

SEE-SAW

THE NORTH WATER

PART FOUR: "THE DEVILS OF THE EARTH"

By

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Based on the novel by Ian McGuire

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1

EXT. POND'S BAY CAMP / TITLES - DUSK

1

As we pull away from the filthy camp, squalid and dirty, the firewood from the whaleboat nearly gone, we can see that time has passed.

SUMNER emerges from the tent into the low sun. His beard is longer, his clothes filthy and his face a mucky brown. But somehow in his posture he looks improved, the drugs drained from his body.

As he walks closer to the shore and we pull further out we see that the sea has started to re-freeze -- new ice, as thin as glass, starting to form between the existing bergs and floes.

SUMNER arrives at the shoreline and looks towards the blue wall of the glacier, the wind cold and fierce on his face.

He sees a lone bird as it flies high in the air, over his head and towards us. He follows that bird until his eyes find us, watching him, unable to help.

CUT TO TITLE:

PART 4: "THE DEVILS OF THE EARTH"

2

INT. POND'S BAY CAMP - DUSK

2

OTTO is reading from the bible to CAVENDISH when SUMNER enters and squats in front of them. MCKENDRICK, WEBSTER and COOK, the only other remaining men, chew on the smallest amount of salted meat.

CAVENDISH

Otto tells me that on the seventh day, God looked down on the earth and saw that all was good. Now, I'm a God-fearing Christian like the best of them, but if I was a different kind of man, I dare say I'd be asking for my money back.

(CONTINUED)

SUMNER

Talk of God is not going to help us invigorate ourselves and if we are to last the winter on the rations we have, then we have to start hunting.

SUMNER turns and addresses the three remaining men.

SUMNER

Tomorrow we must split into two groups, three of us will take the rifles and climb to the headland to hunt for food. And the other three will spend at least an hour tramping up and down to maintain vigour.

DRAX

Let me help you boys. I'm a good shot, me...

(with a grin)

All I need is a rifle.

Everyone glares at DRAX, still chained around the wrists, but in better spirits than the others.

CAVENDISH

If you want to sleep in here I advise you to shut your fucking mouth.

SUMNER looks back at the men, desperate for them to understand, but they seem unconvinced and uninterested, the wind whipping up outside.

SUMNER

If you remain immobile, your blood will thicken and clot in your veins. Your organs will become flaccid and eventually fail, and you will die.

Still, nothing. SUMNER looks to CAVENDISH for help, who bellows an order without bothering to stand up.

2

CONTINUED: (2)

2

CAVENDISH

If you do not commit to this plan
then I'll stop your rations and
you'll all be dead before the week
is out. Your choice.

The murmurs from the men indicate their acceptance as SUMNER's gaze falls back upon DRAX. He offers SUMNER an odd nod of congratulation as he wolfs down his ration of dry biscuits.

3

EXT. POND'S BAY CAMP - DAY

3

The MEN have split up. Two are huddled in blankets by the tent, another two - SUMNER and one other - are out hunting. SUMNER shoots his rifle.

SUMNER (V.O.)

The men do as I instruct but they make no effort. Without the rigor and purpose of the shipboard duties they are lost.

TWO MEN break up the whaleboat with axes.

SUMNER (V.O.) (CONT'D)

We decide to break the first of the whaleboats...

The MEN are huddled around the campfire they've made with the wood from the whaleboat.

SUMNER (V.O.) (CONT'D)

...but the fire gives them little comfort or warmth.

4

EXT. POND'S BAY CAMP - NIGHT

4

The tent sits alone and silent in the night, the wind strong and fierce.

SUMNER (V.O.) (CONT'D)

Yet gradually free from the wretchedness of my withdrawal, the tyranny of my addiction...

DRAX sits alone in the dark.

(CONTINUED)

4

CONTINUED:

4

SUMNER (V.O.) (CONT'D)
I feel stronger.

5

EXT. POND'S BAY CAMP - DAY

5

OTTO leads the men up the headland with their rifles but they shoot little more than a few small birds. SUMNER remains with the remaining men as they stomp in circles around the tent.

6

EXT. POND'S BAY CAMP - DAY

6

SUMNER (V.O.) (CONT'D)
Weeks pass, or is it months, and rations fade. And the cold seeps into our bones.

Cavendish climbs to the top of a peak carrying his rifle. He shouts at the top of his voice.

CAVENDISH
WHY ARE YOU GIVING ME SUCH A
FUCKING RAW DEAL?!

His words echo all around him.

CAVENDISH (CONT'D)
I DESERVE BETTER THAN THIS!

The echo carries on. CAVENDISH falls to his knees.

SUMNER (V.O.)
But I will not fall apart.

7

INT. POND'S BAY CAMP - DAWN

7

SUMNER sleeps near the entrance of the tent wrapped in blankets. He half opens his eyes on hearing a sound outside on the gravel shore -- someone or something is out there. He wraps his scarf tight about his head and his blanket around his body.

