

A MAN FOR ALL SEASONS

Final Screenplay

by

ROBERT BOLT

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CREDITS OVER:

1 CLOSE UP INSERT

A massive white hand with a bishop's ring on it, extending from a scarlet satin sleeve, scribbles ferociously the last line of a letter; signs:

"Wolsey. Ebor."

The quill is thrown down, the letter shoved away.

2 INT WOLSEY'S STUDY

The red satin figure of WOLSEY, seated. A huge man of say sixty, the heavy face contemptuous, intellectual, corrupt. He broods at CROMWELL, his Secretary, a younger man with a subtle, serious, very vital face whose movements express energy perfectly controlled as he folds the letter, carefully drips melted wax on it, offers it to WOLSEY who seizes a heavy seal and:

3 CLOSE UP INT.

Smashes it onto the wax, leaving there the Cardinal's coat-of-arms.

4 INT. HAMPTON DOOR & LONG GALLERY

Letter changes hands from CROMWELL to GENTLEMAN USHER at door of long gallery. USHER walks down gallery. PETITIONERS of every rank rise expectantly, fall back resignedly when they see who it is. He hands letter to MESSENGER in outdoor clothes.

5 INT. HAMPTON STAIRS

MESSENGER descending stairs encounters no-one.

6 EXT. HAMPTON COURTYARD

MESSENGER emerges from door to a courtyard of Hampton. Sunset; the brick walls crimson, the windows flashing bloodily. PANNING, we follow him towards black archway of main entrance. He passes through beneath the massive Royal Coat of Arms.

7 EXT. RIVERSIDE WITH GATE

At the riverside, wrought iron gate in foreground, we see him descend steps to six-oared longboat. A litter of hire boats nearby. He sits, letter prominent, nods. The rowers heave, longboat moves.

8 EXT. RIVER

LONG SHOT Longboat on the flaming river.

9 EXT. RIVER

LONG SHOT Longboat approaching, the riverbank different, the river silvery, the sky drained of light.

10 EXT. RIVER

MESSENGER looks up, checks his letter, grunts to STROKE ROWER who glances over shoulder at:

11 EXT. LONG SHOT RIVER

MORE's Chelsea House approaching, a few lights, faint music mingled with the lapping water.

12 EXT. MORE'S HOUSE

STEWARD comes to garden door of MORE's house to meet MESSENGER approaching. Doesn't budge when they meet. MESSENGER relinquishes letter to STEWARD who turns on his heel and importantly enters house.

13 INT. MORE'S HOUSE CORRIDOR

Inside, enters corridor, approaching door from behind which, laughter.

FINAL CREDIT

14 INT MORE'S HOUSE CORRIDOR

CLOSE SHOT STEWARD glances up and down the corridor, attempts to see what may be in the letter. His manner shows this to be mere impertinent curiosity, not espionage. He can make nothing of it so:

15 INT. MORE'S GREAT HALL

Enters. Clears his throat and signals to someone off scene. With him we see:

15a THE MORE FAMILY, RELATIVES and GUESTS, mostly young. Some are scholars. some are courtiers. ALICE, florid, coarse, splendidly strong and MARGARET, graceful, fine-faced, ardent and another GIRL sew at a half-completed tapestry spread across their knees, baskets of coloured silk at their feet. A pot of crystallized ginger is next to ALICE. YOUNG MEN sit in chairs, on the floor, some drinking wine.

NORFOLK, hard-faced aristocratic, brutal and frank, leans against the fireplace with one foot rested on the belly of an ancient dog. Another old dog is in evidence. On a table, four or five lutes and viols carelessly put down after familiar use - also books

In the background one YOUNG MAN is playing chess with a GIRL, while another GIRL is looking on. They are oblivious of the group at the fireplace. A SERVANT is taking the leavings of a meal from the dining table.

MORE, in the centre of the group, sees STEWARD. He rises quietly and approaches, his attention still on the conversation.

SCHOLAR

... But in Utopia that couldn't be.

NORFOLK

For why?

SCHOLAR

For there the Priests are very holy.

COURTIER

And therefore very few.

MORE smiles, approaching into TWO SHOT with STEWARD. Behind him, a burst of laughter. MORE takes the letter. Registers that it has been tampered with and murmurs:

MORE

Is it anything interesting, Matthew?

STEWARD flickers but recovers.

STEWARD

Bless you sir, I don't know!

MORE

(gravely)

Bless you too. Matthew

He opens letter and turns away, reading

15b MEDIUM SHOT The group, laughter petering out. looks up with mild enquiry as MORE rejoins them, but doesn't sit. The opened letter is in his hand

MORE

It's from the Cardinal.

NORFOLK

What's he want?

MORE

Me.

MARGARET

When?

MORE

Now.

ALICE

In Hampton Court? You won't be there
by mid-night!

MORE

The King's business.

Saying which, he folds the letter and carefully puts it in the fire.
MARGARET, watching:

MARGARET

The Queen's business.

ALICE

(growling)

Mistress Anne Boleyn's business.

MORE, straightening from the fire.

MORE

Well it's all the Cardinal's business.

NORFOLK grunts.

NORFOLK

Very true.

(edge of sarcasm)

And when the Cardinal calls, you all
come running, day or night. What is
the man? A butcher's son!

MORE

Chancellor of England, too.

MARGARET

No that's his office. What is the man?

RICH's voice is heard interrupting on SOUND.

RICH (SOUND)

Surely Your Grace, when a man rises so
high so swiftly -

RICH, a poorly dressed scholar with a head of golden hair, sensitive features and an expression of habitual strain has half-risen, over-eager, from the embrasure where he sits apart.

RICH

- we must think that he was misplaced
in his origins.

NORFOLK stares, then turns away without response.

RICH falters vaguely into the silence:

RICH

That at least is the opinion of, of Aristotle
and -

NORFOLK, to MORE, riding indifferently over RICH's last phrase
(which we hear on SOUND over)

NORFOLK

A butcher's son, and looks it.

MORE

(wry)

His looks, yes I give you his looks.

Appreciative snort from young Courtier. MORE pleasantly to
RICH. raising his voice:

MORE

What was that you said, Richard?

RICH, crouched in his embrasure looks up with flashing smile of
gratitude.

RICH

Nothing, Sir Thomas - t'was out of
place.

ALICE

(flatly)

And Cardinal Wolsey's just what he looks.
And you're a member of the King's High
Council, not an errand boy!

MORE

That's why I must go.
The Duke would go, if the Cardinal
called.

NORFOLK looks affronted for a second, then grunts.

NORFOLK

I might.

Laughter. ALICE has risen. MORE kisses her.

MORE

I'll be back for breakfast.

Kisses MARGARET, says:

Go to bed.

As a matter of routine, as cleaning their teeth, they put their hands together, shut their eyes, their GUESTS rising as a matter of everyday politeness, and:

MORE FAMILY

Dear Lord give us rest tonight, or if we must be wakeful, cheerful, careful only for our soul's salvation. For Christ's sake, Amen.

ALICE and MARGARET have done, but:

MORE

And bless our lord the King.

ALICE AND MARGARET, hastily:

ALICE AND MARGARET

And bless our lord the King.

NORFOLK. gruffly patriotic:

NORFOLK

Amen!

MORE

Good-night Your Grace. Excuse me gentlemen.

But NORFOLK takes him by the elbow, escorting him to the door, held wide by STEWARD. Confidential warning:

NORFOLK

Keep clear of Wölsey, Thomas. He's a frightened man.

MORE looks at him gravely but impassively. NORFOLK looks over his shoulder and sees:

RICH, following, arrested by NORFOLK's glance, stops, stranded, hovering ridiculously.

NORFOLK, frowning:

NORFOLK

Who is that?

MORE

A young friend from Cambridge.

NORFOLK

What's he want?

MORE

(with an aural shrug)

What do they all want? - A position ...
Can you give him a position?

NORFOLK, reluctant; surprised.

NORFOLK

D'you recommend him?

MORE thinks, hesitates, thinks again, and:

MORE

No.

He passes from frame. NORFOLK stares after:

RICH gives him an ingratiating nervous bob and hurries after:

16 EXT. MORE'S GARDEN AND STEPS DUSK

MORE emerging from house into the now almost dark garden where STEWARD passes him on to waiting MESSENGER.

RICH emerges, TRACKING SHOT, RICH at MORE's elbow.

RICH

(eager)

Well?

MORE

No.

16 Continued

RICH
(suspicious, indignant)
Did you recommend me?

MORE
.... No.

RICH stops, MORE turns. RICH not only indignant but sincerely hurt.

MORE
Richard ... I may have a position for
you ...

RICH
What? What position - ?

MORE, gently, but with a saving impatience; indicating the
letter he still carries:

MORE
Not now, Richard. To-morrow.

RICH watches him follow the MESSENGER to the river steps.

17 EXT. RIVER

LONG SHOT, MORE in the longboat on the dusky river.

CUT

18 EXT. RIVER-STEPS HAMPTON NIGHT

The six-oared longboat. MORE and MESSENGER in stern, arrives
at the Hampton River steps. But it is night now. By each of the
litter of waiting boats, a naked torch flares in a bracket, the flames
reflected in the water. As they stop, MORE is counting coins from a
purse. As he alights STROKE ROWER rises, cap in hand. MORE
stoops from steps and throws chinking coins into the cap.

MORE
For you all, Boatman.

And vanishes into dark, STROKE calling:

STROKE
Thank-you, sir.

19 EXT. HAMPTON COURTYARD NIGHT

MORE passes under the portcullis, the glimmering "Henricus VIII", glances up at:

A single lighted window in the cliff-like side of Hampton.

20 EXT. HAMPTON RIVER-STEPS NIGHT

STROKE places last coin on thwart.

CLOSE SHOT, five hands whip away five coins. Two remain.

STROKE takes them. Looks after MORE. Says.

STROKE

Gone to see the Cardinal. Rather him
than me.

CUT

21 INT WOLSEY'S STUDY

CROMWELL pushes aside heavy curtain of ante-chamber, says quietly:

CROMWELL

Sir Thomas is here, Your Grace.

Half turns and says:

Sir Thomas ...

He stands back deferentially as MORE comes swiftly through; his manner is relaxed, his gaze frank, but MORE's eyes flicker upon his for a minute, warily. There is something between them.

MORE

Master Cromwell ...

22 INT. CROMWELL'S ANTE-ROOM

CROMWELL draws the heavy curtain, stands back. He is alone in the ante-room. He carefully leaves the door ajar, stands listening.

23 INT. WOLSEY'S STUDY

MORE is standing beside WOLSEY's chair. WOLSEY gives no sign he knows that he is there. But MORE will not lose dignity by speaking or fidgetting. WOLSEY's pen scratches. In mid-sentence:

WOLSEY

You opposed me in the Council this morning,
Thomas.

MORE

Yes, Your Grace.

WOLSEY

You were the only one.

MORE

Yes, Your Grace.

WOLSEY

You're a fool.

MORE

Thank God there is only one fool on the
Council.

WOLSEY grunts. Stops writing. Looks up at MORE.

WOLSEY

Why did you oppose me?

MORE

I thought Your Grace was wrong.

WOLSEY

Matter of conscience.

(he puts down his pen,
rubs his face wearily)

You're a constant regret to me, Thomas.
If you could just see facts flat on, without
that horrible moral squint . . . with just a
little common sense, you could have been
a statesman.

A single trumpet calls, distant frosty and clear. WOLSEY's face
changes. All indolence gone he rises and goes to the window.
Looks down:

24 EXT. HAMPTON SECOND COURTYARD NIGHT

His POV, the glinting roofs and shadowed courtyard of Hampton.
From the blackness of the archway, preceded by a torch-bearer,
followed at a distance by two cloaked men on drab horses, a golden
figure on a white horse, looking at this distance like some glittering
insect. The clippety-clop of the hooves and a repeated cough float
up to us faintly.

25 INT. WOLSEY'S STUDY

WOLSEY and MORE look down. WOLSEY very tense.

WOLSEY

The King.

MORE

Yes.

WOLSEY

Where has he been? D'you know?

MORE

I, Your Grace?

WOLSEY

Oh spare me your discretion. He's been
to play in the muck again.

(brutally)

He's been to Miss Boleyn.

26 EXT. HAMPTON . SECOND COURTYARD NIGHT

MEDIUM CLOSE SHOT The KING rides under the further archway.
His face is satiated, softened, his body moves passively to the motion
of his horse. He lifts from his chest a locket miniature and looks at it.

CLOSE SHOT the miniature. A young woman.

The KING smiles a smile of tender sensuality, satisfied satyr,
softly letting the locket fall back on his broad chest.

As he passes under the further arch, another trumpet sounds.

27 INT. WOLSEY'S STUDY

WOLSEY leaves the window and sinks into his chair. Fear has
made him dangerous.

WOLSEY

More, are you going to help me?

MORE

(starts to answer. Stops)

If Your Grace will be specific.

WOLSEY

Ach! You're a plodder! All right, we'll plod. The King wants a son. What are you going to do about it?

MORE

I'm very sure the King needs no advice from me on what to do about it.

WOLSEY

(quietly)

Thomas, we're alone. I give you my word, there's no-one here.

MORE

(reassuring, faintly shocked)

I didn't suppose there was Your Grace.

WOLSEY

Oh....!

(deliberately loud)

Do you favour a change of dynasty, Sir Thomas? D'you think two Tudors are sufficient?

MORE's pose deserts him. He starts up, looking about almost wildly.

MORE

For God's sake, Your Grace -!

28 INT. CROMWELL'S ANTE-ROOM

CROMWELL, listening at the door jamb, hands behind his back, head bowed in thought, smiles to himself, a smile of simple amusement. We hear:

WOLSEY (off)

Then he needs a son. I repeat, what are you going to do about it?

29 INT. WOLSEY'S OFFICE

MORE has recovered. Is now gravely straightforward. Steadily:

MORE

I pray for it daily.

WOLSEY

(peering at him)

God's death, he means it . . . That thing
out there - at least she's fertile,
Thomas.

MORE

But she's not his wife.

WOLSEY

No Catherine's his wife and she's
barren as a brick. Are you going to
pray for a miracle?

MORE

There are precedents.

WOLSEY

(controls himself with
an effort. Rises)

Yes. All right. Good. Pray. Pray
by all means. But in addition to Prayer
there is effort. My effort's to secure
a divorce. Have I your support or
have I not?

MORE

(sits)

The Pope gave a dispensation so that
the King might marry his brother's
widow, for state reasons. Now we are
to ask the Pope to - dispense with his
dispensation, also for state reasons?

WOLSEY

I don't like plodding, Thomas.
Well?

MORE

Then clearly all we have to do is approach
His Holiness and ask him.

WOLSEY

I think we might influence the decision
of His Holiness.

MORE

By argument?

WOLSEY

Argument certainly.

(bursting out)

And - pressure!

MORE

Pressure applied through the Church,
church houses, church property.

WOLSEY

Pressure.

MORE

No, Your Grace, I'm not going to
help you.

WOLSEY

(grim)

Then good-night, Master More.

MORE rises, watched by WOLSEY. Neither man wants this.

WOLSEY

Let the dynasty die with Henry the
Eighth and we'll have dynastic wars
again! Blood-witted barons like
your mindless friend the Duke of
Norfolk ramping the country from
end to end - is that what you want?

He controls himself.

Very well, then England needs an heir.
Certain measures, perhaps regrettable,
perhaps not - there is much in the Church
which needs Reformation, Thomas -

MORE smiles at the transparently "responsible" tone.

WOLSEY (Cont)

All right, regrettable! But necessary, to get us an heir. Now ... explain how you, as a Councillor of England, can obstruct these measures for the sake of your own, private, conscience.

MORE

Well ... I believe, when statesmen forsake their own private conscience for the sake of their public duties ... they lead their country by a short route to chaos.

(to take the curse
of priggishness from
what he's said)

And we shall have my prayers to fall back on.

WOLSEY

(curious: passion spent)

You'd like that, wouldn't you? To govern the country by prayers?

MORE

Yes I should.

WOLSEY

I'd like to be there when you try.

(he sits heavily)

Who will wear this -

CLOSE SHOT, the Chancellor's chain.

after me? Mm? Who's our next Chancellor? You? Fisher? Suffolk?

MORE

Fisher for me.

WOLSEY

(dry)

Aye, but for the King? What about my Secretary, Master Cromwell?

MORE

Cromwell!

He looks involuntarily towards the curtained doorway. Recovers.

MORE

He's a very able man... But -

WOLSEY

But?

30 INT. CROMWELL'S ANTE-ROOM

CROMWELL, still listening, does not change his expression.

