

EMBERS

Written by

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FADE IN:

INT. SIR CRAIG BRAX'S TENT - NIGHT

A fire roars over an open hearth, illuminating the darkness. The pavilion is grand, its walls adorned with heraldry, a blend of lions and unicorns.

A single ember rises in the blackness, slowly dissolving. In the BG, a man Glides a whetstone over the glistening blade of a sharpened LONGSWORD, its chimes resonating. The man is JAMES FALLON(23). Serious and determined, the flame casts warm light upon his pale unwavering eyes. Across his neck, is a long, deep MOON-SHAPED SCAR. A SILVER POMMELED DAGGER on is hip.

SIR CRAIG BRAX (O.S.)

Fallon!

Fallon rises immediately, handing the sword to SIR CRAIG BRAX who's entered the tent. A feared yet ostentatious knight, he expects nothing less than perfection. He inspects the blade.

SIR CRAIG BRAX (CONT'D)

Good. By sun-up, we'll relish in
eminence, and put this sickly
rebellion to the sword.

Brax floats his fingers over Fallon's scar, gently tickling.

SIR CRAIG BRAX (CONT'D)

That dagger I bestowed upon you
serves as a symbol of your loyalty.

He tightens his grip, pincering. Fallon doesn't flinch.

JAMES FALLON

I'm at your command, mi'lord.
forever and always.

Fallon's voice is croaked. Every time he speaks it looks as if a thousand needles pierce his jugular. Brax smiles and releases, slapping his cheek gently.

SIR CRAIG BRAX

Your past crimes will be forgotten,
and Your redemption define you.
Never again will they call you
Spider the outlaw.

(voice darkens)

For years my brother, the Earl, has
showered himself in glory, but now
its my turn. Ready my armour.

A COMMOTION outside resonates. Raised voices of panicked soldiers scream "fire!". Hurried footsteps follow. Fallon startles for a moment, but continues scrubbing the Brax's beautifully engraved breastplate. Brax sits at his armchair studying a local map, sipping wine from his gemmed chalice.

A beat. RRRRIIP! Brax and Fallon turn to find a SLIT in the fabric of the tent.

BRAX

Shit!

A HOODED FIGURE bursts through. SWORD in hand, he charges Brax, who stands but before he can draw his blade, the figure plunges his sword deep into Brax's chest, impaling him through his own armchair. Blood seeps through silk.

Fallon watches as in one motion, the Figure withdraws his sword and SLICES Brax's head clean off. Then, he turns his towards Fallon himself.

Fallon reacts quickly, hurling the breastplate then unsheathing his own SILVER POMMELLED DAGGER.

Fallon charges, thrusting the dagger towards the figure who parries easily. Again and again, Fallon slashes on the offensive, but the figure's sword work is too good. The hood disarms Fallon, the dagger falls to the ground.

CRACK! The Hood backhands Fallon, who crashes onto the fire spilling it to the floor.

Unable to control his fall, his face crashes onto a blazing log, BRANDING the skin on the side of his face.

Fallon leats out a raspy, silent SCREAM as the figure stands over him, ready to deliver the final blow. He PICKS UP Fallon's dagger.

The helpless squire looks up, ready to die by his own blade.

INFANTRY#1 (O.S.)

Drunk twat set his own tent on
fire.

Spooked, the figure rushes back out the rip he came through. Eyes twitching and fading into darkness, Fallon watches the headless body of his master through the dying embers of the upturned fire, before finally passing out.

CUT TO BLACK.

Titles; EMBERS

INT. SIR CRAIG BRAX'S TENT - NIGHT

Close on; Fallon's eyes closed, the side of his face seared. His eyes open. He pants and winces in pain. His eyes begin to fill with blood, stirring in relentless rage.

EXT. TENT CITY - NIGHT

The entrance to Brax's tent, flapping gently in the wind as the sound of a huge party echos through the night. Fallon exits the tent, his burned face cloaked. He looks cautiously from side to side, then leaves.

We pull back to reveal a massive military encampment that stretches far into an enclosed highland valley. Between dispersed open fires, over two thousand soldiers, knights and camp followers rave in a typhoon of alcohol, sex, laughter and song, like a Scottish medieval rock festival. Fallon slithers through the debauchery.

A colossal PAVILION in his sights, dwarfing the tents around. Fallon quickens the pace but is stopped by two drunk ARCHERS.

ARCHER#1

Danger fer you tae be wandrin the
camp at night, Spider. An outlaw,
who betrayed his pals for a shot at
the big time, eh. You proud of
yersel, aye?

