

A MAGPIE'S NEST

By

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EXT. A RESIDENTIAL STREET IN BARNET, NORTH LONDON 9.58PM

Crowds line the pavements, waving banners with slogans such as "A horse! A horse! My kingdom for a horse!" and "Once more unto the breach!" Acrobats, dressed as court jesters, turn cartwheels and backflips along the road.

Medieval wenches, all skirts and cleavage, wander up and down selling drinks and snacks and two knights in shining, but lightweight, armour are selling red and white roses.

Along the street, heraldic standards hang on flagpoles: every medieval cliché known to the twenty-first century has been meticulously adhered to.

At the furthest end of the street is a banner stretching across the road with the words "Max-O-Tech is proud to sponsor the Wars of the Roses."

Above it all, on the stage, MARISSA MCKAY, 26, enthusiastic, attractive, stands waiting with a microphone in her hand. Taking her cue from someone off-stage, Marissa lifts her microphone and begins to speak.

MARISSA

It's Friday night, 8th June. If you've just tuned in, it's nearly ten o'clock. Good evening and welcome, welcome to "The All New Wars of the Roses"!

Theme music plays.

MARISSA (CONT'D)

So, you've read it in the papers, you've seen it on the science programmes. It's all over the internet and in just a few minutes Fleur Davenport and Caroline Thomas will be stepping back five-hundred years into the Wars of the Roses. They will be catapulted into the middle of an alien world. Harder times, different lives, different rules: danger, disease and death.

She steps down into the crowd to speak to individuals.

MARISSA (CONT'D)

Tell, me, what brought you here today?

1ST MAN

It's just seeing history being made, innit. So I can say, I was there the first time they did it.

1ST GIRL

Better to be the one who went. I applied, you know.

1ST MAN

Yeah and tell them what happened.

1ST GIRL

I failed the table-etiquette test. I scratched my fleas.

1ST MAN

It would never have been you, anyway. These things are fixed.

MARISSA

Oh, hang on now...

1ST MAN

Everyone knows these things are fixed.

MARISSA

How would anyone know...

1ST MAN

And anyway, why would you want to go back to a time full of diseases, no hot water...

MARISSA

Thousands applied.

1ST GIRL

And at least it's doing something, isn't it! Not just going to the pub and watching other people do stuff!

1ST MAN

You'd get your head chopped off!

1ST GIRL

They didn't chop people's heads off!

1ST MAN

They did!

MARISSA

You'd more likely have been hanged,  
to be honest. Beheading was for the  
better classes.

Marissa walks down the line to a girl in fancy dress.

MARISSA (CONT'D)

Hello, you're looking very  
medieval. What are your thoughts on  
history being made tonight?

PEASANT GIRL

I can't wait to see the real middle  
ages, all the plagues and scourges  
and stuff.

MARISSA

Lovely.

Marissa returns to the stage as she speaks.

MARISSA (CONT'D)

In a minute Fleur and Caroline  
should be appearing at the bottom  
of this hill. It's been cordoned  
off around the live zone - we  
wouldn't want anyone going through  
by accident!

She reaches the top of the steps and turns to look at the  
scene behind her.

MARISSA (CONT'D)

And... yes... the machinery's  
cranking up. It looks like the  
portal's opening! I can see them  
down there. Dressed very nicely, I  
must say. They've spent six months  
immersed in the etiquette and  
customs of the late middle ages.  
Their accents will sound a bit  
strange, but they should be able to  
mingle with the higher classes.  
They'll be making reports back to  
us through cameras hidden in their  
rosaries. Rosaries, of course are  
the little bead things they use for  
praying. And they're heading for  
the portal now! This is it! They're  
at the edge! Oooh! Caroline just  
giving Fleur a little shove. We  
can't have her backing out now;  
we've spent millions on this! And..

(MORE)

MARISSA (CONT'D)  
is this it? Yes! There they go!  
They've gone!

EXT. NIGHTTIME IN OPEN COUNTRYSIDE 10.03PM

It is totally dark, other than a little light from the full moon and a faint glow in the distance. FLEUR, 29, serious and quiet and CAROLINE, 29, outgoing and confident, appear, Fleur stumbling slightly.

FLEUR  
You pushed me!

CAROLINE  
Well, we can't have you backing out now! Don't look like that, it was only a little... encouragement.

FLEUR  
It was like pushing someone off a building while they're still deciding if they want to jump!

CAROLINE  
The portal wasn't open forever and I thought this was what you wanted. You get to visit your beloved middle ages.

FLEUR  
You know, thinking you want to do something and actually doing it aren't always the same thing.

CAROLINE  
Aw, don't be like that. It's a year. Just one year out of our entire lives and then...

FLEUR  
A lot can happen in a year! There are risks, you know.

CAROLINE  
They wouldn't send us somewhere dangerous, it's against their remit. Or their mandate. Or something.

FLEUR  
Their mandate?

CAROLINE  
Yeah, TV shows must be safe. And  
when we're done we'll have money,  
prestige, magazine covers.

FLEUR  
Magazine covers.

CAROLINE  
You don't have to do the magazine  
covers if you don't want.

Caroline starts walking, moving slowly and unsteadily across  
the ground.

FLEUR  
Where are you going?

CAROLINE  
I'm not sure, but we can't stay  
here forever.

After a moment Fleur follows.

CAROLINE (CONT'D)  
I thought we might head for that  
light? Do you think?

She points at a faint light in the distance.

FLEUR  
Suppose.

Caroline moves forward and Fleur follows.

CAROLINE  
Anyway, 1469. Tell me more about  
the Earl of Worcester.

FLEUR  
Warwick.

CAROLINE  
That's what I said.

FLEUR  
It's not. You're going to have to  
start getting it right.

CAROLINE  
You know, I'm counting on you to  
kick things off when we find  
people. With you being the expert  
and everything.

FLEUR

Really?

CAROLINE

I'll tell you what, I feel a bit shy! What if medieval people don't like me?

FLEUR

It doesn't matter if they don't like you. We look wealthy, they won't leave wealthy people hanging around in the gutter.

CAROLINE

Is that how it works in the fifteenth century?

FLEUR

Yes. Yes, it is!

They head for the light, walking slowly over uneven ground. They walk in silence for a moment until Caroline starts singing.

CAROLINE

There were ten green bottles...

BOTH

Hanging on a wall. Ten green bottles...

They disappear into the darkness, their voices fading into the distance.

EXT. DAWN IN SIGHT OF LONDON CITY WALLS 6.51AM.

CAROLINE

I know a song that gets on everybody's nerves. I know a song that gets on...

FLEUR

Caroline!

CAROLINE

Everybody's nerves. I know...

FLEUR

Shut up! Caroline!

As the light strengthens and the fog lifts, the walls are in clear view. The gates are closed.

CAROLINE

A song that - gerroff! - gets on...  
Oh... Would this be London? The  
gates are closed.

As they get closer, the gates open. They watch as livestock file out, followed by shepherds/ pig/ cowherds and head towards grazing land. A few carts set out and afterwards others in small groups, some on horseback, more walking.

After a moment Fleur and Caroline weave through them and enter the city unchallenged.

EXT. IN A BUSY FIFTEENTH CENTURY STREET 7.10AM.

In the city, shopkeepers are opening up shops in their front windows and street traders are setting up their stalls. Fleur and Caroline attract curious stares, but no-one approaches.

As they stand at the side of a street a cart trundles past, splashing them with mud. A teenage boy runs up to them, shouts something and tries to pull the small purse tied round Caroline's waist. They fight him off and he runs away. No-one around them reacts in any way.

CAROLINE

What the..! Did you see that? He  
can't do that!

They both stare after him for a moment. Caroline looks around at the local people.

CAROLINE (CONT'D)

Did you see that?

The local people look at her, then turn away muttering. Caroline turns back to Fleur.

CAROLINE (CONT'D)

Someone must have seen what he did?

FLEUR

I don't know. I don't think they  
care.

CAROLINE

Well, I realise he's not public  
enemy number one, but someone  
should have stopped him.



FLEUR

Well, he didn't get anything. So technically he's not a thief. In a world where life is cheap...

CAROLINE

*Whose* life is cheap?

FLEUR

I'll rephrase: in a world where shit happens, someone trying - and failing - to snatch a purse is... irrelevant.

They both readjust their clothes so the purses are not so obvious. They look around them at the citizens going about their business.

CAROLINE

But if that's... We have to...

They continue to look around them.

CAROLINE (CONT'D)

Life is *cheap*?

FLEUR

I didn't mean that exactly. I just meant, when in Rome...

CAROLINE

But we'll get our heads chopped off!

FLEUR

Don't be ridiculous! Why would that happen? You have to commit a crime to get your head chopped off! They don't just do it to pass the time.

CAROLINE

Are you sure?

FLEUR

Of course I'm sure. We won't get our heads chopped off. We won't be hanged. Didn't you think about this before we came?

CAROLINE

Not really. I thought about the money and how it will be when we get home.

FLEUR

In amongst all that training, all  
you thought about was fame and  
money?

Caroline takes deep breaths.

CAROLINE

I think I'd like a few minutes now.  
Somewhere quiet. Where can we go?

FLEUR

Find an inn or something, I  
suppose. We won't have our own  
rooms, though.

CAROLINE

How do we..? What do we do? Shit!  
Shit! Shit! Shit! We've really done  
this!

FLEUR

Shut up! Everyone's looking at us!

Around them people are starting to stare at them  
suspiciously. They stand close together and stare back.

CAROLINE

*(Quietly)* What do we do?

FLEUR

Try to act normal.

They stand further apart from each other. Caroline reaches  
into her skirts, takes out a cigarette and lighter and lights  
the cigarette.

FLEUR (CONT'D)

What are you doing?

CAROLINE

I know, I said I'd given up.

The citizens back away and talk excitedly amongst themselves.  
After a moment one creeps nearer to look at the cigarette.  
Caroline uses it to wave him away and he jumps back. A crowd  
forms a circle round them and the noise rises.

FLEUR

Put it out!

CAROLINE

What? It's the only thing that's  
keeping them away!

They stand closer together again and the crowd becomes more rowdy. Now and then someone steps towards them and Caroline chases them away with the cigarette. More and more step into the circle and she can't keep up.

The noise gets louder and the people move closer, until soldiers appear. The noise reduces to the odd voice and the soldiers push their way towards Fleur and Caroline. The LEADER, late 30s, steps forward.

LEADER

What passes?

Fleur and Caroline look at him blankly. A man steps out from the crowd.

1ST CITIZEN

They breathe fire.

A woman joins him.

2ND CITIZEN

As dragons do.

Another woman steps forwards.

3RD CITIZEN

Nay, there were no flames. She swallowed the fire and breathed out the smoke.

LEADER

Do they speak truth?

CAROLINE

Not exactly...

1ST CITIZEN

It's the truth! It's the truth!

The crowd mutter in agreement.

LEADER

Show me.

Fleur and Caroline look at each other.

FLEUR

Show him!

CAROLINE

I only brought one.

FLEUR

At least show him the lighter,  
then.

Caroline takes the lighter out of her pocket and strikes a  
flame. The crowd step back again, then move closer.

LEADER

What is that named?

CAROLINE

A lighter.

LEADER

How do you breathe it?

CAROLINE

I can't breathe it anymore.

1ST CITIZEN

There was a stick. A small stick.  
She set it aflame and breathed in  
the fire.

CAROLINE

I have no more sticks.

2ND CITIZEN

Are you going to arrest her?

LEADER

I know not the charge.

2ND CITIZEN

She's conjuring!

LEADER

But has she harmed anyone?

2ND CITIZEN

We are all afraid for our wits.

LEADER

You lot are always afraid for your  
wits. And with reason. If I take  
her for conjuring, I must take half  
of you alike!

1ST CITIZEN

And the queen as well!

The crowd laugh.

LEADER

Watch your tongues! Unless you wish  
to repeat that to Her Highness.  
Yet, I cannot just leave you.  
Follow my men.

He steps behind them and indicates that they should go with him and the other soldiers. The crowd parts to let them through.

INT. IN BAYNARD'S CASTLE 10.10AM

Fleur and Caroline arrive in front of the queen ELIZABETH WOODVILLE, early 30s, with the soldiers behind them. They are in a large room, lit by sunshine from wide windows. Servants stand spaced along the wall.

Elizabeth sits at the far end, surrounded by her ladies.

Fleur and Caroline are pushed forward by the soldiers. Caroline follows Fleur and copies as Fleur walks some way into the room, stops and curtsseys. Caroline jumps and looks behind her as she hears the door clang shut.

ELIZABETH

They tell me you breathe fire.

FLEUR

There was confusion. We did not breathe fire, we have a tool to make fire. Your Majesty.

ELIZABETH

Show me.

Caroline reaches into her pocket, brings the lighter out and lights it. Elizabeth reaches for it and Caroline hands it over.

ELIZABETH (CONT'D)

What is this called?

CAROLINE

We call it a lighter.

FLEUR

Your Majesty.

CAROLINE

Your Majesty.

Elizabeth fumbles with it for a moment, trying to light it. When it lights she throws it away from herself.

ELIZABETH  
Guard, show me it lit.

One of the soldiers steps forwards and takes the lighter. He tests it out nervously, but soon gets the hang of it and stands proudly with the flame burning. Elizabeth sits aloof as her ladies cluster round, holding their fingers to the flame and pulling them back sharply when they find it is real.

CAROLINE  
It won't last forever.

FLEUR  
Your Majesty.

CAROLINE  
Your Majesty.

ELIZABETH  
What?

CAROLINE  
The liquid inside is how it burns.  
It will run out if you keep doing  
that.

Elizabeth and the guard look at each other blankly. The guard burns his thumb on the flame and the light goes out. He does not relight it.

ELIZABETH  
Where is it from?

FLEUR  
We can buy them at home.

ELIZABETH  
From where do you hail? What is  
your purpose here?

Fleur and Caroline look at each other, slightly panicky.

FLEUR  
We have been in Burgundy, Your  
Majesty, at the court, with the  
Duchess of Burgundy, the King's  
good sister. We came with a message  
from her.

CAROLINE  
Fleur!

FLEUR

Our ship was wrecked off the Kent coast.

ELIZABETH

Wrecked? By storms or by men? We have had no storms here.

FLEUR

We don't know, how it happened, Your Majesty. We were below decks.

ELIZABETH

And how is it you were not dragged down with the ship?

FLEUR

We escaped by floating on an empty barrel and ran from the beach before dawn. We believe we are the only survivors.

ELIZABETH

You must be uncommonly light if you can both float on an empty barrel.

Her ladies snigger.

ELIZABETH (CONT'D)

And your message from Burgundy?

FLEUR

We have news of the exiles in France.

ELIZABETH

That is?

FLEUR

That they are still in France. In exile.

ELIZABETH

Though the Earl of Warwick is yet on these shores. Making trouble in the north.

Caroline hisses to Fleur.

CAROLINE

Fleur! Our heads! On the block!

