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"The Winter Games of Our Discontent"

SUPER ON BLACK SCREEN:

If stupidity got us into this mess, then
why can't it get us out?

-- Will Rogers

FADE IN:

EXT. MENTONIA - COUNTRYSIDE - EARLY MORNING (2009)

LOUIS (38) and ANNE (16) walk in the thick-as-pea-soup FOG.

NARRATOR (V.O.)

Anne had reached her sixteenth year,
the age at which the princes and
princesses of Mentonia are cast off
into the world to come into their own.

(beat)

Not that she had any trepidation about
leaving, only that she would dearly
miss these times with her father,
listening to his tales of the great
Mentonian kings, and his tirades at
the Council of Ministers.

INT. HÔTEL RITZ (PARIS) - BEDROOM - MORNING (2012)

TWO FIGURES GIGGLE as they JOSTLE under the sheets of a
decadent king-size BED.

NARRATOR (V.O.)

Meanwhile, a great crisis was about to
befall our tiny country. And at the
center of this great crisis was, as
usual

Louis YANKS OFF the sheet, his bunny-cute GIRLFRIEND (20s)
pinned under him.

NARRATOR (CONT'D)

-- Louis Frederik Rihard Emanuele
Baillargeon.

He pulls the sheet back over them.

SERIES OF SHOTS - PARIS SHOPPING SPREE - DAY

A) INT. PRADA -- A GLOVED HAND gives a SALESMAN a CREDIT
CARD with the SEAL of the SOVEREIGN OF MENTONIA.

B) INT. HERMÈS -- The gloved hand gives a SALESGIRL the
credit card.

C) INT. MELLERIO DITS MELLER -- The gloved hand gives a
SALESMAN the credit card.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

D) INT. CHANEL -- As the gloved hand gives the SALESMAN the credit card, Louis's girlfriend, owner of the hand, grins like the cat who just ate the canary.

END OF SERIES OF SHOTS

NARRATOR (V.O.)

It was not long before Mademoiselle Binoche's excellent adventure was learned of. And to say the people were none too happy with being on the hook for a quarter of a million kronkites would be a gross understatement.

EXT. SVEN SJÖSTRAND SQUARE (MENTONIA) - EARLY MORNING

MOB strings Louis IN EFFIGY by its "genitals" next to the majestic STATUE of Sven Sjöstrand, TORCHES it. CHEERS.

INT. THE COUNCIL OF MINISTERS - CHAMBERS - CONTINUOUS

Stately BROWNSTONE of the five-person group which advises the Sovereign. The MINISTERS stand as Louis enters. MANFRED GRAF (50s) confronts him.

GRAF

Louis, the only comfort I can take in this latest disgrace is your father is not here to bear witness.

LOUIS

Blow it out your ass, Manfred.

Graf is mortified.

LOUIS (CONT'D)

In case you haven't noticed, they want your head as well as mine! So, if self-preservation is an instinct that you possess, then you better help me figure out how to save our phony-baloney jobs!

MINISTERS

Huzzah! Huzzah! Huzzah!

Louis points to an ELDERLY MINISTER in a WHEELCHAIR ON an OXYGEN TANK.

LOUIS

I didn't get an "huzzah" out of you!

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

As the poor man is HIT with rolled-up NEWSPAPERS by the others for his "insolence", Louis walks to the BALCONY that faces the GROUNDS.

NARRATOR (V.O.)

As poor Petr Petrov was pelted with the morning edition of The *Pathé Pionnier*, it came to Louis how to save his phony-baloney job.

(beat)

It was arrived at as most of Louis's decisions were arrived at: rashly, portentously, and completely bereft of a single working brain cell.

EXT. COUNCIL OF MINISTERS - BALCONY - MOMENTS LATER

Louis appears. The mob HOWLS. He gives a big smile.

LOUIS

My friends.

A COW PIE finds his face. CHEERS. With great dignity, he produces a handkerchief, and WIPES it off.

LOUIS (CONT'D)

My friends. I shall pay for Mademoiselle Binoche's expenditures out of my own personal accounts.

That throws them. Their reaction give him confidence.

