

THE AMAZONS

By Robert Kelly

(Based on the writings of Herodotus circa 425 B.C)

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FADE IN

CGI/MODEL SHOT - 3 PERSIAN SHIPS AT SEA - EVENING

It is 522 BC. Three identical Persian ships are sailing together in the Black Sea. Each has a small crew of around 20 PERSIAN SAILORS - all male, many are relaxing on deck beneath the stars where it is cooler.

PAN TOWARDS ONE SHIP

CUT TO

EXT. DECK OF PERSIAN SHIP - EVENING

Several SAILORS are lounging by a small cooking-fire. A wide hatch leads below deck - SAILOR #1 emerges adjusting his attire as if having 'relieved himself' below. He has a DAGGER in his belt and is unaware someone creeps behind him.

Sailor #1 joins his companions and nods happily. Seeing them gape he turns and sees AMAZON #1 approaching behind him.

Amazon #1 wears only a loincloth, she is about 28, toned and muscular but filth encrusted with matted hair. She has tattoos of rearing horses and deer on her arms and legs (in the style as the famous Russian Ice Mummy).

Amazon #1 SCREAMS a blood-curdling war-cry and DIVES onto Sailor #1, knocking him down and clambering on top of him. She BITES OUT his throat with her teeth in a violent frenzy - BLOOD spurts everywhere as the Sailors stare in horror.

NOTE: The Amazon language is unknown. All Amazon dialogue should sound GIBBERISH but have subtitles throughout.

AMAZON #1
(shouting gibberish - meaning)
TO ME SISTERS, TO ME!!

A group of AMAZONS emerge from below decks, SCREAMING and bloodthirsty. All are toned females wearing only loincloths (at most) and filthy having been kept confined. As a TRIBE they have similar features, animal tattoos, the larger chested have only one breast as one is removed to draw bows.

Amazon #1 pulls the DAGGER from dead Sailor #1's belt and charges at the other Sailors - joined by other Amazons.

The scene becomes a violent bloodbath as more Amazons emerge and join in - literally tearing through the sailors.

CUT TO

CGI/MODEL SHOT - 3 PERSIAN SHIPS AT SEA - EVENING

Two of the ships are in turmoil as ferocious Amazons are rampaging and killing sailors, hacking them with captured weapons or just diving upon them and biting. Some Sailors dive into the sea, favouring drowning or sharks.

The Lead Ship is not fighting as not transporting prisoners. Sailors stand and stare in horror as their companions on the other ships are killed, unsure what to do.

PAN TOWARDS LEAD SHIP WITH NO FIGHTING

CUT TO

EXT. DECK OF LEAD PERSIAN SHIP - EVENING

The Sailors on deck stare out at the 2 x ships being over-run by angry Amazons. Present here is the UNFORTUNATE 1st MATE - a better-dressed sailor with a long beard.

CAPTAIN HANNO emerges from below decks and gazes at the stricken vessels, grim faced. He is 40, of Carthaginian heritage and wears black. He has a curved sword in his belt.

The Sailors and Unfortunate 1st Mate turn to Hanno expectantly - hoping he will have a plan.

HANNO
(to self)
I see what I feared might happen has
indeed now happened...
(loudly to all)
SET SAIL MEN! Get us out of here!

UNFORTUNATE 1ST MATE
But Captain - our comrades? Surely it
is not too late? We may be able to...
(cuts off)

Captain Hanno draws his sword and CUTS DOWN the unfortunate 1st Mate, then kicks him over the side. SPLASH! The Sailors exchange questioning looks - unsure who to fear the most.

HANNO
(loudly to all)
Any more objections? FULL SAILS! That
was an order you dogs! GET MOVING!

The Sailors are slow to obey so Hanno continues.

HANNO
I'll cut down any man who disobeys!

Hanno waves his sword menacingly - the Sailors more hastily begin climbing rigging and readying sails. Hanno gazes out at the other ships as he sheaves his bloodied sword.

POV from Hanno - looking towards the closest ship. The last of the sailors are being torn apart by screaming Amazons. A few Amazons dive overboard and swim towards the other stricken ship to help their sisters still fighting.

QUICK CUT TO

CGI/MODEL SHOT - 3 PERSIAN SHIPS AT SEA - EVENING

Ferocious Amazons kill the last of the Sailors on two of the ships as The Lead Ship sails quickly away with full sails. On the deck of the lead ship is Captain Hanno, shouting unheard orders at his unhappy crew.

The Amazons on the two ships are victorious and begin CHEERING and waving any captured weapons in the air.

FADE TO

INT. CAPTAINS CABIN - EVENING

The finest cabin in the Lead Persian ship. There is a table, chair and small bed and light from ornate bronze lamps.

XANTHE is chained to the bed, her once noble-looking dress tattered and torn. Xanthe is 22 and she is Greco-Persian.

Hanno angrily enters the cabin as Xanthe GASPS and cowers away, expecting further mistreatment.

XANTHE
I thought I heard screams?

HANNO
Your sisters have escaped! Run amok!
Two of my ships are lost.

XANTHE
For the hundredth time - they are not
my sisters. I am merely a 'thrall', a
slave! I am not an 'Amazon'.

Hanno SLAPS Xanthe - she falls back onto the bed, dazed.

HANNO

Yet you speak their tongue - know them
and their ways? You knew their Queen?

Xanthe SPITS out blood and sits up, glaring angrily.

XANTHE

I served Queen Myrina for almost two
years as her personal slave. As we
were being captured I heard she died?

HANNO

She is dead now, yes. She took many of
my countrymen with her. But listen
well slave - you have but one chance
not to join her in death. YOU are now
Queen Myrina! Do you understand me?

XANTHE

Me? But I am not even Amazon!

Hanno SLAPS Xanthe again, even harder this time.

HANNO

You ARE Queen Myrina!

Xanthe turns her bleeding face towards Hanno, angry and
defiant. He raises his hand to strike her again.

FADE TO

INT. MAIN LEISURE AREA, PALACE OF CAMBYSES - EVENING

A cluster of opulent rooms, parts open air with balconies
overlooking an ancient coastal city. Everything is luxurious.
There is an indoor pool, vents blowing-in cooled air and even
a WATER CLOCK - the Persians have water technology.

2 X SUSIAN GUARDS stand at the main doors. These are bearded
robed Persian males carrying spear-like polearms.

SUSIAN GUARD #1 is about 40, he is tall and slim.

SUSIAN GUARD #2 is about 30, beefy and stout.

The main doors open into the entrance area THE CHAMBERLAIN
moves through the rooms, very familiar with surroundings.

He is around 35, a male eunuch with a high voice. He is
overweight, dressed in silks with a shaved head.

The Chamberlain hurries past a PERSIAN LEOPARD - this is chained and semi-domesticated but GROWLS menacingly.

The Chamberlain finds KING CAMBYSES II lounging on a chaise-lounge opposite to THE UNFORTUNATE GUEST, both are sipping wine from golden goblets.

Cambyses is around 30 with dark wavy hair and beard, he is dressed in regal silk robes - he has dark intense eyes.

The Unfortunate Guest is a Persian nobleman, 30, dressed in fine silks and jewels. He seems cheerful.

Two slaves attend them - both around 20 and dressed in skimpy Eastern silks. FEMALE SLAVE #1 is fairer and curvy. FEMALE SLAVE #2 is slender and darker in complexion.

The Slaves CURTSEY to The Chamberlain who BOWS to Cambyses.

CHAMBERLAIN

Sorry to interrupt your magnificence.
A further messenger has arrived with
an update from Commander Hydarnes.

CAMBYSES

Well? What is it? I thought the battle
was all but forgotten by now?

CHAMBERLAIN

The Commander advises loot and spoils
captured at Thermopylae are on the way
as a token of his loyalty and
respect... By caravan and by sea.

CAMBYSES

Yes, yes... That is as expected.

CHAMBERLAIN

The spoils by sea include nearly 300
Amazons - captured at the battle.

CAMBYSES

Amazons?

UNFORTUNATE GUEST

Captured alive?

CHAMBERLAIN

They should arrive within two days Oh
Great One - transported by the ever-
reliable Captain Hanno. Shall I have

the slave trainers notified? And I
wondered if some might make
interesting additions to your harem?

The slaves present cannot help exchanging nervous glances -
they do not like the sound of working with Amazons.

CAMBYSES
An excellent notion Haxamanish!! Yes -
make all the arrangements at once.

The Chamberlain BOWS happily and hurries away, exiting.

CAMBYSES
Amazon Slaves? I shall be envied by
all the civilised world!

The Unfortunate Guest finishes his wine and gazes out of the window up to the clouds. There is a short pause.

CAMBYSES
More wine Utautha?

UNFORTUNATE GUEST
Sorry Cambyses... I was just day-
dreaming about your new slaves.

CAMBYSES
(amused)
You always seem to have time to
reflect and appreciate the little
things... It must be nice to be so
devoid of responsibility?

UNFORTUNATE GUEST
I find taking a moment to gaze up at
the heavens keeps me centred. And I
hear that 'The Magi' say the shapes
hold much significance in divination.

CAMBYSES
The last Magi adviser I had displeased
me greatly... But yes, there is
something 'heavenly' about clouds.
(Gazing up)
Look - that one looks rather like a
crocodile? I saw many such beasts in
Egypt. See the jaws?

UNFORTUNATE GUEST
I thought it was more like a sheep?

Cambyses SITS UP and STARES - suddenly angry.

CAMBYSES
A sheep?
(More angry)
A sheep you say?!

UNFORTUNATE GUEST
I, er, could be mistaken? Actually yes
- I think I see the tail now?

CAMBYSES
(Even more angry)
You dare to contradict The King of
Kings? YOU DARE?!?

UNFORTUNATE GUEST
Actually I see the jaws more clearly.
It's not a sheep at all!

Cambyses leaps to his feed, trembling with rage.

CAMBYSES
(furious)
Guards! Guards!! GUARDS!!!

The Susian Guards quickly approach and ready their weapons.

CAMBYSES
Have this traitor boiled in oil!! Do
it SLOWLY! He must suffer for such
insolence! SUFFER I SAY!!

The Unfortunate Guest whimpers as the Guards begin dragging him away. The two slaves watch in silent terror.

UNFORTUNATE GUEST
No - I made a mistake! A foolish
mistake!! Mercy great king! Mercy!!

The Guards know better than to wait.

CAMBYSES
(To self)
Such insolence!! I will not have it!!
I won't! I WON'T!!

Cambyses THROWS his goblet at the wall. The Female Slaves quickly begin to tidy the mess, trembling with fear.

FADE TO

EXT. DECK OF PERSIAN SHIP - EARLY MORNING

There are bloody patches on deck but all bodies gone. The sails hang in tatters and the ship bobs out of control. The second ship can be seen in the distance - also drifting. Several Amazons have since washed and bandaged themselves, some wear adapted clothes from the sailors. They mill about restlessly on deck, unsure what to do.

Amazon #1 is on the main deck, looking out to sea.

AMAZON #2 is up the mast and gazing about. She is late teens, in torn sailors clothing and is fairer than her sisters.

AMAZON #1
 (gibberish - calling up mast)
*See anything Hippothea? Any land we
 might swim for?*

AMAZON #2
 (gibberish - calling down)
Nothing Myodora... Nothing but sea!

AMAZON #3 emerges from below decks carrying a couple of bulging water-skins which she waves. She is about 40, bigger and taller than most and has old scars crisscrossing her body - she has one breast (Amazons sometimes mutilate themselves).

NOTE: At this point Amazons could switch to 'normal' or remain talking gibberish, so speaking or non-speaking.

AMAZON #3
 This is all I could find below - not
 enough to last more than a day.

AMAZON #1
 Nothing to eat at all?

AMAZON #3
 Nothing but rats. They won't stretch
 far either.

Amazon #2 climbs down the mast uncertainly - more used to trees. As with all Amazons she is very athletic.

AMAZON #2
 How can there be no food here? Surely
 our Persian captors need to eat?

Amazon #2 snatches one of the water skins and begins to drink. After a few mouthfuls Amazon #1 pulls it away.

AMAZON #1
 Wait - we must not drink our fill, or
 our sisters will go thirsty.

Amazon #2 nods, ashamed of her impulsive action.

AMAZON #3
 So we are trapped? With no means to
 control this 'vessel' and no food?

AMAZON #2
 None of us know these ropes or how to
 make this thing move. It is alien.

AMAZON #1
 Perhaps those in the other ship have
 found supplies to share?

The three Amazons move to the side of the ship and gaze out
 at the other ship and the Amazons on that deck.

POV from Amazon #1 looking at the 2nd ship. Amazons there are
 waving their water-skin - as if asking the same question.

FADE TO

INT. MAIN LEISURE AREA, PALACE OF CAMBYSES - MORNING

Cambyses is partly undressed and is being massaged by a MALE
 SLAVE on a couch. The male slave is around 40 and is of
 Egyptian origin, all hair shaved, another eunuch.

The Chamberlain stands nearby, concluding a verbal report to
 Cambyses which he reads from a parchment scroll.

CHAMBERLAIN
 (concluding)
 So with the taxes from Memphis we are
 well above our anticipated annual
 revenue, by around 12%. More than
 enough to begin that new canal system.

CAMBYSES
 (yawns)
 Where is my guest Utautha? I have been
 searching all over the Palace this
 morning and the Guards will not tell
 me where he is hiding.
 (pause, coldly)
 Perhaps I should punish them?

CHAMBERLAIN

You had him boiled in oil Majesty! He questioned your divine interpretation of the clouds - do you not remember?

Cambyses HOWLS pitifully - the Male Slave quickly backs away, fearing some unpleasant reprisal.

CAMBYSES

No! It cannot be?! You say I gave the command to kill him??

The Chamberlain nods and hangs his head sadly. The Male Slave cowers nervously and falls to his knees.

CHAMBERLAIN

It is true, Great King. I dare speak nothing only but truth to you.

Tears well in Cambyses eyes as he sits up.

CAMBYSES

(distraught)

But Utautha was my childhood friend!
The only person I can trust! Oh
Utautha! Poor dear Utautha!!

The Chamberlain gently pats the shoulder of Cambyses, used to his dramatic mood-swings and memory gaps.

CHAMBERLAIN

The Guards dared not refuse a direct command Sire... They are loyal and merely did as were instructed.

(pause)

There we still have some remains - his bleached bones and clothing.

CAMBYSES

Then them to me show me! I will not believe he is gone until I have seen with my own eyes... Ah poor Utautha...

The Chamberlain bows and leads Cambyses gently away, knowing another bad day awaits him and the other slaves.

FADE TO

CGI / MODEL SHOT - 2 PERSIAN SHIPS ADRIFT - MORNING

Very hot and sticky. Days have passed and the two ships seem

worse - torn sails and hanging rigging. They drift further apart. There is nothing but the ocean for miles. Amazons lay on the decks - starved and looking bored and miserable.

CUT TO

EXT. DECK OF PERSIAN SHIP - MORNING

Blisteringly hot. Several Amazons lay on the deck, bored and hungry and sunburnt. Amazon #1 lounges, Amazon #3 is trying to squeeze a final drip from the water skin on her tongue - she snarls angrily and hurls this into the sea.

AMAZON #1
(nods to a bloody patch)
We should have kept the bodies.
Perhaps we could have drank their
blood, or even eat them.

AMAZON #3
To think of all the battles, all the
fights I've seen... Only to die here.
How the gods mock me! Mock us all!

AMAZON #1
I have prayed all night long to
Artemis. I do not believe the gods
abandon us... This is a test of faith
Dioxipp, a stepping-stone in our
journey that we must yet endure.

AMAZON #3
Our journey is over - most of our
tribe killed. Even if we were on land
there are too few of us now to
continue and re-settle.
(Gazing up)
Even the Gods know we are doomed.

Amazon #3 sits in a shady spot near the mast and SIGHS.
Amazon #1 gazes around sadly - all are unhappy around her.

