

Joan d'Arc was a farmer's daughter who lived in the early 15th century. At the time of her birth, the Hundred Years War had raged nearly a century, and England was slowly, surely conquering France.

Joan singlehandedly reversed the tide of the war. She fought not for the king or the nobles, but for the common men and women of France like herself. The common people worshipped her as a saint.

She was captured by the English, abandoned by the French king and tried by the English for witchcraft -- the only possible explanation the Church could find for a woman who not only fought their armies, but defeated them.

Joan was burnt at the stake as a witch.

"This above all, to refuse to be a victim."

-- Margaret Atwood

FADE IN:

SUPER OVER BLACK:

It is said that Merlin of the Britons made one final prophecy before his death: that France would be lost by a harlot and saved by a warrior woman.

For ten centuries the prophecy was forgotten, until the time of the Hundred Years War. France's Queen Isabeau, known for her wide and varied taste in lovers, declared her own son Charles a bastard and ceded the French crown to the English infant king, Henry VI.

France had been lost by a harlot. Half the prophecy remained to be fulfilled.

SUPERIMPOSE: FRANCE, 1443

INT. DUNGEON

It could be day or night; neither sun nor moon has ever touched these walls. Guttering torches light the stone corridors, the dank moldy walls dripping with moisture. Rows of cells stretch back too far to count.

DISTANT SCREAMS echo down the corridors, along with the CREAKING wheels of the rack, the CRACK of whips and the HISS of flames searing flesh.

FATHER MICHAEL, dressed in the trademark blood red robes of the INQUISITION, strides down the filthy corridor. Only 19, he has the frightening face of a child zealot.

Prisoners claw at him as he passes, mistaking his youth for compassion. Hands stretch desperately through the bars.

RAGGED PRISONER

Father! Don't let them take me --

OLD WOMAN PRISONER

I've got grandchildren -- have mercy, sir -- I'm no heretic!

Father Michael strides on, hearing nothing. He reaches a dark cell, guarded by a BURLY SOLDIER. No hands reach out from this cell -- a dark shape sits brooding in the shadows.

Father Michael nods to the soldier, who opens the cell door. The door shuts behind him with a resounding CLANG.

Father Michael takes a deep breath, crosses himself. A voice growls from the shadows.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

VOICE

Get thee behind me.

FATHER MICHAEL

I beg your pardon?

VOICE

It's a literary allusion. It means
get your miserable red-robed
soul-stealing carcass out of here.

FATHER MICHAEL

On behalf of the holy Church and
the divine mission of the
Inquisition, I am charged --

VOICE

I said GET OUT NOW!

Father Michael flinches at the power in the voice.

FATHER MICHAEL

-- to warn you that unless you
confess to your crimes your
everlasting soul will be forfeit,
and you will be burnt at the stake.

From the shadows, a man leans forward into the flickering
light: GILES DE RAIS.

GILES

Then burn me.

Giles was once a strong man, but his body has been broken by
torture. He looks far older than his 50 years. Blood
streaks his face, his skin covered in blisters and bruises.

Father Michael looks away in spite of himself. Giles looks
more closely, surprised by his squeamishness.

GILES

You're just a child. How old are
you, boy?

FATHER MICHAEL

Old enough. God saw fit to make me
a priest.

GILES

(hoarse laugh)
God had nothing to do with it.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

FATHER MICHAEL

Save your blasphemies for your
master in hell. You'll not
frighten me. I know what you are.

Giles shuffles forward, bound in heavy iron manacles.

GILES

Tell me, boy, what am I?

FATHER MICHAEL

You're Giles de Rais, Satan
worshiper, once companion of the
witch Joan d'Arc.

GILES

Witch?

Giles LAUGHS, the sound eerie and almost mad.

FATHER MICHAEL

If you do not confess, you will be
interrogated until the devil is
driven from you.

GILES

You mean I'll be tortured until
I'll say anything. Don't count on
it, boy. They've tried, nigh on a
month now. I'll not "confess."

FATHER MICHAEL

Then you shall burn. Confess, and
you will be hung -- a quick and
painless death.

GILES

A powerful incentive for an
innocent man to confess,
ordinarily. But not for me.

(studies Michael)

You are a strange one. Why did
they send you? You have no stomach
for torture. Perhaps to remind me
of someone else... also young...

FATHER MICHAEL

I am not too young to do God's
work! And you -- you are not
innocent. You were consort to the
devil's handmaid herself --

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

GILES

You know nothing! Nothing about me, and nothing about her!

Father Michael is taken aback by Giles' fury.

FATHER MICHAEL

I know all I need to about your witch. She is long dead.

(beat)

And forever damned.

Father Michael turns for the door, but Giles, with amazing agility, throws himself across the room and in front of the bars, blocking his exit.

GILES

Father, hear my confession.

FATHER MICHAEL

(startled)

I -- I can get you another priest --

GILES

I want you to hear it. What are you afraid of? Cannot your God protect you from my great evil?

Giles stretches out his withered, scarred arms, shaking his chains to emphasize his helplessness.

GILES

Indeed I am formidable. Better to find a more qualified confessor --

FATHER MICHAEL

(stung)

No! I will hear your confession.

Giles slides down against the bars, coming to rest on the floor, as if this last outburst exhausted him.

GILES

Bless me father, for I have sinned. Fourteen years ago --

FATHER MICHAEL

Fourteen years?

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

GILES

I've done a lot of sinning. Now, fourteen years ago, when the war still raged, there was a village in the Lorraine called Domremy . . .

DISSOLVE TO:

EXT. FOREST - NIGHT

Mist clings to the low branches of the trees, the moonlight cold and dusty in the night air. A FIGURE moves through the tangled underbrush, pulls back the hood of her cloak--

A YOUNG WOMAN, face strong and full of determination.

In a clearing ahead lies a motionless KNIGHT in a rusted SUIT OF ARMOR, arms crossed over a SWORD held to his chest.

The woman approaches and looks into the helmet: nothing. The armor is an empty husk, gaping darkness pooled within. She stretches out a shaking hand to take the sword, wraps her hand gingerly around the hilt; it doesn't budge.

She PULLS with all her might. Metal GROANS on metal; the armor CRUMBLES away to dust as the sword pulls free. She raises the sword over her head --

-- to see BLOOD, black in the moonlight, dripping down her arm.

She SCREAMS but no sound emerges. The sword BURSTS INTO FLAMES before her eyes. The fire climbs up her arm toward her face, the flames ROAR over her soundless scream --

INT. JOAN'S BEDROOM - DAWN

The young woman lies tangled in her sheets, still deep in her dream. She SCREAMS and bolts upright.

This is JOAN D'ARC: a peasant girl, at once beautiful and strong as a sapling oak, sun-browned and lithe.

ISABELLA D'ARC rushes in, more irritated than concerned.

ISABELLA

What is the matter with you?
Screaming like to wake the dead!

Joan sits, shaking, as Isabella clucks over her.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

ISABELLA

It's those stories of your
father's, filling your head with
nonsense. When I was your age --

Joan grimaces at this familiar line, joins in.

ISABELLA

-- I had a
husband and
child--

JOAN

-- you had a
husband and a
child--

ISABELLA

-- to keep me occupied of a night.

Joan gives her a playful hug.

EXT. VILLAGE OF DOMREMY - DAWN

SUPERIMPOSE: VILLAGE OF DOMREMY, 1429

The first rays of dawn break over the mountains, streaking
the village below with pale gold light. Thatched houses
cluster around the village square, where a fountain provides
water.

The D'ARC farm lies nestled between the mountains and the
village, its fields lush and green.

EXT. D'ARC FARM - DAWN

Joan, in a homespun peasant's dress, and her 14-year-old
brother PETER climb onto a wagon loaded with vegetables.
Their father, hardy peasant farmer JACQUES D'ARC, snaps the
reigns. The wagon starts for the village.

JACQUES

Peter, try not to get in any
fights. And Joan, no flirting with
those layabout village boys.

PETER

Yes, sir.

JOAN

(disgusted at the idea)
Papa, I never flirt.

PETER

Mama says it would be a blessing if
you did flirt once in a while.

The wagon rattles down the road.

EXT. VILLAGE SQUARE - DAY

Jacques unloads the wagon in the square, among other farmers. Behind him a SHOUT goes up -- Jacques turns his head to see

JOAN

racing with Peter and five village boys across the square.

Onlookers shout at the racers; several old matrons frown at Joan she flies past, skirts flapping and hair flying. Jacques shakes his head for the matrons' benefit; but as soon as they look away, he grins and watches the race.

JOAN'S

face glows. She leaves Peter behind and closes on

THE FASTEST BOY

matching him stride for stride. Horrified, he runs faster, but

JOAN

surges ahead to beat him to the fountain.

The racers collapse in a sweaty heap around the fountain. The boy who lost to Joan reaches out and SHOVES her.

BOY

You cheated.

Peter steps protectively in front of Joan.

PETER

She did not. My grandmother's faster than you, and she's dead.

JOAN

Peter, it's all right.
(she turns to the boy)
What did you say?

ACROSS THE SQUARE

Jacques knows what's coming, hurries toward the fountain.

JACQUES

Joan! Peter!

AT THE FOUNTAIN

Joan turns toward Jacques. The boy SHOVES her from behind.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

BOY

I said you cheated.

Joan whirls around and SHOVES the boy hard, toppling him over and INTO THE FOUNTAIN. The other boys and Peter HOWL with laughter.

JOAN

I beat you fairly.

The boy drags himself from the fountain, dripping wet and furious, just as Jacques reaches the fountain.

JACQUES

Enough of this!

Jacques grabs Joan and Peter and drags them away.

JACQUES

What did I tell you, both of you?

JOAN

I wasn't flirting.

PETER

And I wasn't fighting.

Jacques glares at Joan.

JOAN

You didn't tell me not to fight.

EXT. VILLAGE SQUARE - LATER

The day wanes. A CROWD OF BOYS has gathered around Jacques, listening with fascination to a tale of magic and sorcery.

JACQUES

Then the dying Mordred stabbed King Arthur -- striking his own father a bloody and mortal blow!

A GASP from the audience. Alone in this sea of boys,

JOAN

listens, spellbound, hanging on her father's every word.

JACQUES

Arthur's lifeblood poured onto the blood-soaked ground. They came to bear him away -- but the magic sword Excalibur had vanished.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

BY THE FOUNTAIN

a group of YOUNG PEASANT WIVES Joan's age are gossiping, dandling babies on their knees. One young mother POINTS at Joan and whispers -- the women GIGGLE loudly.

PETER

What happened to the sword?

JACQUES

Some say it returned to the Lady of the Lake. But others say it was taken by the sorcerer Merlin, who wandered the world in searching for one who would fight, as Arthur did, not for riches or glory, but for the common people. He sought the hero who would raise the blade Excalibur in battle again.

(beat)

Some say he searches still.

The boys are spellbound. Joan is entranced, enthralled with the magic of the story.

EXT. VILLAGE SQUARE - AFTERNOON

Jacques, Peter and Joan head out of the square in the empty wagon. As they rattle toward the gates they pass

A YOUNG GIRL

perhaps 15, standing on a wooden crate PROPHECYING. Her eyes are rolled up to the whites, her voice sing-song. A CROWD of peasants is gathered around her.

PROPHET GIRL

I see blood on the grass --
destruction everywhere -- I see
death, the eyes of God turned away
from us! A coin to God's servant,
to turn away His wrath!

The villagers crowd around fearfully, tossing coins at her feet. The Prophet Girl fixes her eyes straight on Joan.

PROPHET GIRL

Blood. Blood and fire!

Joan stares at the Prophet Girl as the wagon pulls away.

EXT. COUNTRY ROAD - AFTERNOON

The wagon rattles along. Peter sleeps, slouched against his father, as Joan looks up at the sky, her face worried.

JACQUES

Pay no heed to that girl, Joan.
Parasites that feed off an honest
man's fear, that's all they are.
Coins for God's blessing, indeed.

JOAN

But the war could come here,
couldn't it, Papa?

Jacques looks over at her.

JACQUES

It's been nearly a hundred years,
and the English haven't touched
this valley. We pay our taxes to
Lord Tremoille and he watches out
for us, as a liege lord should.
The rest is a business for princes
and kings -- all politics.

Joan turns back to the clouds. Her gaze is still troubled.

INT. D'ARC STABLE - AFTERNOON

Joan leads a dray horse into the stable, where the air is heavy with autumn gold. Joan leads the horse to a stall. She turns to go, but her eyes are drawn to

THE SWORD

that hangs on the far wall. Joan carefully takes the sword down, hefts it, balancing the weight in her hand.

FLASH TO JOAN'S DREAM:

The dark, misty forest. Blade raised to the sky --

BACK TO SCENE:

Joan glances down at the sword, startled, then takes a shaky SWING, like a child taking a first step --

JACQUES

JOAN!

Joan STARTS and drops the sword, turning to see Jacques GLARING at her from the doorway.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

JACQUES

That is no plaything! Is this what comes of letting you run like a hoyden with the village boys?

JOAN

But, if the English come --

JACQUES

Then you will have me and Peter, and someday -- as your mother keeps reminding us -- a husband to protect you. You will have no need of that.

Jacques takes the sword from her and hangs it on the wall.

JACQUES

But there is nothing to fear, Joan. They've stayed away this long.

He reaches out, tousles her hair. With sudden fear, Joan HUGS Jacques close. Her sudden emotion surprises him.

JACQUES

We're safe here.

But over her head, his eyes betray the same fear as hers.

INT. JOAN'S BEDROOM - NIGHT

Joan sleeps fitfully again. She tosses and turns, moaning.

FLASH OF JOAN'S DREAM:

A WALL OF FLAMES.

BACK TO SCENE:

Joan AWAKES with a violent start, sits up in bed.

JOAN

(whispers)

Fire.

O.S. CRIES AND COMMOTION; the CRACKLE OF FLAMES and GALLOPING HORSES. Joan pulls herself out of bed, disoriented, and looks out the window over the fields below:

THE VILLAGE

is in FLAMES, people running from their homes, soldiers on horseback CUTTING people down as they flee the fire.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

Joan looks down to see --

THE FIRST STORY OF THE FARMHOUSE

blazing, the flames licking upward. Through the smoky haze she sees SOLDIERS burning everything, taking the livestock.

Joan turns from the window and rushes down the stairs.

INT. KITCHEN - NIGHT

Fire illumines a chaotic scene -- furniture overturned, dishes smashed, the door swinging by one hinge.

ISABELLA (O.S.)
(from outside)
Joan! Peter!

Joan runs out the door --

EXT. D'ARC HOUSE - NIGHT

-- and into Isabella's arms.

ISABELLA
Joan! Where's Peter?

JOAN
I don't know.

JACQUES

stands in front of Joan and Isabella, wielding the sword from the barn, now bloody. Two DEAD SOLDIERS lie at his feet. The remaining men regard Jacques with caution.

JACQUES
Get back, you English parasites!

TWO SOLDIERS charge --

Jacques STABS Soldier #1 in mid-charge. Soldier #2 swings low, CUTTING Jacques' leg. Jacques staggers, then twists sideways suddenly and CUTS DOWN Soldier #2.

JACQUES
I swear I'll kill every mother's son of you before I let you touch my family.

RAVERFORD (O.S.)
HOLD!

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

JOAN

raises her eyes in terror.

Towering over his men on a fiery-eyed horse is the English GENERAL RAVERFORD, his silhouette backlit by the village fires. He is wickedly handsome; his face has the cruel set of a man who enjoys killing.

At his side is LIEUTENANT GLASTON, his sadistic second in command. Perched in front of him is PETER, who squirms helplessly in Glaston's iron grip. Glaston holds his sword tight against Peter's neck.

ISABELLA

(anguished)

PETER!

JACQUES

Dear God.

RAVERFORD

(suavely)

It would be a pity for one so brave to die so young. Drop your sword.

PETER

Papa, don't!

Glaston draws his sword a fraction of an inch across Peter's skin -- a tiny trickle of blood drips down his neck.

RAVERFORD

Calm down, Glaston. They haven't said no yet.

(to Jacques)

Drop your sword.

JACQUES

Why? You'll only kill us all.

RAVERFORD

My men wish to search your house for valuables before it burns to the ground. This is called plunder, and as you may know is customary during war, even in an uncivilized dungheap of a country such as this.

(beat)

Drop your sword, let them pass, and I give you my word that you and your family will be spared.

Otherwise --

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

He motions to Glaston, who pulls Peter tighter against him.

JACQUES

No!

Jacques drops his sword.

JACQUES

You are welcome to whatever you can find.

RAVERFORD

Thank you.
(to Glaston)
Go ahead.

Glaston draws his sword across Peter's throat, KILLING HIM.

Isabella SCREAMS and RUSHES FORWARD -- Glaston tosses Peter's body down into the mud. Isabella throws herself at Raverford --

ISABELLA

MURDERER!

Raverford SLICES down, STABBING Isabella through the heart. Jacques DIVES for his sword, grabs it -- but before he can swing SOLDIER #3 steps forward and RUNS HIM THROUGH.

For one endless moment Joan watches as her father falls forward and COLLAPSES at her feet. With the last of his strength Jacques puts his sword in Joan's hand.

JACQUES

Take it...

Their eyes meet -- and his slowly glaze over in death.

The soldiers swarm forward.

JOAN

stands over Jacques' fallen body, holding the sword with shaking hands. A soldier steps forward -- she HACKS at him with desperate fury.

JOAN

This is OUR HOME!

The soldiers fall back, amazed; then BURST OUT LAUGHING.

Joan stands, breathing hard, awkwardly holding the heavy sword.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

JOAN

(whispering)
This is my home.

The soldiers part like water to let Raverford pass. He rides up to Joan, towers over her.

RAVERFORD

Charming. What's your name?

Joan stands her ground, her breathing ragged. She doesn't answer. Raverford shrugs.

RAVERFORD

Well, I am General James Raverford of His Majesty's imperial army. Now put down the sword, dear. We aren't going to kill you. Not for a while.

He raises his sword and CHARGES her --

JOAN

dodges, but gets tangled in her own long skirts.

RAVERFORD

SLICES his blade down the side of her neck.

Joan staggers to the side, bleeding from the gash. Behind her the fire climbs up the walls. Joan raises her sword.

JOAN

THIS IS MY HOME!

