

Episode Three

The Secret Book of Grazia dei Rossi

Written by Jim Purdy

Based on the novel by Jacqueline Park

Leader Media Productions Limited
1200 Bay Street, Suite 506
Toronto, ON M4V 2A5

416 963-9836

November 2020

"The Secret Book of Grazia dei Rossi
Episode Three"

Opening Credits

1 INT. ISABELLA'S ROOM, PALAZZO COLONNA, ROMA - DAY 1

Mature Grazia enters.

MATURE GRAZIA
Good morning, madama.

Mature Isabella is fussed over by two LADIES-IN-WAITING.

MATURE ISABELLA
Good morning, signorina ebrea.
(to the ladies-in-
waiting)
That will be all for now, thank you.

The Ladies-in-Waiting scurry out.

MATURE GRAZIA
Have you received any word from
Marchese Federico?

MATURE ISABELLA
Yes. Our strategy proved successful.
The German army passed through Mantova
without incident and without
compromising our neutrality.

MATURE GRAZIA
Then your beloved son deserves high
praise for his diplomatic skills.

MATURE ISABELLA
Yes. Except now the two German armies
are united and heading this way. It
is only a matter of time before Roma
itself is under siege by those
barbarians. He says General
Frundsberg has a silk rope knotted
to his saddle that he intends to use
to hang the Holy Father.

MATURE GRAZIA
What do you intend to do?

1 CONTINUED:

1

MATURE ISABELLA

I will have to purchase a red hat
from His Holiness.

MATURE GRAZIA

Red hat?

MATURE ISABELLA

Cardinalship. The Pope will sell
them to powerful families to raise
the money to try to bribe the Germans
off. My son, Ercole, he will make a
fine cardinal. And that is the sole
reason I have come to Roma. To secure
a red hat for Ercole.

MATURE GRAZIA

You Christians do have peculiar
practices.

MATURE ISABELLA

How is your son?

Mature Grazia hesitates a moment, and then...

MATURE GRAZIA

He is very well, madama.

MATURE ISABELLA

You and he have been here some time
now and I have yet to welcome him.

MATURE GRAZIA

He understands how very busy and
preoccupied you are with such
important, worldly affairs...

MATURE ISABELLA

No, it is not right. I must greet
him. Quickly, Grazia, fetch the
boy.

Mature Grazia bows and retreats, not happy at this request.

2 INT. CORRIDOR, PALAZZO COLONNA, ROMA - DAY

2

Mature Grazia hurries along the resplendent corridor lined
with art works, a look of deep apprehension on her face.

3 INT. ISABELLA'S ROOM, PALAZZO COLONNA, ROMA - DAY 3

Danilo stands before Mature Isabella who studies him very closely.

Mature Grazia observes tensely at a distance.

MATURE ISABELLA
When were you born?

DANILO
I was born in the year 1516.

MATURE ISABELLA
Ah yes, the same year as the battle
of Marignano.

DANILO
Oh no, madonna. Marignano was fought
in 1515. My father was wounded there.

MATURE ISABELLA
Oh, in 1515, of course. I remember.
Your father was carried home to
Venezia more dead than alive.
(pauses)
And you were born just after that.
1516. Yes...

Mature Grazia is very tense over this exchange.

4 INT INT. MATURE GRAZIA'S ROOM, PALAZZO COLONNA - NIGHT 4

Mature Grazia sits at her table writing her secret book. It is clear that she has been living there for some time and has moved in and unpacked, with some of her own belongings and artwork on display. This includes a not-quite-seen portrait.

MATURE GRAZIA (V.O.)
My beloved son and confidant, I share
with you, and with you alone, the
deepest secrets of my past in this
libri segreti. You now know of my
great shame - my flight from my
family, my religion, my people - all
for the love of a Christian.

DISSOLVE TO:

5 EXT. DEI ROSSI HOUSE, MANTOVA - DAY

5

Title over in handwritten Renaissance script:

Mantova

1492

MATURE GRAZIA (V.O.)

And you now know of my betrayal, of
how my love was then betrothed to
another. The news of my shame spread
among the Jews north to Venezia and
south to Napoli. My shame meant
marriage was no longer possible.

6 INT. GRAZIA'S BEDROOM, DEI ROSSI HOUSE, MANTOVA - DAY

6

YOUNG JEHIEL, 16, sits on the edge of the bed holding a bowl
of soup to Grazia's lips. GRAZIA, 17, appears weak and wan.

MATURE GRAZIA (V.O.)

I fell into blackness. I have only
fleeting impressions of the following
days. Then, the clear sight of a
beloved face, the sound of a familiar
voice.

YOUNG JEHIEL

Take a little of this *minestra*,
sister.

Grazia focuses on Young Jehiel and is immediately relieved.

MATURE GRAZIA (V.O.)

My family, whom I had abandoned and
so shamed, brought me home and did
everything to nurse me back to health.

PAPA and CHILD GERSHOM, age 5, appear at the bottom of the
bed. FINGEBAT pops up as well.

GERSHOM

Is she going to die? Is Grazia going
to die like Mama?

MATURE GRAZIA (V.O.)

They even brought in the very best
doctor in all of Italy.

6 CONTINUED:

6

JUDAH (LEONE) DEL MEDIGO - aged 30, well-dressed, tall, intelligent, leans into view over the bed, a presence full of strength, compassion, and generosity. He smiles down at her.

GRAZIA

Maestro Leone...

JUDAH

Judah. The Christians call me Leone
but I insist on my Hebrew name, Judah.

She smiles up at him.

MATURE GRAZIA (V.O.)

Three days were all it took for Judah
to cure me.

7 INT. GRAZIA'S BEDROOM, DEI ROSSI HOUSE, MANTOVA - DAY

7

Grazia eases out of her bedroom looking wan and weak. She moves down the hallway while a woman's WAILING can be heard from a distant room.

RICCA, 21, scurries away from Grazia with a scowl.

Grazia slinks down the hallway as the WAILING becomes distinct. It comes from Dorotea in her room.

DOROTEA (O.S.)

Ohhhh!... Ohhhh!! The shame!!....

And my poor Ricca! Ohhhh!

(sobbing and crying)

Who will marry her?... Who will marry

her now?... Ohhhh, the shame that

Grazia, that shameless, selfish,
profane blasphemer, the shame she

has brought upon this house...

(sobbing and crying)

Grazia eases past the open bedroom and peers in to see...

DOROTEA, late 30s, unkempt in her bed, CRYING and WAILING and SNIFFLING.

MATURE GRAZIA (V.O.)

That I could never marry, never know
intimacy with a man, was of no
consequence to me. I had lost the
only man whom I would ever love,
could ever imagine loving.

7 CONTINUED:

7

DOROTEA
My poor innocent virgin... Doomed to
spinsterhood... Ohhhhh!!!

Grazia moves past the door in disgrace.

8 EXT. STREETS OF MANTOVA - DAY

8

Grazia strolls through the streets with Judah. They are
engaged in a lively conversation. Fingebat follows them.

MATURE GRAZIA (V.O.)
The fourth day, his prescription was
a walk in the fresh air. With the
good doctor as my escort.

9 INT. STUDIO, DEI ROSSI HOUSE, MANTOVA - DAY

9

Grazia talks with Papa in his studio.

MATURE GRAZIA (V.O.)
Once I was cured, I was called into
my father's *studiolo* to hear the
punishment I must suffer for my
shameful transgressions against my
family and my religion. I had
sacrificed everything for Lord Pirro.
And I had lost him. Life alone for
the rest of my days was now trifling.

PAPA
Marriage.

GRAZIA
Well, I... I understand I must banish
all such thoughts since I have
disgraced myself much too far...

PAPA
Grazia, Grazia! No, no. You are
forgiven.

Grazia is taken aback.

PAPA (CONT'D)
God has taken pity on you. He has
sent you a husband.

GRAZIA
Who?

9 CONTINUED:

9

PAPA

Your hand has been requested by no
less a personage than Leone del
Medigo.

GRAZIA

Maestro Judah, the doctor? Wants to
marry me?

PAPA

He made the offer this morning. I
have accepted.

Grazia sits there stunned at this turn of events.

PAPA (CONT'D)

We are very fortunate. Such a man.
Physician, scholar, philosopher.

10 EXT. GARDEN, DEI ROSSI HOUSE, MANTOVA - EVENING

10

Judah del Medigo glides up to Grazia sitting on a bench with
Fingebat.

PAPA (V.O.)

He has the ear of the Medicis and
the support of powerful Christians.
And tutor and advisor to Count Pico
of Mirandola.

JUDAH

May I join you, Grazia?

GRAZIA

If you wish to, sir.

He sits beside her on the bench.

JUDAH

Your face is flushed, Grazia. Let
me feel your forehead.
(feels her forehead)
Hmmm, no fever.

GRAZIA

I am blushing, sir... I am shy.

JUDAH

But we know one another so well.

GRAZIA

But everything is different now.

10 CONTINUED:

10

JUDAH

We are still friends, are we not?

She nods in agreement, wondering what he means.

JUDAH (CONT'D)

Well, then, let us dispense with this idea of wife for a moment and talk of friends. Loving friends.

(takes her hand)

Companions in learning and in life. Partners. Confidants. I will soothe you with unguents. You will succor me with soft words. And we will read together. But above all, we will be loving friends. That is my proposal.

She says nothing, disguising her concern over such a passionless proposition. Then, the sound of POUNDING HORSES HOOVES.

11 EXT. COUNTRYSIDE OUTSIDE MANTOVA - DAY

11

Grazia is astride a chestnut bay, galloping full tilt, hair loose and flying, horse's mane flowing, her face set with determination - as if fleeing from something.

With her, Young Jehiel, riding a horse across the countryside.

They gallop into the forest.

12 EXT. FOREST NEAR MANTOVA - DAY

12

Grazia leads the way into the forest.

She reins in her horse in the small glade of aspens with the small stone basin and bubbling spring: the Basco Fontana, where she first made love to Pirro.

Young Jehiel gallops up and stops, wondering why she has stopped.

She stares from her PANTING steed at the glade and fountain.

YOUNG JEHIEL

What is it, sister? Do you see something?

She doesn't answer but stares at the empty glade.

12 CONTINUED:

12

When suddenly they both do see something - two riders approaching from the far side of the forest.

Grazia and Young Jehiel observe...

The riders getting closer and more distinct: one is a woman in a hunting hat with a long plume, the other a man with a distinctly noble demenaour.

Grazia stares closely as...