FADE TO

INT. BANQUET HALL, PALACE OF CAMBYSES - PM

A lavish hall with Persian tables (low like Japanese). All sit on cushions and eat with hands. MUSICIANS are grouped in a corner playing an EASTERN TUNE on period instruments.

Sitting are GUESTS - wealthy merchants and prominent Persian

citizens, all are male and eating and chatting happily.

A few SLAVES hurry about refilling goblets and bringing more food - including Female Slave #1 and #2 and the Male Slave - they are more formerly dressed for this event.

Susian Guard #1 and #2 stand at around the sides of the room, plus also SUSIAN GUARD #3 and SUSIAN GUARD #4.

Susian Guard #3 has a long platted beard. Susian Guard #4 has thick curly hair, both seem burly and rather menacing.

Cambyses wears opulent robes and sits at the head of the table. To his right sits COMMANDER HYDARNES.

Hydarnes, 45, is a lean wiry military man, ill at ease with social events. He sips wine and nibbles politely. A large MEAT PIE is before him on a dish, untouched and steaming.

CAMBYSES

Come Hydarnes - I had this made especially in your honour, even bringing in a special chef for the occasion. Is it not to your liking?

The chatter fades and the Guests begin to look nervously towards Cambyses, sensing trouble is brewing.

HYDARNES

Forgive me Great King - I have grown used to army rations, such luxury overwhelms my simple palate.

CAMBYSES

(threateningly, loudly)
You WILL eat it all Hydarnes - I insist.

The Musicians stop playing - MUSIC STOPS - a hushed silence.

Hydarnes smiles and begins to TUCK INTO the meat pie. Cambyses watches, a strange gleam in his eye.

CAMBYSES

Is it good?

HYDARNES

(chewing)
Delicious! But I do not deserve such favour - nor did I expect such a welcome as this upon my return.

CAMBYSES

Not all my generals are able to move and motivate their men with such precision... Or defeat ferocious Amazon warriors. Such a feat might go to a mans head, or much elevate him in the minds of the commoners.

HYDARNES

The Amazons strength lays in their horses. Our spears, pit-traps and favourable terrain won the day.

CAMBYSES

What do you make of your pie?

HYDARNES

(chewing)

Very tasty, Great King.

CAMBYSES

And the meat? Can you determine what it might be?

HYDARNES

I am not certain? Pork perhaps?

CAMBYSES

I'll have my chef show you.

Cambyses CLAPS HIS HANDS - Female Slave #1 was waiting for this, she darts out of sight. A moment passes and THE COOK enters carrying a basket, assisted by the returning slave.

The Cook is about 50 and he is originally from India - dressed as having just left the kitchen. He bows to Cambyses.

The Cook opens the basket and tips it forward so Hydarnes can see inside - this is a SEVERED LADIES HEAD and HANDS and FEET and some of her clothing. There is a collective GASP from the Guests as they crane to try to peer inside also.

CAMBYSES

May I present Penobia - your pestering wife? She had the gall to come to the Palace DEMANDING I bestow additional honours on you!!

HYDARNES

(Shocked and upset)

But why Great King? I am loyal! I wish

only to serve you and the Empire!

Cambyses rises angrily - the Guests exchange worried looks, a few quake with fear, one begins to weep.

CAMBYSES

Because no matter how great a commander one might be on the battlefield - I AM YOUR KING!

Cambyses becomes very animated, waving and strutting.

CAMBYSES

You owe everything to me! Your men, your equipment, your training - the very food you eat! I AM YOUR GOD!!

The Guards raise their weapons - ready to begin killing if needed. The Guests prostrate themselves face-down on the floor towards Cambyses - all utterly terrified.

Hydarnes does not reply. After a moment of gathering his resolve he smiles grimly and forces himself to take another bite of pie. Cambyses calms and seems disappointed.

CAMBYSES

Perhaps I did you a favour? She wasn't much of a 'looker', too skinny... At least now you might find a better one.

(smiling, to all)

Who is ready for dessert?

The Musicians nervously resume playing.

FADE TO

EXT. CLIFFS NEAR OLIBA - EARLY MORNING

A cliff overlooking the sea and a beach - with crude farm-buildings and fields further inland. This is several miles south west of Ponic Olbia (now ruins) in southern Ukraine that borders the Black Sea. The 2 X bedraggled Persian ships are visible in the distance, adrift.

THE SHEPHERD is about 60 and he wears an early version of a smock. He and his FLOCK are resting at the top of the cliff.

The Shepherd stretches and gazes out to sea and is STARTLED to see the two ships. He GASPS and begins to hurry away.

FADE TO

EXT. BEACH NEAR OLIBA - MORNING

The beach glimpsed from the cliff of the previous scene. The Shepherd is here with several FARMERS - male peasants who live locally. They are wading-out and calling and waving to the nearest ship (the other is further out at sea).

The Amazons seem starved and weak but become excited when they hear the farmers and wave back. Some jump overboard and swim to the beach with their last ounce of strength.

FADE TO

INT. ENTRANCE HALL, PALACE OF CAMBYSES - MORNING

A small hall at the end of a corridor, with main doors to the Leisure Area. An ornate early portcullis dangles here. Susian Guard #3 and #4 stand here on guard duty.

Hanno marches into view along the corridor, heading determinedly towards the doors and the Chamberlain following. The Guards watch, ready to intervene if needed.

CHAMBERLAIN

Wait Hanno! His Majesty is not in the lightest of moods today...

HANNO

Out of my way, fawning wretch! The King will not wish to be kept waiting... My news is urgent.

Hanno pushes past The Chamberlain, knocking him rudely aside. The Guards recognise Hanno as a senior figure and open the double doors to let him through.

CHAMBERLAIN

(Muttering)

On your own head be it then...

CUT TO

INT. MAIN LEISURE AREA, PALACE OF CAMBYSES - MORNING

Cambyses is pacing around the main doors, in a world of his own, whispering. Females Slave #1 and #2 loiter nervously, dressed in their usual silks again.

Hanno and The Chamberlain approach Cambyses, bowing. The door is still open behind them, with Susian Guard #3 and #4 either side - perhaps wondering if they should close it.

CMBYSSES
(surprised)
Oh - Captain Hanno?
(Pause - annoyed)
I hear you have lost my prize?
(Pause - more annoyed)
My ships...?
(angry)
MY AMAZONS?!?

The Chamberlain Squeals and drops to his knees and begins to tremble - his turn to be terrified.

Hanno however steps closer to Cambyses and CLAPS his hands.

HANNO
One ship yet survived Great King -
bearing the greatest prize of all!!

Cambyses and The Chamberlain turn and see Xanthe as she approaches through the open door just behind Hanno, escorted by 2 SAILORS from Hanno's ship. Xanthe has been bathed and beautified, now in flowing silks but her hands chained. She walks tall and proud, defiantly glaring at all.

The sailors bow to Cambyses and seem in awe of him and the room - they step back and remain bowing.

HANNO
May I present Myrina - Queen of the
Amazons!

CMBYSSES
(amazed)
Their Queen?

HANNO
An Amazon Queen has never been taken
in battle before, Great Lord. And this
one I humbly present to you!

POV from Cambyses looking Xanthe up and down - both attracted and impressed. She glares back defiantly.

CMBYSSES (O.S)
YOU are the Amazon Queen?

Xanthe looks proud and defiant.

XANTHE
I am Myrina! Queen of all the Amazons!

BACK TO SCENE

Hanno quickly approaches Xanthe and roughly pulls her down to her knees. She looks up angrily at him. The Chamberlain looks up - now rather puzzled.

HANNO

She is yours Sire. Your slave - your pet - your plaything! Slay her if you so wish - do with her as you please.

CAMBYSES

This will make me the envy of the known world! An Amazon Queen - scarcely seen by any living man?

Xanthe looks up angrily at Hanno - particularly annoyed by the end of his sentence. He SLAPS her back down.

HANNO

Face down before your king, slave! Do not move or speak until given leave.

Xanthe remains with her head lowered.

CAMBYSES

She obeys? I thought they were all wild - like beasts?

HANNO

I taught her a little humility and of our language on the way... But she is feisty and full of wiles. I have had two men with her at all times until she can be properly 'broken'. I suggest you do the same my Lord?

Cambyses walks around Xanthe and pulls up a lock of her hair to caress it between his fingers. She remains prone.

CAMBYSES

Such lovely hair... I have not seen this hue before?

Hanno nods to his 2 x Sailors. They bow repeatedly and retreat backwards exiting - facing Cambyses until gone. The Guards seem to grow more tense - fearing trouble.

HANNO

All Amazons are a wonder sire - see how firm and toned she is? Nothing

like our Persian women. I heard they are only rivaled by women of Sparta.

Cambyses looks down at Xanthes ample cleavage - very impressed. Hanno smiles to himself, his plan working.

CAMBYES
Are all her like her? Amazons I mean?

HANNO
Some have different hair tones and tans, they breed with heroes from distant lands to continue their line.

(Nodding to Xanthe)
Myrina is said to be the most beauteous of all the Amazons. I hope she pleases you Great King?

Cambyses isn't paying Hanno much attention, instead he is poking and prodding Xanthe - like some exotic new pet.

The Chamberlain staggers up and steps closer.

HANNO
As for her companions, the last count had their number at 248, although many will have perished during the revolt. I would like your permission to mount an immediate expedition to return and recapture them?

Cambyses seems happy. The Chamberlain seems surprised.

CAMBYES
You want replacement ships and crew?

HANNO
Yes Great King - and enough coin to hire mercenaries. The Amazons will be weak from hunger by now... My lead ship held the provisions. Starved, unarmed and unarmoured they will be no match for good fighting men.

CHAMBERLAIN
Pah! So you say?

HANNO
I know their last position and where the currents may take them.

CHAMBERLAIN
You failed the God-King once Hanno,
you really expect that...
(interrupted)

CAMBYSES
Two more ships and funding for
mercenaries? You shall have both!

HANNO
Thank you great King!

The Chamberlain looks annoyed but doesn't dare protest.

CAMBYSES
Bring me my Amazons and do it quickly.
You have until the new moon to return
with the rest of my prize.

HANNO
That's just over a week from now?

CAMBYSES
Then I suggest you get moving? Fail me
again Hanno and you shall be declared
an Outlaw. My subjects will hunt you
down until you are returned for...
'suitable punishment'.

HANNO
I will not fail you Great King - the
Amazons are defeated, they just need
to be collected and returned.

The Chamberlain Grins - expecting Hanno to fail. Xanthe and Hanno exchange furtive glances - a secret deal has been made.

FADE TO

EXT. CLIFFS NEAR OLIBA - MID MORNING

The first ship is beached and empty, the 2nd ship almost ashore thanks to the efforts of the Farmers. Numerous starved Amazons have collapsed on the beach, among them is AMAZON #4 - who wears a bikini made from sailors clothing, her very long red hair tied in a plaited ponytail down to her ankles.

A few Amazons are being helped out of the water by The Farmers, the last Amazons still swimming away from the 2nd ship eager to get to dry land.

Amazon #3 is being helped ashore by The Shepherd - it annoys

her to be touched by a man. She reaches the shore and The Shepherd eyes her up lustily, grinning a toothless grin. He WINKS at her - which to her seems an insult.

Amazon #3 SNARLS and lifts the Shepherd by his neck. He flails helplessly - startled and suddenly afraid.

The Farmers pause and turn to stare - shocked. Amazon #3 BREAKS The Shepherds NECK and throws him down.

THE KILLING BEGINS - all Amazons begin SHRIEKING and attacking the Farmers. Within moments the Farmers are killed - with the last held under the water by angry Amazons.

Amazon #3 gazes around at the carnage and smiles.

FADE TO

INT. SLAVE QUARTERS, PALACE - LATE MORNING

A living area for slaves. Two NUBIAN GUARDS - big muscular black men in loincloths with CUDGELS - stand at the side of the room. Two SENIOR SLAVES - older ladies who look stern and serious are readying a bowl of water and washing items.

KYROS THE SLAVE-MASTER has been waiting. He is about 45 and is effeminate in looks and manner - another eunuch.

Xanthe is still chained and being dragged along by Susian Guard #1 and #2 - following The Chamberlain into the room.

CHAMBERLAIN

Here she is Kyros! I suggest you work as quickly as you can - the 'King of Kings' has little patience of late.

The Slave-Master nods and CLAPS his hands. The Senior Slaves unchain Xanthe and tear off her clothing - she stands naked and defiant, her hands on her hips.

SLAVE-MASTER

This is a real Amazon? I have seen many exotic beauties in my lifetime, but never a woman such as this.

The Slave-Master leans down to examine the genitals of Xanthe who scowls angrily at him but remains still.

SLAVE-MASTER

Is she... Intact?

CHAMBERLAIN

She is no virgin - clearly ploughed
many times, although no signs of
having children that I could see.

SLAVE-MASTER

Then at least that part of her
training won't take long.

CHAMBERLAIN

Indeed. And we need her docile and
compliant - and eager to please.

SLAVE-MASTER

I do not perform miracles Haxamanish,
but I will do all I can with her...

The Senior Slaves begin to wash and clean Xanthe - combing
her hair and pulling her about, she does not resist.

CHAMBERLAIN

Whatever you do just do it quickly!

SLAVE-MASTER

Training is rarely a quick process...
The breaking of the will and
repressing individuality can take
weeks - months even! An Amazon may
prove an even greater challenge...

Amidst her scrubbing the Slave-master checks Xanthes teeth,
like a horse. She seems annoyed but does not resist.

CHAMBERLAIN

Are you not the best in this trade? If
you're not up to the task the City is
over-flowing with Slave-Masters...

The Slave-master turns to face the Chamberlain.

SLAVE-MASTER

An Amazon is an unknown quantity. She
seems docile now but in my experience
things can change in a heartbeat...

CHAMBERLAIN

Not just an Amazon - a Queen. But
probably more domesticated as a
result. And she has been obedient so
far... Surprisingly so in fact.

SLAVE-MASTER

Doubtlessly a ploy to gain our trust
before making an escape attempt -
something all slaves like to try until
beaten and punished.

The Slave-master eyes Xanthe suspiciously as the Senior slaves continue scrubbing her.

CHAMBERLAIN

If she proves difficult I have the Torturer waiting in readiness... He and his tools are at your disposal.

SLAVE-MASTER

Good... Though I'm hoping that won't be necessary. If nothing else it interrupts the training - waiting for the wounds to heal.

Xanthe looks angrily at The Chamberlain, catching his eye. The Senior slaves roughly turn her away.

CHAMBERLAIN

As do I... Though that remains down to her... And your own skills, of course.

The Chamberlain heads to the exit, followed by the Susian guards - who seem pleased to be going.

CHAMBERLAIN

Keep me informed on your progress.

FADE TO

CGI/MODEL SHOT - 3 PERSIAN SHIPS AT SEA - PM

Three Persian ships are sailing together, with fresh crews and in good order. The Lead ship is Hanno's ship seen before, the others are brand new - a loan from King Cambyses.

PAN TO LEAD SHIP - where Captain Hanno is stand on deck.

CUT TO

EXT. DECK OF LEAD PERSIAN SHIP - PM

Sailors are working rigging and adjusting sails. On deck in the foreground is Hanno, who now wears new black leather armour and gazes out to sea. Beside him stands a NEW 1st MATE, who is about 50 and weather-beaten.

HANNO

Remain on course to Berezan - but keep your eyes open. There will be two ships adrift out here somewhere.

The New 1st Mate NODS and moves to bark orders at the crew.

FADE TO

EXT. FIELDS NEAR CLIFFS - PM

The fields glimpsed from the cliff previously. Farm buildings are BURNING and have been ransacked. Amazons are exploring, a few cook on small fires, others loot more buildings. Many are now partly-dressed in clothing taken from dead farmers or looted from farms. In the foreground is Amazon #1 #3 and #4.

