

In Pursuit of Glory

The Life of Admiral Horatio Nelson

By

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EXT. CAPE OF ST. VINCENT - DAYBREAK

SUPER OVER:

CAPE OF ST. VINCENT - 14TH OF FEBURARY 1794.

THE WORLD IS IN TURMOIL.

THE AMERICAN COLONIES HAVE REVOLTED AND BROKEN FROM BRITISH RULE.

THE FRENCH PEOPLE HAVE KILLED THEIR KING AND HAVE BECOME A REPUBLIC.

THE FIRST ACT OF THE NEW REPUBLIC IS TO DECLARE WAR ON BRITAIN.

We can see nothing, the screen is filled with a swirling mist. Our ears are filled with a multitude of sounds that slowly become discernible as ships. As the morning sun burns up the mist, we see the British fleet.

EXT. HMS MINERVE

Commodore Nelson, 38, a small man, with the intensity that attracts women and commands men, is staring into the fog.

Captain Berry, 29, an English Bull Dog of a man. He stands next to Nelson, staring earnestly in the same direction as him.

NELSON

Keep your eyes on the Admiral's ship, Captain Berry.

CAPTAIN BERRY

Aye-aye sir.

He turns and redirects his stare to a mist-enshrouded ship a few hundred feet away on their port side.

NELSON

Let me know when the admiral raises the flags.

CAPTAIN BERRY

Aye-aye, sir.

The eyes of the entire British fleet are scanning the ocean. Slowly, the ghostly shapes of ships start appearing before them.

EXT. HMS VICTORY

Admiral Jervis, 52, a tall, well-built man with a rugged handsomeness, stands with his Captain Sir Robert Calder, 45, who is a vain peacock. Calder holds an eye glass and informs Jervis what he sees.

CALDER

Eight ships of the line, no, the mist is clearing to port, there are twenty, my God, no, I see at least twenty-seven ships of the line...

ADMIRAL JERVIS

Enough, captain, hold firm. The die is cast even if you see fifty sails I mean to go through them.

EXT. HMS MINERVE

Nelson is getting the same report as Admiral Jervis.

CAPTAIN BERRY

We are going to be outnumbered three to one, sir.

NELSON

Englishmen don't run from the enemy. We came here to fight and fight we will.

Flags from HMS Victory send out the battle orders to the fleet.

CAPTAIN BERRY

One battle line and we are to sail down their throats, sir.

NELSON

See to it, Captain Berry.

CAPTAIN BERRY

Aye-aye sir.

The British fleet perform a manoeuver to bring the warships into one straight line to sail through the middle of the French fleet.

This enables the British to use their guns on the starboard and port side, whereas the French can only use one set of guns.

Admiral Jervis in HMS Victory leads the column.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

NELSON

Hold steady men, the first blast is
the worst.

Guns are fired. Huge puffs of smoke start arising from the
ships and we see the devastating destruction the cannonballs
are having upon the British and French ships.

CAPTAIN BERRY

(Looking at the flag
signals)

The order is to put about and form
into two divisions.

NELSON

Ignore the order and break the
line.

CAPTAIN BERRY

Ignore the Admiral's order, sir?
That's a hanging offence.

NELSON

Damn it, man, do it or I'll throw
you overboard.

EXT. HMS VICTORY

Captain Calder takes the looking glass down from his eye.

CALDER

What the hell is he doing?

ADMIRAL JERVIS

What?

CALDER

Commodore Nelson has broken the
line.

Jervis takes the looking glass from Calder and sees for
himself. Nelson is attacking seven French ships.

ADMIRAL JERVIS

Order Captain Collingwood and
Captain Troubridge to assist
Commodore Nelson.

CALDER

But, sir, we will lose the
formation. It will be ship to ship
fighting.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

ADMIRAL JERVIS

Yes, I know. Wonderful is it not?
Now give the order.

CALDER

Aye-aye, sir.

EXT. HMS MINERVE

We are in the thick of battle when HMS Minerve comes upon the French flagship, Santissima Trinidad.

CAPTAIN BERRY

Good God, sir. Look at the size,
she must be a hundred gunner.

NELSON

A hundred and twenty six to be
exact, but she is made of the same
materials as us, Berry. Let's go
say hello?

