

The Swordbearer Saga
Part Two:

Toward a Southern Shore

An
Original Screenplay
By

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FADE IN:

EXT. A COUNTRY VILLAGE - DAY

A medieval style village of 12 or 15 wood and stone huts seen from a short distance away, through RAIN that falls in heavy sheets.

Villagers scurry and point towards the group of riders assembled outside the village. The ALARM BELL SOUNDS.

CAPTAIN KA'RAN's horse dances anxiously beneath him, underscoring his exhortations to a band of 40 YARG RAIDERS.

He's a brutal looking creature whose right eye is dead and glassy beneath a scar that runs down his face. He speaks in short guttural tones.

KA'RAN

Kill them! Kill them all.
Make them suffer.

The Yargs, man-like creatures with grey skin, deep set eyes, and sharp, pointed teeth, are heavily armed and ready to fight. Ka'ran spins his horse and leads the charge.

IN THE VILLAGE -

A Red-haired HUNTRESS, 30, armed with bow & arrows and a long knife, herds Women and Children into a large hut.

HUNTRESS

Get inside! Bar the doors!

The last GIRL to enter has red hair as well. Her face is wrought with concern.

HUNTRESS

Don't worry. I'll protect you.

The Huntress hurries her inside, closes the door, and joins the MEN assembled nearby.

The men, about 20 in all, are of various ages and armed with hunting spears, bows, field axes, and old swords.

MAN
Here they come!

The Yargs sweep through the village, putting everyone to the sword.

The villagers fight with desperate courage, especially the Huntress who drops several raiders.

Ka'ran finally, and brutally, kills her as she defends the hut with the children inside to her last ounce of strength.

Ka'ran throws his weight against the door as the rest of the Yargs dismount and start breaking into the other huts.

The door of the hut gives way and Ka'Ran enters.

INT. COUNTRY VILLAGE/HUT - DAY

As Ka'ran steps into the room, he's attacked by 13-year-old Boy with a PITCHFORK.

Ka'ran wrests the weapon away and throws the boy aside. Two Women kneel protectively in front of the huddled children, including the little girl with the red hair.

Another YARG enters, grabs the boy, and throws him with the others. Ka'ran grins mercilessly as he steps forward.

OUTSIDE THE HUT -

The rain continues to pour, muting the SCREAMS from within.

LATER -

The rain forms pools and flows, stained red with blood.

Two riders survey the village. RAVENWOLF (35) is on a black warhorse named FALCWREN.

ELAN (20) is on a sturdy Brown. The stirrups on her saddle are hitched up slightly, like a jockey's.

He's a large, powerfully built man with shoulder length black hair and an air of strength and fierceness.

He's well-armed and carries a ROUND SHIELD on his back. The shield has the images of a wolf, a raven and a dragon boat drawn to either side of, and below the boss.

Elan is short and fit with green, almond-shaped eyes and long, curling brown hair that the rain has plastered about her face.

She wears several BRACELETS on each wrist. Like Ravenwolf she's well-armed.

ELAN
We're too late.

Ravenwolf dismounts and turns a Yarg body over.

RAVENWOLF
At least the odds are
getting better. We should
see if anyone survived.

Elan dismounts. They split up and start checking the huts. Elan goes to the hut where the Huntress fell.

She steps to the door and immediately turns away from the horror inside, struggling to breathe.

Ravenwolf sees her distress, comes over. He looks in the hut.

RAVENWOLF
We're getting closer. We'll
catch them soon and we'll
make them pay. Let's move on.

ELAN
Must we always leave them
like this?

RAVENWOLF
There's nothing we can do for
them now, but there may be
others ahead we can still save.

She draws her KNIFE and goes into the hut. She reappears a moment later with a lock of red hair. She puts it into a LEATHER POUCH on her sword belt.

ELAN
So I won't forget.

She mounts her horse. Ravenwolf does the same.

EXT. COUNTRY SIDE - DAY

The storm continues; punctuated by THUNDER and LIGHTNING.

Ravenwolf and Elan ride at a steady gallop. He reins up abruptly. Elan, caught off guard, pulls up sharply.

ELAN
What is it?

RAVENWOLF
There they are.

Ahead, barely visible in the rain, is the trailing rider of the Yarg pack. Elan's eyes narrow dangerously.

Ravenwolf unstraps his shield. Before he can position it, Elan draws her sword and spurs her horse forward.

RAVENWOLF
Elan!

Seconds pass as Ravenwolf gets his shield in place.

He draws his sword, the AIREON BLADE. A flash of LIGHTNING briefly highlights the RUNES inscribed on the blade.

Elan charges after the Yargs. Ravenwolf races to catch up. The SOUND of the rain covers their advance.

The Yargs number about 15. As Elan nears the last rider, she stands up in her stirrups.

The rider turns his head right before she sends it flying from his shoulders.

She slashes through the shoulder of the next man, severing his arm, then drives her sword through the back of a third.

The Yargs clear their weapons as Ravenwolf arrives.

He rams Falcwren into one of the Yarg horses. It crashes down on its rider.

The fight becomes a swirling melee. One of the Yargs slashes Ravenwolf across the side, drawing blood. Ravenwolf kills him and fights on.

The Yargs fall one-by-one. The last trades blows with Elan until she stabs him in the throat. He falls from his horse, clutching the wound.

Elan gets down and hacks at him until she's satisfied. She angrily cuts off a lock of his hair with her bloody sword.

