

KNIGHT†FALL

by
Don Handfield &
Richard Rayner

Series Pilot

4-14-2014

THE COMBINE

*"Faith is to believe what you do not see,
the reward of this faith is
to see what you believe."
Saint Augustine*

Based on actual historical events

THE CITY OF ACRE

Dark clouds fill the sky above a massive stone fortress by the sea. Ten TOWERS line a great WALL. Banners wave. Two religions, two cultures face off. Crescent moon vs. Cross.

SUPER: The Siege of Acre, 1291

Inside the wall -- CRUSADERS -- a few hundred knights, mostly French, and REFUGEES - Jews and Christians alike.

Outside -- MUSLIMS -- THE MAMLUK HORDE, a slave army of over two hundred thousand battle-hardened soldiers.

This is the last Christian stronghold in the Holy Land.

And it's about to fall.

A HUNDRED DRUMS

beat at once as a gargantuan catapult is wheeled forward -- ten times bigger than others lined up nearby. This is "al-Mansour" aka "Victorious" -- the H-bomb of its time.

The MAMLUK ARMY pulls back from the walls like the tide receding before a tsunami as the CATAPULT fires--

A GIANT MISSILE

hurtles flaming toward the city, whistling like a shell.

BAWHOOM! The WALL EXPLODES in a rain of rubble. As the dust clears the MAMLUKS roar in triumph --

-- a massive breach has been blown. The MAMLUKS swarm in like water through a broken dam.

FRENCH KNIGHTS

drop their weapons and run, cut down as they flee. All seems lost -- until a column of

WHITE KNIGHTS

clad in bleached cloaks with red crosses surge through a narrow street atop armor-clad WARHORSES --

TEMPLAR KNIGHTS -- the best trained and most feared warriors in the entire Christian army. The Navy Seals of the Crusades.

While other knights retreat -- these warrior monks carve a bloody path through the surging Mamluks toward the breach.

The GRAND MASTER, WILLIAM DE BEAJEU, 50s, rides at the head. A battle-hardened veteran and master swordsman.

WILLIAM
Forward, lads! If you fall, you
earn a martyr's crown. Be
victorious, and win immortal glory.

His SGT. AT ARMS - TANCREDE DE HAUTEVILLE -- a grizzled 40, but with the courage and vigor of a much younger man. A warrior whose bravery is tempered by wisdom.

TANCREDE
And any of you thinking of running,
forget it. France is too far away!

GAWANE, 20s, a young TEMPLAR, gazes out across the sea of MAMLUKS, voice cracking at the hopelessness of it.

GAWANE
Good God. They're endless. How long
do you think we can hold them!?

LANDRY

20, young in age, but not experience, fights his way forward, wearing a keffiyeh Arab headdress in lieu of a helm.

LANDRY
Who's trying to hold them?

His face is bronzed by the desert sun, his armor scarred by a hundred battles. Utterly fearless, a true warrior of God. If the others fell, Landry is the one who would bring them back.

LANDRY (CONT'D)
I'm making straight through this
bunch for the Sultan himself.

The TEMPLARS laugh, heartened, redoubling their efforts -- the tip of a spear hacking through the oncoming MAMLUKS. Incredibly, they stem the tide, fighting into the breach.

Plugging the hole.

Hell rains down around them -- fire-brimmed arrows and boulders flaming with pitch streak the air.

TANCREDE
Missiles!

A storm of arrows blackens the sky -- sizzling down toward quickly upturned SHIELDS.

THUNKthunkthunk -- razor points splinter wood - stop mere inches from faces. Suddenly a single beam of

GLORIOUS LIGHT

blazes down through the clouds right onto the breach -- where it gleams and dances off the knights' armor.

A Holy sight -- God's own hand reaching down to bless them.

The MAMLUK army wavers. The EGYPTIAN HANDLERS try to whip them forward as their ranks begin to break.

WILLIAM moves his shield a fraction to witness this miracle. A narrow sliver of the holy light strikes his face.

WILLIAM

God's light. We will win the day.

He smiles in a rapture of faith as

THWOCK!! An arrow slips in the narrow crack, PIERCES his eye.

Stricken, WILLIAM falls to his knees. A mortal blow.

CHAOS erupts as the GRAND MASTER falls.

TANCREDE

William!

The MAMLUKS let go with a great war cry and once again surge forward, threatening to overrun the breach.

TANCREDE (CONT'D)

LANDRY! On me!

Landry hacks his way to William.

TANCREDE (CONT'D)

Help me get him to the hospital.

WILLIAM

Not the hospital. The Temple.

GAWANE

Landry is leaving us?

Landry sees the fear flushing his friend's face.

LANDRY

Take Gawane! I'll hold the breach.

They all know the implications of this.

Certain death for Landry.

LANDRY (CONT'D)

GO!

TANCREDE AND GAWANE

carry the dying Grand Master on his shield through the chaos.
MAMLUKS who broke through cut down REFUGEES in the streets.

INT. TEMPLAR CHURCH - MOMENTS LATER

A grand vaulted interior of rough stone. The TEMPLARS set
WILLIAM by the altar. CRUCIFIED JESUS bleeds down from above.

WILLIAM

Leave us.

The Knights leave him to make his peace with God.

WILLIAM (CONT'D)

Not you Tancrede.

The great doors echo shut and the two men are alone.

WILLIAM (CONT'D)

You will be the Master of this
Temple now. You must carry and
protect its secrets.

The GROUND shakes. BOMBS boom closer. Dust shivers down.

WILLIAM (CONT'D)

Quickly. At the foot of Christ.
There is a loose stone.

TANCREDE approaches the altar beneath Christ's watchful eyes.
Feels for a loose stone. Behind it -- a lever. CLICK.

A false wall grinds back to reveal a

SQUARE BOX

covered in pounded bronze with EGYPTIAN MARKINGS -- the metal
dented and worn black with time.

WILLIAM (CONT'D)

Bring it here.

Tancrede lifts the mysterious BOX by its handles -- heavier
than it looks -- sets it down by William.

WILLIAM (CONT'D)
We've guarded this secret for
centuries. It must never fall into
the wrong hands. Look inside...

Tancrede reaches for the box -- unlatches the lid. Pauses.

WILLIAM (CONT'D)
Go ahead. Open it. You're Master
now. The secret is yours to know.

Tancrede closes the latch. Click.

TANCREDE
I prefer to go on faith.

William smiles, tension leaving his battered body.

WILLIAM
I knew I chose the right man.

The Grand Master turns his good eye to Christ and dies.

INT. SECRET TEMPLAR TUNNELS

SCORES of KNIGHTS carry heavy CHESTS between them, as other
KNIGHTS usher terrified REFUGEES, mostly women and children,
through round tunnels carved in limestone.

A KNIGHT trips in his haste -- and a chest tumbles open --
spilling GOLD onto the floor. They scramble to gather it.

TANCREDE
Hurry up!

A METAL GRATE

opens. REFUGEES and TEMPLARS exit the tunnel, streaming onto

THE DOCKS

A scene of chaos and Armageddon.

A flaming MISSILE strikes the far end -- burning KNIGHTS and
REFUGEES flail screaming into the water.

THE KNIGHTS HOSPITALLER

a rival order to the Templars, in black cloaks with white
crosses, battle to board their own escape ships nearby.

It's the fall of Saigon and The Titanic all rolled into one.
Thousands more people than boats --

FRENCH KNIGHTS kill innocent REFUGEES -- women and children --
to keep them from jumping onto their overcrowded boat.

The chaos hasn't reached the TEMPLAR SHIPS, where TANCREDE
oversees the loading of REFUGEES and GOLD.

GAWANE hefts the MYSTERIOUS BOX onto the ship.

GAWANE
Cast off! They're on the docks!

MAMLUK WARRIORS pour onto the dock, killing on sight.

TANCREDE
WAIT!

The TEMPLARS look up and see a KNIGHT leading a large FAMILY
OF JEWISH REFUGEES toward the boats. Incredibly, it's

LANDRY

undefeated and unbowed, covered in blood.

LANDRY
The Jews missed their boat.

TANCREDE
Hurry up!

THE DAD

carrying two LITTLE GIRLS trips and falls.

The MAMLUKS are too fast -- they'll be overrun.

LANDRY cuts down the first two Mamluks, slowing the rest and
scoops up the GIRLS -- lifts DAD to his feet.

They are almost to the boat when

GRANDMA

trips and falls, tangled in her robes.

LANDRY
GAWANE! Get the old woman!

GAWANE, shell-shocked with fear, hesitates.

LANDRY (CONT'D)
GAWANE!!

GAWANE breaks out of it -- running for the old lady.

A HUGE EXPLOSION

rocks the air. WHOOM! The DOCK explodes, the OLD WOMAN with it. Deadly splinters of WOOD shrapnel fly--

GAWANE

is thrown back by the blast. He sits up, groaning in pain -- his thigh skewered by a sharp wood stake.

LANDRY and TANCREDE

lift GAWANE onto the boat as the

TEMPLAR CAPTAIN

protests the slew of REFUGEE passengers.

TEMPLAR CAPTAIN

Too many! There's no room!

The HEAVYSET DAD, SIMON, 50, presses gold in Tancrede's hand.

SIMON

We'll stay and die. But please. I beg you. Take my youngest.

He thrusts forward a YOUNG GIRL with green irises at the center of her startling yellow eyes. This is ADELINA, 4.

TANCREDE

Keep your gold. Get on board. All of you. Make room!

MAMLUKS stream towards the BOAT.

TANCREDE (CONT'D)

Push off!

Landry steps off to face the horde. Ready to die.

LANDRY

You go. I'll hold them!

TANCREDE

Not this time.

Tancrede's gauntleted fist comes down on Landry's head, knocks him cold. He drags him on board as

THE BOAT

pushes off from the dock, unsteady, waves slapping over the gunwales. It's too full.

TEMPLAR CAPTAIN

Too much weight. I told you!
They're gonna sink us all!

A HOSPITALLER SHIP, also overloaded with REFUGEES, tips -- spilling screaming men, women and children into the water.

KNIGHTS HOSPITALLER

claw at their heavy armor as it drags them under.

EXT. TEMPLAR BOAT - CONTINUOUS

A MOMENT of tension as the JEWS fear they will be kicked off the boat -- TANCREDE shouts an order.

CHESTS OF GOLD crash into the sea.