8

EXT. POND'S BAY CAMP - CONTINUOUS

8

SUMNER emerges into the morning light to find two INUIT HUNTERS on the beach. One is already on the shore and the other is rowing through the small bergs of ice towards it. These kayaks are called "qajaq" are made from stretched seal skin with whale-bone frames.

The ELDER INUK is 50, the YOUNGER INUK perhaps only 20 -- but they both have dark faces burnt by the arctic sun and black hair down to their shoulders. On the kayak already on the shore, there is a large dead seal.

SUMNER approaches them kindly, raising his hand to greet them, but CAVENDISH who has also heard them, comes out with a different agenda.

CAVENDISH

(loudly)

Meat! Fish!

CAVENDISH makes a crude feeding gesture with his fingers and mouth. The others emerge from the tent, now, DRAX the last to come.

CAVENDISH

Hungry.

He points at his stomach and then at the bellies of the men around him.

ELDER INUK

Trade?

CAVENDISH

Yes.

CAVENDISH turns and walks back to OTTO. SUMNER watches as they confer for a moment before OTTO walks back into the tent.

SUMNER looks back to the HUNTERS, at their almost alien appearance. OTTO quickly reappears with a blubber knife and a hand axe. He hands them to the HUNTERS who examine them with care.

(CONTINUED)

8

CONTINUED:

8

They hand back the axe but keep hold of the knife. In return, they hand CAVENDISH an ivory carving of a seal. He waves them off.

CAVENDISH

We can't eat this.

He points at the seal carcass, a hint of desperation in his tone.

CAVENDISH

Food is all we want.

The YOUNGER INUK looks to the ELDER as he considers the trade.

9

EXT. POND'S BAY CAMP - DAY

9

The ELDER INUIT butchers the seal with great speed and skill. The COOK then drops lumps of meat into the embers of the fire where they hiss and spit.

10

INT. POND'S BAY CAMP - DAY

10

The men all feast on the glorious meat, juices running down their faces. SUMNER sits with CAVENDISH and OTTO and they watch the INUITS through a gap in the tent, chattering.

SUMNER

If they give us seals, we'll survive till the spring. We can eat the meat and burn the blubber for warmth.

CAVENDISH

Listen to 'em out there, laughing and joking with themselves. We need to strike a good bargain, but the problem is they already know we're screwed.

SUMNER

You think they'd let us starve to death?

(CONTINUED)

10

CONTINUED:

10

CAVENDISH

Happily. Heathenish fuckers such as them ain't burdened with the Christian virtues of men like us.

SUMNER

What virtues are those?

CAVENDISH

That's the God's truth of it. If they don't fancy what we have to offer, they'll be gone just as quick as they arrived.

SUMNER

Offer them the rifles then -- five dead seals for each rifle, three rifles is fifteen seals. We can live off that till Spring.

CAVENDISH

I'll tell them ten, ten per rifle, though I honestly doubt those savage bastards can even count that high.

11

EXT. POND'S BAY CAMP - DAY

11

SUMNER follows CAVENDISH, carrying a rifle, as he walks towards the ELDER INUK who is stuffing a pipe with some tobacco.

CAVENDISH

Where did he get baccy?

SUMNER

I don't think we're the first whalers they've met.

CAVENDISH shows the HUNTERS the gun. It is already loaded with a cartridge and he hands the rifle to the ELDER INUK to shoot off. The ELDER INUK blasts it into the air.

CAVENDISH

That there's a good weapon.

(CONTINUED)

11

CONTINUED:

11

CAVENDISH raises his hands in the air to make a gesture of ten with his fingers. He then points to the tent and makes the same feeding gesture as before. He then raises one finger and points to the rifle in the ELDER INUK's hand.

The ELDER INUK says nothing. He turns and speaks to the YOUNGER INUK in Inuktitut. He then raises five fingers (not ten) and points to the tent. He raises one finger and points to the rifle.

Annoyed, CAVENDISH steps towards them and raises all of his ten fingers again.

CAVENDISH

I won't be jewed down by no
fucking Esquimaux.

The ELDER INUK frowns, displeased, and takes a few steps closer to CAVENDISH. He pushes down five of his fingers, and then one more.

SUMNER

(whispering)
Shit.

CAVENDISH laughs scornfully.

CAVENDISH

Four seals for a rifle?! What kind
of cunt do you think I am?

SUMNER

If they leave us now, we'll starve
to death.

CAVENDISH

We'll survive without them.

SUMNER

No, we won't.

The HUNTERS look back at them indifferently. The ELDER INUK raises four fingers to clarify their final offer, and then holds out the rifle as if prepared to give it back.

(CONTINUED)

11

CONTINUED: (2)

11

CAVENDISH looks at the rifle steadily but doesn't reach for it -- a stand-off. CAVENDISH shakes his head and then spits onto the ground before heading back to the tent.

CAVENDISH

Ice-gouging niggers.

12

EXT. POND'S BAY CAMP - DAY

12

Smoking a pipe and sitting on a rock, DRAX watches the HUNTERS erect a small tent, fifty yards away from the camp. This TUPIK is made entirely of seal skin. The men then return to their kayaks and head back out to hunt.

