

EVER AFTER: A CINDERELLA STORY

Screenplay by

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FINAL SHOOTING SCRIPT

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1 OMIT 1
2 EXT. COURTYARD - HAUTEFORT - EARLY MORNING 2

LOOKING STRAIGHT DOWN ON A 19TH CENTURY CARRIAGE as TWO BEARDED MEN in their late twenties step out onto the gravel. One carries a BOUQUET OF FLOWERS while the other struggles with a cumbersome LEATHER-BOUND NOTEBOOK

3 INT. STAIRCASE - CONTINUOUS 3

A BUTLER escorts the gentlemen through the lavish residence. Their footsteps echoing on the cold stone floor.

3A INT. BED CHAMBER - DAY 3A

as the guests are escorted into the bed chamber of a GRANDE DAME. She is propped up in bed and surrounded by ATTENDANTS and DOCTORS. The mood is somber but the gracious lady is not. They speak in French (WITH SUBTITLES)

BUTLER

Wilhelm and Jacob Grimm, madame.

GRANDE DAME

Gentlemen, welcome. Do make yourselves comfortable and ignore these dour old faces. You would think they were the ones who were dying.

A TEA SERVICE is rolled in as the brothers marvel at their surroundings.

Wilhelm spots a PORTRAIT OF A YOUNG WOMAN on display in the corner and is captivated. He speaks in German (WITH SUBTITLES).

WILHELM

Jacob, look.

Jacob glances up from his notebook.

JACOB

Beautiful.

WILHELM

No...the signature.

Jacob puts on his glasses and joins his brother at the fireplace. His eyes widen.

4 SAME SCENE - LATER

4

ANGLE ON: the old woman, as she sets down her tea. (They continue in ENGLISH.)

GRANDE DAME

Our family is a great believer in the written word. Your project is quite brilliant, actually. We haven't seen a good collection of folktales since Aesop.

JACOB

We've heard your family has been recounting this story for centuries.

GRANDE DAME

What's left of it. I was afraid it would die with me.

The old woman beckons the one remaining servant to bring her a SMALL ORNATE CASE from the credenza.

WILHELM

Might I inquire about the painting? She is really quite extraordinary.

GRANDE DAME

Her name was Danielle de Barbarac... and this was her glass slipper.

She opens the case and presents a DELICATE SILVER-SATIN SHOE, covered with a THOUSAND TINY CRYSTAL BEADS, which sparkles even in the dim light. The two men gaze upon the family heirloom, astonished.

JACOB

Then it's true, the story?

She sets the slipper down before them and searches their faces. Jacob readies his quill.

GRANDE DAME

Yes, quite. Although, the legend and the truth have grown farther apart over the years. I scarcely know how to begin.

WILHELM

My brother has taken the liberty of introducing most of our tales with "Once Upon A Time."

(CONTINUED)

4 CONTINUED:

4

GRANDE DAME

Oh, I like that. Very well then.
Once upon a time there lived a young
girl who loved her father very much...

Wilhelm glances up at the painting.

5 EXT. FRENCH COUNTRYSIDE (CIRCA 1500) - DAY

5

BEGIN MAIN TITLES: A MAN ON A BLACK STALLION escorts a
CARAVAN OF COACHES across the valley floor. THUNDERING
HOOVES pound the dusty trail. WHEELS BLUR. The HORSEMAN'S
CAPE billows in his wake. His name is AUGUSTE DE
BARBARAC.

*

6 OMIT

6

*

7 SERIES OF SHOTS: THE CARAVAN 7

moving across the Dordogne river; through spectacular
landscapes, passing one impressive chateau after another.
TITLES CONTINUE...

8 EXT. MANOIR DE BARBARAC - DAY 8

A country manor, boasting roughly a thousand acres of
well-tended woods, fields, and orchards. Lovely, but
hardly in the same league as the chateaus we've just
seen.

 YOUNG DANIELLE (V.O.)

 Christmas! I get a mother and sisters
 all on one day!

9 INT. DANIELLE'S BED CHAMBER - DAY 9

ANGLE ON: a pretty little girl as her head pops up into a
beautiful gown. This is YOUNG DANIELLE(8); being dressed
by her doting chambermaids; PAULETTE(50s) and
LOUISE(50s).

 PAULETTE

 Yes, it should be very exciting around
 here, what with a Baroness and all.
 Now hold still.

But Danielle can barely be contained as she studies
herself in the mirror, surprised at what she sees.

 LOUISE

 The master deserves some happiness
 after all this time. She must be
 lovely.

 YOUNG DANIELLE

 I hope she likes me.

 LOUISE

 She will love you. Just be the little
 angel I know is in there someplace.

 PAULETTE

 And don't go chewing on the bones at
 dinner and give yourself away.

(CONTINUED)

Paulette and Danielle exchange teasing smiles.
Something hits the window. Danielle breaks free and
flings it open.

★
★

YOUNG DANIELLE

Gustave, I told you; not today!

10 EXT. MANOIR - DAY

10

ANGLE ON: YOUNG GUSTAVE (8), a scrawny peasant boy and
Danielle's best friend. He is stunned by her appearance.

YOUNG GUSTAVE

You look like a girl?!

YOUNG DANIELLE

That's what I am, half-wit!

YOUNG GUSTAVE

Aye! But today you look it!

He imitates an EXTREMELY prissy girl.

YOUNG DANIELLE

Boy or girl I can still whip you.

She disappears from the window.

11 EXT. MANOIR DE BARBARAC - DAY

11

A STAFF OF FIFTEEN fall in for inspection. MAURICE (55),
the Head Steward, dresses the line as Young Gustave
charges past. Young Danielle bursts out the front door
and races after him like a pink tornado. Paulette and
Louise stumble out after her, then give up.

Maurice shoots them a look, then SEES the caravan of
coaches enter the front gate, led by Auguste on his black
horse. The chambermaids join the line.

MAURICE

Danielle! Quickly, girl, it's your
father!

★

Auguste reins up in front of the manor and dismounts with
a broad grin. He and Maurice shake hands.

MAURICE

Welcome home, Monsieur le Seigneur. I
see you have brought us a Baroness.

(CONTINUED)

AUGUSTE

I have brought you an entire household, Maurice. But I seem to be missing a daughter.

The carriage pulls up in front of the manor. Coachmen leap to the door. Everyone holds their breath as the BARONESS RODMILLA DE GHENT (35) and her two daughters, YOUNG MARGUERITE (9); exquisitely beautiful, and YOUNG JACQUELINE (7); a great personality, arrive at their new home. Their faces show their disappointment. *

RODMILLA

Oh, Auguste, it is absolutely charming. Really. And where is the main house?

YOUNG DANIELLE (O.S.)

Papa!

Auguste turns just as his daughter leaps into his arms, dressed in Alsatian lace, Parisian silk, and Loire Valley mud. Auguste bursts out laughing.

AUGUSTE

Look at you; just as I left. And I wager your friend Gustave is around here someplace.

YOUNG DANIELLE

No sir, I slaughtered him!

Young Gustave shuffles around the side of the house; a human mudpie.

AUGUSTE

So you have. I had hoped to present a little lady...but I guess you will have to do.

He sets her down with a kiss.

AUGUSTE

Danielle, may I present the Baroness Rodmilla de Ghent and her daughters, Marguerite and Jacqueline.

YOUNG DANIELLE

(curtsies awkwardly)

Madame. Mademoiselles.

Rodmilla's smile doesn't quite reach her eyes; her daughters would rue the day they ever got so filthy.

(CONTINUED)

RODMILLA

Hello, Danielle. At last we meet.
Your father speaks of nothing else.
(MORE)

(CONTINUED)

11 CONTINUED: (3)

11

RODMILLA (cont'd)

Although, for a moment there, I
thought I was meeting a little boy.

AUGUSTE

Yes, well, a father's influence can be
a blessing and a curse. She has
things to learn only a gentlewoman can
teach her.

RODMILLA

I will do what I can. Ladies, say
hello to your new step-sister.

Marguerite and Jacqueline curtsy in unison, perfect
angels.

MARGUERITE/JACQUELINE

Mademoiselle.

*
*

12 INT. YOUNG DANIELLE'S BED CHAMBER - NIGHT

12

ANGLE ON: Young Danielle, opening a gift. Auguste sits
beside her on the bed. She reads the cover of a leather-
bound book.

YOUNG DANIELLE

Utopia.

AUGUSTE

It means paradise. A bit thick for an
eight year old but I thought we could
add it to our library.

YOUNG DANIELLE

Will you read some?

AUGUSTE

My dear it has been a very long day.

YOUNG DANIELLE

(sweetly)

...And you are a husband now.

Auguste brushes a lock of hair out of her face.

AUGUSTE

A husband, true, but a father first
and forever. We have been two peas in
a pod, you and I. For a long time. I
suppose this will take some getting
used to.

YOUNG DANIELLE

Did you see the way they ate their
supper? It was perfect. Like a dance.

(CONTINUED)

AUGUSTE
You like them?

(CONTINUED)

YOUNG DANIELLE
Very much.

AUGUSTE
Good. Because I must go to Avignon in
a fortnight.

YOUNG DANIELLE
But you just got back!

AUGUSTE
I know.

YOUNG DANIELLE
For how long?

AUGUSTE
Three weeks.

YOUNG DANIELLE
(negotiating)
One.

AUGUSTE
Two.

YOUNG DANIELLE
One.

They square off and launch into an old routine; rock,
paper, scissors. She wins.

AUGUSTE
Alright, one. Now go to bed.

He kisses her.

13 INT. AUGUSTE'S BED CHAMBER - NIGHT

13

ANGLE ON: Rodmilla, as she opens a LARGE CEDAR CHEST. It
is filled to the lid with invaluable articles of
CLOTHING, CHINA, and LINEN.

She marvels at a pair of GLASS SLIPPERS, then lifts out a
priceless HAND-BEADED GOWN. Turning to the mirror, she
holds it up in front of her. She SEES Auguste in the
doorway.

RODMILLA
You startled me.

AUGUSTE
Nicole wore it at our wedding.

(CONTINUED)

RODMILLA

Ah, then this would be Danielle's dowry.

She puts the dress back and closes the lid.

RODMILLA

It must be very painful to lose one love just as another enters the world. Such tragedy mixed with such joy.

AUGUSTE

And now love has found me again.

RODMILLA

But, Auguste, honestly. This house; the memories...(the real point) the distance from town. When my husband died, God rest his soul, I packed up immediately.

AUGUSTE

Yes, but darling, he was convicted of treason. You would have been beheaded right along with him.

RODMILLA

Well, that was a long time ago and now I have you. All to myself. Finally.

She moves into his arms and nuzzles his neck like a newlywed.

AUGUSTE

(responding)

Careful, madame. You know not what you do.

RODMILLA

(between kisses)

I think at my age I know exactly what I am doing. Oh, darling, I cannot wait until we're introduced at court. I understand the King has a son about Marguerite's age. Wouldn't that be something?

AUGUSTE

(laughs)

Good God, woman, you just got here.

(CONTINUED)

RODMILLA

I'm doing this for us, dear. "A good wife sets sail according to the keel of her husband's estate." And we need a bigger boat.

(CONTINUED)

AUGUSTE

Well, you've already won over
Danielle. She thinks you are
positively regal.

RODMILLA

Au contraire, I think she is the one
wearing the crown in this house.

AUGUSTE

Can you blame me?

RODMILLA

(chiding playfully)
Honestly, Auguste. She's a little
boy.

AUGUSTE

(proudly)

You should see her with a sword.

He lifts her onto the bed.

14 EXT. MANOIR - DAY

14

ANGLE ON: Auguste, putting on his riding gloves. He
shakes a touch of numbness out of his left hand and turns
to his family, waiting with the staff to bid him
farewell.

AUGUSTE

I have never seen so many gloomy
faces. I shall be back in a week.

He kisses Rodmilla. She holds onto him tightly.

RODMILLA

Then go. The sooner you leave, the
sooner we can celebrate your return.

He busses the cheeks of Young Marguerite and Young
Jacqueline then stoops down in front of Young Danielle
and lifts her petulant chin.

AUGUSTE

Perhaps by then you three will have
gotten to know each other better.

He hugs her, tightly. Rodmilla studies them carefully.

AUGUSTE

I am counting on you to teach them the
ropes around here. (to Rodmilla;
playfully) The Baroness isn't used to
getting her hands dirty.

(CONTINUED)

Danielle gazes up at her new stepmother. Rodmilla gives her a tight little smile. As Auguste mounts his horse, the reins slip from his hand. Maurice retrieves them with a smile and Auguste rides away. Rodmilla and her daughters head back inside.

RODMILLA
Come along, ladies. Back to your lessons.

YOUNG DANIELLE
Wait. He always waves when he gets to the gate. It's tradition.

The Baroness ignores her, shepherding her daughters inside. Young Danielle steadfastly waits with the staff, watching her father trot down the lane.

ANGLE ON: Auguste, riding. Perplexed by the intensified numbness in his left arm. And then it happens; a searing pain rips through his chest.

ANGLE ON: Young Danielle, as she SEES her father slump forward and tumble from his horse. She SCREAMS.

ANGLE ON: Rodmilla, rushing to the doorway. She SEES Young Danielle and Maurice running down the lane toward her husband's crumpled body. She hikes up her skirt and sprints after them.

RODMILLA
No, no, no!

QUICK CUTS; Young Danielle and Maurice, reaching Auguste first and turning him over. Confusion distorts his face as he gasps for breath.

Rodmilla bursts through them, pushing them aside. Her eyes fill with tears as her world collapses around her.

RODMILLA
Auguste, please, you cannot leave me here!

Auguste looks up into her face...

....then reaches for his little girl and dies.
Rodmilla's heart goes stone cold at her husband's final choice. She gathers her pride and walks back to the manor, leaving an eight year old girl sobbing in the dirt beside her beloved father.

FADE OUT:

FADE IN:

15 EXT. CASTLE TURRET - NIGHT

15 *

A CLOAKED FIGURE climbs out the window and scales down the wall.

KING FRANCIS (V.O.)

I signed a marriage treaty with the
King of Spain and, by God, that boy
will obey my command or there will be
hell to pay!

16 EXT. INNER COURTYARD - HAUTEFORT - DAY

16 *

KING FRANCIS and QUEEN MARIE march across the courtyard
in their nightrobes accompanied by servants with torches.

QUEEN MARIE

He does not love her, mylord.

KING FRANCIS

It's not ~~about~~ love.

QUEEN MARIE

Perhaps it should be...

KING FRANCIS

If he is to be king he needs to accept
his responsibilities.

QUEEN MARIE

A sapling cannot grow in the shadow of
a mighty oak, Francis. He needs
sunlight.

KING FRANCIS

He needs a good whipping!

17 EXT. TURRET WALL - HAUTEFORT - NIGHT

17 *

A waiting squire and horse are startled as the hooded
figure jumps down beside them. He mounts the horse and
rides off into the night.

17A INT. PRINCE'S BED CHAMBER - CONTINUOUS

17A *

QUEEN MARIE (O.S.)
Honestly, Francis, can't this wait
till morning?

KING FRANCIS (O.S.)
If I can't sleep, neither can he!

The King bursts through the door.

KING FRANCIS
Henry, wake up!

They stop dead in their tracks. The bed is empty and the
window wide open.

QUEEN MARIE
Oh, no. Not again...

18 EXT. ROAD - HAUTEFORT - NIGHT

18 *

The cloaked figure gallops past, revealing a spectacular
night shot of the castle.

19,20 MIT

19,20

21 INT. KITCHEN - MANOIR DE BARBARAC - NIGHT

21

CLOSE ON A TATTERED BOOK open on a young lady's chest.
The title is Utopia; the lady is DANIELLE, all grown up.
She has fallen asleep in front of a massive fireplace.
Beneath the soot, matted hair, and tattered clothing,
hides a beautiful twenty year old.

A ROOSTER CROWS o.s. and she stirs awake.

22 EXT. MANOIR - DAWN

22

as Danielle chops the daily firewood.

23 EXT. SIDE FIELD - MANOIR - DAWN

23

as Danielle pours a bucket of water onto withering crops.
Despite her best efforts, the once beautiful chateau and
surrounding countryside have fallen on hard times.

24 EXT. ORCHARD - DAWN

24

ANGLE ON: Danielle, gathering apples in her skirts. WE
SEE Hautefort in the distance. She looks up curiously as
the ROYAL GUARD thunder past with torches, then returns
to her chores.

25 EXT. BACK FIELD - MANOIR - DAY

25

as Danielle heads back to the manoir, she hears a LOUD WHINNY echoe from the stables. Suddenly, her father's BLACK STALLION leaps a hedge with the cloaked figure on its back, galloping straight for her.

Instinctively, Danielle grabs an apple and HURLS it like

(CONTINUED)

a fastball at the oncoming rider, hitting him right between the eyes. The stricken jockey TUMBLES BACKWARDS off his mount.

QUICK CUTS: as Danielle fires more apples, fearing retaliation as the dazed man staggers to his feet, holding his head.

DANIELLE

Thief! This will teach you to steal my father's horse!

HENRY

Please, my own has slipped his shoe and I have no choice!