Joan CHARGES the startled Raverford. His horse REARS in fright, STRIKING her in the forehead. She falls back into the doorway --

-- as the beams of the door COLLAPSE in a pillar of flame and smouldering stone. The house sags, falling in on itself. Raverford looks at the collapsing house in disgust.

RAVERFORD

There are plenty more where she came from. Come!

Raverford rides off, Glaston and his men following behind.

INT. D'ARC KITCHEN - CONTINUOUS

Joan, stunned from the head blow, stumbles through the kitchen to the BACK DOOR as flaming wooden beams fall around her. The sword falls from her hand unheeded.

Joan stumbles out the door into the night, as the house CAVES IN behind her. She sinks into the grass, unconscious.

EXT. PIT OF THE DEAD - DAY

Joan's eyes flutter open, slow and disoriented.

Smoke curls around her. Nearby, FLAMES CRACKLE. She wipes her eyes, struggling to focus -- and sees that her hands are sticky with half-dried BLOOD.

Horrified, Joan scrambles to sit up -- but something holds her down, draped over her legs and stomach. She KICKS away the weight, rolling it off of her -- the DEAD BODY of the Prophet Girl.

Joan's vision suddenly pulls into sharp focus. She is lying atop a

PILE OF CORPSES

in a dirt pit. The blood of countless dead smears her clothing and face. Their lifeless bodies lie tangled beneath her. She has been left for dead.

Joan doesn't scream.

Around the edges of the pit wood has been stacked and set on fire; smoke and flames block Joan's view of what is beyond. Panting with exertion and horror, she pulls herself over the dead bodies, crawling to the side of the pit.

Joan finds a spot where the wood has yet to catch, and drags herself out of the pit.

EXT. FIELD - DAY (CONTINUOUS)

Joan crawls through a veil of smoke to emerge in the middle of a scorched field. She hears GARBLED VOICES. Back to her, walking away, she sees dirt-smearred VILLAGERS carrying shovels and ragged bundles. Leaving Domremy.

Joan raises one hand feebly, her voice smoke-strangled.

JOAN
(a croaking whisper)
Wait -- wait for me --

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

The crackle of the flames drowns out her voice. The villagers continue walking without looking back. Joan COLLAPSES as the fire ROARS up behind her.

CUT TO:

INT. DUNGEON - NIGHT

Father Michael listens, enraptured, as Giles pauses to COUGH. His chest heaves and the wretched noise seems to WAKE Father Michael up as if from a trance.

FATHER MICHAEL
This has nothing to do with you.
You are seducing me with your
devil's tales!

Father Michael jumps up and SHOUTS at the guard.

FATHER MICHAEL
Let me out! Let me out now!

The guard FUMBLES as Father Michael presses against the bars. Giles raises his head, eyes blazing in the near-dark.

GILES
(whispers)
Don't you want to hear what happens
next?

The door swings open with a cold CLANG and Father Michael rushes out, crossing himself repeatedly.

THE GUARD

strides angrily into the cell and KICKS Giles brutally in the stomach. He bends down over Giles.

GUARD
You're not a grand lord any more --
show some respect for your betters!

Curled on the floor, gasping, Giles looks up -- and SMILES. Infuriated, the Guard KICKS him across the jaw.

INT. DUNGEON - MORNING

Father Michael hurries down the dark corridor, stops at Giles' cell. The guard lets him in.

Giles sits in slumped in the corner, considerably more mangled than the last time we saw him.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

One arm dangles broken at his side.

GILES

What do you want?

FATHER MICHAEL

(stiffly)

I was ordered here.

GILES

Indeed. As you can see, the men of God had a few questions for me last night. I'm afraid I told them I would speak with no one but you.

(beat)

Tell me, little Father, why is the mother church so concerned that I die by humane hanging?

FATHER MICHAEL

It is not your death that concerns them. There are certain misguided peasants and clergy who think your witch should be -- canonized. Confession of your witchcraft would go far toward silencing them --

GILES

They want to make Joan a saint?

Giles begins laughing hysterically.

FATHER MICHAEL

I fail to see what is so amusing.

Giles suddenly stops laughing. He uses his good right arm to raise his useless left one up to Father Michael's face.

GILES

See this? Do you know why they broke my left arm? So I could still sign my name to their -- your -- damned confession.

(an afterthought)

Of course I'm left-handed.

(beat)

Do you think they did any less to her? And now they want to make her a saint. I wonder what shall become of my memory when I am dead.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

FATHER MICHAEL

You will be remembered for exactly what you are -- a worshipper of Satan.

GILES

Until it is politically expedient to remember me otherwise.

Father Michael turns to go. Giles sighs.

GILES

No, stay. I am weary of the company of rats waiting for me to die.

Father Michael turns back, a little too eagerly.

GILES

Where did I stop...

FATHER MICHAEL

(without hesitation)

She woke up in the pit, with all the dead bodies --

(catches himself)

-- I think.

DISSOLVE TO:

EXT. D'ARC FARMHOUSE - MORNING

Joan hammers wooden markers into the dirt. The ruined farm smokes gently as she pounds the last crude wooden cross into the earth, marking her family's graves.

She doesn't cry.

She turns to go and STUMBLES over the torn hem of her dress, as she did facing Raverford. She reaches down without looking and absently tears at the cloth. With the same fixed, numb expression, she walks toward the farmhouse.

INT. D'ARC FARMHOUSE - MORNING (CONTINUOUS)

Joan enters the house and stops short, as if seeing the destruction for the first time. She sinks slowly, soundlessly to her knees among the ashes.

DISSOLVE TO:

INT. D'ARC FARMHOUSE - NIGHT

Night has fallen. Joan has not moved.

The ruined house rises around her like a twisted cathedral, sharp blackened stones and tattered ash-thin wood reaching up into the open starlit sky.

Joan sways on her knees, barely keeping her balance. Her eyes flutter -- she sags -- then COLLAPSES into the ashes.

Something GLIMMERS inches away from her face. Joan reaches out a trembling hand, brushes away the ashes to reveal

HER FATHER'S SWORD

buried in the rubble. She puts her hand around the hilt and PULLS the sword from the ashes, clutching it to her. For the first time, Joan begins to CRY.

She SOBS uncontrollably, gasping. This is the first sound she has made since crawling from the pit. She looks at the sky and SCREAMS a cry of grief that tears from her throat out into the night.

INT. D'ARC FARMHOUSE - MORNING

Joan's eyes are swollen but dry. She slings a bag of scavenged supplies over her shoulder. The sword is strapped to her waist, concealed by her cloak, tangling in her skirt as she moves.

She turns in a slow circle, taking one last look at what was her home; then she starts walking.

EXT. GATES OF VAUCOLEURS - DAY

Exhausted and grimy, Joan approaches the grey, forbidding city gates. She walks through the gates and enters

THE STREETS OF VAUCOLEURS

which stretch before Joan like the ragged mouth of hell. They swarm with REFUGEES, dirty, hopeless, desperate.

Joan is frozen at the sight. The sea of human bodies stretches away as far as Joan can see. She steps slowly into the streets, entering another world.

ON THE STREETS

Deformed beggars cry for aid, displaying bleeding sores. Joan walks past wounded villagers lying on pallets under makeshift shelters, flies buzzing around their wounds.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

Joan's shock shows in her shaky steps. The wounded and dying stretch before her in uncountable numbers.

EXT. GOVERNOR'S MANSION IN VAUCOLEURS - DAY

The stone mansion of the Lord Tremoille rises from a sea of dirty, milling peasants like an island.

A LINE OF REFUGEE PEASANTS

snakes out from the mansion, Joan at the end of it.

LATER IN THE DAY

The line has barely moved. Joan inches forward.

EVEN LATER

Joan has moved a few feet. Several people around her have gone to sleep.

AND EVEN LATER -- NIGHTFALL

A guard motions a group of peasants inside, including Joan.

INT. GOVERNOR'S MANSION - NIGHTFALL

Joan is herded up the stairs with the other peasants, through ornate carved doors and into

THE AUDIENCE CHAMBER

of the Lord Tremoille.

The spacious audience chamber is hung with thick tapestries and filled with glittering nobles.

The room whispers wealth.

Presiding over the room in a high, ornate chair is LORD TREMOILLE himself, a corpulent man in brocaded clothing, fingers heavy with gold and jewels. Oblivious to the misery below him, he LAUGHS and GOSSIPS with his retinue.

In front of Joan, an OLD MAN bows before Tremoille's chair. Tremoille doesn't look up, but the SCRIBE seated next to him looks the peasant over sharply.

SCRIBE

Name and business?

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

RAGGED OLD MAN
Pierre of Burey, vassal to his
Lordship. The English burned my
farm.

The scribe carefully counts out TWO COPPER COINS and hands them to the old man, who looks at them mournfully and shuffles away. One of the guards presses Joan forward.

SCRIBE
Name and business?

JOAN
(whisper)
Joan.

The Scribe looks up in irritation.

SCRIBE
(loudly)
Name and business?

JOAN
(firmer)
Joan of Domremy. I come to ask
vengeance of my liege lord, on
behalf of his murdered vassal
Jacques d'Arc.

The Scribe stares at her for a moment, then scribbles something and hands her two copper coins. Joan looks at the coins.

JOAN
No. This isn't what I want --

SCRIBE
Well it's all you're going to get.

The Guard steps forward and pushes her aside.

GUARD
Move along now.

Joan starts moving toward the door -- she meets the eyes of an old peasant woman, wearing bloody bandages, waiting her turn. The woman's eyes are full of pain.

Joan turns back, marches up to Tremoille's chair.

SCRIBE
Stop! What are you doing!

Tremoille looks up as Joan THROWS the coins in his face.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

TREMOILLE
(immediate panic)
Guards! Help!

Several guards leap forward and take protective positions around Tremoille.

JOAN
I demand vengeance for my family!
It is my right!

TREMOILLE
My heart -- I'm palpitating!

He takes out a snuff box, snorts a nosefull and SNEEZES daintily. He relaxes visibly and peers at Joan.

TREMOILLE
What are you talking about?

Joan is hysterical, exhaustion and shock taking their toll.

JOAN
The Englishman Raverford killed everyone -- burned the village to the ground -- you are our liege lord, I demand vengeance --
(sobs)
-- and if you will not go after him, I will do it myself!

Tremoille stares at her -- ragged, dirty, looking pathetic and crazy at once -- then erupts in LAUGHTER. Taking the cue, the guards and nobles and peasants all start LAUGHING.

Joan stands unmoved, blushing bright red as they laugh.

TREMOILLE
(to the guards)
Send her back wherever she came from. And tell her father to box her ears!

The courtiers LAUGH as the guards converge on Joan.

JOAN
I have no father!

The guards drag her out.

EXT. MANSION COURTYARD - DAY

Guards carry Joan out and DUMP her unceremoniously in the mud. She scrambles to her feet, but they are already gone.

EXT. STREETS OF VAUCOLEURS - NIGHT (LATER)

A chill autumn wind blows through the narrow streets as refugees and beggars huddle together for warmth. Joan looks small and lost in the sea of freezing bodies.

Two KNAVES, BOGG and HENRI, saunter by with the air of scavengers. Their eyes dart among the huddled shapes.

HENRI

My, my, what a fine lady to be out on such an unpleasant evening. Bogg, in't a fine lady?

JOAN

(dully)
Leave me alone.

HENRI

We've helped many a girl like yourself, stranded by hard times.

His concern is positively slimy. He reaches down and grabs her by the arm. Joan pulls away.

JOAN

I said leave me alone.

Henri SLAPS her hard, JERKING her up by her arm.

HENRI

Show a little manners, you miserable wench!

Joan gives him a long look -- and something in her SNAPS. She SLAPS Henri back. Enraged, Henri whips a DAGGER from his belt, pressing it between Joan's cheek and eye.

HENRI

You would have gotten a hot meal out of it if you'd behaved yourself.

Joan moves her hand carefully beneath her cloak, gripping the hilt of her father's sword. Bogg cups a hand over her breasts, loosening the laces of her dress. Henri LAUGHS and presses the dagger beneath her eye.

VOICE

UNHAND HER!

They DROP Joan and whirl around, frightened, to see

A CLOAKED FIGURE

sword drawn, facing them from the shadows.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

CLOAKED FIGURE

You are a discredit to chivalrous
men everywhere!

The figure steps forward into the light --

A BOY, maybe 17, caught between adolescence and manhood, a sword looking vaguely ridiculous in his grasp. He is, however, deadly serious about saving Joan.

BOY

Now get you gone before I write my
anger in your blood!

The men are grinning -- is this child serious?

The boy takes another step forward, sword leveled. Henri LUNGES at him, the boy flinches for a second --

-- and Henri BACKHANDS him with brutal force, sending the boy flying. His sword falls from his hand. Bogg grabs it, then bends over the stunned boy and begins rifling through his pockets.

HENRI

Kill him. We've got other
business.

Henri licks his lips, turns back to Joan --

-- to find her SWORD an inch away from his neck. Joan stands poised to run him through.

JOAN

Leave him be.

Henri's eyes dart to Bogg -- back to Joan -- he DODGES sideways and GRABS for her.

HENRI

I got 'er, Bogg!

JOAN

jumps back, SLASHES clumsily at

HENRI

who howls in pain as one of her wild blows cuts open his leg. He falls, bleeding from the gash.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

HENRI
 (in disbelief)
 The bitch! She cut me! Kill the
 boy, Bogg, kill 'em both!

BOGG

stands over the boy, who is now fully awake and wide-eyed with terror. Bogg arches his sword for a death blow --

JOAN

THROWS herself at Bogg -- gets tangled in her skirts again and FALLS FORWARD, sword first --

IMPALING BOGG on the end of her blade.

BOGG

pulls himself off the blade -- looks down at the mortal wound in shock. He COLLAPSES to the ground DEAD.

HENRI

looks at Joan with terror. He frantically drags himself away, pushing with his good leg.

HENRI
 MURDER! HELP! MURDER!

Joan stares down at Bogg's body, then at her bloody sword. The boy jumps up.

BOY
 Come on!

Joan cannot tear her eyes away from the man she has killed.

JOAN
 (whispering, to Bogg)
 Why didn't you leave him be?

The boy grabs her by the the arm and JERKS her after him.

BOY
 We have to go NOW!

Joan snaps out of her trance. She runs after him. Henri's cry's recede in the distance behind them:

HENRI
 HELP! MURDER! HELP!

EXT. BARRACKS - NIGHT

The training grounds of the Army division at Vaucoleurs.
The boy pulls Joan behind him into a dark stone building.

INT. ARMORY - NIGHT

The boy strikes a light. Joan looks around her --

-- WEAPONS of every kind and description are stacked against the walls, hung on the shelves, piled on the floor: swords, maces, crossbows, longbows. They gleam in the dim light.

JOAN

Where are we?

BOY

The armory, in the barracks of the army regiment. I come in here at night. I like it here.

He carefully replaces his sword in a rack.

BOY

I -- borrow -- sometimes, but only so I won't have to go out unarmed.

JOAN

My name is Joan.

The boy makes an awkward attempt at a gallant bow.

BOY

Jean de Metz, my lady, page to the great knight Sir Coulengy. I am man of chivalry who defends the weak and champions the downtrodden.

Joan gives him a skeptical look.

JEAN DE METZ

(defensive re: the thugs)
They took me by surprise. Had it been daylight, they'd be dead men.

(sudden realization)

Thank you -- if you hadn't --

Joan cuts him off abruptly.

JOAN

It was an accident.

She glances down at her dress. Bogg's BLOOD is smeared in a huge stain across the skirt and bodice.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

JOAN

It was this damned dress.

In a sudden FURY Joan RIPS the skirt off her body, then the heavy petticoats, then tears off blood-stained bodice. She stands in her thin cotton chemise, the heap of ripped clothing at her feet. De Metz looks away, embarrassed.

JEAN DE METZ

You -- should put that back on.

He sneaks a glance at Joan, standing among the weapons in the flickering light, almost naked. She is fiercely beautiful.

JOAN

I'll never wear that thing again.
I killed a man because of it.

De Metz stares at the pile of clothes, nervously concentrating on not looking at her.

JEAN DE METZ

It wasn't your fault. No one could
fight with all that stuff on.

Joan looks suddenly thoughtful.

JOAN

Can I borrow some clothes?

CUT TO:

INT. ARMORY - NIGHT (LATER)

Joan now wears the clothes of a PAGE: tunic, breeches, boots. She struggles to belt her sword around the unfamiliar clothes.

JEAN DE METZ

I'm not sure this is a good idea --
(notices her struggle
with the sword)
No, no, not like that.

De Metz shows her how to belt her sword around her waist. As he puts his arms around her he suddenly realizes how close they are, and FLUSHES deep red.

He belts the sword on her. He hastily steps back to survey the outfit, pleased -- then CATCHES himself.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

JEAN DE METZ
 What am I doing? You can't go
 around dressed like that. It's
 ridiculous. You look like --

JOAN
 (challenging)
 Like what?

JEAN DE METZ
 Like a boy! Cut your hair and you
 could pass for a page!

Joan's hand goes to the long braid at her back.

CUT TO:

Joan, HAIR SHORN, sword belted at her side. She LUNGES,
 trying out the new clothes, which don't tangle or trip her.
 De Metz cannot help himself; he LAUGHS.

JOAN
 (defensive)
 What?

JEAN DE METZ
 Well -- I mean --
 (indicates her sword arm)
 -- you're doing it all wrong.

JOAN
 Then show me how to do it right.

JEAN DE METZ
 (shocked)
 I can't. It isn't -- seemly -- for
 a girl to fight.

JOAN
 As you say, no one will know I am a
 girl in these clothes.
 (beat)
 And I don't want to be seemly. I
 want to survive.

JEAN DE METZ
 (evading)
 It'll be dawn in a few hours. We
 should get some sleep.

He turns away.

INT. ARMORY - NIGHT (LATER)

Joan sleeps in a bedroll. From a few feet away, de Metz watches her. His eyes linger on her, fascinated, smitten. Unmoving, her eyes still closed, Joan suddenly SPEAKS.

JOAN

Perhaps you cannot teach what you do not know.

She opens her eyes, stares at him with unerring intensity.

JOAN

You fear to teach me.

Startled, de Metz stumbles indignantly over his words.

JEAN DE METZ

I can teach more than you could learn!

JOAN

I have seen no great fighting from you thus far.

Joan regards him, her silence a challenge.

JEAN DE METZ

I will show you what kind of a fighter I am. And we will see what you are made of, as well.

He turns over decisively, his back toward her. Joan smiles to herself and closes her eyes.

