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We open on the eyes of LYRA, 12, full-frame, as she struggles to stay awake.

INT. LECTURE HALL - DAY

We are in the grand lecture hall of JORDAN COLLEGE, arranged like a rotunda, with terraced seating. The seats are leather, their backs painted wood. Tall lead-paned windows line one side, looking out upon the Great Quadrangle of the college; busts of famous Jordan men and their daemons stand in between the windows. Shafts of light shoot through the gloom, illuminating chunky diagonal shafts of dust in the air.

Lyra sits incongruously amongst a throng of scholars, all male and in academic gowns, they and their daemons focused upon a lecturer, the TUTOR OF METAPHYSICS --

TUTOR OF METAPHYSICS

Obedience.

We cut back to the eyes of the scholars, all attention except for Lyra.

TUTOR OF METAPHYSICS (cont'd)

Unquestioning obedience is the first rule of human behavior as it is of science. All things obey laws -- experimental metaphysics proves as much. An apple falling from a tree may not "choose" to fall upwards. It must obey the law of gravitation. A lion cannot live upon roots and grass. It will die if it does not obey its nature. And similarly, we must obey. Daemon must obey human, servant must obey master, child must obey parent, wife must obey husband -- although some would say the data on that has yet to be experimentally proven!

The scholars sense that the Tutor is making a joke, and laugh.

LYRA

Smelly old ninny. I feel sorry for his wife.

Suddenly, Pantalaimon, Lyra's daemon, who is perched on Lyra's shoulder, **speaks!**

PANTALAIMON

Quiet! You'll get us in trouble again!

FELLOW

Lyra, are your comments reserved for your daemon --

LYRA

Pantalaimon. Sir.

FELLOW

-- for Pantalaimon, or are the rest of us fit to hear them?

Pantalaimon shifts into a mouse form and crawls around the back of Lyra's neck.

PANTALAIMON

Now you've done it.

We see that all of the scholars as well as the Fellow are looking at her. And it may be now that we notice that each and every one of them has a daemon, each a different sort of animal, perched on their shoulder or curled on their lap or hovering nearby. The fellow's daemon happens to be a particularly musty-looking **owl**, which is training its glassy eyes on Pantalaimon at this very moment.

LYRA

(smoothly)

I was saying this was your best lecture, ever, Dr. Maule. Much better than the one Dr. Marenbon gave this morning.

Dr. Maule seems unconvinced, but Lyra's face is infused with innocent candor. His vanity defeats his skepticism.

FELLOW

Well, we mustn't be too hard on Dr. Marenbon. Not a Jordan man, after all.

We hear more ACCOMODATING LAUGHTER from the scholars, and see relief on Lyra's face.

FELLOW (cont'd)

Now -- to the specific obligation at hand -- the bond between human and daemon.

The fellow refers to a chart suspended behind him, a hand-tinted line-drawing of a generic man, with certain areas of the body marked out (we may or may not recognize these as corresponding to vedic "chakras", and a form like a colored balloon extending from his heart, containing a line-drawing of a **bird**). The style is that of Vesalius or Gray's Anatomy -- a precise technical rendering done by hand for purposes of study. It is a scientific drawing of a man and his daemon.

FELLOW (cont'd)

Experimental metaphysics has proven that this link is indivisible. Much as the particle is the finest component of matter and cannot be cut into smaller pieces, so the human and his daemon is the indivisible unit of mankind's conscious existence. Logically, it is as inappropriate to speak of a living person without a daemon as it is to speak of a living person without a head.

This apt comment is greeted with CHUCKLES. UNDER the ABOVE, we see the following:

Lyra responds to a TAPPING on one of the windows looking out upon Great Quad. We see that the person tapping on the window from outside is actually UPSIDE DOWN -- hanging from the unseen eaves.

Lyra is not surprised by this at all. This is her best friend ROGER. He gestures for her to come over to the window -- and the gesture is reinforced by Roger's **daemon**, who is in the form of **bat**, also hanging upside-down and gesturing to her with one claw.

Lyra waits for her chance, and when the Fellow's back is turned, scampers over the scholars' feet towards the window. The scholars turn to see Lyra's place still filled, and turn away again, before realizing that it is infact Pan in the shape of an orangutan. The fellow turns accusingly.

FELLOW (cont'd)

Lyra Belacqua!

-- But Lyra is already up and over the window-pane, crawling out into what appears to be open air. The fellow turns his wrath upon Pantalaimon, and his **owl-daemon** flies from his shoulder towards where Pan sits smiling -- but quick as a blink Pan runs along the desktops and JUMPS OUT OF THE WINDOW, turning into a **parrot** in mid-air.

EXT. JORDAN COLLEGE - DAY

We follow Lyra out of the window, and our perspective opens to comprehend a TREMENDOUS VISTA -- Great Quad, Jordarn, the biggest quadrangle of the biggest college in Oxford. The piecemeal work of ten centuries, the impression is at once of grandeur, disorder, permanence, and decay, stretched over three courts and acres of stone. Lyra and their daemons are perched on the eaves above the lecture room, looking out on Great Quad. They can also look out upon the network of COLLEGE ROOFS, forbidden and unsafe but as familiar to them as the streets below.

ROGER

'Lo Lyra.

LYRA

'Lo Roger.

ROGER

Was was that old geezer goin' on about then?

Lyra starts off across the rooftops, and Roger follows.

LYRA

He was lecturing.

ROGER

Lecturing? What, was he mad at them scholars?

LYRA

Nah. They want to listen to him. They write it all down, see, and at the end of the year the praelectors take all their notebooks away and ask 'em what the fellows said, and they have to remember it all.

Roger screws his face up in distaste.

ROGER

So why do you have to go? Is it because you're gonna be a lady?

LYRA

(annoyed)
Who told you that?

ROGER
Cook. She told me your Uncle
asriel left you here so you could
become a lady.

LYRA
(angrily)
Nobody can make me a lady, not even
my Uncle Asriel and the Master and
all the Fellows combined, right?
(then, breezily)
So what did I miss?

ROGER
The Gyptians are comin' to town for
the horse fair.

LYRA
Everybody knows that. Happens each
Michaelmas.

ROGER
The college won the cricket.

LYRA
Yeah.

ROGER
How could you know that? It just
happened.

LYRA
I knew they was the best, so I
assumed they won. Assuming right's
the same as knowing, en't it?

ROGER
(confused)
Maybe...
(beat)
Well -- I bet you don't know about
the Gobblers.

Lyra doesn't. She's fazed, but hides it.

LYRA
'Course I do.

ROGER
Yeah, what do they do then?

LYRA
They gobble people, don't they.
Don't be stupid.

ROGER
(disappointed)
Oh. Well I heard there was ten
children missing in London, and the
Gobblers are coming to Oxford to
steal more kids.

LYRA
I'd like to see them come to
Jordan! I'd like to see them try
to get past the Head Porter!

ROGER
The Gobblers en't afraid of the
Head Porter, Lyra. They en't
afraid of anybody.

LYRA
Well I en't afraid of the Gobblers.

Roger stops and looks at her, admiringly.

ROGER
You en't?
(off her look)
Then promise me you'll come and get
me back if the Gobblers snatch me.
(beat)
And I'll promise to come get you.

Lyra turns to him, serious, honoring the idea of an oath.

LYRA
I won't promise. The Magisterium
says oaths en't ethical. But I will
swear to the death.

ROGER
Right then.

Roger and Lyra each gravely lick their palms and shake hands,
as their daemons turn into dragonflies and buzz around each
other. Then, Pantalaimon, seemingly distracted, sweeps past
Lyra and dips below the line of the roof and back.

PANTALAIMON
Listen!
(off Roger and Lyra's
attention)

PANTALAIMON(cont'd)
The Master and the Librarian are
talking about ice bears.

Both Roger and Lyra immediately jumps to the edge of the roof and begin literally to eavesdrop -- listening in on the conversation in the RETIRING ROOM below.

INT. RETIRING ROOM - DAY

A luxurious room, appointed in masculine academic style. The Master and the Librarian confer over coffee. We cut between the roof and here through this scene.

MASTER
-- and she apparently negotiated on
behalf of the Magisterium with the
king of the bears himself.

ABOVE, Lyra's eyes widen.

LIBRARIAN
King Haakon? He hasn't admitted a
human to his court since --

MASTER
No, Terrington, there's a new king.
Ragnar Sturlusson. Crowned on
Oberammergau day this year. Not
without some controversy -- they
say the old king may have been
encouraged to his final rest.

LIBRARIAN
Asriel will have a thing or two to
say about it. When does he arrive?

ABOVE, Lyra looks over to Roger.

LYRA
Uncle --

MASTER
-- Arrived in time for sherry.

LIBRARIAN
He's already here...Master, are you
sure it's entirely necessary
to...take such strict measures
against Lord Asriel?

MASTER

I've no choice in the matter. The Magisterium insists that he must be silenced.

(beat)

We'd better fetch him from dinner or we'll be missed.

The Master and Librarian turn to a row of hooks on the wall that hold numerous academic gowns of varying degrees of age and gaudiness. They take their gowns and leave.

LYRA

I've got to get in there!

PANTALAIMON

What?

ROGER

What?

LYRA

You heard them -- they're going to do something to my uncle!

ROGER

But -- you can't go in! Only the master and fellows! Anyway -- who says they'll do something?

LYRA

"Strict measures"!

PANTALAIMON

So they'll give him a talking to! Who cares?

ROGER

I en't goin' in there.

LYRA

Pan, are they gone?

PANTALAIMON

Yes. Wait -- why?

Lyra is slipping in through the window.

INT. RETIRING ROOM - DAY

Lyra is in unfamiliar, scary and exciting territory. She looks for a place to hide. While she is still looking, the DOOR OPENS.

PANTALAIMON

There. We're as good as spanked.

The Master walks in, but because of the angle of the door, doesn't see her. Lyra FREEZES, as does Pan, who has taken on the form of a chameleon and is trying to blend in with the background. All seems well until the Master's daemon turns to look them right in the eye -- Lyra and Pan hold their breath --

-- But we see that the Master's daemon is an aged **mole**, who can't make them out at all. Lyra and Pan EXHALE, and Lyra scampers for a tall armoire as the Master turns to the window and walks to the table in the room's center.

INSIDE THE ARMOIRE, Lyra peers through the cracks between the doors.

PANTALAIMON (cont'd)

Now we're stuck!

LYRA

Shut up, Pan!

She \watches as the Master places a decanter of wine on the table -- innocent enough -- then sees him take a white paper packet from amongst the folds of his robe and pour a stream of white powder into one of the glasses. He pours a glass of wine over the powder, mixes it with a pencil, sets the glass in front of the finest chair in the room, and heads back to the door.

LYRA (cont'd)

Pan! Did you see that? He's going to poison Uncle Asriel!

PANTALAIMON

It's probably bicarbonate of soda. You're going to embarrass yourself and get us punished because the Master has a stomach-ache. Now --

We hear noises and footsteps as more people enter the room.

LYRA

Too late now.

PANTALAIMON

You'd better get comfortable. You know how much they talk.

At this, Lyra sees LORD ASRIEL step in. Her expression at once assumes a more reverent aspect.

Asriel is dressed in well-cut travelling clothes and accompanied by his snow-leopard daemon, Stelmaria. He carries a formidable air that sets him apart from the academicians whose scholarly distinction he shares.

MASTER

I had the '99 Tokay decanted for you, Lord Asriel. I remember you were partial to it.

The Master picks up the glass and hands it to Asriel.

LORD ASRIEL

You are very kind.

INSIDE THE ARMOIRE, Pan seems finally convinced -- he looks at Lyra in alarm.

LYRA

We have to tell uncle Asriel.

PANTALAIMON

They'll see you.

LYRA

They won't see you.

Asriel takes a seat far from the armoire.

LYRA (cont'd)

It's far -- but you have to --

PANTALAIMON

-- This is the silliest thing in a lifetime of silly things you've done --

LYRA

Pan, you must!

The STEWARD, flanked by his **great Dane** daemon, is pouring out the rest of the Tokay into glasses for the Fellows. Pan slips out of the armoire, a centipede, then a snake, finally a moth, making his way across the room and flitting to Stelmaria's ear. As Pan proceeds further from her, Lyra's face shows first anxiety and then pain...

LYRA (cont'd)
So far...so far...

The snow leopard shows no reaction, but Asriel, who has lifted the glass to admire the wine, manifests the slightest show of concern. He lowers the glass, considering. The Master is regarding him closely.

MASTER
To the college --

ASRIEL
(interrupting)
I will get straight to the point, gentlemen. I've travelled a long way and I've a train waiting to take me to White Hall after I've spoken to you.

Asriel puts down his glass without taking a sip.

ASRIEL (cont'd)
Cawson!

THOROLD
Right away, my lord.

THOROLD, Asriel's butler, backs in, carrying a large wooden box with beautifully worked brass fittings, and a lens at one end.

Meanwhile, the Steward leans ove to gather up the glasses of wine from the table, but Asriel gets there first.

ASRIEL
I'll do that, thank you, Hunt.

The Master tries to follow Asriel's movements as he relocates the glasses of wine on a side table. He can't tell which is which. He shares a worried look with the Librarian.

Asriel slides open a hinged rawer in the wooden case that Thorold has placed on the table. The workings of the SPIRIT PROJECTOR, a sort of slide projector, become apparent. As with most of the technology in this world, it is hand-machined and beautifully worked.

The Fellows settle into chairs, some reachinhg for pipes or poppy-burners as Asriel removes a paper-thin amethyst TRANSPARENCY from amongst the slots in the case and fits it into the spirit projector.

ASRIEL (cont'd)
Hood -- the lamps.

The Steward turns down the old-fashioned naphtha lamps that illuminate the room. As Asriel pumps a brass chamber in the spirit projector, a bright white/yellow circle glows on the opposite wall.

ASRIEL (cont'd)
As some of you know, I set off for the North twelve months ago on a diplomatic mission to the king of Lapland.

As Asriel speaks, Pan is making his way back to the armoire, slipping past the fellows' daemons in the form of a scampering **gecko**.

ASRIEL (cont'd)
At least, that is what I pretended to be doing. In fact, my real aim was to go further north still -- to the Arctic pack-ice -- to investigate the phenomenon identified by the college's particle-scope as taking place over true-north.

Pan finally slips back into the armoire, where a frantic Lyra HUGS him.

LYRA
Oh Pan! You went so far! It hurt!

PANTALAIMON
Me too!

ASRIEL
The photograms I will show you should speak more eloquently than I ever could about the...
philosophical value of the expedition.

Asriel slips a TRANSPARENCY between the spirit projector's lamp and lens, and the machine casts a picture onto the wall. The picture is rendered in a deep, deep red, so deep as to be almost black.

In the PHOTGRAM we SEE: Night, under a full moon. A wooden hut in the distancem secured to the pack-ice by metal cords. Philosophical instruments -- wires, aerials, porcelain insulators -- are all gilded with frost.

A man dressed in warm furs stands with his arm raised as if in greeting. To his side stands a small figure, presumably a child.

ASRIEL (cont'd)
This photogram was taken with a
standard emulsion. This one --

The same scene, only now the taller figure is BATHED in an eerie light as glowing particles seem to be streaming from his upraised hand into the sky.

ASRIEL (cont'd)
-- was taken with a special
emulsion prepared at the
Universities' Dawkins laboratory.

The CASSINGTON SCHOLAR and a YOUNGER FELLOW pipe up.

CASSINGTON SCHOLAR
Where were the photograms taken?

ASRIEL
Northern Svalbard.

CASSINGTON SCHOLAR
How did you earn the bear-king's
permission --

YOUNGER FELLOW
Gave him his own daemon.

Laughter.

YOUNGER FELLOW (cont'd)
Well, the poor beast has been
casting about for a daemon of his
own. Placed an ad in the Times.
Deeply embarrassing. Is that light
rising up from the man's hand or
coming down?

ASRIEL
It's going down. But it isn't
light. It's **Dust**.

The word "Dust" is said, and taken, with particular emphasis and moment. The fellows are astonished.

MASTER
But how --

LIBRARIAN
Surely --

YOUNGER FELLOW

It can't --

The DEACON, an official of the Magisterium attached to the staff, butts in, seemingly helpfully.

DEACON

Mirabile dictu. Gentlemen, let us allow Lord Asriel to explain.

IN THE ARMOIRE, Lyra turns to Pan.

LYRA

What are they talking about, Pan? What's "Dust"?

PANTALAIMON

I don't know.

ASRIEL

It is Dust, gentlemen, as hypothesized by Russakov. The particular emulsion of this photogram is formulated to register it. As you can see, the figure of the man is perfectly visible. The figure to the right --

DEACON

-- His daemon?

ASRIEL

No, it's a child. Which is exactly the point, isn't it? The child is completely free of dust.

The Fellows remain astonished, digesting this.

MASTER

Lord Asriel -- not that I mean to impute any bias to your research, but...why has no such picture ever been taken before?

ASRIEL

Not at all, master. You bring me to my next point. As you know, the magnetism of the North Pole charges certain particles, as for instance in the case of the aurora borealis, the famed "Northern Lights". It is this charge that renders Dust visible in this photogram.

ASRIEL(cont'd)

And it also shows something, to my
mind, even more astonishing --

Asriel slips another photogram into the spirit projector. We
see a picture of the Northern Lights --

ASRIEL (cont'd)

Here you see the Northern Lights --
storms of charged particles of
intense strength -- invisible in
themselves, but causing luminous
radiation when they interact with
the atmosphere. Now here --

Asriel points to an area in the photogram --

ASRIEL (cont'd)

Is where I wish to direct your
attention.

MASTER

What is that?

LIBRARIAN

Is it --

ASRIEL

A city.

We can indeed see, behind a cluster of tents and an untidy
heap of boxes, the unmistakable outline of a city. Towers,
domes, walls -- buildings and streets, suspended in the air!

LIBRARIAN

I don't understand -- a city in the
ice?

ASRIEL

Not in the ice, Librarian. A city
in another world.

A further hush.

DEACON

That is not possible.

ASRIEL

(angrily)

It is not only possible, it is
fact. It is also proof.

ASRIEL(cont'd)

Proof of the existence of alternate worlds -- alternate universes -- coexisting with, interpenetrating our own, intangible, inaccessible -- until now.

As Asriel continues, the Deacon leans his head to listen to his **tarantula** daemon, and writes a note on a rich piece of card.

ASRIEL (cont'd)

Gentlemen, I intend to travel to that other world. With a significant source of energy -- and a significant source of funding -- I can effect a crossing.

MASTER

I see. The college is to be the source of the funds...but what is to be the source of energy?

ASRIEL

(casually)

Simple. I will break the unbreakable.

Asriel reaches out and takes a glass from the table. We are not sure which one -- poisoned or not. He raises it in toast.

ASRIEL (cont'd)

To other worlds.

Asriel, with barely a moment's hesitation, puts the glass to his lips and DOWNS it, as the Master looks on.

With a fierce vitality, Asriel smiles and puts the glass down. Still alive. Some of the fellows follow enthusiastically in his toast and drink, others less so. The Master, pale, looks at his glass.

ASRIEL (cont'd)

You're not drinking, Master? Are you unenthusiastic about the discovery of other worlds -- or about the '99 Tokay?

MASTER

I -- the -- you must excuse me, but I have further questions.

MASTER(cont'd)

With regard to the -- the political
ramifications -- the academic value
-- the financial considerations of
such an endeavor --

IN THE ARMOIRE, Lyra's attention is flagging as the
conversation revives...

PANTALAIMON

Oh dear -- they're off again.

FADE TO:

INT. ARMOIRE - LATER

Lyra is asleep against a corner, snuggled under some academic
robes, Pan curled around her neck like an **ermine**. The doors
are FLUNG OPEN.

LYRA

(waking)

I never -- I en't -- I didn't --

ASRIEL

What were you doing in there?

LYRA

The Steward locked me in here!
Honest!

ASRIEL

You're lying.

Asriel YANKS her out of the armoire.

LYRA

Ow! You're hurting us!

EXT. MASTER'S GARDEN - DAY

Asriel, still holding Lyra by the wrist, pulls her out of the
door into the Master's enclosed garden, and marches her
across the garden and through a passage in the corner.
Stelmaria, meanwhile, carries Pantalaimon in her mouth like a
kitten.

ASRIEL

You have no business in the
Retiring Room.

LYRA
 You're not very grateful, are you?
 I just saved your life!

ASRIEL
 That's true.

He lets go of his grip on Lyra. At the same time, Stelmara lets go of Pan, who shakes himself indignantly.

LYRA
 Uncle? Why did the Master try to kill you? And what are you going to do with him?

ASRIEL
 Nothing.

LYRA
 But he wanted to poison you!

ASRIEL
 Yes, but I see no reason to hold it against him.

They vanish through the arched passageway leading to --

EXT. GREAT QUAD - DAY

Asriel and Lyra stride diagonally across the grass of Great Quad, Lyra trotting to keep up with her uncle.

LYRA
 But --

ASRIEL
 After all, he seems to have kept you in one piece --
 (looks at her)
 -- even if you have turned into a filthy, duplicitous little savage. What's the square root of ten?
 (off Lyra's look)
 Hopeless.

LYRA
 Did you get the money you needed?
 Are you going North again?

ASRIEL
 Yes. I'm leaving straightaway.

LYRA
 (stops)
 Can I come?

Asriel stops and looks at her, as if anew.

LYRA (cont'd)
 I want to see the Northern Lights
 and ice bears and glaciers and
 everything.

Both Asriel and Stelmaria are regarding her intently.
 Finally --

ASRIEL
 Your place is here.

Asriel keeps walking. Lyra follows.

LYRA
 But why? Why is my place here?
 And what's Dust?

ASRIEL
 Nothing to do with you. Now you're
 not coming. Put it out of your
 head; it's too dangerous. Do what
 you're told and be a good girl.

LYRA
 But you don't do what you're told,
 do you? You don't let anybody tell
 you what to do.

ASRIEL
 That's right. And I may have
 reason to regret it. Now don't
 argue any more or I shall be angry.

LYRA
 But uncle --

Stelmaria growls menacingly. Lyra frowns hard at Asriel, but
 he takes no notice.

ASRIEL
 Well. You...are taller.
 Your..daemon still changes forms,
 does he? Hasn't settled into one
 form yet?

Lyra catches a bit of Asriel's discomfort with this question.

LYRA

...Yeah...

ASRIEL

Well. As I said. Behave yourself.
And...

Asriel leave sthe thought unfinished, turns and leaves. Lyra watches his retreating form for a while, then turns angrily and storms up the stairs towards her room.

EXT. JERICHO MEADOWS - DAY

Here, in the meadows by the river Isis, the colleges of Oxford form a low skyline in the distance.

A number of brightly colored NARROWS BOATS are in various stages of mooring on the bank. Some are stacked several deep, gangways laid between them. Interspersed with them are flat HAULING BARGES, from which horses are being unloaded. Clustered by the bank are a number of tents and palisades -- a temporary village erected for the Gyptian HORSE FAIR. The gyoptians are a nomadic waterfolk whose home villages are in the fens of East Anglia but whose bloodlines extend to Ireland, The Isle of Man, the Low Countries, Normandy, Flanders, and as far as the Indies.

On the edge of one of the encampments, a child, BILLY COSTA, is "helping" to put up a tent. As his older brother, TONY COSTA, positions a stake to be hammered in, Billy picks up a mallet to hand to him. Tony looks for the mallet where he left it but can't find it, and he has to let go of the stake, which slackens a rope, and sets in motion a chain of inconveniences.

BILLY COSTA

Tony, I got your mallet here.

TONY COSTA

(annoyed)

Leave it, will you? Give it to me
and get on with yer, Billy. Go on.

Offended, Billy wanders away, poking around the edges of camp, looking for something interesting to do. His daemon, in the shape of a **sparrow**, follows him.

He hears a curious PIPING and SQUEAKING in the distance. Curious, he FOLLOWS the sound to the edge of a stand of trees...where he sees, half-obscured, a beuatifully-furred GOLDEN MONKEY.

BILLY COSTA

Hello.

The monkey stands on its hind legs and waves. Billy laughs. The monkey retreats into the woods, looking back at him.

BILLY COSTA (cont'd)

Where you goin' then?

Billy follows the monkey, who keeps just ahead of him, scampering and turning corners until they're out of sight and earshot of the Gyptian camp. Finally, the monkey winds round the trunk of a big oak and a CLEARING is revealed --

EXT. CLEARING - DAY

Standing there, looking ghostly and beautiful in her gorgeous, ladylike clothes among the trees, is a lovely woman. This is MRS. COULTER. Though poised, she seems surprised and delighted to see Billy.

MRS. COULTER

Oh -- hello!

Billy doesn't respond. His daemon flies to his shoulder, takes **mouse** form, and crawls into his neckerchief.

MRS. COULTER (cont'd)

I see you fond my daemon. How kind of you! I was wondering where he had got to.

Billy's daemon pokes her head out of his neckerchief.

MRS. COULTER (cont'd)

What's your daemon's name?
(confidentially)
You can tell me.

BILLY COSTA

(cautiously)
Ratter.

MRS. COULTER

Ratter. And can Ratter change forms?

BILLY COSTA

Yeah.

To demonstrate, Ratter climbs out onto Billy's outstretched hand, and turns into a BUTTERFLY.

MRS. COULTER
 How lovely. Tell me one more
 thing. Does Ratter like chocolate?

Mrs. Coulter's daemon is tentatively walking towards Billy and his daemon. He holds up his clawed hand, and Ratter flutters down to rest on it.

BILLY COSTA
 No. But I do.

MRS. COULTER
 (pleased)
 Well as it happens, I have more
 chocolate than I can drink myself.
 Will you help me drink it?

Mrs. Coulter smiles, a winning, warming smile. Billy smiles back. Mrs. Coulter turns and walks out of the trees, her daemon following, still holding Ratter. Billy follows.

EXT. EDGE OF THE GYPTIAN CAMP - DAY

Lyra and Roger lay on the ground, hidden from sight of the Gyptians by a ridge. Stretching behind them is a line of seven or eight OXFORD CHILDREN.

LYRA
 It's Gobblers, Roger! We're just
 in time!

ROGER
 I thought we was the Gobblers this
 time.

LYRA
 No, we were the Gobblers last time.
 Now we're the kids.

ROGER
 But the Gyptian kids don't know
 they're s'posed to be the
 Gobblers.

Beyond the ridge, we see a cluster of Gyptian kids currying a pony.

LYRA
 It's just like cowboys and
 skraelings, or redcoats and rebels.
 We fight. They'll get the idea.

LYRA(cont'd)
 (to the other kids)
 You ready?

They are. Some of them hold up slimy mudballs they've oacked from the river bank.

LYRA (cont'd)
 (to her troop)
 Come on then!

Lyra launches herself over the top of the ridge, and with a yell CHARGES the Gyptian kids. The other Oxford kids follow in her wake, launching mudballs at the Gyptian kids.

They've achieved complete surprise, and the Gyptians are pelted with mud -- but then they recover, and a melee ensues. There are tree-branch swordfights, daemons dogfighting -- Lyra makes for a big Gyptian kid and attacks, butting him in the stomach. The kid goes down, and Lyra holds a branch/sword to his neck.

LYRA (cont'd)
 You're under arrest!

GYPTIAN KID
 No I en't!

But Lyra's attention is taken by something else.

LYRA
 (runs off)
 Remain here for further instructions!

GYPTIAN KID
 No I won't, Lyra!

NEARBY, the Gyptian's pony is standing placidly. Lyra gets into the saddle, and Roger follows.

ROGER
 Are we stealin' a horse?

LYRA
 No, we're requisitioning it.
 (beat)
 Just for a bit.

As Lyra spurs the pony, the kids -- Oxford and Gyptian -- see what's going on, and RACE caterwauling after her. But now the adults themselves have taken notice, and they wave and holler at Lyra, who has to change course...unfortunately the pony takes them right into the heart of the Gyptian camp --

Through all the goings on of the mounting of the horse fair. The Gyptians shout at her in alarm, some trying to grab the bridle and some jumping out of the way --

Until Lyra finds herself surrounded. Nobody seems to think this was a very good joke.

LYRA (cont'd)

Dismount.