As Nelson engages the Trinidad, CAPTAIN COLLINGWOOD, 38, a broad chested Adonis, on the Excellent, and CAPTAIN TROUBRIDGE, 43, a stout block of a man, on the St. George, join the battle.

The Excellent gives the San Nicholas a broadside side at close range that blasts clear through her to the San Josef.

At the same time the San Josef receives a broadside from the St. George. This causes the San Nicholas and the San Josef to get dangerously close together.

Nelson coming around the Trinidad after exchanging broad sides, sees this, and acts.

NELSON (CONT'D)

Captain Berry, all sails on a
ramming course for the San
Nicholas.

CAPTAIN BERRY

Aye, aye sir.

The Minerva crushes into the San Nicholas. The speed and the power of the hit drives the San Nicholas into the San Josef. The three ships are entangled by spars and rigging.

NELSON

Marines to me! Prepare to board.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

The ships marines line up and Nelson runs to join them. He stops by one of them and we discover later that this is his step-son Joshua.

NELSON (CONT'D)

Ready, lad?

JOSHUA

Aye-aye, sir.

NELSON

Westminster Abbey or glorious
victory!

MEN

Nelson and England!

The British sailors and soldiers jump from bulwark to bulwark, others run along the Captain's yards and jump onto the San Nicholas' rigging.

Some marines, led by Nelson, crawl along the bowsprit. One marine falls into the sea before they can jump for the San Nicholas' stern.

A marine breaks open a window of the upper quarter gallery and jumps in quickly followed by Nelson and the other boarders.

French officers fire on them, but they are able to break through them, with pistol fire and bloody cut and thrust from swords, picks and cutlasses.

They push forward to the quarterdeck, where they are in time to see Phillips, 22, a bruising boxer of a man and Jones, 20, a small Welsh waif taking down the French flag.

They have taken control of the San Nicholas, but they are still receiving fire from the San Josef.

NELSON

Phillips, come here!

Phillips runs across, ducking through the fire from the San Josef.

PHILLIPS

Yes, sir.

NELSON

Inform Captain Berry I need men to guard this ship because I intend to board the San Josef.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED: (2)

PHILLIPS

Aye-aye sir.

Nelson turns to the men around him. Joshua has been with him every step of the way.

NELSON

Ready, men?

Nelson breaks from cover, and the marines follow him. The fight for the San Josef is short. As Nelson and his men arrive on deck, he is met by an unarmed French officer, who goes down on one knee.

FRENCH CAPTAIN

With great sadness, I must
surrender to you. Our Admiral is
below decks, dying.

The French officer hands over his and his admiral's sword. Nelson passes them onto Joshua, who tucks them under his arm.

NELSON

I am sorry to hear of your
Admiral's ailment.

Nelson reaches down and pulls the officer to his feet.

NELSON (CONT'D)

Now, if you would be so good to
signal your other ships to
surrender, we can get on with the
day.

The French Captain gives the order.

JONES

Bloody hell, they did it to. They
surrendered without a fight.

PHILLIPS

Without their admiral they didn't
know what to do.

NELSON

So it would seem.

Commodore Nelson, and his crew are hailed with cheers from the other British ships.

INT. HMS VICTORY - OUTSIDE ADMIRAL JERVIS' CABIN

Collingwood, Troubridge, and Nelson wait together.

COLLINGWOOD

Whatever possessed you to break the line? You will be lucky if you only get court-martialed.

NELSON

It would have taken too long to come about, and the French would have had time to regroup.

CAPTAIN TROUBRIDGE

It was not your decision to make.

COLLINGWOOD

You had better hope Jervis sees it your way, Nelson. Or you'll be hanging for the yard arms.

INT. ADMIRAL JERVIS' CABIN

Captain Calder is speaking heatedly to Admiral Jervis.

CALDER

He broke the line, sir. He disobeyed a direct order. He should be stripped of his command...

ADMIRAL JERVIS

Enough. It was a breach of orders, and if ever you commit such a breach I will forgive you, if victory is the same result.

CALDER

But, sir...

ADMIRAL JERVIS

Enough. Ask Nelson, Collingwood and Troubridge to join me.

CALDER

Aye-aye, sir.

Calder goes to the cabin door and calls to them.

