

# JUDAH/RUBEN

INT. THRONE ROOM - DAY

The place is packed with the Elders of the tribes of Israel. Saul is on the throne. Ahinoam stands behind him, and a little to his left.

The ELDER OF RUBEN and the ELDER OF JUDAH, at the front of the crowd, are both particularly surly, but no one in this meeting is very happy.

SAUL

Achish thinks to frighten us with this foolish display of might. But I know this man. He has no stomach for battle.

RUBEN

He has thirty thousand! And your army is woefully depleted by your needless attack on the Amalekites.

SAUL

It was God's will that we--

RUBEN

And now God's will is no longer with you! The prophet proclaimed it for all to hear! Saul has offended God!

The entire chamber erupts at this. Saul stands, furious, and Ahinoam steps forward.

AHINOAM

Saul is God's chosen king!  
For how many years. He has led wisely and well. And this is how you repay him?

(louder now)

Because I did not hear god say,  
betray your king!

RUBEN

(insistent)

The prophet said--

AHINOAM

The prophet is not here to explain himself. But Saul is here.  
Protecting all of us.

RUBEN

The Philistines have no argument  
with the house of Judah.

SAUL

The Philistines are not arguing  
with Anyone! They are invading!  
Make no mistake. Our great king  
will meet with Achish and he will  
try to avert this catastrophe.

EXT. PALACE - DAY

Ahinoam, at the entryway of the palace. There are soldiers  
everywhere, getting ready to move to the front lines. It is  
controlled chaos. Judah joins her. She glances over at him.

AHINOAM

When the tribes of Israel prepare  
for war, they are impressive.

JUDAH

The eleven tribes together do not  
equal the might of Judah.

AHINOAM

Your men are fierce, it is true.

JUDAH

It is also true that there are ten  
thousand of them.

AHINOAM

Yes.

JUDAH

If our forces join, you are still  
outnumbered. If we do not join,  
you and your bloodline are wiped  
from the face of this earth. Some  
would say that's as it should be.

That pisses her off but she suspects this is going somewhere.

AHINOAM

And you?

JUDAH

My son came to Gibeah to marry your  
daughter, and Saul sent him to his  
death.

Ahinoam nods, serious.

AHINOAM

When war is upon us, men die.  
Mittayahu was a great loss. But  
you also have a daughter.

JUDAH

I do.

AHINOAM

She is a beautiful girl. Jonathan  
is quite taken with her.

JUDAH

Is he?

They see him, crossing the square.

JUDAH (CONT'D)

Let's hope he comes back.

Ahinoam smiles at him, a slight bow. She goes inside.

INT. PALACE BANQUET - NIGHT

She heads across the room leaving Saul, in his cups and  
bragging to the Elder of Judah and the Elder of Ruben.

SAUL

I told Achish, bring your carnage.  
We will fight to the death of every  
man woman and child.

RUBEN

You are rather free with the lives  
of our families.

SAUL

It will not come to that.

RUBEN

You know this, how?

SAUL

I know it because I know him. If  
conquest is easy, he will take it.  
If he has to work for it? He hasn't  
the stomach.

RUBEN

And we are to trust your word.

SAUL

(getting testy)

You are to trust my sword. You  
have in the past. My friend, drink  
enjoy the festivities, we are here  
to celebrate.

RUBEN

Yes of course. I apologize.