

THE KING'S COURT

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FADE IN:

INT. TAVERN - BEDROOM - NIGHT

A window CREAKS open. A breeze blows in.

A cloaked figure climbs through the open window. He hits the floor, soundless, and rolls to a knee. His daggers flash in the candlelight as the flame of purpose burns in his eyes.

DANTÉS (late 20s with long brown wavy hair, clean shaven, athletic build) cuts his eyes from side to side.

He rises to his feet, takes a step, a floor board GROANS. He freezes. The bed squeals.

Dantés whips his head to the side. Metallic, supernatural NEEDLES appear beside him. They point at the bed.

Dantés prowls to the bed. SALINA (late 20s, long black silky hair) lies under covers.

Dantés sheathes his daggers. His NEEDLES disappear.

He skulks to the door. Opens it, just a crack, peaks down the lifeless hall.

He opens the door further, surveys the other side of the hall, finds it equally silent. He vanishes from the bedroom.

A cloaked figure descends from the ceiling, lands in absolute silence. SOMBRA (mid 20s, seductive eyes) throws back her hood, unsheathes her ninjato, ambles from the room.

INT. TAVERN - KITCHEN - NIGHT

ISHMAEL 30s, places a platter of Mediterranean Sweet Rolls on the counter. He wipes the sweat from his brow.

Dantés, shrouded beside a wall, observes.

Dantés removes a dagger, creeps into the kitchen, hides behind a counter. Chef strolls past Dantés.

Dantés rises to his feet, steel set to lethal purpose.

DANTÉS

Death awaits those who...

Ishmael spins, Dantés PLUNGES his dagger into Ishmael's heart, his eyes flare open.

DANTÉS (CONT'D)
Feed the enemies of my king.

SOMBRA

From the steps, sheathes her sword, disappears up the steps.

DANTÉS

Covers Ishmael's mouth. He lays Ishmael on the floor, soundless, wipes his blade clean.

He grabs a roll, takes a bite.

FOOTSTEPS in the background.

SALINA (O.S.)
Ishmael? Ishmael?

Dantés whips his head to the steps, to the door.

SALINA

Enters, she stands alone. She rubs her eyes.

SALINA
Ishmael... Ishmael?

Salina rounds the counter.

SALINA (CONT'D)
Ishmael!

Salina drops to her knees, her hand falls to Ishmael's chest, blood paints her palms, fingers. Her weeps thunder loudly.

Dantés, roll in hand, sits behind the counter. He takes in her agony.

Dantés peaks around the counter, Salina lies on Ishmael, oblivious to his presence.

He escapes upstairs.

EXT. TAVERN - BALCONY - NIGHT

Dantés stands on the balcony, stares at the moon, nibbles on the roll. His eyes drift to his hands, he shakes his head.

Dantés escapes into the night.

INT. DANTÉS' RESIDENCE - BEDROOM - MORNING

SUPER: SPANISH KINGDOM OF GRANADA 1327 (2 YEARS LATER)

Dantés slumbers next to AAMINAH (late 20s, long black hair, olive skin) who snores.

A KNOCK pounds the door. Dantés, dagger in hand, jolts awake, rolls out of bed, throws on his clothes and cloak.

EXT. DANTÉS' PORCH - MORNING

A MESSENGER, female, stands on the porch. The door opens, Dantés stands in the doorway, rubs his eyes.

MESSENGER

His Majesty requests your presence.

INT. CASTLE - KING'S CHAMBERS - MORNING

King LÉONTES, mid 30s, tall, muscular, light brown hair, grooms his beard as he admires himself in the mirror.

A gold necklace hangs around his neck with an emblem (a cross on one side, a Yin-Yang on the other).

Prince ARTURO, late 20s slim build, blond hair and pale blue eyes, mocks Léontes with laughter.

ARTURO

I have been absent for two years
and you lecture me on 'true' love?

Arturo's laugh rattles the walls.

ARTURO (CONT'D)

Please! True love is
indistinguishable from The Plague.

LÉONTES

The Plague --

ARTURO

Yes, both cause hallucinations and
are dangerous to society. One more
so than the other...

LÉONTES

Father would be disappointed to --

ARTURO

Dead men hold little relevance in
current affairs.

LÉONTES

Does the marriage rejection to the
princess of Castile pain you so?

Antonio shrugs.

ARTURO

Pushed me in a new direction.

LÉONTES

Your schemes in the dark have not
gone beneath notice. Collecting
property, establishing power you --

A KNOCK thumps on the door.

ARTURO

Your condescension is appreciated,
but no less motivating.

Léontes shakes his head. Arturo storms to the door, opens it.
Messenger does a curtsy. Dantés gives a slight bow.

Arturo exits, they enter. Messenger escorts Dantés to the
center of the room; she does a curtsy.

MESSENGER

Your Majesty, may I present,
Fernando Dantés to you.

Dantés bows low.

LÉONTES

Thank you.

Messenger glides toward the door. Dantés extends his arm to
hinder her path. He surrenders his daggers to her. She
accepts them, exits.

LÉONTES (CONT'D)

The cost of loyalty is high, is it
not, Dantés?

DANTÉS

My lord?

LÉONTES

I was thinking of Arturo and... pay
it no mind, it is a trivial matter.

Silence.

LÉONTES (CONT'D)

You do not have to relinquish your daggers when you enter my chambers.

DANTÉS

My liege, there is no reason to keep them on my person.

LÉONTES

Some things never change...

DANTÉS

No, they just grow older and hopefully less foolish.

They both laugh, share an embrace.

LÉONTES

Come, we must honor those that paved the path before us.

EXT. CASTLE - MARKET - MORNING

Dantés and Léontes enter.

FLORIN (early 30s, stocky build, dark hair) shops with DIANNA (13, long blonde hair, pale skin, big eyes).

Dianna measures a dress against her frame.

Dianna locks eyes with Dantés. Her smile captures him, he stops, lags behind Léontes. Dantés bows low, Dianna smiles.

Dantés gives a discrete nod to Florin, Florin returns the gesture. Florin pickpockets a man who passes.

Dantés smiles as he strolls past.

TYDUS (late 20s, pale skin, blue eyes, blonde hair, slim, but toned) lifts his goblet in the air, finishes his wine.

Tydus tosses the cup to the ground, enters a brothel.

Dantés shakes his head.

EXT. ROYAL GRAVEYARD - DAY

Léontes and Dantés stand in front of a series of graves with their heads bowed, hands folded in prayer.

LÉONTES

Great men are always taken before
their time...

INSERT - GRAVES

"KING LÉON, QUEEN SOPHIA, PAULO DANTÉS, ISABELLA DANTÉS."

BACK TO SCENE

Léontes lifts his head, grabs his necklace's emblem.

LÉONTES

Now, that we have a moment --

DANTÉS

My lord!

Dantés, dagger in hand, stretches over Léontes' shoulder,
BLOCKS an arrow with his dagger.

Dantés attention shifts to the wall, a cloaked ARCHER stands
defiant. Archer loads another arrow.

LÉONTES

What is happening --

Dantés pushes past Léontes, sprints to Archer.

Archer lets his arrow fly; Dantés DEFLECTS it. Archer hops
down the opposite side of the wall.

Dantés runs to a thick tree. He leaps, plants a foot onto the
tree, vaults over the wall.

EXT. GRANADA - STREET - DAY

Archer KNOCKS a few people to the ground as he scurries by.
Dantés hurdles over the fallen in pursuit.

Archer pulls a wagon into the path.

Dantés SLIDES under it. Dantés shoots NEEDLES at Archer,
Archer cuts around a corner, unharmed.

ALLEY

MERCHANTS line the walls.

Dantés turns the corner. An arrow SOARS through the air, Dantés sidesteps, the arrow passes by.

A crowd gathers between Archer and Dantés.

Dantés dashes up a wall, shoots a line of NEEDLES, they thrash Archer in his back. Archer plunges to the ground.

Dantés, dagger in hand, advances upon Archer.

DANTÉS

Choose your words as if they depend upon pleasing me.

Archer freezes. Dantés presses his boot to his head.

DANTÉS (CONT'D)

Silence does not satisfy.

Dantés glances over his shoulder.

LÉLEK (mid 20s, short hair, clean shaven) enjoys a meal with CRISTINA (early 20s, long hair, pregnant) and FERNANDO (10).

Lélek reaches into his cloak. Dantés shakes his head. Lélek nods and returns his attention to his family.

Dantés flips Archer over, the hilt of a knife protrudes from Archer's chest. Dantés scans the crowd, eyes gather upon him.

Dantés pulls his hood over his head, he vanishes.

EXT. ROYAL GRAVE YARD - DAY

Léontes stands by the graves. Dantés enters.

LÉONTES

Glad that business is behind us.

DANTÉS

Matters of state security should be taken more seriously.

LÉONTES

Here you stand, that satisfies me.

DANTÉS

Yes, but --

LÉONTES

Still your tongue so I may give you higher purpose!

DANTÉS

My lord?

LÉONTES

I want you to head the negotiations with the Kingdom of Castile.

Silence.

LÉONTES (CONT'D)

Dantés, the times are changing.

DANTÉS

Evidence points to the contrary.

LÉONTES

Yes, well... aside from that, words are the new steel.

DANTÉS

Do I... no longer serve a purpose?

Léontes laughs.

LÉONTES

Your query lands far from the truth! Any brute can swing steel. I need you for the battle of wits.

DANTÉS

But the prince... he could --

LÉONTES

The prince is more taken with pride than duty. He'll not suffer... More than a scratch...

DANTÉS

Has that day finally arrived...

LÉONTES

After tonight...

Léontes puts a hand on Dantés' shoulder.

LÉONTES (CONT'D)

Success will not be rewarded with hands slick with blood.

DANTÉS

My only desire is to serve you and the people of this kingdom. If that be with a tongue of silver... then so be it.

LÉONTES

Gratitude.

Léontes removes his hand.

LÉONTES (CONT'D)

I will announce your new station at the assembly tomorrow. For now, our presence is required elsewhere.

INT. CASTLE - KING'S HALLWAY - DAY

Messenger looks out a nearby window. Dantés enters, closes the door behind himself.

Dantés collects his daggers from Messenger, she exits. Dantés' NEEDLES manifest, point to an obscure hallway.

Arturo stands tall, confident.

ARTURO

Spare me a moment, Assassin.

EXT. CASTLE - INNER COURTYARD - DAY

A statue basks in the sun. Arturo ambles into its shadow, nibbles on a Mediterranean Sweet Roll.

Dantés enters, inspects his surroundings. His hand drifts inside his cloak.

DANTÉS

Darkness cannot shroud ill intent.

Dantés spins, throws a dagger into the shadows. Steel RINGS against steel.

ARTURO

You cannot overcome one above your station with brute force alone.

Sombra slinks to Dantés, hands him his dagger. He places his hand on its hilt. Dantés and Sombra measure each other.

Dantés accepts the dagger, sheathes it. Sombra fades into obscurity. Dantés studies her.

ARTURO (CONT'D)

Try to stay in the moment.

Dantés brings his narrowed eyes to Arturo. They fall upon the roll Arturo nibbles on.

Dantés wipes the scowl from his face, he slinks to Arturo, gives a slight bow.

DANTÉS

How may I assist you, my lord?

Arturo, between bites, hands Dantés a sealed letter.

ARTURO

In your wildest fantasy, did you suspect you would work for me?

Silence.

ARTURO (CONT'D)

I needed him removed to lay claim to his property, much less personal than what he set his eyes to...

Dantés cuts Arturo with his eyes, TEARS open the letter. Dantés' eyes flare open.

DANTÉS

This, is an order to kill the king?

ARTURO

That is the duty of an assassin, to kill people, or am I mistaken?

DANTÉS

This must be a --

ARTURO

When hunting such lavish game, one must be armed with the proper tool.

DANTÉS

It was you! You sent the --

ARTURO

I know not what you speak --

Dantés presses Arturo against the statue. Arturo drops the roll. Dantés plants a dagger to Arturo's throat.

A knife appears on Dantés' throat. Sombra's eyes blaze behind Dantés. Arturo shakes his head discretely.

ARTURO (CONT'D)

He still has a role to play.

Dantés furrows his eyebrows. Blood runs down the blade at his throat. Sombra does not budge, Arturo shrugs his shoulders.

Arturo reaches into his shirt, Dantés stops him. Dantés reaches into Arturo's pocket, pulls out a similar letter.

Dantés opens it.

ARTURO (CONT'D)

That letter, which I have another, states that you sent an assassin after His Majesty.

Dantés presses Arturo into the statue with more force.

ARTURO (CONT'D)

You're observant, the first was written by a foreign hand.

Silence.

ARTURO (CONT'D)

Take it to the king, if you must. He will see an unknown script, painting you a traitor.

Arturo touches the tip of Dantés' dagger.

ARTURO (CONT'D)

We know where that leads...

Dantés releases Arturo. Sombra lowers her blade. Dantés storms to the door.

ARTURO (CONT'D)

The king will fall.

Dantés plants his feet, stops in the archway.

ARTURO (CONT'D)

What remains uncertain is whether or not you fall with him, Assassin.

Dantés exits. A devious smile spreads across Arturo's face.

INT. CASTLE - KING'S COURT MEETING CHAMBER - DAY

A round table rests in the middle. Seven marble statues rest on pedestals around the perimeter. Colorful tapestries and paintings line the walls.

Aaminah, Lélek, Florin and ELOY (30s, bald, thick beard) occupy the table. Dantés enters, meets Lélek's eyes.

Lélek presses his palms together, Dantés returns the gesture with a slight bow.

DANTÉS
Have you visited our parents?

LÉLEK
Time is best spent with those yet
of this world.

Dantés takes his seat next to Aaminah. Eloy scowls at him.

AAMINAH
So, the diplomat of punctuality
finds himself tardy...

Dantés produces a vial with dark liquid.

DANTÉS
Matters of grave import required my
time and --

Aaminah snatches the vial, drinks the liquid.

DANTÉS (CONT'D)
Imagine if your mother and sister
acted with such disregard of --

Léontes, with a scroll in hand, enters.

LÉONTES
Thank you all for your attendance.

Everyone rises to their feet.

LÉONTES (CONT'D)
You may take your seats.

All, but Léontes, sit.

LÉONTES (CONT'D)
Time is a luxury afforded only to
the dead; so today, I'll be brief.

Léontes unravels the scroll, a map of the city of Guadix.
Léontes points to the map as he speaks.

LÉONTES (CONT'D)
Here, in the western district,
Arturo's scouts have located a Safe
House that the Outlaws utilize.

Dantés narrows his brow, Aaminah catches the gesture.

LÉONTES (CONT'D)
I have yet to find their
benefactor, but in time --

A KNOCK thunders against the door.

LÉONTES

You may enter.

A SERVANT enters with a tray of goblets and a pitcher. Léontes accepts a chalice Servant fills it with red wine.

Servant fills a glass for each member. Servant exits.

LÉONTES (CONT'D)

Ride out for the glory of the kingdom; be there by nightfall and as always, keep to the code!

Dantés, Florin, Aaminah and Lélek raise their drinks in a toast. Eloy leaves his grail on the table.

DANTÉS

To the code!

Dantés, Florin, Aaminah and Lélek sip their wine. A KNOCK raps on the door.

LÉONTES

Enter.

Messenger enters, does a quick curtsy, hands Léontes a note, exits. Léontes reads the scribe.

LÉONTES (CONT'D)

Hmm... Arturo indicates that Dantés can handle this alone...

DANTÉS

I... request Aaminah's assistance.

LÉONTES

Apologies, but your desire is denied. I have a task set for Aaminah's unique talents.

Aaminah smiles at Dantés.

All exit except Dantés and Léontes. Dantés finds his feet.

DANTÉS

My lord, we must break words.

LÉONTES

What clouds your mind?

DANTÉS

A heavy truth, but you must --

The door of the chamber SLAMS against the wall. A Royal Guard, VICTOR, 30s, enters. He leans over, pants.

VICTOR
Pardon the interruption, my lord.

LÉONTES
Find your breath, then tell me what spouts this haste?

VICTOR
A crowd has gathered at the Puga Estate. A noble killed a commoner, the crowd roars for blood!

Léontes puts a hand on Dantés' shoulder.

LÉONTES
We shall address this matter later and raise a cup to your victory!

Léontes exits with Victor in tow.

EXT. CASTLE GROUNDS - STABLE - DAY

Dantés pulls his horse from the stable.

DANTÉS
You enjoy a hard earned sleep?

The steed neighs.

