

The Heresy of Galileo

Written by

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FADE IN:

EXT. ROME - VATICAN CITY - DAY - ESTABLISHING

Title: "The Vatican, Rome, Present Day"

Hustle and bustle of passing people, cars, buses and trucks around the solemnity of Vatican City.

INT. VATICAN CORRIDOR - DAY

Bathed in sunlight, hushed in opulence and priceless art.

Dressed like twins, SIMPLICIO and SAGREDO, both 30, in black robes and wide-brimmed hats. Simplicio, empty-handed, strides confidently. Sagredo takes shorter steps, adjusts his spectacles and shuffles papers in an antique folio.

INT. PAPAL RECEPTION CHAMBER - DAY

A soft KNOCK on the great doors before him prompts POPE JOHN PAUL to mark the Bible he reads. The Pope watches as Sagredo and Simplicio enter and pay their respects.

SAGREDO

We are summoned as advocates to present the case for...

SIMPLICIO

And against...

SIMPLICIO & SAGREDO

...Galileo Galilei.

Displeased, the Pope shakes his head and motions they should proceed.

SAGREDO

He was a devout Catholic, inquisitive, perhaps, but always devout.

SIMPLICIO

He disobeyed the laws of the Church and the Church's highest authority, the Holy See.

SAGREDO

He found the truth and has been proven to be correct.

(MORE)

SAGREDO(cont'd)

Your Holiness, his condemnation by the Church has been a horrible mistake. It has set us back... centuries!

SIMPLICIO

Sagredo's facts, they are disorganized and inaccurate. I have examined the evidence. Galileo was a subversive, a heretic!

SAGREDO

But, he was telling the truth!

SIMPLICIO

Another lie, Sagredo!

POPE JOHN PAUL

Simplicio, please. I'll hear you both.

The Pope motions for Sagredo to begin.

SAGREDO

If it pleases your Holiness, I will begin in the year fifteen seventy-four...

EXT. OUTSKIRTS FLORENCE - ARNO RIVER'S EDGE - DAY

Title: "Florence, 1574"

YOUNG GALILEO Galilei, 10, red-headed, tall and square, stands knee-deep in the clear water, a thick stick in one hand. He runs his other hand down the length, then plunges the stick into the water and sees:

A STICK IN WATER

Seemingly divided in two at the water's surface. He runs his hand down the length of the stick and into the water to check that it is still whole.

YOUNG PAULO (O.S.)

Galileo! Galileo! Quick! Quick!

Young Galileo turns to see: YOUNG PAULO Sarpi, 11, a darker boy, who has grown a cautious, sly demeanor, calling to him from the shore.

YOUNG GALILEO
Come here! You must see this!

YOUNG PAULO
Show me later. Come now!

Young Paulo runs off.

Galileo, torn between his discovery and his friend, takes the stick with him as he runs out of the water.

EXT. COUNTRY HOUSE - STONE FENCE - CONTINUOUS

Young Galileo and Young Paulo spy on the house.

YOUNG GALILEO'S POV - ROAD NEAR HOUSE

Father BELLARMINO, 25, thin-faced with the bowl-cut hair of a monk, wears a white-hooded robe and a bushy beard cleaved from the chin. He nods to Chief Constable SCAGLIA, 25, disfigured face, balding and mean.

Scaglia is flanked by TWO DEACONS in military attire that carry a ramrod.

BACK TO SCENE

Young Galileo and Paulo whisper.

YOUNG GALILEO
What are they doing?

PAULO
She's a witch.

GALILEO
A witch?

PAULO
They say she cures sick women with Satan's power.

GALILEO
How?

PAULO
I told you, black magic. The Church has come for her.

Excited, Young Galileo and Young Paulo sneak up to a window and peer in.

INT. COUNTRY HOUSE - LIVING CHAMBER - CONTINUOUS

The room shows 16th Century warmth and wealth: Shelves of books, comfortable furnishings, and a large fireplace with racks of drying herbs.

GIANA, 55, a kind-faced midwife, finishes preparing a tea according to a recipe book. Giana smiles as she turns and hands the brew to: FELICIA, 14, pregnant and smiling.

EXT. COUNTRY HOUSE - CONTINUOUS

The Deacons swing the ramrod and break down the door. The thrust carries them into the house. Scaglia quickly follows as Bellarmino waits outside.

INT. COUNTRY HOUSE - CONTINUOUS

Two DEACONS burst through the doorway. The cup of tea falls to the floor and SHATTERS. The Deacons drop the ramrod and apprehend Giana and Felicia roughly. One Deacon holds Felicia in front of him, twisting her arms behind her back.

Scaglia, demon-faced, enters wielding a wooden club. With all his might, he swings and strikes Felicia's pregnant belly.

One Deacon wrestles Giana, kicking and screaming, out of the house.

Scaglia, looking toward Giana, kicks Felicia again for spite. A Deacon drags Felicia away. Scaglia follows.

Bellarmino enters the house casually. He inspects the contents, first the teapot. Then, he gently plucks a handful of the drying herbs. Next, he selects three books from the shelves, smiles, and leaves.

EXT. COUNTRY HOUSE - CONTINUOUS

Young Galileo and Paulo running away from the house.

EXT. FLORENCE - ARNO RIVER BANKS - CONTINUOUS

Young Galileo and Paulo are both standing knee-deep in the river's shallows. Young Galileo lets Young Paulo examine the stick. Then, Young Galileo gently inserts it into the water.

A STICK IN WATER

Young Paulo runs his hand down the stick that appears broken at the water's surface.

BACK TO SCENE

Young Paulo takes the stick away and holds it before Young Galileo.

YOUNG PAULO
This is a devil's stick. That
witch must have cursed this stick,
Galileo.

Young Paulo throws the stick into the river's current.

YOUNG GALILEO
Why did you do that, Paulo? That
was my stick!

YOUNG PAULO
Galileo, tell no one, no one, that
you touched such a thing!

Young Paulo wades toward shore, leaving a confused Young Galileo.

EXT. FLORENCE - PLAZA - NIGHT

Giana, now a convicted "Witch," is being prepared for her burning at the stake. She is covered with bruises, her clothes in shreds.

Two Deacons tie her to a post surrounded by a mound of dead sticks and logs.

A NOISY CROWD OF TOWNSPEOPLE jostles for position to view the spectacle. Young Galileo and Young Paulo are drawn to the front, maneuvering their way through the Crowd.

Now tied, Giana is pelted with rotten fruit and vegetables, as the Deacons shovel the combustibles up and around her.

A hooded EXECUTIONER stands before Giana.

EXECUTIONER
Will you recant your witchery?

GIANA

Yes. Yes. Have mercy. Please
have mercy.

EXECUTIONER

Dear woman, you have saved your
soul.

The Executioner lights the fire from his torch.

GIANA

No! Please, have mercy! No!

To the delight and horror of the Crowd, the Deacons fan the flames. The Executioner adds Giana's BOOKS to the fire. Giana's head falls forward, blood running from her ears. Young Galileo is terrified and can't stand to look. Young Paulo stares, aghast.

People in the Crowd cover their faces with their clothing. Many Townspeople turn to leave.

The Executioner leaves and Young Galileo moves to follow him. Young Paulo realizes his friend has left and follows, as well.

EXT. FLORENCE - STREET - CONTINUOUS

The hooded Executioner briskly walks away from the plaza, past Townspeople who deliberately look away from him.

Young Galileo, running, enters the street and steals after the Executioner.

The Executioner turns a corner and, still walking, pulls off his hood.

Young Galileo turns the corner to see the Executioner unmasked is Father GRASSI, 18. Grassi's eyes are dark and penetrating; he wears a mustache and tightly-cropped beard.

Grassi holds Young Galileo in his sights for a long moment, then turns and walks away.

Young Paulo, breathless, finds Young Galileo and shakes him.

YOUNG PAULO

Vow! Vow with me!

Young Paulo shakes Young Galileo, who stares at him, dazed.

YOUNG PAULO (CONT'D)
 Vow to forever be a child of God
 and the Lord Christ Jesus. Vow to
 be forever God's soldier.

Paulo shakes Galileo.

YOUNG PAULO (CONT'D)
 I will always be a child of
 the Lord Christ Jesus. I
 will forever be God's
 soldier. Amen...

YOUNG GALILEO
 ...always be a child of the
 Lord Christ Jesus. I will
 forever be God's soldier.
 Amen.

EXT. CHURCH PLAZA - NIGHT

TITLE: "Saint Peter's Chapel, Pisa, 1579"

By torch light, FUNERAL PROCESSION marches toward the CHAPEL.

Eight MONKS, barefoot and dressed in plain brown robes, carry a wide casket in red-faced agony as they bear its tremendous weight. Their faces contort in anticipation of the chapel's steep steps. The CHANTS from their brethren barely mask the pallbearers' GRUNTS and GROANS.

At the rear of the procession are Young Galileo and Young Paulo, now dressed as novice monks. They struggle not to be heard, holding their hoods close toward each other.

YOUNG GALILEO
 Who was the fat man?

Young Paulo frowns and puts a finger to his lips. Young Galileo enjoys giving him a playful poke.

YOUNG PAULO
 Galileo!

YOUNG GALILEO
 Tell me.

YOUNG PAULO
 Now you've broken your vow of
 silence twice.

YOUNG GALILEO
 So have you.

YOUNG PAULO
 A benefactor.

INT. SAINT PETER'S CHAPEL - NIGHT

The COFFIN drops onto the marble altar with a THUD. The CHANTS, more resonant in the confines of the sanctuary, crescendo and softly end. The Monks kneel in prayer.

GALILEO

Lights a devotional candle, the first in a long series.

INT. SAINT PETER'S CHAPEL - DAY

Light streams in through stained glass windows.

CANDLES

Fourteen of the candles are burned to pools of wax.

EXT. PISA - STREET - DAY

Pageant flags fly in blue sky and bright sun. A boisterous crowd of VILLAGERS SINGS a hymn to the cadence of enthusiastic DRUMMERS.

CHILDREN play hide-and-seek among the adults.

Passed from MAN to MAN, a bottle of red wine is kept from an OLD PEASANT WOMAN. Snatching the drink, she swigs and smiles broadly. The MEN clap and cheer.

Cheerful Men carry a large...

STATUE OF SAINT PETER.

The procession is led by VATICAN CLERGY, dressed in finely tailored, richly-colored vestments, a contrast in appearance and philosophy to the Monks in the Chapel.

Bellarmino, now dressed as a bishop, is at the lead.

Prominent among the crowd are the PASTORS of the local parishes, including Father Grassi.

The priests embrace their Parishioners, play with the Children, bless all manner of ANIMALS and trinkets.

BELLARMINO
 Father Grassi, have your
 parishioners behaved better than
 last year?

GRASSI
 I am afraid they have all been
 wretched for months, Bishop
 Bellarmino.

Bellarmino shakes his head sadly, then cracks a smile.

BELLARMINO
 They shall be forgiven, Father
 Grassi.

INT. SAINT PETER'S CHAPEL - DAY

Brother MICHAEL, round-faced and lean, is aroused from his devotion by the DRUM BEATS from the arriving procession. He slowly rises and heads toward the chapel entrance.

He pulls open the door to find Bellarmino and the Crowd.

EXT. SAINT PETER'S CHAPEL - CONTINUOUS

MICHAEL
 Silence! Some respect for the
 dead.

Michael slams the door shut. Bellarmino knocks politely on the door. Michael opens the door a crack.

BELLARMINO
 Please, Brother Michael, open the
 door.

MICHAEL
 We are in mourning, Bishop
 Bellarmino.

BELLARMINO
 We wish to celebrate Saint Peter's
 Day mass.

MICHAEL
 Fine.

Michael closes the door, but Bellarmino holds it open.

BELLARMINO
In the church.

MICHAEL
Not today.

BELLARMINO
Brother, tell me, who has died?

MICHAEL
The soul of Signor Rossi is
departing.

BELLARMINO
I'd like to pay my respects.

INT. SAINT PETER'S CHAPEL - CONTINUOUS

Bellarmino and Michael approach the casket where SIGNOR ROSSI's body lies. Grassi and the other Clerics follow at a distance. Villagers gawk from the vestibule.

Bellarmino surveys the scene. He spots Young Galileo and Young Paulo, who are doubled over on the floor.

BELLARMINO
Please rise, my sons.

There is no response, then Young Galileo snores. Grassi wakes Young Galileo and Young Paulo with quick kicks.

PAULO
Is it over?

Young Galileo is startled at the sight of Grassi.

YOUNG GALILEO
Where am I?

Agitated, Bellarmino walks past Michael and directly to the casket. Bellarmino glances at the rotting CORPSE of Signor Rossi. His face turns sour at the odor.

BELLARMINO
How long have you been mourning?

MICHAEL
Today is our fourteenth day.

BELLARMINO
Two weeks!

He takes Michael aside.

BELLARMINO (CONT'D)
 Brother Michael, you have prayed
 enough for this soul. Let's
 consider the practical side of the
 matter.

Bellarmino turns to leave.

MICHAEL
 Now, I understand how you see it.
 One soul departed, the living are
 impatient.

Bellarmino stops short. Then returns to Michael.

BELLARMINO
 What are you saying?

MICHAEL
 Bishop Bellarmino, I wish to
 clarify my understanding. Temporal
 need is above... all, in your view.
 Yes?

BELLARMINO
 And, why would you take that to be
 my meaning, Brother?

MICHAEL
 Well, your Eminence, it is Saint
 Peter's Day and the crowd is eager
 to receive indulgences. Isn't that
 the tradition?

BELLARMINO
 Brother, let us at least agree in
 principle. We are both committed
 to saving souls, not damning them.

MICHAEL
 Yes, I can well agree, but I will
 not relinquish the chapel and the
 sanctity of the funeral rites to
 provide you with a place to
 facilitate your... your exchange of
 forgiveness for... remuneration.

BELLARMINO
 What?!

MICHAEL

Jesus cast the money-changers from
the temple! This is exactly why
the Lutherans are winning the souls
and hearts of the people.

Bellarmino issues a sharp slap across Michael's face.

BELLARMINO

You're impertinent.

Michael quickly strikes Bellarmino back. The Parish Clerics
come to the rescue of their Bishop.

VILLAGER

(To another Villager.)

We should not intervene...this is a
religious matter.

The Monks rush in to save Michael.

PAULO

(To Young Galileo.)

Come on.

Young Galileo hesitates, then slowly goes to join Young
Paulo. Jostles turn to shoves... Shoves to fisticuffs...

The Village Men hold themselves back no longer and rush in.
Young Paulo tries to punch a priest in the belly and takes a
fast swipe to his head that sends him reeling.

Young Galileo sees this and decides on another tactic, fast
shin kicks from behind, which Young Paulo quickly mimics.
Sticks intrude...

Then, anything in the chapel that is not nailed down,
including candlesticks and statuettes.

EXT. PISA - SAINT PETER'S PLAZA - CONTINUOUS

To the horror and amazement of the town's Women and Children,
the casket containing Signor Rossi is launched out of the
chapel and into the plaza.

Quickly followed by Young Galileo and Young Paulo.

The casket SPLINTERS to pieces as it HITS the pavement.

Young Galileo watches as Signor Rossi's limbs partially
detach. A HORDE OF FLIES rises and BUZZES above the body.

Young Galileo throws up.

The Monks, outnumbered, are beaten out of the chapel by the Priests and Villagers.

EXT. MONASTERY COMPOUND - NIGHT - ESTABLISHING

High and foreboding on a hilltop.

INT. MONASTERY LIBRARY - NIGHT

A well-scrubbed Young Galileo stands fascinated before a golden model of the Aristotelian universe. Michael, sporting a serious black eye, instructs.

MICHAEL

At the center is our Earth, in
chaos and disorder. Circling
around are the heavenly spheres,
perfect, unchanging and eternal...

EXT. HILLTOP - NIGHT

Young Galileo, stretched back, wide-eyed, looking up at the heavens. In his mind he imagines the flat, prosaic Aristotelian cosmos that Brother Michael has described...

STARRY SKY

The EARTH from beyond, not in black space, but large and brown, fixed in vaporous ether being circled by a...

THE MOON

Gray and smooth.

A GOLDEN STAR

YOUNG GALILEO (V.O.)

Saturn.

A BROWN STAR

YOUNG GALILEO (V.O.)

Jupiter.

THE SUN

Flat and yellow, propelled by ghost-like ANGELS.

A BRIGHT BLUE STAR

YOUNG GALILEO (V.O.)

Venus.

And, points of white light, STARS, fixed in connected clusters of constellations, on a transparent sphere.

YOUNG GALILEO (V.O.) (CONT'D)

The Heaven's firmament.

ALL CIRCLE THE EARTH

YOUNG GALILEO (V.O.)

The Lord God's heavens. You are
The Almighty.

Young Galileo lowers his head, deep in thought.

INT. MONASTERY LIBRARY - NIGHT

Young Galileo comes back from his celestial dream.

YOUNG GALILEO

How do we know all this, Brother
Michael?

MICHAEL

From the teachings of Aristotle.

YOUNG GALILEO

But Aristotle was not a Christian.

MICHAEL

No, Galileo, he lived before our
Lord Jesus. But, as Saint Thomas
has explained, his wisdom was
divinely inspired.

YOUNG GALILEO

But, Brother Michael, how can we be
certain?

MICHAEL

Well... I've just told you.

YOUNG GALILEO
You will teach me everything there
is to know? Everything?

