

THE SHROUD

EPISODE 7

"ORIFLAMME"

by

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THE SHROUD. EPISODE 7. ORIFLAMME.

INT. HAVERING PALACE THRONE ROOM — DAY

HAVERING, LONDON. 24 DECEMBER 1349.

A dimly lit, narrow chamber hall.

A soldier in chains is being dragged toward the throne. This is AMERIGO OF PAVIA.

The palace guards drop him at the feet of the current king of England, KING EDWARD III, who sits on the throne, stone-faced.

Standing to the king's left is his son, commander of the English army, EDWARD THE **BLACK PRINCE**.

To the king's right is soldier of fortune and English lieutenant SIR WALTER MANNY.

BLACK PRINCE
So this is the traitor.

PALACE GUARD
Amerigo of Pavia. Captain of Calais.

AMERIGO
(pleading)
I would never betray you, Lord
King--

The guard kicks him in the ribs.

PALACE GUARD
Quiet.

BLACK PRINCE
Do you realize what you've done,
captain? You've left Calais
completely open to attack.

MANNY
We need their port for supplies. If
we lose the city, our forces will be
left defenseless against the French.

The Black Prince gives him an annoyed look.

BLACK PRINCE
Yes yes Sir Manny, we are aware of
the consequences.

MANNY

This is what happens when you
entrust the city to someone of...
inferior stock.

BLACK PRINCE

Inferior?

Manny steps closer to Amerigo, looks down upon him with
disgust.

MANNY

A lowborn, dull-witted Italian
swine.

BLACK PRINCE

Careful, Manny. Be it so, he was
still appointed by the king.

Manny turns back toward the throne.

MANNY

An English outpost should be manned
by someone trustworthy.

BLACK PRINCE

An Englishman, I gather?

MANNY

Who else?

He points at Amerigo.

MANNY

Would you rather this Roman mongrel?

AMERIGO

What I did, I did for the king--

Manny grabs him by the tunic.

MANNY

Did we not say silence?

He shoves him away.

MANNY

We have no choice but to gather what
men and supplies we have left at the
citadel and bid retreat.

On his throne, King Edward quietly watches this entire
exchange with curiosity.

BLACK PRINCE

Can we not leave a garrison behind
to guard the fort? Warn us of any
French invasions?

Manny points at Amerigo.

MANNY

Did you not hear the dog's plans?
The French are already on their way.

The Black Prince steps toward the palace guards.

BLACK PRINCE

Send word to all deputies and
officers stationed at the citadel.
They must make preparations to leave
at once.

Manny glowers at Amerigo with a scowl of disgust.

MANNY

And what of this worm?

BLACK PRINCE

You know the punishment for treason.

He leans over, looks Amerigo in the eyes.

BLACK PRINCE

The accused will be drawn up, his
genitals cut off, his guts
eviscerated and disembowelled, and
his body chopped into four pieces.

MANNY

(smiles)

I've always wondered if Roman blood
tastes of wine.

BLACK PRINCE

Take him away.

Finally King Edward casually lifts his hand.

KING EDWARD III

Wait...

Everyone stops, the weight of the king's voice casting sudden
authority over the room.

King Edward stands up from his throne, steps toward Amerigo.

KING EDWARD III
How much did Charny offer you to
give him the city?

Amerigo casts his gaze over the gathered royals, visibly
shaking.

AMERIGO
Twenty thousand crowns, sire.

The King turns away, reflects on this for a beat.

The Black Prince and Manny exchange curious glances -- what
is the king thinking?

KING EDWARD III
(to himself)
Charny would dare do this, even
while we are currently in a truce
with the French.

MANNY
Sire?

KING EDWARD III
There is an opportunity to be seized
here.

The King turns to his lieutenants.

KING EDWARD III
Charny is a man of principle. Of
chivalric honour. He wrote a damned
treatise on the matter!

The King paces slowly, thinking aloud.

KING EDWARD III
For such a man to buy his way into
Calais in secret -- without a fight,
as is the honorable way -- would be
a disgrace so calamitous as to rock
the French court.

He waves his hands, as if spelling out a newspaper headline.

KING EDWARD III
"Geoffroi de Charny, paragon of
knightly virtue, shames all of
France!" Or something to that
effect.

Manny and the Black Prince exchange wary glances again, still
not getting it.

KING EDWARD III
All this time, we were trying to
defeat Charny in battle, racking up
loss and loss, when now he just
freely serves up his head for the
guillotine.

The King looks at his men.

KING EDWARD III
King Philip will never recover from
such a scandal.

He steps toward Amerigo, who is drenched in nervous sweat.

KING EDWARD III
When are you due to meet Charny?

AMERIGO
In a week's time, sire.

KING EDWARD III
You will return to Calais and meet
with Charny as planned.

Manny immediately reacts.

MANNY
My lord, I must protest--

But the King ignores him, still addresses Amerigo.

KING EDWARD III
You will feign complete knowledge of
this meeting, and you will let
Charny pass through the city gates
unobstructed.

BLACK PRINCE
Father, do you hear yourself--

The King reels on the Prince with a piercing glare.

KING EDWARD III
I hear myself quite clearly... son.

AMERIGO
(nervously)
My king... if I do this, do I have
your assurance that my brother will
be released from your custody?

KING EDWARD III
You have my assurance that you will
not die an agonizing death.

MANNY

My lord, why are we just giving the city to Charny?

KING EDWARD III

We are giving him the *illusion* of taking the city.

The Black Prince steps closer, his father's plan finally coming into focus.

BLACK PRINCE

An ambush.

The King nods. Looks back at Amerigo.

KING EDWARD III

Do you understand your mission, Amerigo of Pavia?

AMERIGO

Yes, my king.

Amerigo bows.

AMERIGO

I will bring you the head of Geoffroi de Charny...

CUT TO- TITLES: **THE SHROUD**

EXT. LOWER TOWN - SMYRNA HARBOUR - DUSK

SMYRNA, ANATOLIA. 1344.

Picking up from last episode. We are back to the present day 1344, in the aftermath of the Crusader battle.

The shoreline and harbour are littered with BODIES OF BOTH SLAIN TURK WARRIORS AND LATIN CRUSADER SOLDIERS. Fires across the lower city are pattering out, plumes of smoke and ash smouldering between the corpses.

CHARNY is crossing the sandy harbour, making his way toward a waiting skiff on shore, Gianluca's brown satchel slung across his shoulder.

He comes across BEAUJEU, who is walking from shore back toward the city.

They stop a moment, the weight of the day finally taking its toll.

BEAUJEU

Off again?

Charny pats the bag.

CHARNY
Something I need to give back to a
friend.

Beaujeu points at the bag.

BEAUJEU
All this time you had your own
mission.

Charny looks down at the sand.

BEAUJEU
That's why you came. It was never
about the crusade.

Charny looks up again, meets his stare.

CHARNY
I came here with anger, Ed. Anger at
the life I left behind. Despair at
the life that was denied me.

His hard stare softens.

CHARNY
But I leave... with hope. However
faint.

He shrugs his shoulders.

CHARNY
It will have to be enough.

A silent beat, the soft lapping of the waves in the distance.

Beaujeu hesitantly addresses the elephant in the room.

BEAUJEU
Geoffrey, what happened today --
what we both witnessed -- it was
impossible.

