

Episode Seven

The Secret Book of Grazia dei Rossi

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"The Secret Book of Grazia dei Rossi"

Episode Seven

FADE IN:

1 EXT. ROAD OUTSIDE ROMA - DUSK 1

Two horses THUNDER along the road at full speed.

Towards the city of Roma, its skyline in the moon-lit distance.

Title over in handwritten Renaissance script:

Roma

April 6, 1527

2 EXT. CITY STREETS, ROMA - DUSK 2

The two horses CANTER through the streets.

3 EXT. PALAZZO COLONNA - DUSK 3

They approach the massive palazzo and ride through its gates.

4 EXT. COURTYARD, PALAZZO COLONNA, ROMA - DUSK 4

The two horses CLATTER across the stone courtyard to the main palazzo entrance.

The riders dismount and look up to the building, revealing DANILO, age 11, and MATURE LORD PIRRO, age 56.

Above them, a woman - MATURE GRAZIA - looks down at them from her lit window.

5 INT. GRAZIA'S BEDROOM, COLONNA REGGIO, ROMA - DUSK 5

Mature Grazia hurries from her window and out of her room.

6 INT. PALAZZO COLONNA, ROMA - DUSK 6

Mature Grazia hurries down the corridor.

6 CONTINUED:

6

Down the staircase.

And out the door.

7 EXT. COURTYARD, PALAZZO COLONNA, ROMA - DUSK

7

Mature Grazia hurries out and stops at the sight of...

Mature Pirro handing the horses over to the Servants. Both he and Danilo, dirt-covered, rumpled, and sweaty, turn to see Mature Grazia.

MATURE PIRRO

(to Danilo)

Go to your mother, Danilo.

Danilo runs to his mother's arms.

Mature Grazia holds the boy close to her while she looks at...

Mature Pirro, watching them, as Servants tend to their horses.

Danilo talks excitedly to his mother.

DANILO

Mama, Mama we saw the most remarkable events. An army stretched out across the landscape as far as the eye can see. Thousands and thousands of the most hardened soldiers who will do almost anything to win the day.

Mature Grazia listens to Danilo and observes...

Mature Pirro turning away and hurrying into the building.

8 INT. ISABELLA'S PRIVATE SUITES, PALAZZO COLONNA - DUSK

8

Mature Pirro reports to MATURE ISABELLA, elegant, self-possessed, and anxious to hear his report.

MATURE PIRRO

Constable Bourbon informed me that he has now doubled the price for moving his troops out of Italy. A quarter of a million ducats.

Mature Isabella shivers, intimidated by the amount.

MATURE PIRRO (CONT'D)

We must pay it. Pay it now, before it goes to three-hundred thousand ducats.

MATURE ISABELLA

I'm afraid the Pope has so far declined to sell off any red hats. He would rather give up the Holy See than sell cardinalates.

MATURE PIRRO

The Emperor is not sending any supplies or money to Bourbon's army. They will be paid in the pillaging of homes here in Roma.

MATURE ISABELLA

Starve the lion before he enters the den.

MATURE PIRRO

Unless we pay. Now.

MATURE ISABELLA

The Pope will pay. Oh, he will kick and squirm, but any day now a messenger will appear at this door from His Holiness, graciously consenting to bestow upon my son Ercole the red hat of a cardinal. And I will retrieve the ducats I have put away for just this purpose. I won't leave Roma until I have a red hat.

MATURE PIRRO

I am not sure His Holiness can wait much longer.

Mature Isabella eyes him with concern.

MATURE PIRRO (CONT'D)

One hope is that Bourbon decides to take Firenze and lets his army of looters loose on that city. That will give us time here in Roma and, perhaps, satiate the unpaid army with loot from Firenze rather than from Roma.

Mature Isabella turns away and moves to a window where she looks out, contemplating, upset. After a moment...

8 CONTINUED: (2)

8

MATURE PIRRO (*CONT'D*)
Excuse me, Madonna, but do you have
any further need of me right now?

MATURE ISABELLA
(without turning from
the window)
No, no. Thank you, cousin. You
have, as usual, expedited yourself
very well. And now, I am sure you
have other duties to tend to.

MATURE PIRRO
Thank you, Marchesana.

Mature Pirro bows and turns to leave.

MATURE ISABELLA
(turning to him)
Oh, and how was Grazia's son, Danilo?

Mature Pirro stops and turns back.

9 INT. GRAZIA'S ROOM, PALAZZO COLONNA, ROMA - DUSK

9

Mature Grazia and Danilo sit together, Danilo reading Judah's
letter from Constantinople.

DANILO
Papa sounds very happy there.

MATURE GRAZIA
Yes, and he's very anxious that we
join him.

DANILO
And you? Do you want to live in
Constantinople?

MATURE GRAZIA
I am like you, my son. I want some
time to think about it. Now freshen
up and prepare for dinner.

DANILO
Yes, mama.

Danilo heads for the door. Mature Grazia follows him.

MATURE GRAZIA
I missed you, Danilo.

9 CONTINUED:

9

DANILO

Me too, mother.

MATURE GRAZIA

I do not think I could ever stay
apart from you for long.

Danilo opens the door to leave.

DANILO

You will never have to, will you?

Danilo heads out of the room.

10 INT. CORRIDOR, PALAZZO COLONNA - EVENING

10

Danilo heads down the resplendent, art-festooned corridor.

Mature Grazia watches from her bedroom door. She goes to
close the door when...Mature Pirro suddenly appears coming down the corridor from
the opposite direction, still disheveled from his journey.

He hurries to her at the door.

MATURE GRAZIA

Lord Pirro, and how are you after
your journ...?But he cuts her short, grabbing her and easing her into the
room. He is very tense, distraught.

11 INT. GRAZIA'S BEDROOM, PALAZZO COLONNA, ROMA - CONTINUOUS

11

Mature Pirro eases Mature Grazia into her room.

MATURE PIRRO

Lady Grazia, I am sorry for this
intrusion, but... There is a rumour
about that only you can put to rest.

MATURE GRAZIA

Whatever it is, Lord Pirro, I will
endeavour to clarify any situation
to which I am privy.

Mature Pirro looks at her, hesitating and tense.

11 CONTINUED:

11

MATURE PIRRO

Is it possible that the boy with whom I have just travelled and whom I have offered to adopt... Is it possible that he is indeed my own son?

Mature Grazia freezes, stunned at his question.

MATURE PIRRO (CONT'D)

If this sounds mad, please forgive me. But I have loved you all these years. And trusted you like no other in my life. Do not wound me any further with evasions. Only the truth can heal the pain of this betrayal. Is it true that Danilo is my son?

Mature Grazia hesitates, then...

MATURE GRAZIA

Yes.

Mature Pirro stares at her, a welter of confused emotion playing on his face. He steps back and turns away from her, grievously hurt, speaking with his back to her.

MATURE PIRRO

It is a cruel thing you have done, Grazia... To keep a father from his son. And a son from his father... A cruel thing.

MATURE GRAZIA

I am sorry, but cruelty was the furthest thing from my heart. You can believe that.

He shakes his head: "No."

MATURE GRAZIA (CONT'D)

Just as, thirty-four years ago, I was betrayed. Cruelly betrayed. And then, too, cruelty was the...

MATURE PIRRO

The furthest thing from my heart.

MATURE GRAZIA

Yes. You and I, we were not... But I had a son.

(MORE)

11 CONTINUED: (2)

11

MATURE GRAZIA (CONT'D)
And a good home with Judah. I did
what any mother would do. Looked
first to the safety of my child.

He nods his head: "Yes." He then turns to look at her.

MATURE GRAZIA (CONT'D)
Danilo, of course, does not know.
Judah agreed we should tell him when
he comes of age. His next birthday,
in six months. But now... I can
only ask that you, too, wait.

They stare at one another a long moment.

He then spins and bolts out of the room without another word.

Mature Grazia steadies herself, a welter of confused emotion
playing on her face.

12 INT. CORRIDOR, PALAZZO COLONNA - EVENING

12

Mature Grazia and Danilo, dressed for dinner, walk along the
grand corridor festooned with paintings, sculptures, and
tapestries. He talks while Mature Grazia appears preoccupied.

DANILO
Lord Pirro says he shall have a suit
of armour made to measure. For me.
To wear into battle.

