

PRINCESS QUEST INTO THE FORBIDDEN LANDS

She's trained her whole life to rule, but when the arrival of her new stepbrother upends the princess' life, she is unprepared to be thrown into the role of his rescuer when the boy is kidnapped, sending the kingdom into political turmoil. Animation - Adventure.

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EXT. CASTLE ROAD - DAY

PRINCESS KIRA (13,) the young and fearless Princess of Latavia rides her royal steed alongside her squire, HENRY (13) and his horse, AUGUSTA.

Although she is only a teen, she has the confidence and statue of a noble knight as she stares into the distance. Henry, in contrast, keeps peering over his shoulder, back to the castle.

The castle of the mythical kingdom of Latavia stands majestically, looking like a giant mountain protecting the tiny village cottages surrounding it.

HENRY

Let's go back.

KIRA

I can't.

HENRY

I know it is hard, but...

Suddenly, Kira slumps forward in her saddle. Henry pulls tightly on his reins and turns his horse sideways towards Kira. He catches a glimpse of her boot as it digs into the side of her horse.

KIRA

Find me!

Kira and her horse take off as Henry struggles to turn his horse back around. He clears the dust from his face while his eyes follow the hindquarters of Princess Kira's horse as it disappears in the distance.

HENRY

(to himself)
Not again.

EXT. COUNTRY KNOLL -- DAY

Henry rides hard until he spots Kira's horse tied to a tree on a peaceful grassy knoll high above the castle. The lush green landscape and blooming flowers indicate springtime.

Henry searches for Kira. He shimmies up an old oak tree and grins. He deftly climbs up a few more branches and pauses.

HENRY

Surrender!

He pushes aside a large leafy branch to reveal a hiding place on a thick limb. There is no one there. Henry drops to the ground.

He spots a dense shrub a few feet away. He charges into the foliage with his hand on his sword.

HENRY (CONT'D)
I know you're here. You should take more time hiding your horse instead of yourself.

He takes out his sword and chops away some of the bush.

Again, there is no one there. Discouraged, Henry leans against the large oak tree and returns his sword to its sheath.

His expression brightens when he spots an old arched brick bridge spanning a small stream. He runs up to the top of the bridge and lays down flat. He leans over the edge and peers under the bridge.

He reaches under the bridge and grabs a hand full of dirt. He tosses it into the stream in disgust and comes down off the bridge. He is tired and discouraged.

Henry sits down on a large rock and wipes the sweat from his forehead. He unbuckles his sword belt and drops it to the ground.

HENRY (CONT'D)
I give up. You win.

The rock starts to rise.

Henry grabs onto the rock to stabilize himself but is thrown to the ground as the rock materializes into the very human shape of the young princess.

She flips Henry over with her boot and pulls out her sword, pointing it at Henry's chest.

KIRA
Surrender!

Henry is obviously used to this routine. He places his hands under his head as a cushion and smiles at her. Kira is very serious.

KIRA (CONT'D)
You have been defeated in the name of the Kingdom of Latavia.
Surrender.

Henry casually flicks her sword tip away and slowly gets up. He brushes the dirt from his pants. He turns Kira around and looks at her cape.

HENRY

A very effective disguise.

KIRA

A wise ruler must be a master of diplomacy and disguise.

He touches the fabric.

HENRY

Does a wise ruler use the drapes from the chambers of your future stepmother?

KIRA

Everything in that castle will be mine someday.

The valley below comes alive with church bells RINGING and crowds CHEERING. Kira thrusts her sword into the ground and falls down to one knee. She bows her head.

HENRY

Are you praying for their happiness?

Henry joins her on one knee. Kira shakes her head solemnly.

KIRA

I pray for Latavia. We are taking in our enemy today.

INT. CASTLE CHURCH -- DAY

KING PHILLIP (40s,) the joyous King of Latavia, walks down the aisle with his new bride QUEEN SELINA (30s) who looks like she could be Kira's older sister instead of her new stepmother.

As they reached the foyer, the king spots a disheveled Kira standing in the rear. A look of disappointment quickly replaces the king's smile.

Kira makes a small bow instead of a curtsy. The couple passes and begins greeting their guests outside of the church, leaving Kira alone in the foyer.

She sadly walks up the flower-strewn aisle towards the throne, occasionally kicking a rose high into the air.

A thin and ugly man, PETER (30s) follows her in the shadows of the side aisle.

INT. STABLES -- DAY

Henry feeds the royal horses, stopping at each animal to stroke it and whisper in its ear. The afternoon's peace is interrupted by the sound of galloping horses approaching.

Two of King Phillip's knights, MARK and JAMES (20s,) ride into the stables, almost trampling poor Henry. Their laughter and the sweat-drenched condition of their horses indicate a day full of excitement.

They quickly dismount, ignoring Henry and their horses.

JAMES

Aye, twice the size of most, but no match for my strength or skills.

Henry runs after the two knights as they leave the stables.

HENRY

Romalanders?

The knights either do not notice Henry or they are ignoring him. Henry persists after them.

HENRY (CONT'D)

How many?

Henry finally gets the nerve to grab the edge of Mark's tunic.

HENRY (CONT'D)

Were you injured?

Mark turns around in fury and pushes Henry to the ground. He starts to draw his sword.

MARK

I'll teach you a lesson for touching a royal knight.

Henry does a quick rollover and springs to his feet. He stands defiantly in front of Mark.

An older knight, CHARLES (50s,) appears from the shadows. He puts a hand upon Mark's sword arm.

CHARLES

Women and wine await you.

Mark leans down to look Henry directly in his eyes. He breaks out into a laugh and picks Henry up.

MARK

Come on, boy, we'll let you have a sip of wine.

James and Mark head towards the castle, with Mark carrying Henry, who kicks and squirms. Charles follows.

CHARLES

Your horses have been ridden hard. They need tending before merriment.

MARK

How thoughtless of us.

Mark throws Henry towards the barn.

MARK (CONT'D)

You heard him, Squire.

Mark and James continue on towards the castle, laughing. Charles looks sadly at Henry who limps back to the stables.

CHARLES

Did you talk to her?

Henry shakes his head.

HENRY

Hide and seek, again. I'm too old for these childish games.

CHARLES

You missed the wedding. I didn't expect Mark or James to show up, but you're like...

HENRY

Family?

Henry drops his head. Charles puts an arm around him.

CHARLES

Be patient. Most squires don't start training to be a knight until they are closer to sixteen. You're younger than all of the squires.

Henry smiles.

HENRY
I am, aren't I? Faster and
stronger too.

Charles pats him on the shoulder.

CHARLES
Don't try to prove that to the
princess, okay?

INT. CASTLE CHURCH -- DAY

After reaching the front of the church, Kira starts to fence a pretend opponent. Kira leaps onto the throne.

KIRA
Her Majesty, Queen Kira of Latavia
will hear your request now...

She motions for her imaginary subject to rise. Kira hold out her hand to be kissed.

KIRA (CONT'D)
Oh, Prince William, you are too
kind. Your gift of jewels...

Peter coughs from behind the throne. Kira grabs her sword and quickly leaps around the throne to confront him as he emerges from the shadows.

Peter lacks the good looks, charm and manners of his younger sister, Queen Selina.

PETER
I hope I haven't interrupted a
tender moment between you and your
precious Prince William, my dear
Princess.

Peter pretends to look for the imaginary prince under the throne. Kira follows him closely.

PETER (CONT'D)
I guess I was only interrupting a
child's play.

Kira confronts him with her legs planted firmly.

KIRA
I am no child. I am the future
ruler of Latavia. You are lucky I
have let you...a Romalander stay.

Peter gestures to his surroundings.

PETER

I should be grateful to spend my days filled with excitement like this?

KIRA

The South Romalanders would have killed you and your sister had my father not granted them asylum after the death of King Alexander.

PETER

Asylum? I'd hardly call marrying your father and sharing his bed...

Kira springs up and shoves him, but he regains his balance and reaches for his sword and starts to pull it out. But Kira beats him to the draw and points hers at his chest.

PETER (CONT'D)

I guess no asylum from you, little Princess.

He carefully grabs her sword, then kisses her hand. He then mocks her in a high voice.

PETER (CONT'D)

Oh, Prince William, you are too kind...

TITLE: Time Passes

INT. KIRA'S CHAMBERS -- NIGHT

A slightly older Kira sits at her dressing table looking for something. She knocks over bottles of perfumes and powder. Dust fills the air as a hairbrush falls to the floor.

KIRA

(to herself)
Finally.

She picks up a black leather riding glove and then turns her head as she hears someone approaching her door.

KIRA (CONT'D)

Go away!

She puts the glove on and holds up her other hand, which already had the glove's mate on it. She hears another TAP on the door.

KIRA (CONT'D)
I said, leave me be. I prepare for
battle alone, surely I can get
ready for bed without a bunch of
ladies following me around.

Kira turns her head to see the door opened a crack with Queen Selina peeking in.

QUEEN SELINA
A moment, dear?

Kira, slightly embarrassed, performs a quick bow as the queen crosses the room.

QUEEN SELINA (CONT'D)
We haven't really talked since your
father, and I returned from our
honeymoon in the Southern lands a
few months ago.

KIRA
Leaving Latavia without a ruler for
almost half a year, was stupid,
stupid, stupid.

The queen smiles.

QUEEN SELINA
You and the royal council have done
an excellent job in keeping the
kingdom strong. I wanted to thank
you.

She gestures for Kira to sit at the dressing table as the queen picks up the hairbrush.

KIRA
That was my mother's.

The queen examines the ornate brush.

QUEEN SELINA
It's exquisite.

She gently starts unbraiding Kira's hair. After she finishes, she starts brushing Kira's hair.

QUEEN SELINA (CONT'D)
I know that I cannot replace your
mother...

With each stroke Kira's frown and fury increases.

QUEEN SELINA (CONT'D)
But, I'd like us to be friends,
because I have some good news...

Kira, at this point, turns red. She gets up and grabs the hairbrush from the queen's hand, throwing her slightly off balance.

KIRA
I'm too old to need a mother!

Kira tosses the hairbrush on the table. It skids across and lands on the floor.

KIRA (CONT'D)
And a wise ruler needs no friends.

The queen reaches down to pick up the hairbrush.

KIRA (CONT'D)
In fact, you can have that brush
since you took everything else that
was my mother's!

The queen falls to the floor and SCREAMS.

EXT. COURTYARD - DAY

Kira paces back and forth. Henry comes out of the stable and blocked her well-worn path.

HENRY
Any news?

Kira shakes her head, sits on the small wall, and puts her face into her hands.

KIRA
It's all my fault. My fault, my
fault, my fault.

Henry grabs her arm.

HENRY
How could you possibly blame
yourself, Kira?

He removes one of her hands and holds it as she looks up at him.

KIRA
It's just like it was with my
mother. Now I've killed
another...mother.

Henry grabs the other hand to hold her firmly and looks straight into her eyes.

HENRY
Queen Kirena died in the plague.
Don't try to put this on yourself.

KIRA
Momma called the doctor for me. She
thought I had a fever.

Kira's eyes are red. Henry hugs her, trying to soothe her.

HENRY
The doctor must've given her the
plague. Kira, you didn't kill
anyone. The plague killed half of
us.

Kira starts to cry fully into Henry's embrace.

KIRA
I had no fever. I was playing when
my mother told me to rest. Then
when she checked on me, I pretended
to be asleep, so she thought I had
a fever. I had no fever. I was
bad, bad, bad. I had no fever.

HENRY
You were a child. You're not to
blame.

Kira pulls away in anger.

KIRA
No! I killed her. Me! It was me,
me, me.

INT. QUEEN'S CHAMBERS -- DAY

Queen Selina holds a bundle wrapped in a red satin blanket. She smiles as King Phillip peeks through a door next to her bed.

KING PHILLIP
Safe to enter?

She welcomes him in with a smiling nod. The king comes to her side, gently picks up her free hand, and kisses it. He pushes aside the blanket to reveal an infant, PRINCE ALEC, sleeping soundly.

KING PHILLIP (CONT'D)
You have a beautiful son, Selina.

She looks kindly at him and looks back at her baby.

QUEEN SELINA
I named him Alec. Do you mind?

The king rubs the top of the baby's soft hair.

KING PHILLIP
I expected it.

He leans over and gives her a kiss on the cheek.

KING PHILLIP (CONT'D)
You've given me so much joy. I
honor your memories.

The tender moment is interrupted as Kira tumbles into the room, dragging her sword. It makes a noisy metallic sound as she crosses the room. King Phillip hugs her, unbuckles her sword belt, and lets it fall to the floor.

KING PHILLIP (CONT'D)
Come say hello to your new baby
brother.

KIRA
A male heir. What you always
wanted.

KING PHILLIP
I wanted you. This changes
nothing.

KIRA
I've trained my whole life to rule
Latavia. The law is clear. The
crown goes to the male heir.
Everything will change.

King Phillip looks back at the queen, who closes her eyes.

KING PHILLIP

Either pay your respects to our
queen and Prince Alec or leave us.

Kira makes a slight bow, grabs her sword and leaves.

QUEEN SELINA

Give her time.

KING PHILLIP

With the Romalander army growing
bigger and bigger, our kingdom is
running out of time.

INT. CASTLE CATHEDRAL -- DAY

It is the baby's christening day, and the cathedral is packed with nobility and crowds that strain for a peek at the new heir to the throne. Kira stands in the back foyer in full armor with Henry.

During a sacred part of the ceremony, the audience kneels, and even the group in the foyer quickly goes down on one knee. Kira leaves the cathedral, but Peter follows her out.

