

THE KINGDOM OF HEAVEN

by

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*"What does it profit a man
To gain the whole world
And lose his immortal soul?"*

10/9/03

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FADE UP ON:

RAVENS in stripped trees. Frost clings to hedges, and low fog lies on the November fields of France. A season of mud and snow.

TITLE:

"FRANCE, 1186"

Sustain the image of smoking fields and then (with the sound of PICK AND SPADE...)

1 EXT. A CROSSROADS. DAWN

1

OPEN CLOSE on the most medieval face you've ever seen: a pale, injured, vengeful face, capable of a routine mask of piety: a priest. With a dirty fingernail the priest flicks out part of a frozen worm from a winter apple. We are at an intersection of two lanes of near-frozen mud in hedgerow country. Two GRAVEDIGGERS, a cold PRIEST, a BODY, at a country crossroads overlooked by a Celtic cross. ON SOUND, as the PRIEST contemplates his meal (he wants better and is sure he deserves it) we hear...The PICK and SPADE at work, digging the grave at the exact center of the crossroads.

GRAVEDIGGER (os)

(singing)

I am Francois, to my dismay
(the SPADE digs into
the nearly frozen
ground)

Conceived and born in the usual
way...

(throws earth)

Son of man, yet by the way, not of
him my mother say...

PRIEST

(beyond cold in thin
and ragged wool)

Shut up and dig.

Chewing his distasteful apple he stares at: A SMALL BODY, wrapped in something like burlap. Where the wrapping is parted we see a pitiful white face and open eyes upon which snowflakes fall. A rope-scarred neck. A woman: a suicide. A silver CRUCIFIX around her neck. The priest, eyeing the crucifix in an ecstasy of greed is for a moment unable to eat his apple. Then he eats.

The GRAVEDIGGERS are in rags, dirty, coughing, destined to die before forty --but men as we are.

(CONTINUED)

The GRAVEDIGGER is cleverer than his condition, saturnine, and watching for his opportunity in life long after he should have stopped looking. His right ear is mutilated.

GRAVEDIGGER

(dangerously clever)

Denied the cross for suicide, the suicide is then buried at the center of a cross.

(leans on his pick,
like a scholar)

Show me the logic.

(a noticeable beat)

Father.

PRIEST

What would you know of Logic?

GRAVEDIGGER

(the rising, and
vindictive, Common
Man)

I have ears, Father. Though one is notched because I love justice.

PRIEST

Thieving.

(thieving, he puts
the dead woman's
CRUCIFIX around his
own neck.)

Dig.

The GRAVEDIGGER (a man who will come into his own, has vowed it), digs. The PRIEST suddenly (as RAVENS erupt from trees beyond a frozen field) looks in the direction away from the sunrise.

PRIEST (CONT'D)

(as the GRAVEDIGGERS,
ceasing to dig, also
stare)

Horses.

(softly, querulously,
and as if there's an
opportunity in it)

Knights.

Straightens his clothes. Medievally speaking, the boss is coming.

A PARTY OF MOUNTED KNIGHTS AND MEN-AT-ARMS (at first glimpsed beyond a birch grove) come along the road. They are cloaked, cowled. The colors of their clothes are the only color in the day.

(CONTINUED)

The KNIGHTS ride mares, but ready-saddled DESTRIERS are led behind the party, which also is accompanied by a CART carrying tents, armor, supplies. A SQUIRE rides before, in rich, dirty velvet (later recognizable as the livery of IBELIN.) The SQUIRE, who has a dirty cold, and is none too happy at the French weather, comes up, on a muddy palfrey, and looks at the gravediggers, the body. The PRIEST bows low. THE SQUIRE looks at the scene. It is no business of his. A suicide being buried at a crossroads? Normal.

SQUIRE

(flatly, no conceit)

Clear the road.

THE SQUIRE, staring at the PRIEST, says nothing. As the sound of horses draw nearer the PRIEST and the GRAVEDIGGERS back out of the road and bow, giving the road to:

THE TRAVELLERS.

A scowling, huge, German knight (ODO), a worldly and scholarly HOSPITALLER, an ENGLISH SERGEANT (not a knight but mounted to fight as one despite inferior, leather armor), a fantastical Turkish mercenary (FIRUZ) and two MOUNTED GENOESE CROSSBOWMEN in leather armor. The principal of the party is GODFREY OF IBELIN. GODFREY is what in those days might pass for a vital sixty, battle-scarred. He wears beneath his cloak (as do his knights) armor modified by use in the desert, padded and quilted in the Saracen manner. GODFREY is a man riding into his past. He seems to remember the crossroads, the countryside--but not with any joy. He seems a man weary of life as he has lived it, with a heavy responsibility or obligation on his mind.

The PRIEST (standing, head bowed, with the gravediggers as the knights pass) is in a frenzy of curiosity but does not dare look up as GODFREY passes.

THE HOOVES OF DESTRIERS, PALFREYS, MULES, pass by the small body and the just-finished grave. FIRUZ stops and takes in: the crossroads. The winter country. His Middle Eastern face is deadpan, but curious.

PRIEST stays with eyes averted until the riders (and their creaking cart) have passed.

GRAVEDIGGER

(to other
gravedigger)

Crusaders.

(a beat)

I can smell the blood and spices.

(resentfully
beginning to dig)

I can smell the opportunity.

(CONTINUED)

1 CONTINUED: (3)

1

The second GRAVEDIGGER knows what he means, but does not agree about "opportunity". Where he is now is where he will die. He digs.

PRIEST
(staring after
riders, in a frenzy
of curiosity and
perhaps opportunism)

Dig.

THE SQUIRE, who has turned back, reins in. He tosses a coin.

SQUIRE
For this burial, from my lord. And
a mass for the soul.

The priest bows greasily but he has other uses for the coin.

2 EXT. BEYOND THE CROSSROADS. CONTINUOUS

2

GODFREY, riding, stares around at the wintry countryside of his youth. His face is intelligent, lined, grave, scarred: he has seen the world to its very end and now he has returned to where he was born. He sees: AN ORCHARD. It smokes with frost. (Perhaps there is a particularly memorable tree).

GODFREY'S POV:

A prosperous, strong, thatched farm with a workshop building (a FORGE); but it is still. No smoke rises from the chimneys.

A grubby APPRENTICE (his job, of which he is certainly incapable, to defend the farm in its owners absence) stares out at the passing knights from behind a hedge. The HOSPITALLER looks curiously at Godfrey, who is staring towards the forge.

HOSPITALLER
You know this place, my lord?

GODFREY
(looks around at
country...then at
the ORCHARD)
I know all of it.

He spurs on. The TRAVELLERS continue towards...

THE LOCAL CASTLE.

3. EXT. THE CROSSROADS. CONTINUOUS 3

The PRIEST is staring after the knights with interest, fear, speculation. The workmen begin to throw the body into the finished grave.

PRIEST

You've forgotten.

An AXE falls to the frozen ground. The GRAVEDIGGERS look at each other.

GRAVEDIGGER

She was your brother's wife.

PRIEST

Cut off her head.

(hurries away)

And return the axe!

The PRIEST hurries after the KNIGHTS. White ambitious face.

4 EXT. THE VILLAGE. LATER THAT MORNING 4

A cloister is being added to an existing town church. Scaffolding. The local Bishop, fat, shrewd, a politician, but fundamentally a decent man, anxiously watches the progress of the church, the PRIEST with him, both clerics holding up their skirts from the mud.

BISHOP

Your brother. You have spoken to him?

PRIEST

(mock-concerned)

He is insane with grief, my lord, and still arrested.

BISHOP

The burial was...

PRIEST

Yes.

BISHOP

Yet you did not mutilate the person.

PRIEST

(lying piously)

No.

(CONTINUED)

BISHOP

A law can go too far.
(chewing a thumbnail
and looking at the
construction)

It can go too far. I ask myself
"Would Jesus do it thusly?" There
is so much done in Christendom of
which Christ would not be capable.
One day we must look into it.

(walking)

You must release your brother. I
cannot do without him.

PRIEST

My brother, my lord Bishop, has
gone insane. Madmen must be
confined.

BISHOP

Your brother is as mad as I am. He
grieves.

(the PRIEST'S plan is
history)

Without your brother I have no
ironwork. Without iron braces I
have no church. Let him out.

(as PRIEST, thwarted,
submits to this,
the BISHOP digs in
his robes)

Give him this

(a chinking, fat,
PURSE)

and tell him...that he is at the
very center of my prayers.

PRIEST is unhappy, but takes the PURSE, and complies. He
goes off down the muddy street. Turning a corner, he
quickly shakes out half the money into his own purse. Then
more than half.

EXT. THE YARD OF THE FORGE. DISCONTINUOUS (SUNLIT, A DREAM)

A splendid rooster, Chanticleer, taking a dust-bath. A
woman's BARE FEET move through the farmyard.

The face of the woman we have seen dead. She is alive,
smiling. She is kneeling at the edge of a kitchen garden,
planting small saplings, a LOMBARDY POPLAR, smiling back at
her observer...

BALIAN, in sunlight, on the best day of his life. Face
dripping. He is at the trough, washing.

(CONTINUED)

5 CONTINUED:

5

EGGS are laid in a bed of grasses. The WIFE looks back at her observer (Balian), walks through a door, and disappears.

6 INT. A TOWN LOCKUP. DAY

6

BALIAN awakes in reality and in dirty straw. He sits up. He is no more than thirty as it was in those days. Nothing in his face except the fact that he has again remembered his wife is dead. Balian is no peasant. He is a master craftsman, a blacksmith and inventor. He is watched by two sympathetic GUARDS. The PRIEST, entering, has no fear of Balian: he has been tormenting him for years, and knows him as an easy target: a man who will never strike back.

PRIEST
(resentfully)
The Bishop needs you.
(as Balian says nothing)
Release him.

He goes, a man off on his business. BALIAN remains sitting in the straw. He stares at the open DOOR as if not knowing what to do with such a thing as a door.

OLD GUARD
(to Balian, kindly)
On your feet. This is not heaven.
It is the world, and there are troubles in it. Do yourself no injury. Other men are always good for that.

BALIAN nods, and does stand. He has always stood on his feet and manages to do so now.

7 EXT. CROSSROADS . NIGHT. SNOWING

7

A whimpering DOG scratches at the frozen ground, already covered with snow. The burial crossroads. BALIAN, drunk, is looking at the stars. Then he falls to his knees, staring at the earth. He touches the ground. It is frozen and his wife is beneath it. As he sobers up, sounds O.S: and

(BALIAN'S POV)

the PRIEST comes along, with BOYS and GRAVEDIGGER carrying bundles of fuel and torches.

BALIAN continues to kneel. The burden-carriers walk on, crossing themselves, in semi-respectful silence (though one of the BOYS laughs, and is swatted by the GRAVEDIGGER). The PRIEST remains behind, and crouches by his brother.

(CONTINUED)

PRIEST

You must take the cross. Crusade.

BALIAN, in an extremity of grief, has nothing to say to this.

PRIEST (CONT'D)

(points)

Her grave was here. Or was it there. I am afraid I cannot tell you the exact location. I wasn't present at the burial.

(BALIAN stares at the ground)

Call me a liar. You have reason.

(a beat)

You never fight back.

(slaps Balian's face aside)

You turn the other cheek. Do you think you are Jesus Christ?

(BALIAN simply looks at him, snowflakes in his lashes.)

I think that you conceive yourself without sin. That is a sin.

BALIAN gets up and walks away through the snow. The PRIEST stares after him.

INT. THE GREAT HALL OF THE CASTLE. NIGHT

MUSIC. The travellers from the Holy Land, employing their knives, are dining with GODFREY'S BROTHER (who stayed a poor provincial lord while his brother became a baron in the Holy Land). GODFREY is self-absorbed, thinking, eating reflectively. The HOSPITALLER carries the conversation with the GODFREY'S BROTHER and the brother's mendacious, cynical, and worthless SON (Godfrey's nephew), who is drinking as if his guts are on fire.

GODFREY'S BROTHER

And what of Jerusalem?

HOSPITALLER

(suavely)

In peril, my lord. As always.

GODFREY'S BROTHER

We have stood there against the Muslims for almost a hundred year.

(CONTINUED)

HOSPITALLER

The Muslims...
 (a beat)
 have someone...
 (another suave beat)
 new.

He holds up a silver wine-cup, and to change the subject:

Very fine.

GODFREY'S NEPHEW

(always, one way or
 another, picking a
 fight he couldn't
 win)

Do you mean, Hospitaller, that it
 is very fine for such a poor place?

ODO, the German knight, looks up at, with relish, a
 potential enemy. Odo loves an enemy. The HOSPITALLER is
 suave.

HOSPITALLER

I mean that it is very fine.

GODFREY'S BROTHER

And yet you do not drink. A knight
 should be a knight, a monk a monk,
 not both at once, that is what I
 say.

(The Hospitaller,
 both a knight and a
 monk, mildly ignores
 this.)

But I am old fashioned. As for the
 cup, I have an artificer. A
 blacksmith. Or did have...

GODFREY

(distracted, staring
 away)

Which son of the blacksmith of my
 time is the blacksmith now?

GODFREY'S BROTHER

The eldest. Balian.

(as GODFREY,
 registering a
 significance,
 resumes eating)

His child died. His wife fell into
 a melancholy. She would not listen
 to reason. She killed herself.

(MORE)

(CONTINUED)

GODFREY'S BROTHER (CONT'D)

(disinterested,
worldly)

It occurs. Now he is mad and I
cannot get knife made nor horse
shod.

GODFREY, listening, drinking wine, moves to a window and
parts the ragged hangings to look, with thoughtful sadness,
down into the valley.

GODFREY'S BROTHER (CONT'D)

(drunk, and
disguising
bitterness)

It is six and twenty years since my
brother took the cross, and now he
returns an actual Baron of the
Kingdom of Jerusalem. How is that
for the fate of a younger brother?

In his rude hall in his rude castle (as KNIGHTS drink to
GODFREY), he laughs and toasts, and murmurs to his SON
(Godfrey's nephew, who leans towards him):

GODFREY'S BROTHER (CONT'D)

(sotto voce)

With no heir it comes to me and
thus to you.

GODFREY'S NEPHEW

(a sadistic fop, a
raper of goose-
girls)

Then I thank my stars for my uncle.

GODFREY'S POV:

We see the lights of the village and in the distance the
lights of the forge. Perhaps even at this distance we can
see the glow of the forge. SNOW is falling.

SNOW blows into the room. Godfrey, cold, reflective,
coughing slightly, drops the drapery.

INT. THE SLEEPING LOFT. DAWN

Balian sits up in his wifeless bed in the darkened loft.
Breaks ice in a stone bowl. Throws water into his face.
Goes on into the main living area. A rope still hangs from
a rafter. Balian cuts it down. A CRADLE, finely made,
stands in the middle of the room. Balian puts it in the
fire. A boy (Balian's APPRENTICE) stares at his master.

BALIAN

We shall go to work.

10 EXT. BALIAN'S FORGE. LATER THAT MORNING 10

SMOKE RISES.

ANGLE-IRON plunged to cool in a barrel of water. Then thrown with a clang with others on a heap.

LATER

BALIAN emerges from the forge, and throws ironwork (angle-irons, simple braces, presumably for the building church) into a cart. He looks up (startled) and sees:

GODFREY'S SQUIRE, sitting a palfrey.

SQUIRE

You are the blacksmith?

(BALIAN nods)

Balian the eldest son of the Balian that was?

BALIAN nods.

SQUIRE (CONT'D)

(simply, as he turns his horse)

Remain.

The SQUIRE, after another strange, direct look at Balian, rides off.

11 INT. BALIAN'S FORGE. LATER 11

BALIAN is eating coarse brown bread, and staring at the APPRENTICE. The two eat together silently. On SOUND we hear horses.

12 EXT. THE YARD. CONTINUOUS 12

BALIAN walks out into the light. The entire party stares at him. The Knights, the English Sergeant, Firuz, the two Crossbowmen, and Godfrey.

PRIEST

(pointing)

That is the man.

ODO, riding, ducking low in the saddle, peers into the forge as if (characteristically) looking for stealables.

ODO

You are an armorer. An artificer. According to your lord, and this priest.

(CONTINUED)

BALIAN looks expressionlessly at the men. PRIEST kicks at his small donkey, riding around the yard.

HOSPITALLER
(dismounting, quietly
to Balian)

You have my sympathy and blessings
and your wife's soul is today the
object of my prayers.

BALIAN, recognizing the habit, bows his head. The HOSPITALLER blesses him. GODFREY watches through the spitting snow.

HOSPITALLER (CONT'D)
We need the horses shod. All. And
food if you can provide it...You
will be paid.

BALIAN nods at this saintly man.

The TRAVELLERS are lolling in the thin sunlight, eating chicken beneath a tree. The hungry PRIEST has not been invited to eat but is still attempting to ingratiate himself.

PRIEST
He has made great engines for
sieges. He has made petraries to
cast the largest stones...
mangonels, catapults...he works
finely in silver...
(trump card)
He would be one of the few on your
journey worth more alive than dead.

ODO
(eating)
Shut up.

GODFREY is not listening. His wine cup shakes slightly in his hand. GODFREY, of all things, is nervous. He walks across the road into the orchard. In a FLASH of summer we see a dark-haired woman retreating from him, a complex look of fear and, just possibly, invitation.

GODFREY drinks. The HOSPITALLER seems to understand what Godfrey is thinking: and well he should, because he is Godfrey's confessor.

GODFREY

Do you still advise what you
advised upon the road?

HOSPITALLER

I do, my lord. But I take no credit
for your contrition. I am merely
your confessor.

(concerned for the
shivering Godfrey)

It is warm by the forge.

14 INT. THE FORGE. LATER

14

BALIAN, assisted by the Italian Crossbowmen and the ENGLISH
SERGEANT, is shoeing a DESTRIER. The huge war horse has
had to be roped against the side of the stall. BALIAN
finishes, steps back. ODO is there, eating an apple.

ODO

(to Balian)

Have you been at war?

BALIAN nods.

ODO (CONT'D)

(coming close, to
intimidate)

Against whom and for whom did you
fight?

BALIAN

(the entering GODFREY
now in earshot)

For one Lord against another, on a
point which cannot be remembered,
and which then or now had no
significance.

The PRIEST, looking through a window, listens outraged at
his brother's outspoken reply.

ODO

(close to Balian)

There is better game now. One God
against another. The pay is
proportionate.

ODO menaces BALIAN with sword. Laughter.

PRIEST

(piously
opportunistic)

I have been telling him that.

(CONTINUED)

GODFREY stands.

GODFREY
Leave me with this man.

The room empties as if Godfrey's voice is a starter's gun.
GODFREY takes up the good sword just put down by ODO.

GODFREY (CONT'D)
("sighting" the
blade)
You have lost your wife.
(concealing extreme
interest)
Were there children?

BALIAN
Not alive, my Lord.

GODFREY
God has made us men, and we must
suffer all.
(then looks out at
the country,
nostalgically)
I knew your...namesake.

GODFREY looks up at the rafters. Wind. Pigeons under the
thatched eaves.

GODFREY (CONT'D)
(pressing on with it)
I knew your mother.

BALIAN looks up, knowing everything at once. A hammer in
one hand. He is the picture of Godfrey's murderer.

GODFREY (CONT'D)
To be courteous I should say that
it was against her objections...
that I was the lord's brother and
she had no choice...
(noticing that BALIAN
is holding the
hammer)
But I did not force her.

Godfrey, pointedly, lays the sword aside. He will accept
what comes.

GODFREY (CONT'D)
Some say Jerusalem is the very
center of the world for asking
forgiveness.

(MORE)

(CONTINUED)

GODFREY (CONT'D)

For myself, I call it here...Now.
(a beat)

I have much forgiveness to ask of
you.

Outside the windows, as the father and son stare at each other, SNOW magically begins to fall hard. BALIAN puts the HAMMER down (GODFREY swallows at this sign that his murder will not occur). BALIAN turns to the forge, pumps the bellows, in chaos.

GODFREY (CONT'D)

I can use an armorer.

BALIAN

(clinging to what he
knows of the world)

Whoever you are, my lord, and
whatever you are saying, my place
is here.

GODFREY

(gently, kindly)

What made it your place is now
dead. It is no more.

BALIAN shakes his head.

GODFREY (CONT'D)

I am old. If you would have
anything of me take now what you
can.

BALIAN

(wanting Godfrey and
the entire
subject...perhaps
his life itself...
to go away)

No.

GODFREY, disappointed, but not one to press the point
further, nods.

GODFREY

Then I have seen you, and you have
seen me, and that is that. I am
sorry for your troubles. God
protect you.

GODFREY goes out from the forge.

EXT. THE TRACK BY THE FORGE. LATER

The party rides out. GODFREY lingers.

(CONTINUED)

15 CONTINUED:

16.

15

GODFREY

It is easy to find Jerusalem. You
come to where the men speak
Italian, and then continue until
they speak something else. We go by
Messina. Goodbye.

GODFREY spurs after his party.

