

F O C U S
F E A T U R E S

I N T E R N A T I O N A L

AGORA

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Space, seen through an infinitely powerful telescope: clusters of galaxies flash by; we backtrack and stop at one in particular, we cross various nebulae...

A caption reads:

*In the fourth century A.D., Egypt
was a province of the Roman Empire.*

*Alexandria, its most renowned city,
eclipsed even Rome, becoming the
last bastion of a vanishing world.*

We observe all the planets beyond our own solar system, from the furthest to the nearest, as the powerful zoom of our telescope continues to pull back...

A further caption reads:

*Alexandria was the scene of
frequent religious clashes between
Pagans, Jews and a sect, until
recently outlawed: the Galileans,
also known as Christians.*

We reach Earth and travel from pole to pole, then head back towards the stars. Over this image, the voice of HYPATIA.

HYPATIA (V.O.)

How many fools have wondered why
the stars don't fall? But you have
listened to the wise, and you know
that the stars move neither up nor
down; they merely revolve from east
to west, following the most perfect
course ever conceived: the circle.
Think of the moon when full...

(our eyes now fall on the
moon)

...equidistant from the centre
along its entire perimeter, with
neither beginning nor end... And
what of the sun?

The silhouette of the sun, partially veiled by clouds, fills the screen. The image is framed by an open window.

HYPATIA (V.O.)

The heavens are ruled by the
perfection of the circle. For this
reason, the stars have never
fallen, and they never will.

(MORE)

(CONTINUED)

HYPATIA (V.O.) (CONT'D)

But what about here on Earth, the
kingdom of imperfection?

A woman's hand enters frame, holding a silk handkerchief. She releases it.

HYPATIA (V.O.) (CONT'D)

Here, bodies do fall, and their
movement is not circular, but
linear.

The handkerchief falls slowly. A man's hand gathers it from the ground and returns it to its owner: HYPATIA, a ravishing twenty-five-year old. She has been handed the handkerchief by DAVUS, an exotic-looking youth of athletic build, with a metal collar round his neck.

We are in a semicircular lecture hall, with three tiers of seats where some twenty youths, all male, sit listening. Hypatia is perched on a high stool in front of them. The room's decoration, as well as the clothing and hairstyles, place us unequivocally in a Greco-Roman environment.

HYPATIA (CONT'D)

Let me do that again...

Hypatia once more releases the handkerchief. Davus rushes to pick it up, but she signals him to stop.

HYPATIA (CONT'D)

What mysterious wonder lurks
beneath the ground that forces
every man, animal, slave and object
to settle there? What might it
be...?

A handsome youth with restless eyes is quick to answer.

ORESTES

Their heaviness, lady.

HYPATIA

(after shaking her head)

Synesius.

SYNESIUS has a more serious expression than his companion.

SYNESIUS

Their weightiness.

Hypatia gets down from her stool and picks up the handkerchief.

HYPATIA

You both speak of the same thing,
but not of the primary cause.

(MORE)

(CONTINUED)

2 CONTINUED: (2)

HYPATIA (CONT'D)

Have you never wondered at the
thought that your feet are standing
upon the very centre of the
cosmos,...

(she crumples the
handkerchief between her
hands)

...that holds all things
together...? the universe would be
shapeless and infinite,...

(she opens her hands, and
shakes the wrinkles from
the handkerchief)

...and it would make little
difference if we were here or
there...and we'd all be better off
having never been born.

3 EXT/INT. LIBRARY: REAR COURTYARD/MAIN BUILDING - DAY 3

We see an immense courtyard surrounding a monumental,
Egyptian style temple, out of which drift the strains of a
religious litany, and a circular building of Roman
architecture.

Studious looking men stroll around, deep in thought. Others,
possibly slaves, come and go carrying scrolls.

A caption reads:

Library of Alexandria, 391 A.D.

Davus is inside the circular building, placing scrolls on a
shelf. From time to time he steals a sideways glance: Hypatia
and Orestes sit in a corner conversing quietly. She seems to
be explaining something to him...

4 INT. LIBRARY: SERAPEUM - DAY 4

We are at the ceremony we heard in the distance. A priest
(OLYMPIUS) is officiating before a congregation of about
twenty, among them an elderly man (THEON).

The attitude of the worshippers shows restraint and a certain
monotony.

OLYMPIUS

Oh, God, our Father, Lord of the
universe, eternal force of the
cosmos, origin of all things, where
everything begins and where
everything comes to an end.

We now see the imposing statue of a deity which could well be
Zeus. Its head is crowned with an enormous ceramic urn, a
vase almost. Behind it loom statues of other deities.

(CONTINUED)

4 CONTINUED:

OLYMPIUS (CONT'D)
Almighty Serapis, Isis, Horus,
Anubis and all the gods, who
enshroud us with your protection in
heaven and on earth...

5 INT. LIBRARY: MAIN BUILDING - DAY 5

Davus continues to cast furtive glances at Hypatia and Orestes whose voice and gaze have now become much more intimate.

Davus tries to decipher what the young man is whispering to his teacher, but without success. Suddenly, Orestes stretches out his hand and takes Hypatia's. Her behavior becomes very self-conscious.

Hypatia looks up and catches Davus's eye. He immediately looks away.

HYPATIA
(ill at ease)
Fetch the master.

Davus walks off towards the temple.

6 INT. LIBRARY: REAR COURTYARD - DAY 6

Davus enters the courtyard and signals to another young slave, MEDORUS.

Medorus heads for the Serapeum.

7 EXT. LIBRARY: HILL - DAY 7

Hypatia and Theon stroll down the side of a hill, followed by Davus and Medorus laden with scrolls and teaching equipment. Behind them, the walled entrance to the Library on the hilltop.

HYPATIA
Courting me, like one of his
conquests! The nerve of the man!

THEON
That Orestes is as foolish as his
father.

Two bearers approach, uphill, carrying a litter. An old man (HESIQUIUS) pulls back the curtain.

HESIQUIUS
Greetings.

THEON
A little late today, aren't we,
Hesiquius?

(CONTINUED)

HESIQUIUS
Ah, tell that to these two.
(to the bearers)
Get a move on, snails!

Theon smiles as the bearers step more lively. Hypatia is clearly not so entertained by what she has just seen.

THEON
Shall I speak with Orestes?

HYPATIA
No, this is for me to deal with. I suggested he devote his heart to another muse more beautiful than I.

THEON
Who?

HYPATIA
Music.

Theon bursts into raucous laughter.

THEON
Music!

HYPATIA
He didn't find it the least bit amusing, I assure you.

FADE TO:

In a room full of research instruments (a hydroscope, a quadrant, various sets of scales...) Theon and Hypatia work together, surrounded by books and scrolls. He draws epicycles along one of Ptolemy's models as she takes notes.

ASPASIUS, a gaunt fifty-something standing at one end of the room with a metal collar around his neck, lights an oil lamp.

Hypatia checks one of her father's jottings.

Hypatia shows him the scroll.

HYPATIA
How can two twenty seven become sixteen? It's fourteen, father.

Theon looks at the scroll and grunts.

9

INT. HYPATIA'S HOUSE: BATHROOM - AFTERNOON

9

Hypatia lies soaking in a bathtub. Davus stands at one end of the room.

Davus takes another towel and approaches her from behind, meticulously drying her hair. We zoom in on their faces, almost touching. We hear the slave's breathing, while she is lost in her thoughts...

10

EXT. AGORA - DAY

10

The main square of ancient Alexandria is a huge open space at the end of the equally spectacular Via Canopica, a wide avenue flanked by columns.

A group of men have gathered around a pyre surrounded by statues of gods. AMMONIUS, a scrawny monk with crazed eyes, brandishes a wooden cross as he argues heatedly with another citizen (PAGAN RIVAL).

AMMONIUS

They behave like humans! They eat
and drink...and fornicate!

The square is buzzing with activity: passers-by, stall-holders, preachers, beggars...

PAGAN RIVAL (V.O.)

If my gods eat and drink and
fornicate, good for them!

Meanwhile, Theon is buying fresh fish from one of the market stalls. Behind him is Medorus. He opens the sack he is carrying to put in the purchased fish.

AMMONIUS (V.O.)

Don't you realize what you are
saying? Are the rest of you
listening to this nonsense? If you
had half a brain, you'd see that
your gods are a sham. A sham!

Ammonius raises his voice above a wave of boos and hisses.

AMMONIUS (CONT'D)

Know this, you who console
yourselves with pagan images!
(Pointing to the statues)
Men, women, birds, reptiles...!

Theon, with Medorus at his heels, decides to stop beside the group and listen to the debate. Ammonius now points to a statue of Serapis.

(CONTINUED)

AMMONIUS (CONT'D)
Serapis! Who could ever trust a god
with a flowerpot for a crown?

Laughter and applause. The Pagan Rival takes offence at this comment.

PAGAN RIVAL
Ah, you Christians... How arrogant
you become now that the Empire
allows you to exist!
(To the crowd)
My father's father saw them
slaughtered in the circus and fed
to the lions!

This time it is the Pagan Rival who reaps the applause.

AMMONIUS
(furious)
Enough! Enough! Watch.

Ammonius stands at the edge of the pyre.

AMMONIUS (CONT'D)
I shall now cross the fire. If my
God is the true God, I shall suffer
no harm.
(to the Pagan Rival)
If, however, your gods exist, they
will surely roast me like a pig.

Murmurs of amazement.

PAGAN RIVAL
You're mad!

AMMONIUS
We'll find out soon enough.
Silence!

Ammonius focuses his gaze on the bonfire. Then he looks
heavenwards, muttering something between his teeth, crosses
himself and kisses his crucifix.

He skips lightly over the flames...

...and reaches the other side, singed but unscathed. The
lower hem of his smock has caught fire but he quickly snuffs
it out with a pat of his hand. Then he raises his arms before
the crowd with a victorious grin.

There is a clamor of rejoicing and wonderment. Medorus is
clearly impressed...

Voices start up with the cry of : Miracle!

(CONTINUED)

PAGAN RIVAL

Don't you see? The scoundrel raced
across! Of course it didn't burn
him!

Some of the crowd push the Pagan Rival towards the edge of
the pyre, amidst shouts and laughter.

PAGAN RIVAL (CONT'D)

What are you doing? No! No!

TROUBLEMAKERS

Into the fire! Pray to your gods
now!

THEON

(smiling, to the
troublemakers)

Come on now, let the man go...

HOTHEAD

Quiet, pagan, or we'll throw you in
as well.

Theon stands there, numbed.

The Pagan Rival cannot hold out against the shoving and ends
up on the pyre. He gets up, then stumbles again, to a roar of
laughter. Finally, he manages to scramble out of the pyre,
enveloped in flames. Many rush to his aid.

Theon is horrified...

EXT. HYPATIA'S HOUSE: COURTYARD - DAY

Theon, in a rage, brandishes a small wooden cross in the
faces of his five slaves, including Davus, Medorus, Aspasius
and another slave girl (SIDONIA).

THEON

Whose is this?!

Hypatia enters the courtyard and observes the scene from
behind her father.

THEON (CONT'D)

How many times must I repeat
myself? Today the Christians burned
a man! Right in the middle of the
Agora!

(Showing everyone the
crucifix)

I do not want this in my house! Not
in the house of Theon!

Theon hurls the cross to the floor.

(CONTINUED)

11 CONTINUED:

Sidonia runs to the cross and kneels to pick it up.

Theon holds out his hand.

THEON (CONT'D)
Give it to me.

Sidonia bursts into tears, but does not obey. Davus looks at her with a mixture of admiration and compassion.

THEON (CONT'D)
Give it to me!

Davus runs up to Sidonia and kneels before Theon, his face virtually touching the ground.

DAVUS
Master, I beg mercy for your slave girl.

HYPATIA
Davus!

THEON
Get up, Davus. This has nothing to do with you.

DAVUS
I too am a Christian.

THEON
What did you say?

DAVUS
I too am a Christian. Punish me for both of us.

Theon looks at his daughter, with a mixture of confusion and indignation.

THEON
So now they presume to teach us mercy!
(pause)
Bring me a whip!

HYPATIA
Father...

THEON
(to Sidonia)
Go.

HYPATIA
Father, I beg of you..

One of the slaves returns with a whip and hands it to Theon.

(CONTINUED)

11 CONTINUED: (2)

Incapable of witnessing the punishment, Hypatia leaves the room as Davus receives the first lash of the whip...

DISSOLVE TO:

12 INT. HYPATIA'S HOUSE: DAVUS'S ROOM - NIGHT

12

In their lowly, windowless but clean quarters, Davus and Medorus whisper from their respective straw mattresses. The only light comes from an oil lamp resting in a niche in the wall.

Davus is lying face down, displaying the nasty whip weals on his back. Medorus is sitting.

MEDORUS

...wrapped in a blazing brightness.

DAVUS

That would be the flames, stupid.

MEDORUS

Then, why didn't he burn like the pagan? Tell me!

Davus does not answer.

A curtain is drawn back and Hypatia appears with a cloth and a small flask.

Davus and Medorus instantly shoot to their feet.

HYPATIA

(to Medorus)

Leave us.

Medorus leaves the room.

HYPATIA (CONT'D)

(to Davus)

Sit down.

(Davus kneels, sitting
back on his heels)

Lean forward.

Davus obeys.

Hypatia approaches and studies his back with concern. She moistens the cloth with salve from the flask and, leaning over the slave, dabs it on his wounds. Davus winces at the sting of it, but is unable to complain.

HYPATIA (CONT'D)

Tell me, is it true that you're a
Christian?

Davus ponders his reply.

(CONTINUED)

DAVUS

Mistress, I don't know how to answer.

HYPATIA

Why?

DAVUS

If I say yes, it would be a lie.
But if I say no, it would mean I
lied to the master, and I don't
know which is worse.

Hypatia laughs.

HYPATIA

Then say nothing!

Hypatia finishes anointing his wounds and caresses his head affectionately, as if he were a child, or a dog.

HYPATIA (CONT'D)

The master is upset with himself.

Her eyes fall on a rudimentary contraption, half-hidden in a corner in the dim lamplight: a group of small spheres connected to a central one by wooden spokes.

HYPATIA (CONT'D)

What is this?

DAVUS

Just something I put together,
mistress.

HYPATIA

Show it to me.

Davus drags himself towards the device and holds it up in front of his mistress.

DAVUS

It's Ptolemy's system.

HYPATIA

(impressed)

Did you make it?

Davus nods.

Hypatia looks at him with amazement and tenderness.

13

INT. LIBRARY: HYPATIA'S LECTURE HALL - DAY

13

Davus is in the centre of the room, describing his invention to Hypatia's disciples. She sits attentively beside him on a high stool.

DAVUS

(recovering from his
embarrassment)

Earth, the centre of the cosmos,
and revolving around it, the sun
and the five wanderers, so called
because they follow their own
course, obstinately disobeying the
law of the circle...Nevertheless,
Ptolemy shows us that they do obey
it. The fact that we see them move
in a loop is due to the joint
effect of two circles.

Davus turns a small central handle which makes the five
spheres turn around the one representing the Earth...

DAVUS (CONT'D)

The one they travel along around
the Earth...

...while, with his other hand, he works a knob attached to
one of the spheres, making it describe a lesser circle.

DAVUS (CONT'D)

...and a lesser circle proper to
each wanderer.

HYPATIA'S DISCIPLE 1

(amazed)

Look, the epicycles...

The joint effect of the two movements causes the sphere to
trace a sort of loop.

DAVUS

So, it is not heaven that errs, but
our eyes that deceive us.

HYPATIA

(proud of him)

Well said. Your exposition proves
that you follow my words more
closely than some of those present
here.

A ripple of laughter. The smile that creeps across Davus's
face is quickly repressed.

Orestes pays close attention to the device.

(CONTINUED)

ORESTES

I say, the gods should have
consulted me before they created
anything.

HYPATIA

Why do you say that, Orestes?

ORESTES

It all seems so whimsical! Why the
joint effect of two circles?
Wouldn't it be more perfect if the
wanderers didn't wander and a
single circle gave sense to
everything?

Synesius, the young man with the stern expression who we have
already met, intervenes.

SYNESIUS

By what authority do you judge the
work of God?

ORESTES

What is wrong with you Christians?
Can a man no longer open his mouth
in this city?

SYNESIUS

If you criticize creation, you
criticize our Lord and you offend
us!

ORESTES

Move out to the desert, you won't
hear anything to offend you out
there!

Laughter.

SYNESIUS

You know nothing of what you speak
...

Hypatia observes them without a word. Her gesture is enough
to make them both hang their heads in shame.

HYPATIA

Synesius, what is Euclid's first
rule?

SYNESIUS

Why the question?

HYPATIA

Answer.

(CONTINUED)

Pause.

SYNESIUS

If two things are equal to a third thing then they are equal to each other.

HYPATIA

Good. Are you two not similar to me?

SYNESIUS

Yes.

ORESTES

Yes.

HYPATIA

Here, more things unite us than divide us. I say this to all of you, whatever your creed... We are brothers! Brothers, no matter what happens in the streets! Leave brawling to the riff-raff and slaves.

Her final remark is like a slap across Davus's face. No one realizes, not even Hypatia.

HYPATIA (CONT'D)

And now let us honour Davus with some well-deserved applause.

They all applaud with a slowly accelerating rhythm until their clapping bursts into a continuous ovation. From the routine way they do it, this is clearly a custom.

As they clap, Orestes turns his eyes to Hypatia, with an expression of devout emotion.

Davus stares glumly at the ground.

Ammonius, wearing a hood, stands on a corner preaching fervently to the passing crowds. About five men have gathered to hear him.

AMMONIUS

(at the top of his voice)
...to judge us all, alive and dead!
And then it will be too late,
because only those who have
believed will be saved! What are
you waiting for?

Davus, carrying a sack, joins the group of onlookers.

(CONTINUED)

AMMONIUS (CONT'D)

The kingdom of God is upon us, come forward and be saved!

Come forward and be saved!

(addressing the group including Davus)

You men, do you not want to be saved...? Do you understand what I am telling you?

(they all nod self-consciously)

But do you understand as men do, or do you nod your heads like sheep do?