GAUNTLETED HANDS reach for the MYSTERIOUS BOX to throw it overboard. Tancrede stops them just in time.

TANCREDE

The box stays. Lose the gold.

The KNIGHTS hold up their shields as a

VOLLEY OF ARROWS

pepper the boat. The SAIL RISES, fills with wind -- a great red cross on white - carrying them safely away.

Tancrede takes a last look at Acre, a smoking ruin.

SIMON and his family huddle protectively around Adelina, the yellow-eyed little girl, relieved and grateful.

SIMON

Thank you.

Tancrede nods, catching the little girl's eye.

Between them is the MYSTERIOUS EGYPTIAN BOX.

ADELINA

What's in the box?

TANCREDE

A secret.

CREDITS ROLL

as TEMPLAR GOLD sinks and spins beneath the waves.

On one side, the TEMPLAR SEAL: two knights on a single horse.

On the other, the TEMPLAR MOTTO in Latin: *Glory unto God.*

The COINS flutter onto the sandy bottom alongside scores of DEAD CRUSADERS, corpses drifting like seaweed in the current.

The quest for the Holy Land is over.

CUT TO:

EXT. FRENCH COUNTRYSIDE - MORNING

Shafts of sunlight pierce gray clouds. SHEEP graze on rolling hills of grass yellowed by drought.

SUPER: Orleans, France - Fifteen years later

PARSIFAL, 19 years old, a peasant shepherd, gawky, with a pure and earnest innocence, tends a sorry flock which bleats with hunger. Famished himself, the boy spies a

ROTTEN APPLE

clinging to the top branch of an otherwise bare tree.

PARSIFAL

in the branches now -- reaching for the apple, he stretches -- gets it -- but he's overreached.

THUMP! He lands in a heap beneath the tree.

He sits down on a stump to eat his prize. One side is rotted and worm-ridden. The other has a decent bite or two. He shines it on his worn tunic, about to dig in when

A LAMB

butts his woolly head into Parsifal's leg.

PARSIFAL

What's your problem? You have all this grass. The whole hillside.

The LAMB bleats in hunger, nudging him again.

PARSIFAL (CONT'D)

Fine. But your belly won't mind, so
take the rotten side.

Parsifal holds out the apple, rotten side first -- but before
he can react, the LAMB has eaten the whole fruit.

Parsifal sighs. He'll go hungry a bit longer.

He hears a yip and turns -- sees a

PACK OF WOLVES

trotting out of the tree line. In a flash, he's up, his
hunting bow drawn, arrow nocked.

PARSIFAL (CONT'D)

Not my flock. Not today.

His ARROW TIP hovers over the ALPHA WOLF'S HEAD. Just when
he's about to let it fly, the wolf freezes. Cocks his ear.

HOOFBEATS in the distance. A DOZEN HORSES or more.

The WOLF PACK bolts and PARSIFAL turns to see

A TEMPLAR KNIGHT

on horseback galloping the rough road below. Parsifal stares,
awestruck. He's heard stories and minstrel's songs of the
white knights, but he's never actually set eyes on one.

His boyish wonder turns to concern as he sees a

BAND OF HIGHWAYMEN

on horseback pursuing his hero. Brigands wielding bows.

Arrows strike the KNIGHT from behind -- blood blossoms on his
white tunic emblazoned with the RED CROSS.

Parsifal watches in horror as the TEMPLAR topples from his
horse onto the hardpan, helmet flying off his head.

It's a gray-bearded old man, 60s, ROGER de CAUX. A veteran of
two crusades, once he would have taken these men single-
handedly, but age has betrayed him.

THE LEAD SCOUNDREL

PIERS DE CHINON, 30s, aka KING OF THE ROAD, slides off his
horse. Despite his roguish good looks, he's no Robin Hood.
He's a cynical opportunist and a cold-blooded killer.

The dying OLD MAN makes a game attempt to stand and draw his sword. PIERS laughs, booting him back into the dirt.

PIERS
Stay down, old man.

One of his men leads over the KNIGHT'S HORSE and Piers digs in the saddlebags, finds a secret compartment. He pulls a

BAG OF GOLD

free and tosses it to his right hand man, 'THE COUNT' GRANDJEAN, 30s, a burly brute in a leather bodkin.

GRANDJEAN
You said he'd be loaded.

PIERS turns to the rest of the BRIGANDS. A dirty, filthy lot of peasant villainy and scum.

PIERS
Scourge him, boys.

They set on the old man like ants on a cow carcass, yanking off his boots, his armor, his gauntlets.

PARSIFAL (O.S.)
Let him alone!!

The BRIGANDS look over, surprised to see PARSIFAL, bow cocked, arrow nocked, pointed in their direction.

PIERS
Or else what, shepherd? You'll set your sheep on us?

The MEN relax when they see how shaky his hand is on the bow.

PIERS (CONT'D)
You ever killed a man?

PARSIFAL
I've killed plenty of wolves.

Parsifal purses his LIPS -- gives a long loud whistle.

GRANDJEAN
Who you calling, boy? Your mum?

The BRIGANDS all laugh, surrounding Parsifal while Piers engages him in distracting chatter. A charming sociopath.

PIERS

My men are starving. I can see from your ribs you haven't had a good meal in what? A month? The king reminds the money, skims off the top and a loaf a bread is suddenly five times what it was.

PARSIFAL

This man doesn't work for the King. He works for God.

PIERS

The Templars protect the royal treasury. The King stole our money, so we're stealing it back.

PARSIFAL

If you have murdered one of God's true knights, each and every one of you will burn in hell.

GRANDJEAN

Least we'll go on a full stomach.

GRANDJEAN reaches down and grabs the TEMPLAR'S SWORD.

THWICK! Parsifal fires and GRANDJEAN drops the SWORD, SCREAMING, hand gouging blood from the arrow lodged in it.

GRANDJEAN (CONT'D)

AHHHH!! Fucking little shit!

Piers lunges and grabs Parsifal from behind.

PIERS

You shot the wrong man, shepherd.

GRANDJEAN picks up the SWORD again, approaching.

GRANDJEAN

You're fucking dead, boy...

A LONG LOW WHISTLE echoes from the woods, nearby. A burly PEASANT WOODCUTTER with an AXE steps from trees.

Another whistle, PIERS sees three rugged FARMERS with SCYTHES stepping from a wheat field.

A FEW MORE PEASANTS with PITCHFORKS head down the road.

TWO MORE SHEPHERDS on an opposite hill, wielding bows.

Soon a SMALL ARMY of ANGRY PEASANTS advances on them. Honest, hard-working folk, with no love for BRIGANDS.

Piers weighs the odds, lets Parsifal go. All charm again.

PIERS
I like your guts, shepherd.

The PEASANT CROWD closes in, yelling in anger.

PIERS (CONT'D)
Let's go lads, unless you want to
share the loot with this lot.

The BRIGANDS quickly take their horses -- GRANDJEAN, one hand still impaled, can't hang onto the TEMPLAR SWORD. It drops.

GRANDJEAN
Wait, I want that fucking sword!

PIERS
Leave it!

The BRIGANDS race off down the road into the forest as Parsifal collapses with a sigh of shaken relief.

THE DOORS

of a modest church burst open. Bare stone floor, no pews, a plain wooden cross -- but the walls are a riot of color:

HAND PAINTED MURALS

mostly dark visions of medieval superstition and Apocalypse. A hell dog with blazing eyes. A dancing skeleton of death.

A FRIAR

goodhearted and underfed, in a homespun robe, grows pale and distraught at the sight of the dying old TEMPLAR.

FRIAR
God save us. What manner of men
would do such a thing?

PARSIFAL
Brigands, father. Can you help him?

They lay the KNIGHT on the straw covered floor. The Friar examines his wounds -- surely mortal. In fact...

FRIAR
I'm afraid he's already dead.

He starts to close the KNIGHT'S EYES -- and they all jump back as the old man moves -- grabbing the FRIAR'S hand.

OLD KNIGHT
Parchment and quill... Quickly.

CUT TO:

A QUILL

races across parchment, scrawling Latin as the

THE OLD KNIGHT

dictates into the FRIAR'S EAR, his voice barely a whisper.

The FRIAR helps press the old man's TEMPLAR SIGNET RING into burning wax to seal the letter.

OLD KNIGHT
My sword...

The FRIAR lays the SWORD gently on the old man's lap.

OLD KNIGHT (CONT'D)
The boy? Where is he?

The VILLAGERS part for PARSIFAL, who looks on, humble.

PARSIFAL
Forgive me. I was too late.

Parsifal's eyes water. The OLD KNIGHT smiles.

OLD KNIGHT
No. You were just in time.

The OLD KNIGHT says a quick prayer in Latin, blessing his sword, then hands it over to PARSIFAL.

OLD KNIGHT (CONT'D)
Take my sword and this letter to the Paris Temple. Give neither to anyone, save the Master himself.

Parsifal takes the gleaming SWORD with mingled awe and dread.

PARSIFAL
Paris? But I...

OLD KNIGHT
I know you won't fail me.

EXT. VILLAGE OUTSKIRTS - MORNING

The FRIAR reads last rites as the OLD KNIGHT is buried.

PARSIFAL and the VILLAGERS shovel earth onto the grave.

EXT. PEASANT HUT - MORNING

A plume of sad smoke billows from a thatch hovel.

INT. PEASANT HUT - MORNING

A tiny space, with meager possessions -- a single pot, a mattress of straw, two crude stools and a rough table.

Parsifal stuffs a burlap sack with meager possessions, harangued by his mother HELENE, late 30s, once beautiful, her caring face worn from years of labor.

HELENE

Paris? You've never been past
Montaran. It's not safe!

PARSIFAL lays the SWORD on burlap, tracing his fingers over LATIN WORDS he can't read engraved on the shining blade.

PARSIFAL

I made a promise.

Parsifal wraps the SWORD up, strapping it to his back.

HELENE

To a man you don't know. Who will
tend the flock? Do your chores?

PARSIFAL

Friar Ilbert. Rene and the rest
will help with the other jobs.

Parsifal slings his BOW across his other shoulder.

HELENE

Will Friar Ilbert or Rene be my son
while you're away?

PARSIFAL

I'll only be gone a few days.

HELENE

That's what your father said.

Parsifal hugs his mother and she falls into him.

PARSIFAL

Mum. I'll be back. I promise.

EXT. VILLAGE - DAY

The VILLAGE PEASANTS see Parsifal off, a community affair, with everyone giving something to help his journey: a bit of bread or cheese, or simple encouragement and advice.

