

THE SHROUD

EPISODE 3

"INSURGENTIBUS CONTRA FIDEM"

by

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THE SHROUD. EPISODE 3. INSURGENTIBUS CONTRA FIDEM.

EXT. CHAPEL - NIGHT

We pick up on CHARNY from last episode, as he exits the chapel in shame.

He blows right past Beaujeu's horse, which is tied to a post, and keeps walking... down the darkness of the road ahead.

VOICE (O.S)

Geoffrey--

Charny doesn't stop. Keeps walking.

BEAUJEU jogs up behind him. Grabs his arm.

BEAUJEU

Will you stop--

He tries to spin him around but Charny brushes him off.

BEAUJEU

Where are you going?

Charny finally stops.

CHARNY

Why did you bring her here?

BEAUJEU

She was worried.

CHARNY

You had no right.

He turns away, starts off again. Beaujeu trails him.

BEAUJEU

She's your wife. Does she not have a right?

CHARNY

You're one to talk.

BEAUJEU

What does that mean?

CHARNY

Your dalliances with the queen. They tarnish the king's legacy.

BEAUJEU

You speak out of turn.

CHARNY

And you bring dishonour to the royal
name.

Beaujeu grabs his arm again. Spins him around.

BEAUJEU

You were about to strike a priest!

The rage in Charny's eyes subsides as the reality hits home.

CHARNY

My God...

He brushes past Beaujeu. Somber.

CHARNY

She went to him, Ed.

Beaujeu looks at the ground, lost for words, as Charny
broods.

CHARNY

But how can I blame her?

He leans on a nearby wall, drained of emotion.

CHARNY

He was there for her and I was not.
Simple as that.

BEAUJEU

The life of a soldier is not easy on
those we love.

CHARNY

A fact too often forgotten.

Beaujeu puts a comforting hand on Charny's shoulder.

BEAUJEU

Look, you're my friend, Geoffrey.
What goes on between you and Jeanne
is none of my concern. But I also
know that you are a man of honor.
What happened back there, it could
not have been on a whim. Something
drove you to it.

CHARNY

That does not excuse what I did...
what I wanted to do.

He looks at Beaujeu. Crestfallen.

CHARNY
I can't stay here, Ed. How can I?
Not after what I've done.

BEAUJEU
Then perhaps my arrival was
fortuitous, after all.

Charny furrows his brow.

BEAUJEU
The king has assigned us to Cyprus.

CHARNY
Cyprus?

BEAUJEU
To aid King Hugh secure his claim on
the Holy Land.

Charny's eyes harden.

CHARNY
When do we leave?

BEAUJEU
Our ship departs at midday tomorrow.

Off Charny, conflicted...

TITLES: THE SHROUD

INT. DUNGEON CELL - DAY

SMYRNA, ANATOLIA

HAROUN sits in the dark cell. His turban gone. Long black hair coming down his shoulders in clumps.

He chisels lines into the ground with a small rock.

Suddenly, a jangling of keys. The cell door opens.

FARIK steps inside, holding a pair of chains.

Haroun doesn't look up. Keeps scratching into the stone.

HAROUN
Is that necessary?

Farik rattles the chains.

FARIK
The bey's orders.

Haroun stops chiseling. Drops the rock.

HAROUN
I would have thought more of you.

FARIK
I thought the same of you.

Haroun finally looks up.

HAROUN
You see the injustice. And you
choose to do nothing.

FARIK
I do what the bey commands.

HAROUN
Even if it defies all logic?

Farik steps closer. A quiet anger.

FARIK
Obey. Just obey. That was my advice
to you. Freely given. Again and
again. But you ignored me at every
turn.

HAROUN
And rightly so!

FARIK
You have flirted with treachery for
too long. And now it binds you at
last.

HAROUN
This is your doing, as much as it is
mine. If we had killed the monk back
on the ship.

FARIK
My decision was sound, as you can
well see.

He tosses the chains at Haroun's feet.

FARIK
You are the one in chains. Not I.

INT. SMYRNA CASTLE - DAY

Haroun is dragged into the throne chamber, hands and feet in
chains, flanked by Farik and another Turk soldier, GHAZI.

UMUR BEY sits on his throne chair, GIANLUCA standing awkwardly at his side.

Haroun burns with anger at the sight of the monk, struggling against his chains.

HAROUN

Does your mockery know no bounds?!