DANIELLE

And our choice is what?! To let you!?

She fires several more rounds, sending him for cover behind the horse -- which refuses to stay put.

HENRY

Wait, ow, I was merely borrowing it.

DANIELLE

Get out! Shoo! Or I'll wake the whole house!!

The stallion rears up, KNOCKING the man to the ground. His hood falls back, revealing PRINCE HENRY'S FACE FOR THE FIRST TIME. And, boy, is he ever gorgeous. He, however, cannot see her face clearly through her feral-like hair.

ANGLE ON: Danielle, realizing who he is, throws herself to the ground in front of him.

DANIELLE

Forgive me, your Highness, I did not see you!

HENRY

(re: the apple)

Your aim would suggest otherwise.

DANIELLE

And for that I know I must die!!

HENRY

(sees his opening)

Then speak of this to no one and I shall be lenient.

He checks that the GUARDS are gone then mounts the horse quickly.

(CONTINUED)

DANIELLE

We have other horses, Highness.
Younger, if that is your wish.

He opens a LEATHER POUCH and pours out a HEAP OF GOLD
COINS near her head. Her eyes open WIDE.

HENRY

I wish for nothing more than to be
free of my gilded cage.

CLOSE ON Danielle as his words strike her curiously. She
lifts up her face but the Prince has already galloped
off, leaving her breathless.

26 OMIT

26 *

27 INT. DINING ROOM - MANOIR - DAY

27 *

Rodmilla is seated at the head of a long table. Her two
grown daughters, MARGUERITE; the clever beauty, and
JACQUELINE; the disappointment, are seated on either
side. Marguerite shoves her plate at Paulette, now ten
years older and far more haggard.

MARGUERITE

I said I wanted FOUR minute eggs, not
four ONE minute eggs, and where in
God's name is our bread!?

Paulette scurries off with her tray.

PAULETTE

It's just coming out of the oven,
mylady.

RODMILLA

Marguerite, precious, what do I always
say about tone?

JACQUELINE

(by rote)

A lady of breeding ought never to
raise her voice any louder than the
gentle hum of a whispering wind.

RODMILLA

Jacqueline, dear, do not speak unless
you can improve the silence. ||

MARGUERITE

I was not shrill, I was resonant. A courtier knows the difference.

RODMILLA

I sincerely doubt your "style" of resonance would be permitted in the Royal Palace.

MARGUERITE

Well, I'm not going to the Royal Palace, am I, mother? No one is! Except for some Spanish pig they have the nerve to call a Princess!

RODMILLA

Darling, nothing is final until you're dead, and even then I am quite sure God negotiates.

(then)

Why is there no salt on this table? Danielle?!

28 INT. KITCHEN - CONTINUOUS

28

as Danielle rushes into the kitchen from outside. She spills the apples onto the table and shouts through the door.

DANIELLE

Coming!

She grabs the salt from the hutch and begins scraping it into a salt cellar.

PAULETTE

She is in one of her moods.

LOUISE

(rhetorical)

Did the sun rise in the east?

DANIELLE

Yes, Louise, it did. And it is going to be a beautiful day.

She pulls a handful of coins out of her apron pocket.

PAULETTE

Look at all those feathers! Child, where did you get this?

(CONTINUED)

DANIELLE

From an angel of mercy. (pointedly;
to Louise) And I know just what to do
with them.

Louise covers her mouth and bursts into tears.

LOUISE

Maurice...!

DANIELLE

If the Baroness can sell your husband
to pay her taxes, then this can
certainly bring him home. The court
will have to let him go.

LOUISE

But the King sold him to Cartier.
He's bound for the Americas.

DANIELLE

Not yet, he isn't. This is our home
and I will not see it fall apart.

RODMILLA (O.S.)

We are waaaaaiting.

PAULETTE

Take heed, mistress, or those coins
are as good as hers.

Danielle stuffs the money back in her pocket, grabs the
salt, and timidly enters the dining room.

29 INT. DINING ROOM - CONTINUOUS

29

DANIELLE

Morning, Madame. Marguerite.
Jacqueline. I trust you slept well.

RODMILLA

What kept you?

DANIELLE

I...um... fell off the ladder in the
orchard but I am better now.

Danielle sets down the salt above Marguerite, who recoils
as flakes of ash fall onto the tablecloth.

MARGUERITE

Someone's been reading in the
fireplace again. Look at you; ash and
soot everywhere.

(CONTINUED)

RODMILLA

Some people read because they cannot think for themselves.

MARGUERITE

Why don't you sleep with the pigs, "cinder-soot," if you insist on smelling like one.

RODMILLA

That was harsh, Marguerite. Danielle, come here, child.

Danielle stands for Rodmilla's scrutiny.

RODMILLA

Your appearance does reflect a certain... crudeness, my dear. What can I do to make you try?

DANIELLE

I do try, stepmother. I...I do wish to please you. Sometimes I sit on my own and try to think of what else I could do, how I should act --

RODMILLA

Calm yourself, child. Relax.

The room is silent. All eyes glare at Danielle.

DANIELLE

Perhaps if we brought back Maurice, I would not offend you so.

RODMILLA

It is your manner that offends, Danielle. In these hard times, I have sheltered you, clothed you, cared for you. All I ask in return is that you help me here without complaint. Is it such an extraordinary request?

DANIELLE

No, mylady.

RODMILLA

Then I will hear no more talk of servants coming back. Is that understood?

DANIELLE

Yes, mylady.

Danielle bows and exits.

(CONTINUED)

29 CONTINUED: (2)

29

RODMILLA

After all I have done. After all that
I do. It is never enough.

30 EXT. FOREST ROAD - DAY

30

ANGLE ON: Henry reining in Auguste's stallion. Ahead, a
SCRUFFY BAND OF GYPSIES surround an OLD MAN and his
ENTOURAGE

ANGLE ON: the gypsies, rifling through the old man's
possessions. The GYPSY LEADER looks down the road at
Henry and WHISTLES to his men. They scatter like
cockroaches in twelve separate directions.

ANGLE ON: Henry, wondering why they took off, turns and
SEES the Royal Guard closing fast. Henry kicks his horse
into gear.

OLD MAN

Please, for the love of God, the
painting! That man, there, he's
getting away!

HENRY

The guard will assist you, I cannot!

The Old Man grabs his leg and simply opens his heart.

OLD MAN

Please, sir, it is my life.

Henry considers his options and makes a fateful decision.
He curses his own weakness and takes off after the GYPSY
THIEF.

31 EXT. FOREST - CONTINUOUS

31

ANGLE ON: the gypsy thief, running up a steep hill
through the trees, with a BRASS TUBE. He disappears over
the rise.

ANGLE ON: Henry, spurring his horse to follow. The thief
suddenly re-appears on horseback and takes a mighty swing
at the Prince with a large stick. The CHASE IS ON.

32 EXT. CLIFF - CONTINUOUS

32

QUICK CUTS: as the two men slalom wildly through the
trees; grappling for the stolen tube; and finding
themselves racing along the crack in the side of a
mountain. They round a corner and play chicken with a
cliff. Both riders and mounts sail OFF, still wrestling
over the prize, and splash down in a LARGE POND.

*
*
*

33 EXT. RIVER - CONTINUOUS

33

ANGLE ON: Henry, breaking the surface, holding the floating tube, swimming to shore. The gypsy thief comes out of nowhere, gets him in a headlock. Henry clubs him unconscious with the brass cylinder.

34,35 OMIT

34,35

36 EXT. SIDE STREET - SARLAT - DAY

36

ANGLE ON: Jacqueline, eating a pastry and keeping a sharp eye out.

ANGLE ON: Rodmilla and Marguerite, picking through trinkets, baubles, and brooches with a shady GOLD VENDOR. He hands the Baroness a brooch, which she holds up to Marguerite's ample bosom.

RODMILLA

No, too small. It needs to draw some attention.

GOLD VENDOR

I fear, Baroness, anything larger might make her fall over.

RODMILLA

Perhaps you are right. I shall look elsewhere.

GOLD VENDOR

I have just the thing!

Jacqueline spies two well-dressed, middle-aged noblesse; CELESTE and ISABELLE coming down the street. She tries to whistle as promised but all she gets is crumbs. The two women glide right past her and spy Rodmilla and Marguerite deep in the alley. They stop and address them from the safety of the street.

CELESTE

Honestly, Rodmilla, a young lady's reputation does not belong in an alleyway.

*

*

RODMILLA

Alright, I'll confess, I was bargain shopping for my chambermaids.

These women don't buy it for a second but they do like to keep up appearances.

(CONTINUED)

ISABELLE
(to Celeste)
Gifts for the help.
(MORE)

(CONTINUED)

36 CONTINUED: (2)

36.

ISABELLE (cont'd)

What a novel idea. (then; to Rodmilla)
I suppose you've already heard. The
Prince has run away.

CELESTE

He wants to marry for love. Can you
imagine?! Why the very idea is...

RODMILLA

Crude and utterly selfish.

ISABELLE

I wonder if anyone has caught his eye?

The Gold Vendor returns with an ENORMOUS BROOCH.

GOLD VENDOR

Here it is!

Rodmilla is busted but completely nonplussed.

RODMILLA

Mmm, I wonder.

37 OMIT

37

37A INT. PAINTER'S STUDIO - DAY

37A

ANGLE ON: GUSTAVE (20); no longer a boy, but not quite a
man. He looks out the window at Rodmilla and the ladies
gossiping below. He shakes his head, incredulously.

GUSTAVE

Have you lost your marbles? Do you
know what the punishment is for
servants who dress above their
station? Five days in the stocks!

DANIELLE

You'd do the same for me. Admit it.

GUSTAVE

Me?! Pretend to be a courtier?
Prancing around like a nobleman. Why,
I've never even been to court. And
neither have you.

DANIELLE

Then I won't be recognized. Now hand
me that gown so I can be on my way.

Gustave crosses past a nearly-finished painting of the
old noblewoman. Her GOWN and ASSORTED JEWELRY have been
left behind; arranged on a mannequin for the artist to
consult at his leisure. *

(CONTINUED)

37A CONTINUED:

37A

He pulls the dress off the form and, averting his eyes,
hands the gown to her behind a CHANGING SCREEN.

(CONTINUED)

GUSTAVE

They'll never buy it. You're not snotty enough.

DANIELLE

They will never buy a servant with twenty gold francs either. I am his only hope.

GUSTAVE

And the Baroness? What did you tell her?

DANIELLE

I'm picking wildflowers. Can you still see her?

GUSTAVE

They're buying a brooch.

DANIELLE

Unbelievable. She ignores the manor, blames us for her debt, and still pretends to have money to burn. Now don't you dare laugh. I'm coming out.

Danielle steps out from behind the screen uncomfortably. Embarrassed by such pretense, her eyes remain downcast and her posture stooped. She fumbles with her shoes.

DANIELLE

The shoes are too big.

Gustave is speechless; she looks stunning. Their eyes meet.

GUSTAVE

Nobody will be looking at your feet...

DANIELLE

(blushing)

Yards of fabric and I still feel naked.

GUSTAVE

If you are going to be a noblewoman, you must play the part. (lifting her chin) You look down to no one.

DANIELLE

I am just a servant in a nice dress.

GUSTAVE

Come, we have to fix your hair.

38 EXT. FOREST ROAD - DAY

38

ANGLE ON: Henry, soaking wet, as he returns the tube to its rightful owner. He is surrounded by CAPTAIN LAURENT and the Royal Guard. The Old Man unscrews the end and digs out the ROLLED CANVAS.

CAPTAIN LAURENT

Henry, you promised.

*
*

HENRY

I know, I lied. I thought I'd see the world before I gave up my life to God and country.

OLD MAN

Then why on earth did you stop?

HENRY

(simply)

I suppose it's because I lack conviction. You seem to have it in spades. You claimed it was a matter of life and death.

OLD MAN

A woman always is, Sire.

The Old Man unfurls the painting, known throughout the world as the MONA LISA. LEONARDO DA VINCI breathes a sigh of relief and displays his masterpiece for the young Prince.

HENRY

She laughs at me, sir, as if she knows something I do not.

LEONARDO

The lady had many secrets. I merely painted one of them.

CAPTAIN LAURENT

Signore da Vinci has been invited to the palace as the artist in residence.

Henry's jaw drops.

HENRY

Leonardo da Vinci?!

(CONTINUED)

38 CONTINUED:

LEONARDO

Michaelangelo was trapped under a ceiling in Rome. I am but a second choice.

*
*
*

He grabs Leonardo by the shoulders.

HENRY

Why, here I am on my way to Genoa and I find my salvation on the highway! Sir, you are the very founder of forward thinking and my father is the King of backward! Perhaps you can talk him into the sixteenth century!

LEONARDO

Captain Laurent, do translate.

CAPTAIN LAURENT

Prince Henry suffers from an arranged marriage, signore. Among other things.

LEONARDO

Ah...

39-41 OMIT

39-41

42 EXT. MAIN GATE - MANOIR - DAY

42

ANGLE ON: Prince Henry and Captain Laurent, trotting down the lane, leading Auguste's stallion. Leonardo's entourage and the Royal Guard wait outside the gate.

*
*

43 INT. MANOIR - CONTINUOUS

43

It's pandemonium (Elvis is heading for the building). Rodmilla lassos Marguerite and cups her face intently.

RODMILLA

Change quickly, girl, and do so with utmost care for you are about to meet your future husband! Remember, courtesy is currency. Now go! (SEES Jacqueline) You, help her!

44 EXT. MANOIR - CONTINUOUS

44

ANGLE ON: Rodmilla, as she gracefully receives the Prince without an ounce of sweat.

RODMILLA

Your Highness, what a lovely surprise.
I wasn't expecting such handsome
company. To what do we owe this
honor?

HENRY

I am returning your horse, Baroness.

RODMILLA

Oh...Was it missing?

HENRY

Yes, I borrowed it this morning. I'm
afraid I might have scared the wits
out of one of your servants; a young
lady with... quite a good arm
actually.

Rodmilla negates her instantly.

RODMILLA

She is mute, mylord.

HENRY

Really? She spoke quite forcefully.

Smiles; doesn't miss a beat...

RODMILLA

It comes and goes... But as always
his Highness is welcome to anything he
wishes... anything at all.

ANGLE ON: Marguerite, half-dressed and panting, as she
flies out the door with Jacqueline right behind her.

RODMILLA

Oh, hello, ladies. Look who's here.

MARGUERITE/JACQUELINE

Your Highness.

They curtsy like synchronized swimmers. Captain Laurent
catches Jacqueline's eye and smiles.

45- OMIT

47A

45-

47A

DANIELLE

This gentleman is my servant and I am
here to pay the debt against him

CARGO MASTER

Too late. Bought and paid for.

ANGLE ON: Maurice, as he recognizes Danielle and grips
the bars. She silences him with a LOOK.

DANIELLE

I can pay you twenty gold francs.

This gets his attention. He leers at her and quips;

CARGO MASTER

Madame, you can have me for twenty
gold francs. Drive on!

ANGLE ON: Prince Henry, galloping through the main gate
and into the outer courtyard with the Royal Guard.

BACK TO SCENE: as Danielle grabs the bridles.

DANIELLE

I demand you release him at once...
or... I shall... uh, take this matter
to the King!

CARGO MASTER

The King's the one who sold him -- now
he's the property of Cartier.

DANIELLE

He is not property at all, you ill-
mannered tub of guts! Do you honestly
think it right to chain people like
chattel?!

ANGLE ON: courtiers, in the outer courtyard and the front
garden begin to notice Danielle.

DANIELLE

I demand you release him at once!

CARGO MASTER

Get out of my way!

PRINCE HENRY(O.S.)

You dare raise your voice to a lady,
Sir?

(CONTINUED)

48 CONTINUED: (2)

Danielle TURNS TO SEE the crowd part and bow as Prince Henry approaches with Captain Laurent. She tries to hide her face.

CARGO MASTER

Forgive me, your Highness, but my job is to take these thieves and criminals to the coast.

This is the MOMENT OF TRUTH. Danielle squares herself and looks the Prince straight in the eye. There is not a shred of recognition.

DANIELLE

A servant is not a thief, your Highness. And those who are cannot help themselves

The Prince and Captain Laurent trade LOOKS.

HENRY

Really? Well then, by all means, enlighten us.

DANIELLE

(beat; then gradually)

If you...suffer your people to be ill-educated and their manners corrupted from infancy, and then punish them for those crimes to which their first education disposed them, what else is to be concluded, Sire, but that you first make thieves, and then punish them.

ANGLE ON: Da Vinci, impressed. He catches a glimpse of her footwear and smiles to himself.

HENRY

Well, there you have it. Release him.

CARGO MASTER

Sire, my orders are...

HENRY

I SAID RELEASE HIM!

(CONTINUED)

48 EXT. OUTER COURTYARD - HAUTEFORT - DAY

48

ANGLE ON: Danielle, running along the road below and disappearing under the archway. CAMERA TILTS UP TO REVEAL the MAIN GATE, crowded with peasants. CONTINUE PANNING TO REVEAL THE PALACE.

*
*
*
*

ANGLE ON: Danielle, as she is allowed entrance past a clot of peasants crowding the gate. Her hair and manner are that of a courtier but her tattered footwear belongs to a peasant and her heart is in her throat. She gapes at her surroundings, overwhelmed.

