

The Tudors
by
Michael Hirst

SECOND DRAFT
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Reveille LLC

INT. DUCAL PALACE - URBINO - DAY

TITLE: URBINO, ITALY

On the ground floor there are raised voices as the English Ambassador, EDWARD COURTENAY, EARL OF DEVON, is led inside by two of the Duke's officials, BEDOLI and SARTO.

COURTENAY

This is humiliating, Signore Bedoli.

BEDOLI

Prego, Excellency, prego.

COURTENAY

What is so urgent that I have to be dragged from my bed before seven o'clock?

SARTO

The Duke has called an early meeting of the Council. He wanted you to attend.

Ducal SECRETARIES and GUARDS throng the lower floor, but as they mount the grand staircase - hung with recently painted Renaissance masterpieces - Courtenay sees a group of armed MEN wearing very different clothes. They part to let him through. The CAPTAIN bows to him.

CAPTAIN

Monsieur.

They go on up.

COURTENAY

What are the French doing here?

BEDOLI

(quietly)

That is what his Grace wants to talk to you about.

They reach the doors to the Council Chamber.

SARTO

The meeting has already started.

They open a door and bow as Courtenay enters.

INT. COUNCIL CHAMBER - DAY

A group of well-dressed ITALIAN MEN are sat around a large, ornate table. They acknowledge Courtenay's presence, without rising.

COUNCILLOR

Your Excellency...forgive us. We have some other business.

(beat)

His Grace will be here shortly.

They go back to their discussion, in Italian, of some financial affair. Feeling cold, Courtenay goes over to the fire. He picks at a bowl of sugared fruits and, the fire warming him, removes his cape.

Then Bedoli comes back in.

BEDOLI

Excellency - the Duke would like a private word with you in his apartments.

Courtenay nods, pushes open the door to the Duke's apartments, his cloak negligently over his arm.

INT. CORRIDOR - DAY

Halfway down the corridor Courtenay sees the same group of Frenchmen. He is uneasy as he passes them, and quickens his pace towards the door of the Duke's cabinet.

He is aware that they have fallen in behind him.

Almost at the door, in the lobby, Courtenay whirls round to face them. The captain stabs him with a dagger. Courtenay bellows with rage.

COURTENAY

Your Grace!...Help!...Your Grace!

He tries to free his sword - but the hilt has become entangled with the cape. And as he struggles to free it, he is stabbed again and again.

COURTENAY (cont'd)

Bastards! You French bastards!

But he is a powerful man, and hampered and wounded though he is, he drags his assailants this way and that across the lobby, smearing its marble floor with blood, while they go on lunging at him with their daggers.

With a sudden convulsive movement he shakes the pack loose and stands alone, swaying, blood pouring from his wounds. He takes a step forward - and falls headlong to the ground, stone dead.

INT. COURT - WHITEHALL PALACE - LONDON - DAY

The King's secretary, RICHARD PACE, walks through the court, watched enviously by some of the young COURTIERs.

He is joined by a man of an older generation, THOMAS MORE (36), dressed soberly in black.

MORE

Mr Pace.

PACE

Mr More.

(beat)

His Majesty wants Council this afternoon to be brief. He's due to play tennis.

MORE

Where is the King?

Pace lowers his voice a little.

PACE

He's gone down to Jericho.

More knows what he means, frowns with disapproval. They walk on, through grand rooms.

MORE

How is he?

PACE

With regard to...?

MORE

With regard to Italy. What the French are doing in Italy. What other regard is there?

PACE

His Majesty is counselling
patience.

MORE

Yes, but you are his secretary. You
see him every day.

Pace stops before the doors to the King's private chambers,
guarded by YEOMEN OF THE GUARD armed with long battle axes.

PACE

In private he's mad with grief.
Almost inconsolable.

(beat)

I think you ought to remember it
was his uncle they murdered!

A beat. Then Pace passes through the doors.

CUT TO:

INT. BEDCHAMBER - "JERICHO" - DAY

On a vast bed, in a well-appointed chamber, this young KING
who is "mad with grief" and "inconsolable" is in fact making
passionate love to his latest mistress, the beautiful and
blonde ELIZABETH BLOUNT.

HENRY VIII, King of England, is 25 years old: tall,
athletically-built, and extremely handsome: by reputation
"the handsomest prince in Christendom".

INT. OUTER CHAMBER - "JERICHO" - DAY

In the very next room, Henry's GROOMS, SERVANTS and
BODYGUARDS await him. The King is never truly alone.

They can hear very distinctly the creaking of the wooden bed,
and Elizabeth's mounting moans of pleasure - but they sit
without expression, as if they can't hear anything.

INT. BEDCHAMBER - JERICHO - DAY

Passion spent, Henry rolls off. There's a long beat. She
can't speak before he does.

HENRY

How is your husband?

ELIZABETH

My husband is - extremely jealous.

Henry turns towards her, smiles gleefully, puts his hand back on her breast.

ELIZABETH (cont'd)

He's threatening to make a scandal.
He says he'll put me in a nunnery.

Henry runs his hand down her taut, naked body.

HENRY

That would be such a waste.

INT. COUNCIL CHAMBER - DAY

Henry presides over a meeting of his council. The COUNCILLORS - apart from Pace and More - are the great lords of England, men like the DUKES of BUCKINGHAM and NORFOLK, scions of ancient families with vast wealth and estates.

But next to Henry sits his CHANCELLOR, THOMAS WOLSEY, a man with almost effeminate features, dressed in the red robes of a Cardinal.

HENRY

My Lords, we meet to consider questions of great moment. The King of France has demonstrated to the world his aggressive policies. He is already at war with the Emperor. Now his forces have over-run five or six city states in Italy. He has bullied the Pope into declaring him the Defender of the Faith!

(beat)

On top of that, to prove that nobody can touch him, he arranges to have my cousin murdered in cold blood.

There are loud murmurs of outrage and disgust around the room.

HENRY (cont'd)

My Lords, I believe all these actions are causes for war.

There are even louder mutterings of agreement. Henry turns to Buckingham.

Although he is England's highest ranking nobleman, Buckingham - with his fat, red face - actually looks more like a butcher.

BUCKINGHAM

(proud and haughty)

Your Majesty is right. You have every reason to prosecute a war, although, in truth, you have been slow to say so, and only now perhaps because it has touched you in person.

Henry overlooks the criticism; looks towards another of his great Nobles.

HENRY

Norfolk?

NORFOLK

I agree with my lord Buckingham. We should attack France and teach the French a lesson.

The great noises of approval continue. Then abate.

HENRY

Wolsey?

The Chancellor looks around carefully. Buckingham stares at him with evident hostility.

WOLSEY

I concur with Your Majesty. They are indeed just causes.

Henry smiles, claps his hands together.

HENRY

Good. That's settled. We shall go to war with France. Your Grace will make the necessary arrangements. Now I can go play.

Wolsey bows.

WOLSEY

Majesty.

Henry leaves the chamber, some of the Councillors in his wake. More artfully steps in front of Wolsey.

MORE

You really think we should go to war?

WOLSEY

I think we should try to do what the King wants us to do.

MORE

What if the King doesn't know what he really wants to do?

WOLSEY

Then we should help him to decide.

Wolsey moves on past.

INT. REAL TENNIS COURT - DAY

Henry plays "real" tennis with his close friend, CHARLES BRANDON. Brandon is the same age as the King, physically very similar.

The game they are playing is not like modern tennis, but a fast, more aggressive version, played with racquets and a hard ball in a confined space. The ball SLAMS off black painted walls and sloping roofs, and there are galleries filled with SPECTATORS.

Henry and Brandon wear shorts, soft shoes and fine-textured shirts, through which their fair skins glow. They play hard and physical...but manage at the same time short, quiet exchanges about women in the crowd.

HENRY

The blonde one, behind Norfolk. I haven't seen her before.

BRANDON

She's Lady Jane Howard. Norfolk just brought her to court, as a lady to her Majesty.

They play on, smashing the ball around.

HENRY

Have you tried her?

Brandon grins, wipes the sweat from his forehead with a cloth.

BRANDON

She has the sweetest, plumpest
breasts - and sighs when you kiss
them.

Henry laughs. Plays a winning shot - to great applause from
the galleries.

HENRY

My game, I think, Charles.

BRANDON

You know I'm just letting you win!

Henry grins, shoves him against the wall.

HENRY

Play!

They start playing again.

BRANDON

Now there is someone I have to try.
Look over there: middle gallery,
blue dress. See her? Such an
exquisite, virginal face.

HENRY

Who is she?

BRANDON

(after a beat)
Buckingham's daughter.

Henry glances up at the sweet face of the girl, then at
Buckingham, proud and haughty.

HENRY

A hundred pounds you don't succeed.

BRANDON

Done.

INT. PRIVATE CHAMBERS - DAY

Food dishes are tasted for poison, then passed to a GENTLEMAN
of the privy chamber, then in turn, with a bow, to Buckingham
who serves the King, and Lady Elizabeth Blount who serves the
Queen as they sit at table. The Spanish-born Katherine of
Aragon, once beautiful, is now a dumpy, middle-aged matron,
worn out by constant miscarriages. She picks at her food.
Henry eats with relish.

HENRY

How is our daughter?

KATHERINE

She is healthy. Her tutors tell me she has exceptional talents, especially for music. You should be proud.

HENRY

I am, sweetheart. She is the pearl of my world.

Buckingham, bowing, sets down another dish.

BUCKINGHAM

Majesty.

Then moves away.

KATHERINE

(after a beat)

You have not answered my father's letters.

Henry pretends not to have heard her.

KATHERINE (cont'd)

Why have you not answered his letters?

HENRY

Just because your father is the King of Spain, does he think I have nothing better to do?

KATHERINE

He advises you to sign a treaty with the Emperor, recognizing France as your mutual enemy.

Henry doesn't answer. Katherine is insistent, leaning closer.

KATHERINE (cont'd)

He also advises you not to heed everything Wolsey tells you, since Wolsey is biased for the French.

HENRY

Since when are you a diplomat?

KATHERINE

I am my father's daughter.

HENRY

You are my wife. You are not my minister, or my chancellor. But my wife.

They both smile for the sake of the watching COURTIERS.

KATHERINE

(whispers)

And I should like to be your wife in every way. Will you not visit my bedchamber again, as you used to?

Henry's food suddenly doesn't taste so good.

EXT. HAMPTON COURT PALACE - DAY

With its mellow red brick and formal gardens, this is one of the most beautiful houses in England.

INT. CHAMBER - HAMPTON COURT PALACE - DAY

Two MEN are waiting in one of the many magnificent reception rooms. One of the men is wearing ecclesiastical robes. They examine a huge, obviously priceless tapestry.

MAN'S VOICE

(explaining)

"The Triumph of Fame over Death."
It's based on a work by Petrarch. It was presented to the Cardinal by the Venetian state.

Arriving, the man - one of Wolsey's SECRETARIES - bows.

SECRETARY

Excellency...your Grace. Cardinal Wolsey is ready to receive you.

He leads them through into Wolsey's private apartments.

INT. PRIVATE APARTMENT - DAY

Wolsey, as ever in his red robes, rises from his desk in the wood-paneled chamber.

SECRETARY

His Excellency the French Ambassador and Bishop Bonnavet.

WOLSEY
Gentlemen, welcome.

He offers his hand and they both kiss it. He makes a gesture for them to sit.

WOLSEY (cont'd)
What happened in Urbino was most unfortunate - especially for me. Your Excellency is well aware of my sentiments towards your country. But - how to explain this?

AMBASSADOR
It was not done on my master's orders. And those who committed the crime have already been punished.

Wolsey shrugs.

WOLSEY
No. You must understand, we are already beyond that. King Henry has an appetite for war. And on this occasion it will be hard to appease him.

AMBASSADOR
Then - let us have war.

A beat.

WOLSEY
With respect to your Excellency - you don't mean that. You are already fighting a war against the Emperor. Now you would have to fight on two fronts - even though I'm told your King already complains of being short of money.

The Frenchmen look at one another.

BONNIVET
May I ask your Grace why you invited me here today? I am a man of God, after all, and not a diplomat.

WOLSEY
But I too am a man of God. I believe that faith can drive diplomacy.

(MORE)

WOLSEY (cont'd)

I asked you here precisely because
I wanted your advice.

BONNIVET

(surprised)

Well...I believe...I believe that
everything humanly possible should
be done to avoid a war between our
two countries. It would do England
no good to get involved in our
European squabbles. Far better she
stands above them. Why become
involved when you don't have to? I
am certain your Grace has ways to
pacify the young lion.