Farik and Ghazi hold Haroun back as he tugs at the bonds.

HAROUN

May Allah smite you for this.

UMUR

This is why you stand before me in chains, Haroun. You have always failed to see the larger plan.

(off Gianluca)

He has a part to play in this. As do we all.

HAROUN

How could you? After everything we've done... everything we've seen...

This hangs in the air a moment.

HAROUN

You were there. You saw what the infidels did to my son Ali...

A single tear rolls down his cheek.

HAROUN

My only son...

Sorrow gives way to rage. He sneers at Gianluca.

HAROUN

Infidels like him.

UMUR

Haroun...

HAROUN

You break bread with our enemy--

Umur stands up.

UMUR

Enough!!

He points at Gianluca.

UMUR

Was *he* there? Did *he* kill your son, *hmm*? Take our lands?

Umur steps closer.

UMUR

My father -- the great Aydin Mehmed Bey, praise Allah -- took this land back from the Latin conquerors. Built this fortress. Founded the greatest beylik in all of Anatolia. We will not let his sacrifice be in vain.

He glares into Haroun's eyes.

UMUR

He paved the path that we now walk. The path you now sully with your continued insolence.

HAROUN

Your father would be ashamed at what his son has become--

Umur BACKHANDS Haroun across the face.

Gianluca startles at the sudden lash of violence.

UMUR

You're lucky I don't have you torn limb from limb.

HAROUN

A fate I would prefer--

Umur SLAPS him again.

Gianluca turns away. Disturbed.

Haroun glares at Umur. Spits blood.

UMUR

A boat is waiting to take you to Cyprus.

HAROUN

What?!

UMUR

From there you are left to whatever wolves lurk in the shadows of this world. To live out the rest of your days in exile.

Farik and Ghazi start to drag him away.

Umur motions for them to stop. He grips Haroun by the throat.

UMUR

And if I see you here in Smyrna
again... I will kill you.

He shoves Haroun away, as Farik and Ghazi resume dragging him off.

Umur turns back toward the throne. Sees Gianluca looking at him with an unsettled glare.

UMUR

You see what I do to a friend,
priest.

Umur walks up to him. Eye to eye.

UMUR

Imagine my enemies.

Umur walks away.

Off Gianluca's unsettled glare...

INT. CHARNY HOME - NIGHT

Charny enters his home quietly, surprised to find JEANNE sitting by the window, by candlelight.

CHARNY

Jeanne...?

She starts to get up.

JEANNE

Geoffrey --

CHARNY

No, Jeanne, wait--

He moves to her. Motions for her to sit back down. He kneels at her feet.

CHARNY

I'm so sorry. I let my emotions get
the better of me. I had no right.

She smiles sadly.

CHARNY

You are not my possession. You are
my wife.

He lowers his gaze in shame. Buries his head in her lap, his body wracked with sobs of grief.

CHARNY
Can you ever forgive me...?

JEANNE
Geoffrey...

She cannot fight back the tears. Caresses his head.

JEANNE
You know I never wanted this. To hurt you.

CHARNY
Nor I you.

JEANNE
I have always loved you.

Charny looks up at her, face streaming with tears.

JEANNE
That will never change.

CHARNY
I have never wanted another. Even in the hell of war, the darkness of prison, my heart belonged to you.

She takes his face in her hands. Leans in and kisses him tenderly on the lips.

He gives in, the tenderness giving way to passion.

CUT TO- ON THEIR BED - MOMENTS LATER

Charny and Jeanne tear away at their clothing, their lips locked the whole time.

They lay down and Charny mounts her, Jeanne sighing in ecstasy. As their lust takes over, CUT TO--

INT. PALAIS DES PAPES - DAY

HENRI enters the papal chambers, where we find POPE CLEMENT VI speaking in confidence to a random cardinal. The cardinal bows and leaves, brushing past Henri as he walks out.

POPE CLEMENT VI
Well, Henri? What say you? Please tell us all goes as planned.

HENRI

It does, your Holiness. Ambassador Zaccaria has agreed to lead your armies. And we have secured the bailiff of Negroponte -- Pietro Zeno -- to command the Venetian fleet.

Clement spreads his arms.

POPE CLEMENT VI

This is indeed joyous news.

He pours himself a cup of wine.

POPE CLEMENT VI

King Philip has also assured us that Hugh of Cyprus will provide his army when the time comes.