*
*
*

ANGLE ON; Danielle, on the drawbridge, as she spies Maurice being herded onto the another prison wagon below. The years have taken their toll; he now has rheumy eyes and a raspy cough.

DANIELLE

God give me strength.

She hurries to intercept the wagon as it comes around the corner, heading for the main gate. She steps in front of the wagon, forcing the BELEAGUERED CARGO MASTER to stop.

(CONTINUED)

The Cargo Master shits his pants. The noblesse BUZZ with excitement. All eyes are on this event as Maurice is freed.

ANGLE ON: the Old Noblewoman seen in the portrait, as she brags to her friends.

OLD NOBLEWOMAN

I will have you know I have a dress
just like hers.

ANGLE ON: Maurice, as he is set free and knowing things are not what they seem.

MAURICE

(overwhelmed)

I thought I was looking at your
mother.

DANIELLE

(sotto voce)

Meet me at the bridge. (then playing
to the crowd) We leave at once, see to
the carriage.

Maurice stumbles on ahead. Danielle turns to the Prince.

DANIELLE

I thank you, Sire.

She curtsies and makes a BEELINE for the main gate,
trying to ignore the stares. Henry, intrigued, sidles up
to her making her very nervous, indeed.

HENRY

I could have sworn I knew every
courtier in the Province. Have we met?

DANIELLE

I am visiting a cousin.

HENRY

Who?

DANIELLE

My cousin.

HENRY

Yes, you said that. Which one?

(CONTINUED)

DANIELLE

The only one I have, Sire.

She QUICKENS her pace; eyes on the exit. Henry is truly captivated.

HENRY

Then, please, tell me your cousin's name so that I might call upon her to learn who you are. For anyone who can quote Thomas More is well worth the effort.

DANIELLE

The Prince has read Utopia?

HENRY

I found it sentimental and dull.
I confess the plight of the everyday rustic bores me.

Danielle slows to a stop, astonished by his arrogance, and motions to the departing prison wagons.

DANIELLE

I gather you do not converse with many peasants...?

HENRY

(laughing)

Certainly not! No. Naturally.

Again, his arrogance gets her goat. Danielle's spirit gets the best of her.

DANIELLE

Excuse me, Sire, but there is nothing natural about it. A country's character is defined by its "everyday rustics" as you call them

(MORE)

(CONTINUED)

DANIELLE (cont'd)
and their position demands respect.
Not... not...

*

Henry is fascinated. No one has spoken to him like this before.

HENRY
Am I to understand you find me
arrogant?

*

*

DANIELLE
You gave one man back his life but did
you even glance at the others?!

(No, he didn't...) They stand facing each other; charged
with an electricity neither has ever felt.

HENRY
Who are you?

*

Danielle notices the stares and the silence from the crowd.

DANIELLE
I fear the only name to leave you with
is... Comtesse Nicole de Lancret.

*

HENRY
There now, that wasn't so hard.

ANGLE ON: Queen Marie, walks out of the arboretum with
her entourage. She SEES her son.

*

QUEEN MARIE
Henry, you're back!

Danielle blanches; a one on one with the Queen is too much.

HENRY
Hello, mother.

QUEEN MARIE
The King would like a word with you.
Several, in fact.

HENRY
He usually does. I shall be right in.

He turns back to Danielle but she has disappeared.

54 INT. THRONE ROOM - HAUTEFORT - DAY

54

ANGLE ON: Henry and the Queen, as they enter the throne room. The King looks up from his work. *

KING FRANCIS

You, sir, are restricted to the grounds!

HENRY

(laughs)

Are you putting me under house arrest?

KING FRANCIS

foul disposition. And I will have my way --

HENRY

--Or what? You'll ship me to the Americas like some criminal. All for the sake of your stupid contract.

The King leaps to his feet.

KING FRANCIS

(sputtering)

You are the Prince of France!

HENRY

And it is my life!

QUEEN MARIE

Francis, sit down, before you have a stroke. Honestly, the two of you... Sweetheart, you have been born to privilege and with that come specific obligations.

HENRY

Forgive me, mother, but marriage to a complete stranger never made anyone in this room very happy.

KING FRANCIS

You will marry Gabriella by the next full moon or I will strike at you any way I can!

HENRY

What's it to be, father? Hot oil, or the rack?

(CONTINUED)

54 CONTINUED:

KING FRANCIS
I will simply deny you your crown and
live forever!

HENRY
Good. Agreed. I don't want it.

Henry exits, leaving King Francis with no one to yell at
except his wife.

KING FRANCIS
He's your son!

55 OMIT 55

56 EXT. BACK FIELD - MANOIR - DAY 56

ANGLE ON; Louise, picking vegetables out back. She
glances up and SEES her husband, laughing and walking
across the field with Danielle (holding a bouquet of
wildflowers).

ANGLE ON; Danielle, as Louise and Maurice embrace.
Paulette races out and joins them. Louise kisses her
husband's face repeatedly, then reaches for Danielle.
This is her family.

57 INT. GREAT ROOM - MANOIR - MOMENTS LATER 57

ANGLE ON; Danielle, entering the great room where
Marguerite and Jacqueline are playing backgammon.
Marguerite doesn't even look up.

MARGUERITE
(singsong)
Somebody's in trouble.

Danielle turns to find Rodmilla, standing right beside
her. And before she can even say hello, the woman grabs
her by the ear, marches her across the room, and hurls
her into a chair. The wildflowers fall to the ground.

*
*
*

RODMILLA
You stupid, stupid, girl! You know
how important this is to me! To
Marguerite! Why the whole thing makes
me sick! It's deceitfulness, Danielle,
and I will not have it in my house!

DANIELLE
What did I do?!

MARGUERITE
Think Danielle. Think real hard.

(CONTINUED)

57 CONTINUED:

Danielle isn't sure how much they know. Jacqueline helps her out, mouthing, "The horse..."

DANIELLE

Prince Henry stole our horse this morning.

RODMILLA

(mock surprise)

Really?! Why then that would explain why he RETURNED IT THIS AFTERNOON?! How dare you let him surprise me like that?!

DANIELLE

I'm sorry.

RODMILLA

Luckily for you, Marguerite turned in a beautiful performance. She and the Prince had quite an interlude.

MARGUERITE

I shouldn't be surprised if he drops by again.

Danielle is reeling; the Prince, showing up here, would be a catastrophe.

RODMILLA

Come, come, I must know exactly what was said. The simplest phrase can have a thousand meanings. He said you were forceful. What did you say?

DANIELLE

I called him a thief, madame. I did not recognize him.

Rodmilla sighs with relief and hugs her.

RODMILLA

Oh, Danielle, my little country girl. Now you must work extra hard to make certain the manoir is spotless. We cannot have the Royal bottom sitting on a dirty chaise, now can we?

Marguerite SEES Maurice and Louise standing in the doorway.

MARGUERITE

What is he doing here?

(CONTINUED)

DANIELLE (cont'd)
and their position demands respect.
Not... not...

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*
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Marguerite! Why the whole thing makes
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and I will not have it in my house!

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(CONTINUED)

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Marguerite SEES Maurice and Louise standing in the doorway.

MARGUERITE

What is he doing here?

(CONTINUED)

57 CONTINUED: (2)

57

MAURICE
(to Rodmilla)
I have worked off your... my debt,
madame. They told me to go home.

RODMILLA
(studies him a beat)
Fine. Go catch a chicken.

58 INT./EXT. LEONARDO'S BEDCHAMBER - DAY

58

ANGLE ON: Leonardo, obsessed with his latest project.
King Francis enters the domed chamber and marvels at the
designs and models, cluttering the room.

KING FRANCIS
I understand I have you to thank for
my son being home...

KING FRANCIS
These last few years haven't been
easy. He's become... confused.

LEONARDO
Confused how, Sire?

KING FRANCIS
He doesn't want to be King.

LEONARDO
Why not?

Leonardo takes a miniature parachute figurine and exits
right past the King -- and out onto the ramparts. The
King follows.

KING FRANCIS
Don't know, really. Something about
not wanting to take over the family
business, I suppose.

Leonardo throws the figure off the ledge; it falls like a
stone.

LEONARDO
My father wanted me to be a lawyer.

KING FRANCIS
That, sir, would have been a tragedy.

LEONARDO
Perhaps your son's calling is a voice
only he can hear.

(CONTINUED)

Leonardo returns to his chamber. The King follows. *

KING FRANCIS *

Like a mountain of granite that boy,
but I, too, am a mountain, and a far
more stubborn one.

LEONARDO

Then I see no solution, your Majesty,
unless, of course, one of you were to
become a river.

Using the King's finger, Leonardo ties a parachute string
in a knot as he casually changes the subject. *

KING FRANCIS

And why would we do that?

LEONARDO

It is just that a river is much
stronger than a mountain.

KING FRANCIS

Go on.

LEONARDO

A river's strength is divined from its
fluid nature. Create a dam and it will
find a way around.

Leonardo heads back outside. The King follows. *

KING FRANCIS

And this "damn" kid, how do I get
around him?

LEONARDO *

May I humbly submit, Sire, that if
France and Spain wish to fortify their
alliance with a contract, let the
treaty be between Kings, not children.
A river changes course, Majesty, but
it always finds a way to the sea.
Throw.

The King throws the parachute up. It catches the wind and
floats on the air. They both watch in awe.

KING FRANCIS

The next time I fall from the heavens -
remind me to call on you.

59 EXT. ARBORITUM - HAUTEFORT - SUNSET

59

CRANE DOWN TO REVEAL Henry and the Queen strolling beneath the canopy.

QUEEN MARIE

Who dear?

HENRY

Comtesse de Lancret. She's the cousin of... actually I don't know who her cousin is. Surely you have heard of her?

QUEEN MARIE

Darling, there are simply too many courtiers to remember them all by name. Why do you ask?

HENRY

Mmm? Nevermind.

The King barges in from a side entrance.

KING FRANCIS

In honor of Signore da Vinci, I have decided to throw a Ball. A masked ball. At which point you and I will strike a compromise.

HENRY

Compromise? You?

KING FRANCIS

If love is what you seek, I suggest you find it before then. For in five days hence, at the stroke of midnight, you will announce your engagement to the girl of your choice...OR I will announce it for you. Are we agreed?

Henry considers the offer.

HENRY

And what of your treaty?

KING FRANCIS

Let me worry about Spain. You've got bigger problems.

Husband and wife share a KNOWING LOOK.

QUEEN MARIE

Choose wisely, Henry. Divorce is only something they do in England.

(CONTINUED)

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59 CONTINUED:

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59

HENRY
Thank you, father.

(CONTINUED)

59 CONTINUED: (2)

59

ANGLE ON: King Francis, walking away, rather pleased with himself. *

KING FRANCIS
I am France. I am a river.

60-62 OMIT

60-62

63 INT./EXT. MANOIR - NEXT DAY

63 *

CLOSE ON: the Royal Invitation, as Rodmilla reads between the lines. The ROYAL PAGE waits at the door like a faithful, lovesick puppy.

And the engagement?

ROYAL PAGE
Cancelled. Rumor has it, he must find himself a bride before that very night.

RODMILLA
That doesn't give us much time.

Rodmilla turns on her charms and cradles the Page's hand in hers. She eyes him, seductively, pressing coin after coin into his palm; her gaze never leaving his.

RODMILLA (cont'd)
I shall need to know who the competition is. (one) Every move he makes...(two) His agenda...(three) And any other tidbits you can dig up (four, five, six).

The Royal Page begins to flush.

ROYAL PAGE
He's playing tennis with the Marquis de Limoges tomorrow noon.

Rodmilla smiles; caresses his face.

RODMILLA
A skin of such elegance concealing such ruthlessness. I've grown rather fond of our intrigues together. Surely you must know that.

The poor guy doesn't stand a chance.

ROYAL PAGE
I'm having an inkling, mylady.

(CONTINUED)

63 CONTINUED:

RODMILLA

When my daughter is Queen, perhaps we
can find a new arrangement.

She gently closes the door between them, then gives a
small genuflection of victory and hollers upstairs.

63A OMIT

63A

63B EXT. BEEHIVES - MANOIR - DAY

63B

ANGLE ON: Danielle, using a SMOKER to calm a beehive.
She reaches in to remove a honeycomb, shakes off the
bees, and hands it to Paulette. They SEE Maurice and
Louise doing their chores together as the Royal page
gallops past.

PAULETTE

You did a wonderful thing yesterday,
child. Wonderful.

They continue working around the bees.

DANIELLE

Makes the whole place feel nicer,
doesn't it?

PAULETTE

I'd a given anything to see you all
dressed up like a courtier. Speaking
to the prince like a lady.

DANIELLE

Scolding him was more like it; the man
is insufferable.

PAULETTE

(knowing smile)

Yes, you've been saying that... all
day.

DANIELLE

Well, it's as true now as it was this
morning.

PAULETTE

But darling, he's royalty. They're
born like that.

DANIELLE

Then, I suppose the penalty for being
wealthy, is that you have to live with
the rich.

(CONTINUED)

63B CONTINUED:

PAULETTE

I'll bet he's quite charming -- once
you get to know him.

DANIELLE

Honestly, he and Marguerite deserve
each other.

She hands Paulette another comb.

PAULETTE

Bite your tongue! The only throne I
want her sittin' on is the one I have
to clean every day.

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64 INT. MARGUERITE'S BED CHAMBER - DAY

64

Marguerite's bed chamber is decorated to the hilt. Lavish fabrics, heavy curtains, and too much bedding. A CLOSER LOOK REVEALS this is Danielle's childhood bedroom.

ANGLE ON: Marguerite, tearing apart her wardrobe. A LARGE PILE OF BEAUTIFUL GOWNS lies on the floor. Rodmilla sifts through the carnage.

RODMILLA

Oh, my darlings, the years have not been kind but this just proves that even God appreciates the intricacies of court. (re; a dress) And what is wrong with this one?

MARGUERITE

It's blue!

RODMILLA

Henry loves blue.

MARGUERITE

And fifty other girls will be wearing the exact same color.

RODMILLA

Very good, Marguerite.

(CONTINUED)

Jacqueline steps into the bed chamber, wearing a LOUD GREEN GOWN TWO SIZES TOO SMALL.

JACQUELINE
This one is too small.

RODMILLA
Then we shall get you a tighter cinch.

JACQUELINE
I cannot breathe as it is!

RODMILLA
(pointedly)
If one cannot breathe, one cannot eat.

MARGUERITE
Mother. Focus. Please.

RODMILLA
Perhaps if I knew what you were looking for?

MARGUERITE
Something fit for a queen!

ANGLE ON: the Baroness, as she considers the unthinkable.

RODMILLA
Come, ladies, I have just the thing.
But we must speak of this to no one.

MARGUERITE
Oh, I do love a good intrigue!

65 INT. RODMILLA'S BED CHAMBER - CONTINUOUS

65

ANGLE ON: Danielle's trousseau, as Rodmilla finds the key and kneels down in front of it.

RODMILLA
Waste not, want not.

She opens the chest and lifts out the remarkable beaded wedding gown Marguerite practically squeals.

MARGUERITE
Ah, perfect!

Jacqueline scoops up the exquisite glass slippers.

JACQUELINE
Where did you get these?!

(CONTINUED)

RODMILLA
It's Danielle's dowry. For her wedding.

MARGUERITE
(snorts)
Cinderella; married? To who, the chimney sweep?

JACQUELINE
But, mother, if it's her gown, perhaps she'll want to wear it to the Ball.

MARGUERITE
Since when does a Royal function include commoners?

JACQUELINE
Well... never. But she is our stepsister and the invitation did say to the ladies of the house--

MARGUERITE
-- She is not of noble blood!

RODMILLA
And besides, and who would notice? No one!

MARGUERITE
Honestly, Jacqueline. Whose side are you on?

DANIELLE (O.S.)
What are you doing?

ANGLE ON: Danielle, standing with an armload of wood. Rodmilla turns crimson.

RODMILLA
Well, what does it look like? I am airing out your dress for the Masque.

Jacqueline doesn't understand the sudden change of heart.

JACQUELINE
Her dress? But you just said --

Marguerite gives her sister an EVIL LOOK and joins in the deceit. Why confront now what you can put off until later?

(CONTINUED)

MARGUERITE

-- I suppose, for a commoner, it will have to do. I mean, look at it, it's practically an antique.

DANIELLE

You wish me to go to a Masque?

RODMILLA

Of course.

Danielle has never been included in anything before.

DANIELLE

...I do not know what to say.

Danielle moves toward her stepmother but Rodmilla stiffens, stopping her in her tracks.

RODMILLA

Say? Honestly, Danielle, it hurts me that you don't feel like one of my daughters.

DANIELLE

I only meant...

RODMILLA

I thought we could all go as one big, happy family. That is... if you complete your chores in time and mind your manners until then.

Jacqueline drops the shoes back into the trunk and storms out, disgusted.

DANIELLE

What's the matter with her?

MARGUERITE

(privately)

She doesn't want you to go.

RODMILLA

Come, child, let us see how it looks.