WOLSEY

Thank you. But I know an old fable.
A group of wise men had learned
that anyone caught in the rain
would be driven mad. So they sought
shelter in a cave, believing that
when they emerged they would be
able to rule a world peopled by
fools and imbeciles. Unfortunately,
when they did come out, they were
set upon by homicidal maniacs.

(beat)

So much for splendid isolation.

INT. ROYAL BEDCHAMBER - NIGHT

The GROOMS of the bedchamber finish preparing the King for
sleep: tying up his nightgown, pulling back the bedcovers and
removing the warming pans.

Henry, glancing at a large crucifix, plants a kiss upon it. A
beat.

HENRY

I will visit the Queen tonight.

GROOM

Yes, your Majesty.

The servants busy themselves, some taking flaming torches
from the walls. A hidden door is opened into the secret
passage which connects Henry's private apartments to
Katherine's.

By the light of the torches Henry walks though the passage.

INT. QUEEN'S CHAMBERS - NIGHT

Taken by surprise, the Queen's LADIES-OF-THE BEDCHAMBER hurry to greet the King. They curtsey low. Among them is LADY JANE HOWARD. She is very young and very beautiful, her skin milk white, her hair touselled.

HENRY

Where is the Queen?

LADY JANE

Her Majesty is at prayer, your Majesty.

A beat. Henry stares at her. He's changed his mind.

HENRY

Tell her Majesty that I came to offer her my love and devotion, as her true husband.

LADY JANE

Yes, your Majesty.

Henry turns away, but as he does so he catches the eye of one of his SERVANT'S, who understands immediately. As Henry withdraws, the servant goes over and whispers something into Lady Jane's ear.

CUT TO:

INT. WOLSEY'S CHAMBER - NIGHT

Wolsey with the two Frenchmen.

AMBASSADOR

Has your Grace some plan? A way to avoid war?

WOLSEY

Otherwise I would be wasting my time.

AMBASSADOR

If your demands are excessive or humiliating, you will be wasting your time.

WOLSEY

Excellency, I'm not going to make any demands.

The Ambassador is suitably surprised. Wolsey pushes a sheaf of papers across the table.

WOLSEY (cont'd)

This is the outline of a new peace treaty. Take a deep breath before you open it.

The Ambassador reaches for the paper.

AMBASSADOR

May I?

Wolsey stops him

WOLSEY

No. I want you to go away and read it carefully. I believe it introduces something new into the world of diplomacy. If your King accepts it, in principle, then he can sign without any loss of face. On the contrary, he can rejoice. My master can rejoice.

A beat.

AMBASSADOR

In which case - what does your Grace want in return?

WOLSEY

Nothing.

AMBASSADOR

Nothing!?

WOLSEY

Nothing from you.

Wolsey looks at the Bishop.

WOLSEY (cont'd)

What I want, your Grace...only you can give me.

BONNIVET

I don't understand.

WOLSEY

Ah, but when you come to think of it, when you pray...when you ask God...I'm sure the answer will come to you.

INT. PRIVATE CHAPEL - NIGHT

Alone in her small private chapel, filled with candles and icons, Katherine kneels on the stone floor, as she does for hours each day. On the altar is an image of the Virgin holding the baby Jesus in her arms.

INT. ROYAL BEDCHAMBER - NIGHT

Lady Jane is escorted into Henry's bedchamber. She curtsies. With a gesture, Henry dismisses his servants, then gently lifts her.

HENRY

Jane.

LADY JANE

Your Majesty.

HENRY

Do you consent?

LADY JANE

Yes, your Majesty.

Henry touches and kisses her, gently, her mouth, cheek and neck. As she arches back he tears open the front of her gown and kisses her breasts.

Lady Jane sighs.

CUT TO:

EXT. TILTYARD - PALACE - DAY

Two huge horses carrying KNIGHTS in full armour gallop towards each other down either side of a wooden barrier, their long wooden lances aimed at the breastplate or helmet of their opponent.

The ground shakes. The COURTIERS cheer on their favourite. Katherine sits under a coloured awning watching the spectacle with several of her LADIES.

There is a violent collision. One of the lances shatters against a helmet, the force of the impact knocking the RIDER out of his saddle and sending him crashing to the ground. Where he lies still.

The winning KNIGHT, dressed in black armour, takes the applause, removes his helmet, revealing himself as Buckingham. As he rides out of the list, the fallen rider is lifted off the ground by three STRONG MEN. Blood bubbles through the eye slits of his helmet, and gushes out beneath it.

Waiting to enter the list we find Henry and a few of his closest friends and contemporaries: BRANDON, KNIVERT and COMPTON. All four are armoured up and on horseback. They laugh and joke.

BRANDON

My turn.

COMPTON

Good luck.

BRANDON

Why should I need luck?

Trumpets announce his arrival in the list. He rides up the dais on which Katherine and her ladies are sitting. He bows to the Queen.

BRANDON (cont'd)

Your Majesty.

Then his eyes search: settle on Lady Jane a moment, pass on...settle again on Buckingham's daughter, ANNA.

BRANDON (cont'd)

My Lady, would you do me the honour of letting me wear your favours today?

Anna appears to hesitate, blushes...then nods, stands up and gives Brandon a piece of material dyed with her colours. Brandon ties the material round his arm, then bows, rides to the end of the list where his PAGE hands him his shield, helmet and lance.

Meanwhile the ladies around Anna whisper and giggle with excitement.

At a signal, Brandon flies down the list towards his OPPONENT. Their lances glance against shield or thin air, the horses thundering on.

They turn once more, and once more these metal juggernauts gather speed and momentum and crash together. Brandon is caught a glancing blow, sways but stays in the saddle. But his own lance has caught his opponent square on the breastplate, shattered, and lifted the KNIGHT into the air. Brandon takes the cheers...catches Anna's eye. His OPPONENT is helped back to his feet, groggy but unharmed.

CUT TO:

INT. CHAMBER - HAMPTON COURT PALACE - DAY

Wolsey works at his desk, carrying on the affairs of state, a couple of lean dogs at his feet.

His Secretary enters.

SECRETARY

Your Grace - Lady Blount is here.

A beat. Wolsey seems irritated, then nods.

WOLSEY

Very well.

Elizabeth is shown in, curtseys.

ELIZABETH

Your Grace.

WOLSEY

What can I do for you, Lady Blount?

A beat. She is somewhat unnerved.

ELIZABETH

I am - with child, your Grace.

WOLSEY

So what?

ELIZABETH

It is - his Majesty's child.

Wolsey is suddenly all-attention. Looks at her searchingly.

WOLSEY

You are certain?

ELIZABETH

Yes.

A beat. Wolsey thinks.

WOLSEY
Have you told the King?

She shakes her head.

WOLSEY (cont'd)
Good. In due course I will inform
his Majesty. But for the time being
you will say nothing to anyone - on
pain of death. Do you understand?

A beat. She nods.

WOLSEY (cont'd)
When you can no longer disguise
your condition, you will be removed
to a private place for your lying-
in. There you can give birth to
your bastard.

A beat. He's finished. Elizabeth stands up.

ELIZABETH
Thank you - your Grace.

Wolsey is once more writing his correspondence. Elizabeth
quietly leaves his chamber.

CUT TO:

EXT. TILTYARD - DAY

Cheers and applause at the violent conclusion to another
contest.

Henry and his friends, their armour all dusty now and smeared
with blood after several forays, look over to see who will
enter the list.

Once more it is the black knight - Buckingham.

KNIVERT
He's won ten courses already! What
is he trying to prove?

COMPTON
Let me go against him.

BRANDON
No. Let me.

Brandon rides forward.

HENRY
(quietly)
Out of the way!

Brandon has to draw back, as Henry rides into the list. The very appearance of the King of England, in armour, on horseback, in the flesh...elicits an audible thrill of excitement, a gathering of breath, an expectancy.

As he rides over to the dais, Compton leans closer to Brandon.

COMPTON
(quietly)
What is it between those two?

BRANDON
You mean you don't know? Buckingham has a better claim to the throne than Henry.
(beat)
And they both know it.

Henry approaches the dais, stops in front of Katherine, and bows.

HENRY
My Lady.

Katherine smiles, walks over to him...and ties her colours to his arm. At the same time, out of the corner of his eye, Henry catches Lady Jane's eye.

But he bows once more to Katherine, canters back to the end of the list. Both he and Buckingham are given their shields, helmets and lances.

Henry puts on his helmet - and we suddenly see everything from his POV. Through the two narrow eye slits we see Buckingham, a tiny figure. We hear the snorting of the horse, the drumming of its hoof-beats, the grinding of metal plates, the roar and din of the crowd. The noise becomes almost unendurable as the horse kicks into a gallop of just amazing, dizzying speed. We can see the end of the lance, seemingly miles away, difficult to aim because of its length. But steadying...as Buckingham's horse hurtles towards ours, growing bigger and bigger.

And then an EXPLOSION of NOISE, a sickening sound of high-speed collision, a lurching, shattering...like some high speed auto crash.

Then, we're outside again. Henry's lance is shattered and he throws it aside. Buckingham is lying on the ground. The people are cheering. He rides back, watches as Buckingham's PAGES remove his helmet, sit him upright.

Henry stares down at him for a moment, without a word - then rides off to enjoy his triumph.

EXT. RIVER THAMES - DAY

CAPTION: ONE MONTH LATER.

On a beautiful summer's day, the King's barge is rowed upstream from Whitehall to Chelsea, a small village outside the city walls.

Cows, horses and sheep graze in the open fields on either side of the river in this buccolic scene.

EXT. HOUSE AND LANDING STAGE - CHELSEA - DAY

Thomas More and his extended FAMILY await the arrival of the barge at his private landing stage. As the boat docks, Henry leaps ashore and embraces More with obvious affection.

HENRY

Thomas.

MORE

Your Majesty.

More indicates the large gathering.

MORE (cont'd)

My family.

(to his wife)

Alice, won't you kiss the King?

ALICE, a rather plain woman, comes hesitantly forward, but kisses Henry on the mouth, in the English fashion.

ALICE

Majesty.

HENRY

Mistress Alice.

(to More)

Shall we walk in the garden? I like walking in gardens.

More smiles, indicates the path. They walk on together.

HENRY (cont'd)
You didn't say much in Council.

MORE
About what?

HENRY
You know very well - about going to
war with France.

More is silent a while. The river slips past.

MORE
As a humanist I have an abhorrence
of war. It's an activity fit only
for beasts - yet practiced by no
kind of beast so constantly as by
man.

A long beat.

HENRY
As a humanist I share your opinion.
As a King I am forced to disagree.

More smiles a little.

MORE
Spoken like a lawyer.

HENRY
You should know. You taught me.

Henry suddenly grabs More around the neck, playfully.

HENRY (cont'd)
Are you finished?

MORE
Yes.

Henry lets him go.

MORE (cont'd)
And no. Instead of spending ruinous
amounts of money on war, I think
you should spend it on the welfare
of your people.

Henry nods.

HENRY

Thomas, I intend to be a just ruler. But tell me this: where's the glory in education and welfare? Why is Henry V remembered? Because he endowed universities and built alm houses for the destitute? No. It's because he won the battle of Agincourt. Three thousand English bowmen against sixty thousand French. The flower of French chivalry destroyed in four hours. Arrows falling like rain from the skies. That's why he's remembered, Thomas.

And More, sadly, looks at him.

INT. COURT - NIGHT

A crowded court. Buckingham and Norfolk look down from a gallery. Buckingham is drunk.

BUCKINGHAM

He has no right to any of this. His father took the throne on the battlefield; he had no real claim to it, only through a bastard on his mother's side.

NORFOLK

Your Grace's family is more ancient.

BUCKINGHAM

I am directly descended from Edward III. This is my crown, and my court, and not his crown or his court.

Norfolk looks around carefully.

NORFOLK

That's treason, your Grace.

BUCKINGHAM

But it's true. It's true, isn't it, Norfolk? It's the truth. And one day we shall make it come true.

He looks at Norfolk, who doesn't deny it. Buckingham smiles, kisses him, and moves away - followed by a small entourage of his FOLLOWERS.

As they walk through the court, COURTIERS bow and make way. One or two even whisper into his ear.

Buckingham is like a King in waiting!

So he enters his private apartments.

INT. PRIVATE APARTMENTS - NIGHT

No sooner is he inside, when he hears the VERY LOUD sounds of love-making from an adjoining room.

A beat. Then Buckingham throws open the doors.

On the bed, Brandon is making love, doggie-fashion, to Anna, Buckingham's daughter. Buckingham lets out a howl, and draws his sword.

