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# 1602™

PART THREE



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# 1602 Part Three

*In which further Assaults lead  
to new Revelations*

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I AM OBSERVING EVENTS.

THERE ARE LARGE EVENTS, AND  
THERE ARE SMALL EVENTS, AND  
I WATCH THEM ALL.

WIDESPREAD UNUSUAL WEATHER PHENOMENA CAUSE  
STRESS-FORMATIONS AND REACTIONS. TRANSIENT  
SINGULARITIES PRODUCE SHOWERS OF PARTICLES I  
HAD THOUGHT ONLY HYPOTHETICAL IN THIS SECTOR OF  
THE UNIVERSE; THEY EXIST FOR NANOSECONDS, BURDENING  
REALITY WITH THEIR BRIEF EXISTENCE, SENDING BILLOWS  
BACK AND FORTH THROUGH TIME IN THEIR WAKE.

SOON ENOUGH, IF THIS  
CONTINUES UNCHECKED,  
IT WILL RIP THIS WORLD  
INTO A CLOUD OF DUST  
AND ELECTRO-MAGNETIC  
PATTERNS.

BESIDE THESE EVENTS  
ALL OTHERS ARE SMALL.  
STILL, I WATCH THE SMALL  
AS I WATCH THE BIG...

I WATCH AS THE QUEEN'S  
ADVISER, SIR NICHOLAS  
FURY, SENDS A BLIND MAN  
TO BRING THE GREATEST  
TREASURE OF THE TEMPLARS  
BACK TO ENGLAND.

I WATCH AS THE GRAND  
INQUISITOR, IN SPAIN, LOSES  
ANOTHER OF THE WITCH-  
BREED TO HIS CRIPPLED  
OPPONENT IN ENGLAND,  
AND PLOTS HIS REVENGE.

I WATCH DOOM.

I WATCH DR. STEPHEN STRANGE, HER  
MAJESTY'S NEW COURT PHYSICIAN, AS  
HE TAKES A WATER-TAXI UP THE THAMES  
TO THE PALACE, PUZZLED AND TROUBLED.

I WATCH VIRGINIA DARE,  
THE FIRST-BORN OF THE  
ENGLISH COLONISTS IN  
THE NEW WORLD, AS SHE  
MEETS THE QUEEN. I  
WATCH AS SHE IS ATTACKED  
BY AN ASSASSIN. AS SHE  
IS SAVED BY HER INDIAN  
BODYGUARD. AS SHE IS  
TRANSFORMED INTO  
SOMETHING OTHER...

I WATCH THE  
PATTERNS.

I OBSERVE  
EVENTS. I  
MUST NOT  
INTERFERE...

...I MERELY  
WATCH.







Do you know what *this* is?

Net.

Yes. Can you use it?

Rojhaz... good hunter.

Excellent. Try not to *hurt* her.



Through fire and water, earth and air, Come to me, Virginia Dare.



KRRRAAAA--



So. We have much to do fast, before the *others* find their way to this place.



What in the name of a thousand blistering Hells has been happening here?



We have, as you see, recovered Mistress Dare, Sir Nicholas.

Might I advise you *not* to step into the circle? There are healing energies at work, and it would be a bad idea to disrupt them.



At the risk of repeating myself...

What.

Happened.

Here?



Miss Dare was snatched by some creature. We found her up here, injured and unconscious. I am attempting to heal her, a little, before we bring her down.



What did you do to your arm, Strange?

I was careless. It is easy to rip one's garments as one climbs a building. I do not often climb walls.



I'll have them carry up a rope and canvas. Let's bring her down.

**T**he Fortress of the Inquisition. Domdaniel, Spain.

Welcome, Brother Tomas. You honour us by your presence.

It is I who am honoured, Grand Inquisitor.

I was *wondering* if there was a place where we could be entirely *alone*, Grand Inquisitor. There are *sensitive* matters we need to discuss, where there can be no *possibility* of prying eyes and listening ears.

His Holiness's message is for *you and you alone*.

I know just the place, Brother Tomas...