He mounts the beast, SNAPS the reigns, gallops from the castle with haste.

EXT. GUADIX - ROAD - DUSK

A two story taupe Safe House, with a pair of GUARDS stand watch, rests down the road. A tarp shade cloaks vendor's stand in front of the house.

Dantés rides Raul towards the Safe House. Dantés pulls his hood low over his forehead.

The Guards spot him, load their bows.

Dantés sends a barrage of NEEDLES at them. His needles ring true, the guards plummet to the ground.

Dantés rises in his saddle to a crouch. He snatches his two daggers from their sheathes, draw them to his chest.

DANTÉS

Raul, now!

Raul PLANTS his hoofs in ground.

Dantés soars from the saddle, CRASHES into the front door of the Safe House.

INT. SAFE HOUSE - ENTRY FOYER - DAY

Dantés burst through the door, SMASHES into a Guard, knocks him unconscious. Dantés rolls on top of the door.

From the roll, Dantés lands a vicious kick on a Guard's chest, he flies into a table, DEMOLISHES it.

Dantés sends a volley of NEEDLES behind him, through his cloak, they stop a charging guard in his tracks.

Dantés spins, BLOCKS a sword attack with his daggers. The force knocks Dantés backwards.

Dantés rolls with the blow, stops on a knee.

The Guard takes a mighty swing, Dantés PARRIES the blow, with Guard open wide, he sends a dagger to his gut.

Guard plummets to the ground. Dantés studies the area, silence, sheathes his daggers, escapes down the hall.

INT. SAFE HOUSE - HALLWAY - DAY

Dantés slinks to a door, puts his hand on the door handle. Metal RINGS in the background.

Dantés whips around, a WARRIOR swings a sword his way. Dantés catches Warrior's sword hand.

Warrior pushes Dantés against the wall. Dantés reaches for his dagger, Warrior stops him.

Dantés stomps Warrior's foot, Warrior groans.

Dantés snatches his dagger, plunges it into Warrior's heart.

Dantés puts a hand over Warrior's mouth, sets him on the floor with ease.

Dantés checks both sides of the hall. Alone, he snatches his other dagger, steps to the door, KICKS it open.

INT. SAFE HOUSE - MASTER BEDROOM - DAY

Daggers in hand, Dantés strolls inside. LEADER (30s) stares out the window, back to Dantés.

DANTÉS
You knew this day was coming.

LEADER
Did you?

Leader turns, has a Mediterranean Sweet roll in hand. Dantés dashes forward, tackles him, presses a dagger to his throat.

LEADER (CONT'D)
Arturo sent you?

Dantés leans back with wide open eyes.

DANTÉS
Speak, and avoid riddles.

Two NEEDLES hover over Leader's eyes.

DANTÉS (CONT'D)
I am not beyond testing your works
against the influence of pain.

LEADER
Arturo paid me to destroy the crops
last year! Now, here you are...

DANTÉS
What prompts this madness?

LEADER
I cannot say, but here you are,
helping him get what he wants, or
standing clear of his path...

Dantés looks away. Leader's hand slides inside his shirt.

Dantés snaps his attention back to Leader, puts force behind his dagger.

LEADER (CONT'D)
Mercy...

DANTÉS
Thousands starved... where was your
sentiment then?

Dantés executes Leader. Dantés climbs to his feet, sheathes his daggers, puts his fingers in his mouth, WHISTLES.

He darts to the window, leaps outside.

EXT. GUADIX - SAFE HOUSE - DUSK

Dantés bounces off the tarp, onto the ground. Raul gallops beside him. He mounts the beast and takes flight.

INT. CASTLE - KING'S CHAMBERS - NIGHT

The door SLAMS against the wall. Léontes jolts awake.

Sombra, shrouded by a cloak, stands in the doorway.

EXT. CASTLE - GATE - NIGHT

Dantés gallops inside, dismounts, sprints to the castle.

INT. CASTLE - KING'S CHAMBERS - NIGHT

Léontes sits in a chair. Sombra stands besides him with knife to his throat.

INT. CASTLE - HALLWAY - NIGHT

Pockets of candlelight illuminate the hallway. Dantés rounds the corner, dashes down the hall to the king's door.

INT. CASTLE - KING'S CHAMBERS - NIGHT

The door POUNDS against the wall. Dantés rolls inside, stops on a knee. Daggers in hand, he inspects the room.

Salina lies in bed, Léontes slouches in his chair.

Dantés rises to his feet, bows.

DANTÉS

Your Majesty, please forgive my
intrusion, but this could not wait.

Silence.

DANTÉS (CONT'D)

My lord?

Dantés struts to Léontes. Dantés puts his hand on Léontes' throat. Blood paints his hand and wrist.

DANTÉS (CONT'D)
Léontes, Léontes!

Léontes looks up, locks eyes with Dantés, forces a pained smile. Léontes puts his hand on the back of Dantés' head, pulls him in close.

Léontes drapes the Necklace of Rule around Dantés' neck. Dantés' eyes open wide. Léontes leans into Dantés' ear.

LÉONTES
Fly...

Léontes' hand falls limp to his side. Dantés shakes him.

DANTÉS
Léontes! Léontes!

Dantés weeps. FOOTSTEPS echo in the hallway. Dantés scowls at the door, grunts.

Dantés runs to the bed, grabs the bedsheet. Salina, asleep on the bed, does not stir.

Dantés ties one end of the sheet to a bedpost, grips the other tight. Dantés stares at Léontes.

DANTÉS (CONT'D)
I will move heaven and earth to --

Guards burst into the room. Dantés spurts for the window, leaps through it, SHATTERS the glass.

EXT. CASTLE - WALL - NIGHT

Glass surrounds Dantés as he swings into the night. On his return, he soars toward a bedroom window.

INT. CASTLE - BEDROOM - NIGHT

Dantés CRASHES through the window, startles a COUPLE in bed. He brushes glass off his cloak, clears his throat, exits.

INT. CASTLE - HALLWAY - NIGHT

Dantés sprints down a corridor. A TALL GUARD and JORGE (20s) inhibit his path. They draw their swords.

A sword bears down on Dantés, he slides under it, in between the Tall Guard's legs.

The letter slips from Dantés' pocket.

Dantés springs to his feet, SMASHES Tall Guard's head into the wall. Tall Guard drops, unconscious.

Jorge leaps into action. Dantés catches Jorge's hands, uses the momentum to flip him onto his back.

Dantés puts Jorge into a sleeper hold until he passes out.

Dantés releases him, raises his hood, escapes.

EXT. CASTLE GROUNDS - STABLE - NIGHT

Raul eats hay with the other horses. Dantés dashes, mounts him. Raul neighs. Dantés rides into the night.

Victor and an entourage of Guards surge from the castle.

VICTOR

After him!

Dantés exits the gate. Victor, and several Guards mount their horses and give chase.

EXT. FOREST - NIGHT

Dantés dives off Raul mid-stride. He rolls to a stop, conceals himself in the bushes alongside the road.

He watches as Victor and his men make it around the bend. Victor and his men chase Raul. Dantés escapes.

INT. CASTLE - ARTURO'S CHAMBERS - NIGHT

Royal Guards BARGE into Arturo's room. Arturo jolts away.

ARTURO

Are you ignorant of the time, or simply inconsiderate?

ROYAL GUARD #1

Pardon the intrusion, Your Highness, but it is urgent. The king... has been slain...

ARTURO

What?

Arturo rises out of bed, throws on his royal garb.

ROYAL GUARD #1
I'm sorry... your --

Arturo, with a wicked smile across his lips, exits.

INT. KING'S CHAMBERS - NIGHT

Léontes' corpse rest on the floor. Arturo and his Royal Guards stare at Léontes. Arturo checks Léontes' neck, scowls.

Eloy, with a Royal Guard escort, enter. Eloy takes a moment to take in the scene.

Arturo snaps towards Royal Guard #1.

ARTURO
He's taken it!

ROYAL GUARD #1
My lord?

ARTURO
The Necklace of Rule!

Eloy smiles.

ARTURO (CONT'D)
Coward, he will pay for all the damage he has done. Does anyone else know of this?

ROYAL GUARD #1
No, but --

ARTURO
Good.

ROYAL GUARD #1
Good?

ARTURO
The kingdom does not need another reason to fret. The king slipped from this world in his sleep.

ELOY
Yes, Your Majesty.... The king.

The Royal Guards and Eloy kneel before Arturo. They put their fists over their hearts.

ROYAL GUARDS

Long live the king! Long live the
king! Long live the king!

INT. CASTLE - HALLWAY - NIGHT

Tall Guard and Jorge gain consciousness.

TALL GUARD

You alive?

Jorge pats himself.

JORGE

Mostly...

The Tall Guard spots the letter, picks it up, reads it. His
eyes flare open.

TALL GUARD

Jorge, read this.

Jorge looks at the letter.

JORGE

Interesting, what does it say?

EXT. DANTÉS' RESIDENCE - FRONT PORCH - NIGHT

A pair of Royal Guards exit the house. They stand on the
front porch, Aaminah leans against the doorway.

AAMINAH

Satisfied? I have not seen the man
since daylight...

ROYAL GUARD #1

We will continue our search
elsewhere, my lady.

Royal Guards bow and leave. Aaminah closes the door.

INT. DANTÉS' RESIDENCE - BEDROOM - NIGHT

Aaminah enters. She removes her cloak, it falls to the floor.

A hand covers her mouth. She grabs the person's wrist, throws
them over her shoulder, onto the bed. In a flash, she has her
sai at her intruder's heart.

AAMINAH

Your boldness hastens your death.

Aaminah throws back the intruder's hood.

AAMINAH (CONT'D)

Dantés?

Aaminah drops her sai, kisses him. Her hands fall to the necklace, she studies it, her eyes grow wide with alarm.

DANTÉS

The king... is no more.

AAMINAH

What?

DANTÉS

When I arrived, the king was slain.
The prince sent men, but I --

AAMINAH

How did you avoid detection?

Dantés furrows his eyebrows.

DANTÉS

Aaminah, this is me...

Aaminah gives a seductive glance.

AAMINAH

Indeed.

Aaminah kisses Dantés. Dantés caresses her body. He rolls on top of her. He kisses her neck, stops.

DANTÉS

I should not have come...

AAMINAH

Words... are not the best use of
your tongue.

Aaminah kisses Dantés. They hurry out of their clothes.

DANTÉS

Wait...

Dantés stops Aaminah at her undergarments.

DANTÉS (CONT'D)

If my hands were the cause of --

Aaminah puts her finger on Dantés' lips.

Aaminah kisses Dantés. Dantés pulls back, takes a step towards the door. Aaminah grabs his wrist.

AAMINAH

If Arturo moves to take your life.

Aaminah pulls Dantés close, his ear lies beside her lips.

AAMINAH (CONT'D)

(whispers)

Then only God can stop me from
having you this night.

Dantés kisses Aaminah on her neck, removes her clothes.
Dantés kisses her chest, works his way down to her navel.

Aaminah seizes the sheets, her MOANS grow loud. Dantés works
his way back up, kisses her with deep passion.

Aaminah rolls on top of Dantés, they make love.

INT. DANTÉS' RESIDENCE - BEDROOM - MORNING

Light filters through the bedroom window, Dantés awakens.
Aaminah, in sheer night attire, snores next to him.

Soundless, Dantés rolls out of bed.

He puts on his pants, throws his cloak about his shoulders.
He saunters to the bed, kneels beside Aaminah.

DANTÉS

I have known hell, a place where
life holds no value....

Dantés leans in, kisses Aaminah on her forehead.

DANTÉS (CONT'D)

I pray this path does not lead
toward that abyss...

Dantés climbs to his feet, takes a step, Aaminah grabs his
hand. He turns, locks eyes with her.

AAMINAH

I would not have it so...

Silence.

DANTÉS

The king offered me a diplomatic position before he met his end...

Aaminah's eyes flare open.

AAMINAH

You promised we would marry when death became a faded memory...

DANTÉS

Arturo snatched that end from deserving hands. He will --

AAMINAH

Remain and together we can --

Dantés places a finger on Aaminah's lips, shakes his head.

AAMINAH (CONT'D)

But, with you gone...

Aaminah caresses her thigh.

AAMINAH (CONT'D)

Who will keep night's chill at bay?

Dantés puts his hand on her other thigh, rubs the length of it. Aaminah tilts her head, makes deep eye contact, smirks.

DANTÉS

I impatiently await for the taste of your lips again.

Aaminah gives a feisty smile. He takes her hand, brings it to his lips, kiss the back of her hand. Her smile fades.

Aaminah puts her fingers on the edge of Dantés' mouth, forces a smile across his lips, she giggles.

Dantés shambles to the window, stands there for a moment, turns to Aaminah, drinks her beauty with his eyes.

A tear falls from her eye. Dantés climbs through the window.

Wood SMACKS against stone in the background. Thunderous FOOTSTEPS echo in the hall.

The bedroom door CRASHES against the wall. Royal Guards flood into the room.

Aaminah, jumps to her feet, sais in hand.

AAMINAH

Find yourselves removed, or find
yourselves heartless!

Victor steps in front of the Royal Guards.

VICTOR

You are summoned.

INT. CASTLE - THRONE ROOM - DAY

The nobility and trade masters fill the room.

Arturo sits on the throne. Queen Salina stands beside him
with the crown in her hands.

Aaminah, Eloy, Florin and Lélek watch from a balcony above.

SALINA

We have suffered a great loss.

(then)

But, by the grace of God, King
Léontes ruled his people with
dignity, love and humility.

Salina wipes away a tear.

SALINA (CONT'D)

There is nothing he wouldn't have
given for the prosperity of his
people. History will always
remember him well.

Salina clears her throat.

SALINA (CONT'D)

Now, with the passing of a king,
comes the end of an era, but opens
the doors to a new one.

Salina turns to Arturo, stares into his eyes...

SALINA (CONT'D)

With the grace of God, may he rule
his people well.

Salina crowns Arturo. She takes a step back.

SALINA (CONT'D)

Long live the king! Long live the
king! Long live the king!

CROWD

Long live the king! Long live the
king! Long live the king!

Aaminah, Eloy, Florin and Lélek exit.

EXT. CATALINA'S RESIDENCE - PORCH - ÓRGIVA - DAY

Dantés BANGS on the door. He cuts his eyes from one side to
the other, no one gives him a second thought.

He tucks the Necklace of Rule into his shirt.

MALE VOICE (O.S.)

Are you mad? You knock with the
intent to seize the place!

Dantés RAPS on the door harder. The door swings opens.

ANTONIO (early 40s, short hair, tall, muscular, menacing
eyes) blocks the doorway. He studies Dantés.

DANTÉS

Is this the Cruz Residence, house
of Catalina?

ANTONIO

No, it's --

FEMALE VOICE (O.S.)

It is, who calls?

A timid girl, CATALINA (early 20s, fair skin, long hair, hazy
eyes) flounces next to Antonio.

She pats Antonio's arm. She locks her arm around his elbow.
Her line of sight is just off center of Dantés.

Dantés bows.

DANTÉS

I answer to Dantés, I am a member
of The King's Court.

Catalina aligns her line of sight as he speaks.

DANTÉS (CONT'D)

King Léontes told me to come here
if ever I am in need...

Dantés peers into Catalina's eyes.

DANTÉS (CONT'D)
You're blind?

CATALINA
I am Granadan as well, but you did not state it aloud.

Antonio furrows his eyebrows.

ANTONIO
One would think that Léontes would select from better stock.

Dantés glares at Antonio, returns his gaze to Catalina.

DANTÉS
How remiss of me, I meant no disrespect, my lady. I just... I just... have nowhere to go...

CATALINA
You know my... my king?

ANTONIO
He must have fallen on tough times to give this such high purpose.

DANTÉS
Your tongue leads you down a path of misery.
(to Catalina)
Will you grant me entry? There is much to discuss.

CATALINA
Certainly, my servant, Antonio, will show you to your quarters.

Dantés enters, Antonio shuts the door behind him.

INT. CATALINA'S RESIDENCE - HALLWAY - DAY

Antonio escorts Dantés.

ANTONIO
What brings you here?

Silence.

ANTONIO (CONT'D)
Dantés?

DANTÉS

Best not broach the subject until
the appropriate time.

Antonio grunts. They reach a bedroom.

ANTONIO

Here is where you will reside.

INT. CASTLE - KING'S COURT MEETING CHAMBER - DAY

Aaminah, Eloy, Florin and Lélek wait in their seats and speak
among themselves.