Brandon leaps for his clothes.

Buckingham puts the point of his sword to Brandon's throat.

BUCKINGHAM

What is this?

BRANDON

It is what it looks like - your Grace.

Buckingham presses the point a little deeper.

BUCKINGHAM

You have violated my daughter.

BRANDON

No. She begged.

BUCKINGHAM

You've taken her honour.

BRANDON

I swear to your Grace I have not. Someone else was there first.

The girl can't help laughing. Buckingham is puce.

BUCKINGHAM

Son of a whore.

Brandon meets his gaze squarely.

BRANDON
Yes, that is true - your Grace.

Buckingham lowers his sword.

BUCKINGHAM
Get out.

Brandon leaves.

Buckingham walks over to the bed. He hits Anna so hard in the face that her nose explodes with blood.

EXT. WHITEHALL PALACE - DAY

Wolsey rides on a mule into the palace grounds, just as Christ rode a mule as he entered Jerusalem. But there the comparison ends. Wolsey is preceded by two CROSS BEARERS on horseback holding aloft two great silver crucifixes, and followed by four FOOTMEN carrying gilt poleaxes - and his mule is decked out in velvet cloth.

His appearance creates a great stir, COURTIERS and BEGGARS crowding around the procession to stare, many in awe, at the Chancellor of England.

INT. PALACE - DAY

Holding an orange hollowed out with spices and herbs to his nose, to protect him against the stench of humanity, Wolsey proceeds through the palace. Now PETITIONERS crowd around him, desperate for him to read their suits, address their grievances.

PETITIONER #1
Your Grace, I beg you, read my petition!

Waving it in his face.

PETITIONER #2
Read mine, your Grace, for the love of God!

PETITIONER #3
All I ask for, your Grace, is justice! Please take my petition. I beg you, as a man of God.

Wolsey ignores them, and his USHERS push them away.

USHER

(shouting)

Oh my lords and masters, make way
for his Lord's Grace. Make way
there!

Wolsey passes through another set of doors - which are shut
in the anguished faces of the Petitioners.

INT. CHAMBER - PALACE - DAY

Wolsey is joined by Pace - who bows to him.

WOLSEY

(quietly)

I trust you are keeping a good eye
on my interests, Mr. Pace?

PACE

Of course, your Grace. Like an
eagle.

WOLSEY

I don't want an eagle, Mr. Pace.
They can soar too high. Be a pigeon
- shit on everything!

PACE

Yes, your Grace.

Wolsey moves on.

WOLSEY

Where is the King?

PACE

Out hunting.

WOLSEY

Good. It keeps him in good humour.
Send word when he returns.

PACE

Yes, your Grace.

He bows, as Wolsey walks away.

CUT TO:

EXT. ROYAL PARK - DAY

Henry out hunting with his friends, already mud-spattered, the horses steaming.

Then the CRY goes up, and the dogs begin their furious barking.

COMPTON

Over there!

A DEER has been chased out of copse, and flees before the dogs. The hunting horn sounds.

HENRY

A fine buck. Let's have some sport.

The young men fly after the buck on their massive hunters, galloping pell-mell into thickets, jumping ditches, reckless, each one trying to out-ride the others.

Knivert gets in front. Grins - then the next second his horse stumbles into an unseen ditch, and almost somersaults, throwing Knivert violently into the bank, and breaking its own legs.

Henry and the others laugh at his failure, ride on, faster, whipping between the trees, the buck now clearer ahead of them.

COMPTON

(shouting)

He's tiring! Look!

They burst into open ground. But ahead of them now, is a lake. It's touch and go...but the buck just gets there first...and swims out of reach, leaving dogs and riders stranded on the bank, panting, watching the antlers recede into the distance.

Henry shrugs.

HENRY

You win some, you lose some.

Beat.

BRANDON

That reminds me. You owe me a hundred pounds.

Henry looks at him, and grins.

EXT. WHITEHALL PALACE - EVENING

The hunters return in the gathering dusk, exhausted and satisfied. SERVANTS carry the kill on long poles strung over their shoulders: the corpses of deers, hares, wild boars and other animals.

More SERVANTS - and some of Henry's GROOMS - swarm around as they dismount, laughing among themselves.

Pace comes forward, bows.

HENRY

Mr. Pace.

PACE

Your Majesty. His Grace the Chancellor is in the palace.

Henry nods.

HENRY

I'll see him later.

(beat)

Oh, and Mr. Pace - give Mr. Brandon a hundred pounds from my purse.

PACE

Majesty.

Henry slaps Brandon on the back.

HENRY

I want to hear all about it.

They go off, laughing.

INT. PRIVATE CHAMBERS - NIGHT

Henry with Wolsey and More. Henry, loose-limbed, relaxed, bites into an apple, walks around.

HENRY

How are the preparations going?

WOLSEY

Very well. Both your army and your fleet are assembling. Provisions and stores are being laid in. You could go to war in a matter of weeks.

Henry beams.

HENRY

Excellent. I knew I could depend on you. When have you ever failed me?

WOLSEY

I am grateful to your Majesty.

A beat. Wolsey - always a great actor - seems to hesitate.

HENRY

What is it?

WOLSEY

Your Majesty, wars are expensive. To pay for them you must raise taxes. That's not always popular.

(beat)

What if your Majesty could gain more glory and prestige by other means?

HENRY

Other means?

WOLSEY

Peaceful means.

Henry pulls a face.

HENRY

What! No battles?! No glory?

He glances at More.

MORE

I think your Majesty should hear him out.

Henry sits down.

HENRY

Go on.

WOLSEY

In the last few weeks, on your Majesty's behalf, I have conducted an intense round of diplomatic talks.

(MORE)

WOLSEY (cont'd)

Not just with the French Ambassador
- also with representatives of the
Emperor, and envoys from the
Italian States, from Denmark,
Portugal...

HENRY

What for?

WOLSEY

To make a Treaty.

Beat. Henry, puzzled, glances at More again, who shrugs.

HENRY

What kind of Treaty?

WOLSEY

A new kind. Something never before
envisaged. A Treaty of Universal
and Perpetual Peace.

Henry, despite himself, is intrigued. More certainly is.

MORE

How is it to be effected?

WOLSEY

In several stages. In the first
place there will be a summit
meeting between the Kings of France
and England. During the summit,
your Majesty's daughter will be
betrothed to the French Dauphin.
And at the end of the summit, you
will both sign the Treaty. It will
be quite new in the history of
Europe, committing all its
signatories to the principle of
collective security and universal
peace.

HENRY

Which means?

WOLSEY

Should any of the signatory
countries suffer aggression, all
the others would immediately demand
that the aggressor withdraw. If he
refuses, within one month all the
rest would declare against
him...and continue until peace is
restored.

(MORE)

WOLSEY (cont'd)

The Treaty also envisages that closer co-operation will inevitably lead to the creation of new institutions, like a Council of Europe, which would organize trade and resolve all future conflicts peacefully.

During the latter part of this, Henry has got back to his feet, excited, pacing about again.

HENRY

In some ways I like this. I know what it is...

(looks at More)

...and so do you, Thomas.

MORE

Yes.

HENRY

It's the application of humanist principles to international affairs. A totally new way of conducting them.

(beat)

Your Grace is to be congratulated.

WOLSEY

Thank you, your Majesty.

HENRY

Always be assured of my love.

Wolsey bows, withdraws.

GROOM

Your Majesty, the Duke of Buckingham desires an audience.

Henry pauses, then nods. Buckingham is shown in.

HENRY

Your Grace.

BUCKINGHAM

Your Majesty ought to be made aware that yesterday I discovered Mr. Charles Brandon in flagrante delecto with my daughter.

Henry looks at him.

HENRY
You interfered?

A beat. Buckingham's face spasms.

BUCKINGHAM
Mr. Brandon has brought shame to my family. I demand that your Majesty banish him from court, with whatever other punishment your Majesty sees fit.

The two men are toe to toe.

HENRY
There will be no punishment. Unless your daughter accuses Mr. Brandon of raping her. Does she so claim?

A long beat. Buckingham struggles with his anger.

HENRY (cont'd)
Does she claim that Mr. Brandon raped her?

BUCKINGHAM
She doesn't need to. The offence is against me and against my family.

HENRY
As far as I know, there has been no offence. Therefore no need for any punishment.

A long beat. Still Buckingham struggles with his emotions. Then briefly bows.

BUCKINGHAM
Majesty.

And walks out.

MORE
Be careful of Buckingham, I beg you. He may well be stupid but he's richer than you are, and he has an army.

(beat)
Even your father backed off him.

Henry looks at him.

INT. COURT - NIGHT

Wolsey walking in company with Bishop Bonnivet. They speak quietly.

WOLSEY

I'm very happy that the King of France has agreed to sign the Treaty and host the summit.

BONNIVET

His Majesty is delighted there will be no war. As we all are.

WOLSEY

What about the other matter we spoke of?

A beat.

BONNIVET

Which - other matter, your Grace?

Wolsey stops, suddenly seizes the Bishop, slams him against the wall.

WOLSEY

I saved your master's arse. I want my reward. And you can arrange it. Do you understand?

Bonnivet nods.

INT. PRESENCE CHAMBER - DAY

Henry gives his almost daily audience, sitting on a throne beneath a canopy of cloth-of gold, flanked by NOBLES and COURTIERS.

The Palace Chamberlain knocks on the door with staff, is admitted.

CHAMBERLAIN

Sir Thomas Boleyn.

BOLEYN enters. A tall, impressive-looking man in middle-age, with hooded, intelligent eyes.

He bows low.

HENRY

Sir Thomas. We have recalled you from France because there is some talk of a rapprochement with the French, possibly a summit. As our Ambassador it would be up to you to make all the necessary arrangements.

BOLEYN

I am as always at your Majesty's service. Whatever task you give me, I will venture to carry it out to the very best of my abilities, whether it be in the name of peace or war.

Henry smiles.

HENRY

Of your abilities, Sir Thomas, I have not the slightest doubt. Nor of your faithfulness.

He extends a hand, and Boleyn kisses his coronation ring, with obvious fervour.

BOLEYN

Majesty!

CUT TO:

INT. BUCKINGHAM'S CHAMBERS - PALACE - DAY

One of Buckingham's RETAINER'S accompanies Boleyn as he walks through the Duke's gilded rooms. He passes Anna, who is reading a book, a bandage over her nose. She turns away self-consciously.

The servant finds his master.

SERVANT

Your Grace, Sir Thomas Boleyn.

Buckingham makes a languid gesture. BOLEYN walks in, bows, and kisses his hand.

BUCKINGHAM

Sir Thomas. You have returned from France?

BOLEYN

For a while, your Grace.

BUCKINGHAM

They tell me you are an excellent Ambassador.

BOLEYN

Then, whoever they are, they are very kind.

There's a pause. Buckingham dismisses his servants with a gesture.

BUCKINGHAM

You come from an old family.

BOLEYN

Indeed. But not as ancient, nor as grand as your Grace's.

Buckingham, though pleased, waves the compliment airily away.

BUCKINGHAM

Nevertheless, we have much in common. I understand - I understand you dislike parvenus as much as I do.

A beat.

BOLEYN

I - think I might follow your Grace's argument.

BUCKINGHAM

The King chooses to surround himself with commoners, men of no distinction, new men, without pedigree or title. How does that help the prestige of his crown?

BOLEYN

(in dangerous waters)
Your Grace, I -

BUCKINGHAM

His father seized the crown on a battlefield, by force, not by right.

BOLEYN

Your Grace, no-one wants to return to the evil days of civil war. What is done is done. The King is the King.

BUCKINGHAM

And Wolsey is his hand-maiden! The son of a butcher! A man of the cloth with a mistress and two children. Tell me, Boleyn, how do you like this fellow?

BOLEYN

Not at all.

Buckingham smiles.

BUCKINGHAM

Then, together, we must destroy him!

INT. PRIVATE CHAMBERS - DAY

Henry being shaved by his BARBER, while at the same time dictating a letter to Pace.

HENRY

My dearest royal cousin...No. Make that - My beloved cousin. We shall make all necessary arrangements to meet together face to face. Nothing is now closer and dearer to my heart than this Treaty of Universal Peace.

He pauses, to let the barber shave under his chin.

HENRY (cont'd)

And as a token of my good will, my commitment to this Treaty, and my love for your Majesty, I have decided...

He pauses again, to let the barber finish, and gently wipe his face. Then Henry strokes his clean-shaven jaw reflectively.

HENRY (cont'd)

...I have decided not to shave again until we meet.

