



B A L L B A R I A N S
SOMARRIAN HUNT
EPISODE 1

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Based on CHALDEA by
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EXT. GRANADA PALACE - DAY - ESTABLISHING

The GRANADA PALACE is the home of Rahat, the Merchant of Granada, who is the Merchants Guildmaster of Andalus.

The palace, a Moorish monument to wealth and prestige, is surrounded by glorious fountains glistening in the bright sun.

INT. GRANADA PALACE - ANTECHAMBER - DAY

RAZIN, (male, Moor), an agent of Rahat, frogmarches five disheveled and beleaguered visitors, an ELF, DWARF, HALFLING and two HUMANS to an antechamber, where they wait dejected.

A DOOR opens and a cloud of INCENSE roils forth. From the smoke a FEMININE HAND beckons the dwarf.

TORGRUM, (Male Dwarf Barbarian) lurches to his feet, like a marionette puppet and stumbles to the door.

INT. PALACE - GUILDMASTER OFFICE SUITE - LATER

Torgrum sits, his eyes wide and unblinking, as if in a trance. Thick incense spinning around his head.

RAHAT, (middle-aged Moor woman), stern and all business paces with her arms folded behind her back.

RAHAT

You were arrested for crimes against the kingdom and I purchased your debt. I have a generous offer so you may earn your freedom. You value your freedom?

TORGRUM

Yes, mistress.

RAHAT

For this freedom you owe me a debt. Not just a debt of gratitude, but of significant value in coin.

CLAW

Yes, mistress.

RAHAT

I have consulted the astrologers and all agree, unified under the Anumians.

(MORE)

RAHAT (CONT'D)

Your life has great untapped potential and I wish to exploit that potential.

ARMONDO

Yes. Yes. Mistress.

RAHAT

You will assume the life of a graver and embark upon a great adventure. You will travel across the Great Sea to Gravers Dig in Somarria. Once there, you will register and participate in a Hunting Tournament called, *The Somarrian Hunt*.

CALSIMEER

Yes, Mistress.

RAHAT

Since the emperor's death, gravers have gathered, eager to test their skills at the hunt and fortunes earned.

PANSY

YES, yes, my mistress, as you command.

RAHAT

I am sending you on this business excursion with four other individuals, like yourself. You are good friends and trusted business associates. You will live together and work together to this end. As a result, you five collectively owe me five of the Emperor's Gold Sovereigns.

ALL FIVE INDENTURED SERVANTS

Yes, mistress.

RAHAT

I'm confident you have what it takes to repay this debt and likewise rebuild your shattered lives.

Rahat waves her hand, weaving an ARCANES INCANTATION, fueling the incense fume thicker. The smoke, enters their eyes, ears, mouth and nose.

As the memory altering enchantment seeps deeper into its victims, Rahat cuts NAIL CLIPPINGS and HAIR for insurance.

RAHAT (CONT'D)

Now sign!

Rahat cuts their finger, spewing blood across parchment.

Torgrum, Claw, Armondo, Calsimeer, and Pansy have the same memory implanted, agreeing to the business transaction. The result of Rahat's powerful memory altering spell.

INT. GRANADA PALACE - CLAW'S ROOM - NIGHT

Claw sits Lotus Pose on their bed meditating.

BEGIN DREAM SEQUENCE

Claw opens their eyes, as Razin enters the room, the once solid door shifts to smoke with his ghost-like passing.

RAZIN

Quickly, follow me, mistress Rahat doesn't like to be kept waiting.

CLAW

In the middle of the night?

RAZIN

Rahat doesn't sleep when doing business.

Taking Claw's hand, they run quickly down smoky corridors.

RAHAT'S DREAM CHAMBER - HAZY MINUTES LATER

A large incense burner, an elaborate mechanical dragons heart hangs from a long chain. It pulses a thick fume to the thud of a rhythmic heart beat.

The aromatic blue smoke shifts, forming Moorish architecture, walls, arches, and palatial water fountains.

Rahat trans-lucent and out of focus reads an INFINITE SCROLL that coils like a dragons tail around the magicians feet.

CLAW (V.O.)

