

Chimerical

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Episode 13: Repetitive Corporeal Act

Nish wakes in his bed, his head pounding from the hangover; he rarely drinks, let alone as much as he did last night. He grips his head, gritting his teeth from the pain. He contemplates using one of Fjorn's rejuvenating potions, but as he isn't actually injured, decides against it. He looks around the room. Once again, the bed adjacent to his is neatly made, having not been slept in.

"Figures..." Nish sighs.

He climbs out of bed and walks toward the window. To his surprise, the sun is nearly at its zenith. How could he have slept in so late? He scrambles to dress himself, collect his pack and attach his weapon belt. He rushes out of the room to see that many of the hotel room doors are open; the rooms are empty and several employees are cleaning and making the beds. Pecia and her caravan are gone. Jo'dehki sits at a table, eating breakfast with the Dunmer girl. For a

brief moment, Ra'kanishu regrets not spending more time with Pecia, or sleeping with her.

The Imperial walks past the Khajiit and his Dunmer lover, motioning for Jo'dehki to follow. He steps outside and looks around, stretching his muscles. Spotting a general goods store across the street, he walks across the road and enters. A middle-aged woman stands at the counter, greeting the man politely. Nish buys a simple breakfast consisting of a loaf of crusty bread, several apples and a small wheel of cheese. By the time he leaves the store, Jo'dehki exits the inn. The Khajiit looks around for his companion, quickly spotting him across the street. He dashes toward the Imperial.

"Apologies, my friend. Jo'dehki certainly did not anticipate what happened last night, though I doubt you can blame him, yes?"

"Don't worry about it. Let's just get moving. We're burning daylight." Nish grumbles.

Nish bites into an apple as he stows the rest of his food into his pack. He tosses a second apple to Jo'dehki, before closing and slinging his pack over his shoulders. They leave Skingrad, hiking west along the Gold Road. Nish seems deep in thought, even angry as he marches along the road. Jo'dehki struggles to think of something to say to his companion, struggling to ease the growing tension between them. His internal strife eventually subsides, and the Khajiit remains silent.

After walking for some time, they stop to rest at a fork in the road. An earthen trail is marked by a sign that simply reads 'Ferry to Elsweyr'. Nish sits on a small rock beside the sign and takes a drink from his waterskin. Jo'dehki glances to the Imperial, who appears anxious. With each step, the Imperial had grown increasingly agitated and irritable. He sits on the ground beside the rock, his curiosity finally overcoming the Cathay-Raht.

"What troubles you?" Jo'dehki asks.

"What do you mean?" Nish mutters.

"We are nearly to the border, but you do not look very happy. In fact, you look more upset than you did yesterday."

"Perhaps Ra'kanishu is nervous..." The Imperial replies.

Before allowing the conversation to continue, Nish cuts the break short and begins walking the path that leads to the water, and the ferry into Elsweyr. Jo'dehki rises to his feet, quick to join his companion who walks away from him on the trail. They follow the path, winding through the short hills and sparse forest, before coming upon a clearing. A short dock stands alongside the water's edge, and several people board a sizeable boat for Elsweyr. They buy passage on the ferry, which costs them twenty drakes each. They board the vessel, alongside nearly a dozen more travelers, taking seats on benches that line the craft.

The crew untie the boat from the docks and push off, and soon the ship bobs gently in the water. Jo'dehki stands and walks toward the rails, resting his hands on the wooden beams as he leans over, looking at the vibrant blue water below.

"Perhaps it is a good thing that Fjorn did not join us, yes?" He comments.

He turns back to Nish, who can't help but crack a faint smile at the thought. The Imperial looks up at Jo'dehki and chuckles.

"Indeed. Vomit isn't the most pleasant thing to clean out of a beard." Nish says.

"Are you speaking from experience?" Jo'dehki grins.

"Perhaps... It was far more embarrassing for her than it was for me, since it wasn't my vomit." Nish laughs.

"That sounds like a story worthy of a campfire." Jo'dehki remarks.

