

EPISODE THREE – CROSS-STITCH

20. 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!

21. EXTERIOR – PATH TO DRAYTON VILLAGE - NIGHT

N: Thurstan picks up Cynewyn and runs with her to her cottage. Women from the village run to help.

Sound: Calls out for help, footsteps on the path. Grunting, crying out, sounds of sobs.

She goes into early labor and loses the baby.

Sound: Sounds of distress

Sound: sad music

N: Hours pass and Thurstan sits head in hands outside her cottage.

THURSTAN

Oh no, oh no. What have I done? What have I done?

Sound: galloping horse hooves

STABLE LAD

My Lord, come quickly! Lady Isabelle! The baby comes!

THURSTAN

Yes, yes, I come.

Sound: horse galloping.

22. INTERIOR – DRAYTON MANOR - NIGHT

Sound: sounds of labor, female cries, then a baby cries

BERTANA

Lady, here, here is your baby boy! He is strong and healthy!

IsABELLE

Take him away. I don't want to see him.

THURSTAN

But Isa. Please! Ralph needs you!

ISABELLE

He is dead to me. Now get out!

Sound: transition music

23. EXTERIOR – DRAYTON VILLAGE - DAY

N: Thurstan goes to the village to find a wet nurse for his baby boy.

THURSTAN

Dame, can you help me? You have a newborn, n'est-ce pas?

DAME

My apologies, Lord, I only have enough milk for my own baby. Maybe someone else...

THURSTAN

Please, dame. My son is hungry. And his mother...

A beat.

DAME

She refuses. Yes, I have heard.

A beat.

DAME

Alright. Bring the babe to me.

Sound: baby crying, soothing sounds of woman attending him.

24. INTERIOR – COTTAGE - DAY

N. Bertana visits Cynewyn in her cottage, sits with her in her sorrow.

CYNEWYN

But Bertana, how could she reject her baby? How? Her baby is alive and mine is...

Sound: soft crying.

BERTANA

I know, love, I know.

Sound: transition music

25. INTERIOR – DRAYTON MANOR - DAY

N: Some weeks after the birth, Isabelle scratches a letter onto parchment, folds and seals it.

ISABELLE

Ranulf, attend me.

MESSENGER RANULF

Madame?

ISABELLE

See the Lady Queen gets this letter as quickly as you can.
It is most urgent.

MESSENGER RANULF

My Lady, as you will.

Sound: galloping horse hooves.

Sound: transition music

26. INTERIOR – WINCHESTER CASTLE - DAY

N: At the Royal Court in Winchester, Queen Edith, consort of the former King Edward and sister of the vanquished King Harold, holds an audience. She occupies a rare and tenuous position in the Norman government. Next to her sits William's brother Odo, who, in William's absence, rules England with an iron fist. A messenger approaches Edith.

Sound: approaching footsteps.

QUEEN EDITH

What is this?

MESSENGER RANULF

An urgent message from Drayton Bassett, my Lady.

QUEEN EDITH

Ah, I hope...

A beat.

QUEEN EDITH

Yes! The final piece of my plan is in motion!

ODO

What are you on about, woman?

QUEEN EDITH

My women, Saxon women, will create a mighty *tenture*, a wall hanging fit for a king, for all to see and remember the mighty deeds of my Lord.

ODO

You mean William? Or Edward?

QUEEN EDITH

Peace, your Grace. Your place will not be forgotten on the *tenture*. The ladies gather even now at Canterbury to begin the work.

Sound: [transition music](#)

27. EXTERIOR – DRAYTON MANOR - DAY

N: Her plans complete, Isabelle sits packed and ready to leave on a cart outside Drayton Manor. Her ladies and four sturdy knights surround her.

Sound: [running footsteps](#)

THURSTAN

Isa, what is this? Please! Don't go! Ralph needs you! I need you!

ISABELLE

My Abbey is completed and awaits me, Thurstan. It's what I've always desired. A life away, a life of quiet and peace.

THURSTAN

Oh, Isabelle. I tried to be kind. To make up for the others. For what they did to you.

ISABELLE

You were kind. But it wasn't enough. It will never be enough. And now that you have an heir...

THURSTAN

But you are my wife!

ISABELLE

I am the Bride of Christ, now. Adieu.

THURSTAN

But...

ISABELLE

Adieu...

Sound: clinking horse harnesses, clopping horse hooves, jingling armor.

Sound: baby cries.

Sound: transition music

28. INTERIOR – VILLAGE HALL - DAY

N: Time passes swiftly when, at the village hall, Cynewyn stitches with some of her women friends.

Sound: knocking on the door.

A messenger boy delivers a scroll to Cynewyn.

BERTANA

Who is it from?

CYNEWYN

My lord Thurstan. He wants me to act as Lady to his manor.

BERTANA

But my dear, grief is not done with you yet. It is unfair for him to ask this of you!

EOWYN

And to act as Lady, yet not be Lady? People will assume you are his concubine.

CYNEWYN

I care not.

BERTANA

It is true - he is lost without Lady Isabelle. Nothing is getting done. It is chaos.

CYNEWYN

They are my people and if they need me, I will go.

Sound: transition music

29. INTERIOR – DRAYTON MANOR - DAY

N. The next day Cynewyn sits across from Thurstan at the hall table.

THURSTAN

(harrumph)

This is nonsense! I can make neither heads nor tails of these scrolls! Can you decipher them?

