

# HIS DARK MATERIALS

## EPISODE 1

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*His Dark Materials* is a story set across many universes.

The action in the first series mostly takes place in Lyra's world. A place where a human's soul takes the form of a creature - animal, insect, bird or reptile. A lifetime companion and conscience, a daemon is the most sacred relationship a person can know.

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In childhood, a daemon can change from one form to another at will.

Note: the word daemon is pronounced like the English word "demon."

1 EXT. QUAD. JORDAN COLLEGE - NIGHT 1 1

Title: "Jordan College, Oxford."

Title: "Twelve years ago."

It's raining. We're close on some pitch black water. We pick out gargoyles of medieval figures with their animal daemons wrapped around them.

We hear the noise of whirring rotors and then lights start dancing on the drowned world.

A GYROCOPTER sets down on floats, dispersing the flood water.

A door to the gyrocopter opens and a SNOW LEOPARD dives into the water. We travel with her, deep in the dark murk, as she swims. This is STELMARIA.

A man follows.

We pull back to see ASRIEL, bearded, tired, glorious, with a BABY carefully held in his coat. He has the intense eyes of his leopard daemon.

ASRIEL looks around. STELMARIA does the same, they always look in opposite arcs. Both stand perfectly still for a moment. Listening. Then they wade on.

ASRIEL bangs on a large door set between two elegant windows. There's a silence. ASRIEL bangs again.

ASRIEL  
Open the door.

There's the sound of bolts being unlocked. The door is pulled open, the water sluices through and light is showered onto the quad. A BUTLER, elderly, elegant, looks out into the night.

ASRIEL (CONT'D)  
Lower your bloody lamp.

ASRIEL enters and quickly pounds up a staircase.

2 INT. MASTER'S LODGING. JORDAN COLLEGE - NIGHT 1 2

STELMARIA is the first to look into the room. He scopes it quickly and then returns to the fast approaching ASRIEL.

STELMARIA  
It's safe.

ALICIA, a raven, flies at them as they enter - but flies up when she sees who it is, and replacing her in shot is THE MASTER, a grey, anxious and yet imperious man.

THE MASTER

What in the world -

ASRIEL puts the baby in THE MASTER's arms.

ASRIEL

This is Lyra.

THE MASTER

Asriel....

ASRIEL

Secundum legem de refugio  
scholasticorum -

THE MASTER

Scholastic sanctuary? You can't be  
serious.

ASRIEL

- protectionem tegimentumque huius  
collegii pro hac puella Lyra nomine  
reposco.

ASRIEL, relieved to have said his piece, looks at the THE MASTER - and quickly corrects how he's holding the child.

ASRIEL (CONT'D)

Out there she's in danger, Francis.

THE MASTER

Jordan College is a place of  
learning, it's not suitable for a  
child -

ASRIEL

And this is hers...

ASRIEL takes an alethiometer from a black velvet bag and places it upon the Master's study table. THE MASTER looks at it, astonished and distracted.

THE MASTER

An alethiometer?

ASRIEL uses this distraction to make good his exit.

ASRIEL

I've no choice. Keep her safe.

THE MASTER looks down at the baby. The baby LYRA and her tiny pine marten daemon, PANTALAIMON. PANTALAIMON chirps up at THE MASTER and then the baby starts to cry. We close on her face.

His Dark Materials.Episode One.Roger.

3

EXT. PORT MEADOW - DAY 2

3

And then we cut to another face. And there's something about the eyes, or the face shape that tells us that maybe this is the same child.

She's now 13, puckish and fierce. Beside LYRA is an adult pine marten, PANTALAIMON. She lights a match and holds it above her head. Next to her is 12-year old ROGER, anxious and kind. His daemon SALCILIA, a ferret.

ROGER

What are you doing?

LYRA

Wind's north-easterly, which means favour your right side.

ROGER

Lyra, are you sure? With these Gobblers about...

LYRA

You said Gobblers are a myth.

ROGER

I said that yesterday, when we were safe in college.

We cut to their POV: a 7-year-old boy, BILLY COSTA, jittery and decent, sits whittling wood beside his squirrel daemon, RATTER, in the last of the sun. Another 15-year-old, TONY COSTA, restless and driven, is on a large Gyptian boat moored among a couple of smaller boats. TONY scrubs up some copper pans, with his hawk daemon LYUBA perched on one.

LYRA

Too late now.

LYRA ducks low and runs across the meadow.

ROGER picks up a catapult. He has four mud pellets beside him. He thinks and then, on LYRA's nod - favouring his right side - fires a pellet at the boat.

The first one hits BILLY on the chest, leaving mud on him, and he cries out. ROGER fires another, it hits TONY's knee and showers him with mud.

TONY gets off the boat.

TONY COSTA  
Whoever did that....

LYRA runs behind him, unties the boat in one fluid move, pushes the boat from the bank and climbs onto it.

TONY COSTA turns around, outraged. He tries to grab at the boat, but can't reach. He keeps pursuing it along the bank as LYRA fires the boat into life.

TONY COSTA (CONT'D)  
Don't you dare.

ROGER, with a head start, breaks for cover and runs for the BAILEY BRIDGE. SALCILIA a bird above him. ROGER reaches the bridge just as LYRA passes under it. He swiftly moves to the other side and looks down at the boat.

LYRA  
Jump then.

ROGER doesn't jump. He sees TONY and BILLY approaching and sets off across the meadow. LYRA watches him go, despairingly.

MA COSTA (O.S.)  
What the bloody hell are you doing?

LYRA looks up. MA COSTA, fierce and maternal, has emerged from below deck. Seeing this, TONY COSTA grins and sets off after ROGER.

LYRA  
Oh.

LYRA thinks and then dives into the water; as she does PANTALAIMON changes from a pine marten into an otter and swims beside her. She reaches the bank and scrambles out.

MA COSTA  
You better run fast, Lyra.

4 EXT. STREETS. OXFORD - DAY 2

4

LYRA, adrenaline delightfully coursing through her, runs through the streets. She looks up and PANTALAIMON is a falcon above her.

She twists into a turning - and there stands ROGER. She smiles, delighted to have found him.

TONY COSTA (O.S.)  
We told you to stay away from our boats.

LYRA turns to see TONY and BILLY COSTA. ROGER grimaces. We see SALCILIA held tight in his arms.

LYRA

See your daemon's settled Tony  
Costa. What's that - a budgie?

BILLY COSTA

A budgie? Nah, it's a hawk.

TONY COSTA

Just you wait Lyra - when yer Pan  
settles as a stoat.

PANTALAIMON lands and becomes an angry dog, barking hard at the COSTAs. BILLY's daemon RATTER faces him, changing from a squirrel to a dog. TONY's daemon LYUBA tries to fly down at them all, but SALCILIA ascends quickly up, a bird, to face off against her. ALL FOUR DAEMONS bristle: this is a Mexican stand-off. LYRA laughs.

LYRA

Wouldn't mind a stoat. Better than  
a budgie anyroad.

BILLY COSTA

It's not a budgie. It's a hawk.

TONY COSTA

She knows it's a hawk, Billy.

LYRA

Roger!

LYRA and ROGER disappear around the corner, TONY COSTA and BILLY chase them to find ROGER and LYRA have climbed up along the ramparts. PANTALAIMON flies past, a falcon again.

TONY COSTA and BILLY COSTA split up as they pursue them. TONY following them up onto the ramparts, BILLY tailing round on the street.

But LYRA and ROGER'S agility and knowledge are too great for TONY, they run over the roof, and down onto a street behind.

LYRA has a wide smile on her face as she and ROGER emerge onto a larger street and they see it -

5 EXT. PORTER'S LODGE. JORDAN COLLEGE - DAY 2 5

Jordan College, all magisterial splendour and darkened rooms.

A PORTER opens the door to them both. And then shuts it hard after them. He winks at LYRA. They run upstairs to a turret.

6 EXT. PORTER'S LODGE. TURRET. JORDAN COLLEGE - DAY 2 6

They look out and down New College Lane. In fact, they have a 360 degree view of Oxford from up here.

LYRA  
We've lost them.

ROGER is still slightly terrified. SALCILIA a ferret on his shoulder. PANTALAIMON becomes an ermine.

