

Castle of Otranto

by  
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Based on the Novel  
By Horace Walpole

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EXT. AN OVERGROWN FIELD - DAY

We open with frantic shots of a man running through a field. The man is a knight named FREDERIC. He has been in prison for years. His hair and beard are too long, he isn't wearing any armor, and he's not as fast as he used to be. We follow him as he runs through the tall grass viscerally.

Behind him, he is being chased by guards and their dogs. There are enough of both to fill the field. Frederic continues to run, bending the tall grass around him, stumbling as he struggles for breath.

The GUARD at the head of the pursuit is almost on top of Frederic, as he stops for a second to catch his breath.

GUARD

It's pointless to run, Frederic.  
There's no one for miles to help  
you.

Almost as if on cue, a knight steps out of the grass beside Frederic. This knight is wearing full armor, and carrying a crossbow. The knight's name is SAMUEL, and he launches a shot that hits the guard in the neck. The guard drops, but his dog continues forward.

FREDERIC

It's about time.

SAMUEL

Sorry sir. When they refused the  
ransom, we had to improvise.

There's a barking, and Frederic grabs the hilt of Samuel's sword. Pulling the sword from its holster, he turns around just as the dog leaps at his head. We cut away as Frederic swings his sword, and off camera we hear the dog whimper from the attack.

Frederic and Samuel both look down on the dog with sympathy. More sympathy than they gave its owner, anyway. There's more barking and yelling. Samuel looks up at the oncoming guards.

SAMUEL (cont'd)

We should keep moving.

Frederic gives the dog one last look, and then follows Samuel into the brush. We are shown an extreme long shot of Frederic and Samuel making for a nearby forest. The guards are right on their tail.

Two more knights step out from behind trees right at the edge of the forest. They both have crossbows at the ready.

Two guards behind Frederic and Samuel get hit and go down hard. Frederic and Samuel pass the two knights as they reload their weapons, and the four of them retreat into the forest.

EXT. CLEARING - DAY

The four of them come upon a clearing, where they are joined by two more knights. While Frederic and Samuel are both older, the other four knights are young and inexperienced.

SAMUEL

This is the crew, sir. I had to do some rebuilding in your absence.

Frederic examines one of the knights closely.

FREDERIC

Where did you recruit these men?  
Direct from their mother's loins?

SAMUEL

They're good men, sir. Alexander led a resistance against a tyrannical baron in his home town when he was fifteen. Bryan is Jaxter's boy.

Bryan looks annoyed at being called Jaxter's boy. The knight Frederic is examining is Alexander. He nods.

ALEXANDER

Sir.

FREDERIC

What of Jaxter? And Leon?

SAMUEL

Jaxter is dead. So is Kardeth. Leon and Zachary gave up on you years ago. We're not on speaking terms anymore.

Frederic looks around the clearing. Everything is quiet, and feels safe.

FREDERIC

Is this real?

SAMUEL

Sir?

Frederic starts exploring the clearing with interest.

FREDERIC

This forest feels like it's been  
taken from my dreams.

ALFONSO (O.S.)

You're not dreaming.

The men around the clearing startle at the sudden appearance of a hooded stranger right in their midst. The stranger is really the spirit of ALFONSO. BRYAN is so startled that he pulls the trigger by accident, and fires his crossbow. We follow the bolt, as it soars through the air, and directly through Alfonso. Alfonso's cloak seems to swirl lightly like a wisp of smoke, and the arrow goes right through.

SAMUEL

(To Bryan)

Hold your fire.

FREDERIC

(To Alfonso)

Who are you?

ALFONSO

You've dreamt about this place,  
though, haven't you?

FREDERIC

Answer my question.

ALFONSO

Why should I? You don't know me.  
You might recognize my face, but  
what's in a face?

FREDERIC

Then why have you appeared to us?

ALFONSO

Because I know you. More  
importantly I know your destiny.

FREDERIC

I don't believe in destiny.

ALFONSO

Believe in it or not, you've ended  
up here for a reason.

FREDERIC

Was it my destiny to be imprisoned  
for fourteen years?

ALFONSO  
 (Without skipping a beat)  
 Yes. And now you've been drawn  
 here.

Samuel watches Alfonso with distrust.

SAMUEL  
 (To Frederic)  
 I propose a different destiny  
 filled with beer and women.

ALFONSO  
 Sir Frederic Yallard, Royal Knight  
 of Vicenza.

FREDERIC  
 You know my name.

ALFONSO  
 I know more than that. I know if  
 you leave now, and turn your back  
 on your destiny, you'll never find  
*your daughter.*

Alfonso's words mean something to Frederic, but do nothing  
 but confuse Samuel.

SAMUEL  
 (To Frederic)  
 Who?

ALFONSO  
 (To Frederic)  
 Tell me I'm wrong. Tell me you  
 don't care for her.

FREDERIC  
 Is she alright?

ALFONSO  
 She's under Manfred's care now.  
 Help me now and maybe in the  
 process you'll save her life.

SAMUEL  
 (To Alfonso)  
 He's a free man.  
 (To Frederic)  
 Lets go, my lord, please. I haven't  
 spent the last fourteen years of my  
 life breaking you out, only to fail  
 now that we are so far.

FREDERIC  
(To Alfonso)  
What would you have me do?

ALFONSO  
What I want of you is something you  
should find familiar from your days  
in captivity. I want you to dig.

FREDERIC  
What?

He points to the ground beneath his feet.

FREDERIC (cont'd)  
Here?

Alfonso points to the ground at his feet.

ALFONSO  
More like here. All around here.

SAMUEL  
The entire clearing? Are you mad?

CLOSE UP of Alfonso. His eyes dissolve into black pits, like those of a bleached skull.

ALFONSO  
I'm furious.

He blows away, as if made of smoke and carried away in the wind. The knights share confused glances. Finally Frederic starts digging, using the hilt of his sword like a pick-ax. The other knights join in and soon everyone is digging. It's not long before...

BRYAN  
I found something!

Frederic stops digging.

FREDERIC  
Excellent. You really are Jaxter's  
boy.

Frederic helps Bryan clear away some of the dirt. We've yet to see what they found. Samuel joins them.

SAMUEL  
It's... exactly what we needed.

We finally see what they've dug up. A giant stone sword, made of well polished white stone. It looks as if it was once part of a statue.

SAMUEL (cont'd)

Great, a giant sword. Happy Birthday.

FREDERIC

I know what this is. Those drinks and women will have to wait until we get to Otranto.

SAMUEL

Otranto? That's a hundred leagues from here. What of the sword?

FREDERIC

We bring it with us.

All the knights stand around the sword in a state of confusion. Frederic leaves the group to wash his face in a stream. Meanwhile, Bryan and Alexander are still looking forebodingly at the sword.

BRYAN

That's insane. This thing must weigh like four hundred pounds!

He shares a look with Alexander. We pan above the clearing, away from the trees and up into the sky.

FADE TO BLACK

SUPERIMPOSE: "The Castle of Otranto".

CREDITS

FADE TO:

EXT. OTRANTO - DAWN

The castle of Otranto is a large classically structured medieval castle. It has a small surrounding courtyard, and around that the small town of Otranto. Closest to the castle is a large church. It would easily be the largest building in the town, were it not dwarfed by the castle. Atop it's tower, wedding bells toll, and behind we can see small mountains.

There is a town square filled with shops, and in the center is a very tall white statue of Alfonso.

At the bottom of the hill there's a gate and wall that stretches around to surround the whole of Otranto.

MONTAGE

- 1) Castle servants getting the castle ready for a wedding.
- 2) MANFRED, a bad tempered king who will do anything to keep his rule, tries on his crown in front of a mirror.
- 3) ISABELLA, a twenty year old princess being forced into a marriage she wants no part of, is also in front of a mirror, trying on her wedding dress. Today is the big day.
- 4) Bells ring in the belltower.
- 5) Inside the chapel, FATHER JEROME, an old priest with a mysterious past, prays to Jesus.
- 6) At the edge of the town a peasant steps through the gates. THEODORE, a young man who's been travelling alone for years, follows the commotion to the town circle. Shops are being closed, it's a holiday for all but the servants.
- 7) The servants work hard to get the great hall of the castle ready for the wedding. The hall has long tables filled with food for the feast, and a throne sits on a rise across from the front entrance. Manfred enters the hall, and without a word to anyone sits on his throne.

PAUSE MONTAGE

EXT. OTRANTO SQUARE - MORNING

Everyone is making their way towards the castle. There are only a few stragglers in the square. SHOPKEEPER, an older woman who runs a fruit kiosk, is still closing her shop. Theodore approaches her.

THEODORE  
Excuse me ma'am.

SHOPKEEPER  
We're closed.

THEODORE  
What's the occasion?

The Shopkeeper looks Theodore over once.

SHOPKEEPER  
You're one of them passer bys come to stay for a night.

Theodore nods.

SHOPKEEPER (cont'd)  
 Good day for it. The young Prince  
 Conrad is gettin married today.

Theodore notices the woman's sign, advertising excellent prices on apples.

THEODORE  
 Your sign promises fresh fruit.

SHOPKEEPER  
 All my fruits been taken for the  
 feast. Headin there now. Come with  
 if you want.

Theodore hears the wedding bells and looks up at the bustle at the castle.

THEODORE  
 Sounds great. I love a good  
 wedding.

CONTINUE MONTAGE

8) Theodore makes his way up the hill with the Shopkeeper. All around people are decorating, and getting things ready.

9) Prince CONRAD, a sickly pale boy no older than 15, is being dressed for his big day. He's getting married, and he's plenty nervous.

10) Isabella is ready, though she isn't nervous. Nor is she excited. Throughout her fitting she remains completely silent, deceptively calm. All except for one tear that rolls down her cheek.

11) In the Great Hall, Manfred watches the festivities with emotional distance. The hall is filled with people talking, and eating, and having fun.

12) HIPPOLITA, A timid queen who wants only the best for Manfred, sits quite a ways off to the side from the king, with her daughter MATILDA. Matilda is eighteen years old and tired of being ignored by her father. Matilda tries to pass Hippolita a plate of food, but the queen pushes it away.

13) Theodore enters the great hall and makes straight for the food. BIANCA, an aged servant to the king, is just putting out a plate of apples. Theodore grabs an apple from the table excitedly. He starts filling his pockets from the plate, and notices Bianca give him a weird look.

THEODORE (cont'd)

I haven't had a fresh apple in over  
a year.

14) People in the Great Hall start to dance.

15) In the chapel, Father Jerome is still praying. A statue of Alfonso starts to bleed from the nose. Jerome watches it with fear in his eyes. Touching the blood with his thumb, he moves into action. Panic-stricken, and looking to make sure no one else sees anything, he pushes the statue into a cupboard and locks it.

16) The dancing continues, though a lane is made down the middle. Isabella walks down the aisle, as everyone around stops dancing to watch. She reaches the throne, bows to the king, and steps away to stand beside Hippolita and Matilda's table.

END MONTAGE

END CREDITS

EXT. OTRANTO COURTYARD - NOON

Conrad steps out the side of the castle into the blazing sun. He is dressed and ready to be married. He is led through the courtyard by KEITH, a young servant, when there is a strange noise like a whistle, and all the birds in the area take off. Conrad looks up at the sky, at the blinding light of the sun.

INT. GREAT HALL - NOON

Everyone is watching the entrance to the hall tense with anticipation. A moment passes, and another, but nothing happens. Isabella and Matilda share a glance.

There is a loud noise from outside, like a thud. It is followed by screams. Everyone looks nervously at one another, and frantic whispering starts to spread throughout the crowd of people. After more waiting, Manfred springs to his feet and makes for the door.

The door is opened, and Keith stumbles in, meeting the king in the middle. The servant is pale white and his eyes are distant.

MANFRED

Where is my son?

Keith doesn't seem to fully understand the question.

KEITH  
Am I dreaming?

Manfred grabs him by his collar and shakes him so hard they both fall to the ground. Manfred presses Keith against the stone tiles.

MANFRED  
Where is my son!

KEITH  
It was horrible...

MANFRED  
What was?

KEITH  
...makes no sense...

MANFRED  
(Yelling)  
What doesn't make sense? Tell me  
what happened!

KEITH  
(Whispering)  
There aren't words sir...

Manfred looks at the door the servant had just come from. It hangs partially open, a ray of sunlight shining onto Manfred's face.

CUT TO:

EXT. COURTYARD - NOON

Manfred stands with a number of servants around a large polished white stone helmet. Like the sword, it looks like it is from a large white statue. Manfred doesn't know what to think, as the servants around watch him and wait for his reaction.

MANFRED  
What am I looking at?

KEITH  
It just fell from the sky, sir.  
Only missed me by a hair.

MANFRED  
What of my son?

The servant, leads Manfred around the helmet, to where a bloody mess can be seen.

KEITH

He was beside me one moment and  
gone the next.

Manfred slowly crouches and touches what little remains of his son Conrad.

MANFRED

My only heir to the throne... is  
dead?

He is wrought with sudden emotion, and the servants can only watch on solemnly. No one knows what to say. People start piling out of the great hall to join in a circle around the king. Everyone is quiet.

Manfred slams his fist into the side of the helmet. He might as well have hit a brick wall. Filled with anger, he gets to his feet and futilely tries to push the helmet. It doesn't move. He uses up all his anger on it, and then collapses against it.

MANFRED (cont'd)

Is this real?

Keith steps forward and kneels.

KEITH

I'm sorry my lord. It should have  
been me.

Manfred grabs Keith's shoulder and nods. He then releases the servant, who starts to cry. Manfred slides down the helmet until he's sitting with his back to it.

MANFRED

How could this happen?

He looks around at the crowd that has formed, but nobody steps forward with any theories.

MANFRED (cont'd)

(Yelling)

Helmets don't just fall from the  
sky!

KEITH

Maybe we've angered god?