*This woman has claws, sharp claws.
Sunk deeply into my soul.*

Rahat levels a PIERCING GAZE, striking Claw like a spear thrust to the head, a knife to the heart, a pin to the eye.

RAHAT

Ahh yes, Claw. Welcome.

CLAW

Thank you, my lady.

RAHAT

You are a member of the Calaten
Thatalo?

CLAW

Yes. Is that a problem?

RAHAT

You've heard of my mother, Jubal?

Claw GASPS sharply, unable to contain their surprise. The name Jubal (An Elder Dragon), releases a flood of ecstasy from the young elf, for they all but worship dragons.

CLAW

Jubal is your mother? Is she here?

RAHAT

No. Since I know about your lodge,
and what it stands for, I am
entrusting you with extra
responsibilities. I trust you
would never betray one of my kin.

CLAW

Oh, no. Of course not--

Rahat ignores the muddle-tongued elf.

RAHAT

We dragons value our privacy, and
you would not betray, I am anything
other than a human woman.

CLAW

Who does not have claws. I can
speak to that personally.

Rahat held up her index finger and from its tip heat wave energy pulses and spirals, a whirlpool of colored clouds.

Claw wavers, head spinning as if drunk, eyes bulging transfixed by the energy vortex.

Inside that vortex, appears an ebony dragon's claw. The claw stretches forth, tapping Claw on the forehead.

And then just as quickly it withdrew, with a vast sucking of air. The energy vortex slamming shut with a bang.

RAHAT

If your debt is repaid in full and you have served me well, I will allow you to worship me. I entrust you with important responsibilities which will be well-rewarded, but you must not tell anyone who I am, or I will be... *cranky*.

CLAW

Ohhh, ah, a cranky dragon is not anything I ever wish to witness. I am honored to revere you with or without the successful completion of this task.

RAHAT

I've provided you with a line of credit. So you have access to funds. Any credit you access, however, will be added to your collective debt, plus interest.

Claw bowed.

CLAW

What is the proper honorific I should use to address you? Mistress? Milady? 'O scaley one?

The dragon heart incense burner pulses angrily, gushing smoke rings of noxious black smoke.

RAHAT

Let's just stick with Malika Rahat.

CLAW

Yes, Malika.

DREAM SEQUENCE ENDS

INT. PALACE LIBRARY - DAY

Our five heroes, are given VISAS that enable them to travel abroad, to Arusha and back, gain employment and register for The Hunt.

After Calsimeer signs his documents, Razin pulls him aside.

RAZIN

You are a holy man, who serves
Dionysus. In our times, it seems
that almost every religion finds
fellowship with other religions
that are not of Set.

Calsimeer works his mouth thoughtfully without speaking.

RAZIN (CONT'D)

In Sheol, Seek out Hatsu, a
priestess of Amaterasu who runs
Camp Sunshine. She operates an
orphanage we donate to.

CALSIMEER

Why tell me all this?

RAZIN

I thought you might like to know
another religious leader who is
operating secretly, as you are.
People who shun Set have a kinship.

CALSIMEER

I appreciate the help. I am glad
to know, in some respects we are on
the same side.

RAZIN

I am on my master's side, but I
certainly hope for your success.

EXT. THE GREAT SEA

The voyage across the Great Sea lasts three anumians --
Spring, Ballerina, and Artisan.

On the last day of Artisan, just as Warrior manifests in the
early evening sky, The Crucible, enters the port of Gravers
Dig.

EXT. GRAVERS DIG - DAY - ESTABLISHING

As they approach landfall, the walled TOWN OF SHEOL catches
their attention on a hill.

That however is not their destination. Instead--

GRAVERS DIG. A Somarrrian wildlands frontier boom town. This
place is a ripe dump--tropical hot and sweaty.

EXT. GRAVERS DIG - DOCKSIDE - LATER

The five inch slowly down the gangplank with their things.

They stand motionless, kept at bay by a turbulent mass of people and animals going about business and daily routines.

Youth of all ages, girls and boys, dart quick like hummingbirds between flowers, dogs yapping, people yelling.

There's cattle, horses, chickens, elephants, and camels--if there is an animal mode of transportation, it's visible here.