13

EXT. POND'S BAY CAMP - DUSK

13

DRAX watches from the edge of the tent as the HUNTERS unship two dead seals. He walks towards the men finding them surprisingly lively despite the day of hunting.

DRAX

You got two nice fat-looking ones there. I can help you butcher them if you like.

They point at DRAX, laughing at his chains. DRAX laughs with them, rattling his chains, which only makes them laugh louder.

DRAX

Them fucks in there don't trust me, see. They think I'm dangerous.

He makes a distended, monster face and claws the air to illustrate his meaning. The INUIT HUNTERS laugh louder. DRAX reaches down and takes one of the dead seals by the tail.

DRAX

Let me butcher this one for you.

DRAX makes a cutting gesture along its belly.

DRAX

I can do it easy.

(CONTINUED)

13

CONTINUED:

13

They shake their heads and wave him off. The ELDER takes a knife, leans down, and quickly cuts open the seal. He leaves the giblets, purple, pink and grey, steaming on the ground.

DRAX can smell the freshness of the meat as they start to butcher the animal. His mouth starts to drool, licking his lips in anticipation.

DRAX

I'll haul that over for you if you'd like.

Ignoring him, the YOUNGER INUK takes some of the meat and the blubber over to the tent. Meanwhile, the ELDER INUK starts picking through the giblets to find the liver. He slices off a good-sized piece and eats it raw.

The ELDER looks up and grins -- his teeth and lips red with blood. He cuts off another piece and offers it to DRAX who takes it without thought.

DRX

I've eaten worse in my day. Plenty worse.

DRAX chews it once and then swallows, smiling. The ELDER laughs. When the YOUNGER INUK returns, they confer for a while before he pulls out a severed eyeball from the giblets. He pierces it with the point of a knife and sucks out the inner jelly. They both look at DRAX and grin.

DRAX

I've eaten eyeballs before; an eyeball's an easy picking.

The ELDER finds the other eyeball, pierces it as before, and gives it to DRAX. He sucks out the juice, and puts the rest of the eyeball in his mouth. He chews it and swallows it down.

The INUIT HUNTERS laugh wildly as DRAX opens his mouth wide, sticking out his tongue to show that it is truly gone.

(CONTINUED)

EPISODE 4

11.

13

CONTINUED: (2)

13

DRAX

I'll gobble down anything you give
me, any fucking thing at all --
brains, bollocks, arseholes. I int
fussy.

The ELDER points to DRAX's chains again, growls and craws
the air.

DRAX

Aye, that's about the size of it
right here.

14

EXT. POND'S BAY CAMP - NIGHT

14

The black sky is now dense with stars and the Borealis
unfurls like a vast and multicoloured murmuration in the
sky.

15

EXT. POND'S BAY CAMP - PRE DAWN

15

With everyone asleep, DRAX walks to the HUNTERS tent. He
crawls inside without invitation.

16

INT. TUPIK - DAWN

16

DRAX, sitting cross-legged, offers the HUNTERS tobacco
which they accept gratefully. In return, they give him
some frozen seal liver which he chews like a piece of
jerky.

The HUNTERS begin to talk, the ELDER telling stories to
the YOUNGER. DRAX cannot understand -- but he watches
closely.

Slowly, he begins to understand what he must do next, the
future gradually revealing itself. DRAX tunes out the
harmonic clatter of their voices and in the silence that
remains, a small smile appears on his face.

17

EXT. POND'S BAY CAMP - DAY

17

From far above, we see the camp on the shore of the bay. The larger floes on the sea have joined together to create a solid mass. There are still some channels of water but it won't be long now until they are locked in until spring.

18

EXT. POND'S BAY CAMP - DAY

18

There is snow on the ground now, thicker than the dusting before. CAVENDISH raises five fingers to indicate that they want five more seals from the HUNTERS. The ELDER shakes his heads and points in the direction in which they came.

SUMNER

They want to go home.

CAVENDISH

They can't.

SUMNER

The sea is freezing. If they don't leave now they'll be stuck.

CAVENDISH lifts his fingers again but the ELDER waves his rifle back at them and points west.

ELDER

Utterpok. No trade.

CAVENDISH shakes his head, softly cursing.

SUMNER

We have enough meat and blubber to last us a month. So long as they come back before the supply runs out, we can survive. They can come back with dogs.

CAVENDISH

How about the old bastard goes, and the other one stays with us. If they go off together, we can't be sure they're ever coming back.

(CONTINUED)

18

CONTINUED:

18

SUMNER

Don't threaten them. If you press too hard, they'll be gone for sure.

CAVENDISH

They may have that one rifle but they hant got no balls or powder for it yet so I reckon I can threaten the bastards all I like.

CAVENDISH points at the YOUNGER INUK and then at their tent.

CAVENDISH

He stays here.

(then pointing at the
ELDER INUK)

You can fuck off.

CAVENDISH gestures out to the ever-freezing sea. The ELDER shakes his head, smiling ruefully, finding the suggestion both foolish and embarrassing.

