

The Battle of Ronaldsway

By

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EXT. BEACH. MORNING

The stoney beach at Derbyhaven. It is an early morning in October. The sun is just beginning to come up. OLLIE, 28, in chain-mail and with a sword, strides down the beach purposefully. In that bleak landscape and scenery, Ollie is (almost) the epitome of Viking.

Ollie passes a couple walking on the beach.

OLLIE

Mornin'

The couple mumble a response but stare after him as he strides on without breaking pace.

EXT. BEACH. MORNING

Ollie strides up to join four people stood dressed as medieval Viking warriors.

OLLIE

Is this it?

ANDY, 23, wears glasses, clutches a bow and three arrows.

ANDY

Yeah.

KELLY, male, 36, is barely seen over his huge wooden shield.

KELLY

Steve was feeling ill.

CHRYSTAL, 25, has a sword and wears glasses and a "viking" helmet, turns back to Ollie after hearing of Steve's absence.

Ollie's irritation increases as he is about to say something but is interrupted by a plane loudly taking off behind them. They stop, turn and watch it go.

Ollie turns back to the others. He sees DAVE, 33, rotund and bearded, closing his car boot and coming over, wearing convincing medieval costume and apparently carrying only a small sword in his belt.

OLLIE

Who's that?

(CONTINUED)

ANDY

Dave.

OLLIE

Who's Dave?

Dave enters the group.

DAVE

Alright.

The rest of the party mumble "Alright" / "Hello". Pause.  
Ollie wonders whether to say something to Dave but doesn't.

OLLIE

(in a Public Speaking voice)

Right, well, thanks for coming this morning. I know that some of you have been preparing for this a very long time.

KELLY

(aside to Andy)

Your arrows are nice.

ANDY

Thanks.

OLLIE

Andy's bow and arrows should get a special mention... And Chrystal's helmet.

CHRYSTAL

Thank you.

Ollie shifts his chain mail obviously but no one comments.  
Pause.

OLLIE

We all look great. We should feel very proud of ourselves. And what we're doing today is going to be an enormous leap forward for Battle Re-enactment on the Isle of Man.

ANDY

Not soon enough.

KELLY

Hear, hear.

(CONTINUED)

OLLIE

Now, I know that everyone's raring to go, but we should wait just a little longer in case there are any more spectators on their way.

There is one person paused suspiciously while walking their dog. They stand a good distance away.

OLLIE

So let's assign roles.

DAVE

I will be Finn McQuiggan.

ANDY

Eh?

Dave smiles and nods. Pause.

OLLIE

Ok. So who would like to be the Manx?

They all put their hands up except for Dave. Andy has his hand up last, having been playing with his arrows.

OLLIE

You can't all be the Manx. There can't just be Dave as the army of Scots.

DAVE

I'm not Scottish. I'm Finn McQuiggan.

Ollie looks at Dave. Pause. Ollie points to Andy and Kelly.

OLLIE

Ok. Well, anyway, you two have to be the Scots.

KELLY

What?

ANDY

No way!

OLLIE

Sorry. That's the way it is.

ANDY

Why!

CHRYSTAL

Andy can't be a Scot - he's been working on his character for weeks.

OLLIE

Look, I'm not being funny, but we can't all be Manx. Anyway, he was the last one with his hand up.

ANDY

That's just childish.

OLLIE

Yeah, well... I'm Godred Magnusson anyway.

KELLY

Why do I have to be a Scot?

CHRYSTAL

It's your boat.

KELLY

Oh.

OLLIE

So that's decided then. You should get going.

Ollie deliberately begins busying himself with his chain-mail in order to avoid Andy's stares. After a moment Andy turns away.

ANDY

This is a joke.

KELLY

Come on. We'll take my car.

Andy and Kelly go off to a car. A trailer with a small boat is connected to the back of the car. Dave admires Ollie's chain-mail.

DAVE

Where did you get that?

OLLIE

I got it off Etsy.

(CONTINUED)

DAVE

I got an authentic Samurai sword  
off the Silk Road.

CHRYSTAL

You have a Samurai Sword?

DAVE

I didn't bring it. - Historically  
inaccurate.

OLLIE

(to Chrystal)

What are you going to be doing with  
your sword?

CHRYSTAL

What do you THINK I'll be doing  
with it?

OLLIE

(honestly aghast)

You're a woman in 1275 - you've got  
to be a peasant wench!

CHRYSTAL

If you think I've got up this early  
in the morning to be a peasant  
wench, you've got another thing  
coming. I'm going to use this sword  
to fight with, or I'm going to use  
it to slash your damn tyres!

OLLIE

(appealing to her)

We're going to look like idiots if  
we have a woman as a part of the  
fighting!

Chrystal threatens him aggressively with her sword.

OLLIE

Mind the chain-mail.

DAVE

The historical records give some  
authenticity to female warriors.