(MORE)

HENRY (cont'd)

My beard will be a token of universal friendship, of the love between us. We have been enemies too long. Let us now embrace in friendship. And let there be peace in Europe.

INT. CHAMBER - HAMPTON COURT PALACE - DAY

Bishop Bonnivet kisses Wolsey's hand.

BONNIVET

I have some news for your Grace. His Holiness, Pope Alexander, is desperately ill and sure to die. In view of your Grace's well-known piety, as well as your learning and diplomatic skills, I can assure your Grace of the support of the French Cardinals at the conclave to elect a successor. If your Grace has also the votes of your own Cardinals, then, as it please God, you will be elected Pope, Bishop of Rome - our new Holy Father.

Wolsey's face somehow manages to express his total satisfaction. But he crosses himself.

WOLSEY

Thank you, your Grace. You make me feel very humble.

CUT TO:

INT. BEDCHAMBER - HAMPTON COURT PALACE - NIGHT

Wolsey lies face down but naked on his great bed. His MISTRESS, a plain-looking PEASANT-WOMAN with enormous breasts, straddles his back and pummels it with her fists. Wolsey groans with relief.

PEASANT WOMAN

You work too hard.

WOLSEY

I know.

Grunts beneath another blow.

PEASANT WOMAN

It will kill you.

WOLSEY

I know that too. What am I supposed to do?

She stops pounding him, leans over him to whisper in his ear.

PEASANT WOMAN

Stay alive.

CUT TO:

INT. CLOSET - PALACE - NIGHT

More finishes his prayers, his Latin orisons, and rises for bed. He removes his doublet - revealing beneath it a filthy hair-shirt. The skin around it is lacerated and raw, with weeping wounds.

More doesn't take the shirt off, merely lies down in his bunk, to suffer.

CUT TO:

INT. QUEEN'S PRIVATE CHAMBERS - NIGHT

Katherine is undressed by two of her Ladies - Elizabeth Blount and Lady Jane. As they unfasten each article of clothing, (dresses were made up of many interchangeable parts), she catches their eye - but says nothing. Maybe she knows, and maybe she doesn't. But her feminine intuition probably tells her something.

Elizabeth moves away from her, suddenly has a stomach cramp. She touches her stomach - and Katherine sees her doing it.

KATHERINE

Are you ill, Lady Blount?

ELIZABETH

No, your Majesty.

She moves away.

KATHERINE

No, stay.

Elizabeth turns, curtseys again. Katherine indicates that she can kneel beside her, and dismisses Lady Jane.

There's a long beat.

KATHERINE (cont'd)

I have not talked to anyone for a long time. The King dismissed my Spanish confessor and my Spanish ladies, in case they were spies. And I cannot trust my English confessor.

A beat. She plays with her rosary.

KATHERINE (cont'd)

I can trust you though, can't I, Lady Blount?

ELIZABETH

(after a beat)

Yes, Madam.

KATHERINE

It is not seemly to feel self-pity. Suffering is the lot of all mankind. Think how our Lady suffered to see her only son nailed to a cross. Her only son...

She pauses, overcome.

KATHERINE (cont'd)

I cannot give the King a living son. That is my pity. That is my suffering. I once gave birth to a baby boy...a sweet boy...who died in my arms, after just four weeks of life.

She starts to cry.

KATHERINE (cont'd)

The King blames me. I know. He thinks it is all my fault. He does not know how much I suffer, how much I pray.

A beat. She looks up at Elizabeth, her face shining with tears.

KATHERINE (cont'd)

And now he will not come to my bed. He does not come. He does not come because he thinks me repulsive. Look at me! Am I not old? Am I not fat and repulsive?

ELIZABETH
(softly)
Gentle Madam, no.

Katherine weeps bitter tears. Elizabeth cannot watch, and lowers her eyes.

CUT TO:

INT. BUCKINGHAM'S CHAMBERS - NIGHT

A young, beautiful, Italian-looking BOY, dressed in a white Greek tunic, is fitted with a pair of feathered wings by Buckingham's servants. They also powder his face, put some red colour on his lips. Then a hook is placed over his belt, attached to a wire.

One of the SERVANT'S whispers to the boy.

SERVANT
Remember you're flying.

They winch the boy up with a rudimentary pulley. He spreads his arms out, with the wings attached, and as they let go he glides slowly down a taut rope.

From his bed, Buckingham watches the winged boy descend like Icarus. With a shudder, the boy comes to an abrupt halt just a few feet above the aristocrat. Who smiles, and reaches up for him.

CUT TO:

INT. CONFESSIONAL - NIGHT

Henry sits alone in the small and dark confessional. He looks very sombre. This is a different Henry, not just thoughtful but troubled.

PRIEST V.O.
(quietly)
Yes, my son.

There's a long pause.

HENRY
I have been thinking of my brother. Arthur. He died when I was fifteen years old. Of a fever. He had only been married for six months.

Another long pause.

HENRY (cont'd)

He was married to my wife. When he died, it was decided that I should marry her. I think my father did not want to lose the dowry. In any case, Katherine swore her marriage to Arthur had never been consummated, that he had been too weak and ill, and Papal dispensation was granted.

In the darkness Henry can just hear the soft breaths of the Priest.

HENRY (cont'd)

So I married her. And since then she has had five still-born children, a boy who lived for twenty eight days, and a single living daughter.

Another pause. There is very real pain in Henry's eyes.

HENRY (cont'd)

What if she lied? What if their marriage was consummated. She was young and beautiful then. The object of desire...

(beat)

Father, what does it say in the Gospels?

There is no answer.

HENRY (cont'd)

Answer me!

PRIEST V.O.

In Leviticus it says, "If a man marries his brother's wife, they will die childless. He has done a ritually unclean thing."

We see Henry clench his fists.

PRIEST V.O. (cont'd)

But you have a child.

HENRY

But not a son! Not a son. Can you
not see that it is Divine Justice
for my offence against God!

A long pause. Henry rests his head bleakly against the wooden
screen.

INT. COURT - DAY

Henry strides through the court accompanied by COURTIERS and
SERVANTS.

The doors to the Queen's private chambers open, and a dark-
haired, very pretty LITTLE GIRL of about six emerges, with
her GOVERNESS.

Henry's eyes light up. She and the Governess both curtsy
formally to him, but with a great roar of delight he sweeps
the little girl up in his arms and swings her around,
laughing.

HENRY

This is my daughter, Mary! Is she
not beautiful?

He hugs and kisses her, and Mary smiles and kisses him back,
much to everyone's delight.

Then he hands her back to her Governess.

HENRY (cont'd)

Goodbye, sweetheart. Be good. Do
everything you are told.

Katherine has also appeared.

KATHERINE

(quietly)
May we talk?

INT. SMALL CHAMBER - DAY

Katherine with Henry.

KATHERINE

I don't like it.

HENRY

What?

KATHERINE

Your beard.

Henry grins ruefully, touches the result of several days' growth.

KATHERINE (cont'd)

Nor what it means.

HENRY

(warning)

Katherine.

KATHERINE

You are giving my daughter away to the Dauphin and to France. You did not even consult me. The Valois are the sworn enemies of my family.

HENRY

She is mine to do with as I see fit. It is a great marriage.

KATHERINE

It is not. She is marrying into a cesspit. I see Wolsey's hand behind this. Though I love your Majesty, and am in every way loyal to you, I cannot disguise my distress and unhappiness.

Henry looks at her, rather coldly.

HENRY

I am afraid you will have to.

CUT TO:

INT. SHOOTING GALLERY - PALACE - DAY

THWACK! An arrow buries itself into the wooden top of a barrel. Henry has built this shooting gallery in the centre of his palace, and now he and Thomas Boleyn take turns at firing their bows.

HENRY

Tell me about King Francis.

Boleyn fires, just catching the target.

BOLEYN

He is twenty three years old.

HENRY

Then he is younger than me.

He aims.

BOLEYN

Your Majesty would not think so, to look at him.

HENRY

(pleased)

Ah.

He fires, hits near the centre.

HENRY (cont'd)

Is he tall?

BOLEYN

About your height - perhaps a little shorter.

HENRY

How about his legs? Has he got strong calves, like mine?

Boleyn fires, misses.

BOLEYN

Your Majesty, ~~no-one~~ has calves like yours.

Henry laughs.

HENRY

Is he handsome?

BOLEYN

Some people might think so. He certainly thinks so himself.

HENRY

He's vain?

BOLEYN

Your Majesty - he's French.

Henry laughs again, fires, the arrow speeding down the long gallery, thumping into the tub.

HENRY

What about his court?

BOLEYN

It has a reputation for loose morals and licentiousness which the King, by his own behaviour, does nothing to dispel.

HENRY

He encourages it?

BOLEYN

He practices it openly.

A beat. Henry looks at him.

HENRY

You have two daughters. How do you protect them?

BOLEYN

I keep an eye on them. But I also trust in their goodness.

A beat. Henry nods, puts his bow down, the game over.

HENRY

You will return immediately to Paris. I am entrusting you with all the diplomatic negotiations for the summit.

Boleyn bows.

BOLEYN

Majesty.

Henry strides off.

INT. STABLES - DAY

Knivert carefully examines some magnificent horse-flesh, watched by Brandon. He steps back, admiring the young bay gelding.

KNIVERT

I'll take him. He's a beauty.

BRANDON

He looks good enough.

Knivert walks over.

KNIVERT

The French better watch out. During the day we'll unseat them from their horses, and at night from their women.

He laughs. Brandon is silent.

KNIVERT (cont'd)

And if we do well enough, Henry is bound to reward us.

BRANDON

What are you looking for?

KNIVERT

An earldom at least. What about you?

A long beat. Brandon looks back at him.

BRANDON

A Dukedom.

It sobers Knivert up.

KNIVERT

Are you serious? You want to be a Duke?

BRANDON

What's the point of being ambitious, if you're not ambitious enough? Fortune is a wheel, my friend.

(looks over at the horses)

Let's ride it to the top.

He walks out.

INT. CHAMBER - HAMPTON COURT PALACE - DAY

Wolsey and More.

MORE

Your Grace wanted to see me?

WOLSEY

I did. To talk about the summit,
since you have been appointed the
King's principle Secretary.

He pushes a thick document across the table.

WOLSEY (cont'd)

It's important that his Majesty
does what he's told. Here are the
rules governing all matters of
precedent and etiquette. They will
be observed at all times. It's also
been agreed that, in order to
preserve the honour of both
nations, neither King will take
part in any joust or combat.

MORE

(with a smile)

I see.

(beat)

What can the King do?

WOLSEY

Always tell the King what he ought
to do, never what he can do. For if
the Lion ever discovers his own
strength, no man will ever be able
to control him.

More looks back at him, soberly.

INT. COURT - NIGHT

Norfolk walks by himself down darkened passageways. There is
something furtive about it.

Reaching a door, he knocks on it gently. The door is quickly
opened by an invisible hand. We catch a glimpse into the room
beyond. We see Buckingham, Boleyn, and two other Councillors.
They look like conspirators.

Norfolk joins them. The door is closed in our face.

INT. BEDCHAMBER - BRANDON'S CHAMBERS - NIGHT

Brandon gently examines the scar on Anna's nose.

BRANDON

Poor you.

He kisses it. Then gently he pushes her back on the bed.

BRANDON (cont'd)
Now - where were we?

She takes his hand, guides it between her legs.

ANNA
You were there.

Brandon smiles.

INT. PRIVATE CHAMBERS - DAY

Henry, with courtiers, grooms and TAILORS in attendance looks eagerly through a new collection of clothes and accessories for the coming summit.

The fabrics are beautiful, expensive, and richly coloured. Many have jewels sewn into them. There are also daggers with handles of gold, coats with fur collars, gold chains, feathered bonnets, slippers and boots.

SERVANT
(announcing)
His Grace Cardinal Wolsey.

Wolsey enters, bows. Henry gestures him over.

HENRY
I want your opinion. Do you like
this cloth?

He picks out a suit of cloth and gold and silver, and holds it against himself. Wolsey, his own clothes - even his ecclesiastical robes - always finely made and cut (unlike More's disregard of fashion) - carefully studies the effect.

WOLSEY
It suits your Majesty well. Perhaps
- if I may - with these with it.

He picks out some accessories carefully - gloves, shoes, chain, and then an over-jacket lined with black fur. Henry is pleased.

HENRY
You think Francis will have
anything as fine as these?

WOLSEY
Only if he steals them.

Henry laughs, claps Wolsey on the back.

HENRY

Come. Let's eat together. We can talk.

He walks from the room, all the courtiers and servants bowing. There are still more in the next, larger chamber, with a dining table already laid and food ready to be served.