EXT. CASTLE CATHEDRAL -- DAY

Peter catches up with Kira and grabs her by the arm.

PETER

You left without pledging your
honor to my darling nephew.

KIRA

I will die before I bow to any
Romalander, including you.

PETER

Your new brother is half
Romalander, half Latavian. When he
takes the throne, you'll be bowing
to him. He is what joins our three
kingdoms into one. North Romaland,
South Romaland and Latavia. You
must be a child not to understand
these things.

Kira pushes him hard, but he regains his balance and grasps both her hands. He brings one of her hands close to his lips.

As he starts to kiss her hand, she turns it into a fist and plants it firmly on his jaw.

KIRA
Never try that again.

He steps back, rubbing his jaw and laughing at Kira, who now has her sword held high.

He does a mocking bow and takes a few more steps back. She lowers her sword and storms away.

EXT. CASTLE COURTYARD--DAY

Kira walks up to a circle of young SQUIRES, attracted to their laughter. They move aside out of respect for the princess. We can now see that one of the squires has Henry on the ground, pointing his sword at Henry's chest.

KIRA
It isn't really a sword fight, if
only one has a sword, is it?

Kira removes hers and tosses it high into the air to Henry. He catches it with skill. Obviously, the two have played this sword toss game often, along with hide and seek.

She then walks up to the squire with a sword and holds out her hand.

KIRA (CONT'D)
I'm sure you don't mind?

The squire quickly hands the sword to Kira and backs away, thankful to be out of her line of sight. Kira holds the borrowed sword high.

KIRA (CONT'D)
The barbarian defensive?

Henry jumps up and takes a stance. Kira takes a quick stab at Henry's thigh and draws blood. He does a backflip and drops to the ground.

She spins around and also does a back flip and takes a stab towards his arm, but he rolls over a few times and out of her range. His rolling motion stirs up a small cloud of dust.

Kira knees down on one knee and coughs as she tries to clear it away. Henry continue to roll in the dust and sneaks behind her. He points his sword at her.

HENRY
Surrender!

The shocked squires quickly disperse, to avoid Kira's anger at losing.

Henry helps her up and hands Kira her sword. She holds up her hand in refusal.

KIRA
You earned that sword, it is yours.

Henry looks at the sword.

HENRY
Not sure about that. We've done the barbarian defense hundreds of times.

Kira frowns and corrects him.

KIRA
More like thousands, you idiot.

She gives him a playful push, but then unties her scarf of colors and dabs at his wound.

KIRA (CONT'D)
I wanted to make it look real. You okay?

Henry nods and they walk towards the castle, LAUGHING. They spot Peter getting off his horse.

HENRY
I sure like your new step-uncle.

Henry pulls out a small knife.

HENRY (CONT'D)
He gave me this yesterday.

Kira stops and faces Henry.

KIRA
Seriously? He's a Romalander. We will soon be at war with them again. He is the enemy!

Henry quickly tucks the knife away and touches Kira's arm.

HENRY

Peter said there is talk of a treaty now that Prince Alec has been born. Your father wants to protect his son.

Kira pulls her arm away. Under her breath, she mutters angrily.

KIRA

(to herself)
His son, a Romalander.

EXT. CASTLE COURTYARD -- DAY

King Phillip and Queen Selina take a gentle stroll around the courtyard, holding Prince Alec as Henry leads a young mare past them.

They wave at Henry who gives them a big wave back. Henry breaks into a jog, which the young mare matches with a gentle trot.

QUEEN SELINA

He's quite special to you.

KING PHILLIP

Like a son.

The queen gives him a knowing look and returns the squeeze of his hand.

QUEEN SELINA

Does he know?

KING PHILLIP

What?

QUEEN SELINA

His eyes, his nose. We can see our own kind.

KING PHILLIP

There was a time when our two countries killed each other on sight. Now you and Peter live here with us.

QUEEN SELINA

Your knights killed his parents?

He nods sadly.

KING PHILLIP

They brought Henry to me when he was only three years old to decide if he should die or be sold as a slave.

Henry sprints by again and gives them both a big grin.

KING PHILLIP (CONT'D)

I went into the chapel to contemplate my choices and when I returned, he and Kira were playing together.

The king waves enthusiastically.

KING PHILLIP (CONT'D)

They have been inseparable ever since.

INT. STABLES -- DAY

Henry brushes Kira's chestnut horse as it eats. Kira moves quickly to the horse's side and rubs her hand down the flank. She holds her hand up.

KIRA

There is still mud.

Henry just smiles and dips the brush into a wooden bucket of soapy water. He vigorously rubs the flank, splattering water on Kira.

She jumps back and places a hand on her sword. He looks up at her and winks.

HENRY

You don't have to fight me too, Kira.

KIRA

Princess Kira. You will call me Princess Kira.

HENRY

I thought we were friends.

Henry tosses the brush back into the bucket with a splash. Some of the dirty water splatters onto Kira's boot.

KIRA

A wise ruler has no friends.

He drops down on one knee and bows his head.

HENRY

Forgive me, Your Majesty, Princess
Kira of Latavia, daughter of King
Phillip and Queen Kirena of...

Kira springs upon Henry and sends him tumbling back into the hay. She sits astride him and leans close to his face.

KIRA

Because a wise ruler needs no
friends.

Henry reaches up and strokes her hair.

HENRY

Then what am I?

She moves closer to his lips and then freezes. Instead she grabs a bundle of hay and starts to sprinkle it over his head. She starts to feed the hay to him.

KIRA

I have told you a hundred times,
you're a horsey. Eat up, horsey.

Henry grabs her hand and does a quick flip to put Kira on the ground with him on top. He is able to pin both her arms back and get a hand free.

He reaches into the bucket and grabs the wet brush. Henry moves closer to Kira's forehead with the wet brush until she manages to knock it out of his hand.

They both break out into laughter as the struggle for the brush escalates.

INT. CASTLE GREAT ROOM -- DAY

Kira sits across from the king, who signs scrolls.

KING PHILLIP

The nursemaids tell me that you
rarely visit the nursery.

He hands them to his squire and motions for the young man to leave.

KING PHILLIP (CONT'D)

The queen says you won't hold him.

Kira gets up and stands with her hands on her hips.

KIRA

I have never shown disrespect to that kid.

King Phillip slams his fist down on the desk.

KING PHILLIP

That kid? You call him, "that kid?"

KIRA

Prince Alec. Future King of Latavia. Son of King Phillip and Queen Selina, former Queen of North Romaland and consort to the late King Alexander of North Romaland, and nephew of King Stephen of the disputed South Romaland.

KING PHILLIP

Starting tomorrow, you will spend one hour each day with your brother.

KIRA

An hour? I am no nursemaid. The knights are deficient in their fencing, swordplay, jousting...

KING PHILLIP

Knights? Jousting? Get out and come back when you can tell me as much about my son.

INT. ROYAL NURSERY -- DAY

Kira sits on the thick carpet across from Prince Alec who holds a ball with a cord wrapped around it. There is a stack of wooden blocks between them. Kira grabs the ball from the Prince and holds it by the cord.

KIRA

Like this.

Kira hands it back to him by the cord and Prince Alec grabs the ball instead. She takes it back again and holds it by the cord and swings it around. The little prince picks up one of the wooden blocks and sticks it in his mouth.

KIRA (CONT'D)

No, I've told you a million times, that's the castle.

Kira takes the block from his mouth and puts it back on the stack. She swings the ball by the cord and sends it smashing into the blocks like a mace.

Prince Alec WAILS in fear as the queen enters the room.

QUEEN SELINA

Stop!

The queen swoops up the prince and pats his back gently. She picks up the makeshift toy weapon by its cord and inspects it.

QUEEN SELINA (CONT'D)

Can't you just play with him?

The queen storms out the door with Prince Alec.

KIRA

(to herself)

I haven't played since the day my mother died.

She hits the rest of the blocks with the ball.

INT. STABLES -- DAY

Kira sits on a low stone wall throwing rocks. She looks bored and angry at the same time. Henry approaches her holding something wrapped in an old rag.

HENRY

I have a present for you.

Kira brightens at the sight of him and reaches greedily for the object. Her hands open and shut.

KIRA

Gimme, gimme, gimme.

She quickly unwraps it to reveal a toy wooden horse. She throws it down in anger and pushes Henry to the ground. She straddles him, throwing punches to his chest.

KIRA (CONT'D)

How dare you mock me.

Henry seizes her hands and holds them firmly.

HENRY

I dare no such thing.

KIRA
 A child's toy? I must spend my
 time in a nursery, so you give me a
 toy?

Kira jumps up and walks over to the fallen wooden horse, and
 picks it up. She brushes it off.

KIRA (CONT'D)
 An ugly toy at that.

Henry slowly rises and takes the little horse from her. He
 holds it in his hand.

HENRY
 They say when they found me, I had
 held it so hard that the horse's
 head was imprinted in my fist.

Henry hands it back to her.

HENRY (CONT'D)
 It's the only thing I own. I
 thought you could use it to play
 with Prince Alec.

Kira drops the toy horse to the ground.

KIRA
 I don't know how to play. Swords
 are my toys. All I know is how to
 rule a kingdom...and now that is
 gone. What do I do now?

INT. KIRA'S BEDROOM -- NIGHT

A storm rages outside and the room fills one moment with a
 flash of lightning followed by a thundering boom. There is a
 crash from the direction of the nursery.

INT. ROYAL NURSERY -- NIGHT

Kira rushes into the nursery. The storm has forced open a
 window. SCREAMS are coming from underneath an overturned
 crib.

KIRA
 Alec. Where are you?

Kira pushes hard at the heavy crib and brings it upright. A
 frightened Alec squirms out of a mass of blankets.

His screams cease with the sight of Kira. She swoops him up into her arms.

KIRA (CONT'D)
Be still while I check for
injuries.

She performs a close inspection that causes the little guy to GIGGLE.

KIRA (CONT'D)
No broken bones, no wounds. Carry
on, little soldier.

She starts to set him back in the crib, but he grabs her thumb and looks beseechingly into her eyes.

Kira takes him back into her arms and sits in a comfortable chair. Her voice is soft and kind. She speaks slowly.

KIRA (CONT'D)
A wise ruler must always protect
the weak because the kingdom's
strength is determined by its
weakest subject.

The little boy closes his eyes while still holding firmly onto her hand.

KIRA (CONT'D)
I will protect you, my brother,
until you are strong. I will make
you ready to rule.

Title: THREE YEARS LATER

EXT. CASTLE COURTYARD -- DAY

Time has passed. Alec, now a toddler, sits in front of Kira as she rides her horse around the courtyard. She holds him tightly as she makes a sharp turn, stops, and starts galloping again.

King Phillip and Queen Selina watch from a balcony above the courtyard.

EXT. CASTLE BALCONY -- DAY

There is a look of pride in King Phillip's eyes as he watches Kira and the child riding in circles below. Unfortunately, the queen has more of a look of terror. He holds her close.

KING PHILLIP
She has a firm arm around him.

QUEEN SELINA
What if she falls?

The king ponders this thought for a moment while rubbing his beard.

KING PHILLIP
I'll stop her.

He raises his hand, and the queen quickly grabs it.

QUEEN SELINA
No, you might startle her. Send
for Henry.

Without saying a word, a lord-in-waiting appears, nods, and then rushes out. A few minutes pass before a breathless Henry approaches the balcony and makes a deep bow.

Peter follows him, making a slight bow and gives his sister a kiss on the cheek.

PETER
Ahh...I see your concern, dear
sister.

Henry looks down at a determined Kira, who digs her heels into the mare's sides and gallops towards a stone wall. The queen GASPS, then grips the edge of the balcony just as Kira pulls back the reins and stops the horse.

HENRY
There is no better horseman.

KING PHILLIP
Except maybe you, Henry?

Henry beams with pride. But Peter moves in front of Henry.

PETER
My sister has complained that Kira monopolizes your son. Even his nursemaids won't dress him until Kira had approved his outfit.

Queen Selina nods. Peter moves in closer.

PETER (CONT'D)
 Aren't you concerned that Kira
 might cause your son to have an
 "accident" and improve her lineage
 to the throne?

King Phillips glances down at Kira, who makes another run
 towards the wall. The king turns to Henry and rests his hand
 on Henry's shoulder.

KING PHILLIP
 Maybe you can encourage the
 princess to partake in some field
 exercises?

HENRY
 Just yesterday Kira, I mean the
 princess, mentioned that Prince
 Alec should learn fencing, the
 mace, and dagger throws.

The queen GASPS and Peter comforts her. The king lays a hand
 on Henry's shoulder.

KING PHILLIP
 I was thinking more of a Maypole or
 a picnic?

EXT. CASTLE COURTYARD -- DAY

Kira inspects a picnic basket while a servant holds the young
 Prince.

KIRA
 I don't see his figs?

SERVANT
 It is underneath the bread, M'Lady.

Kira spots the item and nods.

KIRA
 Inspection complete.

Henry approaches from behind the mare. He looks into the
 basket and pulls out a small melon.

HENRY
 A melon instead of a mace?

Kira ignores his taunting and takes the toddler from the
 servant. She holds him up to eye level.

KIRA
 Are you ready for field exercises,
 young Prince Alec?

The little boy starts GIGGLING causing Henry to LAUGH.

KIRA (CONT'D)
 He will never be prepared to rule
 in time.

HENRY
 He's got a couple of decades before
 the weight of the crown crushes his
 tiny head.

The little prince puts out his arms for Henry to hold. Henry takes the child while Kira jumps onto her horse. She reaches down for her brother.

KIRA
 Off with you, before it's off with
 your...