Charny nods.

CHARNY
Aye. But it happened.

There it is. Plain and true. They both nod.

BEAUJEU
So what now?

CHARNY

We go on.

Beaujeu acknowledges with a nod.

CHARNY

Will you be joining me back in
France?

BEAUJEU

I have business to finish in Cyprus.

He holds out his hand.

BEAUJEU

We go on.

Charny firmly grips his arm, then they fall into a hearty
embrace.

CHARNY

Goodbye, my friend.

Beaujeu breaks off the embrace, a grin on his face.

BEAUJEU

What's this "goodbye" nonsense?
We'll see each other again.

Charny nods sadly.

CHARNY

Aye. Maybe we will.

He pats Beaujeu on the shoulder, then continues down the
coast toward the shoreline. Boards the waiting skiff.

Off Charny's boat, pulling off shore...

INT. PALAIS DES PAPES - AVIGNON, FRANCE - DAY

POPE CLEMENT VI spreads his arms in jubilation as he sees
BISHOP BARLAAM enter the palace doors.

POPE CLEMENT VI

Ah, Barlaam. Glorious news from the
Patriarch Henri. They have
recaptured the harbour at Smyrna.

BARLAAM

A Latin victory?

POPE CLEMENT VI

With the Lord Christ on our side,
was the outcome ever in doubt?

BARLAAM
No. Of course not, Holiness.

POPE CLEMENT VI
This will surely appease the
Venetian Council. With the shipping
lanes on the Aegean now cleared of
the Turkish piracy threat, they can
resume their trading activities
without fear of reprisal.

Barlaam looks away, distant.

BARLAAM
Wondrous news indeed.

POPE CLEMENT VI
I presume this is welcome news for
you as well, bishop?

BARLAAM
Holiness?

POPE CLEMENT VI
The reason for your somewhat...
guarded reaction.

Barlaam smiles, unconvinced.

BARLAAM
A victory for our soldiers is a
victory for all of Christendom.

POPE CLEMENT VI
A sentiment I would ordinarily
share. However from your lips it
rings hollow.

BARLAAM
Your Holiness?

POPE CLEMENT VI
Do not deny what this victory means
for you. Without Umur Bey's forces,
the would-be Emperor Kantakouzenos
will have no hope of marching on
Constantinople.

BARLAAM
I admit, with all due deference, it
is a relief.

POPE CLEMENT VI
Keeping Empress Anna on the
Byzantine throne benefits both of
us, Barlaam.

He puts an arm around Barlaam's shoulder.

POPE CLEMENT VI
For you, it means Palamas remains in
prison and you remain free. And
your doctrine is upheld. And for me,
well...

He pulls his arm away and steps toward a tray of drinks.

POPE CLEMENT VI
...Kantakouzenos was never a staunch
ally of the Holy See.

He pours himself a glass.

POPE CLEMENT VI
We are both of us relieved, Barlaam.
And gracious in our joy.

BARLAAM
Of course, Holiness. But I fear my
joy may be short-lived.

POPE CLEMENT VI
Oh? Why so?

BARLAAM
Apologies, Holiness. Just a passing
feeling. Nothing more.

He turns away, his eyes downcast.

BARLAAM
I have not been feeling well of
late.

POPE CLEMENT VI
Nothing of grave concern I pray?

BARLAAM
Solus Deus scit. I only wish to
return home to Naples, to live out
the rest of my days.

POPE CLEMENT VI

Of course. No one deserves it more.
With Henri gone, you've assumed his
position with the utmost humility
and grace. The success of our
crusade owes a debt to you, *mon*
cher Barlaam.

Barlaam bows, solemn.

BARLAAM

Holiness.

EXT. PERTHUIS CHAPEL - DAY

Charny, still in his dented and blood-stained battle armor,
approaches the small church, satchel in tow.

INT. CHAPEL - SAME

A PRIEST is crouched over in a corner, his back to us.

Charny rushes through the chapel doors with a tinge of
excitement. Lifts the bag.

CHARNY

Abbot, I have--

The priest turns around. Charny stops, thrown off by the
stranger looking back at him.

CHARNY

Who are you? Where's Brother
Stefano?

PRIEST

(stammers)

I...I...

Charny suddenly catches himself.

CHARNY

Apologies, father. Please excuse my
curt manner.

PRIEST

Quite alright, son.

CHARNY

My name is Geoffroi de--

PRIEST

I know who you are, *Monsieur* de
Charny. You are quite the legend in
these parts.

Charny turns away, somewhat embarrassed.

PRIEST

I am Father Descartes, the new chaplain here.

CHARNY

Father, forgive me but... where is the previous chaplain? Brother Stefano?

PRIEST

I'm afraid the abbot has... gone.

Charny's face goes white.

CHARNY

Gone?

PRIEST

Yes. Gone back to his monastery in Monte Cassino.

Charny lets out a sigh of relief. But then the reality hits.

PRIEST

Is there something I can help you with?

CHARNY

No. Just... I had a gift for him.

PRIEST

(smiles)
How kind.

CHARNY

Yes...

Charny gives him an empty smile.

CHARNY

Thank you, Father.

He turns and walks out, leaving the chaplain somewhat perplexed.

EXT. DIRT ROAD — DAY

Charny walks down a long road. Then stops. Looks in the distance, where his former house stands.

He takes a deep breath. Grips the satchel tighter. Still unsure about this.

Finally he continues forward.

EXT. TOUCY HOUSE - DAY

Charny walks up to the door. Pauses a moment. Looks back toward the road.

Then musters up the courage and knocks.

The door opens to reveal JEANNE, a look of shock on her face.

JEANNE
Geoffrey --

CHARNY
Hello, Jeanne.

JEANNE
I did not expect--

CHARNY
Neither did I.

They stand there awkwardly for a beat.

Finally Jeanne wraps an arm around his shoulder, hugs him somewhat stiffly.

He puts an arm around her waist, savours the feel of this, despite the strangeness of it.

She pulls away, and he suddenly becomes aware of his bulky armour.

CHARNY
Sorry... for my sodden appearance.

JEANNE
I've seen you worse.

He looks at her sheepishly, as she gives him a rueful smile. They both laugh.

But the mood goes sullen just as quickly.

JEANNE
I cannot imagine what you have just gone through.

CHARNY
The only thing that kept me alive was the thought of seeing you again.

Jeanne smiles politely, but turns her gaze away. Charny shakes his head regrettably.

CHARNY

I should not have said that.

Suddenly she kisses him. Slowly. Delicately.

They pull apart. Charny looks at her, stunned. She returns another rueful smile.

JEANNE

I should not have done that.

Charny smiles, and they both laugh again.

But the heavy burden returns, and Charny's smile fades.

CHARNY

I came here to give something to
Brother Stefano.

He pulls the leather bag from beneath his cloak.

CHARNY

I've come here to leave this in the
hands of someone worthy of the Lord.

He unslings the bag. Gently puts it in Jeanne's hands.

CHARNY

I cannot think of a person more
worthy.

Jeanne looks at the bag, then at Charny, moved by his heartfelt emotion.

JEANNE

What is it?

Charny smiles.

CHARNY

Life.

His eyes suddenly fill with awe.

CHARNY

You're right. You cannot imagine
what I've been through to get this.
But I would do it all again.