MICHAEL
You will be one of us.

Young Galileo smiles. Michael smiles.

YOUNG GALILEO
But, Brother Michael, if the
heavens are perfect and never
changing, then what of comets?

Michael struggles to keep his positive view of Young Galileo.

MICHAEL
Comets?
(Pause.)
You know, Galileo, at some point,
we must all have faith.

Young Galileo is now examining the model from all sides,
moving its delicate parts, to the consternation of Michael.

YOUNG GALILEO
I think I understand, Brother
Michael.

Michael pulls Young Galileo away.

MICHAEL
Excellent.

YOUNG GALILEO
But, if the Earth is imperfect, why
are we at the center of God's
universe? And, why do all the
planets appear to do this?

Young Galileo describes a loop in the air with his finger.

YOUNG GALILEO (CONT'D)
And, how big is the Earth? What
forces do the angels use to move
the planets? And, how far away are
the stars? How many are there?
And...

MICHAEL
Another vow of silence may be in
order.

INT. MONASTERY CHAPEL - DAY

Michael prays over the NOVICE MONKS, Young Galileo and Young Paulo among them, who are to be ordained. The Monks fill the small stone chapel with their harmonic CHANTS.

One BROTHER swings a brass bowl of burning incense, blessing those to receive the sacrament.

Young Galileo sneezes.

VINCENZO Galilei, Young Galileo's father, 40, bearded and robust, whose dress confirms his artistic, free-thinking attitude, bursts into the chapel.

VINCENZO
Galileo, are you here?!

The ceremony comes to an abrupt halt. Young Galileo, kneeling at the altar, quickly turns toward his father.

YOUNG GALILEO
Yes, Papa.

Vincenzo, now frantic, runs to him. Young Galileo throws himself into his father's arms.

MICHAEL
You received my letter in time.
I'm so happy you came.

Vincenzo holds his son as if he has snatched him from certain death.

VINCENZO
(To Michael.)
Has it been done?

Michael gives a reassuring smile.

MICHAEL
No. You are just in time, Signor Galilei.

VINCENZO
(To Galileo.)
Oh, thank God! Let's go.

YOUNG GALILEO
Where?

VINCENZO
You came to be educated, not to
become one of them.

MICHAEL
What!?

VINCENZO
We'll leave now.

YOUNG GALILEO
Papa, I can't leave.

VINCENZO
Oh, yes, my son, you can.

Young Galileo throws a tantrum.

YOUNG GALILEO
No! No! I'm staying! They're
teaching me! Paulo, help me!
Paulo!

Young Paulo is frozen as he watches Vincenzo grab Young Galileo by the collar and drag him down the aisle.

EXT. MONASTERY CHAPEL - DAY

Angry Monks running out of the chapel screaming curses in both Italian and English:

MONKS
You'll be punished! Burn in hell!
Diavolo! Sfratto! Infidel!
Blasphemer! Defrocked! Defrocked!

DONKEY CART - YOUNG GALILEO

Young Galileo, crying, sits beside his father in the cart.

YOUNG GALILEO
Why? Tell me why.

VINCENZO
You're not to go back. They're
parasites, all of them. Do you
understand?

YOUNG GALILEO
(Nods.)
But... Papa, I want to learn.

VINCENZO

You will go to... the University,
yes.

YOUNG GALILEO

For mathematics?

VINCENZO

And become a slave to a patron,
like your father? No, you're
clever. You'll study medicine.
You'll be a physician. Better yet,
a surgeon.

Young Galileo's turning stomach shows on his face, he strains
not to throw up. Seeing this, Vincenzo sighs wearily.
Vincenzo stops the cart. He searches for words of comfort.

VINCENZO (CONT'D)

You'll help people, my son.

GALILEO

Yes, Papa.

EXT. PISA - TOWER OF PISA - DAY - ESTABLISHING

Title: "University of Pisa, 1583"

INT. HOSPITAL - WARD - DAY

Dimly-lit arched vaults and mosaic floors where NUNS in white
habits are assisted by NOVICE GIRLS no older than 10.

Wooden posts support ropes from which beds, holding two and
three PATIENTS each, are suspended.

The MOANS and anguish of the sick and dying echo softly.

Father CREMONINI, 40, plump and stern, with clerical collar
enters. He escorts several MEDICAL STUDENTS in secular
dress.

Among them is Galileo, now 19.

The teacher's pet, TOMMASO, 22, poised, dark, handsome and
refined, holds a lantern illuminating each of the many
patients for Cremonini.

A NUN draws back the covers on a FAT MAN whose legs are
swollen and black with gangrene.

CREMONINI

Urine.

A Nun hands Cremonini a bowl, he sniffs it, examines it under the light, swishes his finger in and looks intently at drops of it falling from his finger.

Then, passes the bowl to Tommaso, who begins the same meaningless ritual in earnest.

The Nun pulls back the covers on a woman. It is Felicia from the earlier scene, her emaciated body covered at various points with leeches. Galileo recognizes her.

GALILEO

How long has she been here, Father
Cremonini?

Cremonini pulls Galileo over and puts Felicia's wrist in Galileo's hand. Galileo doesn't understand what he's to do.

CREMONINI

Stop gawking and take her pulse.

(Pause)

Never mind. Tommaso, show him how
it's done.

Tommaso takes Felicia's other wrist.

CREMONINI

Galileo, tell me the seven
divisions and twenty conditions of
urine.

GALILEO

Her pulse is strong. Would the
number of beats matter?

The other Students smile and shake their heads.

CREMONINI

The number? It's strong or it's
weak. Besides, we can't time the
number accurately. Let us proceed.

(Turning to Galileo)

Galileo, you're always... arguing.
Just absorb what you're told.

INT. DE'MEDICI PALACE - LIVING CHAMBER - DAY

De'Medici NOBLES, both MEN and WOMEN, all in elegant dress,
socialize.

Vincenzo plays the lute (a Renaissance guitar), while a DIVA sings a somber but beautiful cantata.

GALILEO

Enters the palace. Looks to see his father, Vincenzo, engrossed in his music. Trying not to be seen, Galileo walks quickly past the gathering.

VINCENZO

Intuitively looks up to see his son, Galileo, sneak by.

EXT. DE'MEDICI PALACE - COURTYARD - DAY

OSTILIO, 60, silver hair with bright eyes, as comfortable in his loose clothes as his loose white skin. His stick draws basic geometric figures in the sand as he lectures a bored group of well-dressed COURT STUDENTS, all male, of teenage years.

The eldest student is GIOVANNI De'Medici, 17, with classic Roman looks and stunning dress that accentuates his fine figure.

A GREAT DANE puppy occupies his attention.

OSTILIO

So we can determine...

Ostilio looks up to notice Galileo listening from behind a pillar. Giovanni raises his hand nonchalantly...

OSTILIO (CONT'D)

...exactly how far from point A to point B. Giovanni De'Medici, you have a question?

GIOVANNI

Why must we learn this, Professor Ostilio? I heard the Grand Duchess say, mathematics is intellectual play.

OSTILIO

And what do you consider intellectual work, my young De'Medici.

GIOVANNI

Mechanics. Mechanics is bringing us military power and civil improvement of the highest order.

OSTILIO

And, Giovanni, you see no correlation between the design of these wonderful mechanical devices and mathematics?

GIOVANNI

It is genius like Da Vinci's that brings mechanics to life.

OSTILIO

Class is dismissed. You are a great dreamer, Giovanni.

Giovanni smiles at what he imagines is a compliment.

OSTILIO (CONT'D)

But, without mathematics, I wish you luck. You'll need it.

Giovanni frowns at the cut. The Court Students leave.

GALILEO

About to sneak off.

OSTILIO (O.S.) (CONT'D)

You, you there!

Galileo stops and turns to Ostilio.

OSTILIO (CONT'D)

You've been spying on my talks for days. Who are you? Come here.

GALILEO

I am Galileo.

OSTILIO

The son of Vincenzo, the Court Musician?

GALILEO

Yes, Professor Ostilio.

OSTILIO

Why do you spy on me?

GALILEO
I study medicine.

OSTILIO
I'm old, not ill.

GALILEO
My father says there's no living to
be made with mathematics.

OSTILIO
He might be right.
(Pause)
Do you have a mathematical hero?

GALILEO
Yes, Archimedes. But the Greeks
were not right about everything,
were they?

Ostilio's face delights.

OSTILIO
Come every day.

INT. HOSPITAL - SURGERY - NIGHT

The PATIENT, a robust man of 40, is nude, tied down on a
wooden table and gagged.

Cremonini and his Students, including Galileo and Tommaso,
gather around.

Two Students retract the Patient's legs at his knees.

CREMONINI
Begin your rosaries. You are about
to witness a most auspicious event.
Believe me when I tell you, you
will never forget your first
surgery. The patient has fasted
for two days.

TOMMASO
Father Cremonini, do you know what
sin has brought this man to us
today?

CREMONINI
I am not his confessor, Tommaso,
only his physician.
(MORE)

CREMONINI(cont'd)

But, this is the curse of his evil deeds, you can be sure. Have mercy. As we have studied, the planets are in the proper alignment for this procedure.

Cremonini makes the sign of the Cross, takes up his scalpel, brown and dirty, and touches the Patient deeply with one hand above and around his crotch.

CREMONINI (CONT'D)

We locate the stone and bring it to the neck of the bladder, there, at the entrance, and precisely two fingers above the anus.

Galileo compares his two slender fingers to the fat hand of Cremonini and the muscular hand of Tommaso.

CREMONINI (CONT'D)

I incise lengthwise...

The Patient reacts violently.

CREMONINI

...and extract the stone.

A rush of blood, and just as quickly, Cremonini holds something in his bloody, bare hand and smiles.

The students applaud.

TOMMASO

Incredible, Father Cremonini!

GALILEO

But, Father Cremonini, I've studied the records. There is a problem.

All eyes on Galileo.

GALILEO

No victim of this procedure lives beyond seven weeks.

The Patient's eyes go wide before he passes out.

Cremonini sticks the bladder stone into Galileo's hand and closes Galileo's fist around it.

CREMONINI

Galileo, my chambers, now!

INT. CATHEDRAL - PEWS - NIGHT

Galileo kneels, crying and praying. He looks at his blood-stained hands. Finally, he holds his wrist in his opposite hand and takes his own pulse. We hear Galileo's HEARTBEAT echo.

He begins to relax, meditate, still holding his wrist. He leans his head back, eyes open. His HEARTBEAT steadies.

Above him, a CHANDELIER begins to swing, pushed by a gust of WIND. The chandelier's arch is wide and fast. The swing of the chandelier and Galileo's heartbeat are synchronized, the effect hypnotic. Galileo shuts his eyes.

Galileo opens his eyes to find...

THE CHANDELIER

With little swing left. But, amazingly, his heartbeat and that of the pendulum are still synchronized.

INT. HOSPITAL - WARD - NIGHT

Galileo holds a string and bob in one hand, watching it intently. He holds the wrist of Felicia in his other hand.

Felicia opens her eyes slightly. Galileo's heart goes out to her. She closes her eyes, dying.

GALILEO

You're scaring me. Don't die.
Please, young lady, don't die.

Felicia slips into death.

INT. UNIVERSITY OF PISA - DEAN'S OFFICE - DAY

The hand of Dean GIROLAMO. Girolamo, 50, is dressed as the elder statesman of the university. He shows a deft touch with his fat fingers as he adjusts a string and pushes the bob on Galileo's first invention: A small pendulum on a stand.

GIROLAMO

It is, indeed, brilliant, Father
Cremonini, brilliant. A pulse
clock!

CREMONINI

Yes, but..

GIROLAMO

This little device will be every physician's necessity. You are to be commended, Father Cremonini.

CREMONINI

Dean Girolamo, you mean Galileo is to be commended?

GIROLAMO

Yes, but he was under your supervision, correct?

CREMONINI

Yes, but...

GIROLAMO

Therefore, the invention is ours. It will put the University's College of Medicine, your school of medicine, Dean Cremonini, in the ranks of Bologna. No, no, Salerno!

CREMONINI

Dean Girolamo, I am honored, but...

GIROLAMO

Doesn't it work, Dean Cremonini?

CREMONINI

It is brilliant, Dean Girolamo, and it does work. It's just that, in principle, according to Aristotle, it shouldn't work.

GIROLAMO

What are you saying?

CREMONINI

This student appears to have defied a vital law of motion. The length of the swing should determine the interval, not the length of the string. It's all wrong, all wrong!

Girolamo quiets Cremonini and takes a moment to reflect.

GIROLAMO

Tell me, how is Galileo's progress?

CREMONINI

He questions everything. He can't stand the sight of blood.

Girolamo takes Cremonini to the door, arm around his shoulder.

GIROLAMO

We should let this student down softly. And, let's not worry about the laws of motion. After all, have you ever known one doctor, never mind one student, to bring down the entire realm of established knowledge?

CREMONINI

Dean Girolamo, one monk named Martin Luther now claims half the world's Christian souls and has the Vatican contemplating holy war.

INT. CREMONINI'S OFFICE - DAY

Cremonini sits at his desk. Galileo stands before him.

GALILEO

Father, you sent for me. Congratulations on your elevation to Dean of Medicine.

CREMONINI

(Chokes.)

Yes, yes, well, thank you, Galileo. But, I'm afraid I have grave news for you. It's been decided you'll never be a doctor of the medical sciences. It's time you plan to leave the college, the university, in fact.

GALILEO

Honestly?

CREMONINI

Yes, I'm very sorry, but... Galileo, you argue very well, perhaps you would make a fine litigator, eh?

GALILEO
Perhaps. Thank you, Father
Cremonini.

Galileo quickly makes the sign of the Cross, gives a broad smile, and runs out the door. Shocked, Cremonini bolts from his desk and yells after him.

CREMONINI
No argument?

GALILEO
None. You're right... for once!

CREMONINI
Little bastard.

EXT. FLORENCE - PLAZA D'OUOMO - DAY - ESTABLISHING

Title: "Florence, 1585"

EXT. FLORENCE - PLAZA D'OUOMO - FOUNTAIN - DAY

The famous plaza is busy with MERCHANTS, TOWNSPEOPLE, SOLDIERS, HORSES, ARTISTS and CLERICS. Paulo, now 22 and a friar, greets Galileo. They embrace.

GALILEO
(Smiling.)
Paulo, I've been dismissed from
medical school.

PAULO
Thank God. You were never meant to
be a physician.

GALILEO
And, I guess I wasn't meant to be a
monk.

They laugh.

PAULO
Then why did you fight in the
church in Pisa?

GALILEO
Because you fought.

PAULO

Do you know what that fight was about?

GALILEO

Do you?

Paulo checks around, then takes a book out of his pouch and hands it casually to Galileo.

ON BOOK:

Galileo's POV "ON THE BABYLONIAN CAPTIVITY OF THE CHURCH" by FRIAR MARTIN LUTHER.

Galileo quickly hands the book back.

GALILEO (CONT'D)

Put this out of sight. You vowed, we vowed together, to always be children of Christ.

PAULO

We also vowed to be God's soldiers. God needs soldiers now, Galileo.

GALILEO

Paulo, the Church is reforming. The Church's Council of Trent seeks reconciliation as we speak. Are you looking for another fight?

PAULO

The fight I have already.

Paulo fixes his gaze on Galileo.

PAULO (CONT'D)

Galileo, the church will not change, the Lutherans will not return to the fold unless men of courage, God's soldiers, force them to change.

Paulo hands the book to him.

GALILEO

I will always be your friend, Paulo, but never another word of this. Never.

Galileo gives back the book.

INT. BISHOP BELLARMINO'S OFFICE - NIGHT

Bellarmino adjusts the length of the string and stares at Galileo's pulse clock.

BELLARMINO

Where did you get this, Tommaso?

TOMMASO

From Galileo, a medical student with me in Pisa. I knew, Bishop Bellarmino, that the Catholic Church would want to know about...

BELLARMINO

Yes, yes.

Bellarmino looks at the young man, sizing him up. You are a clever young fellow. Tommaso bows, trying to hide his delight at being recognized.

BELLARMINO (CONT'D)

Have you considered joining the Society of Jesus, the Jesuit order?

TOMMASO

Would that such a miracle were possible, Bishop Bellarmino.

BELLARMINO

Miracles are possible, my young friend -- when one understands how miracles work.

TOMMASO

I defer to your wisdom, Bishop.

Tommaso kneels to kiss Bellarmino's ring.

BELLARMINO

Excellent. And, Tommaso, more information on Galileo and other free thinkers might be great facilitators of... a miracle.

Tommaso rises, bows and takes his leave.

EXT. VINCENZO GALILEI'S HOME - COURTYARD - NIGHT

Vincenzo plays his lute quietly.

O.S. a BABY WAILS, CHILDREN are heard SCREAMING, PLAYING, then CRYING.

GIULIA, 45, Vincenzo's wife, storms into the courtyard. A beautiful woman, who is an apparent miss-match for the artistic Vincenzo, she has the dress and haute attitude of her upper-class breeding.

GIULIA
Vincenzo! Vincenzo! Please, some
help! Please!

He ignores her.

She storms back into the house.

Galileo quietly enters the courtyard. He breathes heavily and begins to speak, but nothing comes out.

Vincenzo looks up to see his son. Overwhelmed with anger, Vincenzo throws the lute against the house.

Galileo hesitates, then runs.

Vincenzo grabs Galileo in the doorway.