The riders move closer. The woman is young, noble, well-dressed, unknown to Grazia: PRINCESS OF SAVOIA.

The man is LORD PIRRO, 21, like Triton astride his sea horse.

Grazia blanches, staring intensely while trying not to. Her horse SNORTS and WHINNIES.

Pirro and the Princess ride up and past, neither looking up.

Grazia stares at him, her emotions welling up and ripping out of her despite her best efforts to contain them.

At the very last second, Pirro seems to turn and glance at her for the briefest moment, but then rides onward, away.

She yanks her horse around and gallops off pell mell in the opposite direction.

Young Jehiel spurs his own horse after her, SHOUTING.

YOUNG JEHIEL (CONT'D)
Grazia!... Grazia...

But she is riding like a fury, recklessly charging through the forest, past trees, beneath branches - desperately fleeing her pain.

Young Jehiel hopelessly tries to catch up, CALLING OUT to her.

She plunges onwards, exploding out of the forest straight to a fence. She crouches low and...

Leaps over the fence into an open field where, suddenly:

A BUZZING ROAR, the HORSE SHRIEKS, and Grazia is batting the air with her hands and arms.

Bees swarm around her and the horse until...

The horse collapses and Grazia is thrown into the mud.

13 INT. GRAZIA'S ROOM, DEI ROSSI HOUSE, MANTOVA - DAY

13

Judah leans over, gently cleansing...

Grazia's wounds and welts that pimple her swollen face.

JUDAH

Up until a few months ago, I would
have applied a poultice of cow ordure.
But I have now developed a new unguent
for such emergencies.

Off to the side, SNIFFLING, Dorotea observes out of propriety.

JUDAH (CONT'D)

(to Dorotea)

I used it with great success on a
bravo or two in the Borgia circle.

Dorotea nods and SNIFFLES, suitably impressed.

Grazia winces at his touch.

He applies his touch even more gently.

JUDAH (CONT'D)

Tell me, Grazia. Why were you riding
in such a reckless fashion in that
wood?

Grazia tries to answer, but her swollen lips will not form
the words distinctly.

GRAZIA

Aoww aws wryeen oo...wryeen wun way...

Dorotea strains to understand, but cannot.

Judah LAUGHS.

JUDAH

Ah, my learned scholar with three
languages and a gift for rhetoric.
Cannot form a single syllable.

She is not amused.

He turns away and retrieves a small gift from his bag.

13 CONTINUED:

13

JUDAH (CONT'D)
Here, this might improve your
disposition and effect a quicker
cure.

She takes the gift and unwraps it, her swollen hands unsteady.

Dorotea cranes for a better look.

Judah observes Grazia tenderly.

The wrapping is pulled away to reveal a ring of delicate yellow
gold studded with a sparkling diamond.

Grazia stares at it in astonishment, then looks to Judah and
struggles to say "Thank you".

JUDAH (CONT'D)
(laughs)
Woh weowcome.

Grazia LAUGHS, but immediately stops at the pain.

Dorotea spots the ring, SNIFFLES, and scowls in envy.

14 INT. DEI ROSSI HOUSE, MANTOVA - DAY

14

RABBI ABRAMO, elderly, officious, pompous, studies the ring
on Grazia's finger. Behind him, Dorotea SNIFFLES with
satisfaction.

RABBI ABRAMO
This ring will not do! You must
return it to the bridegroom at once!

Grazia, her swelling partially subsided, is taken aback.
Dorotea smirks in gratification.

He pulls the ring from her finger.

RABBI ABRAMO (CONT'D)
The sages tell us that only a plain
gold band will do as a wedding ring.
No jewels. No gems. No decoration.

15 INT. ENTRANCEWAY, DEI ROSSI HOUSE, MANTOVA - DAY

15

BANG, BANG, BANG angrily on the door. A Servant hurries to
the door and pulls it open to reveal Judah, who steps in upset.

JUDAH

Where is Maestro dei Rossi? I demand
to see him now!

CUT TO:

Papa scurrying in to where Judah stands pacing in anger.

JUDAH (CONT'D)

What is this absurd nonsense about
my betrothal ring?!

CUT TO:

Rabbi Abramo obsequiously scurrying in to Judah and Papa.

Around the edges of the room, on the stairs and in doorways,
others observe: Grazia, Dorotea, Young Jehiel, Child Gershom,
Ricca, and several servants.

JUDAH (CONT'D)

Now what are these foolish and
unsubstantiated objections to my
bride's gift?

RABBI ABRAMO

It says, clearly, in the Talmud,
maestro, that...

JUDAH

The Talmud says nothing clearly, you
fool. If any adjective in the world
is inappropriate to the Talmud it is
the word "clear".

Rabbi Abramo bows and nods like an upbraided child.

Grazia revels in Judah's forcefulness.

Others observe in amazed amusement.

JUDAH (CONT'D)

Now, as for the insult you have
perpetrated upon me and, more
importantly, upon my bride-to-be...

All eyes turn to Grazia.

JUDAH (CONT'D)

To be given a gift of love and to
have it whisked away by an ignorant
busybody.

15 CONTINUED: (2)

15

Rabbi Abramo seems to shrink in mortification.

Dorotea SNIFFLES and retreats into an alcove.

JUDAH (CONT'D)

Listen, for I will say this only once.

All lean forward to hear.

JUDAH (CONT'D)

The wedding ring is never mentioned in the Torah. Never mentioned. Only one form of marriage is recognized in the Great Book - marriage by consummation. To be blunt, the Torah tells us that a marriage is sanctified by the act of copulation.

Grazia listens with particular interest.

Others react with bemusement, Child Gershom with puzzlement.

JUDAH (CONT'D)

Do you follow me?

Rabbi Abramo nods yes. So does everyone observing.

JUDAH (CONT'D)

Genesis, Chapter Twenty-four: "And Isaac brought Rebecca" - his bride - "into his mother's tent and took Rebecca and she became his wife and he loved her." The *taking* of Rebecca sanctified the marriage in the eyes of the Lord. Should it not be enough to satisfy the rest of us, Rabbi?

RABBI ABRAMO

But.. But the ring...

JUDAH

Of what significance is the ring?! In the eyes of the Lord, consummation sanctifies the marriage. Of what significance is the ring?

Rabbi Abramo says nothing. All is silent and everyone stares and waits. Finally,

15 CONTINUED: (3)

15

YOUNG JEHIEL

Well, of what significance is the ring?

JUDAH

Of absolutely no significance whatsoever!!!

He strides over to Grazia, takes her hand, and slides the ring onto her finger.

JUDAH (CONT'D)

Except as a token of my commitment to Grazia.

Grazia looks at him very impressed as everyone CHEERS and LAUGHS.

MATURE GRAZIA (V.O.)

Could I, in this man's arms, forget those other arms that once held me so fervently?

16 INT. SYNAGOGUE, MANTOVA - DAY

16

A wine glass shatters against the wall amidst CHEERS of CHAIM and MAZEL.

Grazia and Judah stand beneath the canopy in their wedding costumes, facing a different RABBI.

MATURE GRAZIA (V.O.)

Could I, after all, feel the stirrings of passion and love I thought had been lost to me forever?

Around them cheering are Papa, Young Jehiel, Child Gershom, and dozens of well-dressed guests. Dorotea (SNIFFLING) and Ricca are subdued and not so pleased. LIVE MUSIC UP and OVER.

17 EXT. COURTYARD, DEI ROSSI HOUSE, MANTOVA - NIGHT

17

MUSIC CONTINUES OVER dancing among the guests in the courtyard. Men dance with men, women with women, as per Jewish custom.

Others mill about CHATTING and LAUGHING.

Off to one side, platters of food are displayed for guests to eat.

Grazia is with Young Jehiel and Child Gershom.

17 CONTINUED:

17

CHILD GERSHOM

But why Firenze, sister?

GRAZIA

That is where my honourable husband
has a home and position as a doctor.
Will you miss me, brothers?

YOUNG JEHIEL

It certainly doesn't appear that you
will miss us. You have your husband
and your ring.

CHILD GERSHOM

Why such a fuss over a ring?

YOUNG JEHIEL

No fuss. The ring means nothing.
It is copulation that is all.

GRAZIA

Jehiel!

CHILD GERSHOM

Copu...? What is that?

YOUNG JEHIEL

It is how your sister will be truly
married.

Judah approaches from across the room.

CHILD GERSHOM

Is it another Latin word?

YOUNG JEHIEL

Tonight, the blood will be on the
sheets.

Grazia is suddenly concerned.

CHILD GERSHOM

Blood? Why blood? What's that...?

YOUNG JEHIEL

No blood, no consummation.

CHILD GERSHOM

Why can't people use simple words
instead of all this Latin and Greek?

Judah steps up to Grazia.

17 CONTINUED: (2)

17

JUDAH

Is the bride ready to join her groom
in their wedding chamber?

She smiles in assent, disguising her concern: How will she
produce blood on the sheet tonight?.

Jehiel smirks at her.

18 INT. WEDDING CHAMBER, DEI ROSSI HOUSE, MANTOVA - NIGHT

18

The MUSIC and REVELRY is HEARD in the DISTANCE. Grazia stands
tensely in the middle of the room.

Judah closes the door and turns to her.

GRAZIA

Sir, there is something... I ought
to have told you... I must tell you
now.

JUDAH

A confession?

GRAZIA

Yes... Uh, before we go any further,
there is something... There is...

JUDAH

Grazia, before you go any further,
perhaps you will allow me to go first.

She hesitates and says nothing, allowing him to continue.

JUDAH (CONT'D)

You remember our conversation on our
betrothal day? About friendship?

She nods "Yes".

JUDAH (CONT'D)

I think perhaps I did not make my
proposal sufficiently clear. Things
were left unsaid. Unexplained. And
now, here, on the threshold of our
marriage, I wish to rectify the
situation.

He hesitates, clearly uneasy.

She waits, wondering what this could be about.

JUDAH (CONT'D)

You are delicate and have been through a lot. As a physician, my prescription is rest, good care, peace... time to heal. And so...

(hesitates again)

I propose that we... we delay the consummation of our marriage. For a few months. Perhaps a year. Until you are ready.

Grazia is stunned and doesn't know what to say.

JUDAH (CONT'D)

You look puzzled, Grazia. Does my solution not suit you?

GRAZIA

Oh no, sir. I am... I am relieved.

JUDAH

Good. Then it is agreed. For now, loving friends.

He finally approaches and gives her a kiss on the forehead.