ROGER  
(breathless)  
Remind me - why I did that - again?

LYRA  
Because it was fun.  
(beat)  
All right, because I made you.

She sees TONY come round the corner, frustrated. LYRA waves and TONY scowls back and walks off.

LYRA (CONT'D)  
What do you want to do now? We  
could go to the cellars, I've got -

ROGER  
I'm on lunch shift. Sorry.

He hesitates a moment more, and then reaches in and instinctively hugs LYRA.

ROGER (CONT'D)  
Oh, you're still wet.

LYRA watches ROGER go, she shivers slightly, noticing her wet clothes as if for the first time.

She looks out over the college, her home.

There's a moment of pure stillness as we look into the soul of this girl, as she examines the place that made her.

LYRA sees four gowned SCHOLARS moving in pairs across the quad. And then she sees a SNOW LEOPARD walking surreptitiously beside another man. She frowns.

LYRA  
Is it...?

PANTALAIMON perches beside her on the edge of the ramparts, staring intently.

LYRA (CONT'D)  
Uncle? Uncle! UNCLE!

Her voice echoes across the quiet college. STELMARIA turns first and looks up and sees LYRA. Then ASRIEL turns. He looks at LYRA a beat, his face full of dismissal, and then he walks away.

LYRA watches him go. Her face hardening with each of his footsteps. She thinks. And then she clambers over the rooftops, opens the ceiling hatch and drops through.

7 OMITTED 7

8 INT. LYRA'S ROOM. JORDAN COLLEGE - DAY 2 8

LYRA'S room is a tribute to the place she most wants to be: the North. There are charts and diagrams down one side of the room, some pictures of some gruff-looking pioneer and explorer-types down the other side, along with a shelf full of tattered-looking adventure books and atlases.

LYRA drops from the ceiling hatch onto her wardrobe and down into her room, full of anger. PANTALAIMON trails after her, an ermine. LYRA takes a breath.

LYRA  
He didn't mean it.

PANTALAIMON  
Then that's even worse.

LYRA lies back on the bed and looks up at the ceiling. On it - carefully, if inexpertly etched - is a map of the North.

She raises her hand, it makes a shadow.

She moves the shadow like a bird across the world, and for a moment she's swooping across distant lands.

LYRA (O.S.)  
He probably had someone to talk to  
or something. He'll find us after  
lunch. He'll talk to us then.

9 EXT. STREETS. OXFORD - DAY 2 9

BILLY COSTA makes his way back through the twisted streets. He looks left and right, unsure where next to turn.

BILLY COSTA  
We need to see up, Ratter, turn  
into a bird or something....

RATTER turns from a dog into a squirrel and ascends up the side of a wall, looking out over Oxford.

BILLY COSTA (CONT'D)  
Just find out where the river is.

MRS COULTER  
Are you lost?

MRS COULTER appears behind them both. Radiant and enchanting.

BILLY COSTA

No.

MRS COULTER

Oh no, you're covered in mud.

She kneels beside him, and uses a handkerchief to clean his cheeks.

Her GOLDEN MONKEY daemon approaches RATTER, his fur luxurious, his colour lustrous. He spits on his hand and cleans RATTER's squirrel fur. RATTER grows still.

MRS COULTER (CONT'D)

Now, you're looking for the river  
you say? This city is so confusing.  
Let me help you.

BILLY looks at MRS COULTER suspiciously.

10

INT. SEMINAR ROOM. JORDAN COLLEGE - DAY 2

10

LYRA sits alone in a seminar room, now in dry clothes. It's late afternoon.

CHARLES is standing beside a blackboard and mountains of books. LYRA is clearly his sole pupil.

CHARLES

The Magisterium teaches that there  
are two worlds.

He draws two circles on the board. SERENA, CHARLES's gecko daemon, sits on top of the board and watches LYRA beadily.

CHARLES (CONT'D)

The world of everything we can see  
and hear and touch, and another  
world, the spiritual world of  
Heaven -

He writes 'Earth' in the first circle and 'Heaven' in the second circle.

LYRA

And then there's Hell.

CHARLES

Well. Yes.

LYRA is looking out of the window and sees ASRIEL across the quad, she scowls. CHARLES adds 'Hell' to the second circle. PANTALAIMON, an ermine, looks at her nervously.

PANTALAIMON

Please don't do it.

LYRA

It's almost five o'clock. He hasn't come. So I have to go to him.

PANTALAIMON

You don't have to do anything.

ASRIEL enters a building opposite, LYRA thinks.

LYRA

Librarian, will you read me that piece on Hell again...

CHARLES

I don't exist to entertain you Lyra. And the Magisterium wouldn't approve of...

LYRA

Please.

CHARLES looks at her and indulgently smiles. He turns towards the bookcase and begins to ascend a wobbly library ladder. But SERENA stays watching LYRA.

CHARLES

Now, where is it...

CHARLES looks for the book, exasperated. His gecko daemon turns toward the bookcase to help and LYRA makes for the door.

CHARLES finds the book. He turns back, he sees she's gone and the door is open. He runs out of the door.

CHARLES (CONT'D)

Lyra? Lyra.

He disappears down the corridor.

Whereupon the door swings back, and LYRA is revealed behind it. She locks it quickly. And then walks back to the window, opens it and climbs out.

There's silence. And then there's a bang on the door.

CHARLES (O.S.) (CONT'D)

All right, you've had your fun.

LYRA pulls herself onto the roof. PANTALAIMON, a cat, waits for her.

PANTALAIMON

People are going to be mad.

LYRA

I'm mad. My own uncle hasn't even  
said hello to me yet.

She starts to run across the roof, we pull back and watch her  
- fearless, brilliant LYRA.

She looks into the Retiring Room.

PANTALAIMON

No, Lyra, that room is expressly  
forbidden.

LYRA

Not for family reunions.

She is about to drop inside when THE MASTER enters. LYRA  
pulls herself up, hidden. She grins.

LYRA (CONT'D)

All right. That was close.

12 INT./EXT. RETIRING ROOM/ROOFTOPS. JORDAN COLLEGE - DAY 2 12

THE MASTER walks assertively into the room. His words seep up  
to LYRA.

THE MASTER

Is this the Tokay?

ALICIA, his raven daemon, scans the room protectively.

The BUTLER appears: a silver haired obsequious man, a silver  
obsequious dog at his feet.

BUTLER

Yes, Master. The 1938, as you  
ordered. His Lordship is very  
partial to that, I remember.

LYRA's ears prick up.

THE MASTER

Good. Now leave me, please.

The BUTLER makes to leave. THE MASTER carefully looks at the  
TOKAY. The BUTLER turns back by the door.

BUTLER

Do you need the lamp, Master?

THE MASTER

Yes, leave that too. Look in during  
dinner to trim it, will you?

The BUTLER leaves.

ALICIA circles the room nervously as THE MASTER takes a small piece of folded paper from his pocket.

He unfolds it and then waits a moment - thinking thinking thinking. Then, his hands trembling, he pours the powder into the wine.

LYRA stares, horrified.

13

EXT. ROOFTOPS. JORDAN COLLEGE - DAY 2

13

PANTALAIMON transforms in shape from a cat to a mouse, climbing up beside LYRA's ear.

PANTALAIMON

You don't know what he put in -

LYRA

If it was innocent why did he send the Butler away?

PANTALAIMON

The Master is a good man, he's always been kind to us.

LYRA

He's poisoning my Uncle.

14

INT. RETIRING ROOM. JORDAN COLLEGE - DAY 2

14

THE MASTER thinks a moment, utterly consumed by what he's just done. Then he hears footsteps and, with one last desperate glance at the wine, departs quickly.

If he'd looked towards the window he'd have noticed LYRA, watching him carefully. But he didn't and he doesn't.

After a beat ASRIEL walks in, his face consumed, carrying projection equipment. He puts it down and sees the wine.

BUTLER (O.S.)

The Master ordered it decanted especially for you, my Lord.

The BUTLER has entered the room. ASRIEL turns to his equipment and starts assembling it.

BUTLER (CONT'D)

There are only three dozen bottles left of the '38.

ASRIEL looks at him with distaste.

ASRIEL

All good things pass away.

BUTLER

Can I help you with the equipment?