ELDER

No trade. Utterpok.

Unafraid, they turn away and walk towards their tent. As they do, CAVENDISH reaches into his pocket and takes out a cartridge.

SUMNER

You think killing them will change their minds?

CAVENDISH

I ain't killing anyone yet; I'm just aiming to get a little more attention, that's all.

SUMNER

(with force)
Put down the fucking gun.

The HUNTERS are busy taking down their tent when SUMNER walks over to them.

(CONTINUED)

18

CONTINUED: (2)

18

SUMNER

I have something for you. See here.

SUMNER digs into his breast pocket and takes out the looted Indian ring. He pauses a beat and then hands it to the ELDER INUK. CAVENDISH approaches from behind.

CAVENDISH

What use do they have for your stolen jewels? If you can't eat it, or burn it, or fuck it, it ain't much use out here.

SUMNER

They can trade it with other whalers. They're not so stupid.

The ELDER examines the ring. SUMNER raises all ten of his fingers (for ten seals) and then points at the ring. As the HUNTERS talk among themselves, the YOUNGER INUK takes the ring and licks it twice.

CAVENDISH

(laughing)

The daft bastard thinks it's marzipan.

They look at the ring for a while longer, turning it over several times -- it looks almost unearthly in the flat arctic light, a relic from a different world.

The ELDER INUK nods and gives the ring to the YOUNGER who tucks it down into his britches. CAVENDISH applauds the deal and pats SUMNER on the back before leaving.

CAVENDISH

It seems your criminal endeavours have paid off.

SUMNER, now alone, places his hand on the pocket where his ring was kept. He feels lighter somehow as if a space has appeared inside him.

From back outside the tent, we see SUMNER out on shore, the near frozen sea behind him. He is being watched from this vantage point by DRAX.

19

INT. POND'S BAY CAMP - NIGHT

19

DRAX sits in the corner of the tent, still in chains and wrapped in a blanket. He passes the time scrimshawing a crude image of *Britannia* into a fragment of walrus ivory.

He stops and looks up for CAVENDISH, beckoning him over. CAVENDISH approaches and lowers himself onto the rug-covered floor.

CAVENDISH

Is that Britannia? You're a surprising bastard, I'll give you that, Henry Drax.

(then)

What do you want?

DRAX

Remember that time we talked about. That time we both thought might never happen.

CAVENDISH

I remember it well enough.

DRAX

Then I'spect you can more-less guess what I'm about to tell you.

CAVENDISH

That time hant come -- it can't have, not out here.

DRAX

It has Michael.

CAVENDISH

Bollocks to that.

DRAX

When the old Esquimaux leaves in the morrow, he'll take me with him. It's all agreed between us. All I need from you is a file to cut these chains off, that and a quick glance the other way.

(CONTINUED)

19

CONTINUED:

19

CAVENDISH

You'd rather live as a Yak than an honest Englishman? Or at least an Irishman.

DRAX

I'll winter over with them if they let me, and come spring I'll look out for a ship.

CAVENDISH

Bound for where?

DRAX

New Bedford, Sebastopol. You won't see sign of me again. I'll swear to that, at least.

CAVENDISH

We're all of us trapped here now. Why should I help you alone to escape?

DRAX

You're only keeping me alive and breathing so they can hang me later on. Where's the sense or reason in that? Let me take my chances with the Yaks -- the savage bastards may stick a lance in me, but if they do, there's no man here'll mourn my passing much.

CAVENDISH

I'm a whaleman, not a jailer -- that's true enough.

DRAX nods.

DRAX

Think on it -- it's one less mouth to feed, and when you get back to England there'll be no blame attached. You and Baxter can go about your business without no trouble from me.

(MORE)

(CONTINUED)

19

CONTINUED: (2)

19

DRAX (CONT'D)

You can even take my share for
giving you a helping hand.

CAVENDISH

You're an evil, filthy, conniving
bastard, Henry and I 'spect you
always were one.

DRAX

(shrugging)

Maybe, but if I am what you call
me -- why would you want such a
fiend living so close amongst you
when you have the God-given chance
to cut him free?

CAVENDISH stands up and walks away. DRAX goes back to his
carving in the glow of a weak blubber lamp. He can barely
see what he is doing, but he feels the shallow lines of
the engraving with his finger like a blind man might.

CAVENDISH soon returns and crouches beside DRAX. He shows
him a metal file, hidden under his jacket; it's an inch
wide and at one end there is a blunt spike. He pushes it
underneath DRAX's blanket.

CAVENDISH

You can't use it inside the tent,
the others will hear you.

DRAX

The seal meat don't agree with me
none. I'll be in and out all the
night shitting, I'spect.

CAVENDISH

I've been thinking.

DRAX

Oh aye.

CAVENDISH

What if I come along with you.

DRAX sniffs and shakes his head.

(CONTINUED)

19

CONTINUED: (3)

19

DRAX

It's safer here.

CAVENDISH

We can't all winter through alive.
Seven men? It ain't possible.