FARMER

Don't be on the road after dusk,
boy. Scourgers everywhere.

Friar Ilbert, RENE THE WOODCUTTER and HELENE walk with Parsifal past the broken cart at the end of the village.

WOODCUTTER

Stay straight until the old road.
Then go north, but make sure you
bear left at the Thieves' tree.

HELENE

Don't sleep in the woods, wolves
will eat you. Find a stable!

PARSIFAL

I won't get eaten, Mum.

Parsifal walks on, embarrassed by her concern.

HELENE

When you get there turn straight
around and come back!

PARSIFAL

I will, Mum. Don't worry.

The FRIAR has to hold Helene back, worry lingering in her eyes as she watches her only son disappear down the road.

EXT. FRENCH COUNTRYSIDE - DAY

Parsifal walks across rolling fields blazing with poppies.

EXT. ROAD TO PARIS - FRENCH COUNTRYSIDE - DUSK

Parsifal walks an old Roman road by a ruined AQUEDUCT. A few steps later, he stops cold, staring up in horror at

DEAD BODIES

hanging from a giant oak. Grotesque faces twisted in pain, each wears their own severed hands strung around their neck.

PARSIFAL
Thieves' tree.

MATCH CUT TO:

A DEAD THIEF

in an IRON CAGE. He too wears a necklace of severed hands.
But this is no country thief --

THE CITY OF PARIS

stretches out around his swaying steel crypt. Cramped houses
arranged higgledy-piggledy on either side of winding streets.
Scores of church spires rising high.

A RABBLE-ROUSER on a crate incites a CROWD of PEASANTS,
keeping one eye on the distant CITY GUARDS.

RABBLE-ROUSER

The King puts his face on a new
coin and what bought a pig last
week ain't worth a loaf of bread!

ANGRY PEASANT

What bread!? There ain't none!

EXT. PARIS - ILE DE LA CITE - AFTERNOON

The RIVER SEINE splits Paris, forking around a small island.
The heart of the city, and home to the awe-inspiring

NOTRE DAME CATHEDRAL

much the same as we know it today, and a new

ROYAL PALACE

with half-completed walls encircling the sharp gothic spires
of the royals-only CHURCH OF ST. CHAPELLE.

INT. ROYAL PALACE - KING'S CHAMBERS

A PLUMP RED-FACED TAILOR fits a luxurious velvet robe,
trimmed with ermine and sable around the square shoulders of

KING PHILIP THE FAIR

40s, ruthless, vain -- he's called FAIR because of his good
looks, not because he is decent or just.

Hugely in debt and suffering from bouts of mania and melancholia - what we call bipolar -- he's going through a medieval mid-life crisis.

PHILIP

Get to the point, de Marigny.

CHAMBERLIN - DE MARIGNY, 60s, silver-haired, even-keeled, though with a face weary and belabored by having to manage a King with power beyond scope and ego beyond reason.

DE MARIGNY

Perhaps we slow work on the new Palace, delay the tennis court.

PHILIP

You're telling me I must bake in the sun like a peasant every time I wish for sport because a lowborn German noble insinuated himself into the affections of my daughter?

Philip pats nervously at his barely receding hairline.

DE MARIGNY

Merely stating the realities, Sire. The dowry is fifty thousand pounds.

PHILIP

You Paris masters at your desks seem to think the world should be ruled by facts and reasonings. It is to me that God entrusted the world. Not to my daughter, not to some German princeling and certainly not to you! If she's fool enough to marry for love, why should I have to pay?

WILLIAM DE NOGARET, 47, KEEPER OF THE SEALS, King's legal counsel and consigliere, a godless man of nondescript appearance and abundant wickedness, glances up from papers he's signing and affixing in wax with the ROYAL SEAL.

DE NOGARET

Even love costs money, Sire.

Philip is stunned silent -- about to rage.

PHILIP

Excuse me?

De Nogaret blows on a wax seal to dry it. Cunning, sly, his shark-like eyes are offset by a perpetual cruel smile - as if he just heard a secret joke about your impending demise.

DE NOGARET

But you're the King. It shouldn't matter. It's your God given right to have whatever you desire.

PHILIP

Yes. Exactly! Maybe I need more lawyers and one fewer chamberlain.

DE MARIGNY

Sire, the people are already near riot from de Nogaret's last big idea. You can't raise taxes or shave down their coin any further.

DE NOGARET

You won't need to. You can borrow from the Poor Fellows of Christ.

DE MARIGNY

The crown already owes the Templars half a million.

DE NOGARET

I'm sure they can be persuaded to extend the crown another courtesy.

The TAILOR tugs at the robe, the King slaps his hand.

PHILIP

No! No. It's all wrong.

Philip adjusts the robe, sucking in his gut and glaring at his reflection in a flaking mirror, disgusted.

PHILIP (CONT'D)

Hopeless.

The room falls still. This could end the TAILOR's life.

TAILOR

Perhaps if the King could tell me what he wants.

The KING tears off the robe. Throws it down in rage.

PHILIP

How do I know what I want? You're the tailor, not me! GET OUT!!

The TAILOR starts to leave -- Philip stops him.

PHILIP (CONT'D)

Not you, Tailor. You stay!

De MARIGNY and de NOGARET exit. DOORS close, leaving the angry King alone with the terrified TAILOR.

TAILOR
Please, Sire. I have four children
and a wife I love dearly...

The MAN falls to his knees, pleading for his life.

PHILIP
Does she love you back?

TAILOR
Excuse me, sire?

PHILIP
Stand up and look at me.

The TAILOR dare not raise his eyes.

PHILIP (CONT'D)
I said look!

The TAILOR, stands, and does look -- surprised to see the KING weeping -- pain and heartbreak in his eyes.

PHILIP (CONT'D)
Does your wife love you? Does she
have the look a woman gets in her
eyes when she really wants you?

The TAILOR, still frightened, answers with a careful nod.

PHILIP (CONT'D)
It's worth more than gold. My wife,
I used to live in the glow of her
glance. Now when she does look at
me, it's with disdain and scorn.
She hasn't shared my bed in months.

The TAILOR grows alarmed at the intimacy of this confession.

PHILIP (CONT'D)
Lines assault my eyes. My
traitorous hair departs me for my
pillow each night. This aging rapes
my soul, and you Tailor, are all
I've got to save me.

Philip gazes at his sad reflection in the smoky mirror.

PHILIP (CONT'D)
So when you ask what I want. I want
you to weave magic.
(MORE)

PHILIP (CONT'D)

I want a robe so beautiful that my wife will fall in love with me all over again.

The TAILOR nods -- inspired.

TAILOR

I will make you the most beautiful robe the world has ever seen.

EXT. PARIS - ILE DE LA CITE - DUSK

The mighty bells of NOTRE DAME shiver the air. CROWDS rush to make VESPERS, or sunset prayers.

A BAKER

sells fresh loaves of bread from a CART on the bridge. A YOUNG RUFFIAN, QUINCY, 8, snags a loaf and runs.

A CITY GUARD gives chase, weighed down by his chain mail and ample girth. Other GUARDS in similar blue tabards join in, shoving people violently aside in pursuit.

GUARDS

STOP! THIEF!

The YOUNG RUFFIAN'S flight ends abruptly as he is collared by

A WHITE KNIGHT

on horseback and held up, dangling like a prize fish. The scrawny, filthy boy's eyes widen in fear. The knight is a TEMPLAR, and we recognize him as

LANDRY

the hero of Acre, still handsome and battle-ready, but now with the troubled eyes of a true believer tortured by doubt.

The KING'S GUARDS catch up, breathless and angry. The BAKER runs behind them, jabbing a finger.

LANDRY

What's going on here?

BAKER

That's him. That boy there. Little thief stole my bread!

CITY GUARD

Little thief's gonna hang for it.

The GUARDS unspool a hangman's rope. Landry looks into the huge eyes of the scared boy.

LANDRY

He's no thief. I gave him coin and specific orders to buy two loaves.

CITY GUARD

I saw him steal it!

Landry slides down off his horse, approaching.

LANDRY

Are you calling me a liar?

It's LANDRY versus EIGHT GUARDS. And he's up for it.

Landry edges his cloak back ever so slightly, revealing the hilt of his sword. Itching for a fight.

It's the GUARDS who are relieved when THREE TEMPLARS ride up
TANCREDE

at the head. Wearier now, hair gray, but still with immense presence and command. He edges between LANDRY and the GUARDS.

To make peace.

TANCREDE

Here. This should cover it.

Tancrede fishes a GOLD COIN from his tunic and tosses it to the BAKER -- who is more than satisfied. The Guards, still breathless from the chase, are not.

CITY GUARD

We'll get you next time, thief.
You'll decorate our bridge, just like your little friend.

Landry gets back on his horse, a hard glare from Tancrede.

TANCREDE

We discussed this. Things outside the Temple aren't our concern.

LANDRY

What are you talking about? My new squire was just getting me bread. Isn't that right, squire?

The BOY stares, wide-eyed, then bolts into the CROWD.

As the **TEMPLARS** all ride on together, **LANDRY** glances up at a **PALACE** window -- as if he can tell someone is watching him.

CUT TO:

THE ROYAL PALACE - QUEEN'S CHAMBERS - CONTINUOUS

ALICE, 20s, pretty, blonde, ducks away from the window, giggling and blushing.

ALICE

I think he saw me.

HOLGA, 30s, stout, no-nonsense, shoos her back to her work. She leads the **QUEEN'S DRESSERS** as they prepare her wardrobe.

HOLGA

Of course he saw you. A giggling idiot. Now get back to work. The Queen will be here any minute.

Holga takes a look herself. Sees **LANDRY** riding by.

HOLGA (CONT'D)

Oh, he is a fine one. But if you really want a man's attention, do it like a real woman.

Holga hikes her skirts, flashing her womanhood at the window.

HOLGA (CONT'D)

Take a look, monk. Red as cherry pie and twice as sweet.

AGNES, 19, brunette, pale and shy, lays out a **SATIN DRESS**, blushing with anger at these vulgar profanities.

AGNES

Holga! Stop. You'll send him straight to hell just for looking.

ALICE

You scared him away, you old bat. He's ours to admire, not yours to corrupt. You're married.

HOLGA

To a good man. With a broken dick. A woman's field can only go untilled so long before she goes mad.

AGNES

What was he doing out there anyway?