Danielle sets down her pile of wood and tentatively steps before a full length mirror. Rodmilla holds the dress before her. It is just as she feared; she would look stunning.

RODMILLA

I was afraid of this. You just don't have the face of a courtier.

(CONTINUED)

Marguerite joins them in the mirror.

MARGUERITE
Perhaps if she squeezed the dirt out
of her pores first.

66, 67 OMIT

66, 67

68 EXT. RIVERBANK - DAY

68

ANGLE ON: a stone, skipping across the water. REVEAL
Henry at river's edge with a handful of rocks. Leonardo
retrieves his LATEST INVENTION from the wagon and joins
him.

LEONARDO
Word has it your hunt this morning was
cancelled.

HENRY
I've never seen so many women out for
a walk. Somebody could have been
killed. *

LEONARDO
(a wry smile)
Or married.

HENRY
Do you really think there is only one
perfect mate?

LEONARDO
As a matter of fact I do.

HENRY
Then how can you be certain to find
them? And if you do find them; are
they really the one for you, or do you
only think they are; and what happens
if the person you are supposed to be
with never appears; or she does but
you're too distracted to notice?

LEONARDO
You learn to pay attention.

(CONTINUED)

HENRY

Fair enough. So let's say God puts two people on earth and they're lucky enough to find one another. But one of them gets hit by lightning. Then what? Is that it? Or, per chance, you meet someone new and marry all over again. Is that the lady you were supposed to be with? Or was it the first? And if so, when the two of them were walking side by side, were they both the one for you and you just happened to meet the first one first? Or was the second one supposed to be first? Is things meant to be?

LEONARDO

You cannot leave everything to fate, boy. She's got a lot to do. Sometimes you must give her a hand.

Henry stares at Leonardo's invention.

HENRY

What is this project?

LEONARDO

Would you care to see if they work?

68A EXT. FIELD - DAY

68A

ANGLE ON: Danielle and a PIG, digging for truffles. Behind them, the hillside is littered with SPECTACULAR CHATEAUS.

She takes off her work hat and wipes the sweat from her brow. The river beckons, sparkling in the sun. Danielle looks down at her filthy appearance and sets off toward the water.

69 EXT. RIVER - DAY

69

ANGLE ON: Danielle, swimming in her underthings, delighting in her privacy. She floats on her back, gazing at the clouds.

ANGLE ON: Leonardo, fully clothed and walking across the water like Christ (thanks to his giant, pontoon-like boat shoes). He looks down at Danielle in passing and gives her a casual wave.

LEONARDO

Lovely day.

(CONTINUED)

69 CONTINUED:

69

Danielle SCREAMS bloody murder, causing the old man to lose his balance and capsize. His boatshoes BOB TO THE SURFACE without him.

70 EXT. RIVERBANK - MOMENTS LATER

70

ANGLE ON; Danielle and Leonardo, each clutching a boatshoe and paddling to shore. Henry splashes into the shallows to greet them.

HENRY

Signore da Vinci, are you alright?

LEONARDO

I should leave walking on water to the son of God. Fortunately, I tripped over an angel.

Henry and Danielle lock eyes; both are stunned.

HENRY

Comtesse?!

DANIELLE

Your Highness?!

She throw herself to the ground. Then realizes she's supposed to be a courtier and stands back up, regally.

DANIELLE

Careful, it's very slippery right there.

HENRY

Here, please, allow me.

71 EXT. RIVERBANK - LATER

71

ANGLE ON: Leonardo, dressed in his long-johns, and digging through his wagonload of inventions. Danielle and Henry are seated nearby in a perfectly glorious setting. Danielle is wrapped in Henry's cloak.

HENRY

Where are your attendants?

DANIELLE

(thrown off)

I...um, decided to give them the day off.

HENRY

(laughs)

A day off?! From what, life?

(CONTINUED)

DANIELLE

There are days when I wish for nothing
more than to be alone.

HENRY

Tell me Nicole de Lancret, why do I
get the feeling you're hiding
something? *

Danielle shifts, uncomfortably.

DANIELLE *

I think perhaps you are looking too
closely.

Henry backs off.

HENRY

Perhaps I am. I'm afraid,
mademoiselle, you are a walking
contradiction and I find that rather
fascinating. *

DANIELLE

Me?

HENRY

Yes, you. You spout the ideals of a
Utopian society and the abolition of
the class system, and yet live the
life of a courtier.

(CONTINUED)

DANIELLE

And you own all the land there is, yet
take no pride in working it. Is that
not also a contradiction?

Henry rises to meet her.

HENRY

First I'm arrogant and now I have no
pride. However do I manage that?

DANIELLE

You have everything and still the
world holds no joy. But you insist on
for its possibilities.

HENRY

(beat; then)
How do you do it?

DANIELLE

Do what?

HENRY

Live each day with this kind of
passion. Don't you find it exhausting?

DANIELLE

Only when I am around you. Why do you
like to irritate me so?

HENRY

Why do you rise to the occasion?

(CONTINUED)

71 CONTINUED: (3)

ANGLE ON: Jacqueline, on a hillside across the river,
having found the pig but no Danielle. *

JACQUELINE
Danielle? Danielle!

(CONTINUED)

71 CONTINUED: (4)

BACK TO SCENE: as Danielle suddenly excuses herself.

DANIELLE

You will have to excuse me, your
Highness, I have lost track of the
hour.

Leonardo has just brought out his elaborate kite.

LEONARDO

But the wind. It's perfect.

DANIELLE

I'm sorry.

HENRY

I'm playing tennis tomorrow with the
Marquis de Limoges. Will you come?

DANIELLE

I really must go.

She throws Henry his cloak and races off.

HENRY

Why does she keep doing that?

72-73 OMIT

72-73

74 DINING ROOM - MANOIR - DUSK

74

ANGLE ON: Rodmilla and her two daughters having supper.
Danielle, Paulette, and Louise stand beyond the perimeter
of the table, ready to serve.

RODMILLA

Paulette, where are the candlesticks?
We can hardly see our plates.

PAULETTE

They are missing, mylady. I have
searched high and low.

MARGUERITE

The painting in the upstairs hall is
gone too. Seems we have a thief in
our midst.

The staff trade LOOKS. Rodmilla sets down her silverware.

RODMILLA

So this is how I am treated after all
our years together. My husband's
prized possessions...

(MORE)

(CONTINUED)

RODMILLA (cont'd)

Well, I shall garnish all your wages
until the pilfered items are returned.
Is that understood?

ALL

Yes, ma'am.

RODMILLA

Perhaps I should ship you all off to
the Americas with the rest of the
thieves...

JACQUELINE

Oh, didn't you hear? The Prince went
to the King and asked him to release
all those men.

DANIELLE

He didn't?!

Rodmilla shoots her a look. The help aren't supposed to
be listening.

JACQUELINE

By Royal Decree, any man who sails
must now be compensated.

RODMILLA

Compensated? Honestly, what is the
world coming to?

MARGUERITE

Well, what I want to know is who is
this Comtesse everyone is talking
about? Why there must've been ten
courtiers speaking of her today and
how the Prince fell all over himself.

Danielle fills Marguerite's glass...

RODMILLA

We will find out who she is and bury
her.

...and almost spills it.

(CONTINUED)

JACQUELINE
Mother!

RODMILLA
The social pyramid has slippery
slopes, Jacqueline. Mind that you
don't fall off.

JACQUELINE
It's blasphemy...

RODMILLA
Darling, Hell couldn't possibly be
worse than a house in the country.
(then)
These truffles are magnificent
Danielle, thank you.

Danielle can barely contain her smile.

74A INT. THRONE ROOM - HAUTEFORT - NIGHT

74A

Meet PIERRE LE PIEU (50); the court armorer; a wealthy
older gentleman with bad posture and worse teeth. He
fits a HELMET on Prince Henry as part of his new SUIT OF
ARMOR. Captain Laurent and several soldiers look on.

Henry WINCES as the metal grazes his brow.

LE PIEU
Begging your pardon, Sire.

HENRY
It's this silly bruise.

(CONTINUED)

CAPTAIN LAURENT
And from a servant no less.

LE PIEU
I like a woman who hits back.

HENRY
Perhaps that explains why you are
unwed, sir.

LE PIEU
But I never lack for company.

CAPTAIN LAURENT
Company that is bought and paid for,
you slimy bastard.

LE PIEU
We all pay inevitably, Captain. For
some of us it is up front.

The soldiers laugh. Henry draws his sword, trying out his
armor. Laurent draws his. They duel, playfully

HENRY
And what of love, monsieur? Is your
soul so satisfied you can live without
it?

LE PIEU
I am a homely man, Sire. I take what I
can get.

HENRY
Surely there is someone. A face that
keeps you awake at night?

LE PIEU
There is... someone, your Highness. A
commoner.

HENRY
A commoner?! (Laurent scores a jab)
Ow! Le Pieu, I'm surprised at you.

LE PIEU
Yet I find her spirit intoxicating.

HENRY
Intoxicating. Well said.

CAPTAIN LAURENT
Do not get him started, le Pieu. We
will never hear the end of the
"Comtesse de Lancret."

(CONTINUED)

LE PIEU
De Lancret? That name is unfamiliar to
me.

HENRY
(dejectedly)
Yes, to everyone.

The Queen strolls through the room with her attendants.

QUEEN MARIE
Henry, you know the rules. Take your
friends outside. No sword fighting in
the house.

HENRY
Sorry, Mother.

74B INT. LEONARDO'S BED CHAMBER - HAUTEFORT - NIGHT

74B *

ANGLE ON: Leonardo, working on a CHARCOAL STUDY OF THE
COMTESSE DE LANCRET (one such pose destined to become the
portrait seen by the Brothers Grimm).

75 INT. RODMILLA'S BED CHAMBER - MANOIR - NIGHT

75

ANGLE ON: Rodmilla, working feverishly in her LEDGER
BOOK.

CLOSE ON THE ENTRIES: CANDLESTICKS, PAINTING, VASE. She
totals the amount and slams down her pen, then catches
her reflection in her mirror. She leans in closer to get
a better look. When she is through, she picks up her
quill and makes another entry: MIRROR.

76 OMIT

76

77 INT. MARGUERITE'S BEDROOM - NIGHT

77

ANGLE ON: Marguerite, washing her face mercilessly. A
compulsive neurosis. She scrubs and scrubs and still it
isn't enough to cleanse her ugly soul. So she begins
again...

77A INT. KITCHEN - MANOIR - NIGHT

77A

ANGLE ON: Jacqueline, having a midnight snack.

77B INT. ATTIC - NIGHT

77B

ANGLE ON: Danielle, unable to sleep, and seated in the
moonlit window.

77C EXT. SPORTS ARENA - SARLAT - DAY

77C

ANGLE ON; Prince Henry and the MARQUIS DE LIMOGES meet at the net. The stands are overflowing with beautiful, available women and their mothers. *

HENRY

Last week we played to a couple of old drunks.

(CONTINUED)

MARQUIS DE LAMOGES

(a sardonic grin)

I believe tennis has swept the nation.

Henry scans the crowd for the Comtesse de Lancret.

ANGLE ON; Rodmilla, Marguerite, and Jacqueline, sitting close together on a bench, scoping out the competition. They SEE a COMTESSE and her beautiful, red-headed DAUGHTER, across the arena.

MARGUERITE

Mother, look how pretty Lulu du Pres has become.

RODMILLA

She has developed quite nicely, hasn't she?

MARGUERITE

But certainly not prettier than me.
(then; insecure) Is she?

Rodmilla SEES Isabella and Celeste also looking and confides in them.

RODMILLA

My daughters and I were just commenting on how breathtaking Lulu du Pres has become.

ISABELLA

As were we, Baroness.

CELESTE

She is a vision.

RODMILLA

(sotto voice)

And what a blessing those horrible pustules haven't yet spread to her face.

The ladies' smiles disappear. Marguerite looks at her mother, adoringly. The crowd suddenly erupts with applause as the players take their positions.

78-800MIT

78-80

80A EXT. VILLAGE SQUARE - DAY

80A

It's market day. The village is crowded with people selling their goods (meat, poultry, dairy). WE SEE barbers, dentists, puppet shows, and amusements.

(CONTINUED)

80A CONTINUED:

ANGLE ON: Danielle, carefully arranging the produce in the back of their wagon with Louise and Paulette.

DANIELLE

There I was prattling on about injustice while he was actually doing something about it.

LOUISE

Maybe you inspired him.

PAULETTE

If it was me on that riverbank, I would have kept my mouth shut and my options open.

Louise punches Paulette. Danielle is too troubled to see the humor.

DANIELLE

I am never going to be that woman again.

PAULETTE

(sarcastic)

Why, darling? You were doing so well. Couple more days and we would have had a revolution on our hands.

LOUISE

Oh hush up, y'bag of bones, can't you see she feels bad enough as it is?

PAULETTE

I'm teasing, y'old snail. If it went as bad as she thinks, why would he invite her to tennis?

DANIELLE

You mean the Comtesse.

PAULETTE

(pointedly)

I mean you.

Off Danielle's LOOK...

80B EXT. SPORTS ARENA - SARLAT - DAY

80B

ANGLE ON: Prince Henry, playing an early version of tennis with the MARQUIS DE LIMOGES. Henry serves and they volley, aggressively. The Prince falls into the stands after the ball and is smothered with assistance. He extricates himself to discover a half dozen ladies handkerchiefs tucked into his clothing.

He looks around for the ball and spies Marguerite; backlit by the sun; the ball in her outstretched hand. As he approaches, she leans over the rail, offering him the ball and an excellent view.

HENRY

You're looking well, Marguerite.

MARGUERITE

You're welcome to look, your Highness.

80C EXT. VILLAGE SQUARE - DAY

80C

ANGLE ON: Pierre le Pieu, walking through the market trailed by his MOORISH HENCHMAN leading a pair of REALLY COOL DOGS. He spies Danielle and approaches. Paulette and Louise crowd around Danielle, protectively.

LE PIEU

Danielle de Barbarac, you get prettier every week.

DANIELLE

And you, Monsieur le Pieu, are wasting your flattery.

LE PIEU

Pity your soil is the best in the Province and yet so poorly tended.

He ain't talking about her grapes either. Danielle shifts uneasily.

PAULETTE

We have limited resources, sir.

LE PIEU

Is there anything I can do?

LOUISE

Perhaps you should bring it up with the Baroness and stick to shopping.

(CONTINUED)

LE PIEU

I'd rather discuss it with Danielle,
if you don't mind.

He clears a strand of hair from Danielle's face.

LE PIEU (cont'd)

I may be twice your age, child, but I
am well-endowed... as evidenced by my
estate. I have always had a soft spot
for the less fortunate. You need a
wealthy benefactor and I need a young
lady of spirit...

DANIELLE

(offering fruit, pointedly)
Prunes?

LE PIEU

No, I'll buy nothing this week. I'd be
careful if I were you. Without my
generosity, your pathetic farm would
cease to exist.

He moves on. Danielle watches him go.

BEHIND THEM, WE SEE Prince Henry and Marguerite, followed by an
entourage of Royal guard, Rodmilla, and Jacqueline, strolling
through the market and heading their way!

ANGLE ON: Henry, as he offers Marguerite a piece of
chocolate from a servant's tray.

HENRY

Here. Never have you tasted anything
so delicious.

Marguerite stops; opens her mouth; and closes her eyes.
A beat. Embarrassed, Henry does the honors and gently
lays a sliver on her tongue. She savors it and moans in
ecstasy.

HENRY

Like it?

MARGUERITE

(opens her eyes)

Like it? Why it's positively sinful!
What is it called?

(CONTINUED)

HENRY

Chocolate. The Spanish monks keep
sending bricks of it. Would you care
for another?

She closes her eyes and opens her mouth.

HENRY

I, um, think we can do it with our
eyes open.

MARGUERITE

(seductively)

But then I'd miss the anticipation.

And with that, he plops another piece of chocolate into
her luscious mouth. She moans again; Henry can't help
but imagine...

ANGLE ON: Rodmilla, watching her daughter's performance
and catching the hungry look on Jacqueline's face.

RODMILLA

Don't even think about it.

BACK TO SCENE: as Henry surveys the market and locks onto
Paulette and Louise selling chickens. What he doesn't
SEE is Danielle standing with them; her head buried in
the cage!

HENRY

Marguerite, do you find me arrogant?

MARGUERITE

No, your Highness. And anyone who
does, doesn't know you at all.

HENRY

Well, that same someone also told me
that our peasantry defines this
country's character.

MARGUERITE

They were joking, certainly.

HENRY

(lost in her memory)

No, they weren't. Shall we go see?

ANGLE ON: Danielle, getting a chicken out of the cage as
Henry approaches in the background. Paulette and Louise
are like two deer in the headlights -- unable to speak.
They tap her on the back. Danielle turns; chicken in
hand. And all hell breaks loose!

(CONTINUED)

RAPID FIRE CUTS: as Danielle screams; tossing the bird into the Prince's face; the Royal Guard reacts; Paulette and Louise spin Danielle around and shove her under the wagon. It's like Reagan meets Hinkley; pandemonium and confusion; extreme but brief.

When the dust settles, Danielle is gone, the servants stand innocently; and Henry has no idea what just happened.