MATURE GRAZIA
Battle? But you are not going into
any battle, are you?

DANILO
I mean, if I choose to become a
soldier. Lord Pirro will provide me
the armour.

MATURE GRAZIA
What would your father say about
such a thing?

DANILO
It would not make him angry, would
it? He would not force me into
another profession against my wishes,
would he?

12 CONTINUED:

12

MATURE GRAZIA

No, Danilo. But he would expect you to take your time and think very carefully about it.

DANILO

That's what Lord Pirro says.

MATURE GRAZIA

And Lord Pirro is right. There is still a lot of time for you to decide.

13 INT. DINING ROOM, PALAZZO COLONNA, ROMA - EVENING

13

Mature Isabella sits at the head of a massive dining table, dressed in her finery. Other GUESTS also sit at the table while SERVERS wait on them.

Among them is Mature Grazia and Danilo, the latter seeking Mature Pirro, who is absent.

MATURE ISABELLA

Danilo, you appear full of energy and appetite after such a long, grueling trip.

DANILO

Yes, marchesana. I found the trip very enlightening and very exciting.
(glances around)

MATURE ISABELLA

How enthusiastic you sound. Yet you appear distracted.

DANILO

I was wondering where my honoured liege, Lord Pirro, was.

MATURE ISABELLA

Lord Pirro has declined dinner. I fear he is, unlike your youthful self, exhausted from his long trip.

Danilo is reassured by this explanation.

MATURE ISABELLA (CONT'D)

I understand you also met my nephew, Constable, the Duke of Bourbon.

Danilo hesitates: He was not impressed by Bourbon.

MATURE GRAZIA

But isn't Constable, the Duke of
Bourbon leading the Emperor's army?

MATURE ISABELLA

My nephew! Yes!

She refers to a painting on the wall opposite: a portrait of
Bourbon in profile entitled "Charles de Bourbon, Conble de
France".

MATURE ISABELLA (CONT'D)

Leading the Emperor's army right
here to attack Roma and the Pope and
us. Right now he and his army are
in Firenze and all we can do is hope
that he gets caught up trying to
conquer Firenze and thereby delays
his conquest of Roma.

MATURE GRAZIA

But he's always been closely allied
to the French, King Francis. They
have always been such close friends.

DANILO

Your portrait even calls him the
"Constable of France".

MATURE ISABELLA

Yes, but not anymore, alas.

Mature Grazia gives Mature Isabella a look: "And?"

MATURE ISABELLA (CONT'D)

According to Lord Pirro of Bozzuolo,
it all started after the Constable's
wife Suzanne, died. He was in great
anguish over the loss of such a young,
beautiful woman who left all the
Bourbon estates to her husband. But
it turns out the King's mother, old
Louise, had a claim on those
properties and a very strong
attraction to the Bourbon and, with
Bourbon's wife now dead, she suggested
he marry her. I'm afraid Bourbon
was outraged and insulted at such a
proposal, which of course outraged
and insulted old Queen Louise and
she demanded that her son, the King,
avenge this insult.

(MORE)

MATURE ISABELLA (CONT'D)

Francis thereafter spurned and humiliated Bourbon, his former friend. This went on for two years with Bourbon losing all power, influence, and status at the French court. It's little wonder that the poor, scorned Bourbon leapt at the chance to regain his glory in the service of the Holy Roman Emperor. That is all according to Lord Pirro but I do find that noble knight to be reliable, do you not think so?

MATURE GRAZIA

Lord Pirro? Yes. I most definitely find him a man of great reliability.

MATURE ISABELLA

Then there is Ferrante, my own son.

She refers to another painting on the wall: Titian's Man in a Military uniform, purported to be Ferrante Gonzaga. A young, bearded man in a red, military-like costume surrounded by a pet dog, a child, and a dragon-like red creature armour.

DANILO

Your son, marchesana?

MATURE ISABELLA

I last saw him three years ago. He looked resplendent in his officer's uniform glowing with youth. He is now one of Constable's lieutenants.

MATURE GRAZIA

And that makes him part of the force attacking us here.

MATURE ISABELLA

Yes. Ferrante grew up in the court of the emperor and is very faithful to him. So both my nephew and son. But we mustn't forget the Colonna brothers. Cardinal Pompeo...

She refers to another painting: A portrait of a man in a scarlet cardinal's cape over his shoulders and a scarlet biretta with three peaks on his head.

MATURE ISABELLA (CONT'D)

And captain Vespasiano.

13 CONTINUED: (3)

13

This time she points to a small engraving of the head and shoulders of a man in armour with a plumed helmet.

DANILO

They own this grand Palazzo Colonna.

MATURE ISABELLA

Yes and generously loaned it to me for my stay here. Because they, too, are in common cause with Pope Clement in a treaty signed less than two weeks ago. Except, of course, they aren't and are instead Ghibbelines, loyal to the Emperor and the key motivators behind the entire assault on Roma. Pompeo wants to be Pope and Vespasiano wants to please his brother and his Emperor.

MATURE GRAZIA

That's the same Vespasiano betrothed to your niece, Guilia.

MATURE ISABELLA

When I think that I have promised my beautiful niece to that dishonorable cur ... I cannot break off the engagement, but I can refuse to attend the wedding. One must maintain some principles.

MATURE GRAZIA

And your niece, Guilia, is living right now in this Palazzo with us

MATURE ISABELLA

Yes, as a *donzelle*. You've seen her, I'm certain.

DANILO

The Colonna brothers own this palazzo, one Colonna is betrothed to your kinswoman who's living here, and their army attacking Roma is commanded by your nephew and your son.

MATURE ISABELLA

Yes. This whole war is just one large family quarrel.

13 CONTINUED: (4)

13

MATURE GRAZIA

Doesn't that suggest that the very
safest place to be during this attack
is right here in the Palazzo Colonna?

Mature Isabella stops short at this insight and an idea twigs.

MATURE ISABELLA

Danilo, your mother is very astute.
We must use her insight to our
advantage.

14 INT. ISABELLA'S PRIVATE SUITES, PALAZZO COLONNA - DAY

14

Mature Isabella dictates while Mature Grazia writes.

MATURE ISABELLA

Accordingly, for your own safety, I
strongly advise you to move your
family and your most valuable
belongings into the palazzo at once.

There is a KNOCK on the door.

MATURE ISABELLA (CONT'D)

Yes?

The door opens and Mature Pirro enters. Throughout the
following, he performs his duties properly but is clearly
sensitive to Mature Grazia who in turn is aware of him. Mature
Isabella studies them both.

MATURE PIRRO

A courier has just arrived with this
message.

He passes a letter to Mature Isabella who opens and peruses
it.

MATURE PIRRO (CONT'D)

It says that Bourbon has abandoned
the campaign against Firenze and
instead is marching directly on Roma.

MATURE ISABELLA

(upset)

And how long? How long before ...?

MATURE PIRRO

Ten days, maybe twelve. Except...

14 CONTINUED:

14

MATURE ISABELLA

What?

MATURE PIRRO

They says he's abandoning all his
equipment, carriages, heavy baggage,
and light artillery to speed up the
march and get here sooner.

Mature Isabella is crestfallen.

MATURE ISABELLA

But why? Why did he decide not to
take Firenze?

MATURE PIRRO

Because the Duke of Urbino arrived
with a contingent of the Pope's army.

MATURE ISABELLA

Urbino! But he's done everything to
avoid confronting Bourbon through
this entire campaign.

MATURE PIRRO

Yes, the man is a known coward. He
has more lead in his shoes than in
his cannons. But he arrived to defend
Firenze and Bourbon decided to move
on.

MATURE ISABELLA

That gives us no time at all.
(passing him the letter)
Here, please give this to Grazia to
file.

Pirro takes the letter to Grazia at the writing table.

She takes the letter, with neither acknowledging the other.

15 INT. GRAZIA'S BEDROOM, PALAZZO COLONNA, ROMA - NIGHT

15

Mature Grazia sits pondering her portrait by Mantegna.

She then removes her secret book and mulls over its pages
when there is a KNOCK on the door. She quickly puts away the
book.

MATURE GRAZIA

Yes, enter.

15 CONTINUED:

15

Danilo enters with a letter.