Arturo enters, all fall silent.

ARTURO

Greetings, Assassins.

Silence.

ARTURO (CONT'D)

Recent events have saddened my
kingdom, but they have also spurred
us, the valiant, to action.

Aaminah, Florin and Lélek leer at one another.

ARTURO (CONT'D)

It is our duty to bring justice to
those that would shake our resolve.

Aaminah, Florin and Lélek give discrete nods.

ARTURO (CONT'D)

Fernando Dantés is an enemy of this
kingdom. I commission you to bring
the weight of justice on his head!

INT. CATALINA'S RESIDENCE - GUEST BEDROOM - DAY

Dantés enters the modest bedroom with Antonio in tow.

Antonio's hand slides inside his shirt, out comes a small
pickaxe with a curved blade. He swings at Dantés' neck.

Dantés, dagger in hand, spins and --

INT. CASTLE - KING'S COURT MEETING CHAMBER - DAY

Eloy grins. Aaminah's hand slides inside her cloak.

ARTURO
Who wants hero renown?

Eloy stands with a stern visage.

ELOY
Opportunity waits for no man. Where
should I begin?

Arturo scratches his chin. A wicked smile crosses his lips.

ARTURO
Start in Órgiva...

Eloy bows.

ARTURO (CONT'D)
Be sure to bring back my necklace.

Eloy smirks, exits.

ARTURO (CONT'D)
With this matter all but settled, I
set my sights to Castile.

FLORIN
The Kingdom of Castile, my lord?

ARTURO
Yes, their princess will learn the
cost of rejecting noble blood.

Arturo heads to the door.

FLORIN
My lord, our army pales in
comparison to --

ARTURO
Then I will go into construction,
with the peasantry as my mortar.

Silence.

ARTURO (CONT'D)
But first, a remnant of my
brother's past must be addressed.

Arturo approaches the door, opens it, stops in the doorway.

ARTURO (CONT'D)
Florin, I expect you at my throne.

Arturo exits. Lélek sips his wine.

LÉLEK

The change in the wind pushes us
toward unfavorable ports.

Aaminah leaps from her seat, snatches her sai from its sheath, dashes to the door.

Florin hops to his feet, grabs Aaminah. She spins him around, SLAMS him into the wall. A marble statue next to them sways.

LÉLEK (CONT'D)

Your hand strikes to appease wound
inflicted upon your heart...

The statue falls off its stand, SHATTERS on the floor.

LÉLEK (CONT'D)

Absent thought of its cost...

Aaminah points her sai at Lélek.

AAMINAH

There you sit with your tail
between your legs as your brother
is condemned to death!

LÉLEK

Properly cloaked death is never
seen before it strikes.

AAMINAH

I tire of your fucking riddles!

LÉLEK

Taking the stage before the
appointed hour invites calamity.

Lélek climbs to his feet.

LÉLEK (CONT'D)

I take leave to find a safer
passage for those absent of steel.

Lélek exits.

Aaminah turns her attention to Florin, raises a sai to his throat. He lifts his hands in defense.

FLORIN

Patience, Aaminah. The king's
dealings lead him to his own ruin.

INT. CATALINA'S RESIDENCE - GUEST BEDROOM - DAY

Dantés BLOCKS Antonio's strike.

ANTONIO

Ah, you are more than I suspected.

DANTÉS

Are you absent of sanity?

ANTONIO

Hardly, only heart.

DANTÉS

I took you for a mere servant --

Antonio draws a second pickaxe. Dantés retrieves his second dagger. Antonio swings, Dantés IMPEDES the attack.

ANTONIO

A man can serve more than one purpose, my friend.

Dantés pushes Antonio back.

ANTONIO (CONT'D)

The same as his words.

Dantés BUMPS his shin into the leg of the bed. Antonio attacks, Dantés BLOCKS.

ANTONIO (CONT'D)

If I speculate that you will hurt her, if I even hallucinate that you will so much as step on her toes --

Dantés attacks, Antonio PARRIES.

ANTONIO (CONT'D)

I will end you.

Antonio sweeps Dantés' feet from under him. Dantés CRASHES to the floor.

DANTÉS

You speak as if it will be easy.

Dantés raises his hand, NEEDLES materialize.

Antonio holds up his index and middle finger, waves them through the air; Dantés' needles EVAPORATE.

ANTONIO

Easier yet!

Antonio kicks a dagger from Dantés' hand.

ANTONIO (CONT'D)
Farewell, Dantés.

Antonio brings his pickaxe down and --

CATALINA (O.S.)
Is everything satisfactory?

Antonio stops his attack short of its mark.

CATALINA (CONT'D)
I heard the clashing of steel...

Catalina stands in the doorway with a hand against its frame.
Antonio and Dantés stare at her.

ANTONIO
Blanket the fires in your mind, my
lady. Dantés here tripped and his
daggers banged against each other.

CATALINA
Surely, Dantés, a man from the
court would know proper footing.

Catalina giggles, saunters away.

DANTÉS
I have never fought your like.

Dantés climbs to his feet.

DANTÉS (CONT'D)
You should be in the court!

Antonio mocks him with laughter.

ANTONIO
How much I would pay for your
youth... but I would not bid a coin
for your wits.

Silence.

ANTONIO (CONT'D)
You think he would put his
strongest in the castle?
(then)
He put his best to protect that
which is truly important.

Antonio turns his back to Dantés.

ANTONIO (CONT'D)
I am above the court.

Antonio strolls to the door, stops when Dantés speaks.

DANTÉS
Join me, help me put an end to
Arturo and his trech --

ANTONIO
I never raise metal beside those
who are unworthy.

Antonio exit.

INT. CASTLE - THRONE ROOM - DAY

Arturo, with a scroll in hand, enters.

Florin, at the window, turns to meet Arturo. Florin bows.

ARTURO
You a gambling man, Assassin? I
hear dice is your game...

FLORIN
The dead cannot be resurrected.

ARTURO
You willing to wager that?

FLORIN
What end do you seek?

ARTURO
Your unequivocal cooperation.

FLORIN
You have my cooperation --

ARTURO
But not unvarnished.

Arturo raises the parchment.

ARTURO (CONT'D)
This deed grants me ownership of
your property. Do I have your
cooperation now, Assassin?

Florin takes a deep breath, exhales.

FLORIN
Possessions, can be obtained again.

ARTURO
How about we raise the stakes?
(to the door)
Sombra...

Sombra enters, she drags Dianna in tow. Tear lines run down Dianna's cheeks. Florin's eyes grow wide.

ARTURO (CONT'D)
Does this prompt you to be more
accommodating, Assassin?

Florin draws a throwing knife.

ARTURO (CONT'D)
You think that is wise?

Sombra swings Dianna in front of her.

DIANNA
Florin --

Sombra presses a knife against Dianna's throat.

FLORIN
Kings do not threaten --

ARTURO
No, kings do not receive advice
from men in your station.

Florin cuts his attention between the knife at Dianna's throat and Arturo.

ARTURO (CONT'D)
It was a shame what befell her
father, but, to my benefit, his
sacrifice bred this situation.

Arturo shakes his head.

ARTURO (CONT'D)
It's a pity what loyalty costs
these days...

Florin glances at his knife.

ARTURO (CONT'D)
Perhaps a little more incentive is
in order.

Sombra locks eyes with Florin, his PUPILS dilate.

FLORIN
What madness is this?

Florin creeps toward Dianna. The knife shakes in his hand.

ARTURO
Resist all you want, but no one is
beyond Sombra's influence.

Florin flounders to Dianna, he holds the knife to her eye.
Tears run down Dianna's face.

DIANNA
Florin... please...

Florin's eyes well up, he bites his lip.

ARTURO
Assassin, now is the time to make a
critical decision.

Florin's knife inches closer to Dianna's eye.

ARTURO (CONT'D)
Refrain from action, then this girl
will have to browse for a new eye
in the marketplace.

DIANNA
Florin...

Florin sighs.

FLORIN
You have my hands...

Arturo nods to Sombra, she breaks eye contact with Florin.

Florin's eyes return to normal, he catches his breath. He
takes a few steps from Dianna, sheathes his knives.

Dianna takes a step toward Florin, Sombra yanks her back.

FLORIN (CONT'D)
This is how I am to be repaid for
my service?

ARTURO
Consider this another beaming
opportunity to express your
unflinching loyalty.

Florin storms to the door.

ARTURO (CONT'D)
Currency is a precious resource.

Florin stops at the doorway.

ARTURO (CONT'D)
So I will turn your estate into a
brothel if you fail. And...

Arturo saunters to Dianna, puts his thumb and index finger on her chin, raises her chin, forces intimate eye contact.

ARTURO (CONT'D)
This lovely virgin gem will be my
brothel's main course.

Florin's hatred seeps from his eyes.

ARTURO (CONT'D)
You can keep what you loot, but I
want what he wears around his neck.

Florin exits. Sombra makes her way to a corridor.

ARTURO (CONT'D)
Keep an eye on them.

Sombra stops.

ARTURO (CONT'D)
But keep your distance. An animal
is most dangerous when cornered.

INT. CATALINA'S RESIDENCE - HALLWAY - NIGHT

Catalina, with her hand on the wall, glides down the candlelit hallway. Her hand slides against the door frame,

She squares herself to the room, opens the door. Light filters inside, it reveals Dantés in deep slumber.

Catalina takes a step inside.

ANTONIO
My lady?

She freezes.

ANTONIO (CONT'D)
What need can be satisfied at this
end of the residence?

CATALINA
Oh, I... lost my way.

Antonio slides her way, takes hold of her wrist.

ANTONIO
This way, my lady.

Catalina peeks over her shoulder as Antonio leads her away.

INT. CASTLE - THRONE ROOM - NIGHT

At a window, Arturo admires the moon. Tall Guard enters.

TALL GUARD
My lord.

Arturo turns. Tall Guard bows.

TALL GUARD (CONT'D)
Our search efforts have been in
vain your --

ARTURO
Double your efforts! There has to
be a witness to his whereabouts.

TALL GUARD
Yes, my lord.

Arturo reverts back to the window.

TALL GUARD (CONT'D)
My lord, there is a separate issue
I would like to discuss --

Arturo swivels to face Tall Guard, scowls.

TALL GUARD (CONT'D)
On the night of Dantés' escape, I
found this letter...

Tall Guard pulls out the letter.

ARTURO
Anyone else read it?

Arturo collects the letter; scans it.

TALL GUARD
My partner cannot read!

Tall Guard laughs, Arturo feigns a chuckle. Arturo pivots to a nearby torch.

ARTURO
Goddamn loose ends... Sombra.

Sombra rises THROUGH the floor, stabs Tall Guard in the back. Arturo sets the letter on fire.

ARTURO (CONT'D)
Dangerous things like this cannot
be allowed to exist, you agree?

Tall Guard SMASHES against the floor. Arturo drops the burning letter by Tall Guard's face.

Arturo smirks at Sombra.

INT. CATALINA'S RESIDENCE - GUEST BEDROOM - MORNING

Orange sunlight illuminates the room. Catalina enters with a cup of water. She ambles to the bed.

Dantés sleeps on his back. Catalina pats the air until her hand finds the night stand. She sets the cup upon it.

She finds the bed with her hands.

Catalina takes her hand to Dantés' face; draws it back. Again, she takes her hand to his face.

Dantés' eyes flare open.

Dantés grabs Catalina's wrist, flips her onto the bed. He climbs on top of her, presses his forearm against her throat.

Dantés points his index and middle finger at her hazy eyes. Two NEEDLES protrude from his fingers.

CATALINA
Good morning. You going to kill me?

Dantés shakes his head. The needles DISPEL, he lifts his forearm, rolls off Catalina.

DANTÉS
Apologies, my lady. Sneaking up on
me is un --

CATALINA
Unwise?

Dantés opens his mouth to speak, closes it.

CATALINA (CONT'D)

Would you be so kind and lead me to the door? With our little tumble, I lost my position...

Catalina offers her hand, Dantés takes it.

He leads her to the door. Catalina feels for the doorway. She peers over her shoulder at Dantés.

CATALINA (CONT'D)

Meet me in the kitchen. I prefer to exchange words over a warm meal.

Catalina makes her way down the hall.

INT. CATALINA'S RESIDENCE - KITCHEN - DAY

A square table, large stove and a few counters decorate the unpretentious kitchen. Sunlight shines through the windows.

Antonio stands in the corner, nibbles on a piece of bread. Catalina sits behind a halfway finished plate of food.

Dantés enters. He gives her a slight bow, grunts. He looks to Antonio, who dismisses him.

DANTÉS

Good morning, my lady.

CATALINA

Now you resort to using your words?

Catalina smirks. Antonio lowers his bread, glares at Dantés.

CATALINA (CONT'D)

Please...

Catalina gestures to an empty seat, but is off target. Dantés takes the seat behind a plate of food.

ANTONIO

State your purpose.

Catalina raises her cup to her lips. Dantés' eyes fall to the table. Catalina lowers the cup from her lips.

CATALINA

Dantés?

DANTÉS

It weighs on my heart, but our king is no longer of this world...

Catalina's eyes flare open wide. Antonio lowers the bread from his mouth.

DANTÉS (CONT'D)

A lesser man, Arturo, has ascended to the throne and I... have no fealty to the man.

Catalina's hands shake. She returns the cup to the table. Her eyes drop to her plate.

CATALINA

I see...

DANTÉS

My lady?

Antonio places his hand inside his shirt.

Catalina covers her face with her hands. She burst into tears. Dantés leans back in his chair, eyes wide.

DANTÉS (CONT'D)

My lady, we all weep for our king, but he was --

CATALINA

He was my father!

DANTÉS

Your what?

Catalina gets up from the table, darts down the hall.

ANTONIO

Words fall from your mouth like shit from a pig's ass!

Antonio chases after Catalina.

INT. CATALINA'S BEDROOM - DAY

The spacious room has few accommodations. Dantés enters.

Catalina, with Antonio who sits by her side places a hand on her shoulder, kneels at her bed. Her sobs thunder.

Dantés slides towards them.

Antonio snatches his pickaxe, turns his attention to Dantés.

ANTONIO

Place heel firmly upon ground!

Dantés snatches his dagger from its sheath.

He stops his advance.

DANTÉS
My sincerest condolences...

Dantés grabs the emblem of the Necklace of Rule.

DANTÉS (CONT'D)
My lady, this means that you are --

ANTONIO
Your duty was to protect the king!
Prove yourself of fucking worth!

Dantés sheathes his dagger, stomps to the door.

CATALINA
Dantés...

Dantés stops.

CATALINA (CONT'D)
Please, my tears, make them stop...

Silence.

ANTONIO
Find yourself far removed!

DANTÉS
I am not prepared to invade --

Antonio glares at Dantés, pickaxe in hand. Dantés exits.

INT. CASTLE - THRONE ROOM - DAY

Arturo sits on the throne. Victor, with Lélek in tow, enter.
Arturo waves, Victor exits.

ARTURO
I respect you, Assassin, as much as
a king can respect a killer.

Lélek stands unimpressed.

ARTURO (CONT'D)
But, you tried to outwit me and
that was your downfall.
(to the hallway)
Sombra.

Sombra pushes Cristina into the Throne Room, she stumbles, but does not fall. Lélek's eyes flare open.

ARTURO (CONT'D)
Family of the court must get
permission before any exodus.

Sombra stands behind Cristina, puts a knife to her belly, one to her throat.

Lélek SINKS through the floor, REAPPEARS behind where Sombra was, but Sombra is gone. Lélek looks to Arturo, Arturo points to the ceiling.

Lélek looks up. Sombra hangs from the ceiling, upsidedown, with Cristina. Lélek takes a step towards Arturo.

ARTURO (CONT'D)
Continue and your wife makes a mess
on my floor.

Silence.

ARTURO (CONT'D)
You should look out the window.

Silence. Arturo gestures to the window. With fire in his eyes, Lélek storms to the window, opens it.

LÉLEK
I see an unsuspecting countryside.

ARTURO
Look to the sky.

EXT. CASTLE - ROOF - DAY

Lélek stares up, sees Fernando, tied to a poll, gagged, over the roof of the castle.

INT. CASTLE - THRONE ROOM - DAY

Lélek turns to Arturo with narrowed eyes.

ARTURO
Your son is unscathed. Let's hope
the weather holds steady.

LÉLEK
You play with fire --

ARTURO

Then let me extinguish such flames.
Do as I say, or we see how well
your family fairs with heights.

Cristina opens her mouth to speak. Sombra NICKS Cristina in the neck. Blood drips down her throat.

