



HIGHLANDER

The Series

#96509
THE MESSENGER

Written by
David Tynan

Highlander

"THE MESSENGER"

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Production #96509

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Filmline International Highlander

HIGHLANDER

"The Messenger"

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CAST LIST

DUNCAN MACLEOD
RICHIE RYAN
JOE DAWSON
METHOS

MESSENGER
WILLIAM CULBRAITH

HARRY THE BOAT GUY
JEFFREY
HICKSON

GREENWALL
CONFEDERATE SOLDIER
SAD SOUTHERN VOICE (V.O.)

HIGHLANDER

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SET LISTINTERIORS

MACLEOD'S LOFT

DOJO

/OFFICE

JOE'S

BOATHOUSE

CULBRAITH'S QUARTERS - ANDERSONVILLE PRISON - 1864

CULBRAITH'S HOUSE OVER THE WATER

CHURCH

EXTERIORS

DOJO

JOE'S

CITY STREET

DOCKS

ANDERSONVILLE PRISON - 1864

MESSENGER'S SEASIDE COTTAGE

/GARDEN

/BEACH NEARBY

CHURCH

WOODS - GEORGIA - 1964

HIGHLANDER

"The Messenger"

TEASER

FADE IN:

901 EXT. CITY STREET - NIGHT

901

A BIKE whines down a dark street, pulls to a curb. RICHIE props the kickstand and gets off, starts to move away -- then he gets the BUZZ. He looks around. There's no sign of the other Immortal, but they're close, he can feel it.

He draws his sword and moves warily along the street, senses on edge, pausing at shadows and darkened stoops. His sense of danger is growing. He hears his heart pounding in his ears, until it drowns out everything else. As he passes an ALLEYWAY and continues --

A DARK FIGURE slides into view behind him.

Richie feels the presence. He whirls around, sword up, bracing for an attack -- but what he hears is a calm voice with an air of quiet strength.

RICHIE

I'm Richie Ryan.

MESSENGER

Don't be afraid, Richie Ryan.

Who the hell does this guy think he is? Richie smells a trick, maneuvers to meet the expected charge.

RICHIE

(pumped)

What makes you think I'm scared?

MESSENGER

You're holding your sword.

There's gentle reproof in the tone. Richie snorts, takes a better grip on his sword.

RICHIE

You got that right, Einstein.

MESSENGER

But all I want to do is talk.

RICHIE

What about? The weather?

(MORE)

(CONTINUED)

RICHIE (CONT'D)

Shaq's game?

(beat)

Or what you're gonna do with my head?

The Immortal steps into the light: he's tall, bearded, with intelligent eyes and a gentle, regal composure. Later we come to call him Messenger, but for now he has no name.

MESSENGER

Peace.

The word hangs in the air, simple and surprising.

RICHIE

Good line, pal... but no dice.

MESSENGER

I swear you're in no danger. I stopped taking heads a long time ago.

He opens his coat, revealing that he has no sword.

MESSENGER (CONT'D)

I'm not armed.

Richie edges back, not sure whether the guy is crazy, or setting him up.

RICHIE

Everyone carries a sword. Everyone takes heads... we fight or we die.

MESSENGER

That's what you were taught...

(beat)

What if you could stop fighting?

(intense)

Imagine it!

(beat)

What if all Immortals could live in peace? Real, eternal peace? Think about it, Richie Ryan, and dream.

His voice is earnest, compelling, but Richie doesn't seem to buy it. He raises his sword.

RICHIE

Who are you?

MESSENGER

The oldest of us still left alive.

(beat)

I am Methos.

(CONTINUED)

901 CONTINUED: (2)

901

And as Richie stares, the Messenger kneels before him, raises his head so his neck is bared, open to attack. He looks into Richie's face.

MESSENGER (CONT'D)

It's up to you. You can have my head... or you can listen to what I have to say.

Richie's blade still looms over the Messenger as we --

FADE OUT.

END TEASER

ACT ONE

FADE IN:

902 EXT. DOCKS - DAY

902

A waterside area, with various BOATHOUSES and repair sheds. Moored along the dock is a large, older SAILBOAT.

MacLeod is on the deck, looking over the boat while HARRY, a crusty, grizzled Walter Brennan type sailor he's dealt with before, looks on. MacLeod checks some rigging, then swings back onto the dock beside Harry.

HARRY

Thought your friend was comin'.

MacLeod shrugs, picks up a rag.

MACLEOD

Richie gets here when he gets here.

He wipes his hands with a rag as Harry re-tamps his pipe. They look at the boat a BEAT.

MACLEOD (CONT'D)

You were right, Harry. She's got good lines... but she needs a major re-fit.

Harry nods affably, starts lighting his pipe.

HARRY

Yep.

MACLEOD

Could have some rot below the waterline. Engine's taken salt. New rigging all 'round...

(beat)

She's not worth fifty-thousand, Harry. Not even forty.

HARRY

(agreeably)

Nope.

MacLeod looks at him, piqued.

MACLEOD

So why didn't you tell me that over the phone?

HARRY

Because... she'll go for twenty.

(CONTINUED)

902 CONTINUED:

902

He smiles craftily.

MACLEOD

You old fart.

He breaks into a slow smile, then gets the BUZZ. He turns, expecting Richie, but his face goes cold as he sees --

WILLIAM CULBRAITH

thirtyish, a hard-faced immortal with a long scar down one cheek. Culbraith gives a curt nod of recognition, then he lifts his blade and points to a nearby BOATHOUSE. The invitation is clear: follow and fight.

MacLeod reacts... he will need no urging.

HARRY

So, you want her?

MACLEOD

We'll talk later.

MACLEOD

drops the rag and moves after Culbraith, his face hard with anger: whoever this guy is, MacLeod wants to take him out. As MacLeod steps into the BOATHOUSE --

TRANSITION TO:

902A EXT. WOODS - GEORGIA - 1864 - DAY

902A

MacLeod and JEFFREY, a recently freed slave, are running through the woods.

ANOTHER ANGLE

A Confederate PATROL is moving through the trees, on the alert.

MACLEOD AND JEFFREY

splash through a stream. Jeffrey stumbles and MacLeod slows.

MACLEOD

Let's stop a minute.

Jeffrey comes to a stop, breathing hard, resting hands on thighs as he recovers from the run.

MacLeod is winded as well. He takes a swig from his canteen, offers it to Jeffrey. Jeffrey is reaching for it when

(CONTINUED)

902A CONTINUED:

902A

MACLEOD

reacts to the sound of a branch breaking.

TWO CONFEDERATE SOLDIERS

step out from behind the trees nearby, guns leveled at MacLeod and Jeffrey.

JEFFREY

raises his hands slowly.

JEFFREY (CONT'D)

You got us.

CONFEDERATE

You bet we do.

He cocks his rifle to fire. Jeffrey's eyes widen in fear. MACLEOD reaches for his pistol. The Confederate Soldier swings his rifle toward MacLeod -- as he expected -- but:

JEFFREY

NO!

JEFFREY

rushes in front of MacLeod. He takes the bullet in the leg. He goes down hard as

TWO MORE CONFEDERATE SOLDIERS

emerge from cover. MacLeod and Jeffrey are surrounded.