The crowd surges towards her as they get off, and she bolts for one of the narrows boats, jumping from the bank and onto the boat, running onto tyhe next boat along as she is chased. But she is finally brought to a stop by an authoritative FEMALE VOICE.

MA COSTA

STOP! STOP IT NOW!

And Lyra and Roger, newly emerged onto the bank again, do stop. Standing in front of the is MA COSTA, a stout, formidable Gyptian matron and the head of her family.

MA COSTA (cont'd)

Where is he?

The rest of the kids have come to a stop too, a rogues' gallery of bruises, scrapes, torn clothes, and mud.

LYRA]

We was -- we was just playing, honest. I was going to give the pony back --

MA COSTA

(upset)

Billy. Have you seen Billy Costa?

We can see Tony emerge from behind her, also looking anxious.

TONY COSTA

Billy! BILLY! QUIT PLAYIN'!

But there's no response. A sens of ALARM is spreading through the Gyptian camp.

ROGER

(to Lyra, whsipers)

Gobblers...

Lyra takes in the rising panic of the Gyptians.

LYRA
 Let's find him, right? We'll make
 search parties. You take some kids
 and check west of the Isis and
 we'll check the colleges.
 (to Ma Costa
 We'll find him.

Lyra, Roger and the other Oxford kids set off, some of their
 daemons turning into **hunting dogs**, some into sharp-eyed
hawks.

EXT. RIVERBANK NEAR THE CITY - DAY

Roger and Lyra share a look as they split up and Roger combs
 the banks, Lyra heading back into the city...

EXT. STREET OUTSIDE JORDAN - TWILIGHT'

Lyra and Pan are scampering along the street outside of
 Jordan, looking for Billy.

LYRA
 Billy! Billy Costa!

The HEAD PORTER, who is closing the big GATES of the college,
 spies Lyra and calls to her.

HEAD PORTER
 Lyra! Over here!

LYRA
 What? Did you see him?

HEAD PORTER
 Who? Enough of your games now.
 The Master wants you at dinner.
 And presentable.

LYRA
 Tell him I'm busy.

HEAD PORTER
 Tell him yourself.

The Head Porter grabs Lyra by the scruff of her neck and
 drags her into college.

EXT. PORTER'S LODGE - DAY

He calls to MRS. LONSDALE, the college housekeeper, who is leaning against a desk in the Porter's Lodge, gossiping with one of the porters. She takes one look at Lyra and frowns.

MRS. LONSDALE

(grabbing Lyra)

The number of times you've been told about keeping clean. Look at you! Just look at your skirt! It's filthy! "Lord Asriel 'as entrusted us wi'is only niece," says the Master, "a beautiful babby girl, won't be no trouble --"

Then we HEAR, over shots of Lyra being HERDED UP THE STAIRS -- BOILING WATER BEING POURED IN A BATH -- LYRA'S HAIR BEING SCRUBBED METICULOUSLY -- A PUFFY DRESS BEING FASTENED ON AN UNWILLING LYRA -- HER HAIR BEING PAINFULLY BRUSHED --

MRS. LONSDALE (cont'd)

Now you're goin' to dine with the Master and his guests, and I hope to God you behave. Speak when you're spoken to, be quiet and polite, and don't say "I dunno" when you're asked a question.

And --

INT. MASTER'S LODGE - EVENING

Lyra sits, in a pink dress and patent leather shoes, looking balefully at the MASTER.

MASTER

Will you have a cake, child?

LYRA

You first.

The Master seems confused, but leaves it at that.

MASTER

You're growing up quickly, Lyra. Almost a young woman. It's been ten years...

(shakes off the nostalgia)

Have you given any thought to your future, Lyra?

LYRA
What future?

MASTER
I mean, your education...to prepare
you for one of the ladies'
colleges, perhaps --

LYRA
Not Jordan? No -- why would I ever
--

MASTER
All good things must pass, Lyra.
And so it is with childhood.
Sometimes you must do what others
think best for you.

MRS. COULTER
I'm afraid I must disagree, Master.

Lyra sees Mrs. Coulter, young, beautiful and stately, who has
just entered the room.

MRS. COULTER (cont'd)
When I was a young woman of Lyra's
age, I knew that no-one could
really truly understand me --
except, of course, my daemon -- and
that it would be best if I were
free to do as I pleased.

Lyra is impressed. Entranced, in fact. She has never seen
anyone quite like Mrs. Coulter.

MASTER
Mrs. Coulter, this is our Lyra.
Lyra, come and say hello to Mrs.
Coulter.

Lyra gets up and curtsies.

MRS. COULTER
How do you do, Mrs. Coulter.

MRS. COULTER (cont'd)
I hope you'll sit next to me at
dinner. I'm not used to the
grandeur of High Table. You'll
have to show me which knife and
fork to use.

Lyra smiles, embarrassed and pleased.

INT. HALL - JORDAN COLLEGE - DAY

HIGH TABLE, where the masters and fellows eat, is on a slightly raised platform above the level at which the scholars eat. Here they dine on gold dishware, not silver. College servants dart back and forth. Lyra is engrossed in conversation with Mrs. Coulter.

LYRA

-- So my Uncle Asriel left me here, 'cause my parents had died and he was doing so many dangerous things in Africa and with the Xingu tribes in the Amazonas and such --

MRS. COULTER

I met Lord Asriel at the Royal Arctic Institute. We compared reflections upon the political structure of the Svalbard bears.

LYRA

(amazed)

You've seen an ice-bear?

MRS. COULTER

(laughs)

Yes, and I've talked to them. Of course in the North, they don't call them "ice bears", they call them panserbjorne. As a matter of fact I've had an audience with the king himself, Ragnar Sturlusson.

LYRA

Then you're an explorer too? Have you ever stayed in an igloo?

MRS. COULTER

Stayed? I've built one, and cooked seal-meat in it! Confidentially, it beats this roast beef!

They LAUGH together. Something seems to occur to Mrs. Coulter.

MRS. COULTER (cont'd)

As it happens I'm going back to the North very soon.

(thinks)

You should come along too.

LYRA

Me?!

Pantalaimon, in **ermine** form for politeness, turns downy white.

MRS. COULTER

As my confidential secretary.
There would be a lot of work to do -
-

LYRA

-- I can work!

MRS. COULTER

-- And you would have to learn
mathematics, and navigation, and
celestial geography --

LYRA

-- Will you teach me? I already
know some -- they force me to -- I
mean I like to study --

MRS. COULTER

It's a lot to learn...

LYRA

I don't mind! I want to learn it
all!

MRS. COULTER

Well then. It's decided.

(thinks)

But I had better get the Master's
permission. Master?

(he looks up)

I wonder if I might borrow dear
Lyra for a while. To assist me in
London and the North.

The Master does not seem surprised -- but he does seem
concerned. He and Mrs. Coulter share an odd look.

MASTER

Lyra...do you wish to go?

Lyra is somewhat taken aback by the Master's asking her
opinion.

LYRA

Yes, please.

The Master, who seems suddenly weakened or exhausted, assents with a nod. Lyra claps happily, and Pan changes into a **butterfly** and circles above as Mrs. Coulter's **golden monkey** watches him.

INT. LYRA'S ROOM -- JORDAN - NIGHT

We see Lyra's small travelling case open, a flurry of clothes around it, as Lyra sleeps. It is the middle of the night.

Lyra is SHAKEN AWAKE by Mrs. Lonsdale.

LYRA

What -- what is it?

MRS. LONSDALE

Listen. The Master wants to see you before you leave with Mrs. Coulter. Get up quickly and run across to the Lodging now. Go into the garden and tap at the French window of the study. Do you understand?

Under this, we see Lyra running across the lawn by the Master's Lodging, then tapping at the window. The hush at this hour sets the majesty of Jordan and the University at a new angle.

INT. MASTER'S STUDY - NIGHT

The Master opens the French windows to admit Lyra, then closes it and the curtains behind her.

MASTER

Good girl. Come quickly, we haven't long.

LYRA

Aren't I allowed to go?

MASTER

Yes; I can't prevent it. Lyra, I'm going to give you something, and you must promise to keep it private. Will you swear to that?

LYRA

I will.

(beat)

If you tell me one thing.

The Master is unused to being offered conditions, but he listens.

LYRA (cont'd)
Why did you try to kill my Uncle
Asriel?

The Mater looks astonished.

LYRA (cont'd)
And don't lie, or I'll know. I
know all about lying.

MASTER
What an extraordinary child...Lyra,
you will not be able to understand
this yet...but I hoped to protect
you. You, and all of us. Now --

The Master takes a small package wrapped in black velvet from his desk. She sees a flash of gold machinery as he hands it to her.

LYRA
What is it?

MASTER
It is an alethiometer. It is one
of only six that were ever made.
Your uncle gave it to the college.

LYRA
But what does it do?

MASTER
It tells the truth. As far as how
to read it, you'll have to learn by
yourself.

The Master puts his hands gently on either side of Lyra's head and holds her for a moment.

MASTER (cont'd)
The powers of this world are very
strong; men and women are moved by
tides much fiercer than you can
imagine, and they sweep ua all up
into the current. Go well, Lyra;
bless you, child. Bless you. Keep
your own counsel.

We hear sounds in the corridor on the other side of the study door.

LYRA
Thank you, Master.

She turns to leave.

MASTER
Lyra -- you must never tell Mrs.
Coulter about the alethiometer.
Keep it from her. Now go, child.

EXT. COLLEGE GATE - DAWN

Lyra, in a sensible coat for travelling, is being made much of by the Porters, who are seeing her off. Lyra seems a little bereft.

LYRA
Where's Roger? I thought he'd come
see me off.

PORTER
Don't know, Lyra.

Mrs. Coulter appears from outside the gate.

MRS. COULTER
Lyra? Come on, slowcoach.

LYRA
Well tell him -- tell him he better
keep his word. And he owes me for
that toffee apple.

PORTER
Alright, Lyra, but I ain't seen him
since yesterday.

Lyra seems concerned, but Mrs. Coulter is waiting.

MRS. COULTER
We'll miss the airship, dear.

Lyra follows Mrs. Coulter, casting a look back at the college.

EXT. AIRSHIP MOORING - DAWN

Lyra, looking somewhat overwhelmed by events, follows Mrs. Coulter into the hanging cabin of a bullet-shaped zeppelin secured to a grand metal mooring-mast. Bags are handed to uniformed STEWARDS.

EXT. AIRSHIP - WIDE

The zeppelin lifts slowly from the ground, its mooring ropes held by ground crews --

And its ENGINES growl to life as it clears the mast...

INT. CABIN - DAY

Lyra and Mrs. Coulter sit at a linen-clad table. Behind them we can see a tidy, luxuriously-appointed cabin...below, the city of Oxford, from a higher perspective than Lyra has ever seen. Mrs. Coulter is preoccupied with making notes in a small book with a golden pencil. Lyra, and pan in the form of a gecko glued to the window, seek out and find the shape of Jordan college...

ANGLE from OUTSIDE: With a moment of recognition -- the only home she has known, seen entire and from a distance -- TEARS begin to roll down Lyra's face. Pan turns and notices, and becomes a dog in Lyra's lap, sitting and licking her face.

The golden monkey watches. Mrs. Coulter looks up, smiles gently at Lyra, and strokes her hair. Embarrassed, Lyra musters a smile.

EXT. LONDON FROM ABOVE

London in Lyra's world and time. From above, we recognize a number of familiar landmarks -- the Thames, of course, but no Houses of Parliament; Big Ben in fact presides over the aerodrome to which the zeppelin is heading. Tower Bridge, the Battersea Power Station, but also the great Atomworks at Fulham, and glowering over it all, the Magisterial Seat.

EXT. LONDON STREETS - DAY

Mrs. Coulter and Lyra sit in a carriage that breezes along Regent Street, a controlled exodus of people and their daemons off upon their different purposes. Due to a peculiar marking on the carriage, denoting the favor of the Magisterium, other carriages and horses make way for them.

Lyra's mood has bounced back, in fact she is excited and wide-eyed.

LYRA
All these poeple...

MRS. COULTER
Did you think Oxford was all the world?

LYRA
All that mattered.

LYRA (cont'd)
Everybody's making way for us!

MRS. COULTER
Yes, I know some very kind people at the Magisterium. They loaned me this carriage.

LYRA
What is the Magisterium?

MRS. COULTER
(laughs)
What is the Magisterium? My, you have been sheltered. You may as well ask what is water. It's what people need. They keep things working by telling people what to do.

LYRA
But -- I thought you didn't let anybody tell you what to do.

MRS. COULTER
Well -- there are exceptions. And there are exceptional people. Besides, they don't tell people what to do in a mean, petty way. They tell people what to do in a kind way -- like parents tell children what to do, or teachers tell pupils.

Lyra doesn't seem completely won over by the analogy, but she smiles in assent.

INT. MRS. COULTER'S FLAT - FRONT STAIRS

Lyra walks into Mrs. Coulter's flat and takes it in with a GASP. It's grand as any Jordan college room, but beautiful in a way they are not -- pretty, feminine. Light flows in from the south-facing windows. The walls are papered in delicate gold and white stripes;

there are pictures in gilt frames, an antique looking-glass, fanciful sconces bearing arabic lamps with frilled shades; frills on the cushions, flowery valances over the curtain rail.

Lyra looks at herself in the mirror and seems lost and amazed.

MRS. COULTER

This will be your room. At least,
if you like it.

And she opens the door into Lyra's bedroom, all white and pink, soft and beautiful...at the other end is her own bathroom. A maid is filling up a tub with hot water...through the steam we --

FADE TO:

INT. LYRA'S BATHROOM - NIGHT

Lyra is brushing her hair in the mirror. She's wearing a pretty ankle-length dressing gown. Pantalaimon, sitting on her shoulder in the shape of a **mouse**, smooths his whiskers.

INT. LYRA'S BEDROOM

Lyra steps cautiously over the threshold of her new bedroom. Everything is pretty and soft, especially the feather bed, which seems impossibly plump and inviting. Pan flits about the room, sniffing at things in the form of a **cat**.

Lyra smiles, takes a breath -- and LAUNCHES herself dead center into the embrace of the bed. Pantalaimon jumps into the air, a songbird, and then divebombs her, taking a cat-shape at the last moment. The two of them play and giggle. We hear a gentle knock on the door and Mrs. Coulter appears in the doorway.

LYRA

(guiltily)

I found the nightgown on the back
of the door -- I hope you don't
mind --

MRS. COULTER

I had it ordered for you, dear.
You'll need some new things, if
you're to help me on business and
accompany me to the North.
Tomorrow we must go shopping. That
is, unless you packed arctic gear --

LYRA
 (seriously)
 No...

Pan helpfully changes into a snowshoe hare. Mrs. Coulter and the golden monkey both smile and Mrs. Coulter touches Lyra's hair.

MRS. COULTER
 Now go to sleep. We've much to do.

Mrs. Coulter heads to the door and puts out the light. Momentarily, after she's left, Pan's eyes gleam in the darkness and Lyra turns her bedside light on.

PANTALAIMON
 Why is she so nice to us?

LYRA
 Because she's nice.

PANTALAIMON
 Then why did the Master tell us to hide the alethiometer?

LYRA
 I don;t know, Pan. Where is it?

PANTALAIMON
 Still in your coat.

LYRA
 Go on, then.

Pan scampers to the closet in the shape of a raccoon and fetches the black velvet parcel out of Lyra's coat. He brings it to Lyra and she unfolds it...

...To give us our first proper look at the ALETHIOMETER. It's a beautifully worked machine, the size of a large pocket-watch. Thirty six SYMBOLS ring the face -- ant, hourglass, skull, dolphin, anchor, chameleon, bull, beehive, etc. A NEEDLE swings 'round the face of its own accord, and three more are controlled by dials on the side.

LYRA (cont'd)
 What do you think it does?

PANTALAIMON
 The Master called it "alethiometer". And "meter" is a measure of something.

LYRA
Yeah, but that's the easy part.

PANTALAIMON
What do you think makes the needle
move?

LYRA
I don;t know, Pan. Maybe uncle
Asriel does. Maybe we're supposed
to take it to him.

We hear a SOUND from the doorway -- and can make out the
figure of the monkey as it flashes away. Lyra has hidden the
alethiometer in the black velvet.

MRS. COULTER
Lyra, dear? Isn't it time to
sleep?

Lyra turns off the light...and tucks the alethiometer under
her pillow.

INT. DRESS SHOP - DAY

In a fashionable seamstresses shop, Mrs. Coulter has Lyra
dressed up in front of a mirror.

MRS. COULTER
Yes, this one, I think, dear. What
do you think?

LYRA
I suppose...

MRS. COULTER
Very lady-like.

LYRA
Mrs. Coulter? These clothes
are...well, beautiful. And I'm
ever so grateful. But -- I
wondered --

MRS. COULTER
What use are they if we are going
to the North?

LYRA
(relieved)
Yes.

MRS. COULTER
 Because before we go to the North,
 we have to get peoples' help. And
 Londoners are no different from the
 tribesmen in Nova Zembla. They
 have their costumes...

Mrs. Coulter gestures towards the clothes in the shop...

INT. MRS. COULTER'S DRESSING ROOM - NIGHT

MRS. COULTER
 ...And their warpaint...

Mrs. Coulter applies makeup as Lyra looks on curiously.

INT. THEATER - NIGHT

Mrs. Coulter and Lyra sit in a fine box at the theater.
 Below, an opera is being sung, But Mrs. Coulter appears lost
 in conversation with he circle of admirers and patrons around
 her -- some of the good and great of the capital.

MRS. COULTER
 -- And their rituals --

INT. RESTAURANT - NIGHT

Mrs. Coulter sits at a table with a party of elegant
 Londoners, including a lavushly bearded EXPLORER and another
 fine LADY.

MRS. COULTER
 -- And their savage feasts with
 their strange taboos...

An ELEGANT MAN instructs Lyra in TABLE MANNERS. Lyra follows
 his lead, flattered by the attention. Nearby, Pantalaimon
 looks on, bored, in the shape of a **toad**.

INT. ROYAL ARCTIC SOCIETY - DAY

The famous explorer points to a MAP projected upon the screen
 of the lecture hall of the Arctic Society, narrating a
 lecture with grand gestures.

MRS. COULTER
 ...And their prominent and powerful
 chiefs and shamans.

Mrs. Coulter regards the lecture attentively, as Lyra takes notes for her.

MRS. COULTER (cont'd)
And one must learn how to use all
of these things to one's
advantage...

INT. MRS. COULTER'S FLAT - DRAWING ROOM - NIGHT

The flat is cleared for action, a cocktail party about to begin. Mrs. Coulter ends her lecture...

MRS. COULTER
Whom to invite and whom not
to...you think we've made the right
choices, don't you? Perhaps I
shouldn't have invited Doctor
Bollobas -- he's such a bore, but
one of the foremost experts on
particle metaphysics. I've taught
you what a particle is, haven't I?
It's a --

LYRA
(piqued)
Yes, like Dust, I know.

At the mention of Dust, Mrs. Coulter freezes; the golen monkey snaps its head to attention.

MRS. COULTER
Dust?

LYRA
Yeah, you know, from space, that
Dust, like in the North. You can
see it with a special camera, and
it lights people up -- except
children.

MRS. COULTER
And where did you hear that?

The room is charged with tension.

PANTALAIMON
Don't tell her anything --

LYRA

I dunno -- maybe I overheard it at Jordan, from one of the visiting scholars...Why, did I get it wrong?

MRS. COULTER

Well, I don't know. I'm sure you know much more than I do. Now dear -- you must put away that horrid little shoulder bag before the guests arrive.

Lyra looks down at the little white leather bag she carries with her.

LYRA

Oh, please, Mrs. Coulter. I do love it --

MRS. COULTER

Not indoors. It looks absurd to be carrying a shoulder bag in your own home. Now put it away at once and help with these flowers --

The phrase "in your own home" sets Lyra on edge. Pan turns into a polecat, arches his back and hisses.

LYRA

Oxford is my home.

(beat)

It won't be in the way, and it's the only thing I really like wearing --

QUICK AS A FLASH, the golden monkey has scampered over to Pantalaimon and overpowered him -- One paw on Pan's neck, and the other pulling, slowly and deliberately, as if to pull off one of his ears.

Lyra drops the bag with a metallic clunk. She's in pain and fear.

LYRA (cont'd)

Don't! Please! Stop hurting us!

MRS. COULTER

Do as I tell you, then.

LYRA

I promise!

The golden monkey lets go of Pan, who immediately leaps into Lyra's arms. She scoops him to her face to kiss and console.

INT. LYRA'S BEDROOM - MOMENTS LATER

Lyra runs in and removes the alethiometer from the white bag. She hides it under her pillow and THROWS the white bag against the wall. We hear the sound of a bell pull.

MRS. COULTER (O.S)
Lyra, dear?

Lyra spins 'round, suspicious and alert. Mrs. Coulter appears at the door, smiling.

MRS. COULTER (cont'd)
Would you be an angel and welcome
the first guests? I'm at the mercy
of these flowers.

INT. MRS. COULTER'S FLAT - FRONT STAIRS - DAY

Lyra heads down the stairs, tense, self-contained and guarded.

PANTALAIMON
Are we running away?

LYRA
'Course we are. But we have to
wait 'til there's enough people.
Then she won't notice.

PANTALAIMON
He will.
(beat)
Never mind. I'll fight him. I'll
beat him this time. I'll change so
fast he'll --

LYRA
Shh.

Lyra and Pan reach the foyer just as the BUTLER opens the door to LORD BOREAL, a greying, patrician figure with a **snake** deamon.

BUTLER
Lord Boreal.

BOREAL

Ah. You must be Mrs. Coulter's
protegee...

LYRA

Lyra, sir. May I take your cape,
Lord Boreal?

Boreal hands Lyra his cape; she in turn hands it to the
butler and leads Boreal up the stairs.

LYRA (cont'd)

This way, please.

BOREAL

I've been.

(beat)

How is my old friend the Master of
Jordan?

LYRA

(intrigued)

Very well when I left him, thank
you, sir.

BOREAL

Mrs. Coulter has taught you
manners, that's certain. Has she
taught you everything she knows?

Lyra senses an opportunity to learn something. She feigns
feigning innocent.

LYRA

...I'm not sure I understand, my
lord...

Boreal inspects her face. His daemon's tongue licks the air.

BOREAL

Oh? I see. Very good.

Mrs. Coulter intercepts them at the top of the stairs.

MRS. COULTER

Alistair -- how kind of you to form
the advance guard. We shall fetch
you some champagne for your
troubles. Lyra?

Lyra nods and heads towards the kitchen. As she looks back,
she sees Boreal and Coulter looking at her and murmuring
conspiratorially...

She pushes through the swinging door into the pantry --

INT. MRS. COULTER'S FLAT - DRAWING ROOM - LATER

And EMERGES later in time, with a silver tray of canapes. She drifts up to a group mid-conversation -- the particle philosopher BOLLOBAS and a young couple.

BOLLOBAS

The extraordinary thing is -- these particles seem to be attracted to human beings --

YOUNG WOMAN

Really?

BOLLOBAS

Yes -- and to some more than others. Adults attract it, but not children. At least, not until adolescence. In fact, that's the very reason --

(leans in confidentially)

-- that the General Oblation Board was set up. But our hostess could tell you about that.

YOUNG WOMAN

Is Mrs. Coulter involved with the Oblation Board?

BOLLOBAS

My dear, she is the Oblation Board. It's entirely her own project.

YOUNG MAN

I hear they're called "The Gobblers".

The young woman laughs, and Bollobas chuckles knowingly.

BOLLOBAS

Just so. For General Oblation Board. You see? From the initials.

Bollobas turns to take a canape from the plate Lyra's carrying. He doesn't realize the alert expression on Lyra's face, and Pan's tense posture.

BOLLOBAS (cont'd)
 But you're quite safe from the
 Gobblers, aren't you dear?

LYRA
 -- Oh yes. Will you excuse me?

Lyra withdraws to swallow her thoughts, but hear her uncle's name mentioned before she has enough time to recover.

ELDERLY GENTLEMAN
 Asriel? Locked up.

An ELDERLY GENTLEMAN is talking to a gorgeously uniformed CAVALRY OFFICER.

CAVALRY OFFICER
 No. Not Asriel?

Lyra drifts over to them.

ELDERLY GENTLEMAN
 Certainly, my boy. The Magisterium requested that the King of the Bears place him in custody in Svalbard. And there he shall stay.

CAVALRY OFFICER
 How are the mighty fallen.
 Wouldn't want to trifle with the *panserbjorne*, I can tell you that much.

(taking a canape; to Lyra)
 Thank you m'dear.

(to the elderly Gentleman)
 At any rate -- the new drill manual specifically dictates the length for hussar's tunics at --

Lyra has caught sight of Lord Boreal, who stands by an ornamental fireplace, jaded and languorous. She heads in his direction, past clumps of politicians, artists, and tycoons.

LYRA
 Canape, Lord Boreal?

Lord Boreal looks bemusedly at the empty silver platter.

BOREAL
 ...No, thank you. Well, Lyra, what do you think of your first grown-up party?

Lyra is annoyed at Boreal's patronizing tone.

LYRA

It's all right I suppose. The guests can't help it if they've got nothing to say for themselves.

BOREAL

(his interest piqued)

Oh?

LYRA

Yeah. 'Course at Jordan you get used to knowing more than other people about things, like Dust and the Oblation Board.

BOREAL

Really. And what do you know about the Oblation Board?

LYRA

(casually)

Just about everything. How Mrs. Coulter organized it, and kids call them Gobblers, and they're taking children.

BOREAL

I don't know if "taking" is quite the word for it. The scheme only really works if the children are willing, and that's where Mrs. Coulter comes into it. What child could resist her? And if she's going to use you as well to bring the brats in, so much the better.

Lyra blanches. She sees Mrs. Coulter, across the room, smiling and charming. Mrs. Coulter looks up and sees her.

BOREAL (cont'd)

Has she shown you the process yet?

(Lyra shakes her head)

It's quite extraordinary. Of course, it's for their own good.

LYRA

..What is, Lord Boreal?

BOREAL

Severing, of course.

Lyra tries to maintain her composure, but the blood is pounding in her head. Lord Boreal seems to be distorting in her vision.

LYRA
Yes. Severing.

BOREAL
No need to be squeamish, my dear.
I'm told it doesn't hurt a bit.

LYRA
Would you excuse me?

Lyra musters the best smile she can and walks away as Boreal smiles to himself, pleased at having overawed this precocious child.

As Lyra walks back to her room, she overhears snippets of conversation --

GUEST #1
-- If we could isolate the dark
principle --

GUEST #2
-- Svalbard, you say?

GUEST #3
-- The Oblation Board --

GUEST #4
-- Heresy, isn't it? --

GUEST #5
-- street urchins. They won't be
missed --

GUEST #6
-- Before their daemons have
settled --

Lyra makes it to the corridor and into her room. She closes the door behind her, and runs to find the alethiometer under her pillow. She fetches her ratty old coat from amongst a closetful of fine things, as Pan flutters about nervously, a **goldfinch**.

PANTALAIMON
It's her, Lyra! She's running the
Gobblers!

LYRA
I know, Pan --

PANTALAIMON
What are we going to do?

LYRA
Run. And find Uncle Asriel. He'll
fix it. He'll make them wish
they'd never --

PANTALAIMON
But he's locked up!

LYRA
Then we'll save him.

PANTALAIMON
Save him? First we've got to save
ourselves.

Lyra tucks the alethiometer in her coat.

LYRA
That's what we're doing.

INT. MRS. COULTER'S FLAT - CORRIDOR - NIGHT

Lyra opens the hall door, and sees that the way out the front
is littered with guests. Servants are bustling around the
back stairs...and Mrs. Coulter is slowly making her way in
Lyra's direction. She hasn't seen Lyra yet...

PANTALAIMON
No good...no good...

LYRA
Come on.

INT. LYRA'S BEDROOM - SAME

Lyra runs to the window and opens it. She steps onto the
sill, closes the curtains behind her...

EXT. MRS. COULTER'S FLAT - ROOF - NIGHT

and scurries up the drainpipe...