Amazon #3 is hammering a hoe with a rock, making a spear.

Amazon #4 is cooking a leg of mutton on a campfire and is turning this round on a spit of branches, licking her lips.

Amazon #1 has since washed and now wears a cloak made from a farmers smock. She uses her knife to cut-off a slice of mutton and begins to chew hungrily.

AMAZON #3

(still hammering)

These farmers had few weapons, but these tools are better than nothing.

AMAZON #1

(chewing)

I told you the gods have not forsaken us. And it is good to be on dry land!

There is the sound of GALLOPING - Amazon #2 is riding towards them on a farm horse - the animal seems shocked to be ridden and is not very fast. Amazon #3 has baggy breaches and tunic.

AMAZON #2

Sisters! Look what I found!!

The horse stops awkwardly and Amazon #2 hops-off in an athletic manner. The Amazons examine the animal.

AMAZON #3

A sorry looking beast?

AMAZON #2

They use these in the fields - we have

captured a few more!

Amazon #1 and Amazon #4 stroke the tired horse - they seem angry at its poor condition.

AMAZON #1
The poor beast seems as starved as we?

AMAZON #2
They use them for ploughs and carts.

Amazon #4 feeds the horse some grass as she whispers a soft prayer to the horse-goddess in its ear.

AMAZON #3
Perhaps others here will be in better condition? And now we can scout ahead.

Amazon #1 wipes a tear from her eye.

AMAZON #1
It saddens me to see the state of this noble animal. And the Persians and Greeks call us 'savages'??

FADE TO

EXT. STREETS OF BORYSTHENES - LATE MORNING (NEXT DAY)

A prosperous Persian coastal city on an island south of modern-day Ukraine (now ruins). Tall buildings, wide plaza's, wide roads and good sanitisation. In the background is a port where the three Persian ships are docked with other ships. LOCALS crowd the streets - Scythians, Chinese, Indians, Persians, travellers and sailors. Market stalls everywhere, offering everything from spices to drugs and prostitutes.

Hanno is accompanied by The New 1st Mate and they push past various Locals and proceed away from the harbour, heading up a hill. The New 1st Mate wheezes as they walk, not very fit.

HANNO
(Annoyed)
Three taverns and not one mercenary to be found! It seems that someone has been here before us...

Gasping, the New 1st Mate points to a large house ahead.

HANNO
That I think is the local officials

house. Let's pay him a visit.

The New 1st Mate NODS - too out of breath to speak.

FADE TO

INT. MANSION AT BORYSTHENES - LATE MORNING

Very Persian in looks and décor. Through large windows the harbour can be seen in the distance. Two HOUSE SLAVES are present, waiting with heads bowed wearing plain tunics.

THE GOVERNOR is a guest here but has taken over. He is about 55 with grey hair and pot-belly, very upper-class.

He is seated with BABEK, both nibbling dates. Babek owns the mansion and is a politician and merchant. Although well dressed his robes are poorer than the wealthy Governor.

TILLY is the daughter of Babek, she stands shyly nearby. She is about 17 and is strikingly pretty.

An ELDERLY SERVANT is in the doorway, bowing his shaved head - he has just announced another visitor.

GOVERNOR
(to Elderly Servant)
Two visitors you say? Sent by the
King? Send them in please, there's a
good fellow.

The Governor glances lustily at Tilly, who smiles shyly back.

GOVERNOR
(to Babek)
If that's fine with you, good Babek? I
feel so welcome here that I was
forgetting I am merely a guest.

Still chewing Babek smiles politely and nods. The Elderly Servant bows to both and withdraws to fetch the visitors.

SLOW FADE TO

INT. MAIN LEISURE AREA, PALACE OF CAMBYSES - LATE MORNING

Cambyses is chasing the two Female Slaves around the rooms WHIPPING them, he pants and laughs. The ladies whimper and run, trying to avoid the lashes but dare not fight back.

The Chamberlain approaches and looks questioningly at

Cambyses who has the slaves cornered.

CHAMBERLAIN
My Lord - have these slaves displeased
you in some way?

Cambyses turns to The Chamberlain, exhilarated.

CAMBYSES
Not at all! Just enjoying a little
sport... Any further news on my newest
slave girl yet?

CHAMBERLAIN
Only that great progress is being
made. The Slave-Master promises that
she will be well worth the wait and
ready within a few days! He works
night and day on her so that she will
be ready all the sooner.

CAMBYSES
Good! I grow tired of my older slaves
and concubines... I long for fresh
fruits yet untouched!

POV from Cambyses as he watches the Female Slaves. They look
alluring, sweaty and panting - cowering nervously.

BACK TO SCENE

The Chamberlain smiles politely and bows - but doesn't
understand what the fuss about females is all about.

FADE TO

EXT. RANSACKED LANDS - PM

Burnt fields and damaged farm buildings in the background. A
few PEASANTS are trying to flee - male farmers.

Amazon #4 is mounted and riding-down peasants in the
background, YELPING with glee. Other Amazons chase Peasants
on foot or fire captured bows with deadly accuracy.

In the foreground walk Amazon #1, #2 and #3 - killing any
nearby peasants casually as they wander and chat.

AMAZON #3
These Persian peasants are fat and
weak! No match at all for us.

Amazon #3 nods then HURLS a spear - it THUDS into a fleeing Peasant who collapses and dies.

AMAZON #2

It seems strange we have yet to see women here? Not so much as a girl.

AMAZON #1

Persians do not value women - they keep them locked away, having children and acting as servants and maids.

AMAZON #3

Perhaps we should liberate them before we all meet our glorious end?

AMAZON #1

Every man we kill here is another woman set free.

Amazon #1, #2 and #3 wander towards a wooden barrel where a Peasant is hiding. The Amazons are fully aware of this.

AMAZON #3

Myodora - will you lead us? You are of noble birth and it was your plan that helped us escape.

AMAZON #2

Yes - you should lead us in our vengeance! We owe our freedom to you. With you we can kill many Persians before we die.

Amazon #1 pulls the lid off the barrel and pulls out the Peasant by his ears. She HEADBUTTS him then lifts and throws him to the ground where he lays dazed.

AMAZON #1

Very well sisters - I am honoured! I will follow in Myrina's heroic steps. We will cause these Persians to shudder at the name 'Amazon'!

Amazon #1 draws her KNIFE and CASUALLY STABS the Peasant in his gut in a slow sawing motion. He SCREAMS and expires.

FADE TO

INT. SLAVE QUARTERS, PALACE - PM

The two Nubian Guards are watching Xanthe closely. The Slave-Master is sitting on a cushion by a low table, waiting to be served. Xanthe now wears new silks that show more than they conceal. She is preparing food on a tray on a side-table.

PAN OUT from Xanthes knife SAWING a slice of Persian bread.

The Slave-Master smiles as Xanthe approaches with the tray and carefully sets-up dishes and drink before him.

The Slave-Master deliberately KNOCKS OVER the drink, the wine splashes everywhere. Xanthe says nothing and quickly begins to tidy, as The Slave-Master observes closely.

SLAVE-MASTER

Very good! It seems hard to believe
you are an Amazon Queen, being so
quick to obey? You must be
unaccustomed to following orders?

XANTHE

I am unaccustomed to the punishments
you seem to enjoy bestowing. So I do
what I must to avoid them... Master.

SLAVE-MASTER

Are you not angry to be made a slave?
To suffer the whims of your captors?

XANTHE

I accept my fate - for I am educated
enough to know the ways of the world -
to the victor belong the spoils. At
least I have my life and the promise
of better treatment in return for hard
work and faithful service.

SLAVE-MASTER

I heard you Amazons prefer death to
slavery, or subservience to men?

XANTHE

I prefer life to death, even if that
means I must obey.

SLAVE-MASTER

So you say, but words are easily
spoken... Help me up to my feet?

Xanthe obeys, helping The Slave-Master stand.

SLAVE-MASTER
Now slave - strip!

Xanthe obediently removes all her clothing, perhaps knowing the Slave-Master is a eunuch.

SLAVE-MASTER
Walk up and down for me.

Xanthe does as instructed, walking gracefully up and down as The Slave-Master watches. The Nubian Guards watch closer.

SLAVE-MASTER
You certainly have the bearing of a Queen, even when being shamed. Now - face the wall and lean.

Xanthe obeys, putting her palms on the wall.

SLAVE-MASTER
Open your legs wider! Good.

The Slave-Master SNAPS his fingers at the nearest Nubian guard. He nods and stands behind Xanthe and eagerly unfastens his lower clothing.

SLAVE-MASTER
Do not resist slave - you may find Nubians different to other men. Bigger and more of a challenge!

The Slave-Master nods to The Nubian Guard behind Xanthe. She GASPS as the guard thrusts into her from behind. After a few thrusts the Nubian Guard settles into a steady rhythm.

SLAVE-MASTER
You seem to be having no trouble? Did you have many lovers before?

XANTHE
As I mentioned before Master, I am no stranger to men and their ways.

The Nubian Guard picks up pace, starting to enjoy his task. The Slave-Master watches for a moment, curious about a deed he is unable to perform himself.

SLAVE-MASTER
That is evident. But remember - as a

slave your own pleasure is irrelevant - your only priority is pleasing your master. Make my man here happy, if you are able to do so?

XANTHE
Of course... Master.

Xanthe grits her teeth and tenses - The Nubian Guard GASPS and thrusts harder - now panting and juddering happily.

SLAVE-MASTER
Good... Excellent! The King of Kings will be very pleased...
(to Nubian Guard)
That's enough - get out before you seed her, you idiot!

The Guard reluctantly withdraws and begins to tuck himself in. Xanthe is now sweaty as The Slave-Master pulls her to face him, moving his face close to hers.

SLAVE-MASTER
You may make a good slave after all...
But remember - the King expects blind obedience, even if that means your life. Your life is no longer your own.

XANTHE
I expect nothing more... Master.

FADE TO

EXT. OLBIA AND SURROUNDING LANDS - PM

OLBIA is a walled citadel surrounded by fertile farmland, a primitive SCYTHIAN town conquered by Persians. Buildings have had Persian modifications and additions in recent years.

NOTE: These people worship a SEA GOD and fish and dolphins are common decorations throughout the whole settlement.

In the distance approaching are several Amazons on horses.

FADE TO

INT. OFFICE OF SAUROMACES, OLBIA - PM

The equivalent of a Mayor's office in one of the larger public buildings. Seated at his desk is SAUROMACES, an Olbia citizen with embroidered dolphins on his attire. He is dark-

haired, rugged and rather handsome.

TIGATAO is another leading citizen - he sits opposite Sauromaces, having concluded an argument. He has decorative fish motifs on his clothes. Both men are in their 30's.

SAUROMACES

I know you don't hate the Persians as much as I do Tigatao - but raiders pillage our farms and where is Governor Kambujiya? Our Persian overlord and supposed protector?

Tigatao opens his mouth to reply but Sauromaces continues.

SAUROMACES

Too busy off grovelling to his mad king, no doubt!

(rising angrily)
To think we were once Scythians - proud warriors! Now reduced to relying on Persians for protection... Such is the price of becoming 'civilised'.

The door busts open and THE MILITIA CAPTAIN enters. He is about 40 and dressed in leather armour with a spear and shield. (Their shields and armour look like fish-scales).

MILITIA CAPTAIN

Lord Sauromaces - we are attacked!

SAUROMACES

WHAT?!?

MILITIA CAPTAIN

Raiders are at the walls!!

FADE TO

EXT. WALLS OF OLBIA - PM

Large walls span the town and have battlements. PEASANTS flee towards the gates as several mounted Amazons ride them down, on captured horses with weaponized tools - led by Amazon #3.

The peasants are male, workers from nearby farms.

A few Peasants make it inside the settlement as MILITIA ARCHERS hurry into position on the battlements and ready crossbows. (Militia have limited combat experience).

MILITIA CAPTAIN (O.S)
Close the Gate! Close the gate!!

The Gate closes - sealing several Peasants outside.

The Amazons waste no time charging and riding them down, SHRIEKING WILDLY and revelling in killing.

MILITIA CAPTAIN (O.S)
Fire! FIRE! FIRE NOW!!

A volley of arrows THUD DOWN from the battlements, most missing the Amazons and hitting the Peasants instead.

Amazon #3 is closest to the gate - she drops her 'spear', leaps off her horse, grabs a wounded peasant and LIFTS HIM as a shield. Arrows THUD into the Peasant as she and the other Amazons retreat.

Once out of range she climbs on her horse and gallops away with the Amazons, all SHRIEKING - happy to find a challenge.

FADE TO

INT. MANSION AT BORYSTHENES - PM

The House Slaves are present, as is Tilly. Hanno and The New 1st Mate stand before The Governor and Babek. Tilly looks at Hanno with curiosity. The Governor is seated and nibbling some olives from a bowl as they talk.

GOVERNOR
Amazons? The raiders are AMAZONS??

Babek GASPS LOUDLY and nervously pours himself a drink - spilling most of the wine in the process.

HANNO
Does that make a difference?

GOVERNOR
It may make ALL the difference Hanno.
An Amazon is not easily defeated...
How many did you say is their number?

HANNO
After being adrift and from likely casualties - probably 200 at most.

GOVERNOR
200 blood-thirsty Amazons? With all of

Arachosia left undefended?!

Babek DROPS the wine decanter noisily - Tilly and one of the House Slaves hurry forward and begin to tidy the mess.

HANNO

These are half-starved, unarmed and unarmoured. And furthermore no horses, so little better than ordinary women. How many mercenaries have you?

GOVERNOR

A little under 200, as most had departed for the battle at Thermelon and have yet to return... But I have my personal guard here with me.

HANNO

Your own body guard?

The new 1st Mate waves to a Slave - they hurry and refill his goblet of wine, which he gratefully drinks.

GOVERNOR

Yes - hand-picked warriors, veterans to a man and all well trained. They number fifty. Good Babek here has also offered several of his household guards to join us, as well as putting us up as we gather and prepare.

Babek nods proudly, but CHOKES as his sips his wine.

HANNO

Why is your province undefended?

GOVERNOR

Local troops were sent to serve Commander Hydarnes. Immediately after the battle they all disbanded...

(leans closer, lowering voice)

Lower ration costs that way - they make their way home at their own expense.

(speaking normally)

Raising additional forces again so soon will prove very difficult.

HANNO

It seems disbanding was premature?

Babek NODS in agreement, opening his mouth to speak but being cut-off by The Governor.

GOVERNOR

Blame the Commander - not me! But how was he to know? The Amazons were crushed, all enemies dead... Now they appear again from nowhere! Attacking farmsteads, burning grain stores, killing livestock and peasants alike!

Having cleaned the mess Tilly wanders back to her original position - the Governor watches her lustfully.

HANNO

If they can't be stopped the King will retaliate, sending one of his great armies - but that will take time. Bad news always travels slowly...

The New 1st Mate waves again to a Slave - they hurry and refill his goblet - he is making the most of his visit.

GOVERNOR

I have already displeased The King of Kings in some previous unpleasantness that I prefer not to discuss... When Cambyses realises whats happened here and that we cannot hope to generate our annual stipend... Well...

(trails off, worried)

HANNO

Well Governor at least you've cheered me up - I've finally met someone who is even more doomed than me!

Babek BURSTS OUT LAUGHING. The Governor glares at him and he returns to sipping his wine and keeping quiet.

GOVERNOR

I'm not done yet! That is why I am here - gathering mercenaries I'll lead personally... But I had no idea we were up against Amazons.

HANNO

I suggest we combine forces? I have knowledge of our foe and I can offer three ships, each with a small but

loyal crew for auxiliaries.
Furthermore I have coin from The King
to hire additional mercenaries.

GOVERNOR
Ships would be ideal! As for
mercenaries every available one is
already in my pay, save your money...

The Governor CLAPS his hands - a House Slave hurries forward
and helps him to his feet.