MATURE GRAZIA (CONT'D)
Oh, Danilo, how good to see you. I
was just sitting here thinking...
(notices his letter)
What's that you have?

DANILO
A letter from Papa in Constantinople.

He moves to her and passes her the letter. She takes it but
does not read it.

MATURE GRAZIA
What does he write?

DANILO
He's very concerned for us. He's
heard of the war and the imminent
attack on Roma. He wants us to flee
the city and catch a ship to him in
Constantinople where we can all be
together and safe.

MATURE GRAZIA
What do you think we should do?

DANILO
It's only a matter of days before
Bourbon arrives and the entire city
will be blockaded. No one will be
able to come or go.

MATURE GRAZIA
So you think we should leave now,
while we still can?

Danilo hesitates, uncertain.

MATURE GRAZIA (CONT'D)
Why don't you write him yourself?

Danilo is taken aback: Me?

MATURE GRAZIA (CONT'D)
You have an excellent hand. And you
express yourself admirably. I'm
sure your father will appreciate
hearing from you.

DANILO
Very well.

15 CONTINUED: (2)

15

He turns to leave but then turns back.

DANILO (CONT'D)

May I explain to him that, as long as we're in the Palazzo Colonna and under Marchesana Isabella's protection, we are as safe as we would be in Constantinople?

Mature Grazia is pleased by this question.

MATURE GRAZIA

By all means, but... We are probably safe, yes, but I wouldn't overly exaggerate our safety here. Use your skill with rhetoric to assure him of our safety without overstating your case.

Danilo smiles in agreement and heads out of the room.

16 INT. CORRIDOR, PALAZZO COLONNA - DAY

16

Mature Grazia follows Mature Isabella hurrying down the corridors, past bustling servants and a HUBBUB of activity.

MATURE ISABELLA

I woke up this morning with such a profound shudder. Rafaello's tapestries. I fear for them.

MATURE GRAZIA

You fear they won't be safe? If the Emperor's army breaches the walls?

MATURE ISABELLA

I understand that that should not happen, that with negotiations and the right bribes, all of this martial chauvinism will vanish. I understand. But while we might hope for the best, we should prepare for the worst. What will those barbarians do to those exquisite tapestries?

ALESSANDRO, Isabella's chamberlain, approaches.

ALESSANDRO

Madama, Lady Felice Orsim has arrived, as have the ambassadors of Ferrara and Urbino.

16 CONTINUED:

16

MATURE ISABELLA

Ah, excellent! They are already starting to appear. Thank you, Alessandro. Tell them I shall greet them momentarily.

Alessandro turns to leave.

MATURE ISABELLA (CONT'D)

Oh, Alessandro. I think it prudent that we prepare accommodation for ... three hundred.

ALESSANDRO

Yes, madam.

17 EXT. COURTYARD, PALAZZO COLONNA, ROMA - DAY

17

Roman CITIZENS - their children and staff and crates of belongings - are unpacked from carriages and carts and hauled into the palazzo.

Suddenly, a COURIER gallops into and across the courtyard, catapults from his horse, and dashes past the Citizens into the palazzo.

18 INT. CORRIDOR, PALAZZO COLONNA - DAY

18

The Courier hurries past Citizens - their families, staffs, crates of belongings - huddled in groups along the corridor.

19 INT. ISABELLA'S PRIVATE SUITES, PALAZZO COLONNA - DAY

19

The Courier bows and passes a letter to Mature Isabella while Mature Grazia observes.

MATURE ISABELLA

Thank you.

The Courier heads out of the room while Mature Isabella opens the letter.

MATURE ISABELLA (CONT'D)

They're at Viterbo!

MATURE GRAZIA

That's only...

19 CONTINUED:

19

MATURE ISABELLA

Two days away. So, any time now
we'll get the call.

20 EXT. COURTYARD, PALAZZO COLONNA, ROMA - DAY

20

More Citizens crowd into the courtyard unpacking their
belongings.

A SECOND COURIER gallops across the courtyard and pushes
through the Citizens into the palazzo.

21 INT. CORRIDOR, PALAZZO COLONNA - DAY

21

The Second Courier hurries past a more crowded corridor of
Citizens and their families, all making a LOUD RUMBLE of noise.

22 INT. ISABELLA'S PRIVATE SUITES, PALAZZO COLONNA - DAY

22

The Second Courier bows as Mature Isabella rips open the
letter.

MATURE ISABELLA

Ha! Get me Lord Pirro! Immediately!

23 INT. ISABELLA'S PRIVATE SUITES, PALAZZO COLONNA - EVENING

23

Bundles of cash are removed from a chest.

MATURE ISABELLA (O.S.)

I told you. Red hats for sale.
It's what he should have done months
ago.

Mature Isabella smirks to Mature Pirro as she places the
bundles of cash in a bag.

MATURE ISABELLA (CONT'D)

His Holiness would like you to collect
the money for red hats from heads of
the Accioli, the Gaddi, the Spinola,
and the Grimani families. Finally,
I have what I came for. A red hat
for my Ercole.

She hands the bag of money to a downcast Mature Pirro.

23 CONTINUED:

23

MATURE ISABELLA (CONT'D)
Cheer up, cousin. This is what we've
been waiting for, is it not?

MATURE PIRRO
Yes, marchesana.

He bows and turns to leave.

24 INT. PALAZZO COLONNA - DAY

24

Mature Grazia and Danilo observe...

Mature Pirro hurrying out of the palazzo with the bag.

Danilo CALLS OUT to him.

DANILO
Lord Pirro!

But Mature Pirro ignores him and hurries off.

DANILO (CONT'D)
I wish I could go with him.

Mature Grazia looks at him in concern.

25 INT. ISABELLA'S PRIVATE SUITES, PALAZZO COLONNA - DAY

25

A hat box as Mature Isabella's hands remove a scarlet biretta
with three peaks.

She admires it with barely contained excitement.

MATURE ISABELLA
Now that I've finally got what I
came for, I can no longer safely
leave this city for home. Don't you
find that ironic, Lord Pirro?

Mature Pirro observes neutrally, while Mature Grazia sits at
the writing desk.

MATURE ISABELLA (CONT'D)
We have our red hats and the Pope
has his money to raise an army against
the Emperor.

MATURE PIRRO
Except I have the money, marchesana.
(MORE)

25 CONTINUED:

25

MATURE PIRRO (CONT'D)

I have been instructed by the Pope
to deliver it to Bourbon and his
German hordes as ransom for the city.

MATURE ISABELLA

Then you must hurry. They are only
one day away.

MATURE PIRRO

Yes, marchesana.

He turns and starts to leave, passing Mature Grazia at her
desk.

Then he stops and hesitates.

Mature Grazia and Mature Isabella observe him in confusion.

He pivots back to Mature Grazia, grabs her hand, and pulls
her out.

MATURE ISABELLA

Pirro! What are you doing?! What
are you doing?! You are supposed to
be on your way to...

But Mature Pirro pulls Mature Grazia out of the room.

26 INT. CORRIDOR, PALAZZO COLONNA - DAY

26

Mature Pirro hurries Mature Grazia down the corridor, past
the hordes of Citizens crowding the walls. Behind them, Mature
Isabella hurries out of her rooms and CALLS AFTER them.

MATURE ISABELLA

Cousin! What are you doing? You
know you must hurry to Viterbo. For
all our sakes! What are you doing?!

But Mature Pirro pays no heed and hurries away with Mature
Grazia.

27 INT. GRAZIA'S BEDROOM, PALAZZO COLONNA, ROMA - DAY

27

Mature Pirro hurries into the room with a surprised Mature
Grazia.

MATURE PIRRO

Grazia... Grazia....

MATURE GRAZIA

What are you doing? You are supposed to be on your way to Viter...

MATURE PIRRO

I know! I am fully aware of what I am supposed to be...

MATURE GRAZIA

Bourbon's army is sitting there and you need to pay them to stop...

MATURE PIRRO

I know what I need to do.

MATURE GRAZIA

Your duty to the Pope, to Roma, to all of us...

MATURE PIRRO

I know my duty, Grazia! I have always done my duty. I know nothing but duty. Duty has thwarted my life. Denied me what I care for most. And now, duty is to take me away from you again. And from a son I didn't know I had.

