

"THE SHADOW RISING: DECISIONS"

FADE IN:

EXT. STONE OF TEAR - DAY

A beautiful sunset, with seagulls flying past, and the hazy outline of a ship near the horizon. We pull back, revealing the busy streets of Tear, and then through half-drawn purple draperies...

INT. RAND'S BEDCHAMBER - DAY

...into a large room with a four-poster bed, rugs, a fireplace, and a couple of lounging chairs. The CAMERA stops and begins turning clockwise around the room. Raised voices can be heard as the CAMERA turns, and it slows momentarily to focus on CALLANDOR, a glittering sword on an ornate stand. It continues rotating until the arguing noblemen are all in frame. RAND AL'THOR is flanked by two Tairen High Lords, MEILAN and SUNAMON, who are trying to stand proud and yet keep an obedient demeanor. Rand is looking at an unwrapped bundle of white sheets. We can see the top sheet is titled 'Treaty Between Tear and Mayene', but then Rand tosses the bundle at Meilan. He catches it nimbly and bows, but not before we can see a flash of anger.

SUNAMON

All is as you said, my Lord Dragon.
Grain for ships...

RAND

And two thousand Tairen levies to see to the proper distribution of the grain and protect Tairen interests. Two thousand men. Under the command of Torean!

MEILAN

The High Lord Torean has an interest in affairs with Mayene, my Lord Dragon.

RAND

He has an interest in forcing his attentions on a woman who won't look at him! Have you even spoken to Berelain?

Rand grimaces, and the bundle of papers goes up in flames. Yelling, Meilan throws the bundle into the fireplace and brushes sparks and cinders from his finely-made coat.

RAND

(quietly)

You will go to Berelain, and by noon tomorrow, you will have offered her the treaty I want, or by the sunset, I'll hang both of you. If I have to hang High Lords every day, two by two, I will. Now get out of my sight.

The High Lords back away, bowing with each step, making a mockery of their own obedience.

RAND

Get out!

They run for the door, pulling it open with little grace. An Aiel guard looks in to check things out, then closes the door. Rand trembles with anger, and turns towards Callandor, which seems to beckon him. He looks at his palms, each of which has a heron branded in the center. The CAMERA zooms slowly in on his palms as all we hear is Rand's breathing.

SELENE/LANFEAR

You are changed from when I last saw you. Stronger. Harder.

Spinning to face this new voice, Rand sees the woman he knew as SELENE, tall, blonde, dressed in white and silver.

RAND

Selene, where did you come from? How did you get here? I thought...

SELENE/LANFEAR

I go where I wish to be. You have been marked, but no matter. You were mine, and you are still mine. I will lay claim to what is mine openly, now.

RAND

Selene, we had pleasant days together, and hard days; I'll never forget your courage, or your help, but we were just companions. We traveled together, but that was the end of it. You will stay here, in the Stone, and when peace returns

to Cairhien, I will see that your estates are returned to you.

SELENE/LANFEAR

You HAVE been marked... Estates? I may have had estates in those lands, once. The land has changed so much since then... Selene is only a name I sometimes use, Lews Therin. The name I made my own is Lanfear.

RAND

A poor joke, Selene. And my name is Rand.

SELENE/LANFEAR

We call ourselves the Chosen - chosen to rule the world forever. We WILL live forever. You can, too.

Rand tries to take a step back, but something invisible stops him. His eyes widen.

RAND

Light, you ARE one of them.

He turns towards Callandor, but the invisible wall prevents him from reaching the ter'angreal.

SELENE/LANFEAR

I cannot trust you fully, Lews Therin. Certainly not with Callandor. There are only two more powerful that a man can use. One, at least, still exists, but I will not trust you yet with your little toy.

RAND

My name is Rand. Rand al'Thor.

SELENE/LANFEAR

You are Lews Therin Telamon. Oh, you may not look like him, but I would know who is behind those eyes even if I'd found you in your cradle. How much easier everything would be if I had found you then... Do you wish to see my true appearance?

Selene/Lanfear smiles, and around her the air shimmers as if from a great heat. Her face and body morphs into someone

different, someone even more beautiful, more mature, more regal. Selene is gone, replaced by the true Lanfear. Rand tries to speak, but nothing comes out.

LANFEAR

Now you see me as I am, and I have you in my hands.

She draws a fingernail along his jaw hard enough to make him flinch.

LANFEAR (CONT.)

The time for games and subterfuge is past, Lews Therin. Long past.

RAND

Do you mean to kill me, then? The Light burn you, I -

LANFEAR

Kill you? I mean to have you forever! You were mine long before that pale-haired milksop stole you, before she ever SAW you! You loved me!