ELAN

So I won't forget!

She kicks his body, then strides back to her horse. Ravenwolf rides over, looks down at her sternly.

She meets his gaze but then lowers her eyes; sees the bloody tear in his tunic.

ELAN

You're cut.

Ravenwolf puts his hand to the wound. It's still bleeding.

RAVENWOLF

I don't think its deep
enough to worry about.

Ravenwolf sheathes the sword and gets a roll of cloth from the saddlebag. He cuts off a length with his knife and secures the wound. He scans the Yarg bodies as Elan mounts.

RAVENWOLF

I thought there'd be more than this.

ELAN

Could there be another band?

RAVENWOLF

If there is we'll find them
and deal with them, but we
can't track them in this.
Let's try and find some shelter.

They ride off.

EXT. COUNTRY SIDE/NEAR A FOREST - LATE DAY

The storm continues. Ravenwolf indicates the tree line in the distance.

RAVENWOLF

Maybe it will be better in there.

They spur their horses in that direction.

EXT. FOREST - DUSK

Ravenwolf and Elan come to a fork in the trail divided by a low rise of earth.

One trail leads deeper into the forest. The other towards a WOODEN STOCKADE WALL about 150 yards further on.

A FLASH OF LIGHTNING highlights twenty WOODEN FIGURES stuck into a rise of earth that splits the trail.

They are carved out of wood and vary in height. Though crudely done, each possesses a distinct character.

Ravenwolf and Elan stop to look. They HEAR a GROWLING, WAILING SOUND echoing from somewhere deep in the forest and nudge their horses towards the stockade.

EXT. STOCKADE VILLAGE - DUSK

The wall is made of tightly braced logs about 15 feet high with sharpened points at the top. It's still raining.

Elan rides up to the gate, kicks it with her foot. After a moment two villagers appear at the top of the wall.

One, CEDRIC, holds a LANTERN, the other, MATHIS, a cocked CROSSBOW. Both men are in their late thirties.

CEDRIC

What do you want?

RAVENWOLF

A dry roof, some hot food,
and a bed.

MATHIS

Ride on. There's no place for
you here.

ELAN

Listen to me, you worthless
hump. Do you know who this is?
This is Ravenwolf of Bourne.
Until a fortnight ago he was
the king of this sopping,
shithole of a country. If it
weren't for him there would be
twenty Yarg raiders sitting
here instead of two wet riders.
Now open the fucking gate!

Cedric scowls at her and disappears with the lantern.

RAVENWOLF

That's telling them.

ELAN

Well, it's true.

She kicks the gate again. Ravenwolf notices two large
circles of charred earth and ash on either side of the
gate, barely visible in the mud.

They hear the SOUND of the gate being unbarred.
It opens slowly inward and they ride through.

EXT. INSIDE THE STOCKADE VILLAGE - DUSK

The wall surrounds a village of about 30 buildings. The MEN
of the village line the path on either side of the gate.

They are all armed in one way or another and stand with
their weapons ready.

Ravenwolf and Elan stop their horses as the gate closes
behind them. ALDEN, a heavy-set man in his 50s, with white
hair and beard arrives at the head of the crowd.

ALDEN

I am Alden, the village Elder.
Is it true that you are the King?

RAVENWOLF

I was. I'm not anymore.

ALDEN

Then you are welcome.
(MORE)

He indicates for the villagers to lower their weapons.

ALDEN (CONT'D)

There is a stable just ahead.
You can put your horses there
while I find a place for you
to stay.

Ravenwolf nods his thanks and nudges Falcwren forward.
Elan follows.

Among the crowd a small boy, about eight, watches them go.
His name is BEAN.

EXT. STOCKADE VILLAGE/STABLE - NIGHT

Ravenwolf and Elan reach the stable and dismount. Next to
the stable is a blacksmith's shop with an open front.
They pause to look in.

INT. STOCKADE VILLAGE/BLACKSMITHS - NIGHT

By a LANTERN'S LIGHT the Blacksmith, DECLAN (45), a
bearded, sturdy man, uses a hammer and chisel to carve
another of the WOOD FIGURES that were on the trail,

He stops to clear away the wood chips and examine the
carving. He briefly notes the two of them then solemnly
returns to work.

EXT. STOCKADE VILLAGE/STABLE - NIGHT

Ravenwolf and Elan lead their horses inside.

INT. STOCKADE VILLAGE/STABLE - NIGHT

Ravenwolf and Elan start to remove the tack from Falcwren and the Brown.

ELAN

I have a bad feeling about
this place.

RAVENWOLF

We'll stay until the rain stops.
If we don't pick up the tracks
of any more raiders we'll move on.

ELAN

To the sea?

RAVENWOLF

To the sea.

This cheers her up a bit. They briefly wipe down the horses with dry blankets and lead them into empty stalls.

Ravenwolf throws down some fresh hay, pats Falcwren's muzzle and comes out.

Alden enters as Elan comes out of the Brown's stall,

ALDEN

I have a place ready for you,
just down the way. I'm afraid
it will mean getting wet again.
You can use those blankets for
cover if you like.

RAVENWOLF

We're already soaked to the bone.
I doubt it would make a difference.

ELAN

Speak for yourself.

She takes one of the blankets and drapes it over her head.
They follow Alden out of the stable.

You've just read the opening scenes of

TOWARD A SOUTHERN SHORE
Part Two of THE SWORDBEARER SAGA

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