

THE THOMAS CROWN AFFAIR 2

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BLACK

CATHERINE (V.O.)
...you really think there's a
"happily ever after" for people
like us?

EXT. OPEN SKY, FREEFALL - DAY

THE CONSTANT DEAFENING SOUND OF RUSHING AIR.

We are FALLING THROUGH SPACE, dropping at 130 mph through clear blue sky.

SWING DOWN. Far below, but growing, the tiny atolls of Papua New Guinea framed by turquoise ocean stretching as far as the eye can see.

CAMERA SWINGS AGAIN. A female skydiver, air whipping through clothes and hair, moves towards us.

Close, we recognize CATHERINE BANNING, a pen-light sized video camera over her left ear. She smiles at us, yells something wonderful, but all we hear is the rushing air.

REVERSE ANGLE: THOMAS CROWN, falling with her, a small video camera over his ear, yells back but we hear nothing.

CLOSER. Crown's face fills the frame. He stares back at Catherine. An uncomplicated calm in his face even as the wind rips by.

REVERSE ANGLE AGAIN: Catherine, staring back at Crown. A stillness here, a gentle moment in freefall, the roar of the wind a blanket around these two. God they're happy.

SOMETHING CHANGES. We don't know what, but the image is different, flatter now, a little washed.

The image of Catherine pulls back a little. Her mouth moves again, telling Crown something we'll never hear.

We're still MOVING AWAY from the image, the effect is disorienting.

Suddenly she SHOOTs UPWARDS, Crown's POV racking up with her. He watches as the parachute's canopy deploys and she rises up and away from him.

CROWN'S VOICE OVER
What do you think she was
saying...?

CLOSE ON CROWN lying on an analyst's couch -

CROWN

I'll never know. And I don't know
if knowing would help. And if I
have to be perfectly honest,
there's something liberating... in
not caring anymore.

(small beat)

Am I making sense?

ELLIOT'S VOICE

You might be, if you had a shrink.

REVEAL

INT. SITTING ROOM - NIGHT

Dark wood and tasteful, expensive art on the walls. Crown by
himself on a couch, no analyst present, just a FREEZE FRAME
of Catherine's face on a nearby huge plasma screen and, in
the doorway -

ELLIOT SMITH, late 20's. Charming, self-effacing, and the
nearest thing Crown has to a friend. Crown sits up -

CROWN

I've tried but they hate all the
traveling...

Crown crosses out. Elliot follows.

ELLIOT

Go home then and-

CROWN

I am home ...

EXT. YACHT DECK - NIGHT

Crown pushes out onto the deck of a YACHT.

CROWN

... wherever the hell we are.

PULL BACK To reveal this is not just a yacht -- it's a mega-
yacht. A floating estate steaming through pitch black seas.

EXT. ISTANBUL - ESTABLISHING FROM THE SEA - MORNING

Istanbul from a distance is the very definition of "shining city on a hill." From here, across the improbably blue sea, it seems to be all white marble and little glass shards jutting out from the cliffs.

Overlay: "Istanbul, Turkey."

EXT. CROWN'S YACHT - ESTABLISHING - DAY

The yacht cruises in toward the Golden Horn.

EXT. YACHT - TENDER BOAT

Crown drops into a Tender BOAT to the shore. Elliot slides in with some ANALYSTS who work for Crown. The boat ROARS off.

ELLIOT

(to Analysts)

At the conference you can drop hints about the Khirastani deal, but no confirmation --

ANALYST #1

(off cityscape)

Wow.

ELLIOT

Stay focused. We need --

CROWN

This really the first time you've seen it?

(Analyst nods)

Something new. Enjoy it while it lasts.

EXT. ISTANBUL - ESTABLISHING - MORNING

Now the detail view: Caliphate architecture meets Crusades, overlaid with twentieth-century hustle. Twelve-year-olds sell iPods to women in burkaks and middle-aged disco queens. Ancient marble buildings erupt between concrete 60's bureaucratic offices, incursions from a dream world into ours.

EXT. FINANCIAL BUILDING - MORNING

Crown and his men push by a group of MEN and WOMEN in traditional Khirastani garb standing in front of a display titled: "Khirastan. A culture, a people." Large photographs illustrate a landscape which varies from snow-capped mountains to stretches of rice-flats to burgeoning industrial cities. Images of life: Children playing, weddings, workers erecting architecture.

TRACK WITH Crown, Elliot and the Analysts as they move up the steps and inside. A small Khirastani girl watches them disappear into the building.

INT. FINANCIAL BUILDING - LOBBY

Crown and his people edge through the investors and venture capitalists. They pause in front of a GIANT display: An image of a handsome young man, DAWOUD BADRI, walking amidst flocks of adoring farm workers. Regal.

ELIOT
(off the image)
Wonder how much they paid the
smiling farmers?

CROWN
He's the legitimate heir to the
throne.

Crown turns, keeps moving. Elliot and advisors catch up.

ELLIOT
He's corrupt.

CROWN
Good, hate to think we wasted those
bribes.

ELLIOT
And a sociopath.

CROWN
Makes him a bad priest, not a bad
king.

DAWOUD (O.S.)
Not king yet, my friend.

It's DAWOUD in the flesh. He's the new Middle East royalty, London suit, old school ties. Dawoud's smooth, cruel when he needs to be. A barracuda born to a fortune.

He's shadowed by HAKKAN, his massive ex-military state security man. Hakkan has a neck you can't fit both hands around, and a disquieting sense of humor.

Dawoud and Crown do the grip and grin as cameras FLASH.

CROWN

(low)

You said you had your Parliament --

DAWOUD

(low)

Soon. Soon.

Elliot looks nervously at Hakkan.

INT. FINANCIAL CONFERENCE - HALL - LATER

Hundreds of investors listen as Crown, at the podium, lectures off power point.

CROWN

Monarchies produce a trillion dollars a year in trade. We need to integrate our modern business plans with traditions that have existed for centuries. To discuss some of these issues, I'm pleased to introduce Prince Dawoud al-Farahd Badri, of the House Badri of the Principality of Khirastan.

APPLAUSE as Dawoud takes the podium.

INT. FINANCIAL CONFERENCE FOYER - LATER

Multimillionaire executives rub shoulders in a large, modern foyer and up on a higher staircase balcony.

A group of Japanese executives, led by MIYASHTA, argue heatedly with Crown. All hold smiles for the various passers-by and cameras, no matter what.

MIYASHTA

It's worth another ten million dollars.

CROWN

That wasn't in the first appraisal.

MIYASHTA

We've followed the letter of the contract.

CROWN

(building))

Christ the contract you need the extra ten million.

(Miyashta nods)

I'm all that's in the way. One man.

MIYASHTA

Well, yes --

CROWN

Your company's five times my size, you can take me if you try. Fight me for it. What's stopping you?

Conversation around them is dimming. Miyashta looks around nervously. Crown gets close, right in his face.

CROWN (CONT'D)

(low)

Just show me you have the stones to fight. Just demand I give you the money, instead of begging, and I write the check.

MIYASHTA

...we should refer this to arbitration.

Elliot inserts himself, speaks subtitled Japanese -

ELLIOT

I believe that is wise.

Irritated. Bored. Crown stalks off. Elliot rushes after.

ELLIOT (CONT'D)

We're not done!

CROWN

I am.

ELLIOT

Where're you going?

CROWN
Sightseeing...

Elliot stops. Everyone watches Crown leave; nobody's turning their backs on the biggest shark in the room.

EXT. HAGHIA SOPHIA - MORNING

Tourists and photographers dot the front of the mosque. A PALLET TRUCK unloads massive STEEL PLATES from a FLATBED. A hip young honeymooning GROOM takes photos of his BRIDE on the steps. Their Peugeot's decorated for the honeymoon -- shaving cream and tin cans. The Groom checks his watch.

PAST THEM in the BG, Crown is getting out of a limousine. He shakes hands with a small balding man, turns and takes in the amazing view.

ON CROWN as an eager GUIDE rushes up.

GUIDE
Mister Crown, it's an honor. If you don't mind, we're about to take a small private group through --

The pallet truck lowers a stack of ten plates to the ground. The IMPACT, metal on concrete, is deafening. The DEEP VIBRATION interrupts the guide. He grimaces.

GUIDE (CONT'D)
-- I'm sorry. Bang bang, all day, this racket.

CROWN
Nothing halts industry.

YASMIN (O.S.)
You mean "progress."

Crown turns, takes in:

YASMIN. She's in her mid-30's, beauty without effort, eyes unafraid, a generous smile that welcomes whatever may come without judgment. Designer clothing speaks of money, the antique Leica on her shoulder, of taste and world travel.

CROWN
Do I?

YASMIN
(to guide)
Sorry I'm late.

Crown's eyes slowly take inventory.

CROWN

Not at all.

YASMIN

Oh, Lord, you're one of those.

She breezes past. Crown chuckles, sharp. Pleased.

EXT. TOPKAPI PALACE - ESTABLISHING

A massive Palace complex taking up the entire peninsula of Saray Burnu. Massive sprawl, not bulk. It's a maze of interconnected buildings and beautiful courtyards and gardens.

EXT. TOPKAPI PALACE - FIRST COURTYARD - MORNING

A large GERMAN TOURIST sits at a cafe table, sipping an espresso. Open laptop before him. PAST HIM we see CROWN and his small private TOUR GROUP.

On the move, the Guide points out sections of the Palace. Crown's small GROUP of VIPS chats among themselves. A stylish American Couple, the Barretts, a few others. Crown's trying to fend off the Americans.

BARRETT

No, I remember, you totally ruined that guy's company. Bankrupted him.

CROWN

Mm, he took it badly.

BARRETT

Blew his head off with a shotgun.

CROWN

That's badly.

They pass through the first courtyard. Every head swivels to take in Yasmin -- except one: the German. Crown looks at him. Looks at Yasmin, smiling, effortless. But there's something else there, behind the eyes.

She senses his study, glances over.

CROWN (CONT'D)

(to Yasmin)

I'm sorry, I didn't catch your name.

YASMIN

Let me guess. Arbitrage? Venture capital?

Letting his gaze rest on her...

CROWN

Acquisitions.

YASMIN

Exciting. And I'm sure you have a lovely yacht.

(teasing)

Tch, I got it in one, didn't I.

CROWN

It's a very nice yacht.

She shakes her head sympathetic breezes past.

YASMIN

(parting)

They always are..

INT. TOPKAPI PALACE - HAREM SECTION - LATER

Crown's group moves among the elegantly-tiled chambers.

GUIDE

The Harem women spoke many languages and were political masters. Indeed, many times during the turmoil of succession between Caliphs, the Queen Mother and the women of the Court kept the government intact as the brothers fought for the throne.

They move through the interior chambers of the Harem. Beautifully embroidered furniture laid out amidst a labyrinth of tiled baths.

Crown falls into step with Yasmin.

CROWN

Seems somehow... more civilized.

Beat, she doesn't want to engage, can't help herself.

YASMIN

You love the Harems, don't you.
Men like you always love the
Harems.

CROWN

Some say they were a prison. The
Sultan would ~~lock his~~ rivals
inside.

YASMIN

(almost impressed)
You know about Sulemeim the Third?
His brother locked him in the
Harems for forty years. When they
let him out --

CROWN

He'd gone mad.

YASMIN

You see? Give a man a life where
he has every woman, every pleasure,
every dream come true -- and it
will drive him insane.

CROWN

Except that Sulemeim enjoyed all
his women...

(leaning close, low)

It was the syphilis that didn't
agree with him.

(beat)

Sometimes having it all... means
having it all.

INT. TOPKAPI TREASURY - SECOND FLOOR

The Guide leads the group past various TREASURES in glass
cases. Suits of armor, men's jewelry. The sun streams in
from windows overlooking the inner courtyards within and the
sea without.

GUIDE

There are many treasures here, but
I know what you want to see first.

INT. DAGGER ROOM - CONT.

GUIDE

The Topkapi Dagger.

THE TOPKAPI DAGGER is upright in a frame within a glass case, all on a waist-high stone pedestal.

GUIDE (CONT'D)

Three of the largest emeralds in the world adorn the handle, with a great, eight-sided emerald atop the pommel.

MRS. BARRETT

Are those --

GUIDE

Diamonds. All the way up and down, on both sides.

BARRETT

What's it worth?

Yasmin, surprisingly, interrupts.

YASMIN

It's beyond price.

CROWN

(bone dry)

I doubt it's insured for "beyond price."

GUIDE

Two hundred twenty five million dollars. If one must be crude.

YASMIN

(off Crown)

I have the feeling this one must.

Crown closes on her.

CROWN

Why the interest?

YASMIN

The jewels.

CROWN

Seeing as one of the world's largest diamonds is on display right over there, I somehow don't think so.

YASMIN

It's not just jewelry. A great general wore this dagger into battle. When the battle was over, a nation was born. It's a work of art, a story.

CROWN

It's a weapon.

YASMIN

It's a symbol.

CROWN

Of power.

YASMIN

Of hope. It represents a people's history. Symbols matter.

CROWN

Oh, Lord, you're one of those.

Crown moves on, leaving Yasmin caught between anger and intrigue.

She checks her watch.

EXT. HAGHIA SOPHIA - MORNING

A POLICEMAN approaches the Bride and Groom, still on the steps. He gestures for them to move their parked car. The Groom nods, apologizing. The Bride holds out her camera to the Policeman. The Policeman smiles.

In the BG, the Pallet Truck drops another stack of steel plates. FEEL the vibration. Bang. BANG.

INT. DAGGER ROOM

Yasmin catches up to him.

YASMIN

So all you see is an object?

CROWN

The dagger means different things to you and me. That's what makes it interesting. And that it is interesting...

(his gaze moving to her)
...makes it beautiful.

She smiles, quizzical. Who is this guy?

Crown breaks away from Yasmin circles the room. Sees the blast plate edges.

GUIDE

Ever since the most famous attempt to steal the Dagger, in 1964, we've had special security here. Metal blast plates, lasers ...

Crown checks out the wall -- laser emitters.

GUIDE (CONT'D)

At night, the room seals airtight. Three inch steel shutters, and a series of motion detectors... All this security makes one thing completely certain --

CROWN

(speaking up)

The only way to steal the Topkapi Dagger... is in broad daylight.

The others chuckle. Crown does not, keeps his gaze on Yasmin.

EXT. HAGHIA SOPHIA - MORNING

In their car, the Groom at the wheel waves goodbye to the smiling Policeman. As soon as the Policeman rounds the corner, the Groom shifts the car back into PARK. OFF THE WATCH on his waving hand, GO TO...

...the construction WORKER stacking up 10 steel plates on the pallet loader. Way, way more plates than he's loaded before. The loader groans under the weight.

He's wearing the SAME WATCH.

EXT. TERRACED GARDENS - MORNING

ANOTHER MATCHING WATCH on the German's wrist. His hand lowers to the laptop.

The SCREEN filled with images from Topkapi security cameras. One of them shows Crown and Yasmin in the dagger room.

EXT. HAGHIA SOPHIA - MORNING

The Worker's watch alarm chimes. He tugs a lever. TEN STEEL PLATES -- two tons of steel -- crash like THUNDER to the ground. The plates literally SMASH THROUGH the asphalt.

EXT. TERRACED GARDENS - MORNING

On the sound of the impact, the German hits a button. One after another, the screens in front of him go black.

INT. TOPKAPI SECURITY OFFICE - MORNING

MATCH TO SECURITY SCREENS going dark.

The GUARDS react, to the rumble and screens.

INT. DAGGER ROOM - MORNING

The RUMBLE hits, like a small earthquake. The windows vibrate. Piercing alarms blare, startling everyone... except Yasmin. Crown studies her, his gaze drops.

She's now wearing SNEAKERS.

He knows.

INT. SECURITY OFFICE - MORNING

Guards react to the alarms. Mayhem. Distraction.

GUARD #1
(in Turkish)
The motion sensors.

EXT. HAGIA SOPHIE - MORNING

Alarms, commotion. The flatbed truck and the pallet loader have been abandoned. The Worker's GONE.

INT. DAGGER ROOM - MORNING

The guide ushers everyone out.

GUIDE

Quickly, quickly. We have to evacuate. Watch your step.

The STEEL BLAST-PLATE WALLS are sliding down in the doorways. The guide - like everyone else - rushing out, DISTRACTED by the commotion.

Yasmin lingers to the rear of the group. At the last moment, she slips back under the lowering blast plate.

A THUD as the room seals. No windows, no balconies, no doors.

Yasmin tugs a small ROTARY BLADE from a harness on her right thigh -- flashing a spectacular bit of leg in the process.

Crown leaning casually in the corner, cutting the tip off a cigar.

He returns the cutter to his inside lapel pocket, next to his FOUNTAIN PEN.

CROWN

Is it showtime?

Two quick steps and she's to him, the blade against his throat.

YASMIN

Don't try to stop me.

Crown watches, his expression still flat, appraising. Wordlessly raises his hands as if in surrender -- then rotates his arm around to show his watch. Seconds passing.

CROWN

Thief or killer.

(beat)

You only have time to be one.

Beat. Yasmin takes the blade away from his throat. She crosses back to the dagger case. Crown follows.

She points to laser emitters in the walls. Their "line of sight" creates a LASER PERIMETER around the central cases.

Yasmin ducks the lasers. Now inside the 10x10 secure zone.

YASMIN

Don't cross the line.

CROWN

Wouldn't dream of... crossing the line.

Yasmin cuts a SEAM into the BASE AROUND THE PEDESTAL.

CROWN (CONT'D)

...The base? Not the best use of your time.

She moves on to the BOLTS affixing the glass case to the podium. The cutter makes fast work of the first. She glides to the second bolt. A WHIR, and it's done. On to the third.

Crown crosses. DUCKS the lasers. A good amount of room inside the perimeter, but still cozy.

He appraises her. There's a temptation here, echoes of an old thrill. He actually starts to say something, raises his hand -- coughs it back.

Crown lights his cigar. She doesn't turn, keeps working.