Jeanne looks into his eyes, notes the reverence there.

JEANNE

Your eyes, Geoffrey. I have not seen
that look in a long time.

She steps closer.

JEANNE
What happened over there?

CHARNY
You would not believe it if I told
you.

VOICE (O.S)
Jeanne...?

Jeanne and Charny both spin around to find GABRIEL
approaching from the road, rake in hand, farming tools slung
over his shoulder. His face goes taut when he sees Charny.

GABRIEL
Geoffrey...?

CHARNY
Hello, Father Gabriel.

GABRIEL
Just... Gabriel.

CHARNY
Oh...

He looks back at Jeanne, who averts her gaze, then suddenly
gets it.

CHARNY
I see.

JEANNE
Geoffrey, I didn't mean--

Charny lifts his hand and smiles.

CHARNY
It's alright, Jeanne.

He walks up to Gabriel, who nervously braces himself.

GABRIEL
Geoffrey, please, I beg you--

CHARNY
I'm sorry, Gabriel.

Gabriel relaxes, confused.

GABRIEL
Sorry?

CHARNY

For what happened the last time we
saw each other. I had no right to
assault you the way I did.

He puts his hands on Gabriel's shoulders. Pulls him into an
embrace.

CHARNY

Forgive me.

Gabriel simply looks at Charny with stupified wonder.

Charny turns back one last time toward Jeanne, gestures at
the bag.

CHARNY

Keep it safe until I return.

She nods, and with that, Charny turns away and walks off down
the road again, leaving Jeanne and Gabriel to watch him go
with a strange curiosity...

EXT. LOWER TOWN - SMYRNA, ANATOLIA - DAY

TWO MONTHS LATER

The streets buzz with townspeople, perusing the various shops
and markets lining the roads. A seemingly normal day now in
the Anatolian city.

In this rather peaceful setting, we find DOLON watching as
papal and Venetian soldiers lay down fortifications along the
town border, hammering down planks of wood and raising them
with ropes.

NICO steps up beside him, joins his gaze at the construction
site.

NICO

The work goes quickly?

DOLON

Not quick enough. The town has seen
ten attacks last week alone.

NICO

These fortifications will go a long
way in protecting the townspeople.

DOLON

Yes, but for how long?

NICO

As long as--

Dolon suddenly lifts his hand.

DOLON
Shhh --

His ears perk up. Alert.

NICO
What is it?

DOLON
Did you hear that--?

He turns his gaze skyward, and his eyes go wide in horror.

DOLON
RUUUUUNNN!!

Nico and the other soldiers and townspeople follow Dolon's gaze skyward to see--

A CLUSTER OF FLAMING FIREBALLS DESCEND--

They SCATTER and dive as the FIREBALLS MAKE IMPACT -- market stalls EXPLODE and rows of half-built border WALLS COME CRASHING DOWN IN FLAMES--

Dolon DRAWS HIS SWORD as several SOLDIERS around him are MOWED DOWN BY ARROWS--

Down the streets of the demilitarized zone come running FARIK AND A BATTALION OF TURK SOLDIERS -- YELLING WITH SCIMITARS RAISED--

Dolon, Nico, and the remaining Papal and Venetian soldiers TAKE UP ARMS -- defending the town against the ONCOMING HORDE--

Farik COMES BARRELING DOWN ON DOLON -- who goes CRUMBLING TO THE GROUND as Farik RAISES HIS BLADE -- but Dolon BLOCKS IT WITH HIS SWORD as he rolls away -- LEAPING UP to fight on equal footing--

Faraway MANGONELS UNLEASH ANOTHER BARRAGE OF BURNING PITCH toward the lower town--

Nico LEAPS FOR COVER as the FIREBALLS BATTER THE STREETS -- sending more market stalls up IN FLAMES--

Suddenly A CALVARY OF ARMORED KNIGHTS HOSPITALLER COME BARRELING DOWN THE TOWN STREETS on horseback -- SLAMMING THROUGH the attacking Turk forces -- TURKS SCATTER, scores getting TRAMPLED UNDERFOOT--

Dolon watches as the REMAINING TURK FORCES RETREAT--

He runs to Nico nearby, helps him to his feet.

DOLON
Come on. Let's go.

As the Knights and Venetians DRIVE OFF the last of the Turks,
CUT TO--

INT. HARBOUR FORTRESS - DAY

Dolon bursts into the meeting chambers, startling the men gathered inside -- ZACCARIA, ZENO, and HENRI.

Zeno notices the spattered dirt and blood on Dolon's face and armor.

ZENO
My God man, what happened?

DOLON
(furious)
What happened? *What happened?!*

He slams his hand down on the table, leaving a bloody handprint.

DOLON
We are getting slaughtered out there.

ZENO
The Turks again?

DOLON
And again, and again. We cannot continue like this.

ZACCARIA
Dolon is right. I have warned of this since we took the harbour months ago.

ZENO
We are fortifying the town borders as quickly as we can.

ZACCARIA
Then why are we suffering constant bombardment?

ZENO
If we had more men to mount the walls and secure the moat--

ZACCARIA
Perhaps if your drunk Venetian swine
worked faster--

ZENO
(steps closer)
And if your over stimulated papal
ingrates stopped harassing the
townswomen, perhaps we could--

HENRI
Enough!

They turn toward the diminutive, frail form of Henri, who
stands up with the help of his golden staff.

HENRI
This continual incessant bickering
will not help us keep our hard-won
land.

He walks slowly around the table.

HENRI
Our land. Not theirs.

He steps up to Zaccaria and Zeno, gives them a stern look.

HENRI
Ours.

ZACCARIA
Your Eminence, as I have said time
and again, this is a Pyrrhic
victory. As long as Umur Bey still
holds the acropolis, we maintain a
tenuous hold on this town at best.

ZENO
We've heard your plans, Martino.
What you suggest is suicide.

ZACCARIA
If we don't move to take the castle,
we are just as good as dead staying
here.

HENRI
What we need is a celebration.

They all turn toward Henri, baffled.

ZENO
Eminence?

HENRI

To honour the victory that Dolon here and our forces have won against the marauding infidels.

ZACCARIA

Eminence, you cannot seriously be suggesting--

HENRI

The cathedral on the outskirts of town will be perfect to serve as our place of worship.

ZENO

With all due respect, Eminence, this is madness.

ZACCARIA

Far be it for me to agree with Pietro, but in this case he is right. You are talking about leaving us all exposed to attack--

HENRI

I am talking about reclaiming what is ours by right!

They stop, taken aback by the bishop's harsh tone.

HENRI

We must send a message. We took this land back for Christ.

He points a bony finger toward the door.

HENRI

Out there stands his church. And every moment we leave it to rot under Saracen tyranny, we mock and spit on his glory.

Zaccaria speaks softly, taking on the tone of an exasperated parent.

ZACCARIA

Your Eminence, the church is located in the unoccupied land between our harbour and their acropolis. We will be completely out in the open, without our defenses--

HENRI

God will be our defense.

Zaccaria, Zeno, and Dolon exchange worried glances. There's no convincing him.

EXT. PARIS - DAY

Establishing shot of the sprawling French capital.

