

UGO & PARISINA Punishment without Forgiveness

di

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FADE IN

Black screen

1

INT. MALATESTA PALACE (CESENA) - NIGHT

1

OVERLAY: SEPTEMBER 1416

PLAYROOM

A room with stone walls on which hang the coats of arms of the Malatesta's lineage, some hunting trophies, a few swords and spears; the room is enlightened by two mullioned windows.

On a large oriental rug, the twelve years old LAURA MALATESTA pinches an harp. She, tiny, wears an elegant dress that tightens her breast: awesome, with long blonde hair tied up by a gold chain.

Around her TWELVE DAMSELS of the Court: two of them are petting a small dog, others are embroiding with needle and line on a small hoop, others are playing a flute following Parisina. Together with them is a familiar, ALDOBRANDINO, whose daily duty is pleasing Laura and her Court in those activities where women are less accustomed: he lives in harmony with them.

Laura's educator, GISELLE, enters the room: a beautiful damsel of French lineage, not young, knowledgable of the Court intrigues. Close friend of Laura's deceased mother, she passed finest education to the youngster, reason why Laura is called PARISINA.

GISELLE

Chérie it's time to sleep.

PARISINA

Yes Giselle... firstly I'd like to take a hot bath.

GISELLE

(to the damsels)

Prepare the bathtub for her.

ALDOBRANDINO

(to the damsels)

Follow me... let's go and take the water from the laundry.

In the room the noise of their dresses crawling on the floor.

BEDROOM

(CONTINUA)

The damsels close the curtains. The four-poster bed is leaning on the walls, cut-out veils are knotted at the bed columns. In a corner, a golden dressing table with perfums, make up and hairbrushes.

Aldobrandino plays and jokes with FIAMMETTA and ANNUZZA, two nice young damsels, same age as Parisina, preferred among the others.

SOON AFTER

He walks into the room with the hot water amphoras, follows the two damsel with oriental oils and white linen for her.

ALDOBRANDINO
(putting a finger in the
bathtub)
It's hot!... add some cold water!

Aldobrandino, at the time of undressing, leaves the room.

FIAMMETTA
What scent do you prefer?

PARISINA
(smiling)
Give me... give me lavender.

FIAMMETTA
It's ready.

She naked, standing in the bathtub, is waiting for the damsels to wash her. Giselle takes from the wardrobe a white nightgown.

Annuzza starts washing the back.

GISELLE
(to Annuzza)
Leave it... I'll carry on.
(looking at Parisina)
Chérie... soon you will be a
woman!

Parisina, blushing, covers the immature breast crossing her hands.

PARISINA
I know Giselle... my breast is
growing.
(blushing)
During the night a wake up
sweating, with my hands between
the legs, wishing to touch
myself.

(CONTINUA)

GISELLE
That's the sign!

PARISINA
(full of curiosity)
You already went through it...
how is it?

GISELLE
(blushing)
I can't describe it, but I can
tell you it will all happen
naturally... You'll know what you
want... and what the man can give
to you.
(pause)
Twelve years ago I promised your
mother to look after you...

PARISINA
(interrupting her)
... and you did it!
(pause)
You are my mother... I will
always be grateful to you.

SOON AFTER

As soon as the bath is over, Fiammetta dries her with a
linen and helps her to wear the night robe. Parisina is
sitting on a golden pouff at the dressing table. The two
damsels pour scented oils on her long blond hair and comb
her.

GISELLE
Tomorrow we'll go to church...
then you might like to carry on
reading me Roman de Tristano?!

PARISINA
Oh!... No!... If it's a nice day
we can go to Cesena horseriding
on the beach.

GISELLE
I'll ask Aldobrandino to get the
horses ready.
(pause)
Good night Chérie.

PARISINA
(from under the duvet)
Please let me ride sidesaddle...
like grandma Caterina.
(pause)
You know she went to her wedding
riding that way?

(CONTINUA)

GISELLE
(wrinkling the nose)
For a young women that's not the
proper way to ride.
(pause)
Showing the ankles too!

PARISINA
C'mon Giselle!... You like it
too!

2 INT. PLAYROOM (MALATESTA PALACE) - DAY

2

Parisina and Giselle enter the room, holding a riding whip
in their hands and wearing soft skirts to feel
comfortable. A fine hairnet, dropping down from the hat,
same color as the skirt, protects their hair.

ALDOBRANDINO
(with a soft voice)
I saddled your horses as you like
Madame.

STABLES

He takes a small stair to help the two women getting on.

GISELLE
My dear, you are always so sweet.

PARISINA
We'll be back at the Vespers.

ALDOBRANDINO
I will be here madame, waiting
for you.

At the graceful trot, they go to the palace exit.

3 EXT. RIDE TOWARDS CESENATICO - DAY

3

EMBANKMENT TOWARDS CESENATICO

On the embankment, the two ladies are riding two black
shiny horses. Behind them Cesena, in front of them the
cultivated fields of the countryside, far away the seaside
and a pine forest.

GISELLE
Are you happy?

PARISINA
Yes... grandma Caterina shocked
everyone when she arrived riding
this way to her wedding with the
Gonzaga.

(CONTINUA)

GISELLE
(wrinkling the nose)
I'll say that again... That's not
the proper way for a woman,
showing her ankles and the
underwear.

CESENATICO BEACH

The two ladies ride on the beach: the sea is flat, there's
low tide, the sun warms up.

PARISINA
(smiling)
Leave the bridles, let's see who
arrives first at the forest

GISELLE
(seemingly annoyed)
You're reckless, this too is not
the proper behaviour for a young
woman.

Her horse gallops, Giselle follows. Parisina's hat flies
away and her long blond hair seems like the tail of a
comet.

SOON AFTER

PINE FOREST

Now the horses ride at the graceful trot.

GISELLE
You will be one of the most
beautiful noble women in Italy!

PARISINA
(smiling)
Stop joking!

Giselle talks about her father Andrea and her uncle Carlo.

GISELLE
The Serenissima is holding your
family in high consideration
(pause)
Pope Gregorio XII lives in Rimini
under your family protection.
(pause)
Your uncle Carlo has had large
consent at the Council of
Costanza.

SERENISSIMA: the Republic of Venice.

(CONTINUA)

PARISINA
(smiling)
You're right Giselle... I'm a
good taken.

GISELLE
All the Italian nobles will want
you as wife.

Parisina wrinkles her nose.

PARISINA
Those marriages are only out of
interest not for love.
(sigh)
Should I do the same?!

GISELLE
(as world woman)
Don't worry Chérie... you know
how these things go?!
(pause)
Men fight battles, while women
build peace in bed ... after
building a good peace, you will
find your love.
(pause)
Your Lord should not know nothing
about it and this will be enough.

PARISINA
(sobbing)
I hope mine will be out of love!

The two ladies change subject.

PARISINA
(referring to his father and
his uncle)
Tomorrow they will be back for a
few days.

GISELLE
Braccio di Montone sacked houses
and crops on our land... but he
has been defeated.
(pause)
They are good in the art of war.

4 INT. MALATESTA PALACE (CESENA) - DAY

4

COURT

The coloumn of KNIGHTS enters the palace, ANDREA and CARLO MALATESTA lead it. Andrea, in pain, struggles to get off the horse, his brother helps him, they walk up the stairs to the hearing room.

(CONTINUA)

ANDREA (43yo.) and CARLO MALATESTA (48yo.): brothers and soldier of venture, strongly binded to Pope Gregorio XII and the Serenissima.

HEARING ROOM

Waiting for them is POLISSENA, step mother of Parisina and third wife of Andrea, together ELISABETTA GONZAGA: 40yo., Carlo's wife, highly cultured women, severe, she likes the arts and looks after the business in Carlo's absence.

Behind them Parisina and Giselle.

The two soldier of venture are sitting on their high chairs, behind them FOUR SOLDIERS.

Carlo holds Andrea straight: swollen eyes, hardly talks and holds his head in the hands.

POLISSENA

What happened?

CARLO

He has the Quartan Fever... take him to his bedroom and call the doctor.

PARISINA

How do you feel father? hold on me.

Parisina and Giselle help him while leaving the room.

5

INT. BEDROOM OF ANDREA - EVENING

5

Parisina supports the delirious father in his bedroom. She wash his forehead with a napkin. He has a moment of clear mind but suffering.

ANDREA

Daughter... I never told you why your mother died.

PARISINA

Was it my fault?!

(perplexed)

Two days after I was born?!

ANDREA

No!... She has been poisoned by your grandfather Checco... it was my fault.

PARISINA

Father, why you are telling me that?

(CONTINUA)

ANDREA

To take a load off... I think
it's my time.

(pause)

I was aiming to conquer
Forolivium while he was in
charge... I convinced your mother
to take the seals from her father
to enter the city without
battling.

(pause)

For your mother it was the time
of delivery. Your grandfather
once discovered the intrigue,
waited for you to born... Three
days later he gave her a poisoned
soup to get revenge.

FOROLIVIUM: Ancient name of the city of Forlì.

Parisina has a tear on her face.

ANDREA

Now you can go my dear, leave me
alone, Elisabetta and Carlo will
look after you... Go!

He turns is face.

ANTE-CHAMBER

Giselle is waiting for Parisina at the exit.

GISELLE

Why are you crying Chérie?

PARISINA

(upset)

Did you know?... Did you know?

GISELLE

Certainly Chérie... but your
mother asked me to swear silence.

6

INT. HEARING ROOM MALATESTA PALACE (CESENA) - DAY

6

Carlo is sitting at his chair, Andrea's one is empty. On
his right, standing, Elisabetta.

Parisina enters the room with swollen eyes, sobbing, with
a napkin in her hands.

CARLO

(lovely voice)

My dear... be assured we will
always be next to you.

(CONTINUA)

Elisabetta hugs her.

ELISABETTA

My darling... you know how sad I was for not giving children to Carlo... now if you want we will be your family.

CARLO

Stop you tears, close your heart to pain, I loved my brother and we both would have preferred to die in battle.

ELISABETTA

You are too young to stay here alone looking after your domains and business.

(pause)

You will come to Rimini with all your Court.

PARISINA

Your heart sounds good... I'll follow you advise.

DISSOLVE TO

7

EXT. PALACE MALATESTA (RIMINI) - DAY

7

GARDENS

In a warm spring day, in the flowering gardens, Carlo walks and talks with Marquis NICCOLO' III d'ESTE.

He's 34yo., tall and slightly overweight, blond curly hair, since 1 year widow of Gigliola who didn't gave him children.

CARLO

The news has come: the Serenissima listened to you and prohibited the seamen from Clodia to go fishing in your side of the river Po.

CLODIA: Ancient name of the town of Chioggia.

NICCOLO'

(proudly)

Yes!... At the Ascension's Fair in San Marco square, where I well showed up with 200 knights properly dressed and their pageboys, I told the Doge about my regrets... and he agreed.

(CONTINUA)

DOGE: President of the Venice Republic.

NICCOLO'
Now, tell me about you?!

CARLO
I had no time to get bored... at the Council of Costanza I was accused to trait the Roman Church from Rodolfo da Varano... I well defend myself.

NICCOLO'
Was it not you the one who read Gregorio's resignation as Pope, reassembling the Avignone schism?

CARLO
Yes of course!... my authority was great, the emperor wanted me always on his side.

(pause)
Once I was back, I'd been asked to fight against Braccio da Montone and Tartaglia... but 2000 horses and 700 infantry were not enough, I was captured and taken in prison to Camerino

CAMERINO: Ancient town in the region of Marche

NICCOLO'
(interrupting him)
They are good captains, paid by the Florentines who are willing to get on the Hadriaticum Seaside.

CARLO
When I was captured the Serenissima offered 80.000 ducati to get me free.

DUCATI: Ancient currency of the Middle Ages.

HADRIATICUM: Adriatic Sea.

NICCOLO'
(smiling)
That's to show the high consideration the Serenissima and Pope Gregorio have for you.
(pause)
They wouldn't pay that amount if they would have had any doubt about your faithfulness.

(CONTINUA)

CARLO

That's very true! Well, until I'll be able to protect the land borders.. mainly by the Visconti family.

VISCONTI: Nobleman Lords of Mediolanum (now known as Milan).

NICCOLO'

Our faithfulness to the Serenissima and to Pope Gregorio will always be recognized... be sure!

The two keep talking and walking along the flourishing gardens.

In a corner, Giselle and the damsels play the harp and sing songs. Parisina paints two MUSES.