LOUIS (CONT'D)

And I hereby decree that as long as a Baillargeon rules Mentonia, the Crown shall not be supported by your hard-earned kronkites. As you must make your way in the world, so shall we.

They disperse, utterly baffled.

INT. PALACE OF THE SOVEREIGN - THRONE ROOM - MORNING

Louis, on the THRONE, reads a BOOK, "Rubber Ducky Racing for Dummies". He quaffs cow pies as a MAKE-UP ARTIST works on him, and a TV CREW SETS UP. GEORG bows to him.

GEORG

Your Majesty, Queen Beatrix.

Louis nods his thanks, puts down the book, and grabs the PHONE beside him.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

LOUIS (ON PHONE)
Bea! Hey! How's it hanging?

INT. PALACE (VALDEMAR) - QUEEN'S APARTMENTS - CONTINUOUS

Airy and dignified. STRING QUARTET PLAYS.

QUEEN BEATRIX (70s), as regal as Louis is not, BREAKFASTS with her snooty grandson, PRINCE RUPERT (17). She puts the phone ON SPEAKER MODE.

BEATRIX (ON PHONE)
Louis, don't tell me you were silly enough to cede the family fortune as well?

LOUIS (OVER PHONE)
Well, Bea, it was either that or get strung up by my nuts and set on fire.

She is not amused.

BEATRIX (ON PHONE)
What about the dowry?

INT. PALACE OF THE SOVEREIGN - THRONE ROOM - CONTINUOUS

Louis has no idea what she's talking about.

LOUIS (ON PHONE)
Dowry? What dowry?

Georg CLEARS his throat. Louis looks at him, perplexed.

GEORG
Your Majesties signed a treaty to betroth the Princess to Prince Rupert.

LOUIS
I did?

GEORG
Yes. Your Majesty.

This bit of info seeps into His Majesty's wee brain.

LOUIS
I must have been wasted.

GEORG
Quite. Your Majesty.

INT. PALACE OF THE SOVEREIGN - LIBRARY - MOMENTS LATER

Louis and Georg scan the room. Louis PULLS OUT a drawer, finds a leather-bound FOLIO. He READS its cover:

LOUIS

"Treaty between The Kingdom of Mentonia and The Kingdom of Valdemar for the Betrothal of Her Most Gracious Highness, Princess Anne Marit Brigida Ludvika of The Kingdom of Mentonia to His Royal Highness, Prince Rupert Otto Jaromír Matthias of The Kingdom of Valdemar. Thirty-one, December, nineteen ninety-three".

He FLIPS through several PAGES quickly, STOPS, reads.

LOUIS (CONT'D)

A million kronkites?!

He grabs the PHONE to his right.

LOUIS (ON PHONE) (CONT'D)

Come on, Bea, are you really going to hold me to this?

(beat)

Look, why don't I send you a case of cow pies, and we'll call it even.

INT. PALACE (VALDEMAR) - QUEEN'S APARTMENTS - CONTINUOUS

Beatrice does a slow burn. Rupert throws a FIT.

RUPERT

I want the dehydrated water springs, Grammy! I want the dehydrated water springs!

She GESTURES for him to calm down.

BEATRIX (ON PHONE)

Deed the dehydrated water springs, then we will call it even.

LOUIS (OVER PHONE)

Are you out of your mind?!

BEATRIX (ON PHONE)

No? Then, I shall see you in court.

INT. PALACE OF THE SOVEREIGN - LIBRARY - CONTINUOUS

Louis has officially gone off the deep end.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

 LOUIS (ON PHONE)
 Ha! The joke's on you because I won't
 be there!
 (beat)
 And I may be broke, but - newsflash! -
 I don't have some snooty-ass
 Parliament to answer to! I'm still the
 king of my domain, baby!

INT. PALACE OF THE SOVEREIGN - THRONE ROOM - LATER

A glum Louis, the reality of his situation having sunk in,
 stands before a CAMERA, the DIRECTOR in his face.

 DIRECTOR
 Now, Your Majesty, all you need to do
 is to read the cue cards, and flash
 that shit-eating grin.

Louis nods. A MAN holds a clap-board, SNAPS it, LEAVES.