No one replies. Ammonius snorts in frustration and prepares to leave...

Suddenly Ammonius sees Davus.

AMMONIUS (CONT'D)

What are you looking at?

DAVUS

Are you Ammonius, the miracle man?

Ammonius turns and looks at Davus, smiling, like a hunter bagging his prey.

AMMONIUS

(holding out his hand)

Do you want to see a miracle? Come here!

Davus does not move. He seems hesitant.

Ammonius grabs him by the arm.

As he enters, Ammonius pulls back the hood from his head. Davus follows him, looking all around the building. We are in a sort of church-cum-hospital for tramps.

At one end of the nave, the bishop THEOPHILUS, sporting a long beard and wearing a black headdress with thirteen crosses on it, is reading, to a small congregation, a passage from the Gospels.

AMMONIUS

That's Theophilus. The bishop.

Davus moves closer to Theophilus.

THEOPHILUS

(reading)

...for they shall be comforted.

(MORE)

(CONTINUED)

THEOPHILUS (CONT'D)

Blessed are the meek: for they
shall inherit the earth. Blessed
are they which do hunger and thirst
after righteousness: for they shall
be filled...

Davus's face shows growing curiosity towards what he is
hearing. Ammonius observes him with piercing eyes, as if
seeking his approval.

AMMONIUS

The word of God!

CUT TO:

Ammonius, the skirts of his smock bulging with bread, is
distributing it among a large number of sick people and
beggars at the far end of the square. Other hooded monks are
doing likewise.

Davus follows him, still carrying his sack.

DAVUS

So what did you do to escape the
flames?

AMMONIUS

(handing an apple to a
woman)

The Lord be with you.

BEGGAR WOMAN

And with you, parabalano.

AMMONIUS

What do you think I did?
(pointing heavenwards)
I prayed! You probably don't even
know how.

Ammonius discovers to his chagrin that he has run out of
bread. He steals a glance at Davus's sack and snatches it
from him.

AMMONIUS (CONT'D)

Give me that.

Before Davus can react, Ammonius opens the sack and begins to
hand out bread among the beggars.

DAVUS

What are you doing?! They're for my
master!

(CONTINUED)

AMMONIUS
(handing a loaf to a
beggar)
The Lord be with you.

BEGGAR 1
Bless you, parabolano.

DAVUS
Now I'll have to pay for it with my
own money!

AMMONIUS
What do you need money for? Look at
their faces.
(he gives the sack back to
Davus)
Here, do it yourself and I'll teach
you how to pray.

Davus stands rooted to the spot, not knowing what to do.
Slumped on the ground in front of him, a starving old man
holds out his hand.

AMMONIUS (CONT'D)
Go on!

Davus is still unsure. Finally, he pulls a loaf out of the
sack and hands it to the old man.

AMMONIUS (CONT'D)
Now say: the Lord be with you...

DAVUS
(staring the beggar
straight in the eye)
The Lord be with you.

The old man smiles and nods his head. Beside him is another
old man who also stretches out his hand. Davus hands him
another loaf.

DAVUS (CONT'D)
The Lord be with you.

BEGGAR 2
Thank you.

DAVUS
(to another beggar)
The Lord be with you.

BEGGAR 3
Bless you.

The more loaves Davus distributes, the brighter his eyes
shine.

(CONTINUED)

15 CONTINUED: (3)

Ammonius observes him from a distance, with his hands on his hips.

AMMONIUS

Eh, slave! What's your name?

DAVUS

Davus.

AMMONIUS

Davus, the "slave-us"! Now you're looking like a true parabalano! Ha, ha, ha!

Davus' reply is a beaming smile.

16 EXT. AMPHITHEATRE - AFTERNOON

16

The performance of a classical Greek play is in progress.

Theon and Hypatia are among the public. We can also make out several of her pupils, among them Orestes. He looks impatient and toys nervously with the aulos he is holding.

17 EXT. AMPHITHEATRE, COLUMNS - AFTERNOON

17

The masses crowd around the columns which demarcate the amphitheatre, straining to see the spectacle. There's a lot of pushing and shoving, and the occasional insult.

Davus has to push aside another slave in order to see.

18 EXT. AMPHITHEATRE - AFTERNOON

18

The performance ends.

CRIER

End of Act Two!

The public applauds while the actors run offstage. One of them remains on stage.

ACTOR

Thank you, dear audience, thank you. Excuse the delay while we move things around and change our costumes.

As the actors withdraw and silence falls, Orestes runs towards the centre of the stage, carrying his aulos.

ORESTES

(very embarrassed)

Forgive...forgive my boldness. I am Orestes, son of Orestes.

(MORE)

(CONTINUED)

18 CONTINUED:

ORESTES (CONT'D)

I am here to declare my love...my
love for Hypatia, the philosopher,
whom no doubt you all know.

Gasps of amazement. Hypatia is thunderstruck.

ORESTES (CONT'D)

For some time now, following her
counsel, I have devoted myself to
music in the hope of finding solace
in the harmony of its sounds, but
for me, such harmony resides only
in my lady.

A unison "ooh" from the public. All eyes are on Hypatia who
does her best to put on a good face.

ORESTES (CONT'D)

So, then, my purpose here is merely
to... offer my...my melody to...
(grinding to an awkward
halt; to himself)
Enough talk...

Orestes begins to play the aulos. Behind him, slaves come and
go, shifting items of scenery.

The melody is simple and beautiful.

19 EXT. THE EARTH - AFTERNOON

19

Riding on a crescendo in the music, we journey into outer
space. We observe our planet, with the sun sinking behind it.

In the background, the aulos plays on, its strains peppered
with a cough or two from the audience, the cry of a child, a
dog's distant bark...Even the crickets add their
counterpoint.

This is, for a few seconds, the sound of the Earth...

20 EXT. AMPHITHEATRE - AFTERNOON

20

Orestes ends his rendering.

After a few moments' silence, the public erupts into
applause, cheers and whistling.

Hypatia is the only one not to join in with the ovation. She
seems deeply moved by her disciple's gesture; favourably or
not is another question. Theon also applauds, with his eyes
fixed on his daughter.

21 EXT. AMPHITHEATRE, COLUMNS - AFTERNOON 21

Davus also seems affected by the situation. Someone jostles him, eager for a view of the stage. Davus shoves him away, angrily.

22 EXT. AMPHITHEATRE - AFTERNOON 22

The public continues to applaud. Meanwhile, Orestes climbs through the audience to where Hypatia is seated, bows his head before her and offers her his aulos...

After a few seconds' hesitation, Hypatia takes it.

The ovation is even louder.

23 EXT. HYPATIA'S HOUSE: COURTYARD - NIGHT 23

A group of philosophers gathered around Theon are engaged in lively conversation. We recognize Hesiquius, the old man we met earlier arriving late at the Library, and Olympius, the priest who led the prayer in honour of Serapis. There is food and drink on hand.

HESIQUIUS

That young man will go far. I tell you, if I preferred a banana to a fig, I'd have already fallen at his feet.

Laughter all round.

PHILOSOPHER 1

(to Theon)

Wouldn't you do well to please him?

THEON

Me? How?

PHILOSOPHER 1

Granting him your daughter's hand. Or don't you plan ever to marrying her off?

THEON

Hypatia subject to a man, with no freedom to teach?! Nor even to speak her mind...?! That would be death to her.

HESIQUIUS

But tell me, Theon, are you not speaking for her now?

Theon has no answer to this.

24 INT. HYPATIA'S HOUSE: STUDY - NIGHT 24

Hypatia sits looking pensively at Orestes' aulos. The distorted voices of the philosophers can be heard in the distance.

In the background, behind a half-open curtain we can make out Davus, shrouded in shadows...

Hypatia senses a presence and turns towards the curtain: Davus is no longer there.

25 EXT. HYPATIA'S HOUSE: COURTYARD - NIGHT 25

Theon sits up to pour himself some more wine.

THEON

What if I told you...I'm thinking
of proposing her as my successor?

A sudden hush. A few disconcerted expressions.

THEON (CONT'D)

Speak, freely.

After several seconds, during which no one dares open his mouth, one of the philosophers speaks up.

HESIQUIUS

She knows your teachings better
than anyone. And she is prudent and
virtuous.

All nod, except Olympius.

HESIQUIUS (CONT'D)

And all that despite her youth and
her sad condition...being a woman,
I mean.

OLYMPIUS

(concerned)

My dear Theon, as priest of the
temple I feel obliged to intervene.
Your daughter allows Christians in
her classes.

HESIQUIUS

Olympius, this is not the time
to...

OLYMPIUS

When was the last time she went to
worship? Now more than ever, the
Library needs someone who will
defend our faith. The Christians
are multiplying!
(MORE)

(CONTINUED)

25 CONTINUED:

OLYMPIUS (CONT'D)

And the Oracle is not favourable to
us, I assure you. A strong mentor,
Theon... We need a man.

They all fall silent.

26 EXT. HYPATIA'S HOUSE: ROOFTOP - NIGHT

26

Davus appears on the rooftop, very anxious...

He looks up, seeking solace in the stars... Or in someone.

Dropping to his knees, he puts his hands together and in a
whisper, slowly, dredging his memory, utters:

DAVUS

Father, our Father...hear me. Don't
let anyone else have her. No.
Don't let anyone else have her...

Davus realizes how absurd, pathetic even, his prayer is. His
eyes drop to the ground and he shakes his head.

He crosses himself awkwardly, gets up and leaves.

27 INT. LIBRARY: HYPATIA'S LECTURE HALL - DAY

27

Hypatia's disciples file onto the tiered seats down the
central staircase that divides them.

Hypatia observes them solemnly from her stool. Davus is
standing behind her.

The students, obviously intimidated by their teacher's stern
face, greet her timorously as they take their places.

HYPATIA'S DISCIPLES

(as they sit)

Good day, lady.

She nods, not a word. In her hands, a crumpled handkerchief.

Orestes, in the front row, stares at Hypatia, trying to hide
his anxiety.

Silence is almost immediate.

HYPATIA

Yesterday, many of you saw one of
your colleagues give me an aulos. I
accepted the gift...and today I
also wish to make him a gift of my
own.

Hypatia gets up off her stool and walks towards Orestes. She
holds out the handkerchief...

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

Orestes takes the handkerchief and unfolds it. It is stained with blood.

Orestes, and his classmates, are stunned.

HYPATIA (CONT'D)

It is the blood of my cycle.

A shock wave of muttered comments.

HYPATIA (CONT'D)

Orestes, you say you have found harmony in me. I suggest you look elsewhere, because...

(pointing to the handkerchief)

...there is nothing beautiful in that. Don't you agree?

Unable to bear the embarrassment, Orestes stands and rushes out of the room.

HYPATIA (CONT'D)

Yesterday we were discussing the Apolonian cone...

The Worried Youth bursts into the room.

WORRIED YOUTH

Lady! Forgive me, lady. Olympius requires your presence urgently in the Serapeum.

Hypatia immediately leaves the room.

WORRIED YOUTH (CONT'D)

(to the rest)

You too.

EXT. LIBRARY: FRONT COURTYARD - DAY

Hypatia climbs the stairs leading up to the Serapeum, followed by her disciples and Davus. Without taking his eyes off his mistress, the slave seems to mutter something between his teeth. We zoom in on his lips and hear what they say.

DAVUS

Thank you, Lord. Thank you, thank you...

INT. LIBRARY: SERAPEUM - DAY

Other philosophers and their students are also flooding into the temple. Olympius is haranguing the gathered throng.

(CONTINUED)

PHILOSOPHER 2

What is happening?

OLD PHILOSOPHER

It's a sacrilege!

OLYMPIUS

The Christians have gathered in the
Agora and are mocking the gods...We
must put an end to their insults!
They may not fear the statues, but
they will fear our swords!

GATHERING OF PAGANS

Yes! To the Agora! To the Agora!

Hypatia approaches Olympius and gestures at him to calm down.

HYPATIA

Wait! What are you going to do?
Attack them...? Stain your hands
with blood?

No one answers. Theon, very ill at ease, observes the scene
passively from the wings.

HYPATIA (CONT'D)

Because of an insult?!

OLYMPIUS

To the gods! An insult to the gods!

HYPATIA

If you find it so outrageous, take
it before the prefect.
(to the crowd)
Go, denounce their acts to the
prefect!

OLYMPIUS

One might think you're protecting
them.

Hypatia is astonished by this insinuation.

HYPATIA

I'll tell you who I'm protecting,
Olympius.
(pointing to the crowd)
Them, our disciples, who you are
inciting like murderers!

Olympius glues his eyes on Theon.

(CONTINUED)

29 CONTINUED: (2)

OLYMPIUS
Honourable Theon, you have the last
word.

All eyes now turn on the old philosopher. After several
seconds of painful deliberation, Theon speaks.

THEON
The insult...must be answered.

Hypatia is stunned. Olympius gives a satisfied nod.

OLYMPIUS
Those Jews among you may do as you
please, this is not your battle. As
for you Christians, you would do
well to join those of your own...

HYPATIA
You will not cast my disciples out
of this house!

OLYMPIUS
(raising a fist)
Glory be to Serapis!

PAGAN CROWD
(imitating him)
And to all the gods!

30 EXT. LIBRARY: COLONNADE - REAR COURTYARD - DAY

30

A row of sacks has been placed against a side wall of the
courtyard. Philosophers and disciples take swords and daggers
from inside them and distribute them among themselves.

Olympius is one of the first to arm himself.

OLYMPIUS
Keep your weapons hidden. Don't
give yourselves away.

Hypatia and several of her disciples, Synesius among them,
observe with sorrow the frantic activity of their companions.

A PAGAN PRIEST empties a sack full of clubs which spill over
the floor.

PAGAN PRIEST
Clubs for the slaves!

OLYMPIUS
Slaves, come forward!

Unable to disobey, Davus takes a step forward, but Hypatia
holds him back and shakes her head.

(CONTINUED)

30 CONTINUED:

Orestes, armed with a sword, passes in front of Hypatia and flashes her a spiteful glare. Her eyes cloud with disappointment and sadness.

31 EXT. LIBRARY: FRONT COURTYARD - DAY 31

The hotheads cross the courtyard towards the exit.

32 INT. LIBRARY: SERAPEUM - DAY 32

Only a handful of slaves and old people are left in the temple, apart from Hypatia and her students.

SYNESIUS

Lady, four of us are Christians. If
you wish us to leave...

Hypatia ponders her reply.

HYPATIA

We shall all return to the lecture
hall and continue our lesson.

33 EXT. VIA CANOPICA/AGORA - DAY 33

The group of pagans from the Library strides with determination along the Via Canopica. Their silence contrasts with the festive jubilation coming from the end of the street.

In the Agora, a roaring mob hurls rotten vegetables and excrement at a statue of Isis. Theophilus watches them with a self-satisfied smirk. At his side is a retinue of priests, among whom a YOUNG DEACON stands out.

THEOPHILUS

(motioning for silence)
Let's hear her now!

Theophilus stands at the foot of the statue and cups his hand round his ear.

Meanwhile, the pagans stream into the square and surround the crowd, unsheathing their swords.

THEOPHILUS (CONT'D)

(pointing at the statue)
Do you hear any complaint?

CROWD

Noooo!

THEOPHILUS

This one has lost her voice, too!

A roar of laughter. The Young Deacon smiles and nods.

(CONTINUED)

THEOPHILUS (CONT'D)

Their mouths do not speak, their eyes do not see, their noses do not smell! Yet still the pagans come here and kneel before them! What madness is this!

A few Christians, aware of the encircling pagans, warn those nearest to them and begin to disperse.

From where Theophilus stands, we can clearly make out the line of pagans. Someone gives a signal, the pagans raise their arms and begin the attack.

ANGRY PAGANS

For the gods!

In the distance, glimpses of butchery and shouts of panic. Theophilus and his followers run for cover while bedlam spreads like a whirlwind.

We now see the scene from very high up: from such a distance, the terrified mass looks like a swarm of ants forming strange geometric shapes: circles closing in on a central point; stampeding groups, like rays of light...

We sense thudding blows, slashing swords and plunging daggers in the midst of an almost imperceptible chaos of shouts.

We return to ground level and notice several witnesses of the slaughter: a group of women weep and embrace each other in the shelter of a colonnade; a dog barks at the crowd; the oxen drawing the cart, unable to move, are docile witnesses to the surrounding spectacle...

Theon totters along, wielding his sword with little conviction. Medorus follows him, observing the surrounding chaos with growing indignation.

Orestes rushes, standing between them and a group of four men charging towards them, shouting, hostile.

ORESTES

Sir, stay close to me!

Theon looks at him and decides to obey.

Medorus moves a short distance away from them and sees the Troublemaker literally beat the living daylights out of a Christian who holds up a crucifix as if it were going to protect him.

The Christian looks at Medorus and stretches out a pleading hand. Stunned by the blows, he bumbles something unintelligible. We perceive Medorus' desperation, conscious that he cannot intervene without giving himself away.

(CONTINUED)

33 CONTINUED: (2)

The Troublemaker turns towards him.

TROUBLEMAKER

You!

(getting to his feet and
facing Medorus)

What are you looking at?! Get in
there and fight!

Medorus stands rooted to the spot. The Troublemaker grabs his
hand and thrusts his dagger into it.

TROUBLEMAKER (CONT'D)

Go and fight!

Medorus looks at the dagger with a strange expression.

TROUBLEMAKER (CONT'D)

Are you deaf? I said, fight!!

Medorus explodes and plunges the knife into its owner's
stomach. He stabs him again and twists the knife with all the
brutality he can muster, while the Troublemaker crumples to
the ground...

All this before the astonished eyes of Theon.

Medorus turns to Theon, a blank look in his eyes. The latter
glances at the club Medorus is still holding... The other
raises it and begins to beat him around the head.

MEDORUS

I'm a Christian!
(another blow)

I'm a Christian!
(another blow)

I'm a Christian!!

Orestes finally manages to fight off the four men surrounding
him. Only then is he able to help Theon...

...by hacking mercilessly into Medorus.

