

**NIGHT  
OF THE  
ECLIPSOID  
MAN**

**A DRY SMOKE & WHISPERS  
ARCHIVE CHRONICLE**

**PART TWO**

© 2 0 2 4 E N S E R N E M E D I A

## THE MULTIVERSE IS A DOUBLE-HELIX

Up and down twin coiling strands of massive energy: an infinity of spheres and each one is a unique universe. Massive movements of ideas, thoughts, concepts, pulse up and down these strands. As do the souls of all beings within. Some souls spiral high, some sink low, some maintain. Culture is just one manifestation, and anything here on Earth is reflected above and below in denigrated or exalted forms.

Four spirals above Earth lies a universe much like our own, yet subtly different. Energy is more cohesive and so energies of the mind are more easily harnessed. But are just as much feared.

In this universe is a galaxy, and within it, an interstellar civilization: five regions that have formed alliance and have become the Quintocracy. The galactic capital is a large teeming world with two moons: Quaymet. It is a land of opportunity. It is the fulcrum of all known society. But as always, it is a place of two faces. The uptown is a wonderland corollary of middle-eastern minarets and a strange form of Victorianism translated into a glass and neon futurism.

But across the broad River Thothboro: the Neon Bowery. Passed over once-affluent neighborhoods now dwindling into a black market paradise of hi-tech cut throats and mad scientists. For the tapestry of humanity is too complex for Utopia. There is always the struggle of ascension and loss, pride and its fall, humility and its unexpected light in the darkness. This is the home of a highly eccentric warrior for truth. In his own words:

**My name is Emille Song. Special Detective. I am a Telepath. My people have been outlawed for two centuries. That's why I hate injustice. And use my talents, here in my home, Quaymet, to fight a ceaseless, some say, futile war, against greed and corruption. This is my Mission. Through this life and out the other side.**

His agency partner is Professor Durrick Henchard, war veteran, Antique Weapons expert. And one of the few who know of Song's esper abilities. Together, they attempt to make Quaymet and the Quintocracy a better place, fighting the good fight, via the

**Dry Smoke & Whispers Detection Agency**

**SONG'S SYNOPSIS:** In Part One, a bizarre lab accident transforms Spencer Knightbridge into a bizarre negative inverse of himself, an Eclipsoid Man. Wielding plasma power drawn from the sun itself, Knightbridge decides to erase his own existence. Now, as he catches up with two devils from his past, Cottonmouth and Stang, Knightbridge is about to discover how completely he's been betrayed, in Part Two of *'The Night of the Eclipsoid Man'*.

**THEME SONG • • • • PART TWO • ACT ONE • OPEN WITH HOWL OF ECLIPSOID FIELD**

KNIGHTBRIDGE:: **Cottonmouth. Old friend. Now you will do what I want. No... more... secrets.** (howl) And into the past we go again. Flashback mic. City at night ambience. Sporadic whistling wind.

WATCHER: **Here's the thing. It's an OverSeer Ring. Once you gift it to someone, it will always come back. Oh, unless...** (leaves it unsaid) **You get me that ring. Here's what you do to make it all work...**

ECLIPSOID FIELD • Setting changes to night outside the main Academy. Crickets, Rope against the flagpole, with the same sporadic mournful wind.

STANG: (a little nervous) **It's midnight, CM. What if he doesn't show?**

COTTONMOUTH: (takes a drag on a reefer, then tosses it) **Just wait. He won't pass up a clandestine meeting with his *Knight in shining armor*.**

STANG: **And if anyone hears what's kickin'?**

COTTONMOUTH: (dismissively) **What's gotten up your saddle sore? Dorm's way back behind the school there.**

The school door opens, footsteps down concrete steps.

(whispering) **See?** (gloating) **What I tell ya.**

JASPER: (softly, warily) ***Knight, are you there?***

And they pounce on him. He tries to slip away, but they get a good hold on him. Jasper starts to cry for help, but Stang pulls a vibe knife.

STANG: **Quiet. Or we do this the messy way.**

JASPER: (sees it's useless, quietly) ***Who are you? What do you want?***

COTTONMOUTH: **First off, *this*. The ring!**

Cottonmouth brings up Jasper's arm. Jasper starts to fight, but then remembers: they won't be able to keep it. Cottonmouth slips it off and whistles.

COTTONMOUTH: **I can see why the Big W wants this. Shiny *baroque!***

Meanwhile, in the background behind the following, Stang is messing with the rope on the flagpole. He's tying a really big rock to one end and he's hoisting it up, up, up, puffing, it's heavy. It's scraping and bumping against the flagpole as he hauls it up and away from us. Then he ties a noose and wraps the rope around the pole anchor so he has his hands free.

JASPER: **That old thing? Hey, I can set you up with way better shent.** (getting suspicious of Stang's activities) **What... what is he doing?**

COTTONMOUTH: **Oh, just a little *prep*. Now *next*, Master... Pennion, isn't it? We need a *note*.**

JASPER: (comprehending what they're up to) **Oh, no, please. You don't need to do this. You've already got the ring.**

STANG: (butting in from the side) **But, ya see, we need to keep the ring.**

COTTONMOUTH: **And Big W tells me there's only one way to do that. Stang, sit our little friend down on the flagpole base and give him pen and paper.**

JASPER: **I won't do this. You can't make me do this. Just kill me outright. Don't make Spence think I was weak.**

COTTONMOUTH: **But Mr. 'I'm so much better than anybody else with my book learning and my degrees' – well, upstart Mr. Knightbridget, he needs to be brought down a peg. Maybe down a whole flagpole. He needs to blame himself.**

JASPER: (to Stang, he doesn't look sociopathic like Cottonmouth) **You there. You don't want to to do this, do you?**

STANG: **Do what?** (and he looks off at the horizon nonchalantly) **I don't see anything happening. Don't see anything at all.**

JASPER: **Torture me. I don't care. Kill me, I'll care less.** (with absolute determination) **I won't do that to Spence. Nothing will make me write that note!**

COTTONMOUTH: **This will. The crest on the ring. I push it in.** (metallic flink)

COTTONMOUTH: **And I say:** (and as he says it, he's reverbed and a hella chorus joins him) **SH•TAHV TESHGADAH.**

JASPER: (hearing that mystic summons, he knows they're going to follow through – shouts desperately) **HELP ME – SPENCE! PLEASE! ANYONE!**

COTTONMOUTH: (enjoying every second of this, its the ultimate control. and now that eerie second chorus is muted but still there every time he issues a command) **NO SHOUTING! ...YOU CAN ONLY WHISPER NOW.**

JASPER: (hoarsely, breaking down) **No, you can't be doing this. You can't!**

COTTONMOUTH: (leans down close to Jasper's ear and whispers fiercely) **Now here's exactly what you're going to write. And then we're gonna put your scrawny little muffin neck in the noose... And we're gonna let go... And that great... big... rock up there... is going to come plummeting back down to the ground. Because you're so ingenious. So resourceful. Spence knows it. You can accomplish anything you set your mind to.**

JASPER: (in a broken whisper, completely anguished) **Oh, frecking OverSeers – It's not fair! ... I'm sorry, Spence. I'm so sorry. Hear me! I didn't leave you.**

••••• SCORE SEGUE ••••• INSIDE SONOCAR IN HYPER•FLIGHT.

