

Transcript for Episode Two – Piercing Time

EPISODE TWO – RUNNING STITCH

8. INTERIOR – DRAYTON HALL - NIGHT

CYNEWYN

Hereward hiding in the fens is clever, but I fear William's attack will be ferocious. As it was in York and Durham. The King grows weary of rebellion.

VILLAGE MAN#1

Aye, lady, but we are not weary of it!

Sound: ayes, sounds of assent.

CYNEWYN

Then you, all of you, must go to Morcar. He has need of you, more than me.

Sound: transition music

9. EXTERIOR – DRAYTON VILLAGE GREEN - DAY

N: After two weeks of heavy fighting, Drayton's soldiers and thegns straggle back to the village, footsore and weary, straight into the waiting arms of Thurstan and his men.

THURSTAN

Throw them into the cages, all of them!

Sound: men being dragged, brutalized. Woman and children sob and cry.

THURSTAN

And tell the women to go home, or they can join their men!

LEOFRIC

Oui, my Lord. Gladly.

Sound: Men brutalized, cages crashing shut.

Sound: crackling flames, animals in distress, children crying, general sounds of distress. People murmuring, walking feet

10. EXTERIOR – DRAYTON VILLAGE GREEN - DAY

N: A few days later in the village green

THURSTAN

For the loyalty of Edwin's troops who now serve my Lord King, I will spare your lives. But you must swear fealty to me and to King William or suffer his wrath.

VILLAGE MEN

Aye, Lord, we will. Aye, Aye.

Sound: transition music

11. EXTERIOR – DRAYTON VILLAGE - DAY

NARRATOR: Several weeks have passed and Thurstan and some of his knights ride through Drayton on a hunting expedition. Cynewyn runs out of her cottage and drops to her knees.

CYNEWYN

Lord, I would speak with you. Please. Just a moment of your time.

LEOFRIC

If she stays on her knees, I want a turn!

Sound: rough laughter.

THURSTAN

Leofric, silence.

Sound: horses pulling up, bridles jingling.

THURSTAN

Lady?

CYNEWYN

The villagers are hungry, Lord. Our food is nearly gone, our milk cows stolen. The children suffer.

THURSTAN

Why should I care about these people? They sent men to attack our King.

CYNEWYN

People from the countryside have no where else to go. There is not enough food for all of them. For all of us.

THURSTAN

You brought this on yourselves!

CYNEWYN

Lord, please, we will serve you faithfully, but we need full bellies to do so.

Sound: jingling bridles, stamping hooves.

A beat.

THURSTAN

My Lady Isabelle arrives in a fortnight and I would not have her see a starving village.

A beat.

Ah, Leofric and Francois, see that the cows are returned and the grain restored. Do it now. And help them rebuild their cottages.

LEOFRIC

Yes, Lord!

CYNEWYN

Thank you, my Lord.

THURSTAN

Lady, get off your knees. Men, come away. Our birds are getting restless.

Sound: retreating hoofbeats.

CYNEWYN

(whispers)

Thank you, God.

Sound: transition music

Sound: clip clop of horses, men and women talking and singing in the fields, sounds of a scythe through grass.

12. EXTERIOR – FIELDS NEAR DRAYTON VILLAGE - DAY

CYNEWYN

Headman, well met. The grain grows tall. And ripe.

HEADMAN EADBALD

Harvest time approaches, Drottning. But there are too many fields and not enough men.

CYNEWYN

I have good news, Eadbald. Morcar sent word today...our men will return within the week.

HEADMAN EADBALD

That is good news indeed.

CYNEWYN

And if need be, we will all help.

Sound: Walking through the fields

A beat.

THEGN #2

We are lucky in one thing, Drottning. Lord Thurstan's days are taken up with his birds. He does not know that men are missing.

CYNEWYN

Yes...move them in slowly, Eadbald. We have two weeks until her arrival.

A beat.

CYNEWYN

His Lady Isabelle will not be so sanguine, I'm sure.