CROWN (CONT'D)

(re: dagger)

You sure you want that one?

YASMIN

If you trip that laser, I will kill you.

He takes a diamond out of a nearby case, waves it at her.

CROWN

Very large diamond. Right here.

YASMIN

(without turning)

Shut. Up.

Yasmin jerks her head back as the third bolt SNAPS under the weight of the case, a white-hot fragment sparking just past her eyes.

Crown watches her struggle with the case. He can't help himself. It's an itch, he needs to scratch it.

Yasmin works out the bolt fragment. She cuts the fourth bolt, goes to lift the case.

CROWN
(dead flat)
Don't.

YASMIN
I said --

He leans forward, blows smoke across the case. The smoke illuminates a plane of NEW LASERS on each side, bouncing off the glass back to the emitters.

Yasmin. Shocked. She looks across to the ADDITIONAL LASER EMITTERS, CONCEALED in WALL SCONCES.

CROWN
It's never the things you know...

He's so close to the lasers. His cigar ash, overextended, barely clinging. Could fall any minute and break a beam.

Yasmin points up. There are STEEL EDGES in the ceiling.

YASMIN
Break that beam and the steel shutters drop. Lose your hands.

Crown holds her gaze. LEANS BACK. The ash falls harmlessly to the carpet.

CROWN
Lose the Dagger.

Yasmin pulls away, eyes taking in the new situation, trying to find an angle, any angle.

To the side, voices drowned out by a metallic whir. A carbide tipped blade pierces the blast-plate walls, starts to descend. The guards are cutting into the room.

Crown watches Yasmin pace, her eyes moving, her mind spinning possibilities.

CROWN (CONT'D)
Any regrets?

YASMIN
Don't believe in them.

Crown nods, accepting. As he takes in the magnificent room:

CROWN
It's a nice place to end.

YASMIN
It's a mausoleum. I won't end
here.

Yasmin circles the room like a caged animal, thinking.

CROWN
You know, I have regrets... not
many, but there's a Bordeaux that --

YASMIN
(moving, focused)
A Bordeaux? How about the books
never read, friends lost, never
having a child, never falling in
love --

CROWN
Never?

YASMIN
(glancing at Crown,
caught, correcting)
Never again floating on my back in
the red sea.
(back to the case)
Or standing on Kilimanjaro in my
underwear.

Crown moves around the room, countering her, also working the
problem in his own way. Their images are distorted through
glass cases, translucent jewels.

CROWN
(staring at a case)
You're not seeing it --

YASMIN
(taking in an angel)
If you don't have regrets, you
don't want enough.

CROWN
I want a lot.

YASMIN
You want a bottle of wine.

She looks at the door as the blade cuts lateral line in the plates. We can just see guards on the other side of the metal doors.

CROWN

If you have a way out, now would be the --

YASMIN

Not without the dagger.

Crown nods unconsciously. Watches her staring at the dagger, gears whirring.

CROWN

(whisper)

Come on. Don't you see it?

Yasmin looks at Crown who's stepped behind a heavy glass case. She shakes her head ever so slightly.

Crown stares at her through the heavy glass case, SMILES. We hold on that wolf-smile.

He's back.

And she gets it, her eyes darting between the two cases. One with the dagger, and the one Crown's behind. Identical.

She MOVES, reaching him. His hands lift the case, she joins him. Together, they move the second case against the dagger case.

The edges meet, seam together, perfectly.

They start to slide the matching case into the path of the beam, glass riding the glass of the Dagger display.

CROWN (CONT'D)

(deadpan)

On your back.

She stares at him for a beat, then swings around, drops to her back, catching the dagger case as it falls off the pedestal. The matching glass case has slid into place seamlessly. The lasers never detect the switch.

YASMIN

Didn't you just get a lot more interesting.

The saw is almost through now. Guards voices are more urgent. We catch a glimpse of gun metal on the other side.

She reaches into the case, removes the dagger.

Crown looks around the airtight room.

CROWN
(around his cigar)
About that exit...

She looks over the dagger at him as time runs out --

Then Yasmin sardonically raises a hand. The blade...

...BREAKS the perimeter beam.

The STEEL BOX SLAMS down from the ceiling.

Lands on the podium. For a second, everything is still.
Then, a CRACKLING SOUND.

FISSURES spread out from the seam Yasmin cut into the base.
The stone podium CRACKS into a MOSAIC. A moment of quiet--
then the base COLLAPSES.

The steel box falls another five feet, yanking chunks of
ceiling with it.

Crown steps back to see...

...THE SPACE in the ceiling that used to conceal the steel
box. Crown is as close as he gets to impressed.

CROWN (CONT'D)
Simplicity. Always best.

Yasmin lifts the fountain pen from Crown's lapel pocket and
hoists herself up onto the steel box. Crown flicks the cigar
away and climbs up after her.

Yasmin's moving up into the hole, bracing herself like a rock
climber. There's a seam in the top of the exposed hole -- a
hatch. She wedges the fountain pen into the seam.

Crown looks up. A lovely view.

CROWN (CONT'D)
Lace?

YASMIN
Right.

Crown is puzzled by her tone. Gets it. Steps RIGHT.

The hatch SMASHES down in the space he was just standing.

EXT. TOPKAPI PALACE ROOF - MORNING

Crown pulls himself up after her. Admires the stunning view, the Bosphorus Bridge - Asia and Europe a stone's throw apart. And moored in the middle, surrounded by smaller boats, Crown's impressive yacht.

CROWN

Look at that. It is a lovely yacht.

To the west, beyond the palace walls, we see the Bride and Groom waiting with their car. Yasmin's getaway. Guards and cops run by, distracted. The Bride gestures for Yasmin to hurry.

Yasmin runs west down the narrow roof, hops over a waist-high barrier.

PULL UP to see her landing.

Into a BLANKET OF NESTING PIGEONS. As one, the birds ERUPT into the sky.

Down by the getaway car, the guards turn. Shout and point. They can't quite see Yasmin, but they know where she is now.

HER ESCAPE ROUTE - GONE.

The bride shoots a desperate look up to Yasmin.

CROWN (CONT'D)

Car trouble?

Yasmin paces back. Clamoring rises through the hatch. The guards are closing.

OVERHEAD SHOT -- the hatch, Crown on one side, Yasmin on the other, guards rising from below.

Crown offers his hand. She ignores it, jumps across the hatch. They're off now, hurrying across the complex maze of rooftops.

Visible on the walkways below them, soldiers and security SWARM madly. They CONVERGE on Crown and Yasmin's path, not seeing them but knowing there's only so much room to hide...

Crown pauses above a skylight. Yasmin points to a blinking green light in the frame.

YASMIN
They're all wired...

But one skylight catches her eye.

NO BLINKING GREEN LIGHT.

She screeches to a halt, doubles back to it.

YASMIN (CONT'D)
Wait - this one's not.

CROWN
There's probably a reason for that.
She flips the skylight open. Stares down.

YASMIN
(wry smile)
What could possibly go wrong?
She disappears inside.

Crown gazes at the opened skylight. A moment. Do I or don't I?

What the hell. He follows.

INT. SECURITY OFFICE - MORNING

She lands.

In the back of the SECURITY OFFICE.

STRAIGHT INTO THE VIPER'S NEST.

Yasmin looks around frantically. The guards, heavily armed, still distracted with the screens, the alarms, the commotion outside. No one's turned around -- yet.

Crown suddenly, calmly beside her.

CROWN
(enjoying this)
Turkish prison, for one.

The guards turn. Fifteen gazes level on them.

Yasmin's demeanor shifts 180. She unloads on Crown in subtitled Turkish -

YASMIN

What kind of man are you? We're here forty minutes, you can't get them to find my camera?!

(to guards)

Which of you imbeciles do I have to bribe to file a report?

The guards look at Crown. He shrugs, mouths "sorry." Hustles her away.

The guards go back to their screens. They look at each other, whistle, shake their heads. Poor bastard.

Crown and Yasmin are almost to the door. A guard lowers his radio, looks up at the open skylight, Realizes --

They're already gone. Guards scramble.

EXT. PALACE GROUNDS - MORNING

Crown and Yasmin flying down a steep hillside, barely keeping their feet. A guard appears above, then others.

The hill slopes down, stopping abruptly. A fifteen-foot drop down to a road. Shouts behind them. Crown offers his hand.

Yasmin glares at him. He waits, implacable. Guards with automatics closing fast.

Yasmin finally snaps. Takes his hand. He lowers her toward the street.

EXT. NORTH STREET - MOMENTS LATER

The merchants in the street react as Crown falls to the ground behind Yasmin. They approach one of the parked DRIVERS. Crown casual, Yasmin glancing back.

CROWN

I need to buy your car.

DRIVER

My car is not for sale --

Crown hands him a WAD of cash.

DRIVER (CONT'D)

-- third gear, it sticks. Good luck to you and your lovely wife.

The Driver flips Crown the keys. Yasmin snatches them in mid-air. She slides behind the wheel. Crown shrugs to the Driver, gets in the car. Yasmin PEELS OUT.

INT. CAR / EXT. ISTANBUL STREETS - MOMENTS LATER

INTERCUT Between the car and the traffic as Yasmin swings around a corner --

-- and right through four POLICE CARS that split off on either side of her. The Police cars U-TURN and pursue them.

Yasmin takes a corner too wide, SCRAPES the side of a truck. Metal everywhere. TWO MORE Police cars join the chase as they turn onto a CLIFFSIDE ROAD above the sea.

CROWN

Should have let me drive.

YASMIN

Please. When was the last time you actually drove yourself anywhere?

CROWN

(considers)

Good point.

YASMIN

I know your type

(off his look)

You're a rich playboy looking for kicks and you don't give a damn if we survive this or not, do you?

CROWN

Have a drink with me.

Yasmin turns her head. Stares straight at him, unflinching, as she weaves along the road. Horns scream, tires squeal.

She just keeps staring into Crown's eyes. Finally, the sheer ballsiness of it makes Crown laugh.

Yasmin turns back to the road. She deftly weaves between two more Police cars.

But they turn a corner: a CONSTRUCTION SITE blocks the road. There's a gap, but it's narrowing. Yasmin FLOORS it.

YASMIN

(smiling)

Think I can make it?

CROWN
 (almost sad)
 ...No.

The car slips through, threading the gap... almost. At the last second, machinery IMPACTS the car's side, sending it veering off course.

A railing LOOMS. The car PUNCHES through, and rockets sideways down the slope toward the ocean. Yasmin spins the wheel, but there's no traction. The car makes a single flip and SMASHES into the water.

INT/EXT. CAR - UNDERWATER

Crown gulps air as the car floods. Yasmin's stunned. Crown grabs her, muscles his door open.

The car slowly ROLLS onto its side, sinking deeper. Crown's side is up, Yasmin's down.

Yasmin unbuckles her seat belt. Crown climbs through his door, turns to help Yasmin out. She's halfway clear when her ankle gets TRAPPED in the PASSENGER-SIDE SHOULDER STRAP.

She tries to pull free. The belt tightens.

The car hits the sandy bottom. A cloud of silt mushrooms. The car keeps rolling. Unless Yasmin can get free, she'll be pinned beneath it.

Crown reaches for the dagger. Yasmin tries to shove him away. He overpowers her, gets his hand on the blade. Yasmin's furious with betrayal.

Crown uses the dagger to cut Yasmin's seatbelt.

Crown pulls her clear. He and Yasmin swim away, staying under for as long as possible.

EXT. ISTANBUL MARINA - LATER

The docks of pleasure-boaters and rich tourists. Along a single stretch of dock, some men clean a LARGE SAILBOAT.

Crown and Yasmin pull themselves from the water, soaked. A long moment as they pant, collapsed on the dock, Crown's eyes on a silent Yasmin. She won't return his gaze. He stands. Adjusts his collar.

CROWN
I need to buy your boat.

SAILOR
My boat is not for sale.

EXT. OCEAN - COAST OF TURKEY - DAY

The sailboat glides along.

EXT. SAILBOAT - DAY

Crown SINKS the dagger into the wooden deck, checks the trim of a sail.

CROWN
Get the --

Yasmin is already swinging around the yardarm, runs up the sail like a racing pro. Crown notices. She ties it off.

CROWN (CONT'D)
Next time, I'll drive

She reaches for the dagger. His hand closes over hers.

YASMIN
It's mine.

A moment, eye to eye, both their hands clasped around the dagger.

CROWN
You lost it.

He focuses on her hand -- a slight tremor.

CROWN (CONT'D)
Your hand is shaking.

She sees it, too. She releases her hold, pulls away and wraps her arms around her wet torso. A shiver wracks her body, her facade crumbling.

YASMIN
It's nothing. The car --

She wipes at her watering eyes, frustrated.

CROWN

Your body just realized how close we came to dying. It sometimes takes a while, but the effect is... powerful. Wakes you up.

YASMIN

But not you?

Crown shrugs, produces a bottle of wine from the boat's stores, offers it to her. They're close now.

CROWN

Drink this.

YASMIN

And it will make everything better?

CROWN

Won't make it worse.

A beat and she takes the wine, pulls the cork out with her teeth, drinks deeply.

Crown takes her in, appreciating her as a drop tracks down her chin, onto her bare collarbone.

She offers him the bottle, he drinks. He offers it back.

She takes it, moves a step closer.

YASMIN

You know, I've been close to death before. And just because it scares me doesn't mean I wouldn't risk it again. And if I cry it's because I like living, I like it a lot.

(closer, hotter)

And that I'm crying and you're cool and calm in a moment like this, it doesn't mean -- attractive and strong as you are -- it doesn't mean I need you.

She's really close now.

YASMIN (CONT'D)

It means you don't care enough. And that means...

(inches)

That you most desperately, completely... need me.

(MORE)

YASMIN (CONT'D)

(beat)
No retort?

CROWN

...None.

She pushes into him, kissing him. Backs off a second.

YASMIN

What's your name?

He's about to answer but she moves into him again, kissing him, cutting him off. Yasmin starts undressing Crown with her free hand, Crown slides his free hand in behind her.

When they fall, he lands on top. She reaches for the knife, the blade touching the back of his neck... she could slice off his head, or at least a good portion of it...

CROWN

Go ahead...

With the blade on his neck, he kisses her passionately - their love-making develops as we watch the blade cutting a thin, scarlet line on the back of Crown's neck...

The sex is fueled by adrenaline, the after-rush of success, the Last-Tango of it all... strangers... and the knife... and more than anything, an affirmation of life.

LATER - Crown lies on his back... stunned.

Yasmin sits upright near him, her back to him. He stirs and she glances over. In her eyes, concern. This happened too fast.

She rises, goes below.

He touches the back of his neck.

EXT. SAILBOAT - HOURS LATER - DAY

Crown and Yasmin wear whatever they found aboard the boat. Crown's on his back, relaxing. Yasmin rolls onto her knees, arches her back. Crown reaches up to touch her. Careful, intimate. Her quiet response...

YASMIN

What does this mean?

She opens one of his hands, rubs his palm with her fingers.

YASMIN (CONT'D)

Here. Clean. Hands of a rich man.
But here.

She folds his fingers over, closing them.

YASMIN (CONT'D)

Your knuckles are a mess of scars.
Layers of them. Hands of a rich
man, but fists of a thug.

She kisses his knuckle. Opens his hand, turns it back and
forth. Knuckles to palm

YASMIN (CONT'D)

Which are you?

A moment, then Crown releases his hold, moves below to find
another bottle.

YASMIN (CONT'D)

(soft)

Oh. What did I kick over?

CROWN

Why the Dagger?

She sits, raises the dagger above her. The sun above plays
through the emeralds, dappling her with green.

YASMIN

It has a history.

CROWN

I like history. Anchors us in a
world where nothing lasts.

From the galley, he can still see her, gazing at the dagger.

YASMIN

...Sometimes history is an anchor.
That will drag you down.

She smiles; sad, fascinated by the dagger -

YASMIN (CONT'D)

It belonged to a Persian prince.
When he was assassinated in the
eighteenth century, the Dagger came
to Turkey.

(beat, lost in the dagger)

But the family survived and went on
to rule a small country --

CROWN
Principality of Khirastan. In the
'stans, north of Iran.

Yasmin glances below. That is not casual trivia. Crown's
opening a bottle.

YASMIN
You know Khirastan.

CROWN
I have investments there.

YASMIN
We're not open to foreign
investment.

CROWN
"We"?

Crown's hands freeze on the wine pull. He puts it together.
She can't be:

CROWN (CONT'D)
Are you Yasmin Badri -

She stands, startled, exposed. Defensive. Crown reacts,
echoing -

CROWN (CONT'D)
What did I kick over..?

YASMIN
Too much, I'm afraid..

In one fluid motion she crosses to a small motorized DINGHY
hanging off the side of the boat as Crown climbs on deck.

CROWN
Yasmin!

Yasmin's over the side in an instant. She starts the dinghy
outboard with one pull. Looks back.

CROWN (CONT'D)
Today... was an interesting day.

She smiles, despite herself. She hits the throttle, the
dinghy ROARS away. She doesn't look back again.

He watches her disappear into the chop. He laughs. Darkly.

EXT. YACHT DECK - LATER

Elliot waits on deck as Crown ascends the lowered stairs.

ELLIOT
Hey. New boat. Where did you go?

CROWN
I spent the day with Princess
Yasmin Badri.

Pause.

ELLIOT
What are you doing?

CROWN
Complete coincidence. Had no idea
who she was.

ELLIOT
Does this change our plans?

CROWN
(considers)
...No.

ELLIOT
How did you even meet her?

CROWN
We stole the Topkapi Dagger
together.

They walk in silence. Elliot's brain is screaming. He
manages to appear painfully casual.

ELLIOT
You don't actually happen to have
the Dagger.

CROWN
No.

ELLIOT
She has it?

CROWN
...not exactly.

EXT. ISTANBUL MANSION - ESTABLISHING - NIGHT

ESTABLISHING of another house with a fantastic view of the Sea. This is where Yasmin's staying while in Istanbul.

