

Tristram Winslade: An Elizabethan Catholic in Exile

by

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Thesis summary

The propensity of popular culture to privilege a narrative of glorious victories and righteous progress in accounts of England's Protestant Reformation is largely enabled by an unquestioning belief that the country was overwhelmingly anti-Catholic and anti-Spanish, and that its success was inherently a good thing. In recent times, the success of the Reformation has been used to assure Britons that in difficult times, such as the uncertainty surrounding Brexit, they have the strength to prevail. This trend is not only producing a sanitised, one-sided narrative that allows generalisations and incorrect assertions to flourish, but is also ensuring that the stories of those who were apparently so dangerous have been erased from history. The story of Cornwall in the sixteenth century is a case in point. Here, accounts of Cornwall during the reign of Elizabeth I assume that the violently Catholic response to the Reformation in 1549 had been crushed, that the population was pacified and the Catholic activists were rendered impotent.

The life story of Tristram Winslade challenges this assumption. Archival research and records and histories written from the 'other side', demonstrate the existence of an activist enclave of Cornish Catholics working for Spain and supporting a Catholic invasion of their homeland right up until the mid-1570s. It further shows that when this enclave was shut down, Winslade chose a life of exile and continued to work among the English Catholic exiles in Brussels, where he became close to the Spanish vice-regent and wrote a plan that may have led to the failed attempt to invade Cornwall in 1597. When peace brought the Anglo-Spanish conflict to an end, he appears to have rejected the Gunpowder plot in favour of another form of exile, this time in the form of a colony for English Catholics in north America.

Declaration

I certify that this thesis:

1. does not incorporate without acknowledgement any material previously submitted for a degree or diploma in any university; and
2. to the best of my knowledge and belief, does not contain any material previously published or written by another person except where due reference is made in the text.

Cheryl Hayden

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The research involved in this project would have been impossible without the support of numerous institutions and their professional and generous staff and volunteers. Foremost, Lara and her team at the document delivery service at Flinders University Library. I am also extremely grateful to: National Archives (U.K.). Kew, London; Cornwall Records Office; National Archives, Madrid; University of Queensland Social Sciences and Humanities Library; Mannix Library, Melbourne; Georgetown University Library, Washington D.C.; Stonyhurst College; Jesuits in Britain Archives; Rare Books and Manuscripts Library, University of Illinois at Urbana-Champaign; Constantine Historical Society; Constantine Museum; Historic England; Royal Albert Memorial Museum and Art Gallery, Exeter; the Faber Centre of Ignatian Spirituality, Brisbane. Particular gratitude is due to Janet Few, Buckland Brewer History Group; Elizabeth and David Kivell, Winslade Barton; Sister Maria Rosa-Pia, Lanherne; Bruce and Dom Winslade of Stroud; Lord Devon and Felicity Harper at Powderham Castle; Juan at the Livaria Olisipo, Lisbon.

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I would like to acknowledge Amazon UK's international bookshop service. Through Amazon, I was able to purchase a number of out-of-print and hard to find books that proved critical to my research. The Australian Government's decision to insist that they comply with our complex GST rules, while understandable, has now made it difficult for Australian scholars and researchers to access this massive store of printed material.

My Brisbane critique group has been critical to the ongoing creation of Tristram Winslade: thanks to Duncan Richardson, Rosanna Licari, Tamara Lazaroff, Andrew Leggett, Tanya Morton and Melissa Ashley. Thanks also to Sue Harvey and Maree Boyce.

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Introduction

Background

*'...an Englishman with a Spanish and traitorous heart.'*¹

In 1606, in the wake of the discovery of the Gunpowder Plot, England's Attorney-General Sir Edward Coke got to his feet at the trial of the Jesuit priest Henry Garnet and spewed forth a tirade of loathing that harked back nearly twenty years to the Spanish Armada. "Observe here," he commanded his audience, "that about the time of this invasion, there being in Spain met in consultation about that business, the Cardinal of Austria, the Duke of Medina, Count Fuentes, two Irish bishops, with sundry military men, and amongst others Winslade an Englishman..."²

The man being referred to was Tristram Winslade who, just months before Coke's outburst, had been recorded as having 'piously finished with this life' and been buried on 24 November 1605 in the chapel of the English College of Douai in Flanders.³ Who was this Englishman and what had happened in his life to lead him to a meeting such as Coke described? Why was he buried in a Catholic university chapel in Flanders? Was he a spy working in Flanders for England, or was he, as Coke believed, a traitor to his homeland?

As this research project will demonstrate, the rightful place of the name 'Tristram' within the Winslade family has for centuries confused and misled historians, as indeed it confused and misled me when I first came across it. The name 'Tristram Winslade' is almost

¹ Thomas Hughes. *History of the Society of Jesus in North America*. (London: Longman Green, 1908): 153.

² *A True and Perfect Relation of the Whole Proceedings against the Late Most Barbarous Traitors, Garnet a Jesuite, and His Confederats: Contayning Sundry Speeches Delivered by the Lords Commissioners at Their Arraignments, for the Better Satisfaction of Those That Were Hearers, as Occasion Was Offered; the Earle of Northampton's Speech Having Bene Enlarged Vpon Those Grounds Which Are Set Downe. And Lastly All That Passed at Garnets Execution*. (London: Robert Barker, 1606.) Accessed at Early English Books Online: http://gateway.proquest.com.ezproxy.flinders.edu.au/openurl?ctx_ver=Z39.88-2003&res_id=xri:eebo&rft_id=xri:eebo:image:132192:209

I have silently modified the seventeenth century spelling in Coke's speech. (Thomas Hughes adds 'with a Spanish and traitorous heart' to Coke's description. See footnote 1).

³ *Douay College Diaries: Third, Fourth and Fifth, 1598-1654, with the Rheims Report, 1579-80*. (English College, Douai, France: Burton, Edwin Hubert, 1870-1925; also: Great Britain: Williams Thomas Leighton, Catholic Record Society): 70. <https://archive.org/details/douaycollegediar10eng/>
Translation from Latin provided by Dr Michael Kelly.

entirely unknown to mainstream history, and yet within disparate narratives about English attempts towards a counter-Reformation it appears frequently. It appears not only in English records, but those of Spain, the Spanish Court in Brussels and the Vatican. It is attached to a wandering minstrel, an officer aboard the Spanish Armadas, a prisoner in the Tower of London and a proponent of a north American colony for English Catholics. He has even been associated with Shakespeare's *The Tempest*.⁴

I first encountered Tristram Winslade in previous research into the 1549 Prayer Book rebellion, during which the commons of Cornwall and Devon waged a significant armed revolt against Edward VI's English language prayer book.⁵ The name 'Tristram' appears in one of the earliest and most quoted, and yet most misunderstood, passages about his family. Written c. 1603 by Sir Richard Carew of Antony in Cornwall, it describes Tregarrick, an estate in the south of Cornwall, as

sometimes the Wideslades' [sic]⁶ inheritance, until the father's rebellion forfeited it to the Prince, and the Prince's largess rewarded therewith his subjects. Wideslade's son led a walking life with his harp to gentlemen's houses, wherethrough and by his other active qualities, he was entitled Sir Tristram; neither wanted he (as some say) a 'belle Isound,' the more aptly to resemble his pattern.⁷

The rebellious father in this account I recognised immediately as John Winslade who, with Humphrey Arundell, had been found guilty of high treason for leading an army of Cornish rebels and engaging in battle with the King's army. They were hanged, drawn and quartered at Tyburn in January 1549-50. The wandering harper suffering poverty through his father's attainder was William Winslade, himself a fully-grown man who had led his own troops in the

⁴ Dennis Taylor. 'Prospero's Island and the Catholic Exploration of America,' in *The Catholic Shakespeare?* (Lanham, Maryland: Rowman & Littlefield Publishers, 2013). 84-85.

⁵ The key sources for this rebellion include: Frances Rose-Troup. *The Western Rebellion of 1549*. (London: Smith, Elder & Co. 1913. University of Michigan Reprints); Julian Cornwall. *Revolt of the Peasantry 1549*. (London: Routledge & Kegan Paul, 1977); Barrett L. Beer. *Rebellion and Riot: popular disorder in England during the reign of Edward VI*. (Kent, Ohio: Kent State University Press, 1982).

⁶ The spelling of the surname is inconsistent in Fifteenth and Sixteenth Century sources. Wydeslade, Wideslade, Wyndeslade, Wynsladd, Wynslade and Winslade are all to be found. In his 1595 document, Tristram uses 'Winslade', and so I have done the same except when citing sources that use other variations.

⁷ Sir Richard Carew. *The Survey of Cornwall 1602*. (Launceston, U.K.: Tamar Books Reprint, 2000): 157.

very same rebellion.⁸ Carew seems to be suggesting that William was nicknamed ‘Sir Tristram’ because of the Cornish legend *Tristan and Isolde*, wherein Sir Tristan committed treason against King Mark of Cornwall by using his charms with the Queen Iseult. There was not, as far as can be discerned from Carew’s writing, any reference to a real person called Tristram Winslade. And yet, according to Frances Rose-Troup, who wrote what remains to this day the seminal account of the rebellion, there *was* a Tristram Winslade: he was William’s son.⁹ This posited a situation in which, depending on which came first, William Winslade was either nicknamed with the same name he had already given his first-born son, or he would use his nickname as a badge of honour and bestow it upon his first-born son as a message to his enemies.

This strangely contradictory turn of events melded neatly with another critical point of curiosity to enter my consciousness towards the end of writing my novel, *A Christmas Game*.¹⁰ In the throes of following the rebels and trying to live with them and their cause, the executions of Arundell and Winslade left me wondering what happened to their wives and children. Unaware of the real Tristram, I was particularly interested in the fates of Humphrey Arundell’s two sons, Humphrey and Richard, who were aged approximately seven and five years in 1549, and a daughter whose name is not recorded but who may have been the child recorded as having been born at the beginning of the rebellion.¹¹ Trusting Rose-Troup’s interpretation of her archival research, I began working on a novel that would explore the aftermath of the rebellion through the lives of these three children and started to explore a depressingly scant archive. Where were they? There was no mention of them in the official

⁸ *Barkley v Tubb and Mowhane*. STAC 5/B93/13. (Star Chamber. 28 Elizabeth). The court heard evidence relating to the Winslade family prior to 1544. George Tubbe, who had married into the family, told the court that William Winslade, prior to this time, had already married Jane Babington, ‘a nun professed’, without his father’s consent. This marriage may have occurred as early as 1539, when Jane’s nunnery was closed as part of the dissolution of the monasteries. From this detail we can conclude that William Winslade had turned 21 at some point between 1539 and 1544. Therefore, by 1549 he was a fully-grown man. For details of Jane Babington, *Calendar of Letters and Papers, Foreign and Domestic, Henry VIII*. Vol xiv, part I, no. 270/2. (London, Public Record Office). 1894. (My thanks to Professor Nicholas Orme).

⁹ Frances Rose-Troup. *The Western Rebellion*. 101, note 4.

¹⁰ Cheryl Hayden. *A Christmas Game*. (Redruth, U.K.: Palores Publications, 2012).

¹¹ Humphrey Arundell was at his home near Bodmin for his wife’s confinement when approached by local rebels to lead them. See Frances Rose-Troup. *Western Rebellion*. 123-124. For details of Arundell’s children: *Ibid* (notes): 102.

Tudor *Visitations*.¹² This is hardly surprising, as the purpose of the Herald's Visitations was to record the pedigrees of families who had the right to bear arms, and so we find that while Humphrey Arundell's widow's eight children to her second husband, Thomas Carey, appear in Visitations, his own children are entirely absent from the record.¹³ Hence, the rules around the right to bear arms silently ensure that anyone relying on *Visitations* for genealogical purposes will discover that the families of traitors have become 'extinct'.¹⁴ Like the Arundells of Helland, the Winslades – or at least the branch involving John and William – appeared to have become extinct after William Winslade, just as the brothers Lysons had pronounced.¹⁵ Not satisfied with this, I sent a query into the world of online genealogy. I waited, and while I waited, I began to find online references to a Tristram Winslade. But still the question remained: was he really a person in his own right, or simply an alias for his father?

Eighteen months later, long after I had given up hope of hearing from the descendants of families that were 'extinct', I received an email from someone called Winslade. A process of referral and discovery began, culminating in the arrival by email of twenty-four digitized pages of a Latin document apparently written somewhere in the Spanish empire in 1595 by a Tristram Winslade.¹⁶ As the English translation emerged from awkward sixteenth century

¹² *Visitation of the County of Devon 1564*,

<https://ukga.org/cgi-bin/browse.cgi?action=ViewRec&DB=13&bookID=136&page=57&submit=Submit>
The Visitations of Cornwall comprising the herald's visitations of 1530, 1573 and 1630. (Great Britain: William Pollard & Co. 1887). <http://ukga.org/england/Cornwall/visitations/>

¹³ Herald's Visitations and the College of Arms <http://www.medievalgenealogy.org.uk/guide/vis.shtml> .

For Thomas Cary and Elizabeth Arundell and their children: *Visitations of Cornwall*. 80.

<http://ukga.org/england/Cornwall/visitations/>

¹⁴ For example, Wikipedia uses the Visitations of Devon to conclude that Humphrey had no children. See https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Humphrey_Arundell. Not only did traitors' sons lose the right to bear arms, they were held to have tainted blood. A hearing into William Winslade's property, for example, was told that 'William Wideslade ought not to have the lands aforesaid for that his father was attainted and he in blood corrupted...' *Inquisition into the Property of William Widesladd esquire, a fugitive*. E 178/531. Court of Exchequer. 26 Elizabeth I. (1583-1584).

¹⁵ Rev. Daniel Lysons & Samuel Lysons. *Magna Britannia, being a concise topical account of Great Britain Vol. 3, Containing Cornwall*. (London: T. Cadell & W. Davies. 1814): clxiii. E-book edition:

<https://books.google.com.au/books?id=nzQgAQAAAMAJ&pg=PR163&lpq=PR163&dq=extinct+by+the+death+of+the+son+of+John+Winslade&source=bl&ots=Z->

See also: *Visitations of Devon 1564*. 208

¹⁶ This document, titled "[De praesenti statu Cornubiae et Devoniae quae duae Provinciae sunt Hispaniae proximiores](#)" ("On the Present Condition of Cornwall and Devon, the Two Counties nearest Spain"), is the twelfth item in Hans P. Kraus's *Pictorial Biography of Sir Francis Drake* held in the Library of Congress's Rare Books and Special Collections Division, Washington D. C. The catalogue provides a brief description of the document, but no translation. <https://www.loc.gov/rr/rarebook/catalog/drake/drake-catalogue.html>

Latin syntax and grammar, long sentences and confusing phraseology, my translator Dr Michael Kelly and I endeavoured to make sense of a story that was quite literally unfolding before our eyes. Not only were we reading a plan for a Spanish invasion of England, we were reading the work of a man who identified himself to King Philip II of Spain as Tristram Winslade, son of William and grandson of John. And he was no longer in England. He was in the service of Spain, and living in Brussels. This document put an end to any fantasy I might create about the Arundell boys and their sister. Tristram Winslade was real. He had led a real life of his own, born of his father's rebellion, and it was amazing.

In this moment, my faith in the historiography of the Cornish rebellions and the sixteenth century Catholic families who suffered because of them simply wilted. In front of me, as Tristram's plight in 1595 Brussels emerged in all its misery, was an extraordinary story that had clearly been read but never been translated, published or re-told.¹⁷ The man who, according to English historians, had never really existed was speaking to me from across the centuries and he had my full attention. What could I make of him? How do you understand a man intent on mounting an invasion of his own country? Today, all you really have to do is look at the plights of countless populations who have been persecuted for their religion, their desperate migrations and their lives as asylum seekers, refugees and exiles. Do we really believe they do not yearn to return to their homelands and live as they, or perhaps their forebears, once lived? Like many exiles, Winslade was not interested in seeking safe haven somewhere in Catholic Europe; he wanted safe haven in a Catholic England – as it had been for twelve hundred years.¹⁸ The quest took him on a journey of intrigue and adventure.

The repatriation of Tristram Winslade is highly political, as his story has its roots in events which historians have found convenient to wipe from the record; events which can quite justifiably be described as atrocities. As an Australian, it is impossible not to be conscious of the suffering of my own country's Indigenous population following European colonization. While some important advances have been made in recent years in terms of

¹⁷ Cheryl Hayden. 'Tristram Winslade: the desperate heart of a Catholic in exile'. *Cornish Studies* 20. Editor: P. Payton. (Exeter, U.K.: University of Exeter Press, 2012): 32-62 (33).

¹⁸ Cheryl Hayden. '1549: The Rebels Shout Back'. *Cornish Studies* 16, Editor: P. Payton. (Exeter, U.K.: University of Exeter Press, 2008): 206-228 (214).

human rights, it can easily be argued that the damage done has created unsolvable, intergenerational disadvantage that no amount of money will ever fix. The Cornish, my ancestors, are among the oldest surviving inhabitants of the British Isles and like their Celtic cousins, the Welsh and the Scots, their treatment at the hands of the English is in some ways comparable to that perpetrated upon the Australian Aboriginal people. As John Angarrack's confronting work on Cornwall's history shows, when the impact of the 1549 rebellion on Cornwall is examined on a *per capita* basis, we can legitimately use terms like 'atrocities', 'genocide' and 'ethnic cleansing'.¹⁹

The research project

The primary question I wish to answer in this research project is: what can the life of Tristram Winslade tell us about Cornwall in the second half of the sixteenth century, when the standard historical account tells us that the population was 'pacified'? Given the broad-ranging historical contexts within which the name Tristram Winslade appears, it would be remiss to not also explore the archive to either verify or preclude the many claims made about him and to then make some conclusions about his life, both during and between the key historical events identified by the research. Therefore, given the interplay of the historical and the imagined, this project comprises two parts: an exegesis weighted at 30 per cent and a work of historical fiction titled *Acts of Faith*, weighted at 70 per cent.

The objective of the exegesis is to present my research into the life of Tristram Winslade, the focus of which lies predominantly within the scope of historical research, including the transcription of several sixteenth century documents which have revealed intriguing insights into the Winslade family at a deeply personal level.²⁰ But the very nature of Tristram Winslade's life also demanded research into so much more: his sixteenth century surroundings in Cornwall, Devon, Spain and Portugal, the identification of the most important people in his life, and the critical events that shaped it. Out of this has come the challenge to

¹⁹ John Angarrack. *Our Future is History: Identity, Law and the Cornish Question*. (Independent Academic Press, 2012): 177.

²⁰ These are referenced during the discussion to follow.

create a sympathetic rendering of a man I might not understand, let alone like. While he might have gone through life recognised as a ‘nobleman’, would it be possible, in the face of the world’s understanding of the Elizabethan narrative, to present him as a man with a noble cause? Although at first it seemed strange, through logical analysis of the known facts about his life and the lives of his associates, I found myself understanding his lack of agency, sympathising with the treachery he became involved in, and deeply embedded with the existential crisis that I believe struck him during his final years. The narrative of his life, as it revealed itself, made perfect sense when applied to a Catholic who could not in all conscience live in Elizabethan England.

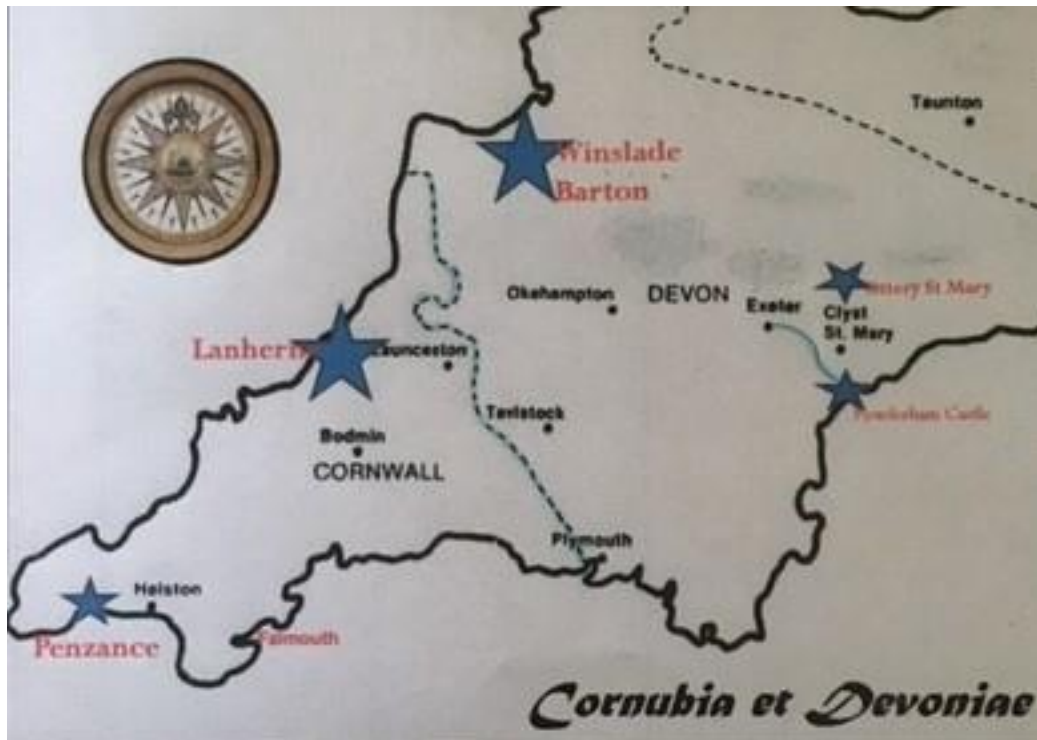
A novel about Tristram Winslade could not simply be a catalogue of regurgitated facts, notwithstanding that the catalogue of facts is new and revealing. I needed to know what he was like; what his world was like. I wanted to get the bottom of his name – why was he named for ‘sorrow’? Whose sorrow? Research for this component of the project encompassed a vast array of activities and sources. I carried out location research at two of his childhood homes in Devon and Cornwall and also at key locations in Spain and Portugal.²¹ Old maps and heritage information provided insights into early modern and medieval features of his environment, such as the medieval fishponds at Winslade Barton, the renovations at Lanherne and the existence, in early modern times, of great estuaries in Cornwall that rendered houses that are today ‘inland’ accessible by sea.²² I read the novels of authors whose knowledge of the Cornish environment was deeply ingrained and examined my own photographs and books for minutiae.²³ I heard that Winslade Barton was haunted by a black cat. Strange dreams and revelations came to me in the small hours. Most of these involved maps, fire or death. I wrote them down.

²¹ My thanks to Flinders University for research funding.

²² Saxton’s Map of Cornwall, 1576, shows the size of the estuaries that gave Cornwall a strong maritime tradition. British Library Maps, C. 7, c.1. I have used my own copy, purchased in 1987.

²³ Of particular note: Daphne du Maurier. *The House on the Strand*. (Victor Gollanz Ltd., 1969). Du Maurier uses the ancient estuaries to great effect as her character travels between the Twentieth and Fourteenth Centuries. Also: Winston Graham. *Grove of Eagles*. (London: Collins Fontana, 1973), which follows the Killigrews of Arwennack during the Spanish wars.

Orientating ourselves



Significant places in the life of Tristram Winslade to be featured in this research project are highlighted in the above map.²⁴ Lanherne and Winslade Barton are, to my knowledge, his main places of residence in Cornwall and Devon, although his early childhood may have been spent at Ottery St Mary. Exeter was the biggest city in the region, while Falmouth and Plymouth were the biggest harbours. This map does not show the size and significance of Cornwall's rivers and estuaries.

²⁴ Map outline taken from Barrett L. Beer. "The Western Rebellion" in *Rebellion and Riot*. 39. Not for publication or reproduction elsewhere.

Chapter One - What history tells us

1.1 The Tudor period and popular culture

*'Henry VIII's greatest achievement was to prevent England from becoming Catholic.'*²⁵

Nothing rings with drama like the name Tudor. They are, apparently, 'historical superstars'.²⁶ Whether it is the drama leading to Henry VII's coronation on Bosworth field, Henry VIII's six wives and his all-consuming need for a male heir, Bloody Mary's evil court and burning Protestants, the crisis of a sickly Edward VI, or Elizabeth's victory over the Spanish Armada and the endless plots to bring her down, the list of clichéd, lionizing television dramas, documentaries, films and books goes on and on. But it is the over-arching double narrative of nation-building and religious Reformation that dominates the Tudor era, constantly drawing our attention to the importance of these policies to the development of Britain and its economic rise. Such discourse ignores the fact that during the sixteenth century the name 'Tudor' was hardly used.²⁷ Instead it shines a relentless spotlight upon the monarchies of Henry VIII and his second daughter, Elizabeth. Popular historical accounts and representations of their respective reigns are imbued with an unquestioned, almost gloating, belief in the worthiness and righteousness of the Protestant Reformation. At times, as demonstrated by Dr Matt Green's comment, its proponents do their cause a great disservice. Just as misleading is the general tenor of representations put to the public at Hampton Court Palace, where one could be forgiven for thinking that Elizabeth and Henry VIII were the only two Tudor monarchs. Aiding and abetting this historiographical sleight of hand is a breathtakingly clinical tendency to gloss over Henry VIII's other two children: his much longed-for son and heir, Edward VI, and his first-born child, Mary Tudor. The preferred narrative treats these two monarchs as inconvenient disruptors of a good story – Edward for making the Reformation

²⁵ Dr Matt Green. 'The Secret Life of Henry VIII', *The Private Lives of Monarchs*, Episode 5, series 1. SBS Australia. 24 Nov 2017. The producers of this program have presented this comment as an introductory 'grab' and ignored any context within which it may have been uttered. It gives the impression that England had never been Catholic.

²⁶ Dr Helen Castor. *Lady Jane Grey: Murder of a Child Queen*, Episode 1. SBS On Demand, Australia. Accessed 11 July 2018.

²⁷ C. S. L. Davies. 'Tudor: What's in a Name?' *History*. (Oxford: The Historical Association and Blackwell Publishing Ltd, 2012.) 24-42 (24).

unpopular and throwing the country into serious economic strife and rebelliousness, and Mary for marrying the King of Spain and throwing the whole Reformation into reverse.

On the other side of this coin is the notion that attempts to overturn the Reformation reflected the superstitious popery of Catholicism and the evil intent of the Vatican and Catholic Europe, particularly Spain, to which was attached the 'Black Legend'. This coin is replete with familiar characters: on one side we have the Elizabethan statesmen such as Walsingham and the Cecils and the dashing privateers such as Drake and Grenville, while on the other side we have King Philip II of Spain, Mary Queen of Scots, Anthony Babington, and a plethora of Jesuits and potential assassins whose mission outlived the Queen and culminated in the plot to blow up the House of Lords in 1605.