13. EXTERIOR – DRAYTON MANOR - DAY

N: LADY ISABELLE finally arrives from Normandy in a horse-drawn cart. She is twenty-one years old, elegant, thin and dark-haired with a face set into lines of unhappiness. Despite having two other stillbirths, in this her third marriage and pregnancy, she is now almost eight months along.

Sound: Jingling harnesses, hoofbeats, clanking arms, creaking cart.

GATEMAN

Who goes there?

HORSEMAN#1

It is the Lady Isabelle of Broyes, now Bassett. Let us through.

Sound: opening gate, horse sounds, creaking cart.

N. Thurstan runs down the steps.

Sound: Footsteps on stairs.

THURSTAN

Isabelle, you have arrived! Welcome.

HORSEMAN#1

My Lady is quite fatigued, Lord. Look to her.

THURSTAN

Here, Lady, let me help you.

ISABELLE

Oh. Finally here.

THURSTAN

My lady, all has been prepared for you. Come, rest from your journey.

ISABELLE

Ladies, come.

(a beat)

Lord, I would speak with you, in private.

14. INTERIOR – DRAYTON MANOR HALL - DAY

Sound: footsteps into the Hall.

THURSTAN

I know you are fatigued, Isa, but you are home now.

ISABELLE

Husband, we slept with the cattle and the crofters on our journey here! There are no manor houses, no rich estates. This Angle-land. It is a beautiful land full of pigs.

THURSTAN

Not pigs, Isa, birds! They are magnificent!

ISABELLE

(laughs harshly)

Birds! Why am I not surprised?

Sound: Rustling clothing.

ISABELLE

I had thought you would ask after the child.

THURSTAN

My apologies, wife. How do you fare?

ISABELLE

Better, now that my journey is done.

THURSTAN

You'll see, Isa, life is good here.

ISABELLE

Thurstan, our clothes and shoes are ruined. I would tour the tannery and weaving sheds tomorrow. Maybe there is something good in this God-forsaken place.

Sound: transition music

15. INTERIOR – DRAYTON MANOR HALL - DAY

Sound: carpentry, hammering, shuffling footsteps.

ISABELLE

Ah, there she is. Finally.

N: Cynewyn crosses to Isabelle and curtsies deeply.

ISABELLE

(in French)

You are Cynewyn, n'est-ce pas? You were the Lady here?

ISABELLE

(in broken English)

Lady here were you?

CYNEWYN

Yes, Lady.

ISABELLE

This is rich land and beautiful, but the people live like animals, even the lords.

ISABELLE

But, no matter. I hear you are the best needlewoman in the village. Though I see no evidence of it here.

CYNEWYN

Madam?

ISABELLE

Well?

N: Cynewyn removes garments from a small casket.

ISABELLE

Oh la. You did this?

CYNEWYN

As you see.

ISABELLE

What else have you?

N. Cynewyn pulls out a girdle in rich brocade fabric, picked out in gold thread.

Sound: Gasp of the ladies.

CYNEWYN

Lady, may I speak?

ISABELLE

Oui.

CYNEWYN

The robe is for the bishop and the girdle, it is for you. A gift from Lord Thurstan. Nearly completed.

ISABELLE

But how did he know...

CYNEWYN

He told me of your coloring. The blue will match your eyes, I think.

A beat.

ISABELLE

So, as the Lady, you saw to all the robes for your Lord?

CYNEWYN

Yes. My Lord father and my husband.

ISABELLE

Your husband? And father? Where are they?

CYNEWYN

Both dead, My Lady.

A beat.

ISABELLE

Ah. And your women, are they as skilled as you?

CYNEWYN

That is for you to judge, Lady.

N: She spreads out gorgeous altar cloths and vestments embroidered with semiprecious stones.

CYNEWYN

We are here to serve you and your household.

ISABELLE

Bon. You may leave.