LÉLEK

Still your hand --

ARTURO

You can have your brother, or your
family. Both are beyond your reach.

Lélek cuts his eyes back and forth from Sombra to Arturo.

He exhales deeply, drops his eyes to the floor.

LÉLEK

You... have your retainer.

ARTURO

Your brother will understand.

(then)

I believe you have places to be.

Cristina opens her mouth to speak. Sombra pokes her with her knife. Cristina closes her mouth.

ARTURO (CONT'D)

Assassin.

Lélek considers Arturo.

ARTURO (CONT'D)

Bring back any jewelry the man
wears around his neck.

Lélek DISAPPEARS.

Arturo turns to Sombra and Christina.

ARTURO (CONT'D)

Go.

Sombra and Cristina exit.

EXT. CASTLE - OUTER WALL - NIGHT

Dantés scales the outer wall of the castle. At the ledge, he surveys both sides, clear. He climbs over.

The door to the walkway opens. Dantés leaps from the wall, grips the top of the stone, hangs over the ledge.

The Royal Guard inspects the area, strolls past Dantés. Dantés climbs the wall, enters the castle.

INT. CASTLE - KING'S CHAMBERS - NIGHT

Dantés enters, finds Salina, who sleeps alone.

DANTÉS
(whispers)
That would be overly bold to sleep
in a dead man's bed.

INT. CASTLE - BEDROOM - NIGHT

Dantés enters, slinks to the bed. A Man and a Woman sleep, Dantés shakes Man.

DANTÉS
Where is he?

Dantés eyes jump to a platter of Mediterranean Sweet Rolls that rest on the night stand.

MAN
(yells)
Help, guards!

Dantés scowls. FOOTSTEPS echo in the background. Dantés darts to the door.

INT. CASTLE - HALLWAY - NIGHT

Dantés enters, locks eyes with Jorge.

JORGE
You? Intrud --

Dantés draws a dagger, Jorge KNOCKS it out of his hand.

Dantés STRIKES, renders Jorge unconscious. Dantés sets him on the floor. Shadows of an entourage gather.

Dantés spots his dagger, reaches for it, retracts his hand, an arrow SLAPS his dagger out of reach.

Dantés glares at the guards in the hall. He escapes.

INT. CASTLE - LUXURIOUS BEDROOM - NIGHT

Dantés closes the door. A few torches line the walls and illuminate the room. FOOTSTEPS outside the door fade away.

FLORIN (O.S.)
Hello, Dantés...

Dantés, dagger in hand, spins. Florin, half naked with his hand behind his back, greets him.

FLORIN (CONT'D)
You bid for my death, old friend?

Florin reveals his hand, a throwing knife glimmers.

DANTÉS
Not this night.

Dantés sheathes his dagger. Florin pockets his knife.

DANTÉS (CONT'D)
You reside within castle walls?

FLORIN
Much has changed...

DANTÉS
The evidence lies in your sheets.

Florin glances back to the BLONDE, asleep, on his bed.

FLORIN
No... well yes, she is a new affair. Of more pressing concerns, Arturo contracts your death.

DANTÉS
This is one trait I am pleased to share with the rat.

FLORIN
You move against him?

Florin makes his way to the door, pulls Dantés along.

FLORIN (CONT'D)
Let us move quickly, and conclude this foul affair.

DANTÉS
You spill honey in my ears --

KNOCKS thunder on the door.

DANTÉS (CONT'D)
But my intent is no longer shrouded
in darkness...

Florin's eyes plummet to the floor.

DANTÉS (CONT'D)
I must leave this place.

FLORIN
I know a means...

EXT. CASTLE - BALCONY - NIGHT

Dantés and Florin study the distance to the ground.

DANTÉS
This does not hold much promise...

FLORIN
Dantés, you can only buy from what
the market has in stock.

Dantés cuts his eyes at Florin. KNOCKS rap on the door and
steal their attention.

ROYAL GUARD (O.S.)
Florin, open this door, now!

FLORIN
You in the mood to buy yet?

Dantés studies the wall. He puts his hand on a hairline
fracture in the stone. The fracture runs halfway down the
structure. Dantés unsheathes his dagger.

FLORIN (CONT'D)
What madness has taken hold?

Dantés smirks.

DANTÉS
In these most troubling of times,
loyalty is hard to come by.

Dantés puts a hand on Florin's shoulder. Florin looks away.

DANTÉS (CONT'D)
Thank you for yours.

Dantés puts a hand on the balcony. Prepares to jump, but
Florin grabs his arm.

FLORIN
From this point on, be prepared...

Silence.

DANTÉS
Keep a sharp eye on the clouds.

Dantés hops over the balcony, GUTS his dagger into the wall.
He descends towards the ground.

EXT. CASTLE - WALL - NIGHT

Dantés' blade SCRAPS against the wall, SPARKS fly about.

He plants his feet against the wall, his speed decreases. An
arrow WHIZZES past.

Dantés looks up, an archer loads another arrow.

Dantés spots the stable. He plants his feet into the wall,
springs from the wall to the stable.

EXT. CASTLE GROUND - STABLE - NIGHT

Dantés CRASHES through the wooden ceiling.

INT. STABLE - NIGHT

Dantés descends through the air, POUNDS through a support
beam, CRASHES into a horse; it NEIGHS and THRASHES about.

Dantés LANDS in a stack of hay. He grunts as he staggers to
his feet.

He shakes his head, CRACKS his back. He spots a bucket of
white paint under a table.

Dantés smirks, drops a few coins on the table, grabs the
paint, exits.

EXT. CATALINA'S RESIDENCE - PORCH - MORNING

Dantés surveys the area. He raises his paint covered hand and
bangs on the door.

Antonio swings the door open. He stares at Dantés, grunts at
his ruffled appearance.

ANTONIO

You assault my eyes. Did your steel
find purpose?

Dantés pushes past Antonio and enters.

INT. CATALINA'S RESIDENCE - HALLWAY - MORNING

Dantés shuffles to Catalina's bedroom, stops, stares at the
door. He raises his hand to knock on it --

Antonio shoves Dantés along.

ANTONIO

Keep pace.

INT. CATALINA'S RESIDENCE - GUEST ROOM - MORNING

Dantés enters. He trudges to the bed, falls on it, face first
and blacks out.

INT. CATALINA'S RESIDENCE - GUEST ROOM - DAY

Catalina eases into the room. She saunters deeper inside, a
floor board CREEKS. Dantés jolts awake, YAWNS.

CATALINA

Sorry, did I wake you, Dantés?

DANTÉS

Yes... no! Do not concern yourself.

CATALINA

Come to the kitchen. There are
things we must discuss.

Catalina leaves. Dantés rubs his eyes, climbs out of bed.

INT. CATALINA'S RESIDENCE - KITCHEN - DAY

Catalina waits at the table. Dantés, in fresh clothes,
enters. He joins Catalina at the table.

CATALINA

I apologize for my outburst
yesterday. I... I...

DANTÉS

Apologize for nothing.

Silence.

DANTÉS (CONT'D)

You are the one who deserves an apology. You have it, coupled with my condolences.

CATALINA

Gratitude.

DANTÉS

My lady, forgive my boldness, but why are you not in the castle?

CATALINA

Long ago... Arturo, sent me away being a shame on the family.

Silence.

CATALINA (CONT'D)

My crime was being born before my father was married...

DANTÉS

Ah. How much do you know about your father's court?

CATALINA

To my regret, not much. But, he noted that I can trust you.

Catalina holds her hand up to Dantés' face.

CATALINA (CONT'D)

May I?

Dantés leans into her hands.

Catalina slides her hand down his face. Her finger tips graze his lips; she smiles.

CATALINA (CONT'D)

I'm not sure of what I should expect, but you do not feel like an... I sense... something else...

DANTÉS

Deception is as lethal as a sword.

CATALINA

For some yes, but in your case... I find you pleasantly lacking.

DANTÉS

Last night, I attempted to claim vengeance, but my hands were unable to deliver... But, my efforts were not without reward.

CATALINA

Dantés?

DANTÉS

Without someone to take the throne, the aristocracy would claw for power, which could lead to war.

Dantés grabs Catalina's hand, places it on the emblem of the Necklace of Rule.

DANTÉS (CONT'D)

To a commoner, this represents a noble flaunting their wealth. To those of a higher station, this...

Catalina rubs her hands about the emblem.

DANTÉS (CONT'D)

Affirms your place in the world.

Catalina yanks her hand back.

CATALINA

I do not want it!

Dantés leans back in his seat with wide eyes.

CATALINA (CONT'D)

I am many things, but I am no creator of law, negotiator with kings and no enforcer of taxes!

DANTÉS

Arturo is a plague upon --

CATALINA

In exchange for your quarters, you will tend to my needs.

Catalina extends her hand. Dantés stares at it, shakes it.

DANTÉS

I will find a way to help you accept your destiny --

CATALINA

Get to the market before the vendors leave. You will find coin on the counter.

Catalina points behind Dantés, he spins, spots the coin purse. He ambles to the coin purse, opens it.

INSERT - NOTE

"I HAVE HAD MORE OF YOU THAN I CAN STOMACH. TAKE THE MONEY AND FALL FAR FROM SIGHT."

BACK TO SCENE

Dantés chuckles.

CATALINA

Dantés?

DANTÉS

Apologies, I will move as the wind.

EXT. GRANADA - CITY SQUARE - DAY

Arturo, with Sombra by his side, stands on a wooden platform. A loud crowd of PEASANTS (males ages 15-30) in dirty rags, gather. Arturo gestures for silence.

Soldiers and archers surround the peasantry.

ARTURO

I stand before you, to present you with a grand opportunity.

Silence.

ARTURO (CONT'D)

Join my army, become soldiers, smiths and be rewarded.

Silence.

Arturo gives a dismissive wave. The archers load their bows, FIRE upon the peasants. Screams erupt from the crowd.

A score of them drop to the dirt.

ARTURO (CONT'D)

Allow me to make this simple for the simple. Join them.

(MORE)

ARTURO (CONT'D)
 (points to the fallen)
 Or join me.

The peasants kneel.

ARTURO (CONT'D)
 Much improved.

EXT. ÓRGIVA - MARKET - DAY

The orange sun illuminates the Market. Indistinctive chatter and the exchange of commodities take place. Dantés strolls along with a small bag over his shoulder.

Sombra, with her hood up, studies his movements in seclusion.

Tydus sits with a PROSTITUTE on his lap and a cup of wine in hand. His sleeveless shirt shows his toned arms.

Dantés passes a bench. On the bench sits a WELL DRESSED MAN, 20s. He takes special interest in Dantés.

Dantés drops his bag. His dagger jumps into his hand, as he rushes Well Dressed Man.

Two wrist blades IMPEDE Dantés' attack. Well Dressed Man looks up, smirks at the fire in Dantés' eyes.

WELL DRESSED MAN
 (Eloy's voice)
 What gave me away?

DANTÉS
 You reek of discontent.

The crowd ERUPTS into panic. Eloy kicks Dantés in the belly, Dantés rolls backwards, stops on a knee.

The Prostitute on Tydus' lap tries to get up, but he forces her back to his lap.

TYDUS
 What's wrong, my love? It is only
 two fools fighting to the death.

Tydus takes another sip of his wine and watches the bout.

Dantés sends a BARRAGE OF NEEDLES at Eloy; Eloy BLOCKS them. Eloy SHAPE SHIFTS and slips into the crowd.

Dantés climbs to his feet, examines the crowd. He spots a MAN standing by the Blacksmith's Stand.

Dantés charges the Man and stabs him. Shock coats the Man's face as he stares into Dantés' eyes. Dantés peers at the reflection in a hanging sword.

The reflection of a CHARGING MAN catches Dantés' eye.

Dantés puts his hand behind his back, under his cloak, and sends a BARRAGE OF NEEDLES through his cloak. The needles PUNCTURE the Charging Man's chest.

Dantés spins, reveals his dagger was in between the Man's arm and rib cage. The Charging Man SHAPE SHIFTS into Eloy. Dantés stabs Eloy in his abdomen.

Eloy eyes the wound with disbelief, collapses to the ground. Dantés kneels beside Eloy, rolls him on his back. Eloy puts a hand on his wound.

ELOY

Who would have thought that... you
had the fortitude to kill me.

DANTÉS

I could not let you take me, not
before I fulfill my purpose.

SOMBRA

Slips into obscurity.

ELOY

Puts his bloody hand on the side of Dantés' face.

ELOY

This is only the beginning, Dantés.

Eloy's hand falls from Dantés' cheek and leaves a streak of blood behind. Dantés takes a moment to collect himself.

He surveys the area and finds his bag, gathers it.

Dantés strolls to the Baker's Stand, plops some coins on it, stuffs some rolls into his bag.

Dantés goes to the Man and places the coin purse in his hand.

DANTÉS

I apologize for earlier. I hope
this is enough to make amends.

Dantés takes a step away, but before he gets too far, he looks over his shoulder at the Man.

DANTÉS (CONT'D)
Please see to it that this man
receives a proper burial.

Dantés leaves.

Tydus finishes his wine, tosses the cup aside. He pushes Prostitute from his lap.

He finds his feet and follows Dantés at a safe distance.

INT. CASTLE - ARTURO'S CHAMBERS - NIGHT

Arturo sits at his desk, reviews parchments.

ARTURO
Any news from Eloy?

Arturo looks to Sombra, who stands at his desk. She hands him a scroll. Arturo unravels it, reads over it, chuckles.

ARTURO (CONT'D)
The fool fell short of his own
delusional expectations!

Arturo sets the scroll on his desk.

ARTURO (CONT'D)
Find anything useful?

Sombra shakes her head.

ARTURO (CONT'D)
Get to it, she must act in a way
that pleases me.

Sombra nods, exits.

EXT. GRANADA - STREET - DAY

Florin meets with Antonio, concealed in a hooded cloak.

FLORIN
Truth coats his words.

Antonio grunts, takes a step away. Florin grabs him by his arm, Antonio snaps in Florin's direction.

FLORIN (CONT'D)

The cost of information... is the
cost of information.

Antonio drops some coins in Florin's hand.

FLORIN (CONT'D)

Gratitude, I will meet you at the
hour we discussed.

Antonio nods, disappears. Lélek emerges from the crowd.

FLORIN (CONT'D)

Can one life be traded for another?

LÉLEK

In my lonely bed, the elusive
answer has pried sleep away from
weary eyes...

Lélek and Florin freeze. Lélek smirks.

LÉLEK (CONT'D)

I extend my praise. It has been
more years than I can count since
someone has evaded my detection.

Sombra, under a hooded cloak, stands with a dagger pressed to
each of their spines.

FLORIN

You aim to relay words that our
movements are being restricted?

Silence.

LÉLEK

We have not forgot our station --

FLORIN

Or it's cost...

LÉLEK

Our minds are set to purpose.

Lélek glances over his shoulder into Sombra's eyes.

LÉLEK (CONT'D)

We move to the desired end.

Sombra measures them for a moment, disappears into the crowd.
Florin takes a deep breath.

FLORIN
 Women are dangerous enough, but
 that one...

Florin stares into the clouds --

EXT. GRANADA - BUILDING - DAY

A white rectangle with two pillars on each side and a
 Crescent Moon on the side.

EXT. GRANADA - STREET - DAY

Lélek smiles.

LÉLEK
 The cornered beast uses memories
 from days long past...

FLORIN
 When the moon is among us, what do
 you think he will encounter?

INT. CATALINA'S RESIDENCE - KITCHEN - DAY

Dantés writes a letter at the table. Catalina, with her hand
 on the doorway, enters.

Dantés lifts his eyes from the page, sets his feathered pen
 on the table, his eyes drink her beauty.

CATALINA
 Dantés?

DANTÉS
 Present, my lady.

Catalina drifts to the table, sits opposite Dantés. She pats
 the table, her hand falls to the paper.

DANTÉS (CONT'D)
 Apologies...

Dantés retracts the paper. Catalina stops him. Dantés stares
 into her hazy eyes.

CATALINA
 What is it?

DANTÉS
 A correspondence.

Catalina's eyes light up.

CATALINA
To...

DANTÉS
Someone of unparalleled importance.

CATALINA
What does it say?

Dantés pockets the letter. Catalina places her hand on his.

CATALINA (CONT'D)
If the thought of lofty ears
frighten you...

Catalina rises to her feet, steps around the table to Dantés' side. She traces her hand up his arm to his face.

She leans into his ear.

CATALINA (CONT'D)
(whispers)
Then say it intimately.