ASRIEL

No. Just leave me.

The BUTLER looks at him, nods and exits. STELMARIA follows him and listens at the door. She turns to ASRIEL.

ASRIEL rubs his face. He can only keep his exhaustion at bay for so long. STELMARIA yawns.

STELMARIA

We should rest.

ASRIEL

We should sleep for three days.

ASRIEL looks at his equipment and then goes to the wine.

He picks up the glass, whereupon it's kicked out of his hand and smashes to the floor.

In one fluid move, ASRIEL turns and twists his attacker, throwing her to the floor and holding her arm behind her back. He is a very skilled fighter.

ASRIEL (CONT'D)

Lyra, what the hell are you doing!

LYRA

Let go of me and I'll tell you.

ASRIEL

I'll break your arm first.

PANTALAIMON is a cat and hisses at STELMARIA, who growls back.

LYRA

Do that and I'll let you drink your drugged wine.

He looks up at her, curious now.

LYRA (CONT'D)

I saw the Master poison your wine!

ASRIEL looks at her, thinking it through. He lets go of her arm, an amused smile on his face. LYRA turns and sees the smile and thinks he doesn't believe her.

ASRIEL

You saw him poison my wine?

LYRA

He added white powder, Pan thinks  
it's me being dramatic, but -

ASRIEL laughs. LYRA looks at him, surprised.

LYRA (CONT'D)

I en't lying.

LYRA points to a grain or two of the white powder on the carpet. ASRIEL bends and examines it. He licks his finger and uses it taste the substance. He opens the decanter the Tokay was in - he sniffs it - and then he knocks it onto the floor with a smile.

ASRIEL

Clumsy.

LYRA

That's what you're doing?

ASRIEL

Yes.

LYRA

Someone tries to kill you and you  
just destroy the evidence?

ASRIEL

Someone probably tries to kill me  
and yes, I destroy the evidence.

LYRA

But surely you should be doing  
something.

ASRIEL

I am doing something. I am thinking  
why the Master would want to do  
that to me. I'm sure he had good  
reason for it.

STELMARIA looks at PANTALAIMON and then lowers her head.  
PANTALAIMON does the same. LYRA frowns.

ASRIEL (CONT'D)

What?

LYRA

'Thank you Lyra, for saving my  
life.'

ASRIEL

Oh, yes, well done. I'm very  
grateful.

LYRA

All day I've waited for you to find me and - nothing.

ASRIEL thinks and then looks at LYRA. He opens a wardrobe, looks in it and then around the room.

LYRA (CONT'D)

You're infuriating.

ASRIEL looks at the fireplace and then disregards it. He opens the shuttered windows. He disregards that too.

ASRIEL

And you're tenacious, or you used to be. Do you want a job?

He lifts a section of the heating unit. It has a crawl space inside. He looks at it and smiles. Perfect.

LYRA

No.

ASRIEL

You might find it a little cramped but...

LYRA

I don't want a job.

ASRIEL

I want you to watch the Master. Everything he does. Particularly whenever Dust is mentioned, can you do that?

LYRA looks at him, disbelieving.

ASRIEL (CONT'D)

Good. Quick now. Someone's coming.

LYRA

But -

ASRIEL

Make a noise and I won't help you. You're on your own. You understand?

LYRA hesitates and then nods. She climbs inside.

ASRIEL firmly closes the unit, a dark look on his face.

THE MASTER enters the room, he looks at ASRIEL and then the smashed wine.

ASRIEL (CONT'D)

Bit of an accident I'm afraid. Such a shame. Only three dozen bottles left, apparently?

THE MASTER looks up at ASRIEL. His face betraying a thousand thoughts. ASRIEL smiles gently.

15 INT. RETIRING ROOM PANELS. JORDAN COLLEGE - DAY 2 15

LYRA crawls through to a place where she can stand, and blinks in the darkness. PANTALAIMON becomes a moth. Fluttering his wings in the partial light.

They look at THE MASTER's now unreadable face. LYRA looks at PANTALAIMON.

LYRA

Still not much of a hello, was it?

16 EXT. RIVERBANK. OXFORD - DAY 2 16

SOPHONAX, a large and beautiful cat, looks around herself at the landscape. FARDER CORAM, wise, tricky, his beard matching his daemon's many colours, moves quickly after his daemon.

He sees TONY COSTA.

FARDER CORAM

Tony. Tony Costa.

TONY COSTA turns, his face smudged with tears.

FARDER CORAM (CONT'D)

I'd hoped it was a bad rumour. Who saw Billy last?

TONY COSTA

Me. We were going after that girl. We split. It's my fault.

TONY is broken inside. LYUBA circles above them both. Looking out, always, for BILLY.

TONY COSTA (CONT'D)

They say it's the Gobblers.

FARDER CORAM

Who says?

MA COSTA (O.S.)

Idiots say.

TONY COSTA shrinks at those words. Another hawk ascends beside his own: JAL. His Ma is here.

TONY COSTA

No, Ma.

MA COSTA

My son is missing, and that's nothing to do with no bloody Gobblers. He's just lost, that's all. And we need to help him find his way home.

FARDER CORAM walks over to a bewildered-looking MA COSTA. He takes a breath and holds out a MAP to her.

FARDER CORAM

Then let's organise ourselves and look properly Ma Costa, don't yer think?

She looks up, her eyes screaming pain.

17 EXT. STREETS. OXFORD - DAY 2

17

A long line of GYPTIANS stalk the streets of Oxford.

Above them float birds of prey. Giving a view of all they see.

We pick out the anxious faces of MA COSTA, TONY COSTA and FARDER CORAM.

They pass people - academics and otherwise, going about their business - all of whom look askance at them: gyptians aren't well thought of. But does that stop them? Never.

18 INT. RETIRING ROOM / PANELS. JORDAN COLLEGE - EVENING 2

18

In the Retiring Room sits a select group of Jordan College's trusted FELLOWS and daemons, a flock of men and their creatures.

They only have one thing in common: they all look as if they've spent far too long in libraries. Even the daemons look dusty. We pick out the faces of ASRIEL, THE MASTER, CHARLES, a pugnacious-looking CHAPLAIN, and an elderly but sharp-witted SUB RECTOR.

THE MASTER lights a spirit lamp under a silver chafing dish and melts some butter. His hand is shaking - he controls it - he looks across to ASRIEL, who looks coolly back.

He takes a breath, he concentrates on his task. He slices open some poppy heads and tosses the seed pods into the chafing dish. He speaks with careful control.

## THE MASTER

I feel sure I speak for all of us  
when I bid Lord Asriel welcome.

There's a stamping of feet by the fellows, an acknowledgement  
of sorts.

## THE MASTER (CONT'D)

We don't see him as often as we  
would like, but his visits always  
bring us a great deal to talk  
about.

Above them, LYRA moves to get a closer visual and the unit  
creaks ominously.

## PANTALAIMON

Careful.

LYRA shoots PANTALAIMON, still a moth, a withering look.

## THE MASTER

Needless to say, whatever we  
discuss this evening will remain  
private. Jordan College is not  
going to become a channel for  
gossip, rumour or dangerous  
controversy. Academic freedom is  
too precious to risk. Lord  
Asriel...

As LORD ASRIEL speaks, so the Poppy is passed among the  
fellows, who each take a poppy head and eat the seeds inside  
using a specially adapted fork.

## ASRIEL

Thank you, Master.

THE MASTER and CHARLES exchange a knowing glance. THE MASTER  
indicates the wine stain with a flick of his head.

ASRIEL begins to pump at a lantern, which flares brightly,  
and then he winds quickly a projector which begins to show  
images. LYRA watches, amazed.

## ASRIEL (CONT'D)

As some of you know, I set out for  
the North twelve months ago on a  
diplomatic mission to the King of  
Lapland. At least, that's what I  
pretended to be doing...In fact my  
real aim was to go further north  
still, right on to the ice, to try  
and discover what had happened to  
the Grumman expedition.

The fellows watch, fully engaged.

19 INT. RETIRING ROOM PANELS. JORDAN COLLEGE - EVENING 2 19

But most engaged of all is LYRA, who moves closer to get a better angle.

ASRIEL (O.S.)  
This is the first of the  
discoveries I made...