MACLEOD

crouches over Jeffrey, stemming the blood, his gun forgotten on the ground beside him. A soldier prods him with a rifle barrel.

CONFEDERATE

On your feet.

MACLEOD

That bullet shattered his leg. He can't walk!

CONFEDERATE

Then you're gonna carry him.

He points MacLeod's pistol at Jeffrey's head.

CONFEDERATE (CONT'D)

Or he's staying here.

(CONTINUED)

902A CONTINUED: (2)

902A

MacLeod helps Jeffrey up.

903 EXT. ANDERSONVILLE PRISON - 1864 - DAY

903

A wooden stockade, with high walls, and a fenced off HUT at one end. Through the FORT GATES, several UNION PRISONERS are marched at bayonet-point by thin, predatory CONFEDERATE GUARDS. The new arrivals are mostly intact: uniformed and disciplined, with some walking wounded. Among them --

MacLeod, wearing civvies, helps JEFFREY, a young ex-slave. Jeffrey has a stained bandana tied around a leg wound, and he limps painfully.

JEFFREY

We don't belong in here, Mr. MacLeod.
We ain't even soldiers.

MACLEOD

We'll be okay, Jeffrey. Just stay close. I'm gonna take care of you.

Jeffrey is too slow, and HICKSON, a tough Confederate Sergeant with a handlebar moustache, prods him.

MACLEOD (CONT'D)

Let him be. Can't you see he's wounded?

HICKSON

You ride with the devil, you fry with the devil.

(beat)

Now get goin'.

(re Jeffrey)

And tell the slave he better hurry.

He gestures with his gun, and they move up to join the rest of the soldiers, who are stopped in a line, staring in stunned silence at the sight before them. GREENWELL, the Union Sargeant, removes his cap.

GREENWELL

Sweet Jesus.

A tattered horde of UNION PRISONERS shoe-horned into the stockade. Uniforms frayed or non-existent. Some on crutches, limbless, wearing filthy bandages.

Gaunt faces, untrimmed hair and beards.

MEN

squabble over a scrap of maggot-ridden bread a dog wouldn't touch.

(CONTINUED)

903 CONTINUED:

903

Hickson grins at the new arrivals.

HICKSON

Welcome to Hell, boys.

He salutes mockingly, and the Guards move off. As the soldiers stand there, some rattier long-time inmates approach the newcomers. One INMATE runs a hand hungrily down Jeffrey's arm.

Jeffrey throws a stricken look at MacLeod. MacLeod grabs the man's arm, shoves him stumbling back into the dirt.

Greenwell is staring at the prisoners, sickened.

GREENWELL

God help me. These are Union soldiers.

MACLEOD

They were.

Greenwell grabs the Inmate, drags him to his feet.

GREENWELL

Who's in charge of this hell-hole?

Before anyone can speak -- BANG -- a GUARD fires his gun in the air, and SILENCE instantly blankets the stockade. Every eye turns to the HUT, fixed on the door there.

MACLEOD

I believe we're about to find out.

MacLeod feels the BUZZ, and a moment later --

CULBRAITH

a Confederate Colonel, steps out onto the porch. He surveys the rabble before him with almost a look of dread.

The prisoners freeze, watching him in utter silence: the cold eyes, the scarred face. Feeling the BUZZ, Culbraith's eyes rake the crowd -- linger briefly on MacLeod -- then move on. He addresses the camp in a grave voice. What he's about to do gives him no pleasure.

CULBRAITH (CONT'D)

I have warned you. There is no escape from Andersonville prison. It is futile. It is suicidal. To those who try and to others.

(beat)

What I do now is on your head, not mine.

(CONTINUED)

903 CONTINUED: (2)

903

He nods to the Hickson, on one side of the stockade, where three guards drag four ragged UNION PRISONERS before the stockade wall.

CULBRAITH (CONT'D)

You know the rules -- one man tries to escape, he and three others die.

A shocked MURMUR from the assembled prisoners.

CULBRAITH (CONT'D)

SILENCE!

(beat)

It's a harsh lesson, but it is one you have forced me to teach.

He nods his head. Hickson raises his arm: the GUARDS level their rifles, prepare to fire at the prisoners.

MACLEOD

surges forward.

MACLEOD

You can't! This is murder!

Culbraith freezes, raises a hand -- stalling the execution. MacLeod holds Culbraith's eyes.

CULBRAITH

No one can question my authority here.

(to a Guard)

Bring him to my quarters.

The GUARD drives a rifle butt into MacLeod's head. MacLeod goes down in a heap. Culbraith turns on his heel and steps inside, leaving MacLeod lying there.

904 INT. CULBRAITH'S QUARTERS - 1864 - LATER

904

Culbraith is at his writing desk, looking at a picture. CLOSE ON a black and white tintype of a pretty Southern woman and her two daughters. Then

PULL BACK

to find the windows overlooking the stockade and the prisoners, as MacLeod is brought in by Hickson and two Guards.

Culbraith continues writing.

CULBRAITH

Thank you, Sergeant.

(CONTINUED)

Hickson salutes and leaves. Culbraith puts his quill aside and regards MacLeod.

CULBRAITH (CONT'D)
Colonel William Everett Culbraith.
(beat)
Have a seat, sir.

MACLEOD
Duncan MacLeod.
(beat)
And I'll stand.

Culbraith stands and examines MacLeod.

CULBRAITH
I hear you're an abolitionist,
MacLeod.
(beat)
It may surprise you that I, too,
share certain ill feelings about the
institution of slavery. In fact, on
my farm outside Atlanta, my wife and
I have no slaves of our own.

MACLEOD
No, but you have Andersonville.

CULBRAITH
I take it you don't approve of my
prison.

MACLEOD
This is no prison, Culbraith. It's
a slaughterhouse.

CULBRAITH
(with great distaste)
It's all slaughter, isn't it? What
we do. What they do.
(beat)
I've seen more death in this war
than I have in a dozen lifetimes.
(beat)
I grow sick of the war. Ours and
theirs.
(beat)
But I am a soldier, sir, and I have
my orders.

MACLEOD
Orders. Do your orders tell you to
treat those men like animals?

CULBRAITH

If they are animals, it is because
of the way they treat each other.
No discipline, no honor. They kill
one another for a crust of bread.

MACLEOD

(with passion)
Because they're starving.
(with reason)
Those men are soldiers. They deserve
respect.

CULBRAITH

(with passion)
These soldiers are destroying the
South. My South.
(resigned)
The truth is, I have no food to give
them. These are hard times. My own
guards are on half rations. What
would you have me do?

MACLEOD

For a start, I'd show mercy to the
men you're about to have killed.

CULBRAITH

(beat)
I can't afford mercy.

Culbraith goes to the window, his face full of regret.

CULBRAITH (CONT'D)

When one escape goes unpunished,
discipline breaks down. Without
discipline, we descend into chaos.
(hard)
And I will not suffer chaos under my
command.

He raises his hand, his white handkerchief in it, prepares
to signal the firing squad.