He moves to her and stares into her eyes. Very quietly:

MATURE PIRRO (CONT'D)

I cannot leave you again. Not now. Knowing who Danilo truly is.

MATURE GRAZIA

But your...

He places his hand over her lips.

MATURE PIRRO

Grazia, marry me. I have waited all my life. I cannot wait any longer. Divorce your husband. Marry me.

She looks into his eyes and begins to waver.

They kiss.

MATURE GRAZIA

I do love you. I do. All this time, all the years, have done nothing to suppress it.

27 CONTINUED: (2)

27

MATURE PIRRO

Then marry me. My cousin Isabella
will still stand with you at the
baptismal font. Marry me, Grazia.
Marry me.

MATURE GRAZIA

And Danilo?

MATURE PIRRO

Danilo is my son.

MATURE GRAZIA

But raised with great care and love
by someone who does not want to lose
him. And Judah? My duty to him?

MATURE PIRRO

Duty. And how has duty served your
life?

MATURE GRAZIA

Sometimes, duty is all we have. And
your duty? To your country? To all
us here in this beleaguered city?

MATURE PIRRO

Which is why I will not leave you.
Or Danilo. I will not leave you
without protection. The Emperor's
army will be inside the city walls
in no time and I cannot...

MATURE GRAZIA

Pirro, Pirro... I love you. But you
must, for all of us, you must hasten
to Viterbo.

MATURE PIRRO

I cannot leave you...

She places her hand over his mouth.

MATURE GRAZIA

While you are away, I will be baptized
as a Christian. On the day you
return, I will marry you.

He takes her hand and kisses it fervently.

MATURE GRAZIA (CONT'D)

Now fly. Fly like Pegasus back to
me. I'll be waiting.

- 27 CONTINUED: (3) 27
- They kiss fervently and he spins away and out the door. She follows.
- 28 EXT. PALAZZO COLONNA - DAY 28
- Mature Pirro rides out of the gate with the bag of money.
- 29 EXT. PONTE SISTO, ROMA - DAY 29
- The bag of money is strapped to Mature Pirro's horse but the horse has slowed down to a walk.
- Mature Pirro and his steed are consumed in a mass of FLEEING ROMANS - nobles, cardinals - all trying to funnel across the bridge with their carts and carriages overloaded with their goods.
- Pushing their way through in the other directions is a PHALANX OF MERCENARIES, dressed in armour, carrying halberds and brandishing swords.
- Mature Pirro does his best to penetrate the wall of moving humanity that's blocking the bridge.
- 30 EXT. CONSTABLE BOURBON'S CAMP OUTSIDE ROMA - DAY 30
- The bag of money is thrown back at Mature Pirro who catches it.
- Facing him is CONSTABLE BOURBON. They are standing outside his tent. A vista of Roma is in the distance.
- BOURBON
- My men will do much better sacking
Roma, don't you think?
- He motions around him.
- Mature Pirro looks to see...
- A bedraggled corps of haggard, wild-eyed, men. Beyond them, as far as he can see, a formless mass of soldiers spread over the muddy countryside.
- MATURE PIRRO
- Honourable sir, your men have no
weapons, your army no siege machines.
You lack supplies of any kind.
- Bourbon LAUGHS.

30 CONTINUED:

30

BOURBON

One thing we have, Lord Pirro of Bozzuolo. One thing that months of privation and marching and betrayal have given them. The strongest weapon of all. Hatred.

31 INT. CORRIDOR, PALAZZO COLONNA, ROMA - DAY

31

Mature Grazia follows Mature Isabella, who is grilling her chamberlain, Alessandro, and pushing past crowds of Citizens trying to make themselves at home. There is a LOUD HUM of humanity - CHATTER, BABIES CRYING, WOMEN WAILING.

MATURE ISABELLA

The gunpowder, has it been delivered?

ALESSANDRO

Yes, madama, last night. In a covered wagon.

MATURE ISABELLA

And pikes?

ALESSANDRO

Lined up in the antechamber.

MATURE ISABELLA

And the men? Where are they garrisoned?

ALESSANDRO

Up at the top of the *giardino*, madama. At the Tore de Mesa.

The step around and over a large puddle of urine in the middle of the corridor.

MATURE ISABELLA

And the supplies, are we stocked?

ALESSANDRO

The forty pounds of fish at yesterday's dinner. Not a herring bone is left.

MATURE ISABELLA

We are sharing our bounty as Christ commands us to. Have you sent your boys to the market today?

31 CONTINUED:

31

Mature Grazia catches a glimpse of a nobleman squatting on the floor with his pants around his knees, defecating.

ALESSANDRO

With orders to buy anything that wriggles.

MATURE ISABELLA

Very good, Alessandro. That will be all.

(turning to Mature
Grazia)

Where is your son?

MATURE GRAZIA

In his room.

MATURE ISABELLA

Fetch him to us.

MATURE GRAZIA

Yes, madame.

Mature Grazia bows and hurries away.

32 EXT. TOWER, PALAZZO COLONNA, ROMA - DUSK

32

A vista of the city as the sun sets. On the distant Janiculum Hill, across the city on the other side of the River Tiber, a mass of humanity has gathered: the Emperor's army

Gazing from the vantage point of the tower are Mature Isabella, Mature Grazia, and Danilo.

DANILO

It is so quiet.

MATURE ISABELLA

The calm before the storm.

Mature Isabella moves to Danilo, placing her hand on his shoulder, and speaking to him in a new intimacy.

Mature Grazia watches in concern.

MATURE ISABELLA (CONT'D)

This is the spot where Nero stood, watching the city burn. I think we may witness something just as spectacular.

DANILO

Are you afraid, marchesana?

MATURE ISABELLA

Enc spero, enc metu. My family motto.

DANILO

Without hope or fear. A very valiant motto for a lady.

Mature Isabella smiles warmly at Danilo's comment.

MATURE GRAZIA

But surely, Lord Pirro's mission to Bourbon will see the Imperial forces withdraw?

MATURE ISABELLA

No, I'm sorry. I have just received word that Bourbon has declined the money. Lord Pirro is now madly dashing to Firenze in hopes of moving that coward Urbino into action and get his troops down here.

DANILO

But Urbino is days away.

MATURE GRAZIA

So Lord Pirro will not be returning to us...

MATURE ISABELLA

For many days.

MATURE GRAZIA

What will you do should the Emperor's armies overrun the city?

DANILO

Remember, Madonna Madre, that a thirty-foot wall stands between them and us and that scaling such a wall is a very risky venture.

MATURE ISABELLA

Risky, but not impossible.

DANILO

I have seen with my own eyes the abandoned Imperial artillery lying along the road all the way from

(MORE)

32 CONTINUED: (2)

32

DANILO (CONT'D)

Lombardia. And you heard Lord Pirro explain that even if Bourbon does manage somehow to break into the Borgo, the city bridges can be cut and the city saved.

MATURE ISABELLA

Oh, I am quite confident that my nephew and my son will break through the defenses. But by then, we will have collected a hefty ransom from all our guests. That should secure us safe passage out of Roma. But there is still one issue remaining.

They look at her: What's that issue?

MATURE ISABELLA (CONT'D)

Master Rafaello's tapestries. We must rescue them from these barbarians. I feel it's time we wrote to my nephew and son.

33 INT. PALAZZO COLONNA, ROMA - NIGHT

33

Mature Grazia and Danilo walk through the crowded corridors of the palazzo, lit only by a few candles. Well-to-do people are sprawled on the floor, their children running about, their babies CRYING. A LOUD HUBBUB of CHATTER ECHOES up and down the corridor.

MATURE GRAZIA

Judah was right all along. But I refused to listen and now we are trapped here.

DANILO

Mother, you worry too much. The battle has not been lost yet.

MATURE GRAZIA

True, but right now, in Constantinople, there is no battle. And no danger.

DANILO

You would rather be there then, with Papa?

33 CONTINUED:

33

MATURE GRAZIA

To tell the truth, I would rather be
anywhere but in this doomed city.

They enter Mature Grazia's room.

34 INT. GRAZIA'S BEDROOM, PALAZZO COLONNA, ROMA - NIGHT

34

Mature Grazia and Danilo enter the room. She crosses to her writing desk and retrieves the manuscript of her secret book. Her portrait by Mantegna sits on its easel.

