

A VERY BRITISH REVOLUTION

By

Anthony John Youngman

Based on a True Story

ayou080670@westnet.com.au

BLACK SCREEN:

SUPERIMPOSE:

"LONDON, NOVEMBER, 1816.

A year has passed since the crushing defeat of Napoleon at Waterloo. The British government, its coffers empty after decades at war, tightens its purse strings and imposes a new tax on corn. The austere measures leave millions of the working class unemployed, destitute and facing starvation. The country is on the verge of revolution..."

FADE IN:

INT. LONDON - PRESTON'S APARTMENT - DAWN

A decrepit apartment in the slums of London. THOMAS PRESTON (45), a thin man of ragged appearance sits at a small table and carefully pens a letter with a feather quill.

He folds the letter, drips red candle wax onto the join and presses a brass seal into the molten blob, blowing gently on the wax until it congeals.

He looks up, his attention disturbed by the sound of a handbell RINGING in the distance.

Preston hurriedly dons his threadbare coat, stuffs the letter in his pocket and grabs his walking stick.

EXT. GREYSTOKE PLACE - DAY

From a dark alley opposite we see Preston being watched by MR BLACK, a dark shadowy figure. Preston exits the apartment and walks with a limp down the gloomy mist filled street.

He steps past a dozen or so homeless war VETERANS dressed in their ragged uniforms. They look up, starvation and misery evident on their gaunt faces. Some lay about drunk, others huddle around a small fire in a vain effort to keep warm.

EXT. CHANCERY LANE - DAY

Preston crosses the street into Chancery Lane and limps toward a scarlet coated POSTAL CARRIER ringing a handbell.

Preston hands the letter to the postal carrier, pays him a penny and limps off.

Mr Black approaches the postal carrier and gestures for the letter. The postal carrier fearfully hands it over.

From Mr Black's p.o.v. we see the address close up:

"To Henry Hunt Esq. Middleton Cottage, Southampton"

EXT. SOUTHAMPTON - HUNT'S HOUSE - DAY

The rear of a modest Georgian country house. ANDREWS (30), a faithful servant stands in front of the stables holding the reigns of a gallant looking horse.

HENRY HUNT (43), a tall dashing gentleman exits the rear of the house wearing his customary blue jacket and brown top boots.

He carries the LETTER which he puts into a saddle bag, mounts the horse and rides off.

EXT. SOUTHAMPTON COUNTRYSIDE - DAY

Hunt rides at a gallop over idyllic countryside. He passes a shepherd herding a flock of sheep.

EXT. COUNTRY ROAD - DAY

Hunt slows to a canter down a country road. He doffs his hat at two young women walking along the road. They nod in return and giggle to each other after he has passed.

EXT. BOTLEY VILLAGE - DAY

Hunt rides slowly past village shops, a tavern and thatched cottages.

EXT. COBBETT'S HOUSE - DAY

A large farmhouse situated next to the Hamble River. Hunt rides down a dirt path leading to the house surrounded by fields of corn.

He dismounts the horse, ties it to a fence post and removes the letter from the saddle bag.

COBBETT (O.S.)

Ah, Mr Hunt, to what do I owe this pleasure?

Hunt turns to face WILLIAM COBBETT (53), a stocky gentleman farmer and political journalist.

HUNT

Cobbett old friend, I seek your advice on a strange invitation I've received from a Thomas Preston in London. Have you heard of him?

COBBETT

Thomas Preston? Hmm Preston? Perhaps it's the same Preston who belongs to the Spenceans.

HUNT

The Spenceans?

COBBETT

A group of fanatics who follow the teachings of the late Thomas Spence... Is that the letter?

Hunt hands him the letter. He reads it attentively.

COBBETT

So they wish to present an address to the Prince Regent on behalf of London's distressed inhabitants... A foolish undertaking, I recommend you decline the invitation.

HUNT

Well it's too late for that I'm afraid, I've already accepted it. I was hoping you would help me draw up some resolutions for the meeting.

COBBETT

I don't suppose you'll change your mind?

Hunt smiles wryly and shakes his head. Cobbett sighs.

COBBETT

In that case sir you had better come inside, I have a few passages from this week's Political Register which might prove useful.

HUNT

Splendid.

EXT. LONDON - CHANCERY LANE - DAY

A bustling city street. Hunt sits beside Andrews in a tandem pulled by two horses. He points at a building.

HUNT
Andrews, this is it, stop here.

ANDREWS
Very well Sir.

EXT. THISTLEWOOD'S APARTMENT - DAY

A well kept Georgian apartment. Hunt knocks on the door. A female servant answers.

FEMALE SERVANT
Good morning sir.

HUNT
Good morning madam, my name is Henry Hunt, may I inquire of a Mr. Preston? I'm told I might find him here.

FEMALE SERVANT
No sir, there's no Mr Preston here. I shall ask Mr Thistlewood, the master. Please sir, come in.

INT. THISTLEWOOD'S APARTMENT - DINING ROOM - DAY

The servant leads Hunt into a neat and well furnished dining room where he is seated.

Moments later ARTHUR THISTLEWOOD (42), dressed in a smart dressing gown and moroccan slippers, joined by DOCTOR WATSON (50), dressed in genteel black, enter the room. Hunt stands.

THISTLEWOOD
Mr Hunt, good morning sir, my name is Arthur Thistlewood and this is my associate Doctor Watson.

The men exchange handshakes.

HUNT
Good morning gentlemen. Excuse the intrusion but I'm trying to locate a gentleman of the name Thomas Preston.

THISTLEWOOD

Ah yes, Preston acts as secretary to our committee. We directed him to invite you to our meeting at Spafields.

HUNT

Oh I see. I understand you wish to submit an address to the Prince Regent. May I see it?

WATSON

Most certainly sir...

THISTLEWOOD

(curtly)

The committee have already made up their minds on the substance of the address.

HUNT

Gentlemen, before I consent my support, I wish to peruse the address very minutely.

Thistlewood looks sternly at Watson.

THISTLEWOOD

If you insist, I shall fetch it.

Thistlewood leaves the room.

HUNT

This committee, may I inquire who comprise it?

WATSON

(nervous laugh)

Mr Thistlewood and myself are the principal members. My son and Messrs Preston, Castle and Davidson make up the rest.

Thistlewood returns holding a small bundle of papers.

THISTLEWOOD

Here you are sir.

Hunt reads the first page attentively. He shakes his head.

HUNT

You propose marching in a body to the Prince Regent's residence to

(MORE)

HUNT (cont'd)
demand a meeting with him, this is treason! And here, the redistribution of land back to the people. I'm sorry gentlemen, I cannot consent to such a plan.

WATSON
What do you recommend sir?

Thistlewood gives Watson an annoyed look.

HUNT
The only course of action I see is to pass resolutions stating the distressed state of the country, the necessity of obtaining a reform of Parliament and to present a petition by legal means to the Prince Regent.

Thistlewood thinks it over.

THISTLEWOOD
Very well. If you would be so kind as to put together the resolutions and a proper address to the Prince Regent, we will support them at the meeting.

HUNT
So, it's agreed then gentlemen?

They nod and shake hands.

EXT. ISLINGTON - SPAFIELDS - DAY

A hackney coach pulled by two horses winds its way through a large cheering crowd.

Hunt sits in the back with Watson and enthusiastically waves his hat through the window.

EXT. SPAFIELDS - MERLIN'S CAVE TAVERN - DAY

The coach pulls up near the tavern entrance. Hunt and Watson exit the coach and bow before the cheering horde.

A rough looking man, CASTLE (25), moves behind them waving a large tricolor flag of red, white and green and the spirited YOUNG WATSON (19), holds a pole mounted with a red cap of liberty.

Thistlewood calls out to them from a large window on the second floor.

THISTLEWOOD
Up here gentlemen!

Hunt signals his acknowledgment.

EXT. MERLIN'S CAVE TAVERN - WINDOW - DAY

Castle and young Watson hang their revolutionary ensigns out the window. Hunt appears and is hailed by a deafening cheer.

HUNT
Fellow citizens and countrymen.
This country is in a state of unparalleled distress and misery felt by all classes except those who derive their fortunes from the taxes levied upon the people. The cause of these intolerable burdens is the immense amount of debt contracted by carrying on a long, unnecessary and unjust war. The main object which appears to have been to stifle civil, political and religious liberty and to restore despotism throughout the country...

Amongst the cheering crowd we catch a glimpse of Mr Black.

INT. WHITEHALL - HOME OFFICE - CONFERENCE ROOM - DAY

The Prime Minister - LORD LIVERPOOL (46) sits at a conference table with the Secretary of State: LORD SIDMOUTH (59) and the leader of the House of Commons: LORD CASTLEREAGH (47).

LIVERPOOL
Lord Sidmouth, how confident are you that an insurrection will take place at this Spafields meeting?

SIDMOUTH
Reliable sources have informed me Prime Minister that an attempt is imminent.

CASTLEREAGH
Have you in place measures to deal with this possibility?

SIDMOUTH

A Company of Royal Guards have garrisoned the Spafields prison and have orders to shoot the ringleaders should a rebellion be attempted.

EXT. SPAFIELDS - PRISON RAMPARTS - DAY

Royal Guardsmen stand out of view with their rifles resting on the ramparts. The CAPTAIN watches Hunt through a telescope.

EXT. MERLIN'S CAVE TAVERN - WINDOW - DAY

Hunt continues his speech.

HUNT

...the sole cause of this corruption is a want of reform in Parliament and this citizens can only be achieved by the adoption of universal suffrage, annual parliaments and vote by ballot.

(the crowd cheers)

I also propose that a petition be presented to his Royal Highness, the Prince Regent, beseeching him to take into consideration the burdens of this suffering and starving people and that this meeting be adjourned to this day fortnight in order to learn the fate of it.

The crowd cheers.

EXT. SPAFIELDS - PRISON RAMPARTS - DAY

The Captain closes his telescope, satisfied that a disturbance is unlikely.

CAPTAIN

Sergeant, stand down the men.

SERGEANT

Yes sir.

INT. LONDON - COOPER'S HOTEL - DINING ROOM - NIGHT

Hunt enters a busy dining room where he finds Cobbett waiting at a set table. Cobbett stands and bows his head.

COBBETT

Mr Hunt.

HUNT

(returning bow)

Mr Cobbett.

Cobbett gestures for Hunt to take a seat.

COBBETT

Please... I've taken the liberty of ordering dinner - whiting and chops.

HUNT

Splendid.

COBBETT

So, how was the Meeting?

HUNT

Magnificent, you should have seen the way they hung on my every word William, I believe I've found my true calling.

COBBETT

(cynically)

Oh really? Henry 'Orator' Hunt, the working man's hero.

HUNT

You sound a little jealous William?

COBBETT

Well, perhaps a little.

They both chuckle.

HUNT

So tell me, how's your Political Register faring these days?

COBBETT

Not bad, sold 40,000 copies last month.

HUNT
40,000 copies! I'm the one who
should be jealous.

As Cobbett is pouring Hunt a glass of wine he notices five men heading towards their table.

COBBETT
Are you expecting company?

HUNT
No, why?

Hunt turns around to see Thistlewood, the two Watsons, DAVIDSON (35) - a Jamaican born mulatto, and Castle enter the dining room. Hunt rolls his eyes.

THISTLEWOOD
Good evening gentlemen. Got room
for five more? My, those chops look
nice.

HUNT
(annoyed)
I'm sorry sir but dinner has been
prepared for two only.

As Hunt is about to remonstrate with them Castle RINGS the bell and Thistlewood and Watson sit down at the table.

WAITER #1 appears, lengthens the table and sets down a table cloth. WAITER #2 appears and places wine and glasses on the table. Cobbett gives Hunt a bemused look.

COBBETT
(to waiter #2)
Can you bring out five more
servings please.

WAITER #2
Certainly sir.

HUNT
(to Spenceans)
Gentlemen, this is Mr Cobbett, an
old acquaintance of mine.

HUNT
(to Cobbett)
William, this is Mr Thistlewood,
Doctor Watson, Mr Davidson, young
Mr Watson, and I beg your pardon
sir.

CASTLE
Mr. Castle.

The men fill their glasses and Cobbett raises a toast to the King.

COBBETT
To the King's health.

They raise their glasses and take a sip of wine. Castle raises his glass and offers another toast.

CASTLE
May the last of the Kings be
strangled by the guts of the last
priest!

Some of the other diners look disapprovingly at Hunt's table. Hunt, furious, rises from his seat.

HUNT
Good God man! Watch your language!

Hunt sits back down. The whole party reprimands Castle.

HUNT
(to Watson)
Pretty company you've introduced us
to.

COBBETT
(to Hunt)
Pretty society we have got into
indeed.

EXT. WHITEHALL - HOME OFFICE - DAY

Hunt, carrying the Spafields petition rolled up into a scroll, ascends the wide steps outside the Home Office.

He looks up at the large white columns which emanate a sense of great power.

INT. HOME OFFICE - RECEPTION - DAY

He proceeds to a counter behind which an officious PUBLIC SERVANT stamps documents and pays him no notice.

HUNT
Excuse me sir, my name is Henry
Hunt, I wish to have an audience
with Lord Sidmouth.

PUBLIC SERVANT
 (curtly)
 Do you have an appointment sir?

HUNT
 No, I'm afraid I don't.

PUBLIC SERVANT
 I'm sorry sir but Lord Sidmouth
 will only see those with a prior
 appointment.

The public servant continues stamping documents.

HUNT
 Oh... Can you check when he is next
 available?

The public servant huffs and grumpily checks the diary.

PUBLIC SERVANT
 Tuesday is the next available slot.

HUNT
 Tuesday! But that's almost a week
 away.

PUBLIC SERVANT
 The Secretary of State is a very
 busy man.

Mr Black, lurking in the background notices Hunt and coughs
 to get the public servant's attention.

PUBLIC SERVANT
 Excuse me a moment.

The public servant walks over to Mr Black who whispers
 instructions in his ear. Mr Black then walks off.

PUBLIC SERVANT
 It appears there has been a
 cancellation and Lord Sidmouth is
 free to see you sir.

HUNT
 Excellent.

PUBLIC SERVANT
 Please follow me.

INT. HOME OFFICE - AUDIENCE ROOM - DAY

Hunt is introduced into the audience room where Sidmouth sits waiting at a large oval table. Sidmouth stands.

HUNT

I'm sorry for intruding on your time sir but I have a petition from the distressed inhabitants of London and wish to have it presented to the Prince Regent.

Sidmouth draws the chair back for Hunt.

SIDMOUTH

Please sir, take a seat.

HUNT

Thank you.

Hunt hands the petition to Sidmouth.

SIDMOUTH

This is a most important paper and couched in such proper language that I feel it my duty to lay it before the Prince Regent first thing in the morning.

HUNT

Might I expect any reply from his Royal Highness?

SIDMOUTH

Certainly not; it being the Royal practice to never give answers to petitions; but if it was thought advisable to attend to the prayer of it, his Royal Highness's Ministers will immediately act upon it.

HUNT

Excellent, it is my earnest hope that some relief may be granted to those poor souls.

SIDMOUTH

I wish to commend you on your course of action at the late Spafields meeting. I happened to receive a copy of the memorial some days before the meeting and I

(MORE)

SIDMOUTH (cont'd)

declare that had any attempt been made at going in a body to the Prince Regent's residence, then bloodshed would most certainly have been the consequence.

HUNT

Thank you sir, I have promised the people to attend another meeting at Spafields on the second of December to notify them of my application. You have my word sir that I will uphold peace and order to the best of my power.

EXT. ISLINGTON - SPAFIELDS - DAY

SUPERIMPOSE: "TWO WEEKS LATER..."

At the bottom of Spafields a large mob surrounds a wagon decorated with revolutionary ensigns.

Standing on the wagon is Thistlewood, Davidson, Castle, Preston and the two Watsons emblazoned with tricolor cockades.

Young Watson, with a PISTOL tucked in his belt addresses the crowd.

YOUNG WATSON

My fellow citizens, the last time we met in this place we agreed to present a petition to his Royal Highness the Prince Regent. This petition we have been told was presented but in a word has been ignored!

The crowd responds with BOOS.

YOUNG WATSON

This man calls himself the father of his people. Is it not the duty of a father to protect his children? Does he do so? No. He treats your complaints with indifference and tramples on your rights. Are we to submit any longer to this?

Young Watson puts his hand to his ear.

CROWD

No!

YOUNG WATSON

If they will not give us what we
want, shall not we take it?

CROWD

Yes!

YOUNG WATSON

Are you willing to take it?

CROWD

Yes!

YOUNG WATSON

Will you follow me?

CROWD

Yes!

Young Watson grabs one of the tricolor flags, jumps from the wagon and marches off with the mob. He is followed by Castle.

EXT. SKINNER STREET - DAY

Young Watson, Castle and a small mob march along Skinner Street. They pass a tavern and are reinforced by a party of rowdy sailors.

CASTLE

Join us citizens, we march on the
Tower!

EXT. GUN SHOP - DAY

The mob smash the windows of a gun shop and steal the guns on display.

INT. GUN SHOP - DAY

Young Watson enters the shop with his pistol drawn. He is followed by Castle. They see the SHOP OWNER standing behind the counter.

YOUNG WATSON

Hold your hands up where I can see
them!