A Targonian lad, AGGEE, (late teens, in a bright kente kufi hat), screeches to a halt in front of the newcomers.

After a quick survey he decides Cal is "the leader".

CALSIMEER

What can I do for you little one?

The boy waves flamboyantly clearing the dock. Typical for new arrivals, it seems, the crowd parts.

AGGEE

Hello, I am Aggee. Welcome to Gravers Dig. You are here for the Hunt?

CALSIMEER

We are indeed here for the hunt.

If the young Targonian's arms moved fast, his lips move faster.

AGGEE

Let me help you. I can conduct everything. Are you registered for the Hunt? Where are you staying? Do you have local currency?

Cal has difficulty getting an answer in edge wise.

CALSIMEER

Yes. Maybe, we don't know, we have--

AGGEE

You seem to need me.

CALSIMEER

These are all very good questions.

AGGEE

I am a guide. If you pay me, I will keep people off you. I can show you around town. Get you checked into your inn. Manage your luggage. Bring food. Hire any help you might need. Is that acceptable?

Calsimeer tries to ascertain if he is a scam artist.

CALSIMEER

You trying to work a scam?

AGGEE

I am Aggee, your humble servant. You pay, I work hard-double hard. Most loyal. Ask anyone, Aggee the best.

Torgrum motions to the kids lurking nearby.

TORGRUM

They're sharks, all of 'em. I sense an ongoing trend with these children.

(Swats mosquito)

Like the pests in this gods forsaken place. If we don't hire him, we'll never be rid of these bloodsuckers.

AGGEE

Wise dwarf.

CALSIMEER

What do you think everyone?

The rest of the group rumble halfheartedly.

AGGEE

Do you have reservations at a place to stay tonight?

CALSIMEER

We've just arrived, so no.

PANSY

What are our options?

AGGEE

There are a broad array of places you can stay, depending on your finances.

Aggee climbs onto a crate and points.

AGGEE (CONT'D)

You can set up a tent and camp in the field. It's free for anyone who is registered for the Hunt. And that includes breakfast.

The crew stifles a laugh.

AGGEE (CONT'D)

There are bunkhouses. Open floor with stacked cots. That costs half a torte per person per night.

CALSIMEER

What is a torte?

AGGEE

Local currency, we'll cover that in a minute.

AGGEE (CONT'D)

There is of course, a proper inn. One torte per night per person. Sleep on the floor. Five torte extra, you can have a private room.

The new comers mutter, not understanding the currency.

AGGEE (CONT'D)

If I am not out of your price range yet. You can rent a house for one-hundred torte a night.

Aggee scans the blank stares.

AGGEE (CONT'D)

Should I stop there?

CLAW

Normally, I'm happy with climbing a tree and hanging a hammock. I'm going to do as the locals do, and... sleep in a bunkhouse?

TORGRUM

Field. Bunk. Whatever. Let's go!

PANSY

How much money do we have to spend on lodging?

TORGRUM

Rahat gave us a budget. Correct?

CLAW

Remember, whatever funds we spend, we'll have to pay back with interest.

PANSY

I'm happy to live on the streets.

ARMONDO

I'm not.

Aggee claps his hands sharply together three times.

AGGEE

We should probably talk about tortes.

(off blank stares)

The local Currency. What kind of currency do you have?

Claw waves the promissory note from Rahat.

CLAW

We have assets.

Claw holds the note protectively so that Aggee can read but not make off with it.

AGGEE

I cannot read this language. Is it a bank note? I recommend we exchange your currency into Tortes at the Casino.

CLAW

(snidely)

And gamble.

AGGEE

The Andal currency is pegged to the Emperor's Gold Sovereign so you will get a pretty good exchange.

TORGRUM

He's a godsdamn Chaldeapedia of fun facts. Pegged to the sovereign. Pegged to my ass, if you don't sound like a dwarf.

CALSIMEER

Let's exchange our money first.

Aggee bows to Calsimeer and waves.

AGGEE

(jumps down from crate)
If we hurry double-haste, we can
hit the market before it closes.

PANSY

Yes! Banking and then shopping.

CASINO MONTAGE

Our heroes, new to Gravers Dig and it's unique money market, head directly to the Casino where foreign currencies are exchanged.