The queen looks curiously at Caroline. Fleur's voice starts to waver.

FLEUR  
Apart from him.

ELIZABETH  
Although he is the foremost of the  
exiles in France.

FLEUR  
Yet only one.

ELIZABETH  
And that is all? You risked your  
lives to tell us news we did know?

FLEUR  
We had a letter. We lost it in the  
wreck.

ELIZABETH  
And where were you bound before you  
were wrecked?

FLEUR  
To relations of our husbands' some  
way west of here. Our husbands now  
drowned.

ELIZABETH  
Are they known to us? What are  
their names?

FLEUR  
They are just humble folk. I forget  
the name myself.

ELIZABETH  
You forget their names? Are the  
names of your kinsmen not also your  
names?

Fleur breathes deeply and stands up straight.

FLEUR  
They are relatives on their  
mothers' side.

Caroline covers her face.

ELIZABETH  
What is the name of their town?

FLEUR  
I forget.



ELIZABETH

That will make the finding of them difficult. Where will you stay tonight?

FLEUR

We have no place to stay. We are quite alone in the world now, without our husbands.

Elizabeth turns and speaks quietly to one of the ladies while Fleur and Caroline look at each other, Caroline scowls at Fleur, who smiles and shrugs. Elizabeth turns back to them.

ELIZABETH

We shall give you food and a bed for tonight. This afternoon you must make a statement to the sheriff regarding the possible wreckers in Kent. Tomorrow you may continue on your search for your relatives. Good luck with that.

Bowing and scraping, they follow the lady Elizabeth nominated through another door and deeper into the castle.

INT. THE REFECTORY 10.25AM

In a long room with a refectory table, the lady indicates they should sit.

FLEUR

I think that went well.

CAROLINE

Do you? You don't think we're a bit closer to getting our heads chopped off?

FLEUR

Of course not! We haven't done anything wrong.

CAROLINE

I think we should go as soon as we get the chance. Today if we can.

FLEUR

Why? We're in the king's castle! We should try to stay longer. We've just met the queen! The queen! Elizabeth Woodville!

CAROLINE

You've changed your tune. Listen,  
if we mess her around, we're  
doomed. We can't get away while  
we're shut in the castle.

FLEUR

We could become ladies in waiting!  
Sometimes I think you lack  
ambition.

CAROLINE

My ambitions lie with keeping a low  
profile here and a high one when we  
get home.

Fleur sighs and shakes her head.

INT. IN THE STUDIO.

Marissa stands in front of a huge screen showing an image of  
the queen, undignified: the shot is frozen as she leans  
forward and opens her mouth to speak.

MARISSA

Well, we couldn't have asked for  
better than that, could we? With  
all their education, I think Fleur  
and Caroline could go a long way in  
the fifteen century court!

INT. BACK IN THE QUEEN'S ROOM 10.35AM

The lady Fleur and Caroline followed returns, followed by  
Lord Rivers, early 30s.

RIVERS

You sent for me, my lady.

ELIZABETH

Brother, have you news of any spies  
in town? We have two girls here  
with a machine for making fire.  
They tell a very strange story of  
having been in Burgundy and knowing  
Ned's sister. Not a word of it  
makes sense, but they don't seem to  
care. They won't say where they're  
from: they told my soldiers their  
country is the United Kingdom, but  
I know of no such place.

(MORE)

ELIZABETH (CONT'D)

And their dresses are made cheap,  
yet when they speak they sound well-  
bred. Though their accents are a  
little strange. Mayhap from one of  
the Russian states.

RIVERS

No, sister, I have not heard of  
them.

ELIZABETH

They bide here tonight. I am  
undecided on whether to set them  
free in the morning, or keep them.

RIVERS

Do you want me to interrogate them?

ELIZABETH

No. If they are important somewhere  
there may be consequences.

RIVERS

Where will they travel tomorrow?

ELIZABETH

I know not. They know not. They've  
forgotten. So they say.

RIVERS

Perhaps you could suggest we send  
scouts to find their forgotten  
destination and invite them to stay  
while they look.

ELIZABETH

Perhaps. But if they are spies and  
I harbour them here?

RIVERS

Put them to work in the nursery if  
they're wellborn: they won't hear  
much of importance from infants.

INT. IN THE CONFESSIONAL BOX

Fleur, smiling, faces her rosary (camera).

FLEUR

Well, yeah, we're here, we've met  
Elizabeth Woodville. I think she  
likes us: watch this space...

INT. IN THE ROYAL NURSERY AFTERNOON.

Fleur and Caroline, in plainer dresses than those they arrived in, are picking up wooden toys.

FLEUR

We walked straight into two of the best jobs in the country!

CAROLINE

Yeah, if it seems too good to be true, don't you sometimes think..?

FLEUR

Don't be so nervous. They needed staff, we came along at the right time. Discussion over.

Kate, early 20s, another nursery nurse, appears, excited.

KATE

Russians!

FLEUR

We're not Russian.

KATE

No? Have you heard? The King has returned with all his loyal men. They parade through London now. If we go up to the battlements we'll be able to see them.

EXT. ON THE CASTLE BATTLEMENTS

Fleur, Caroline and Kate stand on the packed battlements and find a space. The streets are lined with crowds and just coming into view is a long procession, men mounted on horses at the front.

FLEUR

So, who's who?

KATE

That will be the king at the front. And next to him, I'm sure, are Lord Hastings and the Duke of Gloucester.

CAROLINE

Are they important?

Kate looks at her as if she is mad. Fleur looks at Caroline and puts her finger to her lips.

FLEUR

We're not familiar with your hierarchy.

KATE

Lord Hastings is the king's nearest friend. And after the king, the Duke of Gloucester is the most important man in the land. And you do not wish to rile his anger: he has a temper like Satan's.

CAROLINE

Satan is bad tempered?

Fleur jabs Caroline with her elbow.

KATE

Look, we can see them properly now. The king is as tall as Goliath.

CAROLINE

It's hard to tell when they're on horses.

KATE

He is tall and he is patient as the saints. You will find he visits the nursery more often than the queen.

FLEUR

Who else is there, then?

KATE

I'm not sure, but I think that banner yonder is Lord Neville. You know who he is, don't you?

FLEUR

Yes.

CAROLINE

No.

FLEUR

Yes, we know he's the king's cousin and Earl of Warwick's brother. You do know who the Earl of Warwick is, don't you?

CAROLINE  
He's the enemy

KATE  
That's right. Funny really, Lord  
Neville over here, with the rest of  
his family in France and the Duke  
of Clarence over there, with the  
rest of his family here.

CAROLINE  
Well, it's a tangled web we weave.

KATE  
We leave the weaving to the  
townsfolk. Have no fear about  
tangles.

They look at each other curiously.

INT. IN THE GREAT HALL EVENING.

It is just after mealtime. Most people are still sitting at their tables, finishing their drinks. Others mill around the room, although they tend to keep loosely to the order in which they sat to eat (king at the top, to housekeeping staff at the bottom).

Fleur and Caroline are about in the middle of the room, below the nobility, but above the general staff.

At the top of the hall KING EDWARD IV, about 30 and LORD HASTINGS, mid 30s, are talking and laughing. The queen, seated next to the king, is speaking to one of her ladies. Animated conversations are going on all the way down their table.

Two drunk SQUIRES, in their 40s, squeeze through the lower rows of benches.

1ST SQUIRE  
Make way! Make way, please!

2ND SQUIRE  
Aye, we need to get back to our  
places before the queen sees us!

1ST SQUIRE  
Oh yes, oh yes. We're making the  
place look untidy!

The 2nd squire raises his voice to a squeak.

2ND SQUIRE

Must I wait for the country-folk to settle before my servants clear the table!

The 1st squire also speaks in a squeak.

1ST SQUIRE

You make my court alike to a barnyard!

They go back to their normal voices.

2ND SQUIRE

'Tis not so long since it was just a barnyard she reigned over.

Fleur and Caroline look at each other.

1ST SQUIRE

Aye. When the lowly become high, they are always prouder than those born high.

2ND SQUIRE

Even with the talk that it was magic put her there.

1ST NEARBY MAN

Quieten yourselves. Your voices will carry to Their Highnesses. Be gone, back to your friends.

The squires take a moment to orientate themselves, then move back to their places.

2ND NEARBY MAN

They speak the truth, though, I did not hear you deny that.

Minstrels are tuning up their instruments, from the lower end of the hall, servants start to move the tables and benches aside.

Suddenly there are raised voices, the hall becomes quiet and everyone's attention is turned to an area a few places down from the king. LORD JOHN NEVILLE, late 30s and LORD PERCY, early 20s, are on their feet facing each other.

JOHN

Speak it clear. What is it you accuse me of and on what evidence?

PERCY

I charge you as your brother: what suits for one Neville suits for them all. Warwick and his like crave the throne.

A gasp goes through the crowd. Lord Hastings hurries down the hall towards John and Percy. He speaks to Percy.

HASTINGS

Why this, Harry? Why now? An outburst like this cannot end well and you are to return home in a day.

PERCY

Neville has my birthright, I cannot leave without speech on it.

JOHN

You forsook your birthright when you forsook...

HASTINGS

Silence! If you wish this to end in a fight, fetch your swords and we shall go outside. If not, Harry, leave now.

Lord Percy takes a moment to consider and John puts his hand on a dagger on his belt. Percy turns to leave. At the door he turns back.

PERCY

You have what is mine today, but God bestowed it and will not see it moved so easily.

EDWARD

Do you blame me for your misfortune, Percy? If you think I was mistaken in leaving your head on your shoulders, I can entertain the notion of changing my mind.

PERCY

No! No, Your Grace, I know you have been generous. I had no plan to spoil your peace. I apologise.

He bows and leaves. The court is quiet. Fleur watches Lord Neville as he turns and goes back to his seat. Caroline turns to Kate.



CAROLINE

Oooooh! What was all that about?

KATE

Lord Percy was the Earl of Northumberland, but he turned traitor and the post was given to Lord Neville. Why Lord Percy was not beheaded, I cannot tell.

CAROLINE

So Lord Percy should be dead, but he's not and he's complaining about it. Well.

KATE

Lord Percy is accustomed to being a very great man, it must be hard to live as a lesser one. We are fortunate, really, in the nursery we have not men's cares.

FLEUR

Yeah.

Fleur nods in contented agreement. The minstrels start playing and people line up to dance. Kate joins and beckons Fleur and Caroline to follow.

As they dance, Fleur's attention is caught when she comes alongside John Neville, who is in the next set along. Almost forgetting the dance, she looks over her shoulder to see him better. After a moment he notices and glances back.

The lady next to Fleur runs into her as Fleur has failed to move on when she should. Ruffled, Fleur returns her attention to the dance.

INT. IN THE NURSERY MORNING.

The two older of the three princesses, BESS, 4 and MARY, 3, are sitting at desks with slates and papers. Mary is just making a mess with the ink, but Bess, is trying to copy the family tree Fleur has drawn for her.

Caroline is sitting by the window reading an oversize book. Fleur is wandering around the room. They both jump to attention and curtsy when Edward and Hastings enter.

EDWARD

Good morn. Be at ease.

Bess and Mary jump down from their desks and run towards Edward who picks the first one to reach him up.

EDWARD (CONT'D)

You see I told you, Will, my girls are getting large. I shall soon be needing husbands for them, though the pickings are a little lean.

HASTINGS

Perhaps their nurses know of some Russian lords you could match them with?

EDWARD

Perhaps they do?

He looks at Fleur and Caroline who look flustered and smile and laugh nervously.

EDWARD (CONT'D)

See, Will, how the ladies go all aflutter in my presence.

He and Hastings walk over to see what Bess has been writing. Caroline follows and loiters behind them, smiling coyly whenever Hastings glances at her.

HASTINGS

Your family tree, Sire. Maybe there is inspiration here.

EDWARD

Lady Cecily of Raby. Who is she, Bess?

BESS

Grandmama.

EDWARD

That's right. There's your cousin, Kathryn, Lady Hastings. And there's... who's that?

He turns his head to the side, squints at the page and turns it to the other side.

EDWARD (CONT'D)

The Dude of Gloucester? The Dude of Clarence? What is it we call a Dude, Will?

Hastings looks at the page.

HASTINGS

I know not, Sire, but it seems, in our midst we have a Dude of York, also.

MARY

Dude of Gloucester!

EDWARD

The word is not dude, Mary. These are the noble dukes of our land.

BESS

We call them dudes.

EDWARD

Yet dude is not a word.

Mary tugs at his belt.

MARY

Dude of Gloucester.

CAROLINE

This is Princess Mary's new word.

EDWARD

Dude?

CAROLINE

Nay, Sire, Gloucester. The dudes are already common parlance.

EDWARD

Very well then, the dudes have it. In fact, I may create a new title. Name me a town requiring a dude.

HASTINGS

I name St Albans to receive the first dude. It will be interesting to see what your daughters learn in a twelve month. It may be we then have a true taste of the Russian ways.

CAROLINE

And in return, what will you show us of English ways?

Edward and Hastings raise their eyebrows in surprise as she steps forward and speaks. Fleur looks horrified.

HASTINGS

What have you yet to see? I fancy you have knowledge enough of our habits. I have seen you senseless with drink as often as old Clarence.

Edward and Hastings laugh.

CAROLINE

Sirs, I would like to see the work of men. I would like to learn to use a sword.

Edward and Hastings laugh.

HASTINGS

Miss, it is not for a lady - especially a gentlelady - to use a sword. She would earn muscles like a washerwoman!

CAROLINE

Just let me have a go! Just to pick one up and swing it around a bit.

Edward and Hastings look at each other. In the background Fleur chews her nails nervously.

HASTINGS

It is not womanly, you know. Not seemly.

CAROLINE

Just one quick go. Let me chop something with it.

EDWARD

The sword will make her arm ache; the other maids will laugh at her and she will quickly have her fill.

HASTINGS

Sire, it is not done.

CAROLINE

It's not against the law. Is it?

EDWARD

Nay, I think it is not against the law. And if it were, the man who makes the law stands before you, ready for change.

CAROLINE  
Lord Hastings?

EDWARD  
Let her try it once, Will. You can entertain us with the tale afterwards and never will a lady ask this again.

HASTINGS  
Very well then. This once. Meet me in the courtyard at noon tomorrow and I shall show you what men learn at age seven.

EDWARD  
It is settled. Ladies, we depart. I shall visit again on the morrow.

Fleur and Caroline curtsy as Edward leaves followed by Hastings. Caroline's eyes follow Hastings. Edward can be heard laughing and talking as he walks down the corridor.

EDWARD (CONT'D)  
Ladies learning sword work! What next? My wife to study cookery?

Fleur turns to Caroline, annoyed.

FLEUR  
That's not how things are done!  
You'll make us look... stupid.  
Unnatural. Outsiders.

CAROLINE  
Oh, chill out. It's only a bit of fun.

