster and faster across the sea's surface into a blinding white light and a deafening white noise.

All explodes into deathly silent blackness.

(LONG BEAT)

ERIC'S vision slowly clears, his sword is buried into the earth.

LEIF stands beside the kneeling and stricken ERIC.

LEIF slowly kneels down beside ERIC.

LEIF drapes his arm around ERIC'S shoulder.

LEIF
(in a gentle
whisper)
Come father.

ERIC
I have been no father to you.

LEIF
And yet I am proud to be your son.

INT. THJOHILD'S CHURCH - NIGHT

LEIF and THJOHILD sit on a bench facing the altar.

LEIF
Go to him ...please.

THJOHILD
I cannot.

LEIF
He needs you.

THJOHILD looks painfully at LEIF.

THJOHILD
Sometimes that is not enough.

LEIF
What is one god more or less.

LEIF looks deep into THJOHILD'S eyes.

LEIF (CONT'D)
You are his goddess.

EXT. SEASHORE CLIFF - NIGHT

THORGUNNA is apprehensive as her eyes meet LEIF'S unreadable stare.

LEIF and THORGUNNA are irresistibly drawn together.

They kiss in desperation.

LEIF
(in a fierce murmur)
You are in my bones ...from the first ...

THORGUNNA'S
You ...you possess me.

LEIF and THORGUNNA kiss at length.

LEIF pulls away and smirks into THORGUNNA'S eyes.

LEIF
And your potions?

THORGUNNA'S
I shall burn them ...now

THORGUNNA pulls back from LEIF and turns to leave.

LEIF slaps THORGUNNA'S bottom.

LEIF
Be quick.

THORGUNNA looks back over her shoulder, eyebrows arched.

THORGUNNA

(in mock anger)

I am not one of your tavern maids.

(BEAT)

LEIF

(solemn)

No ...indeed ...you are my
Queen ...

EXT. ERICSFJORD SHORE - DAY

THANGBRAND and GUDLEIF and the two MONKS load their
skin boat under the eyes of LEIF and the FATHER.

LEIF

Your word then ...to make a full
and true account to the High King.

THANGBRAND

(mumbling)

Yes Lord ...before God.

EXT. VILLAGE SQUARE - BRILLIANT DAY

EVERYONE is gathered for the wedding of LEIF and
THORGUNNA who stand in front of the FATHER.

LEIF and THORGUNNA are in white.

ALL are gathered in a smiling throng.

ERIC with little THORGILS in his arms stands proudly
beside THJOHILD.

The FATHER crosses himself and raises his hand in a
grand benediction.

THE FATHER

In our Saviour's grace and in his
infinite mercy ... we gather today
for...

ERIC and THJOHILD exchange a warm glance.

LEIF

Hold father, Call on no Gods today
....lest we feel the wrath of all
the immortals ...

THORGUNNA looks nervously at LEIF.

THJOHILD stiffens slightly.

A HUGE AND glistening RAVEN screams out from a treetop.

EVERYONE looks to the RAVEN

THORGUNNA, unseen, signals to the RAVEN.

The RAVEN takes flight.

POV: THE RAVEN

The RAVEN glides over the wedding party who return its gaze.

As the RAVEN circles and gains height all but LEIF look back to the FATHER.

THYRKER (V.O.)

And so the beads of time pass slow.

And love unbidden may still last.

And love withheld ...

LEIF and THORGUNNA kiss.

ERIC and THJOHILD exchange a shy glance.

THYRKER (V.O.) (CONT'D)

may yet surrender ...

ERIC's eyes brim as he looks down at little THORGILS.

THYRKER (V.O.) (CONT'D)

And though our virtue masks only
sin.

That is all that we're left in the
end.

If when the veil drops ...

The Gods are more mortal than all.

(BEAT)

For cattle will die ... kinsmen
will die.

And all kingdoms fade into the
mist.

But Fame ...Fame ...it will
last ...Forever

The wedding party begins to spin out of the RAVEN'S
sight as the ocean envelopes all.

(BEAT)

THYRKER (VO) (CONT'D)
And our song ... remains the same.

The opening chord of ***The Song Remains The
Same*** bursts forth.

ROBERT PLANT
*I had a dream ... oh, my,
Crazy dream ... oh, oh
Anything I needed to know
Any place I needed to go ...*

THE END

CLOSING CREDITS ROLL:

Walking out to: ***Over The Hills and Far Away***