

# THEODORE sc 1

20.

EXT. TOLK HOUSE - DUSK

Theodore Tolk walks towards his station wagon. Other Kveld-Ulf are already in their cars. Theodore gives a sad-but-brave smile to a cousin as he fobs his car unlocked.

MINA

Uncle Theo!

Theodore turns. Mina runs across the lawn, waving.

THEODORE TOLK

Mina. You okay, darling?

MINA

Grammy wants to talk to you.

INT. TOLK HOUSE, VILHELMIINA'S ROOM - DUSK

Vilhelmiina is propped up in bed, entirely human, all signs of dementia gone; she just look tired.

Theodore edges alone through the door, softly knocking.

VILHELMIINA

Theodore, love. I hate a man who stands in a doorway. Come in and close it, I'm not made of glass.

THEODORE TOLK

You okay, Mom?

She tilts her head and looks at him curiously, as if the question was ridiculous. Theodore closes the door.

VILHELMIINA

Was there a party?

THEODORE TOLK

Sorry?

VILHELMIINA

There were so many people here.

THEODORE TOLK

They're worried about you. They love you.

VILHELMIINA

Nobody needs to worry about me. I'll bury all of you.

Start →

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THEODORE TOLK  
I hope you'll at least get help  
digging.

VILHELMIINA  
Tell me about your business, Theo.

THEODORE TOLK  
Oh. It's fine. There's always  
contracting work. We're waiting to  
see what Carol and the Union manage  
about the bridge contracts...

VILHELMIINA  
I meant *your* business. Your Russian  
friends.  
(Theo blinks, uncertain)  
You think a mother wouldn't know?

THEODORE TOLK  
Oh. That... was just a temporary  
measure. You can't deal with large  
scale garbage hauling in the borough  
without the Russians. I wouldn't call  
them friends.

VILHELMIINA  
I never turn away a useful friend.  
(smiles)  
You remember Lina Holmlund.

THEODORE TOLK  
Great aunt Lina? I never met her.

VILHELMIINA  
She died young. She was supposed to  
be next Den Mother. When *I* took it.  
She was closer in blood, but a  
Laerling, too young. A year from her  
Bleed-In. *Young like Carol is young.*

Theodore watches her closely; there's something here.

VILHELMIINA (cont'd)  
I was fifty years old, full-blooded.  
The heads of the families wanted to  
wait for Lina to come of age. But I  
was hungry, and I had friends.

THEODORE TOLK  
I never knew that.

VILHELMIINA

It's not polite conversation.

(leans in--)

There are times that practicalities  
overshadow tradition. When blood  
needs shit, Voluspa...

Her tongue moves thickly over her lips, eyes sliding aside.  
Theodore puts a hand on hers.

THEODORE TOLK

Mom...

VILHELMIINA

It has to be you. You're the only one  
I trust. Do you understand me?  
*It has to be you.*

THEODORE TOLK

(shocked)

That's not possible. We've always  
been lead by women.

VILHELMIINA

*It has to be you.*

end

INT. CREAN HOUSE, KITCHEN - NIGHT

Beth Crean pours a boiling pot of pasta through a strainer,  
steam blossoming. She's a comfortably attractive mid-40's.

A door SHUTS off-screen and John Crean enters, looking beat.

BETH CREAN

You're home early.

JOHN CREAN

I need cheering up. Only night this  
week I get to eat dinner with my wife  
I'm gonna make a point of it. We  
still got that Dago Red?

John Crean dumps his shit and throws his jacket on a chair,  
grabs a bottle of wine from on top of the fridge.

BETH CREAN

It's a busy week?

JOHN CREAN

I'll have to work some off-hours.

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FINN  
But it's yours?

MARTIN LEVY  
Legally it's mine. My ex-wife has it.  
If I get into it with lawyers and  
courts and shit, I'm out thousands of  
dollars and weeks of my life and not  
even sure I'll get the car. You know?

FINN  
You for real, man?

Martin pulls an envelope from his back pocket and lifts the  
flap so Finn can see the pile of CASH inside.

MARTIN LEVY  
Thousand bucks up front. A thousand  
more when the car's in my drive. That  
Mercedes means a lot to me.

Finn looks at the cash, near-salivating.

EXT. QUEEN RESTAURANT, COURT STREET - NIGHT

Establishing. 1960's Italian, all the shutters drawn.

INT. QUEEN RESTAURANT - NIGHT

Dinner's just over. Carol, seated at a table between Mina  
and William. The restaurant is filled with about fifty  
KVELD-ULF, the heads of the families.

CAROL  
Vilhelmiina should be here. They have  
to know she supports me.