The shop owner fearfully complies. As young Watson moves toward the gun rack he is sprung upon by the SHOP ASSISTANT who attempts to seize his pistol. A struggle ensues, the pistol discharges and the shop assistant is shot in the stomach.

SHOP ASSISTANT
You've shot me!

YOUNG WATSON
I'm sorry sir, it was an accident.
Please, let me help you.

CASTLE
Leave him, we haven't time, the
police are coming.

The mob barge in and seize guns and ammunition.

EXT. CHEAPSIDE - DAY

Hunt drives down Cheapside in his tandem accompanied by his servant Andrews. He recognizes Castle amongst a mob who beckons him to pull over.

CASTLE
Where are you going?

HUNT
To Spafields of course!

CASTLE
Oh, the meeting has been broken up
and young Watson has got possession
of the Tower. Turn your horses and
join us.

Hunt gives Castle a nasty look and lays his whip upon the horses and passes rapidly on.

HUNT
What a damn scoundrel!

EXT. TOWER OF LONDON - DAY

Thistlewood, Preston, Davidson, the two Watsons, and a large armed mob stand before the Tower. Soldiers watch on from the parapets.

PRESTON

Brave soldiers, you are our
brothers. Join us! Surrender the
Tower!

SOLDIER

(laughing)
Sorry citizen, we only take orders
from our King!

Half a dozen horse soldiers make their appearance on Tower Hill upon which the mob scatters and flees.

THISTLEWOOD

Stop! Come back you cowards!

Thistlewood and the others realizing they are outnumbered and outgunned make their retreat.

INT. LONDON - CROWN AND ANCHOR TAVERN - DAY

SUPERIMPOSE: "TWO MONTHS LATER..."

Reform delegates from various parts of the kingdom crowd the room drinking and chatting. They carry petitions from their towns with them.

In a corner of the room Hunt converses with the northern Reformers SAXTON and BAMFORD, a ragged pair in working class attire.

MAJOR CARTWRIGHT (76), an old Reform veteran, wearing an old fashioned coat and wig speaks secretly with Cobbett.

MAJOR CARTWRIGHT

Mr Hunt seems to be bonding well
with our friends from the north.

Cobbett looks over his shoulder and sees Hunt slapping his leg and laughing at one of Saxton's jokes.

MAJOR CARTWRIGHT

I've met with Burdett in Brighton.

COBBETT

Oh.

MAJOR CARTWRIGHT

He refuses to back universal
suffrage.

COBBETT

That doesn't surprise me.

MAJOR CARTWRIGHT

You must try to influence Hunt and others to do likewise. Without Burdett's support in Parliament, our petitions will not see the light of day.

COBBETT

They won't be easily swayed but I shall give it my best shot.

Cobbett turns to the assembled reform delegates and motions for them to be quiet.

COBBETT

Gentlemen! Please Gentlemen, I move that Major Cartwright take the chair. Those in favor say aye.

REFORM DELEGATES

Aye.

Cartwright sits in the appointed chair and receives a warm applause from the delegates. He looks about the room and nods his thanks.

MAJOR CARTWRIGHT

Thank you Mr Cobbett.

COBBETT

Gentlemen, it is my determined opinion that the right of voting for Members of Parliament can only be safely and practicably extended to householders paying direct taxes to church and state... I therefore recommend that we petition upon the plan of householder suffrage.

Cobbett's motion receives a lukewarm response.

HUNT

Fellow Reformers, I ask you to recollect the language and irresistible arguments in favor of universal suffrage which Mr Cobbett himself published in his Political Register not two weeks ago.

The delegates laugh.

COBBETT

(annoyed)

I protest against Mr Hunt quoting from anything I may have published in the past, my current position is in support of householder suffrage.

Bamford, an intelligent northern lad backs Hunt.

BAMFORD

What about the militia lists? Couldn't they be used to register voters?

DELEGATES

Hear, hear.

HUNT

Gentlemen, I declare that it is the right of every freeman to be represented in the Commons' House of Parliament, and this can only be done by universal suffrage; and on this ground I move that the word universal should be substituted for householder.

DELEGATES

Hear, hear!

MAJOR CARTWRIGHT

A vote on this matter will settle the score. Those in favor of universal suffrage raise your hand.

The majority of delegates raise their hands except Cartwright and Cobbett. Cobbett looks about the room and slowly raises his hand to the cheers of the delegates.

INT. LONDON - COBBETT'S HOUSE - DAY

Hunt and Cobbett sit in the parlor room drinking tea.

COBBETT

What do we do now? We have the petitions but without Burdett we have no means of presenting them to Parliament.

HUNT

What about Lord Cochrane?

COBBETT
No, Cochrane will only act on the
advice of Burdett.

HUNT
Who does that leave then?

COBBETT
Not a soul.

HUNT
I have a plan. On the day
Parliament sits we collect
thousands of people in front of
Lord Cochrane's house and thus cut
off his access to Parliament unless
he will take in some of the
petitions.

COBBETT
What! You would besiege a man in
his own house?

HUNT
Desperate cases require desperate
remedies.

COBBETT
But how the devil do you contrive
to collect such a number?

HUNT
Leave that to me. If you will go to
his Lordship's house at one o'clock
and stall him for a while, I will
undertake to bring ten thousand
people to the front of his house by
two o'clock.

COBBETT
(chuckling)
This is madness, sheer madness...
But it's worth a try I suppose.

EXT. PARLIAMENT STREET - DAY

About 20 delegates with Hunt leading, march in pairs down
Parliament Street toward Palace Yard carrying their
petitions.

HUNT

Mr Saxton, take hold of my petition
and roll out a few yards.

Saxton complies and unrolls the petition which Hunt is holding and moves to the head of the procession.

This sparks the peoples' curiosity and they begin to follow the delegates.

HUNT

Citizens, we are going to Palace
Yard to get Lord Cochrane to
present our petitions to
Parliament.

The crowd responds with cheers and huzzas and some run forward to pass on the news.

BAMFORD

Your plan appears to be working Mr
Hunt.

EXT. ST JAMES GARDENS - STREET - DAY

The royal carriage passes crowds of cheering supporters who line the streets.

From the crowds' p.o.v. the portly PRINCE REGENT can be seen in the carriage waving his appreciation. His groom LORD MURRAY sits opposite.

Castle stands amongst the crowd and holds a few stones in his right hand.

INT. ROYAL CARRIAGE - DAY

LORD MURRAY

The crowds are numerous today, Your
Highness.

PRINCE REGENT

Yes, it warms the heart to see such
displays of affection and
gratitude.

The Prince continues to wave when suddenly the window shatters and shards of glass spray into the carriage. Lord Murray receives a cut above the right eye. The Prince shrieks in terror.

EXT. LORD COCHRANE'S HOUSE - DAY

The delegates arrive outside Cochrane's house accompanied by several thousand spectators. Hunt rolls up the petition.

HUNT

Here goes, wish me luck.

He heads toward the front door.

INT. LORD COCHRANE'S HOUSE - PARLOR - DAY

A comfortable parlor, a painting of Cochrane in Admiral's uniform dominates the room.

Hunt is ushered into the room by a SERVANT and finds Cobbett and COCHRANE sitting together drinking wine.

HUNT

My Lord, excuse the intrusion but I have come with the Reform delegates to request your Lordship to present our petitions to Parliament.

LORD COCHRANE

(with Scottish accent)

Mr Hunt, as I have been explaining to Mr Cobbett for the past half hour, I cannot take such a step without first consulting Sir Francis Burdett.

Cobbett looks at Hunt and shrugs.

HUNT

My Lord, please take a look out the window.

Their appearance at the window draws forth immense cheers.

LORD COCHRANE

Oh my!

HUNT

My Lord, refuse their request if you please, but if you do I am sure you will regret it for as long as you live.

LORD COCHRANE

Very well, I take the hint. But I will only present one petition.

Hunt winks at Cobbett.

HUNT
Splendid.

EXT. LORD COCHRANE'S HOUSE - DAY

Cochrane's front door opens and out comes Cochrane carried aloft on a chair by Bamford, Saxton two other delegates, the petition resting on his lap.

Hunt and Cobbett follow them out with satisfied grins. The crowd responds with continued acclamations.

INT. HOUSE OF COMMONS - DAY

Hunt, Cobbett, Bamford, Saxton and a few other delegates stand below the Bar and watch Cochrane present the petition to Parliament.

LORD COCHRANE
I present before the House a petition signed by 24,000 distressed inhabitants of the metropolis, praying for a reform of Parliament agreed to at Spafields on the second of December, 1816. The present state to which this country is reduced could only have been brought about by a corrupt mode of sending members to Parliament. Why, I have experienced first hand this corruption in my own electorate where votes were openly, avowedly and unblushingly sold.

REFORMERS
Hear, hear.

Cochrane holds up the petition.

LORD COCHRANE
This petition prays as a remedy for these ills - universal suffrage, annual Parliaments, and vote by ballot. I move that this petition be brought up and read.

Lord Murray, with a bandage around his head, rushes in and appears at the bar.

LORD MURRAY

Gentlemen, I have important news regarding an attempt made on the Prince Regent's life.

CASTLEREAGH

Mr Speaker, I move that this man be called in and examined.

THE SPEAKER

Call him in.

The SERGEANT-AT-ARMS escorts Lord Murray into the chamber.

THE SPEAKER

State your name and business.

LORD MURRAY

Sir, my name is Lord James Murray, I am a Lord of the Bedchamber.

CASTLEREAGH

Please state what has happened in your own sight.

LORD MURRAY

Sir, on his Royal Highness's return from Parliament this morning the left window of the carriage was fractured in two places.

CASTLEREAGH

In what manner was it fractured?

LORD JAMES MURRAY

The appearance was that of two holes, as if two bullets of a small size had passed through the glass.

The members of the House face the Reformers and jeer at them.

CASTLEREAGH

Thank you Lord Murray, that is all.

Lord Murray is escorted from the chamber by the sergeant-at-arms.

LORD COCHRANE

Mr Speaker, may we return to the question of the petition being read.

CASTLEREAGH

Mr Speaker, in light of today's events I move that the petition be ordered to lie on the table.

Close up of Bamford and Hunt at the Bar.

BAMFORD

(to Hunt)

I don't understand?

HUNT

It means our petition is dead in the water Mr Bamford.

INT. 10 DOWNING STREET - DINING ROOM - NIGHT

Liverpool, Sidmouth, Castlereagh and other aristocratic guests sit around the dining table. A vacant seat is next to Liverpool.

LIVERPOOL

Castlereagh, I understand the new bills are progressing well?

CASTLEREAGH

Yes Prime Minister, I plan to present the suspension of habeas corpus bill on Wednesday. I'm confident we have the numbers to pass it through the House.

LIVERPOOL

Good... Sidmouth, what are we to do with these Radicals?

SIDMOUTH

A list of the key troublemakers has been drawn up. I plan to arrest them after the bill is passed.

LIVERPOOL

Does that include Hunt?

SIDMOUTH

A search of Watson's apartment failed to reveal any incriminating evidence. It would be unwise to arrest him at this time.

ROBERT PEEL (28), young, handsome and ambitious arrives and is ushered to his chair by a servant.

LIVERPOOL

Ah, Mr Peel, nice of you to join us.

PEEL

(northern accent)

My Lords. My apologies for being late.

LIVERPOOL

Castlereagh, I'm informed that Mr Peel is performing exceedingly well in the Commons?

CASTLEREAGH

Yes, his maiden speech was the best I have ever heard. Some would say the best since that of William Pitt.

PEEL

Thank you My Lord.

LIVERPOOL

Mr Peel, tell us what you think should be done to quell these revolutionaries?

PEEL

Well, I think we must look to the root of the problem. Take away the peoples' suffering and they will soon forget about revolution.

SIDMOUTH

You have quite a lot to learn young man. The memories of bloodshed are still fresh in my mind from those horrible days of the French Revolution. The only way to run this country is with an iron fist. As soon as we release our grip on power, I am convinced that old England will suffer the same fate as France.

Peel and Sidmouth exchange icy stares. Castlereagh stands and raises his glass.

CASTLEREAGH

To the King's health!

ALL
The King's health!

INT. LONDON - THE COCK TAVERN - DAY

A busy tavern engulfed in a haze of tobacco smoke. Bamford and Saxton sit alone enjoying their breakfast of salted herring.

In the background we see Davidson at the bar nursing a mug of porter and conversing with the BARMAN.

From Bamford's p.o.v. we see Watson and Preston enter the tavern and talk to Davidson. Davidson nods and points in their direction. Watson and Preston walk toward their table.

WATSON
Good morning gentlemen. My friend
Mr Davidson informs me you are
Reform delegates from the North.

BAMFORD
Aye, who be asking?

WATSON
Doctor Watson and this is my
associate Mr Preston.

Bamford nods and offers his hand.

BAMFORD
Samuel Bamford of Middleton and my
friend here is John Saxton of
Manchester.

SAXTON
Would you like to join us sir?

WATSON
Thank you, yes.

SAXTON
Wait, you're not by chance the same
Doctor Watson of Spafields fame?

WATSON
The very one.

SAXTON
Fancy that eh Sammy, we're in the
company of heroes. Wait till we
tell the lads back home.

BAMFORD

(wary)

Aye, fancy that.

WATSON

Mr Preston has a suggestion which might be of interest to you gentlemen.

PRESTON

I've been thinking for some time now that it would be a great show of strength if the Northern Reformers were to march en masse to London to present their grievances to the Prince Regent.

BAMFORD

I don't think the magistrates will take too kindly to that.

WATSON

We've discovered an ancient law which states that as long as the petitioners are in groups of ten, then the march is perfectly legal.

SAXTON

That sounds like a brilliant idea. I shall raise it with Mr Bagguley upon our return.

Davidson appears at the table.

DAVIDSON

Quick, the police are coming, follow me.

WATSON

We bid you adieu gentlemen.

Watson and co. scurry off out the back door. Bamford and Saxton resume their breakfast.

Constables ELLIS and SMITHERS step into the tavern, perform a quick search and question the barman who shakes his head in denial.

EXT. LONDON DOCKS - DAY

WORKERS load and unload cargo from the many ships that line the dock. Scattered about the wharves are crates, barrels and piles of sacks.

A SCRUFFY MAN and constables RUTHVEN, Ellis and Smithers armed with pistols board the ship across the gangway.

RUTHVEN
Guard the exit.

ELLIS
Yes sir.

Constable Ellis stands across the gangway with his pistol cocked and ready.

EXT. DECK OF SHIP - DAY

SAILORS using ropes and pulleys position a large crate of sacks over the cargo hold.

The CAPTAIN stands nearby issuing instructions to a YOUNG OFFICER. The constables walk toward them.

RUTHVEN
Where's the captain?

CAPTAIN
That be me.

Constable Ruthven holds up a warrant.

RUTHVEN
We have orders to search this ship for fugitives. The ship's manifest if you please.

The captain scans the warrant.

CAPTAIN
Hmm, just a moment.

The CAPTAIN goes off to fetch the manifest.

RUTHVEN
(to Smithers)
Search the ship, bring all the passengers and crew above deck.

The captain returns with the manifest and gives it to Ruthven. Ruthven looks it over.

The passengers are brought above by Smithers and made to stand in a line. Amongst them stands a disguised Thistlewood, his WIFE holding their BABY SON and young Watson disguised as a Quaker.

RUTHVEN
(to scruffy man)
Do you recognize any of them?

The scruffy man walks along the line of passengers and looks at their faces. He passes Thistlewood, pauses and continues. He then passes young Watson who has broken out in a sweat.

RUTHVEN
Well?

The scruffy man shakes his head.

SCRUFFY MAN
Nah, they ain't here.

RUTHVEN
Damn!

SCRUFFY MAN
What about me fee govenor?

The scruffy man puts out his hand and smiles a toothless grin.

Ruthven retrieves a coin from his pocket and flips it to the scruffy man.

RUTHVEN
Here.

The scruffy man clumsily drops the coin which rolls slowly across the deck toward Thistlewood. Thistlewood instinctively steps on the coin with his Moroccan slipper.

The scruffy man reaches down for the coin, recognizes the slipper and slowly looks up at Thistlewood.

SCRUFFY MAN
That's him, that's Thistlewood.

RUTHVEN
Arrest him!

THISTLEWOOD'S WIFE
Run Arthur!

Thistlewood makes a dash for the gangway but constable Ellis blocks him and points the pistol at his head.

ELLIS

Try it and I'll blow your brains
out!

INT. TOWER OF LONDON - PRISON CELL - DAY

The GUARD unlocks the door and pushes Thistlewood into a large stone walled prison cell.

Sitting on the edge of a rustic bed is Watson, the elder, looking agitated. Watson stands up.

WATSON

So they got you too?

THISTLEWOOD

Yeah, bastards took everything, I'm ruined.

WATSON

And my son?

THISTLEWOOD

I'd say he'd be half way to America by now.

WATSON

Oh, thank God.

THISTLEWOOD

Where's the others?

WATSON

Preston and Davidson are locked up in the other tower.

THISTLEWOOD

And Castle?

WATSON

Haven't you heard? Castle's betrayed us. He's one of Sidmouth's spies.

