

INT. CLIONA'S PERSONAL CHAMBERS IN THE UNDERWORLD

A darkness envelops the party and LEANAN as they enter CLIONA's chambers. Aside from the candles lit sporadically about the space there is nothing to decipher...

...Except, in the center of the room stands a woman with her back turned. The strands of her silver hair and the material from her dress float off her body.

A levitating scroll and quill accompany her as she pours over what looks like scrawled names. Deep in thought, she hems and haws as she reads through.

She points. The quill crosses out a name.

A slight breeze carries a nearly imperceivable cry.

She is oblivious to those who stand behind her. Leanan cautiously steps forward.

LEANAN

Sister?

The scroll and quill freeze in midair. Cliona's previously flowing hair straightens out like a spooked cat.

She drops her upraised hand. The scroll and quill fall with a clatter.

Cliona's stiff body turns to face Leanan. Her face reveals shock, but also a deep rage building. Leanan, in turn, swallows back tears.

For a moment, they stare at one another in silence.

Cliona composes herself.

CLIONA

Why have you come here?

LEANAN

I think you know, sister.

CLIONA

I have not seen you in centuries.
How could I know what thoughts fill
the mind of a stranger?

Leanan's not prepared for the cold response.

LEANAN

Cliona please-

CLIONA

NO!

She turns away abruptly, slamming her palms down on her desk.

CLIONA (CONT'D)

Do not dare speak my name.

Leanan bows her head. But she pushes on.

LEANAN

(softly)

I have come to reconcile with you.

Cliona whirls around.

CLIONA

WE ARE AT WAR!

Cliona's hair creates a wild crown around her head, like the unquenchable flames of a wildfire. She backs down from her aggressive stance, and lowers her gaze towards Leanan.

CLIONA (CONT'D)

(coldly)

Sister.

Leanan straightens herself, deciding to match Cliona's energy.

LEANAN

Yes, I am aware as your creatures
have savaged my lands and people.

Cliona stays silent.

LEANAN (CONT'D)

We cannot continue like this. It is
tearing apart the very realm we are
sworn to oversee.

CLIONA

You abandoned ME. YOUR duty. OUR
followers.

LEANAN

And I apologize. But you have to
understand I could not bear to
witness what this had all become.

Leanan gestures to the surrounding Underworld.

LEANAN (CONT'D)

Those are not your followers. They
are slaves bound to the chains of a
life that has long left them,
unable to move on due to the
torture YOU resign them to...

CLIONA

They are deserving.

A pause.

CLIONA (CONT'D)

(sighs)

This is beyond me now. The Tuatha
Dé Danann demands your imprisonment
and I alone cannot placate their
desires.

Cliona circles around to the entrance of the room, blocking
the exit.

CLIONA (CONT'D)

(dejected)

If you surrender now this can be
peaceful. If not...

She hesitates.

CLIONA (CONT'D)

I recommend you ready yourself.

Leanan's stare is unflinching. She will not back down.

Cliona frowns. With a wave of her arm, the candles
extinguish.

A battle begins shrouded in darkness.