DRAX

One or two might die, but I'd say
you won't be one of them.

CAVENDISH

I'd sooner take my chances with
the Yaks like you are.

DRAX shakes his head again.

DRAX

That ain't the agreement I made.
It's me alone.

CAVENDISH

Then I'll make my own agreement,
separate like, why not?DRAX turns the ivory over in his hand, feels it's shallow
indentations with his thumb.

DRAX

You'll do best to stay.

CAVENDISH

Nay, I'll be coming with. And that
there file's my ticket out.

DRAX

Ye always was a bold and
blusterous fucker, Michael.

CAVENDISH

You'd thought to get one over on
me, I'spect, but you won't do it.
I ain't staying here to die with
these others. I got bigger plans.

20 **EXT. POND'S BAY CAMP - NIGHT** 20

DRAX squats down behind the canvas of the tent to protect him from the howling wind and the falling snow. He takes out the file and starts to work at his chains.

21 **INT. POND'S BAY CAMP - DAWN** 21

DRAX, his beard now covered with ice, is finally free. As he enters the tent, he seems larger, stronger. As if he's been asleep and is now awake.

He picks his way through the sleeping bodies, groaning and cursing, until he reaches CAVENDISH. He leans down and whispers into his ear.

DRAX
Get ready but wait for my whistle.
Don't come 'til you hear it.

DRAX ties his clothing into a bundle with a cord and on his way out of the tent, pauses to look down at SUMNER, deep asleep. He leans down and watches him for a long and peculiar beat before leaving.

22 **EXT. POND'S BAY CAMP - DAWN** 22

Pale light glows on the horizon as DRAX walks towards the tent. He lowers to his hands and knees and crawls inside.

23 **INT. TUPIK - DAWN** 23

Despite DRAX's presence, the HUNTERS do not wake. They sleep with their heads towards the door so DRAX is now kneeling behind them.

He sniffs the air and reaches out, touching the surface of the furs and hides, gently pushing down until there is an answering moan from the ELDER INUK.

Before he can say a word, DRAX drives the spiked but blunted end of the file into the ELDER's neck just below the ear. There is a spurt of blood and a noise between a gargle and a gasp.

23

CONTINUED:

23

The YOUNGER INUK is now awake, terrified. DRAX turns and punches him twice in the face before he throttles him. It is soon over.

DRAX pulls off the furs that warm the YOUNGER INUK and he searches for the ring in his britches. He finds the ring and lifts it up to the morning light before dropping it into his own pocket.

24

EXT. POND'S BAY CAMP - MORNING

24

The sun has risen. The camp is silent. Now carrying a bundle of furs and the Inuits blubber knife, DRAX walks towards the kayaks when he hears CAVENDISH's footsteps behind him.

DRAX

I hant whistled you yet.

CAVENDISH

I ain't waiting for no whistle.

DRAX

The case is altered.

CAVENDISH

Altered?

DRAX

Yes.

CAVENDISH

How so?

DRAX

I have to show you something.

CAVENDISH

Show me what?

DRAX keeps walking a more few paces before he puts down the bundle of furs on the ground.

CAVENDISH

What is it?

DRAX

What do you see?

(CONTINUED)

24

CONTINUED:

24

CAVENDISH pauses and shakes his head.

CAVENDISH

What the fuck I meant to be
looking at?

DRAX

Open them up. You'll see.

As CAVENDISH leans down to take a closer look, DRAX grabs him by the hair. He yanks CAVENDISH's chin upwards and cuts through his windpipe with a single slice of the blubber knife.

CAVENDISH, rendered suddenly mute, grasps his gaping neck with both hands as if hoping to reseal it. He drops to his knees, choking.

He shuffles forward, jerking, rasping, blood flowing from the wound. He topples, falls on his back, staring up at DRAX. He shudders, confused and terrified. DRAX looks down at him...

DRAX

This weren't my idea, Michael.
This one was yours alone.

CAVENDISH stops moving and his hands fall to his side, blood seeping into the dirty snow beneath him.

25

EXT. POND'S BAY CAMP - DAY

25

CAVENDISH's corpse lays spread-eagled on the snow, frozen hard, his throat gashed, blood spread outwards in a halo of red. SUMNER stands alongside the COOK, WEBSTER and a nervous MCKENDRICK.

SUMNER

Cavendish must have helped him cut through the chains.

COOK

He deserves this then, the stupid fuck.

OTTO approaches from the Inuit tent.

(CONTINUED)

EPISODE 4

25

CONTINUED:

22.

25

OTTO

Drax killed the Esquimaux too.

WEBSTER

What do we do now? What do we eat
without any seals?

COOK

We get hungry. Unless we fancy a
cooking our Mr Cavendish here in a
tasty stew.

MCKENDRICK

Why would Drax kill both them
Esquimaux? Why not steal their
kayaks and flee?

OTTO

Maybe he wanted something they
had.

SUMNER automatically touches his breast pocket where the
ring had been. His anger is at breaking point -- but he
desperately tries to keep it in.

WEBSTER

What shall we do with this idiot?