INT. MANCHESTER - ABANDONED MILL - NIGHT

SUPERIMPOSE: "MANCHESTER, NORTHERN ENGLAND"

JOHN BAGGULEY (18), a smartly dressed, confident and intelligent young man stands elevated on a bench next to his fellow working class Reformers - the bright and youthful SAMUEL DRUMMOND (25), the wise and respectable JOHN KNIGHT (54) and Saxton.

They are surrounded by hundreds of men mostly poor and unemployed. Standing amongst the crowd is Bamford.

BAGGULEY

(to crowd)

In a week's time we march to London with nothing but a blanket on our backs and a petition in our hands. The march will take us nine days there and nine days back... Will you turn back when you get to Stockport and face those high and cold hills in Derbyshire?

CROWD

No!

BAGGULEY

I am a reformer, a republican and a leveler and will never give up the course till we have established a republican government!

Knight nervously gestures for Bagguley to watch his words.

KNIGHT

Please sir.

The crowd however cheers and chants his name.

CROWD

Bagguley! Bagguley! Bagguley!

Bamford voices his objection to those around him but is ignored.

BAMFORD

Brothers, this march I fear is unlawful and unwise. Please see reason!

Standing hidden in a dark corner of the room is JOHN LIVESEY, the sly magistrates' spy.

He records the last few words of Bagguley's speech in his notebook, puts it in his pocket and steps out of the shadows.

EXT. MANCHESTER - ST PETER'S FIELD - DAY

MARCHERS with rolled up blankets on their backs begin to make their way onto the field.

In the middle of the field stands a makeshift stage constructed from two joined wagons.

EXT. ST PETER'S FIELD - BACK STREETS - DAY

A large MILITARY FORCE comprised of dragoons, mounted yeomanry and infantry begins to form up in the streets behind the field.

EXT. EDGE OF ST PETER'S FIELD - DAY

A dissenting preacher, JOSEPH HARRISON (37) reaches the edge of the field and looks in awe at the excited CROWD of 60,000 people.

In the distance he sees a horse drawn chaise carrying Bagguley and Drummond slowly cutting its way through the crowd to the stage.

On seeing the orators the crowd opens up with a deafening cheer.

EXT. ST PETER'S FIELD - STAGE - DAY

Bagguley and Drummond mount the stage and begin to rouse the crowd.

BAGGULEY

This is one of the happiest moments of my life to see you all ready to go on such a righteous journey. If you look through the annals of history you will not see any like this. In the reign of Richard II 40,000 men went to London to demand their rights to the King, but they only came a little way from London. They did not go from Manchester!

The crowd cheers.

BAGGULEY

Now you brave gentlemen that are going, come towards the stage and form yourselves into tens with your

(MORE)

BAGGULEY (cont'd)
 leading man at the head. If any of
 you want a petition, we have some
 here that are left.

EXT. EDGE OF ST PETER'S FIELD - DAY

Harrison pushes his way through the crowd toward the stage.

EXT. BELOW STAGE - DAY

The marchers walk past the stage where Bagguley and Drummond
 hand out petitions to every tenth man.

Harrison eventually walks past and receives his petition.
 Behind him is a poor weaver in threadbare clothes named
 JACOB MCINNIS (20) who tugs at his sleeve.

MCINNIS
 (with Irish accent)
 What's it say Parson?

Harrison hands it to McInnis.

HARRISON
 Here, take a look.

MCINNIS
 I can't read.

HARRISON
 It's a petition to the Prince
 Regent praying for Parliamentary
 reform and universal suffrage.

MCINNIS
 Universal sufferings?

HARRISON
 (laughing)
 No, universal suffrage, the right
 for all men to vote.

MCINNIS
 Oh.

Harrison extends his hand.

HARRISON
 Name's Joseph Harrison.

MCINNIS

Jacob McInnis, pleased to meet you
sir.

They shake hands and follow the marchers off the field.

EXT. ST PETER'S FIELD - STAGE - DAY

Saxton ascends the stage.

SAXTON

Mr Bagguley, a gentleman has sent
me to tell you that Nadin and a
great many constables are waiting
for you in the street.

BAGGULEY

Never mind, he only means to alarm
the meeting.

Saxton, perplexed, wanders off.

DRUMMOND

(to crowd)

We will let them see it is not riot
and disturbance we want, it is
bread we want and we will apply to
our noble prince as a child would
to its father for bread.

INT. ST PETERS FIELD - BROWN'S COTTAGE - DAY

Several magistrates and law men stand and watch the
proceedings through the cottage windows.

MAGISTRATE

I've seen enough. Read the Riot Act
and arrest these revolutionaries.

EXT. ST PETER'S FIELD - DAY

NADIN, a stocky brute, leads his constables through the
throng toward the stage. They viciously strike at the people
with their truncheons.

Bagguley and Drummond see the approaching constables and
shout and motion to the remaining marchers to hurry off the
field.

A regiment of the King's Dragoon Guards canters onto the
square behind Nadin and surrounds the stage.

STAGE

Nadin climbs the stage and puts Bagguley and Drummond in irons. They offer no resistance.

EXT. ROAD TO STOCKPORT - DAY

About 700 men march in a long column along the road to Stockport. Some carry blankets, some knapsacks, and some have walking sticks cut from fresh oak.

BLANKETEER

Militia ahead lads!

MCINNIS

I don't like the sound of this.

HARRISON

It's alright friend, we haven't broken any laws.

EXT. NEAR STOCKPORT - LANCASHIRE BRIDGE - DAY

JOHN LLOYD (45), wearing militia uniform, sits boldly on his horse. He is a staunch loyalist and fierce opponent of the Reform Movement.

Next to him are constables BIRCH and BARRATT followed by a MOUNTED TROOP of the Cheshire Yeomanry.

LLOYD

Draw swords! Surround and capture as many as you can.

Lloyd swings his horse around and charges forward, the troop follows yelling a war cry.

EXT. ROAD TO STOCKPORT - DAY

The marchers seeing the approaching yeomanry start to panic and scatter in all directions.

HARRISON

(to his group)

Quick, head to the river banks, it's too steep for the horses to follow!

EXT. NEAR RIVERBANK - DAY

The group runs toward the river bank with Harrison following behind. They dodge the mounted yeomanry who swing their swords at them.

One MARCHER is struck by a sabre and falls to the ground.

A local FARMER standing near the path to the river calls out to the Blanketeers.

FARMER

This way lads!

The cruel looking Constable Barratt charges towards Harrison's group but is blocked by the farmer brandishing a pitchfork causing his horse to rear up.

Barratt pulls out his pistol, cocks it and shoots the farmer dead between the eyes.

Harrison stands frozen in disbelief.

Constable Birch rides up and strikes Harrison over the head with his truncheon.

Harrison cries out in pain as he falls to the ground, blood gushing from his head.

McInnis starts to administer first aid.

HARRISON

Leave me!

MCINNIS

But you're bleeding bad.

Harrison hands the petition to McInnis.

HARRISON

Take it. Go!

McInnis takes the blood stained petition, slides down the bank and wades across the river.

Harrison stumbles toward the bank and hides behind a clump of bushes. He ties his linen scarf around the bloody wound.

Harrison remains perfectly still as Barratt's horse slowly trots past. Men's voices are heard in the distance. Barratt scans the area one more time, turns his horse and rides off.

EXT. MANCHESTER - NEW BAILEY PRISON YARD - DAY

A prison coach waits in front of the New Bailey Prison where Bagguley, Drummond, Saxton and Knight are put in irons by the vicious Constable COLLIER and his colleagues.

NADIN

That's it men, nice and tight.

BAGGULEY

Where are they taking us?

NADIN

It seems you boys are going to London after all. Cold-bath Fields prison to be precise.

Nadin laughs.

MONTAGE:

A) McInnis and about 400 blanketeers who have evaded capture, march from Stockport toward London in the pouring rain.

B) In the cold hills of Derbyshire the number has dropped to 100. The men struggle uphill against the sleet and rain.

C) McInnis and four stragglers sit at the base of a bridge huddled around a SMALL FIRE. Two of the men are suffering from pneumonia.

D) McInnis, now alone, reaches the peak of a small hill and smiles in triumph as he sees the outline of London in the distance.

INT. HOME OFFICE - SIDMOUTH'S OFFICE - DAY

Sidmouth and Castlereagh sit in conference together.

SIDMOUTH

The uprising has been averted. I have commanded General Byng to deliver His Royal Highness's gracious approbation to the officers and privates who took part on that great day.

The door knocks.

SIDMOUTH

Enter.

PUBLIC SERVANT

My Lord, there is a man wishing to see you regarding a petition to the Prince Regent, he calls himself a Blanketeer.

SIDMOUTH

Accept it and send him off.

CASTLEREAGH

No wait, I'm curious to see this so called Blanketeer. Send him in.

PUBLIC SERVANT

Yes, My Lord.

Moments later the public servant ushers McInnis into the office. The eight day march has taken its toll on his appearance and hygiene.

Castlereagh screws up his face and holds a scented handkerchief close to his nose.

SIDMOUTH

State your name?

MCINNIS

Jacob McInnis sir.

SIDMOUTH

What do you want Mr McInnis?

MCINNIS

I come with a petition to incense the Prince Regent about things in our part, for they are mighty bad and want mending.

SIDMOUTH

(smiling)

What do you expect the Prince Regent to do?

MCINNIS

I was told that if we had annual Parliaments and universal sufferings, that would be the making of us.

Castlereagh sniggers.

SIDMOUTH

Well, leave your petition and I think you had better go home.

Sidmouth rings a bell and the PUBLIC SERVANT enters.

SIDMOUTH

Give this man 12 shillings, some meat and porter, then set him on his way.

The public servant bows his head.

MCINNIS

Thank you sir, you are most kind.

McInnis leaves the bloodied petition on the table and is led out of the room by the public servant.

CASTLEREAGH

These northerners, abhorrent creatures.

Sidmouth picks up the petition and tears it up.

SIDMOUTH

With their leaders gone, I doubt they'll be troubling us for much longer.

They both chuckle.

INT. COLD-BATH FIELDS PRISON - LARGE CELL - DAY

We see Bagguley, Drummond, Saxton and Knight stripped naked and cowering in the corner of a dark filthy cell as two sadistic JAILORS laugh and throw buckets of freezing cold water over them.

INT. LONDON - COURT OF KING'S BENCH - DAY

The prisoners - Watson, Thistlewood, Preston and Davidson stand in the dock while WETHERELL, their lawyer, stands and delivers his closing speech to the Jury.

Hunt watches on intently from the gallery.

WETHERELL

Gentlemen, the whole weight of evidence in this trial rests on the statements of that infamous villain

(MORE)

WETHERELL (cont'd)

Castle; a wretch employed in support of a constructive and interpretative treason. This indescribable villain, bred a journeyman smith, seemed of late to have aspired to what he probably thought a more genteel employment... The trading in and merchandizing of blood!

Wetherell, maintaining eye contact, paces slowly past the Jury.

WETHERELL

All the overt acts, independent of the riot, were proved by Castle alone, who had attempted as shown by Mr Hunt himself to entrap him on more than one occasion... Upon the testimony of such a wretch would a British jury condemn to the gallows the unfortunate men behind me?

INT. LONDON - COURT OF KING'S BENCH - DAY

Watson, Thistlewood, Preston and Davidson stand in the dock waiting to receive the Jury's verdict.

CLERK OF THE CROWN

Prisoners behind the bar, hold up your hands. Gentlemen of the Jury, look upon the prisoners, do you find them guilty of high treason or not guilty?

FOREMAN

Not guilty.

Cheers emanate from the gallery. Hunt stands and applauds. The prisoners show relief on their faces.

The judge LORD ELLENBOROUGH forcibly taps his gavel on the table.

LORD ELLENBOROUGH

Order! Order! There is no other charge against the prisoners at the bar, is there?

ATTORNEY GENERAL
No my Lord.

LORD ELLENBOROUGH
Then the Court orders them to be
discharged.

The prisoners cheerfully shake hands with Wetherell.

EXT. NEAR STOCKPORT - LANCASHIRE BRIDGE - DAY

SUPERIMPOSE: "STOCKPORT, DECEMBER, 1817"

Joseph Harrison, his wife SALLY (38) and children: THOMAS (2), BETSEY (4), NATHAN (7), MASSAH (9), JOSEPH (11), and PETER (13) ride through the countryside in a large cart packed with their meager possessions.

They reach Lancashire Hill, the elevated position providing panoramic views of the town below.

Smoke belches from a dozen or so cotton factories shrouding the town in a grey haze.

EXT. STOCKPORT - MARKET PLACE - DAY

They continue through the grimy, misty streets of Stockport and enter the market place.

They pass stalls selling cheap food stuffs to the poor: fried pigeon, rat on a stick, nettle soup.

They witness a man selling his wife to a group of male bidders. The husband leads her around with a leash tied to her neck.

Constable Barratt leans against a wall scanning the market place for trouble. He taps his truncheon in anticipation.

A poor, emaciated man approaches Harrison's cart.

BEGGAR
Can you spare some loose change or
food sir?

Harrison hands him a few coins.

BEGGAR
God bless you sir.

As the cart moves away Barratt kicks the man hard in the behind and chases him from the market place.

BARRATT
Get outta here scum!

EXT. STOCKPORT - WINDMILL ROOM - DAY

The cart pulls up in front of a stone windmill positioned next to a small cottage and disused warehouse.

NATHAN
Look, it's the windmill. Is this
our new home Father?

MASSAH
It's huge.

HARRISON
Yes Nathan, this is our new home.
We will live in the cottage and the
warehouse will be our new chapel.

PETER
What will you call it Father?

HARRISON
I'm not sure Peter, haven't given
it much thought.

PETER
What about the Windmill Room
Chapel?

SALLY
That has a nice ring to it.

HARRISON
Alright, Windmill Room Chapel it
is.

SALLY
Let's look inside shall we.

Harrison and the boys hop down from the cart. Harrison then assists Sally and the smaller children from the cart.

They walk to the main entrance and Harrison unlocks the door.

INT. WINDMILL ROOM CHAPEL - DAY

The door creaks open revealing a large dark room.

As they walk in a family of pigeons nesting in the rafters flap about the room. Sally SCREAMS.

Large cobwebs hang from the ceiling, bird droppings cover the floor and a thick layer of dust covers everything.

HARRISON

Hmm, what do you think Sally? Needs some mending.

Sally puts her hands on her hips and looks over the room.

SALLY

Nothing a bit of elbow grease won't fix, besides it's all we can afford.

Harrison puts his arm around Sally.

HARRISON

Come on boys, let's unload the cart.

MONTAGE:

A) Inside the warehouse Harrison removes the boards covering the windows. Sally clears the cobwebs with a BROOM. The boys sweep and scrub the floor clean.

B) Harrison and Peter carry a large plank into the newly renovated warehouse and position it over some crates forming a makeshift pew. To the rear we see an old table used for an altar and a barrel for a temporary pulpit.

C) At the market place Harrison and the boys circulate hand bills advertising the new chapel.

D) Harrison attaches a wooden sign to the front of the warehouse inscribed "Windmill Room Chapel."

INT. WINDMILL ROOM CHAPEL - DAY

Behind the pulpit, Harrison preaches to a small congregation.

HARRISON

Friends, go now in peace to live by the grace of Christ and the love of God.

The parishioners rise and exit through the front doors.
 MOORHOUSE (45) a coach driver and layman in the congregation
 approaches Harrison.

MOORHOUSE

I'll be off Parson, I've counted
 the collection and locked it away.
 Down on last week I'm afraid.

HARRISON

(disappointed)
 Oh... thank you James.

Moorhouse nods and heads toward the door. Harrison moves to
 the altar and extinguishes the candles.

BAGGULEY (O.S.)

Morning Parson, that was a very
 uplifting sermon.

Harrison turns to greet Bagguley.

HARRISON

Thank you sir, I wish the townsfolk
 felt the same way... I'm sorry,
 have we met before?

BAGGULEY

John Bagguley sir.

HARRISON

Of course, the Blanketeer March,
 thought I recognized you.

BAGGULEY

Cost us nine months in prison
 Parson. Although I'm not sure what
 for, as we were never charged.

HARRISON

Most unfair sir, most unfair... So
 what brings you to our small town?

BAGGULEY

I'm told you were once a
 schoolmaster.

HARRISON

Aye, a few years back now.

BAGGULEY

You see, I plan to open a school
 myself. A school for the poor and

(MORE)

BAGGULEY (cont'd)
 needy which will not only teach the
 basics of reading, writing and
 arithmetic but more importantly the
 merits of a radical reform of our
 Commons House of Parliament.

HARRISON
 Sounds like a worthy cause sir.

BAGGULEY
 I could do with some help Parson...
 Will you join me?

HARRISON
 Well sir, thank you for the offer,
 but as you can see, I have much to
 do around here and little means to
 do it.

BAGGULEY
 Join me Parson and I promise you,
 in two weeks your congregation will
 double. If it doesn't, well, we'll
 shake hands and part ways, nothing
 gained, nothing lost. So what do
 you say Parson?

Harrison strokes his chin and thinks it over.

HARRISON
 Alright, you've got yourself a
 deal.

Joseph puts out his hand and they cheerfully shake hands.

INT. WHITEHALL - CASTLEREAGH'S OFFICE - DAY

An anxious looking Sidmouth enters Castlereagh's office and
 holds up a letter.

SIDMOUTH
 A letter from Thistlewood, the
 miscreant's challenged me to a
 duel.