INT. IN THE CONFESSIONAL BOX

Caroline sits facing the camera.

CAROLINE  
What do I have to do to get it right? I'm like a leper round here. A social leper, that is. They're loving Fleur though. I don't get it. *Nobody* loves Fleur.

INT. IN THE GREAT HALL EVENING.

It is after the mealtime and the tables and benches have been cleared away. There is dancing. Fleur and Caroline are stumbling through a new dance. Caroline is a bit drunk and is attracting stares from a few of the women.

When the dance comes to an end, Fleur walks away and wanders round the room as the next dance begins. She peers through the dancers to the other side of the hall, where Lord John Neville is sitting at a bench, carving a piece of wood into the shape of a horse. Gradually Fleur makes her way round and stands behind him. He does not notice her until she speaks.

FLEUR

Can you do cats?

JOHN

Cats? Why would you want a carving of a cat? They are just rat-catchers; necessities like pots and pans. They are not noble animals.

FLEUR

They look nice. They sit on you and purr while you stroke them.

JOHN

I'll grant you, some of those brindled ones have a pleasing pattern, but Jesus wept, don't have them sitting on you! Fresh from eating rats! You have some strange ways you Russian girls.

FLEUR

We're not... never mind.

JOHN

And know you who I am?

FLEUR

Of course, you're Lord John Neville, Earl of Northumberland, cousin of the King, brother of the Earl of Warwick.

JOHN

Aye and yet you, a nursery nurse, come and chatter to me as if I am another servant.

Fleur jumps to attention.

FLEUR

I... I'm sorry. I thought... I didn't think. I was forgetting myself.

JOHN

Be at ease, girl, I jest.

FLEUR

Yet, I must recall my rank and beg your permission to leave.

She curtseys and moves towards the main throng of the hall.

EXT. DAY. IN THE COURTYARD.

The queen and four of her ladies appear around the corner of the castle and walk alongside the castle wall, making for the main doorway. As they walk the queen does a double-take and stops. The ladies shuffle into each other, stop and look in the same direction as the queen. The queen speaks to the lady on her left.

ELIZABETH

Agnes, do you find the weather uncommonly warm today?

AGNES

It is warm, my lady, but not uncommonly so.

ELIZABETH

If our minds are not addled by the sun, then tell me what seems to pass on the lawn yonder.

AGNES

It seems to me that one of the Russian girls is swinging a sword at Lord Hastings.

ELIZABETH

Do all agree?

The other ladies nod and "yes, my lady".

AGNES

Should we call a guard, my lady?

The queen laughs briefly.

ELIZABETH

No. If Lord Hastings is defeated by a maid, we are perhaps at advantage without him.

The ladies laugh, then hurry to catch up as the queen, not laughing, continues back to the castle.

On the other side of the courtyard Fleur is standing with other servants, grouped around an elderly pedlar. He has a number of chests on a cart, one is open and he takes small items out of it, opening a box to show a rotted splinter of wood on a piece of linen inside. Some of the girls look more closely.

Kate leans back and speaks to Fleur.

KATE

Do not buy a piece of the True Cross, they are splinters from the boats on the river. If you wish to own a relic, have a bone of a blessed saint.

FLEUR

I'm not going to buy a relic.

KATE

Are you sure? A bone from St Christopher may help you find your way home.

Fleur looks at her sceptically. The man opens another chest and the female servants crowd in more eagerly while the men move away with their purchases. Kate peers over, sighs and returns to where she was.

KATE (CONT'D)

Tokens to tell the future. To use them you must study for years.

FLEUR

I don't need tokens to tell me the future.

The other girls overhear, gasp and look at her.

GIRL

Have you the sight?

FLEUR

No! I only mean, we have such a great king, our future must be assured.



They nod, but look suspicious. However, all attention moves away from Fleur when the pedlar closes the box of tokens and opens another. Kate straightens up. The pedlar holds a small bottle in the air.

PEDLAR

Here we have a new potion from Spain! Two drops a day in your ale promise to remove any blemish within a fortnight.

As the girls mutter and pass it around amongst themselves, sniffing it, he holds up a small pot.

PEDLAR (CONT'D)

The new rouge, alike to that worn by the Queen of Denmark. Try!

He offers the case to Fleur. Slowly she takes it from him, opens it and rubs her finger in it. The pedlar holds a small mirror in front of her. All the other girls watch as Fleur self-consciously rubs it on her cheek. They mutter their approval. Fleur smiles and looks in the mirror again.

KATE

Fleur, it is your colour. You must take some.

FLEUR

I don't really need any rouge.

One of the other girls takes the case from her and they all start to try it. Fleur glances into the mirror again.

KATE

Yet, Fleur, I have never seen you with your face painted. It is most strange, now I realise. You must have some.

FLEUR

I really don't think...

KATE

Is it the charge? I could make you a gift of it.

FLEUR

No, it's....

KATE

What is the worry? Does your church forbid it?

FLEUR

No, I... there is no worry. Go on then!

She takes her purse out from her skirts to buy a pot of rouge.

INT. THE QUEEN'S PRIVATE CHAMBERS

The queen and Lord Rivers sit informally.

ELIZABETH

With a sword, I tell you, brother.  
A sword!

RIVERS

'Tis certainly uncommon.

ELIZABETH

My court will be the jest of Europe. They speak already that I am not high-born. When they hear of this, they will say I know not the difference between man and woman.

RIVERS

Yet how will they hear? Do we hear of the actions of the nannies in Burgundy? Spain? France? Nay.

ELIZABETH

Should their nurses do as that one did, I am sure we should hear.

RIVERS

Still, you say Lord Hastings was her companion? They will not speak so of him. They will tell themselves it was not as told.

ELIZABETH

Will they not?

RIVERS

They will say the word "sword" is but a substitute and what can be more common than that? Meanwhile, my men are all across Europe to learn who they are. We shall know anon if they signal danger.

EXT. IN THE COURTYARD.

John Neville stands near the castle wall watching a page lead a slightly lame horse around the courtyard. Fleur appears, wearing the rouge in circles on her cheeks and hurrying around the corner of the castle, carrying laundry which blocks most of her view ahead. She runs into John and gasps in horror.

FLEUR

My lord, I am sorry! The fault lies all with me.

John is amused.

JOHN

Aye, you carry too much. I saw you at a glance, yet thought you were merely a cloud approaching.

FLEUR

A cloud on legs?

JOHN

Well, they must have some means of travel when on the ground.

Fleur laughs. John beckons to his page who leads the horse over.

JOHN (CONT'D)

Let my page help you. I shall return Galahad to the stables.

FLEUR

Thank you, my lord.

The page takes the laundry from Fleur and John leads the horse away. He glances back at Fleur who is still watching him and smiles. She smiles back. As she turns to follow the page, she takes a mirror out of her pocket and looks at herself, still smiling she dabs at the rouge.

INT. IN THE NURSERY. MORNING.

Fleur and Caroline are folding linen and stashing it in a chest. A toddler runs into the room, throws a wooden toy at Caroline, laughs and runs away.

CAROLINE

Little shit. She threw a cup at me yesterday.

(MORE)

CAROLINE (CONT'D)

Well, one of them did, I find it hard to tell which is which.

FLEUR

That one's Mary, you have to be nice to her because she dies just before her fifteenth birthday.

CAROLINE

Oh no. How come?

FLEUR

She just falls ill and dies. I don't know what of. They probably didn't know themselves.

CAROLINE

Does she know?

FLEUR

What?

CAROLINE

Oh, yeah, I forget they don't know what we know.

FLEUR

It's not all that confusing.

CAROLINE

To be honest, Fleur, I'd prefer it if you didn't tell me who lives and who dies. Do you know what it's like to be talking to someone and thinking, five more years, or whatever? Well, yeah, I suppose you do, but you can't do anything about it. I'd prefer not to know.

FLEUR

Really? You don't want to know?

CAROLINE

That's what I said. These were like fictional people before I came here, but now they're not. They don't know what comes next and I don't want to either.

FLEUR

Well, if you're sure.

CAROLINE

Anyway, it could get us into trouble. What if we predict doom for the King and then doom happens? They'll think we had something to do with it.

FLEUR

There is no doom for the King. Well, not this year.

Voices are heard outside and Kate and Alys, late teens, enter the room.

KATE

Russians!

CAROLINE

We're not...

KATE

Alys has news.

They all turn to look at Alys, who looks coy.

ALYS

I am to be married!

FLEUR AND CAROLINE

Congratulations!

KATE

Tell them to whom you are promised.

ALYS

To Sir Geoffrey Ayton.

KATE

A knight! And an older son! Our Alys will be almost a lady!

FLEUR

And when will you be wed?

ALYS

On Thursday. We depart the morn after for his home in Shropshire.

CAROLINE

That's quick. Are you nervous?

FLEUR

She should be excited, not nervous.  
To start as servant, then marry a  
knight is a commendable  
achievement. Her children may  
become lords. I am envious.

Caroline stares at Fleur.

INT. IN THE CONFESSIONAL BOX

Fleur sits facing the camera.

FLEUR

Really? It's been more than a week  
since I was here? No, I know I  
never miss church, but sometimes I  
have to choose which century takes  
priority. I mean, do you want us to  
fit in, or don't you?

INT. IN A CORRIDOR OUTSIDE THE NURSERY LINEN ROOM.

The queen and five of her ladies are walking down a corridor.  
They hear voices from a door that is ajar and stop.

INT. INSIDE THE LINEN ROOM.

Fleur, Caroline and three other members of the nursery staff  
are inside. Caroline is standing up while the others sit and  
watch her.

CAROLINE

This is more like her.

Caroline paces up and down with her nose in the air in an  
impression of the queen. She trips over one of the other  
girls feet.

CAROLINE (CONT'D)

Oops! Sorry! Didn't see you down  
there from my lofty heights.

The other girls giggle.

FLEUR

She would never say sorry. She'd  
want you flattened so she could  
walk over you.

INT. IN A CORRIDOR.

The queen steps back, upset. She and her ladies continue down the corridor.

AGNES

My lady, will you have speech on it with the king?

ELIZABETH

And what would I say? How could I tell the tale?

INT. IN A CONFESSIONAL BOX

Caroline sits in the box facing the camera.

CAROLINE

Are you sure it's been five weeks? Five weeks since you saw Fleur? We are pretty busy here, maybe she hasn't had time. Yeah, I know I always have time.

INT. OUTSIDE THE CONFESSIONAL, IN THE CHAPEL.

Caroline emerges from the confessional box, takes a few steps forwards and stops when she sees Fleur, kneeling and praying. She walks up to her.

CAROLINE

Just the person. The TV people want to speak to you. What are you doing?

Fleur waits until she gets to the end of her prayer and looks up.

FLEUR

Praying. For a little more life for Princess Mary.

CAROLINE

You don't believe in God. Remember? And how can you pray to change something that's already happened?

FLEUR

It hasn't happened yet.

CAROLINE

It happened five-hundred years ago.

FLEUR

Before we were here it had happened  
five hundred years ago, now it  
hasn't.

CAROLINE

I'm not getting into this. We have  
to be at work in a few minutes. Are  
you coming?

FLEUR

In a few minutes.

Fleur turns back towards the alter, puts her hands together  
and closes her eyes.

CAROLINE

Fine. Weirdo.

Caroline looks at her for a moment before walking away.

FLEUR

You could do better yourself, you  
know. I know you only go to church  
on a Sunday.

Caroline stops and turns back to look at Fleur.

CAROLINE

So?

FLEUR

I think Sunday and Wednesday are  
the minimum really. It might stop  
you being so moody all the time.

CAROLINE

I'm not moody. Why would I go more  
than I have to? Where you need to  
go is a few more steps to the  
right, into that confessional box.

Fleur looks up at her blankly. Caroline lowers her voice.

CAROLINE (CONT'D)

Once a week is your contractual  
minimum. Remember that?

FLEUR

They don't need to speak to us  
every week.



CAROLINE

Yes, they do! They have a TV show to make, that's why we're here. If you don't go, you won't get your money.

FLEUR

It's not seemly to talk about money in the house of God.

CAROLINE

What?

FLEUR

You heard.

CAROLINE

Fine. But remember, the rules are a minimum of once a week. Understood?

FLEUR

Understood.

Caroline looks at her for a moment, then leaves.

Fleur waits until she hears the door close behind Caroline and closes her eyes again. She screws them up in concentration, then opens them again.

FLEUR (CONT'D)

No good.

She gets up and leaves by the same route as Caroline.

INT. IN THE GREAT HALL EVENING MEALTIME.

At the top of the hall the king and queen are greeting two nobles and their wives, newly arrived at court. The king stands in front of the queen, blocking her view, as he smiles flirtatiously at the wives. When he turns to the queen, she smiles a false smile at him and he briefly looks sheepish.

Fleur sits about half way down smiling and gazing around her. She has circles of badly applied rouge on each cheek.

The atmosphere is festive and Alys is the centre of attention, with people stopping to speak to her. Serving boys bring a plate of fish to their table and people start to cut themselves pieces.

Caroline arrives and squeezes onto the bench next to her. She does a double-take when Fleur turns towards her, then leans round to get a better look.

CAROLINE

You're meant to blend that in, do you see anyone else here who's put it on in circles like a clown? Here.

She rubs at Fleur's face until the rouge has mostly vanished. At the top of the hall Caroline sees John talking intensely to Kathryn Hastings. She looks at Fleur to see if she has noticed, then back at them. Fleur follows her gaze.

CAROLINE (CONT'D)

That's Lord Hastings' wife talking to Lord Neville, isn't it? They look pretty pally.

FLEUR

She's his sister. You know, I'm in the vein for the vino tonight.

CAROLINE

"In the vein for the vino" Where did you get that from?

FLEUR

Don't I always say that?

CAROLINE

No, but then you never really used to drink.

FLEUR

I didn't, but now I find it really relaxing.

CAROLINE

Well, I suppose you did miss it all in the uni years. So busy with your head in the past. And now, here you are, your head really is in the past and you can let your hair down!

There is a commotion down the table. They look towards Alys and she is standing, clutching her throat and gasping for air. Her friends stand, urging her to breathe and slapping her on the back. The girl opposite them speaks.

GIRL

I think she's choking on a fish bone.

CAROLINE

I know what to do for that!

FLEUR

What?!

CAROLINE

I know what to do!

Caroline and Fleur whisper for the rest of the scene.

CAROLINE (CONT'D)

The Heimlich manoeuvre.

FLEUR

It hasn't been invented!

CAROLINE

So? Maybe it's one of our strange Russian customs.

FLEUR

It makes no difference! You can't save her! You can't change history.

CAROLINE

We can't stand here and watch her die.

FLEUR

She might not die.

Alys falls to the ground. Caroline starts to move forwards and Fleur pulls her back.

FLEUR (CONT'D)

Stop it! You can't do it!

CAROLINE

She's dying!

FLEUR

You have to let her! This is five-hundred years ago!

CAROLINE

What were you saying about Mary earlier? This is now!

