

Fool

written by

Matthew David Brozik & Sydney Krueger-Brozik

September 1, 2025

FADE IN:

1

EXT. BATTLEFIELD - DAWN

1

An expansive, barren field. A battlefield, in fact -- soon, anyway. The morning mists are clearing as the sun rises. It is a colorless landscape, as no blood has yet been spilt.

Two companies of hundreds of soldiers stand facing each other; about fifty yards separates their front lines. Armored knights sit astride horses clad in barding, while squires stand beside them. The hot breaths of the mounts are visible in the cold, still air. All is quiet on the battlefield. Until...

The peal of a single war horn pierces the calm, immediately rousing the attentions of men and horses alike. The company of soldiers flying orange standards tightens its formation and prepares to engage the enemy.

The company of soldiers flying green standards, however, splits into two, creating a central pathway the full depth of its formation. This is clearly a passage for a personage of immense importance.

After a long, fraught moment of inactivity passes... we hear a faint jingling. The sound grows in volume as someone makes their way through the two halves of the divided company. Finally, he arrives.

A lone knight on horseback takes up a position at the front of the green company. Except he isn't exactly a soldier, and his horse is merely the hobby kind. This is TIMBLE, the royal jester of the Kingdom of Celadonia, here to discharge one of his few but essential duties -- mocking an opposing military force before combat begins in earnest. He wears minimal armor and his motley cap-and-bells (which has two floppy points).

The soldiers of the other company trade quizzical glances with one another. Timble quickly commands their undivided attention, however.

TIMBLE

(projecting)

Top of the morning, gentlemen.
Thank you all for coming out. I'm
sure you'd rather still be in bed.
With your livestock!

(beat)

I can see that some of your short
swords are a little droopy this
morning. Don't worry: That's
fairly common in soldiers over
twenty-five!

(MORE)

TIMBLE (CONT'D)

(beat)

Oh, and I heard that your Queen
Mother is so ugly that her royal
portrait hanged itself!

Nobody laughs. Rather, the soldiers now appear eager to attack.

TIMBLE (CONT'D)

All right, well, that's my time.
You've been very... attentive.
Have a safe battle. Remember to
clean the tips of your war
hammers.

Timble then retreats back along the pathway opened for him... which closes again as soon as he's through. Then the two companies promptly meet and clash noisily.

2 EXT. HILLSIDE - LATER

2

On a hillside overlooking the battlefield, Timble sits on the ground, watching the action from a safe distance. He holds the staff of his hobby horse in one hand.

We don't see the conflict. We hear the sounds of battle, and we watch Timble's reactions to the carnage. It seems like he wants to look away but can't. He does, however, cover his hobby horse's eyes.

3 EXT. CASTLE EVERWELL - MORNING - ESTABLISHING

3

A nice, large castle on a nice, large piece of land. All the usual castle components: towers, turrets, battlements, arrow loops. A crenelation or two.

SUPER: CASTLE EVERWELL, KINGDOM OF CELADONIA

4 INT. CASTLE EVERWELL - THRONE ROOM

4

Everwell is the metaphorical seat of monarchical government of Celadonia, and the throne room of Everwell contains the literal seats of that monarchy. On the his-and-hers thrones in the spacious and lavishly appointed chamber sit KING MANDOLPH (late 40s, amiable) and QUEEN CHLORAL (early 40s, regal). Also present are dozens of chancellors, nobles, advisors, counselors, retainers, and attendants.

No one is speaking, and the mood in the room is tense. Many a peek at the King is stolen as the group waits for... something.

Finally we hear, again, the jingling of bells -- Timble's bells. As the jingling gets closer, two men rush to open the large doors to the throne room. A moment later, Timble comes running in -- carrying his hobby horse, not "riding" it.

All eyes are now on Timble, who stops running only when he reaches the foot of the King's throne at the far end of the room... and then Timble takes a moment to catch his breath.

He bends forward, dropping his hobby horse and placing his hands on his knees. He breathes heavily. Just as the delay borders on too long, Timble raises a finger to indicate that he needs just a moment more before he can report.

Finally:

TIMBLE
(breathlessly)
Well!
(beat)
I just flew back from the
battlefield, and--

Nope. He's not ready. Timble stops, clears some dust from his throat, then gestures toward the goblet at the King's arm. Graciously, King Mandolph nods for an attendant to take the goblet to Timble.

Timble grasps the goblet and drains it in one fluid motion. He hands the goblet back to the attendant.

TIMBLE (CONT'D)
(less breathlessly)
I just flew back from the
battlefield, Your Majesty, and,
boy, are your soldiers all dead.

The room erupts in murmurs. Timble offers a goofy, apologetic smile.

ANGLE ON KING MANDOLPH, who grimaces.

5

INT. CASTLE EVERWELL - THRONE ROOM - MOMENTS LATER

5

In the background, Timble -- who has gotten his second or third wind -- is animatedly recreating death scenes from the battlefield to amuse the King, the Queen, and most of the others in the room. Timble uses his jester's scepter as a prop weapon.

In the foreground stands VERMILIA, a cunning, ambitious woman in her late 30s, conferring with her personal attendants, large PUGN (pronounced "Pung") and wiry MINCE, both dressed in all black.

VERMILIA
 (indignant)
 It's disgraceful. "Jester's
 privilege." Nothing less than a
 license to mock anyone and
 anything. Just look at him--

Pugn and Mince turn to look at Timble.

VERMILIA
Don't look at him. Look at me.
 Listen to me: When the revolution
 comes, that imbecile will be first
 against the wall.

Now Vermilia turns to watch Timble's antics. Pugn and Mince do likewise. After a moment of sneering...

PUGN
 (thickly)
 Which wall?

VERMILIA
 What?

PUGN
 Which wall will he be first
 against?

VERMILIA
 Whichever wall we line up the
 enemies of the kingdom against. It
 doesn't matter. It's an
 expression.

PUGN
 Oh.

Another moment, then:

PUGN (CONT'D)
 But if you had to pick a wall...

VERMILIA
 Mince, take Pugn and wait for me
 in our carriage.

Mince leads Pugn away from Vermilia. We follow them.

MINCE
 (MORE)

MINCE (CONT'D)
 (to Pugn, friendly)
 You've got to stop asking her
 questions. You know she doesn't
 like answering questions.

7 INT. CASTLE EVERWELL - THRONE ROOM - MOMENTS LATER

7

Vermilia still watches the rest of the retinue as they watch Timble. PRINCE LUCIEN (16) sidles up to her.

LUCIEN
 (nonchalant-ish)
 Oh, hi.
 (beat)
 Vermilia... right?

She does not answer him. He is not deterred.

LUCIEN (CONT'D)
 (re: Timble)
 He's pretty great. Timble. Isn't
 he great?

VERMILIA
 (coldly)
 Is he?

LUCIEN
 I mean... I like him.

VERMILIA
 Do you?

LUCIEN
 You don't?

VERMILIA
 Not very much, no.

LUCIEN
 Oh, yeah, well... I guess he can
 be a bit... or a lot...
 (beat)
 Do you need a drink or something?

8 EXT. CASTLE EVERWELL - VEHICLE LOT - MOMENTS LATER

8

A flat area off to one side where multiple horse-and-carriage combos are parked. In one corner of the lot, a gaggle of coachmen congregate, each smoking a pipe.

At Vermilia's carriage, Mince and Pugn loiter. Mince lights his own pipe.

PUGN
 Why does she hate him so much?
 Vermilia, I mean. Timble, I mean.
 (beat)
 Was her father killed by a jester?

MINCE
 Vermilia doesn't suffer fools
 gladly. And Timble is a fool. It
 is literally his job.

After a quiet moment.

PUGN
 How do you get that job? Jester.

MINCE
 I don't know.

He uses the end of his pipe to punctuate what he says next:

MINCE (CONT'D)
 And do not ask Vermilia.

The sounds of people exiting the castle prompt Mince and Pugn to look in that direction.

ANGLE ON CASTLE

Vermilia is leading the exodus, Prince Lucien following her like a puppy. Then come the others.

PUGN (O.S.)
 Do you think "Timble" is his real
 name?

MINCE (O.S.)
 Not now.

9 INT. CASTLE EVERWELL - THRONE ROOM

9

The end of the parade of advisors, counselors, et al. is exiting the room through the main doors. The King stands in front of his throne, waving goodbye regally. Timble stands in front of the Queen's throne, waving sarcastically. The Queen is not present.

When the big wooden DOORS of the room shut with a resounding THUD:

TIMBLE

What a morning. Eh, sire?

Timble pats the King's bottom. The King turns to scowl at Timble, raising an eyebrow. He does not look as indulgent as he has to this point. Timble sees it.

TIMBLE (CONT'D)

My apologies, Your Majesty. I thought you were the Queen.

A tense moment... then the King laughs, heartily. The King begins to walk toward a side door of the room. Timble follows a half-step behind.

10

INT. CASTLE EVERWELL - TIMBLE'S BEDCHAMBER - LATER

10

Timble's bedchamber is small, but very tidy. On one side, beneath a window, is a simple wooden table. In the middle of the room is a simple wooden bed. A long burlap curtain hangs along the entire length of the room, on the side of the bed opposite the table, serving as a wall.

Timble stands at the table and methodically removes his cap, placing it onto the table... then he lays his scepter gently on the table... and finally he puts down what appears to be a rubber chicken made of wood.

Then Timble lays on his bed, facing the ceiling, and closes his eyes. He is exhausted.

Almost immediately, we hear a ruckus on the other side of the curtain, like someone is looking for something haphazardly.

Timble gets out of bed again, walks to the curtain, and slides it wide open... revealing the other half of the room. This is where the royal magician sleeps. It is a space of complete chaos. Books of all sizes are piled high. There are flasks of colorful, bubbling liquids. There is a large bird in a large cage.

WOBBLEWAND (tall, ancient, robed) is searching through all of it for...

TIMBLE

(groggily)

Can I help you find something, Wobblewand?

WOBBLEWAND

Eh? Oh. I... I'm looking for the royal jester.

TIMBLE
That's me, Wob. Your roommate.
Timble. The royal jester.

Wobblewand turns to face Timble.

WOBBLEWAND
Ah! There you are.

TIMBLE
Here I am. Is there something I
can do for you?

Wobblewand extends a hand to Timble.

WOBBLEWAND
Pull my finger?

TIMBLE
(sighing)
I'm so sorry I taught you that.

11 INT. CASTLE EVERWELL - THRONE ROOM - AFTERNOON

11

The following day. Once more, Mandolph and Chloral are on their thrones, and a throng of advisors -- including Vermilia -- are in attendance.

MANDOLPH
Yesterday's decisive loss on the
field of battle has had
unfortunate consequences for the
kingdom. Celadonia must cede a not
insignificant parcel of land to
Ardoria, which will mean a sizable
reduction of rents and taxes
payable for the benefit of the
commonwealth.

There is grumbling, but only a little.

MANDOLPH (CONT'D)
Moving on: We will now entertain
new business. Who wants to go
first?

A noble approaches the dais and bows.

NOBLE 1
John the Good, Your Majesty. Earl
of Greenhollow. Our roads are
muddy and filled with poisonous
frogs.

Timble tumbles into view, stops, and stands next to John.

TIMBLE
(mockingly)
Doesn't that make it easier to
have your vehicles... toad?

Everyone laughs. Not Vermilia, though. Timble tumbles off.

MANDOLPH
Noted, John, Earl of Greenhollow.
Next?

John exits and a second noble steps up and bows. He is portly,
to say the least.

NOBLE 2
Charles the Mediocre, Your
Majesty. Marquis of Stonebrook.
Our priory needs a new roof.

Timble tumbles back into view, coming to stand next to Charles.

TIMBLE
Perhaps your lordship should not
sit atop the building, watching
the nuns.

The crowd laughs. Even Charles. But not Vermilia. Timble
tumbles off again.

Charles steps aside, and a third noble steps up and bows.

NOBLE 3
Philip, Your Majesty. Just Philip.
Baron of Bleakwater. A pestilence
is ravaging our cows.

TIMBLE (O.S.)
Are your daughters okay?

Once more, all but Vermilia laugh uproariously. Philip steps
aside. No one steps forward immediately.

MANDOLPH
If that concludes the new
business...?

Now Vermilia comes forward.

VERMILIA
Actually, Your Majesty, I must
speak up. I can hold my tongue no
longer.

Murmurs from the rest.

VERMILIA (CONT'D)
The kingdom is in disarray.
Flooded roads. Crumbling
structures. Dying livestock. And
yet what do we hear from the
throne? Solutions? Resolutions?
No: Insults from an idiotic
acrobat.

Now the room is silent. Everyone holds their breath.

MANDOLPH
You mean Timble, right?

VERMILIA
I do. The rolling, bouncing,
braying halfwit.

MANDOLPH
(patiently)
My dear Vermilia, the station of
court jester is a time-honored
one. Indeed, the jester's
privilege was even codified in the
laws of the realm. We consider
Timble almost like a son.

VERMILIA
My apologies, then, Your Majesty.
I did not mean to insult the
fruitcake of your loins.

She bows, steps aside, disappears into the crowd, then leaves
the throne room quietly.

12 **EXT. CASTLE EVERWELL - GROUNDS - LATER**

12

Vermilia walks, with Mince and Pugn right behind her.

VERMILIA
I really hate that jackass.

They walk in silence for a moment. Pugn turns to Mince.

PUGN
(quietly, sadly)
Me?

13 INT. CASTLE EVERWELL - LIBRARY - LATER**13**

The "library" of the castle is more like a closet. There are floor-to-ceiling bookcases on all four walls. There is a small table in the room and a single chair. Vermilia enters.