CASTLEREAGH
 Oh dear, I trust you declined? You
 couldn't hit an elephant at five
 paces.

SIDMOUTH

I'll give him my answer, I'll have
the belligerent rogue arrested and
flung into prison!

CASTLEREAGH

Oh come now Henry, that's not very
sporting of you.

INT. HORSHAM GAOL - FILTHY CELL - DAY

We see Thistlewood unceremoniously flung into a cold, damp,
filthy prison cell by two guards.

They lock the cell door behind them.

THISTLEWOOD

You tell that bastard Sidmouth when
I get out of here he's a dead man!
Mark my words, I shall have my
revenge!

Thistlewood collapses on the muck splattered floor and
weeps.

INT. STOCKPORT - SCHOOLROOM - DAY

The schoolroom has a similar appearance to the Windmill
Chapel but larger. Apart from a few blackboards the room is
otherwise empty.

Harrison stands on a ladder and hangs a lantern from the
rafters. The older boys scrub the floors and paint the grimy
walls white.

Bagguley rushes into the room.

BAGGULEY

Joseph! Come, our prayers are
answered.

They follow Bagguley out of the room.

EXT. STOCKPORT - SCHOOLROOM - DAY

A large cart is parked in front of the school. The cart is
full of chairs, desks, books and assorted school equipment.

HARRISON

I don't understand, our finances
are almost exhausted, we can't
afford this.

An elegantly dressed SERVANT in powdered wig steps forward.

SERVANT

A gift from Sir Charles Wolseley
sir.

HARRISON

What, the Baronet of Staffordshire?

SERVANT

Yes sir.

HARRISON

I see. Please inform Sir Charles we
are most grateful for his generous
gift.

SERVANT

Very well sir.

The servants begin carrying the items past them into the
school room.

BAGGULEY

Can you believe it Joseph? Sir
Charles, a baronet and a Reformer!

HARRISON

It will show our enemies we are not
just made up of the swinish
multitude as they like to call us.

INT. STOCKPORT - SCHOOLROOM - DAY

Harrison is writing on the blackboard, the school children
copy the writing onto their slates.

Peter stares out the window and notices something strange.
The smoke from the factory chimneys has stopped and
thousands of workers are pouring out of the factories onto
the streets.

PETER

Father, look! The workers are
leaving the factories!

The other children rush over to the windows and look out.
Harrison wanders over and looks out the window.

YOUNG JOSEPH
What's happening Father?

HARRISON
I'm not sure Joseph.

Bagguley walks over.

BAGGULEY
The workers are turning out.
They've declared a general strike!

INT. STOCKPORT - LLOYD'S OFFICE - DAY

Lloyd is sitting at his desk working on legal documents when the door knocks.

LLOYD
Enter.

Birch pokes his head into the office.

BIRCH
Young Mr Lloyd to see you sir.

A genteel young man, JOHN HORATIO LLOYD (18), steps into the office.

JOHN HORATIO LLOYD
Hello Father.

LLOYD
John Horatio, my boy, come in, look at you, quite the young gentleman. Come sit, tell me all about Oxford.

Lloyd pours two glasses of port from a decanter and gives one to his son.

JOHN HORATIO LLOYD
I am quite settled now Father and progressing well with my studies. I have an excellent tutor named Dixon, quite an eccentric. He has me reading all manner of texts.

LLOYD
You look a little thin boy, are they feeding you well?

JOHN HORATIO LLOYD

Yes Father, the Hall dinners are quite satisfactory. With exams these past two weeks I may have neglected my appetite a little.

LLOYD

Oh, I have excellent news boy, Lord Sidmouth has been most generous and loaned us the sum required to continue your education.

JOHN HORATIO LLOYD

That's brilliant news father.

LLOYD

It's not without a catch though. He's requested I keep him well informed on Radical activity in town, so I might be making use of your note-taking skills during your stay.

JOHN HORATIO LLOYD

Of course Father.

EXT. STOCKPORT - POWER-LOOM MILL - NIGHT

The night is still and tranquil. A group of striking weavers picket outside Birley's power-loom mill.

McInnis takes a swig from the gin bottle and peers up at the sky. Nearby stands his longtime friend PEARSON (25).

MCINNIS

Never seen the sky so clear before.
Look at all those stars, millions
of em.

MRS FILDES, a plain but kind woman, arrives accompanied by the beautiful MARY (19) and ANN (18), each carrying a basket.

PEARSON

Evening Mrs FILDES?

MRS FILDES

Evening lads, thought you could do with some supper.

She removes the cloth from the basket revealing a pie.

PEARSON

Aye, looks delicious, thank you ladies.

Mary offers a pie to McInnis and their eyes lock for a moment.

MCINNIS

Thank you.

MRS FILDES (O.S.)

Come on girls.

MCINNIS

Wait, what's your name?

MARY

Mary MacDonald.

MCINNIS

Mine's Jacob, Jacob McInnis.

MARY

Nice to meet you Jacob McInnis.

The three woman walk off. Mary turns and smiles at McInnis.

PEARSON

(to McInnis)

I think she likes you.

McInnis, embarrassed, pushes him away. The sound of faint marching can be heard in the distance.

MCINNIS

Do you hear that?

PEARSON

Aye, sounds like marching.

The strikers walk into the middle of the street and strain their eyes to see what is coming. They see lit lanterns in the distance, the sound of marching getting louder.

WEAVER

What shall we do?

MCINNIS

Wait and see who 'tis I suppose.

WEAVER

(nervously)

Looks like military, I don't like this.

MCINNIS

We ain't done nothing wrong, just
hold your ground.

The marchers get closer. It is a troop of redcoats escorting about 100 workers. At the front of the escort is MR BIRLEY, the greedy owner of the mill.

PEARSON

Hey, that's Birley, who are the
others?

MCINNIS

Blacklegs!

McInnis and the other weavers watch on hopelessly as the soldiers form a defensive line in front of the factory entrance.

The soldiers look ominous with long bayonets fixed to their flintlock rifles.

Birley unlocks the doors and the blacklegs flood in.

BIRLEY

Mr McInnis, you can tell your
workmates we won't be requiring
their services any longer.

MCINNIS

Birley, you miserable bastard!

Birley laughs off the abuse and enters the mill.

INT. STOCKPORT - SCHOOLROOM - EVENING

Harrison and Bagguley are lecturing to a small group on Reform when McInnis and Pearson enter the room.

MCINNIS

Excuse me Parson, but me and a few
friends would like to join your
Reform School.

HARRISON

Of course Jacob, come in and join
us.

McInnis opens the door wide and standing in line is over 1000 workers.

MCINNIS
Come on in lads!

Harrison looks on in awe and turns to Bagguley who laughs as the workers flood in.

EXT. STOCKPORT - MARKET PLACE - DAY

Constable Barratt strolls past the notice board and focuses his attention on a bill advertising a Reform meeting to be held at Sandy Brow.

He snatches the bill off the board and walks off at a quick pace.

EXT. STOCKPORT - SANDY BROW - DAY

The outskirts of town. A makeshift stage stands at the top of an open field and is surrounded by 4000 supporters, mostly working class. The Windmill can be seen in the background.

Bagguley stands at the front of the stage with Harrison seated to his right, clutching a handful of papers.

Behind them stands Drummond and members of the Stockport Union Committee - Moorhouse and SIMS, both middle-class gentlemen.

Bagguley addresses the crowd.

BAGGULEY
Gentlemen, we have met on this
cause of reforming Parliament till
I am almost weary of meeting, but
we must meet to devise some means
to restore our long lost liberty;
oh sweet liberty, thou darling of
Englishmen... But how are we to
recover it is the object now in
question.

John Horatio Lloyd looks on intently from the crowd, seemingly touched by Bagguley's words.

BAGGULEY
All the towns and villages
throughout the kingdom shall choose
delegates to present a petition to
the House of Commons. If their
grievances are ignored, they shall
(MORE)

BAGGULEY (cont'd)
 form a National Convention; this is
 the way they did it in France. You
 shall consider this National
 Convention as your legitimate
 Parliament, for they alone are your
 representatives.

Drummond takes a large swig from a gin bottle.

BAGGULEY
 But you say, how are these
 representatives of ours, comprising
 this National Convention to act?
 How will they have power? I will
 tell you. You are to give them
 power, you are to protect them, and
 if necessary repel force by force.

MCINNIS
 (from crowd)
 Who will lead us?

BAGGULEY
 If you want a leader, I will lead
 you and sword in hand I'll lose the
 last drop of my blood in the
 glorious cause of freedom!

The crowd erupts with loud cheers. John Horatio Lloyd cheers
 and applauds with them.

In another part of the crowd stands Livesey the spy, he
 frantically scribbles down Bagguley's words.

Harrison whispers into Bagguley's ear.

HARRISON
 Careful John, there may be spies.

Bagguley ignores him.

BAGGULEY
 Liberty or death!

CROWD
 Liberty or death!

INT. STOCKPORT - BULKELEY ARMS TAVERN - NIGHT

Livesey sits alone in a quiet corner of the tavern making last minute alterations to his report.

As he is writing, two mugs of beer are plunked on the table. Livesey looks up to see Lloyd.

LLOYD

I trust you had a productive day,
Mr Livesey?

LIVESEY

Oh yes, Mr Lloyd, productive
indeed.

Livesey hands the report to Lloyd who flicks through it.

LLOYD

I gather you've applied your usual
pinch of spice?

LIVESEY

Of course sir.

LLOYD

Nothing too dramatic I see, just
enough to secure their arrest.

They both chuckle. Lloyd slides a pouch of coins across the table.

We pan across the room to see McInnis and Pearson sitting in a dark corner within earshot of their conversation.

EXT. STOCKPORT - BAGGULEY'S HOUSE - DAY

Lloyd, Birch and a few constables wait outside Bagguley's house with pistols at the ready. Barratt emerges through the door.

BARRATT

No sign of em sir.

LLOYD

Damn it!

INT. COACH TO LIVERPOOL - DAY

Bagguley and Drummond sit forlornly in the back of the coach as it speeds towards Liverpool.

EXT. LIVERPOOL DOCKS - DAY

A dozen or so sailing ships rest moored against the wharf. The wharf bustles with sailors and dock workers moving cargo. A shipping office is visible in the background.

INT. LIVERPOOL DOCKS - SHIPPING OFFICE - DAY

Bagguley and Drummond stand near the ticket counter.

SHIPPING OFFICER

Your tickets sir. The ship will be getting underway in about half an hour. Have a safe journey.

DRUMMOND

Thank you.

Drummond picks up the tickets from the counter and gives one to Bagguley. Bagguley kisses his ticket and holds it up.

BAGGULEY

To America, the true land of liberty.

They laugh and exit the office.

EXT. LIVERPOOL DOCKS - SHIPPING OFFICE - DAY

As they pass through the doors they hear the CLICK of pistols being cocked.

Nadin and Collier jump out and surprise them. Collier keeps his pistol aimed while Nadin lifts up a set of irons and walks toward Bagguley.

NADIN

Going somewhere gentlemen?

Nadin laughs.

BAGGULEY

Damn you Nadin, damn you to hell!

Nadin claps the irons on Bagguley and continues laughing.

INT. CHESTER CASTLE - INFIRMARY - EVENING

Harrison squats next to Bagguley who lies in a fevered state on a straw bed. The coughs, moans and groans of the sick can be heard throughout the room.

HARRISON

I've written to Sir Charles to solicit his support but haven't heard back as yet.

Suddenly, the man in the bed opposite lunges forward and vomits on the floor.

HARRISON

God willing we'll get you out of this wretched place soon good friend.

BAGGULEY

It's no use Joseph, they'll never release us before the trial, Lloyd will make sure of that. You must carry on alone Joseph, promise me you'll do that.

HARRISON

Of course friend, I promise.

Bagguley nods and closes his eyes.

EXT. STREETS OF STOCKPORT - DAY

Thousands of the poor and disaffected line the streets and cheer as Hunt passes by in an open barouche waving his hat.

Lloyd, Barratt and Birch stand with their arms crossed and snarl as Hunt passes them. Hunt bows contemptuously in return.

EXT. STOCKPORT - CLASSROOM - DAY

Harrison rushes outside to take his position next to Sally, Moorhouse and Sims.

Hunt's barouche pulls up and young Peter opens the door and takes the reins. Hunt leaps off the barouche and performs a majestic bow in front of the welcoming committee.

Harrison steps forward and shakes Hunt's hand.

HARRISON

Mr Hunt, on behalf of the Stockport
Union for the Promotion of Human
Happiness, I welcome you to
Stockport!

HUNT

People of Stockport, I thank you
for your kind and warm welcome!

The crowd claps and cheers. Harrison ushers Hunt over to the
welcoming committee where they greet and shake hands.

INT. STOCKPORT - CLASSROOM - DAY

As Hunt enters, he sees BRUCE, a hunchbacked man wearing
spectacles, conduct a small group of children who sing
Handel's "See the Conquering Hero Comes."

HUNT

(clapping)

Bravo, bravo... Ladies and
gentlemen, nothing is more
gratifying to my heart, than to see
the friends of Reform meet to
illustrate to their children, the
fabric of genuine freedom.

The audience responds with applause.

INT. MANCHESTER - TAVERN - PRIVATE ROOM - DAY

The Reformers occupy a large private room. Harrison and
Bamford stand in a corner taking refreshment.

From Harrison's p.o.v. we see Hunt shuffling through a
handful of notes whilst conversing with the veteran Reformer
Knight and the flamboyant JOHN JOHNSON (28).

BAMFORD

(to Harrison)

The older gentleman talking to
Hunt, that's John Knight, a Jacobin
from way back.

HARRISON

And the young man next to him?

BAMFORD

The dandy? That's Johnson our new
secretary.

HARRISON

Oh.

Saxton wanders over and joins them.

BAMFORD

Hello Saxton, pray tell you'll not
be marching us off to London again.

SAXTON

Ha ha very funny.

BAMFORD

John, may I introduce the Reverend
Joseph Harrison of Stockport.

SAXTON

I've heard a lot about you.

BAMFORD

And this sorry creature is Mr
Saxton of Manchester.

HARRISON

(bowing)

A pleasure sir, you may consider me
your chaplain on the field of
battle.

A SHABBY MAN approaches Johnson and whispers in his ear.

JOHNSON

Friends, the hustings is ready!

HUNT

Gentlemen, let's give these people
a show they won't forget!

EXT. MANCHESTER - ST PETER'S FIELD - DAY

The stage is adorned with two flags - "Hunt and Liberty" and
"The Rights of Man" topped with a red cap of liberty.

As Hunt ascends the stage the crowd of 10,000 erupts with
cheers. Knight and Johnson follow closely behind.

UNDERNEATH STAGE

We hear a loud GROANING sound as the timbers buckle under their weight.

STAGE

Saxton, Bamford and Harrison ascend the stage.

UNDERNEATH STAGE

We hear a CRACK as one of the timbers snaps.

STAGE

KNIGHT

Citizens, I'm very happy to have the honor to propose Henry Hunt Esquire as Chairman of this meeting.

The crowd cheers.

HUNT

Thank you Mr Knight... My fellow citizens --

CRACK! Suddenly the stage collapses with a CRASH and the Reformers fall down in a heap. The crowd goes silent. After the dust settles:

HARRISON

Is everyone all right?

BAMFORD

I think so.

SAXTON

Where's Mr Hunt?

Hunt's head emerges from a pile of timbers.

HUNT

God damn it Johnson!

JOHNSON

Oh, are you alright Mr Hunt.

HUNT
Trying to kill us all with this
damn flimsy construction?

JOHNSON
I'm terribly sorry sir, I wasn't
expecting so many on the hustings.

Hunt looks inquisitively at Johnson.

HUNT
What's that on your back man?

JOHNSON
What?

Johnson turns his head to see a long brown streak of horse
shit smeared over his expensive jacket.

JOHNSON
Oh fuck!

Hunt breaks into laughter. The Reformers join in. Soon the
whole crowd erupts into laughter.

INT. MANCHESTER - THEATER ROYAL - STAGE BOX - NIGHT

A large baroque style theater packed to the brim. Hunt,
Johnson, Bamford and Saxton take their seats in the stage
box.

In the adjoining stage box sits a group of Hussars in
scarlet dress uniform.

HUSSAR #1
Look, it's Hunt.

HUSSAR #2
Radical scum.

They stare at Hunt's party with disdain.

HUNT
I say Johnson, excellent seats man.

JOHNSON
I have a friend in the ticket
office, managed to reserve them for
me.

Hunt is soon recognized by the audience and the word quickly
spreads. Some point in his direction.

SUPPORTER #1
 Hunt and liberty!

A dull chatter emanates across the theater.

SUPPORTER #2
 Rights of man!

The chatter grows louder with some of the well-to-do looking up at Hunt with annoyed faces.

JOHNSON
 Looks like you've started a
 commotion Mr Hunt.

HUNT
 I'm sure it will settle down once
 the play starts.

HUSSAR #2
 Play God save the king!

The tune is played and the audience including Hunt stand and remove their hats. Saxton however remains seated with his hat on.

SAXTON
 Oh for God's sake!

A young man behind Saxton knocks his hat off. Saxton and Bamford jump up from their seats and wrestle the man to the ground.

HUNT
 Gentlemen please!