NICCOLO'

(looking at Parisina)
Is she Andrea's daughter?
(fascinated)
She is... awesome!

CARLO

Yes! She's a flower, full of life... always happy.

NICCOLO'

Have you already thought about getting her married?

CARLO

Elisabetta and I are thinking about that.
(pause)
Tell me... you recently became widow, didn't you?!

NICCOLO'

Yes!... Since two years the Black Death is raging over Ferrara... It has taken my wife too.

CARLO

The Serenissima would be keen to see our families strenghtened through a marriage between us... we will guarantee security over the land domains in the South.

NICCOLO'

(smiling)
Let's go... I'd like to know her, so that I can get to talk to her.

(CONTINUA)

DISSOLVE TO

8 INT. BEDROOM OF PARISINA - NIGHT

8

Elisabetta enters into Parisina's room, while Giselle is getting her undressed for the night.

ELISABETTA
(respectfully)
Giselle... leave us alone.

PARISINA
Dear untie...

ELISABETTA
This morning did you notice
Niccolò, the Marquis of
Ferrara... walking in the garden?

PARISINA
Do you mean the well mannered
noble that uncle honored me to
meet earlier?

ELISABETTA
Yes!... Your uncle and I have
thought about you as his
spouse... if you like him!

PARISINA
I'm worried about it but it's a
step I'd like to take.
(pause)
It's time, he's a handsome Lord.

DISSOLVE TO

9 MONTAGE - ENTRANCE IN FERRARA - DAY

9

OVERLAY: 27th February 1418

1-TWO KNIGHTS with the Malatesta's and Este's araldic coat of arms open the coloumn. DRUMMERS announce them, Niccolò and Parisina follows on two white horses, then CAPTAINS on horses and soldiers. At the end some carts are lead by Aldobrandino together with the Court damsels;

2-A cart rides around the street picking up the Black Death victims wrapped in linens and abandoned in front of the houses;

3-The column enters the empty city. Citizens gets away scared or lean against the house walls;

4-The PLEB walks covering the nose with a napkin, NOBLES wear the doctors' mask.

10

EST./INT. PALACE OF THE MARQUISES - DAY

10

STAIRCASE OF THE PALACE

Inside the Ducal courtyard, Niccolò helps his young spouse getting off the horse taking her by the hips.

On the main staircase there's a large red carpet. Standing TRUMPETERS, five steps away from each other, are playing their instruments.

NICCOLO'

Come my dear, I'd like to take
you around the Palace.

He offers his arm to Parisina, then they walk up the stairs. She turns to the courtesans and, while smiling, greets them with her hand.

NICCOLO'

You'll see... You will like
Ferrara.

SOON AFTER

HALLWAY

The long hallway lit by large windows on a side, on the opposite several doors open. At the end of it, the massive door of her apartment, in the Torre del Rigobello.

NICCOLO'

The one at the end will be your
apartment my dear, in the
Rigobello tower.

(pointing the other doors)

While the others will be your
damsels' apartments.

PARISINA

My Lord, it's a perfect choice,
my damsels will be grateful.

(pause)

The one next to me will be for
Giselle and the last one for
Aldobrandino.

NICCOLO'

The Palace will be all yours my
dear. I will stay at the
Castle... tomorrow I'll introduce
you to the Court.

(pause)

Now take a rest... Later I'll
come to say hi, before going to
sleep.

(CONTINUA)

PARISINA
(blushing)
I'll wait for you my Lord.

11 APARTMENT OF PARISINA - DAY

11

HALLWAY

Aldobrandino checks the SERVANTS carrying the trunks in the damsels rooms. In the hallway there is a busy hustle and bustle.

BEDROOM OF PARISINA

Giselle nervously commands the damsels on how to arrange the dresses in the wardrobes.

PARISINA
Giselle... help me to undress.

She is left with a white corset and a pair of jupe-culotte. She's smiling, in the bed resting on her stomach, with the legs up, holding her face with the hands under the chin.

GISELLE
Chérie, you know what's coming tonight?!
(pause)
You'll lose your innocence!

Fiammetta e Annuzza walk around the room busy arranging the clothes.

FIAMMETTA
(blatantly)
What a nice guy your Lord...
there are many chats about him

ANNUZZA
(smiling)
Everyone knows the saying "Here and there from the River Po are all sons of Niccolò".

PARISINA
I know!
(whispering to Giselle)
I feel the curiosity of that moment.

GISELLE
(neutral voice)
Chérie you have to understand that men are like bees, once they've taken a flower they'll look for another one.

(CONTINUA)

PARISINA

(referring to Niccolò)

I know!... He already told me that Stella's sons live at the Palace.

GISELLE

She is his favourite, Chérie. Niccolò never married her for political reasons but he legally recognized their three sons. Prudence tells me to be cautious with her.

(pause)

Give him legitimate sons! If this will not happen, Ugo, the oldest, could become Lord of Ferrara.

(worried)

She comes from the De'Tolomei from Siena lineage... hurry up to give him a male son.

PARISINA

I'll met them tomorrow at the Court... now let me rest.

12

INT. BEDROOM OF PARISINA - NIGHT

12

The damsels, once finished the toilette of the new spouse, drop some oriental oil on her. Parisina is wearing a white tunic to the ankles with a wide décolleté, a small rope is slightly loosened to show the brest. She's wearing nothing underneath.

The bed is in the center of a wall, a fireplace is heating up the room, in a corner a dressingtable and a pouf with golden inserts. At the table, Parisina grooms her long hair then moves it on the chest.

PARISINA

(to Fiammetta and Annuzza)

Now you can go.

Parisina walks around the room to check everything is perfect for the first night with Niccolò.

She lights up a candle, puts it on the bedside table and afterwards she goes under the duvet waiting for Niccolò, while pretending to read a book.

SOON AFTER

Niccolò knocks the door and walks in, he's wearing a white tunic. He puts a wooden chop in the fireplace.

(CONTINUA)

NICCOLO'
Are you feel comfortable at the
Palace?

She closes the book, lifts a corner of the duvet and gently taps her open hand on the bed, as to invite him.

PARISINA
(smiling and worried)
Certainly my Lord... I was
waiting for you.

He, skilled lover, she, innocent and willing to know love, hug each other.

Niccolò starts kissing her neck, then moves down to her young brest, she turns her head to let him carry on. Niccolò's expert hands moves up the thighs.

PARISINA
(softly)
Slow down my Lord... let me fully
feel this unique moment.

The flames of the fireplace flash the two bodies twisting.

She, full of desire, pushes Niccolò's head down to the bikini, he softly keeps kissing her between her legs.

PARISINA
Aah!... my Lord... carry on...

She takes his head and guide him.

SOON AFTER

PARISINA
My lord... put your sword inside
(pause)
it's time.

She turns her head on the pillow, a tear drops in a mix of pain and happiness. Her voice is suffocated and full of desire.

PARISINA
(half-opened eyes)
My Lord carry on!... carry on! I
can feel it growing.

His body curves and pushes with all the strenght, rythming his movements with her moans.

SOON AFTER

She is leaning on Niccolò's chest and kisses him.

(CONTINUA)

PARISINA
Will you be faithful to me?

NICCOLO'
Yes!... I will!

PARISINA
I'm willing to give you a
legitimate son, so you can
introduce him to the Pope.

He grooms her hair, she closes her eyes and falls asleep.

13 INT. BEDROOM OF PARISINA - DAY

13

Aldobrandino opens the curtains, the sun enters the room. Parisina wrinkles her eyes, dazed by the light. Giselle approaches her to the bed.

PARISINA
(smiling)
Oh!... You could leave me
dreaming a bit more.

GISELLE
Looking into your eyes, I can see
you enjoyed last night?!

PARISINA
(smiling)
My dear friend, now I'm a
woman... my Lord is a great
lover.

GISELLE
I'm happy for you Cherié, but
look out for Court intrigues.

DISSOLVE TO

14 INT. HEARING ROOM OF NICCOLO' - DAY

14

ALBERTO DEL SALE, saviours' old councillor, UGUCCIONE CONTRARIO, Niccolò's friend, GIACOMO GIULIOLI, secretary, and the DOCTOR are waiting in the room.

Stella's sons UGO (14yo.), LIONELLO (11yo.), BORSO (5yo.), the courtesans and the city nobles are on the other side.

The trumpeters play the instruments. The two spouses solemnly enter the room, her cloth crawls on the floor. Niccolò keeps his arm high to let Parisina put the hand. The two sit at the Marquis' high chairs. Giselle is standing one step behind her.

(CONTINUA)

The TOWN CRIER, in the middle of the room, unwraps a paper.

TOWN CRIER

(loud voice)

His Magnificent Marquis Niccolò
III D'Este, Lord of Ferrara,
Modena and Reggio Emilia welcome
as his spouse Laura Malatesta of
Malatesta De'Malatesti

(pause)

All of you will pay respect and
obedience.

(pause)

Offences to her person are like
offences to the Marquis.

Parisina, with her hands crossed on the tummy, full of
pride looks one-by-one at the attendees trying to keep in
mind their faces, while smiling to everyone.

The Saviours get closer to the young spouse lowering their
head almost to the floor.

Ugo walks down the room holding his two brothers by the
hands: he's a beautiful boy, handsome, with curly blond
hair, fierce and uneasy behaviour.

NICCOLO'

My Lady, these are my three sons.

PARISINA

Where is Lady Stella?

UGO

(fiercly)

My mother was not feeling well
today... she couldn't make it.

He doesn't kneel, he just bows a little.

LIONELLO

(kneeling)

Madame I'm Lionello.

BORSO

(kneeling)

I'm Borso.

Ugo takes them by hand and leaves the room without
attending the reception.

Parisina whispers to Niccolò's ear.

PARISINA

How old is Ugo?

(uncertainly)

(CONTINUA)

(CONTINUA)

PARISINA (SEGUE)

He didn't seem too happy about my arrival.

NICCOLO'

He will soon turn fourteen.

PARISINA

Did you already know their mother would have not attend?

He doesn't reply.

NICCOLO'

(to the attendees)

Let's celebrate seven days of parties.

Alberto and the Doctor (tall, black dress, glasses on the nose) get closer to them.

ALBERTO

My Lord the Black Death is raging over the city, many people moved to the countryside where they can eventually meet only a few souls... It would be wiser to postpone the celebration.

DOCTOR

Carefulness suggests minimizing the gatherings... there are already over one thousand deaths.

PARISINA

My Lord carefulness is never enough... doesn't matter if we will celebrate on better times.

NICCOLO'

(smiling)

Let's do it.

15

EXT. DUCAL COURTYARD - DAY

15

Parisina and the damsels walk down the staircase. At the fountain two kids, Lionello and Borso, are with a woman: STELLA DE'TOLOMEI. She is slightly older than 30yo., black hair, tall, beautiful and austere.

GISELLE

(whispering)

That's Stella with her kids!... I already met her.

(CONTINUA)

PARISINA

Introduce me!

(to the damsels)

Please stop here on the grass in
the shadow.

Parisina and Gisella approach Stella.

GISELLE

Madame, how nice is to see you
playing with your kids... I'd
like to introduce you Parisina,
who you didn't met yet.

Stella can't hide a rancorous look.

STELLA

The Black Death suggested me to
be careful.

Stella wears a fake smile.

STELLA

I'll be happy to pay you my
respect and to be your friend.

PARISINA

(embarassed)

... And I'd be pleased.

The three women look each other, Stella keeps quiet
showing that she would not carry on the conversation, she
turns to her children and walks away.

Parisina and Giselle go back to the damsels: they prepared
the color palette to paint, sing and play music.

GISELLE

(whispering)

Did you understand you should be
careful with her?!

PARISINA

Yes!... Her eyes drop
thunderbolts and her voice was
not sincere.

From the Volto del Cavallo comes Ugo with his court of
YOUNG FRIENDS, all from noble lineage: they hold in their
hands bows and arrows. A FAMILIAR follows with a round
target to be hanged to a branch.

Ugo sees Parisina and decides not to pay her respect.

UGO

(to the familiar)

Put it over there.

(CONTINUA)

FRIEND
(looking at Parisina)
Isn't her your mother-in-law?

Ugo throws an arrow.

UGO
(upset)
Yes!... It's her.

Now the friend shoots an another arrow.

FRIEND
From your words I can see she is
not your flavour?!

Now Ugo throws another arrow.

UGO
Sure!... My father married her to
please the Serenissima but she'll
never mean something for me.

Now the friend shoots an arrow.

FRIEND
(talking about Niccolò)
Should he have a male, you'll not
get any chance to take his role.