MONTAGE SEQUENCE

Showing Joan learning to fight.

AT THE BARRACKS - DAWN

De Metz and Joan perch on a low stone wall, watching as the KNIGHTS go through their MORNING DRILL. No one pays any attention to Joan, who looks like any other page.

De Metz gestures and explains as Joan watches the knights drill -- observing swordwork as they lunge, thrust, parry. He is working hard to impress her with his knowledge.

FIELD OUTSIDE THE CITY WALLS - DAWN

A deserted field outside the city walls. In the misty pre-dawn, Joan practices the swordwork she has watched, clumsily mimicking the movements of the soldiers.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

De Metz watches, stifling LAUGHTER at her ineptitude, stepping up to DEMONSTRATE how it's done with obvious pride.

FIELD OUTSIDE THE CITY WALLS - DAY

Joan hammers a SCARECROW into the dirt to use as a fencing partner. De Metz grins and shakes his head.

FIELD OUTSIDE THE CITY WALLS - DAY

Joan faces off against de Metz. he disarms her easily, showing off. He pats her on the back patronizingly.

FIELD OUTSIDE THE CITY WALLS - EVENING

Night falls on Joan, practicing again with the scarecrow. She has worked up a heavy sweat, her eyes shine with almost fanatical determination. Her arm shakes with exertion.

But she's better.

Watching, de Metz shows surprise at her rapid progress.

IN THE ARMORY - NIGHT

Joan sleeps fitfully, dreaming. Across the room, de Metz rises from his bedroll and slowly approaches her as she tosses and turns. He drops to one knee, searching her face as she DREAMS.

She KICKS her blanket off in the violence of her nightmare, and he quietly COVERS her again, careful not to wake her.

FIELD OUTSIDE THE CITY WALLS - DAY

Rain pounds down on the field. Joan ignores the water coursing down her face and arms as she ATTACKS the scarecrow, fainting, charging, turning.

Joan slips on the wet ground and falls. She lies in the mud for a moment -- then pulls herself up and CHARGES with renewed fury, her movements fluid and strong. She SLICES the scarecrow's arm off, then his leg, then his HEAD.

Joan stands as the rain slices down her body, looking at the ruined scarecrow. She RAISES her sword to the sky.

FIELD OUTSIDE THE CITY WALL - DAWN

Joan fights with de Metz again. Her swordplay is now skilled and fluid. She disarms the startled boy.

Joan pats de Metz on the back, imitating his earlier patronizing gesture.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

He grins back, taking no offence, but cannot hide his amazement. He is a little in awe of her.

END OF MONTAGE

INT. ARMORY - NIGHT

Joan packs her few possessions into a worn shoulder-sack. De Metz walks in with a loaf of bread. Something between them has subtly changed. He still looks at her with all the longing of an adolescent crush, but there is a deference in his manner, as if she were noble. Or holy.

JEAN DE METZ

Tomorrow?

JOAN

I'll leave at first light.

JEAN DE METZ

What will you do when you find him?

Joan looks at him with deadly simplicity.

JOAN

Kill him.

Joan joins him as he sits down and tears the bread in half.

INT. ARMORY - NIGHT (LATER)

Joan dreams, de Metz asleep across the room.

IN JOAN'S DREAM

She is back at her home, looking out over the peaceful farm. The fields are green, the countryside verdant and lush. Joan's father steps through the doorway to join her. She turns to smile at him --

-- and turns back to see RAVERFORD AND HIS MEN standing over them. Raverford's sword SLICES down, stabbing Jacques brutally through the chest. With agonizing slowness, Jacques falls forward onto the ground, his LIFEBLOOD seeping onto the soil around him.

And as his blood touches the ground, every growing thing WITHERS before it -- the farm is PARCHED and STRANGLLED, everything dead and dying in ever-widening circles.

Joan snatches the sword from her father's dead hand and whirls to face Raverford.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

But the man standing over her is no longer the Englishman. LORD TREMOILLE, wrapped in fine robes, stands over her dead father, clutching a bloody cross. He grins widely at Joan.

TREMOILLE

(whispering)
He's coming.

The THUNDEROUS POUNDING OF HOOVES rips the air --

JOAN WAKES

in MID-SCREAM to find de Metz shaking her by the shoulders.

JEAN DE METZ

For God's sake! You'll have the whole regiment on our heads!

JOAN

(utter certainty)
Raverford. He's coming --

CRIES and COMMOTION outside. De Metz jumps up and looks out into the barracks courtyard.

EXT. BARRACKS - NIGHT

A PAGE runs through the barracks, shouting frantically.

PAGE

Arm yourselves! The English are approaching!

IN THE ARMORY

De Metz looks at Joan with a disturbing expression of awe.

JEAN DE METZ

You knew. You knew.

IN THE BARRACKS COURTYARD

Soldiers are scrambling for their horses and weapons. The beefy SIR COULENGY strides out, half-dressed, bellowing.

SIR COULENGY

De Metz! Where are you, miserable little whelp!

IN THE ARMORY

De Metz is jolted from his revelation by the knight's voice.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

JEAN DE METZ

Stay here. You'll be safe.

He darts out into the courtyard. Joan steps out slowly behind him, unnoticed in all the frantic commotion. Across the courtyard she spots

LORD TREMOILLE

looking ridiculous on a prancing white charger, ARGUING loudly with the battle-scarred CAPTAIN FOURAND.

TREMOILLE

You must ride out to stop them! I will not have them anywhere near this city, do you hear me?

CAPTAIN FOURAND

It's madness to go outside the walls!

TREMOILLE

(coldly)
You will do as you are told or I will have your head on a pike and give the job to someone who will.

Their eyes lock for a moment. Captain Fourand bows, acquiescing.

CAPTAIN FOURAND

My liege.

TREMOILLE

(fatherly)
It's for the best, Fourand.

Tremoille turns and rides off, guards and attendants behind.

CAPTAIN FOURAND

Fall in! We'll show these English dogs how real men fight!

The knights are scrambling into a ragged regiment.

CAPTAIN FOURAND

To the gates!

Fourand wheels his horse and CHARGES out of the barracks, the knights and pages streaming behind him.

JOAN

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

has gone very pale. She scans the flood of knights, sees de Metz mounting his little pony to follow Sir Coulengy. Joan runs over to him, grabs the reigns of the horse.

JOAN

You must stay.

SIR COULENGY

looks back to see what's delaying his page.

SIR COULENGY

Get on that horse, you lazy
whoreson!

Coulengy STRIKES de Metz, knocking him to the ground. The boy's face flushes with humiliation. Joan helps him up.

JOAN

Go with him and you ride to your
death.

De Metz stands paralyzed between them -- then turns to Joan.

JEAN DE METZ

RUN!

He darts out into the crowd of horsemen, Joan close on his heels. They vanish into the crowd.

CUT TO:

EXT. OUTSIDE THE CITY WALLS - NIGHT

Raverford and his legion GALLOP like dark phantoms toward the city. The walls rise ahead of them. Raverford smiles a feral, dark smile as his horse pounds through the night.

CUT TO:

EXT. STREETS OF VAUCOLEURS - NIGHT

Joan leads de Metz through the frantic streets. Terrified peasants are running everywhere, women carrying children, tradesmen loading carts.

The army regiment THUNDERS past, pouring down the narrow streets and through THE OPEN GATES to the fields outside the walls. The gates close behind them.

ON THE CITY STREETS

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

De Metz grabs Joan's arm, gasping for breath.

JEAN DE METZ
When you said I would die -- have
you actually -- do you know that?

JOAN
What are you talking about?

Joan pulls de Metz behind her to the base of the wall.

EXT. CITY WALL - NIGHT

The wall that encloses Vaucoleurs stands about 14 feet high. Narrow stone staircases run from the ground up to the BATTLEMENTS, a wide walkway at the top of the wall.

Joan takes the steps two at a time to reach the battlements. De Metz staggers up the stairs after her.

JEAN DE METZ
I'm just saying -- you knew the
English were coming. It's a simple
question --
(beat)
Have you foreseen my death?

Joan turns on de Metz in irritation.

JOAN
It takes no foresight to see that
if you ride outside the city walls
you will be ambushed! I used
common sense, nothing more.

They reach the top of the stairs.

JOAN
No one can see the future.

De Metz looks out over the moonlit battlefield at the English troops approaching the city.

JEAN DE METZ
What is this? A lucky guess?

ON THE FIELD

the French close in on the very small English force. It appears the English are OUTNUMBERED two to one.

ON THE WALL

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

The TOWN WATCHMAN shouts the news to the peasants below:

WATCHMAN

They're almost there.

Joan looks around frantically. Below her, pushing his cart along the street is a RAG PEDDLER, fleeing the city with his wares. Joan bounds down the stairs, past de Metz.

JOAN

I need those!

She grabs an armload of rags. The Peddler blocks her way.

RAG PEDDLER

Those are mine!

Joan GLARES at him fiercely. He jumps back, lets her pass. De Metz grabs an armload of clothes, BOWS to the Peddler.

JEAN DE METZ

Jean de Metz of his Majesty's army,
at your service, kind sir. Don't
worry, we know what we're doing.

ON THE FIELD

The French and English CLASH in the middle of the field!
Swords CLANG as the soldiers begin a furious battle.

ON THE WALL

Joan heaps the rags along the wall, turns to de Metz.

JOAN

Wood! Get some wood!

JEAN DE METZ

Wood. Right.

He heads down the stairs, then turns for a moment.

JEAN DE METZ

What are we doing?

JOAN

Saving ourselves.

ON THE FIELD

The English turn and RUN -- the French pursue them.

WATCHMAN

The English are running!

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

ON THE WALL

A CRY OF VICTORY goes up from the peasants in the street.

De Metz brings armfuls of wood up the stairs. Joan frantically stacks the wood over the rags; at the CHEERS she looks up.

JOAN

Here it comes.

A SUDDEN CLAMOR rises from the field -- coming not from the battle, but from the FORESTED HILLSIDES on both sides. The peasants fall abruptly silent. The wind whistles wildly through the tree branches.

An eerie, determined calm has settled over Joan.

JOAN

(to de Metz)
Get oil, tallow, fat -- whatever
you can find.

He heads down the stairs.

ON THE FIELD

From the cover of the trees

RAVERFORD

emerges overlooking the battle. He raises his sword and SLICES it down through the air.

ENGLISH SOLDIERS pour down the hill behind him, flooding the open space between the French soldiers and the town walls.

THE FRENCH SOLDIERS

are SURROUNDED, cut off from the town.

THE ENGLISH SWORDS

FLASH in the moonlight, then come up dripping with blood.

ON THE WALL

Joan and de Metz splash oil on the rags. SCREAMS mingle with English VICTORY CRIES as the French are massacred. De Metz pauses to look at the carnage below.

JEAN DE METZ

Mary mother of God.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

He crosses himself, looks at Joan almost with worship.

JEAN DE METZ
(under his breath)
Thank you.

ON THE FIELD

the battle is over quickly, the dead and wounded French soldiers littering the ground.

RAVERFORD
TAKE THE CITY!

Like a swarm of insects, the English surge toward the city.

THE STREETS BELOW THE WALL

are in utter panic as the peasants try to hide or flee.

ON THE WALL

Joan and de Metz scramble among the rags and wood, drenching them with oil. They ignore the frenzy below them.

ON THE FIELD

Raverford and his men reach the base of the wall, position SIEGE LADDERS and start CLIMBING.

ON THE WALL

Joan grabs an alcove TORCH, runs back to the edge of the wall. She looks down at the English soldiers scrambling up their ladders, and holds her torch aloft.

JOAN
James Raverford!

ON THE FIELD

Raverford and Glaston look up.

RAVERFORD
What is that?

GLASTON
It's some idiot page.

ON THE WALL

Joan waves the torch at the soldiers.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

JOAN

France is our home -- and we will
not give her up!

She PLUNGES the torch into a pile of rags and tinder, which BURSTS into flame. Joan and de Metz run the length of the wall, igniting the oil-soaked rags.

JEAN DE METZ

Eat fire, English scum!

Within seconds, the top of the battlement is a WALL OF FLAMES, fanned by the gusting autumn winds.

THE KNIGHTS

slap desperately at the flames as the wooden ladders CATCH FIRE. Several knights top the ladders and THROW themselves through the flames, emerging on the other side, where

JOAN

waits, sword drawn, eyes reflecting fire. She HACKS down the first knight to cross the flames.

DE METZ

draws his sword and hurries to her side to join the fray.

JOAN

dodges as a knight SLASHES at her. His blade catches her shirt, slitting it open to her stomach --

-- revealing the unmistakable swell of CLEAVAGE beneath.
The knight FREEZES with shock.

ON THE FIELD

Raverford stares up at the fighting figure lit by the flames, clearly female.

RAVERFORD

My God. That's no page. That's
a girl.

A shudder of disbelief RIPPLES through the ranks of the English as they realize Joan is female.

ON THE STREETS BELOW THE WALL

The townspeople have ceased their frantic milling and are slowly gathering on the street to look up in amazement at

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

JOAN

facing the still-frozen knight. Taking the opening, Joan KICKS him, sending him flying over the wall to the field below.

She continues fighting, STABBING and SLICING the oncoming knights, silhouetted by the flames like a wild demon. Her passion makes her seem more than human.

EXT. BATTLEFIELD - NIGHT

The English troops are in a complete panic.

SOLDIERS

jump from the flaming ladders to the ground, to escape the fiery inferno of the wall.

THE KICKED KNIGHT

comes SAILING over the wall, trailing fire. He lands with a THUD among the soldiers, his neck broken. The soldiers look at the dead man with open terror.

KNIGHT #1

The French have harnessed the
devil's wife! She'll kill us all!

Fear distorting their faces, the men turn from the wall and RUN raggedly for the shelter of the trees.

Raverford shouts after them with growing fury.

RAVERFORD

She's no devil! COME BACK HERE!

His men STAMPEDE for the forest, ignoring him.

Raverford stands on the deserted field, the dead knight at his feet. He KICKS the body savagely, then SHOUTS to the battlements:

RAVERFORD

I will return, little whore!

He mounts his horse and GALLOPS after the retreating men.

CUT TO:

EXT. FOREST CLEARING - NIGHT (LATER)

The English troops are straggling back to their camp, gathering fearfully around a meager fire. Raverford's voice can be heard SHOUTING from his tent.

INT. RAVERFORD'S TENT - NIGHT

Glaston suffers through Raverford's tirade.

RAVERFORD

We are going back and we are going to crush that miserable little town and the whore who hides in it!

GLASTON

The men won't go, sir. They think she's a witch.

(beat)

What if she is a witch?

RAVERFORD

Glaston, you are an utter fool. She's just a woman who's good with a sword!

GLASTON

Women can't fight, sir. Everyone knows that.

RAVERFORD

Anyone can fight! Except, apparently, my men when faced with a female!

The tent flap opens to admit a travel-muddied Knight, SIR SUTCLIFF. He is a robust man, grinning as if at some very funny joke.

RAVERFORD

Sutcliff! What are you doing here?

SUTCLIFF

I could ask the same. I expected to find you in the city walls, not skulking about in the forest.

(sniggers)

And your men are going on about some kind of sword-wielding wench.

(starts laughing)

You can't seriously mean to tell me you were driven back by a woman?

Raverford flinches but keeps his temper.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

RAVERFORD

A temporary setback. I will attack again tomorrow.

Sutcliff wipes his eyes, sobers.

SUTCLIFF

I'm afraid not. I've brought orders from General Talbot. You're to join the rest at the siege of Orleans.

He hands Raverford a sealed parchment.

RAVERFORD

This is impossible. I must attack tomorrow -- I cannot allow such an affront to myself, to England --

SUTCLIFF

(shrugs)

It's your neck will stretch if you disobey Talbot. Come, Raverford. She has made you a laughingstock, and cost you this city. Do not let her cost you your life as well.

Raverford crumples the letter in his hand. He strides to the tent flap, throws it open, shouts out to the men:

RAVERFORD

We ride for Orleans in the morning!

CUT TO:

EXT. CITY STREETS - NIGHT

Joan strides down the streets, de Metz at her side. A CROWD of jubilant peasants dances behind them as they approach

TREMOILLE'S MANSION.

INT. AUDIENCE CHAMBER - NIGHT

Tremoille sits in his ornate chair, flanked by TERRIFIED NOBLES and a pompous BISHOP. A NERVOUS HERALD stands in front of them. Tremoille himself looks relaxed.

JOAN AND DE METZ

burst through the doors, the peasants behind. The herald speaks, tripping over his words in his haste.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

HERALD

Hold, English knights! The noble
Lord Tremoille surrenders. The
Dauphin will pay a high ransom for
Lord Tremoille and his retinue --

TREMOILLE

(to herald)
Shut up! It's not them.

De Metz drops on one knee before Tremoille.

JEAN DE METZ

My lord. This woman drove the
English back. The city is saved!

Joan drops on one knee as well.

JOAN

I come to ask a boon of my liege,
in return for my service. I humbly
ask for a horse and equipage for a
journey to the Dauphin, in Chinon.

She looks up, her eyes as defiant as her tone is humble.

JOAN

From him will I request men, to
pursue the Englishman Raverford
myself.

Tremoille snorts a pinch of snuff. He stands, his face
working with emotion -- which resolves into anger.

TREMOILLE

How dare you? Guards! Arrest
this--

He looks pointedly at Joan's male clothing.

TREMOILLE

-- whatever this is! Take her away
to the dungeon and out of my sight!

The peasants fall instantly SILENT.

JOAN

draws her sword, still bloodstained from the battle --

DE METZ

scrambles to his feet to defend her, but

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

THE GUARDS

KNOCK him aside in their headlong CHARGE at her. Swords CLASH as a furious fight begins.

De Metz runs to Tremoille.

JEAN DE METZ
Are you mad? She saved us all!

TREMOILLE
I am the lord of this city and I say she shall be taken away to the dungeon and left there to rot!

De Metz draws his own sword and whips around, but

THE PEASANTS

are already surging forward, ANGER swelling in their ranks. Tremoille suddenly realizes his men are vastly outnumbered by these ragged masses. He motions to the Bishop. The Bishop steps forward, and the peasants fall back.

BISHOP
(shouting)
My children, your liege lord does this for your own protection. This creature is dangerous!

Metal CLANGS loudly on metal as Joan blocks with deft skill. She does indeed look a little scary.