 DIRECTOR (CONT'D)
 And... action!

Louis tries to be cheery.

 LOUIS
 My friends. Are you depressed?
 Feeling worthless? Life lost all
 meaning? Do you just want to end it
 once and for all?

INT. TV STUDIO - DAY (2014)

Anne holds a BOTTLE of the same "fine" product Louis pitched
 years before.

 ANNE
 Then, "*Selbstmord*" is the cure for
 what's ailing you. Developed in over
 twenty years of double-blind research
 studies, "*Selbstmord*" is guaranteed to
 provide hours of utter anguish,
 hopelessness, despair, and the guts to
 finally take the plunge!

She flashes her father's shit-eating grin.

INT. PALACE OF THE SOVEREIGN - GREAT ROOM - MORNING

A sad shell of her former glory.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

Anne, in a heavy sweater, sits at her desk, sifts through BILLS. She could use some *Selbstmord* right about now. Georg, in an overcoat, bows to her.

GEORG

Your Majesty. Harol's Heating Oil will make a delivery if we pay seventy -five percent of the balance in cash.

She finds the BILL for HAROL'S HEATING OIL: 300 kronkites.

ANNE

Two-hundred twenty-five kronkites?!

(beat)

This is ridiculous! I am the Sovereign! I shouldn't have to beg the heating company not to cut off the oil or beg the treasury to refinance the mortgage! I should not even have a mortgage! How the hell did this happen to me?!

She glances about the room, then NOTICES something O.S.

INSERT: FRAMED 1896 PHOTOGRAPH ON A TABLE

Fourth-great grandfather BAUDOIN (60s) stands among TWELVE formally-dressed MEN.

BACK TO SCENE

She stares at the photograph.

NARRATOR (V.O.)

As she pondered how the hell this happened to her, it came to Anne how she could get the two-hundred and twenty-five kronkites.

EXT. CHÂTEAU DE VIDY (LAUSANNE, SWITZERLAND) - DAY

On this stately hunting lodge is THE OLYMPIC HOUSE, headquarters of the International Olympic Committee.

INT. THE OLYMPIC HOUSE - CONFERENCE ROOM - CONTINUOUS

BORIS sets up the PRESENTATION on the STAGE as Anne walks along the IOC MEMBERS' table, handing EACH a BRIEF detailing Pathé, Mentonia's bid for the 2020 Winter Olympics.

INSERT: IOC MEMBERS' TABLE - CONTINUOUS

NAMEPLATE: "HRH Crown Prince Rupert, Kingdom of Valdemar"

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

TWO BUTLERS SERVE Rupert (now 22): filet mignon; Chilean king crab; Almas caviar; Alba white truffles; Romanée-Conti Pinot Noir, 1997. Anyone else would kill to get a whiff of this. Rupert is not one of them.

RUPERT

I was promised a Cheeseburger Happy Meal. I do not want this crap! I want my Happy Meal!

They REMOVE the food before he really loses it.

BACK TO SCENE

Boris PASSES OUT the briefs as Anne takes to the stage.

ANNE

Ladies and gentlemen, thank you for granting us the honor of presenting our bid for the twenty-third Winter Games. I am Anne, Sovereign of the Kingdom of Mentonia.

She produces a MAP, and points out where Mentonia is.

ANNE (CONT'D)

My great-great-great-great-grandfather, King Baudouin, fought in the Austro-Sardinian War. His son, Prince Étienne, was killed in the Serbo-Bulgarian War. Baudouin knew first-hand the horror, the waste, and the stupidity of armed conflict.

(beat)

When he heard of the Baron's simple yet profound idea to revive the Olympics as a way to build peace and goodwill among nations, Baudouin sent him a donation of two-hundred fifty-thousand francs.

(beat)

One of the original members of this Committee, it was Baudouin's dream for the Games to be held in Mentonia.

The PROJECTOR SCREEN shows Baudouin's BLUEPRINTS MORPH into an OLYMPIC FACILITY.

ANNE (CONT'D)

His vision was made reality by my grandfather, King Pierre, also an esteemed member of this Committee. Built in Pathé, it is maintained by my people, who hold the Olympic Ideal sacred.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

They are not moved in the slightest. She gets miffed.