HENRI

And the Knights of Rhodes?

POPE CLEMENT VI

Grand Master Helion de Villeneuve has pledged his allegiance to our holy crusade, and will be sending twenty squadrons of knights to join us at the anointed hour.

HENRI

Then all is set.

Clement holds out a goblet of wine.

POPE CLEMENT VI

Drink?

A heavy silence. Henri turns away, distraught.

POPE CLEMENT VI

Something on your mind, Henri?

HENRI

The monk, your Holiness...

Clement sighs. Puts down the cup.

POPE CLEMENT VI

We spoke about this, Henri.

HENRI

There could be some truth in his words--

POPE CLEMENT VI
Does it matter?

Clement puts a reassuring hand on Henri's shoulder.

POPE CLEMENT VI
Your concern for a fellow brother in
Christ... it's admirable. But dare
we say, misguided. If the Turks
found him, he is surely dead.

HENRI
And what of his shroud?

Clement gives him a cynical smile.

POPE CLEMENT VI
You believe the abbot? Stefano, was
it?

HENRI
He spoke of a conviction I have
rarely ever seen. If this item that
the monk carries could change the
whole of Christendom, would it not
be in our interest to secure it?

POPE CLEMENT VI
My dear Henri, you've always been an
idealistic one. A little naïve,
perhaps. The Benedictines, we are
sure they mean well, but...

He gets close. Leans in.

POPE CLEMENT VI
...they are not to be trusted.

Henri looks away. Hesitant to say it. But then--

HENRI
You cast an entire order aside...
because of a few bad men from your
childhood.

Clement sneers at the arrogance. But then calms himself.

He walks over to a table. Picks up a sealed scroll.

POPE CLEMENT VI
This is the official bull, granting
the Crusade indulgence.

He hands the scroll over to Henri.

POPE CLEMENT VI
Insurgentibus contra fidem.

HENRI
Insurgents against the faith.

POPE CLEMENT VI
(nods)
Take it to all the churches and
temples across Europe and the East.
Let them preach of its good word, of
its blessings on those who wish to
fight for the Lord Christ. Let them
shout it from the highest towers.

Henri takes the scroll. Bows.

HENRI
Your Holiness.

INT. PERTHUIS CHAPEL - DAY

Inside Father Gabriel's chambers, STEFANO stands in the corner, watching helplessly as GABRIEL gathers his things, packing them into a bag.

STEFANO
Can you not give this some more
thought, Father?

GABRIEL
I have, abbot.

STEFANO
Perhaps you've judged yourself too
harshly.

GABRIEL
I have not judged myself enough.

STEFANO
No one will begrudge you a slight
misstep.

GABRIEL
You frame it too lightly.

STEFANO
You are only human. We all are. The
people of this town must see that.

GABRIEL
I'm afraid God does not see it so.

STEFANO
God has already forgiven you,
Gabriel--

He grabs Gabriel's arm. Stops his frantic packing.

STEFANO
Why can't you?

GABRIEL
You are a good man, Stefano. There
is no one better to take over this
chapel.

STEFANO
(stunned)
What?!

Gabriel sighs. Sits down on the bed.

GABRIEL
This is not sudden, abbot. I have
considered this for a while. What
happened last night only reinforced
it.

STEFANO
Nothing happened last night.

GABRIEL
A man almost struck me. For being
with his wife.

STEFANO
You gave her spiritual comfort.
Hardly a sin.

GABRIEL
But my heart loved her.

He looks up at Stefano, eyes misty.

GABRIEL
It still does. How can I remain
here? When she is so near?

Stefano says nothing. Just nods sadly.

GABRIEL
He wanted to kill me, Stefano. I
could see it in his eyes.

STEFANO

He would never have. Charny is a man
of honour. A man of God. Even if he
refuses to see it.

But Stefano's voice cracks slightly, not as convinced as he
should be.

Gabriel gets up.

GABRIEL

I cannot serve the Lord. Not when my
heart belongs to another.

He takes Stefano's hands.

GABRIEL

I leave the souls of this town in
your care.

STEFANO

Gabriel, I... I am abbot of Monte
Cassino. I have obligations.

GABRIEL

They will understand.

Gabriel lifts his bag. Slings it over his shoulder.

GABRIEL

Goodbye, abbot.