This 'good guys-bad guys' trope has been perpetuated over centuries through a systematic excision of traitor families from the records including the absence of their progeny from the Herald's *Visitations*, the methodologies of antiquarians who rarely cited their references, and the highly selective practices of the editors of state calendars. In the case of Tristram Winslade, there are numerous examples in which the truth about his identity and other matters pertaining to his family have been covered up. *Visitations*, for example, cites William Winslade to be the last of his line, leading Lyssons, among others, to declare the family extinct.²⁸ As for the Edwardian Calendar of State Papers, it might be expected that the Domestic series would include a reference to the memorandum citing the 1549 rebel leaders' reasons for their rebellion.²⁹ But despite the fact that this memorandum is held in the State archive, it appears that when the calendars were being compiled in the 1850s, an editorial decision was made to omit it.³⁰ Another example of choosing what continues to be included as part of the historical record is a French-language pamphlet, included in its entirety as an appendix to Rose-Troup's book.³¹ This is believed to have been written on behalf of the

²⁸ *Visitation of Devon 1564*. 208.

²⁹ Rose-Troup cites State Papers Domestic, Edw. VI, Vol. VII. No. 6. regarding a letter written by the King on 24 July 1549 to the rebels in response to their demands, but it is not mentioned in the Calendar. *The Western Rebellion*, 218.

³⁰ I acknowledge the assistance staff at British History Online, which publishes from the Calendars, for insight into the selective processes employed by the nineteenth century editors of the Calendars of State Papers.

³¹ *La Responce du Peuple Anglois à leur Roy Edouard sur certains articles qui en son nom leur ont esté envoyez touchant la religiõ Chrestienne*. Paris: Robert Masselin, 1550. Reproduced in Frances Rose-Troup. *The Western*

Cornish and Devonshire rebels in the aftermath of the rebellion and sent to France, where it was presented to the parliament and published in Paris in 1550. It is a critical document because it sets out precisely why the 1549 rebellion occurred, why the rebels believed they had a right to act as they did, and why their actions should not have been seen as having been directed towards the King in his minority.³² To my knowledge, despite the passing of 470 years, this document has never been published in English.³³ The fact that Rose-Troup chose to publish it may have something to do with the fact that she was American and not interested in conforming with the historiographical agenda of the English establishment.

These examples, all relevant to the story of Tristram Winslade, demonstrate how the state sanctifies and sanitises the preferred story while, at the same time, it systematically shuffles to the background those documents that tell the 'other side of the story' or portray the nation state as something less than the glorious entity its pomp and ceremony would have us believe in. There appears to be much whitewashing of the stories of those who opposed the Reformation and it is enabled by ignorance. The English Heritage interpretation at Launceston Castle is a case in point: here, the Cornish are entirely absent from their own history.³⁴

1.2 The historiography of resistance and loss

*'... but also to the raising of open rebellion, the Cause of the Spoil of the whole Country, and the undoing of themselves, their Wives, and Children; as in Sequel and in the End it fell out and came to pass.'*³⁵

We now turn to examine the work of the influential writers and historians who have dominated the literature and created the 'truth' about Cornwall and its Catholics from 1550

Rebellion. Appendix H: 441-470. (Title translation: *The English People's reply to their King Edward on certain articles sent to them in his name on matters touching the Christian religion*)

³² Ibid.

³³ The document is believed by some to have been a French translation of an English original. Ibid. 441.

³⁴ Cheryl Hayden. "1549: The Rebels Shout Back", 221.

³⁵ John Hooker. *The Antique Description and Account of the City of Excester*. (Exeter: Andrew Brice, 1765): 34. [Hooker was also known as Vowells. He wrote his initial account in 1564.]

to 1600. A review of the historiography of the Prayer Book Rebellion has identified serious biases and inconsistencies in key influential primary sources, in particular the work of the sixteenth century Protestant historian, John Hooker, who demonstrated a high degree of rhetorical agility to deny the Catholic rebels any agency, awareness or reason in regards to their actions.³⁶ This was followed nearly forty years later by Sir Richard Carew of Antony in Cornwall who, in the late 1590s and early 1600s, journeyed around his homeland recording his impressions of the Cornish people, their pastimes, traditions and culture, and the landscape, climate and economic activity. His derisive account of the Winslades, as noted above, has become a touchstone for anyone writing about members of this family, regardless of context, time or the actual identity of the person under discussion, with the result that by the nineteenth century the idea of 'Sir Tristram' had thrown many historians off-course. While early historians identified William Winslade as the 'son' who led the walking life and was nicknamed Sir Tristram, the fact that he then named his own son Tristram has further led even recent writers to believe that William Winslade and Tristram Winslade, who was found aboard the Armada in 1588, were the same person.³⁷ Thus, in the nineteenth century, as we have seen, the family became widely known as extinct. Confusion about the Winslades continued through the twentieth century and on into the twenty-first, but most significantly with Frances Rose-Troup, whose mangled footnote from 1913 may perhaps be the origin of all confusion since. This is regrettable because notwithstanding other more recent accounts of the rebellion that defined the lives of the Winslade family, her book remains a seminal work, largely because of her dedication to locating primary sources and for the appendices of supporting documents she has insightfully included. She correctly identifies John and William – father and son – as the two Winslade men active in the rebellion and includes numerous footnotes to clarify aspects of their genealogy.³⁸ In one of these footnotes, she identifies William Winslade's two sons, Tristram and Daniel, but then in her attempt to explain Tristram, falls into the trap set by Carew and Lysons: she mixes up William's life as a harper with Tristram's appearance aboard a flagship of the Spanish Armada, and tells the reader that

³⁶ Ibid. 210-218.

³⁷ For example, Alan Haynes states that the name Tristram was used by William as an alias when serving Spain. Alan Haynes. *Invisible Power, The Elizabethan Secret Services*. (Stroud, U.K.: Alan Sutton Publishing, 1992): 52

³⁸ Frances Rose-Troup. *Western Rebellion*, 100-102.

William's name really was Tristram. So, despite having identified Tristram as William's son, she then reduces them to one person; all in the one footnote.³⁹

Arguably the most influential historian to write about sixteenth century Cornwall in modern times is the Cornish-born Oxford scholar and historian, A.L. Rowse. While apparently deeply attached to his homeland, his *Tudor Cornwall* is imbued with the flavour of an explanation for Cornwall's perceived backwardness. A part of this, we are led to believe, is its population's penchant for clinging to Catholicism before finally being snatched from its clutches by the irresistible and inevitable force of the Reformation. Rowse's objective is clear and self-confessed: he was concerned to explain 'why it was that Cornwall, which was so devoted to Catholicism ... should have become so Protestant later. This book as a whole is the answer to that question.'⁴⁰

This may explain why a 449-page book devotes only twenty pages to Mary Tudor's reign and does so within a narrative framework that suggests it was an unfortunate glitch in the on-going progress of the reformation.⁴¹ In dealing with Mary, Rowse draws on archival material to focus on her parliaments (whose membership saw little change from the Edwardian), the restitution of sacred Catholic objects to the churches in Cornwall, the problems surrounding the Reformation's legacy of married clergy and the drama surrounding Mary's decision to marry King Philip II of Spain. The chapter concludes by describing Mary's reign as a failure, citing among other things her failure to produce an heir, the unpopularity of her pro-Spanish policies and a sharpening of the differences between the old and new faiths.⁴² There is almost no recognition in these twenty pages that the people of Cornwall, having defended their religion so vehemently in 1549, might have celebrated her accession

³⁹ Ibid 101, fn 4. Rose-Troup is rare, but correct, in her mention of the two sons. Tristram identifies himself in his 1595 document and while Rose-Troup does not cite a source for Daniel, he appears as a witness at the Inquisition into the property of their father. (*Inquisition into the Property of William Winsladd.*)

⁴⁰ A.L. Rowse. *Tudor Cornwall*. (London: Jonathan Cape, 1941): 305.

⁴¹ It is noted that this represents 4.5% of the book, perhaps a reasonable statistic when one considers that her reign lasted less than five years of the entire sixteenth century. However, as one of only five Tudor monarchs it could be argued more attention would be a reasonable expectation in a county that had so vehemently expressed its Catholicism. It is noteworthy, perhaps, that Polwhele described the Cornish as mere spectators to Mary's reign. See Richard Polwhele. *The History of Cornwall: Civil, Military, Religious, Architectural, Agricultural, Commercial, Biographical and Miscellaneous*, Vol. IV. (London: Law and Whittaker, 1816): p. 65.

⁴² A.L. Rowse. *Tudor Cornwall*, 319.

to the throne or that survivors of the rebellion might have begun to regroup. After all, men such as William Winslade and Robert Smyth, both high profile members of the Cornish leadership during the rebellion, were free men even during the final years of Edward VI's reign and yet they disappear from the story.⁴³

Rowse, however, is not entirely uninterested in the Winslade family. They feature in three of his books: *Sir Richard Grenville of the Revenge* (first published 1937); *Tudor Cornwall (1941)*; and *The Expansion of Elizabethan England* (1955).⁴⁴ He, too, believes William and Tristram to be the same person. For example, in the first of these publications, the Grenville biography, he gives an account of Tristram Winslade arriving at the English College at Douai in 1583, but concludes that this is William travelling under a nickname, which may explain why, in *Tudor Cornwall*, Tristram is not mentioned at all.⁴⁵ Curiously, in 1955, Rowse finally identifies Tristram as John Winslade's grandson (rather than William, his son) but continues to ascribe to him the walking life, which was intended by Carew to describe his father.⁴⁶

Rowse finally deals with the 'Cornish Catholics' in a chapter of their own. Here, we find them in conflict with Protestants again: '*The seventies saw the battle fiercely joined between militant, resurgent Catholicism and Protestantism whose [sic] aggressive impulse was not yet stemmed... We are entering the age of the Counter-Reformation.*'⁴⁷ It is from the 1570s onwards that the main Catholic families, with the Arundells of Lanherne identified as the 'the chief mainstay', reappear.⁴⁸ Set entirely within the Elizabethan era, this chapter is almost exclusively interested in recusancy, treason and the ultimate demise of the old faith, thus

⁴³ Frances Rose-Troup portrays Smyth as a fearless captain who led the Cornish charge at the Battle of Fenny Bridges. (*The Western Rebellion*, 259.) Smyth was not captured and lived until 1569.

⁴⁴ A.L. Rowse. *The Expansion of Elizabethan England*. (London: The Reprint Society, 1957): 43; A.L. Rowse. *Sir Richard Grenville of the 'Revenge'*. (London: Book Club Associates (reprint), 1977): 188. It should be noted that this was first published in 1937.

⁴⁵ A.L. Rowse. *Sir Richard Grenville*, 188.

⁴⁶ A.L. Rowse. *Expansion of Elizabethan England*, 43. As late as 1992, Rowse was still insisting that Tristram and William were the same person, commenting that Paula Martin ought to have concluded that the officer, Tristram Winslade, whom she had found aboard the *Nuestra Senora del Rosario* was in fact William Winslade. See A.L. Rowse. 'Shorter Notices', *The English Historical Review*, CVII (CCCCXXIV) (1992): 715; See also: Paula Martin. *Spanish Armada Prisoners: The Story of the Nuestra Senora del Rosario and her crew, and of other prisoners in England, 1587-97*, Exeter Maritime Series No. 1. (Exeter, U.K.: Exeter University Publications, 1988): 75-76.

⁴⁷ A.L. Rowse. *Tudor Cornwall*, 342

⁴⁸ *Ibid.*

ensuring that any remnant of Cornish Catholicism can only be examined as the backward side of the Reformation coin. Despite alluding to the 'aggressive impulses' inherent to the age of Counter-Reformation, there is no discussion of how this aggression was displayed and little evidence of any activity that would assist a counter-reformation. So, while the chapter is redolent with archival richness, this richness is limited to a few ingredients: anecdotes about Catholics arrested and imprisoned for recusancy, Catholics whose lands and wealth were confiscated, the priests arrested for saying the Mass and details of various wills. Behind this narrative of declining power and influence, the words 'aggressive impulses' can only be interpreted as having been chosen to convey the impression that the Cornish Catholics simply could not help themselves, even though Rowse makes a point of saying that nothing dangerous was going on. In summary, Rowse's conclusion is that in the 1570s, in Cornwall, despite this being the age of counter-Reformation, very little was happening in terms of opposition to religious reform and that the Arundells of Lanherne were declining in influence.⁴⁹ As we will see, this is far from the truth, and the fact that Rowse presented the Cornish Catholics as he did only highlights that for his purposes they were little more than the losers whose struggle had by necessity to be presented in order to underscore the Protestant victory.

Curiously, this methodology of inclusion only to serve a purpose or prove a point works in favour of the Winslades when it comes to Rowse's work on Richard Grenville. As we will see, despite Grenville's status as an Elizabethan hero, he was a deeply flawed character and Rowse's objective was to 'in part dispel the myth and make him more real as a man.'⁵⁰ In doing so, he spared Grenville little and in dealing with his role as a Justice of the Peace in overseeing the court inquiry into William Winslade's property, we find Rowse displaying a curious degree of sympathy for the Catholics on the losing side of history. He found the Winslades' to be 'an extremely moving story ... involving as it did the ruin of a whole family, the formal depositions of witnesses unfolding layer upon layer of human suffering.'⁵¹ Other aspects of the humanity and pathos inherent to this case will be discussed below.

⁴⁹ A. L. Rowse. *Sir Richard Grenville*, 131.

⁵⁰ *Ibid*, 9

⁵¹ *Ibid*, 186.

Moving on now from A. L. Rowse, we find no issue with F.E. Halliday, who in 1975 correctly identified William Winslade as Carew's wandering harper, but did not complicate his narrative with any mention of Tristram Winslade.⁵² By 1977, however, the impact of Rose-Troup's and Rowse's errors emerges in the work of Julian Cornwall. While not commenting on 'Sir Tristram,' it is apparent that Julian Cornwall has applied incorrect information to the chronology of events and characters involved in the Prayer Book Rebellion and assumed that in 1549 William Winslade must have been a 'very young man who followed his father unquestioningly.'⁵³ In fact, as we have noted, William was about 30 years of age and led his own troops from his estate at Mithian.

In 1992, Philip Payton proffered a centre-periphery model that viewed Cornwall's history primarily as a struggle between the quest for recognition and self-expression of a marginalised people and the dominating force of the centre's historiographical discourse. In this model, we see early modern Cornwall populated by people who, once granted a degree of autonomy through the Duchy of Cornwall in recognition of their ethnic and cultural differences, had begun to exhibit extreme frustration at interference by the new nationalising policies of the Tudor monarchs. The idea that Cornwall is a region worthy of its own history is an old one and almost all historians have recognised the reality of a Cornish sense of ethnic difference, particularly from the outsiders' perspective and going back to the Iron Age.⁵⁴ However, in 2002, John Chynoweth, in another work titled *Tudor Cornwall*, caused a minor historiographical sensation not only by copying the title of Rowse's book but by asserting that Cornwall had no claim to any ethnicity that would differentiate itself from the rest of England.⁵⁵ As Mark Stoye noted, given the Cornish language surname of the author, this was quite a claim.⁵⁶ Nevertheless, Chynoweth's forensic examination of Star Chamber litigation

⁵² F.E. Halliday. *A History of Cornwall*. (Letchworth, Hertfordshire: Garden City Press Ltd., 1975): 183

⁵³ Julian Cornwall. *Revolt of the Peasantry*, 62

⁵⁴ For example, F.E. Halliday devotes three chapters to the pre-history of Cornwall and its ancient population, emphasising the difference with the experience of England and also Cornwall's link to Europe via Brittany. By the Iron Age, the people of Cornwall were recorded and described by Diodorus, a Sicilian Greek historian, as 'very fond of strangers', 'civilised in their manner' and 'working very carefully the earth...' *A History of Cornwall*, 47.

⁵⁵ John Chynoweth. *Tudor Cornwall*. (Stroud, UK: Tempus Publishing, 2002).

⁵⁶ Mark Stoye. 'Shorter Notices', *English Historical Review*, cxix. 481 (April 2004): 505-508.

<https://academic.oup.com/ehr/article-abstract/199/481/505/5200152> 30 October 2018.

by Cornish gentry does shed light on some of the Winslade family's legal cases. Unfortunately, while apparently understanding that there were three Winslades active during the second half of the sixteenth century – John, William and Tristram – Chynoweth follows others in attributing the 'walking life with his harp' to Tristram, rather than to William.⁵⁷ Once again, the real life of Tristram Winslade is obscured by mis-readings of Carew.

Also published in 2002 was Mark Stoye's *West Britons*, which presented a sequence of uprisings and episodes of resistance in Cornwall, including the events of 1549, as part of a continuum of Cornish resistance.⁵⁸ Covering 150 years, this period began in 1497 with a march on London over taxation and concluded with a last Cornish rebellion during the Second Civil War of 1648. In Stoye's model, the Reformation provided the Cornish with yet another grievance against their English overlords and in this regard his theory follows Payton's idea of Cornish discontent over what was viewed as foreign interference. Stoye's theory is critical to this project and will be discussed further below.

In 2007, Bernard Deacon asked the question that burned inside my brain: what happened when the defence of the old religion failed? His response to this question, which I am assuming is a reference to the Prayer Book Rebellion, appears to be that Cornwall became Protestant. He refers to Tristram Winslade as 'a member of the wealthiest family to support the 1549 rising', which is correct, although the statement appears to imply that he took part in the conflict.⁵⁹

In 2012, the same year in which I published Tristram Winslade's invasion plan, Haynes took Tristram's identity to its ultimate destruction. Firstly, he claimed that the name 'Tristram' was used by the Spanish as an alias for William Winslade – the converse of Rose-Troup's finding that William's name 'really was Tristram' – and then uses this nebulous Tristram as a vehicle for speculation about the severity of the rack as an instrument of torture:

⁵⁷ John Chynoweth. *Tudor Cornwall*, 291.

⁵⁸ Mark Stoye. *West Britons: Cornish Identities and the Early Modern British State*. (Exeter, UK: University of Exeter Press, 2002).

⁵⁹ Bernard Deacon. *Cornwall: A Concise History*. (Cardiff: University of Wales Press, 2007): 78

*If the rack in the Tower was indeed somehow a milder instrument than that later employed by Topcliffe, who did not really flourish until Walsingham died in April 1590, it could explain how, after his release in February of that year, the unfortunate Winslade could actually become an itinerant harpist. The lamentable suspicion must remain that he was not a very good one.*⁶⁰

Of course, neither of Haynes' statements is correct and a careful reading of Tristram Winslade's record of interrogation in the Tower of London would have clarified the matter, as in it he stated that his father was 'William, then alive'.⁶¹ While not deliberate, such spinning allows historiography to annihilate any possibility for Tristram Winslade to emerge as an individual with an active interest in seeking justice for himself. And so, having neglected its duties under the principle of Habeas Corpus, history absolves itself of the crimes committed against him and eliminates from the record any suggestion of resistance or, indeed, the oppressive tactics administered by the state against such people. Voids, such as this one, make it possible for television networks and production companies to create documentaries such as *Elizabeth I and her Enemies* and *Queen Elizabeth I and her Secret Service*.⁶² The purpose of such series, as explained by the presenter of the former, is to reassure the English people in troubled times that their nation is a strong one – in other words, history is quite openly being used as propaganda. It sets out to achieve its goal by trotting out a handful of villains whose behaviour is held up and dealt with in the absence of any explanation of the underlying cause. Indeed, in the 'Secret Service' series, historian Dr Dominic Green, in a decontextualized 'grab', puts his finger on a salient point when he observes that 'there must have been some kind of damage to someone's soul to commit that kind of crime.'⁶³ Indeed. But the fact that Catholics believed that by following the Reformation they would be damned is completely ignored and there is no follow-up whatsoever to Dr Dominic Green's observation. Instead, the villains are limited to Mary Queen of Scots (beheaded), Anthony Babington (whose grisly

⁶⁰ Alan Haynes. *Invisible Power*, 52.

⁶¹ *Record of Interrogation of Tristram Winslade*. LM/1329/370. 31 July 1588. Surrey History Centre.

⁶² *Elizabeth I and her Enemies*. SBS Australia, 2018; *Queen Elizabeth I and her Secret Agents*. SBS Australia, 2019.

⁶³ *Queen Elizabeth I and her Secret Agents*, Episode 3. Screened SBS Australia, January 2019. Green was most likely referring to the Gunpowder Plot.

execution is not dealt with) and Philip II of Spain, whose Armada was sent packing. The fact that myriad assassination plots and invasion plans were being hatched by the exiles in Brussels and Madrid and were supported by countless Catholics in England is entirely overlooked because the story is not really about the enemies; it is about Elizabeth and her greatness. And in this narrative, Elizabeth's greatness relies entirely on the fact that she had enemies and overcame them; why she had them in the first place is immaterial. It is my objective, in telling Tristram Winslade's story, to push against this sanitised narrative and to return to popular – or unpopular – culture a more thoughtful narrative.

However, before forging ahead with the uncovering of Tristram Winslade and his life, it is necessary to return to the key question of what was going on in Cornwall and the extent to which it might have had anything to do with any on-going display of ethnically-based resistance, which Mark Stoye has found so compelling.

1.3 Ethnicity, identity and resistance

*'The prime leaders of the Catholic army were Widesladus and Arundell, who were considered to be among the more eminent in the Cornish nobility.'*⁶⁴

Not long before Tristram Winslade was born, the Cornish had expressed their deeply hostile attitude towards the undermining of their ancient brand of Celtic Catholicism, which, along with their language, was axiomatic to their identity as a people. The extent to which the Winslade family identified as Cornish at this stage is worth exploring, because they were in fact a Devonshire family whose seat was in the parish of Buckland Brewer. It was not until the 1480s, when Richard Wydeslade's wife, Marina Byrt, inherited six large Cornish estates from her grandfather, that the family became significant in Cornish circles.

Tristram's grandfather, John, appears to have taken up residence at one of these estates – probably at Tregarrick – before his father's death and possibly upon marriage to Jane Trelawney, whose father's estate was nearby at Menheniot. William appears to have

⁶⁴ Tristram Winslade, 1595. See Cheryl Hayden. "Tristram Winslade: the Desperate Heart", 45.

been their only child and may have been the only one of the Winslade men of the Buckland Brewer family to have been born in Cornwall. Thus, if any of the Winslade men had identified as Cornish, first among them must have been William. But what about the women they married? It is worth touching upon their pedigrees in order to understand the family's position in Devon and Cornwall.

Historical and archival notes relating to Tristram Winslade often refer to his nobility, and in the quote at the start of this section we see that in his invasion plan, he applies it to his grandfather and, by inference, to himself. What was this "nobility"? It appears to have come through the lineage of his paternal grandmother, the above-mentioned Jane Trelawney, whose own mother, Jane Holland, was from the once-great Holland family that held the earldom of Kent and, closer in time to Jane, were the Dukes of Exeter.⁶⁵ Here, all the while recognising that Jane Holland's father, Robert, was 'the bastard Duke', we find that Tristram's four-times-great-grandparents on the Holland line were Sir John Holland Earl of Kent (son of Joan Plantagenet, Fair Maid of Kent) and Elizabeth Plantagenet (daughter of John of Gaunt and Blanche, Duchess of Lancaster). Both branches led directly back to Edward I: the first via Edmund of Woodstock and the second via John of Gaunt, Edward III and Edward II. Had Robert not been illegitimate he, like his older half-brother Henry Holland, might have had 'too much royal blood to be allowed to live.'⁶⁶ As it was, he died at the Battle of Towton in 1461. So, on this side, Tristram Winslade had more Devonshire nobility than Cornish.

However, this side of Tristram Winslade's family also features a connection to the cream of Cornish rebels, Thomas Flamank, the lawyer executed for leading the 1497 rebellion. He was married to Jane Trelawney's half-sister, Elizabeth Trelawney, and was therefore related by marriage to John Winslade, although significantly older.⁶⁷ It is perhaps not

⁶⁵ John Chynoweth. *Tudor Cornwall*, 303. (Part of Tristram's family tree is demonstrated on page 39 of this document.)

⁶⁶ Michael M.N. Stansfield. "The Hollands, Dukes of Exeter, Earls of Kent and Huntington 1352-1475", Unpublished thesis, Corpus Christi College, Oxford. (1987): 309. https://ora.ox.ac.uk/objects/uuid:ff873c44-1488-4918-8ccd-586a7ff94caf/download_file?safe_filename=602323386.pdf&file_format=application%2Fpdf&type_of_work=Thesis

⁶⁷ Ian Arthurson. "Flamank [Flamanc, Flamang, Flandrensis], Thomas (d. 1497)", *Oxford National Dictionary of Biography*. (3 Jan. 2008). <https://doi-org.ezproxy.flinders.edu.au/10.1093/ref:odnb/9668>

surprising that having moved into Cornish circles, John Winslade became involved in rebellious activity. The Byrt inheritance had included the manor of Bochym, near Constantine, which was, in John Norden's words, 'the house in which that instrument of rebellion Wynslade [John] dwelled at the time wherein he undertook to be one of the leaders of the Cornish rebellious troupes in their Commotion.'⁶⁸ William, most likely following his marriage to the professed nun, Jane Babington, took up residence across the peninsula at another of the inherited estates, Mithian, near St Agnes. It seems clear that by 1549, the combination of Catholicism, nobility and rebellious heritage had made the Winslades ideal leaders for a rebellion; they were clearly accepted by the Cornish as Cornishmen.⁶⁹ Thus, in 1595, we note that while Tristram informs King Philip II of Spain that he was born in Devon, he recognises that his identity is more complex: he has kin, marriage relations and friends in both Devon and Cornwall. It may be that he viewed his status as a native of Devon as nothing more than an accident of birthplace brought about by the aftermath of rebellion. With her home at Mithian confiscated and her husband in prison, Jane Winslade (née Babington) may have returned to her parents' home in Ottery St Mary in Devonshire, and this may have been where Tristram was born. But what sort of a world awaited him?

Much has been written about the rebellion whose aftermath coloured the world Tristram Winslade was born into, but once the pillage and executions were over and Cornwall had been 'pacified', there is very little to help us understand what happened next. The historiography of this period has been almost entirely dominated by the discourse of the victor over the loser – the Protestant over the Catholic, the 'progressive' over the 'backward' – with the result that the remnants of the rebellion, including the survivors who were left with nothing to lose except life itself, have been almost completely lost to us.