BISHOP
No woman can fight off an entire regiment of soldiers on her own -- without the help of the Dark One.

De Metz jumps in front of the Bishop.

JEAN DE METZ
Or of God! She has the Sight -- I am witness, she told me the English were coming. It was God who gave her the strength to save us. God speaks to her in dreams, and I have seen it!

BISHOP
Blasphemy!

JEAN DE METZ
IT IS THE TRUTH!

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

The guards DROP their swords and back away from Joan. She stands panting, trying to catch her breath.

JOAN

(to de Metz)

What -- ?

But it's too late. The peasants SURROUND Joan and lift her onto their shoulders, YELLING joyously, drowning out her voice. Some fall on their knees in prayer.

Tremoille looks at Joan with poisonous fury.

CUT TO:

INT. DUNGEON - NIGHT

Giles pauses as Father Michael leans forward excitedly.

FATHER MICHAEL

She had no visions from God -- no divine voices told her to save the city!

GILES

I don't doubt that de Metz believed what he was saying. He was the believing kind.

FATHER MICHAEL

But you admit it was all a sham!
She was an ordinary common woman --

GILES

Ordinary? That is your fondest wish, isn't it, Father? That she should be ordinary. You and I are ordinary, Father -- living our tiny lives in fear and muffled pain. You call yourself a man of God but your soul is twisted and shriveled. You cross yourself and confess to another bent and soulless man in the dark, and think that God will forget the screams, the blood, the spattered flesh and torn bone that you sanction in His name. You belong to the Devil, and he keeps you in comfort, like a weak and whining mistress.

(beat)

You are ordinary, Father. She was all that you are not.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

FATHER MICHAEL

(hoarsely)

You are the voice of Satan himself.

GILES

And that is the profound tragedy of your young life. You know that I am not.

Giles LAUGHS, a wretched, haunting sound.

Father Michael turns and BANGS on the door. It opens, and he RUNS out. Giles' laughter fades darkly behind him.

INT. DUNGEON CORRIDOR - NIGHT

Gasping, Father Michael stumbles down the corridor. A sudden PIERCING SCREAM cuts the dank air. A WOMAN'S VOICE cries out, horrified, hysterical --

WOMAN'S VOICE

In the name of God, sir, NO!

He follows the voice to a cell door. From inside, the sound of MUFFLED SCREAMS. He looks into the cell --

-- where three GUARDS are holding down a YOUNG WOMAN as the fourth STRIKES her and hitches up her skirt.

Father Michael pushes open the door, rushes inside and PULLS the guard off, throwing him to the floor.

FATHER MICHAEL

STOP!

GUARD

But she's a confessed witch -- just a dirty whore to the devil --

FATHER MICHAEL

All of you GET OUT!

They get out.

Father Michael tries to help the woman up, but she jerks away from his touch. She wedges herself into the corner of her cell, blood trickling slowly from her mouth.

WOMAN

They're hanging me in the morning. Why won't they let me sleep...

Father Michael sits on the stone floor, head in his hands.

INT. GILES' CELL - MORNING

Father Michael enters Giles' cell. Giles looks up, smiles.

GILES
You're late. Busy morning?

FATHER MICHAEL
I had last rites to administer.

GILES
No rest for the wicked. Now where
were we -- ah, the victory at
Vaucoleurs.

He continues speaking as we

DISSOLVE TO:

EXT. TOWN SQUARE - DAY

The peasants crowd in the square, throwing COINS into a
steadily growing pile.

GILES (V.O.)
The common people pooled all they
could spare --

A farmer puts a squawking CHICKEN on the pile.

GILES (V.O.)
-- to buy horses for Joan and de
Metz.

INT. SMITHY - DAY

A brawny BLACKSMITH forges plain, sturdy armor.

GILES (V.O.)
With what was left they bought her
armor, not the finery of noble
knights but strong, hardy stuff,
much like she was herself.

EXT. ROAD OUT OF VAUCOLEURS - DAY

GILES (V.O.)
Then Joan and de Metz set out to
see the Dauphin.

Joan and de Metz set off down the road, a crowd of peasants
waving and shouting as they ride away.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

GILES (V.O.)

But in that week, Tremoille had already reached Chinon. Joan had thwarted him once -- and he was determined she should not again.

EXT. CAMPSITE - NIGHT

Joan and de Metz are camped for the night. Joan DREAMS.

IN JOAN'S DREAM

Joan wanders through the blasted, grey landscape of her earlier dream, clothed in her sturdy red peasant dress. At her feet, her FATHER'S BLOOD flows in rivulets across the land, which withers before it.

She follows the blood, stepping lightly across the wasted grass, through a thicket of twisted, leafless trees --

-- and into a clearing where an island of LUSH SILVER-GREEN BIRCH TREES rises from the brown. Joan steps up to the trees, pushes them aside to glimpse a

STONE BUILDING

behind the trees. But even as she reaches out to touch the walls, GREY, DEAD FOLIAGE springs from the ground, strangling the stone building, hiding it from view.

AN OLD MAN steps forward from within the thicket of twisted foliage. His face is draped in shadow.

OLD MAN

Fire is a destiny.

JOAN WAKES

and sits up, gasping for breath, panicked. Across the coaling fire de Metz stares at her with that same awe-struck gaze. Joan calms herself.

JOAN

Stop -- stop looking at me with that ridiculous expression. It's nothing but a dream, such as any man may have.

JEAN DE METZ

Your dreams are not like other men's.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

JOAN

Your quick thought saved me from Tremoille's dungeon, and I thank you for it --

JEAN DE METZ

It was not quickness. It was the truth.

JOAN

-- but do not fall prey to your own invention, de Metz. If I cannot wield a sword without being called devil or prophetess, then I will take prophetess, and my freedom. But I am no more angel than you.

JEAN DE METZ

(adamant)

But you saved the city.

Joan stands angrily and pokes the coals, piling on wood to build the flames.

JOAN

My father once bade me have no fear, for he would protect me. If not him, my brother, or someday a husband. He did not mean to lie.

(beat)

I protected myself. I saved myself. There is no mystery to that, no magic, no prophecy!

De Metz stares into the fire, but he is not convinced.

EXT. CITY OF CHINON - MORNING

Dew lays heavy and icy on the ground as Joan and de Metz gallop toward the stone walls of CHINON. The city rises above her walls in decaying magnificence.

EXT. GATES OF CHINON - DAY

Joan and de Metz ride toward the gates. At their approach, the gates are suddenly thrown open, revealing:

A THRONG OF EXCITED PEASANTS

massed around the entrance to the city. The cry goes up among the peasants like a mantra --

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

PEASANTS

Joan of Domremy! Joan D'Arc!

The peasants SURGE forward, touching the hem of Joan's cape, kissing her feet. Some kneel by the side of the road.

PEASANTS

Savior of Vaucoleurs!

INT. PALACE AT CHINON - DAY

From a window high in the palace walls, two men look down at the scene below.

ARCHBISHOP REGNAULT DE CHARTRES is a skeletal, pinched man whose rich red robes hang on him loosely. De Chartres turns from the window, his robes a dry whisper on the stone.

DE CHARTRES

We may have a problem.

The second man leans forward into the light -- Tremoille.

TREMOILLE

Word of her has spread faster than we expected, but I've prepared. Let us hope she was shriven before she entered these walls, for today she goes to meet God.

The door opens soundlessly behind them and the young

GILES DE RAIS

enters the room. This is Giles at 36, young and vibrant but somehow blunted. He has the air of a man who has lost the ability to feel due to some pain too great to be borne. His eyes are stony.

Tremoille holds out his hand to be kissed.

TREMOILLE

De Rais.

Giles bows fractionally, doesn't speak, and ignores the hand. He is beyond caring about rank.

TREMOILLE

She's here.

CUT TO:

INT. DUNGEON - NIGHT

Giles pauses, looking at the rapt face of Father Michael.

GILES

At that time I was the favorite
assassin of the royal set.

FATHER MICHAEL

Assassin? You were a knight.

GILES

In name only. When I joined the
Royal army, I thought I would be
fighting for the French people.

Giles looks at his chained hands like they are foreign
objects.

GILES

We fought, all right -- to preserve
the riches of whomever was in the
Dauphin's favor. The nobility
worried at France like wolves
ripping apart a dying animal,
killing French and English alike.
A man learned quickly that he must
kill or die, and I chose to kill.
Became, indeed, quite adept at it.

(beat)

I feared nothing, hoped for
nothing, cared for nothing. There
was too much blood on my hands.
But you know about that, don't you?

Father Michael looks down at his own smooth white hands.

CUT TO:

EXT. STREETS OF CHINON - DAY

The streets of Chinon are even more squalid than Vaucoleurs.
The city is packed to bursting with peasants, merchants,
soldiers, and the parasitic hangers-on of the royal court.

Joan and de Metz are besieged on all sides by worshipful
peasants. An OLD WOMAN holds a baby up to Joan.

OLD WOMAN

Give him your blessing -- please --

Joan gently pushes the proffered child back to her.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

JOAN

I have no powers to bless, old
mother.

But the old woman is already dancing off into the crowd.

OLD WOMAN

My grandson has been touched by the
handmaid of God!

Joan looks to de Metz.

JOAN

This is getting out of hand.

INT. DAUPHIN'S AUDIENCE CHAMBER - DAY

The opulent chambers of the Dauphin clash garishly with the crumbling castle that houses them. Decay peeks out behind the resplendent tapestries and ornate furniture. At the far end of the chamber sits the

DAUPHIN CHARLES VII OF FRANCE

a weak-chinned, sallow, knock-kneed man in his mid-twenties with eyes that bulge slightly from their sockets. Charles avidly plays dice with an OBSEQUIOUS COURTIER.

Tremoille, de Chartres and the royal COURT pack the room, whispering in anticipation. Charles ignores them, engrossed in his dice. From the back of the room Giles watches the proceedings in cynical silence.

The doors swing open and a herald announces:

HERALD

Your Majesty, Joan d'Arc of Domremy
and Jean de Metz.

Charles looks up from his game as Joan and de Metz enter.

CHARLES VII

Ah, the prophetess! I rolled two
sevens. Is that good luck, or do
they cancel each other out?

Joan and de Metz trade confused glances.

JOAN

Your Majesty. I have come to
request troops of you.

(MORE)

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

JOAN (cont'd)

Give me men to lead and I will
destroy the English general
Raverford in your name, and the
name of France.

CHARLES VII

They say God speaks to you in
fantastical dreams -- tell me about
them. I love dreams, especially
with bright colors.

JOAN

I am not here to discuss my dreams.

CHARLES VII

Ah, but we are most interested,
especially the good Archbishop de
Chartres. He makes a study of holy
mystics, don't you?

The Archbishop steps forward.

DE CHARTRES

It is a humble interest, Majesty.

He turns to Joan.

DE CHARTRES

But so many who claim to be
prophets are in the devil's employ.
As I'm sure you know, my dear, the
Bible tells us it is a sin -- and a
sign of witchery -- for a woman to
wear the clothing of a man.

JOAN

Have you ever tried to fight in a
dress?

De Chartres is taken aback at her common-sense question.

JOAN

I thought not.

She turns back to the Dauphin, ignoring him. De Chartres
scrambles to step between them.

DE CHARTRES

Survivors of Domremy say that Joan
d'Arc was burned with the rest of
the dead. I find this...
suspicious.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

JOAN
(exasperated)
Do you think God raised me from the
dead, Archbishop?

Several courtiers GASP at Joan's effrontery.

DE CHARTRES
You mock our Savior!

JOAN
Indeed not. I mock you.

Charles LAUGHS into the tense silence. Giles smiles.

CHARLES VII
I don't think she's afraid of you,
de Chartres. How refreshing.
(to Joan)
Even or odd?

JOAN
What?

Charles picks up the dice, shaking them.

CHARLES VII
Even or odd. Numbers.

JOAN
Odd.

CHARLES VII
Of course.

He throws the dice, looks at them.

CHARLES VII
Impressive. God helps you at dice
as well. You shall have your men.

Distressed, Tremoille steps forward.

TREMOILLE
Sire, the duel.

Charles claps his hands like an excited child.

CHARLES VII
Oh, yes! I almost forgot.

JOAN
Duel?

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

DE CHARTRES

A little test, my child. If you are a soldier of God, as you claim, He will grant you victory.

JOAN

If I win, I shall be given men?

CHARLES VII

Yes, yes. After the duel.

JOAN

Who shall I fight?

Giles steps out from the crowd, looking implacably strong. Joan meets his gaze without flinching.

CUT TO:

EXT. TOWN SQUARE - DAY

The town square is crammed with peasants craning for a look at Joan. A sense of manic festivity hangs in the air, as the Dauphin and his court file into their raised seats.

DE METZ

helps Joan with her armor, watching Giles across the square.

JEAN DE METZ

This is insane. He's almost twice your size.

JOAN

Don't assume that's an advantage.

De Metz holds up her helmet, but she waves it away.

JOAN

I want to see his eyes.

GILES

watching Joan, puts his own helmet aside.

JOAN AND GILES

approach the Dauphin on his dais, then bow.

ARCHBISHOP DE CHARTRES

makes a great show of BLESSING Giles and his sword.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

DE CHARTRÈS
Witness the appointed servant of
God! God will grant life to the
virtuous!

JEAN DE METZ
What does he mean, "grant life"?

TREMOILLE
This duel is to the death, my boy.

Joan freezes, lowers her sword.

JOAN
I don't even know this man. He's
done me no wrong.

DE CHARTRES
Do you default, then?

All eyes are on Joan as she turns to Giles.

JOAN
(to Giles)
Have you nothing to say?

GILES
I shall kill you regardless.

THE NOBLES

watch her, avid as vultures around a dying animal.

THE PEASANTS

faces weathered and rugged, look to her with wordless hope.

JOAN
(to Giles)
Suit yourself.

She raises her sword --

JOAN AND GILES

CHARGE, CRASHING together with the ring of steel on steel.

GILES

swings heavily, a crushing blow meant to end the fight.

JOAN

sidesteps deftly, countering his raw strength with agility.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

GILES

STUMBLES, pulled off balance by the force of his own swing.

JOAN

SWINGS from the side, aiming for his unprotected head. But at the last moment she shifts her aim and deals him a stinging BLOW to the shoulder, denting metal with her force.

JOAN

I don't want to kill you.

GILES

That's your problem.

IN A TREE ABOVE

several YOUNG PEASANT BOYS have climbed into the branches to watch the fight below; their eyes are riveted on Joan.

JOAN

feints left, dodges right, and again Giles' heavy blow WHISTLES through empty air, barely missing her.

GILES

throws his foot out, catching her in the leg --

JOAN

falls to the ground, but ROLLS and comes up sword first, the tree trunk at her back.

JOAN

I require more reason than a king's amusement to kill a man!

GILES

lunges, sword slicing,

JOAN

ducks -- and Giles' sword SLICES into the tree trunk with a THUNK. The tree SHAKES with the impact -- just as

A 5-YEAR-OLD PEASANT BOY

LEANS OUT from the branches overhead, craning for a better look. He loses his balance and FALLS from the branches --

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

GILES

looks up for one amazed second before the boy CRASHES into him and they go sprawling into a tangled heap. In a flash Giles has jumped up -- but

JOAN

stands between him and his sword, still stuck in the tree. Courtiers GIGGLE and WHISPER, leaning forward for the kill.

Joan stands before the unarmed Giles, motionless.

GILES

seeing her hesitation, GRABS the boy and puts his arm around his neck in a tight vise.

The peasants seem to draw their breath as one. The air stretches tight and still.

GILES

My sword.

He gestures to his sword, still stuck in the tree trunk. Joan drops the tip of her blade, looks at Giles with death in her eyes.

JOAN

Let him go.

GILES

Give me --

Joan is shaking with fury.

JOAN

HE'S A CHILD!

Giles STARTS, as if awaking from a dream. He looks down at the little peasant boy, who quakes with terror.

CLOSE ON THE BOY'S HAND

tiny, grubby, BLOODIED from the fall, clutching the cold STEEL of Giles' armored arm.

Giles PUSHES the boy away as if his touch burned him. The boy SCRAMBLES out into the crowd.

GILES

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

shows emotion for the first time, his face betraying dawning horror as he realizes how close he has come to losing his soul.

JOAN

turns to the tree, YANKS Giles' sword from the trunk and tosses it to him. It CLATTERS to his feet.

GILES

I didn't mean -- I almost --

Giles looks down at the blade, then up at Joan -- then sinks to his knees.

TREMOILLE

Idiot, what are you doing? Get up!

DE CHARTRES

Witchery! Your Majesty --

CHARLES VII

(irritably)

Shut up, both of you. This is interesting.

GILES

ignores everything, his eyes only on Joan. He bows his head; pitches his voice low, for her ears only.

GILES

(whispers)

Kill me.

JOAN

I will not.

With a ROAR Giles jumps up, grabs his sword and ATTACKS -- HACKING, SLICING, his blade a blur of motion as he SLAMS his sword against hers again and again.

But with uncanny accuracy, he never hits Joan herself.

Giles SWINGS one last time; then gives her a clear opening, dropping his sword arm at his side.

JOAN

dazed by the onslaught, almost strikes -- but doesn't.

JOAN

Do you yield?

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

Giles stares at her in frustration, throwing his arms wide and exposing his entire body to attack.

GILES

Just kill me!

Joan looks at him angrily. She drops her sword and SLUGS him across the jaw with her armor-covered fist. He COLLAPSES with a resounding CLANKING of armor.

JOAN

He yields. I win.

UNEASY SILENCE as the nobles regard Joan uncertainly. CLAPPING rings out in the silence -- all eyes swerve to

CHARLES

as he applauds merrily. Taking the cue, the courtiers begin clapping politely, and the peasants start to CHEER.

CHARLES VII

It appears God favors you, Joan d'Arc. You shall have your men.

He shrugs.

CHARLES VII

You did win the throw.

CUT TO:

INT. TAVERN - NIGHT

The common tavern bustles with peasants celebrating Joan's victory with raucous drinking and song. At the door --

JOAN

disguised in her page's garb, enters cautiously with de Metz, similarly attired. No one gives them a second glance. They sit at a crowded table where several PEASANTS are comparing stories about Joan.

PEASANT #1

I heard she knocked down that killer de Rais with one stroke -- him a knight and her a farm girl!

PEASANT #2

It's God gives her the strength. She's strong as five men.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

PEASANT #1

Ten!

Joan gives de Metz a disturbed look. He grins and shrugs.