ISABELLE

Oh, and Cynewyn, I am not as innocent as my husband. He is Grand Falconer to King William, the greatest falcon hunter in the world. He is not used to running an estate. But I, I, will know every pig, cow, goat, sheep, chicken, every sheaf of wheat or barrel of oats. I will know every man, woman and child that lives here and everything that happens. Am I clear?

CYNEWYN

Yes, my Lady.

ISABELLE

And I want all the accounts in two days.

[Sound: transition music.](#)

16.EXTERIOR – DRAYTON VILLAGE - DAY

N: The next day, Cynewyn walks with her cousin Bertana, whose lover is a Norman Lord. Bertana is teaching her French to eavesdrop on their new masters.

BERTANA

No, no, like this...My husband loves the birds more than me!

Mon mari aime les oiseaux plus que moi!

CYNEWYN

Mon mari aime les oiseaux plus que moi!

BERTANA

My face is sour like an old prune!

Mon visage est aigre comme un vieux pruneau!

CYNEWYN

Mon visage est aigre comme un vieux pruneau!

BERTANA

My ladies look like a flock of sheep!

Mes dames ressemblent à un troupeau de moutons!

CYNEWYN

Exactement !

Sound: Peals of laughter.

17. INTERIOR – DRAYTON MANOR - DAY

N: A few days have passed and Cynewyn, her kinswomen and Isabelle's ladies form an uneasy sewing circle in an alcove off the Manor hall.

ISABELLE

(in rough English)

What is the word 'Drottning' that I hear them call you, Cynewyn?

CYNEWYN

(reluctantly)

It means 'Queen' my Lady.

ISABELLE

You? A queen? Queen of what? The cows?

Sound: laughter

CYNEWYN

My father was brother to Lord Alfgar, last of the Mercians of the royal line. There are two of us now, myself and my cousin Morcar.

ISABELLE

Oh yes, Morcar the Traitor. Who resides with Hereward the Wake and the stinking Picts.

Sound: More laughter.

ISABELLE

I, on the other hand, am descended on my mother's side from Charlemagne, a real king. A king of France.

CYNEWYN

As you say, Lady.

LADY IN WAITING #1

These Saxons, they sicken me. How is it that such people can create such beauty?

LADY IN WAITING #2

Oh, for the grand houses of Normandy! For my feather bed and the King's fine wines!

ISABELLE

Ladies, I also long for our home. Can you keep a secret?

Sound: transition music

18.INTERIOR – DRAYTON VILLAGE HALL - NIGHT

N: The sun rises and sets several times. One evening Cynewyn rests in the village hall.

BERTANA

It won't be much longer, now, cousin. And you'll have a babe of your own.

CYNEWYN

Aye, tis bittersweet. I will love him or her, but grieve for my husband. I miss him so.

Sound: sounds of a lyre, women and men talk quietly, clink of dishes

HEADMAN EADBALD

Drottning.

CYNEWYN

Yes, Headman?

HEADMAN EADBALD

The harvest is nearly in, the animals are slaughtered and salted down and food is put up. Thanks to you.

CYNEWYN

Thanks to you all. My father smiles from heaven.

N: A messenger enters the hall, kneels in front of Cynewyn and hands her a scroll.

Sound: paper unrolling.

CYNEWYN

He will stay in the North for the winter. Thanks be to God.
My cousin is safe.

Sound: Ayes all around.

CYNEWYN

But there may be something else. What have you heard
about the Lady Isabelle? And Lord Thurstan?

19. EXTERIOR – PATH TO DRAYTON VILLAGE - NIGHT

N: That same week, Cynewyn slowly trudges home after a long day stitching and sewing at the Manor. It is dark on the path, only the moon sheds light. Suddenly, a horseman appears behind her, galloping in a fervor of haste.

Sound: galloping horse hooves, neighing.

N: The horse runs her down, knocking her off the path.

CYNEWYN

Oh, oh...

THURSTAN

Lady, lady? Oh no...get help!

END EPISODE TWO