Fallon says nothing, just stares with concrete sharpness.

ARCHER#1

If weren't for Lord Brax, you
wouldn't last a second in this army
boy, and when your golden web
breaks, we'll be there waiting.

Fallon doesn't show any reaction. The Archers give up, and with a hint of fear, they share a chuckle and leave.

ARCHER#2

Fucking Traitor!

INT. EARL JOHN LEVINE'S TENT - NIGHT

Small wooden figures sit atop a map spread over an elaborate mahogany table. Standing over it are, THE EARL: Lavishly dressed, spirited and youthful. CHAPLIN KINIARD: Tall and humble, draped in priests robes, GOLD RINGS on his fingers. SIR AARON ROSS: Dressed in full plate armour. His damp, GLOVED FINGERS directing the map.

SIR ARRON ROSS

When we entice the rebel centre into the bottleneck, their influx in numbers will immobilise them. By then our cavalry will have pincerred to the Northern flank, breaking their vanguard.

CHAPLIN KINAIRD

Casualties?

SIR ARRON ROSS

Half the infantry I'd say.

The Earl accepts with a waved hand. Kinaird sucks up.

CHAPLIN KINAIRD

A sufficient quantity for such illustrious acquisitions, my lord. The warrant for men to replenish will scarcely flounder. Congratul...

Fallon BURSTS in. Ross MOVES towards, hand on the grip of his sword. The Earl rests a calming hand on his shoulder.

CHAPLIN KINAIRD

James my son, we we're expecting the good Lord Brax to join us?

EARL JOHN LEVINE

What on earth happened to your face, dear boy? looks like its been fucked by a volcano.

JAMES FALLON

Mi'Lord Brax was murdered by some hood...

Ross cuts him off, THROTTLING his neck.

SIR ARRON ROSS

Back to your cave, Spider. our halls have smelled of your shit far too long. An outlaw that can hardly speak is of no use here.

Fallon's eyes fall, Noticing WETNESS on Ross's glove.

EARL JOHN LEVINE

Everyone leave, par the squire.

Ross leaves grudgingly, eyeing Fallon as he goes. Kinaird places a hand on Fallon's shoulder before following.

EARL JOHN LEVINE

I believe there is a place in this world for everyone, and our loyalty determines that.

The Earl pours himself a large glass of wine, and takes a sip from his lavish chalice. He comes closer.

EARL JOHN LEVINE

Those who cannot speak, may still have a voice, if their allegiance lies in the right place. Go join the infantry. We mourn my brother, a bathe in rewarded when we prevail.

Fallon sucks up his anger, bows then leaves.

INT. TENT CITY - NIGHT

Kinaird stops Fallon as he exits the Earls tent, a tepid fire beneath them. The party that was at full flow also fading.

CHAPLIN KINAIRD

Its not safe for you here Fallon. Leave, find peace somewhere you're not known as Spider or outlaw.

JAMES FALLON

Who finds peace in a world dictated by war? I'll not forsake the opportunity Brax gave me.

CHAPLIN KINAIRD

You shouldn't play with what you don't understand. Please?

Fallon waits a beat, but he's made his decision. He leaves Kinaird and ventures deeper into Tent city. Below, the fire begins to flatten.

Through the jungle of tents, the Hooded figure watches.

INT. LIZA'S TENT - NIGHT

An INFANT boy sleeps quietly beneath the sounds of the fading party, a flame flickers beside. LIZA(26), a rough and capable camp follower hastily packs supplies into tattered bags.

JAMES FALLON (O.S.)

Leaving?

Liza turns sharpish, seeing Fallon standing at the door, a twisted look in his eye.

LIZA

James, what are you...

Fallon THROTTLES her, fingers warped around a hand made WOOLLEN SCARF that sits around her neck. Although he seems aggressive, he's also reserved, affectionate.

LIZA

You look like...

JAMES FALLON

Ive been fucked by a volcano right?
Ross murdered lord Brax, and you
know every secret in this army so
I'll give you one chance to tell me
or I'll make that wean an orphan.

LIZA

Do you even know who you are
anymore?

Fallon releases his grip, caressing Liza's scarf softly. Liza looks deep into Fallon's eyes, gently touching his fingers.

LIZA

I've kept it, every day that you've
repelled your past. There's a note
I saw from the rebels. The Earls
days are numbered and so are yours.
You can't trust anyone James.

JAMES FALLON

Whats Ross up to?