Again, the panels creak. This time one or two of the fellows look toward the heating unit, irritated.

PANTALAIMON  
If you move again, they will find  
us.

LYRA  
I need to see what he's showing  
them.

PANTALAIMON  
That is not our job.

ASRIEL loads a picture into the projector. It shows a dark wooden hut in the middle distance, in front of it a MAN in furs - his hand raised in greeting - and to one side of him a smaller figure.

20 INT. RETIRING ROOM. JORDAN COLLEGE - EVENING 2 20

ASRIEL  
This photogram was taken with a  
standard silver nitrate emulsion.  
But I took two pictures that day...

ASRIEL loads a second photo, the picture is darker now, and in the centre of it the MAN has altogether changed - he's bathed in light and a fountain of glowing particles appears to be streaming from his hand.

CHAPLAIN  
That light, is it going up or  
coming down?

ASRIEL  
It's coming down, but it isn't  
light. It's Dust.

There's sudden incredulity among the gathered fellows. They know how dangerous talk of Dust is.

FELLOWS  
But how -/Surely -/It can't.

ASRIEL, pleased by the response, glances over at LYRA's hiding place.

ASRIEL

It's Dust. It registered as light on the plate because particles of Dust affect this emulsion as photons affect the silver nitrate emulsion. As you see, the figure of the man is perfectly visible. Now I'd like you to look at the shape to his left. The figure that seems almost to have merged into the darkness.

THE MASTER

That's not the man's daemon?

ASRIEL

No, that shape you can dimly see is a child.

CHARLES

A severed child - ?

The fellows wince and shake their heads.

ASRIEL

An entire child. Which, given the nature of Dust, is precisely the point, is it not?

He makes clear eye contact with THE MASTER - both are aware how dangerous this is.

ASRIEL (CONT'D)

We - as adults - are surrounded by Dust. In fact, we're almost consumed by it. But children - they're not. Or barely at all. Gentleman, I believe this is proof Dust is exclusively attracted to adults.

THE MASTER

Asriel, be very careful.

ASRIEL

And this is where it gets really interesting... One of Grumman's last messages to the Academy in Berlin spoke of a certain natural phenomenon only seen in the lands of the North. I believe this is what he was referring to -

He changes the slide, the next picture is of a small group of tents dimly outlined against a vast horizon of colour. It is the Aurora.

CHAPLAIN

The Aurora. The Northern Lights.

ASRIEL

Yes, when seen with the ordinary emulsion. Now I'd like you to look at it taken with the special emulsion.

21 INT. RETIRING ROOM PANELS. JORDAN COLLEGE - EVENING 2 21

We watch with LYRA as she determinedly peers at the picture. Beyond the Aurora, in the sky, is the unmistakable outline of a city: towers, domes, walls, buildings. All the fellows are amazed.

She looks at PANTALAIMON, an ermine now, staring out just as intently as her.

22 INT. RETIRING ROOM. JORDAN COLLEGE - EVENING 2 22

CHAPLAIN

That looks like - a city.

ASRIEL

It does, doesn't it? A city in the sky.

CHAPLAIN

Is this the Barnard-Stokes other worlds business? It is, isn't it?

ASRIEL looks around - a small, satisfied smile on his face.

ASRIEL

A myriad of worlds, of which The Magisterium only controls one. A myriad of worlds visible only through that most distasteful of substances - Dust.

There's a shocked silence.

THE MASTER

Clear the room. None of us can hear this.

ASRIEL

You have to.

THE MASTER

Asriel, these are heretical discussions.

ASRIEL flashes THE MASTER a look, he knows this is a trump card.

ASRIEL

Necessary discussions. I think Grumman found evidence of these multiple worlds and it cost him his life.

THE MASTER

His life?

ASRIEL carefully removes a vacuum flask from his bag.

ASRIEL

I found his body preserved in the ice off Svalbard.

ASRIEL opens the flask and pulls from it a lump of ice.

The fellows react in shock.

23 INT. RETIRING ROOM PANELS. JORDAN COLLEGE - EVENING 2 23

LYRA peers through the cracks, but can only make out the vaguest of shapes - what seems to be a bloodied lump inside the ice.

LYRA

Pan is that....?

PANTALAIMON

Yes, it's a head.

24 INT. RETIRING ROOM. JORDAN COLLEGE - EVENING 2 24

The elderly SUB-RECTOR isn't shocked however, he inspects the ice carefully. Inside, we see, the blurred but unmistakable shape of a severed head.

ASRIEL

You'll notice the characteristic scalping pattern, I believe you might be familiar with it, Sub-Rector?

SUB-RECTOR

My eyes are not very clear, and the ice is dirty, but it seems to me that there is a hole in the top of his skull. Am I right?

ASRIEL

You are.

SUB-RECTOR

Trepanning?

ASRIEL nods. There's a murmur of excitement around the room.

CHARLES

So he'd become a Shaman? Could the  
Tartars have done this?

ASRIEL takes the flask back from the SUB-RECTOR.

ASRIEL

Or it is a member of the  
Magisterium looking to mask their  
tracks. To keep us safely ignorant.  
Albeit - as you say Master -  
intellectually "free".

THE MASTER closes his eyes, he knows he has been beaten.

ASRIEL (CONT'D)

There is a war happening - right  
now. Between those determined to  
keep us in ignorance, and those -  
like Grumman - who will risk  
everything to fight for the light.  
He was a Scholar of this college,  
his work was profoundly important,  
and I need funding to continue it.  
Who will stand against me?

ASRIEL looks around the room. He knows he has them.

25 EXT. CHRISTCHURCH MEADOW. OXFORD - DUSK 2 25

MA COSTA sits alone looking out across the dusky meadow.

TONY COSTA slowly approaches her.

He sits beside her. They say nothing to each other. TONY  
COSTA puts his arm around his mum.

26 INT. RETIRING ROOM. JORDAN COLLEGE - NIGHT 2 26

The room is now empty as ASRIEL dislocates his equipment.

He checks around himself and then opens the panelling. He  
carefully gathers LYRA in his arms as, asleep, she cradles  
the ermine PANTALAIMON.

27 EXT. QUAD. JORDAN COLLEGE - NIGHT 2 27

ASRIEL carries LYRA across the quad. He stops.

He smiles to himself as he looks at her.

28

INT. LYRA'S ROOM. JORDAN COLLEGE - NIGHT 2

28

ASRIEL gently places LYRA on her bed, we realise (but he does not) she's awake. LYRA pretends to stay asleep as he carefully removes her shoes and puts blankets over her. He thinks a moment and then he makes to leave. PANTALAIMON raises a sleepy head and LYRA stirs.

LYRA

Did they vote to give you the money?

ASRIEL smiles.

ASRIEL

Now you wake up. Yes. They did.

He makes to leave again.

LYRA

What's Dust?

ASRIEL

Nothing to do with you.

LYRA

It *is* to do with me. You told me to spy for you, so now you have to tell me what I was spying about.

ASRIEL

There are some things you are better not understanding yet.

LYRA doesn't like that answer, but she nods.

LYRA

Can I see the man's head?

ASRIEL

Why would I let you do that?

LYRA thinks.

LYRA

You were right. The Master. He didn't like what you were saying. Don't trust him.

ASRIEL

I don't trust anyone. Go to sleep Lyra.

ASRIEL stands looking at her for a moment more, something approaching affection on his face, and then he dismisses all thoughts and leaves the room. LYRA is left.

29 EXT. MASTER'S LODGING. JORDAN COLLEGE - NIGHT 2 29  
A match flares and a lamp is lit. THE MASTER and CHARLES are in the drawing room of his lodgings.

30 INT. MASTER'S LODGING. JORDAN COLLEGE - NIGHT 2 30  
The MASTER stands looking drained at the window.

THE MASTER  
Of course he knew, I have no idea how, but he knew, and he spilled the decanter himself.

CHARLES  
One of his spies?

ALICIA perches on THE MASTER'S shoulder watching CHARLES or SERENA for the slightest movement, neither flinch. And then SERENA licks her own eyeball to stay cool.

THE MASTER  
That got into a locked room before he entered it?

CHARLES  
Forgive me, Master, but I can't help being relieved. I was never happy about the idea. Of murder.