Astonishing. I had not *imagined*...

These caverns were here before *we* were-- they were tunneled into the rock. Tread carefully once you have crossed the bridge-- there are deep pits, leading to what was the lower level, before it was flooded by the sea.


So...what word from his Holiness?

A rumour has reached his Holiness's ear that the Inquisition has... how do I say this... begun to talk with King *James* of *Scotland*.

There are *always* rumours.

Indeed.





Had such talks actually occurred, his Holiness would be deeply concerned.


I would have thought his Holiness would approve of *any* attempts to convert the unbelievers.

His Holiness is uncomfortable with any *part* of the *church* which has its own agenda.

I see.


This is one of those *pits*, of which I warned you. It leads down to the flooded caverns below. You can hear the sea.

They say that many of the Inquisition's mistakes have been lost forever down the pits.



The Holy Father worries that you have your *own* plans, Inquisitor.


And in these days of *unrest*, with the *weather* so strange and *dangerous*, and much loose talk about the end of the world, people with their *own plans* cause the Holy Father *distress*.



I see. So now what? Shall I accompany you to *Rome*?

There will be no need for *that*. This matter is to be kept quiet. There will have been an *accident*-- you will have tumbled into a pit. You are an *old* man.

I shall be *horrified*, and the *Pope*, when I tell him, shall also be *deeply distressed*.



Ah. That is unfortunate.





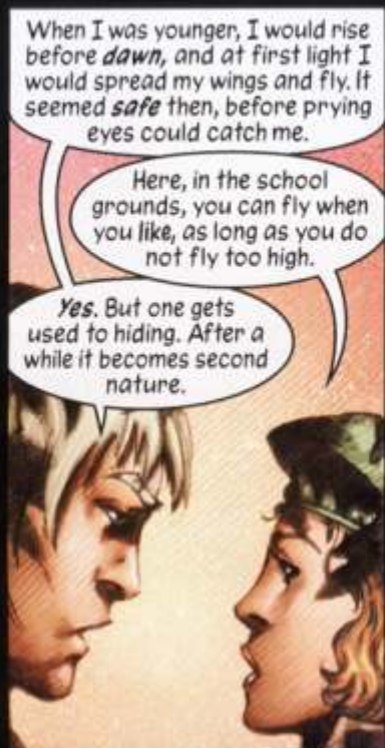


You can fly, without wings.

No. I can push myself off the ground, with my *mind*. I cannot do it for long.

You are like *me*! You are not bound to the Earth. This is *wonderful*!

You were up early. I saw you flying, from my window.



When I was younger, I would rise before *dawn*, and at first light I would spread my wings and fly. It seemed *safe* then, before prying eyes could catch me.

Here, in the school grounds, you can fly when you like, as long as you do not fly too high.

Yes. But one gets used to hiding. After a while it becomes second nature.



Master Javier says that *one day* the world will be ready for us, for what we are. On *that day*, we will live *side by side* with Humanity.

Aye. And on that day, the Last Trump will sound.



Imagine, John. All across the world-- in the jungles of Africa, in far China and the Indies, in Russia, in lands we have never heard of or dreamed, there are those like *us* being born.

My father raised me. We moved from place to place. Back when I... when I was a *boy*.

How many of us are killed as monsters by our *parents*? How many are raised in *secret*, hiding what we are?



I am grateful to Sir Javier for so *much*-- for my life, obviously, and all that he is teaching me. But most of all I am grateful that *here*, I can be *myself*.

At least here, among *ourselves*, friend John, there is no need, ever, to *hide*.



I wish to God...

Yes?



What are you two doing up there? Come down, this instant!



Forgive us, Scotius. We meant no harm.



The bell for morning prayers will ring shortly. You should both be properly dressed, and in the chapel.

Master Grey, I shall talk to you later.



Dear God, who made us what we are.

Who gave us our talents, making us each different, who gave us our gifts.

In your infinite mercy and wisdom, allow us to share our gifts with the world, and not to hide our talents beneath a bushel.