MACLEOD'S POV - THROUGH WINDOW - THE FIRING SQUAD

The firing squad takes aim at the prisoners.

MACLEOD

Killing them won't stop them from
trying to escape!

Culbraith lowers his hand.

(CONTINUED)

904 CONTINUED: (3)

904

THE FIRING SQUAD

SHOOTS -- and the prisoners crumple like rag dolls.

Silence follows the blast of the rifles.

RESUME - MACLEOD AND CULBRAITH

MacLeod takes a step towards him. Instantly Culbraith's sword is out, at MacLeod's neck.

CULBRAITH

I don't enjoy killing, MacLeod, but
I will if you make me.

And OFF this, Guards enter and take MacLeod's arms. They drag him out, still holding Culbraith's eyes.

TRANSITION TO:

905 INT. BOATHOUSE - THE PRESENT - DAY

905

MacLeod and Culbraith are in mid-battle, fighting around the boathouse, neither asking or giving quarter. Then Culbraith slips on the decking, goes down MacLeod wounds him in the side. Culbraith goes to his knees. MacLeod raises his sword for the final blow. He's about to swing -- and they both get the BUZZ. MacLeod hesitates but only for a moment. He starts to bring the sword down

RICHIE

MAC! NO!

MACLEOD

is thrown, half-turns to Richie --

Culbraith sees his chance. He rolls aside -- grabs his sword -- and keeps rolling OFF the walkway into the water. MacLeod scrambles to the edge to look after him:

Nothing. Bubbles, a ripple -- he's gone. MacLeod looks at Richie in fury, then storms out.

906 EXT. DOCKS - CONTINUOUS

906

MacLeod moves along the docks, pissed, Richie trying to catch up.

RICHIE

Mac, would you give me a chance to
explain!

(CONTINUED)

MACLEOD

What's to explain? Because of you
that murdering bastard is still alive.

RICHIE

I know.

The calm way he says this stops MacLeod. He stares at Richie.

MACLEOD

You wanted Culbraith to live? Do
you have any idea what he is?

RICHIE

It doesn't matter. It has to stop.

MacLeod stares at Richie like he's flipped.

MACLEOD

What has to stop?

RICHIE

All of it. The fighting, taking
heads, dying... It's time to end
it, Mac.

(beat)

We can end it.

MacLeod sees the light of conviction in Richie's eyes.

MACLEOD

Because you say so?

He starts to walk away.

RICHIE

Just hear me out! Someone taught
you to kill, right? Someone taught
that to him... and someone before
that.

MACLEOD

Because that's the way it is.

RICHIE

Why is that the way it is?

(beat)

I'm talking about peace, Mac. All
of us, living in peace.

MACLEOD

It can't happen.

RICHIE

Why?

(CONTINUED)

906 CONTINUED: (2)

906

MACLEOD

Because of men like Culbraith.

His eyes fall on a TAR POT where someone is heating tar to patch a hull. And OFF the flames --

TRANSITION TO:

907 EXT. ANDERSONVILLE PRISON - 1864 - NIGHT

907

A small FIRE near makeshift tents. MacLeod and Jeffrey are with Greenwell and a few Soldiers. Jeffrey lies on a blanket, shivering and sweating as MacLeod prepares to look at his leg. He puts on a brave front.

MACLEOD

It's going to hurt, Jeffrey.

JEFFREY

You go ahead, Mr. MacLeod. You do what you have to.

As MacLeod works, Jeffrey prattles on out of nervousness.

JEFFREY (CONT'D)

Tell me again how my Sarah looked.

MACLEOD

Beautiful, Jeffrey, but you know that.

JEFFREY

And she's waiting for me.

(beat)

We're gonna get married.

(beat)

Gonna name our first-born Duncan.

(beat)

If it's a boy.

MACLEOD

I'd be honored.

MacLeod rips open Jeffrey's pant leg, revealing the wound -- and tries to hide his reaction. It's as bad as it gets. Jeffrey looks at MacLeod hopefully.

JEFFREY

How is it? It's better, ain't it?

MacLeod covers up the leg.

MACLEOD

I'm sorry, Jeffrey.

(MORE)

(CONTINUED)

907 CONTINUED:

907

MACLEOD (CONT'D)

(beat)

It's the gangrene.

Jeffrey stares, then shakes his head in denial.

JEFFREY

It can't be. I feel better, Mr. MacLeod. The leg don't hurt any more...

MACLEOD

The nerves are dead.

(harder)

Jeffrey, the leg's got to come off. If it doesn't, it'll spread. You'll die.

Jeffrey closes his eyes, shaking his head.

MACLEOD (CONT'D)

It's not the end. You'll live... You'll still have children.

JEFFREY

Just won't be able to run no races with 'em.

He manages a weak smile. The kid has heart.

MACLEOD

Keep still. I'm going after a doctor.

He stands and heads off into the dark. Greenwell looks at Jeffrey and shakes his head.

908 INT. CULBRAITH'S QUARTERS - 1864 - LATER - NIGHT

908

Culbraith stands by his desk. MacLeod stands before him, Hickson and a Guard eyeing him, weapons at the ready.

CULBRAITH

Gangrene.

(beat)

Your friend should have stayed on the plantation.

MACLEOD

If the leg comes off now, he'll live.

CULBRAITH

I'm afraid my surgeon is occupied. We have wounded of our own.

(CONTINUED)

908 CONTINUED:

908

(beat)
He'll have to wait.

MACLEOD
If he waits, he'll die.

CULBRAITH
I didn't put him in harm's way, you did.

MACLEOD
(beat)
Colonel, he's only a boy, a scared boy.

CULBRAITH
They're all scared boys.
(beat)
I'll do what I can. If my surgeon's available, I'll send him in the morning.

He returns to his desk and starts writing. And OFF MacLeod's reaction --

909 EXT. ANDERSONVILLE PRISON - 1864 - LATER - NIGHT

909

Jeffrey looks worse than before. MacLeod settles on the ground beside him and wipes his forehead.

JEFFREY
I didn't figure he'd come.

MACLEOD
You have to hold on, Jeffrey. 'Til tomorrow morning.

JEFFREY
I can wait. It's not like I'm real anxious to see him.

He manages a weak smile, and coughs. MacLeod gives him a sip of water from a canteen. Jeffrey sighs and settle back.

JEFFREY (CONT'D)
Mr. MacLeod? Thank you.

MACLEOD
For what? I'm the one who got you into this.

JEFFREY
I may be a prisoner, but I'm not a slave.

(CONTINUED)

909 CONTINUED:

909

MACLEOD

(beat)

Get some rest, Jeffrey.

Jeffrey closes his eyes. MacLeod stays awake, looking up at the night sky. And OFF this --

910 INT. CULBRAITH'S QUARTERS - ANDERSONVILLE - 1864 - MORNING 910

Culbraith is getting dressed as Hickson enters and stands at attention at the door. He has a dispatch.

HICKSON

I beg your pardon, sir, but the courier said it was urgent. It's from your brother-in-law.

CULBRAITH

Very well, Sergeant, come in.

Culbraith reads the dispatch silently to himself. As he reads, his face is covered with despair.