MORE

Me rather than Cromwell.

31 INT. WOLSEY'S STUDY

WOLSEY

Then come down to earth... Until you do
(returns his attention
to the papers)
You and I are enemies.

MORE

(absorbs this dangerous
news)

As Your Grace wishes.
(goes)

WOLSEY

As God wills.

MORE

Perhaps, Your Grace.

He has reached the door when:

WOLSEY

More!

MORE turns at the curtain.

You should have been a cleric!

MORE

Like yourself, Your Grace?

WOLSEY's pen falters, he turns; but MORE has gone, into:

32 INT. CROMWELL'S ANTE-ROOM

CROMWELL is innocently absorbed in papers at his table. He rises, respectfully and smiles as MORE goes through into:

33 INT. LONG GALLERY

WOLSEY's waiting-chamber. A long gallery with recessed windows. As he comes out there is a stir among the SUITORS there. Mostly they are poor, some - women with infants - are asleep, on the window-sills or crouched against the walls. There is a sprinkling of distressed gentlefolk and one or two flashy looking courtiers. When they see that it is not WOLSEY they sink back, disappointed and resigned. The men-at-arms on duty are stolidly indifferent throughout. Three or four SUITORS converge on MORE. All keep their voices respectfully low. MORE is tired. He walks down the gallery fast. But a little group follows him, silent but desperate. He senses their distress and stops. A handsome, hard-faced WOMAN of the middle class pushes forward. This is AVERIL MACHIN. She proffers a fine silver goblet.

MACHIN

Sir Thomas.

MORE

What's this?

MACHIN

From some grateful poor folk in Leicester.

MORE

(rather puzzled, takes it)

Leicester?

MACHIN

You do more good than you know, Sir Thomas.

MORE would enquire further but she has backed and curtseyed and a pathetic little OLD MAN claims his attention. Thrusts at him a paper and a basket with a cloth.

OLD MAN

My daughter has a case sir. In the Court of Poor Men's causes.

MORE looks at him, with sympathy, but steadily. He lifts the cloth.

Baked apples sir.

MORE
 (smiling slightly)
 To sweeten my judgement.

OLD MAN's wit doesn't travel this fast. He simply stares, anxiously.

I'll give your daughter the same judgement
 I would want for mine. A fair one, quickly.

OTHER POOR SUITORS hustle round him, whispering and susurrating. MORE takes their petitions. "Thank you, I will read it". "Thank you." "I understand." Then a raffish looking COURTIER with a neatly ribboned scroll steps forward with an elegant smile, the hoipoloi dealt with, expecting preferential treatment, but before he can open his mouth MORE gently takes the petition from him, says gently:

MORE
 I'll read it.

And goes, but COURTIER follows, drawling:

COURTIER
 It's an awkward case, Sir Thomas, I -

MORE
 (wearily, but hard)
 I'll read it.

COURTIER drops back. MORE relaxes, walks on, going home.

CUT

34 EXT. HAMPTON RIVER-STEPS NIGHT

The river steps of Hampton as before. Torches glittering.
 From the darkness.

MORE (on SOUND)
 Boat?

BOATMAN at foot of steps looking up.

BOATMAN
 Sir? Chelsea sir?

MORE descending. the cup glinting in his hand

MORE
 (with deep satisfaction,
 embarking)
 Chelsea.

MORE sits the cup prominent. ... BOATMAN settling to his oars, sighs.

BOATMAN

Well, I 'spect you'll make it worth my while, sir.

MORE looks at him, with speculative and affectionate interest.

MORE

Have you a licence?

BOATMAN

Bless you yes, sir, I've got a licence.

He shows the metal plaque attached to his sleeve.

MORE

Well then, the fares are fixed.

BOATMAN

They are, sir -

He heaves at the oars.

Hampton to Chelsea, downstream, a penny halfpenny. Chelsea to Hampton, upstream, a penny halfpenny -

He heaves at the oars.

Whoever makes the regulations doesn't row a boat

MORE

No. Threepence, if you get me home for breakfast.

BOATMAN

Thank you, sir!

35 EXT. MORE'S HOUSE RIVER-STEPS AS FOR SCENE 11 DAWN

RICH is asleep at the head of the Chelsea river steps, his fair head cradled against the damp stones, wild flowers growing in the mortar there.

36 EXT. RIVER DAWN

BOATMAN in the boat glances over his shoulder.

37 EXT. LONG SHOT MORE'S HOUSE RIVER-STEPS

His PCV the distant steps, RICH crouched there.

38 EXT. RIVER DAWN

MORE is asleep, the cup in his lap.

BOATMAN turns back again. Coughs.

MORE starts awake, drops goblet, retrieves it.

BOATMAN

Nice cup, sir.

MORE is reminded of a puzzle.

MORE

Ye-es ...

He examines it curiously. Finds something engraved on the base. Examines it. Looks up, his face changed, cold, disgusted. Puts cup carefully aside on the thwart as something unclean. Suddenly changes his mind. Quick and dexterous flips it into the river.

BOATMAN, horrified, with a movement of instinctive swiftness retrieves it, dripping. Shocked.

BOATMAN

That's worth money, sir ...

MORE, ashamed of the hystrionic gesture, takes it, but holds it as something unclean again.

39 EXT. MORE'S HOUSE RIVER-STEPS DAWN

RICH starts awake, runs down steps to receive boat, but:

BOATMAN, expertly guiding boat to steps, standing, balanced, curtly:

BOATMAN

Mind away, sir.

RICH, rejected again, scuttles up steps, turns as:

MORE alights. He is tired, incipiently impatient.

MORE
Have you been here all night?

RICH
(half proud, half sheepish)
Yes.

MORE
What .. ?

RICH
You said there was a post ...

MORE
Oh yes.

He rubs the fatigue from his face, addressing himself to this untimely problem. Looking towards the sleeping facade of his house beyond the dew-bright garden.

Yes. I'll offer you a post. With a house,
a servant, and fifty pounds a year.

RICH
What? What post?

MORE
At the new school.

RICH
A teacher!

He is bitterly disappointed and affronted.

MORE
(gently)
Richard, no-one's going to give you a
place at Court.

RICH
Master Cromwell says he'll do something
for me!

MORE
Cromwell -! ... Well if you know Cromwell,
you don't need my help.

RICH seizes his arm and with passionate sincerity:

RICH

Sir Thomas, if only you knew how much,
much rather I'd your help than his!

MORE

Not to a place at Court.

RICH's chin comes up.

RICH

Why not?

MORE

Look -

He thrusts the cup at RICH.

RICH

(puzzled)

What is it?

MORE

It's a bribe.

He upends the cup and reads the inscription:

"I am the gift of Averil Machin . . ." An
Averil Machin has a lawsuit in the Court
of Requests. . . . Italian silver.

RICH stares at it greedily.

MORE

Take it . . . No joke.

RICH

Why - Well thank you!

MORE

What will you do with it?

RICH

(sharply)

Sell it.

MORE

And buy what?

RICH

(fierce)

A decent gown!

MORE nods, sympathetic.

MORE

But Richard, that's a little bribe. At Court they offer you all sorts of things. Whole Manors, Manor houses, coats of arms. A man should go where he won't be tempted. Why not be a teacher? You'd be a fine teacher, perhaps a great one.

RICH

And if I was who would know it?

MORE

You. Your friends, your pupils, God. Not a ~~bad~~ public, that ... Oh, and a quiet life ..

RICH

(a short laugh)

You say that -

MORE is looking over the sweetly flowing river, doesn't seem to hear.

You come from talking with the Cardinal -

MORE

Ah yes, talking with the Cardinal ... It's eating your heart out, isn't it?

(bitter)

The high affairs of State.

RICH knows what this refers to, knows he shouldn't but can't resist. Unconsciously edges closer.

RICH

The Divorce?

The shutters come down behind MORE's eyes.

MORE

Boatman, take this gentleman to the New Inn.

And turns away; but behind him:

RICH

Sir Thomas!

MORE turns. RICH half way down the steps has turned to him and looking up, holding up the cup:

Thank you!

His eyes shine with excitement. MORE says dryly:

MORE

Be a teacher ...

RICH looks after him, a thought forming behind his eyes, but BOATMAN coughs. RICH embarks ..

CUT

40 MORE'S HOUSE GARDEN DOOR DAWN

STEWARD opens garden door of house for MORE. MORE nods.

MORE

Matthew ...

STEWARD

Sir ...

41 INT. MORE'S HOUSE CORRIDOR

MORE precedes him along the corridor.

MORE

Lady Alice in bed?

STEWARD

Yes sir.

MORE

Lady Margaret?

STEWARD

No sir.

MORE stops.

Master Roper 's here, sir.

MORE

At this hour? Who let him in?

STEWARD

He's a hard man to keep out, sir.

42 INT. MORE'S HOUSE GREAT HALL

MORE throws open door to hall where:

MARGARET and ROPER - a finely severe young man with a face full of rectitude - rise guiltily away from one another looking towards.

MORE in the doorway, looking stern.

MARGARET

(chin up but a
little timorous)

Will wants to marry me, father.

MORE comes towards them.

MORE

Well he can't marry you.

ROPER

Sir Thomas, I'm called to the
Bar.

MORE is disarmed.

MORE

Oh congratulations, Roper -

ROPER

My family may not be at the palace,
sir, but in the City -

MORE

There's nothing wrong with your family
Will. There's not much wrong with you. -
(sinking wearily into a chair)
except you seem to need a clock -

ROPER

(stiffly)
I can buy a clock sir.

MORE

Will, the answer's 'No', and will be 'no'
so long as you're a heretic.

ROPER

(rising)
That's a word I don't like, Sir Thomas!

MORE

(rising)
It's not a likeable word. It's not a likeable
thing!

MARGARET, alarmed, from behind MORE tries to silence him.

ROPER

The Church is heretical! Doctor Luther's
proved that to my satisfaction!

MORE

Luther's an excommunicate!

ROPER

From a heretic Church! Church - ? It's a
shop! Salvation by the shilling! - And
divorces!

MARGARET signals frantically. He says straight at her, over MORE.

Look - what I know, I'll say!

MARGARET

You've no sense of the place!

MORE

(yawning)
He's no sense of the time. Listen Roper.
Two years ago you were a passionate Church-
man. Now you're a passionate - Lutheran.

MORE (Cont)

We must just pray that when your head's finished turning, your face is to the front again. Is your horse here?

ROPER

No, sir, I walked.

MORE

Then take a horse from the stables and get back home.

(ROPER hesitates)

Go along.

ROPER turns, turns back.

ROPER

May I come again?

MORE indicates MARGARET.

MARGARET

Yes, soon.

ROPER goes.

MARGARET watches him, sadly. MORE watches her, guiltily. We hear door shut.

MARGARET

Is that final, father?

MORE

As long as he's a heretic, Meg, that's absolute.

Because it pains it to deny her what she wants he says it with special severity. MARGARET accepts it.

MARGARET

What did Wolsey want?

MORE goes dead pan.

MORE

Nice boy, young Will. Terribly strong principles, though.

He winces as the outer door bangs, looks up at gallery apprehensively and adds:

MORE

Clumsy, too.

He looks to MARGARET for a smile; gets instead a thoughtful stare.

MORE

You're very pensive.

MARGARET

You're very gay. Was it the Divorce?

MORE

To bed.

43 INT. MORE'S GREAT HALL STAIRS AND GALLERY

He propels her up the stairs, chatting:

MORE

A cantankerous lot, the Ropers. Old Roper was just the same. If heresy came into fashion, now, Young Will would want to be a Bishop.

MARGARET turns, says:

MARGARET

You don't want to talk about it.

MORE

No.

Both look up and off as a door clicks.

ALICE in gown and nightcap at door of bedroom on the gallery.

Genuinely remorseful MORE hurries past MARGARET and joins her.

MORE

Oh I'm sorry you were wakened, chick.

ALICE

I wasn't sleeping very deeply. What did Wolsey want?

MORE flickers. MARGARET pauses to see what he will do.

MORE

Will Roper's been.

The sleepiness flies from ALICE's face.

ALICE

Will Roper -!

MORE adds fuel to the flames.

MORE

Yes. He's been here all night. He wants to marry Meg.

ALICE looks really dangerous.

ALICE

Oh why you don't beat that girl -!

MORE

No she's full of education and it's a delicate commodity.

With which he trundles her back into the bedroom, following, but turning back to say:

MORE

Good-night, Meg.

His tone is quiet and perfectly grave - NOT sharing a joke at ALICE's expense. But MARGARET at her own door smiles a smile of loving appreciation to herself as she answers.

MARGARET

Good-night.

44 INT. MORE'S BED-CHAMBER

Inside their room, ALICE is still mottled.

ALICE

Marry Meg - a lawyer's son?

MORE is surprised and tickled.

MORE

Well she's a lawyer's daughter.

ALICE

Pouf!

She straddles happily, impressive and touching in her night attire.

ALICE

Norfolk spoke of you for Chancellor
of England before he left.

MORE, seated on the bed, pulling at his shoes, leaves off.

MORE

He's a dangerous friend then. Wolsey's
Chancellor, God help him.

ALICE

But Norfolk said if Wolsey fell -

MORE

If Wolsey fell, the splash would swamp a
few small boats like ours.

Tugging at his shoes again, comfortable, ruefully admiring:

Oh no. There'll be no new Chancellors
while Wolsey lives.

CUT

45 EXT. LONG SHOT ABBEY DAY

Beneath a flying Winter sky, two HORSEMEN ride the horizon of
a snow flecked moorland landscape. CAMERA PANS to bring on
frame an isolated little Abbey. Wind on SOUND continuous:

46 INT. ABBEY CELL

WOLSEY's great chain on the same red silk. But now we find the
gown is thrown at the foot of a bed. And WOLSEY in the bed is a
changed man, at death's very door. The room is small and plainly
whitewashed, having one small gothic window. Two MONKS in
cassocks and the dying man himself look apprehensively towards the
door at the sound of heavy footsteps. It crashes open. A young
officer in sodden travelling clothes announces:

OFFICER

The Duke of Norfolk, Earl Marshal of
England!

NORFOLK follows. In furs and leather he looks barbaric. He doesn't like his present job; he doesn't like WOLSEY. He takes two steps towards the bed, his face set. WOLSEY gestures feebly to the chain. NORFOLK slings it over one arm. Clears his throat, not looking at WOLSEY.

NORFOLK

Have you any message for His Majesty?

WOLSEY shakes his head. NORFOLK turns, but at the door.

WOLSEY

If -

NORFOLK turns, reluctantly.

If I had served my God one half so well
as I have served my King, God would not
have left me, to die in this place.

NORFOLK hates it.

NORFOLK

Thank God that you're dying here Your
Grace. The King would have you to die
in the Tower.

NORFOLK turns.

MONKS horrified. WOLSEY falls back. On SOUND door shuts,
footsteps recede.

CUT

47 INT. WESTMINSTER HALL

Fanfare. CLOSE SHOT The chain held by NORFOLK, in ceremonial dress. Continuous pull-away reveals MORE in his best gown, surrounding courtiers and officials. MORE turns, formally to face the assembly. PULL-AWAY draws up and up, SHOOTING down the tall columns of a State Hall (Westminster) upon the little group, the important flock of witnesses while NORFOLK:

NORFOLK

(reading)

I am straightly charged by the King Himself
here openly to declare how much all England

NORFOLK (Cont)

is beholden to this man and how worthy he is to have the highest room in the realm, and how dearly the King's Grace doth love and trust him! Not only for much good council delivered in council, but for better council yet, the which is privy to the King's person, and this same Sir Thomas More, here made before you all to be - Lord Chancellor of the realm!

Fanfare and CLOSE SHOT. The chain descends on MORE's shoulders.

DISSOLVE

48 EXT. RIVER

Fanfare modulating to gay, light, frivolous music. The screen a blaze of golden light, the sun on water. Out of this effulgence swims the Royal Barge. In the stern, the King in holiday mood, dressed in cloth-of-gold, surrounded by COURTIERS. The MUSICIANS in an escorting barge. A third barge with quietly dressed OFFICIALS.

49 EXT. MORE'S GARDEN & STEPS

MORE, wearing the Chancellor's chain, waits in his garden, the music reaching us faintly. STEWARD jumps down from river wall, nodding and gulping, too overcome to speak.

MORE

Calm yourself, Matthew; fetch Lady Alice.

The music nearer. An anonymous shout: "God Save His Majesty!"

STEWARD

Oh Jesus!

And runs.