34 EXT. LIBRARY: REAR COURTYARD - DAY

34

Hypatia walks hurriedly. She is followed by Davus, Synesius
and the rest of her pupils.

HESIQUIUS and another philosopher walk in the opposite
direction. In the distance a confusion of shouts and orders
can be heard.

OLD PHILOSOPHER

To the entrance! We have to defend
the entrance!

(CONTINUED)

HYPATIA
What's going on?!

HESIQUIUS
Our men are being chased back by
the Christians!

35 EXT. LIBRARY: SERAPEUM/FRONT COURTYARD/HILL - DAY 35

As she crosses the Serapeum, Hypatia finds a chaotic multitude. Teachers and students are pouring in, breathless and in some cases, badly wounded. Some are dragging in Christian prisoners at dagger point. There are blows, shouts, blood...

Almost all the students who, up to now, had stayed with Hypatia run to the front courtyard. Synesius and the other three Christians don't know what to do...

Hypatia walks back and forth, searching desperately.

Hypatia finally catches sight of Theon heading towards one side of the temple. The old man limps along, almost hanging off Orestes' arm. Hypatia rushes over.

HYPATIA
Father!

Orestes helps Theon to sit down by a column. One whole side of the old philosopher's face is covered in blood. Hypatia examines the wound anxiously.

HYPATIA (CONT'D)
What happened to you?!

ORESTES
(almost breathless)
It was his slave.

Brief silence. Hypatia cannot help turning momentarily to Davus. There is a dark exchange of looks between them.

HYPATIA
Bring water and some cloths.
Quickly! Father! Are you all right?

Hardly lifting his head, Theon nods. He is very pale and has a blank look in his eyes.

Orestes comes out into the front courtyard, heading towards the gate.

As he descends the temple steps, he passes by Synesius who is applying a makeshift tourniquet to a badly wounded student, with the help of his three fellow Christians.

CHRISTIAN STUDENT

(uneasy)

Synesius, we ought to get out of here...

Synesius pays no heed to the warning. He continues his task, to the pained cries of the wounded man.

SYNESIUS

Hold him still.

Orestes is at the other side of the courtyard, fighting on the outer esplanade which surrounds it. At the foot of the hill he can make out a dark multitude, chanting unintelligible slogans.

We join the group and discover that it consists of about a hundred parabalani. Ammonius is among those heading the procession. The monks march shaking their staffs, knives and scythes to the rhythm of their chants.

PARABALANI

Glory to God! Glory to God...!

AMMONIUS

Brothers! The Lord is with us...!

Orestes watches the approaching threat uneasily.

ORESTES

The parabalani are coming!!

Olympius runs towards the entrance. A quick glance is enough to make him react.

OLYMPIUS

Close the gates!

ORESTES

But there are still a lot of our men out there!

OLYMPIUS

May the gods protect them...Close the gates, I say!

Several men begin to close the two enormous halves of the imposing wooden door.

The parabalani continue approaching. Their clamour has become a deafening roar and their steady march a frenzied stampede...

The pagans push with all their might... The gate thuds closed in the nick of time.

Synesius and his Christian companions exchange worried looks.

(CONTINUED)

Students and philosophers rush to bar the door and shore it up with oblique wooden beams. The rest try to corner the Christian intruders trapped within the walls.

A Christian slashes the air with a dagger, shrieking like a maniac. Davus leaps at him and downs him with one swinging punch. They both crash dramatically to the ground. Two students rush to help the slave.

OLYMPIUS (CONT'D)

Don't kill him!

(approaching them)

He's our hostage now. So are all the others. Do you hear me, everyone? The Christians are our hostages!

The order is echoed through the courtyard, while Synesius and his three fellow Christians approach Hypatia with ill-disguised nervousness. Just then, Orestes and Synesius come face to face. Their eyes lock. You could cut the tension with a knife.

OLYMPIUS (V.O.) (CONT'D)

Take our wounded to the temple and the Christians to the cellars! Those of you with a good eye and a good aim, take positions on the wall....!

As he speaks, the PAGAN PRIEST points to Synesius.

PAGAN PRIEST

Olympius, this one is a Christian.

All eyes are fixed on Synesius who is staring at the ground serenely.

INFORMER

(pointing to his companions)

Yes, and these two as well...

PAGAN PRIEST

What shall we do with them?

Someone shouts from the back:

HESIQUIUS

Leave them alone! They are on our side!

A babel of opinions is unleashed, but Olympius raises his hand to command silence.

(CONTINUED)

OLYMPIUS

If they are Christians, they must
go to the cellars.

Hypatia and her students shudder at this order and hurriedly
close ranks around the Christians.

HYPATIA

Olympius, if you are going to
imprison my disciples, you will
have to imprison me with them!

OLYMPIUS

If necessary, I will!

Suddenly, Orestes positions himself right in front of Hypatia
and his companions. He brandishes his sword at Olympius,
glaring icily.

ORESTES

If anyone dares to lay a finger on
one of my brothers, I swear I'll
run him through.

His threat seems to work: nobody dares obey Olympius' order.

A voice from the battlements breaks the tension.

STUDENT 1

Hey! Look at this!

Olympius and a few others walk off towards the wall.
Hypatia's disciples remain on guard as the crowd disperses.

Hypatia looks at Orestes with a sparkle in her eyes. Her
voice shakes.

HYPATIA

Orestes. Thank you.

Olympius reaches the ramparts and takes a careful look...

Outside, the mob, headed by the parabalani, has grown into a
gigantic human tide which covers practically the whole
hillside.

A battalion of soldiers on horseback, dressed in the style of
the Roman Empire, tries to contain the uprising as it makes
its way towards the main entrance.

The roar of the crowd is terrifying.

STUDENT 1

(very frightened)

Since when were there so many
Christians?!

(CONTINUED)

35 CONTINUED: (4)

OLYMPIUS
(with a sombre look)
We shall have to negotiate.

36 EXT. LIBRARY: COLONNADE - REAR COURTYARD - NIGHT 36

Hypatia and her disciples prepare to sleep in a corner of the courtyard, some distance away from the rest of the pagans. Beyond the walls, the Lord's Prayer can be heard being prayed en masse.

HYPATIA'S DISCIPLE 1
What can we expect from a Christian emperor, except to be put to the sword?

HYPATIA'S DISCIPLE 2
I'll settle for still being alive when his verdict arrives.

HYPATIA
No one is to leave the group for now.

As she gets comfortable, Hypatia casts a sideways glance at Orestes who is lying down at the other side of the communal bed, unaware of the conversation.

HYPATIA'S DISCIPLE 2
Are they going to pray all night?

HYPATIA
Davus, you get some rest, too.

DAVUS
Where do you want me to sleep, lady?

Hypatia gives her answer a moment's thought.

HYPATIA
Here, at my feet. That'll be best.

Davus hurriedly lies on the stone floor, curled up at his mistress's feet.

FADE TO:

All the pagans are asleep...

Four of Hypatia's group get to their feet furtively and begin to tiptoe away, under cover of the shadows. Suddenly, one of them returns and approaches Hypatia.

(CONTINUED)

CHRISTIAN STUDENT
(in a whisper)
Synesius! What are you doing?!

Synesius, who we now clearly recognize, crouches beside the philosopher and strokes her hair with his hand.

SYNESIUS
Lady, sister, mother...

CHRISTIAN STUDENT
Synesius! Let's go!

SYNESIUS
...may God bless and protect you.

Synesius makes a sign of the cross over Hypatia's head and steals away.

Curled up at the philosopher's feet, Davus has just witnessed the scene. Hypatia mutters in her sleep and turns over. The slave immediately adjusts his position on the ground.

In turning over, Hypatia's foot has ended up very close to Davus's hand. The slave's breathing becomes jerky, his eyes open: this new situation drives away his sleep.

He now holds his breath as his fingers move nearer and nearer...

...until they brush her skin.

Davus sinks into ecstasy. His gaze alternates between his hand next to Hypatia's foot, and the mantle of stars which covers them, the sole witnesses and accomplices of his audacity.

FADE TO BLACK.

A ball made of rags rolls bumpily across the courtyard floor. A kick suddenly changes its trajectory...

A group of men are playing some sort of sport. The sun beats down on them. Underneath the colonnades, several spectators half-heartedly cheer them on.

HYPATIA'S DISCIPLE 3 (V.O.)
Indeed we obtain the same utility
from slaves as we do from
domesticated animals...

FADE TO:

38 EXT. LIBRARY: FRONT COURTYARD - DAY 38

An old man walks in circles beneath the searing sun. The chirping of the crickets sounds louder than ever.

HYPATIA'S DISCIPLE 3 (V.O.)
Both with their bodily strength
help us to satisfy the needs of our
existence...

FADE TO:

39 INT. LIBRARY: LATRINES - DAY 39

Three students sit on a communal latrine. Filth and flies are everywhere.

HYPATIA'S DISCIPLE 3 (V.O.)
Nature herself has made it so,
since she formed the bodies of
freemen different from those of
slaves...

40 INT. LIBRARY: HYPATIA'S LECTURE HALL - DAY 40

One of Hypatia's students, standing on a tiered seat, reads aloud from a scroll. His appearance, like that of his fellows listening to him, is very neglected.

HYPATIA'S DISCIPLE 3
Endowing the latter with the
necessary vigour for the gruelling
tasks of society, and the former,
on the other hand...

A loud commotion forces him to interrupt his reading. All the disciples, as if they already knew the cause, look towards the exit with expressions of impatience. The reader prepares to continue...

HYPATIA
That will do. We will continue with
Aristotle tomorrow.

The young men race to the exit, some tripping over one another.

Hypatia, Davus and Orestes are the only ones who show a certain calm and presence of mind, although they also leave.

41 EXT. LIBRARY: FRONT COURTYARD - DAY 41

In the centre of the courtyard, Olympius and two other priests are carrying out a hectic share-out of food. Each one has a sack from which he is taking chunks of stale bread.

(CONTINUED)

Hypatia and Davus elbow their way through the rabble and, like the rest, have no option but to reach out at full stretch in the hope of a mouthful of bread. Olympius's voice booms out, trying to impose order.

OLYMPIUS

Make way for the teachers and
priests, then the disciples!

PAGAN PRIEST

Do as you are told! First the
teachers and priests!

For a moment, the surging throng seems out of control.

OLYMPIUS

Back, you slaves! Get to the back!

A student grabs Davus from behind and strikes him.

STUDENT 2

Are you deaf, you cretin? You
slaves go last!

For a moment, Davus's sinister expression threatens a response to the blow...

His eyes meet Hypatia's; she has witnessed the scene. He lowers his head and moves off.

A dice rolls over the ground stopping on a six.

Theon, lying on a bed of cushions and with his head still bandaged, gives a frown of disappointment. He picks up the dice and shakes the cup again while Hypatia sits at his side. Several other convalescent patients sit around.

THEON

The three won't come out. It is a
disaster.

HYPATIA

Leave the dice. Have you been seen
to today?

Theon shakes his head vaguely. Hypatia begins to unwind his bandage.

THEON

My child, promise me that when I'm
gone you won't remember this
fragile old man.

HYPATIA

I promise.

THEON

Remember me as I was before...
Before, when I could still think,
when we worked together, and...and
I listened to you...How could I be
so foolish?! Seeing you here,
locked up because of me.

HYPATIA

Father, don't...

Hypatia manages to remove the bandage just as Theon turns towards her. The old man's eyes and lips are quivering.

THEON

I wanted you to be free.

HYPATIA

I am free.

Hypatia is greatly disconcerted. Theon turns his head away as he shakes the dice. She then notices, with a lump in her throat, the dreadful state of his wound.

43 EXT. LIBRARY: FRONT COURTYARD/HILL - DAY

43

STUDENT 1, sitting beside Orestes on the top of the wall, smiles mischievously as he leans over: several dozen Christians are on watch, clustered into small camps.

STUDENT 1

Eh, Galileans! What's that
carpenter god of yours doing now?!

A flurry of protests comes from the other side.

CHRISTIAN

Building coffins for you scum!

The young pagan smiles even wider.

STUDENT 1

Tell him I'd rather have a nice
bed!

Almost immediately, a stone hurtles towards him. The youth shelters behind the wall, creased up with laughter.

Orestes watches, inscrutable.

44 EXT. LIBRARY: FRONT COURTYARD/SERAPEUM - NIGHT

44

About fifteen people are sitting around a bonfire blazing in the middle of the stairs leading up to the Serapeum. The dim, flickering light makes it difficult to recognize their faces.

(CONTINUED)

At the back of the temple, through the columns we can discern Olympus, making an offering to the gods. The voices of the priests accompanying him and of the convalescents join together in a pagan prayer.

Orestes, sitting near Hypatia, looks towards the temple, dejectedly.

ORESTES

So tell me, where are the gods now?
We might as well look for others.

Hypatia turns her eyes heavenwards; there's a new moon and the stars glimmer more brightly than ever.

HYPATIA'S DISCIPLE 2

Others? Which? The god of the
Christians, perhaps?

Orestes avoids answering, but from his expression we can guess that it has passed through his mind.

HYPATIA'S DISCIPLE 2 (CONT'D)

Such boldness!

ORESTES

What do you think, lady? Am I so
bold?

The philosopher slowly rises, without taking her eyes off the heavens.

HYPATIA

Put it out.
(pointing to the bonfire)
Put the fire out.

Several men rush to disperse the burning embers, while Hypatia climbs the stairs and stands in the temple entrance. Without the light of the flames, the starry mantle is even more visible: the Milky Way is clearly outlined, dividing the sky into two.

HYPATIA (CONT'D)

(to Orestes)
Bold you are indeed. I recall
something you said...

ORESTES

Me?

HYPATIA

That day you criticized the
heavenly mechanism, you called
it...
(charged with mystery)
Whimsical. Do you remember...?

(CONTINUED)

Orestes thinks back.

ORESTES

Yes, although actually I was
criticizing Ptolemy for
complicating everything with his
epicycles... Or maybe I'm just
simple-minded.

The philosopher turns her eyes once more towards the heavens.

HYPATIA

The heavens must be simple!

Orestes is a little confused. He surreptitiously leans over
to one of his companions.

ORESTES

(whispering)

So, am I right or...?

HYPATIA

What if there were a simpler
explanation for the Wanderers?

For a few seconds, no one answers. In the end it is old
Hesiquius who intervenes.

HESIQUIUS

There is.

All eyes turn on the old man.

HESIQUIUS (CONT'D)

...But it is so absurd and so old
that no one gives it any credit.

HYPATIA'S DISCIPLE 2

What theory is that?

HYPATIA

(to Hesiquius)

You speak of Aristarchus.

The old man nods. Then he addresses the other.

HESIQUIUS

Aristarchus maintained that the
Earth moves. The strange behaviour
of the wanderers was nothing more
than an optical illusion caused by
our own movement in combination
with theirs...around the sun.

HYPATIA'S DISCIPLE 3

A heliocentric model...

(CONTINUED)

HESIQUIUS

That's right. The sun would be in the centre, as befits its dignity as king of the stars...

HYPATIA

...making Earth just another wanderer.

HYPATIA'S DISCIPLE 3

Where can the books of Aristarchus be consulted?

HYPATIA

Everything we know of him is through the writings of others.

HESIQUIUS

His work was lost in the fire in the mother Library, when Julius Caesar came to Alexandria. That is why we must protect this library at all costs. This is all that remains of everything man has ever known.

Pause.

DAVUS(V.O.)

However...

Pause. Hypatia looks around the faces of those present, almost unrecognizable in the dark.

HYPATIA

Who speaks?

Davus appears next to her, half-hidden behind a column and drops to his knees.

DAVUS

Forgive me, mistress. I was listening...

HYPATIA

Speak up.

DAVUS

If...if, for example, we travel on a cart or an animal, the wind blows in our face. In the same way, the movement of the Earth would provoke a strong wind... And birds would lose their way in flight. And the sea would always be rough...

(CONTINUED)

HESIQUIUS

I told you Aristarchus's hypothesis
makes no sense at all.

Hypatia approaches Davus, still on his knees, while the rest
continue debating. She sits next to him and whispers in his
ear.

HYPATIA

I'm sure what you said can be
refuted...

(smiling)

But right now, I don't know how!

Davus also smiles. They exchange a lingering look...

HYPATIA'S DISCIPLE 3

Chaos.

Everyone turns their eyes skywards.

The sun is at its zenith.

Six imperial guards beat their drums loudly at the Library
doors. Before them, a battalion of 200 soldiers, three rows
deep, stands facing an expectant multitude (1000 people).

Prominent among those gathered there is Theophilus with his
full retinue of priests, including the Young Deacon at his
side.

A delegation on horseback, headed by an apparently high-
ranking Roman official, makes its way through the crowd.

OFFICER 1

Make way for the prefect! Make way
for the prefect Evagrius!

Inside the courtyard, the insurgents also head towards the
gates. Their faces are racked with fatigue and uncertainty.

Theon, still bandaged and looking very unwell, not wanting to
miss this gathering, clings on to his staff and his
daughter's arm.

Evagrius's horse stops in front of the great gateway. The
drum rolls cease.

Evagrius cautiously holds out his hand and one of his
subordinates hands him a rolled up parchment. A deathly hush
falls.

(CONTINUED)

EVAGRIUS

Listen, one and all! Prepare to
hear and obey the verdict of our
emperor!

Evagrius unrolls the parchment and reads it, facing the
gates.

EVAGRIUS (CONT'D)

"I, Flavius Theodosius Augustus,
emperor and supreme head of the
provinces of the Orient, having
been informed of the events which
recently took place in the city of
Alexandria, do hereby declare and
command that the insurgents shall
be pardoned and freed and not a
single one of them shall be
tortured or executed..."

Evagrius's reading is interrupted by an angry roar from the
Christians, behind him. The imperial guards raise their
swords and shields in a defensive position.

EXT. LIBRARY: FRONT COURTYARD - DAY

Inside, the pagans receive the news with excitement and
enthusiasm. Many embrace each other. Some even start a
typical Alexandrian round of applause...

The drums resume their solemn tattoo, subduing the commotion
on both sides of the wall. Evagrius' voice is heard once
more.