Manfred glares at him until finally Bianca steps forward, and pulls Keith to his feet.

BIANCA

So god threw a helmet at us? Get up  
you fool, and leave the King alone!

She pulls Keith through the crowd. The King looks around to everyone that's left. Servants, and guards, and Theodore.

THEODORE

It sorta reminds me of that statue  
in the center of town.

There is whispering amongst the crowd.

CROWD

He's right. It's true. The Statue  
of Alfonso!

A guard points to the statue in the middle of town. It is no longer wearing a helmet, instead it has sculpted hair.

GUARD

My lord. The statue's helmet is  
gone!

Manfred looks to the helmet with awe and disbelief. In the back of the crowd Bianca turns to someone.

BIANCA

Impossible. My father, god bless,  
sculpted that statue himself, and  
the helmet was chiseled directly  
into the rock, I know that for a  
fact.

MANFRED

This is some kind of trick. Or  
magic.

Manfred turns on Theodore threateningly.

MANFRED (cont'd)

I've never seen you before. Based  
on your state of clothes I'd be  
safe to assume you're a guest. By  
the dirt on your face, I'd say you  
just got in. So how were you so  
quick to recognize the helmet?

Theodore is surprised at Manfred's sudden hostility.

THEODORE

I don't know. I'm observant. I had nothing to do with this murder, if that's what you're trying to imply.

MANFRED

Can I risk it? What other reason could you have for stopping here at so convenient a time.

The Shopkeeper is in the crowd.

SHOPKEEPER

I seen him come in. He had a lot of odd questions about the wedding.

THEODORE

(Surprised)

What? That never happened!

MANFRED

You're here to stop the wedding, why? To end my bloodline? What did you think you would do to me? Take my legacy?

THEODORE

It's not true.

MANFRED

(Yelling)

My legacy is eternal!

Theodore tries to back into the crowd, but the crowd separates, forming behind the king. Theodore tries to calm them down.

THEODORE

(Calmly)

Okay look, this is getting way too out of hand. If we can just talk through our aggression for one second...

MANFRED

And risk losing my kingdom to another of your spells? No, I think not. Guards! Kill Him.

THEODORE

What no, wait!

A guard comes at him with a polearm. The guard jabs straight for his chest. Theodore grabs the polearm, pulls The guard towards him, and punches him in the side of the head. The punch hit's the guards helmet hard enough to drop him, while Theodore shakes his hand in pain. He keeps hold of the polearm with the other hand.

THEODORE (cont'd)

My lord, if I could wipe out your kingdom, why haven't I done it already.

MANFRED

You mean why did you kill my only son instead. It wasn't enough to destroy my kingdom, you had to destroy my heart first.

THEODORE

That's just mean! Who would do that?

More guards move in to kill him, and they swarm him to the point where he is completely swarmed. He fights for his life, and manages to keep the guards at bay, always careful not to kill anyone.

THEODORE (cont'd)

Enough. Please, I don't want to hurt anyone.

MANFRED

It's too late for that.

THEODORE

I'm willing to surrender to you if you promise not to kill me until you have proof.

Manfred bites his lip in thought, finally agreeing.

MANFRED

Fine.

Theodore stares deep at Manfred, trying to decide if his word can be trusted.

MANFRED (cont'd)

On my word as king, I will not execute you without a trial.

Theodore throws his polearm to the floor.

MANFRED (cont'd)  
Put him under the helmet until I  
decide what to do with him.

Two guards grab Theodore by the arms. Another six work together and manage to lift the giant helmet as high as their knees. Theodore is shoved underneath.

THEODORE  
What are you doing?

Manfred crouches to meet Theodore face to face.

MANFRED  
Not killing you.

The helmet is dropped with a loud thud. Manfred straightens and points to the nearest guard.

MANFRED (cont'd)  
Watch him, and don't feed him. If  
he starves to death we'll know he  
was innocent.

INT. HELMET - NOON

Theodore leans back against the wall of the helm, and pulls an apple from his pocket. With a sigh, he takes a bite, and chews thoughtfully.

INT. GREAT HALL - AFTERNOON

Manfred storms into the hall, and makes straight for a door in the back that leads to his quarters. Isabella is standing by a table close to the entrance. She has been trying to see what was going on.

ISABELLA  
What was all that noise and  
commotion?

Manfred storms past her. Next, his daughter Matilda gets off her chair.

MATILDA  
Where is my brother?

MANFRED  
(Without looking)  
Conrad is dead.

Hippolita faints in her chair. Matilda is left speechless as Manfred leaves the hall. Noticing Hippolita, Matilda rushes to her mother's side.

MATILDA

Mother!

Isabella, still in her elegant wedding dress, is shocked at the news.

ISABELLA

He's dead.

She giggles for a second, but forces herself to stop. She is silently relieved that her fiance is dead. Finally getting control of herself, she moves to Hippolita's other side.

ISABELLA (cont'd)

Do you need some help?

MATILDA

We need to get her back to her chambers.

They each grab an arm, and start dragging her from the hall.

INT. HIPPOLITA'S CHAMBERS - AFTERNOON

Isabella finishes lighting the candles in the chamber. The room is spacious with warm colors, tapestries, and wood paneling. Hippolita lies silently sobbing into her pillow. Matilda sits at the foot of her bed, equally distraught. Isabella is filled with confusing emotions.

MATILDA

My poor brother.

ISABELLA

You think he suffered before he died?

MATILDA

Would you care?

HIPPOLITA

My poor Manfred.

They both look to her in surprise.

ISABELLA

Where is he while his family grieves.

HIPPOLITA  
He grieves worst of all.

Isabella looks as if she wants to say something, but keeps her mouth shut.

MATILDA  
Why did he push us away?

HIPPOLITA  
My child, he couldn't stand seeing his wife in grief. It would break his heart. I don't want that. Isabella?

Isabella moves closer to her side.

HIPPOLITA (cont'd)  
Would you check on him? Please, I need to know if he's alright.

Isabella is visibly shaken at the thought of checking on the king. She blatant and honestly says:

ISABELLA  
I don't want to do that.

Matilda shoots her a look.

MATILDA  
I'll do it.

ISABELLA AND HIPPOLITA  
Thank you.

HIPPOLITA  
You were always so strong. So unlike your brother.

Matilda squeezes her mother's hand and tries to smile.

MATILDA  
(To Hippolita)  
He was always the delicate one. You sure you're okay?

ISABELLA  
(To Matilda)  
I wont leave her side.

## INT. MANFRED'S CHAMBERS - AFTERNOON

Manfred's room is dark. Manfred sits alone and quiet on a couch close to a warm fire. The fire is the only light in the room, and the light dances devilishly off his face. Manfred just stares deep into the fire, even as the door opens behind him, and Matilda peeks in.

She sees him at the fireplace and steps into the room. She doesn't close the door behind her. She walks over to the window, and pulls back the curtains, so light shines into the room. The room is lavishly furnished, with numerous paintings hanging from the walls. Every painting in the castle is a different portrait of Alfonso.

MATILDA

Father? Are you [okay]... I want to give you [a hug]... Uh, can I hug you?

Manfred doesn't react in anyway to anything she says. Tears begin to swell in her eyes.

MATILDA (cont'd)

Can you look at me. Mother and I need you. And you need us.

Manfred suddenly turns to her in surprise, and rage.

MANFRED

(Yelling)

Need you? I have no need for a daughter!

He gets off the couch, and approaches her, his arms swinging at the door. Matilda cowers from him, and allows herself to be chased from the room.

MANFRED (cont'd)

(Yelling)

Get out! And don't disturb me again.

He's at the door and gives her one last nasty look.

MANFRED (cont'd)

(Whispering)

Seeing your face disgusts me.

INT. CASTLE HALLWAY - AFTERNOON

The hallway is warm, with candles hanging from the walls, and furnished with banners, tapestries, and more portraits of Alfonso.

Matilda half runs down the hall, tears threatening to burst. She passes a very confused Keith, and finally stops after a corner only to break down. She silently cries, and cries, and finally tries to pull herself together. Wiping her face on her sleeve, and still sniffing, she starts off again. She manages to cover her emotion convincingly by the time she reaches Hippolita's room.

She's about to go inside when Bianca joins her at the door. Matilda looks at her in wild surprise.

MATILDA

What are [you doing here]...

Her voice cracks, and she clears her throat.

MATILDA (cont'd)

What are you doing here?

BIANCA

The highness summons Isabella to his quarters.

MATILDA

(Harsh whisper)

What?

Matilda is filled with emotion, and looks away in an attempt to calm herself down.

MATILDA (cont'd)

(To herself)

What?

Bianca points to the door.

BIANCA

Are you coming or going?

Matilda forces a smile, and then opens the door and enters.

## INT. HIPPOLITA'S CHAMBERS - AFTERNOON

Hippolita and Isabella have hardly moved since Matilda left. Isabella is still at Hippolita's side. Matilda joins them at the bed.

MATILDA

Father cannot control his grief, or he'd come see you, but he says he loves you very much, and hopes you're okay.

HIPPOLITA

He's so caring.

Hippolita notices Bianca standing at attention at the foot of the bed.

HIPPOLITA (cont'd)

(Confused)

Bianca?

Matilda shoots Isabella a glance.

BIANCA

The king summons for Isabella.

ISABELLA

(Surprised)

Me? Why me?

Hippolita leans forward and grabs Isabella's hand.

HIPPOLITA

Oh, please go. My beloved needs you, for my sake would you go?

Isabella shares an alarmed look with Matilda, but she has no other choice.

ISABELLA

Alright.

## INT. MANFRED'S CHAMBERS - AFTERNOON

Manfred is pacing back and forth in front of the fireplace, arguing to himself. A portrait of Alfonso hangs over the fireplace. It is clear at times that it is the painting that Manfred is talking to.

MANFRED

I didn't need him, there's still time left. I can have other children, there's still time for my legacy to continue.

Manfred turns angrily to the portrait over the fireplace.

MANFRED (cont'd)

(Yelling)

I will have an heir to the throne.

Manfred stops, and stares deep into the picture. The picture used to be frowning, but the frown turns ever so slightly into a smile. It is almost unnoticable, but Manfred notices the change. He stares silently at it, certain that it was frowning before, waiting for any kind of proof to present itself.

Suddenly the door behind Manfred opens, and Manfred turns his attention towards it. As his head turns, the picture of Alfonso winks, but it is only a split second.

ISABELLA

Your highness, I was told you wanted to see me.

MANFRED

Isabella. Come in, sit down, please.

Manfred sits on the couch, and motions for her to join him. Isabella is unsure what to make of the whole situation but starts forward.

MANFRED (cont'd)

Close the door as well, if you could.

It's obvious Isabella doesn't want to comply, but seeing no other choice with him watching her, she closes the door. She then sits on the edge of the couch, as far from Manfred as she can.

MANFRED (cont'd)

You don't have to be afraid. It's alright to trust me. I know you never cared much for my son.

Isabella watches him, but keeps her mouth shut.

MANFRED (cont'd)  
I don't want you to grieve for my son.

ISABELLA  
(Surprised)  
Why not?

Manfred slides closer to her on the couch.

MANFRED  
You know Conrad was important to me.

ISABELLA  
Of course. He was your son.

MANFRED  
He was more than that, he was my heir. One day I'll be dead and the only way my legacy can live on is with a male heir. Without Conrad, my bloodline ends with me.

ISABELLA  
Your daughter...

MANFRED  
(interrupts)  
Is a woman and cannot be king.

He moves closer to her again. His arm can almost reach her shoulder. Isabella tries to lean away, but she was already on the edge of the couch.

ISABELLA  
You can still have many more children.

MANFRED  
You're absolutely right. But my wife can't. She's too old to mother another child.

ISABELLA  
I'm sorry.

Manfred moves towards her again, and touches her knee.

MANFRED  
Don't be. As you said, I can still have many more children.

Isabella leans too far back and slides off the couch. She doesn't even react, her fear of Manfred shows on her face.

ISABELLA

What are you saying, my lord?

MANFRED

I need you to mother my child.

Isabella covers her mouth with her hand, and tears well in her eyes.

ISABELLA

Never.

MANFRED

If you give me an heir, I would make you the happiest woman in the world. Anything you could want will be yours. All you have to do is give your body and mind to me. Won't you make an old king happy?

ISABELLA

Absolutely not.

Manfred misinterprets her revulsion.

MANFRED

If you're worried about Hippolyta, I'm already planning to divorce her. We're actually cousins you know; third removed.

Isabella gets to her feet and backs away from him. He gets up and pursues her like a predator.

ISABELLA

It's not your marriage that concerns me, your highness.

MANFRED

I know I'm old, but I'm also experienced.

Manfred moves in and kisses her. She tries to push him away but he puts his arms around her. Finally she knees him in the groin. His face is frozen against hers in pain, and suddenly he drops to his knees and doubles over.

ISABELLA

You're a creep, and you're foolish  
to think I would ever let you touch  
me.

She opens the door but turns back to him.

ISABELLA (cont'd)

And you're a lousy king.

MANFRED

Bitch, I order you to take off your  
dress and lie down on my bed.

He grabs for her but she slaps him away.

ISABELLA

Leave me alone!

She leaves, and Manfred watches her go. Behind him, the picture of Alfonso shakes it's head mockingly. Manfred suddenly turns to it. He'd seen its movement from the corner of his eye. It immediately stops once it has his attention. He stares at it so critically, utterly confounded by it.

Suddenly the Picture stops pretending.

ALFONSO

You're pathetic.

He leaves out a door in the painting while Manfred rushes to try and grab him, but he's too late and the painting is now only an empty room. Manfred slams his palms against the canvas, and rips the painting from the wall.

MANFRED

He's in the walls!

Suddenly its as if his own voice knocked some sense into him. He looks to the door Isabella ran from, as if just remembering her.