INT. YASMIN'S HOME - LIBRARY - CONT.

A lavish, ancient library. Fire in the massive FIREPLACE. MUSTACHE, WORKER, the GROOM and BRIDE are here. Stripped of their disguises, they all carry themselves as experts. Mercenaries. They have laptops, computers. A few large LCD's attached to the centuries-old wood around them.

Yasmin enters with the Bride. She's carrying the Dagger.

YASMIN

A FAKE?!

BRIDE

It's flawless, but when you run a spectrographic analysis --

Yasmin grabs a hammer and SMASHES the emeralds and diamonds on the hilt of the blade. They crush to powder.

BRIDE (CONT'D)

-- or that. We could do that.

Yasmin turns, storms out.

BRIDE (CONT'D)

Where are you going?

No answer. The Bride sighs in familiar frustration -

INT. CROWN'S YACHT - BUSINESS CENTER - NIGHT

The Yacht's BUSINESS CENTER is filled with video SCREENS and computers -- you could run a small country's stock market from here. Currently it's dark but for the glow from one large central SCREEN. It has the standard file-folder icons marked KHIRASTAN, FARAHD, DAWOUD, etc.

Elliot has stacks of paper spread out around him, folders. Images and text about Yasmin. He moves between the papers and screen, organizing the information.

Elliot drags a picture of an ELDERLY MAN waving to a crowd, places it top center of the Screen.

He opens the DAWOUD folder. Spins through to the LONDON TIMES front page, "Khirastani King dead at 75, Prince Dawoud next in line", with a full head-and-shoulders photo of Dawoud. Elliot drags that below and to the right of Farahd.

Elliot looks up as Crown enters, doing up his tie.

CROWN

Princess Yasmin's one year older,
which makes her first in line --

ELLIOT

No. Yasmin Badri left the
Principality at seventeen,
renounced her title.

Elliot taps on a slideshow icon next to Yasmin's name.

IMAGE: Yasmin, college aged. Smoking, with mod clothes and a stack of books, candidly caught at an outdoor café.

ELLIOT (CONT'D)

(consulting paperwork)
Worked her way through Harvard.
Majored in History. From there,
she pops up all over...

IMAGE: Yasmin, at a post-concert party in Senegal. She's celebrating, an arm around a native musician.

ELLIOT (CONT'D)

...Starts a lot of things, finishes
few. Rich bohemian socialite...

IMAGES: Yasmin and some friends in their underwear, on a snow-capped peak, laughing. Yasmin, climbing off a motorcycle in Greece. Yasmin, skydiving over the Congo.

ELLIOT (CONT'D)

(off files)
Oh, look, it also says she's
addicted to risk, ruthless --

ON CROWN: Watching, appreciating.

ELLIOT

...and a little crazy. Can't
imagine how she got your attention.
(pushes the files away)
Anyway, her psych profile says
she's not interested in going home.

Crown reaches over, hits a key. Screen reverts to the Badri family, now with a picture of Yasmin added. It's a triangle -
- Yasmin and Dawoud below, Farahd up top.

ELLIOT

She's out of the running, Thomas.

Crown stares at Elliot for a moment, then tosses him a thick legal tome, almost knocks him back.

CROWN

Khirastani Constitution: Their Parliament has to approve Dawoud as King. And he is not popular.

(off the screen)

A son who needs good publicity.
And a daughter who needs to prove she's part of the family...

Crown pulls the picture of the Topkapi Dagger placing it between Dawoud and Yasmin.

ELLIOT

You're telling me that whoever returns the dagger gets the crown?

CROWN

...Symbols matter.

INT. MANSION - BALLROOM - NIGHT

An ornate, tasteful, centuries-old space currently packed with a hundred millionaires, almost as many paparazzi. A massive COAT OF ARMS hangs here, the same symbol of the BADRI family scattered around.

Dawoud Badri is holding court. He stands in front of a large crowd of supporters. Behind him, a DISPLAY with PHOTO BLOW-UPS of the Topkapi Dagger, historical documents, the deceased King Farahd.

DAWOUD

... My father, King Farahd, before his death ...

Sympathetic noises. Dawoud bravely carries on.

DAWOUD (CONT'D)

... his deepest wish was to have the Topkapi Dagger returned to our country after its centuries abroad.

He gestures to a document.

DAWOUD (CONT'D)

After years of negotiations I am confident that I will soon be able to leave Istanbul, and bring our heritage home...

There's a disturbance in the crowd. Whispers are spreading. A few people head for the exit at the rear of the ballroom.

DAWOUD (CONT'D)

...We can all be grateful that today's attempted theft failed. And so very soon, I will be able to...

People are PRESSING towards the back of the room. A MURMUR grows.

Hakkan, nearby, touches his earpiece. He throws a worried glance to Dawoud, breaks away.

INT. MANSION - FOYER - NIGHT

We move through the press of people, towards the main entrance. In front of us, the crowd parts to reveal:

YASMIN, elegant and powerful, stands in the doorway, taking in the crowd who stares back at her, struck dumb for a moment.

People begin bowing, excited by her presence.

Yasmin smiles graciously. She steps forward, embraces an older female servant who cared for her as a child, whispers a few words in Khirastani.

The woman's eyes water, moved. She glances around, unsure about the breach of decorum.

Yasmin calms her with a kiss on the forehead before moving on.

Applause. The crowd turns, breaks into excited hubbub. She glides forward. Cameras flash as the BUZZ continues to grow around her. The prodigal returning. But this is no child. She's a queen.

Voices now break the calm. People calling out, speaking into phones, passing the news.

Yasmin beelines for the Ballroom, comes up short. Hakkan stands in her way. She waits. Finally, he kneels. She extends her hand to him.

HAKKAN
Princess.

YASMIN
Out of uniform, Hakkan.

HAKKAN
I am now your brother's head of state security.

YASMIN
Congratulations. Been busy?

HAKKAN
The interesting thing about enemies of the State, highness: the more you look, the more you find.

INT. MANSION - BALLROOM

SEEN FROM HIGH, People bow in a WAVE breaking ahead of Yasmin as she passes into the room. They fall before her.

Dawoud sees her, chokes, swallows it. For him, this is everything that could go wrong in his life collapsed down to one moment.

Yasmin and Dawoud see only each other, locking eyes from eighty feet away. She heads straight for him. Dawoud waits, never looking away. Unreadable.

FIND Crown and Elliott, watching this from a balcony.

ELLIOT
What's she doing?

CROWN
Declaring war.
(beat)
"Loves risk." "A little crazy."

ELLIOT
Oh God. You're enjoying this. You do realize that if she actually wins, she will shut us out. All the money we've invested in Dawoud, getting ready for him to become King, just, just gone.

(MORE)

ELLIOT (CONT'D)

She's dangerous, Thomas. She can destroy you.

Crown stares down at Yasmin, thinking.

BACK TO Dawoud, as Yasmin arrives, face to face with him. There's a long moment as they try to bluff it out, read each other.

DAWOUD

Ladies and gentlemen, my sister. Yasmin al-Farahd Badri, Princess of the House Badri of the Principality of Khirastan.

Yasmin and Dawoud kiss cheeks. She turns to them, blows a gracious kiss. The crowd breaks into applause, more flashbulbs. Dawoud takes it in, appreciates it for what it is. She's good at this.

Dawoud and Yasmin move close so no one can hear them, keep up the facade for all the bystanders and cameras, smiling.

DAWOUD (CONT'D)

We've missed you, sister. You never call, you never visit...

YASMIN

Perhaps you've noticed, women are not citizens in Khirastan. Home was dangerous, even for a Princess.
(beat)

It's one of the things I plan to change.

DAWOUD

I have the votes in Parliament.

Dawoud and Yasmin walk along the walls of art. The photographers and crowd stay behind, but still close.

YASMIN

(off a painting)
Father's Chagall?

DAWOUD

I took it from the house in Monaco. He loved it so. Such a pity that you couldn't be bothered to come home in time to see him die.

YASMIN

You don't think I regret that every day of my --

Yasmin controls her anger.

DAWOUD

(low)

Tsk. Tsk. Remember who you are.
There are rules.

(leaning close)

You were such a disappointment to
him.

This rocks Yasmin. She swallows, hesitates.

Dawoud takes the moment to turn to the crowd, all charm.
He's good at this, too.

DAWOUD (CONT'D)

One brief introduction before my
sister's beauty completely sweeps
you away.

(over laughs)

I want to thank someone. He's been
a very good friend for these
difficult months since my father's
death. The owner and CEO of one of
the world's great corporations --

(beat)

-- Mister Thomas Crown.

Yasmin's frozen as more applause rolls over them. Crown
shakes Yasmin's hand.

YASMIN

You're Thomas Crown..?

CROWN

You didn't let me answer.

The three of them wave, bow in the spotlight as the crowd
applauds. A little circle of cool hatred in the warmth.

A little ways off, Hakkan and his Security Men exchange
glances. And behind him, Elliot is in the crowd. He lets
his gaze move from Hakkan to Crown, Yasmin and Dawoud.

EXT. MANSION BALCONY - MOMENTS LATER - NIGHT

A beautiful view of Istanbul at night splays out beyond the
marble railing. Yasmin comes through the French doors first,
furious. Crown and Dawoud follow.

Yasmin whirls and SLAPS Crown across the face.

DAWOUD
So you've met.

YASMIN
(to Dawoud))
You're turning this *thief* loose in
our government!

CROWN
And you deplore thieves...

DAWOUD
I will personally supervise all
foreign investments in Khirastan.

YASMIN
The fox guarding the hens --

DAWOUD
You'll see millions of dollars come
into the country --

YASMIN
And billions of dollars leave with
you and your friends.

That was a step too far. Dawoud leans into her.

DAWOUD
You abandon us for years, running
all over the globe --

YASMIN
I would have spent my life cutting
ribbons at school openings --

DAWOUD
Fulfilling your duties to the
family. As I did. I was there and
you were gone.

She turns away from him, moves off.

DAWOUD (CONT'D)
(to her back)
Go back to your life, your
adventures, your *causes celebre*.
Stop pretending you care about a
country you barely lived in.
(nodding)
Thomas.

Dawoud crosses out.

Yasmin stares at Crown, controlling her rage. For the first time really taking in her adversary.

YASMIN

You knew it was a fake.

CROWN

...Once I saw it. The real one must be in the vault while the custody hearing is on.

YASMIN

Why did you help me steal it? They could've killed us.

Crown's sharp, cutting through her bullshit.

CROWN

Stop it. You had a crew but you're the one who stepped into that room. You wanted the thrill.

YASMIN

...we're not the same. I won't let you strip my country of everything it's worth.

CROWN

I was invited in. By your brother.

YASMIN

Dawoud's corrupt.

CROWN

People keep saying that as if it's a defect.

Crown leans in, intense.

CROWN (CONT'D)

I'm sorry, when did I seem burdened by conscience? When we were stealing a priceless piece of art, or eluding the police? Or when we were f--

BAM. It's a flat-hand slap, and even though he catches this one, she actually rocks Crown on his heels. He holds on to her, gets close again.

CROWN (CONT'D)

You have to earn the second one.

YASMIN
I'm going to beat him.

CROWN
You're too angry to win.

YASMIN
I'll bury you.

CROWN
(unamused smile)
...get in line.

Yasmin exits, leaving Crown alone on the balcony. He whistles, low. Damn.

INT. DAWOUD'S MANSION - STAIRCASE - MOMENTS LATER

Hakkan's rushing up to find Dawoud, intercepts him on the stairs.

HAKKAN
What happened?

DAWOUD
She knows Crown. How is that possible?

They continue back to the party.

HAKKAN
She's a threat.

DAWOUD
She's a bloody icon. Mothers tell their daughters, "Work hard, study hard, you'll grow up like Princess Yasmin..."

HAKKAN
Crown could be hedging his bets.

DAWOUD
Of course he is, trying to play us off against one another. Smart.

Turning into the crowd of expectant faces. All smiles.

DAWOUD (CONT'D)
But she won't cut a deal with him - she despises men like Crown.

EXT. BLACK SEA RESORT - ESTABLISHING - DAY

On the peninsula, among the mountains and primeval forests. Snow banks, some three feet deep, framed by massive trees, boughs heavy with snow and ice, so close together one can barely walk through them, never mind ride.

But that's what Dawoud and Crown are doing. Riding through them at full gallop, cutting between trees, ducking below limbs, jumping over snow covered obstacles. Their horses are powerful, low to the ground.

They break through to find ANCIENT VILLAS with golden roofs. Staff move between the residences and the MAIN BUILDING. The sea is just beyond the buildings.

EXT. RESORT

Crown and Dawoud slow to a canter. Two dozen other MEN test saddles. These men are not hard, but not soft, either. Sportsmen. Professional rich men.

DAWOUD

All these men have the money I need?

CROWN

The money we need.

DAWOUD

Thank you for bringing them here, my friend.

Crown stands in the saddle, surveys the land. The facilities are a wild mix of primitive and opulent. The primitive is an affectation, rough clothing for rich men. This could be a hunting party from two centuries ago.

DAWOUD (CONT'D)

It used to be a fort. Then my Russian cousins took it over. Turned it into a hunting lodge.

CROWN

What's the local game?

DAWOUD

Wolves. They hunted wolves.

(off Crown)

You don't approve?

CROWN

On the contrary. Not sporting to hunt anything that can't kill you.

Dawoud takes note of that. Crown simply smiles. As the others mount up, Dawoud trots to the open field...

EXT. FIELD

This area has only been nominally cleared. Tree stumps, fallen wood, soft snow over frozen dirt -- it's a hellacious place to ride.

The men form up around Dawoud, all on horseback, all bearing crops and polo mallets. Barrett, the American from Topkapi, is among the group. Hakkan brings out a large red ball, worn and scarred.

DAWOUD

Welcome. If you are all going to be investors in my country, I want to give you a real taste of our culture.

HORSEMAN

Last I checked, Polo was an English game.

DAWOUD

Not the way we play it, my friend.

BARRETT

So what are the rules?

YASMIN (O.S.)

There are no rules.

They react as Yasmin rides out, similarly dressed. Crown and Dawoud exchange looks.

YASMIN (CONT'D)

No invitation? Oh, of course. Men only.

CROWN

So there IS a rule.

YASMIN

Rules were made to be broken.

Yasmin gestures with her whip, cutting the right half of the men away. Leaving Crown behind.

Yasmin and her team ride off. Dawoud sighs, turns to Crown.

DAWOUD

Mister Crown, you are with me.

(beat)

Aren't you?

Dawoud, Crown, and the rest of the men ride to the opposite end of the field.

Hakkan places the "ball" in the center of the space. Hakkan gets clear -- then SHOUTS.

ON CROWN As both sides CHARGE. Barrett is next to him. Over the thunder of hooves.

BARRETT

What does "no rules" me --

WHAM. He's caught in the chest by another rider, knocked clean off his horse.

Welcome to ice polo: It's a real sport. In this part of the world, a good match lasts a week. Blood is the norm, death not uncommon.

Crown pivots around another charger, searches for the ball.

Yasmin hits it strong and true, charges after it. Crown's a beat behind.

CROWN

...you're good at this game...

As she swings around she SLAMS her shoulder into another player, sending the man down. Spurring her horse:

YASMIN

Not just THIS game...

Crown cuts in after her.

CROWN

Get real, once I've signed the-

They jostle for position, shoulders pushing up against each other, the ball bouncing underfoot. She swings the mallet.

YASMIN

Last chance to save your financial skin...

He blocks her swing. The ball spins away.

CROWN

Worry about your own skin...

She backhands him, lunges for the ball, sends it skittering to a teammate who gallops after it.

YASMIN

You're not angry enough to win,
Mister Crown...

Crown chokes out a laugh as he spurs his mount. With a CRY and a WHIP they dive back into the match.

EXT. OPEN FIELD - DAY

Two men fight for the ball on foot.

THUNDERING HOOVES. Dirt and ice fly. Forms converge. Yasmin and Crown. Trying to get an angle on the ball.

The struggle, trying to get into position to swing mallets. She reaches down, releases his girth. Saddle slides away, but Crown stays on, bareback. A hoof kicks the ball. It bounces away.

CROWN

Any more tricks up your sleeve?

YASMIN

One...

They ride side by side, closing on the ball.

CROWN

Don't tell me it's the dagger. That ship has sailed...

YASMIN

Not while I live...

She looks over, distracted for a second. Whoosh Crown grabs her foot from the stirrup, leverages her up and over. She lands hard.

Crown circles her with the ball.

CROWN

Business before pleasure,
Princess...

YASMIN

If you insist...

She rears up, grabs the horse's foreleg, drives in. The horse falls, Crown toppling to the ground.

As the horse rises up, Yasmin's on it. She spurs the charger, gallops after the ball, hits it.

Yasmin SCORES. She swings back among her cheering teammates.

Dawoud trots up next to Crown, standing in the dirt. He circles him, shouts over the chaos.

DAWOUD

What's she doing?

CROWN

Showing us she's tough.

DAWOUD

Will she take some of them from us?

CROWN

(eyes tight on Yasmin,
riding)

Not enough.

The match starts again with a ROAR.

-- Impacts, falls; one SCREAM as a shoulder is separated.

-- Crown and Yasmin pass again, breathing hard, bruised.

CROWN (CONT'D)

A side bet. Next on the ground.

YASMIN

You're not getting me back into bed.

CROWN

I lose, I tell you how to get the dagger.

A beat, and they're off, riding at the ball, they trade glances as they close.

Crown gets there first. He has a half-second of triumph before Yasmin decides, the hell with it. She uses the momentum of the charge to SLAM into him, grabbing the ball.

They both SPIN off their horses, CRUNCH into the snow. That one was a stopper. They lay there, gasping for a moment.

YASMIN
You landed first.

CROWN
...no argument.

YASMIN
Are you alright?

CROWN
I've been hit harder.

YASMIN
So get up.

CROWN
It's a good spot.