INT. PALAIS DE LA CITÉ - DAY

Charny walks down the famed halls of the immense, illustrious Royal Palace. Now cleaned up, garbed in his gleaming knight's armour and white cloak, helmet tucked underneath his arm, he walks with renewed purpose into the

THRONE ROOM

where we find KING PHILIP VI and QUEEN JOAN seated on their throne chairs. Standing beside the king stands his son JOHN II, 25, also adorned in royal armour and cloak.

Charny takes the knee before them.

CHARNY

My lord.

KING PHILIP VI

Rise, Sir Charny.

Charny stands up.

KING PHILIP VI

We have received word from his Holiness Pope Clement the Sixth, who in turn has received word from the Patriarch Bishop Henri d'Asti, specially commending you and Sir Beaujeu on your bravery in the Lord's crusade.

Charny bows his head.

CHARNY

Thank you, my lord.

KING PHILIP VI

In light of this, I am anointing you an official royal councilor.

Charny looks at them, stunned.

CHARNY

I -- I don't know what to say.

KING PHILIP VI
You will be put in charge of all our
French forces in the northeast. Your
charge will be protecting our
northern border against the English
invaders.

CHARNY
It shall be done.

The King stands up. Steps toward him.

KING PHILIP VI
You will also be the bearer of the
Oriflamme.

Charny's jaw drops.

CHARNY
My lord, I -- I cannot.

KING PHILIP VI
Can you think of anyone better?

CHARNY
The standard bearer is the highest
honour for a knight. It is only for
France's greatest soldier.

Philip puts his hands on Charny's shoulders and smiles.

KING PHILIP VI
Exactly.

Charny smiles back, overwhelmed.

CHARNY
I am honoured, lord.

KING PHILIP VI
The honour is mine.

He steps back toward the throne.

KING PHILIP VI
But we have much work ahead of us. I
will be leaving for Crécy shortly,
to join our forces at the frontline,
to prevent King Edward and his army
from further incursion into our
territory.

He puts a foot on the throne.

KING PHILIP VI
 You and John here will head to
 Aiguillon to join the siege there.
 The English are dangerously close to
 taking the city, and I want my best
 knight to cut them off.

Charny bows his head again.

CHARNY
 Lord.

Philip motions toward his son, standing idly by the throne.

KING PHILIP VI
 You know my son, the prince John the
 second?

CHARNY
 Of course, sire. Duke of Normandy.

JOHN II
 I look forward to fighting alongside
 you, Sir Charny.

Charny nods, then subtly clears his throat.

CHARNY
 Sire, will Lord Beaujeu be joining
 us?

KING PHILIP VI
 I'm afraid Beaujeu is still on loan
 to King Hugh in Cyprus, protecting
 our interests in the east.

Queen Joan visibly shifts in her throne. Charny notices.

KING PHILIP VI
 I share your discontent, Sir Charny.
 His services would indeed prove
 valuable here, but alas we must
 press with what we have.

CHARNY
 Of course, sire. I will be sure to
 inform his wife of his commendation
 from the pontiff.

QUEEN JOAN
 Wife?

The queen's soft voice somehow cuts sharply through the
 throne room.

CHARNY
Yes, your Grace. Marie.

She gives a subtle smile, masking the concern.

QUEEN JOAN
Don't bother, Sir Charny. You have
your orders. I will advise his wife
myself.

Charny looks toward the king, who simply shrugs his
shoulders. Charny bows.

CHARNY
As you wish, your Grace.

INT. SMYRNA CASTLE - NIGHT

UMUR BEY is knelt on a prayer rug inside Gianluca's old
chambers, eyes closed, hands upright. Candles flicker.

FARIK (O.S)
(softly)
Bey...

Umur Bey keeps his eyes closed. Does not turn around.

UMUR
You have news, Farik?

Farik stands by the door, cuts and scrapes on his face.

FARIK
Our spies have heard whispers. The
Christian occupiers intend to hold a
mass.

Umur opens his eyes.

UMUR
A mass...

FARIK
Some sort of ceremony. Outside the
city limits.

A dark glare falls over Umur's eyes.

UMUR
Tell me everything...

EXT. OUTER CITY - DAY

17 JANUARY 1345

The deserted no man's land between the harbour in the lower town and the castle fortress in the upper acropolis. Unlike the populated parts of the city bordering it, this abandoned demilitarized zone resembles an empty, devastated wasteland.

A PROCESSION OF CLERGYMEN moves its way down a scorched gravel roadway, led by Bishop Henri, who holds aloft the golden crucifix. Behind him follow a line of DEACONS and PRIESTS, all dressed in the formal white regalia of the Curia, a sharp contrast to the grey, gloomy earth that surrounds them. As they shuffle down the road, some recite the Lord's prayer in Latin while others chant a somber Gregorian hymn.

Behind the clergy trails a clustered group of CRUSADER SOLDIERS -- mix of PAPAL, VENETIAN, and HOSPITALER -- led by Zaccaria and Zeno, who look none too pleased. Behind them follow Dolon and Nico and others, shifting wary glances at the ominous terrain around them.

Before them looms the massive abandoned Smyrna Cathedral, some of the stone facade and statues crumbling, but otherwise still in tact.

INT. ABANDONED CATHEDRAL - DAY

The clergy and crusaders are all gathered inside, the mass already in progress.

At the altar, Bishop Henri lifts his gaze up to the high domed ceiling, hands clasped in prayer.

HENRI

We praise you, oh Lord, for the
blessings you have bestowed upon us.

He lifts the communion wafer. Closes his eyes.

HENRI

*Accipite hoc omnes et edite; hoc
est corpus meum, quod pro vobis
tradetur. [Take this, all of you,
and eat of it; this is my body,
which will be given up for you.]*

As the congregation close their eyes and bow their heads, Zeno steals a glimpse at the surroundings, the walls, doors, stained glass windows. It all seems too quiet.

Next, Henri lifts the chalice. Eyes closed.

HENRI

Accipite et bibite ex eo; hic est enim calix sanguinis mei, sanguis novi et aeterni testamenti, qui pro vobis et pro multis effundetur in remissionem peccatorum. Hoc facite in meam commemorationem. [Take this all of you, and drink from it, for this is the chalice of my blood, the blood of the new and eternal covenant, which will be poured out for you and for many for the forgiveness of sins. Do this in memory of me.]

Henri sets down the chalice, briefly genuflects, then looks upon the gathering.

HENRI

Let the Lord Christ grace us with his everlasting light, who sanctified our victory over the Muslim heathens and restored this dark place to its former glory.

He grips his gold crucifix.

HENRI

Let the infidels who blaspheme the name of Christ know his swift and deadly justice, and with our triumph they shall know the eternal punishment that awaits them.

He lifts the crucifix.