OLLIE

Eh?

(CONTINUED)

DAVE  
The Battle of Santwat, 1098.

CHRYSTAL  
Cheers, Dave.

DAVE  
(sternly)  
Finn.

OLLIE  
Ok. Well, fine - but only because  
there isn't anyone else.

CHRYSTAL  
(noticing the dog-walker  
leaving)  
Uh-oh, they're going!

OLLIE  
Crap!

Ollie runs over to the 'audience' and begins to deliver a  
speech, as if to a large crowd of interested spectators.

OLLIE  
Thank you for coming along today.  
Your interest means a lot to us -  
it is wonderful to know that Manx  
history is still relevant and  
important to Manx people today.

Dave cheers loudly, raising his fist in the air. Then he  
abruptly stops and crosses his arms.

OLLIE  
It was on this day, the eighth of  
October, "In the year of our Lord  
1275" that, as the Chronicles  
report -

DAVE  
Applicuit navigium regis Scotiae in  
party de Reynaldsway-

OLLIE  
(aside)  
Dave!

DAVE  
Yeah?

OLLIE

What's that?

DAVE

It's the Chronicles... In the original Latin. - Historical accuracy.

OLLIE

What? No one speaks Latin! Jesus!

Ollie momentarily pauses in order to regain composure.

OLLIE

(public speaking again)

"A fleet of Lord Alexander King of Scotland landed at Ronaldsway in Man," and there followed one of the most bloody battles of Manx history. The final chapter in our little Manx nation's proud Viking heritage.

There is the sound of a motor in the distance.

CHRYSTAL

That's Kelly and Andy on their way.

Kelly and Andy are in their boat in the distance, coming across the bay from St. Michael's Isle.

OLLIE

Crap!...

(quickly)

Ok. So this marks the precise anniversary of one the Isle of Man's greatest and most important battles - the Battle of Ronaldsway.

(slower - prepared lines)

We hope today to give you some taste of the fury, the bravery, the victory and the loss that was wrought by steel that day - that day so far away in time but so close in our hearts.

Ollie turns from the one-person audience with a flourish. He goes to join Chrystal further down the beach. She is staring at Dave, who has put a small piece of driftwood between his teeth as he growls and begins to breath heavily through his nose. Dave stares out at the boat noisily approaching.

(CONTINUED)

OLLIE  
What's he doing?

CHRYSTAL  
Is he being a berserker?

They stare at him closely and he widens his eyes. The motor on the boat is turned off and Andy and Kelly wobble about as they set up the oars and begin to paddle in. Andy has the Scottish flag painted across his face.

OLLIE  
Is Andy wearing face-paint?

CHRYSTAL  
It helps him take on character.

Ollie shakes his head, then he steps forward and turns back to shout a rallying speech as if to his army.

OLLIE  
Manxmen! This is your moment! It is for this time now upon us that you were molded from mortal clay. Your whole long lives have been lying in wait to spring up into action for these few brief minutes that are now upon us. The entirety of history lain out so that your feet would be here now upon these stones and this shaft of iron clasped in your hand. And from this moment too, all of history will flow...

A plane loudly comes in to land behind them. Ollie is annoyed to have to wait for it to pass.

OLLIE  
... all of history flowing out from this one moment, this one beach upon which we now stand. And all men who follow will forever stand on the back of this day; in the wake of these few hours; in the shadow of these our deeds. This is the moment, Manxmen. This. Is. The. Moment!

Ollie and Chrystal raise their swords and shout. Dave begins to visibly shake in pent-up berserk fury.

(CONTINUED)

The boat is not quite close enough to the shore. The men are exhausted and discuss quietly if it's shallow enough to get out, but they decide to row more. The 'Manx' have been shouting for some time now.

With the boat wobbling, Andy tries to stand but is too unsteady. He sits and gets out his bow. Kelly goes to one side to get out of the way and causes the boat to rock. After Andy readjusts, he fumbles an arrow onto the bow, takes aim and fires. The arrow clatters on the stones some distance from Ollie's feet. Kelly and Andy shout unconvincingly as they begin to precariously get out of the boat.

Chrystal and Ollie run down to engage in battle. Chrystal engages with Kelly, but she has to wait a long time between swings of her sword as he keeps a hold of the boat cord and proceeds to pull it up onto the rocks, stopping intermittently to hit her sword with his. Ollie is engaged in swinging his sword at Andy and shouting in supposed exertion. However, Andy is using his arrows like a sword, unsure what else to do in the situation.

Dave, at last, lets out a blood-curdling scream and pulls a flail (a spiked ball on a chain connected to a stick) from his belt behind his back. He begins swinging it wildly around his head and runs towards the others, who scatter in fear. Dave chases them up and down the beach.

Thunder strikes suddenly. It begins to rain.

Dave stops, looks up, and then runs off towards the cars. Everyone except Ollie follows. They get into one of the cars as torrential rain falls.