⁶⁸ John Norden. *Speculi Britanniae pars: a topographical and historical description of Cornwall*, Vol 1. (London: John Norden, 1728): 43.

https://books.google.com.au/books?id=53tbAAAAQAAJ&pg=PP26&pg=PP26&dq=norden+history+of+Cornwall&source=bl&ots=UheGY2m_Tq&sig=ACfU3U1mAtgRTSKxEpGZ-0MtqJmT4KK5UQ&hl=en&sa=X&ved=2ahUKEwj64Nzmla7iAhWlYo8KHcObDPA4ChDoATAlegQICRAB#v=onepage&q=Winslade&f=false

⁶⁹ John Winslade said at his trial that the commons had threatened to burn down his house if he refused to lead them. It is impossible to know whether there is any truth to this. Frances Rose-Troup. *The Western Rebellion*, 346.

As this analysis of the historiography of the second half of the sixteenth century demonstrates, the Winslade family is something of an exception to this trend. The myriad of court hearings involving their land has left a rich archive and put them among the most visible of the Cornish Catholics. Generally, however, they are at the mercy of historians whose primary interest is to use their loss to feed a morality tale about the risk of rebellion rather than for any actual interest in their lives. But as will be seen, the very fragments that have been used to tell one story can, when pieced together coherently and viewed as a whole, tell a far more interesting one; one in which the key players are much more than just passive inhabitants of their own demise. What we find are the remnants of lives being lived with one purpose in mind: to return England to Catholicism and regain lost estates.

1.4 A Gap in the Record

*'In Cornwall, the situation was not dangerous, for after the lesson of 1549, when Cornishmen had been killed in their numbers on the heath outside Exeter, the county accepted tranquilly the religious forms the Government, in its greater wisdom, thought fit to impose.'*⁷⁰

So far in this chapter we have reviewed a selected range of publications notable for their treatment of the subject of our investigations and for the contradictions and confusion that has been amassed over years of scholarship. We have seen how, despite evidence to the contrary, it has become wrongly accepted that Tristram Winslade was only a name; a name used by William Winslade as an alias. We have also gained some understanding of how a Devonshire family became intimately connected with Cornish resistance and rebellion. The question remains: what difference does it make, today, if the characters of Tristram and William were one person or two? Does a definitive answer to this question actually shed any new light on how we might understand the nature of Cornish rebellion or resistance during the second half of the sixteenth century?

⁷⁰ A. L. Rowse. *Sir Richard Grenville*, 131.

At this point we examine more closely two texts that have made specific, yet contradictory, claims about Cornwall during this period: Mark Stoye's *West Britons*, in which the Elizabethan era is entirely encapsulated within his era of Cornish on-going, ethnically-driven resistance, and Bernard Deacon's *Concise History*, which claims that there was no on-going resistance during this period. It is worth noting that while approaching this period from entirely different perspectives, both Stoye and Deacon appear to concur with Rowse's claim that nothing dangerous was going on and that the Arundells of Lanherne were, by the 1570s, losing influence.

Firstly, let us examine Stoye's theory. He argued that during the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries there existed a strong sense of Cornish identity which 'endured for much longer than has often been assumed' and that it 'exerted a powerful influence on Cornish politico-religious behaviour throughout the Tudor and Stuart periods...'⁷¹ Building upon observations made by both Rowse and Payton that Cornish identity was an integral factor in the on-going struggles against increasingly nationalistic government policies reaching out from London, Stoye then argued that the era of rebellion, spanning a century and a half from 1497 to 1648, could be better understood when viewed as a sequence of events. So, despite the apparently unrelated causes of these events – the burden of taxation in 1497, the threat to traditional religious practice in the 1540s, and the threat of a London-centric and puritanical Parliamentary republic in the 1640s – Stoye argued that there lay embedded in every episode a strong and volatile element of ethnic solidarity. This deeply held sense of identity, therefore, emerged whenever the integrity of the Cornish people's identity, and whatever remained of their so-called autonomy, was threatened. Furthermore, he argued that this difference was recognised not only by Cornwall's neighbours, the people of Devon, but also by the monarchs of the day – in particular Elizabeth I.

Inherent to Stoye's argument, however, as he unpacks and examines the particularity of each episode of rebellion, is the inescapable fact that within his model of analysis there is a period of more than ninety years in which there was apparently no resistance at all. That is, within a framework of 151 years of ongoing resistance, there were ninety or more consecutive

⁷¹Mark Stoye. *West Britons*, 1.

years, from 1550 to the early 1640s, in which there was no resistance; echoes, here, of Rowse's claim that even in the midst of rising oppression of Catholics by the Elizabethan regime, nothing dangerous was happening in Cornwall.

In pondering this apparent hole in Stoye's theory I now found myself returning to my original question: what happened to the children of those who were executed, attainted, poverty-stricken or just enraged by the 'pacification' process inflicted upon Cornwall in the aftermath of the Prayer Book Rebellion? Is it conceivable, given Queen Elizabeth's increasing oppression of Catholics, especially after her ex-Communication and the declaration of war with Spain in 1569, that nothing dangerous was going on in Cornwall during the 1570s? Is it conceivable that every descendant of Humphrey Arundell and John Winslade and others of the rebel leadership, having been left landless and penniless, would just disappear into the peasant workforce, under the thumbs of Protestant masters?⁷²

Already, we have found that the rebel leader's sons, Humphrey and Richard Arundell, were servants at Lanherne and were indicted for recusancy in 1578.⁷³ But that is all there is to see. What about the Winslades? After all, they were not extinct either. In 1588, Tristram Winslade had stated under interrogation that, from the age of ten years, he had served Sir John Arundell and that his father was William Winslade. The translation of his 1595 document revealed that he had indeed continued his father's work and was well informed about the rebellion that had left him landless and penniless. But by this time, he was 45 years old. What had his life been like? Where had he been, and what had he done? Already, Winslade is giving us a tincture of Cornish resistance, but which way reveals the truth? If Rowse is to be believed, nothing dangerous was going on and this resistance must therefore have taken the form of

⁷² Daniel Winslade had sought the advice of a Mr Cary, while apparently still residing at Pelynt in Cornwall, presumably at Tregarrick, where the property was in the hands of his enemy, John Trevanion. (*Inquisition into the Property of William Winsladd*.) His service later appears to have been the subject of litigation between John Holland and George Carey. (National Archives online catalogue, Holland v Carey E 133/6/827.) This George Cary is probably George Cary of Cockington in Devon, who was authorised, along with Grenville, to conduct the raid on Francis Tregian's home. See: A.L. Rowse. *Richard Grenville*, 183.

⁷³ Clare Talbot (ed.) *Miscellanea: Recusant Records*. (Great Britain: Catholic Record Society Record Series, 53, 1961): 114. Here we find 'trompeter Richardus Arundell', 'Umphredi Arundell' and 'Johannis Prediaux', along with many members of the Arundell and Stourton families, and others, all indicted for 'not cominyge to the church of Mowgan', (ie: St Mawgan, the church adjacent to Lanherne). I believe it to be unlikely that members of the Lanherne family would be listed among the servants and that these two Arundell men are far more likely to be the dispossessed cousins.

passive aggressive grumbling, but if Winslade's life is an indication, something more sinister was afoot that so far has not been revealed. The attempt to solve this conundrum through an exploration of Tristram Winslade's life forms the backbone of this research, but before we delve into his life, we must examine the argument Deacon employed in 2007 to conclude, like Rowse, that there was no 'ongoing resistance' in Cornwall during the sixteenth century.

Deacon's work is based on A. D. Smith's four pillars of identity – ethnicity, religion, status and politics – which, while recognising that 'religious communities are often closely related to ethnic identities', nevertheless draws a distinction between the two.⁷⁴ His conclusion comes from his examination of what happened in Cornwall 'when the defence of the old religion failed', which this paper assumes is a reference to the failure of the Prayer Book Rebellion. One would expect that if this question is to be answered an examination of the second half of the sixteenth century must be carried out. Deacon does not do this. Rather, he explains this vital half-century in one page; brevity which militates against any analysis or understanding of the people alive at the time, what they hoped to achieve and, finally, what really did happen 'when the old religion failed'. Critical examples for this project are the conflation of two Sir John Arundells of Lanherne (father and son, the 12th and 13th Sir Johns of Lanherne) and the claim that Francis Tregian of Golden Manor was executed alongside his priest Cuthbert Mayne. When added to the vague description of Tristram Winslade, such reductionism obviates any need to examine the Catholics of Cornwall any further, because apparently they were either dead or too elderly to be a threat. Deacon therefore concludes that 'there was little hint of any potential unrest in the 1570s', perhaps due to the population having been 'cowed' or because they were 'indifferent'.⁷⁵ The truth about these people, however, reveals a different picture. The Sir John Arundell who employed Tristram Winslade and the Arundell boys was a vital man in his thirties when Tristram went to Lanherne. Francis Tregian, who was only three years older than Tristram and a young married man with a three-year-old heir when he was arrested in 1577, spent his days in various prisons until King James

⁷⁴ Bernard Deacon. *Concise History*, 65. Deacon draws on the traditionally accepted pillars of identity set out by A.D. Smith in *National Identity* (London: Penguin Books, 1991): 6.

⁷⁵ Bernard Deacon. *Concise History*, 78.

I allowed him to go into exile. He died in Lisbon and his vertical tomb at São Roque is, even today, a site of pilgrimage for English Catholics.⁷⁶

Stoyle and Deacon have both neglected the second half of the sixteenth century but, as we have seen, their respective leaps into the seventeenth century are made upon two quite different horses running on two distinctly different courses. Stoyle's leap to the Civil War ignores the strife that befell the Cornish Catholics in 1577 and he takes the struggle for identity from one form of overt rebellion to another. Deacon, on the other hand, eliminates the main players and therefore their activities, thus drawing a line under Catholicism in Cornwall, from which point he argues against notions of continuity. What we have, in the middle of this historiographical battle, is the very same gaping hole that gave rise to Rowse's pronouncement – cited above – that the 'county accepted tranquilly the religious forms the Government, in its greater wisdom, thought fit to impose.'

This patronizing assessment betrays not only Rowse's acute desire, in the 1940s, to have his countrymen be seen as good and loyal Elizabethans (that is, Protestant) but also an element of naivety; surely, the antics of Grenville and his subsequent knighting should have had Rowse asking himself what Grenville had really uncovered when he raided Francis Tregian's house. Was it simply that, through his bringing down of Cuthbert Mayne, Grenville had enabled the Queen to show her subjects she was serious about the threat of Catholicism, or had he been privy to some other information that has so far failed to come to light?⁷⁷ After all, as the story goes, Grenville's achievement was to bring about the eventual demise of the 'radius of Catholic influence' created by and perpetuated by the Arundells and Tregians.⁷⁸ These families represented the 'remnant' of Cornish Catholicism at a time when, according to Rowse, the situation in Cornwall 'was not dangerous' but also when 'a very considerable remnant ...[which]... if left to itself it would have grown, for there must have been some

⁷⁶Tregian and Mayne were both arrested in June 1577 by Richard Grenville. Tregian spent years in the Marshalsea and Fleet prisons, where he fathered most of his 18 children. He was freed by James I and died in Lisbon, where his vertical tomb at São Roque church remains a site of pilgrimage for English Catholics. The author visited the site and has seen the tomb. For detail of Tregian's life see Raymond F. Trudgian. *Francis Tregian 1548-1608, Elizabethan recusant: A Truly Catholic Cornishman*. (Brighton, U.K.: The Alpha Press, 1998).

⁷⁷A.L. Rowse states that all of Grenville's papers were destroyed. *Sir Richard Grenville*, 9-10.

⁷⁸A.L. Rowse. *Sir Richard Grenville*, 131.

underground sympathy for Catholicism among the simplest people.⁷⁹ As Stoye has noted, there were indeed ‘nagging fears that the Cornish might one day rebel’ and that Spanish agents were looking to Cornwall for signs of insurrection.⁸⁰

It is at this point that we must examine what appears to be a disjointed relationship between the events in 1577 in Cornwall and other aspects of England’s imperative to rid itself of Catholicism. Notwithstanding that Grenville’s persecution of the Cornish Catholics led to the first execution in England of a ‘seminary’ priest – Tregian’s priest, Cuthbert Mayne, who was executed in Cornwall in November 1577 – Gerard Kilroy claims that England’s penchant for executing these priests had its genesis in the horrors of Sander’s invasion of Ireland in 1582;⁸¹ it is indeed from this time that such persecution became a national obsession. But if Kilroy is right, the fuss and reward associated with Grenville’s achievement, including his knighthood, seems to be much ado about nothing very much. Was Grenville acting purely out of greed, as suggested by Haynes, and therefore just a hero being celebrated for a victory over something that was no threat?⁸² Or was there something else going on?

The fact that historiography has not asked this question and therefore not answered it demonstrates its quite singular purpose, which has been to celebrate the demise of a small group of Catholics whose influence no one is clear about and who were not involved in anything dangerous apart from Francis Tregian’s reckless flaunting of a priest. So, either Grenville just struck it lucky with his attack on Golden Manor, or he had landed the first strategic strike aimed at shutting down something more sinister. Why, one feels compelled to ask, was he knighted?

Here, we begin the task of looking at the personalities, goals and grievances of the individuals who played critical roles in this narrow slice of Cornish history. And while our main focus is to locate and identify the true story of Tristram Winslade, it is essential to explore the character who ruined whatever it was the Cornish Catholics were up to in 1577 and to interrogate the possibility that rather than acting purely out of greed and at the urgings of his

⁷⁹ A.L. Rowse. *Sir Richard Grenville*, 131 & 144.

⁸⁰ Mark Stoye. *West Britons*, 43

⁸¹ Gerard Kilroy. *Edmund Campion: A Scholarly Life*. (London: Routledge, 2015): 267.

⁸² Haynes says Grenville ‘was a man who in fits of rage chewed glass...’ *Invisible Power*, 36-37.

own pugnacious personality, Grenville had got wind of something that needed his attention and that the presence of a priest at the Tregian residence simply provided him with a reason to search the property and arrest Tregian and Sir John Arundell. Then, as we will see, there is the intriguing fact that Grenville persistently appeared every time the Winslades came before a court or an interrogation. Why was he so obsessed by the Catholic families of Cornwall? No one has bothered to ask.

1.5 Richard Grenville and a forgotten legacy

*'... a certain dominant streak is observable: a harsh domineering note, proud in the extreme, unyielding, betraying signs of overstrain and unbalance ...'*⁸³

Richard Grenville (1542-1593) was born into a family already aggrieved by the Arundell and Tregian families, a matter often noted – sometimes confusedly so – by historians.⁸⁴ According to Rowse, this grievance had its origins in a marriage bid made by Sir Richard, Marshal of Calais (our Grenville's grandfather) who wanted his daughter Margaret to marry John Tregian, who instead chose Katherine Arundell of Lanherne. Could the legend of this feud possibly have fuelled Grenville's malice when he arrested Tregian in 1577? After all, John Tregian was dead and the widowed Katherine had returned to Lanherne.⁸⁵ It seems unlikely, given the generational gap. Yet, other historians have misread the quarrel and hopped it over the generations and into Grenville's lifetime. A Tregian family historian claims that Grenville's father (that is, Roger Grenville, who died in 1545) had wanted his daughter to marry John Tregian.⁸⁶ Meanwhile, Haynes claims that Grenville himself wanted his daughter to marry Francis Tregian.⁸⁷ Such muddling is rife throughout the history of the sixteenth century

⁸³ A.L. Rowse. *Richard Grenville*, 21. Rowse claims that these family characteristics reached their apex in this particular member of the Grenville family.

⁸⁴ A.L. Rowse demonstrates Tregian's insistence that his arrest was the result of Grenville's envy and malice (*Tudor Cornwall*, 351). This line of reasoning is followed by Haynes, who claims Grenville 'nursed a deep animosity towards Tregian (Alan Haynes. *Invisible Power*, 37.) For Grenville's birthdate: A. L. Rowse. *Sir Richard Grenville*, 37.

⁸⁵ A.L. Rowse. *Tudor Cornwall*, 345; A.L. Rowse. *Sir Richard Grenville*, 132.

⁸⁶ Raymond F. Trudgian. *Francis Tregian 1548-1608*, 5. There is no evidence I have found that Roger Grenville had a daughter. He had three sons.

⁸⁷ Alan Haynes. *Invisible Power*, 37.

Catholics and has the potential to seriously distort our understanding of people and events. We may come closer to the truth with Trudgian's observation that Grenville resented Arundell and Tregian because they had served on the commission on piracy.⁸⁸ However, we might also ask what grievances Grenville had against Catholics as a whole and cast our gaze towards events that might have had a significant impact upon him.

Like the two legitimate sons of Humphrey Arundell, Grenville was a young child at the time of the Prayer Book Rebellion – he was seven years old. He had already lost his father, Roger, who as captain of the Henry VIII's warship the *Mary Rose*, went down with the vessel as it sank before the king's eyes at Portsmouth in 1545. Accounts of the 1549 rebellion describe how, in its early days, a contingent of Cornish rebels stormed into the half-ruined Trematon Castle where the retired Marshal of Calais, Sir Richard Grenville, had gathered various members of his household for protection.⁸⁹ Carew suggests that he was taken prisoner and held in Launceston gaol, an act that constituted the rebels' first act of treachery.⁹⁰

The possibility arises that seven-year-old Richard Grenville had felt the terror of the raid on the castle, during which the women were stripped of their clothing and had jewellery torn from their fingers.⁹¹ He may have seen his grandfather being taken away and feared for his safety. What is more certain, however, is that all of this taught Grenville to loathe all Catholics, and his early inheritance, at the age of twenty-one, started him on a journey which would ultimately enable him to wreak a modicum of revenge. But before becoming a Sheriff and a Justice of the Peace, Richard Grenville had some obstacles to overcome, which probably began in the late 1560s when, in London, he killed a man by running him through with his sword. With a tarnished reputation that made him unwelcome at Court, he may have directed his anger in the direction of home, and those he loathed most.

⁸⁸ Raymond F. Trudgian. *Francis Tregian 1548-1608*, 5. It should also be noted that Tristram Winslade described Grenville, among others, as a pirate. Cheryl Hayden. "Tristram Winslade: the Desperate Heart", 46.

⁸⁹ Frances Rose-Troup. *The Western Rebellion*, 128-129. Also, Mark Stoye. "Fully Bente to Fighte Oute the Matter': Reconsidering Cornwall's Role in the Western Rebellion of 1549', *English Historical Review*, cxxix, no. 538. (June 2014): 549-577 (565).

⁹⁰ Richard Carew. *Survey of Cornwall*, 131.

⁹¹ Eg: Frances Rose-Troup. *The Western Rebellion*, 128-129. Rose-Troup's sources include Richard Carew who, writing fifty years after the event, may be exaggerating the cruelty meted out by the rebels in order to meet the expectations of his audience, which included his family and friends.

It was probably widely known that Sir John Arundell of Lanherne's father – first cousin to rebel leader, Humphrey – had aided the rebel cause in 1549, just as it was widely known in the mid-1570s that the new Sir John's nephew and step-son-in-law, the ardently Catholic Francis Tregian, had not only recently received permission from the Queen to return from exile, but that he had spurned her advances, left her Court and returned to Cornwall. While he returned to Golden for a time, he settled in at Lanherne for a protracted period, with his wife and servants, thus wearing out his welcome while the renovations to Golden Manor were completed.⁹² Once ensconced in his newly refurbished home, he took up the dangerous game of harbouring a 'seminary' priest, Cuthbert Mayne, whom he flaunted around the countryside under the flimsy guise of a household steward.⁹³

The danger to Sir John Arundell was considerable. In 1576, having for some years been chief steward of the Earl of Oxford's lands in Cornwall, he had purchased these six manors for £3000.⁹⁴ His 'radius of influence', therefore, far from shrinking – as assumed by Rowse – appears to have been expanding, just at the very time that William Allen 'was involved in full-scale plans for an invasion of England.'⁹⁵ This, considered in relation to the suspicion around Arundell as a 'great friend of the King of Spain and the one who married Lady Stourton', gave him every reason to be cautious and give 'as little offence as possible.'⁹⁶ By Easter 1577, with Francis Tregian's behavior at Golden becoming more and more reckless, Arundell banned his household from visiting them. But despite Sir John's caution, his own family connections might have presented enough risk. Notwithstanding the religious schism that divided the Catholic and Protestant families, the Lanherne family appears to have maintained friendly ties

⁹² *Tregian vs Arundell*, Cornwall Records Office, AR/17/07. During this period, the relationship between Tregian and Arundell became fractious, with Tregian demanding delivery of a promised dowry payment from Sir John. Chynoweth summarises the case as a 'seemingly childlike argument about who should do what first apparently stemming from Tregian's dislike of Arundell, which had been caused by some 'discourtesy received at his hand'. ' John Chynoweth. *Tudor Cornwall*, 87.

⁹³ A. L. Rowse. *Sir Richard Grenville*, 135. Mayne also spent days and weeks at a time at Lanherne.

⁹⁴ H.S.A Fox & O.J. Padel. *The Cornish Lands of the Arundells of Lanherne, Fourteenth to Sixteenth Centuries*. (Exeter, U.K.: Devon and Cornwall Record Society, New Series 41, 2000): xxxii-xxxiii.

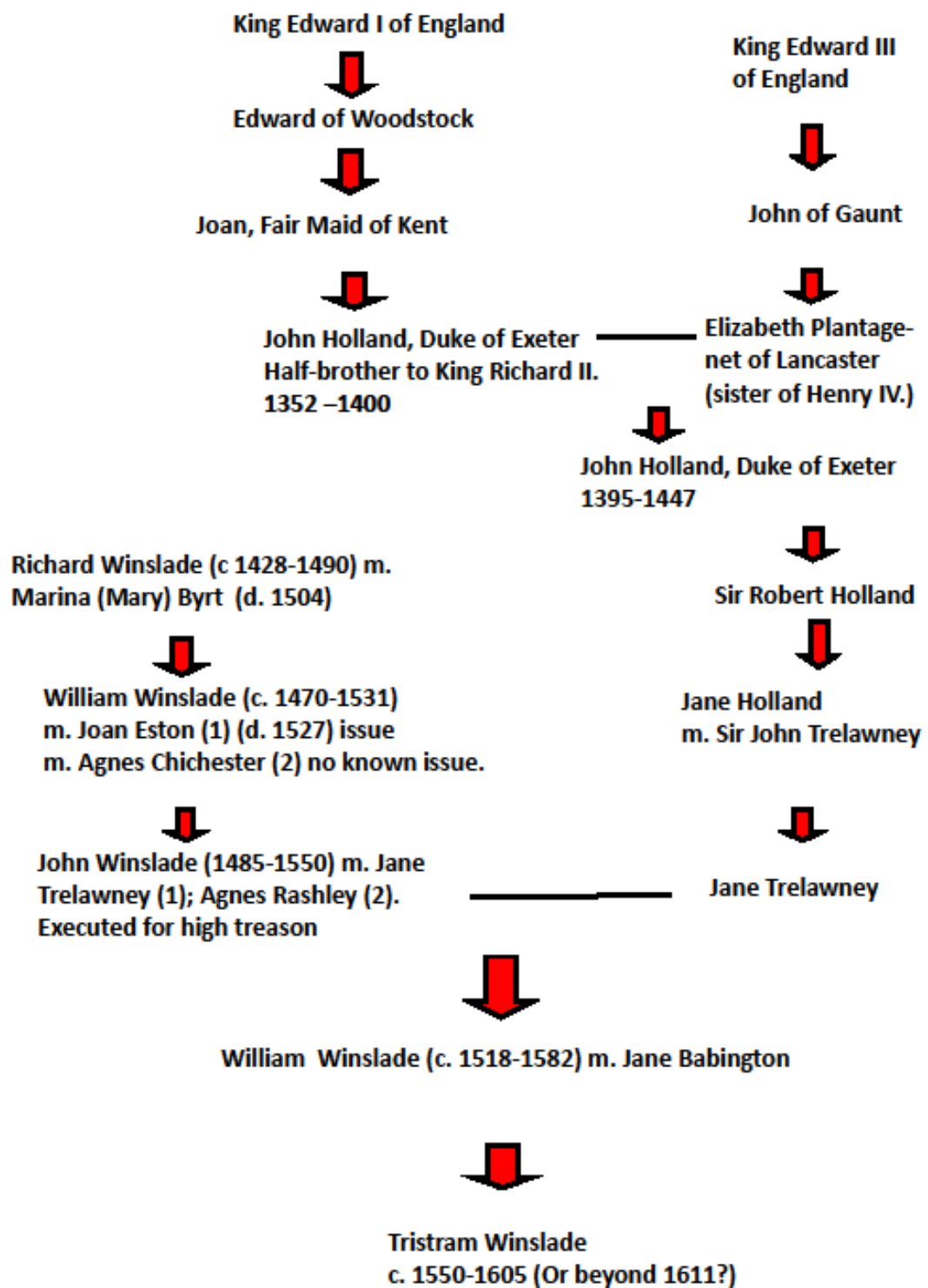
⁹⁵ Gerard Kilroy. *Edmund Campion*, 88.

⁹⁶ A.L. Rowse. *Tudor Cornwall*, 345. Rowse believes this statement to be intended to describe Francis Tregian. From my own reading of Rowse's source (Salisbury MSS) I believe it to be a description of Sir John Arundell. It was Arundell's wife, Anne, who had been Lady Stourton. Tregian married her daughter, who is generally referred to as Mary Stourton. The term 'great friend of the King of Spain' may have originated with Ralph Sherwin's revelation under torture that Sir John Arundell had supported an invasion of England which would land at St Michael's Mount. (Gerard Kilroy. *Edmund Campion*, 318.)

with their Protestant kin. First among these were their cousins, the Arundells of Trerice, who were related by marriage to the Grenvilles. It is entirely possible that news of what went on at Lanherne and Golden would eventually reach the ears of Richard Grenville. Whether he learned anything concrete about Sir John's activities at Lanherne is unknown, but what he learned about Francis Tregian at Golden must have presented him with an irresistible opportunity: he could pander to the Queen for her favour and act upon his loathing of the Cornish Catholics all in one grand gesture. It could only do him good.

The question we must now pose is: what does all of this have to do with Tristram Winslade? The answer lies in previously unexplored archival material, and it shows not only that Grenville's raid on Golden, and the simultaneous arrest of Sir John Arundell in London, changed Tristram Winslade's life forever, but how and why.

The noble, yet corrupted, blood of Tristram Winslade



Chapter Two – A man called Tristram

The previous chapter has revealed how history's assumption that Cornwall was pacified and of no real threat to the Elizabethan Reformation during the second half of the sixteenth century has left in its wake a void where real Cornish Catholic people – including survivors of the devastating rebellion of 1549 – were still living. Tristram Winslade is one such individual, and in this chapter we set out to recover his life story. With previous mainstream English historical accounts unable to offer much help, we must now turn elsewhere. Firstly, we re-examine the archive for anything that might shed light on the Winslade family at this time, for we cannot rely on previously published material to have extracted from everything they have cited all of the interesting anecdotes, foibles and emotions inherent to a family under pressure. Secondly, we explore historical accounts coming from oppositional narratives that focus on the cause of the English Catholics, for it is here that we might find evidence of what Tristram Winslade was actually doing. Thirdly, having gleaned as much as possible, we employ the imagination to create his persona and to place him in his own world. The first question is fundamental to the matter: can we be sure that he even existed?