ANNE (CONT'D)

All right. You know why I am here, and I know why you are here, so let us get down to brass tacks.

(beat)

The initial estimate by the City of Vancouver for the operational costs of the twenty-ten Games was four-hundred ninety-four million, four-hundred seventy-two thousand Euros. As everyone knows now, that was wishful thinking. Security alone cost one-hundred seventy-nine million Euros. And for the first time in history, the IOC had to lend funds to an OOC to keep the OCC solvent.

(beat)

So, what did the good people of Canada get for all their millions: three mascots who looked like escapees from a Pokémon convention, and Wayne Gretzky in the back of a pickup truck!

The members GRUMBLE at this harsh truth.

ANNE (CONT'D)

A Pathé-hosted Games will not face such obstacles. We have near-zero unemployment, and a highly-skilled and motivated workforce. Moreover, neither the central or the communal governments have never - I repeat, never - operated at a deficit.

(beat)

Bottom line: we confidently project net IOC profits of at least four-hundred million Euros.

MURMURS. Anne and Boris exchange hopeful smiles.

IOC PRESIDENT

Pass.

She looks at him: "What?!"

IOC PRESIDENT (CONT'D)

Forgive me, Your Majesty. As English is not your native language, I shall put this in Flemish as delicately as I can: "Nee"!

She and Boris are beyond stunned.

INT. PALACE (VALDEMAR) - CROWN PRINCE'S APARTMENTS - BEDROOM
- NIGHT

As STATUES of RONALD McDONALD, OFFICER BIG MAC, THE GRIMACE,
and BIRDY watch over him, Rupert sleeps snugly in his
GOBBLINS PAJAMAS in his custom-made MAYOR McCHEESE king-size
BED with HAMBURGLER BEDSHEETS.

LOUD BANG O.S. He springs UP, sees something, then SHRIEKS
like a girly-man.

INT. AL ARABIYA (DUBAI, UAE) - TV STUDIO - NIGHT

An ANCHORMAN sits behind a desk. IN ARABIC WITH ENGLISH
SUBTITLES:

ANCHORMAN

Crown Prince Rupert, heir to the throne
of the Kingdom of Valdemar, has been
missing for over twenty-four hours.

EXT. PALACE (VALDEMAR) - GROUNDS - DAY

Late-Medieval fortress. REPORTER for TELEVISION TONGA
stands near the entry. IN TONGAN WITH ENGLISH SUBTITLES:

TELEVISION TONGA REPORTER

The head of security for King Otto told
authorities that the Crown Prince was
last seen by his staff entering his
quarters at nine o'clock Monday evening.
Police admit they have no leads, and
are now asking the public for help.

EXT. PARLIAMENT BUILDING (VALDEMAR) - DAY

19th-Century Greek Revival. REPORTER for MCOT (THAILAND)
stands on its steps. IN THAI WITH ENGLISH SUBTITLES:

MCOT REPORTER

The Crown Prince was reportedly upset
during the International Olympic
Committee meeting in Lausanne,
Switzerland on Friday because he was
not served his favorite dish, a
McDonald's Cheeseburger Happy Meal.

EXT. McDONALD'S (VALDEMAR) - DAY

BANNER: "We Miss You, Rupert! Come Home Soon!" REPORTER
for ITN (SRI LANKA) faces an O.S. camera. IN SINHALA WITH
ENGLISH SUBTITLES:

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

ITN REPORTER

Sources say that before the meet, an IOC member spiked the Crown Prince's lemonade with a certain bodily fluid.

INT. ABC (NEW YORK CITY) - MASTER CONTROL - DAY
OPERATORS MONITOR RAW NEWS FEEDS. Monitors GO DARK. CHAOS.

INT. AL JAZEERA (DOHA, QATAR) - MASTER CONTROL - CONTINUOUS
OPERATORS MONITOR RAW NEWS FEEDS. Monitors GO DARK. CHAOS.

INT. BBC (LONDON) - MASTER CONTROL - CONTINUOUS
OPERATORS monitor RAW NEWS FEEDS. Monitors GO DARK. CHAOS.

