

# REBIRTH

An original screenplay  
based on a true story

by  
T.L. Lewis

“Throughout history it has been the inaction of those who could have acted,  
the indifference of those who should have known better, the silence of the voice  
when it mattered most. that has made it possible for evil to triumph.”-- Haile Selassie

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FADE IN:

INT. LOUVRE, PARIS--DAY

Doors glide into a library of gold bound classics.

Through a vaulted archway, a gallery of artwork dazzles.  
Rays of white light illuminate Da Vinci's Mona Lisa,  
secured on a golden easel.

Atop a polished desk, an open book. A gust of wind turns the  
pages, as a window CREAKS and swings wide open into the grim  
grays of overcast skies and cobblestone streets.

EDMUND (V.O.)

As a child, I believed I was  
immortal.

CHURCH BELLS RING in the distance.

EXT. TOWN SQUARE, PARIS --DAY

Headless bodies slump in a wooden cart, piled like garbage.

A MOB rants around the blood-soaked scaffold. An ax glistens  
and drops, a sickening CRUNCH and THUD; blood spurts and  
splatters a little boy's face.

Frantic, the little boy, EDMUND (9) reels through the crowd  
and trips over a basket-- ruby red liquid splashes.  
Heads roll in front of him. His tiny hand covers his heart.

On his knees he retches, as wind blows dirt and blood  
across cobblestones.

SUPER:           PARIS - 1550

Little Edmund rises pale, his face a mix of blood and tears.

EXT. CEMETERY, HILLTOP-- MOMENTS LATER

Edmund stumbles around weathered headstones.  
An obelisk shrine towers above him.  
His trembling hand strokes the inscription.

INSERT IN GRANITE: "IT IS NOT DEATH THAT A MAN SHOULD FEAR,  
HE SHOULD FEAR NEVER BEGINNING TO LIVE".

He turns and tramples over wild flowers till he reaches the  
summit. Little Edmund's swollen eyes pinch tight.

EDMUND (V.O.)

From that day forward, I chose not  
to seek the meaning of life, but to  
make the most of being alive.

He throws, what appear to be, stones into the air.

Clouds cast elapsed shadows and shafts of sunlight on emerald meadows and vineyards below.

SUPER:            FRENCH COUNTRYSIDE - 1562

EXT. COUNTRYSIDE, HILLTOP -- DAY

EDMUND (22) handsome and erect at his easel, swirls paint on his palette. His bright eyes and smile exude passion as the breeze ruffles his hair and RUSTLE the leaves above him.

STRING MUSIC resonates, as PHILIPPE, (23) attractive and agile, plucks his violin, spellbound with the painting.

PHILIPPE

Edmund, this is why you're the artist  
and I, your humble admirer.

Edmund's brush strokes the canvas as Philippe teases.

PHILIPPE (CONT'D)

Nice bouquet of-- 'flowers'...

VIEW ON CANVAS: A voluptuous NUDE holds a 'bouquet of flowers' between her firm, round bosom.

Movement in the meadow: Edmund looks up from the painting, takes a double take, and nudges Philippe.

EXT. MEADOW, CONTINUOUS-- DAY

A stunning maiden, GENEVIEVE (17) bends over to gather wild flowers. As she rises, the wind catches her white cotton dress and caresses her shapely silhouette.

EXT. HILLTOP-- CONTINUOUS

Edmund's lustful eyes and mouth open wide.

PHILIPPE

For pity's sake, bridle yourself.  
She's the niece of the Prince de  
Conde`. Just finish your painting.

EDMUND

Painting can wait.  
(teases)  
I tend to agree with Aristotle, that  
"Art is long, but life far too short."

PHILIPPE

This time you need to think before  
you leap.

Edmund playfully lunges forward to startle his friend.

EDMUND

I say the longer the leap, the sweeter  
the liberation.

PHILIPPE

Typical Humanist-- a love of liberty,  
void of light.

Philippe rolls his eyes. Edmund laughs.

PHILIPPE (CONT'D)

The Prince will liberate you alright,  
from your head.

Edmund stares, mesmerized by Genevieve and ignores Philippe.

EXT. COUNTRYSIDE, MEADOW, CONTINUOUS

A Brown Stallion gallops from the thicket carrying ANNE DE  
CONDE(Conday)(18). Hair and mane flow like chocolate silk.

Genevieve rises as her silken hair ripples at the curve of  
her waist.

A muscular WHITE MARE glides toward Genevieve and halts.  
Genevieve strokes the mare.

GENEVIEVE

Those men are staring at us.

ANNE DE CONDE

Pay them no mind. artists and  
musicians-- they're all hedonists.

Genevieve grins as she mounts the mare with ease and glances  
toward the young men on the hill.

GENEVIEVE

(scowls and shouts)

They're probably hoping we'll fall  
off so they can rescue us.

ANNE DE CONDE

More like wolves wishing to devour  
us.

EXT. TOP OF HILL, CONTINUOUS

Philippe plucks his violin louder but remains unnoticed.  
He climbs the tree in frustration and mumbles.

PHILIPPE

Women on horses!

EXT. MEADOW, CONTINUOUS--DAY

Both girls giggle as they bounce confident and limber.

GENEVIEVE

Anne, look. One climbed the tree.  
No, don't, the other is waving.

ANNE DE CONDE

I noticed, and here we are without  
headdress and on horseback.

GENEVIEVE

(mutters)  
The artist is a handsome hedonist.

ANNE DE CONDE

Genevieve, shame on you!

The girls giggle on into the woods until hidden from view.

EXT. HILLTOP, CONTINUOUS --

Edmund takes a lustful deep breath and exhales to find  
Philippe in the tree wearing a scowl on his face.

EDMUND

Philippe, I'm sorry. What were you  
saying earlier?

Philippe hesitates, then shouts down from the tree.

PHILIPPE

Perhaps Plato said it best, "We can  
easily forgive a child who is afraid  
of the dark"--

EDMUND

-- I know. "The real tragedy is when  
men are afraid of the light."  
(jokes)  
With me, it was always more the fear  
of pain.

As they snicker, Philippe falls out of the tree. He rolls  
on the ground laughing.

Edmund pulls him up. Philippe grabs his violin.

PHILIPPE

I forgot to tell you...

He raises his violin and flashes a teasing grin.

PHILIPPE (CONT'D)  
I'll be playing at Prince de Conde's  
banquet Thursday.

Edmund's eyes light up.

PHILIPPE (CONT'D)  
Meet me there early. I can introduce  
you, if you promise to behave.

Edmund's smile turns upside down.

EDMUND  
I cant. I'll be in Paris til weeks  
end-- classes.

Philippe nods over his shoulder as he walks away grinning.

PHILIPPE (O.S.)  
Perhaps you'll be more anxious to  
return home this time.

Edmund dabbles a few more strokes.

EXT. TREE LINED COUNTRY ROAD, DAY

A DOZEN MEN on horseback, emerge through a dark canopy of  
tree cast shadows.

DUKE DE GUISE, (44) cracks his long whip hard as he digs his  
heels into his lead dark horse.

The Duke's eyes are piercing. His expressions alternate  
between a charming grin and sarcastic grimace, framed by a  
deep scar across his cheek.

CARDINAL DE GUISE (55) the Duke's radical elder brother,  
is an older relic of unreason. His face contorts into a self  
righteous smirk.

The Duke, the Cardinal, their younger brother CHARLES (32)  
and followers continue on the winding rural road.

EXT. TOWN OF VASSY, CONTINUOUS--DAY

SUPER: TOWN OF VASSY

CHURCH BELLS RING in the distance.

A cloud of dust rises and disperses into the main street  
of the town. The men encounter a small ranting group of  
CITIZENS.

DUKE DE GUISE

What is all this bell ringing?

CITIZEN I

The Bells!! Since the edict of toleration, they're getting bolder.

TOWN CITIZEN

We were saying, "If only Duke De Guise were here, he'd make them pipe to another tune."

The Duke plucks with cockiness at his dark beard.

DUKE DE GUISE

Monsieur, you are so astute.

CITIZEN I

God bless you, monsieur!

The agitated crowd continues to gossip.

EXT. VASSY, MEADOW, CONTINUOUS-- DAY

Nestled between majestic oak trees-- a large barn. The finale of an inspirational SONG echoes from within.

INT. CONVERTED BARN -- CONTINUOUS

In this large but modest sanctuary, sit over one hundred reverent and smiling MEN, WOMEN, CHILDREN on notched planks. The fiery middle-aged speaker, MOREL (55) grows passionate.

MOREL (O.S.)

There are those who seek and those who deny. Yet, even with our eyes wide open, we must remember--

A small boy sweetly touches his Mother's smile. A Father cradles his newborn.

MOREL (O.S.) (CONT'D)

Our sight is still dim and temporary, but light which we cannot yet see, will endure forever.

Morel raises his black book.

MOREL (O.S.) (CONT'D)

It is not enough to merely recite the words. We must also live by them. Let us not judge, but love.

Morel pauses and looks at his audience with affection.

MOREL (O.S.) (CONT'D)

Just as one candle can light thousands of others, it is the light within us that will bring peace.

Morel turns a page and reads in earnest.

MOREL (O.S.) (CONT'D)  
 Whatever things are pure, whatever  
 things are true, whatever things are  
 just...

MOREL (CONT'D)  
 Whatever things are noble and  
 uplifting. We must meditate upon,  
 and practice such things.

Morel's words resonate.

MOREL (CONT'D)  
 We must forgive-- and forsake, even  
 the appearance of evil.

INT. LOUVRE, PARIS--DAY

SUPER: PARIS, THE LOUVRE

The Queen Mother, CATHERINE DE MEDICI, (52) petite, perky  
 and in full bloom, reads at her desk.

INSERT BOOK: THE PRINCE OF MACHIAVELLI.

She turns the page and reads aloud.

CATHERINE DE MEDICI  
 "A prince wishing to keep his state  
 often finds it of little consequence  
 and even necessary, to do evil."

Catherine turns another page of the Prince of Machiavelli.

A KNOCK AT THE DOOR.

As the door opens, NOSTRADAMUS, (72) an ominous sage in a  
 dark robe and long gray beard, enters.

GUARD  
 Your Excellency, Monsieur Nostradamus.

NOSTRADAMUS  
 Catarina de Medici!

CATHERINE DE MEDICI  
 Michel, my old friend. No one has  
 called me that in years.

NOSTRADAMUS  
 You know I will always be grateful  
 for your pardon. Once they learned I  
 was Jewish --

With affection, he takes her hands in his.

CATHERINE DE MEDICI

--I could not just stand by and let them torment you.

NOSTRADAMUS

No doubt they've found another group of heretics to torture.

CATHERINE DE MEDICI

That's why I sent for you. Of all, I knew you would understand.

NOSTRADAMUS

It takes not a wise man to discern the fate of those whose beliefs become more important than their actions.

Catherine motions toward the door. She leads down the hall.

CATHERINE DE MEDICI

I have been cooped up all day.

Catherine opens doors to the library. Proudly displayed is Da Vinci's painting of the MONA LISA.

Two men take the painting off the wall. Nostradamus looks toward Catherine in surprise.

CATHERINE DE MEDICI (CONT'D)

Just a short trip. A loan to a close friend. She'll return home soon.

Nostradamus feels the canvas in awe, face to face with Mona.

NOSTRADAMUS

Timeless. A moment when reason is suspended and imagination smiles.

EXT. FULL SHOT OF VASSY, MEADOW- DAY--CONTINUOUS

CHILDREN smile, sing and spin as they play 'Ring Around The Roses'. They drop into the lush grass in giggles. A few cheerful citizens casually emerge from the barn.

The Duke rides to the front door and dismounts. He and his men startle everyone who see them.

INT. BARN, DAY--CONTINUOUS -- DAY

The Duke strolls in a presumptuous manner through the front door and stops cold to warmly pat the head of a young boy.

When Duke de Guise spots Monsieur Morel, he methodically moves in close enough to almost whisper in Morel's ear.

Out of his mouth comes a low, raspy, chilling, delivery.

DUKE DE GUISE

Who made you so bold as to seduce  
these people?

Morel respectfully raises a black book in his hand.

MOREL

Monsieur, I am no seducer.

The Duke calmly takes the book and thumbs through it while he coolly walks toward the back of the barn. Morel follows.

The Duke stops, then mildly hands the book back.

DUKE DE GUISE

(to the nearby soldiers)

Go, and get ready a gibbet, and hang  
this rogue for deceiving these people.

MOREL

Why, brother, there is no harm in  
this book. Tis the Sacred Writings.

The Duke rises in a rage. He grabs and throws the book.

DUKE DE GUISE

Blood of God! It was but a year ago  
since these books were printed; and  
you teach this as Gospel!

The other Guise brothers rush toward Morel as he vaults to the pulpit and falls to his knees.

The Duke pulls his dagger. Without hesitation or emotion-- De Guise pulls Morel's head back by his hair.

Blood streams. Morel collapses. SCREAMS of distress begin.

THREE UNARMED MEN rush to help Morel. The soldiers stab them.

DUKE DE GUISE (CONT'D)

They truly are mad; even the threat  
of death cannot abate their pride.

Several citizens behold the cruelty, throw stones and hit the Duke in the face.

The soldiers see the Duke bleeding-- their rage intensifies. The butchery turns more barbaric. Windows and doors are

Those climbing the rafters are shot down. Duke De Guise's men go through coats and pockets and collect loot.

Walls are splattered with blood.

Many take their last breaths in prayer.

The Duke turns over boards and bales and sets a fire.  
The Cardinal throws their books into the flame as kindling.

CARDINAL DE GUISE

Heresy!

The Cardinal, the Duke and his men abandon the barn, ablaze.

A Mother cries as she holds her lifeless daughter in her arms. Her voice quivers. A flaming beam drops. Silence, except for the crackle of fire.

Morel, now dying, weakly reaches out and struggles to speak to a YOUNG MAN hiding in the hollow pulpit.

MOREL

Go, get word to Beza.

The young man chokes on smoke as he kindly strokes Morel's face. Morel takes his last breath. The young man crawls and stumbles out the window.

EXT. MEADOW, OUTSIDE BARN-- CONTINUOUS

The young man sprints and mounts a nearby horse.

Duke De Guise spots him and a chase ensues. HOOF BEATS. Through the shadows of trees, Duke De Guise and his riled men stampede on horseback.

Unceremoniously, the Duke shoots the young man dead off the horse. In the bushes, two soldiers hold down a young woman as the Duke and his men rebound toward the barn.

The Duke now looms over the small boy and his Mother.

The small boy now cries beside her still body. The Duke smiles warmly, then his eyes turn icy.

DUKE DE GUISE

(to his men)

Silence them all.

DOZENS OF SHOTS ECHO.

INT. PARIS, LOUVRE, BALCONY-- CONTINUOUS--DAY

Doors CREAK open onto the balcony. Catherine waves her arms in frustration.

CATHERINE DE MEDICI

I am at my wits end. De Guise threatens violence, Prince de Conde demands tolerance. I try to please all and please none.

NOSTRADAMUS

And what have you done to calm the calamity?

CATHERINE DE MEDICI

I've tried to mediate-- granted funds at Admiral Coligny's request for another expedition to the New World.

NOSTRADAMUS

Many no longer blindly accept the corruption of Popes, nor the commands of Kings.

CATHERINE DE MEDICI

And I truly thought the edict of toleration would stop the bickering. Perhaps, relocation of the reformers to the New World?

NOSTRADAMUS

I wish I could assure you, but peace will not be found abroad until peace is made at home.

CATHERINE DE MEDICI

Agreed. I could always count on your gift for candor.

Dancers make movements resembling ballet.

NOSTRADAMUS

Catherine, you too, have a gift.

Below-- an impressive landscape of pretty COURTESANS and DANCERS that stretch their long legs. Catherine jokes.

CATHERINE DE MEDICI

You mean I could be a gifted dancer?

NOSTRADAMUS

A gift for humor and the arts, but the gift I speak of is sight; as when I forewarned you of your husband's death, you already knew.

CATHERINE DE MEDICI

But what is my gift worth? A gift void of a legacy, if I cannot halt the bigotry.

NOSTRADAMUS

A flower does not always flourish amidst thorns sown in blood drenched soil.

EXT. UNIVERSITY OF PARIS -- DAY

INSERT SIGN: UNIVERSITY OF PARIS-- FOUNDED 1215

A flower dotted campus. Under a broad shade tree, Edmund and THREE bright-eyed philosophy STUDENTS (20's) recline in discussion, nibbling fruit.

STUDENT III

So many speak in symbols of love and peace but so few apply the wisdom.

STUDENT II

"Though we speak with the tongues of men and of angels, and have not love, we have the sound of smashing cymbals." Corinthians.

EDMUND

"True wisdom is not found in judgment. Only words and actions both true and kind can change the world."

STUDENT I

Is that from the gospels?

EDMUND

No, Buddha.

STUDENT I

Well said, but here and now, either we accept the church as the ultimate authority, that the church and King are one, or take the other view--

STUDENT II

--Yes, the other view is called treason, and the reason they burned Professor Du Bourg at the stake.

EDMUND

First the books, then the writers.

STUDENT III

They profess to seek light, but defend the darkness.

STUDENT II

Many believe we have no obligation to obey those who defile God.

STUDENT I

Well I suppose the word defile would have to be defined.

STUDENT III

You sound like Professor Marcel.

PROFESSOR MARCEL (69) in robes, approaches from a distance.

STUDENT II  
 (clears throat)  
 Bonjour Professor Marcel.

Professor Marcel nods, shuffles until out of sight.

EDMUND  
 It seems that both church and campus  
 are becoming empty storage space for  
 old relics.

They all snicker at Edmund's attempt at wit.

EDMUND (CONT'D)  
 It's obvious we should not bow to  
 mortal men.

STUDENT II  
 (quietly)  
 Erasmus says it's their intolerance  
 that's creating this crisis for those  
 curious and courageous.

STUDENT I  
 We needn't worry. I doubt any of us  
 will ever be so courageous.

Edmund stands. An erotic sketch falls from his backpack.  
 Student III teasingly picks up Edmund's titillating sketch.

STUDENT III  
 But curious--what do you have here?

EDMUND  
 Isn't it Erasmus who also said that,  
 "Man is born for love?" I, too, am  
 devoted to love, especially the love  
 of beautiful women!

STUDENT I  
 I see your "devotion" and your lack  
 of punctuality for class again.

They all laugh as Edmund rushes off grinning.

EDMUND  
 Tempus Fugit!  
 (time flies)

INT. CLASSROOM, DAY--CONTINUOUS

ART STUDENTS pack up their materials, their primitive,  
 but erotic, paintings still wet on their easels.

Behind the curtain, A VOLUPTUOUS MODEL, MAURA, (25).

Maura bends over and pulls on her skirt that accentuates the curve of her waist and small of her back.

Edmund rushes into the classroom, glances to see if anyone notices, then peeks behind the drape.

The buxom model looks over her shoulder and smiles as she leisurely buttons her blouse. Edmund slowly raises his eyes and encounters her fiery but sweet chocolate eyes.

EDMUND

(startled)

Maura, I didn't know that you model.  
You'll inspire many beautiful works.

MAURA

(coy smile)

I didn't see you in class earlier.

EDMUND

Running late and behind. Is there  
any way you could pose for me later?  
I'll be happy to compensate you.

Maura smiles.

EXT. PARIS STREET, MOMENTS LATER-- DAY

Maura smiles as she and Edmund stroll together. A speech given by a well dressed nobleman, CHANCELLOR L'HOPITAL (55).

CHANCELLOR L'HOPITAL

If we cannot unite the two creeds--  
Must the adherents of one ridicule  
the other? I call on you all for  
toleration.

A few jeer and boo. Maura is agitated. Edmund appears aloof.

MAURA

Catherine De Medici's appointed idiot!  
Chancellor L'Hopital--pooh! Is he  
serious? Edict of Toleration?  
Ridiculous.

EXT. COUNTRY ROAD, DAY-- CONTINUOUS

Edmund and Maura continue their conversation while they proceed at a brisk pace down the tree lined rural road.

Shafts of sunlight pierce the canopy of trees.

MAURA

(coyly smiles)

And you are Pisces, creative, and  
sensitive, but on your darker side,

MAURA (CONT'D)

An escapist and a follower who is easily led.

EDMUND

Is it not you who is following me?

Edmund grins as Maura giggles.

Maura runs her tongue around her lips to moisten them.

EDMUND (CONT'D)

We're almost there. There's a well just outside the barn.

In the distance, a farmhouse and barn with a well.

EXT. BARN, WELL-- CONTINUOUS

Edmund hands Maura a gourd of water. The water runs down the sides of her mouth and trickles down her cleavage.

Edmund's eyes fixate on the sparkling droplets of water.

INT. INSIDE BARN-- CONTINUOUS

Edmund sets up his canvas and supplies as Maura lingers provocatively in the doorway.

SENSUAL SILHOUETTE OF MAURA

Maura leans against the barn doors and loosens her hair pins. She sensually tosses her head as her russet hair tumbles below her shoulders down to her waist.

MAURA

Would you help me?

Edmund fumbles with her button and she helps him, eagerly.

MAURA (CONT'D)

Is there no one at home?

Edmund shakes his head. Maura's eyes light up.

EDMUND

My Uncle is visiting family in Rochelle. They allow me to stay here whenever I take classes.

Edmund picks up his brush and palette and drops his brush. Maura grins and arches her back.

EDMUND (CONT'D)

You look perfect. Just lower your eyes a bit.

FACE OF MAURA. Her lids lower as her lips part.

EDMUND (CONT'D)  
 Left arm higher, lower your right  
 leg. Relax. Nice.

Edmund sketches as the tension rises. Maura slowly pulls  
 her skirt above her thigh.

EDMUND (CONT'D)  
 Raise your skirt-- more.

Edmund stares and sketches as his eyes glimmer.  
 He turns his back to mix paint.

Maura slips up behind him and reaches around his waist.

EDMUND (CONT'D)  
 Maura?

He palms her necklace as Maura touches his lips.

She leads him to the haystack. Urgent intimacy.  
 Both surrender down onto their knees.