VERMILIA'S POV

The first bookcase is empty. The shelves are covered in dust. The second bookcase is empty. So is the third. Finally, we see the fourth bookcase. On one shelf is one large book.

BACK TO SCENE

Vermilia takes the book to the table and sits in the chair. She opens the book, flips through some pages, reads some things. Then we see on her face that a plan is forming...

She slams the book shut again, causing a cloud of dust to blow up into her face, prompting a coughing fit.

14 EXT. TAVERN - EVENING - ESTABLISHING**14**

A quaint, freestanding tavern down the road from Everwell. A sign over the door reads THE DREADFUL BOAR.

15 INT. THE DREADFUL BOAR**15**

There are 15 or so men and women in the place, some at tables, some at the bar. A female publican is behind the bar, serving drinks. A lyre-and-lute duo performs in a corner.

At a small table Timble and Wobblewand sit on low stools, each with a flagon. They watch the musicians.

The front door opens and Pugn and Mince enter. No one takes notice. Mince sees Timble and Wobblewand, however, and heads toward them. He gestures for Pugn to go to the bar, which Pugn does.

While Pugn orders drinks, Mince takes a seat at the table next to Timble's. When the musicians end their song and the patrons clap, Mince leans over and speaks to the magician.

MINCE

(dissembling)

Forgive me, gentlemen, but you look familiar. Have I seen you at Everwell? Wait -- you're the royal magician, aren't you?

WOBBLEWAND

I am. He's not.

MINCE

(to Timble)

No, but I daresay I recognize you as well.

(pretending to think)

You're the Keeper of the Seals?

No? The Doorward? The--?

TIMBLE

The royal fool. At your service. Although not really. I'm off the clock.

MINCE

Ah! The King's jester. Gambol?

Bumble?

TIMBLE

Timble.

MINCE

Of course. Timble. Tim. May I call you Tim?

TIMBLE

That's fine. But it's a silent B.

Pugn brings two flagons to the table and sits.

MINCE

So, this is actually kind of embarrassing, but my friend here bet me a pair of gold pieces that I couldn't stuff more than seven ferrets into my breeches. And I was going to try that this evening, but...

TIMBLE

But?

MINCE

Well, I just think I'd feel uneasy doing something so silly in the presence of a professional silly person. You know?

TIMBLE

Like I said, I'm off the clock. And, to be honest, I wouldn't mind being in the audience for a change.

MINCE

In that case...

Mince gets to his feet and stands on his stool.

MINCE (CONT'D)

(loud)

Fellow Celadonians, lend me your
ferrets! I wish to attempt a realm
record!

16 INT. SUNGLEAM HALL - DRESSING ROOM - NIGHT

16

At Vermilia's manor house, she is getting dressed. Although it is already nighttime, she is preparing to go out. On her dresser sits the large book she took from the castle library, the CODEX CELADONIENSIS.

Standing before a full-length cheval glass, Vermilia poses a question:

VERMILIA

Mirror, mirror, on the floor...
does this outfit make me look
treasonous?

17 INT. THE DREADFUL BOAR - LATER

17

Back at the tavern, Mince is negotiating a ferret into his pants, which are already wriggling with multiple ferrets. The other patrons are cheering him on. The musicians play a jaunty tune.

PATRONS

Seven! Seven! Seven!

Mince gets the seventh ferret down his pants, and the crowd goes wild. Pugn quickly hands Mince another ferret, and Mince make a show of attempting to add it to the business...

It is now surprisingly quiet, though. No cheering. No music. We ANGLE ON THE PATRONS. All of them are silently counting on their fingers, deep in concentration. Until...

ONE PATRON

(triumphantly)

Eight!

ALL PATRONS

Eight! Eight! Eight!

...but before Mince can get in number eight, seven ferrets escape his pants through the legs. The animals scatter, and patrons lunge to collect them. A pair of patrons trades ferrets in the background.

Mince drops onto his stool. Pugn claps him on the back and offers him a drink.

TIMBLE
That was impressive.

MINCE
That means a lot coming from you.
(beat)
Are you sure you wouldn't care to try?

Timble considers this, smiles, then grabs his flagon and drains it in one pull. He slams his empty flagon onto the table.

TIMBLE
(decisively)
Bring me the ferrets.

18 INT. CASTLE EVERWELL - THRONE ROOM - NIGHT

18

The throne room is empty but for Vermilia, standing before the dais and holding the Codex Celadoniensis, and a HERALD, standing near the side door behind the dais. The herald holds a long, formal horn.

After a moment, the side door opens, prompting the herald to raise his horn and bring it to his lips. Just as he begins to blast a fanfare, King Mandolph steps through the door and pushes the horn away from the herald's face.

Mandolph is in his bedclothes. He is carrying his crown. He first sits on his throne, then puts his crown on his head.

MANDOLPH
This had better be a matter of life or death, Vermilia.

VERMILIA
Death, Your Majesty. My bodyguards have arrested a man just as he completed committing one of the most longstanding crimes on the books. Or, the book.

She taps the Codex.

MANDOLPH
Which is...?

Vermilia opens the Codex and reads.

VERMILIA

(quoting)

"In order to preserve and maintain the good repute of the kingdom, no subject of Celadonia shall introduce into his breeches more than seven muskrats, ferrets, or weasels at one time. Intoxication shall not be an excuse."

Vermilia closes the Codex and waits. Mandolph stares at her for a moment.

MANDOLPH

You got me out of bed to sentence a man to death for putting seven--

VERMILIA

Eight. Eight ferrets.

(beat)

Your Majesty, it pains me to be the one to say it, but your stature as a decisive man of action is waning. There is talk that you are soft on crime, among other things. This could be an opportunity to rehabilitate your reputation.

After a moment:

MANDOLPH

What's his name?

VERMILIA

Merthyn, sire. Merthyn Carpenter.

MANDOLPH

Is he a carpenter?

VERMILIA

Does that matter?

MANDOLPH

I suppose not.

He yawns. He rubs his eyes.

MANDOLPH (CONT'D)

As you wish, Vermilia. He will be put to death first thing in the morning. And thank you for bringing this matter to my attention.

VERMILIA
Of course, Your Majesty. Anything
for the kingdom.

CUT TO:

19 **EXT. CELADONIA - MORNING - ESTABLISHING** 19

A beautiful morning. The sun is shining, birds are singing, and a BELL is RINGING a cheerful series of gongs.

20 **INT. CASTLE EVERWELL - DINING HALL - CONTINUOUS** 20

Queen Chloral is already seated at one end of a long table. The table itself is covered with all kinds of foods. Attendants scurry hither and thither.

King Mandolph enters, stretching. He kisses his wife on the cheek as he passes her, then takes a seat at the other end of the table. Behind his seat is a large window through which abundant sunshine streams.

MANDOLPH
I had the strangest dream last
night.

Abruptly, a new BELL GONGS outside. This one is not cheerful. It's exactly the kind of bell that makes one wonder for whom the bell tolls.

A PAGE steps into view and whispers in the King's ear. The King's demeanor immediately changes for the worse.

MANDOLPH (CONT'D)
Damn it.

He gets up quickly to leave. On his way out, he grabs something from the table.

MANDOLPH (CONT'D)
I'll just take a piece of toast to
go.

21 **EXT. CASTLE EVERWELL - GROUNDS - SCAFFOLD - MOMENTS
LATER** 21

The scaffold where executions take place -- rarely but not never -- is a large elevated structure with a prominent guillotine. Already present on the scaffold are the EXECUTIONER (large), Vermilia, Wobblewand, and Timble.

Timble wears rags and a hood over his head; his hands are shackled in front of him.

On the ground, watching, are Mince and Pugn.

Mandolph climbs the steps of the scaffold to join the party already present. He's a bit out of breath when he gets there.

MANDOLPH

Sorry I'm late.

(to Timble)

Oh, that was insensitive.

(to Vermilia)

Let's just begin.

Vermilia hands Mandolph a scroll. He takes it, opens it, and reads, addressing Timble.

MANDOLPH (CONT'D)

Merthyn Carpenter... you stand accused and convicted of the crime of introducing more than seven ferrets into your breeches at once. The sentence is separation of your head from your body by means of a blade dropped onto your neck.

(beat)

Do you have any final words?

TIMBLE

(muffled)

JESTER'S PRIVILEGE!

MANDOLPH

(to the others)

What did he say?

(to the executioner)

Take his hood off.

EXECUTIONER

Take his head off?

MANDOLPH

His hood. Take his hood off.

The executioner removes Timble's hood.

MANDOLPH (CONT'D)

(to Timble)

Say again?

TIMBLE

(breathlessly)

Jester's privilege, sire!

MANDOLPH
 (chuckling)
 My boy, that is amusing, but
 jester's privilege is only for my
 jester.

TIMBLE
 I am your jester, Your Majesty.
 It's me! It's Timble!

Mandolph peers at Timble. He does not recognize his jester.

MANDOLPH
 I was told your name is Merthyn,
 and that you are a carpenter.

TIMBLE
 (excitedly)
 My name is Merthyn, and my father
 was a carpenter! But I am your
 jester, and I use the name
 "Timble" when I jest! Ask
 Wobblewand! We're roommates in the
 castle!

Mandolph turns to Wobblewand.

MANDOLPH
 Is this true? What's going on
 here?

Before Wobblewand can respond, Mandolph turns to Vermilia.

MANDOLPH (CONT'D)
 (growing frustrated)
 Is this my jester?

TIMBLE
 I'll prove it, Your Majesty. I
 just need... three... apples!

Mandolph looks around the scaffold for apples. He sees none.
 Then he spies Mince and Pung below.

MANDOLPH
 (calling down)
 You, there! Find three apples and
 throw them up here.

A moment later three potatoes come flying up onto the scaffold.

MANDOLPH (CONT'D)
 (calling down)
 That's fine.

Wobblewand picks up the fruit and hands them to the king. The king nods to the executioner, who nudges Timble forward. Timble takes a step toward the king and raises his shackled hands. The king places the three potatoes in Timble's hands. Timble attempts to juggle, only to immediately drop all three potatoes to the floor of the scaffold. They roll away.

MANDOLPH
 You are Timble!
 (to Vermilia)
 This is Timble!

VERMILIA
 Is it.

MANDOLPH
 (to the executioner)
 Unbind him at once.

The executioner removes Timble's shackles.

VERMILIA
 Your Majesty, you aren't thinking
 of letting him go free, though,
 are you?

MANDOLPH
 Of course I am. Timble has license
 to put as many ferrets down his
 breeches as he pleases.

VERMILIA
 But, Your Majesty, he was on his
 own time. And if you make an
 exception for the court jester
 when he isn't at court....

Mandolph listens.

VERMILIA (CONT'D)
 (much quieter)
 Your reputation, Your Majesty.
 "Law and order" means law and
 order.
 (beat)
 But, of course, it's your decision
 to make.

Vermilia steps back. Mandolph looks from her, to Timble, to the executioner, to Wobblewand, to Mince and Pugn, then back to Timble, then to the castle, then to a cloud in the sky, then back to Timble. Finally:

MANDOLPH

Upon reconsideration of the matter
at hand, I hereby exercise the
prerogative of mercy.

Vermilia looks disappointed. Timble looks hopeful.

MANDOLPH

(with regret)

The sentence of death stands, but
I will extend to the prisoner the
choice of the manner of his death.

Now Timble looks horrified, and Vermilia looks satisfied.

Mandolph looks Timble squarely in the eyes. Mandolph looks
regretful but resolute.

MANDOLPH

Merthyn Carpenter, also known as
Timble, how do you wish to die?

Everyone is silent. Timble takes a moment to collect his
thoughts before responding. His face is a study in anxiety...
until the slightest of smirks appears.

TIMBLE

(calmly)

Your Majesty, I wish to die of
natural causes.

Now a smile begins to appear on the King's face. After a tense
moment...

MANDOLPH

Granted.

VERMILIA

Your Majesty...!

MANDOLPH

(ignoring her)

In recognition of the necessity of
enforcing the laws of the realm
without immoderate exception, the
prisoner is hereby banished from
the kingdom of Celadonia.

Timble, still dressed in drab prisoner garb, is packing a
medium-sized canvas bag. As he packs his jester's costume, cap,
and a couple of other things from his area, he mutters.

He is clearly experiencing multiple strong emotions at once.

TIMBLE
(muttering)
Banished... potatoes... kingdom...
ferrets... gravity... sea
monsters...

Timble puts the strap of the bag over his shoulder and grabs his scepter, then turns around to see Wobblewand watching him.

TIMBLE (CONT'D)
(irritated)
And what are you looking at?

WOBBLEWAND
Weren't you beheaded this morning?

TIMBLE
In fact, I was not. No thanks to
you, though.

WOBBLEWAND
Are you leaving?

TIMBLE
Yes! I'm leaving! I'm leaving this
room, this castle, and this
kingdom! But at least I'm taking
my head with me.

WOBBLEWAND
Well, that's something.
(beat)
Here, take these with you as well.

Wobblewand reaches for a small sack on a side table. It is tied closed neatly with hemp string, but we can see that there is at least one oddly-shaped item in it. He hands the sack to Timble, who accepts it brusquely.

TIMBLE
What's in here?

WOBBLEWAND
I forget.

Timble sighs gruffly and shoves the sack into his bag. He starts to step past Wobblewand.

WOBBLEWAND (CONT'D)
And I almost forgot: The King
asked me to give you something.

TIMBLE
What is it?

WOBBLEWAND
I don't remember.

TIMBLE
(a bit less irritably)
Take care of His Majesty,
Magician. And yourself.

WOBBLEWAND
Oh, I'll be fine.