Apparently, CASINO CHIPS are the currency of choice, accepted everywhere.

After a dwarf bank teller verifies the authenticity of Rahat's promissory note, to the astonishment of everyone, they each receive a bulging bag of CASINO CHIPS--

worth 5,000 Tortes.

EXT. SHOPPING DISTRICT - EARLY EVENING

The Shopping District, muddy and chaotic, is barely a step up from a caravan flea market.

The vendors are doing a brisk business with background noise of construction: New Shops Coming Soon!

The busiest place by far is the Dwarven armory. Its a madhouse of people gearing up for the hunt.

If the friends want to do business there, they'll have to go in as a wedge.

AGGEE

Any of these shops pique curiosity,
master dwarf?

TORGRUM

Just a minor question. The Hunt.
What do we know about The Hunt?

AGGEE

It's scary hunting in Somarria.

TORGRUM

How far away? What is the
destination?

(MORE)

TORGRUM (CONT'D)

What kind of ground are we going to cover? Are we going to sail, ride horses? What do we need?

Aggee smiles waving his hands as-if he was a god creating the Pearl Universe.

AGGEE

Somarria very dangerous and savage. A vast wilderness. Here to horizon are wide plains, and then thick dark jungles, and hills lots of hills.

(giggling impishly)
Dangers like that.

TORGRUM

Horses. I think we're in need of horses and tack.

AGGEE

Who says, dwarves aren't wise?

EXT. GNOME TRADING CARK - MOMENTS LATER

Calsimeer, like a moth to flame heads to a brilliant red sign: HEALING POTIONS.

BRANDI, (a pint-sized gnome woman), the proprietor, is busy polishing crystal vials when Calsimeer catches her eye.

AGGEE

This is Brandi, she's a graver fixture.

Brandi speaks quick in a high-pitched squeaky voice.

BRANDI

Hey. Hey. How is it going? Glad you stopped by, you happened upon the best alchemist in all of Gravers Dig.

AGGEE

(shaking head)
Liar. She no alchemist.

BRANDI

What can I get you? I have the largest selection of assorted elixirs from here to Trevous. Tonight, one time offer, we have a special on healing potions.

(MORE)

BRANDI (CONT'D)
They are only, like, fifty tortes
each. Get'em while they're hot.

CALSIMEER
How many tortes each you say?

BRANDI
Fifty tortes each.

CALSIMEER
Fifty tortes... *each*?

Calsimeer cracks his neck and adjusts into a *haggle stance*.

BRANDI
Maximum of...
(thinking)
twenty per customer.

CALSIMEER
Maximum of twenty?

Brandi clasps her hands together, praying. Praying to her god
or in hopes Cal is the next sucker.

CALSIMEER (CONT'D)
Apologies.
(Doing math)
Math was never my strong suit.

BRANDI
Two times five is ten, add another
zero. Zero. That would be one-
thousand tortes.

Calsimeer reels, punch drunk by the enormity of the quote.

BRANDI (CONT'D)
I tell you what? I give it to you
for nine ninety-five.

CALSIMEER
(scoffs)
A tempting offer.

Brandi digs deep into her sales pitch routine.

BRANDI
You will never find healing
potions, this quick, this cheap
anywhere. These are the cheapest
healing potions anywhere.

CALSIMEER

Oh, yes, yes, yes. I understand,
and you are talking very, very
fast.

BRANDI

Amazing product. Because I have
low overhead. I have just the
cart. Just me. I don't have any
employees. You are getting this
close to wholesale.

CALSIMEER

Sure. Let's say we do ten?

BRANDI

Okay. No discount though for ten.
Five-hundred tortes.

CALSIMEER

How about a discount for fifteen?

BRANDI

Huh?

CALSIMEER

Discount for fifteen?

BRANDI

Okay, fifteen healing potions.
(calculating)
I tell you what, I will give them
to you for seven twenty-five.

CALSIMEER

Seven twenty-five sounds wonderful.

Brandi opens a cupboard and quickly counts 15 vials, placing
them into a cute little package with a ribbon.

BRANDI

This is a free gift with purchase.
A special invention of my own
genius. I call it, *Miracle Wine*.