HENRY
 Yeah...
 (He makes a cutting
 gesture across his
 throat)
 ... right.

He waves goodbye as Kira gallops to the drawbridge.

INT. KNIGHTS' QUARTERS -- DAY

Charles walks into the knight's quarters. Mark and James cut him a wide path, while the other knights come closer.

CHARLES
 Need a couple of volunteers.

KNIGHT #1
 What's the mission?

CHARLES
 Follow the Princess.

KNIGHT #2
 She won't like that.

CHARLES
 That's why I need you to follow way
 behind.

(MORE)

CHARLES (CONT'D)

I can't even begin to describe what she'll do if she catches you.

A couple of knights rub their arms while others hold their stomachs. Most shake their heads and move away.

CHARLES (CONT'D)

Anyone?

Mark and James whisper to each other. Charles walks over and pokes Mark in the chest.

CHARLES (CONT'D)

What about you?

Henry walks in and leans against the wall. He whittles a piece of wood.

MARK

Not me, if she even thinks I've been looking at her...

James also shakes his head. Mark points at Henry.

MARK (CONT'D)

Why not send him? He follows her around like a courtyard dog anyway.

Charles looks over at Henry, who has completed his whittling into a duplicate toy horse. Henry doesn't seem to mind the obvious insult.

CHARLES

I pick you two...

Charles points at Mark and James.

CHARLES (CONT'D)

... and if you don't leave now, I'll tell her that you followed her, and it was your idea.

The two dash to their horses while the rest of the group breaks out in LAUGHTER. Henry hands the toy horse to Charles.

HENRY

For your little girl.

Charles looks at the fine workmanship, then at Mark and James as they hurry off.

CHARLES

If only we could craft our knights
this well.

INT. CASTLE THRONE ROOM -- DAY

King Phillip sits on his throne taking a little nap when Queen Selina enters the room. She sits in the chair next to him.

QUEEN SELINA

Peter is right, what prevents Kira
from getting Alec killed?

KING PHILLIP

Honor, trust, loyalty, and love.

The king takes her hand and holds it.

KING PHILLIP (CONT'D)

Kirena used to feel the same way
about how I was raising Kira to
rule and be ready for battle.

QUEEN SELINA

But Kira was your child. Alec
is....

The queen gets up from the throne and starts to pace back and forth in front of King Phillip.

QUEEN SELINA (CONT'D)

Peter says that things are bad in
Romaland. A civil war is starting,
and if King Stephen wins, they will
come down here next, and start a
war with Latavia. A wise ruler...

The king gets up and holds her tight.

KING PHILLIP

A wise ruler, doesn't listen to
Peter, so much.

EXT. COUNTRY KNOLL -- DAY

Kira sets up the perfect picnic area and then enjoys the sun on her face as Prince Alec enjoys the lunch on his face. She looks down at the castle and kingdom below.

KIRA
 To rule Latavia will require fifty
 brave and fearless knights, my
 brother.

She looks down at a bunch of grapes and grabs them. She starts to make little piles.

KIRA (CONT'D)
 You always keep a core group of
 five knights close to you - whether
 in battle or in bed. A wise ruler
 can never rest without caution.

She moves another group over to the side of the blanket. The Prince reaches over and starts to eat some of the "core knights."

KIRA (CONT'D)
 This group of ten knights is kept
 to the right of you, just outside
 your core group.

Kira notices that the core group is gone. The Prince starts to GIGGLE and one of the half-eaten grapes falls from his mouth. Kira moves another group of five grapes in.

KIRA (CONT'D)
 If one of your knights is
 injured...

She tosses the remains of the half-eaten grape off of the blanket. Suddenly there are the sounds of THREE APPROACHING HORSEMEN.

KIRA (CONT'D)
 Speaking of knights who are about
 to be injured, it sounds like
 someone is checking up on us.

Kira stands up to confront them and is blinded by the bright sun. She holds up a hand to shield her eyes and then terror spreads across her face.

KIRA (CONT'D)
 Romalanders!

Kira reaches down and grabs the Prince. She dashes towards her horse but is struck in the back of her head by one of her attackers. Both Kira and the Prince fall to the ground.

Kira grabs her sword and jumps up just as another rider approaches. She pushes Alec away.

KIRA (CONT'D)

Run Alec!

She lunges towards the horseman and slashes his tunic. The attacker brings his horse quickly around and swings a club that makes contact with her head. She is knocked unconscious.

A third horseman leans down from his mount and snatches the fleeing Prince. The first rider draws his sword and prepares to finish off Kira.

A FOURTH HORSEMAN is watching from behind a stand of trees nearby. The branches obscure his face.

HORSEMAN #4

Leave her. She is defeated.

The three Romalanders rush off with the SCREAMING Prince as their prisoner. Kira lays stricken on the ground.

EXT. CASTLE DRAWBRIDGE -- DAY

Kira rides across the drawbridge with her arms looped around the neck of her horse. Henry spots her from the courtyard and runs to the bridge just as Kira falls from her horse.

KIRA

Romalanders! Romalanders!
Romalanders!

Henry cradles her head and tears off a portion of his sleeve to stem the flow of blood from her head wound.

HENRY

The Prince?

KIRA

They took him.

HENRY

Romalanders. Are you sure?

Kira opens her hand to reveal a fabric swatch from a Romalander tunic. Henry holds it up and inspects it.

HENRY (CONT'D)

From the north.

Henry scoops Kira up and carries her towards the castle.

INT. CASTLE HALLWAY -- DAY

Henry puts Kira down in the hallway. Two squires run after him.

HENRY
Fetch the doctor.

One squire scampers off. Kira lifts her head with a pained look.

KIRA
Fetch Charles. I need Charles.

A few moments later, Charles and the doctor arrive. The doctor starts mending her wounds while trying fend off Kira that doesn't want to be worked on.

CHARLES
Who did this?

She holds out the fabric. The queen comes down the hallway.

QUEEN SELINA
Where is he? Where is my son?
Where have you taken him?

Kira tries to sit up, but grabs her head in pain. Blood drips down and the doctor quickly starts on that area.

KIRA
Romalanders. Your own people
kidnapped him.

QUEEN SELINA
No! It was you. You wanted him
dead!

A few ladies come in from outside the door. Charles guides the queen towards them. The queen SOBS.

CHARLES
Queen Selina is feeling weak,
please help her to her chambers.

After she leaves Charles sits on the side of the bed.

CHARLES (CONT'D)
You were outnumbered?

KIRA
Three, maybe four.

CHARLES
You saw their faces?

Again Kira nods.

KIRA
Gather all our troops, pack
supplies, we leave in an hour.

INT. KNIGHTS' QUARTERS -- DAY

The knights assemble their weapons and prepare their battle gear.

KNIGHT #1
She commanded all our troops go
after Prince Alec.

Charles holds up his hand.

CHARLES
We cannot move a number that great
across the border of Romaland
without causing a war. It will be
twenty. Only the blue and red
troop.

Mark and James stand off to the side WHISPERING. Charles approaches them.

JAMES
Why not the gold troop? Our troop?

CHARLES
Because you lead the gold troop.
You failed to protect the princess.
I would have been dead before I
showed myself back here after
losing Prince Alec and letting them
harm the princess.

Peter steps out of the shadows where he has been hidden from the main group.

PETER
The princess. I think suspicion
should be on Princess Kira, not on
Mark or James. Plus, they saw the
kidnappers, they will be helpful.

Charles glares at the two.

CHARLES
Join the red troop, but do not ride
anywhere near me.

EXT. CASTLE DRAWBRIDGE -- DAY

Kira and Charles lead the blue and red troops of knights towards the drawbridge. Henry brings up the rear.

Henry looks up towards the balcony and waves at the king who waves back. Kira looks back at her father as he turns away.

EXT. ROAD TO THE FORBIDDEN LANDS -- DAY

The group rides hard with Charles and Kira in the lead. Henry tries to move up along the red and blue group but must spend most of the time being consumed by their dust.

EXT. GREAT DIVIDE RAVINE -- DAY

The group reaches a rope bridge and halts. Henry finally makes it to the front and rides up next to Kira. He points breathlessly across the bridge.

HENRY
The forbidden lands.

Kira moves her horse to cross the bridge first and Henry is able to maneuver close behind her.

As they carefully ride across the bridge to the east, twenty horsemen approach from the north.

CHARLES
Romalanders!

Kira looks at the Romalanders approaching and then at Charles. She looks at the bridge, then back at Charles. He nods.

Kira and Henry dig their heels into the sides of their horses. They gallop quickly to the other side. A few Romalanders try to follow them, but the Latavian knights intercept them.

Another Romalander breaks away and sprints towards the bridge.

Kira cuts the ropes holding the bridge. Kira and Henry are now stranded on the other side as the Latavian knights battle the Romalanders.

EXT. ROAD THROUGH THE FORBIDDEN LANDS -- NIGHT

Kira and Henry charge forward into the forbidden lands alone. Their pace slows as darkness consumes the sky.

HENRY
Why, again?

KIRA
I told you a thousand times,
Charles told me to.

HENRY
They won't be able to fix that
bridge tonight in the dark. We are
alone.

Henry holds up his hand.

HENRY (CONT'D)
I can't see a thing. I fear we
might run into a tree.

KIRA
Are you afraid of the dark?

HENRY
Afraid only for my horse since we
have no others.

Kira stops and gets down from her horse. She takes the reins and ties it to a tree beside the road. Henry follows her and they both remove their saddles and gear. A light mist starts to fall. Henry holds up his hand.

HENRY (CONT'D)
My horse loves the rain and he'll
appreciate the cool of the night.

Henry looks around and grabs a few branches.

HENRY (CONT'D)
I prefer shelter.

Kira walks a few feet away from the road and inspects a large rock wall.

KIRA
I see an opening.

She motions for Henry to join her.

KIRA (CONT'D)
It's an abandoned cave.

Henry comes over and peers into the dark opening.

HENRY
You have no proof that it is
abandoned. I'm not going in there.

Kira gives Henry a hearty pat on the back.

KIRA
Grab the gear and let's get some
sleep.

Kira pats her sword.

KIRA (CONT'D)
I will protect you from the
monsters of the night.

Henry turns and mutters to himself.

HENRY
It's not monsters that I'm afraid
of.

INT. CAVE -- NIGHT

Kira and Henry settle in for the night and only a faint beam of moonlight illuminates their faces. Henry stares up at the cave ceiling.

HENRY
You're still mad.

Kira turns towards him and props herself up on one elbow.

KIRA
Why should I be? I like being
called a monster.

HENRY
That's not what I meant.

KIRA
Maybe you meant that it would be
monstrous to sleep next to me?

HENRY
Sort of.

Henry rolls over, away from Kira.

KIRA
I don't snore like the other
knights.

She pokes him in the back.

KIRA (CONT'D)
Maybe you do. You're probably the
monster.

Henry rolls back over and grabs her hand. He pins it above her head and leans over her. They are both aware of the closeness. Kira pulls her hand free and pushes him away.

KIRA (CONT'D)
Get some sleep. It's a long ride
to the border tomorrow.

INT. CAVE -- DAY

Kira and Henry sleep soundly as two hideous TWIN TROLLS, ABOO and PEEK, tower over them.

ABOO
It's my turn.

PEEK
You ate the bigger warthog last
week.

Peek pokes at Henry.

PEEK (CONT'D)
This one is mine.

Henry MOANS and rolls over.

HENRY
(muttering in his sleep)
You win, Kira.

Kira stirs and rolls over. The sun starts to shine into the cave. She partially shields her eyes and squints at the trolls. Finally the horrendous sight comes into focus as she GASPS. Peek gives Kira a little nudge.

PEEK
Maybe this one is bigger. It
certainly looks tastier.

Kira grabs her sword, flips upright and lunges towards the pair.

Aboo seizes the sword and lifts it into the air with Kira dangling from the other end. Kira drops to the ground as Henry slowly wakes up.

HENRY
Is it morning?

Henry sits up, rubbing his eyes. He looks over and notices Kira's bed is empty. Then he spots her lying on the ground next to it.

HENRY (CONT'D)
You rolled out of your bed. Who is
the monster now?

Aboo inspects the sword and starts to use it as a tooth pick. Peek reaches up and grabs it.

PEEK
Gimme.

ABOO
I had it first.

Aboo tries to take it back, but Peek holds it out to the side. Henry looks up and focuses on the two. He remains perfectly still and leans towards Kira.

HENRY
(whispering)
Kira. Kira, wake up.

Kira gets up and brushes herself up.

KIRA
I'm awake, you idiot. I've been
battling these monsters alone.

Peek drops the sword in shock.

PEEK
Monsters? Where?

They move back towards the cave entrance in unison. They are attached at the hip.

ABOO
I don't see any monsters.

PEEK
She must mean out there.

Peek peers out the cave door into the sunlight.

ABOO
 Maybe she meant you. You look
 hairable.

PEEK
 Horrible? I don't get it.

Aboo reaches over, and taps Peek on the head.

ABOO
 Hair, hair, hairable. You haven't
 combed your hair in days.

They both laugh in unison. Peek slaps his thigh.

PEEK
 That is a good one. Another one,
 another one.

ABOO
 What is mightier than the mightiest
 king, more evil than the devil, and
 you'll die if you eat it?

EXT. LATAVIA FOREST GLEN -- DAY

King Phillip and three knights ride into the glen where four monks stand. The king and his knights dismount as the monks pull back their hoods.

KING PHILLIP
 Your presence answers my question.

One of the monks, KING STEPHEN (60s,) unties his cape to reveal the royal crest of Romaland.