A CHEER rises from the end of the field. Yasmin and Crown roll onto their sides. Yasmin spits blood from a split lip.

Dawoud's scored. He rides back to them.

DAWOUD
So wrapped up in each other...
He winks. Rides off.

EXT. VILLAS - OUTDOOR PAVILLION - THAT NIGHT

This is where the money comes in. A banquet, music.

Full service. Crown hoists a drink to the crowd. It's raucous, the music almost deafening.

Dawoud pushes up to Crown. Refills his glass. The two consider the crowd. Dawoud toasts.

DAWOUD
To the men who truly run the world.
Crown takes a sip. Winces. Blood on the lip of his glass.

CROWN
They haven't gotten rid of governments quite yet.

DAWOUD
Tick tick, my friend. Tick. Tick.

Dawoud turns away, smiling at the group of rich men.

YASMIN (O.S.)
And so it begins.

Crown turns, takes in Yasmin, beautiful, sad.

YASMIN (CONT'D)
The selling off of a country, one
piece at a time.

DAWOUD
Each of these men, dear sister, is
only allowed a small piece. Our
family will always control the
largest share. They are never more
than partners.

YASMIN
(eyes on Crown)
Jackals only hunt together until
the kill.

She pulls away.

EXT. VILLAS - CLIFFSIDE - LATER

Snow all around, but not in this cliffside garden. Hundreds
of torches, painstakingly maintained, keep the temperature
high enough for plants to thrive.

Yasmin, alone, walks on the edge of cliffs overlooking the
ocean. She spots some WILD ROSES. Drifts toward them.

Crown approaches, out of the firelight.

CROWN
You like roses?

YASMIN
Orchids.

She softens.

YASMIN (CONT'D)
When I was a little girl, my father
had orchids picked from the garden.
He would fill my room with them.

CROWN
He loved you.

YASMIN

He loved the little girl who smiled at a room filled with orchids. The teenager who wanted to go to university... he didn't know what to do with her.

(beat)

I wasn't meant to live a life, but to play a role.... I couldn't.

CROWN

But now you can.

It takes her a moment. She's never actually said this aloud.

YASMIN

I can change my people's lives.

CROWN

Even if it means giving up your own?

YASMIN

(beat)

Everything I've done, all my life, was only for me.

CROWN

Don't be ashamed of that.

She steps away, takes in the breath-taking view, the stars.

YASMIN

Do you believe there's someone up there, watching us?

CROWN

I believe that if they ever were, they're gone now.

Yasmin looks at him.

YASMIN

You're a cynic, Thomas?

CROWN

A realist.

(gently)

How do you know you'll be any good at it?

YASMIN

Have you ever tried anything you weren't good at?

CROWN

Once.

YASMIN

And because you failed you gave up.
I won't.

Crown shrugs, philosophical.

She starts to go.

CROWN

Next time, I'll get you orchids.

EXT. / INT. MAIN VILLA - THE NEXT DAY

Dawoud and Crown leading a signing ceremony with the investors. Each man now is flanked by various ACCOUNTANTS and LAWYERS. After each signature, Crown and Dawoud congratulate each man.

Crown looks up from a signing, eyes focusing on...

Yasmin, two hundred yards away, watching.

A beat and she pulls away, heads for a walkway leading down cliffs to a refurbished dock where her speedboat waits.

EXT. SPEEDBOAT

Yasmin climbs aboard and the speedboat pulls away from the docks. She keeps staring back at Crown as Mustache appears at her side.

MUSTACHE

(under his breath)

Everything's changed. They've brought in Becker from Interpol. He's moving the Dagger.

YASMIN

When?

MUSTACHE

...We don't know.

EXT. CROWN'S YACHT - LATER - DAY

Crown climbs aboard from the tender boat.

INT. YACHT BUSINESS CENTER

Elliot is on the phone. Crown passes through.

ELLIOT
(into phone)
I have to call you back.

INT. CROWN'S OFFICE

Crown tosses the CONTRACTS on his desk. He STARES down.

ELLIOT
You sold off our Chinese assets.

CROWN
We can't appear weak.

ELLIOT
Better to appear crazy.
(beat)
She was there, wasn't she?

CROWN'S P.O.V.: Next to the contracts, Elliot's file on Yasmin. A photograph of Yasmin, elegant and mod, at a posh event listening to three Sudanese women in traditional garb.

ELLIOT (CONT'D)
That's Paris three months ago, at a conference on Sudan. Surprised a lot of people to see her there.
(beat)
Going soft for the do-gooder? It's not like you, Thomas.

CROWN
She'll do anything to beat her brother. We can use that.

ELLIOT
How? This deal is risky enough as is, and she is a problem.

CROWN
A problem... or an opportunity?

ELLIOT

You know, they're not always the same.

CROWN

Come on, Elliot. The bigger the risk, the bigger the reward.

ELLIOT

This is big enough.

CROWN

(on the pictures)

Think bigger.

Crown exits. Elliot stares after him. Thinking.

INT. YASMIN'S LIBRARY - LATER - DAY

The room is in full battle-plan mode. Schematics, maps, schedules, both paper and digital. Yasmin's Crew pore over them. The stereo plays Yo Yo Ma's Libertango, loud and passionate. Yasmin paces, a ways off, at one with the music, a kind of heightened meditation.

The Bride shoves over one of the blueprints.

BRIDE

That one, according to the manifest. Sub-basement vault.

GROOM

No way. No way into that.

Mustache slams down the phone.

MUSTACHE

Becker's personally transporting the dagger to the airport. He's riding with it the whole way - from there it goes to Switzerland. Swiss vault, Zurich until the hearings are complete.

When Yasmin speaks, she does so without looking over, without breaking connection to the music.

YASMIN

(not breaking stride)

No. It's got to be here, in Istanbul, when they move it. Run it again.

The Groom gestures off a MOCK-UP of the route of the Dagger. It's both 3-D and on MAPS on the screens. PHOTOS of each location track the route.

GROOM

The Dagger is loaded into an armored truck here at the Palace. Armed guards, four squads --

BRIDE

So not there, either.

GROOM

Becker rides in the armored car, with a security convoy, along this route out to the airport --

MUSTACHE

Blow up the truck --

YASMIN

(without looking over)
-- and destroy the Dagger.

GROOM

(back to display)

The convoy enters the back entrance of the airport, drives to Hangar 6. Escort locks the hangar down, then Becker carries the Dagger less than ten meters to a private jet.

Mustache calls up documents on the screen, and a photo of a PRIVATE PLANE.

MUSTACHE

Where agents of the Bank will take possession.

BRIDE

It's impossible.

YASMIN

Nothing's impossible.

MUSTACHE

(losing patience)

Look, even if we could do it, we still don't know when. They could be moving the dagger as we speak.

Yasmin has stopped, looking out over the view.

YASMIN

No. Not yet.

MUSTACHE

How do you know?

YASMIN'S P.O.V.: The black water of the Bosphorus, cutting a swath through the lights of the city. And in the center, the lights of a yacht.

YASMIN

Because he's still here.

EXT. ISTANBUL WATERFRONT - NIGHT

A towncar pulls up on the cobblestoned steps of the Bazaar waterfront. Yasmin gets out amidst the street vendors and rug merchants, packing up for the evening.

She looks out into the Bosphorus where Crown's yacht is moored 200 yards out, its lights gleaming over the water.

A CROWN ACQUISITIONS launch is moored at the stone steps that descend into the water.

INT. CROWN'S OFFICE, YACHT - NIGHT

Crown sits in his large leather chair, drink in his hand, the Bach Suite for Cello No. 3 playing through the room. A De Kooning, a Kandinsky, others adorn the walls.

His gaze is locked on a George Seurat landscape, central to the collection.

YASMIN (O.S.)

Did you know the Morori were depicting whole seascapes using shells before Seurat ever painted his first dot?

Crown looks over. She stands in the entrance to Crown's office, beautiful.

YASMIN (CONT'D)

And many of Kandinsky's same forms can be found in the drawings of the Masai.

CROWN

...I wasn't aware it was a race.

YASMIN

I'm just suggesting your impressionist heroes owe a debt they should acknowledge.

(beat, off the Seurat)

...I like this one. It's simple.

CROWN

But you don't like simple. You like it raw, visceral, essential.

She stares at him, unblinking.

YASMIN

Yes.

CROWN

And you don't know when they will move the dagger. And so here you are.

YASMIN

...Yes.

He studies her for a moment, the lack of fear. Focusing on the Seurat:

CROWN

When you look at that, what do you see? I mean really see?

A beat. Yasmin looks directly at Crown:

YASMIN

I see a master of detail whose every stroke, every motion meant something.

CROWN

What else?

Beat. She turns to the painting.

YASMIN

Beauty.

CROWN

Really? When I look at this, I feel a man's rage, his anger: at God, at women, at a whole world which leaves him always starving for more and more life. I see... the ugliest side of human desire.

And he's there, right next to her. His fingers touch her neck. She stops breathing.

YASMIN
I don't see it.

CROWN
I know you don't.

YASMIN
What do you want, Thomas?

CROWN
...To be surprised.

YASMIN
You value surprise more than love.

Beat. Crown stares at her. The two of them close.

CROWN
Without love, surprise will do.

Closer...

YASMIN
...that is, somehow, the saddest
thing I have ever heard anyone say.

He hesitates. The moment passes. He crosses to the bar, pours himself another drink.

A beat. She starts to speak. No words come. She moves to leave.

CROWN
They move it in two days. 8:00 am.
...Make it interesting.

YASMIN
Count on it.

EXT. ISTANBUL WATERFRONT - NIGHT

Darkness. The sound of heels on paving stones, moving fast. Yasmin appears from shadow, walks quickly towards the waiting car, opens the back door, steps in.

INT. CAR - NIGHT

The Bride and Groom wait in the front. They look back at Yasmin who sits upright in the seat, something fierce and alive in her eyes.

GROOM

I told you it wouldn't do any good--

YASMIN

Two days.

BRIDE

Look at you. What happened in there?

YASMIN

(honest)

I... I don't know

EXT. ISTANBUL - VARIOUS LOCATIONS - MONTAGE

Behind all these scenes of mad preparations, of detailed work, we hear a low, occasional BEEP.

-- Yasmin and the Bride are on a balcony near the Hagia Sophia. The Bride compares notes, points to one of the SIDE GATES of Topkapi Palace. Yasmin snaps pictures.

RACK to another Balcony, where Hakkan watches her through binoculars.

-- Beep.

-- Mustache delivers a package to a COMMERCIAL HANGAR. Small jets land in the BG.

Under his clipboard he has a LASER DISTANCE MEASURE. He turns smoothly, marking off the dimensions of the space, the distance to the back fence.

-- Beep-beep. Clatter. Beep.

-- The Groom, in a suit, waits in an office. A young SALESWOMAN enters, shakes his hand. They exchange cards. She produces a sheaf of FLYERS for various PRIVATE JETS.

Beeeeeeep...

INT. HARDWARE STORE - DAY

Where a homely Turkish clerk scans a SINGLE SCREWDRIVER across the bar-code reader. BEEP. Flustered. Looks up.

Crown, in a suit worth more than her house. Doesn't exactly blend in here. She hands him the screwdriver.

CLERK
That's all you need?

She fixes a wayward lock of hair.

CROWN
That's all I need.

EXT. YASMIN'S MANSION / EXT. CAFE - DAY

Hakkan is across the street from Yasmin's base, leading surveillance on Yasmin. He sends several PLAINCLOTHES AGENTS to take positions on the end of the street.

Crown sits behind him. Hakkan doesn't bother to turn.

HAKKAN
Your information, as always, Mister Crown, is excellent. Prince Dawoud sends his thanks.

Crown absentmindedly checks out a PHOTO of the convoy.

CROWN
Have you checked the Swiss transfer papers as well?

HAKKAN
Impossible to forge.

CROWN
Like a Monet.

He smiles at his own inside joke.

CROWN (CONT'D)
She's smart. Take your eyes off her for even a second and she'll have the Dagger.

HAKKAN
Every man I have is watching her.

CROWN
She's used to that.

HAKKAN
(firm)
She's not a magician.

Crown smiles. Blows across his coffee to cool it.

EXT. TOPKAPI PALACE - THE NEXT DAY - MORNING

At the SIDE ENTRANCE of the Palace wall, an ARMORED CAR and a BLACK TOWNCAR wait. Besides the four squads of ARMED GUARDS, PLAINCLOTHES GUARDS try to appear inconspicuous with earpieces and hidden holsters. They scan the area.

EXT. HAGHIA SOPHIA - UPPER LEDGE

The BRIDE looks down through binoculars. Into a cell:

BRIDE
Not kidding about security.

INT. TOPKAPI SUB-BASEMENT - VAULT

MAX BECKER leads some MUSEUM OFFICIALS past ARMED GUARDS. 50's, mustached, the lean hard muscles and eyes of a professional, Becker misses nothing, never hurries. He wears a black suit, shirt, and tie.

They swing open an ancient door in a stone sub-basement. The Topkapi Dagger is inside, with other treasures not on display.

Becker takes the Dagger, places it into a small STEEL CASE.

EXT. TOPKAPI PALACE - SIDE ENTRANCE - MINUTES LATER

The Museum Officials come outside, Becker leading the way. Two more armed guards open the back of an armored car. Becker climbs inside with the box.

Armed guards latch the doors. They climb in the cab, start it up.

The black car loads up with private security and rolls out. The Armored Car follows.

EXT. HAGHIA SOPHIA - UPPER LEDGE

The Bride bolts from her niche.

BRIDE
(into cell)
We're rolling!

EXT. ISTANBUL STREETS

The convoy moves quickly along major roads. Crowded but clear, no cover for anyone to try anything.

INT. "WAREHOUSE" SPACE - CONT.

Yasmin, dressed in a business suit, coordinates her team on the cell phone. She's in some sort of large, dark space with machinery all around her.

YASMIN
Nir, call me at the checkpoint.

As she talks, Worker passes with a Makita power drill.

YASMIN (CONT'D)
They're up.

WORKER
We're ready.

EXT. ISTANBUL STREETS

On an overpass, the Groom waits. As the convoy emerges, the Groom calls in.

GROOM
On their way.

INT. "WAREHOUSE" SPACE

Yasmin waves her hand, "wrap it up."

Mustache and the Worker are pulling on CONSTRUCTION WORKER outfits. Other SERVICE PEOPLE rush by, carrying FUEL HOSES.

EXT. AIRPORT COMMERCIAL ENTRANCE - ESTABLISHING

There is one main thoroughfare, with high chain-link fences and a maze of hangars and turn-off gates in every direction.

EXT. AIRPORT - COMMERCIAL ENTRANCE - MINUTES LATER

The convoy pulls up to the security kiosk at the main entrance to the Istanbul Airport.

SECURITY GUARD

Ten minutes early.

CONVOY DRIVER

No one on the roads.

They pull through, heading for the commercial/private loading hangars to the rear.

EXT. HANGAR AREA GATE

At one of the turn-off gates, a sign indicates "HANGARS 1-10".

Mustache appears behind the Gate. He lays down a circle of CONES, then produces a high-pressure TANK. He SPRAY-PAINTS the pavement behind the gate DARK BLACK.

EXT. AIRPORT COMMERCIAL LANE

The convoy picks its way through the maze.

INSIDE THE LEAD CAR A PLAINCLOTHES MAN scans the signs. He points to the one marked "HANGARS 1-10."

INT. ARMORED CAR

Max Becker sits, his hand resting on the box containing the dagger. The car bumps a little. His free hand brushes his weapon, confirming its readiness.

EXT. HANGAR 6 / RUNWAY

A PRIVATE JET sits on the causeway, engines rumbling. The SWISS INSURANCE AGENT stands at the bottom of the stairs to the jet door. The PILOT sticks his head out. The INSURANCE AGENT taps his watch, shrugs.

The Insurance Agent settles back in to wait. PAST HIM, far, far down the tarmac we see the doors OPEN on the NEXT HANGAR DOWN --

EXT. HANGAR 7

-- and an IDENTICAL PRIVATE JET taxis out onto the runway. Yasmin follows, a batch of documents in her hand. The private jet is in the exact same position as the Swiss jet but one hangar down. Yasmin, waiting in the same spot as the Insurance Agent, at the bottom of her jet stairs.

EXT. HANGAR AREA GATE

The convoy stops. Another TRUCK is parked nearby, with Mustache working in the bed.

The Plainclothes Man gets out. Scowls at the closed gate. Swears. He calls over to Mustache.

PLAINCLOTHES MAN

What is this?

MUSTACHE

Oh, they just repaved this morning.

PLAINCLOTHES MAN

We have to get through to Hangar 6.

MUSTACHE

No problem. Access road's still open. Just go down to the next gate, cut back. You'll see the signs.

The convoy starts off again. Mustache, whistling happily, begins to pack up his gear.

EXT. HANGAR 7 - REAR ENTRANCE

Using the Makita power drill, the Worker unscrews the HANGAR 7 sign from the wall. Replaces it with the sign from HANGAR 6. A two-second job.

He tosses the Hanger 7 sign into a trash can and dashes back into the building.

EXT. HANGAR ACCESS ROAD

The convoy is picking its way through the detour. As it makes a final turn, the NUMBERS of the HANGARS come into view on metal signs screwed onto the hangar walls --

EXT. AIRPORT - BIRD'S EYE VIEW OF HANGARS

The armored convoy rolls down the hangar access road. It drives past the NOW-UNMARKED Hangar 6 and turns into Hangar 7, which is now RE-LABELLED to read as Hangar 6.

DOWN THE ROAD: In stark contrast to the convoy, a TRIUMPH, the classic British motorcycle, powers toward us. Black and silver. The driver wears a tearaway work jumpsuit and a sleek helmet with a tinted windscreen. He slows as he approaches Hangar 7.

EXT. HANGAR 7 RUNWAY

The CONVOY arrives. The lead car pulls a little ahead, and its Plainclothes Men file out. They scan the area.

YASMIN

We thought you got lost.

PLAINCLOTHES MAN

Almost.