HENRI

GLORY TO THE LORD GOD--

A PAIR OF STAINED GLASS WINDOWS SUDDENLY SHATTER -- TURK WARRIORS CRASHING THROUGH THEM, SPEARS AND SCIMITAR BLADES RAISED--

The assembled crusaders barely have a moment to get their bearings when MORE TURK WARRIORS CRASH THROUGH THE WINDOWS -- WAILING with fury--

YET MORE TURKS COME SWINGING IN from the upper balconies on ropes -- among them FARIK and UMUR BEY -- DESCENDING upon the unsuspecting crusaders, throwing the ceremony into COMPLETE CHAOS--

The crusade soldiers STUMBLE AND TRAMPLE OVER EACH OTHER as the Turks CUT THEM DOWN with uncontained brutality--

Nico wriggles his way free from the disarray but STUMBLES -- looks up to find A TURK SINK HIS SPEAR INTO HIS BACK, IMPALING HIM TO THE FLOOR--

Zeno and Dolon and a few other soldiers manage to DRAW THEIR SWORDS -- but the TURK ASSAULT is overwhelming --

Dolon valiantly DRIVES HIS BLADE THROUGH an oncoming Turk -- but A SPEAR SUDDENLY BURSTS OUT FROM HIS TORSO -- followed by ANOTHER-- and ANOTHER -- he crumbles as the Turks CLEAVE HIM TO PIECES--

The deacons and priests SCATTER AND STUMBLE in futility, TURK SWORDS CUTTING A SWATH OF DESTRUCTION THROUGH THEM -- their white robes stained with DARK CRIMSON BLOOD --

Zeno SLAMS HIS SWORD THROUGH a Turk's shoulder -- but barely has a moment before FARIK COMES BEARING DOWN ON HIM--

Caught off guard, Zeno is on the defensive as Farik DRIVES HIM CLOSER AND CLOSER TOWARD THE ROWS OF VOTIVE CANDLES--

Farik STICKS HIS FOOT BEHIND ZENO'S ANKLE and SLICES HIS SWORD STRAIGHT ACROSS ZENO'S THROAT -- BLOOD SQUIRTS from his jugular as Zeno COLLAPSES ONTO THE CANDLES- IGNITING HIS CORPSE in flames.

Across the chaos, Umur Bey catches a glimpse of Zaccaria and makes a beeline -- Zaccaria SPINS only to REPEL UMUR'S BLADE at the last moment -- but Umur does not relent, STRIKING AND STRIKING until Zaccaria's sword GETS CAUGHT IN THE STONE PILLAR -- Umur KICKS THE BLADE, snapping it in two -- then LOPS OFF ZACCARIA'S HEAD with one clean stroke --

Eyes wild with rage, Umur clocks Bishop Henri cowering behind the altar, praying intensely. He GRABS the patriarch by his frock and SLAMS HIM UP AGAINST THE ALTAR.

Henri nervously makes the sign of the cross.

HENRI

Pray for us now and at the hour of our death--

UMUR

Your hour has come, priest.

Suddenly Henri takes on a defiant tone.

HENRI

I know my just reward, heathen. I shall be at the Lord Christ's right hand this day.

Umur snatches the fallen crucifix staff from the ground.

UMUR

And I shall be at his left, waiting
to kill you again.

WITH A LION'S ROAR UMUR RAMS THE STAFF DOWN THROUGH HENRI'S
OPEN MOUTH -- pinning his head to the altar--

Umur stares a moment, at the bishop's corpse hanging limp and
lifeless off the altar, his impaled head keeping his body
from slipping off entirely.

Off Umur's blood-spattered face, looking up at the fresco on
the high-domed ceiling... CUT TO--

EXT. PARIS CITY STREETS - DAY

The streets of the French capital are bustling with people,
pedestrians and carriages crossing back and forth; the
standard crowds and hectic pace of the big city.

We hone in on a rather elegant HORSE-DRAWN CARRIAGE, making
its way down the streets.

EXT. SIDE STREET - DAY

The carriage turns the corner into a smaller, quieter street.
It stops in front of one of the tenement houses.

The horse driver disembarks, moves toward the carriage, opens
the door and offers his arm to--

QUEEN JOAN -- who steps off the carriage. Looks up
disconcertingly at the house.

INT. TENEMENT HOUSE - SAME

A young woman, modestly dressed, head wrapped in a kitchen
rag, stirs a steaming pot. This is MARIE.

A hard knock on the door startles her. She wipes her hands
quickly and goes to the door, swings it open to find the
driver there, Queen Joan standing a few feet further.

Marie's eyes immediately go to the queen, stunned.

DRIVER

The Queen Joan of Burgundy. Wife of
King Philip the Sixth.

Marie quickly drops to her knee.

MARIE

My queen.

QUEEN JOAN
Rise, child.

She steps closer.

QUEEN JOAN
May I enter?

CUT TO -- MOMENTS LATER, Marie and Joan alone in the house.
Marie quietly watches the queen, who slowly circles the kitchen, inspecting, as if sizing up the competition.

MARIE
(nervously)
My queen... may I offer you something? Water?

Joan stops. Gives Marie a sympathetic look.

QUEEN JOAN
You would offer water to a queen?

Marie waits, unsure how to respond.

QUEEN JOAN
Indeed you are a God-fearing woman.

MARIE
Of course, your Grace.

QUEEN JOAN
Your name is Marie de Thil. Daughter of Jean de Thil and Agnes de Frobois.

Marie nods, head bowed, eyes flitting between the queen and the floor.

QUEEN JOAN
Wife of Sir Edouard de Beaujeu.

Marie looks up.

MARIE
Yes, my queen. Is he--

QUEEN JOAN
Sir Beaujeu has been commended by his Holiness, Pope Clement the Sixth, for his piety and bravery in the Lord's crusade at Smyrna.

Marie smiles, lets out a long sigh of relief.

MARIE
I am humbled, your Grace.

QUEEN JOAN
As I'm sure he is.

She steps closer to Marie. Looks at her youthful face.

QUEEN JOAN
Such a young child.

She gently strokes her cheek.

QUEEN JOAN
I would never have known.

Marie gives her a confused look.

MARIE
Known what, my queen?

Joan snaps out of it. Offers an empty smile.

QUEEN JOAN
When your husband returns, I will
ensure the king grants you both a
new home, in any castle in the city.

MARIE
Your Grace, we are overwhelmed by
your generosity. But truly it is not
necessary.

Joan smiles. Touches Marie's cheek again.

QUEEN JOAN
He has done well.

A beat, as Joan studies Marie's innocent face.

QUEEN JOAN
I just want you to know...

Marie waits expectantly. Joan is about to say something, then
thinks better of it.

QUEEN JOAN
...Beaujeu is a good man.

Marie bows.

MARIE
Thank you, your Grace.

Joan moves toward the door, opens it to find her driver still waiting for her.

QUEEN JOAN

Thank you for your hospitality.

She walks out, leaving Marie awed and slightly baffled.

EXT. COURTYARD - IMPERIAL PALACE - DAY

CONSTANTINOPLE

EMPRESS ANNA OF SAVOY sits on the veranda, watching her toddler son play in the rose gardens below. She watches with a disquiet, an uncertainty, less assured than we are used to seeing her.

ALEXIOS enters the courtyard. Approaches the empress with hands folded, subdued.

ANNA

What bad news is it this time,
Alexios?

ALEXIOS

Contrary to your belief, I do not
rejoice in being the harbinger of
doom.

ANNA

The role does suit you. Well, get on
with it. The news has only been ill
of late. Why hold back now?

ALEXIOS

It would seem... Umur Bey has
annihilated the crusade leaders.

She turns, looks at Alexios.

ANNA

Bishop Henri...?

ALEXIOS

And his lieutenants. All dead.

She turns away. Looks off into the distance. Distraught.

ALEXIOS

The Smyrna harbour is still in Latin
hands for now.

ANNA

Does it matter? How long can they
hold it without an army?