She SLIPS -- almost falls, but Pan is there to help her,
hanging from a rain gutter in the shape of an **orangutan** --

And they're up, over the dormered window, and onto the slate roof...they scamper along, carefully negotiating the unfamiliar terrain...Pantalaimon turns into a sparrow and practically EXPLODES into the air with joy as Lyra tastes the air, in her element again...

EXT. LONDON STREETS - NIGHT

...But down on the pavement it's a different matter. Lyra could navigate Oxford by smell, but she's lost in London...ONE STREET fades into ANOTHER as Lyra and Pan wanders the shadows, from the bright and noisy center, whence the Chthonic Railway radiates, to the uniform row-houses of the suburbs, to the darkened masses of the Wharflands.

PANTALAIMON

Where are we going?

LYRA

Away. We can figure out what to do later. For now need to find a place to sleep.

(looks around)

Everything's so exposed here. I wish we were in Oxford.

PANTALAIMON

There's a canal down that way.

Lyra looks down some cobbled steps, which do in fact lead to a canal with barges at the edge.

They head cautiously down the steps...

EXT. WHARFSIDE - NIGHT

Lyra and Pan creep along the side of a building, then peep in --

INT. WHARFSIDE BUILDING - NIGHT

Inside, an old man reads an illustrated journal as his spaniel daemon curls asleep at his feet.

EXT. WHARFSIDE - NIGHT

Lyra look down to the damp edge of the canal, then into the building again.

LYRA

Should we ask him to let us in,
Pan?

-- But Pan is distracted, rapidly changing into a bat, an owl, a wildcat again -- Lyra follows his gaze to see THREE FIGURES running at her, trying to cut off her escape. One of them carries a THROWING NET.

Pan utters a savage GROWL and throws himself, a **leopard**, at the **fox** daemon of the nearest man, and Lyra darts past him, heading for the wharf. Pan, leaping into the air and taking the form of an eagle, shouts to Lyra --

PANTALAIMON

Left! Left!

Before Lyra can spring clear, she is CAUGHT in the greasy tangles and knots of the throwing net. She tumbles to the ground as Pan comes to her aid, only to be leapt upon by the nearest man's fox daemon, who clamps his jaws on his wildcat form and claws away at his back. In the net, Lyra feels his pain in her own flesh.

One of the men grabs Lyra and begins to lash the cord of the throwing net around her, bundling her up like a spider does a fly.

LYRA

Pan!

Through the net, Lyra can see Pan collapse to the ground, exhausted, as the fox keeps hold...

...and then she sees one of the men JERK BACKWARDS, an arrow in his neck. The man falls down, with his **jackal** daemon writhing at his side. Meanwhile, the second man is engaged by a dark man with a knife, their daemons lashing out at each other; the dark man with the knife gets past the swinging cudgel of the slaver and he sinks the knife deep in the man's chest.

The third slaver, who has Lyra in his net, looks up to see the wielder of the bow glaring at him. He holds a dagger to Lyra's body, threatening in an unknown tongue to kill her unless he's allowed to escape.

The man with the bow nods, as if in acceptance of the bargain -- and then launches an arrow through the man's eye, a risky, almost impossible shot. The man's head snaps back, and he falls to the ground. Lyra watches, fascinated, as the fox daemon FADES and DRIFTS AWAY like smoke.

Meanwhile the archer has shouldered his weapon and run over to Lyra. He begins to slit the cords of the net with his knife, and his face comes into the light --

It's TONY COSTA, the Gyptian, brother of the abducted Billy Costa and son of Ma Costa.

TONY COSTA
That en't Lyra?

Lyra looks up to see Tony's face --

LYRA
(recognizing him)
Pan! Pan, we're safe!

And Tony continues to cut as Lyra is overwhelmed by relief and Pan's exhaustion.

FADE TO:

INT. GYPTIAN BARGE - DAY

Lyra awakens in the TOP BUNK of the sleeping-cabin of the Costa's boat. We hear the comforting RUMBLE of the engine. She blinks, raises her head and KNOCKS it on the ceiling.

LYRA
Bugger!

PANTALAIMON
Ow!

Pan has been knocked awake. He has been sleeping curled around Lyra's feet in the shape of a **cat**.

Lyra has laid her head back, and is now looking at the coffered ceiling above her bunk, which has been painted with bright mystical imagery.

PANTALAIMON (cont'd)
Where are we?

Lyra looks out of the porthole to her right, and sees a green riverbank passing by.

She eases out of the bunk, carefully this time, and lowers herself to the floor. She goes through the door at the end of the cabin to find herself in a cabin with a stove. Bacon sizzles in a skillet, and a pot of coffee warms. Lyra's stomach reminds her how long it has gone without; she stares at the food.

From above, Tony Costa lowers himself into the little cabin. He smiles at her shyly.

TONY COSTA
 (calling up to the deck)
 Ma! She's up!

Next comes the sizeable, solid figure of MA COSTA, who we saw before at the Gyptian encampment in Oxford. She appraises Lyra, who looks back at her nervously.

MA COSTA
 So we finally caught the horse thief?

Ma Costa approaches Lyra, her hands outstretched. Lyra doesn't know how to interpret the gesture -- Pan arches his back and HISSES.

But Ma Costa takes Lyra's head in her hands gently, and her daemon, a **hawk**, steps over to Pan and licks his head. Ma folds Lyra in her arms and holds her close.

MA COSTA (cont'd)
 We thought you was taken by the Gobblers too.
 (beat)
 Sit you down, now, and we'll get some breakfast in you.

Lyra sits, and Ma Costa fixes her a plate of bacon with a flaky biscuit and some gravy. Lyra sets to it like a stevedore.

TONY COSTA
 Them three we -- those as we took you from, we thought they was Gobblers at first, but they wasn't. Turk traders, most likely.

LYRA
 You got him right in the eye! Will you teach me to shoot like that?

Tony looks embarrassed, ashamed even. Lyra changes the subject.

LYRA (cont'd)
 ...What were you doing in London, Ma Costa?

MA COSTA

Taking on stores. There's to be a meeting of all the Gyptians -- a roping, we call it -- at the great zaal in the fens. See, the Gyptian people, we been hurt worse than most by these Gobblers, and we're a coming together to decide what to do about it.

TONY COSTA

We found out they're taking the kids far up north, from one of the Gobblers that we caught. They do experiments on 'em.

LYRA

Will we go rescue the kids?

Tony and Ma Costa look at each other, bemused.

MA COSTA

"We"? Well, "we" shall see about that. Done already?

Lyra has, in fact, polished off her plate.

LYRA

Yes, thank you. I think I'll go up now.

MA COSTA

No, Lyra, you mustn't.

(off her look)

We've word the police are lookin' for a girl child, turning houses and barges upside down all up the river and 'round London. You're to stay below until we've decided what to do.

Lyra looks disappointed.

MA COSTA (cont'd)

It seems you matter in the scheme of things, enough for the police to trouble over you when they don't trouble over so many other children disappearing. So why don't you tell us how you came to be in London, and what you was doing there, every bit that you can remember.

Lyra sits back down.

LYRA
May I have some coffee, please?

Lyra takes a breath and launches into her story in a grand manner.

LYRA (cont'd)
Well, it all started when I was up
on the roofs one day, and I heard
that my Uncle Asriel was --

EXT. THE FENS, EAST ANGLIA - DAY

Tony confers with KERIM, another of the Gyptians who saved Lyra, at the wheel of the narrows-boat as it slips along a channel in the Fens, the country of bogs and fens that the Gyptians call home. By the prow, another Gyptian, JAXER, eyes the way.

Lyra pokes her head up from below.

TONY COSTA
That's right, you can come up now.

Lyra and Pan step up onto the deck, Pan turning into a **seagull**.

TONY COSTA (cont'd)
This is the Fens, it's our land,
the government don't dare follow us
in.

Lyra looks across the wilderness and the huge sky. At the horizon the waterways and puddles seem to melt into the ocean.

LYRA
It's beautiful.

Tony and Kerim laugh.

TONY COSTA
I en't never heard anybody say that
about the Fens. But thankee, Lyra,
we're partial to it, and it treats
us well.

LYRA
What's that, Tony?

Lyra points to a conspicuously vertical smudge on the northern horizon.

TONY COSTA

That is the *byanplats*, the only land above sea level for miles around here. And there is the *zaal*. Still some ways off yet. All the Gyptian tribes will be mustering there for the roping this evening. But first we've to take you to see John Faa.

LYRA

Who's he?

TONY COSTA

The king of the Gyptians.

EXT. BYANPLATS - DAY

This is the island that stands above the fens, upon which the Gyptians have built the *zaal*, their great round wooden mustering-place. Clustered at its feet is a dock-city, with moorings, some permanent dwellings, bars, smugglers' warehouses, and an eel-market.

Lyra and Pan are thrilled by the place, the sounds and smells and the gaudily-arrayed people, who issue from hundreds of narrows boats and other vessels and congregate by the *zaal* and the other buildings.

Lyra, now dressed in Gyptian gear, stands at the bow, itching to explore, as the Costa's barge pulls in to its moorings. She looks pleadingly at Ma Costa.

MA COSTA

All right. But come back by dusk.
(to Tony)
And you too.

TONY COSTA

I'll be here.

MA COSTA

Sober.

Tony nods. He, Kerim and Jaxer jump to the dock, and try to help Lyra off, though she insists on doing it herself.

EXT. BYANPLATS - EEL MARKET - DAY

Lyra walks through the eel market, under the walls of the *zaal*, where eels are sold live from out of big wooden barrels, dried and hanging from stalls, and cooked at little stands where Gyptians crowd 'round and drink beer and genniver. As she passes, the Gyptians look up and regard her curiously -- Gyptian clothes or not she stands out here.

She looks into a slithering barrel of eels, Pan curiously poking his cat-nose over the edge. The eels swim in the liquid mass made of each other, and it is difficult to tell where one begins and another ends...

KERIM

Lyra!

Lyra looks up from her reverie.

KERIM (cont'd)

You're to come now. Cut along.

(beat)

John Faa.

INT. ZAAL - CORRIDOR - DAY

Lyra is being walked along a curved corridor that describes the outer shell of the *zaal*. Kerim, Jaxer and Tony are at her side.

JAXER

You call him Lord Faa.

TONY COSTA

-- And I don't know what you'll be asked, but mind you tell the truth.

LYRA

(offended)

I en't never lied, Tony. You ask anybody.

Tony smiles, and opens a door --

INT. ZAAL - PARLEY ROOM - DAY

-- into a room curved at one end and smaller at the opposite, like a wedge. A long, plain oak table sits in the center. And at it sit JOHN FAA, grey but strong and massive;

FARDER CORAM, a wizened old man, with a beautiful autumn-colored cat daemon; MA COSTA; and the chiefs of the six Gyptian tribes, all men of real gravity and authority and, in the right circumstances, considerable menace.

Lyra is struck shy by the attention of all those at the table. Tony gives her a nudge forward.

John Faa gets up, his full height and mass commanding, and walks over to Lyra, who improvises a curtsy.

LYRA

How do you do, Lord Faa?

JOHN FAA

(smiling)

Welcome, Lyra.

John Faa offers Lyra his hand to shake. She reaches out and finds her hand engulfed in his.

JOHN FAA (cont'd)

Come sit by my side. You know Ma Costa. This is Farder Coram. You're our guest here, and under our protection, and you've nothing to fear from any of us. Ma Costa has told us your tale, all the way up until you run away and the Costas found you. Now -- is there anything you may have forgot, that you can tell us now?

Lyra hesitates, and shares a look with Pan.

LYRA

Well...I suppose it's all right to tell you...

She fishes the alethiometer out of her jacket and places it on the table. John Faa's massive slow curiosity and Farder Coram's quicksilver mind are trained on it instantly.

FARDER CORAM

I never thought I'd ever set eyes on one of them again. That's a symbol reader. Who gave you this?

LYRA

The Master of Jordan. He said I'd have to learn how to read it myself. And that it was called an alethiometer.

John Faa looks to Farder Coram for explanation.

FARDER CORAM

That's a Greek word. I reckon it's from *aletheia*, which means truth. It's a truth measure. Have you learned how to use it, Lyra?

LYRA

No. I can make the three short hands point to different pictures, but I can't do anything with the long one, it goes all over. Except sometimes, right, sometimes when I'm concentrating, I can make the long needle go this way or that just by thinking of it.

JOHN FAA

Do you know how to use it, Farder Coram?

FARDER CORAM

I know how it works, but not how to read it full and proper. May I hold it, Lyra?

Lyra seems surprised even to be asked, but nods. Farder Coram takes it up carefully, and we look at the alethiometer with him.

FARDER CORAM (cont'd)

All these pictures round the rim, they're symbols, and each one stands for a whole series of things. Take the anchor, there. The first meaning of that is hope, because hope holds you fast like an anchor so you don't give way. The second meaning is steadfastness. The third meaning is snag, or prevention. The fourth meaning is the sea. And so on, down to ten, twelve, maybe a never-ending series of meanings.

JOHN FAA

And do you know them all?

FARDER CORAM

I know some, but to fully read it I'd need the symbol-book.

FARDER CORAM(cont'd)

I saw one, in Uppsala, where I seen it read once by a wise man. You got three hands you can control...

(he demonstrates)

And you use it to ask a question. By pointing at three symbols you can ask any sort of question you can imagine, because you've got so many levels of each one. Once you've got you question framed, the other needle swings round and points to more symbols that give you the answer.

JOHN FAA

Could you use it to find out about Benjamin de Ruyter, and the rest of our spies?

FARDER CORAM

I might. But it was given to Lyra, and I reckon it was given with a purpose. Go ahead, child. Try it.

Farder Coram hands it back to Lyra, who is shy caught in the attention of all of these adults. She looks at the alethiometer, not knowing quite what to do.

FARDER CORAM (cont'd)

Lyra, ask it what's become of the spies we sent out under Benjamin de Ruyter.

Lyra thinks a moment, then positions the three hands -- one on the serpent --

LYRA

Well, a serpent is cunning, like a spy ought to be...and the crucible could mean knowledge, which you sort of distill...and the bee, which is always working hard; out of the hard work and the cunning comes knowledge, and that's the spy's job --

Lyra stares hard at the device, but the needle doesn't seem to be doing anything.

LYRA (cont'd)

It isn't working.

FARDER CORAM

Don't try too hard, Lyra. Hold the question in your mind, but lightly, like it was something alive. Don't fret nor push for an answer.

Lyra thinks, takes a breath, allows her mind to drift...and the NEEDLE STARTS TO MOVE. It spins about, dances for a moment on the symbols of the hourglass, moves on, and stops at the hourglass for longer...then it repeats the sequence.

LYRA

The hourglass...what's that mean, Farder Coram? It keeps coming back to that.

FARDER CORAM

There's often a clue if you look more close...d'you see that little old thing on top of it?

Lyra peers at the symbol.

LYRA

...It's a skull.

(beat)

But it came round to it on the second time...the first time it only stopped there a moment.

FARDER CORAM

In the hourglass range of meanings you get Time...and the second one...Death.

Lyra looks up, her interest now overthrown by concern.

JOHN FAA

Well...I hope you read it wrong, at least this time, child. But one way or another, it seems this was entrusted to you, for some purpose.

LYRA

But why did the master give it to me? And why did he try to kill my uncle?

John Faa looks at Ma Costa, and something passes between them.

JOHN FAA

My guess is the Master had no choice but to try to kill Lord Asriel. And no choice but to give you up to that woman. Powerful as he is, there are great forces at work, as will brook no dissension. But he wanted to give you something to help you on your road.

LYRA

But maybe I'm supposed to take it to my uncle...

MA COSTA

He en't your uncle, child.
(off Lyra)
He's your father.

LYRA

My parents died in an airship accident. He told me.

MA COSTA

No, Lyra. That's not the truth. The truth is...

JOHN FAA

...There is a word, Lyra, that the landlopers use for a kind of child who is born out of the bounds of marriage...the word came about because of money, and land, and who should have what...*illegitimate*. Now this word don't mean nothing past wills and stacks of coins and paper, but people have forgot that and taken it as a sort of shame. So parents were invented for you.

LYRA

...If Lord Asriel is my father, then who is my mother?
(beat)
Not her. Not Mrs. Coulter.

MA COSTA

Yes, Lyra. But she never saw you after you was born, as you was put by your father in the keeping of a Gyptian woman, and after that, the Master of Jordan himself, him and the scholars.

MA COSTA(cont'd)

And he kept you from harm as long as he could, and all the time the Gyptians was keeping an eye on you, and word came back to Farder Coram and me. Bet you didn't know that, did you?

LYRA

(amazed)

...No...

JOHN FAA

And so it was until there came all this anxiety about Dust. And all over the country, all over the world, wise men and women too began a worrying about it. It weren't of any account to us Gyptians, until they started taking our kids. And then we got interested. And that Gyptian woman who nursed you, she never stopped being anxious on your behalf.

LYRA

Who was the Gyptian woman who nursed me?

JOHN FAA

Why, it was Billy Costa's mother, of course. She didn't tell you, because I didn't let her, but now it's all out in the open.

Lyra looks at Ma Costa, who beams back at her. She is trying to digest this immense meal of information.

LYRA

I have one more question, since you know so much...What has become of Roger Parslow, the Jordan College boy? He's my friend.

Farder Coram looks at Ma Costa, who looks back sadly at Lyra.

MA COSTA

Taken, Lyra. Like my Billy, and so many others. Taken north.

Lyra nods, trying to take this with equanimity...then tears start rolling down her cheeks. She tries to hold back her tears in front of all these stern men.

JOHN FAA

Don't be ashamed. There's nothing wrong with tears, Lyra, for the hurt is real and deep. Go to bed now. There'll be much to do tomorrow.

Ma Costa gathers up Lyra in her great arms and kisses her, and helps her off to bed.

EXT. ZAAL - MORNING

The next day, Gyptians are streaming into the Zaal for the Roping, the gathering of the tribes. Lyra, feeling conspicuous as the Gyptian families around all regard her with curiosity, enters with Kerim and Tony walking proudly on either side.

INT. ZAAL - MORNING

Inside, naphtha lamps illuminate the faces of the Gyptians. The far reaches of the zaal sink into darkness. Lyra and the Costas take their place in the benches, which are already crowded. Daemons crouch under the benches, sit on shoulders, or perch out of the way on the rough wooden walls.

On one edge of the zaal, a low wooden platform holds eight chairs. The crowd begins to fall silent as eight men -- John Faa, Farder Coram, and the six chiefs of the Gyptian tribes -- appear from the shadows in the back of the platform and stand in front of the chairs.

When the crowd has become silent, Farder Coram and the six chiefs sit down. John Faa steps to the front of the platform.

JOHN FAA

Gyptians! Welcome to the Roping. We've come to listen and come to decide. You all know why. Now, there's been talk of a child and a reward. Here's the truth to stop all gossip. The child's name is Lyra Belacqua, and she's being sought by the landloper police. There is a reward of one thousand sovereigns for giving her up to them. She's in our care, and there she's going to stay.

JOHN FAA(cont'd)

Anyone tempted by the thousand
sovereigns had better find a place
neither on land nor on water. We
en't giving her up.

All around her, people turn to look at Lyra. She blushes,
and Pan turns into a moth to conceal himself.

In the back of the audience, a Gyptian raises his hand.

JOHN FAA (cont'd)

Yes, Raymond van Gerrit?

RAYMOND VAN GERRIT

Lord Faa, I heard as all the folk
living around the edge of the fens
is having their houses turned
upside down on this child's
account. I heard there's a move in
Parliament this very day to rescind
our ancient privileges of movement
in and out of the fens on account
of this child. She en't a Gyptian
child, not as I heard. How comes
it than a landloper child can put
us all in danger?

JOHN FAA

Now spell it out, Raymond van
Gerrit, don't be shy. You want us
to give this child up to them she's
a fleeing from, is that right?

(the man still stands
obstinately)

Well, perhaps you would and perhaps
you wouldn't. But if any man or
woman needs a reason for doing
good, ponder on this. That little
girl is the daughter of Lord
Asriel, no less. For them as
forgotten, it was Lord Asriel who
defeated the Watercourse Bill in
parliament, to our great and
lasting benefit. And it were Lord
Asriel who fought day and night in
the floods of '53, and plunged
headlong in the water twice to pull
out young Ruud and Nellie Koopman.
You forgotten that? Shame on you,
shame.

Raymond van Gerrit sinks to his seat. A low hiss of
disapproval sounds through the great hall.

JOHN FAA (cont'd)

Now, the government and the Magisterium and the police, them as seeks the child, are in league with them as have been taking our kids. So talk as we may, we won't change owt. We must act if we want to change things. Here's another fact for you: the Gobblers, these child thieves, are a taking their prisoners to a town in the far North, way up in the land of cold and dark.

(beat)

What I'm proposing en't easy. And I need your agreement. I'm proposing that we send a band of fighters up north and rescue them kids and bring 'em back alive. I'm proposing that we put our gold into this, and all the craft and courage we can muster. Yes, Emma Braks?

EMMA BRAKS

Lord Faa, there's landloper kids as well as Gyptians been taken captive. Are you saying we should rescue them as well?

JOHN FAA

Emma, are you saying we should fight our way through every kind of danger to a little group of frightened children, and then say to some of them that they can come home, and to the rest of them that they have to stay? No, you're a better woman than that.

Adriaan Braks, a man nearby, stands.

ADRIAAN BRAKS

Lord Faa, we don't know what them Golbblers might've done to our children. We all heard rumors and stories of fearful things. We hear about children with no heads, or about children cut in half and sewn together, or about things too awful to mention.

ADRIAAN BRAKS(cont'd)

I'm sorry to distress anyone, but in case you find anything of that awful kind, Lord Faa, I hope you're going to take powerful revenge.

Lord Faa chooses his words carefully.

JOHN FAA

Nothing will hold my hand, Adriaan, save judgement. Our work is first rescue, then punishment. It en't gratification for upset feelings. But be assured -- when the time comes to punish, we shall strike such a blow as'll make their hearts faint and fearful. We shall strike the strength out of 'em. We shall leave them ruined and wasted, broken and shattered, torn in a thousand pieces and scattered to the four winds. Well -- do I have your approval, my friends?

A full-throated roar fills the hall, hands are clapped in the air, fists shaken, voices raised in excited clamor. The rafters of the zaal shake, and a score of sleeping birds wake from the perches and flap their wings, and little showers of dust drift down.

Lyra looks about her, stands, and raises her hand to catch Lord Faa's attention. He can't recognize her amidst the shouting. She starts to call out --

LYRA

Lord Faa! Lord Faa!

John Faa notices Lyra in the crowd, and gradually Lyra's shouts rise above the simmering and quieting clamor.

LYRA (cont'd)

Lord Faa! May I speak?

JOHN FAA

(intrigued)

It will be the first time that a landloper has spoken in our zaal... since your father. Go on, then, child.

LYRA

I'm Lyra. I'm the one you've been talking about. And I have a friend, Roger.

LYRA(cont'd)

And I swore an oath to him that if he was taken by the Gobblers, I would go and rescue him. I want to keep that oath. And I don't want to stay here and be protected and wait to see what happens. I want to go north with you, and rescue the kids.

Some are bemused by Lyra's demand, but most are impressed as well. John Faa smiles, his hard countenance softening. He looks to Farder Coram. They have been through this.

JOHN FAA

Lyra, there en't no question of taking you into danger, so don't delude yourself, child. I know your heart was set on going north, but it's my belief not even Mrs. Coulter was going to take you. Now we must muster our forces and our supplies, and quick --

There a commotion at one of the great doors, as someone pushes his way into the center of the Zaal.

YOUNG GYPTIAN

Lord Faa! Lord Faa! There's Jacob Huismans just come back, and he's sore wounded!

Farder Coram and the chiefs get up and, with Lord Faa, descend from the platform and towards the great doors.

EXT. ZAAL - DAY

Farder Coram, John Faa and the chiefs come outside, followed closely by Ma Costa and her family, Lyra, and finally other Gyptians pushing out from the Zaal, but keeping a respectful distance from --

JACOB HUISMANS, who lays on the ground, his head being cradled by a young Gyptian woman. His face is white with sweat, his eyes glazed.

YOUNG GYPTIAN WOMAN

He made it this far before I found him, Farder Coram. We've sent for a physician. Please don't agitate him. He's in an agony of pain. He come in off Peter Hawker's boat.

FARDER CORAM
Jacob -- can you hear me?

JACOB HUISMANS
Hello, Farder Coram.

FARDER CORAM
What happened?

JACOB HUISMANS
Benjamin's dead. He's dead, and
Gerard's captured.

Farder Coram looks at Lyra. The alethiometer was right, and her reading of it.

JACOB HUISMANS (cont'd)
We broke into the Magisterium, by a
way one of the captured Gobblers
told us. That's where all the
orders are coming from. But...

Jacob stops talking out of pain. He looks at his daemon. His daemon, a ferret, takes up the story. This is very rare, and makes the direness of the situation even more apparent.

FERRET DAEMON
It were like everything we did,
they knew before we did it...it
were a trap. They caught Gerard,
and the rest may be dead...they're
coming to the Fens, Farder Coram.

A wave of astonishment and anger passes through the onlookers.

FERRET DAEMON (cont'd)
A detachment of police, and a
brigade of the Magisterial
guards...

The word is passing back through the crowd.

FARDER CORAM
We'll let you be, now, Jacob.
Here's the Physician. We'll have a
longer talk when you're feeling
better.

JOHN FAA

We've no time to waste, then. Adam Stefanski, I want you to organize the fighting party, a group from each family. Simon Hartmann, you will be treasurer, and account to us all for a proper apportionment of our gold. Nicholas Rokeby, go on to Colby now, find us a vessel. Roger van Poppel, look to the food and the cold-weather clothing.

(to Lyra)

Lyra, matters have changed. You've got your wish -- seems it's just as dangerous to keep you here. I'm putting you under Farder Coram's wing. Don't you be a trouble or a hazard to him, or you'll be feeling the force of my wrath.

(to the heads of the families)

We meet in Colby on Sunday. Go quick and go quiet. Now we've to organize how the rest shall handle these trespassers.

John Faa heads back to the *zaal*, followed by the heads of the families. The crowd dissolves into commotion, while Pan and Lyra look at each other and regard Jacob Huismans, who slowly breathes his last, in the presence of a physician and his woman. The ferret daemon cuddles close to him in the last moments, looking away only once to lock eyes with Lyra before she dissolves into vapor.

EXT. FENS - NIGHT

In the light of a full moon, barges are leaving the byanplats in every direction, winding through the waterways of the fens by feel and lantern-light.

At the head of one of the lines of boats is the Costa's barge, with Lyra at the bow. As the barge slips past us, she is called down below decks.

EXT. COSTA'S BARGE - SAME

Pan and Lyra look at into the night. She has the alethiometer in her hands.

PANTALAIMON

Well, you read it, all right.

LYRA
I'm sorry I did.

PANTALAIMON
What do you think makes the needle
move? It wasn't a spirit. I
would've seen it.

LYRA
What if it's particles, like we
seen in the pictures Uncle...my
father showed in the Retiring Room?
What if Dust moves the needle?

PANTALAIMON
But all those people are afraid of
Dust. What if Dust is bad?
(beat)
If you threw that thing away, right
now, do you think we could just go
back to Jordan?

Lyra looks down at the mud and water flowing past the barge.
The alethiometer is in her hands, over the water.

LYRA
No, Pan. I don't.

MA COSTA (O.S.)
Lyra? Come down.

Lyra walks back and down below the deck. We --

FADE TO:

EXT. WATERWAY - DAY

The barge slips along the water, past a little town whose
inhabitants gaze out at it curiously.

INT. COSTA'S BARGE - DAY

Below, Lyra positions the needles of the alethiometer, Pan
peering over her shoulder. The needle starts to swing round
and dance like a bee amongst the meanings...

We watch Lyra over the course of several days as she learns
to read the alethiometer. We see her learn to slip into the
calm, meditative state in which it begins to clarify
itself...

...at length she looks up to see Farder Coram's gentle curiosity focused on her.

FARDER CORAM

What's it feel like, Lyra? To
...think with the alethiometer?

LYRA

It's...it's almost like talking to someone, only you can't hear them, and you feel kind of stupid because they're cleverer than you, only they don't get cross or anything....And it's almost as if she knew everything! Mrs. Coulter was clever, she knew ever such a lot, but this is a different kind of knowing...