YASMIN

Here are all the transfer papers and documents of receivership.

The Plainclothes Man looks at her blankly, CONFUSED. The Armored Car's DRIVER steps from the cab --

SIRENS break the air. Yasmin, her people freeze. The convoy security reach for their weapons.

POLICE CARS squeal onto the runway. They quickly circle the jet. Policemen and Detectives pour out, guns up.

POLICE DETECTIVE

You! In the cockpit! Cut the engines!

Yasmin's pilot raises his hands. The engine roar dims. Yasmin's trapped.

A Mercedes pulls up among the Police cars. Hakkan gets out. He opens the door for Dawoud.

DAWOUD

You never call. You're leaving Istanbul, and you don't call.

The POLICE DETECTIVE approaches. His men pull the Bride and Groom, handcuffed, from a police car.

DAWOUD (CONT'D)

Go ahead and guess how I found you.

A loaded beat.

YASMIN

That BASTARD. Where is he? WHERE IS HE --

DAWOUD

"Business before pleasure" -- a direct quote.

Dawoud moves to the Armored car doors, gestures to the flustered armored car driver to unlock them.

ARMORED CAR DRIVER

Excuse me, sir, but this delivery is for...

Dawoud grabs the doors handles, twists.

ARMORED CAR DRIVER (CONT'D)

...Yasmin Badri.

Dawoud looks over, confused, even as his muscles continue the action of throwing the doors wide as a WIND rips across the open runway:

The truck is filled with flowers. Filled with thousands and thousands of multicolored BLOSSOMS.

As if that's not surreal enough, the wind and jet chaff rushing across the runway hits the car. The blossoms spin out and SCATTER across the scene, a blizzard of color.

DAWOUD

What the hell is this?

YASMIN

...orchids.

She snatches one as it drifts by.

YASMIN (CONT'D)

They're orchids.

She looks across into Hangar 7. The Worker leans against the wall, shocked. He looks down. A SINGLE SCREW. He crouches. Picks it up. What the hell? Looks over his head.

The metal sign he just replaced now reads 9, NOT 6.

He raises a hand to it. It swings, LOOSE. He rotates it up on its remaining, bottom screw. NOW IT READS 6.

He looks over to meet Yasmin's eyes. SHE GETS IT.

EXT. AIRPORT - BIRD'S EYE VIEW OF HANGARS

A cloud of orchids, BLOSSOMING from Hangar 7. It blows across the hangar access road where we now see...

The Triumph, now well past Hangar 7, nips into the top hangar (Hangar 9).

The REAL CONVOY cruising into view. RIGHT ON TIME.

It passes the UNMARKED Hangar 6...

It passes the MIS-MARKED Hangar 7...

All the way up to Hangar 9

Orchids dance in its wake.

EXT. HANGAR 7 RUNWAY

Yasmin's caught between delight and fury. Dawoud is arguing with the Police.

DAWOUD

No! NO, She has to have it!

The storm of flowers clears. Opening Yasmin's line of sight to Runway 9.

HER POV: A third identical jet taxis onto the runway.

HANGAR 9...

...the "9" sign, also turned upside-down reads 6, held by a single screw. The Triumph is parked beneath it, the helmet dangling from the throttle. On the ground beside it, the tearaway jumpsuit.

On the seat...the screwdriver.

In the background, the jet takes off.

Standing by the hangar, the nonplussed MAX BECKER turns to see everyone staring at him from a distance. He holds the faked documents at the side of his tailored trousers.

Becker looks back at them. Takes in the collection of people staring at him... frowns

EXT. HANGAR 7 RUNWAY

Dawoud and the police stare at the drama beyond them. Hakkan suddenly reacts to an engine WHINE --

HAKKAN
(realizing)
Your sister.

Dawoud turns. Behind him, the last of the orchids blow away. Yasmin's jet is taxiing. Yasmin is in the doorway, pulling it closed.

DAWOUD
Stop her! Arrest her!

POLICE DETECTIVE
For what?

The jet accelerates, lifts off.

Dawoud and Hakkan stare up at the two planes, disappearing into the clouds.

EXT. CROWN'S JET - DAY

The plane cruises high over the flatlands of the Turkish countryside. The sun is already low in the West, it casts long red streaks through the clouds.

INT. CROWN'S JET - CONTINUOUS

Crown pilots, stares ahead at the peaks of the Hasan Dagı volcano rising from the ground.

Crown looks to his left. Yasmin's jet has pulled up abreast of Crown's. Crown looks over, stares at her in the cockpit of the other plane.

She stares back at him. Furious somewhere deep.

EXT. OPEN SKY - CONTINUOUS

The two planes, cruising just above the red-laced clouds and the jagged peaks of Hasan Dagi. Peaceful, steady.

INT. CROWN'S JET - CONTINUOUS

Crown watches Yasmin, staring back at him across the space between the planes. Unapologetic.

Suddenly, her plane banks, seeming to arc right at him. Crown JERKS on the controls, peeling back as Yasmin's plane cuts across his nose, not twenty feet away.

Jet wash ROCKS the plane, Crown's steadies the controls, brings the plane to level.

CROWN'S P.O.V.: Yasmin's plane, already disappearing into the clouds.

EXT. CROWN'S YACHT - NIGHT

A still night. Crown stares up at the sky. Stars. Beautiful. He's noticing.

Elliot, on the other hand, is staring at the Dagger in the now-open steel case. A little shell-shocked.

CROWN
Go ahead. Pick it up.

ELLIOT
You don't want me holding a knife
right now.

Crown's gaze moves to the horizon. The lights of a city are coming into view.

INT. YASMIN'S HOME - LIBRARY - NIGHT

Yasmin's crew sits around the large room, silent and dejected. A few exchange looks.

Yasmin, very much alone, stands in front of the wall of books, staring up at a thousand titles. You get the impression she's been here a while.

Without breaking her focus, she moves to a collection of CD's, fumbles through, puts on the Bach Suite. The same Crown had on when she went to his boat.

She stares at the wall of books... thinking... listening... letting it all wash over her.

Then she moves, pulling a large tome from the shelves. She opens it, flips through pages, stops at a photograph of Crown's Seurat, hanging in a museum.

-- Flashback. CROWN'S YACHT: Crown and Yasmin in front of the Seurat.

CROWN

When I look at this, I feel a man's rage, his anger.

-- Back to the library:

Her eyes move to the caption: "Georges Seurat's Bec du Hoc, on loan from the collection of Thomas Crown, 2003."

Nothing... but something.

Her eyes shift to the page's inside margin. Set to the left of the Seurat, only its right edge showing, is another framed painting, its canvas dark brown, flowing, disturbing.

She moves to the shelf, pulls off another tome, opens it, turns pages, stops.

HER POV of the page: A photograph of the same gallery wall, this time centered on Lucian Freud's "Self Portrait," an image of power and pain, age and grace, self loathing and surrender, set against a contempt for all things mundane.

CROWN'S VOICE OVER

...at a whole world who try as he might to satisfy his needs...

Yasmin's eyes drift to the caption, widen: "Lucian Freud's self-portrait. Stolen from the gallery, 2003."

CROWN'S VOICE OVER (CONT'D)

...leaves him always starving for more and more and more life....

Her eyes flick between the two paintings, the dates, making connections.

YASMIN
 (under her breath)
 ...Amazing.

INT. LUXURIOUS HOTEL SUITE - NIGHT

Hakkan in the unlit living room, stands at the closed double doors. Holding a sat phone. Clears his throat. Loudly.

A moment later, Dawoud emerges. Dawoud takes the phone.

DAWOUD
 Where?

A moment. Dawoud hangs up. Tosses the phone back at Hakkan.

DAWOUD (CONT'D)
 At least the man has taste.
 (off Hakkan)
 We're going to Dubai.

He turns back. As the door SLAMS...

EXT. DUBAI - VARIOUS - ESTABLISHING - DAY

If Istanbul is the symbol of old world power in the Middle East, Dubai is the standard of the new.

Hundreds of stylish high-rises soar from the ocean-side oasis into the desert sky. Everywhere you look, cranes, thousands of them, framing buildings that are found nowhere else in the world; out in the harbor is a series of man-made islands in the shape of various countries.

Overlay: "Dubai, United Arab Emirates."

The place glows with the millions upon millions poured into it. There are many cities where the insanely rich go to play. Dubai is what you'd get if you jumped twenty years into the future and brought back the paradise of that time.

EXT. RACETRACK - ESTABLISHING - HOURS LATER - DAY

A brand-new, lavish HORSE TRACK on the edge of the city. They're not racing horses here, though.

They're racing camels. Camels ridden by tiny ROBOT JOCKEYS. Various SHEIKS and MILLIONAIRES watch their prize-winners trot through workouts. Handshakes signal side-bets.

Crown watches a bizarre trial heat. Robot jockeys atop galloping, snorting camels. A man in a WHITE PANAMA HAT leans against the rail beside him.

A ROAR distracts him. A RED MASERATI pulls up. Dawoud gets out. Some grooms walk one of the camels past as Dawoud joins Crown at the rail. When Dawoud comes, the man in the panama hat moves away. We never see his face.

DAWOUD
Robots riding camels. I
love this country.

CROWN
(off car)
The new model?

DAWOUD
Oh yes. You can have one if you
like.

CROWN
What if I like two?

DAWOUD
Take three. This is Dubai, the
only country in the world where you
can buy a hundred red Maseratis in
a day.

CROWN
(wonders dryly)
What does one do with a hundred red
Maseratis?

DAWOUD
Own them. Why Dubai? Not that I'm
complaining.

CROWN
Neutral ground.

DAWOUD
What do you want, Thomas?

CROWN
To renegotiate.

DAWOUD
Perhaps we should simply call
everything off?

CROWN
You can't afford it.

DAWOUD
Can you?

Crown shrugs. Poker stare.

CROWN
My money is the anchor for every investment you'll get, every company --

DAWOUD
Which is why you get a cut of every single contract!

Dawoud sighs. He switches back to eminently reasonable -- at least on the surface.

DAWOUD (CONT'D)
It's -- really, I admire you. For a moment, even I thought you cared about Yasmin.

(shrugs)
But now... you used her to distract me. Now you have the Dagger, and so you have the leverage. You think you can make me pay even more. Really, magnificent.

(beat)
Now I know what I'm up against.

CROWN
Good to have things out in the open.

DAWOUD
It's one thing to play games with the police. But another man, as rich as you? Are you ready for that?

Crown smiles.

DAWOUD (CONT'D)
You wanted to hunt wolves.

Crown walks away.

DAWOUD (CONT'D)
Let us see who bleeds first.

EXT. DAR AL MASYAS - ESTABLISHING - LATER - DAY

A series of suites and villas built low along the blue canals of the city.

Each suite has a boat and private driver waiting at the dock.

Crown and his boat pull up. He hops out, trots up to the patio outside his suite

EXT. CROWN'S SUITE - PATIO

Crown starts to put his card in the reader that opens the door, pauses.

HIS POV: There's a small fresh scratch in the metal of the door reader, and the door is not entirely shut.

He hesitates, then places a hand flat on the door, pushes.

INT. CROWN'S SUITE

The door swings open, bumps against something. Crown slowly steps inside, reacts.

HIS POV, moving: The suite has been DESTROYED. Not just tossed. Every item has literally been rendered into kindling. The drywall has been stripped from the beams. The fixtures have been ripped from the walls.

This \$8000-a-night suite looks like post-tornado footage. 3-foot tall piles of wreckage line the floor.

Crown moves further in, amazed. He turns a corner.

Yasmin sits in the only intact chair left in the place, in the center of the room. A bottle of fine scotch and an empty tumbler sit next to her.

CROWN

Love what you've done with the place.

She looks up, smiles strangely at him.

YASMIN

I was your decoy... You used me.

CROWN

I never lied to you.

She rises, comes close to him. Really close. Temperatures rise.

YASMIN

...Thank you for the orchids.

He nods, acknowledging. She moves to the door.

CROWN

Yasmin...

YASMIN

One day. One night. No games.

Off Crown... nodding.

EXT. OASIS - AFTERNOON

The shimmer of water. A stand of palms. A large tent. Shade, water, life, all set against the enduring power of one of the world's great deserts.

A line of Bedouins, many leading camels, others horses, still others herding goats, move slowly away, disappearing between dunes.

A helicopter streaks overhead, banking towards the swath of green.

INT. HELICOPTER

Yasmin stares out at the Oasis below. Crown stares at her, trying to decipher what's behind her gaze.

The helicopter touches down. She looks over at him, small smile.

EXT. OASIS

The copter doors open and Yasmin steps out, heads towards the stand of palms that signature the oasis pool.

Crown steps out. As soon as he does, the copter lifts off, banking away. Suddenly, nothing but silence.

He follows after Yasmin, circling the large tent. Yasmin, her back to him, comes into view, standing at the edge of a shaded pool of water. The Oasis.

Crown closes on her, stops a few feet behind her. Her gaze remains steady on the light sparkling off the water.

YASMIN

I believe that there is a fate waiting for each of us. And try as we might to pretend that we are free, it will always have us in the end.

(beat)

Dawoud is broken. He's lost the ability to be a good man. And so... it falls to me.

She turns to him, a deep, drowning uncertainty in her eyes.

YASMIN (CONT'D)

I love freedom. I love that my life is my own. I can't --

CROWN

Then don't. I never would.

YASMIN

(nods)

The martyr and the hedonist. What a fine pair we make.

CROWN

What are we doing here, Yasmin?

YASMIN

Living... No games.

CLOSE ON YASMIN. Exposed as she never has been in front of him.

CROWN

One condition.

YASMIN

(without hesitation)

Anything.

Crown starts to speak, halts himself. Smiles.

CROWN

Ah, screw it...

He charges her, scooping her up, dumping her shrieking and laughing into the water.

They surface, laughing. She pulls away, stares up at him, hands start to undo her own clothing, move to his. He dunks her back in. They go under, this time surface slowly, kissing.

INT. OASIS TENT - AFTERNOON

Crown and Yasmin hit the bed, kissing passionately as they tear at each other's clothes.

He seizes her and they're fucking. Fierce. The sex is fueled by something more visceral than simple desire. A need to know that all of their defeats and compromises, past and future, cannot take their bodies, their passion away from them. They make love as if it was their last night on earth, with each other or anyone else.

LATER - both lying on their backs... stunned. What just happened? Crown touches the side of her face. She turns to look at him.

YASMIN

I didn't want this...

CROWN

Neither did I..

EXT. BURJ AL ARAB - ESTABLISHING - DAY

A single hotel dominates Dubai's beach landscape -- BURJ AL ARAB. It's a thousand feet high and built like a billowing sail over the ocean.

INT. BURJ AL ARAB - DAWOUD'S OFFICE - CONT.

Dawoud serves tea. Elliot stands at the window, nervous. He watches the massive CONSTRUCTION CRANES working on the nearby hotels. The builders in Dubai never sleep.

DAWOUD

You're making the right choice.

ELLIOT

I haven't made any choice, yet.

DAWOUD

As you wish.

ELLIOT

I've got a great job...

DAWOUD

No question. Being Thomas Crown's protegee is a fantastic opportunity.

(beat)

You think, someday, that will be your company? That he'll step aside?

ELLIOT

He'll die at his desk.

DAWOUD

So ...how much longer? Ten more years, cleaning up his messes? Twenty?

(no answer)

A whole career as Thomas Crown's boy?

(pause)

That's what the other executives call you behind your back, you know.

(turns the blade)

I wonder what Crown calls you?

Elliot crosses away. Furious.

DAWOUD (CONT'D)

I need someone. An expert, to deal with all these foreign companies.

(no answer)

I'm not asking you to betray him.

ELLIOT

I'd never --

DAWOUD

I know. But he's not negotiating in good faith. You know, with my sister, he's out of control. We're businessmen, and he's playing these games...Just tell me. Tell me, so we can all do business together. Just how much does he have riding on... us?

Elliot hesitates. Dawoud beams his most comforting smile.

INT. OASIS TENT - AFTERNOON

Crown's eyes blink open, focus. He's alone.

Deep-hued light filters in through heavy canvas shades that sway gently in a breeze. He takes in the fabrics, the layers and layers of rugs. A basin of water.

EXT. OASIS TENT

Crown pushes through the flaps of the tent, wanders through the oasis. He comes around a stand of low lying trees.

Yasmin stands in front of a white camel, feeding it figs.

CROWN

Beautiful animal. But a little slow for my taste.

Without turning, Yasmin smiles.

EXT. THE DUNES - SUNSET

The Dunes of the Wuste Desert outside of Dubai are enormous; some are thirty feet high. They're like deep-ocean swells, frozen in a moment. Their color shifts from red through pink through fire-orange as the sunlight changes. And like a great sand ocean, they go on forever.

A DUNE BUGGY soars over the crest of a dune, SLAMS down the lee side. It barely stays upright. Actually, it's barely a dune buggy; more like a steel cage on four fat wheels. Yasmin is piloting the buggy over the dunes. Crown holds on.

They are, literally, the only thing in sight.

One bad landing, and the buggy tilts. Yasmin stands in her seat, grabs the frame.

YASMIN

Left! Left!

She and Crown toss their weight to one side. The buggy rights itself.

Yasmin looks at Crown who's looking back at her, shit eating grin creasing his features. She floors it, accelerates towards another Dune and over.

There is an excellent chance that a jazzier version of "Windmills of Your Mind" plays on their buggy sound system.

EXT. THE DUNES - LATE SUNSET

Crown, driving now, steers the buggy across a flat expanse. Yasmin stands on her side of the vehicle. Scans the horizon, the sun half disappeared into the sand. Nothing in view.

YASMIN

There's nothing out here.

CROWN

Exactly.

EXT. THE DUNES - NIGHT

Two thousand stars fill the night, a dozen constellations, prominent. The sand is pitch black, featureless. REVEAL

Crown and Yasmin, lying on their backs, looking up at the sky, studying the heavens. She's nestled into him, playful.

YASMIN

So tell me where we go then.