Within an hour, the ferry reaches the docks of Arenthia. The crew tie down the boat and extend the gangplank before allowing the passengers to disembark. As soon as Nish's feet touch the rust colored soil of Elsweyr, his demeanor shifts; the Imperial suddenly appears happier, even giddy. Jo'dehki is bewildered by his companion's abrupt mood swing. The tension between them, however, seems to be gone; that is more than enough for the Khajiit,

who himself now slowly grows nervous as he sets foot in Elsweyr for the first time in many years.

Nish is eager to continue, and though Jo'dehki knows that they can't walk to Rawl'Kha before nightfall, the Imperial has no desire to sit and wait. He seems almost possessed, driven to return home to his village at any cost. It is then when Jo'dehki realizes that he doesn't even know which village Nish is returning too; they had never actually spoken of it in detail. Is it Willowgrove, the village he is avoiding? Or could it be a village adjacent? What if he is recognized and arrested on their way to Nish's family? The thoughts race through the Khajiit's mind and his heart begins to pound harder and faster.

For a moment, Jo'dehki considers voicing his concerns to Nish. As he looks to his friend, however, he witnesses the excitement on his face; he knows that he cannot tell Ra'kanishu. He doesn't want to go his own way again, and is certain that the Imperial wouldn't turn back for him when they are so close. Even if he would, Jo'dehki doesn't want to give Nish a reason to turn back and go on without seeing his family or Tsanavi again; he can't deny him that. Once again, Jo'dehki decides to hold his tongue. He will follow the Imperial and see how their journey unfolds.

They walk through the city and head south for the road to Rawl'Kha. As they leave the city proper, Nish stops to admire the view. In the distance are several figures, shambling towards them. They continue their walk, approaching the figures on the road. As they come into view,

Jo'dehki becomes nervous; the beings are three Khajiiti guards traveling with three shackled prisoners. For a moment, Jo'dehki worries that there may be a bounty on his head and that they may recognize and arrest him. He shields his face as the guards draw near, pretending to scratch his brow for an extended period of time. The Khajiit's prisoners are all men and mer; an Imperial, a Dunmer, and a Nord.

The helmeted guard leading the others is female, and from her size and form Nish would guess that she is Cathay, a very common breed. Her feline shaped helmet turns as she focuses on the Imperial, who does not hide his gaze. Their heads turn as they pass each other on the road, each continuing to stare at the other. As the woman turns back and leads her associates and their prisoners, Nish looks over her figure. As his eyes glance down to her firm buttocks, he notices something else.

The Imperial prisoner walking behind her has removed his shackles. They are open, but rest upon his wrists; he is merely pretending that his hands are still bound before him. Nish stops and turns back. He is torn between ignoring the situation, which truly isn't his concern, or helping the guards. The unshackled prisoner looks back. Seeing the shocked expression on Nish's face, the prisoner makes the decision for him. He lunges for the female and knocks her over, pulling her axe from the ring of her frog that sits at her hip, as well as drawing her dagger from her sheath.

He turns the axe and swings, slamming it into the neck of the guard who walks behind him, nearly decapitating him

in a single blow. The prisoner then tosses the dagger to the Dunmer behind the dead guard. The Nord at the rear of the line wraps his chains over the head of the guard who stands between him and the dark elf, garroting him. The entire attack takes mere seconds. Nish drops his pack, draws his sword, and rushes toward the scuffle. As the female turns over, the Imperial prisoner brings up his arms, holding her own axe as he prepares to execute her.

The blade gleams in the light as he swings. She closes her eyes tightly. A loud crack forces her eyes open. Nish stands beside her, having used the blade of his sword to strike the handle of the axe, parrying the weapon. The prisoner glares at the interloper, and swings the axe. Nish blocks the blow, and then another, leading the prisoner away from the unarmed guard. As the Nord strangles the guard before him with his chains, an arrow suddenly pierces his neck, protruding from the front of his throat. He falls to the ground as Jo'dehki frees the unconscious guard from the coiled chains.

The dagger wielding Dunmer intervenes, swinging at Nish who parries his strike as well. He spins his sword and slashes the Dunmer's leg, dropping him to the ground before blocking another swing from the Imperial. He bears down on Nish with the axe, swinging it vertically. Nish blocks the strike with the side of his sword, before quickly spinning his body and locking his sword underneath the beard of the axe. He wrenches it from the prisoner's hands, vaulting it several feet away. Nish complete the spin, slashing the prisoner's throat open and cutting down to his spine.