Grant us freedom from those who hate us, and would destroy us. And let us, while hated, not in turn give in to hate. Amen.

# The Tyrol.

There are *no* fresh horses waiting here Fraulein. No driver. *Nothing*. I told you.

But our horses are exhausted. They can't keep going...

I am *sorry*, Mein Herr. There have been such rains in the last few days, your horses are not here. The roads run like rivers.

But think, if the horses cannot get here, then your carriage *also* cannot get through. I am sure that as soon as the ways to the south are passable once more you will be on your way.

Meanwhile, you must *stay* here.

We have no rooms free-- there are soldiers here, waiting for the rains to stop. But you can sleep above the stables...

Well, you'll not be going anywhere until these storms are over.

No. We have no time.

Of course it's the wrath of God! *When* have we had such weather as this?

Aye-- they say there was a *firestorm* in Prague...

Matthew-- the soldiers he spoke of. They're over there.

I can *hear* them, Natasha. I am *blind*, not *deaf*.

Captain... a *business* proposition. I would very much like to *buy* your best horses.

She is *beautiful*. I'll say *that* for her.

I repeat. I will *pay* for the horses.



You. Blind man. What do you do?

Me? I sing for your lordship's pleasure, General.

Show us.



So they looks at themselves as they steps onto land, And they knew that their lives had been saved.

Then each of the four of them puts out a hand...



And they touched, and gave thanks, standing there on the sand, For the fortune that favours the brave, the brave--

For fortune still favours the--



Enough! And this madwoman. Is she your mistress? Or does she also sing?

Not at all. She can't sing a note.



She's the most dangerous woman in Europe.

Honestly, Colonel, you'd better sell her your horses.



Blind man! You are very funny...



I would have paid them. I was perfectly willing to pay.

I know. I heard you.



We'll take the forest paths heading south...we should be all right if we keep to the high ground.

Well, I've not met them *all*. But I can't imagine anyone more dangerous.

Do you *really* think I'm the most dangerous woman in Europe?

That's very *sweet* of you. Hold tight.





And how is the girl *now*, Sir Nicholas?

She has not woken.

I see. Have Strange attend her.

But, Majesty--

I do not care if you trust him or no, Sir Nicholas. I am your Queen, as I am his, and I say he shall stay with Mistress Dare until she is well.

=koff!:



Now. Have we learned anything further about these two assailants?

I have told you that Javier believes that there is a *third*, Majesty. The two men we have will not talk. Perhaps if we were to *torture* them--

We do *not* torture. We are not *barbarians*.



No, Majesty.

Yes, Majesty...

But find out what you need to. Do what you have to do.



If there *is* a third assassin, Javier believes that *you* are the target. My advice to you--

--will be very *sensible*, and will be *completely ignored*, Sir Nicholas. I shall do precisely as *I wish*.

There have been assassins *before*, you know. *Many* of them. There were assassins before you were *born*. And I am still here.

Yes, Your Majesty.



We live in a time of miracles and wonders, Sir Nicholas, and I cannot say that it *pleases* me. Any word from the man you sent to bring back this Templar weapon?

He, and another European agent will be in *Trieste* soon enough. They will make contact with the old man, and return with his weapon.

We must pray that they *succeed*, Sir Nicholas.



And now, Sir Nicholas, if you will excuse me. The Latverian envoy has requested an audience. He brings gifts from Count Otto von Doom.

And Count Otto's gifts are always extremely amusing.



Peter. You are to go immediately to Sfrange, and take him to Mistress Dare's rooms. He is to attend her. Queen's orders.

Good evening, Ambassador.

What's that?



A gift for Her Majesty. It plays sweet music, without human hand.

Remarkable. What will Count Otto come up with next? Eh, Peter?

I trust the Queen will enjoy it.



When you get to the girl's rooms, you are *not* to leave them alone together, do you understand me? Listen to *everything*. Tell me *everything*.

Of course, Sir Nicholas.

"If you need me tonight, I shall be in the Tower. I need answers."



My lady. Are you the Doctor's wife?

I have that honour, lad. And you are?