SONG: **The Wastelands. Why so far out?**

ANEELIA:: (empathy kicks in) **Doctor Thurwood. Something's wrong, what is it?**

THURWOOD: (pause) **I know I'm going to sound like some surrogate father, but Spencer deserves so much better. Despite his dark past, or maybe because of it, Knightbridge has never taken a life... 'To kill another is to kill yourself.'**

HENCHARD: (this brings back painful memories of the war and both Basil's and his conflicts with it)  
**Ohhh. OverSeers 9:13. The Sisters' lessons go deep, don't they.**

••••• **SCORE SEGUE** ••••• **BACK AT THE DIAMOND ICICLE.**

Ignition. Burning sun effect, then Eclipsoid Field. Back in the present: Knightbridge primal screaming his rage and pain, field blazing and flanging out in waves. The car windows shatter one by one. Knightbridge exhales in a ragged gasp. Then, the anguish, the rip between everything he has tried not to be and this unbelievable betrayal.

KNIGHTBRIDGE: **OverSeers above! I ask you *Why?* They killed another!** (field howls)  
(field begins to ramp)(with utter avenging rage) **Why shouldn't I *kill them.*** (a crackling electrical field passes over the car)

COTTONMOUTH: **No, no, *DON'T!***

STANG: ***We're sorry. We're sorry.***

KNIGHTBRIDGE: (cold rage) **No... *You'll say anything to live. But you had a choice. You could have let Jasper live... And you did not.***

The Eclipsoid field builds to a burning sun crescendo.

••••• **CUT TO:** Sonojet landing in foreground. At near distance: Sirens. An inferno. The Diamond Icicle is ironically on fire. A rescue crew, coordinating opening the shell of Cottonmouth's car with some kind of laser devices. Foreground: The gullwings of the Sonojet open, Song climbs out. The others, too.

**SONG'S NARRATION:** **The Diamond Icicle was a raging inferno. Cottonmouth's racer was surprisingly intact. Its windows were shattered but jagged, so the rescue crews were taking off the doors with lasers. This team was from MedPol, a combination Medical and Law Enforcement Agency. An ambulance was backing up to the racer as I introduced myself to the official in charge.**

SONG: **How bad is it? Special Detective Song.**

MP NURSE BYERLY: **That's nice, but this is a closed medical crime scene.**

SONG'S BADGE: (showing her a badge) **STAFF, Private Investigations.**

MP NURSE BYERLY: (impressed) **Gregson's division. He's one of our best. I'm Coordinator Byerly.**

Now the medical crew is removing the bodies of Cottonmouth and Stang.

MP ORDERLY: ***Careful, careful. Onto the gurney... OK, now the other one.***

They bring Cottonmouth through on a gurney. It's like he's trying to talk but can't. And the sound he's making needs to be innately horrifying. Like he's trying to breathe, and that's not going well either.

THURWOOD: (horrified) ***Faith to the Utter Darkness.***

MP ORDERLY: (walks up rapidly, hands Byerly a medical iPad making very erratic noises)  
**MP Orderly B•Lengé, reporting.**

MP NURSE BYERLY: (like she doesn't want to know) **Status?**

MP ORDERLY: **Vander Lespool. Street designation: Cottonmouth. Regular patron. It's... as if he's been dropped from a great height... twisted into a pretzel. Every bone broken. But this is weirder yet. Crushed larynx. That's...like he's also been dropped from a very tall gallows...**

MP NURSE BYERLY: (irritated, a little more than concerned) **Then why isn't he...**

MP ORDERLY: **I don't know... Other one, same condition. They're both infused with some kind of... ambient energy. So strong they could be around for years. But the mortal injuries... Vander's going to Quaymet High-Intensity.**

MP NURSE BYERLY: (horrified, moved in spite of herself) **So you're saying that neither of them are going to die?**

MP ORDERLY: **I'm saying they're going to wish they could. The pain will be constant. And they're both... totally conscious and aware. The other...**

NURSE BYERLY: (reading iPad) **Mitchell Pekoré... Stang.**

MP ORDERLY: **Well...his eyes are missing... no blood. Healed sockets. But according to our chronometer, done at the same time as the other injuries.**

MP NURSE BYERLY: **Thank you, B•Lengé.**

Now they're removing Stang. Rolling of gurney. Stang trying to vocalize. Some weird sing-songy choking attempt at speech. He's loaded in. The doors are closed. Ka-thunk. Ka-thunk.

MP NURSE BYERLY: (to Song) **So, Detective Song. Who or what did *this*? Any idea?**

SONG: **We're thinking it may be an... off-world affair. Probably a one-time incident.**

NURSE BYERLY: **Penta's Hayla, I hope so. I don't want the patrons of even *this* deathpit... (part of the building collapses) to suffer a fate like that.**

And now we hear a rescue guy in the background: **Oh, for the Pit and the Pitchfork...** (pause, shouting) **WE FOUND THE EYES.** (pause) **THEY'RE DANGLING FROM THE REAR VIEW MIRROR.** (exclamations, nervous laughter)

SONG: **Ouch... We'll get back to you the second we have anything.**

NURSE BYERLY: **This is gonna be a *Henthuva* report.** (she strides off, shouting to the crew)

Another siren arrives. It's the fire department. The big vehicle pulls up rapidly, the team deploys, a coordinator yelling directions. Next second they're spraying the place with giant water jets, the fire hisses, but it's pretty out of control. But in a moment, it won't matter anyway.

HENCHARD: (to Song and Basil) **I think this is about the young man at Wayward Academy. That suicide you told me about...**

THURWOOD: **I think it's pretty clear from this... it wasn't suicide.**

ANEELIA: (penny drops) **That's what I was feeling. Spence said he had big-teeth ghosts. But I... I couldn't comprehend... it didn't sink in just how sharp those teeth had been.** (and now she hears the Eclipsoid field, it fades in,

just under the surface.)(now she's almost losing it too, it's just too much)

**Oh, everybody. He's here. Spence is here. It's like he's hovering over us...** (realizes he's paying a visit to Stang and Cottonmouth)  
**No... Over them. The two from the car.**

A rumble of thunder. Crack of lightning. The wind begins to blow heavily. Reactions in the background of the guys trying to fight the flames. A lightning bolt flashes down, hits just a few feet from Song and company.

SONG: **You've got to be kidding me. Everybody, into the SonoJet, it's shielded.**

They all run for it, the gullwings close and just in time. A deluge opens up. A real dumper. Only two sounds now, the rain and the Icicle, hissing. CUT TO: inside the SonoJet, the rain pelting down on it.

ANEELIA: **Emille, I think we've been going at all wrong. We need to communicate with Spence... one on one. Can you connect all of us to him at once? A Telepathic Gestalt?**

SONG: **Problem is, it may be a one-way transmission. Professor – Basil – I have your consent?**

HENCHARD: (bracing himself) **Just do it.**

THURWOOD: **I'm tired of being left behind.**

Song's telepathy effect, louder than usual. We fade into the ambulance. Both C and S are on lung machines, a strange constant pumping sound, maintenance equipment reading their Outer Limits whacked vitals. Rain, muffled, pounding on the roof. Fade to only muffled rain and Knightbridge as he pronounces sentence.