GOVERNOR
(To slaves)
Bring refreshments for my new allies!

The New 1st Mate grins - music to his ears.

FADE TO

EXT. AMAZON CAMPSITE - PM

A mobile camp of tents in the vicinity of Oliba, made from
materials taken from farms. Several Amazons are present,
gathered around Amazon #1, #2, #3 and #4. The Amazons are more
organised, weapons made from tools and all better dressed.

Amazon #3 has sustained a wound from an arrow - which Amazon
#4 is treating silently as the others talk.

AMAZON #3
No warriors came to fight us - instead
they hid behind walls and fired at us
like cowards. We must attack before
they are ready and organised!

AMAZON #1
We have no siege weapons, no ladders.
Our losses may be absolute.

AMAZON #3
They are ill-prepared, if we move
quickly we can overwhelm them - level
the whole town before the day is out!
(wincing)
Careful Otara!

Amazon #4 shrugs apologetically and steps away.

AMAZON #2
These Persian dogs shamed us! We are

too few now to reach the lands we set out for, so let us avenge ourselves and our fallen sisters! Strike fear into the hearts of our enemies!

AMAZON #3
Honour demands we take revenge on those who kept us prisoner! Let them tremble at the name 'Amazon'!!

The Amazons nearby nod and whisper to each other. Amazon #4 snarls and clenches her fists, eager to fight.

AMAZON #1
You are right sisters, you are right!
The Gods have given us this chance for glory! We must avenge ourselves!!
(shouting to all)
We will attack and show NO MERCY!!!

The Amazons CHEER and wave their weapons eagerly.

SLOW FADE TO

EXT. OUTER WALLS OF OLBIA - LATE PM

The gates are closed, any corpses removed and the Militia Archers are at the walls. The sun is lower in the sky and shimmering heat wafts up from the dry dusty ground.

NOTE: CGI may be needed here.

Just outside are 150 x hidden Amazons - under camouflaged blankets that match the dusty ground. They have crept closer undetected, including Amazon #3 and #4. The Militia Archers gaze out from the battlements - seeming worried.

Suddenly Amazon #3 tears off her cloak, jumps up and waved her makeshift axe and SCREAMS! All the Amazons do likewise - appearing en-mass SCREAMING - then CHARGE towards the walls.

The Militia Archers are startled and fumble their weapons.

MILITIA CAPTAIN (O.S)
Fire fools! Fire for your lives!!

An ALARM BELL RINGS inside the settlement.

Arrows FIRE DOWN - killing and wounding some Amazons, but they continue. A few Amazons pause to fire bows back - Amazons are much more accurate and several Archers drop dead.

The Amazons reach the walls and begin to CLIMB - some using knives and farm-tools, some bare hands. The Militia Archers FIRE down at them, panicking and afraid.

FADE TO

EXT. TOWN SIDE OF WALLS, OLIBA - LATE PM

The town-side of the tall walls have ladders and stairs up to the battlements, opposite ramshackle Scythian houses and winding roads. The ALARM BELL and SCREAMING AMAZONS heard.

Sauromaces and Tigatao are ready to ascend the wall with about 40 X MILITIA - all in leather armour and have shields and spears. Sauromaces wears finely made 'lamella' armour - the best quality available which indicates his seniority.

SAUROMACES

Up the walls men! Quickly!! If they take the walls we're all dead!

Tigatao quickly leads the Militia up the ladders and stairs to the battlements, with Sauromaces following behind all.

FADE TO

EXT. BATTLEMENTS OF WALLS, OLIBA - LATE PM

The battlements are wide, as are the walls. Frightened Militia Archers are shooting at screaming Amazons who are rapidly climbing. 30 Militia soldiers led by Tigatao are spreading along the walls, just as Amazons reach the top.

The first wave of Amazons SCREAM in fury and GRAB the Militia Archers and hurl them over the side where other Amazons below tear them apart. Other Archers drop their bows and RUN!

Tigatao and the Militia Soldiers hurry to attack the Amazons - thrusting long spears and blocking with shields. The un-armoured Amazons mostly have adapted farm-tools but fight.

The first wave of Amazons are soon killed but are quickly replaced by others climbing the walls, this group led by Amazon #4. On seeing their dead sisters the Amazons SCREAM more furiously - the Soldiers start to fall back, afraid.

Tigatao charges alone - stabbing and fighting. His brave attack shames his men and brings them back to order. The Militia work as a team with Tigatao - stabbing the Amazons.

Amazon #4 is stabbed by Tigatao but pulls out the spear,

SHRIEKS with rage and DIVES onto him, knocking him down.

Sauromaces arrives up the stairs. He uses his spear and KILLS Amazon #4 and pulls her off Tigatao. Tigatao scrambles up, flustered. Sauromaces glances down at the attackers below.

SAUROMACES
Young men without beards? Perhaps
shock troops to test our defences?

An Amazon arrow WHIZZES PAST Sauromaces, just missing him.

A DIFFERENT BELL rings further away - the opposite side.

SAUROMACES
There are attacking the other side!
Tigatao - take a detachment to the
Southern wall - quickly!

Tigatao nods and waves to nearby Militia Soldiers - he and about 15 soldiers hurry along the battlements, leaving about 20 soldiers and Sauromaces behind.

A third wave of Amazons clamber over the wall, with Amazon #3 among them. They snarl, trembling with rage.

Tigatao glances back but Sauromaces waves him on.

SAUROMACES
Go Tigatao, go! I will hold this side
to the last man if I must!

The Amazons charge at the remaining Soldiers, eager for blood. Amazon #3 kills one of the Militia Soldiers and now focuses on Sauromaces who she realises is the leader.

AMAZON #3
(to Sauromaces)
Time to die, little man!

Sauromaces does not understand her language. After exchanging a flurry of blows he wounds Amazon #3, causing her to drop her weapon and topple to her knees in a pool of blood.

SAUROMACES
Who are you? Why are you attacking?!

Sauromaces aims his spear at Amazon #3 who looks angrily up at him. She SPITS BLOOD and dives up at him desperately trying to take him to the afterlife with her.

Sauromaces STABS - killing Amazon #3.

He studies her corpse and is surprised to find the attackers are female. Another group of Amazons appear over the wall.

FADE TO

EXT. SOUTHERN WALLS OF OLBIA - LATE PM

Walls the far side of Oliba, facing south - the battle rages to the north and there are only a handful of Militia Archers here. Two Alarm BELLS are ringing inside the settlement.

Amazon #1 is leading a mounted Amazon CHARGE of about thirty mounted Amazons, all have makeshift weapons and bows.

As the Amazons CHARGE to the wall the Militia Archers fire - all missing the fast-moving targets.

Now at the wall The Amazons gallop around in a wide circle, FIRING their bows when near and reloading as they gallop away so firing constantly in a mobile circle. Their arrows kill ALL the Militia Archers after several moments.

AMAZON #1
KILL THEM!! KILL THEM ALL!!!

Amazon #1 jumps off her horse and begins climbing the wall, followed by her eager companions.

QUICK FADE TO

EXT. BATTLEMENTS OF WALLS, OLIBA - LATE PM

Many dead here - mostly Amazons. Other Amazons are climbing-up, screaming and snarling. Sauromaces has re-organised the Militia - those with spears stab down at the Amazons and deflect arrows with their shields. Those with bows fire down from behind those with shields.

Sauromaces watches, satisfied - but glances at dead Amazons and seems troubled about killing so many women.

QUICK FADE TO

EXT. SOUTHERN BATTLEMENTS, OLIBA - LATE PM

The dead Militia Archers lay here as Amazon #1, Amazon #2 and the group of formerly mounted Amazons climb onto the walkway.

Tigatao arrives from further along the battlements with his

group of 15 Militia Soldiers - armed with spears and shields. He HOWLS and charges - his men follow.

A few Amazons are KNOCKED OFF the wall or impaled by spears - Amazon #1 however SCREAMS IN RAGE and leaps between the spears and knocks down two of the Militia.

AMAZON #1
DIE PERSIANS, DIE!!

Tigatao STABS her with his spear, injuring her shoulder. She SNARLS up at him but he SMASHES his shield in her face.

QUICK FADE TO

EXT. OUTER WALLS OF OLBIA - LATE PM

30 Amazons climbing and another 50 grounded and waiting their turn. Militia Archers who fled before have returned and are firing down - the waiting Amazons have to use their fallen comrades as meat-shields. About 20 x Amazons are on the battlements, clashing viciously with Soldiers and Sauromaces. The Amazons seem to be losing momentum, the attack falters.

There is the sound of HORSES approaching from around the wall. Amazon #2 and a couple of the Amazon riders ride into view - with Amazon #1 bloodied and unconscious over one of the horses - all have fresh wounds.

AMAZON #2
(Calling to Amazons)
FALL BACK! Our attack has failed! Fall
back before we are all lost!!

The climbing Amazons begin to descend. Those grounded hurry to attend any injured Amazons, trying to shield companions as they start to retreat from the Militia.

The Militia Archers seem too tired to shoot (or low on arrows). The Amazons all retreat together, careful not to leave any of their wounded behind.

MILITIA CAPTAIN (O.S)
They're retreating! We won!! Praise
the gods - they're leaving!

Militia begin to CHEER. A few archers aim at the departing Amazons - but Sauromaces waves to let them go unharmed.

FADE TO

INT. ROYAL BED CHAMBER - EVENING

An opulent 'Eastern' style room with a huge bed. The Chamberlain is bowing as he reverses towards the door. Xanthe is wearing makeup with hair tied up in gold braids and a slinky silk dress. She looks stunning as she stands smiling at Cambyses - who is clad only in his loincloth.

The Chamberlain glances with concern at Xanthe for a moment then exits apprehensively, closing the door behind him.

Xanthe stands legs apart and thrusts out her chest.

ANGLE from behind Xanthe, facing Cambyses from between her legs as he looks her up and down. The flimsy clothing of Xanthe drops to the floor around her ankles as Cambyses stares - impressed and excited.

CAMBYSES
(licking lips)
Oh yes... Finally!!

FADE TO

INT. MANSION AT BORYSTHENES - LATE MORNING (NEXT DAY)

Hanno is seated with The Governor, who is relaxing drinking wine and finishing some olives. Babek is gone but Tilly remains, crossed-legged doing some embroidery - of a romanticised Amazon warrior. The Governor is sat opposite and he eyes her longingly. Hanno stares out at the harbour.

The Governor looks Tilly up and down. She smiles back shyly.

GOVERNOR
Fine needlework. If only Amazons were more like those you're depicting.

HANNO
No-one wants pictures of self-mutilated women covered in blood Governor. Nor can imagine such horror.

The Governor 'accidentally' drops his bowl, it rolls along the stone floor and rests under the table near Tilly.

GOVERNOR
Ah silly me! Tilly my dear - would you mind helping an old man? My knees are not what they once were...

Tilly SMILES and retrieves the dropped bowl, turning her back to the Governor and BENDING as she reaches under the table.

POV from The Governor - watching Tilly. He GASPS as she bends and stretches, her dress barely covering her bottom.

BACK TO SCENE

Hanno notices the Governors antics and scowls.

HANNO

You seem surprisingly relaxed Governor, if you don't mind me saying? Is it not your own province being raided? Time may not be a concern for you - but it matters greatly to me.

GOVERNOR

No point in working one's self into a frenzy for no good reason Hanno... Besides - I have good reason to be relaxed. Meet Gisgo - an old friend.

The Governor waves to someone in the doorway - this is GISGO THE SPY - a scruffy shifty-looking man. He GRUNTS as he steps towards Hanno and offers a glimpse of his tongue-less mouth.

HANNO

He has no tongue?

GOVERNOR

No - but he has the most excellent ears and eyes. And fortunately Gisgo is able to write whatever he sees...

Tilly hands the bowl to The Governor and returns to her seat.

GOVERNOR

Thank you Tilly.

(sips wine)

Not only do I find Gisgo the most peaceful of company he has brought me important news from Oliba - a walled citadel about a days ride due East.

Gisgo nods proudly. Tilly looks him up and down, unsure what to make of this strange visitor.

HANNO

I know of Oliba - good farm lands. The far Eastern part of your province I'm

guessing?

GOVERNOR

(nodding)

The Amazons attacked there a day ago
but were unable to breach the walls.
They have set-up camp nearby, licking
their wounds.

HANNO

Then we know where to go! Shall we
leave at once??

GOVERNOR

Are your ships prepared and ready?

HANNO

Of course! We can sail with the tide?

GOVERNOR

So soon? I hate travelling by sea
Hanno - it ruins my digestion and I
never get any rest... I think perhaps
tomorrow morning, when its lighter and
I've slept properly.

The Governor looks Tilly up and down, fantasising.

HANNO

If you prefer? Need I remind you
though the longer we wait - the
greater the chance they may allude us?

GOVERNOR

I'm sure Babek won't object to us
staying one extra night. He is too
cowardly to join us but I do so like
his company. And that of his daughter!

Tilly smiles shyly at the Governor, not used to so much
attention. Gisgo steps forward and WINKS at Tilly, also
finding her attractive. Hanno SIGHS - yet another delay.

FADE TO

EXT. AMAZON CAMP NEAR OLBIA - LATE MORNING

The Amazons have moved their camp nearer Olbia - which can be
seen in the distance, the large gates closed. About 160
Amazons remain, about 40 are wounded. The last several horses
are grazing nearby. Facing the town is Amazon #2 - keeping

watch. Amazon #1 lounges, both are bandaged and rested.

AMAZON #1

You should have let us all die with honour - then we'd be with out glorious ancestors in the hereafter, not battered and bloodied like this.

AMAZON #2

To die failing is not a good death, by retreat we might try again.

The town gates open and Amazon #2 points.

AMAZON #2

To arms Sisters - the gates open!!

The Amazons clamber up and grab their weapons - turning to look at the settlement. About 200 Town Militia are exiting, with spears and shields ready.

QUICK FADE TO

EXT. OLIBA AND SURROUNDING LANDS - LATE MORNING

The Amazon Camp is nearer the walled town. The gates of Oliba are open as Sauromaces leads 200 Militia outside. The less-injured Amazons quickly exit their camp and mount the remaining horses - others hurry and form a line and ready bows. Amazon #1 is too wounded to move quickly, she is aided by Amazon #2 as they grab weapons and join the archers.

AMAZON #2

(pointing to Sauromaces)

That man in armour seems the leader?

If we slay him they will become demoralised and confused.

AMAZON #1

Fire my sisters! Shoot them down!!

The Amazons FIRE their arrows. Before the first arrow hits the Militia quickly form a SHIELD WALL - inter-locking shields like a shell. The arrows pepper harmlessly down as The Militia continue closer - with shields raised.

AMAZON #1

(shouting to mounted Amazons)

Get ready to charge the flanks! Break their wall of shields!

The mounted Amazons quickly form two groups in wedge formation on either side of the archers.

The Militia suddenly STOP and retreat back towards their town - still using their 'shield wall' for protection. A few Amazon arrows continue to bounce harmlessly off them.

AMAZON #2
WAIT SISTERS! They are leaving! Are they afraid of us perhaps?

AMAZON #1
HOLD! All hold positions! Stop!

Where the Militia were previously are bags of supplies and a cage containing live chickens. As the Militia retreat to the gates a few Amazons edge closer. The Amazons find the supplies and hold them up suspiciously so all can see.

AMAZON #2
What is the meaning of this? Have they gone mad with fear?

Amazon #1 waves to the line of Amazon archers - they lower their bows and all go to investigate what has been left. Some look questioningly at their leader, fearing a trap.

AMAZON #1
Gather the supplies - but beware of traps and tricks!

The Militia reach the gate - they break formation and hurry back inside the town, the gates close quickly behind them.

FADE TO

INT. ROYAL BED CHAMBER - EVENING

Things appear to be happening but are unseen - as both Cambyses and Xanthe are naked and under the bobbing sheets.