JUDAH (CONT'D)

I have brought a sack of cow's blood for the sheets. To benefit the morning well-wishers. I suggest we keep this arrangement as our secret.

Grazia LAUGHS. He is puzzled.

JUDAH (CONT'D)

Do you not concur?

GRAZIA

(through her laughter)

Oh yes. Yes. Yes, of course.

JUDAH

Now, what was it you wished to tell me?

GRAZIA

(laughing harder)

Nothing... Nothing at all...

Judah observes her inquisitively.

18 CONTINUED: (2)

18

MATURE GRAZIA (V.O.)
 So the question of my virginity, or
 lack thereof, was set aside for the
 time being. But so too was my hope
 for a new found lover who would make
 me forget he who had taken my
 virginity. At least for the time
 being.

Grazia stops laughing and looks at him.

There is unease, a lack of resolution, between them.

Fingebat runs in jumps up onto the bed.

19 EXT. VISTA OF FIRENZE - DAY

19

A vista of the skyline of Firenze: Brunelleschi's magnificent
 dome atop the Cattedrale di Santa Maria del Fiore and clock
 tower of the Palazzo Vecchio.

Title over in handwritten Renaissance script:

Firenze

1493

Grazia and Judah ride on mules burdened with packed goods
 towards the city of Firenze in the distance.

MATURE GRAZIA (V.O.)
 Moving away from Mantova - away from
 all the places now so linked in my
 heart and mind to Lord Pirro - I
 hoped would help me forget. But of
 course I carried with me wherever I
 went a living token of my lover.

Fingebat rides in a basket on the mule.

Judah and Grazia stop to survey the city below them. FINGEBAT
 BARKS.

JUDAH
 Firenze. A new Athens. A model
 republic of scholars. Truly built
 to the measure of man. A symbol of
 the rebirth of knowledge and culture.
 And the great Medicis of Firenze are
 nothing like the crude Gonzagas of
 Mantova.

19 CONTINUED: 19

Grazia just appears weary. FINGEBAT BARKS.

20 EXT. FACADE, OSPEDALE DEGLI INNOCENTI, FIRENZE - DAY 20

Judah and Grazia on their mules pause before the facade of the orphanage made up of nine semicircular arches on columns.

Judah's eyes moisten with emotion as he stares across the open square to the colonnaded loggia.

JUDAH

The proportions of the loggia, it is
so...

Grazia is not that impressed.

21 EXT. DUOMO, CATTEDRALE DI SANTA MARIA, FIRENZE - DAY 21

Judah and Grazia gaze at the magnificent dome from their mules.

JUDAH

Classical perfection. Brunelleschi
studied the ruins of antiquity and
mastered Roman construction methods.
That is how he could achieve such a
masterpiece.

Grazia takes it in but wants to get to their home.

22 EXT. GIOTTO'S BELL TOWER, FIRENZE - DAY 22

They stand before the tall, elegant bell tower.

JUDAH

Giotto, a genius. He only lived to
see the first floor completed. But
he lives on, in this magnificent
bell tower. It will live forever.

He bows his head in reverence. Grazia looks from him up to the tower, again not that impressed.

Grazia regards it and him with fatigue.

MATURE GRAZIA (V.O.)

To me, a loggia was a loggia, a dome
a dome...

23 EXT. PONTE VECCHIO, FIRENZE - DAY 23

Judah and Grazia dismount from their mules at the entrance to the closed bridge which spans the Arno River.

MATURE GRAZIA (V.O.)
...a bell tower just a bell tower.
I had seen plenty of both.

24 INT. PONTE VECCHIO, FIRENZE - DAY 24

They walk their mules across the closed bridge over the Arno River, passing shops with tanners, butchers, farmers.

MATURE GRAZIA (V.O.)
Ignoramus that I was, I could not
yet perceive the difference between
an indifferent one and a sublime
one.

25 EXT. DEL MEDIGO HOME, OLTR'ARNO, FIRENZE - DAY 25

Judah and Grazia stop before a quite affluent, three-storey home on a street in the Oltr'arno district nestled among a series of smaller craftsmen's' shops and homes.

MATURE GRAZIA (V.O.)
But I could perceive the comfort and
comparable luxury of our new home.

Grazia is now impressed as she follows him into the building.

26 INT. DEL MEDIGO HOME, OLTR'ARNO, FIRENZE - DAY 26

Grazia oversees the food preparation in the kitchen, instructing the COOK and four SERVANTS.

MATURE GRAZIA (V.O.)
So I turned myself into the exemplary
Jewish wife who finds all the
diversion she needs in tending her
house

CUT TO:

Grazia inspecting for dust on the credenza and berating a servant when her finger comes up smudged with dirt.

MATURE GRAZIA (V.O.) (CONT'D)
 I was a woman now, a member in good
 standing of the sisterhood of Jewish
 wives.

CUT TO:

Grazia lies cuddled up in Judah's arms in bed, both poring
 over a heavy book. Except Grazia's eyelids are proving heavy.

MATURE GRAZIA (V.O.) (CONT'D)
 But not a wife in every respect.

Fingebat jumps up on the bed.

JUDAH
 Fingebat, down! Now! Off the bed.

Fingebat hesitates. Grazia cuddles and pets the dog.

GRAZIA
 You know you're not allowed up here.
 Now down you go.

She eases the dog off the bed.

GRAZIA (CONT'D)
 I am sorry, sir, for the interruption.
 But to tell the truth, I am very
 tired.

JUDAH
 Certainly, Grazia.

He closes the book and sets it aside. She pulls the bed cover
 over her. He blows out the candle and settles next to her.

Fingebat curls up on the floor at the foot of the bed.

Grazia enters the studiolo.

GRAZIA
 You called for me, sir?
 (startled)
 Oh! I did not realize you were with
 company.

A very young man is with Judah: MEDINA DE CASES, clad entirely
 in black.

JUDAH

This is why I called for you, honoured wife. I would like you to meet my new apprentice, Medina de Cases. Medina, your mistress, Madonna Grazia.

Medina bows. Grazia curtsies.

JUDAH (CONT'D)

He needs training in vernacular Italian and I cannot imagine a better tutor than your learned self, my little wife.

GRAZIA

Certainly, honoured husband. We could work from texts by Dante Alighieri.

JUDAH

I thought Boccaccio's more earthy tales might have a greater appeal.

GRAZIA

If you think so.

Judah puts his arm around the boy in a fatherly manner

JUDAH

Run along, now. But make sure to be ready tomorrow before the bell tolls matins.

Medina bows and moves out. Grazia looks to Judah with questions.

JUDAH (CONT'D)

He is from a group of Jewish refugees, expelled from Spain last year. They settled in a tiny house down on the riverbank. Many of them had risen quite high - physicians, tax-farmers, advisers, even familiars of the court itself. Yet they were caught completely unprepared when King Ferdinand ordered them expelled.

GRAZIA

They had no notion yet they were so close to the court?

27 CONTINUED: (2)

27

JUDAH

They are like many Jews. They fell into the trap of believing that such a thing could not happen to them. To other Jews, perhaps. But not them.

GRAZIA

I still find it hard to believe.

JUDAH

The tide of Jew-hating rises and falls like the sea itself. When it floods over, we Jews ask ourselves, Why me? Why here? Why now? Whereas the real question is, How can any Jew living in a Christian land ever believe himself beyond the reach of the tides?

28 INT. STUDIOLO, DEL MEDIGO HOME, OLTR'ARNO, FIRENZE - MORNING

28

Grazia and Medina sit closely together poring over a large text of Boccaccio's *Decameron*. She reads a passage, he then reads the same passage.

GRAZIA

(reading easily)

'Tis humane to have compassion on the afflicted; and as it shews well in all...

MEDINA

(reading haltingly)

'Tis humane... To have...

GRAZIA

Compassion.

MEDINA

... compassion on the ... afflicted...

GRAZIA

Afflicted. Good.

MEDINA

... afflicted; and as it ... Shews well in all...

29 INT. DEL MEDIGO HOME, OLTR'ARNO, FIRENZE - DAY

29

JUDAH (O.S.)
Grazia!... Grazia, hurry!

Startled by the call, Grazia hurries towards the front entrance.

There Judah is pulling on his boots.

JUDAH (CONT'D)
Quickly. Can you lace my boots?

Grazia bends down to lace his boots.

He concentrates on fastening his *camicia* (shirt).

GRAZIA
What is it, my lord? Why the...

JUDAH
Medina has hired a horse for me. I must hurry.

GRAZIA
But what is it?

JUDAH
Count Pico. He's...

GRAZIA
What?

JUDAH
He's sent word. He taken a fever and he needs me immediately. I must go.

He quickly kisses her on the cheek and dashes out the door, leaving her suddenly alone.

30 INT. BEDROOM, DEL MEDIGO HOME, OLTR'ARNO, FIRENZE - NIGHT

30

Grazia nods off in bed over a book. Fingebat nestles up to her on the bed.

31 INT. STUDIOLO, DEL MEDIGO HOME, OLTR'ARNO, FIRENZE - MORNING

31

Grazia and Medina sit over the *Decameron*.

31 CONTINUED:

31

MEDINA

False witness he bore, ... solicited
or ... unsolicited?

GRAZIA

Unsolicited, yes.

MEDINA

... unsolicited, with boundless
delight; and, as oaths were in those
days had in very great respect in
France ...

32 EXT. UPPER LOGGIA, DEL MEDIGO HOME, OLTR'ARNO, FIRENZE - DAY 32

Grazia stands on the roofed gallery at the top of their home
looking down on the street activity. She is bored, restless.

33 INT. BEDROOM, DEL MEDIGO HOME, OLTR'ARNO, FIRENZE - NIGHT 33

In bed with Fingebat, Grazia stares into space past her book.

34 INT. STUDIOLO, DEL MEDIGO HOME, OLTR'ARNO, FIRENZE - MORNING 34

Grazia and Medina sit over the *Decameron*.

MEDINA

The story told by Neifile brings to
my mind another in which also a Jew
appears...

35 EXT. UPPER LOGGIA, DEL MEDIGO HOME, OLTR'ARNO, FIRENZE - DAY 35

Grazia gazes listlessly to the street below with Fingebat,
who suddenly starts to dash to and fro and BARK frantically.

Grazia sees...

36 EXT. DEL MEDIGO HOME, OLTR'ARNO, FIRENZE - DAY 36

A horseman galloping down the street: Pirro.

He reins his horse to a stop, in front of...