KNIGHTBRIDGE: (eclipsoid telepathy) **Cottonmouth. Stang. I wanted to burn you both. Incinerate you to the last level of whatever Hell you may believe in.** (howl) **Too easy.** (echoes strangely) **I give you the gift of...** (his voice breaks) **Time.** (almost to himself) **Years to reflect. To consider what you've taken from others.** (howl, echoes) **If and when you ever feel honest remorse... only then... in memory of the compassion of Jasper Pennion... will you be released from my Eclipsoid Tesseract Judgement Day...**

## **END ACT ONE • ACT TWO**

SONG'S NARRATION: **The Neon Bowery. A strange and decrepit domed building. Inside, an ancient military bridge. And sitting on the control-throne of a long forgotten Kommendant ... a condemned man, waiting for execution.**

Rustling sounds, slenths scuttering about. Wind whistling like Dachau through a broken window, randomly. And one drop of water falling. Plink, Plink. Plink. Precisely every seven seconds. Non-stop.

WATCHER: (shouting up into dome) **Well, come on!** (something akin to bats scatter)  
**Get it over with! ... I know you're comin' for me.**

CUT TO: SonoJet, inside. Slight hum of machinery. Song's telepathy effect. And everybody in the jet wakes up.

HENCHARD: **Oh, Faith... Guess that was a fitting if ongoing epitaph.**

SONG: **Our connection. It's been cut off. We shouldn't be back...**  
(there's a hint of the Eclipsoid field) **Wait... he's left us a message.**

Knightsbridge's voice. Slight eclipsoid field surrounding it. It echoes.

KNIGHTBRIDGE: **Please leave me to do what must be done...** (And the field echoes away)

ANEELIA: **I have another bad, bad feeling.**

SONG: **OK, troops, there's no use flying all over everywhere. But we can do reconnaissance from here.** (punches an unlocking sequence)

SJ CONTROL SYSTEM: **Quaymet Secure Capital Access. Entrance granted.**

And at that point, we hear the fire crew packing it up. Orders are barked, doors close, the heavy vehicle drives off.

HENCHARD: (whistles) **Well, we won't have to worry about the Diamond Icicle anymore... smoke and ashes. Knightsbridged into oblivion.**

••••• **SCORE SEGUE** And we're back on the bridge. Watcher is sitting in the central chair, humming something that sounds like Thelonious Monk. Same echoing drop of water, precisely every seven seconds. Then the Field arrives.

KNIGHTBRIDGE: **What a perfect place for an ambush... (scans, mildly surprised) but I can tell no one else is here... Aiden K?**

WATCHER: **Oh, that Azzie done left. They all leave you in shent in the end, you know that. And he took the only thing that mighta mattered, when it's all said and done.**

KNIGHTBRIDGE: (darkly) **The ring. Aiden has the ring.**

WATCHER: **Final betrayal. He knew why I wanted it.**

KNIGHTBRIDGE: **More conquest? It has powers. You could have subjugated the whole East Side with it. Emperor of the Neon Bowery.**

WATCHER: **Huh. But amassin' 'a Empire... don't mean nothin' if ya ain't around to lord over. Take a look inside 'a me.**

KNIGHTBRIDGE: (Scanning field. Grim, almost disappointed) **Nature's payback.**

WATCHER: **Yeah. Gut fulla the Big C. Havin' to pop these (swallows a big pill, takes a swig from a thermos of hootch, almost chokes) ta keep the pain from eatin' me alive. Morph don't do it no more. Not even the Thraw... Thought the ring might be the cure. (heaves himself up from the chair, shuffles to a table, sound of a decanter uncorking) So if you wanna pay me out. For stealin' the ring. Hangin' yer wittle muffin ... (with dark, dark irony) Do me a solid...**

••••• **SCORE SEGUE** ••••• **INSIDE SONOJET**

SONG: **Alright. Aneelia, I've connected us both to the mapping system. Neon Bowery is our target area. Are you ready?** (Both fields harmonize)

SJ CONTROL SYSTEM: (readout sound) **Location achieved.** (more calculation sounds, followed by a definitive bleep) **Pictures of site projecting.**

HENCHARD: (recognizes it immediately, deeply alarmed) **How can that still be standing?**

THURWOOD: (recognizing it, too) **That's a Blue Apocalypse military bunker. It's gotta be 300 hundred years old, at the least.**

SJ CONTROL SYSTEM: (data recovery) **Official records readout.**

SONG: (scanning quickly) **Mmm. OK, records say: totally decommissioned. Just a shell.**

SJ CONTROL SYSTEM: (data recovery) **Sealed files need Quintara Verification.**

ANEELIA: (shocked) **Quintara?!**

SONG: (grimly) **The covert of the covert... This may explain how Watcher carved out such a large territory. If he's had an ancient, forgotten cache of Blue Apocalypse atrocities, it's no wonder his rivals kept disappearing. Giving verification.**

Telepathy effect. Answered by an unlocking code. Immediate strident blue alert alarm.

SJ CONTROL SYSTEM: **Active classified device identified under bunker ruins. Countdown in progress. BlueOps 10. BlueOps 10. BlueOps 10.**

CUT BACK TO BRIDGE. Watcher is pouring himself a drink.

WATCHER: **So I guess that changes... everything?** (sits back down heavily)  
**Ya know, when I wuz really small – wanted to be a *musician*.**

WATCHER: **Can ya fancy that? But my Old Man beat it outta me. Guess that's why I liked watchin' Aiden K scrape down on ya so much. Seein' someone else gettin' it for a change.**

KNIGHTBRIDGE: **And that was your takeaway. Not 'I'll be better than that. I'll just be worse.' ... I can't fettle** (suddenly, that word seems incongruous, pasted on, losing the Menk) **I can't even begin to comprehend that.**

WATCHER: (laughing gruffly) **'Xactly why you jus' one big smeckin' target. From yer pointy little head to yo cute fake Menker ass, so easy, my man, so easy. Let me tell you 'bout –**

KNIGHTBRIDGE: (not having any of it and now, getting a real truth-sense tingle) **Time to go find the ring. Enjoy your last days.**

WATCHER: **Enjoy yours.** (smiling evilly) **I still got you on the hook.**

Song and Aneelia's Telepathy and Empathy sound come through together. But it's broken and fractured, maybe blocked by the building itself. Oddly, it's broadcast *in* the building, somehow, echoing, Watcher can hear it.

ANEELIA: **SPENCE** (broken) **–ET OUT! TELEPORT! TIME** (broken) **TELEPORT!**

WATCHER: (gloating) **Too late. Damping field. Guess what. I'm checkin' out. And I'm takin' you with me!**

One shrill, distorted klaxon and the bomb below goes off. Concrete floor goes KAWUMP. Uprushing of plasma. Massive incorrect particles of the universe explosion.

**SONG NARRATION: We saw it from way out in the wastelands. A diamond like point of light. And then a column of thalo blue, shooting straight up, not out. The device was old, and it burnt out fast, leaving a glowing blue streamer that started to drift sideways in the wind. Knightbridge got out, but not without damage. And now he was about to be pitted against his greatest adversary, Aiden K, in a dilapidated Neon Bowery apartment that sadly, once, was**

**home.**

**••••• SCORE SEGUE ••••• INSIDE APARTMENT.**

A beat. Then a heavy dull explosion. A beat. Shockwave hits. Several windows shatter. Building rattles. Screams.