2.1 Alias or real person?

*'Winslade was the paternal grandfather of the one who wrote this report.'*⁹⁷

If we read any account of Cornish history relating to this period, our understanding of the *0 Tristram Winslade was. To begin with, we turn to two documents extant from the sixteenth century. The first, from 1588, is the above-mentioned partial remnant of the record of the interrogation of Tristram Winslade in the Tower of London, which was conducted by none other than Sir Richard Grenville, among others. Winslade was sailing with the Spanish Armada when his ship, the galleon flagship, *Nuestra Señora del Rosario*, broke a mast and foundered. He was arrested by Sir Francis Drake, who found 'Tristan Uniglade' on the ship's manifest, and was quickly taken up to London.⁹⁸ Under interrogation, he revealed that his father was

⁹⁷ Tristram Winslade, c. 1595. Cheryl Hayden. "Tristram Winslade: the desperate heart", 45.

⁹⁸ Cesáreo Fernández Duro. *La Armada Invencible, por El Capitan de Navio, Tomo II*. (Madrid: 1885): 71.
<https://ia801407.us.archive.org/11/items/laarmadainvenci01durogoog/laarmadainvenci01durogoog.pdf>

William Winslade – a fact Grenville would have already known – and, more surprisingly, that William had served the emperor, Charles V. As we will see, this document reveals a great deal more about the life of Tristram Winslade.

The second document is the 1595 Latin document referred to above, which deals with matters pertaining to an invasion of Cornwall and Devon and even naming those in the south-west of England who were ready with men, arms and money to help the Catholic cause.⁹⁹ This document not only confirmed Tristram's identity as William's son and John's grandson but provided an insight into those he counted as his most trusted friends and allies.

These two documents, having clarified the matter of identity, provide the researcher with the certainty required to proceed with a thorough investigation into the life of Tristram Winslade. This was very clearly a family whose post-rebellion objectives were driven by a deep desire to have England return to Catholicism so that they might reclaim their lost lands. Their true story was never going to be found by only looking to English or Cornish history.

2.2 Family of origin

*'... she had no cause to wish evil to the said Wideslades, for that the said John Wydeslade, her former husband, had been one of the best family...'*¹⁰⁰

In 1547, the Edwardian parliament decided that any wife enjoined in property with her husband would not lose her rights to that property in the event of her husband's treason, and some historians have suggested that it may have been in this context that, at some point prior to the 1549 rebellion, John Winslade 'enfeoffed' his wife, Agnes Winslade, with his Cornish estates.¹⁰¹ This scenario is suggestive of some sort of collusion between John Winslade and

⁹⁹ Cheryl Hayden. "Tristram Winslade: the desperate heart." Tristram identifies the rebel leader, Winslade, as his grandfather, and identifies himself as the 'one who wrote this report' (45); he names John Winslade as his paternal grandfather (47); he lists 'John, William and Tristram Winslade' as those denounced by Reginald Mohun, who took possession of their inheritance (54).

¹⁰⁰ Alice King's testimony regarding Agnes Winslade. *Inquisition into the Property of William Widesladd*.

¹⁰¹ This may have happened in the immediate prelude to the rebellion, as in 1549 Edward VI's government passed laws which, in cases of riotous assembly in which a person was found to be a traitor, '*ensured the lord of the fee would not lose the land to the king.*' K. J. Kesselring. "Felony and Forfeiture in England, c. 1170-1870", *The Journal of Legal History* 30, no. 3 (2009): 210. <https://doi.org/10.1080/01440360903353948>

his only son and heir, William, in which they were preparing for rebellion and, in the event that one or both of them were found to have committed treason, the Cornish estates would be protected. Indeed, detail of the feoffing ceremony at which Agnes received her rights to the estates is one of the most interesting pieces of evidence presented at a Commission of Inquiry into the property of William Winslade, which was set up by Chancery and heard in Cornwall by the man knighted for his persecution of Cuthbert Mayne and Francis Tregian: Sir Richard Grenville. Among the most colourful witness accounts are those given by people who had been servants and tenants of John and Agnes. They describe the actual ceremony, in which John and William walked together in the courtyard at Tregarrick, while two of Agnes's new tenants – servants of John – entered the hall and presented her with the 'turf and bough' that symbolized the estates, after which John entered the hall to receive her loving gratitude.¹⁰²

Here, then, is a picture of family solidarity and it is backed up by evidence to suggest that Agnes's love for John endured long after his death. Witnesses told the court that her next husband, John Trevanion, had accused her of encouraging John Winslade's rebellion; that Agnes had told Trevanion that John Winslade was from the 'best family'; that she accused Trevanion of having had thirty years' benefit of the Winslades' land without it costing him anything; and that she had wanted Trevanion to give her the papers so that she might return them to William Winslade and his heirs because she had nothing against them. The image here is one of marriage gone very bad indeed. In fact, Rowse's account of Trevanion suggests that perhaps even before Agnes's death, he had his eye on a new wife, because the year after Agnes's death, he married Joan Daniel whom he 'had long entertained a suit for...'.¹⁰³

That, then, is the happy families version of life in the Winslade family before John's execution, as heard by Sir Richard Grenville in 1584-85. Then, in a series of legal suits heard in Chancery and Star Chamber, brawling over the Cornish estates escalated to fever pitch and witnesses desperate to secure their grasp on them let loose with their attacks on the Winslades.¹⁰⁴ It is not my intention to go into the intricacies of this protracted legal battle

¹⁰² *Inquisition into the Property of William Widesladd.*

¹⁰³ A.L. Rowse. *Tudor Cornwall*, 343-44.

¹⁰⁴ *Barkley v Tubb and Mowhane*. John Barkley appears to have been granted the lands by the Queen due to William Winslade's status as a fugitive. He describes himself as 'sergeant of your majesty's cellar.'

here, as John Chynoweth has explained the matter succinctly, but some of the witnesses are worth hearing from.¹⁰⁵ One piece of colour comes from George Tubbe who said that, 'about one and forty years past [he] did marry the only daughter of Agnes, wife of the said John Winslade...'¹⁰⁶ Tubbe told the court that the deeds of Agnes's feoffment were created, sealed and delivered in 1544, that is, during the reign of King Henry VIII and therefore long before the introduction of the Edwardian treason laws discussed above. It would seem, then, that the feoffment had nothing to do with protecting the land against a foreseeable attainder for treason. Rather, according to Tubbe, John had enfeoffed Agnes with the Cornish lands because he was thoroughly displeased with William, who had failed to follow his advice in terms of his marriage. According to Tubbe, William had

... without his father's consent, married himself to one Jane Babington a nun professed and therefore the said John Winslade diverse times said that the children which William his son had or should have begotten upon the said professed nun were or should be all bastards... [and had also] ...abused his mother-in-law [ie: step-mother] Agnes Winslade by ill-treating her with dishonest and hard speaches, saying she was a strumpett and a drabbe and that he wold not leav her worth a grote after the death of his father John Wynslade.¹⁰⁷

Whom does one believe? The elderly servants of the deceased Agnes Winslade who had nothing to gain by defending her, or the grasping son-in-law who is now blaming his co-defendant for arranging a forgery and all the while blackening the name of William Winslade and his offspring? Or does the truth lie elsewhere, for any row between father and son seems

¹⁰⁵ John Chynoweth provides a detailed summary which includes a case mounted by Tristram Winslade in the court of Star Chamber in 1590. *Tudor Cornwall*, 291-293.

¹⁰⁶ This reference to Agnes's daughter – implying that she was not John's daughter – led me to wonder whether John Winslade had been Agnes's second husband. *Visitations* show George Tubbe's wife was Eleanor Rashley. (See *Visitations of the County of Cornwall*, 519.) Further investigation found that Agnes had indeed been married to a Robert Rashley (d. 1530s) and that they had a son, John Rashley. John Rashley was therefore William Winslade's step-brother and they are both cited in *Barkley v Tubb and Mohawne* in connection with having witnessed the signing and sealing of a deed. Agnes and John do not appear to have had children together, suggesting that Agnes may have been beyond her childbearing years by the time of their marriage.

¹⁰⁷ *Barkley v Tubb and Mowhane*.

to have been patched up by the time of the rebellion, because by then William was living on one of his father's estates near St Agnes.

For now, though, we return to Grenville's Commission of Inquiry for one vital piece of information that has been entirely overlooked by historians: the apparently innocuous words, in reference to William Winslade's sons and heirs in 1585: 'Daniel and his brothers.'¹⁰⁸ Here, two facts leap out at us: firstly, Tristram's brother Daniel has become known as their father's heir and, secondly, there were more sons in the family than have been recorded (at least to our knowledge), for if Daniel Winslade had more than one brother, then William Winslade had at least three sons. If Tristram's fugitive status disqualified him from the count, then it seems that there were at least four boys in this family: Tristram, Daniel, and at least two others.

This revelation not only challenges the widespread claims about the extinction of the family, but also takes us back to the life of William Winslade at the time his family was taking shape. If Tristram was the eldest son and born c. 1550, what sort of world were these children born into? What sort of life would they be expected to live?

2.3 A post-apocalyptic world

*'With sorrowful, perhaps tearful, eyes they watched the procession, content not to follow to Tyburn, but satisfied that their captains had been executed because they returned not.'*¹⁰⁹

John Winslade was executed at Tyburn on 27 January 1550. William, who had been arrested, was released from the Fleet prison in early November 1549. And so the date of Tristram's birth, c. 1550, places his arrival at possibly the most harrowing time in William Winslade's life. Is this why we suddenly find, in a family full of men called William, John and Richard, a first-born son named Tristram, a name meaning 'sorrow'? We do not know what William did when he was first released. Given the notion that he had married Jane Babington against his father's

¹⁰⁸ *Inquisition into the Property of William Winsladd.*

¹⁰⁹ An account of the experience of two of John Winslade's servants who were in London on the day of his execution. Frances Rose-Troup. *The Western Rebellion*, 349.

wishes, he may have actually loved her and gone to find her, perhaps at her father's house in Ottery St Mary in Devon, the county in which Tristram states he was born. He may also have visited Agnes, his step-mother, at Tregarrick in the hope that she would allow him to return to the estate at Mithian. If he did, he was disappointed, perhaps because Agnes appears to have married John Trevanion very quickly after John Winslade's execution and he would not allow William near her. This may be why and when William was forced to lead a 'walking life' with his harp.

This point in William Winslade's life is worthy of analysis. Here we have a grown man who had, according to his enemies, angered his father by marrying a professed nun but who seems then to have gone along with the ceremony at which his step-mother was being 'enfeoffed', for the term of her life, with all of his Cornish inheritance. At that point, William was still set to inherit his father's substantial Devonshire holdings, so perhaps father and son had reached an understanding. If, during the second half of the 1540s, father and son had reconciled any differences, then William would no doubt have been seriously aggrieved by John's execution. That, and John Trevanion's refusal to see him at Tregarrick, appear to have turned William's grief to anger. Notwithstanding the birth in c. 1550 of his heir, William joined Charles V's army in Siena where, by July 1551, he was '...in the daily habit of speaking evil of the King's Majesty and the Council, calling them Lutherans, and saying there is no justice, with such like...'. He even challenged an English soldier to a duel, which he then refused to engage in, perhaps because he risked being sent back to England.¹¹⁰ William was exhibiting all of the anger that might be expected of someone whose father had been executed, whose lands had been stolen and who was living in exile because his country was being ruled by a thirteen year-old king to whom he could never swear allegiance. Added to this, he was living apart from a wife he may have married for love, and from his first-born son. In 1551, life for William Winslade was about as bad as it could get.

But two years later the unexpected happened: in 1553, at the age of fifteen, Edward VI died and, notwithstanding efforts to put Lady Jane Grey on the throne, within weeks, England had a Catholic Queen Mary. This was undoubtedly the signal for William to return

¹¹⁰ *Calendar of State Papers Foreign, Edward VI*, July 18, 1551. William Barnes to the King's secretary. British History Online: <https://www.british-history.ac.uk/cal-state-papers/foreign/edw-vi/pp140-157>

home, and when he got there he met a three-year-old son who did not know him and quite possibly never would.

A man of his time, William's priority was to use his unquestionable Catholic pedigree to retrieve some of his lost lands. To this point, William's focus had been on survival. Any attempt to retrieve the Cornish estates, now being controlled by John Trevanion, would have to be made through the civil courts. But the sudden change in the monarchy meant that England was suddenly Catholic again, and the Devonshire lands – taken by the Crown by virtue of John's attainder – were back in contention. William turned to Sir Thomas Denys for help and, with his hopes on the rise, celebrated the birth of a second son whom he favoured with the name Daniel, perhaps to reflect the 'hope through faith' optimism the Marian era brought to him. And so, we find the two sons of William Winslade who can be found in the archive, bearing names that seems to reflect the roles each would eventually play in the quest to recoup the family fortune. Tristram, our man of sorrow born during the reign of a Protestant boy-king, was to carry on the treacherous quest for a counter-Reformation and, upon its success, reclaim the family's estates; this much we know from his treatise to King Philip. For reasons unknown, perhaps during the mid-1560s, Daniel may have entered service with a George Cary Esquire in Devon and represented the family at the inquest into their father's possessions.¹¹¹

2.4 Allegiance, obedience and indoctrination

*'Many have for a long time conceived a serious hope that ... on a happier day the star of Gabriel will finally rise to assist them.'*¹¹²

Tristram Winslade's early childhood would have been lived beneath the threat of the rod as he learned to be obedient. However, with his father away, his first lessons were probably delivered by his mother, or perhaps her father, Sir Nicholas Babington. Tristram does not refer to his mother or her family in his 1595 document and the remnants of his interrogation in

¹¹¹ *Inquisition into the Property of William Winsladd*. As noted above, this may have been George Cary Esq. of Cockington in South Devon. The role of the Cary family in the control of certain members of the Arundell and Winslade families, while beyond the scope of this project, is fascinating and perhaps worth further exploration.

¹¹² Tristram Winslade on Gabriel Denys, 1595. Cheryl Hayden. "Tristram Winslade: the desperate heart", 46.

1588 are, unsurprisingly, equally devoid of the Babington name.¹¹³ It is likely that Jane Winslade was forced to obey her parents during her husband's absence and that little Tristram, born full of evil as all children were believed to be, bore the brunt of everyone's demands. How he felt, at the age of three years, about the man who arrived home from Siena we cannot possibly know. While he mentions William, his father, in both the extant documents referred to above, there is no hint of emotion. Intriguingly, the man Tristram Winslade would describe, in c. 1595, with the greatest affection and respect is Gabriel Denys, the fifth son of Sir Thomas.¹¹⁴ What was the extent and nature of their relationship?

By the mid-1550s, Sir Thomas was a very elderly man and, through the Orleigh Court branch of the family, was a neighbour to the Winslades at Buckland Brewer.¹¹⁵ As a young man, he probably would have known an even younger John Winslade. Notwithstanding that he did not take the rebels' side in the rebellion, the depth of Sir Thomas's Catholic sympathies may have been underestimated because, according to Tristram Winslade, during Lady Jane Grey's brief 'monarchy', he had planned for the secession of Cornwall, Devon, Somerset and Dorset, which – so Winslade seems to be suggesting – would defend Catholicism and guarantee Mary Tudor a Catholic realm.¹¹⁶ Then, during the first months of Mary's reign, Denys led local opposition to Wyatt's rebellion, which in Devon was being stirred up by Sir Peter Carew, the very man who had been rewarded in 1549 with the Winslades' Devonshire estates. It was into this milieu of anti-Carew sentiment that William Winslade seems to have approached Denys about his Devonshire lands.

The fact that Tristram knew about Sir Thomas Denys's secession plan – something I have not found mentioned anywhere else – suggests also that by the mid-1550s, perhaps as soon as William Winslade arrived home from Siena, the two families forged a seriously guarded bond. It also suggests that William (or perhaps Gabriel Denys) made sure Tristram knew everything that had happened in the quest for a counter-Reformation. The need for

¹¹³ This may have more to do with discretion in the face of the treachery laid at the feet of his distant cousin, Anthony Babington, in 1586 than the influence of the Devonshire branch of the family during the 1550s. Anthony Babington was found guilty of high treason in the context of a bid to put Mary Queen of Scots on the English throne. His fate as leader of the Babington Plot is well documented.

¹¹⁴ Tristram Winslade, 1595. See Cheryl Hayden, "Tristram Winslade: the desperate heart", 46-47.

¹¹⁵ During the 1560s, a William Denys resided at Orleigh in Buckland Brewer. His wife was the widow of Sir Thomas's brother, Henry Denys. *Visitations of the County of Cornwall, 1620*, 138.

¹¹⁶ Cheryl Hayden, "Tristram Winslade; the desperate heart", 42.

secrecy then has quite logically led to a lack of detail now, and it is at moments such as this that we need to imagine how events unfurled and who might have been involved. For example, Sir Thomas's overtly Catholic son, Gabriel, might have accompanied his elderly father – Sir Thomas was by now in his seventies – as he travelled around the county, carrying out the many duties he performed for Queen Mary. This is one way in which Gabriel Denys's influence and involvement in Tristram's life can be explained. But it may be that this relationship was forged very early in Tristram's life when, in his father's absence, a visit from a young friend of the family may have been something of a delight.¹¹⁷ We might also conjecture that Sir Thomas and Gabriel Denys served, respectively, as father figures for William and Tristram Winslade.

And so, while we might imagine the teenage Gabriel Denys teaching young Tristram the art of swordsmanship with wooden swords, their fathers were working towards reclaiming the manor house of Winslade Barton and its lands. The possibility of this began with Griffith Ameredith, an Exeter merchant who had acquired Winslade Barton and its lands from Sir Peter Carew and in 1556 sold it to the Crown.¹¹⁸ Perhaps in response to this, Sir Thomas Denys instituted a commission to examine William Winslade's claim to the property. Then, because '... the commissioners certified into the Court of Chancery that William had been enfeoffed on the said lands as in the petition ...' the Queen granted to William Winslade the manor and lands of Buckland Brewer 'as they were held before the attainder of John Winslade.'¹¹⁹ Notwithstanding Queen Mary's grant, there is a suggestion that she was apprehensive about acceding to the application because, as Tristram would later reveal, it was her husband, the King of Spain's intervention on William Winslade's behalf – possibly

¹¹⁷ Gabriel Denys was born 1538, thus he was twelve years older than Tristram. He was Sir Thomas's fifth son and married Elizabeth Swettman (née Potter) of Kent. *Visitations of the County of Cornwall, 1620*, 138.

¹¹⁸ *Grant by Griffith Ameredith of the City of Exeter to Philip and Mary of the manor of Winslade and six messuages in Buckland Brewer, Devon, in consideration of £800 of a £2160 17s 4d debt owed to the Crown*. E 355/113. 2 & 3, Philip & Mary. Ameredith draws attention to the fact that Sir Peter Carew [who had been granted the lands following John Winslade's attainder] had failed to pay in excess of £2000 in taxes and had purchased it from him for £800. By this time, Carew had fled into exile for having conspired against Queen Mary as part of Wyatt's Rebellion. Ameredith, a successful Exeter merchant and member of Parliament, had a history of helping Carew with property matters. See History of Parliament Online: <https://www.historyofparliamentonline.org/volume/1509-1558/member/ameredith-griffith-1495-1557>

¹¹⁹ Great Britain. *Calendar of the Patent Rolls Preserved in the Public Record Offices. Philip and Mary*. (London: His Majesty's Stationery Office, 1936): 105-106.

because Winslade had served Spain in Siena – that persuaded her to act.¹²⁰ The archives also give us a hint of William Winslade’s reclaiming of the Barton, which appears to have been leased by Sir Peter Carew’s friend, Sir Anthony Pollard, whose father – Richard Pollard – was living there when William Winslade took possession.¹²¹ This was a situation destined to be problematic because, during the 1549 rebellion, Sir Anthony Pollard had been one of the more committed Protestant reformers with whom the Cornish rebels, perhaps even one of the Winslades, had refused to parley. For the Pollards, the loss of this lease to the Winslades would have been more than an affront.

By this time, Tristram Winslade was eight years old, an age when permanent memories begin to take root. Certainly, in the sixteenth century, heirs to their father’s fortunes began to learn precisely who they were in the world and what would be expected of them. With the stress of homelessness and poverty behind them and a Catholic Queen on the throne, William and Jane Winslade must have felt they could rebuild their lives and think about an appropriate education for their eldest son. There can be little doubt that Tristram was already familiar with his father’s stories of the rebellion for he writes of this in 1595, thus giving modern readers a new and unique insight into what the rebels actually believed about the rebellion and the strength of the ‘Catholic Army’ of Devon and Cornwall:

‘This battle alone made the power and the courage of the two counties very famous, because the Royal army, even though it was put together from all the other counties of the Kingdom, would not have dared to advance into battle if the Burgundians and Germans had not been accepted as allies...’ and that the leadership of Winslade and Arundell was so great that under them ‘...many – Bury, Smith, Coffin and others – were leading even the noble ranks.’¹²²

It is impossible, here, not to hear a father’s ‘tall tales and true’ being told around the fire at Winslade Barton, and to perhaps find some growing affection between a troubled

¹²⁰ In 1595, Tristram Winslade reflected on the Queen’s kindness and the King’s intervention. Cheryl Hayden. “Tristram Winslade: the desperate heart”, 54.

¹²¹ *Pollard vs Wynslade*. Court of Chancery. 1558-1579. National Archives, U.K.: C3/140/53.

¹²² Cheryl Hayden. “Tristram Winslade: the desperate heart”, 44-45. It should be noted that Winslade is exaggerating the size of the Royal Army. Lord Russell had been given only 300 men and was heavily reliant on foreign mercenaries.

father and his eldest son. But any happiness young Tristram might have experienced at Winslade Barton was short-lived. By November 1558, within months of their reclaiming Winslade Barton, Queen Mary died and England became Protestant again. It may have been at this point that the expectations laid at Tristram's feet shifted, but without knowing whether, in return for King Philip's intervention, William had promised any kind of service to Spain, it is impossible to be certain about when or why it was decided that Tristram would go to Lanherne.¹²³ But at the age of ten years, that is where he went. He had had, at the most, two years to enjoy life with his family at Winslade Barton.



Winslade Barton
Photo taken by author,
Sept, 2016.

¹²³ Sir Thomas Denys's lengthy career at Court had produced a powerful network of friends in Devon and Cornwall, including the Arundells. He may have organised Tristram's service to Sir John Arundell of Lanherne. See: Mary L. Robertson. "'The Art of the Possible': Thomas Cromwell's Management of the West Country Government". *The Historical Journal* 32, no. 4 (Dec. 1989): 793-816 (799). <http://www.jstor.org/stable/2639685>. Accessed 19-01-2017.

2.5 A faithful servant

*'...the Esquire's son [expects to] wear the knight's livery...'*¹²⁴

Apart from Tristram's reference to his birthplace and his father's identity, contained in his 1595 document, his arrival at Lanherne at the age of ten years is the earliest known fact of his life that I have found. While history provides us with no clues as to whether he missed home, the possibility arises that having been sent away, he may have suffered from homesickness or childhood melancholia.¹²⁵ Likewise, there is nothing to tell us whether he ever returned home. However, his sense of his entitlement to Winslade Barton – so patently evident in 1595 – suggests that when Queen Elizabeth confiscated it again in 1564, he felt its loss keenly. He might, too, have been grateful that his position at Lanherne meant that he did not have to endure the pain of leaving it to live on a tenement at Bideford with his parents and siblings.

For now, Tristram was a young man learning the role of the obedient servant and being schooled in accordance in the traditional sixteenth century way. As the son of an esquire it was fitting that he should serve Sir John Arundell, who was aged in his mid-thirties and a Member of Parliament. Arundell had inherited his father's lands and title in February 1557- 58 at a time when he appears to have had no children of his own. He had, however, recently married Lady Anne Stourton, neé Stanley, the eldest daughter of the notoriously Catholic Earl of Derby and widow of Sir Charles Stourton. She already had four children – John, Charles, Edward and Mary Stourton, who would marry Francis Tregian. From c. 1560, Lady Anne began producing Sir John's seven children – two boys and five girls.¹²⁶

For young Tristram, arriving at Lanherne must have been daunting. Firstly, compared to Winslade Barton, it was massive. Most likely during the 1550s, with Catholicism on the rise, extensive modifications had been made to the house, including, in mid-sixteenth century style, an entire course of rooms along the length of what was then the rear wing. Effectively, this meant doubling the depth of this wing and so rooms which had had windows facing both

¹²⁴ Lacey Baldwin Smith. *Treason in Tudor England: Politics and Paranoia*. (Princeton, New Jersey: Princeton University Press, 1986): 84.

¹²⁵ Terence R. Murphy. "'Woeful Childe of Parents Rage': Suicide of Children and Adolescents in Early Modern England, 1507-1710", *The Sixteenth Century Journal* 17, no. 3. (1986): 259-270 (260).
<http://www.jstor.org/stable/2540320> Accessed: 07-10-2017.

¹²⁶ For an account of the Arundells of Lanherne: A.L.Rowse. *Tudor Cornwall*, 361-367.

the courtyard and the exterior landscape now had their exterior walls and windows built over to create the internal walls of a new row of rooms which would monopolize the exterior vista.¹²⁷ By the end of the Reformation, at least nine priest holes had been created, with one priest hiding out for eighteen months, and the house became ‘invaluable as a Mass centre.’¹²⁸ Today, Lanherne is a closed convent and access to the interior is not possible, but from the outside it is possible to glimpse suggestions of past intrigue. A door in a garden wall, for example, does not simply provide access to another part of the garden; the garden wall is wide enough to house a staircase that leads to the first-floor rooms of the house. It is easy to see how, with the garden wall door unlocked, people could enter and leave private areas of the house – perhaps Sir John’s study – without being seen by any of the servants. Secrecy would become part of Tristram’s world.



Part of the sixteenth century wing at Lanherne, which is now the front of the house. Photo taken by the author, Sept. 2016.

Just as the house was large, so too were its lands. With the help of seventeenth century maps of the estate and the heritage listing description of its history, it is possible to make sense of the estate as it might have been when Tristram Winslade lived there. In addition to its extensive pastures and cropping lands, the manor house probably had the same pigsties, carpentry workshops, a cider press, barn, coach house, brewhouse, stables, malthouse, kiln, bakehouse, wash-house, gardens, orchards and woodlands it would have two

¹²⁷ Thanks to Historic England. Entry number 1144134. Heritage officers have not been able to enter Lanherne as it is a closed order convent.