As he walks out of the chapel, leaving Stefano baffled, CUT
TO--

INT. CHARNY HOME - THE MORNING AFTER

Jeanne is tying on her dress by the side of the bed, as
Charny buckles his pants.

JEANNE

Can you not stay a while longer?

CHARNY

I have already stayed too long. The
ship leaves shortly.

JEANNE

How long will you be gone?

CHARNY

I don't know.

Jeanne lowers her gaze, afraid to ask it.

JEANNE
And what of us?

Charny stops dressing. Looks at Jeanne.

The silence in the room weighs heavy as Charny steps over to Jeanne, takes her face in his hands.

CHARNY
I cannot ask you to wait for me. Not again.

JEANNE
But what am I without you?

CHARNY
A woman. Free to do as you will.

Jeanne looks away, still unsure.

CHARNY
If it remains as it was, I will still be gone. And you will still be here. Alone.

He strokes her hair.

CHARNY
My heart cannot bear it.

Jeanne nods, resigned to their situation.

JEANNE
Nor mine.

CHARNY
I want nothing but joy for you. Even if I cannot give you that joy.

A tear rolls down Jeanne's cheek as they embrace for a long moment.

Charny closes his eyes and buries his face in her hair, not wanting to break off the embrace.

EXT. CHARNY HOME - MINUTES LATER

Jeanne stands outside by the door, watching as Charny mounts his waiting horse, now dressed in his armor, long red cloak billowing behind him, sword strapped to his side.

He takes a longing look back at Jeanne, who smiles sadly and offers a weak wave of the hand.

Charny nods, holds his gaze just another moment longer.

Finally he turns away, gives his horse a kick as the steed takes off.

Jeanne watches as the horse kicks up dust, Charny becoming a distant blot in the horizon.

EXT. VILLAGE ROAD - DAY

Charny rides quickly, his cloak flowing in the wind as his horse charges ahead.

EXT. CHAPEL - DAY

Stefano steps outside the door of the chapel. Looks up into the sky as a cloud of dust sweeps in.

He glances at the road to find

CHARNY -- sitting there on his horse, almost like a triumphant warrior angel, the way Stefano had envisioned him in Jerusalem years ago.

A swell of emotion overcomes him as he steps up to Charny's horse.

STEFANO

Off again?

CHARNY

Duty calls, I'm afraid.

He gives the priest a determined look.

CHARNY

I have not forgotten our pact, abbot. If your monk still lives, I will find him. And the shroud.

Stefano clutches at his heart, overcome with joy.

STEFANO

I knew my journey here wouldn't be for naught.

He touches Charny's leg. Kisses his boot.

STEFANO

Bless you, Sir Charny. You are a prince among men.

CHARNY

I am nothing.

He sweeps his cloak behind him.

CHARNY

But I will try to prove my worth to
you.

Charny kicks his horse and rides off, Stefano watching him go, eyes brimming with a newfound hope.

EXT. SHORELINE - DAY

Beaujeu readies his boat, throwing a few bags and items inside. In the distance, a LARGE TRANSPORT SHIP waits on the water, several miles off shore.

Beaujeu looks up to see Charny riding up.

Charny hops off the horse, walks toward the small boat. Beaujeu smiles, locks arms with Charny. They climb in.

Charny pauses, takes a last look back at the village. *His* village.

He and Beaujeu sit down, start rowing. Toward the large vessel in the distance.

EXT. SEA PORT - DAY

NEGROPONTE, GREECE. ONE YEAR LATER. 1 NOVEMBER 1343.

A massive shot of the AEGEAN SEA, just off the coast of a bustling city.

TWENTY GALLEYS are scattered across the waters, some of the huge warships simply afloat, others moving inland, toward shore.

Standing at the edge of the harbour is ZENO, looking out toward the sea, at the ships coming in, a slight look of trepidation on his face.

The first galley docks. Several men help Bishop Henri off the ship. Zeno steps in to help them.

ZENO

Bishop Henri. Welcome back.

HENRI

Thank you, bailiff.

ZENO

I take it your trip from Rhodes was agreeable.

HENRI

As agreeable as any voyage on stormy seas can be.

ZENO
Will Ambassador Zaccaria be joining
us?

ZACCARIA (O.S)
He will.

ZACCARIA steps off the ship. Shakes hands with Zeno.

ZACCARIA
Good to see you again, Pietro.