She pulls out a tiny micro vial containing a deep burgundy
liquid.

BRANDI (CONT'D)

This is fine wine from Mycanea.
Pour the vial into a gallon of
water and it will produce the best
wine you've ever tasted.

Brandi presses the vial into Cal's hands.

BRANDI (CONT'D)

It's wine concentrate. Just a small vial and you get a whole gallon of wine. *Whoo-hoo!*

CALSIMEER

You are a fine girl. A good girl. A gnome after my own heart.

BRANDI

Do you require anything else? I have a robust inventory, anything you desire, one torte or less

CALSIMEER

Do you have any ball bearings?

BRANDI

Yes, ballbarians! I exclusive ballbarians vendor.

CALSIMEER

How much for one-hundred steel ballbarians?

BRANDI

My cost for steel is quadruple that of ceramic. That would be four tortes for one-hundred ballbarians.

CALSIMEER

I will do that; one hundred percent do that.

EXT. SHOPPING DISTRICT - MIDTOWN - EVENING

Claw approaches a large round CIRCUS TENT, faded and weather beaten with a ramshackle sign: D O G S.

A large and imposing black-as-sin bullmastiff is tied down securely outside the flap with five hulking iron chains.

A sign hangs from the dogs neck: Beware of Unrooly. Eats anything including customers.

Claw pushes past Unrooly and through the flap--

INSIDE

COUGH! An overwhelming pungent smell of dog urine and feces assaults Claw's senses. The owner is NOT taking care of the dogs properly. Claw recognizes the smell of cruelty.

MASTER
WAR DAWGS ARE TWO-HUNDRED TORTES.
HUNTING DOGS ONE-FIFTY.

Claw stumbles back from the verbal onslaught from the proprietor, MASTER, a ten-foot ogre wearing nothing but leather harness and chains.

He shakes a large savage bullwhip at Claw for emphasis.

MASTER (CONT'D)
I am the beastmaster, of Khino-
ulrup, bred, born, and trained.

Claw gathers courage.

CLAW
Wh-what kind of dog breeds do you
sell?

MASTER
I said, War Dawgs are two-hundred.
Hunting Dogs one-fifty!!

CLAW
But, what kind of--

MASTER
But what?

CLAW
Whatever breed you got, I will take
two hunting dogs and four war dogs.

MASTER
One-thousand one-hundred tortes.

Ahh, crap, Claw realizes, they only have one thousand tortes.

CLAW
I'm sorry, Mr. Ogre sir.

MASTER
W-H-A-T?

CLAW
I don't have that much, I only--

MASTER

Why did you ask to buy dogs you cannot afford? Are you wasting my dogs time?

CLAW

I have one-thousand tortes in casino chips.
(counting under duress)
Three war dogs is six-hundred and four hunting dogs--

MASTER

Is dog math hard for elf?

Apparently, the ogre is better at math than the elf.

MASTER (CONT'D)

You can have three war dogs and four hunting dogs for one-thousand.

Haggling with an Ogre--next level stress for sure.

CLAW

SOLD! Free all the dogs.

The ogre lowers a stern gaze at the tiny elf.

MASTER

Pay me and they will be freed.

LATER

The ogre leads forth two WAR DOGS with short cropped mohawks.

MASTER (CONT'D)

This is Worstest and Badboy.
(hands bag of bones)
Each has a Rule Bone they are afraid of. Help keep rooly.

Moments later, he leads four HUNTING DOGS.

MASTER (CONT'D)

This is bastard and his three bitches. Feel free to rename 'em, I don't give two shits.

Speaking of shit, Worstest is doing just that on the floor. The ogre kicks the feces with a toe to a larger pile.

MASTER (CONT'D)

If you get 'em killed, I have more bitch sisters.

(MORE)

MASTER (CONT'D)

Ten-percent discount to returning customers, but since you so bad at dog math, I will take advantage of you.

Business complete, he turns to leave.

CLAW

Wait. You still owe me another war dog. You trying to rip me off?

The Ogre growls revealing savage hulking yellow chompers.

MASTER

I'll rip your head off.

CLAW

What about the dog out front, what's his story?