CALDER (CONT'D)

Commodore Nelson. Captains Collingwood and Troubridge.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

They enter the cabin. Admiral Jervis walks across to Nelson, and stands in front of him.

ADMIRAL JERVIS

Sir, I have had the pleasure to witness many great feats in my life, and your victory today will be placed amongst the highest.

NELSON

I was doing my duty sir.

ADMIRAL JERVIS

Yes, but it was the execution of it that was remarkable. Please be seated, gentlemen.

They sit.

ADMIRAL JERVIS (CONT'D)

In my report of this victory to the admiralty, you gentlemen will play a large part.

ALL OF THEM

Thank you, sir.

ADMIRAL JERVIS

Now to business. Nelson, I need you to go to Naples on a diplomatic mission.

EXT. PORT OF NAPLES, ITALY

HMS Agamemnon is lowering her anchor. Commodore Nelson is on deck.

NELSON

Captain Berry, ready a boat, I must visit with the British Ambassador Lord Hamilton.

CAPTAIN BERRY

Aye-aye, sir.

NELSON

King Ferdinand and Naples are considered allies, but I want the ship at battle readiness at all times.

CAPTAIN BERRY

Understood, sir.

EXT. PALAZZO SESSA - THE BRITISH AMBASSADOR'S RESIDENCE

It is an imposing building that has a panoramic view of the Bay of Naples. We see Nelson walking into the building.

INT. LORD HAMILTON'S STUDY

Nelson is waiting for Lord Hamilton, 62, a congenial and eccentric aristocrat. He enters almost immediately.

HAMILTON
Commodore Nelson?

NELSON
Yes, sir.

HAMILTON
Please, be seated. I believe you have some dispatches for me?

NELSON
Yes, sir.

Hamilton looks at the substantial number of letters, that Nelson has given him.

HAMILTON
I would like to talk to you after I have read these, Commodore. Would you mind waiting?

NELSON
Not at all, sir.

HAMILTON
Excellent. My man will show you to my art collection.

He rings a bell and a servant appears to take Nelson.

HAMILTON (CONT'D)
I will call you once I am finished.

NELSON
Very good, sir.

INT. AMBASSADOR'S RESIDENCE BALLROOM

There is an impressive collection of art work on every inch of the walls.

Hamilton enters. Nelson is studying one of the potraits.

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CONTINUED:

HAMILTON

Astonishing how the artist captured the beauty of the subject.

NELSON

Yes, the lady is an astonishing beauty.

HAMILTON

George Romeney is a wonderful artist and has truly captured the lady's beauty.

NELSON

If the artist has painted true then she would rival Helena of Troy.

Lady Emma Hamilton, 31, a woman of remarkable beauty, and the artists subject has entered the room unnoticed.

EMMA

I have received many compliments in my life, Commodore, but never so historically embroidered.

NELSON

Lady...I apologize...I had no idea...I mean...Commodore Nelson at your service, Lady Hamilton.

HAMILTON

I am sorry Commodore, I should have informed you that my wife was the artist's subject.

EMMA

I sometimes have to remind my husband that I exist outside of the picture frame.

NELSON

I am sure no man could ignore you whilst you were in the same room as him.

HAMILTON

Commodore Nelson is here to ask King Ferdinand for aid. The King has granted us an audience.

EMMA

After your meeting you should dine with us Commodore.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED: (2)

NELSON

I would be honored, my lady.

EMMA

Please call me Emma.

Nelson glances at Lord Hamilton, who nods his permission.

NELSON

Emma.

Hamilton and Nelson leave. Emma watches them go.

EXT. PALACE OF THE KING OF NAPLES

We see Nelson and Hamilton walking into the palace.

INT. HALLWAYS OF THE PALACE

Hamilton and Nelson are led through them by a footman. They come to a closed door, on which the footman knocks.

There is no reply, but the slow opening of the doors from within.

KING FERDINAND, 35, a ferret faced man. He is surrounded by his ministers.

The only one of note is SIR JOHN ACTON, 45, a sprightly aristocratic man, who is the Prime Minister of Naples. He is an Englishman with a French mother.

FOOTMAN

Ambassador Lord William Hamilton
and Commodore Horatio Nelson.

KING FERDINAND

Let them come forth.

The king is sitting on an ornate chair on a small dais. Hamilton and Nelson approach him and bow.