ALEXIOS

I am told his Holiness is assembling
a fleet of reinforcements as we
speak.

ANNA

There is a larger issue here,
Alexios.

Alexios nods. He knows.

ALEXIOS

Kantakouzenos.

ANNA

He is no doubt emboldened by Umur
Bey's victory. How long before they
unite their forces with an eye
toward my throne?

She nervously taps her fingers on her armchair.

ANNA

We must strike him first. Order a
battalion of men to move on Serbia.
We will stop him at Prizren Castle
before he gets any farther.

But Alexios turns away. Averts her gaze. She notices.

ANNA

What is it?

He hesitates still. She stands up, takes a step closer.

ANNA

Play your part, harbinger. Out with
it.

ALEXIOS

Empress, I have been your advisor --
and your husband's advisor before
his death -- for as long as I can
remember. So I advise you now...

He takes a long breath.

ALEXIOS

Take your child and run.

ANNA

What? Why would--

ALEXIOS
 Kantakouzenos has retaken Demotika.
 He is already now making
 preparations to march on
 Constantinople.

She turns away, dismayed. Crushed.

ALEXIOS
 It will be his.

She steps toward the edge of the balcony. Looks down at her
 child, playing innocently in the grass.

ANNA
 Will this be the last time I watch
 my son run through the garden?

ALEXIOS
 There are other gardens, empress.

She smiles. A tear rolls down her cheek.

ANNA
 Perhaps in the next world...

CUT TO— A MONTAGE -- SHOWING A PASSAGE OF TIME...

AEGEAN SEA

JOHN VI KANTAKOUZENOS stands at the head of a MASSIVE
 WARSHIP, his men behind him rowing furiously, his eyes set
 firmly in the distance...

AIGUILLON, FRANCE

CHARNY, JOHN II, AND AN ARMY OF FRENCH KNIGHTS IN A BLOODY
 BATTLE WITH ENGLISH FORCES--

PIERRE-PERTHUIS, NORTHERN FRANCE

JEANNE and GABRIEL inside their home, kneeling in prayer
 before THE SHROUD...

PARIS

BEAUJEU returns to his home, greeted with a passionate
 embrace from his wife MARIE...

GERACE MONASTERY, ITALY

BARLAAM lays on his deathbed inside a small chamber, dimly
 lit by candles, surrounded by a few monks who pray
 silently...

CONSTANTINOPLE

In a PRISON CELL, palace guards open the cell door to let out GREGORY PALAMAS, who steps outside the cage a free man, squinting at the bright torchlight...

SMYRNA, ANATOLIA

UMUR BEY stands outside the abandoned CATHEDRAL, looks skyward at the decomposing corpses of BISHOP HENRI, ZACCARIA, ZENO, DOLON, NICO, AND SEVERAL CRUSADE SOLDIERS, hanging in display from the church walls...

CONSTANTINOPLE

And finally, KANTAKOUZENOS enters the IMPERIAL PALACE throne room, flanked by his BLOODIED ARMY, approaching ANNA OF SAVOY, who stands firm and tall by the throne. Kouzenos stops, looks down at her and smiles. As she shoots back a defiant glare... CUT TO-

EXT. FRENCH SUBURB - DAY

THREE YEARS LATER

Under grey, clouded skies, CHARNY and JOHN II, in armor and red cloaks, make their way on horseback down a road, toward a lone monastery in the distance.

INT. ABBEY OF SAINT-DENIS - DAY

Charny and John enter the quiet, somber abbey, the clinking of their armour awkwardly piercing the silence.

A MONK approaches them, pointing toward another monk behind him, in white robes almost regal-like.

MONK

May I present the Abbot Gilles
Rigaud the Second.

RIGAUD steps closer, bows.

RIGAUD

My lords, it is an honour to host
the king's son, Prince John, and his
porte-oriflamme, the esteemed
Geoffroi de Charny.

JOHN II

The honour is ours, abbot.

RIGAUD

Would you like to see the recent additions to the north side of the nave? A new choir was just constructed on the--

JOHN II

If you don't mind, abbot, we do have pressing business back in Paris.

RIGAUD

Yes, of course. Shall I lead you to the object of your visit?

The abbot motions them forward, but Charny catches a glimpse of someone standing by one of the stone columns, hands folded in the sleeves of his brown robe -- STEFANO.

Charny's eyes go wide in astonishment.

As the others start off, Charny steps back.

CHARNY

Uh, gentlemen... please excuse me.
I'll meet you at the chapel shortly.

As they head off down the archway and out of sight, Charny walks slowly toward Stefano.

CHARNY

Do my eyes deceive me?

STEFANO

They may deceive us both.

Charny wraps Stefano in a tight embrace.

CHARNY

I thought I would never see you again.

STEFANO

I feel shame in admitting this but... there were times I thought the same.

Charny breaks off the embrace, overwhelmed.

CHARNY

What are you doing in Saint Denis?

STEFANO

I had received word that you were back in France. And that you were here to collect the Oriflamme. I thought this may be my only chance to see you, before...

Charny nods.

CHARNY

Before war again?

Stefano shakes his head in amazement.

STEFANO

I stand in awe, Geoffrey. How you drift from one battle to another. How you always survive to fight the next. With each one, I fear, being your last.

Charny looks downcast, as Stefano glares at him in wonder.

STEFANO

It seems as though my eyes look upon a ghost.

CHARNY

You may very well be.

Charny takes a breath, reticent to say it.

CHARNY

I have not told this to anyone, but... the shroud...

Stefano's eyes suddenly light up.

STEFANO

You have it?

CHARNY

I gave it to Jeanne, when I returned from the east. For safekeeping.

He looks away, his eyes distant.

CHARNY

I have not seen her in three years. Nor the shroud.

STEFANO

But you had it. You held it.

CHARNY
I *felt* it, abbot.

Stefano gives him a puzzled look.

CHARNY
It brought me back from certain
death. Healed my wounds!

Stefano's eyes suddenly go wide in shock. Looks at him with
reverence.

STEFANO
My God... it's true...

He grabs Charny's arms, almost drops to his knees.

STEFANO
You are truly the one chosen for
this. The Lord has anointed you his
vessel.

Charny shakes his head, uncomfortable with the praise.

CHARNY
All I can do is fight for my
country. And for God.

Stefano's watery eyes beam with pride.

STEFANO
There is no greater purpose.

But Charny looks away, somber.

CHARNY
I'm sorry, about your friend.
Gianluca. I could not save him.

STEFANO
In the end, he found his true faith.
As you did.

Charny nods. Then looks toward the archway.

CHARNY
I must go.

STEFANO
I will visit your old home soon.

CHARNY
If you see Jeanne, tell her...

He pauses a moment. Unsure what to say.

Stefano puts a comforting hand on his shoulder.

STEFANO
I will tell her.

Charny nods, then hugs Stefano again.

CHARNY
Goodbye, abbot.

Stefano buries his head in Charny's shoulder, tears flowing.

STEFANO
Godspeed, son.

Charny pulls away, then walks toward the archway. Takes a last look back at Stefano, who smiles sadly.

Then disappears around the archway.

INT. CHAPEL - SAME

Charny enters the sacred chapel, where John, Rigaud, and the other monk are waiting for him.

RIGAUD
Ah, Sir Charny, may I present to
you...