The Hussars charge across to Hunt's box and man-handle them out of the theater to the cheers of the loyalist audience.

HUSSAR #1
 Take them to the pump.

HUNT
 Get your hands off me you Waterloo
 butcher!

Moments later the Hussars return to their seats followed by Hunt and his friends looking a little roughed up, their hats flattened.

HUSSAR #2
 Play god save the king!

The orchestra repeats the tune, this time with Hunt's party standing with hats removed. A sardonic smile on Hunt's face.

EXT. STOCKPORT - SCHOOLROOM - DAY

Hunt and Saxton are ushered into the room by Bruce.

BRUCE

Welcome back Mr Hunt we've been expecting you.

Harrison and McInnis step toward him.

HARRISON

I understand sir you had an unfortunate mishap at the theater the other night.

HUNT

Yes, the governments' venal agents tried their best to provoke us, but we wisely resisted.

HARRISON

Just so you don't leave us with too much ill feeling sir, we've got you this small gift as a token of our appreciation.

McInnis presents Hunt with a white hat decorated with green ribbon.

MCINNIS

Here sir, hope it fits.

HUNT

Why thank you gentlemen, that's just the ticket.

Hunt tries on the hat.

HUNT

A perfect fit... Gentlemen, may this white hat come to symbolize the purity and innocence of our cause.

HARRISON

Amen to that sir.

INT. STOCKPORT - LLOYD'S OFFICE - DAY

Lloyd sits at his desk and John Horatio stands before him.

LLOYD

Bagguley's trial is coming up soon, you'll be expected to testify of course. I've read through your notes and made some alterations to support our case.

JOHN HORATIO LLOYD

But you can't do that Father, my notes are evidence.

LLOYD

It's alright my boy, no-one will know. Here's a copy of Mr Livesey's notes I'd like you to become acquainted with them.

John Horatio scans through the notes.

JOHN HORATIO LLOYD

These notes are misleading Father, the speeches have been taken out of context. We should use my notes instead, they are more accurate.

LLOYD

What's important my boy is that these men stay locked up behind bars. Do you want anarchy? Do you want a revolution?

JOHN HORATIO LLOYD

I cannot lie Father.

Lloyd stands up, his face red with rage.

LLOYD

You'll do what your damn well told boy!

(slamming his fist down)

Who do you think is paying for your fancy education eh! Now take these notes and get out!

John Horatio takes the notes and storms out of the room.

INT. CHESTER - COURTROOM - DAY

A crowded court room. Bagguley and Drummond sit at the dock. Harrison watches the proceedings from the public gallery.

John Horatio Lloyd is at the witness stand and is cross examined by MR CROSS, lawyer for the prosecution.

CROSS

Mr Lloyd, can you tell the court truthfully and to the best of your recollection, the words spoken by Mr Bagguley on the 1st of September last?

JOHN HORATIO LLOYD

Mr Bagguley told the assembly he would lay down a plan for them to act upon. Each town should send a delegate to London as its representative; and they should prepare a bill of rights and present it to the House of Commons; and if they should not accede to it they must use force and compel them to it.

Bagguley shakes his head.

CROSS

Did Mr Bagguley say anything else?

JOHN HORATIO LLOYD

He said this is the last time we meet thus; the next time must not be to speak but to do. They must rise and demand, insist upon, and use force to obtain their rights.

This stirs up the jury comprised of upper class gentry.

BAGGULEY

(to Williams)

I didn't say that. He's twisting the truth!

WILLIAMS, their lawyer nods his head and motions for Bagguley to remain calm.

CROSS

Thank you Mr Lloyd, that is all.

John Horatio looks at his father who nods his approval.

INT. CHESTER - COURTROOM - NIGHT

The courtroom is dimly lit by candles and lanterns.

JUDGE MARSHALL

Gentlemen of the Jury, do you find
the prisoners guilty or not guilty?

FOREMAN

Guilty!

LLOYD

(pumping fist)

Yes!

EXT. HORSHAM GAOL - DAY

The large wooden gates of Horsham Gaol open up. Thistlewood steps out appearing thin and emaciated, his coat and breeches threadbare, he holds in his hands a small bundle containing his only possessions.

EXT. STOCKPORT - SANDY BROW - DAY

An excited crowd of 20,000 supporters surround the stage clapping and cheering.

We move in to see Harrison and Saxton upon the stage. Saxton holds up a red cap of liberty secured to a pole.

SAXTON

Citizens, I hold before you the Cap
of Liberty, the very same cap
raised at Spafields in 1816. Some
say the red cap is a symbol of
revolution, I say it is no such
thing. In ancient times it was worn
by slaves who were granted their
freedom and we raise it now as a
symbol of our long lost liberty!

The crowd cheers.

BEHIND FIELD

Lloyd gallops onto the field followed by constables Birch, PASS and a mounted troop of the Cheshire Yeomanry.

Marching on foot behind them is Barratt and a group of 20 special constables who form a line behind the crowd.

BIRCH
 (to Barratt)
 Where's your truncheon?

Barratt pats his leg where the truncheon should be hanging.

BARRATT
 I dunno, must have left it at the
 lockup.

BIRCH
 Here, take mine.

Birch leans down and passes him the truncheon. Barratt nods his thanks.

LLOYD
 They have the impertinence to show
 that thing in my town. Seize it!

BIRCH
 But they meet legally sir.

LLOYD
 You heard me, seize it!

AMONGST CROWD

Lloyd gives the signal and leads the charge toward the stage. They viciously strike at the women and children with their sticks as they pass along.

Livesey turns around to see a constable with his truncheon raised in the air ready to strike.

LIVESEY
 No!

The truncheon comes down hard on his head.

NEAR STAGE

A fat pompous YEOMANRY OFFICER calls out to Saxton.

YEOMANRY OFFICER
 I demand that cap of liberty in the
 name of the King!

SAXTON
 Stand firm lads!

Constable Pass rides up to the stage and grabs the Cap of Liberty but it is strenuously wrestled back by Saxton.

AMONGST CROWD

The sky turns black as the crowd launches rocks, mud and brickbats at the authorities. The mounted yeomanry crouch low on their horses to duck from the onslaught.

YEOMANRY OFFICER

Retreat! Retreat!

The horses gallop from the ground, their riders bruised and covered in mud. The foot crew follows in a similar state. Lloyd calls out to them with disgust and disappointment:

LLOYD

Get back in there and take it you cowards!

The yeomanry ignore him and vacate the ground. Lloyd reluctantly follows.

STAGE

Saxton takes the Cap of Liberty and places it on his head. The crowd responds with laughter and cheers. Saxton then replaces it back on its staff

WOLSELEY ascends the stage and shakes hands with Harrison, and Saxton. He is followed by Johnson and Knight.

HARRISON

Citizens, I propose Sir Charles Wolseley as chairman!

CROWD

Wolseley forever!

Wolseley addresses the crowd.

WOLSELEY

Gentlemen, I cannot describe the sensations of pleasure which I experience at meeting with my brave countrymen on the very spot where you have gained a noble victory over your direct enemies. I trust Sandy Brow will be more famed in history than the field of Waterloo.

The crowd cheers.

PEARSON
 (from crowd)
 Three hearty cheers for the Cap of
 Liberty! Hip hip!

CROWD
 Huzzah! Huzzah! Huzzah!

Harrison addresses the crowd.

HARRISON
 Gentlemen, the practice of
 petitioning the House of Commons in
 its present state is absolute
 folly. If there be a thousand walls
 between us and our prince, we will
 blow them down either to heaven or
 hell, but we will have them down.
 (great applause)
 And then let us see whether it is a
 man or a pig who sits upon the
 throne.
 (laughter)
 Those who embark in the cause of
 Reform must hold their lives as I
 hold my hat. Nay, they must not be
 afraid to let it go.
 (throws it to crowd)
 It is not worth seven shillings in
 the cause of freedom.
 (hat is returned)
 You see my friends we shall get our
 lives again!

The crowd cheers.

EXT. STOCKPORT - SCHOOLROOM - EVENING

Outside the schoolroom an immense crowd joyously sings
 "Millions be Free" to the sound of a fiddle.

The local magistrate REVEREND PRESCOTT (80), a man well
 respected by the townspeople, arrives accompanied by Lloyd,
 Birch and a company of REDCOATS.

Prescott taps the Windmill Room door with the end of his
 walking stick. Harrison and Saxton answer the door.

HARRISON
 Good evening Mr Prescott.

PRESCOTT

Mr Harrison, could you please use your influence to induce the people to retire. I assure you that it is no means my intention to take any persons into custody and can only lament what has happened to disturb the peace of this town.

Prescott gives Lloyd an annoyed look. Lloyd, with cuts and bruises on his face looks down in shame.

HARRISON

I shall try my best sir.

Harrison steps out and addresses the crowd in a loud voice.

HARRISON

Friends, I ask you to please return to your homes quietly and peaceably. The Windmill Room will be closing soon.

MCINNIS

No! They only want us to go so they may take you.

HARRISON

I assure you all is safe, Mr Prescott has given me his word.

MCINNIS

If you say so Parson.
(to the crowd)
Come on lads!

McInnis sings "Millions be Free" and leads the people off who join in singing.

PRESCOTT

Thank you Mr Harrison.

Prescott suddenly winces, grabs his chest and stumbles. Harrison catches him and holds him up.

HARRISON

Are you alright sir?

Prescott recovers.

PRESCOTT

Yes thank you, the afflictions of old age I'm afraid. I will leave a
(MORE)

PRESCOTT (cont'd)
guard of military to ensure you
will not be disturbed again.

HARRISON
Thank you sir.

Prescott bows and leaves with the other law officers. A squad of redcoats surrounds the Windmill Room with fixed bayonets.

EXT. STOCKPORT - MARKET PLACE - NIGHT

The Market Place is packed with working class revelers who drink, sing and dance. The occasional celebratory SHOT is fired into the air.

McInnis and Pearson drink and dance with their girlfriends MARY and ANN.

PEARSON
We gave those feather-bed soldiers
a proper sousing today.

ANN
Aye, did you see the look on
Lloyd's face?

They all laugh.

EXT. STOCKPORT - MARKET PLACE - DARK ALLEY - NIGHT

Barratt watches on from a nearby dark alley. He pulls out his pistol and cocks it.

From Barratt's p.o.v. we see McInnis in the gun sight.

EXT. STOCKPORT - MARKET PLACE - NIGHT

MARY
Kiss me my brave man.

McInnis pulls Mary close to him and at that moment a bullet WHISTLES past and hits Mary in the chest. She cries out in pain.

McInnis pulls his hand back revealing blood.

MCINNIS
My God, Mary!

Ann screams as Mary collapses.

McInnis carefully lowers her to the ground and presses his neck scarf over the bleeding wound.

MCINNIS
I saw a flash come from that alley!

Pearson nods and runs toward the alley.

MCINNIS
You'll be alright my love, I
promise. Hold in there.

Mary's face turns pale as she succumbs to shock and passes away.

MCINNIS
Mary... No!

EXT. STOCKPORT - MARKET PLACE - DARK ALLEY - NIGHT

Pearson runs down the alley and sees a man in constable's uniform quickly mount a horse and ride off in haste.

Pearson gives up the chase and stops to regain his breath. He sees a truncheon on the ground. Picks it up and observes the name "Birch" engraved on the handle.

INT. STOCKPORT - LLOYD'S OFFICE - DAY

Constables Birch and Pass stand before Lloyd's desk.

LLOYD
I have good news gentlemen.
Wolseley and Harrison have been
indicted for sedition. Here are the
arrest warrants.

Lloyd lays out two copies of the arrest warrants at the end of his desk. Birch and Pass step forward and pick up a copy.

BIRCH
I don't understand sir, Mr Prescott
gave his word that no charges were
to be laid.

LLOYD

Unfortunately Mr Prescott's health has taken a turn for the worse... I am the law in this town now gentlemen.

BIRCH

But only a magistrate can authorize an arrest warrant sir.

LLOYD

Correct Mr Birch, that is why I had the Chester magistrates sign it. You will also notice that the warrant stipulates that bail is to be conducted in my presence only. This will ensure the prisoners are returned to Stockport. Do you understand?

BIRCH AND PASS

Yes sir.

LLOYD

Good. Now hurry!

The constables bow and rush out the door.

INT. STOCKPORT - SCHOOLROOM - DAY

Sally escorts Birch and Pass into the Windmill Rooms where Mrs Fildes and the FEMALE REFORMERS of Stockport all dressed in white have gathered for a meeting.

SALLY

Sisters, my husband has a bill found against him for doing the devils know what at the last Stockport meeting.

BIRCH

Where is he?

Pass searches the rooms for Harrison.

SALLY

I've already told you he's not here. He left for London yesterday.

BIRCH

Which direction?

SALLY

He said he was going south through
Staffordshire.

BIRCH

(to Pass)

Staffordshire, that's where
Wolseley lives. We might just kill
two birds with one stone.

Birch and Pass leave in haste. Many of the women begin to
cry and after a few moments of profound silence:

MRS FILDES

Harrison and Liberty!

INT. STOCKPORT - HARRISON'S COTTAGE - DAY

Harrison quickly packs his small travel BAG. Sally watches
on with tears in her eyes.

HARRISON

I'll take the coach east to avoid
Birch and should arrive in London
on Wednesday. There'll be friends
there who'll take me in.

They embrace and kiss. Harrison opens the door.

SALLY

Be careful Joseph.

EXT. STOCKPORT - NEAR LANCASHIRE BRIDGE - EVENING

Harrison stealthily steps down the dark narrow streets
leading to the Lancashire Bridge.

He peeks around the wall and spots sentries standing guard
at the entrance to the bridge preventing his escape. He
observes a coach being stopped by Barratt and searched.

As he turns around he is shocked to find a man dressed in a
long coat stepping towards him. Shock soon turns to relief
as Harrison recognizes his friend Moorhouse.

HARRISON

Moorhouse, good god man, you almost
gave me a heart attack.

MOORHOUSE

I heard you might need help, quick
follow me.

EXT. STOCKPORT - LANCASHIRE BRIDGE - EVENING

Barratt, holding a lantern swings it in front of the
approaching coach.

The coach comes to a stop. He walks up to Moorhouse and his
assistant sitting on the dicky dressed in long coats with
scarves partially obscuring their faces.

BARRATT

Hold fast a moment, I need to
search your coach?

MOORHOUSE

Be quick, we have a tight schedule
to follow.

Barratt looks through the partially fogged up coach window
and sees a man wearing the clothes of a dissenting minister.
He pulls out his pistol and flings the door open.

BARRATT

Ha, I've gotcha!

A young man (19) cries out.

YOUNG MAN

Don't shoot!

Barratt realizing his mistake apologizes to the young man.

BARRATT

Oh, I beg ya pardon sir. Thought
you was someone else.

Barratt closes the coach door and yells out to Moorhouse.

BARRATT

Carry on.

Moorhouse cracks the whip over the horses and drives off in
haste.

EXT. STOCKPORT - LANCASHIRE HILL - EVENING

Harrison, sitting on the dicky removes his scarf.

HARRISON

Those clothes suit him, has your son ever considered a career in the priesthood?

MOORHOUSE

(laughing)

What, and give up his wine and women. I think not.

Moorhouse lays his whip over the horses and the coach rides into the night.

EXT. LONDON - SMITHFIELD MARKETPLACE - DAY

A bustling city market. A small ox cart cuts its way through the throng toward a clearing in the center. Harrison sits at the rear, jerking back and forth, his legs dangling over the edge.

The cart stops, the DRIVER turns and indicates they have reached their destination. Harrison hops off, thanks him and waves goodbye.

Harrison pulls out a slip of paper with directions and sets off through the busy crowd. He pauses, turns his head to gather his bearings and accidentally bumps into a stranger.

HARRISON

Oh, excuse me sir.

The stranger raises his hand to gesture he is alright, the hand blocks the view of his face. We follow the stranger a short while before he stops suddenly and turns his head, a quizzical look on his face. The stranger is Mr Black.

From Mr Black's p.o.v. we see Harrison entering a narrow side street in the distance.

EXT. LONDON - GREYSTOKE PLACE - EVENING

The entrance to a long narrow lane lined with decrepit brick apartments. The lane is empty apart from the odd stray cat.

Harrison looks down at the slip of paper and back up at the street sign: "Greystoke Place". He continues on cautiously.

Suddenly a dog on a leash lunges at him, barking ferociously, Harrison slips and falls, the dogs jaws snapping inches from his face, its head restrained by the taut rope.

Harrison carefully gets up, dusts himself off and continues on. He looks at the slip of paper and looks up to see the number "16" on the door in front of him.

Suddenly, a figure behind Harrison slugs him over the head. Darkness.

INT. LONDON - PRESTON'S APARTMENT - EVENING

Harrison comes to. From his blurry p.o.v. we see five unfriendly ruffians staring back at him. Amongst them we recognise Davidson, the Jamaican.

Harrison sits gagged and tied to a chair.

EDWARDS, fierce looking with pale complexion, the apparent leader of the group holds the slip of paper in his hand.

EDWARDS

He's a spy, I say we cut his throat.

The thin, long faced BRUNT spurns him on.

BRUNT

Yeah, cut him good.

We hear BARKING outside but the men pay it no notice.

DAVIDSON

No, we should wait for Preston, he'll know what to do.