SAD SOUTHERN VOICE (V.O.)

Dear Colonel, Georgia is burning from Atlanta to the sea. Thousands have died. It grieves me to tell you this, but your wife... my sister... and the children...

A voice interrupts.

MACLEOD (O.S.)

Colonel Culbraith.

Culbraith says nothing. His face hardens into a mask that is beyond pain, beyond hate.

MACLEOD

stands in the doorway under the watchful eye of a couple of Confederate soldiers.

MACLEOD (CONT'D)

I've come about the surgeon.

CULBRAITH

Your request is denied.

MACLEOD

(incredulous)

What?

(beat)

You said he'd be tended to today!

(CONTINUED)

910 CONTINUED:

910

CULBRAITH

That'll be all.

MACLEOD

Dammit, the man is dying in agony.

CULBRAITH

Agony is what war is about, Mr. MacLeod.

He starts to turn away. MacLeod gets in his face.

MACLEOD

At least give me a knife! Let me try to save him!

He puts out his hand, desperate, pleading.

MACLEOD (CONT'D)

Please.

Culbraith looks at the hand a BEAT. But the letter has turned his heart to stone.

CULBRAITH

You've had your answer.

Culbraith nods to the guards. They level their rifles, back MacLeod out of the hut.

911 EXT. ANDERSONVILLE PRISON - DAY

911

As MacLeod moves back to Jeffrey, sits beside him. Jeffrey is breathing hard, bathed in sweat.

MACLEOD

I'm sorry.

It's all he can say. Jeffrey closes his eyes in anguish, knowing the doctor isn't coming, that there's no hope.

JEFFREY

You tried. You did what you could.

MacLeod cradles Jeffrey, holding his head up, wipes his fevered brow.

MACLEOD

It wasn't enough.

Jeffrey winces, the poisoned flesh burning through his body like a hot poker.

JEFFREY

It hurts, Mr. MacLeod! God, it hurts!

(CONTINUED)

911 CONTINUED:

911

MACLEOD

(torn)
I know.

JEFFREY

(a whisper)
Then make it stop.

MacLeod cradles Jeffrey's head, his eyes welling up.

MACLEOD

(anguished)
There's nothing I can do.

JEFFREY

(a whisper)
Please, I don't want to die like
this.

MACLEOD

Jeffrey... I can't.

JEFFREY

Mr. MacLeod.
(beat)
You have to.

MacLeod looks up and sees --

CULBRAITH

standing at the hut, hands behind his back, watching him
coldly.

MacLeod locks eyes with him. On his face, sorrow for what
he has to do -- and hate for Culbraith for making him do it.
He talks through his tears.

MACLEOD

Look at the sky, Jeffrey.

Jeffrey's fevered eyes lift up, see it -- and gleam with
light. MacLeod's eyes are still on Culbraith.

JEFFREY

God bless you, sir.

MacLeod suddenly WRENCHES hard -- and breaks Jeffrey's neck.
Jeffrey flinches once -- then lies still in his arms, all
pain flooding from his body forever.

Still staring at Culbraith, MacLeod closes Jeffrey's eyes.

(CONTINUED)

911 CONTINUED: (2) 911

Culbraith shows no expression. He turns and steps back into the hut.

TRANSITION TO:

912 INT. DOJO - THE PRESENT - DAY 912

MacLeod and Richie are entering, Richie still trying to make his argument.

RICHIE

Maybe Culbraith thought he had to do it. You don't know what made him like that.

MACLEOD

You're right.
(beat)
And I don't care.

RICHIE

Maybe if you talked to him, you'd understand each other. You'd find a reason not to fight!

MACLEOD

I don't need to talk to him.
(beat)
Some people are evil, Richie. Not bad, not misunderstood... just evil.
(tight)
You don't reason with evil. You kill it.

RICHIE

But evil only exists because of fear. That's what Methos is talking about!

MacLeod stops, turns and stares at him.

MACLEOD

Methos?
(beat)
You've been talking to Methos?

RICHIE

I thought he was just a legend. The oldest Immortal alive... Then he shows up out of nowhere.

MACLEOD

(tight)
And feeds you this crock about peace and love.

(CONTINUED)

912 CONTINUED:

912

RICHIE

It's no crock. Mac, we sat up talking all night. The guy's got this wisdom, this strength...

(beat)

It was like listening to some kind of saint.

MACLEOD

He's no saint. And I don't care how old he is, he's wrong.

RICHIE

Have you heard a word I said? This is a chance to change our lives! To live without being afraid!

MACLEOD

Without a head.

Richie sees he's getting nowhere, flares in frustration.

RICHIE

Sometimes I don't get you, Mac.

(beat)

I don't get you at all.

He turns and walks out. MacLeod starts for the elevator, angrily slams the door down and slaps the button.

913 INT. MACLEOD'S LOFT - DAY - CONTINUOUS

913

The elevator stops. MacLeod lifts the door -- and stops. He's getting the BUZZ. He quietly pulls his sword, enters the loft to find

METHOS

the real one, flopped on the couch with his stocking feet propped on the table, revealing TOES wiggling through rips in his socks, beer in hand. On the floor beside him, a well-worn internal-frame pack, and badly worn hiking boots. (NOTE: Methos no longer wears the Watcher tattoo.)

MacLeod lowers his sword, not smiling.

METHOS

Thought I'd make myself at home.

(taking a sip)

There's some cold ones in the fridge.

MACLEOD

I know. It's my fridge.

(MORE)

(CONTINUED)

913 CONTINUED:

913

MACLEOD (CONT'D)

(beat)
I thought you were out wandering the world.

METHOS

Tibet.
(shrugs)
Yak-butter was hell on the digestion.

Methos takes a sip of beer, and wiggles his toes.

METHOS (CONT'D)

Besides, I had all the enlightenment I could use.

MACLEOD

Too bad you didn't keep it to yourself.

Methos sees he's pissed, does a doubletake.

METHOS

Guess I dozed off somewhere along the line. What are we talking about?

MACLEOD

I'm talking about the crap you've been handing Richie.

METHOS

Ah.
(beat)
Which crap was that, exactly?

MACLEOD

You know damn well. Stopping fighting, laying down your sword... "give peace a chance." Sound familiar?

Methos stares a BEAT, puts the beer down.

METHOS

So. He's here.

MacLeod stares.

MACLEOD

Who's here?

METHOS

Me.
(beat)
The other Methos.

(CONTINUED)

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913 CONTINUED: (2)

913

And OFF MacLeod's look --

FADE OUT.

END OF ACT ONE

ACT TWO

FADE IN:

914 INT. MACLEOD'S LOFT - DAY

914

Methos is at the counter, a leather awl in his hand, fixing a tear in his boots as MacLeod looks on.

METHOS

I never actually met the guy. I just heard rumors about him. He's been going around, spreading his message to other Immortals.

MACLEOD

(pointed)

Using your name.

METHOS

It's not like I took out a patent or anything.

MACLEOD

Sounds like this guy's started a franchise.

(beat)

This line about peace and love... what's he after?

METHOS

Maybe exactly what he says.

MACLEOD

Come on. Turning the other cheek only gets you slapped twice.