KING FERDINAND (CONT'D)

It is good to see you again, Lord
Hamilton.

HAMILTON

Your Majesty. Let me introduce you
to Commodore Nelson, who arrived in
Port today.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

KING FERDINAND

Welcome, Commodore Nelson. The British flag is welcome in our waters in these troubled times.

NELSON

His Majesty is kind. His words will be welcomed by his cousin the King of England.

KING FERDINAND

Does England still stand defiant against France?

NELSON

We do, sir.

KING FERDINAND

What can I do to aid your battle?

NELSON

We need supplies to replenish our ships and fresh troops to help us take the fight to the French.

KING FERDINAND

I shall give this some thought. The French are a plague that infects Europe. I must protect my own people from this disease.

NELSON

I am at your disposal night or day, your Majesty.

KING FERDINAND

I thank you.

Hamilton and Nelson leave. Sir John Acton walks with them.

INT. OUTSIDE THE KING'S AUDIENCE HALL

HAMILTON

Commodore Nelson, this is Sir John Acton, Prime Minister of Naples and a good Englishman.

ACTON

That was well done in there, Commodore.

NELSON

I did nothing but follow my orders.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

ACTON

These are difficult times. We have heard that the allied forces of Britain, Holland and Austria have been pushed out of France and Belgium. Also, Spain has not been able to stop the French Republican's Army's advance over the Pyrenees.

NELSON

That is why we cannot cede the oceans to them.

ACTON

Italy is unaffected, but knows that will end. The King will chose the right side.

NELSON

God willing, he shall.

INT. PALAZZO SESSA - DINNING ROOM

Nelson is eating dinner with Emma and her husband Hamilton.

NELSON

I hope the King is able to make his decision soon.

HAMILTON

We can do nothing but wait, but the King knows the time is short.

NELSON

If we don't act, he will find the French knocking on his door.

EMMA

Gentleman you have talked of nothing but business all night.

NELSON

I am sorry my lady...Emma, I did not mean to distress you.

EMMA

War does not distress me, being ignored does. With men, such as you, Commodore, we can never be defeated.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

NELSON

You flatter me.

EMMA

No, I speak the truth. I will fear no Frenchman while I know you are here to defend us.

NELSON

I will not fail you.

EMMA

Now, gentleman, one of you must compliment me on my dress, otherwise the evening will have been a complete disaster.

INT. PALAZZO SESSA - GAME ROOM

The three of them are playing a game of cards when Hamilton receives a message.

HAMILTON

It is a note from Sir Acton asking me to visit with him.

NELSON

Should I accompany you?

HAMILTON

No. Emma dear, will you take care of Commodore Nelson?

EMMA

Of course, dear.

HAMILTON

If you will excuse me.

He leaves the room. Nelson and Emma sit in silence looking at their cards.

EMMA

How ill will it be, if the King does not supply the troops and supplies you have requested?

NELSON

We do not ask for them lightly.

EMMA

I believe I know a way to speed the King's decision.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

NELSON

And how is that?

EMMA

I am privy to Queen Carolina's inner circle. She is angry that her sister, Queen Antoinette, is in prison awaiting execution.

NELSON

The queen was not in attendance today when we had our meeting with the king.

EMMA

Yes, he excludes her because she is angry that he has done nothing to help her sister.

NELSON

Do you think you could tell the queen of my mission here?

EMMA

I meet with her tomorrow.

NELSON

If you would do this, it would be of great service to your country, my lady.

EMMA

It is Emma and I do it for you. Does by boldness shock you? The stories of your courage at St. Vincent made me believe you would value it in others.

NELSON

I am not shocked, merely cautious of our positions.

Emma walks over to Nelson and sits in his lap.

EMMA

Does this position suit you better?

NELSON

This is an agreeable position.

EMMA

Good. There are many more I wish to show you.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED: (2)

NELSON

I will endeavor to make myself
available to you.

EXT. THE TOWN OF NAPLES

Nelson is showing his step-son around the City of Naples. As they are looking at the architecture of the town they are come upon by Emma in a carriage.

EMMA

Commodore Nelson.

NELSON

Lady Hamilton.

EMMA

What finds you walking the streets
of Naples?

NELSON

As we wait the King's decision I
decided to show my step-son the
city and the architecture is best
seen on foot.