16 INT. THE FORGE. NIGHT

16

BALIAN is at work. The room is lit like hell. A sword
smokes, white-hot, in the coals of the forge. BALIAN looks
up and notices: THE PRIEST, lurking uninvited in the door.
He continues to work.

PRIEST

The village does not want you.
(Balian continues to
work)

When the old lord is dead they will
drive you out. When the bishop is
dead, it is certain.

BALIAN

And you take my property.

PRIEST

The Church...

BALIAN

You.

PRIEST

Well.

(a beat)

I am the church. Here.

(a beat)

They would have taken you to
Jerusalem. Away from all this. I
arranged it. Go, go.

(grabs Balian's
wrist)

I swear that you will have no peace
as long you stay. No man ever
needed a new world more. Imagine
your sin and pain erased. All.

BALIAN looks up slowly in the firelight.

PRIEST (CONT'D)

And if you Crusade you may relieve
your wife's condition in hell.

(MORE)

(CONTINUED)

PRIEST (CONT'D)

(BALIAN looks at his
brother)

I put it delicately. She was a
suicide. She is in hell.

(turns smiling)

Though what she does there without
a head...

BALIAN, the hot metal smoking in his hand, drives the white-hot sword, slowly, through the PRIEST's chest, and carries him back onto the live coals of the open forge. The PRIEST, still alive, looks up in wonder for a long beat, then bursts explosively into flame. As the clothes burn away Balian sees: His wife's crucifix. He grabs it out of the fire. He backs away. COALS have spilled from the forge and the building is catching fire. Balian turns and sees:

The APPRENTICE. The APPRENTICE backs away from Balian. He turns and runs into the snow.

17 EXT. A ROAD SOMEWHERE IN FRANCE. DAY

17

GODFREY and his knights are riding. GODFREY reins in, and so does the party.

GODFREY'S POV:

BALIAN sits his mare atop a small hill. He rides down. BALIAN is hollow-eyed, exhausted in the saddle, his burnt hand wrapped. He wears a shirt of leather armor with iron rings. A sword-hilt protrudes from his bundle. GODFREY spurs forward.

GODFREY

Have you come to kill me? Even
these days, it is not easy.

(noticing with real
concern Balian's
distraught
condition)

What do you want?

BALIAN

Is it true that in Jerusalem I may
erase my sins, and those...of my
wife. Is it true?

GODFREY

We'll find out together.

BALIAN

I've done murder.

Father and son look at each other. Godfrey nods.

(CONTINUED)

17 CONTINUED:

17

GODFREY
 (to Firuz, in perfect
 Arabic)
 Look at his hand.

18 EXT. A CAMP BY A RIVER. NIGHT

18

BALIAN is having his hand re-wrapped by FIRUZ. He is given a drink by the HOSPITALLER.

HOSPITALLER
 It is the poppy which grows in the East. I think it is the true lotus that the men of Odysseus ate. A burn needs that, and butter.

BALIAN watches as:

A falling star glitters and explodes. The men of the camp exclaim at it.

HOSPITALLER (CONT'D)
 (bemused)
 Perhaps Jerusalem has fallen.

BALIAN stares without saying anything. GODFREY, cloaked, passes by without looking at his son.

19 EXT. THE CAMP. MORNING

19

A SWORD is thrown into the leaf-mould. BALIAN looks up from his porridge at: GODFREY, who leans on another sword.

HOSPITALLER
 His hand is hurt, my lord.

GODFREY
 Fuck his hand. I have fought two days with an arrow through a testicle.

He swings the flat of his sword at Balian, who, favoring his burnt hand parries, clumsily but like lightning and with great force. The clang sends RAVENS up from the trees. GODFREY grins: not bad. ODO, chewing meat, is watching carefully. BALIAN takes up a "low" guard, obviously in terrible pain. But he knows what he's doing on a duffer's level. He's strong, dangerous, a natural, and Godfrey knows it.

GODFREY (CONT'D)
 Never take a low guard. Watch.
 (He raises the sword
 above his head)
 (MORE)

(CONTINUED)

GODFREY (CONT'D)

Like this. This guard by the
Italians is called la posta di
falcone...one strikes from high.
Like this. Do it.

BALIAN (though it is difficult with his swaddled hand)
duplicates the posture. GODFREY from the high guard swings
low and sweeping and BALIAN parries. The great sword hacks
into the dirt. But when Balian strikes at GODFREY...clang!
His sword spins away, and ends up falling point down into
the earth, the cross hanging sideways, much like a grave
marker. It's obvious: Balian may have some experience, but
he's no match for a knight. ODO takes the sword from
Godfrey.

ODO

(touches Balian's
eyes with two
fingers)

Pay attention.

(to Godfrey)

I have your leave?

GODFREY, sitting in the leaf-litter, eating dried apricots,
nods gravely.

FURTHER OFF

We see ODO and BALIAN circling each other, fighting. Steel
clangs.

EXT. A WOOD. THE NEXT DAY. TWILIGHT

The PARTY, riding, sees: ARMORED MEN riding ahead through
the trees.

ODO

They are getting to the front of
us.

HOSPITALLER

How many?

ODO

Too many.

GODFREY

The war horses. All else dismount
and cover in the trees so they may
not charge among you.

BALIAN goes among the trees with the men-at-arms and pack
animals. The KNIGHTS, changing from saddle to saddle, mount
their destriers.

(CONTINUED)

GODFREY'S POV

A KNIGHT, and then four more KNIGHTS, come out of the trees to the front. They are the equivalent of rich country layabouts out to do a lynching.

GODFREY'S NEPHEW

Uncle.

GODFREY nods.

GODFREY'S NEPHEW (CONT'D)

You have with you a man, Balian,
who killed a priest his brother.
I am charged by both my father and
the lord bishop to bring him back.

The KNIGHTS look at Godfrey, who says nothing. He stares at his putrescent nephew calmly.

ODO

(riding up to
GODFREY'S NEPHEW)

I say he is innocent of the charge.
If you say he is guilty, then we
will fight, and God will decide the
truth of it.

HOSPITALLER

(leaning drily
forward)

My German friend is a close student
of the law.

BALIAN walks up, ready to surrender. Much to his surprise:
GODFREY winks at him.

GODFREY'S NEPHEW

He is a murderer.

GODFREY

(slowly, and very
dangerous)

So am I.

A half dozen MEN AT ARMS with PIKES come out of the trees to the right. Godfrey's party is flanked on both sides: CROSSBOWMEN to the left, PIKEMEN to the right. And confronted by the knights.

GODFREY (CONT'D)

Whoever dies here, you will be
among them.

(CONTINUED)

GODFREY'S NEPHEW
(warily, looking at
the very veteran
knights)

You are my uncle: I must give you
the road.

The OPPOSING KNIGHTS unexpectedly wheel away. GODFREY (not new at this) snaps a look left as--

A VOLLEY OF CROSSBOW BOLTS fly out of the trees. The SQUIRE is struck in the heart and dies instantly. FIRUZ has his mare killed beneath him. ODO is shot through the middle of the neck, but he wheels and as a PIKEMAN stabs at him grabs the shaft of the PIKE and kills the man holding it. The HOSPITALLER also deals with the Pikemen (and so does his destrier, a weapon in itself, which bites a man's face off, and kicks another down).

GODFREY'S NEPHEW AND KNIGHTS (having attained the distance to mount a charge) wheel and charge the party, taking advantage of the confusion following the ambush. GODFREY looks up at them and only now do we see that he has been shot under the arm and into the chest.

GODFREY spurs directly at the knights. He kills the man to the left of GODFREY'S NEPHEW (into whose horse his destrier smashes). The HOSPITALLER now is with him. HORSES go down: the two men have broken the charge; they wheel, looking for enemies.

The SERGEANT, as a KNIGHT thunders towards him, swings a PIKE and plants it in the earth. The KNIGHT is piked off his rearing horse and the SERGEANT expertly goes forward and daggers him where he lies. He has done this before: a lot.

In the path there is a general melee. FIRUZ kills two men (The French, in general, are hopelessly outclassed by the Crusaders, and we can see this fact in the white face of GODFREY'S NEPHEW, whose ambush is coming apart around him) and then FIRUZ is shot in the head with a crossbolt.

ODO even with a crossbow bolt through his neck and gargling with blood is a serious customer. He runs at and smashes down a dismounted knight, and turns and cuts another across the body, armor ripping like linen. The now wounded second KNIGHT, grappling close with ODO, grabs the bolt and twists it. BLOOD spurts everywhere and ODO dropping his sword grabs the man's own dagger and kills him with it. He staggers a little way, and then falls. A PIKEMAN runs out of the wood with an axe and crushes ODO'S head with two blows and then (as the HOSPITALLER, still mounted, wheels) runs away.

(CONTINUED)

BALIAN, drawing his sword, is being backed among the trees by two scrambling CROSSBOWMEN now using short swords. He kills one, and then gets lucky as the other falls. He hacks down. GODFREY'S NEPHEW emerges through the trees...and he (and his equally terrifying, eye-rolling destrier) charges down on Balian. BALIAN stands his ground and--- is shoved aside by the ENGLISH SERGEANT. GODFREY rides in between Balian and GODFREY'S NEPHEW, and confronts his nephew..

GODFREY

(visibly weakening)

Thank my brother for his love.

GODFREY'S NEPHEW stares: then turns and rides away. GODFREY thunders after him, and raising in the saddle (with blood streaming down his side from the wound under his arm), hacks down on his nephew with a two-handed stroke that cuts through his helmet as if it were paper(As he does this though, we see the downward motion of his arm SNAP OFF the shaft of the bolt, leaving the head of the bolt in his body). GODFREY twists in agony and almost falls out of the saddle.

GODFREY'S NEPHEW'S eyes roll while and he rides on a little way and then topples from the saddle. GODFREY in agony (more blood streaming through the links of his mail) turns his horse and sees:

The ATTACKERS running away, routed. The ENGLISH SERGEANT kneeling by the KNIGHT knocked down first in the melee by ODO. He has a dagger to the knight's throat.

KNIGHT

(almost affably)

I am the son of Roger de Cormier. I am accorded the privilege of ransom.

GODFREY nods at the ENGLISH SERGEANT who...CUTS THE KNIGHT'S THROAT.

ENGLISH SERGEANT

(standing up from the corpse, and to BALIAN)

Nothing better in the world than killing a fucking knight.

The HOSPITALLER stares with horror at ODO, tries to move him, realizes that he is dead. He stands up, and removes his hood of mail.

GODFREY, looking at the sun through the black French trees, has blood bubbling on his lips.

(CONTINUED)

20 CONTINUED: (4)

20

He is helped from the saddle by the ENGLISH SERGEANT and a CROSSBOWMAN. The HOSPITALLER examines him. Both the Hospitaller and Godfrey, locking eyes, know that the wound is fatal.

GODFREY

Let me walk. Give me a cup of wine.

GODFREY (as he is given the wine) looks sternly at BALIAN.

BALIAN

They had right to take me.

GODFREY

(clutching Balian for support)

So do I.

Godfrey might have got his death-wound. But he's found his son.

21 EXT. A ROAD IN ITALY. TWILIGHT.

21

GODFREY rides half conscious and muttering in the baggage cart which has been fitted out as his ambulance. BALIAN rides with him, looking down concernedly. As the party comes to a juncture of the road we begin to hear a war-song, sung in French), and BALIAN looks up to see: CRUSADERS. Twenty knights and their parties, poor priests riding mules, and the true religious, very old people among them, walking with staffs. A complete representation of medieval Europe.

HOSPITALLER

Where do you go?

OLD PILGRIM

Jerusalem, brother.

HOSPITALLER

By what direction?

OLD PILGRIM

Someone knows. God knows.

GUY DE LUSIGNAN, a splendid knight in the red cross we will associate with extremists in Jerusalem, rides up with a large party of knight-recruits also wearing red crosses.

HOSPITALLER

(suddenly staring, as if at a threat greater than any so far)

De Lusignan.

(CONTINUED)

21 CONTINUED:

21

GUY has ridden up to GODFREY'S CART. GODFREY is unconscious. GUY sneers down at him.

GUY

About time.

GUY spurs on. BALIAN stares after him.

22 EXT. THE CAMP ABOVE ROME. TWILIGHT

22

The HOSPITALLER is praying above the sleeping GODFREY. This is real faith, a sign of the cross executed as if it means something. BALIAN, with a plate of food, hesitates; but the HOSPITALLER, seeing him, smiles, gestures "come".

HOSPITALLER

(arming himself, a warrior now)

Do not be deceived by his chances.
(he shrugs on his mail)

The bolt is broken off and cannot be cut out. If his ribs are broken the marrow may enter the blood. He will take a fever and die; or a cyst will form and he will live. He is in the hands of God.

23 EXT. THE CAMP ABOVE ROME. LATER

23

Fire burning. GODFREY leans on a stick at the top of a little hill. The men at arms watch for thieves. BALIAN is making his bed. The Hospitaller, attending to Godfrey, leaves Godfrey.

GODFREY

Balian.

Balian joins him. They stare at: An enormous field of fires, of lighted houses, as far as the eye can see. Blue night is come down.

BALIAN

I have never seen so many lights.
Is that Rome?

GODFREY

The beginning of it.
(amused)
What know you of Rome?

BALIAN

That it was once, and is no more.

(CONTINUED)

GODFREY

Rome is a candle left burning in a skull. And so am I.

(reminded of his
impending death)

Do you know what lies in the Holy Land? Not what fanatics say, but what does lie there?

BALIAN shakes his head slowly "no".

GODFREY (CONT'D)

(a beat)

The new world. A man who in France had not a house is in the Holy Land the master of a city. He who was the master of a city begs in the gutter. There at the end of the world you are not what you were born, as you are here, but what you have it in yourself to be.

(stares at Balian,
and then with great
intensity:)

If I raise you in the world...

(we see that Godfrey
has not decided to
do so)

....do not disappoint me.

BALIAN nods, emotionally. GODFREY is not one for sentiment.

GODFREY (CONT'D)

Whatever your position, and that I will decide, you are of my house, and that means you will serve the King of Jerusalem.

BALIAN

(smiling hesitantly)

What might a king ask of a man like me?

GODFREY

This king? A better world than has ever been seen. A kingdom of conscience. A kingdom of heaven.

(a beat)

Peace instead of war...love instead of hate. Did you think that lay at the end of "crusade"?

BALIAN shakes his head "no".

(CONTINUED)

GODFREY (CONT'D)

(softly)

It does.

(a beat)

There is peace between Christian and Muslims. We live together. Or between Saladin and the King we try.

(turns)

Men still go down to the Holy Land for war, however, and war they will have, for all the good kings and fine intentions in the world.

(a beat)

But you will serve the peace, and the King. Swear.

BALIAN

I swear.

24 EXT. A MAIN BRIDGE ACROSS THE TIBER. DAY

24

Our party rides through throngs of people of all nations. BALIAN is a yokel stunned by the city. He stops his horse to stare. GODFREY has been put on his horse. He seems not well, but determined to seem it. He rides up beside Balian, and stares at him.

GODFREY

When we see his Holiness, you will attend me.

(to HOSPITALLER)

See him dressed him as my squire.

(spurring on)

I would not bring a son to Rome and not let him see the Pope.

25 INT. THE PAPAL CHAMBER. DAY

25

This is the Apostolic Court, and grand. BALIAN kneels, with the HOSPITALLER. GODFREY has been allowed to sit in a chair. CARDINALS and PRIESTS in galleries to either side. GUY is present, with TEMPLARS. The POPE is a worldly man who looks as if Godfrey is attempting to sell him a pig in a poke.

POPE

You presented to England that the Muslims are stronger, and now unified under...what is his name...

BISHOP

(whispering)

Saladin.

(CONTINUED)

POPE

(ignoring this
information)

...their new king? That if open war
is provoked we may lose that war?
That the loss of such a war is the
loss of the Kingdom of Jesus
Christ? That the situation
is...grave?

GODFREY

I explained all. That we are
outnumbered. That the peace is
fragile. And nevertheless there
will be no troops from England.

POPE

(grimacing, walking)

And what news from the king of
France? Will he Crusade?

GODFREY

He will not, because should he
leave France, Henry of England will
take it.

(CARDINALS rustle:
this is bad.)

As my endeavours with England and
France have been fruitless, only
your Holiness may reinforce
Jerusalem and so sustain the peace.

POPE

"Sustain the peace"!?

GODFREY

(diplomatically
lying)

Until a better time for war.

The HOSPITALLER raises an eyebrow.

POPE

If an army from me were possible,
you should have had no need to go
to France!

GODFREY

Your holiness must then reconsider
what Christ's city is worth to
Christendom. Which is to say, you.

The POPE crashes sourly into his throne.

(CONTINUED)

POPE

You ask money for the king of Jerusalem? Well. I will tell you what I have heard about the king of Jerusalem: that he will not live the year.

GODFREY

Rumor.

GUY is the culprit. GUY smiles: a curl of a smile.

POPE

That he has no heir... and will have none.

GUY

(interrupting)

Your Holiness, the heir is my stepson by Sibylla de Saluces... the king's sister, and my wife.

Bows greasily.

POPE

I know who she is. And I know you.

GUY

I am a man not afraid to press God's holy war against the Muslims. There are those in Jerusalem
(looking at Godfrey)
Who would live with the Muslims in peace. Was this the point of holy crusade?

CARDINALS

No!

GODFREY

(exhausted)

I am a man of war and little else. But under Saladin the Muslims are too strong to be tried in war.

GUY

And when last did you try?
Appeaser.

The POPE rises, angered by this bickering. In a rage:

POPE

He has held Jerusalem against the Muslims.

(CONTINUED)

GUY

If he lives he will yet hold it
against Crusaders.

Laughter, at the dying Godfrey's expense.

POPE

Look at the Jerusalem I have
inherited...whose lords have forgot
it is God's Kingdom, and not
theirs.

(to Guy, with
distaste)

One party wants a war that cannot
be won. The other

(to Godfrey, with
equal distaste)

...and even its king...would
welcome unbelievers into God's
city.

GODFREY

Yes, my lord. Like Jesus Christ.

CARDINALS rustle.

POPE

(coming forward like
Darth Vader)

Beware of me, Godfrey.

GODFREY

(the last act of a
lion)

If you wish Jerusalem to be God's
Kingdom, Your Holiness, then give
me some of God's money and your
troops. Otherwise it will please
your Holiness to rule here, and
Saladin will rule in Jerusalem.

Though CARDINALS go nuts here, the POPE is outmaneuvered.

POPE

I will give you 50 knights and
sergeants armed, 200 Genoese
crossbowmen, and 500 infantry, with
this condition: that they only
defend the holy city.

(looking directly at
GUY, who drops his
eyes)

(MORE)

(CONTINUED)

POPE (CONT'D)

They will hold the City of Jesus Christ not for its quarrelling patricians, but for Christendom. Which is to say...as you pointed out... me.

GUY seethes. GODFREY nods: he will take what he can get. The POPE and his entourage exit. GODFREY kneels painfully, propped on his sword. The GREAT DOORS are closed. BALIAN stares open-mouthed.

GODFREY

And you thought it was about religion. Help me up, for Christ's sake.

(points at oranges)

Get one of those.

BALIAN does. Godfrey peels the orange. BALIAN allows Godfrey to put the section of fruit (not unlike the host) into his mouth. Quite obviously he has never expected that anything on the earth could taste like this. Mouth still crammed, the juice trickling, he stares at his father.

GODFREY (CONT'D)

That is the East.

(a beat)

And take the rest of them. It's not every man who has stole the Pope's oranges.

Before BALIAN can move, GUY comes close to GODFREY.

GUY

Would I had seen you when you still did fight Muslims, rather than dine with them. You had a reputation. Once. Would I had fought you when you were still capable of making bastards.

This is aimed at BALIAN. Godfrey chuckles for a long time.

GODFREY

I knew your mother when she was making hers. Fortunately, you are not one of mine.

(to BALIAN, though hating to say this in front of GUY)

Help me.

A TRICKLE of blood on the marble. GUY, looking down at the blood, and then up from it, watches the men go.

26 EXT. MESSINA. DAY 26

BELLS ringing in a crumbled belfry. Beyond them: A Medieval port city, a Crusader launching point. Caravels at anchor.

27 EXT. A STREET IN MESSINA. DAY 27

The Mediterranean winter: whipping wind, a cold blue sea. GODFREY, now near death, is carried on a litter. MEN AT ARMS knock aside beggars, ragged priests, ragazzi. The HOSPITALLER meets other HOSPITALLERS in clerical habit, and gestures to GODFREY in his litter. These compassionate men come forward, and take the litter from the paid locals. Messina (and we can see it in Godfrey's strained face) is no place to die. BALIAN watches his father carried inside THE HOSPITAL OF ST JOHN.

28 EXT. THE RAMPARTS OF MESSINA. DAY 28

BALIAN, sitting by the wall with the (dozing) ENGLISH SERGEANT, is fascinated by the sea-trade. (And there's a lot of it: oranges, spices, silks, being unloaded). CRUSADERS are streaming onto ships. GUY comes up on horseback. He examines Balian insolently.