Ugo becomes angry.

UGO
(talking about Stella)
If he would have married her I
would not be in this borderline
situation... Stop now!

Parisina from distance rise her arm to hail him. He looks
at her without answering back.

GISELLE
It seems like Ugo has the same
attitude like his mother.

PARISINA
He'll change... I'm sure!

16 INT. PALACE OF THE MARQUISES - DAY

16

Parisina in the Palace hallway meets Ugo. He steps on a
side to avoid interrupting her walk.

Parisina talks to him in a friendly manner.

(CONTINUA)

PARISINA
Good Morning Ugo.

UGO
Madame!

PARISINA
We are so close by age that I
could be your sister, instead the
destiny made me your
mother-in-law.

UGO
(resentfully)
That's the destiny Madame... I
don't reckon I should pay you the
respect of a mother. My mother
should have been his wife!

Ugo, after a quick bow, goes away.

DISSOLVE TO

17 INT. HEARING ROOM OF NICCOLÒ - DAY

17

UGUCCIONE
It seems like the Black Death is
over but there are no more
litterati or nobles in the city...
as you know what happened when we
had been forced to close the
Studium due to money shortage.

STUDIUM: Ancient name of the universities.

ALBERTO
By keeping it closed, we'll lose
dignity with the Serenissima and
the main Seignouries.

NICCOLO'
What do you suggest?

ALBERTO
We should re-open it and invite
the finest Enlightened from all
Europe.

UGUCCIONE
You know, my friend, how
important is to have a Studium
and some Cultural Circles.

NICCOLÒ
Well! Let's invite the finest
researchers.

(CONTINUA)

(pause)
Let everyone know!

18 EXT. ORATORY OF SAN CRISPINO - DAY 18

FLAG WAVERS, troumpeters and drummers walk down the Piazza degli Ortolani next to the Cathedral. The coloumn of Niccolò and Parisina is introduced by PAGEBOYS with the coats of arms, they walk to the Oratory for the re-opening of the Fine Arts. Ambassadors from all the Italian Seignouries follow.

Parisina solely holds Niccolò's arm and smiling whispers

PARISINA
My lord I'm due to give you a heir.

NICCOLO'
(smiling)
Let's pray God is a boy.

19 INT. BEDROOM OF PARISINA - NIGHT 19

OVERLAY: 23rd March 1419

ANTCHAMBER

Niccolò walks nervously in front of the door. SERVANTS walk into the room with hot water amphoras and white linen, the ones walking out hold blood dirty linen.

The shout of Parisina's labour can be heard in the hallway.

BEDROOM

Parisina has sweat drops on her face, she bites a napkin and with her hands holds the bed coloumns. Giselle wets her forefront.

The MIDWIFE, a strong woman with frowning eyes, putting her head between her legs, looks at the vagina opening.

Annuzza and Fiammetta, worried, help each other cleaning Parisina's tumb with a small wet linen.

MIDWIFE
The water is over.
(pause)
That's it!... it's open.

GISELLE
It's time Chérie!
(pause)

(CONTINUA)

(CONTINUA)

GISELLE (SEGUE)
Take a deep breath!

SOON AFTER

MIDWIFE
PUSH!... PUSH!...

Parisina shouts in pain.

GISELLE
(whispering)
Push Chérie!... Push!

A cry breaks into the room.

MIDWIFE
(aseptic voice)
It's a female!

SOON AFTER

MIDWIFE
(surprised)
Stop... it's not over yet!

GISELLE
What's going on?

MIDWIFE
It's two!
(to Parisina)
Milady, you should keep pushing.

PARISINA
(in pain)
FOR HOW LONG?... HOW LONG?

MIDWIFE
Not much... the head is already
halfway out.

Parisina, after getting rid of the second burden, stops shouting and faints.

MIDWIFE
They are two girls... healty
(to Fiammetta and Annuzza)
Clean and cover them up
(to Giselle)
Stay close to her.

Parisina opens her eyes.

GISELLE
Chérie... you delivered two
beautiful daughters.

(CONTINUA)

Parisina is worn out, two tears drop down from her eyes.

PARISINA
(smiling)
Let me see them.
(uncertainly)
What will my Lord say?!

Struggling, she sweetly hugs them in their wool covers.

PARISINA
I'll call them Ginevra and Lucia.

ANTCHAMBER

The midwife leaves the room.

NICCOLO'
So?...

MIDWIFE
(cold voice)
They are two females!
(pause)
It would be good if you leave her
resting. Tomorrow you can see
her.

Niccolò thoughtfully walks away.

20

INT. BEDROOM OF PARISINA - DAY

20

In the room there are two changing tables and two baby cots. The FEEDERS hold Ginevra and Lucia to their brest.

GISELLE
(to Parisina)
Chérie how are you today?

PARISINA
I can stand up... after three
days, I tried to milk them but I
don't have enough milk.

GISELLE
(looking at the feeders)
It's not your duty, they should
do it... or your breast might be
deformed.
(pause)
Your Lord?...

PARISINA
He came the following day with
some important presents, he was
nice... He would have preferred a
boy.

(CONTINUA)

(pause)
I'm sure about it!

GISELLE
Now Chérie you have to get well soon... don't let Stella take space in his thoughts.

PARISINA
Yes! My dear friend, I'll give him a boy!

ANNUZZA
Messer Ugucione Contrario is here!

PARISINA
Let him in.

Giselle and Annuzza leave the room.

PARISINA
What a nice idea to come and visit me.

UGUCCIONE
I'll bring congratulations by my family and I.

She gives him her hand, he sweetly kisses it.

PARISINA
You should know I consider you a good friend.

UGUCCIONE
Whatever I can do... trust on me.

DISSOLVE TO

21 EXT. COURTYARD BASILICA OF SAN GIORGIO - DAY

21

The Marquis coloumn, preceded by flag wavers, thrumpeteers and drummers enter the Basilica for the exumation of the body of the co-protector of the city: San Maurelio.

The plebs credits him for the saving from the Black Death. A large CROWD is waiting for them.

PARISINA
(to Niccolò)
I can't see Ugo with his brothers?

(CONTINUA)

NICCOLÒ
They'll not come... Stella is in
bed feeling unwell.

PARISINA
(tart voice)
As she did on the day of my
arrival!

The coloumn enters the Basilica.

22 INT. HEARING ROOM OF NICCOLÒ - DAY 22

Ugo is privately meeting his father.

UGO
Father, the health of our mother
is worsening. She fears her time
has come.

Niccolò silently listens.

UGO
She desires to meet you.

NICCOLO'
Is it that bad?

UGO
Yes!... yes father!

23 INT. BEDROOM OF STELLA - DAY 23

OVERLAY: 11th July 1419

Stella, pale in the face, sunken-eyed, holds her hair up
in a white nighcap, she is on her bed. There is a dim
light in the room.

Niccolò gets closer to the bed and holds her hand.

STELLA
(in pain)
My lovely Lord... I thought you
wouldn't make it.

NICCOLO'
I listened Ugo's prayer... here I
am!

STELLA
I always loved you... and I never
asked you to marry me.

(CONTINUA)

NICCOLO'
That's true my love.

STELLA
(talking about their sons)
It's for them my exortation.
(pause)
They should have a future next to
you.

NICCOLO'
They already live at Court, Ugo
is resourceful and all the ladies
look at him.

STELLA
He would have been the right heir
to the Lordship
(with resent)
If you would have married me.

NICCOLO'
Don't worry... you'll get better
soon and will forget these words.

STELLA
No!... my time has come.
(pause)
You can go now!

24 INT. HEARING ROOM OF NICCOLÒ - DAY

24

ANTCHAMBER

The Court pageboys open the large door. Ugo, while
leaving, meets Parisina who is going to see Niccolò.

PARISINA
(to Ugo whispering)
You should know I'll never bend
to you... arrogant boy.

He doesn't answer and leaves.

PARISINA
(to Niccolò)
Ugo's behaviour is getting more
and more bratty... I'd like you
to talk to him.

NICCOLÒ
(justifying Ugo)
His mother died today.

(CONTINUA)

PARISINA

I feel for him my Lord... I hope
he will calm down towards me.

NICCOLÒ

I feel for his behaviour with
you, I'll talk to him... but mind
your words.

PARISINA

I'll obey my Lord... my heart is
filled only with Ginevra and
Lucia.

(pause)

My only wish is to give you a
male heir.

25

EXT. GARDENS OF PALAZZO SCHIFANOIA - DAY

25

Parisina and Giselle, with the damsels and TWO NANNIES,
are chatting in the gardens.

GISELLE

How are your relations with Ugo?

Parisina looks at the nannies, busy helping her daughters
to walk their first steps: the little girls are wearing
white dresses and haircaps.

PARISINA

(referring to the twins)

Are they not handsome?!

(referring to Ugo)

I can't stand him... his mother
convinced him it was me taking
away his rights.

GISELLE

... that he shouldn't have.

PARISINA

I hope my Lord will send him away
on a mission so I will not see
him for a while

(pause)

as he did with Lionello... He
sent him to Rome to study the art
of war.

GISELLE

Your Lord spends his time only
with you, he's very much in love!

(pause)

He's not seeing any of his
mistresses... Anna, Caterina,
Filippa keep asking about him.

(CONTINUA)

Anna de Roberti, Caterina Albaresani, Filippa della
Tavola: noble courtesans three of his favourite lovers.

PARISINA

I didn't know they were still
looking for him!

GISELLE

Counting the ones at court and
the unknown ones, it makes over
30 in total... all of them gave
him kids.

PARISINA

Yes! He often comes to meet me in
the night... he's passionate, I
can feel he's in love.

(blushing)

I'm late with my period.

GISELLE

(smiling)

Chérie what were you waiting for?
Chérie I'm so happy for you!

(pause)

Are you sure?

PARISINA

The doctor checked me up. It will
be due in Spring... Niccolò still
doesn't know.

26 MONTAGE - PARISINA'S PREGNANCY

26

1-Parisina walks in the ducal gardens with Giselle;

2-She goes to her twins near the courtyard fountain, they
are checked out by TWO NANNIES;

3-She is swelling and fatigued, she sits on a bench while
her two daughters run around playing;

4-Ugo in the Palace voids Parisina;

5-Niccolò during the walks with Parisina puts his ear on
her belly to listen the baby's movements.

DISSOLVE TO

27 INT. PALACE OF THE MARQUISES - DAY

27

PARISINA'S BEDROOM

Giulioli, the secretary, after getting announced enters
Parisina's room, who just woke up. She, in a friendly
manner, calls him Giacomo.

(CONTINUA)

PARISINA

(smiling)

Tell me Giacomo, what's so urgent
to knock my door?

GIACOMO

I understand your uncle and aunt
from Cesena are coming.

(pause)

They reached the city door
already... they'll be here very
soon.

(embaraced)

I iwanted to let you know first,
as I know how much you love them.

Parisina is getting restless.

PARISINA

(smiling)

What a nice news you brought!

(to the damsels)

Call me Giselle!

SOON AFTER

PARISINA

(to Giselle)

Uncle Carlo and Aunt Elisabetta
are coming... Get their rooms
ready... hurry up!

The soar tummy makes Parisina move awkwardly.

GISELLE

Calm down Chérie... I'll take
care of it.

ENTRANCE STAIRCASE

Carlo and Elisabetta solely walk up the staircase.

Parisina, breaking the protocol, waits for them at the
entrance. Giselle and two trumpthers are next to her.

PARISINA

Dear unties... what a joy to see
you here.

Elisabetta looks at the round silouhette of Parisina.

ELISABETTA

You look awesome my dear.

PARISINA

I'll get the royal rooms ready
for you.

(CONTINUA)

ELISABETTA

My flower, I'd be next to you
over the next few days.

HEARING ROOM

Carlo walk in to pay his respect to Niccolò who, who is busy giving orders to his familiars, leaves his throne respectfully and goes to hug and kiss him.

NICCOLO'

My friend! I'm happy to see you here.

CARLO

Elisabetta wanted to help our niece on her last days... you and I will talk about the problems that plague Italy.

Niccolò is sitting uncomfortably at his throne, he is holding some grapes. Carlo is standing near the desk and bites an apple from a fruitplate.

NICCOLÒ

(to a servant)

Take two glasses and some wine.

CARLO

My friend, why did you left the Lega Antiviscontea led by the Serenissima?

NICCOLÒ

Right now, the Visconti hold too much power... I rather preferred an honorable peace to a defeat that would have weakened my Lordship... Ten years of war shoved my finances.