Buckingham is also in the chamber, ready to serve the King. Buckingham has been given the privilege of holding the silver basin for the King to wash his hands in.

He bows, but there's still a coolness between them. Henry dips his fingers into the water, then removes them.

Then Wolsey puts his own fingers into the water.

Buckingham, outraged to be holding a basin for the son of a butcher, reacts violently, emptying its contents over Wolsey's shoes.

Everything stops.

WOLSEY

Your Grace has made a mistake.

Buckingham can hardly speak.

HENRY

You will apologize.

(beat)

I said, you will apologize.

BUCKINGHAM

I apologize if I have offended your Majesty.

A beat. Henry nods a little.

HENRY

Your Grace may leave us.

Buckingham bows, withdraws. Henry looks over at one of his grooms.

HENRY (cont'd)

Fetch the Chancellor a pair of my shoes.

He smiles, as they sit at table. Wine is poured. Wolsey makes the sign of the cross, both men lower their heads.

WOLSEY

We thank God for what we are about
to receive.

HENRY

Amen.

He crosses himself.

WOLSEY

Everything is prepared for the
summit. It will take place in the
Pale of Calais - English territory.
In a valley known as the Val d'Or,
the valley of gold. More than a
thousand labourers have constructed
a palace for your Majesty built of
temporary materials made to look
real. They have called it the
Palace of Illusions, and some say
it is the eighth wonder of the
world.

HENRY

And the French?

WOLSEY

Have put up tents and pavilions in
the field.

A beat. They are interrupted by the arrival of dry shoes.

HENRY

They haven't spent as much money as
we have.

WOLSEY

I assure your Majesty the French
are just as committed as we are to
the success of this summit.

There's a long pause. Food is brought.

WOLSEY (cont'd)

(quietly)

Lady Blount is with child.

HENRY

Lady Blount?

WOLSEY

She came to see me. She is carrying
your Majesty's child.

A long beat. Henry thinks about it.

WOLSEY (cont'd)

If you want her to keep the child,
I will arrange for her to be moved
to the house at Jericho. I will
also deal with her husband.

Henry looks at him.

HENRY

I am very grateful to your Grace.

Wolsey smiles.

EXT. VAL D'OR - DAY

CAPTION: THE FIELD OF THE CLOTH OF GOLD.

We see an empty and grassy ridge. We hear the sound of horses - and suddenly Henry and all his party appear at the top of the ridge, in all their glory. Henry, in his cloth of gold and silver, rides a bay horse hung with gold bells that jangle as he rides.

Beside him are YEOMEN OF THE GUARD, carrying the fluttering pennants and banners of England, and many of his great LORDS and COURTIERS, from Buckingham to Boleyn and Brandon.

Below them, in the valley, is the Field of the Cloth of Gold: a vision of brightly painted pavilions and a fairy-tale palace.

On the ridge opposite, the French party appears. KING FRANCIS 1 with members of his glittering NOBILITY and an armed escort of his SWISS GUARDS. Francis himself is tall, dark, hook-nosed but devilishly handsome.

The two parties stare across at each other, warily. Brandon rides closer to Henry.

BRANDON

What if it's a trap? What if they
mean to kill you?

A long beat. Henry looks over at Francis - then abruptly urges on his horse.

HENRY

(shouts)
Stay here! All of you! On pain of
death!

He rides down into the valley. Francis, urging on his own horse, follows suit, the two Kings converging on the French pavilion.

EXT. FRENCH PAVILION - DAY

The pavilion is made of gold damask and guarded by a statue of St Michael.

Henry and Francis ride slowly towards each other. On meeting they doff their caps, and embrace, full of smiles, admiring each others' beards.

They dismount and walk to the entrance to the pavilion - where they pause.

HENRY

After you, cousin.

FRANCIS

Absolutely not. After you, cousin.

The impasse lasts a moment or two, then they link arms and, laughing, pass into the tent together.

INT. PAVILION - DAY

The inside of the pavilion is lined with blue velvet embroidered with fleurs-de-lys.

This is a formal reception, with the French on one side and the English on the other. Henry is supported by Queen Katherine, by Wolsey, More, and many members of his nobility. Beside Francis is his beautiful young wife, QUEEN CLAUDE, and several DUKES and PRINCES OF THE CHURCH.

All these people are fashion victims. It's like the Oscars. Except it's both men and women who have dressed up like peacocks to impress and dazzle. The competitiveness of the whole occasion is already just so obvious.

But no-one dazzles more than the two Kings. Their clothes simply glitter with jewels.

Trumpets sound. An ENGLISH HERALD steps forward to read a proclamation.

HERALD

Hear ye! Hear ye! I, Henry, by the
Grace of God, King of England,
Ireland and France, do hereby...

HENRY
 (loudly)
 Stop.

Henry looks at Francis.

HENRY (cont'd)
 I cannot be that while you are
 here, for I would be a liar. During
 this summit I am simply Henry, King
 of England.

He smiles, and applause ripples through the pavilion.

FRANCIS
 And I am just Francis, King of
 France - and Burgundy.

There is more applause. But obviously, beneath the
 conviviality, both Kings are sparring.

WOLSEY
 Your Majesties, I ask you to each
 place a hand upon the Holy Bible,
 and swear before God and these
 Princes and Lords that you will be
 true and loving to each other.

He holds out a large, gold-tooled Bible. Both Henry and
 Francis manages to place their hands upon it at the same
 time.

HENRY
 I so swear.

FRANCIS
 Moi aussi.

There is more applause. The Kings embrace again and move
 away.

WOLSEY
 And now the Queens' Majesties.

Katherine and Claude approach. Then hesitate.

KATHERINE
 (under her breath)
 We are supposed to kiss the Bible.
 But which one of us first?

CLAUDE
 (under her breath)
 You do it. I don't mind.

KATHERINE
 No, I couldn't. You kiss it.

CLAUDE
 I don't want to.

A beat.

KATHERINE
 Then what shall we do?

It looks as if a diplomatic incident is already brewing.
 There is some restlessness. A murmuring.

CLAUDE
 Kiss each other.

Very happily, the two Queens kiss cheeks - to great laughter
 and applause. An incident averted.

Henry and Francis join in the laughter. Champagne corks begin
 popping. The party has started.

CUT TO:

EXT. PAVILION - DAY

Outside the pavilion great crowds of French and English
 servants and retainers have gathered. They have already been
 served with free wine or beer and are also in a party mood.

One FRENCHMAN climbs on top of a barrel, and raises his cup.

FRENCHMAN
 English and French! Good friends!

Everyone laughs and drinks.

EXT. PALACE OF ILLUSIONS - DAY

Henry and several of his party approach the specially-
 constructed palace. From the outside it looks like a genuine
 building, constructed of brick and stone, with a gatehouse
 and battlements, with lawns in front of it with an "ancient"
 Roman fountain. There are poles with the King's carved beasts
 on top of them.

Henry surveys the effect. Looks at More.

HENRY
What do you think?

MORE
It's - incredible!

Henry laughs, puts his hand on the wall - and shakes it! It's only painted canvas.

HENRY
But it's not real. It's all an illusion.

No-one can quite believe it. Brandon walks over to the fountain, cups his hands and drinks from the free-flowing liquid.

BRANDON
It's real wine!

Everyone laughs.

INT. DINING HALL - PALACE OF ILLUSIONS - NIGHT

Another beautiful illusion. The "hall" has a ceiling of green silk studded with gold roses, a taffeta carpet. Henry and Francis sit at either end of the huge dining table, each surrounded by members of their Court. The table groans with food, wine flows freely and - much to More's disapproval - the general behaviour is almost riotous.

Henry and Francis keep lifting their cups to each other. Then Henry stands.

HENRY
Brother, I have a gift for you.

He makes a signal. Norfolk carries the gift to Francis.

NORFOLK
Majesty.

FRANCIS
(aside, in French)
You know, I fear the English even when they bring gifts!

His courtiers laugh.

The velvet box is opened, revealing a fabulous collar of rubies. Francis smiles graciously at Henry, claps his hands.

FRANCIS (cont'd)

Thank you, brother. And now I have a gift for you.

A FRENCH NOBLE takes the gift to Henry.

NOBLE

Majeste.

The gift is revealed - a magnificent bracelet of diamonds. There are genuine gasps of amazement and admiration. Clearly it's worth much more than Henry's gift. But Henry manages to smile graciously.

HENRY

Brother your gift is much more splendid. Thank you. I am embarrassed, for the only other thing I can give you is this pastry.

He gestures to a large brown pie. His CHEF, bowing, carries it over to Francis, whose courtiers snigger audibly.

The chef bows again, puts it down before the French King - and oddly, offers him a hunting knife.

Amused, slightly puzzled, Francis takes the knife - and cuts into the pastry. Almost at once the whole dish trembles, the pastry cracks open, bright wings flutter - and a dozen small ortelon birds burst out of the pie and start to fly around the tent.

There is general amusement, and much applause for Henry's trick. Only Francis seems somewhat unimpressed.

FRANCIS

That was - tres amusant, mon frere.

Henry rises, holding out his goblet.

HENRY

Now, sir, let me propose a toast to your beautiful and gracious Queen, Claude. Madame.

He bows, they all drink.

FRANCIS

And I, to your...

(beat)

Gracious and...beautiful Queen,
Katherine. Madame.

He bows. Katherine smiles graciously - but the comparison between the Queens is wounding.

Then the conviviality resumes - the drinking, music playing.

More turns to his neighbour.

MORE

Who are you, sir?

MAN

Sir, I am the Venetian Ambassador.

MORE

What do you make of all this?

AMBASSADOR

I admire the gold chains of the English - but I think the French dress more elegantly.

MORE

You don't think the dresses of the French ladies are too revealing? Unfit for the chaste?

The Ambassador shrugs.

AMBASSADOR

Perhaps. But the English ladies don't know how to dress at all! And they drink too much!

More doesn't have a comeback.

We PAN down the table. The dresses of the French women are indeed very revealing, and most of them are as young and beautiful as the Queen.

PAN ON. We find Buckingham sitting next to Boleyn. Both men are staring at Henry, who seems to be having such a good time.

Further down - Wolsey is staring at them.

EXT. TOURNAMENT - DAY

English KNIGHTS joust against French ones, each side shouting for its champions, applauding the results.

The two Kings and their parties sit in a viewing gallery. Henry can't stand just being a spectator, can hardly sit still.

A FRENCH KNIGHT in blue thunders down the list, and unhorses the ENGLISH KNIGHT in red...to a great cry from the French spectators.

FRANCIS

Bravo! Bravo! Vive la France!

It's almost too much for Henry. He looks back at More.

HENRY

God help me, I must enter the list, or I'll go mad!

MORE

Let me advise your Majesty. Don't. How do you negotiate with a dead King?

HENRY

I won't get killed. You know I won't.

MORE

Yes, but if, just this once, your horse were to stumble, and you were to fall...?

He glances across at the great banks of spectators. Henry sees the huge potential for humiliation, has to bite his lip.

Francis leans across, whispers to Henry.

FRANCIS

You see that young woman over there. Dressed in red and gold?

Henry sees her, nods.

FRANCIS (cont'd)

Her name is Mary Boleyn, the daughter of your Ambassador. I call her my English mare because I ride her so often.

With a smile, Francis sits back.

INT. CHAPEL ROYAL - PALACE OF ILLUSIONS - DAY

Members of both courts, both Queens and Kings, have gathered to witness the betrothal of six-year old Mary to the eight-year old DAUPHIN, Francis' eldest son. Both children are dressed like grown-ups and the Dauphin even wears a little silver sword.

Wolsey officiates.

WOLSEY

In the name of the Father, the Son and the Holy Ghost we are come here to this place of God to witness the betrothal of his Highness, Prince Henry Philip of France, to her Highness Princess Mary Tudor of England.

(beat)

May I have the ring?

He is handed an absurdly large diamond ring. He solemnly blesses it, then puts it on Mary's finger.

WOLSEY (cont'd)

There. You see? You will be the Queen of France!

Everyone applauds. The ring is handed back. Mary looks her future husband up and down with a child's curiosity.

MARY

Are you the Dauphin of France? If you are, I want to kiss you.

There is some genial laughter as she tries to do this...but the Dauphin, small and rather feeble is patently petrified, tries to escape from her clutches.

DAUPHIN

Mama! Mama!

Disgusted by his performance, Mary pushes him away and he sprawls on the floor. Amusement turns to horror.

FRANCIS

Mon Dieu!

The Dauphin, now weeping, is consoled by several of his Courtiers. Personally, Henry finds it hard to disguise a little smile of satisfaction.