THE MASTER  
You think that's what I wanted? This is what I came from New Denmark for? Not for academia but poisoning?

CHARLES  
I - know it's not a decision you'd have taken lightly.

THE MASTER hesitates, he looks at CHARLES. He pours a decanter of brantwijn. Beside the decanter we pick out the alethiometer and the Book of Everything.

THE MASTER  
The alethiometer warns of appalling consequences if Lord Asriel continues his research. Apart from anything else, the child will be drawn in and -

CHARLES  
Lyra? This is about Lyra? But she's just an innocent girl -

THE MASTER

And she needs to stay one. Which has meant making sure this college was unimpeachable. But there is little chance that tonight's hotbed of heresy will not get back to them.

CHARLES

You're saying we have to let her go?

THE MASTER

The alethiometer says Lyra has to make a journey.

CHARLES

What kind of journey?

THE MASTER

One which, I'm afraid, includes - a great betrayal.

CHARLES

Who's going to betray her? Asriel?

THE MASTER

That's the saddest thing, she will be the betrayer.

CHARLES looks up, shocked.

CHARLES

We can keep her here. We must.

THE MASTER downs the brantwijn, he looks at his friend with tired eyes.

THE MASTER

No. All we can be is scared for her. And scared of her.

31 INT. LYRA'S ROOM. JORDAN COLLEGE - DAY 3

31

Light creeps in through her curtains. LYRA stirs.

She turns over. PANTALAIMON nestles into her. An ermine.

Her nose twitches as PANTALAIMON's tail brushes against her face.

LYRA

Pan...

PANTALAIMON pulls his tail in. LYRA settles back to sleep.

There's a cough.

LYRA looks up, the cough is coming from within the room. PANTALAIMON immediately turns into a growling dog. He yelps in protective alarm.

LYRA twists to see ROGER sitting in the corner of the room.

LYRA (CONT'D)

Roger?

ROGER

Didn't want to wake you 'case you'd had a late night.

LYRA

So you thought instead you'd just sit in the corner of my room.

ROGER

Door weren't locked.

LYRA

You're a bit creepy you know that?

LYRA starts to put on her shoes.

ROGER

Two bits of news you need to know, one, Billy Costa's gone missing, word is the Gobblers got him.

LYRA looks up, shocked.

ROGER (CONT'D)

So from now on we stick in the college and only the college. Please, Lyra.

LYRA

What's the second bit of news?

ROGER

Your uncle's loading up an airship, he's about to fly.

LYRA looks at him and then thrusts her bed covers off.

LYRA

You should have woken me.

LYRA runs hard across the college gardens. ROGER runs after her. Both of their daemons are dogs.

MRS COULTER, an interested look on her face, watches them from a distance. She softly smiles, and heads for the Master's Lodging.

33

EXT. FIELD. OXFORD - DAY 3

33

Ahead of LYRA an AIRSHIP sits, with lots of people loading supplies and scientific instruments. She pushes past, looking for one man.

And then she sees him, supervising the stowing of his camera equipment.

LYRA  
You're not leaving.

ASRIEL looks up. PANTALAIMON wraps himself around LYRA's throat protectively as an ermine.

ASRIEL  
Unfortunately I have to, the  
Magisterium will know everything  
by now.

LYRA  
So you're leaving me? You're  
leaving me with a murderer?

ASRIEL  
The Master would never hurt you.

LYRA  
No. No. You're not -

She pulls some equipment from his hand. He pulls it back.

ASRIEL  
Dirty fingernails. Don't they make  
you wash in this place.

LYRA  
The librarian's fingernails are  
always dirtier than mine.

ASRIEL  
Charles is a learned man. What's  
your excuse?

LYRA  
My uncle shut me in a wall!

ASRIEL yanks the equipment from her.

ASRIEL  
Study hard, Lyra. Try to learn  
something. I'll see you when I next  
come through.

LYRA

I once found a rook on the Library roof. It had a hurt foot. I was going to kill it and roast it but Roger said we should help it get better. So we gave it scraps of food and some wine and then it got better and flew away.

ASRIEL

I'm presuming this fiction has a moral?

LYRA

(this is hard for her)  
Kindness... leads to people - things - rooks - getting better. If you just could be, occasionally -

ASRIEL looks at her a moment more, as if analysing her. Then he swallows and turns away.

ASRIEL

I'm sorry, I just don't have time for you right now.

LYRA

You could take me with you, then we'd have lots of time.

ASRIEL

The North is no place for a child.

LYRA looks at him, she knows she can't win.

LYRA

Does this look like it? The airship my parents died in?

ASRIEL

No. That was smaller.

LYRA looks at him a second more, he doesn't wilt, he stays full of steel. She walks hard away.

ROGER and ASRIEL remain.

ROGER

She's better than you think she is.  
She's - special.

ASRIEL looks at him for a moment.

ASRIEL

Oh, everyone's special.

ASRIEL looks out to watch LYRA walk away. His face betrays him for a moment, but then he turns away.

34 INT. CLOISTERS. JORDAN COLLEGE - DAY 3 34

LYRA is upset and very anxious not to show it, she clutches the ermine PANTALAIMON to her. ROGER trots after her. His daemon a dog.

ROGER  
Lyra... Lyra... will you wait?

But LYRA is not for waiting, she turns left and then right. And then she opens a door, and she starts to descend down some stairs.

35 INT. WINE CELLAR. JORDAN COLLEGE - DAY 3 35

ROGER runs past wine racks that span the length of the room.

ROGER  
Lyra... Lyra...

ROGER tries to follow her footsteps. SALCILIA sniffing out her trail.

He doesn't like the dark much, he doesn't like the cellars much, he doesn't like running much, he doesn't like any of this much, but he ploughs on regardless.

Suddenly, he sees light, he picks up his pace.

36 INT. CRYPT. JORDAN COLLEGE - DAY 3 36

LYRA sits on the edge of a series of coffins. ROGER enters and slows to a stop. Neither say anything for a moment. ROGER carefully walks over, and is surprised to see the coffins are open.

ROGER  
These coffins've got skeletons in 'em!

LYRA  
All coffins have got skeletons in them Roger, it's sorta the point.

ROGER  
But I can see these skeletons.

We pick out SALCILIA and PANTALAIMON for a moment nearby, a dog and a cat playing affably in the corner.

LYRA  
Not all of them. Only the ones with the open caskets. Makes you think what's behind the ones that are closed, doesn't it?

ROGER

I wasn't thinking that, no.

LYRA smiles as ROGER shivers. And then he looks at her and reluctantly smiles.

ROGER inspects the coffins. They're all marked with dates and an engraving of their daemons.

LYRA

Who do you think these were when they were alive? Probably Scholars, I reckon. Or the coffins are Masters, and the Scholars just get one of these skulls.

LYRA indicates the shelves around the room. ROGER takes a step back, as he sees row upon row of skulls staring at him. LYRA picks one of them up.

ROGER

What you doing? You en't supposed to touch 'em.

A coin drops out of the bottom of the skull.

ROGER (CONT'D)

Oh no, you've broken it.

LYRA bends and picks up the coin.

ROGER (CONT'D)

A coin - might be treasure?

LYRA

It's like the ones on the coffins. It's his daemon. Must be.

She takes the coin out, examines it.

LYRA (CONT'D)

A chaffinch. Must have been a dreamer.

ROGER

You think at all? Bout what yer Pan will settle as?

LYRA carefully replaces the skull and the coin.

LYRA

Yeah. I think about it. Pan and I talk about it. Pan thinks he'll be a lion -

PANTALAIMON

I don't.

LYRA

I think he'll be a vulture. Or a screech owl.

PANTALAIMON

You think I'll be a fox.

LYRA

And you? What do you think Salcilia will be?

ROGER

Oh, a house marten or a house cat?

LYRA

Something to do with houses then?

ROGER

Maybe if Pan is a fox, Salcilia will be a vixen.

There's a silence.

ROGER knows he's said something quite bold. He rubs his nose.

ROGER (CONT'D)

Or a badger. Or a mole. I think Salcilia could be a happy mole.

He looks at LYRA, who nods, anxious for this not to be horrible for him.