Rodmilla bursts onto the scene.

RODMILLA

What are you trying to do?! Scare the Prince to death?!

PAULETTE

We was startled is all!

HENRY

(perplexed)

Were there just the two of you?

LOUISE

And the, uh... chicken, your Highness.

HENRY

It's the oddest thing...

80D EXT. SIDE FIELD - MANOIR - DUSK

80D

ANGLE ON: Maurice, doing his chores. He HEARS an ODD NOISE, looks up, and SEES the kite stuck in the tree above him.

81-89OMIT

81-89

90 INT. RODMILLA'S BEDCHAMBER - NIGHT

90

ANGLE ON: Danielle, washing Rodmilla's hair as Marguerite recounts the adventures of her day.

MARGUERITE

And then he said the most wonderful thing. He said, "I have no doubt I'll be seeing you at the Masque." Just like that. Why, I practically floated home.

JACQUELINE

Honestly, mother, I caught the tennis ball and she got all the chocolate.

*
*

(CONTINUED)

RODMILLA

I am proud of both my girls. Now we must get our beauty sleep. The Prince always attends the eight o'clock mass.

They kiss their mother and hurry off, leaving Danielle alone with Rodmilla. She rinses her stepmother's hair in SILENCE.

RODMILLA

We must push for a quick engagement. Oh, Paris at Christmas! Can you imagine? No, I don't suppose you can.
(beat; then)
What are you looking at?

DANIELLE

Nothing, madame.

RODMILLA

Well, stop it. It's not polite to stare. You had better learn some manners.

DANIELLE

Yes, ma'am.

Rodmilla sits up and Danielle begins combing her hair.

RODMILLA

(softens)

My mother was hard on me too, you know. She taught me that cleanliness was next to Godliness. She washed my face twenty times a day, convinced it was not clean enough. But I was very grateful. She wanted me to be the best I could be. And here I am a Baroness...and Marguerite shall be Queen.

*
*
*

(CONTINUED)

DANIELLE

She is so much like you.

RODMILLA

Do you really think so?

DANIELLE

I've heard the courtiers speak of you
in town and --

*
*

RODMILLA

(snaps)

-- What do they know? They know
nothing! It's just talk and malicious
gossip!

(then)

What did they say?

*
*

DANIELLE

They marvel at your beauty.

*

RODMILLA

(beat; recovers)

Oh. Well. They're just being polite.

Rodmilla gets up and ushers Danielle into her chair,
spinning her toward the mirror which reflects three sides
of her face.

*

(CONTINUED)

RODMILLA (cont'd)
Pity you never knew your mother. I'm
sure there's a bit of her in you
somewhere.

Danielle is a bundle of conflicting emotions; loneliness,
fear, anger, and a suppressed yearning for a mother's
touch.

DANIELLE
I wish I knew what she looked like.

She lowers her gaze but Rodmilla's finger lifts up her
chin.

RODMILLA
We must never feel sorry for
ourselves. No matter how bad it gets;
it can always get worse.

DANIELLE
Yes, madame.

RODMILLA
You have got so much of your father in
you. Sometimes I can actually see him
looking out through your eyes.

DANIELLE
(smiles)
Really?

RODMILLA
Your features are so masculine. And
then to be raised by a man. It's no
wonder you were built for hard labor.

DANIELLE
Did you love my father?

Rodmilla's face grows COLD.

RODMILLA
I barely knew him. Now go away, I'm
tired.

91-95OMIT

91-95

96 EXT. FIELD OF HAYSTACKS - NEAR HAUTEFORT - DAY

96

ANGLE ON: Danielle, running between haystacks, flying
Leonardo's kite while Gustave paints the castle. It is
the FIRST KITE they've ever seen.

(CONTINUED)

DANIELLE

Yes, but they would move into the palace and I could stay with the manoir. Turn things around. That's all that matters.

GUSTAVE

You like him; admit it.

DANIELLE

Nope.

GUSTAVE

I suppose if you saw him again, you'd simply --

DANIELLE

-- walk right up to him and say; "Your Highness, my family is your family. Please take them away."

GUSTAVE

Well, here comes your big chance 'cause he's headed this way.

Danielle stops dead in her tracks. She spins around and SEES Prince Henry galloping across the fields toward them, leaving the Prince's coach back on the road.

She ducks behind a haystack.

ANGLE ON: Prince Henry, stopping to talk to Gustave, who bows and scrapes.

HENRY

I'm looking for Signore da Vinci. We're to go to the monastery together. Have you seen him?

GUSTAVE

Da Vinci?

HENRY

Isn't that his flying contraption? Where did you get it?

GUSTAVE

(stumbles)

From, uh, the Comtesse de Lancret. She is a friend of his.

HENRY

You know her?! Please, I must find her. Where is she staying?

(CONTINUED)

ANGLE ON: Danielle, reacting to the Prince's words.

GUSTAVE

I believe... your Highness... she is staying with a cousin... the, uh, Baroness Rodmilla de Ghent.

HENRY

Mmm, that does present a problem.

QUICK CUT: Danielle, out from behind a haystack, motions to Gustave to SHUTUP - then darts behind another.

GUSTAVE

But I happen to know she is there, alone, by herself, at this very moment.

HENRY

Excellent. (then) Nice painting.

He gallops off. Danielle faces Gustave, angrily.

DANIELLE

Gustave, you horrible little snipe!

GUSTAVE

Did you hear? He liked my work!

DANIELLE

And he is headed toward my house!

GUSTAVE

(smiles knowingly)
Then I suggest you run.

Danielle's anger seems to blossom into excitement before our eyes. She turns and runs like the wind.

97 EXT. CATHEDRAL FOYER - DAY

97

ANGLE ON: Rodmilla and the girls, climbing out of their carriage. The Royal Page intercepts them on their way in.

ROYAL PAGE

Prince Henry left early this morning, Baroness. No one knows where he went. But I brought you something to brighten your day.

(CONTINUED)

97 CONTINUED:

97

He hands her something wrapped in a handkerchief, then whispers in her ear. Rodmilla almost kisses him in gratitude.

RODMILLA

Why you vicious, vicious man.

98 OMIT 98

99 EXT. STREAM - DAY 99

Danielle splashing across a stream.

100 EXT. BRIDGE - DAY 100

Henry galloping across a bridge; the Royal Coach struggling to keep up.

101 EXT. FIELD - DAY 101

Danielle running through a field of wheat.

102 EXT. MANOIR ROAD - DAY 102

Henry turning down the long drive toward the manor.

103 EXT. MANOIR - DAY 103

ANGLE ON: Danielle, sprinting the last hundred yards up the back trail. CAMERA PANS WITH HER to the kitchen door, then PICKS UP THE PRINCE who takes US around to the front of the manor.

WITHOUT CUTTING THE CAMERA, the door opens REVEALING the Comtesse de Lancret, beautifully coiffed and decked out in Marguerite's rejected blue dress.

DANIELLE

Your Highness, what an unexpected surprise.

104 INT. MANOIR - CONTINUOUS 104

QUICK CUT: the household staff inside. Exhausted from assisting Danielle's rapid transformation.

105 EXT. MANOIR - CONTINUOUS 105

Henry leans against the door with a roughish grin.

HENRY

Do you not attend church?

(CONTINUED)

DANIELLE

(pointedly)

My faith is better served away from
the rabid crowds.

HENRY

(touche)

I'm afraid my father's edict has
created quite a stir.

DANIELLE

As did your own when you freed those
people. Why didn't you tell me?

HENRY

(smiles)

Because you were digging such a lovely
hole around yourself.

DANIELLE

(her, too)

I have been forced to reevaluate you,
you know.

HENRY

Could it be that I have leapt to the
middle of your esteem?

-- The Royal Coach passes through the gate with Laurent.

HENRY

The Franciscans have an astonishing
library. Since you are so fond of
reading I thought perhaps you might
join me.

DANIELLE

It's not fair, Sire. You have found
my weakness but I have yet to learn
yours.

HENRY

I should think it was quite obvious.

Their eyes meet. She is suddenly very shy.

HENRY (cont'd)

Captain Laurent, I shall not be
needing my horse or your services.
(offers his hand)

Today I am simply... Henry.

Danielle takes his hand, unable to say his name.

*

106 EXT. CATHEDRAL - DAY

106

ANGLE ON: King Francis and Queen Marie, emerging from the church. The King passes the beautiful Lulu du Pres, then turns to his wife curiously.

KING FRANCIS

Pustules? Now that is what I call a tragedy.

QUEEN MARIE

Never have I seen such a sea of bosoms in all my life.

*
*

ANGLE ON: Rodmilla and her daughters, pushing their way past the beggars as the King and Queen climb into their carriage.

Rodmilla opens the Page's handkerchief REVEALING A DELICATE LOCKET, which she hands off to Marguerite.

RODMILLA

Make haste, Marguerite, it's now or never.

ANGLE ON: Marguerite, as she approaches the carriage and intercepts the Queen.

MARGUERITE

Forgive me, your Majesty, but I believe you dropped this on your way out.

She presents the locket. The Queen looks at it confused, then feels around her neck.

QUEEN MARIE

My goodness, I do not even remember putting it on. Thank you, child. I must say, it is a rare person indeed who would return such a priceless keepsake.

Marguerite bows and scrapes.

MARGUERITE

You are too...magnanimous, Majesty.

The King and Queen trade LOOKS. King Francis gives a big nod of approval. The Queen's Lady in Waiting whispers Marguerite's name in her ear.

(CONTINUED)

106 CONTINUED:

QUEEN MARIE

Marguerite. We shall have a chat tomorrow, you and I. Bring your mother...

MARGUERITE

As you wish.

107 OMIT 107

108 EXT. MONASTERY - DAY (2ND UNIT) 108

ANGLE ON: the Prince's coach, heading across a bridge toward a cliffside monastery. The haunting strains of a GREGORIAN CHANT float on the breeze.

109 INT. MONASTERY - CONTINUOUS 109

ANGLE ON: Danielle, overwhelmed. Thousands of books line a magnificent staircase. FRANCISCAN MONKS sit at their desks, meticulously transcribing ancient volumes.

ANGLE ON: Henry, studying the look on her face.

HENRY

Pick one.

DANIELLE

I could no sooner choose a favorite star in the heavens.

HENRY

What is it that touches you so?

DANIELLE

I guess it's because when I was young my father would stay up late and read to me. He was addicted to the written word and I fell asleep listening to his voice.

HENRY

What sort of books?

DANIELLE

Science. Philosophy. I suppose they remind me of him. He died when I was eight. Utopia was the last book he brought home.

(CONTINUED)

109 CONTINUED:

HENRY

Which explains why you quote it.

Danielle runs her hand over a row of titles.

DANIELLE

I would rather hear his voice again
than any sound in the world.

Henry considers this a moment, then heads downstairs
troubled.

DANIELLE

Is something wrong?

HENRY

In all my years of study, not one
tutor ever demonstrated the passion
you have shown me in the last two
days. You have more conviction in one
memory... than I have in my entire
being.

Danielle is taken aback. She looks at him as if seeing
him for the first time. His angry vulnerability is a
revelation.

DANIELLE

That's not true!

HENRY

Who do you think released those people
headed for the americas?

DANIELLE

You did.

HENRY

No, it was you! I never would've seen
them without your eyes. Which is why
I couldn't tell you at the river... I
was ashamed.

DANIELLE

(humbled)

Your Highness, if there is anything
I've said or done that --

HENRY

-- Please, don't. It's not you.

110 OMIT

110

111 EXT. COUNTRY ROAD - DORDOGNE - DAY

111 *

ANGLE ON: the Prince's carriage, tilted to one side with a broken wheel. Henry and Danielle stand with the DRIVERS and FOOTMEN.

(CONTINUED)

HENRY
Well, this is terribly embarrassing.

DRIVER
We'll head back to the monastery at
once, your Highness.

Danielle looks around nervously, (she's been gone a long
time already) then plays against it.

DANIELLE
And we shall continue on foot.

HENRY
But it's half a days walk?!

DANIELLE
(chiding playfully)
Honestly, Henry, where's your sense of
adventure?

112 EXT./INT. MANOIR - DAY

112

ANGLE ON: Rodmilla and her girls arriving home.

RODMILLA
Now we mustn't get overconfident,
ladies. The Prince wasn't in church
today; we need to know why.

Jacqueline is upset.

JACQUELINE
Marguerite gets to do everything!

MARGUERITE
Oh, don't be daft, Jacqueline. The
Queen doesn't even know you exist.

RODMILLA
What Marguerite does is for all of us,
darling. I am counting on you to help
her get ready.

JACQUELINE
Lovely, next thing you know I shall be
cleaning the fireplace with Danielle.

RODMILLA
Where is that girl?

MARGUERITE
Probably off catching rabbits with her
teeth.

(CONTINUED)

Paulette greets them at the door.

(CONTINUED)

PAULETTE

Begging your pardon, mylady, but the
gilded mirror in your bed chamber. Did
you move it?

RODMILLA

Of course not, why?

PAULETTE

It's also missing.

RODMILLA

Then it too shall come out of your
pay.

Louise waits until the Baroness is out of earshot.

LOUISE

Either you stop telling her when
things go missing, or we'll be paying
her to work!

PAULETTE

Good thing I didn't mention the
tapestries.

113	OMIT	113
114	OMIT	114
115	EXT. ROCKFACE CUL DU SAC - DAY	115

ANGLE ON: Henry, staring at a dead end.

HENRY

You would think I would know the way
to my own castle.

DANIELLE (O.S.)

Why is it men never stop for
directions? Ah, there it is! It's
back that way.

Henry looks down at Danielle's dress and shoes lying on
the ground.

HENRY (cont'd)

And I still can't believe that I'm
down here while you're up there; and
in your undergarments no less?!

ANGLE ON: Danielle, standing above him on the edge of the
cliff.

(CONTINUED)

DANIELLE

I couldn't very well climb up here in that gown, now could I? Besides, you might break your Royal neck and then where would we be?

HENRY

You swim alone, climb rocks, rescue servants. Is there anything you don't do?

DANIELLE

Fly. Now turn around so I can climb back down.

ANGLE ON: Henry, as he turns -- right into the fist of the gypsy who stole the Mona Lisa! Only this time, he has brought along his friends...

QUICK CUTS: as Henry rolls to his feet and SEES that he is surrounded by TWELVE MEN ON HORSEBACK. The gypsy that punched him, who we will call CRACKED SKULL, draws his SWORD and DAGGER. Henry does the same.

HENRY

Stay aloft, madame, we've got company!

ANGLE ON: Danielle, hearing SWORDS CLASH. She SEES the problem below and, using the vines and a fallen tree, begins to scramble down.

ANGLE ON: the GYPSY LEADER, admiring the view as she scales down the rockface. He stabs Danielle's dress with his sword.

GYPSY LEADER

My wife thanks you for this fine garment, mademoiselle.

DANIELLE

(still climbing)

You will give me back my dress, sir.

Henry is chivalrous, even in the middle of his own engagement.

HENRY

Let the girl go!

DANIELLE

And leave you here?! I should think not.

(CONTINUED)

CRACKED SKULL

Be nothing left when I am finished
with him!

HENRY

Finished with me?! Why you ugly, puss-
faced, toad!

The swordplay escalates into some heavy shit. All eyes
turn to the fight.

ANGLE ON: Danielle, KICKING ONE GYPSY IN THE FACE and
LEAPING DOWN onto the Leader to get her dress back. His
men subdue her and place a knife to her throat. Henry

HENRY

Let her go. Your quarrel is with me.

The Gypsy Leader nods to his men.

GYPSY LEADER

Release her.

DANIELLE

I insist you return my things at once!
And since you deprive me of my escort,
I demand a horse as well.

A beat. Even Henry is impressed with her boldness.

GYPSY LEADER

Mylady, you may have anything you can
carry.

The men LAUGH. Danielle studies her opponent.

DANIELLE

May I have your word on that, sir?

GYPSY LEADER

On my honor as a gypsy. Whatever you
can carry.

Danielle walks right past her clothes and scoops up the
dumbfounded Prince in a fireman's carry! She turns and
gives the Gypsy Leader a short curtsy, then strolls off
through the woods.

ANGLE ON: the Gypsy Leader, as his embarrassment turns to
HOWLS OF LAUGHTER. The other men join him.

GYPSY LEADER

Wait! Please, come back! I will give
you a horse!

120 INT. RODMILLA'S BED CHAMBER - NIGHT

120

*

ANGLE ON: Louise, turning down her bed. Paulette empties Rodmilla's chamber pot out the window.

RODMILLA

I want to be informed the minute she gets home, understood?

PAULETTE/LOUISE

Yes, ma'am.

121 EXT. GYPSY CAVE - NIGHT

121

*

ANGLE ON: a bonfire, leaping into the night. The gypsies have formed an arena around Danielle and Henry playing "rock, paper, scissors" for shots of grappa. Both are thoroughly smashed.

The contestants tie three times in a row.

DANIELLE

You are reading my thoughts, mylord.

HENRY

And they are as fuzzy as my own, Comtesse.

DANIELLE

Then France concedes?

HENRY

Never!

(confides)

My next choice will be paper.

