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"The Winter Games of Our Discontent"

Written by

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ON BLACK:

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

-- Will Rogers

FADE IN:

EXT. TRČKA - 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 Trčka were cast off into
the world to come into their own. Not
that she had any trepidation about
leaving home, only that she would miss
these times with her father dearly,
listening to his tales of the great
Trčkan kings, and his tirades at the
Council of Ministers.

INT. HÔTEL RITZ (PARIS, FRANCE) - SUITE IMPÉRIALE - 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 country. And at the center
of this great crisis was, as usual --

Louis (now 41) yanks off the sheet, his bunny-cute
GIRLFRIEND (20s) pinned under him.

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

-- Louis Pietro Henrik Boldvin
Baillargeon.

SERIES OF SHOTS: PARIS SHOPPING SPREE

-- INT. ANA QUASOAR -- A hand gives a SALESLADY a credit
card, the Seal of the Sovereign of Duklja on it

-- INT. AUBERCY -- The hand gives a SALESGIRL the card

-- INT. BUCHERER -- The hand gives a SALESMAN the card

-- INT. SAINT-GERMAIN-DES-PRÉS PIED-À-TERRE -- Louis's lady
friend grins as she hands the LANDLADY the card

END SERIES OF SHOTS

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

NARRATOR (V.O.) (CONT'D)
It was not long before Mademoiselle Noël's excellent adventure was learned of. And to say that the people were none-too happy with being on the hook for a half-million trinkas would be a gross understatement.

EXT. SEBJÖRN OF SÖDERTÄLJE SQUARE (TRČKA) - MORNING

Next to the equestrian statue of macho mercenary Sebjörn of Södertälje, a MOB strings an effigy of Louis up by its "genitals", then torches it to CHEERS.

INT. COUNCIL OF MINISTERS (TRČKA) - CHAMBERS - LATER

Stately hub of the MINISTERS who rede the Sovereign. Louis enters as QÚPERSIMÂN QEQERTARSUATSIAAT confronts him.

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

LOUIS
Blow it out your ass, Qúpersimân!

Qeqertarsuatsiaat 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 posses, then you better help me figure out how to save our phony-baloney jobs!

MINISTERS
Huzzah! Huzzah! Huzzah!

Louis points at a Minister in a wheelchair, on oxygen.

LOUIS
I didn't get a "huzzah" out of you.

As the poor man is HIT with rolled-up newspapers by the others, Louis walks to the foreground BALCONY.

NARRATOR (V.O.)
As poor Petr Petrov was pelted with the morning *Pathé Poste*, it came to Louis how to save his phony-baloney job.
(MORE)

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

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

(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 before his SUBJECTS. BOOS. He smiles.

LOUIS

My friends.

A cow pie HITS his face. CHEERS. With great dignity, he produces a handkerchief/wipes it off.

LOUIS (CONT'D)

My friends. I shall pay for Ms. Noël's expenditures out of my own privvy accounts.

That throws them. Their reaction give him confidence.

LOUIS (CONT'D)

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

The crowd disperses, utterly baffled.

INT. PALACE OF THE SOVEREIGN - THRONE ROOM - MORNING

On the throne, Louis reads a book, Rubber Ducky Racing for Dummies, and quaffs cow pies. GÖRGES enters, bows to him.

GÖRGES

Your Most Gracious Majesty, Her Majesty Queen Beatrix is on the telephone.

Louis puts down the book, grabs the phone beside him.

LOUIS (ON PHONE)

Bea! Hey, how's it hanging?

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

Airy. QUARTET PLAYS Rameau as QUEEN BEATRIX (70s; regal) breakfasts with her grandson, PRINCE RUPERT (17; snot).

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

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

LOUIS (OVER PHONE)
Well, 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?

Görge CLEARs his throat. Louis looks at him, perplexed.

GÖRGES
Your Most Gracious Majesty and Her
Majesty signed a treaty to betroth Her
Most Gracious Highness to His Royal
Highness Prince Rupert.

LOUIS
I did?