23 **EXT. CASTLE EVERWELL - GROUNDS - MOMENTS LATER** 23

It is still a sunny day, possibly even more beautiful than it was earlier in the morning. Timble walks -- bag slung over his shoulder, scepter held like a walking stick -- away from the castle. He looks over his shoulder once, then continues on.

24 **EXT. CELADONIA - VILLAGE - LATER** 24

Timble travels a dirt road through a populated area, passing various structures and subjects. They are mostly happy. He is not. He takes another look back over his shoulder, then walks on.

25 **EXT. CELADONIA - OUTSKIRTS - AFTERNOON** 25

Timble finally reaches the border of the kingdom. He comes upon a sign that reads: NOW LEAVING KINGDOM OF CELADONIA. He stops at the sign, then looks back into the only realm he's ever known. Then he steps past the sign.

As soon as Timble steps out of Celadonia, it begins to pour. The sky turns dark, brightened only by lightning, accompanied by thunder. Within seconds, Timble is drenched.

There is a second sign. It reads: WELCOME TO BLIGHTMOOR.

Timble turns around to peer back into Celadonia. It is still sunny there, just feet away. Timble turns back again and, slumping with dejection, continues into Blightmoor.

26 **EXT. BLIGHTMOOR - EVENING** 26

It is still raining, and it's even darker now, when Timble sees the first signs of life in Blightmoor. He comes upon a lodging house, identified by a sign reading CARDINAL'S INN.

He heads for the entrance.

27 INT. CARDINAL'S INN - EVENING

27

Timble walks into the front room of the establishment, where an INNKEEPER (female, middle-aged) stands behind a simple reception desk.

INNKEEPER
(pleasantly)
Good even. Is it raining out?

TIMBLE
(miserable)
Is that rain? I thought it was
God's tears. He's crying because
of stupid questions like that one.

HARD CUT TO:

28 EXT. CARDINAL'S INN - MOMENTS LATER

28

Timble steps out of the inn, not welcome there. Fortunately, there is another inn directly across the road. This one is the MORTALS' INN.

29 INT. MORTALS' INN - MOMENTS LATER

29

Timble steps in. A SECOND INNKEEPER (male, middle-aged) greets him.

INNKEEPER 2
(pleasantly)
Good even. Is it raining out?

Timble takes a breath... then forces himself to simply smile.

30 INT. MORTALS' INN - LODGING ROOM - LATER

30

Timble is undressed but for his underclothes. His soaked outerwear is hanging on a wooden chair. As he puts on a new, dry set of clothes, his stomach growls.

TIMBLE
(to his belly)
Hold your tongue.

31 INT. MORTALS' INN - DINING AREA

31

A handful of other lodgers are taking their meals in an open space with low tables and benches. Timble takes a seat at a table where a couple of others already are.

LODGER 1
Just arrived?

TIMBLE
Yes.

LODGER 2
Did you come from far?

TIMBLE
Everwell.

LODGER 2
Is it raining out?

HARD CUT TO:

32 EXT. MORTALS' INN - NIGHT

32

Timble is thrown out of the Mortals' Inn -- through a front window. He lands on the muddy road. After a moment, he gets to his feet, then looks up to a second-story window just in time to see his bag coming down through the air toward him. He catches his bag, but the impact knocks him down into the mud again. He looks up to the window once more.

TIMBLE
(calling)
I had a--

Timble is interrupted by a CRACK overhead. But it's not thunder. His scepter -- snapped in two -- comes down from the window, tossed into the mud.

33 EXT. MORTALS' INN - MOMENTS LATER

33

Timble walks around to another side of the building, where he finds a covered area where horses are stabled. The ground is covered with straw.

Timble finds a corner and hunkers down, huddling over his bag. He opens his bag and withdraws a potato. The nearest horse looks at Timble and snorts. Timble produces a second potato and rolls it to the horse.

TIMBLE
 (to the horse)
 At least you won't ask a lot of
 questions.

The horse snorts again.

TIMBLE (CONT'D)
 Or maybe you will.
 (beat)
 I'm a court jester. I was, anyway.
 (beat)
 What about you?

The horse snorts a third time.

TIMBLE (CONT'D)
 Oh, you're a horse?
 (beat)
 Do you know the horse who galloped
 into a tavern? The publican asked
 him, "Why the long face?"
 (beat)
 Neigh?
 (beat)
 All right, well.. I'm going to try
 to get some sleep. You keep your
 distance, okay? I'd rather not
 have a night mare.

FADE OUT.

FADE IN:

34 EXT. MORTALS' INN - STABLE - DAWN

34

Timble wakes up to an overcast morning. He is still on the
 straw. The first thing he notices is that he's alone -- no
 horses. The second thing he notices is that his bag is gone.

TIMBLE
 (outraged)
 Horse thieves!

Then he notices a STABLE BOY nearby. Timble gets to his feet
 and walks toward him.

TIMBLE (CONT'D)
 (calling)
 Hallo, there!

The stable boy stops and waits for Timble. When Timble reaches
 him:

TIMBLE (CONT'D)
 Who can I speak to about lodging?
 Specifically, lodging a complaint.

STABLE BOY
 That depends on your complaint.

TIMBLE
 I was robbed.

STABLE BOY
 Then you'll want to speak to
 Robin. He's the beadle of the
 manor.

TIMBLE
 And where is the manor?

STABLE BOY
 Not much. Where's the manor with
 you?

Timble and the boy stare at each other for a moment. Then the
 boy points to the distance.

STABLE BOY (CONT'D)
 It's that way. It's a large house.
 You can't miss it.

35 **EXT. BLIGHTMOOR - COUNTRYSIDE - MORNING**

35

Timble treks over grassland, eventually cresting a large hill.
 A large manor house comes into view.

36 **EXT. LYNDRAP MANOR - MOMENTS LATER**

36

As Timble approaches the manor house, he sees dozens of men and
 women walking to and fro. Everyone looks busy. He accosts the
 first person he can, a woman carrying a spinning wheel.

TIMBLE
 Excuse me! Spinning Jenny?

The woman stops and turns to face Timble.

JENNY
 I prefer Spinning Jennifer, if you
 please.

TIMBLE
 My apologies. Could you point me
 to the one called Robin?

JENNY

About half of the men and a third
of the women here are called
Robin. Can you be more specific?

TIMBLE

Robin the beadle.

JENNY

Ah. He's that one. In the jerkin.

Jenny walks off; Timble makes a beeline for a man in a jerkin.

TIMBLE

Robin? Robin the beadle?

ROBIN THE BEADLE is a middle aged man with a scar running the
length of the left side of his face.

ROBIN THE BEADLE

'Tis I! How may I help you,
stranger?

TIMBLE

I spent last night in the village
down the hill. I slept with the
horses. My pocket was stolen.

ROBIN THE BEADLE

Was it raining?

(beat)

Never mind. You'll want to speak
with the reeve.

TIMBLE

Robin the Reeve?

ROBIN THE BEADLE

Indeed. He's right there. In the
jerkin.

Robin the Beadle steps away; Timble heads for a second man in a
jerkin.

TIMBLE

Robin? Robin the Reeve?

ROBIN THE REEVE is a middle aged man with a scar running the
length of the right side of his face. Otherwise, he looks
identical to Robin the Beadle.

ROBIN THE REEVE

'Tis I. What do you want,
stranger?

TIMBLE
(taken aback)
Ah... I spent last night in the
village down the hill. My pocket
was stolen.

ROBIN THE REEVE
And?

TIMBLE
And I'd like to get it back.

ROBIN THE REEVE
Talk to the bailiff.

TIMBLE
Robin the Bailiff? Man in a
jerkin?

ROBIN THE REEVE
If you already know who he is, why
are you wasting my time?

Robin the Beadle hoofs it; Timble heads for a third man in a
jerkin.

TIMBLE
Robin? Robin the Bailiff?

ROBIN THE BAILIFF is a middle aged man with scars running the
lengths of the left and right sides of his face. Otherwise, he
looks identical to the previous two Robins. He looks Timble up
and down.

ROBIN THE BAILIFF
Let me guess... your pocket was
stolen.

TIMBLE
Yes!

ROBIN THE BAILIFF
Who stole it?

TIMBLE
I... I don't know.

ROBIN THE BAILIFF
Then it was probably the Dark
Woods Bandits. They're called that
because they're dark.
(beat)
The woods, I mean.

TIMBLE

And where are the Dark Woods?

Robing the Bailiff points beyond the manor house.

ROBIN THE BAILIFF

They're that way. It's a lot of trees. You can't miss it.

TRIMBLE

And how will I find the bandits?

ROBIN THE BAILIFF

(chuckling)

They'll probably find you.

(beat)

You should get started if you want to reach the woods before sundown.

TIMBLE

(unconcerned)

Do I need to reach the woods before sundown? Is that when the Dark Woods get... darker?

ROBIN THE BAILIFF

You haven't spent much time out in the real world, have you?

37 **EXT. DARK WOODS - AFTERNOON**

37

Timble is in the woods, surrounded by trees. Lots and lots of trees. He has been walking for several minutes at this point, but he hasn't yet seen any other people. Just trees.

He stops to take stock and get his bearings. He can't. Everywhere he looks, nothing but trees, and each tree looks a lot like the others.

But then he sees something different. Timble freezes when he realizes that a wild boar is staring at him.

TIMBLE

Oh.

(beat)

And where did you come from?

The boar does not answer.

TIMBLE

Not talking? Well, aren't you a bore.

(MORE)

TIMBLE (CONT'D)

(beat)

Not laughing either? Fine. I don't
work for you.

The boar takes a couple of steps toward Timble.

TIMBLE

No, no. You don't have to come any
closer.

Timble starts to back away, but the boar moves toward him again. Timble trips on a root and falls to the ground. The boar starts trotting toward Timble. Timble springs to his feet, then sprints to the nearest tree with a low branch. He runs two steps up the trunk of the tree and vaults himself onto the branch. He sits on the branch and watches the boar, who comes to a halt and looks up at Timble in the tree.

TIMBLE (CONT'D)

Nice try, scruffy.

(beat)

What's that? Nice tree, Timble?
Thank you.

The boar trots off. Timble remains in the tree.

YOUNG GIRL'S VOICE (V.O.)

That was very impressive.

Timble knits his brows. Was that... the boar talking? Timble looks around. On the ground behind him is a girl of about 11. She holds a bow and has a notched arrow aimed at Timble.

BANDIT

(calling up)

Do you think you could outrun an
arrow?

TIMBLE

(calling down)

I've never tried.

BANDIT

Would you care to try today?

TIMBLE

Not really.

BANDIT

Then come down from the tree. And
keep your hands where I can see
them.

38

EXT. DARK WOODS - GLADE - LATER

38

The young girl bandit -- ANNIS -- marches Timble into a glade, where four other pre-teen bandits already are, tending to various bandit tasks. This is their base of operations. Bandit Camp, if you will.

As Annis and Timble approach, the others notice. Two of the four stop working and meet Annis and Timble. SCRAG, a 12-year-old boy, is the leader of the group. PLUCK is a 10-year-old boy.

SCRAG
(re: Timble)
Ho! Who is this?

ANNIS
I found him in a tree, hiding from
a wild boar.

TIMBLE
Not so much hiding as waiting.

PLUCK
Waiting in a tree, you say? Have
you tried wading in a river?

Annis and Scrag chuckle. Timble scowls.

SCRAG
What's your name, tree-climber?

TIMBLE
I'm called Timble.

ANNIS
(meaningfully)
He's very... sprightly.

SCRAG
(getting her meaning)
Is that so?
(to Timble)
What brings you to the Dark Woods,
Timble?

TIMBLE
I'm looking for the Dark Woods
Bandits. This seemed like a good
place to start.

PLUCK
Sounds like that boar gave you a
good start!

Annis and Scrag titter.

TIMBLE

Look, who is this? And who are you, for that matter?

SCRAG

Oh, that's Pluck. He's a jokester. I'm Scrag. You've already met Annis. And the twins over there are Halfpenny and Dave. Together, we're the Dark Woods Bandits.

HALFPENNY and DAVE (9-year-old girl and boy, respectively) are preparing a fire in the background.

TIMBLE

Wait, what? No. You're... children.

PLUCK

Children indeed, but we kid you not.

TIMBLE

All right, that has to stop. It's annoying. Cut it out.

Scrag motions for Pluck to beat it. Pluck buzzes off to join the twins.

TIMBLE (CONT'D)

(re: Pluck)

And he's like that all the time?

ANNIS

(to Scrag)

As I was saying, Timble is light on his feet. He made it up that tree in two blinks.

TIMBLE

You could even say that I was on top of the situation.

SCRAG

(to Timble, ignoring that)

So why were you looking for the Dark Woods Bandits?

TIMBLE

Because you stole my pocket last night. At the Mortals' Inn.

SCRAG
You were staying at the Mortal?

TIMBLE
(coyly)
In a manner of speaking.

ANNIS
(laughing)
He was sleeping with the horses. I
lifted his pocket.

TIMBLE
You did! Where is it?

ANNIS
Somewhere over there.

Annis point to an edge of the glade. In the corner is a tree.
On the branches of the tree are scores of bags. Timble walks
over. Annis and Scrag follow.

TIMBLE
You stole all of these?

SCRAG
Just this past month.
(beat)
Which is yours?

Timble scans the bags overhead. Then he points.

TIMBLE
That one.

SCRAG
You can have it back if you can
get it.

Timble looks at Scrag. Then he looks back up the tree. Finally
Timble climbs the tree... about ten feet off the ground to the
branch where his bag is. He has to climb out a bit, but he
manages to snag his bag. Then he drops to the ground and lands
with an agile tumble. When he gets to his feet, the bag's strap
is already over his shoulder.