They try again. Sure enough, he's paper; she's scissors. Henry proudly picks up his glass, slams his shot, and continues right over backwards. Danielle flounders to his side, collapsing with laughter.

DANIELLE

You do your kingdom proud, sir.

HENRY

Oh, my head is spinning.

DANIELLE

I have never been so dizzy.

HENRY

Then here. Quit moving.

*

He cradles her face and pulls her down for a very passionate kiss. She is startled, then responds in kind.

(CONTINUED)

121 CONTINUED:

It is a hot, sexy moment broken only by the lascivious cheerleaders around them.

122 EXT. MAIN GATE - MANOIR - PRE-DAWN

122

ANGLE ON: Danielle, as Henry gently guides her down off the Gypsy horse. They are face to face and his hands linger a beat too long around her waist.

HENRY

You saved my life, you know. Back there in the woods.

DANIELLE

A girl does what she can, Sire.

HENRY

Henry...

DANIELLE

Henry.

*

(CONTINUED)

122 CONTINUED:

The moment is electric. The Prince kisses her. She turns
and floats down the lane. He calls after her. *

HENRY

Nicole? *

She turns, conflicted; the burden of her lie is suddenly
very heavy. *

HENRY

Do you know the ruins at Amboise?

DANIELLE

Yes.

HENRY

I often go there to be alone. Would
you meet me there tomorrow?

DANIELLE

I shall try...

HENRY

Then I shall wait all day.

Off Danielle's LOOK...

123 INT. KING'S BEDCHAMBER - HAUTEFORT - DAY

123

ANGLE ON: the King and Queen, asleep. Henry throws open
the curtains and the morning sun hits them like a bucket
of cold water. King Francis sputters in his sleep.

KING FRANCIS

Off with his head...!

QUEEN MARIE

Wake up, Francis. Your son has
something to tell us.

(CONTINUED)

HENRY
Mother, father. I want to build a
university. With the largest library
on the continent. Where anyone can
study, no matter their station.

The King and Queen trade LOOKS.

KING FRANCIS
Alright, who are you and what have you
done with our son?

HENRY
And I want to invite the gypsies to
the Ball.

Henry exits. The Queen calls after him.

QUEEN MARIE
All of them, dear?

KING FRANCIS
What's the matter with him?

QUEEN MARIE
He's in love.

124 INT. ATTIC - MOMENTS LATER

124

ANGLE ON: Danielle, passed out in her bed. Rodmilla
nudges her with a broom. She MOANS.

RODMILLA
Where were you?

DANIELLE
I got lost.

RODMILLA
I don't believe it. You are hiding
something from me -- I can feel it --
and I demand to know what it is.

DANIELLE
Then, please, tell me so that I might
go back to sleep.

MARGUERITE
What about our breakfast?

(CONTINUED)

124 CONTINUED:

DANIELLE

You have two hands. Fix it yourself.

She rolls back to sleep. Marguerite GASPS like a fish.

MARGUERITE

Why you lazy little leech!

Rodmilla calmly accepts her refusal.

RODMILLA

Jacqueline, go boil some water.

JACQUELINE

Me, boil water?! Oh, I knew it, I just knew it.

125 EXT. MANOIR - DAY

125

ANGLE ON: Danielle, washing her face at the well.
Paulette beckons from an upstairs window.

PAULETTE

Mistress, you'd better get in there quick!

126 OMIT

126

*
*
*
*

127 INT. RODMILLA'S BEDCHAMBER - DAY

127

ANGLE ON: Danielle, as she walks in to discover Marguerite holding up the beaded wedding gown. Rodmilla glances up without a shred of guilt.

RODMILLA

Well, look whose finally decided to grace us with her presence.

Danielle stares, dumbfounded.

DANIELLE

What do you think you are doing?

MARGUERITE

Trying on my dress.

RODMILLA

Do you honestly think after that performance this morning, I'd let you go anywhere?

Danielle grabs the glass slippers out of the chest and holds them close.

DANIELLE

These are my mother's!

MARGUERITE

Yes, and she's dead.

Danielle turns and lets fly a ROUNDHOUSE SLAP. Marguerite topples over the bed and OUT OF SIGHT. But Danielle's not finished. She stalks Marguerite around the bed and chases her out the door.

DANIELLE

I am going to rip your hair out!

MARGUERITE

Mother!

JACQUELINE

(to Rodmilla)

Do something!

128 EXT. STAIRWAY/GREAT ROOM - CONTINUOUS

128

QUICK CUTS: as Danielle and Marguerite charge downstairs, scrambling around the furniture. Marguerite dashes to the hearth and snatches up Danielle's Utopia, holding it over the flames.

MARGUERITE

Get away from me or so help me God....!

Danielle freezes. The servants rush in.

DANIELLE

Put it down!

MARGUERITE

Give me the shoes!

DANIELLE

Put it down!

They both stand their ground, panting with adrenaline. Rodmilla enters the tableau; the picture of self-control.

RODMILLA

Consider carefully, Danielle. Your father's book or your mother's shoes... although neither will save you from a sound lashing.

Danielle hands Rodmilla the glass slippers; her eyes never leaving the book. Marguerite drops it in the flames anyway. Danielle rushes to save it but Rodmilla holds her back - letting it burn. A deathly silence fills the room.

129 EXT. SIDE GARDENS - HAUTEFORT - DAY

129

ANGLE ON: Queen Marie, as she makes a pained little face and reaches to pat Marguerite's hand.

QUEEN MARIE

To think you saved that baby from a runaway horse... You really must have my doctor look at that.

ANGLE ON: Marguerite, dressed to the nines, and sporting a great big shiner.

MARGUERITE

It was a maternal instinct, Majesty.

ANGLE ON: Rodmilla, admiring her daughter's performance.

(CONTINUED)

RODMILLA

She is being modest. Truth be told,
she never does a thing for herself;
always looking out for the less
fortunate.

QUEEN MARIE

I am so sorry my son cannot join us.
He seems to have disappeared again.

RODMILLA

(fishing)
Again?

QUEEN MARIE

Yes. He was gone all day yesterday and
did not return until dawn.

ANGLE ON: Rodmilla, puzzled. ("Naw, it couldn't be...")

RODMILLA

(then; smiling)
It would be marvelous to have that
kind of stamina.

QUEEN MARIE

Perhaps you can help solve this
mystery for me. Do you know the
Comtesse de Lancret? Apparently she is
visiting a cousin but no one seems to
know who?

Rodmilla hasn't heard that name in ten years. She is
flabbergasted but her public face never cracks.

RODMILLA

"Nicole..." de Lancret?

QUEEN MARIE

Yes! Oh, wonderful! I was beginning to
think she was a ghost.

RODMILLA

No. I am afraid she has been around
for years...and staying...with us as a
matter of fact. (to Marguerite) Right,
darling?

Marguerite knows something is up but needs more
information.

MARGUERITE

Yes. Of course. Our cousin...

(CONTINUED)

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129 CONTINUED: (2)

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129

RODMILLA

Whom you like to call Cinderella.

*

(CONTINUED)

And with that, Marguerite bursts from her seat like an open ended balloon -- absolutely out of control -- until she finally reels herself back into her public persona and sits back down, calmly.

QUEEN MARIE

Good heavens, child, are you all right?!

MARGUERITE

(blinks; smiles)

There was a bee.

ANGLE ON: Rodmilla, still smiling, as she puts a calming hand on her daughter's arm.

130 INT. DANIELLE'S BED CHAMBER - ATTIC - DAY

130

ANGLE ON: Jacqueline, smearing a poultice on Danielle's welted back. They are both in great pain.

JACQUELINE

You really brought this on yourself you know. First with breakfast and then that horrid display downstairs.

DANIELLE

I wish yesterday had never happened.

JACQUELINE

'Course, I shall never forget the way Marguerite's feet went up over her head like that...

She starts to laugh. Danielle joins her, then winces in pain.

JACQUELINE

She should not have said that about your mother...

131 EXT. RUINS - DAY

131

A magical place deep in the forest. A medieval cathedral destroyed long ago and reclaimed by nature.

ANGLE ON: Prince Henry, sitting in what was once a stone window, reading a book in the dappled sunlight. He looks up to SEE Danielle; a vision (in another borrowed gown) standing in the grass. *

DANIELLE

Hi...

(CONTINUED)

Elated, he hops down and approaches her. She stiffens; in a great deal of pain. If he touches her, she will surely faint. Henry notices her pale expression.

HENRY
Are you well, madame?

*

(CONTINUED)

DANIELLE

I fear I am not myself today.

HENRY

And I feel as if my skin is the only thing keeping me from going everywhere at once. *

DANIELLE

There... there is something I must tell you.

HENRY

And I, you. Oh, here, your book. You

DANIELLE

Your Highness --

HENRY

-- Henry.

DANIELLE

I cannot stay long but I had to see you again. There is much to say.

HENRY

I have not slept for fear I would wake to find this all a dream. Last night I had a revelation. I used to think that if I cared about anything, I would have to care about everything, and that I would go stark-raving mad. But now I've found my purpose; a project, actually; inspired by you. And I feel the most wonderful freedom!

His boyish grin is irresistible. He is so happy right now; so there with her; that she starts to cry. She is going to break his heart.

DANIELLE

Henry, please, it wasn't me. It's always been inside you. Never forget that. Promise me, you won't forget that.

HENRY

You are unlike any courtier I have ever met, Nicole, and tomorrow at the Masque I shall make that known to the world.

(CONTINUED)

DANIELLE
Why did you have to be so wonderful?

HENRY
Now then. What was it you wanted to tell me?

DANIELLE
(beat)
Simply that... Last night was the happiest night of my life...

She kisses him, passionately (a goodbye kiss?) and he responds in kind. He wraps his arm around her back and she stiffens with pain, pushing him away.

DANIELLE
No!

HENRY
I'm sorry.

Danielle backs away, memorizing his face, unable to tell him the truth and hating her own weakness.

DANIELLE
I must go...

HENRY
Nicole...

She warns him off and backs away, determinedly. He follows.

DANIELLE
No!... No...no...

132 INT. MANOIR/GREATROOM - DAY

132

ANGLE ON: Danielle, entering in her peasant dress (and the blue gown thrown over her arm) to find the entire household waiting for her in the living room.

RSD

RODMILLA
Of all the insidious jokes...turning your mother into a Comtesse. Why it's almost as absurd as a Prince spending his days with a servant who sleeps with pigs!

DANIELLE
Which bothers you more, stepmother? That I'm common? Or that I'm competition?

(CONTINUED)

RODMILLA

Where is the dress?

*
*

DANIELLE

I do not know what you are talking about.

MARGUERITE

The gown, the slippers! They were in my room this morning and now they are gone! You hid them, I know it!

RODMILLA

Where did you put the gown, Danielle?

QUICK CUTS: as servants cower in anticipation.

DANIELLE

Where did you put the candlesticks?
Where are the tapestries? The silver?
The mirrors? Perhaps the dress is with them.

There is a LONG BEAT.

RODMILLA

You will produce that gown immediately or...

*

DANIELLE

I will die a thousand deaths before I see my mother's dress on that spoiled, selfish cow!

Marguerite blinks in disbelief; Jacqueline snorts back a laugh. Rodmilla looks at Danielle with something bordering on respect.

(CONTINUED)

132 CONTINUED: (2)

132

RODMILLA

Well, perhaps we can arrange that.

133 INT. CELLAR - MOMENTS LATER

133

ANGLE ON: Danielle, standing in the cold stone cellar as Rodmilla closes and locks the door, plunging her into a world of darkness.

134 INT./EXT. CELLAR DOOR - CONTINUOUS

134

ANGLE ON: Rodmilla, as she pockets the key and passes the servants on the stairs.

RODMILLA

Open this door and you will wish you never set foot in this house...
Marguerite, Jacqueline: gather everything that will fetch a price. We are going to town first thing in the morning.

Marguerite splits off. Jacqueline looks at Rodmilla.

JACQUELINE

Mother, it's only a Ball.

*

RODMILLA

Yes. And you are only going for the food.

Off Jacqueline's SHATTERED LOOK...

135 EXT. HAUTEFORT - TWILIGHT

135

*

The spectacular silhouette of the palace against a beautiful orange sky.

*

136 EXT. FRONT GARDEN - HAUTEFORT - TWILIGHT

136

*

ANGLE ON: Henry, in shock. His mother just dropped the bomb.

HENRY

Engaged? To a Belgian?!

QUEEN MARIE

I am afraid so.

HENRY

That's impossible. There has to be some mistake.

(CONTINUED)

QUEEN MARIE

She was traveling by boat this afternoon. The Baroness was quite reluctant to talk about it.

HENRY

It is no wonder with tidings such as these! If she was betrothed, she damn well should have had the decency to say something!

QUEEN MARIE

Would you have listened?

HENRY

Of course not! I would have --

-- Henry suddenly realizes why the Comtesse was upset. *

HENRY

Oh, how could I have been so blind?!
There I was pouring my royal heart out
and she was simply trying to bid me
farewell. *

QUEEN MARIE

It is a strong woman who keeps her wits about her with you trying to steal her heart.

HENRY

Yes, and what a clumsy thief I turned out to be.

QUEEN MARIE

Come now, Henry...

He storms off. The Queen watches him go then calls after him.

QUEEN MARIE

...there are other choices.

137 INT. LIBRARY - LE PIEU'S CHATEAU - NEXT DAY

137

ANGLE ON: Le Pieu, dropping coins into Rodmilla's hand.

LE PIEU

It warms my heart to see a mother so devoted to her daughters.

RODMILLA

It is a small sacrifice...

(CONTINUED)

LE PIEU

...For such a large reward. But I
fear, Baroness, your manor is empty.
For as you can see, I am living in
most of it.

ANGLE ON: the library, chock full of Rodmilla's
scavengings: the mirror, the paintings, the candlesticks,
etc.

RODMILLA

After tonight, that manor can burn for
all I care.

LE PIEU

And what of your Danielle?

RODMILLA

(warily)

What about her?

LE PIEU

I have always had a soft spot for the
less fortunate... and even though I am
old, I am well-endowed... (Rodmilla
looks up) Unless, of course, you,
yourself have grown tired of your
solitude.

RODMILLA

Surely, you jest.

LE PIEU

We are two sides of the same coin,
Baroness. Our lives have been a
constant struggle for respect. I plan
to savor my revenge like a gourmet
meal. Perhaps we could dine together?

*
*

RODMILLA

I seem to have lost my appetite,
monsieur. Good day.

She pivots and heads for the door.

139 EXT. VILLAGE SQUARE - DAY

139

ANGLE ON: Gustave, arguing with Maurice.

MAURICE

You are her friend, Gustave, she needs your help. He expects to see her!

GUSTAVE

But I am nobody! The Prince would never see me.

MAURICE

Then go to da Vinci! Surely, a painter can see another painter. Find him!

Gustave gets that deer in the headlights look.

GUSTAVE

I am but an apprentice, sir, and he is the greatest painter in the world. I could no sooner talk to God.

Maurice spies Rodmilla and her girls, exiting the dressshop with a wrapped gown. He shakes Gustave by the shoulders.

MAURICE

For once in your life, man. Be bold!

140 EXT. HAUTEFORT - TWILIGHT

140

FIREWORKS announce the beginning of the ball.

141 EXT. MANOIR - NIGHT

141

ANGLE ON: the three ladies, climbing into the carriage. WE SEE the Palace fireworks in the distance. Marguerite's costume is a peacock extravaganza; feathers flying out in all directions. Jacqueline is stuffed inside a horse-head mask.

JACQUELINE

I wanted to be the peacock!

RODMILLA

Honestly, Jacqueline. A horse is one of God's noblest creatures.

JACQUELINE

Why don't I just pull the carriage while I'm at it.

(CONTINUED)

RODMILLA
If you think it'll get us there any
faster...

Maurice hops aboard and they drive off.

142 EXT. OUTER COURTYARD - HAUTEFORT - NIGHT 142

ANGLE ON: a LINE OF CARRIAGES, dropping off their
COSTUMED CELEBRANTS at the Grand Entrance.

ANGLE ON: Gustave, crashing the party. He tumbles out
from underneath a carriage and makes his way toward the
drawbridge. He SEES the Royal Guard manning the door then
peers over the wall for another way in. *

Below, the Royal Page (aka: Snitch) is heading for a
quiet corner in which to relieve himself. Gustave sees a
vase balanced on the wall and makes a decision. *

ANGLE ON: the Royal Page as he tucks himself in his
pants. He looks up just in time to SEE a vase smack him
in the head. *

ANGLE ON: the semi-naked Page, laid out on the ground; as
Gustave steps into view, dressed in his page uniform. *

143 OMIT 143

144 OMIT 144

145 OMIT 145

146 EXT. INNER COURTYARD - HAUTEFORT - NIGHT 146

ANGLE ON: Gustave, moving through the courtyard. He asks
someone to point him in the direction of Leonardo, who's
over by the wave machine, cornered by Celeste and
Isabelle. *

MOVING POV: toward Da Vinci and Celeste. Da Vinci looks
right at US as WE APPROACH AND CONTINUE ON PAST; up to
ANOTHER MAN WITH A BEARD. *

On Gustave as he speaks to who he believes is a God. *

GUSTAVE
Si...? Si...? Signore Da Vinci? *

But Gustave can't handle it. He passes out; right into
the arms of the great painter himself. *

(CONTINUED)

LEONARDO
Yes?