METHOS

Still, it has a nice ring. No fighting, no killing, peace and harmony... Tell me you haven't fantasized about it yourself.

(beat)

Some young suckers are sure to fall for it.

MACLEOD

Richie's seen the light.

METHOS

Voila.

MACLEOD

He won't listen to me. He thinks the guy is some kind of prophet.

(CONTINUED)

914 CONTINUED:

914

METHOS

Who's to say he's wrong?

MACLEOD

You are. The man is a fraud!

METHOS

Look, enough people want my head because of who I am. If he wants to play "Methos," I say let him.

MACLEOD

And if he gets killed doing it?

METHOS

Then nobody's going to be looking for me.

(beat)

They say imitation is the sincerest form of flattery.

He holds up the boots.

METHOS (CONT'D)

What happened to honest craftsmanship?
I only put a thousand miles on these babies.

MacLeod pushes the boots aside.

MACLEOD

At least talk to Richie. Convince him the guy's a fake.

METHOS

What makes you think he'll listen to me?

MACLEOD

Because...

(beat)

You'll be so damn sincere.

His smile says he won't take no for an answer. Methos sighs.

METHOS

I left Katmandu for this.

And OFF this --

915 EXT. JOE'S - DAY - ESTABLISHING

915

RICHIE (O.S.)

You're putting me on, right? This is some kinda joke.

916 INT. JOE'S - DAY

916

Richie faces Methos, as MacLeod and Dawson look on. Methos tries to look uninvested in the outcome.

MACLEOD

I'm afraid not.

Richie looks from Methos, to MacLeod and Dawson.

RICHIE

This guy isn't Methos. He's Adam Pierson.

METHOS

I was for a while.

(beat)

I gave it up.

RICHIE

I mean, look at him. He's way too...

METHOS

Yes... ?

RICHIE

Ordinary.

Methos looks at MacLeod.

METHOS

(shrugs)

Maybe I should grow a beard.

He starts away. MacLeod pulls him back. Richie looks to Dawson for help.

RICHIE

Help me out, Joe. I mean, five-thousand years of wisdom? Him?

DAWSON

I dunno about the wisdom part...

(beat)

But five-thousand's about right.

Richie stares. He's starting to feel on shaky ground.

MACLEOD

I know how you feel, Richie, but what you see is what you get.

(beat)

This is the real Methos.

(CONTINUED)

RICHIE

Are you sure?

(beat)

I mean, that's what HE said. How do you know it's true?

BEAT. MacLeod and Dawson trade looks.

DAWSON

He's got a point, Mac.

MacLeod looks to Methos, expecting him to launch into a convincing speech. Instead, Methos shrugs.

METHOS

I did my part.

(to MacLeod)

You did yours.

(re Richie)

And he's gonna believe what he wants to.

RICHIE

Don't you get it? It doesn't matter.

(beat)

This Methos, that Methos...

(beat)

It's not the name I care about, Mac... it's the message I believe in.

MacLeod flares in frustration.

MACLEOD

The message is wrong and it's going to get you killed.

(beat)

Richie, you just met him. What he's saying goes against everything we know. Why would you believe him?

RICHIE

Because he offered me his life. Why would he do that?

MACLEOD

Maybe he's afraid to fight.

METHOS

Or maybe he knew you wouldn't take it.

RICHIE

(with sarcasm)

Right.

(CONTINUED)

METHOS

It worked.

RICHIE

He didn't know it would.

METHOS

(to MacLeod)

There's one born every minute.

Richie shakes his head, almost pitying the others.

RICHIE

I don't get this. I mean, this is a chance for peace... a chance to end the killing forever.

He looks directly at MacLeod.

RICHIE (CONT'D)

Of all the people in the world, I thought you'd understand.

He turns and leaves. There's an awkward silence.

DAWSON

He's young, Mac. Young people make mistakes.

METHOS

Look at disco.

There's a beat. MacLeod doesn't answer. Then, abruptly --

MACLEOD

See you later.

(beat)

I've got someone to find.

He turns and starts out.

DAWSON

I'll check out this other "Methos."
Maybe something will turn up.

Dawson heads to the back room. Methos stands there alone.

Wasn't all this about him?

METHOS

I think I'll go buy some socks.

917 OMITTED 917

918 INT. CULBRAITH'S HOUSE OVER THE WATER - DAY 918

Culbraith is on the deck, looking out to sea. He gets a BUZZ, he turns.

It's the "other Methos." He approaches slowly, hands raised.

CULBRAITH
Who the hell are you?

MESSENGER
My name is Methos.

Culbraith reacts to the name. A myth has come to life.

CULBRAITH
You're not real.

MESSENGER
I think I am.

Culbraith reaches for his sword.

CULBRAITH
And now you're looking for me?

Messenger smiles.

MESSENGER
Yes... but not for the reason you think.

He opens his coat to show he is unarmed.

MESSENGER (CONT'D)
I carry no sword.

CULBRAITH
Then you're a fool.

He steps closer. Messenger doesn't move to defend himself.

MESSENGER
(beat)
If you kill me, we won't be able to talk.

Culbraith pauses, eyes him suspiciously.

CULBRAITH
There's nothing to talk about.

(CONTINUED)

MESSENGER

There's you.

(beat)

What you are... what you were...
why you feel as you do.

CULBRAITH

You don't know a damn thing about
me.

MESSENGER

I know others who've known you.
They say William Culbraith was a
soldier

(beat)

They say you lost your loved ones.

Culbraith is thrown by this.

CULBRAITH

(an edge)

Everyone has.

MESSENGER

Does it make it less painful? Make
the scars any easier to bear?

(beat)

Your home was destroyed by the Union
army. Your family killed... your
wife violated.

Culbraith stares at him, lowers his sword.

CULBRAITH

Sherman's March.

(distant)

They were hiding in a church when
the Union soldiers found them. I
had told them about holy ground.
They thought they were safe.

(beat)

They burned the church with them in
it.

MESSENGER

You wanted to weep, but you couldn't.
You wanted to raise them up, hear
them laugh again... but they were
gone forever.

(beat)

So you went out to kill.

CULBRAITH

(remembering)

As many as I could.

(CONTINUED)

MESSENGER

But it didn't stop the pain.

Culbraith shakes his head, numb.

MESSENGER (CONT'D)

So you kept killing... until you
couldn't remember their faces. Your
wife, the children... they were
gone.

CULBRAITH

(welling up)

I tried. Jesus, I tried... but I
couldn't.

MESSENGER

I know your pain, William. And I
know how to end it.

He places a hand on Culbraith's shoulder. Culbraith closes
his eyes in pain. Then --

THE BUZZ. Culbraith tries to recover, picking up his sword
as

The door BURSTS open -- MacLeod stands there, sword out,
ready to fight.

MACLEOD

I'm Duncan MacLeod of the Clan
MacLeod.

Messenger raises his arms.

MESSENGER

This doesn't have to be.

(beat)

Please, put up your sword.

MacLeod takes in Messenger.

MACLEOD

So you're the new prophet.

(beat)

We'll talk about it afterwards.

He moves in, but Messenger steps before him.