Edmund's hand pushes down to the small of her back,  
 the other through her silky hair.

Passion mounts behind the golden bales of hay--  
 into the heat of the moment.

EXT. COUNTRY ROAD, DAY--CONTINUOUS

Duke De Guise and his men gallop toward a fork in the road.  
 INSERT SIGNS POINTING: Northeast --Paris, South -- Loire  
 Valley.

The Duke points straight ahead toward Paris.  
 A storm brews as darkness looms.

CHARLES DE GUISE  
 We need water for the horses.

Sheep and goats graze together nearby in an overgrown pasture.  
 De Guise shoots one of the sheep and laughs.

The Duke's boots dig into the horse flesh. He strikes with  
 his whip-- the horse arches back and races forward.

INT. BARN, CONTINUOUS

Edmund and Maura are still and sprawled out, their eyes fixate  
 on the barn ceiling. Maura slowly buttons her blouse.

She rolls over and searches the hay frantic and whining.

MAURA  
My rosary, please, help me find it.

EDMUND  
(under his breath)  
Just a bunch of shiny beads.

MAURA  
(Stressed)  
I cannot just confess this. I need my rosary.

EDMUND  
Well, maybe it's a sign that you shouldn't pray right now. To pray or not to pray, pray and sin, sin, and pray, confusing.

MAURA  
You mock me! How can I explain this at confession?

EDMUND  
Perhaps you should begin-- by confessing to me. I can punish you.

Edmund reaches to touch her again.

MAURA  
You mock like the heretics.

As she turns, the rosary falls from the waist of her skirt.

MAURA (CONT'D)  
They'd even destroy the statue of the Blessed Virgin if they could!

Edmund grabs the beads and taunts her as -- come and get it.

MAURA (CONT'D)  
That's blasphemous!

Edmund rolls his eyes and hands the beads to Maura.

EDMUND  
Me? It is not I who pretends to be something I'm not.

Maura, red faced, stares cold, storms out-- back toward Paris.

EXT. BARN, DAY CONTINUOUS--

EDMUND (CONT'D)  
Women!

He stares off to see Maura almost out of sight.

HOOFBEATS IN THE DISTANCE.

## EDMUND'S REFLECTION IN WELL

EDMUND (CONT'D)

(humor)

A boy's reflection, searching for perfection. A man's illusions, now torn apart. A door was opened, not to touch, but only to harden my-- heart. Not bad.

HOOF BEATS closer. Edmund peeks around the corner of the barn as men on horses advance. Edmund closes the doors. He presses his ear to the barn wall.

EXT. BARN, DAY--CONTINUOUS

The band of brothers water their horses at the pond. De Guise and the men drink from the well.

CARDINAL DE GUISE

I'm getting too old for these long journeys.

The Cardinal, stiff, dismounts and the others do so.

CARDINAL DE GUISE (CONT'D)

It will be good to sleep in Paris.

DUKE DE GUISE

All the comforts of home, but I have no plans for sleep.

The men laugh heartily. Charles does not look as amused.

CHARLES DE GUISE

I keep seeing their faces.

DUKE DE GUISE

Why should you fret? They're heretics and heresy is treason.

CHARLES DE GUISE

The women and children. I still hear their screams.

CARDINAL DE GUISE

What screaming? Their psalm singing?

DUKE DE GUISE

--Or their whining while they were being roasted like pigs?

CARDINAL DE GUISE

Charles, heresy is punishable by a fiery blaze.

De Guise, smug, struts, grins, without remorse.

DUKE DE GUISE  
We just saved on firewood.

They all howl as Duke raises his voice louder and prouder.

DUKE DE GUISE (CONT'D)  
The heretics at Vassy deserved no  
better fate than the Jews.

CARDINAL DE GUISE  
My Brothers, remember, first and  
foremost, we, the Guise are defenders  
of the covenant.

INT. BARN, CONTINUOUS

Edmund cringes and closes his eyes..

EDMUND  
De Guise?

(FLASHBACK-BOYHOOD MEMORY) EXT. PARIS STREET--DAY

NINE NOBLEMEN stand on the rear platform with hands bound  
behind them, staring upward, humbly singing Psalms.  
MONKS in black robes chant even louder in Latin.

A TALL NOBLEMAN(39) in a crimson robe, steps forward.  
SILENCE.

TALL NOBLEMAN  
The charges to which I am accused,  
are lies. I have done nothing but  
try to deliver the King from his  
true enemies, the Guise.

An EXECUTIONER, cloaked in black, motions and the tall  
nobleman falls to his knees.

NOBLEMAN'S FACE. His kind eyes meet the eyes of young Edmund.

ANGLE ON AX, POISED, GLISTENING, SHAKING...

WHISPERS of Mercy, as the murmur of Pitié, Pitié  
spreads through the crowd. Duke de Guise scowls.

The Cardinal de Guise raises his arm-- The ax falls as if in  
slow motion-- then it accelerates-- CRUNCH and THUD.

INT. BARN, (END FLASHBACK) PRESENT--CONTINUOUS

Edmund flinches-- his palette tumbles to the ground.  
CHICKENS CACKLE.

EXT. BARN, CONTINUOUS

The soldiers look toward the barn and reach for their rifles. Duke De Guise motions for a SOLDIER to check the barn. The men and the soldier point rifles toward the doors.

INT. BARN--

Edmund's eyes widen as the barn door swings open... The Soldier looks around-- a rooster chases a hen. The Soldier grins and motions clear.

EXT. BARN--

CARDINAL DE GUISE  
Good, now listen to the Duke.

DUKE DE GUISE  
We'll get aid from the Duke of  
Wittenberg--

CHARLES DE GUISE  
But he's on the side of the reformers.

CARDINAL DE GUISE  
(Bragg)  
Yes, but he owes us for our help  
against the Hapsburgs.

From the loft, pulsating FLUTTER.  
The soldier kicks the barn door and raises his rifle.

INT. BARN-- CONTINUOUS-- DAY

The soldier almost trips as he steps on Edmund's palette. FLUTTER from the loft; tension intensifies. The soldier pulls the trigger toward the loft. A SHOT RINGS.

EXT. BARN--

The men flinch, raise their rifles toward the loft.

DOVES fly out the loft window. The Duke aims, pulls the trigger and misses. Mumbles of relief. Cardinal scowls.

CARDINAL DE GUISE  
Enough child's play. Quiet!

DUKE DE GUISE  
(brags)  
We actually told Wittenberg that we  
agreed with his beliefs-- Though we  
would, only in due time, be able to  
express this publicly.

Laughter from the men.

DUKE DE GUISE (CONT'D)

We actually swore that we had nothing to do with the persecution of reformers.

Again, joyful, proud laughter. De Guise stands taller.

CHARLES DE GUISE

It is De Conde and Coligny that we should fear most.

DUKE DE GUISE

Fear is for fools! They'll be taken care of in due time.

The Duke strikes his horse violently, as the men all follow.

CARDINAL DE GUISE

Our Kingdom will come, for their end is coming, soon.

LAUGHTER, HORSES NEIGH, GALLOP--

Edmund lies behind a bale of hay, motionless. Wavering, hesitant, he climbs down and paces.

EDMUND

God? I can't believe this. Why me? Why? They're all a bunch of demented fanatics. Risk my life?... No.

Pacing stops as he waves his arms and shakes his head.

EXT. COUNTRYSIDE, ROAD-- CONTINUOUS

The tree lined country road winds-- bordered by vineyards. Ahead -- a horse and carriage.

INT. CARRIAGE-- CONTINUOUS

ADMIRAL GASPARD COLIGNY, (Kolen'yee) (62), Grandfatherly, handsome, graying beard and hair.

Reserved, but his eyes smile. Debonair, yet down to earth-- chews on a toothpick. CHARLOTTE LAVAL, his gorgeous, (44) refined and radiant wife, cuddles beside him.

CHARLOTTE

Monsieur Coligny, it has been so long. It will be wonderful to again visit with the Conde's.

Coligny sweetly strokes the back of her neck.

COLIGNY

And to spend more time with you.

CHARLOTTE

A festival, away from religious  
zealots and petty politicians.

Coligny grins as he tenderly kisses her ring finger.

CHARLOTTE (CONT'D)

If anyone brings up either, I'll  
distract with a comment about the  
decor, the weather or whatnot. For  
pity's sake, we need time to relax.

Edmund, on horseback, passes the carriage, and turns off the  
road to the left. The carriage continues straight ahead.

EXT. MARKETPLACE, CONTINUOUS--DAY

Into town Edmund rides-- a dashing figure, his cloak flies  
behind him, his horse's hooves clatter on cobblestones.

The GIRL selling fruit, holds round melons up provocatively.  
Edmund looks down and stops to water his horse. Edmund takes  
and pays her for fruit, grinning, as she flirts.

He overhears CITIZENS conversing.

OLD MAN

(Speaking to merchant)

My finest wine froze in the cellar.  
Coldest winter I can remember.

OLDER WOMAN

Wine? Soon we won't be able to even  
afford bread.

OLD MAN

Damn Huguenots, you never see them  
want for not.

They look suspiciously toward Edmund.

He makes the sign of the cross. The woman's grimace turns  
to a meager smile.

OLDER WOMAN

And now the Jezebel Queen grants  
them an edit of toleration.

Edmund hurriedly mounts his horse.

Children cross the street following behind a nun in single  
file, when a small little girl with swollen eyes whimpers.

The nun pushes her forward. Edmund halts his horse as children cross in front of him. A little boy with sad, empty eyes looks up at him.

INT. MONASTERY, CONTINUOUS

FUNERAL MUSIC. Incense floats around a coffin.

Dark, dingy shadows and recesses, lead into the darkness of TWO PRIEST'S (50's) dark, hollow eyes.

PRIEST II

They teach that men and even women  
should be able to read for themselves!

PRIEST I

Thankfully, the peasants can't read.

PRIEST II

But the Humanists and Huguenots now  
study both Greek and Hebrew! When  
they learn Hebrew, at once they become  
as Jews!

A commotion--at the back door. A parishioner jumps with joy.

PARISHIONER

Victory, Victory!! We are blessed.  
We've killed hundreds of Heretics at  
Vassy.

Parishioner makes a motion of their throats slashed.

PRIEST I

It has begun!

Priest I crosses his chest and kisses the crucifix.

INT. THE CARRIAGE, LATER DAY

Coligny kisses Charlotte's small Maltese cross that adorns her throat with a dove that dangles and captures the sunlight.

Young people in the fields, sing psalms as they work.  
Coligny and Charlotte smile at the sight.

COLIGNY

(ko--LIG-NYEE")

Refreshing, youth who have neither  
fear of work nor lack of faith.

The radiance of the sunset illuminates the grand Chateau de Conde seen in the distance, framed by a tree lined drive.

INT. CHATEAU DE CONDE, DUSK, CONTINUOUS

Coligny and Charlotte follow, as bags are taken upstairs.

At the end of the large foyer, a glimpse of BEAUTIFUL WOMEN who appear as "Earth angels", radiant, in shimmering silk gowns and brilliant jewels, dancing with WELL DRESSED MEN on marble floors.

Under a blue ceiling veiled with clouds and cherubs, Philippe and FOUR MUSICIANS merrily line the walls to greet guests.

The MUSIC inspires, an upbeat mix of harp, violin, and lutes. The ambiance, a sense of Heaven on Earth.

THE QUEEN OF NAVARRE, (58) aglow, the sister in law of Prince de Conde, statuesque, refined and regal with a kind smile and eyes that reflect her heart of gold. She wears a Maltese cross. A golden dove dangles from it.

The Queen speaks to her sister in law. MADAME DE CONDE (36) charming and radiant, no lines except when she smiles.

QUEEN OF NAVARRE

It is freedom that all of humanity  
long for. In Navarre, it is truth  
that sets us free.

MADAME DE CONDE

Your good brother in law, my husband,  
has not given up on the cause of  
liberty and justice in France either.

EXT. CHATEAU DE CONDE, GARDENS-- CONTINUOUS -- NIGHT

Torches and candles illuminate.

PRINCE DE CONDE, (42) commanding with dark hair, stands confident, in spite of less than perfect posture.

JUDGE LACQUER, (45) graying at his temples, suave, sophisticated and handsome.

JUDGE LACQUER

Yes, Machiavelli instructs the Prince  
on methods of solidifying his rule--

PRINCE DE CONDE

--Whereas La Boetie dedicates his  
discourse to ways of overthrowing  
him--

JUDGE LACQUER

--In order to secure the liberty of  
the individual.

PRINCE DE CONDE

Why is it, that men consent to their own enslavement?

JUDGE LACQUER

Excellent question. La Boetie calls this the great mystery of civil disobedience.

QUEEN OF NAVARRE

Perhaps it should be called what it is-- fearful, blind obedience.

DE GOURGES, (45) dashing in a decorated Captain's uniform, his eyes piercing and face framed by dark hair and a dark, meticulously sculpted beard. He overhears the discussion and walks forward to join to the conversation.

DE GOURGES

All long for freedom, but few want to fight for it.

Coligny and Charlotte stroll toward him. Coligny and De Gorges embrace. De Gorges sweetly kisses Charlotte's hand.

COLIGNY

Monsieur De Gorges, I hear you speaking of freedom-- glad you could break free to be here.

DE GOURGES

(teases)

Quite an evening amongst heretics.

CHARLOTTE

Monsieur de Gorges, did you taste the delicious cheese?

She hands him a taste. Coligny grins at Charlotte.

CHARLOTTE (CONT'D)

And, my, what a beautiful starlit night.

EXT. COUNTRY ROAD, STARRY NIGHT

The stallion gallops as he carries Edmund, his black cape flying.

Edmund stops to water his horse in a still dark pool and kneels silhouetted under the blanket of stars. He looks up and traces Cassiopeia like the letter M.

EDMUND

All my faith and prayers did not bring you back.

He closes his eyes and drops his head into his hands.

EDMUND (CONT'D)

I've tried to forget, tried not to think at all, and now it's returning to haunt me.

As he stands -- a shooting star.

INT. DE CONDE CHATEAU, NIGHT- CONTINUOUS

Genevieve's eyes sparkle like sapphires, silken hair pinned up, loose tendrils caress her shoulders.

Genevieve and Anne look toward Philippe and they all nod. Philippe looks away self conscious as they grin. Genevieve, Anne and her brother, HENRI,(16) chat.

ANNE DE CONDE

Did you hear? The Queen Mother hoped to marry her twit son to the English Queen Elizabeth.

HENRI DE CONDE

Can you imagine? I'm not sure he even fancies girls.

ANNE DE CONDE

No, he prefers to dress like a girl.

They all giggle. Genevieve looks toward the adults.

HENRI DE CONDE

Once, I overheard Queen Catherine say to him, when he was but a small boy, to trust no one except for her. And I think now, he trusts no one, especially her.

Genevieve listens and smiles politely, then wanders across the room toward the Prince and the handsome Judge. The Judge spots Genevieve, raises his brow as his eyes widen.

As Judge Lacquer shows an instant attraction for Genevieve. De Gorges and the Prince exchange protective glances.

PRINCE DE CONDE

Judge, did I mention that my niece, Genevieve, has studied Greek and Latin? And is becoming quite a scholar of the scriptures?

The Judge kisses her hand, quite tenderly, too tenderly...

JUDGE LACQUER

Genevieve, what a lovely name. And, Genevieve, did you know that justice is a major theme of the scriptures?

GENEVIEVE

Yes, and all the more disheartening  
that so little justice is discerned  
by those who profess to uphold it.

Judge Lacquer looks at her with more fascination.

JUDGE LACQUER

Nam et ipsa Scientia Potestas est.

GENEVIEVE

Yes, knowledge is power. Veritas  
Lux -  
(The truth enlightens)  
And how ironic that we live in fear  
when we can read classic literature  
and behold masterpieces still wet on  
canvas.

Genevieve smiles as Judge Lacquer grins.

GENEVIEVE (CONT'D)

Uncle, that reminds me, I simply  
love your new painting.

They all walk toward the foyer and behold the masterpiece.

GENEVIEVE (CONT'D)

Beautiful! Da Vinci, isn't it?

PRINCE DE CONDE

Unfortunately, she's only on loan.  
The Queen Mother had it sent, just  
in time for the festival.

The Judge savors his drink and the sight of Genevieve.

JUDGE LACQUER

Fine art should not be hidden, but  
appreciated.

POUNDING at the front entry and FAST-PACED FOOTSTEPS.  
One of the staff enters with a handsome young man.

Edmund makes his grand entrance and all eyes are upon him.  
He mesmerizes, especially the women in the room.

Anne and Genevieve exchange glances then eyes focused on  
Edmund.

EDMUND

Monsieur's, Madam, Mademoiselles, I  
beg your pardon. My sincere apologies  
for interrupting your party.

The girls all give him the once- twice over.

EDMUND (CONT'D)

I overheard news that I could not  
keep to myself. I come to you with  
a communique of concern.

Their eyes widen as faces light up with the spectacle of the  
handsome young man.

GENEVIEVE AND EDMUND'S EYES MEET.

Philippe ceases playing his violin and walks toward Edmund.  
The room is silent.

PRINCE DE CONDE

(Speaking to Philippe)

You know this young gentleman?

PHILIPPE

Yes, he's a good friend.

Philippe and Edmund embrace. Philippe whispers.

PHILIPPE (CONT'D)

For pity's sake, couldn't you wait?

Edmund looks at Philippe seriously. Philippe looks puzzled.

EDMUND

Prince, I beg your pardon, but I  
must speak with you in private--

Coligny, De Gorges and Edmund follow the Prince.

INT. LIBRARY, CONTINUOUS

Carved mahogany doors glide into an impressive library.

BEZA, (70) an elder man in robes, with thick beard as white  
as snow, commanding, yet humble, studies at the oversized  
desk.

PRINCE DE CONDE

Sorry to interrupt. Pastor Beza,  
Admiral Coligny-- this young man,  
Monsieur--

EDMUND

--Edmund Du Chastel.

Edmund bows. The doors close behind him.

PRINCE DE CONDE

What is the news you bring, son?

EDMUND

I've come to warn you that the Guise  
have death wishes for you and Monsieur  
Coligny in particular.

The Prince and Coligny grin at one another. Everyone laughs.

PRINCE DE CONDE

Son, the Guise have been trying to  
murder us for years now.

Edmund is taken back.

EDMUND

Yes, but I heard them boasting of  
murder they committed only days ago,  
of innocent men, women and children  
at Vassy.

They all look stunned.

COLIGNY

Vassy? Those poor souls. Isn't that --  
Morel's congregation?

BEZA

Yes, he is a kind and decent man.

PRINCE DE CONDE

The Guise are maggots. They never  
cease spewing their hatred and terror.

The Queen of Navarre knocks, enters and is greeted with sad  
eyes. Through the open door music and chatter resume.

Genevieve looks toward the open library door. Edmund catches  
a peek at Genevieve as the judge flirts with her.

Madame de Conde and a MAID carry in a refreshment tray.  
Edmund, ravenous, accepts the tray offered him.

Genevieve and Edmund exchange glances as she moves her head  
and eyes away from the library back toward the Judge.

The doors close.

INT. LIBRARY, CONTINUOUS

QUEEN OF NAVARRE

I can see from your faces, the news  
is not good.

COLIGNY

The Guise have now murdered innocent  
women and children in cold blood.

PRINCE DE CONDE

This is the final straw! I'm leaving for Paris to speak with the King and Queen Mother.

BEZA

We must stay calm. Keep in mind that Christ himself, for all the authority and power that dwelt in Him, never adopted violence as his method of defense.

De Conde looks at the Queen, then Coligny.

BEZA (CONT'D)

His disciples chose to meet death rather than defend themselves with the sword.

Coligny and the Prince look somber.

PRINCE DE CONDE

I speak of retribution, not revenge.

DE GOURGES

This is now a matter of justice!

BEZA

Monsieur De Gournes, I know you are a soldier, but as men of peace, we must believe that peace is more important than all justice.

DE GOURGES

Sir, many have died for your faith, in the name of peace. I only feel ashamed that so many atrocities have been committed against those innocent. I must speak out.

PRINCE DE CONDE

If more of your faith would show such courage.

QUEEN OF NAVARRE

True, this is no longer a matter of faith but the defense of decency. Must we not stand for those innocent, for those unable to defend themselves?

BEZA

We must not answer violence with violence.

De Gournes shakes his head solemnly. He speaks, under his breath, to the Prince.

DE GOURGES

You did not choose violence, it chose you.

Beza bows his head.

PRINCE DE CONDE

How long can we choose to idly allow harmless women and children to be murdered in the name of peace or justice?

MADAME DE CONDE

I should cancel the festivities.

PRINCE DE CONDE

No, the girls have their hearts set on it.

MADAME DE CONDE

Perhaps, you could go to Paris later in the week.

(to Edmund)

You are most welcome to join us for dessert.

INT. OUTSIDE THE DOUBLE DOORS, CONTINUOUS

As Madame de Conde exits the library, Philippe awaits.

PHILIPPE

(whispers)

He is the artist that I spoke of earlier.

MADAME DE CONDE

Oh my, quite the messenger and you are also confident of his artistic ability?

PHILIPPE

Ah oui, he is a most dedicated and imaginative artist!

MADAME DE CONDE

Then, by all means! Your artist friend will be our honored guest. You are both welcome to stay in our guest cottage through the festival.

INT. CHATEAU, MOMENTS LATER

Everyone chatters about Edmund and the news as the flicker from the soft candlelight and fireplace warms the room.

Edmund gravitates toward Genevieve.  
Genevieve looks up to find Edmund very close to her staring  
into her eyes and below. Genevieve's eyes dart away nervously.

GENEVIEVE

We can no longer accept a world where  
decent men are viewed as villains,  
nor villains made heroes.

Edmund kisses her hand, a bit too slowly. Genevieve, shy  
turns and walks away toward the painting of Mona.

GENEVIEVE (CONT'D)

Did you see this masterpiece?

Edmund follows.

GENEVIEVE (CONT'D)

The artist, Monsieur Da Vinci, lived  
his last days not far from here. On  
his death bed, he apologized to God  
and man for leaving so much undone.

