

UNFINISHED BUSINESS

Written by

Nicholas Slade

INT. PUB - NIGHT

RED XAVIER, 25, tall and muscular with long black hair and red eyes, walks into the pub.

He wears a long black trench coat. A sword hangs on his hip.

Red walks up to the bar where a BARKEEP, 50s, in a vest, cleans a glass.

RED

Hey, barkeep. I'm looking for a man by the name of Ennis Barrfiend. You heard anything about him?

Barkeep places the glass on the bar. He stares at Red.

BARKEEP

And why do you want to know that?

RED

He and I have... unfinished business.

Barkeep picks up the glass. He looks to his right.

BARKEEP

I heard those three over there mention that name.

Red looks over at the other end of the bar to see --

TALL BOUNTY HUNTER, 30s, lanky, MUSCULAR BOUNTY HUNTER, 30s, buff, and SHORT BOUNTY HUNTER, 30s, rat-like, harass a beautiful WAITRESS, 20s, red hair and freckles, at the bar.

TALL BOUNTY HUNTER

Come on, lass, how about you come with us for a while, eh?

Tall Bounty Hunter grabs her butt.

She pulls back and slaps him.

WAITRESS

Piss off!

Bounty Hunters laugh. Tall Bounty Hunter pulls out a knife.

Waitress trembles.

Red frowns and walks over to the them.

Muscular Bounty Hunter glances at Red and laughs.

MUSCULAR BOUNTY HUNTER  
Look, boys, we got ourselves a  
knight in shining armor.

Short Bounty Hunter cackles.

SHORT BOUNTY HUNTER  
Yeah, but it looks like he forgot  
his armor at home.

Red stares at the three.

Tall Bounty Hunter walks up to Red.

TALL BOUNTY HUNTER  
You got something to say to me,  
boy?

RED  
I'm looking for some information. I  
was told you could help me.

Tall Bounty Hunter laughs again.

TALL BOUNTY HUNTER  
Information? Don't you know who we  
are?

SHORT BOUNTY HUNTER  
Tell him who we are, Boss.

TALL BOUNTY HUNTER  
We're the roughest, nastiest bounty  
hunters this side of the Runic  
Mountains.

Tall Bounty Hunter leans into Red.

TALL BOUNTY HUNTER (CONT'D)  
That means you're not getting a  
single bit of information from us.  
Not. One. Bit. You got that?

Red smiles.

RED  
I was kinda hoping you'd say that.

Red punches Tall Bounty Hunter in the face. He knocks him out  
cold.

The other two Bounty Hunters' mouths gape.

Red looks at them.

RED (CONT'D)  
Either of you feel like talking?

Short and Muscular Bounty Hunters draw their swords.

Short Bounty Hunter charges at Red. Red dodges him and gets behind him. Red strikes Short Bounty Hunter's neck.

Short Bounty Hunter falls to the floor unconscious.

Muscular Bounty Hunter swings his sword.

Red dodges and knees him in the groin. Red grabs his head and knees him in the face.

Muscular Bounty Hunter falls unconscious.

RED (CONT'D)  
Guess not.

Waitress walks up to Red.

WAITRESS  
Thanks, stranger.

Red nods. He kneels down and goes through Tall Bounty Hunter's pockets.

He pulls out a letter.

Red opens the letter and examines it.

INSERT - LETTER, which reads:

"We have located the Barrfiend Bandits. I don't care what you do to them, just bring my daughter back home safely. I have dispatched my best man, Clancy, to assist you. He will meet you at sunrise at the following location to provide you with your next instructions..."

BACK TO THE PUB

Red looks up from the letter to Barkeep.

Barkeep slides Red a drink.

EXT. FOREST - DAY

Red walks down a forest path. He stops at a clearing.

In the center of the clearing stands CLANCY, late 20s, short blond hair and thin frame. A sword hangs on his hip.

Red walks toward Clancy.

RED  
I take it you're Clancy.