MESSENGER

Whatever he did to you, he did out
of pain. Because of what others had
done to him.

(MORE)

(CONTINUED)

MESSENGER (CONT'D)

(beat)

But it can stop here. You can stop it.

MACLEOD

I will. When he's dead.

MESSENGER

Is that what Darius taught you?

MacLeod stares at him, thunderstruck.

MESSENGER (CONT'D)

Yes, I knew Darius. I know what he tried to do for you. How much he loved you.

(beat)

Would he be proud of this?

TRANSITION TO:

FLASHBACK - 1815/1816 - CLIPS FROM "BAND OF BROTHERS"

MacLeod meets Darius on the battle field. Darius tries to tell him an Immortal's place is not in mortal wars.

MacLeod leaves for the new world, telling Darius that he can't be like him.

TRANSITION TO:

Messenger faces MacLeod.

MESSENGER

When Darius asked you to consider peace, you listened to him. You tried.

MACLEOD

You're not Darius.

MESSENGER

I carry the same message.

MACLEOD

Why do you think Darius lived on Holy Ground? You don't make peace by throwing away your sword.

MESSENGER

I have.

(CONTINUED)

MACLEOD

(beat)

Even if you convince a thousand to follow you, it only takes one to start the killing.

(beat)

Just one.

MESSENGER

Will you be that one, MacLeod? The one who wouldn't consider peace?

MacLeod looks at Culbraith, sees the anguish in the man's eyes. He hesitates.

THE MESSENGER

steps in front of Culbraith.

MESSENGER

If you would, then kill me first.

He holds MacLeod's eyes.

MESSENGER (CONT'D)

Choose life, my friend.

Torn, MacLeod turns without a word, and leaves.

Messenger turns to Culbraith.

MESSENGER (CONT'D)

Choose peace.

Messenger looks at Culbraith, smiles, and leaves.

FADE OUT.

END OF ACT TWO

ACT THREE

FADE IN:

920 EXT. MESSENGER'S SEASIDE COTTAGE - GARDEN - DAY

920

Messenger is near his porch, gardening in pots, when he gets the BUZZ. He looks up -- to find the real Methos standing watching him with a quizzical look.

METHOS

Methos, I presume.

Messenger nods.

MESSENGER

So they tell me.

METHOS

Interesting. I'd always heard you were a myth, but you seem quite real.

(beat)

Tell me, is it true Socrates was a friend of yours?

MESSENGER

I've had many friends.

METHOS

And I've always wondered what Cleopatra was really like.

MESSENGER

She was a woman like other women. She loved, she lived, she died.

METHOS

Speaking of death... You do seem quite... vulnerable.

As he says this, he takes out his sword with studied casualness, examines it. The threat is obvious, but Messenger doesn't react to it.

MESSENGER

We're all vulnerable.

Methos toys with his sword, his tone conversational.

METHOS

More for you, I think.

(a look)

A lot of people might want the head of a five-thousand year-old man.

(CONTINUED)

920 CONTINUED:

920

He swishes the sword experimentally.

MESSENGER

Perhaps. But they also listen to a five-thousand year-old man.

METHOS

I suppose they would. I mean, fifty centuries must have taught you a lot. Knowledge, wisdom... that sort of thing.

MESSENGER

That's what people think. Truth is, my beliefs are very simple.

METHOS

Ah, yes. I've heard about those beliefs. You really believe there's no such thing as evil?

MESSENGER

Only fear.

METHOS

So men like Genghis Khan and Hitler were only children acting out?

MESSENGER

They were men driven by fear to commit evil acts.

METHOS

(with sarcasm)

And I suppose if their mothers had truly loved them, the world would have been different?

MESSENGER

Perhaps... Can you say it wouldn't?

METHOS

(curious)

And you really think it's possible to end "The Game?"

MESSENGER

I believe it's worth trying.

METHOS

Even if it costs your life?

Messenger smiles the smile of a Gandhi.

(CONTINUED)

MESSENGER

What else is my life good for?

(beat)

How could anyone look back on five-thousand years and say they'd done nothing? Risked nothing? Merely stayed alive?

(a smile)

It would be pointless.

It's as if he's looking right into Methos.

METHOS

Some might think all that experience is worth saving.

MESSENGER (CONT'D)

I don't think so -- but we could talk about it.

He gestures toward the garden chairs.

METHOS

(beat)

I'm afraid I have a prior engagement.

He turns and starts off.

MESSENGER

I didn't catch your name.

METHOS

That's right. You didn't.

He flashes an inscrutable look, then leaves. Messenger looks after him a BEAT, then returns to his flowers.

It's late, the place empty. MacLeod is leaning on a post, arms crossed, brooding. Methos paces as Dawson looks on.

METHOS

A little pathos, a little pop psychology. You don't have to be five thousand years old to have a rap like that.

(beat)

The man is either a fraud or he's delusional, and you're buying it.

(beat)

Richie at least has an excuse. He's young, and the young think with every body part except the brain.

(CONTINUED)

921 CONTINUED:

921

MACLEOD

I'm not buying anything.

METHOS

No?

(beat)

One speech from the "wise one" and you forgive Culbraith. What's next? Friendship rings? The Love Boat?

MACLEOD

I haven't forgiven anything.

(beat)

He just made me think.

METHOS

Don't think too much. We don't need another one to add to the list.

MACLEOD

(beat)

What list?

METHOS

(in disgust)

Ask Joe.

DAWSON

I did some checking on this Methos flake...

(off Methos' look)

The phony one.

(pissed)

There's been a trail of dead Immortals behind him.

MACLEOD

He's killing them?

DAWSON

No, just suckering them in. They've laid down their swords, but the next Immortal doesn't.

METHOS

Meanwhile our gentle friend moves on, spreading the good word.

MACLEOD

I'm not a convert.

(beat)

And I don't intend to be.

DAWSON

And what about Richie?

(CONTINUED)

921 CONTINUED: (2) 921

And OFF this --

922 EXT. MESSENGER'S SEASIDE COTTAGE - GARDEN - DAY 922

The Messenger is sitting there saying nothing, just looking at Richie.

RICHIE

What is it?

The silence draws out. Richie grows uncomfortable.

RICHIE (CONT'D)

I've been here for twenty minutes and you haven't said a word.

MESSENGER

Go home, Richie.

RICHIE

Why? What'd I do?

MESSENGER

Your sword.

He smiles gently. Richie's hand goes to it.

MESSENGER (CONT'D)

It's all right. You'll give it up when the time is right.

RICHIE

You're pissed.

MESSENGER

No... but I'd rather not have weapons in my presence.

RICHIE

(struggling)

It goes against everything I was taught.

MESSENGER

I know.

He stands, moves around the garden.

MESSENGER (CONT'D)

The Spartans left their children on a hillside to die. It wasn't right... but it's what they were taught.

(beat)

We act, because we're taught to act.

(MORE)

(CONTINUED)

922 CONTINUED:

922

MESSENGER (CONT'D)

We all kill because we're taught to
kill. Because we fear death.

Richie meets his eyes.

RICHIE

Aren't you afraid to die?