MATURE GRAZIA

Danilo, I know we are probably going
to be safe here with Marchesana
Isabella. But still, I feel... I
want to consign to you, my son, the
two items of value I have here with
me. My portrait by Maestro Mantegna
and my *libro segreto* made for you to
read when you reach manhood.

She passes the manuscript, carefully wrapped and tied, to
Danilo.

MATURE GRAZIA (CONT'D)

In this manuscript, all is explained
for you. And with that portrait, I
will never have to leave you again.

DANILO

Mama...

She holds him close to her, her torn emotional state playing
on her face.

MATURE GRAZIA

Now I must to the marchesana. She
needs to write to her nephew.

35 INT. ISABELLA'S PRIVATE SUITES, PALAZZO COLONNA - DAY

35

Mature Isabella dictates, Mature Grazia transcribes, Danilo
observes.

MATURE ISABELLA

Most esteemed nephew: In accordance
with your advice, I have garrisoned
this palazzo, not forgetting a special
guard on the well.

(MORE)

MATURE ISABELLA (CONT'D)

We are bountifully provisioned and prepared to await rescue at your hands should matters come to that. I commend myself to your protection and my dear Ferrante to your care. Isabella, Marchesana et cetera, Palazzo Colonna, May 5, 1527.

Mature Grazia finishes scratching out these words with her quill.

MATURE GRAZIA

I shall have this delivered immediately, madama.

MATURE ISABELLA

I thank you very much, Grazia. I'm not sure I could manage all this without your very able assistance.

MATURE GRAZIA

I thank you, madama. I do have one request to make of you.

Mature Isabella looks to Mature Grazia: And what is that?

MATURE GRAZIA (CONT'D)

Will you stand by me at the baptismal font, as you promised all those years ago?

Mature Isabella is taken aback, but is also impressed.

MATURE ISABELLA

My dearest Grazia, after all these years. It will be an honour. And, if I may ask, is this baptism to be quickly followed by a wedding?

MATURE GRAZIA

I'm not sure how quickly it will be, but yes.

MATURE ISABELLA

My warmest congratulations and best wishes to you both. This marriage will make you and I relatives.

Mature Grazia smiles at her.

35 CONTINUED: (2)

35

MATURE ISABELLA (CONT'D)
But right now, I must retire for the
night. And you should, too. Tomorrow
promises to be a rather significant
day.

36 EXT. TOWER, PALAZZO COLONNA, ROMA - DAY

36

WUMP! WUMP! WUMP! CONTINUES over a vista of Roma that now
includes huge clouds of black, billowing smoke rising over
the city.

Watching from the tower are Danilo, Mature Grazia, Mature
Isabella, and a cluster of ARISTOCRATIC GUESTS. All CHATTER
about the battle as if it were a sporting event.

Mature Grazia, however, is clearly distressed.

MATURE ISABELLA
They are trying to breach the walls
at San Spirito.

DANILO
Those walls are thirty feet high and
they have no siege equipment.

MATURE ISABELLA
Then the Pope's men are repulsing
them.

DANILO
Just as I said. And Lord Pirro says
they should blow up the bridges. If
they cannot cross the river, they
cannot take Roma.

MATURE ISABELLA
Danilo, I must say you have the soul
of a soldier.

Mature Grazia exchanges a knowing look with Mature Isabella
as Constanza appears.

CONSTANZA
Madama, a courier has arrived.

A THIRD COURIER follows Constanza into the tower.

Mature Isabella turns to him. All await his message.

THIRD COURIER

Most esteemed Lady and good Madam, I have a report from the battle. Renzo de Ceri's troops have held off the Imperial hordes, knocking down their scaling ladders and shooting a hundred *landsknechts*. They are easy targets from the tops of the walls. The Prince of Orange's assault on the Ponte Milvio has also been turned away. The battle is going in our favour.

There is an immediate HUBUB of celebration and relief from everyone in the tower.

MATURE ISABELLA

Very good. I thank you for your service.

The Third Courier bows and moves out as high spirits move through those gathered.

Except for Danilo, who is suddenly alarmed.

DANILO

Madama, madama...

MATURE ISABELLA

What is it, master Danilo.

DANILO

Fog.

They all look across the city to see a cloud of fog slowly enveloping the scene.

Mature Isabella's face becomes a cloud of concern.

Mature Grazia tries to quell her growing alarm.

DANILO (CONT'D)

An enemy that cannot be seen cannot be repulsed.

They all watch in dread silence as the fog gets thicker and thicker until it has enshrouded the city and nothing can be seen. WUMP! WUMP! WUMP! is now LOUDER and CLOSER. DISTANT SHOUTS, CRIES, and the CLAMOUR of fighting soldiers is heard.

MATURE GRAZIA

What is that smell?

36 CONTINUED: (2)

36

DANILO

Gunpowder.

MATURE ISABELLA

They are inside the city, Danilo.
You can hear fighting in the streets.

MATURE GRAZIA

It smells like death.

They all exchange quick looks of alarm and concern. Mature Grazia appears especially uneasy.

37 INT. CORRIDOR, PALAZZO COLONNA - DAY

37

Mature Isabella leads Danilo and Mature Grazia along the corridor past the SQUALLING BABIES, MOANING mothers, and trembling gentlemen.

MATURE ISABELLA

Let us make the worst case: The Borgo is taken, the Tiber has been crossed, and the Imperials are already streaming through the streets of Roma grabbing what they can where they can.

38 EXT. COURTYARD, PALAZZO COLONNA, ROMA - DAY

38

Mature Isabella, Danilo, and Mature Grazia inspect the main gate that is well locked and protected by MERCENARIES who appear tough and mean.

MATURE ISABELLA

My honourable nephew Bourbon is too experienced a commander to permit them to sack the town until they have their position secured. Rest assured there will be no looting tonight.

39 EXT. NORTH LOGGIA, PALAZZO COLONNA, ROMA - DAY

39

Mature Isabella, Danilo, and Mature Grazia continue their inspection.

Mercenaries are lined up along the loggia. More mercenaries are in the windows of the rooms in the *piano nobile*.

39 CONTINUED:

39

MATURE ISABELLA

My honourable nephew promised to come to us within hours of the fall of the city. A troop of his men will arrive here to reinforce our own *bravi* before midnight and watch over us once his troops are let loose to loot the city.

40 EXT. TOWER, PALAZZO COLONNA, ROMA - EVENING

40

Mature Isabella, Danilo, and Mature Grazia survey the city but can see little for the heavy fog and black smoke as darkness begins.

LOOTING SOUNDS from the streets below: DRUNKEN GERMAN SONGS, SCREAMS, SHOUTS.

MATURE ISABELLA

Even if the worst comes to pass and Roma has fallen to the Imperials, we have nothing to fear.

Danilo is reassured, but Mature Grazia is not. She stares into the darkness, fear and conflicted emotion on her face.

After a moment, a hand reaches out and clasps hers.

She turns to Danilo, holding her hand and looking at her in concern and support.

41 EXT. PALAZZO COLONNA, ROMA - NIGHT

41

LOOTING SOUNDS CONTINUE as outside the high palazzo walls IMPERIAL SOLDIERS run amuck, chasing and murdering Citizens with glee.

But at the base of the wall, a small phalanx of Spanish soldiers forms a protective guard as a large basket is slowly lowered from the top wall of the palazzo.

A young, noble Spanish officer - DON ALONSO DE CORDOVA - is helped into the basket, which is then slowly winched up the wall.

42 EXT. LOGGIA, PALAZZO COLONNA, ROMA - NIGHT

42

LOOTING SOUNDS CONTINUE as the basket swings into the loggia and is caught by Alessandro and several Servants.

42 CONTINUED:

42

Don Alonso is helped out of the basket and lead away.

43 INT. GALLERY, PALAZZO COLONNA, ROMA - NIGHT

43

Don Alonso bows before Mature Isabella, perched on a chair in the grand hall adorned with 270 paintings, intricate giltwork, painted mirrors, and monumental tables.

Mature Grazia stands near by with Danilo. There are dozens of other Citizens gathered around.

DON ALONSO

Don Alonso de Cordova of Spain and
in the service of his Holy Roman
Emperor, Charles the fifth, at your
service, señora.