INT. VINCENZO GALILEI'S HOME - LIVING CHAMBER - CONTINUOUS

Giulia, holding an INFANT, screams as she snatches a TODDLER off the floor and away from the path of Vincenzo and Galileo as they TEAR through the house, upsetting the table and sending the other FOUR GALILEI CHILDREN crying and running.

EXT. VINCENZO GALILEI'S HOME - STREET - CONTINUOUS

The DOOR of the house slams open as Vincenzo bursts out into the street holding Galileo. Galileo can only stare at his father. Vincenzo raises his fist, but begins to cry.

VINCENZO
All you want to do is play! Play
with numbers! Then, go. Go and
play.

Vincenzo throws Galileo to the ground, returns to his home, slamming the door behind him. Galileo lies in the street, crying.

INT. VINCENZO GALILEI'S HOME - LIVING CHAMBER - CONTINUOUS

Giulia, silently calls her children to her with her arms, and tries to hold back her tears.

GIULIA

There was a time all you wanted to
do was play with numb...

Vincenzo slaps her.

Galileo bursts through the door, sending his mother, Giulia, back with a start.

The Children begin wailing again.

Vincenzo turns to see his son storming toward him. Vincenzo is stopped cold.

Galileo stands before his father, determined, and quickly wipes his battered face on his sleeve. Galileo waits, staring into his father's eyes for what seems an eternity.

Vincenzo's face turns weak and sad.

Giulia and the Children whimper, frozen in the b.g.

Galileo stares at Vincenzo, who finally looks away. Galileo looks around to see:

GIULIA & THE FIVE CHILDREN

In the meagerly-furnished room.

VINCENZO

A poor, old, broken man. He looks up at his son, but has nothing to say.

GALILEO

Overwhelmed, turns and leaves.

EXT. VATICAN - SAINT PETER'S SQUARE - DAY - ESTABLISHING

Title: "The Vatican, 1590"

SCORES OF WORKERS and CRAFTSMEN swarm the square like busy ants.

OBELISK SCAFFOLD

Where Workers are lowering a ninety-foot tall EGYPTIAN OBELISK into a SCAFFOLD FRAME. A web of intricate ropes is controlled by geared WOODEN WINCHES.

SUPERVISION PLATFORM - TABLE

CLAVIUS, 50, a warm and patient man, the Vatican's chief astronomer and mathematician, points out a detail of the project drawing to Galileo.

CLAVIUS

It's a complex problem.

Galileo has picked up a writing plume and is fast at work. Clavius watches, amazed.

GALILEO

Father Clavius, I believe you'll need more supporting lines to hold that much weight, but there might be a simpler approach...

(Drawing)

...like this.

CLAVIUS

Interesting. There are some others here at the Vatican I would like you to meet, Galileo.

GALILEO

I would be honored, Father Clavius.

INT. VATICAN - LIBRARY - DAY

Galileo sits waiting on a small stool before a long table. The Vatican Library in the b.g. row upon row of books, study carrels and painted columns covered with artwork.

Galileo stands as Clavius enters. He is followed by Bellarmino and Father General of the Jesuits, ACQUAVIVA, a very young 37. Acquaviva is completely military in appearance and demeanor, but he attempts to hide a visible tremble with unnecessary gestures and head movements.

Clavius, Bellarmino and Acquaviva take seats behind a table facing Galileo. Clavius signals Galileo that he may sit.

CLAVIUS

Galileo, let me present Father General of the Society of Jesus, Acquaviva. And, Jesuit Bishop Bellarmino.

ACQUAVIVA

Clavius tells us that your skills may be an asset to the Church.

GALILEO

It is my dream...

BELLARMINO

Galileo, your reputation precedes you.

GALILEO

Thank you, Bishop Bellarmino.

CLAVIUS

Galileo has recently invented this scale...

Clavius slides the device over to Acquaviva.

CLAVIUS (CONT'D)

...which can discern the percentage of base and precious metals...

BELLARMINO

I'm aware of Galileo's inventiveness, but Father General Acquaviva will be more interested in his devotion. Have you been ordained, Galileo?

GALILEO

Please let me explain, Bishop that I did not complete...

ACQUAVIVA

Galileo, are you aware that the Church is in a dire struggle against heresy and evil?

GALILEO

I have always been a devout...

ACQUAVIVA

Evil is everywhere. Do you agree?

GALILEO

Well... certainly, along with God's grace, is it not?

Acquaviva stands, the others follow his lead.

ACQUAVIVA

Bishop Bellarmino is my trusted advisor on all matters relating to the sciences. I trust his information regarding... allegiance and reliability. Perhaps, Galileo, you can prove yourself elsewhere.

Acquaviva leaves, followed by Bellarmino.

CLAVIUS

Before you go, Galileo, would you care to see the Vatican Observatory? The Tower of the Winds? It's where I calibrated the calendar.

GALILEO

Father Clavius, where else could I better prove my faith than within the Church?

INT. VATICAN - PAPAL CHAMBERS - DAY

POPE GREGORY, 80, his small, stern face, lined, pocked and chiseled, watches the square construction intently out his window.

Bellarmino enters followed by Acquaviva.

BELLARMINO

Your Holiness, the new Father General of the Society of Jesus, Acquaviva.

Pope Gregory turns and sizes up Acquaviva in an instant.

POPE GREGORY

When did you take your vows?

ACQUAVIVA

It's been fourteen years, Pope Gregory.

POPE GREGORY

You're not yet forty, are you?

ACQUAVIVA

I realize this is a serious flaw, I promise to remedy the situation. Even while I sleep.

POPE GREGORY

Yes. Well, Father General, there's nothing that can be done about it now, is there?

ACQUAVIVA

Your Holiness, I, as all in my order, are vowed to serve the Pope and the Papacy.

POPE GREGORY

Very well, then.

(Pointing.)

After decades of planning, the Obelisk will finally be moved to the center of Saint Peter's Square.

ACQUAVIVA

Symbolic of the Church and its influence moving back to the center of world affairs, I would hope, Your Holiness.

Several of the ropes on the Obelisk platform snap in quick succession, which sets off panic and chaos among the Workers. Pope Gregory is startled and holds his chest. Acquaviva doesn't flinch.

POPE GREGORY

We are making moves in the correct direction.

ACQUAVIVA

The Council of Trent has failed to bring the rebellious Lutherans back into the fold. The Lutherans will not reconcile without major concessions by the Church.

POPE GREGORY

The Lutherans will return as they see the Church is reforming itself.

ACQUAVIVA

Your Holiness, our reformation has not won us a single Lutheran principality.

Acquaviva holds a parchment out to Pope Gregory.

POPE GREGORY

What is this, Father General?

ACQUAVIVA

A new index of books and authors to be banned. We cannot be too careful. The Pope finds it distasteful.

Acquaviva presents another document.

ACQUAVIVA (CONT'D)

The Holy Office of the Inquisition must intensify its efforts under the leadership of Cardinal Bellarmino.

POPE GREGORY

Cardinal?

Bellarmino steps forward obsequiously.

BELLARMINO

I'm prepared to make a substantial tithe to the Vatican, immediately.

The Pope takes an envelope from Bellarmino.

Pope Gregory quickly opens the letter, locates the amount, moves to his desk, and signs the decree.

POPE GREGORY

Congratulations, Cardinal Bellarmino. Serve well in Christ's name.

EXT. FLORENCE - ARNO RIVER - DREDGING BOAT - DAY

Two WORKMEN lead mules on board the boat, a complicated design that includes TREADMILLS for mule power, large SCOOPS on WATER WHEELS and a towering CRANE that operates a CLAW SHOVEL.

Galileo and Ostilio are beside Giovanni, now 25, in stylish dress, his full-grown Great Dane at his side, admiring the ship.

GALILEO

Yes, this is quite interesting.

Giovanni's Great Dane growls at Galileo.

GIOVANNI

Well, Galileo, when the river tide is low, the boats cannot move our goods. I've designed and commissioned the building of this ship that will clear the river's bottom easily.

GALILEO

Amazing.

OSTILIO

I knew you two would work well together.

Giovanni gives Ostilio a suspicious glance.

Galileo is absorbed and concerned. He keeps checking between the plans and the boat in front of him.

GALILEO

You haven't launched her yet, correct?

GIOVANNI

Yes, that's right. Don't look so worried, every detail is magnificent.

GALILEO

What's that?

GIOVANNI

Well, Galileo, I've replaced human power with mules.

GALILEO

How much do they weigh?

GIOVANNI

The normal weight of a mule, I'm certain.

GALILEO

And that is?

GIOVANNI

An idea borrowed from the fabulous construction of the D'Uomo. That crane can lift three hundred pounds.

GALILEO

Oh, that's too bad.

OSTILIO

What Galileo means, I'm sure, is that it might need a slight adjustment.

GALILEO

No, that's not what I mean at all.

GIOVANNI

Well, what are you saying?

GALILEO

It's obvious. The whole stern is off balance. Just lower that shovel into the current and she's going down.

Ostilio sees his plan for Galileo's employment dashed. Giovanni considers, then looks slightly crazed and conflicted.

GIOVANNI

You're wrong. Remarkably wrong.

GALILEO

I wish I were.

GIOVANNI

(Calling to his men.)

Cast off, men!

OSTILIO

Please, Giovanni, hear Galileo out.

The boat moves into the current. The shovel is lowered and... The boat quickly SINKS to the bottom, the Men swimming for safety while the Mules, tied on the treadmills, go under.

OSTILIO (CONT'D)

Perhaps together, you could combine your talents more successfully!

GALILEO
Damn waste of mules.

Giovanni turns to Galileo, holding back the Great Dane that is eager to attack.

INT. CREMONINI'S OFFICE - DAY

Cremonini enters his office holding a candle to light his way. He is startled to find a thin, pale Galileo.

CREMONINI
What's happened to you?

GALILEO
I've been everywhere, Doctor.
Padua, Florence, Rome and Bologna.
I'm not... accepted.

CREMONINI
Galileo, I can only help you if you
will put aside your damn pride.

Galileo nods, biting his lip hard.

CREMONINI (CONT'D)
There is a question, a literary
question, many are now willing to
have answered by mathematics.

GALILEO
What are you talking about?

CREMONINI
How tall is Lucifer?

GALILEO
(Belligerently.)
That's not a mathematical question,
and even if it were...

CREMONINI
You may take your leave.

GALILEO
I'm sorry, but, Father, what good
would it do?

CREMONINI
Damn it! Listen, you little fool,
listen!

Cremonini goes to a bookshelf and snatches down a copy of Dante's "INFERNO."

CREMONINI (CONT'D)

It's Dante, and in Tuscany, Dante is important. It's the Devil, and to the Church, the devil's important.

Cremonini throws the book at Galileo.

CREMONINI (CONT'D)

It's our faith, and in this world, our faith is everything, everything!

INT. UNIVERSITY AUDITORIUM - NIGHT

The room is crowded with the finest NOBILITY, CLERGY and LEADERS of Tuscan society. Among them are Cremonini, Paulo and Ostilio. Giovanni works to control his menacing Great Dane.

On stage, Father Tommaso, now a priest in black vestments and a collar, completes his discourse.

TOMMASO

After reviewing my methodology, I'm sure you will conclude, with me, that Lucifer is approximately seven hundred cubits tall, as derived from the best information Dante gives us as scientists.

The Audience responds with reserved APPLAUSE. GIROLAMO, an academic, takes the floor.

GIROLAMO

Thank you, Father Tommaso. And now, a man known well at our university for his... rhetorical skills. Former student, Galileo Galilei, will offer his attempt at this vexing enigma.

Galileo receives reserved APPLAUSE as he mounts the podium.

GALILEO

Thank you, Dean Girolamo. The other speakers have shed much light on this question.

(MORE)

GALILEO(cont'd)

I hope I can make a similar
contribution to the discussion.

Galileo looks directly at Paulo.

GALILEO (CONT'D)

(Pause.)

Somewhere beneath this Earth is
Hell.

INT. UNDERGROUND - DANTE'S HELL - NIGHT

The underworld kingdom of evil and torture. This awful pit,
miles deep, writhes with the agony of damned human souls.

GALILEO (V.O.)

A hideous realm of circular torture
that Dante tells us begins at
Jerusalem and spirals down to the
Devil himself. Caught chest-deep
in ice, Lucifer delights in the ill
treatment of his captives, thrown
down to him from the tiers above.

A gruesome, winged LUCIFER, breathing fire through many
mouths, takes one, then another of the sinners in turn.

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

Pagans.

Lucifer squeezes an ASIAN SOUL between his fingernails.

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

Adulterers...

Lucifer skewers two FORNICATING SOULS and toasts them in his
fiery breath.

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

...gluttons, hoarders, wasters, the
wrathful and the sullen.

Lucifer devours an OBESE SOUL mystically plucked from the
air.

GALILEO (V.O.)

But the Devil presides personally
over the misery delivered to
Heretics in the circle called the
City of Dis.

Paulo and Galileo exchange glances. Bishop MAFFEO, 26, oval-faced with impeccable hair, is so captivated by Galileo's presentation that he GASPS, hand to mouth, then THROWS his hand back, accidentally hitting Paulo, who is seated beside him.

MAFFEO
(To Paulo.)
I'm so sorry.

INT. DANTE'S HELL - THE CITY OF DIS - NIGHT

A swarm of huge RED MOSQUITOES chases and sucks the blood of running HERETICS who, to escape, plunge into a lake of vile, bubbling feces.

FROGS on the shore of the lake transform into SNAKES, which slither into the water to feast on the Heretics who struggle to stay afloat. The tide rises and a huge wave smashes the half-eaten Heretics into an embankment of sharp rocks where, again, they are attacked by the giant Red Mosquitoes.

GALILEO (V.O.)
Though I may appear to digress,
central to our question is the
Giant of the City of Dis, Dante
names Nimrod. His face is as high
and wide as the cone of Saint
Peter, which measures five and a
half cubits.

From his navel up, NIMROD, the beastly giant, towers as he marches along the bottom of Hell as seen from the rim above.

GALILEO (V.O.) (CONT'D)
The link is here, where Dante
compares man to the Giant and the
Giant is compared to the size of
Lucifer's arm. Therefore, if we
know Dante's size and Nimrod's
size, we can deduce the size of
Lucifer.

Nimrod, cloaked in massive chains, spots something interesting on one of Hell's upper tiers. Nimrod smiles, and with both hands grabs Galileo and Paulo, then throws them both down into the City of Dis with the other Heretics.

INT. UNIVERSITY AUDITORIUM - STAGE - NIGHT

Galileo sweating profusely.

GALILEO

Since it is well accepted that the length of an arm is generally one-third of the entire height...

MAFFEO

Spellbound, watches SCHOLARS in the audience write notes, do the calculations, and confer with those seated nearby.

GALILEO

Looks up, distracted by the excited conversation in the audience.

GALILEO (CONT'D)

...we, we can calculate, according to these ratios, that Lucifer's height will be...

The audience hangs on his every word now. Slowly, Galileo gives the answer the Scholars are already in agreement with.

GALILEO (CONT'D)

...one-thousand nine-hundred and thirty-five cubits.

Galileo ends and looks up.

To his surprise, the audience erupts in wild applause, shouts of "BRAVO" and red roses rain on him. Among those in standing ovation are: Ostilio, Cremonini, a less enthusiastic Tommaso, and a disgusted Giovanni.

Galileo, in a daze, steps off the stage and moves toward Paulo.

Maffeo moves to intercept Galileo.

Paulo nods to Galileo, but then turns to leave.

MAFFEO

I was most impressed. Allow me, humbly, to introduce myself, Maffeo Barberini.

GALILEO

Bishop Barberini?

(Maffeo nods.)

Of the House of Barberini?

(Maffeo nods again.)

(MORE)

GALILEO(cont'd)

I am humbled. Thank you for your kind words.

MAFFEO

I would like to suggest that you come to Pisa. I believe our University needs you.

GALILEO

Bishop Barberini, thank you, but...

MAFFEO

I know. I'll speak with Dean Girolamo. Please, in the future address me as a friend, just Maffeo, please. I'll expect you soon.

Maffeo makes his exit as others congratulate Galileo.

EXT. UNIVERSITY OF PISA - ACADEMIC HALL - DAY

Title: "University of Pisa, 1590"

Galileo, a rebel in commoner's clothes, arrives and mounts the steps. He approaches Tommaso and four other PRIESTS who wear academic garb.

GALILEO

Good morning, Professors.

PROFESSORS

(Grudgingly.)

Good morning.

The Professors turn and walk away.

TOMMASO

No discussions today, Galileo. They're all sick of arguing with you. So am I.

(Pause.)

We get nowhere questioning what we already know.

GALILEO

This assumes what you know has some value to begin with, Father Tommaso.

TOMMASO

Why did you have to come back?

GALILEO

Father Tommaso, do you think I
would stay here with the lot of
you, if I did not need the money?

INT. CLASSROOM AUDITORIUM - DAY

The class of all male STUDENTS becomes quiet as Galileo takes the podium. Galileo looks out at his students as if they are his beloved. This contrasts with the pain on his face as he looks down at the lesson book.

GALILEO

Stevinus, remind me, today's
lesson?

STEVINUS

Aristotle's laws regarding falling
bodies. How heavier objects fall
faster than lighter objects.

GALILEO

If we must. Let's begin where...

The Students come to full attention and prepare to take notes.

GALILEO (CONT'D)

...Aristotle tells us...