Clancy looks up from the ground. He turns to Red.

CLANCY  
Who are you? Where are the three  
hunters my employer met with  
before?

Red smiles.

RED  
I'm afraid they won't be coming.

Red pulls out the letter from his coat and holds it out.

RED (CONT'D)  
You're going to have to work a deal  
with me.

Clancy glances at the letter.

CLANCY  
You took them out?

Red stops in front of Clancy.

RED  
This letter says you know where  
Barrfiend is. Tell me.

Clancy scowls.

CLANCY  
Why? Because of you my plan to save  
Lady Marthaline is ruined.

Red raises an eyebrow.

RED  
Who? Oh, the kid Barrfiend's got.  
Whatever, just tell me where  
Barrfiend is.

CLANCY  
And what will you do when you find  
him?

A wicked smile flashes across Red's face.

RED  
I'm gonna kill him. Along with  
anyone else who's foolish enough to  
follow that sack of trash.

Clancy takes a step toward Red. He raises his fist.

CLANCY  
And what about Lady Marthaline!

Red pushes Clancy's fist away.

RED  
That's really not my concern.

Clancy turns and walks away.

CLANCY  
Then your need for blood is not my  
concern either.

Red crosses his arms.

RED  
And where are you going?

CLANCY  
To save Lady Marthaline.

RED  
On your own? You'll get massacred.

Clancy stops and turns around.

CLANCY  
I'll have you know that I am more  
than capable with a sword.

Red smirks.

RED  
Really? If you're so great, then  
how did these bandits get away with  
your young mistress?

Clancy grits his teeth. He runs up to Red and grabs his coat.

CLANCY  
What the hell is your problem?

RED  
I need Barrfiend's location!

CLANCY

And I need to save Lady Marthaline!

Red and Clancy grit their teeth at each other.

Clancy takes a deep breath and sighs. He lets go of Red.

CLANCY (CONT'D)

I guess we've reached an impasse.

RED

It would seem so.

Clancy backs away from Red.

CLANCY

Let's make a deal. I'll take you to Barrfiend if you help me save Lady Marthaline.

Clancy extends his hand.

CLANCY (CONT'D)

Do we have a deal, Mister...

Red looks down at Clancy's hand.

RED

Red. The name's Red.

Red shakes Clancy's hand.

EXT. ABANDONED CHURCH - DAY

Red and Clancy hide behind a large tree trunk.

A grassy clearing separates them from the massive church.

RED

So this is it? Barrfiend's inside?

CLANCY

Yes.

Red stares at the church.

RED

Alright, here's the plan: I'm going to go in and kill everyone.

Clancy turns his head toward Red and stares at him.

RED (CONT'D)  
Well, not the girl of course.

CLANCY  
That's not it. If you go in there like a stampeding bull, we risk Lady Marthaline getting hurt in the chaos and I won't have that.

Red looks at Clancy.

RED  
Okay, Mr. Tactician, what do you suggest we do?

CLANCY  
We need to find a way to get his men out here. Once we get past them, we can confront Barrfiend and save Lady Marthaline.

Red looks behind him and notices a large rock. He looks back and forth between the rock and the church.

CLANCY (CONT'D)  
Alright, here's the plan. We'll sneak around back and then --

Red picks up the rock, stands, and throws it at the top of the church. The rock SMASHES through a window.

CLANCY (CONT'D)  
Real subtle.

RED  
Thanks.

A loud COMMOTION emits from the church.

The church doors open.

BANDIT 1, 30s, tall and muscular with short hair, BANDIT 2, late 20s, ape-like, BANDIT 3, late 20s, snake-like, and BANDIT 4, 30s, long hair and mustache, spill out into the clearing.

The church doors close.

RED (CONT'D)  
Alright, Clance, let's see if you're as good with a sword as you say you are.

Clancy draws his sword.

CLANCY

Gladly.

Red jumps over the log. He walks up to the bandits.

Clancy tilts his head.

CLANCY (CONT'D)

What the hell is he doing?