FARDER CORAM

Can you show me?

LYRA

Well...I was asking it what Mrs. Coulter's doing...

She shows Farder Coram the alethiometer and where she's positioned the needles.

LYRA (cont'd)

The Madonna is Mrs. Coulter, and I think *my mother* when I put the hand there; and the ant is *busy* -- that's easy, that's the top meaning; and the hourglass has got *time* in its meanings, and partway down the ladder there's *now*, and I just fix my mind on it.

FARDER CORAM

And how do you know these meanings?

LYRA

It's like feeling your way down a ladder at night. You put your foot down and there's another rung. Well, I put my mind down and there's another meaning, and I kind of feel what it is. Then I put 'em all together. There's a trick in it like focusing your eyes.

FARDER CORAM

Do that then, and see what it says.

Lyra does, and the needle begins to turn immediately, stops, moves on again, in a precise series of sweeps and pauses. Farder Coram watches it and watches Lyra watching it.

Thunderbolt, infant, serpent, elephant, chameleon...

FARDER CORAM (cont'd)

What's that lizard mean?

LYRA

It don't make sense...I can see what it says, but I must be reading it wrong. I think the thunderbolt is anger, and the child...I think it's me...and I was getting a meaning for that lizard thing, Farder Coram, but you interrupted me.

FARDER CORAM

I'm sorry, Lyra.

LYRA

I'll go back --

Farder Coram sees that Lyra is strained and fretful.

FARDER CORAM

Never you mind, Lyra.

(beat)

Perhaps it's safe for you to take a bit of air up top.

LYRA

I can?

FARDER CORAM

Yes, child. Don't stay too long, mind, and if there's people on the banks come back down.

LYRA

Thank you!

Lyra drops the alethiometer on the bed, suddenly a child again, dropping a toy absently, and clomps upstairs.

EXT. COSTA'S BARGE - SAME

Lyra comes up on deck, breathes in the air, speeds past Tony at the wheel, Ma Costa peeling potatoes, Kerim smoking a pipe. She runs to her favorite spot at the bow, Pan turning into a **gull** and floating above her.

Clouds hang in the sky, the air is grey, the banks are brown, there's little sound but the bow splashing through the waves and, away somewhere, an insect BUZZING.

Then, as Pantalaimon soars up out of a dive with his wings white against the gray, something black hurtles at him and strikes.

Pan falls sideways in a flutter of shock and pain, and Lyra CRIES OUT, feeling it sharply. Another black thing, flying heavily and directly like a beetle, joins the first, driving into Pan. Pan falls, trying to make it into Lyra's waiting arms...he's failing...

But then Ma Costa's daemon arrives, shaking its beak in a quick movement and striking one of the things out of the air and onto the deck. Pan lands in Lyra's hands, but before she can comfort him he turns into a **wildcat** and springs onto the creature, holding it down with needle-filled paws, as the other one flees, growing smaller and smaller in the distance.

Kerim throws the dregs from the mug he's been drinking from, and throws it to Lyra. She captures it...

And we CUT TO

INT. COSTA'S BARGE - DECKHOUSE - DAY

Farder Coram's surprisingly deft hands as he RELEASES the thing only to capture it quickly again in a beer glass, like a huckster's trick.

We see it clearly now, as long as a thumb, fat and slick, dark green, its wing cases erect like a ladybird about to fly, its six clawed legs scrabbling the smooth glass.

LYRA

What is it?

FARDER CORAM

If you was to crack it open, you'd find no living thing in there. No animal nor insect, at any rate.

FARDER CORAM(cont'd)

I seen one of these things before,
in Morocco. Afric things. There's
a clockwork running in there, and
pinned to the spring of it, there's
a bad spirit with a spell through
its heart. It won't never stop;
and when you let the spirit free,
it's so monstrous angry it'll kill
the first thing it gets at.

LYRA

But what was it after?

FARDER CORAM

Spying. I was a cursed fool for
letting you above. And I should
have let you think your way through
those symbols without interrupting.

LYRA

I see it now! It means air, that
lizard thing! I couldn't see why --

FARDER CORAM

Ah. I see it too. That en't a
lizard, it's a chameleon -- and it
stands for air because they don't
eat nor drink, they just live on
air.

LYRA

But if the alethiometer told me,
then it was sent by --

FARDER CORAM

Mrs. Coulter. Don't need the
alethiometer to know that.

Lyra looks out of the porthole, into the grey sky.

LYRA

And one of 'em got away...

CUT TO:

EXT. PORT OF COLBY - DAY

The barge has arrived at Colby, the port where the Gyptian
expedition is to take ship. We see the Costa's tying up at
the docks, which extend along shore for what seems like
miles, and an old Gyptian tillerman take over from Ma Costa.

MA COSTA

Keep her safe. We're a coming
back, you know.

TILLERMAN

Don't doubt it, Ma Costa. Anybody
as'd stand against you won't be
standing long.

Ma, Lyra, Tony, Kerim, Jaxer and Farder Coram disembark, as unobtrusively as possible, and -- with barely a look at the thriving portside --

EXT. FURTHER DOWN THE DOCK - DAY

-- Embark onto the *Noorderlicht*, the big ship that will take the Gyptians to the edge of Lapland, north across the sea.

Lyra takes in the mass and girth of the ship with excitement. The vessel seems immense compared to the barge -- a wheelhouse and a funnel amidships, a high fo'c'sle and a stout derrick over a canvas-covered hatch; yellow light agleam in the portholes and the bridge, and white light at the masthead; and three or four men on deck, working urgently at things she can't see.

Further down, Gyptians are using the derrick to load supplies from the dock.

John Faa emerges from the wheelhouse, with Nicholas Rokeby and the CAPTAIN of the ship at his side.

JOHN FAA

Evening, friends. I'm relieved to see you. Poor Jack Verhoeven's been shot, and his boys captured. We're to weigh anchor as soon as we can. This is Captain Macaulay, Master of the *Noorderlicht*.

FARDER CORAM

Noorderlicht. That's a good omen.

LYRA

What's it mean?

FARDER CORAM

That's Dutch. "Northern Lights".

LYRA

Like the Roarer? That my Uncle was showing the pictures of?

FARDER CORAM

The Aurora. Yes. The Aurora
Borealis, the northern lights.

At this, a STRANGER steps up onto deck from the main cabin. He's dressed in a long DUSTER and a wide-brimmed hat. His daemon is a long, skinny, threadbare hare. This is the Texan LEE SCORESBY. The Gyptians are surprised to see him.

As he yawns, the duster pulls back to reveal two Colt revolvers in holsters on his belt.

TONY COSTA

Behind me, Lyra --

JAXER

-- Didn't see him --

KERIM

-- Keep them hands up!

Kerim and Jaxer have drawn knives. Scoresby holds his hands up and open.

JOHN FAA

Who might you be, sir?
(to the Captain)
And why didn't you tell me there
was others on board?

CAPTAIN

I don't see as how I'm not allowed
to sell passage on my own ship.

NICHOLAS ROKEBY

That wasn't our agreement.

TONY COSTA

What if he's a spy, Lord Faa?

LEE SCORESBY

Fella, you can call me what name
you like, I been called 'em all,
but ain't nobody ever called me a
spy.

TONY COSTA

Assassin, then. What you doin'
with them pistols, if you're so
innocent, like?

LEE SCORESBY

These? Gentlemen, I see you've never visited the fair country of Texas. Manners in those parts aren't so...refined as amongst your people.

He stares pointedly at Jaxer's and Tony's knives. They don't lower them.

LEE SCORESBY (cont'd)

I'd as soon go out of doors without these two as without my boots. They're loud fellows and somewhat hostile of aspect, but very reassuring companions on the road. Now, if you don't mind, before we embarked on this delightful tete a tete, I was intending to smoke a cheroot.

(raising his hat to Lyra)
Miss.

Lee strolls past them, nonchalant.

CAPTAIN

I can't jettison a paying customer. You wanted my ship on short notice. He's an aeronaut -- may even be of use to you, whatever you've got in mind.

JOHN FAA

(thinks)

Never mind him. We'll have to abide his company. If he's a spy, he's better close to us than on land and reporting to the Magisterium. Mind you watch him, though, Tony.

Tony nods. Lyra follows this exotic stranger with her eyes as he strolls along the rail.

INT. CABIN - NIGHT

We now hear the deep rattling THRUM of the engines. Lyra is putting her things away.

PANTALAIMON

Why do you keep taking our things out and putting them away?

LYRA

Stowing them. That's what you call it, on ship. And I want to do it in the most seamanlike way.

She carefully wedges the SPY-FLY, which has been corked into the beer glass, with the cork facing down and tightly strapped against the hull. Inside, the spy-fly BUZZES angrily.

The ship is leaving port, cruising along the wharf district. Lyra hears a COMMOTION on shore, sees the flash of torches, looks out the porthole.

LYRA (cont'd)

Let's see what's happening.

PANTALAIMON

We're not supposed to go up. Not while there's people about.

LYRA

It's nightttime, Pan.

EXT. DECK - DAY

Lyra emerges onto the deck furtively, but no-one is telling her to keep below. Anybody on deck is either working or looking off the rail to see the shore, where a crowd is gathered in an open place, around a tall pile of wood, on top of which stands a YOUNG WOMAN, tied to a post.

Lyra goes to the rail, fascinated. She finds herself standing next to Lee Scoresby, who looks at the spectacle as well.

LEE SCORESBY

(distastefully)

Burnin' a witch.

LYRA

Why? What did she do?

LEE SCORESBY

She flew. And we can't fly.

(beat)

She's free like we ain't. Plus, it's Sunday.

LYRA

Where's her daemon?

LEE SCORESBY

Up there. Flyin' around to beat
the band.

Lyra's amazed to see the duck daemon of the witch so far from
her. The duck flaps about, honking madly in distress.

LYRA

But how can they separate so far?

LEE SCORESBY

A witches daemon can go as far as
she wants it to. Frightening,
ain't it?

On shore, the pyre has been set light to. We can hear the
witch begin to wail. She looks at the duck, which is
twisting around in the air in pain.

Next to her, we hear a sharp CRACK. The duck falls from the
sky, dissolving before it even reaches the water.

She turns to Scoresby, who is settling into the rail. No
sign of a gun in his hands...but an air of deep sadness.

On shore, the witch goes unconscious...but the crowd doesn't
seem to notice, caught up in the excitement of the flames.

LYRA

What's your name?

LEE SCORESBY

Lee Scoresby.

LYRA

Lyra Belacqua.

Lee holds out his hand and they shake.

LEE SCORESBY

Mighty pleased to make your
acquaintance, Miss Lyra. Now, if
you'll excuse me...I'm not feelin'
well.

Lee heads below decks.

EXT. ESTUARY - DAWN

The ship emerges into the estuary of the Colby as dawn
breaks...

EXT. GERMAN SEA - DAY

The ship exits the English Channel and joins the more open waters of the German Sea, putting on sail as the wind kicks up. We see Lyra by the rail, looking somewhat ill as sailors and Gyptians free lines from the belaying pins and start to hoist the sails...Tony Costa looks at her bemusedly --

INT. SHIP - NIGHT

Lyra is reading the alethiometer by the light of Pantalaimon's firefly form as the ship heels and falls wildly...

EXT. GERMAN SEA - COAST OF NORWAY - DAY

Now Tony himself is looking green, the relatively mild seas of the English coast having given way to the chop of colder waters...

Meanwhile, Lyra is laying FACE DOWN in the BOWSPRIT NETTING, at the very apogee of the swell, rocking up and down as water sprays up at her, joyous --

EXT. GERMAN SEA - COAST OF NORWAY - NIGHT

The sea calmer, the jibs are going up. Lyra and Pan, in monkey form, haul away at the lines with the sailors, who seems used to her presence --

EXT. NORWEGIAN SEA - OFF TROLLESUND - DAY

A grizzled SAILOR, his albatross daemon soaring beside him, perches on the mast-head. Over the edge of the little platform, he sees some smaller fingers creeping. He looks over to see --

LYRA, holding on to the rope ladder for dear life, having scampered up this far. Pan is a mouse, clutching her clothes...

The Sailor helps her up, and the two of them look towards the rocky coast, lined with fjord-mouths, and see TROLLESUND at the mouth of one of them...

CUT TO:

EXT. TROLLESUND - DAY

Lyra and Farder Coram walk through the streets of Trollesund, the tidy northern town that is the northernmost port on their journey. In the background, we can see activity by the ship.

LYRA

Is it true there en't any male
witches?

FARDER CORAM

It is, Lyra. When they choose to
have children, they find a mate
amongst the humans. If the baby is
a girl-child, then they take it
with them to their lands in the
north.

LYRA

What if the witch wants to stay
with her husband?

FARDER CORAM

They won't hardly ever marry, Lyra,
as they're so long-lived. The
whole life of a man is but a season
to them. And all our hates and
loves are nothing but shifting
moods.

Farder Coram falls silent, and Lyra observes him curiously. They come to a green-painted house, and rings the bell. A male servant opens the door.

FARDER CORAM (cont'd)

Is the Consul in, please?

SERVANT

Yes. Will you wait for him inside?

INT. WITCH CONSULATE - DAY

Lyra and Farder Coram sit in a well-appointed office, Lyra feeling out of place after so many days at sea.

LYRA

(whispers)

The servant said "him". I thought
they was all ladies.

FARDER CORAM

Witches don't live in towns, Lyra.
They don't concern themselves with
our troubles. But they have a
human representative here in
Trollesund.

Just then, a door opens, and DOCTOR LANSELIUS comes in, a
plump, well-groomed man, with a **snake** daemon wrapped about
his neck. Lyra gets up, and Farder Coram labors to pull
himself up on his stick --

DOCTOR LANSELIUS

Please, Farder Coram, stay seated.
Miss Belacqua.

Lyra sits, surprised.

FARDER CORAM

You were expecting us?

DOCTOR LANSELIUS

Word from the seals in the harbor.
A side benefit from my patronesses
cordial relations with the local
fauna. Some tea?

The servant brings in a tray and sets it down between them.

FARDER CORAM

Thank you, Doctor.

DOCTOR LANSELIUS

My great pleasure. Now -- how
might I be of use to Farder Coram
of the Gyptians?

FARDER CORAM

In two ways, Dr. Lanselius. First,
I'm anxious to get in touch with a
witch lady I met some years ago, in
the fen country of Eastern Anglia.
Her name is Serafina Pekkala. It
was forty years ago, but I believe
she will remember.

DOCTOR LANSELIUS

Serafina Pekkala is queen of a
witch clan in the region of Lake
Enara.

FARDER CORAM

Then the former queen has gone to meet Yambe Akka, the mother of the dark?

DOCTOR LANSELIUS

You are a scholar, Farder Coram.

FARDER CORAM

Only an admirer, Dr. Lanselius.

DOCTOR LANSELIUS

And the second request?

FARDER CORAM

I'm representing a number of Gyptian families who've lost children. We've got reason to believe there's an organization capturing these children, ours and others, and bringing them into the North for some unknown purpose. I'd like to know whether you or your people have heard of anything like this a going on.

Doctor Lanselius thinks, sips his tea.

DOCTOR LANSELIUS

It's not impossible that notice of some such activity might have come our way. You realize, the relations between my people and the Northlanders have been on a solid footing for some time now?

FARDER CORAM

I do, and that it would be difficult to justify disturbing them.

DOCTOR LANSELIUS

Then you will understand that any information you may receive is not coming to you through me.

FARDER CORAM

Quite so.

DOCTOR LANSELIUS

Well...in this very town there is a branch of an organization called the Northern Progress Company, which pretends to be searching for minerals, but which is really controlled by something called the General Oblation Board of London. This organization, I happen to know, imports children. This is not generally known in the town; the Norroway government is not officially aware of it. The children don't remain here long; they are taken further north.

FARDER CORAM

Do you know where, Dr. Lanselius?

DOCTOR LANSELIUS

No. I would tell you if I did.

FARDER CORAM

And do you know what happens to them there?

Doctor Lanselius glances at Lyra, who looks stolidly back. Doctor Lanselius's serpent daemon whispers into his ear.

DOCTOR LANSELIUS

I have heard the phrase *Maystadt Process* in connection with that matter. I think they use that in order to avoid calling what they do by its proper name. I have also heard the words *intercision*, and *severing*...but what they refer to I could not say.

FARDER CORAM

Thank you. Now, you've answered my questions very fairly, sir, and here's one more. If you were me, what question would you ask the Consul of the Witches?

Doctor Lanselius smiles.

DOCTOR LANSELIUS

Were I on...what I conjecture to be your...errand, I would ask where I could obtain the services of an armored bear.

Lyra sits up, intrigued, as does Pan.

FARDER CORAM

(surprised)

I understood the armored bears to be in the pay of the Oblation Board.

DOCTOR LANSELIUS

There is at least one who is not. You will find him at the sledge depot at the end of Langlokur Street. He earns a living there at the moment, but such is his temper and the fear he engenders in the dogs, his employment might not last for long.

FARDER CORAM

Is he a renegade, then?

DOCTOR LANSELIUS

It seems so. His name is Iorek Byrnison. And I would seize the chance to employ him, even if it were quite remote.

Lyra can hardly sit still. She tugs at Farder Coram's sleeve.

DOCTOR LANSELIUS (cont'd)

I understand, Miss Belacqua, that you are in the possession of an alethiometer?

LYRA

I am.

(thinks)

Would you like to look at it?

DOCTOR LANSELIUS

I would like that very much.

Lyra fishes about in her bag, and hands him the alethiometer. He looks at it with great care.

DOCTOR LANSELIUS (cont'd)

How exquisite. I have seen one before, but it was not so fine as this. And do you have the book of readings?

LYRA
Know, but I don't need it.
(he is intrigued)
I can read it on my own, sort of
like listening.

DOCTOR LANSELIUS
(evenly)
I see.

LYRA
Sir, how does it work?

DOCTOR LANSELIUS
That, I cannot tell you. But I can
tell you that it was invented
accidentally, by a metaphysician
wishing to read the influence of
certain planets -- the needle was
meant to point to Venus, or Mars,
as a compass points to Truenorth.
But something else moved the
needle. Perhaps, someday, you
shall discover what, and tell me.

Doctor Lanselius smiles a smile that ends the meeting. Lyra
and Farder Coram get up.

FARDER CORAM
Thank you, Doctor Lanselius.

DOCTOR LANSELIUS
I shall contact Serafina Pekkala,
Farder Coram.

LYRA
Thank you, Doctor! Let's find the
bear, Farder Coram!

Lyra darts out of the room. Before Farder Coram can leave,
Doctor Lanselius gently takes his arm.

DOCTOR LANSELIUS
Do you know who that child is?

FARDER CORAM
The daughter of Lord Asriel, and
Mrs. Coulter, of the Oblation
Board.

DOCTOR LANSELIUS

I believe she is more than that, if it is true about her reading the alethiometer. The witches have talked of such a child for centuries past. Because they live so close to a place where the veil between the worlds is thin, they hear immortal whisperings from time to time, in the voices of those beings who pass between the worlds. And they have spoken of such a child as this, who has a great destiny that can only be fulfilled elsewhere -- not in this world, but far beyond. Without this child, we shall all die. So the witches say. But she must fulfill this destiny in ignorance of what she is doing, because only in her ignorance can we be saved. Do you understand that, Farder Coram?

But Lyra reappears at the other side of the door frame, and tugs on Farder Coram.

LYRA

Farder Coram -- the bear --

DOCTOR LANSELIUS

Goodbye, Farder Coram. Goodbye, child. I am glad to have met you. I shall remember this day, Lyra.

Lyra looks at him curiously, and then she and Farder Coram depart.

EXT. TROLLESUND - LANGLOKUR STREET - DUSK

Lyra and Farder Coram walk from the consulate downhill, Lyra skipping ahead in impatience. Night is falling.

LYRA

What was he talking about, Farder Coram?

FARDER CORAM

(honestly)
I have no idea.

LYRA

Shall we go hire the bear? My father knows about the bears. They're mercenaries, which means they fight for whoever pays them.

FARDER CORAM

So they do, Lyra. And deadly fighters they are, too.

LYRA

Have you fought a bear?

FARDER CORAM

I have, not alone, thank God.

LYRA

Did you kill him? I heard they're practically impossible to defeat! I've never seen a bear, but I've seen pictures -- and my -- Mrs. Coulter said she had even spoken to the king of the bears, his name was Ragnar something --

But Farder Coram has stopped dead; it is difficult to tell whether in respect or fear.

They have come to the waste plot behind Einarsson's bar and the sledge depot. In the lengthening shadows by the back door of the bar, a vast pale form crouches upright and gnaws at a haunch of meat it holds in both hands.

Farder Coram and Lyra are standing by a sheet metal gate that separates them from whatever this is.

FARDER CORAM

Iorek Byrnison!

The bear stops eating, but that is all.

FARDER CORAM (cont'd)

Iorek Byrnison, my name is Farder Coram, of the western Gyptians. May I speak to you?

The bear drops the reindeer leg and rears to its full height - - ten feet or more, and speaks from that height, his voice deep and jagged and without human intonation. Farder Coram holds his ground, but Lyra unconsciously takes a step back. The bear's muzzle is red with blood.

IOREK BYRNISON

Well?

FARDER CORAM

We want to offer you employment,
Iorek Byrnison.

IOREK BYRNISON

I am employed.

Iorek Byrnison drops to all fours. The earth seems to rattle.

FARDER CORAM

What do you do at the sledge depot?

IOREK BYRNISON

I mend broken machinery and
articles of iron. I lift heavy
objects.

FARDER CORAM

What kind of work is that for a
panserbjorn?

Lyra looks at Farder Coram, surprised at his provocative question.

IOREK BYRNISON

Paid work.

Behind Iorek, the back door of the bar opens and a man quickly sets down a crock of liquid. Iorek turns that way, and the man swiftly withdraws. Iorek turns his back fully on Farder Coram and Lyra, strides to the crock, picks it up and downs a gush of brown spirits.

Farder Coram looks at Lyra, seemingly at a loss for words.

LYRA

Is that what they pay you?
Whiskey?

The bear stops drinking. Turns his head. Lyra holds her ground.

IOREK BYRNISON

They pay me spirits and meat. What
would you give me?

FARDER CORAM

I don't know what to offer you,
Iorek Byrnison. If gold is
desirable to you, we have gold.

IOREK BYRNISON

No good.

The bear takes another long drink.

LYRA

Fighting. There'll probably be
fighting. We're going north to
where they've taken some kids
captive. They took my friend, and
I swore to him I'd go rescue him.

The bear stops, fastens his eyes upon Lyra. She shivers a if
with cold. Then, as suddenly, he turns back to his drink.

FARDER CORAM

(leaving)

Come, child. We've done what we
could.

LYRA

Iorek Byrnison! I read that bears
live to hunt seals and to wage war.
Why are you here, drinking spirits
and letting the northlanders tell
you what to do?

Farder Coram is horrified, and tries to drag Lyra back as
Iorek drops the crock with a crash and steps forward, at once
ponderous but swift as lightning. Pan crawls inside her
coat, but Lyra doesn't flinch.

IOREK BYRNISON

I know the people you are seeking,
the child cutters. I don't like
them, so I shall answer your
question politely. I stay here and
drink spirits because the men here
took my armor away, and without
that, I can hunt seals but I can't
go to war; and I am an armored
bear; war is the sea I swim in and
the air I breathe. The men of this
town gave me spirits and let me
drink til I was asleep, and then
they took my armor away from me.
They say I must work for seven
years to get it back.

IOREK BYRNISON(cont'd)

If you want my service, the price is my armor. Do that, and I shall serve you in your campaign, either until I am dead or until you have a victory. The price is my armor. I want it back, and then I shall never need spirits again.

The bear turns and walks away.

CUT TO:

EXT. TROLLESUND - DOCKS - DAY

Farder Coram and Lyra arrive back at the dock where the ship is moored. Lyra has been consulting the alethiometer as they walk.

LYRA

I know where his armor is, Farder Coram. And it says more about him -

-

But Farder Coram's attention is taken by some sort of commotion on deck.

There, Gyptians and sailors are backing away from a gigantic SNOW GOOSE, grey with a streak of white on its head. One sailor clutches a belaying pin, Tony has an arrow knocked to his bow, others have their knives out. As the goose turns unconcernedly, the Gyptians and sailors shuffle about in a radius of fear around him.

TONY COSTA

Stay back, there!

SAILOR

What is it? It spoke --

GYPTIAN

There ain't no human about --

The daemon, whose name is KAISA, speaks.

KAISA

Where is Farder Coram?

JOHN FAA

Put your weapons down!

The Gyptians and sailors do so, reluctantly. Farder Coram arrives at the scene.

FARDER CORAM

Don't be fearful. This is a
witches daemon, and he can travel
as far from her as he pleases.

(to Kaisa)

Kaisa, I and happy and proud to see
you again. I apologize for this
welcome.

KAISA

No matter. Serafina Pekkala sends
greetings, Farder Coram.

FARDER CORAM

How is Serafina Pekkala?

KAISA

She is well and strong.

Lee Scoresby strolls up to Tony and the other Gyptians.

LEE SCORESBY

Gentlemen? Any of you in the mood
for a game of hazard?

A pack of cards appears in his hands, and he cuts and
shuffles them adroitly while fishing a cheroot out from his
jacket with the other.

TONY COSTA

Pochspiel?

LEE SCORESBY

Pochspiel? Oh, you mean poker.
(innocuously)
I've heard of it.

The Gyptians smile and follow him to the saloon, leaving John
Faa, Farder Coram, and Lyra to talk with Kaisa.

KAISA

Who are these people, Farder Coram?

FARDER CORAM

These are John Faa, Lord of the
western Gyptians, and Lyra
Belacqua, the daughter of Lord
Asriel.

KAISA

(to Lyra)

The witches speak of you.

LYRA

...They do?

KAISA

Yes. Your father seeks to open a bridge to other worlds.

John Faa and Farder Coram are intrigued.

FARDER CORAM

The witch consulate spoke of other worlds as well, Kaisa. Do you mean the stars?

KAISA

No. Even the furthest stars belong to our universe. I refer to the worlds that exist, not further away, but interpenetrating this one. Here, on this deck, there are ten million worlds, some alike ours, some utterly strange. There are worlds where daemons have no humans, and worlds where humans have no daemons.

This is an unsettling, even fantastical idea to the three humans and their daemons.

LYRA

And the city in the sky? The one that my father photogrammed in the aurora?

KAISA

-- Yes. Charged particles in the aurora borealis render the veil between worlds thin. The witches have known this for many centuries. Lord Asriel seeks to build a bridge between the worlds in the far north, and the Magisterium thinks him mad, for they do not believe that there are other worlds.

JOHN FAA

Is this something to do with Dust? Why do the Gobblers take the children north?

KAISA

They seek Dust, and they fear and hate it.

KAISA(cont'd)

They go north to be near to the
aurora where Dust enters the
universe...they seek through their
experiments to destroy it. And
they go north to hide their
shameful work from human eyes.
They have built a complex, with
steel buildings and concrete
passages. A regiment of Tartars
with wolf daemons guards it.

John Faa and Farder Coram share a look.

KAISA (cont'd)

We don't know what they do, but
there is an air of hatred and fear
over the place and for miles
around. Witches can see these
things where other humans can't.
Animals keep away too. No birds
fly there; lemmings and foxes have
fled. So we call the place
Bolvangar, the fields of evil.
They don't call it that. They call
it "The Station". But to everyone
else it is Bolvangar.

JOHN FAA

A regiment of Tartars...

LYRA

We need the bear, John Faa!

JOHN FAA

No, Lyra. He is not free to go as
you thought. I have spoken with
the townspeople. He gambled and
drank and killed two men, and now
he must work off the debt of blood.

LYRA

But they're lying! They tricked
him, I know it --

JOHN FAA

It may be as you say, Lyra, but we
cannot risk angering the
northlanders. We've enemies enough
as it is.

(to Kaisa)

Kaisa, can you tell us the way to
Bolvangar?

KAISA
I can, if you show me your charts.

JOHN FAA
(pleased)
Good. Very good! Nicholas! Fetch
the charts! We will leave on the
next high tide.