Grazia, now standing on the street in front of her home with
Fingebat, BARKING EXCITEDLY. She smiles up at...

Pirro, astride his horse like a gallant knight.

- 37 EXT. COUNTRYSIDE - DAY 37
- Grazia gallops across the open countryside with Pirro, the wind blowing in her hair. She is free and in love, when...
- COOK (O.S.)
Madama...
- 38 EXT. UPPER LOGGIA, DEL MEDIGO HOME, OLTR'ARNO, FIRENZE 38
- Grazia, gazing into space, turns to see...
- The Cook proffering a piece of paper to Grazia. Fingebat is curled up asleep.
- COOK
The week's supplies.
- Grazia takes the paper and quickly scans it.
- GRAZIA
But my husband has not returned and cannot send to the market for...
(stops short)
Very well. I will tend to this.
Thank you.
- 39 INT. DEL MEDIGO HOME, OLTR'ARNO, FIRENZE - DAY 39
- Grazia, dressed in a bonnet and carrying a large basket, heads out the door.
- Medina, the Cook, and the other servants all huddle together and gossip in shock and disapproval.
- 40 EXT. DEL MEDIGO HOME, OLTR'ARNO, FIRENZE - DAY 40
- Grazia walks down the street, defiantly enjoying the freedom even while warily looking about her, like a child afraid of being caught.
- 41 EXT. MERCATO VECCHIO (OLD MARKET), FIRENZE - DAY 41
- Grazia moves among the overcrowded, overbuilt, and polluted food stalls in the market square.
- She pokes and sniffs at some fish, but is not satisfied.

41 CONTINUED:

41

She purchases some fresh vegetables at another stall.
She examines some more fish but is still not satisfied.
She buys a capon at another stall.
Another fish stall, still no satisfaction, when...

MESSER BONAVENTURA
Excuse me, madonna. You are the
wife of Judah del Medigo...?

Grazia turns to find an old, well-dressed gentleman, MESSER
BONVAVENTURA, who holds a small golden horn to his ear.

GRAZIA
Yes, Grazia dei Rossi.

MESSER BONAVENTURA
We were lucky enough to be introduced
at the synagogue... when?

GRAZIA
I believe it was last month. You
are...

MESSER BONAVENTURA
Messer Bonaventura. And where is
your august husband, lady?

He looks about for Judah in the market.

GRAZIA
Up in the hills of Fiesole with a
sick patient.

MESSER BONAVENTURA
(taken aback)
Then who brought here, to the market,
lady?

GRAZIA
I have brought myself, sir.

He pushes the trumpet to her lips.

MESSER BONAVENTURA
By yourself, did you say?

GRAZIA
Yes sir, quite alone.

41 CONTINUED: (2)

41

MESSER BONAVENTURA
(quite upset)
Oh, my dear, dear lady, then you
must allow me to escort you to my
own house. There, you can recover
from this ordeal on the streets.
Then we will accompany you across
the river to your own home. You
must. You absolutely must!

Taken aback, Grazia cannot say no.

42 INT. BONAVENTURA HOME, FIRENZE - DAY

42

REGINA BONAVENTURA, an elderly woman, pours borage tea into a
cup for Grazia. They sit with Messer Bonaventura in a lounge.

REGINA
This will counteract whatever you
might have contracted in such gamey
surroundings, my dear lady.

GRAZIA
But really, I hardly think that...

MESSER BONAVENTURA
And then you can rest in bed.

GRAZIA
I really am not...

REGINA
And I will take and have your boots
cleaned.

MESSER BONAVENTURA
Yes, while you rest.

GRAZIA
You needn't go to so much...

REGINA
Heaven knows what disgusting matter
the boots may have picked up in the
market.

MESSER BONAVENTURA
(sipping his tea)
Borage tea, the very best for purging
one of any malady.

Resigned, Grazia sips her tea.

42 CONTINUED:

42

REGINA

I am sorry that Diamante is not here.

MESSER BONAVENTURA

Where is she?

(to Grazia)

Our daughter-in-law.

REGINA

Oh, out on her horse again. Always bouncing her belly around on the back of that animal.

MESSER BONAVENTURA

Just like the Queen of Portugal.

REGINA

Yes, and you know what happened to her.

Grazia sips her tea, unable to escape.

43 INT. BEDROOM, BONAVENTURA HOME, FIRENZE - DAY

43

Grazia sits up in a resplendent bed, unable to sleep or leave.

Suddenly, the door opens and DIAMANTE enters - tall, golden-haired, dressed for hunting in a hat with a magnificent red plume - a true Diana.

DIAMANTE

I am the daughter-in-law they no doubt referenced, with disapproval. Diamante Bonaventura.

GRAZIA

Oh, and I am...

DIAMANTE

Grazia dei Rossi.

She moves to the bed carrying Grazia's boots.

GRAZIA

Yes.

DIAMANTE

(passing the boots to her)

Here. You'll need these to make your escape.

43 CONTINUED:

43

GRAZIA

Escape?

Grazia takes the boots and throughout the following pulls them on.

DIAMANTE

Yes. The old parties would like nothing better than to keep you locked up here on some pretext or other.

GRAZIA

Locked up?

DIAMANTE

With kindness. Because the streets are dangerous. Horses are dangerous. And young women are reckless...

GRAZIA

Like the Queen of Portugal?

DIAMANTE

Precisely. Now get going while my esteemed parents-in-law are taking their rest. I will send your goods on with a lackey.

Grazia moves towards the door and then stops.

GRAZIA

But I haven't thanked them for...

DIAMANTE

Write them a note. I hear you're a practiced scribe.

Grazia and Diamante exchange warm smiles; they understand one another instantaneously.

44 EXT. UPPER LOGGIA, DEL MEDIGO HOME, OLTR'ARNO, FRIENZE - DAY

44

Grazia again observes the street activity below, bored and listless.

When she spots...

A figure moving through the people towards the house: Judah.

Excited, she dashes into the house.

45 INT. DEL MEDIGO HOME, OLTR'ARNO, FIRENZE - DAY

45

Grazia scurries down the stairs, across the entranceway, and pulls the door open in excitement, to see...

Judah, disheveled, haggard, weary, staggers up to the door.

Grazia throws her arms around him. He stands still, hardly responding.

46 INT. BEDROOM, DEL MEDIGO HOME, OLTR'ARNO, FIRENZE - DAY

46

Grazia helps the weary Judah undress for bed.

GRAZIA

Five days and nights?!

JUDAH

He had a raging fever. I could not trust anyone else.

GRAZIA

Is he so important a personage that you must risk your own health to...

JUDAH

(snapping impatiently)

Important!? Pico della Mirandola is famed in all countries where scholarship is valued. He was my pupil in Padova, the most brilliant I ever had. He is my sponsor at the Platonic Academy. And is much admired in the Medici circle.

GRAZIA

I do not mean to upset you, honoured husband. But I still do not understand just what it is about this Pico that caused you to give up five consecutive nights of sleep...

JUDAH

Without his intercession we would not be living here now in this great city and in this fine house.

GRAZIA

And would that be such a tragedy?

He stops and stares very coolly at her.

46 CONTINUED:

46

She returns his gaze.

JUDAH

I had a letter at Fiesole. From Ser Bonaventura. About some reckless escapade in the marketplace?

Grazia is taken aback and doesn't know what to say.

JUDAH (CONT'D)

We must talk, Grazia. When I have had some sleep, let us meet in my *studiolo*. A proper setting for a serious conversation.

GRAZIA

Yes, husband. Have a good sleep.

She turns and moves out of the room, concerned.

47 INT. BOUDOIR, DEL MEDIGO HOME, OLTR'ARNO, FIRENZE - NIGHT

47

Grazia, concerned, upset, frustrated, sits in her boudoir staring at herself in the mirror.

As she studies herself, an idea comes to her.

After a moment's thought, she pulls out a little bronze cask and opens it to reveal a collection of makeup supplies and beauty lotions.

A MONTAGE of Grazia preparing herself:

Slathering ambergris on her bosom.

Painting white past on her face.

Kohl around her eyes.

Rouge on her cheeks.

Trying on different, provocative dresses.

Until she stands before the mirror satisfied at the sexual allure she sees reflected back.

48 INT. STUDIOLO, DEL MEDIGO HOME, OLTR'ARNO, FIRENZE - NIGHT

48

Judah sits at his writing desk studying a text. A DOOR OPENS and he looks up. He freezes, unnerved by what he sees:

Grazia is all her made-up, costumed splendour. She moves into the room, all expectation.

Judah stares, not knowing how to react or what to say.

She stands before him, waiting for some reaction.

He just stares.

Finally, she moves around the desk to him, kneels before him, and begins to pull off his boot.

He yanks his foot away.

JUDAH
What are you doing?

She looks up at him, startled; this is not what she expected.

JUDAH (CONT'D)
Why is your face so white? You
constipated?

Grazia is completely taken aback.

JUDAH (CONT'D)
Come closer. Let me see.

She rises and leans close to him. He rubs her cheek and smudges the white paste.

JUDAH (CONT'D)
Dye!

GRAZIA
Does it displease you?

JUDAH
This stuff is poisonous. You will
break out in little red spots.

GRAZIA
I thought it would make you look
favourably upon me.

JUDAH
Do I not look favourably on you
already?

GRAZIA
You rarely look on me at all, honoured
husband.

48 CONTINUED: (2)

48

Judah is taken aback and ponders her comment.

JUDAH

Come here, little wife, by me.

She sits next to him.

JUDAH (CONT'D)

(very tenderly)

Now, then, perhaps you forget I am a physician trained to see not only what's on the surface, but what lies under the skin. What I see is the true Grazia, not the Grazia you are hiding tonight under powder and pigment. You need never poison yourself or whiten your face for me. I find you beautiful just as you are.

GRAZIA

I am sorry, honoured husband, for not appreciating how you feel.

JUDAH

No, no, I must admit my responsibility for this misunderstanding between us. We have both been in error. You, for acting like a fool, which you are not. And me, for keeping you stuck here alone like an old matron, which you also are not. Now let us thank God that there is time to make a fresh start.

Grazia smiles in expectation as he leans down to her.

And kisses her on the forehead. She disguises her disappointment at his chaste gesture.

JUDAH (CONT'D)

We have been invited to the country villa of the Bonaventura family. For the feast of Purim. You have now become well acquainted with them so I feel we should accept.

(provocatively)

And there, at the celebrations, you shall see that I too have a taste for pleasure. Even a small talent for it.