INT. CBS (NEW YORK CITY) - MASTER CONTROL - CONTINUOUS
OPERATORS MONITOR RAW NEWS FEEDS. Monitors GO DARK. CHAOS.

INT. CNN (ATLANTA, GA) - MASTER CONTROL - CONTINUOUS
OPERATORS MONITOR RAW NEWS FEEDS. Monitors GO DARK. CHAOS.

INT. CCTV (BEIJING) - MASTER CONTROL - CONTINUOUS
OPERATORS MONITOR RAW NEWS FEEDS. Monitors GO DARK. CHAOS.

INT. DEUTSCHE WELLE (BONN, GERMANY) - MASTER CONTROL -
CONTINUOUS
OPERATORS MONITOR RAW NEWS FEEDS. Monitors GO DARK. CHAOS.

INT. FOX (NEW YORK CITY) - MASTER CONTROL - CONTINUOUS
OPERATORS MONITOR RAW NEWS FEEDS. Monitors GO DARK. CHAOS.

INT. FRANCE 24 (PARIS) - MASTER CONTROL - CONTINUOUS
OPERATORS MONITOR RAW NEWS FEEDS. Monitors GO DARK. CHAOS.

INT. NBC (NEW YORK CITY) - MASTER CONTROL - CONTINUOUS
OPERATORS MONITOR RAW NEWS FEEDS. Monitors GO DARK. CHAOS.

INT. RIA NOVOSTI (MOSCOW) - MASTER CONTROL - CONTINUOUS
OPERATORS MONITOR RAW NEWS FEEDS. Monitors GO DARK. CHAOS.

INT. ABC - MASTER CONTROL - DAY
Anne APPEARS ON the monitors. More CHAOS.

INT. AL JAZEERA - MASTER CONTROL - CONTINUOUS
Anne APPEARS ON the monitors. More CHAOS.

INT. BBC - MASTER CONTROL - CONTINUOUS
Anne APPEARS ON the monitors. More CHAOS.

INT. CBS - MASTER CONTROL - CONTINUOUS
Anne APPEARS ON the monitors. More CHAOS.

INT. CNN - MASTER CONTROL - CONTINUOUS
Anne APPEARS ON the MONITORS. More CHAOS.

INT. CCTV - MASTER CONTROL - CONTINUOUS
Anne APPEARS ON the monitors. More CHAOS.

INT. DEUTSCHE WELLE - MASTER CONTROL - CONTINUOUS
Anne APPEARS ON the monitors. More CHAOS.

INT. FOX - MASTER CONTROL - CONTINUOUS
Anne APPEARS ON the monitors. More CHAOS.

INT. FRANCE 24 - MASTER CONTROL - CONTINUOUS
Anne APPEARS ON the monitors. More CHAOS.

INT. NBC - MASTER CONTROL - CONTINUOUS
Anne APPEARS ON the monitors. More CHAOS.

INT. RIA NOVOSTI - MASTER CONTROL - CONTINUOUS
Anne APPEARS ON the monitors. More CHAOS.

INT. PALACE OF THE SOVEREIGN - PRESS ROOM - CONTINUOUS

At his WORKSTATION - featuring a SATELLITE MODEM and a SATCOM FREQUENCY CONVERTER - Boris leans back in his chair with a shit-eating grin: he's just hacked into the raw feeds of every major TV network in the world!

Georg mans a CAMCORDER as Anne stands in front of it, waves.

ANNE

Hello, world. I am, by the Grace of God, Her Most Gracious Majesty, Anne, Sovereign of the Kingdom of Mentonia, Grande Duchesse of Pathé, Storfustinna of Bårgen, Velika Kneginja of Duklja, Granduchessa of Risacci, Defender of the Faith, Guardian of the Realm, you get the idea.

She holds up a MAP, and points to where Mentonia is.

ANNE (CONT'D)

We have Crown Prince Rupert.

EXT. MAIN SQUARE (PATHÉ) - CONTINUOUS

PEOPLE watching the JUMBOTRON greet the news with CHEERS.