Farder Coram, John Faa, and Nicholas Rokeby confer with
Kaisa, while Lyra stands apart, frustrated.

HESTER
Lyra. Lyra.
(she turns and notices)
I can't speak long. Go and find
the bear. Tell him where his armor
is, while you have a chance.

Lyra looks at the adults, who have for the moment forgotten
her, nods and slips away.

EXT. TROLLESUND - LANGLOKUR STREET - NIGHT

Lyra trudges along the street, with Pan fluttering about her
nervously.

PANTALAIMON
We shouldn't be doing this.

LYRA
Yes we should.

PANTALAIMON
John Faa said not to.

LYRA
John Faa can be wrong, Pan. You
didn't read the alethiometer.
Iorek Byrnison is telling the
truth.

PANTALAIMON
So? He's a bear. And they're
vicious killers. Farder Coram said
so.

LYRA
I wouldn't mind having a vicious
killer on my side, would you?
(beat)
You're a coward, Pan.

PANTALAIMON

Certainly I am. What are you
intending to do? Let him massacre
the townspeople?

LYRA

I don't think he's like that, Pan.
He seems so sad. Imagine how it
would be, all alone like that,
without a daemon.

PANTALAIMON

Without anybody to tell him when
he's suicidal.

They find themselves at the fence and waste-plot where Iorek lives. He can be seen toying with the thick, dented metal shell of a gas-engined tractor that has crashed and is in need of repair. He lifts the metal casually, turns it back and forth, and bends the whole heavy sheet back into shape, the dents springing out and the original shape returning. Then he deftly flips the massive tractor on its side, examining the runner. He notices Lyra and Pan and turns to them, expressionless.

Lyra takes a step towards the fence.

PANTALAIMON (cont'd)

Don't. I won't.

Pan settles on the ground, a cat. Lyra looks at him... and steps away from him, around the fence and towards Iorek Byrnison.

PANTALAIMON (cont'd)

Lyra!

Lyra keeps walking, as Pan digs his claws into the ground.

PANTALAIMON (cont'd)

Stop! It hurts!

Lyra herself is in pain, tears squeezing out of her eyes, but she keeps moving towards the bear, who has not shifted an inch.

Pantalaimon is writhing in anguish, braced against the pull of Lyra as if against a rope dragging him away. Lyra casts a look back, then towards the bear. She tortuously makes her way to him, and stops practically eye to eye. With Pan as far away as he is, she can barely hold herself there.

PANTALAIMON (cont'd)

Lyra!

With a sob, Pan rockets towards her, unable to maintain the distance between them any more. Lyra welcomes him into her arms, clinging to him unhappily, both of them shaken.

LYRA

Oh Pan! I couldn't believe how much it hurt --

PANTALAIMON

-- I thought you might go for good -
-

LYRA

Never! Never! We'll always be together!

She and Pan gather themselves as the bear watches.

LYRA (cont'd)

Iorek Byrnison.

IOREK BYRNISON

Well?

LYRA

I know where your armor is.

IOREK BYRNISON

How do you know that?

LYRA

I got a symbol reader. They tricked you out of it. They shouldn't have done that, Iorek Byrnison. If I tell you where it is, will you come with us and help rescue the kids from Bolvangar?

IOREK BYRNISON

Yes.

LYRA

Listen, you got to promise not to take vengeance. They done wrong taking it, but you just got to put up with that.

IOREK BYRNISON

All right. No vengeance afterwards.

IOREK BYRNISON(cont'd)
But no holding back as I take it,
either. If they fight, they die.

LYRA
It's in the district office of the
Magisterium. They think it's got
an evil spirit in it, and they want
to exorcise it.

IOREK BYRNISON
What is your name, child?

LYRA
Lyra Belacqua.

IOREK BYRNISON
Then I owe you a debt, Lyra
Belacqua.

And he charges off without further word. Lyra and Pan run
after him, barely keeping pace.

They follow him as he lopes down Langlokur street, then turns
into the main street of the town. Some townspeople scream
and run inside, others come outside to watch the commotion.

EXT. TROLLESUND - MAGISTERIAL RESIDENCE - DAY

He charges straight past the sentries at the gate of the
Magisterial Residence, and THROUGH the stout oak doors,
shattering them into splinters.

One sentry, nonplussed, looks about and fires a shot in the
air. Noticing the crowd gathering, however, they realize
that they have to and, and so, nodding to each other to
embolden themselves, they enter the house.

There are shouts and SHOTS. A SERVANT, her chicken demon
fluttering and clucking, runs out screaming. Next out is the
MAGISTERIAL COMISSAR, his robes and chain of office
fluttering about him as he crashes through the window.

The crowd backs up, as a squad of POLICE filter through and
take up positions outside the residence.

There is silence inside, then a mighty ROAR, at which the two
sentries, dusty, bruised and frightened, emerge. One runs
for it, while the braver one stands in front of the door, his
rifle trained upon it..

But Iorek Byrnison emerges through the wall, the bricks
dropping about him. In his armor, he is terrifying.

It is rust red, crudely riveted together: great sheets and plates of dented, discolored metal that scrape and screech as they ride over one another.

The sentry fires several shots, and the police raise their weapons, but Iorek shrugs off the bullets like flies, and, lunging forward swiftly, BATS the sentry to the ground. In a moment he has the sentry's head in his mouth.

PANTALAIMON

Oh no --

LYRA

Iorek!

Lyra runs to Iorek and reaches into one of the few gaps in his armor, where the helmet meets the shoulder. She grabs his hair and puls with all her might. Iorek is still, the sentry's head still in his mouth...the police riflemen hold their fire.

LYRA (cont'd)

Iorek! Listen! You owe me a debt, right? Well, now you can repay it. Don't fight these men. Just turn around and walk away with me. If you fight these men, you'll kill them, and there'll be more fighting, and more delay, and we'll never get away from here, and we won't be able to rescue those kids. So do as I say, please!

Iorek Byrnison thinks, opens his mouth, and lets the limp sentry fall from it. Without a look at the townspeople, he turns and walks towards the docks, with Lyra and Pan at his side.

EXT. HARBOR - DAY

Farder Coram and Lyra, arguing with some police at the dock, turn to see Lyra coming with the bear.

JOHN FAA

Good God.

The bear, once he reaches the water, takes his helmet off and drops it on the ground with a clang. Behind them, coming down the street, a mob is gathering, angry, frightened people pushing the police onwards.

The police who have been arguing with Farder Coram and John Faa turn their attentions to the bear, who is slipping off the carapace of his armor. With the armor removed, the bear suddenly slips into the water.

LYRA

Iorek Byrnison!

(to the others)

They'll just take his armor back --

And that indeed seems to be the intention of the POLICE CHIEF, who is ordering his men to drag the armor back up the hill and prepare to fire on the bear when he emerges.

POLICE CHIEF

You four get that creature's armor back --

-- But a CLICK cuts his sentence short. It's LEE SCORESBY, who has one of his colt revolvers trained point blank on the Chief of Police's head.

LEE SCORESBY

Let's not be too hasty. Way I see it, it's of no use to you. Which is maybe why you folks ain't taken such good care of it. Why, look at the rust! Now, don't anybody move 'til the bear comes back. Or, I guess you could go home and read the paper. 'Sup to you.

No-one moves, and Iorek emerges from the harbor, dragging a black object. It's a dead seal. With a paw, Iorek RIPS the seal open and starts using the blubber to lubricate the armor.

LEE SCORESBY (cont'd)

Iorek. Howdy. I was down south, heard you ran into a little local trouble. Thought I'd come and try to figger a way to spring you. Fortunately little girls come real resourceful down in those parts.

The bear GRUNTS, still working on the armor. With the Gyptians starting to cluster around Scoresby, backing him up, the odds seemed to have changed for the police.

LEE SCORESBY (cont'd)

Lookee here, reinforcements. What do you say you fellas just call it a day?

Lee Scoresby lowers his pistol and the Chief of Police, exhausted by the possibilities for carnage, tries to gather up what is left of his dignity and retreats. Some of the townspeople stay behind, still angry, but when Iorek slips on the armor again, trying it for noise, and walks up to Lee Scoresby, they back off and make their way homeward.

LEE SCORESBY (cont'd)
I've just been hired on by these gentlemen of the Gyptian persuasion. You figure you'd like to join this turkey shoot?

IOREK BYRNISON
Yes. I have a contract with the child.

The Gyptians look at Lyra with wonder.

EXT. SHIP - DAY

The Noorderlicht plows along the coast, towards hilly land in the distance. The sailors and Gyptians go about their business, but avoid the area where Iorek Byrnison sits, going over his armor with his great hands and expert eye. A sailor thinks about undoing a line near where Iorek sits, but changes his mind.

By the wheel, Lyra, John Faa and Farder Coram stand.

JOHN FAA
Well, I'm glad he's on *our* side.

LYRA
Lord Faa...I'm sorry I didn't do what you said. I'm sorry I got us in trouble.

JOHN FAA
Never you mind, Lyra. The harbor police was about to search the ship. Someone told them we were smuggling smokeleaf to Nova Zembla. And all the while there's kids going in and out, being taken up north by child-stealers. If it weren't for your bear, we'd've been stuck in port and maybe worse. No, I'm sorry I tried to keep you from doing what you felt in your gut was right.

LYRA

Who told 'em we was smugglers?

John Faa shakes his head.

FARDER CORAM

The Northern Progress Company, maybe, doing the Magisterium's dirty work. They bring plenty of money to Trollesund. They could put a muzzle on the truth, and replace it with untruth about us.

JOHN FAA

Either way, somebody wanted to stop us. I was worried we hadn't seen the hand of Mrs. Coulter anyplace. Now I'm worried we have.

Lyra seems uncomfortable at the mention of her mother. She leaves the conversation and approaches Iorek Byrnison. Iorek does not so much as look up to acknowledge her.

LYRA

(brightly)

...Do you like sailing, Iorek Byrnison?

Iorek looks up at her, his expression utterly blank.

LYRA (cont'd)

I like sailing. At first I was seasick. Do you get seasick?

No response from Iorek.

LYRA (cont'd)

I s'pose not.

(searching for another subject)

How is your armor coming along?

IOREK

It will serve.

LYRA

Why didn't you just make armor from all the metal that was lying around the sledge depot?

Iorek's look is hard to interpret, but there is perhaps a note of offended pride. He looks at the metal hull of the ship. Flourishes a claw, and RIPS through it casually.

IOREK BYRNISON

Worthless. My armor is made for me, of sky iron, from the falling stars that land in Svalbard. A bear's armor is his soul, as your daemon is your soul. You may as well take him away and replace him with a doll. That is the difference.

LYRA

Then...is your soul all rusty and dented, like your armor?

The bear seems to regard Lyra for the first time.

IOREK BYRNISON

You are a foolhardy and impertinent child.

LYRA

Thank you.

IOREK BYRNISON

The rust is only what appears on the surface. The dents are memories of war.

(beat)

The boy who you swore the oath to -- is he your mate?

LYRA

Mate? No. 'Course not. He's my friend.

Iorek grunts in acknowledgement.

LYRA (cont'd)

You can understand that, can't you? Lee Scoresby is your friend.

IOREK BYRNISON

We have campaigned together.

There's a lull in the conversation.

LYRA

Iorek? Is it hard not having a daemon? Don't you get lonely?

IOREK BYRNISON

Lonely? I don't know. They tell me this is cold.

IOREK BYRNISON(cont'd)

I don't know what cold is, because I don't freeze. So I don't know what lonely means either. Bears are meant to be solitary.

LYRA

Beg pardon, Iorek. I hope I en't offended you. It's just that I'm curious, see, I'm extra curious because of everything I heard about bears. And I heard that the king of Svalbard, Ragnar, wants a daemon.

Iorek grunts.

IOREK BYRNISON

I do not know. I am not a Svalbard bear.

LYRA

I thought you was...

IOREK BYRNISON

No. I was a Svalbard bear, but I am not now. The king sent me away as a punishment because I killed another bear.

LYRA

Why did you kill the other bear?

IOREK BYRNISON

Anger. We fought. There are ways among bears of turning our anger away from each other, but I was out of my own control. So I killed him and I was justly punished.

LYRA

And...why were you fighting the other bear?

IOREK BYRNISON

His mate wanted me. I wanted his mate. There was a cub. The cub was mine.

Lyra looks at Iorek.

LYRA

Illegitimate...

IOREK BYRNISON

(evenly)

The one I fought killed his mate
and the cub, as was his right.

Lyra is moved by this; her eyes tear. Iorek, on the other hand, seems unemotional.

LYRA

Oh Iorek...

She reaches for one of his great paws.

IOREK BYRNISON

(factually)

Be careful. You will cut your
hands.

Lyra does not move her hands away.

EXT. FJORD - DAY

The Noorderlicht has anchored as close as possible to a glacier that marked the interior end of a deep fjord lined by rocky cliffs where puffins and kittiwakes nest. Their screaming can be heard, like the commotion of a city at mid-day.

The ship's boats have been lowered and are ferrying the Gyptians' supplies onshore. Lee Scoresby is supervising the loading of some crates onto a sledge.

LEE SCORESBY

Careful now, fellas. The
machinery's kind of finicky. I
want to die in a rocking chair, not
a hydrogen fire.

Nearby, Ma Costa opens a crate of rifles, packed in wood shavings. She hands one to Jaxer and inspects the bolt of another herself.

JAXER

You know how to work one of these?

MA COSTA

Women have trigger fingers too,
son.

Lyra, meanwhile, sits on a crate, communing with the alethiometer. What she reads seems confusing to her.

Iorek watches the Gyptians struggle with a pallet of stores. He observes them as they try to figure out how to haul it from the ship's boat. Then he strides up and deftly lifts it over the gunwales himself.

GYPTIAN

...Thankee...

Another boat ferries sled-dogs to the shore. As they see Iorek they strain at their leashes and BARK wildly.

-- And the sound of the dogs BARKING covers a CUT TO:

EXT. GLACIER - DAY

The Gyptian party, a hundred strong, hauls itself up the slope of the glacier, making for the pass between the two sides of the fjord. Men urge on the dogs, their boots sinking in the snow as they try to keep the sleds on their rails and moving.

Lee Scoresby, his daemon Hester and Iorek plod upwards with an easy familiarity. Behind them, Lyra gasps as she climbs, now clad in jury-rigged snow gear cut down to size, burning up from exertion inside the warm reindeer hide...

They reach the top of the pass, and she EXHALES in relief...

Until she sees the long, long snowy plain below, more mountain in the distance...

Lee Scoresby looks to Iorek and nods towards Lyra. The bear turns around to see her, now hiding her exhaustion.

CUT TO:

EXT. GLACIER - DAY

Iorek, now shorn of his armor, stands on all fours patiently while Lyra awkwardly and laboriously pulls herself up onto his back.

EXT. TUNDRA - DAY

Iorek lopes along by the train of dog sleds, showing little or no response as Lyra chats away.

LYRA

-- and she was ever so clever, Mrs. Coulter was, but she was always telling me what to do -- I don't like it when people tell me what to do --

We CROSS-FADE to later in the day, Lyra still talking to him -
-

LYRA (cont'd)

-- And when you said that I thought of my father, right, because *he's* sort of like an exile too, and solitary and rough, and --

And CROSS-FADE to night falling, Lyra nodding off on Iorek's back as he plods on undeterred.

LYRA (cont'd)

-- I don't see why anybody's daemon should ever have to settle. I want Pan to be able to be whatever he likes, but everyone says I'll be glad when he can't...

Lyra's eyes close, and her hands relax their grasp on Iorek's fur.

EXT. AROUND CAMPFIRE - NIGHT

Lee Scoresby sits playing a mournful tune on a HARMONICA, leaning back against his pack, the flap of his tent open behind him. He looks up and momentarily stops as Iorek walks by on his hind legs, Lyra slung like a doll under one massive arm.

EXT. MA COSTA'S TENT - NIGHT

Ma Costa looks up from the pot she's stirring over the fire as Iorek approaches. She stands, not knowing quite how to address the bear.

Iorek walks up to her and hands her Lyra like a bundle, then turns and walks away. Lyra is a little too big to be carried around by Ma Costa, but she lowers her gently towards the tent and Lyra crawls inside...

INT. MA COSTA'S TENT - NIGHT

Lyra wakes in Ma Costa's tent, and hears Ma Costa sleeping away under her blanket a little ways off. She crawls to the tent flap and peeks out. She exits the tent --

EXT. MA COSTA'S TENT - NIGHT

-- And stands up to look at the Arctic night, full of stars, and, to the north, a shimmering curtain of light that dances along the horizon, shifting between green and crimson and amber.

PANTALAIMON

The aurora borealis.

Lyra looks at it, entranced.

LYRA

Do you think it's looking at us the way we're looking at it, Pan?

PANTALAIMON

It can't look. It's just an it.

LYRA

But what if "it's" are alive too, just like us? I mean, if everything's alive, and everything thinks and sees and feels, just in its own way?

PANTALAIMON

You must still be asleep.

LYRA

I think I'm awake.

She looks at the aurora.

LYRA (cont'd)

(to the sky)

Tell Roger we're coming!

INT. TUNDRA - THE NEXT DAY

The sled train ventures northwards. John Faa, Farder Coram, Ma Costa and Lee Scoresby confer as they walk.

JOHN FAA

Mr. Scoresby, weather permitting
I'll have you take your airship up
tomorrow and reconnoitre
northwards.

LEE SCORESBY

I'd be happy to, Lord Faa. I'll
just need to fill the balloon a
piece.

LYRA

Lord Faa?

Lyra approaches, carried on Iorek's back.

JOHN FAA

Yes, child.

LYRA

The alethiometer keeps telling me
something. In the next valley
there's a village by a lake where
the folk are troubled by a ghost.

JOHN FAA

I don't see how that can matter
now, Lyra, not enough for us to
divert from our path.

LYRA

But what if I was to go, Lord Faa?
With Iorek to protect me, I mean.
The alethiometer has never told me
anything that wasn't important.
There's something to do with the
Gobblers, and Bolvangar.

FARDER CORAM

Why shouldn't we send some men,
then?

LYRA

They'd have to walk, because you
can't get a sled over that ridge.
But Iorek could take me on his back
ever so quickly. Couldn't you,
Iorek?

IOREK BYRNISON

I could be there and back three
times before next moonrise.

JOHN FAA

Are you sure you need to do this?
That symbol reader of yours en't
playing the fool with you?

LYRA

It never does, Lord Faa, and I
don't think it could.

Lee Scoresby leans in to John Faa confidentially.

LEE SCORESBY

Lord Faa, if Iorek Byrnison takes
the little girl, she'll be as safe
as if she was here with us. All
bears are true, but I've known
Iorek for years, and nothing under
the sky will make him break his
word.

JOHN FAA

Iorek, are you willing to do what
the child bids?

IOREK BYRNISON

She owns my contract, Lord Faa.

JOHN FAA

You shall have to catch us up,
then.

IOREK BYRNISON

I will.

Ma Costa comes over and grasps Lyra's head in her hands.

MA COSTA

You come back as soon as you've
found out what you need to know.
And don't be silly, and don't be
brave neither.

(to Iorek)

Take care of her, bear. If you
don't, you'll answer to me.

Iorek says nothing but turns and starts to run towards the
ridge.

EXT. RIDGE - DAY

Iorek bursts over the top of the ridge, Lyra laughing with
joy at the exhilaration of riding a galloping polar bear.

We follow Iorek and Lyra as they make their way across the snowy plateau, around the spine of a mountain, into a valley with a lake running along the center.

EXT. VALLEY - DAY

At the edge of the lake, the water has frozen into quartz-crystal-like shards of ice, and as the wind blows them against one another they tinkle like chimes.

Then she notices that Iorek is looking up at the sky.

Black forms can be seen in the upper air, moving northwards in a long stream.

LYRA
Are those birds?

IOREK BYRNISON
Witches. Many. More than I have ever seen before.

LYRA
Witches! What are they doing?

IOREK BYRNISON
Flying to war, maybe. This is a sight to frighten Lord Faa. If they are flying to the aid of your enemies, you should all be afraid.

LYRA
Do you know any witches, Iorek?

IOREK BYRNISON
I have served some. And fought some.

LYRA
And...are you afraid?

IOREK BYRNISON
Not yet. When I am, I will master my fear.

Iorek slows to a walk as he spots the village they're seeking, in the distance.

IOREK BYRNISON (cont'd)
We are near.

Lyra slides off of Iorek's back, landing unsteadily on her feet. She shakes her legs around to warm and wake them up. The cold is bitter in the valley.

IOREK BYRNISON (cont'd)
What do you want to do?

LYRA
(after a moment's
hesitation)
There's a child or a ghost or
something down in that village. Or
maybe near it, I don't know for
certain. Maybe the alethiometer
was telling me something I can't
understand.

IOREK BYRNISON
If he is outside, he had better
have shelter.

LYRA
I don't think he's dead...I
dunno...the alethiometer
said...something unnatural.

Lyra struggles to hide her fear, places her hand on Iorek as if to gather courage as they walk into the village.

EXT. VILLAGE - DUSK

The weatherbeaten houses of the village are clustered around the frozen lake and a jetty sticking into it. Boats are covered with snow. A few thin trails of smoke dribble upwards from the houses, some of which have been lashed to the hard ground with cables of twisted steel.

No one is abroad. But we can hear the barking and whining of dogs as Iorek's presence stirs them to panic.

As Lyra and Iorek approach the frozen dock, a man slips from one of the houses, a rifle in his hands and his wolverine daemon hissing and snapping at his side.

Iorek Byrnison deftly steps between Lyra and the man with the rifle. Lyra pops from behind him, unwilling to be protected. The VILLAGER says something in a language Lyra doesn't know (Lapp). IOREK speaks back in the same language, and the man moans in fear.

IOREK BYRNISON

(to Lyra)

The man thinks we are devils. What shall I say?

LYRA

Tell him...tell him we're not devils, but we have friends who are. And we're looking for...a strange child. Tell him that.

The VILLAGER responds rapidly.

IOREK BYRNISON

He asks if we have come to take the child away. He says they have tried to drive it off, but it keeps coming back.

Lyra can see fearful faces at every window.

LYRA

Tell him...we will take it away with us, but they were very bad to treat it like that. Where is it?

He VILLAGER points and explains.

IOREK BYRNISON

In the smoke house. There.

Iorek turns and walks towards the smoke house, which is a dark, ugly, evil-looking shed by the jetty. She is frightened, not the least because the villager, having said his piece, is quick to lock himself back in his house.

Lyra strokes Pan and takes a deep breath.

EXT. SMOKE HOUSE - DUSK

Lyra catches up with Iorek, who has stopped before the smoke house. Nothing can be made out from inside.

LYRA

I had better go in.

(beat)

You might frighten whatever's inside.

Iorek looks at Lyra, who seems pretty frightened herself. He raises himself to his full height...and unhooks the lantern hanging on a post nearby. He hands the lantern to Lyra.

LYRA (cont'd)

Thanks.

Pantalaimon is running back and forth in front of Lyra, trying to convince her not to go in. He utters strange little frightened sounds.

PANTALAIMON

No! Don't go in! Bad! Something bad! Don't go in!

LYRA

Pan, for God's sake! Help. Be a bat. Go and look for me.

But Pan is no help.

Lyra approaches the door of the shed, which is blackened with smoke. She releases the reindeer-skin latch.

LYRA (cont'd)

Come out. Come out!

No response. Pantalaimon jumps into her arms, pushing and pushing at her in his cat form.

PANTALAIMON

Go away! Don't stay here! Oh, Lyra, go now! Turn back!

INT. SMOKE HOUSE - DUSK

We see Lyra silhouetted against the light from outside as she takes her first tentative step inside, holding Pan still against her.

LYRA

Hello...hello...

We can make out vague shapes in the lantern-light -- hanging things, smoking things, nothing welcoming or human.

LYRA (cont'd)

Don't be...afraid...

We hear a SNUFFLING, and something like CRYING, miserable, painful...

LYRA (cont'd)

Who...who...

Lyra steps further in, and the lantern light suddenly reveals what the villagers have been afraid of, and what the Oblation Board is doing...

It's a little boy, alone, cold and filthy, huddled against the wall. He frantically clutches at one thing and another, bringing it close and then throwing it away, as he tries to find his...

PANTALAIMON

Where is its daemon...it doesn't
have a daemon...they took it
away...

Lyra takes a step back, horrified and revolted.

LYRA

...Severing...

The child, meanwhile, who we may recognize as BILLY COSTA, seems to barely register Lyra. But he does on some level realize that there is another being in the shed.

BILLY COSTA

Where...where's my ratter? Have
you seen her?

Billy puts down the piece of fish he's been holding, picks up another, keeps whining and fidgeting.

PANTALAIMON

Let's go...let's leave, now.

LYRA

...No...Billy?

Billy doesn't recognize his own name.

LYRA (cont'd)

I know you. You're Billy Costa.
It's me, Lyra, from Oxford.
(still nothing)
Let me take you back to your Mum.

A momentary confusion on Billy's face.

BILLY COSTA

I need Ratter.

LYRA

Billy, come on with me...we'll take
you someplace safe.

The boy seems reluctant to move. Lyra puts out her hand.

EXT. SMOKE HOUSE - DUSK

Lyra comes out, holding the hand of the half boy Billy Costa. The child is so lost that the sight of Iorek doesn't seem to faze him at all.

IOREK BYRNISON
Lyra Belacqua...where is the rest
of this child?

LYRA
Gone, Iorek.

IOREK BYRNISON
Gone?...Gone...
(beat)
I have seen war. I have seen men
in parts. Men on fire. Men with
their stomachs open, but still they
live...
(beat)
This is the most wicked thing I
have ever seen.

LYRA
Get up on Iorek, Billy, and hold on
to his fur.

Iorek bends low so that Billy can get on, which he does clumsily. His grip on Iorek's fur is weak.

IOREK BYRNISON
The child will fall if I run.

Lyra looks at Billy, and overcomes her fear and revulsion. She climbs on behind him and holds him, grasping Iorek's fur and keeping him on.

BILLY COSTA
Ratter...is she gonna know where I
am?

LYRA
Yeah...she'll know...she'll find
you and we'll find her...

Lyra has tears running down her face. Iorek gets up and trots off with the children on his back.

EXT. GYPTIAN ENCAMPMENT - NIGHT

As Iorek arrives at the tents and fires of the Gyptian encampment, the Gyptians come out to meet them, John Faa and Farder Coram at their head. But they stop short and fall silent as they see the mutilated thing that Lyra has brought with her. Only John Faa has the courage to step forward and help Lyra down.

FARDER CORAM

Gracious God, what is this? Lyra,
child, what have you found?

LYRA

It's Billy Costa. And they cut his
daemon away. That's what the
Gobblers do.

A wave of anger and dismay passes through the Gyptians, but still no one will move forward to help.

IOREK BYRNISON

Shame.

The Gyptians look at Iorek, surprise.

IOREK BYRNISON (cont'd)

Shame on you! Think what this
child has done! You might not have
more courage, but you should be
ashamed to show less!

JOHN FAA

You're right, Iorek Byrnison.
(to the Gyptians)
Build that fire up and heat some
soup for the child. For both
children. He can eat and get warm,
even if...

Before John Faa can finish his thought, a figure bursts through the group of Gyptians. It is MA COSTA.

MA COSTA

Billy?

Billy stands there, still lost, miserable, unable to recognize his mother.

Ma Costa runs to him and swallows him in her arms, crying in bitter SOBS. Behind her come Tony, Jaxer, Kerim.

Lyra looks on, ready to drop with exhaustion. She feels John Faa's massive hand on her shoulder.

JOHN FAA

Come, Lyra. Brave girl. You've earned some warmth and a night's sleep.

He directs her towards the Costa's tent.

INT. MA COSTA'S TENT - NIGHT

Lyra wakes up as Ma Costa enters the tent. It is some hours later.

LYRA

Ma Costa...where's Billy?

MA COSTA

Gone, child.

(beat)

Once he was warm...and we was holding him...the life just left him.

(beat)

When he was gone, he looked like anybody else dead, his daemon vanished.

Lyra is sitting up now.

LYRA

Ma Costa -- I'm sorry -- I'm sorry -
-

MA COSTA

Whatever for, Lyra?