RAND

And you loved power!

Lanfear takes a step back, shocked at his outburst. She tilts her head, studying him.

LANFEAR

You've learned much... more than I would have believed, truly... but you are still fumbling your way through a maze in the dark, and your ignorance will kill you. Some of the others fear you too much to wait. Sammael, Rahvin, Moghedien. Others, perhaps. But they will come after you. They will not try to turn your heart. They will come at you by stealth, destroy you while you sleep, because of their fear. But there are those who could teach you, show you what you once knew. None would dare oppose you then.

RAND

Teach me? A Forsaken to teach me? Are you mad? You're the enemy - I hate everything you've done,

everything you stand for. I'll destroy you if I can. You, and the Dark One, and every last Forsaken!

LANFEAR

Do you know why some of us fear you? Do you have any idea, little boy? Because they are afraid the Great Lord of the Dark will give you a place above them. The Great Lord wants you. He wants to exalt you above all other men. He told me.

RAND

That's ridiculous. The Dark One is still bound in Shayol Ghul, or I would be fighting the Last Battle right now. And if he knows I exist, he'd want me dead.

LANFEAR

Oh, he knows. The Great Lord knows more than you suspect. You CAN talk to him; go to Shayol Ghul, into the Pit of Doom, and you can... bathe in his presence.

Rand recoils from the look of ecstasy on Lanfear's face.

LANFEAR (CONT.)

Words cannot describe it. You must experience it to know. Kneel to the Great Lord, and he will set you above all others, leaving you free to reign as you will. Asmodean will teach you to wield the Power without it killing you. Let me help you.

She stands right next to him, whispering in his ear.

LANFEAR (CONT.)

We can destroy the others, we can rule the world together. Two great sa'angreal were made just before the end, one for each of us. Their power... With those, we could challenge even the Great Lord himself. Even the Creator!

Rand draws back, breathing raggedly, his eyes wide.

RAND

You ARE mad. The Father of Lies says he wants to exalt me? I was born to fight him, that is why I am here. I'll fight him and all of you until the Last Battle! Until my last breath!

She stands there, studying him like he's a museum exhibit.

LANFEAR

I could take you with me. I could have you turned to the Great Lord whatever you want or believe. There are ways.

His eyes roll around, looking for anything in the room that might help him escape her clutches.

LANFEAR (CONT.)

You were always stubborn. I won't take you, not this time. I want you to come to me of your own will.

Behind Lanfear, a man-like shape comes through the doorway. The shape is like a chameleon, changing its colours to match its surroundings. In its right hand is a dull-looking knife. Rand blinks, tries to focus on this new threat.

LANFEAR (CONT.)

What is the matter? You're frowning.

Rand pushes Lanfear out of the way, grimaces, and a fiery sword appears in his hands. The shape rushes at him, and as the CAMERA circles around the two, Rand dances around the outstretched knife, swinging his blade behind his back, cutting off the shape's hand at the wrist. He continues to pivot around the shape, thrusting his sword through the shape's heart. Suddenly the chameleon effect stops, and a male corpse falls to the floor.

RAND

A Gray Man. What are you playing at, Lanfear? You could have killed me easily.

LANFEAR

I make no use of the Soulless. I told you there are... differences among the Chosen. There is still time for you to come with me, to learn, to live. You do not do the tenth part of what you can. Come

with me, and learn. Or do you mean to try and kill me, now?

The moment hangs in the air as Rand tries to decide what to do. Then a shocked look passes over his face as he realizes...

RAND

My Aiel guards - what did you do to them?

He walks backwards towards the door, his sword held up in front of him, keeping Lanfear at bay.

LANFEAR

Nothing. Do not go out there. This may only be a testing to see how vulnerable you are, but even a testing can kill a fool for a man.

CUT TO:

OUTER HALLWAY

The camera centers on the large oaken door that leads to Rand's bedchambers. The door is flung open, and as Rand steps into the doorway, the CAMERA pulls back to reveal a scene of carnage: six Aiel guards lying on the floor, bloody and silent. Three ordinary-looking men, also dead, with spears run through them.

RAND'S POV

Past the dead men, down the hallway, a small battle is being fought, with Defenders clashing with Trollocs and a MYRDDRAAL. An alarm gong sounds, and then another. The Defenders are losing badly.

BACK TO SCENE

Rand raises his sword, his eyes cold with rage.

RAND

Fade! Try me!

Rand and the Myrddraal rush at each other, the young man leaping over the dead bodies to meet the evil creature. Rand skids on some blood and nearly loses his balance as he meets the Fade's swing with his own blade.

