

BREATHCALLER

Written by

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FADE IN:

EXT. MOUNTAINTOP- SUNSET

A figure wrapped in tattered garments stumbles through the chunks of ice underneath him. A shiver, he hides his hands under his armpits avoiding the frostbite. His old, shine-less sword sways at his right hip.

This is DESH (mid-40s), black haired with grey-ness intertwined. Scars label his wrinkling face; the stern expression of an old knight who has seen too many winters pass and been in too many wars.

He aims his path towards the cave up ahead.

INT. CAVE ENTRANCE- CONTINUOUS

Desh steps into the entrance of the cave and immediately falls to his knees, exhausted. He removes the clothing weighing down his head and coughs out red blood.

He looks up and notices a torch barely lit and a rocky path leading inward. He stands to his feet, unsheathes his sword, grabs onto the torch and cautiously walks forward.

INT. INNER CAVE- SUNDOWN- HALF AN HOUR LATER

Tired as he is, Desh continues walking down the straight and narrow path, torch before him. Then--he stops.

DESH
(to himself)
Warmer.

A deafening ROAR ECHOES through the hollow cave up ahead. Desh jogs towards the origin of sound-

-Desh reaches the end of the stone hallway. Before him: a hollow, abandoned city. The dragon's domain. He marvels-

BREATHCALLER
What prompts your unwelcome visit,
Invader?

Desh stares up at the gigantic beast resting above him. Long and slender, the dragon's body wriggles around a dusty pillar. His scales twinkle green, red, and golden. His skull the size of a man. His whiskers long and prominent, as well as his horns and teeth. This is BREATHCALLER, terror of the sky, master of the wind.

DESH
You must be Breathcaller.

BREATHCALLER
That I am. And you are?

DESH
I am Desh--

BREATHCALLER
Just...Desh? No fancy titles? No
flashy speech?

Desh doesn't answer.

BREATHCALLER (CONT'D)
I suppose. What is your purpose
here then, Desh?

DESH
Honor. Specifically regaining it.

BREATHCALLER
What, pray tell, have I done to
dishonor you?

DESH
Nothing actually.

Desh lays his torch down and grips his sword tighter.
Breathcaller looks down at him quizzically.

BREATHCALLER
Then what's with the sword? Are you
a bounty hunter? A warrior?

DESH
Something like that.

Desh tactically shifts his feet into a fighting stance and
begins to circle the beast mimicking an old dance.

BREATHCALLER
Before you start waving your sword
at me will you at least tell me who
has so rudely dismembered you of
your honor?

DESH
(he thinks)
Others. The King of this land you
occasionally ambush.

BREATHCALLER

And this King has stripped you of
your honor and tasked you this
heavy burden?

(he moves slowly)

Can the King not himself come and
confront me?

DESH

If he could get up off his fat arse
without needing aid.

BREATHCALLER

Seems to me you do not much admire
this King you take orders from.
Which King has sent you this way?
Damian or his heir? Time passes by
rather oddly down here I can't say
I'm caught up with who our country
has named as king this year.

Breathcaller flows down to Desh's level a few yards away.
Desh raises his silver sword with his left hand straight and
up to shoulder level. Breathcaller waits for his response.

DESH

Damian's grandson: Abberd.

BREATHCALLER

Ahh, so he had heirs. And this new
King, he wants my head?

Desh takes a deep breath but doesn't lose his focus. Both
begin to rotate together completing a circle, barely inching
closer.

DESH

He has promised me my honor and
titles back if I simply bring him
back your heart.

Breathcaller takes a moment, rests his claws near his wide
chin in thought.

BREATHCALLER

I see.

Desh lowers his left sword-arm down near his waist, still
pointing in the dragon's direction.

BREATHCALLER (CONT'D)

I am not your enemy Desh. You have
not yet wronged me.

(MORE)

BREATHCALLER (CONT'D)

You can still walk back through
those halls and resume your life.
You still have much left of it.

DESH

I can't leave this tomb without
your heart.

Desh stares hard at the great dragon. Eyes sharp enough to cut in the sword's place. Breathcaller blinks with doubt. The two are now a few strides from one another.

A split moment passes and--

--Breathcaller lunges forward with flames forming in his throat and mouth opening wider. Desh ducks and takes two wide steps forward and under. He swings his heavy sword near the neck of the dragon but misses his mark. Fire blasts out of Breathcaller's jaws missing Desh by a hair. The distance between them is great now. The warrior looks behind for cover before the dragon's next attempt. He sees a large stone and hurries for it--

WHOOSH! A new wave of freshly formed fire engulfs the wide side of the stone Desh hides behind. He crouches tightly to avoid the fire inching its way towards him.

Finally the fire stops, the dragon must regain his strength. Desh takes this moment to lunge out from behind the charred rock and charge the beast. His wide strides take him near the side of the beast. He takes a hard swing at the dragon. His sword clangs against the thick claws of the beast's right hand. His worn sword rings, he is shocked back. Instead of creating distance afterwards, Desh takes this moment to dive straight under Breathcaller's belly. He directs his sword straight and digs his silver sword deep into the warm stomach of the dragon. Breathcaller shrieks in pain and tumbles down. With just enough time Desh rolls out from under the falling beast.

Desh quickly stands up and regains his weapon. Breathcaller lies with little movement and exhales sharp, warm breaths. Some of his last. He sees Desh in his peripheral vision.

BREATHCALLER

Sla-Slayer! Come here. I will not
harm you. You have won.

Desh moves forward with sword in hand.

BREATHCALLER (CONT'D)

I- I-- I truly wish my heart serves
you well.

(MORE)

BREATHCALLER (CONT'D)

May it bring back your honor and
make you content once again. I'll
see you in the next life, Desh.

Breathcaller takes one last sigh as the fire inside him burns out.

Desh drops his sword as soon as he sees the soul of the beast leave its body behind. He takes a knee and rest his left hand on the top of the dragon's head.

EXT. MEDIEVAL CITY STREETS- DAY

Large amounts of people crowd the pathways leading to the King's castle. Desh is lead by a company of the King's best on horseback. He holds tightly to a heavy bag in his hand.

His face is expressionless contrasting the cheering all around him. The King's subjects, peasants and carpenters, blacksmiths and innkeepers all shouting his name:

EVERYONE

DESH!!! DESH THE DRAGON SLAYER!!!

Desh finds no joy in the matter.

Finally he reaches the steps of the King's Castle. Up at the top waiting for him is a fat, burly man with a golden crown laid on his head and a young girl no older than fifteen on his arm.

Once in front of the King, Desh kneels down and hesitantly kisses the large diamond ring on his majesty's sausage finger.

Desh then quickly stands and presents the nation's King with the bag in his hand. The King looks at it as if it were a silly notion to touch such a filthy item. Desh gives a light scoff not taking his sight away from the King and pulls out the bloody heart of the dragon slain days before.

He then presents it to the crowd. They roar nearly as loud as the dragon did.

KING ABBERD

Well done, knight. Or shall I call
you Dragon Slayer?
(he laughs)

Desh lays the heart in a chest nearby and stands beside the King facing his people. He turns around as he sees the chest taken away.

Back against the crowd, he looks down at his bloody hands mumbling to himself. His voice overpowered by the thousands below.

KING ABBERD (CONT'D)
(shouting over the crowd)
Honor has been restored!

The crowd explodes. Desh ignores.

He takes a breath and looks up towards the mountain longingly. Far away he feels the warmth of the dragon's cave. His eyes water.

He looks down, ashamed.

FADE TO BLACK.