CAMBYSES (O.S)
Oh yes - an excellent trick!
Excellent!!

XANTHE (O.S)
I thought you might like this?

CAMBYSES (O.S)
Don't stop - more! Yes.. OH YES!!

The Chamberlain KNOCKS LOUDLY on the door and enters from outside, looking nervous.

CHAMBERLAIN
(Clearing throat loudly)
Sorry to disturb you, oh Great King of Kings...

The head of Cambyses appears from below the sheets.

CAMBYSES
Haxamanish you idiot! This better be more important than your very life?!

CHAMBERLAIN
Urgent news from Arachosia! The province has been attacked by raiders!

CAMBYSES
(very angry)
What?! Who dares attack Persia??!

The Chamberlain loses his nerve and drops to his knees. Luckily for him Commander Hydarnes is just behind him and he steps over the Chamberlain and enters the room with a bow.

HYDARNES
Apologies Lord. My scouts have just confirmed the news... I came here at once to advise you.

CAMBYSES
(annoyed)
Advise me of what? What news?

Cambyses climbs out of bed, pulling the sheets around himself. Hydarnes gets a look at Xanthe who stares back at him - they both like what they see.

HYDARNES
Yesterday Oliba came under siege - attacked by marauding Amazons!

CAMBYSES
(quickly calming)
Amazons you say? Well those will be the ones Captain Hanno is after.

HYDARNES
You already know of them?

CAMBYSES

Of course! A task force of mercenaries is already on its way to re-capture them - sent out days ago.

HYDARNES

Great King - I had hoped to get your permission to raise a small force of my own to intercept them? I could be there within a couple of days.

CAMBYSES

Not needed, I'm sure good old Hanno has things well at hand. Amazons are not so tough, once you learn how to treat them... Right Myrina?

Xanthe smiles at Cambyses but does not reply.

FADE TO

INT. TILLYS BEDROOM, MANSION AT BORYSTHENES - NIGHT

The bedroom is dark with only one lamp for light. There is a gentle TAPPING at Tilly's door. Tilly is nude but pulls on a silk dressing-gown as she hurries to answer.

The door opens - it is The Governor. He grins and gazes furtively behind him then pushes his way into the room.

Tilly opens her mouth to protest but the Governor puts his finger to her lips.

GOVERNOR

(whispering)

Hush girl! If your father hears us he will have us both thrashed! And that would never do, I am very important. It is your duty as a host to keep me safe... And happy.

Tilly looks worried and listens for signs of her Father as the Governor quietly closes the door.

GOVERNOR

I've brought you a present - a sign of my affection for you...

The Governor pulls out a gold necklace with a very large PEARL and dangles this before Tilly.

GOVERNOR
 Young girls still like things like
 this, don't they?

Tilly smiles at the necklace and takes it for further study.

GOVERNOR
 The pearl is from the isle of Crete,
 the gold from Egypt - crafted by the
 Pharaohs personal smith!

The Governor runs his finger in the gap of Tilly's dressing-gown and grins leeringly, finally near his objective.

GOVERNOR
 I won't be back after tomorrow...
 Probably not again for several months
 - so I wanted to leave something to
 remember me by. Perhaps you could do a
 little something for me, to show your
 gratitude in return?

Tilly smiles, removes her gown and lays on the bed. The Governor grins and quickly joins her, removing his robes.

The Governors hands wander over Tilly for a moment then he clammers on top of her between her legs. She GASPS - because he is so fat and heavy. He begins to pump eagerly as Tilly studies the necklace, holding it up behind his back. She politely feigns excitement by squealing softly.

PAN DOWN to the bottom of the bed.

UNKNOWN to the Governor the boots of Gisgo The Spy are sticking out - he is under the bed having got here first, in more ways than one. The BED CREAKS and Tilly GASPS.

GOVERNOR
 You ARE a good girl!! Lovely! Lovely!!

Gisgo SIGHS - it's going to be a long night.

FADE TO
 EXT. OLIBA AND SURROUNDING LANDS - MIDDAY (NEXT DAY)

The following day - The Town Militia are in 'shield wall' formation and are retreating to the gates. Only a few Amazons fire at them - the arrows bounce off the shields. Again fresh supplies have been left and the Amazons are beginning to check these with weapons at the ready. Amazon #1 and #2 are

among those examining the new goods left behind.

AMAZON #1
More food and supplies, almost like an offering to us?

AMAZON #2
But why? Surely they must hate us for attacking them?

AMAZON #1
Perhaps they plan to poison us?

AMAZON #2
Poison is no way for a warrior to die.
Though they out-number us and could give us a good fight if they wished.

AMAZON #1
I gave up trying to understand the actions of men long ago - they are as spoilt children who think they know all there is to know...

Amazon #2 nods then finds an amphorae of wine, she checks it then holds it up towards Amazon #1, smiling.

AMAZON #2
But I'm not one to refuse free wine!

FADE TO

INT. MAIN LEISURE AREA, PALACE OF CAMBYSES - MIDDAY

The rooms are empty apart from Xanthe who is now dressed in her silks and she eats a light meal.

Hydarnes enters with The Chamberlain and they look around.

CHAMBERLAIN
Myrina - is his Lordship still sleeping?

Still chewing Xanthe NODS, somewhat happily.

CHAMBERLAIN
You must have REALLY worn him out then?
(to Hydarnes)
Feel free to wait if you wish? His Majesty will be here soon... I have

other urgent matters to attend to.

HYDARNES
Thank you Chamberlain - I shall.

The Chamberlain bows and hurries away, exiting.

XANTHE
I should leave too - but will send a slave to attend you.

Xanthe gathers her plate and nods to Hydarnes as she walks away but he steps closer and blocks her route.

HYDARNES
Don't rush away Myrina... I hoped for a chance to speak with you.

XANTHE
Speak? Cambyses will grow suspicious if we're found together?

HYDARNES
Nonsense, I have good reason to be here... I hear you're his newest slave? And an Amazon no less?

XANTHE
A Queen! But yes - now a mere slave, just a plaything for the king.

HYDARNES
I thought I recognised you from the Kings bedchambers? I liked what I saw. I liked it a lot.

Xanthe moves to leave by Hydarnes gently takes her hand.

FADE TO

EXT. LEAD PERSIAN SHIP - MIDDAY (FOLLOWING DAY)

On deck are a mix of Sailors and several MERCENARIES. The Mercenaries are from all over the world - with unique weapons and armour and all male. To the sides in the distance are the other 2 ships with more sailors. The Governor and Hanno are at the prow gazing towards a distant stretch of coastline.

PAN OUT from the Hand of the Governor who grips the side tightly, he looks seasick and has just vomited.

HANNO

We could already be on the way home by now - these delays of yours seem very poor judgement, in my opinion.

GOVERNOR

Oh stop going on about it Hanno...
(Wiping mouth)

As I said before, the longer we waited the more mercenaries join us, now we're up to 200, plus my guards.

HANNO

A few extra will make little difference overall.

GOVERNOR

You say the Amazons are weakened - poorly organised and unarmed?

HANNO

I am sure of it. They will be tired from the siege too. Finding them will prove the greatest challenge we face - let's hope they did not move on.

GOVERNOR

Even if they did - without horses they will not get far... Or be a match for our combined troops from Oliba itself.

HANNO

Is Oliba well defended?

GOVERNOR

Only local Militia - they will have sent the better fighters to join Commander Hydarnes. But their numbers should still be in the hundreds... The Head Man of Oliba is a fool named Sauromaces - we don't see eye-to-eye but I can count on him to sally-forth when we arrive. He won't be able to resist an easy win to impress his people. The Amazons will be trapped!

HANNO

A sound plan, but remember I must capture at least several prisoners. That was the main point of my mission and I'm running out of time!

GOVERNOR

I doubt The King will be satisfied
with that alone Hanno - so after the
battle I have further plans...

HANNO

Oh?

GOVERNOR

There are fertile lands owned by
Scythian shepherds just north of our
borders... A contested area since
Cyrus the Great conquered this land.
After the Amazons are dealt with I
will drive out the Scythians - take
their land and blame the Amazons. It
shouldn't take more than half a day.

HANNO

So your province expands, the Amazons
are crushed and order restored? Even
Cambyses would be contented I think.

GOVERNOR

And you may take the wives and
daughters of the Scythians should you
wish to make up numbers of captives.
No-one speaks their crude language or
would ever know they are not Amazon.

HANNO

Really Governor - what a wicked mind
you must have?!

The two chuckle - each having found a kindred spirit.

FADE TO

INT. ROYAL BATHROOM, PALACE - MORNING

Persians have water technology and the Palace has a version
of indoor plumbing. Xanthe is naked and having a SHOWER,
unaware Hydarnes is peering in from a gap in the doorway.

PAN OUT from Xanthe as she scrubs and SPITS out a mouthful of
warm water from the shower. Soapy bubbles everywhere.

After a few moments the door CREAKS and Xanthe spots Hydarnes
- she GASPS and covers herself with her hands.

XANTHE
How long have you been here?!

Stepping closer Hydarnes looks Xanthe up and down.

HYDARNES
Long enough to confirm what I only
glimpsed before...

XANTHE
But the King - he'll have you killed
for this! Me too probably?!

HYDARNES
No-one saw me come here, none shall
see me leave.

Hydarnes snatches Xanthe by her wrists, she struggles but
cannot pull free as he eyes her lustily.

XANTHE
Let me go! You shouldn't be in here!

HYDARNES
You're no Amazon - if you were I'd be
dead already! But don't worry -
whoever you are - I can keep your
secret if you do something for me?

Xanthe stops struggling and Hydarnes releases her.

XANTHE
Yes - it is true... I am really just a
slave. My name is Xanthe. Please don't
tell the King or I'm dead! What is it
you want from me then?

Hydarnes smiles and pulls Xanthe closer - kissing her and
pushing her against the wall, her soapy bubbles splashing
over his armour. At first she resists but her resistance
crumbles as she grows more passionate.

FADE TO
EXT. OLIBA AND SURROUNDING LANDS - MIDDAY

Amazon #1 and #2 are at camp with the remaining Amazons - all
seem happier, healthier and in better order.

AMAZON #2
They are coming! The towns-folk are

coming again!

Several Amazons hurry to mount their horses, others line-up with bows as the Militia and Sauromaces approach.

AMAZON #1
Midday again - they seem punctual? If
a little 'touched by the gods'...

The Militia form their shield wall, again they begin to back away having left fresh supplies. This time the Amazons are not hostile, a few hurry to get the new supplies.

Sauromaces however remains behind, he waves his arms in the air at the Amazons - showing his bare wrists. His men pause just outside the town gate this time and wait nervously.

SAUROMACES
(Calling to Amazons)
I wish to speak to your leader!

The closer Amazons grab some supplies and hurry back towards their camp as Sauromaces steps closer. Other Amazons GRAB WEAPONS and hurry towards Sauromaces to intercept him.

SAUROMACES
I come in peace! I wish only to talk!

QUICK FADE TO

EXT. AMAZON CAMP NEAR OLBIA - MIDDAY

Sauromaces sits at the campfire opposite Amazon #1 and #2, all surrounded by armed Amazons who stare suspiciously.

NOTE: Sauromaces and the Amazons speak different languages.

AMAZON #2
(To Amazon #1)
He speaks a Scythian dialect - I know
a few words, but not enough to talk.

AMAZON #1
Has he come to spy and see how few of
us remain? Here to gloat?

AMAZON #2
(To Amazon #1)
He requests a truce - that there is no
more fighting.

AMAZON #1
No fighting? But why??

Amazon #1 makes gestures with her hands - opening her fists and mouthing words questioningly at Sauromaces.

SAUROMACES
My people were once as you -
Scythians! Proud hunters and nomad
warriors... We built these towns but
never forgot our traditions. Then the
Persians came - led by King Cyrus.
They took our lands and force us to
pay them taxes and obey their laws.

AMAZON #2
(To Amazon #1)
He says the Persians control his
settlement - he seems unhappy.

AMAZON #1
Then he should fight for his freedom!
Tell him an Amazon would rather die
free than live on a slave to a king.

AMAZON #2
(To Amazon #1)
I do not know the words - sorry.

AMAZON #1
(to Sauromaces)
Why did you bring us food and
supplies? Why?

Sauromaces looks confused and does not understand.

Amazon #1 retrieves an empty amphora and waves this in the air. Sauromaces understands and nods.

SAUROMACES
These are gifts - we wish to become
friends. Our peoples lived side-by-
side for centuries - we can both
benefit each other.

Sauromaces has a fist with one hand - then extends this and shakes his other hand, to demonstrate 'friendship'.

Amazon #1 nods. She knows one word the Scythian understands - Persian. She utters "PERSIAN" and spits on the ground. Sauromaces smiles and nods.

SAUROMACES
 Persians! Yes - they are scum!!

He also spits - the Amazons seem very pleased.

FADE TO

INT. SLAVE QUARTERS, PALACE - MIDDAY

The Chamberlain and Slave-Master are seated at a table, eating a simple meal as the 2nd Older Slave attends them, refilling their drinking-bowls with water.

SLAVE-MASTER
 I hear The King is very pleased with
 his newest slave?

CHAMBERLAIN
 Too pleased! He is completely smitten!
 Night after night she drives him wild
 with desire, doing all manner of
 strange sexual things for him...

SLAVE-MASTER
 Then what is the problem?

CHAMBERLAIN
 He is obsessed with her! He showers
 her with gifts - gives her her own
 private room, dresses, jewellery, now
 it's rare perfumes from Egypt!

SLAVE-MASTER
 You almost sound jealous, my friend?

The Chamberlain takes a bite of food and glances disapprovingly at the nearby slave who served it.

CHAMBERLAIN
 Something just isn't right I tell you
 - and not just this food. I cannot
 understand how an Amazon would be
 so... So 'giving'? So eager to please.

SLAVE-MASTER
 I'm the best at what I do - as I keep
 telling you! I was methodical and she
 responded well to training, perhaps
 realising it was pointless to resist.
 She even knew some things I didn't!

CHAMBERLAIN

Well lets hope you have as much luck when the other Amazons arrive? There may be hundreds coming in a matter of days. You might want to think about hiring more underlings or guards?

SLAVE-MASTER

If they're all as easily trained as Myrina that won't be necessary... I expect even YOU could break them in!

The Chamberlain takes a bite of food, not convinced.

FADE TO

INT. MAIN LEISURE AREA, PALACE OF CAMBYSES - MIDDAY

Slave-Girl #1 is cowering under a table, under attack from the Persian Leopard which is trying to reach her with its paws but is still chained to the wall and cannot quite reach.

Xanthe hurries forward bravely as the Leopard turns to her, snarling. She now wears a new SILK DRESS and jewellery.

She firmly takes the Leopard by its chain and pulls it away. Sensing it has a firm master the beast cooperates.

Slave-Girl #1 whimpers and crawls away, moving to safely.

XANTHE

You must always be firm with beasts!
If they sense fear they will always attack. This I learned among the Amazons - how to treat animals.

Xanthe strokes the head of the Leopard, it sits obediently.

Slave Girl #1 begins nursing her injuries and snivelling.

XANTHE

Remember this of me Yazmina - today I have saved you from harm!

Slave Girl #1 nods and glances fearfully at the leopard.

FADE TO

EXT. BEACH NEAR OLIBA - MIDDAY

A wide beach overlooked by cliffs. The 3 x Persian ships have

beached and wooden walkways are down as the Sailors and Mercenaries and BODYGUARDS disembark. The Bodyguards wear matching Persian silk armour, with shields and spears and small crossbows. Being unloaded by sailors are CAGES AND CHAINS - ready for prisoners. In the foreground on the beach are The Governor and Hanno with THE MERCENARY CAPTAIN.

The Mercenary Captain is a Mongol and resembles Genghis Khan.

GOVERNOR

For someone in such a hurry we took a long time to arrive here Hanno?

The Mercenary Captain nods in agreement.