He falls to the ground as arterial spray jets from his wound. The battle lasted about as long as their ill-fated escape attempt, and within a minute, two prisoners and a guard lie dead, two more injured, and the unarmed guard looks on in awe. Ra'kanishu spins his sword, allowing the blood to fly away from the blade. He steps up to the woman, sheathing the weapon and reaching a hand out to her. She takes his hand as he helps her up.

"Saj jer raba domjha'a?" He asks her.

She blinks and her eyes grow wide in surprise. She reaches up and removes her helmet, revealing her face to her savior.

"This one is fine, stranger. Thank you for your help." She bows her head respectfully.

"Ra'kanishu was happy to help." He replies.

Jo'dehki steps up to the injured Dunmer, who groans on the ground and holds the large gash on his leg. He holds his bow on the man, keeping him in check. The remaining guard moves and groans, slowly coming too after having been strangled into unconsciousness. The female Khajiit looks between the two strangers for a moment.

"His name is Jo'dehki." Nish adds.

Jo'dehki's heart drops, and he briefly wonders if he is going to have to kill this woman and escape.

"Thank you, Ra'kanishu and Jo'dehki. This one is called Rabara. She is a captain among the guards." The woman introduces herself.

"A pleasure to meet you, Rabara." Nish smiles.

"Ra'kanishu is Khajiiti; it's a very strange name for an Imperial." She comments.

"Ra'kanishu is not your average Imperial." He retorts.

"Rabara is surprised an Imperial would so eagerly help the Khajiit with Imperial prisoners." Rabara adds.

"They are criminals, and not worth their weight in hide and meat." Nish says sternly.

Rabara grins, intrigued by the strange Imperial with a Khajiiti name. She glances at his Khajiiti sword and sheath, with its bone handle and polished brass guard and pommel. She then notices his Khajiiti axe that sits in a frog on his belt; it sits across from the sword on the other side of his hip. Her eyes turn back up to the Imperial, who she finds rather attractive. Her eyes narrow as she steps up to him.

"Rabara is impressed, Ra'kanishu. Your dance was superb. Watching you made this one's whiskers twitch..." She says.

"That's very flattering of you to say." Nish grins.

Nish takes a moment, looking over the powerful Cathay woman. He admires her feminine figure, and assertiveness. She rests a hand on her hip and takes a step back. She turns slightly, as though to allow him a better view. She gazes at him, her tail slowly swaying. He feels himself flush as the blood rushes toward his loins. He looks back up to her face, their eyes immediately locking. Her eyes are a vibrant orange, contrasting wonderfully with her cream-colored fur. Though she has no visible patterns in her fur that he can see, she has painted the fur on her face and neck with ocher stripes; the red-orange stripes are remarkably symmetrical. Rabara has no mane, and her tall and slender ears are tipped with fur and adorned with two golden horn shaped earrings.

“You dance so wonderfully. It made her want to groom herself... Or perhaps... Allow you to do it for her.” She growls sensually.

“What fun that would be, but what’s in it for Ra’kanishu?” He asks, stepping closer to her.

Rabara grins wider, bearing her teeth.

“Rabara returns all favors, and more. Perhaps after her bath, she could enjoy a private sparring match with you?” She purrs.

“You are quite the tigress. This one doubts he would win, but he’s willing to try.” He steps even closer.

“Rabara would greatly enjoy your effort...” She steps toward him.

Their noses are mere centimeters from each other, their eyes remaining locked. Jo’dehki, the now conscious guard, and even the injured Dunmer prisoner all feel as though they are intruding on Ra’kanishu and Rabara.

“Ahem...” The guard clears his throat.

“What is it?” Rabara growls angrily, never turning away from Nish.

“Uh, Captain... We have to return the prisoners... Er... Prisoner...” He reminds her.

“Ugh...” Rabara groans in frustration. “Do you have spare time after this one drops off her prisoners?” She asks Nish sweetly.

“For you... Of course.” Nish nods.

“Nish, are you sure that’s such a good idea?” Jo’dehki asks.