ZENO
And you, Martino.

Zeno looks out into the waters.

ZENO
Are the armies all here?

HENRI
All who have pledged allegiance to
the crusade.

ZENO
I do not see the banner of Cyprus.

HENRI
Hugh has promised to send a
formidable force by way of King
Philip.

ZENO
Were they not told to meet here with
the rest of the league?

VOICE (O.S)
Yes, we were.

They all turn to find BEAUJEU climbing onto the harbor off a
small boat, a small band of FRENCH KNIGHTS behind him, CHARNY
among them.

HENRI
You must be Hugh's captain.

BEAUJEU
(bows)
Edouard de Beaujeu. Commander of the
Cypriot army. Representing his
eminence Philip, king of France.

Henri suddenly locks eyes with Charny. He brushes past
Beaujeu and steps toward him, trance-like.

HENRI
I am Henri d'Asti. Voice of his
Holiness, Pope Clement.

Henri waits, but Charny does not bow.

HENRI
That sigil on your armor... "de
Charny"... I have seen it before. A
friend showed it to me once.

He steps closer. Lowers his voice.

HENRI
A Benedictine abbot.

Charny does not react. Remains stone-faced.

HENRI
Do you know any brothers of the
Order?

CHARNY
I may have met one in my time.

HENRI
Was he a good man?

Charny narrows his eyes. Knows they're talking about the same
person.

CHARNY
A true man of God.

HENRI
Then let's hope he prays for you
still.

He puts a hand on Charny's shoulder.

HENRI
As will I.

Henri turns back toward Zeno and Zaccaria.

HENRI
When the rest of the ships have
docked, have all the men gather
together at the church in the city
center...

He starts to walk off.

HENRI
...to commemorate this special
occasion.

As the rest of them follow him off the harbor, Beaujeu leans in close to Charny.

BEAUJEU
What was that all about?

Charny shrugs his shoulders.

BEAUJEU
You do make friends in the strangest
places.

Charny smiles. Beaujeu gives him a hearty clap on the back, and as they march off the harbor toward the city, CUT TO--

ZENO -- who stops. Senses eyes on him. Looks up at the nearest ship to find--

BATELLO -- one leg up on the bow of the ship, hand on the mast, looking down on Zeno with a shit-eating grin. He waves mockingly.

Zeno sneers at the sight of him. Walks away.

EXT. CHURCH OF SAINT PARASKEVI - LATER THAT DAY

An establishing shot of the large cathedral-like temple in the city heart. Several waiting soldiers mill about outside while others are slowly filing inside.

HENRI (V.O)
Welcome, crusaders...

INT. CHURCH - DAY

The nave is jam packed full of newly-arriving Crusader soldiers into the city -- the Papal Army, Venetians, Knights Hospitaller, Cypriots and French Knights -- all gathered for the informal mass.

Standing before the altar leading the ceremony is Bishop Henri, a couple of other bishops and priests behind him. Flanked on either side of him are Zaccaria and Zeno.

HENRI
Welcome all to Negroponte, and
thanks to our gracious host, Pietro
Zeno, commander of the Venetian
fleets, for allowing us entrance
into their gracious city.

The crowd of men murmur and nod.

HENRI

It is fitting that we gather here on this holy day of All Saints -- the first of November, in the year of our Lord 1343 -- in this Church of Saint Paraskevi, to welcome us in her arms, in grace and humility, and to officially christen this blessed crusade of his Holiness Pope Clement the Sixth, against the Muslim invaders.

More nods and grunts of approval.

In the back of the church lurks Batello and his brother Nico, observing the mass with a curious eye.

HENRI

The Turkoman threat has grown exponentially across the nations bordering the Aegean. The Turk ruler -- Umur Bey -- has increased his pirate numbers and conquest of Christian lands, to numbers never before seen. His Holiness has seen fit to put an end once and for all to this heretical tyranny.

The grunts and chants of agreement grow louder.

HENRI

And so we gather here, men of all nations under the Latin faith -- under His ever watchful eye -- to carry out the will of our Lord God. To be the instrument of His fury.

Some of the men erupt into cheers.

HENRI

In two days time, we set sail on the Aegean, to begin purging our lands of the Saracen menace.

We focus on Charny, somewhere in the crowd of soldiers, Beaujeu at his side. Charny grimly looks at the other men as they raise their arms in unison.