JEAN DE METZ

(low, to Joan)
What harm in a little good
story-telling?

JOAN

Much, if it is false.

The peasant men are warming to their subject.

PEASANT #2

-- and she called down the fire of
God, they say the walls burst
into flame at her prayer!

PEASANT #1

She killed thirty men on that
wall single-handed!

JOAN

(interrupting)
Surely, more like three.

The men look at her in irritation.

PEASANT #1

My brother's wife was there! Where
were you, boy?

JEAN DE METZ

Well, actually --

Joan KICKS him under the table. He GRUNTS in pain.

PEASANT #2

I heard she killed forty on that
wall!

The men SHOUT in assent.

PEASANTS

Aye! Forty!

CUT TO:

EXT. TAVERN - NIGHT

Joan stalks outside, followed by a limping de Metz.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

JEAN DE METZ

You didn't have to kick me.

JOAN

I'd no desire to spend my dinner
kissing babies and blessing the
sick.

(disgusted)

"Forty men" indeed!

JEAN DE METZ

(softly)

Men should be allowed their heroes.

She doesn't answer, striding away without a backward glance.

JEAN DE METZ

(shouting after her)

We'll be wanting some hero-worship
tomorrow, I'll warrant!

EXT. GARRISON AT CHINON - MORNING

A troop of TWENTY KNIGHTS is lined up in the garrison. They
MUTTER restlessly among themselves, angry and disgusted.

JOAN AND DE METZ

come galloping into the garrison. The knights immediately
fall silent, watching Joan's approach skeptically. These
knights look dangerous, ruthless; their armor is rusted and
war-worn, their faces weathered and battle-scarred. They
glare at Joan, openly hostile.

Joan rides up the line, then down it, meeting each man's
derisive gaze. She halts her horse.

JOAN

We ride for Orleans. Fall in.

A SNIGGER. The knights do not move. The air prickles with
tension, broken by a sudden POUNDING of hooves behind Joan.

All eyes turn to the garrison gates, as

GILES

gallops in, a hastily packed bag slung over his back. He
comes to a halt, slides off his horse and goes down on one
knee before Joan. She dismounts and raises him up from the
ground.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

JOAN

I am no noblewoman, to be bowed to.
Stand before me, if you will speak.

Giles draws his sword, kisses it and offers it hilt first to Joan. A ripple of disbelief goes through the knights.

GILES

I beg you to accept my service.

JOAN

I accept, Sir Giles de Rais.

(low)

But we may not be going anywhere.

Giles turns to look at the recalcitrant knights.

GILES

I see Tremoille gave you the finest
men he could spare.

(to knights)

Gentlemen, you know me, and you
know I am not a patient man. Fall
in.

The knights look at each other nervously.

GILES

FALL IN OR ANSWER TO ME!

With much scrambling and clattering of weapons the knights
hastily FALL INTO FORMATION behind Joan.

As they ride out the gates, de Metz rides up to Giles.

JEAN DE METZ

The men seem to respect you.

GILES

(flatly)

They don't respect me. They're
afraid of me.

Giles gallops ahead.

CUT TO:

EXT. CITY OF ORLEANS - DAY

Orleans is a city under siege, battered walls rising over
the banks of the wide Loire river.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

The river is dauntingly wide, spanned by a shattered, burnt-out bridge. The bridge reaches from Orleans to a four-towered fort that rises from the water: THE TOURELLES.

The Tourelles, which have been captured by the English, have a drawbridge which can be lowered to reach the opposite shore. English forces are camped around the city, their tents and equipage forming a ring around the city walls.

EXT. TOWER OF THE TOURELLES - DAY

RAVERFORD AND GLASTON

climb a twisting stone staircase to the top of the tower, where GENERAL TALBOT, commander of the English forces, stands looking across the river at the city. Talbot has the strong, battle-weary face of an honorable fighting man. Behind him stands Sutcliff.

RAVERFORD

Talbot.

TALBOT

Your fat Frenchman did not deliver Vaucoleurs. I gave you a great deal of money to buy his treachery, and you come back empty-handed.

(sighs)

Bribery and deceit. We are too long in this accursed war, so far from home. We have forgotten how to fight like true men.

He gestures across to Orleans.

TALBOT

Our newest grand military conquest is starving helpless peasants.

(laughs bitterly)

And you cannot even defeat a woman.

RAVERFORD

(angrily)

If you had not called me here, she would be dead now. I had the situation in hand.

TALBOT

A French peasant girl chased you away from an undefended city.

(MORE)

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

TALBOT (cont'd)
I don't know what you had in your
hand, Raverford, but it clearly
wasn't the situation.

Sutcliff SNIGGERS in the background. Raverford puts his
hand on his sword, starts for Talbot -- Sutcliff draws his
sword and steps between them.

TALBOT
Careful. Don't compound your
mistakes with yet more stupidity.

The confrontation is interrupted by the arrival of TWO
SOLDIERS dragging a gaunt FRENCH PEASANT behind them. They
toss him at Talbot's feet.

SOLDIER #1
Caught him stealing bread, sir.
Enough to feed five, greedy bugger.

PEASANT MAN
My family is starving!

RAVERFORD
It's a siege. That's the
point.

TALBOT
That's enough --

PEASANT MAN
Don't worry, he'll be punished.
She will be here soon.

RAVERFORD
She's nothing but a peasant
bitch!

The peasant BREAKS away from the soldiers and THROWS himself
at Raverford --

TALBOT
NO!

Raverford grabs the peasant and STABS him in the chest.

RAVERFORD
(hissing)
She will join you soon in hell!

He PUSHES the peasant over the tower's edge.

THE PEASANT

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

plummets into the water -- then surfaces, struggling feebly.

RAVERFORD
(disgusted, to soldiers)
Go finish him off. And save his head!

The soldiers hurry down the stairs.

Talbot turns to Raverford with tight-lipped fury.

TALBOT
You are a disgrace to the field of war. As long as I command this army, we do not kill unarmed peasants!

Talbot looks over the edge of the tower.

BELOW, AT THE ENCAMPMENT

the soldiers crowd around the shore, all attention drawn to the effort to get the peasant from the water.

ON THE TOWER

Talbot continues looking down as he speaks to Raverford.

TALBOT
As things stand, you would be in command should anything happen to me. But I can't trust you.

Raverford glances to Glaston, then walks over to Talbot. Talbot turns to him with smooth, controlled anger.

TALBOT
I don't appreciate you killing my prisoners. Or giving orders to my men.

Raverford and Talbot stand eye-to-eye.

RAVERFORD
It won't happen again.

Raverford whips out his dagger -- and BURIES it in Talbot's chest. Talbot looks at him in amazement as he collapses forward into Raverford's arms.

RAVERFORD
Because they're my men now.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

SUTCLIFF

LUNGES for Raverford -- but

GLASTON

steps in smoothly and SLASHES Sutcliff across the neck. Sutcliff falls to the ground, over Talbot's fallen body.

Raverford quickly puts his dagger in Sutcliff's lifeless hand, then NODS to Glaston, who YELLS to the soldiers below:

GLASTON

Treachery! Murder! The General is betrayed by his own guard!

CUT TO:

EXT. JOAN'S DREAMSCAPE - NIGHT

Again, the grey and desolate landscape. Before her, gliding through the shadows, Joan sees

THE OLD MAN

headed for the COPSE OF GREEN BIRCHES.

JOAN

Wait!

She runs after him, reaching the trees, but the Old Man has VANISHED.

EXT. CAMPSITE - NIGHT

Joan WAKES with a start. De Metz sleeps on one side and Giles on the other, the other men snoring around the fire. Joan stands, walks to the fire, warms her hands and face.

A HAND reaches out to grasp her shoulder from behind --

Joan whirls, whipping a dagger from her belt, and faces Giles, who catches her wrist, stopping the dagger at his stomach.

GILES

If you cannot see your opponent,
never aim for the gut.

He raises her wrist to his neck. There is a strange, challenging tenderness in his action.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

GILES

The neck. Strike to kill.

He lowers his hand, leaving her dagger at his bare throat. Joan does not pull back. Their faces are inches apart. Across the blade, their eyes lock for a long, naked moment.

GILES

You sleep poorly.

Joan drops her eyes, lowers the dagger from his neck.

JOAN

I have dreams.

She turns and sits by the fire.

GILES

So they say. Dreams of God?

JOAN

Will you return to Chinon if I give the wrong answer?

GILES

I have nothing to go back to. There or anywhere.

JOAN

Nor I.

GILES

Is there no betrothed, no farmer's son who awaits your return?

Joan stares into the fire, the FLAMES dancing in her eyes. Suddenly she is very far away.

JOAN

I have no heart for love. Only for vengeance.

(beat, changing subject)

I do not know how I shall lead these men. They follow you, and that only out of fear.

GILES

Because they have had experience with nothing else. To the generals, they are cannon fodder.

(beat)

Give them something to believe in, and you will find them the most loyal men God created.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

JOAN

You have overmuch faith in me.

GILES

Give a lost man faith and he will follow you to the end of the earth. And beyond.

DE METZ

listens to the conversation from his bedroll, staring into the dark with sleepless jealousy.

EXT. ROAD TO ORLEANS - DAY

De Metz slows his horse to drop back by Giles.

JEAN DE METZ

Did you sleep well?

GILES

Yes.

De Metz waits for more response; Giles continues riding.

JEAN DE METZ

Ahem. Well, I had nightmares that kept me thrashing 'til dawn.

Giles raises an eyebrow, but says nothing.

JEAN DE METZ

I dreamt that Joan was attacked -- but not with sword. She was beset by deceitful words of love, from a man who could not see her holiness.

GILES

I see. What did you do?

JEAN DE METZ

I gelded him.

Giles looks at him for a long moment -- then LAUGHS.

GILES

You're either a brave man, or singularly stupid.

He gallops forward, leaving de Metz in his dust.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

JEAN DE METZ

(shouting)
I am not stupid!

He gallops after Giles. They catch up to JOAN, riding at the head of the troop.

JEAN DE METZ

He called me stupid.

Joan ignores their arguing, eyes fixed on something ahead:

A COPSE OF SILVER BIRCHES

Startled, Joan realizes this is the clearing of her dream. Through the trees she glimpses

A STONE CHAPEL

A cross crowns the eaves. The tiny chapel is oddly graceful, built with a powerful simplicity that speaks of a far earlier age. It looks as old as the forest itself.

JEAN DE METZ

(still arguing)
I never killed a man for money.

GILES

I find myself considering killing one for pleasure.

Joan cannot tear her eyes from the chapel as they ride past.

JOAN

(preoccupied)
A moment's peace, can't you! You bicker like a pair of old women.

EXT. ROAD TO ORLEANS - EVENING

The troop rides, horses kicking up dust. Ahead, shimmering in the late afternoon light, the road widens onto

A DESERTED VILLAGE

that has been PLUNDERED and BURNT. The village stretches across the path like a great black gash. Joan pulls her horse to an abrupt halt.

DEAD BODIES are strewn across the charred dirt. HANGING BODIES festoon the trees, motionless in the fetid air. The bodies of PEASANT WOMEN lie draped over the lip of the town well, blood arched across their torn dresses.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

Their legs are pitifully splayed open.

Joan dismounts. ASHES puff around her feet with each step.

THE KNIGHTS

shift restlessly, MUTTERING as they gaze at the carnage.

JOAN

stands by the bodies at the well, unhearing. She reaches out and gently COVERS the exposed breasts of one corpse.

The knights' MUTTERING grows louder, an angry buzz of unrest. Finally KNIGHT #1 turns and SHOUTS to the others.

KNIGHT #1

This is insanity! What are we, twenty men, against the man who ordered this?

He FLINGS out his arm to point to Joan.

KNIGHT #1

We follow a madwoman into the mouth of hell -- and why? So Raverford may have a few more French to kill?

Another KNIGHT turns defiantly to Giles.

KNIGHT #2

I say we go no further. Better to live a deserter than die for a woman's idiocy!

CRIES of approval from the other knights.

GILES

You assume you will live to desert.

Giles reaches for his sword. De Metz moves to stand by him.

JOAN

(sharply)

Giles. No.

Joan turns her gaze to the bodies at the well. She speaks to the knights without looking up, voice hoarse with grief.

JOAN

For what have you fought in the past? Riches, titles, courtiers' intrigues? March with me, and you fight for none of those things.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

She indicates the CORPSES with a SWEEP of her arm.

JOAN

It is for these people, and those like them, that we fight.

(to Knight #1)

You fear to die?

She advances on the stunned knights, voice growing strong.

JOAN

Then go! I release you all!

(beat)

I fear death, but I will not abandon my heart's blood. My home.

Joan stares the knights down, one by one.

JOAN

France is our mother; we are of the same blood, and you are my brothers. I hold your lives as dearly as I hold my own, and will risk no man where I would not risk myself.

(beat)

But I come here ready to risk all, for our Mother France is dying. Her blood soaks the ashes, she cries out in pain.

Many of you are shamed that you must ride with me. But I tell you, a time will come when men will say, did you face the English at Orleans? Were you there when the city was won, and we took our first step toward freedom? And you will hold your heads high to say yes, you were there. In the name of justice, and of France -- our home.

Joan stands before them, unmoving.

With an inscrutable look, Knight #1 reaches for his sword --

Giles and de Metz stand tense, eyes scanning the knights --

Knight #1 draws his blade, DROPS TO ONE KNEE, turns his sword HILT FIRST and offers it to Joan.

KNIGHT #1

(ashamed)

I'll go if you'll have me.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

Knight #2 drops to one knee, and presents his sword.

KNIGHT #2

And I as well.

Like a dam unleashed, the other knights jump down from their horses, DROP TO THEIR KNEES and DRAW THEIR SWORDS.

Joan raises her hands over their bowed heads.

JOAN

I am honored to have you at my side.

Giles looks on in wonder; de Metz smiles at his amazement.

JEAN DE METZ

(to Giles)

She is more than you dream.

EXT. CITY OF ORLEANS - MORNING

Fog has crept in with the dawn, and the air is thick with cold mist. Joan and her men move forward, the mist moving around them like water. There are faint NOISES ahead, jumbled and indistinct.

The noises resolve suddenly into the SHOUTING and the CLASH OF WEAPONS, nearby but still invisible in the heavy fog. They emerge from a dense patch of fog into

THE MIDDLE OF A FURIOUS BATTLE

Joan's horse rears, frightened by the sudden onslaught of sound and motion. Emerging from the mist like a mirage is

THE CITY OF ORLEANS

towering over them beyond the river. In front of Joan, ghostlike in the fog

A MASS OF ENGLISH SOLDIERS

surrounds some 200 FRENCH SOLDIERS who are trapped with the river at their backs.

Joan raises her sword --

JOAN

I am Joan d'Arc -- and this is OUR HOME!

She PLUNGES into the fray.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

A SEA OF STARTLED ENGLISH FACES turn from their fighting to see

JOAN AND HER MEN

galloping out of the fog like apocalyptic horsemen. Joan and her men ATTACK fiercely, swords flying.

THE ENGLISH

scatter. The fog hides the smallness of Joan's band.

THE TRAPPED FRENCH SOLDIERS

suddenly find new strength and ATTACK the English with renewed fervor, YELLING out Joan's name like a warcry:

SOLDIER #1
Joan d'Arc! We
are saved!

SOLDIER #2
In the name of
God -- and Joan!

The English knights SCATTER under the dual onslaught.

THE FRENCH SOLDIERS

BREAK THROUGH the English encirclement with a ROAR of triumph. At their head is a tall, bearded knight, DUNOIS, DUKE OF ORLEANS. He gallops to Joan's side.

DUNOIS
How many have you brought?

JOAN
Twenty.

Dunois looks at her in horror.

DUNOIS
God help us.
(shouts to his men)
Retreat! Fall back!

Dunois GALLOPS through the breach in the English, leading his men toward the forest.

JOAN

scans the battle, looking up at the Tourelles to see

RAVERFORD

peering down at the battle, his face a mask of fury.

CUT TO:

EXT. BATTLEMENTS OF THE TOURELLE - DAY

Raverford watches the melee below with mounting anger.

RAVERFORD

Glaston!

Raverford points to the battle -- JOAN is faint but unmistakable in the mist as she gazes up at the tower.

RAVERFORD

It's her! The whore of France!
Send every man we have onto the
field! Saddle my horse! I want
her dead!

Raverford strides to the stairs, Glaston hurrying behind.

CUT TO:

EXT. BATTLEFIELD - DAY

Joan watches as Raverford disappears from view.

JOAN

(to herself)
You'll be out like a rat who scents
carrion, now you see us running...

She turns to Dunois.

JOAN

(urgent)
We must attack!

Dunois whirls in disbelief.

DUNOIS

Are you mad?

JOAN

Raverford will open the drawbridge.
If we're there we can take the
tower --

SOLDIER #1

We can't attack
the tower!

SOLDIER #2

We'll be
slaughtered like
animals!

JOAN

It will be the last thing he
expects. I tell you, we can
defeat him!

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

DUNOIS

And I tell you -- I will not risk
lives for a woman's insanity!

Joan sees her chance slipping away. She WHIRLS around,
brandishing her sword, SHOUTING to the French troops.

JOAN

Soldiers of France! I am Joan
d'Arc, called the Handmaid of God.
I tell you to TURN AND FIGHT!

The soldiers pause in their flight.

JOAN

Follow me and --

Joan hesitates, at the enormity of her lie.

JOAN

-- God will give us the tower! GOD
HAS SHOWN ME OUR VICTORY!

In the surreal, misty light she looks both inspiring and
terrifying -- an otherworldly creature, an angel of God.

JOAN

wheels her horse and GALLOPS toward the tower, Giles and de
Metz in her wake. With a ROAR the French soldiers SURGE
behind her.

DUNOIS

watches for a stunned moment as all his men follow Joan and
her band toward the tower. He gallops after them.

The English soldiers, abandoned in the middle of their
battle, look at each other in confusion -- then CHARGE after
Joan's men.

EXT. THE TOURELLE - DAY

JOAN AND HER ARMY

thunder up to the base of the tower. They are stopped short
by the RIVER, which flows between them and the tower.

The men pause, confused.

At that moment the drawbridge comes swinging down with a
resounding THUD and

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

RAVERFORD AND HIS MEN

come pounding out -- directly into Joan's waiting troops.

JOAN
VENGEANCE FOR FRANCE!