CROWN

India.

YASMIN

Mmmmmmm... Gulab jamun. Sweet.

CROWN

Ancient civilizations, temples of gold.

YASMIN

(laughing)

Oh, yes, that too.

(curling into him)

And beds. Lots and lots of beds. Satin sheets. Do we travel by sea or air?

CROWN

Always by sea.

YASMIN

Of course. But not the yacht. A sailboat. A HUGE sailboat. A schooner. With a giant stateroom. And a giant... bed.

She kisses him.

YASMIN (CONT'D)

I like traveling the world with you, Thomas Crown. Find us an island.

CROWN

It's done.

YASMIN

(eyes closed, imagining)

Oh, yes. I like this island very much. It's peaceful. There's just the sand, and the water, and you, and me.

He doesn't respond, sobers. She opens her eyes, follows his gaze upwards.

CROWN

Run with me.

A long moment. She's on the edge of saying yes. All her doubts brought into focus by Crown.

CROWN (CONT'D)

Yasmin, I know who I am. Men like me die alone with sad-eyed nurses who can't quite remember our names. Nothing lasts.

(beat)

So for now, I live it out. Every moment. Come with me. You want to.

He kisses her; she lets him, responds passionately... then -

YASMIN

Just because nothing lasts doesn't mean nothing matters. You can be a good man.

CROWN

I've made my choices. I have no regrets.

YASMIN

Listen to yourself. You thought love was going to save you.

(beat, smiling)

You can't forgive it for not.

CROWN

So why are you smiling?

YASMIN

Because the only people who are disappointed by love, are romantics. I know your dirty secret, Thomas Crown.

CROWN

And I know yours. You brought me out here to try to live the next forty years of your life in this one day, one night. But it won't work. You can't --

YASMIN

You're right.

Crown pauses, realizes how hard this is for her.

YASMIN (CONT'D)

This will be... the life I didn't live. This will be so that in the future, I can close my eyes, and remember this. Is that so wrong?

CROWN

...Somehow, that is the saddest thing I have ever heard.

He reaches out to her, touches her elbow.

EXT. PRIVATE VILLA - DUBAI CANALS - MORNING

Crown's boat cruises along the canals. Villas loom. Crown and Yasmin ride together at the wheel. He drops the boat out of gear, glides towards a dock.

YASMIN

They say that love changes who you are. Everything you believed, or thought that you were so clever to know, is stripped away. And that in the face of such complete annihilation... people are capable of anything. Is it true?

CROWN

(beat)

Yes.

Yasmin smiles, wipes her filling eyes --

The boat glides to the dock, stops. Crown offers her a hand up. She takes it, pauses.

CROWN (CONT'D)

Yasmin --

YASMIN

It's not love I've discovered, it's purpose. I know what I have to do.

CROWN

Then I suppose you better do it.

She nods, steps onto the docks.

YASMIN

For the last time, will you give me the Dagger?

(beat)

Please.

CROWN

(looking away)

I make it too easy, you'll never enjoy it.

YASMIN

This isn't easy.

CROWN

(hard beat)

No.

(beat)

Yasmin, I take I don't give. And I don't apologize.

YASMIN

Do you know how much I love that in you?

Caught off guard, he starts to respond.

YASMIN (CONT'D)

-- Good bye, Thomas Crown.

With Yasmin now, turning away, tears flowing freely down her face as she pushes through a villa's gate. Behind her, watching her walk away, Crown.

A beat and he puts the boat in gear, pulls out of the frame.

INT. YASMIN'S VILLA - MORNING

Yasmin lets herself into her villa. Goes straight to the windows, watching Crown's boat pull away into the distance.

MAN'S VOICE

Many men only dream of a woman such
as yourself watching them as
they... sail away

REVOLVE to reveal: MAX BECKER, sitting very still and very proper in a chair strategically hidden in a corner of the room. Even in this climate, he wears the black suit, collared shirt, and tie. Max Becker doesn't change to suit the world. He changes the world to suit him.

Yasmin reacts... but it's not with surprise.

YASMIN

Many men... but not Thomas Crown.

BECKER

No. Not Thomas Crown... I don't
suppose you know where the Topkapi
Dagger is?

YASMIN

He has it, and you won't find it.
We both know that. He's too smart.

Becker nods, agreeing.

BECKER

So then what am I doing here,
Princess?

Yasmin doesn't answer. Becker sighs, rises, starts to leave.

BECKER (CONT'D)

This is a waste of my time.

Yasmin tosses papers down on the table between them. Becker looks down. The Lucian Freud self-portrait stares back up. His eyebrows raise.

BECKER (CONT'D)

All right, yes, it's very familiar.
I have been looking for it for
years.

YASMIN

He loaned the one to steal the other. He gives so he can take.

On Becker, no emotion. Considering.

On Yasmin, steeling herself.

YASMIN (CONT'D)

I can give you ~~Thomas~~ Crown.

BECKER

Why?

YASMIN

To put my brother's partner behind bars.

(beat)

Do you want to know where it is?

Beat. Becker, studying Yasmin. Yasmin, strong now, staring back at him.

BECKER

Yes, very much.

EXT. CAFE - MORNING

An exclusive dockside cafe. Crown's boat moored in the BG. Patrons in both traditional Arab garb and the most expensive Western styles. The morning sun shines on...

ON Crown as he sips Turkish coffee and basks, not really reviewing the contract before him. He signs it, almost absent-mindedly. Regards the exquisite Michel Perchin fountain pen. To the MAN opposite:

CROWN

Mind if I keep this?

The Man's VOICE is familiar but we don't see his face.

MAN

It's all yours now.

As he pockets the pen, Crown's cell rings.

CROWN

(into cell)

Hello?

INTERCUT WITH

INT. BURJ AL ARAB - DAWOUD'S OFFICE

DAWOUD
 (into phone)
 Did you enjoy your time with my
 sister?

CROWN
 She seems to feel you're a man of
 questionable character.

DAWOUD
 Yasmin always did suffer from an
 elevated sense of morality.
 Fortunately for me, we're not
 similarly afflicted. But let me
 ask, did Yasmin seem all right?
 (pause)
 Because I am very worried about her
 ...health. Are you?

Crown reacts. Without a word to the Man, he gets up and
 starts for his boat.

CROWN
 That was a mistake.

DAWOUD
 Come show me how to fix it, then.

EXT. DUBAI CANALS - MINUTES LATER

Crown BLASTS past, showing us how fast his boat can go.

INT. BURJ AL ARAB - LOBBY - LATER

Crown crosses the vast lobby to one of the GLASS ELEVATORS
 rising all the way up the interior of the thousand feet.
 Hakkan waits. When he sees Crown, he clears the elevator.
 The two of them step in.

EXT. BURJ AL ARAB - ROOFTOP - LATER

Crown bursts onto the roof. The helipad is rebuilt as a
 DRIVING and PUTTING GREEN. Dawoud DRIVES golf balls off the
 thousand-foot edge into the ocean.

Hakkan joins his Agents stationed around the roof.

DAWOUD

I'm glad it's just the two of us.
No need to get Yasmin involved
until she needs to be.

CROWN

(to Dawoud)

You won't hurt her.

DAWOUD

(shrugging)

Royals die, Thomas. Usually in car
crashes. You can look it up.

Dawoud goes for the backswing -

Crown suddenly charges. Two Security Men rush him. Crown punches one in the throat, backhands another. Hakkan's a step slow, he can't stop Crown from SLAPPING the golf club from Dawoud's hands, grabbing him by the shirtfront...

...and bringing them both to the edge of the thousand foot drop. Crown stops at the last second, both of them teetering.

Dawoud's wide-eyed. When Crown speaks, his Scottish accent breaks through.

CROWN

You listen, you little shit, I will put both of us over the edge and then I will beat you to death on the way down if you mention her again. Now don't speak. Don't. Speak.

Dawoud nods. Without speaking.

Crown steps back, releases Dawoud. Hakkan's hand shoots out, steadies the Prince. Crown steps clear, hands raised.

CROWN (CONT'D)

Another word and I pull all my investments, all my friends' investments --

DAWOUD

(calm)

No, you won't. Elliot told me how you will lose everything without me. I'm somewhat flattered you felt I was worth the risk.

It's like Crown's been stabbed. He can barely stand.

DAWOUD (CONT'D)

He's a smart young man.

Hakkan produces a stack of papers, over three inches thick. Dawoud takes them.

DAWOUD (CONT'D)

My family fortune is the basis for all of Khirastan's wealth.

(off papers)

And now yours. These are the contracts, the partners you found for me.

Dawoud tosses them over the edge of the Burj al Arab. They snowflake through the air.

DAWOUD (CONT'D)

Elliot found me new partners. He found companies to take over every one of your investments. I'm giving them bigger shares, more profit. You get nothing.

CROWN

...Elliot told you.

DAWOUD

Bring me the Dagger. I get what I want, you get my sister. It's easy. How can you even pretend there's a choice?

CROWN

Money means nothing to me.

DAWOUD

Really? Who is Thomas Crown without money?

Crown's about to snap back, stops. That question has a weight to it he didn't expect.

Hakkan steps in front of Dawoud. Crown heads for the suite.

After he's gone:

DAWOUD (CONT'D)

Usually in car crashes.

Hakkan silently agrees.

EXT. THE WORLD ISLANDS - ESTABLISHING - DAY

From the air, it looks like a map of the world -- but each country, on the blue ocean, is an individual, perfect green ISLAND.

Crown's yacht sits just off "England". The size distortion is disturbing.

EXT/INT. YACHT, CORRIDORS - DAY

Crown moving with purpose.

CROWN
(booming)
Where the hell is she?

An ASSISTANT appears, satellite phone in hand.

ASSISTANT
Yasmin Badri.

Crown grabs the phone, still moving.

CROWN
Get out of Dubai.

YASMIN
What do you--

CROWN
He threatened you

INT. YASMIN'S VILLA - CONTINUOUS

Yasmin, alone now, looks out over the water. The bravado's gone, replaced by a deep sadness.

YASMIN
I'm not afraid.

CROWN
Yasmin --

YASMIN
Would you walk away, Thomas? Would you turn your back on the only thing in your life that ever really mattered?

INT. YACHT, CORRIDORS - CONTINUOUS

The business center looms in front of Crown.

CROWN
Listen to me...

YASMIN
I'm warning you, Thomas. Walk away
from this deal.

CROWN
I'm not finished yet. But you need
to --

INT. YASMIN'S VILLA - CONTINUOUS

YASMIN
You walk away, so will I. But not
alone.

Behind her, curtains flutter. She doesn't see Hakkan step
behind her into the frame.

INT. YACHT, CORRIDORS - CONTINUOUS

The line goes dead.

CROWN
Yasmin?...

Crown steps into

INT. YACHT BUSINESS CENTER - CONTINUOUS

Analysts look up as Crown blows into the space. Suddenly
motion stops, phones ring, unanswered.

Crown takes in his team, slowly lowers the phone as Elliot
crosses into the frame, carrying a small suitcase. Stops in
front of Crown.

ELLIOT
You weren't here.

CROWN
(distracted, thinking)
Get out.

ELLIOT

What was I supposed to do, watch
you run this company into the
ground?

On Crown, focusing his frustration, burning now, wanting to
beat this man to the ground.

CROWN

It's my company

ELLIOT

Your company, our salaries. Our
lives. Ten thousand pensions. Do
you ever think about anyone but
yourself when you pull these high-
wire acts?

The Staff look nervously at each other. Should they be here
for this?

CROWN

Do I pay you to disagree with me?

ELLIOT

You used to.

CROWN

At your age --

ELLIOT

At my age, you'd already sold out
two bosses. You taught me this.

(beat)

And you also taught me when to walk
away. He beat you, Thomas.

Crown shuts down. Just dead-eyes Elliot.

CROWN

Get off my ship.

Elliot exits with dignity.

A beat. Crown's staff stares back at him, confused.

CROWN (CONT'D)

EVERYBODY OFF!

Crown watches as his people leave their stations, head for
the exits.

INT. YACHT BUSINESS CENTER - LATER

Crown is alone in the yacht office. The screens flicker. Documents everywhere, but no answers. He sits with a bottle of scotch.

One of the phones rings. He ignores it. It keeps on ringing.

Again and again. Finally Crown snatches it up.

CROWN

What?

INT. DAWOUD'S OFFICE

Dawoud is on the phone.

DAWOUD

Time to renegotiate.

EXT. YACHT BOW - LATER

Crown, bottle of scotch in hand, stands at the prow of his ship. Seemingly way past rage. Almost without expression, he lobs the bottle out into the water.

INT. YASMIN'S ROOM - DAWOUD'S SUITE - SUNSET

Yasmin watches the sky go red over the desert. One of Hakkan's AGENTS unlocks the door to her room, carries in a tray of water and food.

PAST HIM, IN THE MAIN ROOM Dawoud stares back at her, his eyes disturbingly empty. Then he looks away, out the large windows. Crown's yacht is visible in the distance.

ANOTHER ANGLE TO INCLUDE Elliot, case in hand, waiting, uncomfortable. He meets Yasmin's gaze for a moment, looks away.

DAWOUD

Don't you have a financial presentation to prepare for.

ELLIOT

That's assuming he gives in.

DAWOUD
 He has no choice. You showed me
 that, remember?

INT. CROWN OFFICE, YACHT

The room's dark save the flicker of the business center screens seen through the glass of the office.

Crown, utterly alone, stares ahead.

One hand rests on a WOODEN BOX. He flips it open to reveal the Topkapi Dagger.

A beat and he lifts it, holding it aloft so the light of the screens bounces off the emeralds.

His eyes shift from the dagger to something beyond.

WE ROTATE AROUND CROWN, lining up behind him with his line of sight.

On the wall, where the Seurat hung. The Lucian Freud Portrait is in its place. Vibrant, seething, staring back at Crown.

EXT. DUBAI SKYLINE - MORNING

ESTABLISHING as the sun breaks over the glass spires.

INT. DAWOUD'S SUITE - MORNING

Yasmin watches TV. Flips from channel to channel.

CNN ANNOUNCER

And there are rumors today, that
 the leadership of the Principality
 of Khirastan will finally be
 settled --

INT. CROWN'S YACHT - BUSINESS CENTER - CONT.

Crown, still alone, still sitting, Dagger still in his hand, watches the news on his screens.

BBC

-- claiming he made contact with
 the thieves and ransomed back the
 treasure.

(MORE)

BBC (CONT'D)

Prince Dawoud has announced a press
conference at the Dubai
International Finance Commission --

INT. DAWOUD'S SUITE

Yasmin's still surfing.

AL-JAZEERA

Opinion polls have surged for
Prince Dawoud with the news he has
personally recovered --

Dawoud enters. Turns off the TV. He sits by Yasmin.

DAWOUD

You know, in the old days, I could
have just locked you up in the
Harems at Topkapi. Not all change
is progress.

YASMIN

Do you remember when we were small,
the way we used to play in the
gardens. You were always the good
one.

DAWOUD

And yet you were always the
favorite.

YASMIN

Not always.... How did we get here?

Dawoud brushes Yasmin's hair from her face.

DAWOUD

Families, eh? Rich or poor.

Dawoud rises.

DAWOUD (CONT'D)

You lost. He lost.
(then)
Last chance. Come wave to the
crowds. It's what Father would
have wanted.

Yasmin won't even look at him.

YASMIN

Do you really believe that?

A beat. Dawoud crosses, kisses the top of her head. Exits.

INT. CROWN'S OFFICE, YACHT - DAY

Crown stands in his office, slowly and exactly knotting his tie. He picks up the Dagger's wooden box, crosses out.

As he passes the wall where last night the angry Lucian Freud painting was, the Seurat landscape is back in its place.

EXT. BURJ AL ARAB - DAY

Crown, dagger box in hand, steps from a taxi, pays the driver too much. His gaze moves up the towering sail of the hotel. Against it, he looks small.

INT. LOBBY, BURJ AL ARAB - DAY

Crown steps into the lobby. Across the expanse of marble, Hakkan waits by a private elevator. Crown walks up to him, nods. Hakkan stares back, the hatred palpable.

INT. ELEVATOR, BURJ AL ARAB - DAY

Crown is pushed roughly against the glass wall of the elevator. He stares down at the receding lobby as Hakkan searches him. Nothing.

Hakkan stares. Elevator dings.

INT. CORRIDOR, BURJ AL ARAB - DAY

Crown and Hakkan move towards a door guarded by two of Dawoud's men. The door swings open and Crown steps into:

INT. DAWOUD'S SUITE - DAY

Dawoud stands in the center of the living area, the cat who ate the canary. Crown's eyes track. Four of his security are arrayed around the room.

Through a doorway leading to the bedroom, Yasmin. She stands, stares back at him. Honestly shocked.

DAWOUD

May I...?

Dawoud puts out his hand for the case. Yasmin breaks Crown's gaze, looks away.

A beat and Crown holds out the case. Dawoud takes it. Eyes never leaving Crown, he tosses it to a SPECIALIST who begins authenticating the piece with a jewelers loop.

ON CROWN. That gaze he's leveled so many times at men he will crush. Dawoud stares back, a man who's never lost.

And then Crown's gaze folds. He eyes twitch, look away.

CROWN

I just want her.

Dawoud can't keep the sneer from his voice. To Yasmin:

DAWOUD

See, in the end - you were the one who brought me the dagger.

The Specialist hands Dawoud the case with dagger, it's real. Dawoud nods to Hakkan. Yasmin starts to move forward, but one of Dawoud's security blocks her.

Dawoud holds the dagger, stares at it.

DAWOUD (CONT'D)

Do you know how much... I despise this thing.

He snaps the case shut.

DAWOUD (CONT'D)

(to Hakkan)

Keep them here until it's official, then...

CLOSE ON DAWOUD: His eyes communicating murder to Hakkan.

DAWOUD (CONT'D)

...then release them.

Dawoud lowers his head just a little, so that his eyes are level with Crown's.