50 EXT. RIVER MUD FLAT

The Royal Barge has grounded, the KING already standing, the other barges gliding in on either side. The KING alights. His golden feet sink in the mud. A moment of surprise. COURTIERS pause, hesitant. Then the KING laughs. They alight after him, laughing. The sun flashes round them, turning the mud to gold.

51 INT. MORE'S HOUSE GREAT HALL

In the Hall of MORE's house, ALICE anxiously watches the face of NORFOLK who is inspecting a long table set with the excessive creations of a Tudor banquet, the SERVANTS, tense and nervous, who line the walls. MARGARET too is anxious. NORFOLK grunts.

NORFOLK

That's very well.

STEWARD arrives breathless in the door and calls without ceremony:

STEWARD

My lady! The King!

NORFOLK nods, leads off, all hurrying.

52 EXT. RIVER MUD-FLAT

The golden feet of the KING stride athletically up the hardway, the black mud glinting. COURTIERS follow.

53 EXT. MORE'S GARDEN & STEPS

NORFOLK, ALICE, MARGARET fetch up a bit breathlessly by MORE. He takes his wife's arm, pats it reassuringly. MARGARET stands by NORFOLK.

MORE

(lets go her arm)

Now remember, the visit's a surprise.

ALICE nods, but then common sense bursting through:

ALICE

But he'll know we're expecting him when he sees all that -!

MORE

Oh Kings can absorb a little inconsistency.

Then seeing that she is genuinely puzzled how to behave, seriously and revealing his own deep pleasure in it:

It's a very great honour. One friend calling on another you see.

MARGARET and NORFOLK, side by side like soldiers on parade, looking ahead (the KING must be near now, though hidden below the wall).

MARGARET

What is he really coming for?

NORFOLK

To talk about the Divorce. He wants an answer.

MARGARET looks at him.

MARGARET

He's had his answer!

NORFOLK

He wants another.

ON SOUND

KING (on SOUND)

Thomas!

MORE squints. With him we see:

The KING on the wall by chance or design stands in the eye of the sun and seems transparent like a flame.

They all sink down.

MORE

Your Majesty does my house more honour than I fear my household will bear.

The KING steps down and becomes visible.

KING

No ceremony Thomas, no ceremony! A passing fancy -

(he raises him)

I happened to be on the river.

(holds out shoe, proudly)

Look, mud . . . By Heaven, what an evening!

Lady Alice, I fear we came upon you unexpectedly.

ALICE

(shocked)

Oh no Your Grace - that is yes, Your Grace but we are ready to entertain Your Grace.

She is flustered. The KING doesn't like people to be flustered when he's feeling informal. He grunts, nods, fiddling at the locket round his neck, MORE comes in expertly.

MORE

This is my daughter Margaret, sire, she has not had the honour to meet Your Grace.

MARGARET curtseys low. He looks her over, approves.

KING

Why Margaret, they told me you were a scholar.

She looks confusedly to her father.

MORE

Answer, Margaret.

MARGARET

Among women I pass for one Your Grace.

ALICE and NORFOLK exchange satisfied glances.

KING

Antiquone modo Latina loqueris an Oxoniensi?

MARGARET

Quem me docuit pater, Domine.

KING

Bene. Optimus est. Graecamne linguam quoque te docuit?

MARGARET

Graecam me docuit non pater meus sed mei patris amicus, Johannes Coletus, Sancti Pauli Decanus. In literis Graecis tamen, non minus quam Latinis, ars magistri minuitur discipuli stultitia.

During this last, CLOSE SHOT the KING. Her Latin is better than his; he is not altogether pleased.

KING

Ho . . .

He walks away. Unseen by any, MARGARET mistakenly begins to rise from her curtsey. MORE puts his hand on her head and gently presses her down again, so that she is ready again when.

KING

Can you dance too?

MARGARET

Not well, Your Grace.

KING

Well I dance superlatively!

He plants his golden leg before her crouching form, the absurd cod-piece prominent.

That's a dancer's leg, Margaret!

She has the wit to look straight up and smile at him. He pulls her to her feet.

On SOUND, sycophantic chuckles. KING turns to:

His party has followed and stands against the wall, all smiling and chuckling.

MORE bows and smiles, the host. His expression changes. He has seen:

CROMWELL in a modest position among the Officials, bows to MORE.

KING

Lady Alice, the river's given me an appetite.

ALICE

If Your Grace would share a very simple supper.

KING

It would please me to. Take them in, Thomas and I will follow.

He throws an arm about MORE's neck, the good friend.

ALICE

Matthew.

STEWARD

My lords and gentlemen!

He stalks majestically away along the path. The COURTIERS and OFFICIALS follow, MUSICIANS now hop over the wall with ribboned strings and polished brasses.

KING

(calls after)

Do you like music, Margaret?

MARGARET

Yes, Your Grace.

KING

They'll play to you.

CUT

MUSIC floats from an open window of MORE's house. HENRY and MORE come on frame. The KING is very pastoral, raising his hand to trail it through the leaves of the apple trees, picking a flower, almost skipping. MORE plods behind him. The music changes.

KING

Ah. Now listen to this, Thomas.

54 EXT. MORE'S ORCHARD & HOUSE

CLOSE SHOT They come to rest beneath a big tree. A rotten garden bench beneath it. The KING is very much the connoisseur, head tilted, beating time with one finger. He smiles at MORE.

KING

Sit down.

MORE hesitates.

KING

Be seated . . . No courtship Thomas; you are my friend are you not?

MORE

Your Majesty.

KING

And thank God I have a friend for my Chancellor. Readier to be friend I trust than he was to be Chancellor.

MORE

My own knowledge of my poor abilities -

KING

I will judge of your abilities, Thomas . . . Did you know that Wolsey named you for Chancellor?

MORE

Wolsey!

KING

Aye; before he died. Wolsey named you
and Wolsey was no fool.

MORE

He was a statesman of incomparable ability,
Your Grace.

KING

Was he? Was he so? Then why did he
fail me? It was villainy then!

He is shouting, his eyes blaze with indignation. MORE rises.

CUT

55 INT. MORE'S HOUSE GREAT HALL

In the hall, the MUSICIANS are silent. So too the SERVANTS and the COURTIERs, scattered about, seated and standing. All are listening uneasily to the all-too-familiar voice whose roaring comes in distantly at the open window. NORFOLK and ALICE exchange worried glances. STEWARD looks frightened. MARGARET looks cautiously at CROMWELL. He seems to be lost in contemplation of a tapestry. But all the while the furious voice comes unintelligibly to us. It ceases.: All relax.

CUT

56 EXT. MORE'S ORCHARD & HOUSE

The KING relaxes too. Confidential:

KING

Wolsey was a proud man, Thomas,
pride right through. And he failed
me! - He failed me in the one thing
that matters Thomas, then as now.

He looks keenly at MORE, who lowers his eyes. The KING
affects to chide himself.

But look Be seated. . .

Both sit.

KING (Cont)

What an evening.

MORE smiles. The KING fills his splendid chest.

A man could fight a lion, eh?

MORE

(with genuine
affection and
admiration)

Some men could, Your Grace.

KING

Touching this matter of my divorce,
Thomas, have you thought of it since
we last talked?

MORE

Of little else, Your Grace.

KING

Then you see your way clear to me?

MORE

That you should put away Queen
Catherine, sire? Oh alas, as I think
of it I see so clearly that I can not come
with Your Grace that my endeavour is not
to think of it at all.

KING

Then you haven't thought enough!

His eyes blaze again. Then the fire goes out. He pats MORE's
knee reassuringly. His gaze wanders, focusses with pleasure.

That's a lilac.

Their POV, a beautiful lilac alone in the sunshine. KING comes
on frame, calling back to MORE:

We have them at Hampton . . . Not so
fine as this though.

He breaks off a blossom and strolls back with it to MORE.

KING

Ha. I'm in an excellent frame of
mind.

He puts the blossom to his nose.

Beautiful . . .

(now his tone
becomes serious,
thoughtful)

You must consider, Thomas, that I
stand in peril of my soul. It was no
marriage; I have lived in incest
with my brother's widow. Leviticus
- "Thou shalt not uncover the naked-
ness of thy brother's wife." Leviticus.
Chapter 18, Verse 16.

MORE

Yes, Your Grace.
(he hesitates)
But Deuteronomy -

KING

(triumphantly)
Deuteronomy's ambiguous!

MORE

Your Grace, I'm not fitted to meddle
in these matters - to me it seems a
matter for the Holy See -

KING

(reproving)
Thomas, Thomas, does a man need
a Pope to tell him when he's sinned?
It was a sin, Thomas . . . And God
has punished me. I have no son.
Son after son she's borne me Thomas,
all dead at birth or dead within the
month; I never saw the hand of God
so clear in anything.

His face is clouded and fearful, full of superstitious dread. Dully:

KING

It is my bounden duty to put away the
Queen . . .

(flaring)

And all the Popes back to Peter shall
not come between me and my duty!

(with real but irritable
curiosity)

How is that you cannot see? Everyone
else does.

MORE

(eagerly persuasive)

Then why does Your Grace need my
poor support?

KING

Because you are honest.

(he looks at him,
hard, shrewd and
frank)

What's more to the purpose you're known
to be honest . . . There are those like
Norfolk who follow me because I wear the
crown, and there are those like Master
Cromwell who follow me because they
are jackals with sharp teeth and I am
their tiger, and there is a mass that
follows me because it follows anything
that moves. And there is you.

MORE

I am sick to think how much I must dis-
please Your Grace.

KING

No, Thomas, I respect your sincerity.
Respect? Oh man, it's water in the
desert . . .

He looks gloomy, abstracted. Looking up, he finds MORE's
anxious, paternal regard upon him and smiles.

KING

How did you like our music? That air they played, it had a certain - well, tell me what you thought of it.

MORE

Could it have been Your Grace's own?

KING

Discovered! Now I'll never know your true opinion. And that's irksome, Thomas, for we artists, though we love praise, yet we love truth better.

MORE

Then I will tell Your Grace my true opinion.

But he pauses.

KING

Well?

MORE

To me it seemed ...

He pauses as though for the exact critical word. KING makes a little involuntary gesture, like a dog eager for a bone.

... Delightful.

KING

Thomas, I chose the right man for Chancellor.

MORE

I should in fairness add that my taste in music is reputedly deplorable.

KING

Your taste in music is excellent. It exactly coincides with my own. Ah music! Music! Send them back without me Thomas; I will live here in Chelsea and make music.

MORE

My house is at Your Grace's disposal.

KING

Thomas you understand me ...

But his attention wanders. He looks gloomily at:

The lilac. A cloud shadow passes over it and it bends to the wind.

The KING lays aside the blossom.

KING

Touching this other business, mark you, Thomas, I'll have no opposition.

MORE

Your Grace?

KING

No opposition I say! No opposition!

He leaps up. MORE rises.

Be seated! ... I'll leave you out of it - but you are my Chancellor - I don't take it kindly Thomas, and I'll have no opposition! I see how it will be. The Bishops will oppose me! The full-fed, "Princes of the Church"! Hypocrites! They're all hypocrites! Mind, they do not take you in Thomas!

MORE

(agitated and indignant)

Your Grace is unjust. If I cannot serve Your Grace in this great matter of the Queen -

KING

I - have - no - queen! Catherine is not my wife and no priest can make her so. And they that say she is my wife are not only liars .. but Traitors!

CUT

57 INT. MORE'S HOUSE GREAT HALL

In the hall the raging voice reaches us as before. All the KING's PARTY has drawn together, looking inimically at:

ALICE and MARGARET, standing close together, the KING's disfavour on them like a sickness. NORFOLK uneasily standing a few feet away from them. ALICE looks at him. He silently jerks his head. She goes.

CUT

58 EXT. MORE'S ORCHARD & HOUSE

MORE is aghast and white, the KING shaking, breathing hard, leaning against the tree trunk. He holds out a hand and says almost piteously:

KING

If you could come with me, there is no man I would sooner raise, yes with my own hand.

MORE's hand moves; he would like to take the KING's, but shakily:

MORE

Oh, Your Grace overwhelms me.

He half-turns away, covers his face. The KING looks sulkily ashamed and at a loss. A bell strikes sweetly. Grumpy:

KING

What's that?

MORE

Eight o'clock Your Grace.

He is still turned away.

KING

Oh lift yourself up man. Have I not promised? I'll leave you out of it . . . Shall we eat?

MORE

If Your Grace pleases.

He turns and manages a smile. But the KING's gaze won't meet his.

KING

Mm. . .

He moves away. Suddenly, with transparent falsehood:

Eight o'clock you said? Thomas, the tide will be turning. I was forgetting the tide. I must go.

MORE

(steadily)

I'm sorry. Your Grace.

Still the KING avoids his eye, chattering on, walking swiftly.

KING

I must take the tide or I'll not get back
to Richmond. No don't come ...

CUT

ALICE hurries anxiously round the corner of the house, almost
collides with the KING. He is embarrassed.

KING

Oh. Lady Alice. I must go. I want to
catch the tide.

(recovering his poise)

Affairs call me to Court. So I give you
my thanks - and say good-night.

ALICE sinks into a curtsey. Looks up unhappily, seeing:

The KING striding swiftly away through the garden.

59 EXT. MORE'S HOUSE GARDEN DOOR

The COURTIERS and OFFICIALS pour out of the house, furtively
excited, chattering to one another softly and follow him, higgledy-
piggedy. MUSICIANS come last, and then the STEWARD who looks
after them.

60 EXT. MORE'S GARDEN & STEPS

The KING descends steps to the hardway. Looks with vague anger at:

61 EXT. RIVER MUD-FLAT

A litter of miscellaneous boats and gawping onlookers, who falls back
as he strides towards his barge. Among them we discover RICH.

CUT

62 EXT. ORCHARD AND HOUSE

ALICE strides angrily up to where MORE sits still beneath the tree.

ALICE

You crossed him?

MORE

Somewhat.

ALICE

Why?

MORE

I couldn't find the other way.

ALICE

You're too nice altogether, Thomas!

MORE

Woman, mind your house!

ALICE

I am minding my house!

Her eyes fill and her strong mouth trembles on this. She turns in her absurd finery and trudges away through the grass, MORE following, looking at her.

63 RIVER MUD FLAT

The KING crashes into his seat in the Barge, nods curtly at BARGE-MASTER, the Barge leaves.

Latecoming COURTIERS are stranded, one with his feet in the water. Behind them the MUSICIANS, OFFICIALS, stream hastily over MORE's garden wall and down the foreshore, in confusion, mixed in with SIGHTSEERS.

Among them we find CROMWELL. He is standing calmly, looking off at:

RICH. He stares back at CROMWELL.

CROMWELL beckons him.

RICH hesitates.

CROMWELL beckons again.

RICH comes along the muddy gravel of the foreshore towards him.

CROMWELL advances a step or two and meets him. Politely:

CROMWELL

Are you coming my way, Rich?

RICH, rabbit to CROMWELL's snake, stares, fascinated, but shakes his head, and manages:

RICH

No.

CROMWELL

I think you should, you know.

RICH

I can't tell you anything!

CROMWELL shrugs, turns, turns back and holds out his hand.

RICH is tempted, shakes his head, turns sharply about as though to run up the foreshore towards More's garden wall, slips and falls full length in the mud.

He looks up, furious, frightened, confused, to find:

CROMWELL, eyebrows raised, the boatload of comfortably gowned OFFICIALS behind him, regarding RICH with mild interest.

CUT

64 MORE'S HOUSE GREAT HALL

CLOSE TRACKING SHOT, in the hall, empty of servants now, ALICE patrols the table so that we see the parade of fantastic comestibles at which she glowers, MORE following.

MORE

Well what would you want me to do?

ALICE

Be ruled! If you won't rule him, be ruled!

MORE

There's a small area where I must rule myself - it's very small, less to the King than a tenniscourt.

ALICE

Look at that!

She jabs her finger at the silver platter which bears some kind of jelly in the form of a castle, which cost her a morning's work.

MORE

Yes ... Have some.

He picks up the platter with its absurd wobbling burden but she jerks away and continues on so that he follows with it.

MORE

Look. It was eight o'clock. At eight o'clock Lady Anne likes to dance.

ALICE

Oh... And you stand between them!

MORE

I? What stands between them is a Sacrament of the Church. I'm less important than you think, Alice.

She has come to the chair where the King would have sat.

ALICE

Stay friends with him, Thomas.

MORE

Whatever may be done by smiling, you may rely on me to do. Come.

They sit, by the King's empty chair. But she is still full of sullen misgiving.

Alice ... Alice ... Set your mind at rest.
This -

He taps himself.

Is not the stuff of which martyrs are made.

He looks up. So does she. His expression changes, his back stiffens, very much the father.