FLEUR

I was only saying a prayer.

One of the pages shouts:

PAGE

Call a priest!

Fleur wraps her arms round Caroline as if she's going to do the Heimlich manoeuvre herself. On the other side of the table, Alys is getting weaker. A priest arrives and everyone makes way as he kneels beside her. He starts to pray over her. Caroline makes a last effort to break away from Fleur.

FLEUR

She'll have catastrophic brain damage by now.

CAROLINE

You're not a doctor.

Alys's eyes go blank. People step back. Someone covers Alys's face with a cloth. After a moment people start to return to where they were, but no-one continues eating.

INT. IN THE STUDIO 9.30PM

Marissa stands in front of a screen showing the image of Alys as her face is covered. There is a studio audience in front of her.

MARISSA

Well, that's what this show is about, uncovering untold stories. An hour ago, no-one had heard of poor Alys, tomorrow she'll be in all the papers.

She walks towards the studio audience. A number of audience members put their hands up as she approaches. Marissa goes to a YOUNG MAN in a blue jumper.

YOUNG MAN

I can't believe Fleur just stood there and let her die!

GIRL NEXT TO HIM

What if it had been one of them?

MARISSA

It wouldn't be one of them: this is the Light Entertainment Department.

YOUNG MAN

That was light entertainment?

MARISSA

That was five hundred years ago. Everyone we see except Fleur and Caroline is already dead.

The studio is silent.

MARISSA (CONT'D)

Dead, after having lived out their lives, as one day we all will be. Meanwhile, I'm absolutely confident neither Fleur, nor Caroline are going to meet their end by choking on a fish bone in the fifteenth century.

YOUNG MAN

There's nine months of fish eating left to them yet.

MARISSA

But forewarned is forearmed.

Marissa looks directly into the camera, daring anyone to challenge her.

INT. IN THE NURSERY. EVENING.

Fleur is standing in the doorway facing into the room. Caroline is sitting in a chair turned away from her.

FLEUR

You have to come!

CAROLINE

Yesterday we watched a girl choke to death. They're carrying on as if nothing happened. I won't go.

FLEUR

What are they supposed to do? People die young all the time here.

CAROLINE

They could at least acknowledge it properly!

FLEUR

The whole court can't grind to a halt. We have to go and we have to act as if that's what we think too.

Caroline stays where she is. Fleur crosses the room and pulls her arm.

FLEUR (CONT'D)

They already think we're strange enough. We have to do this.

Caroline stares straight ahead for a moment, then stands up and strides out of the room ahead of Fleur.

INT. IN THE GREAT HALL EVENING.

Fleur and Caroline enter as the whole court is listening to the king.

EDWARD

... happy news. Tomorrow my heralds go out across the country, but today I proclaim to you, the nearest of my subjects, the glad word that my queen is in expectance of another child!

The court applauds. The queen smiles, looks around at them and nods.

EDWARD (CONT'D)

After three maids, let's hope God grants a son for the House of York.

The king sits down and the court applauds again. Fleur and Caroline take their seats among the nursery staff who are more subdued than the rest of the court. The queen leans over to speak to the king. The king stands up again.

EDWARD (CONT'D)

My subjects of the nursery, are you not pleased at the thought of a new arrival? Do you baulk at the work?

HASTINGS

Your Grace, I believe they buried one of their number this afternoon.

The queen looks at the nursery staff.

ELIZABETH

What? Are we all to mourn the loss of a servant? They will have us grieve the passing of a dog next!

CAROLINE

Hey!

Everyone stares at her.

CAROLINE (CONT'D)

Alys deserves proper respect!

ELIZABETH  
More respect than God's anointed?

FLEUR  
(*Whispering*) Caroline sit down.

CAROLINE  
(*Whispering*) What? Are you mad?

FLEUR  
(*Whispering*). No I'm in the  
fifteenth century.

ELIZABETH  
I asked you a question: how can you  
think the funeral of a servant  
could be more than the news of a  
new prince?

CAROLINE  
Because everyone is equal.

The king looks at Caroline with narrowed eyes. A murmur runs  
around the court. Kate leans towards Caroline.

ELIZABETH  
Do not test that notion.

KATE  
(*Whispering to Caroline*). Has a  
demon possessed you? If you grovel  
to the queen at once, you may be  
forgiven. Go!

CAROLINE  
No!

FLEUR  
Caroline, go and grovel! Just do  
it! Go and crawl up the hall.

Caroline looks uncertain, but before she gets chance to move,  
the queen breaks off from speaking to the king and leaves the  
hall with her ladies behind her.

CAROLINE  
Well, she's leaving, I can't barge  
in now. That would make it worse.

Fleur looks at Caroline with her arms folded and shakes her  
head.

KATE

If you will not grovel, I think you should remove yourself and spend some days hoping not to be called to the king.

Caroline marches out of the hall. As Kate turns to one of the other members of nursery staff, John Neville walks past. He glances over, looks at Fleur and smiles. Fleur smiles back, stands and follows him.

INT. IN THE CONFESSIONAL BOX

Caroline sits downcast, not looking into the camera.

CAROLINE

I know this is reality TV, but whose reality is it meant to be? Theirs or ours? I didn't anticipate seeing some one die.

INT. IN ELIZABETH'S CHAMBER

The queen's chamber ladies sit quietly with their embroidery, pretending not to notice as the king and queen argue.

ELIZABETH

And that is all? None - not even my husband - reacted and all you do after is have someone speak to her?

EDWARD

She is upset over the death of her friend and their understanding of protocol is slight. Maybe you could have been gentler with her.

ELIZABETH

Gentler? The servants cannot think their cares rank with ours.

EDWARD

And they do not.

ELIZABETH

We cannot let it stand. Show all I am to be respected, with the full glory of a queen. Send them out.

Edward throws his hands in the air.



EDWARD

Elizabeth, be kind. Where else would they go? They have lost their families and would never survive outside this castle.

ELIZABETH

They are of no use! They told tales of wreckers in Kent, but could give no evidence of wreckers in Kent. They raise our daughters, yet our daughters' manners are worse every day. Bess called your brother the Dude of Gloucester the other day.

EDWARD

Aye, I heard of the dudes. And I laughed. If it worries you, why not move them to the kitchen, or set them to sewing?

ELIZABETH

I shall set them to sewing when I want my sleeve sown to my hat and my shoes sown to my coat. Ned, you know I saw Will Hastings showing the plump one how to use a sword?

EDWARD

I have heard something of it, but these are not reasons. They irritate you, I know, but does my brother of Gloucester not irritate you more? And Will? Yet you have never asked for them to be turned from court.

ELIZABETH

It is different. Our lords are of our land. They belong in our court.

EDWARD

Yet my answer is the same whether it be them or our foreign guests.

They look at each other for a moment. Then Elizabeth turns her back on Edward and picks up a piece of embroidery, although she does not start stitching. Edward stands for a moment, then shrugs and leaves.

INT. IN THE NURSERY.

Caroline is singing *Sweet Child of Mine* as a lullaby, while unpicking stitching from an old dress. Kate enters.

KATE

Good eve, Caroline.

CAROLINE

Evening.

KATE

Caroline, I did laugh the other day. One of the kitchen girls told me you'd been seen with Lord Hastings and he was showing you how to use his sword. Never have I heard it named that before!

CAROLINE

No, he actually was showing me how to use his sword.

KATE

Aye, so they said! Worry not, it is only in fun. But tell of Fleur; what passes between her and Lord Neville?

CAROLINE

What do you mean?

KATE

Each evening, when the dancing begins, they dance a little - perhaps for show - then they disappear. For what purpose? Do they have a dance of their own?

CAROLINE

I don't know what you mean. I've never seen them disappear.

KATE

Come, do you aver you can see Fleur at all times of an evening? Do you always know where she is?

CAROLINE

Well, of course I don't always know where she is. Do you always know where I am?

KATE

It is not the same.

Caroline puts the dress down and looks directly at Kate.

CAROLINE

So, tell me, exactly, what are you asking?

KATE

I ask you if Fleur is involved with Lord Neville. What is your answer?

CAROLINE

My answer is no, Fleur would not do such a thing.

KATE

But it is not such a great thing. What man does not take a mistress when he is away from his wife for many months?

Caroline returns her attention to the dress.

KATE (CONT'D)

It is a good thing for her...

CAROLINE

You are mistaken.

KATE

I think you speak to deceive.

Kate leaves and Caroline watches her thoughtfully.

EXT. THE CASTLE COURTYARD AFTERNOON.

The pedlar is packing up his wares and preparing to leave as Fleur and other servants walk away from him, examining their purchases.

Elizabeth walks briskly from a door near the gateway, heading towards the central door, followed by three of her ladies in waiting. She does a double-take as she sees something in the far corner of the courtyard, then stops and watches. In the corner Caroline is struggling to swing a sword as Lord Hastings stands behind her and tries to guide her arm. They are both laughing.

ELIZABETH

They persist.

She turns to one of her ladies.

ELIZABETH (CONT'D)

Summon my brother. Tell him to meet me in the east chamber.

INT. A COMMUNAL ROOM OF THE CASTLE.

Elizabeth sits with the same two ladies. She picks at some embroidery while the ladies stitch with more concentration. The third lady from the courtyard enters with Lord Rivers.

ELIZABETH

Brother, give me glad news: tell all you have learnt of the foreigners who came late to our court.

RIVERS

Sister, I beg forgiveness, I have learnt nothing. I have not sat idle, yet each course down which I pursue them leads to nought.

ELIZABETH

Explain.

RIVERS

I have sent men across all London to see who knows them, but none confess to it. I dispatched spies to France; allies to Burgundy. Even to Russia have I sent men. But all return uninformed.

ELIZABETH

You say you have men in Burgundy, where they reckon most lately they departed, yet none have heard of them? Is that not curious?

RIVERS

I fear they claimed they were more than they are: the bluster of strangers in an unfamiliar land. Or their visit was too brief to etch their memories to the court. For certain, none there recalls them today.

ELIZABETH

Yet, they read, they write, they know of history.

(MORE)

ELIZABETH (CONT'D)

They are not peasants wandered from the plough! Somewhere, someone awaits their return. Find out where! Find out why!

RIVERS

Sister, we must consider their story may be true. It may be they are ordinary folk who have lost all.

ELIZABETH

Brother, you always were quick to believe the most fantastical stories. Continue your quest and I shall be the one proved true.

EXT. IN THE CASTLE COURTYARD. MORNING.

The courtyard is filled with horses and soldiers preparing to leave. Fleur is speaking to John, who is standing beside his horse. Fleur is wearing more make-up than before, again, badly applied.

JOHN

You seem unconcerned. Know you not that we travel north to subdue men who would see our heads on pikes?

FLEUR

I know, yet I think that God is with you on this occasion.

JOHN

Is it true, as they say, that you have the sight?

FLEUR

No, I just have sight of the strongest army in the land. It will not be beaten by a band of rebels.

JOHN

Now you speak sense.

A herald shouts for everyone to mount their horses, then plays a fanfare.

JOHN (CONT'D)

So we must part, but you say it is not goodbye, just until we meet again.

Fleur nods, John mounts his horse. He looks as if he is going to speak, but Hastings shouts to him first.

HASTINGS  
Northumberland! Make haste!

JOHN  
Until then.

He and everyone else in the courtyard start to ride out through the main gate. Caroline joins Fleur.

CAROLINE  
They get back alright, then?

FLEUR  
Thought you didn't want to know what happens.

CAROLINE  
Just this once?

FLEUR  
They get back alright.

One of Elizabeth's ladies in waiting appears behind them. They jump slightly when she speaks.

LADY  
Her Grace, the Queen commands you attend her immediately.

CAROLINE  
Why?

LADY  
That news is not for me to deliver.

The lady walks away. Fleur and Caroline look at each other, shrug and follow in the same direction.

INT. IN THE QUEEN'S CHAMBER.

Elizabeth sits in a chair, her ladies sit on stools nearby. Fleur and Caroline enter and curtsy.

FLEUR  
Your Grace.

CAROLINE  
Your Grace.

ELIZABETH

You must be all agog to know why I have summoned you here and I shall not keep you waiting. You are to collect any belongings you have and leave. You may never return.

FLEUR

But Your Highness, why? What have we done?

ELIZABETH

May I not have whom I choose in my own house? And may I not turn out those whom I choose not to have?

FLEUR

Your Highness, you may, but why? We've been here months. We've been no trouble.

ELIZABETH

I am your queen and I am unrequired to give you reason for my decisions.

Fleur is shaking.

FLEUR

But Your Majesty...

ELIZABETH

Go! I shall hear no more. Another sound and the guards will remove you and put you straight in the gutter.

INT. IN THE CORRIDOR.

Fleur and Caroline stand together, speaking quietly.

CAROLINE

Of course we'll manage! It was only good luck we got here in the first place. We'll just have to find jobs or something. Are we very marketable in the fifteenth century jobs forum?

FLEUR

We're not the pick of the bunch. How much money have you got left?

CAROLINE  
 Nearly half, I think. Just under.

FLEUR  
 I'm all out.

CAROLINE  
 What? How? We pay no rent, we have  
 no bills, we hardly ever leave the  
 castle!

FLEUR  
 We do sometimes go out and these  
 clothes weren't cheap. I had to buy  
 make-up or I wouldn't look the  
 part.

CAROLINE  
 How much have you bought?

FLEUR  
 I have a small chestful hidden  
 under Bess's bed. Sometimes you  
 just want to look nice.

Caroline rolls her eyes.

FLEUR (CONT'D)  
 And... I have one of St Peter's  
 finger bones. Hair from the severed  
 head of John the Baptist.

CAROLINE  
 You bought a relics? They're just  
 junk!

FLEUR  
 I thought they would be nice to  
 take back to the twenty-first  
 century.

CAROLINE  
 Jewellery, might have been nice,  
 not some bits of old bone from the  
 butcher's

FLEUR  
 Well, the point is, I have next to  
 no money left. And there's  
 something else.

Pause.



FLEUR (CONT'D)

I'm pregnant.

CAROLINE

What? No, not "what". I heard what you said. Shit! How? How far?

FLEUR

I'm not sure. Couple of months.

CAROLINE

Is that all? You could be wrong?

FLEUR

Not really. You see now why we can't leave the castle? The jobs we can get are hard, manual labour. We won't last five minutes. And we won't manage on half your money.

CAROLINE

I like the way you're making this my problem as much as yours.

FLEUR

Are you going to abandon me?

Caroline looks away for a moment.

FLEUR (CONT'D)

Maybe we can go home.

CAROLINE

Will we still get our money?

INT. OUTSIDE THE CONFESSIONAL, IN THE CHAPEL.

Fleur and Caroline emerge together from the confessional box. Caroline leans shakily against the side of the box.

CAROLINE

They can't put us somewhere they can't get us out of! You can always get out! That's the law! Isn't it?

FLEUR

Is it? Does it make any difference if it is?