GUY

I am Guy de Lusignan.

(spits on BALIAN'S
tunic: GODFREY'S
livery)

Remember that name, and me.

He cuts Balian (just raising his eyes after being spat upon) across the face with his stick, and rides on. The ENGLISH SERGEANT remains. Peering after Guy, then at Balian.

GUY, whooping, rides his horse towards the port.

A strange cry, which we know as the Muslim call to prayer, but which Balian has never heard before. BALIAN looks around and sees: SARACENS. SHIPYARD workers, they are making their ablutions, then praying, wherever they can find a space to do so.

BALIAN

(astonished, walking
forward)

What are those men?

ENGLISH SERGEANT

Muslims.

(CONTINUED)

28 CONTINUED:

28

BALIAN

(shocked)

They are allowed their prayers?

ENGLISH SERGEANT

(shrugs)

If they pay a tax.

BALIAN

I thought the purpose was to kill them...

But the ENGLISH SERGEANT is gone. BALIAN looks towards the ships again. He is fascinated by the ships. He wipes at his tunic: Godfrey's livery.

29 INT. THE "HOSPITAL" OR HOSTEL OF ST. JOHN. NIGHT

29

A fire at the end of the long room. A TABLEAU. GODFREY, on a couch, is dying. A table of candles. A HOSPITALLER BROTHER, his face very serious, is writing to GODFREY'S whispered dictation, which we cannot hear. (Important not to hear it, not to blow what is going to happen). The HOSPITALLER - our HOSPITALLER - comes forward from the deathbed.

HOSPITALLER

(grim, to ENGLISH SERGEANT, and other HOSPITALLERS who stand waiting)

Get him.

30 INT. SERVANT'S SECTION OF THE HOSTEL. NIGHT

30

Balian is asleep on a mat. The ENGLISH SERGEANT kicks him. BALIAN looks up: he has been dreading the news that GODFREY is dying...and expects it...but does not expect...

A WHITE GARMENT, dropped in his lap.

SIX HOSPITALLERS and the ENGLISH SERGEANT stand looking at BALIAN, who is very much a peasant holding a white cloth.

ENGLISH SERGEANT

Put it on.

BALIAN looks at the garment, at the man. He stands, already shirtless, and puts on the white gown.

ENGLISH SERGEANT (CONT'D)

Come with these knights and do not be afraid. I will walk behind.

(CONTINUED)

BALIAN
 (no suspicion
 whatsoever)
 What is it?

ENGLISH SERGEANT
 Come with these knights.

31 INT. A HALLWAY. NIGHT

31

BALIAN, in his white gown, is taken along the hall.

32 INT. THE ROOM WHERE GODFREY IS DYING. CONTINUOUS

32

Balian, entering, confronts:

The HOSPITALLER. GODFREY is on his feet, supported by two HOSPITALLERS.

HOSPITALLER
 Get on your knees.

BALIAN complies. The HOSPITALLERS (including our HOSPITALLER) get to their knees. GODFREY, supported by the monks, comes forward through the gloom. Then he stands by himself above BALIAN. BALIAN dares for a moment to look up; and then looks down. A very long pause, as the old man gathers himself.

GODFREY
 (barely able to
 speak)
 Be without fear in the face of your
 enemies. Be brave and upright that
 God may love thee. Speak the truth,
 always, even if it leads to your
 death. Safeguard the helpless, and
 do no wrong. That is your oath.

GODFREY with the last of his strength delivers a blow with his open hand that nearly knocks Balian sprawling. (There was no crap with swords in those days: you got whacked).

GODFREY (CONT'D)
 And that's so you remember it.

As BALIAN recovers, GODFREY is being helped back to his bed. Balian looks up in wonder.

HOSPITALLER
 Rise a knight, and Baron of Ibelin.

33 INT. THE ROOM WHERE GODFREY IS DYING. LATER

33

GODFREY is whispering. BALIAN kneels. GODFREY grips Balian's hands. Godfrey is whispering to Balian.

GODFREY

Defend the king. If the king is no more, protect the people.

HOSPITALLER

(softly)

You must confess now to Holy God, my lord, not your son.

GODFREY nods, weakly: he might differ; but it is time.

HOSPITALLER (CONT'D)

(whispering)

Are you sorry for all your sins?

GODFREY nods. OIL is applied to his head. LATIN is spoken. The HOSPITALLERS kneel. GODFREY slowly makes the sign of the cross; and dies.

34 EXT. THE PORT. LATER

34

Brutal wind. The HOSPITALLER walking towards the docks, with Balian.

HOSPITALLER

I leave now with my order. You will go by the Genoan ships. If it is God's will that I die at sea, go to Godfrey's house. You will be expected. You will be known.

BALIAN nods. The HOSPITALLER embraces him.

HOSPITALLER (CONT'D)

Each day do right. And no wrong.

(a beat)

God bless you.

THE HOSPITALLER walks aboard the galley. BALIAN watches. The English sergeant joins him.

ENGLISH SERGEANT

For those who go upon the sea in ships, Mary Mother of God pray for them...

As the sound of WIND rises on sound:

DISSOLVE TO:

35

EXT. THE COAST OF THE KINGDOM OF JERUSALEM. MORNING

35

OPEN ON a beach with wreckage tumbling in the tide race. On the beach the camera finds THE ENGLISH SERGEANT drowned, eyes glazed, his mouth full of sand. The wreckage of a shattered galley lies broken on the sand. Birds in great number are screaming overhead, and pecking at the bodies of the drowned. There are knights..dead...priests...dead....great ladies and their servants...and...Balian, who wakes, coughing. GODFREY'S SWORD is strapped to his back. He wears a simple tunic, hose. He has lost his boots. On his belt there is...he feels for it...a small purse. He gets to his feet and surveys the destruction as the sun rises. He approaches one corpse--another--he drives the birds away from several --but they are all dead. He crouches near a DEAD LADY. He closes her eyes--or tries to -- and then snaps loose her purse and empties it. BALIAN finds a knife on a corpse and sticks it through loops on the back of his belt. Staring out to sea he sees: A HORSE, tangled in line. It is a destrier, maddened with fear. Balian wades out, then swims to the horse. He pulls his knife and cuts it free, takes the halter, and leads it out of the water. Holding, calming, the horse, he hobbles it deftly with a piece of line. BALIAN is exhausted, thirsty. He rummages among the wreckage for water.

BALIAN'S POV:

A scrap of green in a chasm in the desert rock. The mirage has begun to waver.

36

EXT. THE DESERT. DAY

36

BALIAN is walking, leading the limping stallion. There is no way to tell how many days he has walked. He has come to a small oasis and has drunk there. He hears a sound, and stands.

BALIAN'S POV:

Two riders and one man running afoot approach from the mirage, heading towards the oasis. They resolve as -- A SARACEN KNIGHT--what appears to be his SQUIRE (IMAD) also mounted on a horse and leading a mule with baggage, and a SERVANT on foot, leading another baggage horse.

BALIAN comes shakily out into the open, ready to ask for help...information... quarter...but the SARACEN KNIGHT unships a lance.

SARACEN KNIGHT

ALLAH!

(CONTINUED)

and immediately charges. BALIAN leaps aside, and hacks into the unarmored horse which screams. The KNIGHT turns his bleeding horse. The SARACEN SQUIRE, a handsome, learned-looking young man (IMAD), watches impassively: this is what is done, when Muslim and Christian meet in the desert and can get away with it. The SERVANT runs at Balian, drawing a dagger, and is (luckily, clumsily) hacked down. The SARACEN KNIGHT drives again with his lance, misses. He casts aside his lance and now takes out his recurved bow, and feels for an arrow. BALIAN, seeing his own death, runs wildly towards him. The SARACEN KNIGHT keeps his distance, trying to nock an arrow. BALIAN staggers and slips in the sand.

BALIAN

Fight me!

SARACEN KNIGHT

Why should I?

BALIAN

(just remembering it)

I am the Baron of Ibelin.

SARACEN KNIGHT

(nocking arrow)

He is old. I knew him at Damascus.

BALIAN

I am the new one.

The SARACEN KNIGHT considers. He dismounts, and draws his sword. They fight. IMAD does not intervene or express emotion: he watches. BALIAN takes "the high guard" as shown him by Godfrey. In the fight, Godfrey's good sword snaps the heavy scimitar. The SARACEN KNIGHT scrambles for his dropped lance. BALIAN, sword raised over his head, runs him down and kills him. IMAD is thrown from his rearing horse (BLOOD from the final blow having flown into his horse's eyes) and lies stunned on the ground. Staggering with exhaustion, bleeding, BALIAN recoils from the dead SARACEN KNIGHT, and approaches IMAD. IMAD, sitting up, holds out his arms in a gesture of surrender. BALIAN digs ravenously in a saddlebag, finds DATES, crams into his mouth.

BALIAN (CONT'D)

You have taken it very well that I have killed your master.

IMAD

(philosophically)

It was the end of his time. Taking it poorly bakes no bread.

(CONTINUED)

36 CONTINUED: (2)

36

IMAD is scholarly, awfully well-dressed for a servant, but Balian has no way to measure this.

BALIAN

Take me to Jerusalem.

37 EXT. THE DAVID GATE OF JERUSALEM. DAY

37

The massive "DAVID TOWER" stands above the track. Above it the domes and spires of Jerusalem. It is an impressive sight: the "center of the world", completely walled. BALIAN and IMAD ride towards the gate, covered with dust.

IMAD

I will be cloaked in the town if it pleases my lord.

BALIAN

Why?

IMAD

(lying poorly and covering himself with his plain cloak)

I owe money.

BALIAN couldn't care less. Outside the gates a party of pilgrim knights are abasing themselves. On their knees, armor piled, they throw dust on themselves. Striped with blood, their hair chopped off and burning on a fire.

BALIAN and the cloaked IMAD enter, past TOWN GUARDS. We follow through into:

38 EXT. JERUSALEM. CONTINUOUS

38

A BOOMING MARKETPLACE. Jerusalem is the crossroads of the world, a carnival of cultures, and open to all. Arabs, Jews, Syrians, Byzantine Christians, Europeans, Pilgrims walking barefoot, ash on their heads and vast numbers of the mad: naked saints covered with filth. Many, many children. It's almost a city of children. We see the PIOUS, the PILGRIMS, the THIEVES that prey on them. An ARROWSMITH is at his work, wrapping a fletched shaft, then adding the arrow to a vast pile of them. Etc. BALIAN and IMAD walk on, leading their horses. A MUSLIM TRADING CARAVAN is preparing to travel home. The CARAVAN-MASTER recognizes Imad: begins, shocked, to speak; Imad raises a palm and quiets him. And so passes, cloaked.

(CONTINUED)

BALIAN
 (not having noticed
 this)
 Where did Christ die?

IMAD
 (points OS)
 That is where the Prophet came down
 from the sky. I am no expert in the
 other matter.

BALIAN
 (almost frantic)
 I must know where Christ died.

IMAD
 (bemused)
 I thought he didn't.

BALIAN
 (to a DISREPUTABLE
 PASSERBY)
 Where was Christ crucified?

The DISREPUTABLE PASSERBY holds out his hand. BALIAN pays him a coin. The man points solemnly at A HILL. BALIAN dismounts and starts off, up the hill. IMAD, holding the horses, watches him go, bemusedly.

39 EXT. GOLGOTHA/CALVARY (SUPPOSEDLY). TWILIGHT

39

Balian climbs "Golgotha" with a desperation, as if he will find his wife, or every answer, at the top. A ROBBER steps out of the shadow (turbaned, ghoulish, but originally French). He holds up: a nail.

ROBBER
 It is one of the nails that pierced
 Our Lord.

BALIAN starts to move past. The ROBBER in a flash holds a dagger on BALIAN. BALIAN shoves the man aside (the ROBBER stumbles and falls, losing his knife). BALIAN cuts off his own purse and throws it blindly backwards, striding on.

OLD NAKED BEGGAR
 (watching the money
 bounce)
 That is good. That is Godly.

The ROBBER and his FRIENDS scramble and fight for the purse.

(CONTINUED)

39 CONTINUED:

39

BALIAN comes to the apex of the hill and, taking the cross from beneath his shirt, falls to his knees. He looks uncertain. He lays down the sword, and closing his eyes, clutching the CROSS, prays.

He waits for an answer.

It isn't working.

We leave him as dust blows around him in the twilight.

LATER

STARS have come out. BALIAN still is on his knees but his arms are at his side. A picture of sadness, confusion, defeat.

DISSOLVE TO:

40 EXT. GOLGOTHA/CAVALRY. DAWN

40

At cock crow, BALIAN, sleeping on the stony ground, the sword under him, wakes up looks into the rising light. He needs water. He remembers where he is: Jerusalem. He looks out over Jerusalem. He wipes dirt and tears off his face. A man putting himself back together. In one hand he holds the CROSS and in the other the SWORD. He looks around to see if anyone is observing him, and then because no one is, watching, quickly scratches a hole and buries the cross, after kissing it. He pats the earth around it. Scatters stones.

BALIAN

(as if to the wife's
actual grave)

How could you be in hell if you are
in my heart?

He takes up the sword, looks at it, weighs it. Puts himself together. Heads down the hill.

41 EXT. A STREET IN JERUSALEM. MOMENTS LATER

41

BALIAN is surprised to see IMAD--still waiting. IMAD is asleep, the reins of the horses wrapped around his arm. BALIAN crouches, and wakes Imad.

IMAD

Did you find what you wanted?

BALIAN

Take the better horse and be about
your business.

(CONTINUED)

41 CONTINUED:

41

IMAD

It is your prize of war. I was the servant of the man you killed. I am your slave.

BALIAN

I have been a slave, or very near to one. I will never keep one nor suffer any to be kept. Go.

IMAD looks at Balian with admiration. Not overcooked: he accepts it.

IMAD

(mounting)

You killed a very great cavalier among the Moslems. His name was Mummad al Fais.

BALIAN

(seriously, holding
Imad's bridle)

I will pray for him.

IMAD

Your quality will be known among your enemies before ever you meet them.

BALIAN

I want no enemies.

IMAD smiles sadly at that, and raising a palm joins a stream of MUSLIM PILGRIMS. BALIAN looks around at the Holy City, the center of the earth. Nearby: a BAKER'S STALL. Balian is hungry, but feeling at his belt, realizes that he gave his purse away. He moves on through the city.

42 EXT. A SQUARE IN JERUSALEM. MORNING

42

TWO MEN in the same livery Balian wears, lean against a wall outside a wine-shop, checking out the town, and then...something else.

THEIR POV:

BALIAN, wearing tattered Ibelin livery, Godfrey's huge sword strapped to his back, moves through the crowded square.

MOMENTS LATER

BALIAN pays a penny to drink at a dirty, crowded, PILGRIM'S FOUNTAIN, from an iron cup on a chain.

(CONTINUED)

42 CONTINUED:

42

One of GODFREY'S MEN speaks to the other, who departs.

43 EXT. THE SQUARE IN JERUSALEM. LATER

43

BALIAN is sitting on the ground, eating dates hungrily from a wrap of cloth. A shadow falls across him. He looks up to see:

SIX OF GODFREY'S MEN. Sergeants. All in livery.

BALIAN draws his sword.

ALMARIC comes forward. Godfrey's number one, top-sergeant of forty-odd, a man with some education.

ALMARIC

Since you wear Godfrey's livery,
you must know him.

BALIAN

Yes.

ALMARIC

A man my size.

BALIAN

No. Taller.

ALMARIC

Indeed. And with green eyes,
notoriously.

BALIAN

(thinking,
remembering)

Blue.

GODFREY'S MEN go onto their knees, and in turn take Balian's hand, kissing it. Almaric takes the sword.

ALMARIC

Come with us. My lord.

44 EXT./INT. GODFREY'S HOUSE IN JERUSALEM

44

ESTABLISH GODFREY'S GRATED DOOR. (ARMS carved in heartwood). Almaric's fist pounds on it. A STEWARD looks out; he bolt is thrown. BALIAN, surrounded by his men, moves like a sleepwalker into the COURTYARD. One could not imagine anything greener or more beautiful. Falling water. Fruit trees. Birds. We see (as he sees) that Godfrey's house (to one side of the courtyard) is a bit like a firehouse: stables below (with a separate walled yard). The sergeants (now staring out of windows) sleep above.

(CONTINUED)

44 CONTINUED:

44

WOMEN OF THE HOUSE come forward, veiled, and gently guide BALIAN where he needs to go.

45 INT. A LITTLE ROOM IN THE HOUSE. MOMENTS LATER

45

In a dreamlike sequence Balian, standing naked in a copper bowl, is bathed with sea-sponges by the girls.

46 INT. GODFREY'S BEDROOM. AFTERNOON

46

BALIAN is sleeping on silks, in a breeze, in the shadow of window-lattice. He wakes, feels the fabric. He sees: a bowl of ROSEWATER. He drinks it uncertainly, and then tries to eat the petals. SERVANT-GIRLS flee, giggling.

47 INT. BALIAN'S HOUSE. MORNING

47

BALIAN, wearing a silk tunic, explores the rooms, nodding at the people who stare at him, and bow. Bowed at in the kitchens, he nervously escapes into the STABLES.

AMALRIC

(eating, to alarmed
SERGEANTS)

He may be mad.

48 EXT. THE STABLE COURTYARD. DAY

48

A clumsy use of a hoof-pick. A horse screams. OPEN UP ON: A BEAUTIFUL WARHORSE is shying from both a YOUNG SERGEANT and an ARAB BLACKSMITH. BALIAN comes in and grabs the horse by the halter. With great gentle force. Forearm braced along the head. The horse settles down.

BALIAN

You've hurt him.

The YOUNG SERGEANT and the ARAB BLACKSMITH back away.

49 EXT. GALLERY ABOVE THE STABLE COURTYARD. LATER

49

ALMARIC is staring dubiously out into the yard.

ALMARIC

Will you look at that.

The HOSPITALLER comes forward out of the gloom, and looks down, smiling, through lattice. Now in Jerusalem the Hospitaller is not in his stained travel kit, but resplendent, looking more the priest, though in armor. The Hospitaller looks like God.

50 EXT. THE STABLE COURTYARD. CONTINUOUS

50

BALIAN with gentleness and intensity is shoeing the horse. He is shirtless and covered with sweat. Frightened Arab STABLEHANDS stare at him, hand him what he needs. BALIAN sets down the hoof just done, and looks around as A SURF OF DOGS, WHIPPETS, come through the gate, followed by a rider. A beautiful woman sits side-saddle on a palfrey. She rides around BALIAN, who, peasant nerves operating, stands with his head down. Riding on the horse (perhaps against the glaring sun), is a beautiful woman (SIBYLLA). She wears riding silks, and a turban.

SIBYLLA

Where is your master?

BALIAN

I have none.

He goes back to work. SIBYLLA looks up and sees the HOSPITALLER and ALMARIC. The HOSPITALLER gives her the high sign. Sibylla dismounts, and as he does a bracelet catches on her saddlebow. The bracelet falls into the dust. Balian retrieves it.

SIBYLLA

Can you mend it?

BALIAN

(uncomfortably)

It is not broken.

SIBYLLA

Then improve it.

As Balian stands holding the impossibly beautiful bracelet, SIBYLLA goes to a bucket and gets a ladle of water. As she drinks her DOGS harass BALIAN.

SIBYLLA (CONT'D)

(walking back towards
Balian)

Do you know who I am?

BALIAN shakes his head no. She reaches and takes back her bracelet. Their fingers touching. Looking evenly at Balian she slowly puts the bracelet on. BALIAN bows low-serf-low. SIBYLLA smiles, raising an eyebrow, and mounts.

SIBYLLA (CONT'D)

(leaning down from
the saddle)

(MORE)

(CONTINUED)

SIBYLLA (CONT'D)

Should in the course of your black-smithing you see Balian son of Godfrey who is now come from France...

She gives him a flower from the posey on her saddlebow,

SIBYLLA (CONT'D)

Tell him that Sibylla called...that I bless his father's name... and that I wept at the news.

SIBYLLA turns horse and gallops out, her dogs tumbling after her. BALIAN goes to the gate and in deep confusion stares after the splendid figure caroming down the street, scattering merchants like pigeons.

AMALRIC has come down from the gallery and is looking with concern at the potential madman.

AMALRIC

(embarrassed, from the corner of his mouth)

That was the princess of Jerusalem.

BALIAN

(returning to work)

Yes...

ALMARIC

Bow no more to equals, my lord.

BALIAN (speechless at being equal to a princess) sees: THE HOSPITALLER. The HOSPITALLER takes away the hammer.

HOSPITALLER

You are an ex-blacksmith.
(as ALMARIC leaves, smiling)

How find you Jerusalem?

BALIAN

(bitterly)

God does not speak to me. Not even on the hill where Christ died.

BALIAN gestures vaguely as the Hospitaller smiles.

BALIAN (CONT'D)

Can you bless a man who has lost his religion?

HOSPITALLER

No matter. I put no stock in religion.

BALIAN, turning back, is surprised. This man is a priest.