INT. CASTLE HALLWAY - AFTERNOON

Isabella runs through a door, passing two guards who don't react. She runs down the hall, and around the corner, passing Keith who is yet again quite surprised. She comes across a small narrow stairway leading down into the dungeons. She glances once behind her. Seeing nobody, she starts down the stairs.

EXT. COURTYARD - AFTERNOON

ESTABLISHING SHOT of Alfonso's helmet. A guard is standing at attention at it's side, completely zoned out.

INT. HELMET - AFTERNOON

Theodore gets to his feet. The helmet is low enough he has to hunch over, but he manages to shuffle to the other side.

THEODORE

Excuse me?

EXT. COURTYARD - AFTERNOON

The guard stiffens and looks around nervously.

INT. HELMET - AFTERNOON

GUARD (O.S.)

I'm not supposed to talk to you.

THEODORE

Look, I don't know what time it is, but I'm getting hungry. Am I going to be getting any dinner tonight?

GUARD (O.S.)

I'm not supposed to feed you either.

THEODORE

So you're going to stand there while I starve to death.

GUARD (O.S.)

Why don't you use your dark magics and make food?

Theodore rolls his eyes, and begrudgingly pulls another apple from his pocket. It is quite clear he is no longer excited about eating apples.

THEODORE

(Sarcastically)

Abra Kadabra.

He takes a bite, and starts to shuffle back to where he was sitting, when his foot suddenly falls through a hole in the ground. He pulls it out and looks inside. It's a storage room in the castle's catacombs, storing old pottery. Reaching down, he grabs at the floor tiles, and they crumble around the hole. After working at the hole, he manages to get it big enough to fit through.

INT. CATACOMB HALLWAY - AFTERNOON

Isabella runs past door after door. It's as if she's counting every door to her right.

ISABELLA  
No. No. No.

INT. STORAGE ROOM - AFTERNOON

Theodore is carefully climbing down a bookcase. He's halfway down when Isabella runs into the room, covered in sweat, and shuts the door behind her. Turning around, she is surprised to see Theodore hanging from the bookcase.

ISABELLA  
Who are you?

She puts her hand back on the doorknob.

THEODORE  
No one important.

He drops the last couple feet to the ground. Isabella backs away. Theodore is surprised at her fear.

THEODORE (cont'd)  
I'm no threat to you.

ISABELLA  
I'll be the judge of that.

Theodore grabs at her hand but she hides her hand in the folds of her dress.

THEODORE  
Are you alright?

ISABELLA  
I'm about as far from alright as  
the ground is from the sky.

There is a noise that could well have been the creaking of the walls... or something more. Either way, Isabella jumps in fright, and starts to search the room for something.

THEODORE

Who are you running from?

Isabella doesn't answer at first, instead she freezes, looking at him critically, trying to decide if she can trust him. There's another noise, and Isabella glances once to the door and back.

ISABELLA

The king.

THEODORE

The king is out for me as well.

ISABELLA

At least he's not trying to rape you, and impregnate you with his devil seed.

THEODORE

Yeah, I'm lucky he only wants me dead.

Isabella continues searching, checking behind books, and under certain vases.

THEODORE (cont'd)

What are you looking for?

ISABELLA

The princess once told me of a trap door around here somewhere.

THEODORE

There's another princess?

ISABELLA

I'm not a princess. I was being forced to marry Prince Conrad today. Then I would have been a princess.

THEODORE

Congratulations.

ISABELLA

He's dead. And honestly, I'm happy for it.

THEODORE  
Well then, congratulations.

ISABELLA  
If I had my way, the entire royal  
bloodline would be dead by  
nightfall.

Isabella gets frustrated and shatters a vase against a wall.

THEODORE  
Need some help?

ISABELLA  
Unless you'd rather stand there.

THEODORE  
I'll help you find the trap door if  
you tell me your name.

ISABELLA  
Its Isabella.

THEODORE  
The trap door is under your feet.

She looks down. Beneath her feet is a extravagant rug.

ISABELLA  
How do you know?

THEODORE  
A storage room this neglected  
wouldn't be furnished with a rug  
that nice without an ulterior  
motive like covering a trap door.

ISABELLA  
Have you had much experience with  
trap doors?

THEODORE  
No, but I worked for a couple years  
under an interior decorator.

Isabella steps off the rug and they pull it aside. Underneath  
is a wooden trap door.

ISABELLA  
This is it, oh thank god.

Isabella is relieved, as if her troubles are over.

THEODORE  
Where does it lead.

ISABELLA  
I don't know, but anywhere is  
better than here.

Together they lift the trap door. There is a ladder leading  
down a dark damp shaft. Isabella starts down the ladder.  
Behind the door, voices can be heard.

GUARD (O.S.)  
I heard voices coming from down  
here.

MANFRED (O.S.)  
Check every room.

THEODORE  
(Whispering)  
Well, Isabella. I hope there's a  
light at the end of that tunnel.

ISABELLA  
(Whispering)  
Come with me.

THEODORE  
(Whispering)  
No. Someone has to hold them back,  
or they'll just give chase.

ISABELLA  
(Whispering)  
Thank you for everything.

THEODORE  
(Whispering)  
Go!

Isabella continues down, stops as if to say something, but  
Theodore closes the door before she can. He then plants the  
rug over it, just in time as the door opens. Theodore stands  
at attention.

Two guards storm in, followed by Manfred. Manfred notices  
Theodore, and immediately presses forward. He grabs Theodore  
by the collar, and presses him into a bookcase.

MANFRED  
YOU... What have you done to my  
castle?

The walls begin to whisper, responding to Manfred's anger, and all other sounds get drowned out. Manfred turns a pale white, and stiffens in fear. The whispering begins to fade. Theodore is just confused, and looks around the room in search of a source to the sound.

THEODORE

What is that? Where was that coming from?

MANFRED

Don't you know?

THEODORE

I knew a ventriloquist once who could...

Manfred pulls out a knife.

THEODORE (cont'd)

Oh come on. You can't really think it was me? I mean you no harm.

MANFRED

And yet you're here. How did you escape the helmet?

THEODORE

Through that hole, right there. I climbed down.

Theodore points to the hole in the ceiling.

MANFRED

And did you observe anything while here?

THEODORE

If you removed that huge desk, you'd really improve the flow of the room.

MANFRED

I want to know about the Princess Isabella.

THEODORE

She's not a princess, she never married your son.

MANFRED

She's like family. If you saw her,  
you must let me know so I can  
protect her.

THEODORE

I've seen quite literally nothing  
since you trapped me under a giant  
stone helmet!

There is a scream from upstairs that echoes throughout the whole castle. Manfred makes an odd motion, putting Theodore between him and the door. They look at each other, and nobody makes a move. Finally Theodore suggests:

THEODORE (cont'd)

We should go see what that was  
about.

MANFRED

After you.

Theodore gives Manfred a look of frustration, but does as he's asked and makes for the hallway. They both get halfway down the hall, when Bianca joins up with them.

BIANCA

Sir, two cooks are dead.

THEODORE

How?

Manfred pushes him aside and steps forward.

MANFRED

(To Theodore)  
Out of the way.  
(To Bianca)  
Where did it happen?

BIANCA

The great hall, sir.

MANFRED

How?

BIANCA

The cooks were getting ready for dinner. A servant entered with the plates, and he insists that he saw a giant foot.

THEODORE  
Doing what?

BIANCA  
Nothing, it crushed the two cooks  
and then disappeared.

MANFRED  
Disappeared?

BIANCA  
By the time I got there it was  
gone, and it took the bodies with  
it.

THEODORE  
That's absurd.

MANFRED  
This whole kingdom is absurd.  
Darkness engulfs us all, and the  
very shadows are out for our souls.  
(To Bianca)  
You're dismissed.

BIANCA  
Thank you sir.

Theodore and Manfred consult after Bianca leaves.

THEODORE  
I hope this proves to you I'm not  
involved. I was with you the whole  
time.

MANFRED  
Which means I'm no closer to  
finding the source of all this than  
I was when my son died.

THEODORE  
Let me help you.

MANFRED  
Why would you want to? I've  
imprisoned you, accused you, tried  
to kill you. You owe me nothing.

THEODORE  
Then let me earn my freedom.

MANFRED

I must check on my wife. If you  
want to help, then come with me.

THEODORE

We could split up.

Manfred gives him a critical look.

THEODORE (cont'd)

Or not. After you.

INT. HIPPOLITA'S CHAMBERS - AFTERNOON

Matilda is just helping Hippolita with her make-up when  
Manfred and Theodore come in. Manfred doesn't even knock, but  
instead opens the door and boldly enters.

MANFRED

Where is Isabella?

Theodore shoots Manfred a surprised look.

MATILDA

She left to see you.

MANFRED

You haven't seen her since?

Neither woman answers his question, though they share a  
knowing glance that is lost on Manfred. Matilda notices  
Theodore for the first time, and curiosity spreads across her  
face. She shoots him a confused smile, and he returns hers  
with one of his own. Hippolita doesn't notice either of them,  
instead she grabs her husband's hand.

HIPPOLITA

Are you okay my lord? There was a  
disturbance in the great hall.

MANFRED

I've heard.

HIPPOLITA

We went to see for ourselves.  
There's nothing there.

THEODORE

I'd like to take a look.

HIPPOLITA

Don't go with him, please, stay  
with me. I'm scared... whatever is  
happening, face it with me.

Manfred doesn't respond to her. He gives her a cold look, and  
then leaves with Theodore.

HIPPOLITA (cont'd)

(Whispering)

I love you...

Matilda approaches her mother and they embrace.

MATILDA

I'm sorry, mother.

HIPPOLITA

I'll be fine.

MATILDA

I'm going to stay with you, in fact  
I promise not to leave your side.

HIPPOLITA

Don't make a promise you can't  
keep. I want you to retire to your  
room until dinner.

MATILDA

Why? I want to be with you.

HIPPOLITA

Wait for Bianca there. I sent her  
to find Isabella.

MATILDA

Father's interest in her worries  
me.

HIPPOLITA

Don't be silly. Your father is a  
great man.

INT. GREAT HALL - AFTERNOON

Manfred is in the great hall with Theodore, Keith, and a  
number of servants and guards. Manfred grabs a table and  
flips it over angrily. All the plates and cutlery clatter to  
the floor, but still Manfred's anger wages on.

MANFRED

There's nothing here.

Theodore kneels to the ground, pressing his hand against the tile. He then moves to a different tile and does it again. He looks up at one of the servants.

THEODORE

The foot was right here?

SERVANT

Yes sir. A large stone one. When I left the cooks were right around there. I came back, and the foot was in their spot.

THEODORE

Maybe the cooks left the room while you were gone. Is there a search going for them?

KEITH

Yes sir, The maids are checking every room.

SERVANT

My lord, I know what I saw. That foot killed those cooks. I saw an arm.

MANFRED

Really?

SERVANT

Yes sir. It was sticking right out the side, half crushed.

MANFRED

(To Theodore)

Well, peasant. What do you think of that?

Theodore presses his palm against another floor tile.

THEODORE

Lets pretend for a second that a magical foot appearing and disappearing in the span of a minute isn't impossible. That still leaves a number of questions, like where's the blood? None of these tiles are even damp.

(MORE)

THEODORE (cont'd)

There's not a single sign anywhere that anything out of the ordinary happened here.

MANFRED

So the boy lies.

SERVANT

I'm not lying!

Theodore notices an apple near his feet, likely thrown from the table that Manfred tipped over. He picks it up, and takes a bite before getting to his feet.

THEODORE

As much as I hate to say it, if we're to believe a stone foot can appear and disappear at will, then anything else could be possible.

MANFRED

If a stone helmet can fall from the sky...

THEODORE

Then how impossible is it for a stone foot to crush two people, and depart with both their bodies, and the blood. Also you have to consider the possibility that the foot and the helmet are related.

MANFRED

I have no doubt in my mind that they both came from Alfonso's statue.

THEODORE

So what's our next move?

MANFRED

(To Keith)

How long until dinner is ready?

KEITH

Another hour sir.

Manfred signals to a guard.

MANFRED

Find the boy a room, and lock him inside until I say.

THEODORE

My lord? I've only tried to help you.

MANFRED

And I've repaid you with your life. You should be grateful.

Without even a goodbye, Manfred sweeps off and out of the hall. The guard grabs Theodore by the arm, and starts to lead him away.

INT. MATILDA'S CHAMBERS - SUNSET

Matilda sits by her open window, watching the sunset while distractedly brushing her hair. Bianca sees her princess alone by the window and frowns.

BIANCA

My lady, you'll catch cold.

Matilda is startled out of her daydreams, and notices Bianca.

MATILDA

Did you find Isabella?

BIANCA

No. She's just disappeared. I fear for her, and you. Weird things are happening, I don't think this castle is safe anymore.

MATILDA

Oh Bianca, is it wrong that I'm not afraid to die.

Bianca takes Matilda's brush from her, and leads her to a mirror where she starts brushing Matilda's hair.

BIANCA

My lady, don't start thinking like that. You're too young.

MATILDA

I have no purpose. Here or anywhere. I want the castle to just swallow me up and spare me the horror of a loveless marriage.

Bianca gives Matilda a critical look.

BIANCA  
Like Isabella?

MATILDA  
Why else do you think she ran? I doubt we'll ever see her again. Rather smart if you ask me. I've often thought of just running off and joining a convent.

BIANCA  
Oh, girl, don't be silly. You can't give up on men yet. They aren't all bad. I've met good ones. And you'll meet the right one someday.

MATILDA  
I've waited 18 years, and the only man who's ever touched my life for the better has been dead for nearly a hundred years.

BIANCA  
(Shocked)  
Matilda?

MATILDA  
Otranto's founder, Alfonso. When I was young I used to stare at his pictures for hours.

BIANCA  
I'm not surprised, this castle has hundreds of them.

MATILDA  
I bet Alfonso was one of your good men.

BIANCA  
Honestly, his pictures always give me the willies. Whenever I look at one I feel like he's looking back.