INT. WOLSEY'S CHAMBER - PALACE OF ILLUSIONS - NIGHT

Wolsey entertains a surprising guest - Thomas Boleyn.

BOLEYN

In my presence he has railed
against your Grace, calling you a
necromancer, a pimp, who uses evil
ways to maintain your hold over the
King.

WOLSEY

Go on, Sir Thomas.

BOLEYN

He made it clear that the affairs
of England would be handled better
if he, and not you, were at his
Majesty's right hand.

WOLSEY

And what did Lord Buckingham say
about the King?

A beat.

BOLEYN

He said that he had a greater claim
to the throne and that as the King
has no male heirs, no son, then he
will be made King next.

(beat)

He also told me once that he has
even considered bringing that
eventuality forward more quickly.

WOLSEY

In what way?

BOLEYN

By assassinating his Majesty.

A beat. Wolsey nods.

WOLSEY

You have done well to come to me.

He offers his hand, and Boleyn kisses it.

WOLSEY (cont'd)
But say nothing of this to anyone.

INT. KING'S APARTMENTS - PALACE OF ILLUSIONS - NIGHT

Henry sups wine, and waits impatiently.

After a few moments Brandon enters, bows, then signals for someone to follow. A YOUNG WOMAN enters, her hood down over her face.

Henry glances at Brandon - who nods, smiles, and withdraws, leaving them alone.

Henry gently pulls off the hood, revealing the beautiful face of Mary Boleyn. He stares at her.

HENRY
Lady Mary.

MARY
Your Majesty.

He touches her face.

HENRY
I have heard many things about you.
You have been at the French court
for two years. Tell me - what
French graces have you learned?

MARY
With your Majesty's permission?

She sinks to her knees in front of him. We see this from behind, but it's clear she unfastens and takes off his cod-piece, takes his cock in her mouth.

CLOSE ON Henry's face. He is both surprised, disgusted and thrilled - all three at once! He glances down at her bobbing head, then closes his eyes in pleasure.

EXT. PALACE OF ILLUSIONS - NIGHT

Wine is still flowing freely from the fountain and large groups of English and French servants and retainers with nothing better to do have made liberal use of it and are now stinking drunk.

Good feelings have evaporated, replaced by ancient feelings of suspicion and hostility. The whole thing is a tinder box, waiting for a spark to ignite it.

A FRENCHMAN, almost too drunk to walk but still needing another drink, trips over an ENGLISHMAN'S foot in the darkness

ENGLISHMAN

Fucking frog! Watch where you're going,

FRENCHMAN

Cochon!

ENGLISHMAN

What was that? What did you call me?

More people begin to move up, on either side, quickly, menacingly.

FRENCHMAN

Pig!

ENGLISHMAN

Fuck off!

The French start to make the sound of pigs grunting. The Englishman sees red.

ENGLISHMAN (cont'd)

I said fuck off! All of you frogs fuck off! This is our palace. This is our fucking wine. So fuck off!

The English make two-fingered signs at the French, famous from Agincourt, and meaning "fuck you". Some laugh tauntingly.

FRENCHMAN#2

Yes. We're going off to fuck your wives, since you English don't satisfy them.

The French laugh, make the sign of cuckold's horns on their heads. Someone on the English side throws a punch - and suddenly it's mayhem, both sides wading in, throwing punches, sprawling to the ground, in a moveable feast of hatred.

CUT TO:

INT. FRENCH PAVILION - DAY

Here, there is organized violence. The royal parties and their courtiers watch WRESTLING MATCHES between English YEOMEN OF THE GUARD and some FRENCH BRETONS.

Francis is visibly delighted by the success of one HUGE BRETON who tosses a YEOMEN out of the ring like a straw man.

FRANCIS

You see that, brother? The truth is, in most things, we French excel you. Why deny it? We have the greatest artists, the greatest musicians, the greatest poets...most of whom, by the way, live at my court. The greatest philosophers, architects, engineers. We have the most beautiful women. Surely, brother, you don't deny that?

He laughs - but he means it! More, sitting beside Henry, watches his master's face contort with anger.

FRANCIS (cont'd)

Even our wrestlers are better than yours!

A beat.

HENRY

Are you sure?

His voice is heavy with threat.

FRANCIS

What?

MORE

I beg your Majesty to consider -

HENRY

Are you sure? Are you sure all your wrestlers are better than mine? Do you want to prove it?

Henry stands up - and everything around them abruptly STOPS, and GOES QUIET.

FRANCIS

What are you suggesting?

HENRY

I am suggesting - I am challenging you to a wrestling match. You and me - brother.

There is general astonishment - also a frisson of excitement. Francis's ADVISERS immediately surround him, shaking their heads, pleading with him not to respond.

More tries one last time.

MORE

Your Majesty - for the love of God!

But Henry is beyond appeal.

HENRY

(to Francis)

You're a coward.

Furious, Francis springs up.

FRANCIS

Merde!

(beat)

I accept your challenge. Let's do it now.

The two Kings walk down to the ring. There is an almost incredulous silence as their grooms disrobe them, until they are practically naked. Both are fit men, well toned; they like showing off.

They walk into the ring towards one another.

HERALD

Your Majesties...gentlemen...the rules of the game...the rules are...as follows: the first man to throw his opponent to the ground will be declared the winner. Are you content?

(beat)

Then fight.

And suddenly the whole pavilion EXPLODES with noise, the French shouting and screaming for their King, the English doing the same, all decorum abandoned.

In the ring, the two young men begin cautiously to circle each other, making feints, looking for places to attack. Then first one attacks, then the other. Brief, hard, repulsed.

The spectators are mesmerized, excited. Who could have expected such a thing?

Brandon leans over, has to shout above the noise.

BRANDON

His Majesty is going to win.

But More shakes his head.

MORE

No, whatever happens, he's not going to win.

They look on. People are yelling themselves hoarse. Already both men have worked up a sweat, are panting slightly, still looking for that opening, that vital chance.

The Queens watch on, white-faced. Katherine gently takes Claude's hand in hers.

Francis seems to be blowing harder - and Henry goes for him, big time. He gets the French King in a deadly grip...and the contest seems virtually over.

But in that last second, as if finding some inner strength, Francis suddenly powers his body upwards. Henry is caught off balance. He loses his grip on Francis's sweaty flesh, seems to hang in the air a long time...but then crashes to the floor.

Francis has won.

The French go delirious. Grooms and servants of both men pile into the ring and surround them. Among the English there's a palpable sense of disbelief.

Henry, with only his ego truly bruised, is quickly back on his feet. He tries to shove his way through the throng to Francis.

HENRY

(shouting)

A re-match. I want a re-match!

(beat)

Can you hear me? I want a re-match.

Are you afraid of a re-match?

Francis at least pretends to be angry again. He even pretends to try to reach Henry.

FRANCIS

Are you calling me afraid? Of what
am I supposed to be afraid?

HENRY

Then we'll have a re-match.

A tall FRENCHMAN steps between them.

FRENCHMAN

As his Majesty's physician, I
absolutely forbid it. It would not
be right for his Majesty to further
risk serious injury...in the name
of sport.

And Henry is obliged to see Francis being hustled away, the
victor, applauded, fawned upon, slapped on the back, cheered
by his supporters.

INT. HENRY'S APARTMENTS - PALACE OF ILLUSIONS - NIGHT

Henry stands alone in the extraordinary beautiful set of
apartments that have been created for him.

There's a long moment, then Henry picks up an axe and starts
to destroy his apartments. Because everything is so flimsy,
the walls made of canvas and only painted to look like brick,
it is far easier for him to wreck absolute havoc.

He tears the illusion to bits. His fury is so great and
terrifying that no servant or groom will go near him. They
back off, disappear...while Henry grunts with concentration,
destroying the dream.

Eventually, when everything has been destroyed, smashed,
obliterated, he stops.

More has been summoned. He walks in. He sees Henry holding
the axe, and he sees the universal damage. But what he also
sees is a new Henry. This is not a defeated man. This is the
Lion Rampant. Behind Henry's eyes is a clear, cold
intelligence. Here is a man who is breaking out.

Over this, we begin to HEAR a beautiful and very spiritual
song, sung by English and then French CHORISTERS.

More walks closer to the calmer Henry, amongst the ruins of
his apartments.

MORE

Tell me: are you going to sign the Treaty?

HENRY

Yes.

MORE

But why, if you don't believe in it?

HENRY

(smiles)

I will sign it because Francis will sign it. But it's only words. Within a week, a month, a year, if he think it serves his interest he'll break it. We can talk of love - but it's only words.

(beat)

Why shouldn't I sign the Treaty?

More looks back at him, with nothing to say. The spiritual music grows louder.

INT. HALL - PALACE OF ILLUSIONS - DAY

Crowded with all the dazzling COURTIERS of both Kings. The big formal occasion to end the summit.

Both Henry and Francis look incredible, still trying to outdo each other in the magnificence of their clothes and jewels.

Wolsey, the architect of peace, officiates. On a table in the centre of the hall is the Treaty Document.

The CHORISTERS end their song.

WOLSEY

I now ask his Majesty the King of France to come forward, and sign, in good faith, the Treaty of Universal and Perpetual Peace.

Francis, smiling sincerely, does so, with a flourish.

WOLSEY (cont'd)

And I ask his Majesty the King of England, in good faith, to do the same.

Henry, smiling sincerely, signs, with a flourish. The Kings embrace - and everyone applauds.

Thomas More doesn't applaud, or smile. But then, Thomas More rarely smiles.

EXT. WHITEHALL PALACE - DAY

CAPTION: ONE MONTH LATER

The palace is in the grip of winter. There is ice everywhere and the trees, stripped of their leaves, stand like gaunt sentinels in the grounds.

INT. CHAMBER - WHITEHALL PALACE - DAY

A clean-shaven Henry talks to Wolsey.

HENRY

What else have you found out?

WOLSEY

The Duke is raising an army. He says it is to protect him when he tours his Welsh estates, because he's not popular there. He's also been borrowing large amounts of money - perhaps to bribe your Majesty's guard.

There's a long pause. Henry walks to the window, looks over the wintry scene.

HENRY

Invite the Duke to court. But don't say anything that might alarm him. And in the meantime, keep a watch on him.

Wolsey bows.

HENRY (cont'd)

Oh, and prepare yourself for a trip to Aushburg. I want you to visit the Austrian Emperor. We have business to discuss. It might suit us better to make deals with him, rather than with France.

A beat. Wolsey is surprised, but tries not to show it. He bows again.

WOLSEY

Majesty.

And goes out.

Henry sits down at a desk, and begins to work on some correspondence.

EXT. CHAPEL TO OUR LADY OF WALSINGHAM - DAY

A bitter day. The rain falls. Katherine approaches the small stone chapel with several of her LADIES, including Lady Jane.

At the gate, they stop. Though a Queen, Katherine does what all pilgrims do - removes her cloak and shoes.

Alone now, drenched by the soaking rain, she walks up the path to the chapel door, her head bent in humility.

She enters the chapel.

INT. CHAPEL - DAY

It's dark and cold inside. But hundreds of candles brightly illuminate the image of the Virgin and Child.

Katherine sinks to her knees on the stone floor, stares up at the lovely, compassionate face of Mary, holding the little baby Jesus in her arms.

Tears form in Katherine's eyes, spill onto her cheeks.

KATHERINE

(quietly)

My Lady, full of Grace, I pray
you...I beseech you...give me a
child. A son to fill my womb. Oh my
Lady, I beg you.

She starts to weep, inconsolably, her body shaking, her face pressed against the cold unforgiving stone.

CUT TO:

INT. CHAMBER - JERICHO - DAY

Big with child, Elizabeth Blount moves slowly into the main chamber, accompanied by two of her LADIES, where Wolsey is waiting.

ELIZABETH

Your Grace.

WOLSEY

Lady Blount. You are nearly full term?

ELIZABETH

In a little while.

WOLSEY

You are well?

ELIZABETH

As can be expected.

(beat)

Have you some message from his Majesty?

WOLSEY

No. None. But from your husband...

Elizabeth's face falls.

ELIZABETH

My husband.

WOLSEY

I have spoken to him. He finds that he is reconciled to your condition.

ELIZABETH

Then he won't send me to a nunnery?

WOLSEY

He will be created a Lord, and given an estate.

ELIZABETH

And my child?

WOLSEY

That is for the King to decide - whether or not he will recognize the child. I cannot give you any more encouragement.

ELIZABETH

Will you tell the King of my love for him?

Wolsey doesn't react, or reply. Merely bows a little, and walks away down the long hall, and out.