The ogre shakes his head.

MASTER

No-no-no. Unrooly must stay. Last year, Cosmo put those magical chains on him to keep Gravers Dig safe.

CLAW

What did he do?

MASTER

He's unrooly.

EXT. COSMO TOWER - EVENING

Armondo stands before a simple, squat stone tower. Facing the road is a plain ironwood door with a gray moss-covered gargoyle perched upon the frame.

Armondo approaches the smooth door slowly examining it for a door handle, for which there is none.

At eye level however, there is a relief carving of a mystical sigil: the ANUMIAN UNIVERSE GATE.

He touches it with his palm.

ARMONDO

Friend.

Everyone knows the childhood method of opening a magical door speaking friend, but this tower isn't in on the joke.

ARMONDO (CONT'D)

Amigo.

Nada.

ARMONDO (CONT'D)

Freund.

nichts.

ARMONDO (CONT'D)

Ffrind. Ven. Ystävä. Ami. Amico.

POOF!

like a snapping ember from a fire, A MAN, materializes next to Armando, forming solidly out of thin air.

MAN

Next.

ARMONDO

Cosmo I presume?

If the man is Cosmo, he shows no sign of acknowledgement and disappears into the early evening shadows.

Perhaps, maybe the door is an elaborate illusion.

With profound purpose and determination Armando takes a forceful step forward, plowing headfirst smashing his nose.

ARMONDO (CONT'D)

(rubbing schnoz)

Owww!!

He looks around sheepishly, hoping no one saw his idiocy.

ARMONDO (CONT'D)

Business might fair better if you allowed customers to enter.

(beat)

Or hung out a closed sign.

The riddle of the sigil is the key---no doubt.

He touches the sigil once more, and, this time--

WHOOSH, SUCK, and POP!

Armondo titters head spinning from a headrush and discovers that he is indeed *someplace else*--

presumably inside the tower?

COSMO
 Welcome, I'm Cosmo, the
 Magnificent.

The proprietor, COSMO, a wizard, stands behind a fabulously ornate glass counter crammed with arcane antiquities.

COSMO (CONT'D)
 Who do I have the pleasure of doing
 business with today?

The Tower room, tiny and cramped, contains a smorgasbord of magical paraphernalia stacked from floor to ceiling.

A 12-ft chiseled stone golem looms over Armondo, looking down inspecting him.

ARMONDO
 I am Armando... the Bardbarian?

COSMO
 You are most welcome esteemed
 Bardbarian.

The sense of magic, *the real deal*, is pronounced and permeates everything.

COSMO (CONT'D)
 I am a broker of fine magical
 wares.

ARMONDO
 Your magical wares are broken?

COSMO
 NO. Bro-kur.

ARMONDO
 Oh, yes. Excuse me for my
 ignorance.

COSMO
 No apologies necessary, it is I who
 should apologize for the confusion
 gaining entry to my tower. Security
 only permits one customer at a
 time. My inventory is much too
 valuable to allow customers to
 wander unattended.

ARMONDO
 (re: tiny room)
 Where is room to wander I wonder.

COSMO

What might you be in the market for? This is not my entire collection. You only need but ask, and I will provide it or search the world trying.

ARMONDO

Have you heard tell of the legendary singing sword?

COSMO

A sword that sings?

ARMONDO

Aye.

COSMO

Fascinating. Well, that is a very rare weapon. Sadly, I do not have one in stock. I can try to obtain it. Leave me a deposit, so that I would know the sincerity of your interest. A fully refundable deposit, of course.

ARMONDO

I will give you the equivalent of one-hundred torte in gambling tokens.

COSMO

I approve your method of currency, but one-hundred torte is a paltry sum. Make it double, prove you are serious. Two-hundred torte.

ARMONDO

I will make it three hundred. Serious enough?

Cosmo spent the new next few minutes taking down personal information, filling in the contract explicitly.

COSMO

If you should not survive the Hunt, what should I do with the deposit?

ARMONDO

Give it to a cleric friend of mine Cal. Go see Cal. Go see Cal.

COSMO
Go. See. Cal. Hmmmm. And where
might I find this Cal?