Dantés turns, inches away from her full lips.

CATALINA (CONT'D)
What inspires your hesitation?

DANTÉS
I... I --

ANTONIO (O.S.)
I underestimated you.

Antonio enters.

Catalina stands erect, slides her hands to Dantés' shoulders. Antonio stares at her with suspicious eyes.

His gaze lurks to Dantés.

ANTONIO (CONT'D)
A lesser man would have taken the
coin and had himself removed.

DANTÉS
Your coin was not enough to satisfy
my purpose.

ANTONIO
But, it was enough to get by.

Antonio approaches Dantés.

ANTONIO (CONT'D)
Your unsuspecting words fell upon a
delicate flower.

Dantés rises to his feet.

ANTONIO (CONT'D)
Even so, mine should not escape my
lips absent of thought

Antonio offers his hand. Dantés clasps Antonio's forearm.

DANTÉS
Your words are well received. Does
steel accompany them?

ANTONIO
Do not mistake intent. I only deem
you worthy of trust, nothing more.

DANTÉS
Progress, I suppose...

Catalina puts her hand on Dantés back, slides it to his
shoulder. Antonio glances at her fingertips.

CATALINA
I am glad that bit of
unpleasantness is behind us!

ANTONIO
It is beneath heel, but not yet --

A KNOCK thunders against the door.

ANTONIO (CONT'D)
You travel heavy?

Dantés shakes his head. Antonio unsheathes his pickaxe,
glides to the door.

TYDUS (O.S.)
Within these walls is a man that I
would embrace as a fucking brother!

Antonio glares at Dantés.

DANTÉS
I do not keep such rough company.

Antonio opens the door, hides behind it.

Tydus (with an empty arrow quiver on his back, bow in hand) enters with his fingers around a cup of wine.

He spots Dantés, raises his cup hand to Dantés.

TYDUS

You there, man of fucking worth --

Antonio emerges from behind the door, SMASHES Tydus against the wall, KNOCKS the cup from his hand.

Wine paints the floor.

ANTONIO

State your purpose, or find yourself gone from this world.

TYDUS

Gratitude... that cheap wine tasted of piss! But, it was still wine --

ANTONIO

Find words for my question.

Tydus glances at Dantés.

TYDUS

You harbor a man that has committed an offense against the king. An offense worthy of death!

Antonio glares at Dantés.

ANTONIO

You killed the king?

Catalina's hand fall from Dantés' shoulder.

DANTÉS

I loved the king as a brother! My only crime was my tardiness to prevent his death.

(then, to Tydus)

How did you come by this?

TYDUS

The man --

(to Antonio)

You like your hands upon me?

Antonio releases Tydus, sheathes his pickaxe.

TYDUS (CONT'D)

I recognized the man you sent to
the afterlife. I too hold issue
with the man they call king --

FLASHBACK - INT. CASTLE - BANQUET HALL - DAY

Tydus (with an empty arrow quiver on his back, his bow in
hand) stands erect in the center of the room.

Salina, in a traveler's garb, enters. Servant, with his hands
full with her belongings, follows.

Eloy enters. With steps heavy with purpose, glares at Tydus
as he passes. Tydus gives him a cheerful wave.

Arturo enters with Victor in tow. Arturo struts to the
throne, sits. Victor stands beside him.

Salina exits, Arturo SNAPS his fingers. Victor hunches over.

ARTURO

(whispers)

Be sure to send her on her way.

Victor bows, exits. Arturo returns his attention to Tydus.

ARTURO (CONT'D)

Break words, or forever be silent.

TYDUS

King Léontes owes me money, he is
no more, you are his brother... You
owe me money.

ARTURO

Bold words!

TYDUS

Sounder logic.

ARTURO

How much did he owe?

TYDUS

One hundred gold, fifty silver.

ARTURO

How did my foolish brother accrue
such a ridiculous bounty?

TYDUS

His business follows him to the grave. I only seek payment for remembered actions.

ARTURO

Well, that presents a problem...

Royal Guards fill the room. Tydus reaches into his quiver, an arrow APPEARS in his hand. He loads his bow, aims at Arturo.

TYDUS

Mind your business, or the king will find his mind upon the stone.

ARTURO

Your hands are talented.

TYDUS

Not like the rest of me.

Royal Guards draw their weapons. Arturo raises his hand.

Tydus keeps his aim on Arturo, backpedals to an obscure hallway, glances over his shoulder, clear.

TYDUS (CONT'D)

I have no time for such petty things! Come at me and prove that you do not value your lives.

Tydus wraps his bow around his shoulder. A Royal Guard advances, swings his sword at Tydus. Tydus stops the sword by CLAPPING his palms on both sides of the blade.

DANTÉS (O.S.)

Wait a moment...

Tydus flips the man, takes hold of his sword.

A group of Royal Guards attack Tydus. Tydus PARRIES an attack, STABS the guard in the belly.

Tydus rolls, escaping a sword slash. He swings his sword, SNAPPING the blade of another sword.

ANTONIO (O.S.)

This smells of piss and shit! He strokes his own cock!

Tydus throws his sword into a guard's chest. Tydus runs, jumps onto the guard's chest, flips backwards (bringing the sword with him) and lands on the ground.

DANTÉS (O.S.)

His soft hands are set to the task.

A Royal Guard charges. Tydus crouches low, flips the man over his back, KICKS him and sends him THROUGH a window.

Tydus throws the sword and cuts the chandelier from the ceiling. It CRASHES into three Royal Guards.

CATALINA (O.S.)

I suspect he uses both hands!

Tydus grabs his bow, loads an arrow into it, aims at Arturo. Slowly, Tydus steps backwards to a hallway.

TYDUS

You will regret this.

ARTURO

Doubt fills me to the brim...

Tydus escapes.

BACK TO:

INT. CATALINA'S RESIDENCE - KITCHEN - MORNING

Tydus smiles from cheek to cheek.

DANTÉS

To hasten understanding, which parts are meant to be fact?

ANTONIO

His lips rattle with the thunder of broken noise.

TYDUS

Believe what you wish, that is the choice every free man must make of his own accord.

Silence.

TYDUS (CONT'D)

But know that the truth lingers in there... somewhere.

Antonio shakes his head.

TYDUS (CONT'D)

Fact is, here I stand...

Tydus glances at his cup.

TYDUS (CONT'D)
Thirsty...

ANTONIO
You come here, after a man has
tried to --

Antonio points to Dantés.

ANTONIO (CONT'D)
Kill him?

TYDUS
Good decisions tend to lead to
predictable outcomes. Rashness
shakes up the shit of a simple day.

ANTONIO
What do people call you, so I may
know what to say when you're ripped
from this world?

TYDUS
Apologies... I'd leave you to weep
with the other women.

Antonio slides a hand to his pickaxe.

TYDUS (CONT'D)
When the name Tydus falls from
mouth, I may or may not answer...
(to Catalina)
Depends on whose lips part with
such sweet song.

Antonio grabs Tydus.

DANTÉS
This fool lives dangerously.

ANTONIO
I've seen your like before, they
cannot be trusted!

TYDUS
Like a farmer, I spread my seed far
and wide at the anointed hour.
(to Catalina)
I simply plow different fields.

Antonio presses Tydus hard against the wall.

TYDUS (CONT'D)

My ambition rests in the pursuit of simple pleasures. I am the only man you can trust!

Antonio huffs.

ANTONIO

I have a query to make, even so...

Antonio drags Tydus to the door.

ANTONIO (CONT'D)

I cannot allow this shit stew to stay within these walls.

Antonio stops in the doorway, glares at Dantés. Antonio exits with Tydus, SLAMS the door shut.

TYDUS (O.S.)

Who would have thought an old man could carry such strength!

Dantés faces Catalina with hopeful eyes.

DANTÉS

As much as I would like to celebrate this minor victory, I have business in Granada.

Dantés takes a few steps toward the door.

CATALINA

Dantés, I...

Dantés regards her.

CATALINA (CONT'D)

I wish to feel the earth beneath my feet, the sun on my face...

DANTÉS

As you wish.

Catalina's face lights up.

DANTÉS (CONT'D)

But at night...

Catalina furrows her eyebrows.

DANTÉS (CONT'D)

We shall do more than walk.

EXT. ÓRGIVA - MARKET - DUSK

The moon illuminates the area.

Dantés and Catalina sit at a table. She keeps her arms crossed. Couples gather in the Market Center.

CATALINA
So, we have walked...

Dantés smiles.

CATALINA (CONT'D)
What scheme have you been --

Music BLARES in the background. Couples dance and spin about.

CATALINA (CONT'D)
This is --

Dantés takes Catalina's hand, leads her to an open spot.

Dantés spins Catalina, she moves stiff, timid, afraid.

CATALINA (CONT'D)
Oh, this is not for me...

DANTÉS
Do as the music demands.

Catalina smiles, sways her hips to the rhythm of the music.

She gains comfort, pulls Dantés in close. She places her hands to his face, keeps his eyes on her.

They spin, rock and sway as one into the night.

INT. CATALINA'S RESIDENCE - BEDROOM - NIGHT

Dantés lays Catalina on her bed, tucks her in. The Necklace of Rule dangles from his neck. He stares down at its emblem.

DANTÉS
Perhaps, action can spur action...

INT. CATALINA'S RESIDENCE - HALLWAY - NIGHT

Dantés enters. A cloaked figure prowls from behind him. Dantés spins, SLAMS the figure into the wall.

Dantés' dagger jumps to his hand, it FLASHES in the torch light. He presses it against the intruder's throat.

Dantés pulls back their hood.

DANTÉS
Aaminah?

He drops his dagger, kisses Aaminah with deep passion.

DANTÉS (CONT'D)
You should not have --

AAMINAH
Who is the whore?

DANTÉS
She is not a --

Aaminah scowls.

DANTÉS (CONT'D)
She answers to Catalina. She is the
daughter of Léontes.

Dantés steps down the hall. Aaminah accompanies him. Dantés
pushes her against the wall.

DANTÉS (CONT'D)
No...

AAMINAH
No?

DANTÉS
In the event that I fail, your
hands must be clean of this.

Aaminah opens her mouth to speak. Dantés puts his finger on
Aaminah's lips, shakes his head.

DANTÉS (CONT'D)
I will not be alone.

Aaminah lowers his hand, kisses Dantés. She takes his hand to
her thigh, uses his hand to caress it and her breasts.

Dantés leans in for a kiss. Aaminah smirks, escapes down the
hall. Dantés exhales, collects his dagger, exits.

EXT. GRANADA - STREET - NIGHT

Dantés, with his hood pulled low, slinks along the street. He
stares into the sky.

A tavern rest between two taller buildings. Dantés smiles.

A cloaked figure trails Dantés.

INT. ABANDONED TAVERN - ENTRY FOYER - NIGHT

A thick coat of dust clings to the bar and the floor.

Dantés enters, shuts the door with ease.

FLORIN (O.S.)
Hello, Dantés.

Dantés, dagger in hand, spins.

FLORIN

With a cup in hand sits at a lone table under a hole in the ceiling. Moonlight filters in.

Debris, from the hole, falls, crashes into his shoulder.

Florin twirls a throwing knife on the table. Several cups lie about on the floor.

Dantés studies the area, sheaths his dagger, joins Florin.

DANTÉS
Gratitude, for meeting --

FLORIN
Much has changed...

DANTÉS
You only drink during the best, or
worst of times...

Florin finishes his wine. He tosses the cup aside.

DANTÉS (CONT'D)
What is your next move?

Florin cuts his eyes at Dantés.

Dantés jumps to his feet, makes his way to the door. At the door, Dantés reaches for the door handle.

Dantés retracts his hand. The handle glycines.

DANTÉS (CONT'D)
You poisoned it...

Dantés regards Florin.

DANTÉS (CONT'D)
Much has changed.

Florin snatches another throwing knives from his cloak.

DANTÉS (CONT'D)
So be it.

Dantés unsheathes his dagger, NEEDLES materialize around him.

GOLDEN PARTICLES float past Dantés' eyes. Dantés covers his nose and mouth. His needles VANISH.

FLORIN
How long can you fight absent air?

Florin rushes Dantés, throws two knives at Dantés. Two knives jump into Florin's hands.

Florin slashes at Dantés, Dantés rolls forward to a crouch.

From the crouch, Dantés slashes at Florin's ankles. Florin hops, sends a boot to Dantés' face.

Dantés takes the hit, rolls backwards to a kneeling position.

Florin springs on him, cuts down at Dantés.

Dantés BLOCKS the knives with his dagger.

Dantés climbs to his feet. Florin knees him in the gut. Dantés exhales, takes a breath, gags.

Florin stabs at him, Dantés rolls out of the way.

Dantés finds his feet. He plummets to a knee, covers his mouth as he vomits blood. Blood seeps between his fingers.

Tears drain from Dantés eyes.

FLORIN (CONT'D)
Dianna is grateful.

Dantés locks eyes with Florin.

Florin charges, slashes at Dantés.

Lélek RISES from the floor, IMPEDES Florin's attack.

FLORIN (CONT'D)
Lélek?

Florin's golden poison EVAPORATES.

LÉLEK

I stand among fools who would run
in desert heat!

FLORIN

Lélek, if we do not --

Lélek sweeps Florin's feet from under him, pummels him in the chest. Florin curls into the fetal position.

LÉLEK

To think that I would choose which
family is more important...

Dantés coughs, wipes the blood from his mouth.

DANTÉS

Gratitude, for --

Lélek roundhouse kicks Dantés in the chest. Dantés smashes to the floor, dust cumulates in the air.

LÉLEK

A court divided...

Lélek points his short sword at Florin.

LÉLEK (CONT'D)

Just because we have been driven to
a ledge, does that mean our only
option is to reach for the clouds?

Lélek points his sword at Dantés.

LÉLEK (CONT'D)

You visit father's grave, yet you
did not know the man.

In the background, the front door CRASHES against the stone wall. Aminah, cloaked, sais in hand, enters.

Her eyes flare open in alarm. Lélek glances at his sword, connects eyes with Aminah.

LÉLEK (CONT'D)

Still your hand --

Lélek's PUPILS dilate, he freezes. Florin rises to his feet, lunges for Dantés.

Lélek steps in his path, takes the knife in the belly.

DANTÉS

No!

Dantés climbs to a knee, hunches over, vomits blood.

Aaminah rushes into the fray. Lélek grabs Florin's wrist, holds him in place.

Aaminah plunges her sai into Florin's spine. Together, Florin and Lélek crash to the floor. Lélek's eyes return to normal.

Dantés sears Aaminah with his eyes.

LÉLEK (O.S.)

Dantés...

Dantés crawls to Lélek, he takes Lélek's hand. Tears brim in Dantés' eyes.

LÉLEK (CONT'D)

Do not let them fall...

Lélek's hand grows limp, Dantés let's go, it falls to the floor. Dantés collapses beside Lélek.

AAMINAH

Dantés!

Aaminah rushes to his side, comforts him.

FLORIN (O.S.)

My friend...

Dantés and Aaminah turn their attention to Florin. Aaminah dashes to him, thrusts a sai at his throat.

DANTÉS

Hold...

Aaminah stops inches from Florin's throat. Florin ignores her, he raises his fist in the air.

FLORIN

Be prepared...

Florin's fist drops, Lantana berries scatter to the floor.

Dantés points to the berries, he falls unconscious.

Aaminah gathers the dispersed berries. She takes them into her mouth, chews them up.

She opens Dantés' mouth, puts her lips to his. She leans back, lifts his head, massages his throat.

Dantés' eyes flare open. Relief washes over Aaminah.

AAMINAH

Forgive me... I'm so sorry...

Dantés covers his face, weeps. Aaminah, at a loss for words, places her hand on his arm.

DANTÉS

This ends, tonight.

Tears trek down Dantés' face. He struggles to rise to a sitting position. Aaminah helps him to his feet.

Dantés takes a step, stumbles, Aaminah catches him.

AAMINAH

Not this night...

EXT. GRANADA - STREET - NIGHT

Dantés, with his arm around Aaminah, wobbles outside. Tydus, with a poster in his hand, makes his way to them.

TYDUS

Did this beauty's loving leave you
in this poor condition?

Dantés glares at Tydus.

TYDUS (CONT'D)

Feast your eyes on this.

Tydus hands Dantés the poster.

INSERT - POSTER

A poster in Dantés' likeness.

BACK TO SCENE

Dantés drops the poster, reaches for his dagger. Aaminah snatches her sai.

Tydus grabs Dantés' wrist, locks eyes with him.