EDWARDS

I'm in charge here and I say we kill him... Brunt, cut his throat.

BRUNT

What, why me?

EDWARDS

Coz I said so!

Brunt grabs a sharp knife from the table and steps slowly towards Harrison. Harrison frantically jerks his body back and forth in an effort to free himself.

Brunt hesitantly pulls back Harrison's head and just as he is about to slit his throat, Davidson steps in and grabs the knife off him.

DAVIDSON
No, this ain't right!

Suddenly, we hear KNOCKING at the door.

The men stand frozen staring at the door. The door knocks again. Edwards pulls out a pistol, steps quietly toward the door and gestures for TIDD to open it.

The stocky and balding Tidd quickly pulls the door back revealing a surprised Hunt holding a bundle of papers.

HUNT
What in the devil's name are you playing at?

Hunt turns and sees Harrison tied to the chair.

HUNT
What in god's name! Untie him you bloody fools! That's Harrison from Stockport!

INT. LONDON - COCK TAVERN - NIGHT

Hunt and Harrison sit and dine together in a quiet corner of the tavern.

HARRISON
Those men, who are they?

HUNT
Spenceans, Thistlewood's gang of desperate fools.

HARRISON
Thistlewood, do you trust him?

HUNT
No, not at all, but he serves his purpose - rallies the masses, distributes pamphlets, that kind of thing.

HARRISON
I feel a fool, I was told I'd be safe there.

HUNT

The Spenceans were once a peaceful group but ever since Spafields and the infamous Mr Castle they've become quite paranoid. Suspect everyone's a spy.

They both chuckle.

HARRISON

I'm curious Mr Hunt, what makes a man like you get involved with radical politics?

HUNT

A man like me?

HARRISON

Forgive me sir, I mean no disrespect; what I mean to say is you're a man of means, you already have the vote, what drives you?

HUNT

Fair question. I could say that I feel it my duty to better the life of my fellow man, which is true in itself of course, but I must confess that the adoration of the crowd is my opium, nothing brings me greater joy.

HARRISON

You'll be happy to hear then that Johnson is organizing another rally in Manchester next month and wants you to be chairman.

HUNT

Really? You must make sure then that he procures the largest assemblage this country has ever seen.

The men laugh.

EXT. LONDON - COCK TAVERN - NIGHT

As Hunt and Harrison pass through the tavern doors they are confronted by officers Ruthven, Ellis and Smithers.

RUTHVEN

Sir, we have a warrant for your arrest.

Ruthven lifts up the warrant.

HUNT

If you want me, I'll go with you.

RUTHVEN

No, we don't want you but Mr Harrison.

Officers Ellis and Smithers handcuff Harrison.

HARRISON

Where are you taking me.

RUTHVEN

Giltspur Street Prison.

Harrison is led off.

HUNT

I'll send someone to bail you. Good luck sir.

HARRISON

Thank you Mr Hunt. I'll see you in Manchester.

INT. LONDON - GILTSPUR STREET PRISON - DAY

Harrison is flung into the prison cell by the jailor. The cell is dank and dark with a straw bed in the corner and a door of iron bars.

INT. LONDON - GILTSPUR STREET PRISON - DAWN

Harrison is woken by the sounds of tinkling keys and the creaky iron door being flung open.

JAILOR

Wake up Parson, visitor to see you.

Thistlewood steps into the cell holding a lantern and the jailor locks the door behind him. Harrison sits up looking a little disheveled, his eyes squinting.

THISTLEWOOD
 Good morning Mr Harrison, my name
 is Arthur Thistlewood.

HARRISON
 Morning sir.

The men shake hands.

THISTLEWOOD
 I have brought the bail money with
 me, but to no avail I am told.

HARRISON
 I'm afraid so, a ploy by Lloyd to
 have me returned to Stockport.

THISTLEWOOD
 Despair not sir for the day of
 reckoning is near... Soon will be
 the time for revolution.

They hear voices approaching and turn to see the jailor and
 constables Birch and Pass at the entrance of the cell.

JAILOR
 Visiting time's over Mr
 Thistlewood.

Thistlewood bows and exits the cell.

THISTLEWOOD
 When the time comes Mr Harrison, I
 pray we can count on your support?

Harrison looks back at Thistlewood speechless.

BIRCH
 Alright Parson, gather your things,
 we journey to Stockport today.

Harrison stands and brushes the straw off his clothes.

INT. COACH TO STOCKPORT - DAY

Harrison sits handcuffed in the coach looking out the
 window. Birch sits next to him and Pass opposite. Suddenly
 the coach hits a pothole - CRACK!

The coach slowly comes to a halt.

PASS
What was that?

BIRCH
I don't know but it didn't sound good.

The DRIVER pokes his head through the door.

DRIVER
We've damaged an axle. We should make it to Newcastle but you'll have to change coaches there.

EXT. SOUTHERN ENTRANCE TO STOCKPORT - DAY

Pearson and a large angry MOB stands waiting at the edge of the road. A coach can be seen in the distance coming toward them.

Pearson flags down the coach. The mob surrounds the coach and opens the carriage finding it empty. They pull the DRIVER down from the dicky.

PEARSON
Where's Harrison and Birch?

DRIVER
I swear I don't know?

The driver breaks free and runs off. The mob then pushes the coach over onto its side.

INT. STOCKPORT - LLOYD'S OFFICE - DAY

Barratt stands at attention in front of Lloyd's desk.

LLOYD
Harrison and Birch must be prevented from coming back to Stockport. I need you to wait for the Defiance coach on the road from Cheadle and divert them to another town.

BARRATT
Yes sir.

EXT. NEWCASTLE - COACH HOUSE - DAY

Birch and Harrison stand waiting outside the coach house.
Constable Pass exits the office.

PASS

The Coburg coach will be here soon,
it will take us to Stockport
through Congleton.

HARRISON

(to Birch)

Sir, I fear returning to Stockport
may cause a riot and it might be
far preferable to go to a country
magistrate to give in bail.

BIRCH

I have my orders Mr Harrison.

EXT. ROAD FROM CHEADLE - NIGHT

Constable Barratt stands alone next to his horse on the
Cheadle Road and looks down at his pocket watch, puzzled why
the coach has not yet passed.

EXT. SOUTHERN ENTRANCE TO STOCKPORT - NIGHT

The Coburg coach carrying Birch, Pass and Harrison pulls
into Stockport. They notice the demolished coach on the side
of the road and a small group of men who point in their
direction and run off.

BIRCH

I don't like this. Something's
wrong.

Birch calls out to the driver.

BIRCH

Stop the coach!

(to Harrison)

I'm taking you to my house until I
know it's safe.

INT. STOCKPORT - BIRCH'S COTTAGE - DAY

Birch leads Harrison into his small cottage through the rear door. He locks the door and lights a lantern revealing a rustic kitchen with a small oak table and chairs.

BIRCH

We'll wait here until things settle down. Are you hungry sir?

HARRISON

Yes, I'm starved.

Harrison sits at the table. Birch prepares some bread and cheese on a plate. He then pours some cider into cups and hands one to Harrison.

HARRISON

Thank you.

BIRCH

Who will be your bail?

HARRISON

Most likely Moorhouse and Sims.

As they are eating, a rock smashes through the window.

MOB (O.S.)

We know you have Harrison. Release him or we'll pull your house apart!

Birch runs to the window and looks out seeing a large mob.

HARRISON

Let me talk to them. Perhaps I can convince them to go home quietly.

Birch takes a moment to think it over.

BIRCH

No, stay here, I'm going to Mr Prescott's to get advice.

HARRISON

Take care sir.

Birch nods, puts on a long coat and slips out the back door.

EXT. STOCKPORT - PRESCOTT'S HOUSE - NIGHT

Birch knocks on Prescott's door but no-one answers. He tries again without success. He gives up and walks down the pathway to the street.

EXT. STOCKPORT - STREET NEAR LLOYD'S HOUSE - NIGHT

As he is heading up the street he is met with a large mob coming in the opposite direction. He puts his head down and continues on but is spotted by a member of the MOB.

MOB

Hey, that's Birch!

Bruce walks up to Birch and is followed by McInnis and Pearson.

BRUCE

Is Mr Harrison at your house?

BIRCH

Aye he is... Is Sims to act as his bail?

BRUCE

I'm not sure. I haven't seen Sims this last hour.

McInnis then moves behind Bruce and using Bruce's shoulder to brace his pistol he shoots Birch in the chest. Birch cries out and grabs his chest. He takes his hand away revealing blood.

BRUCE

(to McInnis)

What have you done?

Birch stumbles over the palisades of Lloyd's garden. Bruce, Pearson and McInnis immediately scatter.

John Horatio Lloyd who has witnessed the event runs up the street to warn his father.

INT. STOCKPORT - BULKELEY ARMS TAVERN - NIGHT

Sitting at a bench, Lloyd examines Moorhouse and Sims to give Harrison's bail. John Horatio barges into the room.

JOHN HORATIO LLOYD
 (frantically)
 Father! Mr Birch has been shot!

LLOYD
 Calm down boy, who did this?

JOHN HORATIO LLOYD
 The Radicals.

Barratt wanders in.

LLOYD
 The uprising has begun. Barratt!
 Send a messenger to the barracks at
 Manchester, tell them we require
 immediate military assistance,
 Move!

BARRATT
 Yes sir.

EXT. STOCKPORT - LOCKUP - DAY

The town is now tranquil. Nervous TOWNSFOLK step to the side of the road as a troop of armed REDCOATS march past the Stockport Lockup.

INT. STOCKPORT - LOCKUP - DAY

Moorhouse and Sims meet with Lloyd at the lockup. Harrison stands handcuffed behind the iron bars of the cell.

LLOYD
 Mr Harrison, the bail required is
 one thousand pounds. We are going
 to bind you in one hundred pounds
 more not to attend any public
 meetings in future.

HARRISON
 Sir, as a free born Englishman I
 will never bind myself from doing
 that which I believe to be
 constitutional, lawful and right.

LLOYD
 Suit yourself, eleven hundred
 pounds then.

Sims opens the cashbox and reluctantly counts out the money.

EXT. STOCKPORT - LOCKUP - DAY

Harrison, Moorhouse and Sims gather on the street outside the lockup. Harrison rubs his grazed wrists.

HARRISON

Thank you gentlemen.

SIMS

I'd be careful what you say in public from now on Parson. There won't be enough money to bail you next time.

Harrison nods.

MONTAGE:

A) Horse Artillery and troops of the 6th Dragoon Guards ride west on a country road toward Manchester.

B) Five thousand stern faced redcoats march north in a long column toward Stockport.

C) Hundreds of white tents dot the fields on the outskirts of Stockport where horse and foot troops group in considerable numbers.

EXT. SOUTHERN ENTRANCE TO STOCKPORT - DAY

Hunt rides his gig toward Stockport looking cross. He is met on the road by a nervous looking Johnson and Saxton on horseback.

HUNT

Why the hell wasn't I informed the meeting's been canceled? I've just traveled over 200 bloody miles!

Saxton looks at Johnson who remains quiet.

SAXTON

Sir, the meeting has been merely postponed. We intend holding another meeting in a week's time on the 16th.

HUNT

Mr Johnson, once again you have made a fool of me. I've made up my mind to return to Hampshire at once!

Hunt proceeds to turn his gig around.

JOHNSON

Sir, we beg you to stay on. Mr Moorhouse has provided a bed for you in Stockport tonight and you can lodge with me at Smedley Cottage for the remainder.

HUNT

This is a great inconvenience sir!

JOHNSON

Oh, and we have organized a triumphal entry into Manchester for you tomorrow.

Hunt pulls the reins and halts the gig.

HUNT

Hmm... very well then... I'll stay on.

JOHNSON

(relieved)

Thank you sir.

EXT. ROAD TO MANCHESTER - DAY

Hunt and Johnson set off in a chaise followed by Harrison, Wolseley, Moorhouse and Saxton in a coach. About 300 supporters follow behind waving and cheering.

INT. HUNT'S CHAISE - DAY

Hunt, sitting next to Johnson in the chaise, waves his white hat at the supporters.

HUNT

Johnson, give me the hip!

JOHNSON

Hip hip huzzah.

HUNT

Louder man!

JOHNSON

Hip hip!

SUPPORTERS

Huzzah!

EXT. MANCHESTER - EXCHANGE BUILDING - DAY

They stop outside the Exchange Building, a stronghold for the loyalists. From the large open windows the GENTRY hiss and abuse Hunt.

Saxton flings open the coach door, aims his arse at the loyalists, lifts his tails and lets off one enormous FART!

GENTRY

Disgusting behavior.

The Radical supporters laugh and cheer.

INT. HARRISON'S COACH - DAY

WOLSELEY

Bravo Mr Saxton Bravo.

Saxton sits back down.

SAXTON

I think I've shat myself.

They all laugh.

INT. HUNT'S CHAISE - DAY

Hunt and Johnson ride through the streets.

JOHNSON

I've been thinking Mr Hunt. It might be wise if Harrison not attend the rally?

HUNT

Sir, I esteem Mr Harrison a genuine and devoted friend of Liberty.

JOHNSON

No, I don't doubt that, it's just this business with Birch has sullied his reputation in the eyes of the magistrates. I fear they may use it as a handle for conspiracy charges against us.

HUNT

Hmm... yes, you may have a point there. I'll let you pass on the news then.

JOHNSON

Me? Oh yes of course.

INT. STOCKPORT - WINDMILL ROOM CHAPEL - NIGHT

A hot sultry night, Harrison stands at the pulpit and delivers a passionate sermon to the packed audience. THUNDER can be heard in the distance.

HARRISON

And I saw an angel standing in the sun and he cried with a loud voice saying to all the fowls that fly in the midst of heaven, come and gather yourselves together unto the supper of the great God, that ye may eat the flesh of kings and the flesh of captains and the flesh of mighty men.

Harrison pauses to wipe his forehead with a handkerchief. A flash of LIGHTNING illuminates the room followed by a loud THUNDERCLAP. Harrison looks up.

HARRISON

It comes, it comes, the dreadful storm comes rolling in!

EXT. MANCHESTER - ST PETER'S FIELD - DAY

SUPERIMPOSE: "MANCHESTER, AUGUST 16, 1819"

Bamford and the Middleton contingent holding long banners march onto the field in military step to "La Victoire est à Nous" played by drummers and fife players.

Contingents from other parts of the county begin to march in and take their place on the field.

EXT. STREETS OF MANCHESTER - DAY

People line both sides of the streets and mass toward St Peter's Field.

Hunt sits packed in the crowded barouche and receives cheers from the passing crowd as he waves his white hat.

His fellow passengers are Johnson, Moorhouse, Saxton, Knight, and Mrs Fildes who wears a white dress.

EXT. MANCHESTER - ST PETER'S FIELD

On the field several hundred special constables quickly push through the crowds and form themselves into two lines, leading from Buxton's house (where the magistrates are stationed) to the stage.

Several Reformers push the stage deeper into the field and away from the constables.

Nadin appears from the edge of the field and walks up and down the aisle formed by the two rows of constables.

CROWD

Boo!

EDGE OF FIELD

Hunt's barouche reaches the edge of the field and a tremendous cheer explodes from the crowd of 150,000. The bands play "See the Conquering Hero Comes."

The barouche makes its way to the stage along a line marked out by 18 waving flags and five caps of liberty.

STAGE

As Hunt mounts the stage he receives another great cheer. He is followed by Knight, Johnson, Saxton, and others.

Hunt checks the stage is secure by stamping his left foot and bobbing up and down. A nervous Johnson then awkwardly addresses the crowd.

JOHNSON

Fellow citizens, I declare Mr Hunt
chairman.

Johnson's feeble voice is not heard and the crowd remains quiet.

KNIGHT

Hip, hip, huzzah!

The crowd responds with cheers. Hunt then steps forward.

HUNT

Gentlemen, fellow countrymen, I hope that you before me this day will exercise the all powerful right of the people. If any man will not be quiet, that you put him down and keep him quiet!

BUXTON'S HOUSE

The magistrates, 100 yards away at Buxton's house are leaning out of the windows straining to hear Hunt's words. The young effeminate magistrate HULTON watches the speech through a pair of opera glasses.

HULTON

What did he say?

MAGISTRATE

I believe he said it is the peoples' right to put any man down.

HULTON

That sounds like a breach of the peace to me. Andrews, take this warrant and arrest them.

He hands Chief Constable ANDREWS an arrest warrant.

ANDREWS

Sir, without military assistance we will not be able to execute the warrant.

Hulton then writes two notes.

HULTON

Get this note to Major Trafford and this one to Lieutenant Colonel L'Estrange requesting their forces to proceed here at once.

Hulton hands the notes to Andrews who nods his acknowledgement.

EXT. MANCHESTER - STREETS EAST OF FIELD

A messenger on horseback pulls up against Major TRAFFORD and hands him the note. Trafford reads it and immediately calls his troops to action.

TRAFFORD
Draw swords!

The men draw swords and gallop down the back streets toward St Peter's Field. As they are riding, a YOUNG WOMAN steps onto the road carrying her two year old SON. She is struck by a galloping trooper and her child is killed instantly.

EXT. MANCHESTER - ST PETERS'S FIELD

The Manchester Yeomanry arrives at Buxton's house and Andrews runs over to Birley (the mill owner) who is dressed in a yeomanry captain's uniform.