KING STEPHEN
 A king who would kidnap children
 deserves death. I would never
 touch your son.

King Phillip opens his hand to reveal the fabric swatch of Romaland. King Stephen takes the fabric and inspects it.

KING STEPHEN (CONT'D)
 Northlanders. Our civil war has
 claimed more victims.

KING PHILLIP
 Why would they want war with me?

KING STEPHEN

Your armies cannot cross the
forbidden lands. To fight the
north, you must conquer the south.

KING PHILLIP

That would weaken both of us.

A lone horseman approaches from the distance. All three of King Phillip's knights draw their swords as the three "monks" toss off their robes to reveal the full battle gear of Romalander knights.

As the horseman nears, we see that it is actually Queen Selina. Her eyes are focused on King Stephen.

QUEEN SELINA

Murderer!

INT. CAVE OF THE TWIN TROLLS -- DAY

Kira and Henry sit across from Peek and Aboo. All four are eating berries and some bread. Henry makes some scratches in the dirt with his knife.

HENRY

That's seven for you and nine for
us.

ABOO

You shouldn't have gotten credit
for the first one.

KIRA

I got it right. Nothing is
mightier than the mightiest king -
and if I eat nothing, I die.

PEEK

But you were not trying to answer
the riddle, you were arguing that
nothing would be mightier than you
if you were a king.

KIRA

I'm lucky and right. Just one more
and we get to go free.

She taps at the score in the dirt.

KIRA (CONT'D)

That was the deal.

PEEK

The deal is that we don't eat you.
Now it's our turn to catch up,
gimme another riddle, Henry.

Henry starts to stroke his chin.

HENRY

There are six birds on a fence and
you shoot one with an arrow, and
kill another by throwing a rock.
How many are left?

ABOO

That's easy, four.

KIRA

Wrong. There would be none, since
they would all fly away in fear.

HENRY

Exactly. Let's have our riddle.

Henry picks up a piece of wood and starts to whittle with his
knife. Peek and Aboo put their heads together and whisper.

EXT. LATAVIA FOREST GLEN -- DAY

King Phillip has a difficult time restraining Queen Selina as
she kicks and squirms against his firm grip.

QUEEN SELINA

Let me go. I'll kill him myself.

King Stephen tries to offer a comforting hand, but she spits
on it.

QUEEN SELINA (CONT'D)

Murderer.

King Stephen uses the swatch of fabric to wipe it off.

KING STEPHEN

Let her go, Phillip. Her rage is
justified.

QUEEN SELINA

So it is true. You killed my
husband.

King Stephen bows his head in shame.

KING STEPHEN

It is our civil war that killed King Alexander. I might as well have drawn the sword myself.

QUEEN SELINA

You killed him to seize the throne for the south.

She spits again but it misses its mark.

KING STEPHEN

We found King Alexander's body in their deserted camp.

He holds out a comforting hand. She starts to push it away, but pauses.

KING STEPHEN (CONT'D)

He had been dead for days before our troops arrived.

The queen starts struggling again to get free of King Phillip's hold.

QUEEN SELINA

Liar. My husband's knights would have died before letting harm come to their king.

KING STEPHEN

Are they alive today? I risked my life to tell you that I do not have your son.

QUEEN SELINA

Then who killed my husband?

KING STEPHEN

Find your son and you'll have your answer.

This time King Stephen reaches out and grasps her arm.

KING STEPHEN (CONT'D)

King Phillip is your husband now. He gave you asylum and a son. Let us help you find your son.

INT. CAVE OF THE TWIN TROLLS -- DAY

Kira and Henry whisper with their heads together. Aboo and Peek seem pleased.

ABOO
Time is up.

Kira holds up a cautious hand.

KIRA
Wait, we almost have it.

HENRY
It's simple, a sword.

Kira holds a finger to his mouth.

KIRA
That's not our answer.

HENRY
If I go into battle with only one
thing, it has to be a sword.

KIRA
Too simple, too obvious.

Henry continues with his whittling and it appears that he is
creating a toy wooden horse.

HENRY
How can I defeat my enemy without a
sword?

KIRA
Without a shield, you would be dead
before you made the first lunge.

Kira jumps up and starts pacing.

KIRA (CONT'D)
With a sword, I cannot protect
myself, with a shield and I cannot
defeat my enemy.

She looks intently at the twin trolls. They each have a bow
and arrow strapped across their backs.

KIRA (CONT'D)
Too easy.

EXT. CAVE OF THE TWIN TROLLS -- DAY

Aboo and Peek follow Kira and Henry out of the cave. Both
heads droop on their chests. Kira looks sternly at the pair.

KIRA
Look at you two. Those short legs,
big bellies...

Kira packs her gear.

KIRA (CONT'D)
... plus you're out of breath from
this short walk.

PEEK
Our mother told us to never leave
the cave.

ABOO
She said that we're hideous.

Henry pulls Kira aside.

HENRY
They might be helpful.

Kira breaks away and continues packing her gear.

KIRA
They would slow us down.

HENRY
Think of the protection they could
offer.

Kira throws her remaining gear on her horse. She turns in
fury.

KIRA
Protection? Are you saying that I
can't protect myself?

Kira jumps on her horse.

KIRA (CONT'D)
I will find my brother and bring
him safely home.

She digs her heels into the horse's sides. The horse jumps
forward and Kira takes one final look back at the dejected
trolls.

KIRA (CONT'D)
Without anybody's help.

Henry grabs his own gear and looks at the twin trolls who are
almost in tears. They hold out the reins to his horse.

HENRY
Kira's answer to the riddle was
wrong.

PEEK
You would not take a bow and arrow
into battle?

ABOO
Is the answer the sword?

HENRY
If I could only take one thing into
battle...

Henry takes the reins and jumps up on his horse.

HENRY (CONT'D)
... it would be my friends.

He pulls the toy horse out of his saddlebags and hands it to
the pair.

INT. QUEEN'S BEDROOM -- DAY

The queen rests peacefully as the king leans towards her lady-
in-waiting from a chair next to the bed.

KING PHILLIP
How long has she been asleep?

LADY-IN-WAITING
For over three hours now.

As the queen stirs, King Phillip reaches over and takes her
hand.

KING PHILLIP
Feeling better?

QUEEN SELINA
Any news?

KING PHILLIP
Charles reports that it will take
another day to repair the rope
bridge.

QUEEN SELINA
Do you believe King Stephen?

KING PHILLIP
I believe the truth and the truth
is that Alexander was killed by he
who would benefit by war.

QUEEN SELINA
Or she?

The king drops her hand and stands up.

KING PHILLIP
You can't mean Kira?

QUEEN SELINA
She led exercises into Romaland,
she hates me and all Romalanders.
She let Alec be taken.

KING PHILLIP
That is absurd.

QUEEN SELINA
Who cut the rope bridge? It was
Kira. She doesn't want any
witnesses when she kills Alec.

KING PHILLIP
Don't you think you've insulted
enough innocent people for one day?

The king starts to leave but turns back around to glare at
the queen.

KING PHILLIP (CONT'D)
If you want to accuse someone, why
not ask your brother where he was
the day your husband was killed?

INT. CASTLE THRONE ROOM -- DAY

Mark and James bow in front of the king as he paces back and
forth in front of the throne. They don't look up.

MARK
I saw nothing either.

KING PHILLIP
While my daughter was attacked and
my son kidnapped, you both were
tied to a tree?

JAMES
We were gravely wounded, your
Highness.

KING PHILLIP
Why was she out of your sight?

JAMES
Charles told us that she'd be
furious if followed.

KING PHILLIP
A great knight can be there...

The king points to an imaginary spot on the rug.

KING PHILLIP (CONT'D)
... without being seen. Do you
always obey Charles?

MARK
Always, especially since the
time...

James pushes him.

KING PHILLIP
What time? Has Charles been
unfair?

MARK
Nothing, Your Lord.

The king comes over to Mark and picks him up by the neck.

KING PHILLIP
Speak or I'll replace my hand with
the sword.

MARK
The princess was talking about who
would be king if Prince Alec was
sick or missing and...

The king drops Mark and storms towards the door.

KING PHILLIP
Guards. Get me Charles.

INT. QUEEN'S BEDROOM -- DAY

The queen paces by the window. A squire stands before her.

SQUIRE

His bed was not slept in last night, although it is not uncommon for him to share the bed of...

The squire realizes his blunder and turns red.

SQUIRE (CONT'D)

I am sorry your Highness, but the maids have not seen him.

QUEEN SELINA

Did you look in the kitchen? He often partakes in the spirits.

SQUIRE

None of the cooks have seen him all day.

The queen looks out the window. She has a look of concern.

QUEEN SELINA

My brother might be able go without his wench, but never without his wine.

EXT. ROAD TO ROMALAND -- DAY

Henry and Kira ride side-by-side along the country road. Kira looks cautiously over at Henry.

KIRA

We'll be over the mountains before nightfall.

Henry merely nods.

KIRA (CONT'D)

We could stop first for dinner.

Henry looks away.

KIRA (CONT'D)

They were a risk, but I wasn't going to leave without you.

Henry stops his horse.

HENRY

A risk to whom? Prince Alec? To the quest? To your glorious victory?

Kira turns her horse around and faces Henry.

KIRA

I don't know. I don't know how to find the kidnappers and I don't know how to get him back.

Kira's head falls.

KIRA (CONT'D)

I don't even know how to protect my future king, so how could I have ever thought I could rule?

Henry pulls his horse along side Kira's. He takes her hand.

HENRY

You don't need to know everything.

He holds her hand to his chest.

HENRY (CONT'D)

The heart will give you the answers.

Kira pulls her hand away.

KIRA

My heart is empty. I'd rather have twenty knights with twenty horses and swords.

Kira pulls her horse ahead. Henry falls in behind her and whispers to himself.

HENRY

When will you learn that one true friend is worth the strength of a dozen?

INT. CASTLE GREAT ROOM -- DAY

King Phillip paces back and forth in front of the window as Charles rushes into the room.

CHARLES

My Lord?

KING PHILLIP

Kira.

Charles joins the king at the window.

CHARLES
Say no more, and know this as my
friend...

Charles places a firm hand on the king's shoulder.

CHARLES (CONT'D)
... although she once resented
Prince Alec, her heart is now true.

KING PHILLIP
How long until the bridge is
repaired?

CHARLES
It is almost complete. We ride at
dawn.

The king is silent as he looks out at the village.

KING PHILLIP
You are so far behind her now.

CHARLES
We both agreed to cut the rope
bridge.

KING PHILLIP
But who thought of it first? Why
was Kira alone with Alec that day?
Why, why, why?

CHARLES
Kira is not a kidnapper.

KING PHILLIP
I wish I had your confidence. I
raised her to be fearless,
ruthless, protect the kingdom at
all costs. Regardless of what you
find...

The king comes up and grabs Charles's arm.

KING PHILLIP (CONT'D)
... bring my daughter home to me.

INT. QUEEN'S BEDROOM -- DAY

Mark and James stand uncomfortably in front of the queen who
brushes her hair.

QUEEN SELINA

It was her and not Charles who cut the rope bridge...cutting you all off from the kidnapers and Alec?

They both nod.

MARK

She has been planning this for years. We have always seen her and Henry ride off to the knoll between here and Romaland.

QUEEN SELINA

During these trips the two made to the border, did the princess ever speak of the person she and Henry were meeting?

JAMES

She would have punished us with a colossal vengeance if we had pried.

The queen lays down her brush and picks up a velvet pouch and a scarf.

QUEEN SELINA

I will be most grateful if you honor me by riding tomorrow with my colors.

She holds out the scarf, which James takes with a slight bow. She reaches over and takes Mark's hand and opens it.

QUEEN SELINA (CONT'D)

It would also honor me if you accepted this small token.

She places the velvet pouch in his hand and closes his fingers around it. They both drop quickly to one knee.

JAMES

We pledge our lives for you.

She lays a gentle hand on Mark's shoulder.

QUEEN SELINA

Not for me, but for my son. Bring Prince Alec home to me.

MARK

What about his kidnapers?

QUEEN SELINA
Punish her with a vengeance.

EXT. MONSTROUS MOUNTAIN -- DAY

Kira and Henry stop at the face of an enormous mountain, that is literally - a giant face. There is an opening that looks like a huge mouth.

KIRA
It is too steep to scale. We'll
have to make way through that
tunnel.

HENRY
I cannot see light at the other
side.

KIRA
Afraid of the dark again?

Henry gives his horse a little kick and he rides towards the opening. Just as he starts to enter the tunnel, the Monstrous Mountain comes alive. Boulders start tumbling and it appears that the mountain is GROANING.

KIRA (CONT'D)
Watch out. It's closing.

Just as Henry enters the tunnel, it caves in. His horse throws him as it is frightened away. Henry lies trapped beneath a mound of dirt and rocks. Kira runs to his side.

KIRA (CONT'D)
Are you hurt?

HENRY
Just my legs.

Kira looks at the mound of dirt and she starts pushing it off of Henry. With each handful she removes, more seems to slide on top of him. Kira leans close to Henry.

KIRA
(whispering)
It doesn't want to let you go. Lay
still.

Kira moves behind Henry and grab his arms. She starts to pull him free of the debris. The mountain GROANS again and moves closer to Henry.

KIRA (CONT'D)
(loudly)
I wonder what that is over there?

Kira stands up and points at something on the far side of the mountain.

KIRA (CONT'D)
I'll go see.

She leans down close to Henry and whispers.

KIRA (CONT'D)
Try to work yourself free.

Kira runs over to the far side of the mountain and picks up some rocks. She starts throwing them.