(pause)

I gave up Parma but I got Reggio with some extra cash too.

(pause)

I still owe the Serenissima 160.000 Ducati... while the Roman Curia gave me the Vicary of Argenta at a lower price.

(pause)

and what about you?...

CARLO

I!

(pause)

In Bologna Condulmer renewed my Vicary in Osimo and Sarasina

(pause)

(CONTINUA)

(CONTINUA)

CARLO (SEGUE)

You know how much he's binded to
Martino V and to the Doge.

(pause)

My finances are exhausted like
yours... I keep paying the
Serenissima for freeing me.

CONDULMER: Michele Condulmer, pontifical legate and
Cardinal of Siena.

MARTINO V: Elected Pope after the Council of Costanza.

NICCOLO'

(interrupting him)

The Serenissima asked me to be
mediator between them and Filippo
Maria Visconti to stop their
disputes.

(pause)

Right now we should act like
peacemaker not like warriors.

(pause)

Now go and rest... we'll meet for
supper.

ROYAL ROOMS

Parisina takes Elisabetta to her room: large, with a desk,
some chairs and a large fireplace, where some woodchops
are burning, on the side two large mullioned windows with
colorful glasses and dark velvet curtains. On the floor
oriental carpets.

ELISABETTA

How are you my flower?

PARISINA

(blushing)

I'm due... delivery is due next
week.

ELISABETTA

From the shape of your tummy he
will certainly be a boy.

PARISINA

I hope so... I'd like to give
him an heir worthy of Rome.

ELISABETTA

Did Niccolò stop his love affairs
at Court?

PARISINA

Yes! I'm so happy.

(CONTINUA)

ELISABETTA

Does everyone respect you?

PARISINA

Yes! Everyone is very nice with me... Uguccione, Giacomo, the old counsellor Alberto, everyone is my friend, many pageboys and familiars respect me fondly.

ELISABETTA

(uplifting voice)

You have Giselle here, who taught you good manners... and you have learned it well.

PARISINA

(sad voice)

The only person I didn't bond with is Ugo... actually we can't stand each other. He's my Lord's oldest son.

(pause)

It's always a fight: mischiefs and rude answers, especially after his mother's death.

28

INT. DINNER ROOM - EVENING

28

A chandelier is at the center of a long table. The two Lords at both ends, their spouses on the side. The WAITERS are standing near the walls, ready to serve water and wine, SERVANTS are plating the food.

ELISABETTA

We have been in Bologna to pay our respect to the papal legacy.

(looking at Parisina)

We were anxious to come here for your delivery.

Parisina suddenly gets pale.

PARISINA

I beg you a pardon, I think it's time.

Elisabetta quickly gets up and helps her.

ELISABETTA

(worried)

Come, I'll take you to your room!

PARISINA

(holding her stomach with the hands)

(CONTINUA)

(CONTINUA)

PARISINA (SEGUE)
Please call Giselle!... she has
already arranged everything.

Elisabetta helps Parisina and the two leave.

29

INT. BEDROOM OF PARISINA - NIGHT

29

In the room the air is frantic, the damsels quickly enter
and exit to make everything ready.

Parisina is undressed and laid on the bed with her
nightgown raised up to her crotch.

The SCREAMS of the contractions echo through the room.

PARISINA
Is Giselle not here yet?

ELISABETTA
She'll be here soon my dear...
she ran to get the midwife.
(sweet voice)
Calm down my dear everything will
be okay, take a deep breath.

Giselle arrives with the midwife.

MIDWIFE
(to Elisabetta)
When did it start?

ELISABETTA
An hour ago!

MIDWIFE
Her water has already broken...
the baby is coming out any time
from now.
(to Parisina)
Are you ready my dear?... Take a
deep breath and when I'll tell
you, push hardly.

PARISINA
(biting a napkin)
I'm ready!

MIDWIFE
PUSH!

PARISINA
(long shouting)
AAAAAAAHAH!

The room is filled with a loud cry.

(CONTINUA)

ELISABETTA
IT'S A BOY!

The damsels clap their hands.

MIDWIFE
(to the damsels)
Wash him!... and cover him well!

Giselle approaches the midwife.

GISELLE
(whispering)
Did you see how bluish is the
baby?

MIDWIFE
A doctor is needed soon. The new
mother keeps bleeding.

Parisina opens her eyes, in pain but happy.

PARISINA
Can I see him?... I will call him
Alberto Carlo.

GISELLE
Soon Chérie
(pause)
We called the doctor, he needs to
check you.

PARISINA
Why?

GISELLE
(lovely voice)
Out of carefulness, Chérie.

SOON AFTER

The doctor enters the room: everyone keeps quiet.

He gets closer to the baby cot where there is the little
boy, well covered. He opens the bag and picks up the
stethoscope putting it on his breast and on his lungs.

The doctor and the women speak in a low voice trying not
to be heard by the new mother.

MIDWIFE
(to the doctor)
You have to see her.
(pause)
She keeps bleeding.

The doctor makes a through check up of Parisina.

(CONTINUA)

SOON AFTER

DOCTOR
(to Giselle and Elisabetta)
I have to clean up the uterus.

The two women worriedly look each other.

DOCTOR
(to Parisina)
Madame I have to clean you up...
take a deep breath.

The midwife takes a bottle of chloroform, then she puts some drops on a linen and place it on Parisina's face: she faints.

SOON AFTER

DOCTOR
(to Giselle and Elisabetta)
She'll not be able to have kids
anymore.

SOON AFTER

Parisina opens her eyes, is in pain and has only an edge to her voice.

PARISINA
Bring me my son!

The midwife and the doctor with a sight agree, the daimselfs put the crying little bundle next to her.

PARISINA
(worried)
Why is he so darkish?

DOCTOR
(calming her)
Madame he doesn't breath
properly, maybe it's a cold...
better to keep him warm.

SOON AFTER

The doctor closes the bag, with his eyes he invites Giselle and Elisabetta to follow him.

ANTCHAMBER

Niccolò and Carlo are waiting for them.

DOCTOR
(to Niccolò)
The baby's heart doesn't beat

(CONTINUA)

(CONTINUA)

DOCTOR (SEGUE)
properly, all the blood
circulation is affected.
(lowering his voice)
She will not be able to have
babies in future.

NICCOLÒ
Will the baby make it?

DOCTOR
(sadly)
I'm not sure, we have to wait a
few weeks... I'll come every day.

GISELLE
(crying)
How can I tell her?!

ELISABETTA
Let's pray!

SOON AFTER

BEDROOM

Niccolò seats next to Parisina hiding his concerns.

NICCOLO'
My lady how are you?

PARISINA
(starts crying)
My Lord... Alberto Carlo is not
feeling well!

NICCOLO'
Calm down, everything will be
okay.
(kissing her forehead)
Not take a rest, Giselle is here
with you.

DISSOLVE TO

30

MONTAGE - BEDROOM OF PARISINA - DAY

30

1-Parisina in bed feeds her Alberto Carlo to her breast;

2-The doctor walks away from Parisina and speaks with
Giselle and Elisabetta lowering his voice;

3-Parisina, with a sad face, spends a lot of time next to
her son's cradle and swings it;

4-When she is alone, she cries lying on her bed.

31 INT. BEDROOM OF PARISINA - NIGHT

31

A damsel enters the room to get Alberto Carlo ready for the night feeding.

DAMSEL
HELP!... HELP!

Parisina is already awake and busy cleaning her nipples for the feeding. She takes the small lifeless body from the damsel's arms.

PARISINA
(running to her son's
cradle)
OH GOD!... OH GOD!... WAKE UP MY
LITTLE BOY
(sobbing)
OH GOD!... OH GOD!... PLEASE WAKE
UP!

Giselle and Elisabetta arrive in the room, still wearing their nightrobe. Giselle hugs her, Elisabetta takes the little lifeless body in her arms.

Giselle is caring her head, sitting next to her on the bed.

PARISINA
NO!... MY GOD!... NO!

GISELLE
Calm down Chérie!... God has
taken your little one with him...
Calm down.

SOON AFTER

She is on her bed exhausted: Niccolò arrives.

PARISINA
WHY?!... WHY?!

The Marquis hugs her without saying a word.

SOON AFTER

He leaves the room. She is now alone quiet, pretending to be resting while, with her head on a side, cries.

DISSOLVE TO

Parisina, sad with swollen eyes, walks with Giselle and Elisabetta toward the fountain surrounded by flourishing plants.

PARISINA
(to Elisabetta)
Thanks for staying.

ELISABETTA
I wanted to be next to you.

PARISINA
You two are my everything... my family!

GISELLE
You need to go over it Chérie!... you are still a 18th years old young flower.

PARISINA
(sighing)
Something in my soul has been broken, and in my Lord's one too
(with a tear on her face)
I will not be able to give him children in future neither.

ELISABETTA
It has been a bad time for him too.

PARISINA
I feel him cold... and distant to me.
(sighing)
Since a few nights he doesn't come to see me anymore.

PALACE STAIRCASE

Ugo meets Parisina, Giselle and Elisabetta. He's a less rancorous look.

UGO
(to Parisina)
Madame... I'm sorry for what happened to you... Even if I can't be a mother, I feel for you.

Parisina holds out her hand to him. He, for the first time, bows respectfully, then carries on his way.

(CONTINUA)

ELISABETTA

(surprised)

He seemed sensible about your disgrace.

PARISINA

Yes!... It's the first time.

GISELLE

Stella's death shocked him deeply.

ELISABETTA

My dear daughter I have to go back to Gradara... I'll be there quite often, you know how much I like it.

(pause)

You can count on your uncle and myself.

33 INT. HEARING ROOM OF NICCOLO' - EVENING

33

Niccolò called Ugo.

NICCOLO'

This evening I'll not dine at the Palace.

UGO

(interrupting)

Are you busy father?

NICCOLO'

(smiling)

It's men stuff... please keep it for yourself.

(pause)

Please dine with Parisina.

34 INT. DINING ROOM - EVENING

34

Parisina is already sitting at the table, waiting for Niccolò. Ugo walks in and seats at his father's place.

PARISINA

What're you doing Ugo? That's your father's chair.

UGO

(lowering his eyes)

My father this evening is not dining with you, he's busy.

(CONTINUA)

PARISINA

(sobbing)

I don't see him very often
anymore... now he doesn't even
dine with me.

UGO

(nicely)

He's busy on State business...
I'm sorry but you've to dine with
me this evening.

PARISINA

You know where is he gone?

UGO

No!... He asked me to tell you
he'll not come.

On Parisina's face, a tear drops down, she wipes it off
with a napkin. Ugo is surprised by her face. She,
remembering his kindness on the staircase, shows that she
likes his company.

PARISINA

(with a sad smile)

I'd like to thank you for the
words you used today with me.

UGO

Can I call you by your name?

PARISINA

(embarrassed)

I would be happy.

(pause)

... and can I call you by yours?

The waiters serve dinner. The two youngster sometimes they
cross each other sight.

UGO

(shy)

We both went through bad times...
I'm tired of being angry with you
while living under the same roof.

Once the dinner is over, Parisina leaves the room: she's
surprised by Ugo's new behaviour.

PARISINA

Ugo you have been so nice to keep
me company this dinner.

35

INT. HEARING ROOM OF NICCOLO' - DAY

35

Niccolò meets Uguccione, the saviour Alberto del Sale and the doctor: they talk about the Black Death hanging over the city.

ALBERTO

The news is frightening my Lord.

NICCOLO'

What are you saying?... How many deaths so far?

ALBERTO

Over one hundred!

(upset)

Outbreaks in the castrum, in the borough of San Giorgio, in Via della Rotta and Via dei Sabbioni.

NICCOLO'

(worried)

It's worst than last time! What can we do about it?

DOCTOR

The hygenical conditions and the bad water are between the causes of it.

(pause)

At Court, I suggest you boil the water before drinking and avoid meetings.

UGUCCIONE

It would be appropriate to get Parisina a break away from the city... It would be good for her soul too.

(pause)

She did not recover yet after the death of her son.

NICCOLO'

(to the pageboys)

Call Parisina!

SOON AFTER

PARISINA

(sad and cold tone)

Here I am my Lord... what do you want from me?

(CONTINUA)

NICCOLO'

The doctor suggests for you to leave Ferrara... the Black Death is killing too many people, I'd prefer to know you are safe far from it.

PARISINA

(sarcastically)

Are you sure this is the real reason... or is it another one I shouldn't know?