INT. PALAIS DE ÉLYSÉE (PARIS) - PRESS ROOM - DAY

The PRESIDENT OF FRANCE READS a statement before REPORTERS. IN FRENCH WITH ENGLISH SUBTITLES:

PRESIDENT OF FRANCE

"We denounce, in the strongest terms possible, this outrageous violation of international law".

INT. BEIT AGHION (TEL AVIV) - PRESS ROOM - DAY

The PRESIDENT OF ISRAEL READS a statement before REPORTERS. IN HEBREW WITH ENGLISH SUBTITLES:

PRESIDENT OF ISRAEL

"Israel has never had a better friend than Mentonia. However, we cannot condone what is nothing less than an act of terrorism".

EXT. 10 DOWNING STREET (LONDON) - ENTRANCE - DAY

The PRIME MINISTER OF GREAT BRITAIN speaks to REPORTERS.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

PRIME MINISTER OF GREAT BRITAIN
This outrageous act is an assault not
only on civilized people everywhere, but
on civilization itself.

INT. THE KREMLIN (MOSCOW) - PRESS ROOM - DAY

The PRIME MINISTER OF RUSSIA stands REPORTERS, about to read
a statement, but at the last moment, decides to go off-
message. IN RUSSIAN WITH ENGLISH SUBTITLES:

PRIME MINISTER OF RUSSIA
I have got to say it: what this woman
did took balls. She determined what
was in the best interests of her
country, set upon a course of action,
and pursued the course of action until
the objective was achieved. That is
leadership. Were Queen Anne a man, I
would follow her gladly into the bowels
of Hell.

INT. THE WHITE HOUSE (WASHINGTON, D.C.) - PRESS ROOM - DAY

The PRESIDENT READS a statement before REPORTERS.

PRESIDENT OF THE UNITED STATES
"I have directed the Secretary of State
to recall of our ambassador to Mentonia
and to expel Mentonia's diplomatic
mission. Further, I have called for an
emergency session of the United Nations
General Assembly.

(beat)

"Let Queen Anne know this: this
deplorable act will not be tolerated.
You will be held accountable, and you
will be made to suffer the
consequences".

REPORTER #1
But Mr. President, Queen Anne severed
diplomatic ties last year after the
Vice President called Mentonian
dehydrated water "the Devil's poison".

PRESIDENT OF THE UNITED STATES
(thrown)
The Vice President said that.

REPORTER #1
Yes, sir.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

PRESIDENT OF THE UNITED STATES
(still thrown)
About... dehydrated water.

REPORTER #1
Yes, sir.

REPORTER #2
And Mentonia quit the United Nations in
nineteen fifty-three after then-
Secretary-General Daj Hammarskjöld
called the Coddle "butt ugly".

PRESIDENT OF THE UNITED STATES
I am almost afraid to ask... what is a
Coddle?

REPORTER #2
Mentonia's national bird, sir.

The President takes all of this in, then finally shrugs.

PRESIDENT OF THE UNITED STATES
Well, guess that's that.
(beat)
Who wants to accompany me on another
taxpayer-funded hamburger run?

The reporters CLAMOR to be picked like a bunch of eager
schoolkids.

INT. PALACE OF THE SOVEREIGN - MUSIC ROOM - DAY

Laid out on a couch, Rupert, HOGTIED, a COW PIE in his
mouth, COMES TO, to find himself surrounded by TEN very big,
very scary MEN in black -- THE PALADIN.

NARRATOR (V.O.)
The Paladin. The direct descendants of
the mercenaries led by Karles "The
Creep" Maureus, bastard son of
Charlemagne, who sacked our tiny country
in the year eight-fourteen.
(beat)
Each member of the Palatin takes a
blood oath to place the Sovereign above
all else, and to execute his orders
without question, under pain of death
or dismemberment, whichever is the
messiest.

INT. OLYMPIC HOUSE - CONFERENCE ROOM - DAY

A STAFFER with a LAPTOP INTERRUPTS the IOC President's MEETING with the MARKETING COMMISSION. The Staffer places the laptop before him.

ANNE (ON LAPTOP)
Mr. President, I will come right to it:
award us the Games, and I shall release
the Crown Prince.

Everyone exchanges serious looks, then burst out LAUGHING.