AIDEN K: **Right on ya, *Watcher*. Or should I say *under* you. Never so happy to see anyone go up in a big ball of blue fire. *Did you get him? My little weasel bastard? I'm actually hoping... no.***

A Quaymet Civil Defense siren goes off in the distance. And the Eclipsoid Field fades in. But this is where it has changed. Something's off, out of phase. Subtle here.

KNIGHTBRIDGE: **Father, I'm *home*.**

Transformer goes. Power dies. Civil defense siren dies. One drunk lady: *OH, WE'RE GOING TO DIE*. Hysterical sobs.

AIDEN K: **The old homestead is just like it used to be. Bet this brings back some memories... we were all so cosy here, the three of us.**

Flashback effect. Eight year old Knightbridge and his mother.

MRS. K: **I have something for you.** (gears of the ring box)

YOUNG KNIGHTBRIDGE: **Oh, that's *beautiful*.**

MRS. K: **Put it on.**

YOUNG KNIGHTBRIDGE: **Mother, I can't. It's *too* beautiful. I'll lose it.**

MRS. K: **But you can't. *Let's share a memory together...***

He spins back out of it. Realizes something.

KNIGHTBRIDGE: **I was never in the Vorga Cascades – we couldn't afford to travel. She planted that memory in my brain, like it was something *real*.**

AIDEN K: **Now you're gettin' it. She had *powers*, that one. Powers I knew I could use. Or would come to me later... What in the hell have you become? Maybe you really are the *Key*.**

KNIGHTBRIDGE: **You have the ring. Give it to me.**

AIDEN K: **I don't think so. No. You, me, we've got seriously unfinished business. *You owe me*.**

And suddenly Knightbridge has a strange intuition. The Field flares. He scans this stranger.

KNIGHTBRIDGE: **You're not my *Father*.**

AIDEN K: **Now you're *really* gettin' it. See, I was part of the Quintocratic forces that served in the big Keambudahnah Meltdown. *Huge* old time reactor blew up. My whole platoon – more sterile than a *Clean Room*. So when your Mum came up *preggers...***

And now another epiphany triggers.

KNIGHTBRIDGE: **Where is *she*? You said *she* left us.**

AIDEN K: **Oh, she did. Cheatin' *witch*. Not lyin' about that. But right now, let's go *full circle...***

Takes the ring out of his pocket. Opens the box, gears. Puts the ring on.

AIDEN K: **Now it's Happy Hour for what I've *always* wanted.**

Just like Cottonmouth, he presses the crest. It makes the same flink. And then he intones: **SH•TAHV TESHGADAH.** Same result. The echoing chorus. The chorus that echoes his every command.

KNIGHTBRIDGE: (honest fear in his voice) **No. *Don't do this. Not after everything I've been through.***

AIDEN K: **You're going to be so much more effective than Watcher. I could put myself on the *throne*. With your power, maybe the *Quintocratic High Seat itself*. Because if I tell you to do something. like: (and the chorus kicks in, just like before) **GET DOWN ON YOUR KNEES AND KISS MY FILTHY BOOTS...****

And down Knightbridge goes, painfully from the sound of it. Then starts crawling over to Aiden, trying to resist.

KNIGHTBRIDGE: **This... can't be... *happening...***

And then he stops. And then Knightbridge stands up. And laughs. Just loses it. And the chorus joins him.

AIDEN K: **Stop!... what are you doing... *I SAID STOP!***

Resonating laughter goes more than a little demonic. Trails off. Now the chorus is clearly with Knightbridge.

KNIGHTBRIDGE: **SH•TAHV. You can't control me with my *own name*.**

AIDEN K: **Your name. (and the light dawns) *Oh, that witch.***

KNIGHTBRIDGE: **The ring is *my* birthright. Activated by the name my mother chose for me. When I heard Cottonmouth say it, I knew.**

He expects anger and disappointment from Aiden, but no, he's oddly unphased.

AIDEN K: **Well, it was worth a try. So you got that from the *ring*... OK. But you still don't get it. You still don't know *what* you are.**

KNIGHTBRIDGE: (pointedly) **A beast of burden... a *zipper-man*.**

AIDEN K: ***K•Tev Tror.***

Aiden is an oddly patient sociopath. Takes a device out of coat, emitting an odd, very disturbing sine wave oscillation.

KNIGHTBRIDGE: **Pops. Give it up. You can't control me with words *or devices*. That Troid thing you put in my head. That GPS. That burned out the second I became *this*.**

AIDEN: (he's in quiet sadistic mode again) **Yeah?... Not before it delivered its nanobyte payload to a much *more* important organ than your *brain*. (icily, now, knows he has the upper hand again) **Controller. Fifty percent. *Block the organ of Assimilation.*****

The first thing we hear is a billowing gout of flame, like a furnace door opening. Then: a moment of a whistling hurricane on M•Hellengau. But then, blotting that out: the Eclipsoid field in feedback. Shrieking dissonance that hurst the ears, the field doubling back on itself. Knightbridge screams. falls against a wall and drags down, in agony. The distorted field continues throughout.

AIDEN: **Not faking it *this time*, are ya, you *freak show hump*.**

KNIGHTBRIDGE: (over and through the pain) ***The conduits. How could I miss that...I'm still connected. I'm the focal point.*** (now he tries to appeal to the sociopath) ***Aiden! Listen to me. I'm connected to the center of the sun. Cut off that connection, and everything goes. Quaymet burns like the sun.***

AIDEN K: ***Seriously? REALLY??*** (he's overjoyed) ***Because you wouldn't care if I threatened to kill you, but the whole planet on your head.***

## **END ACT TWO • ACT THREE**

AIDEN K: ***Controller, give him a little air while I explain things. Take the block down to forty percent.***

The conduits fade. Knightbridge gasps in air, the pain retreating.

KNIGHTBRIDGE: ***Aiden. I'm begging. For real, this time. Don't do this.***

AIDEN K: (but he just laughs) ***You actually don't know what you are, do you?***

KNIGHTBRIDGE: ***Just tell me. I don't understand.***

AIDEN K: ***The answer's been inside of you from the day your bastard ass was born. Why you weren't burnt to a cinder by whatever made you this weird-ass phantom thing... You and your mother. You're both T•Kev Tror. People of power. People like you have an extra organ that can channel immense energy. Like an internal transformer. You can make things happen just by thinking them.***

••••• CUT TO: BOWERY AMBIENCE. The wind comes up, keening through a gutter or eave.

**SONG NARRATION:** The wind stirs. The darkest hours of the night, when it seems any nightmare can penetrate the veil between us and infinity. Broken windows in the bristling barrios of the Neon Bowery look like eerie eyes, hiding the ruined lives within. But now a new color begins to glide in. A sinuous glow, thalo blue, rippling in like a phosphorescent mist and somehow, eerily alive.

First hint of chilling wall of the Blue Apocalypse Fallout. Then fade back to apartment with Knightbridge and Aiden K.