CAROLINE

Well... YES. We won't be here forever! We can sue them when we get home. Shall we ask them again?

FLEUR

They told us the science: physical things can only go through once a year. That was explained to us.

CAROLINE

I didn't think they meant emergencies.

They sit quietly for a moment.

CAROLINE (CONT'D)

So we need jobs. What are the options?

FLEUR

We could go shrimping, be milkmaids.

CAROLINE

In London?

FLEUR

They have cows. We could be rat catchers, astrologers, beekeepers, innkeepers. We could do laundry.

CAROLINE

There's more to that than starting up the washing machine, isn't there?

FLEUR

It's a full-time job. And a very tough one. You could be a nun.

CAROLINE

Nuns.

FLEUR

Nah. We could be outlaws.

CAROLINE

Seventeen years of education and we're qualified for nothing.

INT. EVENING. IN THE QUEEN'S CHAMBER.

Elizabeth stands by the window. Caroline stands by the door.

ELIZABETH

Mercy? Oh, you want to stay in the castle. Still, you can't. I've made my decision: why would I change it?

CAROLINE

But your Highness! We're strangers in your world, we know no craft. How would we support ourselves outside?

ELIZABETH

How would I know? Why should I care? Sell your clothes. Sell yourselves. It's not my concern!

CAROLINE

But Your Grace, we do no harm. Your Highness *please* reconsider!

ELIZABETH

Were you of the belief you could shout at me in my own court and suffer no consequence? That you could speak to a queen as to a beggar? That you could mimic me for amusement and fear no reproach?

Caroline swallows and looks at the floor, deflated.

CAROLINE

I am sorry, Your Majesty. I am unaccustomed to the ways of your world.

ELIZABETH

Then here lies a lesson.

CAROLINE

Your Majesty, we won't be here forever. Please let us stay just a little longer. Your Highness...

ELIZABETH

You've "Your Highness'd" enough. I do believe you should already be gone. So leave! And don't forget to curtsy.

Caroline shakes her head, gives a brief curtsy and leaves. As she goes one of Elizabeth's ladies enters through another door.

LADY

Your Highness, Fleur is asking to see you. She's one of the nurses from the nursery.

ELIZABETH

I know who she is. And I wager I can guess what she wants.

LADY

Shall I send her in?

ELIZABETH

No. Yes... no. Very well, I'll tell her myself what I told her friend.

The lady leaves, Fleur enters and gives Elizabeth a brief curtsey.

FLEUR

Your Highness.

ELIZABETH

Fleur. Commence then, plead with me, beg me to recant. Cry if you want, prostrate yourself. I've seen it all from your friend.

FLEUR

Caroline's been here?

ELIZABETH

She left only a moment ago. I know you're here to say the same as she, so hurry, then leave me in peace.

FLEUR

I doubt I'm going to say what Caroline said.

ELIZABETH

No? So forge ahead. Surprise me!

FLEUR

Your marriage to the King is not legal. You are just Elizabeth Woodville. Your children are all bastards. Surprised?

ELIZABETH

Say that again. No! Don't! HOW DARE YOU! *HOW DARE YOU!* WHO ARE YOU? Guards!

FLEUR

Don't call the guards! Think about what I said. And that I may say it again. Do you wish other ears to hear it? Even the ears of loyal men?

Two guards appear, Elizabeth gestures them away.

ELIZABETH

Leave, I was mistaken.

They leave.

ELIZABETH (CONT'D)

You lie.

FLEUR

There is no lie. When you and the King were secretly married, he was already betrothed to Lady Eleanor Butler. Another secret, but entirely legal, ceremony. He was never free to wed you.

Pause.

FLEUR (CONT'D)

Is that not the mirror of your own marriage? One spring morning you and he met and secretly wed. The only difference, that yours was revealed, Lady Butler's kept secret. I wonder only if there are any more.

ELIZABETH

How many know?

FLEUR

You believe me then?

ELIZABETH

Of course I don't believe you! This is treason. Yes! Treason! And I want to know how many have conspired in it!

Fleur stares at Elizabeth and says nothing.

ELIZABETH (CONT'D)

It will go easier when we try you if you tell all you know now.

FLEUR

If you try me for treason you'll have to give a reason for it. The law here is quick to condemn, but it at least requires a crime first.

ELIZABETH

It has a crime! This is treason!

FLEUR

*But you can't tell them what I've done!* And if you accuse us, we'll have a chance to state our defence and when we tell, who will they believe; knowing the king as they do? As you do. And even if they say they believe you, there will always be those who doubt and plot against you on the strength of it.

ELIZABETH

We'll find a reason to try you. Maybe a different reason, but there's always a reason.

FLEUR

But I shall still speak the truth on the state of your marriage.

They stare at each other for a moment.

ELIZABETH

What is it you want?

FLEUR

Only to stay in the castle.

Elizabeth thinks for a moment.

ELIZABETH

You will both work with the wardrobe staff until my husband returns. Then the matter will be resolved.

INT. IN THE STUDIO.

Marissa stands in front of the screen, where Fleur and Elizabeth are frozen in the last scene.

MARISSA

Hmmm. No-one was supposed to know that for another thirteen years.

She turns to the audience. A boy in a tie puts his hand up.

BOY

Fleur has to be playing with fire,  
going up against the most powerful  
woman in the land.

A middle-aged woman at the back shouts out.

MIDDLE AGED WOMAN

Yeah and a witch, to boot!

The audience laughs.

MARISSA

Yeah, but it's just Fleur  
maintaining the status quo.

BOY

What would be the consequences,  
though, if something changed  
because of that?

MARISSA

We have taken adequate measures to  
ensure nothing will change.

BOY

What measures?

MARISSA

Adequate ones.

BOY

No, come on, the queen could do  
something different now she knows  
that. How can you stop it?

MARISSA

The queen won't want that  
information repeating, will she?

BOY

Even if the queen keeps quiet, if  
Fleur's got away with it once,  
what's to stop her changing  
something else?

MARISSA

Such as?

BOY

She could invent electricity?

Marissa smiles coldly.

MARISSA

I don't think that's very likely.  
Do you?

INT. IN THE CASTLE WARDROBE.

Fleur and Caroline are hanging dresses on dummies.

CAROLINE

So Kate's happy now she's become  
mistress to a nobleman.

FLEUR

Who did she get?

CAROLINE

The Dude of Gloucester.

Fleur looks up when Gloucester is mentioned. She watches as Caroline walks a small circle with one shoulder higher than the other in an impression of Gloucester.

FLEUR

Really?

CAROLINE

Yep. Him with the lopsided walk.  
What's with his walk, anyway?

FLEUR

He's got a curved spine. You do  
know who he is, don't you?

Caroline shakes her head.

FLEUR (CONT'D)

*(Whispering)* He's Richard III. Or  
will be one day. Do not repeat that  
to anyone, no matter what.

CAROLINE

What, the bloke from the car park?

FLEUR

The very same.

CAROLINE

Is that spine thing hereditary?  
Because Kate thinks there's a baby  
on the way.



Fleur is staring at her.

CAROLINE (CONT'D)  
 What? Oh, you know something about  
 this, don't you? Don't tell me!

A girl runs in.

GIRL  
 They're back!

She runs back out again.

CAROLINE  
 Who?

FLEUR  
 The armies? From the north? It's  
 about time.

EXT. IN THE CASTLE COURTYARD. MORNING.

Edward, Hastings and Gloucester are among many nobles and knights dismounting their horses as pages and servants run to help. Fleur and Caroline watch curiously as Gloucester strides past them. They see John standing beside his horse and make their way towards him.

JOHN  
 Fleur, come see, I have a gift for  
 you.

He searches in his saddle bag for a moment, then brings out an ornamental rosary and gives it to her. She smiles.

JOHN (CONT'D)  
 I made the journey to York  
 particularly for it, there is a  
 craftsman there who is known to be  
 the finest.

FLEUR  
 Thank you.

She and Caroline admire it for a moment, then Fleur takes off her rosary with the camera in it, puts it in a pocket in her dress and replaces it with the new one.

CAROLINE  
 Don't lose that.

JOHN  
 Nay, it is made bespoke.

CAROLINE

I meant the original one. Which is also bespoke.

JOHN

Come now, I need a drink. You can tell me of events in my absence.

Fleur and Caroline exchange glances.

FLEUR

Or you can tell me about your campaign.

JOHN

You think you wish to hear of war, but I tell you it is not talk for ladies.

Fleur and John head off towards the castle, where other couples are already heading, leaving Caroline standing beside the horse. A page comes and takes the horse. Caroline is left standing alone.

INT. IN THE KING'S PRIVATE ROOMS

The walls are almost completely covered in tapestries. The king is near the window. The queen paces the room.

EDWARD

Our marriage is a marriage, Elizabeth! Maybe not in the eyes of God but certainly in the eyes of the world. We'll deal with Fleur.

ELIZABETH

Yet, someone must have told her! What if they tell?

EDWARD

Why would they tell? For what benefit? How many know?

ELIZABETH

I do not know.

EDWARD

I cannot say either. I swear to God, Elizabeth, apart from Fleur, I know of only one other. He who betrothed us, Bishop Stillington. And he has received a princely sum for his silence.

ELIZABETH  
What about Hastings?

EDWARD  
No, I'm sure... no.

ELIZABETH  
Gloucester?

EDWARD  
Definitely not.

ELIZABETH  
Northumberland?

EDWARD  
If she's told him, but she didn't  
learn it from John.

ELIZABETH  
Clarence? Warwick? The Archbishop?

EDWARD  
No, no, NO! Elizabeth, there's no  
point in us wondering.

ELIZABETH  
We'll have to have her executed

EDWARD  
No-one will be executed. If she  
dies we'll never know who the  
others are.

ELIZABETH  
But this is treason.

EDWARD  
Or is it blackmail? What does she  
want?

ELIZABETH  
To stay in the castle. To blackmail  
your king is treason.

EDWARD  
To stay in the castle? She already  
does stay in the castle.

Pause.

EDWARD (CONT'D)  
What have you done?

ELIZABETH  
I told them to leave.

EDWARD  
By God's grace! I told you... Where  
is she now? Is she still here?

ELIZABETH  
They're working in the wardrobes.

INT. IN THE CONFESSIONAL BOX

Caroline sits cheerfully facing the camera.

CAROLINE  
So, we were in a bit of a pickle,  
but it seems to have come good. The  
chat I had with her must have made  
a difference. I think I'm getting  
the hang of the way things are  
round here. At last!

INT. IN THE WARDROBE.

Caroline shoves Fleur against the wall and leans into her

CAROLINE  
You said what? That has to be a  
crime. What is it? Blackmail?  
Treason? Treason!

FLEUR  
It's not treason.

CAROLINE  
What if they execute you? What if  
they execute me?

FLEUR  
They won't execute us.

CAROLINE  
How do you know?

FLEUR  
Because the word is out there now.  
And they know, I'll keep my mouth  
shut for as long as I'm not  
threatened.

CAROLINE  
I hope you're right.

INT. IN THE KING'S PRIVATE ROOMS

Fleur stands by the door, facing Edward.

EDWARD

... you will return to the nurseries and resume your duties there, but mark now my words: if ever there is a whisper of this repeated, I shall know who to come to and your head will be over the Tower ere you can say "Dude of York"! Understood?

INT. IN A COMMUNAL ROOM IN THE CASTLE.

Fleur and Caroline sit in a window seat. Fleur has now got the hang of doing her make-up, she is visibly pregnant, four or five months. Fleur has the psaltery and is plucking out a tune. It is a sunny day and the sun is shining on them through the glass window, but it is only March and John is sitting in a chair by a fire, smiling, amused at their efforts.

FLEUR

I taught myself this today.

She plucks out the first few bars of *The A-Team Theme*. Caroline smiles. A page enters and bows to John.

PAGE

Sir, the King wishes to see you in his chamber.

John stands up and speaks to Fleur and Caroline.

JOHN

I think you almost have that one. I shall expect something new when I get back.

He follows the page out with a spring in his step. When he leaves Fleur puts the psaltery down.

FLEUR

It's 25th March today.

CAROLINE

What? Is it someone's birthday or something?

FLEUR

Today is the day it all starts  
going wrong. Remember I told you?

CAROLINE

Not really. If you remember, I did  
ask you not to tell me what happens  
to people.

FLEUR

Well, you're going to see today  
anyway. The King has sent for John  
to tell him he is giving the duchy  
of Northumberland back to the  
Percys.

CAROLINE

Why would he do that?

FLEUR

No-one really knows, but it was  
John's undoing. He's on the path to  
his end.

CAROLINE

Does this seem like five-hundred  
years ago now?

FLEUR

I never thought we'd get this  
involved and now that we are, I  
keep thinking something will turn  
up to put it right. I keep  
wondering what.

CAROLINE

What will you tell the baby?

FLEUR

The truth?

CAROLINE

Really?

FLEUR

Can you think of something better?

INT. INSIDE EDWARD'S ROOMS.

Edward is sitting on an ornate chair. Hastings is standing  
beside him. John is in front of them. Clerks are seated at  
desks along one side of the room.

JOHN

Sire! I am a second son, I have inherited nothing. Look at the power and wealth of my older brother, Warwick, compared to mine. Regard the riches acquired by my younger brother, the Archbishop. Everything I have - I had - I have earned as a soldier. I have fought, in every way: I have fought for what I have achieved and I have fought for you. Against all persuasions to join the Lancasters and in low tides, as in high. And now, you take what I have earned and give me title and rank with no estates to support it. A promotion, you say? It is worth the moment it takes to say the words and nothing more. I have a son who must be left a legacy and five daughters to find husbands for. How am I to provide futures for them?

EDWARD

John, this is not poor treatment. I have raised you to a Marquess. Have no worries about your children, I shall find them good marriages.

JOHN

With respect, my lord, my son had a good marriage arranged. With Exeter's daughter. But you paid them four thousand marks to marry her to a Woodville!

EDWARD

There will be no more marrying the Woodvilles. The Woodvilles are in need of no more marriages.

JOHN

Maybe, but who is left now for the rest of us? Northumberland was all I asked and did I not earn it? The title of Montague is a worthless dignity! A magpie's nest.

EDWARD

I have made you a fair swap! Leave me now before you say something you regret!

John leaves the room without stopping to observe the normal protocol.

EXT. IN THE COURTYARD.

Caroline sighs as she watches John and Fleur disappear around the corner of the castle, then turns and heads in the opposite direction.

Along the side of the castle she enters a small garden, enclosed by trellises. Caroline stops suddenly when she sees the queen, kneeling over a patch of soil, muttering, her hands hovering over stones and sticks which have been laid out in a deliberate pattern.

The queen is alerted by the sound as Caroline steps on a twig. She has been caught casting a spell and they look at each other warily. Caroline curtsseys and starts to turn.

ELIZABETH

You will have heard rumours.

Caroline stops and turns back.