NICCOLO'

(with hypocrisy)

My only concern is your health my dear

(hiding his happiness)

You can go to Elisabetta's... until it will be over.

PARISINA

Now she is in Gradara!

NICCOLO'

Right, you know it well after spending many wonderful times over there... she will be happy to have you around.

(pause)

Ugo can keep you company... hopefully you'll find peace with each other.

PARISINA

I'll do as you like my Lord.

Parisina leaves the room.

UGUCCIONE

(whispering)

My dear friend, I suggest you to keep away from the other women.

(pause)

A few years ago, you risked your life for an infection.

36

EXT. STREET OF THE COUNTRYSIDE TO GRADARA - DAY

36

Along the dirty roads, the KNIGHTS' column is approaching the fortress of Gradara. At the center of it, Parisina and Ugo ride keeping quiet, Giselle right behind. Aldobrandino leads the carts with the damsels at the end of the column.

Ugo get his horse closer to Parisina's.

(CONTINUA)

UGO

(shy)

Parisina... While away, I don't want to bother you or give you anything to worry about.

PARISINA

(looking at him)

Thank you Ugo. I saw it in your eyes.

Ugo loosen the bridle and go ahead of the coloumn.

Giselle's horse gets next to Parisina's.

GISELLE

Chérie... what did the bold guy want from you?

PARISINA

He's been nice, he asked me to befriend and stop the fighting.

(pause)

His eyes are sincere... he suffered for his mother death.

GISELLE

... and you?

PARISINA

I accepted it! I'm starting to get to know him.

GISELLE

(smiling)

He's a nice boy, he has the same bearing as his father.

PARISINA

(uncaring)

Yes!

37

MONTAGE - ENTRANCE IN GRADARA - DAY

37

1-The SOLDIERS ON DUTY at the drawbridge recognize the Malatesta's and Estensi's vessels and lower it;

2-The coloumn proceeds through the main street of the borough: on the side a tavern from which loud voices and kitchen smell. Follows a horseshoer' workshop who's banging on a envil the horse shoe hanged at the wall ring;

3-People gives room to the coloumn stretching on the house walls;

4-At the second walls circle, on the right there's a guard spot. Soldiers ask for the permission;

5-The coloumn reaches the courtyard of the fortress.

38 EXT. FORTRESS OF GRADARA - DAY

38

COURTYARD

Elisabetta walks down the main staircase, followed by DAMSELS and PAGEBOYS.

Ugo, the first getting off his horse, goes straight to help Parisina, who appreciates it with a smile.

ELISABETTA

I'm so happy for your arrival.

(pause)

Carlo is on duty and we'll have time to spend together.

PARISINA

(looking at Ugo)

My Lord desired his presence.

Elisabetta give him the hand uncaringly, he kisses it.

ELISABETTA

(to his pageboys)

Unload the carts and take the trunks in the bedrooms.

(to the guests)

Follow me.

The pageboys take Ugo and Giselle in their bedrooms.

PARISINA'S BEDROOM

ELISABETTA

It's like you left it... in Gradara the air is cleaner and there is no risk.

(curious)

Why Ugo is with you?

PARISINA

My Lord would like we build peace.

SOON AFTER

DINING ROOM

Elisabetta and her guests are sitting at the table.

ELISABETTA

Uncle Carlo is on a mission for the Serenissima.

(CONTINUA)

PARISINA

I hope to see him.

The waiters approach the guests with a bowl and plate the soup.

ELISABETTA

(about Carlo)

I know when he goes but never
when he'll be back.

(pause)

You'll stay here for a while...
you'll see.

UGO

The art of war takes a lot of
effort and Carlo is a great
commander.

(pause)

Niccolò sent Lionello to Rome to
learn the art from Braccio di
Montone.

BRACCIO DI MONTONE: Mercenary, often opponent of the
Malatesta.

ELISABETTA

(about Braccio)

How do men change... years ago it
was our worst enemy.

GISELLE

Men prefer the noise of the arms
rather than diplomacy.

ELISABETTA

They choose diplomacy only when
they have no other chances.

Once the dinner is over.

ELISABETTA

I beg you a pardon I'd like to go
for the evening prayers.

Parisina and Ugo remain and talk.

PARISINA

(sweet tone)

I've been here when I was young.
I spent unforgettable times.

(pause)

Come I'd like to show you the sea
from the Tower.

At the entrance of the tower spiral staircase, Ugo takes
her hand to help.

(CONTINUA)

UGO

It's a massive fortress, hard to
be taken.

TERRACE OF THE MAIN TOWER

Parisina leaves his hand and goes straight to the
crenellated tower. The two look at the sea and the stars
on a mild evening. Ugo is fascinated by her voice and her
eyes, shining in the night.

UGO

I've been unkind with you.

PARISINA

I know!... and I always answered
you back.

UGO

(sweet voice)

I saw you as an obstruction...
and my mother saw you as a
impostor.

His face gets closer to Parisina's.

PARISINA

(emotionally)

What are we doing Ugo?

He holds her arms along the body, Parisina's face gets
sweeter. Her eyes close, her lips takes the unexpected
kiss.

The flight of a NIGHT OWL with its FEARFUL SCREAM
interrupts the kiss.

UGO

(sweetly)

Today I reckon I was just feeling
envious for my father.

(pause)

I desired you since the first
time.

The night owl stops screaming. They keep kissing.

PARISINA

Stop!... We can't... You are my
spouse's son.

She quickly runs to the spiral staircase.

The MAID get closer to her bringing breakfast. Giselle walks in.

GISELLE
Good morning!

Parisina seems shocked.

GISELLE
Chérie, how did you sleep?

Fiammetta puts a second pillow behind her back.

PARISINA
I dreamed something weird.

GISELLE
Tell me!

Fiammetta while setting up the room listens. Parisina feels awkward and lower her voice.

PARISINA
Last night, I went up the tower
with Ugo to show him the
seaside... he was looking into my
eyes without saying a word.

GISELLE
(curious)
What happened next?

Fiammetta leaves the room.

PARISINA
The moon lit up our eyes, he held
me by the arms and kissed me.

GISELLE
(wrinkling her nose)
Chérie!... Chérie!

PARISINA
I let it happen.
(blushing)
While he was kissing my lips I
felt a thrill in my heart.
(upset)
Meanwhile a night owl with its
frightening cry broke that
moment.

GISELLE
(thoughtfully)
That's not a good sign.

(CONTINUA)

PARISINA
What should I do my friend?

GISELLE
If Cupid threw this arrow follow
the flow Chérie... but don't let
your Lord know.

PARISINA
(thoughtful)
Please ask Aldobrandino to
prepare my horse, I'd like to
take a ride and think.

GISELLE
As you like Chérie.

DISSOLVE TO

40 EXT. FORTRESS OF GRADARA - DAY

40

UPPER TERRACE

Parisina walks down the staircase wearing a comfortable
skirt to ride. Aldobrandino, in the courtyard, holds the
bridle of her horse.

PARISINA
I'm coming!

INTERNAL COURTYARD

ALDOBRANDINO
(joking)
The horse and I will always be at
your service.

PARISINA
(thoughtful)
My dear friend, I know!
(pause)
Help me to get on.

He takes a small staircase closer, she gets on with style.

ALDOBRANDINO
Hold the brills, he's well
groomed and have eaten enough.
(pause)
If I can... where are you going?

PARISINA
In the county of Ligabizio, in
the forest or by the seaside.
(sad voice)
Don't worry... I'll come back at
the Vespers.

(CONTINUA)

LIGABIZIO: Ancient name of the city of Gabicce.

She eases the bridle and the horse goes through the exit of the fortress.

UPPER TERRACE

Ugo sees the young girl leaving at the gentle trot, he quickly walks down the stairs and speaks with Aldobrandino.

UGO
Where is she going?

ALDOBRANDINO
Through Ligabizio... she'll not be back for lunch.

UGO
Get my horse ready!

Ugo gets on his horse, leaving the bridle he tries to reach Parisina.

41 EXT. FOREST OF LIGABIZIO - DAY

41

Parisina rides while absorbed in her thoughts. From behind she hears the sound of a horse.

Ugo reaches Parisina while entering the forest. In front of them the sea with the sound of the waves breaking onto the beach. She stops the horse and a smile lights up his face.

Ugo easily gets off the horse then he takes her by the hips to help her down. The two, too close together, start kissing again like the night before.

UGO
PARISINA!... PARISINA!

PARISINA
(sexy voice)
My heart last night was torn apart by remorse.

She half-opens her eyes.

PARISINA
Now it's gone... I want you!

Ugo gently pushes her on the grass without taking the lips away from her own.

(CONTINUA)

UGO
(whispering)
I love you!... I want you... now!

PARISINA
(whispering)
That's crazy!

He, while kissing her, undo her corset.

UGO
The scent of your breast drives
me crazy.

PARISINA
(sensual voice)
Kiss me my love!... Kiss me!

Parisina pulls up her dress and spreads her legs, now she is shirtless and with her dress pulled up to her bikini. She feels his hand caressing her flower. Parisina's hand pushes his head onto her breast.

PARISINA
What will we do now?

UGO
I don't know my love!
(pause)
I can't live without you!

The two lovers walk silently on the seaside holding each other hand. Ugo, shirtless, and Parisina, without her corset and with the shirt kept loose, from time to time hug and kiss each other.

The horses follow, held by the bridle by Ugo.

SOON AFTER

PARISINA
We must continue in the
shadows... it will be our secret
until death.

UGO
(talking about Niccolò)
Running away would do no good...
he would find us!

PARISINA
(feeling guilty)
No one should suspect.
(pause)
Niccolò should know nothing about
it.

The two lovers dress up then get on their horses and ride back to Gradara for the vesper.

42 EXT. FORTRESS OF GRADARA - DAY

42

UPPER COURTYARD

Giselle see them together.

GISELLE
(sending away the damsels)
Hurry up! Go to prepare a bath
for Parisina.

INTERNAL COURTYARD

Aldobrandino is waiting for them. He takes a small staircase to help Parisina getting off the saddle. Ugo with a jump gets off and gives him the bridle.

The two lovers walk up the stairs next to each other at some distance and whispering.

UPPER COURTYARD

PARISINA
(to Ugo)
Giselle saw us.
(pause)
She adores me and would never
allowed anything bad happen to
me.

UGO
What about Aldobrandino?... this
morning he saddled up my horse to
reach you.

PARISINA
They are my most loyal people.
They have been by my side since I
was born.

Once in front of Parisina's door, Ugo makes a polite bow. She, after making sure not to be seen, looks him sweetly.

43 INT. BEDROOM OF PARISINA - EVENING

43

Once in her bedroom, Parisina crosses Giselle's gaze who is waiting for her. She wants to be left alone with Parisina.

GISELLE
(to the damsels)
Once the bath is ready, you can
go. I'll take it from there.

(CONTINUA)

Fiammetta, leaving the room, gives a intrigued look to Parisina.

PARISINA

(smiling)

Oh!... my dear friend what a day!

GISELLE

(wrinkling her nose)

After you left, I saw Ugo riding right behind you.

(pause)

Turn around, I'll undo your corset, you're messy and your dress is dirty with grass.

PARISINA

What a day! He came to the forest... everything happened out of the blue

(pause)

I found myself on the grass with him over me kissing me... caressing me... kissing me

(pause)

I felt myself on fire. I gave myself to him.

Parisina, dropping the dress on the ground, is naked: she enters the bath. Giselle, after rubbing her back, drops scented oils on her.

Giselle, worldly woman, understands what happens.

GISELLE

(disapproving)

Do you know our eyes look different and our skin smells longer after love?!

PARISINA

I love him!... I will not live without him.

GISELLE

(worried)

You look too excited Chérie... It's not appropriate for you to dine with us tonight.

(pause)

I'll justify your absence with Elisabetta.

PARISINA

(smiling)

You have to help me... always!

(CONTINUA)

GISELLE

I'll do that for you! Don't worry... but you need to control yourself

(pause)

You have two daughters and a husband.

PARISINA

(about Niccolò)

I'm sure of it... he's back to his libertine lifestyle.

GISELLE

Did anyone notice you?

PARISINA

No... we have been in the forest and on the seaside all day long.

GISELLE

You're crazy my darling... but if you found love I'm happy for you.

PARISINA

Yes... I'm happy.

44 INT. DINING ROOM - EVENING

44

At the dinner table, Parisina is the only one missing.

ELISABETTA

Is Parisina late?

GISELLE

No Madame... she's not coming, she is not feeling well.