ROPER and MARGARET approach. They look like a bride and groom. He has her arm possessively beneath his own, holds her hand in his. What's more, her face is happy and hopeful, his is set and serious. They fetch up by MORE whose glance stays on their linked hands

ROPER

Good-day, sir ... Lady Alice ...

MORE's cold glance travels up to ROPER's face. No reply.

MARGARET

Will wants to talk to you, father ...

MORE's glance fastens on the hands again.

MARGARET

I told him it wouldn't be convenient -

MORE

You were right ... You're very free with my daughter's hand, Roper!

ROPER would slip his hand from hers but MARGARET keeps possession.

ROPER

It's of that I wish to speak. Sir, you've had a disagreement with His Majesty.

MORE

Have I?

ROPER

So Meg tells me. I offer my congratulations.

MORE

If it's true, is it a matter for congratulation?

ROPER

Yes.

He lets go MARGARET's hand, clasps his own. She quickly sits and looks at her father with the proper compound of fear, appeal and gratitude; she realizes that he is straightforwardly jealous. ROPER's youthful struggle for dignity makes him very appealing as:

ROPER

Sir, when last I asked you for your daughter's hand you objected to my

(he struggles for the right word)

... unorthodox, opinions.

MORE

I did.

ROPER

Since then my views . . . my views have,
er, somewhat modified.

MARGARET and MORE exchange glance of delightful amusement.

MORE

Well that's good hearing, Will.

ROPER has seen their interchange. Hotly:

ROPER

I modify nothing concerning various
corruptions in the Church -

MORE

Quite right.

ROPER

But an attack on the Church Herself. No,
I see behind that an attack on God -

MORE, alarmed, with a forkful of jelly poised.

MORE

Er, Roper -

ROPER

The Devil's work!

MORE

Roper -!

ROPER

To be done by the Devil's Ministers!

MORE

For Heaven's sake Will, remember my
office!

ROPER

Oh, if you stand on your office -!

MORE

I don't stand on it, but there are certain
things I may not hear!

ON SOUND: STEWARD coughs, discreet and disapproving.

All look up, alarmed. RICH is entering, past STEWARD. He halts and looks at them, smiling, awkward, distraught. He is still muddy. MORE glances at ALICE, rises.

MORE

Richard?

RICH

I fell ... Lady Alice ...

ALICE nods, non-committal.

Lady Margaret.

MARGARET

Good evening, Master Rich.

MORE

Oh. Do you know - William Roper the younger?

RICH comes forward, ingratiating.

RICH

By reputation of course.

ROPER

Good evening, Master ...?

RICH

Rich.

ROPER

Oh.

(recollecting something)

Oh.

RICH

(defensively)

You have heard of me?

ROPER

Yes.

RICH

In what connection? I don't know what you can have heard -

He looks at them, hostile. Suddenly blurts, shrill.

RICH

I sense that I'm not welcome here.

MORE

Why Richard, have you done something to make you not welcome?

RICH

(emotional, impulsive)

Cromwell is asking questions. About you
He is continually asking questions about
you and your opinions!

MORE looks thoughtful.

MORE

Of whom?

STEWARD commences discreet Exit. The movement attracts their attention. RICH points, excitedly:

RICH

Of him for one! That's one of his sources!

ALICE, MARGARET, ROPER in turn, staring at STEWARD, angry, disgusted, hostile, each according to his nature.

STEWARD, cautiously "innocent".

But MORE, still looking at RICH, says quietly:

MORE

Of course; that's one of my servants.
All right, Matthew.

STEWARD makes his exit, just a little too hastily. MORE goes on looking gravely and searchingly at RICH who can't stand it:

RICH

You look at me as though I were an enemy!

MORE puts out a hand.

MORE
Why, Rich, you're shaking.

RICH
Help me.

MORE
How?

RICH
Employ me.

MORE
No.

RICH
Employ me.

MORE
No.

RICH goes, turns back.

RICH
I would be faithful!

MORE
Richard, you couldn't answer for
yourself even so far as tonight.

RICH goes.

ALICE on her feet, excited. SHORT CLOSE UPS:

ALICE
Arrest him!

MORE
For what?

ALICE
He's dangerous!

ROPER
For libel - he's a spy!

TWO SHOT MORE and MARGARET

MARGARET
Father that man's bad.

MORE

There's no law against that.

ROPER

There is! God's law!

MORE

Then God can arrest him.

ALICE

While you talk, he's gone!

MORE

And go he should if he were the Devil himself, until he broke the law.

ROPER

(amazed)

So - Now we'd give the Devil benefit of law!

MORE

Yes what would you do? Cut a great road through the law to get after the Devil?

ROPER

I'd cut down every law in England to do that!

MORE really stung at this:

MORE

Oh. And when the last law was down and the Devil turned round on you, where would you hide, Roper, the laws all being flat? - This country's planted thick with laws from coast to coast - Man's laws, not God's, and if you cut them down - and you're just the man to do it - Do you really think you could stand upright in the winds that would blow then?

DISSOLVE commences, and ON SOUND wind rises, as he continues to himself:

Yes, I'd give the Devil benefit of law.
For my own safety's sake.

65 EXT. DOCKSIDE PUB NIGHT

Wind blowing over black water, wet cobbles. A figure flits, its thin garments clapped about it by the wind. RICH. He turns a corner, another, hesitates, dives into a doorway over which a bushel of hops thrashes in the gusts.

66 INT. DOCKSIDE PUB

Passes through room where two or three poor looking watermen sit silently drinking. Into a short corridor. Hesitates, uncertain. CROMWELL comes to a doorway, a tankard in his hand.

CROMWELL

Here, Rich.

He goes back in. We follow. A dark little room made cheerful by firelight, a black oak table with jug and bread. A picture of simple comfort., and CROMWELL smiling:

CROMWELL

It's taken you long enough to get here.

RICH

Have I kept you waiting?

CROMWELL

Months. Here.

He takes a mug of warmed wine from the fireside, gives it to RICH.

CROMWELL

Do you know the news?

RICH

What news?

CROMWELL

Sir Thomas Paget is retiring.

His voice thickens with almost physical pleasure.

And I succeed him.

RICH

Secretary to the Council! You?

CROMWELL

T'is surprising, isn't it?

66 Continued

RICH

Oh no - I mean one sees - it's logical.

CROMWELL

No ceremony, no courtship. As His Majesty might say.

RICH laughs, but glances into the shadows.

Yes, see how I trust you.

RICH

Oh I would never repeat or report a thing like that.

CROMWELL

What kind of thing would you repeat or report?

RICH

Well nothing said in friendship.

CROMWELL

Do you believe that?

RICH

Why yes.

CROMWELL

No but seriously.

RICH

Yes!

CROMWELL

Rich, seriously.

RICH hesitates, mumbles:

RICH

It would depend what I was offered.

CROMWELL

Don't say it just to please me.

RICH

(bitterly)

It's true; it would depend what I was offered.

CROMWELL appraises him; RICH looks back.

CROMWELL

We-ell ... There is another post vacant. Collector of Revenues for York.

RICH

Is it in your gift?

CROMWELL

Effectively.

RICH

What must I do for it?

CROMWELL sits by him and, as telling a story to a child, while RICH watches him hawklike:

CROMWELL

Rich, I know a man who wants to change his woman. Normally a matter of small importance, but in this case it's our liege lord Henry the eighth of that name - which is a quaint way of saying that if he wants to change his woman he will. And our job as administrators is to minimize the ...

Searches delicately for the word.

... inconvenience, which this is going to cause. That's our only job, Rich, to minimize the - inconvenience - of things. A harmless occupation you would say, but no, we administrators are not liked, Rich, we're not popular - I say "we" on the assumption you accept this post at York I've offered you.

RICH's smile fades; he looks down, almost whispers:

RICH

Yes ... Yes.

CROMWELL

(with distaste)

It's a bad sign when people are depressed by their own good fortunes.

RICH

I'm not depressed.

CROMWELL

You look depressed.

RICH

I'm lamenting. I've lost my innocence.

CROMWELL

Some time ago. Have you only just noticed? ... Now your friend, our present Lord Chancellor - there's an innocent man.

RICH

The odd thing is, he is.

CROMWELL smiles at him, understandingly.

CROMWELL

(with dislike)

Yes, I say he is. Unhappily he's got his innocence entangled in this proposition that you can't change your woman without a divorce, and can't have a divorce unless the "Pope" says so. And from this quite meaningless circumstance, I fear some measure of ...

He searches again. RICH, like the bright boy of the class waving his cup

RICH

Inconvenience!

CROMWELL

Just so. This goblet he gave you, how much was it worth?

RICH freezes, puts down cup, licks lips. CROMWELL, gently:

Come on, Rich, he gave you a silver goblet. How much did you get for it?

RICH

Fifty shillings.

CROMWELL

It was a gift, wasn't it, from a litigant, a woman?

RICH

Yes.

CROMWELL

Which Court? Chancery?

RICH raises his cup and drinks desperately. CROMWELL restrains him.

CROMWELL

No don't get drunk. In which Court was the litigant's case?

RICH

Court of Requests.

CROMWELL grunts, looks abstracted, turning over the information in his mind. Becoming aware of RICH's hypnotized gaze he says, comfortingly:

CROMWELL

There. That wasn't too painful, was it?

RICH

(a short, rueful laugh)

No!

CROMWELL

No.

Suddenly looks contemptuously at his protege.

CROMWELL

And you'll find it easier, next time.

RICH has a moment of violent shame.

DISSOLVE

67 INT. CANTERBURY CHAPTERHOUSE

ANGLING DOWN. The Princes of the Church ascend the shallow stone spiral to the Chapterhouse of Canterbury in a river of black velvet caps, billowing lawn sleeves and susurrating slippers.

The KING'S REPRESENTATIVE stands impassively, in the circular Chapterhouse as they take their seats, each in his episcopal throne. Silence and stillness save for a little nervous coughing which echoes from the vaulted roof. REPRESENTATIVE glances at CRANMER, raised above the rest. CRANMER bows assent. REPRESENTATIVE lets fall open the scroll he carries.

REPRESENTATIVE

My Lord Archbishop, my Lords, Reverend
Doctors of the Church -

CAMERA PANS over the varied faces, benign, shrewd, ascetic,
gross.

REPRESENTATIVE

The answer of our liege lord Henry to his
trusty well-beloved subjects, pontiffs in the
Canterbury Convocation.

BACK to the REPRESENTATIVE.

His Majesty accepts your humble admission
of many grievous errors, for which he
accepts the manumission of one hundred
thousand pounds in token. But, mindful for
the ordering of the Realm and the quietness
of his subjects, His Majesty requires that
you do now straightly renounce your pretended
allegiance to the See of Rome and admit the
Statute passed through Parliament, acknowledging
the King's good title: Supreme Head of the Church
in England.

He folds the scroll, looks round the assembly.

Now my lords, what's your answer, yea
or nay?

CUT

68 INT. MORE'S HOUSE GREAT HALL

CLOSE SHOT MORE, his hands on the chain, his face grim, listening to NORFOLK who faces him, ALICE, ROPER, MARGARET in a formal row. He half lifts the chain. it catches in the folds of his fur hood

MORE

Take it.

NORFOLK

Not I!

MORE turns to his wife:

MORE

Alice?

ALICE

No! Sun and moon Master More you're taken for a wise man! Is this wisdom - to betray your ability, abandon your station, and forget your duty to your kith and kin?

MORE bows his head to it, turns to MARGARET and ROPER, who steps forward eagerly.

ROPER

Shall I sir?

MORE

No thank you, son Roper Margaret, will you?

She steps forward.

MARGARET

Yes.

A moment's confrontation She takes the chain from his shoulders

MARGARET

If you want.

MORE

There's my clever girl.

MARGARET turns to NORFOLK, about to hand him the chain.

68 Continued

ROPER

Well done, sir!

MORE and NORFOLK both look sharply at:

ROPER, defiant.

ROPER

In my opinion, that thing's a degradation!
In my opinion-

MORE

(with sudden rage)

Silence!

(more softly)

Will! Silence! Remember that you have
a wife now, and may have children!

NORFOLK steps forward, with deliberate formality and takes chain
from MARGARET.

NORFOLK

His Majesty accepts your resignation
very sadly. He is mindful of your
goodness and past loyalty. And in any
matter which concerns your honour and
welfare he will continue your good lord.

CUT TO

69 EXT. MORE'S GARDEN

The chain rests on NORFOLK's arm as he and MORE emerge from
the house to the garden, walking fast

NORFOLK

(curtly)

All right Thomas, make me understand.
Because I'll tell you now - to me this
looks like cowardice!

MORE

(a bit ruffled)

All right, I will. This isn't "reformation",
this is war against the Church. Our King,
has declared war on the Pope because the
Pope will not declare that the Queen is not
his wife.

NORFOLK

And is she?

MORE looks at him, laughs, pats his arm. NORFOLK shakes off
his hand and repeats:

Is she?

MORE arrests him. Makes a display of looking about, conspiratorial.

MORE

Have I your word that what we say here
is between us two?

NORFOLK

(impatient)

Very well.

MORE

And if the King should command you to
repeat what I may say?

NORFOLK

I should keep my word to you!

MORE

Then what has become of your oath of
obedience to the King?

69 Continued

NORFOLK sorts this out. Then, astounded:

NORFOLK

You lay traps for me!

MORE

No, I show you the times.

CUT

70 EXT. MORE'S GARDEN & STEPS

NORFOLK his face heavy with distaste and unhappiness, climbs the river wall from MORE's garden. He turns:

NORFOLK

All right - we are at war with the Pope!
The Pope's a Prince, isn't he?

MORE

He is also the successor of St. Peter, our
only link with Christ.

NORFOLK

So you believe! And will you forfeit all
you've got - which includes the respect of
your country - for a belief?

MORE

Mm. Because what matters to me is that
I believe it. Or rather, no - not that I believe
it, but that I believe it. I trust I make myself
obscure?

NORFOLK

Perfectly. Why d'you insult me with his lawyer's chatter?

MORE

Because I am afraid.

71 EXT. RIVER MUD-FLAT

NORFOLK

Man, you're sick!

He descends the steps, turns and looks up, framed in green willow.

This isn't Spain, you know! ... This is England!

CUT

72 MORE'S HOUSE GREAT HALL

MORE's household is assembled in the hall. Their babble dies as a door opens in the gallery above and ALICE, MARGARET, ROPER, MORE emerge.

MORE

My friends, you know why I have called you here. I have to-day resigned my office. I am no longer a-

(smiles at them)

"Great Man".

Murmur of sycophantic laughter from HOUSEHOLD. STEWARD steps forward, righteous:

STEWARD

Sir, we want you to know that we're all on your side!

MORE

(sharply)

My side? What side is that?

STEWARD

(unctuous)

Well sir, we all know what you think.

MORE

None of you knows what I think! And if you guess at what I think and babble it about, you do me no good service!

Reaction shot his POV. HOUSEHOLD stare back uncomprehending, puzzled by his sudden urgency.

MORE

Now since I am no more a Great man, I no longer need a great household. Nor can I afford one. You will have to go ... However I still number some Great Men among my friends; and they still need great households, No-one will be turned away from here until we've found another place for him ...

(to STEWARD; quietly)

That is all.

STEWARD turns, gestures HOUSEHOLD out.

ALICE, MARGARET, ROPER return through door on gallery. MORE is about to follow when (on SOUND) a discreet cough. He turns, reluctantly. Looks down and sees:

STEWARD, a model of mournful propriety, looking up at him at foot of stairs, his WIFE behind him; she bobs a curtsey.

MORE, forseeing it all, looks a bit dry; as one tackling a small, necessary, distasteful task, descends, saying:

MORE

What about you, Matthew, will you stay?

STEWARD

Well sir, that's according.

MORE at foot of stairs helps him to the heart of the matter.

MORE

There will be more work and ... less money.

STEWARD

(statesmanlike)

Don't see how I can then, sir. After all, I've got my own responsib-

Indicates WIFE.

MORE

Quite right Matthew. Why should you?

Turns to reascend watched by STEWARD, turns again.

MORE

I shall miss you, Matthew.

STEWARD

(jocose)

No-o-o sir - you see through me sir; I know that.

MORE

I shall miss you Matthew. I shall miss you.

A moment of confrontation. MORE releases him by turning away. STEWARD, with wife, CLOSE SHOT, his face puzzled, shocked watches him. Then goes. So soon as they are out of sight:

73 INT. BUTLER'S ALCOVE

STEWARD

Now damn me isn't that them all over!

He hurls cap onto ground. His WIFE retrieves it. He takes it, absently.