ELIZABETH (CONT'D)

You may speak truth. I am not ignorant of what passes behind my back.

CAROLINE

I pay no heed to rumours, Your Highness.

ELIZABETH

You know there is no crime in what I do. I chant only to bring about trivialities, like to the village hags who cure colds and chills.

CAROLINE

Your Highness, I apologise, I wandered here by mistake. I only looked for somewhere quiet. In this castle we are never alone; although ever alone.

ELIZABETH

Never alone and ever alone. You may make a point. I have knowledge of a spell to bring friendship if you wish it.



CAROLINE  
Does it work, Your Highness?

ELIZABETH  
You may make your own verdict on that.

CAROLINE  
Yes, Your Highness.

ELIZABETH  
Folk will gossip and accuse on little evidence. Lives have been destroyed on a false word.

CAROLINE  
Yes, Your Highness. I am no gossip, Your Highness. I believe I may be returning home soon, we have received news.

ELIZABETH  
Then perhaps our memories will be free of this meeting?

CAROLINE  
They will be free.

INT. IN THE CASTLE GARDENS.

Fleur is making daisy chains. Caroline sits next to her.

CAROLINE  
And so, it turned out, the queen really was a witch!

FLEUR  
Sshhh!

CAROLINE  
There's no-one around. Anyway, you know what the date is, don't you?

FLEUR  
Late May?

CAROLINE  
Second of June. One week 'til we go home.

FLEUR  
Just a week? Already?

CAROLINE

We need to do a reccy into town, to check we know where the portal is, now that they've given us the coordinates. Do it tomorrow?

FLEUR

Yeah, fine. You sure we're going to be able to find it OK?

CAROLINE

Yeah, the camera lines it up for us with little red dot. No thinking required. What could go wrong?

INT. IN THE STAFF SLEEPING QUARTERS OF THE NURSERY. EVENING.

Fleur is getting ready to go, tying closed a small bundle. Caroline hurries into the room.

FLEUR

Sorted it with Princess Bess? We're really short of time now.

CAROLINE

Yeah, she's asleep. Have we got everything we're taking?

Fleur sheepishly holds up her bundle.

CAROLINE (CONT'D)

Your relics. Fine. If you must. Let's go!

Fleur nods. As they turn to leave Princess Bess appears at the door.

BESS

I don't feel well.

Fleur and Caroline look at each other.

CAROLINE

We're a little bit busy at the moment, Bess. Kate's in the nursery, why don't you go and find her?

BESS

I don't want Kate.

CAROLINE

Well, you don't want us. We're terrible at making people feel better.

BESS

I want you.

Caroline looks at Fleur.

FLEUR

We'll just take her round to Kate and go.

BESS

Nooo!

Bess starts crying loudly. Kate enters, followed by two other nursery workers.

KATE

What passes? Why does the princess cry?

FLEUR

She's got a stomach ache or something. Can you deal with her, please?

BESS

I want Caroline!

KATE

But she wants you, Caroline.

CAROLINE

I'm busy. Can you deal with her, please?

Kate and the girls with her are taken aback.

KATE

What can keep you too busy to tend to the princess?

CAROLINE

It's not my shift. She has to learn.

Kate stands directly in front of Caroline, blocking her exit and the other girls are close behind her.

KATE

Knowest you something we knowest not? Something that allows you to cast aside your duties? Have you been made empress of a sudden?

FLEUR

Caroline hasn't been feeling too well herself today, she's worried she'll make Bess worse.

Kate and the other girls recoil.

FLEUR (CONT'D)

She didn't want to say because she knows how folk worry when sickness is in the air. We are sure it's nothing, but we are going to the apothecary anyway, for a potion.

KATE

You ought to have spoken so immediately. Go. I shall take Bess.

She picks Bess up and hurries out, with other girls following close behind.

FLEUR

We need to run!

EXT. IN THE COURTYARD. EVENING.

Fleur and Caroline hurry out of the castle and run straight into Elizabeth. Elizabeth stays standing, but Fleur is knocked into Caroline, Elizabeth's ladies flurry around, gasping in horror.

ELIZABETH

Be the castle on fire?

CAROLINE

No, Your Highness.

Fleur and Caroline hurriedly curtsy and try to shuffle away.

ELIZABETH

Then why do you run like dogs after a bone?

CAROLINE

We... we apologise. We have no reason. We like to run, so we did. Sorry!

Caroline curtseys again and shuffles further backwards.

ELIZABETH

Yet you know this is a poor way to go around the castle.

FLEUR

Look, we were running, we ran into you. No harm done. Let's go.

Fleur pulls Caroline's arm and they set off towards the gate.

ELIZABETH

Halt!

FLEUR

Catch us if you can!

CAROLINE

Don't antagonise her.

ELIZABETH

Guards!

Guards appear in front of the gate and block their way.

CAROLINE

Now look what you've done!

Caroline turns back to Elizabeth.

CAROLINE (CONT'D)

Your Highness, I beg pardon for my friend, but a fever ails her. It leads her almost to madness.

The queen's ladies step back.

CAROLINE (CONT'D)

We wished to keep it secret. We go now to the apothecary. Fleur has her relics, we hoped he could advise her of their use. If she cannot be cured, our aim is to spare the castle and not return at all.

ELIZABETH

It is more noble than I would have thought of you. I wonder where you may stay if you do not return? Send word to the castle and we may find you a dwelling for your final days.

(MORE)

ELIZABETH (CONT'D)  
 Guards, let them through. Do you  
 know the way to the apothecary?

CAROLINE  
 Yes, thank you, we do.

ELIZABETH  
 My guard will escort you.

CAROLINE  
 There is no need, we know the way,  
 thank you, most gracious Highness.

ELIZABETH  
 I insist. If this be the last time  
 we meet, I think past words can be  
 past. Guard, take them to the  
 king's apothecary.

The guard nods and indicates the direction to Fleur and  
 Caroline.

FLEUR  
 He's pointing the wrong way.

CAROLINE  
 I know. Wait 'til we get round the  
 corner - then run.

Fleur nods and they set off. Elizabeth and her ladies, follow  
 to just outside the gates.

EXT. OUTSIDE THE CASTLE GATES.

Fleur and Caroline, followed by the guard, walk sedately  
 until they reach a corner then suddenly run, into a side  
 street and out of sight. The ladies gasp.

ELIZABETH  
 Ah, it is the summer madness, clear  
 to see. They will both be dead  
 before dawn.

The ladies nod regretfully and follow Elizabeth back into the  
 castle.

INT. IN THE STUDIO.

Crowds line the pavements, the decor is as in the first show,  
 the area in which Fleur and Caroline will appear has been  
 cordoned off.

On the stage above the crowd, Marissa stands in front of a screen with a frozen image of figures dancing in the great hall the previous evening.

MARISSA

So, that brings us up to date with events in the fifteenth century. If you want to know more, you'll be able to put your questions straight to the horses' mouths. Welcome to the series finale, live from the London residence of the Dude of St Albans!

Music plays.

MARISSA (CONT'D)

We just have time for one more comment from the audience. Yes, you, sir, in the red jumper. How do you think Fleur and Caroline will have changed when they come back from the fifteenth century?

MAN IN RED JUMPER

I think they'll never take a hot shower for granted again.

MARISSA

I'm sure they won't. OK, we're ready to start the ten second countdown. Here we go...

Marissa is joined by the crowd in the countdown.

MARISSA (CONT'D)

Ten, nine, eight...

Streamers are fired into the sky.

MARISSA (CONT'D)

Seven, six, five...

EXT. A STREET IN LONDON.

Fleur and Caroline run down the street, a barrel is pushed out of a side street and Caroline slips as she narrowly misses it. They run on and round a corner.

INT. IN THE STUDIO.

MARISSA  
four, three, two, one...

The crowd cheers.

EXT. A STREET IN LONDON.

The street is a residential street with a few shop keepers selling food from their front windows. A landlord is rolling and stacking barrels in front of his inn. The citizens watch curiously as Fleur and Caroline appear from the corner, run to a space below the inn sign and move quickly backwards and forwards in the space, waving their arms and looking down at their rosaries.

INT. IN THE STUDIO.

The sound peters out as nothing happens in the cordoned zone. The cameras search the area nearby. Fleur and Caroline are not there. Marissa holds her hand to her ear, listening. She looks up at the camera.

MARISSA  
OK, I'm just hearing the technical department are checking our clocks are properly synchronised with the fifteenth century.

Marissa is slightly turned away from the camera and the crowd. She is holding her hand to her ear, concentrating and seems to be talking to her shoulder.

MARISSA (CONT'D)  
Should I start another countdown?  
No? Does that mean what I think it means?

She is still talking to the control room, but she stands up straight now and turns towards the audience. There is background noise of the talk of the crowd.

MARISSA (CONT'D)  
What should I tell them? Are we still having the fireworks?

She stands up straight, faces the audience and lifts the microphone to speak. The crowd falls silent.



MARISSA (CONT'D)

Ladies and gentlemen, as you can see, Fleur and Caroline have not arrived. Our experts are still checking the data and will continue to do so until we have a final resolution on this. However, I regret to inform you that current indications are, Fleur and Caroline have missed the portal home.

EXT. A STREET IN LONDON.

Fleur, heavily pregnant and exhausted is slumped against the inn wall, gasping for breath. Caroline walks in circles in the middle of the street, shouting at the sky.

CAROLINE

SHIT! SHIT! SHIT! SHIT! SHIT!  
FUUUUUCCKK! ARGGHHH!

Fleur stirs back into life.

FLEUR

ARGGHHHH!

Caroline looks at her.

FLEUR (CONT'D)

I think the baby's coming.

CAROLINE

It can't be, you've got weeks to go.

FLEUR

Well this doesn't feel right.

CAROLINE

Shit. Can you get up?

Fleur hoists herself up and they head slowly back the way they came.

INT. MORNING. IN THE KING'S CHAMBER.

Edward sits next to Hastings and John stands facing them.

EDWARD

Another daughter, I hear.  
Congratulations.

JOHN

Thank you, Your Grace.

EDWARD

Naomi. We certainly have space for a Naomi, among all the Lizzies and Catherines. She plans to care for it herself?

JOHN

It is a plan of sense since she works in the nursery.

EDWARD

Yet, will she care for this one more than the others?

JOHN

Sire?

EDWARD

It would only be natural and my wife has concerns. Many concerns.

JOHN

I'm sure Fleur will continue to do her duty.

EDWARD

The baby is not my only concern. Her friend was at one of my gatherings last night. She told me some strange history of a united kingdom. Folklore from their home, no doubt. But then she told me England's story will be the same.

JOHN

Wishful thinking, perhaps?

EDWARD

Perhaps, Cousin, but there is something uncanny about these girls. And of course, my good queen has no fondness of them.

JOHN

Sire?

EDWARD

There is a house in town. A fine house with two bed chambers and glass in the windows.

(MORE)

EDWARD (CONT'D)

My good cousin of Oxford will rent it to you for a song. Move them into it. Do not bring Fleur back here.

INT. DAYTIME. UPSTAIRS IN FLEUR AND CAROLINE'S NEW HOUSE.

Caroline drops backwards onto the bed. Fleur, no longer pregnant stands scowling in the doorway with her baby over her shoulder.

CAROLINE

This is better! Why couldn't we have come here in the first place?

FLEUR

This is banishment.

CAROLINE

Why couldn't we have been banished sooner?

Fleur scowls.

CAROLINE (CONT'D)

There's a pub next door.

INT. DAY. IN THE INN NEXT DOOR

Fleur and Caroline sit with flagons of ale, ignoring the curious stares of the innkeeper and other customers. The baby Naomi is in a basket on a nearby table. The innkeeper's children peer in at her.

FLEUR

We need to talk about the house and stuff. John pays for everything and we need him to do this for a year. Yes? He dies in seven months.

The innkeeper's wife comes into the bar from downstairs, carrying a baby about a year old. She looks at Naomi.

WIFE

Is yours a good sleeper?

Fleur glances over at Naomi.

FLEUR

Sometimes I have to check she's not dead.

WIFE

You're lucky. Mine were all screamers. Reckon I haven't slept for ten year. Give them whisky when they're really bad, but only when they're really bad. They expect it otherwise.

Fleur looks down at her drink and over at Naomi.

WIFE (CONT'D)

You're not local, are you?

CAROLINE

We're from the... abroad. Our ship sank. We lost our money.

FLEUR

And our memories. We've been relying on the charity of a gentleman who took pity on us.

WIFE

Aye, I could tell you weren't like us. That'll be his baby then, not one you brought over with you?

Fleur looks slightly embarrassed. The wife grins.

WIFE (CONT'D)

Took pity on yer. I'll say.

INT. IN FLEUR AND CAROLINE'S HOUSE.

Fleur and Caroline are downstairs.

CAROLINE

We've got seven months. Something will turn up.

FLEUR

Such as? We know our employment outlook and I've been thinking, it would be best if we just saved John's life.

CAROLINE

Fleur! That's ridiculous! That would be massive! The whole world would fall out of kilter!

FLEUR

No, it wouldn't. Do you really think that if we save one person - one minor historical character - the people back home will grow extra eyes and tentacles?

CAROLINE

Of course I don't, but... he could have loads more children. One of them could be psychotic.

FLEUR

It wouldn't matter. He's not a major player. He's not ambitious. Nothing major will change.

CAROLINE

You don't know that. You don't know what would change.

FLEUR

I don't care.

CAROLINE

What? How would we do it anyway? How do you stop a battle? Who else would you end up saving? Who would you accidentally kill?

FLEUR

We don't have to stop a battle, we just have to get him out of it.

CAROLINE

You can't.

FLEUR

I can't leave him to die.

CAROLINE

You have to.

FLEUR

I can't.

INT. DAY. IN FLEUR AND CAROLINE'S HOUSE.

Fleur and Caroline are in Caroline's room, looking out of the open window at the turmoil in the street below. The Town Crier's bell is heard.

TOWN CRIER

(Unseen). The Earl of Warwick has landed! The king has fled!

CAROLINE

What?

FLEUR

Exactly what he said. When things calm down, we can move back into the castle.

CAROLINE

Why would we want to do that?

Fleur looks at her.

FLEUR

Because we can. Warwick won't know, or care who we are or if we're meant to be there.

CAROLINE

Yeah, but we don't want to. I don't want to.

FLEUR

It'll be safer there. Look at what's been going on in the streets. If there's a riot and they decide to attack us, how would we defend the house? John is at the castle.

CAROLINE

He's a prisoner?

FLEUR

He's changed to Warwick's side.

CAROLINE

A traitor.

FLEUR

Well, that depends on who wins, doesn't it? Listen, he'll be at the castle for a few weeks. When he leaves, he leaves for the last time. I want to see him while I can. Come with me?

A stone flies up from the street and smashes a pane of glass in their window. Caroline scowls.

CAROLINE  
Just for a few weeks.

INT. BAYNARD'S CASTLE GREAT HALL.