The four Bandits look at Red and draw their swords.

BANDIT 3

Who the hell are you?

BANDIT 2

Are you the fool who threw the rock  
into our hideout?

Red stops in front of the bandits.

Bandit 1 pushes the other Bandits aside.

BANDIT 1

You must be very brave or very  
stupid to come here. Don't you know  
who we are?

Red pulls out his black steel sword. He thrusts the sword  
into Bandit 1's throat.

Bandit 1 gasps. He falls to the ground. His body twitches.

The other three Bandits' mouths gape.

BANDIT 2

You are so dead!

Clancy sighs.

CLANCY

Guess I'm up.

Clancy jumps over the log and charges at the Bandits.

Bandit 4 looks at Clancy.

BANDIT 4

Another one?

Clancy clashes swords with Bandit 4.

Bandit 2 and Bandit 3 swing their swords at Red.

Red dodges both attacks. Red chops off Bandit 2's hand and stabs Bandit 3 in the heart.

Bandit 2 screams.

Red lifts Bandit 3 with his sword and throws him into Bandit 2.

Both Bandits fall to the ground. They lie motionless.

Red turns to Clancy.

Clancy disarms Bandit 4 and slices him behind the knee.

Bandit 4 falls and cries out in pain.

RED  
You're actually not half bad.

CLANCY  
I told you so.

Red sheaths his sword.

INT. ABANDONED CHURCH - DAY

Red kicks open the doors. Red and Clancy walk in.

At the end of the church, next to the pulpit, stands ENNIS BARRFIEND, mid 30s, a scoundrel in gentleman's clothing.

ENNIS  
Very impressive.

RED  
I see you're still smug after all these years, Barrfiend.

ENNIS  
I'm sorry, but have we had the pleasure of meeting before?

Red frowns.

RED  
How could you forget? After you tried to kill me?

ENNIS  
I'm afraid you're going to have to be more specific. I've done that to many people. But no matter.

Ennis reaches behind the pulpit and pulls out MARTHALINE, 10, with blonde hair and blue eyes.

CLANCY  
Lady Marthaline!

MARTHALINE  
Clancy? Help me, Clancy!

Clancy grits his teeth.

RED  
Let the girl go, Barrfiend. You're  
all alone here.

Ennis laughs.

ENNIS  
I'm afraid that your plan has a bit  
of an oversight.

Ennis raises his arm.

ENNIS (CONT'D)  
Drusus!

Ennis snaps his fingers.

A portion of the wall near the pulpit explodes. From the smoke emerges DRUSUS, 30s, a hulking mass of muscles.

CLANCY  
That's a very big oversight.

RED  
Ya think?

Drusus ROARS and charges at Red and Clancy.

Clancy swings his sword at Drusus, but Drusus knocks it away and grabs Clancy by the throat.

Drusus throws Clancy back at the wall. Clancy hits the wall hard and slumps to the floor.

RED (CONT'D)  
Clance!

Red glares at Drusus.

RED (CONT'D)  
Alright, you big dumb son of a  
bitch, let's go.

Drusus throws a punch at Red. Red dodges and punches back.

Red and Drusus exchange punches.

Red gains the upper hand and delivers a blow to Drusus' abdomen. Drusus falls to one knee.

Ennis grits his teeth.

RED (CONT'D)  
Let's finish this.

Red rears back his fist.

ENNIS (O.S.)  
Wait!

Red looks over at Ennis. His eyes widen.

Ennis presses a knife against Marthaline's throat.

Red grits his teeth.

Ennis laughs.

ENNIS (CONT'D)  
It looks like I underestimated you,  
but no matter. I know how you hero  
types work. Now, if you don't want  
this to get more colorful, you only  
have to do one thing.

RED  
And what's that?

ENNIS  
Stand there and let Drusus beat you  
to death!

Ennis laughs harder. Drusus stands up.

RED  
Fine.

Red takes a deep breath.