Miss me? What's in me for him to miss?

He lectures WIFE, defensive, wordly-wise.

"Matthew, will you take a cut in your wages? No Sir Thomas I will not" - that's it.

Points warning finger at WIFE.

And that's all of it!

WIFE, a fan of MORE, afraid of her husband, looks at him dubious.
He reacts:

All right - so he's down on his luck - I'm
sorry! Don't mind saying that: I'm
sorry - bad luck! If I had any good luck to
spare he could have some! I wish we could
all have good luck all the time! I wish rain
water was beer! I wish we had wings! . . .
But we don't . . .

CUT

74 INT. MORE'S HOUSE BED CHAMBER

MORE enters his bedroom. ALICE sits there, sewing savagely.
He waits. She looks up.

ALICE

So there's an end of you. What will you
do now? Sit by the fire and making goslings
in the ash?

MORE

Not at all, Alice. I expect I'll write a
bit. I'll write, I'll read, I'll think. I
think I'll learn to fish! I'll play with my
grandchildren when son Roper's done his
duty. Alice - shall I teach you to read?

ALICE

No by God!

And now comes out with what preys deepest on her mind:

Poor silly man - d'you think they'll leave
you here to learn to fish?

MORE

If we govern our tongues they will!

It threatens to be a marital row. Curtly:

Look, I have a word to say about that. I
have made no statement. I've resigned, that's
all. The King is made by Act of Parliament
Supreme Head of the Church in England.
This English Church will first divorce him
from the Queen, then marry him to Lady Anne.

MORE (Cont)

But on any of these matters, have you heard me make a statement?

ALICE

No. And if I'm to lose my rank and fall to housekeeping I want to know the reason: so make a statement now.

MORE

No! Alice, it's a point of law. Accept it from me, Alice, that in silence is my safety under the law. But my silence must be absolute, it must extend to you.

ALICE

In short you don't trust me.

MORE

Look - I'm the Lord Chief Justice, I'm Cromwell, I'm the Keeper of the Tower and I take your hand and I clamp it on the Bible, on the Blessed Cross -

CLOSE SHOT, he takes a Bible and does so -

And I say: "Woman, has your husband made a statement on these matters?"
Now - on peril of your soul remember - what's your answer?

ALICE

No.

MORE

And so it must remain.

ALICE sews; he puts away the Bible. She speaks, softly.

ALICE

Have you opened your mind to Meg?

MORE

Would I tell Meg what I won't tell you?

ALICE

Meg has your heart. I know that well enough.

It is said sadly, but not resentfully. MORE is moved, but it is the truth. He stoops and kisses the coarse grey hair. She says anxiously:

ALICE

This is a dangerous matter then; if you haven't told Meg.

MORE

(comfortably)

I don't think so. No no - when they find I'm silent they'll ask nothing better than to leave me silent: you'll see.

CUT

75 EXT. HAMPTON COURTYARD SNOW

It is Winter but all that we can see is snow on pavement and ledges as in CLOSE TRACKING SHOT we cross a courtyard of Hampton with RICH. He is well clad now and has an air of modest consequence. He passes two officials with a little bow and they turn to look after him, heads together.

75A INT. HAMPTON STAIRS

He enters a small doorway and plunges up the dark stairs, pauses and listens at a door.

76 INT. CROMWELL'S NEW STUDY

A ROOM IN HAMPTON. CROMWELL seated at a table loaded with papers. NORFOLK seated in a carved chair, uneasy and exasperated CROMWELL is insultingly patient.

NORFOLK

But he's silent Mr Secretary - why not leave him silent?

CROMWELL

Not being a man of letters, Your Grace, you perhaps don't realize the extent of his reputation. This "silence" of his is bellowing up and down Europe! In Europe he is claimed as the King's enemy.

NORFOLK

Rubbish - Crank he may be: traitor he is not.

CROMWELL

Exactly. And with a little pressure -

Door opens at far end of room and RICH enters.

With a little pressure he can be got to say so. And that's what we need - a brief declaration of his loyalty to the present administration.

NORFOLK

I still say let sleeping dogs lie.

CROMWELL

The King does not agree with you.

NORFOLK flickers.

RICH looks at NORFOLK.

CROMWELL looks at NORFOLK.

He rallies:

NORFOLK

What kind of pressure do you think you can bring to bear?

CROMWELL

I have evidence that Sir Thomas, while he was a judge, accepted bribes.

NORFOLK

What?

Leaps up.

Goddammit he was the only judge since Cato who didn't accept bribes! When was there last a Chancellor whose possessions, after three years in office totalled one hundred pounds and a gold chain?

CROMWELL

Richard.

RICH goes to door. CROMWELL sits back.

It is as you imply common practice, but a

CROMWELL (Cont)

practice may be common and remain an offence; this offence could send a man to the tower.

RICH admits WOMAN (Averil Machin)

Come here.

She comes forward.

This woman's name is Averil Machin; she comes from Leicester. She entered a case in the Court of Requests in -

Consults papers.

WOMAN

A property case it was.

CROMWELL

(mildly)

Shut your mouth. A property case in the Court of Requests in April 1526.

WOMAN

And got a wicked false judgement!

CROMWELL

And got an impeccably correct judgement from our friend Sir Thomas.

WOMAN

No sir, it was not!

CROMWELL

Tell this gentleman about the gift you gave the judge. The judgement for what it's worth, was the right one.

WOMAN

No sir - !

CROMWELL looks at her. She falters.

Well not to my thinking . . .

(then with eager venom, to Norfolk)

I gave him a cup sir; an Italian silver cup
I bought in Leicester for a hundred shillings.

NORFOLK

Did Sir Thomas accept this cup?

WOMAN

He did sir.

CROMWELL

He did, we can corroborate that. You can go.

She wants to linger and explain her case.

Go!

RICH takes her to the door and returns, while NORFOLK, scornfully:

NORFOLK

Is that your witness?

CROMWELL

No; by an odd coincidence this cup later came into the hands of Master Rich here.

NORFOLK

How?

RICH

He gave it to me, Your Grace.

NORFOLK

Gave it to you? Why?

RICH looks fleetingly awkward; then, an off-hand shrug.

RICH

A gift.

NORFOLK

Oh ... Oh yes ... Yes, you were a "friend" weren't you?

Looks RICH up and down as though he were a faulty animal. RICH looks down.

When did Thomas give you this thing?

RICH

I don't exactly remember, Your Grace.

NORFOLK begins to be suspicious.

NORFOLK

D'you "remember" what you did with it?

RICH

I sold it.

NORFOLK

Where?

RICH

A shop.

NORFOLK

Has the shop still got it?

RICH

No. They've lost track of it.

NORFOLK

How convenient.

CROMWELL has watched RICH's discomfiture, NORFOLK's bullying with some enjoyment.

CROMWELL

You doubt Master Rich's word, Your Grace?

NORFOLK

It had occurred to me.

CROMWELL

This is the Bill of Sale.

NORFOLK

Oh.

CROMWELL, satisfied, lays down the paper. With extraordinary agility for so hefty a man, NORFOLK grabs it. Then, frowning, he labours over reading it, breathing hard; we realize that he is barely literate. Then:

NORFOLK

That cow put her case into court in April 26, you said. That is dated May.

He replaces the bill on the table.

In other words, the moment Thomas knew this cup was a bribe, he dropped it into the nearest ...

He looks at RICH.

NORFOLK (Cont)

... gutter.

RICH looks venomous, CROMWELL laughs.

CROMWELL

The facts will bear that interpretation,
I suppose.

NORFOLK guffaws, expands, gets up, triumphant.

NORFOLK

Oh this is a horse that won't run, Master
Secretary.

CROMWELL

Just a trial gallop Your Grace: we'll find
something better.

He stands, too. NORFOLK's grin fades. He looks unhappy and
grunts again.

NORFOLK

Well - I want no part of it.

CROMWELL

You have no choice.

NORFOLK

(incredulous)

What's that you say?

CROMWELL

The King -

NORFOLK's aggressive fury freezes on his face.

The King particularly wishes you to be
active in this matter of Sir Thomas.

NORFOLK

He has not told me that.

CROMWELL

Indeed? He told me.

NORFOLK

(appealing)

Look here, Cromwell, what's the purpose of all this?

CROMWELL

(pleasantly)

Now there you have me. It's a "matter of conscience" I think. The Kings wants Sir Thomas to bless his marriage. If Sir Thomas attended the wedding now it might save us all a lot of trouble.

He is escorting NORFOLK out. NORFOLK shakes his head, gloomy.

NORFOLK

He won't.

CROMWELL

If I were you I should try to persuade him.

NORFOLK blinks, can hardly believe his ears which have registered menace from this upstart.

CROMWELL

I really would try, if I were you.

NORFOLK

Cromwell, are you threatening me?

CROMWELL

My dear Norfolk, this isn't Spain -

He spreads his hands, jocose:

This is England!

CUT

77 EXT. BELL-TOWER

ANGLING UPWARDS. BELL-ROPES, garlanded with green and white, leap up and down like dancers. ON SOUND the bells crash out.

ANGLING DOWNWARDS. THE BELL-RINGERS pull frenziedly; barrels of beer and tankards about them, a fresh relay of ringers ready. Everyone wearing green and white favours.

CUT

78 INT. BOLLEYN'S MANOR HOUSE HALL

CHURCH BELLS continuous but now more distant, and overlain by cheering. HENRY, dressed in green and ANNE dressed in white, backs to CAMERA at an open window, HENRY raising a golden tankard to the unseen crowd outside. He turns to us, leading ANNE to a seat at a table, festooned in green and white. SERVANTS wearing green and white favours shut the window, so that bells and cheering are overlain by music; applause. HENRY raises tankard to guests.

MEDIUM SHOT A representative sample of GUESTS, looking up at him, clapping, all wearing green and white favours.

HENRY, smiling. Suddenly sees something over their heads. Looks eager.

MEDIUM LONG SHOT what he has seen: A group of OFFICIALS, along them, back towards us, MORE.

HENRY descends from dais. TRACKING shot, with mounting interest he advances swiftly, not heeding the bowing and curtseying GUESTS.

HIS POV The group of OFFICIALS. They become aware of his approach; MORE, the last. His attention is drawn by one of the others, he is turning.

The KING, delighted, only about fifteen feet away now.

KING

Thomas - !

MORE turns. It is not MORE at all but some quite different man of similar physique.

The KING checks, looks deeply chagrined.

The OFFICIALS, puzzled, bow.

The KING returns the bow mechanically, turns on his heel.

ANNE is watching, nervously. He joins her. Sits in his chair looking gloomy and dangerous. She doesn't know what to do. The bells peel out ON SOUND.

DISSOLVE

79 EXT. RIVERSIDE NEAR MORE'S HOUSE WITH REEDS

The screen is full of windblown Autumn reeds, scarlet, gold and brown. ON SOUND, Autumnal wind, and heavy breathing, with splashing feet, the swish and crunch of sickles. MARGARET and ROPER, intent, bent low, work onto frame MARGARET slightly ahead; it is a race. MARGARET more absorbed than ROPER. Both reach simultaneously for a bunch of reeds with their left hands, sickles poised in right.

CLOSE SHOT, their flushed faces, ROPER amused, but MARGARET:

MARGARET

Mine.

ROPER straightens, looks down fondly as she vigorously sickles it and straightens.

They retrace their steps through the shallows to the bank, add each his own harvest to two separate piles. MARGARET's twice the size of ROPER's. Now she smiles:

MARGARET

Well?

ROPER

Monstrous, I married a woodcutter.

He throws his heap onto hers and slips a rope round. Straightens. She looks at him.

ROPER

Oh winner take all. And carry it.

She accepts the challenge, stoops and struggles. Instantly:

ROPER

No!

He lifts the bundle with one arm. She looks at him pleased. Pleased in turn he lifts her with the other arm, her face now level with his

CLOSE SHOT, the young married pair, flushed and healthy, face to face.

MARGARET

Strong Will ... Good Will ... Good, good Will ...

And gently takes his face in her hands and kisses him. He puts her

down, and in the instant both become aware of something, off, their faces alert. On sound, hoofbeats.

Their POV, a horseman, not galloping madly but at the canter, speeds past them at a distance, the river flashing behind him.

They look at one another, not quite alarmed, yet alert. ROPER drops the reeds; they run, barefoot.

80 INT. MORE'S HOUSE GREAT HALL

MESSENGER enters hesitantly, holding letter. With him we mark the signs of downfall, the very small fire in the baronial fireplace, the table stripped of silver its bare oak clean, the carpets gone, the tapestries gone, all quiet, stripped, empty. His footsteps echo as he traverses the house, meeting at the rear:

MARGARET and ROPER, breathless from running. They don't look like the scions of a distinguished house. MESSENGER uncertain.

MESSENGER

Lady Margaret?

MARGARET

Yes?

His glance falls quizzically, a little embarrassedly on the sickles she holds.

MARGARET

We've been cutting reeds.

She hands them to ROPER and in answer to his continuing uncertainty says straightforwardly:

We use them for fuel.

She is effortlessly Lady Margaret, despite her rough warm clothes and peasant vigour. He bows a little, produces the letter Formal.

MESSENGER

I have a letter for your father, Lady Margaret.
From Hampton Court.

She looks at him, fear showing.

He is to answer certain . . . charges . .
Before Secretary Cromwell

CUT

81 INT. HAMPTON CROMWELL'S NEW STUDY

CLOSE SHOT The brutal, clever face of CROMWELL, ready for the fray.

CROMWELL

Good of you to come, Sir Thomas. Master Rich will make a record of our conversation.

MORE

Good of you to tell me, Master Secretary.

CROMWELL laughs pleasantly, looks at:

RICH ready to write.

CROMWELL

I think you know one another?

MORE

Indeed yes, we're old friends. That's a nice gown you have, Richard.

RICH has the grace to look uncomfortable.

CROMWELL

Believe me Sir Thomas - no that's asking too much - but let me tell you all the same, you have no more sincere admirer than myself.

RICH prepares to write.

Not yet, Rich, not yet.

He invites MORE to join him in laughing at RICH.

MORE

If I might hear the charges.

CROMWELL

Charges?

MORE

I understand there are certain charges.

CROMWELL

Some ambiguities of behaviour I should like to clarify - hardly 'charges'.

MORE

Make a note of that, will you Master Rich?
There are no charges.

CROMWELL laughs admiringly and shakes his head.

CROMWELL

Sir Thomas, Sir Thomas . . .

His smile fades, sadly, as one reluctantly compelled to broach a painful subject.

The King is not pleased with you.

MORE

I am grieved.

CROMWELL

Yet do you know that even now, if you could bring yourself to agree with the Church, the Universities, the Lords and the Commons, there is no honour which the King would be likely to deny you?

MORE

I am well acquainted with His Grace's generosity.

CROMWELL

(disapproves. Sighs again)

Very well. You have heard of the so-called "Holy Maid of Kent" - she who was executed for prophesying against the King?

MORE

Oh yes; I met her.

CROMWELL

Just so, you met her. Yet you did not warn His Majesty of her treason. How was that?

MORE

She spoke no treason. Our talk was not political.

CROMWELL

My dear More, the woman was notorious. Do you expect me to believe that?

MORE

Happily there were witnesses.

CROMWELL consults paper.

CROMWELL

You wrote a letter to her.

MORE

Yes, I wrote advising her to abstain from meddling in affairs of State. I have a copy of this letter - also witnessed.

CROMWELL

You have been cautious.

MORE

I like to keep my affairs regular.

CROMWELL puts down paper, picks up a small book. He opens it, glancing at the fly:

CROMWELL

Sir Thomas, in the May of 1526 the King published a book

(permits himself superior smile of an intellectual for the work of an amateur)

a theological work. It was called "A Defence of the Seven Sacraments."

MORE

Yes. For which he was named "Defender of the Faith" by His Holiness the Pope.

CROMWELL

- By the Bishop of Rome. Or do you insist on "Pope"?

MORE

No. "Bishop of Rome" if you like. It doesn't alter his authority.

CROMWELL looks surprised, amused, pleased.

CROMWELL

Thank you. You come to the point very readily; what is that authority? As regards the Church in England, for example, what exactly is the Bishop of Rome's authority?

TWO SHOT MORE and CROMWELL A tense confrontation. Then:

MORE

You will find it very ably set out and defended,
Master Secretary, in the King's Book.

CROMWELL drops the book, saying:

CROMWELL

The Book published under the King's name
would be more accurate. You wrote that
book.

MORE

- I wrote no part of it.

CROMWELL

- I do not mean you actually held the pen.