She CHARGES at the shocked English soldiers. Her soldiers POUR onto the drawbridge after her, shouting battle cries.

JEAN DE METZ
The Handmaid of God leads us to
VICTORY!

RAVERFORD AND HIS MEN

are SWEEPED BACK by the tide of soldiers, forced into the tower.

BEHIND JOAN'S MEN

the English soldiers come rushing up from the battlefield, and start across the drawbridge.

DUNOIS

whirls, shouting to his men:

DUNOIS
Protect the flank!
(shouting into the tower)
Close the drawbridge! Now, now!

INSIDE THE TOWER COURTYARD

De Metz and his men HEAVE on the massive winch -- the huge chains CREAK with strain as the drawbridge starts to lift.

ON THE DRAWBRIDGE

soldiers FALL as the bridge moves beneath them, sending some flying over into the water, leaving others hanging on the edges of the rising drawbridge.

DUNOIS

loses his footing, falls and rolls down into the tower --

THE DRAWBRIDGE SHUTS

behind him, leaving the attacking English outside.

INT. THE TOURELLE GREAT HALL - DAY

The battle rages through the courtyard and into the cavernous lower room of the tower.

JOAN

cuts a swath through the English soldiers, fighting her way across the room to reach

RAVERFORD

where he stands at the base of the stairs.

JOAN

In the name of those you have slaughtered!

She SWINGS at him with all her might. Raverford BLOCKS, surprised by her vehemence.

RAVERFORD

Do you have some sort of personal quarrel with me?

Infuriated, Joan LUNGES at him -- Raverford BACKS up the stairs, blocking and thrusting as he climbs.

ACROSS THE ROOM

De Metz spots Joan and Raverford on the stairs. Giles is surrounded, fending off three attackers at once. De Metz starts fighting his way across the room to the stairs.

ON THE STAIRS

Raverford continues backing up the stairs, holding Joan off.

JOAN

Don't you remember me?

Raverford SLASHES at her, cutting her arm.

RAVERFORD

(urbane)
Have we met?

With a cry of fury Joan CUTS Raverford across the neck, leaving a gash matching the scar on her own neck.

JOAN

Remember that?

Raverford touches his hand to his injured neck in disbelief -- then SCANS the battle in the room below him.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

THE FRENCH

are fighting like fiends, inspired and ruthless.
Raverford's men are clearly LOSING.

RAVERFORD

seeing his men losing, turns and RUNS up the stairway,
quickly vanishing from sight on the twisting stone stairs.

JOAN

Come back here!

Joan dashes up the stairs after him.

DE METZ

sees them vanish up the stairs.

EXT. TOWER BATTLEMENTS - DAY

JOAN

emerges from the stairwell at the top of the tower. Fog
billows through the air; the edges of the battlements seem
to bleed out into the sky.

At the far corner of the battlements

RAVERFORD

is hastily stripping off his armor, and has removed all but
the heavy breastplate. He looks hastily over the tower's
edge, judging the distance to the water.

JOAN

You'll sink like a stone.

Raverford glances at the water, knowing she's right.

RAVERFORD

I am a prisoner of war. I demand
the right of ransom!

JOAN

If you were a naked newborn, I
would still strike you dead!

She LUNGES at him -- they CLASH, sword on sword. Joan cuts
him on the arm, the leg, the chest, drawing blood.

RAVERFORD

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

stumbles from his wounds and slips --

JOAN

WHIPS her blade over his, sending his sword skittering across the stones. She stands over him, her sword poised at his heart.

JOAN

This is my father's sword.

GLASTON (O.S.)

And I would be putting it down.

Joan turns to see

GLASTON

at the top of the stairs, holding de Metz with his sword at his neck just as he held her little brother Peter.

JOAN

turns back to face

RAVERFORD

who is looking from Glaston to Joan as if recalling a distant memory. He stares at her with sudden recognition.

RAVERFORD

The little peasant wench in the red dress! I do remember killing your inconsequential family.

He LAUGHS.

RAVERFORD

Now drop your sword. Or he dies.

JOAN'S

sword quivers as her muscles shake with tension and indecision -- her sword hovers over the heart of the man she hates with all her being.

RAVERFORD

What price your vengeance, little peasant girl? How many Frenchmen will die to pay for it?

(whispering)

Ah, but I understand. We will let nothing stand in our way, we two.

(MORE)

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

RAVERFORD (cont'd)
I am defenseless, unarmed. Kill me
-- as I did your brother.

Joan looks at him in horror. He nods toward de Metz.

RAVERFORD
Of course, the boy will die. But
no price is too high to slake that
thirst. We are alike, are we not,
little one?

De Metz sees her hesitation.

JEAN DE METZ
Don't worry, Joan. God will
protect me in your service!

JOAN

cannot bear the trust on his face. Her sword wavers --

RAVERFORD

GRABS for her arm, but before he can reach her

GILES

LUNGES out from the stairwell, SLICING Glaston's side!

GLASTON

COLLAPSES to the ground in a pool of blood.

GILES
There is a price for the blood of
innocents.

JOAN

turns back to Raverford and CHARGES --

RAVERFORD

whips a dagger from his belt, but not fast enough, as

JOAN

buries her sword in his shoulder, running him through with
such force that the blade emerges from the other side. She
WRENCHES the sword out of his shoulder.

RAVERFORD

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

slides down the wall, leaving a trail of blood. His dagger slips from his fingers.

RAVERFORD

(hissing)

Go ahead. Take your wretched vengeance and be done!

Joan raises her blade over his head -- then brings it down with a resounding CLANG onto the stone wall beside him. The blade BREAKS in two pieces.

JOAN

I will not murder a defenseless man.

Joan SLAMS the pommel into Raverford's stomach. He doubles over, gasping for breath.

JOAN

I will never be like you.

She SLUGS his jaw and Raverford COLLAPSES, unconscious. She runs to de Metz, who stares at the dead body of Glaston.

JEAN DE METZ

(dazed)

I told you it would be all right. God wouldn't let him harm me --

Joan grabs de Metz by the shoulders and SHAKES him fiercely.

JOAN

Damn you, Jean, stop it! It wasn't God! It was Giles and pure blind LUCK that Glaston didn't slit your throat!

De Metz pulls free and backs away, to the edge of the battlements. Joan follows him.

JEAN DE METZ

You said God would give us the tower --

JOAN

I knew Raverford would drop the drawbridge. I lied to get the men to follow me! Do you understand, it was all lies to get to Raverford!

De Metz is stunned, betrayed.

(CONTINUED)

INT. CHAPEL (DREAMSCAPE) - NIGHT

The chapel is simple, a dirt floor strewn with fresh straw and flowers. A bank of candles burns around the altar.

But there is no crucifix here; in its place is an altar holding a stone statue of a WARRIOR GODDESS, bow slung over her shoulder and sword at her side. From behind the altar

THE OLD MAN

rises, in a travel-stained black cloak. For the first time Joan sees him in the light. He is grey-bearded and grave; his face is all angles and strong, graceful bones.

OLD MAN

(gently)
Blood has a price.

He points to the floor at the base of the altar. His hands are torn and covered with dirt.

A SWORD

rises from the earth in front of the altar. The hilt GLEAMS in the candlelight.

OLD MAN

Take it, and choose.

The old man looks at Joan, his face both angry and sad, as he says the last words her father spoke to her.

OLD MAN

Take it...

CUT TO:

EXT. RIVER LOIRE - DAY

JOAN

breaks the silvery surface of the water and takes a violent, shuddering breath, the sound of air in her lungs deafening to her own ears.

GILES

stripped of his armor, is swimming for the shore, dragging Joan behind him with almost superhuman strength.

EXT. SHORE OF RIVER LOIRE - DAY

De Metz helps the exhausted Giles drag Joan onto the shore near the base of the Tourelle. The fighting has stopped; dead and wounded bodies litter the ground. The English have retreated away from the tower.

De Metz wraps her in blankets. She stares straight ahead, as if in shock. Giles gently examines the dagger in her shoulder.

De Metz speaks to her, trying to get a response.

JEAN DE METZ

We took the Tourelles and some shoreline as well -- Joan, we won.

Joan speaks as if in a trance, eyes riveted in front of her.

JOAN

How many dead?

GILES

Twenty-three. Of our troop, four.

JOAN

Dead in my name.

Joan suddenly blinks and stares straight at de Metz.

JOAN

(urgent)
Do you forgive me?

JEAN DE METZ

There is nothing to forgive.

Joan takes the handle of the dagger and PULLS the blade from her body with one violent motion as she STANDS.

JOAN

You're wrong.

Joan weaves, unsteady on her feet -- then COLLAPSES. Giles catches her as she falls. Joan blacks out.

INT. SURGEON'S TENT - DAY

Joan wakes to find Giles at her side, washing out her wound.

JOAN

Blood has a price.

GILES

Yes. Always.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

JOAN

My lies led men to their deaths.

She struggles to get up.

JOAN

I must leave, now. I will have no
more blood on my hands --

Giles catches Joan by the shoulders, holding her down.

GILES

It's too late, Joan.

JOAN

Don't you understand? I'm no
prophet, no savior, nothing!

GILES

(simply)
You saved me.

Joan looks away from the unspoken love in his eyes.

JOAN

Those men think that by following
me, they obey the will of God!

GILES

God is not my concern. I'm
following you.

A long moment as Joan searches his face.

JOAN

That is what frightens me.

He eases her back onto the cot, then carefully continues
washing the blood from her shoulder.

JOAN

Giles -- do you believe -- that
dreams can have meaning?

GILES

I did not, before I met you.

He leans across her, reaching for a cloth -- Joan gazes up
at him as his hands brush her bare skin.

She reaches up and touches her hand to his face, resting it
against his cheek for a long, aching moment. An eternity.

Giles leans forward and KISSES her gently on the forehead.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

GILES

Now, I could believe anything.

He rises to go. As he reaches to open the tent flap, Joan sees his hands -- they are SHAKING. Then he is gone.

EXT. FRENCH CAMP - DAY (LATER)

The French camp hums with activity as the soldiers fortify their new position. No one notices as Joan steals out of her tent, shrouded in a dark cloak. She mounts her horse and swiftly rides out through the camp.

After a few moments Giles emerges to follow silently behind her.

EXT. CHAPEL CLEARING - DAY

Joan bursts into the clearing where the chapel stands, quiet, peaceful. She jumps off her horse and hurries inside.

INT. CHAPEL - DAY

Afternoon sunlight streams through the arched windows, flooding the walls and floors with golden-bright light. The altar stands as in Joan's dream -- but a rough-hew wooden CRUCIFIX now hangs in place of the GODDESS STATUE.

Joan walks slowly up to the altar, eyes on the cross.

JOAN

Every sparrow that falls. They say.

(beat)

Where were you? When he came for Papa and Mama, and Peter? Where?

(sudden anger)

I'm lying. I invoked your name to escape prison, then to get troops -- why don't you strike me down? Go ahead -- I've blasphemed -- strike me down!

She STRIKES the stone altar with her mailed fist.

JOAN

WHERE ARE YOU? ANSWER ME!

Her voice echoes into silence.

She looks down at the base of the altar --

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

FLASH TO JOAN'S DREAM:

as the SWORD rises from the earth at the base of the altar,
up to her waiting hand --

BACK TO SCENE:

Joan drops to her knees, pulls out her dagger and GOUGES at
the dirt in front of the altar.

CUT TO:

EXT. ENGLISH CAMP AT ORLEANS - LATE AFTERNOON

Raverford sits before a roaring fire as a surgeon tends to
his shoulder. He glowers with rage.

A PAGE approaches timidly.

RAVERFORD

What is it!

TREMOILLE (O.S.)

It's me.

Tremoille steps arrogantly up to the fire, takes a pinch of
snuff, SNEEZES.

Raverford JUMPS up, knocking the surgeon aside as he draws
his sword -- which he levels at Tremoille's neck.

RAVERFORD

You -- you pathetic tub of guts!
Your death will lighten my mood
considerably!

Tremoille squeaks with terror.

TREMOILLE

Wait! I have come to offer you
your heart's desire. For a price.

Raverford throws back his head and LAUGHS.

RAVERFORD

You think I'll give you so much as
a shilling after Vaucoleurs?

TREMOILLE

This time I do not offer a city in
some backward valley. I offer you
the heart and soul of France.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

Raverford lowers his sword and regards Tremoille.

TREMOILLE

It matters not to me under what
crown I live, so long as I am rich.
The richer, the better.

RAVERFORD

You fool. Riches are meaningless.
It is the taking of them... ah,
that is the true pleasure in life.
(shrugs)
Once you have them, why -- they are
nothing. But true conquest goes on
forever.

TREMOILLE

(horrified)
You would swallow the world, if you
could.

RAVERFORD

Perhaps I have already begun.

CUT TO:

INT. CHAPEL - SUNSET

Joan has dug a deep hole before the altar. Her dagger
CLANKS against metal, deep in the dirt.

She throws the dagger aside and digs with her bare hands.
Joan pulls a BUNDLE of rotting cloth from the hole and
gingerly unwraps it, the ragged cloth disintegrating in her
hands. Beneath is a cracked SHEATH of braided leather --
holding a SWORD.

The blood-red light of sunset floods over Joan as she grips
the pommel and

DRAWS THE SWORD

from the crumbling sheath. The blade is rusted, dull, and
pocked. The leather falls to dust around it.

As her fingers close around the sword Joan GASPS -- her arms
go rigid, her eyes widen --

AND SHE HAS A VISION.

SMASH CUT TO:

EXT. FOREST - NIGHT

The greybearded OLD MAN runs through a dark forest with a speed and grace that bely his years. He reaches a clearing, and by the moonlight sees

THE STONE CHAPEL.

He rushes inside, slamming the wooden door behind him.

INT. CHAPEL - NIGHT

The old man puts the bolt across the door, glances quickly around his refuge. Candles burn around the altar, and above it stands the statue of the WARRIOR GODDESS.

O.S. SHOUTS and hundreds of approaching footsteps.

EXT. CHAPEL - NIGHT

A MOB floods around the chapel, surrounding it, carrying torches, sticks, knives. Their faces are contorted with hatred and fear. At their head is a robed BISHOP.

BISHOP

Sorcerer! You'll not escape the
justice of the one true God!

INT. CHAPEL - NIGHT

The old man rummages in his ragged cloak and pulls out a

SWORD

sheathed in braided leather -- the same sheath Joan just unearthed. But now it is new, shiny and soft. He handles the sword with great care, almost reverence, wrapping it in his cloak and laying it on the ground.

The old man goes behind the altar and starts DIGGING a hole in the packed earth with a stone. The door SHAKES as heavy fists POUND against it.

EXT. CHAPEL - NIGHT

The Bishop raises his torch.

BISHOP

Merlin! Demon of the Britons! We
condemn you to death for sorcery
and service to darkness! You shall
BURN!

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

The Bishop THRUSTS his torch against the wooden door -- which smoulders, then BLOSSOMS into fire. The mob throw torches at the chapel; in seconds it BURSTS INTO FLAMES.

INT. CHAPEL - NIGHT

Smoke clouds the air as Merlin finishes digging the hole, and places the sword carefully in the earth.

The wooden beams rain down sparks. The straw bursts into flame. The door is a wall of fire. Through the thickening smoke Merlin looks out -- straight into our eyes, Joan's eyes.

MERLIN

Come, child.

JOAN

steps into frame, again in her red peasant dress, hair in a long braid. The heat and fire do not seem to affect her.

MERLIN

Fire is a destiny. This is how I died, but nothing can harm you here.

The beams creak and COLLAPSE, raining down stones and dirt.

JOAN

What is it you want of me?

MERLIN

The truth was hidden within your lies. You must choose.

Merlin gestures at the wall. Out of the smoke walks

JACQUES D'ARC

alive, unwounded. With a cry Joan RUNS to her father and throws her arms around him. He holds her close.

JACQUES

(sadly)

What have you done in my name, Joan?

JOAN

(sobbing)

My heart has been consumed with vengeance. Papa, forgive me...

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

Jacques pulls back from his daughter tenderly.

JACQUES

It is you who must forgive
yourself, and become the warrior
you were born to be.

He steps away from her and is SWALLOWED BY THE SMOKE.

JOAN

Papa!

Joan looks down to see

HER FATHER'S BODY

bloody and glassy eyed, sprawled on the floor at her feet.
Next to him lies her MOTHER, and PETER. Joan whirls around
to see the burning chapel now piled high with the twisted,
pathetic BODIES OF THE DEAD.

Joan kneels down, KISSES her father's cold, lifeless
forehead.

JOAN

I swear to you, I will no longer
fight for the dead. Nor will I
leave the battle to another.

(beat)

I will fight for the living.

Merlin gestures to the sword, nestled in the earth at his
feet.

MERLIN

You have chosen well, child. Take
up the sword.

Joan reaches down and draws the SHINING BLADE from its
sheath. As Joan raises the sword, she sees she now wears
her armor -- she has become as she is now, hair shorn, in
battle dress.

MERLIN

Your father's was the sword of
vengeance. This shall be the blade
of justice.

The statue of the goddess CRACKS and SHATTERS, falling into
rubble over the hole where the sword was buried.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

MERLIN

(whispering)
Take it, and be the savior of your
people.

Flames ROAR UP in front of him -- he is lost from sight --

DISSOLVE TO:

INT. CHAPEL - TWILIGHT

As Joan wakes with a JERK, still kneeling on the ground, the sword in her hand --

But the sword has changed. The rust and decay have fallen away. The blade is sharp, bright and pure.

The door to the chapel OPENS and Giles strides in. He stops short; he sees Joan, the shining blade.

JOAN

You were right. I cannot turn back.

She sheathes the sword at her waist.

JOAN

Nor do I want to.

EXT. CHAPEL - NIGHT

Joan and Giles turn their horses back toward Orleans. As they head out of the clearing

DE METZ

emerges from the foliage, riding hell-for-leather down the road. He takes one look at Joan, bruised and exhausted --

-- then LAUNCHES himself from his horse at Giles. He DRAGS Giles to the ground, FLAILING and PUNCHING at him.

JEAN DE METZ

If you've harmed her I'll kill
you!

He KICKS Giles and PUNCHES wildly. Giles pulls back.

GILES

I saved your life today -- it is
customary to be thankful for that!

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

De Metz THROWS himself at Giles and they sprawl in the dirt.

Suddenly, Joan's SWORD is PLUNGED into the earth between them, separating them. Both men look up, startled.