EDMUND

One lifetime is not enough. I know  
there's so much I have yet to master.

GENEVIEVE

Monsieur Da Vinci said that one can  
have no smaller nor greater mastery  
than mastery of oneself.

EDMUND

(brags)

Yes, in fact, at the University less  
than two days past-- I said that we  
should not make men our masters as  
we all tend to seek our own glory.

Edmund drops his handkerchief intentionally bends over to  
pick it up. Philippe floats by and plays his violin louder.

GENEVIEVE

Agreed.

Edmund rises so slowly that it's vulgar and intimidating, as  
if he is inhaling and measuring every inch of Genevieve.

EDMUND

Yes, indeed, I have much yet to  
master, so much more I desire to  
learn.

EYE CONTACT AS THEY STAND FACE TO FACE.  
Genevieve's face turns crimson.

GENEVIEVE

Monsieur, regarding the mastery of self, be most assured-- you do have much more to learn. I will pray that God may grant you a long life.

Genevieve spins and walks away, as she rolls her eyes.  
Philippe shakes his head and plays a doom and gloom stanza.

Anne and Genevieve exchange glances.  
Anne rolls her eyes with the "I told you so" nod.

HENRI DE CONDE

(whispers)

If only his brain were as big as his codpiece.

Several beautiful women crowd close around Edmund.  
Genevieve remains charming but aloof, as the Judge moves in.  
Edmund's eyes hold his preoccupation with Genevieve.

The Fireplace blazes.

INT. GUEST BEDROOM, LATER --NIGHT

The fireplace embers dim as Coligny tosses and turns.  
Charlotte turns over and touches to comfort him.

COLIGNY

I can't sleep. Those poor souls.  
We lie in comfort, while they lie in the open, as food for vultures.

CHARLOTTE

Edicts alone cannot change hearts.

COLIGNY

I also know in my heart -- we can't continue to allow them to slaughter us.

CHARLOTTE

We must think on this carefully--

COLIGNY

--I can think of nothing else.

A moment of silence passes.

COLIGNY (CONT'D)

Will you be prepared if they drag me to the scaffold, our name tarnished, our children made orphans?

CHARLOTTE

Gaspard, are you afraid of death?

COLIGNY

(clears throat)

I just want to know that I've made a difference with my life.

CHARLOTTE

You've made all of the difference in my life.

COLIGNY

And you mine.

(inhale)

They mistake our kindness for weakness.

INT. DE CONDE GUEST COTTAGE, CONTINUOUS--NIGHT

Edmund stares at Genevieve's sensual silhouette in the upstairs window. Candlelight illuminates as Genevieve slowly bends over to brush her hair.

EDMUND

What am I doing wrong? I don't have a problem with other women.

PHILIPPE

Idiot. She's not like other women.

Edmund is enthralled, until Genevieve blows out the candles. Philippe shakes his head.

EXT. DE CONDE ESTATE, MORNING-- SUNRISE

A ROOSTER CROWS. Prince De Conde extends a gun to Edmund.

PRINCE DE CONDE

You may need this, times are unpredictable.

EDMUND

I have never--

PRINCE DE CONDE

--I will teach you.

EDMUND

I do know how to use a sword, my Lord.

And quickly with an expert's fluidity, he thrusts his enormous sword effortlessly, as it glistens in the sunlight. Prince De Conde likewise pulls his sword.

The fencing begins. The Prince is graceful, but Edmund's movements are as fluid as a dance. Edmund, confident, pirouettes as if light as a feather.

PRINCE DE CONDE  
 You are a master. My man.  
 Where did you study?

Edmund pauses with pride as the Prince notes the crest on the base of the sword (azure triple tower castle.)

PRINCE DE CONDE (CONT'D)  
 Ah, Du Chastel.

EDMUND  
 My Grandfather's.

PRINCE DE CONDE  
 That explains it. A noble family,  
 long history of knighthood. Your  
 family must be very proud of you.

Fencing resumes.

EDMUND  
 Proud? Fighting war noble? I see  
 it as the epitome of moral decay.

Prince de Conde lunges at Edmund.

PRINCE DE CONDE  
 Son, defending life, liberty and  
 family, is not man's worst moral  
 dilemma.

Prince de Conde pirouettes around him.

PRINCE DE CONDE (CONT'D)  
 A far more degraded state is found--

The Prince pins Edmund.

PRINCE DE CONDE (CONT'D)  
 --in the mind of a man who has found  
 nothing he is willing to fight, or  
 die for.

The sword tickles Edmund's throat.

PRINCE DE CONDE (CONT'D)  
 Many shout loudly words of peace,  
 then when it matters most... their  
 silence deafens.

Madame De Conde interrupts. The men lower their swords. Edmund bows and politely excuses himself, with his head lowered.

Genevieve stands by an upstairs window. Her eyes follow Edmund. She holds her hand over her heart.

EXT. PARIS, STREET-- MORNING

Several horsemen gallop through early morning fog. It is Duke de Guise staging a regal entry (under the grand Arch).

INSERT: ETCHED ON TOP OF THE ARCH THE WORDS:  
ONE FAITH, ONE LAW, ONE KING.

The look of a coronation, nobles, merchants, and a large crowd of admirers are turned out to grace his entry-- their enthusiastic cheers proclaim his welcome.

Next to the Duke, rides the Cardinal de Guise in full attire. De Guise raises his sword. As if the Duke were King, the crowd shouts repeatedly--

CROWD

"Long life to Guise", "Long life to Guise."

The Duke raises his sword higher and the crowd roars louder.

EXT. PARIS, PALACE BALCONY --CONTINUOUS

Catherine de Medici and Nostradamus watch the procession.

NOSTRADAMUS

De Guise appears more like a hero who has defeated the enemies of France, than a man drenched with the blood of his fellow countrymen.

CATHERINE DE MEDICI

Entering under the arch! The Duke is trying to appear as King! I expect Prince de Conde to ride in behind him, at any moment, to demand retribution.

EXT. DE CONDE CHATEAU, GARDENS-- SUNSET, EVENING

The Prince and Madame de Conde greet the GUESTS that enter in full costume, through the grand antique gates.

The courtyard is lined with torches, FLAG HOLDERS, TRUMPETERS, and SERVERS with trays, dressed in costume.

The row of flares cast a haunting purple glow over the crowd and fringes of the dense forest that surrounds the chateau's meadow. Let the Party Begin!

Edmund spots and stares at Genevieve, spellbound. He winks, bows, then struts over and whispers something in her ear. Genevieve smiles and for a moment seems unguarded.

LOUD EXPLOSIONS. Everyone jumps, jolted.

The crowd looks toward Edmund.

FIREWORKS.

A large cake is carried out to the long table and everyone cheers. Edmund's appears startled.

EDMUND  
(Grins and blushes)  
How did you know?

Edmund looks at Philippe as Philippe smiles and bows.

EDMUND (CONT'D)  
Oh Philippe, you rogue. I should  
have known. But thank you, thank  
you all. I am truly-- I am honored.

Edmund raises his glass to toast the Prince and Madame de Conde. He truly appears charming and humble.

EDMUND (CONT'D)  
I am humbled by your hospitality.  
May we never forget what is worth  
remembering and never recall that  
which is best forgotten.

Edmund looks directly into Genevieve's compelling eyes.

EDMUND (CONT'D)  
I will always value and cherish this  
night the rest of my life. To be  
welcomed in the home of such noble  
people who make me feel like family.

He raises his glass and brow to Genevieve, his eyes moist. Genevieve raises her glass and nearly flirts.

EDMUND (CONT'D)  
To your kindness.

Everyone applauds. The fun and games begin. THE JESTERS "pick up" on the two (Edmund and Genevieve) and begin to act out Edmund's heart being stolen. Genevieve blushes.

Philippe and his band of musicians along with France's best dance troupe perform under the stars. Genevieve laughs with Edmund. The Prince, Madame De Conde and others dance.

MADAME DE CONDE  
Look at Genevieve, I don't remember  
seeing her so happy. I think my  
sister would be pleased to see her  
smiling.

PRINCE DE CONDE

I'll see to it that she's safe and-smiling.

CHARLOTTE

Monsieur Coligny, you have not stepped on my feet once.

COLIGNY

I suppose love inspires even the clumsy.

They giggle like children as they spin around. MUSIC turns more upbeat-- Edmund asks Genevieve to dance.

EDMUND

When I look into your eyes, I seem to lose myself.

GENEVIEVE

I would prefer you find yourself.

EDMUND

It feels as if I have done both.

LOUD EXPLOSIONS. Genevieve cynical- loses Edmund in the crowd. Edmund searches disappointed-

EDMUND (CONT'D)

( speaking to himself)

I've been running from a part of myself I thought I'd lost forever and now I'm chasing it.

THUNDEROUS BLASTS as MUSIC bursts louder. Silhouettes glow. Edmund searches through the crowd for Genevieve. Fireworks light up the countryside. Edmund spots her.

Edmund touches Genevieve's face and fingers the back of her neck. She again turns and walks away. Edmund looks at the stars.

INT. HENRI'S DRESSING ROOM--DAY

The young men primp as Henri shares his costumes with Edmund.

HENRI DE CONDE

Yes, I see the way you look at Genevieve and the way she runs from you.

EDMUND

Is it so obvious?

HENRI DE CONDE

Obvious? Let's just say, she's like a sister to me and I'll not hesitate to protect her if your intentions are anything less than honorable.

EDMUND

She is brilliant and beautiful-- extraordinary. But it's more, something in her eyes, that reveals such awareness and a kind heart.

HENRI DE CONDE

So kind that she tries to hide it.

EDMUND

She's different than any other woman I've ever known.

HENRI DE CONDE

And I assume there have been more than a few.

EDMUND

(sincere)

With other women, I thought only of myself. Now I think only of her.

HENRI DE CONDE

Even more reason to hold you to your word as a gentleman. Besides the fact that my Father would have you shot.

EXT. DE CONDE CHATEAU-FESTIVAL, DAY--

The festivities continue with jesters, chess, tennis, archery, and other forms of amusement, including Portraits by Edmund.

Edmund sets up his easel. Just as he pulls out a canvas, the cook almost drops his heavy trays. Edmund rushes to help him carry them inside the chateau.

EXT. COURTYARD, DAY-- CONTINUOUS

Philippe notices that the canvas is not blank.  
VIEW: An unclad upper body sketch of Maura is visible.

As the girls walk over, Philippe tries to switch the canvas, his foot catches on the tripod-- and the girls giggle.

TRUMPETS blare. Edmund runs out as excited guests mingle. Edmund now realizes that Philippe is trying to cover the nude sketch and swats toward Philippe to distract the girls.

EDMUND

A bee!

PHILIPPE

(Pretends to be serious)

Thank you, artist. Bee stings make me, uh- swell.

ANNE DE CONDE

(jokes to Genevieve)

Better the bee stings that makes honey than the spider that sucks blood.

Genevieve sees the canvas nude and raises her brow to Anne and scowls at Edmund with disgust.

Genevieve walks away. Edmund is speechless.

As Philippe shakes his head, Henri glares at Edmund.

EXT. MEADOW, LATER

Henri sits weaving something out of straw--

HENRI DE CONDE

Let's play the game the King That Does Not Lie. A crown is needed, which I just happen to have here.

Everyone sits around Henri in a circle.

HENRI DE CONDE (CONT'D)

Draw straws, the longer straw wins the chance to be The King or Queen: You may ask a question of each one in the circle. And you are allowed to also ask him anything. One rule: No lies allowed.

They draw straws to see who goes first. Of course, Henri draws the biggest straw and asks Edmund the first question.

HENRI DE CONDE (CONT'D)

How will you know when you're in Love?

EDMUND

I will know, for when I look into her eyes-- I will see my future.

Edmund gazes at Genevieve who blushes and turns away.

Henri and Philippe shake their heads, like 'what a liar'.

A young girl selects the next straw as the game continues. Edmund overhears the younger children argue. The familiar word liar is heard. The adults are annoyed. Edmund motions the children to come closer.

EDMUND (CONT'D)

Do you like stories?

CHILDREN

Yes!

The children gather closer.

EDMUND

Once upon a time, there was a King  
who always told the truth and became  
upset whenever he heard his subjects  
calling one another liars.

The adults all look at one another admiring Edmund's charisma  
and control. Edmund looks direct toward Henri.

EDMUND

He then said that he did not want to  
hear anyone ever use the word liar  
again and to set a good example-- he  
would offer his daughter in marriage  
to anyone who heard him use the word.

Genevieve walks away with a letter in hand, but no one seems  
to notice. All eyes are on Edmund.

EXT. THE FOREST-- CONTINUOUS

Rays of golden sunlight stream through the canopy of trees,  
Genevieve is on her knees in prayer-- surrounded by majestic  
branches that seem to cradle her.

GENEVIEVE

Dear God, I don't know what is true  
anymore. The world has gone mad. Do  
you not see? Do you not listen?  
Where is the love?  
(between sobs)  
Forgive me, I beg you, guide me--  
help me, lighten this burden.  
Please, be with my parents. Protect  
them, help them find safety in  
England.

EXT. MEADOW, CONTINUOUS

CHILDREN'S EYES WIDE OPEN-

EDMUND

The Shepherd told the King: When I  
was a young boy, I used to help my  
father in the mill to load bags of  
flour onto the back of a donkey.  
One day, the bags were so heavy that  
the poor donkey broke right in two.

Laughter from the children.

EDMUND (CONT'D)

"Pretty tall tale," said the King.  
The next morning the tree branch had  
grown bigger-- so big that he then  
climbed up on it higher and higher  
until he reached the moon.

CHILDREN

Oooh!  
(Giggles)

EXT. FOREST-- CONTINUOUS

GENEVIEVE

Please, return my innocence. When I  
believed that justice would always  
prevail, that good conquers evil.  
Please, forgive me my doubt.

(MORE TEARS AND SOBS)

Replace my anger with love, my  
confusion with calm, my fear with  
faith... Give me strength and the  
wisdom to find the faith that I had  
as a child.

EXT. MEADOW--CONTINUOUS

Children are in awe.

EDMUND

The shepherd boy wanted to be wise,  
but he instead was fearful, a wolf  
was trying to eat his head, so he  
gave him a blow with the iron bar  
and a letter popped out of his behind.

The children cackle. Edmund cups his hand to his ear.

CHILDREN

"Pretty Tall Tale" said the King.  
(laughter)

EDMUND

Do you all want to know what the  
letter said?

CHILDREN

Yes!

EDMUND

It was a letter from the King. If  
you behave the rest of the day, later,  
I will tell what the letter said. I  
will tell you if the Shepherd boy  
gets the King's beautiful daughter.

The Children pull Edmund up and then take off running.

EDMUND (CONT'D)

Remember, life is too short for lies.

Edmund winks at Henri as he picks a handful of daisies.

EXT. THE FOREST, CONTINUOUS

Rays of sunlight stream through. Edmund hides and overhears.

GENEVIEVE (O.S.)

Those poor innocent children at Vassy, why? I pray for grace in a grave time. Please, give our leaders the courage to lead. Give me the courage to live, for I am beginning to fear life more than death.

Edmund calls her name.

EDMUND

Genevieve, Genevieve!

When she hears his voice, she tries to compose herself.

EDMUND (CONT'D)

You worried me. You should have told me you were going for a walk! I would have come with you.

GENEVIEVE

You take much for granted, that you think I need you with me in my every step?

EDMUND

No, I did not mean that. I only want to ensure your safety.

Her cheeks turn crimson. She crumples the letter.

GENEVIEVE

Thank you, but I can take care of myself!

EDMUND

I so admire your strength, but it's dangerous now. We must all take precautions.

GENEVIEVE

I apologize. I just received news that my Parents have fled Brittany to England. I fear for their safety and I may have no home to return to.

Edmund comes closer to hold her.  
Genevieve pushes him away. He is visibly taken back.

GENEVIEVE (CONT'D)

My mind is in enough turmoil. Do you think I am so anxious and in need of flattery, as to add to my sorrow with a broken heart?

EDMUND

(serious)

No, it is I who fears the broken heart.

Genevieve glances surprised, as he wipes his eyes to hide his vulnerability, or not be mistaken for a con.

GENEVIEVE

I'm sorry. Life is so precious- too fleeting for duplicity.

Edmund tries not to grin.

EDMUND

That is what I was just telling the children.

Edmund looks into her kind eyes.

He hands her daisies, now crumpled, as she holds them tight. He lifts her hand and kisses it with tenderness.

The bushes in the distance move.

LEAVES RUSTLE.

Edmund pulls his sword and steps forward to shield Genevieve. The leaves rustle louder and their eyes widen. A deer and her fawn feed on tender leaves.

GENEVIEVE

(giggles)

Oh, precious little deer.

EDMUND

We'd better get back, they'll think we're frolicking in the forest.

They both laugh and their faces relax.

EXT. MEADOW, PICNIC--MOMENTS LATER

They sit on a blanket, as a little boy struts by.

LITTLE BOY

We already know. Nah nah nah, nah.

GENEVIEVE

What do you know?

LITTLE BOY

*Monsieur* Philippe told us-- the letter spelled y-e-s... And that the "Slepard" boy gets to keep the King's daughter.

Everyone close-by giggles.

EDMUND

Yes, indeed, He's as "Honest as a Huguenot."

INT. DE CONDE ENTRY, DAY--

Edmund stands admiring the Da Vinci with emotion. Genevieve advances down the stairs behind him.

EDMUND

I was just again admiring the Da Vinci. True genius -- such beauty.

He looks intently at Genevieve.

EDMUND (CONT'D)

Two masterpieces now before me.  
Both formed of soft lines.  
Safumato--fumo--

GENEVIEVE

--Italian, for "smoke", Seamless transitions between light and dark.

EDMUND

How do you know that?

She smiles discreetly-- the MONA LISA smile.

GENEVIEVE

Some say he never sold her because he never finished it.

EDMUND

I think it is because he loved her too much.

GENEVIEVE (O.S.)

Possibly, or it could be--

Philippe runs in.

PHILIPPE

(Interrupts)

--They're getting ready to sound the trumpets.

GENEVIEVE

Perhaps we can continue our talk in  
the Library, later.

INT. DE CONDE LIBRARY, LATER--DUSK

Genevieve reclines in a plush chair by the fireplace. In  
her lap-- an open book. Edmund stands behind her.

EDMUND

You seem so melancholy tonight.

Genevieve turns and looks directly into Edmund's eyes.

GENEVIEVE

This moment reminds me of when I was  
a little girl, I couldn't wait to  
grow up, and then, I wanted to be  
little again. I had yet to learn  
patience or contentment. I'm still  
learning how truly precious every  
moment is.

She pats the seat and he joins her.

EDMUND

I stopped seeking the meaning of  
life long ago. But always I  
questioned, why the names of men who  
commit horrors linger, but men of  
honor are soon forgotten.

GENEVIEVE

Perhaps we confuse honor with fame.  
Fame is a temporary illusion and a  
false glory, as is war. How could  
war ever be just? I pray for peace.

She hands him a black book and points to a passage.

EDMUND

"They shall beat their swords into  
plowshares, and their spears into  
pruning hooks, and nation shall not  
lift up sword against nation, neither  
shall they learn war any more." I  
believe those who follow their  
conscience ultimately find justice.

Edmund stares into her eyes.

EDMUND (CONT'D)

I truly want to believe that. I  
always thought war avoidable, enough  
to become a pacifist, a disgrace to  
my family.

Edmund inhales and exhales with emotion and looks up.

GENEVIEVE

Life seems to give us only two choices. We choose fear or we choose love. What is it that you fear?

Edmund closes his eyes. Nervous, his hands rub his face. He runs his hands through his hair. He bows his head --

EDMUND

I've tried to forget, but now- all I do is remember. This war on humanist ideals was declared long ago.

He gets on his knees at Genevieve's feet with humility and opens his heart.

EDMUND (CONT'D)

When I was but a boy, my uncle Bernard, the Priest, was so excited...

(FLASH BACK) -- INT. CHURCH, EDMUND'S P.O.V. --DAY

Little Edmund is an altar boy. His UNCLE BERNARD, the Priest, holds up an infant as he concludes a Christening.

UNCLE BERNARD

Edmund, hurry, this is a special day. We're late.

EXT. TOWN SQUARE, PARIS -- DAY

CHURCH BELLS RING IN THE DISTANCE.

Little Edmund and his Uncle weave in and out of the angry crowd. MONKS in black robes chant in Latin as the mob shouts.

MOB

Heretics, Heretics, Heretics!

The NOBLEMEN sing Psalms in French but the monks chant louder and louder in Latin, drowning out their song. Little Edmund covers his ears.

A calm peace frames the faces of those being condemned, some looking toward heaven singing.

AN EXECUTIONER, cloaked in black, motions and a nobleman falls to his knees. His kind eyes meet the eyes of innocent young Edmund.

A man seated near the King and Queen Catherine bravely steps forward.

PRINCE DE CONDE

Have mercy! One hundred is enough.

ANGLE ON: the glistening AX-- poised and shaking...  
 WHISPERS of mercy, as the murmur of Pitié, Pitié spreads  
 through the crowd.

Duke de Guise sits smug and scowls.  
 Without warning, Cardinal de Guise raises his arm--

The ax falls-- as in slow motion-- then it accelerates--  
 blood spurts. With blood and tears on his face,  
 Little Edmund pushes through the crowd and stumbles...

INT. CHURCH, DAY--CONTINUOUS

Little Edmund darts down the aisle and falls on his knees at  
 the altar. He takes his rosary out of his pocket and looks  
 up at the empty eyed statues, but no words come out of his  
 mouth, only tears from this little boy's eyes.

His trembling hand throws his rosary to the ground. It breaks  
 into a thousand beads, as he too falls to the floor. He  
 cries as he reaches out and gathers many of the beads into  
 his pocket. He runs out of the church down the steps outside.

EXT. CEMETERY, DAY--CONTINUOUS

Little Edmund staggers and reels frantically around  
 headstones. He stumbles up the hill toward a large granite  
 monument and traces the etched words.

Little Edmund sprints until he stands atop the hill. He  
 reaches into his pocket, and throws --the loose rosary beads--  
 violently into the air as tears pour down his cheeks.