“Sure it is! We were never making Rawl’Kha before nightfall anyway. We might as well stay... Take in the scenery.” He says, looking Rabara over again as he speaks.

Jo’dehki is very uncomfortable with the decision, as much as Nish’s shift in personality. He returns the arrow and slings his bow while Nish retrieves his pack and Rabara collects her weapons. The duo help Rabara and her guard return with their remaining prisoner. Jo’dehki and the guard each carry the wounded Dunmer by an armpit. Nish walks

beside Rabara as she leads them to the Arentia prison, flirting intensely the entire way. Every other sentence is a sexual innuendo of some kind, making the three men behind them increasingly more uncomfortable.

They reach the prison and Rabara leaves to inform her superior of the incident. Meanwhile, Jo'dehki and the guard place the Dunmer inside an of empty cell. As the guard leaves to find the garrison doctor to treat the Dunmer's wound, Jo'dehki and Nish wait on a bench for Rabara and her superior, per her instructions. They are not kept waiting for long. Within minutes, Rabara returns, her helmet tucked underneath her arm. Behind her is an older female Cathay with blue eyes, black fur and light grey spots. Nish rises to his feet, standing at attention like a trained soldier, while Jo'dehki remains seated.

"Ahziss kor jer pur Ta'agra." The woman begins.

"Azhiss saj." Nish nods.

"Azhiss va Inezda. Tonsh jer dorr zatay Rabara wo roj moraziit." Inezda says as she bows her head to Nish.

"Jer yosan." Nish replies.

"Ahziss kiz bavto jer dorr jer zrish ike jer kasash." Inezda continues.

Jo'dehki's ears seem to prick and he looks to the older Cathay.

"Jaji vabaoh degeka." Nish says as he holds up a hand.

Inezda, Rabara and Jo'dehki all raise their brows in surprise.

"Sajoh bavto ahzirr dorr saj kaaka vaba felor." Nish continues.

"Ba jer kasash." Inezda shrugs.

Nish turns and looks at Rabara, a pleasant smile on his face. She grins back and steps away from Inezda's side; she walks by Nish, stroking his sword arm with her claws, gazing at him. Inezda looks between them and chuckles softly.

"Ahziss kor kador dal." She says as she laughs softly.

Suddenly, another guard barges in, interrupting the moment.

"Rabara, please come! There is an urgent matter you need to help us with!" She exclaims as she gasps.

"Are you serious? Rabara is busy right now." She groans.

"Please, we need a Captain to sort this out!" The guard pleads.

Rabara growls angrily as she takes her helmet in her hands, preparing to slip it over her head.

“Rabara.” Inezda calls out.

“Yes?”

Inezda motions to her. Rabara approaches the older tigress, who leans closer to her.

“It’s alright. Go and enjoy yourself... Inezda will handle it for you.”

“Thank you, ma’am!” Rabara happily and quietly exclaims.

She promptly returns to Nish, setting her helmet down on the bench he was sitting on.

“Rabara is free now.” She coos.

Nish opens the door, holding it open for her as she steps out of the office. Jo’dehki quickly follows behind as the pair seem to leave without him.

“Perhaps Ra’kanishu can buy you a drink?” He asks her.

“Rabara is not thirsty for ale...” She purrs.

Jo'dehki finally stops Nish, stepping up and grabbing the Imperial's wrist. Nish stop and turns back to the Cathay-Raht, while Rabara narrows her eyes, glaring at yet another interruption.

"Pardon this one for just a moment." Nish says before stepping away from Rabara.

"What are you doing? This is not like you. What has changed?" Jo'dehki quietly asks Nish.

"Please forgive this one's bluntness, but after Daro'veera's betrayal, and sitting and waiting while you indulged yourself, *twice*, this one isn't going to deny himself the simple pleasures he used too. If this one was to die on the road before making it home, he may regret not spending time with Rabara, just like he did with Pecia." Nish explains.

Jo'dehki is shocked, but can't say that he doesn't understand. Nish's new outlook, although rather hedonistic, is one that is shared by many Khajiit, Jo'dehki included.

"Go find something to do while this one is busy. We'll meet at the inn we passed on our way here." Nish continues.