HANNO

We sailed against the current, but leaving should be much quicker.

GOVERNOR

I've not been to Oliba for about a year, it's a ghastly place - all Scythian descendants. A backward and unruly bunch. No women here either.

HANNO

No women? How come??

GOVERNOR

Contrary to the rumour about Scythians preferring horses - there was a plague. A deadly outbreak a few decades ago, before we took over. Almost all the women were wiped out. That's what you get for having poor sanitisation, sometimes these barbarians have to learn the hard way.

Hanno seems troubled by this news.

GOVERNOR

Don't worry Hanno - there is no plague now. Your Amazons will die by our arrows and spears - not disease. I modernised the whole town, it's almost fit for a Persian! Well... Almost.

HANNO

You didn't tell me about the lack of women? In fact, you didn't tell me much about anything here.

GOVERNOR

I'm surprised you have an interest?
 Naturally attempts have been made to
 increase numbers of ladies at Oliba,
 incentives and bribes to move here...
 Although no-one seems keen to live in
 old Scythian slums for some reason?

HANNO

It's a shame we brought no cavalry -
 sending a few scouts ahead would be
 very useful... And we might get word
 to Oliba, or find what happened.

GOVERNOR

They'll soon realise what is
 happening. Even dull-witted Scythians
 will recognise liberation when they
 see it marching towards them.

QUICK FADE TO

EXT. CLIFF OVERLOOKING BEACH NEAR OLIBA - MIDDAY

Below the cliff is the previous scene - the three beached
 ships and armed men disembarking. Tigatao has dismounted his
 nearby horse and has crawled to the edge of the cliff to gaze
 down at those arriving. He seems conflicted and uncertain.

FADE TO

EXT. OLIBA AND SURROUNDING LANDS - EARLY PM

The gates of Oliba are closed. The Amazon Camp seems at ease
 yet a couple of Amazons spring up and ready weapons as
 Tigatao approaches in the distance on his horse. His path
 leads towards Oliba and passes near the Amazon camp.

Two of the younger prettier Amazons (with no mutilations)
 jump athletically onto their horses and ride towards Tigatao.

Tigatao stops before they reach him and looks from the
 Amazons to the walled town and back - as if making an
 important decision.

PAN TO Tigatao as he ponders his next move.

FADE TO

EXT. RANSACKED LANDS - EARLY PM

Now abandoned and burnt-out. The Governor, Hanno and Mercenary Captain are leading the Sailors and Mercenaries and Bodyguards along a rough PATH towards a hill in the distance.

HANNO

We are on the right track Governor -
judging by all this devastation.

GOVERNOR

(Gazing at ruins)

Such a terrible waste - mindless
damage for the sake of it. I will have
to help with rebuilding when this is
over... Perhaps you might donate the
Kings money you mentioned?

HANNO

I'll hang onto it for now - it's not
mine to offer. And if I'm late back
I'll need all the leverage I can get.

They all march onwards for a few moments.

GOVERNOR

Oliba should be just beyond that hill,
we'll get a good view of the town too.
Why didn't you land us closer Hanno?

HANNO

Our ships would be spotted - this way
we may have the element of surprise.

GOVERNOR

Ah - good thinking!

FADE TO

INT. LEOPARDS DEN, PALACE - EARLY PM

A semi-abandoned room given over to the Leopard - old clawed and scratched furniture. The unchained Leopard is dozing on cushions in the corner. Xanthe and Hydarnes are naked on a sofa, with Xanthe on top bobbing her head between his legs. Their hastily removed clothing lays on the floor.

HYDARNES

Oh good... So good! OH YES!!

The Leopard opens its eyes a little then goes back to sleep.

There is a POP sound as Xanthe pulls away, wiping her mouth.

XANTHE

I'm glad you liked it... And as you enjoy reminding me - I must work hard to please you, lest you tell the King my little secret.

Xanthe smiles and begins to get dressed.

HYDARNES

You are full of surprises Xanthe. To think I expected to have power over you - but you have bewitched me entirely! How is it you're so skilled, so good at love-making?

XANTHE

I suppose being a slave for so long I automatically think of the pleasure of others ahead of my own - the rest comes naturally. Come on - clean yourself up, else we risk being discovered. I'm sure the King grows suspicious of your recent visits.

Hydarnes starts to get dressed, glancing at the Leopard.

HYDARNES

Not at all. I am petitioning him about raising an expedition to the north, to stave-off other nomadic tribes like the Amazons that trespass our lands... He said to enjoy his hospitality while he considers my latest proposals.

XANTHE

Hydarnes - about what you alluded to - The Kings 'accident'? I know the King has many enemies - not all imagined or just in his troubled mind.

HYDARNES

Hasty words spoken at a moment of passion. I suggest you forget what is said in moments of intimacy, I forget myself when with you.

XANTHE

But what happens to me should the King die? I heard Persian Kings are buried

with widows and favourite slaves.

HYDARNES

That won't happen - I will protect you
and have an army at my back.

XANTHE

Really? Go on...?

Xanthe begins caressing him and rubbing his lower regions.

XANTHE

Or do you need more convincing of my
loyalty?

Xanthe rubs and squeezes.

HYDARNES

No more - I'm exhausted! As you know
Cambyses is as hated as he is mad. He
has murdered my relatives and many
other nobles for no good reason. All
here want him dead but fear him too.

Xanthe rubs more vigorously - Hydarnes GASPS happily.

XANTHE

And??

HYDARNES

My old friend Darius - who I have
known since childhood - plans to usurp
the King. I have secured most of the
army to back us when that happens.

Xanthe slides to her knees and pulls Hydarnes towards her -
he GASPS happily.

XANTHE

But what of you and me?

HYDARNES

As I said - I'll protect you when the
assassins work is done. Oh... Oh good!

Xanthe bobs in-front of Hydarnes, his back to the camera. Her
hands hold onto his backside, he abandons fastening his
clothes and clasps her head instead. After a few moments of
bopping Xanthe leans back and speaks.

XANTHE

I may be of more use to your schemes
than you realise. I do not love the
King, even though he talks about
setting me free and making me his
Queen.

The hands of Xanthe move to the front of Hydarnes.

HYDARNES

His Queen? He hardly knows you! Oh..
Oh... OH!!

Xanthe starts to finish off Hydarnes with her hands, he gasps
and judders happily. (Again her back to the camera).

XANTHE

A Queen without a King will need an
army. Are you not a hero to the
people, a celebrated General,
respected by all?

HYDARNES

(panting)
Yes - that's right... So right!! YES!

The Chamberlains voice can be heard calling from outside.

CHAMBERLAIN (O.S)

(Calling)

Myrina! Myrina - where are you? The
King is in need of you! Myrina!!

Hydarnes steps back nervously and Xanthe quickly stands.

FADE TO

INT. MAIN LEISURE AREA, PALACE OF CAMBYSES - EARLY PM

Slave Girl #1 has been keeping lookout and seems relieved as
Xanthe emerges through an internal door (fully dressed).

The slave waves to Xanthe - someone is approaching. Xanthe
closes the door and straightens her sticky clothing as The
Chamberlain turns around a corner and approaches.

CHAMBERLAIN

Ah Myrina! There you are... The King
wants your 'company'. Where were you?

XANTHE
Just feeding the pussy.

CHAMBERLAIN
Ah yes. No-wonder the beast seems to like you more than any of us. Come.

The Chamberlain seems suspicious but beckons and turns to lead her away. She wipes her mouth and follows behind.

FADE TO

EXT. AMAZON CAMP NEAR OLIBA - MID PM

The Amazon Camp seems abandoned, empty tents and left supplies - no-one in sight. In the background Oliba can be seen, the gates closed. The Governor and Hanno are with the Sailors and Mercenaries and Bodyguards - looking around the camp. (The Mercenary Captain is absent).

GOVERNOR
They appear to have fled? That's women for you - inherently devious. I'm sure half the stories are just made-up.

HANNO
They left in a hurry - many supplies abandoned. They are probably still in the area - so be on your guard!

GOVERNOR
Perhaps those at Oliba can shed some light on what happened? Has Captain Zhenjin returned yet?

HANNO
The Mercenary Captain? No, not that I've seen. At first they seemed reluctant to let him through the gate?

GOVERNOR
Well - he is a mercenary - naturally shifty. Can't say I blame them.

HANNO
(Raising hand)
Quiet - I think I hear horses!

From the far side of Oliba The Amazons appear - mounted on fresh horses - with proper weapons and bows. With them is Amazon #1 and #2. They fan-out and slow to a trot as they

arrive closer to the warriors.

HANNO
(Shouting to all)
Defensive Positions!! MOVE!!!

The bodyguard quickly surround their leader and Hanno, forming a circle around them and point their spears out like a giant porcupine. The Mercenaries form two loose groups either side of the bodyguard, protecting the flanks. The Sailors pull out knives and huddle together at the rear.

GOVERNOR
Horses?! Where did they get so many?

HANNO
Where indeed? A few farm animals
maybe, but these look good quality?

GOVERNOR
And they're armed too - look!!

The Amazons CHARGE - they circle around the soldiers and sailors, firing their bows at close range.

HANNO
Keep down, Governor!

The Mercenaries and Bodyguards mostly have shields that they make good use of - the sailors however are mowed-down.

HANNO
Should we not try to preserve my men?
Unless yours can also sail a ship?

GOVERNOR
Fear not - my personal Guard will be
more than a match for them.

HANNO
Remember - I need prisoners - not
corpses!!

GOVERNOR
(calling to Bodyguards)
Don't just stand there - charge! And
protect the sailors too!!

The Bodyguards reluctantly charge as the Amazons ride out of range of their spears and turn in their saddles to fire at them as they retreat. Several Bodyguards fall dead.

HANNO
Have your men not got bows?

GOVERNOR
Of course! Short-range though.
(calling to Bodyguards)
Return fire! Shoot fools! Shoot!!

The Bodyguards pull out their small crossbows and FIRE at the Amazons - who are mostly already out of range. The Amazons move towards the gates of Oliba and regroup.

CUT TO
EXT. OLIBA AND SURROUNDING LANDS - MID PM

In the foreground is the Governor and Hanno, with surviving Mercenaries, Sailors and Bodyguards - now moving towards the mounted Amazons waiting near the gates with Amazon #1 and #2.

Militia Archers appear on the walls and ready their bows.

The gates open and 200 x Militia exit, led by Sauromaces. With him is The Mercenary Captain and The Militia Captain.

GOVERNOR
Reinforcements! Now we have them
trapped between us both!
(calling to all)
Charge! CHARGE! Before they escape!!

The Amazons pause, looking around - behind are the approaching Militia, ahead the Governors forces.

The Mercenaries, Sailors and Bodyguards CHEER and charge recklessly towards the Amazons, sensing victory. The Town Militia lower their spears and advance, gaining pace.

Hanno and The Governor hurry behind their body of charging men - the Governor is overweight and struggles to keep up.

HANNO
This may be over quickly after all?

GOVERNOR
(panting)
Yes - the only way I lose now is if I
die from a heart-attack!

The Governor soon stops for a moment, panting. Hanno reluctantly stops with him, wanting to fight beside his men.

GOVERNOR
Just a moment, I must catch my breath.

PAN TO THE GOVERNOR as he pants to recover and he gazes at Amazon #1. He sways - light-headed.

POV from Governor - Amazon #1 looks trapped and worried. She has her legs around her horse and bobs up and down in the saddle, she shakes her loose hair and clutches her bow tightly and snarls back at him.

SLOW MOTION EFFECT as the Governor watches - slipping into a day dream (aided by being unfit and lack of air).

ESTABLISH SHIMMERING EFFECT - THE GOVERNORS VISION

As before only now instead of a horse between Amazon #1's legs lays the Governor! Amazon #1 is naked and riding him, throwing her head back in passion. She is clean and wears only makeup. Instead of a bow she cradles the Governors head below her, he is also naked. Amazon #1 rides him harder, pumping and bouncing, now SCREAMING in passion.

The Governor GASPS - looking like he has a heart-attack.

ESTABLISH SHIMMERING EFFECT - VISION ENDS

Back to reality - Amazon #1 is clothed and on her horse as before, with bow in her hand.

Hanno is shaking the Governor, who had slipped into a dream.

HANNO
You alright Governor?

GOVERNOR
What? Er - yes. Fine... Fine...
(wheezing)
After this I might keep an Amazon as a personal slave - something to show to guests at dinner parties and enjoy.

HANNO
Whatever you want, but first we have to beat them! So try to stay focussed.

Hanno and The Governor hurry to catch up with their troops who are now a little way ahead and charging.

Suddenly the Amazons disperse to the sides and The Militia SLAM into the forces of The Governor. Militia Archers begin

to fire down at the Governors troops.

The Governors troops are confused and surprised, dying in great numbers. The Governor whimpers and stares.

The Amazon CHARGE with axes and spears - riding into the Governors troops from the sides who are pinned in place by the Militia - the scene becomes a massacre!

FADE TO

INT. MAIN LEISURE AREA, PALACE OF CAMBYSES - MID PM

Cambyses is seated as Xanthe and the two Female Slave Girls set his plate for dinner. Susian Guard #3 is by the door.

PAN OUT from bloody meat being chopped by Xanthe - she is serving roast beef onto plates for herself and the King.

CAMBYSES

Smells delicious! The Cook was happy to follow your recipe without a fuss?

XANTHE

The Cook was happy to co-operate when told you were keen to sample the food of my people.

The Chamberlain is approaching in a fawning manner, nervous of interrupting during meal time.

CAMBYSES

I've already sampled many of your delights Myrina - so let me taste your cooking as well!

CHAMBERLAIN

Sorry to interrupt Master - but Commander Hydarnes is waiting in the lobby, seeking a further audience.

CAMBYSES

Not that petition business again? He seems here every day of late.

CHAMBERLAIN

He does seem keen my Lord. I can send him away if you wish?

CAMBYSES

No, I'll see him after dinner... At

this rate I might authorise his expedition just to get him out of my hair. There is something else?

CHAMBERLAIN

The agent from Oliba has arrived, with the Horse Merchant of Borysthenes - both have news about the Amazons.

The Chamberlain glances at Xanthe for a moment.

CHAMBERLAIN

I'll be pleased when those pester-some women have finally been dealt with.

Xanthe smiles sweetly back and STABS the beef menacingly.

FADE TO

INT. DECK OF LEAD SHIP - LATE PM

Tired Sailors are in the rigging and adjusting sails (the New 1st Mate is absent). This ship is alone - the others left behind. A few bodyguard are onboard - treating each others wounds and injuries. At the prow is The Governor and Hanno.

GOVERNOR

Sauromaces - that dirty traitor!! What a turncoat! Why would he and the whole settlement turn against us like that??

HANNO

Perhaps the Amazons offered something that you and the Persians could not?

GOVERNOR

At least we made it away alive... I told you my bodyguard were good.

(pause)

I fear The King may choose to remedy that though when we return.

HANNO

You're sure heading back to The King is wise? He will soon learn of our failure, regardless if we hurry.

GOVERNOR

Its better he hears from us before some spy - as I may yet be able to put a 'positive spin' on things...

HANNO
Ha! Really? After this fiasco?

Hanno rummages in his pocket and pulls out a bag of coins.

GOVERNOR
What do you have there Hanno?

HANNO
The money for the mercenaries given to
me by The King... Perhaps if I return
it he will be more merciful.

GOVERNOR
Not tempted to just keep it and make a
run for it? I can be trusted to keep
quiet, I'll say the Amazons got you?

HANNO
No, I like my position as Captain in
the Persian Empire - if the King
decides I must die then I die. At
least my honour dies intact.

GOVERNOR
You ran very quickly back at the beach
for such a man of honour?

HANNO
I've seen how the Amazons kill men -
you'd have run quickly too. In fact -
had I been captured I'd have sipped
some of this.

Hanno pulls out a small bottle of POISON.

GOVERNOR
Poison?