HENRI

But for now, eat. Drink. Rest. For soon, by His grace, we shall drive Umur Bey and his hordes to the gates of Hell. *For the glory of God!*

SOLDIERS
FOR THE GLORY OF GOD!!

As the chanting continues, Batello grins, nudges his brother Nico.

Charny slips away through the crowd. As Beaujeu watches him leave, CUT TO--

EXT. COURTYARD, SMYRNA CASTLE - DAY

In the luxury courtyard of the Turk fortress, we find Umur Bey and Gianluca sharing a meal under a blazing sun, seated at opposite ends of a long table, laid out with all manner of food and drink over a fine white tablecloth.

A few guards stand around the courtyard, keeping watch.

Gianluca has shed his monk robes and now wears a white Arab dress, appearing clean and well tended.

Umur picks up a silver goblet.

UMUR
You're not eating, Gianluca.

GIANLUCA
Apologies, bey.

He reaches for a piece of bread.

GIANLUCA
I still struggle to acclimate myself to such extravagance.

UMUR
There's no shame in living well. I'm sure your Vatican brothers could attest to that.

GIANLUCA
I've never been.

Umur drinks, chewing at the same time.

UMUR
No, of course not. You counted yourself among the more... humble faction of your Church.

GIANLUCA
Our devotion was to the poor. The meek. The clergymen of the Holy See, however, seemed at odds with Christ's message.

UMUR
(lifts his glass)
Peace be upon Him.

Gianluca nods graciously as he sips from a cup of water.

Umur lays back on his chair. Pensive.

UMUR
I feel a tide turning, Gianluca. War
is on the horizon.

GIANLUCA
With respect, bey, you seem to draw
the conflict out.

UMUR
I am an agent of chaos then, is that
it?

GIANLUCA
The Church and their allies likely
see you thus.

Umur leans in to the table.

UMUR
You cannot fathom a world where
perhaps it is your Christian
people who are the invaders?

GIANLUCA
I've come to believe that each side
in a war sees themselves as the
oppressed.

He puts his cup down. Somber.

GIANLUCA
But in the end, there are no
victors.

UMUR
A man of the cloth can afford that
belief.

He looks out into the horizon.

UMUR
But I cannot.

Gianluca nods, as they ponder this in silence.

INT. GIANLUCA'S CHAMBERS - LATER

After the meal. Gianluca enters his spacious but sparsely furnished chambers. He moves to a wooden cabinet, swings open the doors to reveal--

THE SHROUD -- neatly and carefully hung on a shelf, glimpses of Christ's imprinted image visible.

Off Gianluca's concerned look...

EXT. VILLAGE ROAD - DAY

Jeanne carries a basket of fruits underneath her arm.

Down the road she spots Stefano standing outside the chapel, looking up toward the sky.

She hesitates a moment, before finally approaching.

JEANNE

Abbot?

Stefano spins, somewhat startled.

STEFANO

Oh. Madame Toucy.

JEANNE

I did not mean to disturb your prayers.

STEFANO

Actually, I was looking for a deficiency in the stone. There seems to be a drip somewhere in the structure.

JEANNE

Oh...

STEFANO

It can be frustrating when the water that's supposed to turn to wine keeps turning back into water.

Stefano looks at her expectantly, but Jeanne only offers a cursory smile.

STEFANO

That was a joke.

JEANNE

Oh, yes... of course...

STEFANO
Something I can help you with?

JEANNE
No, it's just... I want to
apologize. For everything.

STEFANO
It's been a year, Madame Toucy.

He brushes it off with a wave.

STEFANO
It's forgotten.

JEANNE
I never meant to drive Father
Gabriel away.

STEFANO
The good father simply needs some
time to reflect.

JEANNE
How much longer will you be staying?

STEFANO
Until the Church sends a suitable
replacement.
(beat)
Or until Gabriel returns. Whichever
comes first.

He smiles. Jeanne catches it this time.

JEANNE
Another joke?

Stefano simply shrugs his shoulders.

Jeanne smiles sadly.

JEANNE
Geoffroi had a fondness for you. A
shame he could not be here to
partake in your company.

STEFANO
Nor yours.

This stings Jeanne a bit. Stefano regrets it immediately.

STEFANO
I'm sorry --

JEANNE
It's alright.

STEFANO
Sir Charny may not admit it, but he
is doing the Lord's work.