Alice relishes the thrill of knowing more about the dashing knight than her fellow handmaidens.

ALICE

Oh, just your usual knightly things. Sparing a peasant boy who was stealing bread.

QUEEN JOAN of NAVARRE, 30s, sweeps in. They rush to attend her, not out of fear, but because they revere and love this bold, clever and still beautiful Queen.

JOAN

Alice, the news here is that the peasants are now desperate enough to steal bread, not that some Templar knights are sticking their noses where they don't belong.

HOLGA

I wish he'd stick his nose in me.

The MAIDENS chuckle as the QUEEN blushes and Alice starts to comb her Queen's long shining tresses.

JOAN

You are all utterly hopeless.

ALICE

I have the naughtiest dreams about him. I'm a Saracen princess and he captures my castle and ravishes me.

JOAN

Oh, Alice, leave the poor man alone. He's taken vows.

ALICE

Don't you think he's handsome?

JOAN

I don't even know which one you're talking about. All those Templars look alike, dress the same, and those serious bearded faces. I could never imagine being with a man like that. I mean, why are they so dour all the time?

HOLGA

Because they can't have any women!

All the WOMEN, including the Queen, laugh.

EXT. NOTRE DAME CATHEDRAL - ESTABLISHING

The CHANTS and echoing SONG of Vespers resound.

INT. NOTRE DAME CATHEDRAL - PRIVATE CLOISTER

Tancrede walks with De Nogaret.

TANCREDE

I'm delighted for the Princess. But the crown owes a considerable sum.

DE NOGARET

The King of France is good for it.

TANCREDE

We bank for many kings. Others pay their debts. The Order needs its reserves for a new Crusade.

DE NOGARET

You know the King and his Holiness were just discussing that very problem? Where will we get the money for the next campaign? I proposed a very interesting solution. One that could help us all in these tight financial times.

TANCREDE

What's that?

DE NOGARET

Merging the Templars and the Hospitallers into one order.

TANCREDE

That makes no sense. We could just as soon merge England and France.

DE NOGARET

Royal families join to get stronger. Why shouldn't holy warriors do the same?

TANCREDE

Beyond the fact that we've hated each other for centuries, we have two entirely different mandates. They run hospitals. We fight to protect pilgrims in the Holy Land.

DE NOGARET

Yes, but since your Order deserted Acre, Christendom no longer has any stake in the Holy Land.

TANCREDE

We didn't desert Acre--

DE NOGARET

Then what exactly is it, besides gold, your order is protecting?

Tancrede's anger rises and De Nogaret smiles knowingly.

DE NOGARET (CONT'D)

If the Templars are so short on funds that you can't make a simple loan to the King, perhaps a merger is the best solution?

TANCREDE

We're not merging.

DE NOGARET

The King and The Pope together can be quite persuasive and I assure you the the idea has already moved beyond mere speech.

Tancrede wants to put his fist through the man's head.

DE NOGARET (CONT'D)

However. If the King were to get the loan, and you were to compose a letter to the Pope justifying why the Templars should retain their own banner, then I may be able to ensure the King's full support. Then your rivals stay in their hospitals. And you keep your banks.

EXT. NOTRE DAME CATHEDRAL - LATER

LANDRY waits atop his CHARGER as TANCREDE storms out.

LANDRY

What did the serpent say? Haven't seen you this pale since Tyre.

Tancrede mounts his own horse, teeth clenched.

TANCREDE

He just got me to loan the King more money.

(MORE)

TANCREDE (CONT'D)

I'd rather face ten Saracens head
on than one lawyer with a knife
aimed at my back.

LANDRY

Politicks is a slow death from the
inside. And that's if you win.

TANCREDE

Why weren't you in there? You've
been missing prayers all month.

LANDRY

If I go in, who will save all the
bread stealers?

TANCREDE

If you don't, who will save your
soul?

LANDRY

My soul wouldn't need saving if
you'd let me die at Acre.

EXT. DARK FOREST - NIGHT

PARSIFAL treads the moonlit road.

A WOLF HOWLS and he draws his bow for protection.

Predatory eyes burn in the darkness. As Parsifal scans the
forest, he sees A LIGHT shining through the trees -- it's

A COUNTRY TAVERN

warm and inviting. Smoke billows from the chimney, candles
beckon from every window. Safe harbor.

A TEMPLAR KNIGHT slays a DRAGON on the swinging board that
hangs over the door: "THE ANGEL INN"

Seeing it as a sign from God, Parsifal steps inside.

INT. COUNTRY INN - MOMENTS LATER

Parsifal is greeted by an unspeakable stench, and debauchery
such as his young eyes have never seen:

Bevies of WHORISH WENCHES, naked, dancing as they are pawed
and groped by a crowd of ROWDY DRUNKS.

A BIG MAN takes a skinny wench from behind in the shadows.

Parsifal lowers his head in shame, backing toward the door.

-- bumping right into

PIERS

Fate be fucked, it's you. Hey,
Greatjean! Look what I caught
coming back from the pisser! The
brave little shepherd, come to
join our party.

GREATJEAN looks up from the giant breasts his face is buried
in, lifting his bandaged hand from a HEFTY WENCH'S thigh.

GREATJEAN

You little shit.

Parsifal scrambles away as PIERS yanks the wrapped SWORD
BUNDLE from the shepherd's back.

PIERS

What's in here, boy?

He throws the bundle to GREATJEAN who paws it open to reveal
the TEMPLAR SWORD.

PARSIFAL

Give it back!

GREATJEAN

Give it back? This sword was mine
until you stole it.

GREATJEAN collars Parsifal, murder in his eyes.

GREATJEAN (CONT'D)

You're a good Christian, right? Eye
for an eye. Hand for a hand.

PARSIFAL struggles as the BRIGANDS pin his arm onto a table.

The few WENCHES who protest are elbowed aside.

GREATJEAN raises the SWORD to strike off the boy's hand--

BRIGANDS

Do it! Chop it off!

--A HAND catches Greatjean's wrist.

VOICE (O.S.)

You'll dull the sword that way.

Greatjean tries to break free, but EBAN, 30s, dark-haired,
wiry, dangerously calm, holds his arm in a vice-like grip.

EBAN

If you're going to cut a hand off,
you want something more like this.

Eban pulls a gleaming blade from the folds of his coat,
wafting the point close to Greatjean's eyes.

EBAN (CONT'D)

See the waves of blue. Damascus
steel. May I look at yours?

Eban flips his knife, catching the blade and smacking the
pommel on Greatjean's elbow pressure point, causing the
TEMPLAR SWORD to fall from his grip.

Eban catches it with barely a glance.

EBAN (CONT'D)

Toledo's finest. Perfectly
balanced. A Templar blade.

Eban holds out both weapons, weaving them in the air.

EBAN (CONT'D)

A man could do serious damage with
these if he knew his craft. Perhaps
even clear a whole room.

The BRIGANDS release Parsifal, circling this new threat.

PIERS

This isn't your concern.

EBAN

Forgive me. But your voices are
loud and this scene is amusing. You
said this boy stole your sword?
That makes you the fattest and
ugliest Templars I've ever seen.

GREATJEAN pulls two knives. The BRIGANDS do the same --
circling Eban and Parsifal with a curtain of pointed steel.

GREATJEAN

Let's take them, lads. We're twenty
and they're two.

EBAN

Two? I counted six.

EBAN'S "ASSOCIATES" emerge from the shadows wielding
CROSSBOWS. Four unassuming men exuding murderous skill.

A CROSSBOW bolt at his temple, Piers keeps his cool.

PIERS

Well then. Who might you be?

EBAN

We're just simple merchants that
sell steel out of Spain.

PIERS

Yeah? And we're just honest lads
who cobble shoes out of Champagne.

EBAN

Then we'd best part friends.
Further unpleasantness could be bad
for both our businesses.

An uneasy stalemate as EBAN hands the sword back to PARSIFAL,
the crossbow-wielding ASSOCIATES covering their escape.

EBAN (CONT'D)

Where are you headed, Templar?

PARSIFAL

I'm no Templar, sir. I'm just
headed to Paris.

EBAN

So are we. You should come along.

EXT. ANGEL INN - NIGHT

EBAN climbs onto a black Arabian.

EBAN

Climb up, Templar. We'll be moving
a bit faster than you can run.

He pulls Parsifal onto his horse.

PARSIFAL

You think they'll come after us?

EBAN

They can try.

His ASSOCIATES cut the bridles of the BRIGANDS horses,
slapping their backends and scattering them to the wind.

INT. ROYAL BEDCHAMBER - NIGHT

JOAN, beautiful and flushed with righteous anger, bolts into
Philip's bedchamber. Despite her mood, he is delighted.

JOAN

A tennis court? You'd spend our daughter's dowry bring a silly outdoor game in?

PHILIP

My love, if we have a court indoors we could play together year round.

JOAN

Oh, stop it. People starve on the streets and yet all you think of is clothing and sport. It's madness.

Philip wraps his arms around her.

PHILIP

I'm borrowing more than enough for both. De Nogaret fixed it.

JOAN

A church debt is the Devil's salary. We can't go on borrowing money from the Templars.

PHILIP

Then let's call it off. I don't want her marrying a German anyway.

JOAN

He's suitable and she loves him. Do you know how rare that is?

PHILIP

He does us no political good. We didn't marry for love, but we still found it didn't we?

For all his wicked faults, he truly does love his wife.

JOAN

Don't sell Germany short. That's half our border. They're a strong ally and we may need them one day.

Philip eases her chemise aside, exposing her breasts.

PHILIP

I don't need the Germans. The English prince is a better match.

Joan tolerates his hands exploring her body.

JOAN

A better match for you, not for her. From what I hear, he would much prefer one of our sons--

Philip kisses her neck with growing passion.

PHILIP

If I thought it would get Longshanks off my back I would gladly offer anyone up.

Joan pushes him away and closes her robe.

JOAN

Would you offer me up as well?

PHILIP

Never. You are my true love.

JOAN

So why wouldn't you want that for our daughter?

PHILIP

Can we please talk about this after I bed you? It's been months, don't you want another child?

Joan pulls away from him, leaving the room.

PHILIP (CONT'D)

You can't refuse me. I am your husband. And your King!

EXT. PARIS TEMPLE - NIGHT - ESTABLISHING

The candle and firelit city of Paris stretches out below a storybook castle of five towers with pointed minarets. It's more formidable and imposing than any of the King's palaces.