¹²⁸ ‘Lanherne: A Brief History’, Carmelite Sisters of Lanherne. My thanks to Sister Maria Rosa Pia. It is impossible to be certain when, during the course of the Reformation, these priest holes were constructed. However it is possible that they were built on the orders of the Sir John Arundell who is the subject of this paper. His father died before Elizabeth came to the throne and it seems unlikely that his heir, another John Arundell, would have had the nerve to keep priests hidden when he took over the lands in the 1590s.

hundred years later.¹²⁹ Saxton's 1576 map of Cornwall also suggests that the nearby stream was much wider and deeper than it is today, as all of Cornwall's rivers and estuaries were.¹³⁰ Flowing north, this stream meets the sea at Mawgan Porth, where today the surf rolls onto a broad, flat beach, behind which, to the east of the river mouth, the dark cliffs rise sharply, forming deep, narrow caves, and curving around to the headland at Trenaunce. It is not difficult to imagine the arrival of ships and boats, the comings and goings of smuggled goods, illegal priests and various other black-listed individuals. Likewise, it is not difficult to imagine the recreational pursuits of the young men who lived there. When their lessons were done and prayers said, they would have gone shooting for pheasants or hunting deer in the woodland. They would have fished in the stream, flown their kestrels and ridden horses along the beach.

The second major consideration about life at Lanherne was its population. While Sir John himself was not a member of the aristocracy, his wife, Lady Anne Arundell, was the daughter of an Earl – a lady in her own right – and so there can be little doubt that she had brought to Lanherne a certain style and certain expectations. But while Lady Anne was filling the house with offspring, Sir John had inherited from his father numerous wards. These were the children of martyred or impoverished Catholics, many of whom were of noble blood and were now being drenched with counter-Reformation ideals. First and foremost for my purposes, and for my original interest in their fates, were the children of rebel leader Humphrey Arundell, who, as we have already noted, were several years older than Tristram and already residing at Lanherne. In recreating this part of Tristram's life, I drew upon the prospect of a special bond being formed with Richard Arundell – whom I have named 'Dickon' in the novel – and then became intrigued by what might develop between Tristram and their sister. As a character from history without even a name, her fate was impossible to determine and ripe for invention. I named her Philippa, which would become shortened to Pippa, and she would play the role of muse to Tristram's increasingly desperate and fanciful hopes and

¹²⁹ A Plan of Lanherne Mansion House, 1777 <https://www.cornwall.gov.uk/media/28529608/wca-573-appendix-e2-evidence-2.pdf> Also: *Lanherne – Plan of chamber story with photographs*. Cornwall Records Office. AR 18/16. This plan reveals the changes to the house made since the mid-1500s.

¹³⁰ *Saxton's Map of Cornwall, 1576*, British Library Maps, C.7 c. 1. (Souvenir map, British Library Board, 1976.) This map also shows the size of the Hayle, Camel, Fal and Fowey estuaries.

dreams. Others at Lanherne included John Easton (perhaps a cousin to Tristram), John Prideaux, John Williams (the schoolmaster) and William Hanne, the estate steward.¹³¹

2.6 Master Winslade

*'He saith that his intention was ... to do as much good as he could for that he was never given to crueltie.'*¹³²

The circumstances relating to Tristram's entry into the Lanherne household are unknown, and may not be as clear cut as those surrounding the Arundell children, who were cousins of the family whose father was dead and whose mother appears to have been forced to abandon them when she remarried. With no evident blood or marriage ties between the Winslades and the Arundells, there is an element of uncertainty around whether Sir John Arundell took Tristram as a matter of religious affinity or because King Philip II of Spain had shown the Winslades favour and requested something in return. The latter possibility suggests there was a strategic and businesslike aspect to the deal over Tristram's future. It might also be that, as a gesture of gratitude to Spain for the return of Winslade Barton in 1558, William Winslade had offered up his eldest son. If this was so, Tristram's life at Lanherne may have been marked for a more privileged and more strategically targeted experience. He may have been among the favoured few whose upbringing and training would be designed to bring about the counter-Reformation and, following the return of their lands, become members of a newly returned Catholic land-owning gentry, if not nobility. As will be seen, the quest for this outcome appears to have been the driving force behind the actual events and narrative arc of his life's story.

The second point of differentiation is that, unlike the situation for the Arundell children, Tristram's father was still alive. Until 1564, he was rebuilding his fortune at Winslade Barton and probably remained hopeful of regaining the Cornish lands through the civil courts. There remained, therefore, the potential for Tristram to become a wealthy landowner and as

¹³¹ Tristram's great-grandmother (ie: John Winslade's mother) was Joan Easton (d. 1527). See *Visitations of Devon*, 208.

¹³² *Record of Interrogation of Tristram Winslade*.

such he may have been seen as a suitable future son-in-law for the Lanherne family, should the Lady Anne produce daughters.¹³³ This hope may have placed Winslade above the two Arundell boys in the hierarchy of servants.

Thirdly, while the Arundell boys' mother was a secular woman, Tristram's mother had been a nun until the dissolution of her convent in 1539.¹³⁴ It is not known how long she lived, but given that Daniel had 'brothers' other than Tristram – presumably younger – it seems probable that she was still alive when Tristram went to Lanherne. We do not know how her status as a former professed nun was viewed by the Arundells of Lanherne other than that they could be assured of the piety of Tristram's upbringing. These points of differentiation may shed light on Tristram Winslade's duties and status at Lanherne and may also explain why, after the arrest of Sir John in 1577, he went into exile while others remained in Cornwall to be indicted for recusancy.

Regardless of Tristram's position among the servants, it was nevertheless his God-given duty to obey not only his father but also his patron; likewise, it was William Winslade's duty as a gentleman to obey Sir John Arundell.¹³⁵ At the time of Tristram's arrival at Lanherne, Queen Elizabeth was just two years into her reign and Catholics were hopeful that her brand of Protestantism would create an enduring tolerance of Catholicism. As we will see, obedience meant that during the course of the Reformation, Tristram Winslade would bend his loyalty ever further from the English crown in order to follow the demands of Sir John's increasingly pro-Spanish agenda and of Spain's God.

But before Tristram could become an activist, he had to go to school, and at Lanherne that meant obeying the schoolmaster, who obeyed Sir John or his Lanherne-based delegate. In Sir John's absence, his brother Edward Arundell appears to have managed affairs in Cornwall and he – or even Lady Anne, if indeed she was interested in the education of her husband's young servants – may have set the curriculum. Tristram Winslade's education was

¹³³ The first of the five Arundell daughters, Dorothy, was born c. 1560, about the time of Tristram's arrival. Kate Aughterson. "Arundell, Dorothy (1559/60–1613)", *Oxford National Dictionary of Biography*, (8 Oct. 2009): <https://doi.org/10.1093/ref:odnb/68019>

¹³⁴ Jane Babington had been in the Buckland Minchin Priory in Somerset, which was surrendered to the King in February 1539. She was granted a pension of £4 per annum. *Calendar of Letters and Papers, Foreign and Domestic, Henry VIII*, vol xiv part i, p. 106 (or no. 270/2), (London: Public Record Office, 1894). My thanks to Professor Nicholas Orme for this information.

¹³⁵ Lacey Baldwin Smith. *Treason in Tudor England: Politics and Paranoia*, 84.

probably delivered according to St Thomas Aquinas's system which brought together the material and spiritual by joining Aristotle's science, Ptolemy's astronomy and Galen's medical theories ... with the Church's teachings on the nature and destiny of the soul.¹³⁶ The schoolroom would have been another site for 'piety, obedience, and decorum' in order that young men such as Winslade might 'sooner attain to wisdom and gravity...'¹³⁷

Such an upbringing was clearly designed for someone whose destiny lay somewhere other than the pigsty or cider press, and if – as alleged by Sir Edward Coke in 1606 – Winslade really did attend a meeting of Spanish nobles to discuss the Spanish Armada, then he must have attained appropriate levels of these desired qualities. Today, of course, we cannot help but wonder what Tristram Winslade was like as a person. I have wondered this myself, so many times, and find myself wanting to attribute to him individualistic qualities we tend to admire in the twenty-first century. But was there really any room in a life such as Winslade led for individuality? And if not, is it relevant to ask whether he was a happy boy, or a good boy? We must conclude that he was obedient and therefore 'good', for a bad boy would never have been promoted to the risky activism with which he was entrusted. Perhaps any trace of individual personality might be better found by asking whether he made friends easily. Was he genial? Good humoured? Innately thoughtful, patient and kind? Was he a useful person to have around in a crisis, or good at games and sports? Did he seek out company, or enjoy solitude? Did the women of the household like him?

While the personalities of Richard Grenville and Francis Tregian – who despite their religious differences were both aggressively zealous – might suggest that the rigid ways of thinking created a society of people who were all the same, Rowse's *Tudor Cornwall* abounds with details of people who bore all manner of personality traits: generosity, impulsivity, litigiousness, avarice, constancy, cruelty and caution to name a few.

¹³⁶ A. C. Grayling. *The Age of Genius: The Seventeenth Century & the Birth of the Modern Mind*. (London: Bloomsbury, 2017): 233. The novel contains a performance by the students of a dialogue written by Erasmus. See: C. Augustijn. *Erasmus: His Life, Works, and Influence*. Translated by J.C. Grayson. (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 1991): 165-166.

¹³⁷ Lacey Baldwin Smith. *Treason in Tudor England*, 93.

So, what might Tristram Winslade have been like? One piece of evidence suggests that he was well liked, and this might suggest that he had a genial disposition and some aptitude for various sixteenth century pursuits, which life at Lanherne would have undoubtedly provided. In 1584, seven years after Tristram went into exile, one of the Cornish gentlemen in possession of the contested Winslade estates, Sir William Mohun, wrote to Lanherne informing John Williams, the tutor, that ‘Sir John Arundell’s Banes [children] officers or servants have of late taken and ... caried awaye a younge bay gelding ...’ from his brother-in-law at Bochym, and assuming this was done to avenge the Winslades for their loss.¹³⁸ Bochym was one of the Winslade family’s contested Cornish estates. It was near Constantine, and so a long way from Lanherne. But if the horse was taken by the Arundells, and presumably sold, to whom did they send the money? It may have been given to Daniel Winslade, still residing in Cornwall, but the Lanherne family knew Tristram well and at this time – as we will see – he was in exile at Rheims and had received money, presumably from someone in England. This shred of possibility points to him having been well liked and fondly remembered. Adding to evidence of Winslade’s personality are his statements, firstly in 1588 when he stated that he was ‘not given to cruelty’, and then in 1595 when he beseeched Philip II to treat England’s ‘Schismatics’ with pity. Later, the census of Englishmen pensioned by Spain described him as ‘loyal’.¹³⁹

So, there is enough tantalizing evidence to provide an insight into the life Tristram Winslade led. But the Elizabethan Reformation ensured that life at Lanherne would take a serious turn, and it all happened as Tristram came of age. Was it ever really going to be true, given the impossibility of a peaceful co-existence of the Elizabethan Reformation and of Sir John Arundell of Lanherne, that nothing dangerous was happening in Cornwall?

Here, we return to our research question: how can the events of Tristram Winslade’s life shine a light on what was happening in Cornwall and what, if anything, did it have to do with Richard Grenville’s actions as Sheriff?

¹³⁸ *Letter from William Mohun to Willyams, Complaint*, 16 April 1584. Cornwall Record Office: AR/10/5. The loss is most likely a reference to the family’s loss in the Inquisition into William Winslade’s property, which had recently been completed.

¹³⁹ Albert J. Loomie. *The Spanish Elizabethans: the English Exiles at the Court of Philip II*. (New York: Fordham University Press, 1963): 263.

2.7 The noble apprentice

'...20. Gabriel Denisius

'Tristramus Winsladus

*'With many other noblemen, and outstanding commoners in Flanders, Spain, and those staying elsewhere...'*¹⁴⁰

If, during the 1560s, the atmosphere of religious toleration in England had enabled the continuation of a fairly traditional approach to life in a large, wealthy household, the tenor of life at Lanherne would change with the onset of hostilities that followed the Queen's excommunication by the Pope in 1569. At this point, English Catholics were forced to consider their allegiance because now, by definition, they could no longer be both Catholic and loyal Englishmen. The loyalty of the Arundell family to their faith in the face of the Reformation does not appear ever to have wavered. Back in 1549, during the rebellion, Sir John's father had lain low at Chideock in Dorset, yet despite being well away from Cornwall and Devon he still managed to send servants to support his doomed cousin Humphrey.

Now, twenty years later, in 1569, Tristram Winslade's master was continuing the tradition with ever increasing zeal, and evidence points to his early participation in the Ridolfi Plot, which was a plan to assassinate Elizabeth, and, with military support from Spain, replace her with Mary Queen of Scots who would marry the Duke of Norfolk and rule England. In September of that year, one of Sir John's servants was discovered carrying a letter which linked Sir John and his cousin, Sir Matthew Arundell of Wardour, to the plot's key players.¹⁴¹ Indeed, Sir John's support for the plot is confirmed in Ridolfi's advice to the Pope that '... towards Cornwall and Wales, are Sir de Lunai [Sir John Arundell] and the Earl of Worcester,

¹⁴⁰ Dr Morys Clynnog, Rome, c. 1576. Clynnog included the names of Gabriel Denys and Tristram Winslade at the end of a list of men from western England who had been working on invasion plans of Wales in the early 1570s. J.M. Cleary. "Dr Morys Clynnog's invasion projects of 1575-1577", *Recusant History* 8, no. 6. (October 1966). Edited by A.F. Allison and D.M. Rogers. Catholic Record Society, 300-322 (316). Translation from Latin by Dr Michael Kelly.

¹⁴¹ *Calendar of the Manuscripts of the Most Hon. The Marquis of Salisbury K.G.* Part 1, 1883. (London: Eyre and Spottiswood, 1883): 421.

each of whom will raise 6000 men, all Catholics...'¹⁴² He was also named as a key supporter of the plot by the Bishop of Ross who was interrogated in 1571 by Sir William Burghley.¹⁴³ This would have come as no surprise to Burghley because the year before, in April 1570, Sir John had declined to subscribe to the articles for Uniformity of Common Prayer, although he continued to serve at Court having been recognized for his 'good behaviour and appearance before the Privy Council when required.'¹⁴⁴

This then was the state of play within the Arundell household at the time Tristram Winslade came of age in c. 1571. Sir John Arundell appears to have been actively involved in Papal plans to invade England and it is reasonable to assume that at least some of his servants, being bound by the rules of obedience, were also involved. Indeed, evidence from the Vatican suggests that Tristram Winslade was among those servants who became very close to Sir John's treacherous undertakings, for his name appears among a group of 'western' men working in Flanders in the early 1570s on plans for a Papal invasion of Wales.¹⁴⁵

The Welsh invasion plans were hatched by the Welsh rector at the English College in Rome, Morys Clynnog, whose college erupted in English-Welsh factionalism and brawling as a result. According to Cleary, he began submitting his plans to the Vatican in 1575-76, using draft documents, both strategic and tactical, drawn up by disparate groups of English and Welsh exiles. One of these groups comprises twenty men, all listed and named, from the western part of England and among them are Tristram Winslade and Gabriel Denys. The placement of Tristram's name in this list is odd. Everyone else is numbered, with Gabriel Denys given the final numbered place at 20. Tristram's name is unnumbered and indented directly beneath Denys's name. There are two possible explanations for this: Arundell may

¹⁴² J.H. Pollen. *The English Catholics in the Reign of Queen Elizabeth*. (London: Longman, Green & Co, 1920): 162. The brackets are Pollen's. Pollen explains that his account varies slightly from the Vatican Archives, which suggest that de Lunai and Arundell are different people. Pollen claims the mix up is the result of the use of cipher. I contend that Pollen is most likely correct: there was no-one else in Cornwall who would have been described as such in this context at this time.

¹⁴³ William Murdin (Ed.). *A Collection of State Papers Relating to Affairs in the Reign of Queen Elizabeth from the year 1571 to 1596*. (London: 1759): 25.

¹⁴⁴ Great Britain. British History Online. <https://www.british-history.ac.uk/cal-state-papers/domestic/edw-eliz/1547-80/pp368-373>

¹⁴⁵ J.M. Cleary. 'Dr Morys Clynnog's invasion projects of 1575-1577'. The term 'England', in the context of this paper and in political parlance of the day, included Wales. Hugh Owen and David Stradling were Welshmen. For the list, see p. 316. I wish to thank Sophie Vezier for drawing my attention to this paper.

have sent Tristram abroad to serve Denys as part of his contribution to the Ridolfi Plot or Winslade may have worked at Lanherne, gathering local intelligence which he sent to Denys. Certainly, Gabriel Denys was in Antwerp at this time, in the service of Sir Francis Englefield, another of Cleary's Welsh invasion planners.¹⁴⁶ The connection here between Winslade, Denys and Englefield explains how and why, much later, Englefield was able to use his influence to have Winslade freed from the clutches of the Inquisition. For now, though, in the early 1570s, there arises the possibility that Tristram was sent into his first period of exile to ensure that at least some of the invasion planning that linked Arundell to the Ridolfi Plot was undetectable either in London or at Lanherne. Why his name was indented beneath Denys's and not given its own number on the list of invasion planner personnel may never be known. Nevertheless, this curious episode is worthy of some detailed exploration for three key reasons.

Firstly, if it is true that Winslade was in exile at this time, then we must accept that his statement in the Tower of London in 1588 – or what we know of it – did not reveal the complete truth: '... he saith that he was borne in the Countie of Devonshire and heretofore served Sir John Arundell knighte but whereas after the apprehension of Cuthbert Mayne Sir John fell into trouble and he departed into the parts of beyond the seas...' ¹⁴⁷ In other words, he told his interrogators, who included Sir Richard Grenville, that he did not leave England until 1577. This statement is dated 30 July 1588 – just days after his arrest aboard the Armada – and as the manuscript is only partly extant, we cannot know whether he gave more information later on, particularly after 18 September, when the Privy Council ordered he be removed from Newgate and taken back to the Tower for examination upon the rack.¹⁴⁸ It could be that, if Winslade had already spent some time in exile, he omitted such information from his statement because he believed its secrecy remained intact and did not want to cause further danger to Sir John, who was, at this time, in prison. If Winslade had been in Antwerp

¹⁴⁶ William Murdin (Ed.). *A Collection of State Papers*, 14. The Bishop of Ross told Burghley that he had corresponded with Mr Denys, a servant to Englefield, regarding books. Gabriel Denys was the only member of his family who was overtly Catholic and, by this time, his father was deceased. Despite his application to return to England c. 1574, there is no record that he ever did so while Elizabeth was on the throne.

¹⁴⁷ *Record of Interrogation of Tristram Winslade*.

¹⁴⁸ Paula Martin. *Spanish Armada Prisoners*, 75.

with Gabriel Denys, we must assume that he had left the country secretly and returned in the same way.

Secondly, several of the names of the men on the list of invasion planners from the west of England reappear in connection with Winslade's life and work in the 1590s. In addition to Gabriel Denys and Sir Francis Englefield, we find Edward Seymour, who in the 1590s was back in Devon and prepared to provide men and arms to support the Cornish invasion;¹⁴⁹ Hugh Owen, who in Brussels became the chief spymaster in exile and kept invasion plans at his lodgings above the cheese market;¹⁵⁰ John Prideaux, who returned to Cornwall and was among those at Lanherne indicted for recusancy in 1578;¹⁵¹ and David Stradling, who can be linked to land in Glamorgan, to which the Winslades laid a claim.¹⁵²

Thirdly, as we will see, this work on the Welsh invasion projects appears to mark the beginning of Winslade's career as a planner of invasions and its influence can be seen in his later work. For example, the English translations of excerpts from the draft tactical plan for the Welsh project, which Cleary identifies as coming from Winslade's team c. 1574, and Winslade's 1595 invasion plan reveal a distinct similarity in tone and style. In the first, we find a description of two Welsh regions that

¹⁴⁹ This Seymour was the disinherited Catholic first-born son of the Lord Protector, Edward Seymour, who during Edward VI's reign brought Protestantism into sharp focus with the introduction of the English language Book of Common Prayer.

¹⁵⁰ A. H. Dodd. "The Spanish Treason, the Gunpowder Plot, and the Catholic Refugees", *The English Historical Review* 53, no. 212 (Oct. 1938): 627-650 (629).

¹⁵¹ As early as 1570, the Cornish lawyer Richard Bray – whom Tristram writes of in 1595 as one of his most trusted associates in Brussels – wrote to Edward Arundell from Exeter, asking him to write to John Prideaux so that Prideaux might return to Cornwall. *Letter from Richard Bray to Edward Arundell*, 7 Dec. 1570. Cornwall Record Office AR/25/23. For Prideaux's recusancy: C. Talbot (Ed.). Catholic Record Society. *Miscellanea*, 114.

¹⁵² *Inquisition into the Property of William Winsladd*. A witness deposition referred to William Winslade as 'recently of Ogmores in the County of Glamorgan'. This appears to be a reference to William Winslade's visit to Wales with James Blount in 1577, when they had had 'great conference' with the wife of Sir Edward Stradling, Lady Agnes Gage, about Mountjoy and Joyseland, lands in the lordship of Ogmores, Glamorganshire. Rev. John M. Traherne (Ed.). *Stradling Correspondence: A series of letters written in the Reign of Queen Elizabeth: with notices of the family of Stradling of St. Donat's Castle, Co. Glamorgan*. (London: Longman, Orme, Brown, Green and Longmans, 1840): 47. There are also several documents held by the National Archives in London whose titles and catalogue descriptions suggest that the family was actively pursuing the rights to lands in Glamorgan, including: William Winslade v Yevan ap Rees, C 3/193/50; Tristram Wyndeslad v Roger Thomas, C 4/23/29; Wyndeslad v Yevan, C 3/190/56. Sadly, these documents are illegible.

are so closed in and set about with very high mountains and deep rivers, that from Harlech castle to the town of Conway [sic], no one can go out from those provinces unless it be by four very narrow and restricted approaches or passes.¹⁵³

Cleary suggests that Hugh Owen prepared this strategy – and he would have known the country – but twenty years later, Winslade would write that the south-west England was protected by two rivers,

and the gap by which the heads of these rivers are divided ... is so fortified by marshes, ditches, earthworks and enclosures, and so suited by the nature and advantage of the site to undertake any form of fortification that these four counties, separated from the rest, can easily defend themselves against all the forces of the whole Kingdom.¹⁵⁴

Either Winslade had a significant hand in writing the draft for the Clynnog plan or he learned a very great deal from Gabriel Denys and/or Hugh Owen.¹⁵⁵

While we cannot be certain about Tristram Winslade's location during the early 1570s, we do know that by the end of 1574 he had returned to Lanherne. This is evident from a legal document in which we find him, aged 24 years, testifying for Sir John in a dispute over the details of a dowry agreement the latter had made with Francis Tregian. In his statement, made in January 1575, Tristram swore on oath that 'he had heard [about the dowry matter] by credible report in the house of Lanherne'.¹⁵⁶ The first point here is that he seems not to have had any first-hand knowledge of what Sir John had promised Francis Tregian, and this may be because he (Winslade) had been in Antwerp and had only just returned, facts that could never be revealed to a court of law in Cornwall. The second point is that, upon returning to Lanherne, Tristram Winslade seems to have been elevated to the upper echelon of Sir John's

¹⁵³ J.M. Cleary. "Dr Morys Clynnog's invasion projects of 1575-1577", 307.

¹⁵⁴ Cheryl Hayden. "*Tristram Winslade: the desperate heart*", 42.

¹⁵⁵ There is significant uncertainty here: notwithstanding the evidence provided by Cleary, Loomie finds that Owen was not mixing in Englefield's circles at this time and, apart from a brief visit to Madrid in the winter of 1572-73, was based in Brussels. It is possible that exiles in Brussels and Antwerp might have been working on the same projects. Albert J. Loomie. *Spanish Elizabethans*, 54.

¹⁵⁶ *Tregian v Arundell*.

most trusted servants, and this is supported by the relationships of the other witnesses acting for Sir John in this matter: his wife, brother, sister, steward and other household staff close to their lord's person.

There is one more aspect of Tristram Winslade's involvement in the Welsh invasion projects to be examined: the extent to which it might help to expand upon Mark Stoyle's theory of on-going, ethnically driven resistance. According to Cleary, Clynnog believed that because the Welsh had shown on-going fidelity to Catholicism, and had their own language and history, it had the 'potential for resistance' against the Elizabethan Reformation. The notion of the power of Welsh ethnicity has a clear parallel with the idea of Cornish 'difference' that rang out so clearly during the 1549 rebellion. So, while Cleary, in 1957, might have viewed such a notion as 'fantasy', today's emergent understanding of Britain's Celtic minorities and their struggles leaves me with few qualms about the idea that, firstly, Clynnog believed there was a groundswell of Welsh resistance and, secondly, that the Welsh people's fellow Britons, the Cornish, may have either cooperated with them in developing the plan or, as per Arundell's preference, began to develop their own plan because they had their own discrete identity for which to fight.¹⁵⁷ Like the Welsh, the Cornish had practised an ancient Celtic form of Catholicism, which had for centuries resisted many of the influences of the Roman church. Their religious traditions imbued the physical landscape – the homeland – with its own holiness, a factor which, along with language, gave their resistance a potent, existential dimension.¹⁵⁸ It was precisely this sense of persistent, self-identifying 'otherness' which the Cornish had expressed within the living memories of many of those involved in Clynnog's plans and which, in 1595, Tristram Winslade would refer to in his memorandum to King Philip II of Spain.

This then, was the mind-set of the 'simplest people' – the Cornish people who Rowse concedes were there, ready to be led once again by someone of influence. According to Rowse, Arundell's influence in the 1570s was waning. But was it?

¹⁵⁷ For insight into the Vatican's recognition of Welsh identity and its potential in terms of supporting the counter-Reformation see Martin Cleary. "The Catholic Resistance in Wales: 1568-1678", *Blackfriars* 38/444. (1957): 111-125.

¹⁵⁸ Lisa McClain. "Katholic Kernow" in *Lest We Be Damned: Practical Innovation and Lived Experience Among Catholics in Protestant England, 1559-1662*. (New York: Routledge, 2004).