Stefano steps closer. Smiles warmly.

STEFANO
I know that you and Charny may have
went your separate ways, but he will
always fight in your honor. Always.

Jeanne smiles. Gives him a slight bow.

JEANNE
Good day, abbot.

She resumes her walk down the road. Off Stefano watching her
go, CUT TO--

INT. TAVERN - NIGHT

A rowdy bar in the seedier part of Negroponte. Packed to the
brim this night with crusader soldiers.

At one table we find Zeno, Zaccaria, and Beaujeu, nursing
cups of ale. They shout above the noise of the other patrons.

ZENO
(to Beaujeu)
I noticed you arrived on the Cypriot
boat.

BEAUJEU
My men are currently on loan to King
Hugh. But we still fly the French
banner.

ZACCARIA
How fares your king's war with the
English?

BEAUJEU
Badly. Our forces are spread thin
across England and its vassals.
Philip was fortunate enough to spare
a few knights for this crusade.

ZENO
Pawns in a royal chess game, is what
we are.

VOICE (O.S)
Well spoken.

They look up to see two knights Hospitaller standing there -- a scraggly looking long-haired Frank in an eye patch named DOLON; and a black knight in bulky armor named BRUENOR.

DOLON
Mind if two more pawns join you?
Beaujeu pulls up some chairs.

BEAUJEU
Please.
The two knights sit.

ZENO
I didn't think Helion de Villeneuve could spare any more knights, what with his battalion stuck near Jerusalem.

DOLON
We always have a few more cogs to throw into the wheel.

BRUENOR
Wouldn't be a war without one.

BEAUJEU
Do I detect an English accent?

BRUENOR
Aye. Coventry. But my parents were born in the Yoruba kingdom near Oyo. They were sold as slaves to English barons.

ZENO
When did you earn your freedom?

BRUENOR
I was born free. My parents knew they'd not be able to raise me, so they sent me to a family of nobles who'd just lost a child and were looking for another. They raised me in a good home as one of their own.

BEAUJEU
So how did you end up in the Order of Saint John?

DOLON

We found him in a pig pen, waste
deep in shit.

Dolon pokes him in the shoulder as Bruenor laughs.

BRUENOR

My half brothers were good with
books, but I was better with a
sword. I fought a few campaigns
under King Edward's banner, but
Saint John gave me purpose.

DOLON

So here we are. Rats in a snake den.

BEAUJEU

So who are the rats?

Dolon swivels in his chair. Looks at the crowd of soldiers
packed into the bar.

DOLON

And who are the snakes...

CUT TO - **BATELLO** -- sitting at another table, playing a
couple of VENETIAN SOLDIERS at dice. His brother Nico stands
behind him.

He rolls the dice on the table. The Venetians scoff as
Batello, Nico, and their cohorts roar in laughter.

Batello sweeps the coins off the table into his bag.

BATELLO

This hurts me more than it hurts
you, fellas, trust me.

VENETIAN SOLDIER #1

That's enough damage for one night.

The Venetians stand up.

BATELLO

Fancy another game, boys?

VENETIAN SOLDIER #2

Don't think so.

They walk off.

BATELLO
C'mon, night's young! Cowards the
lot of ya! Does not one cretin in
this lousy bar have the stones to
play me?!

VOICE (O.S)
I'll play you.

Batello looks up to see--

CHARNY -- standing over the table. Looking grim.

Batello laughs.

BATELLO
Finally! Someone with gall.

Charny sits down, facing Batello.

BATELLO
Starting bid?

CHARNY
Twelve ducats.

Batello shakes the cup of dice. Glares at the sown crest on
Charny's tunic.

BATELLO
That sigil... I've seen it before...

CHARNY
Roll?

BATELLO
Ten.

Batello rolls. He and his brother laugh.

BATELLO
First one's mine.

Batello takes Charny's coins.

Just as he's about to play the dice again, Charny suddenly
GRABS HIS WRIST--

CHARNY
(deadly)
Roll those marked dice one more time
and I'll cut your throat.

Nico is about to pounce, but with his free hand Batello makes
a sign to hold.

He glares closely at Charny, suddenly making the connection.

BATELLO

Ah, yes. I recall the name now...
Charny...

(sarcastically)

The "great" French knight. Defender
of the helpless and the weak. How
noble.

Charny's grip on Batello's wrist gets tighter.