Theodore's voice can be heard throughout the room, singing a song in italian. Bianca turns pale, and panics.

BIANCA (cont'd)  
It's the ghost, my lady, hide!

MATILDA  
Nonsense Bianca. Someone is singing out my window.

Matilda rushes to the window.

MATILDA (cont'd)  
(Shouting)  
Hello down there?

Theodore is sitting in the window beneath hers, watching as the stars begin to shine for the night. He startles at the sound of Matilda's voice.

THEODORE  
(Shouting)  
I'm sorry, I didn't mean to disturb you.

MATILDA  
(Shouting)  
What were you singing? It was beautiful.

THEODORE  
(Shouting)  
It's an old Italian song my mother used to sing me.

BIANCA  
I recognize his voice.  
(Shouting)  
Are you not the peasant I saw with the king earlier?

MATILDA  
(To Bianca)  
Ooo, the good looking one?

THEODORE  
(Shouting)  
Yes, my name's Theodore.

MATILDA  
(Shouting)  
Were you singing about anyone, Theodore?

THEODORE  
(Shouting)  
No, I was trying to distract myself from thinking about someone. May I ask your name?

Bianca shakes her head.

BIANCA  
Better for us he not know.

Matilda shoots Bianca a disbelieving glance.

MATILDA  
(Shouting)  
You're addressing the Princess  
Matilda.

Theodore looks up in minor surprise.

THEODORE  
(Shouting)  
I apologize, your highness, but I  
must ask if you have heard anything  
to do with Isabella.

MATILDA  
(Mouths to Bianca)  
Isabella?  
(Shouting)  
Do you know where she is?

THEODORE  
(Shouting)  
No. And I suppose neither do you.

Theodore sighs.

THEODORE (cont'd)  
(Shouting)  
I only met her once, in a closet  
filled with old pottery.

MATILDA  
(Shouting)  
The one in the basement? Did she  
use the trap door?

THEODORE  
(Shouting)  
Yes! Tell me you know where it  
leads.

MATILDA  
(Shouting)  
Straight to the Chapel.  
(To Bianca)  
Oh she would be safe there.  
(Shouting)  
(MORE)

MATILDA (cont'd)  
Theodore, you have no idea the  
comfort you have brought to me  
tonight.

THEODORE  
(Shouting)  
I do, your highness, as I feel the  
same way.

BIANCA  
Say good bye to him, dinner will be  
ready soon.

MATILDA  
(Shouting)  
Theodore. I'm afraid I must go.  
Thank you for our chat, it has  
meant a lot to me.

THEODORE  
(Shouting)  
There's something else you should  
know. Isabella was running from the  
king.

Matilda and Bianca share looks.

THEODORE (cont'd)  
(Shouting)  
Matilda?

MATILDA  
(Shouting)  
Thank you Theodore. I'm closing my  
window now.

She doesn't close her window, but she does go to sit by her  
mirror. Bianca joins her.

MATILDA (cont'd)  
What do you think he means? Why  
would she be running from my  
father?

BIANCA  
I've worked under your father for a  
very long time. In that time I have  
learned that there are somethings  
better left alone.

MATILDA  
That's a horrible attitude!

BIANCA

It's a smart one. You're too young to understand, girl, but powerful men have powerful desires. Sometimes you have to forgive the small things for the greater good.

MATILDA

I fear his desires have overcome him, and THAT is unforgivable.

INT. HIPPOLITA'S CHAMBERS - EVENING

Manfred and Hippolita are in the middle of a conversation.

HIPPOLITA

I told you, no.

MANFRED

Do you know of any hiding place she might run to?

HIPPOLITA

No.

MANFRED

Did she ever talk of family nearby?

HIPPOLITA

Matilda knew her better, my lord. I'm sorry. Maybe if I knew why she ran away I could help you.

Manfred stops, and for a moment we see a softer side of him.

MANFRED

I can't tell you that. Especially now.

Father Jerome steps in through the open doorway. He looks very angry.

JEROME

Perhaps I can shed some light. I know what you're hiding Manfred. I've talked to Isabella.

MANFRED

Father Jerome?

Hippolita immediately notices the stress on Manfred's face.

HIPPOLITA

If your majesty doesn't wish me to know of Isabella's fate, I trust your judgement.

She bows her head and leaves without another word. Once the two are alone:

MANFRED

I need you to divorce our marriage.

JEROME

So you can have your way with Isabella? Never.

MANFRED

I am your king, and you will do as I command.

JEROME

I serve god, and he doesn't speak through you.

MANFRED

You have it all wrong father. I'm as god fearing as anyone else, but Hippolita is my cousin third removed. I didn't know until after I married her. Will god look kindly on me for knowingly continuing a relationship with her?

JEROME

Do you love her?

MANFRED

What does that have to do with anything?

JEROME

Tell me you don't.

MANFRED

It doesn't matter.

Jerome tries to read Manfreds face, and can tell Manfred still loves Hippolita.

JEROME

God will forgive you your marriage to her. I will not sanction any divorce.

The king balls his hand into a fist, as if about to strike Jerome. While Jerome has acted calm and confident so far, we start to realize he's really quite scared, and shaking in his boots. He looks positively afraid now that Manfred is going to hit him, but Manfred holds back.

MANFRED

Where is Isabella now?

JEROME

She's in no danger, your majesty, and it would be wise not to risk God's wrath by coming after her.

MANFRED

Has she mentioned anyone by the name of Theodore?

Jerome is confused and wary about Manfred's question. His answer is vague.

JEROME

What if she had?

MANFRED

They're lovers aren't they. I knew they were.

JEROME

Knowing that, will you leave them alone?

MANFRED

Never. Guards.

He signals for the guards outside. They turn to him.

MANFRED (cont'd)

Get me that peasant we have locked up.

GUARD

Yes sir.

INT. CASTLE HALLWAYS - EVENING

Theodore is dragged down the corridor by two guards.

INT. HIPPOLITA'S CHAMBERS - EVENING

Theodore is brought inside, and forced to his knees.

THEODORE  
What's going on here?

Jerome is confused by the boy.

JEROME  
Who is this?

Theodore pulls his arm from the guard, and points at Manfred.

THEODORE  
This is getting real tiresome.

MANFRED  
I know all about you and Princess  
Isabella.

THEODORE  
Fine, so I helped her escape. Does  
that really matter when your entire  
kingdom is falling apart.

Manfred backhands Theodore in the face.

MANFRED  
It matters! You're going to pay for  
your crimes, boy. Pay with your  
life.

Jerome startles.

JEROME  
You can't, your majesty, I'm sorry.  
I was wrong, I lied. She didn't  
mention anything about the boy.

Theodore laughs. He laughs and laughs and laughs some more.  
Both Manfred and Jerome are shocked at his reaction.

THEODORE  
What crimes, my lord, what possible  
crimes have I committed that I must  
now die over. I'm sure it was  
something serious, as I am sure you  
have no choice. Please, just tell  
me what I did wrong. Let me know  
why, after I put my life in your  
hands, you've decided now to take  
it away.

Manfred says nothing.

THEODORE (cont'd)  
Fine. That's fine. Kill me if you want, but grant me one favor, from one human being to another. Let me confess to the father here.

MANFRED  
Confess?

THEODORE  
Or are you on too strict a schedule?

MANFRED  
Make it quick.

Theodore gets to his feet, and shares a look with Jerome. They both look to Manfred, who takes the hint and crosses the room. Theodore and Jerome sit on the edge of the bed to talk.

THEODORE  
I'm not guilty.

JEROME  
I know.

Theodore looks up at him with surprise.

JEROME (cont'd)  
I'm so sorry, boy. It's my fault, I've caused all of this.

Theodore nods, as if he understands.

THEODORE  
I forgive you.

JEROME  
Why?

THEODORE  
I dunno. It's hard to blame a man of god when I can just blame Manfred instead.

JEROME  
Were either of us in his place, would we really be any different?

THEODORE  
Yes.

MANFRED

(Shouts)  
Hurry it up.

They both shoot him dirty looks.

JEROME

Believe me when I tell you your  
sacrifice will help a most  
beautiful woman.

Theodore smiles.

THEODORE

That sounds worth it. My mother  
taught me to always help a woman in  
need.

JEROME

You must have had a smart mother.

THEODORE

Smart, funny, and strong. She  
raised me, taught me, and trained  
me all by herself. My father  
abandoned us in Sicily long ago.

Jerome is confused and intrigued by the boy.

JEROME

May I...

Jerome grabs Theodore's sleeve and pulls it back. Theodore  
has a birthmark on his arm, a quarter moon. Kinda looks like  
the Nike swoosh. As Jerome sees it, his eyes fill with tears.

THEODORE

I've had it at birth. It's just a  
stupid birthmark, are you okay?

JEROME

Is your mother... is she alive?

THEODORE

No she died a couple years ago.

Jerome gets off the bed, almost as if it were on fire. Tears  
are openly flowing now.

MANFRED

Done?

JEROME  
You can't kill this boy.

MANFRED  
I think you'll find that I can.

JEROME  
He's mine. I'm putting him under  
god's protection.

MANFRED  
That wont help you here father, you  
can only give asylum on holy  
ground.

JEROME  
My lord, he's my son.

THEODORE  
What?

MANFRED  
Preposterous. Priests can't have  
children.

JEROME  
I wasn't always a priest.

Theodore gets off the bed and puts his hand on Jerome's  
shoulder.

THEODORE  
Are you sure?

JEROME  
I loved your mother. More than I  
could possibly convey. It pains me  
to learn of her death. I became a  
priest because I knew I would never  
want the love of any other woman.

THEODORE  
(Angry)  
Then why did you leave us?

He pushes Jerome violently.

THEODORE (cont'd)  
Where the hell were you when mom  
was captured and tortured? All she  
needed was one person to stand up  
for her.

(MORE)

THEODORE (cont'd)

The misery she had to endure, first as a servant, and then while we were on the run would have broken any lesser person. Where were you then? Where were you when I needed my father?

JEROME

I couldn't have helped her.

THEODORE

Bullshit.

JEROME

I'm sorry, when I was with her she was in more danger than she'd ever be alone. We both decided as a family that it was too dangerous for you if I stayed.

THEODORE

I don't believe you.

JEROME

We did it for you.

MANFRED

(To Jerome)

Clearly he is very important to you, so I'm willing to make a deal with you for his life.

JEROME

Anything.

MANFRED

Give me Isabella, and I will give you back your son.

THEODORE

Not a chance.

Manfred doesn't take his eyes off Jerome.

MANFRED

This is the life of your son on the line here, Father.

JEROME

Of course I'll do it.

A trumpet can be heard blown from the gates.

MANFRED

What now?

Keith enters the room, pale and out of breath.

KEITH

A formation of men are approaching,  
my lord.

Manfred's eyes widen with confusion, but it turns to anger,  
as he turns on Jerome.

MANFRED

What will it be, Father. The boy's  
life is in your hands.

JEROME

Yes, your highness.

Jerome runs from the room. Guards move in to take Theodore  
away but Manfred stops them.

MANFRED

I want him where I can see him at  
all times. Bring him with us.

INT. CHAPEL - EVENING

Jerome enters in a hurry, out of breath. His priests have  
been lighting candles, and doing their nightly prayers. When  
Jerome charges in, they are startled and everyone turns to  
stare.

JEROME

Where is she? Is she in her room?

PRIEST

Evening, father. Did your talk with  
the king go well.

JEROME

I can't talk right now, I must  
bring Isabella to the castle.

PRIEST

Are you sure that's a good idea?

Jerome stops to look the priest in the eye.

JEROME

Yes.

He storms off.

INT. ISABELLA'S QUARTERS - EVENING

The room is dark and empty. A window sits open, the wind breezing through to blow against the luxurious bed curtains. Jerome reacts with frustration at finding the room empty.

JEROME

Of course.

INT. CHAPEL - EVENING

Jerome goes back down the middle of the church, towards the exit. Suddenly he stops and turns back towards a statue of Jesus.

JEROME

(Yelling)

You can't have my son!

The priests all turn to stare in surprise at Jerome.

EXT. OTRANTO GATE - EVENING

Manfred, Theodore, and the guards come down from the town square, and join the guards at the gate. Manfred looks through at Frederic and his soldiers, standing in formation just outside the gate. Alexander, Bryan, and the other knights are holding the huge white sword between them.

MANFRED

Frederic?

FREDERIC

Manfred? You're still in charge?

GUARD

Should we let them in, sir?

Manfred has to think about it.

MANFRED

I suppose we should.

The gate is raised, and the troupe marches through. Theodore notices the sword with amusement.

THEODORE

Nice sword guys. Where do you go to buy something like that?

The troupe ignores them. Manfred and Frederic walk side by side up to the castle, with Theodore running to catch up.

MANFRED

I didn't expect to ever see you again.

FREDERIC

Well then you shouldn't have tempted fate. You know why I'm here.

MANFRED

And what's with that sword? Will you be wielding it personally?

FREDERIC

You know, seeing as you are the king, I would think you'd recognize it. It's from your statue.

Manfred looks at the statue in surprise, only now realizing it no longer has a sword.

MANFRED

Where did you find it?

Before Frederic can answer, Jerome meets up with them out of breath, and he falls to his knees.

JEROME

I can't find Isabella. She's gone from the chapel.

MANFRED

You lost her?

FREDERIC

Seems you lost her first, Manfred. Quite rude of you to put the blame on a man of god.

MANFRED

I'll of course start a kingdom-wide search.

FREDERIC

And my knights will of course assist in the search.

Manfred doesn't seem all too excited at that prospect, but he doesn't speak his mind.

MANFRED

Of course, I'll take all the help I can get.

FREDERIC

Excellent.

INT. COURTYARD - EVENING

As they get to the courtyard, Frederic motions for Samuel to join them.

FREDERIC

This is Samuel, my second hand man.  
He'll be in charge.