LYRA

For finding him too late...for what you had to see --

MA COSTA

Lyra, you brought me back my child. You let me hold him in my arms once more...and you let me say goodbye to him. Thank you. Now don't you go losing heart. You mustn't. There's other children to save.

(beat)

And there is revenge to be taken.

We hear a WHISTLING sound...then SHOUTS, and the CRACK of rifles.

Lyra rushes to the tent-flap to find out what's happening.

MA COSTA (cont'd)
Life -- wait --

OUTSIDE, she sees that the Gyptian camp is UNDER ATTACK. Arrows are raining down, and the Gyptians are mustering a defense, firing into the haze; but the light from the fires and the surrounding dark puts them at a disadvantage.

John Faa fires his pistol at a form moving at the edge of camp, and it drops to the ground. A moment later, he is HIT by an arrow and falls.

Lyra is SHOCKED, and doesn't notice until almost too late that a SAMOYED HUNTER, dagger drawn, is rushing towards her --

MA COSTA yanks her back --

INSIDE THE TENT -- a moment before the Samoyed hunter bursts through the flap, and is SHOT point blank by Ma Costa, who is shouldering her rifle.

Lyra has fallen to the floor at her feet, and is looking up in amazement at Ma Costa, who turns to see if she is all right.

LYRA
Ma!

Lyra watches in horror as another Samoyed crashes through the tent flaps and, grabbing Ma Costa from behind, STABS HER.

Ma's **daemon** vanishes in a puff of air. Ma Costa, looking at Lyra, sinks to the ground.

The Samoyed, his **wolf** daemon snarling at his side, closes on Lyra, who casts around for something to fight with as Pan turns into a wolverine, facing the Samoyed's daemon.

Then, there is a RIPPING NOISE as Iorek tears though the tent, opening it to the starry sky above --

-- And the Samoyed barely has time to shout bfore Iorek SHATTERS his body with a single blow of his paw. The **wolf** daemon actually BURSTS in the air.

IOREK BYRNISON
Come with me, child.

Iorek lunges for Lyra and grabs the hood of her reindeer-skin coat in his mouth, like a mother moving her cubs. He hauls her out of the tent and onto her feet, Pantalaimon scurrying behind.

OUTSIDE, some hand-to-hand fighting is taking place where the Samoyeds have mounted forays to steal the sledges. The dogs have been loosed and they run about howling, adding to the chaos. We can see several Gyptians on the ground, some still, some pulling at arrows.

An ARROW SPEEDS TOWARDS LYRA, but Iorek simply knocks it out of the air with a deft movement. The archer and three other Samoyeds close on him. One carries a spear and the others carry long hunting knives, scalloped on one end.

LYRA

Iorek!

They back up Iorek -- so it seems -- keeping him at bay with the long spear, as one of the Samoyeds ready a bolo-like weapon, his eyes on Lyra.

Then IOREK MOVES WITH IMPOSSIBLE GRACE -- not so much speed as foresight. He knows the moment the archer knocks an arrow what the target is, and plucks it out of the air like a ball. He feints at the Samoyed wielding the spear, who plants the butt in the ground, ready to impale the bear.

But Iorek STOPS SHORT, reaches out and BENDS THE STEEL SHAFT as if it were wire.

With the dawning realization that Iorek has been shamming, the Samoyeds back up -- but it is much, much too late. Iorek simply KNOCKS the head off one, RAKES another across the chest, and closes his jaws on the neck of a third as the fourth turns and runs.

One leap by the great bear and it is over, the fleeing Samoyed's skull crush into the ground.

Lyra is almost FRIGHTENED by the spectacle as Iorek turns his bloody muzzle top her.

IOREK BYRNISON

(calmly)

Are you harmed?

LYRA

No -- no, I'm fine -- But John Faa was hit. You must go help the others, Iorek!

Iorek nods and charges into the melee. Soon we hear ROARS, SCREAMS and CRASHES.

LYRA (cont'd)
 (to Pan)
 I should have asked the
 alethiometer if there was danger --
 I should've warned Lord Faa --

-- But Pan is looking over her shoulder, SNARLING. SOMETHING -- another daemon -- knocks him down, and Lyra feels the blow herself, pushing the air out of her lungs --

-- And then Hands are HAULING at her, LIFTING her, STIFLING her cries. She is tossed into the air into someone's arms, her own arms are hauled behind her painfully and tied. A HOOD is crammed over her head --

LYRA (cont'd)
 Iorek! Iorek Byrnison! Help me!

She can't tell if Iorek hears as she is bundled onto a sledge which is soon HISSING across the snow...

In the dark, we can hear the crack of a whip, the howling of dogs.

LYRA (cont'd)
 Pan...Pan, I can't breathe --

CUT TO:

EXT. SNOWY TUNDRA - DAY

Lyra awakes from her stupor as the hood is taken off her head. Her hands are tied behind her back and she is propped against the side of a Tartar sled.

A weatherbeaten, harsh face is peering at her. The TARTAR seems pleased with his catch, more so when he sees Pan, who has been laying inside Lyra's hood in the shape of a **lemming**, turn into an **ermine** and HISSSES at him.

TARTAR
 Ha! Ha! Daemon change. Very good.

The Tartar turns to the man driving the sledge and speaks to him in a language Lyra doesn't understand. The SLEDGE RIVER seems pleased.

TARTAR (cont'd)
What you name?

PANTALAIMON
He doesn't know who we are --

LYRA
Lizzie. Lizzie Brooks. Who are you?

TARTAR
Samoyed peoples. Hunters. Lissie Broogs. Good. We take you to nice place. Nice peoples. You have panserbjorne?

LYRA
My friend.

TARTAR
Bear no good, ha ha! We get you anyway!

LYRA
(angry)
When Iorek finds you, you won't be laughing. He's going to smash you to bits. Where you taking me?

TARTAR
Station. Nice place. Nice peoples.

PANTALAIMON
Lyra...the station...

LYRA
I know.

And we see what Lyra can't...over her shoulder, the approaching forms of the station at BOLVANGAR.

EXT. BOLVANGAR - DAY

The sledge drives through a row of poles carrying anbaric lights, which cast a sickly glow.

They pass through an open metal gate at the end of the avenue of lamps and into a wide open space, like an empty marketplace or an arena for some game or sport. It is perfectly flat and smooth and white, a hundred yards across. Around the edge runs a high metal fence.

The sledge halts at the far end, in front of a huddle of low white buildings, connected by tunnels humped under the snow. At one end of the buildings is a stout metal mast that projects twenty metres into the sky.

The Tartar cuts Lyra loose of her bonds and hauls her to her feet as a powerful anbaric lamp is shined at them from the door of the building. Behind that light, a figure in a coal-silk anorak is silhouetted.

The Tartar and the silhouette exchange words in Tartar. Then the man steps forward, and Lyra is surprised to see, instead of another Tartar, an Englishman, a BOLVANGAR OFFICIAL.

BOLVANGAR OFFICIAL

Do you speak English?

LYRA

Yes.

BOLVANGAR OFFICIAL

And does your daemon always take that form?

Lyra seems confused, but Pan has an answer, which is to turn into a HAWK and lunge at the man's marmot daemon, claws bared.

The Tartar SLAPS Lyra, sending her to the ground, and Pan reacts, flapping back to her side. The Bolvangar official shouts at the Tartar.

BOLVANGAR OFFICIAL (cont'd)

Don't hit her, you bloody savage!

(to Lyra)

There there, you'll be all right now.

The official reaches into a coin purse and hands several heavy coins to the Tartar, who turns and leaves.

BOLVANGAR OFFICIAL (cont'd)

You'd better come in. It's warm and comfortable inside. What's your name?

The man steps inside, and motions Lyra in with a strangely polite gesture.

PANTALAIMON

(whispering to Lyra)

Act stupid. Act like you'll do what they say!

INT. BOLVANGAR - STATION ENTRANCE HALL

Lyra steps into a small, square room, white and steel, shining and clean. At the end of the room is a reception desk.

LYRA
Lizzie. Lizzie Brooks.

BOLVANGAR OFFICIAL
(absently)
That's a lovely name.

Two more adults have entered the room -- a DOCTOR and a nurse, SISTER CLARA.

BOLVANGAR OFFICIAL (cont'd)
(to the doctor)
English. Traders, apparently.

BOLVANGAR DOCTOR
Usual hunters? Usual story?

BOLVANGAR OFFICIAL
Same tribe, as far as I could tell.
Sister Clara, could you take
little, ummm, and see to her?

Lyra is looking around, listening and watching, but seeming as inert and banal as possible.

SISTER CLARA
Certainly, doctor. Come with me,
dear.

INT. BOLVANGAR - CORRIDOR - DAY

Lyra follows Sister Clara down a corridor every bit as antiseptic as the room they've left. The nurse is accompanied by a skipping little **terrier** daemon.

She can see flashes of activity through windows in doors they pass, and through one door, what sounds like the chatter of children's voices overlapping one another, but she can't stay to investigate the sound without alerting Sister Clara.

LYRA
What is this place?

SISTER CLARA
It's called the Experimental
Station. You'll like it.

INT. BOLVANGAR - EXAMINATION ROOM - DAY

Sister Clara leads Lyra into a room with an examining table and a wall lined with counters and shelves of medical equipment, scales, and the like.

SISTER CLARA
Now then -- off with these mucky
things --

Without asking, Sister Clara gets a hold of Lyra's jacket and starts pulling it off. Lyra and Pan share a look and decide to play it obedient.

But the Sister Clara reaches for Lyra's shoulder-bag, containing the alethiometer and the tin with the spy-fly sealed inside.

Lyra pulls back instinctively, and Sister Clara fixes her with an efficient smile.

SISTER CLARA (cont'd)
Now, dear, no-one's going to steal
anything from you. We just want to
make sure everything is clean and
safe, don't we?

Lyra allows Sister Clara to lift the bag over her head, though she tenses when the nurse reaches in and takes out the alethiometer.

SISTER CLARA (cont'd)
What's this?

LYRA
Just sort of a toy. It's mine.

SISTER CLARA
It's pretty, isn't it? Sort of
like a compass. Although little
girls should play with dolls, not
compasses, shouldn't they?
(beat)
Well, off with the rest, and we'll
pop you in the shower.

Pantalaimon, in cat form, raises his hair in protest. Lyra looks at Sister Clara, blushing.

SISTER CLARA (cont'd)
 Now don't be silly. If you don't
 do as you're told, I shall have to
 tell your parents you've been
 naughty, and they won't like that,
 will they?

(beat)

If you want your toy back, I
 suggest you get out of those
 things.

Red with anger, Lyra swallows her pride and begins to
 undress.

INT. BOLVANGAR - ANBARIC LAB - LATER

Lyra is led into another room, this one a laboratory of some
 kind, dim and glowing and humming here and there from complex
 machinery. There, the doctor we saw earlier is waiting
 behind a desk. He seems less slapdash than the official we
 met at the gate, and more acutely intelligent than the
 strangely absent nurse.

BOLVANGAR DOCTOR

Ah, good. Lizzie, isn't it? Do
 you like your new clothes?

Lyra is, in fact, wearing some sort of characterless skirt
 and pullover. But she does still have her bag with her.

LYRA

They en't mine.

BOLVANGAR DOCTOR

No -- they're a present. Now what
 do good little girls say when they
 get a present?

LYRA

Thank you.

BOLVANGAR DOCTOR

You're welcome. Why don't you
 stand on this scale right here?

Lyra does as she's told, and the doctor efficiently begins to
 mark down some results while asking her questions.

BOLVANGAR OFFICIAL

How old are you, Lizzie?

LYRA

Eleven.

BOLVANGAR OFFICIAL

Good. And what were you doing so far north? That must be a fascinating story.

LYRA

My Dad and uncles, they took me north. We was trading smokeleaf to the Norroway trappers.

BOLVANGAR OFFICIAL

I see. You can get off now. Step out of your shoes, and stand on this metal plate, will you? Hold your daemon and look into this green light.

Lyra looks at the metal plate and the light. Could this be a machine that severs children from their daemons?

BOLVANGAR OFFICIAL (cont'd)

Won't hurt a bit.

Lyra seems to remember that phrase from somewhere. Takes a breath and steps on the plate. Looks into the green light that flashes into her eyes, terrified --

-- But nothing happens, it's just a measure of anbaric current.

BOLVANGAR OFFICIAL (cont'd)

Well, you're very lucky that those Samoyeds found you when you got lost.

Lyra can see that the doctor is watching her reaction carefully.

LYRA

But...I wasn't lost. There was fighting...

The doctor takes her wrist in his hand professionally, measuring her pulse, while he tries to speak casually.

BOLVANGAR DOCTOR

Oh, I don't think so. I think you must have wandered away from your father's party and got lost.

BOLVANGAR DOCTOR(cont'd)

Those huntsmen found you on your own and brought you straight here. That's what happened, Lizzie.

The doctor is watching Lyra keenly.

LYRA

I saw a fight...there was arrows and...I want my daddy...

BOLVANGAR DOCTOR

Well, you're quite safe here until he comes. This often happens in the intense cold, Lizzie. You fall asleep and have bad dreams and you can't remember what's true and what isn't. Your father is safe and sound and won't he be happy when he finds out that you're safe and sound too!

The doctor has been continuing his examination of Lyra all the while, and is now feeling the glands in her neck -- though in a way it looks as if he in fact has her hand around her throat.

LYRA

...Is daddy coming?

BOLVANGAR DOCTOR

Of course he is.

The doctor looks her in the eye and smiles. Lyra nods obediently.

LYRA

What do you do here?

The doctor pauses. Then, pleasantly --

BOLVANGAR DOCTOR

We help children grow up the right way, Lizzie.

At this, a BELL starts ringing away somewhere, echoing throughout the building.

BOLVANGAR DOCTOR (cont'd)

(to himself)

Already?

The doctor checks his watch. He is annoyed.

BOLVANGAR DOCTOR (cont'd)
 Well, I'm afraid we'll have to
 finish our chat later. I've got to
 welcome a special guest. You'd
 better run along to dinner. The
 canteen is down at the end of the
 hall. Hurry along, now.

Lyra heads out, but turns before leaving --

LYRA
 Who's arriving?
 (beat)
 Do you think it could be my Dad?

BOLVANGAR DOCTOR
 Not yet, dear. Someone else.
 You'll meet her soon enough.

Lyra takes in this nugget of information, turns and walks
 down the corridor.

EXT. BOLVANGAR - DUSK

Night is beginning to fall as a silvery zeppelin, bearing the
 mark of the Magisterium, floats gracefully towards the
 mooring mast of the station.

INT. ZEPPELIN - SAME

Inside, MRS. COULTER stands by the aeronaut at the zeppelin's
 helm. Dressed in beautifully cut foul weather gear, she
 takes in the prospect with an air of calm and purpose.

CUT TO:

INT. BOLVANGAR - CANTEEN - DUSK

The canteen is a big room with shrill "happy" colors on three
 walls and a long blown up photogram of a tropical island
 along the fourth.

Dinner is already in full swing. There are sixty or so
 children here, all about Lyra's age or younger, boys and
 girls, all eating and chattering at once.

As she walks in, some of the children at the nearest table --
 all girls, cliques having been formed here like anywhere else
 -- stop talking and look up at her curiously. But the rest
 of the room doesn't take any notice of the new arrival.

We can see that nurses are scattered here and there to keep an eye on things but they seem absorbed in their meals for the moment.

Lyra tries to remain inconspicuous, but all the while she is looking, looking...

...and then she sees him. Roger. The reason she has come all this way. He sits at a table on the other end of the room, a little aloof. But he feels someone's eyes on him -- looks up -- and sees her.

Immediately a huge GRIN bursts over his face. He stands up and pushes his chair back, ready to shout and rush over to her --

-- But Lyra shakes her head as discreetly as she can, and Roger gets the message. Sits back down again, barely able to suppress his happiness.

Lyra, herself overjoyed, hides her feelings and makes her way towards him like a shy girl looking for an open spot to sit. Whenever one of the nurses catches her eye and seems to be about to engage her attention, she lowers her head in a way that makes it seem more effort than it's worth.

She sits down at the table with Lyra.

ROGER

I knew. I knew you'd come.

LYRA

I promised, didn't I?

Roger and Lyra grip each other's hands tightly.

ROGER

How'd you get here? Did the Gobblers catch you?

LYRA

No. I come to rescue everybody.
(beat)
Roger, I saw what they done to Billy Costa.

ROGER

They said he went back home.

Lyra looks at him and shakes her head sadly.

ROGER (cont'd)

...I didn't think so. They said they was gonna help us, do this operation, right? And then they'd send us home, and we wouldn't have to worry about Dust.

LYRA

Did they say what Dust was?

ROGER

No, only it was bad, like a disease or something -- and they was giving us an operation to keep it away. But I never believed 'em. This boy Simon, he reckons they kill us, and Mrs. Coulter watches.

Pan hisses with surprise.

LYRA

Mrs. Coulter --

ROGER

This lady from the Magisterium, right? Whenever she shows up, you know there's going to be kids disappearing.

Lyra masters her fear.

LYRA

Is she here now, Roger?

ROGER

No. But they say she's coming.
(beat)
What is it, Lyra?

LYRA

Roger, I need you to do something, right? You've got to tell the rest of the kids that the Gyptians are coming to rescue us.

ROGER

How -- how could they ever --

LYRA

(fiercely insistent)
They're coming, Roger. I know they are.

ROGER

When?

LYRA

I don't know.

(to Pan)

We've got to get the alethiometer back, Pan.

ROGER

The what?

LYRA

I've got to get to that white room that the nurse took me to. Could you make a diversion, Roger?

ROGER

We could set off the fire alarm...they test it sometimes, and there's always people running around...but you might not need to do that.

(beat)

See the ceiling there, by the photogram?

Lyra looks where Roger is looking and sees a drop ceiling.

ROGER (cont'd)

I noticed one of them tiles was out of place, right? And I pushed it in, and there was like a space up there. I thought it would be a good hiding place. But the space keeps on going. I would've explored, only...

LYRA

(understanding)

You were scared?

ROGER

This en't like Oxford, Lyra.

LYRA

That's all right. I'm scared too. But I'm gonna master it.

Roger and Lyra look around, and notice that the children have started filing out, the opening to the kitchen that the food is served out of having been closed. There's a brief window of time in which they won't be noticed.

Lyra pulls a chair over to the photogram, jumps and pushes out the ceiling tile, looks up into the darkness, and JUMPS to catch hold of the edge of the grid that supports the tile.

Roger is watching uneasily. Lyra is hanging until Pantalaimon takes an ape-form and helps to pull her up. She looks down at Roger.

LYRA (cont'd)
Tell the kids to have their warmest
clothes ready.

Roger is about to say something, but the tile slides back. He turns to the sound of footsteps, jumps down from the chair, and runs towards the door, where a stern NURSE appears, rounding up stragglers.

ROGER
Sorry, miss!

INT. CEILING GAP - DAY

Lyra is in complete darkness. Then Pan takes the form of a **firefly** and provides a little orange/yellow glow.

The gap between the top of the building and the room ceilings extends as far as she can see. At certain points what seem to be ventilation grills cast a dim light upwards.

This pocket of air is colder than the rest of the building, and Lyra can see her breath as she contemplates her move.

Slowly at first, she begins to crawl along the metal grid that supports the ceiling, Pan lighting her way forward. Through a grill she sees that she has travelled the length of the canteen...

...then she can see DOWN into the KITCHEN, where some orderlies are noisily clanging pots into large industrial sinks and hosing them down with steaming-hot water.

Next she passes over a smaller, more formal dining room, this one for the chief staff, that a SERVANT is setting with silverware. Lyra passes by that, moving quickly now along one of the main beams of the ceiling grid, and at last spots the EXAMINATION ROOM from above.

LYRA
(whispering)
That's it, Pan!

INT. BOLVANGAR - EXAMINATION ROOM - DAY

We see the grille in the ceiling through which Lyra has been looking shift to the side, and then Lyra lowers a **loris**-form Pan upside-down by his tail, his orb-like eyes peering about.

PANTALAIMON

It's safe.

Lyra swings Pan over to the examining table. The she drops down herself, as quietly as possible but still making a noise that causes her to freeze and listen for any answering sound. There is none.

Pan and Lyra look at one another and then spring into action, opening and shutting little cupboard doors looking for her bag with the alethiometer in it.

PANTALAIMON (cont'd)

Found it!

Pan holds up the bag and throws it to Lyra. She checks that everything's inside -- all there.

With a CLICK the door of the examination room opens. Pan turns into a **cat** and JUMPS into Lyra's arms. They don't have time to do more than hide behind the door a it swings open.

They can see Sister Clara through the gap between the wall and the door. She goes to one of the cabinets and removes a pair of caoutchouc (rubber) gloves, leans over a sink and starts scrubbing her hands.

Meanwhile, Lyra and Pan can her the clicking of her little **terrier** daemon's claws as it prances about.

And suddenly, horrifically, the **terrier** daemon's face pops into the gap between the wall and the door. He is LOOKING RIGHT AT LYRA AND PAN...

-- but, amazingly, the **terrier** daemon only looks at them, his tongue wagging happily.

Pan obligingly turns into a terrier himself, and the two rub noses.

SISTER CLARA (O.S.)

Come on, Bobby.

And just like that, the terrier withdraws, and they hear the sound of the **terrier** skipping away after Sister Clara.

The door swings closed, revealing Lyra and Pan, back in the shape of a cat.

LYRA

Why didn't he turn us in?

PANTALAIMON

Something was wrong with him -- he didn't speak. Maybe he doesn't speak to her either. And she didn't notice the ceiling -- it's like she's half asleep!

LYRA

Let's not stick around to find out why.

Suddenly, Lyra freezes. Passing by the door, she hears footsteps, and a familiar voice --

BOLVANGAR DOCTOR (O.S.)

Your flight was smooth, I hope?

MRS. COULTER

Oh, yes. Smoother than usual. The Grand Magister's zeppelin is luxury itself.

BOLVANGAR DOCTOR (O.S.)

The Grand Magister's own airship -- my dear. I must have a look at it.

MRS. COULTER (O.S.)

First things first, wouldn't you agree?

Lyra is thrilled with loathing and curiosity.

LYRA

We've got to find out what they're doing, Pan.

PANTALAIMON

Oh, no. No more eavesdropping. If you hadn't been so nosy, we would be back in Oxford, and comfortable.

LYRA

Just a little eavesdropping...

CUT TO:

INT. CEILING GAP - DAY

Lyra and Pan are positioned at the grill that looks down into the smaller formal dining room. We can see MRS. COULTER, the BOLVANGAR OFFICIAL, the HEAD NURSE, and several of the BOLVANGAR DOCTORS.

BOLVANGAR OFFICIAL

Well, we've tried our best to keep the claret at the proper temperature, but as you can see, the hardships of the North are many --

MRS. COULTER

(interrupting)

I'm very interested in discovering just how several children wandered free from the station.

Her tone is not harsh, in fact it is gentle, but it brooks no opposition and no small talk.

BOLVANGAR OFFICIAL

Well...I shouldn't wish to narrow the focus on any particular member of the staff. The station's anbaric current is very difficult to maintain at times, and as a result the fence has experienced outages.

MRS. COULTER

But who is in charge of the fence?

BOLVANGAR OFFICIAL

Technically the Tartar garrison is in charge of security.

BOLVANGAR DOCTOR

Mrs. Coulter, I hope you understand that the question is moot. Any child -- severed or complete -- who escaped from the facility would not last very long in the cold.

BOLVANGAR OFFICIAL

That's a...somewhat bloodless way of putting it, but factually correct. We have already recovered two of the three missing children.

MRS. COULTER

Alive?

(no response)

That is unfortunate. We might have learned from them. And the third?

(again no response)

Please understand, Dr. Cooper, I am not criticizing out of malice. We must be extraordinarily careful. We cannot expect everyone to understand the dirty job that we have to do.

(beat)

Well, there we are. A great pity. But enough of that for now. Tell me about the new separator.

Up in the ceiling gap, Lyra and Pan shiver.

BOLVANGAR OFFICIAL

Ah. There's a real advance. With the first model we could never entirely overcome the risk of the patient dying of shock, but we've improved that no end. Simply tearing was the only option for some time, however distressing that was for the adult operators. If you remember, we had to discharge quite a number for reasons of stress-related anxiety. But the first big breakthrough was the use of anaesthesia combined with the Maystadt anbaric scalpel. We were able to reduce death from operative shock to below five percent.

MRS. COULTER

And the new instrument?

In the ceiling gap, Lyra is squeezing one of the supporting wires in fear and anger.

PANTALAIMON

Hush, Lyra -- they won't do it, we won't let them --

BOLVANGAR OFFICIAL

Well, ironically enough, it utilizes a discovery made by none other than Lord Asriel.

Lyra's eyes open wide.

BOLVANGAR OFFICIAL (cont'd)

He discovered that an alloy of manganese and titanium has the property of insulating daemon from human. Do we still face opposition from Lord Asriel, by the way?

MRS. COULTER

No, we needn't be concerned with him any longer. The Magisterium arranged for his detention by the king of the bears. He was to discontinue his research, but he somehow managed to obtain books and materials, and he's pushed his investigations to the point of heresy. He is under sentence of death in Svalbard.

Lyra and Pan share a look of horror.

LYRA

(quietly; to herself)
Father!

BOLVANGAR OFFICIAL

Well -- cause for celebration, I would say. I expect your diplomatic mission to the bears played no small part?

(off Mrs. Coulter's
noncommittal look)

Yes -- let's leave it at that. But let me say that all of your efforts on our behalf are greatly appreciated. Now, the Maystadt process -- we've developed a kind of -- guillotine, I suppose you could call it. A manganese/titanium alloy blade is brought down between child and daemon, severing the link at once. They are separate entities -- permanently.

MRS. COULTER

I should like to see it, as soon as possible. But I'm tired now. I think I'll go to bed.

(beat)

I shall want to see all the children tomorrow.

BOLVANGAR OFFICIAL

Of course, Mrs. Coulter. The orderlies will show you to your chambers.

Mrs. Coulter rises, and the others rise with her deferentially. She leaves the room. When she does, the atmosphere relaxes somewhat.

BOLVANGAR DOCTOR

That woman frightens me, I don't mind saying it.

BOLVANGAR OFFICIAL

Yes, well, without that woman our finds would dry up.

(beat)

Good lord. Asriel under sentence of death.

BOLVANGAR DOCTOR

Wouldn't want to be on the wrong side of her, I can say that much. She's positively ghoulish. Do you remember the first experiments, when she was so keen to see them pulled apart --

In the CEILING GAP, Lyra involuntarily shudders, making a SCRAPING NOISE --

-- That is NOTICED by the doctors, who look up and SEE HER.

BOLVANGAR OFFICIAL

What was that?

HEAD NURSE

In the ceiling --

BOLVANGAR DOCTOR

Quick!

Lyra recoils as the doctors throw aside their chairs and jump up onto the table.

IN THE CEILING GAP

-- Lyra scrambles away as quickly as she can, as one doctor thrusts up a ceiling tile and appears too far away to grab her; but another doctor's **lizard** daemon has appeared in front of her, and HISSES at Pan.

Pan SCRATCHES the lizard with his claws, and down below the Doctor winces; but in the meanwhile a strong ORDERLY has smashed through another of the ceiling tiles and got hold of her wrist.

Lyra struggles against the orderlies and the other doctors who join in pulling her down from the ceiling -- biting, scratching, kicking, punching, spitting in fury. But then -- she hears a sorrowful CRY and twists as if electrified --

The chief official of Bolvangar is HOLDING PANTALAIMON.

Pantalaimon is shaking, crying, currents of anbaric alarm coming off his body.

LYRA

You can't -- not allowed -- not supposed to touch --

-- And then Lyra falls still.

BOLVANGAR OFFICIAL

Was she alone?

ORDERLY

Nobody else there.

HEAD NURSE

Who is she?

BOLVANGAR OFFICIAL

The new child.

BOLVANGAR DOCTOR

She came from the same hunters as the other ones --

BOLVANGAR OFFICIAL

I'm not trying to apportion blame. But something must be done.