OTTO

We bury him.

26

EXT POND'S BAY CAMP - DAY

26

The sky is snow-laden and heavy. CAVENDISH's body is laid
in a scooped-out trench a short distance away from the
camp and covered with slabs of rock.

SUMNER

What do we do with the Esquimaux?

OTTO

They are heathens. I don't know
their funeral rites, if indeed
they have any. We should leave
them were we found them.

27

INT. POND'S BAY CAMP - DAY

27

OTTO leads a prayer with his eyes closed. MCKENDRICK and WEBSTER kneel and bow their heads while the COOK sits cross-legged, picking at himself like an ape.

OTTO

Lord help us understand Your purpose and Your mercy, preserve us from the grave sin of despair.

SUMNER stands near the entrance to the tent as snow falls outside, smoking what little tobacco he has left.

OTTO

Let us not give in to evil but give us faith in the workings of Your Providence even in this time of confusion and suffering.

SUMNER watches the blubber lamp burning in the centre of the tent, black smoke twisting up, causing meltwater to drip from the canvas on to the floor.

OTTO

Let us remember that Your Love created this world and Your Love sustains it still at every moment.

MCKENDRICK, still on his knees and trembling, starts to softly weep as WEBSTER coughs loudly and spits onto the ground

OTTO

Help us remember always that we are a part of Your greater mystery, that You are never absent, that even if we fail to see You, or if we mistake Your presence for some other lesser thing, You are still there with us. Thank you, Lord, Amen.

(CONTINUED)

27

CONTINUED:

27

The amens come back to him in a ragged, grumbling chorus. SUMNER says nothing and as OTTO opens his eyes, he looks around as if surprised at where he finds himself. WEBSTER stares at him with angry, bitter eagerness.

WEBSTER

We've had the Devil hisself living here amongst us. I seen his footprints out there in the snow. The cloven hoof, the mark of Satan. I seen it clear as day.

MCKENDRICK

I seen it too. Like the tracks of a pig or a goat, 'cept there int no pigs or goats alive in this forsaken fucking hole.

OTTO

There are no such tracks, no marks at all. The only Devil is the one inside ourselves.

MCKENDRICK

That Drax is Satan taken on a fleshly form. He int human like you and me, he just looks that way when he chooses to.

OTTO

Henry Drax is not the devil. He's a tormented spirit. I've seen him in my dreams. I've spoken to him many times.

COOK

There's three dead men outside I'd weigh against your fucking dreams.

OTTO

Whatever he may be, he's gone now.

MCKENDRICK

Aye, but where's he gone? And who says he won't be coming back?

(CONTINUED)

27

CONTINUED: (2)

27

The possibility of DRAX's return sets the three men into a desperate commotion. OTTO tries to quiet them, but they ignore him.

WEBSTER

We can find the Yak's camp and they can take us down to the Yankee whaling station on Blacklead Island. We'll be safe there.

OTTO

You don't know where the Yak camp is or how far distant.

WEBSTER

It's away off to the west somewhere. If we follow the shoreline, we'll find it soon enough.

OTTO

You will not find it.

COOK

I've had my fill of taking other men's advertisements. We followed orders since we left Hull, and it's that has brought us to this sorry fucking pass.

OTTO looks over to SUMNER for help.

SUMNER

You'll have no tent.

MCKENDRICK

We'll take the Esquimaux's. They don't need it anymore.

SUMNER

There are no tracks of any kind here, no landmarks any of us can recognise.

MCKENDRICK starts gathering his possessions. His face is stiff and pale, his movements jerky and enraged.

(CONTINUED)

27

CONTINUED: (3)

27

MCKENDRICK

Those as want to stay in this
accursed place can stay but I int
staying an hour longer here.

WEBSTER and the COOK do the same.

OTTO

Have dinner tonight at the least.
Leave at first light if you must.

The COOK raises his fists.

COOK

You're a decent man, Otto, but I
will knock you down if you stand
in my fucking way.

OTTO looks at SUMNER, but there is nothing to be done to
save the men from their foolishness.

28

EXT. POND'S BAY CAMP - DUSK

28

The dead and frozen hunters are dragged out of the Tupik
and left on the ground. MCKENDRICK and WEBSTER pack up
the tent.

OTTO hands the men them their share of what is left of
the seal meat. SUMNER gives the COOK a rifle and some
cartridges.

They shake hands quickly, neither party attempting to
soften the dread implications of leaving. MCKENDRICK
turns to SUMNER.

MCKENDRICK

They int too many men who would
stick up for a fellow like me --
so thank you.

SUMNER

Good luck.

As they walk away along the shore away from the camp,
OTTO comes to join SUMNER.

(CONTINUED)

28

CONTINUED:

28

SUMNER

If Henry Drax is not the Devil, I can't claim to know just what he is. If there's a word coined for a man like him, I don't believe I've learned it.

OTTO

Nor will you learn it, not from any human book, at least. A fellow like him won't be caged in or fixed by words.

SUMNER

By what then?

OTTO

Faith alone.

SUMNER laughs unhappily.