*
*
*

147 INT. CELLAR - MANOIR - NIGHT 147

ANGLE ON: Danielle, sitting by the door.

148 INT./EXT. CELLAR - CONTINUOUS 148

ANGLE ON: the servants, on the opposite side, trying desperately to pick the lock. The knife they are using snaps off in the lock.

PAULETTE
Oh, mistress it's no use!

(CONTINUED)

LEONARDO (O.S.)
Allow me.

ANGLE ON: Leonardo and Gustave, breezing down the stairs. Leonardo simply pulls the pins from the hinges and opens the door from the opposite side! Paulette and crew are astounded.

PAULETTE
Brilliant!

LOUISE
Why, that was pure genius!

LEONARDO
Yes, I shall go down in history as
"the man who opened a door."

ANGLE ON: Danielle, emerging from the cellar. She SEES Gustave standing with Leonardo.

DANIELLE
Gustave, how...?

GUSTAVE
(smiles)
Maurice said the Prince was expecting
you.

Danielle looks away, ashamed.

DANIELLE
He's expecting someone who does not
exist. Signore, my name is Danielle de
Barbarac. I am but a servant.

LEONARDO
And I am the bastard son of a mason.
What has that to do with anything?

DANIELLE
But, I have deceived him! *

LEONARDO
My dear, the Prince will understand.
All anyone possesses in this life is
their character, and yours is as noble
as they come. *

PAULETTE
Come, child, the night is still young.
We must get you ready for the Ball. *

(CONTINUED)

DANIELLE
I do not wish to go.

LOUISE
If you stay, the Baroness wins and we
all might as well join you down there
in the pit.

Danielle looks into the faces of the people she holds
most dear; Paulette, Louise, Maurice.

DANIELLE
(to Leonardo)
How can I face him?

LEONARDO
Because he deserves to hear the truth
from the one he loves.

DANIELLE
(a wan smile)
A bird may love a fish, Signore, but
where would they live?

The old genius pulls her in for a hug and whispers
softly...

LEONARDO
Then I shall have to make you wings.

148A EXT. SIDE GARDENS - HAUTEFORT - NIGHT

148A

ANGLE ON; Pierre le Pieu, strolling past Rodmilla and
Marguerite (in elaborate masks), with a 16th century
HOOKER ON EACH ARM.

LE PIEU
Good evening, ladies.

RODMILLA
It was until you showed up.

LE PIEU
I dare say, Marguerite, that the man
who wins your affections will be the
luckiest man in the kingdom.

MARGUERITE
Yes, and the women who delight in your
company, monsieur, aren't paid nearly
enough.

LE PIEU
You do have an agile tongue.

149 EXT. INNER COURTYARD - ROYAL DAIS - NIGHT

149 *

ANGLE ON: King Francis, barking at a Royal Page.

KING FRANCIS

Disappeared? But he's our Guest of Honor!?

ANGLE ON: Prince Henry and the Queen, watching a dance.

QUEEN MARIE

Mingle, Henry, it's good politics.
These women are not here to see da Vinci.

ANGLE ON; Henry, stepping down into the fray. Rodmilla and Marguerite are first in line.

RODMILLA

Your Highness.

Even with a broken heart, he plays his role masterfully.

HENRY

Baroness, Marguerite.

RODMILLA

A splendid evening, Sire.

HENRY

Yes, quite. Is it just the two of you?

RODMILLA

Jacqueline is at the buffet.

That's not who he was asking about. But he curses himself for holding onto a dream and gives in to the evening's obligations.

HENRY

Well, since I am one of the hosts... I should probably... ask... one of you to... dance.

MARGUERITE

Love to!

150 OMIT

150 *

151	OMIT	151	*
152	OMIT	152	
153	OMIT	153	
154	OMIT	154	
155	OMIT	155	
156	INT. KITCHEN - MANOIR - NIGHT	156	*

EXTREME CLOSEUPS: Leonardo, painting a half-mask on Danielle's face, trimmed with feather, glitter, and powdered pearl. WE DO NOT SEE HER WHOLE FACE.

DANIELLE

I don't understand. If I'm to arrive as myself, is it not wrong to perform such magic on me?

LEONARDO

(smiles)

I suppose it would be if it weren't already a Masked Ball. Rest assured, Danielle, there is no alchemy here; no deceit. God gives each of us our own gifts but it is up to us to apply them; to nurture them; to trust them.

(MORE)

(CONTINUED)

156 CONTINUED:

156

LEONARDO (cont'd)

A seed planted in the dry parched earth doesn't stand a chance. But with a few sunny days, some water... some love... anything is possible. To blossom is to live, Danielle. You are the only magic here.

Danielle blinks. A single tear rolls down her cheek.

157 EXT. MANOIR - NIGHT

157

CLOSE ON THE GLASS SLIPPERS as Danielle steps into Leonardo's carriage. The door closes with barely a GLIMPSE of her costume. The servants gather silently outside.

GUSTAVE

She looks like a masterpiece.

LOUISE

She looks like her mother.

The carriage pulls away. Leonardo, covered in paint, wraps his arm around Gustave's shoulder.

LEONARDO

Come. Let us go see these paintings of yours.

GUSTAVE

(gulp)

Now?

LEONARDO

When you are as old as I am, my young friend, "now" is all you've got.

Gustave smiles and they start walking.

PAULETTE

Wait. It's tradition...

Leonardo turns and SEES the pride in the servant's faces as they watch Auguste's little girl head off to the Ball.

ANGLE ON: the carriage reaching the main gate. Danielle's hand waves from the window.

158 EXT. INNER COURTYARD - BUFFET LINE - NIGHT

158

ANGLE ON: Henry and Marguerite, dancing among the other courtiers with torches.

ANGLE ON: Jacqueline, moving down a buffet line, wrestling with her horse mask.

(CONTINUED)

ANOTHER HORSE-FACED GUEST moves the opposite way down the
other side of the table.

SCRIPT FLY

(CONTINUED)

At the center, they both reach for the same carrot stick and lock in an equine gaze. Captain Laurent lifts off his mask.

CAPTAIN LAURENT

Whoa.

Jacqueline removes hers with a playful smile.

JACQUELINE

Neigh.

159 OMIT

159

159A INT. BASEMENT TUNNEL - HAUTEFORT - NIGHT

159A

ANGLE ON: Henry, silhouetted in the shadows. The King appears at the far end with an entourage of servants with torches.

KING FRANCIS

I understand you wanted to see me.

HENRY

Yes, father, I did.

The King senses his son's mood and dismisses his attendants. He joins him in the shadows. We HEAR the party in the b.g.

KING FRANCIS

Listen, Henry, perhaps it was unfair of me to put so much pressure on you like this. I just thought it was time to make some changes in your life. You seemed to be floundering... and well... I just wanted to tell you I think this university thing is a brilliant idea. We don't have to announce anything tonight if --

HENRY

(miserable)

-- I've made my decision.

KING FRANCIS

Oh. Well, that's fine. Fine.
(beat; then)
So, uh, who's the lucky girl?

Off Henry's look.

160 EXT. INNER COURTYARD - HAUTEFORT - NIGHT

160

The PHALANX OF TRUMPETEERS lets loose with a MIGHTY FANFARE, signaling the party to come to attention. All eyes turn to the royal family on the dais.

ANGLE ON: Rodmilla and Marguerite, holding hands like a pair of beauty pageant contestants. This is Rodmilla's finest hour; she is surrounded by ass-kissing courtiers.

CELESTE

Rodmilla, I trust you won't forget us little people.

SCRIPT FLY

(CONTINUED)

RODMILLA

Oh, Celeste, I think you should count on it.

ANGLE ON: King Francis, clearing his throat.

KING FRANCIS

Friends, honored guests, it gives us great pride on this festive occasion to announce the engagement of our son, Prince Henry I, to --

-- Henry clamps a hand on his father's shoulder. King Francis stops and follows his son's look. The entire party does the same. There is an AUDIBLE GASP.

ANGLE ON: Danielle, standing at the entrance, looking like a magnificent butterfly. She is a vision to behold. Her mask and costume are breathtaking. Her wings flutter gently in the evening breeze.

ANGLE ON: Danielle, reacting. It is a bit more of a reception than she expected.

DANIELLE

Breathe... just breathe...

ANGLE ON: Rodmilla, as confused as everyone else.

RODMILLA

What have we here?

ANGLE ON: Henry, paralyzed. But only for a moment. He jumps off the dais and bounds up the staircase to greet her. There, he takes her face in his hands and looks into her eyes.

HENRY

Tell me it is really you.

Danielle nods, nervous in front of the huge crowd.

DANIELLE

I have come disguised as myself.

HENRY

My mother said you were getting married.

DANIELLE

She was misinformed. Henry, there is something I must tell you; now, before another word is spoken.

(CONTINUED)

HENRY

Then you are not engaged?

DANIELLE

(smiles)

No. I am not.

Henry sighs with relief. She has come back.

ANGLE ON: the King and Queen, watching. King Francis can't help but notice the look in his son's eyes.

KING FRANCIS

Who is she?

QUEEN MARIE

My guess would be the Comtesse de Lancret.

KING FRANCIS

The who?

ANGLE ON: Marguerite, her chin quivering.

ANGLE ON: Celeste, sensing the power shift away from Rodmilla. She whispers in her ear.

CELESTE

Careful, darling. Your fear is showing.

ANGLE ON: Danielle and Henry, in front of a silent audience. The TOWER BELL BEGINS TO STRIKE MIDNIGHT.

HENRY

I was about to make the worst mistake of my life. Come. There is someone I want you to meet.

ONE...

He takes her hand and leads her down the staircase. Danielle lifts her gown in order to descend and the GLASS SLIPPERS catch the light and sparkle brilliantly.

DANIELLE

Henry, I must speak with you!

ANGLE ON: Rodmilla, as the glass slippers dazzle the crowd. Her eyes narrow to furious slits. She grabs Marguerite's hand and pushes her way through the crowd.

MARGUERITE

Mother, what are you doing?!

(CONTINUED)

RODMILLA
Making you a princess.

TWO...

BACK TO SCENE

HENRY
Whatever it is, my answer is yes. Oh,
and look, look! I invited the gypsies.

THREE... The crowd parts as they cross the hall toward
the dais. Suddenly, Rodmilla, with Marguerite in tow,
bursts out of the crowd and grabs Danielle's costume,

QUICK CUT: the crowd, horrified by their antics.

RODMILLA
HOW DARE YOU?!

ANGLE ON: Danielle, horrified, face to face with
Rodmilla. Henry, pushing the crazed woman away. FOUR...

HENRY
Madame, contain yourself!

RODMILLA
She is an imposter, Sire!

DANIELLE
No!!

FIVE...

RODMILLA
Her name is Danielle de Barbarac and
she has been a servant in my home for
the past ten years.

KING FRANCIS
A servant, Henry? Is this some kind
of joke?!

Henry is on the spot; betrayed; confused; embarrassed in
front of his parents. He lashes out at Rodmilla.

HENRY
Baroness, you are on dangerous ground!

SIX...

RODMILLA
Ask her yourself! She's a grasping,
devious, little pretender.
(MORE)

(CONTINUED)

RODMILLA (cont'd)
And it is my duty, your Highness, to
expose this deception as the covetous
hoax it is!

HENRY
(to Danielle)
Tell these women who you are.

SCRIPT FLY

(CONTINUED)

SEVEN... Here it comes. Danielle looks at him with hurt, pleading eyes. She cannot find the words.

HENRY

Tell them...

EIGHT... The truth hits Henry hard. Rodmilla moves forward.

HENRY (cont'd)

My god, it cannot be true.

RODMILLA

Bow before Royalty, you insolent fraud!!

HENRY

Nicole...

NINE...

DANIELLE

Nicole de Lancret was my mother, your Highness. I am what she says...

The SHOCKED MURMURS of the court begin to press in on the wounded Prince. Henry blinks in disbelief.

HENRY

The apple? That was you?!

TEN...

DANIELLE

I can explain!

KING FRANCIS

Well, someone better!

HENRY

First you're engaged and now you're a servant; I've heard enough!

He BEGINS TO LEAVE.

DANIELLE

Henry, please!

ELEVEN... The crowd GASPS at such familiarity. Henry spins around, heartbroken, and publicly humiliated by a commoner in front of his peers.

(CONTINUED)

HENRY

Do not address me so informal, madame.
I am a Prince of France and you...
are... Just. Like. Them.

His words don't hurt nearly as much as the look on his
face. He has fallen back on protocol to protect his heart
-- leaving her destroyed, as well.

She turns and runs through the crowd.

TWELVE...

The SILENCE IS DEAFENING. There's a LONG PAUSE as the
courtiers gape in shock. Nobody seems to know what to
do. Henry glares at Rodmilla, who guides his look to
Marguerite. He turns on his heel and storms off.

161 EXT. ROAD - HAUTEFORT - NIGHT

161

ANGLE ON: Leonardo, coming up the drive as THUNDER
RUMBLES IN THE DISTANCE. He SEES Danielle trip and fall
outside the main gate, losing her shoe. Alarmed, he
calls after her but she doesn't stop.

CLOSE ON THE GLASS SLIPPER as Leonardo picks it up. He
looks at the palace with terrible pit in his stomach. It
STARTS TO RAIN.

162 EXT. KEEP - NIGHT

162

ANGLE ON: Henry, standing in the rain.

LEONARDO (O.S.)

My god, Henry, what have you done?!

Henry turns as Leonardo comes out onto the balcony. They
have to SHOUT ABOVE THE DIN.

HENRY

(hardened)

I have been born to privilege and with
that come specific obligations.

LEONARDO

Horeseshit.

HENRY

You are out of line, old man.

LEONARDO

No, you are out of line. Do you have
any idea what that girl went through
to get here tonight?!

(CONTINUED)

HENRY
She lied to me!

LEONARDO
She came to tell you the truth and you
fed her to the wolves!

HENRY
What do you know?! You build flying
machines and walk on water, and yet
you know NOTHING about life!

LEONARDO
I know that a life without love is no
life at all. *

HENRY
And love without trust?! What of
that?

LEONARDO
She is your match, Henry!

HENRY
I am but a servant to my crown and I
have made my decision. I will not
yield.

Leonardo gazes at the young Prince with pity.

LEONARDO
You don't deserve her...

He removes the glass slipper from beneath his cloak and
places it on the stone as a parting gesture. Henry
stares at it for a long moment.

163 EXT. MANOIR - NIGHT

163

ANGLE ON: Danielle, walking barefoot up the lane and
clutching her other shoe. The DOWNPOUR has turned her
painted face into a smeary mess and the wind has ripped
apart her wings.

She reaches the front door but can't go in. CRANE UP as
she sinks down onto the stoop and buries her face in her
hands. LIGHTNING fills the night sky, followed by a
CRACK OF THUNDER.

FADE OUT.

FADE IN:

164 EXT. MANOIR - SUNRISE (2ND UNIT)

164

SERIES OF SHOTS: everything sparkles beautifully.

165 INT. STABLES - DAWN

165

ANGLE ON: Rodmilla, as she opens the barn doors and discovers the remnants of a small fire; Danielle's gown and slipper have been ritualistically burned.

RODMILLA

Danielle?

166 EXT. BACK FIELD - MANOIR - EARLY MORNING

166

ANGLE ON: Danielle, looking haggard after an awful night's sleep. She is stooped over with a hoe, working the fields with a vengeance. Rodmilla appears on the level above her.

RODMILLA

I have it on good authority that before your... rather embarrassing debut... the Prince was about to choose Marguerite for his bride.

Danielle simply ignores her. She drops the hoe, scoops up a basket of vegetables, and heads up the walk. The Baroness parallels her up on the terrace above.

RODMILLA (cont'd)

Men are so fickle. One minute they're spouting sonnets, and the next; you're back to being the hired help.

Danielle heads up the path in silence.

RODMILLA (cont'd)

But I must say, I've never seen you quite this dedicated to your chores.

DANIELLE

What makes you think I do any of this for you?

RODMILLA

Well... aren't we feisty this morning.

Rodmilla blocks the back door.

DANIELLE

Let me pass.

RODMILLA

You brought this on yourself you know.

(CONTINUED)

This comment stops Danielle in her tracks. She looks at Rodmilla with cold, hard eyes. *

DANIELLE

Don't you understand?! You've won! Go! Move into the palace and leave us be! *

RODMILLA

You are not my problem anymore. *

Danielle heads around to the front of the manoir, trying to remain calm. Rodmilla is right on her heels.

DANIELLE

Your problem? I have done everything you asked and still you denied me the only thing I ever wanted! *

RODMILLA

And what was that?

DANIELLE

(spins around; incredulous)
What do you think?! *

ANGLE ON: Paulette, poking her head out an upstairs window. *

PAULETTE

Mistress, Danielle, come see! It's back; all of it!

BACK TO SCENE: Danielle is too wrapped up in the confrontation to know what Paulette is talking about.

DANIELLE

You are the only mother I have ever known... Was there ever a time, even in its smallest measurement, that you loved me at all?