JOAN

STOP! Both of you! How am I to fight the English when my lieutenants quarrel like schoolboys?

De Metz is mystified, looking from Joan to Giles.

JEAN DE METZ

But I thought --

GILES

I could no sooner harm her than cut off my own arm!

JOAN

I need you both. Fight each other, and it is only me you weaken.

De Metz pulls himself up from the dirt, shame-faced. He extends a hand to Giles.

GILES

(without anger)

I know you only meant to protect her.

Giles takes the outstretched hand. De Metz pulls him up.

JEAN DE METZ

I should have thought to protect you both. I -- misjudged you. I will not do so again.

They face each other, hands clasped in unspoken promise.

JOAN

(impatient)

Perhaps now, gentlemen, we can return to the war at hand.

She JERKS the sword from the ground and sheathes it, swinging up on her horse. Giles and de Metz scramble to follow her.

De Metz looks with interest at the shining sword.

JEAN DE METZ

Nice sword. When did you get that?

EXT. CITY OF ORLEANS - NIGHT

JOAN, GILES AND DE METZ

approach the Tourelles, which now flies the FRENCH FLAG. CAMPFIRES and flicker warmly in the dark. Sounds of CELEBRATION drift over the night air. The drawbridge has been thrown open, and soldiers stagger drunkenly back and forth across it.

Joan, Giles and de Metz ride into the Tourelles.

INT. TOWER COURTYARD - NIGHT

Joan dismounts, looks at one of the drunken soldiers.

JOAN
What's going on here?

The soldier SALUTES her and falls over.

INT. THE TOURELLES GREAT HALL - NIGHT

A fine celebration is in progress, the soldiers drinking and laughing, eating from plates piled high with food. Joan takes in the merriment with disbelief.

JOAN
What are you doing?

An instant hush falls over the room. Dunois hurries over.

JOAN
Tomorrow we must attack again,
maintain our advantage. How can we
do that if you are all reeling from
drink?

DUNOIS
Joan, wait --

She grabs a haunch of roast meat and waves it at Dunois.

JOAN
People are starving in your city.

CHARLES VII (O.S.)
All the more reason these men
should keep up their strength!

CHARLES

rises from his table to face Joan. Archbishop de Chartres and Tremoille are with him.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

CHARLES VII

I came at once when I heard of your victory. Everyone says the English will be routed in a matter of days. And I shall be at army's head, leading the march into Orleans to free the city! Won't that be fun?

TREMOILLE

It will be splendid, Majesty.

JOAN

What are you doing with my men?

DE CHARTRES

Softly, Joan of Domremy. These are the king's men, not yours.

CHARLES VII

I gave them the night off!

Joan is barely containing her anger.

JOAN

We fight in the morning, Sire!

Charles gestures vaguely.

CHARLES VII

Oh, that. Raverford has sent word he means to surrender. He'll deliver his terms in the morning.
(self-satisfied, to Joan)
Lucky for you I decided to come. Raverford crumbled at once when he heard I was here, didn't he, Tremoille?

Tremoille steps closer, to flank Charles.

TREMOILLE

Indeed, Sire. He fears the rightful ruler of France. He knows that with you leading your men, they will be unstoppable.

JEAN DE METZ

What twaddle.

CHARLES VII

(sharply)
What did he say?

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

De Metz opens his mouth to speak and Giles SLAMS him across the shoulders. De Metz chokes and hacks while Giles speaks.

GILES

He said, how natural, that he should fear the one true ruler of this realm.

CHARLES VII

De Rais, that's the most words I've ever heard you say at one time.

Giles bows. Red-faced de Metz keeps his peace, but Joan cannot.

JOAN

Sire, Raverford is not a man of his word. Every moment we delay, he prepares.

CHARLES VII

(as if to a child)
I told you, he's going to surrender.
(to the men)
Dice, anyone?

O.S. SHOUTS from outside:

SOLDIER #1

The English camp! It's burning!
The English are fleeing!

THE SOLDIERS

excited, euphoric and a little drunk, rush outside.

JOAN

Your Majesty, stay here.

Joan, Giles and de Metz hurry out.

Tremoille looks to Charles.

TREMOILLE

And when the English surrender, you will not be there. The men will say Raverford surrendered to Joan of Domremy, not to you.

DE CHARTRES

Indeed. The soldiers love her. Perhaps too much.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

Charles looks from Tremoille to de Chartres and back.

CHARLES VII
It is to me the English will
surrender!

He stalks out after Joan.

EXT. SHORE OF THE RIVER LOIRE - NIGHT

French Soldiers pour out of the Tourelle, to the noise and fire outside. The men lurch and stagger, drunk and confused.

JOAN

pushes past them with disgust. In the distance she sees

A HUGE FIRE ENGULFING THE ENGLISH CAMP

English soldiers rush back and forth, shadows in the smoke; tents burn and horses make high, keening noises of fear.

The French soldiers are drunkenly jubilant.

SOLDIER #1
The hand of God strikes the
English!

SOLDIER #2
Burn, you bastards! Joan d'Arc has
brought the wrath of God down on
you!

Joan, Giles and de Metz scan the scene.

GILES
I see twenty men, maybe thirty.

JOAN
Out of a force of at least five
hundred.

GILES
With troops from the west side of
the city, maybe a thousand.

Joan looks at Giles with sudden horror, then turns to the men -- just in time to see

CHARLES

waltzing out onto the shoreline, waving as the soldiers drunkenly cheer.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

JOAN

Back to the tower, all of you!

Her voice is lost in the jubilant shouting of the men -- as
AN ARROW

comes SINGING through the air and

STRIKES GILES

in the thigh. He GASPS and grabs his leg, blood seeping
through his fingers.

The air is suddenly THICK WITH ARROWS, French soldiers
falling left and right, SCREAMING in pain.

JOAN

Retreat to the tower! Fall back!

She turns to Giles, who is doubled over, the arrow shaft
protruding between his fingers.

GILES

Break it off. Do it quickly.

Joan takes the shaft of the arrow and CRACKS it off, leaving
a short nub protruding from Giles' leg.

GILES

(gasping in pain)

Lean me against a tree and I'll
fight as well as any man.

De Metz puts his shoulder under Giles' arm.

JEAN DE METZ

I've got him. Get the Dauphin,
before he gets himself killed and
loses France for all of us.

Joan draws her sword and heads for Charles through the sea
of men.

De Metz heads for the drawbridge. Giles tries to pull away.

GILES

Damn you, de Metz -- let go of me!
Get to safety while you still can--

JEAN DE METZ

It is customary to say thank you
to a man when he is saving your
life.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

The air is filled with the THUNDERING of approaching horses.

RAVERFORD AND HIS TROOPS

come swinging down on them like dark phantoms. Wave after wave pour down on the French; the English seem countless. The terrified, drunken French scabble for their weapons, as the English ruthlessly, efficiently cut them down.

A GROUP OF ARCHERS

splits off. They reach the base of the tower, then aim crossbows with GRAPPLING HOOKS attached to coiled ropes.

ARCHER

FIRE!

The archers let loose. The hooks fly through the air, dragging across the stone and ANCHORING at the edges of the battlements. English soldiers scale the walls with rapid agility.

CUT TO:

DE METZ

who strikes down an English knight from his warhorse. De Metz mounts the horse then turns to Giles, extending his hand.

GILES

(abruptly)
It is true that I love her.

JEAN DE METZ

As do I.

De Metz grabs his arm, Giles swings himself up behind him.

CUT TO:

JOAN

as she reaches Charles' side. He is flailing around in confusion, like a lost child, his voice querulous.

CHARLES VII

Tremoille? De Chartres?

JOAN

They're gone. Sire, we must go --

CHARLES VII

Gone? Gone where?

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

JOAN

I neither know nor care! Now come
with me!

Joan GRABS his arm and drags him behind her.

EXT. DRAWBRIDGE - NIGHT

DUNOIS AND THE FRENCH SOLDIERS

have managed to mount a ragged defense at the drawbridge. They hold the line doggedly as the English cut a swath through the dying Frenchmen to attack the tower.

JOAN

pulls the Dauphin across the drawbridge, into the tower as

A WAVE OF ENGLISH SOLDIERS

CLASH with the French on the drawbridge.

RAVERFORD

spots Joan as she slips into the tower.

RAVERFORD

There! The devil's wife,
protecting the Pretender! KILL
HER!

His men RUSH FORWARD with renewed determination -- the thin line of French soldiers wavers.

INT. TOWER - NIGHT

The empty great ECHOES with the fighting outside.

JOAN

pulls the Dauphin into the room, the remains of feasting and drinking all around them. Charles seems dazed.

CHARLES VII

But Raverford said he was going to
surrender --

JOAN

My men are dying because of your
vain foolishness; now be silent
and do as I say!

EXT. DRAWBRIDGE - NIGHT

GILES AND DE METZ

gallop to the drawbridge, where Dunois and his men battle the steadily advancing English. Dunois looks to de Metz:

DUNOIS
Get in there and shut the damned
drawbridge!

De Metz spurs the horse through into the courtyard.

INT. TOWER COURTYARD - NIGHT

De Metz jumps down and rushes over to the winch, as Giles slides painfully off the horse --

EXT. DRAWBRIDGE - NIGHT

-- but it's already too late. With unstoppable force

RAVERFORD AND HIS TROOPS

BREAK THROUGH and pour over the drawbridge into the tower.
The French are SWEPT along into the tower, fighting every step of the way.

INT. TOWER COURTYARD - NIGHT

The English storm into the courtyard, pouring between

GILES AND DE METZ

and separating them. Sword drawn, Giles shouts to de Metz:

GILES
Go find her! Go!

De Metz turns and runs into the tower.

INT. TOWER GREAT HALL - NIGHT

DE METZ

barrels into the room, runs to Joan's side, as

THE BATTLING SOLDIERS

come CRASHING into the great hall, the French desperately trying to block the English onslaught.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

RAVERFORD

The Dauphin alive -- but a hundred pieces of silver for the man who brings me Joan d'Arc's head!

DUNOIS

You'll kill all of us before you so much as touch her, or the king!
(shouting)
PROTECT THE DAUPHIN!

The remaining French fighters cluster around Joan, de Metz and Charles, fending off the attacking English.

JOAN

turns to the staircase, shoves Charles toward it.

JOAN

Up the stairs!

At that moment English soldiers EMERGE from the stairway, coming down -- These are the archers who scaled the tower.

DUNOIS

The bridge!

Shielding Charles between them,

JOAN, DE METZ AND DUNOIS

move flush with the wall, fighting their way to the massive WOODEN DOORS at the far end of the hall.

RAVERFORD

cuts down the men in his path, as

DUNOIS

throws open the doors, revealing THE BURNED-OUT BRIDGE that once led to the gates of the city of Orleans.

EXT. BRIDGE - NIGHT

The two halves of the bridge arch toward a center that has been burned away, leaving only spiky charred beams.

This flimsy skeleton of the bridge is far too shaky and weak for men in armor to cross. Beneath the burnt-out center of the bridge the river rushes and eddies fiercely.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

JOAN

grabs Charles and pushes him out the door, onto the bridge, as she, Dunois and de Metz cover the rear.

INT. TOWER GREAT HALL - NIGHT

GILES

lies on the floor, his armor laced with blood. His eyes slowly open as he fights for consciousness. He drags himself up with intense determination.

ACROSS THE HALL

he sees the crowd of soldiers battling at the bridge doors.

The hall is crowded with the dead. Giles surveys the corpses, then takes a longbow and quiver from a dead archer. He drags himself painfully over to the stairs, leaving a trail of blood.

EXT. BRIDGE - NIGHT

CHARLES

takes one horrified look at the charred bridge and turns back.

CHARLES VII

Close the door! Lock them on the other side!

JOAN

whips Charles around to show him the battle raging in the doorway -- French soldiers fighting desperately.

JOAN

If the doors are shut, those men are trapped. And that means dead. This way they have a prayer of escape.

CHARLES VII

But what about me? What about my prayer for escape?

JOAN

You should be praying for the men who will die for you today.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

RAVERFORD

slams through the door, HACKING his way through the defending French. His men flood out onto the bridge.

JOAN AND HER BAND

are trapped with the burnt-out bridge behind them. Joan faces

RAVERFORD

who raises one hand -- holding his men back from the charge.

RAVERFORD

(gloating)

Like most females, you have no grasp of strategy. Let me explain the situation to you: you have lost. Give me the Pretender and I might let you live.

CHARLES VII

I'm no pretender! I'm the rightful ruler of all France!

RAVERFORD

You're a vain, idiotic fool and I was not speaking to you.

Charles shuts up.

Joan raises her bloody sword and snarls at Raverford.

JOAN

He is France, for better or worse, and as long as there is breath in my body he will remain free. And as for me, you will take me dead or not at all!

Raverford bows slightly.

RAVERFORD

With pleasure.

He walks slowly toward Joan, like an animal stalking its prey.

JOAN

holds her ground, determined -- then throws a quick look over her shoulder at the

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

CHARRED FRAMEWORK OF THE BRIDGE

She starts, as if seeing it for the first time.

JOAN
Cross the bridge!

CHARLES VII
What?

DUNOIS

takes in the crumbling beams spanning the bridge, then looks at Joan with sudden understanding.

DUNOIS
Come on, your Majesty!

He takes Charles by the hand and pulls him toward the fragile, burnt-out beams. Charles shies away, terrified.

CHARLES VII
I can't!

RAVERFORD

realizes what they're doing, starts RUNNING toward them.

RAVERFORD
Stop them!

The English CHARGE toward Joan and her band.

CHARLES

takes one look at the oncoming men, bristling with weapons, and starts shimmying out onto one of the beams. Dunois and de Metz follow him.

RAVERFORD

bears down on Joan -- she looks determined to stand her ground and fight --

-- but she turns at the last possible moment and takes a FLYING LEAP

ONTO THE WRECKED BRIDGE

It makes a terrifying CRACKING sound but miraculously holds. Raverford and his men are left at the edge of the bridge.

JOAN

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

looks down to see the water RUSHING beneath her, the crumbling wood she rests on flaking away in her hands.

She crawls across the beam -- it LURCHES and CRACKS, starts to fall from under her. Joan GRABS desperately across to the next beam -- the beam beneath her GIVES WAY and FALLS into the whirling water.

Joan chins herself up onto the beam, and continues crawling.

RAVERFORD

puts a foot on one of the beams -- it BREAKS and PLUNGES into the churning water below.

He watches, powerless, as his prey inches away.

EXT. WALL OF ORLEANS - NIGHT

Across the bridge, a CROWD OF ORLEANAIS watch as Joan and her band crawl across the jittery beams.

ON THE BEAMS

Dunois raises his head to shout across the chasm.

DUNOIS

Gerard, are you over there?
Where's my marshal? Someone open
the gate!

ON THE WALL

From in the crowd city Marshal GERARD appears, looks out and recognizes Dunois with a start of surprise.

GERARD

The Duke! The Duke lives!

A CHEER goes up from the crowd.

ON THE BEAMS

Dunois shouts over the noise.

DUNOIS

Not for long if you don't OPEN THE
DAMNED GATE!

GERARD

Of course! Right away, we're
coming!

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

RAVERFORD

watches this exchange with mounting fury.

RAVERFORD

Archers! To the front! And torches!

ON THE BEAMS

CHARLES

inches along with painful slowness -- Dunois pushes him from behind, trying to speed him up.

CHARLES VII

Stop that! I can't go faster!

DUNOIS

Go faster or die, Sire!

ON THE BRIDGE

Raverford's archers have lined up.

Soldiers hold torches to the ragged edges of the dry, brittle beams, which catch immediately, illuminating Joan and her men.

RAVERFORD

Archers ready -- aim -- AGGH!

An ARROW buries itself in Raverford's arm!

ANOTHER ARROW whizzes through the air to impale an archer through the neck -- then another -- and another --

English soldiers are falling left and right. High above

ON THE TOWER BATTLEMENT

GILES

leans on the wall, firing at the archers below. On the open bridge, lit by the fire, the English are easy targets. Giles continues firing arrows with merciless precision.

ON THE BRIDGE

the English soldiers are completely panicked, running for the cover of the tower.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

RAVERFORD
Damn you all! Stand your ground
and shoot them! Don't let them
get away!

He gestures at Giles.

RAVERFORD
And someone go STOP THAT MAN!

DUNOIS AND CHARLES

reach the other side of the bridge. Dunois hauls Charles to
safety as the GATES swing open and Gerard hurries out.

JOAN

reaches the other side, HAULS herself up onto the bridge,
and reaches down to give a hand to de Metz.

RAVERFORD

SNATCHES a crossbow from a fleeing soldier.

RAVERFORD
No, no, NO!

He takes aim at Joan and he lets the arrow FLY -- just as

JOAN

pulls de Metz up onto the bridge with her.

The arrow SLAMS into de Metz's back. He gasps, then slumps
forward into her arms.

JOAN
Jean -- Jean!

He looks at her, disoriented, amazed.

JEAN DE METZ
You were right. God didn't...
protect...

Joan drags him back with her toward the gate.

JOAN
Help! Someone -- get a
surgeon -- help him!

She cradles him in her arms.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

JEAN DE MÉTZ

Fight for the living...you
promised. Swear to me!

For the first time since her family's death, Joan is in
TEARS.

JOAN

I swear.

JEAN DE METZ

It doesn't matter... if you are
holy. You gave me something sacred
to believe in... something...
true... to fight for...

His eyes go dark.

Joan looks back for a moment to the bridge behind her -- the
fragile latticework of supports collapses in flames.
Through the climbing fire she can make out Raverford.

RAVERFORD

(shouting)

His blood is on your hands!

THE PEOPLE OF ORLEANS

surround Joan. Men reach down to pick up de Metz's body.
Tears STREAM down Joan's face as she watches.

JOAN

(barely able to speak)

Gently. You carry a great knight,
and a hero of France.

They lift his body to bear it into the city of Orleans.

ON THE BATTLEMENTS OF THE TOURELLES

GILES

looks down in horror, realizing that de Metz is dead.
With sudden FURY he SCREAMS out into the night, his voice
raw with unspeakable grief.

GILES

NO!

He unleashes ARROW after ARROW in a frenzy of grief, blindly
firing at the English below.

Then suddenly he is SEIZED from behind by several soldiers,
DRAGGED away from the wall.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

Giles looks at them with defiance.

GILES
You didn't get her. And you
won't.

One of the soldiers CUFFS him across the mouth. Giles
LAUGHS, a dark, hollow sound.