CLOSE SHOT - LANFEAR

She punches the door frame with a closed fist.

LANFEAR

Fool!

BACK TO SCENE

Rand regains his footing and the duel is on.

RAND

Rally to the Stone! The Stone stands!

The swords are a blur, but it appears as if Rand is not faring well.

MYRDDRAAL

You will die this time. I will give your flesh to the Trollocs and take your women for my own.

The duel continues a few moments longer, before Rand is able to strike through the Fade's blade, shattering it. The next swing takes the Myrddraal's head off and with that, Rand staggers backward, panting. Behind him, the Trollocs are dying, their link to the Myrddraal broken. The remaining Defenders stab the Trollocs viciously before turning to greet their leader. In the distance, somewhere in the Stone, the sounds of battle could be heard.

RAND

Follow me.

SERIES OF SHOTS

- A) Rand and the Defenders hurry down a gently spiraling stone stairwell.
- B) A group of Aiel crash down on a clutch of Trollocs.
- C) Rand slices the sword arm off a Myrddraal.
- D) In a long, high-ceiling chamber, MOIRAINNE and LAN fight off a couple dozen Trollocs. Lan's sword is liquid death, while Moiraine hurls fireballs from her open hands.
- E) Rand and company turn a corner and are surprised by five Trollocs, who charge without hesitation. Spinning like a top, Rand cuts through the beasts like a whirlwind.

F) A Trolloc thrusts a spear towards Moiraine's exposed back. Without turning to look, Lan swings his sword behind him, cutting the Trolloc's leg off at the knee.

RAND'S POV

Alone, Rand enters a room to find a Trolloc snacking on a dead noblewoman's arm, as two other Trollocs eagerly await their turn. The sword slashes across the first Trolloc's belly, and it topples to the floor.

BACK TO SCENE

Rand turns to face the other two, but that first Trolloc's leg thrashes in its death-throes, tripping the young man. One of the other Trollocs tackles Rand, its wolf muzzle snapping at the air above his head. The other Trolloc raises its axe, ready to swing the killing blow.

RAND'S POV

A grunt, and the axe drops from the Trolloc's grip. Then the Trolloc with the wolf snout is pulled off him... by another Trolloc.

BACK TO SCENE

Rand leaps to his feet, amazed, as this turncoat Trolloc finishes killing the other Trollocs, then runs off down the hall.

LANFEAR (O.S.)

You risk everything, rushing about wildly with that... that sword.

Rand turns to find Lanfear, disguised as a young girl, her voice the same.

LANFEAR (CONT.)

You build a hut of twigs when you could have marble palaces at the snap of your fingers. You must learn. Join with me.

RAND

Was this your doing? That Trolloc, saving me?

LANFEAR

If I take credit, you will expect it again, and that could be deadly. None of the others is really certain where I stand, and I like it that way. You can expect no open aid from me.

RAND

Expect your aid? You want me to turn to the Shadow. You can't make me forget what you are with soft words.

He grimaces, and she flies through the air to slam against a wall hanging. She grunts, and then he, too, is flying, crashing into the wall opposite Lanfear, and they are pinned, each not giving the other an inch.

LANFEAR

Whatever you can do, Lews Therin, I can do better. You half-use the smallest fraction of what you are capable of, and walk away from what would allow you to crush all who come against you. Where is Callandor, Lews Therin? Still up in your bedchamber like some useless ornament? Do you think yours is the only hand that can wield it, now that you have drawn it free? If Sammael is here, he will take it.

Growling, Rand struggles against the invisible bonds that hold him against the wall. Abruptly, the bonds disappear, and he stumbles forward. He looks at Lanfear, trying to decide what to do with her. Without fanfare, she cuts the invisible bonds he had on her and steps away from the wall, which makes Rand gasp.

RAND

You can't do that.

LANFEAR

I do not have to see a flow to unravel it, if I know what it is and where. You see, you have much to learn. I like you like this. You were always too stiff-necked and sure of yourself for comfort. So - are you forgetting Callandor already, then?

Rand makes a frustrated noise and runs out of the room.

RAND'S BEDCHAMBER

Rand runs through the open doorway and sighs in relief as he sees Callandor is still on its stand. He approaches it slowly, aware of the power it can unleash within him. As he puts his hand on the hilt, a Myrddraal steps into the doorway.

CLOSEUP - CALLANDOR

The sword seems like it catches fire, flooding the eye with brilliance.