MATURE ISABELLA

Greetings, Don Alonso. You bring
word from your commander, my nephew,
the Constable, Duke of Bourbon?

Don Alonso hesitates.

Mature Isabella and Mature Grazia all wait in suspense.

DON ALONSO

I am very sorry to inform you, señora,
that your nephew, my commander, the
Duke of bourbon, was killed earlier
today in the battle.

A GASP SWELLS and ECHOES through the grand hall. Mature Isabella is completely taken aback, as if struck by a blow.

There is CHATTER among the Citizens: What's to happen now?

DON ALONSO (CONT'D)

Rest assured, señora, that with his
dying breath, the noble Bourbon gave
orders that the Palazzo Colonna was
to be protected, even at the sacrifice
of lives.

Another WAVE OF MURMURING among the Citizens. Mature Isabella appears relieved but clearly distressed.

DON ALONSO (CONT'D)

I'm sorry to be the bearer of such
tragic news. Bourbon was a great
commander and noble man.

43 CONTINUED:

43

MATURE ISABELLA

He was... I watched him grow up. We spent many happy summers with him and his mother, Chiara, at our villa in Marmirolo. He was such a wonderful... And what of my son, Captain Ferrante Gonzaga?

DON ALONSO

Captain Gonzaga has now assumed command of his Imperial forces. He will be arriving here at the palazzo as soon as it is feasible.

MATURE ISABELLA

And the city?

DON ALONSO

The city of Roma has fallen. It is in the hands of the Imperial army.

Another WAVE OF MURMURING among the Citizens. Mature Grazia appears unnerved and clings to Danilo.

Mature Isabella, likewise unnerved, displays absolute composure.

44 EXT. PALAZZO COLONNA, ROMA - NIGHT

44

The basket is again winched up the wall containing another figure: FERRANTE GONZAGA, 20 years old but appearing haggard, dirty, and much older.

45 INT. GALLERY, PALAZZO COLONNA, ROMA - NIGHT

45

Mature Isabella bolts out of her chair.

MATURE ISABELLA

Ferrante! My son!

Ferrante crosses the grand hall towards her and bows.

MATURE ISABELLA (CONT'D)

Come closer so I may see you.

He approaches, appearing awkward, embarrassed.

MATURE ISABELLA (CONT'D)

It's been three years, has it not?
When you left to serve in Madrid.

45 CONTINUED:

45

They do not get too close, they do not embrace, they do not break the formal protocols of court life.

FERRANTE

Yes, Madonna Madre. This is hardly the reunion we would have hoped for, however.

MATURE ISABELLA

No, but we thank God that you are here and safe and can assure our safety.

Ferrante looks to Don Alonso.

Don Alonso acknowledges Ferrante with a bow and then...

DON ALONSO

His Imperial forces require a stipend of one-hundred thousand ducats.

A LOUD RUMBLING MURMUR through the gallery as Ferrante winces.

Mature Isabella is shocked. After a moment...

MATURE ISABELLA

And in what cause, sir, am I expected to contribute one hundred thousand ducats?

DON ALONSO

For your ransom, señora. Roma is a captive city. You and your...
(gestures about the room)
... friends are the spoils of war.

MATURE ISABELLA

Ferrante! Do you hear this fellow?

FERRANTE

I do, Madonna Madre.

MATURE ISABELLA

Then why do you not remind him that he is here as the representative of my dead nephew, cut down in his cause this very day and leaving him with orders to protect me?

DON ALONSO

We will protect you, señora. For a price.

45 CONTINUED: (2)

45

Mature Isabella turns to Ferrante: What do you say to that?

FERRANTE

It is the men, the soldiers, Madonna Madre. They have followed us here with the expectation that we will assess the ransoms available in this palazzo and exact them. If they do not get what they feel is coming to them, they will sack and burn this place as they are doing at this moment all over the city.

MATURE ISABELLA

You have that little control over them?

Ferrante nods, ashamed.

MATURE ISABELLA (CONT'D)

If what you say is true, if these barbarians really do answer to no one or nothing but their own bestiality, then I thank God my poor dead nephew did not live to see this day.

DON ALONSO

It was your poor dead nephew, señora, who drove these men on with the promise that they would collect their pay, now owing to them for more than six months of hunger and cold and betrayal - that they would collect all that was owed them and more when they reached Roma. Constable Bourbon gave them Roma, señora, Roma with all its treasures.

Mature Isabella turns to Ferrante for a response.

FERRANTE

I fear Madonna Madre, that your generosity has proven your undoing. It is reported in the camp that more than two millions in valuables are concealed in this palazzo. Your hospitality has made you not only a prize but a glittering prize. Believe me, madonna, ransom is far preferable to a sack of the palazzo.

(MORE)

45 CONTINUED: (3)

45

FERRANTE (CONT'D)

Let each of your guests pay what they are assessed, and out of the money collected we will engage a cadre of stout and loyal men to stand guard over you. And when the violence ends three days from now, those *bravi* will accompany you out of this city to the sea and safety.

MATURE ISABELLA

This is scandalous! Unconscionable! Wicked and opportunistic!

Ferrante can say nothing and avoids eye contact with her.

Don Alonso smirks to himself.

46 INT. PALAZZO COLONNA, ROMA - DAY

46

A long table covered with green baize and equipped with a small weighing scale. Regally sitting behind it is Mature Isabella. At her side with quill and ledger paper, Mature Grazia. Standing behind, Danilo.

Don Alonso and several other commanders sit facing them.

The VITALE FAMILY - man, wife, two daughters - steps forward and deposits his belongings on the table.

Throughout the following, Mature Grazia weighs and writes everything down in the ledger.

MATURE ISABELLA

Signor Vitale can offer you twenty thousand ducats. His wife's jewels, worth twenty-five thousand. Silverware valued at seven thousand. And several fine paintings by Giorgione worth at least fifteen thousand ducats. Agreed?

GERMAN OFFICER

Except the paintings. They have no value.

MATURE ISABELLA

But sir, they are the work of the great Venetian maestro, now dead. Their value is indisputable.

46 CONTINUED:

46

GERMAN OFFICER
Paintings have no value! They are
short fifteen thousand ducats.

Mature Isabella ponders the situation; then...

MATURE ISABELLA
(to Vitale)
Messer Vitale, if you agree, I will
purchase the paintings myself for
the sum of fifteen thousand ducats.

Vitale nods yes.

MATURE ISABELLA (CONT'D)
(to the officer)
And that amount will be added to
their ransom. Is that acceptable?

GERMAN OFFICER
Done!

MATURE ISABELLA
Next.

Another family steps up.

MONTAGE of negotiations:

Mature Isabella, with Mature Grazia recording, puts forth a
family's amount.

Don Alonso and the other officers demand more.

Ferrante observes with disquiet.

Another family.

Further pushback from the officers.

And another family.

Ferrante hangs his head in discomfort.

47 INT. CORRIDOR, PALAZZO COLONNA - NIGHT

47

Mature Grazia and Danilo hurry down the corridor.

DANILO
If only Lord Pirro had arrived with
Urbino's troops...

47 CONTINUED:

47

MATURE GRAZIA

If only we'd accompanied your father
to Constantinople..

DANILO

You surely don't mean that.

MATURE GRAZIA

I'm not sure anymore. I'm just not
sure.

They enter Mature Isabella's room.

48 INT. ISABELLA'S PRIVATE SUITES, PALAZZO COLONNA - NIGHT

48

Mature Isabella sits with Ferrante as Mature Grazia and Danilo
move into the room.

MATURE ISABELLA

Ah, Grazia. Ferrante has agreed to
negotiate the release of Raffaello's
Sistine Chapel tapestries. Once he
has gained possession of them, we
will add them to my baggage and send
them to Mantova for safekeeping.

MATURE GRAZIA

That is indeed very welcome news,
madama.

MATURE ISABELLA

(referring to Ferrante)

It is the very least he can do after
the humiliation we have been put
through.

FERRANTE

Madonna Madre, I have not yet
negotiated their release.

Mature Isabella gives him a stern look.

49 INT. SISTINE CHAPEL, ROMA - DAY

49

A horse munches on a stack of hay while...

PRINCE OF ORANGE (O.S.)