KNIGHTBRIDGE: ***Do you realize, Aiden K... that you've already Watchered yourself. No Empire for you. No... revenge... Revenge for what? Who are you out to destroy? It's not even me. I'm just a means to an end.***

AIDEN K: ***Watchered myself? Explain, or I'll block your connection more.***

KNIGHTBRIDGE: ***Block away. I was already dangerously radioactive. The sun, Aiden K, the sun.***

AIDEN K: (beginning to get it) ***No... You lie.***

Knightbridge wills the Heart of the Sun conduit to gout another solar flare.

KNIGHTBRIDGE: ***You're out of time. Without me to channel it (laughs darkly) the pure solar energy now flooding this room... might as well be back on KeAmbudahnah after that reactor blew.***

AIDEN K: ***Goddammit, you worthless son of a bitch! Then I should just take us out! Might as well just end it all!***

KNIGHTBRIDGE: **Might as well, because I'm *done*. Nothing, not even the annihilation of *everything*, is worth one more moment of *you*, controlling my life... For the first time. I call your bluff... Zero or one hundred. I'll shield you. But choose now.**

AIDEN K: **Controller... *Terminate blockage*.**

We hear flame, then crashing surf, and then it all goes back through Knightbridge. His Eclipsoid field goes momentarily wild and then he's restored. But after this, it's really different. The harmonics are off. Knightbridge gets to his feet.

KNIGHTBRIDGE: **If only I'd done that... so many years ago. (with chorus) **MY RING.****

Cry of pain from Aiden as his arm flies up, the ring is wrenched from this finger and slices through the air over to Knightbridge and onto his hand.

KNIGHTBRIDGE: **I will need this. I know what it is now. What it's purpose really is.**

AIDEN K: **You're not going to shield me, are you. Don't think I'm going to beg or grovel to your *mutated ass*. Just finish me off. That's what I would do.**

KNIGHTBRIDGE: **I'm also done with what *you* would do. (with voice)  
**THE CONTROLLER. THROW IT OUT THE WINDOW.****

Against his will, Aiden flings it, shattering of glass.

KNIGHTBRIDGE: ***Aiden K ... You've forgotten something...***

And there it is: the Fallout. Really close. Chilling wail. Now Aiden reacts with fear. None of this has gone right. He rushes to the broken window, crunching on glass.

AIDEN K: ***No. NO! You freckin' ugly ass universe.***

KNIGHTBRIDGE: (analyzing, realizing) **All this goes *far* beyond a bowery-bound sociopath. It's past time to know something else, *Aiden K*. (with chorus) **Your *real* name, what is it?****

This is his most darkly hidden secret. Pulling the convicted Nazi out of the closet.

AIDEN K: (defiant, snarling) **No. You can't break me. *They* couldn't break me.**

KNIGHTBRIDGE: (a command, with chorus) ****YOUR NAME.****

AIDEN K: (tries to resist, can't) ***KRENT...AAAHH... KRENT RYCLUR.***

KNIGHTBRIDGE: (and the light goes on) **I know that name. (howl) It's actually in the history books. An operative known as 'The Pike'. *Caused* the reactor meltdown on KeAmbudahnah, against official orders or... working so deep they had to throw someone to the Jackaraws. (now it makes too much sense) You are **Quintara**. (momentary telepathy) **No, worse than that. *S'Lér*. The most lethal covert agency in the Quintocracy.****

AIDEN K: ***So-clever*. The last *darkest* shadow in an Assassin's Hall of Shadows. Bound to the *Highest Elite*... Feel any better about it all?**

KNIGHTBRIDGE: **The Highest Elite *ghosted you*. (again, realizing) ... And you wanted to ghost them back. So you went for the long game. Using first my mother. Then me.**

AIDEN K: (now he gloats) **Oh, it should have worked. You... as you are now? That would have been the *ultimate* control. *I was the one. Watcher was just a puppet. A sad, constantly distracted by his own addictions puppet-wipe.***

KNIGHTBRIDGE: **With Quintara intel, you found the Blue Apocalypse weapons in that bunker. And the dirty bomb underneath. It was all you. (beat) This means *one more thing*... You knew what had to be done... to keep the ring...**

AIDEN K: (realizing there will be no mercy, bluffing angrily) **Get out... That was Watcher. All Watcher.**

Another gust of the fallout wind, right on top of them, moaning through the window. It sounds so wrong.

KNIGHTBRIDGE: **It's here. The fallout from the bomb you let the Watcher set off. You thought the ring would protect you. That it would grant some kind of mystic power of survival... But now, one last question. (with chorus) *Your plan, to hang Jasper Pennion.***

AIDEN K: (doesn't want to admit this now, not with what's happening, tries to fight it, can't, he has to tell the truth) **Oh, Penta damn you to the deepest circle of felching hell. Yes, I killed your puling little bastard lover, you perverted sack of shent. Killed him, killed him, killed him! For the ring. And so you'd suffer. Payback for the way your mother and you kept freckin' up my life, no matter how hard I tried to pound both of you into the goddamn freckin' ground.**

He's gasping at the end of this, gasping and now he knows its almost too late. Fallout wail. That breaks him down

AIDEN K: **Please. Take me out before it gets here.**

KNIGHTBRIDGE: **Nooo... This fate is perfect for you – the Pike. the Orchestrator. Jasper's compassion? Even he would agree... not for you.**

And now the wind blows in, full wail. Strange notes.

KNIGHTBRIDGE: **It's not really radiation. More a... *mutagen*. Those blue sparks floating in. They act on the lungs first, then the nervous system. And then your blood boils...**

The fallout swirls around the room, delivering it's poison. It acts fast. Aiden / Drexeter starts choking, heaving. Falling to his knees, he rasps:

AIDEN K: **The ring...**

KNIGHTBRIDGE: **Cannot cure you of *this*... (ironic sidenote) Or cancer.**

AIDEN K: **You're lying...**

Too late. He collapses, vainly trying to pull himself towards Knightbridge. But then his skin is bubbling. And then the boils burst and his blood starts pouring out. He tries to heave himself up one last time. But when he collapses, well, blood in a baggie. Bones, hitting the floor and soft organs. Hissing, and a lingering disintegration.

KNIGHTBRIDGE: **Now who tried to kiss who's boots?**

Eclipsoid telepathy effect, steps as he circles the tiny apartment.

KNIGHTBRIDGE: **All this over a warped vendetta. How I wish the ring did have some mystic power. The power to bring my Jasper back... But now that I've used it, I know. It's a TruthSayer Ring. Meant to command those who lie to tell the truth. An instrument of justice. Not injustice.**

Telepathy effect ends as he steps in the glass by the broken window and stops.

KNIGHTBRIDGE: **Am I some harbinger of Death? Everyone in this building... puddles of bones and blood... victims of a long past war... (one last sound wail of the Fallout) This is the price when winning trumps all. Let us... cleanse it. (damaged eclipsoid howl) As I meant to cleanse myself... Fires of the sun, expunge these sins.**

He teleports. The apartment ripples into flame. Spreads. The floor collapses, and the flames burn higher. •••••

SONG NARRATION: **It was an hour before dawn. I had just powered up the jet when Basil cried out and pointed west. The Heart of the Sun conduit was now visible to the naked eye, snaking across the sky like some kind of pale fiery borealis. Now anybody could find him. And even as we watched, Knightbridge must have teleported. We saw the conduit shimmer, phase out and then reestablish, miles away. And we knew what that destination would be.**

SonoJet streaking by at full speed, dopplering away. Cut to: Inside SonoJet. System announces:

LOCATION CONFIRMED. QUAYMET SKY TOWERS. RESIDENCE OF SISTER MADELINE D•LÉNA, RETIRED.