UGO

(pretending to be surprised)

Nothing serious?

Giselle casts a complicity look at Ugo.

GISELLE

No!... She'll be better tomorrow.

ELISABETTA

(to Ugo)

I saw you coming back from a horseride.

UGO

Yes!... We met at the entrance of the city walls.

DISSOLVE TO

45 INT. PLAYROOM - DAY

45

Elisabetta walks in with a book in her hands and sits next to a windows. Giselle, on the opposite side, is embroiding on a small hoop.

The damsels are busy playing and doing their works. Fiammetta looks out of the window.

FIAMMETTA
(to the damsels)
Parisina is walking on the walls
with Ugo.

ELISABETTA
(to Giselle)
Did you notice, my dear, how they
changed over the last few
months?!

GISELLE
(disregarding)
At the end of the day, Niccolò's
idea was not that bad... now at
least they talk to each other.

ELISABETTA
I don't know!... Doesn't seem to
be just that.

GISELLE
(with firm voice)
She says he's arrogant and
pretentious despite being a good
looking guy... she doesn't feel
anything for him.

ELISABETTA
Might be?!

Elisabetta keeps looking at the youngster from the window. Giselle lowers her eyes and carries on embroiding.

46 EXT. FORTRESS WALLS - DAY

46

The two young lovers walk next to each other, being careful to keep some distance between them.

PARISINA
My love we can stay here forever!

UGO
I don't know!... my father will
not call us back until the Black
Death will go away from Ferrara.

(CONTINUA)

PARISINA

I hope it's not soon!

Do you have any news about him?

He wrote me from Acquae
Patavinorum.

(cold voice)

He would have found help with
some young mistress.

ACQUAE PATAVINORUM: Ancient name of the city of Abano Terme.

UGO

He's always been lushing... he
was faithful only to you.

PARISINA

After the tragedy happened to my
little one, he has been voiding
me... kept at distance.

(sadly)

He left me to my destiny.

(pause)

Now I'm happy... don't leave me
alone... or I'll die!

The two walk silently.

PARISINA

Do you know what happened at the
fortress over one hundred years
ago?

UGO

I heard something about it... It
seems like Francesca, Milady of
Pesaro, is buried somewhere,
killed by his Lord when she had
been caught in intimacy with his
brother.

PARISINA

They say so... You know that
she's been married by proxy with
deception? His father first
introduced her Paolo Il Bello,
brother of Giancotto, the
appointed husband but ugly and
crippled.

(horrified)

He killed both... her body has
never been found.

(CONTINUA)

UGO
It's a mistery.

PARISINA
No my love!... It's reality.
(pause)
Elisabetta told me that...
Giancotto was uncle Carlo's
ancestor.

The two in a corner of the crenellated tower, hiding from the sight of others, stop in a corner. He pushes her and kisses her.

PARISINA
(begging him)
My love... what will we do?

UGO
I don't know!... I don't know!...

DISSOLVE TO

47 MONTAGE - RETURN TO FERRARA

47

black screen

OVERLAY: 6 months later

1-In the fortress courtyard everything is ready for departure: carts and horses are waiting for Parisina and Ugo;

2-Ahead of them the knights holding the Estensi's and Malatesta's araldic coats of arms with the damsels and the trunks;

3-Elisabetta on the last step of the staircase is awaiting to say goodbye;

4-Elisabetta hugs and kisses Parisina on her cheeks while gives her hand to Ugo and he kisses it;

5-The trumpeteers play their instruments;

6-The drawbridge is lowered. The coloumn starts moving and walks down the main street of the town until the external walls;

7-The day is sunny and hot. Parisina rides next to Giselle, Ugo is ahead.

48 EXT. DIRT ROADS OF ROMAGNA - DAY

48

Giselle, perplexed, questions Parisina.

GISELLE
Are you ready Chérie?

PARISINA
I have to be!

GISELLE
I'll always be next to you.

PARISINA
Everything is wonderful... It
must not end.

GISELLE
Seeing you so happy, has melted
my heart.

SOON AFTER

Ugo stops his horse waiting for the two ladies.

UGO
Soon we will be at the Verginese.
(pause)
They are waiting for us for the
night... Niccolò is aware of our
arrival.

VERGINESE: Delizia Estense, place of rest and
entertainment in the countryside.

49 INT. DELIZIA DEL VERGINESE - NIGHT

49

DINING ROOM

Parisina sits at the head of the table. Ugo is in front of
her. Giselle is on the side.

UGO
(to Giselle)
I'd like...

Giselle abruptly interrupts him.

GISELLE
I DO NOT WANT TO KNOW ANYTHING
ABOUT IT SIR... I KNOW WHAT I
SHOULD KNOW... STOP IT!

PARISINA
(shocked)
He just would to make you aware
of our love... and thank you.

(CONTINUA)

Giselle looks into Ugo's eyes.

GISELLE

(calming down)

I knew it from the first time it happened... I have always covered you for the affection I have for her.

(pause)

NOW I'M SCARED... We must be careful.

UGO

Madame, forgive me... Our love is true.

Once the dinner is over, Ugo goes to the stables to check the horses.

50

INT. STABLES OF THE VERGINESE - NIGHT

50

Ugo goes to the stables looking worried. Between the posts, Aldobrandino grooms a horse. An oil lamp gives a dim light.

ALDOBRANDINO

Good evening Sir... why are you here?

UGO

Just checking the horses... Did you finish grooming?

(pause)

What are you doing here? Why are you not with the damsels?

ALDOBRANDINO

We have been missing from Ferrara for months, I'm slightly worried too.

(pause)

If I may ask, I see that you are thoughtful too?!

UGO

Yes... Being back after a few months distresses me.

ALDOBRANDINO

(shy)

Are not matters of love afflicting you?

UGO

(resentful)

It's not your business, think

(CONTINUA)

(CONTINUA)

UGO (SEGUE)
about the horses... We will leave
at noon.

On the way out, Ugo meets Parisina.

PARISINA
I knew you were here.
(pause)
Giselle is as worried as we are,
we will have to live this love in
the shadows... you should try to
understand her.

UGO
I understand my love.

The two kiss each other while Aldobrandino is coming out
of the stables.

ALDOBRANDINO
(coughing)
The horses are ready Sir.

Parisina blushes and lowers her eyes.

UGO
(to Aldobrandino)
You can go!

51 INT. BEDROOM OF PARISINA (FERRARA) - DAY

51

Parisina and Giselle command the damsels to sort the
clothes in the wardrobes, the pageboys carry the trunks
into the apartment.

GISELLE
Your Lord has not come to greet
you yet?

PARISINA
(uncaring)
I think he has other business to
think about... I'll meet him for
dinner.

52 INT. DINING ROOM - EVENING

52

Niccolò is already sitting at the table. Ugo walks in.
Niccolò stands up and goes to hug him.

NICCOLO'
My son! How nice is to see you
again!

(CONTINUA)

UGO
Me too father.
(pause)
I hope the Black Death is over?!

NICCOLO'
Ferrara and the countryside has
been severly hit... your
departure has been a good idea.
(about Parisina)
Tell me son, are your
disagreements over?

Ugo, embarassed, lowers his eyes.

UGO
We tied up, but nothing
important.
(pause)
The small size of the fortress
helped.

NICCOLO'
I'm happy about it my son.

Parisina and Giselle walk in. The two women, fearfully,
look each other. Ugo calms them down with a gaze. Niccolò
stands up and kiss her wife's hand who looks chilled.

PARISINA
(bowing)
Here I am my Lord... I'm back.

NICCOLO'
It was a suggestion, not an
order. Now the situation is
better.

The waiters serve dinner to the attendees.

NICCOLO'
(breaking the silence)
In a few days I have to go away
to meet the Doge in Venice and
come to an agreement on the
proposals to be made to Filippo
Maria Visconti.
(proudly)
I appointed me as peacemaker
between them... I will meet
Filippo at the Acquae
Patavinorum.

FILIPPO MARIA VISCONTI: Duke of Milan.

Parisina and Ugo secretly cross their gaze.

Parisina and Giselle talk about the dinner. She sits at the harp and starts pinching it. Giselle is next to her listening, standing behind them Aldobrandino.

GISELLE

What will you play for me Chérie?

PARISINA

Nothing in particular... I just want to pinch it and listen its harmonic sound.

(looking at Aldobrandino)

My dear, can you read me the Menecmi please?

MENECEMI: Roman Latin comedy written by Tito Maccio Plauto.

Aldobrandino takes the book and puts it on the bookstand next to them. He starts reading by emulating the voice of the characters.

ALDOBRANDINO (V.O.)

(Menecmo)

"Finally! do you like this surcoat? And this bracelet? I took it from my wife to give it to my lover. What shall we do? We have to trick these harpies of a hundred-eyed wives. Gentlemen Husbands follow my example."

PARISINA

When we walked in the dining room in my heart shook.

ALDOBRANDINO (V.O.)

(Spazzola)

"Ehi, my friend, where is my part of the loot?"

PARISINA

I had no words.

ALDOBRANDINO (V.O.)

(Menecmo)

"I'm lost! It was an ambush. Who is it?"

PARISINA

(referring to Ugo)

His look calmed me down.

ALDOBRANDINO (V.O.)

(Spazzola)

"Hello Menecmo. It's me."

(CONTINUA)

GISELLE

Chérie you need to control
yourself.

ALDOBRANDINO (V.O.)

(Menecmo)

"Spazzola. Oh my fortune and my
condolence. Hello. Do you wanna
see a proper work?"

PARISINA

I'll do that.

ALDOBRANDINO (V.O.)

(Spazzola)

"who is the chef who cooked it?"

GISELLE

(worried)

Chérie your Lord is in the Palace
tonight.

ALDOBRANDINO (V.O.)

(Menecmo)

"you always think about food!"

GISELLE

(whispering)

Avoid doing anything crazy!

ALDOBRANDINO (V.O.)

"Menecmo opens his cloak and shows
a surcoat

(Spazzola)

Did you make business with your
wife?"

GISELLE

It's safe for him not to come!...
wait until tomorrow.

ALDOBRANDINO (V.O.)

(Menecmo)

"Yes indeed!"

Giselle turns toward Aldobrandino who has been listening
to the conversation.

ALDOBRANDINO

(whispering to Parisina)

Madame... I'll not say a word.

DISSOLVE TO

54 MONTAGE - NICCOLO' LEAVES FOR VENICE - DAY 54

1-Parisina says goodbye to Niccolò;

2-Niccolò walks down the staircase, the captains on horses are waiting for him, ahead of the column the Estensi's vessels;

3-The solemn column walks down Volto del Cavallo

55 INT. HALLWAY OF THE DUKE PALACE - NIGHT 55

In the middle of the night Ugo walks down the dark hallway, his shadow is reflected on the floor by the moon's ray through the windows.

BEDROOM OF FIAMMETTA AND ANNUZZA

They are still awake and hear a suspicious noise in the hallway. They whisper to each other.

FIAMMETTA

There's someone in the hallway.

ANNUZZA

It's late... have a look around.

Fiammetta slightly opens the door to have a look outside.

ANNUZZA

Can you see who is outside?

FIAMMETTA

It's Ugo.

ANNUZZA

Are you sure?

FIAMMETTA

Yes!... He's knocking Parisina's door.

Fiammetta keeps looking.

PARISINA'S DOOR

UGO (V.O.)

(whispering)

Open the door my love... it's me.

The door silently opens. He kisses her on the doorstep.

BEDROOM OF FIAMMETTA E ANNUZZA

(CONTINUA)

FIAMMETTA
(whispering)
They are kissing!
(pause)
I suspected there was an affair
between them.

ANNUZZA
(whispering)
Better to keep the secret.

PARISINA'S BEDROOM

PARISINA
Did anyone see you?

UGO
No!... my love.

He, while kissing her, takes her on the bed.

SOON AFTER

Ugo leaves. Parisina while fastening her nightgown, kisses him with passion.

UGO
Are you going to Fossadalbero
while my father is away?!
(pause)
We would be away from prying
eyes... I'll also join you.

FOSSADALBERO: Delizia Estense in the countryside.

PARISINA
Go!... Be quiet!

BEDROOM OF FIAMMETTA E ANNUZZA

FIAMMETTA
(with the ear close to the
door)
Did you hear that?
(pause)
There's still someone around!

She quietly opens the door.

FIAMMETTA
It's him... leaving.

56 EXT. PLAYROOM - DAY

56

Parisina is sitting next to the fireplace reading a book.
Ugo walks in.