MANFRED

(Ironic)  
Pleasure to meet you.

They shake hands. Manfred tries to smile, but Samuel only scowls back.

SAMUEL

Manfred right?

MANFRED

King Manfred.

SAMUEL

Frederic told me all about you.

MANFRED

Good things I hope.

SAMUEL

(Serious)  
No.

Manfred's fake smile falters. There is a loud thud, attracting Manfred's attention as the knights drop the large sword beside the helmet. Frederic and his troupe leave the courtyard to begin the search, with Father Jerome following behind them. Theodore tries to follow them, but with a gesture from Manfred the guards grab him.

THEODORE

What are you doing? I want to help!

MANFRED

Not a chance. You'll be locked away until I decide what to do with you.

THEODORE

That wasn't the deal.

MANFRED

No, the deal was for Jerome to bring me Isabella. He failed in his half, so any deal we might have had has gone up in smoke.

(To Guard)

Take him away.

INT. DUNGEON - EVENING

The dungeon is dirty, and damp. The metal bars of the cells are rusted away, and little moonlight gets in. Theodore is thrown into a cell, and the door is locked. With a laugh, the guards leave him to darkness.

THEODORE

Great, and now I'm alone.

It isn't seconds before Matilda turns the corner with a torch. She approaches Theodore's cell.

MATILDA

Theodore?

THEODORE

Princess? What are you doing here?

MATILDA

I heard that my father was locking you away, I had to come.

THEODORE

Do you know if they've found Isabella yet?

Matilda frowns at his mention of Isabella.

MATILDA

No, but I brought you an apple in case you get hungry.

Matilda throws Theodore an apple, he catches it and laughs under his breath.

MATILDA (cont'd)  
I heard you like them.

THEODORE  
Yeah? I've had six since then.

MATILDA  
Can I ask you something?

THEODORE  
I guess. It's not like I have  
anywhere to go.

MATILDA  
Why are you so concerned for  
Isabella. Do you have feelings for  
her?

THEODORE  
My mother told me when I was young  
to always help a woman in need. So  
I do, no matter how much trouble it  
gets me in. I want to feel like I'm  
doing right by her.

MATILDA  
I brought you something else.

THEODORE  
Please, not another apple. I really  
can't take any more.

Matilda grins.

MATILDA  
I brought the key.

She opens her hand, and in her palm is the key. She goes to  
unlock the door, while Theodore smiles.

THEODORE  
Excellent. You might want to lead  
with that next time.

She opens the door and he gives her a hug, to her surprise.

THEODORE (cont'd)  
Thank you for rescuing me.

MATILDA  
Yes, I am sort of like your knight  
in shining armor, aren't I?

THEODORE  
Why do it, though? Why risk  
angering your father like this?

MATILDA  
I'd like to find Isabella before he  
does.

THEODORE  
I promise you I will.

MATILDA  
Also...

THEODORE  
What?

MATILDA  
(Quickly)  
I'm afraid I'm quite taken by you,  
and horribly concerned for your  
life.

There is silence for a moment. Theodore and Matilda move closer as if they're about to kiss, and a grin forms on Theodore's face.

THEODORE  
Well as long as we keep watching  
each other's backs, we should be  
okay.

They move closer still, his eyes staring longingly into hers.

MATILDA  
I have something to show you. It's  
in the armory.

Their eyes are locked, and Matilda is ready to kiss him. Suddenly Theodore breaks away.

THEODORE  
Okay, lets check it out.

Matilda's eyes widen, and quickly flash with frustration.

MATILDA  
(Angry)  
You were supposed to kiss me.

Theodore turns back.

THEODORE  
What? I was?

MATILDA  
(Angry)  
Why didn't you?

THEODORE  
Why didn't you say you wanted to be  
kissed?

MATILDA  
(Angry)  
Couldn't you tell?

THEODORE  
Should I kiss you now?

MATILDA  
(Frustrated)  
It's too late, now! The moments  
over.

Matilda storms past him, and he follows behind her.

INT. ARMORY - EVENING

The armory is much better lit than the dungeon. There are fires everywhere, and the light reflects off the gold walls. Everything has a bright warm feel. There are display shelves filled with weapons and armor, Mannequins dressed as famous people. And more pictures of Alfonso are along the walls.

Theodore stands in front of a mirror, wearing a majestic breastplate, and holding a sword and shield at the ready. Through the mirror, we can see Alfonso wearing the same armor, standing in the exact same pose. They look almost identical. Matilda circles him slowly, scrutinizing him closely.

MATILDA  
You know, you look a lot like  
Alfonso the Good. It's uncanny.

Theodore smiles, and sheathes his sword. Matilda's approaches him and puts her hand on his hilt.

MATILDA (cont'd)  
The moments back.

THEODORE  
What? Oh right.

They kiss passionately. His hand touches her face, and her hair blows in the wind. After the kiss, he continues to hold her while she leans against his chest.

MATILDA

Promise me you'll be careful.

THEODORE

I promise I will find Isabella, and return to you. Not even Saint Peter can keep me away.

MATILDA

Where will you go first.

THEODORE

Isabella's room at the church. I doubt your dad is smart enough to have had it searched for clues.

INT. ISABELLA'S QUARTERS - NIGHT

Isabella's room is still dark, and creepy. The window was left open, and a steady breeze blows as Theodore enters through the door.

THEODORE

Isabella?

He checks the bedside table, under the bed, behind the curtains.

THEODORE (cont'd)

Isabella, are you still here?

Nothing. Theodore shrugs.

THEODORE (cont'd)

Worth a try.

There is a sudden noise for the closet. We see a POV shot of someone inside the closet, and Theodore notices it too. He approaches the closet.

THEODORE (cont'd)

Nice try, but I found...

He rips open the closet, only to find it empty. There's no one there.

THEODORE (cont'd)  
 Never mind then. Isabella, if I  
 were you where would I be.

The curtains rustle more from the wind. Theodore approaches the window and looks out into the mountains. There's a light from a fire by one of the caves, and it can be seen from far away. Theodore looks back at the door, but decides to go out the window instead. He does so, and makes straight for the hills.

EXT. CAVES - NIGHT

Isabella sits beside a campfire, trying hard as she can to warm herself up. It is clearly quite chilly outside, and her survival skills aren't very sophisticated.

There's a rustle from the trees, and Isabella gets to her feet. She's poised to leave, while also staring hard into the dark, trying to decide whether or not she's in danger. Theodore stands in the shadows, just outside the light of the fire. She turns to go, and Theodore steps into the light.

THEODORE  
 Don't go, it's just me.

ISABELLA  
 Theodore?

THEODORE  
 I found you easily, it wont be long before one of the others sees your fire too. You should have made it inside the cave.

ISABELLA  
 These caves run deep, and I'm pretty sure I heard something that sounded like a bear. Can you blame me for building my fire out here?

Theodore sits down beside her.

THEODORE  
 Hmm. A bear or Manfred?

ISABELLA  
 What?

THEODORE  
 I was just wondering which is scarier.

Isabella laughs.

ISABELLA

I should have made my fire in there.

THEODORE

Yeah, probably.

ISABELLA

So if you haven't come to hurt me, why come at all?

THEODORE

To help you.

ISABELLA

Okay, but why? You're defying kings and armies in protecting me without any concern for yourself.

THEODORE

Don't be disillusioned. I'm getting something out of it.

ISABELLA

What?

THEODORE

Satisfaction that I did the right thing. Life feels pretty pointless sometimes, right?

ISABELLA

Lately more than ever.

THEODORE

Well my life doesn't feel pointless. Never. Not as long as I'm doing the right thing. Karma has to count for something. It has to.

ISABELLA

You're one in a million, Theodore.

THEODORE

My mother raised me well.

ISABELLA

You're lucky, my mother didn't raise me at all. She died when I was three.

THEODORE  
What about your dad?

ISABELLA  
I never knew him.

THEODORE  
I never knew my father, either.  
Turns out he's been hiding here the  
whole time, as a priest.

ISABELLA  
You're Father Jerome's son?

Theodore nods.

ISABELLA (cont'd)  
How does that make you feel?

THEODORE  
I dunno. Angry I guess. It wasn't  
easy for us without him.

Isabella scoots closer to him, and rests her head on his  
shoulder.

THEODORE (cont'd)  
He says he has his reasons, so I  
don't know. My mother never blamed  
him, so [maybe I shouldn't either].

Theodore is interrupted by a rustling further down in the  
trees. Isabella's eyes snap open, and her head rises.  
Theodore helps her up, and leads her to the opening of the  
cave. As he passes the fire, he grabs one of the logs, using  
it as a torch. He gives it to her.

THEODORE (cont'd)  
Hide inside. Go deep enough that  
you won't be seen, but not so deep  
that you can't hear us.

ISABELLA  
Be careful.

Theodore smiles and nods. Isabella disappears into the cave,  
the light from her torch getting fainter and fainter.  
Theodore turns toward the fire, when Frederic steps out from  
the trees.

FREDERIC  
Where is she?

THEODORE

Where is who?

FREDERIC

The Princess Isabella. I saw the two of you up here, there's really no reason to lie.

THEODORE

Okay fine. She's here, but you want get to her.

FREDERIC

People have been keeping me from her all her life.

Frederic pulls his sword from the scabbard. Theodore pulls out his sword in response, and takes his shield from off his back..

FREDERIC (cont'd)

But I've gone too far to stop now.

Frederic suddenly kicks Theodore hard in the shield, causing him to fall backwards into the fire. Frederic did the move deliberately to finish Theodore fast, and move on to Isabella.

Theodore rolls out of the fire, cursing to himself. Frederic starts towards the cave, but Theodore pushes himself to his feet, and charges Frederic. Theodore attacks with his sword, but Frederic parry's off his attack. Theodore then pushes in with his shield. Frederic manages to roll off Theodore's shield, and slice Theodore in the arm. Theodore realizes that Frederic is a better fighter than he'd been expecting, and Theodore tackles him away from the cave.

They roll painfully down the hill. Theodore's arm hits a root and he loses his sword. He continues to tumble down, and see's that he is about to hit a tree. He manages to raise his shield in time, and hits the tree without any major damage.

Theodore doesn't even have a moment to regain his breath when Frederic comes at him. Frederic still has a sword, but no shield. Theodore now has a shield with no sword. Theodore manages to block Frederic's first swing, and his second. Theodore pushes Frederic's sword hand back with his shield, and then swings his shield at Frederic's head. Frederic jumps back, and the shield gets stuck in the nearby tree. Frederic swings at Theodore's head over the shield, but Theodore ducks the swing, and then grabs Frederic's arm and disarms him. Frederic pulls his arm away before Theodore can break it, and favours it gently.

FREDERIC (cont'd)  
Where did you learn to fight like  
this boy?

THEODORE  
My mother trained me.

FREDERIC  
She must be a hell of a woman.

THEODORE  
She's dead.

Frederic feels sympathy for the boy.

FREDERIC  
You fight well, and you have a good  
heart. I will spare your life if  
you give me the princess.

THEODORE  
You'll never have her!

Theodore swings at Frederic's head with his fist. Frederic blocks his swing, and gives Theodore a few kidney shots before getting him into a sleeper hold. Frederic tries to put Theodore out, while Theodore struggles desperately. Theodore manages to grab a dagger, holstered to Frederic's belt. Theodore pulls the blade free, and stabs it into Frederic's side. Frederic screams and goes down. Theodore lies on top of him for a moment, struggling for breath, and finally gets up.

THEODORE (cont'd)  
(Emotional and tired)  
I'm sorry it had to end like this,  
but I have to protect her.

Frederic starts laughing, even though every laugh is pain to him.

THEODORE (cont'd)  
What's so funny?

FREDERIC  
We're both being idiots.

Theodore grabs his shield free from the tree.

THEODORE  
You attacked me.

FREDERIC

I thought you were her captor. I never would have hurt her, boy. I'm her father.

Theodore drops his shield.

THEODORE

I've been a fool.

FREDERIC

Maybe a little, but I'm the bigger fool, about to die a fool's death.

ISABELLA

No.

Isabella hurries down the hill; she'd listened to the whole thing, and rushes to Frederic's side.

ISABELLA (cont'd)

The castle isn't far, we'll take you to Manfred's doctors.

FREDERIC

Don't bother. I could never die happier than right here, right now, with you beside me.

ISABELLA

That's stupid talk.

THEODORE

(To Isabella)

I'll grab one arm, you grab the other.

(To Frederic)

I can't let you die sir. I can't have your blood on my hands.

Theodore and Isabella help Frederic to his feet. They balance him between them, keeping him up as they carry him to the castle.

EXT. OTRANTO GATE - NIGHT

They make their way through the gate, and are joined by Samuel and Bryan.

SAMUEL

What happened?

THEODORE

He's gonna die if he doesn't get some help.

SAMUEL

Who was he fighting?

Frederic coughs up blood, and spits it out.

FREDERIC

Don't ask too many questions, it was my fault.

Samuel and Bryan take over carrying him, and the four of them make for the castle.

INT. EMPTY ROOM - NIGHT

They come to a room in the castle that is mostly empty, except for a long table in the middle. Samuel and Bryan help lie Frederic down on the table.

SAMUEL

I'm going to try and find a surgeon in this cursed place.

He leaves. Isabella sits down with Frederic and grabs his hand.

ISABELLA

It'll be alright, everything's going to be alright.

Frederic tries to laugh, but it comes out more like a gargling cough.

FREDERIC

All I thought about for the seven years I was imprisoned, was how you would react to seeing me again. I thought you'd be angrier. Hell, I gave you fifty - fifty odds of killing me on the spot. Never thought you'd want to save my life.

SURGEON, an older man with a monocle and a heavy black bag, follows Samuel into the room. He hurries to Frederic's side, and examines the wound. Theodore leaves the room.

INT. CASTLE HALLWAYS - NIGHT

Theodore starts pacing outside the room. Isabella joins him.