SONG: **We're at top speed, a two minute ETA, but... Aneelia, what do you feel?**

ANEELIA: **Too much! Betrayal. Anger. Pain. He's in physical pain.**

THURWOOD: **His connection to the conduits. He's in crisis...**

SONG: **And we've got to get there before Air Power Strike Force, or we won't be able to get anywhere near that building.**

HENCHARD: **I don't care what Sister D•Lena may have done. No one deserves *this*.**

••••• **SCORE SEGUE** •••••. Memory mic. SNAP of that ruler on desk.

SISTER D•LÉYNA: (angry and frustrated) **Why must you be so *unrepentant*, Jasper?**

JASPER: **How can love be a *sin*? Spence is the best thing that's ever happened to me. He *believes* in me.**

SISTER D•LÉYNA: ***You tempted him off the path!* Do you think you're ever going to make a mark in real Literature with your *Faithless* tales and – and *deviant* poetry? But Knightbridge has a chance, if he *renounces* you, and walks the higher calling!**

JASPER: **We will not give each other up!**

SISTER D•LÉYNA: ***Then I will make it my mission that he never sees you again. Even if I have to lock you in solitary for the rest of your debauched little life!***

We come up out of the memory.

MADELEINE: (frustrated and sad) **Oh, I just want to *forget*. I can't find forgiveness... or atonement... by myself.** (now it's all getting to her, getting angry, raising her

voice) **Spencer Knightbridge! Late as always!... Where are you? Why haven't you come?... you're my only way out... I was with the Order too long... (in anguish) I caused a young man to take his life... Should I take my own in payment? (appeal) Great OverSeers! Can a Mortal sin cancel a mortal sin? (Anger) Your rules say no! Send me Knightbridge, please! Absolve me! I don't want to live with this anymore.**

## END ACT THREE • ACT FOUR

**CUT TO: STAAM HQ** Frenzied com chatter. Barks, short tempers, clipped responses.

ADJUTANT TEMPLE: (urgently) **We have his new position, sir! A SkyTowers Retirement Collective, outside of Brennister Abbey. (worried) Do we engage, after what Song told us?**

GREGSON: **What choice do we have? A Blue Apocalypse Mutagen Release. And now everyone on the entire planet can see that ribbon of light, the Eclipsoid Conduit.**

Gregson hits a control. A covered panel whirs up. He punches it and in the near background, a large podium gears up from the floor and locks into place. The room stills a little, they know what this means.

GREGSON: **With me.**

ADJUTANT TEMPLE: **Yes, sir.**

Gregson rapidly ascends metal steps to Emergency Command Podium, He activates a large room address system,.

GREGSON: **ATTENTION, ALL PERSONNEL. (the room really quiets) The Knightbridge Anomaly has now been designated BlueOps 10. (the entire room reacts, despite protocol. Gregson raises a hand and military order prevails) If you believe in a Deity, this would be the time to have a... private chat. (presses control, low but insistent red alert fills the room) I will be on board the ICCS, our In Crisis Command SonoJet. Carry out orders with no delay and absolute precision. The survival of all Quaymet may depend on it.**

••••• OPEN WITH: RASPING of the damaged connection conduit.

MADELEINE: **Knightbridge, is that you? Are you here at last?**

KNIGHTBRIDGE: (weary, in pain) **I am here. Do you know why I've come?**

MADELEINE: **I... I think so. We have much... so much to.. reconcile.**

**SONG NARRATION: Inside her apartment, former Sister, Madeleine D•Léna, was nearly blinded by the stark magenta of the conduit, radiating like an alien dawn through her giant picture window. Knightbridge had materialized in a nearby glass service elevator. (sound of teleportation) And then he teleported her into the elevator with him. (elevator activates with bell and hum) Slowly the lift began to ascend to the distant rooftop of the building.**

KNIGHTBRIDGE: **I have created a shield to protect you from the radiation.**

MADELEINE: (almost amused) **One last mercy from the Executioner?**

KNIGHTBRIDGE: (amused, so sad) **Think of me as the ultimate... Father Confessor.**

••••• CUT TO: SonoJet landing on roof. Wind blowing. CUT TO: Inside jet.

HENCHARD: **We made it!** (unbuckles harness) **Open the gullwings, Song, let me out!**

But there's nothing on this night that's going to time right. The perimeter alarm sounds three times.

SONG: **And, right on time. Or way too late. Take your pick.**

Air Power Strike Force arrives. A jet streaks by. A second jet. Then vehicles that sound like futuristic helicopters.

A one-man vehicle rotors in, sounding like an angry hornet. Over a megaphone.

PILOT: **Unauthorized vehicle. Cut your engines. Broadcast ID. This is a BlueOps 10 Emergency. Prepare to be evacuated from the area.**

SONG: **I am so sorry, Professor. I was afraid it would come down to this. The only way we can negotiate this situation now ... is to go where absolutely no one else can go.** (he removes his ring and gives it to the Professor) **Take my ring. My path is the M•Hellengau Conduit. And if something goes wrong – try to use the ring again to bring me back.**

THURWOOD: (frustrated) **I don't see how a Telepathic Trance can possibly help.**

HENCHARD: **No, he's right. If we leave the SonoJet, we'll be captured or shot down.** (voice shaking) **Song's right. Left Field is... all we have.**

••••• **SCORE SEGUE** **IN THE GLASS ELEVATOR.** Air Strike SoloPilots buzzing like a hornet's nest.

KNIGHTBRIDGE: (angry, sad, in pain) **Tell me of Jasper's last days.**

MADELEINE: (beat) **It's strange. He seemed to be bearing up well. He was convinced you'd come back. His loyalty to you... I saw a side of him I hadn't seen before. But in those days...**

KNIGHTBRIDGE: **... the Order was your only standard as to... the nature of love.** (voice goes a little grim) **And things did not go well.**

MADELEINE: (time for all the guilt to come out) **I pushed. I chivvied. I harassed. I said he'd never see you again, that you'd left him for good. I was... relentless. And I set a precedent.** (her voice cracks and her regret is overwhelming) **Your friends from Menkleford. They took that as license to set on him every chance they had. That was my sin. I should have protected him... I should have helped him survive...**

An over-daring heli pilot buzzes the elevator, deafening, like a giant hornet attacking.