EVAGRIUS (V.O.)

(reading)

"In exchange for my generosity, the
insurgents will abandon the
Serapeum and the Library
immediately..."

EXT. LIBRARY: HILL - DAY

Evagrius continues reading, his face inscrutable:

EVAGRIUS

"...allowing the Christians to
enter and dispose of the premises
as they see fit."

This time jubilation erupts in the Christian ranks. Many
raise their crucifixes on high, their fervour aroused to
fever pitch.

50 EXT. LIBRARY: FRONT COURTYARD - DAY

50

Astonishment, fear and indignation are stamped on the pagans' faces.

PHILOSOPHER 2

As they see fit?! What can we
expect? They'll destroy everything!

Theon still has the strength to squeeze his daughter's arm.
He looks at her disconsolately...

THEON

The books...

...his anguish contagious.

OLD PHILOSOPHER

What do we do now?

PHILOSOPHER 1

We cannot let this happen! Not
after all we've been through!

Meanwhile, the clamour outside is subdued once more by the
hammer of the drums.

51 EXT. LIBRARY: HILL - DAY

51

This time Evagrius speaks in his own right.

EVAGRIUS

The pagans will leave by the
stables!
From there you will be escorted to
the Agora. Obey this instant!

Another surge of Christian cheers behind him and hundreds of
crosses held on high.

MULTITUDE

Hallelujah! Hallelujah!

Evagrius addresses one of his subordinates.

EVAGRIUS

Send half the regiment to the other
side. We'll send the rest later.

OFFICER 1

Yes, sir.

Another soldier, as restless as his horse, approaches
Evagrius.

(CONTINUED)

51 CONTINUED:

OFFICER 2
Prefect, we won't be able to
contain this mob for long.

Evagrius glances at the Christian horde, whose jubilation is bordering on ecstasy. He makes brief eye contact with Theophilus, whose lips are pursed in a subtle smirk of satisfaction.

52 INT. LIBRARY: MAIN BUILDING - DAY 52

Hypatia, Theon, Orestes and ten other students rush to and fro in a large hall full of bookshelves.

They are all frantically emptying the shelves full of codices and rolls of parchment, throwing them to the floor.

THEON
Set aside the lesser works!

HYPATIA'S DISCIPLE 3
Which are the lesser works???

The commotion outside becomes louder...

53 EXT. LIBRARY: FRONT COURTYARD - DAY 53

From the top of the wall, STUDENT 1 shouts a warning to his companions:

STUDENT 1
The soldiers are withdrawing!

Over the horrified faces of philosophers and students we hear the roar of a human avalanche charging at the gate...

54 INT. LIBRARY: SERAPEUM - DAY 54

In the makeshift hospital, practically all the sick and wounded have been evacuated.

Davus wanders aimlessly among the men and women crossing the room, laden with jewels, gold and silver.

DAVUS
Have you seen my mistress?

STUDENT 2
Come, slave!

Davus turns and sees two men struggling to drag a sumptuous chest. He runs towards them.

DAVUS
Have you seen Hypat...?!

(CONTINUED)

54 CONTINUED:

STUDENT 2
Be quiet and help!

Davus obeys with sullen reluctance.

55 INT. LIBRARY: MAIN BUILDING - DAY 55

Hypatia hurriedly examines the labels on the scrolls.

Beside her, Orestes roughly scoops the scrolls off a shelf onto his mantle.

ORESTES
We cannot carry so many!

HYPATIA
Get help! Where has my slave gone?!

THEON
And bring sacks!

Hypatia gives her father a concerned look.

HYPATIA
(to Orestes)
Please, get my father out of here.

Orestes nods.

56 EXT. LIBRARY: FRONT COURTYARD - DAY 56

Several student and slaves reinforce the gate with wooden beams. Even so, it shudders and creaks under the pounding blows of what seems to be a battering ram.

57 EXT. LIBRARY: STABLE EXIT - DAY 57

The pagans rush through an empty stable. In the background, at the other side of the exit, we see two long rows of soldiers forming a sort of corridor down the length of a slope.

Olympius is next to the door, hurrying his companions on.

OLYMPIUS
Come on, quickly!

A young man passes by him, looking worried.

PHILOSOPHER 2
Hypatia and her students are still
in the Library.

OLYMPIUS
Have they lost their minds?!

(CONTINUED)

Olympius seems to think for a moment what to do. Then he shakes his head, the decision taken.

OLYMPIUS (CONT'D)

If that's what they want, let them
burn!

Davus finally finds his mistress with several of her disciples, desperately salvaging scrolls from the shelves. The philosopher's mantle is so full of parchments that it seems about to burst.

DAVUS

Lady...

Hypatia turns to him and flashes him an accusing look.

HYPATIA

What are you standing there for?!
(pointing to a sack of
scrolls behind Davus)
Pick up that sack!

Then she carries on with her task, completely oblivious to the approaching danger. Davus is overwhelmed at her irresponsibility.

DAVUS

But, lady, you must leave...

Hypatia turns to him, in a fury.

HYPATIA

Pick that up, I say!!

Davus obeys awkwardly, somewhat taken aback by the sudden aggressiveness of his mistress. As he crouches to pick up the sack, Hypatia returns to her desperate rescue of scrolls.

HYPATIA (CONT'D)

You and your kind...never around
when you're needed!

Her words are like a knife in the ribs to Davus. He just stands there speechless. This irritates Hypatia even more and she blazes a final look in his direction.

HYPATIA (CONT'D)

Hurry up, you idiot!

The slave turns and shuffles off, the sack over his shoulder.

59 EXT. LIBRARY: FRONT COURTYARD - DAY 59

The next onslaught splinters the gate badly. The battering ram pokes into the courtyard. The pagans who were resisting the relentless pounding run for their lives.

STUDENT 5

Run!

60 INT. LIBRARY: MAIN BUILDING - DAY 60

A student races up to Hypatia and her group.

HYPATIA'S DISCIPLE 2

There's no time! There's no time!

The rest of the students grab a few last scrolls and make a run for it.

Just then, Hypatia's loses hold of her pile of scrolls and they scatter all over the floor. She immediately crouches to gather them up, but Orestes grabs her from behind.

ORESTES

Lady...

From outside comes the loud crunch of the battering ram smashing into the timbers of the gate...

61 EXT. LIBRARY: FRONT COURTYARD/HILL - DAY 61

Finally, the great gate gives way to the final onslaught of the battering ram.

A raging horde bursts into the courtyard. Many shout and leap about, others run around inspecting the premises.

62 EXT. LIBRARY: STABLE EXIT - DAY 62

Davus walks towards the exit, head bowed, dejected. He is overtaken by two philosophers pulling a small cart full of books and valuables. Davus lets them pass in front of him and his eyes fall on a bunch of ornate swords...

The glint of the swords reflects onto his face...

Davus reacts sharply, as if a spring had been released inside him: he tosses the sack he is carrying onto the cart and grabs one of the swords...

He turns and retraces his steps. The clamour of the Christians now echoes around the whole interior.

Hypatia, Orestes and five other students, laden with scrolls, rush towards Davus. He speeds past them, his eyes miles away, and runs off in the opposite direction. Hypatia stops, puzzled.

(CONTINUED)

HYPATIA

Davus!

Davus stops at the sound of his mistress' voice, but doesn't turn round.

HYPATIA (CONT'D)

Where are you going?!

The slave finally turns to face her and concentrates into what seems to be his final look, all his hate, confusion and frustration.

Orestes believes he can interpret the slave's attitude and intervenes:

ORESTES

Lady, let him be.

(with a degree of
admiration)

He is ready to die for our gods...

Mistress and slave stand looking at each other for a few seconds. Davus clenches his teeth and half closes his eyes, trying not to cry. Hypatia shakes her head, perfectly understanding what is really happening to her slave.

HYPATIA

Davus, no...!

Orestes manages to shepherd his teacher towards the exit, though she is still able to cast a couple of fleeting glances at her slave...

...who is returning once more to the interior.

The flow of pagans spills down the hillside, flanked by the two columns of imperial soldiers. Some Christians have approached this area to shout insults at those escaping.

Hypatia looks back in desperation, as if yearning to see Davus reappear.

Davus is frozen to the spot, his sword raised. In his eyes we now see a whirlpool of doubts. He really has no idea what he plans to do...

Suddenly, just behind him, he hears the roar of the crowd. He hardly has time to turn round: a veritable human tidal wave engulfs him and practically sweeps him to the central area of the courtyard. There its force diminishes as many spread out into the adjacent rooms and corridors.

(CONTINUED)

Davus wanders aimlessly, looking from one to another, though no one seems to look back at him, no doubt taking him for just another Christian...

AMMONIUS (V.O.)

Eh, slave!

Davus turns and makes out Ammonius in the distance, perched on a niche in the wall, next to the bust of a philosopher. The monk waves his arm in greeting.

AMMONIUS (CONT'D)

Davus! Davus, the slave-us! Ha, ha, ha!

Ammonius points to the bust.

AMMONIUS (CONT'D)

Help me with this!

(he reads a plaque next to
the statue)

Eratosthenes of Cyrene. Let's teach
the master a lesson.

Ammonius slips into the niche and, resting his back against the wall, gives the bust a mighty shove with his feet.

For a few seconds Davus does nothing. He simply observes in a detached way how the monk puts heart and soul into consummating his act of vandalism.

Davus's expression begins to cloud, smouldering with a hatred we have never seen in him.

The hatred turns to anger with each quickening step the slave takes towards Ammonius. The monk becomes very uneasy when he sees what is coming towards him...

Davus reaches him and clambers into the niche. He places his feet against the philosopher's bust and pushes with all his might. Such is the pressure that the statue gives way and topples immediately, smashing to smithereens on the ground.

Ammonius bursts out laughing, euphoric. Davus's irate expression is slightly softened by the monk's jubilation, making it even more disturbing.

All around him the Christian horde has begun to ravage everything in sight. Some steal; others rip the plaster off the walls, topple the statues of the philosophers...

CHRISTIAN HORDE

Hallelujah! Hallelujah...!

Ammonius jumps down from the wall and shouts along with his companions, raising his arms.

(CONTINUED)

64 CONTINUED: (2)

The cry hammers deep into Davus's being, like a pounding throb. From the slight movement of his lips we see that he too has unconsciously begun to murmur it...

Finally Davus jumps down from the niche and joins Ammonius, leaping and shouting.

DAVUS
Hallelujah! Hallelujah!
Hallelujah!!

65 INT. LIBRARY: MAIN BUILDING - DAY

65

Ammonius, Davus and five other men are zealously sweeping shelf-fuls of books and scrolls onto the floor where they are trampled underfoot.

In a corner stands the replica of Ptolemy's model made by Davus. The slave gazes at the apparatus with a mixture of infinite sadness and murderous hate...

He sets off towards it, grabbing a stool in his path...

He slams the stool onto his handiwork, smashing it into pieces. He pounds it again and again as if wanting to crush the life out of it.

Someone unrolls one of the scrolls, gives a scowl of contempt and spits on it.

ANGRY CHRISTIAN
Pagan filth!

Then he tosses the scroll into the air. The parchment unfolds like a streamer. The others decide to imitate him. The room is inundated with flying scrolls.

Ammonius and Davus do likewise, screaming and giggling like children.

Our point of view rises to the ceiling. We hear shouts, noises and hysterical laughter over the image of a beautiful vault decorated with magnificent frescoes with mythological motifs.

One or two flying scrolls whirl across frame as our panning shot continues its course until it reaches the floor on the other side of the room, leaving the image upside down, showing for a few instants a topsy-turvy world.

THEOPHILUS (V.O.)
You heard the pagans say...!

66 INT. LIBRARY: SERAPEUM - DAY

66

Several ropes have lassoed the statue of Serapis. From one side, Theophilus addresses a multitude of sweating Christians covered in lime and soot.

THEOPHILUS

...that if anyone dare to lay a hand on this statue, the earth would open, and chaos would be unleashed...!

Ten men pull the ropes taut, signalling bystanders to move aside.

THEOPHILUS (CONT'D)

...that the fires of hell would burn us and the heavens would fall from the skies! Well, now we will see!

The men pull on the ropes with all their strength and the image of Serapis topples, smashing into several pieces against the ground and raising a huge cloud of dust. The tremor is so spectacular that for a moment it seems the prophecy has been fulfilled...

The figure of Theophilus re-emerges through the dust cloud, his arms raised on high.

THEOPHILUS (CONT'D)

We live!

The uproar is deafening. Davus shouts, euphoric, like one more Christian.

CROWD

We live! We live!

67 EXT. LIBRARY: REAR COURTYARD - DUSK

67

A bird's eye view of the Library on fire, with piles of scrolls burning in the courtyard.

68 EXT. HYPATIA'S HOUSE: ROOFTOP - DUSK

68

Hypatia watches in the distance the pillage of the Library.

ASPASIUS, the elderly slave who we saw earlier reading to Theon, appears behind her. Hypatia turns round.

ASPASIUS

The master's wound is festering.

(CONTINUED)

Pause. Hypatia and the slave exchange grim looks.

HYPATIA

I know.

Aspasius withdraws.

Hypatia bursts into bitter weeping. Her sobs are strange, spasmodic, those of a woman unused to tears, caught unawares by grief.

69 INT. HYPATIA'S HOUSE: STUDY - NIGHT

69

The crickets' strident chirping invades the stillness inside.

Hypatia is now crouching, examining among the sacks some of the codices and scrolls she managed to rescue. Her cheeks are still tear-stained.

A presence makes her turn...

Framed in the doorway is Davus, a sword gripped in his hand. His appearance is piteous. He is greasy, and stained with blood, lime and soot.

HYPATIA

Davus...!

Hypatia leaps to her feet, at once astonished and thrilled. She runs towards him and embraces him with all her might. Davus maintains the grip on his sword, not reacting, an icy stare in his eyes...

In a sudden fit, he grabs his mistress by the neck and pushes her against a wall. Hypatia opens her mouth to shout, but Davus covers it roughly with his hand...

He gives rein to his passion and licks his mistress's neck, like a dog, taking his hand from her mouth and groping her breasts.

Hypatia trembles with fear but no longer tries to shout. There is a certain detachment in her eyes, as if her mind were trying to block out this aggression.

Davus rubs his whole body against hers for a while longer. Then he takes her chin in one hand, trying to make his mistress turn and look at him. When at last their eyes meet, her expression is devastating. Hypatia doesn't transmit the least flicker of hatred, but neither does it contain a hint of affection.

Davus cannot hold her stare and goes to pieces. He embraces her, sobbing like a child.

(CONTINUED)

They remain this way for some time, Hypatia's vacant stare in contrast to her slave's bitter sobbing.

Slowly, with clumsy, trembling fingers, Davus hands her his sword. Hypatia holds it loosely in one hand, while Davus's body slides down hers until he is on his knees...

Davus manages to control his crying. He takes the sword by the blade, with both hands, bows his head and places the point on the back of his neck. He waits...

Our point of view remains with the slave and the shot of the sword over his head, so we are unable to see Hypatia's reaction to this turn of events...

After a few seconds, the sword is withdrawn from Davus's neck and flung to the ground. Davus continues to hang his head, though his eyes dart nervously from side to side...

Hypatia lowers her hands to the slave's neck and very slowly unties the leather straps fastening the metal collar around his neck. She removes it.

Davus, not understanding a thing, looks up. Hypatia, whose face we never see, responds in measured tones:

HYPATIA (V.O.) (CONT'D)
You are free. Go.

Davus is speechless. Before he can say or do anything, Hypatia pulls away from him and walks slowly out of the room.

Davus remains on his knees, staring at the collar on the ground. Gradually he seems to become aware of the immediate consequence of his liberation and once again falls victim to anguish and pain.

Carrying all he possesses in a small bundle, Davus walks aimlessly among the passers by, like a stray dog. His eyes reflect enormous uncertainty and infinite abandonment.

A town crier, standing on a raised spot beside a fountain, reads at the top of his voice from a wooden board.

CRIER
...henceforth in Alexandria only
Christian and Jewish worship shall
be permitted! Pagan sacrifices,
worshipping pagan symbols and
visiting pagan temples shall no
longer be allowed...!

Davus is swallowed up by the crowd, as our point of view stretches ahead down the immense avenue.

70 CONTINUED:

CRIER (CONT'D)
Should anyone commit such an act or
dare raise his eyes to the statues
of his former gods, he shall be
punished without clemency!

In the distance, the hill crowned by the Library, its ruins
still smoking.

FADE TO BLACK.

71 EXT. THE EARTH/EGYPT/ALEXANDRIA - DAY

71

Fade in.

Image of our planet from outer space. In the background,
rendered almost unintelligible by the reverberation, a litany
can be heard.

A caption reads:

*After its capture by the
Christians, the Library was rebuilt
and turned into their main
stronghold.*

We zoom towards Egypt with our powerful lens. The image must
have the same quality and precision as those obtained by
satellite.

A caption reads:

*Many pagans converted to the new
faith and Alexandria enjoyed a time
of peace while the Roman Empire
finally split into two parts.*

We approach a city on the Mediterranean coast: the
lighthouse, situated on a nearby islet, as well as its
spectacular network of streets and avenues help us to
identify it as Alexandria.

A caption reads:

*Christians saw this as a sign of
the end of the world announced in
the Gospels and decided to prepare
themselves by living holier
lives... now only complicated by
the presence of the Jews.*

We descend even further and the hill with the ruins of the
Library comes into view. We pass through the front courtyard,
packed with people, stopping on the open dome of the temple.
We move down inside: a group of ten or so priests has
congregated around a corpse surrounded by ornaments.

(CONTINUED)

71 CONTINUED:

A caption reads:

The Library, 15 years later.

72 INT. LIBRARY: SERAPEUM - DAY

72

We enter the scene: the litany, chanted by the gathered priests, is now intelligible. One of them, the Young Deacon, hereafter CYRIL, now in his early thirties, is kneeling beside the laid out body... of Theophilus.

Inside the temple a mere hundred or so nobles and priests assist at the ceremony.

CONGREGATION

Amen.