All five bandits clap. Timble can't help himself. He bows.

PLUCK
(calling)
You really went out on a limb for
that hand!

Timble ignores him. He opens his bag and looks inside.

TIMBLE
(panicked)
Hey! Where's my garb?

ANNIS
We sold it.

TIMBLE
You sold it? To whom?

SCRAG
We're not at liberty to say. Also,
we don't ask questions of our
customers.

TIMBLE
So, somebody bought my property
from you. But not all of it?

Timble extracts from his larger bag the smaller sack that
Wobblewand gave him. It is tied shut, but not as neatly as it
was.

TIMBLE (CONT'D)
What about this?

ANNIS
Nobody wanted that.

SCRAG
Why do you even have any of that?

TIMBLE
(abashed)
I'll be honest with you. I don't
even know what any of it is. It
was a going-away present that I
never opened.

PLUCK (O.S.)
There's no time... like the
present!

Timble now opens the sack and withdraws three items, one at a
time, and considers each one in turn. As he does:

ANNIS (O.S.)
It's an empty hourglass...

Timble takes out a medium-sized hourglass with no sand in it.
He turns it upside-down, then right-side-up again. Not a grain.
He places the hourglass on the ground.

ANNIS (O.S.) (CONT'D)
...a piece of cloth...

Timble takes out an irregularly-shaped piece of blue cloth. He looks it over. It appears to be nothing special. He stuffs it up his sleeve like a handkerchief.

ANNIS (O.S.) (CONT'D)
...and a rock.

Before Timble finds the last item, he casts a glance at Annis. A rock, did she say?

Timble reaches into the sack once more and pulls out... a rock. It's a rock about the size, shape, and color of a potato, but it is definitely just a rock. Timble looks at the rock for just a bit longer than anyone would need to look at a rock... then shoves it back into the sack. He puts the hourglass in there, too, then puts the sack into his bag.

TIMBLE
Fine, well, they're my gifts, and
it's just as well that no one
wanted to buy them from you.
(beat)
But since you sold my garb, that
money belongs to me. Hand it over,
and I'll be on my way.
(beat)
And I won't even tell anyone that
I found you.

SCRAG
You couldn't find us again if your
life depended on it. Tell anyone
you want. Tell everyone!

TIMBLE
Just give me my money.

SCRAG
I'll give you the money we got for
your garb if you help us.

TIMBLE
(wary)
Help you? Help you do what?

ANNIS
Help us get our hands on
something. Well, your hands. Then
our hands. Something that was
taken from us.

TIMBLE
(downright suspicious)
This sounds extremely suspicious.
(MORE)

TIMBLE (CONT'D)
(beat)
Where exactly is this... thing?

39 CASTLE CAPER - MONTAGE

39

40 A) DARK WOODS - FAR EDGE/CASTLE GROUNDS - DAWN

40

Scrag, Annis, and the twins emerge from the woods at the edge of the grounds of Castle Grimview. They walk as a group past the gatehouse, onto to the castle grounds proper. Then they break off and go separate ways. Scrag stays near the gatehouse.

SUPER: CASTLE GRIMVIEW

SCRAG (V.O.)
Here's how we'll do it: Four of us
bandits will cross the woods to
Castle Grimview at first light.
(beat)
Timble, you'll follow with the
last bandit separately.

TIMBLE (V.O.)
As long as it's not--

SCRAG (V.O.)
Pluck, you'll escort Timble.

TIMBLE (V.O.)

Oh, come on.

(beat)

Wait. You're just going to walk
past the gatehouse onto the castle
grounds?

ANNIS (V.O.)
We're children. No one pays
attention to us.

41 B) EXT. DARK WOODS - MORNING

41

Timble is dressed like a guard from Castle Grimview. Over a long red coat is some light armor, primarily a chestpiece. The helmet is the nasal type, with the long bar that covers the nose. The outfit mostly fits Timble, but not quite. He's less beefy than the typical castle guard.

Timble and Pluck walk through the woods. At first they walk side by side.

Pluck talks animatedly, incessantly. Eventually, Timble gestures unmistakably for Pluck to walk in front and at a distance.

SCRAG (V.O.)
Timble, you'll be dressed in the castle guard outfit we've cobbled together.

TIMBLE (V.O.)
How did you manage that?

PLUCK (V.O.)
Bribes, mostly. The gauntlets and greaves cost us an arm and a leg.

TIMBLE (V.O.)
Stop.

PLUCK (V.O.)
We paid through the nose for the helmet.

TIMBLE (V.O.)
I am not going to miss you.

42

C) EXT. DARK WOODS - FAR EDGE/CASTLE GROUNDS - LATER

42

Timble leaves Pluck at the edge of the woods, then continues on to the castle grounds, walking past the gatehouse giving a casual salute.

SCRAG (V.O.)
Timble, you'll leave Pluck in the woods.

TIMBLE (V.O.)
With pleasure.

SCRAG (V.O.)
You'll then proceed onto the castle grounds and meet me just past the gatehouse. You'll lead me toward the prison tower as if I'm your captive.

Scrag joins Timble. Timble takes Scrag by the scruff of his tunic and drags him roughly further into the castle grounds.

SCRAG (V.O.) (CONT'D)
Not too roughly, though.

Timble lets go of Scrag's collar and places his hand on the boy's shoulder, leading him forward much more gently.

43

**D) EXT. CASTLE GROUNDS - PRISON COURTYARD - MOMENTS
LATER**

43

In a corner yard of the castle grounds stand a prison tower and, nearby, a two-story armory, both made of stone. Near these buildings are several CASTLE GUARDS, all dressed like Timble, only less ill-fittingly; each holds a pike.

The guards mill about until something gets their attention. We see them all look at something...

ANGLE ON TWINS

The twin bandits Halfpenny and Dave square off in the courtyard for a bareknuckle fistfight.

SCRAG (V.O.)

At the prison courtyard, the twins will create a distraction by pretending to fight.

ANGLE ON GUARDS

The guards don't seem to care much about the kids fighting.

ANGLE ON TWINS

Halfpenny and Dave now square off with large swords. As they do, the guards come over and form a semi-circle around them, their backs to the armory.

SCRAG (V.O.)

It will be a dramatic fight.

The twins cross swords. The guards cheer them on.

44

E) EXT. CASTLE GROUNDS - ARMORY - MOMENTS LATER

44

Scrag leaves Timble at the entrance to the armory. Timble steps inside.

SCRAG (V.O.)

Timble, you'll slip inside the armory. I'll double back to the woods and rejoin Pluck.

45

F) INT. ARMORY - CONTINUOUS

45

Timble climbs a staircase to the second story of the small building. On the second story, he locates a high shelf where various confiscated items are.

SCRAG (V.O.)

On the second floor, you'll find a shelf with various confiscated items. You'll grab ours and defenestrate it. Annis will be waiting below the window.

Timble takes something from the shelf and walks over to a window with it. We do not see what the item is.

46

G) EXT. CASTLE GROUNDS - PRISON COURTYARD - MOMENTS LATER

46

The twins wrap up their mock battle, throwing down their swords, shaking hands, and walking off arm-in-arm. The disappointed castle guards disperse.

SCRAG (V.O.)

The twins will call a truce and retreat for the woods.

(beat)

Finally, Timble will exit the armory and Annis will come home. Mission accomplished.

PLUCK (V.O.)

A towering achievement!

TIMBLE (V.O.)

Can I defenestrate him instead?

47

EXT. CASTLE GROUNDS - ARMORY - MOMENTS LATER

47

Timble emerges unnoticed from the armory and walks around to the back of the building. Annis is there, wearing Timble's bag on her shoulder and holding a leather ball about the size of a honeydew. It is lumpy and not quite spherical. All the same, Annis looks very pleased to have it.

TIMBLE

(bemused)

That was all... to get your ball back?

ANNIS

It's our only ball. Pluck kicked it over the castle wall a few months ago and the guards took it away.

(beat)

You want to play with us? We can make two teams of three now. No one has to sit out.

Timble listens to Annis and realizes that, bandit or not, she's still a little girl. All of the bandits are just kids.

TIMBLE
(gently)
Maybe another time. For now, I think I'm going to stick around here. It's not my castle, but it's a castle... and castle life is what I know.

Annis removes Timble's bag from her shoulder and hands it to him.

ANNIS
The money for your garb is in there, along with your odds and ends.

Timble smiles.

TIMBLE
That's actually not necessary. You can keep the money.

ANNIS
Good. Because I was lying. We already kept your money.

Annis runs off with the ball. Scowling, Timble watches her go, then turns toward the castle proper.

48 INT. CASTLE GRIMVIEW - ENTRANCE HALL - LATER

48

Timble enters the castle still wearing the pilfered guard's uniform. There are other people milling about the entrance hall, including other guards, some of whom glance quizzically at Timble, who is clearly not at a post.

Timble slips into a side chamber. We wait in the entrance hall for a moment... until he returns, no longer wearing the armor or helmet of a castle guard. Now he appears more or less like a regular subject of Blightmoor.

Timble makes his way through the people in the entrance hall, eventually reaching the doors to the throne room. The doors open after a moment, allowing people to move in both directions: Some go into the throne room, others come out.

Timble goes in.

49

INT. CASTLE GRIMVIEW - THRONE ROOM - CONTINUOUS

49

Timble steps into the throne room of Castle Grimview with some others. Once inside, the others disperse, leaving Timble standing alone to take in the character of the chamber.

The throne room of Castle Grimview is stark and serious. The mood in the room is subdued and serious. People converse, but quietly.

On the throne at the top of the throne room sits KING CNURL (50s, white beard, white hair, serious). Standing before Cnurl just now is an ABBOT.

ABBOT

Right Reverend Costello of Cistern
Abbey, Your Majesty.

CNURL

Your concern, Abbot Costello?

ABBOT

Lord Edric has fenced in some of
the abbey's land, claiming it as
part of his hunting grounds.

CNURL

I will send word reminding Edric
that coveting thy neighbor's grass
is merely a sin, but taking it is
a crime. Go in peace, Father.

All in the room not on the throne murmur in assent. The monarch's decisiveness is impressive. The abbot withdraws.

A ROYAL ADVISOR now steps onto the dais.

ROYAL ADVISOR

(loudly)

That concludes the business before
King Cnurl this morning. The
afternoon session will begin after
noon.

(beat)

Thank you. Please exit the room in
an orderly fashion.

Everyone leaves through the main doors. Except Timble. Timble waits and watches everyone go, managing to stay out of sight.

When the main doors close and the room is empty but for King Cnurl and himself, Timble steps out of the shadows and clears his throat.

TIMBLE
Your Majesty?

CNURL
Who's that? Show yourself!

Cnurl springs to his feet on the dais and grabs a hefty morning star, brandishing it before him.

Timble walks forward, then stops and puts his hands out in front of him. Then he bows, and rises again.

TIMBLE
'Tis only I, Your Grace. Merthyn
Carpenter, late of Celadonia,
called Timble, formerly jester to
His Highness, Mandolph the Well-
Meaning.

Cnurl lowers but does not relinquish his weapon.

CNURL
And what is the meaning of this
surreptitious visit?

TIMBLE
Well, in my defense, I didn't mean
to be surreptitious. Everybody
else just left the room so
quickly.

(beat)
But since we're here, Sire, if I
may be so bold, I couldn't help
but notice that you do not
currently employ a royal fool, and
if the position is available, I
would respectfully ask your leave
to throw my cap-and-bells into
the ring.

CNURL
(bemused)
The Kingdom of Blightmoor has
never employed a royal fool or
jester.
(beat)
Do you really mean to tell me that
King Mandolph retained you to
amuse him? While he sits on his
throne?

TIMBLE

(ashamed)

He did retain me to do so, Your Majesty. Until very recently. I... left Everwell to pursue other opportunities.

CNURL

But Mandolph gave you a bed in the castle? And meals? To... what? To dance and prance and play with words?

TIMBLE

And juggle. Sometimes I juggled.

CNURL

Absurd. No wonder Mandolph has a reputation for frivolity. He is not considered a very serious king, you know.

Cnurl seems like he has more to say, but just then there is a KNOCK on a side door of the throne room. That door opens, and a PAGE enters, walking directly onto the dais and to Cnurl. He leans close to Cnurl's ear and whispers something.

CNURL

(to the page)

What? For him?

The page nods.

CNURL (CONT'D)

I'll allow it.

The page exits, quickly, and impossibly soon after that the main doors of the throne room open. Wobblewand enters and walks toward Timble, who turns to see the magician.

TIMBLE

(surprised)

Wobblewand?

Wobblewand joins Timble near the foot of the dais. Wobblewand bows to Cnurl.

WOBBLEWAND

(to Cnurl)

Do I know you?

CNURL

(growing exasperated)

I am Cnurl, king of Blightmoor.

(MORE)

CNURL (CONT'D)

You are standing in my castle,
Grimview.

(beat)

Who are you?

WOBBLEWAND

Wobblewand. Royal magician to King
Mandolph of Celadonia. I was
roommates with the jester until he
moved out, if you're interested.

TIMBLE

(to Wobblewand)

That's me, Wob.

(to Cnurl)

I was the neat one.

CNURL

Are you being funny now? Is this
all a jest? Did Mandolph send you
both to mock me? A jester and a
magician? Magic isn't even real!

TIMBLE

Not a jest, Your Majesty. As I
almost mentioned earlier, Mandolph
banished me. I turned up in your
kingdom mostly by accident.

(beat)

I don't know why Wobblewand is
here, though.

CNURL

He told my page he's here to see
you.

