



SHIELD OF
DARKNESS

WRITTEN BY
M.LATHROM

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Written by

Matt Lathrom

matt@mlathrom.com
writtenby.mlathrom.com

FADE IN:

EXT. FIELD - DAY

NYGELL (28), ducks and dodges sword swings as he weaves his way through the raging battle.

Chaos. Mud flies, men fall, blood splatters around.

Nygell's blonde hair peeks out from under his shiny metal helmet. His leather strappings and armor clean and new.

He ducks under his wooden shield, a sword crashes down on it.

A MUDDY SOLDIER swings at him. He swaps it away with his sword, shoves the soldier down with his shield, runs away.

ANGLE ON WILLIAM (32), bright eyes and white teeth shine through the mud-covered warrior face. His helmet worn and dinged.

He swings left and right. Slices a soldier's stomach. Shield-blocks a sword swing. Elbows the guy. Thrust his sword through the man's stomach.

He whips around.

POV of Nygell weaving through the battle.

William grits his teeth, then rushes toward Nygell.

ANGLE ON Nygell, he crouches low as he snakes through the battle, shield in front of him.

Slam, he hits something. Peeks over the shield.

POV of lumbering BRUTE with a mace looks who looks down at him.

Nygell back up.

The BRUTE swings the mace a couple of times, throws it down.

Nygell closes his eyes and retract.

CHINK.

Nygell peers up. A sword above him as caught the mace. He turns to see.

William kicks the Brute back. The Brute stumbles. He swings his mace around, swings down at William. William lifts his shield. The mace cracks it in half.

William tosses the shield.

WILLIAM
(to Nygell)
Get up! Fight!

Nygell rises, looks at the sword in his hand.

A sword swings around from behind William, catches William's arm. It clinks on the chainmail, knocks William aside. A SWORDED SOLDIER behind him

Nygell shoves Sworded Soldier down with his shield.

The Brute swings his mace. Hits William's sword. It sticks into the ground.

Nygell lifts his sword to stab the Sworded Soldier. He hesitates.

The Brute swings his mace up, comes down toward William. William roles out of the way, pulls his sword from the mud. Stabs the Brute in the stomach.

Nygell holds his sword above the Sworded Soldier. His hand trembles. He glances over.

POV William pulls the sword from the Brute.

Smash. Sworded Soldier kicks Nygell in the gut. Nygell folds over. Sworded Solider swings his sword when--

William thrust his sword through the man's neck.

Nygell looks at William. William shakes his head, then rushes back into the furious battle.

EXT. ENCAMPMENT - NIGHT

Fire burn next to small tents. Men walk around. Distant grunts as soldier tend to their wounds.

Nygell warms his hands over the fire. He has an anxious look about him. His eyes fixed as the day's events churn in his mind.

Across the fire, William squats down onto a log.

Nygell avoids eye-contact.

WILLIAM
What the hell were you doing out there?

NYGELL

I'm sorry. But I told you before...
I can't do this.

WILLIAM

Oh yes, of course. You're too smart
to fight, too kind to kill.

Nygell shakes his head. Pulls his hands in close to his
body.

NYGELL

I'm not good to anyone out there.
Best use me as a shield next time.

William rises. He looms over the fire. Burns a hole in
Nygell with his glare.

WILLIAM

You think you're so kind. You're so
noble. You like feeling this way,
acting like you're better than all
of us. But you're worst one of the
lot. You think I came out of my
mother with a sword in my hand and
a taste for blood?

(beat)

Every one of us is the same. You
want to believe you can't kill a
man because it makes you feel
virtuous. Better than us. But
you're too much of a coward to
accept what you're capable.

(beat)

You are not a virtuous man. Virtue
is not doing good. Virtue is
knowing your inner evil and doing
good in the face of it. You lie to
yourself, and you lie to the world.

William storms off.

CLOSE ON Nygell's face contorts in anger.

EXT. FIELD - DAY

Nygell ducks and dodges sword swings as he weaves his way
through the raging battle.

Chaos. Mud flies, men fall, blood splatters around.

ANGLE ON William, who fight with fury. He glances over.

POV of Nygell ducking around.

William shakes his head, goes back to fighting.

ANGLE ON Nygell. A sword swings out of nowhere, clanks against his helmet. He hits the ground.

A ringing in his ear.

He lies next to another dead body. He looks dead. Men fight around him. He closes his eyes.

WILLIAM (V.O.)

You're too much of a coward to accept what you're capable of.

Nygell scrunches his eyes closed. He shakes with fear.

WILLIAM (V.O.)

You lie to yourself, and you lie to the world.

Nygell's eyes shoot open. He lifts himself off the ground to his feet. He pulls the sword from his sheath.

A DEMENTED SOLDIER with a twisted grin pulls his sword from a man coughing up blood. Laughs.

Nygell rushes him, lifts his sword, swings.

The whips around, blocks with his sword.

They swing and block each other.

Nygell tosses his shield. The man stumbles back.

Nygell lunges at him, sword first.

The sword pierces the man's chest. The Demented Soldier grips the sword as his falls to the ground.

Nygell pulls it out. Bloodlust in his eyes. Uncontrolled rage. He screams out. Explodes into battle.

He swings wildly, killing indiscriminately. A sliced stomach here, a throat cut there. He cuts the legs out from under men.

A mace swings above him, he ducks. A MACE MAN swings again. He catches the mace chain with his sword. He yanks on it, pulls the Mace Man close. Head butts him.

The man falls back. Hits the ground.

Someone slams into the back of Nygell. Nygell whips around, stabs. Then freezes.

Nygell's bloodlust fades as he traces the handle of his sword, to the bloody end stuck in William.

William falls to his knees. Peers up at Nygell with a look of pure shock and realization.

CLOSE ON Nygell's eyes. Glassy, red, raging.

William looks at the evil he released. He falls back. Grips his stomach.

His eyes go still as he looks up into the sky.

CLOSE ON Nygell. Tears fall from his eyes. Eyes dart around. Then, he swings his sword around him, slicing another man's arm off.

He throws himself back into battle, screaming like a madman.

FADE OUT.

THE END