ANDREWS
Captain, we have in our possession
an arrest warrant and require your
assistance!

STAGE

Hunt is fully into his speech when Knight whispers something in his ear. Hunt angrily replies:

HUNT
Sir, I will not be interrupted!
When you speak yourself, you will
not like to experience such
interruption.

Hunt looks back at the crowd and sees the arrival of the Manchester Yeomanry at Buxton's house. The troopers raise their swords. People begin to scatter.

HUNT
Stand firm!

The cavalry raise a battle cry and charge toward the stage kicking up dust.

EXT. MANCHESTER - STREETS WEST OF FIELD

The second messenger reaches L'ESTRANGE and hands him the note. L'Estrange turns to face his men.

L'ESTRANGE
Follow me!

He gallops off followed by the 15th Hussars and Cheshire Yeomanry with Lloyd and Barratt amongst them.

EXT. MANCHESTER - ST PETER'S FIELD

On the field, the Manchester Yeomanry manages to form rough lines between the constables. Nadin, clutching the arrest warrant, follows the yeomanry, now thrusting forward. Taunts are thrown at the yeomanry.

CROWD

Go home you feather bed soldiers!

As the cavalry reach the stage, Nadin's constables raise their truncheons to identify themselves. The Yeomanry confusing them for Reformers, strike several of them down with the flats of their swords.

STAGE

HUNT

(holding up his fist)

Be firm!

The stage is completely surrounded by the yeomanry. Captain Birley maneuvers his horse up to the stage.

BIRLEY

Sir, I have a warrant against you,
and arrest you as my prisoner!

HUNT

I willingly surrender myself to any
civil officer who will show me his
warrant!

Nadin then pushes his way through the crowd and holds up the warrant for Hunt to see. Hunt and Johnson then jump to the ground where the constables are waiting.

Nadin grabs Johnson but is struck in the arm by a rock. Mayhem then breaks out.

BIRLEY

Have at their flags!

BETWEEN STAGE AND BUXTON'S HOUSE

The yeomanry with swords raised slash their way towards the banners. Two troopers ride up beside the stage and recognize Saxton.

YEOMANRY #1
 There's that villain Saxton, run
 him through the body!

The TROOPER lunges at Saxton but he dodges the blade and it only manages to cut his waistcoat.

Mrs Fildes screams as the trooper strikes her with his sword taking off part of her left breast.

BELOW STAGE

Hunt on the ground, sees a man nearby have his nose cleanly sliced off by a troopers blade. Hunt is struck on the head by the flat edge of a sword.

Nadin forces his way back to Buxton's house with Hunt and Johnson in tow.

A yeomanry officer attempts to shoot Hunt with a pistol but Hunt swings Nadin's body around and uses him as a human shield.

BUXTON'S HOUSE

L'Estrange arrives at Buxton's house.

L'ESTRANGE
 Sir, what are my orders?

HULTON
 Good God sir! Do you not see how
 they are attacking the yeomanry?
 Disperse the crowd!

L'Estrange stares back perplexed.

L'ESTRANGE
 (to troopers)
 Front and forward!

Lloyd, Barratt and the Cheshire Yeomanry immediately gallop toward the rear of the stage.

EDGE OF FIELD

Captain Birley slashes at one worker trying to escape the field and is joined by three other troopers who slash at him. An officer of the 15th Hussars shouts at them.

HUSSAR OFFICER

For shame, won't you give the
people time to get away. Don't you
see them down!

MONTAGE:

A) The scene is of utter carnage and confusion, yeomanry ferociously slashing at the crowd and constables striking the people with their truncheons.

B) The crowd retaliates. L'Estrange's cap is knocked off his head by a flying brick.

C) A yeomanry trooper is struck in the head by a brick thrown by a woman. He falls to the ground and is trampled by a horse.

D) A reformer swings a two handled sickle at a horse and slices its stomach open.

E) GUNSHOTS can be heard. A dragoon is hit in the shoulder.

F) Infantrymen shoot at a marksman hiding behind a chimney who frantically tries to reload his rifle. The marksman is hit and falls to his death.

BUXTON'S HOUSE

As Hunt reaches the steps of Buxton's house, a RETIRED GENERAL raises a cudgel and brings it down over Hunt's head, his hat taking the impact of the blow. As he is about to take another swing, Nadin intervenes.

NADIN

Shame sir!

The general, ashamed, steps back into the crowd.

HUNT

Thank you sir, you have saved my
life.

NEAR STAGE

Lloyd and the Cheshire Yeomanry hack their way toward the flags on the stage. Barratt wrests a red banner from a Reformer and holds it up in triumph.

EDGE OF FIELD

Harrison arrives on the field and is shocked to find a scene of devastation and carnage.

The yeomanry cavalry continue to swing their swords at the fleeing crowd. They ease up only when an officer of the 15th Hussars again cries out:

HUSSAR OFFICER

For shame, for shame! Gentlemen;
forbear, forbear! The people cannot
get away!

The last remaining stragglers make their way from the field. The ground is littered with hats, shoes and musical instruments. Scattered about are the dead and injured.

Harrison falls to his knees and weeps.

EXT. MANCHESTER - NEW BAILEY PRISON YARD - DAY

L'Estrange and a detachment of the 15th Hussars, march the prisoners Hunt, Johnson, Saxton and others to the prison yard of the New Bailey where they join Knight and Moorhouse.

EXT. STOCKPORT - MARKET PLACE - DAY

Lloyd and the Cheshire Yeomanry arrive back in Stockport on horseback and assemble in the market place.

LLOYD

(ecstatic)

Men, we return with honor!

BARRATT

(holding captured flags)

What shall I do with these sir?

LLOYD

Burn them.

EXT. STOCKPORT - HARRISON'S COTTAGE - NIGHT

Constable Barratt drags Harrison by the handcuffs through the front door of the cottage. Sally stands at the door.

SALLY

Where are you taking him?

BARRATT
To Chester Castle.

Sally cries helplessly as Harrison is marched off between a squad of armed REDCOATS.

SALLY
No! Joseph!

Harrison turns around to see her but is struck hard in the shoulder by the redcoat's rifle butt.

REDCOAT
Move it!

INT. CHESTER CASTLE - PRISON CELL - NIGHT

The jailor with Harrison by his side unlocks and opens the prison cell door. The door creaks open to reveal Bruce sitting in the corner on a bed of straw.

BRUCE
Mr Harrison!

HARRISON
Good evening Mr Bruce, it appears I'm your new roommate.

BRUCE
I could do with some company sir.

They cheerfully shake hands.

INT. CHESTER CASTLE - VISITING ROOM - DAY

Moorhouse sits waiting at a small table. A PRISON GUARD stands in the corner. The sound of keys CLANGING can be heard as the door is unlocked and Harrison enters the room.

Moorhouse stands and the two men embrace.

MOORHOUSE
Parson!

HARRISON
James! It's good to see you old friend, do you bring news?

MOORHOUSE
Yes, good news. Hunt's been bailed and has returned to London. The

(MORE)

MOORHOUSE (cont'd)
whole country is now rallying
behind us.

HARRISON
Aye, that is good news. The
government has no choice now but to
agree to our terms.

Harrison checks the guard is not listening and whispers to Moorhouse:

HARRISON
You must go to London and persuade
Hunt to cut ties with the
Spenceans. The fools will ruin
everything, they're planning a
revolution.

EXT. STREETS OF LONDON - DAY

Tens of thousands of people line the streets cheering and waving flags as Hunt makes a triumphal entry through London in an open landau. He resembles a conquering Roman emperor as he stands on the landau and waves to the adoring crowd.

Thistlewood stands next to him and holds a laurel wreath over his head. Behind them sits Watson and Preston.

THISTLEWOOD
The Manchester massacre has made
you more popular than ever Mr Hunt.
The people are ripe for revolution.

Hunt stares at Thistlewood and pushes away the laurel wreath.

HUNT
We must hold fast by the laws Mr
Thistlewood. That is how we shall
gain our object.

Thistlewood angrily sits down and crosses his arms.

Another landau follows containing Moorhouse and the Spenceans: Davidson and Edwards.

INT. CARLTON HOUSE - ANTI-ROOM - DAY

Castlereagh and Sidmouth bow before the overweight Prince Regent (now King George IV) who lies on a chaise drinking wine. A tray of cup cakes sits on a small table next to him.

SIDMOUTH

You wish to see us Your Majesty?

GEORGE IV (PRINCE REGENT)

Yes, firstly I wish you to pass on my sincere thanks to the magistrates and brave soldiers for their prompt and decisive action at Manchester.

SIDMOUTH

Of course Your Majesty.

GEORGE IV

And there's another delicate matter I need you to take care of. It appears my slut of a wife plans to return to England to claim her rights as Queen... I want a divorce.

CASTLEREAGH

A divorce might prove difficult your majesty. The law states that adultery must be proven before a divorce is granted and it's unlikely the Queen will admit to it.

GEORGE IV

Damned if I'll be admitting to it!

CASTLEREAGH

There might be another option. Perhaps a 50,000 pound annuity might entice her to relinquish her title and stay abroad.

King George IV thinks it over.

GEORGE IV

Very well, see to it.

CASTLEREAGH

Yes your majesty.

Castlereagh and Sidmouth bow and make their exit.

INT. NEWGATE - DEBTOR'S PRISON - DAY

Thistlewood and Edwards visit Watson in his dank and dark prison cell.

WATSON

Hunt's reception has left me broke.
They've locked me up for debt.

THISTLEWOOD

I've decided to make Edwards my
aide-de-camp until we can free you.

EDWARDS

That shan't be long. The death of
the King has presented an
opportunity to stage the uprising.
Most of the ministers and troops
will be at Windsor for the funeral.

WATSON

But our numbers are too small for
that.

THISTLEWOOD

I agree, perhaps a better plan will
be to assassinate the ministers
when they meet together for
dinner... Edwards I want you to
find out when and where they plan
to hold their next function.

EDWARDS

Right sir, shall do.

INT. LONDON - WHITE HART INN - DAY

SUPERIMPOSE: "THREE WEEKS LATER..."

Thistlewood and the Spenceans meet in a quiet corner of the
inn. Edwards rushes in holding the "New Times Newspaper."

EDWARDS

There's to be a Cabinet dinner
tomorrow night.

THISTLEWOOD

I don't believe it, show me.

Thistlewood takes the paper and reads it.

THISTLEWOOD

He's right, they are to dine at Lord Harrowby's at Grosvenor Square... Here's the plan. When the doors are opened, we rush in, seize the servants, present pistols, and threaten to kill them if they make any noise; two to take the entrance to the stairs upwards, and two others to the lower part of the house, armed with blunderbusses and hand grenades, if any attempt to pass throw hand grenades and destroy them all; others are to go where the Ministers are, to murder them all but spare the women. If there should be any good men, kill them for keeping bad company.

TIDD

I will go in first with a brace of pistols and knives, I shall say, my Lords, I have got as good men here as the Manchester Yeomanry, enter citizens and do your duty.

THISTLEWOOD

A second group led by Edwards will meet in Shoreditch and capture the Artillery Ground and cannon. A third group led by Preston will meet south of the river and fire the oil warehouses.

BRUNT

A watch should be set up on Lord Harrowby's house to see if any soldiers go in there.

THISTLEWOOD

Rent a house in Cato Street... When it's all over gentlemen we'll carry the heads of Sidmouth and Castlereagh on pikes through the streets to excite terror.

The men laugh.

EXT. LONDON - CATO STREET - STABLE - DAY

Davidson and Tidd carry sacks and crates full of arms into the stable.

EXT. LONDON - LORD HARROWBY'S HOUSE - DAY

Through Brunt's p.o.v. across the street delivery carts are seen delivering sacks of vegetables and other supplies into the house.

INT. LONDON - CATO STREET - STABLE - NIGHT

LOFT

The loft has irregular brick walls, rustic timber beams and uneven floor boards. A wooden ladder descends to the ground floor.

16 desperate conspirators including Thistlewood, Davidson, Brunt and Tidd are spread about the loft unloading crates and loading weapons.

Brunt approaches Thistlewood who is loading a pistol.

BRUNT

I thought more were coming, is this it?

THISTLEWOOD

The numbers are sufficient Mr Brunt.

BRUNT

Maybe we should postpone the operation.

THISTLEWOOD

What, and miss our opportunity, I think not.

TIDD

Thistlewood's right, it might be months before they plan another dinner.

Suddenly they hear a noise outside.

THISTLEWOOD

What was that?
(to Tidd and Davidson)
(MORE)

THISTLEWOOD (cont'd)
You two check below.

Tidd and Davidson draw swords and descend the stairs.

GROUND FLOOR

They look out the door and see an empty street.

DAVIDSON
All's clear, probably a stray cat.

They sheath their swords and lean against a timber post. Davidson pulls out his pipe and lights it up. Suddenly they are grabbed from behind and their mouths covered.

Officers Ruthven, Ellis and Smithers climb the ladder. Davidson manages to yell out a muffled warning.

DAVIDSON
Police!

LOFT

RUTHVEN
We are police officers. Lay down
your arms!

As Smithers reaches the second floor, Thistlewood lunges forward and stabs him near the heart with his sword.

Smithers falls down into officer Ellis's arms who is coming up the ladder behind him.

Ellis immediately fires his pistol at Thistlewood but misses. The lights are struck out and the police make their way back down to safety.

GROUND FLOOR

Thistlewood leaps down the ladder shooting and swinging his sword at all who attempt to oppose him.

He makes his escape through the back window and is followed by Brunt and Tidd. The remaining gang members put up a brief struggle but are overcome.

EXT. LONDON - BACK STREET - NIGHT

A dimly lit back street of London. The four fugitives stop to rest and gain their breath.

TIDD

What do we do now?

THISTLEWOOD

It's not over yet, we still have Preston and Edwards. When the people see we have captured the cannons at Shoreditch it will trigger the uprising.

EXT. LONDON - THAMES RIVERBANK - NIGHT

The four men stop at the banks of the Thames and see that all is quiet.

BRUNT

No sign of Preston.

THISTLEWOOD

Edwards is our last hope.

EXT. SHOREDITCH - ARTILLERY GROUNDS - NIGHT

They reach the artillery ground and find it empty. Edwards creeps up behind them.

EDWARDS

Hey lads.

TIDD

(startled)

Jesus.

EDWARDS

What's going on? No-one showed up.

THISTLEWOOD

It seems we've been sold out by all parties Mr Edwards.

INT. LONDON - SIDMOUTH'S HOUSE - DINING ROOM - NIGHT

Sidmouth sits alone in a large ornate dining room. A candelabra illuminates his dinner with dim flickering light.

He picks up an almost empty bottle of red wine and fills his glass with the dregs. Suddenly, in the corner of his eye he detects movement near the doorway.

SIDMOUTH

Is that you Hobhouse? Fetch me more wine will you.

He continues his meal of beef and Yorkshire pudding.

SIDMOUTH

Hobhouse! More wine damn it!

He hears steps behind him.

SIDMOUTH

About bloody time!

CLICK! The sound of a pistol being cocked. Sidmouth freezes.

SIDMOUTH

Who's there?

Sidmouth turns to see Thistlewood standing behind him holding a pistol. Nearby stands Edwards holding a sword.

THISTLEWOOD

I believe we have some unfinished business My Lord.

SIDMOUTH

Hobhouse! Help!

EDWARDS

He's a little tied up at the moment.

KITCHEN

HOBHOUSE the servant is gagged and tied to a wooden chair, he jerks back and forth trying to free himself.

DINING ROOM

SIDMOUTH

What do you want?

THISTLEWOOD

It's obvious isn't it, I demand my satisfaction... Edwards give your sword to his Lordship.

EDWARDS

But.

THISTLEWOOD

Do it!

Edwards throws his sword on the table.

THISTLEWOOD

I think the ballroom might be a more suitable venue.

They walk through to the ballroom. Edwards carries the candelabra to illuminate their path. Thistlewood follows behind, his sword pointed at Sidmouth's back.

INT. SIDMOUTH'S HOUSE - BALLROOM - NIGHT

The men step into a large empty ballroom, a piano sits in the corner. Edwards lights the candles around the room.

Thistlewood places the pistol on top of the piano. The duelers take their positions in the middle of the room.

THISTLEWOOD

Engarde!

Thistlewood thrusts forward but his jab is effortlessly deflected away by Sidmouth.

SIDMOUTH

I've been trained by some of the best swordsmen in Britain.

Sidmouth goes on the offensive with a few powerful swings which are skillfully blocked by Thistlewood.

THISTLEWOOD

I learned my skill on the battlefield.

Thistlewood counters with a few heavy blows. The sword fight continues for some time with fierce blows being struck from both sides. In the background Edwards sneaks toward the piano.

Thistlewood receives a cut to the shoulder and pauses to assess the damage. He retaliates with a jab at Sidmouth's side. Sidmouth stumbles and falls to the ground. Thistlewood points the sword at his throat.

SIDMOUTH

Please no! Have mercy sir!

THISTLEWOOD

Say your prayers my Lord.

Suddenly, Edwards points the pistol at Thistlewood's temple.

EDWARDS

Drop the sword Arthur.

THISTLEWOOD

What?

EDWARDS

You heard me, drop it.