TIMBLE

(to Wobblewand)

You are? Why? Does King Mandolph
want me back?

WOBBLEWAND

Oh, definitely not. Also, there's
now a curtain where your bed used
to be.

(beat)

But I was supposed to give you
this from the king before you
left.

Wobblewand produces a scroll, tied with a leather strap. Timble
takes it, opens it, unfurls it, and reads it to himself. Twice.

CNURL

Well? What is it?

TIMBLE

It's a letter, Your Majesty. A letter of introduction. And a map.

CNURL

A letter to whom? A map to where?

TIMBLE

(hesitantly)

I'm not sure I'm supposed to share that information, Your Grace. It might be for my eyes only.

CNURL

What if your eyes remain here, in Blightmoor, while the rest of your body is released to pursue other opportunities? Eh, fool?

TIMBLE

It's a letter to the headmaster of a place called the Particularly Private Preparatory Academy for Princes. And the map is to there.

(beat)

From Castle Everwell.

(beat)

That presents a problem.

CNURL

What's the problem? What is preventing you and your magician friend from leaving Grimview -- and Blightmoor -- as soon as I finish this sentence?

TIMBLE

Only that we don't know quite how to proceed from here, Sire.

CNURL

(sighing)

Bring me the map.

Timble steps forward and hands the scroll to Cnurl, who looks it over. Cnurl hands it back to Timble.

CNURL (CONT'D)

I will have someone start you off in the right direction. I assume you need horses.

TIMBLE
Yes, please.

WOBBLEWAND
Me, too.

TIMBLE
Yes, a horse for you, too.

WOBBLEWAND
No, I mean I need two horses.

CNURL
Please leave my kingdom now.

Timble and Wobblewand bow, then turn and walk toward the doors of the throne room.

CLOSE ON CNURL

Cnurl gestures toward the side door. The page from earlier enters again and walks to the throne.

CNURL
Bring me a rider. I need to send a message to Celadonia.

50 SERIES OF SHOTS

50

A ROYAL MESSENGER rides his horse away from Castle Grimview.

He rides toward the border of Blightmoor.

He crosses the border and continues on into Celadonia.

He heads toward Castle Everwell... but rather than ride to the castle, he rides past it.

51 EXT. SUNGLEAM MANOR - LATER

51

The Messenger from Grimview pulls up on the manor house and dismounts. A manor ATTENDANT comes out to meet him. They speak briefly, though we don't hear what is said. The attendant then goes back into the manor house.

A moment later, Vermilia emerges and speaks to the Messenger. Again, we do not hear what is said. When the brief exchange is over, Vermilia produces a small bag of coins and gives it to the Messenger. Then she produces a carrot and gives it to his horse.

52 INT. SUNGLEAM MANOR - PARLOR - MOMENTS LATER

52

A medium-sized room with a fireplace, chairs, and a high table in the middle. The table is set with tea and some finger foods on dishes. Pugn and Mince sit in chairs.

Vermilia enters, and the men stand. Vermilia paces and the men watch.

VERMILIA
(deep in thought)
I've just received very
interesting news. The time to put
my plan into action would seem to
be now.

PUGN
Your plan to redecorate the
windmill?

HARD CUT TO:

53 EXT. SUNGLEAM MANOR - WINDMILL

53

A quick shot of a very drab windmill. It could use a fresh coat of paint. And one of the sails is falling off.

HARD CUT TO:

54 INT. SUNGLEAM MANOR - PARLOR - CONTINUOUS

54

VERMILIA
My plan to depose Mandolph.
(beat)
The kingdom is failing because the
king is a spineless coward.
(beat)
But if I were in charge...

PUGN
How could you be in charge?

Vermilia stops pacing to stare daggers at Pugn. Mince looks at him as well.

PUGN
(carefully)
No, I mean, how could you be in
charge? What could put you on the
throne? Anything?

Vermilia's expression softens.

VERMILIA
I'm glad you asked.

PUGN
You're welcome.

VERMILIA
(ignoring him)
What would put me on the throne is
either a complicated and illegal
political plot that would require
the support of so many of the
simpletons who are blindly loyal
to Mandolph.
(beat)
Or a much simpler scenario,
requiring only that Mandolph and
Chloral be incapacitated.

PUGN
Like locked in a windmill?

Vermilia shoots Pugn a quick, murderous look.

MINCE
(hesitantly)
But...

VERMILIA
But I wouldn't be put in charge?

MINCE
(relieved)
Well, yes.

VERMILIA
That's correct. Under the
circumstances... Lucien would
assume the throne.

MINCE
(understanding)
Ah. But he would merely sit on the
throne. He's not old enough to
rule.

VERMILIA
Exactly.

Vermilia now sweeps everything off the table, sending it all
crashing to the floor. Then she reaches to a sideboard and
grabs a chessboard, fully set up, which she places on the now-
empty table.

Deliberately, she takes a few specific pieces into one hand -- the white king, queen, and both rooks, and the black queen and knights. Then she sweeps all of the remaining pieces off the board, onto the floor, with her other hand.

VERY CLOSE ON CHESS BOARD

She replaces the white king and queen in their starting places, at the top of the board, center. Then she places one white rook next to the white queen.

We then hear -- but do not see -- Vermilia place another piece (or two) on the board, toward a far corner, just out of frame.

VERMILIA (O.S.)
So if Mandolph and Chloral are
indisposed...

Vermilia's hand comes into view and violently flicks the white king and queen off the board.

VERMILIA (O.S.) (CONT'D)
...Prince Lucien moves into
position.

Her fingers push the white rook into the empty king's space.

VERMILIA (O.S.) (CONT'D)
But he'll need a regent to rule.

Her hand places the black queen onto the queen's square.

PUGN (O.S.)
(sotto voce)
Who's that?

MINCE (O.S.)
That's Vermilia.

PUGN (O.S.)
Right.

VERMILIA (O.S.)
And that leaves just one loose end
to be cut off.

Her hand now places the two black knights in the middle of the board. We PULL OUT a bit, to see that the knights are facing in the direction of a white pawn with a little jester's cap on it, already on the board, closer to a far corner. We still do not see that corner.

VERMILIA (O.S.) (CONT'D)
You take him out of play, please.
(MORE)

VERMILIA (O.S.) (CONT'D)
 I'll figure out how to remove
 Mandolph and Chloral.

55 SERIES OF SHOTS 55

Timble and Wobblewand -- walking next to their horses, holding the reins -- traverse some grassland.

They traverse some jungle.

They traverse some tundra.

They traverse some desert.

56 EXT. DIRT ROAD - DAY 56

The foursome walks a dirt road.

TIMBLE
 I think these horses are just
 slowing us down.

Timble and Wobblewand release the horses' reins, then slap the horses' haunches. The horses run off.

57 EXT. CITY - NIGHT - ESTABLISHING 57

The center of a new city. Despite the late hour, people are out and about.

SUPER: CITY OF TRADEHAVEN, KINGDOM OF MARCHBORNE

58 EXT. TAVERN - NIGHT 58

A sign hanging outside the tavern reads THE SAUCY LYNX.

59 INT. THE SAUCY LYNX 59

Timble and Wobblewand sit at a table. Each drinks from a tankard. They look tired.

REVERSE ANGLE

At another table, in a darker corner of the tavern, sit Mince and Pugn, drinking and watching Timble and Wobblewand.

PUGN

We're not going to make him do
that thing with the ferrets again,
are we?

(beat)

That wasn't very nice.

(beat)

It got him kicked out of the
kingdom.

MINCE

(preoccupied)

It was supposed to get him
beheaded.

PUGN

(concerned)

It was?

(beat)

That's much worse.

MINCE

Yes. Vermilia was not happy. But
it turned out all right. For
Vermilia, anyway.

PUGN

Do you think she'll make a better
king than Mandolph?

MINCE

A better queen, you mean?

PUGN

Mandolph isn't the queen. Isn't
Vermilia trying to take his
throne?

MINCE

You have a point. But, anyway, she
isn't trying to take his throne,
exactly. She wants to get Prince
Lucien into it.

PUGN

And then she'll sit in the
prince's lap?

MINCE

Maybe. Probably not, though.

Pugn takes a drink. Then another. Then another. He needs
courage.

PUGN

I think what she's doing is wrong.
I think what she wants us to do is
wrong.

Mince looks sternly at Pugn for a moment. Then his face softens.

MINCE

Go. Don't go back to Celadonia,
though. Never return to Celadonia.
I'll tell Vermilia that something
dreadful happened to you. Like...
a cathedral fell on you.

PUGN

Or I was carried off by a harpy.

MINCE

Or married off to a manticore.

After a moment without words:

MINCE (CONT'D)

Fare thee well, my friend.

Pugn rises from the table and slips out of the tavern. Mince goes back to watching the jester and the magician.

REVERSE ANGLE

Timble and Wobblewand now have the scroll map unfurled on the table before them.

CLOSE ON MAP

MATCH CUT TO:

60

EXT. FOREST - MORNING

60

CLOSE ON MAP

NEW ANGLE

Timble and Wobblewand stand in the forest, looking at the map. They keep turning the map and themselves around. For about half a minute.

Finally, Timble takes one step forward and immediately falls into a pit of quicksand.

TIMBLE

Wobblewand! Find a rope! Or a
vine! Or a tree branch!

WOBBLEWAND
(calmly)
Use the hourglass.

TIMBLE
What?

WOBBLEWAND
Didn't I give you an hourglass? I
meant to give you an hourglass.

TIMBLE
(panicking)
Yes! Yes, you gave me an
hourglass. It's in my pocket. But
I don't need an hourglass. If you
don't find a tree branch, I'm not
going to live another hour!

WOBBLEWAND
Take the hourglass out of your
pocket. Take the top off the
hourglass. Put the hourglass into
the sand.

Timble does exactly this, sinking ever lower as he moves. Only his head and shoulders remain above the sand when he lowers the hourglass...

...and then all of the quicksand is sucked into the upper chamber of the hourglass. Timble now stands in an empty depression in the ground. He is completely safe. He looks at the hourglass. It is completely empty.

TIMBLE
(utterly amazed)
Where... where did it all go?

WOBBLEWAND
(utterly unconcerned)
How should I know?

Wobblewand walks off. Timble puts the hourglass back into his bag, picks up the scroll from the ground, scrambles out of the depression, and follows the magician.

TIMBLE
(calling)
Remind me to tell King Cnurl about
that.

61 INT. CASTLE EVERWELL - CHAPEL - DAY

61

The chapel is mostly empty, but with a handful of scattered penitents.

CLOSE ON PENITENT

We get right up close to one young man, kneeling in the pews, head bowed, praying.

PENITENT

O God, who hast bidden us to
worship Thee in spirit and in
truth, shadow us with the power of
Thy Holy Spirit. Let Thy mercy and
the promised grace of Thy
salvation come upon us, that our
prayer may be directed unto Thee
by Him, through whom we believe
our sins to be forgiven. We
beseech Thee to hear us, O Lord.
Amen.

We PULL OUT to see Prince Lucien sitting next to the Penitent.

LUCIEN

(to Penitent)

Less regret. More... remorse.

PENITENT

Yes, Your Highness.

The penitent goes back to praying. Vermilia slides down the pew to sit next to Lucien on his other side. She leans in to speak to him quietly. He does not notice her at first.

VERMILIA

Your Highness.

LUCIEN

(startled)

Oh, God!

He turns to see Vermilia, then motions for them to scooch down the pew, away from the penitent. They do.

LUCIEN (CONT'D)

Hi. Can this wait?. I'm praying.

VERMILIA

My apologies. But I think I can
answer at least one of your
prayers.

LUCIEN

Go on.

VERMILIA

I can't say much here, but what if a certain seat were to become available? Would you be interested in a... nicer chair?

LUCIEN

Is that even possible? What about--?

VERMILIA

Leave that to me.

(beat)

But if you were to take a more... comfortable position, could I count on you to count on me for... support?

LUCIEN

Would the new and comfortable chair alone not provide enough support?

VERMILIA

Look, if I put you on the throne, would you allow me to be your regent?

LUCIEN

Oh. Yes. For sure.

Vermilia pats his thigh.

VERMILIA

Peace be with you, Your Highness.

LUCIEN

And with you.

He goes to pat her thigh, but she has already withdrawn. Lucien slides back down the pew and leans toward the penitent.

LUCIEN (CONT'D)

What's a "regent"?

62

EXT. WOODS - AFTERNOON

62

Timble and Wobblewand take their final steps in this particular wood, emerging onto a road they didn't know was there.

They look both ways... then step onto the road and proceed to follow the road. The road twists here and turns there until finally...

63

EXT. PARTICULARLY PRIVATE PREPARATORY ACADEMY FOR PRINCES

63

Timble and Wobblewand find themselves in front of an impressive building, not unlike a small castle. This is the destination on the map provided by King Mandolph. It is a fancy private school, but that is not obvious.

The men trade a glance, then advance toward the front door. When they reach the front door, they knock.

After a moment, the door opens and a BUTLER emerges. He looks over Timble, then Wobblewand, and makes a showing of not revealing his feelings about their appearances.

BUTLER
(stiffly)
May I help you?

TIMBLE
(flustered)
Yes. Hi. Good afternoon. My name
is Timble -- actually Merthyn--

WOBBLEWAND
(to Timble)
Do you still have the scroll?

TIMBLE
(to Wobblewand)
Yes?

WOBBLEWAND
Give him the scroll.

TIMBLE
Oh. Okay. Right.

Timble produces the scroll from his bag, attempts to unfurl it... fails to unfurl it, drops it, picks it up, brushes it off, manages to unfurl it, then hands it to the butler.

The butler peruses it without changing his expression.

BUTLER
Just a moment, please.