EXT. BEACH - NORTHERN FRANCE - DAY

A cold and windswept stretch of flat beach stretching for miles, with the Atlantic breakers rushing up onto the sand.

In the distance, two small FIGURES break up the monotony of sea and sky.

We move CLOSER and CLOSER towards them, as they walk together along the beach. One of them is Thomas Boleyn, the other a beautiful YOUNG WOMAN with red-hair and bright, intelligent eyes - though she is wrapped against the cold.

They stops, stare out to sea.

BOLEYN

I am sending you back to England.

YOUNG WOMAN

Why?

BOLEYN

His Majesty seems to be tiring of his French alliance. He has also tired of your sister.

A beat. They start to walk on again, slowly.

BOLEYN (cont'd)

When you return you will be introduced at court. You will be brought to the attention of the King. After that, it is your affair. But since his Majesty so much enjoyed your sister's company, I cannot think why he should not enjoy yours. Perhaps even more so.

He glances at the young woman, who nods thoughtfully.

BOLEYN (cont'd)

I don't know how you should do it, but try to prevent his Majesty tiring of you as quickly as he's tired of all the others.

A beat.

YOUNG WOMAN

I shall think of a way.

It's our first glimpse of ANNE BOLEYN.

INT. LIBRARY - WHITEHALL PALACE - DAY

Henry with More. He fetches down a slim but beautifully-bound book.

HENRY

I've had a gift, Thomas. From the Duke of Urbino. A book called "The Prince", written by a Florentine called Niccolo Machiavelli.

MORE

I've read the book. It's a cynical portrayal of political life.

HENRY

It's true it's not like your "Utopia". It's less - utopian. But it's extremely interesting. He asks the question whether it's better for a Prince to be feared or loved.

(reads)

"It is far safer to be feared than loved. For of men it may generally be affirmed that they are thankless, fickle, false. Studious to avoid danger, greedy of gain, devoted to you while you are able to confer benefits upon them and ready, while danger is distant, to shed their blood and sacrifice their property, their lives and their children for you...."

CUT TO:

EXT. TRACK - LANDSCAPE - DAY

Buckingham rides off his estates, towards London. As a great lord he has a great retinue - of KNIGHTS, GROOMS, SERVANTS and ATTENDANTS.

His procession through the countryside is meant to impress and intimidate - and it does. More than a HUNDRED ARMED MEN ride in convoy, all dressed in the Duke's colours. It's like a small army.

HENRY V.O.

But in the hour of need they turn against you.

(MORE)

HENRY V.O. (cont'd)

The Prince, therefore, who without otherwise securing himself builds wholly on their professions of love, is undone."

The Duke's convoy enters a wooded area. And suddenly other ARMED MEN ride through the trees, and confront them.

There's a stand off. COMPTON rides out in front of the Duke - all of whose knights have ridden their horses closer around their master.

Buckingham is not impressed by Compton, though recognizing him. Also, Compton is only attended by about twenty YEOMEN OF THE GUARD.

BUCKINGHAM

What do you want?

COMPTON

Your Grace is arrested for treason.
I am here to take you to the Tower.

The Duke's men draw their swords. Compton is clearly out-gunned, and for a moment everything hangs in the balance.

BUCKINGHAM

Let us pass.

COMPTON

By no means. And if any of your men should strike one of his Majesty's guards - that is another treason in itself, as your Grace should know.

A beat. Buckingham considers - then gestures for his men to put away their swords. He rides closer to Compton, looks at him contemptuously.

BUCKINGHAM

If I am accused - falsely - of treason, I must be tried by a jury of my peers, not by commoners or the sons of butchers. And there is no lord in England who would ever find against me!

Compton doesn't answer. GUARDS close around Buckingham, and escort him away.

INT. WHITEHALL PALACE - DAY

Henry is on his way to play tennis. Wolsey walks beside him, talking quietly.

WOLSEY

I've instituted what's called a Court of High Steward to judge Buckingham's case. I've appointed twenty peers to the court, led by Norfolk.

Henry nods, walks briskly on.

There's a long pause.

WOLSEY (cont'd)

Majesty.

Something in his tone makes Henry stop, look at him.

HENRY

What?

WOLSEY

It would be dangerous to find the Duke guilty of treason.

HENRY

Even if he is?

WOLSEY

Yes. Even if he is. In your father's day, we had other ways and means of bringing the great to heel, without risking revolt. The Lord would be heavily fined, banished from court, stripped of all offices. Disgraced but not humiliated - and still beholden to your Majesty for everything.

HENRY

Do you think that's what the court will decide?

WOLSEY

I have every confidence.

Henry smiles, puts his hand on Wolsey's shoulder.

HENRY
As I have in your Grace.

He marches off.

INT. COURT - DAY

Henry plays with Brandon. This time he's meaner - playing to win. Brandon notices.

The galleries, as always, are full of COURTIERS.

Henry pauses in his play.

HENRY
Wolsey has set up the court.
Norfolk will head it. Make sure he
knows his responsibilities.

Brandon glances up at the galleries, sees Norfolk standing beside two other LORDS. Nods to Henry.

They resume playing.

HENRY (cont'd)
The red-head. Over there. Who is
she?

Brandon looks over.

BRANDON
Lady Anne Boleyn - Boleyn's
youngest daughter.

Henry nods, goes on with his game, grunting with sheer effort.

EXT. GARDENS - HAMPTON COURT PALACE - DAY

Wolsey and More walk slowly through the formal palace gardens. Enclosed by high brick walls or clipped hedges, the gardens are as beautiful and as elegant as the great house itself.

WOLSEY
I am being sent to meet the
Austrian Emperor. The King has
asked me to draw up a Treaty,
uniting us against the French.

MORE

Your Grace must be very sad.

Wolsey looks at him.

WOLSEY

I am very realistic.

They walk on, past antique statues and water fountains.

MORE

Then I am sad.

WOLSEY

Our dreams were very unrealistic.
Like your utopia.

MORE

Probably. And yet I will continue
to dream them, even if I am alone
in doing so.

A beat. Wolsey smiles a little.

MORE (cont'd)

I fear his Majesty no longer trusts
or cares for me as he once did. His
love grows cold.

WOLSEY

Thomas, let me offer you some
advice: if you want to keep the
love of a prince, this is what you
have to do: you have to give him
the thing you care most for in the
world.

A beat. More stops.

MORE

But the thing I care most for, is
my integrity.

A beat. Wolsey meets his gaze.

MORE (cont'd)

And what is it you care for most in
the world, your Grace?

A beat. Then More turns his head, taking in the magnificent
gardens, the extraordinarily beautiful house beyond - and has
his answer.

He meets Wolsey's gaze again, smiles a little.

EXT. CASTLE - DAY

Brandon with six ATTENDANTS rides through the massive wooden doors into one of Norfolk's castles.

EXT. PADDOCK - CASTLE - DAY

Norfolk is watching a YOUNG BOY learning to ride, being led around the paddock on a long lead rein.

Brandon approaches, bows.

BRANDON

Your Grace.

NORFOLK

I'm busy. I have people who could talk to you.

BRANDON

I fear they would not understand.

A beat. Norfolk nods, his men withdraw.

BRANDON (cont'd)

His Majesty sends your Grace his love. And this.

He hands Norfolk a small package. Inside is a large gold ring, bearing a ruby seal. Norfolk reacts.

After a long beat.

NORFOLK

This is my father's ring. He was executed - by his Majesty's father.

BRANDON

The King thought you might like to wear it.

A beat. Norfolk puts the ring onto his finger.

Brandon looks over at the young boy on the pony.

BRANDON (cont'd)

Who's that?

NORFOLK

He's my son.

BRANDON

Your Grace should have a care for his inheritance. It would be terrible, for example, if he did not inherit your ring.

Norfolk looks at Brandon.

NORFOLK

(quietly)

I tried to warn him. I told him that even those who recognized his right would not chose to fight for him. Everyone is tired of civil war.

(beat)

He would not listen. He's too proud. He's always thought himself so great he could stop the wheel of fortune turning. But it turns for everyman.

A beat.

Then Brandon walks away from him.

INT. COURT - EVENING

Music is playing, and there is dancing. Katherine, sat with some of her ladies, her face more care-worn than ever, watches her young husband dancing with some of the most beautiful young ladies at court.

The dance is ritual and formal, the dancers passing from partner to partner.

Eventually, Anne Boleyn comes around to Henry. Their eyes meet, intensely...but nothing is said. Nothing needs to be said. Their is desire in Henry's eyes...and his gaze lingers upon her, even as he moves on to his next partner.

INT. GREAT HALL - WHITEHALL PALACE - DAY

Buckingham sits in a chair of estate, facing his JUDGES - twenty PEERS OF THE REALM, with Norfolk in their midst.

Buckingham looks easy and confident.

NORFOLK

Your Grace has been accused of treason, and with imagining and compassing the death of the King's Majesty.

A beat. Norfolk begins to cry, and finds expression difficult.

NORFOLK (cont'd)

This Court of High Steward, after reviewing all the evidence against your Grace, finds your Grace guilty of the charges against you. And so sentences your Grace to death, at his Majesty's pleasure.

Buckingham, astonished and outraged, has turned white. Norfolk, still weeping, cannot even look at him.

BUCKINGHAM

This is Wolsey's doing. THIS IS WOLSEY'S DOING! THIS IS WOLSEY'S DOING! THIS IS WOLSEY'S DOING!

And so he screams.

INT. JERICHO - DAY

Elizabeth is helped down the passage by two of her LADIES, hurrying as much as they can, and calling out for help. Elizabeth herself seems distressed.

A MAID appears.

LADY #1

Hurry. Fetch the midwives. My Lady's waters have broken.

They help Elizabeth into her bedchamber.

CUT TO:

INT. CELL - TOWER OF LONDON - DAY

Buckingham, in a simple shirt and jerkin, kneels on the floor praying before a PRIEST.

The cell door is unlocked and opened. The CONSTABLE OF THE TOWER appears.

CONSTABLE

It is time, your Grace.

A beat. Buckingham, suddenly tremulous, grabs hold of the priest's hand, fearful and unwilling to meet his Maker.

Those around look on, appalled and embarrassed.

CUT TO:

INT. BEDCHAMBER - JERICHO - DAY

Elizabeth lies on the bed. And all around her is activity - a bustle of WOMEN, MID-WIVES and LADIES. Water is being boiled and brought in, clean towels and linen prepared.

Elizabeth has gone into labour, and her contractions have started. The MID-WIVES comfort and reassure her.

CUT TO:

INT. TOWER - DAY

We suddenly see everything from Buckingham's POV - as if we were going to our own execution.

Buckingham is taken down a flight of narrow stone steps, with GUARDS all about him. The echoing footsteps, the distant voices...everything is slightly surreal.

Buckingham goes through a door and out onto Tower Green, where the cold sunlight hits him, and makes him blink.

CUT TO:

INT. BEDCHAMBER - JERICHO - DAY

The contractions are coming quicker and quicker, and each is more painful. The mid-wives sponge Elizabeth's face but she cries out in agony.

EXT. TOWER GREEN - DAY

We still see everything from Buckingham's POV - as he passes between lines of PEOPLE, then sees the low scaffold, the block, the PRIESTS and NOBLES - and the HOODED EXECUTIONER.

Courage again almost fails him. He stutters, pauses - is pushed forward, almost stumbles onto the stage.

CUT TO:

INT. BEDCHAMBER - DAY

Elizabeth screams with pain. A MID-WIFE puts her hand under her night-dress, between her legs, feels about.

MID-WIFE

You are well open. The baby is coming.

CUT TO:

EXT. TOWER GREEN - DAY

The executioner kneels before Buckingham.

EXECUTIONER

Do you forgive me?

It's hard for Buckingham, who is not brave, and very frightened. He holds out a trembling hand.

BUCKINGHAM

With...with all my heart.

Buckingham kneels before the block. We share the sight he has of the wooden boards a foot or so below his head.

BUCKINGHAM (cont'd)

When I...when I stretch out my arms, that's the signal to strike.

A beat. Still he doesn't stretch out his arms.

CUT TO:

INT. BEDCHAMBER - DAY

The moment has come. An awesome moment. The whole atmosphere in the room has changed, it's almost sacred, the mid-wives grouped around Elizabeth to assist the birth.

Elizabeth shudders, shrieks and moans, in desperate pain, her face purple with pushing, beyond any pain she has ever known.

CUT TO:

EXT. TOWER GREEN - DAY

We are still with Buckingham. We sense his whole body shaking.

BUCKINGHAM
(under his breath)
Oh Jesus...