DAWOUD (CONT'D)

I have to admit, Thomas, I'm a little bit disappointed.

Dawoud pats Crown on the shoulder and walks out, two of the security trailing.

EXT. BURJ AL ARAB HELIPAD - MOMENTS LATER

The helicopter sits on the pad, rotors whirring. Dawoud climbs in. Elliot's already inside, balancing a laptop, scanning files.

INT. DAWOUD'S SUITE - CONTINUOUS

Yasmin stands in the bedroom, watching as the helicopter banks away.

In the main room, Crown has pulled himself up and now stands at the huge windows. He stares out at Dubai. Lost.

EXT. DUBAI FINANCIAL CENTER - ESTABLISHING - DAY

Another 22nd Century tower over a sprawling office/exchange center wedged downtown. Billions of dollars pass through these doors hourly.

Dawoud's helicopter lands on one of the half dozen helipads. Dawoud and Elliot exit the helicopter, shouting over rotors -

ELLIOT

This is a big snow.

DAWOUD

It needs to be. Hakkan will be on the phone with the Prime Minister. The second we get the news Parliament has swung my way, you jump right in and announce our partnerships.

Behind them, the helicopter lifts off the pad. Noise grows. Shouting over the din:

DAWOUD (CONT'D)

Crown's not a man who loses well. I don't want a minute, a sliver of time for anything to happen. Boom boom boom. All at once.

INT. FINANCIAL CENTER FOYER - CONT.

Reporters rush Dawoud. He nods, makes small talk as he pushes out onto the --

INT. DUBAI FINANCIAL CENTER - MAIN TRADING FLOOR

Unlike most stock markets, hold-overs from the early 1900's, the Dubai financial center runs smoothly, HUMMING rather than SHRIEKING. APPLAUSE rises from traders and executives as Dawoud crosses toward a main, raised SPEAKER'S PODIUM, similar to the bell-ringer's platform at the NYSE.

The Attendant nods to Dawoud. Dawoud takes the podium, Reporters from various networks crowd around. Focus in the hall is split between the normal business and the press scrum.

DAWOUD

Ladies and gentlemen, thank you for your time. I will be brief. In the name of the Principality of Khirastan, and specifically my father King Farahd, I have several important announcements.

He produces the wooden box containing the Dagger.

DAWOUD (CONT'D)

As you know, just two days ago, the Topkapi Dagger was stolen from museum custody in Istanbul ...

Elliot crosses to the OPERATOR of one of the BIG BOARDS along the wall near the podium. He flashes the stack of papers, the list of investors Dawoud showed Crown.

ELLIOT

I need these names entered, the financial symbols are here ...

INT. DAWOUD'S SUITE

Hakkan takes the phone from one of his Agents.

HAKKAN

Prime Minister?

INT. DUBAI TRADING FLOOR

Dawoud is taking questions.

DAWOUD

I paid the ransom, and gave what information I had to the Turkish authorities. Please, I want to move on...

The Attendant sidles up to him. Whispers in his ear.

DAWOUD (CONT'D)

Pardon me.

Dawoud takes a phone call. Nods, all gravitas.

INT. DAWOUD'S SUITE

Yasmin watches Hakkan hang up the phone.

YASMIN

You leaked that he had retrieved the Dagger.

HAKKAN

Yes.

YASMIN

And right now Parliament is calling for a vote.

Hakkan doesn't answer.

INT. DAWOUD'S SUITE

Yasmin approaches the guard blocking the door to her bedroom. He glances to Hakkan who nods. What harm can Crown possibly do?

Yasmin comes to the windows next to Crown, tentative. They both look out over the city.

YASMIN

When Dawoud rules the country, he will give it to... to whoever has the most money to buy it.

Crown's face, reflected in the glass.

CROWN

I. Don't. Care.

YASMIN

You let him beat you. For me.

She puts out a hand, touches the hem of his clothing.

INT. DUBAI TRADING FLOOR

The press is eating up the suspense. Dawoud steps back to the microphone.

DAWOUD

I can confirm the Parliament of the Principality of Khirastan has put me forward to take my father's throne. We will have the results shortly.

More applause, more reporters pressing forward. Activity in the rest of the room slows as the traders and execs press forward to be a part of this.

INT. DAWOUD'S SUITE

Crown and Yasmin at the window. On the television, Dawoud's press conference continues.

CROWN

The world is a very big place, Yasmin. Very soon, all of this will seem like a distant memory.

YASMIN

...will it?

He peels away, moves to the bar at the far end of the room.

YASMIN (CONT'D)

There is a story from my country, about a boy who was terribly in love with a girl who was deaf and blind. The boy's love was such that he went to a witch and asked her to give the girl his ears. The witch did this and the girl was grateful and she loved the boy very much...

CLOSE ON Yasmin. Deep sadness growing.

YASMIN (CONT'D)

And so the boy begged: "please, give her my eyes." And the witch did. And for the first time in her life, the girl could see.

She turns, looks back at Crown at the bar, his back to her.

YASMIN (CONT'D)

And the girl looked upon this boy
who had given so much for her...

She can't go on.

ON CROWN. He plinks ICE into a glass. A cube at a time.
CLINK.

YASMIN (CONT'D)

Thomas, you need to know --

CROWN

And she realized that she could
never love a boy who couldn't hear
her voice.

CLINK of more ice. Rhythmic. Hypnotic. Stopping her.

CROWN (CONT'D)

...And she could never love a boy
who couldn't see her face.

YASMIN

Is the girl terrible?

CROWN

No. The boy was a fool. Never let
them take who you are.

CLINK. CLINK. It's beginning to drive her a bit mad. She
starts to say something. Freezes. Stares at his left arm,
moving, like a machine. Ice to glass. Clink.

-- FLASH of the Truck Driver checking his watch at Topkapi --

Yasmin squints, begins to rise..

CLINK.

-- FLASH of the Bride and Groom, checking their identical
watches --

Yasmin's up now, crossing to Crown, who still has his back to
her. In the BG, Hakkan feels something. He straightens up,
tensing, looking for danger.

CLINK.

-- FLASH of the German Tourist, checking the same watch --

Yasmin's almost to Crown, who still won't turn around.

YASMIN

What are you making?

CROWN

Something special. Just for you.

CLINK.

-- FLASH of Yasmin checking her identical watch, in Topkapi, right in front of Crown --

Crown's arm pauses in its arc. Yasmin knows now. She can see:

Crown's wearing one of the identical watches from her crew.

YASMIN

Will I like it?

Crown finally turns. Drink in hand.

CROWN

You might.

In a flash he DROPS the drink, reaches out and GRABS her wrist. He pulls her in to him even as the tumbler falls, falls to the marble floor and --

PURE CHAOS IMPLODES THROUGH THE GIANT WINDOWS as a RED MASERATI smashes through, carrying a concussive shower of glass with it!

Two security men are knocked to the floor. Men by the doors are caught somewhere between freezing and running. Hakkan dives out of the way.

The Maserati lands on the marble floor with a THUD, four anchor points sunk into the large steel frame securing it to a thick cable.

Yasmin's eyes are locked on Crown. Gentle but firm, he guides her to the passenger side, opening the door. She climbs in, and he closes the door, then walks to the driver's side.

A Security officer tries to stand. Crown opens the door on his head, hard. The man drops and Crown's...

INT. MASERATI - DAY

Yasmin looks at Crown for a beat. He turns the engine over. It purrs.

CROWN
I'll drive.

She dives on him, kissing his neck. Crown adjusts the rear view mirror.

HIS POV, through the rear view: Hakkan pulling himself up, drawing his weapon, lining it on the Maserati.

CROWN (CONT'D)
Seat belt...

Crown shifts into gear and floors it!

INT. DAWOUD'S SUITE - DAY

The Maserati's tires spin, burning rubber. The car pulls to the left just a bit, gets traction, and lurches through the open space that used to be a window.

Out into mid-air. A hundred stories up.

EXT. BURJ AL ARAB - DAY

The Maserati, nose angled slightly down, in free fall, cable spooling out behind it.

EXT. CRANE'S CABLE SPINDLE - DAY

A cable feeds out at speed. A mechanism ENGAGES, smoke pours from the spindle.

INT. CRANE OPERATING BOOTH - DAY

The Groom sits at controls. Next to him, the Bride, binoculars to her eyes, headset over her ear, watches.

HER POV, magnified: the Maserati still dropping....

INT. MASERATI - DAY

Crown and Yasmin, holding on for dear life.

THEIR POV: The world coming at them very, very fast. Fifty feet, twenty, five... three. And they just STOP!

EXT. BURJ AL ARAB - DAY

...A foot off the ground, tires spinning. Charges fire. Anchors release. The Maserati drops to the pavement and surges forward in a cloud of melting tire.

INT. DAWOUD'S SUITE - DAY

Hakkan standing where the windows were, watching. He raises his cell to his ear:

HAKKAN

Police? This is Prince Dawoud's head of security. Thomas Crown has kidnapped Princess Badri.

(snapping fingers at one of the agents)

Get a helicopter, now!

EXT. CROWN'S YACHT

Police boats descend on the Yacht, surrounding it.

EXT. POLICE LAUNCH

Becker, with a senior Dubai COP hears the cop radio cross talk. Prominent is the name "Thomas Crown."

DUBAI COP

Seal the airport.

A junior cop raises a radio to his ear.

INT./EXT. MASERATI - MOMENTS LATER

SCREECHES as Hakkan's chase cars pull in behind and around the Maserati. Crown floors it. The Maserati leaps forward.

YASMIN

Is it a very good plan?

CROWN

It's a bit thin.

YASMIN

Lie to me.

CROWN

It's an excellent plan.

POLICE CARS swing into view. Crown threads the needle between two skidding cop cars, swerves back into traffic.

YASMIN

Lie better.

INTERCUT AS NECESSARY WITH

INT. DUBAI TRADING FLOOR

Dawoud points to the big board behind him.

DAWOUD

As you know, up until now, my country's infrastructure has been financed solely by domestic income.

ON THE BIG BOARD Various COLUMN HEADINGS appear: "OIL", "BANKING", "TELECOMMUNICATIONS", "TRANSPORTATION"...

Under each category is, right now, a single name: "Badri"

DAWOUD (CONT'D)

But times have changed...

INT. / EXT. MASERATI

Crown wrenches the wheel, skids through an intersection.

Two POLICE CARS U-turn, fall in behind him.

YASMIN

Sure you're up to this?

CROWN

Right, you know my type...

And Crown yanks the e-brake, revolves the car twice, coming out of the spin exactly through a break in traffic.

On Yasmin, eyebrows raised, impressed.

EXT. DUBAI SKYLINE

Hakkan's helicopter zooms into view, dodging through the skyscrapers. To his left and right, POLICE CHOPPERS move in.

INT. HAKKAN'S HELICOPTER

Hakkan scans the traffic. He spots the red Maserati, actually heading straight toward him.

HAKKAN

There!

(into headset)

I have him.

EXT. DUBAI STREETS

Hakkan's helicopter BUZZES the Maserati, flying ridiculously low. Crown weaves back and forth through traffic, but Hakkan's chopper shadows him.

Finally Crown swerves up onto the sidewalk and underneath the ledge of a building. Hakkan's helicopter just barely swings clear, its blades skimming the glass.

INT./EXT. MASERATI

Crown tracks the chopper as it pivots just above street level.

Hakkan re-acquires him, lays back into pursuit. To each side the chase cars close. Ahead of him, more Police.

Crown takes another corner even faster. Pushing the Maserati to its limits.

YASMIN

Where are we going?

CROWN

Where do you want to go?

YASMIN

Anywhere. As long as its with you.

Crown looks at her with that half smile, like part of him's laughing inside, and a part is drowning. He downshifts. The Maserati surges forward.

INT. DUBAI TRADING FLOOR - LOBBY

DAWOUD

... as my first act, I will denationalize all government-owned industry in the Principality.

A ROAR from the traders. This is huge news.

DAWOUD (CONT'D)

We've been preparing for this for some time. I think we are all very pleased to say -- Khirastan is open for business.

INT. CROWN'S YACHT - BUSINESS CENTER

A few analysts and crew members try to protest as cops stream into the room, led by Max Becker. Becker points at the Seurat.

Technicians move forward.

EXT. DUBAI STREETS

Crown's Maserati has amassed quite a following.

Hakkan's helicopter rises, to show more POLICE closing from other directions.

INT. HAKKAN'S HELICOPTER

HAKKAN

(into headset)

No, I'll be there as soon as I have the situation in hand. It won't be long now.

INT. DUBAI TRADING FLOOR

DAWOUD

...let me introduce the Principality of Khirastan's new financial cultural liaison, Elliot Smith.

Elliot takes the podium.

ELLIOT
Thank you.

EXT. DUBAI STREETS

Despite the Maserati's muscle, the law is closing in.

INT. / EXT. MASERATI

Crown, intent on driving. Yasmin holding on.

Crown's mobile phone RINGS.

CROWN
Can you get that?

Yasmin stares. He's taking a call now?

CROWN (CONT'D)
Inside pocket.

She reaches into his jacket, pulls out his phone. He takes it, answers. She waits for his reaction, emotional.

CROWN (CONT'D)
Yes?

EXT. DUBAI STREETS

One of the Police cars pulls close. Too close.

Crown throws the Maserati into a 540 brake skid. It drops back, scattering its pursuit. Crown shifts effortlessly, and they're back to seventy miles an hour before the other cars are even under control.

INT. / EXT. MASERATI

CROWN
(into phone)
Oh, nothing. What's the number?

He listens. It works for him.

CROWN (CONT'D)
(into phone)
Close it.
(beat, eyes on Yasmin)
What about that other? Good.

He shuts the phone and hands it back. She looks at him, quizzical, then SCREAMS as cop cars flood the frame.

Crown cranks the wheel, tires grip asphalt.

CROWN (CONT'D)

Don't worry. I've done this before.

Yasmin points to the chaos outside.

YASMIN

You've done this before?

CROWN

On a slightly smaller scale.

A familiar song begins...

CROWN (CONT'D)

Think bigger.

Crown glances at his watch, then focuses ahead. Cop cars slide to a stop in front of him blocking the avenue. Nowhere to go. Not even the sidewalk.

Crown stands on the brakes, cranks the wheel. Tires lock up. The car spins 180 degrees as white smoke pours off spinning tires. He's moving in the opposite direction.

Pursuing police cars veer as he makes a hard left down a side street. Above the Maserati, Hakkan's helicopter banks, rotors inches from the pavement.

More police cars move in, closing the box.

EXT. / INT. HAKKAN'S HELICOPTER

Hakkan is focused on Crown's red Maserati:

HAKKAN

He's ours.

He glances ahead. Double-takes.

A WAVE of RED is heading straight for the chase, head-on. Hakkan squints.

They're RED SPORTS CARS, almost THIRTY of them. Moving in a pack. Doing eighty flat and barreling down on Crown.

HAKKAN (CONT'D)

Pull up!

As they do, the PILOT points to the streets to the left of the chase.

PILOT

More of them!

Hakkan looks right. Even more there. They're SWARMING in on the chase. RED CARS, dozens of them from every direction.

INT. CROWN'S MASERATI

Maseratis whipping by at speed, circling them.

YASMIN

How many?

CROWN

A hundred.

He grins like a naughty boy.

EXT. CROWN'S MASERATI

HEAD-ON of Crown's red Maserati. Suddenly, another red Maserati SWERVES in from a side street, lays up right behind Crown and to the left. Then another, from the right. Now there's three red Maseratis. They begin to BOB, playing a shell game with just the three.

INT. HAKKAN'S HELICOPTER

Hakkan tries desperately to keep Crown's car distinct from the other two.

HAKKAN

(into headset)

Hit Crown's car! Mark it, scar it,
DO SOMETHING --

INT. / EXT. CROWN'S MASERATI

Yasmin cranes her neck, car to car. Looks through the windshield --

RED MASERATIS are zooming past them, nonstop. Zooming past and straight into the mass of Police and Security chasing Crown.

She looks out the rearview, reacts as Hakkan's helicopter drops into the frame, closes on them, fast.

And the car shimmies as a helicopter skid impacts the left rear fender.

Crown corrects, makes a hard turn along with four of the red Maseratis. His two tails drop away, but four more take their place. It's like we're watching a dance.

The four accompanying Maseratis peel off, each taking different side streets. Crown veers as well, glances back: All four police cars are still on him. The police are targeting him, keying on him. How?

To his left, a mirrored building. He stares at it, focused.

CROWN'S POV: reflected in the glass: the left rear fender of his Maserati, scarred and dented.

He lifts his cell to his ear, says something we don't hear.

On cue, trailing Maseratis' brakes lock up, rotate left in their slides.

Pursuing police brake, wheels locking up. Too late. They rear-end the Maseratis.

EXT. DUBAI STREETS

-- A series of quick cuts. Bang! Bang! Bang! DOZENS of Maseratis stand on brakes, get tagged by chase cars, other cars.

PULL BACK as ALL the Maseratis, brakes locked, get clipped.

A beat, like an interruption in the dance. Stillness. And then 100 sets of tires spin to life, white smoke billowing, cars lurching forward and we're in the flow again. SCORES of cars cutting in from the side avenues, a FLOOD. Crisscrossing the chase, some falling in behind Crown, some in front, all damaged.

In the POLICE CARS, panicked radio calls. Policemen break and swerve, each trying to follow the car they think Crown is in.

EXT. DUBAI STREETS

The streets ROAR with a hundred engines weaving back and forth, blinding. It's a sight that has never been seen before, and never will again.

INT. CROWN'S OFFICE, YACHT

Becker stands to the side, intense, focused, efficient. Police radio cross talk continues, giving us a blow by blow of the chase, a mix of Arabic smattered with Crown's name.

PULL BACK to reveal the office interior. The walls have been excavated around the Seurat which has been revealed to be sealed into a metal revolve. Now experts carefully drill at the mechanism. Shavings roll off.

Becker looks at the senior Dubai COP standing at the door next to an art SPECIALIST -- the PROFESSOR -- then at his watch.