ISABELLA  
Are you okay?

THEODORE  
You're asking me? I just stabbed  
your father.

ISABELLA  
I don't blame you, you were trying  
to protect me.

THEODORE  
I did a pretty lousy job.

The Surgeon leaves the room, and closes the door behind him.

SURGEON  
I've sewn his wound, the rest I'm  
afraid is in God's hands.

THEODORE  
What are the odds?

SURGEON  
I couldn't say. Not great.

ISABELLA  
Thanks.

Isabella tries to go in, but Theodore stops her.

THEODORE  
Follow my lead.

INT. EMPTY ROOM - NIGHT

Frederic lies on the table still, covered now in a blanket. His armor has been stripped and put in the corner. Theodore and Isabella both enter, and stand on either side of him.

THEODORE  
(Loudly)  
Looks like you're gonna survive to  
fight another day.

FREDERIC  
What did the doctor say?

ISABELLA

He said you'll be fine, said you should be up and moving again by morning.

Frederic smiles, and starts to sit up.

THEODORE

Hey, be careful. Don't push yourself.

FREDERIC

(Lying)

I feel better already, better than I've ever felt.

Matilda enters the room, and immediately goes to Theodore and hugs him.

MATILDA

Theodore!

Isabella looks at the two of them with surprise. Matilda pulls back but keeps her arms draped around his neck.

MATILDA (cont'd)

When you make a promise, you really deliver.

THEODORE

(To Isabella)

Matilda helped me escape here. If it weren't for her, I'd never have found you.

ISABELLA

Matilda, meet my father.

Frederic and Matilda shake hands. Frederic doesn't immediately let go of her hand, but instead holds it firmly and examines it closely.

FREDERIC

You're his daughter, aren't you?

Matilda meets Frederic's eyes, confused at his interest. Suddenly her eyebrows rise as she remembers...

MATILDA

Speaking of my father, he's right behind me.

There is noise from outside the door.

THEODORE

Again, you should have led with that.

Theodore pushes Matilda behind him as Manfred enters the room. Manfred notices Theodore first, and is immediately wrought with emotion. Behind Theodore is a picture of Alfonso, and again they are wearing the same things, and are posed similarly. Manfred mistakes Theodore as being Alfonso.

MANFRED

You're supposed to be dead.

THEODORE

Uh, no sir. You just locked me up.

MANFRED

Theodore?

Surprise turns to anger.

MANFRED (cont'd)

What are you doing here?

Jerome runs into the room out of breath. He is surprised to see Theodore out of his cell, but turns to the king.

JEROME

My lord...

MANFRED

Not now, father.

(To Theodore)

How did you get out of your cell?

THEODORE

Is that really important right now?

Jerome looks at Theodore and sees his nervousness.

JEROME

I did it.

Manfred whips his head towards Jerome so fast he kinks his neck.

MANFRED

You betray me, priest? Who can I trust in, if not god?

FREDERIC

Leave the boy alone, Manfred.

Frederic slips off the table to his feet, Isabella helping him stand.

MANFRED  
What happened to you?

FREDERIC  
I fell.

MANFRED  
Well I see you found your daughter.

ISABELLA  
You knew?

FREDERIC  
Oh, he knew.

MANFRED  
Of course you both can feel safe under my roof. And you're both welcome to take full advantage of my hospitalities as guests.

FREDERIC  
That's nice, Manfred, but I want you to give Theodore that same treatment.

Manfred is surprised by his request.

MANFRED  
He doesn't concern you.

FREDERIC  
All the same, I'd like to see him treated with more respect.

Manfred swallows and turns to Theodore. With a long moment of thought...

MANFRED  
You're free to go.

Theodore and Manfred match looks.

MANFRED (cont'd)  
As in, go now.

Theodore and Jerome leave together. Manfred looks to Frederic who stares silently back.

MANFRED (cont'd)  
I too will retire, but in the  
morning we will have much to  
discuss.

Manfred leaves.

FREDERIC  
Good he's gone. Help me back on the  
table before I faint.

Isabella startles.

ISABELLA  
Oh right!

Frederic goes limp and Isabella leads him to the table and  
helps him lie down.

MATILDA  
We can help you to a room, if you'd  
like.

FREDERIC  
Oh no, that's all right, this table  
is feeling really comfortable right  
now.

He closes his eyes, leaving the two girls to stare awkwardly  
at one another.

MATILDA  
Would you be interested in some tea  
before bed?

Isabella smiles at her.

ISABELLA  
I suppose we have much to discuss.

INT. MATILDA'S CHAMBERS - NIGHT

Matilda and Isabella are sitting at a table drinking from tea  
cups. There is an awkward silence between them. Isabella  
takes a loud sip from her cup.

ISABELLA  
This tea is really good. Different  
than I'm used to.

MATILDA

It's wine. I stole it from the castle stores.

ISABELLA

Ah. That explains a lot.

Isabella drains her glass, and fills it again from the teapot.

MATILDA

I couldn't help but notice the way you were looking at Theodore.

ISABELLA

Yeah? I noticed the way you were hanging from him.

MATILDA

We had a moment.

ISABELLA

Do you like him?

MATILDA

I was about to ask you the same question.

Isabella takes another sip, and the sip turns into a gulp, as she drains her glass again.

ISABELLA

I won't try to get between you.

MATILDA

Thank you, Isabella. I'm glad you're okay. You've been like a sister to me. We need to stick together if we're going to get through these dark times.

ISABELLA

Oh I agree.

Isabella fills her glass as Matilda takes another sip.

MATILDA

He's really dreamy though, right?

ISABELLA

Theodore? Oh yes. He's like the perfect man.

There's a knock at the door.

MATILDA  
Come in.

Hippolita opens the door, and sees them at the table.

HIPPOLITA  
Oh good, you're both together.

MATILDA  
Mother!

Hippolita sits down with them.

HIPPOLITA  
Be a dear and pour me a cup of tea.

Matilda and Isabella trade looks.

MATILDA  
Are you sure you want to drink tea  
before bed. It'll only keep you up.

HIPPOLITA  
Don't be ridiculous.

Hippolita pours herself a cup.

HIPPOLITA (cont'd)  
I couldn't possibly sleep tonight,  
not when everything your father has  
worked to build is crumbling apart.

She takes a sip of her cup, and her face lights with surprise. Isabella and Matilda watch her fearfully, waiting to see how she will react.

HIPPOLITA (cont'd)  
Do you have any bigger cups?

The three women laugh.

HIPPOLITA (cont'd)  
Matilda, I love you so much.

MATILDA  
I love you too mother.

HIPPOLITA  
Please, wait until you hear what I  
have to say.

ISABELLA

My queen?

HIPPOLITA

Matilda, I want to offer your hand  
in marriage to Frederic.

She says this while Matilda is sipping from her cup. Matilda chokes slightly, and places her cup too hard on the table.

MATILDA

Excuse me?

HIPPOLITA

It's the only way I can think of to  
keep our family together.

Isabella suddenly changes the topic.

ISABELLA

Manfred tried to sleep with me.

Everyone looks to her in surprise.

ISABELLA (cont'd)

It's why I ran away. He was in a  
strange frenzy. Tried to take me  
right then and there.

(To Hippolita)

I'm sorry.

Hippolita makes to drink from her cup, only to find it empty. She grabs the teapot and takes a large drink directly from it. Everyone watches her in surprise. When she finishes, she puts the pot down, and wipes her mouth with her hand.

HIPPOLITA

If it's a divorce he wants, I will  
of course consent.

MATILDA

Mother you can't!

HIPPOLITA

We all have our duties, Matilda.  
It's the tragedy of being a woman.  
You must consent to marry Frederic.

MATILDA

I'm in love with someone else.

ISABELLA

She's in love with Theodore, and he  
with her.

Hippolita looks from Matilda to Isabella, and back to  
Matilda.

HIPPOLITA

Who the hell is Theodore?

INT. CHAPEL - NIGHT

Theodore and Jerome enter the chapel. The chapel is empty, as  
Jerome makes for the head of the room. Theodore looks around  
the chapel, taking everything in.

THEODORE

Do you live here?

JEROME

I'm the head of this church. Yes, I  
have a room and an office in the  
back.

THEODORE

I don't even know what to call you,  
or what to say.

JEROME

Well everyone calls me Father. And  
seeing as I actually am your  
father... Are you hungry?

Theodore looks to Jerome.

THEODORE

I could eat.

Jerome grabs an apple from a bowl of fruit and throws it to  
Theodore. Theodore catches it, takes one look at it and makes  
a face.

JEROME

I have something I need to say.

Seeing that Jerome has his back turned, Theodore throws the  
apple over his shoulder.

THEODORE

I have something to tell you first.  
I'm in love.

Jerome turns around in surprise.

JEROME  
With whom?

THEODORE  
The Princess Matilda.

JEROME  
Does she know?

THEODORE  
It's mutual.

JEROME  
Well you have to stop immediately.

THEODORE  
Not likely.

JEROME  
Do you want to give Manfred more  
reason to kill you?

THEODORE  
But I haven't given him any.

JEROME  
Then imagine how your romance with  
his daughter might change that.

THEODORE  
Would you leave the woman you love  
just because it was too dangerous?

Jerome doesn't reply.

THEODORE (cont'd)  
I'm serious. Why did you leave my  
mother?

JEROME  
That's what I wanted to tell you.

THEODORE  
Oh, well then maybe you should have  
gone first.

JEROME  
Do you know the history of this  
town, Theodore?

THEODORE  
Of Otranto?

Jerome nods.

THEODORE (cont'd)  
Not enough to pass a test.

JEROME  
Otranto was founded by a man named  
Alfonso.

THEODORE  
I've heard of him.

JEROME  
Alfonso was a kind man, and his  
people came to refer to him as  
Alfonso the Good.

THEODORE  
So when does Manfred come in.

JEROME  
Manfred's father was Alfonso's most  
trusted assistant, who became  
envious of Alfonso's position. He  
poisoned Alfonso, and banished his  
only daughter from the kingdom.

THEODORE  
Now you're going too fast. Alfonso  
had a daughter?

JEROME  
She was your mother. She came to my  
family one cold winter, and we  
helped hide her for over a year. It  
was during that time that we fell  
in love.

THEODORE  
Skip ahead to the part where you  
leave her.

JEROME  
She was pregnant with you when  
Manfred took the thrown. No one  
knows why he decided to put a price  
on her head, she was no threat to  
him. She had to run, and no matter  
how much I wanted to go with her,  
she wouldn't let me.

THEODORE

Why not?

JEROME

She had plans for you. She told me if I wanted to help, I should try to get close to Manfred and wait for you.

THEODORE

Why? What were the plans? She never told me a thing about any plans.

JEROME

Do I have to say it?

Theodore has already guessed what the plan is, and he's angry about it.

THEODORE

Yes.

JEROME

It's your destiny to depose Manfred, and take your rightful place as king.

THEODORE

Manfred will never give up the throne as long as he lives.

JEROME

I know.

THEODORE

Just because someone thinks they can make a better leader, doesn't give them the right to kill.

JEROME

But it's your destiny.

THEODORE

Maybe it's what you and my mother planned for me, but I don't believe in god's will. And it's definitely not my will, I have no interest being king.

There is a loud noise from off screen, and the two turn to the door as Hippolita shuts it behind her.

HIPPOLITA

I need to speak with you, Father.

Jerome looks at Theodore.

JEROME

Just think about it tonight. We'll talk again in the morning.

Theodore doesn't say anything, but leaves them to talk.

JEROME (cont'd)

What's wrong, your Highness.

HIPPOLITA

Nothing. I would like you to officiate a marriage.

JEROME

Who's getting married.

HIPPOLITA

My daughter Matilda.

Jerome is surprised.

JEROME

With Theodore?

HIPPOLITA

No, with Frederic.

JEROME

Who's Frederic?

HIPPOLITA

That's not important. I also want a divorce from my husband.

JEROME

You can't. Your highness, do you not love your husband?

HIPPOLITA

Love has nothing to do with it. My duty is to make him happy, and your duty is to do as I've requested.

JEROME

With all do respect, my duty is to god.

HIPPOLITA  
Then we'll find someone better  
willing to do your job.

JEROME  
Is that a threat?

We never hear Hippolita's response as we

CUT TO:

INT. EMPTY ROOM - NIGHT

We see Frederic lying on the table, pretending to be asleep.

FREDERIC  
Please don't bother me right now  
Manfred, I need my sleep.

We pull out to find Manfred just coming into the room.

MANFRED  
I would like to speak with you  
about a double marriage.

Frederic's eyes open.

FREDERIC  
What are you talking about.

MANFRED  
I'm offering you my daughter's hand  
in marriage.

Jerome props himself on his elbows.

FREDERIC  
Matilda?

MANFRED  
She is fair skinned. She could give  
you the companionship you must have  
sorely missed during your time in  
prison.

FREDERIC  
And what of the other marriage.

MANFRED  
In return, I would like to marry  
Isabella.

FREDERIC

Are you having some kind of mid-life crisis? Leave the young girls to date boys their own age.

MANFRED

Don't be stupid. You know as well as I do that few women are given that luxury. This double marriage will make everyone happy.

FREDERIC

And what of Isabella's happiness?

Manfred stops, unsure how to respond. Frederic lays back again.

FREDERIC (cont'd)

I don't know what else I can say to you, besides no.

There is a ruckus in the hall.

BIANCA (O.S.)

My Lord! Come quick!

Manfred goes to the door.

MANFRED

Stop your screaming at once.

Bianca joins them in the room.

BIANCA

Your highness, there's been another sighting. A giant hand across the river.

Manfred looks to Frederic anxiously, not wanting him to know.

MANFRED

Hold your tongue.

BIANCA

But my lord, I saw it myself. The kingdom is cursed.

Frederic pulls himself up again.

FREDERIC

What sort of curse?