This is the headquarters of the Knights Templar.

Light glows within the topmost tower.

INT. PARIS TEMPLE - MASTER'S CHAMBER - NIGHT

A ROUND TABLE covered with scrolls fills the room. TANCREDE stares at a blank sheet, struggling to find words for his letter to the Pope. He snaps a quill in frustration.

TANCREDE

Whoever said the word was mightier
than the sword was a godless idiot.

MARTIN THE DRAPER, 70s, scrawls inventory across the table.
Once a famed Crusader, he is now in charge of all the linens.
Despite his low rank, he'll correct anyone out of line on
their uniform -- or anything else for that matter.

DRAPER

You've slopped enough ink all over
those robes to ruin them for good.

TANCREDE

Damn your robes, Draper. I'm trying
to save us. Three hundred years of
history depend on this piece of
paper. I joined to fight for God
not write letters or lend money.

DRAPER

No use to lying to me, boy. You
joined to get away from that harpy
you called a wife. Took a vow of
celibacy and gave up half your
estate to be rid of that witch.

TANCREDE

She's the mother of my children.

DRAPER

Just put down that they can't merge
us with the bloody black shirts.
They're corrupt as all buggery and
we're fighters, not nurse maids.

TANCREDE

Are we? With no Holy Land to
protect, what are we but bakers and
bankers? What's our real purpose?

DRAPER

Sounds less like a question of
purpose, more like a crisis of
faith.

Tancrede throws down his quill, muttering a curse.

TANCREDE

Go back to folding your linens, old
man. Leave me to suffer in peace.

EXT. COUNTRYSIDE OF FRANCE - DAYBREAK

A horse with TWO RIDERS traverses the countryside.

EXT. HILLS OUTSIDE PARIS - DAY

Eban nudges the sleeping Parsifal awake.

EBAN

There it is - Paris.

Parsifal opens his eyes and stares down in awe at

THE CITY OF PARIS

A walled metropolis, the largest city in the world. God rules here, with scores of church spires higher than all else -- except one GREAT CASTLE taller than all the rest:

THE PARIS TEMPLE

in the light of day, it dwarfs even the tallest church spire.

EBAN

There is the Temple you seek.

EXT. PARIS - NORTH GATEHOUSE - DAY

Eban and Parsifal ride toward the NORTH GATEHOUSE. PEASANTS and MERCHANTS file through a pointed arch between twin stone towers decorated with a painted statue of KING PHILIP.

PARSIFAL

I've heard stories that the knights keep the Holy Grail itself inside. Do you think it could really be?

EBAN

It doesn't matter what I think. Only what you believe. But I do hear they keep something in their vaults so secret, so dangerous, they kill any who speak of it.

Parsifal takes in the severed HEADS on poles lining the road. CROWS feast on the eyes of the fresher ones.

PARSIFAL

I won't speak a word.

Eban laughs at Parsifal's fresh-faced alarm.

EBAN

Don't be frightened. Those heads
were taken by the King. Not
Templars protecting a Holy relic.

They cross a bridge over Shitbrook, a moat filled with trash
and sewage. Parsifal watches two half-naked men empty a
barrel of shit. Semi-wild HOGS swarm and set to eating it.

A FARMER tries to stop the CITY GUARDS from pillaging his
PRODUCE CART, and gets beaten face down into the mud.

Parsifal is shaken by the brutal and unjust violence.

EBAN (CONT'D)

Don't stare. Just smile and nod
like you've been here before.

Eban does just that, tossing a coin to a corrupt

CITY GUARD

who waves them through.

EXT. STREETS OF PARIS - DAY

The RABBLE-ROUSER whips up an even bigger crowd this time.

RABBLE-ROUSER

King said the Jews were the cause
of our problems! Kicked them out
and now it's worse than ever!

Eban stops his HORSE near the massive WOODEN GATES of the
fortress-like wall surrounding the Paris Temple.

EBAN

This is where we part ways.

Eban lowers Parsifal down from the horse.

PARSIFAL

Aren't you coming in?

Eban warily eyes the TEMPLAR GUARDS.

EBAN

No, we have business elsewhere.

PARSIFAL

God bless you for your kindness.

EBAN

Someone once did the same for me.
Be careful, friend. This city feeds
on kind hearts like yours.

EXT. PARIS TEMPLE - GATES

BEGGARS and PEASANTS plead for bread. SERGEANT BROTHERS in brown tunics close the gates as Parsifal pushes to the front.

PARSIFAL

Excuse me, sir!

He tugs the cloak of the CHAPLAIN BROTHER, GAWANE, 40s. He survived Acre, but with a permanent limp. Too lame for battle, he now saves brothers' souls by hearing their confessions and dealing out alms.

GAWANE

We're out. Come back tomorrow.

PARSIFAL

I don't want bread. I've come to
deliver a message.

A SERGEANT pushes Parsifal back.

SERGEANT

Deliver it tomorrow.

The GATES are almost shut - Parsifal pleads into the crack.

PARSIFAL

I swear by God, I have an urgent
message for the Master and
Commander of the Temple. I'm to
deliver it to his hand directly.

SERGEANT

His hand directly? Perhaps we
should rouse the King as well?

WHOOM. The GATES slam in Parsifal's face.

PARSIFAL

Sir Roger de Caux is dead! Killed
by highwaymen outside Orleans!

GAWANE

limps briskly, carrying ROGER'S SWORD, troubled. Behind him

THREE SERGEANTS

march Parsifal through the Temple grounds. A town within a town, with its own wharf, barns, mills, smithies and church. Part fortress, part monastery, women are forbidden here.

INT. PARIS TEMPLE - GRAND ROOM

A plain, but vast space of vaulted stone. Scores of bloody campaign banners hang from the ceiling. GAWANE shows ROGER'S SWORD to LANDRY who looks suspiciously back at

PARSIFAL

Now flanked by four SERGEANT BROTHERS, the young man realizes they're part escort, part jailers. He's become a *suspect*.

INT. TOWER STAIRCASE - MOMENTS LATER

Parsifal is led up a narrow winding staircase, afraid he's being marched to his doom inside some high dungeon.

THE MASTER'S CHAMBERS - MOMENTS LATER

Tancrede still struggles with his letter. The door bursts open and Parsifal is led in by Landry and Gawane.

PARSIFAL

Are you the Master, sir?

Parsifal drops to his knees and fumbles in his TUNIC for

THE LETTER

crumpled from the journey. He holds it up, head bowed.

TANCREDE

Get up, boy. Kneel to God and to the King, not to me.

Tancrede takes it, noticing the WAX SEAL is broken, then opens and quickly reads.

TANCREDE (CONT'D)

Hand me the sword.

Tancrede unsheathes THE SWORD, examines the handle, then unscrews the pommel. It's hollow. He pulls out a

SECRET MESSAGE

unrolling it. It too has a BROKEN WAX SEAL. It unfurls to reveal a series of arcane symbols. Some kind of Templar code. Tancrede's brow furrows as he reads.

TANCREDE (CONT'D)

Did you break these seals? Did you read these letters?

PARSIFAL

No, sir. They must have broken on the journey. I-I I can't read.

Tancrede looks the boy over, weighing whether to believe it.

TANCREDE

This says you risked your life for his and wills you his sword. Do you know how much this weapon is worth?

PARSIFAL

No, sir, I don't. But I can't accept it. It's too grand a gift.

TANCREDE

You must want gold then?

PARSIFAL

No. I want nothing. Just to keep my promise to Sir Roger.

The boy's integrity gives Tancrede pause.

TANCREDE

The gates are shut for the night. The brothers will show you to some dinner and a cot.

PARSIFAL

I won't accept charity, sir. If I stay the night and eat your food, you must have chores I can do to pay my way before I go.

TANCREDE

Very well. Gawane will find you work in the morning.

Tancrede eyes the sword as Gawane leads Parsifal out.

LANDRY

You trust him under our roof? The seals were broken. The letter might be fake.

TANCREDE

It's not Roger's hand. But they are his words. I believe the boy.

LANDRY

Assassins can impersonate anyone.

TANCREDE

That boy is no Assassin. I'm more worried that the world has grown so dark that Brigands attack our knights in broad daylight.

LANDRY

The world has always been dark, it's our reputation that's grown soft. We sit here getting fat and doing nothing. Let me ride out and bring them all to justice--

TANCREDE

No. I need you here.

Tancrede holds the CODED MESSAGE over a candle.

TANCREDE (CONT'D)

Roger's message tells me we have worse to worry about than highwaymen or Assassins.

Tancrede watches the FLAMES consume the message.

TANCREDE (CONT'D)

We have a traitor in our midst.

INT. ROYAL PALACE - GREAT HALL - NIGHT

A ROYAL DINNER is being set. MUSICIANS in a gallery above tune instruments as SERVANTS scurry below.

JOAN oversees things, while PHILIP stands off to one side, plotting something with DE NOGARET.

ISABELLA, 15, bursts in, full of energy.

ISABELLA

He's just came through the gates!

JOAN

Okay, places everyone.

INT. ROYAL PALACE - GREAT HALL - MOMENTS LATER

KING PHILIP and QUEEN JOAN sit with ISABELLA as lute and viols strike up in harmony to greet the GERMAN PRINCE, MARCO, 19, dashing, aloof, absurdly handsome.

DE MARIGNY
Prince Marco of Heisterbach!

PHILIP smiles tightly. Hates him already -- as he does anyone who challenges his enormous vanity.

JOAN smiles, moved by her daughter's youthful love and joy.

Isabella blushes furiously as MARCO bestows a wink.

EBAN

observes from the MUSICIAN'S GALLERY.

De NOGARET

sits beside him, mid negotiation.

DE NOGARET
Two thousand? Out of the question.

EBAN
Then three thousand.

DE NOGARET
Three? You're going the wrong way.

EBAN
I'm sure you can find someone else
if the price doesn't suit you.

Eban starts to stand, de Nogaret sits him back down.

DE NOGARET
I have heard the quality of your
workmanship is unparalleled.

EBAN
So perhaps we agree on four
thousand and part friends?

De Nogaret's eyes glimmer. He likes this guy.

INT. PARIS TEMPLE - BARRACKS - NIGHT

Parsifal carries a fresh fold of hemp sheets into a stone corridor of doorless bunk rooms. Each a Spartan cell with a simple bed and a cross on the wall.

SERGEANT
This one's yours for the night.