The butler goes back inside, with the scroll, closing the door behind him. Almost instantaneously, the door opens again and the HEADMASTER steps out, holding the scroll.

HEADMASTER

Greetings, good sirs. I am the headmaster here. I understand that you are visiting us under the aegis of King Mandolph of Celadonia.

Timble is about to respond, but the Headmaster continues.

HEADMASTER (CONT'D)

If you will just wait here a moment more, I will fetch His Highness.

The headmaster steps inside and closes the door before Timble can ask what he's talking about. Timble asks Wobblewand instead.

TIMBLE

What is this place? Is... Mandolph here?

Wobblewand shrugs. When more than just a moment more has passed, Timble gets antsy.

TIMBLE (CONT'D)

What do the other things you gave me do?

WOBBLEWAND

What else did I give you?

TIMBLE

Well, there's a piece of blue cloth.

WOBBLEWAND

Let me see it?

Timble pulls out the blue cloth from his sleeve and hands it to Wobblewand.

WOBBLEWAND (CONT'D)

Ah. This piece of cloth will never touch the ground.

TIMBLE

It will never...

WOBBLEWAND

Touch the ground. No. Not ever.

Timble squints at Wobblewand. He slowly takes back the cloth, then holds it at eye level. Then he lets it fall. It falls toward the ground, out of frame.

Timble continues to look at Wobblewand. Wobblewand looks down, then back up at Timble. Wobblewand motions for Timble to look down.

Timble looks down. The cloth is floating just above the ground.

TIMBLE

Are you... how is that even... why
would it...?

As Timble's mind reels, a breeze blows the cloth away from the men, away from the door.

WOBBLEWAND

Stop it!

Both men dash after the cloth, which is being blown farther away. When they are some ten to fifteen feet from where they were, Timble snatches the cloth. Just then, the door of the school opens a third time, and a YOUNG MAN (16, dressed like a prince) emerges.

Timble and Wobblewand turn to see the Young Man, but before anyone can speak, we hear HORSE HOOVES approaching, and quickly. Timble, Wobblewand, and the Young Man all look in one direction.

From seemingly nowhere, Mince appears in view, riding his horse at full gallop in an arc that brings him right up to the door of the school. He snatches the Young Man mid-arc, then gallops off again.

Timble and Wobblewand watch the abrupt abduction, speechless.

A moment later, a second young man appears in the doorway. This is SCALIBER ("CAL"), elder son of Mandolph and Chloral.

CAL

(confused)
Wobblewand?

Timble and Wobblewand dash back to the school. Timble is still looking in the direction that Mince took off in with the first young man. Timble points, his mouth open... then he turns to face Cal.

TIMBLE

(flabbergasted)
Prince Cal?

CAL

(realizing)
Timble?
(MORE)

CAL (CONT'D)

(beat)

Why are you both here? And where
is Fredegar?

TIMBLE

Who is Fredegar?

CAL

He's my... friend. He went to the
door first to make sure it was
safe.

WOBBLEWAND

It was not safe.

TIMBLE

I think your friend was just
abducted. And I think I recognize
the man who abducted him. It's the
same man who tricked me into
putting more than seven ferrets
into my breeches.

CAL

Don't try that at home. It's a
serious crime in Celadonia.

We now hear another set of HORSE HOOVES approaching. Timble and
Wobblewand move to protect Cal from possible abduction. But
this rider pulls his horse up, dismounts, and reveals himself
to be Pugn.

PUGN

Am I too late?

TIMBLE

For what?

PUGN

For the abduction. To stop the
abduction, I mean.

TIMBLE

I'm afraid so.

PUGN

So Prince Scaliber has already
been abducted?

TIMBLE

No. Prince Cal is right here.

Timble and Wobblewand part to reveal Cal. Pugn bows.

PUGN
 Your Highness. I'm glad you're
 safe.
 (beat)
 Wait.
 (to Timble)
 You said I was too late.

TIMBLE
 Mince took someone else. He might
 have thought it was Prince Cal.

PUGN
 Who was it?

CAL
 My... friend. Fredegar.

PUGN
 That's fortunate.

CAL
 Is it?

PUGN
 We must get back to Everwell. All
 of us.
 (beat)
 We'll need a bigger horse.

64 EXT. ROAD - LATER

64

Pugn's horse and a second horse are now hitched to a carriage.
 Pugn sits on his horse, driving the pair.

65 INT. CARRIAGE - CONTINUOUS

65

Timble, Wobblewand, and Cal sit in the moving carriage.

TIMBLE
 ...but instead of beheading me,
 your father merely banished me.
 I'm still... salty about that.

CAL
 Understandable. But it's also
 understandable that my father
 couldn't just suspend your
 sentence entirely. It would have
 made him look weak. And it sounds
 like he was backed into that
 corner by Vermilia.

TIMBLE

You're a lot more grownup than
when I last saw you.

CAL

Well, sure. I've been away at
school, learning how to be a
grownup.

(beat)

How did you find me, anyway? That
school is supposed to be really
private. Like, hidden private.

TIMBLE

Your father sent me. He even gave
me a map, but we had to have King
Cnurl help us with it.

CAL

King Cnurl knows about the school?

TIMBLE

I... I guess so. Is that a
problem?

CAL

It might be. But let's get back to
King Mandolph. Why would my father
send you to find me?

TIMBLE

He didn't say, but I've been
thinking about that, and I suspect
it's because you're the only
person I knew outside Celadonia.

CAL

And he felt bad about banishing
you, so he pointed you toward a
friend. That makes sense.

(beat)

But what is Wobblewand doing here?

TIMBLE

Wobblewand was supposed to give me
the map before I left the castle.
But he forgot.

WOBBLEWAND

Mistakes were made.

HARD CUT TO:

66 INT. CARRIAGE - MOMENTS LATER

66

Pugn has replaced Wobblewand, who can be glimpsed driving the horses.

PUGN
It's Vermilia. She wants to put
your brother on the throne and
then sit in his lap.

CAL
I don't think that's quite right,
but I get the gist.
(to Timble)
Or, the jest.

Timble shakes his head.

TIMBLE
This isn't the time.

CAL
But what about the King and Queen?
Are they not on their thrones? Did
something happen to my parents?

TIMBLE
(to Pugn)
Did Vermilia say anything about
Mandolph and Chloral?

PUGN
Nothing specific, but she did
knock them off the board.

CAL
The board?

CUT TO:

67 INT. SUNGLEAM MANOR - PARLOR

67

A chambermaid dusts the room. We ZOOM IN on the chessboard,
finally seeing it all. We move from the top edge to the lower
corner, where a second white rook stands.

After a moment, the chambermaid's hand comes into view and,
with a feather duster, sweeps the chessboard clean.

CUT TO:

68 INT. CARRIAGE - LATER

68

Wobblewand sits with Pugn and Cal; Timble drives.

WOBBLEWAND
(reminiscing)
...and I was supposed to journey
with the fellowship to bring the
ring to the volcano, but instead
my cousin went and I stayed home
and made a sandwich.

HARD CUT TO:

69 EXT. BLIGHTMOOR - VILLAGE - EVENING

69

The carriage -- Pugn driving again -- pulls up to a familiar
location, where the Mortals' Inn and Cardinal's Inn are on
opposite sides of the road.

70 INT. CARRIAGE - CONTINUOUS

70

Timble looks out the windows and realizes where they are.

TIMBLE
(uncomfortable)
Maybe we just keep going? At least
over the border...?

71 INT. CARDINAL'S INN - DINING AREA - NIGHT

71

The foursome sits at a table, each with a drink. Timble blocks
his face with his hand, wary of being recognized here.

CAL
We'll set out again as early as
possible. We'll arrive at Everwell
and surprise Vermilia.

PUGN
Vermilia does not like surprises.
One year, on her birthday, Mince
and I--
(beat)
Never mind. Please continue.

CAL
If the King and Queen are... well,
the throne is mine to assume. And
then we'll sort out the rest.
(MORE)

CAL (CONT'D)
Including the whereabouts of my...
friend.

WOBBLEWAND
(certain)
Frideswide.

TIMBLE
(uncertain)
Finnian?

CAL
Fredegar.

PUGN
I'm Pugn.

The other three look at him quizzically.

PUGN (CONT'D)
Who's sleeping where tonight?

CAL
(to Timble and Wobblewand)
Didn't you two used to share a
room? You could--

TIMBLE AND WOBBLEWAND
(quickly)
No.

TIMBLE
(to CAL)
Why don't you and Wobblewand take
one room. I'll bed down Pugn.

PUGN
You trust me?

TIMBLE
Not to kill me in my sleep? Sure.

PUGN
That's kind of you.
(beat)
What if I kill you in my sleep?

Two beds. Pugn sleeps soundly in one. Timble sleeps in the other, on his back. Over his face, the piece of blue cloth floats up and down again as Timble snores lightly.

73 INT. CARDINAL'S INN - SECOND BEDROOM 73

Two beds. Wobblewand sleeps backward in one. In the other, Cal is too troubled to sleep. He stares at the ceiling. Then, when he hears a SOUND in the hallway near the door, he gets out of bed to investigate.

He opens the door...

MATCH CUT TO:

74 INT. CARDINAL'S INN - HALLWAY - MORNING 74

The door opens, revealing Wobblewand.

WOBBLEWAND
What do you want?

REVERSE ANGLE to reveal Timble in the hall.

TIMBLE
Wob, it's me, Timble. Grab Cal and
let's get back on the road.

WOBBLEWAND
Cal? Prince Scaliber?
(beat)
He isn't here.

TIMBLE
No? Well, he must have gotten an
earlier start. I'll check
downstairs.

75 INT. CARDINAL'S INN - DOWNSTAIRS - MOMENTS LATER 75

Timble looks around, does not see Cal.

76 EXT. CARDINAL'S INN - MOMENTS LATER 76

Timble is outside, looking for Cal. He finds their carriage, but not Cal.

77 EXT. MORTALS' INN - STABLE 77

Timble looks in at the other inn's stable. He does not find Cal there. Only horses.

TIMBLE
(to horses)
Hey.

78

EXT. CARDINAL'S INN - MOMENTS LATER

78

Timble joins Wobblewand and Pugn out front.

TIMBLE

He's nowhere.

PUGN

He has to be somewhere.

Timble thinks.

TIMBLE

Wait a minute. Yesterday, Cal seemed concerned that King Cnurl would have learned about his private... hidden school.

PUGN

Well, sure. King Cnurl told Vermilia where to find the prince. At the school.

TIMBLE

What?

PUGN

Vermilia knew that she had to keep Prince Scaliber out of Celadonia if she was to sit in Prince Lucien's lap. But she didn't know where to find Prince Scaliber. Until she got a message from King Cnurl.

Timble runs his hand over his face in frustration.

TIMBLE

The scroll.

PUGN

(continuing)

So then Vermilia send me and Mince to find the school.

(beat)

But it was easier just to follow you. Once we caught up with you.

Timble paces. Eventually, he comes back to Pugn.

TIMBLE

We're in Cnurl's kingdom.

(MORE)

TIMBLE (CONT'D)
 Someone must have seen Prince
 Scaliber here last night and
 recognized him... then informed
 the King, who sent someone to nab
 Cal and bring him...

PUGN
 To... Vermilia?

Timble sighs.

TIMBLE
 To Castle Grimview.
 (beat)
 I'm going back to Castle Grimview.
 (beat)
 We're going to need help.

Timble sighs again, deeply.

79 EXT. DARK WOODS - DAY

79

Timble leads Wobblewand and Pugn through the woods.

TIMBLE
 If memory serves, the camp should
 be just ahead.

WOBBLEWAND
 (chuckling)
 If memory serves, you were going
 to be just a head, weren't you?

TIMBLE
 I really don't know why you find
 that funny.

Just then, an arrow strikes the ground at Timble's feet. He
 stops walking. Wobblewand and Pugn also stop.

ANNIS (V.O.)
 Good thing you brought two
 friends, or the teams would be
 uneven.

80 EXT. DARK WOODS - GLADE - LATER

80

At Bandit Camp, the three men sit on the ground with all five
 bandits.

SCRAG

Now that the introductions are done, you can tell us why you came back. Did you lose something again, Timble?

TIMBLE

(sheepishly)

Yes.

SCRAG

Wait, really? What have you lost now?

TIMBLE

A prince.

(to Pluck)

No joke?

Pluck looks concerned.

PLUCK

(seriously)

How do you lose a whole prince?

SCRAG

It isn't Prince Scaliber of Celadonia, by chance, is it?

TIMBLE

It is, by chance, Prince Scaliber of Celadonia. Why?

SCRAG

Because rumor has it that King Mandolph and Queen Chloral are missing. The royal cavalcade was ambushed during a pilgrimage.

WOBBLEWAND

Was the prince with them?

TIMBLE

No. He was with us.

PLUCK

When you lost him.

PUGN

We think he was taken.

ANNIS

We didn't take him.

TIMBLE

We didn't think you did. We're
pretty sure King Cnurl took him.
Or had someone take him. To
Grimview.

SCRAG

You need our castle guard uniform.

TIMBLE

(over Scrag)

We need your castle guard uniform.

SCRAG

You left it at the castle.

Timble thinks back...

TIMBLE

Arse-wind! That's right. I did.

(beat)

But we got your ball back.

SCRAG

We sure did. Will that help you
rescue your prince?

Everyone is quiet and sullen for a moment.

PUGN

How big is the ball?

81 EXT. DARK WOODS - GLADE - AFTERNOON

81

Everyone is standing now. Scrag and Pluck are getting ready to
leave Bandit Camp.

SCRAG

We'll see what we can see.