Galileo looks up to see his students, hungry for knowledge, hanging on his every word. He's stopped cold. He looks at each and becomes more concerned and vulnerable as the ramifications of his teachings hit home.

GALILEO (CONT'D)

Aristotle... Aristotle...

He considers what to say.

GALILEO (CONT'D)

Class is canceled for today.

The Students look at each other, puzzled.

GALILEO (CONT'D)

We will convene this class with a
practical demonstration of the
principle of falling bodies at the
tower, tomorrow's class time.
Class dismissed! Go do something
useful.

(MORE)

GALILEO(cont'd)

Contemplate bumble bees or write poetry that doesn't rhyme, anything. Best yet, practice the lute. I find it most stimulating.

INT. CREMONINI'S OFFICE - DAY

Dean Girolamo enters.

GIROLAMO

Father Cremonini, have you seen this?

Cremonini, looks up from his work and takes the letter that Girolamo offers.

GIROLAMO (CONT'D)

It seems you may have been right. Your former student, Galileo, is attempting to topple the pillars of knowledge. From a tower that leans!

Cremonini reads with concern.

GIROLAMO (CONT'D)

It promises to be a fiasco of the highest order. I wouldn't miss it!

EXT. STREET - PISA - DAY

Quiet morning. Cremonini taps his foot, impatiently waiting, then sees Galileo turning the corner toward him. Cremonini intercepts Galileo; waving his former student's letter, he walks by Galileo's side.

CREMONINI

You can be so infuriating, Galileo. Let this rest. You can still have a future. I fought to get you your position. Don't risk losing it! Don't you see where this is leading?

Galileo is matter-of-fact, but it comes across as smug.

GALILEO

To the truth.

CREMONINI

I'd like to think you're naive, but I know you're not.

(MORE)

CREMONINI(cont'd)

This does the Church no good, and
it will do you no good.

GALILEO

Father Cremonini, these are the
Jesuits, the best-educated thinkers
of the Catholic Church. Don't you
think they want to know the truth?

CREMONINI

As the lawyers always say: That
depends!

GALILEO

Father, thank you for your help.
But, this is about knowledge, not
politics.

They turn the corner toward Pisa's LEANING TOWER. The square
is filled with TOWNSPEOPLE, PRIESTS, PROFESSORS, OFFICIALS,
CHILDREN, MINSTREL SHOWS and even NOBLES who have come to
witness Galileo's challenge. The sight stops Galileo cold.

CREMONINI

Damn it, Galileo. Everything is
about politics!

Galileo walks into the arena, the noise of the crowd
subsides.

EXT. PLAZA - TOWER OF PISA - DAY

Galileo approaches. On one side is the establishment:
Girolamo, Tommaso, and the other Priests. On the other side:
Galileo's Students and Ostilio. Cremonini hesitates, then
joins Girolamo and the Professors.

GALILEO

(To Tommaso.)

Have you brought objects to your
liking?

Tommaso drops a heavy lead ball the size of a melon at
Galileo's feet. Then, Tommaso tosses Galileo a lead shot the
size of a grape.

GALILEO (CONT'D)

Very good. Stevinus, take these
up. Hold them evenly, and release
them at the same time.

Galileo demonstrates the motion he wants. Stevinus goes to pick up the lead ball and finds it impossible to lift with one hand. Stevinus pockets the lead shot, then bends down to muscle the lead ball to his stomach.

GALILEO (CONT'D)

Father Tommaso, were my instructions to your liking?

TOMMASO

Oh, yes. They should be fine.

INT. TOWER OF PISA - STAIRS - DAY

Stevinus calls from the tower's highest tier, breaking the tense moment:

STEVINUS

Here they come!

The spheres drop in front of Tommaso and Galileo. They hit the ground at exactly the same time. Tommaso is puzzled, then looks up.

TOMMASO

Stevinus, you must let go of the balls at the same time.

STEVINUS

I did let go of the balls at the same time!

TOMMASO

Squats on the ground to get a better vantage point. Again, the balls fall before him, striking at the same time. He looks up at Galileo.

TOMMASO

What have you done to the balls?

Galileo bends down.

GALILEO

(Pointedly.)

Signor, they're your balls.

TOMMASO AND PRIESTS

Prone on the ground, their chins in the pavement, eyes as low as they can get them. Galileo squats down beside Tommaso.

GALILEO
 (Calling up to Stevinus.)
 Stevinus, do it correctly this
 time!

Stevinus throws up his hands and rolls his eyes.

TOMMASO AND GALILEO'S POV - PAVEMENT

Again, the balls fall, this time right before Tommaso's eyes, hitting... at exactly the same time.

TOMMASO AND GALILEO

Stand face to face, nearly chin to chin.

TOMMASO
 We should use a feather.

GALILEO
 A feather rests against the air.

TOMMASO
 So you concede?

GALILEO
 No, I don't concede. Father
 Tommaso, if there were no air they
 would fall at the same rate.

TOMMASO
 There is no such thing as no air.
 That's pure theory.

Galileo smiles and waits.

TOMMASO (CONT'D)
 It's a trick. What you've done
 here today is a hoax.

Tommaso goes after Galileo. The other Professors hold him back. He tears himself away, calmer, but still angry.

TOMMASO (CONT'D)

I don't know how you did it, but I will prove it. I maintain this experiment was totally inconclusive.

Tommaso walks off, the other Priests follow. Ostilio emerges from the crowd and begins slow applause. Some of the Townspeople turn and leave, but many new SUPPORTERS of Galileo join in Ostilio's APPLAUSE, including Cremonini.

SUPPORTERS

Bravo! Bravo! Bravo!

Galileo is carried off on the shoulders of his Students. Ostilio, overcome with joy, turns red-faced and clinches his chest in pain.

INT. BISHOP BELLARMINO'S OFFICE - DAY

Cremonini enters and Bellarmino signals him to sit.

BELLARMINO

It's a pleasure to meet such a distinguished man of science. Your former student, Bishop Tommaso, speaks highly of you.

CREMONINI

Bishop Tommaso?

INT. CORRIDOR - DOORWAY - BELLARMINO'S OFFICE - DAY

Cremonini is pale as Bellarmino watches him exit from inside the office.

Cremonini takes a quick glance back at Bellarmino before gently closing the office door.

INT. GALILEO'S GARRET - NIGHT

By lantern light, Galileo rolls balls down an incline ramp. He times the events with a pendulum.

There's a soft KNOCK at his door.

Cremonini enters, he holds some papers out to Galileo, who stops his work to read them, quickly paging to the end.

GALILEO
They're not signed.

CREMONINI
Your contract has not been renewed.
I'm sorry. I can't help you ever
again, Galileo.
(Pause.)
No argument?

GALILEO
No, Father, you were right...
again.

Cremonini leaves.

INT. DE'MEDICI PALACE - OSTILIO'S BED CHAMBERS - NIGHT

Galileo sits beside Ostilio's bed and holds the sick old
man's hand.

GALILEO
I've been dismissed, again,
Professor.

OSTILIO
Go to your father.

GALILEO
Not as a failure. No.

Ostilio nods.

OSTILIO
I have a friend in Venice, the
Doge. I designed a fine fort for
him. He will find you a place
there. They are business people,
practical people. You will be
appreciated.

GALILEO
Thank you, Ostilio.

OSTILIO
I won't be here to care for my best
pupil anymore, Galileo.

Galileo cries and kisses Ostilio.

OSTILIO (CONT'D)

You're going to have to learn to be
a good boy.

GALILEO

I promise.

INT. VENICE - DUCAL PALACE - HALL OF THE COLLEGE - DAY

Title: "Venice, Ducal Palace, 1597"

The DOGE of Venice, 35, long brown hair covered in a fashionable hat, his cloak adorned with leopard fur, sits across from two clerics...

Father DE DOMINIS, a short man, he makes up for size with energy and passion, and...

PAULO Scarpi, now 32, thinning hair, with a wider face softened by age and changed disposition. The two CHAT in hushed tones.

PAULO

What effect have you seen,
Excellency, from the strife between
the Lutherans and Catholic Church?

DOGE

Friar Paulo, we waste more effort
smoothing relations with the
warring factions, both religious
and secular. It could all be put
to better use making profitable
trades. The Council of Trent
promised reconciliation.

PAULO

It's been how many years now since
the Council of Trent last met?

DOGE

Where are you leading me, Friar
Paulo?

PAULO

You may have the key to unlocking
this impasse.

The Doge is amused.

DOGE

What do you mean?

PAULO

The key to your archive. It will unlock all the documentation of the Council of Trent from your diplomat.

The Doge begins to see the light.

PAULO (CONT'D)

If the truth about the Council of Trent were public and not Rome's dirty little secret, the embarrassment would demand reconciliation. No secret; no choice.

The Doge takes a key off his chain and presses it into Paulo's hand.

DOGE

If my papers on the Council of Trent can end the Vatican's holy war, damn the Pope for the world's good.

INT. ACQUAVIVA'S CHAMBER - INTERIOR DOOR - DAY

Title: "College de Romano, Jesuit Headquarters, Rome"

Scaglia opens the door a crack and peers in. Then, opens the door wider and gives Bellarmino, O.S., a shake of his head to signal he may enter.

INSIDE

Acquaviva's chamber is little more than a cell. A single small window illuminates walls covered with maps and diagrams. Acquaviva sits with his chair snugly situated in the corner. He strains to arrest his uncontrollable head twitches as he stares out from behind his table, a tray of food sits untouched on one side.

BELLARMINO

Enters hesitantly, trying to make sense of the surroundings, which allows Acquaviva a moment to uncoil.

BELLARMINO

At your request, Father General Acquaviva.

Acquaviva speaks in hushed tones and constantly looks around as if he is being watched.

ACQUAVIVA
Cardinal Bellarmino, thank you for
coming. Were you followed?

Acquaviva signals Scaglia to come forward.

BELLARMINO
(Confused.)
Ah, no, Father General.

Acquaviva points out the tray of food to Scaglia, who eats heartily and, finally, nods approval.

ACQUAVIVA
You are to be completely commended
on your work in Tuscany.

When Acquaviva's back is turned, Scaglia takes a handful of food and leaves.

BELLARMINO
Thank you, Father General.

ACQUAVIVA
There is good word. We are making
excellent progress regaining
Poland. Pope Gregory will soon not
be a factor. We can act on serious
matters closer to home. You are
being reassigned. You will leave
for Venice immediately.

BELLARMINO
Will the Pope no longer tolerate
the... practices harbored there?

ACQUAVIVA
It's an infection, Cardinal, an
infection. One of our own, Friar
Paul Scarpi, is trying to foist a
diplomatic reunion with the
Lutherans.

BELLARMINO
Yes, that information has reached
me.

ACQUAVIVA

My God, how it spreads. You must take this matter into your own hands, Cardinal. You must.

BELLARMINO

I understand, Father General. I completely understand.

INT. VATICAN - PAPAL BED CHAMBERS - NIGHT

Acquaviva, Grassi and Tommaso impatiently stand and watch Pope Gregory taking his last painful, dying breaths. Pope Gregory's cessation of breath prompts Tommaso to lift the sheets over the Pope's face prematurely. The Pope gasps several more times, eyes open. Straining to stay alive, Pope Gregory sees his subordinates frustrated at his continued efforts, and succumbs to death.

GRASSI

Of what did he die?

TOMMASO

Bishop Grassi, the Pope lived an abundant eighty-three years. May God take his soul.

Grassi nods.

ACQUAVIVA

The poison that kills a king enters through his gullet. The poison that kills an empire enters through the minds of the peasants.

Acquaviva exits. Tommaso and Grassi stare.

EXT. VENICE - GRAND CANAL - SAINT MARK'S SQUARE - DAY

Galileo steps off a GONDOLA and into the heart of the beautiful floating city of mercantile splendor.

BRUNO Giordano, a light-haired, blue-eyed, handsome man, 37, with charismatic charm and the frame of a giant, enralls a crowd of CITIZENS. Galileo finds his way to the front.

Scaglia stands off in the shadows feigning disinterest.

BRUNO

Allow me to open your eyes and
minds to God's mystical universe.
Where the heavens are infinite.

Some in the crowd are mesmerized; others laugh openly.

BRUNO (CONT'D)

Where planets, circling the stars,
are inhabited as is this Earth.

GALILEO

Planets, worlds like Earth, circle
the stars?

BRUNO

Just as the Earth circles the sun,
good sir.

This statement catches Scaglia's attention. Several in the crowd shout out:

CROWD

Heresy! Heresy! Hear him out!
He's blasphemous.

BRUNO

A moment. What I speak of is
God's, not Aristotle's. The
misguided, they confuse Saint
Thomas' conjecture and have
forgotten God's true prophecy.

CROWD

Who are you to question the Church?

BRUNO

It's in God's numbers, in the
Bible, Revelations...

GALILEO

You can't rest on the Bible. What
proof do you have?

The crowd goes silent.

GALILEO (CONT'D)

Saint Thomas claims his proof is in
the Bible.

BRUNO

All I say will be proved true.
Hear me now: An infinite universe
that is the kingdom of God, begun
in an enormous explosion, the stars
are all like our sun, givers of
light and life to planets circling
them, and all are made of particles
so small no man has ever seen the
smallest part.

GALILEO

Are you Bruno, Bruno Giordano, the
former Dominican Friar?

Scaglia's back stiffens.

BRUNO

No, no, I am Friar Filippo, and
what I say is in accordance with
the Church and with God.

INT. DUCAL PALACE - HALL OF THE COLLEGE - DAY

Where frescoes in intricately-carved gold frames cover every
square inch of both walls and ceiling. The Doge caresses an
ornate sword handle as he chats with several other NOBLES in
similar business attire.

Upon seeing Galileo enter, the Doge curtails his casual
conversation.

DOGE

You must be Galileo. You come
highly recommended by our late
friend, Ostilio.

(Pause.)

You did not know. I'm sorry.

GALILEO

When?

DOGE

A fortnight past. They both Cross
themselves.

GALILEO

Thank you for seeing me. I seek a
position...

DOGE

You have a position. Innovations for marine, military and commercial applications are always desired. Can you make yourself useful in those arenas?

GALILEO

I have in the past.

DOGE

Good. I trust a stipend of one-hundred and fifty crowns will be sufficient for you?

GALILEO

You're most generous.

DOGE

Nonsense. You will soon repay the State of Venice many times over.

The Doge raises his eyebrows, this is serious business.

GALILEO

Yes, yes, certainly.

DOGE

My secretary will attend to the rest.

INT. TAVERNA - NIGHT

Paulo, his arm around Galileo, shows him into the taverna, a joyous party of boisterous MEN, pretty COURTESANS and busy SERVERS. But, Galileo's attention is immediately drawn to:

MARIA Gamba, 22, a vivacious girl with almond eyes, a round face and loose brown hair, who is playing the lute and singing a lovely cantata.

Paulo and Galileo are served at a table.

PAULO

Salute!

GALILEO

Salute!

PAULO

How long have you been here?

Galileo steals a kiss from a bawdy GIRL who has fixed her eyes on him.

PAULO (CONT'D)

Well, long enough to feel very comfortable, I see.

GALILEO

The wine is excellent, the women are...willing, the Doge is happy with mere trifles of engineering, and this is the good part, I teach astronomy!

PAULO

Bravo.

GALILEO

And you are still ordained, I see!

PAULO

And well accepted here in Venice. Am I forgiven?

GALILEO

You were never damned. You frightened me, good friend.

PAULO

It's different in Venice. I have supporters. It's time to bring the Church back together. And for you to share your findings...

At a table in front of Maria sits Bruno. He has the ears of all those around him.

GALILEO

Oh, no. It was not just the Jesuits who learned a lesson in Pisa. I learned something about them. Paulo, who's that?

PAULO

Bruno Giordano, a great thinker.

GALILEO

Fe! He has some interesting ideas, all stolen. Copernicus, Kepler, and who knows who else. He's got nothing for proof, not even logic.

(Drinks.)

Not him! Who is the lute player?

PAULO

Maria Gamba, she's a courtesan.

GALILEO

Perhaps she is for the moment.

Galileo takes up his lute, goes to Maria, sits on the bench close to her, and follows her lead on the lute. They play beautiful music together, eyes locked on each other.

EXT. TAVERNA - NIGHT

Bruno leaves the taverna and walks along the canal. From a doorway he is jumped and then VICIOUSLY CLUBBED by Scaglia and his Deacons.

Bellarmino supervises as Scaglia and the Deacons struggle to push Bruno off the bank and down into a boat on the canal.

INT. MARIA GAMBA'S BED CHAMBER - NIGHT

Galileo PLAYS the lute for Maria who lies on her bed. Wearing little, she poses for him seductively, then comes to him, places his lute aside and sits on his lap. They kiss passionately.

EXT. CITY OF VENICE - NIGHT - ESTABLISHING

Above the city, the Moon tracks across the night sky and moves through its phases.

EXT. ARSENAL - FIELD - DAY

Title: "Four Years Later"

A line of cannons. The nearest fires with a booming BLAST.

The Doge awaits Galileo's calculation.

GALILEO

Three-hundred and forty-seven cubits.

The Doge gives a nod to a SURVEY TEAM that runs out from the cannon with a measuring line.

DOGE

I received an interesting dispatch from a Dutchman.

Galileo sets his latest invention, a CANNON QUADRANT, an adjustable triangular compass with a plumb line, into the mouth of the next cannon.

GALILEO

Oh?

Galileo removes the instrument and nods to the ARTILLERY TEAM, which commences loading the cannon.