HOSPITALLER (CONT'D)

(seriously)

Holiness is in courage. All the goodness that God requires, is here...

With two fingers he touches Balian's forehead, and then his heart.

HOSPITALLER (CONT'D)

And here.

(shrugs)

By what you decide to do every day you will be a good man or not. Remember. Come.

51 EXT. A STREET IN JERUSALEM. LATER

51

BALIAN and the HOSPITALLER ride through the town. BALIAN is in armor. PEOPLE bow. We hear whispers. PEOPLE (originally from all nations, from Norway to the Horn of Africa) stare at BALIAN. Some people follow him through the street. Boys tumbling after. Balian is alarmed at the attention from the street, the BOYS now running beside his horse.

HOSPITALLER

(smiling)

Did you not know that you are famous?

BALIAN looks unnerved and not very happy about it. He sees: Two TEMPLARS, bearded Christian fanatics, their hands tied behind them, ropes around their necks.

HOSPITALLER (CONT'D)

(explaining)

The King has made a peace with Saladin these six years. He holds Jerusalem as a place for prayer for all faiths, as the Muslims did before we came. These men killed Arabs.

BALIAN

So they are dying for what the Pope and every priest in Europe would command them to do.

(CONTINUED)

51 CONTINUED:

51

HOSPITALLER

(simply)

Yes. But not Christ, I think.

BALIAN

I cannot make sense of it.

HOSPITALLER

Oh, my lord of Ibelin, I think you can.

BALIAN does understand. The HOSPITALLER smiles. Spectator
 TEMPLARS (kept back by pikemen wearing the King's livery)
 roar objections; but still the signal is given. The men are
 hoisted; hang. Balian and the Hospitaller enter the main
 gates.

52 INT. OUTSIDE TIBERIAS' ROOMS AT THE PALACE. DAY

52

VOICES raised in Arabic and English. BALIAN stands
 listening.

REYNALD (O.S.)

(shouting)

Who says I raid?

MOVE INSIDE THE ROOM.

TIBERIAS, a plain ferocious knight and noble of fifty-odd,
 leans over his table.

TIBERIAS (O.S.)

(shouting)

This witness, all Jerusalem, holy
 God, and me.

REYNALD OF CHATILLON, a magnificent old brigand with a
 handlebar moustache, is on the carpet. He looks at a MUSLIM
 GRANDEE.

REYNALD

This witness, if you call him that,
 is a Saracen. He lies.

TIBERIAS

There will come a day, Reynald of
 Chatillon, when you are not
 protected by your title.

REYNALD

Oh? When will that be?
 (royally amused)
 (MORE)

(CONTINUED)

REYNALD (CONT'D)

Alert me, Tiberias, when men are equal, and the Kingdom of Heaven has arrived.

TIBERIAS

(pointing down into the square)

Those Templars have been hung for a raid I am sure you commanded.

REYNALD

Prove it, Tiberias. I will wait at Kerak till you do.

TIBERIAS

The king will take your castle, Reynald.

REYNALD

I hold Kerak through France and my wife. Not this king. Try to take it, Tiberias. I will be there.

TIBERIAS stares with frustration. REYNALD exits. The MUSLIM GRANDEE starts shouting in Arabic.

TIBERIAS

(to business)

I cannot protect your caravans unless you agree to be escorted by our soldiers.

MUSLIM GRANDEE

I trade to make money. Not to offend Allah by associating with Christians.

TIBERIAS holds out GOLD.

TIBERIAS

But you will take Christian gold, of course.

The GRANDEE, of course, does, instantly.

TIBERIAS (CONT'D)

You are an ignorant and difficult bastard.

MUSLIM GRANDEE

(smugly)

Who is ignorant who knows God?

TIBERIAS exhaustedly waves the man out. The MUSLIM GRANDEE goes, starchily. TIBERIAS, face in hands, sits at his work-table.

HOSPITALLER (O.S.)

My lord.

TIBERIAS looks up and sees: BALIAN.

TIBERIAS

It is true.

(remarking
resemblance)

You are your father's son. He was my friend.

(a beat)

Godfrey dead...It could have come at a better time.

(a beat)

But you have made your mark already. It was shouted in the streets this morning. You killed a great lord of Syria.

BALIAN

He rode down on me...I was fortunate.

TIBERIAS

Saladin himself has wrote to say it was no breach of the peace, and he sends you this.

BALIAN picks up: a beautiful Arab knife. Worked in gold. Balian knows how fine the workmanship is.

TIBERIAS (CONT'D)

What know you of Saladin?

BALIAN

That he is the King of the Muslims, and surrounds this Christian kingdom.

TIBERIAS

He has two hundred thousand men at Damascus alone. He might win a war if he goes to war and he is daily given cause for war by the Templars, by fanatics newly from Europe, their heads filled with greed and murder, and by bastards like Reynald.

(MORE)

(CONTINUED)

52 CONTINUED: (3)

52

TIBERIAS (CONT'D)

Here from this room I keep the peace, so far as it may be kept. I begin sometimes to wonder if it's worth the trouble. But Saladin and the king between them would make...

(exhaustedly)

...a "better world".

(a beat, smiling)

What did your father tell you of your obligations?

BALIAN

That I was to be a good knight.

TIBERIAS at first smiles. Then looks BALIAN closely in the eye.

TIBERIAS

Nothing more than that?

(BALIAN shakes his head)

I pray the world and Jerusalem can accommodate such a rarity as a perfect knight.

(a beat)

Have you dined?

53 INT. THE GREAT HALL OF THE PALACE. NIGHT

53

In a great hall under a long second-story gallery A DINING TABLE, and very much different it is from the one in France. The delicacies are Eastern, Muslim. TIBERIAS, careworn, is eating slowly. BALIAN is nervous, picking at food. He looks up as two figures come into the room: GUY and SIBYLLA. Sibylla holds Guy's arm. BALIAN looks down at his plate. GUY seats his wife; and then sits across from Balian and stares at him. Drunk, and pouring wine from a jug.

GUY

You sit at my table?

BALIAN and GUY stare at each other.

TIBERIAS

It is the king's table.

GUY

Is it. I have not seen a king at it for some years.

(stares at Balian,
drinks wine)

Well. However far you rise we shall always remember the docks. Eh?

(rising)

(MORE)

(CONTINUED)

GUY (CONT'D)

I won't eat. I am finicky about company. In France

(points at Balian)

This could not inherit. But here there are no civilized rules.

He rises to leave. GUY and TIBERIAS stare at each other, an inch from drawing daggers. SIBYLLA sits with her face unchanged. BALIAN steals a look at SIBYLLA, who catches him at it: and a world is said though her face does not change.

GUY (CONT'D)

I have business in the East. My wife does not lament at my absences. That is either the best of wives

(kisses the top of Sibylla's head)

Or the very, very, worst.
(goes)

TIBERIAS

Do you go to meet Reynald?

GUY turns at the door.

GUY

(openly lying, and mocking Tiberias)

No, my lord. He is in disfavor. I am a member of this court. Why should I make league with that...trouble-maker.

He upends his cup. Wine like blood on the stones. Then he drops the cup and leaves. No one can think of anything to say. Sibylla turns hostess and as if this has not happened:

SIBYLLA

(to BALIAN)

We will ride together. And you will tell me about France and what is and is not the fashion there now.

BALIAN looks, to say the least, unequal to the job.

SIBYLLA (CONT'D)

(drily)

Are you married?

BALIAN

My wife is dead, lady.

SIBYLLA

You must be found another.

(CONTINUED)

TIBERIAS

(murmuring)

The king.

All stand quietly. The KING moves along through the shadows, attended. A white, masked, figure on the gallery above.

TIBERIAS (CONT'D)

(brokenly, careworn,
and now to himself)

The king.

All stand. The KING disappears from the gallery. An Equerry comes forward and whispers in TIBERIAS' ear.

TIBERIAS (CONT'D)

The King would see Godfrey's son.

SIBYLLA

(smiles)

I will take him.

EXT. A COURTYARD. TWILIGHT

Falling water. The palace is full of shadows, whispers, a desert Elsinore. BALIAN, walking with SIBYLLA, looks around warily. The dinner continues beyond an archway (TIBERIAS talking business).

BALIAN

I was distracted this morning. I apologize.

SIBYLLA

(playing with him)

Did we meet this morning? I met a blacksmith. You are a Baron going to see the King.

BALIAN takes the flower out of his cuff, and hands it to her. She takes it, and notices that he tenses.

SIBYLLA (CONT'D)

Do you fear being with me?

BALIAN

Yes.

SIBYLLA looks pleased. It is as it should be. She walks around the fountain.

(CONTINUED)

SIBYLLA

A woman in my place has a mask. Not a face. Until she does unmask in privacy.

(a beat)

We are private now.

BALIAN looks up at her. Fear, but desire. And they are not so private. A slight sound. A SERVANT susses out the fairly dangerous sexual situation and disappears behind a pillar.

SIBYLLA (CONT'D)

Tiberias thinks me unpredictable. He does not know the beginning of it. Come.

She takes BALIAN's hand.

55 INT. A CORRIDOR IN THE PALACE. MOMENTS LATER

55

BALIAN and SIBYLLA have come to the king's door, which is guarded.

BALIAN

You do not come in?

SIBYLLA

(uncomfortable)

No. I cannot.

She goes off down the corridor. At the end she opens a door: a fall of light. She goes through the door, leaving the door open. Balian stares at the open door; then looks at the door to the king's chambers. The doors are swung open.

56 INT. THE KING'S APARTMENTS. NIGHT

56

BALIAN enters the room. It is lit by oil-lamps. Silks and tapestries but it is still a working room--papers and scrolls---books. A great map. The KING sits in a chair before the window, his back to Balian. Before him, Jerusalem and the desert stars.

THE KING

(easily, but lonely)

I wear a mask. I should warn you before I turn.

BALIAN stands staring in lamplight. We see as he sees: one of the king's swaddled hands.

(CONTINUED)

 THE KING (CONT'D)

I did love your father. I am glad
to know his son.

(he stands)

Do not kneel.

He turns. What he wears is the most beautiful mask
imaginable (possibly representing the face that once was),
hammered silver, catching light.

THE KING (CONT'D)

Do you play chess?

BALIAN shakes his head. He's never so much as seen a
chessboard.

LATER

A CRUDE CHESSPIECE: A PAWN. It is a triangle of ivory. It
is touched by an artfully, even beautifully, bandaged hand.
BALIAN looks at the BOARD. Dimension after dimension of
room for error.

THE KING (O.S.) (CONT'D)

It is the world.

We see the young king's masked face.

THE KING (CONT'D)

Each move can be the death of you.

(on the CRUDE PAWN)

Do anything except remain in your
starting place and you cannot be
sure of your end. Were you sure
once of your end?

BALIAN

I was.

THE KING

A man may move himself....a King
may move a man...a father may claim
a son...and then the man begins his
own game. Remember howsoever you
are played, or by whom, that your
soul is in your keeping. Even
though those who presume to play
you be kings. Remember.

(the mask, in
firelight, raises)

When you answer to God you cannot
say "I was told it was thus", or
that virtue "was not the fashion of
my times". Remember.

(CONTINUED)

~~BALIAN stares at a PAWN. Flickering light. He looks up.~~

BALIAN

I will.

THE KING

That was a move. You have begun to play.

LATER.

A massive drawing-board. The KING slides a paper towards Balian. BALIAN, after receiving permission via a nod, examines the drawing.

BALIAN

It is a fortification.

THE KING

(nods)

I have drawn it. What do you think of it?

BALIAN

I have thought, many times, that a castle should be in the shape of a cross. Or a star. That way, no part of a fortress may be approached without being exposed to fire from another part.

THE KING

Draw it.

A stick of charcoal on the table. BALIAN takes the charcoal, and does. The KING smiles, and furls the paper. He has made his test.

THE KING (CONT'D)

The man you killed in the desert, though a Muslim, was my father's friend. He taught me to hawk when I was a boy. He taught me to shoot arrows from horseback as the Saracens do. He was there when my arm was pinched and it was he, not my father's physicians, who noticed that I felt no pain.

(his eyes expressive
in the mask)

I am a leper.

(a beat)

(MORE)

(CONTINUED)

THE KING (CONT'D)

This disease, the Muslims say, is
~~god's vengeance against the vanity~~
 of our kingdom. As wretched as I am
 here, the Arabs say after their
 book, the chastisement that awaits
 me in hell is more severe and
 lasting.

(a wry beat)

If it is true, I call it unfair.

BALIAN may know that this man wants a friend: but he's
 unable to act except as if he is with a king— whose eyes
 die a little when he sees that Balian averts his own eyes.
 The King is condemned to be lonely. Condemned also to be a
 king.

THE KING (CONT'D)

Wine.

The SERVANT pours two cups. Very careful about which cup is
 which. Balian takes his own. The king drinks with swaddled
 hands.

THE KING (CONT'D)

(to Balian, with
 authority, now
 unmistakably the
 king)

You are to go to your house at
 Ibelin and patrol with your knights
 the pilgrim road. That was the
 Templar's function while your
 father was away, yet they harass
 and rob the Jews and the Muslims.
 All are welcome in Jerusalem.

(a beat: drinks off
 his cup)

Protect the helpless.

BALIAN nods. He takes it seriously. He drinks.

THE KING (CONT'D)

And when one day I am helpless...
 perhaps you will protect me. You
 may go.

BALIAN looks up. The glittering mask. Balian nods, sets
 down his cup, goes.

BALIAN nods. The KING returns to his lonely chair by the
 window.

~~57 EXT. THE CORRIDOR. NIGHT~~

57

BALIAN comes out of the king's apartments, and looks down the hall. SIBYLLA'S DOOR still stands open, light falling into the hall. Balian might well have walked towards the door, but a BOY (Sibylla's son) is standing in the hall, staring at Balian expressionlessly.

BALIAN raises his hand. The BOY backs away and disappears into his room.

A LEAD EQUESTRIAN KNIGHT on the floor. BALIAN picks it up, weighs it in his hand, The BOY peeps around the corner again. BALIAN smiles experimentally. The BOY disappears. BALIAN places the LEAD KNIGHT on the edge of a balustrade.

The BOY peeps out again. BALIAN points at the knight and goes.

DISSOLVE TO:

58 EXT. A BARRACKS COURTYARD IN THE PALACE. MORNING
CLOSE ON TIBERIAS.

58

TIBERIAS

The king has charged you with your tasks. You keep the peace. The Muslims shall not be attacked.

(walking, glaring at
men--of Ibelin, and
other houses)

My lord of Ibelin will go to his house of Ibelin and from there protect the pilgrim road. All who pass are under the king's protection, and yours. Jews, Christians, Muslims, all are welcome in this kingdom and all protected. To break the peace, to rob Muslim, Jew or Christian, is death on the instant. Do you understand.

BALIAN nods. His men nod, perhaps more reluctantly.

ALMARIC

Ibelin.

YOUNG SERGEANT

(smiling)
That shithole.

(CONTINUED)

ALMARIC

Ssh.

TIBERIAS comes up to BALIAN, and privately.

TIBERIAS

Be gone to Ibelin. Not least before
the princess Sibylla does take
you... "riding".

TIBERIAS smiles, and hands BALIAN some parchments rolled
bound with ribbon.

TIBERIAS (CONT'D)

They are plans of the city
defenses. The King prays you will
look at them and make proposal for
their improvement.

BALIAN nods.

59 EXT. THE PILGRIM ROAD. LATER

59

JEWS by a campfire stand and bow as BALIAN, cloaked, rides
past with two of his knights, also cloaked. They are very
much policemen on patrol. FACES of the pilgrims: the young,
the old. The HEADMAN blesses Balian gravely as he rides on.
They ride on, past more CHRISTIAN PILGRIMS trudging in a
line towards the city.

60 EXT. ABOVE IBELIN. DAY

60

They ride into shot, reining in.

ALMARIC

There, my lord.

BALIAN rides a little forward.

BALIAN'S POV:

IBELIN. A faintly green valley floor, an oasis, a fort that
would best be called a "casbah". A village around it.

ALMARIC (CONT'D)

Ibelin.

61 EXT. IBELIN. DAY

61

Establish Ibelin as Balian and his party ride in. WOMEN
with buckets hung on poles are carrying water towards the
dry MELON FIELDS. The population consists of Jews, Muslims,
and Arab Christians. The place is desperately poor.

(CONTINUED)

ALMARIC

Your father was important. His
lands were not.

But to Balian, who looks at the blowing palms, it might as
well be paradise.

BALIAN

I have no importance. It will suit
me fine.

A TEMPLAR FANATIC drags a bound young man through a melon
field. BALIAN rides up to him.

BALIAN (CONT'D)

What is this?

TEMPLAR FANATIC

He stole.

BALIAN

Stole what.

(no answer)

What is the object and where is it.

TEMPLAR FANATIC

My lord?

BALIAN cuts the boy free. As we get closer to the casbah
(and move into the courtyard) we see that greasy indolent
TEMPLARS infest the half-ruined house.

ALMARIC

You, knights of the Temple, are
relieved. Return to Jerusalem.

62 EXT. IBELIN. TWILIGHT

62

Torches are lit on the rough battlements. BALIAN stares out
at the desert. At the road, where a solitary pilgrim
proceeds to Jerusalem on his knees. He steps down from the
battlements, revealing:

His KNIGHTS. They have gathered here at their post. Cold
men by a fire (still unsure of Balian). A KNIGHT holds out
a plate of boiled wheat. BALIAN takes it and eats with his
fingers.

BALIAN

(finally putting down
plate, and boldly:)

I am not my father.

(CONTINUED)

62 CONTINUED:

62

~~The KNIGHTS, who have been thinking just this, look at each other.~~

BALIAN (CONT'D)

But I will do my best.

BALIAN, as the KNIGHTS look at each other, goes to the shattered gate of the fortress and looks out at:

BALIAN'S POV

ALMARIC

My lord this is a poor and dusty place.

BALIAN

Is it.

63 EXT. IBELIN. DAY

63

A commotion among the people. They run towards the spring. What they see there is wonderful. A DONKEY turns a wheel which turns a gear which drives an axle which raises buckets from the water. The buckets upend and the water pours into an irrigation ditch which extends into the fields. BALIAN, shirtless, is with the townspeople in the water, driving in boards to shore up the dug walls of the watercourse. The PEOPLE (Jews, Christians, Muslims) are exultant--and so is BALIAN, smiling hugely.

64 LATER

64

BALIAN returns from the water, into the streets of the village. He is thronged by his subjects, and tries to prevent them from kneeling. Over their heads he sees:

AN ARAB GIRL, collecting eggs. She turns, sensing that she is being stared at. She is veiled across, but the beauty, all the beauty you need to know about, is in the eyes. She continues to take eggs from beneath the hens. BALIAN, caught in a memory, extracts himself, and walks on towards the fort. But in his face we see: he has made something useful, he is alive again, he could have a life here. As he walks, he suddenly notices: WHIPPETS. They course around in a pack. He looks up and sees:

SIBYLLA, mounted. She is veiled and with a guard of Turcopole lancers. SIBYLLA rides forward through whirling dust and light. She wears a sort of burnoose all her face but her eyes covered with silk. Slowly she removes the "mask".

(CONTINUED)

SIBYLLA

I am on the way to Kerak. I ask
your hospitality.

Her SERVANTS rush her considerable, fantastical baggage-
train forward through the casbah gates.

65 EXT. A ROOM AT IBELIN. DAY

65

SERVANTS attend SIBYLLA. They take her cloak, her "turban"
as she reveals and drops her hair. Her "mask" of office may
not be entirely in place. A servant removes SIBYLLA's
small velvet shoes.

A servant brushes her hair as another removes her riding
gear. A SERVANT unpacks a lead-lined box of...snow, and
puts it into a silver goblet. Sibylla drinks.

66 EXT. A POOL BEHIND THE CASBAH AT IBELIN. DAY

66

SIBYLLA, now in loose Arab muslin, comes along the gallery,
SERVANTS with her. She has her silver goblet. SIBYLLA
drinks, and looks at Balian. No dialog necessary. She goes
to the pool, steps barefoot into it, and washes. Her
wrists. Balian looks around at the desert. Sibylla bends
forward as a servant pours water over her hair. She moves
forward through the water, the muslin wet, and hands Balian
her cup. She wrings the end of her muslin wrap, and washes
the dust from Balian's face. He catches her wrist, meaning:
don't. SERVANTS are watching.

SIBYLLA

(smiling, and
continuing to wash
his face)

The Commandments...are not for
persons in our positions. They are
for the others.

(a beat)

As for marriage...My marriage to
Guy was arranged by my mother. She
thought the kingdom needed "new
blood".

(a beat, wryly)

She took what was available at the
time.

Out of shot, with Balian staring after her. Picked up, she
wades into the green, saline, pool, under the palms,
holding up her dress. She's no princess, just a girl
kicking through the water. She stops and looks into the
desert. Rippling wind.

HER POV:

(CONTINUED)

66 CONTINUED:

66

Beyond palms, mirages.