EMMA

I do believe I have never seen the
city on foot. Would you mind if I
joined you?

NELSON

It would be our pleasure, my lady.
Joshua this is Lady Emma Hamilton.

JOSHUA

It is a pleasure to meet you, my
lady.

EMMA

You can call me Emma, and I believe
I gave your father the same
privilege. I will begin to think he
does not like me, Joshua, if he
continues to call me my lady all
the time.

NELSON

It would hurt me deeply if I were
to offend you, Emma.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

EMMA

That is better. So, how do you like this great city of Naples, Joshua?

JOSHUA

It is wonderful. Father tells me a civilized society has been here for thousands of years, and once the Italians ruled all of Europe.

EMMA

Really? How fascinating.

They walk as they talk.

EXT. PLAZA

They enter a large plaza where a puppet show is playing. It catches Joshua's attention.

JOSHUA

May I, father?

NELSON

Yes, but only for a short while, we must soon return to the ship.

Nelson and Emma walk slowly around the plaza. Joshua sits in the middle of the plaza watching the puppet show.

EMMA

I have just come from the Queen.

NELSON

And?

EMMA

She was most concerned that her husband, the King, had not mentioned the details of your visit to her.

NELSON

Ah.

EMMA

I will be bold and say the support you require, shall be forthcoming soon or there will be a divorce.

NELSON

England will be ever grateful for your services, my lady.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

EMMA

I have a great love for my country,
but a country's love is such an
impersonal love.

NELSON

I am not a master of the fine arts
of love. Desire is something I
understand, but I am aware of the
shallow waters of such a venture.
They can cause disaster.

EMMA

In this endeavor you must leave the
navigations to a woman.

NELSON

What of our situations?

EMMA

God makes allowances for love.

NELSON

But man does not.

EMMA

Come, we should return. Already
there might be news awaiting us
regarding the King's decision.

INT. PALAZZO SESSA - ENTRANCE HALL

Lord Hamilton comes rushing towards Emma, Nelson and Joshua.

HAMILTON

Good news, good news.

HAMILTON (CONT'D)

The decision is favorable. The King
will shelter and replenish all
British ships in his ports. He will
also supply 4,000 troops.

NELSON

This could not be better. When?

HAMILTON

All this happens as we speak.

NELSON

Then I must take my leave of you.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

EMMA

We will look for you, when next we meet, with the laurels of victory upon your head.

EXT. THE ISLAND OF CORSICA - DAY

We can see Nelson's ship the Agamemnon anchored in the port off of San Fiorenzo.

We see the French flags flying from the island fortresses of Calvi and Bastia.

INT. MAKE SHIFT BRITISH COMMAND CENTER

Nelson is inside arguing with GENERAL DUNDAS, 55, who is built like a walrus.

NELSON

Damn it, sir. We have lost the port of Toulon, we must now entrench ourselves on this island by taking the forts of Calvi and Bastia.

DUNDAS

I have told you we must wait for reinforcements.

NELSON

And while we wait, the French will send reinforcements. We must strike now.

DUNDAS

I will not.

NELSON

I shall send a full report of your...

A knock on the door interrupts Nelson. The general's aide enters.

AIDE

General Dundas, there is a Lieutenant General Charles Stuart to see you.

CHARLES STUART, 45, confidant, fit and striking in his uniform, walks into the room as the aide introduces him.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

DUNDAS

Good God, man, what are you doing here, Stuart?

STUART

I've been sent by the powers that be, Dunny.

Stuart hands Dundas a letter.

STUART (CONT'D)

I'm afraid I am here to replace you.

DUNDAS

Ah? They are blaming the Toulon mess on me.

STUART

I'm afraid so, Dunny.

DUNDAS

Well, if you will excuse me gentlemen, I am sure you will have a lot to discuss.

Dundas walks out of the room.

STUART

Now what were you shouting at Dunny about? Nelson, isn't it?

NELSON

Yes, sir. I was trying to convince him of the dire need to take the two French controlled fortress.

STUART

Yes, they are getting clear shots at our ships from them.

NELSON

Yes, sir.

STUART

Well we can't have that. Let's go knock those frogs off their rocks.

NELSON

Nothing would please me more, sir.