MANFRED

It's nothing to concern you.

BIANCA

It concerns everyone, we're all in danger.

MANFRED

That's enough from you. Your relieved of your duties until further notice.

BIANCA

But my lord!

MANFRED

(Growls)

Leave.

She leaves in a huff.

MANFRED (cont'd)

I'll let you sleep.

FREDERIC

Can I make a suggestion?

MANFRED

No.

FREDERIC

Perhaps you should spend less time on forcing people into marriages, and more time listening to what those people are trying to tell you.

MANFRED

I do not need help running my kingdom, especially not from the likes of you.

Manfred storms out. Frederic lies back down.

FREDERIC

We'll see.

INT. HALLWAY - NIGHT

Manfred reaches the door to his room, and is about to go inside when he notices Hippolita returning to her room.

They share a glance, and Hippolita takes a step towards him, in hopes that he will let her join him. He is tempted, but wipes the thought from his mind, entering his room, and locking it behind him. Hippolita returns to her room and does the same.

INT. ISABELLA'S ROOM - NIGHT

Isabella blows out her last candle, and lies back in bed, her arms behind her head, and her eyes wide open. After a moment she sighs, and moves one hand under the covers. She bites her lip.

EXT. CASTLE - NIGHT

We see Matilda's room from outside her window, as she climbs into bed and blows out her candle.

INT. ISABELLA'S QUARTERS - NIGHT

Theodore is now staying in the room Isabella stayed at the Chapel. He sits alone by the window, staring out at the stars deep in thought. His head drops onto his knees, and his eyes close.

EXT. RIVER - NIGHT

We see the river in the moonlight. On the other side of the river there is nothing but a tree swaying in the breeze. Frederic's boot lands in front of us, obscuring our view of the other shore. When it finally moves, the cloaked figure of Alfonso stands across as if waiting for Frederic.

ALFONSO

You've come to see me.

FREDERIC

I heard there had been a sighting here, I just assumed it was you.

ALFONSO

It was me, but you needn't have come here. I see you always.

FREDERIC

Are you god?

ALFONSO

Just because I can see all doesn't mean I know all. Thank you for bringing back my sword.

FREDERIC

How did that sword get buried so far from here?

Alfonso laughs a creepy laugh.

ALFONSO

It was an accident, actually. All this... that I am... it's taken a while to get used to. But I'm almost ready.

FREDERIC

For what? What is the meaning behind all this madness.

ALFONSO

It's time I explained everything. You see, it all started with...

Suddenly Alfonso disappears in a puff of smoke. Frederic looks around in surprise and anger.

FREDERIC

What? You did that on purpose.

ALFONSO (O.S.)

Guilty.

FREDERIC

I deserve to know the truth.

Alfonso appears beside Frederic and whispers in his ear.

ALFONSO

You'll see for yourself tomorrow.

And he disappears in a puff of smoke. Frederic sighs and, grabbing his wounded side, starts to limp back to the castle.

FREDERIC

Dick.

CUT TO:

EXT. OTRANTO - DAWN

We see the sun rise just over the horizon, bathing the city in colors of red and gold. On the roof of a building, a rooster goes to yell it's morning scream. It doesn't get even halfway through a scream before the wind picks up and blows it from the roof. In the streets, the wind picks up, creating whirlwinds of leaflets, dust and debris. The few people already starting their day are holding onto their hats, and their carts, in hopes they don't blow away.

INT. GREAT HALL - MORNING

Everyone has joined together in the great hall for a breakfast banquet. Everyone sits at separate tables. The king has a table to himself at the head, with the three women sitting together to his left. On his right, Frederic's men have a table, and Jerome and Theodore have a table beside them. For such a large group of people, the hall is uncomfortably quiet.

Manfred takes a large bite of food, and looks longingly at Isabella while he chews. Isabella notices his stare and makes a face. Trying to shake his gaze, she looks to Theodore who stares at his food. It's a giant apple platter, with full apples, an apple pie, and a collection of apple tarts and keishes. There's a card on the platter, saying "Compliments of Princess Matilda". Theodore looks to Matilda who smiles and waves. He smiles back at her, but pushes the platter away. Hippolita watches the two of them with a scowl. Matilda looks to Isabella, who is wrought with emotion and looks ready to either explode with anger, or burst into tears. Maybe both.

By the door, Frederic leans against the frame, watching the room quietly, and distractedly. Turning, he looks out the open front doors. The wind is picking up. In the distance we can see the statue standing tall. Suddenly the statue moves slightly, or is it our imagination, and a pack of birds launch into the air.

Isabella's chair is heard scraping against the floor as she pushes away from the table. Getting up, she storms from the room without a word. As she passes Frederic, he tries to grab her but she's too fast. Matilda pulls her chair back, and hurries after Isabella. Theodore looks as if he's about to say something, but immediately notices the dark looks he gets from everyone in the room just for opening his mouth. He closes it again, and gets up to leave. The last shot we see is of Manfred watching him dangerously.

INT. HALLWAY - MORNING

Theodore walks down the hallway, when he is suddenly pulled into a closet. Behind where he just was, we see that Manfred was following him, and the look on his face is enough to make any man shiver.

INT. CLOSET - MORNING

The closet is very tight. Matilda was the one that pulled him into the closet, and its a tight fit for the two of them. Her lips are dangerously close to his. She begins kissing him.

MATILDA

We can't be together.

Theodore tries to break away from her lips, but in the tight space he has no room to retreat.

THEODORE

What?

MATILDA

My family has plans for me. I am to be given to Frederic as a peace offering.

THEODORE

Frederic would never agree to that.

Matilda pushes him against the now closed door, and reaches her hands under his shirt.

MATILDA

It doesn't matter. If it wasn't him, it would be some other creepy old man. They would never approve of you.

THEODORE

Then what are we doing here.

Matilda stops kissing him.

MATILDA

I don't want to think of the future. I don't want to talk about the miserable life awaiting me. I want you to take me, now. Be my first.

THEODORE

I can't.

MATILDA

You have to.

THEODORE

It's wrong.

MATILDA

Take my virginity so that whichever  
creep I end up marrying wont get  
to.

Theodore turns with Matilda, and pushes her up against the door, holding onto her wrists to keep her from fondling him.

MATILDA (cont'd)

It's not wrong. It's the only right  
thing you can do. If you love me  
you'll do this for me.

THEODORE

I do love you.

MATILDA

I want you inside of me.

Theodore releases her wrists, and begins to grind heavily against her. His hand slips to her dress and starts to raise it.

MANFRED (O.S.)

Theodore?

Theodore and Matilda stop, though they are both breathing heavily.

THEODORE

Manfred?

INT. HALLWAY - MORNING

Manfred is standing outside the door. He signals to a nearby guard with a spear, who approaches him silently.

MANFRED

We need to talk.

THEODORE

I'm sort of in a closet right now.

MANFRED

I won't be long. I've been thinking about everything that's going on. I admit I might have overreacted a number of times around you.

INT. CLOSET - MORNING

Theodore and Matilda are both frozen in awkward positions, as Matilda tries to keep as quiet as possible.

THEODORE

Okay...

INT. HALLWAY - MORNING

MANFRED

I knew, the moment I saw you, that you'd be trouble. But every time I tried to get rid of you, I only made things worse. I've made a lot of mistakes, but I'd like a chance to fix everything.

INT. CLOSET - MORNING

THEODORE

How?

INT. HALLWAY - MORNING

MANFRED

I'd rather show you. It won't have the same impact if I explain it first.

There is a pause. Manfred signals the guard, and the guard passes Manfred his spear. Manfred tests the tip, to assure that it's sharp.

THEODORE (O.S.)

Okay, I'll be right out.

MANFRED

That won't be necessary.

Suddenly, and with a fast and fluid motion, Manfred stabs the spear horrifically through the wood of the door.

INT. CLOSET - MORNING

Matilda's eyes widen.

THEODORE

No...

INT. HALLWAY - MORNING

With a smile of victory, Manfred opens the door to the closet. With the spear still in the doorway, Matilda hangs from the door like a wreath, her eyes already going lifeless. Manfred's look of success quickly changes to one of shock and disbelief.

Theodore bursts from the closet, pushing Manfred into the wall.

THEODORE

(Yells)

What did you do?

His hands tighten around Manfred's throat. Manfred doesn't even struggle, his eyes still on the impaled sight of his daughter. Her body slides off the tip of the spear, and crumples to the floor.

The guard tries to grab at Theodore, and pull his grasp from Manfred's throat. With one hand, Theodore smashes the Guard's head into the wall. Frederic, who was only around the corner when this started, runs in. Looking first at Matilda, then to Theodore and back, Frederic crouches by Matilda's side and feels for her pulse.

Theodore releases Manfred, shoots him a look that says "Your dead to me" and crouches behind Frederic.

THEODORE (cont'd)

Is she dead?

Frederic closes her eyes with his hand.

FREDERIC

I'm sorry.

Frederic looks to Manfred who is in shock.

MANFRED

I didn't know.

FREDERIC

Well you've lost the last of your  
legacy now, Manfred.

Manfred gestures to Theodore.

MANFRED

It's his fault. He's ruined  
everything.

Theodore punches Manfred in the face, breaking his nose. Manfred hits the floor beside Matilda, and immediately tries to get back up. Blood drips from his nose onto the floor, and all over his hands. Seeing the blood on his hands, and Matilda body beside them puts him in even greater shock. Tears and blood stream down his face, as he lifts himself onto his knees beside her body.

As he gets to his knees, Theodore looks ready to punch him again, but Manfred doesn't turn to him, instead choosing to cry over her body. Theodore lowers his fist.

FREDERIC

It's your fault she's dead,  
Manfred. You've brought about your  
own downfall. If you'd ever even  
considered asking the rest of us  
for advice we could have helped  
you.

THEODORE

We're all to blame for her death.  
We were all just too damned  
stubborn.

There's a scream from outside, followed by more screams. The entire castle shakes. Manfred takes a moment, and finally lifts his face from his daughter.

MANFRED

What is happening to me?

THEODORE

I hope it's the devil, come for  
your soul.

FREDERIC

You've pushed people for too long,  
Manfred. It's time for you to reap  
the rewards for all the things  
you've done.

THEODORE

And for the crimes of your father.

MANFRED

My father?

Bianca finds them in the hallway.

BIANCA

It's the statue, my lords. People  
are running for their lives.

Manfred gets to his feet, and walks past Bianca without even  
looking at her. Bianca notices Matilda, and screams.

BIANCA (cont'd)

Oh my god! My lady, no. No.

Manfred continue's past her without paying her any mind.

EXT. CASTLE - MORNING

We follow Manfred as he stumbles out the front doors of the  
castle, and we're given a view of the town. The statue of  
Alfonso has come alive. It's swinging it's mighty sword at  
the people around it, and jabs into a building, causing it to  
collapse.

In the center of town, Manfred's guards have begun fighting  
the statue. Bowmen have lined up along high walkways between  
buildings. Large ballistas have been set up on a number of  
roofs. As guards get one of the ballistas ready, a head guard  
tells the group to fire. The large arrow is shot from the  
ballista straight for the statue's head.

Suddenly, and quite to everyone's surprise, the statue turns  
and grabs the arrow out of thin air. He gives the roof an  
angry look, while a number of regular sized arrows chip away  
at his cheek.

He drops the arrow, and it lands behind Samuel, in the middle  
of a line of people leaving through the front gate. One man  
is crushed. Samuel is trying to lead an evacuation from the  
town. He herds people out the front gate, and comes upon the  
shopkeeper Theodore talked to in the beginning. He waves her  
past, and turns to the two nameless men in Frederic's employ.

SAMUEL

Head to the other side, and help  
people barricade the castle.

The soldiers nod their understanding, and make their way up  
the path.

ALEXANDER (O.S.)

Sir!

Alexander and Bryan are in a window on the second floor of the nearest building.

BRYAN

What's our move?

SAMUEL

We need to run containment on this thing. Keep it from leaving the square.

BRYAN

Yes sir.

INT. BUILDING - MORNING

Alexander and Bryan back away from the window. They look at each other, and it's clear they're afraid.

BRYAN

We're gonna make it through this.

Bryan grabs Alexander's shoulder reassuringly. Alexander grins.

ALEXANDER

Yeah. Yeah.

Alexander leans in and they kiss passionately.

ALEXANDER (cont'd)

I love you.

BRYAN

I know.

With one last meaningful look, the two of them run off in separate directions.

INT. CASTLE DOOR - MORNING

A large number of people are pushing their way into the castle. Hippolita tries to force her way through the crowd, with Isabella following behind her, holding her hand. Hippolita sees Manfred outside, staring off at the distance, and Hippolita calls out to him.

HIPPOLITA

Manfred!

Manfred doesn't respond or make any motion that he hears her.

HIPPOLITA (cont'd)

We have to find Matilda and get out  
of here. Manfred, please!

Isabella slips from Hippolita's grip, her face hard as stone. She walks, almost like a zombie, out the doors, and towards the town.

INT. HALLWAY - MORNING

Frederic sees Isabella leaving the castle and he worries for her. He turns to Theodore, still crying over Matilda, and he crouches down beside them.

FREDERIC

Theodore...

Theodore doesn't look up, as he grasps at Matilda's hand in desperation.

THEODORE

Just go.

Frederic nods to him, and goes after Isabella. Theodore remains over Matilda, not wanting to let her go. There is a distant roar, and the castle shakes. Theodore tries to close his eyes and ignore the crisis but he can't.

THEODORE (cont'd)

I'm sorry. I could have given you  
so much more.

He drops her hand and gets up, his hands balled into fists.

EXT. COURTYARD - MORNING

Manfred stands quietly in the middle of the courtyard, watching the statue almost in anticipation of his doom. Beside him, Hippolita continues to talk, but he doesn't hear her. Finally he does.

HIPPOLITA

We have to do something! Tell me  
you have a plan.

