

Larian Writing Assessment

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Prompt Chosen:

After being arrested by the local guard, their captain makes the player an interesting offer: their sentence rescinded, if they agree to infiltrate a dangerous criminal gang. How does the conversation unfold? And why does the player agree, or refuse?

Dialogue:

The player is dragged before the Guard Captain and thrown to his feet. After being captured for trespassing.

Behind the Captain stands a row of bloodstained execution blades.

Most are clean.

One is freshly bloodied.

You notice a picture hanging on the back wall, crudely drawn by a child. It shows a father and son holding hands. [Perception]

If the Perception check is successful:

1: Nice drawing, is that your child?

-2: Strange place to hang a child's picture.

3: Say nothing.

Guard Captain: It reminds the condemned of what they leave behind. So, tell me, man of the West, which blade would you prefer?

1: The sharpest one sounds good.

-2: I was simply scouting ahead for my caravan. I've heard these lands are quite unsafe for merchants. There's no need for violence.

3: Please, sir, I meant no harm. I was simply exploring.

4: If you were going to kill me, you would've done it already [Rogue]

5: [Attack]

The Captain circles the player, hands clasped behind his back. He then stops in front of the player and looks him dead in the eyes.

Guard Captain: Careless. You westerners should stay in the ports, not trespass on sacred land. I ought to have you executed, but perhaps you can repay the trouble you've caused.

The only danger in these lands is that brought by you and your ilk. We used to live in harmony before you arrived.

The Guard Captain pauses for a second as if absorbed in thought.

1: My apologies, I meant no offence.

-2: I've told you what I was doing, and I wasn't doing anything wrong. Can I go now?

3: My cronies? You mean the merchants down by the docks? [Merchant Background]

4: I don't see why I should stay and listen.

The Guard Captain scoffs in response to the question.

Guard Captain: No, you can't, you'll be lucky to leave here alive. You see, I think it's only fair that you help me since it's Western dogs who are causing all the trouble here.

Guard Captain: Not a week ago, some pirates, mercenary slavers for a rival lord, came and abducted a group of hostages from the local academy.

The Guard Captain tosses a bloodstained sash onto the floor.

Guard Captain: Recognise it? This was taken from one of their scouts before his head ended up on a spike.

[Investigation] The cloth bears a symbol you recognise. It is the emblem of the Yarum Grix, a cult known for trying to infiltrate societies by abducting people and replacing their souls with something far more... unsavoury.

The Guard Captain pauses for again before continuing while rubbing his temples

Guard Captain: Some mistakes cannot be undone... But that does not mean I will stand by and allow these hostages to be taken. I don't care whether you're telling the truth. You're not leaving unless you do what I tell you to do.

1: No, go find someone else to lick your boots.

2: What do you need done?

-3: Go send one of your underlings to do it. Why some 'criminal' you've just arrested?

4: You know those pirates are from the Yarum Grix, don't you? [If prior investigation check was passed]

5: Say no more, by my oath, these hostages shall be rescued. [Paladin]

The Captain's jaw tightens as he breathes deeply. He adjusts his belt, and you notice a small wooden charm tied to it.

[Perception] It's carved crudely, the work of a child. But there's something sinister about it. As you squint your eyes, you notice, very faintly, the symbol of the Yarum Grix etched into the side.

If the Perception check is successful:

1: Do you have a child?

-2: That charm... has the same symbol as the pirates.

3: Say nothing.

Guard Captain: What? I... stop looking at my belt. It's a trophy.

Guard Captain: I am offering you the opportunity to live, and you're questioning my orders? You will go, because you are a westerner like the pirates that kidnapped my hostage... I mean the hostages. Believe me, you are the last person I would trust with this.

1: *Why did he pause? Who could these hostages be?* [Insight]

2: Alright, where am I heading?

3: You've got to be kidding me, you're in charge of what, 10, 11 guys? Why not just storm their hideout and be done with it? [Fighter]

-4: Ok, I'll help, but I'm going to need more information to go off. How many am I rescuing?
[Persuasion]

5: That sounds too dangerous, I'm out.

The Guard Captain's hand tightens on his sword.

Whatever he said, he regrets saying it.

The Guard Captain looks away and takes a deep breath as he composes himself. He turns back to you, seething with a mixture of rage and dread

Guard Captain: You think I don't know that! The hostages... the hostage, he's important to me.

The Guard Captain takes a deep breath before continuing

Guard Captain: They have my boy. The fuckers took my son, and for that, I want them dead.

1: Tell me where I need to go, I'll make these pirates pay.

2: What kind of father sells his own son; he probably feels safer with them than he does with you.

3: Ah, well, I think in that case my price has gone up. Lest the shogun hear that you deigned to work with a Western criminal and besmirch your honour. [Intimidation]

-4: How did they manage to capture your son? [Persuasion]

5: Ok, I'm still not going to help though.

The Guard Captain squirms uncomfortably as if it pains him to speak.

Guard Captain: They didn't...

[Long pause]

Guard Captain: They didn't. I gave him to them.

The Guard Captain's voice cracks. For a moment, he cannot meet your eyes.

Guard Captain: You think I wanted this? My wife was dying. Medicine cost coin. More coin than I could ever earn.

Guard Captain: Who are you to judge? Let the gods force you to choose between your wife and your son.

[Insight] If the Shogun learns that the Captain of the Guard sold his own son to slavers, his career and his head would not survive the week.

1: Tell me where I need to go, I'll make these pirates pay.

2: 500 gold and my freedom, then I'll help.

-3: If you truly care for your son, you will give me 2000 gold and my freedom. [Persuasion]

4: You sold your son. Why should I help you fix that?

5: You need me far more than I need you. [If insight was successful]

6: Go save him yourself. This isn't my problem.

The Guard Captain steps closer to you, looking you deep in the eyes.

Guard Captain: Do you know nothing of fatherhood? For ten years, I've raised my son, and you would have me trade my wife's life for his. First gold. Then mercy. You bargain like a slaver yourself.

The Guard Captain steps back and lets out a sigh of resignation.

I spent twenty years killing Western raiders. Now I must beg one to save my son.

-1: We've all got to make our way in the world. It's not personal.

2: You sold your son into slavery; you're lucky that I'm helping you at all.

3: Yep. I don't care about you or your son.

Guard Captain: So that is how you see it: a man sells his son to save his wife, and another profits from it. I will set you free and give you your 1000 gold when you return with my son. By the morrow, if you aren't returned, then by my arrow you will be sentenced to the hell you deserve, and my honour shall remain untainted.

1: I want the gold now, or I'm not helping [Persuasion]

2: Give me the gold now, or when I find your son, you'd wish he had stayed captured
[Intimidation]

3: You can't expect me to go in there unequipped. I will need some supplies. [Persuasion]

-4: You have a deal.

5: I've changed my mind; your son isn't worth my time.

The Guard Captain draws his tanto and slices the ropes binding your wrists.

Guard Captain: Bring him back by tomorrow. If you do not return... I hunt you down and kill you personally.

I have buried too many sons of this land.

I will not bury my own.

1: Leave [Head towards pirate den]

2: Leave [Disappear into the countryside]

3: Leave [Report the Captain to the Shogun]

4: Leave, [I could pretend to join the pirates, earn their trust first] [Swashbuckler]