Cyril, overcome with emotion, gazes upon the body of Theophilus. He takes the dead man's right hand and places it on his head, closing his eyes and muttering something between his teeth.

Then he withdraws Theophilus' black headdress and kisses his forehead...

73 EXT. LIBRARY: FRONT COURTYARD - DAY

73

The former landscaped courtyard is now a forum of workshops and stables. Hypatia's classroom has also been turned into a horse stall.

The crowd outside waits patiently under the scorching sun. Many have their hands together in prayer.

Among those gathered we can detect expressions of grief but also of hope...

Suddenly, a unison explosion of jubilation.

Cyril appears at the foot of the temple stairs, with Theophilus's headdress on his own head. With a sweeping gesture he blesses the whole square.

We now discover Davus and Ammonius among the faithful, both hooded, in the garb of the parabalani. Davus's face has hardened over the years and he now sports a rather unkempt beard. Ammonius is as scrawny and gawky as ever.

Davus and Ammonius cheer and applaud the bishop enthusiastically.

74 EXT. STREET IN ALEXANDRIA 1 - DAY

74

Davus, Ammonius and ten other parabalani march down a street in two rows of six, with a rather soldierly air.

(CONTINUED)

74 CONTINUED:

Another group of twelve parabalani passes by in the opposite direction. Some raise their hand in greeting.

75 EXT. LEPERS' LANE - DAY 75

Three parabalani carry away dead bodies in a filthy side street full of lepers.

Apart from protecting their hands with rags, each of them has partially closed his hood with a cord around the nose and mouth. Even so, we easily recognize the eyes of Davus and Ammonius.

76 EXT. OPEN SPACE - DAY 76

Davus, Ammonius and their companion pull the rags off their hands and toss them onto a pyre along with the bodies they were carrying.

The third member of their group is ISIDORUS, rough-looking and rather dirtier than his companions.

77 EXT. MARKET - DAY 77

The twelve parabalani continue their personal street patrol. A woman steps into their path carrying a basket of figs.

WOMAN WITH FIGS

Eh, parabalani!

The woman shares the figs among them.

WOMAN WITH FIGS (CONT'D)

Here. For the holiest of holy men.
Bless you!

78 EXT. MARKET - DAY 78

At a fish stall, surrounded by inquisitive onlookers, the stall keeper and a customer are involved in a loud argument. Ammonius is acting as mediator.

AMMONIUS

Be quiet, both of you!

(to the customer)

Let's see, you...if you don't like
the fish, give it back!

CUSTOMER

How can I? I've already eaten it! I
want my money back! My money!

79 EXT. STREET IN ALEXANDRIA 3 - DAY 79

The group of monks now surrounds a man and woman dressed in the purest Hellenistic style. One of them speaks in a threatening tone (HIERAX).

(CONTINUED)

79 CONTINUED:

HIERAX
(to the man)
Aren't you ashamed? How can you let
her parade herself around like
that?

The man hurriedly covers his wife's head.

80 EXT. SQUARE - DAY 80

The parabalani cool off beside a fountain. Several of them
have sat down on a corner, eating figs.

81 EXT. UNSURFACED STREET - DAY 81

The squad of monks recite a Psalm: 59 (58)

PARABALANI
Deliver me from my enemies, Oh God,
defend me from those that rise up
against me, deliver me from
evildoers...

Meanwhile, the monks each pick up small pebbles from the
ground, weigh them in their hands and pocket them.

PARABALANI (CONT'D)
...and save me from bloodthirsty
men; see how they lie in wait for
me...

Ammonius chants this last line glancing sideways at a troop
of imperial soldiers who are keeping a suspicious eye on the
parabalani's strange task.

82 EXT. AMPHITHEATRE - DAY 82

In the same scenario where, years ago, we witnessed Orestes'
declaration of love, we are now watching a performance of
dance.

The spectators, almost all male jews with plaits, laugh and
applaud. All of them wear a small white shawl with blue
stripes over their shoulders (thallit).

83 EXT. AMPHITHEATRE, COLUMNS - DAY 83

The group of twelve parabalani stealthily spread out behind
the columns which demarcated the theatre.

Ammonius signals to his companions to crouch down even more.

Davus, hidden behind a column with Isidorus, casts a quick
glance at the stage.

(CONTINUED)

At a sign from Ammonius, the parabalani dash from behind the columns and, from the top tier of seats, begin to pelt the lower tiers of seats and the stage with stones.

DAVUS

Sinners! Sinners!

AMMONIUS

Obscene Jews! Sinners!

The victims try to protect themselves as best they can from the deluge of stones, and run off in the direction of the stage. The dancers stampede towards the pit.

The parabalani, protected by the columns, hurl stones dementedly...

A shaft of bright light floods down through the central skylight of a domed room. An old man with plaits, in rabbi's clothing and surrounded by five others just like him, stands ranting and raving...

...in front of Cyril, who with considerably greater presence of mind, stands patiently, safeguarded by his own retinue.

RABBI

What right do they have?! What authority?! They are just a bunch of good-for-nothing thugs, pack animals who...?!

A voice interrupts the Rabbi from the other side of the room.

VOICE FROM THE OTHER SIDE

Joran, my dear friend, why don't you calm down and let bishop Cyril speak in his own defence.

The Rabbi grunts and nods.

Cyril addresses the speaker who we have not yet seen, modulating the tone of his words with honeyed charm.

CYRIL

Prefect, the blessed parabalani, whom he has just called beasts of burden, devote themselves, true enough, to carrying burdens. The crippled, the sick, the paralytic, the lepers...!

In the midst of his speech, we finally discover the identity of the prefect, seated on his sumptuous throne: it is Orestes, whose features have appreciably matured, although his eyes have by no means lost their impetuous glint.

RABBI

And stones, Prefect, they carry stones! They now burst into the theatre and stone us, knowing we will do nothing to defend ourselves... because it is the sabbath!

CYRIL

On the sabbath you should honour God instead of loafing around and stuffing yourselves with sweets. That is why the stones fell upon you.

RABBI 2

How dare you speak to a rabbi in this manner! Your uncle Theophilus would never have...

CYRIL

My uncle Theophilus freed us of the pagan curse. And as long as God grants me the strength, I will continue his work of cleaning up this city... no matter who that upsets.

The group of rabbis give a start.

RABBI

What is this? Are you threatening us? Prefect! Do you hear that? Now he's threatening us! This is too much!

ORESTES

Friends, please... There are more things that unite us than divide us. We are brothers!

But the Rabbi has already raised his hands to his chest and is vainly trying to tear his tunic. Cyril observes his action, impassive.

RABBI

Where would you Christians be without the Jews?

Two of the Rabbi's companions help him tear his tunic.

RABBI (CONT'D)

Jesus was a Jew!

Orestes observes the scene, somewhat dumbfounded.

(CONTINUED)

84 CONTINUED: (2)

RABBI (CONT'D)
Jesus was a Jew!!

85 EXT. COAST OF ALEXANDRIA/GALLEY - DUSK

85

A bird's eye view of the coast of Alexandria, at dusk. We soar past the majestic lighthouse and out to sea...

...flying over a luxurious galley under full sail moving away from the shore.

A woman of about forty is on deck: it is Hypatia, her face aglow in the dusk light. Her hairstyle has changed, and in general her appearance is more austere, but her beauty and elegance are none the worse for wear.

FADE TO:

Still bathed in dusk light, Hypatia and Orestes converse, leaning against the ship's handrail.

HYPATIA
There's something I find disturbing
in what you've told me.

ORESTES
What?

HYPATIA
Why did Cyril speak of cleaning up
the city? Is he not satisfied with
what he already has?

ORESTES
He wanted to frighten the Jews.

HYPATIA
Why did he do it in front of you?
What if really he was addressing
you and not them?

ORESTES
Me?! Why? I'm as much a Christian
as he is.

HYPATIA
But many of us from your circle are
not.

The SHIP'S CAPTAIN approaches them from the quarterdeck.

SHIP'S CAPTAIN
Under full sail, Prefect.

Orestes looks at Hypatia, seeking her approval.

(CONTINUED)

ORESTES

And the sea like a millpond, just
as you wanted.

HYPATIA

Let's go. Aspasius, are you ready?

We then see Aspasius, who is now an old man, sitting on his
heels beside the mast. He stands up.

ASPASIUS

Yes, mistress.

HYPATIA

Take the sack and climb to the top
of the mast.

Aspasius picks up the sack beside him and shins up the mast
with an agility that belies his years.

Orestes casts a doubtful eye at the slave.

ORESTES

(quietly, to Hypatia)

Isn't your slave a bit old for
this? I can have one of my men do
it.

Hypatia smiles.

HYPATIA

Aspasius, how old are you?

Aspasius stops half way up the mast and shrugs.

ASPASIUS

I don't know, mistress!

Hypatia flashes a taunting look at Orestes.

HYPATIA

Neither do I. But I assure you he
knows what he's doing.

Aspasius continues climbing.

ORESTES

And now, lady, are you finally
going to tell me the point of all
this?

Hypatia's eyes sparkle with enthusiasm. She points to the
mast and traces its full length with her finger.

HYPATIA

When Aspasius drops the sack, the
boat will be moving forward.
(MORE)

(CONTINUED)

HYPATIA (CONT'D)

Therefore, the sack won't fall at the foot of the mast, but further back. I'd say about...

Hypatia frowns thoughtfully at the deck. Then she goes and stands about three yards behind the mast.

HYPATIA (CONT'D)

...here.

ORESTES

And what's so special about that?

Hypatia seems to enjoy the question enormously. She looks up and makes a sign to Aspasius. He hesitates for fear of hitting her. But Hypatia confirms her signal with a small nod...

...and the slave drops the sack. We see it silhouetted as it crosses the setting sun...

...and crashes onto the deck next to the mast.

Hypatia jumps for joy.

ORESTES (CONT'D)

But you were wrong!

Hypatia nods like a little girl and walks towards the sack, as Aspasius shins down from his perch.

HYPATIA

This is the definitive proof! The sack behaved as if the boat were not in motion!

ORESTES

What does that mean?

HYPATIA

(her smile doesn't fade)
I don't know! But the same principle could be applied to the Earth, don't you see?

(She approaches the handrail and leans on it, looking towards the horizon)

It could be moving around the sun... without us realizing...

Pause. Orestes also leans on the handrail, a wry smile betraying his scepticism.

ORESTES

Ah, Aristarchus...

(CONTINUED)

HYPATIA

Exactly.

ORESTES

Why do you torment yourself with that, lady? Ptolemy is not perfect, but it works...

HYPATIA

It works?! But it was you who...! A few years ago you weren't so pragmatic.

ORESTES

A few years ago, I spoke first and thought later.

86

EXT. HYPATIA'S HOUSE: ROOFTOP - NIGHT

86

Hypatia scans the heavens. Behind her, Aspasius carries an elaborate quadrant which he carefully sets down at one end of the flat rooftop.

CUT TO:

Aspasius places a wooden box on the floor and opens it: it is full of balls of different sizes and colours.

CUT TO:

Aspasius distributes several oil lamps around a nine square metre quadrangular sand pit, filled with sand from the beach. Lybanus fusses around the old man as he works, threatening to scamper across the sand.

ASPASIUS

Shoo...go away...

HYPATIA

Lybanus!

Hypatia points to a corner.

HYPATIA (CONT'D)

There. Lie down.

Lybanus reluctantly obeys.

FADE TO:

Hypatia is beside the quadrant. Using it to measure the sky, she dictates incessant data to Aspasius who writes with great dexterity on a scroll.

HYPATIA (CONT'D)

Cepheus third...thirty-seven...forty-eight...
(MORE)

(CONTINUED)

86

CONTINUED:

HYPATIA (CONT'D)

Cassiopeia
second...nineteen...twelve...
Venus and Mars share house in
Aquarius...

Aspasius glances at the level of a clepsydra (water clock).

ASPASIUS

The third hour, lady.

Pause.

HYPATIA

My father would have celebrated
this conjunction with a good wine.

Aspasius nods with a slight smile.

ASPASIUS

The master would be proud of you
today, lady.

A shadow of nostalgia passes momentarily across Hypatia's
face, but she quickly resumes her observations.

HYPATIA

Let's not be hasty. Everything must
fit together... everything.

87

EXT. LIBRARY: HILL - NIGHT

87

About twenty parabalani are sitting on the stairs up to the
temple. In the starlight we recognize Davus, lying back,
gazing at the sky, Ammonius, a young parabalano (PETER) and
Isidorus. The latter is painstakingly sweeping the steps.

AMMONIUS

He'll come without warning.

PETER

Ridiculous!

AMMONIUS

Without warning! He said so
himself: "Watch, therefore, for the
Son of man will come without
warning".

Isidorus points his broom at the step where Peter and
Ammonius are sitting.

ISIDORUS

Out of the way.

(CONTINUED)

PETER

(standing up)

But he also said that the sun and the moon would turn black and the stars would fall...

ISIDORUS

The stars will not fall.

PETER

Oh, really?

ISIDORUS

(as he sweeps)

No, because they are fixed to the lid of the chest. The lid will open in two halves...and then Jesus will appear.

AMMONIUS

What chest are you talking about?

ISIDORUS

(stopping for a moment)

Don't you know that the universe is a gigantic chest? Heaven is the lid on top and the Earth the ground below.

Everyone roars. Davus alone remains serious: he gives Isidorus a scornful glance, then returns to his stargazing.

ISIDORUS (CONT'D)

What are you laughing at?

AMMONIUS

They still haven't told this fool that the Earth is round!

The laughter continues.

ISIDORUS

(highly offended)

The Earth is flat!

AMMONIUS

It is round! Everyone knows that!

ISIDORUS

It is flat! You are the fool for believing the tales told by those philosophers. If the Earth is round, why don't the people underneath fall into the abyss, eh? And what about the ones on the sides? Why don't they slide off...?!

(CONTINUED)

87 CONTINUED: (2)

Silence. A few bewildered expressions appear. No one really knows how to answer that.

AMMONIUS

Davus knows about this. What do you say, brother? Is the Earth flat or round?

Davus continues looking at the stars. He ponders his reply for a few seconds...

DAVUS

Only God knows those things.

They all mutter in agreement. Isidorus insists:

ISIDORUS

I tell you it's flat! Read the Scriptures. It is flat.

88 EXT. HYPATIA'S HOUSE: ROOFTOP - NIGHT

88

Hypatia continues her calculations using the quadrant.

HYPATIA

Mars continues to lose his brightness despite his linear trajectory.

(annoyed)

Why does he do that, Aspasius...?

Aspasius stops writing, but says nothing.

HYPATIA (CONT'D)

(to herself)

Why does he do that...?

She flings the scrolls down angrily. Aspasius hurries to pick them up.

HYPATIA (CONT'D)

Leave them. That's where they belong.

Aspasius stops momentarily, but quickly resumes his task.

ASPASIUS

Lady, you must not lose heart. Today on the boat you made great progress...

HYPATIA

Why do the wanderers vary their brightness unexpectedly?! Why?!

Hypatia walks to the sand pit, and crouches by the box full of balls.

(CONTINUED)

HYPATIA (CONT'D)

And what's worse, why does the sun?!

Hypatia takes the biggest ball, stands, and raises it to her eyes.

HYPATIA (CONT'D)

Why does it change size from summer to winter?

Aspasius ventures to meditate on the question.

ASPASIUS

Perhaps because...because sometimes it is nearer and other times it is further away...?

HYPATIA

But that...!

Hypatia lets out a gasp of frustration.

HYPATIA (CONT'D)

Nonsense. Come.

Aspasius obeys and stands opposite his mistress on the other side of the sand pit. Hypatia draws a circle in the sand with a rod and drops the ball in the centre.

HYPATIA (CONT'D)

Look. According to Aristarchus, the sun must be the centre of everything...

Hypatia crouches again over the box and pulls out a smaller ball which she tosses onto the perimeter of the circle.

HYPATIA (CONT'D)

...with us traveling in a circle around it.

HYPATIA (CONT'D)

Therefore, and this is the key, always at the same distance. Now: if, as you said, we accept changes in distance, we are forced to add an epicycle to the Earth's orbit...

Hypatia skillfully draws a small circle on the circumference of the larger one, making it coincide with the ball representing the Earth.

HYPATIA (CONT'D)

Nearer...further away... But now we fall into the same trap as Ptolemy...

(CONTINUED)

ASPASIUS
Circles upon circles.

HYPATIA
Exactly!
(she rubs out the epicycle
with her foot)
So, how can we solve this? Our only
alternative...is to displace the
sun from the centre.

With the same foot, Hypatia gently nudges the ball
representing the sun away from the centre of the circle.

HYPATIA (CONT'D)
And that, I assure you, Aspasius,
breaks my heart.
(pause)
So, tell me, what do I do?

The slave looks at her, with a slight smile.

ASPASIUS
Rest, lady.

Hypatia smiles... Just then, some unintelligible shouts break
the silence of the city.

Lybanus leaps to his feet and begins to bark.

Hypatia leans over the edge of the parapet, her curiosity
aroused...

89 EXT. LIBRARY: FRONT COURTYARD - NIGHT

89

The shouts also ring out in the courtyard. The parabalani sit
up and listen...

AMMONIUS
What's going on?

90 EXT. LIBRARY: HILL - NIGHT

90

The parabalani cross the Library wall and look into the
distance.

DISTANT VOICES
Parabalani, come to the Agora! The
temple is on fire!

AMMONIUS
A fire! Let's get moving!

All the parabalani race off.

91 EXT. STREET IN ALEXANDRIA 4 / SQUARE - NIGHT 91

The parabalani run down a narrow street. En route, they meet up with another squad of parabalani rushing out of a side street.

ISIDORUS

Quickly!

A man comes to the door of his house, half-dressed.

ALARMED NEIGHBOUR

What's happening?

ISIDORUS

St. Alexander's is burning!

DISTANT VOICES

Parabalani! Fire at St.
Alexander's! Fire at St.
Alexander's!

The parabalani reach a small square into which more of their fellow monks are pouring. In the centre is a fountain surrounded by pitchers.

AMMONIUS

Fill those pitchers! Quickly!

DISTANT VOICES

Parabalaaaaniii!