KIRA (CONT'D)
It's warthogs. They are trying to cross the Monstrous Mountain. I'll kill one for dinner.

She continues to throw rocks and the Monstrous Mountain GROANS and starts to turn towards that side.

KIRA (CONT'D)
Hurry Henry and help me, before they get away.

The Monstrous Mountain makes a SQUEAK of interest to her activities and Henry is able to pull himself away from the mound of dirt. He takes a few steps away and collapses. Kira looks back and sees that he is free.

KIRA (CONT'D)
They are gone.

The mountain seems to sag in disappointment.

KIRA (CONT'D)
No warthog stew for dinner, my friend.

Kira walks sadly towards Henry and leans down close to him.

KIRA (CONT'D)
It worked. Can you ride?

Henry shakes his head, rubs his legs and closes his eyes in pain.

HENRY
Continue without me.

Kira jumps up and puts her hands on her hips.

KIRA
I don't know where I'd ride.
Obviously I can't go through the
tunnel, or over the mountain...

She walks up to her horse and pulls her gear back down.

KIRA (CONT'D)
... we might as well make dinner
and get some rest.

EXT. CAMP OF THE KIDNAPPERS -- DAY

Two kidnappers, BART and DIRK sit across from Prince Alec. The three of them are playing a game with four sticks and three rocks. Alec appears to be winning. Another kidnapper, OWEN rides up.

OWEN
No sign of them, yet.

Bart and Dirk don't notice Owen and continue to concentrate on the game. Owen walks into the middle of the little circle.

OWEN (CONT'D)
This is no time for games.

He kicks the sticks and rocks, causing them to scatter. Prince Alec WAILS in fear. The little Prince starts to run away.

OWEN (CONT'D)
Grab him and tie him up.

DIRK
He's just a little kid, boss.

Bart catches the Prince and ushers him back to the clearing.

BART
See, he's being good.

OWEN
You two idiots choose. Either that
kid gets the ropes...

Owen struts over and hits Dirk hard with the back of his hand.

OWEN (CONT'D)
... or you do.

BART
But the Master said that the kid
better not be found with any
bruises.

OWEN
Alive. He said the brat better not
be found alive with bruises.

Owen pushes Bart aside and grabs the Prince by the back of the shirt. He drops him in front of Dirk.

OWEN (CONT'D)
Tie him up, or kill him. It
doesn't matter to me.

EXT. MONSTROUS MOUNTAIN -- DAY

Kira has set up an efficient camp and made a makeshift bed for Henry. A roaring campfire contains a pot of stew bubbling.

HENRY
Smells good. What did you manage
to kill for dinner?

KIRA
Sometimes it's better not to ask.

She scoops out a bowl of the brew and hands it to Henry.

KIRA (CONT'D)
Eat every bit of it, or there will
be no berry pie for you.

She lifts a pie from the makeshift rock oven and fans the steaming treat. There is a loud SNIFF. She looks over at Henry who is eating heartily.

KIRA (CONT'D)
Don't worry, you'll get some.

HENRY
What?

Again, a loud SNIFF, SNIFF. Both of them look around. There is nobody in sight. Kira sets the pie down and slowly unsheathes her sword. All is quiet.

HENRY (CONT'D)
Must be our imagination.

Kira grabs her own bowl and fills it. She removes the stew pot from the campfire and sets it aside. Another SNIFF, SNIFF. This time she turns around quickly and catches the source of the sniffing.

KIRA
It's the mountain.

She grabs the pot of stew and brings it closer to the mountain. A louder SNIFF, SNIFF.

She cautiously moves towards the former tunnel and sets the pot down. There is RUMBLING, rocks tumble down, and then the pot disappears.

KIRA (CONT'D)
Well, so much for courtesies.

Suddenly, there is another loud RUMBLING and the tunnel opens wide. Light appears from the other side. With a sharp PING, the pot is shot out of the tunnel and lands at Kira's feet.

Henry struggles to get up and walks stiffly around the camp.

HENRY
A little pie for your new friend,
and we can be on our way.

They both saddle up and ride through the mountain's tunnel. On the other side, the tunnel is in the shape of a smile.

INT. KNIGHTS' QUARTERS -- NIGHT

Mark and James pack their gear as the other knights are also preparing for the journey in the morning.

JAMES
Just shut up.

Mark moves close to James and whispers.

MARK
But if we double cross him, he'll
kill us.

JAMES
Our first loyalty is to Queen
Selina.

James reaches into Mark's tunic and pulls out the velvet pouch.

JAMES (CONT'D)
Remember this is just the beginning
of our rewards that were promised.

EXT. ROAD TO ROMALAND -- NIGHT

Kira and Henry make camp for the night. Henry walks with a limp around the perimeter as Kira pokes the fire. Two bedrolls lay close to the glow of the flames.

KIRA
You should rest.

She moves her gear away from the fire. The toy wooden horse that Henry made for her falls out. He picks up the toy.

HENRY
You brought it. For luck?

Kira grabs it and shoves it deep into the bag.

KIRA
For Alec. To keep him quiet.

HENRY
I hear something.

KIRA
Monsters again?

Henry's frown turns to a smile when he notices the grin on Kira's face. He limps back to the bedroll and sits down. He rubs his leg.

HENRY
I'm slowing you down.

She shakes her head as she joins him on the next bedroll.

KIRA
We'll be at the border by tomorrow eve. They will not cross far into Romaland with Prince Alec until they see how many armies my father is willing to risk to save him. My father depends on me to save Alec and prevent war, but I don't know how.

Henry turns and faces Kira. He props his head on his elbow.

HENRY
Your heart told you to come on this
quest. Your heart knew the answer
to the riddle and to feed the
mountain.

Henry reaches over and strokes her hair.

HENRY (CONT'D)
Born blind but can conquer all.
What is it?

Kira ponders this.

KIRA
It's a bear or a dragon. Aren't
dragons born blind?

HENRY
It's love. Love is blind and love
conquers all.

Kira sits up with a bolt.

KIRA
I hear it too.

HENRY
Love?

Kira grabs her sword and runs towards the bushes. In a few
moments she comes back with three tiny frogs in her hand.

KIRA
Thes are driving me crazy.

ME FROG
Which one is driving?

CRAZY FROG
I'm crazy, I woke up feeling crazy
and I've been that all day.

DRIVING FROG
Don't call me crazy. I guess I'm
driving.

Kira stares in disbelief at the talking frogs.

KIRA
You are talking.

DRIVING FROG

We were singing until you ripped us out of our bush and gave us these silly names.

KIRA

Names?

ME FROG

You said we were driving, me, and crazy.

HENRY

What were you singing?

Crazy jumps down from Kira's hand and hops over to Henry.

CRAZY FROG

A fan.

Crazy frowns at Kira.

CRAZY FROG (CONT'D)

He can tell that we were singing. You yelled for us to stop that noise. It wasn't noise -- it was singing.

Kira grabs her head.

KIRA

In a few hours, I face the biggest test of my life. I have to get at least a few hours of sleep and you are driving me crazy.

She grabs Crazy and the rest and crams the three frogs into her tunic pocket.

KIRA (CONT'D)

Tomorrow I'll give you new names.

From inside the tunic pocket, Crazy screams a muffled question.

CRAZY FROG

What will be our new names?

KIRA

What's for breakfast? Breakfast will be your new names. After I save my brother, I'm eating all three in the morning to celebrate.

The frogs grow silent. One lone frog MUFFLES a last question. Kira opens up the tunic to hear him.

KIRA (CONT'D)

What?

CRAZY FROG

You can call me crazy.

EXT. CASTLE COURTYARD -- DAY

Charles leads the knights out of the castle. He looks back at the balcony as the king waves goodbye.

The queen also waves, but not at him. Charles looks back and sees that Mark and James wear the queen's colors. He looks back up at the queen who is focused on the pair.

EXT. CAVE OF THE TWIN TROLLS -- DAY

Charles and his group of knights ride up to the cave of the twin trolls. Aboo and Peek are sitting outside the cave throwing rocks. Charles holds up his hand for the group to halt.

CHARLES

Greetings from Latavia.

ABOO

We don't like Latavians.

The twins get up and tower over Charles and his knights.

CHARLES

There were Latavians before us? A princess and her squire?

PEEK

We might have seen them.

CHARLES

We must find them. There has been a kidnapping.

Aboo's head drops sadly on his chest.

ABOO

She called us fat.

Mark and James ride up to the front of the group.

JAMES
She will be punished.

Charles holds up his hand again.

CHARLES
Let the trolls speak.

PEEK
Will you take us along?

JAMES
That depends on what you know. Did the princess have a little boy with her? A Prince?

Aboo and Peek put their heads together and WHISPER. James pulls out his sword and points it towards the pair.

JAMES (CONT'D)
Tell us now.

Peek reaches over and plucks James from his horse. He holds him up at eye-level.

PEEK
We're trying to remember. You're confusing us.

Charles takes out his sword and rushes towards the pair. They immediately drop James and back up towards the cave opening and cower.

ABOO
We didn't hurt him. There's no need to be so mean.

Aboo reaches into the cave and pulls out a toy wooden horse. He shows it to Charles.

ABOO (CONT'D)
Does this answer your question?

EXT. POISON SNAKE BRIDGE -- DAY

Kira and Henry bring their horses to a halt at a bridge that crosses a deep ravine. The bridge shimmers in the partial morning shadows.

HENRY
It doesn't look safe.

Kira moves her horse gingerly onto the first few feet of the bridge.

KIRA
Again, the fearless must...

Suddenly the far side of the bridge turns into a SNAKE'S HEAD. With a frightening HISS, the head turns and strikes Kira's horse. The horse rears up, throwing Kira to the ground.

The horse starts foaming at the mouth, then falls stiffly into the ravine.

Kira quickly scampers out of the range of the snake. Henry looks down into the ravine at the dead horse.

HENRY
It has a bite that appears more
deadly than yours.

Kira takes out her sword and rushes to the bridge.

KIRA
It killed my horse.

As she draws her sword high to stab the snake, it turns back into wood and her sword is now stuck in the wood. She tugs at the sword as the bridge is again transformed into a snake.

HENRY
Kira!

As Kira looks up, the snake's head reels back to strike. She quickly grabs her sword and moves out of its range. Suddenly, a ray of sun peaks through the trees and the snake turns its head to face the sun.

It has a content look as it closes its eyes and transforms itself back into a bridge.

HENRY (CONT'D)
I think it has fallen asleep.

Henry gets off his horse and takes a step onto the bridge just as the trees again shade the sun. There is another loud HISS.

KIRA
Get back.

Kira runs up and grabs him by the back of his tunic, picks up her sword and pulls him just out of reach before the snake turns and strikes again. They both tumble to the edge of the ravine.

Sitting up, Kira and Henry brush the dirt off their tunics and look down at the ravine.

HENRY

It will take us the whole day to climb down there and back up the other side.

Henry looks up towards the sun that is close to clearing the tree line. Kira springs up and walks close to the bridge.

KIRA

It killed my horse, I will kill it.

HENRY

If it was that easy, You'd think by now someone would have killed it.

Kira scratches her head.

KIRA

Exactly. It's not dead because it serves a purpose.

Henry looks down at the ravine.

HENRY

Killing horses?

Kira reaches down and picks up a rock. She throws it at a portion of the bridge that is in the sun. It lands with a THUD. The snake doesn't move.

KIRA

Why do you never see a snake at noon?

HENRY

Another riddle?

The sun starts shining on the rest of the snake. Kira throws more rocks that just land with thuds.

KIRA

Snakes sleep in the daytime. Let's go.

They cross the bridge.

EXT. ROAD TO ROMALAND -- DAY

Kira and Henry ride towards the border. Kira sits behind Henry, but keeps a firm grip on the reins.

EXT. CAVE OF THE TWIN TROLLS -- NIGHT

Aboo and Peek sit inside the cave, warming themselves by a campfire. Aboo smashes two rocks together in anger.

ABOO

He didn't have to take my toy horse.

PEEK

You were stupid to show it to him.

Peek reaches over and takes one of the rocks away to stop the smashing noise.

PEEK (CONT'D)

Now he thinks Kira had a little boy with him.

ABOO

She called us fat.

PEEK

Henry made that little horse for me.

ABOO

It was mine. He made it for me.

PEEK

Now neither one of us has it and that man is angry with Kira.

Aboo rubs his belly.

ABOO

I guess we have put on a little weight lately.

EXT. BORDER OF ROMALAND -- NIGHT

The sun has set. Although Kira still sits behind Henry, she pulls on the reins of the horse to stop.

KIRA

Look.

Kira points to some smoke coming from a group of trees ahead. They get off the horse and Henry ties it to a tree. Kira motions for Henry to hush and follow her into the trees.

EXT. CAMP OF THE KIDNAPPERS -- NIGHT

The three kidnappers sleep soundly with Prince Alec between them. Kira and Henry enter the camp and Kira draws her sword.

As she walks closer to the group, there is the THUNDERING of horse hoofs. She turns around as Peter and three HORSEMEN ride into the camp.

PETER
Welcome Princess.

He gets down from his horse with a flare and executes a mocking bow. The three kidnappers sit up.

PETER (CONT'D)
We've been waiting for you.

Henry turns toward Kira.

HENRY
What have you done? How did they know we were coming?

PETER
She has trained her whole life for this moment.

Peter takes out his sword and holds it close to the neck of a still sleeping Prince Alec.

PETER (CONT'D)
Would you like to kill the brat yourself, or let me do the honor as we agreed?

Henry rushes towards Peter, but Dirk intercepts Henry's plunge and sends him to the ground. Dirk knocks Henry unconscious with the handle of his sword.