Grazia lights up with excitement.

48 CONTINUED: (3)

48

DIAMANTE (V.O.)
Grazia!... Grazia, hurry. Guests
are already here.

49 EXT. PORTICO AND COURTYARD, BONAVENTURA SUMMER VILLA - DAY

49

Grazia and Diamante (dressed as men), their arms locked together, stride up to the portico leading into the courtyard, which is filled with costumed guests.

The villa is an imposing brick structure with a colonnaded central portico, bordered by a meadow on one side and a vineyard on the other.

DIAMANTE
We do not want to miss the
announcement.

Grazia looks at her: Announcement?

DIAMANTE (CONT'D)
Who will be the Purim rabbi. The
Master of Revels.

They join Judah, dressed in a long, unadorned black robe from neck to ankle, ISAAC BONAVENTURA, and a small cluster of guests. Many women are dressed as men, and men as women - heavily adorned women with gold necklaces and bracelets.

ISAAC
Ah, wife, I feared you had abandoned
us.

DIAMANTE
You needn't ever fear, Issachino. I
had to hurry Grazia here. She was
dallying.

They embrace in a very intimate way.

Grazia observes them, amazed at their frankness as a VOICE
CALLS OUT.

MESSER BONAVENTURA
Attention!... Attention!... Your
attention, please!

Messer Bonaventura stands on a makeshift pulpit in the
courtyard brandishing a makeshift scepter.

DIAMANTE
Time to announce the Master of Revels.

Everyone turns and presses in on Messer Bonaventura.

MESSER BONAVENTURA

It is my great honour and great pleasure, to commence this feast of Purim by introducing our Purim rabbi, our Master of Revels... Maestro Judah del Medigo!

A HUGE CHEER goes up as Grazia reels from shock. She sees...

Judah, in his black robe, ascend the pulpit. He surveys the guests. He then delivers a sermon.

JUDAH

When the world was young, cannibalism and murder ran rampant. Even the great god Zeus himself could not stamp it out. It was Dionysus who found the cure, for he understood that there are dark forces in man's nature that will out. In giving us the wine cult, Dionysus provided the instrument to channel man's natural, brutish blood lust into a harmless annual feast of abandoned revelry. It is for that great service to mankind that we honour him today.

(raises a glass of wine)

In the name of Dionysus, I urge you to carouse and sing and dance and drink until you drop, so that you may go forward to live a restrained and prudent life for the three hundred and sixty-four days that follow. That is my sermon. Will you have me for your Purim rabbi?

A HUGE, PROLONGED CHEER.

Grazia is amused and impressed - and encouraged - at this new Judah.

Messer Bonaventura ceremoniously grants the scepter to Judah. He raises it aloft and SHOUTS:

JUDAH (CONT'D)

Very well then. Let the revels begin!

He tears off his black robe to reveal a purple toga slashed in bright green.

49 CONTINUED: (2)

49

Grazia SHRIEKS in surprise and delight as the entire courtyard erupts in LOUD REVELRY.

A *Haman* - a great ugly puppet representing the Persian official who was foiled by Queen Esther when he plotted the murder of all Jews - is brought into the courtyard and displayed before Judah.

He surveys it very carefully and then, with an absurd dance-like movement that sends his toga flying above his thighs, he kicks the *Haman* fiercely.

Grazia HOWLS with LAUGHTER as a giant SHRIEK GOES UP. All the children pounce upon the *Haman*, beating and kicking it, to the CHEERS and CHANTS of the adults.

Diamante HOOTS and Grazia joins in.

DIAMANTE

Your husband. He is so big. A giant.
Is he like that... all over?

Grazia now SHRIEKS in LAUGHTER at such a question.

DIAMANTE (CONT'D)

My Issachino, he is a demon in bed.
A regular Etna. He erupts almost
every night.

Grazia GIGGLES in delight and embarrassment.

DIAMANTE (CONT'D)

Does my coarse talk offend you? The
old hag says I have become as common
as a whore from hanging about the
stables.

GRAZIA

Words do not a lady make. It is by
her actions that we know her. And
you are made honourable by your noble
heart.

DIAMANTE

So I can be coarse and still be a
lady! And you? You must be very
happy with such a husband.

Grazia hesitates.

The ugly puppet has been decimated by the children who now withdraw from it as Judah approaches. A HUSH falls over the courtyard as Judah examines the puppet's remains carefully.

49 CONTINUED: (3)

49

GRAZIA

(very quietly)

The truth is - and I have never told
a living soul. The truth is my
husband and I have not yet consummated
our marriage. He believes that I am
too young for those responsibilities
and prefers to wait.

DIAMANTE

(gesticulating surprise)

Dio, what refinement! My Issachino
never had such a thought in his life.

Judah LOUDLY DECLARES:

JUDAH

I hereby pronounce the *Haman* to be
dead!

Another round of CHEERING. Immediately, MUSICIANS appear and
begin PLAYING.

Wine kegs are unveiled.

The guests begin pouring goblets of wine from the spigots.

Others dance - men with men, women with women.

Judah scurries about swatting people with his scepter.

JUDAH (CONT'D)

Where is your goblet of wine?!
Why are you not yet drunk? Drink
up!

Diamante turns to Grazia.

DIAMANTE

A dance is what you need. The motion
will stir up your brains and let out
the noxious air. Besides, I do so
long for a sprightly partner. Come,
Grazia. Be my sister.

She and Grazia move to the dance floor and twirl about.
Exhilaration finally erupts on Grazia's face.

Then she notices...

Judah wildly dancing with a man (dressed as a woman), his
face flush with exuberance, his toga stained with wine, his
whole demeanour outrageous.

49 CONTINUED: (4)

49

Grazia dances on with Diamante when Isaac interjects and sweeps her away into a dance.

Grazia stands still in disbelief at such behavior.

Judah roars up beside her.

JUDAH

Wife, why are you standing still and not indulging in the celebrations? As the Master of Revels, I command you to drink and dance.

GRAZIA

Whatever you command, Master of Revels. What say you to mixed dancing?

(refers to Isaac and Diamante)

JUDAH

It is Purim. Mixed dancing is not only condoned, it is encouraged!

She looks to him to be as good as his word and dance with her.

But he veers off and grabs another celebrant.

JUDAH (CONT'D)

You are still sober enough to stand upon your feet!

He drags the celebrant over to a wine cask, shoves his face under the spigot, and holds him there until he swallows several mouthfuls of wine.

Grazia laughs and withdraws to the edge of the activity.

Judah, looking more disheveled and drunk, gleefully dances with another man.

She studies him closely.

The look in his eyes is wild, carnal, unbridled.

Grazia smiles to herself.

50 INT. STAIRCASE, BONAVENTURA SUMMER VILLA - NIGHT

50

A SNICKERING, MUMBLING Judah, his toga a mess and his bearings out of kilter, staggers up the stairs.

50 CONTINUED: 50

Behind him follows Grazia, amused, excited, and expectant.
They enter their bed chamber.

51 INT. BED CHAMBER, BONAVENTURA SUMMER VILLA - NIGHT 51

Judah staggers to the bed and collapses into it.
Grazia begins to undress.

GRAZIA
Oh, mighty Master of Revels, will
you allow me a few moments to prepare?
Before our revels continue?

She is greeted with SNORING.

She is immediately deflated, the excitement draining away
into bitter disappointment.

52 EXT. STABLES, BONAVENTURA SUMMER VILLA - DAY 52

Judah is strapping saddle and supplies to a mule when Grazia
hurries up to him.

GRAZIA
Honourable husband, the Bonaventuras
have just invited me to stay on here
for a few days. Diamante has asked
me to ride with her. She is a
wonderful companion and we have become
friends. Would you mind terribly?

JUDAH
She is barely literate. What can
you have to talk to her about?

GRAZIA
Oh... You'd be very surprised at the
wisdom she has.

He looks at her askance.

53 EXT. COUNTRYSIDE NEAR BONAVENTURA VILLA - DAY 53

Grazia and Diamante gallop freely across the open fields.
Grazia is again in her element and loving it.

54 EXT. HILLSIDE NEAR BONAVENTURA VILLA - DAY

54

Grazia and Diamante relax under a tree while their horses graze. Valleys spread out before them into the distance.

DIAMANTE

How do I please my husband?!

GRAZIA

Do you feed him some potion or wear a special perfume?

DIAMANTE

(laughs heartily)

With Issachino!? I am lucky if I can get the manure out from under my fingernails. I'm sorry, Grazia. But I am no Delilah. I don't have to be with Issachino.

GRAZIA

I am sorry. I must sound terribly naive. But my mother died when I was very young giving birth to my brother Gershom. So I never had the benefit of her counsel. As for my stepmother, she is a shrew with whom I share only resentment. And Zaira... She was my nanny. She was very dear to me and she did begin the lessons of life I feel now so in need of. But my grandmother resented Zaira and married her off. I have not seen nor heard from her since.

DIAMANTE

I can make inquiries for you, if you like.

GRAZIA

Oh, no, please! It would be too...

DIAMANTE

Grazia, in Firenze we live in the midst of the whores and witches of the Jewish quarter. It will not be difficult.

GRAZIA

But... It is not only the secrets of the bedchamber I seek.

DIAMANTE

What else then?

GRAZIA

Does Issachino... Sorry, Isaac...

DIAMANTE

(laughs)

No, don't be sorry. Isaac is his name. But to me he is Issachino. And so he is to you.

GRAZIA

Does he talk to you?

Diamante gives her a very puzzled look.

GRAZIA (CONT'D)

About his business? His inner feelings? Life outside the family?

DIAMANTE

And does not your august husband talk to you? I am told he spends each noonday alone with you, in conversation.

GRAZIA

Yes, about some problem of interpretation from the *Phaedo*. Or perhaps a *responsum* from one of the Jewish sages. Or we are just silent. Judah hates trivial talk and gossip.

DIAMANTE

(snorts in outrage)

Ahh! Gossip is the spice of life. Every noon when Issachino comes in for dinner, I wring him dry of every drop of news.

GRAZIA

How do you do it?

DIAMANTE

Do what?

GRAZIA

Wring him dry?

DIAMANTE

Oh...

(MORE)

54 CONTINUED: (2)

54

DIAMANTE (CONT'D)
(ponders a long moment)
I do not know how I do it. Or even
that I do it.
(laughs)

55 INT. DINING SALON, BONAVENTURA SUMMER VILLA - DAY

55

Lively dinner conversation revolves around the table as Grazia sits with Diamante, Isaac, Messer and Regina Bonaventura.