92 EXT. AGORA - NIGHT 92

The group of parabalani reach the square and rush inside St. Alexander's...

93 INT. ST. ALEXANDER'S CHURCH - NIGHT 93

...where other parabalani and townspeople have already gathered, all told, about a hundred people.

They all rush to and fro looking for the source of the fire. Their shouts of bewilderment begin to multiply.

ISIDORUS

So, where are the flames?

AMMONIUS

Didn't they say it was on fire?

Several of the crowd are walking towards the exit... when the main doors slam shut.

On the top of the surrounding walls, twenty silhouettes appear, positioned strategically along both sides of the temple.

(CONTINUED)

PETER

Jews! It's a trap!

A deluge of stones rains down on the people below.

Pandemonium reigns as people run about and shout. A crowd forms at the doors trying to push them open, but they have been barred from the outside.

The attackers hurl stones continuously, with great speed and precision...

It is almost pointless trying to protect oneself. In the darkness we discern limbs and skulls crushed by the cascade of stones. The shouts and groans mix with the deafening crash of the rocks against the marble.

Finally, the hell ceases.

Davus, miraculously unhurt, comes out from behind the column where he sought refuge and looks around him: a nightmarish trail of battered, babbling parabalani, some of them undoubtedly dead.

Behind him lies the body of Ammonius, his face covered in blood. Davus takes him in his arms and tries to bring him round.

DAVUS

Ammonius, Wake up! Ammonius!
Ammonius!

Ammonius does not answer. Davus anxiously examines his companion's face, searching for some sign of life. Then he looks to heaven.

Ammonius comes to with a sudden moan.

DAVUS (CONT'D)

Ammonius! Are you alright?

Ammonius repeats Davus words still shocked.

AMMONIUS

Are you alright?

Davus smiles with tears in his eyes.

About a thousand people have gathered in the square.

Fifty or so bodies of civilians and parabalani have been set out in front of the façade of the temple. A deathly hush covers the crowd as Cyril blesses the dead.

(CONTINUED)

Behind him, in the middle of a row of sorrowful parabalani, we see Davus, Isidorus and Ammonius, still bruised.

CYRIL

Christians all! Last night was a
night to deplore!

Cyril allows himself a brief pause so the crowd can take in his words.

CYRIL (CONT'D)

Now I say to you: grieve no longer
for our dead brothers. Weep not!
(with a gesture of extreme
piety)
Shed your tears for the others, for
their executioners...!

There are shouts and expressions of bewilderment among those present. Cyril hastily calms the stir with a gesture of his hands.

CYRIL (CONT'D)

(nodding)

Yes, weep for them...For those who
have done this know not of God, nor
of love, nor of piety.
They know not...because it is they
who repeat the words of the
Scriptures without understanding
them!

(becoming more
impassioned)

It is they who saw only a man when
the Son of God was standing before
them!

(irate)

And it is they who in their
blindness mocked Him and crucified
Him!

A wave of indignation runs through the crowd and echoes like a roar throughout the square. Cyril raises his voice even louder, in the grip of zealous fervour.

CYRIL (CONT'D)

Weep, weep for the Jews, those evil
butchers of Our Lord...!!

The surging roar of the crowd forces him to interrupt his diatribe, but he continues immediately.

CYRIL (CONT'D)

...because God...God has already
condemned them!
(MORE)

(CONTINUED)

94 CONTINUED: (2)

CYRIL (CONT'D)

That is His will, that they live as
slaves, cursed and exiled! Until
the end of time! Cursed and exiled!

The delirium is now collective. The Christians yell with
their crucifixes on high.

CYRIL (CONT'D)

Cursed and exiled! Cursed and
exiled!

The slogan spreads among the gathered throng, particularly
taking hold of Davus and the other parabalani, who shout like
madmen.

CHRISTIAN MULTITUDE

Cursed and exiled! Cursed and
exiled!

95 EXT. VIA CANOPICA - DAY

95

Hypatia, very concerned, is led away quickly by ASPASIUS, her
escort.

In an adjacent street she sees a Jew being stabbed; a horde
of parabalani struggling with several members of a family,
tearing off their clothes... Blows and shouts can be heard,
mixed with the chaotic chants of the attackers:

Hypatia slows down, profoundly upset by what she sees.

ASPASIUS

Lady, do not stop!

To the right of the avenue, several stalls are wrecked and
burned by furious Christians. There are decapitated bodies; a
man crushes the head of a Jew as he is bitten by a dog from
behind; another Jew is thrown out a window, another agonizes
as he hangs from a rope, a runaway horse destroys more stalls
in its path...

Hypatia and Aspasius are forced to step away to the side of
the street, as the attackers hurl the Jews' belongings from
the balconies.

96 EXT. ADJACENT STREET/VIA CANOPICA - DAY

96

In a street adjacent to the Via Canopica, Ammonius, Davus and
Isidorus, the latter two each brandishing a sword,
participate actively in the task of eviction.

In the tumult, a man tries to slip away. A BOY barely eight
years of age points at him, shouting:

BOY

He was in the church! He was in St.
Alexander's! Parabalani!

(CONTINUED)

Davus elbows his way through until he reaches the SUSPICIOUS JEW who kneels at his feet.

Davus raises his sword and, for a moment, is assailed by doubt. He looks at the boy who simply points vehemently at the Suspicious Jew.

A woman (OLD JEWISH WOMAN) runs towards Davus and grabs him by the arm, pleading with him in Aramaic.

Without releasing her hold on him, she kneels beside the Suspicious Jew. Her trembling hands slide down his arm to the sword which she grips by the blade, placing the tip against her head...

This situation, perhaps because of its similarity to the one he lived personally, completely throws Davus and leaves him paralysed. Several seconds pass...

AMMONIUS

Why do you hesitate?

Davus reacts: he kicks the Old Jewish Woman aside and plunges his sword into the Suspicious Jew's ribs. The woman tries to leap onto Davus, weeping, but Ammonius pulls her back.

Davus finishes his merciless act with a further two sword thrusts, leaving the man lifeless on the ground in a pool of blood.

Ammonius waves away the Old Jewish Woman and several onlookers as if they were flies.

AMMONIUS (CONT'D)

He was a murderer! God be with you!

Away! Off with you!

His eyes red with fury, Davus pulls his sword from the Suspicious Jew's corpse and turns round. Just then, he freezes...

...because he sees Hypatia, striding down the Via Canopica surrounded by her slaves.

For an instant her eyes meet Davus's...and move on. She seems not to have recognized him.

The moment seems eternal from Davus's point of view. In anguish he watches the procession disappear...

All at once, Hypatia turns her head and looks at him. Davus instantly recoils into the anonymity of his hood...

Hypatia turns back and continues on her way, unsure of what she's seen.

(CONTINUED)

96 CONTINUED: (2)

Davus stands rooted to the spot for a few seconds, one hand holding his hood, the other his sword...

This final image makes a powerful impact on him: fresh blood trickling down the blade...

97 INT. PREFECT'S HEADQUARTERS: CHAMBER - DAY

97

In a monumental semicircular chamber which reminds us of the Roman senate, about fifty dignitaries gabble all at once.

DIGNITARY 1

Why do you paint the just and the unjust with the same brush? Now all the Jews will want to retaliate!

Orestes is sitting opposite the tiers of seats surrounded by officials. He studies a scroll, his face drawn with worry.

DIGNITARY 2

I fear you do not understand what is really happening. When this is over, there will be no more Jews in Alexandria.

A general silence falls. All eyes converge on Hypatia, standing in the entrance.

Orestes looks up from his scroll and stands. The other dignitaries follow suit.

HYPATIA

(very disturbed)

I'm sorry for interrupting.

ORESTES

Lady, you should not have risked coming.

HYPATIA

Where are the troops! Why are there no soldiers in the streets?!

ORESTES

No army could contain the mob. The entire city is in a frenzy.

(raising the scroll)

He is calling for the annihilation of women and children! A bishop! A Christian!

HYPATIA

Then lock him up...!

Aware of her excessively informal tone of voice, Hypatia tones down her language.

(CONTINUED)

97 CONTINUED:

HYPATIA (CONT'D)
Prefect, you should have him
arrested.

Orestes looks indecisive and distressed.

ORESTES
It's...it's not so easy.

Another dignitary intervenes (HELADIUS).

HELADIUS
Lady, Cyril knows that they both
share the same faith. That places
our prefect in an awkward position.
If he defends the Jews, half the
city will rise up against this
government. It could be the end of
us.

HYPATIA
But if you do nothing, it will give
legitimacy to Cyril's actions and
he will think he has the right to
do the same thing over and over
again, until there's no one left in
this city! No people for this
government to govern!

No one responds.

The violent racket from the street pours in through the open
windows: urgent shouting, weeping. Orestes looks towards it,
deeply affected.

ORESTES
How naive of me to think we had
finally changed...

98 EXT. THE EARTH 98

Once again, we see our planet from outer space. The shouting,
now very faint and indistinct, still accompanies us... This
is now the sound of Earth.

Our focus turns towards the stars as the murmur of sound
fades to silence...

99 EXT. OUTSKIRTS OF ALEXANDRIA - DAY 99

A mournful procession of Jews trudges along a dirt road
leading from the Gate of the Moon, a large arch marking the
entrance to Alexandria. In the distance, behind the periphery
of buildings, several columns of smoke rise up.

Five deacons on horseback gallop towards them from the
opposite direction.

(CONTINUED)

99 CONTINUED:

In the centre of the group we recognize Synesius: his features, somewhat more marked by the passage of time, give him a colder, sterner look. He is wearing a black headdress with thirteen crosses, similar to Cyril's.

100 EXT. VIA CANOPICA - DAY

100

The delegation trots into the Via Canopica.

Two of the deacons partially cover their faces to stave off the stench.

Synesius looks from side to side down the avenue with a scowl of displeasure: Here and there we see parabalani dragging the bodies of dead Jews and loading them onto carts.

The group passes by Davus, Ammonius and Isidorus, who are pulling a small barrow with four corpses.

The three parabalani stop what they are doing momentarily as they watch the delegation ride off.

AMMONIUS

That's the bishop of Cyrene. What is he doing here?

Without a moment's hesitation, Isidorus sets off after them.

ISIDORUS

I'll find out.

101 INT. HYPATIA'S HOUSE: STUDY - DAY

101

Synesius is admiring a multi-coloured astrolabe.

Hypatia gives a feeble smile, visibly on edge. The bishop stands and looks around.

HYPATIA

My little Library of Alexandria.

Synesius notices a row of chairs in one corner.

HYPATIA (CONT'D)

That's where I teach the children.

On a small table in front of the chairs there is a wooden cone with several differently angled cross sections.

SYNESIUS

(approaching)

An Apollonian cone!

HYPATIA

I built it to teach them about the four curves.

(CONTINUED)

Synesius approaches the cone and begins to separate the various pieces, as if it were a toy, allowing the resultant curves to be seen.

SYNESIUS

The hyperbola, the parabola...

Still uneasy, Hypatia looks towards the exit.

HYPATIA

Orestes should have arrived by now.

SYNESIUS

...the circle and the ellipse. It's beautiful!

Hypatia relaxes for a moment.

HYPATIA

I often sit looking at it... And I always wonder: why does the circle co-exist with such impure shapes...?

Synesius sits in the children's seats.

SYNESIUS

What I'd give to sit here and listen to you.

HYPATIA

(reassembling the cone)
I would bore you. It's a long time since I've done anything but beat my head against a stone...

Synesius looks at her, intrigued.

HYPATIA (CONT'D)

Anyway, there are more urgent matters at hand...

ORESTES (V.O.)

Forgive me.

Hypatia and Synesius turn to Orestes, who has just arrived. The prefect walks towards Synesius with outstretched arms.

ORESTES (CONT'D)

Synesius...

The other readily joins him in a hearty embrace.

SYNESIUS

Brother.

101 CONTINUED: (2)

ORESTES

Thank you for coming.

SYNESIUS

Nothing could give me greater
pleasure than to be of help to
you...

(looking at Hypatia)

To you and to my lady, sister and
mother.

HYPATIA

I can't be so many things at once,
Synesius!

(Synesius smiles)

Come. We need to talk.

All three leave the room.

102 INT. LIBRARY: REAR COURTYARD - DAY

102

At one side of the courtyard, Cyril and several deacons have
gathered.

DEACON 3

It's an outrage! Two Christians in
the hands of a heathen!

Cyril raises a hand, as if preparing to speak. All the
deacons look at him expectantly...

Cyril lowers his hand, and a disturbing smirk steals across
his face.

103 EXT. PATH - DUSK

103

Ammonius pulls the cart piled high with dead bodies. Davus
pushes the gruesome vehicle from behind. One of the bodies
seems to be staring at him...

Davus closes his eyes, ill at ease.

104 EXT. OPEN SPACE - DUSK

104

Davus is sitting on the ground as Ammonius repairs a wheel of
the cart, now empty. In front of them is an enormous mound of
corpses.

Other parabalani unload their cargo of dead and toss them
onto the mound. Peter walks with a flaming torch, setting
fire to the corpses' clothing.

DAVUS

Ammonius...does God speak to you?

Ammonius replies with absolute candour.

(CONTINUED)

AMMONIUS

Of course. All the time. "Ammonius this...Ammonius that... Ammonius, Ammonius..." Sometimes I have to tell Him to slow down. Does that happen to you?

DAVUS

More than talk...He shows me things.

AMMONIUS

Ah.

Pause.

DAVUS

Tell me something...you don't ever think we're mistaken?

AMMONIUS

Why?

Davus ponders his words...

DAVUS

I was forgiven once and now I can't forgive.

AMMONIUS

Surely you don't think Jews deserve forgiveness?!

DAVUS

Jesus pardoned them on the cross.

AMMONIUS

Because Jesus...!
(pausing, unsure of how to
continue)
Jesus was God, and only He can show
such clemency!

ISIDORUS

How dare you compare yourself to
God?

Ammonius gestures to his friend not to intervene. Davus remains silent, looking very thoughtful.

AMMONIUS

Brother, if we're still alive, it's
because it was His will to save us
from the stones. And when He saved
me from the flames...?

(MORE)

(CONTINUED)

104 CONTINUED: (2)

AMMONIUS (CONT'D)

He wants us here, doing what we do.
Don't you understand?

DAVUS

It's hard sometimes.

105 INT. LIBRARY: SERAPEUM - DAY

105

Synesius, encircled by his entourage, walks with ceremonious gait towards the temple altar.

The five men genuflect and cross themselves before the large cross.

Then, Synesius moves to one side of the apse...

...where Cyril is awaiting him with open arms.

CYRIL

(formal)

Beloved...

SYNESIUS

(also stretching out his
arms)

Beloved...

The two bishops embrace and kiss each other on the cheeks.

Over this image we hear the audio of the following scene:

SYNESIUS (V.O.) (CONT'D)

Cyril is a very proud man.

106 INT. PREFECT'S HEADQUARTERS: DOMED ROOM - DAY

106

In the same room where Cyril argued with the rabbis, Orestes, Hypatia and Synesius sit chatting in a circle.

SYNESIUS

He'll agree to meet, but he won't
discuss the Jews. He'll only
discuss peace.

ORESTES

Peace?

SYNESIUS

(to Orestes)

My advice, as a humble advisor in
this affair, is for you to accept.
There is something else. Cyril will
not come here. He demands you meet
him in the Library, during the
Sunday service.

(CONTINUED)

HYPATIA
In the Library? Why?

Over this image, we hear in anticipation the audio of the following sequence.

DIGNITARY 1 (V.O.)
I'll tell you why!

INT. PREFECT'S HEADQUARTERS: CHAMBER - DAY

Synesius is standing at one side of the chamber. On the opposite side, Orestes in his chair. Hypatia takes her place by a wall, discreetly out of the way. Dignitaries fill every seat in the auditorium.

DIGNITARY 1
Only Christians have been permitted
to enter the Library since it was
stormed. It is a provocation!

Heated rejoinders are shouted from the floor. HELADIUS manages to raise his voice above the rest.

HELADIUS
Allow me to suggest...!
(silence falls in the
room; looking at
Dignitary 1)
If you consider your presence so
essential...you have only to let
yourself be baptized.

Another outburst of protests. Hypatia's face reflects her profound unease.

HELADIUS (CONT'D)
The majority of us here, beginning
with our prefect, have accepted
Christ...!

Orestes obviously finds the allusion uncomfortable.

HELADIUS (CONT'D)
Why not the rest of you?
It is just a question of time and
you know it!

HYPATIA
A question of time?!
(she walks towards the
tiered seats)
Excuse me, honoured member... As
far as I am aware, your God has not
yet proved himself more just or
merciful than his predecessors.

(CONTINUED)

ORESTES

Lady...

HYPATIA

It is question of time before I
accept your faith?

Silence reigns.

HELADIUS

And why, then, should this assembly
accept the counsel...of someone who
admittedly believes in nothing?!

Tense pause.

HYPATIA

I believe in philosophy!

HELADIUS

Ah, philosophy...
(sarcastic)
Just what we need at times like
these!

Hypatia is about to answer, but a wave of giggles makes her
bite her tongue. There is a lot of murmuring among the
dignitaries, and not a few contemptuous looks...

ORESTES

Enough!

Over Hypatia's alarmed expression, silence falls.

Lying back on a divan, Hypatia seems to be speaking to the
heavens.

HYPATIA

All these years, studying without
respite... Without a life of my
own... I sometimes think, what was
the point?

Orestes approaches with two goblets of wine.

ORESTES

Forget about what was said today.

He sits on the divan. Hypatia sits up and takes one of the
goblets.

HYPATIA

Is this all life holds for me?

(CONTINUED)

ORESTES

What else? I doubt anyone could see
you as a devoted wife and mother!

Lybanus patters over, wagging his tail as usual, and plops
his head into his mistress's lap.

ORESTES (CONT'D)

Everyone in this city knows the
story of the handkerchief.

Hypatia smiles.

HYPATIA

Even my father loved a woman...

(she strokes Lybanus's
head, still resting in
her lap)

Who have I loved? Eh, Lybanus...?