LYRA

Then let's drink on that.

She pulls out a twisted green bottle - it's open.

ROGER

Lyra!

LYRA

What? Weren't gonna run past all that wine and not take a bottle! To foxes and vixens!

She drinks from it, winces, and then takes a longer slug. She laughs and surreptitiously spits the wine out. As she does, PANTALAIMON changes shape four times, tumbling through forms. She hands the bottle to ROGER, who tentatively takes a sip and then also spits it out.

ROGER

Do they *like* doing this?

PANTALAIMON turns back into a cat and rolls happily on the floor. LYRA picks up three of the coins, plays with them, and then puts them back in different skulls.

LYRA  
(stubbornly)  
Yes. And so do I.

37 INT. CHAPEL. JORDAN COLLEGE - DAY 3

37

THE MASTER is waiting at the top of the stairs as ROGER and LYRA emerge from the crypt.

LYRA is surprised, and instantly aggressive, she knows he is a murderer. PANTALAIMON turns into a dog.

THE MASTER  
Hello Lyra.

LYRA  
Master.

She makes to walk on. ROGER beside her. The MASTER calls after her.

THE MASTER  
I'm pleased to see you taking an  
interest in what lies in the  
Oratory -

LYRA  
What?

THE MASTER  
The Oratory. The crypt you've just  
left.

LYRA  
Oh, that was Roger's idea.

ROGER blushes. THE MASTER looks at him.

ROGER  
No! It wasn't...she makes funny  
jokes that en't funny...

THE MASTER  
Don't you have somewhere you -  
belong?

ROGER  
Probably.

He looks at LYRA, and then runs on.

LYRA  
It was my idea. But I done nothing  
wrong. You never banned me from  
going there.

THE MASTER

No.

LYRA nods dismissively and makes to walk on again, THE MASTER catches her up.

THE MASTER (CONT'D)

It is fortunate to have such history around us, but I do sometimes wonder what life we've condemned you to. Don't you miss the society of other children?

LYRA

I got a society - my friend Roger.

THE MASTER

Roger? Oh, the kitchen boy. I'm sure he's... amusing to run around with, but wouldn't you rather enjoy the company of nobly-born children like yourself?

LYRA

With all respect, they sound boring.

THE MASTER

And perhaps - greatest of all - the companionship of other girls...

LYRA

Now they sound really boring.

THE MASTER almost smiles.

THE MASTER

You do know, I hope, that you are a Scholar of this College. The only child ever to grow up as one. You are important to us.

LYRA considers this.

LYRA

And do I want to be that? Important? To you?

The two are playing a strange sort of poker here.

THE MASTER

I'm afraid it's not something one can opt out of.

(beat)

Come sit on top table tonight. There is someone I'd like you to meet.

LYRA frowns, digesting this.

38

INT. DINING HALL. JORDAN COLLEGE - DAY 3

38

There is a bang on a gong.

THE MASTER

Benedic, Domine, nos et dona tua,  
quae de largitate tua sumus  
sumpturi, et concede, ut illis  
salubriter nutriti tibi debitum  
obsequium praestare valeamus, per  
Christum Dominum nostrum.

LYRA is standing, PANTALAIMON an ermine beside her. She looks across the room and sees ROGER, in uniform. They both mouth the words along with THE MASTER. They smile.

And then she sits, along with the FELLOWS and SCHOLARS.

She turns to her left and is surprised to see a GOLDEN MONKEY beside her, staring up at a portrait of a MASTER and his daemon.

MRS COULTER (O.S.)

Now I'm not used to the grandeur of  
this at all.

LYRA turns around to MRS COULTER, who holds out an arm for the GOLDEN MONKEY to climb onto her shoulder. He looks around, spying the room. When he's looked in every direction, she sits.

LYRA

Oh. Hello.

MRS COULTER

You'll have to show me what knife  
and fork to use. I don't want to  
make a fool of myself.

PANTALAIMON makes careful eyes with THE GOLDEN MONKEY, working him out. He descends onto LYRA's lap.

LYRA

Are you - a female scholar?

MRS COULTER

You seem surprised.

LYRA

Female scholars don't dress like  
you.

MRS COULTER laughs. The GOLDEN MONKEY climbs under the table.

MRS COULTER

I'll take that as a compliment.

(beat)

Not really, I'm a member of St  
Sophia's college, but most of my  
work takes place outside Oxford.

ROGER comes past with a water jug, he fills LYRA's glass, she  
doesn't notice him. He trudges on.

MRS COULTER (CONT'D)

But I'm not interesting, you are.  
Tell me about yourself, Lyra.

LYRA

Nothing to say!

MRS COULTER

So reports that you stole a Gyptian  
barge are completely false, are  
they?

LYRA laughs.

LYRA

How did you hear about that?

ROGER turns back to see LYRA absolutely absorbed in the  
glittering warmth of MRS COULTER.

39

EXT. RIVERBANK. OXFORD - EVENING 3

39

There's a muster of boats on the water. Ropes are being  
untied, ready for use. The gyptians are making to leave.

MA COSTA charges through it, her face wild. She sees FARDER  
CORAM, she heads hard towards him.

MA COSTA

Readying the boats? You think we're  
leaving Farder Coram? My son is  
still out there.

A big man with a bull neck turns around, he has a regal air,  
and a fighter's physique. This is JOHN FAA.

JOHN FAA

Farder Coram's done nothing, I'm  
halting the search.

At the sight of JOHN FAA, MA COSTA drops to her knees. JAL  
joins her on the floor. JOHN FAA pulls her up.

JOHN FAA (CONT'D)

No need for that Ma Costa.

JOHN FAA's crow daemon, BERENICE, comes to rest on his forearm. She looks at JAL wistfully.

MA COSTA

Then I can speak free - you may be the Western King - but my son is worth more time than -

JOHN FAA

(interrupting)

The children call them Gobblers.

MA COSTA

There's nothing saying he's with them. There's nothing saying they even exist.

SOPHONAX approaches JAL and sits by him, loyally.

JOHN FAA

Billy's a good boy. He's strong because you've been a strong and good mother to him, Maggie. And if he could, he'd have found his way back to us. But he hasn't.

MA COSTA

He's just lost his way and he needs us to find him.

JOHN FAA

They've taken sixteen of our children so far, and that number keeps growing. Searching for him here when we know he's lost - that's foolishness, and you know it.

40

INT. PARLOUR. JORDAN COLLEGE - DUSK 3

40

MRS COULTER is standing by the window, LYRA looks down with her. MRS COULTER is holding a glass of wine, LYRA watches how her fingers gently entwine the glass. They're alone in the parlour. The GOLDEN MONKEY keeps his eyes on the door throughout.

MRS COULTER

Interesting. I think. That they choose to retire to the room with the less interesting view.

LYRA

It's tradition. They got to do it. They done it for hundreds of years.

MRS COULTER indicates out of the window.

MRS COULTER

You can see everything up here. All the going's on. If only the scholars were more stimulating to watch....

LYRA thinks. PANTALAIMON perches on her arm, an ermine.

LYRA

I sometimes sit on the chapel roof, watching them. You're right, they're very boring.

MRS COULTER

You've been in Jordan for a while, am I right?

LYRA

I came here as a baby. Not that I remember it.

MRS COULTER

That's right, the youngest scholar the college has ever known.

LYRA

My uncle thought it the best place for me, after my mother and father died.

MRS COULTER

And how do they educate you here sufficiently?

LYRA

I learn plenty - the Librarian makes sure of that. History of the College, history of the Magisterium, history mainly. And then there's stuff I just learn around the place. I found a Rook in one of the college quads with him once - it had a broken foot. We killed it - to save it from pain - and then cut it up in pieces and learnt all about anatomy. It was fascinating.

MRS COULTER stops, she opens a drawer, she reads what's inside, she walks on. LYRA watches on, impressed by MRS COULTER's brazenness.

MRS COULTER

And how much do you listen - to this Librarian?

LYRA

Miss, Mrs Coulter, I appreciate your concern, but I don't need to go to school.

MRS COULTER

Don't need to or don't want to? Want to spend all your time cutting up dead birds? Does Asriel not have plans for you?

LYRA looks up, surprised.

LYRA

You know my Uncle?