(FLASH TO REAL TIME) INT. LIBRARY, CONTINUOUS

Edmund's face is wet with tears.

EDMUND

That day, I threw the seeds of my  
 faith to the wind. I vowed from  
 that day forward, to live my life.  
 I didn't notice, until now, that my  
 life had no purpose, other than  
 running from pain.

Genevieve kneels beside him with tears in her eyes.

EDMUND (CONT'D)

I've been running ever since. I was  
 so ashamed. The Cardinal De Guise  
 was a personal friend of my Uncle  
 Bernard-- the Priest.

GENEVIEVE

I'm so sorry. You lost your faith  
 when you saw the death of innocents.

EDMUND

I lost my faith in humanity.

GENEVIEVE

Perhaps the peace that you seek today cannot be found until you make peace with your past.

Genevieve takes his hand.

The front DOOR CLOSES. The Prince enters.

GENEVIEVE (CONT'D)

Uncle, Edmund was just recalling a boyhood memory. An execution of over one hundred Huguenot nobles.

PRINCE DE CONDE

Oh what a shameful and ghastly day. And you saw that as a boy?

The Prince grimaces.

EDMUND

That was you who stood up.

PRINCE DE CONDE

Yes, even then, I was sympathetic to the Huguenot cause. But that day was a turning point. They murdered over a hundred of the most decent and honorable men in all of France.

The two grimace as Prince De Conde takes off his coat.

PRINCE DE CONDE (CONT'D)

The King thought beheading was kinder. Normally he burned Huguenots alive or cut out their tongues for speaking their mind. When I approached my cousin, Henry, the King, at the execution, he had me sent to prison.

He hangs up his coat.

PRINCE DE CONDE (CONT'D)

Three years ago, I spoke out again, and he ordered my execution. Fortunately for me, only days later, The King died in a jousting accident. After his death, Queen Catherine pardoned me.

EDMUND

I have heard so much about Catherine de Medici. Some call her Jezebel, and worse-- What is she really like?

PRINCE DE CONDE

She's a proud woman who has no fear of using her power, but does fear losing it. She distrusts the Guise for that reason. Although, her true motives are not always clear.

EDMUND

Not unlike most women.  
(whispers/winks)

Genevieve shakes her head.

PRINCE DE CONDE

Point well taken, Edmund. You are most welcome to go with us to Paris and I'll introduce you.. Another attempt at diplomacy.

PRINCE DE CONDE (CONT'D)

Would you wish to ride with us?

EDMUND

Yes, thank you. I have to go by the University and also check on Philippe's Mother. She's expecting yet another baby, her ninth.

Genevieve's eyes widen as she smiles. The two can't seem to take their eyes off one another. The Prince exits.

IN THE DOORWAY LEANS MADAME DE CONDE

PRINCE DE CONDE

They didn't even notice that I left the room.

MADAME DE CONDE

I noticed. Pastor Beza would say it is time for a chaperone.

EXT. PARIS STREET, TOWN SQUARE, LATER-- DAY

Prince De Conde, Coligny, Beza, Edmund and Philippe stand near the steps in front of the Palace. Edmund kneels and touches the familiar cobblestones.

Catherine de Medici gazes from upper window. Beside her-- her daughter, MARGOT, (14) a true raven haired beauty.

EXT. PARIS STREET, CONTINUOUS

Edmund looks up at the palace window and sees Margot and Catherine gazing at him.

PRINCE DE CONDE

(To Edmund)

Would you like to meet the Queen?  
She would find your family history  
of interest.

EDMUND

If I'd not made a promise to  
Philippe's Mother. Perhaps another  
day.

PRINCE DE CONDE

Let us then meet up again at sunrise,  
the Market Square.

EDMUND

If we're not there, go on without  
us. We'll catch up.

INT. THE PALACE, CONTINUOUS -- AFTERNOON

KING CHARLES, sickly at age 15, and his beautiful and healthy  
sister, Margot, 14 sit with their Queen Mother Catherine.

CATHERINE DE MEDICI

Who was the handsome young man with  
you in the street?

PRINCE DE CONDE

You will not believe this, he is the  
Great Grandson of Tanguy du Chastel.

CATHERINE DE MEDICI

Pray tell, the same Chancellor Du  
Chastel who paid for the King Charles  
funeral himself? I recall--funds  
were not available in the treasury.

KING CHARLES

Of the same Catholic- Du Chastel's?

PRINCE DE CONDE

The same.

CATHERINE DE MEDICI

What I would do for such a loyal and  
devoted subject.

KING CHARLES

(effeminate)

And I.

Margot twirls her raven hair and grins.

CATHERINE DE MEDICI

So has the Grandson turned Huguenot?

PRINCE DE CONDE

No, he is undeniably a Humanist.

Coligny grins, nods in agreement.

CATHERINE DE MEDICI

A shame. He would be quite a catch.

Catherine glances toward her daughter, Margot. King Charles rolls his eyes and shakes his head.

PRINCE DE CONDE

I think he is already spoken for.

The Prince and Coligny laugh but Beza is not amused. Margot laughs, bows and excuses herself.

PASTOR BEZA

Pardon my interruption, but the matter for which we are here is not as pleasant, but much more urgent. We are here to demand retribution for the atrocities at Vassy.

CATHERINE DE MEDICI

Of this I agree; this was a clear violation by the Guise of the Edict of January.

KING CHARLES

I strongly disagree! I lay blame on the Huguenots who called the barn a church and caused the attack by throwing rocks at Duke de Guise.

COLIGNY

Then, they should have punished only those who did the throwing. They murdered everyone, including innocent women and children! All unarmed.

Beza's face reddens.

BEZA

(to the King)

Sire, our numbers are small, but strong. May it please you to remember, that it is an anvil that has worn out many hammers!

Coligny surprised, turns to Beza as his eyes widen.

COLIGNY

(to Beza)

I think the solution may lie in the generosity of our honorable King Charles and our Queen Mother.

Coligny turns to King Charles and Catherine De Medici.

COLIGNY (CONT'D)

(to the Queen)

The expedition you so kindly funded,  
will expand French presence in the  
New World --a refuge for Huguenots.

KING CHARLES

Perhaps. We will discuss both matters  
further when the chaos subsides.

PRINCE DE CONDE

It is further chaos that we seek to  
prevent.

CATHERINE DE MEDICI

Agreed. De Guise has held us all  
hostage and riled the crowds so. My  
guards will escort you.

STAIRWELL:

BEZA

I cannot believe I lost my temper.  
God forgive me.

COLIGNY

God help us all.

EXT. PARIS STREET-- MOMENTS LATER

TWO BOYS have set up a wooden statue of Mother Mary on one  
of the main street corners.

As people pass, they test their allegiance to the church by  
asking the passers-by to say a Hail Mary or kneel to the  
statue. The boys watch closely.

Most make the sign of the cross in passing, and the boys are  
satisfied. Edmund and Philippe walk by ignoring the statue.

The boys point them out to the MOB and those in the mob point.

The jeering mob chant and soon surround them.  
Philippe mumbles.

PHILIPPE

Beware of hollow wooden objects.

MOB

We'll wash our hands in Huguenot  
blood and make black puddings from  
your children.

PHILIPPE

I told you-- behold, the Trojan twits  
who also think they can cook.

As they come too close for comfort, Philippe appears nervous.

PHILIPPE (CONT'D)

This is against the law!

They scoff at Philippe. Edmund pulls a knife from his boot and spins around showing his prowess and lack of fear. The mob smirks and moves closer.

EDMUND

Take your pick--ignorance--or  
enlightenment.

The brazen mob moves forward faster.

EDMUND (CONT'D)

Very well.

Edmund pulls his sword that shines.

EDMUND (CONT'D)

There are many paths to enlightenment.

Edmund lunges taking off the hat of a burly LOUD MOUTH in the mob, and splits the belt off another.

Loud Mouth and THREE OTHER MEN come at him with swords, then four--five, six, and he easily disarms them.

TWO BRUTES from the back of the crowd lunge toward him. Several in the crowd pull swords.

Edmund disables them, then spins again and grabs the leader as he holds his sword to the leader's throat.

The mob leader stares at Edmund's sword.  
THE DU CHASTEL FAMILY CREST. The leader hesitates, nods and motions the mob to disperse.

Edmund frees him, but then grabs and throws the man's own knife that pins him by his coat to a pole--

Edmund and Philippe walk away.

PHILIPPE

I always knew you were a little barmy--

Edmund tilts his head and looks at him as he raises his eyebrows. As they walk away--Philippe pats him on the back.

PHILIPPE (CONT'D)

I mean barmy in a good way.

(MORE)

PHILIPPE (CONT'D)

I thought that you were illustrious  
with a paintbrush, but I think you  
may be even better with a sword.

(Laughter)

Two men from the mob secretly follow them near Philippe's  
parents home.

EDMUND

I worked up an appetite. Ah, the  
aroma. Roast chicken with tarragon--  
my favorite. She remembered.

PHILIPPE

Hopefully those men will forget.

INT. LEDOUX HUMBLE HOME, EVENING

MR. AND MS. LE DEOUX and their FIVE CHILDREN ages 4-10, hold  
hands around the meager table with their heads bowed. The  
word amen is spoken in unison. Philippe enters with Edmund.

MADAME LE DEOUX

Bonjour, Monsieur's. Just in time.  
Edmund, we're so glad you made it.

Ms. Le Deoux kindly hugs them both. Edmund winks and the  
older children blush. He puts his sword on the mantle.

EDMUND

(teases)

I want you to know that I chose your  
cooking over meeting the Queen. This  
had better be good.

Everyone laughs and Monsieur Le Deoux reaches over and touches  
her hand. Edmund takes a bite and closes his eyes.

EDMUND (CONT'D)

Right choice. I'm sure even the  
Queen's chefs can't match this.

Madame and the children laugh. Edmund winks at the children.  
All pass the food.

MADAME LE DEOUX

Can you believe that we're also  
Grandparents? Our eldest all married,  
except for Philippe.

PHILIPPE

I'm much more concerned about you  
leaving Paris. The mobs roam the  
streets looking for blood, Huguenot  
blood.

Madame Le Deoux grimaces at Philippe and motions shhh- as she looks out of the corner of her eyes toward the children.

MONSIEUR LE DEOUX

I've thought the same about leaving, but it's easier said than done. God will protect us. Paris is our home.

MADAME LE DEOUX

Your Father is Catholic and most of our friends. 1 John 4:18 says, There is no fear in love; but perfect love casts out fear.

Mme. Le Deoux reaches out to her two young daughters and touches their hands with reassurance and affection.

MADAME LE DEOUX (CONT'D)

All of you were born in this house.

PHILIPPE

Yes, and the many say privately that the violence and intolerance is wrong, yet in public, most are silent.

POUNING at the door, as guards barge in.

GUARD

I have a warrant for a Monsieur Du Chastel, who was followed here, for pulling his sword on innocent citizens.

Philippe's Father stands.

MONSIEUR LEDEOUX

You can't just barge into our home.

The guard pushes him back into his seat. Madame Le Deoux puts her hands over her pregnant belly.

Edmund flinches, then looks at the innocent family and Philippe. He stands up and looks at the guard with scorn.

EDMUND

I will go with you peacefully. I will go, but I've done nothing except in self-defense.

GUARD

That's not for me to decide.

PHILIPPE

I'll inform the Prince.

MONSIEUR LE DEOUX  
 (To Edmund)  
 God be with you son.

Little toddler Danielle gets up and hugs Edmund. The warmth touches all, except the guards. Edmund kisses her forehead.

EDMUND  
 (bows to the Le Deoux's)  
 Thank you for the delicious dinner.

MADAME LE DEOUX  
 We'll pray for you, Edmund.

The guard exits with Edmund.

MONSIEUR LE DEOUX  
 Philippe, what is this all about?

PHILIPPE  
 Father, it's what I have been trying to tell you; the mobs are out of control. We were only trying to defend ourselves.

Philippe paces.

PHILIPPE (CONT'D)  
 I don't even know where the Prince is staying.

MADAME LE DEOUX  
 You're supposed to meet the Prince in the morning. Let us pray for Edmund's protection through the night.

They all sit and hold hands as they hold hands.

EXT. PARIS STREETS, NIGHT- MOMENTS LATER

As Edmund is bound and almost dragged to prison, he sees yet another mob with torches burning books in the town square.

INSERT: STOREFRONT SIGN: BOOK SHOPPE

A WIDOW is being threatened-- Two men hold her arms. She shakes with fear.

WIDOW  
 (Cries hysterically)  
 That is everything that my dear husband left me in this world.

Her books are being taken from her book shoppe and thrown violently into the street, piled high and set fire to.

MOB LEADER

Blasphemy--Bibles! Let her join her  
husband in hell!

MOB FOLLOWER

Huguenot! Add her to the flames.  
Burn her alive!

Edmund tries to break free to help her. They knock him out.

FADE TO BLACK.

INT. DUNGEON, FIRST LIGHT -- DAY

Edmund, still, unconscious and in chains. As he stirs, the  
guards enter his cell. The guards drag Edmund upstairs.

INT. UPSTAIRS ROOM OF DUNGEON, CONTINUOUS

There poised, posed and proper, sit Cardinal De Guise and  
his group of THREE INQUISITORS. One of the Inquisitors is  
Edmund's UNCLE BERNARD. Edmund seems startled.

EDMUND

(Sarcastic)

Uncle, I see you've moved up in the  
ranks.

UNCLE BERNARD

And you a magician-- you disappeared.  
You did not even attend the funeral  
of your Mother.

EDMUND

What did you expect? All I would  
have heard was about her eternal  
damnation.

UNCLE BERNARD

Your Mother committed suicide.

EDMUND

She died of a broken heart! Your  
brother-- my father, betrayed her!

UNCLE BERNARD

Enough of this!

EDMUND

I went to the mausoleum to find her,  
to say goodbye--and she was not there.

UNCLE BERNARD

I repeat, enough!

CARDINAL DE GUISE

I see you have been brought up on the grounds of heresy by association with Huguenots, making you an enemy of the King.

CARDINAL DE GUISE (CONT'D)

Heresy is an act of treason.

EDMUND

Treason? I am but a student and the mobs make it difficult to be in Paris to study or for any reason.

UNCLE BERNARD

Mobs? Those earnest citizens are only trying to put an end to heresy.

EDMUND

I demand my civil liberties as a French nobleman!

They laugh at him.

CARDINAL DE GUISE

Non loquis Latinum?

EDMUND

Of Course I can speak Latin-- Vir sapit qui pauca loquitur.

(It is a wise man who speaks little)

Edmund looks at his Uncle Bernard.

EDMUND (CONT'D)

Did you forget, you are the one who taught me?

UNCLE BERNARD

And it appears to be the only thing I taught you.

CARDINAL DE GUISE

Say your Ave Maria.

Edmund stares at him for a long moment.

SCREAMS of agony from torture can be heard in the prison.

EDMUND

Ave Maria, gratia plena. Dominus tecum, benedicta tu in mulieribus, et benedictus fructus ventris tui Jesus, Amen.

The three shake heads, still not pleased.

INQUISITOR III

He ended his Ave Maria very  
disrespectfully.

CARDINAL DE GUISE

He should have added moreover; he  
did not allow the mediation of saints.

It is obvious they pick a quarrel to detain him.

CARDINAL DE GUISE (CONT'D)

Even your Uncle Bernard cannot save  
you from yourself. You will have  
one more day to recant. Guards!

UNCLE BERNARD

Unless-- he can give us information  
about the heretics.

EDMUND

Never! I would never betray such  
honorable men.

CARDINAL DE GUISE

Idiot! Just as we thought. Take  
him away. Maybe his memory and common  
sense will return by morning.

The Guards take his arms forcefully.

EDMUND

So, explain the irony; how can it be  
that you are all tyrants and Paris  
has become a city of mob rule?

UNCLE BERNARD

(sarcastically) I will pray for you  
tonight in prison and for your mother  
in-- Purgatory.

Edmund eyes are like daggers toward his Uncle Bernard.

INT. DUNGEON CELL--CONTINUOUS

The guard unlocks the door and shackle his hands above his  
head, and chain his feet together.

Another MORE GRUESOME GUARD enters with unimaginable torture  
apparatus-- The other guard hands him a stick.

PRISON GUARD

Bite down. This will hurt you more  
than it does me.

CARDINAL DE GUISE

(Stands outside bars)  
All of this can be stopped, if --

EDMUND

--Never!

EXT. MARKET SQUARE, DAWN

PRINCE DE CONDE

They must have gone on without us.

COLIGNY

They probably think old men will slow them down.

PRINCE DE CONDE

Speak for yourself. Most likely, he cannot stay away long from my niece.

PASTOR BEZA

You had better keep an eye on them, chaperoned at all times.

The Prince and Coligny grin at one another as they mount horses, and disappear down the street.

Philippe gets to the square only seconds later and waits-- but they are nowhere to be seen. Philippe paces worried.

INT. DUNGEON CELL, SUNRISE--

Light creeps in from a crack in the brick. Edmund slumps in pain. An older prisoner, BEN DE SALLE, small in stature, but huge in heart, has seen enough.

BEN DE SALLE

Fiat lux.

(Let there be light.)

I'm Ben de Salle.

Monsieur De Salle reaches his hand through the bars.

EDMUND

Edmund du Chastel. Did you see the torture trappings?

BEN DE SALLE

Thankfully, you're young and strong.

EDMUND

They show little mercy.

BEN DE SALLE

Quemadmoeum gladis nemeinum occidit, occidentis telum est."

EDMUND

I understand-- "A sword is never a killer, it is a tool in the killer's hands". Your Latin is excellent.

BEN DE SALLE  
I used to be a Priest.

EDMUND  
I used to be an altar boy.

BEN DE SALLE  
(grins)  
Quite a twist of fate. I guess we  
took the path lesser trodden.

SCREAMS of Torture. The two cringe.

EDMUND  
I'm not a strong believer but I do  
know what they practice is not the  
teaching of Christ. They mock him.

BEN DE SALLE  
Their only aim is to either save us  
from our heresy or kill us for it.  
I could not survive this without my  
faith.

EDMUND  
I lack your faith. I wouldn't  
risk my life for any cause, except  
for the right to speak my conscience  
and to allow you to speak yours.

BEN DE SALLE  
(Whispers)  
Conscience will mean little unless  
we find the means to escape. North  
of Flanders... crossing the marsh,  
quicksand, snakes...  
(grimaces)

EDMUND  
If we survive this. To think I could  
convince my Uncle and actually make  
a difference. I could never win an  
argument with him.

BEN DE SALLE  
Stubborn yes? Maybe the difference  
is not about winning the argument  
but about never giving up the cause.

EXT. CHATEAU DE CONDE, EVENING

The Prince and Coligny arrive home exhausted.

PRINCE DE CONDE  
Darling, are Edmund and Philippe  
here?

MADAME DE CONDE  
No, I thought they were with you.

PRINCE DE CONDE  
They must not be long behind.

The three lumber up the stairs exhausted, move slowly and can barely speak. They reach the top of the stairs.

HENRI DE CONDE  
(to the adults)  
Good Night. Get some rest.

INT. GENEVIEVE'S BEDROOM, CONTINUOUS -- NIGHT

Genevieve, her cousins Anne and Henri De Conde at the bed.

GENEVIEVE  
Something's wrong, I can feel it.  
We have to find Edmund. Your parents  
will understand-- eventually.

Genevieve leaves a note on the bed.  
They carefully crawl out the window.

EXT. MEADOW, NIGHT

Moonlight illuminates as they mount separate horses.

ANNE DE CONDE  
Henri, and was it not you, who said  
girls shouldn't ride horses?

HENRI DE CONDE  
Ok, just this one time, I'm glad you  
didn't listen.

GENEVIEVE  
If only horses were our greatest  
peril.

They gallop into darkness and sprint into the sunrise.

EXT. STREETS OF PARIS SKYLINE, MORNING

Just ahead, magnificent buildings, and cathedrals.  
Philippe paces around the town square.

GENEVIEVE  
Isn't that Philippe?

HENRI DE CONDE  
Philippe? It is I, Henri!

PHILIPPE  
Thank God. Edmund needs us!  
They threw him into prison.

Henri raises his eyebrows toward Genevieve.

GENEVIEVE

I told you something was wrong.

EXT. PARIS, JUDGE LACQUER'S CHAMBERS, MORNING -- MORNING

Anne and Philippe wait outside in the hall.  
The Judge welcomes Genevieve and Henri inside his Chambers.

JUDGE LACQUER

Of course, Genevieve! Bene Placito -

(At one's pleasure)

He kisses her hand slower than is proper.

JUDGE LACQUER

And what brings you here? Paris is  
a dangerous place now. Huguenots  
are not welcome here.

GENEVIEVE

Honoris causa -  
(For the Sake of Honor)  
Ba abusu ad usum non valet  
consequentia.  
(rights abused by  
some are still rights)

JUDGE LACQUER

Genevieve, I am most impressed with  
your knowledge of Latin and of Law.

Henri looks annoyed and clears his throat for attention.  
Genevieve slyly glances at the judge and he looks at Henri.

JUDGE LACQUER (CONT'D)

And Henri, how is your Father?

HENRI DE CONDE

Fine, thank you, your honor.

HENRI DE CONDE (CONT'D)

We need to help our friend Monsieur  
Du Chastel, who has been thrown in  
prison.

JUDGE LACQUER

Ah, the young messenger. He is  
fortunate to have friends like you.  
Allow me to check prison list first.

Looks over a list and pauses.

JUDGE LACQUER (CONT'D)  
 Yes, Edmund du Chastel. Fortunately,  
 he comes from an respected Catholic  
 family. I should have little problem  
 with a pardon. I'll deliver it  
 myself...

Genevieve kisses the Judge on the cheek. He lingers close.

GENEVIEVE  
 Merci, thank you. Pax vobiscum  
 (May peace be with  
 you)

JUDGE LACQUER  
 Dum spiro, spero -  
 (While I breathe, I  
 hope)  
 Please, be careful.

EXT. PARIS STREET, CONTINUOUS

HENRI DE CONDE  
 What were the two of you saying?