GÖRGES
Yes, Your Most Gracious Majesty.

This bit of info seeps into Louis's wee brain.

LOUIS
I must have been wasted!

GÖRGES
Quite. Your Most Gracious Majesty.

INT: LIBRARY - MOMENTS LATER

Louis and Görge scan the room. Louis pulls out a drawer,
finds a leather-bound folio. He reads its cover:

LOUIS
"Treaty between The Kingdom of Trčka
and The Kingdom of Greuthung for the
Betrothal of Her Most Gracious Highness,
(MORE)

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

LOUIS (CONT'D)
Princess Anne Marit Brigida Ludvika of
The Kingdom of Trčka to His Royal
Highness, Prince Rupert Otto Jaromír
Matthias of The Kingdom of Greuthüng."

He flips through several pages quickly, stops, reads.

LOUIS (CONT'D)
One million trinkas?!

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 just send you a case
of cow pies, and we'll call it even.

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

Beatrix does a slow burn while 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.

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 - DAY

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

DIRECTOR
Now, Your Most Gracious 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.

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

She flashes Louis's shit-eating grin.

INT. PALACE OF THE SOVEREIGN - GREAT ROOM - MORNING

A sad shell of her former glory.

Anne, in a sweater, sits at her desk, sifts through bills.
She could use some Sjálfsvíg right about now.

Görges, in an overcoat, approaches, bows to her.

GÖRGES
Your Most Gracious Majesty, Olari's Ōli
has agreed to a delivery if seventy-five
percent of the balance is paid in
advance.

She finds the bill for Olari's Ōli: 300 trinkas.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

ANNE
Two-hundred and twenty-five trinkas?!
(beat)
I am the Sovereign! I should have not
to beg for heating oil or refinance
the mortgage! I should not 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 of third-great
grandfather BAUDOUIN (60s; portly) standing among a group of
TWELVE formally-dressed MEN.

BACK TO SCENE

Anne stares at the photograph.

NARRATOR (V.O.)
As she pondered how the hell this
happened to her, it came to Anne how
she could obtain the two-hundred and
twenty-five trinkas.

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

Stately hunting lodge, and headquarters of the International
Olympic Committee [IOC].

INT. CHÂTEAU DE VIDY - CONFERENCE ROOM - DAY

BORIS hands each IOC MEMBER a brief detailing Duklja's bid
for the 2020 Winter Olympics.

Meanwhile, STAFF from the Restaurant de l'Hôtel de Ville
Crissier serve lunch: Légume Velouté; Île de Ré Crab
Consommé with Caviar Impériale Oscietre; Raviolis with Ceps
and Hazelnuts; Pigeon de Bresse et Légumes in Grand Siècle
Sauce; Gariguettes Strawberry Ice Cream; coffee.

Anyone else would kill for a whiff of this. Rupert (now 22)
- who drinks lemonade while the others enjoy Montrachet
Grand Cru, Côte de Beaune (2002) - is not one of them.

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

The Staff clears his table before he really loses it. Anne
takes to the stage.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

ANNE

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

She produces a map, and points to where Trčka is.

ANNE (CONT'D)

My 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 learned of the simple yet profound idea of Baron de Coubertin to revive the Olympics as a way to build goodwill among nations, Baudouin tendered a donation to the Baron of five-hundred thousand francs.

(beat)

One of the original members of this Committee, Baudouin dreamed of the Games to be held in Trčka.

Boris runs a projector screen: 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, our capital, it is maintained by my people, who hold the Olympic Ideal sacred.

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

ANNE (CONT'D)

Very well. You know why we are here, and we know why you are here, so, as the Americans like to say, "Let's get down to brass tacks".

(beat)

The initial estimate by the City of Vancouver for the operational costs of the twenty-ten Winter Games was one billion, three-hundred fifty-four million dollars Canadian. As everyone

(MORE)

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

ANNE (CONT'D)
now knows, that was folly. Security costs alone were one-hundred seventy-nine million Euros, and the IOC had to lend funds to an OOC to keep it solvent for the first time ever.