WILLIAM  
She's not well enough. That's why  
you're taking control. This is your  
night.

He squeezes her hand and she nods, gets in character, then  
stands up. William TAPS his glass with a knife.

The Kveld-Ulf stop their conversations and look up from  
their ports and espressos. Carol stands.

Start →

CAROL  
Thank you all for coming tonight. I  
wish it was under better circumstances.

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Various Kveld-Ulf nod. Among them-- THEODORE.

CAROL (cont'd)

~~I spent the morning with Vilhelmiina.~~  
~~She's had such a life, has such a~~  
~~large spirit. But she's no longer the~~  
~~woman I've known for... since the day~~  
~~she delivered me. For five years now~~  
~~I've handled Union relations for the~~  
~~families. Five of the most successful~~  
~~years we've ever had.~~ We may be in a  
 rough patch now, but I've never been  
 shy about reminding the City how much  
 it owes the Kveld-Ulf, the Charter  
 our forefathers drew with this  
 nation's founders. As of...

THEODORE TOLK

Here, here.

He raises a glass and toasts Carol. A kind gesture, but it  
 throws her off rhythm. She waits while everybody drinks.

CAROL

As of tonight, I'll be handling all  
 family decisions. ~~At the new moon~~  
~~we'll gather and make official the~~  
~~transfer to Den Mother. Brooklyn has~~  
~~been our home for three centuries. We~~  
~~laid its foundation with our teeth~~  
~~and blood, to make the city across~~  
~~the river great. There are~~  
~~indignities of the Charter we suffer~~  
~~because of our strength. Because we~~  
~~are feared by the weak. But change is~~  
 at the heart of what we are. And we  
 are at the heart of this city. It's  
 time we start acting like it.

She raises her glass for another toast, but Theodore stands.

THEODORE TOLK

I agree.

CAROL

Excuse me?

THEODORE TOLK

This afternoon, your daughter brought  
 me to Vilhelmiina's bedside.

Carol looks at Mina, confused, on the edge of betrayed.

THEODORE TOLK (cont'd)  
 Vilhelmiina told me to take control  
 of the families.

A bomb. Shocked silence.

CAROL  
 ...That's ridiculous. I mean you're  
 not a woman. Our entire tradition--

THEODORE TOLK  
 I know, we've never had a Den Father  
 before. But Vilhelmiina gave me her  
 blessing.

CAROL  
 She told me I was to be Den Mother.  
 This morning.

Theodore looks at her like it's a little sad.

CAROL (cont'd)  
 She did.

THEODORE TOLK  
 All I'm asking for is a vote. This is  
 America. We murdered ourselves a  
 place in this country, we might as  
 well act like we live here.

CAROL  
 This isn't up for discussion.

THEODORE TOLK  
 I remember somebody saying something  
 about *change*.

CAROL  
 No. Absolutely not....

Carol starts stalking towards him, pissed. Theodore stands  
 his ground. Other Kveld-Ulf start getting to their feet.

THEODORE TOLK  
 I'm blood. I've as much a hand in the  
 community as you, and been twice as  
 involved in business.

CAROL  
 You... Having money doesn't give you  
 the right to piss on our history.

THEODORE TOLK  
 You're losing the bridge contract. If  
 you can't handle even that, how can  
 we expect...

Carol gets in Theodore's face, shoves him.

CAROL  
 There's not going to be a vote.

A woman, CINDY TOLK, puts a hand on Carol's arm.

CINDY TOLK  
 Easy, Carol. All he's saying...

Carol LASHES OUT at her.

CAROL  
 No! He's...

THEODORE TOLK  
 Hey!

Theodore comes to Cindy's aid, grabbing Carol's arms.

Carol SNARLS and throws Theodore off, her eyes going wolf,  
 skin SPLITTING, blood running down her cheeks.

Theodore GROWLS and bones CRACK and stretch in his face,  
 muzzle stretching over his teeth.

And two beasts lunge at each other, fanged and clawed,  
 transforming further as they tear and snap at each other.

Everybody jumps up, knocking aside chairs and tables,  
 grabbing at Carol and Theodore, trying to hold them back.

EXT. THE QUEEN RESTAURANT - CONTINUOUS

The restaurant's vertical blinds are closed, and against the  
 noise of the city street, there's no sign of the ruckus.

Jill Wilson, parked in her car with the window open, drinks  
 a canned diet milk shake. Motion catches her eye-- a blind  
 brushed aside, a glimpse of furious motion behind the glass.

Jill gets out of the car and moves towards the window. She  
 peers between the blinds, sees just enough--

JILL WILSON  
 Oh boy.

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