SIBYLLA cocks her head, waiting to hear if Balian comes up behind her. He has not. She looks around and sees:

BALIAN staring into the desert beyond the broken walls.

67 INT. THE FORT AT IBELIN. AFTERNOON

67

SIBYLLA watches from a tower as

SIBYLLA'S POV:

BALIAN walks his horse among his subjects. MUSLIMS in the fields, caught by the call to prayer, kneel.

SIBYLLA
(to MAIDSERVANT)
Prayer, prayer, prayer. This is the
paradise of prayer.

Terrible heat. The Maidservant lays a damp cloth across her eyes.

68 EXT. THE FIELD. CONTINUOUS

68

BALIAN dismounts and, boots in the furrowed dry earth, walks his horse respectfully past the praying MUSLIMS. Squinting against the late sun. A note of paradise. MUSLIMS pray, JEWS and CHRISTIAN work together in the fields. Ibelin is a microcosm of the king's Jerusalem--the better world.

69 INT. THE FORT AT IBELIN. CONTINUOUS

69

SIBYLLA, watching Balian, leaning against the stones, seems to have come to some decision.

70 INT. THE COURTYARD. DAY

70

BALIAN, thronged by citizens, is listening patiently to a complaint in Arabic. Two families of Arabs are shouting. Almaric translates.

ALMARIC
It is the matter of a donkey, my
lord.

BALIAN
A donkey.

ALMARIC
There was a bride-price which
included a donkey.
(MORE)

(CONTINUED)

70 CONTINUED:

ALMARIC (CONT'D)

Instead of a donkey, the father in
the case was given a mule.

Almaric scratches his nose. The FATHER IN THE CASE is
looking for justice.

BALIAN

(whispering)

What's wrong with a mule?

YOUNG SERGEANT

A mule cannot reproduce. A mule is
finite, sir. A mule is no
investment.

BALIAN

Does the bride's family have a
donkey to give over?

ALMARIC

They do not. It seems to be a case
of fraud.

BALIAN

Do I have a donkey?

ALMARIC

Of course.

BALIAN

Well. Give it to him.

Almaric nods, dismayed and impressed.

ALMARIC

Yes, my lord.

BALIAN does up the steps.

71 INT. THE GREAT ROOM AT IBELIN. EVENING.

71

BALIAN is drawing. SIBYLLA watches him from behind a gauze
curtain. Balian dips his pen in ink. Draws, blots, draws.
SIBYLLA comes behind Balian and looks over his shoulder.
BALIAN becomes aware of her.

SIBYLLA

Do you never stop?

BALIAN

I like to have work.

SIBYLLA

A fortress.

(CONTINUED)

BALIAN

Yes. But of a new kind. Not of stone. Stone is vulnerable. It shatters. Stone is not the material to be used.

SIBYLLA

(charmed, mocking
him)

Is it not?

BALIAN

The Romans had a mixture of lime and sand...

SIBYLLA

(professionally
interested)

Yes. It was tried at Acre.
(BALIAN looks at her,
surprised)

It crumbles.

BALIAN

Not with iron bars in it.

SIBYLLA

(teasing)

Well. Well well.

BALIAN

Do you know about this?

SIBYLLA

I am a princess used to war. Will you eat?

BALIAN nods.

LATER

DELICATE FOOD ON A ROUGH TABLE. BALIAN and SIBYLLA have been eating together, Eastern-fashion (no chairs). A fire burns at the end of the room.

SIBYLLA (CONT'D)

How did your wife die?

BALIAN

She was beautiful. She was...a very poor cook.

(smiles)

We didn't have much. We were happy.

(CONTINUED)

BALIAN is embarrassed.

SIBYLLA

You mean to make your place here at
Ibelin now. Your drawings are not
all of the walls of Jerusalem.

BALIAN

This is where I am. What would I be
if I did not make it better?

Sibylla plays with her glass. There is a MUSLIM CALL TO
PRAYER...the last of the day.

SIBYLLA

(off the prayer)

They try to be one: one heart, one
morality. One passion. They do
without our complications. Their
prophet says "do". Jesus said
"decide".

This rings with Balian: his oath.

SIBYLLA (CONT'D)

(looks over her
glass)

Do you pray?

BALIAN

(pours her wine from
a jug)

I pray that I may be equal to what
has been asked of me.

SIBYLLA

Is that all?

(low)

Who stays content when others have
something we do not? Gold, a
certain lover...power...

BALIAN, looking out the window, sees:

BALIAN'S POV:

The ARAB GIRL. She moves along the lane.

BALIAN

(simply)

I do.

(a beat)

(MORE)

(CONTINUED)

71 CONTINUED: (3)

BALIAN (CONT'D)

I was content with what you would call nothing. I may be content again. Here.

SIBYLLA

Do you think I am here because I am bored, or wicked?

BALIAN shakes his head "no".

SIBYLLA (CONT'D)

Then why am I here?

(a beat)

Ibelin is not on the way to Kerak.

Sibylla reaches out her ringed hand. When Balian does not move:

SIBYLLA (CONT'D)

Look at me.

In the gloom, Balian does. Sibylla looks broken. BALIAN's had enough: Sibylla is irresistible. He carries her back against the wall. Above the wall the PALMS rustle.

72 INT. THE ROOFTOP "BEDROOM" AT IBELIN. LATER (DUSK)

72

SIBYLLA, sitting in the bed, looking gravely at Balian.

SIBYLLA

Tell me about France.

BALIAN

My France would not interest you.

SIBYLLA takes one by one the rings from her hennaed hands.

SIBYLLA

This is from France, which I have not seen...I have never been to France...This to remind us of death...This is a remembrance of the birth of my son...this of his father, who is dead...This I bought the day I saw you.

SIBYLLA gets up on her knees, puts a ring on a chain she has taken from around her neck and puts it around his neck and kisses him. Leaving Balian staring after her she goes to the window, wrapped in silk, and takes up a broken pomegranate from the table. With a silver pin she eats the seeds. BALIAN goes and takes the pin from her, and sets the POMEGRANATE down.

Sibylla looks up at him.

(CONTINUED)

SIBYLLA (CONT'D)

But I'm hungry.

BALIAN stands over her.

BALIAN

What comes of this? Really.

PALMS are rustling above the open room. Sibylla seems to have found her equal.

SIBYLLA

(whispers)

The world will decide. The world always decides.

EXT. THE DESERT. DAY

CAMELS laden with dyed goods move along, bells tinkling. Three of the merchant's daughters ride in camel howdahs.

A MUSLIM TRADING CARAVAN moves across the wide desert. Two hundred camels. It has with it a small force of cavalry, riding in a file.

A HILLTOP. TWO RIDERS CREST IT.

GUY and REYNALD sit their horses and stare towards the Muslims. They are at the head of a little over 50 knights, including fanatical TEMPLARS. Destriers restless. Ready as the men are to fight.

REYNALD

(near-sighted)

Do you see them?

GUY

(smoothly)

How could I? I am not here.

(a beat)

This caravan is armed, Reynald.

A CRY FROM BELOW as they are spotted. The MUSLIM FORCE spreads out, archers on horseback, forming a line between the Crusaders and the now hastening caravan. The TEMPLAR MASTER rides up beside them. Bloodthirsty.

TEMPLAR MASTER

God wills it.

REYNALD draws his sword. A rider detaches and streaks away across the desert. GUY notices.

(CONTINUED)

GUY

Now.

The KNIGHTS charge.

Reverse it. The CAMELS and people are running. Men grabbing weapons of every kind.

The heavy knights smash through the defenders, killing everyone they come near. People trying to surrender are killed. We see the TEMPLARS killing with particular savagery. Leave the fight in the dust, the knights murdering, the camels running, silks and silver spilling...

REYNALD rides up to:

The MUSLIM GRANDEE. The man he paid off at the palace.

REYNALD

You.

He splits him in half.

74 INT. BALIAN'S ROOMS AT IBELIN. DAWN

74

BALIAN is asleep with Sibylla. A pounding at the door. He wakes.

75 EXT. THE SCENE OF THE CARAVAN ATTACK. DAY

75

Dust blowing across a scene of carnage. Muslim women, their throats cut, being covered with sand. More dead Muslims. Not one man, woman or child has survived. At a nearby POOL KNIGHTS are drinking, amidst their bloody horses. Exhausted and wounded men lie upon the ground. GUY is drinking as well, from his helmet. REYNALD walks up, dragging a rich Muslim captive on a rope.

GUY

Some got away, Reynald.

REYNALD

(unconcerned)

It's a broad desert. Nothing will come of it. Nothing...

(laughs)

or the apocalypse.

GUY

We have to hide our dead.

(CONTINUED)

REYNALD

Why? If the war is to be now or later I would have it now. I am what I am. Not half in, half out.

GUY strikes REYNALD across the face with his mailed glove. REYNALD, after grinning with bloody mouth, smashes GUY in the face and knocking him down lays a dagger across his throat. REYNALD looks sideways and sees: GUY'S DAGGER at his temple.

GUY

No one wants a war more than me, for how does a man advance? But if I am not in power it is someone else's war. Again. I want my own.

REYNALD

(helps him up
cordially and hands
him some dates)

Don't worry. It was me. *Who but Reynald?* It's always me!

(belches and gestures
around at the dead)

They will believe it at Jerusalem, I assure you. And Damascus.

He mounts.

REYNALD (CONT'D)

If Saladin learns of this, will he go for Jerusalem? No. He'll come for me. At Kerak. You have my word: you were not here.

Reynald rides off, dragging the Muslim captive. GUY stands in the wind and dust. He mounts, and canters to his men.

GUY

Destroy all sign that we were here. Reynald's dead you may leave where they lie.

BALIAN'S MEN pick through the wreckage. BALIAN is "solving" the fight. What horses came from which direction. BALIAN dismounts and examines a dead horse.

BALIAN

(examining it)

That's not a wound. The brand is cut off.

(CONTINUED)

ALMARIC

Reynald did this.

A cry OS:

A SOLDIER is driving off vultures.

SOLDIER

The Christian bodies hid. Here.

In a natural ditch, hastily covered, stripped European bodies, half-buried. The sand blows across them. As BALIAN stares down: SIBYLLA rides up behind him and stares equably at the bodies. What sort of woman is this? A woman of her time. JACKALS are loping towards the dead.

ALMARIC

We must send a rider to the King.
(looks at Sibylla)
Unless my lady will take the news
to Jerusalem.

SIBYLLA

No. I go to Kerak.

BALIAN

(holding her bridle)
Kerak is Reynald's castle. Reynald
did this.

SIBYLLA

Not alone, I think. Not alone.

SIBYLLA rides off through the twilight with her lancers.
BALIAN staring after her.

EXT. A CAMP BY THE MASSACRE SITE. DAWN

BALIAN stands by the dying watch-fire. Bodies have been buried in the desert way, covered with stones. From the other direction: a rider. Light horse, light clothing, at full gallop.

ALMARIC

From Jerusalem.

Rider draws up. King's livery.

RIDER

The king his Majesty Baldwin IV
commands that the Baron of Ibelin
take his whole command from Ibelin
and watch the approaches to Kerak.

(MORE)

(CONTINUED)

RIDER (CONT'D)

Should the Saracens cross the
Jordan, send report to the king.

BALIAN

Do I engage them?

RIDER

The king says that your conscience
will tell you.

INT. THE THRONE ROOM. JERUSALEM. DAY

An assembly of the powers of the land. Set up like the House of Commons, with Templars and Guy's party on one side, Hospitallers and loyalists on the other. The king wearing a mask of silver, looking at GUY and TIBERIAS, who stand before him.

GUY

Maybe Reynald did attack a caravan.
But what of it? War is inevitable.
Peace... unnatural.

TEMPLAR MASTER

(like a man speaking
in tongues)

It was no caravan. It was an army
led by The Devil, headed for
Bethlehem to desecrate the
birthplace of Our Lord.

TIBERIAS

(exasperated)

Reynald, with the Templars, I am
sure--

TEMPLARS

Lie! Lie!

TIBERIAS

*...have broken the king's pledge of
peace. Saladin will come into this
kingdom...*

GUY

(taking a dangerous
flyer)

Tiberias knows more than a
Christian should about Saladin's
intentions.

Uproar among the BARONS. TIBERIAS goes close to GUY.

TIBERIAS

What do you say?

(CONTINUED)

GUY

That you love the Muslims.

A close moment. TIBERIAS very close to Guy.

TIBERIAS

That I would rather live with people than kill them is certainly why you are alive.

GUY

That sort of Christianity has its uses. I suppose.

TIBERIAS

(to court)

We cannot have war with Saladin. We will not win it. And, yes, we have no need for war.

TEMPLARS

Blasphemy, blasphemy.

TEMPLAR MASTER

Blasphemy. An army of Jesus Christ which bears his holy cross cannot be beaten. Does the Count of Tiberias suggest that it could be?

An uproar among the divided parties.

TEMPLAR MASTER (CONT'D)

There must be war. God wills it.

TEMPLARS

God wills it. God wills it. God wills it.

TIBERIAS

(roaring at the whole court)

Then pray Jerusalem that God will win it, for in the end we shall not.

The hall falls silent. A MESSENGER has entered. He moves forward, and speaks to the King. The King raises his masked face.

THE KING

Saladin has crossed the Jordan. With two hundred thousand men.

The king starts to rise.

(CONTINUED)

PHYSICIAN

Your majesty...If you travel you
will die.

THE KING

Assemble the Army.

ON SOUND: A BELL CLANGING ALARM.

79 EXT. THE VALLEY OF KERAK. DAY

79

A LINE OF REFUGEES are streaming towards the castle,
through a rubble village being evacuated in haste. People
loading mules, camels. Some simply running.

80 EXT. A HILL ABOVE THE VALLEY OF KERAK. CONTINUOUS

80

BALIAN crests the hill, mounted, followed by the entire
garrison of Ibelin (50 mounted men). In the distance down
the valley: dust.

ALMARIC

The cavalry will come up the valley
to close Reynald in, and the siege
army will come behind it.

BALIAN looks at the refugees straggling across the desert.
As he does he sees: MUSLIM HORSE are coming up the valley.

BALIAN rides a little forward, staring. MOTHERS with
children running through the dust.

81 EXT. THE BATTLEMENTS OF KERAK. DAY

81

KERAK'S BELL is ringing alarum as well. REYNALD, wearing a
festive gown, and eating an orange, stares indifferently at
the desert. His personal Priest and confessor (a ragged,
long suffering cleric) is with him. MEN-AT-ARMS are manning
the walls. CROSSBOLTS brought up in buckets. An oil-boiler
lighted.

REYNALD

(grabs the priest, to
use him as
"binoculars")

How many?

REYNALD'S PRIEST

(terrified)

I can't see yet. Only a dust
cloud...

(CONTINUED)

81 CONTINUED:

81

REYNALD
 (hands his goblet to
 the priest and
 pisses against a
 buttress)

I serve God. That is what I do. If
 God tells me to raid Mecca then by
 God I raid Mecca. That is the way
 things are done. And now it's all
 this. Again.

82 EXT. THE VALLEY OF KERAK. CONTINUOUS

82

MUSLIM HORSE move from a canter to a gallop. Sweeping up
 the valley.

83 EXT. THE BATTLEMENTS OF KERAK. CONTINUOUS

83

We see the first of the REFUGEES making it through the
 gates. SIBYLLA stands on the ramparts, looking out.

REYNALD
 I wish I were fifty again or that
 you drank liquor. What do you look
 at?

SIBYLLA
 Knights.

REYNALD squints.

REYNALD
 What knights?

84 EXT. THE VALLEY NEARER THE CASTLE. MOMENTS LATER

84

We see the streaming refugees, driving cattle, and heavy on
 the women and children. Into the shot, BALIAN and knights.
 They turn to face the oncoming Muslim cavalry, that rolling
 wall of dust. They walk forward through the refugees moving
 in the other direction. A RIDER comes up.

RIDER
 My lord prays you bring your
 knights into Kerak.

BALIAN completely ignores him. The RIDER is mystified. But
 he twigs it: Balian is going to delay the Muslim cavalry.

BALIAN
 (staring towards
 Muslims)
 If we go into the castle, those
 people will die.

(CONTINUED)

ALMARIC
(swallows)

Yes.

BALIAN
You must have a lie about how many
Muslims one of us is worth in
battle.

ALMARIC
(swallows)
The commonest lie is "ten".

BALIAN
Are you with me?

ALMARIC nods, and makes the sign of the cross. The KNIGHTS
and SERGEANTS cross themselves as well, and move forward.

85 EXT. THE BATTLEMENTS OF KERAK. LATER

85

REYNALD, now being helped into his armor, stares towards
the south, still squinting and using the PRIEST as his
"binoculars".

REYNALD
They mean to charge that?
They are better men than me. Not
quite so bright, but better men
than me.

(to Sibylla)
You know this fellow. Why is he
doing this?

SIBYLLA
Because he is a knight, Reynald.

REYNALD
Hmnn.
(turning away
indifferently)
Selah.

(Meaning, as he says it, "Whatever".) SIBYLLA,
unexpectedly, crosses herself, and watches for the outcome.

86 EXT. THE VALLEY OF KERAK. DAY

86

BALIAN advances with his thin line of heavy cavalry, now
fully interposed between the Muslims and the refugees. We
hear the "allah" beginning, assembling to a roar. The
Muslims are racing, but in contrast to them (going back to
BALIAN) we should not mistake how very dangerous the heavy
knights are. BALIAN draws his sword.

(CONTINUED)

86 CONTINUED:

86

Some of his men are crossing themselves. BALIAN spurs his horse up to a canter, and then as his men catch up, and, taking the "high guard" (none of the knights now using reins: the destriers know exactly what to do) gallops towards the Muslim force. The forces collide. The knights drive deep all across the front, killing, unhorsing, scores of MUSLIMS, completely destroying the impetus of the Muslim cavalry. DESTRIERS smash down Arab horses. A KNIGHT is lanced off his horse. ARABS, in the hundreds, are hacked out of the saddle. Arrows miss their targets. Men roll on the ground in the melee. The IBELIN MEN are grotesquely outnumbered but they have stopped the Muslim advance--for the moment.

87 EXT. KERAK. DAY

87

REFUGEES stream in.

88 EXT. THE VALLEY OF KERAK. CONTINUOUS

88

Now the inevitable end is near: There are too many Muslims. IBELIN MEN go down and are run down by horses or killed or seized by dismounted men. BALIAN wheels in the melee, killing. His HORSE is hamstringed (we see the hatchet that does it), and he goes down. Immediately he is overwhelmed by Arabs, disarmed, beaten, dragged. Horses, whirling dust, screaming men. BALIAN is dragged, forced to his knees. He sees: ALMARIC, with a head wound, and some other of his men, kneeling, all threatened by yelling Muslims. BALIAN closes his eyes, preparing to accept death, and lowers his head.

89 EXT. THE WALLS OF KERAK. CONTINUOUS

89

SIBYLLA turns away from what seems to be the imminent execution of Balian.

90 EXT. THE VALLEY OF KERAK. CONTINUOUS

90

FINE BOOTS come forward through the dust. A SCIMITAR is drawn. BALIAN looks up and sees: the SCIMITAR raised as if to behead him. He lowers his eyes and head. The sword impacts--

ON HIS SHOULDER. The flat of it quivers there and is withdrawn.

BALIAN looks up and sees:

IMAD. The commander of Saladin's cavalry. In beautiful Damascus armor, smiling at him.

He helps Balian to his feet. MUSLIMS stare. Do they kill these men? Do they not?

(CONTINUED)

IMAD

That was something to see.

BALIAN

You were not that man's servant.

IMAD

...No.

He speaks in Arabic to his men...and what they do, finally, is salaam. These are men who appreciate the finer points of chivalry. BALIAN, beyond blown out, nods at them. A MUSLIM hands him a waterskin. BALIAN drinks. ALMARIC can't believe this is happening.

BALIAN

What did he say to them?

BALIAN bows. The MUSLIMS draw back, murmuring. He picks up a wounded man.

ALMARIC

That any men who did what we did are beloved by God.

91 EXT. THE BATTLEMENTS OF KERAK. CONTINUOUS

91

The PRIEST is watching.

PRIEST

They are letting them live.

REYNALD

(indifferent, swigs
wine)

Sometimes they are chivalrous. They learned it from us.

92 EXT. THE PLAIN BEFORE KERAK. CONTINUOUS

92

IMAD gives Balian water.

IMAD

You may go into Kerak, but you will die there. My master is here.

BALIAN looks past IMAD to higher ground (to one side of the valley of Kerak) and sees...the arrival of SALADIN'S ARMY. An enormous line of men, mounted and unmounted, in perfect order, each section with its banner.

ALMARIC

And ours, my lord.

(CONTINUED)

IMAD looks in the other direction. Far, far off he sees the glint of steel in dust. IMAD walks apart, staring, and gets onto his horse to see better.

IMAD

Tell my lord Saladin that Jerusalem
is come.

THE ARMY OF THE KINGDOM OF JERUSALEM.