HANNO
Fast acting and potent - death comes
within minutes.

GOVERNOR
You may want to hang onto that? If we
can't talk our way out of this his
Majesty will do things to us that
would make even an Amazon tremble...

FADE TO

EXT. OLIBA AND SURROUNDING LANDS - LATE PM

The fields are now stained with blood and littered with dead sailors, Mercenaries and Bodyguards, there are nearly no dead Amazons or Town Militia.

In the background the Amazon #2 and other Amazons are riding-down and torturing a handful of surviving enemies with glee.

Several TOWNS FOLK - mostly beggars and older people - wander either looting the dead or looking for those they knew.

In the foreground grimly surveying the scene is Sauromaces, lost in thought as The Militia Captain approaches him.

PAN OUT from the New 1st Mate. He is badly wounded and on his knees SHAKING with pain and fear. Amazon #2 is prodding him with a spear - like a cat with a mouse - before RAMMING her spear through him and impaling him fatally into the ground.

PAN to foreground.

The Militia Captain approaches and SALUTES Sauromaces.

MILITIA CAPTAIN
Our casualties were minimal sir.
(sheepishly)
I apologise for questioning you giving
our horses to the Amazons, I've never
seen such horsemanship before! They
were magnificent!!

SAUROMACES
Yes - the Amazons made better use of
them than we ever could.

Amazon #1 approaches Sauromaces on her new horse, passing bodies, looters and fellow-Amazons. She gazes around happily - this scene is heaven for her.

MILITIA CAPTAIN
Some escaped back to their ship. We
could pursue and sink them? Then we
gain more time before the Persians
learn of our revolt.

SAUROMACES
No Hagamasha - let them go, they're
been punished enough. The Persians
will have spies here regardless.
(pause, thinking)

Tell me - are most of the townsfolk
still behind us and our alliance?

MILITIA CAPTAIN
The ones that count Lord, yes... Might I
ask when the other Amazons are
arriving to reinforce us?

SAUROMACES
Yes, good point. I will ask them.

Sauromaces waves to Amazon #1 - she GALLOPS closer.

The Militia Captain nervously backs away but the horse stops
expertly before him and Amazon #1 hops-off athletically.

AMAZON #1
(triumphant, to Sauromaces)
You fought quite well - for a man!

SAUROMACES
Greetings Myodora! Where are the rest
of your people? Will they join you
here soon?

AMAZON #1
I do not understand you Scythian?

Sauromaces points to the Amazons and moves his hands and eyes
to show he wonders where others are. Amazon #1 nods.

AMAZON #1
We are all those remaining! The last
of our tribe - the last.

Sauromaces looks confused, so Amazon #1 makes gestures with
her hands to try and explain.

AMAZON #1
(shaking head and hands)
There are no more. We are all.

Sauromaces understands and he looks worried - The Town
Militia Captain observes this, also understanding.

MILITIA CAPTAIN
These are all? But this is not enough!
Not enough to defend the town when
they come back for us!!

Amazon #1 looks questioningly at The Militia Captain.

FADE TO

INT. CORRIDOR, PALACE - LATE PM

This leads to the Entrance Hall, the far end is a T-junction connecting to other unseen corridors. The Chamberlain is rushing towards the end, muttering and flustered.

CHAMBERLAIN
(muttering to self)
Get the Priest, get the scribe, ready
the main hall quickly indeed! And all
within the hour... Madness!

The Chamberlain hurries along and bumps into Slave Girl #1 who arrives turning the corner in a hurry. She whimpers and drops the folded dress, shoes and jewellery she was carrying.

CHAMBERLAIN
Pick that up quick! That's the wedding
dress! Is Zahra helping the cook with
the nibbles for the guests?

Both begin to pick up the dress and dropped items as Slave Girl #1 NODS in reply, fearful of punishment.

CHAMBERLAIN
At least the full state version of
this nonsense takes months to arrange,
I won't be running about then... If
she survives longer than the other
ones, which I doubt.

The Male Slave arrives - hurrying rounding the corner. He carries a large vase of Persian flowers (roses, tulips, marjoram and white jasmine) and trips over The Chamberlain and Slave Girl #1 who are still bending.

CLATTER! The vase breaks and flowers fall everywhere.

CHAMBERLAIN
You fool! Get this lot cleaned-up or
we're all for it!!

The Male Slave whimpers and begins to gather the flowers.

CHAMBERLAIN
By the Gods I hate this rushing about,
who'd be a slave?!

FADE TO

INT. OFFICE OF SAUROMACES, OLBIA - MORNING

Sauromaces is hunched over a large map on the table, opposite Amazon #1 and Amazon #2 plus a couple of additional Amazons. Behind Sauromaces is Tigatao and the Militia Captain and a couple of TOWNS FOLK - mostly now unarmed and un-armoured and all have slept and bathed since the battle.

PAN OUT from map on table - this shows the Black Sea and various Persian settlements all around, with Scythian lands to the north and unsettled lands to the East. Oliba is to the north-east of the map, East of the island settlement of Borythenes in the top-middle.

SAUROMACES

(Pointing to East side of map)

You were heading South through Persian territory, looking for the lands known as 'Kalmykia' to resettle? The Persian Army came - you fought and lost - and the last of you are trapped here?

Amazon #2 NODS then turns to Amazon #1

AMAZON #2

Their language makes more sense now, I remember more words - but they are not yet easily spoken.

AMAZON #1

These would-be Scythians do rabbit on, I think I preferred them as enemies. Does he say anything notable or merely ask more foolish questions?

AMAZON #2

I explained we were travelling East. He said the route and lands are known to him. He says another Army will come soon, because they helped us they will all be punished or killed.

AMAZON #1

Tell him that he and those among his people who wish may travel with us - we will resume our trek to the lands told to us by our grandmothers, lands outside the reach of Persia.

Amazon #2 attempts to talk in Scythian but talks gibberish. As before SUBTITLES should appear.

AMAZON #2
 (gibberish - to Sauromaces)
 We go East again - you join us? We
 allies now - we will protect you.

Sauromaces does not understand, so Amazon #2 points on the map and waves her hands to the Amazons and then to him and his people. Her gestures indicate they can travel together.

SAUROMACES
 (understanding and happy)
 We can join you? Travel to the new
 lands together you mean?

The males present begin to eye the females, getting ideas.

SAUROMACES
 (to Militia Captain)
 We can live as our grandparents did!
 Join the Amazons and head East -
 outside the Persian Empire. Spread the
 word to the towns people - all who
 wish to travel may come with us!

MILITIA CAPTAIN
 (pleased)
 Yes Sir - at once!

SAUROMACES
 We'll be long-gone by the time the
 Persian Army arrives. Let them have
 the walls and buildings - we will be
 safe and free - with Amazon wives!!

The Militia Captain, Tigatao and the Locals chat excitedly between themselves as they hurry away to spread the news.

AMAZON #2
 (to Amazon #1)
 They seem very keen on this idea?

Sauromaces looks Amazon #2 up and down, smiling.

AMAZON #1
 I expect they have other ideas of what
 they'll be getting along the way -
 there seems very few women here.

AMAZON #2
 Amazons are not wives! Men serve us -
 we are not their playthings or pets!!

AMAZON #1
Do not worry Hippothea - we will soon
have them whipped into shape. Taming
civilised men is very easy.

Amazon #2 nods and smiles. Sauromaces grins back at her, not
understanding her words or intentions.

FADE TO

CGI / MODEL SHOT - PERSIAN SHIP APPROACHING HERACLEA - AM

The Persian City 'Heraclea Pontica' has a huge Port and even
a lighthouse (smaller than the one at Pharos). A few Persian
trade ships sail to and fro. The Kings Summer Palace is up on
a hill overlooking the whole city.

The Lead Persian approaches the port.

PAN TO LEAD SHIP - here Hanno and the Governor are wandering
together on deck.

QUICK CUT TO

INT. DECK OF LEAD SHIP - MORNING

A few Sailors are adjusting the sails, slowing as the ship
enters the port. In the background is a glimpse of the
sprawling city of Heraclea Pontica as seen previously.

Pacing the deck is The Governor. Hanno stands nearby,
slightly amused at the Governors growing nervousness.

HANNO
What was that unpleasantness you
mentioned, between yourself and the
King? Just so I know when we arrive,
should this come up in conversation?

GOVERNOR
Oh? Well years ago there were rumours
I'd been dipping-into the taxes I was
collecting, after an extended period
of coming-up a little short.

HANNO
And had you?

GOVERNOR
Of course! The pittance I'm paid and
the stress I'm under, it is only right

I get to put a little away for myself.

Hanno thinks to himself for a moment.

GOVERNOR

What about you Hanno? Anything I need to know before we meet The King? I heard that you are respected as a naval man, you won many battles?

Hanno shrugs, not one for boasting or flattery.

GOVERNOR

Surely you must 'play the game' too? I cannot believe that anyone is 'whiter than white' and able to still ascend.

HANNO

I've always got the job done at any cost... Some might call me 'ruthless'. But I've worked hard and have built my reputation up over the years.

GOVERNOR

And what would you say motivates you most? Glory or gold?

HANNO

Glory is fleeting. None may get far without gold in this life.

GOVERNOR

Well should you find yourself dismissed from the Kings service you can always come and work for me. I have a plan forming, but depends somewhat on the mood of the King.

HANNO

A plan?

GOVERNOR

To return to Oliba with a proper army and wipe them off the face of the Empire. That town has been a constant thorn in my side! I'll enslave the populace and level it to the ground. There will be enough loot to appease the king and maybe a few Amazon slaves into the bargain too!

HANNO
And where might you get this army?

GOVERNOR
The General who beat the Amazons
before - Commander Hydarnes - a man
I've met several times and know. I
hear he is visiting the City to meet
the King at his summer palace.

HANNO
I know Hydarnes also - a good military
man, well liked. I might be able to
put in a word about your plan.

GOVERNOR
If I can borrow a few hundred
Immortals from His Majesty, Hydarnes
can lead them and I'll sit back and
count the cash when its all over... The
Commander gets the glory, the King
gets the Amazons - everyone is happy.

Hanno smiles and nods.

FADE TO

INT. ENTRANCE HALL, PALACE OF CAMBYSES - LATE MORNING

Susian Guard #1 and #4 stand here as The Chamberlain escorts
Hanno and The Governor past them to the door.

CHAMBERLAIN
This way gentlemen, his Majesty has
been very busy of late, with one thing
and another... I can barely keep up.

GOVERNOR
Is he in a good mood today?

CHAMBERLAIN
Oh, very. He currently has other
guests who I believe you already know.

HANNO
Shut up and take us through - our news
is very important. Most urgent!

GOVERNOR
Yes - our news takes priority.

The Chamberlain opens the doors and grins at Hanno.

CHAMBERLAIN
I don't see many Amazons with you
Captain? Am I to take it the news then
is not good?

Hanno SNEERS and pushes past him into the room.

QUICK FADE TO

INT. MAIN LEISURE AREA, PALACE OF CAMBYSES - LATE MORNING

Cambyses is sitting with Babek and Gisgo the spy, drinking as Slave Girl #1 pours them more wine.

Hanno and The Governor enter, with The Chamberlain behind.

CHAMBERLAIN
(announcing)
Captain and Governor Kambujiya, my
Lord. They say it is urgent.

The Chamberlain bows to Cambyses who waves him away. The Chamberlain exits the way he came, bowing repeatedly.

CAMBYSES
Well well, speak of the devil?! And
Governor Kambujiya too! Come in - sit!
Governor - I hear there are problems
in your province?

GOVERNOR
You know Gisgo the spy, majesty? And
Babek the merchant from Borythenes?

CAMBYSES
A good King strives to know ALL his
more prominent subjects... Babek is
the leading dealer of exotic horses in
my kingdom. We were discussing his
forthcoming trip to Egypt.

Cambyses nods to Gisgo.

CAMBYSES
And need I remind you that Gisgo is my
spy - not yours, he merely reports to
you as a courtesy.

Gisgo sneers at The Governor.

GOVERNOR
Oh - of course - your Highness.

CAMBYSES
For someone with no tongue he is
surprisingly informative - about you
and your province - as is Babek.

Babek looks flustered and stands, hoping to leave.

CAMBYSES
Don't rush away Babek - we're all
friends here. And perhaps the Governor
can explain his side of how he was
eating you out of house and home and
deflowering your innocent daughter?

GOVERNOR
Ah? Er...? Well... Your Majesty, it is
true I availed myself of Babek's kind
hospitality... But was there in your
name on a matter of state business - I
needed a place to amass an army -
assisted by good Captain Hanno here.

HANNO
Majesty - the expedition was a
failure! The Amazons escaped us!

CAMBYSES
Yes I know... But what I don't know
yet is how you are to be punished.

HANNO
Punished Sire?

GOVERNOR
Noble king - we acted in good faith!
The town of Oliba revolted, they
joined the Amazons against us! A
development none could have foreseen.

CAMBYSES
Captain Hanno, what have you to say on
this matter?

HANNO
The expedition failed because the
Governor is a traitor! He plots with
the rebels and Amazons against you,
hoping to turn his province into an

independent kingdom of his own!

Cambyses GLOWERS with rage for a moment then springs to his feet. The Governor GAPES - shocked at Hanno's words.

CAMBYSES
(Hysterically)
I knew it! GUARDS! GUARDS!!

Slave Girl #1 whimpers and steps away, cowering.

All 4 X Susian Guards charge into the room and quickly aim their weapons at the Governor, as Cambyses points at him.

GOVERNOR
(To Hanno)
You fucking liar! Traitor!! Don't listen Majesty - I am loyal! LOYAL!!

The Governor clammers to his feet and Hanno draws his sword.

HANNO
He came here not to apologise but hoping to poison you!

Babek SQUEALS and cowers, Gisgo pulls out his knife and holds it to the Governors throat - who raises his hands.

HANNO
Search him! Let the evidence of his foul treason speak for itself.

Susian Guard #1 GRABS the Governor by his shoulders and Gisgo quickly rummages in his pockets and pulls out the BOTTLE OF POISON that was seen previously on the ship.

GOVERNOR
That's not mine! Hanno must have planted it on me!

Gisgo opens the lid and sniffs - he nods to Cambyses.

CAMBYSES
(To Guards)
Take him to the dungeon and summon the Torturer! This traitor will be singing his confessions within the hour!!

Susian Guard #1, #2 and #3 firmly drag The Governor away between them, as he continues to protest. Susian Guard #4 remains nearby, sensing trouble with Hanno.

GOVERNOR

No - I'm innocent! Innocent I tell you! I did not plot against you great King! I am loyal!! LOYAL!!

The three Guards and The Governor exit. Babek returns to his seat - shaking. Gisgo grins and gulps down some wine.

Slave Girl #1 composes herself and SIGHS with relief.

HANNO

I learned of his treachery during the battle - which is why the Amazons spared him. He made secret deals and spoke of bribing your generals to lure them to his cause. I took the money he offered me as further proof.

Hanno pulls out a bag of COINS - this is the unused payment intended for hiring mercenaries.

CAMBYSES

Treacherous Generals also? Did he name any names? Was Hydarnes among them?

HANNO

He seemed not to trust me fully and no names were spoken. Take it lord - a sign of my unwavering loyalty.

In the background The Chamberlain returns with Xanthe. She now has fine robes and a small crown.

Hanno hands the bag to Cambyses who empties the coins.

CAMBYSES

Persian gold - and quite a sum.

HANNO

The Governor planned this betrayal for years - he has stolen taxes stashed away, ready for his nefarious schemes.

CHAMBERLAIN

So - the Governor was indeed a traitor? And Hanno exposed him?

CAMBYSES

Yes indeed, good Haxamanish. As we long suspected... But Hanno has still failed me - I did not get my Amazons.

That is twice a failure now!

HANNO
But Majesty, surely I...
(Cut off - worried)

XANTHE
(to Cambyses)
Darling - please show Hanno mercy. He
has just saved your life. And without
him we would never had met.