Thistlewood drops his sword. Sidmouth stands up.

THISTLEWOOD

Why George?

EDWARDS

I'm sorry Arthur.

SIDMOUTH

(to Edwards)

What took you so long? He could have bloody killed me!

EDWARDS

Forgive me my Lord.

SIDMOUTH

Mr Edwards happens to be one of our finest spies. We've known for quite some time about your little plot.

THISTLEWOOD

I'll see you in hell sir!

SIDMOUTH
 Hmm, perhaps you will.

INT. CHESTER - COURTHOUSE - NIGHT

The courthouse is dimly lit by candlelight. Harrison stands in front of the JURY and puts forth his closing arguments.

HARRISON
 Had I any intention of producing a bloodthirsty revolution, I would take the Bar and plead guilty. I wish not for rapine; I wish not for plunder; and however Reform may be called a nostrum, I say that whatever makes knaves honest and bad men good must prove a service to the community...

He pauses to wipe his brow with a handkerchief.

HARRISON
 I know there will be a verdict, and I hardly know that it will concern me much whether it be one of guilty or not guilty. I do not despair; my heart knows not despair; and whether the verdict be for me or against me, I say the will of the Lord be done.

INT. CHESTER - COURTHOUSE - NIGHT

We see the gruff looking Judge Marshall sitting at the bench.

JUDGE MARSHALL
 Gentlemen of the Jury, look upon the prisoners, do you find them guilty or not guilty?

The JURY FOREMAN stands and announces the verdict.

JURY FOREMAN
 Guilty!

Close up of a dejected Harrison and Wolseley in the dock.

MONTAGE:

A) Hunt with arms crossed in a defiant pose stares sternly through the iron bars of the prison window.

B) We see another prison cell with Bamford kneeling on the ground tending to a small cooking pot. Knight sits at a small table peeling potatoes and Johnson mends his jacket with a needle and thread.

C) Wolseley sits in front of the fireplace looking sullen, a glass of wine resting on the armrest. The ornate rococo furniture looking out of place in the large rustic stone walled prison cell.

EXT. CHESTER CASTLE - PRISON YARD - DAY

A small exercise yard in Chester Castle surrounded by tall brick walls and cobbled ground.

The men are all dressed in prison uniform. Harrison and Bruce exercise by walking around the perimeter of the wall.

Bagguley and Drummond entertain themselves by feeding a tamed pigeon.

A prison guard enters the yard with McInnis.

PRISON GUARD

You've got two minutes to say your goodbyes. The prisoners walk over to McInnis and shake hands.

BAGGULEY

Farewell friend.

McInnis nods in return. Then Bruce steps forward.

BRUCE

Goodbye Jacob.

MCINNIS

I'm sorry you got dragged into this Mr Bruce. I've left a signed declaration with the warden taking all the blame upon myself. I pray they see reason and let you go.

BRUCE

Thank you Jacob, God bless.

Harrison shakes hands with McInnis.

HARRISON

Goodbye Jacob.

MCINNIS
Goodbye Parson.

They embrace and shed a tear.

PRISON GUARD
Alright, times up.

EXT. CHESTER GAOL - SCAFFOLD - DAY

McInnis keeps his eyes affixed to the apparition of Mary who stands behind the crowd. A tear runs down her face.

The executioner puts the noose around his neck.

MCINNIS
Together soon, my love.

The executioner places the hood over his head, the platform opens and McInnis drops.

EXT. NEWGATE PRISON - SCAFFOLD - DAY

A large crowd of spectators and police officers surround the gallows in front of Newgate Prison. We move in to see the ominous sight of four nooses hanging from a wooden beam.

Behind the gallows stand the EXECUTIONER, his ASSISTANT and a CLERGYMAN. The executioner wears a leather mask and apron. Behind them lays five coffins and a wooden block.

Thistlewood is led up the steps to the scaffold. He appears perfectly collected and looks about the crowd bowing twice.

CLERGYMAN
Do you repent of your sins?

THISTLEWOOD
No, not at all.

Tidd runs swiftly up the steps and bows to the crowd with a hardened smile. He receives partial cheers.

Davidson comes up.

DAVIDSON
God bless you all! Good bye.

Brunt then comes up but is silent. The men are positioned under the gallows and the noose is put around their necks and secured.

THISTLEWOOD

I shall soon know the last grand
secret.

Davidson recites the "Lord's Prayer". Brunt joins him. The signal is given and the men drop from the scaffold.

Most die instantly but Brunt struggles for some time before coming to rest.

Thistlewood is cut down first and his head is placed on the block. The executioner skillfully amputates the head. The crowd groans with disgust.

He hands the head to the assistant who holds it up by the hair and exclaims.

ASSISTANT

This is the head of Arthur
Thistlewood, a traitor!

EXT. DOVER HARBOUR - PIER - DAY

The SAILORS raise their oars as the longboat drifts gently toward the pier. It is carrying the beautiful QUEEN CAROLINE (52), her small ENTOURAGE and a NAVAL OFFICER.

Beyond we see a sailing ship anchored in the harbor.

The sailors on the pier position the gangway and the Naval Officer disembarks. He extends his hand to assist the Queen ashore.

Cobbett steps forward and kneels before the Queen. He is surrounded by a great concourse of people waving Radical flags and banners.

COBBETT

Welcome home my injured Queen.

INT. WESTMINSTER ABBEY - CORONATION - ALTAR - DAY

The ARCHBISHOP stands before the altar with the crown in his hands. Behind him we see the abbey's pews packed with the aristocracy and visiting dignitaries.

ARCHBISHOP

O God, who crownest thy faithful
servants with mercy and loving
kindness, look down upon this thy
servant George our King, who now in

(MORE)

ARCHBISHOP (cont'd)
 lowly devotion boweth his head to
 thy Divine Majesty. Amen.

EXT. WESTMINSTER ABBEY - SIDE ENTRANCE - DAY

Queen Caroline hurriedly steps toward one of the many side entrances to the Abbey. She turns the door handle but it is locked. Frustration evident on her face.

INT. WESTMINSTER ABBEY - CORONATION - ALTAR - DAY

The Archbishop and assisting bishops move from the altar toward the throne, the DEAN OF WESTMINSTER carrying the Crown.

EXT. WESTMINSTER ABBEY - MAIN SIDE ENTRANCE - DAY

Queen Caroline rushes along to the next entrance where two GUARDS stand either side of the door with fixed bayonets. As she moves toward the door they cross their bayonets in front of her face.

QUEEN CAROLINE
 Let me in! I am your Queen!

They ignore her.

INT. WESTMINSTER ABBEY - CORONATION - THRONE - DAY

Behind the throne the Archbishop takes the crown from the Dean and gently places it on the King's head.

AUDIENCE
 God save the King!

The trumpets sound, the drums beat, and the Park guns fire.

The King looks over to his MISTRESS and gives her a wink. He then looks over to Castlereagh and Sidmouth, dressed as Knights of the Red Garter, and nods his approval, they nod in return.

INT. ILCHESTER PRISON - HUNT'S CELL - NIGHT

Hunt sits rugged up at a small desk in his cold solitary cell. He scratches away his thoughts on a piece of parchment with a feather quill.

HUNT (V.O.)

It is scarcely two short months since I had to record the death of one of the bravest men that ever lived - Napoleon Bonaparte, the late Emperor of France.

INT. ST HELENA - BALLROOM - DAY

Close up of Napoleon in his coffin. Mourners wearing black file past with tearful eyes. In the background we catch a glimpse of Mr Black.

HUNT (V.O.)

I have now the melancholy task of recording the death of one of the bravest women that ever breathed - Caroline of Brunswick, the Injured Queen of England.

INT. QUEEN CAROLINE'S HOUSE - BEDROOM - DAY

The Queen lies frozen on the bed, her eyes wide open, her lips slightly parted.

EXT. QUEEN CAROLINE'S HOUSE - DAY

Mr Black walks at a fast pace down the path from the house. A coach pulls up alongside him and he hops in. The coach speeds off.

HUNT (V.O.)

These are strange times... At the very moment the people of England and Scotland were bathed in tears, and absorbed in sorrow at the death of their much-loved, sincerely-lamented Queen -

INT. ARISTOCRATIC HOUSE - BALLROOM - DAY

A baroque style ballroom crowded full of half-naked, drunk and debauched guests. George IV lumbers after a giggling young beauty who ducks and weaves her way around the room.

HUNT (V.O.)

George the Fourth was cavorting,
half drunk, with his half mad
subjects in the metropolis of
Ireland. O tempora! O mores! These
are indeed strange times.

INT. ILCHESTER PRISON - HUNT'S CELL - NIGHT

Hunt stops to gather his thoughts, dips his quill in a pot of ink and continues writing.

HUNT (V.O.)

But I say there is nothing in these
unusual things to make us despair.
I am delighted at the prospect of
there being soon a great change,
and I laugh out loud when I see the
awkward and ridiculous figures
which our tyrants will cut when we
obtain a real Radical Reform in the
Common's House of Parliament!

EXT. SEEDY PART OF LONDON - TAVERN - NIGHT

From the p.o.v. of a spy we see Castlereagh leaving a tavern in a seedy part of London accompanied by a YOUNG MAN.

EXT. SEEDY PART OF LONDON - TENEMENT HOUSE - NIGHT

The spy follows them at a safe distance to an old tenement house. He waits a short period of time and then enters the apartment.

INT. TENEMENT HOUSE - CORRIDOR - NIGHT

The spy finds a door with muffled sounds coming from behind it. He gently turns the doorknob but the door is locked. He removes his pistol and kicks the door open. He finds:

INT. TENEMENT HOUSE - BEDROOM - NIGHT

Castlereagh and the young man naked under the sheets.

Castlereagh shrieks and sits up, his manhood propping up the sheet.

From Castlereagh's p.o.v. we see Cobbett holding a pistol with a wry grin on his face.

COBBETT

It appears I'm not the only one
with my pistol cocked.

Castlereagh, ashamed and embarrassed, quickly covers his manhood with the pillow.

INT. CARLTON HOUSE - ANTI-ROOM - DAY

The King sits on the chaise and eats sweets from a tray resting on his lap. He has put on more weight. Castlereagh stands before him and appears nervous and agitated.

GEORGE IV

Are you alright Castlereagh? You
don't seem yourself.

CASTLEREAGH

Do you remember the Bishop of
Clogher your majesty?

GEORGE IV

(chuckling)

Of course, who can forget that old
bugger, what.

CASTLEREAGH

I am being blackmailed for the same
crime.

GEORGE IV

Oh... I see...

CASTLEREAGH

They've threatened to make it
public unless I put reform on the
agenda.

GEORGE IV

I think we best keep this to
ourselves, don't you?

INT. CASTLEREAGH'S HOUSE - DRESSING ROOM - NIGHT

Castlereagh sits at his dressing table behind a small mirror. A bowl of water and shaving implements is laid out before him. His face lathered, he picks up the razor and commences shaving.

Suddenly a hand jerks his head back and in one quick stroke slits his throat. Blood sprays onto the mirror, in its reflection we see Mr Black.

INT. 10 DOWNING STREET - OUTSIDE PM'S OFFICE - DAY

Sidmouth is waiting in a chair outside the PM's office. The door opens and Peel exits.

PEEL
(bowing his head)
My Lord.

SIDMOUTH
Mr Peel.

Sidmouth enters the office.

INT. 10 DOWNING STREET - PM'S OFFICE - DAY

Liverpool sits at his desk signing documents.

SIDMOUTH
You wish to see me my lord?

LIVERPOOL
Please, come in, take a seat... As a consequence of Castlereagh's suicide I've decided on a cabinet reshuffle. George Canning will be taking his place.

SIDMOUTH
A wise choice.

Liverpool takes a deep breath.

LIVERPOOL
Forgive me Henry but I've also decided to dismiss you from cabinet, your tenure as Secretary of State will cease immediately.

SIDMOUTH

What? But you can't - I have years of experience - Who will replace me? The pathetic Mr Peel?

LIVERPOOL

Why, yes.

SIDMOUTH

What? You can't be serious? That young upstart wouldn't know the first thing about securing this nation... Why, if it wasn't for me our heads would be stuck on the end of pikes!

LIVERPOOL

I'm sorry Henry, but if this government is to survive another term, an injection of liberal sentiment is necessary.

SIDMOUTH

Bah! Liberal sentiment!

Sidmouth, restraining his anger bows and exits the room.

INT. WHITEHALL - PEEL'S OFFICE - DAY

Close up of Peel staring out the window, deep in thought.

PEEL

I have one final job for you...
Here's the address.

He turns to face Mr Black and hands him a slip of paper. Mr Black reads its contents.

BLACK

Are you sure sir? This is Lord Sidmouth's address.

Peel stares back out the window.

PEEL

Politics is a cutthroat business Mr Black.

INT. CHESTER CASTLE - OUTER GATES - DAY

SUPERIMPOSE: "CHESTER CASTLE, OCTOBER, 1823"

The PRISON GUARD opens the large steel door. Harrison, wearing his new black suit waits by the door carrying a small bag. The guard nods and Harrison steps into the bright sunlight.

EXT. CHESTER CASTLE - OUTER GATES - DAY

Harrison puts his hand up to his eyes to shield them from the sunlight. As his eyes adjust he sees Sally and his children waiting for him at the end of the path.

He runs toward them, drops his bag and embraces Sally. They all shed a joyful tear.

INT. WINDSOR CASTLE - KING'S BEDROOM - DAY

King George IV sits partially naked on a large armchair propped up by cushions and covered by a sheet. He is now morbidly obese and gasps for breath in quick succession.

HARRISON (V.O.)

And then let us see whether it is a man or a pig who sits upon the throne.

A PHYSICIAN pulls back the sheet revealing the grotesque sight of tubes inserted into his oedematous legs which drain fluid into large jars.

The King's breathing becomes more labored until he finally takes his last breath. The physician takes his pulse and closes his eyes.

INT. STOCKPORT - HARRISON'S HOUSE - BEDROOM - DAY

Harrison, older with graying hair, opens a box and pulls out a white hat with green ribbon. Sally gives him a bemused look, smiles and shakes her head. Harrison puts on the hat and shrugs.

EXT. STREETS OF STOCKPORT - DAY

Harrison walks down the cobbled street lined with tenement houses. He is joined by Bruce who is waiting on the pavement and also sporting a white hat.

EXT. STOCKPORT - MOORHOUSE'S HOUSE - DAY

They walk past Moorhouse's house and see him peering out the front window. He grabs his white hat, exits the front door, and joins them.

EXT. STOCKPORT - MARKET PLACE - DAY

A large banner hangs across the street: "Stockport's First Election - 1832."

A large stage is set up in the middle of the market place. Hundreds of men stand about talking, some carry election banners, others hand out leaflets.

They join Bagguley who is also wearing a white hat.

Barratt, now old and frail, shuffles toward them pointing in their direction.

BARRATT

Stop those men! They're planning a revolution!

The crowd looks over to Harrison and the Reformers. The Reformers brace themselves as two burly ORDERLIES rush toward them. The orderlies rush straight past and surround Barratt.

ORDERLY

It's alright Mr Barratt, no-one's planning a revolution. Let's go home shall we.

One orderly restrains him while the other fits a straight jacket.

BARRATT

Get off me! No!

The orderlies drag Barratt away.

MOORHOUSE

Poor fellow, mad as a hatter.

The all laugh.

HARRISON
So, shall we meet the Radical
candidate?

They approach the base of the stage where the candidates are
gathered. One man has his back to them.

BAGGULEY
Excuse me sir.

The radical candidate turns around. It is John Horatio Lloyd
wearing a white hat and red cockade.

JOHN HORATIO LLOYD
Good morning gentlemen.

BRUCE
We've come to wish you luck Mr
Lloyd.

HARRISON
If your father could see you now
sir.

They all laugh.

INT. COACH TO STOCKPORT - NIGHT

Hunt looks out the window of the coach. The passenger seated
next to him is a YOUNG LADY.

HUNT
This is my stop coming up. I must
say, I look forward to a hearty
meal and a soft warm bed.

The young lady smiles and nods. Through the window she
notices a crowd of people in the distance.

YOUNG LADY
Strange, who are all those people?

Hunt cranes his neck out the window on her side. He sits
back down, smiles and shakes his head.

HUNT
A few old friends of mine.

EXT. ROAD TO STOCKPORT - NIGHT

The coach pulls to a stop. Hunt steps down from the coach and doffs his hat.

HUNT
Good evening madam.

YOUNG LADY
Good evening sir.

Hunt turns to see several thousand persons from Stockport accompanied with a coach, a band of music, innumerable flags and banners and the committee of the Stockport Union with Harrison at their head.

Hunt performs a majestic bow before them and they return cheers. The band plays "See the Conquering Hero Comes."

CROWD
Hunt and liberty!

INT. HARRISON'S COACH - NIGHT

Hunt sits in the coach next to Harrison.

HUNT
Mr Harrison, I have made up my mind to no longer support male suffrage.

HARRISON
Oh?

HUNT
I now advocate both male and female suffrage, universal suffrage in the fullest sense.

HARRISON
(laughing)
You're a man ahead of your time Mr Hunt.

HUNT
And you're a priest ahead of yours.

They both laugh. The coach heads off into the night, many of the houses along the way illuminated in honor of Radical Reform.

FADE OUT.

THE END