Ollie is left alone on the beach. His arms are out in appeal and disbelief.

OLLIE

What is going on?! Hey! Hey! What  
is going on here?!

Kelly winds down the window a small way and shouts out.

KELLY

It's raining.

OLLIE

So?!

CHRYSTAL

I'm not getting wet - this jerkin  
is real leather.

OLLIE

I can't believe this!... You call yourselves re-enactors? You should be ashamed! What about the audience?

He sweeps his arm towards where the spectator was, but there is now no one there.

KELLY

There's not much point now.

OLLIE

"No point"? What's point got to do with it? We're re-enactors!

ANDY

Yeah, re-enactors trying to stay dry.

OLLIE

... So is that it? You call yourselves the inheritors of the spirit of the Norse and of the Celts, and this is what you do - hide in a car when it rains. You should be ashamed. On this day, when we gathered to honour and to remember... It's a disgrace! Rain shouldn't matter, spectators shouldn't matter; it is for us ourselves that we are doing this. It is for ourselves... God!... Oh, what do I care?!

Ollie starts to slash his sword on his own, staggering about on the beach as if fighting invisible warriors.

INT.CAR.

Chrystal, Kelly, Andy and Dave look out at Ollie.

KELLY

He looks like an idiot.

ANDY

... Sad.

CHRYSTAL

... Are we going to let him do this on his own?

(CONTINUED)

KELLY

I think so.

ANDY

He's just making a fool of himself.  
And anyway, I can't feel my feet  
from being in that water.

KELLY

Really? You should get yourself  
some thermal socks. - I got these  
ones from Looney's up in Ramsey.

ANDY

They have them there?

KELLY

Yeah, near the other socks.

Pause. Chrystal turns on Andy and the others, suddenly determined.

CHRYSTAL

Ok. Ok, you stay here. You all stay  
here. I'm going out to do this -  
this is what I came here for and  
I'm going to damn well do it.

EXT. BEACH.

Chrystal bursts out of the car and runs screaming at Ollie. Ollie halts, then screams and runs at her with his sword raised. They clash swords and commence to do so on alternate sides, clanging them together above their heads.

In the distance a group of Girl Guides appear with rucksacks, walking along the Coastal Footpath.

INT. CAR.

KELLY

Look! Spectators!

ANDY

They're hikers.

KELLY

But spectators as well soon.

(CONTINUED)

ANDY  
I don't know.

KELLY  
No?

ANDY  
(pensively)  
Do you want to tell your  
grandchildren that you were a part  
of this, or that you were waiting  
in the car...?

Dave, previously unobserved and silent, lets out an enormous scream and leaps from the car in full battle cry. Kelly and Andy look at each other, smile, and leap from the car screaming also.

EXT. BEACH

The three men rush screaming to surround Ollie who valiantly fights them off, battling away their blows as they come.

The rain is beginning to ease up.

The Girl Guides come close and stop to watch.

Ollie grabs one of Andy's arrows and puts it under his arm, screaming in pretence of pain. He drops dramatically to the ground.

Ollie raises a clenched fist and looks to the Guides who stand transfixed. Dave gives him a blow to the back with his sword. Ollie glances at him in irritation, he turns back to the Guides and speaks as if his dying words.

OLLIE  
Ten times fifty -

Dave hits him again.

OLLIE  
(aside)  
What are you doing, Dave?!

DAVE  
Historical accuracy - the Scots  
wouldn't wait for this  
sentimentality.

(CONTINUED)

OLLIE

Yeah, well, we are, ok.  
 (to the crowd, again)  
 Ten times fifty, three times -

Dave hits him on the back. Ollie looks at him. Dave hits him again.

OLLIE

Right!

Ollie leaps up and punches Dave in the face. Dave falls over clutching his nose and rolls away.

Ollie gets back down into his previous lying position, readies himself, and then goes on.

OLLIE

Ten times fifty, three times five,  
 and five and two did fall,

Oh Manx race, beware lest future  
 catastrophe you... be-...fall!

Ollie lets out a deathly cry of pain, then droops, then lets out another cry of pain suddenly, then droops, then, without lifting his head from the stones, a weaker cry of pain, which fades into a low groan, which fades out completely. Silence. Everyone moves in close, open-mouthed.

GIRL GUIDE

Is he dead?

ANDY

He's acting.

KELLY

Re-enacting.

GIRL GUIDE

It's ace.

Ollie opens one eye to see the Girl Guide.

GIRL GUIDE

Will you do that again?

After a moment, Ollie opens both eyes and smiles at last.

OLLIE

Yeah.

EXT. BEACH. MORNING. SUNSHINE.

Music plays as we see them enjoying themselves with the sun now out: the re-enactors do battle, the Girl Guides join in, Dave comes back and is welcomed by all, Ollie speaks to the Girl Guides, people come from the houses to see etc.