2.8 The heart of the action

*'...this deponent saith that he hathe heard by credible reporte in the howse of Lanherne...'*¹⁵⁹

Let us now imagine Tristram Winslade at the age of twenty-four years. He is secure, well-fed, well-dressed in fine quality livery and surrounded by kindred spirits, friends and relations. He is privy to and a player in the main game of Sir John's ambition, in fact it could be said that his work represented grist to the mill of Sir John's military goals: Sir John wanted an invasion, and Tristram Winslade planned them. It also appears that by 1574 Tristram had sworn allegiance to Spain.¹⁶⁰

The level of intensity and anxiety associated with life at Lanherne must have been acute at this time. There can be little doubt that priests were using the nearby ports and streams to access the house, which – as noted above – appears to have had several priest holes installed long before such hiding places became commonplace in the homes of wealthy Catholic families. There may also have been secret visits from Spanish dignitaries and high-profile exiles or allies from elsewhere in England. In 1576, Arundell's influence in Cornwall reached its zenith when the young Earl of Oxford's profligate gambling caught up with him and he was forced to sell his six Cornish estates. Oxford himself was a Catholic sympathizer, and so the sale of his estates to Arundell at this time is noteworthy. All of this occurred just as William Allen was 'involved in full-scale plans for an invasion of England, along with Dr Nicholas Sander.'¹⁶¹ If Arundell was involved in this plan – and the evidence strongly supports the argument that he was – then 1576 was the very year in which Cornwall was at its most dangerous. Sir John and his loyal servants must have been champing at the bit. It is at this point that the story of Tristram Winslade collides with Francis Tregian, who had displeased the Queen by turning down her offer of the title of Viscount and 'escaping' her Court for the

¹⁵⁹ *Tregian v Arundell*. (Deposition of Tristram Winslade.) Cornwall Records Office. AR/17/107.

¹⁶⁰ A. J. Loomie. *Spanish Elizabethans*, 242 & 263. In the census of Englishmen pensioned by Spain, we find Winslade described in list R as being 45 years of age and having served Spain for 23 years. List R – denoting Resident of Brussels – was dated 1597, so that would suggest that Winslade began serving Spain in 1574, at which time he was living under Sir John Arundell's roof at Lanherne.

¹⁶¹ Gerard Kilroy. *Edmund Campion*, 85.

Cornish countryside; he then proceeded to flaunt the above-mentioned priest, Cuthbert Mayne.

The question at this point is, what did Richard Grenville know? Did he really just have it in for Tregian, or had he become aware of the whole scheme being hatched at Lanherne? The destruction by fire of the Grenville papers probably guarantees we will never know what Grenville knew, or how much intelligence he imparted to Sir George Carey, who authorized the raid on Golden Manor. However, the fact that Grenville's strategy to bring down the Cornish Catholics depended on a certain weakness at Golden, rather than at Lanherne, might be a reflection of the caution attributed to Arundell, which in turn would have ensured tight security. Notwithstanding that the priest Cuthbert Mayne had resided at Lanherne for periods of up to a fortnight, Sir John Arundell had avoided drawing attention to himself. When Grenville became Sheriff of Cornwall at the beginning of 1577, Arundell may have sensed an escalation in risk and warned his household against visiting Golden – a problematic situation given that his wife's daughter (Mary Tregian, nee Stourton) was its mistress. He was probably well aware that Francis Tregian had the potential to cause him more trouble than anyone else.

2.9 The end of everything

*'Item Whether you had not heard that Richard Victor was in Ireland with Tristram Winslade and John Williams.'*¹⁶²

I cannot help but imagine that the arrest at Court, in London, of Sir John Arundell in June 1577 marked one of the most traumatic moments of Tristram Winslade's life. It must have heightened the risk associated with the work he had been doing and the danger to his safety. The urgency surrounding him is perhaps best gauged by the fact that while he fled into exile so many other servants, including Humphrey and Richard Arundell, remained at Lanherne. In terms of a creative rendering of this life, regardless of whether it represented the beginnings

¹⁶² Interrogatory administered to Katherine Tregian. *Sir George Carye v Katherine Tregian*. Cornwall Record Office. BU/215.

of his first or second period of exile, news of Sir John's arrest stands out as a heart-stopping, life changing moment.

In the matter of recreating Winslade's life for the purposes of fiction, the tangled possibilities surrounding the start of Winslade's exile detract from the drama. Thus, for creative purposes, I have made this departure from Lanherne his first and had him working with Gabriel Denys on the Welsh project while still in Cornwall. In this scenario, he is now twenty-seven years of age and a landless but noble-born gentleman servant whose task in life was to achieve a counter-Reformation that would lead to the return of his lands. He is very probably unmarried and, without a counter-Reformation, likely to remain so. But his friendships would have been strong and he may have set his heart on one of the young women at Lanherne. The urgency involved in escaping England in the wake of Sir John's arrest would have been an unwelcome shock. So, while the household burns papers and hides priests, rosaries, crucifixes and other religious items, Tristram Winslade flees the house, boards a ship at Padstow and leaves for Ireland. There is nothing in his story to suggest he ever saw Lanherne or Sir John again.

While it may have been a good summer to be gone from Cornwall, for the delay in recusant returns that year was explained by an outbreak of plague, their destination was hardly a holiday camp. The probability must be that, in Ireland, Winslade continued to serve the cause of the counter-Reformation and became involved in the events of the second Desmond rebellion, which included William Allen's Papal invasion, led by Nicholas Sander. He may have been at the massacre at Smerick and, if so, the fact that he survived is remarkable. Meanwhile, William Winslade also fled Cornwall, going first to Brittany, presumably from the south coast of Cornwall, and from there, ultimately, to Lisbon, where he petitioned King Philip II of Spain for a pension. Tristram's own account tells us that it was granted, but that William died before he received it.¹⁶³ We also know that William had taken with him about nine pounds and had left behind a chest containing a 'certain evil book', court rolls, various 'enjoynders' and 'much more' valued at around four pounds.¹⁶⁴

¹⁶³*Interrogation of Tristram Winslade*. Also, a deposition to the *Inquisition into the Possessions of William Winsladd* reveals that Agnes Winslade heard of William's death c. 1581 or early 1582.

¹⁶⁴*Inquisition into the Possessions of William Winsladd*. Deposition of Robert Stowford of Lelant in Cornwall. During this inquiry, William Winslade was described as 'recently of Ogmore in the County of Glamorgan'.

2.10 A Traveller Beyond the Seas¹⁶⁵

'...you have told me nothing that you know of him...' ¹⁶⁶

With no further evidence discovered to shed light on Tristram Winslade's time in Ireland, we now move to 28 August 1583, when we find him arriving at the English College, established by William Allen at Douai but having relocated to Rheims due to plague. Here, the influx of Catholic refugees from England was reflective of the impact of Sander's Papal invasion of Ireland on the persecution of 'seminary priests' in England. As Kilroy has observed, Allen's and Sander's obsession with invasion, which had clearly been supported by Sir John Arundell, was entirely incompatible with Robert Persons' Jesuit mission of sending 'seminary priests' into England and this incompatibility was manifested by the unmanageable numbers of English Catholics now seeking protection abroad.¹⁶⁷ The fact that Tristram Winslade arrived at Allen's English College at this critical time may suggest that following his experience in Ireland, he went home only to be forced abroad again by this wave of persecution.¹⁶⁸ The fact that he sought refuge from Allen is perhaps indicative of Winslade's understanding of their strategic compatibility.

By early 1585, he appears still to have been there, as in January Allen wrote to the English College Rector in Rome, Father Agazzari, concerning 'another well-intentioned man, Tristram Winslade, who [...] desires to obtain satisfaction at my hands, but you have told me nothing that you know of him.'¹⁶⁹ This 'satisfaction' appears to have been a pension from the Vatican, and perhaps (although it is not clear from Allen's correspondence) even permission to go to Rome. In March 1585, Allen then informed Agazzari that certain funds for Tristram had arrived from Rome and that at the time of writing he (Allen) had already handed over

¹⁶⁵ Tristram Winslade's description of himself. *Widslade v Buller and Fubbe*. Star Chamber, 5 W75-12, 1590. (The name Fubbe should in fact be Tubbe.)

¹⁶⁶ William Allen to Father Agazzari, 9 January 1585. P. Renold (ed.). *Letters of Allen and Barrett*. (Catholic Record Society, Publications Record Series, 58, 1967): 118.

¹⁶⁷ Gerard Kilroy. *Edmund Campion*, 146 & 267.

¹⁶⁸ This hypothesis feeds into the stolen pony narrative. If he had been home briefly, only to have to return to exile, the Lanherne children would have been more keenly aware of his need of money in 1584.

¹⁶⁹ P. Renold (Ed.). *Letters of Allen and Barrett*. 118.

fifteen crowns.¹⁷⁰ Here we see evidence of someone in England taking care of Tristram Winslade by sending money for his board to Rome. Sir John Arundell was at this time in the Tower of London and may have been able to direct Lady Anne, his brother Edward or even Sir Matthew Arundell of Wardour to send money for Winslade. Taken further, this may suggest that Winslade was still understood to be in Arundell's service. What was he doing in Rheims? We might assume that Winslade attended some of the lectures delivered to the seminarians bound for the English mission, and echoes of such an education might be the key to his apparent ability, later on, to withstand torture on the rack. Whatever the situation, Winslade was finally told to join the Spanish Army in Brussels. Once again, the early modern 'laws' surrounding obedience and loyalty could not be questioned, and Winslade's situation provided little provision for choice: whether he liked it or not, he was a servant of those at war with his homeland and was in exile. He would obey orders, as he had always done.

There was no English regiment serving Spain in Brussels at this time, but Winslade was probably able to find Gabriel Denys and perhaps also the Cornish lawyer, Richard Bray.¹⁷¹ In Brussels, Winslade joined the Spanish army as an *entretenido* – unattached officer – and made his way to Spain using the reverse of the circuitous route taken by Spanish troops headed for the low countries.¹⁷² It is not known who ordered Winslade to undertake this journey or why, but by 1606 Sir Edward Coke was convinced that he had attended a meeting in Spain regarding the Great Armada, and so it is possible that once he had signed up, he was directed to Madrid.

From a creative perspective, this journey presents an opportunity to spend time with Tristram Winslade as he tramps across Europe and to allow the man behind the obedient servant to emerge. Research does not tell us how he travelled, or whether he had company, but in order to give him some conversation, in the creative work I have placed him alongside

¹⁷⁰ Ibid. 118, 145, 164. It is possible that the dating of these letters (January to March 1585) may refer to the beginning of 1586. If so, Winslade could have been in Rheims for at least 2 ½ years.

¹⁷¹ Tristram refers to Richard Bray in his treatise to King Philip II, describing him as a former Cornish magistrate. See: Cheryl Hayden. *"Tristram Winslade: the desperate heart"*, 48. This Bray is likely to be the same Richard Bray who in 1570 wrote to Edward Arundell concerning John Prideaux, and also probably the second son of Henry Bray of Treswithian, Mayor of Bodmin during the Prayer Book Rebellion. See *Visitations of Cornwall*, 53. His sister Ursula Bray was a servant at Lanherne and, according to Rachel Lloyd, his brother William was a 'great conveyor of priests, recusants and Catholic books...' See Rachel Lloyd. *Dorset Elizabethans: At Home and Abroad*. (London: John Murray, 1967): 88.

¹⁷² Geoffrey Parker. *The Army of Flanders and the Spanish Road 1567-1659: the logistics of Spanish Victory and Defeat in the Low Countries' Wars*. (Cambridge: University Press, 1972): 59-61.

his old friend from Lanherne, Richard Arundell, given the name of 'Dickon' in the novel to differentiate him from Richard Bray and Richard Victor. As they travel, Winslade's orders fade away as the world turns beneath his feet: Cologne, the Rhine valley, the Alps, going down into Italy. Although following orders, we have a situation in which he was most certainly surrounded by what we understand today as the 'force of nature'. He may have heard pilgrims and soldiers speak of traversing the Alps, but could he ever have been prepared for the shock of seeing such monstrous peaks? Had he ever sat alone, or with just one other person, at a night-time campfire? Had he ever spent a day without someone telling him what to do? What did his thoughts do, when left to wander? And how did he feel about the life he had been dealt? Here he was, a direct descendant of three Plantagenet kings, not to mention a legion of foreign princes and princesses, and he was nothing but a penniless and landless soldier of God, at war with his own country and being pushed around the world at the whim of a foreign king.

It is probable that, having reached Italy, Winslade went straight from Milan to Genoa and boarded a ship to Barcelona. A gap in the record, however, provides the possibility that he went to Naples, where volunteers were being prepared for the venture that would become known as the Great Armada.¹⁷³ In the novel, I have used this as an opportunity to place Tristram Winslade among civilians in an entirely different domestic situation than he faced at Lanherne: here, having rescued the fictitious Giuliana Marino from assault, he fails to recognize her father's expectations of him. The situation forces him to question matters of authority, loyalty and obedience, and to leave Naples without the company of a regiment. As an *entretenido* this was entirely possible, and it creates a scenario in which he can arrive in Barcelona as a solitary Englishman and thus susceptible to arrest by the Dominican friars of the Spanish Inquisition on suspicion of 'being a Lutheran'.¹⁷⁴

¹⁷³ According to one Pelligrini, writing from Naples in June 1587, soldiers were being sent to Peru 'although much talk of greater matters'. Salisbury Manuscripts, Part III, 1889. 262-3. This gap in the records also makes unclear when and where Winslade would have heard about the failure of the Babington Plot, which resulted in the execution of his cousin Anthony, and the execution of Mary Queen of Scots, who had been the linchpin of their endeavours.

¹⁷⁴ Juan Blázquez Miguel. "Catálogo de los procesos inquisitorial del Tribunal de Barcelona", *Espacio, Tiempo y Forma* Series IV, *Historica Moderna* 3 (1990) 11-158. Accessed at the Nationale Archive Historical, Serrano, Madrid, Sept. 2016. 'Being a Lutheran' was a common charge of the Inquisition in Barcelona.

Tristram Winslade was probably held by the Inquisition for at least two or three weeks while they confirmed his Catholic pedigree. Here, we find space to explore the parallels between Catalonia's resistance to its Castilian overlords and Cornwall's resistance to England. While the former has recently found expression in a renewed push for Catalanian independence, in the sixteenth century their discontent was expressed through resistance to the Holy Roman Inquisition being pushed upon them by their Castilian king. Records show that the Dominicans in Barcelona had to apologize for their failure to burn people at the public *autos de fe*, explaining that they could find no heresy.¹⁷⁵ Rather, of the 1735 cases heard by the Inquisition in Barcelona between 1578 and 1635, the most common charges related to sexual offences, Inquisition discipline, offences by clergy and 'moral control' (blasphemy).¹⁷⁶ The Catalonians were also obsessed with censorship and held regular book burnings in the square that still exists between the old Cathedral and the Inquisition building in central Barcelona.¹⁷⁷ Perhaps Tristram Winslade was required to give his opinion on any English-language books being examined for heresy. Perhaps he was left alone with more thoughts while he waited. He may have dreamed of home. This time, luck was on Winslade's side; Sir Francis Englefield confirmed Winslade's account of himself and so it appears that he was released without ever being charged.¹⁷⁸

Apart from Coke's allegation that Tristram Winslade attended a meeting regarding the Armada, we know nothing about his time in Spain. His next appearance in the archive shows his inclusion among the Englishmen sailing with the Armada. However, a novel about the life of Tristram Winslade would be incomplete without an account of his journey across Spain. This time, on his way to the meeting Coke claims he attended, he makes the journey alone.

¹⁷⁵ T. Karlikowski finds that between 1540 and 1700, there were 53 executions in Barcelona, all before 1640, compared to 250 in Zaragoza. T. Karlikowski. 'Spanish Inquisition, Numbers and Victims', *Ereticopedia, Mediterranean Digital History* (2013). <http://www.ereticopedia.org/number-of-victims-spanish-inquisition#toc3>

¹⁷⁶ Henry Kamen. *The Spanish Inquisition: An Historical Revision*. (Phoenix Giant, 1998): 258-9.

¹⁷⁷ Henry Kamen. *The Phoenix and the Flame: Catalonia and the Counter-Reformation*. (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1993).

¹⁷⁸ For Englefield's confirmation of Winslade's identity: *Interrogation of Tristram Winslade*. My visit to the Nationale Archives Historical in Madrid revealed a gap in records from the Inquisition in Barcelona for the period I believe Winslade to have been there (c. 1587). Karlikowski finds Barcelona to have been the only Inquisition in Aragon to find people innocent. It follows, therefore, that records for this period must have been kept.

While Barcelona had little taste for the full-blown Spanish Inquisition, the inquisitors of Zaragoza demonstrated total obedience and a complete lack of squeamishness. Could it have happened that in return for the Supremo's decision to release him, Winslade was required to witness an *auto de fe* before meeting with the King of Spain's men? Might the King have required it? Might Winslade have thought it worthwhile as a demonstration of his own faith and commitment? From a creative point of view, would such a scene serve any purpose? The answer, I felt, was a very definite 'yes', and Zaragoza seemed an appropriate backdrop. Here, the *autos de fe* were held in the *Mercado* (marketplace), which is a short walk from the majestic cathedral, Our Lady of Pilar, and the Archbishop's palace – just far enough, perhaps, for the Holy Inquisition to be able to uphold the tenet that it did not burn its flock, but that it was the work of the 'secular arm'.

My challenge was to understand how Tristram Winslade might have responded to such a spectacle. After all, surely nothing would reveal the true character of a man more than his response to something so confronting; nothing would cause him to delve deeply into his beliefs and perhaps begin to question the point of a life lived in never-ending obedience. Or perhaps such thinking is simply my twenty-first century non-Catholic self, reaching the conclusion that my hero's true objective lay in the secular world of dynasty and land ownership and that Catholic Spain was more of a compulsory obstacle course than a powerful challenge to his own beliefs.¹⁷⁹ I found some solace in Tristram's suggestion to King Philip II that the 'Schismatics' of England were '...worthy of pity, for at heart they believe in God with us...'¹⁸⁰

Had he found the horror of the Spanish Inquisition to be beyond justification? Had he learned, through the Jesuits' Ignatian teachings, that the end does not always justify the means?¹⁸¹

¹⁷⁹ An early version of this scene was published as 'Act of Faith' in *StylusLit* 2 (Sept. 2017)

<https://styluslit.com/issue/issue-2/>

¹⁸⁰ Cheryl Hayden. "Tristram Winslade: the desperate heart". 59

¹⁸¹ My thanks to Liz Kerr, Spiritual Director at the Faber Centre, Brisbane, for this insight.

2.11 A seat at the table

*'Don't touch the relics!'*¹⁸²

During the months leading up to the Armada, King Philip's massive Escorial Place was being completed – at least sufficiently to be operational. The King himself may have been in residence during this period because, during the autumn of 1587, he was obsessing over the preparation of a massive donation of relics for transportation to Lisbon.¹⁸³ It may have been here, at El Escorial, that we find the basis for Sir Edward Coke's above-mentioned assertion that Winslade had met with numerous Spaniards to discuss the Armada. But while Coke gives the impression that Winslade was the only Englishman present, we cannot be sure of that. Either way, his status as 'noble-born' might have gained him an advisory role when the Spanish nobles were working out how, as conquerors, they might deal with the English people.

From a life-story perspective, however, what we can see here is the opportunity for Winslade to become known to influential Spanish men of religious and military significance, a factor which may have later gained him the favour of Albert of Austria, who was at this time serving as King Philip's Vice-Roy in Portugal. In fiction, however, the decision to place Winslade at El Escorial was not difficult. Its brutal majesty is a temple to Philip II's ascetic religiosity and its proportions would have cowed the sixteenth century visitor.¹⁸⁴ In addition, the idea of the King obsessing over his relics is acutely human. It provides an opportunity for Tristram to find himself in the King's company and gives a holy purpose to the next part of his journey: to protect the relics during transportation to Lisbon, for while they had been given to the King as a personal gift for his new palace, he had decided to send them to Lisbon not only as a gesture or blessing for the Englishmen sailing with the Armada, but arguably also as a form of propaganda to bind them to him. It was 'a token of zeal for religion, as the counter-

¹⁸² Guy Lazure. "Possessing the Sacred: Monarchy and Identity in Philip II's Relic Collection at the Escorial", *Renaissance Quarterly* 60, no. 1 (2007):58-93 (58-59). <http://www.jstor.org/stable/10.1353/ren.2007.0076> Accessed: 03/04/2013 (The author challenges this download date cited on the article, which was downloaded after a visit to El Escorial in 2016.) Lazure explains how King Philip II's daughter would keep him conscious while he was dying by shouting out 'Don't touch the relics!'

¹⁸³ William Telfer. *The Treasure of São Roque: a side-light on the Counter-Reformation*. (London: Society for Promoting Christian Knowledge, 1932). Also Guy Lazure. "Possessing the Sacred", 58-59.

¹⁸⁴ The author visited El Escorial in September 2016.

Reformation understood religion...'¹⁸⁵ For Tristram, with the horrors of Zaragoza fresh in his mind, no royal gesture could ever have such potent a meaning. If ever he had felt inclined to obey – and as far as we know, he was always an obedient servant and soldier – this act of obedience perhaps gave him greater joy than any other: he was about to bring the counter-Reformation to England. King Philip II's mission was very much a holy war, and Winslade – whether or not he had any involvement with the transportation of the relics – was to be at its vanguard, liberating his country from the clutches of heresy. The zeal surrounding him at El Escorial must have permeated every pore in his body.

The next we hear of Tristram, his name is listed on the Armada manifest.¹⁸⁶ For the purposes of storytelling, however, there must be further challenge before he is allowed to board his ship. At this point, it occurred to me that, for a man born on the wrong side of fortune, he had experienced an astonishing degree of good luck. In 1577, he had left Cornwall just before the plague struck.¹⁸⁷ In Ireland, he may have been one of few to survive the massacre that followed Sander's invasion. He then traversed the Alps, apparently without serious incident, and was then arrested, but then released, by the Inquisition. A lucky man. Could he now be struck down with illness while transporting the procession of relics to Lisbon? What could be worse than to disappoint the King of Spain; for the Armada to sail without him; to not be there to take possession, at last, of this grandfather's lost estates? And what if the illness itself brought it with the silver lining of Agueda, a woman he could love; with whom he could live in comfort, if only he were a disobedient man. Would such a prospect tempt him to stop travelling? To end his endless obedience? How ill might he be? While the relics continue on, he dreams and sweats. He is sorely tempted.

The events of Tristram Winslade's life do not allow him to miss his appointment with the Spanish Armada, although he might have later wished that he had. He arrives in Lisbon with enough time to visit the church of São Roque, in the hills above the harbour, and to sit

¹⁸⁵ William Telfer. *The Treasure of São Roque*. 120.

¹⁸⁶ Cesáreo Fernandez Duro. *La Armada Invencible*. 71. 'Tristano Uniglade' is listed beneath 'Richard Burey' who may have been the renowned pirate, Richard Burley.

¹⁸⁷ Calendar of State Papers, Domestic Series, Elizabeth, Vol. CXV. Preserved in Her Majesty's Public Record Office. (Nendeln, Lichtenstein: Kraus Reprint Ltd, 1967): 555.

for a while beside his father's grave at the adjacent hospice.¹⁸⁸ He boards the Andalusian squadron flagship, the *Nuestra Señora del Rosario* (Our Lady of the Rosary) as an officer and 'private adventurer', and by the time he feels the great galleon shift away from her moorings in the Tagus River, perhaps he senses that everything he has worked for is about to come to pass.¹⁸⁹

2.12 The Tower of London

'... [he] has been also upon the rack to draw from him his knowledge of the intended invasion...'¹⁹⁰

Tristram Winslade was among three Englishmen discovered aboard the *Rosario* when Sir Francis Drake boarded the ship off Plymouth. It had foundered after losing its mast and the priest who took four of the English soldiers to safety did not return for the others. Winslade was immediately arrested, taken up to London and installed in the Tower of London. One can only imagine the horror he felt, knowing what he knew of his grandfather's execution.

Winslade was interviewed almost immediately by a panel comprising the ever-persistent Sir Richard Grenville (who had been knighted for his arrest of Cuthbert Mayne), Sir George Carey (who had authorized Grenville's raid on Golden and seized Francis Tregian's property) and the Attorney-General Sir Richard Young. He was sent to Newgate prison but in September, upon Privy Council order, he was returned to the Tower where he interrogated on the rack, 'at their pleasure'.¹⁹¹ According to Haynes, Winslade was the last person to be racked in the Tower of London because, afterwards, Topcliffe moved it to his private home. While a record exists of what Winslade told his tormentors in July 1588, it is unclear whether

¹⁸⁸ The Casa de Misericordia, adjacent to the church of São Roque, was built by the Jesuits as a hostel for plague victims in 1498 and it is here that William Winslade is believed to have died c. 1582. During renovations of the old hospice in 2007, bodies were found buried on the site. However, there is no record of William Winslade's death here and museum staff (the *Casa* is now a museum) were unable to provide any information about a cemetery that might have existed in the sixteenth century. The author visited in September 2016.

¹⁸⁹ Cesáreo Fernandez Duro. *La Armada Invencible*, 71; Neil Hanson. *The Confident Hope of a Miracle: the true story of the Spanish Armada*. (Random House (e-book), 2011): 170; Calendar of State Papers, Simancas. British History Online: <https://www.british-history.ac.uk/cal-state-papers/simancas/vol4/pp275-286>

¹⁹⁰ The Privy Council's order to release Tristram Winslade, 6 March 1590. See Paula Martin. *Spanish Armada Prisoners*. 75.

¹⁹¹ Paula Martin. *Ibid.*

it also includes anything he told them in September. The Record of Interrogation is only partly extant, includes anything he said while under torture. He appears not to have deviated from the story that he had been forced to board the Armada. By this time he had spent five weeks in the Tower, after which he spent approximately eighteen months in Newgate prison.¹⁹²

Survival in such a place was not something the state took care of. A prisoner's keep was charged at a set rate, and so the question arises here: who paid for Tristram Winslade's keep during his incarceration? The most probable answer is Lady Arundell. She lived in London for the duration of Sir John's incarceration, which only ended with his death in November 1590. She would have been well placed to ensure Winslade's basic needs were met. His release was ordered by an Act of the Privy Council on 6 March 1590 and included a condition that he must return for further questioning within ten days should he be required.¹⁹³ It seems unlikely that the Privy Council really believed that Winslade had been forced to board the *Rosario* and sail with the Armada, particularly given his background. However, it had become common under Walsingham to release prisoners and set *pursuivants* – followers – on their trails. It is possible that Winslade's release was ordered with such a strategy in mind.¹⁹⁴ It

should be noted that at the time of Winslade's release, Walsingham was on his death-bed; the secret service may have been in a temporary state of disarray, and this may help to explain how Winslade managed to escape from England and return to the Catholic stronghold of Brussels.