IOC PRESIDENT
You want fries with that brat?

INT. PALACE OF THE SOVEREIGN - GREAT ROOM - CONTINUOUS

Anne - before a LAPTOP on a table - looks as though she's been kicked in the gut as the LAUGHTER continues O.S.

INT. PALACE (VALDEMAR) - THRONE ROOM - LATER

PORTRAITS of PAST MONARCHS adorn the walls.

KING OTTO (50s), nervous, and his PRIME MINISTER (60s), upper-crust gent, huddle around a LAPTOP.

OTTO
(hopeful)
Does this mean we will have the
wedding, at last?

INT. PALACE OF THE SOVEREIGN - GREAT ROOM - CONTINUOUS

Anne, Georg, and Boris see Otto and the Prime Minister ON their LAPTOP. Rupert has been allowed to move about.

ANNE
No!

OTTO (ON LAPTOP)
Please?

ANNE
No!

OTTO (ON LAPTOP)
Pretty please?

ANNE
No!

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

PRIME MINISTER (ON LAPTOP)
Aw, come on! Be a pal!

ANNE
No!

INT. PALACE (VALDEMAR) - THRONE ROOM - CONTINUOUS

Otto and the Prime Minister SEE Anne on their LAPTOP. They are taken aback.

ANNE (ON LAPTOP)
I had Rupert kidnapped to force the IOC to award us the twenty-twenty Winter Games.

She, Georg, and Boris share a constipated LOOK.

ANNE (ON LAPTOP) (CONT'D)
Besides, my father never paid the dowry.

PRIME MINISTER
No. King Andrea did.

ANNE (ON LAPTOP)
What?! How did Andy get his grubby hands on a million kronkites?!

INT. PALACE OF THE SOVEREIGN - MUSIC ROOM - CONTINUOUS

Anne, Georg, and Boris SEE Otto and the Prime Minister ON the LAPTOP shrug.

ANNE (CONT'D)
Do you know what I had to do to secure a loan from the treasury to finance our journey to Lausanne? I had to promise them Boris's firstborn!

BORIS
What?!
(contrite)
Your Majesty.

She gives him an embarrassed shrug.

OTTO (ON LAPTOP)
Anne, we will do whatever you ask. But I beg of you, I beseech you, please do not send Rupert back.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

An incensed Rupert BLOCKS Anne out so his father sees him.

RUPERT
(brattiness personified)
I love you, too, Daddy!

OTTO (ON LAPTOP)
You arrogant, insolent snot! Nobody
likes you! Nobody has ever liked you!
And nobody wants you to be king!

Rupert now has a constipated moment.

DISSOLVE TO:

EXT. MAIN STREET (PATHÉ) - DAY

Rupert, in his Gobblins pajamas, slouches along. PASSERS-BY notice, but don't approach.

INT. HENRIK'S HØNSEFRIKASSÉ (BÅRGEN) - LATER

Danish eatery. Rupert stares at his HØNSEFRIKASSÉ (chicken fricassee), ignored by the RACUOUS PATRONS around him.

INT. BISHAMON'S BANZAI (DUKLJA) - LATER

Japanese eatery. Rupert stares at his TORA FUGU, the poisonous fish, ignored by the RACUOUS PATRONS around him.

INT. AMARA'S ADDIS ABABA (RISACCI) - LATER

Ethiopian eatery. Rupert stares at his MELASENA SEMBER (beef tripe and tongue in vegetables and sauce). Again, he is ignored by the RACUOUS PATRONS around him.

A POLICEMAN enters, spots Rupert, INFORMS DISPATCH via his WALKIE-TALKIE. Anne enters.

The policeman bows. The patrons CHEER. AMARA BERHE (40s), the cheery owner, comes to her. She shakes his hand as The Palatin form a flying wedge around her.

She and the patrons shake hands/exchange HIGH FIVES as she makes her way to Rupert, then gestures to the patrons.

ANNE
Everyone, this is Crown Prince Rupert.