TYDUS

I pursue one debt at a time.

Dantés smirks.

TYDUS (CONT'D)

Keep to the shadows, everyone is
not as honorable as I.

AAMINAH

You know not who you speak with.
(then)
Attend to the men inside.

INT. CATALINA'S RESIDENCE - KITCHEN - NIGHT

Catalina sits at the table. The door BURST open. Tydus leads
as Aaminah helps a semi-conscious Dantés inside.

CATALINA

Antonio?

TYDUS

A more attractive man stands --

CATALINA

Dantés?

Aaminah scowls. Tydus eyes Dantés with disgust.

TYDUS

Your eyes must be broken -- Oh...

AAMINAH

We need help!

Catalina rushes to Aaminah. She feels for Dantés, Aaminah
grabs her sai, notices Catalina's eyes.

CATALINA

This way.

Catalina leads them down the hall.

EXT. CATALINA'S RESIDENCE - BACKYARD - NIGHT

Catalina, with a pale in hand, steps to the rushing water of
a creek. She drops to her knees, fills the pale with water.

AAMINAH (O.S.)

What is the nature of your
interests in Dantés?

Catalina freezes.

CATALINA

I... he is my father's --

AAMINAH

Allow me to make this as clear as
the air between us.

Aaminah steps to Catalina, pokes the tip of her sai to Catalina's forehead, traces down her nose, her lips, stops at the bottom of her chin.

Aaminah lifts Catalina's chin.

AAMINAH (CONT'D)

Do not overreach.

Aaminah dips a cloth in the water, leaves.

INT. CATALINA'S RESIDENCE - GUEST BEDROOM - NIGHT

Dantés, with a damp cloth on his forehead, sleeps on the bed. Aaminah places her hand on his cheek, stares at him with compassionate eyes.

She makes her way to the door, stops, glances back at Dantés. Tydus puts a hand on Aaminah's arm. With sharp eyes, she snaps in his direction.

TYDUS

Your departure is a disgrace.

Aaminah slaps Tydus' arm away.

AAMINAH

My prolonged absence would draw
unwarranted attention.

Catalina, with a bucket of water, makes her way to the room, feels for the doorway, finds Aaminah's arm, she hesitates.

Aaminah grabs Catalina's hand, places a short sword and a throwing knife in them. Catalina rubs her hand along the steel of the blades.

CATALINA

What are these things?

AAMINAH

Mementos...

Aaminah vanishes. Catalina turns to Tydus, he licks his lips.

CATALINA

If Antonio were to discover --

TYDUS

I need not the problems that
accompany the brute. I go to more
accommodating flesh.

INT. CASTLE - ARTURO'S CHAMBERS - DAY

Arturo and Victor study a map of The Kingdom of Castile.
Arturo points to the map as he speaks.

ARTURO

It will be a double envelopment.
Our peasant force will advance
here, serve as a distraction.

VICTOR

Taking most of the casualties...

ARTURO

When can they move?

VICTOR

For the best possible outcome... A
month, at the earliest --

ARTURO

In two weeks, be prepared to --

Sombra stands in the doorway, scroll in hand.

ARTURO (CONT'D)

Leave us.

Victor bows, exits. Arturo motions Sombra inside. She
approaches the desk.

Sombra hands Arturo the scroll. He unravels and reads it.

Arturo sets the scroll on the desk. He climbs to his feet,
steps beside Sombra, kisses her on the back of her neck.
Sombra stands unresponsive.

ARTURO (CONT'D)

Lie on the bed.

Sombra lies on the bed. Arturo struts to the bed, takes off
her clothes. He disrobes.

ARTURO (CONT'D)

Consider yourself privileged that a
king will make love to you.

Arturo climbs on top of Sombra, kisses her.

INT. CATALINA'S RESIDENCE - GUEST BEDROOM - NIGHT

Catalina, with her back to Dantés, sits on the edge of the bed. Dantés stirs awake, stares at Catalina's back.

He rises, groans, Catalina turns, places her hands on his shoulders and guides him back down.

DANTÉS

I feel myself slipping into hell...

Dantés sobs. Catalina finds his arm, slides her hand down to his hand, holds it firm.

DANTÉS (CONT'D)

Life holds no value, and can be
cast to the wind...

Catalina squeezes his fingers.

CATALINA

They lived protecting that which
held all import --

DANTÉS

They died because I failed them...

Silence. Catalina digs into her pockets, takes out a short sword and a throwing knife.

CATALINA

She had these on her person two
nights past...

Catalina hands Dantés the weapons. He accepts them, rubs his fingertips along the steel of each.

Dantés rises from the bed. Moonlight reflects off the knife.

CATALINA (CONT'D)

Dantés...

Dantés exits.

EXT. CATALINA'S RESIDENCE - BACKYARD - NIGHT

The rushing water of the creek fills the night air. The throwing knife and the short sword stick up from the ground.

Dantés, with a cup of wine, sits on a large rock, glues his eyes to the moon.

He raises his cup to the sky.

DANTÉS

To the code...

Dantés lowers his goblet, clears his throat.

DANTÉS (CONT'D)

To the court.

Dantés finishes his wine.

EXT. CATALINA'S RESIDENCE - PORCH - NIGHT

Dantés opens the door, Catalina, with a bucket in her hand, stands in the doorway. Dantés eyes fall upon her shapely legs, then ascend to her angelic face.

CATALINA

Dantés?

DANTÉS

My lady.

Catalina offers her hand to Dantés.

CATALINA

I wish to wash away the sorrow of recent events.

INT. BATHHOUSE - NIGHT

Dantés sets a red hot stone, into the water; the water SIZZLES. Catalina dips her toe into the water, smiles.

CATALINA

Delightful.

DANTÉS

If you need anything.

Dantés turns around. Catalina's clothes hit the ground. Dantés stops, heads to the main house. Catalina steps into the water, sits.

DANTÉS (CONT'D)

Can I lay trust in you?

CATALINA

You know the answer.

Dantés returns to the tub, turns his back to Catalina, sits, closes his eyes.

Antonio, with an apple in hand, stands in the doorway.

DANTÉS

Long, long ago, King Léontes asked
me to kill a man, a chef.

Dantés exhales.

DANTÉS (CONT'D)

He told me that the man aided the
Outlaws. That was all I needed to
know. Without hesitation, I...

Antonio leaves.

DANTÉS (CONT'D)

When the king married Salina, I
knew the truth...

Catalina puts her hand on the back of Dantés' arm.

DANTÉS (CONT'D)

In light of this, I have made it my
life's ambition to save someone
free of fault.

Catalina smiles.

DANTÉS (CONT'D)

One life does not equal another,
but on my path to redemption, this
would be a good place to start...

Dantés collects Catalina's clothes.

DANTÉS (CONT'D)

Florin has given me that chance.

Dantés climbs to his feet.

DANTÉS (CONT'D)

I will gather your robe.

CATALINA

At your convenience, please acquire
my lavender scented oil.

DANTÉS

Lavender? That is a rare scent in
these parts...

Silence.

DANTÉS (CONT'D)
At your request, my lady.

INT. BATHHOUSE - NIGHT

Dantés, in the Lotus position, sits with his back to Catalina. Her robe rests atop his lap.

A large vial rests on the edge of the stone tub. Catalina runs a damp cloth across her shoulders.

Catalina climbs to her feet. Her wet hair sticks to her back.

Catalina climbs out of the water, stands behind Dantés. She turns her back to him. Dantés rises to his feet, drapes the robe about her shoulders.

CATALINA
Gratitude.

Catalina offers her hand, Dantés takes it.

EXT. CATALINA'S RESIDENCE - BACKYARD - NIGHT

At the foot of the house, Dantés takes a high step onto the porch. Catalina slams her shin into the step and falls.

CATALINA
Ah!

Dantés catches her before she hits the porch.

CATALINA (CONT'D)
It's minor, I was more frightened
than any --

Dantés scoops her up in his arms.

DANTÉS
The first action we take, after an
offense, will have the greatest
impact on the offended.

Dantés sniffs, smiles. Catalina blushes.

Dantés carries her inside the house.

INT. CATALINA'S RESIDENCE - CATALINA'S BEDROOM - NIGHT

Dantés carries Catalina to her bed, lays her down.

DANTÉS

May your dreams be peaceful so that
you may sleep famously tonight.

Dantés turns to leave, Catalina grabs his wrist. Dantés
turns, she pulls him to the bed.

Catalina kisses him, Dantés freezes. He leans back, gazes
into her hazy eyes.

His lips smother hers, he matches her intensity.

Catalina opens her robe, puts his hand on her shapely thighs.
Dantés kisses Catalina on her neck.

Dantés pulls back, stares at Catalina. He looks to the side
for a moment, gets up, heads to the door.

CATALINA

Dantés... wait! I --

Dantés stops in the doorway.

DANTÉS

Sleep well... my lady.

Dantés exits.

Catalina crosses her legs, rubs her calf against her shin,
bangs her head against her pillow.

INT. CATALINA'S RESIDENCE - KITCHEN - MORNING

Dantés sits at the table with Catalina. They eat in silence.

CATALINA

Dantés...

ANTONIO (O.S.)

I bring news.

Antonio enters.

ANTONIO (CONT'D)

The king will inspect his army at
the Academy. We take him upon his
return to the castle.

DANTÉS

You look disappointed...

ANTONIO

This truth makes it a little harder
to justify killing you.

DANTÉS

Good form.

Dantés climbs to his feet. He and Antonio head to the door.

CATALINA

Dantés...

Dantés and Antonio face Catalina.

DANTÉS

My lady?

Silence.

ANTONIO

Blanket the fires of your mind. I
will not allow his rash behavior to
invite calamity.

Dantés and Antonio exit.

EXT. COUNTRYSIDE - ROAD - DAY

A forest occupies the background.

Dantés, Tydus and Antonio crouch low in the field as a
caravan passes.

The king's large coach rolls in the middle of the cluster of
coaches and horsemen.

DANTÉS

Ready?

Tydus reaches into his empty arrow quiver, an arrow
MATERIALIZES in his hand.

TYDUS

Hopefully the irritation in my
loins won't interfere with my aim.

DANTÉS

(to Antonio)

Make sure the fool is not ferried
to the afterlife before his time.

Antonio gives a blank stare, Dantés smiles.

DANTÉS (CONT'D)

By the way, who was your man inside
the castle?

ANTONIO

A member of the court, Florin.

Silence. Dantés slips from sight.

Tydus lets his arrow fly, it STRIKES a Guard. The Guard falls
from his horse.

Tydus loosens another shot, another Guard meets the same end.

Archers load their bows, shoot in Tydus' direction.

Tydus and Antonio flee. The horsemen give chase.

DANTÉS

Emerges from opposite side of the road. Dagger in hand, he
prowls to the wagon.

INT. KING'S COACH - DAY

Dantés, dagger raised, slips inside. His steel falls to his
side as his eyes become colored with shock. He stands alone.

He spots several glass vials, same as the one he handed
Aaminah earlier, on a crate. Dantés leans closer...

INSERT - VIALS

The vials read "DESPAIR".

BACK TO SCENE

Dantés kicks the vials, they shatter.

ARTURO (O.S.)

Tell me, Assassin.

Dantés freezes, grips his lone dagger tight.

EXT. COUNTRYSIDE - ROAD - DAY

Two cloaked figures on horseback stand among a score of
archers. Dantés steps out from the coach.

Arturo throws back his hood.

ARTURO
What happens next?

Arturo raises his hand. The archers draw their arrows. An arrow STRIKES a bow, this forces that archer to turn and release his arrow into a fellow archer.

Arturo snaps his head, finds Tydus, empty bow in hand, at the edge of the forest.

EDGE OF THE FOREST

Tydus smiles at his shot. Antonio, hidden behind a tree, wears a sour visage.

TYDUS
Your eyes give you away, but I do
not fancy cock.

Antonio's demeanor shifts.

ANTONIO
Your mother should have strangled
you with your birth cords.

TYDUS
My absence would leave many women
with a desert between their thighs.

The two disappear into the forest.

ROAD

The remaining archers release their arrows. Dantés hits the ground unharmed. Dantés scrambles to a lone horse, mounts it, rides into the forest.

Sombra throws back her hood, gives chase towards Dantés.

ARTURO
Hold.

Sombra stops, turns to Arturo.

ARTURO (CONT'D)
Let him digest recent events.

EXT. GRANADA - MARKET - DUSK

Aaminah, cloaked, approaches a MERCHANT. She gives a quick smile, retrieves an empty vial from her pocket.

Scared, Merchant shakes his head. Aaminah furrows her brow. Merchant's eyes widen, he looks beyond Aaminah.

Aaminah turns. Victor, accompanied by Sombra, approach.

Aaminah's hand soars inside her cloak. Merchant sets a sword against the back of Aaminah neck. Victor and Sombra draw their weapons. Aaminah's hand falls to her side.

VICTOR
You are summoned.

INT. CATALINA'S RESIDENCE - KITCHEN - NIGHT

Catalina waits at the table. Dantés enters.

CATALINA
Good evening, Dantés.

Dantés slugs past her.

CATALINA (CONT'D)
Is that you, Dantés?

Antonio BURST through the door, pickaxe in hand. He trolls over to Dantés, swings his pickaxe at Dantés, Dantés BLOCKS the attack, LOCKS steel with Antonio.

DANTÉS
What madness has seized your mind?

Catalina runs to the far corner of the kitchen, huddles in a ball in the corner.

ANTONIO
Florin is late.

DANTÉS
I did not seek his --

ANTONIO
Your tongue confirms the truth.

Tydus enters, he sprints towards the brawl.

TYDUS (O.S.)
Stop you mad --

Antonio kicks Tydus in the belly, Tydus flies over the table. Antonio knees Dantés in the ribs, flips him onto the floor.

Antonio SLAMS his foot into Dantés' hand. Dantés loses his grip on his dagger.

TYDUS (CONT'D)

Fuck! I was going to say 'fuck'...

Tydus stands with a loaded bow.

TYDUS (CONT'D)

Our escape went unnoticed --

ANTONIO

I allowed the thought of brighter days cloud my judgement.

Antonio stares back at Tydus.

ANTONIO (CONT'D)

Never again.

Antonio waves his hand, Tydus' arrow VANISHES.

TYDUS

The hell?

ANTONIO

Be patient, your time expires soon, but first...

Antonio turns to Dantés. Catalina lays on top of Dantés. She turns, locks eyes with Antonio. His eyes grow wide.

Antonio drops his pickaxe, it crashes on the floor. He lifts his boot from Dantés' hand.

ANTONIO (CONT'D)

I cannot trust those who kill their own. Fall from sight.

Antonio trudges to the hallway, stops.

ANTONIO (CONT'D)

Take the filth with you.

Antonio escapes down the hallway. Dantés slides from under Catalina, gathers the pickaxe, heads to the door.

CATALINA

Dantés, wait!

Dantés exits, Tydus follows.

INT. CASTLE - ARTURO'S CHAMBERS - NIGHT

Arturo sits on the throne as he reads a scroll. Sombra escorts Aaminah to him. Arturo rises to his feet, SLAMS the scroll on an arm of throne.

ARTURO

This court has not lived up to its reputation. It makes me wonder what purpose you fulfilled.

Aaminah narrows her eyes. She slides a hand to her sai. Sombra pokes Aaminah in the back with a blade. Aaminah glances over her shoulder.

AAMINAH

How did she...

Arturo takes out a vial from his pocket.

ARTURO

I suspended the production of this... inconsequential medicine and I confiscated the rest from your mother's residence.

Fire ignites in Aaminah's eyes.

ARTURO (CONT'D)

Without this, your eye sight goes first, correct?

Silence.

ARTURO (CONT'D)

How long before you and the ones you love turn into senseless cabbage? Days, weeks...

Arturo shatters the vial on the floor.

ARTURO (CONT'D)

Complete your task, or risk becoming deaf, dumb and blind.

Defeated, Aaminah drifts to the door.

ARTURO (CONT'D)

Before you leave.

Arturo tosses Dantés' dagger, it slides to Aaminah. Aaminah collects the dagger, exits.

INT. BROTHEL - NIGHT

Tydus, with a smile from cheek to cheek and a cup of wine in hand, gropes Prostitute #1 on his lap. Dantés sits beside him, a cup occupies his hand.

Tydus stares at the back of Prostitute #2. She turns, locks eyes with Tydus. She smiles with rotten teeth. Tydus gags.

TYDUS

Looked better in my imagination...

Tydus regards Prostitute #1. His eyes fall to her breasts.