At this point, Winslade was in the ironic situation of having travelled in a great circle in order to come home and now, having come home, was being forced back into exile.¹⁹⁵ He was as far from achieving his objective now as he ever had been. He would have to start all over again. However, for a period following his release from Newgate, he clearly had the desire, if not expectation, of being able to remain in England. With the obvious goal of

¹⁹² A yeoman of the guard at the Tower of London has compiled a list of every prisoner known to have been held there, which the author has viewed. It shows that Tristram Winslade was there for five weeks in 1588.

¹⁹³ Paula Martin. *Spanish Armada Prisoners*. 75

¹⁹⁴ R. M. Merriman. "Some Notes on the Treatment of the English Catholics in the Reign of Elizabeth", *The American Historical Review* 13, no. 3 (April 1908): 480-500. <http://www.jstor.org/stable/1834425> Accessed: 10/04/2014. A number of people have suggested to me that Winslade may have agreed to spy for England. He may have agreed to this, but there is nothing in the circumstances surrounding his life from this point onwards to suggest that he ever complied with any such agreement. I favour Merriman's theory.

¹⁹⁵ The remarkable nature of Winslade's survival is almost entirely absent from accounts of this period. An exception can be found in J. McDermott. *England and the Spanish Armada: the necessary quarrel*. (Yale University Press, 2005) in which Winslade is described as a 'remarkable' survivor. (footnote, p. 369).

improving his lot in life, he mounted a range of legal cases all in the quest for land. One of these, a case to reclaim the Cornish estates, disrupted the on-going efforts of his younger brother, Daniel, to achieve the same result. In this case, we find Tristram Winslade claiming that Daniel had believed him to be dead and that, as he had been a ‘traveler beyond the seas’, he had not heard of his father’s death before returning to England.¹⁹⁶ Was this true? It must be remembered that in 1588, Winslade had told his interrogators in the Tower of London that his father had died in Lisbon. Tristram’s endeavours obviously failed, for – as we will see – he returned into exile. However, Daniel may have eventually achieved a modicum of success, perhaps having been more able to reach a compromise with his adversaries because, as far as we know, he had never lived in exile or followed a treacherous path.¹⁹⁷

This was not the only legal case Tristram Winslade mounted. Chynoweth details an attempt to claim inheritance through Edward Courtenay, the last Earl of Devon.¹⁹⁸ In other claims, as noted above, he was seeking certain lands in Glamorgan, where the old Duchy of Lancaster (the source of his nobility) had held great estates until Henry Tudor became king.¹⁹⁹ Astonishingly, he also mounted a case against Sir John Arundell, who died later that year and was taken home ‘with great pomp’ to be buried at the church of St Columb Major.²⁰⁰

Others have noted that he probably ran out of money – if in fact he actually had any – but there may have been other factors at work. By suing Sir John Arundell, he may have lost the patronage of Lady Anne and had no one else to turn to. He may have been summonsed under the terms of his release to return to the authorities. He had expended so much effort in attempting to stay, what happened to force him to once again flee England? It

¹⁹⁶ *Wideslade v Buller & Fubbe*. This case reveals that following the failure of *Barkeley v Mowhane* and Tubbe and the death of both Barkeley and Mowhane, Daniel Winslade had continued the quest for the Cornish estates. Tristram says that Daniel believed him to be dead.

¹⁹⁷ John Chynoweth. *Tudor Cornwall*. 293 & 305. Chynoweth claims that Tristram remained in England until 1597 and concludes that he may have been one of those who reached a compromise with his enemies. However, Tristram’s 1595 document is proof that he had returned to a life in exile much earlier, probably during the time of Archduke Ernst and by 1605 had still not found a way of returning to England. He is therefore unlikely to have been a beneficiary of the compromise discussed by Chynoweth.

¹⁹⁸ John Chynoweth. *Tudor Cornwall*. 302-305.

¹⁹⁹ Rev. John M. Traherne (Ed.). *Stradling Correspondence*. Also, various court cases also appear to have had this as their object: *Wynslade v Williams*. Court of Chancery, C 3/193/50, 1570 (brought to court by William Winslade) and *Winslade v Yevan*. Court of Chancery, C 3/190/56, which was brought to court by Tristram Winslade. Both are seriously damaged and neither is legible.

²⁰⁰ A.L. Rowse. *Tudor Cornwall*, 362.

is here that Haynes finds him living as a wandering harper, but as already discussed, the identity of the harper must remain with William, his father. Tristram did not become an itinerant harper: he turned to his friend, Gabriel Denys, and went to Brussels.

2.13 The retinue of favourites

*'[I] know nothing in the world to be more reprochfull, base, and contemptible than to be an Entertaindo in the king of Spaines army.'*²⁰¹

The objective of this research has been to demonstrate, through the life of Tristram Winslade, that Cornwall had continued to be a site of resistance against the Elizabethan Reformation during the second half of the sixteenth century. To this point, we have seen how during the 1570s the legacy of the 1549 rebellion lived on within the hearts of Cornish Catholics and how this energy had been centred on Lanherne and the ambitions and objectives of Sir John Arundell. And, to this point, Tristram Winslade has emerged from the archive as testament to what was expected of a servant whose fortune was so significantly tied up with these ambitions, for without the Spanish-led invasion so desired by his master, the Winslades would never reclaim their lands. Tristram's 'career', then, can be seen as a direct result of both his grandfather's attainder for treason and the ongoing determination, through several decades, of local Protestant families to ensure that William Winslade's legal endeavours would be too costly and too lengthy for him to continue to pursue. As we have noted, Grenville's raid in 1577 meant exile for both William and Tristram and this highlights the distinct roles that William appears to have given Tristram and Daniel. Tristram, with his place already determined as a servant of Arundell and then of Spain, would work towards the counter-Reformation which, as part of God's design, must eventually come about. Daniel, however, would continue with the legal battles at home, presumably hedging the bet. The orchestration of his sons' quite disparate activities may suggest that for William Winslade the main game

²⁰¹ Sir Lewis Lewkenor [?]. *A Discourse on the Usage of the English Fugitives by the Spaniard*. (1595). Facsimile Reprint. (New York: Da Capo Press, 1973). It should be noted that the identity of the Lewkenor who authored this work is contested. Sir Lewis is a contender, as he travelled to Brussels in order to persuade his nephew to return home. A. J. Loomie suggests Samuel Lewkenor. (See *Spanish Elizabethans*, 10.) It should be noted also that the pages of this document are unnumbered.

was always secular rather than religious. Theoretically, he could have taken his entire family into exile. Instead, he was doing whatever it took to get his land back. Sir John Arundell, however, was among the wealthiest men in Cornwall and had a great deal to lose through his dealings with Spain, Ridolfi and the Vatican. His game was very clearly a high-stakes one of religion.

It is at this point that we might begin to ask where Tristram Winslade's true ambition lay. Was it with the secular notion of inheriting his father's lands – in which case, as a fugitive, a counter-Reformation was the only way he could inherit – or was it with the religious, in which case might he have been prepared to live and die anywhere that held to the true faith? In the main, the clues to Winslade's life have been hidden for centuries in archives, old texts and the often oblique comments of antiquarians and historians working across disparate fields of interest. Alone, none of these snippets is sufficient to give us any real insight into the person that he was and, even stitched together to create a chronological narrative, they provide little insight into the man. For creative purposes, such insight – or, at least a hypothesis about his true nature – is critical in terms of character development, but it is also of interest in terms of what his life can tell us about Cornish resistance to the Reformation in the sixteenth century.

It is reasonable to assume that Winslade entered his next phase of exile with a honed sense of urgency. While all of the exiles must have been acutely affected by the failure of the Babington Plot in 1586 and the subsequent the execution of Mary Queen of Scots in February 1587, for Winslade the 1580s had been a decade of disaster on a much more personal level: he had seen the appalling brutality of the Irish wars; his father and step-grandmother had both died; the legal quest over the Cornish estates had failed; and Anthony Babington, his cousin, had suffered a traitor's death. As for himself, he had been arrested by the Inquisition and been captured, imprisoned and tortured following his discovery aboard the Armada, which had itself been a dismal failure.²⁰² If nothing had gone well during the 1580s, the early 1590s in Brussels were looking just as hopeless. In 1593, for example, the stakes were raised

²⁰²It is unclear how close Winslade was to his younger Derbyshire cousin, however William Winslade may have known Anthony Babington's father, Henry. A Henry Babington witnessed a document for William c. 1544. (*Barkley v Tubb and Mowhane*. Star Chamber. 28 Eliz.)

against the English exiles when the King began expelling them from the city because of the number of spies infiltrating the network and because of the cost involved in paying them.²⁰³ In the absence of money and a coherent long-term strategy, their activities were increasingly marked by fruitless attempts to assassinate the Queen, the result of which was the arrest, torture and execution of the would-be assassins. The lack of a serious strategy to resolve the problem of England was being exacerbated by the exiles' requirement to work on other aspects of Spain's agenda, such as war with France.²⁰⁴ This complaint comes directly from Winslade:

Up until now our proposals, if they have been approved by his Royal Majesty – and the wisest Prince sees how important they are – [have been concerned with] the maintenance of the safety of his own Monarchy, for the destruction of the ever-increasing sects and the restoration of the Catholic religion, not only in England but also in other, neighbouring regions.²⁰⁵

Winslade was not the only one feeling frustrated. In August 1594, Hugh Owen – with whom Tristram must have worked closely – had complained that Spain was 'destitute of the means to support a new English *empresa*' and officials in Madrid had concluded that Spain was 'losing the general struggle in Europe' and that a serious re-evaluation of current grand strategy was in order.²⁰⁶ Winslade's despondency suggests he was writing to the King during a time of general frustration, probably during the twelve months between Ernst's death and Albert's arrival. During this 'hiatus' there was a struggle for leadership of the army in Flanders, which ensured continued defeat in the Netherlands.²⁰⁷ The exiles were, however, on the cusp of a new era in Spanish policy towards the matter of an English counter-Reformation. At some time during 1595, King Philip II had concurred with his advisors and approved a 'new grand

²⁰³ Thomas M. McCoog. *The society of Jesus in Ireland, Scotland and England 1589-1597: Building the Faith of Saint Peter on the King of Spain's Monarchy*. (London: Routledge, 2012), 345-346.

²⁰⁴ A. J. Loomie points to the conflict with Henry of Navarre as 'expensive strategic changes ... [which were] ... high priority from 1591 to 1593.' See: "The Armadas and the Catholics of England", *The Catholic Historical Review* LIX, no. 3 (Oct. 1973) 385-403 (391-2).

²⁰⁵ Cheryl Hayden: "Tristram Winslade: the desperate heart", 48.

²⁰⁶ For detail re Holt: Albert J. Loomie. "The Armadas and the Catholics of England", 393. For detail re Madrid: Edward Tenace. "A Strategy of Reaction: The Armadas of 1596 and 1597 and the Spanish struggle for European Hegemony", *The English Historical Review* 118, no. 478 (Sept. 2003): 855-882 (856).

²⁰⁷ Thomas M. McCoog. *The Society of Jesus*, 207.

strategy, whose centrepiece consisted of a renewed offensive against England.’ This was no coincidence, for the leading English Jesuit, Robert Persons, had been lobbying for a new and rigorous approach to a final ‘*empresa*’ on England, which would include a new Council for the State of England to ensure the plan would be developed by the most talented and committed English exiles in Brussels. The whole scheme was to be governed by the new Archduke.²⁰⁸

From Winslade’s perspective 1595 cannot have been without additional points of interest and challenge. Foremost must have been the attack on the towns and villages around Mounts Bay in western Cornwall by four Spanish galleons. On 23 July, 1595, Hannibal Vyvyan wrote from St Mawes Fort on the River Fal to Sir Francis Drake and Sir John Hawkins informing them that the Spanish had ‘...burned Penzance, Newlyn, Mousehole, Poole [Paul] Church and Church Town and other villages adjoining, without resistance...’ and that forty more ships were seen to seaward.²⁰⁹

While this raid has been explained as the Spanish king’s revenge for an English attack on the Brazilian town of Pernambuco earlier that year, which perhaps says more about Philip II than anything else, it is the apparent lack of Cornish resistance that is most notable as far as Tristram Winslade’s story is concerned.²¹⁰ This was surely the sort of news Philip II – not to mention Winslade – would have been interested to hear, particularly at a time when the Duchy of Cornwall’s Helston tenants had in 1594 won the Queen’s ‘clemency’ in a case that had stripped them of their ancient Duchy landholding customs. Of further interest here is the role of Sir Francis Godolphin as one of the tenants’ deputies in their “Duchy Suit”. Godolphin, with others, subtly reminded Lord Burghley and the Privy Council of the ‘dangerous consequence it may growe in tyme’ if the court’s overturning of the ancient customs were not rectified.²¹¹ Godolphin was named by Winslade as among those supportive of a Spanish invasion, and so we must now ask whether the King of Spain had decided to employ his need for revenge as an excuse to provoke the Cornish into betraying their loyalties; after all, the

²⁰⁸ Edward Tenace. “A Strategy of Reaction”, 856-860.

²⁰⁹ Calendar of State Papers, Domestic Series, Elizabeth, Vol CCLIII. Preserved in Her Majesty’s Public Record. (Nendeln, Lichtenstein: Kraus Reprints, 1967): 77.

²¹⁰ For Philip of Spain’s purpose: Calendar of State Papers. Ibid. 79; Edward Tenace. “A Strategy of Reaction”, 859.

²¹¹ P.L. Hull. “Richard Carew’s discourse about the Duchy Suit”, *Journal of the Royal Institution of Cornwall* (New Series) 4, no. 2 (1962): 181-251.

notion of a Cornish invasion – pushed, in fact, by Sir John Arundell – had been around for decades. In any event, even if the local response to this particular attack appears to have been interpreted by the Spanish as meaning that the Cornish either lacked the wherewithal to resist an invasion or might even actively support one, the hope it might have inspired in the exiles must have been welcome, for they were being crushed by suffering and hardship. As Winslade had already informed the King:

The author ... trusts that there is a better outlook for him in the future than there has for many years until now. But if it is not to be, he will be His Majesty's supplicant (even if unwelcome) so that with his good blessing, he may enter into other ways of maintaining his life. For he [the King] has dealt with him [Winslade] so sparingly that for incurring the expenses of one whole year, barely the salary for even one month is obtained, and then only after much worry and prayers. The result of this is that he is permitted neither to remain here, because there is nothing for him to live off, nor to depart hence, unless he first settles the large debts that he has incurred here.²¹²

Why had he incurred debts? Why was life so miserable? It seems likely that the absence of a Spanish viceroy in Flanders had created a vacuum in which the English Jesuits could take control of the exiles who were desperately trying to justify their continued presence on the Spanish payroll and coming up with all sorts of plans that might please the King. It seems reasonable to view Winslade's document in this context, for it does not appear to have been written in response to a particular request or instruction. Rather, his plea appears to be symptomatic of Spain's ongoing struggle to pay its soldiers, meaning the English among them were trapped in a pressure-cooker world where loyalty, purpose, friendship and a yearning for home became an increasingly toxic glue. It is little wonder that spymaster Hugh Owen's friends became 'very bitter, passionate, haughty, given to threats and to abusive talk about others.'²¹³

²¹² Cheryl Hayden. "Tristram Winslade: the desperate heart", 62. Other contemporary accounts show Winslade's situation to be typical. For example: Sir Lewis Lewkenor. *A Discourse on the Usage of the English Fugitives*.

²¹³ Thomas M. McCoog. *The Society of Jesus*, 356. McCoog is citing from the Jesuit Oliver Mannaerts' comparison between Hugh Owen's friends with the English noblemen whom he found 'very courteous'. While

Another aspect of Winslade's plea is the '... better outlook for him in the future...'. What did he mean? Was he asking for a proper military position, perhaps with the new archduke, and what did he mean by 'new ways of maintaining his life'?²¹⁴ The options available to Winslade demonstrate the situation: he could go home and risk arrest and a treason trial; he could wander around Brussels begging and eventually die of exposure or starvation; or he could continue to obey the expectations of his father and his patron and work for Spain, even without pay, until the counter-Reformation became a reality. So, while in his letter to the King he mentions the possibility of finding another way of living, there is no hint as to what this might have been. Very few of the English exiles in Brussels appear to have set themselves up in business or had viable positions at Court, with most holding out a desperate hope that a counter-Reformation in England would see their return home. They were, in the meantime, doing what they needed to do to survive. Unlike Hugh Owen and Sir William Stanley, who would ultimately be granted significant pensions and/or positions of power with good incomes that sustained them for life, Winslade's position as an *entretenido* was tenuous. It probably meant he did not receive the regular soldier's pay, but rather the starvation-level pension of 25 escudos a year, which must have rendered him vulnerable to exploitation.

During 1595, the situation was made worse by the exiles' spiritual advisor, the Jesuit leader in Brussels, Father William Holt, who controlled all their pensions and monies coming from England.²¹⁵ The longer Holt held onto these moneys, the wealthier he became, and notwithstanding his vow of poverty he accrued around £50,000 from the sale of dispensations.²¹⁶ Holt then had the temerity to threaten exiles who could not pay their debts with debtors' prison.²¹⁷ How Tristram Winslade managed to pay for his food and rent during

Tristram Winslade appears to belong to both camps, we have seen that his father, of the same noble descent, was not above issuing threats and engaging in abusive talk.

²¹⁴ As an 'entretenido', Winslade had no permanent appointment. Dries Raeymaekers. *One Foot in the Palace*. Translation by John R.J. Eyck. (Leuven, Belgium: Leuven University Press, 2013): 126. ProQuest Ebook Central, State Library of Queensland, 7 December 2016.

²¹⁵ Thomas M. McCoog. *The Society of Jesus*, 345 note 27. According to McCoog, pension monies were held by Holt and his fellow Jesuit, Father Robert Persons. Persons, however, was not based in Brussels.

²¹⁶ Thomas M. McCoog. *Ibid*, 323.

²¹⁷ Hugh Owen received income from tithes in Wales (Martin Cleary. *"The Catholic Resistance in Wales"*, 112). Gabriel Denys may have received a bequest or pension from his Godfather, Gabriel Donne, who had been a Marian priest and then Canon of St Paul's, before his death in 1558, and had also received a life pension during

this period is clear from his letter to the king: he borrowed money, perhaps from wealthier friends, such as Gabriel Denys or Hugh Owen. He must have relied on their goodwill and friendship to keep him from the direst of situations.

It is easy to see how Holt's threat, coupled with the King's threat of expulsion for those who were useless, must have directed every breath, every step, of an exile such as Tristram Winslade. Not surprisingly, towards the end of 1595, Holt was accused of tyranny and the Pope was asked to remove him. Ironically, such was the extent of the exiles' bind – the prison of Holt's tyranny was all-encompassing, for he seems to have been their judge, their banker and their Father Confessor – that Winslade's faction supported him. They so needed his continued favour in order to remain in Spain's service that they started a petition to support him, and Winslade, Owen and Denys were among those who collected signatures.²¹⁸ The spiral of favour and compliance continued and it is little wonder that with their survival so bound up with a tyrannical priest they were viewed as fractious.²¹⁹ The Protestant Sir Lewis Lewkenor's description of them as a 'retinue of favourites' was, for him, polite. In a stream of rhetoric that Christopher Highley has exposed as grotesquely hyperbolic, Lewkenor also blamed Sir William Stanley's 'misplaced trust in the Spaniard ... [for] his condition as a mentally disordered outcast.'²²⁰ Notwithstanding the conflicting discourses, Winslade's own account demonstrates the desperation of the exiles in the very year Lewkenor was writing, and the fact that Thomas McCoog pays so much attention to them in his history of the Jesuits underscores the whole scene.

Meanwhile, the attack on Mounts Bay during the summer of 1595 may have elevated Winslade and his plan in the eyes of the people who mattered, and the Jesuits were key players in this regard. In Rome, Father Persons' key objective was to use a re-Catholicized

the dissolution of the Monasteries of £120 p.a. This may explain why Denys appears to have been well established in exile, where he supported a wife and four daughters.

²¹⁸ Rev. M. A. Tierney. *Dodd's Church History of England from the Commencement of the Sixteenth Century to the Revolution of 1688*, 3. (London: Charles Dolman, 1840): Appendix, xxxl.

(Translation from Latin by Dr Michael Kelly.)

²¹⁹ Thomas M. McCoog. *The Society of Jesus*, 353.

²²⁰ Christopher Highley. *Catholics Writing the Nation in Early Modern Britain and Ireland*. (Oxford, U.K.: Oxford University Press, 2008):155-6.

England as the launching pad for a full-scale assault on Protestant Europe.²²¹ So while the support Winslade's faction showed towards Father Holt was certainly mired in desperation, there was also an element of long-term strategy involved. The English Jesuits' big picture, if successful, could send them all home to their estates and families. The King's new agenda for England, along with Cornwall's apparent lack of resistance to the attack on Mounts Bay, must surely have raised the spirits of the exiles in Brussels. The new Archduke could not arrive soon enough.

2.14 Close to the Archduke

*'...bloody, uncertain, and totally useless at bringing about a good reformation.'*²²²

Archduke Albert rode into Brussels in February 1596, a year to the month since his brother's death. He brought with him an ascetic religiosity that echoed that of the King and, like the King, appears to have believed in his own personal godliness, insisting, for example, on a level of pomp, ceremony and ritualistic processes that included having his meat carved and wine poured by noblemen.²²³ One of the first things Albert did, in accepting the King's brief to intensify efforts towards the problem of England, was to invite the English exiles to Court. It is probable, therefore, that under Albert's regime Winslade's sense of purpose was honed and the daily framework within which life was lived was articulated with new rules and expectations: the English exiles – or at least the more worthy among them – would no longer be on the fringes, roaming around Brussels trying to find a project or a crust of bread; some found positions at the palace and may have worked there on the rota system implemented for other members of the Archduke's household and staff.²²⁴

The Archduke's palace was located on a hill – Coudenberg means 'cold hill' – outside Brussels' city walls. But as ostentatious as the palace was, the new arrangement was no recipe for instant bliss. To start with, there was no staff accommodation, and so the Archduke

²²¹Liesbeth Corens. 'Dislocation and Record-Keeping: the Counter Archives of the Catholic Diaspora', *Past and Present*, Supplement 11 (2016): 269-287 (276-7). https://academic.oup.com/past/article-abstract/230/suppl_11/269/2884256 Accessed: 04 September 2018.

²²²Tristram Winslade, c. 1595. Cheryl Hayden. "Tristram Winslade: the desperate heart", 61.

²²³Dries Raeymaekers. *One Foot in the Palace*, 46.

²²⁴Ibid. 73 & 107.

implemented a scheme whereby men like Winslade had to rent rooms in Brussels at a rate determined by the Palace, a situation that may have kept the citizens happy but which added to the financial stress of the exiles who were now serving him, still often without receiving their pay.²²⁵ The Archduke's rental rate may have exceeded that previously negotiated between landlord and tenant, thus increasing the stress felt by the exiles. Another source of stress would have been the Archduke's decision to revise the pension system and find ways of removing troublesome pensioners from Brussels.²²⁶ Winslade's associates, Stanley and Owen, along with Father Holt, undertook this task from March 1596, notable timing when one considers the need for the above-mentioned petition which was circulated later that year. It may have been that by mid-1596, Holt's faction was, in fact, seeing the benefits of belonging to his little retinue and others, quite literally left out in the cold, were feeling aggrieved.

There can be little doubt that the Archduke and the King were serious about a new push to resolve the problem of England, and getting the exiles in Brussels into order was an important part of their strategy. So too was the final *empresa* or invasion, and in 1597, in the Galician port of A Coruña, a massive armada – larger than that of 1588 – was being prepared. Its destination – kept secret until the last minute – was the port of Falmouth, which Winslade had described to the King as 'the equal of any English port, able to hold a thousand ships, even the largest.'²²⁷

Given Winslade's location and the nature of his work, it is highly probable that he knew about this armada. What is unknown is the extent to which it may have resembled the plan he had put forward two years earlier, what he thought about it and whether he had had any role in preparing loyal Catholics at home for what was to come. Indeed, given that many invasion plans were being thrust in front of the King during these years, we cannot be certain that Winslade's plan was even sent to Madrid or had any impact, because, as Loomie has pointed out, Philip II did not believe there was any role for the Catholics in England to play in

²²⁵ Ibid. 70.

²²⁶ Thomas M. McCoog. *The Society of Jesus*, 345.

²²⁷ Cheryl Hayden. "Tristram Winslade: the desperate heart", 41. It should be noted that there was no town of Falmouth at the time. The town associated with the port was Penryn.

a Spanish invasion – and Tristram’s plan was highly dependent upon their help.²²⁸ On the other hand, the last minute choice of Cornwall as a landing site might suggest that Winslade’s plan had resonated with those in Madrid – echoes, perhaps, of Sir John Arundell’s strategy from the 1570s.

On the face of it, the fact that this *empresa* – such as it was – was carried out while Queen Elizabeth was still alive and therefore constituted an act of war would suggest that Winslade would have entirely disapproved, for his objective had been to bring a peaceful counter-Reformation to England during the void that would be left by the death of a monarch who had not named a successor. All other methods attempted to that point, he had pointed out ‘...appear to be of enormous expense, bloody, uncertain, and totally useless at bringing about a good reformation.’²²⁹ There can be little doubt that the 1588 armada, which had caused him so much personal anguish, was at the forefront of his mind when he wrote this blunt assessment.

While Winslade might have disapproved of the means, however, the possibility of a successful outcome must surely have caused no little excitement. But there would be no testing of Cornish resistance to England’s Reformation on this occasion. Notwithstanding that the Spanish Admiral – the *Adelantado* – was in charge, the fleet’s departure was constantly being deferred by poor summer weather and the late arrival of ships among other things. In turn, the delays meant thousands of sailors and soldiers were eating through the provisions, and so fresh supplies were constantly having to be purchased. It was October when the fleet finally sailed, and it straight away met with the Atlantic’s autumn gales and was blown apart. Forty ships sank and countless lives were lost.²³⁰ With the exception of a ship that washed up off St Ives, Cornwall had barely glimpsed it.

The question that remains both unasked and impossible now to answer is who among the nobles and gentry of Cornwall and Devon might have been waiting for it? Winslade’s plan remains a rare source of detailed information about the individuals in England’s south-west

²²⁸ Albert J. Loomie. “The Armadas and the Catholics of England”, 390. Winslade’s plan hinged on significant local assistance to the invasion, which he was confident would be provided by Sir Francis Godolphin in Cornwall and Sir William Courtenay of Powderham in Devon. Cheryl Hayden. “Tristram Winslade: the desperate heart”, 49-52.

²²⁹ Cheryl Hayden. “Tristram Winslade: the desperate heart”, 61.