Peter. Peter Parquagh, mistress. I am here to fetch the Doctor. It's on the Queen's business.



He is in his study. Wait *here*, Peter.

A strange place, my lady...

These are creatures from all across the face of the world, brought here for the Doctor, for his potions and his love of knowledge.

Eye of newt and toe of bat, all that?



Not in the way you imagine it. That fish, for example, when dried and ground, causes a man to become insensible and to feel no pain.

A great boon to *any* physician.

Wait *here*. I shall get the Doctor.



Stephen?

*I am a long way away, my love.*



Where *are* you, Stephen?

*I am far away, my love. I am above the world, somewhere cold and distant. I see the world like a ball, far away, in the blackness of the skies.*



*It seems there is nothing here but cold and dust...*

Stephen, you must come back now. Return to the world.

*But there is an answer here, Clea... and I am so far, so far away...*



**Come back.** Come back to me. Come back from the stars and the moons and the darkness and the cold, Stephen. Come back from the dust and the world of mirrors and reflections. Come back to the warmth and the flesh...

Listen to my voice. Follow my voice...



I am here.





Do not move, Peter.



I-I'm not scared. He's very lovely.

I believe he's actually a *she*. And yes. *She is*.

She was a gift from poor Sir Reed, God rest his soul... he sent her back from his travels, what, five years ago now?

Before your time.



Sometimes, like him, she still goes exploring.

She's *venomous*. But in her venom there are many secrets. And she'll not bite *me*, would you, dear?



"So, Peter, I take it the Queen wishes me to attend Miss Dare?"

"How did you *know*? I said nothing about that."



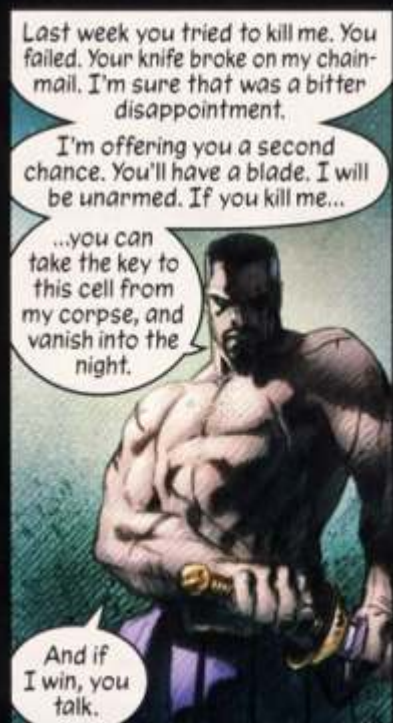
"I am a magician, boy, have you forgotten? And Sir Nicholas is quite predictable."



You will not talk. Your friend is in no state to talk. I want information.

So I'm not going to torture you.

I'm going to offer you a deal.



Last week you tried to kill me. You failed. Your knife broke on my chain-mail. I'm sure that was a bitter disappointment.

I'm offering you a second chance. You'll have a blade. I will be unarmed. If you kill me...

...you can take the key to this cell from my corpse, and vanish into the night.

And if I win, you talk.



Trick.

Ah, you *can* talk. No, no trick.

Do we have a deal?

...deal.





She is in a fever. Her skin is burning up.



Peter, I need to talk to Rohzaz alone, if you will excuse us.

But Sir Nicholas said--

I care *nothing* for what Sir Nicholas said. I am, among my other talents, a physician of no mean skill, and this young lady needs attention.

Now, if you please-- outside.



...I... think... yes.



Has this happened before? A yes or no answer will suffice.

...yes.



Does anyone know about this? Apart from you.

...no.



She changes when scared?

...I... think... yes.

When did this start?

Five year... or six...



Does she always become that... winged creature?

White deer... white horse, also.

White lion-cat.



And is she usually this ill, afterward?

No. Was ill... not... not this bad...





Doom.



And the word hangs dully in the air of the cell.



It is a moment before Fury realises that he is being told a name.

And even as he does...



...it is already too late.

To Be Continued...