PROSTITUTE #1

I'm up here.

She lifts Tydus' head.

TYDUS

You are down there as well.

Tydus snatches Dantés' cup, takes it to his nose, swirls it, sniffs. He leans back in disgust.

TYDUS (CONT'D)

Bad form.

Tydus hands the cup back to Dantés.

TYDUS (CONT'D)

I bring you here for much needed distraction and you drink fucking piss from a river?

DANTÉS

I don't despise its taste, unlike this other taste that lingers...

TYDUS

Your words sour mood, which is set to sow seed into women that do not hold reputation.

Tydus kisses Prostitute #1, she giggles.

DANTÉS

I long for the embrace beyond coin's simple influence...

Dantés drops a few coins on the bar, finds his feet.

DANTÉS (CONT'D)

I cannot say that it was an honor.

Dantés offers his hand to Tydus. Tydus grabs Dantés forearm.

TYDUS
Where do you go?

DANTÉS
My last hope...

Dantés throws his hood up, exits.

EXT. FOREST - ROAD - NIGHT

Aaminah stands in the middle of the road. Her breath drifts in the cool air. Aaminah glances over her shoulder.

Sombra watches from the background. She fades from sight.

Dantés approaches. He and Aaminah stare at each other with long faces, defeat clings to their eyes.

DANTÉS
Forgive me, for leaving --

Aaminah tosses Dantés his dagger. He catches it, stares at the steel for a moment.

DANTÉS (CONT'D)
Join me, he has taken too much from
deserving hands. He must --

POV: Aaminah's vision grows blurry, returns to normal.

AAMINAH
I fear that I would be a burden to
your cause...

DANTÉS
Absent you, I am nothing but flesh
clinging to hollow bones...

Dantés drops to his knees, lifts his daggers to his throat.

DANTÉS (CONT'D)
I pray that you will know peace.

Aaminah raises her hand in protest.

AAMINAH
Stop!

Dantés' PUPILS dilate, he lowers his dagger.

AAMINAH (CONT'D)

I would not have you so easily from
this world.

DANTÉS

Why... why would you --

AAMINAH

To win means to lose and to lose
means to die.

Dantés climbs into a fighting stance.

DANTÉS

Goddamn it -- Don't do this!

Aaminah draws her sais.

AAMINAH

Let's see whose blade is sharper.

Aaminah charges Dantés, jabs a sai at him. Dantés LOCKS his
dagger with it.

MEMORY HIT - EXT. DANTÉS' RESIDENCE - PORCH - DAY

Dantés and Aaminah kiss.

BACK TO SCENE

Dantés and Aaminah's attack each other relentlessly. They
LOCK blades. Both have tears in their eyes.

Dantés throws Aaminah over his shoulder.

Dantés SLAMS Aaminah on the ground. Aaminah rolls sideways,
jumps to her feet.

Aaminah lands a vicious kick to Dantés' midsection.

MEMORY HIT - INT. DANTÉS' RESIDENCE - BEDROOM - NIGHT

Dantés kisses Aaminah's navel, kisses down to her waist.

BACK TO SCENE

Dantés rolls backwards, stops on one knee. Aaminah and Dantés
pant hard for air.

POV: Aaminah goes blind for a brief moment.

DANTÉS
Please... release me...

The two charge each other. Dantés sends his dagger to Aaminah's throat. She DEFLECTS his attack.

Dantés aims his hand at her belly, NEEDLES materialize.

MEMORY HIT - INT. DANTÉS' RESIDENCE - BEDROOM - NIGHT

Dantés and Aaminah make love.

BACK TO SCENE

Aaminah swats his wrist away at the last moment, needles SOAR into the night away from her.

She sweeps Dantés' feet from under him. He lands on his back, loses grip on his daggers.

Aaminah sends her sai to Dantés' heart, stops her blade inches above his chest. Her sai shakes in her hand.

DANTÉS
We have our answer...

Moisture collects in Aaminah's eyes, she shakes her head. Her tears fall upon Dantés chest.

His PUPILS return to normal.

AAMINAH
Collect steel, harden resolve...

DANTÉS
I will be waiting on the shores of
the afterlife.

Dantés kisses her hand.

AAMINAH
You send me to a world absent sun.

Aaminah raises her sai, flips it in her hand, points the tip at her chest. Dantés' eyes flare open.

AAMINAH (CONT'D)
Forgive me...

Aaminah sai crashes toward her heart. Dantés catches her hand inches from her chest.

An arrow WHIZZES through the air, PIERCES Aaminah's chest. Aaminah gasps, loses hold of her sai.

Dantés POV: Upside down, spots Tydus, empty bow in hand.

Taken by madness, Dantés rolls over, grabs a dagger and Aaminah's sai.

He springs to his feet, yells as he charges Tydus. Tydus loads another bow.

TYDUS
Ungrateful shit!

Tydus loosens his arrow, Dantés DEFLECTS it.

AAMINAH (O.S.)
Dantés...

Dantés stops, drops his weapons. The arrow in Tydus' hand VANISHES. Dantés turns to see Aaminah on her knees.

AAMINAH (CONT'D)
I would feel your warmth one last
time before I...

Dantés dashes to her side, drops to his knees. With eyes full of tears, he embraces Aaminah, kisses her.

DANTÉS
Why, why would you do this?

AAMINAH
My family has already slipped from
this world, my senses are fading...

Silence.

AAMINAH (CONT'D)
What better way to get you to do
what needs to be done?

DANTÉS
Not like this... Not like this...

Dantés shakes his head. Aaminah places her hand on his cheek.

DANTÉS (CONT'D)
Will you be my wife? Even if for
just a moment?

AAMINAH
I've always been your wife, even if
we were to foolish to realize it...

Aaminah grips Dantés' hand tight.

AAMINAH (CONT'D)
After all the grief has passed and
the tears subside...

Aaminah wipes away Dantés' tears.

AAMINAH (CONT'D)
You will learn to smile again.

DANTÉS
Smile? A smile will never again
cross my lips.

AAMINAH
I would not have it so...

Aaminah's smile fades, her hand drops from his cheek.

DANTÉS
Aaminah... Aaminah?

Dantés shakes her gently, her death sinks in. Dantés hugs her, brings her face to his chest.

He scoops her up in his arms. He shambles towards Tydus.

TYDUS
Choice was removed from...

Dantés lumbers past Tydus.

INT. CATALINA'S RESIDENCE - KITCHEN - NIGHT

Dantés carries Aaminah inside.

CATALINA
Dantés?

Dantés collapses to his knees, Catalina joins him. Catalina hands fall upon Aaminah's face.

CATALINA (CONT'D)
Who is this? They feel cold...

Silence.

CATALINA (CONT'D)
Is this...

Dantés lies Aaminah on the floor, snatches his dagger from it's sheath, the metal RINGS. Catalina's eyes flare open.

Dantés dashes to the door.

CATALINA (CONT'D)

She takes precedent over vengeance.

Dantés stops, his hands shake. He turns to Catalina, his eyes crash to the floor.

EXT. CATALINA'S RESIDENCE - BACKYARD - NIGHT

Aaminah lies on a bed of wood.

Dantés stands next to Catalina, who carries a torch. Tydus stands in the background.

Dantés approaches Aaminah.

CATALINA

No one deserves this sadness...

Dantés kisses Aaminah on her forehead. He looks down at her sais, pockets one.

Dantés shuffles to Catalina, grabs the torch from her. He sets the wood on fire.

Dantés grabs the Necklace of Rule, stares at it.

DANTÉS

Léontes once asked me if the cost
of loyalty is high?

Dantés stares at Aaminah.

Catalina opens her mouth to speak, but words do not form. Tydus skulks to Dantés.

TYDUS

Dantés... I --

Dantés stares at his dagger.

ANTONIO (O.S.)

Are you going to carry that hatred
with you for the rest of your days?

Antonio approaches, stands beside Dantés.

ANTONIO (CONT'D)

And meet your woman with a scowl
upon your lips in the afterlife?

Dantés lowers his head. Antonio puts a hand on Dantés shoulder. Dantés looks to Tydus.

ANTONIO (CONT'D)
Once... I held a woman with
mirrored intent.

Dantés turns his gaze to Antonio.

ANTONIO (CONT'D)
The taste of her lips filling you
with hope, the want to make a life
of meaning...

Silence.

ANTONIO (CONT'D)
I know your heart well...

DANTÉS
She personified a vision of God's
grace. What became of her?

Silence.

ANTONIO
She fell... to men who stand as
Arturo stands.

Dantés glances at Tydus. Antonio extends his hand. Dantés clasps Antonio's forearm.

DANTÉS
Gratitude.
(indicates Tydus)
What of him?

ANTONIO
Has hell frozen over?

Dantés smirks. Antonio leaves.

Dantés meets Tydus with his eyes. Dantés extends his hand. Tydus clasps Dantés' forearm.

TYDUS
Had we shared a cup, your gesture
would be better received.

DANTÉS
We make due with what is present.

TYDUS

Such is the rumor... You will have
to excuse me. My hands have been
empty for far too long.

Tydus leaves.

Dantés steals another look at Catalina. He locks his arm with hers, they leave together.

INT. CATALINA RESIDENCE - KITCHEN - NIGHT

A fire CRACKLES in the stove. Catalina sits at the table with Antonio. She taps her fingers against the table.

Dantés, armed with Aaminah's sai on his waist, Lélek's short sword on his back, enters. He throws his cloak on.

Dantés slides to the counter, locks eyes with Antonio. Dantés fills his pocket with Lantana berries.

ANTONIO

I take my leave. I go to make
arrangements, in the event that the
impossible happens.

Antonio exits.

DANTÉS

I thought of several different
lines for this moment...

Catalina looks his way.

CATALINA

Which did you settle on?

Silence.

CATALINA (CONT'D)

I see...

Dantés bows low, grunts, stands erect.

DANTÉS

I wish you well, my lady.

Dantés turns, treks toward the door. A few steps from the door, Catalina rushes in front of him. She plants her back against the door, holds her arms out in protest.

DANTÉS (CONT'D)

Step aside.

Catalina shakes her head. She puts her hands on his chest, feels for his weapons, unsheathes a dagger.

Her hands shake as she points it at Dantés.

He bats the dagger to the side. Catalina raises the dagger, aims at his chest. She pants heavily.

Dantés eyes Catalina, the dagger. He steps into the blade.

Blood runs down the dagger, touches Catalina's fingertips.

Her eyes flare open.

She drops the dagger; it bounces on the floor.

Catalina pounds the side of her fist into Dantés' chest as her eyes well up with tears.

Dantés ignores her strikes as he embraces her. She hits him a few more times.

DANTÉS (CONT'D)

A beautiful thing... Your heart no longer carries the chill of winter's night...

Catalina wraps her arms around Dantés. He eyes the door.

CATALINA

I fear I may never see you again...

Catalina lays her hands on Dantés' face. She lowers his gaze to her. Her lip quivers.

CATALINA (CONT'D)

Just once... I would like to feel you before you go.

Catalina guides her hand inside his cloak, slowly removes his daggers. She drops them to the floor.

She slides his cloak over his shoulders, unfastens his shirt, both fall to the floor.

Catalina places her hands on his lower abdomen, then up to his pectorals. Her hands glide up his neck, his chin.

She rest her fingertips on his lips.

Catalina steps around Dantés, puts her ear on his back. She feels his HEARTBEAT, listens to his BREATHS.

She takes her hands to his lower abdomen, embraces him.

CATALINA (CONT'D)
Let it go, Dantés...

Catalina shakes her head.

CATALINA (CONT'D)
Please... just let it...

Dantés places his hands on top of Catalina's hands.

She hugs him tighter. Dantés raises Catalina's hands to his lips. He kisses them with care.

DANTÉS
You have been so good to me...

Dantés turns, drapes the Neck of Rule around Catalina's neck. She traces her fingers around the necklace.

CATALINA
Return, be my eyes... and you shall
have your queen.

Dantés kisses her on her forehead. Tears fall from her eyes.

Dantés grabs his clothes, puts them on.

Dantés collects his daggers, sheathes them.

CATALINA (CONT'D)
Give the king my regards...

DANTÉS
Yes, Your Majesty.

Dantés gazes at Catalina, exits. Catalina puts her hand on the door, falls to her knees and weeps.

EXT. CATALINA RESIDENCE - ON THE PORCH - NIGHT

Dantés puts the back of his head against the door. Catalina's CRIES penetrate the door.

Dantés flounders away with his eyes shut.

EXT. CATALINA'S RESIDENCE - STABLE - NIGHT

Dantés, with a stern visage, approaches a lone horse. He rubs the beast's coat.

Antonio and Tydus, guide their mounts beside Dantés.

DANTÉS

Arturo believes he can force people
to do as he pleases.

Dantés retrieves Antonio's pickaxe, hands it to him. Antonio
accepts and pockets it. Dantés mounts his steed.

DANTÉS (CONT'D)

Let us show Arturo what people are
capable of when heart and mind are
set to clear purpose.

Dantés snaps the reins, he gallops off with Tydus.

EXT. COUNTRYSIDE - ROAD - MORNING

Granada rests in the distance.

Horse legs scurry along the dirt road. Their hooves beat on
the ground with malice. Dantés and Tydus ride hard.

A group of SOLDIERS organize down the road. They turn, point
to at Dantés and Tydus.

SOLDIER

Riders!

An arrow PIERCES a Soldier's chest, he drops from his mount.
Arrow after arrow follow as several more HIT their marks.

Soldiers loose their arrows at Dantés and Tydus.

Several arrows STRIKE Dantés' horse. His horse WHINES, he
crashes to the ground. Dantés flies through the air.

Dantés SMASHES against the ground, rolls upon impact. His
daggers soar to his palms.

Soldiers surround him. Dantés cuts several down. Another
soldier stands over Dantés, his sword set to attack.

A pickaxe PLUNGES into his back.

Antonio dives off his horse, TACKLES a Soldier. Antonio
slices him with unreal speed, moves to the next.

Blood coated steel flashes in the sunlight as Dantés and
Antonio move integrally.

As lethal beasts, they rip through a score of Soldiers,
butchering them with reckless abandon.

Dantés pulls his dagger from a corpse, another Soldier sneaks up behind Dantés.

An arrow GASHES through the Soldier's neck; he falls beside Dantés. Dantés looks to Tydus.

DANTÉS
Gratitude --

TYDUS
Pocket it!

A group of Soldiers gather down the road. Dantés and Antonio sprint toward them.

Arrows, from their backs, fell several Soldiers.

Arrows fly at Dantés and Antonio. Dantés dives, Antonio slides under others.

Dantés rolls, launches a BARRAGE OF NEEDLES at the Soldiers; several fall.

Antonio slides, cuts through the shins of two Soldiers. He rolls backwards, SLAMS his pickaxes into their bellies.

An arrow from Tydus fells another Soldier.

Dantés dodges, cuts down another Soldier. A wounded Soldier grunts, he crawls away, but not far.

Dantés grabs him by the collar, brings him to his knees.

SOLDIER
You are too late --

Dantés PLUNGES his dagger into the man, throws him to the ground. Antonio and Tydus gather on Dantés.

TYDUS
That was thrilling.

DANTÉS
We move on the Academy.

ANTONIO
You move boldly.

TYDUS
You know more soldiers reside within its walls?

DANTÉS

More soldiers to recruit to our
cause. We cannot be the only ones
wronged by this king.

ANTONIO

Perhaps...

Dantés commandeers a lone horse. Antonio and Tydus mount
their horses.

ANTONIO (CONT'D)

Dantés, you think it wise?

EXT. ACADEMY OF THE MILITARY ARTS - TRAINING GROUNDS - NIGHT

A score of Soldiers, with their weapons drawn, surround them.

DANTÉS

Truth be told, I had my doubts...

Antonio and Dantés draw their weapons. Tydus loads his bow
with three arrows.

TYDUS

This is me.

Dantés and Antonio stare at Tydus.

TYDUS (CONT'D)

Fly, before I gain fucking sense!

Dantés nods, darts for the gate.

ANTONIO

Do not die before I have at you!

Tydus lets loose his arrows, three Soldiers collapse.

TYDUS

You and other women will be left
unsatisfied I'm afraid...

Antonio smirks. He dashes to join Dantés.

Three Soldiers stand in their way.

Dantés sends a BARRAGE OF NEEDLES at two, Antonio throws his
pickaxe at another.

Dantés sprints by, Antonio retrieves his pickaxe without
breaking pace.

They pass the gate.