**Survive that. That posturing macho desire to hurt, wound, destroy... anything they don't understand.**

KNIGHTBRIDGE: **And finally he couldn't take anymore.**

MADELEINE: **They found him at dawn, when they went to put up the flag.** (her voice sinks to a whisper) **My doing.** (then her voice grows stronger. Now that it's come to this, and it feels good to say it out loud) **I admit to my sin, Spencer Knightbridge. I pushed him past his breaking point. And I confess this sin to you.**

KNIGHTBRIDGE: **I accept your confession. And now it is time. I only wish that this reckoning had come to both of us sooner. (grimly) *Now all this pain can end.***

••••• CUT TO: INSIDE THE TELEPATHIC VOID WITH SONG

SONG: **I call to the Clandestine.** (There is a rushing sound, things dopplering and whistling past, as if moving at great speed and distance) **I seek one of your own. He is cast, but unnoticed. He follows and no one sees.**  
( the rushing fades away, to the crash of the M•Hellengau ocean on rocky shores. Sad cries of the seabirds. ShadowMan: “*And now the time arrives. All that you have been so far has been in preparation.*” )  
**The Executioner and the Scales of Justice seek innocent blood. I plead audience to arbitrate ...**

••••• SCORE SEGUE ••••• BACK IN ELEVATOR WITH KNIGHTBRIDGE AND D•LENA

KNIGHTBRIDGE: **Sister... Here’s the brutal truth. What neither of us knew...**

Field ramps. Swirling telepathy portal opens up and in we go. Flashback mic. **MONTAGE OF CLIPS FROM THE MURDER SCENE, BLURRING IN AND OUT OF EACH OTHER. ENDING ON: *And then we’re gonna put your scrawny little muffin neck in the noose...*** And the word NOOSE echoes off into fade.

MADELEINE: (breaking down, horrified, this is a level of cruelty beyond her ken} **Oh... Faith to every Pagan Creator... (then anger) How could they have done that? (and then she realizes} This makes what I did...**

KNIGHTBRIDGE: **...the act of someone who cared too much. Oh, how I wanted to blame you. After I became *this*, oh, all I wanted was your slow and agonizing *incineration*... But then I realized... would your death give me even one second more with *him*? My J? Risking his neck to get us Bento. The joy and gratitude when I gave him the ring. And ohhh, I miss his wit. His poems popping up every day on my ToneAkai. Always with me, even after I left...**

MADELEINE: **Oh my, Knightbridge... can you *cry*? In that state? *Red tears* on that black webbed skin?**

KNIGHTBRIDGE: (quoting again) **Tears of the Dead... for the Dead. In *this moment*, Sister... *Forgive yourself*... The sins that sent my J to his *unfair fate*... Not yours. Not mine.**

••••• SCORE SEGUE CUT TO OUTSIDE. Despite gregson’s instructions, several vehicles are flying by faster and faster, circling like the strafers around king kong.

CUT BACK TO ELEVATOR. Knightbridge’s field is becoming ever more erratic.

KNIGHTBRIDGE: **I would teleport you to safety, but, *ohhhh*. I’m broken.**

KNIGHTBRIDGE: (scans) **Aiden’s Controller... It’s damaged my connection to the conduits... Sister, we’re almost to the roof. Exit slowly... show you’re unarmed. Then walk directly to the nearest elevator back into the building. (bell, elevator stops) Go, while you can.**

Then: a short circuit in Knightbridge's eclipsoid field. It stutters, a terrifying electrical dissonance, cutting in and out.

MADELEINE: **You're injured. I can't leave you like this. *What is that flashing?***

KNIGHTBRIDGE: **The end of the world, if I can't find some way to... *cauterize the conduits.* (scans, despairs) *I can't see it. I don't know how...***

Song's telepathy cuts in. Blocks out all the other sounds. Wind rushing.

SONG: **Knightbridge. I have a message. But I don't understand it. Can you hear me?**

KNIGHTBRIDGE: (another fluctuation, pain) **Yes.**

SONG: ***The answer unlocks from the ring.*** (roll of thunder)

KNIGHTBRIDGE: **But it's only a TruthSayer ring. No other powers.**

SONG: (amazed) ***You have a... Show me!*** (telepathy effect ramps for a moment)  
***It's the inscri*** – (but then the telepathy ends suddenly)

KNIGHTBRIDGE: ***Song!***

MADELEINE: (a little afraid) **I heard all that. He started to say 'inscription'.**

MADELEINE: **Show me an image of the ring up close.** (eclipsoid telepathy effect)  
(she translates) ***'Speak Truth and The OverSeers will Free the Sun.'***

MADELEINE: **But it's written in a dialect of... *M•Hellengau. I've studied this! In that tongue, its: T•Jhat Zhüle. Ket Avram net Zail.*** (and then she realizes)  
**Say the second word. It means *Truth.***

KNIGHTBRIDGE: **ZHÜLE.**

Saying the one word unleashes a Halls of Biomechanoid Chorale of Ancient Gods saying it with him. **ATREVAHS.**

**SONG NARRATION: The heavens opened up. The Heart of the Sun conduit... was eclipsed... By a sunbeam from another world. But this beam shown down over half the sky. There were shapes within. Strange coils of dashed and dotted light. It was like they were missing frames. Whenever the eye tried to light on them, like a damaged silent film of backlit chromosome strands, they would twist and stitch, bewildering the eye.**

MADELEINE: (overcome, with awe, humility) ***Oh. OverSeers.***

OVERSEERS: (morphed with thunder) ***YOUR SENTENCE HAS BEEN SERVED.***

**••••• SCORE SEGUE ••••• ON THE ICCS**

GREGSON: (at a total loss) ***What are we seeing?***

ADJUTANT: **Commander, all aerial forces have been neutralized. They've all materialized outside of that – that *beam.* They can't fire and they can't enter it. They're just hovering, sir... uh, orders?**

GREGSON: ***To what avail, Officer.***

**••••• SCORE SEGUE ••••• BACK WITH KNIGHTBRIDGE**

MADELEINE: **I always knew. There was something about you. You were never meant to be here. Your home world is *M•Hellengau.***

A sound like a celestial choir grows, blots out all. Rolls of thunder in the distance. An ethereal drone.

OVERSEER: (triple voice effect? A gestalt? Voice breaks and stutters, as if words are alien to them.)  
**We are... dissolving... the Sun Heart conduit. It is now... undone.**  
(a hissing, as of something evaporating) **Time. So much. So little. We must close this portal ... erase ... a billion minds ... this intervention ... will not ... be remembered...**

ALL OVERSEERS: (morphed with thunder) **FOLLOW US.**

KNIGHTBRIDGE: **The M•Hellengau Conduit! I understand.**

The drone surges.

**SONG NARRATION: And when Knightbridge reappeared in the elevator, he was human again. The solar conduit disconnected, he was no longer a reverse, no longer an Eclipsoid man.**

Upon arrival, Knightbridge collapses. Madeline catches him. The only sound now is that of the OverSeer Drone. Knightbridge's voice is still augmented, for he remains K•Tev Tror. Perhaps a permanent adapt of the ring resonation.

MADELEINE: (in awe) **Were you with... them? Are they...**

KNIGHTBRIDGE: **Overseers, yes.**

He rises painfully. She helps him up.

KNIGHTBRIDGE: **I must send four messages, some token to those who tried to do so much. To whose largesse I am now indebted.**

A particularly loud telepathy field swells, drowns out all else. And Neelz and Knightbridge find themselves together one last time. Maybe a strangely distorted and surreal version of Capital Park in the background? He is as he was, before the events of this terrible night. They are both wide open, both vulnerable. At the edge of every emotion.