MESSENGER

Of course. I'm not a fool.

(beat)

You wonder if that's why I'm doing
all this. Because I'm afraid to
fight.

He pulls a STAVE from the garden and tosses it to Richie.

MESSENGER

Come at me.

RICHIE

Look, I didn't mean anything...

MESSENGER

Come at me. Please.

He gestures invitingly. Richie makes a half-hearted thrust --
Messenger dodges it easily.

MESSENGER (CONT'D)

You can do better than that.

Richie winds up, takes a serious swing. Messenger dodges
the stick, grabs Richie, and throws him on his ass.

Richie, a bit nettled, picks himself up.

RICHIE

I wasn't ready.

MESSENGER

This time, use your sword.

(off Richie's look)

Go ahead. Strike.

His voice is quietly commanding. Richie hesitates, then
takes his sword out. Still he hesitates.

MESSENGER (CONT'D)

Strike!

RICHIE

No.

(CONTINUED)

He slaps Richie hard across the face.

MESSENGER

Strike!

Richie whirls on instinct, his blade slices down --

THE MESSENGER

makes a miraculous move and disarms Richie. In an instant, he's holding Richie's sword an inch from Richie's neck.

MESSENGER (CONT'D)

Sorry, but I needed to make a point.

(beat)

They say the best peacemaker is a man experienced at war. It's not that I can't fight... it's that I won't kill.

He reverses the sword and hands it back. Richie takes it, humbled.

RICHIE

(re his sword)

That's why you don't like them around.

MESSENGER

I don't want the temptation or the opportunity. My defense is my faith.

(a smile)

So far, it's worked.

RICHIE

Sorry I doubted you.

Messenger turns a disapproving look on him.

MESSENGER

Richie, don't believe because of my strength. Believe because of yours. Because you want to.

RICHIE

But I do want to. Why else am I here?

MESSENGER

Listen to me. If you do this... if you join me... you may die. Others have.

(beat)

You're risking everything, Richie. Don't let go of that blade unless you're sure.

(CONTINUED)

922 CONTINUED: (3) 922

He turns and heads toward his cottage, leaving Richie there.
OFF Richie's look --

923 EXT. CHURCH - ESTABLISHING - DAY 923

924 INT. CHURCH - DAY 924

A small church. Richie is in a front pew, deep in thought.
He gets the BUZZ as MacLeod enters, walks up to sit beside
him. They stay that way a BEAT, then --

MACLEOD

I thought I might find you here.

Richie doesn't answer. MacLeod senses his turmoil.

MACLEOD (CONT'D)

It's a lot to think about. Life,
death... what it means.

(beat)

If it means anything.

Richie nods, staring up at the stained glass windows.

RICHIE

I want him to be right, Mac.

MACLEOD

I know.

RICHIE

(firm)

I don't like killing.

MACLEOD

We've talked about this before,
Richie. You're not supposed to.

Richie looks at him.

RICHIE

Change has to start somewhere.

(beat)

Wouldn't you like to live your life
without looking over your shoulder?

MACLEOD

Yes, but it's not possible. Not in
this life. There's evil in the world.
Real evil. And it's up to good men
to stop it.

(beat)

If we don't, if we do nothing...

(beat)

Evil wins.

(CONTINUED)

924 CONTINUED:

924

RICHIE

So that's it? It's just that simple?

MACLEOD

If it's anything, Richie, it's not simple.

RICHIE

Mac... I respect you more than anyone I've ever known. But I've got to make my own decision about this.

MacLeod places a hand on Richie's shoulder.

MACLEOD

I know you do.

MacLeod rises and leaves Richie to ponder.

DISSOLVE TO:

925 EXT. MESSENGER'S SEASIDE COTTAGE - NIGHT

925

Messenger steps onto the porch, following the BUZZ. He peers into the gloom --

Culbraith steps from the shadows.

CULBRAITH

You're not hard to find.

MESSENGER

I don't try to be.

Culbraith steps onto the porch.

CULBRAITH

I thought about what you said.

(beat)

About what I was. How I came to be this way.

MESSENGER

It wasn't your choice, William.

(beat)

You were made into what you are.

CULBRAITH

And you think I could change?

MESSENGER

I know you could.

CULBRAITH

Only if I wanted to... and I don't.

(CONTINUED)

MESSENGER

I don't believe that.

Culbraith draws his sword.

MESSENGER (CONT'D)

This is a mistake, William.

CULBRAITH

Your mistake. I'll have the head of
Methos.

(beat)

This is how I am. This is me. I
can't be anything else.

He moves closer. Messenger draws himself up, seeming to
gain spiritual height, strength.

MESSENGER

I know what I saw in your heart...
in your life. I reached you.

CULBRAITH

And this is what you found.

(beat)

Your death.

He raises his sword. Messenger doesn't flinch.

MESSENGER

If this is what's in your heart, to
kill an unarmed man...

(the Messenger kneels)

... who kneels before you...

(beat)

Then I was wrong.

He looks Culbraith in the eyes.

MESSENGER (CONT'D)

But I don't believe I was wrong.

There's enormous conviction in his eyes, his voice. He holds
the look for a moment -- then inclines his head.

Culbraith looks at him kneeling there, neck exposed, waiting.

CULBRAITH

Believe this.

Then suddenly -- Culbraith whirls and STRIKES. And off the
sword stroke --

FADE OUT.

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END OF ACT THREE

ACT FOUR

FADE IN:

926 EXT. DOJO - NIGHT - ESTABLISHING

926

926A OMITTED

926A

927 INT. MACLEOD'S LOFT - NIGHT

927

MacLeod comes out from the kitchen area as Richie steps in from the elevator. Richie's manner is tentative -- he's made a decision, but isn't sure how to announce it.

MACLEOD

(beat)

You hungry?

Richie shakes his head.

MACLEOD (CONT'D)

Don't suppose you came for a workout either.

(beat)

So. What happens now?

A BEAT -- and Richie takes out his sword. He holds it a BEAT, finding this difficult. This is the blade MacLeod gave him. He holds it out to MacLeod, like an offering. MacLeod doesn't reach for it.

MACLEOD (CONT'D)

Richie, think about this.

RICHIE

I have thought about it, Mac. As much as anything else in my life.

MacLeod still doesn't take the sword.

MACLEOD

You realize what you're doing?

(beat)

These aren't just weapons, Richie. They're part of us... of what we are.

RICHIE

Not me, Mac. It's not what I am.

(beat)

Not any more.

MacLeod sees he's made up his mind. Slowly, reluctantly, he takes the sword. There's a ceremonial feel about this -- a sense of finality and sadness.

(CONTINUED)

927 CONTINUED:

927

MacLeod just looks at him a BEAT, letting it all play on his face.

 RICHIE (CONT'D)

 We don't have to agree on this.

 (beat)

 I'm sorry.

He clasps MacLeod's shoulder, then turns and heads out.

MacLeod looks at the sword in his arms.

 MACLEOD

 Me, too.

And OFF his look --

928 INT. DOJO - OFFICE - NIGHT

928

MacLeod, Dawson and Methos are gathered, drinks all around. MacLeod prods his hardly touched scotch. Methos, sitting on the desk near MacLeod, shrugs at what MacLeod has just told him.