Orestes, suddenly moved, takes her hand and squeezes it
tenderly, smiling. Hypatia returns his smile. Then she looks
at the sky.

HYPATIA (CONT'D)

If I could just get a little closer
to the answer... any answer... with
that alone I would go to my grave a
happy woman.

ORESTES

Why? Why does it mean so much to
you?

Hypatia looks at him, very serious.

HYPATIA

Orestes, right now the whole Earth
could be moving.

(excited)

And no one realises it...no one
except you and me!

ORESTES

Believe me, lady, it's best no one
does.

HYPATIA

Tell me, do you not think it
important?

Orestes, visibly annoyed that the conversation has taken this
tack, stands up and hastens to refill his goblet.

ORESTES

I don't understand why you insist
on moving the ground we walk on.

(CONTINUED)

HYPATIA

You saw yourself what happened on the boat.

ORESTES

I did! But that does not necessarily tell us that the Earth is moving.

HYPATIA

But what if it does?!

Orestes returns to her side.

ORESTES

Look around you! Death, horror, destruction! Then I ask myself: since the circle governs the stars... why would they share such perfection with us? Why, if this, as we all know, is the realm of imperfection?!

Hypatia gives this argument some profound consideration.

ORESTES (CONT'D)

Thus, we are not moving.

HYPATIA

...in a circle.

(pause)

We are not moving in a circle.

Orestes gives the philosopher a look of incomprehension. Hypatia's face mirrors the whirl of ideas running through her mind...

She gets up and, without a word, leaves the courtyard. Orestes stands there, puzzled.

A liquid lapping noise makes him look down: Lybanus is drinking from his goblet.

ORESTES

Wonderful.

Hypatia feverishly consults several scrolls opened out on a table.

Orestes appears from behind a curtain, with an expression of total bewilderment. Lybanus patters in behind him.

HYPATIA

(a bundle of nerves)

Ever since Plato, all of them...

(MORE)

(CONTINUED)

HYPATIA (CONT'D)

Aristarchus, Hyparchus,
Ptolemy...they all tried to
reconcile their observations with
circular orbits...

Hypatia holds up for Orestes to see a scroll depicting a
diagram of the geocentric model with epicycles.

HYPATIA (CONT'D)

But, what if another shape is
hiding in the heavens?

ORESTES

(stepping towards her)
Another?! But there is no shape
purer than the circle. You taught
us that!

Hypatia nods, but immediately shakes her head.

HYPATIA

Suppose...just suppose the splendor
of the circle blinds us to anything
beyond....The same way the glare of
the sun prevents us seeing the
stars!

Hypatia's eyes lose themselves among the notes scribbled on
the scrolls.

HYPATIA (CONT'D)

I must...I must...begin all over.
With...with new eyes!
(muttering)
...rethink
everything...Everything...

She says nothing else, engrossed in her thoughts.

Orestes gazes at her with a smile that at once expresses
sadness, affection and admiration. He strokes Lybanus,
turns...

...and leaves the room without a sound.

A great multitude is gathering outside the Library. Many
cheer the nobles as they arrive in chariots and litters and
go inside. A dozen imperial guards stand watch at the
entrance.

Ammonius, Davus, Isidorus and Peter are stopped by an
inexperienced-looking guard.

GUARD 1

You can't go in.

(CONTINUED)

AMMONIUS

Why not?

GUARD 1

This service is only for the important people of the city. Go away.

PETER

Important? According to who?

AMMONIUS

We are all equal before God!

PETER

According to who?! This is an outrage!

ISIDORUS

Do you know who you're talking to, you ignorant fool?

AMMONIUS

Are you going to stop us entering our house?!

ISIDORUS

To Ammonius! Ammonius, the parabalano, you idiot!

PETER

This an outrage!

AMMONIUS

An unspeakable outraaaage!

Another guard runs up to Guard 1 to inform him.

GUARD 2

The parabalani are allowed in.

Guard 1, still overwhelmed by the three monks' verbal onslaught, steps aside to let them through. Ammonius makes a sign of the cross over the soldier's face, as if nothing had happened.

AMMONIUS

Peace be with you.

The interior of the temple is full of dignitaries. To the rear of the building, near the entrance, there are about seventy parabalani.

111 CONTINUED:

111

A deacon places a thick Bible on the lectern, in front of Cyril, and opens it at a marked page. Cyril kisses the tome and announces:

CYRIL
Reading from the first letter of
Paul to Timothy.

All present cross themselves.

CYRIL (CONT'D)
(reading)
I want men everywhere to lift up
holy hands in prayer, without anger
or disputing. I also want women to
dress modestly, with decency and
propriety, not with braided hair or
gold or pearls or expensive
clothes, but with good deeds,
appropriate for women who profess
to worship God.

Orestes, seated with thirty other dignitaries at one side of the apse, listens to the bishop uneasily. He surreptitiously turns his head towards a Dignitary sitting beside him.

ORESTES
Why is he reading this passage?

DIGNITARY 2
I don't know, prefect. I assure you
it is not the one we agreed on.

112 INT. HYPATIA'S HOUSE: STUDY - DAY

112

Hypatia and Aspasius work surrounded by scrolls. Her expression is one of total concentration.

CYRIL (V.O.)
(reading)
A woman should learn in quietness
and full submission. I do not
permit a woman to teach or to have
authority over a man; she must be
silent...

113 INT. LIBRARY: SERAPEUM - DAY

113

Cyril finishes reading and looks out over the congregation.

CYRIL
This is the Word of God!

CONGREGATION
Amen.

The bishop closes the Bible.

(CONTINUED)

CYRIL

Amen. So be it... Jesus himself
knew this when he entrusted his
holy legacy to twelve men.

(sweeping his hand through
the air)

Not a woman among them.

(pause, full of malice)

And yet...I know of some in
Alexandria who admire and even
trust in the words of a woman...
the philosopher, Hypatia.

At the back of the temple, Davus, standing next to Ammonius,
starts at the bishop's mention of her.

CYRIL (CONT'D)

A woman who has declared, in
public, her ungodliness! A witch!

Orestes and his dignitaries are stunned. Synesius, surrounded
by deacons, also seems greatly surprised.

Cyril pauses, perfectly well aware of the huge stir that his
words have caused.

CYRIL (CONT'D)

Dignitaries, it is time to
reconcile yourselves with Christ.

Orestes glares at the bishop, his eyes bloodshot with rage. A
ripple of frenzied whispering spreads through the group of
dignitaries.

Cyril takes the Bible and advances slowly towards the group
of dignitaries...

He stops in front of Orestes and raises the heavy tome to
chest level.

CYRIL (CONT'D)

This is the Word of God! Kneel
before it and embrace its truths!

Tension is white hot. None of the dignitaries moves, waiting
to take their cue from Orestes...

...but the prefect remains impassive.

One of the dignitaries falls to his knees. His action acts as
a catalyst to the rest of his companions. In a matter of
seconds, all the dignitaries, except Orestes, are on their
knees.

CYRIL (CONT'D)

(quietly)

Kneel.

(CONTINUED)

Bishop and prefect glare daggers at one another.

Ammonius observes the scene with ill-contained rage.

AMMONIUS

Is he not going to kneel?

Cyril raises the Bible histrionically above his head.

Ammonius is unable to remain impassive. He cups his hands around his mouth...

AMMONIUS (CONT'D)

Kneel!

Davus does not second him. Unlike many other parabalani who begin to shout.

PARABALANI

Kneel, prefect! Bow before God!

Many of the nobles witnessing the scene look behind them, very ill at ease: the area near the door is swarming with parabalani, rushing around, shouting...

Orestes finally reacts: he looks away from the bishop and strides determinedly towards the exit, amidst a ferment of shouts and whispers. Many of the dignitaries look at each other and decide to follow him.

This action is the last straw for the furious parabalani, who close ranks in front of the door, blocking the exit.

From the apse, Synesius observes the scene with great concern. He turns his gaze towards Cyril who is retiring down the side of the nave, protected by his cohort of deacons...

Many guards run to defend the dignitaries, unsheathing their swords.

GUARD 2

Make way for the prefect!

Orestes gestures to his bodyguards not to lose control and, fearlessly turns to face the parabalani.

ORESTES

I am as much a Christian as you!

Ammonius seems more eager to turn words into actions. His hand moves time and again to the pocket of his tunic.

ORESTES (CONT'D)

I'm a baptized Christian! I'm a baptized Christian!

(CONTINUED)

AMMONIUS

Miserable wretch! Scoundrel!

Davus quickly catches on to his companion's intentions and tries to hold his arm. But Ammonius, unable to contain himself any longer, pulls a small stone from his pocket...

DAVUS

Ammonius, no...!

Davus grabs his arm. Ammonius's eyes, red with rage, turn towards his companion and, for a second, all his anger seems concentrated on him...

He swipes Davus across the face and pushes him violently backwards. Davus crashes to the ground. Something between them has snapped.

Ammonius's angry, flushed face turns towards Orestes...

He raises the stone and hurls it with all his might...

114 EXT. HYPATIA'S HOUSE: ENTRANCE COURTYARD - DAY

114

Hypatia looks, astounded, at two imperial soldiers. Behind them, six others have been posted in the street.

HYPATIA

It's not possible! Why...!

BODYGUARD 1

The culprit has been executed.

HYPATIA

Take me to the Prefect immediately.

BODYGUARD 1

Lady, he himself gave the order for you to be confined at home until further notice.

Hypatia gives him an uncomprehending look.

BODYGUARD 1 (CONT'D)

At the moment, your presence in the street is not advisable...

HYPATIA

For what reason?

There is an awkward exchange of looks between the two guards.

BODYGUARD 1

Cyril has made serious accusations against you.

(CONTINUED)

114 CONTINUED:

HYPATIA

What does he accuse me of?

BODYGUARD 1

Ungodliness.

Pause.

BODYGUARD 2

And witchcraft.

Hypatia looks from one soldier to the other as she digests the information.

115 INT. HYPATIA'S HOUSE: COURTYARD - DAY

115

Two slave girls and a slave boy gossip together in whispers...

Hypatia's appearance makes them spring round and quickly resume their tasks, giving her sidelong glances.

116 INT. HYPATIA'S HOUSE: STUDY - DAY

116

Aspasius seems to be analyzing diagrams full of curves and epicycles. His profound meditation is made evident by a gentle snort, as if there was something he didn't understand...

He senses Hypatia's presence and turns.

ASPASIUS

Is something bothering you, lady?

Hypatia disguises her concern and shakes her head.

HYPATIA

Tell me what is bothering you.

Aspasius finally points to the scrolls.

ASPASIUS

I just can't help wondering... If orbits are no longer circular... what's to stop them changing each each time around just to fool us and...?

HYPATIA

There, you've said it yourself, Aspasius! *Each time around...* Or do we not observe the same pattern year in, year out?

(Aspasius nods)

I tell you, that shape cannot be very far away.

(CONTINUED)

116 CONTINUED:

116

The old man finally manages to drag a smile out of the philosopher.

117 EXT. STREET IN ALEXANDRIA 5 - DUSK

117

Davus's gloomy eyes stare at something in front of him...

It is Ammonius, dead with signs of having been tortured. He is lying on top of the bodies of four other parabalani.

Just like when they cleaned the city of Jews, Davus pushes the cart carrying the corpses, while other monks pull. Ammonius seems to be looking at him...

The Christian procession accompanying them utter shouts of protest and grief.

118 INT. PREFECT'S HEADQUARTERS: DOMED ROOM - DAY

118

Orestes reposes in a chair situated under the shaft of light coming in through the skylight. The prefect's head is swollen from the stoning.

Two men hold his arms while a third tries to stitch a nasty gash above his eyebrow. Orestes clenches his teeth, trying hard not to grimace with pain. A man puts a wad of cloth to his mouth.

SURGEON

Prefect, why don't you bite on this...?

Orestes shakes his head and turns his eyes to the soldier who has just arrived and stands to attention before him.

ORESTES

Speak.

OFFICER 3

Sir, the bishop of Cyrene wishes to see you.

Orestes winces with pain as he ponders the request.

ORESTES

Leave, all of you.

The doctor stitching his wound pauses to protest.

SURGEON

Prefect, the wound is not yet closed...

ORESTES

Get out!!

(CONTINUED)

The Surgeon cuts the suture with his teeth, leaving the wound half open.

Doctors and soldiers leave the room as Synesius enters. Orestes takes a cloth and presses it to his wound.

For a few seconds the two men glare at each other severely.

ORESTES (CONT'D)

I could kill you right now and display your corpse in the agora as a lesson to the Christians.

SYNESIUS

Would I have shown my face here if I wanted to betray you? Are you blind?

ORESTES

Blind... and deaf!

Orestes springs to his feet, but seems to go dizzy all of a sudden. His feet drag as he walks towards Synesius.

ORESTES (CONT'D)

When it was my head they wanted all along! It's me that false shepherd of souls is after! This palace! This government!

(pause)

Now listen. War is brewing...

SYNESIUS

I know.

ORESTES

Then swear your loyalty to the Empire. Do it! Condemn him! Or turn around and get out.

Synesius takes several seconds to answer, but does so categorically.

SYNESIUS

I'll do it on my knees if necessary. And not only that. In a few days I can gather other bishops from the province, and many monks from the desert, all against Cyril.

Orestes nods with satisfaction, although his face remains tense. He staggers back to his seat...

SYNESIUS (CONT'D)

But first I must ask you a question. Orestes... Do you believe in Jesus?

(CONTINUED)

Orestes doesn't reach his seat. He gives his friend an uncomprehending look.

SYNESIUS (CONT'D)

Are you a true Christian or did you like so many others only convert to prosper in politics?

ORESTES

What are you saying?

SYNESIUS

Why didn't you kneel?

ORESTES

What choice did I have?! Betray Hypatia?

SYNESIUS

I would never offend God.

ORESTES

He's the one who offended God, using the Scripture, twisting his words....!

SYNESIUS

He read what is written.

(Orestes doesn't know how to respond)

How many women do you obey? How many do you admire and listen to?

(pause)

Only one... Only one. The Scripture is correct and it was in his hands.

Orestes seems about to murmur something...but says nothing. Just then a trickle of blood flows from his eyebrow. He hastily wipes it away as if it were sweat.

SYNESIUS (CONT'D)

Brother, don't you see the harm to God... in front of everyone?

Orestes looks at his bloodied hand, confused and faint.

CYRIL (V.O.)

Many are those who remember today the miracles our beloved brother performed in life...

Ammonius's body lies exposed next to the altar, surrounded by his dead companions. Cyril, standing by the body, is addressing a group of two hundred parabalani.

(CONTINUED)

CYRIL (CONT'D)

As when, that time, he commended
himself to the Father and threw
himself into the fire, and was not
even singed!

Davus continues to look sadly at Ammonius. The bishop's words
wash over him.

CYRIL (CONT'D)

Ammonius the parabalanos, dead for
bravely defending the faith of
Christ, I proclaim you a martyr.
And since you are worthy of
admiration, and the Lord has worked
miracles in you, henceforth you
shall be known as Taumasius.
Taumasius the saint!

The parabalanos cross themselves and the crowd erupts in an
explosion of angry shouts.

PARABALANI

Swine! Murderers! Justice! Blood!

Cyril looks at the monks with an ambiguous expression: we
don't know if he is reproving or celebrating their
entreaties...

CYRIL

Little else can I say to you, my
dear parabalani... Let God show you
the way.

Following these words, he withdraws slowly to the side of the
apse, followed by his deacons.

FADE TO:

About 20 parabalani whisper secretively at one side of the
temple.

Davus's vacant, distant expression is doubtless interpreted
by the rest as the exclusive result of his grief for
Ammonius.

PARABALANO 2

What about the monks of Nitria?

HIERAX

Count on at least five hundred of
them. Plus five hundred of our
men...

(CONTINUED)

ISIDORUS

And you think that's enough? He is the Prefect! He has a whole army to protect him.

Peter motions for them to drop their voices.

PETER

Listen! Why don't we do something much more simple and effective.

PARABALANO 2

What are you talking about?

PETER

We can hurt him where it hurts most!

Davus snaps out of his depressive lethargy and takes a few steps back, hiding in the shadows. Over this image, we hear in anticipation the audio of the following sequence.

HYPATIA (V.O.)

What if we dared to look at the world just as it is?

INT. HYPATIA'S HOUSE: STUDY - NIGHT

Hypatia paces the room restlessly.

HYPATIA

Let us shed for a moment every preconceived idea... What shape would it show us...? What shape...?!

Aspasius observes her from his desk, pen in hand.

ASPASIUS

You once said that the problem lies in the inconsistency of the sun.

Hypatia stops by the children's corner and sits down. The carved wooden cone is in front of her.

HYPATIA

Good. Put it into words.

ASPASIUS

The sun must be at the centre, since we revolve around it, and at the same time in another position, since our distance from it varies...

HYPATIA

Exactly.

121 CONTINUED:

ASPASIUS
How could it occupy two positions
at once?

HYPATIA
(muttering)
Two positions at once...

The philosopher sits staring at the cone. She stands and
approaches it slowly...

HYPATIA (CONT'D)
Two positions at once...

She removes the upper section, revealing the circle...

HYPATIA (CONT'D)
It can't be!

She slowly separates the second cross section of the cone,
revealing another circle... Our point of view changes
slightly and we discover that it is really an oval shape...

Hypatia's face glows.

122 EXT. HYPATIA'S HOUSE: ROOFTOP - NIGHT

122

Hypatia, visibly excited, walks towards the sand pit
measuring a length of a cord with her arm. Aspasia follows
her with two lighted torch carriers. He places one of them at
one side of the sand pit.

ASPASIUS
Here, mistress?

HYPATIA
Yes, yes. And the other one...
(pointing to the opposite
side)
There! Keeping the same proportion.

Aspasia fixes the two torch holders into the sand,
symmetrically as regards the edges and almost a yard and a
half apart. Meanwhile Hypatia nervously cuts the cord with a
knife...

...and hands him one end.

HYPATIA (CONT'D)
Tie the end to that torch holder.

The slave obeys. Hypatia ties the other end to the torch
holder nearest to her. Then she gets up, aligning herself
with the two torch holders, on the opposite side to Aspasia,
waving a drawing rod.