A beat.

Then abruptly he thrusts out his arms. We see the shadow of the axe descending fast across the boards.

Then hear a LOUD BANG and our eyes lurch to the ground - a beat - before there is BLACKNESS.

CUT TO:

INT. BEDCHAMBER - DAY

A bloody bundle of living flesh is delivered from Elizabeth's womb, with a gush of blood.

FADE TO BLACK.

FADE IN:

INT. JERICHO - DAY

Henry walks briskly through the chambers of the great house. All along his way, SERVANTS, STAFF, WOMEN bow and curtsy before him.

Ducking his head under a low lintel he finally enters a small chamber, where there are two MID-WIVES and a wooden cradle with a velvet cloth.

The midwives curtsy, as Henry approaches the cradle, and sees the face of the living, new born child.

He makes a signal. One of the mid-wife's pulls back the velvet cloth. The baby is naked beneath it. Henry can see that it is a boy.

HENRY
I have a son. A son.
(beat)
I have a son.

And a smile lights up his face.

INT. VATICAN - ROME - DAY

These words appear on the screen:

VATICAN, ROME.

Hushed whispers. PAPAL GUARDS at the doors. Small groups of red-robed CARDINALS and VATICAN OFFICIALS congregating.

Bishop Bonnivet approaches one of the Cardinal's.

BONNIVET
Cardinal Orsini. Your Grace.

ORSINI
Ah, Bonnivet. Come.

He draws the Bishop aside. They whisper.

BONNIVET
Is it true?

A beat. Orsini glances about.

ORSINI
Yes. His Holiness passed away just
after midnight. God rest his soul.

BONNIVET
But - where is his body?

Orsini leans in, and whispers into Bonnivet's ear. The Bishop stares at him in absolute astonishment.

INT. VATICAN CELLARS - DAY

Bonnivet walks carefully down the ill-lit cellar stairs. Walking forward, he enters some dank chambers where the workmen keep their tools.

Walking deeper, he comes upon an incredible sight.

The body of POPE ALEXANDER has been laid out upon a rough board table, lit with candles at each end, covered with a piece of poor cloth.

Bonnivet crosses himself, as he approaches the corpse.

BONNIVET

Holy Father, forgive me.

He stares down at the pallid form.

Then a WORKMAN, in filthy clothes, suddenly appears.

WORKMAN

Father, would you have some money?
Anything at all. So we can bury the
Holy Father, and lay his soul to
rest.

BONNIVET

What is this?

The workman shakes his head sadly.

WORKMAN

You don't know?...Well, so it is:
the Holy Father kept a mistress.
Sure enough she was a vain and
terrible woman, Father. And when
the Pope died last night, what did
she do but rush in and have her
servants remove all the treasures
from under his bed, where he'd
hidden them. So there was no money
left to bury him.

BONNIVET

But the Curio?...The Faithful? I
don't understand.

WORKMAN

Sure Father, but nobody loved this
man. He was greedy. He loved women
and he loved money. He made so many
enemies. But still, and after all,
he was our Holy Father.

A beat. Bonnivet looks down at the corpulent corpse.

BONNIVET

I will arrange for the burial.

(beat)

You don't know what you've done.

WORKMAN

Sure, we've just done what anyone
would do.

BONNIVET

No. You've done more than that.
You've kept our faith alive.

The workman stares back at him, without any comprehension.

INT. ST. PETER'S BASILICA - VATICAN - ROME - DAY

The election of a new Pope. The basilica, dark and smoky, is filled with red-robed and mitred CARDINALS and BISHOPS, circling around the empty papal throne.

Each PRELATE in turn approaches the altar, on which stands a silver chalice. He lifts his voting paper, and drops it into the chalice.

CARDINAL

Eligo in suu mun pontificem...
(I elect a supreme
pontiff)
Eligo in suu mun pontificem.

We are suddenly CLOSE on Bonnivet and Orsini. They whisper.

BONNIVET

There is an agreement for Wolsey.

ORSINI

No Pope will ever come out of
England. There is a new agreement.

BONNIVET

What is it?

ORSINI

The Emperor's candidate. An
Italian.

They stop whispering - as Wolsey himself passes them. He exchanges a knowing glance with Bonnivet; Bonnivet, as if in answer, nods his head once or twice.

Satisfied, Wolsey moves on.

BONNIVET

(whispers)

Who?

Orsini pauses, and stares back at him with a small smile. And then lifts his voting paper over the chalice.

ORSINI
Eligo in suu mun pontificem.

He drops the paper into the chalice.

The PRIMICERIUS, whose job it is to count the votes, sewing them together with needle and thread, now rises from his chair.

A dramatic beat - then he lifts his arms into the air:

PRIMICERIUS
Habemus Papam
(We have a Pope)

There is a loud, sonorous murmur of assent. The Primicerius walks steadily towards Wolsey...who begins to smile.

Then he walks past Wolsey.

And past Bonnivet.

And finally approaches Orsini.

PRIMICERIUS (cont'd)
Cardinal Orsini, do you accept the
election?

Orsini tries to play humble.

But we CLOSE on Wolsey's face. All the dreams of his life have evaporated and been turned to dust. And, for that split second, he shows it!

INT. CHAMBERS - WHITEHALL PALACE - DAY

Wolsey with Elizabeth Blount. It's as if his failure never happened; he's a consummate actor! His desk, as always, is piled high with official documents and letters. He scratches away with pen and ink.

WOLSEY
His Majesty has decided to recognize his son. He will be known for the present as Henry Fitzroy, and he is to have an establishment at Durham House, with a chaplain, officer, and a sufficient retinue for his station. You are to remain with the boy, and his Majesty will agree an income through the privy purse.

ELIZABETH
 (quietly)
 Thank you.

Wolsey glances up.

WOLSEY
 You must write and thank the King.
 I only do his Majesty's bidding.

A beat. He lowers his head again to his work. The interview is over.

Elizabeth curtsies, and quietly leaves.

INT. COURT - DAY

As she walks through the court, the doors to the Queen's private chambers open - and Katherine walks out, accompanied by several of her Ladies.

Both women catch sight of each other and pause. In the Queen's eyes we can see a terrible pain, which is also a terrible bitterness.

Elizabeth curtsies.

ELIZABETH
 My Lady.

Without responding, her head held regally high, Katherine sweeps away.

INT. COURT - DAY

Wolsey moves through the court, with More beside him.

MORE
 How is the King?

WOLSEY
 His Majesty suffers more and more from these acute headaches. The physicians say they may be the result of an accident in the tilt yard, when the lance shattered on his helmet. Whatever the case, he is best avoided at such times.

They pass on, COURTIERS bowing to either side.

MORE

I was sorry to hear of Orsini's election.

WOLSEY

You are perpetually sorry!

MORE

This is serious. While there is such blatant corruption in the church, then Luther and his like will gain followers.

WOLSEY

That little shit!

More stops abruptly.

MORE

No. He can't be dismissed like that. His arguments have to be addressed and refuted - or we can all be tarred with the same brush. If your Grace had become Pope, I know you would have worked tirelessly to cleanse the church of all its evil practices.

A beat. Wolsey smiles a little.

WOLSEY

Perhaps you think too highly of me, Thomas. Perhaps you think too highly of the whole human race.

Wolsey walks on alone.

INT. KING'S PRIVATE CHAMBERS - DAY

But the curtains are closed. Henry is alone, by the light of a candle he is trying to write something. But we sense at once his discomfort.

Pushing books and papers aside he gets to his feet, and paces about. The pain throbs brutally in his head. He is in agony, grunting, hitting his head against the doorpost.

The blinding pain rips through him. He is in darkness.

CUT TO:

INT. COURT - EVENING

Music is playing. Henry is with his friends and in a good mood, drinking, watching the dancing.

He stares for a moment at Anne Boleyn, and she catches his eye and flirts with him, before moving away.

Henry gestures to Wolsey. They move a little apart.

HENRY

I am creating some new peers. My son will become the Duke of Richmond. Henry Brandon will be made the Earl of Lincoln. Sir Thomas Boleyn is to be Lord Rochford.

(beat)

See to the arrangements.

Wolsey bows.

WOLSEY

Majesty.

Starts to move away. Henry, his attention elsewhere, signals him back.

HENRY

I had not dismissed you.

WOLSEY

No, your Majesty.

Henry pauses to sup - to look over again at Anne.

HENRY

I am going to pay you a visit. Very soon.

A beat.

WOLSEY

Yes, your Majesty.

Henry dismisses him with a gesture of his hand.

He glances across the court. Katherine is looking back at him. There is a new despair about her...as if she has let go. Her eyes puffed and black with lack of sleep, her face visibly ageing.

Henry nods in her direction.

INT. WHITEHALL PALACE - NIGHT

Henry pursues Anne through the chambers and down the corridors of the palace. It's a game - but it also has elements of a dream. Where are the courtiers?

- sometimes we glimpse groups of them standing vaguely back among the shadows. Like ghosts.

The pursuit goes on. What it really reminds us of is the deer hunt. Anne is the quarry.

Henry strides after her, both of them enjoying the hunt.

Finally, she is cornered, unable to escape from the chamber she has found herself in, panting from her exertions.

Henry has her at his mercy. As he strides in, she sinks to the floor in obeisance - or like a wounded deer. Henry drinks her in with his eyes.

HENRY

Anne.

She raises her head, stares at him. He walks over to her, gently raises her. Their faces close now.

HENRY (cont'd)

Will you...?

She smiles, but shakes her head.

ANNE

No. Not like this.

HENRY

How?

ANNE

Seduce me.

The thought amuses him. He reaches out a hand to touch her face.

HENRY

Sweet Anne.

She is no longer there, but in a different part of the room. The sense of being in a dream intensifies.

He stares over at her longingly.

HENRY (cont'd)

Sweet Anne.

ANNE

Write secret letters to me. And
poems. I love poems. Ravish me with
your words. Seduce me.

He smiles, infatuated - makes a move towards her. But she's disappeared.

He turns. The only door into the room is closed.

He walks over and opens it.

On the other side, she is naked.

But the image is subliminal.

Anne has gone. It was in his mind - possibly.

CUT TO:

EXT. HAMPTON COURT PALACE - DAY

This is very real! The dust clinging to the King's shoes as he rides through the magnificent gates into Hampton Court Palace.

Brandon and Knivert accompany him, as well as his bodyguard.

He pauses to study the effect of the late afternoon sun on the warm brick facades, clock towers and formal gardens of this exquisite place.

Then he rides on.

In the courtyard Wolsey is waiting to receive him, in his Cardinal's red robes, surrounded by his staff.

INT. GREAT HALL - EVENING

Music plays. Henry and Wolsey are served a magnificent meal. They eat off gold plates, drink French wines, and each course has thirty sauces.

The great hall is one of the architectural wonders of England.

Henry eats for a while in silence.

HENRY

How was your meeting with the Emperor?

WOLSEY

Very good. We've agreed a draft treaty.

Henry nods.

Then he raises his eyes, glances around.

HENRY

Your Grace's palace is magnificent. It's better than anything I possess.

A beat. He goes on eating. Wolsey looks at him.

INT. PRIVATE CHAPEL - NIGHT

Wolsey celebrates the mass with Henry, who kneels before the altar while Wolsey blesses and then gives him the wafer, which is the body of Christ, to eat, and then the wine, which is His blood, to drink.

WOLSEY

E nomine patri, et filii, et spiritus sanctus.

Henry drains the glass.

Wolsey, leaning over him, whispers into his ear.

WOLSEY (cont'd)

Majesty, with all my heart, I give you this house.

Henry raises his eyes, and looks back at him - without expression, without thanks.

As we move CLOSER to a small statue of the suffering Christ, we begin to hear More's voice.

MORE V.O.

I had always believed in him. He was a beautiful youth, rational and enlightened...

CUT TO:

INT. MORE'S ROOMS - NIGHT

More writes in a journal.

MORE V.O.

At his coronation I wrote these words: "This day marks the limit of our slavery, the beginning of our freedom, the end of sadness, the source of joy."

EXT. GARDENS - PALACE - DAY

Henry and More walk together. They laugh and talk. Henry puts an arm around his friend's shoulders.

MORE V.O.

"Now the people, freed, run before their king with bright faces. Their joy is almost beyond their own comprehension. They rejoice, they exult, they leap for joy and celebrate their having such a king."

INT. PRIVATE CHAMBER - WHITEHALL PALACE - NIGHT

Henry has a different look in his eyes now. More steely. Madder. Here is a man capable of anything.

He stares back at us. Unblinking. Assured of his power.

FADE TO BLACK.