GENEVIEVE  
 Judge Lacquer was just praising me  
 for my knowledge of Latin.

ANNE DE CONDE  
 At the door just now, it looked as  
 if he wanted to praise you a little  
 longer.

Genevieve shakes her head smiling. Judge Lacquer stares out  
 the window as his eyes follow her. Anne nudges her to look  
 back as they cross the street. They continue a discussion.

EXT. PARIS STREET ALLEY, LATER

Judge Lacquer leaves the building. A mob awaits in the alley.

The mob forcefully grabs him and brings forth two other  
 distinguished judges in full robes.

JUDGE LACQUER  
 Judge de Ferriers, Judge de Marion.

Judge Lacquer sees fear in their eyes.  
 He and the other Judges are then blindfolded, their hands  
 tied behind them.

MOB  
 (taunts and repeats)  
 Politique pacifists, Huguenot  
 sympathizers.

The mob pushes the judge and Genevieve recognizes him.

GENEVIEVE  
 Oh my God, we must help him.

HENRI DE CONDE  
 If we do they'll throw us into prison  
 with Edmund.

GENEVIEVE  
 If we can't even help a Judge in the  
 street, how are we going to rescue  
 Edmund from prison?

Two in the mob look toward them pointing.  
 The four walk faster and then run down back streets and alleys  
 into the seedier side of town.

EXT. PARIS BACK STREETS, BROTHEL--EVENING

They pass by a large house-- red curtains partially cover  
 the windows. Red glass covers the candles -- a carnal mood.  
 Scantly clothed LADIES parade inside the Brothel.

Genevieve and Anne look at one another when they see the  
 erotic garments hanging in plain sight on a side clothesline.

Henri and Philippe are the look outs-- the girls grab the  
 clothes. Behind the tall bushes, the girls pinch their cheeks  
 and bite and lick their lips, loosen and tousle their hair.

Both emerge from the bushes dressed as Ladies of the Evening.  
 Philippe and Henri pretend to cover their eyes.

INT. BROTHEL, EVENING-- CONTINUOUS--

Duke De Guise is inside surrounded by adoring prostitutes.  
 He and the women drink wine as they sway toward the stairs.

THE MADAME staggers to the door and steps onto the porch.

THE MADAME  
 My, my, girls-- you here for an  
 interview?

Genevieve and Anne freeze.

An OLD TOOTHLESS MAN comes to the door excited.  
He opens the door and peeks out with big eyes popping.

He opens the door wide with a larger mouth drooling.  
His tongue darts.

OLD TOOTHLESS MAN  
(drooling)  
I'll interview em.

The girl's eyes widen like saucers as they swallow hard.

The Duke teeters to the door, curious to see what is the commotion. His eyes immediately widen with lust.

The girls eyes widen like saucers.

DUKE DE GUISE  
Hiding your best from me, huh?

Duke de Guise grabs his coat as he moves back onto the porch.  
The girls and Philippe and Henri take off running.

PARIS STREET, CONTINUOUS-- NIGHT

When far from the brothel, and it appears safe, Henri and Philippe walk behind them.

INT. INSIDE DUNGEON -- NIGHT

Men lie in their dingy, dirty cells in fetal position tossing and turning on bare, dirty cell floors.

Ben, Edmund and two other men have their heads down.

BEN DE SALLE  
Lord, you have anointed your believers  
to preach the good news to the poor  
and to proclaim freedom to those in  
bondage, to give sight to the blind,  
to release those oppressed...  
(voice fades)

INT. OUTSIDE DUNGEON GATE, DUSK, CONTINUOUS

The girls use their appearance to distract a prison Guard.  
They flirt and the guard responds.

Henri gives the greasy JAILER a blow to the head and Philippe ties a gag around his mouth. Philippe grabs the huge ring of keys from the jailer's waist, and Henri takes his torch.

INT. INSIDE DUNGEON

They delve deeper into the dark tunnel that drips with moisture. Most prisoners sleep on the hard, filthy floor. Henri holds the torch near the bars. The light casts eerie shadows as a rat scampers in front of them.

Philippe spots Edmund and juggles with the lock. He surprises and frees Edmund and then gives the keys to his new Huguenot friend, Ben-- who immediately unlocks the nearby cells.

The men make a run for it. Ben, and the other men look at the girls in their provocative garb and smile. Edmund turns for a double take.

BEN DE SALLE

The Lord works in mysterious ways!

Ben and Philippe then free a few of the others and they all climb to the top of the steps.

As they near the front, Edmund makes a gesture to stop and for silence. Genevieve and Anne go ahead as they lead and enter the street.

EXT. PARIS, STREET, NIGHT-- CONTINUOUS

The Duke jumps from the shadows, the girls jump, startled.

DUKE DE GUISE

Ladies, there you are. I've already sold my soul, how much will yours cost me?

GENEVIEVE

Monsieur, our souls are not for sale.

DUKE DE GUISE

Then I will settle for a feel and taste of your titillating t--

As he reaches forward to touch Gen's breast she kicks him in the groin. She misses and he lunges toward her. He staggers.

DUKE DE GUISE (CONT'D)

Oh, you like it rough.

De Guise draws his hand back to slap her.

Edmund steps forward; the Duke pulls his sword.

Philippe throws the keys--Edmund catches them in one hand, captures the Duke's sword through the ring of the keys and flips the sword out of the Dukes hand.

Edmund points for the Duke to move forward with the point of the sword that now tickles his back.

EDMUND

Monsieur, I cannot fault your taste  
in women. So I will show you a nice  
room for the night. This way.

Edmund throws Duke De Guise into a cell.

DUKE DE GUISE

I'll have your head for this! Do  
you not know who I am?

Ben de Salle ties a gag across Dukes mouth as he mumbles.

EDMUND

I know what you are and since you  
aren't a gentleman, I think I'll  
take the ladies with me.

Edmund throws the unconscious guard into the cell with Duke  
De Guise.

EDMUND (CONT'D)

Company, if you get really lonely.

PHILIPPE

And uh oh,  
(throws the keys away)  
Now we've misplaced your hotel key.

Philippe hands Edmund his sword.

PHILIPPE (CONT'D)

I guess that would have been easier.

EXT. PARIS STREET--CONTINUOUS--

The prisoners "borrow" a large covered ambulance wagon close  
by and they all proceed on to make the horses move faster.

BEN DE SALLE

Edmund, do you not know the man that  
you just locked up was Duke de Guise?

EDMUND

And, would not a rogue by an ordinary  
name still smell just as putrid?

They all snicker. Edmund looks at Genevieve and although  
tired and cringing, the sight brings a grin to his face.

Genevieve then uses some of the medicine and bandages in the  
ambulance to tend Edmund's wounds. Mobs with torches roam  
the streets. They turn the corner.

GENEVIEVE

We must try and find the Judge.

HENRI DE CONDE

The mob took him. The mobs are like  
wolves at the scent of blood.

They all look up at the same time. Speechless, in shock.

THREE JUDGES HANG IN FULL CRIMSON ROBES

GENEVIEVE

Dear God. Please, no. It's the judge!  
We're too late!

Genevieve cries as Edmund comforts her.

The judges silhouettes hang in stark contrast against the  
flames that burn behind them.

EXT. DE CONDE DEN, CONTINUOUS -- DAY

By the fireplace, Prince De Conde and Coligny study a map.

PRINCE DE CONDE

I've almost given up any hope for  
peace.

COLIGNY

My instinct is still for diplomacy--

PRINCE DE CONDE

Over a decade now we've tolerated  
this injustice and still no remorse  
nor retribution, only the murder of  
our most noble.

MADAME DE CONDE

(pacing)

And now innocent women and children.  
We must find our children.

PRINCE DE CONDE

If they are not here soon, I will  
ride back to Paris at dawn.

They continue to study the map. The door opens.  
In walks disheveled, unshaven Edmund. The others follow.

The girls are still dressed in their evening costume.

PRINCE DE CONDE (CONT'D)

I told you they would be fine.

Madame de Conde jaw drops, her eyes widen. She looks at the  
Prince with raised eyebrows.

MADAME DE CONDE  
 Fine? Fine? Thank God Pastor Beza  
 is not here!

Anne, nervous, begins rambling.

ANNE DE CONDE  
 A mob in Paris attacked Edmund and  
 Philippe. Edmund was thrown into  
 prison. Genevieve and Henri went to  
 ask Judge Lacquer for help.

Madame de Conde continues to stare with her jaw dropped.

GENEVIEVE  
 Then, we had to be creative to get  
 the Guard's keys.

MADAME DE CONDE  
 Oh, thank God. We were all worried  
 sick. I pray that explains your  
 clothing?

GENEVIEVE  
 As we were leaving, we saw Judge  
 Lacquer.

ANNE DE CONDE  
 The mob hung him and two other judges  
 in the street.

GENEVIEVE  
 There was nothing we could do.  
 (tears)

Prince De Conde and Madame De Conde affectionately hug all.

HENRI DE CONDE  
 Father, we've also brought some of  
 our army with us.

Outside the door-- Ben de Salle and the freed men wave.

ANNE DE CONDE  
 It's a long story.

INT. LIBRARY, EVENING

Edmund and Genevieve sit alone in front of the fireplace.

GENEVIEVE  
 My uncle says they're all leaving in  
 two weeks.

EDMUND

I truly admire your Uncle. But, you know in my heart I believe war is wrong, just as you do. I've been struggling with this all of my life.

They hear Madame de Conde crying in the other room.

MADAME DE CONDE (O.S.)

You can't do this, you know you're out numbered. It's suicide.

SILENCE, except for muffled sobs. Edmund bows his head.

EXT. DE CONDE ESTATE, LAKE-- LATER DAY

The Prince hands his wife a rose, as they hold one another somber at the shore. Edmund paddles the boat further out. Genevieve twists her necklace: The golden DOVE dangles.

EDMUND

You were right. It is time to make peace with my past. The Huguenots have a right to make peace with theirs.

GENEVIEVE

The dove symbolizes peace and justice.

He takes her chin and their eyes meet. His eyes are piercing.

GENEVIEVE (CONT'D)

You aren't seriously considering... No one would think less of you.

EDMUND

I would. As a Humanist, this time, I choose not to run, but to stand with men of honor.

GENEVIEVE

You're not Huguenot; this is not your cause.

EDMUND

Justice should be the cause of every man. That day I stood eye to eye and watched innocent men die.

GENEVIEVE

You were just a helpless boy.

EDMUND

It haunted me as a boy and seems to have brought me here, as a man.

EXT. FOREST-- SPECTACULAR SUNSET, CONTINUOUS

They ride horseback into the forest, dismount and watch the sunset, hand in hand. In the peaceful green forest, they make a bed of pine needles. They hold one another tight as the shafts of sunlight pierces through the trees.

EDMUND

I've learned from the Prince that the defense of human dignity is not evil nor failure.

GENEVIEVE

War is not the answer. Pastor Beza chooses not to take part in the war.

EDMUND

The Huguenots have not declared war, they've lived and died for peace.

Genevieve shakes her head as she sits, tears in her eyes.

EDMUND (CONT'D)

Please, understand, I can't live with myself any longer, nor be worthy of you if I don't stand with them.

Genevieve takes off her necklace, a symbol of her faith.

GENEVIEVE

I do admire your conviction and your respect for our honor. The necklace I wear is a symbol of that honor.

Genevieve removes the dove.

GENEVIEVE (CONT'D)

It symbolizes the love and sacrifice of Christ. The eight tips are for the eight Beatitudes.

She tearfully places the maltese necklace around his neck. Her voice shakes.

GENEVIEVE (CONT'D)

The Fleurs de lis and the hearts, symbols of love and loyalty.

Edmund holds it tight in his hand, then holds her tighter. Beams of sunlight shroud them.

EDMUND

Perhaps a man's legacy has little to do with fame but in loyalty to those who believe in him.

GENEVIEVE

And in those moments he treasures  
those he truly loves.

They embrace as never before-- as dark blue blends into dawn.

INT. DE CONDE LIBRARY-- DAYBREAK

Edmund and Genevieve are asleep on the couch in front of the fireplace, her head, resting on Edmund's shoulder.

EXT. DE CONDE ESTATE, DAYBREAK

Philippe and others load the "ambulance" wagon with supplies. The men saddle fine horses from the De Conde stables. Coligny and De Conde affectionately hold their wives and family.

FULL SHOT: IN THE DISTANCE A MAN ON HORSEBACK

It is Henri of Navarre. They run to meet and embrace him.

EDMUND

Navarre, go say hello to the others.

Edmund and Genevieve say goodbye: Genevieve kisses the necklace now around his neck. He passionately kisses her.

EDMUND (CONT'D)

Will you wait for me?

GENEVIEVE

You need not ask that question. If anything happened to you and I were still Catholic, I would enter a convent.

EDMUND

Such a waste.

Edmund kisses her and holds her as if not to let her go. He takes her face tenderly in his hands.

EDMUND (CONT'D)

It isn't every day that a man finds peace in the midst of war. If I do not make it back to you--

GENEVIEVE

--You will make it back. A girl does not find love only to lose it.

EDMUND

I will return.  
(voice breaks)  
I see my future in your eyes.

Edmund kisses her eyelids and lips with tenderness,  
then with passion.

The Prince rides up on horseback surrounded by men and their  
emotional families.

PRINCE DE CONDE

We leave you, you, whom we hold in  
our hearts, dearer than life itself,  
to fight this battle for honor,  
justice and liberty.

Children hold their Mother's some in tears.

PRINCE DE CONDE (CONT'D)

We do this for the future of France,  
for our children and their children,  
so they may all be liberated from  
fear. Pray for us.

The women are in tears. Genevieve turns to Anne.

GENEVIEVE (O.S.)

My Edmund, the pacifist, leaves his  
heart to follow his conscience. He  
thinks he'll find peace, by going  
off to war.

She takes the golden dove from her pocket.

GENEVIEVE (CONT'D)

God help us all.

EXT. THE HUGUENOT CAMP -- DAY

SUPER: NINE MONTHS LATER

Edmund writes in his journal. The men put on white capes.

EDMUND (V.O.)

Our victory is just a matter of time,  
for, whenever or wherever in history  
has there been injustice, those with  
the kindest and bravest hearts step  
forward. My respect for the Prince  
and the Admiral grows daily.

The Huguenots sit tall and proud on horseback. On their  
banners, is written: "For God and the Prince. "

COLIGNY

We are bound to live the Gospel as  
well as fight for it.

PRINCE DE CONDE

We will subscribe a bond, a pledge  
of fidelity to God and to one another.

HENRI OF NAVARRE  
For faith, honor and liberty!

The men repeat their new mantra as they ride off united--

EXT. THE HUGUENOT CAMP, LATE DAY

Prince De Conde, Coligny, and men bow heads together. "Amen" is heard in unison as heads raise and bread is broken. A RIDER rushes in on horseback.

RIDER  
They're only minutes behind!

A TRUMPET SOUNDS

All mount their horses. Duke De Guise, and his men ride in pursuit, red capes flapping. The chase heats up across hills and valleys. White Huguenot capes flow.

EXT. RIVER, DAY-- CONTINUOUS

As they cross, the river rises in flood up to their horses girths.

Miraculously, horses and men all survive the crossing with a barrier between them and their enemies. Coligny falls on his knees to give thanks.

EXT. OTHER SIDE OF RIVER-- CONTINUOUS

DUKE DE GUISE  
You'll not be so fortunate next time.

TREES ARE COVERED WITH BUDDING GREEN LEAVES AND BLOWN BY STRONG WINDS-- RAIN FALLS-- TIME PASSES-- FROM FALL TO SPRING.

EXT. BATTLEFIELD, DAY

De Guise's army form on the opposite side of the field.

DRUMS.

As the enemy appears, the haunting DRUMS, The Prince and his men mount their horses. The enemy advances.

Proud, plumed, intimidating; they look invincible, their horses huge, even from a distance.

PRINCE DE CONDE  
If a man has not found something  
worth dying for, he has not yet lived.

De Guises infantry approaches with rippling red capes with white crosses.

They charge, men fight and die, some still standing, but none standing tall.

Both sides retreat. Prince de Conde dismounts, limps and falls. Philippe splints his leg. Edmund sketches.

SUPER: EIGHTEEN MONTHS LATER--

EXT. HUGUENOT CAMP, EVENING

The men sit by the campfire, their tents lit by lanterns. Edmund lies on his cot and closes his eyes and smiles.

(DREAM-FLASH BACK) EXT. DE CONDE ESTATE, --LAKE-- DAY

Orchards and wild roses bloom. Edmund paddles the boat, as he and Genevieve admire the scenery and one another.

GENEVIEVE

The length of our lives shouldn't be the measure, but the depth of the love, and the passion.

EDMUND

Yes, passion.

Edmund sensuously places a sweet purple morsel into Genevieve's mouth and kisses her. THUNDER-- they look up.

(FLASH TO PRESENT) EXT. HUGUENOT CAMP, SUNRISE

THUNDER OF HORSES. Edmund opens his eyes. Men scramble. Loud rumbling in the distance. DRUMS.

Edmund and the men pull on their armor. Prince de Conde staggers with a limp. Admiral Coligny mounts his horses and hurries the men.

SUPER: BATTLE OF JARNAC

EXT. BATTLEFIELD, BATTLE OF JARNAC, DAY

Duke De Guise pushes his army forward. The cavalier charge! Hooves sound like THUNDER; the ground literally shakes.

The prince raises his banner.

PRINCE DE CONDE

Charge ahead!

The two Henri's, and Edmund line up shoulder to shoulder atop horses. They charge, first with rifles, then swords.

THE SOUND OF BATTLE

Prince de Conde spots the Duke and the Cardinal, along side one another in the back ranks on dark horses, scanning the field.

The Huguenots surge forward outnumbered; a prolonged slaughter of Huguenot soldiers begins and ends. They fall four to one.

SCREAMS OF DYING MEN AND HORSES.

Duke De Guise watches from a distance. Seeing an opening, the Duke motions for his RIGHT HAND MAN to go after Coligny.

The Prince de Conde cuts in front of him to protect Coligny.

As if in SLOW MOTION...

A slash from his sword tears off the armor of Prince De Conde's right shoulder. The Prince wobbles on his horse, regains his balance, and tries to keep up the defense.

Prince de Conde falls off his horse but continues to swing his sword valiantly, but falls to his knees.

The Duke de Guise, visible in his red cloak, rides hard in the direction of the Prince, standing in a pool of blood.

The Prince props himself against a tree, weak and pale.

A CATHOLIC SOLDIER recognizes the Prince and his frailty.

CATHOLIC SOLDIER

Prince, you once saved my life when  
we fought on the same side.  
Hide your face, I'll protect you.

Prince De Condé sees the Duke advance, and, feebly raises his arm and points to warn the Catholic soldier.

De Guise pulls back sharply on his horse, stops and shoots his own soldier. The Catholic soldier falls in front of the Prince.

De Guise then pulls his sword and looms above the Prince. He stabs the Prince in the shoulder. The Prince staggers, paler, visibly weaker, but continues to fight back.

Edmund now sees the Prince and begins to fight his way toward his comrade.

Edmund weaves, dodges with his horse, slashing with his sword, cutting down one, another, then another to reach the Prince.

The Prince fights on his knees, until one last thrust of de Guise's Sword. The Prince falls to the ground.

EDMUND

NO!!

Edmund's piercing scream echoes over the battlefield.

As Duke De Guise watches the Prince fall, he now sets his sight on the Prince's son, Henri.

Duke De Guise sees Henri kneeling over his slain father and rushes toward Henri to stab him in the back.

Edmund forges bravely to get to Henri De Conde. Edmund uses himself as a shield, and is stabbed in the arm by Duke De Guise - who then knocks Edmund's sword from his hand.

Duke De Guise stays on his horse and again pursues Henri, Henri turns and defends himself.

Edmund, swift, grabs a sword on the ground and fights off several of Duke De Guise soldiers that surround the Duke.

Just as the Duke knocks Henri's sword from his hand, the Duke raises his sword in the attempt to end Henri's life--

Edmund sprints between them and slashes the Duke in the leg causing the Duke to almost fall from his horse.

Edmund lunges toward Duke De Guise with great anger and an ear piercing SCREAM- He rushes the Duke and knocks him off his horse. Now, they struggle eye to eye.

An intense sword fight ensues, Duke De Guise pins Edmund on the ground beneath him. Edmund appears to give up -- Edmund musters all his might and pushes the sword from the Duke's hand and rolls over him till eye to eye.

Edmund pushes, leaps wild. The Duke and Edmund roll entwined, down the embankment into a stream.

The Duke catches Edmund by the throat and thrusts his head under the water. Edmund thrashes slow-slower.

FLASH BACK: EXT. DE CONDE CHATEAU MEADOW, DAY

FLASH: Genevieve's face glows as it did when he promised to return, when he said he saw his future in her eyes.

TEARS in her eyes-- then a tunnel of brilliant white light.

FLASH TO STARLIT NIGHT: Edmund goes backward into a tunnel that opens into a starlit night, the constellation Cassiopeia.

His MOTHER points, as starlight grows brighter and explodes.

END FLASH BACK: The Duke holds Edmund's face down until Edmund's body goes limp.

Duke De Guise retreats, pulling himself up on a dark horse. Philippe spots Edmund lifeless, face down in the water.

EXT. BATTLEFIELD, END FLASH, PRESENT

TRUMPETS and THE SOUNDS AFTER A SLAUGHTER  
The Duke De Guise's army retreats.

Philippe jerks Edmund out of the water onto the bank as he begins screaming and pounding on Edmund's back in despair.

The Prince lies motionless atop brown earth.  
Henri kneels beside his pale and weak Father.

PRINCE DE CONDE  
(Reaches out to Henri.)  
The pain will pass. This was my  
choice.

Edmund begins to choke, struggling--then coughs up water as his eyes open. Philippe looks upward in thanks. Edmund and Philippe now trudge toward the Prince.

PRINCE DE CONDE (CONT'D)  
(weaker, pulls Henri  
closer)  
Henri, my son... I'm proud of you.  
I know you'll take care of your Mother  
and Anne. Tell them, I love them...