I stabled him here next to our
headquarters to prevent the animal
from being stolen.

49 CONTINUED:

49

REVEAL the horse is munching hay at the base of a wall where Rafaello's tapestry *St Paul Teaching at Athens* hangs. Above and all around are frescos by Michelangelo and others.

Ferrante approaches with the PRINCE OF ORANGE, a handsome young man of 25.

PRINCE OF ORANGE (CONT'D)

How many of these tapestries are there?

FERRANTE

Ten in all.

They stand in the middle of the chapel and survey the tapestries displayed on the walls among the frescoes.

FERRANTE (CONT'D)

Designed by the esteemed Raffaello Santi and woven in Brussels by the master Pieter Van Aelst. They were valued above all else by Pope Leo.

The Prince of Orange takes them in and considers.

PRINCE OF ORANGE

I have actually taken no notice of them before.

50 EXT. PALAZZO COLONNA, ROMA - NIGHT

50

Two rolled packages are hoisted up in the basket guarded by a cadre of Imperial soldiers while the SOUNDS OF CHAOS RUMBLE through the night streets.

FERRANTE (V.O.)

The Prince of Orange very generously granted you two of the master's tapestries.

51 INT. ISABELLA'S PRIVATE SUITES, PALAZZO COLONNA, ROMA - NIGHT

51

MATURE ISABELLA

Two? Only two? And the other eight?

Mature Isabella is with Ferrante and Mature Grazia.

FERRANTE

The Prince has taken three for himself and is setting aside the other five
(MORE)

51 CONTINUED:

51

FERRANTE (CONT'D)

for the Emperor. So as you can see,
all ten are in safe hands.

MATURE ISABELLA

But not in the appropriate hands.
They were made for the Pope to hang
in that chapel.

FERRANTE

Well, when and if the time ever comes,
you may return your two tapestries
to their appropriate home. The other
eight will at least survive.
Otherwise, they would be melted down
to extract the gold from the threads.

MATURE ISABELLA

Where are my two now?

52 INT. RECEPTION ROOM, PALAZZO COLONNA, ROMA - NIGHT

52

A chandelier with a multitude of flickering candles is lowered
from the high ceiling until it hangs six feet from the floor.

On the floor, two large, magnificent tapestries are unrolled:
"St Paul Preaching in Athens" and "Conversion of St Paul" by
Raffaello.

Mature Isabella, Mature Grazia, and Danilo move around them,
studying the work in awe.

Their eyes take in and explore the vivid colours of the
weaving, the bold composition with St Paul, his arms raised,
addressing an audience of Gentiles listening to him in front
of a pagan statue.

And Paul, thrown to the ground amidst an onslaught of horses
and soldiers while the figure of God dramatically blesses the
prone Paul from above.

Mature Grazia looks across the room to Mature Isabella.

MATURE ISABELLA

Even two is worth it. To preserve
these two...

53 EXT. COURTYARD, PALAZZO COLONNA, ROMA - DAY

53

A bleak, foggy day. Wagons are loaded in the courtyard with
goods.

53 CONTINUED:

53

Don Alonso observes as Alessandro and several Servants pile the rolled Raffaello tapestry on the wagon.

DON ALONSO

What is that?

Mature Isabella emerges from inside the palazzo carrying the hat box.

MATURE ISABELLA

A tapestry. Like a painting. It has no value.

Mature Grazia and Danilo follow her with their own goods. Don Alonso stops Danilo, carrying the rolled portrait by Mantegna.

DON ALONSO

And this? What is this?

DANILO

A painting.

Don Alonso looks suspicious but says nothing.

They clamber aboard the coach.

54 EXT. STREETS, ROMA - DAY

54

The coach makes its way through the devastated streets of Roma, escorted by Don Alonso and his soldiers.

Homes and palaces are piles of smoking rubble. The streets are littered with bodies, some headless. People wander the streets: dazed citizens seeking loved ones; drunken soldiers reeling about; servants, prostitutes, and beggars parading about in ermine and coronets.

In the carriage, Mature Grazia, Mature Isabella, and Danilo observe all this in horror.

Outside, they pass a group of LOWLIFES gathered around an unseen figure.

LOWLIFE

Open your mouth, priest. And receive Christ's nourishment.

A space momentarily opens to reveal a fat man with a crucifix around his neck sitting on the ground weeping. The space is quickly closed as the Lowlifes urinate all over the priest.

54 CONTINUED:

54

DANILO
Don't look, Mama.

Mature Grazia quickly looks away.

55 EXT. OSTIA PORT - DAY

55

Goods, including the Raffaello tapestries, are loaded on board the four-master, the *Hespirion*.

Don Alonso bows before Mature Isabella at the base of the gangplank.

DON ALONSO
We have fulfilled our duty to you
and delivered you safely to this
ship.

MATURE ISABELLA
I thank you for your devotion to
duty and to the memory of my late
nephew.

Don Alonso bows, turns, and moves off. Mature Isabella watches him with disdain.

She then turns and proceeds up the gangplank where Mature Grazia and Danilo wait.

Isabella's goods are carried past them into the ship's hold.

56 INT. HOLD, HESPIRION - DAY

56

Sailors carry the tapestries and Isabella's goods into the hold where they are organized into a massive pile.

57 EXT. HESPIRION ON THE OPEN SEA - DAY

57

A storm buffets the ship, it pitches and rocks in the deep swells and violent wind.

58 INT. MATURE ISABELLA'S CABIN, HESPIRION - DAY

58

Mature Isabella lies in bed as the boat rocks and pitches side to side. She is GROANING and looks very ill.

Mature Grazia enters and moves to her.

58 CONTINUED:

58

MATURE GRAZIA

You asked to see me, madonna.

MATURE ISABELLA

There is no one else I can say this to, Grazia. I am past my endurance. I cannot bear one moment more of this cruel sea. I have taken a potion that will let me sleep. When I awake, we will be in Civitavecchia. From there, I mean to continue the journey by land.

MATURE GRAZIA

We will all be glad to quit the sea.

MATURE ISABELLA

But Grazia, I need you to shepherd my treasures back to Mantova. I cannot abandon all my goods and you are the only one I can trust. You will stay with the ship to Genova. There I will arrange to have Lord Pirro meet you.

Mature Grazia brightens at the mention of Pirro

MATURE ISABELLA (CONT'D)

Then he will transport you and the goods across to Mantova, your childhood home. Where perhaps your life can begin anew?

59 EXT. PORT OF CIVITAVECCHIA - DAY

59

The ship eases into the port.

60 EXT. DECK OF THE HESPIRION - DAY

60

Mature Grazia and Danilo stand on the deck with Mature Isabella, holding her hat box.

MATURE ISABELLA

Danilo.

DANILO

Yes, madonna.

60 CONTINUED:

60

MATURE ISABELLA

My goods are dearer to me than my
life. See that you guard them with
your life.

DANILO

Oh, yes, madonna! With my life!

The two women smile. Mature Isabella turns to Mature Grazia.

MATURE ISABELLA

You are young, Grazia. And you are
clever and brave. I know I can rely
on you.

MATURE GRAZIA

Yes, madama.

MATURE ISABELLA

And I know that you are anxious to
return to Mantova. All will be well.

Mature Grazia smiles but makes no further comment.

Mature Isabella walks down the gangplank.

61 EXT. HESPIRION ON THE OPEN SEA - DAY

61

A calm day. The ship ploughs through the water under full
sail.

62 EXT. DECK OF THE HESPIRION - DAY

62

Mature Grazia and Danilo sit out on the deck. Danilo sings.

DANILO

(singing)

Oh beauteous rose of Judea, oh my
sweet soul
Do no leave me to die...

MATURE GRAZIA

I have not heard that song since I
was a child.

DANILO

Lord Pirro taught it to me. He wrote
it for a girl he loved and lost when
he was young.

Mature Grazia reacts.

DANILO (CONT'D)

He called her his wild rose because she had the same purity, the same pungency, and the same sharp thorns.

MATURE GRAZIA

Sharp thorns?

DANILO

Yes, but he meant it in the nicest way.

MATURE GRAZIA

How so?

DANILO

It is hard to say. He said that... About the rose being such a delicate flower. And yet its thorns pierce. And those two things - the delicate flower and piercing thorns - is what love is. So sweet but it can still make you bleed.