(beat)

And what benefit did the good people of Canada realize from these expenditures? Three mascots which resembled escapees from a Pokémon convention, and Wayne Gretzky in the back of a pick-up truck.

The members GRUMBLE at this harsh truth.

ANNE (CONT'D)
A Trčka-hosted Games shall not face such obstacles. We have near-zero unemployment, a highly-skilled and motivated workforce, and the government has never operated at a deficit.

(beat)

We project confidently net profits of four-hundred ninety-one million, forty-thousand Swiss Francs.

MURMURS. Anne and Boris exchange hopeful smiles.

IOC PRESIDENT

Pass.

She looks at him: "What?!"

IOC PRESIDENT (CONT'D)
Forgive me, Your Most Gracious Majesty. As English is not your native language, I shall put this into Flemish as delicately as I can:

(beat; scathing)

Nee!

She and Boris are beyond stunned.

INT. PALACE (GREUTHÜNG) - PRINCE RUPERT'S APARTMENTS -
BEDROOM - NIGHT

As statues of Ronald McDonald, Officer Big Mac, The Grimace, and Birdy watch over him, Rupert sleeps in his Gobblins pajamas in his custom-made Mayor McCheese king-size bed with Hamburgler bed sheets.

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

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

An ANCHORMAN sits at a desk reporting the news. In ARABIC, ENGLISH SUBTITLES:

ANCHORMAN
Crown Prince Rupert, heir to the throne
of the European country of Greuthüng,
has been missing for twenty-four hours.

EXT. PALACE (GREUTHÜNG) - GROUNDS - DAY

Late-Medieval fortress. REPORTER for Television Tonga stands at the entry. In TONGAN, ENGLISH SUBTITLES:

TELEVISION TONGA REPORTER
The head of security for King Otto told
police that the Crown Prince was last
seen entering his quarters at nine
o'clock Friday evening. Police admit
that they do not have any leads, and
are now asking the public for help.

EXT. PARLIAMENT BUILDING (GREUTHÜNG) - DAY

19th-Century Greek Revival. REPORTER for MCOT (Thailand) stands on its steps. In THAI, ENGLISH SUBTITLES:

MCOT REPORTER
Crown Prince Rupert was upset during
the International Olympic Committee
meeting in Switzerland on Thursday
because he was not served his favorite
meal: a McDonald's Cheeseburger Happy
Meal with french fries and milk.

EXT. McDONALD'S CORPORATE (CHICAGO, IL) - DAY

Banner: "We Miss You, Crown Prince Rupert! Please Come Back Soon!" REPORTER for ITN (Sri Lanka) faces an off-screen camera. In SINHALA, ENGLISH SUBTITLES:

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

EXT./EST. 47 WEST 66th STREET (NEW YORK CITY) - MORNING

Headquarters of the American Broadcasting Company [ABC].

INT. ABC - MASTER CONTROL - CONTINUOUS

Clock on a wall shows the time in New York: 7:00 AM.

MASTER CONTROL OPERATORS monitor raw news feeds ON dozens of screens when the screens suddenly go dark. CHAOS.

EXT./EST. 700 HARRIS STREET (ULTIMO, AUSTRALIA) - NIGHT - CONTINUOUS

Headquarters of the Australian Broadcasting Corporation [ABC].

INT. ABC - MASTER CONTROL - CONTINUOUS

Clock on a wall shows the time in Sydney: 9:00 PM.

MASTER CONTROL OPERATORS monitor raw news feeds ON dozens of screens when the screens suddenly go dark. CHAOS.

EXT./EST. SHEIKH KHALIFA BIN ZAYED STREET (DOHA, QATAR) - DAY - CONTINUOUS

Headquarters of Al Jazeera.

INT. AL JAZEERA - MASTER CONTROL - CONTINUOUS

Clock on a wall shows the time in Doha: 2:00 PM.

MASTER CONTROL OPERATORS monitor raw news feeds ON dozens of screens when the screens suddenly go dark. CHAOS.