Ahh, right. Armando remains blank faced, As of yet, he and his friends had not yet secured lodging.

COSMO (CONT'D)
I will be writing instructions: *He is a friend of yours.*

ARMONDO
Everyone knows Cal.

COSMO
I however do not. Should you perish, I will know him presently.

ARMONDO
I hope you never meet Cal.

COSMO
Excellent. Excellent. Have a good evening. And thank you for coming to Cosmo the Magnificent.

Armando turns to exit and can't find a door.

ARMONDO
How do I leave?

EXT. SHOPPING DISTRICT - ANIMAL SQUARE - EVENING

The "Horse and Tack" shop is large, converted log barn and stables surrounded by horse expansive corals.

Torgrum dodges fleet footed customers as he enters Danika's.

INT. DANIKA'S - CONTINUOUS

Danika's is a cavernous cave of timber, fabricated from hulking timbers. Stalls along the walls contain every breed of horse imaginable.

A woman helping rambunctious clientele waves at Torgrum.

DANIKA
I'll be with you shortly.

Torgrum does a double-take and GROWLS like a bear.

TORGRUM

(sotto)

Did she just call me shorty?
(yelling at Danika)
Did you just call me shorty?

DANIKA

I'll be there in a moment.

Still bristling from the implied insult.

TORGRUM

(muttering)

Short and mighty is my temper.

Torgrum moves away from the woman toward the perimeter, where he inspects the stalls and the horses for sale.

After a few minutes, the woman, DANIKA, an athletic Rooshen woman in full leather riding gear and tall boots approaches.

DANIKA

Fine greetings, sir dwarf. Welcome to my stable. I am Danika.

TORGRUM

I am in need of five horses.

She smiles and nods.

DANIKA

A common mistake, ill prepared hunters not purchasing horses. The hunting grounds are treacherous and expansive and speed is important.

TORGRUM

These legs aren't made for walking.

DANIKA

You've come to the right place. Are you looking for draft horses, or riding horses, or war horses?

Torgrum considers the inventory and what they might require in the days to come.

DANIKA (CONT'D)

What do you know of horses?

TORGRUM

I've been on ships, wagons, a war chariot or two and even ridden winged lions.

(MORE)

TORGRUM (CONT'D)

You know, they are all just another form of conveyance.

DANIKA

Right. So not a lot?

TORGRUM

(pointing)

I'll take the chestnut Jutland, and three Morgans; the dun, roan and the dappled silver.

DANIKA

So, you do know your breeds.

TORGRUM

What part of, *these legs aren't made for walking*, don't you fathom?

DANIKA

We also have ponies and mules.

TORGRUM

I'm going to need a pony about eight hands, for my height challenged friend. She prefers bees, but the pony will have to do.

DANIKA

We got that.

TORGRUM

I'll also need a horse for myself. I'm kinda stout, so it needs to be strong and robust. The horse can't be so tall... well you know? I'm five-feet-formidable and require quick ingress egress.

She laughs.

DANIKA

I got you covered.

She pulls out a ledger from a side pouch, and begins writing.

DANIKA (CONT'D)

The whole kit and caboodle works out to nine-hundred and ten. I'll give it to you for nine-hundred even.

TORGRUM

I'll give you eight-hundred. The whole lot for eight-hundred.
 (holds up eight fingers)
 Eight. C'mon, you know you're making a killing here.

DANIKA

Tis true. That's the point of business to make a profit. I stock quality breeds and offer a fair price.

Torgrum and Danika stare at each other, each weighing the situation seeing who will blink first.

Never much good at a stare competition, Torgrum blinks.

TORGRUM

Eight fifty.

DANIKA

Okay, yeah. Nine-hundred.

Torgrum recognizes that Danika runs a clean operation with well-tended horses.

TORGRUM

Nine-hundred. Sure.

DANIKA

I will toss in boarding free-of-charge. I'll have them saddled and ready for you first thing pre-dawn.

TORGRUM

Sounds perfect.

She holds out an itchy palm.

DANIKA

Perfect is nine-hundred torte in my hand.

He hands over the chips.

TORGRUM

What a bargain.

