

LIVE ON

Written by

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OVER BLACK

NARRATOR (V.O.)

Long ago, when great kingdoms stretched across the lands the Eastern Kingdom attacked its neighbor to the West. The once peaceful lands were ravaged by war and families were torn apart as those brave enough left home to fight.

INT. RAYNER'S HOUSE - DAY

RAYNER, 18, his boldness emphasized with the every sway of his shoulders, stands before his mother, HELENE, 41. Silent tears run down her face as she hugs her son.

RAYNER

I know this isn't what you wanted for me, Mother. But I have to go.

HELENE

I know, Rayner. I know.

She places a hand on his cheek.

HELENE (CONT'D)

You are so like your father in many ways. He would be proud of you. Please be careful.

Rayner smiles.

RAYNER

I always am. And if I'm not, I have Leon to help me out.

Helene shakes her head, but she smiles slightly.

HELENE

You best get going.

Rayner walks out of the house.

EXT. VILLAGE - DAY - CONTINUOUS

LEON, 18, reserved but strong, sits atop a horse and waits for Rayner to mount his own. They ride down the path out of the village.

EXT. TRAIL - NIGHT

Rayner and Leon sit in front of a fire. Shadows are cast on the forest around them.

LEON

This time tomorrow we'll be in the camp, probably exhausted from training all day.

RAYNER

Yeah.

Rayner looks up to the sky, the stars bright.

RAYNER (CONT'D)

Why did you come with me?

LEON

I wasn't going to let you go to war alone. Someone needs to watch your back.

Rayner looks over at Leon.

RAYNER

You think I'll need saving?

Leon smiles.

LEON

It wouldn't be the first time.

RAYNER

Like when?

LEON

When you insisted on bothering the farmers' chickens and he caught you, I got you out of that. Or when you almost fell in the that ravine, I caught you. And the time-

RAYNER

Okay, that's enough. Perhaps you have helped me out a few times before.

They both laugh.

Rayner grows quiet, thoughtful.

RAYNER (CONT'D)

We might not make it back.

LEON

Thinking like that will only
guarantee it. Get some rest,
everything is going to change after
tomorrow.

EXT. WAR CAMP - DAY

Rayner and Leon walk past WARRIORS moving from tent to tent,
preparing for training, and carrying out other duties.

WOLFRAM, 35, respected for his size and skill as well as his
ranking as a general, approach the two boys whose untrained
presence is stark against the warriors around them.

WOLFRAM

Who are you?

Leon struggles for words at the sight of the large man.

Rayner steps forward.

RAYNER

I am Rayner, and this is Leon. We
are here to join the fight.

Wolfram looks the two up and down.

WOLFRAM

You are barely old enough to be
here.

RAYNER

But we are old enough.

Wolfram raises an eyebrow at the moderate disrespect.

WOLFRAM

That does not make you warriors.

RAYNER

Sir, my father fought in this war.

QUICK FLASHBACK

Rayner, 16, watches his FATHER walk out of the village, ready
for war.

BACK TO SCENE

Rayner stands a little taller.

RAYNER

He wanted to protect me and my mother, to preserve the life he created. I want to honor his memory, I want to fight.

WOLFRAM

I believe you. But this is not a place for the weak.

RAYNER

We are not weak. We will not disappoint.

Wolfram gives a sharp nod.

WOLFRAM

Then welcome. I'm Wolfram, your general.

He shakes Leon's hand.

He leans towards Rayner.

WOLFRAM (CONT'D)

You best keep that mouth in check. Not all of your superiors will be as forgiving as me.

RAYNER

Yes, sir.

Wolfram smirks.

They shake hands.

WOLFRAM

Go find a tent and get ready. You start your training now.

RAYNER AND LEON

Yes, sir.

The boys walk away, their steps light and excited.

RAYNER

You say you came here to watch my back and yet you can't even talk to the general.

LEON

I was not expecting a man that big.

MONTAGE - RAYNER AND LEON TRAIN AND FIGHT

- Rayner, Leon, and other soldiers train with swords.
- They run through the forest at night.
- They practice archery. Rayner's arrow meets his mark. Leon's does not.
- They sit around the fire with the others. They laugh and joke.
- The army rides together, battle ready.
- Rayner and Leon, back to back, fight the enemies in battle.
- Rayner is knocked down in battle. His opponent moves to attack further, but Leon steps in to save him. He grins back at his friend.
- Wolfram hands Rayner a breastplate with the marking of a general on it.
- Rayner, in his new armor, and Leon, both 21, ride side by side at the front of the war band.

END MONTAGE

EXT. CAMP - DAY

Warriors line up before Wolfram. They are in armor and ready for battle.

WOLFRAM

Today we will ride out. Tomorrow we will fight the most important battle yet. If we win, this war will shift in our favor. But we must fight hard and strong, together.

The warriors cheer.

Wolfram walks up to Rayner. The warriors begin to disperse, anticipation rolls through them.

WOLFRAM (CONT'D)

Are you ready for tomorrow, General.

Rayner grins.

RAYNER

Yes, sir.

WOLFRAM

Good. We will need your strength.

He squeezes Rayner's shoulder as he walks by him.

Rayner looks at the warriors, he spots Leon.

Leon nods at him, Rayner smiles back.

EXT. BATTLEFIELD - DAY

Small rivers of rain and blood run through the field.
Soldiers fight hard, some falling, others move from one
opponent to the next.