EXT. THE BRITISH ENTRENCHMENTS OUTSIDE THE FORT AT CALVI

The British have set up their cannons by the Virgin Mary at the chapel of La Madonna.

There is a constant roar of cannons being fired on both sides. We see Nelson walking through the encampment. He stops outside Lt. General Charles Stuart's tent.

STUART

Ah. Nelson, it is good to see you.
Day 100 and those damn French frogs
are still holding us off. I suppose
I should admire their fight, but I
am bored of sitting on this rock.

NELSON

Their supplies must be running
short.

STUART

Yes, I believe we have been saying
that for the last month.

The general's aide bursts into the tent.

AIDE

General Stuart, French ships have
been spotted. They are trying to
bring supplies to the fortress.

Nelson is already moving out of the tent.

STUART

Damn it, we will be here till
Christmas if we don't stop them.

EXT. BATTLEMENTS

Nelson is rounding up some of his men from the ship.

NELSON

Captain Berry, every man is to be
armed to the teeth.

Nelson and his men move across the rocky bare terrain. As they get closer, they can see the topsails of the French ships.

They take up positions above the bay. They can see the French sailors rowing to shore, bringing in the supplies for the fortress.

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CONTINUED:

As they come ashore, men from the fortress meet them. When they meet at the waterline, Nelson orders his men to open fire.

NELSON (CONT'D)

Fire!

Men drop screaming into the water and on the beach.

The French locate their attackers by the flare from the gun's muzzle. They start returning the fire.

The cannons from the French ships start firing on the British position. The cannonballs striking the rocky shore cause lethal missiles.

Nelson is struck by this shrapnel on the forehead and in his right eye.

NELSON (CONT'D)

Ah!

CAPTAIN BERRY

Are you hurt, sir?

Nelson has a hard time locating Berry because he has lost the sight in his right eye.

There is also blood pouring down from the wound on his forehead.

NELSON

I'm fine, Berry. Keep the men firing. We must stop the supplies.

CAPTAIN BERRY

Aye-aye, sir.

Berry turns back to the action. The French sailors are beating a hasty retreat back to their boats.

Nelson has succeeded in stopping the fortress from being replenished.

Nelson staggers to his feet and looks surveys the battlefield.

NELSON

Captain Berry?

CAPTAIN BERRY

Yes, sir.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED: (2)

NELSON

We need help to carry our dead and wounded back to camp. Also, tell the surgeon we are bringing casualties.

CAPTAIN BERRY

Aye-aye, sir. How is your head, sir?

NELSON

To hell with my head. Leave two men to watch the cove, in case the French try to land again.

CAPTAIN BERRY

Aye-aye, sir.

Nelson turns to leave, and stumbles. He is still adjusting to the fact he has lost his sight in one eye.

Captain Berry steps forward and grips his arm, to stop him from falling.

CAPTAIN BERRY (CONT'D)

That looks like a nasty wound, sir. Why don't I have Phillips help you back to camp?

NELSON

I am quite capable of walking without aid.

CAPTAIN BERRY

Aye-aye, sir.

Berry gives a quick nod to Phillips to indicate to him that he should follow discreetly behind the Commodore.

EXT. OUTSIDE THE FORTRESS

The French commander with six hundred of his men behind him, is surrendering the fortress to the British. They have run out of food.

General Stuart with Commodore Nelson beside him is accepting the Frenchman's sword. Nelson has an eye patch over his lost eye.

The British Army and Navy are lined up behind their commanders.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

BROWN

It should be Commodore Nelson who accepts that sword.

PHILLIPS

Aye, it was 'im who stopped the French from getting fresh supplies in.

JONES

Aye, the navy gets the job done again, and the army takes the glory.

CAPTAIN BERRY

Quiet in the lines.

Brown, Phillips and Jones fall silent.

CAPTAIN BERRY (CONT'D)

It should be the Commodore taking the sword, otherwise I would be given each of you ten lashes for talking.

EXT. OFF THE COAST OF GIBRALTAR - DAY

The Mediterranean fleet are gathered at anchor. There are a number of launches heading towards HMS Victory.

Nelson's launch comes abreast of the HMS Victory.

NELSON

Agamemnon!

SAILOR

Permission granted Commodore Nelson.

Nelson climbs the ladder onto the deck where he is greeted by captain Cuthbert Collingwood.