TIMBLE

I still can't believe that you can
just wander in and out of the
castle grounds, just because
you're children.

WOBBLEWAND

Our castle is crawling with
children. They're everywhere. In
the butteries, the larders, the
pantries...

TIMBLE
Those are rats, Wob. You're
thinking of rats.

PLUCK
Did you hear the one about the
rat, the cook, and the archbishop?

TIMBLE
And you're off!

Scrag and Pluck head out of the glade, into the woods proper.
The others watch them go. After a moment, the three adults and
three children all stare at one another... until:

ANNIS
Ball?

82 SERIES OF SHOTS

82

The six play something like soccer...
...then something like basketball...
...then something like rugby...
...then something that looks like barely organized chaos, with
some of them carrying flags, some holding swords, some wearing
helmets....

83 EXT. DARK WOODS - GLADE - LATER

83

The three adults and three children sit around a fire, eating
roasted animal parts. Scrag and Pluck return to the glade.

ANNIS
(calling)
We saved you none.

SCRAG
It's okay. We ate at the castle.

TIMBLE
What did you learn?

SCRAG
You're not going to like it.
(to Pluck)
Pluck, show them.

Pluck produces a folded up piece of paper, unfolds it, and
hands it to Timble.

PLUCK
We can't read, but it looks like
they're looking for you.

CLOSE ON THE PAPER

At the top of the flyer, writ large, are the words:
JESTER WANTED

In the center of the flyer is an illustration of a jester mid-prance.

TIMBLE (O.S.)
Oh, you've got to be kidding me.

We PULL OUT a bit to see the entire flyer now. At bottom it reads:

AUDITIONS TODAY
CASTLE GRIMVIEW

CUT TO:

84 EXT. CASTLE GRIMVIEW - COURTYARD

84

Dozen of men and women in homemade motley costumes practice various jester-y diversions -- juggling, dancing, tumbling -- badly. Amateurs.

CUT TO:

85 EXT. DARK WOODS - GLADE

85

Timble is pacing, muttering, alternately crumpling and uncrumpling the flyer. The others stand in a loose huddle, watching him. Finally, he walks back to the group.

TIMBLE
(annoyed)
He said it was absurd to have a
jester at court! And that magic
isn't real!

Timble throws the crumpled flyer on the ground. Pluck picks it up and uncrumples it.

PLUCK
This is perfect, though.

TIMBLE
Perfect?

PLUCK

Someone can go to the castle in disguise, as a jester, pretending to be there to audition.

(beat)

Maybe the wizard?

TIMBLE

Or the jester? The actual jester?

SCRAG

Oh, that's brilliant! You can go to Grimview, pretending to want to be the new royal jester, and once you're there, you can look for your prince.

PUNG

Maybe princes.

SCRAG

You lost more than one prince?

TIMBLE

Sort of. Not exactly.

(to Pugn)

What do you mean?

PUGN

Well, Mince might not have taken... Flapjack--

WOBBLEWAND

Frodo.

TIMBLE

"Friend." Let's just call him "Friend."

PUGN

Mince might not have taken Prince Cal's friend back to Celadonia if King Cnurl is working with Vermilia.

TIMBLE

Huh. So Cal and his friend might both be at Grimview. So I'd have to rescue them both. Terrific.

PLUCK

While pretending to be a jester.

TIMBLE

I am a jester!

PUGN

Where's your costume?

Timble pinches the bridge of his nose with his fingers and sighs. The bandits all look away.

TIMBLE

I... lost it.

ANNIS

So we'll make you a new one!

SCRAG

Yes! We have all kinds of silks and satins.

TIMBLE

(brightening)

And bells?

ANNIS

I'm sure we can find some bells.

SCRAG

Let's get to work.

86 BANDIT CAMP - MONTAGE

86

Halfpenny and Dave cut pieces of cloth into irregular shapes using short blades.

Annis and Wobblewand take and record Timble's measurements using knots on strings.

Pluck and Scrag assemble the costume with needle and thread.

Pugn rummages through an assortment of "collected" items -- weapons, currency, jewelry -- looking for bells.

87 SERIES OF SHOTS

87

In a dramatic, almost heroic sequence of very close shots, we see, in turn:

Timble gets into a motley pair of pants.

Timble dons a motley tunic.

Timble pulls on a pair of boots.

Timble pulls on a pair of gloves.

Timble puts on a cap-and-bells... with three points. An upgrade.

88 EXT. DARK WOODS - GLADE - MOMENTS LATER

88

We are behind the group, looking at their backs. They are all -- except Timble -- facing away, all looking at something we can't see. Then the group parts to reveal Timble.

Timble's new jester costume is not in fact an upgrade. It is, rather, very much the result of five child bandits, a henchman, and a wizard attempting to assemble a jester's costume in the woods. Timble looks ridiculous, and not in a good way.

TIMBLE

This is awful.

ANNIS

Maybe that's better, though. A good costume might give you away. No one else is going to have a good costume. Probably.

TIMBLE

You make a decent point. I'm not trying to impress anyone. In fact, I'm not even going to audition.

PLUCK

No?

TIMBLE

Not if I can help it. I just need to get onto the castle grounds. And then I need to find out where the princes are and get there.

SCRAG

They're probably in the castle, though. In the keep.

HARD CUT TO:

89 INT. CASTLE GRIMVIEW - DUNGEON

89

From outside a cell, we see in the door's small window, through bars, Cal looking out forlornly.

PUGN (V.O.)

Not the prison tower?

WOBBLEWAND (V.O.)

He's right.

(MORE)

WOBBLEWAND (V.O.) (CONT'D)
 The dungeon is for torture. The
 tower is for storage.

MATCH CUT TO:

90 EXT. CASTLE GRIMVIEW - TOWER - DAY

90

From outside the very top of the tower, we see Cal behind the
 barred window, looking out forlornly.

TIMBLE (V.O.)
 How... why do you know that?

WOBBLEWAND (V.O.)
 What do you think the royal
 magician does, exactly?

HARD CUT TO:

91 EXT. DARK WOODS - GLADE - CONTINUOUS

91

TIMBLE
 If I'm going to have get inside
 the tower, I'm going to need a
 distraction.

PLUCK
 Can you juggle?

Timble gives Pluck a withering glance.

TIMBLE
 Yes, I can juggle. But I can't
 provide my own distraction.

PLUCK
 (unconvinced)
 I guess.

TIMBLE
 If I could take some of you with
 me. Even just one...

ANNIS
 Do jesters have squires?

TIMBLE
 Not usually.

PLUCK
 (hopefully)
 An apprentice?

TIMBLE

No.

(beat)

But...

TIMBLE'S POV

We PAN across the line of bandits: Scrag... Annis... Pluck... Halfpenny... Dave. We stop on Dave.

TIMBLE (V.O.)

Oh, I have the best and worst idea.

92 **EXT. CASTLE GRIMVIEW - COURTYARD - AFTERNOON**

92

Timble and Dave stand in the courtyard of the castle, just inside the gatehouse. They take in the view of the dozens of wannabe jesters, many already lining up to enter the castle proper.

Timble looks down to Dave.

TIMBLE

You ready?

Without waiting for an answer, Timble scoops Dave up off the ground and sits him onto his right shoulder. Like a dummy. Exactly like a dummy.

TIMBLE

When we get closer to people, go limp. And don't talk. Just pretend to talk when I talk for you.

Timble walks further into the courtyard, passing all of the jester applicants and veering away toward the prison tower.

TIMBLE

(to Dave)

Oof. You're not heavy, but you are not light.

(beat)

Can you go any limper?

CUT TO:

93 **EXT. CASTLE GRIMVIEW - PRISON TOWER - MOMENTS LATER**

93

Timble reaches the base of the prison tower and tries to look up, but finds it impossible to do so with Dave on his shoulder.

TIMBLE
I'm gonna put you down for a
minute. Don't... don't do anything
human.

Timble takes Dave from his shoulder and deposits him gently on
the ground. Dave falls over.

TIMBLE
Come on, Dave.

Timble rights Dave and Dave stays up. Now Timble is able to
look up toward the top of of the prison tower.

TIMBLE
(wondering aloud)
How do you get in there?

GUARD (O.S.)
Practice, practice, practice.

Timble turns to face the guard.

TIMBLE
(surprised)
Huh?

GUARD
I'm just kidding. You have to
commit a crime.
(beat)
Anyway, you shouldn't be over
here. You need to be back that
way, with the other jesters.

TIMBLE
Actually, none of them are
jesters. They might want to be
jesters, but they're not.

GUARD
Whatever you say, fool. But you do
need to be over there.

Timble starts to step away.

GUARD (O.S.)
(calling after)
Hey! You forgot your dummy!

94 EXT. CASTLE GRIMVIEW - COURTYARD - MOMENTS LATER

94

Timble is back near the castle entrance, Dave back on Timble's shoulder. They stand in line with some jesterfolk in front and more behind.

TIMBLE

(to Dave, quietly)

This is... not great. We don't want to be in the castle. We're not here to audition. We should probably get out of this line.

VOICE (V.O.)

Next!

Timble looks up and sees that there is no longer anyone in front of them in line. He's next.

TIMBLE

(muttering)

Pumpernickel.

95 INT. CASTLE GRIMVIEW - THRONE ROOM

95

The throne room is full of people. King Cnurl sits on his throne. Unlike the last time Timble was here, however, the room has a more playful feel to it. Or, at least it feels less humorless.

Timble hesitates toward the back end of the room.

CNURL

(calling)

Well, come on, then. I'm not going to make myself laugh.

Everyone except Cnurl and Timble laugh, but slightly. Timble walks toward the throne.

TIMBLE

(quietly to Dave)

I don't know what to do. I can't be too good, or I'll get the job. If I'm lousy, we'll probably be escorted off the castle grounds.

By now, Timble has reached the dais.

CNURL

Are you talking to your dummy?

TIMBLE
 (forced)
 Yes, Your Majesty, I was talking
 to my dummy. But it's only a
 problem when he talks back!

Dead. Silence.

Timble coughs nervously.

TIMBLE (CONT'D)
 (to Dave)
 Say, Dave...

DAVE
 (loudly)
 Hey, everyone, did you know that
 King Cnurl's parents were brother
 and sister? He's his own cousin!

Very nervous laughter in the room. Timble freezes.

DAVE (CONT'D)
 Now, I'm not saying King Cnurl is
 a raggabrash, but when he mucks
 around the sprout, he mucks around
 the sprout!

Timble throws his hand over Dave's mouth. Dave bite's Timble's
 hand. Timble yelps in pain.

Cnurl signals his guards. Two guards step quickly to Timble.

DAVE (CONT'D)
 So have you ever wondered why
 there's no Queen of Blightmoor...?

One guard grabs Timble's arm; the other grabs Dave by the belt.
 Dave immediately goes limp.

The guards remove Timble and Dave from the throne room. As they
 go:

VOICE FROM THE CROWD (V.O.)
 (yelling)
 And we could see your mouth move!

Timble is led by his guard toward the closed door of a cell.
 Behind them, the second guard still carries a limp Dave.

As the first guard opens the door of the cell with one of several large iron keys on a large iron ring, the second guard deposits Dave onto a table nearby. Dave stays still.

Once the cell door is open, the first guard prods Timble into the cell, then closes and locks the door again. He hangs the key ring on a large nail protruding from a wall near the table. Then both guards head out of the dungeon again.

FIRST GUARD

(to Dave)

Don't you go anywhere, fopdoodle.

The guards chuckle as they leave.

CUT TO:

97

INT. CASTLE GRIMVIEW - DUNGEON - CELL - MOMENTS LATER

97

Timble faces the door, peering out through the small barred window.

TIMBLE

(yelling)

I want to call my sawyer!

CAL (O.S.)

Timble?

Timble turns around to see both Cal and Fredegar already in the cell.

TIMBLE

Cal!

(beat)

And... Frotmund!

FREDEGAR

Fredegar.

TIMBLE

But why are you in the dungeon -- wait. Have you been tortured?

CAL

We won't be tortured. We're just being kept quiet and out of sight. What are you doing here?

TIMBLE

We came to find you. We assumed you'd be in the tower, though.

FREDEGAR

Then why were you looking in the
dungeon?

CAL

And who else is here? Wobblewand?

TIMBLE

No, Wobblewand's in the woods.
Dave came with me.

FREDEGAR

Dave?

TIMBLE

Dave's my dummy. Or, really,
Dave's a bandit. But he's nine
years old and made a pretty
convincing dummy until he went
knave and insulted King Cnurl, who
had us thrown down here.

FREDEGAR

(concerned)

And do you... see "Dave" now?

Timble gestures toward the door.

TIMBLE

He's out there. On a table. By the
nail that the key to our cell is
hanging on.

Just then we hear a KEY TURN in the door lock... and the door
swings open. Dave stands across the threshold.

TIMBLE

(finally realizing)

Ohhhh. I get it now.

(beat)

Good work, Dave. That was really
smart for a dummy!

98

INT. CASTLE GRIMVIEW - HALLWAY - MOMENTS LATER

98

Dave, Timble, Cal, and Fredegar sneak out of a stairwell into a
hallway on the main floor of the castle. They continue to sneak
down the hallway, passing the throne room. Two guards stand at
the open door to the throne room, facing in.

From within the throne room, we hear uproarious laughter. The
guards at the door laugh. Timble scowls.

99

EXT. CASTLE GRIMVIEW - COURTYARD

99

Dave, Timble, Cal, and Fredegar exit the castle building into the courtyard. They squint in the bright sun.

Two figures -- one taller, one shorter -- accost them. After a moment, we see that they are Pugn and Scrag.

SCRAG

Over here.