PETER (CONT'D)
Tie him up until dawn.

KIRA
What happens at dawn?

PETER

You and your brother will die along
with this new enemy I created for
you.

Peter kicks Henry who GROANS. Kira takes a step towards him
with her sword drawn high.

KIRA

Why not kill us all now?

Peter laughs.

PETER

Always ready to battle, my little
Princess? Make a choice.

Peter moves his sword across Prince Alec's neck. Kira drops
her sword and her head in defeat.

PETER (CONT'D)

If I kill you now, the forest
animals will eat your remains
before your knights get here
tomorrow night. I want them to see
how you killed your brother, and
then were killed by your squire.

Peter gestures for one of his horsemen to take over holding
the sword at Prince Alec's neck.

PETER (CONT'D)

There is nothing I would enjoy more
than watching you die, Princess.

Peter takes the ropes from Owen and walks up to Kira.

PETER (CONT'D)

I must be back at the castle to
comfort my sister when she hears of
her son's death.

Kira spits in his face.

KIRA

My father will kill you.

Peter slowly wipes it off his cheek.

PETER

Ah, the good King Phillip. He will
be devastated when he hears of his
daughter's betrayal.

He hits Kira harshly across the face with the back of his hand.

PETER (CONT'D)

If he doesn't die of a broken heart, then maybe I can help hurry his death along some other way. I will be by my sister's side as she rules Latavia and takes back our Romaland.

Kira kicks and bites her captors as five of the kidnappers and horsemen try to tie her up.

EXT. ROAD TO ROMALAND -- NIGHT

Charles raises his hand to signal the others to stop. James moves to the front, along side of Charles.

JAMES

Why are we stopping?

CHARLES

We can't see more than a few feet in front of us and this looks like their camp.

Charles gets off his horse and picks up the discarded and battered stew pot.

JAMES

I'm sure they are just on the other side of this mountain, let's press on.

CHARLES

I'm surprised at your recent concern for her welfare.

Charles reaches up and tugs at the queen's scarf.

CHARLES (CONT'D)

We camp here and cross the mountain at dawn.

Charles tosses the pot at James as he dismounts from his horse.

CHARLES (CONT'D)

Go kill something for dinner...

Charles points towards Mark.

CHARLES (CONT'D)
... and preferably not that idiot
friend of yours.

EXT. CAMP OF THE KIDNAPPERS -- NIGHT

Kira and Henry are tied back-to-back close to the campfire.
The other kidnappers have joined Prince Alec in a deep sleep.

HENRY
You refused to go on this quest,
you refused to take the trolls
along who might have helped us,
you wouldn't leave me behind at the
hungry mountain, and then there is
the way you treated the singing
frogs. It all adds up.

KIRA
If you're so smart, why am I tied
up like you?

HENRY
I don't know everything like you,
but I'm not sure I can trust you.

KIRA
Reach around into my tunic and give
me the frogs.

HENRY
That's gross. They were hardly a
mouthful, but you saved some for
later?

KIRA
I didn't eat the frogs, I brought
them along.

Henry reaches into her tunic.

CRAZY FROG
Hey watch the goods, buddy.

Henry pulls them out. Me and Driving cough and gasp for air.

KIRA
Quiet. If you undo our ropes, I'll
set you free.

The three frogs put their heads together and whisper.

CRAZY FROG
We're already free.

They start singing in unison.

FROGS
Born free, as free as the wind
blows, as free as the...

KIRA
Stop that horrible singing.

Kira looks around frantically.

HENRY
It wasn't that bad, considering
they are frogs.

KIRA
Stop before they wake up.

Kira gestures with her chin towards the sleeping kidnapers.

KIRA (CONT'D)
You are not free. Freedom means
protection from your enemies.
Freedom means you are safe. I can
keep you safe.

The three frogs put their heads together again. They nod.

DRIVING FROG
It's a deal, with one condition...

The three start untying the princess.

KIRA
Anything.

ME FROG
Safe means you don't eat us.

DRIVING FROG
Freedom means you don't stick us in
that pocket again.

CRAZY FROG
And we pick our own names...

Crazy tugs at the ropes at Kira's feet. Finally the ropes
come off.

HENRY
You're free.

On cue, the frogs start singing again.

FROGS
Born free...

KIRA
Hush, you'll wake them.

The frogs stop as a few of the others start to stir as Kira begins to untie Henry. He pulls away.

HENRY
Leave me and get the Prince.

Kira looks over at Prince Alec who is sleeping between Dirk and Bart. She shakes her head and pulls one of Henry's hands free.

KIRA
I've got a plan.

Bart turns over and hits his head on a rock. He GROANS and sits up rubbing his eyes. He focuses on Kira who is kneeling next to Henry.

BART
Hey.

Kira picks up a rock, but Henry grabs her arm.

HENRY
For once, listen to me and run for help.

Kira drops the rock and dashes towards the stand of trees at the edge of the forest glen.

EXT. ROMALAND FOREST GLEN -- DAY

Kira bursts through the trees and finds the group of horses tied up. Both Bart and Dirk are close behind her. As she jumps over a log, Bart stumbles.

BART
Get her.

Kira reaches Henry's horse, Augusta and unties it just as Dirk clears the log. He makes a flying leap towards her, but falls short. He manages to grab Kira's leg.

KIRA
Let me go.

Kira tries to shake him off while still untying the horse, but he has a firm grip. Now Bart has recovered and is closing in. Kira opens her hand and takes out the sharp rock.

She cuts Dirk across the arm and he lets go of her leg with a SCREAM just as Bart reaches her. With a pivoting thrust, she turns and connects her boot with Bart's groin.

Bart instantly drops to the ground. Dirk is trying to stem the flow of blood on his arm.

DIRK

Get up you fool, get her.

BART

Can't... breath... hurt... bad.

Kira springs onto the back of the horse, digs in her heels, and the two sprint away, just as Owen enters the glen.

OWEN

After her.

Bart starts to get up but doubles over in pain. Dirk displays his arm that bleeds profusely. Owen grabs Dirk by the back of his tunic.

OWEN (CONT'D)

Get on your horse unless you want to feel my boot.

Owen grabs the sleeve of Dirk's tunic and tears it loose from the garment. He ties a quick tourniquet.

OWEN (CONT'D)

You might lose the arm, but it will be less than what you'll lose if you don't bring me back the princess.

He helps push Dirk onto his horse. Bart is hugging his horse, obviously still in pain.

OWEN (CONT'D)

I need her dead body.

EXT. ROAD BACK TO LATAVIA -- DAY

Kira rides hard towards the poison snake bridge. The morning sun is filtered through the trees.

She looks back, but the two have not caught up yet. She can see their dust in the distance. She removes her red tunic vest and tucks it into her boot.

She ties a rope around her waist and ties the other end to her sword. She leans close to the horse and whispers into its ear.

KIRA
Listen Gus, I am Princess Kira...

EXT. POISON SNAKE BRIDGE -- DAY

Bart stands at the edge of the ravine while Dirk has taken a few steps down the side into the brush. The horse Kira was riding is on the other side of the bridge, munching on some grass.

BART
Do you see her?

Dirk cuts away some shrubs.

BART (CONT'D)
I saw her fall in that direction.

Bart leans over the edge and points a little further.

BART (CONT'D)
Over there. It's her.

At the bottom of the ravine is the red vest among some rocks. Dirk takes a more steps and tumbles down a few feet. He GROANS and grabs his arm.

DIRK
I'm bleeding again.

He climbs out of the ravine.

DIRK (CONT'D)
You go get the body and I'll get her horse.

Bart starts down the ravine, but falls after a few feet. Just after Dirk steps onto the bridge, the sun is shaded by a group of trees and the snake starts HISSING.

DIRK (CONT'D)
What the...?

The snake's head turns and starts to strike just as Dirk jumps back. Bart looks up at the snake's head.

BART
It must have thrown her from her
horse.

Bart scrambles up the side of the ravine.

BART (CONT'D)
I'm not going down there.

Both of them run to their horses and ride back in the direction of the camp. As they leave, the sun comes out fully and the snake turns back into a bridge.

After they leave, Kira emerges from the ravine. She climbs up a rope that is attached to her sword. It is plunged deep into a nearby tree. She pulls it out and returns it to her sheath.

KIRA
Thank goodness for idiots.

She WHISTLES for the horse.

EXT. CAMP OF THE KIDNAPPERS -- DAY

Henry is now tied up back-to-back to the little Prince. Prince Alec is awake and SCREAMING.

OWEN
Shut that kid up.

HENRY
Let him loose, he won't hurt
anybody.

OWEN
Shut up you slave.

Owen comes over and hits Henry across the mouth.

HENRY
I'm not a slave.

Henry spits out a few drops of blood.

OWEN
Why else would the princess have a
Romalander for a squire?

HENRY
I'm not a Romalander.

Owen is amused and smiles.

OWEN
You really didn't know did you?

Owen looks hard at Henry's face.

OWEN (CONT'D)
And Latavians call us cruel.

EXT. MONSTROUS MOUNTAIN -- DAY

As Kira approaches the Monstrous Mountain, she tosses some bread that she has in her saddlebags towards the rocks.

The tunnel magically opens and she rides through to find Charles and his knights on the other side.

JAMES
Grab her.

Mark brings his horse beside Kira and throws himself at her. They both tumble to the ground. Kira immediately pins Mark to the ground. She chokes him.

MARK
Can't -- breathe.

Charles gets off his horse and runs towards Kira, as three more knights tackle her.

KIRA
Let me at him.

Charles kneels before the kicking and spitting ball of fury as the three struggle to contain her. He gently pushes aside some strands of her hair.

CHARLES
Where's the Prince?

EXT. CAMP OF THE KIDNAPPERS -- DAY

Henry is still tied up, but the Prince is now toddling around. Owen leans against a tree.

OWEN
Least I could do since you'll both
be dead in a few hours.

The Prince wanders up to Henry and hands him a leaf.

OWEN (CONT'D)
You two could be brothers.

Henry looks at the little Prince.

HENRY
He looks like me?

OWEN
That's what is going to get him
killed. Queen Selina was no fool
in running to Latavia.

HENRY
But he's half Latavian.

OWEN
Wrong. You're both full
Romalanders, and from the south.

HENRY
No one ever told me.

Henry bows his head.

HENRY (CONT'D)
Kira hates Romalanders.

Owen CHUCKLES to himself.

OWEN
They say love is blind.

Henry perks up with this statement.

HENRY
Why must you kill us?

Owen walks over to the Prince. He kneels down and looks eye-to-eye at the little boy.

OWEN
Look at him. Peter knew that he
wasn't King Phillip's child.

Prince Alec cocks his head in puzzlement.

OWEN (CONT'D)
If Prince Alec lives, someday he'll
be the rightful ruler of Romaland.

Owen tousles the little guy's hair.

OWEN (CONT'D)
It was enough trouble killing King
Alexander. Now we have to get rid
of his son.

EXT. MONSTROUS MOUNTAIN -- DAY

Kira rides on a horse with her arms tied behind her. Mark and James are on either side.

KIRA
This is wrong. I can take you to
the Prince.

Charles comes up and bows his head.

CHARLES
I promised your father.

She struggles against the bindings.

KIRA
Why must I be tied up, and why have
you given my sword to James?

CHARLES
I can't spare any of my best
knights...

He looks over at Mark and James.

CHARLES (CONT'D)
... and these two are no match for
you should I release these
bindings.

James takes her horse's reins and starts leading her horse away. He pats her sword with a smirk.

KIRA
Wait. I can tell you how to cross
the Monstrous Mountain, the Snake
Bridge.

JAMES
I wouldn't trust what she says.

Charles motions for them to take off. Kira turns her head as they leave.

KIRA
(shouting)
Feed it. You've got to feed it.

EXT. CAMP OF THE KIDNAPPERS -- DAY

Dirk and Bart ride back into the camp. Dirk's arm hangs loose at his side.

DIRK
She's dead.

Henry's head drops to his chest.

BART
Yup, dead, dead, dead.

Owen strides over to the pair as they dismount.

OWEN
Aren't you missing something?

He looks around each of the horses.

OWEN (CONT'D)
Her body?

Owen walks over to Bart and hits him on the side of his head.

OWEN (CONT'D)
Are you deaf? I said bring back
her dead body. Body, remember?

DIRK
But we saw it...

BART
... at the bottom of the ravine.

Owen hits Dirk on his injured arm.

OWEN
You idiots. Without her dead body,
how can Peter frame her for the
Prince's murder?

EXT. MONSTROUS MOUNTAIN -- DAY

Three knights try to scale the mountain and just as they get a few yards up, the mountain RUMBLES and they are tossed to the ground.

Charles signals for them to join the others. Two other knights ride up from the other directions.

KNIGHT #1
There is no way around it, we must
go over.

Charles shakes his head.

CHARLES

I swear I saw a tunnel. Now it's gone.

KNIGHT #2

I too saw the princess ride through the mountain.

Charles goes over to the campfire and stirs the pot.

CHARLES

Our food is ready. Eat and rest and we'll try again after lunch.

There is a loud SNIFF, SNIFF.

EXT. BOTTOM OF THE RAVINE -- DAY

A very worn and torn Dirk stands at the bottom of the ravine. He holds Kira's vest in his hand.

DIRK

Is this what you saw?

Bart runs along the rock riverbed and inspects it.

BART

That's it. She must not be far away.

Dirk hits him on the side of his head.

DIRK

You idiot. She tricked us.

Bart scratches his head.

BART

Gee, you think Owen is going to be mad?

DIRK

It's not Owen that I'm worried about.