He turns to her and smiles an insane smile.

MANFRED

I'm going to let it kill me.

Theodore storms out of the castle, a blade held at his side. He marches across the courtyard and raises the blade so the tip presses against Manfred's neck.

THEODORE

You've been so quick to deal out judgement on everyone else, are you ready to at last yourself be judged?

Manfred slowly turns to him.

MANFRED

By you?

Theodore fights against the struggle of his morals.

THEODORE

Why not me. Who would be better?

Manfred smiles almost too calmly.

MANFRED

Then kill me.

Theodore stares down the edge of his blade, unsure how to act.

THEODORE

I should.

MANFRED

It's either you or that statue. Either way I'm dead. But you don't have the guts. I'll bet all my gold the statue does it for you.

THEODORE

Your gold won't help you when you're dead.

MANFRED

Then it's a bet I can lose. Do it. It's the final chapter now; finish the job!

Across the courtyard Frederic yells at Isabella, who is nearing the town square.

FREDERIC

Isabella!

Theodore and Manfred both look to where Frederic yelled, and they see Frederic running after Isabella, as she approaches trouble. Manfred watches Theodore, who looks back at Manfred but no longer as angrily. Theodore sheaths his sword in one fluid motion.

MANFRED

You really are a nice guy, aren't you. It's not just an act.

Theodore's anger rises again. Theodore punches Manfred hard in the face, forcing the king to fall onto all fours. Theodore shakes his fist.

THEODORE

There aren't even words to describe how good that felt.

FREDERIC (O.S.)

Isabella stop!

Theodore leaves the screen. Manfred slowly gets to his knees, when suddenly another punch hits him in the face, knocking him into the grass. Theodore stands over him again, a peculiar look on his face. Turning, he leaves for real this time, and runs after Frederic and Isabella.

EXT. TOWN SQUARE - MORNING

Isabella stares up at the statue in awe, as it lifts a fruit stand, and crushes the stand between it's hands. Frederic finally catches up to Isabella, and knocks her down behind a produce cart.

ISABELLA

Let go of me.

She struggles against him, and he leans back.

FREDERIC

Are you trying to get yourself killed?

ISABELLA

Why do you care?

Theodore joins them, crouching behind Frederic.

THEODORE  
Of course we care.

FREDERIC  
I'm your father.

ISABELLA  
You've been my father for a day.  
Would you really risk your life for  
me?

FREDERIC  
We both would. Because we care  
about you.

ISABELLA  
Why? I wouldn't do the same for  
you.

THEODORE  
Well you don't have to.

FREDERIC  
Honey, I've only known you a short  
time, but already you've saved my  
life. You absolutely would risk  
your life for us, because we all  
care about each other.

ISABELLA  
No one has ever really cared for  
me. You left me as a child, and  
I've been nothing but a pawn ever  
since.

FREDERIC  
I promise that won't happen  
anymore, hun. I'm back for good  
this time. We're both here for you.

THEODORE  
He's right, Isabella. As long as  
you live, hope lives with you.  
Carry it with you everywhere, and  
never lose sight of it.

ISABELLA  
Is that what you do?

THEODORE  
It's how I get through the bad  
days. Knowing that at anytime my  
luck could change.

The statue behind them throws a cow across the square, and screams are heard offscreen. Isabella watches it all, almost as if from a distance.

ISABELLA

Our lives are meaningless. If that statue kills us all it wouldn't even matter.

FREDERIC

Didn't you hear Theodore? You have to keep fighting, because hope never ends unless you give up.

THEODORE

And the statue isn't going to kill us. I'll think of something.

Theodore scans the building tops of the town, and focuses on the chapel belltower.

THEODORE (cont'd)

That belltower is perfect.

FREDERIC

What are you going to do?

THEODORE

Don't know yet. Don't let him leave the square.

FREDERIC

My men are already working on that.

Theodore turns to go.

ISABELLA

Theodore!

Theodore turns.

ISABELLA (cont'd)

I don't want you to die for me.

THEODORE

I'm not just doing it for you.

ISABELLA

Then why?

THEODORE

I don't know.

(Pause)

Cause that's life.

He leaves them and sprints for the chapel.

EXT. ROOF - MORNING

Bryan stands on the roof of one of the buildings, and watches Theodore sprinting towards the chapel. Bryan then turns to the statue, and fires his crossbow at it. The shot bounces off its hand, but the statue notices. Turning to Bryan, it swings its sword at the base of the building, causing the roof to slant. Bryan tumbles down the roof, but manages to jump onto the adjacent roof, just barely making it with his life. Getting up he fires at the statue again.

INT. CHAPEL - MORNING

Jerome is reading the bible at the podium to a collection of monks praying before him when Theodore bursts into the chapel. Jerome looks up and welcomes him.

THEODORE

How do I get to the belltower?

Jerome points to a door and Theodore makes for it.

JEROME

Beyond that door and up the stairs.

THEODORE

This door?

Theodore opens it and see's the stairs; rickety and falling apart, they seem to go on forever.

THEODORE (cont'd)

And up these stairs? Right.

EXT. ROOF - MORNING

On a different roof, Alexander has joined a Ballista crew. They load the Ballista as he directs them. The statue is still being distracted by Bryan across the way.

ALEXANDER

And fire.

They fire the Ballista, and the shot soars through the air to glance off its cheek. It growls and raises its sword.

INT. STAIRS - MORNING

Theodore pants into the frame, pulling himself up the stairs. He has clearly already ran up many stairs, and he's exhausted. Looking up, he sees that the stairs still go on for forever, with no end in sight.

THEODORE

That's it. I give up.

Theodore turns to go downstairs, only to realize that the stairs go on forever below him as well. Changing his mind about turning back, he sighs, turns back around, and continues up.

EXT. ROOF - MORNING

The statue of Alfonso reaches for Bryan, but he ducks beneath its grasp. Keeping his head down, we hear Samuel.

SAMUEL (O.S.)

Watch out, Bryan!

Bryan looks up in time to see the sword coming straight down on him.

EXT. TOWN SQUARE - MORNING

Samuel brandishes his sword and runs towards the statue, as it cuts the building in half, and the building implodes in on itself.

SAMUEL

Bryan, no!!!

The statue then stumbles back and crushes Samuel under its foot.

EXT. RUBBLE - MORNING

We see Bryan partially buried in rubble, but he's alive. He moves, tries to get up but winces in pain. He's hurt his left arm and favours it gently.

EXT. BELLTOWER - MORNING

Theodore reaches the very top of the belltower, and runs out to the edge facing the statue. He's extremely tired and out of breath, but tries to start his epic moment.

THEODORE  
(Yells)  
Hey stone statue...

Theodore suddenly bursts into a coughing fit, brought on by the physical exertion and loss of breath. The statue hears the loud coughing, and turns its attention towards Theodore. It leans in, so that they are eye to eye. Theodore draws his sword.

THEODORE (cont'd)  
(Yells)  
My name is Theodore. Can you understand me?

The statue leans so close to the tower that his eyes fill our view, staring directly at Theodore.

ALFONSO  
You know that sword can't hurt me.

Theodore looks at his sword in surprise.

THEODORE  
Stop rampaging through this town.  
You've made your point.

The statue smiles.

ALFONSO  
You're so brave. Your mother raised you better than I possibly could have hoped. Theodore, I'm your grandfather.

Theodore is surprised.

THEODORE  
What, you're Alfonso? I don't understand, I thought you were "the good". Why kill all these people?

ALFONSO  
I'm trapped in this world. Cursed to be bound here till my blood again rules in Otranto.

THEODORE  
I am your blood.

ALFONSO  
Then you already know what you have  
to do.

Theodore sheathes his sword and straightens.

THEODORE  
If I take the throne as king,  
you'll leave this town forever?

ALFONSO  
I won't have a choice. It is my  
fate.

THEODORE  
Then I'll do it.

The statue smiles again.

ALFONSO  
You have your mother's spirit.

Theodore frowns at remembering his mother. His voice is  
somewhat accusing.

THEODORE  
You should know, she didn't live a  
very happy life.

ALFONSO  
Few of us get to. It's not easy  
being king, Theodore. You get too  
caught up in the big picture, and  
forget the little things. But the  
little things matter so much more.

Theodore tries to smile in sympathy, as the statue seems  
genuinely reminiscent.

THEODORE  
I'm going back down.

Theodore turns to the stairs and then suddenly thinks of  
something. He turns back.

THEODORE (cont'd)  
Can you help me here?

EXT. TOWN SQUARE - MORNING

The statue lowers Theodore down on its hand. Frederic and a number of civilians are watching, frozen in anticipation. Theodore jumps off the statue's hand, and walks to Frederic. They meet and whisper a conversation, while everyone watches silently. Finally the two of them make their way up the path to the castle courtyard. Everyone follows behind them, and the statue behind them.

EXT. COURTYARD - MORNING

Manfred is kneeling with Hippolita, praying. Frederic and Theodore enter the courtyard and approach him. Around the courtyard are a couple guards and a number of civilians spectating. Nobody makes a move. Frederic unsheathes his sword.

FREDERIC

My men and I are declaring war on  
you Manfred. We are invading you as  
we speak.

A couple guards move to pull out their weapons to defend the king. Alexander grabs one in a sleeper hold and knocks him out.

ALEXANDER

Shh, nap time.

The other one moves to pull out his sword when there is a click from behind him. It's Bryan, his arm in a makeshift sling, and his other arm holding a crossbow.

BRYAN

I wouldn't.

Back in the middle of the courtyard Frederic looks around and shrugs. He is quite flippant with Manfred.

FREDERIC

Looks like we've won. You've been  
defeated. I depose you as king and  
nominate Theodore as the new king  
of Otranto. Now hand him your crown  
and the nightmare will end.

Manfred looks up at them, and grabs a sword at his side.

MANFRED

You'd like that wouldn't you. For  
it to be easy.

Manfred gets to his feet.

FREDERIC

Manfred. Don't be ridiculous.  
There's only one way this is going  
to end.

MANFRED

You'll have to pry the crown from  
my cold dead hands.

Frederic sighs and turns away to trade a look with Theodore.

FREDERIC

Be my guest.

He backs away and Theodore approaches Manfred. Manfred raises  
his sword defensively. Theodore unsheathes his sword.

THEODORE

You can't hope to beat me in a  
sword fight.

MANFRED

I wont give up my rule. Not to the  
demon soul of Alfonso, and  
especially not to you.

Jerome joins the people watching in the courtyard, and  
startles at seeing Theodore in danger. As Theodore gets close  
enough to Manfred, the old king attacks, swinging his sword  
ineffectually. Theodore has no problem disarming him, but  
Theodore refuses to kill him. Jerome looks on approvingly.

THEODORE

Give me the crown.

Manfred pushes him and he stumbles back.

MANFRED

You're not fit to wear it. You're a  
coward, just like Alfonso. Too  
blinded by your twisted morality to  
make the hard choices. At least my  
legacy ends on my terms.

Theodore turns his back on Manfred while the statue's foot  
comes down, crushing Manfred. Theodore doesn't even look  
back.

THEODORE

We can make a new crown.

Hippolita screams in emotional agony.

HIPPOLITA

Don't stop there, you monster.  
Finish the job and take me.

The statue looks down on her in confusion.

ALFONSO

Why do you care so much for a man  
who was so twisted?

Theodore looks up at the statue.

THEODORE

Isn't it time you left. You've hurt  
enough people today.

Alfonso looks down on Theodore, studying him for a moment.  
Finally the statue smiles.

ALFONSO

You will need to be sworn in.

Theodore approaches Jerome in the crowd.

THEODORE

Can you do it?

JEROME

I've waited a lifetime for this  
moment. It would be my honor, your  
highness.

Theodore, Jerome, and a number of others enter the castle.

FADE TO:

EXT. COURTYARD - NOON

The statue of Alfonso leans against the castle, watching the event in the great hall through a large window. We can see Theodore kneeled in front of Jerome, and we can kind of hear Jerome if we listen hard enough.

JEROME

(Muffled)

Do you recognize your god given  
authority to rule over these  
people?

Alfonso watches and a smile spreads across his stone face. We focus on him and he closes his eyes with a sigh of emotion. We are to believe a short time has passed, as when we pull away from his face again Theodore is joining him outside. Alfonso smiles down at him.

THEODORE

It's done.

ALFONSO

I know, and I am so proud of you.  
You've become such a noble young  
man.

THEODORE

My mother raised me well. As well  
as she could.

ALFONSO

Tell her about me. Tell her I love  
her. I don't think she ever really  
knew how much.

He seems to freeze up suddenly, and the statue is just stone once more.

THEODORE

I don't know how you don't know  
this but she's dead... Alfonso?

Theodore notices that the statue is frozen. It's now stuck in a rather comical pose, leaning against the castle.

THEODORE (cont'd)

Well I guess it doesn't matter.

Isabella joins Theodore. She'd been listening in on the conversation, and grabs his hand.

ISABELLA

Your mother must have been an  
amazing woman.

Theodore smiles and accepts her hand in his.

THEODORE

Maybe I'll tell you about her  
sometime.

ISABELLA

There's a banquet, in the hall.  
Celebrating the new king. Are you  
coming in, your Majesty?

Theodore laughs.

THEODORE

Don't call me that. Sure I'll come,  
as long as I don't have to eat any  
more apples.

Theodore and Isabella walk back around to the front of the  
castle, but we don't follow them, instead we begin to rise  
towards an EXTREME LONG SHOT of the castle and town of  
Otranto.

ISABELLA

I'll be honest with you, fruit  
grosses me out. I think it's the  
texture.

THEODORE

Do you think they'll have potatoes?  
I haven't had potatoes in at least  
a year.

We close with the shot of Otranto, with the castle, and the  
huge statue leaning against it. With the belltower, and the  
town square, and the blue clouds in the sky.

FADE TO BLACK

CREDITS ROLL

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