The Prince looks up with weak but kind eyes.

PRINCE DE CONDE (CONT'D)  
Take courage; I have overcome the  
pain of this world.

The Prince takes his last breath.

Coligny and his men stare blankly, some with tears.  
Henri, sobs in despair holding his father's dead body.

The blood of the Prince and the Catholic Soldier trickle  
and mix together, on the brown earth.

Coligny turns to Edmund.

COLIGNY  
I fear we are now in greater jeopardy,  
not from the other army, but being  
beaten by our own despair.

EXT. FOREST, MORNING

Edmund slumps, weak and depressed.  
The dew on the foliage appears to drip like tears.

EDMUND  
Why? Why? What a fool to think I  
would find faith following my  
conscience.

Edmund falls on his knees. He holds Genevieve's necklace.

EDMUND (CONT'D)

Dear God, This cannot be your will.  
Is this what men of honor reap?

As sunlight streams, he looks up toward the heavens.

EDMUND (CONT'D)

Three years, the blood of war... the  
longing for peace, and I for  
Genevieve.

Edmund mounts his horse and rides off in fury, as if he will never look back. He stops and turns around.

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

I can turn away, but I can't desert  
these men.

Edmund squints, in awe, toward a glimmer in the fog.

INT. DE CONDE ESTATE, DAY

Genevieve reads a letter from Edmund to Madame and Anne.

GENEVIEVE

The pain we feel is beyond measure,  
but I know that the Prince died as  
he would have wished, for a cause he  
truly believed in.

Genevieve and Anne wipe away tears as they both hug Madame de Conde. Genevieve finishes reading the letter.

GENEVIEVE (CONT'D)

The Prince told me many times that  
God is just and his justice and mercy  
without bounds And I think he was  
right---

(pause, voice quivers)

When in the deepest pits of despair,  
it seemed that God sent an angel--  
who in our bleakest moment breathed  
her own spirit into us.

EXT. HUGUENOT CAMP, FOG-- MORNING

Through the dense fog peeks a glimmer of a face.  
On a herculean white horse emerges--the face of an angel.

Morning rays of light stream and spotlights a Maltese  
necklace. The dove glistens.

The Queen of Navarre rides forth like a vision from the grey mist, appearing as if descended from heaven.

QUEEN OF NAVARRE  
 (with great passion)  
 Children of God and of France, our  
 brother, our good Prince, is gone--

The men look up in unison.

QUEEN OF NAVARRE (CONT'D)  
 But we cannot believe that he is no  
 longer with us.

She looks toward the heavens as her tear falls.

QUEEN OF NAVARRE (CONT'D)  
 He would not wish us to give up, nor  
 to believe that all is lost. God  
 gave him the courage and the strength  
 to give up comfort and luxury to  
 fight here along side you, YOU, whom  
 he thought of as brothers.

Rays of sunlight- as she raises her voice till it echoes.

QUEEN OF NAVARRE (CONT'D)  
 He so believed in you and in the  
 future of France, that he was willing  
 to give his life for this cause, to  
 right the wrongs, to secure Liberty,  
 and Justice for all!

The men stand taller as light appears in their eyes.

QUEEN OF NAVARRE (CONT'D)  
 The blood of so many just men has  
 been shed, let not their deaths be  
 in vain!

FACES OF THE MEN.

QUEEN OF NAVARRE (CONT'D)  
 I offer you everything I have, I  
 give my dominions, my treasures, my  
 life, and that which is dearer to me  
 than all.  
 (voice quivers)  
 My son.

FACE OF HENRI OF NAVARRE

QUEEN OF NAVARRE (CONT'D)  
 I swear to defend to my last breath,  
 this holy cause of liberty and honor  
 which now unites us!

The soldiers STAND erect, cheers, light in their eyes.

HENRI DE CONDE

My father revered all of you. And today, my life was saved by a selfless friend. Brothers, my heart is as yours. I swear on my soul, honor, and life, to remain true to our cause.

Henri holds up Edmund's arm, on the other side is Henri of Navarre as they all three raise clasped arms up in unison--

HENRI OF NAVARRE

One for all, and all for one!

Again, the men repeat the phrase and cheers. The Queen of Navarre's son, Henri of Navarre pats Edmund and Henri de Conde on the backs with great affection.

INT. DE CONDE VINEYARD, CONTINUOUS

Genevieve continues to read the letter.

GENEVIEVE

"You would all be proud of Henri as he is becoming quite a man. Genevieve, I pray that I am still the man that you dream of.

Genevieve cries.

GENEVIEVE (CONT'D)

I pray for the end of this nightmare that is war."

Genevieve holds the letter next to her heart. BROWN LEAVES FALL- A harsh wind blows the dried leaves.

EXT. BATTLEFIELD, DAY

SUPER: BATTLE OF MONTCONTOUR

The Huguenots rush with fury, with ranks soon broken. As they rally-- Coligny is wounded in the arm.

Blood oozes. Panic among the Huguenots. A slaughter begins and ends quickly. Duke de Guise smirks to Cardinal de Guise.

EXT. BATTLEFIELD, NIGHT

Coligny is carried from the dark field, his face pale and in deep despair, as if resigned to death.

Another stretcher passes his side. Monsieur De Salle, looks him square into the eye with deep devotion-

Their hands tremble and touch from their stretchers.

BEN DE SALLE

Our God is sweet and merciful. We were both spared to live, to continue this fight for honor.

COLIGNY

(His eyes moist)

Monsieur De Salle, God bless you, my true and dear friend.

BEN DE SALLE

"They that sow in tears shall reap in joy."

INT. HUGUENOT CAMP, COLIGNY'S TENT, CONTINUOUS

Philippe bandages Coligny. Edmund checks on Coligny, brings him water and sits close.

EDMUND (V.O.)

When I was a child, I believed that those I love would never die. Good Admiral, I had so much to learn.

COLIGNY

Son, the lines and lessons appear blurred. Sometimes we're not ready to seek or accept what we lack.

Coligny thumbs thorough the book and marks a page.

COLIGNY (CONT'D)

Sometimes the lessons bear repetition.

Coligny hands his open black book to Edmund. He reads:

EDMUND

"When I was a child, I spoke as a child; I understood as a child, I thought as a child."

Philippe, smiles as he stands just outside the tent and sweetly plays the violin and walks toward the campfire.

EDMUND (CONT'D)

"But when I became a man, I put away childish things. For now we see through a glass, dimly; but then we will see clearly, face-to-face."

COLIGNY

Son, don't turn from the word nor stumble from those who profess-but do not practice its wisdom.

Edmund smiles as the good Admiral's color returns to his face as it glows in the candlelight.

COLIGNY (CONT'D)

Our purpose in life may be that which is most difficult for us-- to forgive our enemies and ourselves. I pray that my men and my wife will forgive my failures.

Coligny sits up straight, his face stern but aglow.

COLIGNY (CONT'D)

If only I had been bolder in diplomacy. We were all so capable of the greatest good, yet we became part of the greatest evil.

EDMUND

Admiral, don't forget that many good men died in spite of decency and diplomacy.

Edmund holds his precious Huguenot necklace from Genevieve.

EDMUND (CONT'D)

Good Admiral, I know that you and the Prince will be remembered well by all, as men who followed your conscience and took up arms only as a last resort, in the defense of life and liberty.

SUPER: ONE YEAR LATER

EXT. DE CONDE CHATEAU, FAMILY MAUSOLEUM--DAY

A shrine to the Prince is topped with a Huguenot cross, a sword and the scales of justice. Anne, Genevieve and Madame De Conde at tomb in tears. On the tomb are the words: Louis I de Bourbon, Prince de Conde, 1519-1565.

MADAME DE CONDE

Remember your father died, as he lived --with honor.

Genevieve places flowers at the tomb and tenderly comforts Madame de Conde and Anne. She holds her dove necklace.

INT. HUGUENOT CAMP, CANDLELIT TENT

Edmund holds his necklace from Genevieve close to his heart. He kisses the letter as he smells deeply for her scent. Edmund dips his quill in the inkwell.

EDMUND (V.O.)

My Dearest Genevieve, I survive  
only by dreaming of the best days of  
my life of each and every moment  
with you etched into my heart.

Spring-- branches bud. Edmund's hand with quill...

EDMUND (O.S.) (CONT'D)

I look forward to a new beginning,  
to writing the next chapter of one  
of the greatest love stories ever  
told. I live only to hold you once  
again.

INT. DE CONDE ESTATE, LAKE --DAY

Genevieve writes with quill nestled against a shade tree.

GENEVIEVE (V.O.)

A circle of love has been created,  
connecting us today and always. In  
spite of all the despair, it is  
because of your love, that nothing  
in this world of misfortune can  
corrupt my heart. "Sunt lacrimae  
rerum et mentem mortalia tangunt"

(Subtitle: "These are the tears of things, and our mortality  
cuts to the heart".)

Genevieve places pressed wild flowers from her Bible into  
the envelope with the letter and seals it and prays.

GENEVIEVE (CONT'D)

I beg you, watch over Edmund and  
Henri, and Monsieur Coligny. Don't  
let anything happen to them, please,  
dear God, bring them home safely.

Anne walks up and startles her.

GENEVIEVE (CONT'D)

Anne, let's take the horses tonight  
and find Edmund and Henri.

ANNE DE CONDE

I would love to find them both. But  
Mother could not bear losing us too.

EXT. DE GUISE CAMP, DAY--

A priest gives last rites to a soldier as he closes his lids.

A PRIEST

In manus tuas domine comendo spiritum  
meum.

There is a celebration to the point of drunkenness and unbridled profanity abounds. A conversation takes place between a sober mercenary and very serious De Guise brothers.

DUKE DE GUISE

Now is the moment to attack Coligny.  
His German auxiliaries have mutinied.

MERCENARY

(Spanish accent)

Why were the Huguenots allowed to  
become so strong?

CARDINAL DE GUISE

Thanks to Chancellor L'Hopital,  
Catherine de Medici took a blasphemous  
step in the name of toleration--

DUKE DE GUISE

The Politiques are no better than  
the Huguenots. All traitors to God  
and to the King. Lukewarm maggots.

CARDINAL DE GUISE

If our Queen Mother did not vacillate  
between power and peacemaking.

DUKE DE GUISE

Or if her sons were not weaklings.

CHARLES DE GUISE

But Nostradamus made predictions  
that she gives heed to.

DUKE DE GUISE

Nostradamus is dead.

CARDINAL DE GUISE

What a mistake to allow women power.  
Their emotions betray their common  
sense.

De Guise takes off his shirt, on his back is a red cross, as if the dye of his cape had been tattooed on.

DUKE DE GUISE

With or without her, we'll eliminate  
the Huguenots just as our forefathers  
did the Cathars.

The soldier makes the sign of the cross.

DUKE DE GUISE (CONT'D)

And the Spaniards will crush the  
vermin in the New World. Father would  
have been proud of us.

The mercenary crosses his chest. De Guise draws a cross in  
the dirt and connects lines to form a Pentagram.

EXT. PARIS, PALACE GARDEN-- DAY

Catherine and King Charles study a map as a messenger hand  
delivers a letter. Catherine opens the seal and reads aloud.

CATHERINE DE MEDICI

A petition and formal complaint  
regarding a massacre in the New World.  
for redress... from the relatives  
of the French massacred in  
Florida by the Spaniards--

Catherine De Medici moves forward with a blank stare, as  
they walk toward the palace.

INT. PALACE, CONTINUOUS -- DAY

The King and Catherine read the letter together silently.

CATHERINE DE MEDICI

Just what we need, not enough turmoil  
already in France.

KNOCK AT THE DOOR. The King's guard enters.

GUARD

There is a Monsieur Dominique de  
Gourges here to see the King.

CATHERINE DE MEDICI

Unannounced?

GUARD

Oui, Your Excellencies, De Gourges  
refuses to leave-- until he speaks  
with the King. He says it is a matter  
of life and death.

CATHERINE DE MEDICI

His reputation precedes him. Stay  
calm. We cannot show weakness.

De Gourges enters with two guards.

KING CHARLES

Monsieur, and what is so important  
to arrive demanding to be seen  
impromptu!

DE GOURGES

I apologize, your excellencies. But  
it is with great urgency that I appear  
to demand retribution-- from King  
Philip of Spain-- And Justice for  
the deaths of innocent Frenchmen at  
Fort Caroline, in Florida.

Catherine motions the guards to leave the room.

Catherine and King Charles look at one another out of the  
corner of their eyes as to say--coincidence? King Charles  
hides the letter behind him.

DE GOURGES (CONT'D)

Menendez mutilated their bodies and  
then hung them and placed over them  
this inscription --" Not as to  
Frenchmen, but unto Heretics."

KING CHARLES

But Monsieur de Gournes, Spain is  
Catholic, and you are Catholic.

DE GOURGES

Yes, I am, and my mission is to  
reclaim the pride in being so. Did  
not the most Catholic Philip take  
this pride as he championed the cause  
of heaven by creating hell in the  
new world?

KING CHARLES

Point well taken, but have you been  
away as to not know of the war here  
at home?

De Gournes jerks his arm. The King and Queen Mother flinch.

DE GOURGES

Of course I am too well aware of how  
we are killing one another at home  
and allowing the Spaniards to murder  
us abroad! What a disgrace if such  
an insult should pass unpunished!  
What glory to us if we avenge it!

CATHERINE DE MEDICI

Monsieur De Gournes, we simply have  
not the funds. We are struggling to  
hold our own house together.

DE GOURGES

(his face reddens)

I expected your outrage. I thought you righteous enough of your country's glory, to sacrifice life itself in a cause like this. Was I deceived? Will you refuse to support me?"

CATHERINE DE MEDICI

Monsieur! Do not forget to whom you are speaking! This is not an issue of righteousness nor revenge. This Civil War has depleted our resources.

DE GOURGES

Resources, wasted. Do you truly want such a vile and detestable cruelty to go unpunished?

A moment of uncomfortable silence.

KING CHARLES

King Philip of Spain has devoted monies to help us defeat the Huguenots here at home.

DE GOURGES

Oui, to weaken France and make Spain the stronger!

CATHERINE DE MEDICI

Monsieur, we are in a precarious position.

DE GOURGES

It appears you do not find it pathetic, Christians killing Christians. Very well, I have your answer.

De Gorges turns toward the door.

DE GOURGES (CONT'D)

I will avenge this wrong to restore the dimmed luster of the French name. I will sell my inheritance and even borrow, if I must.

KING CHARLES

We gave assistance to Coligny to finance the initial voyage to Fort Caroline.

CATHERINE DE MEDICI

I do commend your courage and pride. Godspeed, Monsieur De Gorges. We pray for your victory.

De Gournes exits the room. The door slams closed.

CATHERINE DE MEDICI (CONT'D)

What could we say? De Gournes speaks only the truth. Have we not been betrayed by King Philip and De Guise? Perhaps we have chosen sides poorly.

EXT. SHIP, OCEAN--MORNING

INSERT AND DISSOLVE INTO MAP OF ATLANTIC AND FLORIDA

Dominique De Gournes studies a map of the New World and plots his journey to Florida. The Civil War continues in France.

INT. CATHEDRAL, FULL SHOT -- DAY

The Huguenot Army pillages the Roman church, breaking religious statues and relics into a million pieces.

COLIGNY

These are nothing more than idols.  
We must walk by faith, not by sight!

Edmund, at the altar stares upward at the stained glass.

INT. A CATHEDRAL, LATER--DAY

On horseback, Catherine De Medici, and King Charles, survey the damage to the cathedral. Catherine stands in tears.

CATHERINE DE MEDICI

And now the town of Sully, has refused to turn over Huguenots. Even the governor refused your direct orders.

KING CHARLES

I know I read his letter. He had the gall to say that "among our citizens and garrison, we have many brave soldiers, but not one hangman." I'll have him hanged; he thinks himself so wise.

CATHERINE DE MEDICI

The wise Plato told the truth of the deception of war, when he said that "only the dead have seen the end of war."

SUPER: TEN MONTHS LATER

INT. HUGUENOT CAMP, EVENING

Edmund lights a candle lamp. His beard thick and hair falls past his shoulders. He writes in his journal.

EDMUND (V.O.)

Pope Pius cursed Coligny as "all infamous, appalling man."  
Yet, in the presence of defeat, desertion, and curses of his enemies. The good Admiral's fight for conscience, and confidence in God remains unshaken.

Soldiers sit around campfires talking, a few more lines, a little more worn, their hair and beards longer.

Edmund sketches a portrait of Admiral Coligny as Philippe plays the VIOLIN. HOOF BEATS INTERRUPT, TRUMPET BLARES: INSERT LETTER ADDRESSED TO THE ADMIRAL.

Abrupt, a messenger rides in on a white horse and hands Coligny the letter. Coligny's face lights up.

COLIGNY

(apprehensive)

It is news of Fort Caroline.

Coligny begins to read silently— and begins to smile broader. After a moment he reads to Edmund and the two Henri's—

COLIGNY (CONT'D)

From Monsieur De Gourges.  
He says that he sailed to Florida and Killed the Spaniards for their murder of the Huguenots!

Their eyes light up as they straighten their posture.

COLIGNY (CONT'D)

He says: "We took down the Spanish plaque and replaced it with a new one that says: "Not Unto Spaniards or Mariners, But unto Robbers and Murderers."

(With De Gourges letter)

Coligny can barely contain his pride and joy.

COLIGNY (CONT'D)

Thank you Lord!! There is justice!  
All is not lost; nothing is lost.  
We have been off course in a few battles but the burial trenches do not contain our spirit!

The four of them jump up and down, hugging one another and then run with joy shouting the words on the plaque:  
 "Not unto Spaniards, But unto Murderers!"

EDMUND  
 Vive De Gournes!

The other soldiers watch with eyes wide open- they celebrate.

INT. TENT, NIGHT

As the celebration continues, Edmund dips his quill...

EDMUND (V.O.)  
 Although we were outnumbered and disheartened, it was the courage and bravery of Coligny in France and De Gournes in the New World, that inspired us to continue the fight for our honor, our civil liberty and the future of our families and of France.

Edmund lays down with his eyes still wide open.  
 He kisses Genevieve's Huguenot cross with tenderness.

EXT. BATTLEFIELD, SUNRISE, DAY

Atop a large white stallion, proudly sits Henri of Navarre fastening his helmet, over which waves his white plume.

HENRI OF NAVARRE  
 Those brave and good are those who follow their conscience. Yonder is the enemy: may God be with us. Should you lose your courage in battle, rally round my plume; you will always find it on the path of victory!

BEN DE SALLE  
 (quietly to Edmund)  
 We can't beat their army.

EDMUND  
 We may not beat them, but we sure won't show that we fear them. "Maybe the difference is not about winning but in never giving up the cause."

Edmund grins.

BEN DE SALLE  
 Touche!

Edmund, Philippe and Henri de Conde forge ahead followed by other brave men. Navarre's white plume appears to blend into the clouds.

Edmund, Philippe and Henri fight with new vengeance, swinging their swords with deadly accuracy and the momentum seems to turn, rallied by Henri of Navarre's and Coligny's presence.

EDMUND (V.O.)

Not long thereafter,

INSERT: FRENCH MAP

(V.O.)

The Admiral began a brilliant march across the south of France. Victories at Rouen, Tours and La Rochelle. Even though we never attacked Paris, the mere threat created apprehension that seemed to be even more potent.

EXT. HUGUENOT CAMP, DAWN.

Edmund steps out of the tent to listen with greatest respect. Coligny stands tall and all eyes are on him. He speaks from his heart.

COLIGNY

When friends forsake you and your calamities increase, the world sees nothing but failure.

Flash the faces of the worn soldiers.

COLIGNY (CONT'D)

We- have not won every battle, but we have been successful. For, success in the eyes of the world is one thing, success in the eyes of God, is another.

Faces of soldiers.

COLIGNY (CONT'D)

We must not count our success by worldly criticism nor flattery.. But when men humble themselves and do what is right, they are elevated in the eyes of God... Our enemies see only our ruin, but God sees our hearts.

All of the men stand taller-- no dry eyes.

COLIGNY (CONT'D)

I will always remember--as long as I live, you brave and noble men who have stood by my side! Now we stand-- all for one and one for all!

They repeat the mantra and cheer to show affection and respect for their wise and courageous leader.

THE MEN

The war is over!! Vive le France!  
Long live Coligny, Long live Coligny!  
All for one and one for all!

EXT. FRENCH COUNTRYSIDE, -- DAY

The men return wearily but happily back to their homes.

EDMUND (V.O.)

(writes in journal)

In spite of no real victory, it was as if justice had been served and pride restored to the Huguenots. No one truly won the wars of religion. Does anyone ever really win a war?

EXT. FRENCH COUNTRYSIDE, DAY-

Genevieve and Anne pick flowers in the meadow. Edmund and Henri run toward them. Madame de Conde runs out. They all hold tight with tears in their eyes.

GENEVIEVE

I can't believe you're home.

EDMUND

Believe-- and I have another surprise for you.

GENEVIEVE

Your presence is surprise enough.

Edmund helps Genevieve mount a horse.

GENEVIEVE (CONT'D)

The war is finally over. I can't believe that there was no other way.

Edmund and Genevieve on horseback. Edmund is somber.

EDMUND

I wish the Prince were here.

EDMUND (CONT'D)

He died for liberty and justice.

GENEVIEVE

And it is liberty of conscience for which you and he risked all.

They slow and turn at a cross road. Lavender and wild flowers dot the meadows, budding trees cradle the road. Ahead is an old dilapidated sign on a gate.

INSERT SIGN: CHATEAU DU CHASTEL.

The overgrown, yet impressive, chateau is visible, surrounded by the panorama of hills and vineyards. They dismount.

Edmund cannot hide his emotion. Genevieve strokes his hair.

EDMUND

It was left to me as part of my parent's estate. This is the first time I've been back in years.

INT. DU CHASTEL CHATEAU, CONTINUOUS--DAY

Genevieve runs her hand over a desk thick with dust. They both open curtains and windows as fresh air and sunshine fills the room. Edmund runs upstairs as Genevieve follows.

