

~~Then a host of undead hands reach from the shadows.~~

~~They grab her, DRAUGR after DRAUGR, emerging from the darkness behind her. She screams and thrashes as they pull at her clothes, untold numbers of them, a host of spindly hands and begin to drag her to the ground.~~

~~The first time a DRAUGR makes contact with her skin, it sears.~~

~~FLASH: A face bent in extreme exertion. Panting breath.~~

~~One DRAUGR grabs her wrist, another her neck.~~

~~FLASH: A fist, white-knuckled against a handful of straw.~~

~~FLASH: Bare feet digging great furrows through the dirt.~~

~~Wherever they grab her, RIOGHAIN's skin is blistered and blue. Soon, she is covered with corruption -- on her arms and legs and neck and head and face.~~

~~FLASH: That face -- RIOGHAIN's face -- creased with agony.~~

~~As she is buried beneath mounting DRAUGAR, her screaming and thrashing grow worse and worse. The flashes mount until they flicker and eventually burst into the next scene.~~

~~FLASH: Her hand clapped over her mouth to stifle a scream.~~

~~FLASH: Her frantic breathes. Scream through skin. Tear tracks.~~

~~FLASH: Pressure mounts. Skin, red as blood. A wet sound.~~

~~FLASH: The pressure eases. More wet sounds. She gasps.~~

45

EXT. GRAYScape

45

Start

In a gray blankness, mist swirls around RIOGHAIN. All sign of corruption is gone from her flesh. She does not appear alarmed or frightened to be here, in this otherworldly place. Instead, she is supernaturally calm.

To either side of RIOGHAIN stretches a neat row of pews. She walks numbly between them and gazes about, as though remembering this impossible place.

She eventually comes to stop in the middle of it all. Then the mists sweep away and reveal a silhouette before her -- a nine-year-old GIRL.

(CONTINUED)

She wears simple peasant's clothing and looks up at RIOGHAIN with an utterly blank expression. RIOGHAIN doesn't flee or scream, she simply drops to her knees.

HEL

Do you know her face?

From the altar comes this voice - a thousand voices and one.

RIOGHAIN shakes her head.

HEL

How could you?

(beat)

You did not wish to.

RIOGHAIN

I know you.

(beat)

The Enemy. The Beast.

(beat)

Morningstar.

HEL

You hid from her.

(beat)

Here. In the house of your false god.

RIOGHAIN

The true God.

HEL

There is no god here.

(beat)

Only a goddess.

At this, the mists sweep away to reveal HEL where she stands at the altar.

HEL

And you gave her to me.

(beat)

Do you not remember?

A baby, smeared in afterbirth, wails and wails. RIOGHAIN - younger, sweat-slicked, with a full head of hair - cradles her. RIOGHAIN is exhausted but terrified, looking at this squirming child she's made.

47 INT. GRAYSCAPE 47

As RIOGHAIN remembers, one side of the GIRL's face begins to rot away. A ghastly skull now glowers at RIOGHAIN, skin peeling away in strips.

48 EXT. GRAYSCAPE (FLASHBACK) 48

The child - cleaned and sleeping - is placed atop a stone. RIOGHAIN walks away, tears cascading down her cheeks.

49 INT. GRAYSCAPE 49

HEL

You do.

Tears cascade down the kneeling RIOGHAIN's cheeks. She clutches her balled fist to her lips.

RIOGHAIN

Father.

(beat)

Forgive me.

HEL

You found none in life.

(beat)

You will find none in death.

End

RIOGHAIN

~~Father.~~

~~(beat)~~

~~Forgive me. I am unworthy of your
love. Do not abandon me-~~

GIRL

~~Mother.~~

~~RIOGHAIN freezes in terror.~~

GIRL

~~Forgive me. I am unworthy of your
love.~~

~~(beat)~~

~~Do not abandon me.~~

~~This is too much for RIOGHAIN. She scrambles away, aghast at the specter of this child and attempts to run from the church.~~

(CONTINUED)