The KING rides in his litter alongside THE HOLY CROSS, covered with gold and jewels, passes through the streaming dust. 500 knights are marching towards the relief of Kerak. They are flanked by and protected by 5,000 SPEARMEN and CROSSBOWMEN. Essentially the army is a moving square, tremendously disciplined. GUY is with the army.

IMAD stares through the dust. A man breaks away from the Muslim line and rides up beside him. A small, slight, figure, unarmored, in simple clothing. He scrutinizes Balian, his bloody men, then Imad.

SALADIN

Pull back your cavalry.

As HORNS blow and the Muslim horsemen retire, leaving Balian and his wounded, winded, men in the valley...with a perfect view of events...

THE ARMY OF JERUSALEM does an "evolution" and in one movement it is transformed into a fighting line, facing the Muslim Army, about a quarter mile away. Out of the dust rides...in BALIAN'S POV:

THE KING.

THE KING, a brilliant, erect, horseman, is using every ounce of strength he still possesses to not only stay in the saddle but look as if he is still a living man, when in fact he is, essentially, already a dead one. He rides in front of his army, and raises his palm as he arrives before Saladin.

SALADIN rides forward himself, so that they are very close.

THE KING

I pray you retire unharmed to
Damascus.

SALADIN moves forward, looking closely at the dying king. He knows how much effort this has cost the man.

(CONTINUED)

THE KING (CONT'D)

Reynald of Chatillon will be punished. I swear it. Withdraw, or we all die here.

SALADIN looks at the Army of Jerusalem. Then at the king.

SALADIN

I will send you my physicians.

The KING lowers his head but only for a moment.

THE KING

Do we have terms?

TIBERIAS is staring.

SALADIN

We have terms.

The masked KING rides back to his army.

93 EXT. KERAK. LATER

93

THE ARAB FORCE PARTS. BALIAN and his surviving men, released to cheers from the battlements, ride out towards the gates of the castle, which are opened.

94 INT. THE COURTYARD AT KERAK. MOMENTS LATER

94

BALIAN and his men stagger in, acclaimed by the peasants they have saved. Through the crowd comes Reynald.

REYNALD

You would have given me more mouths to feed and more shit to throw over the wall. You have a great deal to learn about sieges.

REYNALD claps him on the arm.

REYNALD (CONT'D)

(whispering)

But that was magnificent.

BALIAN, looking up, sees SIBYLLA. She stands in an archway. Smiling down. BALIAN starts for Sibylla. At that moment...

THE KING and his party, including TIBERIAS and GUY, gallops through the gates of KERAK.

Unable to go to Sibylla through the crowd, BALIAN pulls her ring on its chain from the throat of his armor, and kisses it. SIBYLLA nods.

(CONTINUED)

REYNALD knows he's in for it. He drinks the last of the wine.

THE KING gets painfully from the saddle. The ride has killed him: has taken near the last of his strength. The King, walking to Reynald, dragging one leg, removes his turban. He drops it on the ground. He walks towards Reynald, and takes off his mask. We do not see The King's destroyed face. But Reynald does.

THE KING

This is Jerusalem.

(walks forward)

Will you give me the kiss of peace,
Reynald?

The King kisses Reynald. REYNALD, who decides he's as equal to kissing a leper as anything else on earth (and he's capable of all of it) kisses him back, as if he is kissing his own death, with relish.

The King beats him with a stick. Again, again, again, as GUY watches--terrified that Reynald might squeal. Guy looks up and sees:

SIBYLLA. He follows her eyeline to:

BALIAN.

And he knows. He unties a glove with his teeth.

PHYSICIANS grab the king, who faints. The KING is helped to his litter. The KING reaches out a hand to SIBYLLA...who recoils from him. The KING, a tear falling, closes his eyes.

REYNALD

(to TIBERIAS)

What are you looking at?

TIBERIAS

A dead man. Reynald Count of Chatillon you are arrested and condemned. Your castle of Kerak is taken by the King.

The KING is laid into his litter. The king gestures to BALIAN.

THE KING

If you continue as you are I shall make you Marshal of Jerusalem. What think you of that?

(CONTINUED)

Before Balian can respond, the KING'S LITTER is carried off.

SIBYLLA cannot join Balian in public; but she looks at him. GUY observes this. He looks from one to the other. SIBYLLA, noticing her husband, looks at GUY expressionlessly, and retires into an archway and disappears.

A KNIGHT
(still mounted,
moving through the
crowd)

Godfrey's son charged ten thousand
with a hundred men. Ten thousand,
with a hundred men!

GUY

Did he...

BALIAN is mobbed by peasants.

GUY (CONT'D)

Did he.

INT. SALADIN'S TENT ON THE ROAD TO DAMASCUS. NIGHT

SALADIN saturnine, watchful, delicate with his food, is dining with IMAD and a still-astonished MULLAH--senseless, bigoted, savage, protected from retribution only by his dotage.

MULLAH

Why did we retire? God could not
favor him! God alone determines the
results of battles.

SALADIN

The results of battles are truly
determined by God. But also by
preparation, numbers, the absence
of disease, and the availability of
water.

(kindly)

One cannot maintain a siege with
the enemy behind.

The MULLAH stares: heresy.

SALADIN (CONT'D)

How many battles did God win for
the Muslims before I came?

(a courtly pause)

Before, that is, God determined
that I should come.

(CONTINUED)

MULLAH

Few enough.
 (thinks about the
 reason)
 That is because we were sinful.

SALADIN

It is because you were unprepared.

MULLAH

If you think that way you shall not
 be king for long.

SALADIN

(drily)
 When I am not king I quake for
 Islam.

96 EXT. JERUSALEM. EVENING

96

The domed city is under a dust-storm. We hear churchbells
 and together with them the Muslim call to prayer.

97 INT. HALLWAY IN THE CASTLE. CONTINUOUS

97

GUY watches as his wife goes into her chambers and closes
 the doors.

98 INT. THE PALACE DUNGEON. CONTINUOUS.

98

REYNALD, bearded, very much a prisoner, is flung like a
 snarling lion into a dungeon. TORCHBEARERS and KING'S GUARD
 withdraw leaving all dark as the door clangs.

REYNALD

(in the full dark,
 listening to his own
 echo)

I am Reynald of Chatillon. I am
 Reynald of Chatillon!

99 INT. THE KING'S CHAMBERS. CONTINUOUS

99

TIBERIAS looks down at the dying king.

THE KING

Write to Saladin, and secure the
 peace.

(barely able to
 breathe)

Coronate the boy as my successor in
 the morning. Where is Balian.

(CONTINUED)

TIBERIAS

He is here.

BALIAN steps forward into the light. Uncertain.

THE KING

It is time to conclude my affairs.

(a beat)

You are a knight. But you are above
all is a peer of this kingdom. Do
you know what that means?

BALIAN shakes his head "no". TIBERIAS watches gravely.

THE KING (CONT'D)

I cannot die with there being a
chance of Guy taking power through
my sister. Would you marry Sibylla
were she free of Guy.

You couldn't say Balian isn't tempted.

BALIAN

And Guy?

THE KING

There is no time to go to Rome for
annulment.

TIBERIAS

He will be executed.

BALIAN

I cannot be the cause of that.

TIBERIAS

(abruptly)

You are not in your forge anymore,
boy. Do it.

The KING raises his hand for silence. TIBERIAS,
exasperated, leaves the room. THE KING watches BALIAN. Who
finally looks up.

BALIAN

A king may move a man, you said.
But the soul, you said, is the
man's.

THE KING

...Yes.

The KING (we can see it through the mouth-hole) smiles.

100 INT. THE HALL OUTSIDE THE KING'S ROOMS. MOMENTS LATER

100

TIBERIAS leans against the wall. BALIAN comes out OS. All on Tiberias as he realizes: Balian possibly isn't going to do it.

TIBERIAS

(coming closer)

It is the will of your king...

BALIAN

I have said no! And if you say it is his will that I go against my conscience you are mistaken.

TIBERIAS

I understand. I do. But if you do not marry Sibylla--

BALIAN

...And kill Guy...

TIBERIAS

(pleading)

Who is he that you save his life? He's a man who hates you, who has insulted you...I play the devil but only for the greater good. I play the Devil not to make you a murderer but the salvation of this kingdom. Compromise.

(Balian is backing away from him)

Jerusalem does not need "a perfect knight". Were you not told to serve the king?

BALIAN

I do so.

TIBERIAS

This is the world!

BALIAN

No. This is his kingdom. And it is one of conscience.

BALIAN moves on. He sees: GUY. GUY (who has not heard the previous) stares at him hollowly.

GUY

A hundred against ten thousand.

(CONTINUED)

100 CONTINUED:

100

Slow clapping from Guy. BALIAN gives the man whose life he has saved a look, and continues on his way.

101 INT. SIBYLLA'S CHAMBERS. DAY

101

The BOY is moving a lead knight across a "landscape" made by rumpled bedclothes. SIBYLLA is in a chair by the window, staring out at the desert. BELLS toll. A MAIDSERVANT comes in, and whispers to SIBYLLA. SIBYLLA goes into the hall.

102 INT. THE HALL. CONTINUOUS

102

TIBERIAS is there, hollow.

TIBERIAS

The king wants you. He is not well.

SIBYLLA

I cannot bear to look at him. He knows this. It does not mean I do not love him.

TIBERIAS

(having had enough of her bullshit on this subject)

Go.

Sibylla extricates her wrist from Tiberias' grip, and nods. It is something she knew she must do anyway.

103 INT. THE KING'S DEATHCHAMBER. MOMENTS LATER

103

The KING, wearing his mask, is breathing raggedly. SIBYLLA approaches, down the long room. The King's PHYSICIANS back away. She kneels beside her brother's bed, as if at a coffin at a wake.

SIBYLLA

What of Balian?

THE KING

He will not do it. It would mean the death of your husband.

SIBYLLA

(a desperate whisper)
Order him to do so. Please.

THE KING

(gently)
Would you want him on those terms?

SIBYLLA backs away. She begins to rush from the room.

(CONTINUED)

103 CONTINUED:

103

THE KING (CONT'D)

Remember me as I was.

SIBYLLA turns.

SIBYLLA

(in tears)

I do.

The mask moves: a nod.

104 EXT. BALIAN'S HOUSE. MOMENTS LATER

104

BALIAN hurls open the gates to the courtyard and enters. He kicks up stable-boys, and shouts to the house.

BALIAN

Awake!

ALMARIC comes out with a torch.

BALIAN (CONT'D)

We are returning to Ibelin. This house will be shut...

ALMARIC

My lord.

BALIAN

What?

BALIAN notices...

THE YOUNG MAN he freed from the Templars at Ibelin. He has a great wound on his head, and looks gravely, with a kind of reproach, at Balian. Balian knows before Almaric says it that:

ALMARIC

Ibelin has been destroyed.

BALIAN stares at him.

ALMARIC (CONT'D)

Destroyed.

BALIAN

How?

ALMARIC

Crusaders. They came from Germany. They killed everyone. The Muslims, the Jews, and the Christians.

(CONTINUED)

104 CONTINUED:

104

BALIAN in a rage gets a horse from the stable.

ALMARIC (CONT'D)

My lord there is nothing left.
Nothing. Nothing.

ALMARIC walks away with his torch and the broken boy.
BALIAN goes through the door into the courtyard.

105 INT. THE COURTYARD. CONTINUOUS

105

Moonlight in the pool. BALIAN sits down and looks at the water. PALMS blow overhead, reminiscent of Ibelin, when he lay there with Sibylla. Horse's hooves, OS, and someone comes in behind Balian. BALIAN looks around. It is SIBYLLA, cloaked.

SIBYLLA

I see a man who could be great,
unless he chooses to be "good".

BALIAN

You would sign your husband's death-
warrant to keep power.

SIBYLLA

I'd sign it for love.

BALIAN

What "love" is that?

SIBYLLA

(simply)

Love. Even lovers can murder.
Murderers can love.

A dark, extremely sexual moment. SIBYLLA very close.

SIBYLLA (CONT'D)

I will have power without Guy, or
with him. My son will be the king,
and I will rule. Do you think I
would allow my son to be managed by
Guy? Guy is not dead at your say-so
or my brother's, but at mine.

(a beat)

My grandfather took Jerusalem in
blood. I will keep it the same way,
or any way I can.

(her voice catches)

I am what I am. I offer you that,
and the world.

BALIAN takes her hand away from his face.

(CONTINUED)

105 CONTINUED:

105

SIBYLLA (CONT'D)
(smiling sadly, very
human, looking down)
You say no.

BALIAN
Do you think I'm like Guy, that I
would sell my soul?

SIBYLLA looks up at him.

SIBYLLA
There will be a day when you will
wish you had done a little evil, to
do a greater good.

She moves to go. BALIAN stares after her.

SIBYLLA (CONT'D)
(broken)
But if you wanted the world more, I
would want you less.

SIBYLLA exits.

106 EXT. ABOVE JERUSALEM. DAY

106

BALIAN has ridden out to think. He sits on a rise,
Jerusalem and the whole Holy land laid out before him. A
CREOSOTE BUSH stands nearby. BALIAN throws stone after
stone at its base. Another. Another. The third stone throws
a spark, and the bush explodes into flame: the burning bush
of Moses.

A shadow falls across Balian's back, and then we see the
Hospitaller standing behind, a silhouette against the
burning light.

BALIAN is in a frenzy of thought. He stares at the burning
bush.

HOSPITALLER
Do you love her?

BALIAN nods. He looks at the Hospitaller.

HOSPITALLER (CONT'D)
You've followed your conscience.
Your heart will mend.

The HOSPITALLER wanders away into mirage.

107 INT. SIBYLLA'S ROOMS. DAY

107

SIBYLLA is staring out the window into nothingness. The BOY, having a very good day, zooms around the room. He now has SALADIN'S DAGGER (Balian's gift). He cuts it through the air.

SIBYLLA

Who are you fighting?

BOY

(thinks it odd that
anyone would ask)

Guy.

He runs off. A MAIDSERVANT enters, carrying crystal on a tray. The boy caroms into her and crystal shatters on the floor. The BOY laughs, running around the maidservant who is trying to catch him. SIBYLLA sees (her heart stopping):

BLOODY FOOTPRINTS.

The BOY, in no pain, walks back and forth through the glass. Blood everywhere. Laughing.

SIBYLLA drops to her knees. The boy runs to her.

BOY (CONT'D)

Mother?

108 INT. SIBYLLA'S ROOMS. NIGHT

108

CANDLELIGHT. PHYSICIANS surround the bed of the BOY. A PIN is pressed into the boy's foot. No reaction. Another pin. The PHYSICIAN looks up in horror. He walks, the diagnosis in his face, to SIBYLLA. He nods.

PHYSICIAN

It is your brother's disease.

Sibylla looks up white and deadly.

SIBYLLA

Say a word of this, and you know
what I will do.

109 INT. THE KING'S DEATHCHAMBER. TWILIGHT

109

Move through the columned room. THE KING IS DEAD AND LIES IN STATE. SYBILLA kneels at the end of the room. She crosses herself, and stands to leave, but then as if in a dream moves towards the biered, masked, body. She reaches out trembling fingers and removes the mask.

(CONTINUED)

109 CONTINUED:

109

Here for the first time we see what leprosy has done to the king, her brother. She stumbles back, and drops the MASK on the stones. Then, as she looks up, it is a new Sibylla. One who will do what must be done. Whatever it may be. The TEMPLAR MASTER comes in.

TEMPLAR MASTER

The king is dead.

SIBYLLA

(tonelessly)

Long live the king.

110 INT. THE HOLY SEPULCHRE. DAY

110

The sick boy, kneeling, is crowned as king by the TEMPLAR MASTER as SIBYLLA looks on. There is a sense of foreboding, as if this ceremony is a funeral. A DRUM beats. The nobles kneel to the coronated CHILD. SIBYLLA, her face a mask, stares out over the crowd. All dumbshow, as if by players.

111 EXT. JERUSALEM STREETS. TWILIGHT

111

BELLS are tolling. Show the palace, lighted, above, and Sibylla's balcony.

112 INT. SIBYLLA'S ROOMS. LATER

112

SIBYLLA is washing and re-bandaging the boy's injured feet. As she winds the bandages she begins to cry. The BOY lies quietly, holding his LEAD KNIGHT. He looks curiously at his mother. Sibylla puts herself together, continues to wrap the boy's feet.

113 EXT. A PALACE BALCONY. TWILIGHT

113

SIBYLLA, the sleeping boy-king against her breast, stares across the city. She strokes the sick child's hair, singing a beautiful lullaby in French. She uncorks a phial. She pours it like medicine into the boy's ear. (We should know very well, by Sibylla's expression, that this is euthanasia for love, not murder for the throne). SIBYLLA holds him until he dies. The PHIAL rolls on the stone floor. SIBYLLA looks up at the sky...holding the dead boy.

DISSOLVE TO:

114 EXT. IBELIN. DAY

114

The WATERWHEEL is frozen, askew, in a dry pond. Both fort and village are deserted. Balian, alone, rides up the lonely road.

INTO IBELIN

(CONTINUED)

Shutters banging. All around lie the dead. VILLAGERS mummified skin, fluttering cloth, white bone.

BALIAN rides through his former home. He dismounts at the well to find...a dry bucket, a dry well. Lips cracked, he stares around at the deserted town. He hears: horses. Ahead of him:

A GERMAN knight (on foot) comes out of a ruin. Wearing a red cross. Another knight joins him, riding into sight, armed with a mace. SEVEN KNIGHTS in all come out of the ruin. BALIAN mounts.

KNIGHT ON FOOT

Wer sind Sie?

BALIAN walks his horse towards them. He draws his sword. The KNIGHT ON FOOT runs for his destrier, The MOUNTED GERMAN charges. Balian cuts him out of the saddle as the horses collide. Both horses go down. Balian lands on his feet and runs for the KNIGHT ON FOOT. Kills one, then another, then another. Dodging among the ruins. He catches the last knight, and beats down his guard with ferocity until the man is on his knees and disarmed.

KNIGHT ON FOOT (CONT'D)

Wer sind Sie?

BALIAN

The lord of this place.

BALIAN kills him.

LATER

BALIAN, staggering from thirst, enters the room that used to be his bedroom. PIGEONS fly from the cracks in the masonry. He stands covered in blood. The PALMS are rustling overhead. A memory of Sibylla. He stands and sees: SIBYLLA'S POMEGRANATE. Cockroaches are scuttling in and out of the rotten fruit.

115 INT. THE CHURCH OF THE HOLY SEPULCHER. DAY

115

SIBYLLA, nearly autistic, like a broken doll, is crowned by the PATRIARCH OF JERUSALEM. As the Patriarch backs away, GUY comes forward and lays his hand on his wife's shoulder. Brokenly she looks aside at Guy's ringed hand.

116 INT. THE CRYPT. LATER

116

SIBYLLA is praying by the boy's tomb. A sound behind her. GUY comes forward into the lamplight.

(CONTINUED)

116 CONTINUED:

116

SIBYLLA looks at him. GUY touches her face. SIBYLLA takes it. Needs the touch, even from him. An unexpected eroticism in it. GUY kneels, strokes her hair. Then grips it and twists.

GUY

You poisoned the wrong one.

TEMPLARS enter.

GUY (CONT'D)

Take her.

117 INT./EXT THE PALACE. (VARIOUS) LATER

117

MONTAGE. Psychotic, bearded TEMPLARS move through the palace, fast. CROSSBOWMEN take their places on the parapets. This is a coup d'etat.

118 INT. TIBERIAS' ROOMS. CONTINUOUS

118

TIBERIAS looks up as his door is kicked in and confronts:
PIKES.

119 INT. THE PALACE. CONTINUOUS

119

GUY, moving through the rooms. KNIGHTS and GUARDS wearing the Jerusalem cross are arrested.

TEMPLAR MASTER

If the Papal troops do not
surrender?

GUY

Kill them.

120 INT. THE DUNGEON. MOMENTS LATER

120

The door of Reynald's cell is opened. He stands up, expecting his death. Instead, he sees:

GUY.

GUY

I take Jerusalem.

REYNALD

(getting up, a bit
creaky)

I enjoy a coup d'etat.

TIBERIAS is brought in, under guard.

(CONTINUED)

GUY

(to Tiberias)

I won't confine you. I leave you your power, your knights. You may try civil war. But then the Muslims would see us divided and come in. And so much for Christ's kingdom. As they call it in other parts of the world. The only way to defend Jerusalem is to recognize me.

TIBERIAS

As king.

GUY

As king.
(a beat)

GUY (CONT'D)

I have the town, I have the palace, I have its guard, I have the Templars, I have the Patriarch, and he keeps the crown. It's done, Tiberias. I am Jerusalem.

121 EXT. IBELIN. DAY

121

BALIAN, hopelessly, is trying to clear the well. We can see that he has buried the dead. He hears a horse, and turns. The HOSPITALLER rides out of the mirage.

HOSPITALLER

(a beat)

This place is no more.

BALIAN

Everything I have ever had is "no more".

HOSPITALLER

The boy is dead. Guy is king.

BALIAN sits down on the stones of the well. He nods. Taking the punishment.

BALIAN

How is the boy dead?