BACK TO SCENE

There is a whooshing sound, and the Myrddraal turns to flee, when... Its clothes and armor crumples to the floor, the creature inside vaporized by Rand's use of the One Power. Rand pulls the sword from the stand and hefts it in one hand. A serene look passes over his face.

OUTER HALLWAY

Rand points the sword at a huddle of Trollocs and a Fade, and flames erupt from the floor beneath them. He walks toward the shrieking beasts, and by the time he reaches them, there is nothing left but ash. He walks down the stairwell.

STAIRWELL

A Trolloc comes rushing up the stairs, and Rand points the tip of the sword at it in a casual manner. The Trolloc is hurled backwards and hits the wall, exploding into dust.

HALLWAY

He comes upon a small battle between Aiel and Trollocs, and lights every Trolloc he can see on fire. The Aiel flee down the hallway, looking for other Trollocs to kill. Rand stops in the middle of the hallway, his brow furrowed.

RAND

I need to do something... more.
Bigger.

He grimaces, and Callandor explodes with light. The CAMERA tilts upward to look at the high ceiling. A cloud began to form, a stormcloud with streaks of red and black and silver

running through it. It boils, compressing in on itself, and it seems like the light from Callandor is being sucked into the cloud. It gets smaller and smaller, brighter and brighter, until we...

FADE TO:

SERIES OF SHOTS

- A) Lightning strikes a Myrddraal stepping out of a side corridor.
- B) A dozen Trollocs are chasing a couple of servants when the lightning bolts appear out of thin air to strike each one in the chest, knocking them back, killing them.
- C) A Myrddraal is pulling its sword out of an Aielman's chest when lightning strikes it from behind.
- D) Trollocs and Darkfriends fighting an ever-dwindling circle of Aiel, then, lightning from all sides, hammering down on the evil creatures.

FADE TO:

HALLWAY

Rand sways, using Callandor to steady himself. The light has gone out. Moiraine rushes in and stops herself a dozen feet away from him.

MOIRAINÉ

How...? What you have done, I would not have believed possible.

Lan appears beside Moiraine, flanking her, protecting her from all threats, including the one in front of her.

MOIRAINÉ (CONT.)

Are you... well, Rand?

Rand looks away from the Aes Sedai, and sees a young girl lying dead on the floor a few feet away. He walks to her and bends down.

CLOSE SHOT - LITTLE GIRL'S FACE

Rand's hand brushes strands of hair away from her face.

CLOSE SHOT - RAND

His tears run tracks through the grime and dirt of battle on his cheeks.

BACK TO SCENE

He stands, grips Callandor.

MOIRAINÉ

I will see that someone takes care of her, Rand. You cannot help her now.

RAND

(off Callandor)

With this, I can do anything. Anything!

MOIRAINÉ

Rand!

Callandor blazes with light, and the little girl's body arches up, filled with the One Power. Her legs and arms jerk as if shocked.

MOIRAINÉ (CONT.)

Rand, you cannot do this!

The girl's chest rises and falls. Blood oozes from the wound in her chest.

CLOSEUP - LITTLE GIRL

Her eyes are lifeless.

BACK TO SCENE

Rand's tears continue to flow.

RAND

She has to live! Heal her, Moiraine. I don't know how.

MOIRAINÉ

Death cannot be Healed, Rand. You are not the Creator.

Slowly, the little girl's body slumps back to the floor. Rand howls, a cry of immense pain. Strands of fire lash the walls and ceiling. Callandor's glow ceases.

RAND

The others. Elayne, Perrin, the rest. Was I too late for them?

MOIRAINÉ

You were not too late. But...

RAND

Are they still alive?

MOIRAINÉ

They are.

Rand's legs buckle, and in a swift motion, Lan is there, holding the youth up. Moiraine takes Rand's head in her hands and closes her eyes. The air ripples slightly, and Rand flinches, then sags. He nods and Lan lets him go.

RAND

Lanfear was here. She said this wasn't her doing, and I believe her. She didn't try to kill me, and I didn't try to kill her. You don't seem surprised, Moiraine.

MOIRAINÉ

I doubt you could kill her. Yet. Not without help. And I doubt she will try to kill you. Yet. We know little of Lanfear, but we do know she loved Lews Therin Telamon. I don't know that you're safe from her, but I doubt she will try to kill you as long as she thinks she might win Lews Therin back again.

Rand shakes his head, scrubbing at his forehead with one hand. He turns away from them and begins walking away.

RAND

Tomorrow.

MOIRAINÉ

Tomorrow?

RAND

Tomorrow, I will tell you what I am going to do. A good night to us all, the Light willing.

FADE OUT