MRS COULTER

Everyone *knows* Lord Asriel. But yes - we occasionally pass each other at the Arctic Institute.

LYRA's ears prick up.

LYRA

You're an explorer too?

MRS COULTER

Crudely, yes I suppose. I spent three months in Greenland last year after all.

LYRA tries to contain her excitement.

LYRA

You've travelled North?

MRS COULTER

How else would I have been able to make observations of the Aurora?

LYRA

You've seen the Northern Lights?

MRS COULTER smiles.

MRS COULTER

No, I've no interest in persuading you to school, though I do think some attentive teaching might help you. But I am in the market for an assistant - and I do wonder....

She looks at LYRA provocatively.

LYRA

Me?

MRS COULTER

See the world through a child's eyes and you'll see it anew.

LYRA

But I'm not very - have you talked to people here - I'm not -

MRS COULTER

Some people learn through books, others through doing. You'll do both.

LYRA's eyes glisten with possibility, but then cloud over.

LYRA

The college will never let it happen.

MRS COULTER

I can come to an understanding with Jordan College.

PANTALAIMON turns to LYRA and she remembers ROGER.

LYRA

Well, I can't go alone. My friend Roger, he works in the kitchens, we do everything together -

MRS COULTER

If you don't want the job Lyra...

LYRA

- and he can do anything I can't - cook and clean and -

MRS COULTER

I only need one assistant.

LYRA

Roger and I, we're a good team. He's my best friend.

MRS COULTER

Fine. I'll find space for him - in my kitchen.

LYRA smiles. MRS COULTER extends a hand.

MRS COULTER (CONT'D)

Now, I'm on the nine o'clock airship out of Oxford tomorrow. Is that your last condition, or will you be able to join me?

LYRA looks at the hand.

41 EXT. MA COSTA'S BOAT - DUSK 3

41

MA COSTA is sitting with a glass of spirits in front of her. She hears a noise, JAL turns, JOHN FAA is standing at the side of the boat. She nods, and he climbs on board.

JOHN FAA  
It's changed since I knew it.

MA COSTA  
It's been a long time since.

That's a barb and he knows it.

JOHN FAA  
We're not giving up Maggie.

She looks up at him bitterly. TONY COSTA comes out of the boat.

JOHN FAA (CONT'D)  
We're going to London and then  
we're -

TONY COSTA  
Going to fight the Gobblers aren't  
we?

JOHN FAA looks at TONY COSTA, interested.

TONY COSTA (CONT'D)  
I'd play my part.

MA COSTA  
You will not.

JOHN FAA  
If we can find anything to fight,  
yes, we'll fight those Gobblers.  
And that's how we'll get your son  
back Maggie.

42 EXT. ROOFTOPS. JORDAN COLLEGE - DUSK 3

42

LYRA is looking at ROGER, outraged. PANTALAIMON, a cat at her feet, sniffs at SALCILIA as a ferret.

LYRA  
But you got to.

He looks back, full of consternation.

ROGER  
Lyra, don't do this -

LYRA

London Roger, and after London -  
the North.

ROGER

And I knew you wanted to get there  
eventually - but... until  
eventually - I thought you'd be  
happy here.

LYRA

I'm not and you're not either.

ROGER

Of course I am! This place is  
great! We got the claybeds, and the  
river, and the gardens and the  
college and the - so much - and -

LYRA

But I've seen all of that. You're  
really telling me you don't want to  
come?

ROGER's face tells her all she needs to know.

ROGER

The thing is - the Gobblers are in  
London they say and -

LYRA

You're just scared Roger, scared to  
leave your cosy little life and -

ROGER

This is our home.

LYRA

Stay here then. Become like all the  
servants - Salcilia will become a  
dog and you'll maybe rise as high  
as butler and -

PANTALAIMON hisses, LYRA turns to him, he walks away from  
her, disappointed.

ROGER wipes a tear from his eye. LYRA sees his heartbreak and  
PANTALAIMON's disapproval and stops herself. But she doesn't  
retreat.

LYRA (CONT'D)

You'll realise - first thing  
tomorrow I'll find you outside my  
room and you'll say let's go  
together. You will.

ROGER

Or you'll realise you're not as ready as yer think you are. You talk a big game Lyra, but deep down, I know you're just as scared as I am.

SALCILIA turns into a bird who flies up defiantly at LYRA's face. LYRA faces her down, but there's a hesitation.

LYRA

See you tomorrow.

She stalks away.

43

INT. LYRA'S ROOM. JORDAN COLLEGE - NIGHT 3

43

LYRA shuts the door with a hearty bang.

Then she looks around her room. PANTALAIMON turns into a cat.

LYRA

First thing in the morning. He'll be here and then we'll - go with her -  
(hesitating)  
- we will.

PANTALAIMON knows the hesitation she won't admit to. LYRA starts to take down her pictures and posters.

LYRA (CONT'D)

This can't be our home anymore, and my Uncle never comes here, so... so let's try something new.

She looks at PANTALAIMON.

LYRA (CONT'D)

Our lives have just changed for the better Pan and Roger's not going to stop us celebrating.

44

EXT. CLOISTERS. JORDAN COLLEGE - NIGHT 3

44

ROGER walks slowly through the college cloisters. SALCILIA follows - a dog. ROGER turns and looks at her.

ROGER

No. Don't be a dog. Not tonight.

SALCILIA turns into a cat. ROGER bends down, SALCILIA climbs up onto his shoulder.

And then ROGER is seized hard from behind.

He screams as he is pulled away into the blackness.

45 INT. LYRA'S ROOM. JORDAN COLLEGE - PRE-DAWN 4 45

LYRA wakes slowly to see three robed figures standing at her bedside. She blinks sleepily, unsure what's happening. One reaches up a bony finger and points it at her, and then another, and then the third opens out their hand to reveal a glinting daemon coin within it.

Then, as one, the NIGHTGHOSTS throw back their cowls to show that they have no heads. LYRA screams.

PANTALAIMON becomes a snow leopard and roars at them. They disappear back into the wall.

And then there's a knock. PANTALAIMON turns into a cat.

LYRA  
Roger?

CHARLES opens the door.

CHARLES  
I'm afraid not. Are you quite well?  
I heard screaming?

PANTALAIMON claws at LYRA's feet. LYRA picks him up and cuddles him. He purrs in her ear.

LYRA  
I'm fine. Why are you here?

CHARLES looks at her carefully.

46 OMITTED 46

47 INT. MASTER'S LODGING. JORDAN COLLEGE - PRE-DAWN 4 47

CHARLES stands with THE MASTER. ALICIA, the Master's raven daemon, watches LYRA, now dressed in day clothes, and the owl PANTALAIMON closely from a perch on a cupboard top.

LYRA  
(prepared)  
I'm leaving Jordan to live with Mrs  
Coulter and Roger and -

THE MASTER  
(interrupting)  
No-one is stopping you.

LYRA  
You know about that?

THE MASTER

Mrs Coulter has spoken to me, yes,  
and we're not standing in your way.

LYRA

So... why am I here? Look if Roger  
put you up to this, I know he  
thinks we should stay but -

THE MASTER

Roger put me up to...? The kitchen  
boy? No.

(beat)

Lyra, I promised once to do  
everything I could to protect you  
from anyone who might do you harm.

LYRA

Protect me from what?

CHARLES anxiously looks out of the window.

THE MASTER

And the older you've got, the more  
I've felt the importance of that  
promise.

LYRA

Who did you promise?

THE MASTER

I - think Mrs Coulter will do her  
best by you but I can't be sure. So  
I'm going to give you something and  
you must promise to keep it  
private.

LYRA looks at him, she frowns.

LYRA

Why are you talking in riddles?

CHARLES

This matters Lyra. We need your  
word.

LYRA nods. Silenced by their seriousness.

THE MASTER crosses to the desk and takes from a drawer a  
small velvet black bag - identical to that we saw ASRIEL give  
him, but now worn with age. He takes a raw, worn and chipped  
object from within. It is well-used but still with the  
aristocratic elegance that comes from true power. This is the  
alethiometer.

LYRA

What is that?

THE MASTER  
It's an alethiometer.