INT. / EXT. CROWN'S MASERATI

Crown checks his watch again.

CROWN
We're running out of time.

Crown cuts hard, no longer dodging. Now with a destination in mind.

EXT. / INT. HAKKAN'S HELICOPTER

Hakkan's helicopter and a Police chopper pass perilously close. Hakkan bellows into his mic.

HAKKAN
Then stop all of them! ALL OF
THEM!

EXT. DUBAI - EDGE OF DOWNTOWN BLOC - CONT.

The bulk of downtown Dubai is lined up along a few major, long avenues. Police cars and vans pull to the side. Police leap out in riot gear, with shotguns. They point the guns at an approaching red Maserati. It SCREECHES to a halt.

QUICK SHOTS As the Police set up more roadblocks. Lay out SPIKE STRIPS.

INT. / EXT. CROWN'S MASERATI

Crown maneuvers his car behind a WATER TRUCK.

INT. WATER TRUCK CAB

The Worker from Topkapi checks his mirror. Lines up the back of the trailer with Crown's car. He presses a button.

INT. / EXT. CROWN'S MASERATI

WATER jets out from the trailer, completely soaking the car. Inside, Crown jerks the wheel, fighting the skid. He's driving blind.

FROM ABOVE, we see hundreds of gallons of water WASH over Crown's car. It's like he's trying to drive up a waterfall.

INSIDE, Yasmin tries to peer through the water. She suddenly realizes there's more than water blocking the windshield. It's a SMEAR of RED... then SHEETS of it...

CROWN'S MASERATI is painted in watercolors. The red SHEDS, stripped by the water pressure. The cool Maserati BLUE is revealed.

CROWN
Told you.

Crown's car hovers in the water as the red Maseratis cover him, dancing around him.

Finally, he swings clear of the torrent. His car's completely BLUE now. Not a speck of red. He floors it again, redlining it.

INT. CROWN'S OFFICE, YACHT

The drill pushes through the last locking mechanism with a "tink." The lock's free, the painting starts to revolve.

Becker pushes forward.

...the revolve continues, bringing into view... Lucian Freud's "Self Portrait."

Becker nods to the Professor who's already moving forward as if drawn. He leans forward, close, intimate, seems to breathe in the painting... turns back to Becker and nods.

Becker looks at the cop who raises a radio to his ear.

EXT. DOCKS

Police cars line the waterfront. An armored car idles. A launch pulls up. Becker, with two cops carrying the painting between them, step off.

The cops head towards a waiting van. Becker puts out a hand, stops them.

BECKER

Wait.

A BLACK ARMORED BENTLEY has pulled into the lot. Two armed men get out, TRANSPORT PROFESSIONALS, dressed impeccably, head for Becker.

DUBAI COP

We've locked down the airport, docks, have roadblocks up on all the major highways leaving the city.

BECKER

(eyes on the painting)

Why did Crown come to Dubai?

DUBAI COP

Why does any rich man come to Dubai. To do business.

Becker squints. The two transport professionals arrive, present their ID's to Becker.

BECKER

London. No stops.

TRANSPORT PROFESSIONAL

Who's paying?

BECKER

Courtesy of the Turkish Government.

TRANSPORT PROFESSIONAL

Will you ride with us?

A beat as Becker considers the painting being loaded into the armored trunk of the Bentley.

BECKER

No... I have somewhere else to be.

The professionals nod. Becker watches the doors close. The armored Bentley pulls away, with police escort.

Becker moves to a squad car.

DUBAI COP

Where are you going?

BECKER

Where rich men do business.

EXT. DUBAI MAIN STREET

They've set up the biggest roadblock here.

Red Maseratis are pulled over left and right, their drivers handcuffed and questioned.

Crown's blue Maserati roars toward the Police. They're so fixated on the red cars...

...they wave Crown straight through. He doesn't even downshift as he breaks free of the city proper.

Just then, an armored Bentley rolls by under police escort, heading for the airport.

Hakkan's helicopter passes right over Crown and Yasmin, heading the opposite direction.

INT. CROWN'S MASERATI

Yasmin watches the copter thunder over, then reacts to a sign.

YASMIN

The airport's that way.

CROWN

I know.

(off her look)

Something I need to do first.

Crown turns the car towards the city. Looming ahead and closing fast, the tall shape of the financial center looms.

YASMIN

It's too late. Dawoud has the government. He can do anything he wants now.

Crown doesn't respond. Switches lanes, heads for the financial building.

YASMIN (CONT'D)

No! Stop the car! Thomas, stop the car right now!

Crown BRAKES. The car slides to a stop. Yasmin orients. They're in front of the financial building.

Crown reaches for his door.

YASMIN (CONT'D)

If you go in there they will arrest you. They will arrest you for the painting you stole.

He looks over at her. His eyes read her face.

CROWN

So you figured it out.

YASMIN

"starving for more and more and more... life."

(beat)

I tried to warn you.

Crown nods.

CROWN

...Yes, you did.

And in one motion, he throws open his door and steps out of the car.

WITH CROWN: He takes in the undercover police, reacting to his arrival. Men speak into wrist-mikes.

He starts to walk, towards the building.

EXT. AIRPORT COMMERCIAL ENTRANCE

The Bentley convoy is waved by the security kiosk. We track it as it heads towards the commercial loading hangers.

EXT. HANGER GATE AREA

At one of the turn off gates, a sign indicates "HANGERS 1 - 10."

A MAN appears behind the gate. He lays down a circle of cones, then produces a high-pressure TANK. He SPRAY PAINTS the pavement behind the gate DARK BLACK.

He looks up, sees the Bentley and escort approaching. He steps out in front, waving them off...

...But the Bentley doesn't slow! It SMASHES right through the gate and cones, continues on its way.

INT. DUBAI TRADING FLOOR - MINUTES LATER

ELLIOT

As you can see, Prince Dawoud has recruited an impressive collection of the world's finest investment and infrastructure companies.

ON THE BIG BOARD: Under the various COLUMN HEADINGS: "OIL", "BANKING", "TELECOMMUNICATIONS" "TRANSPORTATION"...

Under each heading, COMPANY NAMES now appear.

ELLIOT (CONT'D)

These are all agreements in principle for...

Elliot hesitates.

ELLIOT'S P.O.V.: Police are flooding into the exchange, taking up positions at the doors. More cops, many armed, move into the high galleries.

ELLIOT (CONT'D)

...for considerable investment in what was once a closed economy.

Elliot gestures to the big board, the long lists of international companies.

ELLIOT (CONT'D)

As soon as Prince Dawoud is crowned all of these contracts become binding. Every industry currently nationalized will now be split up

(MORE)

ELLIOT (CONT'D)

among all these prestigious partners and leap into the free market. Companies like Federov Telecommunications --

As Elliot extols the virtues of Dawoud's partners, Hakkan rushes in. Dawoud crosses to him.

HAKKAN

We lost Crown and Yasmin.

DAWOUD

It doesn't matter.

HAKKAN

They can cause an enormous amount of trouble.

DAWOUD

It's over. Parliament is voting.
(off big board)
Contracts are signed, we have a hundred partners. Let them run.

His eyes are focused on the main entrance. Becker and a dozen more policemen push in.

DAWOUD (CONT'D)

They won't come here.

BACK TO ELLIOT as he points to the various EXECUTIVES gathered behind him.

ELLIOT

We'd now like to turn over the floor to Khirastan's new partners, to let them introduce themselves.

A Russian investor, FEDEROV, steps up to the podium to join Elliot.

A COMMOTION begins at the far edge of the room. Dawoud and Hakkan strain to see over the crowd.

HAKKAN

It's not possible...

Crown strides onto the financial center floor. There's confusion, recognition. Yasmin's three seconds behind him, calling out.

YASMIN

THOMAS!!

He turns, looks back at her, as the cops move forward, surrounding him. One officer grabs an arm, hard, holds on.

YASMIN (CONT'D)

...I'm sorry.

Three more officers surround Crown. Becker steps forward.

BECKER

Thomas Crown, you are under arrest for the theft of the Lucian Freud Self Portrait.

Crown takes in Becker, nods. He looks back to Yasmin. She stares back, fighting tears.

INT. AIRCRAFT HANGAR

The convoy arrives next to a private jet. Its red logo informs us this is an "Executive Transport Service." Armed men are already splayed around.

The two Transport Professionals exit the Bentley, conference with their counterparts from the plane. Several speak continuously on radios and cell-phones as the painting is loaded onto the plane.

INT. DUBAI TRADING FLOOR

Elliot leaves the podium, adjusting his tie. Nervous, going face to face with his old mentor. He passes beneath the big board listing all Khiristan's new investor/partners.

He stops in front of Crown.

CROWN

Elliot.

ELLIOT

Thomas.

(off the cops)

Made some new friends?

CROWN

Seems that way.

(beat)

Hard to know who to trust these days.

A beat, as mentor and Judas survey each other across the chasm of betrayal. Finally:

CROWN (CONT'D)

Not late are we?

ELLIOT

No. Right about... now.

THE BIG CLOCK in the room flips to 12. Suddenly, phones on the trading floor begin RINGING MADLY, as if in sync. Even over the background buzz, a WAVE of noise rises...

Yasmin's stunned. She's just that half-step behind...

CLOSE ON CROWN, filling the shot. He gives her (us) the wolf-grin. Savors it.

BACK OUT: To Dawoud, Yasmin, Hakkan, the traders, the reporters realizing --

Federov steps up to the mike.

FEDEROV

Federov Communications is a Moscow based telecommunications infrastructure company.

(beat)

And, of course, a wholly owned subsidiary of Crown Acquisitions.

-- FLASHBACK to the racetrack. Crown at the rail, next to the Man in the White Panama Hat. As they shake hands, REVEAL the man is Federov. Dawoud approaches in the BG...

DAWOUD looks up as, on the big board, Federov's company name on the list under "Communications" flips to "CROWN".

A TRADER steps forward, thinking out loud:

TRADER

What's he doing?

ON YASMIN staring at Crown. No idea what's happening, but knowing that it's big.

YASMIN

...Making something special.

ON CROWN: he waits, inscrutable. Everyone's watching the board. Except Crown. His eyes, fixed on Yasmin.

FAST CUTS as Barrett, the American from the opening, takes the podium.

BARRETT

-- oil drilling and surveying software, and as of today one of the premiere companies in the Crown corporate family --

-- FLASHBACK as Crown regards the Michel Perchin pen in the cafe.

CROWN

Mind if I keep this?

REVEAL the Man opposite. It's Barrett.

BARRETT

It's all yours now.

And back to Dubai --

MIYASHTA, from Istanbul, is at the podium.

MIYASHTA

-- factory manufacturing, purchased by Crown Acquisitions as of...

-- FLASHBACK to Crown driving in the Maserati, on the phone:

CROWN

Close it.

INTERCUT AS NECESSARY...as the madness grows and grows, more traders hearing from their researchers, all yelling, confirming that these companies do, indeed, all belong to Crown --

Up on the big board, company after company on the Khirastan investor lists flip from their names to "CROWN", "CROWN", "CROWN"-"CROWN"-"CROWN"...

Elliot Gazes at the big board, a thing of beauty. He produces cigars. Hands one to Crown, who still hasn't taken his eyes off Yasmin.

Elliot lights Crown's cigar.

ELLIOT

Steal a hundred-million-dollar piece of art. Done that.

CROWN

Allegedly.

Dawoud is freezing up, still not putting it together. It's all moving too fast.

SPINNING around Crown, Elliot, Yasmin as more of the board flips. Elliot hands Yasmin a cigar. She takes it, absently.

ELLIOT

Steal a princess. Impressive.

SLOWING now, as the hubbub dies. Dawoud staring at a big board. Under every industry, the final names of the investment partners flip to "CROWN".

DAWOUD

He holds a majority control of every industry in Khirastan. That means --

Elliot finally turns to take in the sight. He lights his own cigar.

ELLIOT

But only Thomas Crown can steal an entire country.

(turning to Crown)

Big enough for you?

Crown finally looks at the board. Considers the question...
WHEN MAX BECKER fills the frame.

BECKER

Whatever this means, it won't help you where you're going.

Crown turns, really looks at the man for the first time.

CROWN

And you're sure about that?

Crown's eyes SHIFT. Becker follows his gaze:

ON THE BIG BOARD. All the sectors read "CROWN"... except for one empty slot: "Transportation."

AT THE PODIUM. A small bald man, GYSON, has arrived. The man from Crown's limo at the opening. He's flustered, late. He takes papers from his jacket pocket.

GYSON

My apologies for not being prompt.
Gyson transportation has joined
with Crown Acquisitions as of...

(MORE)

GYSON (CONT'D)

(he checks his watch)
... eleven fifty-two, this morning.

ON YASMIN. Seeing it. Seeing the moment.

-- FLASHBACK to Crown driving in the Maserati, on the phone, looking at her for a moment, almost sad:

CROWN

...What about that other? Good.

ON BECKER. Taking in the man, his eyes shifting to the red logo on the screens. We've seen this logo before.

EXT. MID AIR - CONTINUOUS

The private transportation aircraft, sporting the now familiar logo of Gyson Transportation, cruises at 35,000 feet.

INT. COCKPIT, TRANSPORT PLANE - CONTINUOUS

The radio squawks. A PILOT reaches over, flips it off. He VEERS the plane off course, headed into clouds.

INT. DUBAI FINANCIAL CENTER

Crown stands at the center of collective awe.

Becker stares, cell phone dead against his ear. Yasmin stares, starting to truly understand.

Financial experts in the room gaze at Crown like the supplicants in a church.

ON DAWOUD. Placing his hand on a rail. Trying to stay upright, staring up at the board as the last slot under "Transport" flips to "CROWN." He screams across to Crown.

DAWOUD

You are insane! Don't you realize
if I go down I take you with me?
We're joined at the hip.

Crown ignores him, stays with Yasmin as Becker and his police flood away in the background.

DAWOUD (CONT'D)

Crown! What do you think you have
done!

(MORE)

DAWOUD (CONT'D)

You do this, and I will re-nationalize. You'll have nothing. NOTHING! I am still king!!!

HAKKAN (O.S.)

Parliament is still in session.

Hakkan, expressionless, is on the phone. He looks to Dawoud.

HAKKAN (CONT'D)

Yes, Prime Minister.

Dawoud tries to speak. Hakkan hangs up the phone. He picks up the wooden box containing the Topkapi Dagger. He descends to the floor of the Financial Center. Crosses to Crown. As he passes, reporters, bystanders fall into his wake. The room FLOWS away from Dawoud who's almost speechless. He just manages:

DAWOUD

I lose, Crown, so do you. And Crown doesn't lose. You never lose....

Hakkan arrives at Crown. He waits in the eerie silence. Yasmin watches as Becker closes his phone, pockets it, and exits the building with dignity. Door closes.

Yasmin tries to look at Crown can't. She stares down.

YASMIN

...You knew? And still...

CROWN

(to Yasmin)
Your Majesty.

Hakkan presents her with the Topkapi Dagger. The reporters, the traders, everyone within a hundred yards ROAR QUESTIONS AT ONCE.

Yasmin is overwhelmed. The press of people around her is deafening. She strains to answer questions, turns this way and that.

Dawoud sits on the stairs below the big board. Shaking. Destroyed.

Yasmin can barely get in a word edgewise. Some of the security start shoving back reporters. She looks for Crown. He's gone.

INT. DUBAI FINANCIAL CENTER LOBBY - MOMENTS LATER.

Crown and Elliot are already on the way out. Yasmin rushes toward them. The crowd is right behind her, but Hakkan and his men clear her some space. She only has a few seconds.

YASMIN

Your investments, I can't...

Crown turns, stares at her, emotional. Eyes locked.

CROWN

You can.

ELIOT

The contracts were dependent on Dawoud being King. We have no...
(awkward in front of the emotion)
...We have no standing.

YASMIN

How did you know I'd betray you?

CROWN

Purpose... can make you capable of anything.

YASMIN

...And love.

CROWN

Perhaps for the last time, you're free to choose. So choose.

YASMIN

(realizing)
Crown or country...

CROWN

(swallows)
Your country or your life...

The reporters, traders mob her. Flashbulbs everywhere. She can't push through to him.

Crown and Yasmin stare at each other across the gulf. You can just barely hear:

YASMIN

I'll keep your secret.

A beat. She's still hesitating, can't make the break. He does it for her -

CROWN
Make it interesting.

Crown silently bows. Waits. Finally, Yasmin agrees. She draws herself upright. Her posture, her bearing... everything that was implied before, come to full power. Her words almost lost in the din

YASMIN
(eyes filling)
I love you...

Crown deliberately turns his back to her. She turns her back to him. They walk away from each other, straight away.

Hakkan is already at her side as REPORTERS mob Yasmin -

REPORTER
Your majesty, what will be your first announcement as Queen?

She looks back at Crown, disappearing; small smile.

YASMIN
I've already made it.
(then)
We will have a brief announcement,
and then take questions.

Without another look back, she strides into the chaos.

EXT. DUBAI FINANCIAL CENTER - STREET - LATER

Crown and Elliot walk out the door.

ELLIOT
She said she'll keep your secret.

Crown shakes his head. The valet brings up a blue Maserati with a dented fender.

ELLIOT (CONT'D)
Come on! We just committed fraud
on a historic scale. Tell me!

Crown takes the keys. Elliot stands there, waiting. Crown tosses the keys to him.

CROWN
I'm a romantic.

ELLIOT
Fine. Don't tell me. Be that way.
(he interrupts himself)
But why? At least tell me why!

CROWN
Have you ever ~~tried anything~~ you
weren't good at?

ELLIOT
All the time, evidently.

Elliot gets behind the wheel. As they pull into traffic:

ELLIOT (CONT'D)
Where to?

Crown holds a coin up between his fingers.

CROWN
Heads... we go home.

Crown flips the coin up ~~in the~~ air.

On Elliot, hopeful.

On Crown, smiling.

On the coin revolving through space.

FADE OUT

JOE