An arrow SNAPS the gate rope, the gate crashes closed.

TYDUS (CONT'D)

I haven't had enough wine for this.

Tydus lets his arrows fly.

EXT. CASTLE - OUTER COURTYARD - NIGHT

Dantés and Antonio sneak into the courtyard.

They dart behind a stack of hay.

A garrison of troops pass and leave the castle grounds.

Dantés and Antonio emerge and approach the castle door.

SCREAMS fill the silence. Dantés and Antonio, weapons in hand, look to the sky.

A boy SMASHES into the ground. Dantés and Antonio replace their weapons in their sheaths.

Dantés drops to a knee, turns the body over. Fernando's eyes glare at him. Shock paints Dantés' face.

ANTONIO

Does the boy hold meaning?

Dantés POUNDS the ground with his fist. He leaps to his feet, opens the castle door. Dantés sprints inside.

Antonio holds up a hand in protest.

ANTONIO (CONT'D)

Dantés, wait!

INT. CASTLE - HALLWAY - NIGHT

Dantés leads with Antonio to his back.

FOOTSTEPS echo in the background. Dantés and Antonio stop in a corridor. Soldiers surround them on both sides.

ANTONIO

This is as far as we go.

Dantés turns to Antonio.

ANTONIO (CONT'D)
I do not repeat myself.

Dantés nods, escapes down another hallway. Antonio unsheathes his pickaxes.

ANTONIO (CONT'D)
Who shall be the first to taste
their own blood?

Soldiers charge Antonio, he cuts down many. Jorge enters the fray, BLOCKS Antonio's attack. They steal LOCKS.

ANTONIO (CONT'D)
Ah! A man who presents a challenge!

INT. CASTLE - BANQUET HALL - NIGHT

A body rests in the center of the room. Deeper into the room, chains bind a gagged Dianna.

Dantés, daggers to palm, enters. He scans the hall. He slinks to the body, kneels, meets Dianna's eyes.

Dantés bows low. He gives Dianna a reassuring smile.

INT. CASTLE - HALLWAY - NIGHT

Corpses litter the hallway.

Antonio STRIKES Jorge with a vicious kick. Jorge CRASHES into the wall, slumps to the floor, limp, weak.

Antonio sheathes his pickaxes.

ANTONIO
You fight well; I stand impressed.

JORGE
Go ahead, finish it you scum...

ANTONIO
Another time perhaps.

Antonio dashes down the hall.

INT. CASTLE - BANQUET HALL - NIGHT

Dantés turns his attention to the body. He turns the body over -- Cristina.

Tears flood from his eyes. He brushes her hair from her face.

Antonio enters, studies the room.

Dantés looks his way. Antonio's wears a stern visage.

Antonio tenses up, a sword sticks THROUGH his chest. He collapses to the floor, face-first. No one is there.

DANTÉS

Anton --

Dantés grimaces in pain. He rolls forward, a bloody sword APPEARS out of the floor.

Dantés grabs the back of his leg, blood drips from his hand. He TEARS the sleeve off his shirt, ties it around his leg.

He gags, THROWS-UP blood. Dantés digs in his pocket, eats a handful of Lantana berries.

A BARRAGE OF NEEDLES fly from the far wall, Dantés uses his NEEDLES to DEFLECT them.

Sombra ASCENDS through the floor, a ninjato and a small knife in her hands.

Dantés struggles to his feet, glances at Antonio, scowls.

DANTÉS (CONT'D)

I hope death satisfies you.

Sombra smiles, charges Dantés. She lunges with her ninjato.

Before their steel meets, she slips through the floor. Dantés' eyes flare open.

She pops up behind Dantés, SHAPE SHIFTS into Aminah.

Dantés turns, dagger leading, he stops his blade at Sombra's -- Aminah's -- neck.

DANTÉS (CONT'D)

Aamin --

Sombra puts her hand on the side of Dantés' face, smiles, STABS him in the belly.

Sombra SHAPE SHIFTS into her original appearance, DISAPPEARS through the floor. Dantés falls to a knee, holds his belly.

Arturo speaks as he enters.

ARTURO

Oh Sombra, have you finished
preparing the...

Dantés locks eyes with Arturo; Arturo freezes. Dantés jumps to his feet, Arturo flees. Dantés gives chase.

A JINGLE of glass grabs Dantés' attention.

He peeks over his shoulder, sees the chandelier above Dianna. Dantés cuts between Dianna and to the hallway --

The chandelier falls.

Dantés sprints, he dives at Dianna. The chain holding her SNAPS. They roll in unison.

The chandelier CRASHES into the floor.

Dantés and Dianna stop. Dantés kneels over Dianna.

Several NEEDLES POUND Dantés in the back; he grunts.

DIANNA

Are you --

DANTÉS

Go!

Dianna flees.

Sombra RESURRECTS from the floor, knees Dantés in the face.

Dantés swings his dagger at her, she kicks his dagger from his hand; it SLIDES across the floor.

Dantés uses his other dagger, Sombra stomps his hand, pins it to the ground.

Dantés looks up at Sombra. She makes eye contact, his PUPILS dilate. Sombra unpins Dantés.

His dagger flies to his throat. Sombra smiles at her victory.

EXT. ACADEMY OF THE MILITARY ARTS - TRAINING GROUND - NIGHT

A sword swings at Tydus. He rolls backwards to a crouch.

An arrow PIERCES him in the back of the shoulder.

He spins, looses an arrow, another soldier falls. He pulls the arrow from his shoulder, fires it at another soldier.

Victor, steel set to lethal purpose, storms toward Tydus.

Tydus shoots two rapid shots, HITS two archers on the wall. Tydus loads another arrow, spins, Victor slices down at him.

Tydus raises his bow, Victor splits it in half.

Victor KICKS Tydus; he lands on his back. Victor STABS Tydus in the right shoulder; Tydus hollers.

VICTOR

You are nothing without your bow!

Victor retracts his sword, lunges it towards Tydus' belly --

INT. CASTLE - BANQUET HALL - NIGHT

Sombra takes a knee in front of Dantés, places her fingertips on his chin, lifts his gaze.

SOMBRA

You are no longer required.

Sombra leans into Dantés' ear.

SOMBRA (CONT'D)

Long live the king.

Dantés' PUPILS return to normal.

He looks beyond Sombra, locks eyes with Antonio, who raises his hand. Antonio's hand and face drop to the stone.

EXT. ACADEMY OF THE MILITARY ARTS - TRAINING GROUNDS - NIGHT

Tydus grabs his arrow, DEFLECTS Victor's sword. It lands in the dirt beside Tydus.

Tydus STABS Victor in the leg with the arrow. Victor screams, falls to a knee beside Tydus.

Tydus THRUST the arrow into Victor's chest. Victor collapses to the ground.

INT. CASTLE - BANQUET HALL

Sombra puts her hand on Dantés' cheek, smiles. Dantés clasps his fingers around Aaminah's sai.

DANTÉS

Maybe one day, for one king...

Dantés PLUNGES the sai into Sombra's heart; she gasps.

DANTÉS (CONT'D)
But not this king.

Sombra topples to the floor. Dantés shuffles to her side, retrieves the sai, wipes clean.

He gazes at Sombra with respect. Dantés closes her eyes.

With a hand on his belly, Dantés stumbles to Antonio. Dantés kneels beside him, turns him over, holds Antonio's head up.

ANTONIO
Dantés...

Dantés nods.

ANTONIO (CONT'D)
If Arturo never removed Catalina's mother out of the castle, they would have been foreign to me...

Clarity hits Dantés.

ANTONIO (CONT'D)
I am grateful for that... But his delivery was foul.

Antonio chokes on his blood.

ANTONIO (CONT'D)
End this, your heart's desire will be waiting by the river...

Antonio expires.

Dantés closes Antonio's eyes.

Dantés pockets one of Antonio's pickaxes.

Dantés, under the influence of pain, rises to his feet. The fire of purpose burns bright in his eyes.

INT. CASTLE - THRONE ROOM - NIGHT

Arturo makes his way from the throne to the doorway.

ARTURO
(yells)
Sombra, have you finished exterminating the pest --

A bloody hand on the wooden frame of the doorway. Dantés turns the corner, locks eyes with Arturo.

Shock paints Arturo's face. Arturo turns and flees.

Dantés sends a BARRAGE OF NEEDLES into Arturo's legs. Arturo CRASHES to the floor.

Arturo turns, crawls backwards.

ARTURO (CONT'D)
Wait, Dantés, let me explain...

Arturo crawls towards the throne. Dantés pursues him.

ARTURO (CONT'D)
The chef, was not helping the
Outlaws. He served everyone!

Dantés narrows his eyes, fingers wrapped around his dagger, track Arturo step for step.

ARTURO (CONT'D)
Besides, Sombra is the one that
killed the king --

DANTÉS
We are but tools left in the hand
of our master.

Blood drips from Dantés' wound. He drags his wounded leg.

DANTÉS (CONT'D)
I am here to reprimand the master.

ARTURO
You cannot kill a king, that makes
you a traitor!

DANTÉS
So be it.

Arturo makes it to the foot of the throne. He picks himself up, sits on the throne.

ARTURO
He had you kill an innocent man so
that he could marry his wife --

DANTÉS
We often fall short of the
potential within our hearts.
Despite his shortcomings...

Dantés steps to the throne. Arturo eyes the dagger.

DANTÉS (CONT'D)
He was my king... and my friend.

Dantés PLUNGES his dagger into Arturo's heart.

DANTÉS (CONT'D)
Catalina sends her regards.

Dantés executes a lethal roundhouse kick on Arturo. Arturo flies out of the throne as the chair tumbles over.

Dantés crumples to the floor, takes a deep breath, stares at Arturo. Dantés staggers to the throne, picks it up, sits.

A platter of Mediterranean Spring Rolls rest on a pedestal beside the throne.

Dantés grunts, grabs a roll, takes a bite, shakes his head.

A door CREEKS open. Dianna timidly peeks inside. She enters, stares at Dantés with fearful eyes.

Dantés gives an inviting smile. Dianna stands motionless.

DANTÉS (CONT'D)
Did they harm you?

Dianna shakes her head, tears form in her eyes. Dantés smirks. Dianna breaks into a full sprint.

She dives into Dantés, squeezes the life from him. Dantés gives a whispered grunt.

DANTÉS (CONT'D)
You are safe now.
(then)
I need your assistance...

Dantés shows her a dagger. Dianna stares with wide eyes.

DANTÉS (CONT'D)
Heat this on that...

Dantés points to a torch on the wall. Relief hits Dianna.

Dianna takes the dagger, dashes to the torch. She places it in the fire until it turns bright red.

She sprints to Dantés, hands Dantés the blade. He places the dagger on his belly; it SIZZLES. He clenches his fist.

Jorge, with his hand on the back of his head, enters. He prowls toward Dantés and Dianna.

He draws his sword, points it at Dantés. Dianna stands in front of the sword and holds her arms out in protest.

DANTÉS (CONT'D)
Step aside, Dianna...

Dianna peeks over her shoulder at Dantés.

DANTÉS (CONT'D)
All will be as it should be.

Dianna faces Dantés, tears run down her face.

Dantés wipes away the tears. He puts his hand on her cheek.

Dianna snatches his dagger. She turns, points it at Jorge.

Jorge SMACKS the dagger from her hands. Dianna turns, buries her face in Dantés' chest. Dantés embraces her.

Jorge pulls her from Dantés.

DIANNA
No!

Dianna holds onto his cloak for life.

Jorge pries Dianna away. Jorge throws her to the ground. Dianna gets up, POUNDS Jorge with her fist.

Jorge pushes Dianna, she crashes to the floor, hard. She lies unconscious. Dantés rises, Jorge kicks him into the throne.

Jorge places the tip of his sword on Dantés' chest.

DANTÉS
Without a ruler, Granada will fall
into calamity.

Silence.

DANTÉS (CONT'D)
Or, you can ride with me and place
the heir on the throne.

JORGE
How will I know --

DANTÉS
Their birthright will be around
their neck.

JORGE

A bold claim. Why should I
entertain the words of a traitor?

Dantés holds his belly as he groans.

DANTÉS

Pain limits creativity.

Jorge shakes his head.

DANTÉS (CONT'D)

Choice lies within your hands...

Jorge gets leverage, he grits his teeth.

Silence.

Jorge exhales, sheathes his sword. Dantés struggles to his feet. Dianna rushes to his side.

JORGE

One question.

Dantés stops.

JORGE (CONT'D)

Why didn't you kill me, on the
night of your escape?

DANTÉS

Some men are obstacles...

Dantés glance at Arturo.

DANTÉS (CONT'D)

Others... are targets.

Jorge exits with Dantés and Dianna in tow.

INT. CASTLE - HALLWAY - NIGHT

Jorge, Dantés and Dianna enter.

Tydus, with a vase in his hand, enters. He takes the vase to his lips, streaks of red wine drip down his mouth.

Dantés shakes his head. Jorge's hand slides to his sword.

DANTÉS

You finally procured your coin?

Tydus smiles, produces a coin purse.

TYDUS

That and...

Tydus, replaces the coin purse in his pocket, taps his hip, coins JIGGLE against each other.

TYDUS (CONT'D)

Plus interest.

Tydus taps the other side of his hip, coins CLAP together.

TYDUS (CONT'D)

For my pain and suffering.

Tydus taps his breast pocket, coins KNOCK once more.

TYDUS (CONT'D)

For my --

Dantés holds his hand up.

DANTÉS

The point is made.

JORGE

You robbed the treasury?

Tydus shrugs his shoulders. Jorge puts a hand on his sword.

TYDUS

Your actions are derived from a
commoner's perspective.

Jorge draws his sword a bit, Dantés stops him before he makes too much progress. Dantés shakes his head.

Tydus gives a smug smile.

TYDUS (CONT'D)

I'm off to do something foolish.

Tydus grasps Dantés' forearm. Together, they shake. Tydus heads for the exit, stops at a corridor.

TYDUS (CONT'D)

Tell the brute he will have to wait
another day...

Dantés retrieves Antonio's pickaxe. Dantés throws it to Tydus. Tydus catches it, studies it.

DANTÉS

Try and make him wait...

Tydus takes a swig of wine, smiles, exits. Dantés exits with Dianna and Jorge. A blood trail follows Dantés.

INT. SAFE HOUSE - KITCHEN - DAWN

The sound of rushing water whirls in the background.

Catalina sulks at the table over a bowl of soup. She rubs her fingers around the Necklace of Rule.

A KNOCK beats on the door. Catalina springs to the door.

DIANNA (O.S.)
Catalina, daughter of the king?

CATALINA
Who calls?

DIANNA (O.S.)
Dianna Santos, Dantés sent me...

Catalina sighs. She opens the door, looks just above Dianna. Dianna does a curtsy, her dress RUFFLES.

Catalina adjusts her line of sight.

CATALINA
Pleased to make your acquaintance,
Dianna. Come in, take a seat.

Dianna scurries by Catalina. Catalina starts to close the door, a hand stops her. Catalina looks with concern.

CATALINA (CONT'D)
Who calls?

DANTÉS (O.S.)
A man no longer bound by the chains
of guilt.

Dantés emerges from around the corner. Catalina smiles from cheek to cheek; her eyes fill with tears.

DANTÉS (CONT'D)
I am looking for a woman who has
impeccable vision.

Catalina blushes. Dantés tumbles to the floor. Catalina drops to her knees, her hands fall to his belly.

CATALINA
Is this... are you bleeding?

Catalina finds Dantés' face, puts Dantés' head in her lap as Dantés rolls over to his back.

Dantés reaches up, puts his hand on her cheek. Catalina covers his hand with hers.

DANTÉS
Your Granadan...

Catalina chuckles. Dantés' visage grows stern. Catalina takes her free hand to his face.

DANTÉS (CONT'D)
If desire alone led to reality,
then you would have your eyes.

Catalina leans in, kisses Dantés. The Necklace of Rule falls from inside her shirt.

She places his hand on her heart.

DANTÉS (CONT'D)
This feeling... use it, let it be
the force behind everything you do.

Dantés' hand crashes to the floor.

CATALINA
Dantés... Dantés?

Catalina collapses on Dantés and weeps. Dianna smothers Catalina. Dianna's sobs hum low.

Jorge enters, a floor board squeaks. Catalina glances up.

CATALINA (CONT'D)
Who comes?

Jorge spots the Necklace of Rule.

Jorge steps to Catalina, draws his sword, sticks it in the floor and kneels.

JORGE
Long live the queen.

FADE OUT.