BATELLO

Your exploits across Europe are
legendary.

CHARNY

As are yours.

Batello raises an eyebrow. Caught off guard.

CHARNY

You were a member of the Catalan
Company, taking assassination jobs
for the Crown of Aragon. Eventually
you took money from the Turks to
kill your own men.

BATELLO

You've confused your history of
events with another--

CHARNY

(cuts him off)

Then you boarded a crusade ship to
join the battle of Adramyttion,
taking more money to kill the
emirate's son-in-law after the
battle had already been won.

BATELLO

You speak nonsense.

CHARNY

If an army of mercenaries, liars,
and thieves would not have you, then
why would Zeno take you?

Batello's grin becomes a sneer of contempt. Charny tightens
his grip.

CHARNY

We may be on the same side in this
crusade, but if I see you on the
battlefield, you best watch
yourself.

BATELLO

I don't take kindly to threats.

CHARNY

Nor do I.

Charny finally lets go of his wrist. Gets up from the table.

CHARNY

Stay away from me and my men.

He walks off.

Batello nods to Nico, who slips into the crowd with several
of his men.

EXT. DARK ALLEYWAY - LATER THAT NIGHT

Charny has left the tavern, making his way down a darkened
alley, only a sliver of moonlight lighting his path. His
fists are clenched, still enraged by the incident in the bar.

Suddenly he stops. A noise behind him.

A FIST CONNECTS WITH HIS JAW -- sends him reeling--

He shakes it off to see ANOTHER FIST COMING AT HIM -- but
this time he DODGES and RETURNS A BLOW of his own -- sending
his attacker to the ground--

ANOTHER MAN LUNGES FROM BEHIND with a knife -- but Charny
catches a glimpse and LATCHES ONTO THE MAN'S KNIFE ARM,
snapping it -- the man SCREAMS as bone CRUNCHES--

A THIRD ATTACKER LEAPS from the shadows as Charny PULLS A
DAGGER from his boot -- the third man LASHES OUT WITH HIS
BLADE but Charny's dagger BLOCKS it--

The first man has shaken off Charny's initial blow and JOINS
THE FIGHT--

CHARNY FIGHTS BOTH OFF AT ONCE -- SLASHING HIS DAGGER across
the third attacker's chest as he SEIZES THE FIRST MAN'S ARM
IN A VICE GRIP--

But the man RAMS HIS HEAD INTO CHARNY'S NOSE -- sends him
STUMBLING TO THE GROUND -- the dagger clattering away--

Charny and the man STRUGGLE ON THE GROUND, each landing blows, blood spurting from their mouths.

Then the other man gets the upper hand on Charny, SQUEEZING THE LIFE OUT OF CHARNY'S THROAT with his bare hands... Charny's hand GRASPING FOR HIS BLADE, just out of reach... his fingers finally CLUTCHING THE HILT... CHARNY DRIVES HIS DAGGER UP THROUGH THE MAN'S JAW AND OUT THE TOP OF HIS SKULL--

The man drops dead. Charny shoves his body aside and rises, bloodied and beat up.

Suddenly he hears a noise behind him...

He spins around, but not in time, catching only a glimpse of the FOURTH ATTACKER leaping at him--

Just before the fourth man can deliver the killing blow--

A SWORD BLADE BURSTS OUT FROM HIS CHEST--

The fourth attacker falls dead, revealing his killer--

HAROUN -- clutching a bloodied scimitar in hand--

Charny stands there, dagger in hand, face to face with Haroun.

Haroun senses that Charny is about to attack, but holds his hand out.

HAROUN

Wait -- there may be others--

Haroun waits. Makes sure they're alone.

HAROUN

This is a dangerous place for outsiders.

Charny slowly lowers his dagger.

CHARNY

Like you?

HAROUN

And you.

Haroun lowers his sword.

HAROUN

I have been watching you since you arrived in Cyprus. I know about your mission.

CHARNY

The preachers have been spreading
word of the Crusade for a year now--

HAROUN

NO-- not *their* mission. *Your*
mission.

Charny tilts his head. Curious.

HAROUN

I can take you to the monk. And the
shroud.

Charny reacts. Backs away. Stunned.

CHARNY

What do you want?

HAROUN

All I want--

Haroun steps closer, intensity in his eyes...

HAROUN

-- is the head of Umur Bey.

FADE OUT