HOSPITALLER

(not knowing how to phrase it)

He was... well when he went into his mother's rooms, and dead when he came out.

(CONTINUED)

121 CONTINUED:

121

BALIAN nearly falls.

HOSPITALLER (CONT'D)

Go to Jerusalem.

BALIAN

Why?

HOSPITALLER

(approaching anger)

You have a household of a hundred souls and more in your protection. Your duty is with your people. No matter who is king and who is not. Guy is the king you made.

BALIAN is stricken. The HOSPITALLER moves to go.

BALIAN

Where do you go?

HOSPITALLER

To pray.

BALIAN

For what?

HOSPITALLER

For strength to endure what is to come.

BALIAN

What is to come?

HOSPITALLER

The end of this world.

He disappears into the vast desert.

122 EXT. THE DAVID GATE. TWILIGHT

122

BALIAN rides into the city. He looks around at people throwing dust on themselves...mourning. He hears the bells. MUSLIMS have been slaughtered by drunken knights, who lie in the blood. He spurs his horse on.

123 INT. TIBERIAS' ROOMS. LATER

123

TIBERIAS enters and sees: BALIAN, on his balcony. BALIAN is looking out over the city.

TIBERIAS

Well. You see what you have done.
In the kingdom of your conscience.

(CONTINUED)

123 CONTINUED:

123

BALIAN is in hell.

BALIAN

Did she kill the boy?

TIBERIAS

I don't know. But the boy is dead.
And so is Jerusalem.

(shrugs)

It is an idea that died with the
King who conceived it.

124 INT. THE PALACE. NIGHT

124

Candles flare. The wails and cymbals of mourning continue all over Jerusalem. BALIAN moves along the hall. A YOUNG GUARD steps out at him...and after looking at the expression on Balian's face, steps back. BALIAN pushes through the door of Sibylla's rooms.

125 INT. SIBYLLA'S ROOMS. NIGHT

125

Lamplit. SIBYLLA is kneeling at the end of the room in her white shift. BALIAN charges forward and then stops.

SIBYLLA stands and turns. BALIAN sees:

THE KING'S MASK.

He recoils. The MASKED FIGURE comes closer. Whatever Balian intended to say is gone.

SIBYLLA

What do you see?

BALIAN

...Madness.

SIBYLLA

You see a mask. A mask is not the truth. Do you want the truth?

After a long interval, BALIAN with shaking fingers reaches out and removes the mask. (Sibylla's fingers remain on it). Sibylla's beautiful face is ghastly.

SIBYLLA (CONT'D)

Ask it. 'Did you poison the boy'?

BALIAN nods, asking silently.

SIBYLLA (CONT'D)

I poisoned my son.

(CONTINUED)

125 CONTINUED:

125

BALIAN, as if confronted by a vampire, draws his dagger. SIBYLLA grabs the dagger and pulls it towards her throat. BALIAN has to fight to pull it back.

SIBYLLA (CONT'D)

Do it.

BALIAN

No.

The DAGGER clatters on the stones.

SIBYLLA

(as bravely as possible)

He had my brother's disease.

SIBYLLA collapses. BALIAN stands over her, and after a moment...helps her to feet and after a moment holds her. They hold each other, each staring off into space. BALIAN takes the ring from around his neck and--as Sibylla sits down--drops it in her lap and leaves.

SIBYLLA (CONT'D)

(to herself)

There's no happiness after what I have done. No life.

The door closes OS.

126 EXT. THE DESERT. DAY

126

REYNALD, armor covered with blood, stands and surveys: A SLAUGHTERED MUSLIM CARAVAN. Silks are being dragged from bundles. Purses are being cut from dead Saracens. REYNALD walks through the scene of slaughter. MUSLIM WOMEN are being stripped and raped. REYNALD walks as if stunned and ashamed, but still he has done what he has done. Saladin was right: REYNALD quite simply cannot help himself.

REYNALD

I am what I am. Someone has to be.

He goes up to a captured MUSLIM WOMAN and...

Unveils her. Eyes swerve up.

KNIGHT

That is Saladin's sister.

REYNALD

(drawing dagger)

I know.

127 EXT. DAMASCUS. DAY

127

A GREAT PUBLIC SQUARE, filled with tens and tens of thousands of Muslim men. They are acclaiming SALADIN but using the words to praise God. SALADIN raises his palm and the ALLAH is louder. In a fury Saladin moves away from his balcony and into his palace.

128 INT. THE PALACE IN DAMASCUS. CONTINUOUS

128

IMAD is looking at his master with a kind of fear.

SALADIN

As they slaughtered the Muslims
when they took Jerusalem so will
they die.

SALADIN cuts his palm; and with a finger puts a streak of blood on his head.

129 INT. THE THRONE ROOM IN JERUSALEM. NIGHT

129

GUY is drinking. Not looking very much like being King was his best idea. He is listening to a SARACEN MESSENGER.

SARACEN MESSENGER

The Sultan will not talk terms. He means to try the Kingdom in the greatest wager of battle yet seen in this land. The Sultan finds us divided. The Sultan says that Jerusalem has now a false king. The Sultan demands the surrender of Jerusalem.

GUY

Does he.

The SARACEN MESSENGER nods.

SARACEN MESSENGER

What answer do you return to Saladin?

GUY takes out his dagger.

GUY

This.

He kills the SARACEN MESSENGER, driving point through the underjaw and into the brain. He lets the body fall.

(CONTINUED)

129 CONTINUED:

129

GUY (CONT'D)

Send the head to Damascus. Where is
my wife?

(no answer from the
court)

WHERE IS MY WIFE?

Patriarch of Jerusalem

(to Guy alone)

She still sits with the boy in his
crypt. She will not come out.

GUY

As she likes. She's served her
purposes. Assemble the army.

130 EXT. THE CAMP OUTSIDE THE WALLS OF JERUSALEM. DAY

130

The Army is assembled. The BANNER OF THE HOLY CROSS flies
near GUY'S RED TENT.

131 INT. GUY'S RED TENT. DAY

131

An open-sided affair, a full view of the camp. GUY has
arranged himself in a thronelike chair at the end of 'his
council table. TIBERIAS enters, and stares at Guy in the
half-light.

GUY

Tiberias.

Tiberias nods.

A commotion outside. GUY looks up and we see:

BALIAN riding in with his hundred knights. He rides up to
the tent, dismounts, and enters. He and Guy have a private
word. Everyone watching, but not able to hear.

GUY (CONT'D)

You defend me?

BALIAN

The kingdom.

GUY

What is a kingdom but its king?

BALIAN

The people who endure him.

GUY would have a response for Balian, but more NOBLES are
entering the tent. Guy goes back to the end of the table.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

GUY

We are pleased to have you with us in this council of war. There are those among you who may disagree with our succession but it is war and I...am the king.

(looks up nervously)

We march in the morning. What say this council?

ALMOST ALL

Aye.

BALIAN

No.

TIBERIAS looks up and smiles. GUY is not smiling.

GUY

No?

BALIAN

This army must not move away from water.

TIBERIAS

What he says is true. If you march in the heat of this season, you will kill this army.

BALIAN

Retire within the walls of Jerusalem, prepare the defenses, and meet Saladin here. You have a chance to hold the city. But if we move against him, this army will be destroyed.

GUY

When I wish a blacksmith as the Marshal of Jerusalem I will let him know. Get out. You will not join this army.

BALIAN has no choice but to do so. He goes.

TIBERIAS

I approve his advice, Guy. Saladin wants you to come out. He is waiting for you to make that mistake. And he knows his man.

(CONTINUED)

131 CONTINUED: (2)

131

TEMPLAR MASTER

Tiberias is a traitor. Do not be deceived. We should meet the enemies of God.

GUY

So we shall.

TIBERIAS

(standing)

Then you do so without my knights.

GUY

Then I will have the glory. You've had yours, years and years ago. He's had his...it's time for mine.

132 EXT. THE CAMP OUTSIDE THE WALLS OF JERUSALEM. MOMENTS LATER 132

TIBERIAS joins BALIAN, and they walk towards the city gates, moving through the ARMY.

TIBERIAS

When Saladin destroys this army he will come for Jerusalem. The war will be decided here on these walls. We must begin to shape the defenses.

BALIAN nods. He sees: the HOSPITALLER, mounted, among other knights of his order.

BALIAN

You go with them?

133 The HOSPITALLER nods. 133

HOSPITALLER

I must go with my Order. What God has asked of you, is in your heart. What God has asked of me is death. Have I lived? Will you remember me?

BALIAN nods. Responding to an order OS the HOSPITALLER turns horse and rides off with the other knights.

134 INT. THE PALACE. NIGHT 134

BALIAN moves along the hall. The PATRIARCH sees him.

PATRIARCH

This is no place for you.

(CONTINUED)

BALIAN

(grabs the Patriarch
by the throat)

Open your armory. Get your keys.

PATRIARCH

You are not entitled.

GUARDS come out, Pikes leveled at Balian. A sound. SIBYLLA stands in the hall. Cloaked, in black. She has come up from the tomb.

SIBYLLA

You will open the armory.

PATRIARCH

My lady, that is the church's property.

SIBYLLA

And this is Christ's kingdom. Isn't it?

PATRIARCH

My lady...

SIBYLLA stares at Balian. He looks back at her.

SIBYLLA

(to the Patriarch,
though always
looking at Balian)

I am the Queen of Jerusalem. The king is absent... and he is no king.

SIBYLLA goes to Balian.

SIBYLLA (CONT'D)

Would you kneel before me, if I asked? I do not demand. I ask.

BALIAN does so. More people have come to watch.

SIBYLLA (CONT'D)

I Sibylla de Saluces, right Queen of Jerusalem, declare Balian of Ibelin Marshall of the Kingdom of Jerusalem. You have my warrant.

BALIAN nods. SIBYLLA kneels with him.

(CONTINUED)

134 CONTINUED: (2)

134

SIBYLLA (CONT'D)
 (to Balian alone)
 Save the people from what I have
 done.

BALIAN
 I will.

SIBYLLA nods, satisfied, and then stands and moves down the
 hall, candle-bearers going with her.

135 EXT. JERUSALEM. VARIOUS. DAY

135

MONTAGE of BALIAN, unarmored, directing the arrangement of
 defenses. A broken wall swarming with MASONS. CITIZENS are
 armed with PIKES and SPEARS. BALIAN supervises the
 placement of a BALLISTA. ETC, ETC.

136 EXT. PALACE BALCONY. CONTINUOUS

136

SIBYLLA watches from a high window. The PATRIARCH OF
 JERUSALEM stands near her. She turns.

PATRIARCH
 (his revenge for the
 previous night)
 I have not heard your confession.
 Not this month.

SIBYLLA stares at the Patriarch. Then continues on her way.
 She keeps her composure until she is out of sight, and then
 falls crying to her knees.

137 EXT. THE DESERT. DAY

137

A HUGE SHOT of the desert. At a distance of about a mile,
 we see the ARMY OF JERUSALEM. It is straggling across the
 plain, below two hills understood to be the Horns of
 Hattin. It is no fine "hedgehog" but a rabble baking in the
 sun. Into the shot, a BOOTED FOOT in a stirrup. REVERSE IT
 to reveal:

SALADIN. He is staring, veiled across. Beside him, IMAD.
 The MULLAH rides up.

MULLAH
 God wills it.

SALADIN nods. MUSLIM HORSE ride up the hill.

138 EXT. THE WALLS OF JERUSALEM. TWILIGHT

138

TIBERIAS, staring intently out into the desert, comes along to find BALIAN, sitting rigidly on the ramparts, drinking water from a skin.

BALIAN

Can you sense it?

BALIAN stands and looks out into the desert himself.

TIBERIAS

I know at least that no riders have come...

BALIAN nods.

139 EXT. HATTIN. DAY

139

In THICK SMOKE (obscuring distances), the aftermath of the battle. Dead horses and men, tangled with their enemies. Saracens of the lower classes brawl over purses, arms. (This was, and still is, the greatest Muslim victory of all time), and the Saracens know it: they have smashed not only the army of Jerusalem but the Crusades). The HOLY CROSS is surrounded, spat on, beaten with sticks, carried upside-down. SALADIN, stone-faced, walks over the battlefield. IMAD is with him.

SALADIN

Kill the knights of the religious orders.

IMAD looks taken aback.

SALADIN (CONT'D)

They are fanatics and no peace will ever be made with them. They will think one thing their entire lives, and they will never stop thinking it.

(bitterly, staring
across the
battlefield)

Kill them.

SALADIN walks on through the smoke.

140 EXT. HATTIN. LATER

140

The TEMPLARS and HOSPITALLERS are being butchered one by one by MULLAHS. Most of the holy knights make the sign of the cross and accept martyrdom.

(CONTINUED)

140 CONTINUED:

140

Some try to run, an unseemly scrambling as the Saracens scream. Our HOSPITALLER is brought forward onto the bloody ground.

MULLAH

There is no god but God.

The HOSPITALLER looks up at his executioner and smiles.

HOSPITALLER

I know.

The MULLAH after a moment of confusion slashes down.

141 EXT. THE WALLS OF JERUSALEM. CONTINUOUS

141

BALIAN lowers his head. Wind and dust. As if he is aware of what has happened. He is still bowing when Tiberias' hand touches his shoulder.

TIBERIAS

Come on.

142 INT. SALADIN'S TENT. LATER

142

CLOSE DETAIL: SNOW is scooped into a cup, and water poured into it. SALADIN takes the cup and with his own hands gives it to --GUY, who drinks, not greedily, suspecting what the hospitality means: his life. He hands the cup, thoughtlessly, sideways to REYNALD, who also knows what the cup means...and that neither the cup nor what it means was meant for him.

SALADIN

(quietly)

I did not give the cup to Reynald.

REYNALD

(undisturbed, drinks
the last drop)

I drink water for what it is.

SALADIN stabs the smiling REYNALD in the throat. Blood gushes out. REYNALD pitches forward on his face. SALADIN kneels beside the dying and choking REYNALD. SALADIN touches his fingers in REYNALD's blood and puts a mark in blood upon his own forehead. REYNALD is dragged out and (as the crowd screams) butchered. GUY, on reflection, is more bitter at the nature of his apparent end than afraid of it. He looks up bravely at Saladin. SALADIN (to GUY'S relief) hands his bloody scimitar to IMAD.

(CONTINUED)

142 CONTINUED:

142

SALADIN
 (bending to GUY'S
 ear)

A king does not kill a king.

This does not make Guy (who is about as much of a king as I am) less nervous. GUY knows he has destroyed the world. Eyes luminous in smoke blackened face.

143 EXT. THE DESERT. MORNING

143

TIBERIAS and BALIAN are galloping with a handful of men in Godfrey's livery. BALIAN reins in, staring ahead. He raises his arm, and points.

BALIAN

There.

THEIR POV:

THE SKY IS BLACK WITH VULTURES.

They ride slowly on, and as they crest a hill, we see, as they do:

THE BATTLEGROUND. Ten thousand men lie dead. Dead horses and men are torn by vultures. Saladin's army has moved on. BALIAN and TIBERIAS stare. A mound of executed Templars and Hospitallers has attracted the most vultures.

TIBERIAS slowly makes the sign of the cross. He lowers his head. When he raises his face, he is a new man.

TIBERIAS

I have given Jerusalem my whole
 life. All.

(wearily)

There is no more.

BALIAN

Tiberias...

TIBERIAS takes hold of the cross on his surcoat and tears it off. He rides a little to the side, staring towards the 10,000 dead.

TIBERIAS

First I thought I fought for God.
 Then I realized I fought for money
 and land. And then I was ashamed.

BALIAN

Tiberias!

(CONTINUED)

TIBERIAS looks at him as if for a moment he does not recognize him.

TIBERIAS

There is no more "Jerusalem". I go to Cyprus. Will you come.

BALIAN

No.

TIBERIAS

Saladin must move his army from water to water. You have four days. Perhaps five. God be with you. You are the son of your father. Be without fear. God does love you. He has finished with me.

BALIAN takes his hand. TIBERIAS rides off. After him, with looks of apology at BALIAN, so do, one by one, all the men. Balian sits his horse alone.

144 EXT. THE DESERT. DAY

144

BALIAN is riding back, hard, to Jerusalem. Out of the low ground before him come--twenty MUSLIM RIDERS, all in white, as if in death-shrouds. BALIAN turns his horse to the right (nearly putting the animal down), and sees: MORE WHITE RIDERS. Within an instant he is surrounded: and we've seen these particular riders before. SALADIN'S GUARD. BALIAN does not bother drawing a weapon: there's no point. He looks for a breakout as the circle closes...but then he sees: SALADIN. SALADIN rides forward, holding up his palm. The men look at each other. Horses circling. SALADIN is veiled, unreadable.

SALADIN

I knew your father.

(a beat)

He nearly killed me in the Lebanon. On a great horse he crashed through my guard, and scattered them. He was not five paces from me when an arrow struck through the eye of his horse. I knew his face...and his quality. And you...I did not know he had a son.

BALIAN

He did. He does.

WHITE RIDERS come closer. SALADIN spurs forward and, politely, disarms BALIAN, taking Godfrey's sword.

(CONTINUED)

SALADIN

If you promise to fight no more
against the Muslims, you may go.

BALIAN

If you march on Jerusalem I cannot
promise that.

SALADIN

I do march on Jerusalem. I will
take it as it was taken, in blood.
My people will not have less. I do
march on Jerusalem.

BALIAN

Then I cannot promise not to fight
you.

SALADIN

(very interested in
this man)

Your choice is death, or that
promise.

BALIAN

I cannot promise.

SALADIN

Then your sentence is death.

BALIAN waits for it. Instead of death his is given:
GODFREY'S SWORD.

SALADIN (CONT'D)

Every man dies. Farewell.
(he mounts)

I will take Jerusalem. In blood.

BALIAN

I will defend.

SALADIN nods, and canters away, his guard galloping after,
leaving Balian in the dust.

145 EXT. THE WALLS OF JERUSALEM. DAY

145

MANGONELS are being hoisted to the towers by Papal troops.
A GATE is being blocked up by Masons, etc. MONTAGE of SIEGE
PREPARATIONS, supervised by Balian.

146 EXT. JERUSALEM. A SQUARE. TWILIGHT

146

CATTLE and FOOD are coming into the town. BALIAN, in a fury, is checking his organized defences. ARMS are being distributed.

BALIAN

The Pope's archers will hold the David Gate and wall... have you among you engineers?

PAPAL KNIGHT

None.

BALIAN

Arm your servants from the palace. Take all you need.

PATRIARCH OF JERUSALEM

We must quit the city.

BALIAN

And be massacred on the open road? Saladin's cavalry is between us and the sea.

PATRIARCH OF JERUSALEM

(dancing after
Balian)

We have not enough knights.

BALIAN

Truly?

BALIAN turns to a PEASANT BOY, perhaps of 16.

BALIAN (CONT'D)

What is your condition?

BOY

I am a servant to the Patriarch.

PATRIARCH OF JERUSALEM

You are a slave. That is my slave!

BALIAN

Kneel.

The BOY kneels.

BALIAN (CONT'D)

Be without fear in the face of your enemies. Be brave and upright, that God may love thee.

(MORE)

(CONTINUED)

146 CONTINUED:

146

BALIAN (CONT'D)

Speak the truth even if it leads to
your death. Be a true knight. That
is your oath.

(smacks the boy as
Godfrey smacked him)

And that's so you remember it.

The BOY can't believe it. BALIAN charges on. The PATRIARCH
OF JERUSALEM staring after him.

BALIAN (CONT'D)

(roaring at the rest
of the CROWD)

Every man of arms or capable of
bearing them, kneel.

The CROWD kneels, BOYS, SERGEANTS, MERCHANTS, OLD PEASANTS.

PATRIARCH OF JERUSALEM

(nearly crying,
grabbing Balian,
who's going to
knight everybody)

Does making a man a knight make him
fight better?

BALIAN is surprised by the question.

BALIAN

(very simply)

Yes.

DISSOLVE TO:

147 EXT. JERUSALEM. DAWN

147

Tents are everywhere on the hills. The SARACEN ARMY is
surrounding the city--at prayer. Hundreds of thousands of
men bow and vocalize in unison.

ARCHERS AND SPEARMEN stare out from the walls at the
enormous enemy.

BALIAN stands on the walls, at a tower. As prayer stops...

A solitary figure becomes distinct on a hill:

SALADIN. He raises his palm.

BALIAN, on the wall, does the same.

PATRIARCH

For God's sake, talk terms.

(CONTINUED)

BALIAN
(moving along the
"line")

There are none.

PATRIARCH
One may convert to Islam, and
repent later. It can be done. There
is dispensation in these cases...

We hear tinkling bells, and laughter.

GUY, tied backwards on a tiny donkey, with a conical dunce cap on his head (a crown of thorns?), is driven on display along the front of the Muslim Army, below the walls of Jerusalem. He keeps his dignity as much as possible.

BALIAN now with ALMARIC watches from the walls.

MOMENTS LATER

SALADIN, mounted, rides onto a hill. IMAD with him.