He gently pulls his wrist away from Jo'dehki and rejoins Rabara, leaving his friend behind. As the pair walk down the road, Rabara grows increasingly excited, pulling him harder and increasing her pace until the two are nearly jogging. She leads Nish past the inn that he had mentioned to

Jo'dehki only moments earlier, and towards the front door of a modest home. She takes out a key and unlocks her front door, turning back to Nish as she swings it open.

"Jer vara sharra'i. Ahziss dov'kono traajir ariit pana." Rabara comments.

"Opa ahziss va." Nish smirks.

As they step inside of the home, Rabara shuts and locks the door behind them. As Nish turns around, she suddenly leaps upon him, grabbing his upper arms as she presses him against a wall. She grins, bearing her teeth. Nish does not react fearfully, but grins back. He leans in and tilts his head, kissing her lips several times, his hands resting on her slender waist. She returns the favor before nuzzling his neck with her snout.

"Afa vaba linu wo ahziss." Rabara whispers to him.

"O'zin. Ahziss vaber khiali pur tataamiali jer." Nish chuckles.

"Wo jaji krozijka, rik katro saj jer raba zaj?" Rabara asks.

"Dan felorali korna dan jer." Nish replies, his hands removing the straps that hold her armor together.

"Jer raba dat." She says before licking his neck.

She steps back from the Imperial, quickly dropping her weapon belt, pauldrons, cuirass and gauntlets. She kneels

down to remove her greaves and boots as Nish walks around her, admiring her form. Her eyes try to follow the man, her lips curling up into a lustful grin. Her tail sways gleefully as Nish kneels down behind her, his chest against her back as his arms wrap around her body, his hands resting atop her chest. She moans as he squeezes her ample breasts through her gambeson. They stand and she turns to face him, removing the gambeson as he unties his weapon belt, dropping it to the floor.

Within moments, they stand naked before each other. Rabara purrs as she takes Nish in her hand, feeling his engorged flesh. Her free hand rests on his back, her claws raking his skin as she kisses and licks him. He grips her firm buttocks with both hands. Their bodies press together, her large breasts against his muscular chest. He sighs happily as he feels her soft fur against his flesh. Her tail sways as she pulls at him, eagerly leading him to her bed. They kiss over and over again as she sits atop her bed.

“Jer vara zira serush.” Nish speaks softly into her ear as he lies her down on the bed.

“O'zin. Ahziss vaber khiali pur tataamiali jer.” Rabara giggles.

Meanwhile, Jo'dehki sits alone at a table in the dining hall of the inn. He holds a pewter tankard in his hand, looking at the rippling honey lager within the container. He sighs and looks around, wondering how long he is going to have to entertain himself until Nish returns. He has already rented a room for two, and placed his belongings within. He

lifts the tankard, bringing it to his lips as he slowly sips the sweetened brew. He sighs and looks around the room, noticing three Khajiit playing cards. With coin in his purse, and nothing else to do, Jo'dehki approaches the Khajiit and quickly joins the gamblers.

The three eagerly welcome Jo'dehki to their table, and upon finishing their game, deal a forth hand to the bored archer. He plays several hands, but Jo'dehki's luck does not hold out. The gamblers are very experienced, and though Jo'dehki is a skilled player, he is unable to cheat like usual. Game after futile game, Jo'dehki and the other gamblers lose to a single player, an older Cathay with solid black fur and long black dreadlocked hair. Jo'dehki alone loses nearly two hundred drakes to the old gambler, while the other two lose a total of six hundred drakes. As he takes a turn dealing the next hand, Jo'dehki wonders when Nish will return.

Ra'kanishu and Rabara lie in her bed, a golden silk blanket pulled up to their chests. She lies against and partially over him, her head resting on his shoulder with his arm under her neck, and her hand caressing his chest. She runs her claws in circles on his skin, panting as she turns her orange eyes up to him.

"This one must admit her surprise; you are even better at this dance, and so well equipped." She says with a lustful grin.

"Thank you. Ra'kanishu likes to think that he knows how to pet a tigress." He winks.

“Oh, you certainly do. Rabara assures you of that talent... Have you stroked a Khajiit before, Imperial?” Rabara asks sensually.