 METHOS

 So. The Pied Piper gets another one.

Dawson gives him a look.

 DAWSON

 I suppose you'd know what to do.

 METHOS

 You bet. Standard response to unforeseen dilemma, developed over many centuries...

 (beat)

 Nothing.

 DAWSON

 I think I like the other Methos better.

 METHOS

 You asked.

 (beat)

 Think I'll visit the men's room. Check out the latest graffiti.

He slides off the desk and heads up the stairs toward the dojo locker room. Dawson looks after him.

(CONTINUED)

DAWSON

Is it just me, or is he really a jerk sometimes?

MACLEOD

He's right, Joe. There's nothing to do.

(beat)

It's Richie's decision. I have to respect it.

DAWSON

Even if it gets him killed?

MACLEOD

I taught him how to survive. What he does with that has to be up to him.

He's trying to convince himself as much as anyone else. Dawson shakes his head.

DAWSON

Some guy comes along, says everything's rosy. No more death, no more fear... hell, of course Richie went for it.

(beat)

But this mistake's gonna cost him, Mac.

MACLEOD

It's his to make. It's a question of integrity.

As he says this, Methos returns.

METHOS

There was this Spanish guy. Allejandro Diego Spinoza.

(beat)

One day the Inquisition pulls him in for questioning. Red-hot pincers, tongs... the usual drill.

MACLEOD

You got all that from the locker room walls?

METHOS

(beat)

All he had to tell them was "no." One simple word. They took his house, his money, his lands...

(MORE)

(CONTINUED)

METHOS (CONT'D)

(beat)

But he would not give in.

Dawson looks at him suspiciously.

DAWSON

So what happened?

METHOS

Allejandro? Died in screaming agony,
of course.

(pointed, to MacLeod)

But he kept his integrity.

MacLeod puts his drink down with a sigh. He throws Methos a look.

MACLEOD

Let yourselves out.

He rises and leaves. Dawson turns and looks at Methos.

DAWSON

You are on calculating sonofabitch.

METHOS

Thank you. It's all a matter of
anticipation.

DAWSON

Really. Here, have one on me.

He lifts a brimming glass -- and TIPS it onto Methos' lap.
Methos jumps up, drenched.

METHOS

What the hell was that?!

DAWSON

Just one of those unforeseen dilemmas.

(beat)

Surprised you didn't anticipate it.

And OFF this --

Richie arrives. He starts up the steps, hearing the steady
SQUEAK of Messenger's rocking chair. He reaches the porch --
and stops. Instead of the Messenger, Culbraith sits there,
rocking quietly.

CULBRAITH

Didn't mean to surprise you.

(beat)

I never thanked you for saving me.

Richie feels a twinge of hesitation, but his newfound conviction overcomes it. He moves up toward Culbraith.

RICHIE

It's what he teaches.

He means the Messenger. Culbraith nods.

CULBRAITH

Never met anyone quite like the old man. It's hard to believe he lived so long without a sword.

(beat)

How are you managing it?

RICHIE

Faith can take you a long way.

(beat)

You?

CULBRAITH

Me?

(beat)

I'm afraid I had no faith.

He rises and his sword is in his hand.

CULBRAITH (CONT'D)

No faith at all.

Richie backs off as Culbraith advances.

RICHIE

Don't. You know this is wrong!

CULBRAITH

Is it? I guess old habits die hard.

Richie is backing away, talking desperately.

RICHIE

But he saved your life! Didn't you listen to him?!

CULBRAITH

Right up to the end.

(curious)

Are you going to make it as easy as he did... or put up a fight?

(CONTINUED)

929 CONTINUED: (2)

929

Richie stares in horror.

RICHIE

All he wanted was to save us! To
stop the killing!

CULBRAITH

Only one problem, son.

(beat)

I came to like the killing.

He SWINGS. Richie dodges, and the sword strikes the chair,
splintering it. Richie turns and vaults off the porch, into
the darkness.

Culbraith moves after Richie.

930 EXT. BEACH - NEAR MESSENGER'S COTTAGE - CONTINUOUS

930

Richie scrambles along the beach, Culbraith right after him.
Richie grabs a length of WOOD RAILING, and brandishes it.

CULBRAITH

Putting up a fight.

(beat)

I guess when you get down to it,
we're all the same.

RICHIE

Not all of us. He wasn't.

Culbraith swings -- and cuts the wood in two. His next slice
catches Richie's chest.

Richie stumbles back in the sand, wounded, and angry.

RICHIE (CONT'D)

You bastard!

CULBRAITH

(approving)

That's the spirit. We were made for
war.

He raise his sword to take Richie's head -- and gets the
BUZZ. He hesitates, sword aloft, not turning.

CULBRAITH (CONT'D)

The battle's been joined. You can't
interfere.

MacLeod stands there.

MACLEOD

I wouldn't think of it.

(CONTINUED)

930 CONTINUED:

930

He unfolds his arms to reveal Richie's SWORD. He tosses it.

ON THE SWORD

catching the light as it arcs through the air.

RICHIE

catches it and lunges forward with three fast, hard blows,
forcing Culbraith backwards.

Culbraith goes to his knees. He looks up with cold defiance,
knowing he's finished.

CULBRAITH

Is this the part where I beg for
mercy? Or where you tell me we don't
have to do this?

RICHIE

Neither.

He swings, and Culbraith falls. As the QUICKENING strikes,
logs ignite, and fire swirls up into the sky.

FADE OUT.

END OF ACT FOUR

ACT : TAG

FADE IN:

931 INT. MACLEOD'S LOFT - DAY

931

MacLeod and Methos are there. Richie leans against the counter, looking somber and drained. He's been through an emotional wringer.

RICHIE

I don't even know what his real name was.

MACLEOD

Does it matter?

Richie shakes his head.

RICHIE

I'm sorry he's gone. Maybe he wasn't Methos. Maybe he wasn't right...
(beat)
But he was good.

MACLEOD

Yes, he was.
(in earnest)
And for a moment you thought... you hoped real peace for us was possible.
(off Richie's nod)
Me too.

Methos stands with a self-deprecating shrug.

METHOS

Sorry, I'm not what you imagined, kid.

RICHIE

It's okay.

METHOS

Later.

Methos starts to leave.

RICHIE

Got any words of wisdom for me, old timer?

As Methos leaves, he turns back.

METHOS

Nope.

(CONTINUED)

931 CONTINUED:

931

He's gone.

Richie turns to MacLeod, extends his hand.

RICHIE

Well, thanks for saving my life.

(with a smile)

Again.

MacLeod takes it.

MACLEOD

You won the fight. I just leveled
the playing field.

Richie moves to the door.

RICHIE

I'm gonna get on the bike and head
out for a while. Try to figure out
some things.

MACLEOD

Those big questions.

(off Richie's nod)

Even if you don't find the answers,
keep looking.

Richie nods and starts to leave. MacLeod calls after him.

MACLEOD (CONT'D)

Richie.

(Richie turns)

Take care.

As Richie smiles and nods --

FADE OUT.

THE END