SURVEYOR

(From the b.g.)

Three hundred and forty-seven and one-half cubits!

DOGE

He claims to have invented a spyglass that brings the faraway into near view.

The cannon FIRES. Galileo raises his head from his calculations with concern.

GALILEO

(Distracted.)

Five hundred and twelve cubits.

The Survey team runs out again. The Doge takes the cannon quadrant from Galileo.

DOGE

Can you imagine? Bringing the faraway into view? Perhaps it's a hoax.

GALILEO

Perhaps.

SURVEYOR

Five hundred and eleven cubits.

DOGE

You've done nicely with this, Galileo.

Hands back the quadrant.

DOGE (CONT'D)

I'll commission fifty.

(Pause.)

Galileo? Did you hear me?

GALILEO
 Oh, yes. Fifty. Thank you, Your
 Excellence.

Galileo wanders off. The Doge laughs to himself. A cannon
 FIRES.

INT. GALILEO'S WORKSHOP - NIGHT

Galileo, at his workbench, frantic, testing optical lenses.

GALILEO
 It must be a combination of two
 lenses, it must.

He grabs some paper and draws quickly.

INT. DUCAL PALACE - FOYER - DAY

A fat, impatient Dutch merchant, HOLGARTH, sits uncomfortably
 on a ridiculously small settee. At Holgarth's side is a long
 BOX. FOOTSTEPS bring him to attention. Paulo approaches.

PAULO
 Signor Holgarth, the Doge is...

Holgarth, stands and brushes himself off in anticipation of
 his interview.

PAULO (CONT'D)
 ...not yet ready to see you, not
 today.

INT. DUCAL PALACE - HALL OF THE COLLEGE - DAY

The Doge sits as Holgarth presents a SMALL TELESCOPE,
 delicate in appearance and no more than two feet long.
 Holgarth struggles to speak a foreign language.

HOLGARTH
 With this you... you generals, will
see far than possible with eye
 alone!

DOGE
 What is the cost?

HOLGARTH
 What?

DOGE
Crowns, money, how much?

HOLGARTH
Oh! Yes, two-thousand only. Yes?

The Doge is not pleased.

DOGE
Let's see it work.

Galileo enters, Paulo and De Dominis wheel in something covered in canvas over six feet long.

DOGE (CONT'D)
Galileo?

Paulo removes the canvas, revealing a TRIPOD that holds a large, beautifully-crafted TELESCOPE.

GALILEO
Your Excellency, I wasn't aware I was going to interrupt, but I believe you'll find this is most important.

The Doge's dissatisfaction with the Dutch Merchant is obvious.

DOGE
You're not interrupting, what is this?

GALILEO
Why, Your Excellency, the State of Venice has invented a magnificent spyglass. I present it as a gift in your honor!

Holgrath compares his tiny instrument to Galileo's creation. The Doge takes the tiny telescope from Holgarth, turns toward the window and looks through the instrument.

THROUGH HOLGARTH'S TELESCOPE

A fuzzy image that adjustment of the focus cannot clear.

DOGE

Gives the instrument back to Holgarth and steps over to test Galileo's telescope.

THROUGH GALILEO'S TELESCOPE

A clear view across the bay to a FORT. The animated face of a SOLDIER walking on the fort's rampart.

The Doge jumps away from the telescope. Walks to the window, squinting to see. Then goes over to Galileo.

The Doge, uncharacteristically, embraces Galileo in a long bear hug. Even Galileo is shocked.

EXT. HILLTOP - NIGHT

Galileo stands peering through his telescope aimed at...

THE MOON - MAGNIFIED

Mountains, valleys, craters. An Earth-like world, only desolate and cold.

Startled by Maria, who kisses his neck.

GALILEO

Oh, you frightened me, my love.

Galileo can do little but yield to her kisses.

GALILEO (CONT'D)

Maria, Maria, there are worlds out there...

He is nearly crying now, the sensation of Maria's affection and the sights his eyes have beheld are, together, a powerful drug.

GALILEO (CONT'D)

...the moon has mountains, valleys.
I can see them.

MARIA

You are my world.

She kisses him longer and harder.

MARIA (CONT'D)

Come to bed.

INT. GALILEO'S BED CHAMBER - NIGHT

Maria asleep in Galileo's embrace. Awake, he stares out the window at the...

STARRY SKY

INT. GALILEO'S WORKSHOP - NIGHT

Galileo, dressed in a nightshirt, hangs a lantern and lights another. He surveys his workshop. Preoccupied, Galileo rolls a ball down his incline ramp, then another, but walks away.

He pushes the bob on his pulse clock, passing it casually.

He takes a candle to the bottom of his thermometer, a long glass tube filled with liquid and suspended glass floats, which begin to move. Bored, he moves on.

He uncovers his telescope and caresses the tube. His face grows sour, distressed.

He rushes to his desk and sweeps it clean with his arm. A hundred pieces of glass, metal, balls and wood fly and CRASH against the walls and floor.

He quickly finds parchment, plume and ink. He writes feverishly. A child's soft voice breaks the silence.

VIRGINIA (O.S.)

Papa, what are you doing?

VIRGINIA, 4, walks to her father. She shares her mother's face and full, curly hair. Galileo turns to find his daughter standing beside him, and lifts her up into his arms.

GALILEO

What are you doing out of bed?

VIRGINIA

I asked you first, Papa.

GALILEO

Well, I'm... I'm going to change the world.

VIRGINIA

Why?

GALILEO
Because I must.

VIRGINIA
Why?

GALILEO
God has asked me to.

VIRGINIA
Don't change the world, Papa. I
like it how it is.

Galileo chokes up, his face swells, his eyes fill with tears.

GALILEO
Don't you think you'll like the new
world?

VIRGINIA
I don't know.

GALILEO
Just for you, I'll keep the good
things and change only what's not
right.

VIRGINIA
All right, Papa.

She nods off.

EXT. ROME - CASTLE PRISON - NIGHT - ESTABLISHING

Title: "Rome, Castle Saint Angelo, Vatican Prison"

INT. CASTLE SAINT ANGELO - TORTURE CHAMBER - NIGHT

Bellarmino, his cheeks collapsed, his temperament vile,
speaks to Bruno, who is harnessed to the rack.

BELLARMINO
Lucifer's hold on you is tenacious,
Friar Bruno. Years and still you
profess lies and heresy.

BRUNO
The Earth moves. It revolves
around the sun. The universe is
infinite...

Bellarmino stuffs stoppers up his nose. Bruno's eyes go wide. Bellarmino brings a steaming kettle into view.

BELLARMINO

Confess, you poor soul, confess.

Bruno shakes his head. Bellarmino holds a funnel above Bruno's mouth.

BRUNO

I confess you're an ignorant shit!

Bellarmino inserts the funnel into his mouth and pours from the kettle.

INT. DUCAL PALACE - ARCHIVE - NIGHT

Paulo sits writing. De Dominis comes to Paulo, tired from reading the pages of parchment in his hands.

DE DOMINIS

Friar Paulo, I've made the corrections. We're nearly finished.

PAULO

Yes, Father De Dominis, four years. It wouldn't be completed now if not for your help.

DE DOMINIS

It is a labor of love, Friar Paulo. The Church will soon be one again.

PAULO

Please, check these against the proper dates.

DE DOMINIS

Certainly. When will we go to publish?

Paulo is preoccupied with his work as he replies.

PAULO

I'm not certain.

(Looking up.)

Pope Innocent is not in good health. I want a capable, reigning Pope.

They exchange knowing smiles.

DE DOMINIS

Of course.

When Paulo goes back to work, De Dominis shows his disappointment.

EXT. HILLTOP - NIGHT

Galileo looking through his telescope, making notes.

SATURN

A golden blur, the rings visible only as elongated light.

GALILEO (V.O.)

To the distinguished thinker: Rene Descartes, Paris, France. Dear Monsieur Descartes, through this instrument of magnification, I have observed that Saturn is a planet of three. Two forms are aligned on either side. I confess not to have an explanation.

DESCARTES (V.O.)

Galileo, I am delighted at your descriptions of the moon. Saturn is more astounding. Please, document everything you see...

INT. DUCAL PALACE - ARCHIVE - NIGHT

Dressed in traveling attire, De Dominis pages through Paulo's finished manuscript: "HISTORY OF THE COUNCIL OF TRENT." He carefully places the folio into a leather bag and leaves, closing the door softly behind him.

EXT. VATICAN - CONCLAVE OF CARDINALS - DAY - ESTABLISHING

Title: "The Vatican, Conclave of Cardinals, 1605"

INT. VATICAN - CONCLAVE OF THE CARDINALS - DAY

Tommaso, now 45; Grassi, now 50; and Bellarmino, now 60; all have been elevated to Cardinal and are dressed in red robes.

BELLARMINO

We need a Pope who will continue to support strict reform, Cardinal Tommaso.

TOMMASO

We need a Pope who will keep this church whole, Cardinal Bellarmino!

Grassi intercepts Tommaso and Bellarmino, a letter in hand.

BELLARMINO

We need a Pope who's willing to fight, Cardinal Grassi!

Grassi hands the letter over to Bellarmino who, along with Tommaso, devour its contents as they walk.

BELLARMINO (CONT'D)

It's from Acquaviva.

TOMMASO

A directive?

GRASSI

An order. Face facts, my friends. Six Popes in twenty years, four of whom lasted only months. We need a Pope who won't die, for a change.

BELLARMINO

Borghese.

TOMMASO

He is only fifty-three, and he is an attorney.

GRASSI

Acquaviva wants God's advocate on Earth. We will obey.

EXT. VATICAN - CONCLAVE OF THE CARDINALS - ROOF - DAY

White smoke rises from the chimney. Disinterested Romans glance up, shake their heads and move on.

INT. VATICAN - CONCLAVE OF THE CARDINALS - DOORWAY - DAY

Bellarmino, Tommaso and Grassi, smiling broadly, escort and talk excitedly to the newly-elevated POPE PAUL the fifth, Borghese. The new Pope is 53, silver-haired and poker-faced.

EXT. HILLTOP - NIGHT

Galileo, now 41, at his telescope.

JUPITER

Four tiny stars, really moons, shown circling in TIME LAPSE.

GALILEO (V.O.)

Dear Cardinal Maffeo. You must see this for yourself. Jupiter has four orbiting moons. I've traced their paths for over four years now and...

MAFFEO (V.O.)

Dear Most Beloved and Astute Friend, Galileo. The further our discussion goes, I must confess, that sometimes the more confused I become. So, please come to Rome. I would be most honored to look through, shall I say, your eyes. The recently-elected Pope Paul, a fine gentleman from the house of Borghese, has also expressed his curiosity.

INT. VATICAN - PAPAL MEETING CHAMBER - TABLE - DAY

Pope Paul approaches Acquaviva, Grassi and Bellarmino.

POPE PAUL

(To Acquaviva.)

This must be urgent, Father General Acquaviva, you have left your fortress to come and see me. I expected your usually lengthy missive.

Acquaviva sweats and strains. His speech now includes a slight stutter.

ACQUAVIVA

M-my apologies, Your Holiness...

Acquaviva quickly presents copies of Scarpi's "HISTORY OF THE COUNCIL OF TRENT" before Pope Paul.

ACQUAVIVA (CONT'D)

...Latin, Italian, English, French, G-german. An unauthorized history of the Council of Trent. We have been made out to be uncompromising, money-grubbing thugs, corrupted by power.

POPE PAUL

Is that what we are?

GRASSI

Your Holiness, this piece of rubbish has lost the Church more principalities than Martin Luther took from us in all his days.

POPE PAUL

Cardinal Grassi, recall also the former Catholic followers and clergy who have left us. They might be considered more important than the land itself.

ACQUAVIVA

P-p-pustule. They will forever be an unholy g-g-growth.

BELLARMINO

Pope Paul, our edict is unchanged. Those calling themselves Lutherans must return unconditionally.

POPE PAUL

Cardinal Bellarmino, our lost souls should want to return under the reforms we are making.

BELLARMINO

The author makes a convincing argument that we should negotiate and reconcile.

ACQUAVIVA

The printed w-w-word spreads this hideous disease.

POPE PAUL

The period before printing, when parishioners knew only what we wanted them to know, was so much easier, wasn't it, Father General? Who is the author?

GRASSI

Friar Paulo Scarpi of Venice, your Holiness. But there is also an accomplice, Father De Dominis. De Dominis transported this horrendous document to our enemies in England. Its publication was totally illegal.

BELLARMINO

A writ excommunicating the Doge of Venice is in order. Then, you will be able to negotiate from a position of power.

The Pope doesn't like this but cannot see another way.

POPE PAUL

Fine. But fair warning, I will no longer support unnecessary force and suppression. We must all look within ourselves and our Church for the roots of our troubles.

(Pause)

Take the necessary actions.

Acquaviva nearly runs from the chamber, gasping for breath.

EXT. VENICE - BRIDGE OF SIGHS - NIGHT

Galileo and Paulo, now 42, look down the canal, eerie in the waning twilight as the LAMPLIGHTERS conduct their rounds. MUSIC comes from a nearby taverna.

PAULO

You must believe me. There is an index in Rome. It contains both the names Paulo Scarpi and Galileo Galilei. You cannot go to Rome. Not now.

Paulo leads Galileo down the dark, narrow canal walk.

GALILEO

But, Paulo, an audience with the Pope. Through the telescope, the Pope will see with his own eyes! Isn't that worth the risk?

PAULO

You're assuming that when he looks he is willing to see. Are you now the fearless one!?

GALILEO

You're afraid.

PAULO

No, I am not. With Christ, I have nothing to fear. But, I won't be going to Rome with you.

GALILEO

We vowed to be God's soldiers and Maffeo tells me...

Suddenly, Galileo is pushed into the canal. He never sees his assailant. Galileo swims, trying to find a quick way up the stone embankment.

GALILEO (CONT'D)

Paulo! Paulo! Paulo

SCREAMS O.S. turn into muffled cries.

BUILDING VAULT

Paulo is held by two Deacons. Scaglia, now 45, stabs him again and again, and then faster and faster, fifteen times. The Deacons drop Paulo and steal away with Scaglia.

GALILEO

Climbs out of the canal and searches desperately for Paulo. He finds Paulo, hemorrhaging from every area of his body, Scaglia's knife wedged in his head. Paulo's eyes are wide, his face tense, sweating, unmoving. Galileo rips off a piece of his shirt and wraps Paulo's head to stop the bleeding. He then quickly feels for a pulse.

GALILEO (CONT'D)

Paulo, you're still alive. You're still with me, Paulo.

Galileo picks up his friend and staggers to the taverna door.

GALILEO (CONT'D)

Oh, God. Please, God.

A moment after Galileo enters the taverna, the MUSIC and VOICES are hushed.

INT. DUCAL PALACE - HALL OF THE COLLEGE - DAY

The Doge of Venice, now 50, to the assembled body of VENETIAN LEADERS and PARISH PRIESTS. At the top of his lungs:

DOGE

I will not be excommunicated!
Those who attacked Friar Paulo
Scarpi will be rooted out and
punished.

EXT. VENICE - GRAND CANAL - SAINT MARK'S SQUARE - NIGHT

The Doge and Galileo observing: CONSTABLES tying and, with knives, stripping naked a line of some TWENTY JESUIT PRIESTS.

GONDOLA

In the Grand Canal, loaded with the naked Jesuit Priests.

DOGE

Do we have them all?

CONSTABLE

Your Excellency, with all respect,
we do not have the men who attacked
Friar Scarpi.

DOGE

Tow this barge, and cut this filth
called Jesuit loose in the deep
Adriatic.

The Constable nods.

DOGE (CONT'D)

(To Galileo.)

Cancel your plans to visit Rome.
They know your association with
Paulo and your own theories put you
in risk.

INT. HOSPITAL - WARD - NIGHT

Galileo at Paulo's bedside, taking his friend's pulse.

GALILEO

I can't believe you are alive.
Your pulse, it's good.

Paulo smiles.

PAULO

Either way, I will not live long.
They will come back for me. Are
you going to Rome?

Galileo looks at him as if he's mad.

PAULO (CONT'D)

Please, go. You must go.

GALILEO

You were always much braver than I.

PAULO

Cardinal Maffeo is a friend. You
have been invited. The Pope will
look, and he may, he may see.

Galileo shakes his head.

PAULO (CONT'D)

Look at me! God protected me! I
fought first, just like at Saint
Peter's. You fought smarter,
kicking their shins. Remember?

They laugh and cry.

PAULO (CONT'D)

You were always more clever than I.
You're God's soldier, too, Galileo.
I know you. You're still God's
soldier. Don't deny the Lord, your
God the good fight.

EXT. GALILEO'S HOME - STREET - DAY

A DRIVER loads Galileo's trunks onto a horse-drawn carriage.
Galileo leaves the house accompanied by Maria, now 40; and
Virginia, now 24; and LIVIA, Galileo's youngest daughter, 10,
a happy child with wispy red locks like her father.

Virginia and Livia kiss their father good-bye.

VIRGINIA

Come back soon, Papa.

LIVIA
I'll miss you, Papa.

GALILEO
Of course. I love you.

Maria signals her daughters to leave.

GALILEO (CONT'D)
I'll miss you, my little princess.

Galileo admires Maria's pregnant belly.

GALILEO (CONT'D)
I want a boy this time. What can I
come back with for you? Anything!

Maria summons up her best bitch.

MARIA
A wedding.