MORE

- I answered to my best ability some points
of common law which the King put to me.
As I was bound to do.

CROMWELL

- Do you deny that you instigated it?

MORE

- It was from first to last the King's own
project.

CROMWELL

- The King says not.

MORE thinks this out. Then:

MORE

The King knows the truth of it. And what-
ever he may have said to you, he will not
give evidence to support this accusation.

CROMWELL

Why not?

MORE

Because evidence is given on oath, and he
will not perjure himself. If you don't know
that, you don't yet know him.

THREE SHOT RICH again.

MORE smiles at CROMWELL, proud of the KING. CROMWELL glowers. He goes apart. Formal.

CROMWELL

Sir Thomas More, is there anything you wish to say to me concerning the King's marriage with Lady Anne?

MORE

I understood I was not to be asked that again.

CROMWELL

Evidently you understood wrongly. These charges -

MORE

They are terrors for children, Master Secretary, not for me!

CROMWELL

Then know that the King commands me to charge you in his name with great ingratitude! And to tell you that there never was nor could be so villainous a servant nor so traitorous a subject as yourself!

MORE

So I am brought here at last.

CROMWELL

(contemptuous)

Brought? You brought yourself to where you stand now.

He flings himself into his seat.

You may go home.

MORE rises, goes.

CLOSE SHOT, CROMWELL adds:

For the present.

MORE checks at the door, and goes.

Instantly, CROMWELL's immobility deserts him. He takes a heavy paper from the table, rising, saying:

CROMWELL

Right.

RICH is at his back, prepared, throws a heavy cloak over CROMWELL's shoulders. CROMWELL going.

CUT

82 EXT. HAMPTON RIVER-STEPS NIGHT

Heavy rain. MORE, his garments wet, stands on the bank and calls:

MORE

Boat!

His POV, the flickering torches of the "cab-rank".

Boat ... ?

CLOSE SHOT The BOATMAN huddled under a sack. MORE's voice comes distantly. He looks out. The voice comes again. Other BOATMEN look out from under their shelter. They look at one another. BOATMAN seizes his torch, plunges it in the river, pulls sack over his head again.

MORE as before. With him we see the torches extinguished.

MORE is worried. He says, without much conviction to himself:

MORE

Oh come along ... It's not as bad as that!

His head turns sharply.

A shadowy figure, walking close to the wall, approaches.

It is NORFOLK.

MORE is pleased.

MORE

Howard ... !

(comic indignation)

I can't get home. They won't bring me a boat.

NORFOLK serious and aggressive.

NORFOLK

D'you blame them!

MORE

Is it as bad as that?

NORFOLK

It's every bit as bad as that!

MORE

Then it's good of you to be seen with me.

NORFOLK looks uneasily back along the towpath, saying:

NORFOLK

I followed you.

MORE follows his glance, seeing:

The rain-wet, puddled towpath. Some distance away, a rowing boat upended, leaning against the wall.

MORE

(incredulous)

Were you followed?

NORFOLK looks about him, picks up a big stone, hurls it:

It bounces, echoing, leaps and strikes the boat. A moment's pause. A figure darts out and scuttles away ratlike into the darkness.

MORE, ~~horrified~~, confronts NORFOLK, who nods, grimly.

NORFOLK

Thomas. You're dangerous to know!

MORE

Then don't know me.

NORFOLK

I do know you!

MORE

I mean as a friend.

NORFOLK

I am your friend! I wish I wasn't but I am!

MORE

What's to be done, then?

NORFOLK

Give in.

He puts a hand on MORE's arm. Gently, MORE removes it.

MORE

I can't give in, Howard.

(smiles)

Our friendship's more mutable than that.

NORFOLK

Oh that's immutable is it? The one fixed point in a world of turning friendship, is that Thomas More will not give in!

MORE

(urgent to explain)

To me it has to be, for that's myself! Affection goes as deep in me as you I think, but only God is love right through; Howard, and that's my self.

NORFOLK

And who are you?

He walks away a few paces, and looks MORE up and down.

A lawyer! And a lawyer's son! We're supposed to be the arrogant ones, the proud, splenetic ones - and we've all given in! Why must you stand out? Goddammit man, it's disproportionate!

(quick and quiet)

You'll break my heart.

MORE is moved. He goes to NORFOLK and takes his hand.

MORE

No-one's safe Howard, and you have a son.
We'll end our friendship now.

NORFOLK

For friendship's sake?

MORE

Yes.

NORFOLK is tempted. But he throws away MORE's hand and says gloomily:

NORFOLK

Daft!

MORE looks at him affectionately. Walks away, puts his hands behind his back and says loudly:

MORE

Norfolk you're a fool!

The insult produces an automatic reflex. But then NORFOLK folds his arms, snorts.

NORFOLK

You can't place a quarrel Thomas, you haven't the style.

MORE

Hear me out. You and your class have given in - as you rightly call it - because the religion of this country means nothing to you one way or the other.

NORFOLK

Well that's a foolish saying for a start. The nobility of England -

MORE

The nobility of England my lord would have snored through the Sermon on the Mount!
But you'll labour like scholars, at a bull-dog's pedigree.

NORFOLK begins to breathe hard, but:

NORFOLK

An artificial quarrel's not a quarrel.

MORE

We've had a quarrel since the day we met.
Our friendship was mere sloth.

NORFOLK

You can be cruel when you've a mind to be,
but I've always known that.

MORE

What d'you value in your bulldogs?
Gripping, is it not?

NORFOLK glowers, suspicious, not knowing where the conversation is going now. Sharply. jeering.

Eh?

NORFOLK

Yes!

MORE

That's their nature?

NORFOLK

Yes!

MORE

And that s why you breed them?

NORFOLK

Yes!

MORE

It's so with men I will not give in because
I oppose it - not my pride, not my spleen,
nor any other of my appetites but I do, I.

He goes up to NORFOLK and begins prodding him offensively, and NORFOLK's temper begins to go.

Is there nowhere in the midst of all this
muscle, one single sinew which serves no
appetite of Norfolk's but is. just Norfolk?
There is! Give that some exercise my lord!

NORFOLK

(dangerous)

Thomas -

MORE

For as you stand you'll go before your
Maker ill-conditioned!

NORFOLK

Now steady, Thomas -

MORE

And he'll think that somewhere back
along your pedigree -

He pauses, glances apprehensively at his powerful friend, and says:

a bitch got over the wall!

NORFOLK simply can't take it in for a beat. Then galvanically lashes out. MORE ducks without dignity. They freeze thus, MORE down in the wet looking up fearfully at NORFOLK, enormous and splendid. Then NORFOLK turns. We hear his receding footsteps, as MORE rises, shakily, looking sadly after him. Turns, wrapping his cloak about him, sets off along the towpath.

CUT

83 INT. HOUSE OF COMMONS NIGHT

CROMWELL walks swiftly along an obscure brick passage, still carrying the heavy paper, throwing off his rainsoaked cloak, thrusts open an unimportant looking door and is in:

The House of Commons in session. An OLD MAN is on his feet, his thin voice, echoing under the vault. The Knights and Burgesses barely heed him, and in any case it is CROMWELL they are waiting for. His quiet entry draws attention, makes them sit up and whisper. OLD MAN falters to silence, thus:

OLD MAN

(rhubarb speech as required,
partly audible)

... in consequence of which decay of Guilds,
the rough wool coming out of my own County of
Yorkshire is now notably amiss, to the great
mislike of foreign merchants. The prosperity
of England ...

He, last of all, sees CROMWELL, sitting nearby, all eyes on him, looking blankly at OLD MAN who:

OLD MAN

... I will defer the rest of my matter till ...

And sits. CROMWELL looks to SPEAKER. SPEAKER nods. CROMWELL rises.

CROMWELL

That the loyal Commons here assembled will speedily enact this Bill I doubt not, forasmuch as it concerns the King's New Title and his marriage with Queen Anne. Both matters pleasing to a loyal subject.

He looks up. Hasty murmur of approbation. He nods, infuses an undertone of stern indignation into his voice:

But, my masters, we have among us a sort of hypocrite; a brood of paradoxical cheats; discreet traitors and -

DISSOLVE back to MORE on towpath commences.

- as it were rebels in moderation. The which deceit the King can brook no longer! And we, his loyal huntsmen must now drive these subtle foxes from their cover ...

84 EXT. TOWPATH NEAR MORE'S HOUSE NIGHT

The rain has stopped. MORE steps doggedly along the towpath, country now, wet trees glistening about him, the banks grassy.

MEDIUM CLOSE SHOT. Where the footpath runs at the river's brink, the water swollen with rain, tide and current together, wrenches at the roots of the hazels, mines the soft clay banks.

MORE plods on.

85 EXT. GARDEN GATE MORE'S HOUSE NIGHT

CLOSE TRACKING SHOT MARGARET leaves a garden gate set in a high wall, a hood over her head, emerging onto the same path. She looks along it.

Her POV the footpath, empty.

She sets off, moving opposite on screen to MORE's progression.

86 EXT. TOWPATH NEAR MORE'S HOUSE NIGHT

CLOSE TRACKING SHOT; MORE He stops and listens. Looks:

His POV the path bends sharply a few feet in front of him.
MAGARET comes round the bend.

MORE

Margaret! . . . I couldn't get a boat.
(frowns at her agitation)
What is it, Meg?

With which, he takes her arm and they walk on in tracking shot, the river running by their feet, its busy gurgle running under their talk.

MARGARET

There's a new Act going through Parliament.
Giles Cooper's ridden out to tell us.

MORE

Oh?

He is more interested than alarmed, puzzled by her pent-up concern.
She nods.

MARGARET

Father, by this Act they're going to
administer an oath; about the Marriage.

MORE stops.

MORE

(steadily)
On what compulsion is the oath?

MARGARET

High Treason.

A heavy slice of clay bank falls with soft finality into the incessantly working river.

MORE

What's the wording?

MARGARET

Do the words matter? We know what it will
mean.

MORE

It will mean what the words say, Meg. An oath is made of words. It may be possible to take it.

Sets off again.

MARGARET

(wondering)

Take it?

MORE

Yes. And if it can be taken, you must take it too.

MARGARET

But no!

MORE looks at her, likes what he sees; he puts a hand on her shoulder.

MORE

Now listen. Meg. God made the angels to show him splendour. As he made animals for

Gives her a little shake, smiling dryly.

Innocence, and

Another shake.

Plants, for their simplicity. But Man he made to serve him wittily, in the tangle of his mind

So far it has been a lesson, now he talks to himself, rehearsing something long thought about.

If God suffers us to come to such a case that there is no escaping, then we must stand to our tackle as best we can . . .

He stops, looking over the river, she looking up at him.

And yes, then we can clamour from the housetops - if we have the spittle for it. But it's God's part, not our own - to bring ourselves to such a pass. Our natural business lies, in escaping . . .

His POV, the river A crackling white moon sails out of the clouds and makes it beautiful ON SOUND, over:

MORE

If I can take this oath, I will.

CUT

87 INT. TOWER CELL AND CORRIDOR

SUNLIGHT streams dazzlingly through a barred window. On SOUND a door slams shut

REVERSE. The open door of the cell. ON SOUND many footsteps approach A JAILER enters with a parcel of books and other oddments and a bundle of clothes He dumps both on table, withdraws into the corridor, standing back for LIEUTENANT, SOLIDER, MORE. He enters. Stops. Takes in what he sees. They watch, curiously. He says.

MORE

Thank you, Lieutenant.

He advances into the room They look at him still, silent in the doorway. MORE turns and says a bit sharply:

Thank you.

The LIEUTENANT, embarrassed, stands back. The heavy door shuts, quietly MORE, fighting his feelings, forces himself to an inspection of his new surroundings:

The cell, his POV. It is quite large, there is a window, and its only furnishing is the table, a chair, a rough bed, straw on the floor.

MORE looks at the one bright thing - the sunlit window

He disciplines himself, carefully untying his books He hears a bird fly up to its nest outside the window with a whirr of wings, its shadow radiating in the beam of light, and MORE, attracted, hears the chirruping of nestlings He leaves his books, galvanically strides to the window Too high He drags the chair across, stands on it, grows still, his hands gripping the stone ledge, his face intent with fierce longing as he looks down at:

88 EXT SMALL COURT IN TOWER

A tiny courtyard within the Tower A tree in blossom A young man - a gardener perhaps, a young WOMAN seated near him, sewing He

88 Continued

looks about, goes cautiously and kisses her. She pushes him away, contentedly.

DISSOLVE

89 EXT. SMALL COURT IN TOWER

The same. The tree bears apples now. The young WCMAN reaches up to pluck them. The YOUNG MAN goes, expostulates, leads her to the bench. We see that she is hugely pregnant. The YOUNG MAN goes and picks an apple for her.

DISSOLVE

90 EXT. SMALL COURT IN TOWER NIGHT

The same. Bright moonlight. Hard Winter. The courtyard snowy, the tree ablaze with frost and ice. On SOUND rough music of a rough instrument and laughter. CAMERA PANS to a warmlit window. A baby cries. The music stops, The baby cries again.

CUT

91 INT. TOWER CELL AND CORRIDOR

The cell door crashes open. LIEUTENANT and JAILOR who bears a light.

LIEUTENANT

Sir Thomas!

In the spill of the light MORE rouses from the bed. He is aged. He blinks up at them.

MORE

Oh this is iniquitous!

He pushes back the covers. The LIEUTENANT hastens to bring his shoes as MORE, stiffly and painfully sits up.

MORE

Where this time?

LIEUTENANT

Richmond Palace.

CUT

92 INT. RICHMOND, A LONG CORRIDOR NIGHT

ON SOUND, exquisite music, exquisitely played. MORE, LIEUTENANT, JAILER, PALACE GUARD turn into its far end. As they approach we TRACK with them, the music getting louder. We pass a great door, which opens as a young COURTIER comes out, a bit drunk, and in the sudden burst of music and jollity we glimpse the leaping figures of extravagantly dressed DANCERS. We pass on, the door shutting on the din and silently proceed towards a door at the far end of the corridor.

CUT

93 INT. RICHMOND INTERROGATION CHAMBER

In a fine panelled room, CROMWELL and ARCHBISHOP sit ranged at a table. Behind them, RICH at a small table. NORFOLK warming his backside at a fire. He clears his throat, turns and spits into it. No one speaks. CROMWELL looks savage. ARCHBISHOP cracking the joints of his knuckles. The atmosphere tense and jumpy. It is a relief to them all when (ON SOUND) door opens. NORFOLK takes the vacant chair between CROMWELL and ARCHBISHOP, saying curtly:

NORFOLK

Sit down.

MORE sits on rough bench facing his interrogators. Smiles faintly at NORFOLK.

NORFOLK glowers uncomfortably. Bursts out grimly:

NORFOLK

This is a perilous game you're playing, Thomas.
The Anger of the King is Death!

MORE looks back very seriously:

MORE

If our lives depend on the King's good humour,
none of us is likely to die in his bed.

It is a definite prognostication and too probable. REACTION SHOT, the three Interrogators. NORFOLK clears his throat and formally:

NORFOLK

This is the Seventh Commission appointed
to Enquire into the Case of Sir Thomas More,
appointed by His Majesty's council. Have you
anything to say?

93 Continued

MORE

No.

CROMWELL leans forward, holding out a document of many leaves,

CROMWELL

You have seen this before?

MORE looks away.

MORE

Many times.

CROMWELL

It is the Act of Succession. These are the names of those who have sworn on oath to it.

MORE

I have, as you say, seen it before.

CROMWELL

Will you swear to it?

MORE

No.

NORFOLK

Thomas, we must know plainly -

CROMWELL throws down the paper in exasperation at the interruption. NORFOLK breaks off and glares at him. CROMWELL spreads his hands with mock deference, sighs and rests his head in them.

NORFOLK

We must know plainly whether you recognize the offspring of Queen Anne as heirs to the throne.

MORE

The King in Parliament tells me that they are. Of course I recognize them.

NORFOLK

Will you swear that you do?

MORE

Yes.

NORFOLK

Then why won't he swear to the Act?

93 Continued

CROMWELL

Because there is more than that in the Act.

ARCHBISHOP

Just so. Sir Thomas, it states in the preamble that the King's former marriage, to the Lady Catherine, was unlawful, she being his brother's widow and the "Pope" having no authority to sanction it. Is that what you deny?

MORE looks at him expressionlessly. ARCHBISHOP smiles.

ARCHBISHOP

Is that what you dispute?

MORE as before.

Is that what you are not sure of?

MORE as before. ARCHBISHOP looks at NORFOLK smiling but displeased.