INT. DU CHASTEL BEDROOM, CONTINUOUS--

Into the large suite Edmund opens a closet, complete with hanging clothes and several crimson robes.

GENEVIEVE

Those are the same color robes that the Judge wore.

EDMUND

He died nobly. The mob probably didn't know that Crimson is a color of honor.

GENEVIEVE

Your father was a Judge?

EDMUND

Yes, as was my Grandfather and his Grandfather; his Father a chancellor, before him. Once upon a time, I considered my father to be deserving of the highest honor.

Edmund walks away toward a false wall of books. He and Genevieve find the hidden door. Edmund uncovers a letter hidden behind a book. His face shows mixed emotion.

EDMUND (CONT'D)

I remember my Mother putting this here the day before my Father sent me to stay with Uncle Bernard.

(voice shakes)

I think it's a letter she wrote to my father. Would you read it aloud to me?

GENEVIEVE

Are you sure?

EDMUND

I don't want any secrets between us.

Genevieve takes the yellowed letter and reads:

GENEVIEVE

Dear Claude, I always look for signs of treachery in your actions and your eyes. The pain is almost unbearable. But it is our son whom I fear will be hurt most by my sadness and your indiscretions.

(voice breaks)

I do not want him to lose his faith in God for the imperfections of his parents.

EDMUND

He never kept his promises to her, or to me.

He wipes tears from his cheeks.

GENEVIEVE

Let's go outside -- fresh air.

EXT. DU CHASTEL ESTATE, DAY

They now approach a large oak tree in center of the vast meadow. Genevieve's hand shakes.

She continues to read. Edmund's palms press his forehead.

GENEVIEVE (O.S.)

It is all that I live for now, and if God is willing-- I will one day hold my son and his children in my arms. And, in spite of the past, whenever I look into his eyes, I keep in my heart, the good and precious times. Your wife, Nicole.

EDMUND

My father was a womanizer. He was killed in a duel by a jealous husband, and I was told-- that my mother-- committed suicide. The Church would not allow her to be buried in our family mausoleum. I couldn't find her grave.

(looks up with tears)

I couldn't forgive either of them... until now.

Edmund looks into her eyes. She wipes the tears and holds him tight.

(PANORAMIC SHOT)

Edmund pushes Genevieve on the tree swing. Edmund slows the swing and pulls her to him. He gets on 'bended' knee and puts a ring on her finger. Genevieve's face shows emotion.

GENEVIEVE

If we ever have a daughter we will  
name her Nicole after your Mother,  
and our son after you.

Edmund carries her to the grass. Her head is in his lap as Edmund gazes into her eyes. A passionate kiss...

At that moment: Philippe, Henri and Anne De Conde approach in the distance on horseback with a picnic basket and a kite.

Edmund pulls Gen up, takes the kite and begins to run. The kite soars!

EDMUND

Genevieve, come hold it.

Her hand pulls the kite which rises toward the billowy clouds.

EDMUND (CONT'D)

A kite cannot soar unless it takes  
to flight against the wind.  
(sweet soft smile)

EDMUND (CONT'D)

My Mother used to fly kites with me.

Genevieve leans against him with affection.

Anne talks to Philippe and Henri.  
The kite soars as high as their spirits.

ANNE DE CONDE

Do I hear wedding bells?

EXT. CASTLE CHATILLION DE COLIGNY, LATER-- MORNING

Admiral Coligny is in his orchard busily trimming the trees in farmer's dress with a toothpick in his mouth.  
A MESSENGER on horseback hand delivers a letter.

Coligny opens a sealed envelope and skims it with his eyes. He folds and holds the letter near his heart.

COLIGNY

Charlotte, a wedding invitation. I  
still remember you as a bride, the  
most beautiful bride I'd ever seen.  
Why could you not wait for me?

A tear falls from his eye as he walks uphill.  
A few yards away up a hill lies a family graveyard.

CLOSE UP SHOT ON A MONUMENT: Charlotte Laval Coligny.  
Born: August 1518 Died: Mar 1568

INT. BEDROOM, MORNING

Genevieve is dressed in ivory, buttoned up by Madame De Conde and flowers placed in her hair by her cousins.

MADAME DE CONDE

--Genevieve Terese Thipane Salier,  
soon to be Madame du Chastel. Your  
parents would be so proud of you.  
Perhaps they will move back from  
England, now that the turmoil is  
over.

EXT. DU CHASTEL WEDDING, GARDEN CEREMONY-- DAY

Genevieve glows. Decorations are simple but elegant.  
Apple blossoms and lavender for bouquets and hair.

Philippe, the best man, Madame De Conde the matron of honor,  
Anne De Conde, the bridesmaid.

Henri is the ring bearer and Coligny gives her away.  
Philippe's little sisters, are flower girls. Philippe's  
parents are here. His mother is again very pregnant.

Edmund and all in attendance bask in Genevieve's radiance.  
The music, the eye contact, the tears of joy, the lingering  
kiss, the walk down the aisle--

EXT. FLOWER GARDEN- LATE AFTERNOON

Apple blossoms float on the wind.  
The reception from above, resembles a fairy tale.

COLIGNY

A Toast! And a gift I made myself.

Coligny holds up a beautiful hand carved and painted plaque.

His toast matches the words on the plaque.

COLIGNY (CONT'D)

A toast: Sophocles said that "one  
word frees us of all the weight and  
pain in life-- that word is love."  
To Genevieve and Edmund, a lifetime  
of love.

Genevieve kisses Coligny on the forehead-- Edmund hugs him. Edmund dances with Genevieve and Coligny with Ms. De Conde.

GENEVIEVE

I know my Mother and Father will  
also love you.

Genevieve now dances with Coligny and Edmund dances with Madame De Conde.

MADAME DE CONDE

(To Edmund)

I never told you or Genevieve this. The Prince told me he thought you were the one for Genevieve not long after he met you. He admired your conviction but knew that Genevieve would help you find the meaning and purpose for your life.

EDMUND

Thank you for sharing that with me.

Anne interrupts, almost jumping up and down.

ANNE DE CONDE

This is a wonderful day, like a fairy tale- and they lived happy ever after.

EXT. ON THE PORCH, STARRY NIGHT- WEDDING NIGHT

The starlit sky twinkles above them -- a falling star. Edmund penetrates Genevieve with his eyes.

EDMUND

Since the first time I looked into your eyes, I've thought of no other.

Edmund lifts Genevieve as if weightless into his arms, onto the porch, over the threshold, up the stairs.

INT. BEDROOM, CONTINUOUS

The open door reveals the large plush canopy bed with sheer silk curtains. He whirls her with passion.

The smile in his eyes contains more of a flame than sparkle, as he undresses her with his eyes, then erotically unbuttons her dress- smothering her in kisses, then onto the bed.

Her lips part, as she rises to meet his kiss. He pulls up the sheer silk coverlet on the bed and pulls her up to him.

He begins kissing her face, neck, the curve of her breasts, as she smothers his moans with her kisses. The intensity rises and the stars shine bright late into the night.

--

INT. BEDROOM, MORNING SUNRISE

Sunlight peeks through the window as they still lie wrapped up in one another. Edmund pulls her up to the window.

EDMUND

This is our home! No more war!

They stand together as they look out over their vast estate.

FULL SHOT, DU CHASTEL ESTATE, DAY-

In the distance, Edmund and Genevieve ride together on horseback and pause to overlook the vineyard.

SUPER: AUGUST 1572

EXT. DU CHASTEL ESTATE, --AFTERNOON

On his easel is a sketch of Genevieve sitting under the arbor of purple grapes. Edmund and Genevieve, now sensuously feed grapes to one another.

EDMUND

This was another good year for the grapes; another season with you.

Edmund kisses her tenderly.

GENEVIEVE

There is a season for everything.  
"A time to sow and a time to reap"-

EDMUND

--And now is the time for us to laugh,  
not weep, if we only dare to open  
our eyes wide and dream.

They both laugh and fall back looking at the billowy clouds and notice a bright star in the sky.

EDMUND (CONT'D)

I have never seen anything like it,  
a star so bright it shines in broad  
daylight.

GENEVIEVE

If we could only savor the brilliance  
of each moment--not dwell on the  
past nor fret about the future.

INT. PALACE, EVENING --

A crystal ball sits on a table. In the middle of a dinner conversation- dishes are empty except for the skeleton and remains of a fish on the Duke's plate.

CARDINAL DE GUISE

Your son, the King, has now broken off our coalition with Spain and seeks an alliance with England.

DUKE DE GUISE

He looks up to Coligny as a father. We must somehow convince the King that Coligny plans to betray him.

CARDINAL DE GUISE

King Philip bids me say that if his most Christian Majesty means to purge the kingdom of its enemies, the time is now most opportune.

DUKE DE GUISE

But the head of one salmon would be worth that of ten thousand frogs.

Catherine stands and shows them the door.

CATHERINE DE MEDICI

I will keep your counsel under consideration. Good night Monsieur's.

Catherine De Medici is now alone, and looks out the window.

CHANCELLOR L'HOPITAL

(Loudly)

I thought they would never leave. How many wars will it take to satisfy their blood lust? The Guise are nothing more than war mongers.

CATHERINE DE MEDICI

Chancellor, I agree. We have already lost so many of the industrious Huguenots at a great loss-- to our treasury.

CHANCELLOR L'HOPITAL

The Spaniards and the Guise would do better to govern their own houses. I would rather see a thousand white capes, than one single red cross in Paris.

In walk- King Charles and his sister Margot.

HENRI III, barely 14, their shy more delicate little brother enters.

CATHERINE DE MEDICI  
 Now that you and your sister are  
 here together, Chancellor L'Hopital  
 and I want to discuss a plan.

Chancellor L'Hopital looks at Catherine puzzled.

CATHERINE DE MEDICI (CONT'D)  
 There is still so much anger on both  
 sides, I propose another approach;  
 it is time to unite as Frenchmen,  
 Huguenot and Catholic.

CHANCELLOR L'HOPITAL  
 Forgive me, for doubting you. When  
 you met with De Guise, it was rumored  
 you were again plotting against the  
 Huguenots.

CATHERINE DE MEDICI  
 No, I devised a solution - a means  
 of uniting both sides.

KING CHARLES  
 Mother, go on.

CATHERINE DE MEDICI  
 It is simple!

MARGOT  
 I assumed that you do not have me  
 here merely to sit like a statue and  
 beautify the room?

CATHERINE DE MEDICI  
 No, Margot, you are quite perceptive.  
 I do not need you to sit, but to  
 walk down an aisle. You are to wed  
 the Huguenot Prince, Henri of Navarre.

CHANCELLOR L'HOPITAL  
 Brilliant!

MARGOT  
 But he stinks.

Henri III laughs and they all join in, including Margot.

CHANCELLOR L'HOPITAL  
 Some men have worse vices. The women  
 all seem to be taken with him.

MARGOT  
 I have noticed that.

KING CHARLES

You know men never visit Paris without at least a glimpse of our beautiful Margot.

CATHERINE DE MEDICI

Yes, true, Margot is quite the catch. But Henry is handsome enough and he is a Huguenot Prince.

MARGOT

You know I will obey you, my Mother. He's much better than the old man you first wished me betrothed to.

They all snicker as Margot grimaces.

INT. PALACE, LATER -- AFTERNOON

Catherine and the Queen of Navarre have tea. On the table, two books: the Prince of Machiavelli and the Bible.

CATHERINE DE MEDICI

Our progeny to be wed, who would have dreamed? My Good Queen if you would but return to the true faith, you might save your kingdom of Navarre for your son.

QUEEN OF NAVARRE

Madame, I give power over myself and my son, to God only-- and will treat with justice, all in my Kingdom that he has entrusted to my care.

CATHERINE DE MEDICI

And Queen Elizabeth was excommunicated for less. I am forced into many decisions, for the good of France, not always my own desire.

QUEEN OF NAVARRE

For what good? In Navarre, no one is condemned to death with such a system of terror nor with edicts of toleration, in name only. Edicts that no one pays heed to. I blush for France.

Catherine raises her brow and politely drinks her tea.

INT. BALL ROOM, WEDDING RECEPTION--DAY

Genevieve and Edmund dance across the large banquet room.

GENEVIEVE

(Laughs)

I just realized, the three Henri's  
all here in one room, Henri de Conde,  
Henri of Navarre, and Henri, the  
Duke de Guise, no, four Henri's,  
also, Margot's little brother Henri.

Margot dances in wedding attire with Henri spinning around.

MARGOT

Love works in miracles every day:  
weakening the strong, and stretching  
the weak; making fools of the wise,  
and wise men of fools;

EXT. PARIS STREETS, OUTSIDE CHURCH, LATER DAY

A scuffle between the tall Huguenot gentlemen MONSIEUR DE  
TEIAN and the Guise factions. This handsome Huguenot shouts.

MONSIEUR DE TEIAN

Admiral Coligny was shot, and we  
will find those responsible.

The Duke pushes Edmund and Henri de Conde pushes another  
Guise goon and they all come to blows. The Queens guards  
break up the fight and separate the men. Both sides glare.

HENRI DE CONDE

I implored the good Admiral to leave  
town but he refuses.

MONSIEUR DE TEIAN

The bullet only grazed his arm,  
it's obvious, they want Coligny dead.

EDMUND

I trust none of them.

HENRI OF NAVARRE

Enough, this can wait till morrow,  
this is my wedding day.

Edmund eyes the Duke. The Duke looks toward Edmund with  
hatred, whispers to his men.

DUKE DE GUISE

Be sure to wear a white cross hat  
and white arm bands. Spread the word.

Coligny's men and the Duke's militia glare at one another.

SUPER--

ST. BARTHOLOMEW'S FESTIVAL EVE

INT. PALACE, MARGOT'S CHAMBERS, EVENING

Margot sits on the bed and writes in her diary. Her thin sister ELIZABETH (25) stares in a chair across the room. \*

MARGOT

I cannot believe I'm a married woman.  
Until last night.

Instead of smiling, Elizabeth, begins to cry hysterically.

MARGOT (CONT'D)

My sister, I'm sorry that your  
husband, the great King of Spain,  
could not also attend the wedding.

ELIZABETH

Margot, I beg you not to go out  
tonight. For the love of God, you  
must stay here.

MARGOT

Elizabeth, what is wrong? Sister,  
please, speak to me.

At that moment, Catherine De Medici appears in the doorway.

CATHERINE DE MEDICI

What is going on here?

Elizabeth cries more hysterical and refuses to say a word.

MARGOT

She begged me not to go to my husband  
tonight. How can I not?

CATHERINE DE MEDICI

Elizabeth, Margot can do as she  
pleases. She's a married woman now.

Elizabeth continues to weep violently as Catherine leads her out firmly by the arm. Margot, distraught retires to bed.

INT. MARGOT'S CHAMBERS, LATER NIGHT

As Margot tosses and turns-- there is a VIOLENT KNOCKING at the door. And the shouts, "Navarre, Navarre!"

MARGOT

Henri?

Her NURSE opens the door.

MARGOT (CONT'D)

Monsieur de Teian!

Monsieur De Teian falls upon Margot's bed. He bleeds profusely. Margot screams and jumps out of the bed.

MARGOT (CONT'D)  
 (Speaking to her nurse)  
 He's my husbands friend.

FOUR ARCHERS run into the room. Margot screams as she and the Huguenot grab one another tight, in mutual fright.

MARGOT (CONT'D)  
 I do not know him well-- but I know  
 he's not trying to do me harm.

MONSIEUR DE NANGUY (45) Captain of the Queen's guard, rushes into the bedchamber. Sees Margot surrounded, looks with pity, but amused at the sight.

MONSIEUR DE NANGUY  
 (reprimands the guards)  
 Leave the bedchamber immediately!

MARGOT  
 Merci, Monsieur! Please, grant this  
 poor gentleman his life.

Monsieur de Nanguy and the nurse help dress his wounds and place him in Margot's large wardrobe closet to hide. Margot, covered with blood, changes her clothes behind screen.

MARGOT (CONT'D)  
 Monsieur de Nanguy, is my husband  
 safe? You must take me to him.

STREETS OF PARIS, NIGHT-- CONTINUOUS

Cloaked, Margot and Nanguy flee, another Huguenot gentleman is being pursued by archer's and is shot through with an arrow and falls at Margot's feet.

Margot faints in the arms of Monsieur de Nanguy.  
 Duke De Guise rides by on horseback and shouts in a blood thirsty fury.

DUKE DE GUISE  
 Kill all the Huguenots, It is the  
 King's order!

INT. KINGS BEDCHAMBER, CONTINUOUS

Margot awakens in the King's bedchamber. Margot stumbles to her brother and immediately falls to her knees.

Henri of Navarre and Henri de Conde are being dragged before King Charles and Catherine De Medici.

MARGOT

I beg you to spare their lives.

CATHERINE DE MEDICI

Henri's, I implore you to repent,  
Recant or I cannot save your lives.

MARGOT

Please, Henri.

In tears, both Henri's are on their knees and make the symbolic cross over their chests as a Priest gives communion. The King takes his sister Margot aside and confides with sarcasm.

KING CHARLES

The priest didn't even have to show  
his torture chest. Too easy.

Catherine snickers. Margot is not amused.

INSERT:(SIGN) HÔTEL DE BÉTHISY

EXT. PARIS, HOTEL-- MIDNIGHT--

A three quarter moon that looms. TWO MEN in white cross hats and red capes make their way toward the entrance.

INT. COLIGNY'S HOTEL ROOM, CONTINUOUS

Rays of moonlight fall through the window, bathing Coligny in light. A silver cup catches the light of the candle. A black bible lies open atop a table.

Coligny his arm bandaged, kneels in prayer.

COLIGNY

Whatever your will oh God, according  
to the love you have bestowed upon  
me, I surrender. I shall esteem  
your favor more than all the smiles  
of the world. Not my will --

NOISE AT THE DOOR. Men knock down the door.

EXT. BACK STREETS OF PARIS-- CONTINUOUS

THREE MEN, in white cross arm bands and hats, approach Edmund and pull swords. One the men grabs Genevieve. The man holding Genevieve turns his head as Edmund slashes his arm -- the others rush Edmund.

EXT. PARIS, HOTEL-- MIDNIGHT-- CONTINUOUS--

The man in the white cross hat pulls a long dagger.  
Coligny remains calm.

COLIGNY

You should have more respect for these gray hairs-- to at least, knock first. You cannot shorten by many days, this life of mine.

The man raises his sword.

EXT. STREETS OF PARIS, LATE NIGHT

The NOISE of carts, some loaded with loot and pillage, others with dead bodies that SPLASH as they are cast into the Seine.

Most are slaughtered in their beds, some cast out windows some are shot on the roofs of houses. Wives die in the arms of their husbands, husbands on the bosoms of their wives, children at the feet of their parents.

INT. BEDROOM OF PHILIPPE'S PARENTS, NIGHT-- CONTINUOUS

Madam Le Deoux is now in labor. Her husband wipes her forehead. The MIDWIFE NUN works at the end of the bed. The men in white cross hats barge into the room.

TALL MAN IN WHITE CROSS HAT

(to the midwife)

Sister, have you turned Huguenot?

MIDWIFE NUN

No, monsieur.

(touches her crucifix)

TALL MAN IN WHITE CROSS HAT

Then, leave at once!

MIDWIFE NUN

Monsieur, they are good God fearing people. Monsieur Le Deux is Catholic. The baby-- it's almost born.

TALL MAN IN WHITE CROSS HAT

That is no longer your concern. He should not have wed a Heretic. Tis not even a marriage in God's eyes.

The midwife looks with compassion at Madame Le Deoux, then, crosses her chest and exits. The LeDeoux's beg with their eyes--for mercy. He covers his wife with his body.

MADAME LEDEOUX

Please.

MONSIEUR LE DEOUX

I beg you, in the name of God, please, do not harm my wife and babies, pl--

The men kill Philippe's Father.

TALL MAN IN WHITE CROSS HAT  
Huguenot Whore.

He then raises his sword to Philippe's Mother.

POV OF DANIELLE (10) HIDES UNDER THE BED.

Blood splatters all over floor.  
NEWBORN BABY CRIES then a CRUSHING SOUND.

SILENCE. Danielle shakes with fear. She sees a man's boots--

Arms reach under pull her out. The tall man drags her to where her mother and father now lay and wipes her small, fragile body in the blood of her mother.

Her white gown is drenched in blood.

TALL MAN IN WHITE HAT  
Little girl, this is the baptism in  
blood for all children who become  
Huguenots.

Danielle stares in shock, catatonic. The men continue looting, bagging up anything that looks valuable.

EXT. STREETS OF PARIS-- CONTINUOUS

Coligny is thrown from the window bleeding, barely alive. De Guise, then further degrades him by kicking him violently.

De Guise then makes a motion for Coligny to be beheaded. A messenger arrives on horseback with a sealed letter.

DUKE DE GUISE  
Go back and tell the King. Too late  
now!  
(Holds Coligny's head)  
Send his head to Pope Gregory to  
set the example!

CHURCH BELLS RING. SOUNDS OF DYING AND DESTRUCTION.

DUKE DE GUISE (CONT'D)  
To Arms!

DUKE DE GUISE (CONT'D)  
My friends! Let us do thoroughly  
that which we have begun.

EXT. STREETS OF PARIS, CONTINUOUS-- NIGHT

Edmund, Philippe and Genevieve rush faster at a frantic pace.

PHILIPPE  
I tried to get them to leave Paris  
years ago.

EDMUND

Yes, but this is their home.

Thick smoke from homes and businesses on fire.  
They sprint to the door of Philippe's parents home.

INT. LE DEOUX HOME -- OPEN DOOR CONTINUOUS

Philippe runs toward the cellar door.  
Edmund dashes upstairs as Genevieve follows behind.

INT. LEDOUX BEDROOM

They are sickened to find Philippe's butchered parents as  
Genevieve stands frozen and shocked at the door.  
Edmund covers their bodies with the bed sheets.

EDMUND

(tears falling)

They were always so good to me and  
everyone. How could anyone do this  
to them?

Edmund breaks down and weeps. Genevieve comforts Danielle,  
(9), now crouched, catatonic, in a fetal position.