She refuses his lips and turns away.

EXT. VATICAN - TOWER OF THE WINDS - TERRACE - NIGHT

Title: "Tower of the Winds, Vatican Observatory, 1611"

Pope Paul looks through the eyepiece of Galileo's telescope. Galileo and Maffeo wait. The Pope looks to them, he is unimpressed. Galileo is prompted by Maffeo with a look.

GALILEO
You were looking at the Moon, Your
Holiness. Could you not clearly
see mountains?

POPE PAUL
I saw something. How can we be
certain of what we are seeing?

GALILEO
Well... Allow me to show you
something else.

Galileo aims and adjusts the telescope. The Pope looks again.

GALILEO (CONT'D)

This is Jupiter. The small, seemingly stars, I have documented that they are circling Jupiter. They are actually moons.

POPE PAUL

I see.

MAFFEO

Galileo believes these moon-stars circling Jupiter are a model for the motion of the planets around the sun.

POPE PAUL

Do you believe that, Cardinal Maffeo?

MAFFEO

Well, I... I admit that Galileo's thoughts are ingenious. But, I do not consider them true or convincing. It is all hypotheses, Your Holiness.

POPE PAUL

Well, then. This has been very... speculative.

(Pause.)

Galileo, I would like you to present your finding to my scientific advisors at the Jesuit College de' Romano. If you'll excuse me, Cardinal Maffeo, I must get back to important matters.

GALILEO

Why, yes, your Holiness. Thank you for... looking.

POPE PAUL

Christ be with you, my sons.

Pope Paul exits abruptly. Galileo is crushed.

MAFFEO

Well, I think he was most impressed.

INT. ROME - JESUIT HEADQUARTERS - MEETING CHAMBER - DAY

At a meeting table, Bellarmino, Grassi, Tommaso and Cremonini each wade through stacks of documentation, long sheaves that cascade off the table and onto the floor.

HAND-DRAWN DIAGRAM ON EASEL

Moons circling Jupiter.

GALILEO (O.S.)

The tables I've provided you with represent twelve years of observation and calculation, the regular repeating patterns of which are undeniable.

Bellarmino is disgusted.

GALILEO (O.S.) (CONT'D)

I've tracked these four moons for...

BELLARMINO

Enough. Are you proposing that the Copernican planetary system, where the Earth circles the sun, is that correct?

GALILEO

Reveals diagram of COPERNICAN PLANETARY SYSTEM.

GALILEO

My proof provides a firm foundation...

TOMMASO

Galileo, how exactly would Christ Jesus rise into his Father's kingdom on the third day if the Earth is not the center of all? He would be hindered by the sun, would he not?

GALILEO

I don't profess to have an answer for that question, Cardinal Tommaso.

(MORE)

GALILEO(cont'd)

But, together, I'm sure all these details can be reconciled... to the Church's liking just as Saint Thomas Aquinas...

Galileo's response is met with bored looks.

GALILEO (CONT'D)

...reconciled the knowledge of Aristotle.

EXT. VINCENZO GALILEI'S HOME - COURTYARD - NIGHT

Galileo and his father, Vincenzo, now 60, play a duet on Lutes. Finishing their song leaves them in awkward silence. Vincenzo presents Galileo with pages of a manuscript.

VINCENZO

My study of harmonics. With your help I could finish it.

GALILEO

Yes, Papa, yes. I'll take it with me.

Vincenzo nods and smiles. Galileo rises to leave.

VINCENZO

Take care with those parasites, my son. They understand nothing of the artistic spirit, the spirit closest to God.

GALILEO

I will, Papa. You tried to warn me. I know you tried.

INT. VINCENZO GALILEI'S HOME - LIVING CHAMBER - CONTINUOUS

Galileo comes up behind his mother, Giulia, and kisses her on the cheek.

GALILEO

I'll see you soon, Mama.

GIULIA

Galileo...

Galileo stops at the doorway.

GIULIA (CONT'D)
Please, for me, don't marry the
whore.

Galileo shakes his head and leaves.

GALILEO
Mama, if you knew how alike you
both are. Always concerned about
what people will think.

INT. JESUIT HEADQUARTERS - MEETING ROOM - DAY

At a round table sits Grassi, Tommaso, Bellarmino and
Cremonini.

GRASSI
So, after meticulous review of the
evidence submitted by Galileo
Galilei, are we agreed on our
recommendation to the Pope?

BELLARMINO
Yea.

TOMMASO
Yea.

All eyes look to Cremonini.

CREMONINI
I abstain.

GRASSI
Dean Cremonini?

CREMONINI
I cannot endorse this statement,
but choose not to object with this
committee's majority.

INT. VATICAN CORRIDOR - DAY

Galileo stands waiting in front of the door to the Papal
chambers. Bellarmino enters and closes the door behind him.
Turning to Galileo, he gives a stiff smile.

BELLARMINO
Let's walk.

They take slow steps. Galileo anticipates Bellarmino's words.

BELLARMINO (CONT'D)

The Pope has issued a Bull on the subject of your research.

GALILEO

Yes, Cardinal Bellarmino?

BELLARMINO

It simply states this: The doctrine of double motion of the Earth about its axis and about the sun is false, and contrary to Holy Scripture.

Galileo stops, the words sink in.

GALILEO

But...

BELLARMINO

There's nothing terrible here.

GALILEO

No?

BELLARMINO

No. You may continue your work and observation.

GALILEO

I may?

BELLARMINO

Certainly. Pope Paul understands your intentions are... genuine. But, you must not make rash statements.

GALILEO

Regarding motion?

BELLARMINO

Exactly. Then, you'll be fine.

Bellarmino pats Galileo on the back and leaves him.

EXT. ROME - CASTLE SAINT ANGELO BRIDGE- DAY

Galileo and Cremonini walk across the bridge of white marble adorned with both pedestalled STATUES OF WINGED ANGELS and the HEADS of executed criminals on spears. The ominous Castle of Saint Angelo fills the b.g.

CREMONINI

This Pope rules with an iron fist.
We have few malingerers and no
vocal malcontents.

GALILEO

He saw with his own eyes.

CREMONINI

Bellarmino has set your warning in
a record. This document is not
necessarily your enemy. It states
strictly, you may not advocate
motion...

GALILEO

So, what am I left?

Unnoticed by Galileo and Cremonini as they pass, Scaglia turns to watch them from his position facing the river.

CREMONINI

...only the motion of the Earth
around the sun, would not be
allowed. It would protect you from
discussions involving other motion.
Jupiter and its satellites appear
to be acceptable. What about
Maffeo? He has influence with
Cosimo de'Medici and they can grant
approval to publish.

INT. JESUIT HEADQUARTERS - ACQUAVIVA'S CHAMBER - DAY

Grassi, Bellarmino, Tommaso stand and speak to Acquaviva who is behind a partition.

ACQUAVIVA (O.S.)

The Pope sees through Galileo's
falsehoods, does he not?

GRASSI

That would be accurate, but is it
enough?!

ACQUAVIVA'S TABLE - PLATE OF FOOD

ACQUAVIVA (O.S.)
Tactically, the damn Pope may have
left Galileo some latitude.

BELLARMINO (O.S.)
We could discourage Galileo.

Acquaviva's emaciated hand holds a forkful of food lifted to
his unseen face. A moment later, he spits it all out,
coughing.

ACQUAVIVA (O.S.)
How?

GRASSI, BELLARMINO & TOMMASO

GRASSI
With Bruno. We would let it be
known that heresy, even in the
guise of science, will not be
tolerated.

ACQUAVIVA (O.S.)
And, if Galileo chooses to speak
out again regardless?

TOMMASO
That would be most grievous, Father
General Acquaviva.

BELLARMINO
Will you accompany us to petition
for the Pope's blessing?

ACQUAVIVA (O.S.)
No, I have much important business
here. But, I will correspond with
the Pope.

The tray of food flies from behind the partition and crashes
against the wall. Tommaso is shocked. Bellarmino smiles.
Grassi doesn't react.

GRASSI
Thank you, Father General, good
day.

EXT. ROME - CASTLE SAINT ANGELO BRIDGE - NIGHT

Bruno, badly beaten, tortured and hog-tied, is led across the bridge by a rope around his neck. A hooded BELLARMINO, holding a crucifix out stretched, pulls Bruno's leash tight over his shoulder.

The bridge is lined with CITIZENS of Rome, whose faces show the disgust and protest against the Church that they dare not vocalize.

EXT. ROME - NEW CHURCH PLAZA - NIGHT

Title: "Plaza of the New Church, Rome"

Hooded as the executioner, Bellarmino approaches Bruno, tied to the stake to be burned.

BELLARMINO

Brother Bruno, you have recanted all. The Earth does not move.

BRUNO

No, it does not.

BELLARMINO

It does not circle the sun.

BRUNO

I recant.

BELLARMINO

The stars are not suns.

BRUNO

They are not.

BELLARMINO

And, Brother Bruno, the Universe is not infinite.

BRUNO

It is... infinite. God's Kingdom is infinite! Blessed be the infinite.

Bellarmino removes his mask, looks Bruno in the eyes, and torches Bruno's clothes to flame.

BRUNO (CONT'D)

The Lord, my God, knows no end.
There is no beginning, there is no
end. Blessed be the Lord God's
infinite kingdom of heaven...

INT. FLORENCE - DE'MEDICI PALACE - BANQUET ROOM - NIGHT

DISTINGUISHED GUESTS gather including: Cosimo's older sister,
the DUCHESS, an ancient 60, her voice is shrill, with dress
and make-up to match. And, Giovanni, now 40 and over weight,
still shadowed by his aging Great Dane.

COSIMO de'Medici, 50, the thin, mustached, ruler of Tuscany,
raises his goblet to his guest of honor, Galileo, now 54, who
sits by his side.

COSIMO

Let us drink to Galileo Galilei, in
honor of his first publication "The
Assayer." Salute!

ALL

Salute!

COSIMO

Let us raise our spirits again, to
the newly-appointed chief
astronomer and mathematician of the
House de'Medici...

Gasps of surprise from the Guests.

COSIMO (CONT'D)

Galileo Galilei, Tuscany's son has
proudly come home! Salute!

ALL

Salute!

Galileo stands.

GALILEO

Your Excellency, I am most honored
and graciously accept the position
once held by my dear teacher,
Professor Ostilio. Let us drink to
his memory!

ALL

Salute!

All AD LIB happy, animated conversation. SERVANTS enter with food. Giovanni's booming voice breaks through.

GIOVANNI

I'd like to propose another toast.
To the Church... on the occasion of
the execution of Bruno Giordano for
heresy.

Galileo is disturbed, but recovers.

DUCHESS

Yes, to the everlasting light and
salvation. We understand Bruno
recanted all, except the fallacy of
an infinite universe.

GIOVANNI

Signor Galileo, please, allow us to
gain your insight into this
question. The Church teaches us,
its believers, that the kingdom of
God is finite. What do you say?

Giovanni's Great Dane bounds up onto the table in front of Galileo, snarling.

GIOVANNI (CONT'D)

Down, boy.

The Great Dane gives Galileo a last look and jumps down.

GALILEO

Prince Giovanni, I must confess...
that is purely a theological
question.

INT. VATICAN - INQUISITION TRIAL CHAMBERS - DAY

Title: "Inquisitional Tribunal, Rome, 1616"

The Duchess, overly dressed for the occasion, comes forward to testify in a stream of sunlight from a high, narrow window.

DUCHESS

(Animated.)

He's forever going on about the
planets circling the sun. He
compares them to the moons he
claims circle Jupiter. And, his
spyglass!

(MORE)

DUCHESS(cont'd)

Why, for all we know the images he sees are painted! The man is Satanic, and he has my brother, Cosimo, the most powerful of the Pope's kings, in his pocket. Why, I'm afraid to be near him...

BELLARMINO

The "he" you speak of is Galileo?

DUCHESS

(Coos.)

Of course, Cardinal Bellarmino.

(Animated again.)

And when I asked him, Galileo, that is, if he thought the universe was infinite, he said, "Definitely, Definitely!"

INT. VATICAN - INQUISITION TRIAL CHAMBERS - NIGHT

Galileo comes forward to testify in a stream of sunlight from a high, narrow window. He speaks into the darkened recess.

BELLARMINO

Have you discussed motion with Grand Duke Cosimo de'Medici?

GALILEO

Only in theory, Cardinal Bellarmino.

TOMMASO

Are you suggesting in your work, The Assayer, that Jupiter's satellites are a model for the sun and planets?

GALILEO

No, Cardinal Tommaso. Have you come to that conclusion?

TOMMASO

Certainly not!

BELLARMINO

Not at all!

MAFFEO

I think Galileo has answered our questions and understands the agreement with the Church he is held to. Is that a true statement, Galileo?

GALILEO

Yes, clearly, Maf... Cardinal Barbarini.

EXT. FLORENCE - DE'MEDICI PALACE - STREET - DAY

Galileo steps from the palace to a horse-drawn carriage as the driver loads his bags. He looks back at the palace, resigned, and sees:

THE DUCHESS & GIOVANNI

Smiling down on him from a window above.

GALILEO

Giovanni's Great Dane bounds toward him barking and ready to attack. Galileo stares the dog down. The Great Dane retreats, whimpering. Galileo laughs, looks back up to the window at the Duchess and Giovanni, smiles. Before climbing into the carriage, he bites his thumb toward the window, giving the ultimate sign of disrespect.

INT. JESUIT HEADQUARTERS - ACQUAVIVA'S CHAMBERS - NIGHT

Scaglia opens the door. Dressed in the brown robes of a common monk, Pope Paul enters the chamber and pulls down the hood that has hidden his face. The Pope does not hide his anger.

Acquaviva, now 55, has developed the over-sensitive twitch of paranoia. He stands before the Pope impatiently.

ACQUAVIVA

I understand you have offered safe passage to the traitor, Father de Dominis.

POPE PAUL

God forgives all sinners...

ACQUAVIVA
...who repent.

POPE PAUL
I come to you and you begin the
conversation.

ACQUAVIVA
At the same time, Paulo Scarpi
remains unpunished for his History
of the Council of Trent.

POPE PAUL
You don't consider an attack on his
life punishment?

ACQUAVIVA
Your Holiness, this lack of action
weakens us when we are on the verge
of a crusade to regain...

POPE PAUL
Father General Acquaviva, crusades
have always been waged at great
cost and with little effect. You
executed Bruno without my approval.

ACQUAVIVA
We are prepared for war. We are
politically aligned for war. We
can win back the lost souls.

POPE PAUL
You mean the lost lands. No.
Don't change the subject.

Acquaviva turns and dismisses the Pope with a wave of his
hand.

POPE PAUL (CONT'D)
Don't you dare dismiss me! I am
not your supplicant! Father
General, let's be very clear. When
I do not respond to your missives
and written reports, it means I
need time to review the matter. It
does not imply my consent to
proceed as you damn well please.
You serve at my pleasure and you
stray from my wishes at your peril!

ACQUAVIVA
Your pardon, Holiness.

POPE PAUL

Further, this exclusive possession your Order believes it has on matters of science and theology, these doctrines are in need of my review.

ACQUAVIVA

May I ask why?

POPE PAUL

No.

Acquaviva keeps trying to turn away, but the Pope forces eye contact.

POPE PAUL (CONT'D)

Also, we must do something about the title of your Order.

ACQUAVIVA

The title?

POPE PAUL

Yes, the name Order of the Jesuits, Society of Jesus, it is demeaning to the Holy Savior, don't you think?

ACQUAVIVA

I think not. What would you have be the name of the Order that wants nothing more than the promulgation of His faith?

POPE PAUL

I believe a name after your founder, Ignatius of Loyola, would be more respectful.

ACQUAVIVA

As?

POPE PAUL

Ignatine Order. Yes. Ignatine Order. Much more self-effacing. Have it changed.

ACQUAVIVA

We will... pray on it, Your Holiness. Nine days of prayer are appropriate.

Pope Paul turns to leave, disgusted. Scaglia opens the door for the Pope.

INT. VATICAN - PAPAL BED CHAMBERS - NIGHT

Pope Paul tosses in his sleep and opens his eyes to find...

SCAGLIA

Smiling down on him.

SCAGLIA

It is the ninth day, dear Pope.

Scaglia covers Pope Paul's face with a pillow. Pope Paul struggles for breath beneath.

SCAGLIA

This is the answer to the prayers of the Jesuits. Father General Acquaviva prefers to keep the name Society of Jesus.

EXT. GALILEO'S HOME - STREET - DAY

Galileo steps from a carriage, finely dressed and groomed. He pays the driver who delivers his bags and goes to the door of his house.

INT. GALILEO'S HOME - LIVING CHAMBER - DAY

Galileo enters.

Maria, cooking at the fireplace, turns to see Galileo.

GALILEO

My love.

He moves towards her. She puts up her hand.

MARIA

Have you come to marry me and take me to Florence with you?

He hesitates. He's lost.

GALILEO

I've been dismissed by the House of de'Medici and...

Maria begins a barrage with the spoon in her hand and continues throwing every household utensil she can find.

MARIA

Get out! You Bastard! Get out!

EXT. GALILEO'S HOME - STREET - DAY

Galileo exits, slamming the door against Maria's projectiles.

EXT. VENICE - GRAND CANAL - SAINT MARK'S SQUARE - NIGHT

Galileo steps off the gondola into a nightmare. The few torches lit cast a gloomy light. The square in front of Saint Mark's is a morgue, hundreds of bodies in long lines. PRIESTS giving scores of DEAD their last rites. WORKERS spreading lime on the corpses. GONDOLAS bring more BODIES.