EXT./EST. PORTLAND PLACE/LANGHAM PLACE (LONDON, ENGLAND) - DAY - CONTINUOUS

Headquarters of the British Broadcasting Corporation [BBC].

INT. BBC - MASTER CONTROL - CONTINUOUS

Clock on a wall shows the time in London: 12:00 PM.

MASTER CONTROL OPERATORS monitor raw news feeds ON dozens of screens when the screens suddenly go dark. CHAOS.

EXT./EST. 524 WEST 57TH STREET (NEW YORK CITY) - MORNING - CONTINUOUS

Headquarters of the Columbia Broadcasting System [CBS].

INT. CBS - MASTER CONTROL - CONTINUOUS

MASTER CONTROL OPERATORS monitor raw news feeds ON dozens of screens when the screens suddenly go dark. CHAOS.

EXT./EST. EAST 3rd RING ROAD (BEIJING, CHINA) - NIGHT - CONTINUOUS

Headquarters of China Central Television [CCTV].

INT. CCTV - MASTER CONTROL - CONTINUOUS

Clock on a wall shows the time in Beijing: 8:00 PM.

MASTER CONTROL OPERATORS monitor raw news feeds ON dozens of screens when the screens suddenly go dark. CHAOS.

EXT./EST. 190 MARIETTA STREET NW (ATLANTA, GA) - MORNING - CONTINUOUS

Headquarters of Cable News Network [CNN].

INT. CNN - MASTER CONTROL - CONTINUOUS

MASTER CONTROL OPERATORS monitor raw news feeds ON dozens of screens when the screens suddenly go dark. CHAOS.

EXT./EST. KURT-SCHUMACHER-STRASSE 3 (BONN, GERMANY) - DAY - CONTINUOUS

Headquarters of Deutsche Welle.

INT. DEUTSCHE WELLE (BONN, GERMANY) - MASTER CONTROL - DAY - CONTINUOUS

Clock on a wall shows the time in Bonn: 1:00 PM.

MASTER CONTROL OPERATORS monitor raw news feeds ON dozens of screens when the screens suddenly go dark. CHAOS.

EXT./EST. 1211 AVENUE OF THE AMERICAS (NEW YORK CITY) - MORNING - CONTINUOUS

Headquarters of Fox News.

INT. FOX NEWS - MASTER CONTROL - CONTINUOUS

MASTER CONTROL OPERATORS monitor the raw news feeds ON dozens of screens when the screens suddenly go dark. CHAOS.

EXT./EST. 5 RUE DES NATIONS-UNIES (ISSY-LES-MOULINEAUX, FRANCE) - DAY - CONTINUOUS

Headquarters of France 24.

INT. FRANCE 24 - MASTER CONTROL - CONTINUOUS

Clock on a wall shows the time in Paris: 1:00 PM.

MASTER CONTROL OPERATORS monitor raw news feeds ON dozens of screens when the screens suddenly go dark. CHAOS.

EXT./EST. 30 ROCKEFELLER PLAZA (NEW YORK CITY) - MORNING - CONTINUOUS

Headquarters of the National Broadcasting Company [NBC].

INT. NBC - MASTER CONTROL - CONTINUOUS

MASTER CONTROL OPERATORS monitor raw news feeds ON dozens of screens when the screens suddenly go dark. CHAOS.

EXT./EST. HANS RAJ GUPTA MARG (NEW DELHI, INDIA) - DAY - CONTINUOUS

Headquarters of New Delhi Television [NDTV].

INT. NDTV - MASTER CONTROL - CONTINUOUS

Clock on a wall shows the time in New Delhi: 4:30 PM.

MASTER CONTROL OPERATORS monitor raw news feeds ON dozens of screens when the screens suddenly go dark. CHAOS.

EXT./EST. 221 JINNAN (SHIBUYA, JAPAN) - NIGHT - CONTINUOUS

Headquarters of the Japan Broadcasting Corporation [NHK].

INT. NHK - MASTER CONTROL - CONTINUOUS

Clock on a wall shows the time in Tokyo: 8:00 PM.