CHEERS. He is caught off-guard as everyone insists on shaking his hand. The Policeman escorts TWO MEN to Anne.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

POLICEMAN
 Your Majesty. Henrik Nøstergaard of
 Henrik's Hønsefrikassé.
 (beat)
 Bishamon Gensai of Bishamon's Banzai.

NØSTERGAARD and GENSAI bow to her. They then NOTICE Rupert.

NØSTERGAARD
 (Danish accent)
 Where is my money?!

GENSAI
 (Japanese accent)
 Cough it up, pajama boy!

Rupert points at Nøstergaard.

RUPERT
 You told me *Hønsefrikassé* was chopped-
 up Chicken McNuggets!

Rupert then points at Gensai.

RUPERT (CONT'D)
 And you told me *Tora Fugu* was a fancy
 Filet-o-Fish!

Anne mulls that over. Nøstergaard and Gensai then CHARGE AT Rupert. She raises a hand to STOP them.

She MOTIONS to the PALATIN COMMANDER. He produces his wallet, PAYS Nøstergaard and Gensai, puts a BILL on the table to pay for the Melasena Sember. She nods her thanks to the Palatin Commander, who bows to her, steps back.

Nøstergaard and Gensai bow to her, leave. The Policeman bows to her, leaves. The patrons return to respective tables. Anne takes the seat next to Rupert.

RUPERT (CONT'D)
 (re: the bill)
 Thank you.

ANNE
 You are my hostage. Least I can do.

He cracks a smile, then gives way to despondency.

RUPERT
 My people hate me. They do not want me
 to be king.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

ANNE

No. They do not want an arrogant, insolent snot to be their king. That is the problem with the world: arrogant, insolent snots who call themselves leaders. Only, they don't want to lead; they want only to be followed.

(long beat)

You will become king one day, Rupert. Will you be a king who leads? Or a king who wants only to be followed?

He suddenly has a lot to think about. She gives him a supportive CLAP on the back, then joins the patrons.

DISSOLVE TO:

INT. PALACE (VALDEMAR) - THRONE ROOM - DAY

In a CEREMONY, Anne and Otto sit side by side at a table, signing an accord.

NARRATOR (V.O.)

So, Anne and Otto formally dissolved the Treaty of Betrothal.

They finish, stand, smile/shake hands as FLASHBULBS POP.

EXT. GOTHIC CHURCH (VALDEMAR) - ENTRANCE - DAY

Rupert, in Navy dress whites, emerges with his beautiful BRIDE. CROWD CHEERS.

NARRATOR (V.O.) (CONT'D)

And Rupert decided finally to grow up.

INT. PALACE (VALDEMAR) - THRONE ROOM - DAY

Rupert and his Bride GREET their future SUBJECTS as Otto looks on with pride.

NARRATOR (V.O.) (CONT'D)

Determined to become the king his people will need: one who will lead, not one who wants only to be followed.

EXT. PALACE OF THE SOVEREIGN - NORTH EAST DIVIDER - DAWN

Georg PAYS a WORKER from HAROL'S HEATING OIL as a SECOND WORKER PUMPS the oil from the TRUCK into the cellar. All three REACT to the bitter COLD.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

NARRATOR (V.O.) (CONT'D)
The dissolution of the treaty meant the
release of the dowry, which was used to
pay Harol for his heating oil.

INT. OLYMPIC HOUSE - PRESS ROOM - DAY

Anne and the IOC President smile/shake hands before the
MEDIA as she hands him a large bribe - oops - "donation".

NARRATOR (V.O.) (CONT'D)
The IOC for great-great-great-great-
grandfather Baudouin's seat.

INT. ROYAL TREASURY (PATHÉ) - TREASURER'S OFFICE - DAY

Reeks of snobbery.

A COURIER delivers an ENVELOPE to Manfred Graf. Graf opens
it to find TWO CASHIER'S CHECKS: one MARKED "IOC"; the other
MARKED "Mortgage" with a hand-written NOTE.

NARRATOR (V.O.) (CONT'D)
And to inform Herr Graf what he could
do with his nine-and-a-half percent
interest, compounded quarterly.

Graf OPENS the note. It READS: "Dear Manfred, Blow it out
your ass! Respectfully, Anne".

He is, once again, mortified.

FADE OUT.

END