ISAAC
Do you know that Lorenzo the
Magnificent, on his deathbed, sent
for this bastard of a priest to give
him absolution? Can you imagine?
Lorenzo dei Medici needing
Savonarola's blessing before he could
die.

Messer Bonvaventura and Regina react with TUT-TUTs and
grimaces.

Grazia looks to Diamante...

Who returns her look with a comical face: "Told you I do
nothing. He just talks! Yack, yack, yack."

Grazia is amused.

ISAAC (CONT'D)
He is actually defying the Pope now
and, this I can say for certain,
there is going to be a collision
between these two, Savonarola and
the Pope. And our Medici will be
squeezed between the two of them.
He's a very dangerous man this
Savonarola, a very dangerous man.

GRAZIA
(out of amusement)
More dangerous than Fra Bernardino
da Feltre?

ISAAC
Oh, worse. Much worse.

GRAZIA
Oh, no, forgive me, Ser Issachino,
but he could not be worse than...

ISAAC

Madonna Grazia, Madonna Grazia. I have heard of your own family's expulsion from Mantova at Fra Bernardino's instigation. Yes I know all about it. And still I say that this Savonarola is worse. And Count Pico of Mirandola, do you know that he is a follower of Savonarola?

Grazia suddenly takes a much sharper interest.

GRAZIA

Count Pico? But he is a Platonist, a philosopher, a humanist. How could he possibly...?

Diamante observes Grazia now with surprise at her sudden earnestness.

ISAAC

(laughs)

He often comes to the marketplace. I have personally spoken to him many times. And oh, yes, he speaks highly of Savonarola. And cabalism. And...

GRAZIA

Cabalism?

ISAAC

He is obsessed by it. Absolutely obsessed. Searching for the universal truth in numbers and signs and tongues.

GRAZIA

Then how can he be a Platonist? And how can he follow this Savonarola?

ISAAC

He is seeking one unity. A way of reducing all faiths, all doctrines, all languages of the Lord to one unity. He would turn us all into Christians.

GRAZIA

Count Pico told you he would turn us all into Christians?

55 CONTINUED: (2)

55

ISAAC
No. He said "one unity." But whose
unity do you think he has in mind?
The laws of Moses?

The others LAUGH but Grazia ponders this very seriously.

56 INT. DEL MEDIGO HOME, OLTR'ARNO, FIRENZE - DAY

56

Grazia sits at the dinner table with Judah. They are
absolutely silent. Fingebat lies at Grazia's feet.

Grazia observes Judah in frustration. Finally...

GRAZIA
May I ask about Count Pico's state
of health?

Judah is momentarily taken aback.

JUDAH
Count Pico is not well. Not well at
all. He still suffers from a
recurrent tertian fever. None of my
remedies have had any affect.

Grazia nods and returns to her dinner.

JUDAH (CONT'D)
But whatever brought Count Pico to
your mind?

GRAZIA
He was the subject at the
Bonaventura's villa. Ser Isaac
believes that Count Pico is after
the deep secrets of the cabala in
the cause of the Christian church.

JUDAH
(impatient)
Isaac Bonaventura is an overgrown
baby with an abacus where his brain
should be.

GRAZIA
Perhaps. But is what he says true?

JUDAH
(reluctantly)
Count Pico does have a great interest
in cabala.

GRAZIA

But you tell me he is a Platonist.
How can he give his allegiance to
both a pagan philosopher and Jesus
Christ?

JUDAH

He believes that every way is the
way to the One Truth, if he could
but find it.

GRAZIA

Including the way of Savonarola?

JUDAH

(irritated)
What do you know of Savonarola?

GRAZIA

Isaac Bonaventura was saying that...

JUDAH

Do I have to tell you again that
Isaac Bonaventura is an *ignorante*
who knows nothing but the numbers in
his ledger?

GRAZIA

(defiantly)
He also knows that this priest,
Savonarola, is in league with the
French king against the Pope. That
he intends to bring the French army
into Italy to cleanse us of heresy
and corruption.

JUDAH

(conceding softly,
humbly)
Fra Savonarola is playing a perilous
game. This flirtation with the French
is mad. He is dangerous. A fanatic.

GRAZIA

Does that not make him a strange
companion for a Platonist like Count
Pico?

Judah says nothing.

GRAZIA (CONT'D)

Tell me true, sir, has this Pico
ever tried to convert you?

JUDAH

Of course Count Pico tries to convert me. It is a game between us. He swears he will make me a Christian before he dies and I swear he never will.

GRAZIA

Tell me this, then. How far is it between your game and the forcible conversion of Jews, as has happened in Spain?

JUDAH

I see you are determined to mark my patron, Count Pico, as a Jew hater. Isaac Bonaventura has poisoned your mind.

GRAZIA

Isaac Bonaventura has simply brought certain facts to my attention.

JUDAH

Did he bring to your attention that Count Pico was convicted of heresy by the Roman inquisition for being a Jew-lover and encouraging Judaism?

GRAZIA

And did he burn for it?

JUDAH

He escaped Roma and was taken under the protection of Lorenzo the Magnificent.

GRAZIA

Oh, well when we Jews are accused of heresy, we burn. When Medina's brother was accused of heresy, he was tortured, his arms torn from his body, and hung like an animal from the *bargello's* tower. He had no powerful friends to shield him from the Christians.

JUDAH

Are you blaming Count Pico for having friends, Grazia?

56 CONTINUED: (3)

56

GRAZIA

I am simply saying, sir, that it is easy to hold two opposing ideas at the same time and keep a foot in each camp when you have powerful friends on either side to make sure you do not fall and break your bones.

JUDAH

If you condemn Count Pico for having friends in high places, then you must condemn me. How else do you suppose I hold my position here in Firenze except by the intercession of Count Pico and the acquiescence of Piero dei Medici? And what enables your lady friend Madonna Diamante to caper around the countryside on a stallion like a princess? Powerful friends, Grazia.

(rises from the table)

Any Jew in this country lives happy and free only through his powerful friends in the Christian community.

He turns on his heel and stomps out of the room.

Grazia, alone, slams her fist into the table in frustration. Fingebat leaps up and BARKS.

MATURE GRAZIA (V.O.)

Then, in the summer of 1494, word came to us that Charles VIII of France had crossed the Alps with a force of twenty-two thousand infantry and eighteen thousand cavalry on his way to attack Napoli.

57 INT. BEDROOM, DEL MEDIGO HOME, FIRENZE - DAY

57

Fingebat BARKS and BARKS as Judah angrily tosses his garments into a *cassone*.

Grazia tries to help, removing his clothes from the closet neatly, only to have him yank them from her.

MATURE GRAZIA (V.O.)

But in Asti, the King was felled by a mysterious ailment and Piero dei Medici, hoping to spare Firenze an invasion by the French, ordered Judah
(MORE)

57 CONTINUED:

57

MATURE GRAZIA (V.O.) (CONT'D)
del Medigo to minister to the King.
I took this to be a high honour, but
not so Judah.

JUDAH
It is never an honour to be ordered
about like a lackey.

He slams the lid to the chest shut.

GRAZIA
How long will you be gone?

He hauls the chest towards the door.

JUDAH
Until the King gets well. Or dies.

Grazia is left alone in the room.

MATURE GRAZIA (V.O.)
With Judah gone, I was free to
accompany Diamante on an adventure.

58 EXT. PIAZZA DEL DUOMO, FIRENZE - DAY

58

Grazia and Diamante hurry through the busy square. Both are
dressed very plainly and both are LAUGHING like young girls.

MATURE GRAZIA (V.O.)
We set off to inquire of a local
whore the secrets of the bed chamber.

DIAMANTE
Do the French ladies cut their
necklines down to their navels, like
the Venetian ladies? Does the King
really kiss everybody of both sexes
that he meets? You must ask your
husband.

GRAZIA
But Judah scorns gossip, as you know.

DIAMANTE
But you must ask, as soon as he gets
back. I shall die if I don't have
every single...
(stops short)

A cluster of white-robed youths passes them by and accosts a WELL-DRESSED WOMAN AND MAN, CALLING OUT to them.

YOUTHS

Scourges of Firenze!... Repent your
godless ways!... Repent!

One grabs the fur coat from the Woman. Another snaps the gold necklace from around her neck. The Man, outnumbered, can do nothing.

Grazia and Diamante observe but move on.

GRAZIA

Is it like this all the time?

DIAMANTE

Every day. The *piagnoni* going around
...

GRAZIA

Piagnoni?

DIAMANTE

Children of Savonarola. They harangue
anyone they deem to be a sinner.
And to them, a sinner is anyone who
dresses well.

GRAZIA

Which is why you made me dress so...

DIAMANTE

(stops short)
Dio!

A mob of citizens spills into the square from one of the adjoining streets, SHRIEKING CURSES and throwing stones.

Grazia and Diamante retreat to the edge of the square and watch.

An unseemly procession of people march alongside a cart. A lone figure is chained to the cart and forced to pull it. In the cart, a *bargello* (Captain of Justice/Police Chief), a huge man with a whip lashing the figure.

GRAZIA

What is it?

DIAMANTE

A Jewish whore! See?
(MORE)

58 CONTINUED: (2)

58

DIAMANTE (CONT'D)

The yellow badge. The damn fool.
She was warned not to cohabit with
Christians.

The figure is indeed a woman, her chemise torn from neck to thigh to expose her back and stripes of blood from the whip. A large yellow badge is clear on the front.

DIAMANTE (CONT'D)

And there is her client, being pulled
behind. See, a Christian. His
privates are exposed. He's lucky
they don't cut them off.

A male is tied and pulled behind the cart, his hose torn from his crotch.

The ghastly procession approaches them, the JEERS LOUDER, the YELPS of the whore LOUDER.

Diamante lifts her veil over her and Grazia, shielding them from the site.

DIAMANTE (CONT'D)

Don't look, Grazia. Cover your eyes.

They huddle under the veil hearing the JEERS and the whore's YELPS. Her CRIES effect Grazia, who tries not listen but the cries seem to pierce her consciousness, prod her memory - there is something about that voice.

Grazia pushes back the cloak to see...

The whore, now right beside them, throwing back her hair and looking at Grazia.

Grazia stares at her, slowly placing the face.

The whore stares back, recognition lighting up her face: it is ZAIRA, Grazia's old nanny. Just as the lash rips across her back and she SCREAMS in pain.