EXT. STREETS OF ORLEANS - NIGHT

Joan kneels over de Metz's body as the people of Orleans
look on. With careful hands she closes his eyes, then
stands unsteadily. Dunois takes her elbow, Charles beetling
out behind him.

CHARLES VII
What did you think you were doing?
You could have gotten me killed
back there.

Joan looks at him for a long moment, then comes close to
him, her voice pitched for his ears alone.

JOAN
It had been better you than him.
Majesty.

She turns and walks away through

THE CROWD OF PEASANTS

Starving, bright-eyed, they reach out to touch her gently as
she passes. They whisper her name again and again, their
voices swelling up behind her as she walks.

PEASANTS
Joan of Domremy. Handmaid of God!

CHARLES

watches her with the resentment and anger of a petulant
child.

INT. INN AT ORLEANS - NIGHT

Joan washes herself by dim candlelight, using a washbasin
and coarse rag. She strips the grime and blood from her
body, and watches as the water turns a dark, dirty red.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

A knock, and Dunois enters. Joan continues washing, carefully, almost obsessively, although her arms and face are now clean.

JOAN

It won't come off.

DUNOIS

It never will. Not all of it.

Joan slowly puts down the washcloth.

DUNOIS

I've got Gerard seeing to the Dauphin. He'll keep him quiet and out of the way. But we have other problems.

He holds up a piece of paper, neatly written upon in genteel handwriting, and spattered with blood.

DUNOIS

Raverford formally invites us to enjoy the public execution of our men tomorrow morning. Afterwards, he says, he will take the city.

Joan looks down into the bowl of bloody water -- the water ripples, her eyes cloud over and

JOAN HAS A VISION

of the field by the tower.

GILES AND THE FORTY CAPTURED MEN

have been tied to wooden stakes thrust in the ground, strapped together like trussed chickens. At their feet a huge pile of KINDLING lays dry and crackling.

The wood BURSTS into flames. SCREAMS of agony fill the air, and the heavy steamed smoke of burning human flesh mingles with acrid woodsmoke.

The smoke BILLOWS, obscuring everything; then suddenly CLEARS, revealing

GILES ALONE

older, broken, as we saw him at the beginning of the story. The flames reach for him -- he looks out to Joan calmly --

GILES

You saved me.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

BACK TO SCENE:

Joan looks up from the water with a startled gasp. Dunois is shaking her by the shoulders.

DUNOIS
What's wrong? What is it?

JOAN
He means to burn them all.

DUNOIS
The death of heretics? He wouldn't dare!

JOAN
He will. Because his men call me the devil's wife.
(beat)
I'm going back.

DUNOIS
What?

JOAN
I'm going to get them. Raverford will attack tomorrow -- and we have no men to fight him with. I'll get them back.

Dunois looks at Joan with sudden understanding.

DUNOIS
That's not why you're going.

JOAN
(simple honesty)
No.

EXT. STREETS OF ORLEANS - NIGHT

The peasants of Orleans watch, silent and awed, as Joan walks through their midst to the gate.

She carries her bow and quiver, her sword strapped to her side and a small battle-axe hung from her belt. She wears a stained black cloak over a bloody, battle-worn ENGLISH SURCOAT. She could be any English soldier.

Dunois waits for her at the gate.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

DUNOIS

The skiff is on the bank. Let it drift and the current will carry you to the far shore, into the trees. There are paddles for the return, but you'll not get more than ten men in there at once.

Joan clasps his arm in a strong grip, hand over wrist.

CUT TO:

INT. RAVERFORD'S TENT - NIGHT

Raverford sharpens his blade as Tremoille babbles fearfully.

TREMOILLE

They'll be here in twenty-four hours and nothing I can do will stop it. He's the Dauphin, for God's sake, every noble in the country is sending his army. If they rescue him, I'm doomed.

RAVERFORD

Stop whining. By the time they get here Orleans will be a smoking hulk. And the whore will be nothing more than a bad memory.

TREMOILLE

If you hadn't let that woman and the Dauphin slip through your fingers, we wouldn't be in this position! What am I going to do?

Raverford looks up with dangerous politeness.

RAVERFORD

It is you who has failed me again and again -- but I feel for your distress. I cannot have you so worried. You're a fat man, Tremoille, you should burn well.

TREMOILLE

What?

RAVERFORD

Put him in the field with the others. By dawn, my friend, your worries will be over.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

TREMOILLE

No! No! I can help you! You
need me!

A guard drags away the screaming, crying Tremoille.

EXT. RIVER LOIRE - NIGHT

Joan drifts silently across the river in her wooden skiff;
the current carries her straight into a

THICKET OF TREES

by the waterside. Joan pulls the boat ashore, hiding it
among the trees.

EXT. ENGLISH CAMP - NIGHT

The camp is silent, asleep, the fires burned down to coals.

Joan walks deliberately, like she belongs here, throwing
back her cloak to reveal the English surcoat below. A few
drowsing soldiers glance up, but ignore her.

Joan walks through the camp to the field.

EXT. BATTLEFIELD - NIGHT

The captured prisoners have been trussed to stakes exactly
as Joan saw, wood piled around their feet in preparation for
a giant, obscene bonfire.

GILES

is staring straight ahead, his eyes stony.

JOAN

glances up, sees the Orleans wall. The burning of the men
would have been fully visible to the people of Orleans.

JOAN

(to herself)
You wanted us to watch.

TWO SOLDIERS

stand an indifferent guard, deeply engaged in playing cards.
One soldier looks up, dismisses her with a glance.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

SOLDIER #1
Show's not till morning, lad.

Joan walks up behind them, as if interested in the game --
-- then whips her sword from under her cloak and SLAMS the
pommel into Soldier #1's head. He slumps forward,
unconscious.

SOLDIER #2
What --

She KICKS him in the chest -- he doubles over, and Joan
SLAMS him in the head as well.

TREMOILLE
Someone help, this is a mistake, I
shouldn't to be here --

GILES
Quiet! It's her!

Joan CUTS Giles free with her sword, hands him a dagger.

JOAN
We must move quickly.

Giles immediately starts cutting the other men free.

GILES
What do you think you're doing?

JOAN
Fighting for the living. As I
promised the dead.

Within moments all forty prisoners are free of their bonds.

TREMOILLE
Thank you -- I'll reward you all --

GILES
Shut up or we'll leave you
behind.

EXT. ENGLISH CAMP - NIGHT

Giles leans on Joan and limps along, but despite his injury
they lead the men swiftly and quietly. Nothing stirs.

TREMOILLE

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

falls further and further back -- then suddenly SHOUTS into the stillness --

TREMOILLE
They're escaping! The prisoners!
STOP THEM!

He turns and RUNS for the English camp.

THE ENGLISH CAMP

comes alive, soldiers jumping up from their bedrolls.

JOAN

breaks into a hitching RUN, pulling Giles with her.

JOAN
The river! Get to the river!

Joan and her men RUN for the river, caution forgotten.

EXT. RAVERFORD'S TENT - NIGHT

RAVERFORD

emerges from his tent, sword strapped to his side.

Tremoille comes waddling up to him, out of breath, sweaty.

TREMOILLE
They've escaped! The whore came
and cut them lose. I tried to stop
them -- I warned your men --
(panting)
which should be worth a great deal.
You see, Raverford, you need me.

Raverford RUNS HIM THROUGH with a swift, careless thrust.

RAVERFORD
You are too treacherous even for my
taste, Tremoille. And I can't
abide a fat man.

He shouts to his men.

RAVERFORD
She's here! Find her -- find them
all!

EXT. WALLS OF ORLEANS - NIGHT

The peasants crowd against the wall, looking across the river as the English soldiers fan out, searching.

DUNOIS AND CHARLES

stand with them, Dunois anxiously scanning the water. Dunois spots movement by the copse.

DUNOIS

There!

EXT. RIVERBANK - NIGHT

JOAN AND THE MEN

reach the trees at the riverbank.

JOAN

Behind the trees!

A soldier moves to clear the undergrowth -- and STAGGERS BACK, a dagger through his neck.

AN ENGLISH SOLDIER

stands in the underbrush. Behind him is

THE BOAT

wrecked, hacked to pieces, unusable.

ENGLISH SOLDIER

HERE! THEY'RE OVER HERE!

GILES

LEAPS on the soldier, as

A MASS OF ENGLISH SOLDIERS

come barreling down to the water's edge, weapons ready.

JOAN AND HER MEN

are trapped. The rushing river is behind them, and Raverford's men surround them -- and they are unarmed.

The English ATTACK!

JOAN

tosses her battle axe to

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

GILES

who CHOPS the oncoming soldier, takes his sword and THROWS it to one of the other men.

JOAN

leads the fight, sword biting the air. She cuts down soldiers and throws weapons to her own men.

JOAN'S MEN

fight valiantly, but they are completely outnumbered.

RAVERFORD

steps out from the English and CHARGES Joan with a cry of pure fury. They CLASH in the center of the fighting.

EXT. WALL OF ORLEANS - NIGHT

DUNOIS AND CHARLES

stand at the wall. The peasants watch the fighting with desolate, frightened expressions. Some of them are crying.

An OLD PEASANT WOMAN looks to Dunois.

OLD WOMAN

They'll kill her.

DUNOIS

I fear they will, old mother.

OLD WOMAN

Well, I'm not going to stand here and watch!

The Old Woman turns, picks up a STICK, and hurries to the gates to the bridge.

OLD WOMAN

Marshal, open these gates!

She BANGS on the gates with her stick.

OLD WOMAN

I'll not stand and let her die!

Silence as all eyes turn to the Old Woman --

-- then, CRIES OF ASSENT from the crowd. They turn and RUSH for the gates. Dunois suddenly grins and starts after them.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

CHARLES VII
Wait! Where are they going?

DUNOIS
To open the gates!

CHARLES VII
No! You can't do that -- I order
you not to open those gates!

DUNOIS
Gerard, take him inside!

Gerard escorts the protesting Dauphin away.

EXT. RIVERBANK - NIGHT

JOAN AND RAVERFORD

fight like two people possessed, their swordplay
lightning-fast and furious.

RAVERFORD
You have caused me a great deal of
trouble, little peasant bitch.

Joan STRIKES at him -- he blocks, and STRIKES back.

RAVERFORD
You should have killed me when you
had the chance.

He CHARGES with a flurry of blows; Joan blocks, stepping
backwards, on the defensive. He CUTS her across the cheek.

JOAN
It's too late. Kill me now, and it
won't matter.

JOAN

SLASHES at him, cutting his forearm -- Raverford flinches.
Joan is wearing down, exhaustion taking its toll -- she
SLIPS, falls, and

RAVERFORD

STABS downward --

JOAN

rolls, the sword barely misses her. She rolls to her feet
and faces him again.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

JOAN

(panting)
It cannot be so difficult to kill a
little peasant bitch.

RAVERFORD

ATTACKS with renewed fury -- Joan barely manages to block
his thrusts --

-- when a CRY goes up from the bridge.

ACROSS THE RIVER ON THE BRIDGE

THE PEASANTS OF ORLEANS

have thrown open the gates, and are crowding out onto the
bridge, carrying ladders, planks, anything they could find.
They are armed with swords, daggers, brooms, kitchen knives.
Dunois leads the charge.

DUNOIS

The Handmaid of God!

The peasants throw their ladders and planks across the
bridge, making a shaky but passable crosswalk. They STREAM
across the bridge, reaching the other side and jumping down
onto

THE RIVERBANK

where they JOIN THE FIGHT, attacking the English soldiers
from the side, wielding their makeshift weapons.

THE ENGLISH

turn to fight their new opponents, but the shock of the
attack has rattled them. They are slowly forced back, away
from the riverbank.

JOAN

looks at Raverford triumphantly.

JOAN

It is the spirit of the common
people that you cannot kill.

RAVERFORD

Then I shall be satisfied with
killing you!

He LUNGES, but

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

JOAN

sidesteps, and

RAVERFORD

SLIDES on the muddy ground and FALLS.

JOAN

raises her sword --

JOAN

For my home and my family!

She DRIVES the sword down through Raverford's back, impaling him into the French soil.

GILES

RAVERFORD IS DEAD!

THE ENGLISH SOLDIERS

fall suddenly SILENT. As one, they turn to see their fallen leader, his body under Joan's foot.

For a long moment, the fighters are motionless.

JOAN

PULLS the sword from his body. He is motionless. She reaches down, turns him over --

RAVERFORD

GRABS JOAN'S ARM, knocking away her sword, jerking her down to bring his sword tip to her throat. His face is contorted with suicidal hatred --

RAVERFORD

(a tortured whisper)

Coward -- you could not look into my eyes and kill me, little fool.

RAVERFORD

PULLS her down toward the sword as

JOAN

CLUTCHES the dagger from her belt with her free hand and STABS him straight through the heart.

Raverford arches his back and DIES.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

JOAN
Yes. It is over.

EXT. STREETS OF ORLEANS - DAY (LATER)

The people of Orleans are CELEBRATING wildly. Their city is free, the siege is over.

GILES (V.O.)
Of course, de Chartres managed to weasel his way back into Charles' confidence. Charles was and is a weak-minded fool.

FROM A WINDOW ABOVE THE STREETS

CHARLES

looks down at the crowded streets, watching the peasants cheer as Joan walks through the city, their love for her approaching near-worship.

GILES (V.O.)
And he knew in his heart that Joan was the leader he could never be.
(beat)
When the English captured Joan at Paris, Charles refused to pay the ransom. He knew what they would do to her.

Charles turns away from the window, his face troubled and jealous. He TOSSES his dice -- they come up SNAKE EYES.

ON THE STREETS

JOAN

walks through the streets, Dunois and Giles (walking with a cane) at her side. The peasants CHEER and cry her name.

PEASANTS
Joan, Handmaid of God! Savior of Orleans! SAVIOR OF FRANCE!

As she walks through the crowd, the peasants reach out to her. She touches their outstretched hands as she passes. Reaching out to them all.

CUT TO:

INT. DUNGEON CELL - NIGHT

Father Michael gazes in wonder as Giles closes his eyes, exhausted from his long speech.

GILES

They did what you have done to me.
She was imprisoned and tortured.
They called her a witch, and burned
her at the stake, and the royalty
and clergy of France lifted not one
finger to stop it.

Father Michael looks at the floor, ashamed. There is a lifetime of bitterness in Giles' voice.

GILES

She saved me, but I could not save
her.

Father Michael gets slowly to his feet. He goes to the door of the cell, speaks to the guard.

FATHER MICHAEL

I must have time alone with the
prisoner. Return in one hour.

GUARD

As you wish, Father.

He hands the keys through to Father Michael, then leaves. The guard's footsteps fade down the corridor.

Father Michael hurries over to Giles and UNLOCKS his manacles. He OPENS the cell door wide, standing to the side. Giles looks at him but doesn't move.

FATHER MICHAEL

(whispering)

Go! He'll be back in an hour.

Giles stands. The shadow of the young, powerful soldier he was can still be seen in his old, broken body.

GILES

Didn't you hear what I said? I
lost her -- I don't want to escape!
I want to burn.

(beat)

I could not save her from the
flames. So I will join her. And
wherever the church has sent her
soul, I pray to God they will send
mine there as well.

Giles PUSHES Father Michael out the door.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

GILES

Now LEAVE ME!

Father Michael looks at him in confusion.

FATHER MICHAEL

If you never desired escape, what did you want from me?

GILES

To pass on the truth.

Father Michael turns to go, defeated -- then whirls around angrily, grabbing the cell bars.

FATHER MICHAEL

You -- coward! You are a traitor to all she was, all she lived for!

Father Michael charges into the cell and GRABS Giles by his filthy shirt, hauling him into the light.

FATHER MICHAEL

What do you owe the woman who saved your soul?

With frightening strength Giles THROWS Father Michael off, sending him crashing into the wall. For the first time we see the true depth of Giles' pain.

GILES

(anguished)
Everything. And I let her die!

Father Michael walks out of the cell, closing the barred door behind him. He turns to face Giles through the bars.

FATHER MICHAEL

You thirst for death like a dying man in the desert screaming for water. And beyond death's veil you think to find her.

GILES

(hoarsely)
It is all I dream of.

FATHER MICHAEL

Make her live again. Tell her story, as only you know it.

(beat)

Abandon her memory and you will have truly, and finally, failed her.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

He turns and strides away.

CLOSE ON

the cell door -- closed but still UNLOCKED, ajar by a fraction of an inch.

CUT TO:

EXT. COURTYARD - MORNING

In the blinding morning sun a STAKE stands in the middle of the courtyard, wood piled at its foot.

CHARLES AND DE CHARTRES

sit on a balcony overlooking the courtyard, watching the proceedings as if it were a theatre show.

CHARLES VII

Finally. An end to this wretched cult of Joan d'Arc.

DE CHARTRES

Indeed, Majesty. Finally.

FATHER MICHAEL

stands with the other priests, below the royal balcony.

THE PRISON GATES

swing open and two guards haul out a bloody and unconscious Giles, his face shrouded by a ragged cloak.

CHARLES VII

Bring the prisoner before me!

The guards drag Giles' limp form below the balcony.

CHARLES VII

Giles de Rais, you brought this upon yourself.

Giles' head is slumped down onto his chest. He gives no sign that he hears Charles.

CHARLES VII

You will look at your king when he addresses you!

The guards JERK Giles' head back -- the hood falls away as his head lolls on his shoulders, revealing

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

THE PRISON GUARD

who stood outside Giles' cell, unconscious and bloody,
dressed in Giles' prison rags.

Charles jumps to his feet.

CHARLES VII

What -- what is this! WHERE IS HE?

AN UPROAR of panic and confusion -- guards and priests shout and scramble, falling over each other to find Giles.

FATHER MICHAEL

stands motionless in the middle of the frantic activity. Slowly, he begins to smile, then to LAUGH.

In the midst of the rushing guards and priests, he takes the executioner's torch and LIGHTS the pile of wood at the stake. The dry wood BURSTS into flame.

As the fire climbs into the sky, Father Michael tears off his red cassock and tosses it into the blaze.

The red robe of the Inquisition BURNS ...

DISSOLVE TO:

EXT. COUNTRY ROAD - DAY

Giles walks alone down a quiet country road.

He walks with the steady, measured step of a man who has hundreds of miles behind him and countless hundreds more ahead. A village rises in the distance before him. He turns toward it.

To tell her story.

FADE OUT.

THE END