IMAD
Mercy.

SALADIN
I have sworn otherwise. None.

MUSLIM INFANTRY moves forward, slowly, and then at a run.

CROSSBOWMEN slaughter the men below.

ENGINES FIRE, and as the MUSLIM ARMY screams and Saracen drums beat, the SIEGE TOWER, ARCHERS firing from its platform, is pushed towards the wall. It has caught fire in two or three places. LADDERMEN run alongside the tower. SPRAYS OF STONE from Mangonels tear through the Saracens and rock the tower.

148 EXT. THE WALLS OF JERUSALEM. LATER

148

DEFENDERS wait. CROSSBOWMEN fire and FLAMING ARROWS are fired. BALIAN watches. The SIEGE TOWER comes within ten feet of the wall and as a great RAMP descends, hundreds of MUSLIMS charge forward into PIKEMEN. They are staved off.

BALIAN
Now!

From a TOWER to the side, two GRAPNELS are thrown. Were it not Balian the artificer managing things, this may or may not have been effective, but the instant the grapnels catch (and are hand-tightened), BALIAN waves his arm.

(CONTINUED)

148 CONTINUED:

148

The two lines run to a DERRICK which is holding up a stone the size of a small cottage. A line is cut (killing, as it snaps, the man who cut it), and the weight of the stone jerks the SIEGE TOWER to pieces. It literally explodes. Debris, burning beams, knock MUSLIM LADDERMEN off the walls. The wreckage collapses back on the infantry tightly packed behind the tower, killing scores.

SPEARMEN knock over the ladders that have been gotten up.

BALIAN, moving through smoke, waves his arm, and

GREEK FIRE is flung straight down into the infantry exposed by the tower's collapse. As hundreds of Saracens burn...

CROSSBOWMEN en masse come forward to crowd the walls and begin to slaughter the retiring Saracens.

149 EXT. ANOTHER WALL OF JERUSALEM. CONTINUOUS

149

As MUSLIMS in the thousands mass with ladders beneath another wall....GREAT WOODEN TRAYS running the length of the wall are levered up by a hundred men, and pour stones down, smashing thousands of tightly-massed men (the lumber follows, tumbling down). As a SECOND WAVE of Saracens presses forward over the smashed men, GREEK FIRE jets from pipes fixed to the walls, igniting men as well as the smashed wooden trays. Men on fire run everywhere, and fall burning.

150 EXT. A LESSER GATE OF JERUSALEM. CONTINUOUS

150

As MUSLIMS advance, tens, scores, fall into concealed killing pits of sharpened stakes, and even as they are surprised by them...begin to reconsider the assault, an archer fires a flaming arrow into...A FIELD OF PITCH. An area of about an acre has been covered with pitch and straw and dirt. It goes up like an oil-rig fire, fierce enough to drive defenders back from the walls. This part of the Muslim army is entirely incinerated.

BALIAN on the wall watches as from the three attacked sides of the city....

MUSLIMS withdraw, defeated.

151 EXT. JERUSALEM. NIGHT

151

CATAPULTS are being worked non-stop by the Saracens, and the walls are being struck, hard. The walls are coming down.

152 EXT. JERUSALEM. DAY

152

Concentrated catapult fire is collapsing a wall. It suddenly shivers down, from the bottom, the stone pouring out into a great apron. And the MUSLIM ARMY is ready.

SALADIN rides along the front of his force.

SALADIN

Not one alive. Not one.

MUSLIMS

(advancing)

Allah!

153 EXT. INSIDE THE BROKEN WALL. CONTINUOUS

153

A SHIELD WALL forms, BALIAN directing it. Defenders (all the knights there are, including the first BOY made Knight) go shield to shield. ARCHERS and CROSSBOWMEN take elevated positions behind. As the Muslim army of thousands advances at a run, ready to kill the Christians at a single rush, BALIAN looks to his left in the shield wall and sees:

THE GRAVEDIGGER from the first scene. He now wears armor, silks, and looks like he might have done some fighting in the past years. He has got to the Holy Land by himself and made himself a noble.

GRAVEDIGGER

Master Blacksmith.

BALIAN

Master Gravedigger. You've come to the right place.

The SARACEN ARCHERS, coming up closer, fire a sky-blackening volley of arrows and charge, screaming Allah. This is their chance: they will take Jerusalem at this rush and are not afraid of martyrdom. No arrows oppose them: merely the waiting knights in the broken wall. But they break on the line, hacked down, man after man, by the heavily armored knights. There is no need to scream keep the line: the line is kept, by the knights and the "made knights" with them. Dissolve in the fighting to:

154 EXT. THE BREACH IN THE WALL. DAWN

154

BALIAN, blood-covered and thirsty, wakes from a doze. KNIGHTS are leaning on their swords, or lying on the ground, coughing.

CRANE UP TO REVEAL:

(CONTINUED)

The line of defense is marked by immense piles of dead. Saracens tangled with Europeans inside the breach in the wall. Hundreds of dead: thousands perhaps. The defense of the breach has nearly killed Saladin's infantry.

BALIAN wanders, stumbling, among the bodies.

The GRAVEDIGGER lies dead, hacked across the face.

BALIAN

Remember me in France.

ON SOUND (as Balian looks at the butchery by daylight):

The MUSLIM ARMY is called to prayer.

From the walls of Jerusalem we see the whole army praying.

ALMARIC

(covered with blood)

They will ask for terms. They will ask for terms.

155 EXT. BEFORE SALADIN'S TENT. DAY

155

Saladin waits mildly as BALIAN comes through the crowd, escorted. As he comes through: the Arabs look at him with interest, many salaaming. BALIAN, awkwardly, returns the salaam. GUY, no longer tied to the donkey, is being treated as Saladin's guest. Rubbing his wrists and staring at Balian with a strange look of hatred and admiration mixed.

SALADIN

We must discuss Jerusalem. It's King

(nods at Guy)

has surrendered it but there seems to be a difficulty.

BALIAN

You offered no quarter and we ask none. What has changed?

SALADIN

Will you yield the city?

BALIAN

Before I lose it I will burn it to the ground. Your holy places. Ours. Every last thing in Jerusalem that drives men mad.

(CONTINUED)

SALADIN

I wonder if it would not be better
if you did.

(looks reflectively
at the city)
You will destroy it?

BALIAN

Every stone. And every Christian
knight you kill will take ten
Saracens with him. You will kill
your army here and never raise
another. I swear to God that to
take this city will be the end of
you.

SALADIN

You cannot stand another assault.

BALIAN

Make one, and we will see.

GUY is watching, fascinated, what he might have been.

SALADIN

Your city is full of women, and
children. There will be disease,
soon, from the dead. If my army
will die, and so will your city.

BALIAN

(swallows, knowing
that it is true)
Do you offer terms? I ask none.

SALADIN walks apart. Long pause. Then he turns.

SALADIN

I will give every soul safe-conduct
to Christian lands. Every soul. The
women, the children, the old, and
all your knights and soldiers. Your
Queen. Your King...

(GUY tenses)

I leave to what God will make of
him.

MULLAHS object. BALIAN staring at SALADIN. GUY stares at
Balian with hatred.

SALADIN (CONT'D)

No one will be robbed or harmed, I
swear to God.

(CONTINUED)

155 CONTINUED: (2)

155

BALIAN

Godfrey of Bouillon butchered every Muslim within the walls when he took this city.

SALADIN

I am not him. I am Saladin.

BALIAN

Then on these terms I surrender Jerusalem.

156 EXT. INSIDE THE WALLS OF JERUSALEM. LATER

156

MUSLIMS have taken control of the DAVID GATE and their flag flies there. Inhabitants of the city cheer Balian, mobbing him, falling to kiss his hand. By his defense he has saved their lives. MUSLIMS, respectfully, pass through the crowd.

157 EXT. THE PALACE IN JERUSALEM. DAY

157

MUSLIM CLERKS are visible within a room, writing. BALIAN, sitting on a parapet, looking out at the city. MUSLIM FLAGS fly on every pinnacle. SALADIN sits beside him. BALIAN looks at Saladin. Saladin gives him a cup of water. Balian drinks.

SALADIN

So.

BALIAN inhales; breathes. What remains for him in life is uncertain. He sets down the cup.

SALADIN (CONT'D)

You would have killed my army. I wish to be clear.

(BALIAN nods)

I admire the Europeans. It is said, and I have heard this, that I have learned chivalry from them.

BALIAN smiles bitterly. Saladin smiles as well.

SALADIN (CONT'D)

The trouble with Europeans is that Christianity, and kindness, and even decency, if I may say so, are so infrequent among you that you must give these things an extraordinary name. "Chivalry". It is like faith. When it is true it is good. As it is in you.

Starts to go.

(CONTINUED)

157 CONTINUED:

157

BALIAN

What is Jerusalem worth?

SALADIN

Nothing.

SALADIN is walking back into the palace.

SALADIN (CONT'D)

Everything.

158 EXT. THE PALACE ENTRANCE. DAY

158

In the square before the palace Christians with their goods loaded are forming caravans. BALIAN, moving among them, mounted, suddenly looks around as...

GUY, fully armed, leaps a destrier over some baggage and slams at a gallop into Balian's horse. BALIAN's horse goes down screaming. BALIAN rolls in the dust. Guy rides around him.

GUY

They say now you are beloved by
God.

(false "pious" face,
eyes heavenward)

How much of that am I to take?
There is already a song about
Jerusalem and its false and wicked
king. Was that why I was born?

BALIAN

You should have asked before now
why you were born.

GUY

A bastard may not challenge a man
of legitimate birth. But that's all
right, because I'm challenging you.

BALIAN

What do you charge me with?

GUY

(insouciantly)

Fight, or I'll kill you where you
stand.

BALIAN gets onto his frightened, damaged horse.

GUY (CONT'D)

(CONTINUED)

They would have tried to marry her
to a bucket, or a Saracen if it
would have kept their world intact.
I don't mind that you fucked her,
for are we not all French...but...

(merely smiles,
tightens a lace of
his glove with his
teeth)

I am not a bad man. I am only a man
making my way. I am simply making
my way. As all men are...except for
you. The perfect knight. Do you
think you are Galahad? Do you? Do
you?

BALIAN

I know I am not the man who took a
throne by murder and lost
Jerusalem.

GUY ("enough") rides out and takes a battle-axe from a
retainer, reaching down, slipping his gauntlet through the
loop on the shaft. BALIAN unships a mace. They charge each
other. BALIAN gets his shield under a blow of the axe and
the shield explodes in splinters and he loses his mace. GUY
turns his destrier into Balian's, and Balian's horse is
plowed down. BALIAN stands away from the fallen horse,
eludes a blow of the axe, is knocked down by the horse.

GUY prepares to ride him down. Balian takes the "high
guard"--hopelessly.

KNIGHT (O.S.)

Dismount and fight him.

GUY looks around.

A CHORUS OF KNIGHTS

Dismount and fight him.

GUY realizes he must. He dismounts, fluidly. He draws his
sword. BALIAN waits for him. GUY moves like lightning and
cuts a gash in Balian's face. BALIAN waits. In a quick
passage, Guy disarms Balian, who scrambles and picks up his
sword again. There is no question: Guy is state of the art.

BALIAN stands waiting. GUY, his face blackening, moves to
kill him. BALIAN, outclassed, has his mail slashed through--
a blow that puts him on his knee. GUY raises his sword and
runs at Balian for the kill. BALIAN gets his guard up, and
stands under it.

(CONTINUED)

158 CONTINUED: (2)

158

The Men collide, and GUY, spinning away, eludes a backswing, catches the blade with his hand, drives it down into the ground, and returns a blow that would have cut off Balian's head--except that Balian parries it, surprising GUY.

KNIGHTS and SARACEN KNIGHTS crowd close, shouting. They know their sport: and out of nowhere they are at the World Cup. GUY, wide eyed, really lays in--state of the art--and Balian, clumsily, meets every blow. The two men go at it for sixty seconds straight in an exhausting high speed flurry of attacks and defenses which includes blows in the face with gloved fists. GUY with a broken nose, breathing hard (presumably seeing stars), takes a low guard, and BALIAN, wounded twice, takes a high one.

A SARACEN KNIGHT makes a detailed bet with a CHRISTIAN ONE.

159 EXT. "DAVID STREET". CONTINUOUS

159

The fight moves (as Balian hacks down at Guy and Guy retires) into the streets of Jerusalem. (Down David Street towards the Latin money exchange). GUY is still surprised by the blood coming from his nose and is repelling Balian almost idly. BALIAN misses a blow and crashes into a wall. Guy's sword striking where Balian's head was a moment before sprays sparks. BALIAN lunges and GUY, letting him pass, crashes the pommel of his sword down on the back of his head. BALIAN sprawls on the cobbles. GUY goes after him, cuts, misses, is wounded in the side by a thrust. The blood comes in its sparkling way through the mail. GUY parries a second blow and stabs BALIAN (we cannot tell where or how badly) and attacks violently, relentlessly. The crowd follows the exhausted fighters, who face each other, bleeding, breathless, barely on their feet.

GUY

Water.

It is given him in a skin by one of his knights as well as a fresh, much larger, armor-cracking, sword.

SALADIN, on his horse, watches BALIAN, who is staggering in the dust.

Refreshed, GUY advances on Balian, who standing above at the top of the hill (against the reddening west) takes the "high guard".

GUY goes forward purposefully, to kill him.

BALIAN, staggering, waits. GUY cuts low, Balian, completely out of breath, barely parries. GUY, pale, advances to kill him. BALIAN waits, at the high guard.

(CONTINUED)

159 CONTINUED:

159

BALIAN is cut, badly, in the next pass. BALIAN takes the "high guard" again. He watches Guy (which is to say his death) advance.

GUY (CONT'D)

(mocking)

"Be brave and upright that God may love thee. Be without fear in the face of your enemies." We've all heard the words. How dare you believe them. How dare you.

GUY goes for the kill. It's a move we've seen before. BALIAN parries as he once did with Odo but instead of losing his sword to the riposte (as he did long ago in the French wood) he meets it, and cuts Guy across the middle.

GUY falls to his knees, a (we think) dead man. He falls to his knees and looks up at: BALIAN, above him.

GUY (CONT'D)

Do it.

BALIAN looks up and sees: SIBYLLA, on a balcony. Today, again, he has to choose.

GUY (CONT'D)

(spitting blood)

Do it.

BALIAN holds his sword aside, at arms length. He turns away. GUY tries to arm himself again and, crying, is prevented by his own knights. While grappling for his sword in the scrum he faints from loss of blood. BALIAN staggers along the hilltop and falls. GUY'S KNIGHTS stand with their weapons drawn. They go to Balian, GIRAUT with water.

GIRAUT

Lie where you are.

160 INT. THE PALACE. DAY

160

BALIAN, his wounds bound by MUSLIM PHYSICIANS, stands. The PHYSICIANS back away respectfully. He moves into:

161 INT. THE CORRIDOR. CONTINUOUS

161

MUSLIMS are moving through the palace, taking possession. BALIAN looks into TIBERIAS' ROOM. The room is now all Muslim CLERKS, going through papers. BALIAN moves along.

162 INT. SIBYLLA'S ROOMS. MOMENTS LATER 162

SIBYLLA is sitting before a dressing-mirror. A distorting sheet of polished metal. Staring at an image which is unclear. She is aware of Balian behind her.

She stands, and looks at him. BALIAN stares at her: a huge and irreparable gulf between them. Unbridgeable distance. BALIAN accepts it. He gives her the LEAD KNIGHT. She places it back in his hand.

BALIAN, after a long look at her, goes.

SIBYLLA

God bless you.

BALIAN has come to the end of the room. He hesitates; and then goes out through the curtains. As his footsteps go, SIBYLLA picks up a knife from her dressing table. As we think she means herself harm with it...she cuts off a part of her hair. Then continues cutting.

163 EXT. GOLGOTHA. DAY 163

BALIAN stands where he buried his wife's cross and scrapes in the earth until silver glints. He takes the cross up and sits holding it. He puts it around his neck. Then starts down the hill. Through Muslims who salaam to him. Balian hurries on.

164 EXT. THE DAVID GATE. DAY 164

The PATRIARCH OF JERUSALEM is walking towards the gate, his priests with him, retainers carrying his baggage.

SALADIN

You will go beyond the sea forever?

PATRIARCH OF JERUSALEM

Yes. As sworn.

SALADIN

(mildly)

You lie.

But he lets The PATRIARCH go...and he goes, hastily, hurrying with the other refugees.

SIBYLLA is leaving by the main gate of Jerusalem. But she is not leaving as a queen. Her hair is cut off, there is ash on her face, she wears a simple shift and walks barefoot. She is guarded by SARACEN KNIGHTS.

(CONTINUED)

SALADIN (CONT'D)

You cannot walk all the way to
Acre. Not in your condition.

SIBYLLA does not reply. We notice something we haven't
noticed before: that she is pregnant.

SALADIN (CONT'D)

(to guards)

Protect her.

A very orderly evacuation. BALIAN joins it, on foot. IMAD
appears, holding the magnificent horse that Balian gave him
some time ago.

IMAD

(warily)

It is not a very good horse. I will
not keep it.

(Balian takes the
bridle)

We will meet again.

They clasp hands.

BALIAN

If we do not?

IMAD

Taking it poorly bakes no bread.

IMAD walks away into the crowd. Balian leads his horse
saddened; but free. GUY is dragged past on a litter,
unconscious, by his trudging knights, each of whom...salute
Balian. He returns the nod; and rides out through the gates
of Jerusalem. Not looking back. He spurs past GUY, and
SIBYLLA, again not looking back. Rides along the huge
stream of refugees...all of whom he has saved. As he begins
to be recognized...he pulls the hood of his cloak over his
head. REFUGEES begin to sing a song in French.

165 EXT. THE TEMPLE. DAY

165

SARACEN ENGINEERS on the top of the building throw down the
cross that surmounts it.

It crashes to the stones in front of the Temple and is
broken to pieces by Saracens. MUSLIMS are taking possession
of the temple.

SALADIN is walking, being cheered. MUSLIMS on rooftops, in
the streets, acclaiming Saladin.

(CONTINUED)

165 CONTINUED:

165

MULLAH

We shall go on to Rome.

SALADIN

No.

(mildly)

I won't live that long.

The MULLAH stares after him: smelling heresy, and then decides that he must be mistaken.

INT. INSIDE THE TEMPLE. DAY

Rose-water is being splashed on the flags of what has been a Christian church. It is being purified by MULLAHS. SALADIN stands in the doorway with IMAD and the MULLAH.

MULLAH

God has favored us. All the glory
is God's.

SALADIN walks away from the mullah. The MULLAH would follow; but IMAD stops him.

SALADIN washes, preparing to pray alone. He lays his mat, and, lowering his head, prays.

166 EXT. THE ROAD TO THE COAST. DAY

166

THE CHRISTIAN REFUGEES, escorted by Muslim horsemen, trudge through the desert. SIBYLLA walks barefoot on the stony road, now leaving small spots of blood.

MAIDSERVANT

Ride.

SIBYLLA doesn't consent, and walks on. The REFUGEES sing in French, walking through the Holy Land, heading towards the distant sea.

167 EXT. THE DESERT. DAY

167

A HILL. BALIAN, entirely alone, exhausted, completed, sits on the ground, staring in to the light. He is far from Jerusalem, alone in the desert. His horse crops the ground nearby. He raises his face to the sun. He tears the cross from his tunic, but cannot put it on the ground. He folds it into his sleeve.

CLOSE ON BALIAN'S FACE

SNOW falls past his face. He dismounts and we see that he is in France, at the crossroads where his wife is buried.

(CONTINUED)

167 CONTINUED:

167

BALIAN is dressed not as a knight, but as a rich townsman might dress, with a green winter cloak and hood. His arms are on a pack horse grazing at a distance.

ON SOUND:

The horses come closer. BALIAN finally stands and looks, raising his hood. CRUSADERS.

CLOSE ON:

THE LION OF ENGLAND. Gold on a red tunic.

RICHARD'S KNIGHT

We crusade.

BALIAN

You go to where the men speak
Italian, and then continue till
they speak something else.

RICHARD'S KNIGHT

We have come by this road to find
the lord who was defender of
Jerusalem.

RICHARD COEUR DE LION sits his horse, staring at Balian.
The CRUSADERS pass behind.

BALIAN

I am the blacksmith.

RICHARD

I am the King of England.

BALIAN

I am the blacksmith.

RICHARD COEUR DE LION looks at Balian knowing very well who he is. But he nods, smiles, and rides on.

RICHARD COEUR DE LION looks at Balian knowing very well who he is. But he nods, smiles, and rides on.

BALIAN turns from the passing Crusaders and enters his old kitchen garden to see A YOUNG TREE. It is a Lombardy poplar, one of the ones planted by his wife. When the breeze blows the leaves turn over and the tree appears to be silver for a moment. He touches the leaves. Balian raises his hood against the falling snow.

RICHARD rides, taking the head of his force. The CRUSADERS MARCH ON PAST BALIAN'S FORGE, singing a war song.

BLACK.