PARISINA
(to the damsels)
Leave us alone.

Fiammetta leaves the room with Annuzza throwing a mischievous look to Parisina.

Ugo sits next to Parisina.

PARISINA
(sweet look)
I'll go to Fossadalbero... I'll
wait for you there my love.

UGO
(talking about Niccolò)
My father will be busy building
peace between Venice and Milan...
I'll reach you the following day.

PARISINA
(worried)
We should be careful... I'm
suspicious about Fiammetta's and
Annuzza's look, it seems like
they know something.

57 EXT. DELIZIA DI FOSSADALBERO - DAY

57

GARDEN

Parisina and Gisella talk surrounded by blooming gardens under the shadow of a large oak. The damsels are at the fountain, not too far from them. The gardeners are working on the garden beds.

PARISINA
(worried)
Since a few days Fiammetta looks
at me strangely! I'm sure she's
suspecting something.

GISELLE
Chérie... Your damsels need to
get married and you have this
power over them: you can decide
with whom.
(referring to Fiammetta)
She's a nice girl... find her a
good husband, setup a proper
dowry and send her away.

(CONTINUA)

(pause)
Better not to have her around.

PARISINA
I often see her talking with
Zoese... Niccolò's familiar.

GISELLE
(worried)
Better to act quickly,
(pause)
Your auntie Elisabetta can help
you finding a husband in Romagna.

58

INT. HEARING ROOM OF NICCOLO' - DAY

58

Parisina is seating at her high chair, Giselle is standing
next to her. Niccolò's place is empty.

FIAMMETTA
(worried)
Your Grace would like to see me?

PARISINA
Yes my dear!... it's your time...
I'd like to give you an husband.
My auntie Elisabetta has found
the right person for you.
(pause)
You'll get a rich dawry and good
references... so that you are
respected in that house... your
husband will come next month to
meet you.

FIAMMETTA
(pale)
My lady, I'd like to thank you...
I cannot escape your decision but
I'd like to ask you to change
mind for me: my heart is taken by
someone else. I'd have told you
about it at the right time.

Parisina quickly answers back without giving her enough
time to reply.

PARISINA
Everything is set... You'll
shortly get married.

Fiammetta lifting up her dress not to stumble runs away
without bowing.

(CONTINUA)

FIAMMETTA
(crying)
THAT'S NOT RIGHT!... I DON'T WANT
THAT!

59 INT. BEDROOM OF FIAMMETTA AND ANNUZZA - DAY

59

Fiammetta is on her bed lying on her stomach feeling hopeless. Annuzza sits next to her caressing her and trying to comfort her.

ANNUZZA
My dear... You know that as
damsels this is one of our
duties.

FIAMMETTA
I LOVE ZOESE... I WANT TO MARRY
HIM!

ANNUZZA
Do you really want to give up
your rich dawry?!

FIAMMETTA
(referring to Zoese)
HOW WILL I TELL HIM?!

ANNUZZA
We have been educated, well
dressed, learned the Fine Arts,
what else shall we aim for?!...
You know how is the life outside
the Palace for a young lady!

FIAMMETTA
(sobbing)
You are right!
(pause)
In a few days Zoese will be
back... I'll talk to him!

60 INT. KITCHEN OF THE PALACE - DAY

60

On a hidden corner of the kitchen, away from the gaze of CHEFS, Fiammetta meets ZOESE. He's a handsome boy, slightly older than her, tall, with the goatee, thin face with a strong character: . He's one of the trusted familiars of Niccolò. He has been secretly dating Fiammetta.

ZOESE
My darling!
(pause)
Why are you sad?

(CONTINUA)

FIAMMETTA

(begging)

My dear... my Lady is going to
get me married with someone I
don't even know.

(starting to cry)

I don't want it!... I don't want
it!

ZOESE

What do you want me to do?

FIAMMETTA

(sobbing)

If I can't avoid it... at least
I'll have some revenge.

(angry)

For some time now, my Lady has an
affair with Ugo.

ZOESE

(serious)

Are you sure about it?

FIAMMETTA

Yes!... I've seen Ugo many times
going to her room when is late in
the night, then leaving on
time... It always happens when
Niccolò is away travelling.

(pause)

When we were at the Delizie, when
Ugo would come to see her, she
would give us long breaks then
disappear.

ZOESE

I'll talk to my Lord, you will
see... I'll not let it to happen!

61 INT. BEDROOM OF NICCOLÒ - DAY

61

A large painted room in the Castle. His four posts bed is
at the opposite side of the windows and looks over the
Loggetta degli Aranci.

Zoese walks in and goes straight to Niccolò.

ZOESE

(whispering)

My Lord, I need to talk to you.

NICCOLO'

What's the emergency Zoese?!

(CONTINUA)

ZOESE

(shy)

Something affecting you
personally my Lord.

NICCOLO'

(to the servants)

YOU CAN LEAVE NOW!

(curious to Zoese)

Tell me!

ZOESE

Your Lady is in an affair with a
person at Court.

NICCOLO'

(rolling the eyes)

Careful what you say!...

(pause)

Who is him?

Zoese lowers his eyes and his voice.

ZOESE

(uncertainly)

It's your son Ugo, my Lord!

NICCOLO'

I HOPE IT'S NOT TRUE!... I'LL
CHOP YOUR TONGUE FOR YOUR LIES!

ZOESE

(scared)

Trust me my Lord... I'll show
you!

NICCOLO'

How?

ZOESE

My Lord should pretend to leave
and hide away until night.

(pause)

Pretending to clean the ceiling
of your spouse's bedroom I'll
make a dowel to allow you to spy
underneath at the right time.

NICCOLO'

(whispering)

Who will guarantee me that the
mating will happen?

ZOESE

My Lord... Everything usually
happens on the first days of your
absence.

(CONTINUA)

Niccolò throws him a furious look.

NICCOLO'
(holding his anger)
Don't tell anyone... I'll hide in
the loft above the bedroom.
(rancorous face)
I HOPE IT'S NOT TRUE THEN I'LL
CHOP YOUR TONGUE!

62 INT. PLAYROOM - DAY

62

Niccolò, pretending to be nice, walks in the room looking for Parisina.

Fiammetta, the other damsels and Aldobrandino are listening to her playing the harp. Once seeing Niccolò, she stops.

PARISINA
(with quick smile)
My Lord?

NICCOLO'
Tomorrow I'll go to Modena...
I'll be away for three days.
(before leaving)
I almost forgot to tell you, the
woodworkers will clean the
coffered ceiling in your room,
better not to go there today.

She smiling restarts pinching the harp and with a gesture asks Aldobrandino to get closer.

PARISINA
(whispering)
Do you know where is Ugo?

ALDOBRANDINO
(whispering)
No my Lady!

PARISINA
Call Giselle!

PARISINA
(to Giselle whispering)
Niccolò is leaving!
(smiling)
Let Ugo know.

63 INT. BEDROOM OF NICCOLÒ - DAY

63

Once Niccolò wakes up, Zoese gets closer to his bed. He's willing to proof the betrayal of the two lovers.

ZOESE
(whispering)
It's today!

NICCOLO'
(upset)
Yes!... Make sure to be right.

ZOESE
My Lord... once you'll be back,
change your clothes so no one can
recognize you.
(pause)
I'll wait for you.

NICCOLO'
Get a team of soldiers ready...
but make sure no one can see
them.

DISSOLVE TO

64 MONTAGE - PREPARATION OF THE TRAP - DAY

64

1-Niccolò, escorted by knights, leaves the Marquis Palace;

2-During the day Parisina with her damsels are busy reading, playing music and embroiding;

3-In the evening, Niccolò secretly comes back to the Castle, he's covering up his dress with a frair tunic and his head with a cap: Zoese is waiting for him;

4-Zoese walks ahead in the hallway of the Palace, making sure no one can see Niccolò;

5-The familiar takes a SOLDIERS SQUAD in an empty room, on the opposite side of the hallway;

6-Niccolò, before walking up the long dark spiral staircase that takes above Parisina's bedroom, throws a bad eyesight to the spy.

65 INT. BEDROOM OF PARISINA - NIGHT

65

The damsels are getting Parisina ready for the night. Giselle nicely lifts up a corner of the duvet.

(CONTINUA)

PARISINA
(to the damsels)
Now you can go.

GISELLE
What about Fiammetta?

PARISINA
She's not begging me anymore to
change my mind
(unresting)
I don't trust her!

GISELLE
(worried)
It's weird... If I would have
been so much in love, I would
react somehow.

PARISINA
(sweet eyes)
Now you can go!

GISELLE
(referring to Ugo)
When is he coming?

PARISINA
(smiling)
When you will be dreaming my
darling.
(referring to Ugo)
I'll be... dreaming too with him.

GISELLE
Chérie... you are crazy!

66 INT. HALLWAY OF DUKE PALACE - NIGHT

66

Ugo's shadow, reflected on the floor by the moon, walks down the hallway up to Parisina's bedroom. The damsels' rooms are all closed, the silence is sovereign.

UGO (V.O.)
(whispering)
It's me my darling!

She opens the door. From the bedroom, a dim candle light highlights his face. She closes the door and hugs him.

PARISINA
(sensually)
I was waiting for you my love.

67 INT. LOFT - NIGHT

67

A large room with a low ceiling. Above Niccolò's head the wood beams hold the terrace of the tower. There's a wooden floor.

Niccolò after taking off the tunic is sitting on a trunk, without making any noise.

NICCOLO'
(to himself)
I pray God that the outrageous is
wrong!

SOON AFTER

NICCOLO'
(to himself)
Someone is knocking the door!

Niccolò kneels, then carefully opens the hole made by Zoese.

NICCOLO'
(rolling his eyes)
Wicked!... Wicked!
(pause)
My Spouse and my dearest son!

Niccolò, with the eyes full of hatred, keeps looking.

PARISINA'S BEDROOM

Ugo takes off his clothes, she takes off the nightgown and leans on her bed naked.

PARISINA
(sensual voice)
Come here my love... warm me up.

Ugo goes over her body. She with the legs wide open starts moaning.

LOFT

Niccolò bites his tongue in anger then closes the hole and nervously walks down the spiral staircase.

68 HALLWAY OF THE DUKE PALACE - NIGHT

68

Niccolò with the eyes full of anger, walks in the room where Zoese and the soldiers were hiding and waiting silently.

(CONTINUA)

NICCOLO'
(to the guards)
GO!... SMASH THE DOOR!
(pause)
TAKE THEM!... TAKE THEM TO JAIL!

The noise of the soldiers wakes Giselle and the damsels up. They open their bedroom doors to see what is going on outside.

GISELLE
(to herself)
Oh my God!

The soldiers go straight to Parisina's door. Giselle stands in front of it trying to stop them by widening her arms.

GISELLE
(to the soldiers)
YOU CAN'T DO THAT!... YOU CAN'T
DO IT!

Niccolò, turning his back to Parisina's door walks away passing by the damsels' rooms. He points his finger at Giselle without looking at her.

NICCOLO'
(to the soldiers)
TAKE HER TOO IN JAIL!

Aldobrandino, from his room at the end of the hallway, looks at what's happening. Niccolò, walking through the exit, once arrived in front of his door stares at him.

NICCOLO'
(without turning to the
soldiers)
TAKE HIM TOO... TO ROT AWAY IN
JAIL!

FLASHBACK

BEDROOM OF PARISINA

PARISINA
IT'S YOUR FATHER!

UGO
DRESS UP!

Ugo get dressed without fastening his shirt. Parisina quickly wears the nightgown and puts a scarf on her shoulders.

(CONTINUA)

PARISINA
WHAT WILL HAPPEN? WHAT WILL
HAPPEN TO US?

UGO
ONLY GOD KNOWS!

The soldiers shoulder the door. They push the two lovers out of the room in the hallway.

END FLASHBACK

HALLWAY

Fiammetta, Annuzza and the damsels still wearing their nightgown watch the scene.

DAMSEL
What's going on?

ANNUZZA
They are taking away Parisina...
Ugo is with her.

Niccolò has reached now the end of the hallway.

PARISINA
MY LORD!... MY LORD!

Niccolò hears her words but walks away ignoring her and without turning his back.

The damsels discuss the events.

DAMSEL
(about Parisina)
While we were in Gradara
everything was quite odd: between
them some complicit glances, half
smiles
(pause)
Someone suspected something.

FIAMMETTA
(rancorously to Annuzza)
She gets what she deserves!

Zoese leads the soldiers. The four are taken to the castle prison.