BOLVANGAR DOCTOR

She can't return to the other children. And Mrs. Coulter --

BOLVANGAR OFFICIAL

No. She mustn't know. Certainly not. There's only one thing we *can* do, it seems to me.

BOLVANGAR DOCTOR

Now?

BOLVANGAR OFFICIAL
 Have to. Can't leave it till the
 morning. She wants to watch.

HEAD NURSE
 We could do it ourselves. No need
 to involve anyone else.

The Bolvangar Official thinks.

INT. BOLVANGAR - CORRIDOR - NIGHT

The orderly carries the slack Lyra down a corridor, past the distant murmur of children and the wind outside the station, to a large metal hatch secured with a wheel. Behind him is the Head Nurse, who clutches Pan, and the other doctors.

BOLVANGAR OFFICIAL
 Quickly now.

A doctor rotates the wheel and the door HISSES OPEN, the doctors clattering through in their haste.

INT. BOLVANGAR - OPERATING THEATER - NIGHT

Lyra comes to, looking at a GOLDEN CAGE with a guillotine-like anbaric device poised above it. She SCREAMS --

INT. BOLVANGAR - CORRIDOR - DAY

-- And the screams are cut off to dead silence as the soundproof door is closed and fastened.

INT. BOLVANGAR - OPERATING THEATER - DAY

The orderly clamps his hand over Lyra's mouth.

ORDERLY
 Bloody hell, what a racket.

Lyra reaches for Pan, who is reaching for her, as the orderly and the Head Nurse carefully set them down in the gold mesh cage, on either side of an even finer gold mesh.

HEAD NURSE
 Don't fret, dear -- it's only a
 little cut.

ORDERLY

You want to grow up, don't you?
Well this is how you grow up. All
the adults get it.

Lyra's hands are finally secured against the operating table -
- not by metal hoops, but cushioned medical straps. The
orderly releases her, and she looks at Pan, who is trapped in
the other cage, CHANGING rapidly from wolf to bear to
polecat, snarling, slashing in vain --

LYRA

You'll never keep us apart!
(to Pan, despairingly)
Never, never, never --

But the anbaric guillotine above them hums with force as the
machine goes into action --

MRS. COULTER (O.S.)

What is going on here?

The machine goes silent as the doctors and staff turn to see
Mes. Coulter standing by the open door.

MRS. COULTER (cont'd)

And who is this ch --

She is about to say "child", but as she notices it is Lyra,
the word dies in her mouth. She is astonished to see her.
She RIPS at the door of the cage, finally opening it, as the
golden monkey does the same on the side holding Pantalaimon.
Mrs. Coulter pulls Lyra out, the **golden monkey** pulls Pan out
of the cage.

MRS. COULTER (cont'd)

Lyra...

LYRA

Never, never --

And Mrs. Coulter half walks, half carries Lyra out of the
operating theater. Lyra clutches Pan, and Pan clutches Lyra,
like survivors of a shipwreck, oblivious to all else around
them

CUT TO:

INT. BOLVANGAR - MRS. COULTER'S CHAMBERS - NIGHT

Lyra is asleep, at peace for the moment. Then she SNAPS awake with a gasp. Pan is there in **cat** form, nestled against her.

MRS. COULTER

There, there, you're safe, my dear.

LYRA

They was going to cut -- to cut --

MRS. COULTER

They won't ever do it to you. No one's going to harm you, Lyra, darling. There's no need to go back with the other children, not now I've got my little assistant back. My favorite! The best assistant in the world. D'you know, we searched all over London for you, darling? We had the police searching every town in the land. Whatever happened to you, Lyra?

LYRA

Why were they doing that? I never doen anything wrong! All the kids are afraid of what happens in there, and no one knows. But it's horrible. It's worse than anything...Why?

MRS. COULTER

Ah, my love --

LYRA

It's Dust, isn't it?

MRS. COULTER

Did they tell you that? Did the doctors say that?

LYRA

It's not right to keep it a secret!

MRS. COULTER

Lyra...Lyra, Lyra. Darling, these are big difficult questions, Dust and so on. It's not something for children to worry about.

MRS. COULTER(cont'd)

But the doctors do it for the children's own good, my love. Dust is something bad, something wrong, something evil and wicked. Grownups and daemons are infected with Dust so deeply it's too late for them. They can't be helped...But a quick operation means they're safe from it. Dust just won't stick to them ever again.

LYRA

You don't have to do that to us! You could just leave us! I bet Lord Asriel wouldn't let anyone do that if he knew what was going on! If he's got Dust, and John Faa's got Dust, and Farder Coram's got Dust, it must be all right!

MRS. COULTER

Who is "John Faa", dear?

LYRA

(covering)

-- Anyway, if it was good, why'd you stop them doing it to me? If it was good, you should've let them do it. You should've been glad.

MRS. COULTER

Darling, some of what's good has to hurt us a little, and naturally it's upsetting for others if you're upset. Besides, the doctors are still working on the process, making it better. No one would dream of doing an operation on children unless they had tested it first.

LYRA

-- But they're doing it to children now --

MRS. COULTER

Oh, I know, but...how can I explain it...lost children, and orphans from dreadful bits of the capital, and Gyptian children...well, they've less imagination, you see, and it will hurt them less...and they shan't be missed the way you were...

Mrs. Coulter smiles with the compliment. Pan is changing into a vicious looking **polecats**.

MRS. COULTER (cont'd)

No one in a thousand years would dream of taking a child's daemon away altogether! All that happens is a little cut, and then everything's peaceful. Forever! You see, your daemon's a wonderful friend and companion when you're little, but at the age we call puberty, the age you're coming to very soon, darling, daemons bring all sorts of troublesome thoughts and feelings, and that's what lets Dust in. A quick little operation and you're never troubled again. And your daemon stays with you, only...just not connected. Like a...like a wonderful pet, if you like. The best pet in the world! Wouldn't you like that? Why, even some adults have had it done. The nurses seem happy, don't they?

A flash of recognition passes between Lyra and Pan. Pan growls. Meanwhile, the golden monkey has been scampering about, sniffing the air.

MRS. COULTER (cont'd)

Now, you must get a little rest. Oh -- I almost forgot -- I think the Master of Jordan gave you something, didn't he? He gave you an alethiometer. The trouble is, it wasn't his to give.

Kyra clutches her bag to her chest.

MRS. COULTER (cont'd)
 Ah. I see you have it. Well, I know the Master told you to take care of it, and not to tell me about it, but you haven't, have you? So you kept your promise. But it really ought to be properly looked after.

Mrs. Coulter reaches for he belt around Lyra's waist, and despite Lyra shifting away, she begins to pull the bag away. Meanwhile, the golden daemon is approaching the snarling Pan.

MRS. COULTER (cont'd)
 I can save you the trouble of carrying it around, and really it must have been such a puzzle, wondering what a silly old thing like that was any good for...

She has the bag undone. Reaches in and pulls out a tin.

MRS. COULTER (cont'd)
 What's this? What a funny old tin! Did you put it here to keep it safe, dear? All this moss...how clever -- another tin inside the first one, and soldered shut!

Mrs. Coulter become impatient and pulls a delicate little knife from her things. She pries at the tin, the golden monkey now moving close and peering in -- and a BUZZING sound fills the room.

MRS. COULTER (cont'd)
 Whatever is that --

Mrs. Coulter and the golden daemon peer closer into the tin...

And the SPY-FLY rockets out and CRASHES hard into the golden monkey's face. The monkey SCREAMS and throws himself backwards --

-- hurting MRS. COULTER in turn, who cries out in pain and fright. The spy-fly in turn attacks her, clawing at her neck.

LYRA
 Run, Pan!

Pan scampers out the door, and Lyra after him.

INT. BOLVANGAR - CORRIDOR - NIGHT

Lyra finds herself running down an unfamiliar corridor. At the end is a door and, by it, a button for a FIRE ALARM kept behind a box of glass.

PANTALAIMON
Fire alarm!

Lyra stops and SMASHES the glass with her fist. A loud ALARM begins to wail.

She runs through the door --

INT. BOLVANGAR - CORRIDOR - NIGHT

-- Into another, more familiar corridor. As she runs, children emerge into the corridor from their dormitories. Some have nightshirts on, but most are putting on warm coats, having been warned by --

ROGER
Lyra! Is this it?

LYRA
It is!

ROGER
Are the Gyptians here?

But Lyra can't bring herself to answer that question.

LYRA
Come on!

She runs out to the other end of the corridor, followed by Roger and a crowd of the other children.

INT. ANBARIC LAB - NIGHT

Lyra and the children run into the Anbaric lab, now unoccupied and quiet. In spite of their urgency, Lyra, Roger and the children are brought to a halt by the sight of the GUILLOTINE apparatus.

Lyra lifts a stenography machine from a desk, and HEAVES it at a series of vacuum tubes that seem to power the apparatus. With a hiss and a CRACK, they EXPLODE, scattering glass and sending out forks of anbaric power along the edges of the machine and into the ozone-infused air.

Lyra watches as the machine catches fire.

ROGER
Come on, Lyra!

He drags her away and out a door in the opposite corner.

EXT. BOLVANGAR - NIGHT

The children, led by Roger and Lyra, emerge into the black, chill night, the snow illuminated by the sickly light of the anbaric lamps and the crescent moon above.

Lyra runs, but the other children seem cowed by the night, the snow, and the hideous cold.

LYRA
Run! Run, there's no going back!

As if to punctuate this, the power elements above the anbaric lab burst into FLAMES. SHOUTS can be heard as the doctors inside discover the damage.

The anger of the adults seems to be enough to set the children in motion, and they begin to follow Lyra as she RUNS away from the station, along the row of posts that marked the way she came in with the Samoyed hunters.

LYRA (cont'd)
Keep moving! Keep moving! The
Gyptians are coming!

But the children have stopped, looking at something over her shoulder. She hears an unearthly HOWL and turns to see --

Appearing, one after the other, a line of TARTAR GUARDS, with **WOLF DAEMONS** slavering at their sides. Even the courageous Lyra quails at the sight -- the Tartars, who are affixing bayonets to their rifles, and the snarling wolves at their sides, gradually encircling the children.

The children are packing into a terrified circle, their daemons scampering around madly in fear.

Lyra sees the panic in the children's eyes, and steps towards the Tartars. With the last of her courage, she spits at them in defiance.

LYRA (cont'd)
Go on then! Go on!

As a faint WHISPERING and CLANKING can be heard, one of the wolf daemons springs at her --

-- Only to be BATTED OUT OF THE AIR, its stomach spewing anbaric fire as it dissolves.

IOREK BYRNISON HAS ARRIVED. He turns and GROWLS at the Tartars as one of them number topples forward, dead, his daemon dissolved into the air.

LYRA (cont'd)
Iorek! Iorek!

Iorek casts her a brief look before charging into the Tartars, scattering them like ninepins.

BULLETS PING AND WHINE around Iorek as he twisted and slashes, killing Tartars right and left, snapping bayonets and breaking bones.

The Tartars maintain discipline, the TARTAR OFFICER yelling orders. Half of the detachment tries to deal with Iorek, as the others rush round him towards the children.

The children recoil as the Tartars lower to firing position and the Tartar officer raises his hand to signal the order to fire --

-- But the sound never comes out of mouth. An ARROW embeds itself in his neck, and he falls back, clutching it.

More arrows RAIN FROM THE SKY! Lyra looks up --

To see women swooping and hovering, dressed in ragged black, pulling back bows with their bare arms, knocking and loosing arrows at the Tartars. As the Tartars fire back, they swoop and flutter out of the way, up into the higher air --

LYRA (cont'd)
The witches! The witches have
come!

Some of the children CHEER, others are simply too astonished to do anything.

Iorek comes to Lyra's side.

IOREK BYRNISON
Get on my back and we shall go.

LYRA
No, Iorek, dear, I've got to get
the others safely to the Gyptians.

Iorek nods.

IOREK BYRNISON
You have lost your furs.

It's true -- Lyra hasn't noticed until now that she fled Bolvangar without her reindeer-skin coat. Stopped now, she is shivering. Roger starts to undo his coat.

ROGER
Take mine.

LYRA
No. I en't come this far for you
to freeze to death.

ROGER
But --

LYRA
We just nee to keep moving, that's
all.

Iorek sees another detachment of Tartars heading their way from Bolvangar.

IOREK BYRNISON
Follow my tracks. They will take
you to the Gyptians.

Without another word, he charges towards the Tartars, leaping past the amazed children.

LYRA
Come one! This way!

The children follow Lyra along the line of massive paw prints in the snow. Lyra casts a look back at Iorek, who fades into the haze. We see the silhouette of his great form wheeling and striking, and we hear SCREAMS, SHOTS and THUMPS can be heard.

LYRA (cont'd)
I hope he'll be all right...

Roger looks at her as if she's crazy. Ahead, we can hear the BARKING OF DOGS and the HISS OF SLEDS across the snow. As Lyra laughs with joy, the GYPTIANS appear out of the snow. Ahe runs ahead of the children to jump into the arms of JOHN FAA.

JOHN FAA
Lyra, child! We was afeard --

LYRA

I was afeard too --

There's no need to finish the thoughts. The Gyptians are rushing up to the children, sweeping them up in their arms, Gyptian kids and landlopers alike, and rushing them to sleds. John Faa puts Lyra down and looks at her approvingly.

FAR

Lyra.

Farder Coram hobbles up, beaming.

JOHN FAA

That's it! Get them on the sledges, no time for celebrating!

John Faa heads off to supervise the Gyptians. We can hear a mechanical BUZZING away somewhere.

LYRA

Farder Coram -- my father, they've got him in Svalbard, and they're going to execute him!

Farder Coram doesn't know how to put it --

FARDER CORAM

Lyra -- if the bears have got him --
(beat)
First things first, child, let's get you warm --

But Farder Coram is knocked aside by a TARTAR on a MOTORIZED SLED that has sped after the children. Lyra feels herself swept from the ground in the arms of a Tartar, and thrown to the rear of the sled where MRS. COULTER sits.

LYRA

No!

She begins to struggle with Mrs. Coulter, Pan wrestling and slashing at the **golden monkey**.

The Gyptians see Lyra being carried away, and run after, but their way is blocked by a squad of Tartars. The Gyptians and Tartars fight --

And Lyra is losing to Mrs. Coulter as the sled motors away -- but then a figure jumps onto the back of the sled, tearing at Mrs. Coulter --

-- It is Roger, who has run from the safety of the Gyptians to help her. But Roger is DAZED blow from a Tartar's rifle-butt.

Mrs. Coulter pins Lyra's arms to her side. Ahead of her, though, we see the solid mass of IOREK standing in the path of the sled.

MRS. COULTER
Run him down.

LYRA
Iorek!

Iorek simply awaits the sled, and as it speeds towards him, SMASHES its nose to scrap, yanking it onto its side, spilling all of them loose onto the snow.

Dizzy, Mrs. Coulter and the Tartars can do nothing as Iorek picks up Roger in his bloodied maw and raises Lyra to her feet.

She collapses onto his back, watching as Iorek HURLS Roger into midair, her eyes widening --

-- But Roger is caught by LEE SCORESBY, who has lowered to the ground in his AIRSHIP, a teardrop-shaped balloon with a canvas and wooden hull hanging beneath, guided by an intricate system of windsails.

LEE SCORESBY
Careful with the merchandise, you
old brute!

Iorek does not respond but steps over the edge of the airship's hanging wooden and brass hull. Lee Scoresby LAUGHS and WHOOPS as the airship ascends above the icy plain. In the distance, Bolvangar is AFLAME and SMOKING. He can also see where the Gyptians have finally routed the Tartars --

LEE SCORESBY (cont'd)
Seems to me the Gyptians have got
matters in hand.
(he looks at Iorek)
Son, you are a godawful mess, and
that's the truth.

Iorek's armor has new dents and scratches, and in one spot is smoking, a bullet still lodged there. His jaws and paws are bloodied. He lightly slip the armor off.

Lyra hugs him, SHIVERING with the cold.

LYRA
I knew you would come...I knew...

LEE SCORESBY
We better get you warm, young lady.

SERAFINA PEKKALA
Here.

A witch has landed on the deck, unruffled by the cold in a wispy, ragged dress of black. Scoresby is impressed. He tips his hat.

LEE SCORESBY
Ma'am.

Serafina pulls a ribbon-like strand of black cloth from her clothing, ties it about Lyra's waist, and whispers a spell as she does so.

SERAFINA PEKKALA
This will keep you warm until the next moon.

LYRA
Serafina Pekkala?

The witch smiles in answer.

IOREK BYRNISON
What do you require of me now, Lyra?

Lyra thinks.

LYRA
(matter of factly)
Why, we have to go to Svalbard, of course, and rescue my father, and take him the alethiometer!

With that, she curls up against him and falls asleep.

CUT TO:

EXT. THE UPPER AIR - MIDNIGHT

Lee Scoresby's airship slips between the clouds as he sits at the tiller, carefully monitoring the sails and the winds. It is extremely cold, and **Hester** huddles in his coat as his breath floats up and away.

There is a small area "belowdecks", where we can make out the form of Iorek and the sleeping children. Lee and Hester's only company is the witch Serafina Peckala, who perches on the edge of the hull, oblivious to the height.

LEE SCORESBY

Ma'am, I know you can fly, but your setting like that consterns me considerably.

Serafina Peckala smiles. Lee smiles back.

LEE SCORESBY (cont'd)

That little girl's pretty important, hunh?

SERAFINA PEKKALA

More than she will know.

LEE SCORESBY

Does that mean there's gonna be much by way of armed pursuit? You understand, I'm speaking as a practical man with a living to earn. I ain't trying to lower the tone of this expedition, believe me, ma'am. It's just my contract doesn't include acts-of-war insurance, and let me tell you, once we land Iorek Byrnison on Svalbard, that will count as an act of war. He and the king don't see eye-to-eye.

SERAFINA PEKKALA

Mr. Scoresby, all of us, humans, witches, bears, are engaged in a war already, though not all of us know it. Whether you find danger on Svalbard or whether you fly off unharmed, you are a recruit, under arms, a soldier.

LEE SCORESBY

Well, that seems kinda precipitate. Seems to me a man should have a choice whether to pick up arms or not.

SERAFINA PEKKALA

Perhaps you and I understand choice differently.

SERAFINA PEKKALA(cont'd)

We witches live for many hundreds of years, and know that every opportunity will come again. And we own nothing, so we have nothing to acquire or protect. We have different needs. We don't feel cold, so we have little need for warm clothes.

LEE SCORESBY

I can see that.

(beat)

I can see you ain't saving up for a piece o' land, like myself, and you may not understand the desire...but surely you can see how I might find the notion of a war I ain't been told about kinda troubling.

SERAFINA PEKKALA

Iorek Byrnison's exile is part of it too. The child is destined to play a part in that.

LEE SCORESBY

You speak of destiny like it was fixed. Where's your free will, if you please? If I ever doubted there was free will, that little girl would convince me. She seems to me to have more free will than anybody I ever met. She came all this way to save her playmate from those fiends back there.

SERAFINA PEKKALA

I know that. But he was drawn north by destiny; and she was drawn after him. We are all subject to the fates, but we must act as if we are not; or die of despair. It is her fate to take something of great value to Lord Asriel, that much I know.

(beat; explains)

There is a curious prophecy about that child: she is destined to bring about the end of destiny. But she must do so without knowing what she is doing, as if it were her choice to do it. If she's told what she must do, it will all fail; death will sweep through all the worlds;

SERAFINA PEKKALA(cont'd)
it will be the triumph of despair,
forever. The universes will become
nothing more than interlocking
machines, blind and empty of
thought, feeling, life...

Lee Scoresby spits a bit of his cheroot over the side.

LEE SCORESBY
You try telling that story in
Texas.
(beat)
Don't suppose you've ever been?

Serafina shakes her head.

LEE SCORESBY (cont'd)
Don't suppose you'd care to
accompany me?

SERAFINA PEKKALA
(smiles)
I was in love once, Mister
Scoresby.

LEE SCORESBY
Don't mean you can't be again.

SERAFINA PEKKALA
I'm afraid it does.

LEE SCORESBY
Well that's a damn shame.
(beat)
Could you at least tell me what
side I'm on in this war?

SERAFINA PEKKALA
We are both on Lyra's side.

LEE SCORESBY
Oh, no doubt about that. And that
old bear, too. She helped him get
his armor back, you see. Who knows
what bears feel? But if a bear
ever loved a human being, he loves
her.

INT. BELOWDECKS

In the tiny cabin of the airship, Lyra and Roger sleep under furs as Iorek, wide awake, watches them.

CUT TO:

EXT. SVALBARD - ICE CLIFFS - DAY

As dawn breaks, the mighty ICE CLIFFS of Svalbard hove into view, hundreds of feet high, streaked blue and black. The ship is on course to skim about twenty feet above the surface of the ice plateau. Birds -- or some sort of flying creatures at least -- can be seen and heard issuing from and returning to the cracks and hollows in the ice and the rock underneath it.

LEE SCORESBY

There she is. Svalbard.

Lee Scoresby, Roger, Lyra and Iorek stand looking towards the cliffs. Serafina Pekkala glides about the craft, weaving about with Kaisa, who pulls away towards the land.

SERAFINA PEKKALA

Kaisa will scout a landing place,
Mr. Scoresby.

LEE SCORESBY

Much obliged.

LYRA

Iorek...what will the bears do when
you arrive?

IOREK BYRNISON

I am an exile. They will arrest me
and put me to death.

(off her look)

Or they will try.

LEE SCORESBY

I don't know if you've thought this
through, Lyra, but --

Before Lee Scoresby can finish the thought, we hear a rending SCREAM and a flying thing like a giant, leathery BAT sweeps in between the balloon and the deck, swiping its CLAWS at him. Scoresby ducks, knocking the tiller slightly and jarring the ship.

LEE SCORESBY (cont'd)
Cliff ghaſt!

The cliff ghaſt diſappears into the clouds -- then wheels and returns, claws out and heading ſtraight for the children. Before it can reach them, and before Serafina can raise her bow, Scoresby SHOTS IT DOWN with a revolver. The creature ſcreams and wheels and flops towards the ſea below.

There is ſilence. Lee Scoresby turns to the others.

LEE SCORESBY (cont'd)
Ugly varmint. Everyone all right?

Suddenly, the ſky ſeems FULL of cliff ghaſts, as the reſt of the colony burſt up from below the ſhip, SCREAMING, CLAWING, attacking the balloon, the ſhip, the lines holding them together, and the paſſengers.

Scoresby holds the tiller and tries to keep the ſhip on courſe as Iorek SLAPS the cliff ghaſts away from the children, and Serafina Pekkala ſwoops and dives to evade them and launches arrows at the cliff ghaſts who are gnawing at the lines and ſcratching at the balloon.

Many ghaſts are being downed, but there are many more. Deſpite Scoresby's beſt efforts, the ſhip is GYRATING and SHUDDERING, and heading directly for the tops of the CLIFFS.

LEE SCORESBY (cont'd)
Gotta get them off the lines!

Lyra and Roger reach up to try to tear away the ghaſts that are tangling the lines, as Scoresby increases the flow of hydrogen to the balloon, and the ſhip begins to riſe --

LEE SCORESBY (cont'd)
We're gonna hit!

It is touch and go, but the ſhip SMACKS into the ice and JUST CLEARS it, jarring the paſſengers to the deck, ſmashing in ſome of the ſpars, and ripping ſome of the lines free.

They're alive, but now the balloon is careening wildly, and the ghaſts are redoubling their attack. As the balloon riſes and twists, Lyra tries to pull a ghaſt off Iorek's back --

-- and in one ſickening moment finds that the ſhip is no longer under her -- ſhe is over the ſide -- FALLING, SCREAMING --

LYRA
Iorek!

IOREK BYRNISON
 (calling down)
 Lyra!

And, with a CRUNCH of ICE and an EXPLOSION of snow, she hits the ground, as the balloon bears away put of control, hidden by the swirling snow and mist, the SHOTS, SHOUTS and SCREAMS of the ghastrs growing fainter...

LYRA
 Iorek! Iorek!

PANTALAIMON
 Quiet...don't call out...something
 is out there...

Pan has assumed the form of an **arctic fox** and is sniffing the ground. Then, he raises his head -- turns --

-- And Lyra sees it too. A shape slowly emerges from the whiteness, a familiar grunt is heard over the whistling of the wind --

LYRA
 Iorek --

But it is not Iorek. She realizes this as another shape emerges from the snow.

They are SVALBARD BEARS, and no friends of Iorek. Lyra and Pan take a step back. The bear emerges from the snow, and we see that they are roughly Iorek's size, similarly ferocious of aspect -- but different in their trappings. Their armor is lacquered, polished, and decorated, made as much for appearance as for utility. They carry long, cruelly tipped spears in one hand...and in another, curiously, what appear to be **rag dolls** of some sort -- incongruously like children carrying teddy-bears.

BEAR SOLDIER
 What are you?

Lyra is confused.

LYRA
 I'm Lyra.

BEAR SOLDIER
 Come with us. You are a prisoner.
 Move now. Quickly.

Lyra has no choice but to do as they say. Pan, meanwhile, has scrambled up her clothes in the form of a lemming, and huddles by her neck for warmth.

The prisoner in hand, the bears seem little interested by Lyra, leaving Pan and Lyra free to observe and whisper.

PANTALAIMON

What are we going to do? We'll end up in jail with your father!

LYRA

Pan, what do they have in their hands?

PANTALAIMON

They look like...dolls! What would a bear want with a doll? And why are they all dressed up like that? Iorek Byrnison doesn't need fancy plumes and shiny armor.

LYRA

Pan -- do you remember what they said, in Oxford? That the king of the bears wanted a daemon?

PANTALAIMON

So?

LYRA

The dolls, Pan -- like poor Billy clutching that bit of dried fish -- they do have a weak spot!

PANTALAIMON

I'd love to know what.

LYRA

I've got them, Pan.

Pan looks at her skeptically.

LYRA (cont'd)

Pan, I'll need you to hide in my sleeve, make sure no-one sees you. All right?

PANTALAIMON

That's just fine with me.

As they talk, a VAST shape comes looming out of the white-out -- the brand-new PALACE OF KING RAGNAR.

EXT. RAGNAR'S PALACE - DAY

It's an ugly mix of the traditional ice-architecture of the bears and pastiched stone palaces from the world of humans. Here and there, pieces look very perilously balanced, as though not designed for the winds of Svalbard and the different qualities of ice and marble.

Lining the battlements, Lyra and Pan can see many BEAR SOLDIERS, armed with massive arquebuses and standing by gigantic vats of pitch at the ready to fuel FIRE-HURLERS.

PANTALAIMON

Lyra -- Iorek won't stand a chance...

LYRA

I know, Pan -- we've got to take a risk, or they'll kill him...

The BEAR SOLDIERS escort Lyra through the massive main gates and into a courtyard, all faced with ice, hung with tapestries that are CHAFED AND ROTTING in the cold. The tapestries depict the triumphant battles of the bears, as they terrify and vanquish all foes...

And, as they stride into a vast ENTRANCE HALL, the precious Muscovite carpets on the ground spattered with gull-droppings, parts of fish, blood and skeletons, Lyra sees a portrait of KING RAGNAR. He is depicted in iconic style, holding the globe in his right hand, his left holding up what appears to be a tiny HUMAN...

Lyra takes a deep breath.

LYRA (cont'd)

I must see the king.

The bear simply looks blankly at her. Lyra pushes her gambit further.

LYRA (cont'd)

It would be very rude if you did not. You will be in trouble if you don't.

BEAR SOLDIER

You cannot see Ragnar Sturlusson when you please. You are a prisoner. You will have to wait until he wishes to see you.

LYRA

That was the way it used to be.
But it's the new rule that he needs
to know things first, see? It's
new. Like the dolls you have to
carry.

The bears look at each other. They are clearly unsure of
what to do.

LYRA (cont'd)

It as about the King's enemy, Iorek
Byrnison. It is important that he
know. He will be ever so cross if
I don't tell him immediately.

BEAR SOLDIER

(hesitates)

You will come with me now.

-- And the bears convey Lyra, with Pan hiding in her top,
towards the THRONE ROOM of the king.