Grazia SCREAMS as if she has been whipped and jumps forward toward Zaira, but Diamante grabs her, jams her hand over Grazia's mouth.

DIAMANTE (CONT'D)

What are you doing?! No, don't take
notice! Stop! Don't!

The cart and Zaira move on as Grazia struggles to free herself from Diamante's grip.

58 CONTINUED: (3)

58

DIAMANTE (CONT'D)

Let them pass!.. She was warned!...
There's nothing you can do.

Until Zaira and the cart have moved off and Grazia relaxes.
Diamante releases her.

DIAMANTE (CONT'D)

What were you trying to do? You
cannot help the poor wretch. All
you will do is endanger us. We would
be next. Dragged through the square
like...

GRAZIA

I'm sorry, I'm sorry. But...

DIAMANTE

What?

GRAZIA

It was... She was... Zaira. My Zaira.
My nanny. I grew up with... I...
I...
(breaks down)

Diamante holds her close, sensitive to prying eyes all around.

DIAMANTE

Grazia, not here. Not now. Quick,
we must get home. We must get away
from here now.

Diamante, her arm around Grazia, drags her back away from the
procession. Grazia looks back after the procession in
extraordinary anguish.

59 INT. STUDIOLO, DEL MEDIGO HOME, OLTR'ARNO, FIRENZE - NIGHT

59

Grazia, fully dressed and carrying a candle, enters the dark
studiolo and calls out.

GRAZIA

Medina!... Medina!...

A sleeping figure rouses itself in the corner: Medina.

GRAZIA (CONT'D)

Come on! Get up! I need you to
accompany me on an errand into the
city.

60 EXT. PONTE VECCHIO, FIRENZE - DAWN

60

Grazia hurries across the bridge as the sun rises. A weary, reluctant Medina follows.

61 EXT. STREET NEAR PALAZZO DEI BARGELLO, FIRENZE - MORNING

61

Grazia walks quickly and determinedly ahead of the dawdling Medina and towards the tall, austere crenellated.

Medina suddenly stops.

MEDINA

Madonna... !

She turns back to him.

MEDINA (CONT'D)

Where are we going?

GRAZIA

The bargello.

MEDINA

No! No, please madonna. Please...

GRAZIA

Medina, this is very important. Now stop dawdling and hurry up!

MEDINA

No, I can't. Please don't make me.

Grazia walks back to him and SLAPS him hard on the face.

He cowers.

She holds out her hand to him.

GRAZIA

Take it. And pull yourself together.
For I am going to the bargello this
day. And you are going with me.

He dutifully but reluctantly takes her hand and they walk on towards the looming Palazzo dei Bargello.

62 EXT. GATE, PALAZZO DEI BARGELLO, FIRENZE - MORNING

62

The ancient 11th century palazzo looms dark and ominous in the early morning sunlight.

Grazia, very uneasy herself, drags the trembling Medina to the gate and a uniformed BARGELLO GUARD, who looks at her menacingly.

GRAZIA

I seek to see the Jewish whore who was brought here yesterday.

BARGELLO GUARD

Do you now, little lady? And may I know your purpose?

GRAZIA

She served my family long ago and I wished to bring her what comfort I could, as she often comforted me when I was a child.

BARGELLO GUARD

My orders are to turn such as you over to the captain for questioning.

Medina quivers; Grazia holds up her brave front.

The Bargello Guard ponders her.

BARGELLO GUARD (CONT'D)

But I see you have a good heart, madonna, so I will not.

GRAZIA

Your kindness marks you as a compassionate man and a true Christian. May I see the woman?

BARGELLO GUARD

You may, for all I know. But not in this jail.

GRAZIA

(full of dread)

Is she dead?

The Bargello Guard observes her closely.

62 CONTINUED:

62

BARGELLO GUARD

Ought to be after what she did. But her Christian client turned out to be a Turkish Mussulman, so she was sent back to her house with a warning to leave Firenze at once.

GRAZIA

And where may her house be?

BARGELLO GUARD

Her house? It is the house of whores, madonna, and a nice little lady like yourself need not venture anywhere near there.

(to Medina)

See your lady home, lad. On your way now.

Medina is only too happy to oblige and they turn away.

63 EXT. STREET NEAR BARGELLO PALACE, FIRENZE - MORNING

63

Medina, now moving at a brisk pace, leads Grazia back when she suddenly stops. He turns to her.

GRAZIA

Isn't the house of whores this way?

Medina sags in despair.

64 EXT. HOUSE OF WHORES, FIRENZE - MORNING

64

Grazia and Medina move down the narrow street to a narrow, three-storey house. They enter the door on the bottom floor that is open like a shop.

65 INT. HOUSE OF WHORES, FIRENZE - MORNING

65

Grazia and Medina recoil at the stench. He hangs back while Grazia moves deeper into the dark, hellish place.

She moves past rows of curtained cubicles, just large enough to accommodate a prone woman on a straw pellet, a metal pitcher, and a stool.

Grazia's skin crawls as she moves through this warren of filthy cribs, looking in at each occupant.

65 CONTINUED:

65

The women are in various states of undress, legs splayed, breasts floppily exposed. Many are drinking from wine bottles. Suddenly...

PROCURER (O.S.)
How can I be of service?

Startled, Grazia wheels around to ...

One of the cubicles where the curtain is drawn aside and a very tall, opulently dressed woman steps out: the PROCURER.

PROCURER (CONT'D)
You wish to enjoy a woman?

GRAZIA
I wish... No, thank you, I... I saw this woman yesterday. In the piazza. In the custody of the *bargello*. They told me she was...

PROCURER
Ah, the Jewish whore. Believe me, madonna, we can do better for you than her. I have one from Alexandria with a tongue like a snake and hands...

GRAZIA
I want the Jewess.

PROCURER
But we have better, believe me... Sweet and young and juicy with...

GRAZIA
I want the Jewess! Is she here?

PROCURER
I am only trying to serve you, madonna.

GRAZIA
Then kindly answer my request. Is the Jewish whore here?

PROCURER
Gone. With her pimp and wine bottle. And good riddance too. She's a wild one.

GRAZIA
She had a good heart.

65 CONTINUED: (2)

65

The Procurer SNORTS derisively.

Grazia looks straight ahead and hurries back to Medina and out.

MATURE GRAZIA (V.O.)
I cannot write further of Zaira.
The shame and guilt I still feel.

66 EXT. HOUSE OF WHORES, FIRENZE - DAY

66

Grazia and Medina hurry down the narrow street away from the house of whores.

MATURE GRAZIA (V.O.)
In the square when she was paraded
past me, I turned my back on her ...

67 EXT. PONTE VECCHIO, FIRENZE - DAY

67

Grazia and Medina hurry across the bridge, its shops now open.

MATURE GRAZIA (V.O.)
... and fled back to my comfortable
home. And when I turned my back on
Zaira, ...

68 EXT. DEL MEDIGO HOME, OLTR'ARNO, FIRENZE - DAY

68

Grazia and Medina arrive at and enter the house.

MATURE GRAZIA (V.O.)
... I betrayed myself, an act that
has diminished me forever in my own
eyes.

And close the door.

69 INT. DEL MEDIGO HOME, OLTR'ARNO, FIRENZE - NIGHT

69

The door opens and a weary Judah enters.

Grazia hurries down the stairs to greet him.

MATURE GRAZIA (V.O.)
Judah finally returned, now famous
for curing the French king.

70 INT. BATHROOM, DEL MEDIGO HOME, OLTR'ARNO, FIRENZE - NIGHT 70

Judah sits in the tub of hot water while Grazia scrubs him down.

MATURE GRAZIA (V.O.)
But he stayed only long enough for a
hot bath. Lord Pico had taken ill
again and needed Judah urgently. As
for my questions about King Charles,
all I got were cool, brief replies.

JUDAH
All his Majesty needed was a physic
and some hand-holding.

He rises from the bath and CALLS OUT.

JUDAH (CONT'D)
Medina!... Medina, have you prepared
the necessities?
(to Grazia)
I'm sorry, wife. But I must hurry
away again.

MATURE GRAZIA (V.O.)
In the end, I had no gossip...

71 INT. BONAVENTURA HOME, FIRENZE - DAY 71

Diamante and Grazia lean out the window watching the street below.

MATURE GRAZIA (V.O.)
... to report to Diamante. But soon,
that hardly mattered.

72 EXT. STREETS OF FIRENZE - DAY 72

On the street, a French flag is carried by a soldier.

A cluster of French soldiers walk from door to door, banging
on the doors with their halberds.

73 INT. BONAVENTURA HOME, FIRENZE - DAY 73

Diamante and Grazia, now joined by Isaac, Messer Bonaventura,
and Regina, watch the soldiers. All are distressed.

73 CONTINUED:

73

ISAAC

Savonarola calls these French our saviours. Their King the living incarnation of the Sword of God.

DIAMANTE

Are we just going to let them just walk right in and take our city?

ISAAC

They have come to scourge us wicked Florentines and our Medici rulers of our sins.

DIAMANTE

Is there to be no resistance? No opposition?

BANG! BANG! BANG! On the door below. They all freeze.

74 INT. BONAVENTURA HOME, FIRENZE - DAY

74

French soldiers tramp through the house while Grazia, Diamante, Isaac, Messer Bonaventura, and Regina look on helplessly.

FRENCH SOLDIER

This room - Baron de Corbières...
Here, Count Mezières... The end of
the hall, Lord Soissons...

75 EXT. STREETS OF FIRENZE - DAY

75

Grazia makes her way along the streets, completely deserted except for French soldiers, their SPURS JINGLING as they walk from house to house writing the names of French nobles in chalk on the doors.

MATURE GRAZIA (V.O.)

Mesmerized by Savonarola, the *signoria* of Firenze declared Piero dei Medici a traitor and banished him. The French then took over the city without a shot fired, without a word of protest. It took only two days to wipe out over sixty years of Medici rule. Rodrigo Borgia summed it up: The French captured Firenze with a box of chalk.

76 INT. LABORATORY, DEL MEDIGO HOME, OLTR'ARNO, FIRENZE - NIGHT 76

Flames tickle beakers of fluids as Judah intensely studies his large texts, makes copious notes, turns up flames, stirs beaker contents, paying little attention to...

Grazia, who exhorts him.

GRAZIA

The Bonaventuras are leaving for
Mugello tonight.

JUDAH

Go along with them if you wish.

GRAZIA

And you? Will you not come with us?

JUDAH

Certainly not!