EXT. CASTLE COURTYARD -- DAY

Peter rides into the courtyard and finds his sister sitting on a bench crying. She runs to him.

QUEEN SELINA

Where have you been?

PETER
Hunting, my dear sister. Why the
woeful face?

QUEEN SELINA
The mission failed.

PETER
Are they planning an attack from
the south?

The queen shakes her head.

PETER (CONT'D)
This is all Charles's fault. I
will lead an attack myself to
avenge Alec's death.

QUEEN SELINA
Dead?

The queen faints. Her lady-in-waiting runs to her.

LADY-IN-WAITING
What news did you bring?

PETER
I thought the queen heard that Alec
was dead.

LADY-IN-WAITING
We have heard no news.

The lady fans the queen. The queen starts to stir and sits
up.

LADY-IN-WAITING (CONT'D)
The Prince is not dead, M'Lady.

PETER
Why did you say the mission failed?

QUEEN SELINA
The knights were attacked. They
cut the bridge. Kira went alone
after the Prince.

PETER
There has been no news? The
knights are not back yet?

She shakes her head sadly.

QUEEN SELINA
Their mission failed because Kira
led the quest.

Peter rubs his chin thinking.

PETER
I don't care what they say. I will
go alone now to find Alec.

QUEEN SELINA
There is more.

Peter helps his sister up.

QUEEN SELINA (CONT'D)
Alec is not King Phillip's son. He
is the heir to the throne of
Romaland.

PETER
Alexander's child? I am so
surprised.

QUEEN SELINA
I should have told you.

PETER
Even if he weren't our future king,
I'd gladly risk my life for my
precious little nephew.

The queen rests an arm on his and as they walk towards the
castle.

QUEEN SELINA
I never would have survived without
you, Peter. I'll depend on you to
help rule our restored kingdom
until Alec is old enough.

Peter looks up with mocked sincerity.

PETER
I'll not only rule, but I'll insure
that Prince Alec has his rightful
place.

Peter hands her to the lady-in-waiting and kisses his
sister's hand.

PETER (CONT'D)
I make haste to Romaland. I will
bring your son home to you.

EXT. ROAD BACK TO LATAVIA -- DAY

Mark and James ride with Kira back towards Latavia.

KIRA

Listen, I know you two are totally unencumbered by the thought process, but you've got to believe me.

JAMES

Shut up.

KIRA

It's Peter. He kidnapped Prince Alec.

Mark and James smile at each other.

MARK

She calls us the stupid ones.

KIRA

You imbeciles. My father will have both your heads.

James brings his horse along side of Kira's.

JAMES

You'll never see your father again.

Kira pulls against her bindings.

JAMES (CONT'D)

I don't know what went wrong with the plan, but I bet Peter will be happy to see you again.

KIRA

Traitor. Are you too much of a coward to fight me?

James gives her a harsh slap across her face. A small trickle of blood comes from the side of her mouth.

JAMES

The fearless warrior bleeds after all.

He dabs at the blood with his scarf.

JAMES (CONT'D)

We can't have that, can we?

She stares at the scarf, then turns away.

KIRA
The queen's colors. I should have
known.

EXT. MONSTROUS MOUNTAIN -- AFTERNOON

Charles and the other knights eat their lunch. Again Charles
hears a loud SNIFF, SNIFF.

CHARLES
Who is doing that?

He walks around the group. He picks up the pot of stew.

CHARLES (CONT'D)
Who wants more?

Again a SNIFF, SNIFF.

CHARLES (CONT'D)
Stop that sniffing and make
yourself known.

Charles turns around quickly and looks at the mountain. It
almost looks like a face. Charles discovers the next SNIFF,
SNIFF is coming from there.

CHARLES (CONT'D)
Feed it. She was telling the
truth.

EXT. CAVE OF THE TWIN TROLLS -- DAY

Mark and James lead Kira past the cave of the twin trolls.
The trolls peak out of the cave and spot Kira. Their heads
drop down in shame. They peek through their shame at Kira.

Kira gives them a little wink and smile. She collapses
forward on her horse. Mark and James come along side of her.
James pokes her.

JAMES
Hey, wake up.

Mark gives her a little push. She tumbles off the horse to
the ground. Both of them dismount and lean over her.

JAMES (CONT'D)
Wake her up.

Mark kicks her a few times as the twin trolls creep up behind them. Each one holds out a hand. They look at each other and count silently, ONE, TWO, THREE.

Peek and Aboo SMASH Mark and James' heads together in one synchronized movement. The two drop unconscious to the ground next to Kira.

KIRA
Great job, guys.

The trolls smile proudly. They untie Kira and she grabs her sword back from James. Peek kicks Mark.

PEEK
I get to eat the chubby one.

INT. CASTLE GREAT ROOM -- DAY

The king sits at his desk while two guards bring in Queen Selina. They deposit her and quickly retreat to the door.

KING PHILLIP
I asked to see Peter.

QUEEN SELINA
I came in his place.

KING PHILLIP
He has been missing for two days.

The king stands up.

KING PHILLIP (CONT'D)
Guards.

The guards rush back in.

KING PHILLIP (CONT'D)
Have Peter brought to me at once.

QUEEN SELINA
He had been hunting.

KING PHILLIP
I want to query him, myself.

QUEEN SELINA
Peter is not the one in question here.

She stands defiantly before King Phillip.

QUEEN SELINA (CONT'D)
He has left to bring Alec home to
me.

INT. CAVE OF THE TWIN TROLLS -- DAY

The trolls have tied up Mark and James. Aboo pokes James.

ABOO
I want my toy horse back.

JAMES
I don't have it, Charles took it.

Kira takes the gear from James and Mark's horses and puts it
on the third horse.

KIRA
Henry will make you another one.
Let's go.

Aboo gives James a kick as they hobble over to Kira.

PEEK
We can't go.

Aboo drops his head.

ABOO
We'll slow you down.

Kira takes them by the hand and leads them to the front of
the two horses. She has tied their harnesses together. The
trolls jump up and down in glee.

EXT. ROAD TO ROMALAND -- DAY

Kira and the trolls gallop their horses, pushing them harder
and harder. The trolls start to overtake Kira and her face
displays her frustration.

KIRA
Wait up.

The two slow down and come along side of her.

PEEK
We're sorry. We've never ridden
before and we don't know how fast
you're supposed to go.

Kira sees the sincerity in their eyes. She brightens with an idea.

KIRA
Do you have any snacks in your pockets?

ABOO
Always.

KIRA
Ride on and when you get to the Monstrous Mountain, throw the snacks at it.

PEEK
You'll be okay?

Kira nods.

KIRA
I'll be right behind you.

EXT. POISON SNAKE BRIDGE -- DAY

Charles and the knights ride safely across the snake bridge. They stop to water their horses.

KNIGHT #1
That's another thing she was right about.

CHARLES
I know, I know.

KNIGHT #1
We have to go back after her.

Charles shakes his head.

CHARLES
They're probably back at the castle by now.

KNIGHT #1
King Phillip will bring her up on kidnapping charges.

CHARLES
The king is a better man than I.

Charles mounts his horse.

CHARLES (CONT'D)
He'll know the truth.

EXT. MONSTROUS MOUNTAIN -- DAY

Kira rides up to the mountain and finds the trolls sitting beneath the giant face, eating some berries.

KIRA
You failed.

She gets off her horse and glares at the pair.

KIRA (CONT'D)
You were suppose to feed the
mountain, not your fat bellies.

The two get up quickly and grab a handful of berries.

PEEK
We taught it a trick.

ABOO
Watch.

They scramble up a few feet and stand on a large boulder. They hold out some berries.

PEEK
Open.

The mountain RUMBLES and the tunnel appears below them. The trolls reach down and pat the boulder.

ABOO
Good mountain.

They toss the berries into the tunnel and climb down. Aboo and Peek stand before Kira with a look of accomplishment.

EXT. CAMP OF THE KIDNAPPERS -- NIGHT

Henry and Prince Alec are tied together, close to a roaring campfire. The kidnappers are nowhere to be seen.

EXT. BORDER OF ROMALAND -- NIGHT

Charles spots the smoke from the campfire. He holds his arm up to signal a stop. He motions for the others to dismount and be quiet.

EXT. CAMP OF THE KIDNAPPERS -- NIGHT

The knights creep up close and Charles has them circle the camp. Charles leans in close to the knight next to him.

CHARLES
(whispering)
They must have run scared.

Charles motions for them to enter the camp. Henry spots them and starts to strain against his bindings. His mouth is jammed with a scarf. He shakes his head furiously as Charles approaches.

CHARLES (CONT'D)
Relax sport, we're here now.

Charles leans down to untie Henry. Henry is still making a fuss. Charles notices the scarf and pulls it free.

HENRY
It's a trap.

From a cliff above the camp the kidnappers throw a net down on the group and trap them. Charles and the knights struggle helplessly under the net.

EXT. ROAD TO ROMALAND -- NIGHT

Kira and the twin trolls continue to push their horses onward, but the trolls start to nod off. Peek jolts awake and almost falls off, but Aboo holds onto him tight.

ABOO
We must stop.

PEEK
She'll leave us behind.

Kira notices the pair falling behind. She pulls up on the reins.

KIRA
Keep up.

She surveys both of them. They can barely keep their eyes open.

ABOO
Go on without us.

PEEK
We never should have come along.

Kira sees the sadness in their faces. She takes the reins from Aboo and pulls their horses to a halt.

KIRA
Let's rest.

She helps them get off their horses and unpacks some blankets for the night. As she makes camp, the two sit exhausted with their heads hung low.

ABOO
We have failed you.

PEEK
Put your quest in danger.

Kira kneels down next to them.

KIRA
Your efforts were noble.

Aboo removes the bow and arrow that is slung on his back. He hands it to Kira.

ABOO
Take this for protection.

KIRA
The forest is filled with critters.
I would not deny you your dinner.

She pats the sword she took from James.

KIRA (CONT'D)
A sword, a shield, or an arrow. If
I could only choose one it would
still be my sword.

PEEK
But Henry said the riddle was
wrong.

She reaches up and pats Peek on the shoulder.

KIRA
Sleep my friend, and I'll bring you
back Henry to play with tomorrow.

PEEK
Don't worry about us, just save
your loved ones.

Kira mounts her horse and looks back at their hopeful faces.

KIRA
My loved ones.

She digs her heels into the side of her horse and dashes off.

EXT. CAMP OF THE KIDNAPPERS -- NIGHT

Kira is outside the camp and sees Charles, the knights, Henry, and Prince Alec all tied together. Again the kidnappers are nowhere to be seen. She starts to enter the camp, but freezes when she hears a SNORE to her left.

She creeps through the brush and tracks the source. In a tiny clearing are hiding Dirk, Bart, Owen, and three more kidnappers. All are SNORING and sleeping with the exception of Bart who sits on a rock with a clear view of the camp.

She watches the gang for a moment and notices that Bart nods off for a few seconds, then jolts awake with a start. He surveys the camp, then repeats the cycle.

She silently counts the number of opponents then sits down on a rock in defeat. She jumps up and studies the rock.

Smiling, she returns to her horse and starts to dig into the saddlebags for something.

EXT. CAMP OF THE KIDNAPPERS -- LATER

Kira has transformed herself into a rock by using a knight's cape as a disguise. She creeps slowly into the camp, timing her progression perfectly with Bart's catnaps. She moves around the far side of the bundled group.

Kira nudges Henry who startles awake.

KIRA
Got something for you.

She takes out Henry's sharp rock and starts sawing through the ropes. Henry glances at the cape and grins.

HENRY
You win, Kira. This time you really win.

KIRA
Did you think I wouldn't come back?

HENRY
You hate Romalanders.

KIRA

Not enough to make them keep you
around.

She smiles at him.

KIRA (CONT'D)

I hate war. Romalanders have made
us go to war since before I was
born.

HENRY

What about me?

KIRA

You are Latavian and my friend.

INT. CASTLE GREAT ROOM -- NIGHT

The king is surrounded by a group of knights. The queen
rushes into the room.

QUEEN SELINA

How dare you.

The king tries to steer her away, but she stands squarely in
front of him.

QUEEN SELINA (CONT'D)

You'll get him killed. Now Peter
too.

The king motions for the others to leave. They quickly
scamper out of the room.

QUEEN SELINA (CONT'D)

If that daughter of yours hasn't
already...

The king holds up his hand.

KING PHILLIP

Silence.

A couple of guards come back into the room with the sound of
the king's wrath.

KING PHILLIP (CONT'D)

Take the queen to her chambers.

The two flank her side but she pushes them aside and heads
towards the door. They look back to the king for guidance.
He motions for them to follow her.

KING PHILLIP (CONT'D)
 She is to stay there until after
 we're gone in the morning.

EXT. CAMP OF THE KIDNAPPERS -- DAY

The sun barely peeks through the trees as Kira and Henry have managed to untie the group. The kidnappers are still sleeping outside the camp.

KIRA
 Everybody got the plan?

The group nods in agreement.

KIRA (CONT'D)
 Give us enough time to make it
 across the bridge.

She grabs Alec and pulls him to her.

KIRA (CONT'D)
 Want to play the game now?

Alec nods happily. She tucks him underneath the cape. She peeks out of the cape at the solemn group and winks.

KIRA (CONT'D)
 I'll beat all of you home.

INT. CASTLE GREAT ROOM -- DAY

The king looks out the window in full gear as Queen Selina's lady-in-waiting enters the room. He doesn't turn around.

KING PHILLIP
 Leave me alone.

She walks to him and taps him on the arm with a scroll.

LADY-IN-WAITING
 It is from the queen.