INT. CELLAR-- CONTINUOUS

Philippe finds his brother, ANDRE age 10, his sister  
GABRIELLE, age 5, and brother PIERRE, age 13, whimpering.

PIERRE (crying)

We tried to make Danielle come with  
us, but she wouldn't. We heard  
screams and nothing we could do.

Philippe uncovers an old but mint condition violin and hands  
it to Andre. Edmund and Genevieve now stand behind them.

ANDRE

The baby was crying.

PHILIPPE

Where are my parents?

Edmund shakes his head and tears again fall. Genevieve cries.  
The children sob as they hold one another.

PIERRE

We didn't help them.

Philippe holds his brother with tenderness.

PHILIPPE

It's not your fault.

(MORE)

PHILIPPE (CONT'D)

You did the right thing to save your  
brothers and sister. There was  
nothing you could do.

His tenderness for his brother soon turns to anger as he starts toward the stairs. Edmund tries to stop him but Philippe pulls away and darts up the stairs.

INT. LE DEOUX BEDROOM, NIGHT--CONTINUOUS

Philippe sees blood everywhere. He is off balance and falls beside their shrouded bodies and slowly pulls back the sheet.

His face shows the horror, he backs away, crying.

PHILIPPE

NO! NO! Mama, Papa!

He breaks down and falls to his knees and then sees the new born baby. And then his toddler brother. He vomits.

Edmund helps him up and sees in Philippe's eyes both despair and anger as he is unsteady.

He retches and crawls toward the door.

PHILIPPE (CONT'D)

I'm so sorry, I'm so sorry. I love  
you mamma--- Papa.

He breaks down sobbing--stands and almost stumbles.  
Edmund takes his arm, as he too weakens.

They almost fall to the floor. He pulls his sword, as anger grips him.

PHILIPPE (CONT'D)

Go with me to avenge their deaths!

EDMUND

There is nothing I want more, but  
your Parents would want you to save  
their children. You once told me  
that vengeance belongs to God.

Philippe shakes his head, his face pale as a sheet-- as Edmund leads him down the stairs, their faces, contorted with pain.

Edmund has his arm around Philippe as he breaks down again, pale and sweating, tears stream down his face.

EDMUND (CONT'D)

We must find a way to get your  
brothers and sisters to safety.

He takes Philippe by the shoulders and forces eye contact.

EDMUND (CONT'D)  
Philippe, I need your help!

Genevieve at the foot of the stairs turns away when she sees Edmund and Philippe's despair -- overwhelms her.

EXT. CELLAR, NIGHT.

Edmund holds a candle as Philippe takes the Family Bible from a hiding place and hollows out a loaf of bread, wraps and conceals the Family Bible inside it.

Philippe carefully bundles the bread in a thin cloth.

GENEVIEVE  
(speaking to Philippe)  
We will take care of you all.

EDMUND  
It's getting quiet.

GENEVIEVE  
There truly is wickedness in the world when denial or death are our only options.

Edmund lugs two barrels from the cellar.

EXT. WAGON, COUNTRY ROAD-- STARRY NIGHT

Philippe hides the loaf, as his two little sisters' eyes peer out from inside the barrels. Philippe's brother's in the back cover themselves with pig carcasses and a blanket.

EXT. FRENCH COUNTRYSIDE, ROAD-- DAY

EDMUND (V.O.)  
In the following days and weeks, we and thousands of Huguenots flee the butchery. Those unable to escape or refuse to recant are killed in a rampage that spreads across France.

Along the road, corpses, bodies dangle from trees, many still in pools of blood and flies. The children cover their faces.

EDMUND (V.O.) (CONT'D)  
The rich sacrifice their wealth, and the poor-- all they possess, for the sake of life and liberty.

EXT. WAGON, ROAD-- DUSK

As they travel onward, Soldiers ride forward toward them.

GENEVIEVE

If they catch us, they'll kill us.  
Sh... don't make a sound.

Philippe coaxes his sisters back into the barrels and closes the lids. The little eyes peer out of small slits.

The soldiers motion for their wagon to stop. Tension builds.

Edmund makes the sign of the cross. The soldiers return the "salute" and motion them to pass. Father ahead-- Philippe takes the hands of his brothers and sister, they pray.

PHILIPPE

There is no fear in love; but perfect  
love casts out fear.

EXT. LAND BEFORE THE MARSH, MORNING

Their wagon gets stuck in muck where the road ends.  
They untie the four horses and ride double in the muck.

Desperation, exhaustion...

EXT. LAND BEFORE THE MARSH, SUNRISE

In the distance, a flat-boat adrift in deeper water.

PHILIPPE

*Thank you Lord.*

A small little boy, BENJAMIN (9), waves cattails amidst the flowers of the marsh mallow-plant. \*

An older man, MONSIEUR TREDGER, runs toward the little boy.  
An older woman, MADAME TREDGER, with a cane, limps behind him, crying. They crouch to hide the little boy.

A silver STAR OF DAVID dangles from the throat of the woman and Genevieve reveals her dove.

GENEVIEVE

They're on a rampage. We're trying  
to escape.

PHILIPPE

My Parent's were murdered. These  
are my brothers and sisters. Our  
youngest...  
(voice shakes)

MONSIEUR TREDGER

You're safe now. God sent you to  
us. We'll help you.  
(points to star)  
A sign. It's appeared for weeks.  
(MORE)

MONSIEUR TREDGER (CONT'D)

Never have we seen a star that shines  
in full sunlight.

MADAME TREDGER

You are wise to leave with your  
children; if they take them to the  
convent... Benjamin here, is our  
youngest. And he- he has never been  
apart from us.

MONSIEUR TREDGER

--The monasteries are worse. Please,  
take him with you, until we too can  
join him.

The woman chokes with sobs, her eyes moist.

MONSIEUR TREDGER (CONT'D)

My flatboat will take you to the  
shore.

GENEVIEVE

We'll care for Benjamin as one of  
our own.

MONSIEUR TREDGER

God bless you. I have a sister in  
England. If you can just get him  
safely there.

MADAME TREDGER

Come, eat and rest. You can set off  
before sunrise.

EXT. MARSH, DARK-- JUST BEFORE THE DAWN

The star, now near the horizon, beams. They reassure Benjamin,  
as Philippe and the boys load their supplies.

The men steer with long oars. Near the edge of the dead  
marsh; the children's grimaces reveal the stench.

Behind them, a trail marked with thick oozes and only a swath  
of bent reeds. Shiny smoke flickers and moves like ghostly  
sheets. Genevieve sings and snuggles to comfort.

The ocean is visible ahead and behind them is shallow,  
stagnant water with snakes and turtles cruising the channels.

A LARGE RED BALL COMES UP --SUNRISE OVER THE MARSH.

EXT. STREETS OF PARIS, SUNRISE OVER THE SKYLINE--

A flock of BLACK RAVENS perch upon the roofs and along  
streets. DOGS ravage. Flies swarm. The bright star looms.

Blood splashes against the wheels of Catherine's carriage, as she and her son, King Charles, ride through the streets.

CATHERINE DE MEDICI

How many?

SOLDIER I

Thousands, tens of thousands, all Huguenots and their sympathizers.

Men, women and children lay dead everywhere, most still in bedclothes or naked, as homes and businesses smolder.

KING CHARLES (V.O.)

Mother, the Seine is now a river of blood; the corpses so numerous that the bridges cannot give them passage.

King Charles appears pale, greenish. Vomits.

EXT. OCEAN SHORE, LATER -- DAY

All stumble weary, melancholy, parched lips and faces flushed and sunburned; onward north as the sun sets. Ahead--a small cargo ship, a sloop. Boarding, dozens of tired Huguenots with many children of all ages.

EXT. OCEAN,-- SLOOP -- NIGHT--

The children sleep as Captain aims a quadrant at the stars.

EDMUND

Look, the Big Bear and the North Star. There, the bright star Regulus in the heart of Leo the Lion.

THE SHIP'S CAPTAIN

I've never seen a star so bright as that one, in Cassiopeia.

EDMUND

My Mother used to point out the constellations to me.

Edmund holds Gen as he traces the "M" -- they gaze in awe.

With land no longer visible, so begin the psalms of gratitude. The sloop glides quickly. Rippled moonlight on the water.

SUPER: ROME-- THE VATICAN

EXT. ROME, CELEBRATION IN THE STREETS,-- NIGHT

The moon rises as bonfires blaze throughout Rome. A jubilant crowd. A train of cardinals, bishops and monks, parade toward the Church of St. Mark.

Over the portico of the church, a dragon, and a cloth of purple hangs, embroidered, in gold "Gloriosam De Perfidies Gentibus Populo Catholico Loetitiam Tribuisti."

POPE GREGORY, accepts homage from Cardinal de Guise.  
The Cardinal kneels and kisses Gregory's ring.

POPE GREGORY

God bless you and God bless the King  
of France for granting our people  
such "a glorious triumph over a  
perfidious race."

(Hands coin)

To celebrate this day-- a  
commemorative coin.

CARDINAL DE GUISE

A magnificent mint! An exterminating  
angel killing Huguenots with his  
sword. We must now finish the  
cleansing. We must kill them all--

CARDINAL DE GUISE (CONT'D)

God will know his own.

(points to star.)

A sign.

EXT. OCEAN, SLOOP --CONTINUOUS

CAPTAIN DUVALL

(Points to star.)

Our star is clouded.

Strong gale winds gust, waves swell.  
THUNDER CLASHES and barely drowns out the CRIES of children.  
Lightning flashes all around them, heavy rain pours.

The sloop floods. An assembly line of men and women pass and  
empty buckets-- until exhausted..

Lightning and winds fierce.

EXT. SHIP-- DAWN

A WALL OF FOG . All crouch, disheveled- several inches of  
water cover the floor. Some cry, some sing, most pray.

Edmund, Gen and a few men go overboard to lessen the load.

GENEVIEVE

It's sinking. How long can we hold  
on?

Genevieve can barely raise her head, as her hand slips.

EDMUND

Genevieve, remember the first time  
we met?

Genevieve's head falls forward. Edmund grabs her.

EDMUND (CONT'D)

When I first looked into your eyes--  
(voice shakes)

GENEVIEVE

(Tears)

--I would rather die here with you,  
than to live in a world without you.

EDMUND

Shh. We've come too far to give up  
now.

He tenderly touches her face and kisses her parched lips.

GENEVIEVE

No, I must tell you this. My love  
for is greater than my fear of losing  
you.

Genevieve's eyes close, HER GRASP WEAKENS.  
Edmund tugs her necklace and kisses her lids.

EDMUND

You can only lose if you fear--if  
you truly love me, choose to live.

Genevieve opens her eyes. Edmund's grimace frightens her.  
She looks behind her.

A ghostly outline of a SHIP eerily appears and disappears  
out of a portal of dense fog. The ship drifts through the  
wall of fog alongside them.

OUTLINE OF TALL, MUSCULAR MEN....

Fog drifts to reveal: FIVE AFRICAN MEN on deck. All aboard  
the sloop stare in disbelief-- their mouths wide open--  
An eery SILENCE...

A ray of light breaks through the fog. Up pops the little  
wide eyed Gabrielle.

GABRIELLE

Brown Angels!

Everyone giggles. Smiles are contagious. The African captain  
motions his crew. The men and women give praise as the  
African men lift the children, and help all onboard.

The Africans have leg irons attached with chiseled chains.

CAPTAIN DUVALL

I hear no evil, see no--chains.

THE YOUNG WOMAN and Philippe catch glimpses.

EXT. SHIP-- LATER DAY

Wet items hang to dry. Edmund assists with the masts as the mainsail balloons with ocean air.

EDMUND

(to the African Captain)

I hope soon your path will be free  
of obstacles.

AFRICAN CAPTAIN

Our obstacle is our path.

Edmund looks into his eyes with respect and pats his back.

AFRICAN CAPTAIN (CONT'D)

With tide change, you'll take the  
life boat.

Philippe pulls apart the bread into small pieces- passes to all. He unwraps the BIBLE as if it were more precious than a treasure map. He READS with passion.

PHILIPPE

"For I am persuaded that neither  
tribulation, nor persecution, nor  
famine, nor sword, nor death, nor  
angels-- Nor principalities, nor  
powers, nor things present or things  
yet to come-- Nothing-- shall separate  
us from the love of God."

Not a dry eye. He bows his head, the others also, to PRAY.

PHILIPPE (CONT'D)

May we always remember our heritage--  
and the price placed upon our freedom.

Edmund looks around at the thankful faces on the ship.

PHILIPPE (O.S.) (CONT'D)

May we share their story with our  
children and grandchildren, To never  
accept the abuse of power nor fail  
to defend those powerless.

Tears flow down the faces of many.

PHILIPPE (CONT'D)

May time and distinction avenge those  
oppressed, that one day we will reap  
a rebirth of the civil liberty they  
so proudly stood for. Amen.

YOUNG HUGUENOT WOMAN

Did you ever consider the Ministry?

Philippe and the young woman grin at one another.  
Edmund nudges Philippe with approval.

EXT. SLAVE SHIP--OCEAN -- NIGHT

Edmund and the Captain in awe of brilliant stars.

AFRICAN CAPTAIN

When I point to the stars, most see  
only the tip of my finger.

Edmund grins.

AFRICAN CAPTAIN (CONT'D)

My Grandmother taught lesson, that  
if truth were made easy to find, few  
would value it, many would seek to  
steal it-- others would aim to destroy  
it. So the gods of antiquity, in  
their wisdom, decided to put the  
truth in a man's heart, where only  
the brave would dare look.

EDMUND

I hope we remember our own lessons,  
that in our hearts, we never carry  
the same hatred and intolerance.

AFRICAN CAPTAIN

Only if we forget.

EDMUND

Only if we can't forgive.

AFRICAN CAPTAIN

He who seeks forgiveness will find  
it.

Edmund is awed as the African Captain joins his crew--  
as they SING.

EDMUND (V.O.)

The Danish astronomer, Tycho Brache,  
observed this anomaly in the sky in  
the constellation Cassiopeia-

Danielle and the children point to the bright star.

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

When its magnitude was reminiscent  
of the of the star over Bethlehem  
centuries before. And now, it seems  
to signal a new beginning for us.

A lavender sky and wispy clouds move in time lapse appearing as a surreal painting -- merging present and future.

SUPER: ENGLAND--

INT. ENGLAND, BEDROOM --DAY

A painting of Genevieve hangs prominently.

EDMUND (V.O.)

We lost much, but in time we gained understanding-- That love and honor are not bound by our beliefs, but found-- in our humanity.

A Family Bible lies open on the bed.

A breeze from the open window turns the yellowed pages.

Genevieve and Edmund dote on a baby in Genevieve's arms.

EDMUND (CONT'D)

Little Nicole is a gift. I wish my Mother could be here.

GENEVIEVE

A part of her always will be.

Edmund tenderly kisses his best girls. Through the large window, a view of a YOUNG BOY by the lake.

GENEVIEVE (CONT'D)

Go ahead. When my Mother gets here I'll join you and Eddie.

EXT. LAKESIDE, DAY -- CONTINUOUS

EDMUND JR. (9) places toy sailboats on the water.

Edmund's boyish grin and bright eyes mirror that of his son.

EDMUND JR.

Papa, will you tell me the story?

Their pet barks as Little Edmund takes his Dad's hand. Up over flower dotted hills, into a little boys imagination...

EDMUND

It was a dark and desolate night, until the rising full moon began to dance on the water--

Edmund makes a circle with his arms.

EDMUND (CONT'D)

Shining bright as a beacon to illuminate our way. Shallow, murky water and all that crawled in it, now lurked behind us.

DISSOLVE INTO MOONLIT OCEAN--

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

The deep ocean was before us,  
obstacles, between our fears and our  
freedom. Liberty and justice were  
patient. Time and sea were but  
temporary barriers.

SUPER: FRANCE--

INT. CHATEAU DE BLOIS, BED CHAMBER-- CONTINUOUS

A polished mirror reflects a replica of the scales of justice.

EDMUND (V.O.)

It was only Twenty months after the  
St. Bartholomew massacre, that King  
Charles died, sweating blood,  
reputedly tormented with remorse.  
Catherine was cared for by few, even  
on her deathbed.

Catherine appears rigid on her deathbed, pale and attended  
only by her son, Henri and a guard. She speaks in whispers.

A NOISE. Henri turns and peeks out behind the curtains.  
There stands before him-- Duke de Guise. Henri flinches.

DUKE DE GUISE

Kingy Henri, your dreadful mother,  
finally going to die?

HENRI III

Duke, your end may be even closer.

Duke De Guise draws his sword. Henri's body guard steps  
out, Henri recoils and strikes.

The body guard stabs the Duke through his back. Henri's sword  
enters the Duke from the front. Blood streams. The Duke  
staggers and falls dead at the foot of Catherines' bed.

Henri and his guard drag and toss him out the two story  
window. The Duke plummets into the thorns of the rose garden.

Henri turns around jubilant.

HENRI III (CONT'D)

Madam, congratulate me, for I am  
again King of France, seeing we have  
this morning slain the King of Paris.

CATHERINE DE MEDICI

Do you realize what you have done?  
Now you must finish it.

Catherine whispers to her son-- Henri turns to his guard.

EXT. PARIS, PRISON YARD-- DAY

Nooses bind the limp necks of Duke and Cardinal de Guise.

VULTURES circle as the brothers hang lifeless.  
The Guise corpses are suspended above a bubbling pool.

A guard slackens the ropes. The Guise are slowly lowered,  
until immersed, side by side, in alkali liquid. The rope  
tightens as they are raised up...

THE ONLY REMNANTS OF THE GUISE ARE THEIR SKELETONS.

EDMUND (V.O.)

Neither birth nor death can erase  
our deeds.

EXT. CEMETERY, ENGLAND, PRESENT-- DAY-- CONTINUOUS

Apple blossoms float on the wind.

EDMUND (O.S.)

And his student then asked, "Are you  
the messiah?" "No", he answered.  
"Then are you a healer?" "No", he  
replied. Then are you a teacher?"  
the student persisted. "

Worn headstones peek out behind tall grass dotted with  
daffodils. Edmund and his son appear rising over the top of  
the hill.

EDMUND (O.S.) (CONT'D)

"No, I am not a teacher. "Then  
what are you?" asked the student.  
I am awake", Buddha replied.

Edmund kneels in front of his son.

Genevieve sneaks behind them, radiant like an angel,  
white dress flowing, with a kite in hand.

EDMUND JR.

Papa was telling me the story.

GENEVIEVE

Your Father has always been quite  
the storyteller.

EDMUND

Your Mother is the reason that the  
greatest story I ever told, is the  
one I've lived.

Edmund winks at Genevieve. Edmund Jr. hands her daffodils.  
A kiss of adoration, then their little boy and his pet chase  
butterflies.

EDMUND (O.S.) (CONT'D)

The lessons I want to teach him are  
not found in promises we make--  
but in the promises-- we keep.

Edmund looks directly into Genevieve's eyes. Genevieve looks  
down solemn and strokes a headstone.

EDMUND (O.S.) (CONT'D)

I know we can't have the dread of  
dying rob us of our joy of living.

Edmund tenderly wipes her tears to console and teases.

EDMUND (CONT'D)

I've heard-- there are those who  
dare believe, that, even in the end--  
love will conquer all.

Genevieve opens her kind eyes and coyly smiles.

GENEVIEVE

There is no end, where love begins.

Edmund's smile and Genevieve's eyes say it all.

Edmund Jr. sprints ahead down the hill, toward the lake that  
glistens. Edmund throws a stone that soars toward the water.

Edmund Jr's REFLECTION-- The stone ripples the water.

EDMUND JR. (V.O.)

As a child, I believed my parents  
were immortal. I discovered that  
some things never die.

Ripples spread -- as if in slow motion.

EDMUND JR. (V.O.) (CONT'D)

More enduring and more powerful than  
the words they spoke, was their  
commitment to their ideals and to  
one another.

Above, blue sky, white doves blend into white clouds.

EDMUND JR. (V.O.) (CONT'D)

In their story lives their legacy  
and tribute to all who know the true  
power of love and honor.

Above the clouds- the stars of Cassiopeia. The brightest  
star pulsates-- until it burst and expands-- illuminating  
the darkness with brilliant white light.

FADE OUT:

SCROLL

Many countries opened their arms and hearts to these French refugees and were richer for their kindness. France, on the other hand, lost many of her bravest and brightest.

Many believe the loss of civil liberty and forced exile laid the foundation for both the American and French Revolutions.

It was not until the American Revolution that France's loss truly became America's gain. It was then that the French Catholic Lafayette discovered that his good friend, George Washington, and many other American patriots-- were descendants of the French Huguenots.

They had unknowingly carried a gift--the seeds of honor sown, later reaped as a rebirth of the civil liberties they so proudly stood for.

Rebirth was written by Edmund and Genevieve's Tenth Great Granddaughter, as a timeless tribute, and dedicated to all who share their ideals of love, liberty and justice for all.

#### HISTORICAL NOTES:

Catherine De Medici died of pneumonia twelve days after Duke de Guise. Her son, Henri III was assassinated by a monk.

Henri of Navarre, became King Henri the Fourth-- to give France many years of liberty and prosperity for all, until he too, was assassinated by a monk.

Dominique De Gournes lived in poverty, until Queen Elizabeth of England heard of his brave deeds and restored his honor and favor, that continued for the rest of his life.

Encyclopedia Britannica, "The Huguenots made up the noble and industrious artisan class of France and to be "Honest as a Huguenot" denoted the highest degree of integrity."

Historian, W.H. Lecky: "The persecution of the Huguenots prepared the way for the inevitable degradation of the national character... which, a century later, laid prostrate, in merited ruin, both the altar and the throne."

British historian, Warburton, "The best blood of France deluged the battlefield, the brightest genius of France was suffered to lie neglected and starving in prison, and the noblest characters which France ever possessed were hunted like wild beasts and slain with as little pity."

Edmund and Genevieve's Grandson, Privateer, Captain Edmund, and his Swedish bride Christina Bonde migrated from England to America. He later retired rich and some say from the booty gained from his "adventures" at sea. But that's another story...