The hall is packed, all standing, the nobility at the top of the hall, ranging down to the servants at the bottom. The EARL OF WARWICK, 40s, powerful, confident, charismatic stands next to HENRY VI, 50s, but looks older, confused, nervous. On Henry's other side stand Henry's wife, MARGARET, 40s and his son, EDWARD, 16. At the end of this line, John looks morose.

Fleur and Caroline, about half way down the hall, crane their necks for a better view.

Warwick raises Henry's fist in the air as if he is a champion boxer.

WARWICK  
Ladies and gentlemen, I give you  
your rightful and God-given  
sovereign, King Henry VI of  
England.

All in the hall chorus Henry's name and bow or curtsy.

WARWICK (CONT'D)  
I welcome you to a new and glorious  
era, the Readeption!

CROWD  
The Readeption!

FLEUR  
The Readeption.

CAROLINE  
I think I left my rosary at the  
house.

EXT. DAYTIME. STREET IN LONDON.

Fleur and Caroline walk purposefully up the street.

CAROLINE  
We could stop in for a drink while  
we're here.

FLEUR  
One and then straight back.

They turn into their old street.

EXT. THEIR OLD STREET IN LONDON.

Outside the inn next to their house the innkeeper and his family watch as a small coffin is loaded onto a cart. They hurry towards it.

One of the older sisters from the family turns and sees them.

CAROLINE  
What happened?

SISTER  
Young Will, he took a fever. Friday night. Yesterday we thought he'd pull through, but he went.

CAROLINE  
Oh god. I'm so sorry.

SISTER  
Well, God has spared the rest of us for so long, maybe we shouldn't be surprised. But still... thanks is not what we feel like giving.

CAROLINE  
Shit. Lord. If there's anything we can do.

The sister nods and turns back to her family. The procession moves away.

EXT. DAY. BAYNARD'S CASTLE COURTYARD.

Fleur, Caroline and various servants watch as Warwick's army hastily prepares to leave. Warwick emerges from the castle.

WARWICK  
Slow down! Do the job properly!  
Omit to ready yourself; ready  
yourself to... fail.

John appears in the doorway beside Fleur.

JOHN  
So, Fleur, with your sight of the future, have I chosen correctly?  
Does God still favour me?

FLEUR  
You must chose as your heart  
directs you.



JOHN

That is not what I was hoping to hear.

FLEUR

My lord, you know it is only gossip that I have the sight.

JOHN

Yet, you have previously been so confident.

FLEUR

I did not previously have a child to worry over.

JOHN

Worry not, she will be cared for. We leave later today. Come to visit me and bring the child.

He goes back indoors. Fleur fights back tears.

EXT. MORNING. A HARBOUR IN BURGUNDY.

Edward, Hastings and Gloucester watch as ships are loaded with supplies and weapons.

EDWARD

We cannot fail in this or all is lost.

HASTINGS

We shall not fail, my lord. God will remember the justice of your actions.

EDWARD

Did he remember it when Warwick landed on our shores and sent us over here?

HASTINGS

I am sure he is only trying our resolve.

INT. DAY. BAYNARD'S CASTLE. A SMALL ANTE ROOM

Fleur and Caroline sit idly with games scattered around them. Naomi crawls around on the floor. A storm rattles the shutters on the window above them.

FLEUR

I've been thinking, if we can forge the Earl of Warwick's seal, send a letter to John and tell him to wait for further instructions elsewhere. Somewhere close enough for him to get to, but too far to hurry back here from.

CAROLINE

But afterwards, wouldn't he just be executed for treason?

Fleur thinks before answering.

FLEUR

Maybe not. Edward was sorry about how he'd treated him after the battle. Maybe not?

CAROLINE

But you don't know.

FLEUR

Well, I do know he'll be dead if I don't do anything.

CAROLINE

Fleur, maybe we could find someone else who would help us? Maybe John's sister? Maybe Hastings?

FLEUR

You think Hastings will help us?

CAROLINE

He might help us leave. If we say we're going to try to find our way home. He might help us get away. Then we only have to survive a few months.

FLEUR

I don't want to take Naomi back to the twenty-first century. Can you imagine what they'd do?

CAROLINE

Well, you weren't going to leave her here. Were you?

FLEUR

I have to save him.

CAROLINE  
He died five hundred years ago.

FLEUR  
He's alive now.

CAROLINE  
You can't

FLEUR  
I can't leave him to die.

EXT. DAY. ON THE YORKSHIRE COAST.

Edward, Hastings and Gloucester stand laughing as men retrieve supplies washed onto the shore from wrecked ships.

HASTINGS  
One man! Just one man drowned! Now  
who says God on is their side!

EDWARD  
To London and the crown!

HASTINGS  
To London and the crown!

Raising imaginary glasses they head inland.

INT. DAY. PONTEFRACT. JOHN'S ARMY CAMP. INSIDE JOHN'S TENT.

John unravels a scroll as a PAGE waits for an answer. John reads in silence for a moment, then glances over at KNIGHT who sits near a table covered in campaign maps and reads mockingly, out loud.

JOHN  
"Great lord and fairest brother, I  
hope this finds you well" and so on  
"with all my wishes for your  
continued health." This does not  
sound like my brother. Go find me a  
scribe.

INT. DAY. LATER.

The same scene, the knight and the page are in attendance. John wanders around the tent while a SCRIBE takes dictation at a portable desk.

JOHN

In short, Fleur, do not attempt to meddle again in the work of men or I shall be forced to exile you to my northern quarters.

He watches as the scribe blots his pen.

JOHN (CONT'D)

Lord knows, she has been a novelty, but I think I must return to a more garden variety.

The scribe looks at him quizzically.

JOHN (CONT'D)

That's not part of the letter.

A messenger enters the tent running. He slides to a halt in front of John.

MESSENGER

Sir, the king has landed in England. Sir, his army is sighted on the way here.

A second KNIGHT enters the tent.

KNIGHT

Sir, you heard the news? He is on the route passing here. He has not turned for Pontefract so far.

JOHN

Yet he must do so soon if he is coming here.

KNIGHT

Are we to attack, Sir? If he reaches us here it will be a harder battle.

JOHN

Do not attack. Only act if he swings this way.

KNIGHT

Sir?

JOHN

Those are my orders.

INT. DAY. BAYNARD'S CASTLE.

A tearful Fleur screws up a piece of paper and throws it into the fire.

FLEUR  
SHIT! Shit, shit!

CAROLINE  
He didn't fall for it? I'm not really surprised. I'm sorry.

FLEUR  
The battle's in days! In less than a week, he'll be dead. You're sorry?

EXT. DAY. PONTEFRACT. JOHN'S ARMY CAMPSITE.

Men are rising, eating, washing, a few saying prayers. John steps out of his tent, carrying a scroll and accompanied by a page. The page plays his bugle for the army's attention.

JOHN  
Prepare yourselves to march. The king is at Coventry, laying siege to my brother. This morning we move for London.

INT. DAY. COVENTRY CASTLE. AN UPPER ROOM.

The Earl of Warwick, stressed, with shadows under his eyes looks out of the window at Edward's army, massed outside the walls. He speaks to a scribe who hurries to put down his words.

WARWICK  
So I say again, good cousin, I trust it was only the calmness of my words which failed to impress upon you the urgency of my situation...

EXT. DAY. OUTSIDE COVENTRY CASTLE.

The DUKE OF CLARENCE, similar to Edward, a few years younger approaches the king with a small entourage. They stop in front of Edward. Clarence dismounts, takes off his helmet and kneels.

Edward grins.

EDWARD

Good brother of Clarence! Arise!

Clarence stands, they embrace briefly.

EDWARD (CONT'D)

Long have I wished to welcome you back, yet we have not now time to dally. I have news that our cousin John moves for London. We must leave Warwick here and chase his brother.

CLARENCE

We follow John?

EDWARD

We shall watch over our shoulders, for Warwick. Yet it is John we must pursue for the taking of London.

INT. NIGHTTIME. BAYNARD'S CASTLE.

In the dormatory room Fleur shares with Caroline and other senior servants, all but Fleur are asleep. Fleur, fully dressed, stands and tiptoes out of the room.

EXT. NIGHTTIME. THE CASTLE STABLES.

Fleur shakes a stable boy awake. He grumbles and moans, then sits up. Fleur puts her hand over his mouth.

FLEUR

*(Whispering)* Sshhh. I need a horse.

STABLE BOY

Eh? Come back in the morning.

FLEUR

*(Whispering)* Sshhh. I need one now.

STABLE BOY

Come back in the morning.

Fleur moves and something glints. She holds a knife to his neck.

FLEUR

*(Whispering)* I said I need a horse.

EXT. NIGHTTIME. AT A SMALL SIDEGATE JUST OUTSIDE THE CASTLE WALLS.

Fleur clumsily mounts the horse.

STABLE BOY  
Do you need help?

FLEUR  
I don't do this very often.

She gets mounted and settles herself.

FLEUR (CONT'D)  
Right. Which way's Barnet?

The stable boy shrugs.

FLEUR (CONT'D)  
Which way's north?

He points.

STABLE BOY  
That's the north road. Take you  
nearly to Scotland.

EXT. DAWN. BARNET COMMON.

The common is almost hidden by fog. As she gets closer sounds from the army camp are heard and shapes can be made out. Her horse starts slightly as a bugle call is heard, followed by the shout of the army further from her and in the distance the sound of metal upon metal as the battle begins.

EXT. LATER. BARNET COMMON.

The battle has progressed and the fog has lifted. A few injured soldiers limp past, Fleur recoils, horrified, then presses on.

She moves along a ridge, the soldiers nearest are fighting in a lower area. She picks her way along the ridge above them, panicky, trying to find John.

Eventually she recognises his banner. She starts to shout, but cannot be heard.

There are no battle horses on the field as the decision was made to leave them tied up away from the battle. Fleur's horse is the only one there and not being a battle horse, is reluctant to enter the throng.

She hits hard and it lurches forwards.

Soldiers turn initially with the intention of attacking, but they step back confused when they see it is a woman. Eventually the situation attracts John and Warwick's attention.

They are both furious and John leads her back off the battlefield to the ridge.

JOHN

What are you doing here? Go home!

FLEUR

John! Stop! Stop your army!

JOHN

Go home! I can't look after you here!

As he speaks his voice is drowned out by a shout from the centre of the battle. They turn to look as Edward's troops surge into the space John recently left.

Warwick breaks away from the chaos and runs, but is chased by five enemy soldiers. They all disappear into the nearby woods.

John turns back to the battlefield as his army starts to disperse, the battle is over.

EXT. DAY. OUTSIDE FLEUR AND CAROLINE'S HOUSE.

Armed guards stand on either side of the door, watching the street. Fleur's head pops briefly out of an upstairs window, she looks around and goes back in.

INT. DAY. BAYNARD'S CASTLE. THE KING'S CHAMBER.

Edward and Hastings sit either side of an empty fireplace.

EDWARD

Tradition dictates his head be above the city wall. Absent his body. Will, I cannot bring myself to do it.

HASTINGS

My wife would not like to see it done. Nor I, I confess.



EDWARD

What is the threat? Warwick is dead; Henry's son is dead; Henry is addled. Only John remains.

HASTINGS

And his heart never was in plotting and treason.

EDWARD

It weighs heavy with me that I may have driven him to it.

HASTINGS

Yet, what else could you have done?

EDWARD

I am minded to let my cousin keep his life. On conditions.

INT. DAY. FLEUR AND CAROLINE'S HOUSE. CAROLINE'S ROOM.

Caroline finishes setting up her rosary and sits back on the bed.

CAROLINE

Hello? World? Home? Twenty-first century?

CAMERA

Hello, Caroline. What's happening?

CAROLINE

I'm not sure really. We're back in this house. We were under house arrest, but they decided not to put Fleur on trial. She's just not allowed in the castle any more.

CAMERA

What has she done?

CAROLINE

She went to a battlefield.

CAMERA

That's a crime?

CAROLINE

She interfered.

CAMERA

I'm still not sure what the crime is.

CAROLINE

Nor are they. You don't seem very upset about Fleur having changed history. Again.

CAMERA

What's changed?

CAROLINE

Eh? John Neville's still alive.

CAMERA

Of course he is, he lives to be nearly eighty. Didn't you read any of the texts we recommended?

CAROLINE

Uh. Was there a Battle of Barnet?

CAMERA

Well, yes.

CAROLINE

And who died? Which important people?

CAMERA

Only the Earl of Warwick.

CAROLINE

Have you heard of Henry VIII?

CAMERA

Of course.

CAROLINE

Two world wars?

CAMERA

Yes. Caroline, are you sure you're well? You seem a bit confused.

CAROLINE

Yeah. Yeah, thanks, I'm well. Just a bit tired maybe.

EXT. DAY. OUTSIDE BAYNARD'S CASTLE.

Fleur and Caroline, with Naomi, are saying goodbye to Kate, who has her own baby with her. They walk away from the gates.

FLEUR

That poor baby. When he's still a young lad, he fights alongside his father at the Battle of Bosworth.

CAROLINE

The one where Richard III dies?

FLEUR

That's the one. He's taken prisoner by Henry VII, then executed a few years later.

CAROLINE

Fleur! I asked you not to tell me these things! You've just ruined a really nice morning! Why did you do that?

FLEUR

Because we can do something about it.

CAROLINE

What can we do? We can't do anything.

FLEUR

We know a very nice family who have recently lost a child.

CAROLINE

You'd take Kate's baby away from her?

FLEUR

For his own good.

CAROLINE

Fleur, that's just wrong. Wrong in every way.

FLEUR

To save his life is wrong? Don't you even want to know how we'd do it?

CAROLINE

We?

FLEUR

I can't do it on my own, I'm not allowed in the castle.

Caroline flounders for words for a moment.

FLEUR (CONT'D)

Do you want to know my news?

CAROLINE

Probably not.

FLEUR

I think I'm pregnant.

CAROLINE

Again! Fleur! How... Fucks sake! You know when we get back home you'll just be another single mother with a father who doesn't pay maintenance.

Fleur looks at her with a slight smile on her face.

CAROLINE (CONT'D)

What? Oh. Oh Fleur, are you sure?

EXT. NIGHTTIME. ON A BRIDGE OVER THE THAMES.

Fleur takes her rosary out from amongst her skirts and throws it into the water.

INT. DAY. FLEUR AND CAROLINE'S HOUSE. CAROLINE'S BEDROOM.

Fleur stands, looking out of the window, pulling hair out of a hairbrush. Naomi is crawling around the floor. She notices something and cranes forwards. The front door is heard closing and footsteps come up the stairs.

Caroline appears in the doorway.

CAROLINE

What are you doing in here?

FLEUR

Waiting for you. Where's the baby?

CAROLINE

Eh?

FLEUR

Gloucester's baby. I thought you'd gone to get him.

CAROLINE

Oh, the baby. I'm not doing it.

FLEUR

What? We agreed. We discussed what would happen to him and agreed he would be better living next door.