Xanthe steps towards the king and attention falls on her.

CAMBYSES
Ah - true enough my love. You know I
cannot resist doing whatever you
say... Very well then. Hanno - you're
free, but you better watch your step.

Xanthe pecks Cambyses on his cheek, while staring smugly at
Hanno. Hanno gapes - unable to believe his eyes.

HANNO
You are wed, my lord? To 'her'??

CAMBYSES
A quick ceremony yesterday. We can do
a bigger state wedding later... And no
one seemed to object to the idea.

The Chamberlain nods sadly at Hanno.

HANNO
Then... Er... Congratulations... To
both of you!

CAMBYSES
Thank you - I'm a lucky man Hanno. My
Amazon bride is 'divine' - as I. We
gods are very happy, aren't we love?

XANTHE
Yes darling... Oh - might I have a
quick word with the Captain alone?

CAMBYSES
Of course my dearest, a Queen and
Goddess may do as she pleases...

Xanthe smiles evilly at Hanno.

FADE TO

INT. LEOPARDS DEN, PALACE - MIDDAY

The Leopard is sound asleep on the sofa, unchained. It opens half an eye then returns to sleep.

Hanno enters behind Queen Xanthe - he still seems shocked. She closes the door and he bows to her.

HANNO

Let me again offer my congratulations Majesty. I'm sure you will outlive the previous two Queens. I said you'd make good here if you worked hard.

XANTHE

No you didn't! You said if I don't co-operate and keep the king happy I'd be brutally killed. And that was after you'd already kidnapped and raped me.

Xanthe moves to the leopard and rubs its belly as it snoozes - it begins to PURR. Hanno remains near the door, wary.

HANNO

My actions are unforgivable I know. But know this - if you seek my death I will expose you and your little secret. If the King knew you were not royal, let alone an Amazon, he would take your head, not your hand.

XANTHE

Yours too - for deceiving him in the first place. But I have no desire for vengeance Hanno - here things are working-out very nicely for me.

HANNO

You don't seek retribution? You don't want to avenge the Amazons - your sisters?

XANTHE

I am Greek, to them I was little better than a slave - only elevated a little in their eyes by my gender.

Xanthe steps away from the leopard and closer to Hanno.

XANTHE

Now I am a Queen - a REAL Queen, of this huge Empire. I don't even like Amazons - they are brutal and warlike. Here all is civilised, where I belong.

HANNO

Why - might I ask - are we having this meeting? Just to clear the air?

XANTHE

Because I may need a small favour from you in the near future. You owe me Captain Hanno. Co-operate and I'll see you are richly rewarded.

The leopard looks at Hanno and licks its lips.

FADE TO

INT. ROYAL BED CHAMBER - EARLY EVENING

Xanthe is naked on the edge of the bed, checking 'The Serpent device' - this has a mouth-like leather opening with retractable 'fangs' - an ancient Chinese sex toy for a male.

The door opens and Cambyses enters with Slave Girl #1. He is smiling at Xanthe, pleased to see her.

CAMBYSES

Finally we are alone. Come here wifey - your King needs you!

Xanthe puts down her toy and hurries to kiss Cambyses.

Cambyses nods to the slave - she helps him undress.

When down to his underwear (a loin-cloth) he nods to Slave Girl #1. She curtsies, then exits and closes the door.

Xanthe kisses Cambyses as he gropes her. They then hurry towards the bed and Cambyses climbs eagerly under the sheets.

XANTHE

If you are willing - how about we try something a little different tonight?

Xanthe hands him 'The Serpent device'.

CAMBYSES

What is this thing? A toy snake?

XANTHE

I had it made by the Royal Carpenter.
It's from the far East, something only
known to distant Emperors.

CAMBYSES

What does it do?

XANTHE

It can pleasure a man in new and
exciting ways...

CAMBYSES

How do you know of such things?

XANTHE

From my Father - he was a scholar
researching medical innovations. He
swore to better medical knowledge
after the death of my late mother.

CAMBYSES

I didn't know Amazons knew their
Fathers? Or know much of medicine?

Cambyses puts his finger through the leather lips of the
device - it seems to draw him in and is lubricated.

XANTHE

I knew mine, we were close. He
travelled as far as China and found
needles that stop pain and a device
that injects like a snake.

CAMBYSES

I have never heard of such things.

XANTHE

I used to help copy the designs and
notes about the workings of the human
body when I was still but a girl. That
was until... Well, it doesn't matter
now. It was many years ago.

CAMBYSES

I can give it a try I suppose? You
seem to know many unusual things,
nothing like my former wives.

XANTHE

Again all thanks to my Father - he

taught me to read and I learned all I could. Here, I'll show you...

Xanthe moves the device under the sheet and this bobs about above Cambyses groin area. He lays still and seems uncertain.

CAMBYSES
Oh... Oh I see? Like that?

Cambyses GASPS happily and nods and Xanthe quickens her movements, jerking faster under the sheets.

XANTHE
Just lay back and enjoy... Let the serpent work its wonders.

CAMBYSES
Actually that IS nice... Very nice!
Ooh yes, nice and deep... Lovely!

Xanthe pumps faster and Cambyses begins to pant. She caresses his face with her free hand and kisses him.

XANTHE
When the blood is pumping nicely, that is the moment for the surprise.

CAMBYSES
There is more?

XANTHE
I call it - the fangs of the serpent!

There is a CLICK and Cambyses looks pained - Xanthe's other hand moves to squeeze - injecting him with deadly poison. Cambyses SCREAMS and judders.

FADE TO

INT. TORTURE CHAMBER, PALACE - EARLY EVENING

Dark and filled with unpleasant-looking torture devices. The Governor dangles in a rack and looks very unhappy. Near him is THE TORTURER who holds a pair of pliers. The Torturer is short, bearded and has a blood-splattered apron.

Hanno enters through a large iron door and approaches the Torturer, who seems to recognise him.

GOVERNOR
Come to gloat at my torment have you?

You turn-coat, you back-stabber!

HANNO
(to Torturer)
Take a break - I need to question the
prisoner alone for a few minutes.

The Torturer bows and exits, locking the door behind him.

GOVERNOR
This place is hell! Did you see that
spikey thing on the way in? I won't
tell you where it's been shoved...

HANNO
The Torturer is very thorough, he
knows his trade well.

GOVERNOR
You'll have no arguments there. And
they mean to execute me come morning.
'Me'! This is all your fault!

HANNO
Stop complaining and listen - things
are happening here that are pulling me
down... I might be able to get you
out, if you promise to help in return.

GOVERNOR
Why should I help you? I'm in this
mess because of you!

HANNO
Listen closely and stop fussing...

Hanno leans closer and lowers his voice.

FADE TO

HANNO'S FLASHBACK BEGINS

INT. LEOPARDS DEN, PALACE - MIDDAY

As before, with the Leopard asleep and Queen Xanthe standing
near Hanno, circling him as they chat.

HANNO (V.O)
The Queen - the slave girl pretending
to be an Amazon - she plans to murder
the King with her lover Hydarnes!

GOVERNOR (V.O)
Really? It seems you just can't trust
anyone these days...

HANNO
With the King dead you take over and
solidify your alliance through
marriage? Hydarnes has the bulk of the
army behind him... And I am well
respected among naval Captains - so
you need my support too?

XANTHE
In so many words. Yes.

HANNO
You say there is a plan to arrest and
kill Bardiya - the brother of
Cambyses?

XANTHE
Yes, quite so. All is in place.

HANNO
And when things settle - for my
support I become Admiral for the
entire fleet, get a new palace and
more money than I can spend?

XANTHE
That's about it, yes Hanno. Do we
understand each other then?

HANNO
And if I don't play along? No - don't
answer that: you have me killed,
either by your new husband or old. So
it seems I have little choice...

The leopard YAWNS and stretches.

FADE TO

FLASHBACK CONCLUDES

INT. TORTURE CHAMBER, PALACE - EARLY EVENING

As before. Hanno concludes his whispered tale to the Governor
- who is still chained but less unhappy.

HANNO

When I've played my part I don't expect to live. I know too much.

GOVERNOR

Well it serves you right Hanno. I know just what I'd do in your place though.

HANNO

And that being?

GOVERNOR

First - help get me out of here! This place is intolerable.

Hanno begins to free The Governor.

HANNO

Very well, then let us join forces?

FADE TO

INT. MAIN LEISURE AREA, PALACE OF CAMBYSES - EVENING

There is a MUFFLED SCREAM from Cambyses in another room.

The Chamberlain hurries into the room, Susian Guard #3 is here already and searching, having heard a previous cry.

An internal door bursts open and Cambyses enters, clutching his groin. He is nude and blood pours from his hands.

CHAMBERLAIN

My Lord! What is it? Are you hurt?

Cambyses looks angrily at The Chamberlain for asking such a silly question then he collapses, dying.

From the room behind Cambyses Xanthe emerges - pulling on a silk dressing-gown and holding the gory 'serpent device'.

Hydarnes enters from the main entrance with sword drawn, accompanied by Susian Guard #2 as The Chamberlain gapes.

On seeing the dead King the two Susian Guards BURST INTO TEARS, overwhelmed by shame and grief, WEEPING LOUDLY.

XANTHE

(proudly to all)

As you see - the King is finally dead!

HYDARNES
 (pointing at Xanthe)
 It was her! SHE is the assassin!

XANTHE
 (shocked)
 What?! No?! You bastard!!

Hydarnes springs forward and CUTS Xanthe down - she is dead and the Serpent Device falls and CLATTERS beside her.

CHAMBERLAIN
 Good work Hydarnes!
 (looking at Xanthe)
 Though I expected more from an Amazon?

Hydarnes sheaves his sword and examines Xanthe and then the King - both very dead. He struggles not to smile.

HYDARNES
 I heard about this slave tricking the King. That's why I've been visiting so often here - keeping watch on her.

CHAMBERLAIN
 Ah - good of you. I did wonder?

The weeping guards grovel before the dead king, distraught.

Through the unguarded doors arrives Hanno, followed by The Governor and a handful of Sailors (from the ship) - armed with knives. They fan out and look at the dead King, shocked.

CHAMBERLAIN
 What is this Hanno? Why are you here?

HYDARNES
 Yes Hanno - explain yourself? And your 'armed men' here in the palace?

HANNO
 I happened to be meeting some of my crew here and we heard screams. Fear not - we can help here, if you let me.

CHAMBERLAIN
 And the Governor?

GOVERNOR
 At Hanno's insistence I was released.
 I wanted to warn the King about the

Slave Girl and her plans. The poison I had was hers - I was afraid of her but came to confess and warn his Majesty.

CHAMBERLAIN

You can't have been in two places at once. You clearly had no part in this.

HANNO

The assassin - it was the girl?

HYDARNES

She worked to win his trust and become Queen so she could kill him and take over - yes. I slew her!

Hydarnes examines the Serpent-device - this has blood on its tiny fangs. The Chamberlain gazes at it, appalled.

HYDARNES

This device seems to have poisoned him - it has wooden fangs inside, see?

HANNO

I have heard of such things used by the Chinese. It bites like a snake.

The weeping Guards SOB even louder.

GOVERNOR

Horrible! The King and I had our differences, but to die so terribly...

The sailors murmur and mutter, nodding in agreement.

CHAMBERLAIN

There is blood all down his legs - perhaps we can say it was a leg wound? Give him a little dignity in death.

HYDARNES

What about 'our' dignity? This death brings great shame to us all - our King of Kings slain by a mere woman.

HANNO

Yes - this shames all Persians. This will embolden our enemies, undermine alliances... There could be war.

HYDARNES

We need to be very careful here - or things could get bad for all of us.

CHAMBERLAIN

Perhaps we make this look like an accident? At least make his death shame himself but not all Persia?

GOVERNOR

An excellent notion! After all - he was known for his violent rages and strange behaviour.

HYDARNES

There will be no hiding a wound like that though. What can we say happened?

HANNO

An accident with his horse perhaps?

CHAMBERLAIN

He rarely rode, no.

GOVERNOR

I have it! He stabbed himself in a fit of rage. The wound got infected and he died soon after.

HYDARNES

Would this be believed? That he did this to himself in a moment of rage?

Hanno, the Governor and Chamberlain all nod. The Sailors mutter and nod. Even the Guards nod and begin to SOB LOUDER.

CHAMBERLAIN

He stabbed himself a few times during his 'black moods'. For years I tried hiding away any pointed objects...

GOVERNOR

As for myself I am friends with many other Governors. I can ensure there is no rebellion. Who though will be king? 'You' perhaps, Hydarnes?

HYDARNES

Not I. I think my old friend Darius - he will make a great King.

HANNO

My men will secure the port - keep the news from spreading until we hear from Darius. Can the guards be trusted?

CHAMBERLAIN

Oh yes - they will do as I instruct until a new King is appointed.

HYDARNES

As luck would have it Darius and his men are visiting the capital and can keep order. When things settle I'm sure he will reward us all well.

The Governor and Hanno exchange questioning looks.

FADE TO

CGI/MODEL SHOT - EXODUS WITH AMAZONS - DAY

The Amazons and Towns Folk and Militia from Oliba - including Amazon #1, Amazon #2, Sauromaces, Tigatao, Mercenary Captain and Militia Captain - are all travelling together as a mounted convoy across a barren mountainous region.

As they travel TEXT pans across the screen.

SUPER IMPOSE: In the wake of the death of Cambyses II the united Scythian/Amazon tribe would become one of several tribes called 'Sarmatians' - nomadic groups who settle between the lower Volga and Don rivers throughout the first few centuries BC. They will go on to clash with the Eastern Roman Empire for many centuries to come.

FADE TO

INT. MAIN LEISURE AREA, PALACE OF CAMBYSES - LATE MORNING

Order is restored, any blood and bodies gone. Susian Guard #1 stands at the doorway, puffy-eyed from crying. Lounging and drinking are Hanno and The Governor. Slave Girl #2 is refilling the Governors cup and he leeringly smiles at her.

GOVERNOR

As I said - I know Hydarnes better than you - and probably better than that imposter Queen as well. He has no desire nor the aptitude to be King.

(sips wine)

I'll be the first to pledge my loyalty

to Darius. I suggest you do the same
Hanno, if you'll take my advice?

HANNO
No hard feelings then? Between you and
me I mean?

GOVERNOR
You did right in the end, so I can
'live and let live'... I've had that
Torturer boiled though. And I'll be
much more relieved when I hear Bardiya
is gone, the kings younger brother.

Hanno nods and sips his wine.

SLOW FADE TO
INT. MANSION AT BORYSTHENES - DAY

Babek is weary from his long trip away, he has just returned
home, his House Slaves help remove his shoes.

SUPERIMPOSE : A few months later...

The Elderly Servant hands Babek 3 X REPORTS and bows his bald
head to his master. Babek unravels the parchments.

POV from Babek - the parchments are written in PERSIAN.

CGI EFFECT - the parchments SHIMMER and change into English
for the benefit of viewers, with larger text in places.

The first report is titled 'AMAZONS DEFEATED IN BATTLE BY
GOVERNOR KAMBUJIYA'. Oliba has since been abandoned after
extensive damage but a relief effort is being considered.

The 2nd report is titled 'THE DEATH OF CAMBYSES II, KING OF
KINGS' and provides brief details about his state funeral and
that he was killed by an infected accidental leg wound.

The 3rd report is titled "KING 'BARDIYA' CROWNED IN
PERSEPOLIS" and mentions 'those disloyal to the new King have
been arrested and face execution in coming weeks - including
Governor Kambujiya and several notable Captains'.

BACK TO SCENE

The sound of someone approaching - Tilly arrives in a loose-
fitting dress - 4 months pregnant. She looks embarrassed.

The Slaves bow politely as she passes.

Babek drops his parchments and gapes at her, shocked.

FADE TO

END CREDITS

THE END