MASTER CONTROL OPERATORS monitor raw news feeds ON dozens of screens when the screens suddenly go dark. CHAOS.

EXT./EST. 266 RUA JARDIM BOTÂNICO (RIO DE JANEIRO, BRAZIL) - MORNING - CONTINUOUS

Headquarters of Rede Globo.

INT. REDE GLOBO - MASTER CONTROL - CONTINUOUS

Clock on a wall shows the time in Rio de Janeiro: 8:00 AM.

MASTER CONTROL OPERATORS monitor raw news feeds ON dozens of screens when the screens suddenly go dark. CHAOS.

EXT./EST. ZUBOVSKY BOULEVARD 4 (MOSCOW, RUSSIA) - DAY - CONTINUOUS

Headquarters of Ria Novosti.

INT. RIA NOVOSTI - MASTER CONTROL - CONTINUOUS

Clock on a wall shows the time in Moscow: 2:00 PM.

MASTER CONTROL OPERATORS monitor raw news feeds ON dozens of screens when the screens suddenly go dark. CHAOS.

EXT./EST. HENLEY ROAD/ARTILERY ROAD (AUCKLAND PARK, SOUTH AFRICA) - DAY - CONTINUOUS

Headquarters of the South African Broadcasting Centre [SABC].

INT. SABC - MASTER CONTROL - CONTINUOUS

Clock on a wall shows the time in Johannesburg: 1:00 PM.

MASTER CONTROL OPERATORS monitor raw news feeds ON dozens of screens when the screens suddenly go dark. CHAOS.

INT. ABC - MASTER CONTROL - MOMENTS LATER

Anne now appears ON every screen. More CHAOS.

INT. ABC - MASTER CONTROL - MOMENTS LATER

Anne now appears ON every screen. More CHAOS.

INT. AL JAZEERA - MASTER CONTROL - MOMENTS LATER

Anne now appears ON every screen. More CHAOS.

INT. BBC - MASTER CONTROL - MOMENTS LATER

Anne now appears ON every screen. More CHAOS.

INT. CBS - MASTER CONTROL - MOMENTS LATER

Anne now appears ON every screen. More CHAOS.

INT. CCTV - MASTER CONTROL - MOMENTS LATER

Anne now appears ON every screen. More CHAOS.

INT. CNN - MASTER CONTROL - MOMENTS LATER

Anne now appears ON every screen. More CHAOS.

INT. DEUTSCHE WELLE - MASTER CONTROL - MOMENTS LATER

Anne now appears ON every screen. More CHAOS.

INT. FOX NEWS - MASTER CONTROL - MOMENTS LATER

Anne now appears ON every screen. More CHAOS.

INT. FRANCE 24 - MASTER CONTROL - MOMENTS LATER

Anne now appears ON every screen. More CHAOS.

INT. NBC NEWS - MASTER CONTROL - MOMENTS LATER

Anne now appears ON every screen. More CHAOS.

INT. NHK - MASTER CONTROL - MOMENTS LATER

Anne now appears ON every screen. More CHAOS.

INT. REDE GLOBO - MASTER CONTROL - MOMENTS LATER

Anne now appears ON every screen. More CHAOS.

INT. RIA NOVOSTI - MASTER CONTROL - MOMENTS LATER

Anne now appears ON every screen. More CHAOS.

INT. SABC - MASTER CONTROL - MOMENTS LATER

Anne now appears ON every screen. More CHAOS.

INT. PALACE OF THE SOVEREIGN - PRESS ROOM - DAY - CONTINUOUS

At his workstation - featuring a satellite modem and a SATCOM frequency converter system - Boris leans in his chair, shit-eating grin on his face: he has hacked into the feeds of every major TV news outlet in the world!

Görge's mans a camcorder as Anne stands before it, waves.

ANNE

Hello. I am Her Most Gracious Majesty,
Anne, Sovereign of the Kingdom of Trčka,
Grande Duchesse de Pathé, Storfustinna
av Bårgen, Velika Kneginja iz Duklja,
Granduchessa di Risacci, Defender of the
Faith, Guardian of the Realm, you get
the idea.