Drusus socks Red in the face, but Red holds his ground.

Drusus punches Red two more times.

Ennis smiles.

Marthaline cries.

Drusus stares at Red.

Red smiles faintly.

Drusus grits his teeth and punches Red again.

Ennis frowns.

Drusus stops to catch his breath.

Ennis grits his teeth.

ENNIS

Damn you! Why won't you fall?

Red spits out blood.

RED

I'm afraid I just can't do that.

ENNIS

Who the hell are you?

Red glances to his left and smiles.

RED

Funny, I thought the eyes would have given it away by now.

Ennis looks at Red's eyes.

ENNIS

Red eyes?

Ennis' eyes widen.

ENNIS (CONT'D)

It can't be. You're just a myth!

RED

Oh, so you have heard of me. Sorry to disappoint you, though, I am very much real. As are all those rumors you've heard.

ENNIS

Impossible. You expect me to believe that you were blessed by the Dark God himself?

RED

I see you require proof.

Red draws his sword. Dark aura surrounds the sword. Red's eyes glow red.

Drusus trembles and backs up.

Red points the sword at Ennis.

RED (CONT'D)

This is Scáth, the Shadow Within the Steel, and it will be your death.

ENNIS

Don't come any closer. If you try to kill me, the girl will also die!

RED

Do you want to test that theory?

Ennis shakes. His knife lowers from Marthaline's throat.

Red smiles and his eyes cease to glow.

A finger taps on Ennis' shoulder.

Ennis turns his head to see Clancy behind him.

Clancy punches Ennis in the face. Ennis drops his knife and falls to the ground.

Clancy pulls Marthaline away.

Ennis looks at Red.

ENNIS

Damn you. You tricked me.

RED

That was the idea.

Ennis looks over at Drusus.

ENNIS

Drusus, kill him now! That's an order!

Red turns to face Drusus. Drusus charges at Red.

RED

I think it's about time I show you why I'm called the Red-X.

Red slashes his sword in an X formation. A large X made of red energy forms.

Red thrusts his sword forward. The X rockets off and slams into Drusus.

The force slams Drusus into the wall with a CRASH. The smoke clears and Drusus lies dead in the rubble.

Ennis' eyes bulge.

Red turns and stares at Ennis.

Ennis shrieks.

ENNIS

You, you monster!

Red walks over to him.

RED

Me a monster? Maybe. At least I've never slit a boy's throat in front of a captured man.

Ennis takes a step back.

ENNIS

Oh, Gods, I remember you. But I killed you. I left you for dead!

RED

I got better.

Tears run down Ennis' face.

RED (CONT'D)

Clance, cover the kid's eyes.

Clancy covers Marthaline's eyes.

ENNIS

Look, I can pay you whatever you want. Just please don't kill me.

Red stops in front of Ennis.

RED

Is that so?

Ennis smiles and pulls a knife from behind his back. He thrusts the knife forward.

Red dodges. He rears his sword back and decapitates Ennis.

Ennis' head falls to the ground. His body follows.

Red shakes Ennis' blood from his sword and sheaths it. He turns and walks over to Clancy and Marthaline.

RED (CONT'D)  
How's the girl?

Clancy removes his hands from Marthaline's eyes.

Red kneels down and extends his hand.

RED (CONT'D)  
Hey there kid, my name's Red.

Marthaline grabs his hand.

MARTHALINE  
I'm... Marthaline.

RED  
Nice to meet you. Let's get you home.

Red stands and walks over to Ennis' head. He picks up the head and places it in a nearby sack.

CLANCY  
What are you going to do with it?

Red walks over to Clancy.

RED  
There's a huge bounty for him at the Capital. This should be more than enough proof of his death.

CLANCY  
Well, after that, I'm sure my employer would offer you a position in his guard.

RED  
No thanks. But I'll gladly take the payment for this job.

Clancy smiles.

RED (CONT'D)  
Let's head out.

Red, Clancy, and Marthaline walk toward the church entrance.