LIZA

Come with me. There's still time to
accept who you are, and find peace
together. I know its hard for you
to speak how you feel but know, You
were never a Spider to me, you were
my James. Forever and always.

JAMES FALLON

I will never be a pawn again, Liza.

BANG! Liza Gasps, her eyes fading she falls limp on the floor, An ARROW lodged in her back.

SIR ARRON ROSS (O.S.)
 You dare plot against your betters,
 Spider. That scar should've kept
 you in the ground.

Fallon, dazed with overwhelming sincerity watches her die. He looks up to see Ross at the door, a hooded cloak draped over plate armour, a CROSSBOW in hand. Ross begins to reload but Fallon, overcome with a malignant rage, rips the scarf from Liza's neck and charges, head-butting Ross to the floor with the force of an obese rhinoceros. He wraps the wool around Ross's neck and SQUEEZES. Harder and harder, Fallon's face shakes with uncontrollable madness as Ross's body quivers in death. Fallon finally lets go, and Ross's body slumps to the floor. He looks to the infant, still sleeping peacefully in the corner. A single tear flows down Fallon's eye.

EXT. TENT CITY - NIGHT

We follow Fallon charging through the haphazard canopies, his eyes filled with unpredictable fury. The camp is empty, silent. The fires that illuminated the party are now almost dead. SUNLIGHT starts to befall the sleeping city.

INT. EARL JOHN LEVINE'S TENT - NIGHT

Fallon enters, about to divulge the conspiracy when something stuns him speechless. Before him, the Earl kneels, his blooded face pleading, Fallon's own SILVER POMMELLED DAGGER resting on his neck, GOLD RINGED fingers grasping.

JAMES FALLON
 Chaplin Kin...

Chaplin Kinaird SLITS the Earls throat. He falls, dead.

CHAPLIN KINAIRD
 You know this knife was to be the
 nail in your coffin, Spider. Brax
 did well.

A wave of realisation befalls Fallon's face.

JAMES FALLON
 Mi'lord Brax?

CHAPLIN KINAIRD
 A worthless seed of jealousy. He
 came to me with a plot to overthrow
 his brother.

(MORE)

CHAPLIN KINAIRD (CONT'D)

A clever one for a coward, but we needed someone to frame for the murder, a brute without a voice. then by a miracle of god, an outlaw called Spider came to our cells, so we gave him hope of wrath and power. But Brax, the deluded soul, was but a pawn in game a game of my own.

The two circle a large open hearth at the centre of the room. the embers of the logs still searing, the fires nearly out. Fallon's mind stirs, caressing his scar.

CHAPLIN KINAIRD

Wealth is there for anyone who's prepared to take it. You of all people know that. Ross, the idiot, was loyal to The Earl and look nowhere he is.

JAMES FALLON

So you hatched your own plan, and started this whole rebellion.

CHAPLIN KINAIRD

Aye, And by sunrise they'll be here to burn this place, slaughter this army as it sleeps, and theres nothing you can do.

(laughing)

Who you gonna call out to?

JAMES FALLON

You used us all, and now thousands will die.

CHAPLIN KINAIRD

Thats the way of this world. Power is what defines us, Spider. And I am but a servant.

JAMES FALLON

Aye, A servant to your own renown.

Kinaird SLASHES but at lightning pace, Fallon DODGES then thrusts the Chaplin's face straight into the embers of the burning logs. The Chaplin shakes as muffled screams echo. Then goes limp he goes limp. Fallon exits the tent taking Liza's Scarf, and leaving the DAGGER on the floor.

EXT. TENT CITY - DAWN

The sun rising over the sleeping valley, fallon charges through the tents. He's been badly hurt but the determination drives him forward. He grasps his neck, unable to warn his fellow comrades vocally, he has another plan.

Those who cannot speak, may still have a voice

In front, the ALARM BELL. The thunder of a THOUSAND HOOFS vibrates the very ground beneath him. The Rebels are coming, but still he perceivers. He reaches the BELL. Looking up, a volley of a hundred FLAMING ARROWS lights up the sky like a fluster of shooting stars burning the morning sky. If he leaves now, he could survive.

Your past crimes will be forgotten, and Your redemption define you

But no! He places his hand around the bell, gripping it hard. His other hand grasping Liza's crimson BLOOD SOAKED SCARF.

JAMES FALLON
Forever and always.

He RINGS THE BELL. The camp starts to wake as the ARROWS FALL.

FADE OUT.