NELSON

Collingwood.

COLLINGWOOD

Good to see you Horatio. Been in the wars again, I hear.

NELSON

Yes, do you know why we have been brought together?

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

COLLINGWOOD

As always it is all hush, hush, but
I think somebody is in trouble.

NELSON

Any ideas, who?

COLLINGWOOD

Yes.

NELSON

Who?

COLLINGWOOD

Why don't we go in and find out?

NELSON

Sometimes I think you get some
perverse pleasure out of all the
secrets you keep.

COLLINGWOOD

You know me too well, my old
friend.

They walk towards the Admiral's quarters.

INT. ADMIRAL'S QUARTERS

As Collingwood and Nelson enter the meeting is called to
order.

There are a number of captains, Vice Admiral Parker and
Admiral Jervis.

Jervis catches Nelson's eye as he enters and smiles at him.

Nelson is caught off guard and belatedly returns the smile of
acknowledgment.

PARKER

Please be seated, gentlemen.

ADMIRAL JERVIS

Thank you, men. I have brought you
all together to reiterate that
Britain needs us to protect her
coasts. The Spanish have joined
with the French and now they are in
control of most of the Continent.
We alone in Europe still fight the
tyrant Bonaparte.

(MORE)

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

ADMIRAL JERVIS (CONT'D)
You will find me fair, but hard.
Vice Admiral Thompson, the four men
on the St. George who were found
guilty of treason, have they been
hung?

THOMPSON
No, sir. It is Sunday, sir, and I
thought we could hang them
tomorrow.

ADMIRAL JERVIS
What do you think, Commodore
Nelson?

NELSON
If it was Christmas day, I would
hang them, sir.

ADMIRAL JERVIS
Quite right. Thompson, see that the
men are hung today, and you are
relieved of duty and may return to
England with Vice Admiral Parker.
Commodore Nelson.

NELSON
Yes, sir.

ADMIRAL JERVIS
I have applied to the Admiralty for
you to obtain the rank of Rear
Admiral in attendance, which they
have granted. This meeting is now
adjourned.

There is shocked silence as the men file out. Collingwood
flashes Nelson a smile of congratulation, before leaving.

ADMIRAL JERVIS (CONT'D)
Admiral Nelson, would you please
stay?

Nelson stays seated, and Admiral Jervis waits for everybody
to leave before speaking.

ADMIRAL JERVIS (CONT'D)
I wanted to let you know that as
much as I admire you, your
promotion was earned, not given out
of friendship.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED: (2)

NELSON

Sir?

ADMIRAL JERVIS

You must have wondered why men who had done less in the capture of Corsica were rewarded, and you were passed over?

NELSON

Yes, sir, I had.

ADMIRAL JERVIS

Well, General Stuart made no mention of your contributions in his dispatches.

NELSON

I had thought him a friend.

ADMIRAL JERVIS

Well, you have enemies at the Admiralty, but you also have friends. I need you to sail to Tenerife...

INT. BURNHAM THORPE

Reverend Nelson, 61, Nelson's father, is a small, fit man. He walks into the room from a cold February day, holding a newspaper about the latest British victory and his son's promotion.

Fanny, 36, Nelson's wife, a pretty, but not beautiful woman, is sitting by the fire, darning.

REVEREND EDMUND NELSON

Have you heard the news? I could not walk two steps without people stopping me, and wanting to shake my hand. Our Horatio has been promoted to the rank of Admiral for his success in battle.

FANNY

Yes, I have heard.

REVEREND EDMUND NELSON

And you take no pleasure in it.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

FANNY

Why should I take interest in knowing my husband and son are in danger?

REVEREND EDMUND NELSON

But they are alive and well, and have served our country gloriously.

FANNY

Everyday I wonder when I will receive a note from the Admiralty, notifying me of my husband's or my son's death.

REVEREND EDMUND NELSON

Now, now, dear. Speak no ill thoughts. They are well, and we should be proud of them.

FANNY

I will express no happiness, until they are both home safe. Horatio, knows of my feelings through my letters.

INT. PALAZZO SESSA

Emma is trying on a new dress with her dressmaker in attendance, when Lord Hamilton enters.

HAMILTON

Good news, good news, my dear. Our friend Nelson has brought victory to our country again.