INT. THRONE ROOM - DAY

The door opens from inside to reveal to Lyra a MASSIVE, long
room, high and vaulted, big enough to contain a colony of
SKUAS, who fly amongst the rafters and make their homes in
the chandeliers. Braziers and torches illuminate the place
and seem to be melting and warping the walls in places. Like
the halls outside, the throne room is littered with guano,
bones, half-eaten things...

A dozen bears, ranged along the carpet, without armor but
dressed with various signs of ranks, turn to look at her.
She walks towards them, and they part...

To reveal a bear MUCH LARGER than Iorek. Powerful, bedecked
with jewels, his long claws gilded with gold, he regards Lyra
with a **humanness**, a **cunning**, that we have not seen in Iorek's
face.

As Lyra approaches, she hears a low GROWL come out of
Ragnar's throat. She stops, terrified.

RAGNAR STURLUSSON

What is this little thing?

BEAR SOLDIER

We brought her to you first, great
king. She said --

Lyra leaps in, her voice loud from fear, not confidence.

LYRA
 Our greetings to you, great king!
 (beat)
 Or rather, my greetings, not his.

RAGNAR STURLUSSON
 Not whose?

Ragnar waves his hand in front of his mouth to chase away the flies that buzz about it.

LYRA
 Iorek Byrnison's, Your majesty.

Quickly, Ragnar is off his throne, and has paced forward towards Lyra on all fours, sniffing. She stands her ground.

RAGNAR STURLUSSON
 What have you to do with Iorek
 Byrnison?

The hatred is evident in King Ragnar's voice.

LYRA
 ...I am Iorek Byrnison's daemon.

Ragnar rears back, ASTONISHED, with a GORWL that sounds like a SCREAM. He raises his paw --

RAGNAR STURLUSSON
 -- How -- how --
 (beat)
 How can you be so far from him?

LYRA
 I am like a witches' daemon, great king.

RAGNAR STURLUSSON
 And how has the exile, the unworthy Iorek Byrnison obtained a daemon?

LYRA
 Mrs. Coulter gave it to him.
 (beat)
 That is what she is doing at Bolvangar.

RAGNAR STURLUSSON
 That is not what she told me.

LYRA
She lied to you.

Ragnar ROARS again.

LYRA (cont'd)
Iorek Byrnison subjected himself to an experiment. To see if they could make a daemon for him. And they did. They made me. I can see into Iorek's mind and know exactly what he is doing --

RAGNAR STURLUSSON
Where is he?

LYRA
He is on Svalbard, great king. And on his way here.

RAGNAR STURLUSSON
Why? What does he want? He is mad! We will kill him!

LYRA
He is coming for me. He wants me back.

RAGNAR STURLUSSON
Why shouldn't I kill you right now, and be rid of an enemy?

LYRA
Because I want to be your daemon, Ragnar Sturlusson.

This gives the king pause.

RAGNAR STURLUSSON
My daemon?

LYRA
If you defeat Iorek Byrnison in single combat, King Ragnar, I will become your daemon.
(beat)
But you must defeat him in single combat. Have him killed, and I will evaporate into...into dust.

Ragnar is caught in her lies now...

LYRA (cont'd)
 Defeat him, and I will be your
 daemon, and his strength will be
 yours, and our thoughts will flow
 together...you can send me away to
 spy for you, or keep me here by
 your side...we will be like a human
 being. You and I, together, can do
 anything.

Ragnar is fiercely excited -- but he is also suspicious.

RAGNAR STURLUSSON
 Prove it. Prove to me that you are
 a daemon.

LYRA
 (beat)
 Ask me something only you know.
 Ask me anything.

RAGNAR STURLUSSON
 ...Who was the first bear I killed?

With shaking hands, Lyra withdraws the alethiometer from her
 bag.

RAGNAR STURLUSSON (cont'd)
 What is that?

LYRA
 It is a daemon mirror, great king.
 We daemons use it to see the truth.
 Did Mrs. Coulter not tell you?

Ragnar is quiet.

RAGNAR STURLUSSON
 Who did I first kill?

Lyra looks into the alethiometer. Turns the dials.
 Waits...breathes...and the needle begins to turn. Lyra
 breathes in sharply -- looks up...

LYRA
 ...Truly you are great and
 powerful, Ragnar...
 (beat)
 For you killed your own
 father...and took his place...

Ragnar growls...Then does something strange, wrong for a bear...vile. He SMILES.

CUT TO:

EXT. RAGNAR'S PALACE - DUSK

Outside Ragnar's palace, a ceremonial battleground has been erected...a relatively flat circle of snow and rocks, ringed by high stone bleachers, open on one end...bears are ranging themselves around the combat ground...word of the duel has been spread. Lyra looks away from the ground, towards the ice plains...Pan sneaks out of her collar.

PANTALAIMON

What if he doesn't come? Ask the alethiometer if he is coming.

LYRA

I don;t need to ask the alethiometer, Pan. He's coming. I know he's coming.

(beat)

Oh, Pan...Now I wish he wouldn't...what have I done? Ragnar is too strong...

Ragnar is, in fact, looking invincible. His soldiers are strapping his armor on -- sleek, beautifully made, lacquered and shined...

A tear rolls down her face as Ragnar scrapes the gilt off his claws. Then he approaches Lyra. Lyra wipes her tears away, and Pan scurries into her collar.

RAGNAR STURLUSSON

Where is he? Where is the coward?

Lyra says nothing. Then...out of the distance...comes Iorek. Running, full bore.

The bears see him. They turn.

LYRA

(to herself)

Iorek...

Ragnar growls appreciatively, rears to full height...

LYRA (cont'd)

Great king, let me speak to him. If I do, he will not suspect.

LYRA(cont'd)

Go to your people...tell him it was your idea to call Iorek here, to prove your might.

RAGNAR STURLUSSON

Yes...yes...I will. You go, go and encourage him.

Ragnar turns and walks towards the combat ground. Lyra walks to Iorek, who slows to meet her.

IOREK BYRNISON

Lyra.

Lyra embraces him, crying.

LYRA

Oh Iorek, Iorek dear...I've done a terrible thing...I've betrayed you...

Iorek does not answer, only looks at her curiously.

IOREK BYRNISON

What terrible thing?

LYRA

They captured me...and I didn't know what to do...I wanted to survive, to rescue my father...

(beat)

I told the king I was your daemon. And that he must fight you...if not, Iorek, they would never let you fight, they'd burn you before you got up close -- but you've been fighting, at Bolvangar, and the cliff ghastrs -- and running all this way --

IOREK BYRNISON

Lyra...Lyra Belacqua.

(beat)

No. I shall call you Lyra Silvertongue. To fight him is all I want. Come, little daemon.

Iorek strides towards the combat ground, and Lyra walks by his side, beaming with pride.

The bears of Svalbard clear the way for them to the combat ground, and Iorek and Lyra pass between two lines of them...

EXT. COMBAT GROUND - DUSK

...To where Ragnar Sturlusson waits, taller and more massive than Iorek. Lyra touches Iorek gently on the shoulder, below his armor.

LYRA

Fight well, Iorek my dear. You're the real king, and he en't nothing.

Lyra backs away, and the ritual phase of the combat begins.

RAGNAR STURLUSSON

Bears! I have called Iorek Byrnison here to prove my strength upon his flesh. If I kill Iorek Byrnison, his body shall be torn apart and fed to cliff ghastrs; his head shall be displayed above my palace. His memory shall be obliterated. It shall be a capital crime to speak his name.

IOREK BYRNISON

Bears! If I kill Ragnar Sturlusson, I shall be your king. And the first thing I will be to do is to tear down that palace, and bid you throw away those paltry dolls, and become bears again. The only soul a bear needs is the one he makes for himself, of honest metal.

Ragnar ROARS...

...And Iorek ANSWERS HIS ROAR. And that quickly, the combat is joined.

The two bears begin to prowl restlessly, edging forward, swinging their heads.

Then, with a roar and a blur of snow, they hurl themselves at each other, hitting with a tremendous CRASH, as the ground itself shakes.

LYRA shudders, the impact translating itself into fear for Iorek --

Who reaches up to rake Ragnar's fur below the helmet, which has been dented by the impact.

RAGNAR shakes himself loose of Iorek, who falls away, dislodged. The bear-king stands and we hear his metal POPPING and STRAIGHTENING from the very force of the action.

Iorek struggles to right himself as Ragnar POUNCES upon him, fastening his teeth near Iorek's neck. BLOOD flies through the air and stains the white ground.

Struggling, IOREK uses a rear paw to RIP the chainmail from Ragnar's stomach. We hear the SCREAMING and SNAPPING of the metal rings.

Both bears step back to regain their breath.

LYRA notices in horror that though Ragnar is now encumbered, the chainmail still attached to his armor but hanging loose, IOREK is worse off -- he is bleeding freely from his neck and panting heavily.

LYRA

Oh, Iorek!

IOREK SPRINGS at Ragnar, knocking him backwards and slashing at his neck below the helmet, and RAGNAR snaps at Iorek's stomach. A moment later, both stand upright, like boxers, and are trading blows that RING and CLANG off their armor.

Iron CLANGS on iron, teeth CRASH on teeth, breath ROARS and feet pound on the blood-spattered ground. Ragnar's armor has become torn and distorted, the gold inlay torn out or smeared with blood; his helmet is gone altogether.

But Iorek is worse off, for all that his dented armor has withstood the combat better. Ragnar is bigger and stronger, and Iorek appears to be exhausted. He is LIMPING -- he favors his left forepaw, which does not seem to be able to bear his weight. He now can only mount weak strikes with his right paw.

RAGNAR STURLUSSON

(taunting Iorek)

Is that all? Broken-hand!

Whimpring cub! Is that all, Soon-to-Die?

Iorek does not have the breath to respond; he can only crouch under the buffets that Ragnar delivers.

LYRA is crying, broken-hearted.

PANTALAIMON

Don't look, Lyra.

LYRA

I have to...I won't hide my eyes
from him --

But it is a hideous sight, Iorek being backed further and further by Ragnar's blows --

RAGNAR STURLUSSON

IS THAT ALL?!

-- UNTIL he finds the footing he has been feeling for -- a rock spur in the ice -- and EXPLODES from his crouch and SLASHING with a ferocious left hand at the exposed jaw of Ragnar Sturlusson.

It is a horrible blow. Ragnar's lower jaw is torn clean off, flying through the air scattering blood. The bear's tongue lolls upon his chest.

Iorek LUNGES and seizes Ragnar's throat and TEARS, haking it this way and that way, Ragnar's body hanging limp like a caught seal. Iorek SLAMS Ragnar's body down to the ground -- and it is done.

IOREK BYRNISON

Yes. That is all.

There is a hush and then a sudden ACCLAIM from the bears -- a rapturous, savage cacophony of roars.

IOREK BYRNISON (cont'd)

Bears -- who is your king?!

THE BEARS

Iorek Byrnison!

They rush to him, but he is not looking for them. He looks for Lyra -- who emerges from the crowd --

-- and RUNS to Iorek, embracing him, mindless of the blood.

LYRA

Iorek! Iorek! I thought I had
lost you!

IOREK BYRNISON

Why? You own my contract yet.

CUT TO:

INT. RAGNAR'S PALACE - PRISONER'S WARD - NIGHT

The guard-bear opens the rough metal door into --

INT. ASRIEL'S QUARTERS - NIGHT

-- The surreal sight of Asriel's prison quarters.

Far from being a cold, and barren, the quarters are warm and luxurious, wainscotted with wood halfway up the ice walls, hung with paintings, furnished with expensive chairs, settees, desks, tasteful carpets, anbaric fixtures...a cozy fire licks away in a corner. We are in a FOYER that has two large wooden doors at the end. Asriel's butler, THOROLD, who has been idling on a chair reading an old paper, stands to greet Lyra.

THOROLD

Well if it isn't miss Lyra! Lord Asriel will be pleased.

Lyra looks on, confused.

LYRA

Renfrew?

RENFREW

(proudly)

The same. I wouldn't desert the master; no, not for love nor money. Will you be wanting some tea, miss?

LYRA

...thank you...

Renfrew heads off by a side door, and Lyra walks in, amazed.

ROGER

This is a very nice prison.

LYRA

I don't understand...

Lyra walks to the double doors, and pushes through.

INT. ASRIEL'S INNER CHAMBERS - NIGHT

We see a beautifully appointed sitting room, with windows of sheet-ice that look out upon the arctic night and the glimmer of the aurora.

Ranged about are philosophical instruments of all kinds, tubes, bulbs, metal vacuum-flasks...a great coil that punctures the roof and twists towards the stars that can be seen through the ceiling.

We see Lord Asriel, his back turned to us, as he mutters to himself and pores over a chart that has been laid upon a long table, making measurements with a compass...

Lyra, dazed by the strangeness of it all, steps forward and forgets her restraint...

LYRA

Daddy?

Asriel, who was lost in thought until this moment, turns...

...And RECOILS when he sees Lyra, his eyes widening in terror.

LORD ASRIEL

No! No!

Asriel staggers back and clutches the mantelpiece.

LORD ASRIEL (cont'd)

Turn around! Turn around, get out, go! I did not send for you!

Lyra is astonished, speechless, until --

LYRA

No, no, I came because --

Lyra steps into the room, and Roger come in behind her. Asriel seems to recover -- composes himself -- and looks down at them.

LORD ASRIEL

Lyra...that *is* Lyra?

LYRA

Yes...yes, I came to save you, and to give you the alethiometer --

LORD ASRIEL

Yes -- yes, of course you did. Who is this?

LYRA

This is Roger, from Jordan College. He works in the kitchens. I rescued him too.

Thorold enters with a tray of tea and biscuits.

LORD ASRIEL

Thorold, run a bath for these children, and prepare them some food. Their clothes are filthy...find them something to wear.

THOROLD

Yes, my lord.

LORD ASRIEL

-- And let the boy go to bed. Lyra, sit with me awhile.

ROGER

Lyra...I'm scared.

LYRA

It's all right, Roger. We're safe now.

Roger follows Thorold to some other part of Asriel's quarters. Asriel turns and strides through a different doorway, leaving Lyra to follow.

INT. LIBRARY - NIGHT

Ariel takes a seat by a wide window overlooking the frozen sea below. Lyra sits across from him.

LYRA

I don't understand...I thought you were a prisoner. Under sentence of death.

ASRIEL

I was. There are different sorts of prisoner. Ragnar Sturlusson was a reasonable creature. He liked gold. He also knew that power has a way of changing hands. It was in his interest to allow me to send for a few...comforts, and to continue my research. I suppose if things had gone differently for your mother, I might have been executed...you know Mrs. Coulter is your mother?

LYRA

Yes. And you're my father.

ASRIEL

Yes. So?

LYRA

So? You shouldn't hide things like that from people! It en't right!

ASRIEL

I don;t think I want to be lectured by an insolent child. Now tell my why you've come here.

LYRA

I brought you the bloody alethiometer, didn't I? Through all that's happened to me and Pan, i kept it safe, even from the Gobblers and Ragnar Sturlusson, and as soon as I heard you was in trouble, I came all this bloody way, didn't I? And you en't even said so much as a thank you! Nor showed any sign that you were glad to see me -- you like to fainted, like I was some horrible thing you never wanted to see again. You en't human! You en't really my father. Fathers are supposed to love their daughters, en't they? You don't love me -- and I don't love you! I love Farder Coram, and I love John Faa and Lee Scoresby, and I love Iorek Byrnison -- I love an armored bear more'n my father. And Iorek Byrnison love me more'n you!

ASRIEL

I thought the bear was under contract to you. If you're going to be sentimental, I shan't waste time talking to you.

LYRA

Take your bloody compass then!
I'll go -- I'll leave --

ASRIEL

I wouldn't if I were you. By now Mrs. Coulter is on her way, and soldiers of the Maggisterium with her. You wouldn't last very long out there.

LYRA

What for? Why is everyone killing each other, and people lying, and telling other people what to do?

(beat)

It's for Dust, isn't it?

ASRIEL

Yes.

LYRA

Then tell me one thing. You owe me that much. What is it? What is Dust?

ASRIEL

Dust is what makes the alethiometer work.

LYRA

I knew it!...But There's more to it --

ASRIEL

Much more. Dust is an elementary particle. Like a neutron, or a proton. We knew that before. But -- it does not behave in the usual way. It is not evenly distributed in the cosmos.

(beat)

It tends to concentrate around humans. But only after the onset of puberty -- when your daemon settles into its final form.

LYRA

Why?

ASRIEL

People like your mother -- who believe that the world is an ugly place -- full of evil and sorrow -- believe that Dust is the cause of it. That Dust...is sin.

LYRA

But -- if everybody has Dust on
'em...then everybody is bad?

ASRIEL

-- Unless they can be protected
from Dust, yes. Unless the
Dustless innocence of childhood can
be preserved.

LYRA

But how?

ASRIEL

Your mother is a very clever woman.
She put together two seemingly
disparate phenomena -- the
clustering of Dust and the settling
of daemons -- which happen at the
same time in a child's growth into
adulthood. If the child might be
separated from its daemon --

LYRA

-- Severed --

ASRIEL

I believe that is the term, yes.
Then, Dust could be defeated, and
people could return to innocence.
And obedience. A person separated
from his daemon...is a person
separated from his spirit. His
will.

LYRA

That's what the Gobblers wanted?
(beat)
But why would the Magisterium let
them?

ASRIEL

The Magisterium wants control over
human beings. And Dust is what the
Magisterium fears. Dust flowing in
greater and greater surges from --

LYRA

The Aurora Borealis?

ASRIEL

Yes, and the world beyond the
Aurora. The universes beyond.

ASRIEL(cont'd)

You've seen the city in the stars,
haven't you? Out there --
somewhere -- is the source of Dust.
And when I have enough power, I
will cross into those other worlds,
and I will destroy it. I will
destroy Dust. And when I do --
pain, sin, suffering -- death
itself will die.

LYRA

But -- I thought you were trying to
stop the Gobblers -- that's why
Mrs. Coulter wanted you executed --

ASRIEL

I hardly care what the General
Oblation Board is doing. They've
missed the point entirely.

(beat)

The energy that links body and
daemon is immensely powerful. When
the cut -- the severing of child
and daemon -- is made, all that
energy dissipates in a fraction of
a second. They didn't notice,
because they mistook it for shock,
or disgust, or moral outrage, and
they trained themselves to feel
numb to it.

(beat)

They've ignored a source of
tremendous power.

LYRA

Power.

ASRIEL

That is what life is about, Lyra.

(beat)

Go to bed now. Thorold will show
you where to sleep.

He gets up and heads to the door.

LYRA

You've left the alethiometer.

ASRIEL

I left it for you. It would be no
use to me without the books anyway.
I don't want it.

Asriel leaves. Lyra sits there, looking at the alethiometer. Picks it up and holds it to her breast. She seems exhausted.

INT. BEDROOM - MID-NIGHT

Lyra is SHAKEN AWAKE by a distressed Thorold.

THOROLD

Miss Lyra! Miss Lyra, wake up!

Lyra looks over and sees an unmade bed beside hers.

THOROLD (cont'd)

Lord Asriel's gone, miss! He packed a lot of instruments in a sledge and he harnessed up the dogs and left. But he took the boy, miss!

LYRA

Roger?

THOROLD

The boy kept asking for you, miss! But Lord Asriel wanted him alone. You know when you first came to the door, miss, and he saw you and couldn't believe his eyes and wanted you gone?

LYRA

Yes? Yes?

THOROLD

He needed a child to finish his experiment, miss! And he called for one...

LYRA

...and I brought him...Roger...

She jumps out of bed.

LYRA (cont'd)

IOREK! IOREK BYRNISON!

EXT. ICE PLATEAU - NIGHT

It is PITCH BLACK as the ice thunders and cracks -- it is Lyra, riding a fully armored Iorek Byrnison, with a squadron of armored bear soldiers galloping in a vanguard...

LYRA
Do you see them, Iorek?

IOREK BYRNISON
Yes -- he drives the dogs hard,
towards the pole, and the boy is
with him --

LYRA
We got to stop him, Iorek!

But she sense something in Iorek's body language --

LYRA (cont'd)
What is it?

IOREK BYRNISON
Witches.

LYRA
Are they ours?

-- And, as if in answer, a FLIGHT OF ARROWS falls towards them. Iorek swiftly dodges to the side, avoiding them, but one of the bears behind him is STRUCK and tumbles forward with a ROAR of pain.

Lyra loses hold of Iorek, and skids along the ice, as Iorek, without turning, LEAPS into the air to grab a WITCH with his claws, dragging her to the ground. He LANDS UPON HER with a CRUNCH. The witch lies still beneath his front paws.

Further off, Lyra sits up to see a witch closing on her, pulling back her bow -- but PAN bursts into the air, flying towards the witch and RAKING her with his claws -- Iorek is at her side in a moment.

IOREK BYRNISON
Let us go. My soldiers will handle
them.

Lyra slings herself onto Iorek's back. Iorek hands up an ARQUEBUS, like a giant crossbow, that he has fetched from one of his soldiers, to her.

IOREK BYRNISON (cont'd)
Hold that, child.

And they are off again, towards the horizon and, visible now in the distance -- the shimmering lights of the AURORA. Lyra casts a look back at the bears and witches in combat...

FADE TO:

EXT. FURTHER NORTH - NIGHT

Iorek halts for a moment, sniffing the air.

IOREK BYRNISON
He has stopped. There --

We can see a form in the distance. And, from the south, we hear the BASS RUMBLE of coal-spirit engines in the distance -- the glistening form of Mrs. Coulter's ZEPPELIN materializing.

LYRA
Quickly, Iorek dear!

Iorek starts off again.

EXT. PACK ICE - NIGHT

The ice has become even more choppy, great sheets and chunks leaning into one another, the footing treacherous.

Iorek and Lyra come up to the edge of a deep CREVASSE separating them from Asriel.

LYRA
They must have crossed somewhere --

IOREK BYRNISON
There.

Iorek strides over to where a thin bridge of ice spans the crevasse. Iorek steps onto it and hears a CRACK.

LYRA
Stop, Iorek.

Iorek withdraws, and Lyra slips from his back.

LYRA (cont'd)
It won't hold you.
(sadly)
I'll have to go alone.

The DRONE of the zeppelin engines is growing louder.

IOREK BYRNISON
Go, Lyra. The airship approaches.
I will stop them.

LYRA

No, Iorek! She has soldiers with her! They'll kill you! You must go now -- run -- you've taken me as far as you can. Go home now.

Iorek only looks at her. Lyra bursts into tears.

LYRA (cont'd)

(angrily)

I command you, Iorek Byrnison! Go home! The bears need you...I command you...

IOREK BYRNISON

No, Lyra Silvertongue. Our contract is finished. I will do as I please.

Lyra hugs Iorek, tears streaming down her face.

IOREK BYRNISON (cont'd)

Goodbye, Lyra.

After a moment, Iorek turns and trots towards the approaching zeppelin.

Lyra wipes her eyes, turns, and starts across the bridge, Pan a white **albatross** hovering by her, ready to catch her should she fall...

...But the bridge holds.

EXT. PACK ICE - SAME

While Iorek Byrnison stands waiting for the zeppelin as it swings into range --

-- And the MACHINE-GUN at the belly of the craft opens fire.

A LINE OF EXPLOSIONS sweeps towards him. He delicately sidesteps, shooting the gap between two explosions -- raises his ARQUEBUS -- waits --

And LOOSES the bolt, which whistles towards its target -- the starboard engine of the zeppelin. It strikes home --

And the housing of the engine BURSTS, followed by a gout of FIRE. The balloon veers to the right and noses towards the ground --

Iorek GROWLS in appreciation, throws the arquebus to the side, and starts off toward the ship --

EXT. POLE - NIGHT

Lyra rushes and stumbles long the ice, Pan hovering, keeping Asriel in sight --

PANTALAIMON

They're just past the ridge! Lord Asriel's got all his instruments out, and Roger can't get away -- why won't he run?!

ROGER (O.S.)

LYRA! LYRA!

Lyra stumbles over a ridge and sees before her:

The BLACKNESS of the sky shot through with BILLIONS OF STARS, the Aurora shimmering, and a vast CITY in the sky, clear behind it --

ASRIEL, twisting together wires that run to his upturned sledge, bristling with apparatus, already frosted with cold. Stelmaria, his snow-leopard daemon, stands beside him --

With Roger's **daemon** clutched in her mouth.

ROGER (cont'd)

Let her go -- please -- you're hurting us --
(to Lyra)
Lyra, make him stop!

Pan swoops down and SNATCHES Roger's daemon from Stelmaria's mouth.

LYRA

Roger! Run!

Roger struggles up and begins running towards her as she scrabbles down the ice towards him. But then --

A **snow-owl** daemon drops from the sky and SLASHES Pantalaimon; Roger's daemon, too weak to change, falls to the ice.

We see that the **snow-owl** daemon belongs to a WITCH, who is aloft, trailing the wire from Asriel's sledge, holding it to the sky --

LYRA (cont'd)

Pan!

She herself is brought to the ground by the pain, but she struggles to get up...

Stelmaria has Roger's daemon again, has dragged it back towards the sledge --

And Asriel motions for Roger to follow. He must.

Lyra rushes towards him -- but Asriel has him now -- and he has him rigged to his apparatus. Before Lyra can reach them, he TRIPS OFF THE MACHINERY --

Roger's **daemon** explodes in a BURST OF LIGHT, and A BOLT OF ENERGY ARCS ITS WAY FROM ROGER TO THE AURORA.

And the sky tears open.

Beyond -- just there -- is the sunlight of another world. On the edge of the rent, the ice is melting.

Lyra has reached Roger.

LYRA (cont'd)

Roger -- look --

But he does not respond. His body is limp.

LYRA (cont'd)

Roger...

She grabs him and holds him to herself, hoping perhaps to warm him. But he is beyond touch.

MRS. COULTER (O.S.)

You've done it.

Lyra looks up and sees Mrs. Coulter, just arrived, her clothes torn and smeared, but still beautiful.

MRS. COULTER (cont'd)

You'll be damned.

ASRIEL

There is no damnation.

(beat)

Come with me.

Stelmaria paces to the golden monkey, which is erect with anger and fear. She SEIZES it in her mouth. The monkey does not struggle, but seems instead to SWOON in her jaws.

Asriel EMBRACES Mrs. Coulter, who gives way in his arms.
They kiss --

ASRIEL (cont'd)
Come with me, now, to the other
world -- or go and work your
mischief in this one.

Mrs. Coulter looks at him -- and the world beyond -- and we
sense an infinite sorrow between them.

MRS. COULTER
No...no, I can't.

Asriel nods, turns --

ASRIEL
Then goodbye.

He strides through the gate to the other world -- and is
gone.

Mrs. Coulter turns to Lyra.

MRS. COULTER
Lyra...come.

Lyra shakes her head.

LYRA
Lord Asriel -- he's going to find
the source of Dust, isn't he? And
destroy it?

MRS. COULTER
Yes.

LYRA
And you and the Magisterium -- you
want to destroy Dust too?

MRS. COULTER
It's bad, child. It's evil.

Lyra thinks.

LYRA
I don't believe you...I don't
believe you. What you done is
wrong. And him. Both of you.

MRS. COULTER
That's not for you to say.

LYRA
 Yes it is. And I say if Dust is
 what you're afraid of...then maybe
 Dust is good.

MRS. COULTER
 You're coming with me.

Lyra gets up.

LYRA
 No I'm not.

MRS. COULTER
 Do as I say, Lyra.

LYRA
 Come on, Pan.

Lyra holds out her hand, and Pan hops onto it, a **sparrow**.
 They turn their backs upon Mrs. Coulter.

MRS. COULTER
 Do as I say!
 (beat; frantic)
 OBEY ME!

But Lyra and Pan walk into the sky --

EXT. THE OTHER WORLD - DAY

-- And emerge into the light of another world.

PANTALAIMON
 Lyra...Iorek Byrnison, and Farder
 Coram, and Serafina Pekkala...none
 of them know where we are...they
 can't help us.

LYRA
 We'll help each other. And we've
 got the alethiometer. We'll search
 for Dust, and when we've found it
 we'll know what to do.

PANTALAIMON
 And we'll do it...

As Lyra goes further, she looks about in wonder.

LYRA
 Pan...

PANTALAIMON

Yes?

LYRA

It's beautiful.

THE END