

THE NORTH WATER

PART TWO: "WE MEN ARE WRETCHED THINGS"

By

See

See

OTTO

You were in the water for an hour.
You should be dead, but here you
are, living and breathing.

SUMNER tries speak again, but it is little more than a

BROWNLEE

Mi racle or not, there wi ll be no
more thi rd boat. We mari ners wi ll

(MORE)

(CONTI NUED)

CONTINUED:

SUMNER (CONT' D)

They were sent to the typhus
hospital in Castlebar, that's in
County Mayo where I'm from, a long
way from here.

Even though GAURAV came to see me.

7 INT. SUMNER' S CABIN - NIGHT 7

SUMNER opens hi s eyes, beads of sweat dri ppi ng down hi s forehead.

DI SSOLVE TO:

8 EXT. SEA / SUPER I MPOSED MAP - DAY 8

The Vol unteer sai ls aroun

Mast

OTTO

OTTO

Everything must have its form.

SUMNER shakes his head.

SUMNER

Why would you believe in such things? What good does it do you?

OTTO

The world we see with our eyes is not the whole truth, dreams and visions are just as real as matter. What we can imagine exists as much as anything we can touch and smell. Where do our thoughts come from, if not from God?

SUMNER

They come from our experience; from what we've heard and seen and read. From what's been told to us.

OTTO

If that were true, then no growth would be possible. The world would be stagnant, unmoving. We would be doomed to live our lives facing backwards.

SUMNER is silent for a moment as he looks at the pale sky above and the pitching of the sea below.

SUMNER

12 INT. SUMNER' S CABIN - NIGHT

12

SUMNER si ts at hi s desk wi th HANNAH standi ng before hi m.
SUMNER i s ti red and woul d prefer to be sleepi ng or
readi ng or anythi ng other than deal i ng wi th HANNAH. But

(CONTI NUED)

CONTINUED:

HANNAH shakes his head.

SUMNER
So where is the pain?

HANNAH
Everywhere.

SUMNER sighs, irritated. Impatiently, he prods some more.

SUMNER
If it is not here or here then how
can it be everywhere?

HANNAH
It's -- lower down.

SUMNER
Any diarrhoea?

HANNAH shakes his head.

SUMNER
Do you know what diarrhoea means?

HANNAH
The flux.

SUMNER
Does it hurt when you

N

BROWNLEE (CONT' D)

Steam is the future, of course,
and with a powerful enough
steamship we could dust them to
the sea.

SUMNER

The boy will not say. He is frightened. He may also be a little simple-minded.

BROWNLEE

Oh, he's stupid enough that's for sure. I know his father and his uncle both, and they are bloody imbeciles. And you are sure this happened on board the ship?

SUMNER

Without any doubt.

BROWNLEE

Why did he not cry out?

SUMNER

Perhaps you could ask him yourself? He won't speak to me, but if you order him to name th

15

INT. BROWNLEE'S CABIN - NIGHT

15

BROWNLEE and SUMNER sit beside each other in silence, sipping brandy as they wait. When HANNAH arrives with CAVENDISH, the cabin boy looks pale and afraid.

SUMNER

You have nothing to be frightened about, Joseph. The captain wants to ask you a few questions.

HANNAH stands in front of them, CAVENDISH behind the boy.

CAVENDISH

Should I stay

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CAVENDI SH
I I I -used?

SUMNER
Sodomi zed.

CAVENDI SH rai ses hi s eyebrows, but otherwi se does not
seem a

SUMNER

Because he is scared.

BROWNLEE

Who are you scared of, Jose

SUMNER

We can seek witnesses.

CAVENDISH

(snorting)

We are on a whaling ship.

BROWNLEE

You may go now, Joseph. If I wish
to speak to you again, I'll call
for you.

BROWNLEE returns to his seat but SUMNER is not ready to let this go.

SUMNER

Let me speak to the crew. I will see if anyone knows of --

BROWNLEE

You will not. Unless the boy changes his tune the matter will be dropped. We are here to kill whales, not root out sin.

SUMNER

But a serious crime has been committed.

BROWNLEE shakes his head, deeply irritated by SUMNER's persistence.

BROWNLEE

One boy has a sore arse, that's all. It is unfortunate, I agree, but he will recover soon enough.

SUMNER

His injuries were more severe than that. The rectum was distendedT 12 0 0 12 338 347 Tm233 34

16 INT. SUMNER'S CABIN - NIGHT

16

SUMNER heads straight for the medicine chest. He takes a heavy dose of laudanum, frustrated and weary.

He

(CONTINUED)

SUMNER

Keep the dressing on for a day or
so; it will heal

SUMNER

What are your thoughts on them?

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SUMNER's suspicions are raised but DRAX shrugs. SUMNER

turns and walks to the red sofa, where he puts away his papers.

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23

EXT. VOLUNTEER DECK - DAY

23

Through the spyglass, SUMNER watches the chaos from afar.
Both harpoons have

EXT. VOLUNT

CONTI NUED: (2)

Instead, he sits down on the steps by the deckhouse and watches the men. Not long after -- CAVENDISH approaches with a bottle of rum.

CAVENDISH

Maybe we will make a whaling man of you yet.

SUMNER

Is that so?

CAVENDISH

Some surgeons would be too dainty for the pick haak, but you took to it nicely, I'd say.

SUMNER

Flensing is a good deal like cutting turf, and I did plenty of that when I was a boy.

CAVENDISH

That's it then; it's in your blood.

SUMNER

Whaling is in my blood?

CAVENDISH

Not whaling, the working. An Irishman is a laborer at heart, that is his calling. You may not sound like an Irishman but one you'll always be.

SUMNER

And what is an Englishman's true calling, I wonder. To grow fat off the labors of others?

CAVENDISH

(with a shru

OTTO

Come see.

SUMNER approaches slowly with a growing sense of dread and peers into the cask...

There, curled up and submerged in filthy grey water, is

(CONTINUED)

BROWNLEE

So?

SUMNER

They are only recently missing.

OTTO

The most important questions are the ones we can't hope to answer with words. Words are like toys: they amuse and educate us for a time, but when we come to manhood we should give them up.

SUMNER shakes his head.

SUMNER

Words are all we have. If we give them up, we are no better than

MCKENDRICK

It hant ever been boys. The boys
int to my taste.

CAVENDISH snorts agai n, deri si vel y.

CAVENDISH

You expect us to believe you are
so very particular about whose
arse you lay siege to. From what I
hear, after a pint or two of
whiskey, you would fuck your own
grandad.

MCKENDRICK

It int a matter of laying siege to
anythi ng.

BROWNLEE j abs hi s forefi nger towards MckENDRICK' s face

(MORE)

(CONTI NUED)

CONTI NUED:

CAVE SH claps his hands together and laug

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BROWNLEE

I have rarely heard such desperate nonsense. Take this shameful piece of shite below and chain him to the mainmast before I lose my damn temper.

CAVENDISH takes a howling MCKENDRICK by the arm, dragging him towards the door.

MCKENDRICK

I int no fucki ng murderer93T2 1 Tf (,) Tj ETM

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