LYRA  
Alethio -

THE MASTER thrusts the alethiometer into LYRA's hands. LYRA looks at it and then frowns at THE MASTER. CHARLES looks at the window.

THE MASTER  
One of only six that were ever made. Lord Asriel himself brought it to this college - with, uh...well. It's extraordinary.

LYRA flips open the lid and inside is a mechanical marvel of moving pieces and images. She traces over them with her fingers.

LYRA  
What does it do?

THE MASTER  
It tells you the truth.

LYRA is looking at the object, deeply puzzled.

LYRA  
How?

CHARLES  
The sun is almost up. We must hurry.

THE MASTER looks out of the windows, disconcerted.

THE MASTER  
That you'll have to learn by yourself. But please know this is illegal unless approved by the Magisterium and so secrecy...

LYRA  
No. No. I don't want... secrets. This is my Uncle's. He wouldn't want me to have it.

THE MASTER  
Lyra, look at me. The powers of this world are very strong. Men and women are moved by tides much fiercer than you can imagine, and they sweep us all up into the current. This - hopefully - will provide you with some protection.

He looks at her, deeply concerned.

CHARLES

Go well, Lyra.

THE MASTER

And keep your own counsel.

LYRA looks at him and then the alethiometer. THE MASTER opens the door. She looks at it and then him.

And then she puts the alethiometer into her coat pocket and runs out of the door.

PANTALAIMON, as an owl, looks at ALICIA beadily for a moment more, and then swoops out after her.

48 EXT. QUAD. JORDAN COLLEGE - MORNING 4 48

LYRA watches the sun rise. PANTALAIMON sits, an ermine.

PANTALAIMON

Well, I didn't understand a single word of that but I didn't like it all the same...

LYRA

Roger. We find him. Now.

49 INT. VAN - MORNING 4 49

ROGER wakes in the back of a van, he looks around himself - he's unsure where he is or how he got there.

50 INT. KITCHENS. JORDAN COLLEGE - DAY 4 50

The kitchens are busy, full of frying, steaming and baking.

LYRA

I'm looking for Roger.

CHEF

So am I! Didn't turn up for the breakfast shift, did he?

LYRA turns and looks at the CHEF, tall and slender with a pig daemon. She frowns.

51 EXT. COLLEGE GARDENS. JORDAN COLLEGE - DAY 4 51

LYRA walks, her speed increasing with every step around the gardens. PANTALAIMON turns into a falcon and ascends high into the sky. PANTALAIMON looks down and shakes his head.

51A EXT. ROOFTOPS. JORDAN COLLEGE - DAY 4 51A

LYRA searches across the rooftop. Looking desperately down onto the college quads.

LYRA  
But where is he?

52 INT. CRYPT. JORDAN COLLEGE - DAY 4 52

LYRA runs through the crypt. PANTALAIMON flies, still as a falcon above her. She's trying not to show how scared she is.

LYRA  
Roger? You down here? Don't pretend  
you like it here now.

She stops by the skulls. She thinks, and then resets the coins in the right order. She stops - for a moment of pure atonement.

LYRA (CONT'D)  
Sorry.

She hesitates a moment more and then runs on.

53 EXT. QUAD. JORDAN COLLEGE - DAY 4 53

LYRA looks left and right, the panic now clear.

LYRA  
They've got him, haven't they, Pan?

PANTALAIMON, a falcon above her, flies anxiously.

54 EXT. ENTRANCE. JORDAN COLLEGE - DAY 4 54

LYRA looks out of the college entrance.

LYRA  
Roger? ROGER! ROGER!

Her shouts echo down the streets.

MRS COULTER  
Oh good. I thought for a moment you  
weren't coming...

LYRA looks at her, bewildered.

MRS COULTER (CONT'D)  
The airship.

LYRA

They've got Roger. The Gobblers  
have got him. I know they have.

MRS COULTER bends beside LYRA. She takes out her handkerchief  
and gently dries LYRA's eyes.

MRS COULTER

Then you need to come with me -  
now.

LYRA

Now?

MRS COULTER

The Gobblers are in London, as  
everyone knows. With my connections  
you may stand a chance of getting  
him back.

LYRA looks at her, panicked.

LYRA

But I haven't packed, I haven't  
said goodbye...

MRS COULTER

You've got all you need. Come now,  
we already risk missing our flight.

MRS COULTER turns and walks, expecting LYRA to follow.

PANTALAIMON

Lyra -

LYRA

Pan, you heard her? We've no  
choice.

LYRA starts to walk, but PANTALAIMON is revealed as a monkey  
digging his paws into the ground. He doesn't move. LYRA keeps  
walking.

LYRA (CONT'D)

Stop that.

PANTALAIMON resists following her, she yells out in pain.

LYRA (CONT'D)

You're hurting me.

PANTALAIMON looks at her.

PANTALAIMON

I'm hurting both of us. Lyra, the  
Master -

LYRA

And why would we trust him? He  
tried to poison my Uncle, remember?

PANTALAIMON

(with finality)

Roger said we weren't ready and I  
don't think we are.

LYRA looks at her daemon soulfully.

LYRA

Roger's gone. We've no other  
choice.

PANTALAIMON looks up at her tearfully and nods. He runs to  
her, changing into an ermine as he jumps into her arms. They  
both cry.

LYRA (CONT'D)

It hurt so much when you were  
pulling away from me.

PANTALAIMON

I know. I know. I just -

LYRA

I know. And I'm scared too.

54A EXT. CUSTOMS HOUSE. LONDON - DAY 4

54A

ROGER is hauled by two MEN into a broken-down looking  
building.

55 INT. CUSTOMS HOUSE. LONDON - DAY 4

55

ROGER is deposited in a warehouse and the door is locked  
behind him. He looks around at the glassy-eyed kids, it's  
warm and glowing in the room but something is - wrong.

BILLY COSTA (O.S.)

Roger?

ROGER looks up, and so does SALCILIA, now a ferret. She runs  
up ROGER's leg and into his arms.

ROGER

Billy? Billy Costa?

BILLY looks lost, RATTER a squirrel by his feet. ROGER fast  
approaches him and then envelops him in a hug.

ROGER (CONT'D)

Where are we?

BILLY looks up, his expression sours.

56 EXT. FIELD / AIRSHIP. OXFORD - DAY 4 56

An airship stands waiting on the grass.

LYRA walks towards it, pulls back... and then steels herself and walks forward.

57 INT. PASSENGER AIRSHIP - DAY 4 57

MRS COULTER looks around herself, and then takes some papers out of her bag. She begins to read and notate. LYRA takes an uneasy seat opposite her, PANTALAIMON a mouse.

LYRA

So where do we start looking for Roger -

MRS COULTER

Lyra, airships aren't safe places to talk.

LYRA

But we need to -

The GOLDEN MONKEY looks around the airship anxiously, at a CONDUCTOR and a small group of professionally-dressed PASSENGERS.

MRS COULTER

We're together now Lyra. We'll have plenty of time to discuss whatever you wish. A bit of quiet now will be best.

Beat. LYRA looks up, as if suddenly unsure.

MRS COULTER (CONT'D)

I am pleased you're coming with me though. I think it's the right decision for both of us.

LYRA

I've never been in an airship before. My parents died in -

MRS COULTER

I heard. But that was a long time ago. Technology has vastly improved.

Beat. She looks up at LYRA.

MRS COULTER (CONT'D)

You'll be safe now.

LYRA looks down at the gleaming steeples and spires. She looks, surprised, at a pattern of boats leaving Oxford.

LYRA

The Gyptians. They're leaving too.

But MRS COULTER doesn't look up, she stays immersed in her paperwork. LYRA nods, accepting the rebuke.

58 EXT. RIVER - DAY 4

58

A flotilla of boats make their way down the river. JOHN FAA's boat leads, and he stands at the prow, looking concerned.

59 INT. PASSENGER AIRSHIP - DAY 4

59

PANTALAIMON, a mouse, nibbles LYRA's ear. LYRA turns from the gyptians, reaches up and strokes PANTALAIMON's back.

And then she looks down at the alethiometer, just visible in her pocket.

She thinks. She looks up, she sees MRS COULTER looking at her. Interested by the decision they've both made.

LYRA pushes the alethiometer further into her pocket.

CREDITS.