SUMNER

You dreamt we'd die, and now it's coming true. It's getting colder every day, and we have three weeks food at the most. The sea is frozen solid and we have no hope of help or rescue. Those bastards are as good as dead already.

OTTO

Miracles occur. If great evil exists, why not great good the same?

SUMNER

Signs and fucking wonders. Is that the best that you can offer me?

OTTO

I don't offer you anything. Not any more.

SUMNER cannot stand to go back into the tent. He turns and walks up to the headland.

29

EXT. POND'S BAY HEADLAND - TWILIGHT

29

The wind is bitter as SUMNER walks to the tip of the headland to see the bay now frozen, the sea-ice cracked by winds, buckled, and then re-frozen into a rubbed landscape of crazed blocks.

SUMNER sees the tiny figures of the men vanishing into the cold gloom and suddenly he cannot breathe. His sweat is frozen solid on his brow, his beard hard with saliva. He tries to scream but no sound comes out.

30

INT. POND'S BAY CAMP - NIGHT

30

A fierce gale has hit the camp again. SUMNER and OTTO lie close to each-other for comfort and warmth as the canvas of the tent lashes wildly around them.

SUMNER

We need food.

OTTO

Once the weather passes, we can go hunt.

SUMNER

What about a bear? Can we eat a bear?

OTTO

Yes. But not the liver. The liver will kill you.

SUMNER

I might have a plan.

31

INT. POND'S BAY CAMP - DAY

31

The weather has calmed. SUMNER sits on one side of the tent with the loaded rifle at his feet. He peers through a spy-hole cut into the canvas.

(CONTINUED)

31

CONTINUED:

31

Through the hole, he watches a rook fly down and settle on the forehead of the dead YOUNGER INUK whose body has been dragged to the front of the tent. The bird pecks at him briefly before flying away.

32

INT. POND'S BAY CAMP - NIGHT

32

It is OTTO's turn to keep watch, and he sits patiently with the rifle. Behind him, SUMNER holds a cube of seal meat over the weak flame of a blubber lamp.

33

INT/EXT. POND'S BAY CAMP - DAWN

33

OTTO nudges SUMNER awake. There is ice on the outside of his blanket.

OTTO

There's no sign.

SUMNER takes the rifle from OTTO. He shuffles to the spy-hole. He looks outside to see the two bodies lying under a bright moon.

As he stares into the darkness, he almost instantly falls asleep, a small smile appearing on his ragged face as he hears the sound of a summer morning -- a warm breeze and gentle birdsong.

Then something wakes him. SUMNER looks through the spy-hole to catch some movement in the distance. It is the BEAR -- glowing white in the moonlight as it approaches the camp.

SUMNER quietly checks the percussion cap and cocks the rifle. He pushes the tent flap open and raises the gun partway up his shoulder.

SUMNER kneels down and rests his left elbow on his knee. He presses the rifle stock into the softness of his right shoulder and raises the sight.

The BEAR looks up towards him and their eyes lock for a brief moment. SUMNER breathes in and shoots, the silence broken by the explosion of the rifle. He misses.

(CONTINUED)

33

CONTINUED:

33

SUMNER grabs the extra cartridges and runs to the edge of the bay to see the BEAR a few hundred meters ahead, running through the jagged fissures of sea ice.

Back in the entrance to the tent, OTTO watches. SUMNER turns towards him for a short beat, smiles and then heads out across the ice to follow the bear.

We remain with OTTO as he closes the flaps of the tent and sits alone by the light of a fading blubber lamp. He knows what is in his future now. And as much as can, he accepts it.

34

EXT. FROZEN BAY - DAWN

34

SUMNER heads away from the island following the BEAR. He loads his gun as he struggles over the rough and uneven ice.

He comes to the edge of the bay, the jagged ice now flat stretching into the distance. SUMNER looks out over the vast frozen ocean as the BEAR slows and stops. It turns toward SUMNER.

SUMNER raises his gun and looks down the barrel. But he does not shoot. He lowers the gun and stares at the BEAR. The animal snorts once and then walks away.

Squinting from the light, SUMNER puts on his sunglasses. He looks behind him at the camp no more than a smudge, and then heads out to follow the bear.

35

EXT. FROZEN SEA - DAY

35

SUMNER tracks the BEAR across the expanse of sea ice. The terrain is tough and the wind picks up.

SUMNER's breaths are shallow, the air is bitter. His feet are heavy. His legs throb. He remembers a passage from HOMER which he recites as if telling himself a prayer.

SUMNER

The gods have lured me on to my destruction. My doom has come upon me;

(MORE)

(CONTINUED)

35

CONTINUED:

35

SUMNER (CONT'D)

let me not then die ingloriously
and without a struggle, but let me
first do some great thing that
shall be told among men hereafter.

But there is no end to the struggle across the ice. The BEAR stays in sight, not any closer, not any further away. It's as if the two of them are linked as the world turn and twists around him.

36

EXT. FROZEN SEA - DAY

36

SUMNER slows down and strains to see the BEAR on the edge of the horizon as the weather starts to turn like a mist of ice crystals.