Pugn hands out dark shrouds to Timble and the princes.

SCRAG (CONT'D)

Put those on.

Timble, Cal, and Fredegar cover their heads with the shrouds. The group moves toward the gatehouse.

SCRAG (CONT'D)

Your carriage is on the road
outside the castle grounds. We
just need to get you--

Scrag notices that Pugn has stopped walking and is staring at something. Or someone.

PUGN'S POV

Mince is in the courtyard. He does a double-take, noticing Pugn.

BACK TO SCENE

The men lock eyes.

PUGN

(to his group)

I'll catch up with you.

The others hurry off. Pugn and Mince walk toward one another, meeting in the middle.

MINCE

I didn't think I'd see you again.
I'm... glad you're safe. But you
might not be safe here.

PUGN

I was just leaving.

(beat)

You kidnapped the wrong prince,
you know.

MINCE

I know.

PUGN

Was Vermilia mad?

MINCE

She doesn't know.

PUGN

She will. Both princes are on their way to Everwell now.

Mince nods slowly. Pugn watches Mince nod. Then:

PUGN

You took the wrong prince on purpose, didn't you.

Mince does not answer, but he gives Pugn a look that says, "Maybe. Probably." Pugn understands.

PUGN (CONT'D)

Go. Don't go back to Celadonia, though. And don't come back here. If anyone asks, I'll say I saw you boarding a ship for Newgroundland.

Mince claps Pugn on the shoulder.

MINCE

(sincerely)

Thank you. And fare thee well, again, my friend.

Mince heads off. After a moment, Pugn hurries off.

100 **EXT. ROAD - MOMENTS LATER**

100

The carriage is on the road. Wobblewand, Annis, and Halfpenny are waiting by the vehicle when Timble, Pugn, Scrag, Dave, Cal, and Fredegar appear and join them. Pluck is not present.

The two groups merge into one group, then promptly divide again into a bandit group and a non-bandit group.

CAL

(to the bandits)

I understand you were instrumental in our rescue. Thank you. If you're ever in Celadonia, please say hello.

Cal motions for Fredegar to get into the carriage with him. Wobblewand follows the princes into the carriage. Pugn then climbs onto one of the horses, leaving only Timble and the bandits.

TIMBLE

We need to get him back home and save the-- Hey, where's Pluck?

ANNIS

(hesitant)

Pluck? Oh, uh... he decided at the last minute to... audition. To be the fool of Grimview.

TIMBLE

(blasé)

Oh.

(beat)

(realizing)

Oh.

SCRAG

Well, it was good to see you again, Timble. Good luck putting everything right again.

(beat)

Because if there's anyone who can save a kingdom... it's definitely the jester.

101 INT. CARRIAGE - MOVING - LATER

101

The interior of the carriage is now pretty cramped, with four adult men sitting cheek to jowl, knees to knees.

TIMBLE

(to Fredegar)

Do you want us to drop you off somewhere or...

FREDEGAR

I'll come along. I might as well see what happens next.

CAL

What does happen next? For all we know, we'll be arrested as soon as we enter Celadonia.

PUGN (O.S.)
 (calling back)
 We crossed the border five minutes ago.

CAL
 Well, they'll be looking for us at Everwell for sure. Won't they?

TIMBLE
 Possibly not. No one knows we're coming. Even if Cnurl has discovered that you're gone by now, he'd have to dispatch a messenger to warn Vermilia. And we have a head start.

PUGN (O.S.)
 (calling)
 A messenger from Grimview passed us three minutes ago.

WOBBLEWAND
 (to Fredegar)
 You're sure you don't want us to drop you somewhere? Somewhere a lot safer than with these two?
 (beat)
 Because they're probably walking right into certain death.

102 **EXT. CASTLE EVERWELL - EVENING**

102

The sun is setting but the castle grounds are abuzz with activity. It seems like everyone in Celadonia wants to be on hand for whatever is about to happen.

103 **INT. CASTLE EVERWELL - THRONE ROOM**

103

Inside the castle is no different. In the throne room, scores of subjects are packed in, facing the dais. The thrones are vacant for the moment.

The royal herald lifts his long horn and plays a few notes to call the room to attention. Prince Lucien enters from the side and takes a seat in Mandolph's chair. The room erupts in a murmur. Then Vermilia enters and takes a place standing at the edge of the dais. Everyone hushes up.

VERMILIA

Good people of Celadonia, it is my regrettable duty to inform you that our beloved King Mandolph and Queen Chloral have been taken from us -- removed from their seats of power too soon. Why they were displaced so abruptly might never be known. Please join me in a solemn and unquestioning moment of silence.

The royal herald plays a mournful sting.

VERMILIA (CONT'D)

In accordance with the established system of royal succession, the firstborn son of Mandolph and Chloral is next in line to rule the kingdom. Alas, Prince Scaliber is likewise nowhere to be found.

Another round of confused murmurs from the audience.

VERMILIA (CONT'D)

Under these unusual and unfortunate circumstances, it falls to the second-born royal son to assume the throne.

Lucien waves to the crowd. Tentative applause follows. The royal herald plays a quick, celebratory sting.

VERMILIA (CONT'D)

As Prince Lucien is still a minor, however, he has asked that I serve as his regent until such time as the crown fits. I have accepted the appointment, with the best interests of the kingdom in mind.

The royal herald plays a mildly suggestive little tune. Vermilia stops him with a menacing look.

VERMILIA (CONT'D)

And as my first act as regent, I am exploring a possible union with the kingdom of Blightmoor. For political reasons.

New murmurs. But now something different is happening. The crowd begins to part in the middle, starting at the back of the room, at the main entrance. The doors open. Someone is apparently making their way through the crowd, toward the dais.

Vermilia, Lucien, the herald, and the guards on the dais all crane their necks to see who it is.

TIMBLE (O.S.)
Stop me if you've heard this one.
What do you get when you cross a
king and a queen?

Timble appears at the front of the crowd, at the foot of the dais.

TIMBLE
Treason!

VERMILIA
You.

TIMBLE
Me! And I've got another one you
might like: What do you get when
you make two princes angry?
(beat)
Cross heirs!

Low murmuring.

TIMBLE
Like, crosshairs, but cross heirs.
As in, angry... You know what?
I'll let Prince Cal explain it.

Now everyone looks back to the main doors. Wobblewand enters. Confused mumblings... but then Wobblewand steps aside and Prince Cal enters, prompting a roar of surprise and joy from the crowd.

ANGLE ON VERMILIA

VERMILIA
No. No, you're supposed to be--

Cal continues walking through the parted crowd toward Timble and the dais.

CAL
Gone? Out of the way?

VERMILIA
At... school. Aren't you at
school... somewhere? We tried to
get word to you, but, like I said,
no one knew where to find you.

Cal continues forward, stepping onto the dais. Vermilia steps backward, closer to the thrones.

CAL

Someone knew where to find me.

(beat)

In any event, I'm here now, so you
can step down. A grateful kingdom
thanks you for your service.

Cal continues advancing toward Vermilia, who continues backing up. Vermilia steps between the thrones, then behind Lucien's.

VERMILIA

I don't think so.

She produces a stiletto and holds it to Lucien's neck. Cal stops advancing. Guards draw their swords but stay where they are.

ANGLE ON CROWD

Everyone in the crowd gasps as one.

CLOSE ON TIMBLE

Timble is at the front of the crowd, watching the drama unfold on the dais. Wobblewand steps out of the crowd at Timble's side and hands Timble his bag.

WOBBLEWAND

Use the last item.

Timble reaches into the bag without looking. He pulls out the hourglass.

WOBBLEWAND (CONT'D)

No.

Timble hands the hourglass to someone in the crowd. Then he reaches back into the bag and pulls out the cloth.

WOBBLEWAND (CONT'D)

Also no.

Timble tosses the cloth aside. He reaches into the bag one last time and produces... the rock.

TIMBLE

This?

WOBBLEWAND

That.

TIMBLE

(confused)

How do I use this?

But Wobblewand has slipped back into the crowd and disappeared, leaving Timble to turn the rock over and over in his hands.

ANGLE ON DAIS

CAL

It's over, Vermilia. You can't win. You can't rule. There will be no union with Blightmoor.

VERMILIA

Don't be so sure, Cal. With your ineffectual parents out of the kingdom and your impressionable brother on the throne--

Timble's rock sails into view and smacks Vermilia in the head, knocking her out cleanly. She crumples to the floor. Guards immediately sweep in and take her into custody, removing her from the room.

Cal turns around to see where the rock came from. He sees Timble... and everyone else looking at Timble.

CAL

Did you... throw a rock at Vermilia?

TIMBLE

(surprised)
It... worked.

WOBBLEWAND (O.S.)

Like magic!

104 INT. CASTLE EVERWELL - DINING HALL - MORNING

104

At the breakfast table sit Timble, Wobblewand, Prince Lucien, Prince Cal, and Prince Fredegar. Cal and Fredegar sit next to each other and close.

No one talks. Everyone eats. There is an air of exhaustion in the room.

Suddenly, we hear a royal TRUMPET FANFARE from outside the window.

The group gets up and moves to the window, all staring out, backs to the door of the room. While they look out, King Mandolph and Queen Chloral enter.

MANDOLPH

Oh, good. Breakfast.

He sits. Chloral sits. The five at the window turn around.

CAL
Father! Mother!

LUCIEN
Mother! Father!

Wobblewand points to two things on the table.

WOBBLEWAND
Porridge! Water!

Everyone now sits.

CAL
Where... where have you been? We
feared the worst.

LUCIEN
I was king for ten minutes.

MANDOLPH
We were being held at Castle
Grimview. Guests of King Cnurl.

CAL
But not in the dungeon.

CHLORAL
No. Your Uncle Cnurl promised our
parents he would never again lock
me in a dungeon after my ninth
birthday party.

Everyone but Mandolph looks at Chloral for a long moment.
Chloral takes a long drink of wine from a goblet.

MANDOLPH
(nonchalantly)
We were in the tower.

TIMBLE
The prison tower?

MANDOLPH
(chuckling)
Of course not. The Panorama Tower.
The royal suite. Where all
abducted nobles stay.

FREDEGAR
What are we? Chopped mutton?

TIMBLE

Well, we're beyond pleased that
you're back in Celadonia. Where
you belong. Safe and sound.

(beat)

I should probably go.

Timble gets up from the table.

TIMBLE (CONT'D)

Back to...

MANDOLPH

Business as usual this afternoon.

(beat)

And I'll need my fool.

Timble skips out of the room.

105

INT. CASTLE EVERWELL - TIMBLE'S BEDCHAMBER - LATER

105

Timble is in his room. The curtain is drawn. Timble empties his bag. He places the hourglass on a shelf. Then he places the blue cloth on the shelf. It floats... until he places the rock on top of the cloth.

WOBBLEWAND (O.S.)

Timble? Are you sleeping?

TIMBLE

(amused)

Yes.

WOBBLEWAND (O.S.)

I'll come back when you're awake,
then.

Timble throws back the curtain.

TIMBLE

Wob, I'm awake. What's on your
mind?

WOBBLEWAND

My hat.

(beat)

Speaking of... Prince Scaliber and
his friend are headed back to...
well, you know where. But Cal
asked me to give you this.

Wobblewand produces a lumpy package wrapped in brown paper,
tied with twine and hands it over to Timble.

WOBBLEWAND (CONT'D)
It smells like twine.

Wobblewand exits. Timble sits on his bed. He shakes the package gently. We hear smalls BELLS RING within.

HARD CUT TO:

106 INT. CASTLE EVERWELL - THRONE ROOM - AFTERNOON

106

Mandolph is on his throne. The room is packed with nobles, attendants, and more. There is a hum of excitement and relief.

MANDOLPH
(regally)
Everyone, everyone... please.
Queen Chloral and I are most
grateful to be back among you.
(beat)
I almost forgot how uncomfortable
this chair is.

Laughter.

MANDOLPH (CONT'D)
Now, I know we have plenty of work
to catch up on, but I'm sure you
all first want to hear the
thrilling tale of my abduction.
(beat)
I'm not much of a storyteller,
though. So I'm going to turn the
stage over to my royal jester.

Timble enters from the side in a brand new costume -- in different colors from his old one -- with a cap with three bells. He steps to the front and center of the dais.

TIMBLE
So, a funny thing happened on the
way to the scaffold...

107 EXT. PARTICULARLY PRIVATE PREPARATORY ACADEMY FOR PRINCES - DAY

107

A carriage pulls up at the entrance to the school. The headmaster and butler stand at the school door, waiting. Cal and Fredegar exit the carriage, holding hands.

TIMBLE (V.O.)
There were princes...

108 INT. CASTLE GRIMVIEW - HALLWAY - EVENING

108

Pluck -- in Timble's original costume, with the sleeves and legs bunched up -- walks down a hallway quietly. When he reaches a door, he opens it, revealing the other four bandits waiting outside. He waves them in. They slip in furtively, each carrying a plundering sack.

TIMBLE (V.O.)
...and bandits...

109 INT. REMOTE TAVERN - NIGHT

109

A rough and tumble tavern somewhere far from Celadonia. The clientele is gruff and rowdy. At a table in a corner sit Mince and Pugn, each with a tankard. Pugn is carving the image of a windmill into the wooden table with a knife.

Elsewhere in the room, someone is stuffing ferrets into his breeches.

CROWD
Seven! Seven! Seven!

TIMBLE (V.O.)
...and ferrets.
(beat)
But in the end, everyone wound up
just where they were meant to be.

A woman steps into view and stands at an empty chair between Pugn and Mince at their table. We do not see her face.

VERMILIA (V.O.)
Mind if I take this seat?

CUT TO BLACK.