Rodmilla stares at her without pretense, her mask fully removed for the first time.

RODMILLA

How can anyone love a pebble in their shoe?

Danielle finally has her answer. The illusion of a family has been replaced with clarity and truth.

RODMILLA (cont'd)

Frankly, I've never understood why you've stayed on as long as you have.

(CONTINUED)

DANIELLE

Because one day you will be dead and
this manor will still be here... and
so will I. You have been a trespasser
in my father's house for far too long.

*
*
*

She comes around the front of the house and spies a
CARAVAN OF CARTS parked out front. Pierre le Pieu has
come to return all their belongings.

RODMILLA

Ah, Monsieur le Pieu. Right on time.

*

Danielle is stunned; confused.

LE PIEU

It's all here, Baroness. Every last
candlestick.

DANIELLE

The paintings... my father's books...
You sold them to him?

*
*

RODMILLA

Yes, and now they're back. I couldn't
very well have us looking like paupers
when the King arrives.

*
*

DANIELLE

Monsieur, thank you! This means the
world to us.

LE PIEU

I am a businessman, Danielle, not a
philanthropist.

DANIELLE

I don't understand.

*
*

RODMILLA

I can't very well have you around
distracting the Prince, now can I?

*
*
*

LE PIEU

The Baroness and I have an agreement.

*

RODMILLA

You, for all this. Although, I do
think I'm getting the better end of
the deal.

*

ANGLE ON: Danielle, as she finally comprehends the depth
of Rodmilla's evil.

(CONTINUED)

Le Pieu's henchmen carry her off, kicking and screaming. Maurice and the other servants try to stop them, but are shoved aside.

DISSOLVE TO:

167 EXT. FRENCH COUNTRYSIDE - DAY 167

A panoramic view of the beautiful valley as church bells peal in the distance.

168 OMIT 168

169 INT. CATHEDRAL - DAY 169

A Royal Wedding with all the pomp and circumstance we can afford. The church is packed.

ANGLE ON: Prince Henry, in full uniform, standing rigidly at the altar as A BOY'S CHOIR SINGS A HYMN. *

ANGLE ON; the BRIDE, as she begins her walk down the aisle, resplendent in a magnificent gown; her face shrouded in a veil.

ANGLE ON: King Francis and Queen Marie, seated in the front pew. The King glances at his son, awaiting his fate; his face, unreadable.

ANGLE ON: the bride, coming down the aisle. WE SEE her shoulders shaking and realize she is fighting back tears.

ANGLE ON: Rodmilla, standing on the aisle and dabbing her eyes as the bride passes. CAMERA REVEALS Marguerite and Jacqueline standing with their mother! (Okay, so Prince Henry is marrying someone else. But who?)

Rodmilla nudges Marguerite to flirt with the Marquis de Limoges. She tries but then SEES the Marquis is already taken (by a man as pretty as she is).

ANGLE ON: Leonardo, directly behind the King. He hears the bride sobbing as she passes by.

ANGLE ON: Henry, wondering who could possibly be making all that racket.

ANGLE ON: the bride, as she joins her future husband at the altar. The choir stops; and now the whole church can hear the Bride; sobbing.

ANGLE ON: the happy couple, as they kneel before the altar. The CARDINAL begins the ceremony in Latin. The bride looks back at a SHORT BALD MAN, blubbering in the third row. This makes her cry even harder.

(CONTINUED)

169 CONTINUED:

ANGLE ON: Henry's rigid face, as the absurdity of his world begins to weaken his resolve. Every snuffle, snort and sob makes it that much harder to stay stoic. Until he can't take it anymore. He starts to shake with laughter. *

ANGLE ON: King Francis, as he sees the couple's shoulders shaking for different reasons.

ANGLE ON: Henry, as he helps the bride to her feet and lifts her veil. Meet the PRINCESS GABRIELLA; BABBLING IN SPANISH. She's an emotional wreck. Henry may be Prince Charming to some; but not to her. He gives her a great big kiss. *

HENRY
(greatly relieved)
Madame, I know exactly how you feel!

(CONTINUED)

ANGLE ON: Rodmilla and Marguerite, as the bride rushes into the arms of the bald guy. Henry, jilted at the altar, runs out a side door. Marguerite nudges her mother.

ANGLE ON: King Francis, sees the KING OF SPAIN shaking his head and whispers to his wife.

KING FRANCIS
And I thought I had problems.

170 EXT. CATHEDRAL - DAY

170

ANGLE ON: Prince Henry, as he spies Maurice waiting with the carriage.

HENRY
Where is she?

MAURICE
The Baroness?

HENRY
Danielle.

MAURICE
She has been sold, Sire.

HENRY
Sold?! To whom?

JACQUELINE (O.S.)
Pierre le Pieu, your Highness.

Henry turns to find Jacqueline and Captain Laurent.

JACQUELINE
Just after the masque.

Henry glances back at the church.

HENRY
Tell no one of this. For it shall
reveal itself in due course. Come,
Laurent, there is much to be done.

Jacqueline and Maurice trade LOOKS.

171 INT. ARMORY - CHATEAU BEYNAC - DAY

171

ANGLE ON: Danielle, lifting a heavy wrapped bundle of swords; her legs in shackles. She trudges through a gauntlet of big, SWEATY BLACKSMITHS pounding out le Pieu's armor.

172 INT. LE PIEU'S LIBRARY - DAY

172

ANGLE ON: le Pieu, looking up from his reading.

LE PIEU

Enter.

Danielle enters, dripping with sweat. She presents the swords for his approval.

LE PIEU (cont'd)

I do hate to see you in irons. I would remove them if you'd promise not to run away again.

DANIELLE

I have no reason to stay.

LE PIEU

You belong to me now.

DANIELLE

I belong to no one. Least of all; you.

Le Pieu comes around his desk and tries to lift the sweaty hair off her back. Danielle recoils.

LE PIEU

I do wish you would reconsider my offer.

DANIELLE

I would rather rot.

LE PIEU

I had a horse like you once. Magnificent creature. Stubborn, like you; willful, to a fault. It, too, just needed to be broken.

DANIELLE

You will maintain your distance, sir.

LE PIEU

You didn't say please.

He slips his arms around her. Danielle turns to face him and places the TIP OF A DAGGER under his chin.

DANIELLE

Please.

LE PIEU

I could hang you for this.

(CONTINUED)

DANIELLE

Not if you are dead.

LE PIEU

I do love your spirit.

He slams her wrist down on the desk, but she moves like lightning and cuts him along the cheek. Le Pieu stumbles back, feeling blood. He grabs a rapier.

173 EXT. CHATEAU BEYNAC - DAY

173

ANGLE ON: Henry and the Royal Guard, galloping into the courtyard.

174 INT. LE PIEU'S LIBRARY - CONTINUOUS

174

ANGLE ON: Danielle, grabbing a sword in her other hand and circling le Pieu like a pro.

DANIELLE

My father was an expert swordsman, monsieur. He taught me well. Now hand me that key, or I swear on his grave, I will slit you from navel to nose.

Approaching, he begins to call her bluff, then sees the look in her eye and reconsiders. He slowly takes the key from his pocket.

175 EXT. CHATEAU BEYNAC - CONTINUOUS

175

ANGLE ON: Henry, leaping off his horse. He heads for the entrance just as Danielle marches out.

HENRY

Hi...

DANIELLE

Hi...

(then)

What are you doing here?

HENRY

(feeling abit stupid)

I, uh, came to... rescue you...

She stares at him, unwilling to yield and continues walking.

DANIELLE

Rescue me? A commoner?

(CONTINUED)

175 CONTINUED:

HENRY

Actually, I came to beg your
forgiveness. I offered you the world
and at the first test of honor I
betrayed your trust. Please,
Danielle...

DANIELLE

(stops; turns)
Say it again.

HENRY

I'm sorry.

DANIELLE

(smiles)
No. I meant the part when you said my
name.

HENRY

(him, too)
Danielle... perhaps you would be so
kind as to help me find the owner of
this rather remarkable shoe.

He fumbles its removal from his coat. Henry is actually
nervous.

DANIELLE

Where did you get that?

(CONTINUED)

HENRY

She is my match in every way. Please
tell me I haven't lost her.

Danielle sees the passion in his eyes and sinks down onto
a stone step.

DANIELLE

It belongs to a peasant, your
Highness, who only pretended to be a
courtier to save a man's life... *

HENRY

Yes, I know... and the name's Henry,
if you don't mind.

He crosses up to her and drops down onto his knee.

HENRY (cont'd)

I kneel before you not as a prince but
as a man in love. But I would feel
like a King if you, Danielle de
Barbarac, would be my wife.

CLOSE ON THE GLASS SLIPPER as it slides easily onto her
foot (almost like an engagement ring). Danielle has been
tough for far too long. She bursts into tears and
collapses into his arms. They kiss and kiss and kiss.

176 INT.DINING ROOM - MANOIR - DAY

176

ANGLE ON: the threesome, having dinner in SILENCE.
There's something rotten in Denmark, we're just not sure
what. The servants dare not move a muscle. Finally,
Rodmilla slams down her silverware.

RODMILLA

How could you be so stupid?!

JACQUELINE

(Cringes)

How was I to know he'd come flying out
the side door? He was supposed to be
getting married?!

MARGUERITE

People said he talked to you. What did
he say?

JACQUELINE

I can't be sure... it all happened so
quickly... but I think what he said
was... "serves me right for choosing a
foreigner over your... sister."

(CONTINUED)

Marguerite's ego is back to full bloom.

RODMILLA

Well, then perhaps we shall let him
fret about it for a few days.

The doorbell rings. All three of them leap from their
seats.

ALL

I'll get it!

*

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SCRIPT FLY

177 EXT. MANOIR - DAY

177 *

ANGLE ON: Rodmilla and her girls, as they open the door to reveal Captain Laurent. Behind him, WE SEE the KING'S ROYAL COACH.

CAPTAIN LAURENT

His Supreme Majesty, King Francis, requests an audience with the Baroness Rodmilla de Ghent and her daughters immediately.

RODMILLA

Is anything... wrong?

CAPTAIN LAURENT

No, mylady, the King demanded that you arrive in style.

Rodmilla turns to her girls with a small smile.

RODMILLA

Then in style we shall be.

178 OMIT

178

179 INT. THRONE ROOM - HAUTEFORT - DAY

179

ANGLE ON: the doors, as they OPEN TO REVEAL THE ROYAL COURT and all its members. King Francis and Queen Marie are seated at their thrones; Henry standing between them.

ANGLE ON: Rodmilla and her girls, being escorted in. For the Baroness, this is her crowning moment. She walks down the center aisle toward the dais, nodding regally to Leonardo, Celeste and Isabelle. The King bursts their bubble.

KING FRANCIS

Baroness, did you or did you not lie to her Royal Majesty, the Queen of France?

ANGLE ON: Rodmilla and Marguerite, stunned. But not Jacqueline. Rodmilla hesitates, searching for the right lie.

QUEEN MARIE

Choose your words wisely, madame, for they may be your last.

(CONTINUED)

179 CONTINUED:

RODMILLA

....A woman will do practically
anything for the love of a daughter,
your Majesties. Perhaps I did get a
little carried away.

MARGUERITE

(mock horror)

Mother, what have you done?

(MORE)

(CONTINUED)

MARGUERITE (cont'd)

(then; to the Queen)

Your Majesty, like you, I am just a victim here. She has lied to both of us and I am ashamed to call her family!

RODMILLA

How DARE you turn on me, you little ingrate --

MARGUERITE

(to the King)

You see?! You see what I put up with?!

*
*
*

KING FRANCIS

(barks)

Silence! Both of you!

(to Jacqueline)

Good Lord, are they always like this?

JACQUELINE

Worse. Your Majesty.

RODMILLA

Jacqueline, darling. I'd hate to think you had anything to do with this.

JACQUELINE

Course not, mother. I'm only here for the food.

QUEEN MARIE

Baroness Rodmilla de Ghent, you are hereby stripped of your title, and you and your horrible daughter are to be shipped to the Americas on the next available boat, unless, by some miracle, someone here will speak for you.

*
*
*
*

The court is DEAD QUIET. Rodmilla looks around, hopefully, but not there's not a friendly face to be found. She turns back to the King, still unwilling to lose face.

RODMILLA

There seem to be quite a few people out of town.

DANIELLE (O.S.)

I will speak for her.

Heads turn. The crowd REACTS IN ASTONISHMENT.

(CONTINUED)

ANGLE ON; Henry, grinning from ear to ear. He SEES the stunned look on Marguerite's face. *

HENRY

I don't believe you've met my wife.

Marguerite starts to cry.

ANGLE ON: Rodmilla, as Danielle approaches in all her royal splendor. The look on her face is priceless. And then she does something that makes this moment even more delicious.

The Baroness bows to the floor.

RODMILLA

Your... Highness.

DANIELLE

(poised) *

I want you to know that I will forget you after this moment and never think of you again. But you, I am quite certain, will think of me every single day for the rest of your life.

RODMILLA

And how long might that be?

DANIELLE

I hope it's forever.

ANGLE ON: Henry, looking at his wife adoringly. She is going to make a great Queen. She meets his gaze -- she's finally had her moment. *

180-181 OMIT

180-181 *

There, in the doorway, is PRINCESS DANIELLE; dressed the part and wearing a crown.

DANIELLE (cont'd)

She is, after all, my stepmother.

As she enters the room the ENTIRE COURT bows in her presence like a giant wave.

DANIELLE (cont'd)

All I would ask, your Majesties, is that you show her the same courtesies she bestowed on me.

(CONTINUED)

182 INT. PALACE LAUNDRY - DUSK

182 *

ANGLE ON: Rodmilla and Marguerite, dressed in drab smocks and kerchiefs and part of a vast palace workforce. A NONSENSE MATRONLY SUPERVISOR is putting them through their paces.

SUPERVISOR

And after you wash the tablecloths,
you can start on the napkins.

*
*
*

Two more bags of laundry come down the chute.

SUPERVISOR

And put these over there.

RODMILLA

(delegates)

Marguerite.

MARGUERITE

What?

RODMILLA

You heard the woman.

MARGUERITE

So did you.

(CONTINUED)

RODMILLA

Yes, but I'm management.

MARGUERITE

The hell you are! Why you're just the same as I am; A BIG NOBODY!

RODMILLA

How dare you speak to me in such a tone! I am of noble blood and you --

The Supervisor picks up a heavy bag and tosses it at the bickering pair --

SUPERVISOR

-- Are getting on my nerves! Now get to work!

-- knocking them into a LARGE VAT. The workforce erupts with laughter.

ANGLE ON: the Baroness and her spoiled daughter, as they sputter to their feet; dipped like a couple of Easter eggs. They begin to scream in horror (and they thought they were dirty before...)

182A EXT. MANOIR - DUSK

182A

*

ANGLE ON: Henry and Danielle, galloping together toward the manoir. Maurice, Paulette, Louise, and a WHOLE NEW STAFF are waiting out front -- just like the old days.

*

*

*

183 INT. DINING ROOM - MANOIR - DUSK

183

ANGLE ON: the FINISHED PORTRAIT, as Leonardo unveils it for the newlyweds. Danielle and Henry are surrounded by their closest friends; Gustave, Jacqueline, Laurent, Maurice, Paulette, and Louise.

DANIELLE

Oh, Leonardo, it's wonderful!

LEONARDO

Think of it as a belated wedding present, your Highness.

Gustave snorts.

DANIELLE

What?

GUSTAVE

I still can't get over it. "Your Highness".

(CONTINUED)

183 CONTINUED:

HENRY

I must say, Leonardo, for a man of
your talent, it doesn't look a thing
like her.

Danielle whacks him, playfully.

DANIELLE

You, sir, are supposed to be charming.

Henry grabs her in a clinch and kisses her.

HENRY

And we, Princess, are supposed to live
happily ever after.

DANIELLE

Says who?

A beat. It suddenly dawns on him...

HENRY

(puzzled)
You know I don't know.

CLOSE ON: the painting of Danielle.

GRANDE DAME (O.S.)

...Her painting hung in the university
up until the revolution.

184 INT. GRANDE DAME'S BED CHAMBER - TWILIGHT

184

CLOSE ON: a MAN'S HAND scribbling in a notebook. PULL
BACK TO REVEAL Jacob Grimm writing down the last of the
story. We are back in the 19th century.

GRANDE DAME

Some people have no respect for the
past. They see a palace and create a
a world, a fantasy, a fairy tale...
that I, alone, remember...

A doctor whispers to Wilhelm.

BUTLER

Please. Her Majesty needs her rest.

JACOB

It's a lovely story, madame.

WILHELM

(coining a new phrase)
From rags... to riches.

(CONTINUED)

GRANDE DAME
(weakly)
She rescued him you know.

But they don't even hear it...

185 EXT. INNER COURTYARD - HAUTEFORT - DUSK

185

The Grimm brothers climb into their carriage.

186 EXT. HAUTEFORT - DUSK

186

AERIAL SHOT: as the carriage pulls away and heads through the drawbridge. And still the castle stands. As a monument to history... to love... and to the enduring promise that some fairy tales are built to last forever...

THE END