CAROLINE

You said. I never agreed. I said the story was a sad one and I wished it was different. I didn't agree to change it.

They stand looking at each other for a moment, then Fleur lunges forwards and snatches Caroline's rosary from around her neck, breaking the chain. Caroline tries to grab it back, but Fleur pushes past her.

INT. ON THE LANDING.

Fleur and Caroline stand facing each other, Fleur a few steps down on the stairs, Caroline just outside the bedroom door. Fleur holds the rosary out to her side.

FLEUR

Do you want to go home?

CAROLINE

What?

FLEUR

Do you want to go home in a few weeks? Because I've thrown mine away and if this one goes missing there'll be no way to get the coordinates for the portal.

Caroline jumps forwards and tries to take the rosary back, but Fleur moves a few more steps down.

CAROLINE

Fleur, think about this. Please give me it back.

FLEUR

Say you'll help me save the baby. Promise me.

CAROLINE

I promise.

FLEUR

Now say it like you mean it. I  
threw mine into the Thames, it  
would be easy to do the same with  
yours.

CAROLINE

I promise!

FLEUR

I think I'll keep the rosary  
though, just for now.

From the bedroom Naomi starts to cry. Fleur puts the rosary in her pocket and she and Caroline maintain hostile eye contact as Fleur goes into the bedroom.

EXT. NIGHTTIME. BAYNARD'S CASTLE GATES.

Caroline arrives carrying a bundle of blankets arranged to pass as a sleeping baby in the darkness. She approaches the guards.

CAROLINE

Lord Neville desires to see his  
daughter.

GUARD

At this time?

CAROLINE

We're not here to argue the toss.

The guard weighs this up for a moment, then lets her in.

EXT. NIGHTTIME. BAYNARD'S CASTLE COURTYARD.

Caroline, still carrying the blankets, runs furtively across and disappears into the main building.

INT. NIGHTTIME. INSIDE THE CASTLE. A STAIRCASE.

Caroline, with the blankets, creeps up the stairs, pausing halfway up to listen for sounds above.

INT. NIGHTTIME. A CORRIDOR.

Caroline moves quickly and silently down the corridor, passing a room where the nursery nurses are singing the "where do we go" part of *Sweet Child of Mine*.

As she reaches a corner a door opens and men's voices are heard laughing and joking. She hides in an alcove until they fade away.

INT. NIGHTTIME. IN THE NURSERY.

There are rows of cots for the children and pallets for the staff. All are asleep. Caroline peers at the children for a moment, then creeps towards one looking more closely.

She moves to another and looks closely at him. She slowly picks this one up, wrapped in his blanket and covering him with one of the blankets she bought. He moans and she shushes.

She stands up, looks around to check no-one has woken and tip-toes out.

EXT. INSIDE BAYNARD'S CASTLE GATE.

Caroline stands with the baby waiting to be let out.

GUARD

That was quick.

CAROLINE

It was a false errand, his lordship has retired for the night. There must have been a mistake.

The guard lets her out.

EXT. DAWN. OUTSIDE BAYNARD'S CASTLE.

From inside the castle woman's scream is heard.

INT. EARLY MORNING. DOWNSTAIRS IN FLEUR AND CAROLINE'S HOUSE.

Caroline waits nervously in the front room. Fleur enters from the street.

CAROLINE

What did you tell them?

FLEUR  
That the child was orphaned and I  
thought of them.

CAROLINE  
They believed you?

FLEUR  
Of course they did.

CAROLINE  
Will we be caught?

FLEUR  
How would we be caught?

CAROLINE  
We live next door to a stolen baby.  
Will we be caught?

FLEUR  
This isn't history anymore, I can't  
see into the future. But the  
innkeepers are just a family with  
no end of kids. No-one will be  
looking here.

INT. MORNING BAYNARD'S CASTLE GREAT HALL.

People are rushing in and out. Gloucester strides across the  
hall still pulling on clothes.

INT. MORNING. IN THE KING'S CHAMBER.

The Queen pushes open the door. Edward is lying on his back,  
asleep. There is a woman next to him. She wakes first, grabs  
her clothes and leaves, her movement wakes Edward.

ELIZABETH  
Your brother's bastard is missing.  
He's been taken in the night.

EDWARD  
How can he be taken? We have  
guards. He's probably just crawled  
away unseen. I wager he's sleeping  
in the scullery.

ELIZABETH  
He's three months old.



EDWARD

Are you sure no-one's just taken him for a walk? Have you spoken to all the nursery women?

ELIZABETH

Every one of them. No-one heard a thing.

EDWARD

The guards?

ELIZABETH

Only that Caroline brought Neville's baby up here last night.

EDWARD

And?

ELIZABETH

She came and left with a baby.

EDWARD

And?

ELIZABETH

But were they both the same baby?

EDWARD

Do we have a spare one in the castle this morning? Elizabeth, you can't hold at blame those Russians every time something occurs!

ELIZABETH

Nobody actually saw Neville's baby. The guard let her in, but he did not look close at what she was carrying.

EDWARD

Have you seen John? What did he say about it?

ELIZABETH

He rode out before it was discovered this morning. Early. He was not hungover; he didn't have whores to turn out of his bed.

EDWARD

Sounds like you're warming to him.

He lies back down and closes his eyes.

EDWARD (CONT'D)

We'll have the girls brought to the castle, see what they say. But I'm sure the baby will turn up safe and sound.

INT. MORNING. BAYNARD'S CASTLE GREAT HALL.

The hall is packed with most of the castle occupants. Edward, Elizabeth, Hastings and Gloucester sit at the top. Kate is near the back, sobbing.

Fleur and Caroline stand facing the king. Caroline is terrified, Fleur defiant.

FLEUR

Your Grace, I speak for us both when I say we are pained to hear the news and will pray for the child's safe return. But, I ask, how can we know anything of the matter?

EDWARD

The reason I ask concerns not you, but Caroline. One of our guards admitted you to the castle last night. Was the baby you left with the same as the one you came with?

FLEUR

Sire, if it were a different baby, how would I have brought mine with me this morning? Naomi lies sleeping in the ante-chamber.

EDWARD

Let Caroline answer.

CAROLINE

(*Shaky*). It was Fleur's baby with whom I came and left last night, Your Grace. The child of Fleur and Lord Neville.

ELIZABETH

Caroline, what do you say to the notion you brought no baby to the castle, but left with one regardless?

CAROLINE

I say, no, that did not happen!

There is a jostling at the back of the hall, the crowd parts and John enters. He looks around.

JOHN

What's about? Your Grace?

EDWARD

Good cousin, we have a mystery to unravel: sometime last night Gloucester's child vanished from the nurseries.

ELIZABETH

Caroline was the only person last night seen carrying a child around. She said it was yours. Was it?

JOHN

Mine is close to a year old, my cousin's hardly more than a newborn. Who is so blind they need me to tell them the difference?

ELIZABETH

No-one truly saw the infant. Tell us, did you ask for your daughter to be brought to you last night?

John turns and stares at Fleur and Caroline. They stare back.

JOHN

I did, Your Highness.

EDWARD

There you are then, my good wife. All is as it should be.

ELIZABETH

We are still short by one baby.

EDWARD

We have folk still looking. He cannot have gone far. Who would take a baby from here when there are far easier babies to take all over the city?

JOHN

Your Grace, do we have any reason to suspect these girls? By keeping them here we are merely letting the true villain gain greater distance.

EDWARD

Indeed. My queen, we are no further on with this now.

ELIZABETH

Send them home if you will, but where they go, so goes trouble and will do as long as they roam free.

EDWARD

*(Exasperated)*. John, my good cousin, I shall now release these girls, but I release them to your custody and you must make your very first action to take them to your lands in Yorkshire and keep them there.

John nods and bows.

JOHN

I thank you for your fairness, Sire.

INT. BAYNARD'S CASTLE. OUTSIDE THE MAIN DOOR TO THE GREAT HALL.

John turns to Fleur and Caroline.

JOHN

I know not what you've done, but this is the first and last time I lie to my sovereign for you.

FLEUR

You know we haven't hurt a baby.

JOHN

And that is the only reason I lied. Go home and collect what possessions you may. We depart for the north at dawn.

CAROLINE

Sir...

John glares at her.

CAROLINE (CONT'D)

Sir, I wish to return home.

He looks at her, puzzled.

CAROLINE (CONT'D)

I have lately heard news of a ship that may take me to my homeland. I wish to take it.

JOHN

Very well. You?

FLEUR

I want to come to Yorkshire.

JOHN

It may be better you return from whence you came.

FLEUR

Sir. John, I have not told you yet, but I believe I am to have another child.

John looks slightly annoyed.

JOHN

Very well. I shall take you to Yorkshire. Be ready to depart at daybreak.

John leaves. Fleur beams with happiness. She reaches into her pocket, takes out Caroline's rosary and hands it back to her.

INT. DAY. DOWNSTAIRS IN FLEUR AND CAROLINE'S HOUSE

Chests are open and belongings strewn around the room. Caroline is fiddling with her rosary.

CAROLINE

Are you sure about this? Because after today, you can't change your mind.

FLEUR

I won't change my mind.

Caroline looks at her.

CAROLINE

What if it doesn't work out with John?

Fleur rolls her eyes.

CAROLINE (CONT'D)

Well, you can tell the twenty-first century yourself. Try them in a bit, I couldn't get an answer when I tried to speak to them a minute ago. Don't leave this room with my rosary, though.

INT. SUNRISE. DOWNSTAIRS IN FLEUR AND CAROLINE'S HOUSE.

Everything is packed and ready to go. Fleur is sitting facing Caroline's rosary.

FLEUR

Well, you'll still have Caroline.

ROSARY

Caroline?

FLEUR

Caroline. Who came here with me.

ROSARY

You went through on your own, Fleur.

FLEUR

I..?

ROSARY

You were meant to go with Paul, but he backed out at the last minute. The very last second, in fact. You went through on your own.

FLEUR

Paul?

ROSARY

You were very upset. We had some trouble explaining it to the watchdog.

FLEUR

I came here with Caroline.

ROSARY

Is that someone you met? Someone was trying to speak to us yesterday. We ignored it; we can't speak to people from history ourselves.

FLEUR

Was there another contestant called Caroline? Someone who didn't get through?

ROSARY

Don't think so. No, pretty sure there wasn't. Look, Fleur, just come home tonight and we'll sort this out. Fleur?

Fleur reaches forwards and takes the rosary. Caroline comes downstairs and brusquely takes the rosary from Fleur.

CAROLINE

Did you tell them? Did you change your mind?

Fleur squares her shoulders and takes a deep breath, ready to speak. There is a loud knocking at the door.

SERVANT

*(From outside)*. Fleur Davenport! I'm sent from Lord Neville to escort you to the rendezvous. Are you ready?

Fleur opens the door.

FLEUR

One minute, I need to speak to Caroline.

SERVANT

Lord Neville said there was to be no delay.

FLEUR

It won't be long, I just need to speak to her.

CAROLINE

Have you changed your mind?

SERVANT

Are these your cases? His lordship's sister has sent a basket you can put the baby in.

The servant and two others push their way into the house and start taking out the cases.

FLEUR

Caroline, I...

CAROLINE

Did you contact home? Are you sure about staying? Really?

Fleur nods and shakes her head.

FLEUR

I... I'm staying. They told me something. They told me...

SERVANT

Miss, we must go.

He puts Naomi into the basket.

FLEUR

One minute!

SERVANT

My master said if you didn't come immediately, I was to leave you to go with your friend.

FLEUR

One minute!

SERVANT

Miss, those are my orders.

FLEUR

Caroline, the people from home, they told me...

As she speaks the servant shrugs and gestures to the other servants. Fleur turns as she hears the cart setting off.

FLEUR (CONT'D)

Wait! My baby!

She looks back desperately at Caroline.

FLEUR (CONT'D)

Good luck!

Caroline follows to the front door as Fleur runs after the cart.

EXT. THE STREET OUTSIDE FLEUR AND CAROLINE'S HOUSE.

Fleur catches the cart up. They stop to let her on and continue, Fleur looking back towards Caroline.



INT. INSIDE FLEUR AND CAROLINE'S HOUSE.

Caroline watches Fleur and the servants as they move away.

EXT. THE STREET OUTSIDE FLEUR AND CAROLINE'S HOUSE.

The procession turns a corner and disappears.

INT. INSIDE FLEUR AND CAROLINE'S HOUSE.

Caroline moves sadly into the house. She picks up the rosary, switches the camera on and sets it up ready to speak.

CAROLINE  
Hello? Anyone there? Hello?

EXT. TWILIGHT. OPEN COUNTRYSIDE.

John and his small procession, with Fleur at the back, halt and John turns to speak.

JOHN  
There is a village just over that hill. We shall stay there for the night. In the morning I shall leave for the far north. I'll take the baby and a girl from the village to look after her.

Fleur starts.

FLEUR  
Naomi?

JOHN  
My cousin has kindly agreed to bring the girl up as part of his household. You are to travel with the rest of the company to the West Riding.

FLEUR  
What?

JOHN  
I have found you a husband there. You will be a little early, he is still in London, but his household will be expecting you.

FLEUR

What? But where are you going? You can't take my baby!

John looks at her, bewildered.

JOHN

But this is what you wanted. I asked you if you wanted to go back to your country and you said you wanted to go to Yorkshire.

FLEUR

I wanted to go to Yorkshire with you! You and our baby.

JOHN

Fleur, your husband doesn't want the girl, but he will take the new baby. My cousin will raise Naomi as his own, she will have the life of a lady.

FLEUR

But she's my baby! I wanted to go to Yorkshire with you. Both of you.

JOHN

My wife is a good wife. I can't humiliate her by flaunting a mistress under her nose. You must acknowledge that? I can find an escort to take you to catch your ship home if you prefer? You could even take your baby.

FLEUR

By the time I get to London, that ship will have sailed.

They stare at each other.

JOHN

Your husband to be is a baron, you are of no descent. Other women in your situation would be pleased.

FLEUR

When will we see each other again?

JOHN

I don't think we will see each other again.

John turns his horse to lead the procession to the village.  
Fleur's heart breaks.

EXT. A RESIDENTIAL STREET IN BARNET, NORTH LONDON 9.58PM

The scene is identical to the first scene

MARISSA MCKAY, stands waiting with a microphone in her hand on a platform raised above the crowd. Taking her cue from someone off-stage, Marissa lifts her microphone and begins to speak.

MARISSA

It's Friday night, 9th June. If you've just tuned in, it's nearly ten o'clock. Good evening and welcome, welcome to this special, anniversary, homecoming edition of "The All New Wars of the Roses"!

Theme music plays.

MARISSA (CONT'D)

In just a few seconds Fleur Davenport and her medieval baby will be stepping through the portal and into the twenty-first century!

She puts her hand to her ear.

MARISSA (CONT'D)

The portal's opening. Here we go! Ten, nine, eight, seven, six...

THE END