INT. DUCAL PALACE - HALL OF THE COLLEGE - DAY

The Doge addresses Galileo from a dark window as he looks out on his dark city.

DOGE

The Jesuits are back. The citizens believe the propaganda they spread. Haven't you heard? This plague was cast on the city because the Jesuits were expelled. It's a wonder I haven't been assassinated by some zealot. I have nothing for you, Galileo, unless you have a cure for the plague.

INT. PAULO SCARPI'S CHAMBERS - NIGHT

Galileo finds Paulo dead in his bed, a smile on his face. Galileo goes to touch his scarred temple, but stops his hand above Paulo's face.

INT. TAVERNA - NIGHT

Galileo enters. The taverna is now an abandoned shell. He sits down where he once sat with Paulo and first saw Maria. He lays his head in his arms on the table. A madman SCREAMS as he runs by outside. Galileo doesn't react.

EXT. HILLTOP - DAY

In the morning mist, Galileo at his telescope aims his telescope at the surrounding countryside.

Through the telescope he sees:

A TOWN - SHUTTERED

A HOUSE - ON FIRE

A STREET - LITTERED WITH DEAD BODIES

Being nibbled on by rats.

MARIA (V.O.)

Dearest Galileo. After twenty-three years and three children by you, I am finally to be wed. You can't imagine my happiness. Giovanni Bartoluzzi is a nice man and we're going to invite all of Padua, except you, you bastard. I hope both you and your mother contract the Plague. By the way, both your daughters have taken their vows at the Monastery of San Matteo. I hope you approve. I will do what I can to keep your son, Vincenzo, away from your influence. All my love, Maria.

VENICE - GRAY AND STILL

Several buildings on fire.

THE SUN

The orange globe's first appearance over the Adriatic Sea. It continues to rise through the morning mist.

GALILEO (V.O.)

To my kindred spirit, Rene Descartes. Dear Rene, without you, I would be isolated in a world that cannot understand what I have seen.

(MORE)

GALILEO(cont'd)

I cannot help but look into the sun as I am witnessing phenomena as yet to be explained. Black areas, moving spots. Dare I conclude that the sun is spinning?

GALILEO

Takes his burning eye off the telescope lens and squeezes it shut in pain, then returns to look at the sun again.

INT. VATICAN CORRIDOR - DAY

Tommaso, Grassi and Bellarmino walk following a large group of other Cardinals into a meeting room.

BELLARMINO

I should be made Pope. I'm adored by the followers.

GRASSI

With deepest respect, that's only because they don't know you, Cardinal Bellarmino.

TOMMASO

He's right, Cardinal Grassi, he should be Pope. We need a Pope who will keep this church whole!

BELLARMINO

If not me, who?

Grassi stops and produces a letter. Bellarmino and Tommaso devour the contents as they walk.

GRASSI

There are sixteen Cardinals indisposed by malaria. A split vote and that buffoon, Maffeo, is Pope. We have orders from the Father General.

Grassi strides ahead.

TOMMASO

(To Bellarmino.)

What does that hermit General know?

BELLARMINO

When I'm Pope, he'll be elated.

EXT. VATICAN - CONCLAVE OF THE CARDINALS - ROOF - DAY

White smoke rises from the chimney.

STREET BELOW

Disinterested ROMAN CITIZENS glance up, shake their heads and move on.

INT. VATICAN - CONCLAVE OF THE CARDINALS - DOORWAY - DAY

Grassi bursts through the door, one angry man.

Next, Cardinal Maffeo exits in a stately manner blessing the other Cardinals that have come to congratulate him.

Last, Bellarmino and Tommaso exit, embarrassed and ashamed.

INT. BELLARMINO'S BED CHAMBER - NIGHT

Bellarmino tosses in his sleep and opens his eyes to find...

SCAGLIA

Smiling down on him.

BELLARMINO

No! No!

SCAGLIA

The Father General was elated.

EXT. COUNTRY ROAD - CARRIAGE - NIGHT

Galileo riding atop. He looks out into the night, smiling. He cannot help but open and read a letter, repeatedly.

CREMONINI (V.O.)

Galileo, have you cast your own horoscope as of late? After the mysterious death of Pope Paul, your friend, Maffeo, has been elevated, he has taken the name Pope Urban. The aging Cardinal Bellarmino recently departed of natural causes.

(MORE)

CREMONINI (cont'd)

Best of all, I have at long last secured the Holy Office's approval of your magnificent work, Starry Messenger. Pope Urban and Rome await your arrival.

INT. VATICAN - PAPAL RECEPTION CHAMBER - DAY

Tommaso and Grassi are allowed to enter and hear Maffeo, now POPE URBAN, SINGING along with the VOICES of two Boys, his nephews: Cardinal BASILIO, 7, and Cardinal ROBERTO, 10. Cardinal FRANCESCO, 19, is a playful older cousin to the two child Cardinals. All three wear red vestments.

Pope Urban ends the song, exhausted.

POPE URBAN

No more! No more! Now, we have prepared a banquet in honor of your Ordinations.

(Seeing Tommaso and Grassi.)

Yes, Cardinals, yes! We have some chores?

GRASSI

Indeed, Your Holiness.

(Pause.)

Costumes?

POPE URBAN

No! No! Let me introduce my brother's sons, Cardinals Basilio and Antonio. And, my brother-in-law, Cardinal Francesco. Your newest peers.

BASILIO

Can I see my Mama now?

POPE URBAN

Yes! Yes! Our parents are all going to join us! Now, be good Cardinals and run along!

Basilio and Roberto scream with joy and run off.

FRANCESCO

May I stay?

POPE URBAN

Why certainly, Francesco.

Grassi and Tommaso size up Francesco, who does the same to them.

POPE URBAN (CONT'D)
They were ordained this morning.
Oh! I was most distressed to hear
of the untimely death of your
Cardinal Bellarmino!

GRASSI
Congratulations, Your Holiness.

TOMMASO
And, we gratefully accept your
condolences.

POPE URBAN
Yes! It was a most tedious task
finding all three open positions.
But, I couldn't do for one and not
another. Dear, dear, not.
(Pause.)
So, why are we here? I have a
party to attend.

GRASSI
It is protocol for Your Holiness to
review the activities and plans of
the Society of Jesus.

POPE URBAN
We must support France in her
battles to regain what Luther
plundered.

TOMMASO
At your word, Your Holiness, we are
at war.

POPE URBAN
Excellent. What about heresy?
Still rooting it out, I hope?

GRASSI
Both near and far.

POPE URBAN
Carry on! In God's name, carry on!

Pope Urban scurries off.

EXT. ROME - VIA DI CONCILIAZIONE - DAY

Title: "Rome, Reconciliation Way, 1625"

With the Castle Saint Angelo in the b.g., Galileo rides atop a magnificent horse-drawn carriage. He is showered with flowers and flower petals. Brightly-colored pageant banners fly at his side. He waves and throws kisses to...

AN OVERWHELMING CROWD OF ROMANS

Who fill the street and lean out of windows CHEERING. Many wave copies of Galileo's book "STARRY MESSENGER."

CROWD

Bravo, Starry Messenger! Bravo,
Galileo!

GALILEO'S POV - THE VATICAN

The Obelisk, now centered in the square before Saint Peter's.

SAINT PETER'S SQUARE

Crowded with Romans cheering Galileo.

STEP OF SAINT PETER'S

Galileo mounting the steps to...

POPE URBAN (MAFFEO)

Who waits for him with out stretched arms.

TOMMASO AND GRASSI

Grudgingly applauding, we see a plan behind their smiles.

POPE URBAN AND GALILEO

Embrace and a ROAR goes up from the Crowd.

INT. SANT'ANGELO TORTURE CHAMBER - DAY

De Dominis is wrestled in by two Deacons.

DE DOMINIS

But, the Pope, the Pope has given me special dispensation. I was forgiven. I was forgiven.

Scaglia comes forward to De Dominis.

SCAGLIA

The late Pope, he gave you, Father De Dominis. But under the new Pope, we pay you back for the book on Trent.

EXT. VATICAN - TOWER OF THE WINDS - DAY

Maffeo and Galileo enjoy a moment alone. A sharp line of sunlight penetrates through a hole in the ceiling and lands at Galileo's feet.

POPE URBAN

This is, perhaps, the most holy place of the Reformed Church. It was here, I understand, that Pope Gregory and Clavius began what we continue today. They changed the calendar to reflect the truth.

GALILEO

I knew Clavius, he was a kind man. Pope Urban, is it time again?

POPE URBAN

Time for?

GALILEO

As I was honored on the street called Reconciliation, I wondered, would my good friend and learned superior allow for another reconciliation, between tradition and knowledge?

POPE URBAN

Oh, that I could understand. That the whole world could understand what you know, Galileo.

(MORE)

POPE URBAN(cont'd)

But we must proceed carefully, in
God's name. Yes! Yes, Galileo! It
will soon be time.

INT. JESUIT HEADQUARTERS - CORRIDOR - DAY

Scaglia carries a tray of food and knocks on Acquaviva's
chamber door. Acquaviva opens the door cautiously, his eyes
now wide, hollow, insane. He takes the tray. He SNIFFS the
food warily.

ACQUAVIVA

Has it been tasted?

SCAGLIA

Of course.

ACQUAVIVA

Don't lie to me!

Acquaviva picks up a morsel of food and brings it to his
mouth. His hand SHAKES with fear. He cannot eat. He looks
at Scaglia, then the tray again.

ACQUAVIVA (CONT'D)

Leave me.

INT. HOSPITAL - WARD - NIGHT

Cremonini making his rounds, Galileo at his side.

CREMONINI

You're certain the Pope has given
his approval?

GALILEO

Without question. But he said it
must be done carefully. I want the
Holy Office involved every step of
the way. That's why I need you,
Doctor.

CREMONINI

I'd be honored.

GALILEO

This is crucial. The Holy Office
is the only conduit to the Pope.
You must get accurate information
on the Pope's reaction to every
sentence, to every word.

CREMONINI

I understand. May God be with you.

Galileo walks away.

GALILEO

Thank you.

(Turning back.)

Really, Doctor, you must do something about the odor in here.

CREMONINI

Well, yes. And, also, dear pupil, I believe you're dead wrong about comets.

GALILEO

You might be right, again.

CREMONINI

I am. Little bastard.

INT. VATICAN - PAPAL MEETING CHAMBER - NIGHT

Title: "The Vatican, 1630"

Pope Urban sits at a large table, he is besieged by Grassi on one side, Tommaso on the left. In the b.g. are the windows looking out on Saint Peter's Square.

POPE URBAN

I don't want complexities, they... they muddle my thoughts. Tell me simply.

GRASSI

Germany. We must move against the Lutheran strongholds there swiftly.

TOMMASO

Or this war could last another ten years.

POPE URBAN

Twenty years! I can't bear the thought. Cardinal Grassi, what does Father General Acquaviva think? Why is he not here?

GRASSI

He... he sent us. He is seeing to the mundane business of the Church to leave you free for spiritual concerns.

POPE URBAN

Oh, yes, of course.

TOMMASO

Your Holiness, the College has completed its examination of Galileo's last work, the Starry Messenger.

POPE URBAN

Wonderful, wasn't it? Well, at least what I understood of it.

TOMMASO

Yes, mainly. But, there is a small portion that... well, I won't bother you with it.

POPE URBAN

Galileo is my friend, tell me.

TOMMASO

One section is a direct assault on the doctrine of the Holy Eucharist, I'm afraid.

GRASSI

This can't be ignored.

POPE URBAN

Let him know, he will make amends.

TOMMASO

Very well. We understand he's begun a new work, with your approval.

POPE URBAN

Well, if I inspired him. And I do.

GRASSI

But he's still under Papal directive to avoid "motion," is he not?

POPE URBAN

Well...

TOMMASO

You see motion, here is where we have troubles. Jesuit science agrees with what is in the Bible, but this... this can never.

POPE URBAN

Well... you will review his work carefully before you bring it to me.

GRASSI

An excellent suggestion.

EXT. HILLTOP - NIGHT

Galileo at his telescope, a smile on his face.

VENUS

A crescent waxing full and then waning as would the moon.

GALILEO (V.O.)

To my compatriot, Rene Descartes. I now hold indisputable evidence that the planets, including Earth, are circling the sun as Copernicus theorized so many years ago. Venus waxes and wanes as does our moon. Proof beyond doubt that it circles the sun. Rene, we are all turning and circling the sun.

INT. CASTLE SANIT ANGELO PRISON - STAIRWAY - NIGHT

Grassi watches as the Deacons toss De Dominis down the long, steep flight of stones.

BOTTOM OF STAIRS

DEACON

He's dead.

GRASSI

Burn him anyway. He's bleeding and the Church abhors bloodshed.

INT. VATICAN CORRIDOR - DAY

Bathed in sunlight, hushed in opulence and priceless art.

Dressed like twins, in black robes and wide-brimmed hats, two clerics: Simplicio and Sagredo walk together.

GALILEO (V.O.)

Dear Rene, Pope Urban, my friend Maffeo, is most encouraging. I will finally present the Copernican System, that I have no doubt is correct, for all to see. To do this, I have created two characters: Simplicio, an Aristotelian, who is a bit of a buffoon, and Sagredo, an open-minded Venetian.

INT. VATICAN - PAPAL RECEPTION CHAMBER - DAY

A soft KNOCK on the great doors before him prompts Pope Urban to mark the Bible he reads. The Pope watches as Sagredo and Simplicio enter, pay their respects to him, and retreat several steps to commence their duties: MODELS of the Aristotelian Universe and the Copernican System at their sides.

GALILEO (V.O.)

In the course of their dialogue they will debate both sides. I will draw no conclusions. I will leave the rest to learned minds to decide.

INT. JESUIT HEADQUARTERS - CORRIDOR - ACQUAVIVA'S DOOR - DAY

Grassi and Tommaso talk to Acquaviva through the door.

GRASSI

Thank you for your good council, Father General.

TOMMASO

We were so pleased you could see us today.

ACQUAVIVA (O.S.)

Report.

GRASSI

The war continues. Our allies gain a principality and then lose two.

TOMMASO

The plague nears, Father General, what should be said? What should be done?

ACQUAVIVA (O.S.)

The Lord God can be vengeful. We are not doing all we can, Cardinals. We are not.

(Screaming.)

End the heresy!

Acquaviva pounds on the door.

ACQUAVIVA (O.S.) (CONT'D)

Good God, end the heresy!

(Crying in pain.)

End the heresy, before it ends us all!

INT. VATICAN - HOLY OFFICE - ARCHIVES - NIGHT

Grassi, by lantern light, opens GALILEO'S FOLIO and removes a PARCHMENT DOCUMENT that bears Bellarmino's signature. Grassi then sets the parchment afire with the lantern.

INT. VATICAN - HOLY OFFICE - DAY

Cremonini hands over manuscript pages of Galileo's "DIALOGUE CONCERNING THE TWO CHIEF WORLD-SYSTEMS," to Tommaso.

TOMMASO

Marking sections of the Galileo manuscript, and handing the pages off to...

GRASSI

Who smiles.

INT. VATICAN - PAPAL RECEPTION CHAMBER - DAY

Grassi enters to find Pope Urban being fitted by THREE TAILORS with the most ostentatious of new vestments.

GRASSI

Reads Galileo's pages to Pope Urban.

GRASSI

"Merely taking care of us is adequate work for God, you say? Sagredo responds in exasperation. We take too much upon ourselves if we believe that, Simplicio. I should not like to tie God's hands so, by saying that He has no other cares to attend to than those of the human race alone."

Grassi and Pope Urban laugh together. Pope Urban claps his hands together like a child. The tailors find it impossible to do their work as the Pope never stops moving.

POPE URBAN

Excellent! He's not stated support of motion?

GRASSI

No, certainly not, it's all hypothetical, pure supposition.

POPE URBAN

Wonderful. I do so enjoy you sorting through the good bits for me, Father. If I had to read it all, I'd be too tired for little else. Keep encouraging him.

GRASSI

I will, Your Holiness.

INT. VATICAN - HOLY OFFICE - DAY

Tommaso applies the red wax seal of the Holy Office to a letter.

INT. FLORENCE - PRINTER'S SHOP - DAY

A large operation with several presses. PRINTERS working presses, setting type and binding books.

A title page of a book is hung on a line to dry:

TITLE PAGE: "DIALOGUE ON THE TWO CHIEF WORLD SYSTEMS"

Galileo paces, holding the letter from the Holy Office.

GALILEO

I've made every change they requested.

CREMONINI

You have.

GALILEO

You told me you got nothing but glowing reports from Maffeo.

CREMONINI

It's true, but you cannot release this publication without...

GALILEO

Permission.

Galileo thinks, then picks up a first version of the "DIALOGUE..."

GALILEO (CONT'D)

Take this to Maffeo, directly to the Pope, he'll understand.

INT. VATICAN - HOLY OFFICE - DAY

Cremonini, holding the printed copy of "DIALOGUE..." approaches Tommaso.

CREMONINI

Cardinal Tommaso, I would like to give this to His Holiness directly, at his friend, Galileo's, request.

TOMMASO

The Pope is very busy, Father Cremonini. You may have to wait days, months.

CREMONINI

Please...

TOMMASO

Give it to me. I'll make sure that it gets to him.

Cremonini hands over the book.