EXT. SHOPPING DISTRICT - LYNNWOOD SOFTGOODS - EVENING

Pansy approaches LYNNWOOD SOFTGOODS. The owners are elven with a reputation for superior leathercraft, and based upon the crowded shop, the word is out, this is the place.

She enters.

Leather is fine, but what Pansy has her eyes on are the clientele--the Hunters and Gravers and all their fine crafted weapons and trinkets.

As she dives deeper into the store, brushing under the notice of taller shoppers, she passes racks of leather armor.

She continues around a mountain of stacked tents and bedrolls approaching the rear of the shop.

The SHOPKEEPER, CORDELIA, (20-something, Pert), wears a knee length leather dress and long blonde hair braided.

A man, PIERRE DE CLEMENT, Aimian, handsome and debonair, sports a jeweled dagger on his hip, a pouch of coins, and a rapier slung over his back.

He keeps interrupting the lass as she attempts to work.

PIERRE

I have bottles of wine, my families private label. Please, mon lapin, have dinner and share with me.

CORDELIA

I can't, I'm working.

He leans against the wall, as if posing for a portrait, twirling a long stem rose.

PIERRE

I shall buy this establishment and give you the night off.

He leans in closer to deliver another one of his lines or perhaps a kiss, and she sidesteps, spinning away.

She curves quickly around a pile of crates and runs--

BAM! into Pansy, tripping scattering clothing across the floor.

CORDELIA

I's so sorry, I didn't see you.

Pansy stoops to help gather the clothing.

PANSY

No harm done.
 (looking up at the creep)
 You have your own set of
 challenges.

The shopkeeper smiles and winks.

CORDELIA

We have a wide selection of Halfling
 sizes over there. Let me know if I
 can be of assistance.

PIERRE

What time do you get off?

He nudges a shirt with his foot to Cordelia who picks it up.

Cordelia stands and moves off, the man following like a love-
 struck puppy.

CORDELIA

I'm doing inventory tonight; it's
 going to be late.

PIERRE

Doing? What are you doing with the
 inventory?

As the man turned to follow Cordelia, Pansy takes a closer
 look at the jeweled dagger on his hip.

PANSY (V.O.)

A dandy target, my dandy man.

Pansy makes busy shopping, but follows Pierre as he kicks off
 his boots and takes a seat. He struggles mightily to get his
 right foot into a new pair of boots.

PIERRE

I could wait while you do this
 inventory thing.
 (struggling mightily)
 Damn, these are tight.

Ground zero next to the chair, Pansy spies a table and a
 halfling-size hiding spot.

CORDELIA

Inventory takes all night.

RIP. The boot TEARS out, toes exposed.

PIERRE

What kind of elven crap--

Cordelia snatches the ruined boot from Pierre.

CORDELIA

Those are for halflings, you
cretin.

Pansy spots a blind spot, slips quietly under the table.

CORDELIA (CONT'D)

Wait there, I'll get you a proper
size.

Pansy watches quiet as a mouse, hoping the man doesn't notice
her inches away. No worries, his attention is on--

What is his attention on?

Pansy follows his gaze and finds Cordelia stretching on her
tippy-toes, her back to the man. And the man--

She looks back. His, mouth agape, looking up, eyes wide.

PANSY (V.O.)

(groaned)
You pig!

His attention elsewhere, she reaches for the dagger--

Easy as that! Relieves the dagger from the dandy's waist.

PANSY (V.O.)

Gotcha.

Cordelia returns with ornate crocodile boots and thrust them
into the man's hand.

CORDELIA

You break it, you buy it.

PIERRE

I would buy the moon, if only you
would have dinner with me.

CORDELIA

We had dinner last night. The
spiced meat was some of the best
I've had. The wine superb. It was
the company that was in poor taste.

Cordelia moves, almost runs to the other side of the shop in
hopes of dislodging herself from the antagonist. But no joy.

PANSY (V.O.)
What a putz.

She examines the dagger, it is warm to the touch and almost purrs as she runs her fingers over the glistening jewels.

With Cordelia and Pierre out of line of sight, Pansy slips quietly out from under the table, and makes for the door.

PANSY
(flipping dagger)
A nifty new dagger and a pocket
full of coin. Best shopping day,
ever.