On top of a hill Rayner and Wolfram fight another GENERAL and
WARRIOR. Blades clash, sparks fly. The four men dance around
fallen swordsman and archers.

Rayner glances over to see Leon and some men at the bottom
fighting. The fight is not in their favor.

RAYNER

Wolfram! Go, help them.

Wolfram looks over, then back to Rayner.

WOLFRAM

I am not leaving you.

RAYNER

Go!

Rayner looks to Wolfram, silently pleading as he continues to
fight. Wolfram nods. He slashes at the warrior, he falls, and
goes to Leon's aid.

Rayner fights on.

The fallen warrior crawls to a dead archer, he grabs a bow
and arrow and with his last breath he shoots.

The arrow pierces Rayner's side. He cries out, but remains on
his feet.

The general slashes, Rayner moves only to receive a cut on
his cheek. Rayner tries to dodge another attack, but is too
slow. The blade slices his leg.

Rayner falls to his knees. The general kicks him.

Rayner does not get up.

The general walks away.

Rayner blinks hard, he looks to the sky. His breaths are raspy and inconsistent. He closes his eyes.

Rayner opens his eyes and turns his head. He scans the field below him until he spots Leon.

The general closes in.

RAYNER (CONT'D)

No.

He rolls to his side and tries to push himself up. He slips and begins to fall again, but catches himself.

He rises.

On unsteady feet he looks around. He picks up the bow that was used to shoot him.

He looks for an arrow, but finds none.

His hands grip the arrow in his side. Blood runs from the wound and covers his clothes and hands.

He pulls. His scream pierces the air.

He sways, but does not fall as he knocks the arrow and finds his target.

The general raises his sword. Leon turns. Rayner lets the arrow go.

The arrow pierces the general's neck. Leon watches in shock. He looks around. On the top of the hill he sees Rayner.

He falls.

Leon takes off up the hill to his friend.

LEON

Rayner!

Leon falls next to his friend's side and hauls him to his knees. Rayner's head falls to his friend's shoulder.

LEON (CONT'D)

Come on Ray, stay with me now.

RAYNER
It's about time I saved you, huh,
Leon.

Rayner coughs.

Leon picks him up.

LEON
You can't leave me now.

RAYNER
It's okay.

Rayner lays unconscious in his friend's arms as Leon walks down the hill to find a medic.

EXT. MEDIC TENT - NIGHT

Rain falls in sheets, lightening streaks across the sky,
thunder shakes the ground.

Leon paces in front of the medic's tent. He is covered in
blood and mud from the battle. Tear tracks run down his face.

The medic exits the tent. Leon looks at him hopefully. The
medic stares at the warrior before him, his eyes dark.

Leon runs into the tent.

INT. MEDIC TENT - NIGHT - CONTINUOUS

Rayner lays on a mat. Bloody bandages cover the floor.

Leon rushes to his side.

LEON
Rayner.

Rayner lays there. His eyes do not open. His chest does not
rise.

LEON (CONT'D)
Please, no. Please.

Leon's head falls to his friend's chest. Sobs rack his body.

EXT. FIELD - NIGHT

The dead lay atop funeral pyres in rows.

Leon stands next to Rayner's as the flames engulf it.

SOME TIME LATER

Wolfram walks up to Leon. He stands at his side.

WOLFRAM
He was a good man.

Wolfram looks to Leon, but Leon's gaze stays on the pyre.

Embers glow in the ashes.

WOLFRAM (CONT'D)
These words will not make the pain
go away, but you need to hear them.
The pain of death is not greater
than the joy of life. So, mourn and
cry and let the grief in, but don't
forget why the pain is so great
now. It's because the happiness was
greater. Mourn his death, but do
not stop celebrating his life.

Leon looks at Wolfram, tears fill his eyes. He opens his
mouth, but no words come out.

Wolfram holds up a helmet, Rayner's helmet. He hands it to
Leon.

WOLFRAM (CONT'D)
This is for you.

Leon takes it.

The helmet is clean of blood, Leon's reflection shines dully
in it. A tear runs down the nose of the helmet.

WOLFRAM (CONT'D)
And this.

He hands Leon Rayner's sword.

LEON
But-

WOLFRAM
I know these are to be burned with
their warrior, but Rayner would
have wanted you to have them. And
what good is it to burn perfectly
good equipment.

Leon lets out a breathy laugh. He looks at the pyre.

LEON

I think he would have said the same thing.

Wolfram smiles.

WOLFRAM

He was a fighter. It would be a shame for him to stop fighting now.

Wolfram slaps Leon on the back and walks away. Leon turns.

LEON

Thank you, Wolfram. For everything.

Wolfram waves his hand and continues to walk.

Leon looks at the helmet.

EXT. BATTLEFIELD - DAY

Leon wears Rayner's helmet and holds his sword as he charges into battle. He wears the armor of a general.

NARRATOR (V.O.)

Leon would continue to fight in the war, eventually becoming a general. He wore Rayner's helmet and fought with his sword in every battle.

INT. LEON'S HOUSE - NIGHT

Leon, 24, places his sword, Rayner's sword, on the wall.

NARRATOR (V.O.)

The war was won three years later. Leon never forgot his friend. Refusing to let Rayner's life end on that battlefield, he tells his story. The story of a hero that gave his life so that Leon could live on.

Leon places Rayner's helmet under the sword.

He smiles.