EXT. FLORENCE - STREET - DAY

Galileo walks down the street, shrouded in a thick mist of fog and smoke. He stops a PEASANT WOMAN passing in the opposite direction and places a medicine bag on a leather necklace over her head. She makes the sign of the Cross and hurries off.

A mule cart comes into view through the fog. Galileo gives the DRIVER a medicine bag. The cart, loaded with bodies, moves slowly on.

Galileo comes to a doorway of a shuttered home. He knocks on the door hard with his fist, drapes a medicine necklace over the handle. And goes on to the next door.

The door behind opens a crack and a HAND takes the necklace.

Brother Michael, now 80, face full of buboes, staggers through the fog toward Galileo. Galileo holds out a necklace with both hands to put over his head.

Michael recognizes Galileo.

MICHAEL

You, you are the reason for this.
This man gives curses! Defrocked!
He was defrocked! He conjures
Satan with his glasses! This man
gives curses! He sees Satan! He
sees Satan!

EXT. HILLSIDE VIA - NIGHT

Twilight. Galileo, whipping for speed, drives a mule-drawn cart up and away from the City of Florence, burning in the b.g.

INT. VATICAN - PAPAL MEETING CHAMBER - NIGHT

Pope Urban paces as Tommaso, Grassi and Francesco sit at the meeting table.

FRANCESCO

We need bronze for more cannons,
Uncle.

TOMMASO

We are bleeding the coffers dry.

FRANCESCO

There's plenty of bronze...

The others look to Francesco.

FRANCESCO (CONT'D)

In the Pantheon.

GRASSI

We'd have more riots. And that's just the point. The populace is confused, too much change too quickly. And, I'm afraid, this...

Grassi puts Galileo's published book "DIALOGUE..." on the table.

POPE URBAN

Cardinal Grassi, you're confusing me, again. What does Galileo have to do with the war against the Lutherans?

TOMMASO

We couldn't tell until all the parts were one, but... Galileo, he advocates motion.

GRASSI

And, that's not the whole of it. Your Holiness, when it's all read, one thing is certain.

POPE URBAN

What's that?

GRASSI

Sagredo, the smart one, is Galileo. The fool, Simplicio, is obviously you.

POPE URBAN

What on Earth do you mean? Let me see that!

TOMMASO

The language, it is your language.

GRASSI

The words, they are your words.
Are they not?

TOMMASO

Here, "I admit that Sagredo's
thoughts are ingenious. But I do
not consider them true or
convincing."

GRASSI

And here, "The further our
discussion goes, I must confess,
that sometimes the more confused I
become."

TOMMASO

And, again, here, "I only search
for a simple and ready
explanation."

POPE URBAN

They sound to be my words.
(Pause.)
They are my words.

TOMMASO

Who should the people follow, the
teachings of the Church? Or this
science of Galileo's?

POPE URBAN

What do you mean? Why is that the
choice?

GRASSI

Your Holiness, you are absolutely
right! This is not about you
choosing between Galileo and the
Church. No, you must choose the
Church or the destruction of the
Church. There is no choice, Your
Holiness.

POPE URBAN

The further our discussion goes, I
must confess, that sometimes the
more confused I become.

INT. VATICAN - HOLY OFFICE - NIGHT

Galileo approaches Tommaso.

GALILEO

I have come to see the Pope.

TOMMASO

Yes, we have been wondering what has delayed you. Tommaso walks him out of the office.

INT. VATICAN CORRIDOR - CONTINUOUS

Galileo and Tommaso walk together.

GALILEO

Have you heard from Cremonini?

TOMMASO

We have. This way.

INT. VATICAN - INQUISITION TRIAL CHAMBERS - DAY

Title: "Inquisitional Tribunal, 1633"

Galileo, now 69, comes forward to testify in a stream of sunlight from a high, narrow window. He speaks to a conclave of TEN CARDINALS, including Tommaso, Grassi, and Francesco.

TOMMASO

Do you know why you were ordered to come to Rome?

GALILEO

I assume the reason is to account for the publication of my recent work.

TOMMASO

Is this the book?

A deacon takes it to Galileo.

GALILEO

This is my book and all within.

TOMMASO

Were you in Rome in the year 1616?

GALILEO

I came to Rome of my own accord. I consulted with Pope Urban on the proper hold of the Church with regard to motion. I consulted with several Cardinals.

TOMMASO

Were you notified of their decision?

GALILEO

I was. The Holy Congregation of the Index holds this opinion of motion to be repugnant to Holy Scripture. It is to be held only as suppositional.

TOMMASO

Your deposition here today and your book are to be remanded to the Holy Roman Inquisition.

GRASSI

You will be held pending further action. You have nine days to prepare you defense.

GALILEO

Excellent. I thank the Tribunal.

INT. JESUIT HEADQUARTERS - ACQUAVIVA'S CHAMBERS - NIGHT

The POUNDING of a ramrod at the door in complete darkness. The door caves in revealing Scaglia and his Deacons. Tommaso and Grassi rush into the chamber holding lanterns to illuminate the darkness. The floor and wall are covered with rotting food. Cockroaches and rats scatter running from the light. Grassi and Tommaso find Acquaviva dead, skin and bones, lying in his bed.

INT. VATICAN - INQUISITION TRIAL CHAMBERS - DAY

Galileo comes forward to testify in a stream of sunlight from a high, narrow window. He speaks to the Inquisitional Conclave of Tommaso, Grassi, Francesco and the seven additional Cardinals in attendance.

GALILEO

Let me begin by saying this:
Nicholas Copernicus spent more
years on the difficult study of the
planetary movements than all of you
here have spent days!

TABLE OF CARDINALS

A belligerent Galileo studies the commotion he has caused.

GALILEO

Let me now explain to you why it
does not necessarily follow that
the sun is closer to the firmament
than the moon, unless we first
assume that the Earth is at the
center of all. In doing so I will
be pointing out the Church's
scientific error...

GRASSI AND TOMMASO

Exchange pleased looks.

SHAFTS OF LIGHT

From the room's windows moves across the floor.

GALILEO

GALILEO

The opponents of Copernicus make
certain calculations based on the
premise that, although the Earth's
motion in its annual orbit produces
some curious and extremely large
changes in the case of the planets,
it does not cause any similar
effects in the case of the fixed
stars...

TABLE OF CARDINALS

Trying to stay awake.

SHAFTS OF LIGHT

Turn brilliant orange with the setting of the sun.

GALILEO

GALILEO

If you have followed what I have said so far, then you will understand without my help the fallacy that remains intact...

TABLE OF CARDINALS

Most sleeping, others drift with their own thoughts. SERVANTS light candles in the darkening room.

GALILEO

Is the Copernican view in direct opposition to the Holy Scriptures? I don't believe this is the case and I have never had any opinion or intention but that held by the most venerable Fathers and Doctors of the Church.

TOMMASO (O.S.)

You were ordered by the late Cardinal Bellarmino not to publish your views on motion.

GALILEO

That is correct, but specific to the motion of the Earth and sun. In this, my recent work, which was completely reviewed by the Holy Congregation of the Index...

TOMMASO

And, no permission to publish was granted.

GALILEO

I only present the case for each side as supposition. There is a document that relates to my injunction by the late Cardinal Bellarmino specifically stating...

The Cardinals look to each other.

GRASSI

There is no document to that effect
of which the Holy Office or this
Tribunal is aware.

GALILEO

But, there is!
(Looking to the Cardinals)
But, there is!

The Cardinals are stone-faced.

INT. CASTLE SAINT ANGELO PRISON - PASSAGEWAY - DAY

Galileo, proud and self-confident, is escorted by Grassi and
two Deacons.

A Deacon unlocks a doorway.

INT. CASTLE SAINT ANGELO PRISON - TORTURE CHAMBER -
CONTINUOUS

Galileo follows Grassi into the chamber. Galileo stops in
his tracks, but the Deacons push him forward for a close look
at...

CREMONINI

Nearly nude and harnessed to the rack. Cremonini's eye hangs
by the optical nerve. A foot and several fingers dangle dead
below clamps that cut their blood supply. His abdomen is cut
and several of his bowels are exposed. Grassi and the
Deacons leave. Galileo, who forces himself to go to
Cremonini.

GALILEO

What have I done to you, dear
Doctor?

CREMONINI

I'm glad to see you. Hold on to
that which is dear to you, Galileo.
Hold on.

Galileo can only cry and nod.

INT. VATICAN - PAPAL MEETING CHAMBER - DAY

Grassi places documents before Pope Urban, who looks up from a stack of mail.

POPE URBAN

Look here, Grassi, a fine note from Father De Dominis, thanking me for the splendid accommodations.

GRASSI

De Dominis was executed last month, Your Holiness.

POPE URBAN

My! What a polite man. Oh, well. God rest his soul.

GRASSI

The Tribunal's report. Galileo is to be condemned.

POPE URBAN

Did Tommaso cast my horoscope?

GRASSI

Yes. This will be to your benefit, Holiness.

POPE URBAN

And, if he abjures, Cardinal Grassi, I want you to spare him.

GRASSI

If those are your wishes, Holiness.

POPE URBAN

(Sighing.)

He was a good friend.

Grassi takes the documents and walks to leave.

POPE URBAN (CONT'D)

He will recant, will he not, Cardinal?

Grassi, his back to Pope Urban, smiles.

GRASSI

He is a humble man, Your Holiness.

INT. CASTLE SAINT ANGELO PRISON - CELL - NIGHT

Virginia, now 33, dressed as a nun, is let in. Galileo embraces his daughter.

VIRGINIA

Papa, you must listen to me. I have the Pope's word. Your life will be spared...

GALILEO

No, no...

VIRGINIA

...but you must recant.

GALILEO

No. You don't understand. I am nothing if I recant. I would not be your grandfather's son, Virginia. This is everything I've been taught. My vow to God and Man. My life...

VIRGINIA

It will just be over. Where does that leave... everything!

GALILEO

You'd have me lie, before my God and Church? I can show you God's creation. Would you have me lie to God's face? Would you have me lie?

VIRGINIA

Yes, Papa, yes. Christ Jesus forgives all sinners.

GALILEO

You ask too much of me, my child. You ask too much.

INT. VATICAN - INQUISITION TRIAL CHAMBERS - DAY

Galileo stands before the gathering of Cardinal Inquisitors, including Grassi, Tommaso and Francesco.

His boastful, determined attitude in full force.

GALILEO

I, Galileo, son of the late
Vincenzo Galilei, swear that I have
always believed all that the Holy
Catholic Church does teach.

GRASSI

Working to hide his pleasure.

GALILEO

GALILEO (CONT'D)

I wrote and published a book in
which I bring forward very
persuasive arguments that the sun
is at the center of the Universe
and that the Earth is not at the
center and that it moves. I have
been judged vehemently suspected of
heresy!

Galileo takes a long look at the Inquisitors, and lastly
fixes on Grassi.

INSERT:

EXT. FLORENCE - STREET - NIGHT

Galileo, at 69, running, out of breath, turns a corner.

A hooded Executioner stops walking and pulls off his hood.

Galileo turns the corner, just in time to see the Executioner
unmasked is Grassi.

Galileo, frozen in his tracks, stares at Grassi.

BACK TO SCENE:

GALILEO (V.O.)

It's him. He wants me to... He
wants me to...

The Cardinals stare at Galileo. Galileo pauses to think for
a long moment, then slowly gets down on his knees.

The Inquisitor Cardinals' faces change from stoic to curious.

GALILEO (CONT'D)

(Aimed at Grassi.)

Therefore... wishing to remove from the minds of your Eminences and all faithful Christians this vehement suspicion, reasonably conceived against me... I abjure...

GRASSI

Shocked, then livid.

GALILEO

GALILEO (CONT'D)

I abjure with a sincere heart and unfeigned faith these errors and heresies.

Galileo ends, pleased with himself and satisfied. Antonio and Tommaso exchange smiles. Grassi angered can't believe Galileo is out of his reach.

INT. PARIS - RENE DESCARTES' STUDY - DAY

Title: "Paris, Descartes' Study"

RENE DESCARTES, 37, long-haired, mustached, with a broad face and large nose, writes at his desk. An ASSISTANT, a boy in his teens, enters excitedly.

In FRENCH with English subtitles:

ASSISTANT

Monsieur Descartes, we have word.
Galileo has been condemned.

DESCARTES

Not because of motion?

ASSISTANT

Yes, specifically motion.

Descartes is in shock. He takes his manuscript "LE MONDE," and places it on a shelf.

LE MONDE MANUSCRIPT

Collects dust in TIME LAPSE.

EXT. FLORENCE - GALILEO'S COTTAGE - DAY

Title: "Florence, House Arrest, 1641"

Nestled in the hills and quiet surroundings.

John MILTON, 33, the young, but already famous English writer, climbs the path to the doorway.

INT. GALILEO'S COTTAGE - WORKSHOP/STUDY - DAY

Virginia shows Milton in to see her father, Galileo, now 77, and completely blind. Galileo, with a knowing smile and a happy disposition, tinkers with a brass clock, an open design with exposed parts and gears.

VIRGINIA

Papa, your visitor is here.

GALILEO

You would be Mr. Milton.

MILTON

Yes, sir, it's an honor.

GALILEO

The honor is mine to meet the modern Dante.

Virginia serves tea.

GALILEO (CONT'D)

Now, why have you come to see the crotchety old litigator?

Galileo fumbles with the tea.

MILTON

May I assist you with that?

GALILEO

You're most kind. Take good heed, don't look at the Sun too long.

MILTON

I won't, sir.

Galileo waits.

MILTON (CONT'D)

I'll get to the point.

GALILEO

Please do.

MILTON

Do you regret abjuring?

GALILEO

Everyone asks the same question.
Do I appear to have regrets?

MILTON

I have to say, no, but first looks
can be deceiving. I believe fear
can rip the mind apart from the
soul.

GALILEO

Most poetic. Mr. Milton, I sense
only a confession will satisfy you.

(Pause.)

At that moment, before my accusers,
there was but a single way to win.
It doesn't matter to me whether you
or anyone ever understands. I'll
say this.

(Pause.)

I was, I am, and I will forever be
God's soldier. From the time of my
trial, a quiet, more resourceful
soldier, but I've fought on.

(Pause.)

Good day, kind sir.

Milton realizes his faux pau and retreats.

MILTON

Good day, sir.

Milton leaves and Virginia re-enters.

VIRGINIA

Is everything all right, Papa?

GALILEO

Just fine, my dear.

Galileo gently pushes the pendulum on the clock.

VIRGINIA

It's a beautiful clock, but why the
pendulum?

GALILEO

A minor innovation of mine, it will
run more accurately.

VIRGINIA

But for how long?

GALILEO

As long as there is a hand to tend
it... and the Earth moves.

PENDULUM CLOCK

GALILEO (O.S.)

(Pause.)

Would you take a letter to my
friend, Rene.

VIRGINIA (O.S.)

Yes, Papa.

GALILEO'S SMILE

EXT. HILLTOP - NIGHT

Galileo, with his blind eyes, stands stretched back looking
up at the heavens.

STARRY SKY

EARTH

The beautiful blue Earth from the dark reaches of outer
space, the view of Earth known to Space-Age man.

JUPITER

The giant planet circled by four moons, the realistic moons
of Jupiter known from the Galileo Spacecraft photos.

SATURN

And its beautiful rings.

VENUS

A luminous crescent.

MERCURY

A brilliant sojourner.

MARS

A red globe.

THE SUN

A huge, raging gaseous inferno.

THE SOLAR SYSTEM

From far beyond: The PLANETS circling the sun, the ASTEROID BELT, and blazing COMETS.

THE MILKY WAY GALAXY

Its billions of spiraling stars.

INT. VATICAN - PAPAL RECEPTION CHAMBER - DAY

Pope John Paul listens as the discussion between Sagredo and Simplicio disintegrates into bickering.

SIMPLICIO

This has been a complete fabrication!

SAGREDO

I took a little dramatic liberty!

SIMPLICIO

Your Holiness, everything is relative. We're the center of the Universe if we want to be.

Pope John Paul leaves, disgusted with both Sagredo and Simplicio.

SAGREDO
Do scientists confuse you with the
facts, Simplicio?

They wrestle each other to the ground.

EXT. VATICAN - SAINT PETER'S SQUARE - DAY

A huge crowd gathered.

SAGREDO (V.O.)
When Maffeo, Pope Urban the Eighth,
died in 1644...

TERRACE - CARDINAL FRANCESCO

FRANCESCO
The Pope has passed on, glory be to
God in the highest.

CROWD

Shouting for joy, a wild celebration.

SAGREDO (V.O.)
...the citizens of Rome danced in
celebration through the night.

SIMPLICIO
So?! What's your point?!

Titles:

"Galileo and Descartes went on to develop the modern
scientific method."

"In 1992, Pope John Paul II formally acknowledged the
Church's errors in the case of Galileo."

EXT. MOON - LUNAR LANDING MODULE - NIGHT - (STOCK)

NEIL ARMSTRONG in space suit, stands on the lunar surface.

He drops a FEATHER and a BALL.

ENHANCED: FEATHER AND BALL

Hitting the lunar surface at the same time.

ARMSTRONG

The electronic BEEP and ECHO of space communications.

ARMSTRONG
Galileo was right.

ASTRONAUTS

Jumping and playing on the moon.

Title: "Recent polls continue to show that nearly half of all Americans do not know that the Earth circles the sun once a year."

FADE TO BLACK.