“Jat. Ahziss ari khajiit oriit. Jaadi vara zira zaji.” He answers.

“Jer sajoh ifu man yo mer ariit?” She asks in surprise.

“Kador ko ahziss? Khajiit vara saa'do> Nish says.

Rabara smiles, resting her hand flat on his chest. She kisses his cheek, purring as she nuzzles him. She presses herself closer as she grips his side, holding him tightly in her arms.

“You are certainly not a typical Imperial.” She coos. “Where are you going after you leave?”

“This one heads to his old home in Reaper’s March.” Nish answers.

“Home? You live in Elsweyr?” She asks in surprise.

“Indeed. Ra’kanishu was raised by Suthay-Raht parents.”

“That explains much.” Rabara thinks aloud. “You never said where you were going.”

Nish turns his head, looking at his Cathay lover. His lips are pressed firmly together as he thinks to himself. She notices his expression and begins to worry that she has upset him. Her lips curl down into a frown as she begins to sit up in bed.

"You don't have to share... Rabara was just curious."

"It's alright." He mutters.

"This one *is* a guard captain. You can trust that she will not betray you." She grins, stroking his cheek with the backs of her fingers.

"Ra'kanishu has heard that before..."

Rabara looks down, as though upset by his reluctance to speak. He sits up in bed, placing a hand on her back. He gently rubs her back, scratching her softly with his fingernails.

"But you *are* a guard captain... S'ren-ja is where this one grew up. It's where he is going." Nish suddenly says. "Perhaps you will visit sometime? Assuming you remember this one by tomorrow." He chuckles.

Rabara looks up, gazing at her lover. She grins wide, bearing her teeth. She leans closer, her hands resting on his legs.

"This one couldn't forget such an interesting, lovely and talented warrior." She coos.

"Perhaps." He remarks.

"Would you ever forget Rabara?" She asks, giving him a few tender kisses on his cheek.

“How could this one forget such a tigress?” He winks, before kissing her cheek and neck.

She purrs and closes her eyes.

“Rabara does not know, but she would like to make sure that you don’t.” She growls cutely.

She quickly pushes herself atop him, straddling him and wrapping her arms around his neck. He nuzzles her as her hands grip the back of his neck. She purrs louder and her tail sways. She can feel his arousal between her legs and prepares for another round.

“Jer raba jaga neroth.” She giggles.

“Ranarr.” He grins.

She pulls back and kisses him passionately. He grips her firm buttocks tightly as he kisses her back, moving past her lips.

“An iya tano...” She moans softly. “Afa vaba linu. Ahziss kasashali iit ikopal.” She giggles.

“Ahzisse saj ahziss jai'do.” He murmurs as he necks her.

Jo'dehki sits alone at a table, a plate of grilled fish sitting before him, with a side of bread and a small bowl of thick stew. He has long since stopped playing with the gamblers; Jo'dehki has always known when to cut his losses, a skill that quickly became necessary for his survival. The other two players had already lost the rest of their coin to the older gambler, and have left the inn nearly an hour ago. He looks to the door every so often as he eats his dinner, but as he dips the last piece of bread into the remnants of his stew, Nish has yet to return. He rises from his seat and approaches the young female Cathay innkeeper.

"Pardon this one's interruption, miss." Jo'dehki begins. "This one is retiring to bed, but he has a travel companion who may arrive later. If an Imperial enters and asks for Jo'dehki, please send him to my room."

"Alright. If Inersrin sees your lover, she will send him your way." She remarks, wiping a tankard with a clean rag.

"He is *not* my lover. He is my friend." Jo'dehki growls.

"Is that what they are calling it these days?" Inersrin chuckles.

Jo'dehki snarls but doesn't respond. He quickly turns and leaves the counter. Inersrin smirks, watching him for a moment as the large Cathay-Raht returns to his room. He closes the door behind him and lies down on one of the two beds, choosing the bed that is closest to the door. He rests his hands behind his head, and stares at the ceiling for a moment. He watches the flickering lights of the candle that sits atop the small nightstand. They seem to dance upon

the ceiling. He watches for what seems like an eternity, his eyes weighing heavy as he waits for his companion.