MATURE GRAZIA

Why did he tell you all this?

DANILO

He doesn't want me to make the same mistake. I will always remember his advice.

MATURE GRAZIA

And what was that?

DANILO

A woman who loves you with all her heart is a treasure beyond glory and fortune. A man can count himself lucky to know one such love in a whole lifetime. He said he wasted years learning that lesson.

Mature Grazia studies her son a long moment, coming to a decision.

MATURE GRAZIA

Danilo, I have something to tell you. About Lord Pirro and about that girl.

Danilo turns to her. She is about to speak again when a VOICE SHOUTS from the crow's nest at the top of the mast:

62 CONTINUED: (2)

62

LOOKOUT
Ship ahoy! Off the starboard bow!

Danilo leaps up and looks.

A smaller ship appears on the horizon.

Suddenly there is SHOUTING and commotion aboard the ship.
Sailors are running to and fro.

LOOKOUT (CONT'D)
She's a pirate. Coming fast!

The CAPTAIN appears on deck, BELLOWING COMMANDS.

CAPTAIN
Full sail!

Sailors scramble up the rigging to release the sails.

Others dash about the deck releasing ropes.

The ship's sails fill with wind, the ship lurches forward
through the waves.

Mature Grazia and Danilo look at one another in alarm.

LOOKOUT
She's gaining on us!

The pirate ship is getting larger and closer.

The FIRST MATE runs to the Captain.

FIRST MATE
We can't outrun her, sir. She's
closing too fast.

The Captain hesitates.

Mature Grazia and Danilo watch him.

CAPTAIN
Break out the weapons! To your posts!
Prepare to be boarded.

The crew scurry about, pulling out weapons and distributing
them.

They take up positions along the deck.

The pirate ship bears down on them closer and closer.

62 CONTINUED: (3)

62

The First Mate runs up to Mature Grazia and Danilo.

FIRST MATE

The Captain wants you below. Quickly.

The First Mate leads them to the hatch where Mature Grazia and Danilo hurry down the stairs into the hold.

63 INT. HOLD, HESPIRION - DAY

63

Mature Grazia and Danilo hurry down the stairs.

At the bottom, Mature Grazia turns to go to their cabin, but Danilo continues down the stairs deeper into the hold.

MATURE GRAZIA

Danilo! Where are you going?!

DANILO

The marchesana's *cassones*.

MATURE GRAZIA

No!

But he keeps going.

So she follows him deeper into the hold.

64 EXT. DECK OF THE HESPIRION - DAY

64

FIRING RIFLES, BLOODCURDLING WHOOPS as the pirate ship pulls alongside and its men - PIRATES - swing onto the Hespiron wielding scythes and with daggers in their mouths.

The Hespiron crew fight back but are clearly no match.

65 INT. HOLD, HESPIRION - DAY

65

SHOUTING, WHOOPING, and GUNFIRE CONTINUES from above as Danilo clambers to the top of the *cassones* to guard them. He pulls a small knife from his sash.

Mature Grazia watches him in alarm.

66 EXT. DECK OF THE HESPIRION - DAY

66

The Pirates quickly subdues the Hespiron's crew.

66 CONTINUED:

66

One pirate holds a knife to the Captain's throat and fighting subdues.

67 INT. HOLD, HESPIRION - DAY

67

The FIGHTING FROM ABOVE QUIETENS. Danilo and Mature Grazia listen intensely.

MATURE GRAZIA

Danilo, please. Come down. Don't...

DANILO

We must protect the marchesana's goods.

MATURE GRAZIA

No, please. You can't stand up to these pirates. They'll kill us both and still take madama's goods.

DANILO

It's a matter of honour and duty.

MATURE GRAZIA

No, don't confuse honour and duty with living a good life, with just being alive.

SMASH! BANG! The hatch door is opened and there is the THUDDING of footsteps down the stairs.

Two Pirates appear, immediately spotting Mature Grazia. Pirate #1 crosses to her and grabs her to take her out.

PIRATE #1

Up on deck with everyone else. Let's go.

DANILO

Don't touch her.

Both Pirates turn to Danilo, poised on the *cassones* and holding a knife.

PIRATE #1

Get down here! Get down! Now!

MATURE GRAZIA

He is only a boy. Do not harm him.

67 CONTINUED:

67

PIRATE CAPTAIN
Get down! Or we'll shoot you like a
dog.

Danilo instead raises the dagger to hurl it at Pirate #1.

But Pirate #2 raises his arquebus to aim at Danilo.

MATURE GRAZIA
Danilo, no!

He throws herself in the line of fire as CRACK! - a LOUD
EXPLOSION from the arquebus.

Mature Grazia SCREAMS and is thrown by the impact to the deck
at the base of the *cassones*.

DANILO
Mama!

Danilo leaps down to her. The pirates huddle around.

Mature Grazia lies on the deck bleeding from her abdomen, her
face contorted in pain.

Danilo is frantic, almost hysterical.

DANILO (CONT'D)
Mama! Mama, no! Mama, please...
NO!

She reaches up to him and grabs him, struggling through her
pain.

She COUGHS and CHOKES, releasing Danilo and falling back.
Her eyes stare at him intensely.

Until they lose their focus.

And life drains out of her.

Danilo CRIES uncontrollably over her body.

The Pirates stand around in awed silence.

68 EXT. HESPIRION ON THE OPEN SEA - DAY

68

A silken shroud enwraps the body laying on a stiff board by
the ship's railing.

The Pirates and Crew are gathered around.

68 CONTINUED:

68

Danilo observes in grief-stricken silence.

A Pirate lifts the board, so that the enshrouded body slides gently off and falls into the ocean.

Danilo bows his head, weeping into the manuscript of the secret book he clutches to himself.

69 INT. MATURE ISABELLA'S CABIN, HESPIRION - DAY

69

Danilo carefully unrolls the Mantegna portrait and stares at his mother's face. Her *libro segreto* lies open nearby as
OVER:

MATURE GRAZIA (V.O.)

I dedicate this *libri segreti*, this
secret book, to my son, Danilo, to
be read when he crosses the threshold
of manhood. In it, I will tell all
so that you may know whence you came
and...

70 EXT. DECK OF THE HESPIRION - DAY

70

Danilo sits on the deck reading the manuscript

MATURE GRAZIA (V.O.)

... why you have been torn from the
father you love dearly and brought
to live in this great palazzo.

The PIRATE CAPTAIN stops before him holding leg irons.

PIRATE CAPTAIN

Come on, we're approaching
Constantinople. We need you in the
hold with the others.

DANILO

What's to become of us?

PIRATE CAPTAIN

Sold into slavery. And all the booty,
we'll sell in the bazaars.

The Pirate Captain secures the leg irons around Danilo's
ankles.

DANILO

Sir?

70 CONTINUED:

70

The Pirate Captain looks at him.

DANILO (CONT'D)
My father lives here. He is physician
to the Sultan.

PIRATE CAPTAIN
Is he now?

DANILO
If you would permit, I could write a
note to him and he would pay a healthy
ransom for me, I am sure.

The Pirate Captain ponders this a moment, then...

PIRATE CAPTAIN
Very well. Out of respect for your
mother. She was a woman of valour.

DANILO
Thank you, sir.

OVER: The CRIES of MULLAHS summoning the faithful to prayer.

71 EXT. PORT OF CONSTANTINOPLE - DAY

71

The MULLAHS' CRIES CONTINUE OVER a vista of the port from the
sea as the *Hespirion* heads into port.

72 EXT. DECK OF THE HESPIRION NEAR CONSTANTINOPLE - DAY

72

Danilo, in leg irons, stands on deck with the ship's crew
also in leg irons.

He reads the manuscript as the MULLAHS' CRIES FADE UNDER:

MATURE GRAZIA (V.O.)
This year, 1527, is a year of decision
for Italy, for me, and for you.
When it is done, you will have chosen
a religion and a father. I know you
will choose wisely. You need only
follow your heart. Whatever you
decide, do it with your whole heart.
Remember: *Carpe diem*. Seize the
day. With both hands.

72 CONTINUED:

72

Danilo looks up from the manuscript and gazes upon the spires
of Constantinople shimmering in the sunlight.

FADE OUT

THE END