EMMA

Horatio?

Hamilton looks at the dispatch.

HAMILTON

Yes, that is his Christian name.

EMMA

I knew he was destined for glory.

HAMILTON

You were right, my dear. For his valor they made him a rear admiral.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

EMMA

Do you think he will have business here shortly? I would like to congratulate him personally.

HAMILTON

There are still conflicts happening around Portugal and the Western Sahara.

EMMA

I am disappointed.

EXT. HMS MINERVE - NELSON'S CABIN

Nelson is holding a meeting with his officers.

NELSON

Gentlemen, we have received information that a large quantity of gold bullion from the Spanish treasure ships have been left in the port of Santa Cruz. Without it the French can't buy wheat and that will mean a long hungry winter for Napoleon's army.

The men cheer this.

NELSON (CONT'D)

Go ready your landing parties. We will be leaving at the sound of one bell. I will be leading the boarding parties.

CAPTAIN BERRY

Sir, let me take the lead.

NELSON

The men must see that an admiral is willing to risk his life for his country.

CAPTAIN BERRY

Sir...

NELSON

Berry, you cannot change my mind.

CAPTAIN BERRY

Aye, aye sir.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

All the men leave to prepare for the night assault. A young midshipman enters.

MIDSHIPMAN

Sir, Lieutenant Joshua Nesbit requests an audience with you.

NELSON

Ah. I was expecting this. Let him enter.

The midshipman waves Joshua in.

JOSHUA

Admiral Nelson.

NELSON

Joshua, please have a seat.

JOSHUA

I would prefer to stand, sir.

NELSON

As you will. What may I do for you?

JOSHUA

I came to ask why all of my regiment were to be part of the landing party, and I was not?

NELSON

Joshua, what is to become of your mother, if both of us were to fall?

JOSHUA

What good am I to her, if I am not a man?

NELSON

She worries, and writes to me constantly, telling me to keep you safe.

JOSHUA

If I am to be treated as a boy, send me home to hide behind her skirts, but if I am a man, I will go with you tonight.

NELSON

You are a man. You will go with me tonight.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED: (2)

JOSHUA

Thank you, sir.

Joshua leaves.

EXT. THE PORT OF SANTA CRUZ - NIGHT

Thirty or so boats are quietly rowing from the British ships towards the shore.

NELSON

Put your backs into it, men. It will be dawn soon.

PHILLIPS

This current is strong sir, we cannot make headway.

NELSON

Then save your breath, and row, man.

PHILLIPS

Aye-aye, sir.

EXT. SANTA CRUZ - THE FORTRESS BATTLEMENTS

The sun is slowly coming over the island's mountain.

A young, tired and bored sentry is looking out to sea.

As the sun sweeps slowly over the island and out to sea, the black cloak of night that has hidden Nelson's boats is swept away and the sentry sounds the alarm.

MARINE CAPTAIN

They've spotted us, sir.

NELSON

So it seems.

The boats have made it to land.

Soldiers and sailors jump out of the boats and start dragging them further up shore out of the water.

They are greeted by enemy fire from the fort.

NELSON (CONT'D)

(Standing in the boat he draws his sword)

With me, men!

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

Nelson reaches the bow of the boat but he is hit with a grape shot that blows him back into the boat.

NELSON (CONT'D)

Ahh!

He has been hit in the arm. Joshua is quickly beside him, applying pressure to the wound. He uses his neck scarf to tie off the wound.

JOSHUA

Jones, tear up your shirt, I need to make a sling for the Admiral.

Jones rips his shirt off, and within moments has made a sling for Joshua to use on Nelson's arm. Nelson is fading in and out of consciousness.

JOSHUA (CONT'D)

Stay with me, father. Jones, we need to get the Admiral back to the ship.

JONES

Aye-aye, sir.

Jones rounds up a few men, and they start rowing Nelson back to his ship.

Cannonballs fired from the fortress explode around them. There are men from some of the other boats in the water.

Nelson recovers consciousness for a moment.

NELSON

Stop and pick up these men.

JOSHUA

You are bleeding heavily, father. We need to get you back to the ship.

NELSON

That is an order from your commander.

JOSHUA

Aye-aye, sir.

As they stop to pick up the men, Nelson loses consciousness.