(CONTINUED)

HYPATIA (CONT'D)

Now, Aspasius, imagine that this is the Earth...

(she points to the two torch holders, one by one)

...and that each flame is one of the extreme positions of the sun with respect to it: winter...and summer.

Aspasius nods, pensively.

HYPATIA (CONT'D)

What would happen...? What would happen if both positions were the two centres...of one and the same circle?

Pause. Aspasius ponders the question and finally shakes his head.

ASPASIUS

But it isn't possible, mistress!

Hypatia makes a gesture for him to be patient while she explains.

HYPATIA

So...we know that the centre of a circle is always the same distance from any point on the perimeter...

ASPASIUS

Exactly.

Hypatia points again to the torch holders.

HYPATIA

Now, what happens if I divide that centre into two and what I keep constant...is the sum of their distances to the perimeter?

Aspasius can't help frowning with a discreet grunt of bewilderment.

HYPATIA (CONT'D)

I'll show you. Watch...

The philosopher now places the rod vertically within the cord and tenses it, forming two straight lines with respect to each of the torch holders.

(CONTINUED)

HYPATIA (CONT'D)

If I move the rod along the cord,
as one segment increases, the other
decreases...

(she slides the rod from
one side to the other,
always within the cord)

And viceversa. Therefore, the sum
of both is always constant.

The old man observes Hypatia's demonstration with the rod and
nods.

HYPATIA (CONT'D)

Now, let's apply this to the
Earth's movement...!

Hypatia crouches and sinks the rod into the sand. Then she
begins to walk around the sand pit, moving the rod always
within the cord, thus tracing the outline of its movement.

HYPATIA (CONT'D)

What figure will we obtain...?

Hypatia completes the outline. Our point of view rises in
order to observe it from above: the resultant shape is an
ellipse.

HYPATIA (CONT'D)

An ellipse!

(pointing to one of the
torch holders)

An ellipse with the sun at one of
its foci!

Aspasius contemplates the figure, confused, not quite
agreeing. Hypatia continues enthusiastically.

HYPATIA (CONT'D)

Because, what is the circle except
a very special ellipse whose foci
have drawn so close together that
they seem to be one?

Aspasius stares fixedly at the sand pit, frowning. Hypatia
suddenly loses her enthusiasm.

HYPATIA (CONT'D)

Or perhaps I am raving,
Aspasius...Why should it be so...?
Maybe I'm...

(excited again)

But no! There is harmony in this
premise! It could well be so...

(unsure again)

Don't you think...?

(CONTINUED)

Aspasius looks up from the sand pit and looks at his mistress for a few seconds, without answering. Finally, he nods.

ASPASIUS

It could well be so, mistress.

Hypatia springs towards her slave and hugs him.

Aspasius timidly closes his arms around her, but immediately pulls away. Hypatia also withdraws, with almost childish enthusiasm lighting up her face.

HYPATIA

We'll come back to this tomorrow.

Now get some sleep.

ASPASIUS

(nodding)

Good night, mistress.

The slave leaves the rooftop terrace. Hypatia stands looking at the sand pit.

123 EXT. HYPATIA'S HOUSE: ROOFTOP - DAWN

123

Hypatia stares at the horizon: the sun begins to rise.

Her face catches the sun's glow, her eyes well up...

After a few seconds, dazzled, she kneels in silence.

124 INT. LIBRARY: HYPATIA'S LECTURE HALL - DAWN

124

The sun also illumines Davus's weary face, where he sits still deep in thought...

Something in his expression tells us he has come to a decision...

He leaps up and rushes out of the room amidst a flurry of cackling chickens.

125 EXT. LIBRARY: HILL - DAWN

125

Davus comes out of the entrance and stands at the foot of the stairs leading down the hillside.

He pulls from his tunic the sword with which he killed the Jew. He looks at it for a moment...

...and throws it to the ground, followed by a heap of stones which he takes out of his pockets. Then he runs off.

ISIDORUS (V.O.)

Davus!

(CONTINUED)

125 CONTINUED:

125

Davus turns. Isidorus, not far away, looks at the sword and stones...and then at his companion in puzzlement.

ISIDORUS (CONT'D)

Where are you going?

Davus looks at his companion with a mixture of pride and guilt and sets off running again without answering.

126 EXT. VIA CANOPICA - DAY

126

Davus runs full tilt. There is desperation in his face, but also a hint of euphoria...

127 INT. PREFECT'S HEADQUARTERS: CHAMBER - DAY

127

Various slave girls extinguish and collect the oil lamps scattered throughout the tiered seats.

Hypatia watches them from where she stands waiting in the middle of the room...

ORESTES

Lady...

Orestes appears through a side entrance, followed by Synesius.

Hypatia runs to Orestes and examines his wounds. Meanwhile, Synesius moves strategically towards the Prefect's chair.

HYPATIA

Let me see.

Orestes, visibly uncomfortable, moves slightly away from her and points to his chair by which Synesius is now standing.

ORESTES

Why don't you sit down, lady?

Hypatia looks towards the empty tiers of seats where now only one slave girl remains, collecting the last of the lamps.

HYPATIA

Where is everybody?

ORESTES

Why don't you sit down?

Hypatia gives both men a puzzled look...

...and finally sits on the front row of seats. There is a shady exchange of looks between Orestes and Synesius.

(CONTINUED)

127 CONTINUED:

ORESTES (CONT'D)
All dignitaries who have still not
embraced the Christian faith...are
to be baptized...in public.

Hypatia says nothing. This encourages Orestes to continue.

ORESTES (CONT'D)
The aim is very clear: to add to
our cause all the Christians in the
city, decent folk prepared to fight
for me...

HYPATIA
(interrupting icily)
You talk of peddling faith.

Orestes has no answer to this. He lowers his head, in
embarrassment. Hypatia now glues her eyes to Synesius:
although the bishop also looks uncomfortable, his attitude is
much more serene than the prefect's.

HYPATIA (CONT'D)
Very well. But if everything was
already decided...
(to Orestes)
...I don't understand why you
required my presence here.

Orestes and Synesius exchange another look. The bishop walks
slowly to where Hypatia is sitting...

128 EXT. HYPATIA'S STREET - DAY 128

Davus reaches the street where Hypatia lives, exhausted. At
the far end is the entrance to her garden. He hurries towards
it...

...but soon sees the two soldiers guarding the gate. Becoming
aware of his parabalano's garments, he slows down and finally
comes to a halt.

The soldiers look at him suspiciously.

Davus plucks up his courage and walks towards them...

129 INT. PREFECT'S HEADQUARTERS: CHAMBER - DAY 129

Orestes and Synesius have placed themselves strategically on
either side of Hypatia, still sitting on the tiered seats.

HYPATIA
But...! But I am not a member of
the government!

(CONTINUED)

ORESTES

You are more than that. You are the person I trust most! Everyone knows that!

SYNESIUS

We will deprive Cyril of his main argument.

HYPATIA

No...you cannot be saying what you are saying.

Orestes withdraws a little from the group, frustrated and increasingly restless. Synesius insists.

SYNESIUS

Lady,...years ago you taught us something: if two are equal to a third, they are equal to each other... Do you remember?

(Hypatia gives him a disconcerted look)

The three of us are good people! You are...

(taking Hypatia by the arms, overcome with emotion)

You are as Christian as we are! Don't you see?!

Hypatia is also moved, but her concern is very different. She shakes her head again.

HYPATIA

Synesius, you cannot question your beliefs. I must...

Synesius's eyes are filled with infinite sadness. He stands and moves away from Hypatia, as if suddenly she had the plague.

SYNESIUS

That's a pity, lady. A pity. Our revered teacher taken away from what she herself taught us... Or do you think I am not aware of the insane things you are involved in...?

ORESTES

Synesius!

Orestes does his best to avoid Hypatia's quizzing look.

(CONTINUED)

129 CONTINUED: (2)

SYNESIUS
The Earth moving! Around the sun!
What next, lady? What next?!

HYPATIA
(with tears in her eyes)
Let me go. I beg you.

130 EXT. HYPATIA'S STREET/HOUSE: ENTRANCE COURTYARD - DAY 130

Lybanus barks furiously from the inner courtyard of Hypatia's house.

On the other side of the iron fence, Davus argues heatedly with the soldiers guarding the house.

DAVUS
Let me in! I must see her!

BODYGUARD 3
And why would she want to see a
parabalano?

DAVUS
Tell her at least to look outside!
Lady!!

One of the soldiers punches him in the head. Davus takes the blow meekly, but does not withdraw.

BODYGUARD 4
Clear off before we arrest you!

Davus sees Aspasius who, probably alerted by the dog's barking, approaches the fence.

DAVUS
Aspasius! Aspasius!
(pulling back his hood)
It's me, Davus!

Aspasius reaches the group and looks suspiciously at Davus.

BODYGUARD 3
(to Aspasius)
Do you know this man?

ASPASIUS
Yes.
(to Davus)
What do you want?

DAVUS
I need to see...your mistress. I
have urgent news.

(CONTINUED)

ASPASIUS
My mistress is not here.

DAVUS
I must speak to her!

Davus leaps at the railings. His anguished eyes seem to want to say something further, but the presence of the soldiers prevents him from being more explicit...

Aspasius hesitates before answering but finally speaks.

ASPASIUS
She's at the prefect's palace.

BODYGUARD 4
Go on, clear off!

Bodyguard 4 drags Davus backwards and shoves him on his way. Davus hardly has time to flash a look of gratitude at the old slave. He turns and sets off at a brisk walk.

BODYGUARD 3
Who was that?

Pause.

ASPASIUS
He was a slave once.

Aspasius turns and walks slowly back to the house. Lybanus trots behind him, wagging his tail and licking his hand.

131 INT. PREFECT'S HEADQUARTERS: CHAMBER - DAY 131

Visibly upset, Hypatia walks away from Orestes and Synesius. She is about to leave the room when the prefect runs up to her and stops her.

ORESTES
Wait! Lady, I beg you... If you don't agree, I...
I won't be able to protect you any longer. I won't be able to have dealings with you, or even greet you...!
(pause; his voice cracks)
Hypatia...!

His teacher looks him in the eyes, eyes which are now brimming with tears.

ORESTES (CONT'D)
Don't you see? What will I do if you go? Without you, I won't... I won't be able to go on.
(MORE)

(CONTINUED)

131 CONTINUED:

ORESTES (CONT'D)
(pause, totally
despondent)
Without you, I won't be able to
defeat Cyril.

Hypatia, full of pity, lays a hand on her friend's cheek, and
says in a thin voice:

HYPATIA
Oh, Orestes...
(pause)
Cyril has already won.

Then she leaves the room. Orestes' desolation knows no
bounds.

132 EXT. AGORA: FAÇADE PREFECT'S HEADQUARTERS - DAY 132

When Hypatia leaves the prefect's headquarters, the 4
soldiers responsible for her protection stand to attention,
ready to escort her.

Hypatia, struggling to fight back her despair, stops them.

HYPATIA
No. I don't need you.

The philosopher enters the square at a slow, firm pace.

Several passers-by observe her as she walks. Some of the
looks are anything but friendly...

133 EXT. ADJACENT STREET/VIA CANOPICA - DAY 133

Davus runs full pelt down a new street, bumping into the
occasional passer by. He is heading for the Via Canopica...

No sooner has he stepped into the avenue than he comes face
to face with a group of twenty parabalani. Startled, he comes
to a sudden halt...

He turns and begins to walk in the opposite direction with
his back to his colleagues. A shout from one of them startles
him yet again.

HIERAX
Eh, Davus!
(Davus doesn't stop)
Brother! Where are you going?!
We've found her!

Davus stops dead in his tracks and turns round; the group of
parabalani seem to be surrounding someone.

(CONTINUED)

133 CONTINUED:

Davus waits for his companions to draw nearer and then sees...

...Hypatia's face, half hidden among the parabalani. There is suffering in her expression, but serenity and dignity in her eyes.

Our point of view is Davus's: the philosopher's eyes look at us for a second...

134 EXT. VIA CANOPICA - DAY

134

Hypatia is still looking at us; we realize that this time she does recognize Davus.

The group reaches Davus, passes by on either side of him and keeps walking. Hypatia looks forward again.

He starts walking with the group without taking his eyes off her...

The people in the street watch them go by with a mixture of fear and indignation at what they are doing. There are also many looks of approval.

135 EXT. LIBRARY: HILL / FRONT COURTYARD - DAY

135

The procession slowly climbs the hill leading to the Library.

Davus tries his best to contain his anguish and go unnoticed in the midst of the parabalani, who shout streams of insults at their prisoner.

Suddenly, she turns and gives him an intense stare. With desperate eyes, Davus tries to transmit to her his compassion and support...

A parabalano swipes Hypatia across the head. She trips and falls. She is brusquely forced to her feet again. Someone grabs the veil she is wearing over her shoulders and covers her head with it. A third monk completes the action, readjusting the veil so that it also hides her face. This image should remind us of a woman wearing a burkha.

Davus' eyes fill with tears, and he shakes his head. His hand opens slowly and he lets his sword fall. His lips seem to be muttering a prayer...

The group goes through the entrance and heads towards the temple.

136 INT. LIBRARY: SERAPEUM - DAY

136

The procession enters the temple and walks down the central aisle towards the altar. Halfway there, Peter intervenes again to stop them.

(CONTINUED)

PETER

Here will do. Strip her naked!

Two monks violently pull the veil off Hypatia's head and rip off all her clothes, knocking her to the ground. One of them takes lascivious delight in his task; he gets the philosopher to her feet once again, groping her all over.

PETER (CONT'D)

Come here... That's it, so that God can behold you in all your filth...whore. Or were you not the prefect's harlot?

HIERAX

Heathen! Heathen!

PARABALANO 2

(without taking his hands
off her body)

Whore...

Hypatia, with her eyes fixed on the ground, receives these aggressions with obvious terror, but never loses her composure.

PARABALANO 3

Look. She doesn't react!

PETER

You'll scream all right...when we skin you alive. How many of you have knives?

DAVUS

No!

Davus's desperate intervention surprises everyone. His brain is working overtime to find an excuse.

DAVUS (CONT'D)

Brothers... Why...why stain our blades with such impure blood?

Pause.

PARABALANO 2

Yes, let's stone her!

PETER

Get some stones!

PARABALANO 3

(pointing to the area near
the entrance)

The ones we threw at Orestes are still there!

(CONTINUED)

Davus hurriedly intervenes:

DAVUS

Quickly! I'll stay with her.

All the monks scatter and begin to collect stones which they put in their pockets. Davus and Hypatia remain standing, she with her back to him, waiting...

Davus looks nervously around, unable to do anything. His eyes light on the mosaic on the altar, representing Christ the King. There seems to be a prayer to God behind Davus's anguished gaze. The voices of the parabalani make him turn again towards them.

PETER

No, they're too small! Bigger ones!

Suddenly, Davus seems to understand. He fixes his eyes on Hypatia, standing in front of him...

Davus approaches until he is pressed against her back. Their bodies are both trembling. He passes an arm round her waist...Hypatia turns her head and looks him in the eyes: for an instant we sense complicity, compassion and tenderness between them both...

Davus puts his other arm around the philosopher's neck. She offers no resistance, as if she knew what was going to happen. Their cheeks touch...and suddenly the image of them is strangely similar to that of two lovers in an embrace.

Davus raises his forearm a little more and presses it over Hypatia's nose and mouth. He cannot help letting a sob of desolation escape for what he is about to do, but he does not hesitate... He tightens the pressure of his arm, keeping a furtive eye on the sinister labour of his companions.

Although she has begun to suffocate through lack of oxygen, her eyes, raised towards the open dome of the temple, show no anguish. Davus weeps disconsolately as he maintains the pressure.

His head begins to fill with images of the past:

FLASHBACK: INT. DAVUS'S ROOM - NIGHT

We recall the moment in which, years before, Hypatia affectionately caressed Davus's head as he crouched in his room.

FLASHBACK: EXT. FRONT COURTYARD, LIBRARY - NIGHT

We return to the moment in which Davus, lying next to his mistress, brushed one of her feet with his hand as he gazed at the stars...

139 INT. LIBRARY: SERAPEUM - DAY 139

Davus continues to weep and apply pressure...

140 FLASHBACK: EXT. FRONT COURTYARD - NIGHT 140

We relive the moment when Hypatia and Davus, sitting together, stared into each other's eyes as they talked of the stars...

141 INT. LIBRARY: SERAPEUM - DAY 141

A glimmer of sunlight peeps over the hole in the dome which, despite being circular, from Hypatia's POV appears to be an ellipse...

The sight of it seems to allow her a final breath of peace among so much horror. She slowly closes her eyes...

Davus takes his arm from Hypatia's face and lets her body slowly slump to the ground.

The horde of monks reaches them.

DAVUS

She fainted.

Vaguely disappointed, the parabalani surround the body and raise their first stones.

Davus walks slowly to the altar. Behind him, out of focus, we see the silhouettes of his companions hurling stones to a deafening noise.

Davus stops just under the open dome, in front of the image of Jesus. His disconsolate weeping contrasts with the inexpressiveness of the painting.

142 INT/EXT. LIBRARY/EARTH - DAY 142

Now we see Davus from the sky, through the opening in the dome. Our field of view broadens as we rise...

A caption reads:

*Hypatia's body was mutilated and
her remains dragged through the
streets and burned on a pyre.
Orestes disappeared for good and
Cyril seized power in Alexandria.*

We can now see a high angle shot of the whole city. We continue to move away more quickly, as we read:

*Later, Cyril was declared a saint
and doctor by the Church.*

(CONTINUED)

We begin to distinguish the shape of the Mediterranean Sea.

*Although none of Hypatia's works
survived, it is known that she was
an outstanding astronomer and
renowned for her mathematical
studies on conic sections.*

We continue to speed away from the planet...

*Twelve hundred years later, the
astronomer Johannes Kepler
discovered that one of these
curves, the ellipse, governed the
motion of the planets.*

...until we see it in its entirety. And behind it, space
filled with stars.

END CREDITS