With a dramatic flourish, he gestures at the battle standard raised on the wall -- the blood-red banner hanging from a gilded, GOLDEN LANCE--

RIGAUD
...the Oriflamme.

The others part to make way for Charny, who steps closer in awe.

Rigaud gently takes it from the wall, and ceremoniously hands it over to Charny, who grips the lance, feeling its weight.

Charny drops to one knee, head bowed, as Rigaud recites the creed.

RIGAUD
As bearer of the sacred standard, do
you swear to uphold the laws of God
and Man, to fulfill the keeper's
oath, and to carry the lance in the
name of our Lord Jesus Christ, to
your last breath?

CHARNY
I do.

As Charny rises, steals a quick glance at Prince John, who proudly grabs his shoulder... CUT TO--

INT. SMYRNA CASTLE - ANATOLIA - DAY

Umur Bey prays inside Gianluca's old chambers, eyes closed, as outside the walls we hear the SOUNDS OF BATTLE -- STEEL CLASHING, MEN SCREAMING -- a loud BOOM is heard, shaking the walls, showering Umur in dust...

A BLOODY TURK SOLDIER bursts into the room--

TURK SOLDIER
Bey, the infidel Crusaders have
breached the castle walls...

The BATTLE CRIES outside get closer and louder...

Umur kneels over, head touching the floor.

UMUR
May Ghaffar guide my blade
inshallah...

EXT. SMYRNA CASTLE - SAME

COMPLETE BEDLAM. A contingent of SCANT TURK FORCES scramble to defend the castle against A MUCH LARGER INVASION FLEET OF KNIGHTS HOSPITALLER, VENETIAN, AND CYPRIOT SOLDIERS -- flying the familiar white banners of the Holy Crusade, emblazoned with red crosses...

ATOP A BATTLEMENT, FARIK FIGHTS OFF several Knights of Rhodes -- he CUTS ONE DOWN, and as he raises his scimitar to fell another, A SWORD BURSTS OUT FROM HIS CHEST --

Blood spurts from his mouth as MORE KNIGHTS RUSH IN and perforate his torso with their swords--

ATOP THE WALLS

THE REMAINING TURKS ARE BEING PUSHED BACK BY THE RELENTLESS CRUSADER FORCES--

Scimitar in hand, UMUR BEY TAKES ON SEVERAL CYPRIOT SOLDIERS AT ONCE -- SLASHING HIS BLADE across one of their chestplates -- KICKING ANOTHER as he RAMS THROUGH THEIR SHIELDS and makes a break for the upper wall, where several Crusader soldiers have already unfurled their Christian banners in victory --

Simmering with fury, Umur grabs onto a ladder and MAKES HIS WAY UP THE WALL, sword in hand, A SMALL BAND OF TURK WARRIORS futilely following him up other ladders...

THWIP-- AN ARROW SUDDENLY PIERCES HIS BACK -- Umur grunts and KEEPS CLIMBING --THWIP THWIP-- MORE ARROWS PIERCE HIS BACK -- but somehow he KEEPS CLIMBING--

He reaches the top of the wall and throws himself over the edge. Blade in hand, he prepares to take on an oncoming squadron of knights, when--

THWIP THWIP THWIP-- ARROWS RAIN DOWN ACROSS HIS CHEST, BACK, SHOULDERS, AND LEGS--

Somehow, with countless arrows embedded into his flesh, UMUR REMAINS STANDING -- he wobbles, weak, but musters enough strength to RAISE HIS SWORD UP HIGH --

UMUR
ALLAHU AKBAR--

THWIP-- AN ARROW PIERCES RIGHT THROUGH HIS THROAT--

He gargles up blood, then COLLAPSES OVER THE LEDGE -- falls down the castle walls--

As the last of his men fall to the Crusader army, we push in on Umur Bey's body on the ground, punctured and skewered with broken arrows, lifeless eyes staring up at a setting sun...

EXT. TAVERN - DAY

ONE YEAR LATER

An unassuming tavern on the OUTSKIRTS OF A SMALL FRENCH TOWN.

Charny approaches, dressed in a casual tunic and street clothes, his hair and beard noticeably thicker.

INT. TAVERN - SAME

A low hum of chatter from patrons scattered across the bar.

Charny enters. Scans the tables. Spots one corner table in particular.

He walks toward it to find a sole man sitting there -- AMERIGO.

CHARNY
Amerigo of Pavia.

AMERIGO
Geoffroi de Charny.

He's about to stand and offer his hand.

AMERIGO
A pleasure to finally meet--

CHARNY
Don't get up.

Charny takes a suspicious look around, then sits at the table across from him.

AMERIGO
I must say, I was quite surprised
when I received word that you wished
to meet.

CHARNY
I was not surprised you accepted.

Amerigo takes a chug of his ale.

AMERIGO
Why's that?

CHARNY
Let's not do this dance, Amerigo.
You know why I'm here.

Amerigo smiles.

AMERIGO
It seems the war with England has
not been going well for your king.

Charny clenches his fist.

AMERIGO
Losing Crécy was disastrous in
itself. But Calais is a blow that
will be hard to recover from. Don't
you agree?

CHARNY
Hence why I'm here. Now you served
with the French before. You know how
important the city is to our
defense.

AMERIGO
I also know how important it is to
England's war efforts. And they did
take the city from you, fair and
square...

Amerigo gives him a sly smile.

AMERIGO
...despite your best efforts.

Charny's jaw clenches.

CHARNY
I came here because you agreed to
this. Do not make me regret it.

AMERIGO
Relax, Charny. I have no intention
of reneging on our arrangement.
However, there is an inherent risk
of undertaking such a task during a
truce.

CHARNY
You'll be paid the amount we agreed
on. No more.

AMERIGO
(coily)
If word were to somehow get out--

Charny grabs his shirt.

CHARNY
I came here of my own good will. Do
not squander it with greed.

Amerigo's smile fades, his tone stern.

AMERIGO
Do not speak to me of greed, Charny.
You are abandoning all your
principles by meeting me in this
scummy bar, consorting with a man of
"low born" stature, bribing me with
money to open the gates of Calais
for you and your men to simply waltz
in without a fight and take it back
from the English -- during a truce
no less! And you accuse *me* of
greed? Where's your so-called honour
now, *hmm?*

Charny lets go of his shirt.

CHARNY
Just open the gates when the time
comes. And you'll get your money.

Charny gets up from the table. Glares intensely at Amerigo
for a beat. Then leaves.

Amerigo straightens his shirt and lifts his cup of ale.

AMERIGO
(yells)
Pleasure doing business with you!
(lower)
Wanker.

He takes a long swig.

EXT. TOUCY HOME - DAY

PIERRE-PERTHUIS, NORTHERN FRANCE

Gabriel tills the soil under a cloudy sky. After a moment he looks up to see--

JEANNE -- making her way down the road toward the house, a basket of clothes underneath her arm.

He smiles at her, waves.

She's about to return the wave, but then stops. Shakes unsteadily, weakly. Light headed.

Gabriel watches with concern.

She suddenly drops the basket and faints, collapses to the ground.

GABRIEL
JEANNE!!

Horrified, Gabriel breaks into a run--

INT. HOUSE - SAME

Gabriel bursts through the door, straining to carry Jeanne in his arms.

He brings her to the bed and lays her down gently.