He takes off his glasses for a better view but the animal seems to vanish and then re-appear, contort and stretch on the horizon like a fata morgana.

All of a sudden, the bear seems to charge towards him. He lifts the rifle and aims, terrified but determined. Only it is no longer a bear...

It is a FLOCK OF BIRDS flying into the sky as if it is the bear taking flight. SUMNER follows the birds up and overhead but he does not shoot.

Once they are gone, he looks back for the BEAR but it is nowhere to be seen. He is alone on the ice. He screams out with all the strength he has left, his howls echoing across the ice.

37

EXT. FROZEN SEA - DUSK

37

The conditions are worsening, the arctic light now so flat that there is little sense of where the land ends and the sky begins.

SUMNER is lost in a world of white. His face is frozen, ice covering his clothes. He strains to search through the haze but the bear is nowhere to be seen.

Nearing complete exhaustion, SUMNER drops to his knees. He is lost, bewildered, his failure complete. He breaks down with sobbing howls that no-one can hear.

(CONTINUED)

Then suddenly, he senses the BEAR again. Or is it the BEAR at all? Is it DRAX's laugh he hears carried on the wind. SUMNER stumbles to his feet and staggers through the obscure light.

SUMNER

Come on out, come on out here you
bastard, and let me shoot you
dead.

SUMNER peers blindly forward and yells again.

SUMNER

Come out here! Come out here and
let me kill you!

Then, like an apparition behind him, the BEAR re-appears. It is less than ten yards away looking blankly at SUMNER; steam leaking from its nostrils.

SUMNER slowly turns towards it. He raises the rifle and takes an unsteady aim at the BEAR's chest. Despite the howling wind, SUMNER's head is clear. There is nothing left to consider.

SUMNER breathes in and pulls the trigger. He hears the powder catch and roar. He feels the power of the recoil. And then he is still. Watching as snow starts to fall and whip around him.

SUMNER drops the rifle and stumbles across the ice to find the BEAR lying on its side bleeding heavily.

SUMNER crouches down and puts both palms on its warm flank. He pushes his face deep into the fur as the breathing of the animal slowly comes to a stop.

SUMNER takes the blubber knife from his belt and makes an incision near the groin. He cuts up through the flesh of the belly until he meets the sternum.

SUMNER hacks through centre of the ribcage until reaching the throat. He jams his boot heel against one side of the severed rib cage, and gripping the other with both hands, he breaks it open.

37

CONTINUED: (2)

37

SUMNER feels the sudden heat of the bear's organs, and pushes both hands down into its belly, deeper and deeper into the warmth. When he pulls his arms out they are dripping red. He rubs his face with the hot blood.

SUMNER pulls out the BEAR's innards, tugging out the lungs, the liver, the intestines. The deep cavity that remains is half filled with a steaming pool of hot black liquid.

SUMNER leans forward and starts to drink, ladling it into his mouth with both hands. As he drinks, his body begins to twitch and tremble, spasming without control.

Finally, SUMNER pushes himself into the body of the BEAR, inside the cavity. He pulls the ragged fur and flesh around him like an overcoat.

It covers him as if he's been swallowed by the BEAR. As if he has *become* the BEAR. Enclosed in this coffin of darkness, SUMNER tries to speak but all that emerges are the grunts of a savage.

And soon there is nothing but silence. Darkness. Then, very gradually and unbeknownst to SUMNER, there is the faint sound of footsteps approaching on the ice.

All of a sudden, two mitten hands reach down and open the corpse of the BEAR. SUMNER lets out a scream, a howl of resistance, a desperate cry to be left alone. But the hands ignore him, dragging him, without his consent, back into the cruel world.

38

EXT. SEA ICE - DAY

38

SUMNER travels across the ice. His face is caked with blood. He opens his eyes and looks at the sky moving above him.

39

EXT. MISSION - DAY

39

Through the cabin window we see SUMNER taken from the sled. We pull back to find someone watching in the foreground. We can hear him breathing.

39

CONTINUED:

39

Outside now -- we are with SUMNER as he is carried over the shoulder towards the cabin. The dogs yap wildly as SUMNER opens his eyes.

SUMNER can hear DRAX in his head -- a rising whisper chanting the words *HOMO HOMINI LUPUS* like something from a nightmare.

We follow him as SUMNER screams and shouts, begs to be let free. The door to the cabin opens, and he is taken inside. We can still hear SUMNER shouting as the door is slammed shut.

We stay outside with the wind and the yap of the dogs dropping away until there is nothing but silence.

40

INT. MISSION CABIN - NIGHT

40

SUMNER is laid out on a cot near the stove as the PRIEST and ANNA cover him with blankets. The PRIEST crouches down and tries to shake him awake.

PRIEST (O.O.V)

You lay there and rest, whoever you are.

41

EXT. SEA ICE - NIGHT

41

As the camera PULLS BACK we stay on the cabin with its glowing windows in the background.

END CREDITS ROLL OVER THE PICTURE