ZOESE
DAMSELS... GO BACK TO SLEEP... GO
BACK TO SLEEP!

ALDOBRANDINO
(pale)
I DIDN'T KNOW!... I DIDN'T KNOW!

(CONTINUA)

Giselle walks with her head held high.

GISELLE
(whispering)
May God help us!

Parisina throws herself on the ground. The soldiers take her by the arms.

PARISINA
MY LORD... HAVE MERCY!

Her cries echo in the empty rooms.

UGO
(to Parisina)
My father doesn't know mercy!

69 INT. CASTLE PRISONS - NIGHT

69

IMBARCADERO

The large room, lighted up by a torch, in the base of the Torre dei Leoni, is half way under the water, the ceiling is made of bricks. This is the intersection of the dungeon. One side is opened looking straight at the moat. On one wall a large ring to which is tied a Batana that swaying on the water.

BATANA: Small flat-bottomed boat used to clean the moat of the Castle.

The prisoners walk down the narrow spiral staircase and reach the room, divided by a large metal grate. On one side the CUSTODIAN (old weared out rough with messy beard) is sitting next to a shabby table with the GUARD drinking wine and playing cards. The other side of the room, the one separated by the grate, the darkest, is used as execution room.

DOORMAN

Someone is coming!

GUARD
(at the newcomers)
WHO IS IT?

ZOESE (V.O.)
THE FAMILIAR ZOESE!
(pause)
I'M HERE TO GIVE YOU FOUR
PRISONERS!
(pause)
COMMAND OF NICCOLO'!

The light of the torch highlights the four prisoners' face.

(CONTINUA)

DOORMAN

She is...

ZOESE

(interrupting)

Mind your business, plebian.

PRISON

The custodian, with a large key, opens the prison doors. The narrow hallway allow to walk only in line lowering the head.

ZOESE

(to the custodian)

Put them in different prisons.

PARISINA'S CELL

Her cell is wet, on the floor a dead mouse wrapped by chocraches, seeing the light they run away. In a corner a wooden axis, on the opposite a hole as toilet.

Parisina, before entering the room, looks at Ugo begging.

PARISINA

My love... help me!

The door closes behind her, she is sobbing and hears the other doors opening and closing up.

SOON AFTER

ALTERNATE PARISINA'S CELL AND UGO'S CELL

She, grabbing the gratings, shouts.

PARISINA

UGO?!... UGO?!

(sobbing)

WHAT WILL HAPPEN TO US?

Ugo, sitting on the axis, with the head in his hands, cries.

UGO

MY LOVE!... I DON'T KNOW!

PARISINA

WILL HE... WILL HE HAVE MERCY?

(sobbing)

MERCY?

UGO

HIS PUNISHMENT HAS NO MERCY!

(CONTINUA)

PARISINA
WILL HE TAKE US TO COURT?... OR
WHAT?

UGO
(in despair)
I DON'T KNOW!... I DON'T KNOW!

The custodian, hearing the voices, opens the door.

DOORMAN
(in the dark)
STOP IT!... OR I CALL THE GUARD!

70 INT. KITCHEN OF THE PALACE - NIGHT

70

FLASHBACK

Niccolò, red in the face from anger, walks around the Palace. With his dagger, he hits the curtains and kicks the doors.

NICCOLO'
MY SON AND MY SPOUSE!... THEM!
(pause)
I BRED SNAKES IN MY BODY!

His shouts echo in the hallway.

NICCOLO'
UNFAITHFULS!

Niccolò is looking for a wine flask and walks in the kitchen, still empty at that time of the night: two rooms with fireplaces, sinks, working tables with knives and tools on it.

NICCOLO'
WHERE IS IT?... WHERE IS THE
WINE?!... DAMN!

His anger builds up, his dagger throws on the floor everything from the tables.

NICCOLO'
(kicking the chairs)
WHERE IS IT?... DAMN!

He grabs a cupboard and throws it on the floor together with plates, glasses and pots.

NICCOLO'
AAAAH!... HERE IT IS!

The flask is next to the sink, he grabs it, takes of the cork with his teeth, and swallow it up. Then with the wrist he cleans up his mouth.

(CONTINUA)

He walks out of the kitchen slamming the door.

END FLASHBACK

DISSOLVE TO

71 INT. HEARING ROOM OF NICCOLO' - DAY

71

The saviour rooms are upside down. Niccolò is drunk, sitting with one leg on the armrest of his throne, on the belly the empty flask.

Zoese walks in, looking at the scene, he runs to help Niccolò.

ZOESE
My Lord... Wake up!

NICCOLO'
What you want familiar?

ZOESE
I'll take you to your room to clean up... you don't look good.

Zoese holds Niccolò and takes him to his room.

ZOESE
In the Palace everyone is talking about the night!

NICCOLÒ
Did you do what I asked you?

ZOESE
How could I void it?!

NICCOLO'
Call the Saviours, Ugucione and Alberto.
(pause)
Ask someone to clean up the room.

DISSOLVE TO

SOON AFTER

Ugucione, the only one aware of the events, is waiting. The old Alberto del Sale, the secretary Giulioli, and the Saviour arrive: only Niccolò is missing. While waiting everyone walks around and talks about the events.

UGUCCIONE
(gloomy voice)
Do you know why he summoned us?

(CONTINUA)

SAVIOUR

(uncertainly)

There are a lot of rumors going around outside the Palace... someone says that Niccolò killed himself... others say that Parisina is dead... or that Ugo ran away with her.

(pause)

What did actually happen?

ALBERTO

(with calm voice)

Open up your eyes, it's been months that Parisina and Ugo are having teasing winks.

(pause)

Did you not notice it?

GIULIOLI

(talking about Niccolò)

He spent a little time with her after their son's death.

(pause)

He is back dating his mistresses.

(pause)

She did never fully recover.

UGUCCIONE

They found Parisina in loving attitudes with Ugo.

SAVIOUR

(with compassion)

Poor girl! She brought some fresh air at Court.

GIULIOLI

She's always been nice, always smiling.

UGUCCIONE

Yes!... Everyone liked her

(pause)

However falling in love with her son-in-law is not acceptable.

Niccolò, dark in the face, accompanied by Zoese, enters the room and sits at his high chair.

NICCOLO'

That whore was in bed with Ugo, my dearest son.

(looking at Zoese)

I saw her with my own eyes!

(pause)

WITH MY OWN EYES!

(CONTINUA)

UGUCCIONE

My Lord and my friend, don't
worry too much about it.

NICCOLO'

CHOP THEIR HEAD!

UGUCCIONE

(provoking)

Over the last few months, what
did you do my Lord?

(pause)

while travelling or on a hunting
trip, you wasted no opportunities
to have pleasure with your
mistresses.

NICCOLO'

(without listening)

CHOP IT!

SAVIOUR

My Lord, this sentence normally
applies to murders

(pause)

not to adultery.

ALBERTO

My Lord allow me to tell you that
we should inform our allies about
the events at Court... and not
everyone will understand.

NICCOLO'

(without listening)

CHOP IT!

ZOESE

When?

NICCOLO'

TONIGHT!

ALBERTO

My Lord... forgiveness is valued
more than revenge.

(pause)

Think about it!

NICCOLO'

CHOP IT!... I TOLD YOU TO CHOP
IT!

DISSOLVE TO

72

INT. PRISONS - NIGHT

72

IMBARCADERO

Zoese talks to the custodian and the guard.

ZOESE

Call the hangman for midnight!

CUSTODIAN

Are you sure my Lord?

ZOESE

Do you want to end up the same way?... but at the Torre de' Ribelli?!

Zoese looks over the grate at the execution room.

ZOESE

Get it ready!

CUSTODIAN

Ugo asked to talk to the Lord.

ZOESE

Take me to him.

The doorman picks up the torch and takes Zoese to Ugo's cell.

UGO'S CELL ROOM

ZOESE

Open it!... Give me the torch and wait outside!

Ugo is curled up in a corner crying, holding his head between his crossed arms.

ZOESE

(with sympathy)

What do you want from your father, son?

UGO

I'm regretful for the dishonor I've brought upon him.

(pause)

Forgiveness!... I beg for forgiveness!

ZOESE

I'll talk to him.

(CONTINUA)

UGO
TAKE ME TO MY FATHER!

ZOESE
(to the custodian)
OPEN!

DISSOLVE TO

EXECUTION ROOM

The HANGMAN walks down the spiral staircase followed by two guards. It's a tall strong man with flashy biceps, rough. He's wearing a wide hood, a shirt and a dark pantyhose. On his wrists two leather bracelets with studs, around the neck a necklace with a cross. He brings a long heavy pointless sword: the EXECUTION SWORD.

HANGMAN
Who's next?

CUSTODIAN
It's two... Madame Parisina and
her son-in-law Ugo!

The hangman rolls the eyes and takes the wine flask on the table. He drinks it then wipes his mouth with his forearm.

HANGMAN
(aseptic voice)
I confessed my sins and took the
Holy Communion as usual... but to
chop the head of my Lady is not
everyday business!
(lifting his shoulders)
Heads are heads... and I'm paid
to do the job.

Zoese arrives.

ZOESE
(at the custodian)
Bring Ugo, chain his wrists and
his feet.

SOON AFTER

The sound of chains in the hallway covers Ugo's screams.

UGO
(to the guards)
WHERE ARE YOU TALKING ME?
(pause)
TO MY FATHER?

Once reached the doorstep of the execution room, Ugo realizes.

(CONTINUA)

UGO
NOOO!... LET ME SPEAK TO HIM!

The guards throw him in the middle of the room and make him kneel down. The chain that binds his wrists behind his back force him to stand still in the right position to be executed.

UGO
FORGIVE ME FATHER!... FORGIVE ME!

The hangman takes a white linen and wrap it around Ugo's head. Ugo starts shaking and the chains at his feet make noise.

Zoese horrified from the scene, leaves and sits at the table with the custodian and drinks a glass of wine in front of him.

The hangman is waving the sword in the air many times to warm up the biceps.

SOON AFTER

The sword vibrates in the air, Ugo's head drops, his body keeps shaking for a few minutes. His blood splashes on the walls while the head, wrapped in the bloody linen, rolls down the room.

HANGMAN
(to the guards)
Call someone to clean up!
(cruelly)
I don't want to see blood on the
floor!

The custodian comes with a broom and a bucket. The guards horrified rather prefer not to do the job.

HANGMAN
Did you ever kill someone?...
C'mon take him away.

SOON AFTER

HANGMAN
Bring me her!

In the hallway Parisina's footsteps bound by chains are heard.

She enters the room, on the walls Ugo's blood is still dripping.

Zoese is waiting for her.

(CONTINUA)

PARISINA
(looking in his eyes)
It was you!... I should have
figured it out!
(pause)
Where is Ugo?
(pause)
WHERE IS UGO? WHERE IS?
(pause)
IT'S MY FAULT!... ONLY MY FAULT!

ZOESE
He's already been executed
(pause)
Now Madame it's your turn.

PARISINA
NOOO!... NOOO!

She falls into a surreal silence. Parisina proudly walks over the grate to the execution room.

PARISINA
(a Zoese)
Release my wrists.

Zoese with a look approves.

Parisina, standing in front of the hangman, takes off the necklaces and kneels down.

PARISINA
(looking at Zoese)
Now I don't want to live anymore!

She, after taking off the scarf, wraps up the blonde hair around the head then she offers her neck for the fatal strike.

The large sword waves in the air and hit.

Her body shakes unanimously, the head flies against the grate and the scarf gets unwrapped. The eyes roll, the tongue gets out of the mouth and her smile is chilling.

ZOESE
(horrified)
COVER HER!

Zoese in silence leaves the room.

At the same time a NIGHT OWL stops on the afterdeck of the batana a few meters away. Its FIERCE CRY continues at intervals throughout the night.

73 INT. HEARING ROOM - DAY

73

Niccolò, taken by remorse, wonders drunk around the Palace with a flask of in his hands.

NICCOLO'
SON!... SON!... WHERE ARE YOU?
(desperate)
WHY? WHY?

OVERLAY: PICTURE OF THE ESTENSE CASTLE BY NIGHT.

Text flowing upward on the picture: THE NEXT DAY GISELLE AND ALDOBRANDINO ARE BEHEADED. ON THE FOLLOWING DAYS NICCOLO' ORDERS TO BURN OUT ALL THE IMAGES OF PARISINA AND BEHEAD THE UNFAITHFUL WOMEN OF HIS CITY.

Black screen

FADE OUT.