She holds up a map, and points to where Trčka is.

ANNE (CONT'D)

We have Crown Prince Rupert of
Greuthüng.

EXT. SEBJÖRN OF SÖDERTÄLJE SQUARE (PATHÉ) - CONTINUOUS

PEOPLE watching the jumbo-tron greet the news with CHEERS.

EXT./EST. KRALJ BAUDOUIN BULEVAR (DUKLJA) - CONTINUOUS

Headquarters of the Trčka Broadcasting System [TBS].

INT. TBS - MASTER CONTROL - CONTINUOUS

Anne appears ON every screen as the MASTER CONTROL OPERATORS give each other high-fives / WHOOP it up in celebration.

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

The PRESIDENT OF FRANCE reads a statement before REPORTERS.
In FRENCH, ENGLISH SUBTITLES:

PRESIDENT OF FRANCE

"We denounce this brazen and usurious
violation of international law."

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

The PRESIDENT OF ISRAEL reads a statement before REPORTERS.
In HEBREW, ENGLISH SUBTITLES:

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

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

EXT. 10 DOWNING (LONDON) - ENTRANCE - DAY

The PRIME MINISTER OF THE UK speaks to REPORTERS.

PRIME MINISTER OF THE UK
 This outrage is an assault not only on
 civilized people, but on civilization
 itself.

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

The PRESIDENT OF RUSSIA stands before REPORTERS, about to
 read a statement, but, at the last moment, decides to go
 off-message. In RUSSIAN, ENGLISH SUBTITLES:

PRESIDENT 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 OF THE UNITED STATES reads a statement before
 REPORTERS.

PRESIDENT OF THE UNITED STATES
 "I have directed the Secretary of State
 to recall of our ambassador to Trčka
 and to expel its diplomatic mission.
 Furthermore, I am calling for an
 emergency session of the United Nations
 General Assembly.
 (beat)
 "Let Queen Anne know this: your
 reprehensible act will not be tolerated.
 You will be held accountable, and you
 will be made to suffer the
 consequences."

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

REPORTER #1

But, Mr. President, do not have an ambassador to Trčka. The closet embassy we have to Trčka is Slovakia.

PRESIDENT OF THE UNITED STATES

Are you sure?

REPORTER #1

Yes, sir.

The President gives an astonished scoff.

REPORTER #2

And Queen Anne severed diplomatic ties to the United States in February after the Vice President called Trčkan dehydrated water, quote, "the Devil's poison."

PRESIDENT OF THE UNITED STATES

(thrown)

The Vice President said that.

REPORTER #2

Yes, sir.

PRESIDENT OF THE UNITED STATES

(still thrown)

About... dehydrated water.

REPORTER #2

Yes, sir.

REPORTER #3

And Trčka quit the United Nations in nineteen fifty-four after then-Secretary-General Dag Hammarskjöld called the Coddle, quote, "butt ugly."

PRESIDENT OF THE UNITED STATES

I am almost afraid to ask... what is a Coddle?

REPORTER #3

Trčka's national bird, sir.

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

PRESIDENT OF THE UNITED STATES

Well, I guess that's that.

(beat)

Who wants to accompany me on another taxpayer-funded hamburger run?

They 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 Grimoald Martel, bastard son of Charlemagne, who sacked our tiny country in the year eight-fourteen.

(beat)

The Paladin takes a solemn oath to place the Sovereign above all others, and execute his orders without question, under pain of death or dismemberment -- whichever is the messiest.

INT. CHÂTEAU DE VIDY - 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 its screen.

ANNE (ON LAPTOP)

Mr. President, I shall 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 (GREUTHÜNG) - THRONE ROOM - DAY

Portraits of past monarchs adorn the walls.

KING OTTO (50s; nervous) and his PRIME MINISTER (60s; Old World 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, Görges, and Boris see Otto and the Prime Minister ON the laptop. Rupert has been allowed to move about.

ANNE
No!