He looks at the scroll, but doesn't take it.

KING PHILLIP
 Take it away, I have no time to
 read her ramblings.

LADY-IN-WAITING
 It is for King Stephen.

She places it in his hand.

LADY-IN-WAITING (CONT'D)
M'lady bargains for her son's life.

EXT. POISON SNAKE BRIDGE -- DAY

Aboo and Peek stand at the poisoned snake bridge. It is littered with dead animals and smashed wild berries.

PEEK
How much more does it want?

ABOO
She didn't say to feed it.

Peek scratches his head.

ABOO (CONT'D)
You forgot didn't you?

Aboo tugs at his shirt. He glances at the rising sun peeking through the trees.

ABOO (CONT'D)
It's getting hot.

The two hobble over to a shady rock and sit down. Aboo taps on Peek's head.

ABOO (CONT'D)
Maybe this will cool off your stupid head.

Peek rubs his eyes.

PEEK
A little nap might help.

EXT. ROAD BACK TO LATAVIA -- DAY

Kira and Prince Alec ride at lightning speed towards Latavia. Kira holds him tightly and leans close to his ear.

KIRA
A wise ruler knows all war is based on deception.

EXT. CAMP OF THE KIDNAPPERS -- DAY

Charles, the knights, and Henry still appear to be tied together in the middle of the camp.

CHARLES

One... two... three.

The group jumps up and the ropes drop to the ground. They rush to the horses inside the forest glen. The kidnappers spring to action and follow them.

EXT. ROMALAND FOREST GLEN -- DAY

Charles and the knights run up to the horses, but Henry has beaten them there and he holds out the reins.

HENRY

They were untied, just like she promised.

They quickly mount the horses as SHOUTS start coming through the forest. Charles motions with his arms.

CHARLES

You three, towards the southern Romaland border and my group follows after the prince and princess.

Charles points at Henry.

CHARLES (CONT'D)

You're with me.

They split into two groups and ride off as the kidnappers break through the glen.

EXT. POISON SNAKE BRIDGE ROMALAND SIDE -- DAY

Kira starts to cross the bridge and it turns back into the snake. She pulls up on the reins and stops just in time.

KIRA

We must wait for the full sun, Alec.

EXT. POISON SNAKE BRIDGE LATAVIA SIDE -- DAY

Aboo perks up with the sound of Kira's voice from the other side of the bridge. He pokes Peek awake.

ABOO
It's the princess.

EXT. POISON SNAKE BRIDGE ROMALAND SIDE -- DAY

Kira sets the Prince down on a rock as she moves to the edge of the ravine.

KIRA
I might be able to find another
way...

There is the sound of horse hooves as Peter rides up and plucks the Prince off the rock. He tries to cross and the snake turns its head with a HISS and frightens his horse.

Both Peter and the Prince fall to the ground. Kira runs towards them as Peter grabs the Prince and runs to the edge of the ravine.

He holds the little Prince upside down over the edge. The little boy WAILS in terror.

PETER
Stop.

EXT. CASTLE COURTYARD -- DAY

The king has a group of knights assembled and ready to ride over the castle bridge. He motions for them to head out. There is a SCREAM as Queen Selina rushes out of the castle.

She is holding a small tunic bearing the royal crest. She rushes to the king's horse.

KING PHILLIP
Get out of my way, Selina.

She holds up the tunic and shakes it furiously.

QUEEN SELINA
It's Alec's. I found it in Peter's
room.

The king takes it and inspects it.

KING PHILLIP
I told you to stay in your
chambers.

QUEEN SELINA
I am Queen... you don't tell me...

The king reaches down and takes the crown from her head. He wraps it in the tunic and throws them both down next to her feet.

KING PHILLIP
I want you gone before I return.

The queen grabs a hold of his horse.

QUEEN SELINA
I beg of you -- protect us. Peter must have killed King Alexander and we will be next.

KING PHILLIP
You never should have trusted Peter...

He turns his horse to leave.

KING PHILLIP (CONT'D)
... and you never should have accused my daughter.

The queen is thrown to the ground as the king's horse pivots. She grabs the tunic out of the dust and buries her head into it. He looks back at the sobbing Queen.

KING PHILLIP (CONT'D)
But a wise ruler forgives. If I find Alec and Kira alive...

He motions for the group to leave.

KING PHILLIP (CONT'D)
... you and your son will have asylum.

He savagely digs his heels into the horse's side.

KING PHILLIP (CONT'D)
Make haste through the south.

EXT. ROAD BACK TO LATAVIA -- DAY

Henry, Charles, and another knight ride fast with three of the kidnapers in hot pursuit. They come to a fork in the road and Charles gestures to the left.

HENRY
No. That is back to Romaland.

CHARLES

We have no choice, otherwise we're leading them straight to the princess.

They take the left fork, but Henry looks longingly in the other direction. The kidnappers pause for a moment, then continue following them on the road back to Romaland.

EXT. POISON SNAKE BRIDGE LATAVIA SIDE -- DAY

Aboo and Peek stand at the edge of the ravine - directly across from Peter, Alec, and Kira. They GASP when they see the Prince dangling helplessly.

They watch in horror as Kira draws her sword and moves a few feet away from Peter.

EXT. POISON SNAKE BRIDGE ROMALAND SIDE -- DAY

Peter appears to be amused by the look of concentration on Kira's face. With a sword in his other hand, he makes a mock stab at the air between them.

PETER

Tough choice?

Prince Alec WAILS in fear.

PETER (CONT'D)

Should be easy for a truly wise ruler.

The trolls start waving and catch Kira's eye. Peter has his back to them and fails to notice their presence.

PETER (CONT'D)

Time's up.

He holds the Prince further over the side of the ravine.

PETER (CONT'D)

Choose. Your life or his?

The little guy starts to SOB and looks frightenedly at Kira.

PETER (CONT'D)

Run me through with your sword, and both the Prince and I drop to our deaths. You'll be the next ruler of Latavia.

He holds the sword a little higher.

PETER (CONT'D)
 Grab the Prince and toss him to
 safety and my sword will find its
 home, deep in your heart.

KIRA
 (loudly)
 That is quite a riddle.

EXT. POISON SNAKE BRIDGE LATAVIA SIDE -- DAY

Aboo and Peek stop waving. They look at each other and reach
 over their shoulders for their bow and arrows.

EXT. POISON SNAKE BRIDGE ROMALAND SIDE -- DAY

Kira slowly lays down her sword.

KIRA
 A wise ruler knows that the only
 chance for life...

She kneels down on one knee. She picks a wildflower and
 holds it out to Peter.

KIRA (CONT'D)
 ... is to give up all hope of it.

Peter smiles and pulls Alec back in from the edge.

PETER
 Prepare to die, little Princess
 Kira.

Peter starts to put Prince Alec down, then pauses.

PETER (CONT'D)
 But I'll treat you to the death of
 your obstacle to the throne first.

Peter swings Alec back over the ravine just as Kira leaps to
 catch him.

KIRA
 I didn't choose the sword.

As Peter draws his sword to plunge it into the passing Kira,
 he releases the Prince into the ravine. Kira catches the
 little guy and starts tumbling down the side.

She winches in anticipation of the sword's bite, but manages to grab a hold of a rock to stop their fall.

Kira looks up just in time to see two arrows fly across the ravine. From the other side the twin trolls are jumping up and down.

PEEK AND ABOO
(in unison)
We got the riddle right. We got
the riddle right.

Peter tumbles past Kira and Alec, down into the ravine - impaled by the trolls' arrows.

EXT. SOUTHERN BORDER TO ROMALAND -- DAY

The knights and King Phillip ride towards the southern border. A small hill stands before them. King Phillip holds up his hand to halt.

KING PHILLIP
Draw swords.

King Phillip pulls out his own sword.

KING PHILLIP (CONT'D)
I'm sure that Peter has a well-
prepared enemy filled with lies
awaiting us.

From the other direction, the sound of HOOVES. King Phillip turns and sees a lone horseman in the distance.

KING PHILLIP (CONT'D)
Wait. A messenger from the North.

As the horseman draws closer, he brightens with the recognition of Kira and Alec. He rides to greet them.

Kira holds out Prince Alec to her father's outstretched arms.

KIRA
Your heir is safe, my Lord.

She bows her head in respect. The king gives Alec a quick hug and hands him to a waiting aide. He reaches out and grabs Kira in a bear-like embrace.

KING PHILLIP
Yes, she is.

Kira pushes back in shock?

KIRA
Me? But Prince Alec...

The king looks over at Alec and then points towards the border.

KING PHILLIP
That's his kingdom.

He points towards the scroll in his belt.

KING PHILLIP (CONT'D)
Now his mother gives it away to protect him.

They look over the rise and see the Romaland border lined with soldiers. He pulls out the scroll.

KING PHILLIP (CONT'D)
I must deliver this to seal our peace.

KIRA
But they might kill you.

KING PHILLIP
A wise ruler knows that the only chance for life...

Kira reaches over and grabs the scroll.

KIRA
...is to hope for it with all your heart.

With a swift kick with her heels, her horse springs to action and dashes towards the border.

EXT. FOREST ROAD BACK TO ROMALAND -- DAY

Charles, Henry, and the other knights join up with the first group who are also being closely pursued. Charles signals for them to enter the forest. They ride swiftly through and come to a clearing.

Charles holds up his hand for them to stop.

CHARLES
Draw swords. Romaland border forces will be on the other side.

Henry looks behind them and sees the kidnappers approaching.

HENRY
But the Romalanders will kill us.

CHARLES
Maybe not all of us.

He looks fondly at Henry.

CHARLES (CONT'D)
The scoundrels behind will
certainly kill us for our silence.

They all draw their swords and start riding up the rise.
Charles comes up along side of Henry.

CHARLES (CONT'D)
I wanted to tell you.

He points his sword to Henry's shoulder.

CHARLES (CONT'D)
You were a knight today. If the
princess doesn't do it...

HENRY
If I don't make it...

They reach the top and GASP at the sheer numbers assembled
below them.

HENRY (CONT'D)
Tell the princess ...

Charles starts riding down the hill. He waves for the rest
to follow him.

CHARLES
I'll tell the princess what I told
you.

Charles has moved out of earshot.

HENRY
... that I love her.

EXT. SOUTHERN BORDER MEADOW -- DAY

Charles, Henry, and the other knights approach the leader of
the group.

CHARLES
I see you number in the hundreds.

He looks back at his tiny army.

CHARLES (CONT'D)
We are no match. I ask only for
safe passage...

They lay down their swords in defeat.

CHARLES (CONT'D)
... or a noble death with our own
swords.

The crowd parts to reveal Kira, King Stephen, and King Phillip holding Prince Alec. Kira rides over and gets off her horse. She picks up Henry's sword and smiles. She holds it up to his chest.

KIRA
Surrender. Surrender to Princess
Kira, heir to the throne of
Latavia, daughter of...

INT. KIRA'S CHAMBERS - NIGHT

Queen Selina comes into Kira's chambers carrying beautiful gowns. Kira sits at the dressing table, while a servant brushes her hair. She pulls away and dismisses the servant with a wave of her hand.

QUEEN SELINA
I am afraid these no longer fit me.

KIRA
Are you?

The queen sets the gowns on Kira's bed and shakes her head.

QUEEN SELINA
I will be giving up my crown
tomorrow at the royal council.
These gowns are way to fancy. I
will remain your father's wife, but
only as the kings consort. I do
love him. But, I don't know how to
say I'm sorry for my treason.

Kira goes over to the gowns and feigns interest.

KIRA
Giving up both your's and Alec's
claim to the Romalander throne was
a pretty good start.

QUEEN SELINA

It is time to unite my two countries; North and South Romalander. King Stephen will be a good ruler. He has no children, and someday, Alec might...

KIRA

Rule them both. He'll be ready. I'll make sure of it. Then, Alec and I will make sure all of the Upper Kingdom lives in peace.

Kira pushes the gowns aside.

KIRA (CONT'D)

Seriously, these gowns are way too...

QUEEN SELINA

Feminine?

KIRA

I was going to say, girlie, but whatever. I've said a thousand times, that a wise ruler...

The queen looks at her and then back at the gowns. Queen Selina gathers them and turns to leave.

QUEEN SELINA

A wise ruler doesn't need fancy clothes...

Kira grabs the former queen and hugs her.

KIRA

But a wise ruler might need a mother every once and a while.

INT. CASTLE CATHEDRAL -- DAY

Again the crowds have packed the cathedral for a glimpse of the royal ceremony. King Phillip sits alone on his throne as Kira stands nobly to one side wearing her tunic and pants.

Selina sits meekly in the last row without her crown, holding Alec. Aboo and Peek march little wooden horses across the back of the pew, much to the delight of the little boy.

The three singing frogs sit on Aboo and Peek's shoulders, HUMMING a happy song.

Charles and a small group of knights come up the aisle. The group disperses revealing an anxious Henry. He kneels solemnly before King Phillip.

The king rises and grasps a sword from a velvet pillow. He pauses, then hands it to Kira.

KING PHILLIP

I fear my arm is still weak from
the long ride.

Kira smiles, steps forward and takes the sword. With a tap on Henry's shoulder, she proclaims,

KIRA

I knight you, Sir Henry, protector
of the crown of Latavia.

As Kira pushes the sword slowly into his sheath, she leans close to him and whispers into his ear.

KIRA (CONT'D)

Surrender.

Henry takes her hand as she releases his sword. He lightly presses his lips to it. He maintains his grasp as he looks beseechingly up.

HENRY

Do you?

She kneels down even with him.

KIRA

With all my heart.

THE END: