

"MUSIC AND OTHER ARTS OF WAR"

Written by

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FADE IN:

EXT. VENICE ST. MARK'S SQUARE - DAY - 1939

The screen is black. Sounds from a Hitler rally crescendo in the dark. Suddenly there is silence. A red swastika on a German soldier's arm band appears. A few Italian and German soldiers stand about with the St. Mark's tourists. In Venice, a spring afternoon is turning into evening.

BRUNO BAYER, German, early 30s, smallish, with the build and grace of an athletic artfully improvises Bach's "Double Concerto" all alone at one end of the St. Marks colonnade.

Soon, at the colonnade's other end, another violin is heard.

EVIE FOSTER, American, mid 20s, combination of all-American-girl and high-fashion-ingénue, joins in Bruno's Bach. She's dressed haute couture casual and when she begins to play, all the attention suddenly belongs to her.

Evie and Bruno play and walk toward each other to the delight of the tourists and soldiers who drop coins in Bruno's cap he had placed in the colonnade's center steps.

St. Mark's professional dance-band musicians arrive for the evening. They join Evie and Bruno with a Bach accompaniment. Bruno picks up his coin laden cap as he and Evie walk to the center of the Square. A gloriously cheesy Bach concerto fills St. Mark's. They finish to polite applause, turn to exit as a St. Mark's musician shouts.

ST MARK MUSICIAN

Come back and play with us soon! We
love you, Evie! Leave Bruno at home
next time!

The musician throws her a kiss, the other band members throw a kiss, then the tourists throw kisses to everyone. Evie curtseys, Bruno bows. Then Bruno curtseys and Evie bows.

They depart, the dance bands strike up "Begin the Beguine" because Mr. and Mrs. COLE PORTER dressed in white suites with white fedoras entered St. Mark's, tourists burst into applause.

EXT. VENICE ST. MARK'S BASIN PROMENADE - CONTINUOUS

With St. Mark's and "Beguine" at their backs, Evie and Bruno walk down the waterfront Promenade, Riva degli Schiavo. Tourists wait for gondola rides and sit at small cafes as street musician perform. Centuries-old Byzantine inspired Palaces line the waterfront and glow in the sunset.

EVIE
I'd like to get applause like that
someday.

BRUNO
You just did.

EVIE
Yeah. For leaving.

BRUNO
Don't be greedy: applause is
applause is applause.

EVIE
Thank you, Frau Gertrude Stein.

BRUNO
This is better than applause.

He offers her coins from his hat; she pushes the cap back to
him.

EVIE
Why do you do that?

BRUNO
What?

EVIE
Play for tips. You don't need the
money. I don't need the money.

BRUNO
Never miss a chance to remind the
public that musicians must be paid.
Art is not free. Just ask the
Medics.

EVIE
I will. Next time I see them. Oh, I
forgot, they went broke.

BRUNO
Yeah, buying us the Renaissance.

She takes Bruno's cap, empties the coins into the guitar case
of a street performer.

BRUNO (CONT'D)
Always a good investment.

Two Italian soldiers approach and stop Bruno and Evie.

ITALIAN SOLDIER
Your papers.

EVIE
Me?

BRUNO
Me?

ITALIAN SOLDIER
Both.

They hand papers to the soldier. He turns to Evie.

ITALIAN SOLDIER (CONT'D)
American.

She nods.

ITALIAN SOLDIER (CONT'D)
I thought so. It states here your
Venice residence is the Danieli.

She nods yes.

ITALIAN SOLDIER (CONT'D)
For a year.

She nods again.

ITALIAN SOLDIER (CONT'D)
You've stayed at the Danieli, that
hotel over there, for a year?

EVIE
It's a long story.

He looks Evie over top to bottom then to the other soldier.

ITALIAN SOLDIER
I'll bet it is.

He hands back her papers and opens Bruno's papers.

ITALIAN SOLDIER (CONT'D)
You're German.

BRUNO
Is that what that says?

Evie takes Bruno's arm, squeezes it.

BRUNO (CONT'D)
Yes, I'm a German. From Germany.

ITALIAN SOLDIER

You've been in Italy for three years. Your address is listed as the Royal Conservatory of Music in Florence.

BRUNO

Yes.

ITALIAN SOLDIER

Why?

BRUNO

Because I am the Artist in Residence. That other address is my studio at the Uffizi.

ITALIAN SOLDIER

Then why are you in Venice?

BRUNO

I come here each week to give lessons. To her.

ITALIAN SOLDIER

You travel from Florence to Venice once a week to give a music lesson?

Bruno looks to Evie and gives her the same once-over top to bottom look the soldier had. The soldier hands Bruno his papers, the soldiers walk away.

EVIE

When they stopped us, I thought they've finally caught you. Bruno, you've got to get out of it.

BRUNO

Out of what?

EVIE

Out of that business. Selling phony passports.

BRUNO

Can't. Frankly, Evie I'm getting rich.

EVIE

Frankly, my dear, I don't give a damn. Who's ever heard of a rich musician anyway? Talk about suspicious behavior.

BRUNO

True enough.

EVIE

The Fascists are going to take you away, murder you and I will be without a teacher-mentor-drinking companion. You have no idea how hard it is to find all three of those qualities in one person.

BRUNO

I would think that was a fairly common combination.

EVIE

Well, it's not. So inconsiderate.

BRUNO

How touching.

EVIE

Also "touching" that I waited for you last night. We had a lesson.

BRUNO

I got stuck in Florence.

EVIE

Selling those papers.

BRUNO

Guilty as charged.

EVIE

Don't be funny.

BRUNO

Wouldn't think of it.

(pause)

So, what did you do last night? While I was in Florence. Getting rich, avoiding being murdered out of consideration for you.

EVIE

It was an interesting night.

BRUNO

All nights are interesting when you're around, Evie.

EVIE

I suppose they are.
 (suddenly serious)
 You are the smartest musician I
 known.

BRUNO

Not sure there's a compliment there
 but go on.

EVIE

Antonio Vivaldi.

BRUNO

You were with Vivaldi? That was
 interesting.

EVIE

Bruno! What do you know?

BRUNO

Venetian composer. 1700s.
 May have been the most famous in
 Europe, yet today no one except
 musicologist--and wunderkinds like
 me--have heard of him. So, I'm
 guessing you have something to add
 to that bit of information?

EVIE

Yes. But you first.

BRUNO

A few years ago the Turin Library
 made what was possibly the music
 discovery of the century when they
 found 800 unknown Vivaldi works--
 hand written operas, masses,
 concertos. Hugh. But, I mean this
 is Italy, so, really, who knows.
 Anyway, I don't know anyone who's
 actually seen the manuscripts.

EVIE

I do. Last night, after I was stood
 up by you, I went to Harry's Bar.
 And... Let me start at the
 beginning: I spilled a drink on
 this woman.

BRUNO

Standard beginning of an evening.

They stop at the Bridge of Sighs canal. Evie opens her purse,

hands him a business card.

EVIE

Olga Rudge. American violinist. I spilled the drink on her. She's sort of famous, I think.

BRUNO

Yeah "sorta" but for non-musical reasons.

He flips the card over to the blank side.

BRUNO (CONT'D)

That part's not on the card.

EVIE

What part?

BRUNO

She's Ezra Pound's mistress. That part.

EVIE

So?

BRUNO

Ezra Pound. American poet.

EVIE

I know. I'm an American. Oh, yeah, I met him too.

BRUNO

Ezra Pound was at Harry's Americani expat tourist cocktail canal bar?

EVIE

He's American why shouldn't he be?

BRUNO

He's an American who makes anti-American, anti-Semitic speeches for Mussolini. And is banned from the U.S. because of it.

EVIE

Oh. So?

BRUNO

So, I'm surprised he's hanging out at Harry's. He apparently doesn't like America. Or Americans.

(MORE)

BRUNO (CONT'D)

And vice-versa. Anyway, don't get me started.

EVIE

Good idea.

BRUNO

Where were we? Oh, yeah, you were spilling drinks.

EVIE

Drink. And to update your information Herr Wunderkind, the American traitor and his American mistress now control the Vivaldi manuscripts you just spoke of.

She takes back the card and they resume walking.

EVIE (CONT'D)

Two Americans control music manuscripts from what might be Italy's greatest undiscovered composer.

BRUNO

Gee, imagine that: another plundered Italian artifact.

EVIE

Yeah, 800 of them. Anyway, last night they sat at the bar and the first two words out of Olga's mouth were "Antonio Vivaldi." I was caught off guard, I turned toward them and knocked over my drink. On her. Olga.

BRUNO

Traditionally not the best first impression.

EVIE

Exactly, and I launched into a grand rambling conversation--

BRUNO

--which you are really very good at--

EVIE

--which, I am really good at--so I'm rambling and sponging her off and sponging and rambling and I told her about my experience at the Venice Records Office. That I'd seen that name, Antonio Vivaldi, many times.

BRUNO

Is that true? You have?

EVIE

I have. So, I told them my Vivaldi story; they told me their Vivaldi story which was pretty much the same as your Vivaldi story except theirs' had a better ending.

BRUNO

What do you mean?

EVIE

She's been to Turin; says the manuscripts are masterpieces. She and Ezra are in Venice to gain support for a concert.

BRUNO

After 200 years, Vivaldi returns to Venice. Priceless.

EVIE

That's what I thought. Right?

INT. VENICE HOTEL DANIELI LOBBY - CONTINUOUS

They enter the Hotel Danieli. The towering lobby's old-world opulence is breathtaking. She takes her room key that the desk clerk holds out for her. She winks at the bartender across the lobby, they stroll to the lobby bar and take a seat as the bartender places her drink in front of her.

BRUNO

Amazing.

EVIE

Isn't it? They have a martini ready every time I walk by the bar.

BRUNO

No, that's not amazing. The Vivaldi thing is amazing.

EVIE

Oh yeah, that too.

BRUNO

Olga's got the music, you've got little Vivaldi history from the Records Office. Ezra has worldwide connections. Well, except the U.S.

EVIE

Right.

Bruno takes a sip of her drink. The bartender gives him a can-I-get-you-a-drink look. Bruno shakes his head no then Evie nods yes. Eventually, the bartender sits a Campari and soda in front of Bruno.

BRUNO

We, dear Evie, are in the middle of the beginning of an historic event.

EVIE

Couldn't agree more.

BRUNO

Speaking of history, how is your own personal history quest?

EVIE

Terrible--at the Venice Records Office you mean?--terrible.

BRUNO

But you're still going, obviously.

EVIE

Every couple of days. It's a mess. An old warehouse of shelves stacked to the ceiling with papers. 1920s documents right beside 1720s documents. All in Italian.

BRUNO

So inconsiderate of them.

EVIE

All I've got is this phrase book.

BRUNO

You could learn a little Italian.

EVIE

I really don't have to; everyone here speaks American.

(MORE)

EVIE (CONT'D)

(Bruno winces)

I know I should, I will, I will.
Back to your question, no hospital
records nor a trace of Sophia
Stallenberger or me. Yet. But I
know about Antonio Vivaldi, so it
hasn't been total loss.

BRUNO

You can say that again.

INT. VENICE HOTEL DANIELI STAIRCASE - CONTINUOUS

They stand, Evie scribbles on the bar tab, they move to the
Grand Staircase and slowly step up.

EVIE

As best I can tell, he composed and
taught at the same orphanage for
abandoned girls for about 40 years.

BRUNO

Same teaching job 40 years? That's
impressive.

EVIE

I felt a connection with him the
first day I saw his name. Antonio
Vivaldi: patron saint of abandoned
orphan girls. When Olga started
talking about a Vivaldi-in-Venice
concert I thought Vivaldi led me
here. This will be my concert.

BRUNO

Our.

EVIE

Our. I'll--we'll--be famous. Then
rich. No more dependence on
American patrons for me. No more
peddling fake passports for you.
But there's a kicker--

BRUNO

There usually is.

EVIE

Venice is not interested.

BRUNO

Not interested in Vivaldi?

EVIE

Or the Turin manuscripts or a concert. Giuseppe at Harry's Bar helped Olga with contacts. That's why they were there.

BRUNO

Are they still here?

EVIE

At Harry's?

BRUNO

In Venice.

EVIE

Oh, yeah. She has a house.

BRUNO

American Olga Rudge has a house in Venice, Italy? Really?

EVIE

A gift from her father she said. And she has an apartment in a hill-town south of Florence where she works at a music conservatory.

BRUNO

Siena? Accademia Chigiana. A student of mine is from Siena.

EVIE

Yes, Chigiana. That's where she learned about the manuscripts.

BRUNO

Send her word about a meeting.

EVIE

Meeting?

BRUNO

Our Vivaldi meeting here at your hotel. Next week. Make sure they know that I am somewhat famous just in case they haven't heard of me which they probably have.

EVIE

Well, I can contact Olga and see what happens.

BRUNO

This will happen: We'll make them
think they can't go on without us.

They arrive at Evie's room door, from the floor, she picks up
an American newspaper and her mail. She opens the door.

INT. EVIE'S HOTEL ROOM - CONTINUOUS

Evie and Bruno enter her parlor-bedroom with lagoon view. An
extravagant, large arrangement of flowers is on a center
table. Bruno walks toward the table.

BRUNO

Who died?

EVIE

Probably J.S. Bach in the piazza
earlier.

Bruno picks up the card near the flower arrangement.

BRUNO

Who are these from? May I?

EVIE

Sure.

BRUNO

"Max"

Evie drops the newspaper as she grabs a telegram that's among
the envelopes she picked up at the door.

EVIE

This is not good.

BRUNO

Think positive. They'll love us.
It's going to be great.

EVIE

No. This. My patron is coming. To
Venice.

BRUNO

Ole Max Maxwell Moneybags from New
York, New York, New York who pays
my lesson fees in advance? I love
that guy.

EVIE

You don't know that guy.

Evie reads the telegram from Max aloud.

EVIE (CONT'D)

In from Berlin to Milan...Maxwell
Steel contracts with Germany and
Italy to celebrate...coming through
Venice on the way to Rome...Bring
the family...USA is missing you.

She freezes.

BRUNO

What?

EVIE

There are things about Max, about
his patronage I mean. Complex
things that--

Bruno picks up the newspaper and envelops from the floor.

BRUNO

Dear God it's started.

EVIE

What?

He holds out newspaper's front page for her; she reads aloud
as she takes the paper.

EVIE (CONT'D)

"Nazis Smash, Loot and Burn Jewish
Shops and temples...All Vienna's
Synagogues Attacked...Jews Are
Beaten...15,000 are Jailed..."
Oh my God, it's getting closer.

Bruno picks up the envelop from the stack of mail and shows
her the stamp of Hitler and Mussolini together.

BRUNO

It's here.

Bruno starts to slowly uncase his violin.

EVIE

Bruno. A Lesson?

BRUNO

We have a lesson.

EVIE

We had a lesson last night. You missed it.

BRUNO

I'm here tonight so we have a make-up lesson.

EVIE

No, really no. Not after the war headlines...my patron Max coming...Vivaldi/Olga/Ezra...bad Bach with accordions in the Piazza. No lesson tonight.

BRUNO

Oh? Well then, there are other things we could do...instead of music. To help us forget war and your patron and bad Bach in the piazza...if you know what I mean.

EVIE

Yes, I know what you mean.

Evie begins to uncase her violin.

BRUNO

I take that as a "no".

EVIE

Yes. No. Wouldn't want to risk spoiling a beautiful friendship.

BRUNO

But when you think about it, these are risky times.

EVIE

They're not that risky.

She kisses his cheek, starts to play Johan Halvorsen, "Passacaglia for violin and viola". Bruno closes the door.

INT. OUTSIDE EVIE'S HOTEL ROOM - CONTINUOUS

Music from Evie's room flows through the mammoth Danieli hallways. A current newspaper is dropped outside her door. "Austria Bows To Germany." Sounds of a Hitler rally drown out the music from Evie's room.

EXT. - FLORENCE - DAY

Bruno and Paolo converse as they cross the Ponte Vecchio Bridge headed to Bruno's studio at the Uffizi. The Ponte Vecchio, one of the world's oldest, most picturesque bridges, crosses the Arno River to the Uffizi Building.

PAOLO BANDINI, mid 20s, Tuscan musician; charismatic, animated, irresistibly charming. As they walk and talk, he stays in constant motion around Bruno.

BRUNO

So, you know Olga Rudge.

PAOLO

I know of Olga Rudge. She's American but you'd never guess it. I didn't mean for that to sound like a compliment.

BRUNO

You are among friends.

PAOLO

Raised in England. Concert violinist. Quick rise in Siena at Accademia Chigiana Conservatory. She's now the right hand of Count Chigi. Need more?

BRUNO

Everything you've got.

PAOLO

Everyone knows she's Ezra Pound's mistress. He visits her in Siena, so I see him occasionally. But he lives with his wife in Rapallo. I understand Miss Rudge and Pound have a daughter together and Pound's wife Dorothy had an illegitimate son after a fling in Egypt, the son lives with Dorothy's mother in England. Olga's daughter lives north of Venice with a nanny.

BRUNO

These are busy people.

PAOLO

An opera plot in the making.

BRUNO

Do you ever talk to her?

PAOLO
"Hello. Goodbye."

BRUNO
Has she mentioned Venetian composer
Antonio Vivaldi?

PAOLO
I know about Vivaldi from my
father. He and the Count are
colleagues.

BRUNO
Colleagues? The Chigi Count that
funds the conservatory at his
palace? Your father is a--

PAOLO
I told you: an officer.

BRUNO
A police officer.

PAOLO
A bank officer. President. Monte
dei Paschi. Oldest bank in the
world. Been in Siena since 1400.

BRUNO
Good God, I thought you were
another needy Tuscan music kid.
You should dress better. Really.
It's misleading.

PAOLO
Sorry.

BRUNO
I have been grossly undercharging
you. We'll talk about your fees
later. Back to Vivaldi.

PAOLO
Miss Rudge has been to Turin and
there is a excitement at the
conservatory over what she's found.

BRUNO
I want to talk to you about that.
It's something that will affect all
of us: Olga and Ezra are in Venice
promoting a Vivaldi concert.
However, surprise, no one in Venice
is interested.

PAOLO

That's no surprise. Forget Venice.
Nothing gets done there.

BRUNO

Florence?

PAOLO

Even worse. And not Naples or Milan
or lake Como. But Siena?

BRUNO

A world-wide Festival in Siena?

PAOLO

Sure. Olga and Ezra are there half
the time working on Vivaldi anyway.
The Count's got lots of money. My
father's bank has lots of money.
They've backed Siena's cultural
projects for centuries. Centuries.

BRUNO

You really should dress better.
Come to Venice with me. Tomorrow.
Meet with me and Olga and Ezra.
Siena. That's a great idea and you
are the one who can convince them
before they get hung up in God
forbid Mussolini's Rome and we get
forced out of the picture.

PAOLO

I don't understand.

BRUNO

We'd be on the ground floor of an
historic performance. It would be
huge for our careers. All of us.

PAOLO

Ummm. Probably right. It's
tempting. But I have to practice.

BRUNO

Really. Now you decide to
practice? Oh, your recital. I
forgot about that. You're right.
You need to practice.

PAOLO

Thanks.

BRUNO
Practice in Venice.

PAOLO
I have my routine here in Florence
and it does not involve gondoliers
singing bad Puccini outside my
window.

They start to climb the Uffizi Building stairs to Bruno's studio. Bruno pauses near a discarded newspaper with the headline: "Germany takes over Austria"

BRUNO
The Vivaldi concert might be the
last civilized thing we do before
the world as we know it ends.

PAOLO
You know no shame, Bruno. "The
world as we know it ends"? It will
not end. I will not go to Venice. I
have. To. Practice. In Florence.

Bruno and Paolo enter Bruno's office and the door slams.

INT. HALLWAY OUTSIDE BRUNO'S UFFIZI OFFICE - CONTINUOUS

After he slams the door, Bruno yells and it echoes through the Uffizi hallway.

BRUNO (O.S.)
You'll practice. In. Venice!

PAOLO (O.S.)
No. I. Won't!

BRUNO (O.S.)
And what have you got against
gondoliers singing Puccini?

PAOLO (O.S.)
The high note in Nessun Dorma.

BRUNO (O.S.)
Well, yes. There's that.

After a pause, Paolo starts to mockingly sing Nessun Dorma, Bruno joins in. Historic recording slowly drowns them out. At the record's end there is silence then Paolo yells:

PAOLO (O.S.)
I'll go to Venice.

INT. VENICE HOTEL DANIELI - NIGHT

Bruno, Olga and Ezra drinks in hand, sit near the Danieli lobby fireplace. Paolo standing, addresses them.

PAOLO

The Venetians couldn't pull this off even in Vivaldi's day. Venice being Venice is probably why he finally left. Miss Rudge, the Sieneese can make the Palio, a 2-minute medieval horserace, a European event of the year. They can do the same for Vivaldi.

Evie, dressed for cocktails, descends the lobby's grand staircase. She walks by the bar and the bartender hands her a martini. She reaches the group, the men stand kiss her cheeks. She and Olga nod.

BRUNO

Perfect timing. Paolo's given us his summation, now he is finished.

EVIE

My favorite part of a meeting. The "he is finished" part.

BRUNO

Evie this is Paolo Bandini my Florence Conservatory student from Siena. Paolo, Miss Evie Foster, my American student in Venice.

Evie gives him an extra-long stare.

PAOLO

Oh. American.

EVIE

Yes, New York. Is that a problem?

PAOLO

No. No.

EVIE

Sit, please.

They sit and Evie continues to glance toward Paolo.

BRUNO

So, Evie, we're thinking: Siena.

EVIE

For what?

BRUNO

Vivaldi. For the concert.

EVIE

But Venice is Vivaldi.

(silence)

Well, isn't it?

BRUNO

Yes. Maybe. Maybe no. Siena may be better, all things considered.

EVIE

Have you considered this: no one will come. I mean who's even heard of Siena? An unknown composer, an unknown town? Not a great plan.

Paolo starts to speak but Bruno quickly speaks.

BRUNO

Historically speaking, Siena is one of Italy's most important cities.

EVIE

So's Pompeii but we're not trekking up Mount Vesuvius with our violins.

She stops, takes a deep breath

EVIE (CONT'D)

If the Vivaldi concert is in Venice, I can be a part of it. I live here now. I've researched Vivaldi here--OK, by accident but still. I study here. I play Bach in St. Mark's here. People here love me. Bruno...

BRUNO

They love her here. They do.

EVIE

And I'm good.

OLGA

I believe you mentioned that at Harry's.

EVIE

Yeah, well, probably I did.

BRUNO

Evie is extraordinary.

EVIE

Thank you. I want a career in Europe. Like my mother.

OLGA

You didn't mention that night. And you mentioned so much.

EVIE

Probably I did.

OLGA

Your mother's a European musician?

EVIE

American. Singer. Soprano. She spent most of her life performing in Europe. Sophia Stallenberger. Venice was a special place for her...and me.

OLGA

Stallenberger. Coloratura. She was wonderful. I heard her in London. She died during The Great War returning to the States, didn't she? A German U-Boat sunk her ship, right?

EVIE

HMS Liverpool.

OLGA

The great Sophia Stallenberger was your mother.

Evie and Bruno stare at each other. Evie is distressed.

BRUNO

Evie found out only a couple of years ago that Stallenberger was her mother. Evie was raised in New York foster homes. When she turned 15, Sophia Stallenberger's former dresser and traveling companion, a Mrs. Dumont, contacted Evie.

(to Evie)

OK to continue?

Evie relaxes, nods yes.

Bruno's speech is a voice over a MONTAGE of Sophia's, then later Evie's, history as pictured in newspaper photos and clippings.

BRUNO (CONT'D)

According to Mrs. Dumont, Sophia had an affair in Florence and later in Milan discovered she was pregnant. She didn't inform the father, discreetly went to the hospital in Venice and Evie was born. Sophia left for concerts in London, Mrs. Dumont and the baby remained in Venice and were to meet Sophia back in New York. Sophia's ship was sunk in-route to New York. Mrs. Dumont and the baby arrived in New York but without Sophia there to meet them there were problems debarking. No documentation connected Evie to Mrs. Dumont, no birth certificate, no last name. Evie was taken from her, supposedly temporary, but Evie disappeared into the New York foster home system. The last name they gave her is a result of that: Evie Foster.

OLGA

My god, when did she find Evie? How did she find her? You.

BRUNO

The orphanages of New York sponsored recitals and Evie was a child prodigy among the students.

EVIE

They billed me "Evie Foster: Little Miss Mozart".

BRUNO

Mrs. Dumont eventually saw a news release, contacted the orphanage and the rest is history.

OLGA

But how did she...you, Evie...end up in Venice.

EVIE

For several years, Morris Westin Maxwell, the steel baron, arts patron sponsored my studies in New York then offered me the chance to study abroad. There was only choice: Venice.

OLGA

So you could search the Hall of Records for clues about your birth.

EVIE

And my mother and possibly clues to who my father was...is.

OLGA

That's why you knew about the orphanage records and Antonio Vivaldi and the Pieta orphanage where he worked.

EVIE

He was a musician who cared for abandoned girl musicians. Like me.

OLGA

Vivaldi's story just keeps getting better. Evie you are right, Venice is the perfect place for a Vivaldi concert, but it is a lost cause. Siena's Accademia Chigiana is our best course of action now.

EVIE

But--

OLGA

I agree about Siena's lack of recognition but Ezra can help. He knows everyone. Even people who don't like him know of him and his work and love of music.

EVIE

But--

OLGA

Come to Siena and work with us. You're right, this concert is our destiny. We can meet in Siena with Count Chigi.

(MORE)

OLGA (CONT'D)

So, everyone: one day next week?
That meeting would include you,
Evie.

BRUNO

Sure. Thursday?

PAOLO

Bruno. Thursday?

BRUNO

Oh, right your recital in Florence
is Thursday. So, Saturday?
Everyone? Saturday in Siena? That
has a nice ring to it.

They all nod "yes" and stand adjourned.

EXT. VENICE STREET - CONTINUOUS

Olga, Ezra, Bruno, Paolo, Evie exits the hotel. At St. Mark's square they split, walk in different directions as the outdoor dance band play. Evie and Paolo continue to walk together straight ahead beside the water's edge. The lights from the square shimmer in the lagoon, light their faces. Bruno shouts to Evie from the square.

EVIE

(back to Paolo)

So, looks like I may be coming to
Siena. Any hotel suggestions?

PAOLO

Palazzo Hotel. It's no Danieli but--

EVIE

Let me explain about that hotel.
The Danieli is my patron's choice.

PAOLO

You don't have to--

EVIE

It is an extravagant place to live.
I know that. It's embarrassing
actually. Well, was embarrassing,
I'm kind of over that now.

PAOLO

Of course. In Siena, probably the
Palazzo Hotel.

EVIE

Is that where you stay?

PAOLO

I'm from Siena, so I stay with my folks. I have an apartment in Florence when I'm studying there.

EVIE

How convenient. Thank you for walking with me. This is my little home away from home, you know.

PAOLO

I'm at the Hotel Gritty so it was on my way home

EVIE

Join me for a nightcap?

PAOLO

No, I have to practice. My conservatory recital--

EVIE

--recital Thursday night, right?

PAOLO

Si. Right.

They turn the corner to the Bar and freeze when they see the 8"x11" paper sign on entrance door: "NO JEWS ALLOWED".

EVIE

So, this is why Ezra drinks here.

Evie takes down the sign. Paolo shakes his head, walks away then turns around.

PAOLO

By the way, I heard a recording once of Sophia Stallenburger. She was spectacular. I'm sure you are too.

EVIE

She was. I am. Thanks.

PAOLO

Enjoy your home away from home, Evie. While you can.

She stares at the sign in her hand, walks inside the bar.

INT. HARRY'S BAR - CONTINUOUS

Evie, carries the sign into Giuseppe's kitchen. GIUSEPPE CIPRIANI, late 30's, founder of Harry's Bar.

EVIE
What is this?

GIUSEPPE
A sign. Where did you get that?

EVIE
From your door.

GIUSEPPE
Well, put it back. There was nothing I could do.

EVIE
There's always something you can do.

GIUSEPPE
Not this time. The Army officer said they suspected that Harry's caters to Americans, homosexuals, and Jews.
(Evie's look says "well?")
They can close me down. "Hang up this sign and we might let you stay open" the officer said.

EVIE
Did he say hang the sign on the front door?

GIUSEPPE
Well, where else?

Evie holds the sign on the hood over the kitchen stove.

EVIE
Here?

GIUSEPPE
My stove? The troops have lunch every day in this kitchen.

EVIE
Perfect. Who needs protecting from Americans, Jews, and homosexuals more than Fascists and Nazis at lunch?

She stands on tip-toes, looks him in the eye.

EVIE (CONT'D)

Please, Giuseppe, don't put that sign outside for the rest of the world to see.

GIUSEPPE

Evie, this is a little American cocktail bar on the lagoon. This is not the rest of the world.

EVIE

It's the only one either of us have.

She holds up the sign, he takes it, hangs it on the hood.

GIUSEPPE

Better?

She kisses his cheek. Evie moves to "her seat" at the bar, Giuseppe goes behind the bar to fix her a drink.

EVIE

I have some bad news.

GIUSEPPE

You found another sign.

EVIE

No, this is personal.

GIUSEPPE

Everything with you is personal.

EVIE

I mean really, really personal. I'm in love, I think. I mean, I don't know. Maybe. Love-at-first-sight or something like that. Just now. Tonight. An hour ago. Five minutes ago. How can that be? I met this guy from Siena and I went all weak in the knees. And my heart was beating faster than it should, and I couldn't stop looking at him.

GIUSEPPE

That's it. Love-at-first-sight. It's the worst kind, you know. I speak from experience. Well, experiences.

He places her drink on the bar, she puts her hand on his.

EVIE

I'm afraid. I wasn't before but now I am.

GIUSEPPE

Don't be. I've been in love lots of times.

EVIE

That's not what I meant.

GIUSEPPE

I know what you meant. Everyone I know is afraid, Evie. It's the crazy people who aren't. Unfortunately, the crazy people are in charge right now which is why the rest of us are afraid.

Evie gives Giuseppe a sign of the cross in the air like a priest. Then the bar patrons "cross" Evie and Giuseppe in the air en masse.

EXT. FLORENCE - NIGHT

From the Pizaazle Michelangelo hilltop overlooking Florence and through the streets to the entrance of the historic Santa Croce Church violin music, Niccolo Paganini's "Caprice No.24 from 24 caprices", rings through the city.

INT. FLORENCE SANTA CROCE CHURCH - CONTINUOUS

Paolo, performing in front of the elaborate church altar, finishes the Paganini as Bruno, off to the side, nervously watches in the dark. Paolo's young sister brings him flowers, the crowd applauds and dispenses. Except for one concert goer who remains, sitting motionless. It is Evie. She's slightly overdressed, slightly over made-up, and over coiffed. She stands and walks toward Paolo.

PAOLO

Evie. That is you. I'm--

EVIE

Surprise!

PAOLO

Yes, surprised.

EVIE

Well, the surprise is how wonderful you look--sound--I mean how wonderful you are. Your music. Wonderful. Wonderful. So wonderful.

PAOLO

That's a lot of "wonderfuls".

EVIE

Deserved!

Paolo's family remains with him near the altar: well-dressed mother, father, grandmother, younger sisters and brothers, cousins. They stand frozen, not smiling, intensely watching the English conversation.

EVIE (CONT'D)

Well, since I was going to be in Siena Saturday for the Vivaldi thing, I thought I'd enjoy a night or two in Florence. You know, hear you play--

PAOLO

I'm delighted.

EVIE

And buy you a post-recital drink. I mean as long as I am here.

PAOLO

Uh, my family is here and we're going back to my apartment. I'd better stay with them.

EVIE

Oh, sure, of course. You should. Do that. Another time, then. Again, wonderful. Hearing you play is a humbling experience and I don't humble easily.

PAOLO

Thank you. That's a wonderful thing to say.

Evie walks toward the Church entrance, Bruno whisper shouts.

BRUNO

Evie! What are you doing here?

EVIE

I have no idea.

BRUNO

You never do. Wait a minute.
You're not...not Paolo?

EVIE

What? No. Paolo? No.

BRUNO

Evie.

EVIE

Well, kind of. I mean, I don't
know. And I don't know why I'm here
which says a lot.

BRUNO

I'll walk you back to your hotel.

EVIE

No, you've got Paolo and his
cheerful family. Probably "friends"
to meet afterwards and make an
illegal lira or two.

BRUNO

True, but for you I'd...

EVIE

Go!

BRUNO

This is my town, you know. You want
to meet later for a drink?

EVIE

You are the best friend a girl ever
had but, no, I'm exhausted. It
takes considerable time and effort
to get this over-dressed.

EXT. FLORENCE STREET - CONTINUOUS

Evie walks through the near empty pedestrian streets of
Florence alone. In the Piazza della Signoria, she passes the
Cafe Rivoire then doubles back. The crowd at the tables
outside the cafe's is large and loud, she continues to a near-
empty and quieter interior cafe.

INT. CAFE RIVOIRE - CONTINUOUS

Evie sets herself, eventually a waiter arrives.

EVIE

A martini. No, an espresso. Wait, a martini.

A group of young men arrive at the outside bar, they are loud and animated. Evie sees Paolo among them. He starts to enter the bar, she panics, moves toward the door.

EVIE (CONT'D)

Oh, hello Paolo, I didn't expect to see you here. I was just leaving.

PAOLO

Evie, friends intercepted me before I got to the apartment with my family and insisted--

EVIE

Of course. Ciao. Wonderful, wonderful program.

She rushes out of the cafe. Paolo stands and watches her through the large window, the waiter arrives holding both a martini and espresso and gives Paolo a puzzled look.

They watch Evie turn right and walk across the Piazza until she realizes she is headed in the wrong direction. She comes back to the outdoor Rivoire, addresses the young men.

EVIE (CONT'D)

Hotel Helvetia & Bristol?

In unison, they point to their left, Evie leaves. Inside, Paolo and waiter look down at Evie's table and see she has left a small pile of American coins.

PAOLO

Americana.
 (waiter nods)
 From New York.
 (larger nod)
 Lives in Venice.
 (still larger nod)

Paolo takes the espresso, drinks it in one shot then takes the martini.

PAOLO (CONT'D)

Put it on my tab.

INT. FLORENCE HELVETIA & BRISTOL HOTEL - CONTINUOUS

Evie enters the lobby, a gentleman is hidden behind a German newspaper. She removes the paper. It is Bruno.

EVIE

I told you I would be fine. You're not the parent I never had, you know.

BRUNO

I might be. Want to play?

EVIE

Parent?

BRUNO

Music.

EVIE

At this hour? They'd kick us out.

BRUNO

I've been kicked out of lesser places than this. No, in the piazza. It's always a great night for that sort of thing in Florence.

EXT. FLORENCE PIAZZA DELLA REPUBBLICA - CONTINUOUS

Evie and Bruno warmup/tune their violins in the near-by Piazza della Repubblica. A few portrait artists with their easels are still there. Almost all the windows above the piazza are dark. Evie notices a figure with a violin strapped to his back walking in their direction. She stops tuning.

BRUNO

Why did you stop?

EVIE

God in heaven.

BRUNO

Paolo!

Paolo walks to Evie, he is holding her martini.

PAOLO

I believe you left this.

EVIE

I did. Thanks you but how did you know I was here?

PAOLO
You asked my friends for directions
to the Helvetia. So...

BRUNO
You're headed back to your
apartment? Don't go. Join us.

PAOLO
Evie?

EVIE
As long as you are here. You've got
your violin. I've got a drink.

PAOLO
So, would that be "wonderful"?

EVIE
Yes, one more in a night of so
many. OK, there are three of us so
the "Hermann Capriccio for 3
violins" from your recital?

PAOLO
You know that piece?

Evie gives him a stare.

PAOLO (CONT'D)
Oh. Well. Yes. The Hermann it is.
First, Second, Third.

Paolo signifies himself for First Violin, Bruno Second, Evie
Third. Evie gives him that stare again, she relaxes then
pointing to Paolo then Bruno then herself.

EVIE
One, two, three. Perfect.

Before starting, she looks at Paolo, their eyes meet and
generate electricity that even Bruno notices.

The last of the street artists fold their easels and
disappear down the empty streets. The music starts, some
apartment lights come up and windows open one by one to hear
the music. Window lights dim and apartment dwellers lean
outside their windows to hear the three violinists.

The music echoes through the Piazza della Repubblica, through
the cobblestone streets and up to the Pizaazle Michelangelo
hilltop overlooking Florence.

INT. SIENA DUOMO CATHEDRAL - DAY

ANTONELLA walks through the front door of the empty Duomo, they slam shut behind her. There is organ music, keyboard exercises. She approaches the altar, GIORDANO is at the organ. He stops.

ANTONELLA LOMBARDI, late 20s, is a personification of classical Mediterranean female beauty and she moves with the confidence of her upper middle-class upbringing.

FATHER GIORDANO BANFI, early 30s, priest and organ-master at Siena's Cathedral.

GIORDANO
Something's happened?

Antonella starts to cry, collapses into a chair near the altar. Giordano motions to a confession booth, she follows. Their whispers are barely audible outside the confession as muffled sounds echo across the marble cathedral floor.

ANTONELLA
The police came for Nehemiah and Rachael. Ripped them from their children's arms.

GIORDANO
Oh, dear God. When?

ANTONELLA
Just now.

This is not good. They've probably taken them to Piea.

ANTONELLA (CONT'D)
Why?

GIORDANO
There's a camp there.

ANTONELLA
What kind of "camp"?

GIORDANO
They've been secretly building detention camps. Getting ready for, well, for what's happening now, I suppose.

ANTONELLA
What is happening now?

GIORDANO

In the beginning Jews supported Mussolini and Fascism and now they're being hauled off. It's heartbreaking.

ANTONELLA

Hauled off where?

GIORDANO

To transition camps like Piea.

ANTONELLA

They're Italian citizens.

GIORDANO

Doesn't matter any more. They're Jews. I have friends in Piea. I can help make their life easier. Give me until the morning. Will you be at the hotel?

ANTONELLA

Yes. I've got to keep the Palazzo running until this is over and Nehemiah and Rachael come home. Phone me.

GIORDANO

No more phone calls.

They exit the confession booth. Giordano walks her to the cathedral entrance. She gives him a kiss on the cheek.

GIORDANO (CONT'D)

There are times when you make me want to forget my priestly vows.

ANTONELLA

For a priest, you are a terrible liar.

Giordano walks back toward the organ, a priest steps out from behind the altar, Giordano is startled.

GIORDANO

Oh, Father, I didn't see you there.

FATHER

Just tiding up a bit.

GIORDANO

Of course.

Giordano resumes his keyboard practice.

EXT. PIAZZA DEL DUOMO - CONTINUOUS

Antonella exits Duomo, walks across the piazza to the Santa Maria della Scala Hospital (SMS), there are loud repeated clanging noises, she walks closer. Francesco looks up from a 6' deep hole in the ground near the hospital side entrance.

FRANCESCO BIANCHI, early 30s, tall, trim, dark, athletic, with memorable good looks. Dressed in his kaki "digging" attire with a "Siena University Archaeology" name tag.

ANTONELLA

Francesco! Dug yourself into another hole I see.

FRANCESCO

I live for this. What are you doing here?

ANTONELLA

Leaving Duomo, I heard loud sounds, saw a big hole in the ground and thought "that's probably my boyfriend".

FRANCESCO

Likely it's just another hole in the ground. But the Romans were here and before that, our Etruscan ancestors, so I thought I should check it out. There's something wrong.

ANTONELLA

They took Rachael and Nehemiah.

FRANCESCO

Who took them?

Antonella gives him a look.

FRANCESCO (CONT'D)

Fascists soldiers.

ANTONELLA

Yes, Fascists soldiers. They're rounding up the Jews in Siena.

FRANCESCO

Oh, no.

ANTONELLA

Yes. We have to do something.

FRANCESCO

Antonella, we've been through this.

ANTONELLA

The world outside your precious University is changing. Has changed. We are being run over by a mob of barbarian thugs.

FRANCESCO

We have been run over by mobs of thugs for 2,000 years, Antonella, and we are still here. Barbarians come and they go. We stay.

ANTONELLA

Is that supposed to be comforting?

FRANCESCO

Yes. I will take care of my family and friends, and we will be here when this is over. But I'll not join the current resistance movement in order to celebrate my opposition to the unstoppable forces of the reoccurring cycles of Italy's barbarian history.

ANTONELLA

Spoken like an intellectual with his head in the sand. I'm not asking you to join anything.

FRANCESCO

Good.

ANTONELLA

I'm asking you to start something.

FRANCESCO

Anto--

ANTONELLA

With me.

FRANCESCO

Stop. What about the Aresburgs.

ANTONELLA

They were taken from the hotel a couple of hours ago;

(MORE)

ANTONELLA (CONT'D)

the police gave them ten minutes to pack one bag. No explanations. Their two children were hysterical; I was hysterical. The tourists in the lobby were hysterical.

FRANCESCO

Of course. And you went to see Giordano.

ANTONELLA

Yes. He thinks Nehemiah and Rachael are being taken to a detention camp near Piea.

FRANCESCO

Antonella, since grade school we've known how gossipy Giordano can be, but lately his in-depth knowledge of current events surpasses gossip.

ANTONELLA

What does that mean?

FRANCESCO

How does he know about a camp near Piea?

ANTONELLA

He hears things.

FRANCESCO

Yes. And we all chuckled at Giordano when he told us that one day Jews in Italy would lose their right to vote, or teach school, or marry non-Jews. Or own hotels.

ANTONELLA

So?

FRANCESCO

So. A better question would be why does our old school chum know so much about the fate of the Jews.

ANTONELLA

Maybe the Fascists assume the Church supports their endeavors to rid Italy of Jews. They tell him things. And...

FRANCESCO

And?

ANTONELLA

And I think Giordano has put himself in jeopardy by passing me information. He wants to help.

FRANCESCO

You maybe right. Sometimes you are.

ANTONELLA

Thank you.

FRANCESCO

You can't take care of the whole world Anto. But you can take care of yourself.

ANTONELLA

I thought I had you for that.

FRANCESCO

You do. But I'd appreciate a little help every now and then.

Duomo bell tower chimes. She kisses him on the lips.

ANTONELLA

I'm late, I have to relieve Ilaria at the hotel plus I have piano students at Chigiana and a meeting with Olga and Paolo about some stupid festival.

FRANCESCO

Life among the barbarians goes on.

ANTONELLA

I'll relay that to the Aresburgs. Next time I see them.

EXT. STREET - CONTINUOUS

Antonella leaves and keeps a fast pace through the pedestrian streets of Siena. She reaches the Palazzo Hotel

INT. - PALAZZO HOTEL - CONTINUOUS

The hotel reception room is full of people and luggage. Bruno, Evie, two Italian soldiers, two male one female Nazi soldiers, a well-heeled couple, two refugee-like families. ILARIA, early 20s, Antonella's younger sister, looks a wreck standing behind the desks.

Antonella enters, Ilaria crosses herself. The tourist couple are sharing a newspaper: "Austria bows to Germany"

ANTONELLA

So. Everyone. How are we doing?

They freeze, turn and stare at her then all of them at once start talking and walking toward her.

EXT. SIENA AL MANGIA OUTDOOR BAR - NIGHT

"Il Campo", a fan shaped brick paved public meeting space, one of Europe's finest medieval town squares, is to Siena what St. Mark's is to Venice both in size, history, and social importance. An ancient government building with tower and a dozen or so indoor/outdoor large cafes surround the square. In the center of the string of cafes, directly across from Mangia Tower, is Al Mangia Bar. Bruno, Evie, and Paolo sit at an outdoor table.

BRUNO

I'm still confused about your friend Antonella at the hotel. I thought she was a Conservatory piano professor.

EVIE

She's joining us latter so a little history would be helpful.

PAOLO

Sure. In the mid 1600s--

EVIE

1600s?

PAOLO

In Italy, 400 years is a little history.

EVIE

Waiter, a martini.

PAOLO

In the late Renaissance, the Tromboli family, merchants and international traders, was one of Siena's wealthiest dynasties. They built their Palazzo in the late 1600s. In the late 1800s the Italian economy was winding down and the "Grand Tour" wounding up.

EVIE

"Grand Tour" as in people from
England and U.S. touring Italy.

PIERLUIGI, 40s, waiter, brings her martini, she takes a sip,
frowns, swallows then frowns even more. Paolo speaks softly
and she answers softly back, still frowning over the drink.

PAOLO

You're not at Harry's anymore.

EVIE

You can say that again.

PAOLO

Better learn to drink like an
Italian. Pierluigi, bring her a red
wine. A Brunello.

INTERMITTENT MONTAGE OF PAOLO'S HISTORY OF SIENA

PAOLO

Where was I? Yeah, they came to
Italy for months, sometimes years.
At the turn of this century 25% of
the Florence population was
British.

BRUNO

So glad they finally left.

PAOLO

Bruno! To take advantage of long-
term tourists, the Trombolis
decided to take in paying guests.

EVIE

Like a boarding house. Or in this
case a boarding palace.

PAOLO

Exactly. And it was a hit.
Carnegies, Vanderbilts, Fords,
Prince of Wales, all clamored for
reservations to stay in a Tuscan
palace in the middle of Siena. They
presented letters of reference to
stay there. Henry Clay Frick was
among them. His grown daughter is
there today.

EVIE

So where does Antonella come in?

PAOLO

In the next century.

EVIE

Pierluigi! More--what is this? More Brunello.

INTERMITTENT MONTAGE CONTINUES AS PAOLO SPEAKS

PAOLO

The "Grand Tour" tourists spent fortunes on artifacts to send home. Renaissance paintings, furniture, rare books, you name it. They stayed at the Palazzo and the Trombolis "helped" with purchasing and shipping.

BRUNO

I see where this is going.

PAOLO

Don't get ahead, we Italians love a good story and this is one of them. It was simple supply and demand. But eventually there was a problem. Bruno?

BRUNO

They ran out of "supply" but they did not run out of "demand."

PAOLO

Exactly. The renaissance treasures were gone to England and the U.S.

EVIE

End of story.

PAOLO

Beginning of story.

EVIE

Pierluigi.

PAOLO

Story of the biggest industrial godsend Tuscany has ever known.

BRUNO AND EVIE

They made them.

PAOLO

Yes, they manufactured antiques. The Tromboli art forgery business became Tuscany's largest. Artisans from all over Europe came here. Students came to study their work.

EVIE

Fascinating.

PAOLO

Even more fascinating: the men who created this are still here in Siena; Icilio Joni and Umberto Giunti. Nehemiah Aresburg's father, the Tromboli's Jewish cousin from Berlin, came here to run the forgery business. The Great War (WWI) interrupted business and it never returned to its former glory. When the last Tromboli died, they left the hotel to their Aresburgs cousins. Nehemiah, an excellent forger, took over the business but he and his wife concentrated on revitalizing the Palazzo hotel business.

EVIE

So back to Antonella, the piano playing hotel girl.

PAOLO

The hotel is not legally the Aresburgs'. That is an important bit of history.

EVIE

More history?

Evie looks over her shoulder for the waiter.

PAOLO

Not much to that part of the story, Antonella's story I mean.

Antonella and Francesco walk up behind Paolo.

ANTONELLA

Not much to Antonella's story, Paolo? How flattering.

The gentlemen stand. Kiss Antonella and Francesco.

PAOLO

I meant "historically speaking".

ANTONELLA

Please sit. He's right, historically speaking anyway. About a year ago we learned that the Government might forbid Jews from owning property so my parents, lifelong friends of the Aresburgs, purchased the Hotel Palazzo for a token sum. The Aresburgs continued to run it as their own. The police arrested them today but couldn't confiscate their hotel because the Aresburgs don't own it. Legally, I do. But I don't know how to run it and I sure don't know how to be a mother to their two teenagers. And it's a reminder that it is a frightening time to be alive in Europe.

Ezra Pound walks up to join the group

EZRA

Oh bullshit, Antonella. It is a enlightened time to be alive. Shed a tear for Palazzo Jews but removing them is good for us all.

ANTONELLA

It is not!

EZRA

Bullshit. See you all tomorrow at the meeting.

Ezra walks away lighting his pipe.

ANTONELLA

There goes a horrible man.

BRUNO

Did you hear his latest pro-fascist radio talk from Rome? He's accelerating the anti-Jewish sentiment and empowering his prominence in Mussolini's regime.

ANTONELLA

We've got to do something.

PAOLO

Too late.

FRANCESCO

Ten years too late.

PAOLO

We could've stopped it. We didn't.

ANTONELLA

And now we pay. Rather the
Aresburgs pay.

BRUNO

Some people do not believe too late
and they are doing something.

ANTONELLA

What do you mean? Doing what?

BRUNO

Evie gives Bruno a stern look, but he continues.

I'm told that there is small group
of refugees fleeing Germany into
Switzerland. They hope to come to
Italy for the purpose of getting
out of Europe.

ANTONELLA

On to America?

BRUNO

To North Africa then on to the
Americas or England.

ANTONELLA

How many in this small group?

BRUNO

I wouldn't know.

PAOLO

You are among friends.

Bruno looks to Pierluigi.

PAOLO (CONT'D)

And Pierluigi is a like-minded
friend. OK to speak.

ANTONELLA

How many?

BRUNO

Fifty.

The group is stunned. Pierluigi looks around at the crowd of outdoor dinners, approaches Paolo and whispers in his ear.

PAOLO

He's right. Follow me.

They follow Paolo to the bar's private dining room.

INT. AL MANGIA INDOOR BAR - CONTINUOUS

Paolo, Evie, Antonella, Francesco, and Bruno sit at the private dining room table.

ANTONELLA

Fifty refugees sounds like a lot.
Could we help?

BRUNO

Well--

FRANCESCO

No, we could not.

ANTONELLA

There are Fascists resistance groups in Florence and Milan and Rome. Why not here?

FRANCESCO

Because we are not Florence, Milan, or Rome, Antonella. We are a little hill town of artist and musicians and teachers and winemakers.

Evie raises her glass. Evie mouths the words "This is wonderful".

ANTONELLA

Exactly. That's our cover.

FRANCESCO

That's not a cover that's who we are.

ANTONELLA

Right as always, Francesco. Bruno, do they have the papers they need?

EVIE

Bruno.

BRUNO

Germans don't need papers to enter Switzerland and don't need papers to cross into Italy from Switzerland. But they do need papers to get out of Italy.

ANTONELLA

How many have papers?

BRUNO

Two.

ANTONELLA

Forty-eight do not have papers.

BRUNO

It's a slow process. Forgeries are time consuming, expensive.

ANTONELLA

Have any plans been made?

EVIE

Bruno.

FRANCESCO

Antonella.

BRUNO

Arrangements have been made to get them out of Europe. Yes.

PAOLO

But you can't make the last move out of Italy--out of Europe--without papers. Right?

BRUNO

Right. We can move them to Italy but no further.

ANTONELLA

Where are they coming from?

BRUNO

Cologne. Then Andermatt at the Swiss-Italian border.

ANTONELLA

Then where in Italy?

BRUNO

Uh...

FRANCESCO

Oh no.

ANTONELLA

Siena?

BRUNO

Possibly an option now that you mention it.

FRANCESCO

We don't mention it and it's not an option. If 50 non-Italian speaking people entered Siena, Mussolini himself would round them up before sunset.

EVIE

Unless...unless the 50 non-Italians were coming to Siena during a week-long "international" event like, say a Vivaldi Festival Concert Week.

It is a revelation. They pause a beat, slowly turn to Evie. No one speaks. Evie takes a sip of her wine.

FRANCESCO

You can't get them out of Siena-- out of Italy. You just heard Bruno. They have no papers.

ANTONELLA

Yet.

FRANCESCO

Yes, correct, they have no papers yet. Oh, no. No.

ANTONELLA

The guys from the old days are still here.

FRANCESCO

These are not the old days. These are the new days of Mussolini, Hitler, and Jewish camps, and--

ANTONELLA

Right again.

FRANCESCO

It's too dangerous to even discuss.

ANTONELLA

It's too dangerous not to.

FRANCESCO

Siena will want no part of this.

ANTONELLA

Siena is already part of this.

Francesco stands.

FRANCESCO

Not my part.

INT. SIENA PALAZZO HOTEL - NIGHT

Evie picks up her key at the lobby, walks to her suite. From under the door, she sees a light. She the door slowly.

"MAX" MORRIS WESTEN MAXWELL (mid 60s) her patron from NY, slightly pudgy in his Broorks Bros. suit, sits near a small table with a bucket and opened bottle Champagne, two glasses.

EVIE

Max!

MAX

My dear Evie.

EVIE

I thought you were in Venice.

He walks to her and gently kisses her on the lips then walks back to the table and pours her a Champagne.

MAX

I got your telegram that you were in Siena, and I had heard from Ezra that he was in Siena.

EVIE

Ezra?

MAX

Ezra Pound.

EVIE

Oh, that Ezra.

MAX

Brilliant man. Has this whole international thing figured out.

EVIE

Ummm.

MAX

After business in Berlin, Elizabeth and the children went on to Rome, we'll join them later. I have business with Ezra to help him get back to the U.S. But. I'm here now to be with you. I've missed you.

EVIE

I've missed you. But by "We'll join them in Rome" you mean you and Ezra Pound will join them in Rome.

MAX

No, you and I will join the family in Rome after we've had a few days here to ourselves.

EVIE

That sounds wonderful.

MAX

I thought so.

EVIE

Yes. But I can't go to Rome. I have an obligation--

MAX

Yes, you have an obligation to go to Rome with me. And after Rome, back to the States.

EVIE

I'm not going back to the States, Max. I'm staying here at least another year.

She kisses him lightly and he kisses her back.

MAX

Out of the question.

EVIE

Then a half year.

MAX

Since you were 14 years old, I've given you everything.

EVIE

And I've given you everything in return but I'm not going back to the States. Please understand that.

MAX

Understand? Do you understand what your exorbitant lifestyle cost?

Evie lifts her shoulders.

MAX (CONT'D)

Do you? Unbutton your dress.

EVIE

What? Max.

MAX

Unbutton it.
 (she unbuttons her dress)
 Let it fall.
 (she does)
 And your slip.
 (she does)
 Everything else.
 (long pause)
 My god you are beautiful.

EVIE

Max, I'm not unappreciative. I--

MAX

Shhhh.

Max takes his hand and slowly places it between Evie's legs. He leaves his hand there and moves it gently. Evie is motionless, stares straight ahead. Then he removes his hand.

MAX (CONT'D)

Just so you understand: That is what it cost.

He adjusts his trousers. He looks down at where his hand had been then back to her.

MAX (CONT'D)

And I want that back in New York.
 Now, pick up your clothes.

She does, Max takes them, presses them to his face, takes a deep breath then begins to rip her clothes into pieces.

EVIE

What?

She grabs his arm, he strikes her face with the back of his hand. She staggers, grabs the table, it tumbles over and the champagne and glasses crash to the floor. She rushes to him, he pushes her away and walks to the closet, opens it, and rips up her remaining clothes. Evie stands motionless.

MAX

For one week, I and the family will be at the Rome Excelsior. I'll leave your Siena-to-Rome train ticket at the Palazzo reception desk. Your room at the Danieli in Venice is canceled; the hotel is sending your trunks to me in Rome.

EVIE

Max--

MAX

You've got a week. Figure it out. Live in New York as my wealthy young virtuoso mistress or die with your broke music friends in Siena.

Max turns to leave, opens the door then backs into the room, closes the door. He walks over, grabs her violin on the bed.

EVIE

Don't take my violin.

MAX

I wouldn't think of it.

He picks up the table then smashes the violin into pieces.

MAX (CONT'D)

I hope the symbolism of this moment is not lost.

EVIE

How could you do that?

MAX

I do worse than that to people every single goddamn day of the week and I'm not even fucking them. So to speak.

EVIE

Good point.

Max exits. She goes to the mirror, examines her face, looks out the window and sees Max leaving the hotel. She walks to the bed and from under it, drags out then opens a suitcase.

She takes out her red sequins ballgown concert dress and hangs it in the closet. She takes her primo violin, gives it a kiss and places it on the bed. She picks up the overturned Champagne bottle, holds it up to the light, sits on the bed and drinks from the bottle. There is a knock at the door.

HOTEL MAID

Miss Foster, is everything alright?

EVIE

Couldn't be better.

INT. - SIENA ACCADEMIA CHIGIANA CONSERVATORY - DAY

In the conservatory conference room seated around the large table are COUNT CHIGI, late 60s, head of the Accademia Chigiana Conservatory, immaculately dressed for business, and Maestro ALFRED CASELLA, late 40s, conductor at the conservatory who is smartly-casual dressed, Ezra and Olga, Antonella, Bruno, Paolo, Giordano, and several local musicians are all talking at once. There is a knock outside the conference room door. They stop talking. The door opens slowly, Evie peeks into the room then enters. She is wearing her red sequin gown and sunglasses to hide her black eye.

EVIE

Just couldn't find a thing to wear.

BRUNO

And representing New York, New York
and dressed to kill: Miss Evie
Foster.

Everyone chuckles, the gentleman stand. Most in the room are smiling. Ezra remains seated and doesn't smile.

INT. - PALAZZO HOTEL - DAY

Evie and Antonella are in Evie's suite assessing her damaged clothes. Evie is wearing pants and a shirt borrowed from 16-year-old Aresburg son Niccolo who is not quite yet her size.

ANTONELLA

None of this can be salvaged. Wear
Niccolo's pants for now. Evie, do
you have money?

EVIE

Petty cash and if I stay, I'll cash-
in the Siena/Rome train ticket Max
left.

ANTONELLA

As soon as I can, I'll re-work some of my cloths to fit you. Surely, this crazy patron knew you would find clothes. Seems so pointless.

EVIE

Point one: He's powerful and can tear things up when he wants. Point two: there won't be any more clothes like these--from the best shops in New York--until I returne. He's right on both points. And he's right about another thing: I've got a week to figure it out.

ANTONELLA

If you stay what will you do?

EVIE

I can't count on one hand the number of orphanages I was moved in and out of before I caught Max's ear. Well, eye. My survival skills are extraordinary. In today's meeting they mentioned hiring musicians for the festival, so I'll apply. I think they'll remember me.

ANTONELLA

You are now a colorful part of Chigiana history.

There is a knock at the door and Evie opens it.

ILARIA

Antonella, it's Father Giordano. He's says he's ready now.

ANTONELLA

For what?

ILARIA

I thought you knew. He's in the hotel chapel so ready for prayers?

ANTONELLA

Perfect timing for that.

Antonella crosses herself as she starts to leave. Ilaria stops her at the door.

ILARIA

Warning. Miss Frick is at her new piano in the parlor.

ANTONELLA

Thanks. Imagine, having so much money you purchase a Steinway grand to play while you're a hotel guest. Are all American's this rich?

EVIE

Oh yeah, pretty much all of us that's why I'm wearing this.

Antonella exits Evie's room.

INT. PALAZZO HOTEL - CONTINUOUS

Antonella moves down the wide staircase to the grand parlor where Miss HELEN CLAY FRICK, (early 50s) outfitted in matronly attire sits at her concert-grand playing Chopin's "Prelude in E minor". Antonella, crossing the room addresses her in a singsong voice and Miss Frick singsongs her reply.

ANTONELLA

Excuse me, Miss Frick.

MISS FRICK

You are excused, Miss Lombardi.

Antonella enters the adjacent hotel chapel the size of a small bedroom. Giordano kneels on a prayer bench, she kneels on a bench beside him. Miss Frick's Chopin fills the chapel. Giordano takes Antonella's hand, places a folded paper in her palm, mouths "Amen". Giordano exists through the parlor. He and Miss Frick singsong as Antonella did before.

GIORDANO

Excuse me once again, Miss Frick.

MISS FRICK

You are excused again, Father.

Antonella opens the 2"-square paper: "tonight midnight university botanical garden". She exits the chapel, walks through the parlor.

ANTONELLA

Once again, excuse me, Miss Frick.

Miss Frick stops playing, stares at the keys as Antonella walks through the parlor.

EXT. SIENA BOTANICAL GARDEN - NIGHT

There is a large neighborhood outdoor party nearby, loud music, occasional fireworks. Antonella walks in the garden entrance near a University building holding a small pistol hidden in the ruffles of her dress. Two figures step out of the bushes, one wearing a German uniform, one a Red Cross nurse hooded cape, a third figure, draped in black, is in the distance. The man removes his German cap, the woman removes her hood. Antonella, steps back, holds out the pistol. A flash of light from the fireworks illuminates their faces. It's the Aresburgs. The third figure runs away.

ANTONELLA

Oh my God. Racheal! Nehemiah!

She drops the pistol, they embrace. They whisper as they start to leave the Botany gardens towards the adjacent Palazzo Hotel gardens. She runs back for the pistol.

RACHEAL

The children?

ANTONELLA

Wonderful.

NEHEMIAH

The hotel?

ANTONELLA

Not wonderful. Soldiers have taken over one of the lower floors.

NEHEMIAH

We were hoping it would be safe for us to hide there for a few days.

ANTONELLA

Yes! The staff and the guests have the top floors. The soldiers never bother the us there. But just in case, here's this.

She hands her pistol to Nehemiah.

NEHEMIAH

Hopefully it won't come to that.

ANTONELLA

Nehemiah, are you still on good terms with the men from the old days?

NEHEMIAH

The art forgers? Of course.

ANTONELLA

That's the first good news in days.

NEHEMIAH

We have a contact. Do you know a Bruno Bauer?

ANTONELLA

More good news: I know Bruno.

Antonella, Racheal, and Nehemiah disappear into the garden.

INT. BOTANICAL GARDEN OFFICE BUILDING - CONTINUOUS

At a third story window of the dark University building Francesco holds a rifle ready to shoot. As Antonella and the others disappear he lowers the rifle.

INT. - ACCADEMIA CHIGIANA CONSERVATORY - DAY

Count Chigi, Cassala, Ezra, Paolo, Bruno, a few musicians sit at the conference room table. There is a knock at the door, Evie enters still dressed in Niccolo's clothes.

BRUNO

I was thinking something "in-between" but...

EVIE

Sorry for the attire. Long story.

EZRA

Aren't they all Miss Foster?

COUNT CHIGI

You don't owe an explanation. One brief announcement. Maestro Alessandro Beaumont of the Opera Naples, formerly The Fenice in Venice, Opera di Firenze, the list goes on. He is in Siena and will join our team as our opera conductor. He will be an asset to this noble endeavor.

CASSALA

Wonderful news. Well, I believe we are all here. Except Olga who is in Turin.

(MORE)

CASSALA (CONT'D)

Apparently, there have been problems with the Vivaldi manuscripts. Dr. Gentili, head of the University Library who purchased the manuscripts is having a problem with the past owner concerning performance rights.

EZRA

Maestro, let's not beat around the bush. Gentili is a Jew. If it was a problem earlier, it is not a problem now.

EVIE

Why?

EZRA

Because under the new Italian laws, whatever Gentili thinks or doesn't think no longer matters. He is a Jew. His career as an educator is over; his rights as a citizen of Italy no longer exist. Gentili is a Jew and-

EVIE

--Yeah, we got that.

EZRA

We want the Vivaldi manuscripts? We take the manuscripts. We want to perform Vivaldi, we perform Vivaldi.

EVIE

Not exactly the way I saw our noble endeavor unfolding.

EZRA

Just to be clear no one at this table knows who you are or cares what you think. You are in this group by the good graces of Olga which was a mistake and will be corrected when she returns.

COUNT CHIGI

(quickly)

This committee is set. You and Olga should not be saddled with the burden of deciding who should or should not serve.

EZRA

I--

COUNT CHIGI

Plus, it is good to have diversity.
We hope for an international
audience, it's good we have an
American here with us.

EZRA

Must I remind you that I am an
American?

EVIE

Yeah, I think you must.

CASSALA

Ezra, please a report on the
Vivaldi manuscripts in the Dresden.

EZRA

Another amazing re-discovery of
forty Vivaldi orchestra scores in
Germany. They are on their way to
us via microfiche.

COUNT CHIGI

Ezra, none of this would be
possible without you and Olga. We
will work together to make this
dream a reality. Yes, it is our
noble endeavor. That's all I have
today. Please move on to your
committee meetings.

They stand and start to disperse.

INT. - ACCADEMIA CHIGIANA CONSERVATORY - CONTINUOUS

Paolo, Bruno, Evie, and committee members, walk down the
stairs; MAESTRO ALESSANDRO BEAUMONT walks out of Count
Chigi's office.

ALESSANDRO BEAUMONT (mid 40s) handsome, fit, especially well
dressed, moves with confidence of a man who spends his
professional life moving in front of people.

PAOLO

Maestro!

ALESSANDRO

Paolo, good to be back in Siena.

They continue down the stairs to the ground floor.

PAOLO

Maestro, this is Miss Evie Foster from New York, and this is former wunderkind and current visiting artist at the Florence Conservatory from Cologne, Bruno Bauer.

They shake hands as they move on.

ALESSANDRO

Mr. Bauer, heard good things about you in Florence. And Miss Foster, New York? Many of us would love to be where you came from. Especially now.

EVIE

About my current attire.

BRUNO

There was a little luggage mix-up.

EVIE

Well, a big one.

ALESSANDRO

Happened to me last month. Wore the same suit for four days in a row. You look charming.

They exit the Conservatory's courtyard onto the pedestrian street.

EXT. SIENA STREET - CONTINUOUS

Paolo, Evie, Bruno, and Alessandro pause at the Conservatory entrance.

ALESSANDRO

I'm meeting friends for dinner at Guido's and I'm early. I'd love to buy you all drink.

PAOLO

Another time Maestro, Bruno and I have a commeetee meeting.

ALESSANDRO

Miss Foster? That is if you wouldn't mind being in the company of an older man.

EVIE

I'm pretty much OK with that.

Bruno winces, he and Paolo exit left into the pedestrian street, Alessandro and Evie turn right and stroll toward the town square. Their conversation is inaudible in the tourists-filled street until they reach Al Mangia Bar.

ALESSANDRO

You Americans fascinate me.
Fascinate the whole world really.
Why Siena?

EVIE

The long or the short version?

EXT. - AL MANGIA OUTDOOR BAR - CONTINUOUS

They sit at Al Mangia. The noise of Siena's outdoor cafe crowd becomes louder. Evie's voice weaves in and out of the crowd chatter. Alessandro listens politely.

EVIE

I was raised in NYC foster homes,
didn't even know my last name but I
heard "foster" so much I thought I
must be Evie Foster and I've had
that name ever since...

Loud crowd chatter drowns out her voice for a minute. Evie is an animated storyteller, Alessandro an interested listener.

Turns out I was something of a
music prodigy, "little Miss Mozart"
they called me. When I was 13 or 14--
I'm not really sure how old I am--a
wealthily art patron Maxwell...

The crowd chatter drowns out her voice for a minute.

...so, when I finished NYC college
Max gave me the chance to study in
Europe. I choose Venice instead of
Rome or Naples because...

As her voice is covered by the crowd, Alessandro expression changes from polite to concern to shock.

...Teatro di Fienze....Miss
Dumont....Sophia
Stallenberger....Venice
Hospital...HMS Liverpool...

ALESSANDRO
Evie, stop.

EVIE
What?

ALESSASNDRO
How old are you?

EVIE
Twenty-one or twenty-two.

His lips move as he calculates.

EVIE (CONT'D)
Did I say something wrong?

ALESSANDRO
I was the assistant conductor at
the Florence opera house when
Sophia Stallenberger sang there.

EVIE
Oh, well--

ALESSANDRO
We fell in love. We had an affair.

Alessandro can't be heard over the cafe noise. Evie's face changes from curious to confused before it is frozen in shock. Tears fall. They stare at each other in silence.

I/E. ACCADEMIA CHIGIANA CONSERVATORY - CONTINUOUS

Committee members Count Chigi, Cassala, Evie, Alessandro, Bruno, Antonella, Ezra, Olga, and several musicians are there. Evie and Alessandro sit next to each other.

CASSALA
Father Giordano?

COUNT CHIGI
He had a meeting. He's with the
church so, lot of meetings. Maestro
Alessandro, welcome.

ALESSANDRO
It's a pleasure to be with you all.

Suddenly there's a loud siren repeating in short piercing bursts. Everyone begins to stand.

COUNT CHIGI
We'd better go. All of us.

EVIE
Go where?

ANTONELLA
It's the signal for the town to
gather. Another annoying Fascist
drill.

INT. ACCADEMIA CHIGIANA CONSERVATORY - CONTINUOUS

Everyone files out of the Conservatory. They join the crowd
filling the streets and move to the Duomo piazza. The
intermittent alarm continues.

EXT. SIENA PIAZZA DEL DUOMO - CONTINUOUS

A line of about a dozen soldiers stand shoulder to shoulder
across the Duomo marble porch near the. Two priests and a nun
are marched out in front of the soldiers. Giordano is one of
them. Antonella sees Francesco runs to him.

ANTONELLA
Why is Giordano up there?

FRANCESCO
Don't talk. Don't move.

A flamboyantly dressed Italian FASCIST OFFICER in a black
feathered helmet steps to a microphone, speakers in the
cathedral bell tower echo across the piazza.

FASCIST OFFICER
Recently we rounded up our first
group of Jews for deportation. Two
of them escaped. They escaped with
the help of traitors.

Antonella starts to faint. Francesco grabs her.

FRANCESCO
No Antonella.

FASCIST OFFICER
This is how we deal with traitors.

The officer pulls out a pistol, walks behind the three priest
and presses the gun to the back head of a priest who is
whispering with eyes closed. The officer fires point-blank at
the back of the priest's head.

Blood splatters the crowd in front of him as his body tumbles down the Duomo steps. The crowd screams and panics, turns to leave, but the piazza entry streets are blocked by troops.

FASCIST OFFICER (CONT'D)

There. That was example number one.

Officer goes behind the line and puts his gun to the nun's head.

FASCIST OFFICER (CONT'D)

Example number two.

He pulls the trigger, the bullet glazes her, she falls down the steps and the officer fires several shots into her body.

FASCIST OFFICER (CONT'D)

Prime Minister Mussolini relies on our clergy to rid country of anti-Christ Jewish vermin. This includes vermin who get in our way.

He puts his pistol to the side of Giordano's head and fires. Blood splatters the crowd, Giordano collapses down the steps.

FASCIST OFFICER (CONT'D)

That is all. More examples as needed.

Francesco makes his way through the motionless crowd, picks up Giordano's body, turns to carry him across the piazza to the Santa Maria della Scala (SMS) Hospital. Others lift up the bodies of the priest and nun and follow Francesco.

FASCIST OFFICER (CONT'D)

Stop. Stop them.

The crowd gathers tightly around Francesco and the others as they carry the bodies leaving a small circle of clearance for Francesco and the other two to walk.

OFFICER

I said stop.

Antonella, shaking, tears streaming, is at the hospital door, opens it as Francesco and the others approach and enter.

OFFICER (CONT'D)

I said stop!

The door slams shut.

INT. SIENA SMS HOSPITAL - CONTINUOUS

Francesco carries Giordano's body to the SMS morgue, the other two carriers follow. The bodies are laid on a large table. Antonella takes Giordano's hand and kisses it.

FRANCESCO

Antonella, I want you to follow me.

She shakes her head "no" and kneels beside the table. He kneels beside her.

FRANCESCO (CONT'D)

Follow me, Antonella. Please.

ANTONELLA

Now?

FRANCESCO

Especially now. We'll come back.

He leads, she follows through the Hospital halls to the hole where Antonella had earlier found Francesco excavating. They drop down into the dark level below. Francesco turns on a flashlight he had left earlier to light the huge cave.

ANTONELLA

What is this?

FRANCESCO

Undiscovered Etruscan caves. Giordano had phoned me about a discovery he had made while inspecting renovations on the hospital chapel.

ANTONELLA

So?

FRANCESCO

No one knows this is here.

ANTONELLA

Oh. So?

FRANCESCO

It's large enough to set up a small factory.

ANTONELLA

Factory for what?

FRANCESCO

Tell Nehemiah Aresburg--

ANTONELLA

Nehemiah?

FRANCESCO

I know he and Rachael are hiding in Siena. I saw the note. I was in my office when Giordano brought them to the University Garden.

ANTONELLA

Tell Nehemiah what?

FRANCESCO

To contact Icilio and Umberto and the others.

ANTONELLA

And tell them what?

FRANCESCO

"Welcome to the reunion."

Their voices become muffled as a time-lapse MONTAGE shows the cave the size of a ballroom being filled with large tables, lights being strung from the ceiling, then 20 or so elderly artisans busy with pens, paper, printing press.

EXT. PIAZZA DEL DUOMO - DAY

Francesco exits Duomo, heads for the hospital (SMS) entrance; Paolo waits at the front SMS door.

FRANCESCO

I've been lighting a daily candle at Duomo since I was 12 years old.

PAOLO

This may take more than a candle.

FRANCESCO

I've got more. The old-timers?

PAOLO

They're all there. Way down there. We've listed them as patients so everyone will assume they're here for treatments as they come and go.

INT. SMS HOSPITAL - DAY - CONTINUOUS

Francesco and Paolo walk through the halls, the hospital kitchen, to a storage room door.

A "guard" in a cook's apron allows them entry. Once inside the storage room they open trap door on the wood floor. They head down the ladder.

FRANCESCO
What's that smell?

PAOLO
Ink.

FRANCESCO
We need ventilation.

PAOLO
They're working on it.

FRANCESCO
Supplies?

PAOLO
I've confiscated a fortune's worth of ink and paper from my father's bank, Antonella and Evie are "borrowing" supplies from the Vivaldi Festival printing rooms. Vivaldi is contributing more than a performance to this endeavor.

INT. SMS HOSPITAL CAVES - CONTINUOUS

They make their way through the cave with ping-pong size tables and hanging light bulbs. The artists/forgers greet them. There is a grinding sound.

FRANCESCO
Any news on an arrival date?

PAOLO
Bruno says soon. He'll use two buses from his Conservatory, he and Evie will drive to meet the group in Switzerland.

FRANCESCO
I'm surprised Evie can drive. You know, being an orphan raised in New York City and all.

PAOLO
Well, she volunteered.

FRANCESCO
She volunteers for everything.

PAOLO

I probably should check that out.

The grinding sound is louder.

PAOLO (CONT'D)

What is that?

FORGER 1

The inventing a ventilation system.

PAOLO FRANCESCO

Good.

FORGER 1

He said the fumes were interfering
with the taste of his wine.

PAOLO

A logical priority for a Tuscan.

INT. CHIGIANA MUSIC CONSERVATORY CONCERT HALL - DAY

Evie stands alone on stage. Antonella sits at the piano. A musician carrying a cello case enters.

MUSICIAN #1

Is this the audition for the
Vivaldi Dresden pieces?

EVIE

That was yesterday and tomorrow.

ANTONELLA

Today is choir rehearsal for the
Gloria. Do you sing?

MUSICIAN #1

I might. How much does it pay?

EVIE

Singing is voluntary. Only the
instrumentalists are paid.

MUSICIAN #1

Then I don't sing.

Musician #1 turns, exits

ANTONELLA

So, you and Alessandro believe you
are father and daughter?

EVIE

It's crazy. He was assistant conductor at Teatro della Pergola in Florence when Sophia--mother--was singing Handel's Rinaldo. Apparently, they liked each other.

ANTONELLA

Apparently.

EVIE

They pretty much shattered the ten commandments on the spot the day they met.

ANTONELLA

How Italian.

EVIE

Actually, he was born in Paris.

ANTONELLA

How French.

EVIE

After the Rinaldo run, she broke off the affair and left for La Scala in Milan. He wrote her. She didn't answer. He went to Milan, she'd gone. Later he learned of her drowning on the HMS Liverpool.

ANTONELLA

Incredible.

EVIE

He said that she had a doctor friend in Venice so probably that part of Mrs. Dumont's story is correct.

ANTONELLA

So, finding Vivaldi in Venice lead to finding your father. The ghost of Vivaldi continues to look over you.

EVIE

In a couple of years later, he met and married Marta Moretti.

ANTONELLA

Soprano Marta Moretti?

EVIE

Apparently, there was a preference
for sopranos.

ANTONELLA

Apparently.

EVIE

Over the years Marta had several
miscarriages. The last one was late
term, both she and the baby died.

ANTONELLA

How terrible.

EVIE

He was having a great career but
losing the things he loved most:
Sophia, Marta, the babies...

ANTONELLA

But no more. Finally he found you.

EVIE

He did.

Alessandro enters on the stage and walks behind them.

ANTONELLA

Silly question but what are you
going to "call" each other?

ALESSASNDRO

It's not a silly question. What am
I going to call you?

EVIE

Evie.

ALESSASNDRO

What are you going to call me?

EVIE

Maestro.

ALESSASNDRO

Not the most endearing...

EVIE

"Maestro" and "Evie" until after
Vivaldi week. Then we'll decide.

ALESSASNDRO

As you wish.

Arriving singers take their seats in the Chigiana concert hall.

ALESSASNDRO (CONT'D)

Please, singers, come up here and sit. Did you bring your music?

ANTONELLA

They don't all have music. Yet. There is a shortage of paper and ink and we--

Antonella and Evie both wince.

ALESSASNDRO

Choir, look on. We're all used to that these day.

Alessandro motions for Evie to come to his side and he moves her to the front of the director's stand.

ALESSASNDRO (CONT'D)

Miss Foster--Evie--take it away.

EVIE

Take what away?

ALESSASNDRO

The Vivaldi Gloria. You're the paid assistant conductor, aren't you? Then assist. Conduct.

Alessandro turns, walks toward the exit and shouts.

ALESSASNDRO (CONT'D)

Antonella. Evie. Top of the first movement. One, two, three, four.

Antonella starts to play the keyboard intro, the choir start to sing. They sound terrible.

EXT. STREET OUTSIDE THE CONCERT HALL - DAY

There are confused looks on the faces of passers-by on the street as they hear the choir from the Conservatory window above. Two pedestrians stop and look up at the open windows.

PASSER-BY

Godamned Arnold Schoenberg!

INT. SMS HOSPITAL - DAY

Bruno carrying a leather satchel walks down the hospital hall, into a passageway, then into a small storage room where BOIAN HOFFMAN, college age lookout, is stationed.

BRUNO

"Can you help me I'm looking for the tuberculous ward?"

BOIAN

"There is no tuberculous ward at this hospital."

BRUNO

"But I was told there was such a ward."

Boian relaxes and holds out his hand to shake. They whisper.

BRUNO (CONT'D)

Great. The new password works!
You're German.

BOIAN

You're German.

BRUNO

Cologne.

BOIAN

Munich.

BRUNO

I teach at the Florence Music Conservatory.

BOIAN

University of Siena med student.

BRUNO

I'm surprised to find a German in the Italian resistance.

BOIAN

So am I.

Bruno gives him a hug. Boian opens the trap door in the floor. Bruno descends into the caves.

INT. SMS HOSPITAL CAVES - CONTINUOUS

An old wife, a middle-aged daughter walk among the worktables with water and wine, a young son follows with a basket of bread. Bruno makes his way to one of the tables. Icilio, Umberto, Nehemiah are there. Bruno empties his satchel.

BRUNO

Recognize these?

NEHEMIAH

Passports, birth certificates, bank records, visas. In German.

BRUNO

All forgeries.

They pass around Bruno's papers

UMBERTO

Brilliant.

ICILIO

Our work was Renaissance forgeries, you know. This is all modern: photos, stamps, etc. I don't know.

UMBERTO

How many refugees?

BRUNO

Fifty. But we don't need all of these for each. A passport, a birth certificate for one, transit visa and tax record for another. And we won't need Kindertransports so that helps with the workload.

UMBERTO

What's Kindertransports?

BRUNO

A child's traveling passport. We have two weeks after the refugees arrive to get their papers done by the Chigiana Vivaldi performance.

Other forgers gather around the table share the forged documents. Umberto and Icilio nod to Nehemiah then he turns to Bruno.

NEHEMIAH

We can do this.

Nehemiah picks up his glass of wine, the others follow as someone places a glass in Bruno's hand for a toast.

ICILIO
To a better world through forgery.

UMBERTO
To the old days again.

EXT. AL MANGIA OUTDOOR BAR - NIGHT

Paolo is sitting alone at an outdoor table. Evie arrives.

EVIE
Hello-sranger-new-in-town?

PAOLO
What?

EVIE
American humor.

PAOLO
Oh. That. Of course.

She sets beside him but no one speaks for a while.

EVIE
You don't like me, do you?

PAOLO
What?

EVIE
Everyone else does.

PAOLO
I--

EVIE
People find me reasonably charming. Witty, mysterious past, uncertain future. Talented, hardworking. But not you. Just an observation.

PAOLO
I...I don't...

EVIE
I mention this because that night in Florence, when we played music in the piazza, I thought there was a spark between us.

(MORE)

EVIE (CONT'D)

But since I've been in Siena you've ignored me. So, I was wrong. I guess.

PAOLO

What are you talking about?

EVIE

Paolo.

PAOLO

OK, I'm sorry. Yes. I've been meaning to try to stop ignoring you.

EVIE

Noble gesture. Anything else.

PAOLO

There may have been a spark.

EVIE

Oh.

PAOLO

In Florence.

EVIE

Anything else?

PAOLO

I don't like Americans.

EVIE

Oh, that.

PAOLO

And my family does not like Americans.

EVIE

Usually the way that works.

PAOLO

We don't associate with Americans.

EVIE

OK, I got it.

PAOLO

Americans are loud. And they behave like they are stars in a motion picture and we Italians are extras.

(MORE)

PAOLO (CONT'D)

They overdress, the women wear too much makeup, and they are unkind to our waiters and shopkeepers. I could go on.

EVIE

No one's stoping you.

PAOLO

Americans drink too much.

EVIE

Ouch.

PAOLO

They don't learn Italian language except for "graze" and "bruschetta" which they constantly mispronounce.

EVIE

How many Americans do you know?

PAOLO

I've been around plenty of them. They don't respect my culture so I don't respect them. I mean, who comes from halfway across the globe to be in Venice then hangs out in Harry's American Cocktail Bar?

EVIE

I do.

PAOLO

Yes, Evie. You do. Let me finish. I don't like Americans. Except maybe for one. The one who comes halfway around the globe and hangs out at an American Bar in Venice and plays violin in the Piazza in Florence at midnight. Yes, there was a spark that night, but I didn't want it, so I ignored you hoping it would go away. Anyway, I'm glad you brought it up. It was very American of you.

EVIE

Is that good or bad?

PAOLO

Mostly good.

EVIE
And the spark?

He pauses, looks her in the eyes.

PAOLO
What do you think?

Then he leans over and whispers in her ear.

EVIE
What does that mean?

PAOLO
Learn a little Italian and find
out.

Francesco approaches the table carrying his satchel.

FRANCESCO
Ready?

Evie and Paolo follow Francisco to Al Mangia's private dining room.

INT. AL MANGIA INDOOR BAR - CONTINUOUS

Francesco, Paolo, and Evie enter the room. Antonella, Bruno, Boian and others are already seated there.

FRANCESCO
How is the Vivaldi Festival
progressing?

ANTONELLA
Orchestra great, opera good going
to be great, the Gloria choral
piece? "Coming along" as they say.

EVIE
Which is to say it's not.

FRANCESCO
Hotel reservations?

ANTONELLA
Not a room left in town,
overflowing to Florence already.
London, Paris, Berlin are coming.

PAOLO
Canada, South America, New York--
Evie perhaps some people you know--

EVIE

Yeah sure, I know most of those New York people.

FRANCESCO

On a side note: Evie, I know you've become close with Maestro Alessandro, have you spoken about any of this with him--the refugees I mean?

EVIE

Not a word.

FRANCESCO

Knowing what I know about his past, I believe that Alessandro would join us. He is close to Casella and the Count and they have survived all these years because they know how to survive. Still, probably it's good you didn't mention it.

Francesco opens the case and pulls out some of the forgeries.

FRANCESCO (CONT'D)

A few examples of our forgers' practice work.

BRUNO

Incredible.

FRANCESCO

It is. Now, Bruno and Evie in a week you'll drive the Florence Conservatory buses for the pickup in Andermatt right?

(they nod yes)

You can drive can't you, Evie?

EVIE

Well, I have a week to learn. I mean, how hard can it be?

FRANCESCO

Evie!

EVIE

Boian's driving. Bruno and Boian are driving, Paolo and I are tagging along to make sure they don't mess up.

FRANCESCO

That's reassuring. Bruno, Umberto asked me about Kindertransports.

BRUNO

Yes?

FRANCESCO

They thought you said that Kindertransports won't be needed.

BRUNO

Correct.

FRANCESCO

They were surprised that there were 50 Jews coming and none of them with children.

BRUNO

Well, I suppose some of them are Jews.

FRANCESCO

What?

BRUNO

I would say no doubt probably many are...certainly could be...Jewish.

FRANCESCO

You said 50 Jewish refugees needed our help.

BRUNO

I never said "Jewish" refugees.

FRANCESCO

What other kind of German refugees are there?

BRUNO

Homosexual.

Everyone freezes.

BRUNO (CONT'D)

German homosexual refugees.

FRANCESCO

In six days, a busload of homosexuals--

Bruno holds up two fingers.

FRANCESCO (CONT'D)
--two homosexuals--

BRUNO
--two bus loads--

FRANCESCO
--all homosexuals--

BRUNO
--well, they think they are--

FRANCESCO
--in six days, two busloads of
homosexuals are arriving from
Germany--

BRUNO
--technically, from Switzerland--

FRANCESCO
Bruno, everyone, I'll have to let
Umberto and the others know.

BRUNO
Oh, I think they'll figure it out
once the busses arrive.

FRANCESCO
Is that supposed to be funny?

BRUNO
No. There is nothing funny about 50
queers leaving Nazi Germany to
escape being murdered.

FRANCESCO
I apologize. Bruno this unexpected
development--

BRUNO
--"unexpected development?"--

FRANCESCO
Bruno, I--

BRUNO
Hitler's government declared
homosexuality a mental illness So
to purify the race they will be
removed. Exterminated.

EVIE
Bruno, don't.

BRUNO

So now, gossip from an angry neighbor or a student who doesn't like a professor or a professor who doesn't like a student could mean a death sentence. To those who've already admitted their sexuality, it is a death sentence.

FRANCESCO

Why didn't you tell us?

BRUNO

Would it have mattered?

FRANCESCO

Fair question. I--

BRUNO

We set out on a mission to save human beings. We are going to do that. Nothing's changed.

FRANCESCO

I'll tell Nehemiah and the others. They're old-timers. Maybe they'll understand and maybe they won't.

BRUNO

Nothing about the mission has changed.

EXT. PIAZZA DEL DUOMO - DAY

Francesco walks out of the SMS Hospital door; Paolo sees him from across the Piazza del Duomo and runs over.

PAOLO

You told them.

FRANCESCO

I told them.

PAOLO

And?

FRANCESCO

The older guys left first.

PAOLO

They walked out.

FRANCESCO
Then they all walked out.

PAOLO
And now?

FRANCESCO
Now we tell Bruno we won't make it
to Andermatt.

PAOLO
Wait. Don't turn around.

The two stand motionless. Icilio, Umberto, Nehemiah and the old men walk across the piazza, they approach different hospital entrances. Nehemiah nears the main entrance, his face partially wrapped in a bandage so he is not recognized.

FRANCESCO
You're back.

NEHEMIAH
We are.

FRANCESCO
You left.

NEHEMIAH
We did.

FRANCESCO
After I told you about the
refugees, you left.

NEHEMIAH
We went to the bar. It was our
break.

FRANCESCO
Was that the only reason?

NEHEMIAH
No.

Nehemiah walks to the SMS entrance then returns.

NEHEMIAH (CONT'D)
No one mentioned the refugees when
we were at the bar. No one talked
at all and then I said: "you could
never imagine what it is like to be
hated by people around you because
of who you were born."
(MORE)

NEHEMIAH (CONT'D)

Or what it is like to be persecuted for the crime of being you." And then I said: "I'm going back to work." And here I am.

Nehemiah looks to the other forgers returning to the hospital.

FRANCESCO

And here they are.

Nehemiah adjust his face bandages then enters the hospital.

PAOLO

And here we are.

Francesco starts to walk across the piazza to the Duomo.

PAOLO (CONT'D)

Where are you going?

Francesco holds up a book of matches.

PAOLO (CONT'D)

Better save a candle for me.

Paolo catches up with Francesco, walks with him into Duomo.

EXT. SIENA STREET - CONTINUOUS

Evie and Bruno exit the conservatory walk down the pedestrian street toward the Palazzo Hotel.

EVIE

Why didn't you tell them earlier?

BRUNO

Tell them what? Oh, that.

EVIE

Yeah, that.

BRUNO

The night at the bar, if I'd lead with the group's sexuality, the conversation may have ended right there. Couldn't take that chance. I didn't hide information, I just issued it in order of importance.

EVIE

That does that mean?

BRUNO

First: "These people will be exterminated". Second: "They need help getting out of Europe". Third: "I believe we here in Siena can get them out". Then "They'll be in Siena next week" and finally "They're all queers".

EVIE

I hope all this it worth it for you. Financially, I mean.

BRUNO

Oh, it was. People had to get out and were leaving everything. They didn't care who got their left-behind treasures, might as well be the guy whose papers were getting them out. But that's changed.

EVIE

What changed?

BRUNO

Everything. The German started moving Jews and undesirables into ghettos. The Germans took it all: jewels, art, cash. Especially cash. Soon no one could pay.

EVIE

But you're still doing it.

BRUNO

Yes.

EVIE

And your fortune?

BRUNO

What do you think?

EVIE

You are paying for this escape using the money you made.

BRUNO

I knew all along it wasn't mine to keep. There was some weird destiny thing going on that I couldn't quite figure out until Siena. I had enough money for one more gigantic refugee escape and this is it.

(MORE)

BRUNO (CONT'D)

And, my brother Matthew will be coming with the group to Andermatt. He and his boyfriend, Rolf organized this group from Cologne.

EVIE

Why didn't you me your brother's in this refugee group?

BRUNO

I just did. Information in order of importance, you know.

EVIE

Your brother might disagree on the order. So, I'll meet, Matthew--

BRUNO

--Mattie, a freshman pianist at Cologne University of Music.

EVIE

Why didn't he study in Florence?

BRUNO

I thought having him in Florence might not be good for my career. He's very open about who he is.

EVIE

Oh.

BRUNO

The Conservatory is conservative, not very accepting of--

EVIE

--people like your brother.

BRUNO

I'll bring him to Siena, put him on a ship in Naples, then I can rest. And then I'll be broke. Again.

EVIE

Like God intended musicians to be.

BRUNO

The divine plan, of course. By the way Rolf, the boyfriend, is a vocalist. While he's in Siena he might help with the Vivaldi Chorus.

EVIE

Then that would be divine intervention. Casella has made an Gloria arrangement. Not as singable as Vivaldi's and Alessandro--

BRUNO

--so, you think Alessandro does not know about any of this?--

EVIE

I don't think he does. Anyway, Alessandro has all but abandoned the Gloria choir and he's put me in charge. Our singers are either 80-year-old Duomo choristers or opera divas from Chigiana. It's more terrible than you could imagine.

BRUNO

I'm a music teacher. I can imagine terrible.

EVIE

Double it.

EXT/INT COLOGNE GESTAPO HEADQUARTERS - NIGHT

Outside the Gestapo building, two Gestapo officers march a young man dressed in civilian clothes out of a dark street into the building. There are shouts from the officers and screams from the prisoner.

Through the Gestapo window, a man's hand is held on a tabletop. He repeatedly shouts "No, not my hand". A hammer is held in the air. Fade to black and over black: the hammer strikes, then a long pause then a scream.

EXT. GOTTHARD PASS (ITALY/SWITZERLAND) - DAY

Two small buses weave through Gotthard Pass. Bruno and Evie in the lead bus, Paolo and Boian in the other. Bruno shows down to a crawl at a homemade roadside shrine.

INT. BUS, GOTTHARD PASS - CONTINUOUS

Bruno crosses himself then he speeds up.

EVIE

A little "thanks" for having made it through the pass?

BRUNO

A little "have mercy" for the next stop. Just before we left I got a message that the Nazis have moved into our Andermatt hotel. Some of our refugees arrived in Andermatt several days ago so many of them have been sharing lodging with their would-be assassins.

EVIE

Sleeping with the enemy.

BRUNO

Probably some of that too. I think homosexual acts are only a sin for the homosexuals.

EVIE

We are going to walk into German headquarters and extracting a busload of escaping refugees?

Bruno holds up two fingers

EVIE (CONT'D)

...two busloads of refugees.

BRUNO

Si.

EVIE

Is there a plan "B" I mean other than the little roadside prayer back there?

BRUNO

Mostly the little prayer was it. And this:

Bruno reaches into his bag and hands Evie a pistol.

BRUNO (CONT'D)

It's a last resort. Do you know how to use it?

EVIE

I was raised in Hell's Kitchen. I could take this thing apart put it back together blindfolded.

BRUNO

You are full of surprises.

Evie examines the piece and puts it in her large purse.

EVIE

Part of my charm. Any idea what
we'll find when we get there?

The hotel is in the near distance, Bruno lowers a window,
they hear the faint sounds of singing.

BRUNO

Not sure what it'll look like, but
from here it sounds like Broadway.

EVIE

Cole Porter again. That can't be
bad. Right?

BRUNO

Mr. Porter would have to be the
judge of that.

They park the buses near the hotel entrance, Bruno, Evie,
Paolo, Boian enter the hotel.

INT. BELLEVUE PALACE HOTEL - CONTINUOUS

The large ballroom is filled with young men. German soldiers
and refugees make up the performers on the ballroom stage and
the pit band. They finish a rousing "Anything Goes" then the
piano intros "I Got Rhythm" and a drag Ethel Merman, played
by refugee TOBIAS KRUIAS, early 20s enter from the ballroom
staircase as everyone cheers.

Bruno sees a familiar face, makes his way to refugee ROLF
MÜLLER, early 20s. The music is loud; their conversation
can't be heard. Bruno buries his head in his hands. Evie
rushes over.

EVIE

I'm Evie Foster. You must be
Matthew...Mattie.

ROLF

I'm Rolf, Mattie's friend. Mattie
is not here.

EVIE

Where is he?

ROLF

I don't know. Two days ago he
didn't return from class. I didn't
know what to do so I came on here.

EVIE

You did the right thing.

Bruno puts his arms around Rolf and stays there a few minutes then walks to the reception desk and slides the hotel manager an envelope of money.

EXT ANDERMATT BELEVUE PALACE HOTEL - CONTINUOUS

After "I Got Rhythm" Bruno, Paolo, Boian, Evie help the refugees with suitcases and occasionally musical instruments move to the busses. Bruno and Evie stand at their bus.

EVIE

Bruno, Mattie's got two weeks to make it to Siena. He'll do it.

PAOLO

I could have brought him safely to Florence earlier and I didn't.

EVIE

Two weeks is a long time. He'll do it. What did you tell the Nazis?

BRUNO

Stuck to the story: these are German tourists coming to Siena to attend the Vivaldi festival.

EVIE

I didn't think it was going to be this easy.

BRUNO

We're one passenger short and not yet out of Switzerland.

EVIE

You want to stop at that roadside shrine on the way back to Italy?

BRUNO

Oh, hell yes.

The refugees board the bus. A half-dozen German soldiers stand outside the hotel toasting them. The refugees lower windows, sing "Auld lang syne" in German as they depart.

EXT. GOTTHARD PASS - NIGHT

On Evie's bus, refugees play instruments and casually sing along to Mozart's "Laudate Dominum", Rolf sings countertenor solo, as they meander through the Alps.

At Lake Como, Italian soldiers and police are waiting. They step in front of the buses, the busses stop, Bruno gets out.

BRUNO

Is there a problem?

ITALIAN POLICEMAN

Everyone off the bus.

BRUNO

But--

ITALIAN POLICEMAN

Off the bus!

The buses empty and form a tight group behind Bruno.

ITALIAN POLICEMAN (CONT'D)

You are crossing into Italy with these people. Why?

BRUNO

They are German tourists attending the Vivaldi Festival.

ITALIAN POLICEMAN

The what?

Bruno takes out his clippings, starts to show the officer. He pushes the clippings away.

ITALIAN POLICEMAN (CONT'D)

The Gestapo in Switzerland alerts us to be on the lookout for refugees leaving Germany.

BRUNO

These tourists coming to Siena after a holiday in Andermatt. It's not illegal for Germans to come from Switzerland to Italy.

ITALIAN POLICEMAN

Busloads of German are not allowed to cross into Italy any longer.

BRUNO

But--

EVIE
 But they aren't really "just"
 tourists. They are--

Bruno and Paolo are alarmed by Evie interruption.

ITALIAN POLICEMAN
 You are an American.

He turns to Bruno.

ITALIAN POLICEMAN (CONT'D)
 And you are a German? Are there
 any Italians in this group?

Paolo steps forward. The Italian Policeman addresses him.

ITALIAN POLICEMAN (CONT'D)
 Who are these people?

PAOLO
 What the American girl says.

EVIE
 They're the Vivaldi guest choir.
 I'm in charge. Here's my ID. See.
 It says so right here.

ITALIAN POLICEMAN
 A choir.

EVIE
 Yes.

ITALIAN POLICEMAN
 Then sing.

EVIE
 Me? Oh. Them.

One of the refugees hands a violin to Paolo. He takes it
 looks at the refugees.

PAOLO
 Ah..."Nabucco"? "Va pensiero"?
 Everyone? Anyone?

The refugees nod "yes". Paolo starts the intro, a guitar
 player joins. They start to sing "Va pensiero".

The other Italian soldiers/policemen start joining in. At
 the end of the singalong, they applaud each other. Evie is
 suddenly alarmed at what she sees in the distance.

EVIE

Wait a minute, Bruno.

Evie walks then runs to a group of soldiers in the distance. Then she stands still as a black Mercedes speed away with small swastika flags flowing. She returns to the bus.

BRUNO

What was that about?

EVIE

I thought I saw someone I know.

BRUNO

Who do you know in Lake Como?

EVIE

No one. I hope. The good news is
The Vivaldi Festival Choir just
arrived in Italy. Gloria, Gloria!

INT. CHIGIANA MUSIC CONSERVATORY CONCERT HALL - DAY

The "new improved" Vivaldi choir rehearses on stage, a mix of 20 or so Italians plus 20 or so refugee men. Evie conducts, Antonella at the organ. They finished the first movement and sound great. The choir stands and applauds each other. They turn and applaud Evie and Antonella. Evie covers her face in mock embarrassment, turns to face the concert hall dark lobby and sees Alessandro standing there.

FLASHBACK:

Sees the figure she saw at Como that looked like Alessandro.

END FLASHBACK:

EVIE

You are wonderful. A ten-minute
break. Bellissimo! Bellissimo!

Alessandro walks to the stage and hands them envelopes.

ALESSANDRO

Amazing. This will be a festival
favorite. And here's Festival pay
for you two plus something extra. I
see you've added a few new members.

EVIE

It was you.

ALESSANDRO

What? I said, there are some additional choir members.

EVIE

At Lake Como. It was you. With the Italian police.

ALESSANDRO

I--

EVIE

I saw you.

ALESSANDRO

I was there.

EVIE

Why?

ALESSANDRO

To make sure nothing happened to you.

EVIE

How could you have known? They stopped us and said the Swiss phoned them. No one knew I was there but the Gestapo and the Italian police. And you.

ALESSANDRO

I live and work around important political people. I don't usually agree with them but they are in charge so I deal with them. Sometimes I hear things by accident. I was at a party at the Lake, there was an alert about Andermatt buses headed for Siena and mention of an American girl. That worried me, I didn't want any harm to come to you. Look, I don't know what this Andermatt bus thing was about but--

EVIE

It was about me getting additional voices for the choir.

ALESSASNDRO

Good. And the new voices make the Gloria great. I'm proud of you. Your mother would be proud.

EVIE

Thank you.

ALESSANDRO

I was there to help you. I'll be there again if you need me. Be careful Evie.

He takes her hands, gives it a kiss and walks away. The choir is reassembling. Antonella walks to her side.

ANTONELLA

What was that about?

EVIE

I'm not sure.

ANTONELLA

Do you think he knows anything?

EVIE

He knows something. Anyway, he said he'd help me if I needed it.

Antonella opens the envelop with their pay.

ANTONELLA

Well, our check plus a personal bonus from Alessandro.

EVIE

I feel his help already.

EVIE (CONT'D)

(to the choir)

"Laudamus te". Rolf, Tobias, Ready?

Countertenors Rolf and TOBIAS KRAUS, early 20s, move to face the choir.

ROLF

Evie, are you sure this is a good idea?

TOBIAS

It's for 2 sopranos.

EVIE

I heard your Ethel Merman in Andermatt, Tobias. And Rolf, your Mozart on the bus was like an angle.

Antonella begins the intro, as the countertenors sing "Laudamus te" there is a hospital cave MONTAGE of the forgers at work fingerprinting, photographing, counseling refugees.

EXT. SIENA STREET - CONTINUOUS

After rehearsal Rolf and Tobias are met by Bruno and Paolo. They escort them in the direction of Piazza del Duomo.

ROLF
Can't you go in with us?

BRUNO
Too risky. Directions? Password?

ROLF
Directions: go to the end of the long hall, there's a hospital guard, Boian. Password: "can you help me I'm looking for the tuberculous ward?" He says--

CUT TO:

INT. SMS HOSPITAL - CONTINUOUS

BOIAN
"--there is no tuberculous word at this hospital."

ROLF
"But I was told there was such a ward."

BOIAN

Boian unlocks a storage room door, strikes the vent tube twice then speaks into its open end.

BOIAN (CONT'D)
Two guests.

There are two strikes on the metal tube. Boian opens the trap door, Rolf and Tobias descend the latter into the cave.

INT. SMS HOSPITAL CAVES - CONTINUOUS

Nehemiah waits for Rolf and Tobias.

NEHEMIAH
Welcome. We are here to help.

Tobias, breaks down and sobs.

ROLF

Hello, I'm Rolf Müller and my weepy friend is Tobias Kraus.

Icilio walks up with a clipboard full of papers.

ICILIO

Welcome. You are no longer Rolf. You are now Jim Smith.

Icilio points to Tobias but he still can't answer.

ROLF

He's Tobias Kraus.

ICILIO

--who is now Tom Blackstone.

TOBIAS

Tom? Not Tom. I once dated a Tom.
(Rolf gives Tobias a look)
OK. I'm Tom.

NEHEMIAH

Several stations are set up. Passports, photos, etc. When you leave here today you should have everything you need.

ROLF

On the day we sing the Vivaldi what happens to get us out of Siena and to the boat in Naples?

NEHEMIAH

One of the persons you meet today will identify themselves as your driver. After the concert you'll come to the Piazza. Cars will be parked there with your driver standing beside your car.

ROLF

How will we pay for passage when we get to Naples?

NEHEMIAH

It's paid for.

ROLF AND TOBIAS

How? Who?

Nehemiah slowly looks around.

ROLF

You? For us?

Tobias sobs again.

NEHEMIAH

Bruno sunk every cent he had into getting you all out of the country, but the cost of escaping Europe has skyrocketed. We pitched in to make up the difference.

The forgers give a little toasting gesture.

ROLF

But we can never repay you.

NEHEMIAH

When all this ends, Jim, Tom, visit us here in Siena as Rolf and Tobias. That's the payback plan.

Jim and Tom embrace Nehemiah.

INT. ROZZI CONCERT HALL - DAY

Rozzi Hall backstage Evie and Antonella stand with the choir. Paolo gives Evie a kiss as he and Bruno join the string section on stage. The chorus enters, Casella motions for Evie to step forward, he applauds her as choir mistress. Evie spots Alessandro at the back of the hall. He throws a kiss.

MATHEW "MATTIE" BAYER, 20s, Bruno's younger brother, appears at the back of the hall with a bandaged hand. Bruno, with tears in his eyes, stands then quickly sits, Ralf smiles stands on tip-toes to be seen on the risers and waves.

"Gloria" begins, Evie sees Alessandro being tapped on the shoulder by an Italian soldier. Alessandro turns, is met by several German soldiers, exits the concert hall.

INT. SMS HOSPITAL - CONTINUOUS

Alessandro and the GERMAN OFFICER, mid 50s, and two Italian soldiers walk down the hallway where Boian is standing guard.

GERMAN OFFICER

"Can you help me I'm looking for the tuberculous ward?"

Boian, visibly confused, does not answer.

GERMAN OFFICER (CONT'D)

"Can you help me I'm looking for the tuberculous ward?" I said:
"Can you help me I'm--

BOIAN

"There is no tuberculous ward at this hospital"

GERMAN OFFICER

"But I was told there was such a ward."

Boian nods, leads them to the storage room. He opens the trap door, Alessandro takes out a pistol, points it at Boian.

BOIAN

Maestro, I don't under--

Alessandro shoots Boian three times. He falls over the closed trap door. Alessandro moves over to the cave's vent tube.

ALESSASNDRO

General, this is the suspicious ventilation pipe the hospital worker discovered that lead to our investigation. And these just arrived from Berlin.

Alessandro hands him three metal tins about 3" across.

GERMAN OFFICER

Thank you Maestro. We will use these gas capsules soon in our Poland camps. This is an Italian test run. Would you do the honors?

ALESSASNDRO

Of course.

Alessandro opens the tins and drops them down the vent tube, quickly covers the tube with a bag. Soon muffled voices below turn to muffled screams. The trap door, blocked with Boian body, shutters up and down. Then there is silence as the officer stares at his watch.

An Italian soldier hands the officer a slender telescoping pole with a periscope eye glass attached. The General extends it down the vent tube. Through the periscope they view the bodies of Nehemiah and the others. The officer motions for the others to look.

GERMAN OFFICER

I can report that the tablets are a success. I have you all as witness.

ALESSASNDRO

Congratulations, General. This is a prestigious moment for all of us.

Alessandro motions for them to leave the area. The German officer hesitates and points to Boian's body.

ALESSASNDRO (CONT'D)

I'll contact the hospital and have the bodies removed. Now excuse me, I have a concert to attend.

INT. ROZZI CONCERT HALL - CONTINUOUS

Alessandro resumes his place at the back of the Concert Hall for the end the Gloria. Evie and Antonella notice his return and they exchange puzzled looks. The Gloria finished, the choir moves off stage and twenty or so refugee singers gather together, Evie and Antonella approach the group.

EVIE

You know what to do. May we meet again in better times. Somewhere Vivaldi is smiling.

Two or three at a time kiss Evie and Antonella and Tobias, as he's leaving, starts singing "Somewhere Over the Rainbow" and the others join in as they leave the hall into the streets. Antonella motions to Evie.

ANTONELLA

That's a cue if there ever was one. On with the show.

Antonella and Evie hurriedly move to exit the concert hall.

EXT. PIAZZA DEL DUOMO - CONTINUOUS

Refugees with suitcases move through the festival crowded streets. The line of cars, license plates covered, is parked in front of the Duomo steps. No drivers are visible.

As the refugees near the Piazza the drivers--Nehemiah, Rachael, Umberto, Icilio--each set up in the car, get out, open the back doors as the refugees arrive and jump in.

From each of the three streets that lead to Duomo Piazza, three Italian Army trucks speed into the piazza and stop near the line of get-away cars. Italian soldiers and the German Officer and two soldiers who accompanied Alessandro to the hospital, jump from the backs of the trucks. The soldiers pull their weapons, aim at the get-away drivers but the soldiers fall to the ground before firing, shots are heard in the distance. Tourists flee, the Italian refugee loaded escape cars speed away in different directions. Fifteen or so German/Italian soldiers/officers lay dead on the cobble stones.

Atop an ancient 50 feet wall overlooking the Duomo Piazza six persons, bandana covered faces, stand holding rifles. They descend the ancient stairs, handing their firearms to waiting helpers. They tear off their bandanas. It is Bruno, Paolo, Francesco, Antonella, Evie, then Alessandro. They escape down the exterior Baptistry stairs, run into the Baptistry where priest robes are waiting. They robe up and exit into the street. But Francesco rushes back into the Baptistry, lights a candle then rushes back out.

The Piazza is deserted except for the fifteen dead soldiers. The bells in the Duomo tower ring as SMS doctors/nurses exit the to assess the carnage.

EXT. AL MANGIA OUTSIDE BAR - NIGHT

Two weeks later, seated at joined tables are Bruno, Paolo, Francesco, Antonella, Evie, Boian, and Alessandro. Paolo and Evie hold hands.

PAOLO

Francesco, glad we can be seen together again?

FRANCESCO

Staying apart a while was just a precaution. Half of Siena knows about the Vivaldi escape. The right half. They'll never tell.

EVIE

What makes you so sure.

FRANCESCO

Those twenty years Siena was the forgery capital of the world no one in the world knew. We take care of our own, we keep secrets, make great art and music and great wine.

PAOLO

Alessandro, we were not sure you were with us, then suddenly you were everywhere.

ALESSASNDRO

My multi-affiliation status has been going on from back in my student days in France. It's confusing even for me to keep up with but it seems I'm trusted by those I hate most.

PAOLO

At the hospital. It was bedlam. I thought erything was lost.

ALESSASNDRO

It was an emergency-only plan. I knew that the Germans were on to something since Andermatt. Although they let the group go from Lake Como--Right Evie?

EVIE

I can vouch for that.

ALESSASNDRO

--they monitored their movements and soon focused on suspicious behavior at the hospital. A hospital workers casually mentioned Umberto's vent pipe and they used their periscope to confirm what they expected. I heard about it at the party in Como and I offered to help them - the Germans.

MONTAGE AS ALESSSANDRO SPEAKS

ALESSASNDRO

I took the officer to the cave entrance at the hospital, fired three blanks at Boian who "died" beautifully. I had three fake gas tablets that were in fact Umberto's used snuff tins. Nehemiah and the others were ready to play dead on cue. When we left the hospital, Boian came to life, opened the trap door and the getaway drivers rushed to their cars.

(MORE)

ALESSASNDRO (CONT'D)

Apparently, the German Officer returned to the scene of the crime to show off his work and discovered that they'd been "had". Luckily, all of you had planned to be snipers in case anything went wrong. And it did. A wild-West shootout ensued and the rest is history. So, a toast: A historic end of a little group, big mission, big heart.

EVIE

And to Italian history which we are now a part of. May it forever remain a secret.

FRANCESCO

Hear, hear.

ALL

Hear, hear.

They drink, enjoying the moment.

Umberto and Icilio walk by the group and they stop. Umberto tosses a newspaper onto their table: "Hitler invades Poland the WAR Begins".

ALL (CONT'D)

No, no, no.

Umberto and Icilio walk away then stop.

EVIE

We were pretty good at this sort of thing, you know.

FRANCESCO

I know we were pretty lucky at this sort of thing. We have no sort of plan to continue this small-town Italian resistance madness.

UMBERTO

You didn't have a plan the last time.

Umberto and Icilio stroll away. The group is motionless. Evie raises her glass, one by one the others raise their glasses.

EVIE

Pierluigi, Brunello.

Somewhere nearby a choir is rehearsing Vivaldi's "Cum Sancto Spiritu" from the Gloria

FADE OUT.