OTTO (ON LAPTOP)
Please?

ANNE
No!

OTTO (ON LAPTOP)
Pretty please?

ANNE
No!

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

ANNE
No!

INT. PALACE (GREUTHÜNG) - 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 coerce the
Committee to award the Games to us.

She, Görges, 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?! From where did Andy obtain one
million trinkas?!

Otto and the Prime Minister shrug.

INT. PALACE OF THE SOVEREIGN - GREAT ROOM - CONTINUOUS

Anne, Görges, and Boris try to digest this bit of news.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

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 looks at her.

BORIS
What?!
(contrite)
Your Most Gracious Majesty.

She gives him an embarrassed shrug.

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

An incensed Rupert blocks Anne so his father sees him.

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

A now-enraged Otto lowers the boom.

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.

EXT. MAIN STREET (PATHÉ) - DAY

Rupert slouches along. PASSERS-BY NOTICE, but don't
approach.

INT. NIELS'S NØRRÉSUNDBY (BÅRGEN) - LATER

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

INT. TARO'S TŌHOKU (DUKLJA) - LATER

Japanese eatery. Rupert stares at his Tora-Fugu, the
poisonous fish, ignored by the RAUCOUS PATRONS around him.

INT. YARED'S YABELO (RISACCI) - LATER

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

A POLICEMAN enters, spots Rupert, INFORMS dispatch via his walkie-talkie. Anne then enters. The policeman bows to her as the patrons CHEER.

YARED HAGOS (40s), the cheery owner, comes to her, bows. She shakes his hand as The Paladin 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 everyone.

ANNE
Everyone, Crown Prince Rupert of
Greuthüng.

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

POLICEMAN
Your Most Gracious Majesty. Niels
Nøstergaard of Niels's Nørresundby, and
Taro Tsujimoto of Taro's Tōhoku.

NØSTERGAARD (40s; stern) and TSUJIMOTO (40s; studious) bow to her. They then notice Rupert.

NØSTERGAARD
(Danish accent)
Where is my money?!

TSUJIMOTO
(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 Tsujimoto.

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

Anne mulls that over. Nøstergaard and Tsujimoto then CHARGE at Rupert. She raises a hand to stop them.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

She now motions to LUBOMÍR VIŠŇOVSKÝ, he-man Commander of the Paladin (30s). He produces his wallet, pays Nøstergaard and Tsujimoto, then puts a bill on the table for the Melasena Sember. She nods her thanks to Višňovský, who bows to her, then steps back.

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

RUPERT (CONT'D)
(genuinely humbled)
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.

ANNE
No. They do not want an arrogant, insolent snot to be king. That is the problem with the world today: too many arrogant, insolent snots who call themselves leaders. Only, they want not to lead; they want only to be followed.
(long beat)
You will be 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, and leaves.

INT. PALACE (GREUTHÜNG) - THRONE ROOM - DAY

Ceremony. Anne and Otto sit together, sign 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 (GREUTHÜNG) - ENTRANCE - DAY

Rupert emerges with his beautiful BRIDE. CROWD CHEERS.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

NARRATOR (V.O.) (CONT'D)
And Rupert decided finally to grow up.

INT. PALACE (GREUTHÜNG) - 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: who will lead, not one who wants only to be followed.

EXT. PALACE OF THE SOVEREIGN - NORTHEAST DIVIDER - DAWN

Görges pays a WORKER from Olari's Ōli as a SECOND WORKER pumps the oil from the truck into the cellar. All three react to the bitter cold.

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

INT. CHÂTEAU DE VIDY - 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 International Olympic Committee for great-great-grandfather Baudouin's seat.

INT. ROYAL TREASURY (PATHÉ) - OFFICE - DAY

In digs befitting his lordliness, Qeqertarsuatsiaat sits at a desk opening an envelope: two cashier's checks, one marked "IOC", the other marked "mortgage". He then finds a note.

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

Note reads: "Dear Qúpersimân, Blow it out your ass! Anne".

He is, once again, mortified.

FADE OUT.

END