PARSIFAL
The whole thing?

Parsifal drops his linens on the straw mattress as

MARTIN THE DRAPER

shuffles in clicking his tongue as he runs rough fingers through Parsifal's disheveled hair.

DRAPER
Surprisingly clear of vermin. Off
with those rags so I can burn them.

PARSIFAL
My mum made this.

A LAY SERVANT brings in a plain BROWN ROBE, folded with a leather belt and hands it to Parsifal.

DRAPER
Then I shall return your finery to
you as you exit, sir.

INT. PARIS TEMPLE - PRE-DAWN

The TEMPLARS prostrate themselves as they pray, exactly like a Muslim would today, except facing East instead of Mecca. No medieval church had pews -- all Christians prayed this way.

Tancrede looks over, happy to see Landry has joined them.

The others chant with fervor and fire - true believers. Landry's eyes are dead, he's just going through the motions.

EXT. PARIS TEMPLE - SUNRISE

The CHANTS of MORNING PRAYERS and the TOLLING of CHURCH BELLS echo through the city, already bustling at first light.

EXT. PARIS TEMPLE - MORNING

GAWANE doles out bags of bread as LAYMEN, young recruits in plain brown robes, file up to get them.

GAWANE

Don't give it all away outside the Temple. Go into the city. Find the young, the sick and crippled. Those who can't make it to our gates!

PARSIFAL files up and Gawane hands him a sack of bread.

GAWANE (CONT'D)

Gareth, you know the streets, take this boy with you.

GARETH, 21, big lad, rough around the edges, gives an exasperated sigh and grabs Parsifal by the tunic.

EXT. STREET NEAR TEMPLE - MOMENTS LATER

Parsifal and Gareth haul sacks of bread down the street.

GARETH

You new then?

PARSIFAL

Not new. Just visiting.

GARETH

First things first. Follow me.

Gareth waves him into an alley.

INT. ALLEY - MOMENTS LATER

Gareth pulls a steaming loaf from his sack, digging in with relish. He hands a piece to Parsifal who hands it back.

PARSIFAL

We can't eat this. This bread is for the poor and hungry.

GARETH

Who is poorer than a laymen Templar? All the gold in the world beneath our feet, but can't even buy an apple from the market.

PARSIFAL

Are you hungry?

GARETH

Fuck yes, I'm hungry. Vows say we
only eat meat three times a week.

Gareth crosses himself at the profanity, chewing away.

PARSIFAL

Are you as hungry as she is?

Parsifal nods across the alley to an URCHIN GIRL, 7, covered
in dirt, bone thin, staring back at them.

GARETH

Oh, come on. That's not fair.

Gareth has lost his appetite. He throws her the bread. The
girl tears into it, overjoyed.

EXT. STREETS OF PARIS

Gareth and Parsifal walk the streets, rousing PEASANTS
sleeping rough in the street and handing out bread.

Parsifal turns down a narrow alley that seems a bit more
cramped and hopeless than the rest. Gareth stops him.

GARETH

No, not that street. Never go down
that way. That's the Swamp.

PARSIFAL

What's the Swamp?

GARETH

I just told you. It's where you
don't wanna go down. God's name
you're stupid.

PARSIFAL

Gawane said to hit every street, to
find every orphan...

GARETH

Yeah, easy for old one-leg to say,
he's safe behind the walls. Hey--

Parsifal heads on alone. Gareth watches him go.

GARETH (CONT'D)

Don't say I didn't warn you!

EXT. SWAMP QUARTER - MOMENTS LATER

ORPHANS and URCHINS swarm PARSIFAL as he hands them bread. A gold mine of hunger. Parsifal smiles in delight, until

THE ORPHANS

suddenly scatter like startled pigeons.

PARSIFAL

Wait! I have more...

A STREET GANG surrounds him -- THE RATS OF MISRULE - teens and kids in a hodgepodge of stolen clothes and angry swagger.

JAKE

19, the oldest, steps forward, one eye dragged to a perpetual scowl by the deep scar that runs down his cheek.

JAKE

We told you to stay off our street.

The YOUNG RUFFIAN Landry saved, QUINCY, parrots him.

QUINCY

That's right. Stay off!

PARSIFAL

I'm just handing out bread.

ADELINA, 19, slaps the bread from his hand. Her piercing yellow eyes are hauntingly familiar -- the child from Acre.

ADELINA

Church boy, you dumb? We don't want your charity. Get out of here!

Parsifal stares, struck. Despite her dangerous air, she is the most beautiful girl he's ever seen.

PARSIFAL

If you don't want bread why is everyone so hungry? There's plenty--

WHACK! Jake punches him in the eye and Parsifal goes down. The gang steals his BREAD BAG and runs off.

EXT. PARIS TEMPLE - LATER

Parsifal, sporting a black eye, walks back up to Gawane for another bag of BREAD.

GAWANE
You've paid your debt, son.

PARSIFAL
Give me the bag.

EXT. THE SWAMP - LATER

Parsifal walks back down into the swamp with a full bag of bread. Once again the RATS OF MISRULE surround him.

ADELINA
What is it with you?

PARSIFAL
I know people are hungry down here.
I've seen it.

JAKE
Well take a look at this.

WHACK! Parsifal goes down and the GANG again runs off with his BREAD BAG. Adelina hangs back as he crawls to his feet.

ADELINA
You are dumb, aren't you? Get out
of here and don't come back.

INT. PARIS TEMPLE - LATER

Parsifal, face even more battered, approaches Gawane in the kitchens. He's only got a few bags of bread left.

PARSIFAL
What if you turn the other cheek
and they just hit you again?

GAWANE
That's why we carry swords.

EXT. THE SWAMP - LATER

Parsifal hauls a new BREAD BAG into the SWAMP. The RATS OF MISRULE circle him in disbelief.

JAKE
All right then, church boy. Maybe
we haven't been clear enough.

Jake slides a KNIFE out of his sleeve.

ADELINA
 Jake, don't--

He rushes Parsifal, blade in fist.

SHWICK!! Jake stops short, four feet of shining TEMPLAR STEEL sharp against his throat --

--the old TEMPLAR'S SWORD held firm in Parsifal's hands.

Jake drops his KNIFE, holds up his hands in surrender.

Parsifal so badly wants to strike him his hand shakes.

PARSIFAL
 Now. I'm looking for the ones who
 can't make it out onto the street.
 Who will show me where they are?

The RATS all turn and run away -- except ADELINA.

ADELINA
 You really wanna see? I'll show
 you. But put that away before you
 hurt yourself.

EXT. WHARF ENTRANCE - LATER

Adelina lifts a sewer grate over a scary black pit.

ADELINA
 Afraid of the dark?

Parsifal steels himself and follows Adelina down.

INT. DARK TUNNEL - CONTINUOUS

Parsifal slips from the ladder, lands hard, sword clattering away. He feels on the ground, finds the hilt, GASPING as

A RAT

scurries over his outstretched fingers.

ADELINA
 Here. You won't be able to see, so
 you'll have to hold my hand.

She holds out her hand. He doesn't take it, shy.

ADELINA (CONT'D)
 Come on, it won't break your vows.

PARSIFAL
I haven't taken vows.

ADELINA
So why are you afraid?

He grabs her hand and she pulls him into the blackness.

EXT. PALACE - ROYAL GARDEN - DAY

The SUN burns down on MARCO and ISABELLA, walking arm-in-arm through the rose garden. HOLGA chaperones from ten feet behind, keeping a stern watch over the royal modesty.

MARCO
I'm not sure if that horny old
beast is there to stop our love, or
if she just wants to watch.

Isabella smiles, but troubles worry her brow.

MARCO (CONT'D)
What's wrong? I've never seen my
Isabella so distant.

ISABELLA
I heard them arguing about the
dowry again last night. My father
spends too much.

MARCO
Is that what's on your mind when
there's a Dragon chasing us!?

Marco pulls her into a GARDEN MAZE. A few turns and they are alone. He cups her face, looking into her eyes with passion.

MARCO (CONT'D)
Stop worrying. I have plenty. And
I'd give every penny to marry you.

Isabella, relieved, buries her head in Marco's tunic.

HOLGA (O.S.)
Isabella?! Where are you?

SPARKS

flare, finally catching into FLAME.

INT. DARK TUNNEL - UNDER PARIS

Adelina lights a crude oil lamp, illuminating rank water dripping from the walls of an ancient, deserted gypsum mine.

ADELINA

You can let go now.

Parsifal blushes, releasing her hand as she leads him into a

LOFTY CAVERN

SCORES of REFUGEES, mostly old and infirm, as well as children and MOTHERS huddle inside. Despairing eyes stare up.

PARSIFAL

Who are all these people?

ADELINA

Jews. The King trumped up stories to take their money and kick them out of France. These were too weak or too stubborn to leave.

Adelina helps him distribute the bread to grateful hands.

ADELINA (CONT'D)

If the King learns they're here. He'll kill them all. We Rats of Misrule keep people out of the swamp so they won't be found.

PARSIFAL

Why do you help them?

ADELINA

They're my family.

Parsifal stares at her. Stunned.

PARSIFAL

You're a Jew?

ADELINA

We're people, same as you. Just tell a different bedtime story. Did you expect me to have horns? That's what they teach, isn't it?

PARSIFAL

No. I just. I've never met one. I didn't expect one could be so...

Adelina pushes him against the wall, angry and defensive.

ADELINA
So what? Say it. Just say it.

Parsifal blushes, then blurts it out--

PARSIFAL
Beautiful.

Adelina glares into his eyes and sees he meant it.
She lets him go. It's her turn to blush.

ADELINA
I don't know if that was a
compliment or not. What good is
beauty in this world, anyway?

VOICE (O.S.)
ADELINA!

SIMON

50s, face lined with worry, collars her. The dad from Acre.

HANDS grab PARSIFAL from behind.

ADELINA
Uncle. It's okay! He's with me! He
brought us bread.

SIMON
He could bring us all death!

Jake, Quincy and the other RATS step forward.

JAKE
I say we kill him.

SIMON
Shut up, Jacob. We're not killing
anyone. Adelina, get him out. He
must never come back here.

INT. DESERTED MINES - EXIT TUNNEL

Adelina leads Parsifal out of the darkness and pulls on a
stubborn metal grate. It won't budge.

PARSIFAL
Let me help.

Parsifal wedges his sword in like a lever and pulls. The DOOR
grinds open, flooding the tunnel with light.

Adelina catches the LATIN INSCRIPTION on the TEMPLAR SWORD.

ADELINA
Per fidem ambula non per speciem.

PARSIFAL
You can read? What does that mean?

ADELINA
'Walk by faith, not by sight.'

EXT. CHURCH COURTYARD - DUSK

Parsifal steps into the sun as a MAUSOLEUM DOOR clangs shut behind him. He can hear a CHOIR singing. A divine moment.

EXT. PARIS TEMPLE - LATER

Parsifal walks back into the Temple with two black eyes, covered in filth, but smiling ear to ear.

DRAPER
Good God! Here less than a day and
already stink worse than a goat!
What have you done to my robe?

GAWANE spies the sword beneath his robe and collars him.

GAWANE
Shepherd. You come with me.

INT. MASTER'S QUARTERS - DAY

ROGER's SWORD lays on the table.

TANCREDE
You should have told me. I had men
scouring the castle for thieves.

PARSIFAL
I'm sorry, sir. I just borrowed it.

TANCREDE
Yes. Gawane tells me you have a
gift for charity. But if you're
going to carry a sword, you need
someone to show you how to use it.

Tancrede holds out the SWORD for him to take. Parsifal's eyes grow wide in awed disbelief.

TANCREDE (CONT'D)

I think Roger left this to you for a reason.

PARSIFAL

I'm just a shepherd.

TANCREDE

Landry was an orphan. Draper was son of a fishmonger. Where you come from doesn't matter here. Just what you do.

Parsifal lays his hand on the hilt. Wants to take it.

PARSIFAL

I can't accept this. I promised my mum I'd be back--

Parsifal hands back ROGER'S SWORD. Head bowed.

PARSIFAL (CONT'D)

I'm all she's got.

Tancrede takes the sword back, disappointed.

TANCREDE

All right, then. I'll have some men escort you to the city gates.

LANDRY

Wait. He can't leave tonight.

Tancrede - surprised Landry now wants Parsifal to stay.

LANDRY (CONT'D)

The streets aren't safe. Besides, he ruined the Draper's robe. He owes us at least another day.

EXT. STREETS OF PARIS - NIGHTFALL

A hungry MOB gathers around the RABBLE-ROUSER, many more now willing to shout angry insults at the KING.

RABBLE-ROUSER

The Templars give us bread to feed our families! What does the King give us?! Nothing! He steals our money to line his pockets with fur and leaves us starving!

The CROWD ROARS in approval, near rioting.

A city on the edge.

INT. ROYAL PALACE - NIGHT

ISABELLA and MARCO sit together on a stone bench beneath a large leaded glass picture window. His nuzzling turns to kissing, then his hand snakes up her dress.

ISABELLA

Stop. God will strike us dead if we stray before we're married.

MARCO

Isabella. God won't mind...

He renews his efforts - her head lolling in ecstasy as

CRASH!

A STONE flies in the window. Isabella SCREAMS, seeing a MOB of ANGRY PEASANTS brandishing torches on the streets below.

INT. ROYAL PALACE - THRONE ROOM - NIGHT

RED KNIGHTS encircle the throne room protectively. An elite killing force and the King's PERSONAL GUARD.

KING PHILIP sits on his throne, the QUEEN paces as PRINCE MARCO comforts the terrified ISABELLA.

DE MARIGNY and de NOGARET exchange worried glances.

PHILIP

What are they chanting? I want them all hung!

JOAN

We need to get off this island. It can't be defended.

PHILIP

Are you an expert in military strategy now, love? Please leave that to me and my men.

JOAN

I left it to you with Longshanks, and where did that get us? I won *my* battles, Philip, and my head is on the line here too. We need to leave the city, now. While we can.

DE MARIGNY

Sire, I think that may be wise. At least until our men can round up the instigators and restore order.

PHILIP

You expect me to run from this rabble? No. This is my city, my kingdom. No mob of peasants will rule me. I rule them! Round them up now. Hang them in the streets!

EXT. STREETS OF PARIS - NIGHTFALL

The KING'S KNIGHTS charge into the MOB, beating the RABBLE-ROUSER bloody. The CROWD presses forward in protest.

RABBLE-ROUSER

Resist! Together we--

A SWORD cuts short his shout. The RABBLE-ROUSER looks down in horror at the steel he is now impaled on.

EXT. TEMPLE OF PARIS - BATTLEMENTS - NIGHT

Landry stares across the city, hearing SHOUTS of unrest. A forest of torches already flicker in the dark, streaming like a surging river of light toward the center of the city.

LANDRY

They're going to storm the Palace.

TANCREDE

Perhaps he should have thought about that before he stole from every citizen of France.

LANDRY

The walls aren't finished, if that mob breaks through, they'll kill everyone inside. Women, children.

TANCREDE

We protect their money. The King can protect himself.

LANDRY

His knights are mercenaries. They'll kill innocent people--

TANCREDE

No! We're not a sanctuary for royals, however wayward they may be. We have God's house to protect.

LANDRY

This is not God's house! It's a monument of money. Christ would spit in our faces if he saw this!

TANCREDE

Mind your tongue.

LANDRY

It's why brigands kill our knights!
Why lawyers threaten our lives!
It's why we lost the Holy Land!

Landry SLAMS his way out the door, furious.

THE TWISTED BODY

of the RABBLE-ROUSER is hoisted up to dangle from the bridge leading across the river.

The GUARDS tying it off see the MOB bear down. The King's message didn't quell the riot, but rather inflamed it.

KINGS GUARD

Barricades! Protect the palace!

INT. PALACE - NIGHT

The CROWD outside rages noticeably louder and closer. PHILIP flips playing cards into a HELMET on the floor.

DE NOGARET sees even his RED KNIGHTS are uneasy.

JOAN

Can you not hear the chanting?
They've had to barricade the
bridges. They call for your head.

PHILIP

Ants once tried to eat my dinner.

DE MARIGNY

Sire, perhaps you should heed the
Queen. We can still head south.

PHILIP

We're not going anywhere!

Cards fly as he stands, kicking the helmet in rage.

EXT. ISLAND OF THE CITY - NIGHT

THE MOB presses against the PIKEMAN nervously manning the crude barricades that block the bridges.

YOUNG PIKEMAN
Half the city's out there.

HEAD PIKEMAN
If we gut the first two, the rest
will back off, don't worry.

RIOTER #1
Tell the King his head won't be so
pretty when we're done!

CHEERS erupt. THE CROWD surges suddenly, throwing the front row of PROTESTORS forward. The YOUNG PIKEMAN looks down in horror as his PIKE accidentally impales a YOUNG WOMAN.

WOMAN
OH! God--

She falls back, gouting blood and the CROWD goes mad.

YOUNG PIKEMAN
I didn't mean to--

No use. ANGRY HANDS claw at his throat and he is soon swallowed, crushed beneath scores of trampling feet.

Emboldened to a frenzy, THE MOB scales the barricades.

EXT. TEMPLE BATTLEMENTS - NIGHT

Tancrede gazes out across the city toward NOTRE DAME. FIRES burn in the streets around the palace. He glances down onto

THE TRAINING GROUND

where Landry vents his frustration in a controlled rage, remorselessly hacking a WOOD DUMMY to bits.

A war outside and a warrior not allowed to fight.

EXT. ROYAL PALACE - OUTER WALL

The MOB surges toward the palace gates, a hundred pairs of grimy hands seizing steel and shaking.

The GATES groan - then give -- the crowd surges in.

The KING'S GUARD forms up, but the MOB simply engulfs them.

INT. ROYAL PALACE - THRONE ROOM - NIGHT

The KING, QUEEN, DE NOGARET, DE MARIGNY all freeze as they hear the CROWD now inside the PALACE, baying for blood.

MARCO

Don't be afraid, Isabella.

Marco draws his sword as the DOORS crash open -- it's Marco's PERSONAL GUARD, five black-armored KNIGHTS.

LEAD GERMAN KNIGHT

<They've broken through!>

INT. ROYAL PALACE - BACK CORRIDORS

The RED KNIGHTS usher the ROYAL FAMILY down a back corridor as SHOUTS now echo from within the palace.

Isabella looks back in concern as MARCO's KNIGHTS steer him down a different corridor.

ISABELLA

Marco! Wait! We lost Marco!

PHILIP

He's with his men, he's fine.

Isabella clings to her mother as she's forced to retreat.

EXT. ROYAL PALACE - CORRIDOR - NIGHT

Marco struggles against his PERSONAL GUARD.

MARCO

No! I've got to protect Isabella!

RIOTERS pour into the CORRIDOR between them.

LEAD GERMAN KNIGHT

<Hold them, I'll secure the prince.>

The LEAD KNIGHT pulls Marco up a tower staircase.

INT. TOWER STAIRCASE - NIGHT

The LEAD KNIGHT herds MARCO up the stairs.

MARCO

<We should be going down. Not up!>

LEAD KNIGHT

<There's a safe room up here.>

EXT. TOWER SUMMIT - NIGHT

They burst onto the battlement. Marco looks around, angry.

MARCO

<This isn't a safe room.>

A BLADE FLASHES, Marco's eyes go wide as the LEAD KNIGHT's DAGGER pierces his heart.

Marco falls, dying.

The IMPOSTER KNIGHT tosses aside his helmet.

It's EBAN the Assassin.

EXT. ROYAL PALACE - BACK ENTRANCE - LATER

The RED KNIGHTS push the KING, QUEEN and ISABELLA into a carriage -- de NOGARET gets up with the DRIVER.

MARCO'S FALLING BODY

hits the pavement in front of them.

ISABELLA stares, disbelieving, then SCREAMS. JOAN, also horrified, covers her daughter's eyes, squeezing her tight.

The CROWD surges from the castle as de NOGARET flicks the reins, DE MARIGNY clinging to the top like a frightened cat.

The CARRIAGE tears from the courtyard just ahead of the MOB.

EXT. STREETS OF PARIS - MOMENTS LATER

The ROYAL CARRIAGE streaks across a bridge cleared by RED KNIGHTS and away from the MOB.

INT. ROYAL CARRIAGE - NIGHT

ISABELLA sobs into her mother's chest, inconsolable as QUEEN JOAN rides across from KING PHILIP, furious.

JOAN

Philip, you are a fool!

PHILIP
 If they'd hung more of them, this
 nonsense would have stopped.

The KING puts his hand on hers.

PHILIP (CONT'D)
 Calm down. We're safe now. They'll
 all pay dearly for this.

She pulls away, disgusted.

JOAN
 Don't you see anything?!

The CARRIAGE suddenly lurches.

EXT. STREETS OF PARIS - NIGHT

A crude wall of broken furniture blocks the road. DE NOGARET
 reins the carriage to a stop.

DE NOGARET
 Turn around!

The HORSES panic as DE NOGARET tries to wheel them around in
 the narrow street -- too late.

RIOTERS flood in like water from all directions and swarm
 over the ROYAL CARRIAGE like ants.

Scores of hands shake the wheels, ripping one off.

INT. CARRIAGE - INTERCUT

ISABELLA SCREAMS. The carriage reels. Grubby paws reach in,
 meaty hands grab hold of PHILIP's ermine robe.

PEASANT
 I've got him! PULL!

Philip beats back the hand, his ROBE ripping.

THE QUEEN SCREAMS

as a hand grabs her from the other side --
 yanking her out!

EXT. CARRIAGE - CONTINUOUS

The QUEEN'S SCREAM is cut short -- the hand is covered in a shining steel gauntlet and belongs to

LANDRY

astride his war horse. A literal KNIGHT-IN-SHINING-ARMOR. He places her gently on the saddle behind him.

TEMPLAR KNIGHTS

encircle the ROYAL CARRIAGE, pressing the CROWD BACK with the bodies of their great WAR HORSES.

Not hurting PEOPLE, just crowd control.

TANCREDE

pulls KING PHILIP onto his horse --

GAWANE

hardly recognizable out of his robes, grabs ISABELLA.

TWO OTHER TEMPLARS

rescue DE NOGARET and DE MARIGNY.

The RIOTERS rush back in, splitting the TEMPLARS:

LANDRY and the QUEEN

are forced to the right.

TANCREDE, GAWANE and others to the left --

LANDRY
Hold on, My Lady.

The QUEEN reaches around him, holding on tight.

LANDRY

rides through the CROWD, racing down an empty street.

EXT. STREETS OF PARIS

Landry steers around a corner, then stops at the high wall of a CHURCH. The sound of the MOB growing closer behind them.

JOAN
Why are you stopping?

LANDRY

The way ahead is blocked. Come.

Landry stands on his saddle and pulls her up onto the wall. He smacks his horse, sending it running off.

INT. CHURCH COURTYARD - NIGHT

Landry helps the Queen down into a church courtyard - a small grove of moonlit fruit trees.

The GATE to the courtyard RATTLES and they hear the YELLS of the MOB passing by outside.

LANDRY

We need to get to higher ground.

Landry looks up at the BELL TOWER rising above them.

THE TEMPLE GATES

open and TANCREDE, GAWANE and the other TEMPLARS ride in with the ROYAL FAMILY, lowering them safely from their horses.

PHILIP

Isabella? Where are you?

Isabella finds her father through the chaos and they hug.

ISABELLA

Where's Mother?

Philip looks around. No sign of the Queen.

TANCREDE

They were forced south. But I can assure you, she is safe.

PHILIP

Are you sure?

TANCREDE

She's with our best knight. He'd die before he let harm come to her.

PHILIP

All right then. Anyone else need a drink? You monks do drink, yes?

DE NOGARET

Like Templars they drink.

INT. CHURCH - BELL TOWER - NIGHT

Landry looks out across the city as it burns.

LANDRY

They've taken the bridges. We'll have to stay here for the night.

JOAN

My daughter? Is she safe?

LANDRY

I'd lay my life on it. But we can try to get back now if you'd like.

JOAN

No. If you're sure, let's wait.

Landry strains to slide a heavy broken CHURCH BELL over the trap door. They are suddenly and uncomfortably alone.

JOAN (CONT'D)

Alice likes you.

LANDRY

Who?

JOAN

My handmaiden. You know, the pretty blonde one. You sure you haven't been making eyes at her?

LANDRY

I don't think I've ever even looked in her direction.

Joan reaches behind her neck, loosening a necklace.

JOAN

Don't worry. I told her you were a monk. I told her you'd taken vows.

She eases the dress from her shoulders.

It falls at her feet in a silken heap.

JOAN (CONT'D)

Besides. You're *my* knight.

She slides her arms around his neck, naked.

JOAN (CONT'D)

My champion.

He looks into her eyes, his own full of love and desire.

They embrace.

INT. PARIS TEMPLE - KITCHENS

Parsifal and Gareth haul cases of WINE up from the cellar.

GARETH

As if we ain't got enough to do,
now we gotta serve the King...

PARSIFAL

I've never seen a King.

GARETH

Lucky you.

INT. TEMPLAR GRAND HALL - NIGHT

As the city burns, THE KING and his COURT party. Some of the TEMPLARS also drink -- in fact more than a few are drunk.

PHILIP

Is this Benedictine or Cistercian?
How do these monks have better wine
than me?

DE NOGARET

It's the very best kind of wine,
Sire. The free kind.

PHILIP

In that case. Bring more!

The RED KNIGHTS all cheer, banging the tables.

INT. PARIS TEMPLE - MASTER'S CHAMBERS - NIGHT

Tancrede stares at the empty page again, distracted by the unrest from the city and the celebration below.

TANCREDE

I thought the excitement might help
me write. All it did was exhaust me
and empty our wine cellar.

Draper is across from him, chuckling. A KNOCK at the door.

TANCREDE (CONT'D)

You may enter.

Parsifal steps through the door.

TANCREDE (CONT'D)
 What can I do for you?

PARSIFAL
 About tomorrow.

TANCREDE
 I've already arranged an escort to
 get you home.

PARSIFAL
 About that, sir. I was wondering if
 I might send a message instead.

Tancrede raises an eyebrow.

TANCREDE
 You want to stay?

PARSIFAL
 Yes, sir.

TANCREDE
 And what about your mother?

PARSIFAL
 She'll be fine, sir. She has a
 whole village to protect her.

Tancrede looks at him, not quite understanding.

PARSIFAL (CONT'D)
 But here, it's different. There's a
 whole city of people who got no
 one. And that's a proper knight's
 job, isn't it? Protecting those who
 can't protect themselves.

Tancrede sits back, a light rekindled in his eyes.

TANCREDE
 Report back to your quarters. You
 can start training in the morning.
 And take your sword with you.

Parsifal grabs the SWORD and exits, beyond grateful.

TANCREDE (CONT'D)
 I believe that boy may have just
 helped me finish my letter.

Tancrede grabs the quill, scribbling away. Inspired.

TANCREDE (CONT'D)
 From the mouths of babes...

DRAPER
...into the minds of old fools.

EXT. CHURCH - BELL TOWER - NIGHT

Landry and the Queen stare at each other with intense, satisfied longing. This isn't just sex. It's love.

JOAN
I want to see you more. Every day.

LANDRY
No. It's too dangerous.

Joan pins him down, mounting him playfully.

JOAN
I am your Queen. You can't refuse me. Are you worried your Order will find out you're breaking your vows?

LANDRY
No. Your husband. I know the type. He'd try to hurt you.

She slides off him, sobered.

JOAN
What about God? Aren't you the least bit afraid he'll be upset?

LANDRY
I don't know. The closest I've come to feeling his presence in fifteen years is when I'm with you.

JOAN
Well, nothing unholy about that.

She kisses him, reaching down between his legs.

JOAN (CONT'D)
And since I've only got you for such a short time, I say we spend the night wallowing in our sin...

INT. PARIS TEMPLE - GRAND HALL - NIGHT

Empty bottles litter the floor. RED KNIGHT and TEMPLAR alike are passed out around the room. A few drunkenly engage in silly contests of drinking or strength.

Philip leans in to De Nogaret.

PHILIP

Just how much gold do you think
they have in here?

DE NOGARET

A dragon's hoard, Sire.

De NOGARET sneaks a KEY RING off a passed out TEMPLAR.

DE NOGARET (CONT'D)

Perhaps I can arrange a tour.

TANCREDE

writes his letter, words flowing from his quill. Channeling
the purity and hope of Parsifal.

TANCREDE (V.O.)

The Knights Templar weren't founded
simply to protect a far off place.

INT. PARSIFAL'S ROOM - NIGHT

Parsifal hangs ROGER'S SWORD opposite the cross, then sits on
the bed, taking in his new home. He has found a higher
calling and a true purpose -- one he didn't know he lacked.

TANCREDE (V.O.)

We were founded to protect pilgrims.

INT. ROYAL PALACE - NIGHT

The RATS OF MISRULE, dressed in baggy and ridiculous royal
robes, walk down the hall, looting as they go.

TANCREDE (V.O.)

To keep people safe on long
journeys through dangerous lands.

EXT. CHURCH - BELL TOWER - NIGHT

Landry and the Queen sleep naked, entwined in the folds of
his TEMPLAR ROBE. For once, the faces of the haunted soldier
and the worried queen are both at peace.

TANCREDE (V.O.)

In the end, aren't we all pilgrims?

INT. PARIS TEMPLE - MASTER'S CHAMBERS - NIGHT

Tancrede presses the **TEMPLAR SEAL**, two **KNIGHTS** sharing the same horse, into hot wax on the finished letter. Grateful.

TANCREDE (V.O.)
 Don't we all need someone to be our
 light when darkness draws near?

INT. PARIS TEMPLE - BASEMENT VAULT - NIGHT

De NOGARET and THE KING stare through the cross-hatched bars at the treasure of the **TEMPLARS**. Precious gems, the **ROYAL JEWELS**, chests and chest of **SILVER** and **GOLD**.

KING PHILIP is struck sober by it's grandeur.

PHILIP
 I never dreamed they had so much.

DE NOGARET
 This is nothing...

DE NOGARET points to an **INNER VAULT** of **SOLID STEEL**.

DE NOGARET (CONT'D)
 My spies tell me the real treasure
 lies behind that door.

We move through a foot of **SOLID STEEL DOOR** into the deepest, most secret vault of the **TEMPLARS**.

There on a stone altar is the **BLACK BOX** from Acre.

DE NOGARET (O.S.) (CONT'D)
 They say there is a box, inside
 which is a power beyond measure.

INT. PARIS TEMPLE - BASEMENT VAULT - CONTINUOUS

PHILIP can't stop staring at the glinting hoard.

PHILIP
 I'll take the gold.

Inside their eyes, plans are being hatched.

FADE TO BLACK.

END OF SHOW