NORFOLK

Thomas you insult the King and his Council in the person of the Lord Archbishop!

MORE

I insult no-one. I will not take the oath. I will not tell you why I will not.

NORFOLK

Then your reasons must be treasonable.

MORE

Not "must be", may be.

NORFOLK

It's a fair assumption!

93 Continued

MORE

The law requires more than an assumption;
the law requires a fact.

ARCHBISHOP

Ah; well I cannot judge your legal standing in
the case of course; but until I know the ground
of your objections, I can only guess your
spiritual standing too.

CLOSE SHOT MORE for a second affronted. Then humour overtakes
him.

MORE

If you're willing to guess that, Your Grace, it should be a small matter to guess my objections.

CROMWELL looks up sharply:

CROMWELL

You do have objections to the Act?

NORFOLK

Well, we know that, Cromwell!

MORE

You don't my lord. You may suppose I have objections, all you know is that I will not swear to it, for which you cannot lawfully harm me further. But if you were right in supposing me to have objections and right again in supposing my objections to be treasonable, the law would let you cut my head off.

NORFOLK

Oh. Yes.

CROMWELL

Well done Sir Thomas. I've been trying to make that clear to his Grace for some time.

NORFOLK

Oh confound all this ...! I'm not a scholar and I don't know whether the marriage was lawful or not. But damn it, Thomas, look at these names ...

He seizes the Act.

Can't you do what I did, and come with us for fellowship?

MORE

And when we die, and you are sent to Heaven for doing your conscience and I am sent to Hell for not doing mine, will you come with me, for fellowship?

ARCHBISHOP looks up, shrill:

ARCHBISHOP

So those of us whose names are there
are damned, Sir Thomas?

MORE

I have no window to look into another
man's conscience. I condemn no-one.

ARCHBISHOP

Then the matter is capable of question?

MORE

Certainly.

ARCHBISHOP

But that you owe obedience to your King
is not capable of question. So weigh a
doubt against a certainty and sign.

All three EXAMINERS look at him. He seems to be trapped.

MORE

Some men think the Earth is round, others
think it flat; it is a matter capable of
question. But if it's flat, will the King's
command make it round? And if it is round,
will the King's command flatten it? No I
will not sign.

CROMWELL

Then you more regard your own doubt
than his command?

MORE

For myself I have no doubt.

CROMWELL

No doubt of what?

MORE

No doubt that I will not take this oath. But
why I will not, you Mr Secretary will not
trick out of me.

CROMWELL

(flushes)

I might get it out of you, in other ways.

MORE

You threaten like a dockside bully.

CROMWELL

How should I threaten?

MORE

Like a Minister of State, with justice!

CROMWELL

Oh justice is what you're threatened with.

MORE

Then I'm not threatened. Gentlemen, can't I go to bed.

NORFOLK

I think the prisoner may retire as he requests. Unless you - ?

ARCHBISHOP

I see no purpose in prolonging this.

NORFOLK

Then good-night, Thomas.

MORE gets up. Hesitates.

MORE

May I have one or two more books?

CROMWELL

You have books?

MORE

Yes.

CROMWELL

I didn't know; you shouldn't have.

MORE goes towards door. At the door turns.

MORE

May I see my family?

CROMWELL

No.

As MORE goes out with GUARD and LIEUTENANT.

CROMWELL

Lieutenant!

LIEUTENANT returns.

LIEUTENANT

Master Secretary?

CROMWELL

Have you ever heard the prisoner speak of the King's divorce, the King's Supremacy, or the King's marriage?

LIEUTENANT

No, Master Secretary, not a word.

CROMWELL

If he does, you will repeat it to me.

LIEUTENANT

(coldly)

Of course.

He goes. SOUND: NORFOLK is going, struggling into his surcoat, hears ON

CROMWELL

Rich.

RICH

Secretary?

CROMWELL

Tomorrow morning remove the prisoner's books.

NORFOLK

Is that necessary?

CROMWELL looks up from gathering together his papers. His face is strained and white.

CROMWELL

Norfolk, with regards this case, the King is becoming impatient.

NORFOLK

Aye. With you.

CROMWELL

With all of us, Norfolk. The King's impatience will embrace a Duke or two.

NORFOLK goes out, slamming the door.

RICH looks up from his little table. ARCHBISHOP leaves behind him.
On which:

RICH

Secretary ...

CROMWELL

(abstracted)

Well?

TWO SHOT - RICH, diffidently excited and CROMWELL.

RICH

Sir Redvers Llewellyn has retired.

CROMWELL

Mm ... ?

RICH

The Attorney General for Wales. His post
is vacant.

(rises and approaches)

You said I might approach you.

CROMWELL

Oh not now, Rich!

He fingers the act, musing, almost absently:

He must submit, Rich ... He must.

RICH, standing by him now, quietly and flatly:

RICH

Rack him.

CROMWELL looks up, amused at this puppyish exponent of realpolitik,
then shakes his head, serious:

CROMWELL

No. The King's

(contemptuous)

conscience will not permit it ... No, we
have to find - some gentler way ...

CUT

94 EXT. TOWPATH NEAR TOWER

Bright sunshine. ALICE, carrying a basket, MARGARET and ROPER, looking anxiously eager, hurry along a stone towpath by the river, watched by idlers, passed by strollers, and an occasional man on horseback, an inconspicuous little family group. City noises ON SOUND.

95 EXT. TOWER

They present a paper to a KEEPER at a gate in a high stone wall, and are admitted.

96 EXT. TOWER PRECINCTS

They hurry along the foot of the high stone wall. Present the paper again, and are admitted to:

97 INT. GUARDROOM

They are passed through to:

98 INT. LIEUTENANT'S OFFICE

He rises at once, expecting them, and conducts them:

99 INT. TOWER CORRIDOR

OUT and along a stone corridor, getting dark now, no sounds. The JAILER is waiting and falls in with them.

CLOSE SHOTS ALICE and MARGARET exchange glances. MARGARET takes her mother's arm.

100 INT. TORTURE-CHAMBER

JAILER opens a door. They descend steps after the LIEUTENANT who is walking quickly so that they are halfway through the vaulted stone-walled room before they understand the significance of the quaint-looking iron machine and realize that they are in the torture-chamber.

CLOSE SHOT ROPER, horrified.

A mild-looking man, presumably the TORTURER, half-way through his lunch, rises and sits as the LIEUTENANT passes, looking curiously after:

The MORE FAIMLY follows through a little door into:

101 INT. VERY ROUGH STONE PASSAGE

Walls and floor uneven, dark and damp.

TRACKING SHOT Their stiffened faces.

102 INT. SPIRAL STAIR AND DOOR

They descend, the stonework now completely primitive and glistening.

Taking them by surprise, JAILER unlocks and throws open an inconspicuous door. LIEUTENANT steps in and they hear:

LIEUTENANT

Sir Thomas! Your family's here!

103 MORE'S NEW CELL

In the cell, MORE, wild-eyed with shock, scrambles to his feet.

MORE

Meg?

She runs to him. He grips her fiercely.

Meg, Meg ...

His expression changes to one of pure horror.

For God's sake Meg, they've not put you in here?

JAILER

(benevolent)

No sir, a visit.

LIEUTENANT

(warningly)

A brief one, Sir Thomas.

JAILER and LIEUTENANT go. ALICE and ROPER enter. MORE lets go of MARGARET, embraces ALICE. ON SOUND door shuts.

ALICE

Good Morning, husband.

MORE

Oh Good Morning, Good Morning.

He swings her solid body to and fro, blinking. Lets her go.

MORE

Good Morning, Will.

ROPER

(shaken)

This is a . . . hellish place!

MORE

Except it's keeping me from you my dears,
it's not so bad. Remarkably like any other
place.

ALICE

(critically)

It drips!

MORE

Yes. Too near the river.

He is frantic with excitement and delight. But now he grows still
and his expression alters as he sees:

His family huddled together, scared and guilty. He tries a smile,
and:

MORE

What's the matter?

MARGARET

Father come out! Swear to the Act and
come out!

MORE

Is this why they let you come?

MARGARET

Yes.

MORE

Oh.

ROPER (ON SOUND over)

Meg's under oath to persuade you.

MORE sits at the table. This, not torture, is what he has most
feared; now he must meet it. He tilts his head to look at
MARGARET as she sits by him.

MARGARET

Father. "God more regards the thoughts of the heart than the words of the mouth" - or so you've always told me.

MORE

Yes.

MARGARET

Then say the words of the oath and in your heart think otherwise.

MORE

What is an oath then, but words we say to God? Listen Meg ... my Meg ... When a man takes an oath he's holding his own self in his own hands.

CLOSE SHOT He cups his hands.

Like water. And if he opens his fingers then -

CLOSE SHOT - his fingers fly apart.

- he needn't hope to find himself again.

TWO SHOT MORE & MARGARET as before.

Some men aren't capable of this, but I'd be loath to think your father one of them.

MARGARET looks at him, loving him. Resists the temptation to respond to his pleading smile.

MARGARET

I have another argument.

MORE

(reproachful)

Oh Meg ...

MARGARET

(her tone is syllogistic)

In any State that was half good you would be raised up high, not here, for what you've done already.

MORE

All right.

MARGARET

It's not your fault the State's three-quarters bad.

MORE

No.

MARGARET

Then if you elect to suffer for it, you elect yourself a hero.

MORE

That's very neat. But look now . . . if we lived in a State where virtue was profitable common sense would make us saintly. But since we see that avarice, anger, lust, greed, pride and stupidity, commonly profit far beyond charity, chastity, modesty, patience and thought . . . perhaps we must stand fast a little. Even at the risk of being heroes.

MARGARET

But in reason! Haven't you done as much as God can reasonably want?

MORE

Well finally it isn't a matter of reason. Finally it's a matter of love.

ALICE flares across the cell.

ALICE

You're content then to be shut up here with mice and rats when you might be home with us?

MORE

(horrified)

Content? If they'd open a crack that wide -
(he holds up a finger
and thumb)

I'd be through it like a bird, and back to Chelsea.

His gaze falls back on the bent head of his daughter. He strokes it.

Well. Has Eve run out of apples?

MARGARET

I've not yet told you what the house is like without you.

MORE snatches away his hand. Looks grim. Sharply:

MORE

Don't,, Meg.

MARGARET

What we do in the evening, now that you're not there.

MORE

Meg have done!

He rises.

MARGARET

We don't read because we've no candles. And we don't talk because we're wondering what they're doing to you here.

MORE

The King's more merciful than you. He doesn't use the rack!

JAILER's face appears at the grille in the door.

JAILER

Two minutes to go, sir. I thought you'd like to know.

MORE

Two minutes!

He flies to the grille, from which JAILER's face has gone.

MORE

Jailer!

JAILER's voice echoes back along the corridor.

JAILER (ON SOUND)

Sorry sir. Two minutes!

MORE turns, all active now.

MORE

Now listen, you must leave the country.
All of you must leave the country.

ROPER

And leave you here?

MORE

It makes no difference, Will, they won't
let me see you again. You must all go
on the same day, but not on the same boat;
different boats from different ports.

ROPER

After the trial, then.

MORE

There'll be no trial, they have no case.
Do this for me I beseech you, Will.

ROPER

Yes, sir.

MORE

Margaret.

MARGARET

Yes.

MORE

Alice?

ALICE turns her back.

Alice, I command you!

ALICE

(snarls over her shoulder)

Right!

MORE looks across the cell at her back, intent and nervous, his
eyes deep in his head. The young people stand together, watching,
sensing that here is something beyond their comprehension.
MORE turns awkwardly to the basket on the table. He looks into it.

MORE

Oh this is splendid. I know who packed this.

ALICE

I packed it.

Her short responses come like the rumble of a threatening storm.

MORE

Yes.

He ~~eats~~ a bit of what is there.

You still make superlative custard, Alice.

ALICE

Do I?

He turns, apprehensive. She hasn't moved.

MORE

That's a nice dress you have on. Nice colour anyway.

She turns, and her face is full of primitive resentment, almost hatred.

ALICE

By God you think very little of me! I know I'm a fool, but I'm no such fool as at this time to be lamenting for my dresses! Or to relish complimenting on my custard!

MORE regards her with frozen attention.

MORE

I am well rebuked.

He steps towards her, holding out his hands.

Alice -

ALICE

No!

And she whips her hands behind her back.

MORE

I am sick with fear when I think of the worst they may do to me. But worse than that would be to go, with you not understanding why I go.

103 Continued

ALICE

I don't!

MORE

(just hanging on to his
self-possession)

Alice, if you can tell me that you understand. I think I can make a good death, if I have to.

ALICE

Your death's no good to me!

MORE

Alice, you must tell me that you understand!

ALICE

I don't.

(she throws it straight
at his head)

I don't believe this had to happen.

MORE

If you say that, Alice, I don't see how I'm
to face it.

ALICE

It's the truth!

MORE

(bitterly)

You're an honest woman!

ALICE

Much good may it do me! I'll tell you what
I'm afraid of; that when you're gone, I shall
hate you for it.

MORE blanches.

MORE

Well ...

(he is quite unstrung)

Well ... You mustn't. Alice ... I don't -
want -

(he turns away to hide
his face)

- you - to ...

103 Continued

ALICE hurtles across the cell. He turns and they embrace. She comforts him.

ALICE

As for understanding. I understand that you're the best man that I ever met or am likely to. And if you go - well God knows why I suppose - though as God's my witness God's kept deadly quiet about it!

(she shouts)

And if anyone wants my opinion of the King and his Council - !

CUT

104 INT. HEAD OF SPIRAL STAIRS AND PASSAGE

JAILER & LIEUTENANT, approaching along the passage hear,
ON SOUND:

ALICE

He has only to ask for it!

JAILER & LIEUTENANT exchange glances.

CUT

105 INT. MORE'S NEW CELL

MORE, beside himself, rocks ALICE about as before.

MORE

Why it's a lion I married! A lion! A
lion!

He breaks away. His gaze falls on:

The basket of humble luxuries.

He goes to it.

MORE

Oh this is good.

He turns from them.

It's very ... very good ...

Together they understand that he is weeping. MARGARET and ALICE rush to comfort him. The cell door crashes open.

LIEUTENANT

Sorry Sir Thomas!

ROPER

For pity's sake!

JAILER

Time's up sir!

JAILER goes to MORE, ALICE, MARGARET. ROPER to LIEUTENANT.

ROPER

(horrified)

But one more minute, man!

LIEUTENANT

You don't know what you're asking. We're
watched.

JAILER puts his hand on MARGARET.

JAILER

Come along, Miss.

ROPER crosses and seizes his arm.

ROPER
For Heaven's sake -

JAILER
(mildly, looking round)
Now don't do that, sir.

MORE
Margaret.

They kiss.

JAILER
Now Madam, don't make trouble.

Attempts to take her arm. Again ROPER grasps him.

Are you obstructing me, sir?

LIEUTENANT
Come along please, Lady Alice.

ALICE breaks away from MORE. Hesitates at door. JAILER and LIEUTENANT bustle her out.

ALICE
Don't put your muddy paw on me! Filthy -

The door slams. MORE rushes to the grille. Cranes desperately, but cannot see, can only hear Alice's desperate, raucous voice, forced through a throatful of tears ON SOUND.

ALICE
Stinking - Gutterfed - Turd-key! I'll
see ...! I'll see ...! I'll see you suffer ...
for this!

MORE shouts into the pandemonium:

MORE
Alice! Goodbye!

But a door slams. Total and abrupt silence. He reels away from the grille off frame. JAILER's face appears.

JAILER
(unctuous, resentful)
You must understand my position, sir. I'm
a plain simple man and I just want to keep out

JAILER (Cont)

of trouble.

CUT

106 INT. WESTMINSTER HALL

ON SOUND, MUSIC, heraldic and pompous and crowd noises.

CAMERA IS SHOOTING straight up into the barbaric magnificence of a Tudor ceiling. Continual TRACK and PAN explores this, the banners suspended from it, the tapestried walls, the CROWD in tiered seats, a roped-off section of this for the NOBILITY, including NORFOLK. The JURY in their box. Then a carved Royal Coat of Arms is brought on frame, the canopy and the thrones of three High Court Judges (LORD CHIEF in centre). They are all three looking off frame at:

Their POV, CROMWELL across the floor standing by a table with papers on it. He turns and bows to the JUDGES, signifying readiness.

LORD CHIEF nods to an OFFICIAL by his throne. OFFICIAL raises arm.

A TRUMPETER raised above the tiered seats sounds out.

His POV shooting down on the whole scene; it looks like an amphitheatre awaiting the entrance of the animals. As trumpet ceases all heads turned towards a little door; crowd noise dies to silence. OFFICIAL crosses the echoing floor towards the door.