CYNEWYN

Hmmm...I'm afraid they've been taking advantage of you, Lord. Your farmers are late paying rents, and as usual, are bound up in a squabble regarding land title. Lady Isabelle knew how to manage an estate like this, but since she's left, well...

THURSTAN

I am grateful for your help, Lady. Cynewyn. With your help perhaps I can make this land rich again.

CYNEWYN

But it was rich, Lord. It *is* rich. And the people will respond to you as they get to know you. I promise you this. But they must respect you first.

THURSTAN

The most important thing is that I have rich estates for my son to inherit. For my legacy, for my name.

CYNEWYN

(bitterly)

Yes Lord, of course.

Sound: transition music

30. INTERIOR – MANOR KITCHENS - DAY

Sound: footsteps, kitchen noises.

BERTANA

Cousin, It's good that you are back.

CYNEWYN

You may not be so happy when I tell your father and brothers to stop cheating my Lord on the grain measure!

Sound: guilty laughter.

CYNEWYN

And Eowyn, the best eggs and chickens for my Lord, not the middling ones! I'd have him fatten up some, not you!

Sound: mumbles, "Sorry Lady"

CYNEWYN

All right then. Join me in the hall, ladies. In an hour.

Sound: jingling harnesses, stamping horse hooves.

31. INTERIOR – MANOR HALL - DAY

N: That afternoon, Thurstan enters the hall.

THURSTAN

Lady, I would have a word with you.

CYNEWYN

Is someone here? What is it, Lord?

A beat.

CYNEWYN

Please, you may speak in front of my women.

THURSTAN

A messenger about **you**, Lady.

CYNEWYN

Me? What could it possibly be?

THURSTAN

The Queen, Queen Edith, has decreed that you immediately come to Winchester. To the royal household there.

CYNEWYN

What? Queen Edith? But I don't...I just came back to the manor! What is this about?

THURSTAN

The last thing that Isabelle did before she left was to send a letter to the Queen telling her of your great skill.

CYNEWYN

Oh, I see. And what great skill is that?

THURSTAN

With the needle, Lady. You are to sew for the Queen.

CYNEWYN

The Queen? What have I to do with her? And what about my people, Lord?

THURSTAN

No more questions. Gather your cloak and some small things. Everything you need will be given you there.

CYNEWYN

(bitterly)

Lord, I wish you well. If you thought things were difficult before, then...

Sound: transition music

32. EXTERIOR – MANOR HOUSE - DAY

Sound: horses, murmuring, jingling of harnesses

N: At the manor gate. Thurstan belatedly realizes what his wife has done.

THURSTAN

Lady, I didn't know...I'm sor...fare well. Adieu.

Sound: transition music

33. INTERIOR – WINCHESTER CASTLE - DAY

N: Five days pass and at Winchester Castle, Queen Edith and her ladies work around a table under an open window.

Sound: footsteps

N: Cynewyn and her guard slowly enter the hall. She approaches Edith and curtsies deeply.

QUEEN EDITH

Lady Cynewyn, I presume? I am so eager to meet you.

CYNEWYN

Majesty?

QUEEN EDITH

Your reputation precedes you, my dear. The Lady Isabelle spoke very highly of you.

CYNEWYN

Oh.

(a beat)

Thank you, Majesty.

QUEEN EDITH

Please, we are not formal here. Lady Edith is sufficient. But come, sit, you must be fatigued from your journey.

CYNEWYN

Yes.

(a beat)

Majest...uh, Lady Edith, how may I serve you?

[Sound: transition music](#)

34. INTERIOR – SIDE HALL - DAY

N: Cynewyn extracts vestments and an embroidered robe on silk from a casket.

QUEEN EDITH

But this is extraordinary work. And the fabric - I've never seen it's like.

CYNEWYN

My cousin sent this back from his travels to Byzantium. And my father, when he was alive, purchased swords and weapons with these designs on them.

A beat

CYNEWYN

But that was long ago. How may I help you, Lady?

QUEEN EDITH

I would like you to lead my ladies and other Saxon needlewomen at St. Augustine Abbey in Canterbury.

CYNEWYN

Lead them how?

QUEEN EDITH

We will make something extraordinary, you and I. A *tenture*, a wall-hanging. A living tribute that recalls the glories of the Battle of Hastings.

A beat.

CYNEWYN

Lady, may I speak with you privately?

QUEEN EDITH

A moment, ladies.

Sound: shuffling footsteps out of the room

CYNEWYN

This *tenture*, it is to glorify the defeat of your brother King Harold. Your people. Our people. How can you...?

QUEEN EDITH

Defeat, conquest, it is never as simple as that. The Normans are here now, but they won't decide the story. Or the telling of it. We will.

CYNEWYN

(near tears)

Lady, I'm afraid I...

QUEEN EDITH

Ah, you have suffered a great loss, I hear. So many gone, even your unborn child.

CYNEWYN

(near tears)

And Lady Isabelle, she...

QUEEN EDITH

I know what she did, my dear. But she was not wrong. Your skill with the needle is the best I have ever seen.

CYNEWYN

(near tears)

How can I go on with such a heavy heart?

QUEEN EDITH

You will learn to bear it, as I did. I never did give Edward a child – but no. In truth, Edward never gave me a child – it is the great sadness of my life. But maybe we can do

something together, you and I, that will ease our hearts a little.

END EPISODE THREE