GABRIEL
(frantic)
Stay with me, Jeanne. I'm going to
get help. Stay with me...

He bolts for the door.

Off Jeanne, drifting in and out of consciousness...

EXT. - VILLAGE OF PERTHUIS -- DAYS LATER

A scene of misery, as SEVERAL PEOPLE LAY DEAD OR DYING on the streets and the side of the road, infested with the Black Death.

STEFANO walks through the rows of bodies in the mud, covering his mouth with a cloth, as men stroll by with wheelbarrows carrying more corpses.

INT. TOUCY HOME - SAME

Jeanne lays on the bed, covered in a blanket, drenched in sweat, pustering boils on her face.

Gabriel wipes a damp cloth on her forehead.

STEFANO (O.S)

Dear God...

Gabriel turns to find Stefano there, who steps slowly into the bed chambers, a look of horror on his face as he looks at Jeanne. He makes the sign of the cross.

STEFANO

Lord in Heaven... how long has it been?

GABRIEL

Too long.

STEFANO

A blessing, at least, that you are well still.

GABRIEL

It is only by the grace of God that the plague has not yet affected me.

Stefano steps closer, makes the sign of the cross over Jeanne's forehead.

STEFANO

Can she hear us?

GABRIEL

When she is conscious... which seems less and less.

Gabriel steps away, gives him room as Stefano leans in.

STEFANO

Madame Toucy...

Jeanne feebly opens her eyes, turns her gaze toward Stefano.

JEANNE
(weakly)
Abbot...

STEFANO
(smiles)
Yes, it's me.

JEANNE
The shroud...

Stefano suddenly remembers Charny's miraculous story.

STEFANO
Do you wish to hold it--?

JEANNE
No... not for me... for you...

STEFANO
I don't understand.

JEANNE
Take it... it's yours...

Stefano's eyes go wide.

STEFANO
Madame Toucy, I cannot--

JEANNE
Please...

Stefano notes the strain in her voice. He nods, tears in his eyes.

STEFANO
Very well.

Then he leans in, close to her ear.

STEFANO
Geoffrey loves you still.

Jeanne manages a small smile.

JEANNE
Tell him... I love him...

Off in the corner, Gabriel fidgets, a tear rolling down his cheek.

And then, Jeanne's eyes close and her head slumps to the side, as she takes her last breath.

Gabriel covers his mouth and bursts into sobbing.

Stefano whimpers, as more tears stream down his face.

As we stay on them for a beat, grieving over her bed... CUT TO-

EXT. - STREETS OF CALAIS - NIGHT

CALAIS, FRANCE. 31 DECEMBER 1349.

A quiet night on the road along the narrow coast of the city. In the distance we can hear sounds of crowded taverns and drunken revelry.

Suddenly a BATTALION OF MEN-AT-ARMS sneak down the town walls, led by Charny in full armour, sword drawn.

He motions for his men behind him to stop. He whispers at the knight closest to him, OUDART DE RENTI.

CHARNY

Take your troops and go on ahead to the gate. Amerigo will be waiting for you there.

RENTI

What about the English garrison?

CHARNY

At this hour, most of the sentries will have left their posts to join the New Year festivities. Resistance should be light, if at all.

Renti nods, motions for his party to follow him along the town walls.

Charny stays behind with a contingent of soldiers, waiting in the shadows.

EXT. GATEHOUSE - SAME

Amerigo waits nervously behind the city gates, constantly passing quick glances behind him.

Renti and his party approach the wrought-iron gates. Amerigo quickly unlocks the gate and waves the party inside.

AMERIGO

(whispers)

Come on, hurry, hurry.

The knights quietly move in past the open gates. Renti stops, drops a pouch into Amerigo's hand.

RENTI
Your money, Roman. As promised.

AMERIGO
(smiles)
Glad to see we are on the same side
again, Oudart.

Renti snorts, then moves off with his men, leaving Amerigo to watch him with sly grin.

EXT. STREETS - SAME

Charny and his men-at-arms move swiftly through the dark, silent streets. He motions the knight behind him, EUSTACE DE RIBEMONT, to stop, who in turn gestures at the others to stop.

In the distance, Renti gives him the all-clear signal.

Charny nods and motions his men to follow.

EXT. GATEHOUSE - SAME

Charny, Ribemont, and his men approach the gates. They see Renti and his party waiting across the drawbridge, well inside the tower.

Charny leads his men across the drawbridge.

Renti steps forward to greet Charny.

RENTI
What now?

CHARNY
Check the tower for any sentries. If
you find any, take them out, then
hang our banners. The city is ours--

SUDDENLY THE DRAWBRIDGE IS RAISED -- closing them in from the port side --

Caught off guard, Charny frantically motions his men toward the tower, when suddenly the PORTCULLIS CASTLE GATES COME DOWN AND SLAM SHUT -- boxing them in --

Cut off at both ends, Charny realizes the trap, then catches a glimpse of Amerigo behind the portcullis, RUNNING OFF--

Simmering, Charny starts to chase him, when a SHOUT comes down from above--

VOICE (O.S)
GEOFFROI DE CHARNY--

Charny spins, looks upward to see--

KING EDWARD III -- up on the tower, adorned in armour,
flanked by Walter Manny and a GARRISON OF ENGLISH SOLDIERS--

KING EDWARD III
God has turned from you this night.
SEIZE THEM!!

Charny and his men CLUSTER TOGETHER as ENGLISH SOLDIERS RUSH
IN from all sides, surrounding them --

CHARNY
Men, if we are to die this night,
then take them all with us.

CHARNY AND HIS MEN RUSH THE ENGLISH SOLDIERS, AND THE BATTLE
BREAKS OUT--

INT. ARMOURY - SAME

SOLDIERS OF THE CALAIS GARRISON scramble into the armoury,
snatching SPEARS and SWORDS off the racks--

EXT. TOWER - SAME

King Edward watches as Charny and his men put up a formidable
resistance. He sneers and turns to Manny.

KING EDWARD III
Hurry. With me.

Manny and his soldiers follow the king down the tower...

EXT. GATEHOUSE - SAME

Charny SLAMS INTO A PAIR OF ENGLISH SOLDIERS- DRIVES HIS
SWORD THROUGH THEM -- he spins to see SEVERAL OF HIS TROOPS
ON THE GROUND DEAD -- as MORE ENGLISH SOLDIERS POUR IN from
the open gate --

Charny motions his men to follow him toward the exposed left
flank, when suddenly--

THE BLACK PRINCE comes charging through the gates -- A
GARRISON OF MOUNTED MEN-AT-ARMS behind him --

The mounted soldiers CONVERGE ON THE FRENCH KNIGHTS --
RAMMING SPEARS AND LANCES through their blood stained armour
--

Charny CUTS DOWN a horse, the English rider atop it SLAMMING
TO THE GROUND -- he PLUNGES HIS BLADE DOWN through the
rider's head, then WHIRLS AROUND to see--

THE BLACK PRINCE atop his steed -- holding Charny at speartip
--

BLACK PRINCE
Yield, Sir Charny. The battle is
lost.

Charny passes his gaze over his dead troops, the ones still
standing surrounded by Edward's forces.

Grudgingly, Charny DROPS HIS SWORD, and off the Black
Prince's victorious smile...

FADE OUT