107 INT. SMALL PANELLED ROOM

Inside, MORE is on his knees.

MORE

Dear Lord Jesus, my Sweet Saviour, clear
my wits ...

He is about to rise but sinks again. Behind him the door opens. OFFICIAL pauses. MORE goes on.

MORE

Dear lady, Blessed Mother of God, comfort
my wife and my daughter. And forgive
me for them.

With some difficulty he rises. Nods his comprehension to OFFICIAL, straightens his garment, smoothes his hair, says softly to himself:

MORE

Now ...

And walks out.

108 INT. WESTMINSTER HALL

POV THE TRUMPETER as before, MORE crosses the amphi-theatre; a movement and murmur from the crowd rising and dying as he fetches up before the JUDGES.

CHIEF JUSTICE

Sir Thomas More, though you have heinously offended the King's Majesty we hope if you will even now forthink and repent of obstinate opinion, you may still taste his gracious pardon.

MORE

My lords I thank you. Howbeit I make my petition to Almighty God to keep me in this my honest mind, to the last hour I shall live. So for the matters you may charge me with, I fear, from my present weakness, that neither my wit nor my memory will serve to make sufficient answer. I should be glad to sit down.

CHIEF JUSTICE

A chair for the Prisoner.

One is brought, in total silence MORE sits.

Master Secretary Cromwell, have you the charge?

CROMWELL, across the hall:

CROMWELL

I have my Lord.

MORE is seated close to CROMWELL's table, the JUDGES now at a distance from him. This makes MORE and CROMWELL intimate, the rest a sort of audience to their duel.

CHIEF JUSTICE (ON SOUND)

Then read the charge.

CROMWELL

~~That~~ you did wilfully and maliciously deny and deprive our liege Lord Henry of his undoubted certain title, Supreme Head of the Church in England.

CLOSE SHOT MORE, surprised, shocked, indignant, looking about, looking up at JUDGES.

MORE

But I have never denied this title - !

It is palpably the truth. A faint susurrations runs through the Court.

TWO SHOT, MORE AND CROMWELL

CROMWELL

At Westminster Hall, at Lambeth, and again at Richmond you stubbornly refused the oath. Was this no deinal?

MORE

No, this was silence. And for my silence I am punished with imprisonment.

He looks about, his face dark with suspicion.

MORE

Why have I been called again?

CHIEF JUSTICE

Oh a charge of High Treason, Sir Thomas.

CROMWELL

For which the punishment is not, imprisonment.

MORE

Death . . .

He looks round the Court and as he speaks we have in swift CUTS, the JUDGES, the JURY, NORFOLK, leaning forward.

MORE

Death comes for us all my Lords. Yes even for Kings he comes to whom amidst all their Royalty he will not kneel nor pleasantly desire them to come forth, but straightly grasp them by the very breast and rattle them until they be stark dead! So causing their bodies to be buried in a pit and sending them to a judgement . . . whereof at their death their success is uncertain.

CLOSE SHOT CROMWELL

CROMWELL

Treason enough here!

CHIEF JUSTICE

(reproving)

The death of Kings is not in question,
Sir Thomas.

MORE

Nor mine I trust until I'm proven guilty.

NORFOLK leans forward and calls out:

NORFOLK

Your life lies in your own hands, Thomas,
as it always has!

CHIEF JUSTICE swallows his annoyance when he sees who the inter-
rupter is.

MORE stares back at NORFOLK, seeing:

NORFOLK leaning forwards urgently, glaring a silent message.

MORE looks wary.

MORE

Is that so, my lord?

He turns and looks up at CROMWELL, standing close over him, says:

Then I will keep a good grip on it.

It is a challenge which CROMWELL registers. Throws down his paper
and crosses MORE on his way to FOREMAN, saying:

CROMWELL

So, Sir Thomas, you stand on your silence.

MORE

I do.

CROMWELL

But, Gentlemen of the Jury -

However it is to the Foreman that he mostly addresses himself, to FOREMAN's gratification. He nods his appreciation of CROMWELL's points, allows discreet shadows of gravity and amusement to play across his commonplace face as he feels appropriate, while:

- there are many kinds of silence. Consider first the silence of a man when he is dead. Let us say we go into the room where he's laid out, and listen ... What do we hear? Silence, what does it betoken, this silence? Nothing. This is silence pure and simple. But consider another case. Suppose that I should take a dagger from my sleeve and make to kill the prisoner with it. And suppose their lordships there instead of crying out for me to stop or crying out for help to stop me, maintained their silence? That would betoken! It would betoken a willingness that I should do it, and under the law they would be guilty with me. So silence, can according to the circumstances, speak. Consider now the circumstances of the prisoner's silence. The oath was put to loyal subjects up and down the country and they all declared His Grace's Title to be just and good. When it came to the prisoner he refused. He calls this silence. Yet is there a man in this Court -

He moves from the JURY, harangues the whole assembly.

Is there a man in this country -

PANNING SHOT OVER CROWD. listening intently.

Who does not know Sir Thomas More's opinion of this Title?

NORFOLK looks troubled.

Yet how can this be?

CLOSE SHOT CROMWELL

Because this silence betokened - nay this silence was - not silence at all, but most eloquent denial!

He looks about triumphantly. FOREMAN and JURY, impressed, JUDGES listening attentively, anxious buzz from crowd. MORE cuts in.

CLOSE SHOT MORE

MORE

Not so! Not so Master Secretary, the maxim is "qui tacet consentive".

He turns to JURY, carefully:

The maxim of the law is: "Silence gives consent." If therefore you wish to construe what my silence "betokened" you must construe that I consented, not that I denied.

A buzz of pleasure from crowd, JUDGES attentive and approving.

NORFOLK grinning.

FOREMAN puzzled.

CROMWELL angry.

CROMWELL

Is that what the world in fact construes from it? Do you pretend that is what you wish the world to construe from it?

MORE

The world must construe according to its wits. This Court must construe according to the law!

PANNING OVER THE CROWD, excited and pleased.

CROMWELL, looking coldly vicious.

CROMWELL

My Lords! I wish to call Sir Richard Rich!

SILENCE falls. In the distance:

OFFICIAL (on SOUND)

Richard Rich ...!

The "amphitheatre" shots again. RICH, splendidly gowned and now with a chain of office, enters across the floor. He fetches up before

the JUDGES. OFFICIAL proffers bible and we hear, OVER JURY.

RICH

I do solemnly swear that the evidence I shall give before the Court will be the truth, the whole truth, and nothing but the truth.

He takes hand from Bible but:

OFFICIAL

(embarrassed mutter)

So help me God, Sir Richard.

RICH replaces hand.

RICH

So help me God.

CLOSE SHOT MORE watching him with a premonition that this is the instrument of his destruction. Looks up as:

CROMWELL

Now Rich, on 12 March, you were at the Tower?

RICH

I was.

CROMWELL

With what purpose?

RICH

I was sent to carry away the prisoner's books.

CROMWELL

Did you talk with the prisoner?

RICH

Yes.

CROMWELL

Did you talk of the King's Supremacy of The Church?

RICH

Yes.

CROMWELL

What did you say?

RICH

I said to him: "Supposing there was an Act of Parliament to say that I, Richard Rich, were to be King, would not you, Master More, take me for King?" "That I would," he said, "For then you would be king."

He licks his lips, catches MORE's burning eye upon him and looks away.

JURY, attentive.

CROMWELL

(sharply)
Yes?

RICH

Then he said; "But I will put you a higher case," he said . . . "How if there were an Act of Parliament to say that God should not be God?"

Approaching his Rubicon he falters.

MORE leans forward.

MORE

This is true; and then you said -

CHIEF JUSTICE

(also leaning forward)

Silence! Continue..

RICH

I said "But I will put a middle case. Parliament has made our King Head of the Church. Why will you not accept him?"

Again he stops, paralyzed.

CROMWELL

Well?

RICH

Then he said Parliament had no power to do it.

CHIEF JUSTICE

Repeat the prisoner's words..

RICH

He said: "Parliament has not the competence."

He breaks:

Or words to that effect.

CROMWELL

(harsh)

He denied the Title.

RICH

He did.

Total silence. MEDIUM SHOT MORE, CROMWELL, RICH.
ONE SHOT: CLOSE SHOT: JURY.

MORE

In good faith, Rich, I am sorrier for your perjury than my peril.

CHIEF JUSTICE

Do you deny this?

MORE

Yes!

(he stands)

My lords if I were a man who heeded not the taking of an oath, you know well I need not to be here. Now I will take an oath. If what Master Rich has said is true, then I pray I may never see God in the face! Which I would not say were it otherwise for anything on earth.

CROMWELL says calmly to JURY. :

CROMWELL

That is not evidence.

MORE steps towards JUDGES, desperately:

MORE

Is it probable - is it probable - that after so long a silence, on this, the very point so urgently sought of me, I should open my mind to such a man as that?

CLOSE SHOT CHIEF JUSTICE. He doesn't like it. Says rather coldly to RICH:

CHIEF JUSTICE

Sir Richard, do you wish to modify your testimony?

RICH

No, my lord.

CHIEF JUSTICE

Is there anything you wish to take away from it?

RICH

No my lord.

CHIEF JUSTICE

Have you anything to add?

RICH

No my lord.

CHIEF JUSTICE

Have you, Sir Thomas?

MORE returns to his chair.

MORE

To what purpose ... ? I am a dead man.

CLOSE SHOT as he sits quietly and says to CROMWELL who is standing close:

You have your will of me.

FOREMAN's mind is made up - Over him we hear:

CHIEF JUSTICE (SOUND)

Then the witness may withdraw.

MORE looks up and follows RICH with his eyes: we hear the receding steps.

MORE

I have one question I should like to ask
the witness.

CLOSE SHOT RICH arrested half way across the hall fearful.

That's a chain of office you are wearing.
May I see it?

RICH looks uncertainly to **CHIEF JUSTICE**.

CHIEF JUSTICE gestures him to obey.

MORE, still seated joined by **RICH**, who cannot look at him. **MORE**
examines the medallion.

MORE

The Red Dragon.
(to Cromwell)
What's this?

CROMWELL

Sir Richard is appointed Attorney-General
for Wales.

MORE nods, looks up into **RICH**'s face.

MORE

For Wales ... Why, Richard it profits a
man nothing to give his soul for the whole
world .. But, for Wales ...!

He lets go of the medallion and in **LONG SHOT** watches **RICH**'s long
exit.

CROWD watching him.

JUDGES watching him. They in turn watched alertly by:

CROMWELL registers the general unease. Rather sharply:

CROMWELL

My lords! I have done.

CHIEF JUSTICE pulls himself together.

CHIEF JUSTICE

The Jury will retire and consider the
evidence.

CROMWELL

(quickly)

Considering the evidence, it shouldn't be necessary for them to retire.

(to FOREMAN)

Is it necessary?

FOREMAN glances at his fellow jurors. Some just won't look at him. One shakes his head, another makes a little gesture of helplessness. FOREMAN shakes his head.

CHIEF JUSTICE

Then is the prisoner guilty or not guilty?

FOREMAN rises and as one conveying a piece of information: :

FOREMAN

Guilty, my lord!

LONG SHOT The amphitheatre shot, frozen and silent, a momentary tableau.

CLOSE SHOT CROMWELL suddenly looks desperately tired.

CHIEF JUSTICE rises, anxious to get it over with.

LONG SHOT the whole COURT, MORE excepted, rises.

CHIEF JUSTICE

Sir Thomas More, you have been found guilty of High Treason. The sentence of the Court is -

MORE

My lord - !

CHIEF JUSTICE, surprised, stops.

CROMWELL looks alert.

MORE

My lord, when I was practising the law, the manner was to ask the prisoner before pronouncing sentence, if he had anything to say.

CHIEF JUSTICE is put about.

CHIEF JUSTICE

Have you anything to say?

MORE

Yes.

LONG SHOT whole COURT reseating, MORE rising in counterpoint.

Since the Court has determined to condemn me - God knoweth how - I will discharge my mind, concerning my indictment and the King's title. The indictment is grounded in an Act of Parliament which is directly repugnant to the Law of God. The king in Parliament cannot bestow Supremacy over the Church because it is a Spiritual Supremacy! And more to this, the immunity of the Church is promised both in Magna Carta, and the King's own Coronation Oath!

CROMWELL leaps forward.

CROMWELL

Now we plainly see that you are malicious!

CLOSE SHOT MORE

MORE

Not so. I am the King's true subject and pray for him and all the realm . . . I do none harm, I say none harm, I think none harm. And if this be not enough to keep a man alive, in good faith I long not to live . . . And therefore my poor body is at the King's pleasure. Would God my death might do him some good.

(a flash of anger)

Nevertheless -

"Amphitheatre" shot again.

- It is not for the Supremacy that you have sought my blood. But because I would not bend, to the Marriage!

Uproar. CHIEF JUSTICE intoning on a rising voice, to conquer the noise:

CHIEF JUSTICE

You have been found guilty of High Treason.
The sentence of the Court is that you shall
be taken from the Court to the Tower,
thence to the place of execution ...

CUT

109 EXT! TOWER SMALL COURT

The tree full of birds, happy in the sunshine, amongst the blossom,
against a grey stone wall. ON SOUND, the chirruping of the birds.
After a couple of moments, ON SOUND:

MORE (ON SOUND)

I am commanded by the King to be brief.

110 CLOSE SHOT, MORE

And since I am the King's obedient subject,
brief I will be: I die His Majesty's good
servant. But God's first!

He pances. Turns, looks speculatively down at:

111 CLOSE SHOT, his POV, the Block, the axe held by the EXECUTIONER,
the EXECUTIONER's herculean legs in black tights. The
EXECUTIONER kneels so that we see the terrifying hood, and MORE
comes on frame. We see him only waist down, but hear:

MORE (ON SOUND)

(formally)

I forgive you, right readily.

112 LONG SHOT over backs of crowd at the tableau on the scaffold,
MORE, kneeling EXECUTIONER, LIEUTENANT, GUARDS,
ARCHBISHOP. SPECTATORS silently doff their hats. Birds ON
SOUND.113 CLOSE SHOT, rises into TWO SHOT with MORE, who evidently
catches a glint of something human from the eye-slits of the hood.

MORE

Be not afraid of your office. You send
me to God.

ARCHBISHOP, sotto, significant:

113 Continued

ARCHBISHOP

You're very sure of that, Sir Thomas.

MORE looks at him for a moment afraid, then happily ducks the whole issue.

MORE

He will not refuse one who is so blithe -

He prepares to kneel

- to go to him.

His head goes down onto the block, **EXECUTIONER** shifting his grip on the all-too-practical fifteen-pound axe.

114 **CAMERA** takes up **MORE'S** POV going down onto the block with him. Among the straw of the scaffold we find:

115 **EXTREME CLOSE SHOT.** A grasshopper toils clumsily along a stalk of straw, intent. A grunt on **SOUND**.

116 **ANGLING UP.** **EXECUTIONER** swings up his axe, is poised, commences the terrific downwards swoop.

117 **EXTREME CLOSE SHOT.** The grasshopper dislodged by the impact of the blow. It kicks, begins laboriously to climb back onto the stalk. **ON SOUND**, over, the chirruping birds. **ON SOUND**, over again:

EXECUTIONER

Behold - the head - of a traitor!

CUT

118 **CLOSE SHOT.** The tree as before, but cold light now. **ON SOUND** a rhythmic slip-slop of water and someone softly whistling between his teeth. This continues over:

119 **PANNING SHOT** over the empty courtyard, showing a corner of the scaffold, the pavement littered with the leavings of the crowd. The slip-slop is explained as we end on:

120 CLOSE SHOT, the EXECUTIONER, without his hood now, his back towards us, crouched on his heels, is vigorously washing the axe with a rag in a shallow tub of water. On the ground nearby an earthenware flask of oil, more rags, a coarse and a fine honing-stone. He is technically absorbed and does not hear as we do, ON SOUND, a woman's voice call softly, blankly:

VOICE (SOUND)

Thomas ...

He works on, unheeding, and again, more sharply:

Thomas - !

He looks up and off, revealing himself now that he is without his hood as the YOUNG MAN whom MORE saw from his cell window. With him we see:

121 MEDIUM CLOSE SHOT. His YOUNG WIFE, the baby on her arm, still wiping flour from the other hand onto her apron regards him with affectionate impatience from a little doorway. Half liking, half resenting his absorption in his work she now thrusts out the hand, inviting and cheerful:

Dinner!

Immediate "freeze" on which superimposed:

THE END