ANEELIA: **Spence! It's you. The real you.**

KNIGHTBRIDGE: **I'm afraid we don't have much time.**

ANEELIA: (and suddenly she knows) **You're leaving...**

KNIGHTBRIDGE: (laughs sadly) **Ohh.** (quoting himself) **Always reading me. Now we both – finally – really know who the other is. Eh, my High Tea Empath.**

ANEELIA: **You could have told me you were GaiYee. I would have adjusted.**

KNIGHTBRIDGE: (thinks of the Menks) **Lines in the sand, Neelz. You think it shouldn't matter, but then it does... I... couldn't bear to lose another friend...**

ANEELIA: (thinks of her brother, gone, or worse than gone) **I know. Two words. That we could never say out loud... 'From the smallest of secrets do such giant shadows fall' ... I wish I could have met Jasper ... I am so sorry... (sensing the past loneliness) he was the only one who ever really knew you, wasn't he... (then teasing him) until me at least.**

KNIGHTBRIDGE: **He would have liked you too. His own Posh Girl. I can just hear it, East and West, ripping both sides of the capital a new one... (wistfully) had that only been so... (maybe in some other timeline, yet to come) To us, Neelz. Another place and time... Where the stars are kinder?**

And now, a hint of M•Helligau. Those mournful gulls. The crashing surf. Aneelia hears it. So wistful. So other.

ANEELIA: **Is that home? Is that where you're going?**

KNIGHTBRIDGE: (honestly afraid) **I don't know, Neelz – if I keep this form... if I'll still be me... or become... something else.**

The surf grows louder for a beat, then fades dramatically.

ANEELIA: (realizes that fade means time is up, with urgency) **Spence, you're out of time... Go home. Before its: 'stars too far and oceans too wide.'**

KNIGHTBRIDGE: (he feels it too, also with urgency) **Neelz, One last gift: If they all close in, and it's your darkest hour** (telepathy effect) **Shout this word... Zhüle...**

His voice echoes on that word and the telepathic wah washes over everything. And we're back in the elevator.

Knightbridge kind of breathes out in a shuddering sigh. This last effort has totally exhausted him. Now the only sound is the wah of M•Helligau. But it starts to break up. It's fading away.

KNIGHTBRIDGE: **Oh, Neelz, why are you always right? I've used too much energy. The M•Helligau conduit. It's slipping away from me...** (he tries to teleport, it starts to form, then shorts out. Tries again, it fails. Despairing) **It's leaving me... I don't have the power to reach it...**

MADELEINE: (with sudden inspiration) **My life force. Would it be enough?**

KNIGHTBRIDGE: (almost horrified) **I can't ask that of you...**

MADELEINE: **I'm freely offering it. Others will come who will do what I should have done earlier. I think this is why I am here. Take me with you.**

KNIGHTBRIDGE: **I'm already half translated into the beyond. You will... die.**

MADELEINE: **Oh, I think some part of me will become part of you. I always knew I wanted to save you... and somehow, I think... no, I know, I'll be saving the best part of myself.**

KNIGHTBRIDGE: (with utter gratitude and weariness, an Order Benediction:) **Your Spirit will Rise and Find It's Place.** (takes one last look at Quaymet) **And you, benighted Quaymet. This low resonance, this two-dimensional world. Enough pain. Hold me, Sister.** (they embrace) **Now we ascend.**

His teleport effect expands, augmented by the Choir of Overseers. There is a massive uprushing of wind, a rumble of M•Helligau thunder, and the two of them leave Quaymet at last.

## **END ACT FOUR • EPILOGUE**

**SCORE SEGUE ON THE NICKELODEON CALLIOPE.** Finally home. In the salon, with drinks and pipes. Song lights his with the dragon lighter. (yes, series watermelon) **Fireplace. Aquarium.**

HENCHARD: **Did all of that really happen, or was it all a dream?**

SONG: **More like a nightmare, but, well, you're not going to believe how all this may have begun. My last talk with Knightbridge.**

**Flashback.** Inner telepathic void.

SONG: **That ring. Your family, The Teshgadah.**

KNIGHTBRIDGE: **Why do I have the feeling their History is... *conflicted*.**

SONG: **A feud with a rival family that escalated into a K•Tev Tror civil war. Picture a global conflict fought with metaphysical powers. Many, many, many lives lost. Your family name now means a conflict almost impossible to, uh, *bridge* without massacre. But that's why you *passed this lifetime Teshgadah*.**

KNIGHTBRIDGE: (amazed now that he realizes) **I didn't kill anyone. I took no lives.**

SONG: **Against all the odds. Cottonmouth. Stang. You dispensed Justice. Vigilante, maybe, but Justice. Watcher? Did it to himself, trying to murder *you*. And Aiden? Let me guess. The Fallout.**

KNIGHTBRIDGE: **It was a fitting fate for *him*. But again, the *cost*.**

SONG: **But in the end, not on your head. Go now. Find your place.**

**Return to present.** Reactions from everybody, contemplating all this. McKendrick whirs in, chipper now that everything's in place again.

McKENDRICK: **Who wants more of *everything*?**

Oh, wonderful distraction. Assent all around. Drinks and new hors d'oeuvres placed on tables under the following.

THURWOOD: (almost hesitantly) **So, did, uh, Knightbridge contact *all of you*, telepathically, as well?**

Somewhat hesitant assent all around.

THURWOOD: **I can't go into it all, but I will say... He was a... different person... one I would really have liked to have known so much better.**

HENCHARD: (spontaneously turning this into a toast) **Hear, hear!** (they all clink glasses)

McKENDRICK: **Mmm. Oddly touching. Would anyone else care to share more of their Spencer Knightbridge telepathic messages?**

ALL FOUR AS ONE: **No!**

Out on **Knightbridge's Theme**.

## **NOTES ON PRODUCTION FROM THE AUTHOR**

A production like this is so much more than just the script. It starts there, granted, but then becomes a collaborative effort. And that's where the magic happens.

This version of Night of the Eclipsoid Man underwent gigantic transformation in the script stage alone. We had a vague blueprint from the original, but knew it had to be even more engaging on a character level than what we were capable of writing and producing, well, over forty years ago.

Once we felt the script was ready, then it was time to cast. I was fairly worried about Spencer Knightbridge, because this was a complex character. He's almost an anti-hero, but we needed someone who could make this incredibly beleaguered individual sympathetic in the end, despite all odds. And we found our Knightbridge in Marc Homoyoun, an actor who played pivotal roles in Dry Smoke twenty years earlier. He knocked it out of the park, and the story kept transforming. Because a really great actor will be a lightning rod for what is right or wrong about what you've written for your character. Listening to him bring flat words into the three-dimensional realm of emotional believability further honed every aspect of the story, leading to more adaptations that strengthened the story line.

And every actor in this brought such an A game that the script just kept getting better and better.

But the real test was fitting this behemoth into two hours. Actually approximately fifty to fifty-five minutes of each hour. And the editing process was painful, but the age-old adage of 'kill your darlings' further and further refined the story. It is all a kind of bizarre digital sculpture, in a wavelength format.

So the script here appended is fairly close to word for word, because it was edited after the fact. But a more interesting study for writers or producers would be the script about three versions back. Because that would really tell the story of what stays and what goes, what makes everything sing louder and what obscures instead of clarifies.

A gigantic shout out and thanks to all who helped polish this into its current form.

**Jerrel McQuen**

PS: Having said all that, there will be an extended version of Part Two in particular, with bonus scenes and refined narrations to make it all even one stage better.