GRAZIA

You refuse the offer, then?

JUDAH

Grazia, I hold the life of a
desperately ill young man in my hands.
Have I not made that clear to you?

GRAZIA

You have, sir. And I tell you we
are in a precarious position with
the French...

JUDAH

Twaddle! The Bonaventuras are in a
precarious position. They might
have their fortune confiscated. But
you and I, we are in high favour
with the French King. I am his
physician. His "saviour." Still,
perhaps you should go to the
countryside with your friends.

GRAZIA

And leave you here?

JUDAH

Medina will see to my needs.

76 CONTINUED:

76

GRAZIA

I do not believe a wife should leave
her husband when danger threatens.
My place is at your side.

JUDAH

If you wish to go, go. If you wish
to stay, stay. But for God's sake
leave me to my work.

77 INT. DEL MEDIGO HOME, OLTR'ARNO, FIRENZE - DAY

77

Grazia waits inside the door tensely listening to:

The JINGLE OF SPURS getting closer.

A NEARBY BANG! BANG! BANG!

Silence. Grazia stiffens, smooths her hair, and approaches
the door.

The JINGLE OF SPURS very near, then right outside the door.

Then, from the other side of the door...

FRENCH SOLDIER (O.S.)

Move on, move on. The physician
lives here. The King commands it.

The SPURS MOVE ON. Grazia eases her tension in relief. A
TRUMPET FANFARE

78 EXT. PIAZZA DEL DUOMO, FIRENZE - DAY

78

The TRUMPET FANFARE announces the entry of the Gascon infantry,
marching into the square in full regalia and formation.

Observing in a canopied reviewing stand are the elites of the
French court and Florentine society, including Grazia and
Judah.

MATURE GRAZIA (V.O.)

And an invitation from the King soon
followed that Judah could not refuse,
though he could not spare the time
away from Lord Pico. Thus we came
to be seated under the canopy
sheltering the King's most favoured
guests, the exquisites of the French
court and the Florentine traitors
who followed Savonarola.

78 CONTINUED:

78

Swiss infantry, French cavalry, Breton archers, Scottish cross-bowmen all march past to the BEAT OF DRUMS and CHEERS OF:
FRANCIA! FRANCIA!

Judah is impatient and glum; Grazia uncomfortable.

MATURE GRAZIA (V.O.) (CONT'D)
We were all there to cheer the
conqueror of the once-proud commune
of Firenze.

Finally, KING CHARLES VIII enters the square on his horse. He is an extremely ugly man: a small body with an overlarge head; a large beak nose; thick lips hanging open like an engorged vulva; scraggly red beard more like pubic hair than whiskers; and twitching hands and head.

The CHEERS INTENSIFY at the sight of him. Grazia is repulsed.

Judah becomes increasingly tense and alarmed.

The King passes by the reviewing stand.

While the dignitaries around them CHEER and APPLAUD, Judah appears increasingly unnerved and Grazia more alarmed.

The King passes out the other side of the square.

Judah immediately leaps up, grabs Grazia's hand, and hurries off of the stand.

Judah, with Grazia in tow, pushes his way through the crowd filling the square.

GRAZIA
Sir!?!.. What..? What is...?

But Judah just presses on through the crowd oblivious to her.

GRAZIA (CONT'D)
Tell me! What is it? What...?

JUDAH
It's Lord Pico. I must... I must
get to Fiesole. He needs me.

GRAZIA
But, sir...

JUDAH
There's no time. You'll just have
to come with me.

78 CONTINUED: (2)

78

MATURE GRAZIA (V.O.)
Judah was impatient to be gone to
his patient in Fiesole.

79 EXT. STABLE, FIRENZE - DAY

79

Two mules stand ready and waiting.

Judah and Grazia hurry up

MATURE GRAZIA (V.O.)
Willy-nilly I must accompany him to
Count Pico della Mirandola's villa
on the Fiesole heights. To escort me
home would have robbed him of precious
time with his patient.

80 EXT. COUNTRYSIDE BETWEEN FIESOLE AND FIRENZE - DAY

80

Judah and Grazia, on their mules, climb the hills out of
Firenze and up to Fiesole.

Judah suddenly turns back.

JUDAH
He is dead.

Grazia is taken aback: How does he know?

81 EXT. PORTAL, MIRANDOLA VILLA, FIESOLE - DAY

81

A SERVANT hurries to the portal to let Judah and Grazia in.

SERVANT
Oh, Maestro Leone. Count Pico... He
died only a short time ago.

Grazia marvels that Judah's premonition has come true.

Judah bows his head in great sadness.

JUDAH
Too young. Too soon.

82 INT. SALA GRANDE, MIRANDOLA VILLA, FIESOLE - DAY

82

The Servant pulls aside a heavy curtain, through which Judah
leads Grazia into the large room, its windows curtained against
the daylight.

82 CONTINUED:

82

Candles flicker around the centre of the room where a cluster of black-robed figures - members of the Platonic Academy - stand around a bier. On the bier, a coffin; at the foot of the coffin, a bust of Plato.

Judah and Grazia move to the coffin and peer in, Grazia seeing Lord Pico for the first time. She is astonished at...

LORD PICO lying in rest, a beautiful, noble young man with golden hair spread out on the pillow.

BLACK-ROBED FIGURE #1
Ah, Leone del Medigo. We have lost
the brightest ornament in the
humanistic diadem.

BLACK-ROBED FIGURE #2
Our Phoenix, truly our Phoenix.

The others all MUMBLE in agreement.

Grazia stares at the figure in wonder.

83 INT. STAIRWAY AND CORRIDOR, MIRANDOLA VILLA, FIESOLE - NIGHT

83

Two servants, carrying a candelabra of candles and luggage, leads Judah and Grazia up the darkened stairway.

And along the corridor.

84 INT. BEDROOM, MIRANDOLA VILLA, FIESOLE - NIGHT

84

Candle-light flickers on the bejeweled crucifix hanging on the wall.

Grazia sits on the bed in the otherwise stripped room.

Judah stands at the door, holding a single candle.

JUDAH
I am sorry, Grazia. I fear I cannot
sleep. I need to sit with... To
spend a few last moments alone with
him.

She looks up at him in silent assent.

85 INT. SALA GRANDE, MIRANDOLA VILLA, FIESOLE - DAY

85

Lord Pico lies in his coffin the image of youthful beauty.

85 CONTINUED: 85

Judah pulls the curtain aside and somberly crosses to the coffin.

86 INT. BEDROOM, MIRANDOLA VILLA, FIESOLE - NIGHT 86

Grazia starts awake in her bed. She looks to her side, but the bed is still empty.

Distressed, she rises from the bed.

87 INT. STAIRWAY AND CORRIDOR, MIRANDOLA VILLA, FIESOLE - NIGHT 87

Grazia, carrying a single candle, moves down the dark corridor. And down the dark stairway.

88 INT. SALA GRANDE, MIRANDOLA VILLA, FIESOLE - NIGHT 88

She pauses at the heavy curtain.

Finally, she quietly pulls it aside and enters the room.

Judah kneels before the coffin, a single candle lighting him.

Grazia silently moves towards him.

Closer and closer to Judah, until his shape is clearer. He is swaying back and forth over the dead body, MUMBLING and MUTTERING.

Grazia stops and watches.

Judah's movements and mumblings become more distinct; he is SOBBING openly, tears running down his cheeks; he clenches Pico's hands in his own.

Grazia watches, transfixed.

Judah lifts Pico's hands and kisses them.

JUDAH
(through his sobs)
Ohh, my beloved... There is no sun...
And no moon... Only grayness. And
tears...

He reaches into the coffin and lifts Pico's head in his hands

88 CONTINUED:

88

JUDAH (CONT'D)
Speak to me one last time... Tell me
I am forgiven... That you love me...
Oh, speak...

And he kisses Pico on the mouth with great passion.

Grazia is stunned and AUDIBLY GASPS.

Judah turns to see her.

She stands there, frozen, in her candlelight.

He stares back at her from the coffin.

Then he lets out an AGONIZED GROAN and pulls himself to his feet and staggers from the room.

DISSOLVE TO:

89 INT. MATURE GRAZIA'S ROOM, PALAZZO COLONNA - DAY

89

There is a KNOCK on the door. Mature Grazia sets her writing quill down.

ALESSANDRO, Isabella's *major domo*, enters with a letter.

ALESSANDRO
Pardon, Lady Grazia. A letter for
you. From Constantinople.

He crosses to her, hands her the letter, bows, and moves out of the room.

She opens the letter and reads it.

MATURE JUDAH (V.O.)
Grazia, most treasured wife. There
is no heaven on earth, but if there
were, it would be this fair city of
Constantinople.

90 EXT. CONSTANTINOPLE - DAY

90

A view of Constantinople from the harbour.

MATURE JUDAH (V.O.)
It is an oasis of peace, dignity,
and freedom unimagined even by me
until now.

91 INT. GREAT PALACE, CONSTANTINOPLE - DAY

91

MATURE JUDAH, in his early 60s, enters the resplendent court hall and bows to...

SULEIMAN THE MAGNIFICENT, rising from his throne and gesturing for Judah to sit on his right.

MATURE JUDAH (V.O.)

In our first meeting, Suleiman the Magnificent received me standing up and seated me at his right. This is a wonderful compliment and an expression of trust.

Mature Judah sits beside Suleiman the Magnificent. The two men hold an animated conversation.

MATURE JUDAH (V.O.) (CONT'D)

Listen, Grazia. The Sultan has opened this country to us all. The gates are ever open to equal position and the unhindered practice of Jewish worship.

92 INT. MATURE GRAZIA'S ROOM, PALAZZO COLONNA - DAY

92

Mature Grazia reads the letter.

MATURE JUDAH (V.O.)

We can renew our inner life and abandon practices we have been compelled to adopt by Christian nations in which we live as exiles. You belong here at my side in Turkey, Grazia. Roma is becoming increasingly dangerous. My son deserves to be safe. He belongs in the synagogue in which he was raised. Do not betray us, I beg you. Judah del Medigo.

Mature Grazia sets aside the letter and ponders a moment.

Then she picks up her quill and begins writing.

MATURE GRAZIA (V.O.)

I find that in writing this book for you, Danilo, so you can understand, is actually helping me understand.

(MORE)

92 CONTINUED:

92

MATURE GRAZIA (V.O.) (CONT'D)
Helping me make the choices in my
life that I must make.

FADE OUT:

END OF EPISODE THREE