²³⁰ For a fictionalized account of this armada: Winston Graham. *The Grove of Eagles*. 401 ff.

who might have been alerted to the forthcoming fleet. The fact that the fleet never arrived has enabled them to remain inert, silent and forever innocent.

2.15 Matters of discernment

*'The intention of the author and the good and godly endes proposed by him ... I like very well, but yet for the execution...'*²³¹

The final phase of Winslade's life, as far as the record is able to tell us, reveals a significant increase in his despair. He was not alone in this. Even by 1595, Lewkenor was describing how English soldiers in Brussels, suffering from starvation and/or melancholy, had been taking to their beds and dying. During the early days of this era of accelerating hopelessness, Winslade appears to have remained busy. The census of exiles suggests he survived the culling of Spain's English 'pensioners' and was working for the Archduke, probably as a military adviser, and also involving himself in factional politics.²³² There is the sense that he was quite literally keeping himself alive through the relentless pursuit of the over-arching objective, all aided by the fact that he was one of the 'hispaniolized' exiles: that is, he worked for and was loyal to Spain. But the entire faction was working on a failed strategy and when King Philip II died in 1598, the English regiment was disbanded. Increasingly, the exiled population began to doubt that God was really on their side.²³³ The idea that this notion began to plague Winslade gains a whiff of credibility when we consider the seismic shift in his thinking in the years that followed.

The death of Elizabeth in March 1603 had brought James of Scotland to England's throne and by August 1604 a peace treaty had been signed that ended the war between Spain and the exiles' homeland. What was a person like Tristram Winslade to do now? His entire adult life had been spent as an Englishman working for Spain, with the objective of a military-

²³¹ Letter from Father Robert Persons to Tristram Winslade, 18 March 1605. See David B. Quinn (Ed.). *New American World, A documentary History of North America to 1612*. Vol III. (New York: Arno Press & Hector Bye Inc. 1979): 364.

²³² Albert J. Loomie. *Spanish Elizabethans*. 263.

²³³ Lewkenor cites this fear as becoming common among the exiles.

led counter-Reformation that would deliver to him his grandfather's lands. Suddenly, all of that seemed to be over.

Meanwhile, in England, hopes that King James I would be more tolerant towards Catholics were fading and desperation began pushing a zealous few towards a plan to blow up the House of Lords while the King was opening Parliament. The Gunpowder Plot officially began with its blessing in England in May 1604 and historical accounts suggest that most of Winslade's circle in Brussels knew what was being hatched. Guy Fawkes, for example, was in Stanley's regiment. More broadly, it also fed into the objectives still being pursued by Father Persons: a swift counter-Reformation in England, from where an attack on Protestant Europe could be launched. What people like Winslade thought about the plot itself is unknown. Certainly, they must have recognised that it represented a last-ditch effort to achieve the ultimate goal and return home to a Catholic England. But what would God think? And how would Catholics at home react?

Winslade, for one, appears to have suffered a crisis of conscience. The Jesuit charged with the exiles' spirituality at the time, Father William Baldwin, may have challenged him to use his own discernment in order to discover the will of God, to avoid martyrdom and to understand that the end does not always justify the means.²³⁴ Somehow, Winslade either found or was offered another option. He may have discovered that Sir Thomas Arundell of Wardour, through the Plymouth Company, was sponsoring a voyage of exploration to 'Norumbega' – that is, the northern part of the north American coast, all of which was then known as 'Virginia'. Perhaps, through this, Winslade saw a means by which to extract himself from beneath the stifling blanket of unquestioning obedience that had been foisted upon him by tradition and circumstance. During the winter of 1604-05, he summoned the strength of will to write a plan for a colony of English Catholics that would reunite those at home with those in exile. Then, presumably thinking that the Church would find such an idea laudable, he sent his plan to Rome seeking the approval of Father Robert Persons.²³⁵

²³⁴ Thanks to Liz Kerr, Faber Centre, Brisbane. Father Holt died in 1598, in Barcelona.

²³⁵ Historians studying the early colonization of North America are aware of this plan only because Persons' response to it still exists. Dennis Taylor and David B. Quinn have both suggested that Winslade came up with this plan and discussed it with Sir Thomas Arundell and the Earl of Southampton, Shakespeare's patron. See: Dennis Taylor. "Prospero's Island and the Catholic Exploration of America". Also David B. Quinn, *England and the Discovery of America*. (London: Allen & Unwin, 1974): 384. Here, Quinn suggests the Library of Congress

As we have seen, Winslade's connection with the Arundell family was close and firmly established, and this probably extended beyond Lanherne to Wardour, in Wiltshire. In the early 1570s, both Arundell families were connected to the Ridolfi Plot and during the 1590s, after Sir John's death, Lady Anne Arundell had moved to her house at Chideock on the Dorset coast. So, for a decade or so, they had not been far distant. Sir John Arundell's old cousin, Sir Matthew Arundell of Wardour, had died in 1598, finally leaving his son, Thomas, to pursue his Catholic dreams. Thomas was about ten years younger than Winslade and a much more overt Catholic than Sir Matthew had been. In 1595, Sir Matthew had sent Thomas, with the Queen's approval, to help Emperor Rudolf II fight the Turks and, for his efforts, Thomas was made a Count of the Holy Roman Empire. This infuriated the Queen, who had him imprisoned and, later, Guy Fawkes' statement under interrogation led to the suspicion that Thomas Arundell had been writing invasion plans for Spain.²³⁶ Might it be possible that, despite denying having visited Brussels on the way home the Turkish wars, he found the temptation to meet with the Archduke and the English exiles too great to resist? In any event, it is difficult to believe that Winslade's plan for a Catholic colony in North America and Arundell's voyage of exploration were being planned at the same without being in some way connected.²³⁷

No copy of Winslade's plan has ever turned up in the archive, and yet we know a great deal about it from Father Persons' reply. Addressed to Mr Winslade on 18 March 1605, it reveals that Winslade had designed a Utopian-style colony, in that it would be funded by the sale of the estates of wealthy English Catholics to enable men and women from all classes and with all the necessary skills and equipment to begin a new life abroad. Before sailing to America, however, the ship would dock somewhere in Europe to pick up the exiles. Tristram Winslade was very clearly envisaging a new life for himself and hope must have burned bright. He had served Spain since 1574, and for twenty-seven years had lived in poverty-stricken exile

dating of 1595 to be incorrect, suggesting instead 1588. I believe the events described by Winslade suggest 1595-6 is far more likely.

²³⁶ A. Hopper, "Arundell, Sir Thomas, First Baron of Wardour", *Oxford National Dictionary of Biography*. <https://doi-org.ezproxy.flinders.edu.au/10.1093/ref:odnb/726>

²³⁷ James Phinney Baxter, the biographer of Sir Ferdinando Gorges (a partner in the Plymouth Company), claims that Gorges knew that Arundell's true purpose was to find a location in North America for Catholic colony. James Phinney Baxter (Ed.) & Sir Ferdinando Gorges. *Sir Ferdinando Gorges and his province of Maine, including The Brief Relation, The Brief Narration, his Defence, The Charter Granted to him, His will, and his Letters*, Vol. II. First printed: Boston: Prince Society, 1890. (New York: Burt Franklin Reprint. 1967): 7-8 fn. 291.

all in the hope that a Spanish conquest of England would return his lands and fortune. He was now fifty-five years old and fully cognisant of the fact that the quest was futile; he would never have the pleasure of going home. Therefore, unless the Gunpowder Plot delivered an evil victory, his options were either to remain in exile and take to his bed and die or to find a home in a new land. Did the starkness of this choice blind Winslade to the fact that Persons would find the whole colony idea to be 'morally impossible'?²³⁸

Persons sent his firm but polite rebuttal to Winslade after Waymouth's voyage had left its anchorage in the Thames. Winslade, of course, received it in Brussels, and so there is no evidence to suggest that Arundell was influenced by it.²³⁹ Sir Thomas, however, was about to be influenced by greater forces and, during the expedition's absence – for he did not sail with it – much would happen that may have had an enormous impact on the rest of Winslade's life. The most important matter was Arundell's sudden loss of interest in the expedition and in the Catholic settlement. Factors other than Father Persons' disapproval were at this point very much in play.

The first of these came in May 1605, when Sir Thomas was elevated by King James to the English peerage as Baron of Wardour. Secondly, and somewhat extraordinarily, the expedition's chronicler James Rosier – a servant of Arundell – found that by July his master had '[...] so farre engaged himself with the Archduke, that he was constrained to relinquish this action [...]'²⁴⁰ Thirdly, in mid-August, King James appointed Arundell colonel of the English regiment in Flanders in place of Sir William Stanley. His task was to go to Brussels and, in accordance with the peace treaty, round up the English soldiers who had been serving Spain, bring them home and prepare them for service in Holland.²⁴¹ This really was a test of

²³⁸ Great Britain: Jesuits in Britain Archive, *Grene's Collectanea* Part I, f. 337b. Translation from Latin by Dr Michael Kelly; also David B. Quinn. *New American World*. 365.

²³⁹ D.F.X. Connolly assumes Winslade was in England and blames the delay of Persons' letter for Arundell's change of mind. See: "A Chronology of New England Catholicism Before the Mayflower Landing", *Records of the American Catholic Historical Society of Philadelphia* 70, no. 3-4 (Sept-Dec. 1959): 95. The letter, probably sent from Rome, was dated 18 March 1605. In England, this was 8 March, which according to Rosier was three days after the expedition left Ratcliffe. According to James Rosier, they finally departed Dartmouth on 31 March. See James Rosier. "The True Relation of Waymouth's Voyage, 1605", *American Journeys Collection*, Document No AJ-041. Wisconsin Historical Society Digital Library and Archives (2003): 359.

²⁴⁰ James Rosier. *Ibid*, 357.

²⁴¹ Oxford Dictionary of National Biography: <https://doi-org.ezproxy.flinders.edu.au/10.1093/ref:odnb/726> According to Loomie a 'strong and visible torrent' of Englishmen had poured across the Channel to serve Spain in the wake of the 1604 peace treaty. See: "The Armadas and the English Catholics", 402-3.

Arundell's loyalty and he failed it from the start by sailing to Brussels in the company of the Spanish Ambassador, which greatly displeased King James, who had been negotiating with the Archduke for Arundell's safe passage. Once again, Arundell had displeased his monarch by accepting favours from European Catholic governments and, although streams of the exiled soldiers were now coming home, King James saw fit to order Arundell home by the end of November.²⁴²

Arundell's mission must have been of acute concern to Winslade, who had served as an unattached officer with the English regiment in Flanders, under Stanley, since the early 1590s. Militarily and strategically, Winslade and Stanley were closely aligned and probably met frequently.²⁴³ Now, Stanley was being replaced by another of Winslade's allies, but Sir Thomas Arundell was expected to take the regiment in an entirely different direction, one which would be impossible for Winslade to comply with. Winslade, through his early allegiance to Spanish and Catholic causes and because he was a fugitive from English justice, was not like the other soldiers. He could not go home. The situation, therefore, had become grim because peace had normalised diplomatic relations between London and Brussels, and there was now an English ambassador resident there. The ambassador would have known who the 'hispaniolized' English traitors were, and who was involved in espionage and invasion planning. When Guy Fawkes and his cache of explosives were found beneath the House of Lords on 5 November 1605 (in Brussels it was 15 November), the risk to the safety of Winslade and his faction in Brussels became dire.

And so we find that Sir Thomas Arundell was in Flanders right at the moment when, on 23 November 1605 – just eight days after the discovery of the Gunpowder Plot – Tristram Winslade 'piously finished with this life' at the English College of Douai, where he was found to be in such dire poverty that there was no money for a funeral befitting a nobleman.²⁴⁴ And therefore, presumably, no money for a headstone.

²⁴² Sir Ralph Winwood. *Memorials of State Affairs in the Reigns of Q. Elizabeth and K. James 1*, vol ii, ed. by Edmund Sawyer (London: T. Ward, 1725): 144-145.

²⁴³ Winslade and Stanley probably first met in Brussels in the early 1590s, following Winslade's release from prison in March of that year. Stanley had fought for the English until January 1587 and it is unlikely that the two men crossed paths before Winslade fled England after his release from prison in March 1590. Details of Stanley's career: A. J. Loomie. "A Soldier: Sir William Stanley 1548-1623", in *Spanish Elizabethans*.

²⁴⁴ *The Douay College Diaries: Third, Fourth and Fifth, 1598-1654, with the Rheims Report, 1579-80*. <https://archive.org/details/douaycollegediar10engl> Translation from Latin, Dr Michael Kelly.

While it is hardly remarkable that, at the age of fifty-five years, a man with Winslade's life experience might have died in such circumstances, the timing of his apparent demise is fascinating. Of critical interest here is the strife surrounding Hugh Owen, who was terrified of being kidnapped by the English ambassador's men and shipped home to England to face a treason trial. Eventually, after making it clear to the Spanish that if he were tortured he could not guarantee to maintain the secrecy around so many of the exiles' Catholic supporters in England, the Archduke had Owen and his papers placed under house arrest with his foreign secretary, Juan de Mancidor.²⁴⁵ Then, in April 1606, intelligence sent to England claimed that Hugh Owen and William Stanley had been ill and were recovering at Douai. Furthermore, later that month, Owen was seen in Brussels with two gentlemen who had been reported as having died.²⁴⁶ It was in this very month, at the trial of Henry Garnet, that England's Attorney-General Edward Coke described Tristram Winslade as an 'Englishman, but with a Spanish and traitorous heart'.²⁴⁷

This confluence of intrigue may suggest that Winslade was one of the 'deceased' gentlemen seen with Owen in Brussels. This, in turn, may explain an event five years later when, on 31 January 1611, Mr Winslade, 'a nobleman' arrived at the Douai College

[...] from England and stayed with us here for three or four days then on account of some business he left from here to Brussels from which parts he returned to us again and on his return stayed with us for three or four days.²⁴⁸

Could it possibly be true that this man, whose life was lived in relentless pursuit of a world order dictated by others, finally found a way to ease his suffering and return to England? Is it feasible that by the age of 61 years he was still well enough to travel; still able to return to Brussels, perhaps to finally claim some long-overdue pay for his years of

²⁴⁵ Albert J. Loomie. *Spanish Elizabethans*, 86-89. Loomie describes the threat to spymaster Hugh Owen, whom the Archduke eventually placed in protective custody.

²⁴⁶ Calendar of the Manuscripts of the Most Hon. The Marquis of Salisbury K.G., Part XIII. (London: Eyre and Spottiswood): 120.

²⁴⁷ Thomas Hughes. *History of the Society of Jesus in North America*. 153.

²⁴⁸ *The Douay College Diaries: Third, Fourth and Fifth, 1598-1654, with the Rheims Report, 1579-80*, 108.

Translation from Latin by Dr Michael Kelly.

service?²⁴⁹ As tantalising as this question is, there is nothing in the research as yet uncovered which provides a definitive answer. All we can say is that while the report of a death, found in an archive, might generally be accepted as evidence of actual death, there is sufficient murkiness around the circumstances of this particular ‘death’ to raise doubt. And so we are left with the possibility that having lived such a gruelling life, our hero finally found sanctuary at home in England.

Tidbits from archives and sources such as the Douai diaries have taken us so far in the quest to trace the story of Tristram Winslade, but there is the possibility of a final denouement. Here, though, we must – at least for now – place our faith in a remnant of oral history. In the 1880s, the then Lord Arundell of Wardour told the American historian J. G. Shea that ‘[...] owing to the destruction of papers during the siege of Wardour Castle in 1643 nothing remains in the archives of that ancient Catholic house to give full light on this early Catholic expedition to our shores.’ Hard on the heels of Arundell’s account, Shea then states that Tristram Winslade’s plan was used by the Separatists who sailed on the *Mayflower*.²⁵⁰ Shea cites no reference or evidence for this, leaving this researcher to wonder if the story of Winslade’s plan had been known at Wardour and survived the ravages of England’s dreadful Civil War to be passed down as part of Arundell family lore. If we join the dots, there seems to be a reasonable degree of probability that Sir Thomas Arundell smuggled a living Winslade home to Wardour Castle and that he was given refuge there. Such refuge may have enabled Winslade to meet Arundell’s brother-in-law, the Earl of Southampton, who then, through the Virginia Company, discreetly arranged for the Separatists in England and Holland to reunite in America.

Tristram Winslade would have been seventy years old when the *Mayflower* sailed. If he had been well enough at the age of sixty-one years to travel to Brussels and back, it just might be that, nine years later, he finally witnessed the success of his ‘Norumbega’ plan.

²⁴⁹ Dries Raeymaekers tells us that year after year, ‘delinquent pay’ was finally dispersed, often years after it was due. *One Foot in the Palace*. 119.

²⁵⁰ John G. Shea. *The Catholic Church in Colonial Days, 1521-1763*. (New York: John G. Shea, 1886): 25-28.

Chronology of key events in the life of Tristram Winslade

1550. Tristram Winslade is born in Devon to parents impoverished by rebellion.

1558. Queen Mary returns Devonshire property confiscated in 1549.

1560. Tristram becomes a servant in the household of Sir John Arundell of Lanherne.

1564. Queen Elizabeth confiscates the Devonshire properties.

Early 1570s. Tristram is among a group of Catholics planning a Papal invasion of Wales.

Jan. 1574-75. Tristram is in Cornwall, giving evidence in a court case.

1577. Sir John Arundell is arrested and Tristram flees to Ireland.

28 August 1583. Tristram's arrival in Rheims is recorded in the College of Douai diary.

April 1585. Tristram is still at the English college in Rheims.

Late 1585 – early 1588. Tristram travels to Brussels and joins the Spanish army as an unattached officer. He travels up the Rhine and over the Alps into Italy. He enters Spain at Barcelona and is arrested. He is released and travels to either Madrid or El Escorial, where he may have attended a meeting to discuss the Armada. He then travels to Lisbon.

1588. He sails from Lisbon with the Spanish Armada.

July 1588. Tristram's ship founders and he is arrested by Sir Francis Drake. He is interrogated in the Tower of London.

Sept 1588. The Privy Council orders that Tristram should be put on the rack.

March 1590. The Privy Council orders Tristram's release.

1595-96. Tristram is a resident of Brussels and is serving at the Archduke's court. He writes an invasion plan of Cornwall and Devon for King Philip II of Spain. He gathers signatures on a petition of support for Father William Holt.

Late 1597. Tristram has been travelling with the Archduke, probably to the siege of Amiens.

1600. Tristram is granted a Spanish army pension.

Early 1605. Tristram sends a plan for a north American colony for Catholic exiles to Rome. Father Robert Persons sends a detailed and scathing reply.

Nov. 1605. Eight days after the discovery in London of the Gunpowder Plot, Tristram's death is recorded in the Douai College diary.

April 1606. English spies report that 'dead' men are walking around Brussels.

January 1611. Master Winslade visits the College at Douai from England, on his way to Brussels. He returns several days later, and then returns to England.

Conclusion

*'[He is ...] a well-born gentleman, pensioned by order of the King, he is loyal and has endured much suffering.'*²⁵¹

So say all his friends: William Stanley, Hugh Owen and Father William Holt, who together assessed Spain's English pensioners for the King and summarised Winslade's service and qualities. Here then, Coke's traitor finally emerges as a loyal subject of Spain, assessed as such by those who knew him and could have struck him from the pension list had he fallen out of favour or not worked for the cause.

The object of this research has been to explore the life of Tristram Winslade in the hope of shedding some light upon the nexus of two theories about Cornwall during the Elizabethan Reformation: Mark Stoye's theory that Cornwall exhibited a 150-year period of rebellion, which encompassed the entirety of the Elizabethan era, and the notion posited by A. L. Rowse and others, that by the 1570s the Catholics of Cornwall had given in to the wisdom and innate 'rightness' of the Protestant Reformation and were no longer a danger to its progress or to Queen Elizabeth. No one, it seemed, had bothered to ask questions around matters of revenge or retribution that might have been expected from those who had lost everything as a result of the Prayer Book Rebellion. Rather, the consumer of history is expected to believe that these families really had been 'pacified'; that they either simply decided to behave themselves or gradually wilted beneath the pressure of increasingly harsh recusancy fines. There is no doubt that for the vast majority of common Cornish people, the road to religious reform followed one of these paths, with resistance limited perhaps to attending secret masses when they were available. The story of Tristram Winslade, however, shows us that not all was as it seemed. Under the cover of the security surrounding Lanherne, Sir John Arundell was cultivating a garden of dreams in which obedient, loyal and committed young men were the saplings trained to bend to his will and ultimately bring to fruition the invasion that would re-Catholicise England or, if not England, then Cornwall. Tristram

²⁵¹ Albert J. Loomie. "A Census of the King's Pensioners, attached to the Regiment, 1587-1603", in *Spanish Elizabethans*. 263. Thomas M. McCoog tells us that Owen, Stanley and Holt carried out the review of pensions and that Holt and Persons 'controlled the purse strings': *The Society of Jesus*, 345.

Winslade was not alone in the enterprise, but through an admixture of careful archiving and amazing luck, he has emerged from this corner of history as something of a standard-bearer.

When the research began, I had before me two primary sources: Winslade's 1595 document, in which he endeavoured to persuade King Philip II of Spain that the south-west of England would support a Catholic invasion that landed in Cornwall, and the transcript of his statement under interrogation in the Tower of London in 1588. In both documents he identified himself as Tristram Winslade, the son of William Winslade; it was this certainty that gave rigour to my exploration of Tristram's life, firstly as a legacy of the tragedy that befell his family as a consequence of the 1549 Prayer Book Rebellion, and secondly to examine how English historiography has, over 400 years, maintained the myth that after the death of

William, the Winslades became extinct. Perhaps not surprisingly, having found Tristram Winslade among the servants at Lanherne, it was not long until I was able to answer the question that had started the whole thing: what had happened to the children of the rebel leader, Humphrey Arundell? It was hardly surprising to find all of them at Lanherne. They were all rebels' children, and would live their lives as such.

By and large, the most instructive detail about Tristram Winslade's life has not come from those writing about English or even Cornish history; in fact, it can be argued that these histories have been almost wilful in the way they have tried to air-brush him from existence.²⁵² Rather, what I have gleaned has come from two broad categories of material. The first are the archival documents, housed in the United Kingdom, that have been, in the past, either cherry-picked for details that support a certain narrative or not been examined at all.²⁵³ The second group comprises the works and footnotes of historians working on the 'wrong' side of history and exploring the Catholic, Spanish and Vatican records which are often only mined by people interested in privileging the story of the Counter-Reformation. I acknowledge here that further exploration of European archives, particularly of the Estates

²⁵² During the research process, the author undertook an analysis of the historiography of Tristram Winslade. This was presented at the Historical Novel Society of Australia conference in Melbourne, 2017. See: Cheryl Hayden. 'Knit Two, Drop Four: Finding lost heroes in the holes of history's knitting', *Backstory Journal* 4, Melbourne, Australia] 2017. <http://www.backstoryjournal.com.au/2017/12/06/knit-two-drop-four-finding-lost-heroes-holes-historys-knitting/>

²⁵³ An exception to this general rule is John Chynoweth, whose book *Tudor Cornwall* includes considerable detail regarding Winslade's genealogy and certain of his and his family's legal battles.

General, may shed further light on Tristram Winslade's life. However I submit that as this research is a creative endeavour, based on historical fact, it is not necessary to discover every possible fact, particularly when it is never possible to be certain that one has found all there is to be found.²⁵⁴ Rather, in setting out to privilege a life lived on the wrong side of history, I have found more information about Winslade and his family than I ever thought possible. Some of it was revealed for the first time as I transcribed Elizabethan handwriting to discover what people had said about the family during court hearings. As my inexpert eye unpicked legal documents word by word, the sentences revealed, for example, that Tristram had at least two brothers; that when his parents married they had seriously displeased his grandfather; that he may have had descendants who were not only shipwrights but related by marriage to the navigator George Waymouth. Other works, such as Loomie's research into the Englishmen working for the Spanish in Brussels, revealed that by 1597 he had gained a certificate of residency and may have been 'close to the Archduke'.²⁵⁵

For creative purposes, such bits and pieces have formed the tapestry of Tristram Winslade's life. They have given him friends, foes, plenty, poverty, hope and despair. Through his sixteenth century eyes, the world of Catholic Europe is revealed as he tramps his way through foreign lands, where temptation might be served up, but where his quest is never far from his mind. Perhaps the most frustratingly difficult aspect of his life to be certain about is the nature of the agreement made between William Winslade and Sir John Arundell when Tristram was just a child. Here, despite a careful analysis of chronology, I remain unsure whether William gave his heir to the Spanish cause during the 1550s, or whether the nature of his service changed with religious politics of the day and Sir John Arundell's agenda.

While all of this detail and conjecture is fodder for a novel, from the historical detail we can now confidently claim that in the years following the Prayer Book Rebellion, not everything in Cornwall was as 'pacified' as historians have thus far believed. And so when we revisit Mark Stoye's theory, we can now state that there is indeed evidence to support the argument that Cornish resistance to the Reformation had continued well into Elizabeth's

²⁵⁴ Paul Arblaster. "Recusant Archives in the Low Countries", British Academy Conference: *Recusant Archives and Remains from the Three Kingdoms* (2004). Thanks also to Professor Geoffrey Parker.

²⁵⁵ Albert J. Loomie. *Spanish Elizabethans*. 263.

reign, peaking firstly during the 1570s, when we find Tristram actively involved in early invasion plans, and then in the mid-1590s, firstly when the Cornish people failed to resist a Spanish incursion in Mounts Bay and then in the detail of Winslade's invasion plan. There is also evidence to suggest, particularly in terms of the earlier Welsh invasion plans, that an element of ethnically-based hostility might have been extant, in this instance being expressed in the context of a religion that had its roots in an ancient Celtic form of Catholicism that, in Cornwall and Wales, had preceded that coming from Rome.

In summary, I believe we can say that Winslade's life is the dramatic personification of the on-going struggle that continued within a sector of Cornish society during the second half of the sixteenth century.

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Tristram Winslade: an Elizabethan Catholic in Exile

Acts of Faith

By

Cheryl Hayden

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“Official history,” the colonel said with a bitter smile, “is written by the victors. According to official history, men like me don’t exist.”

Umberto Eco, *Foucault’s Pendulum*

London: Vintage, 2001. 123

Part I

Barcelona, 1587

They sit him on a hard chair in a room that stinks. Candlelight casts moving shadows upon the granite walls; picks out chains, manacles and ropes.

Before him sit three inquisitors whose bench is upon an elevated platform: two black-cloaked Dominican friars and a well-fed Inquisitor with arched eyebrows and womanly lips. Adjacent to their bench, at floor level, a scribe positions his pens and inks and straightens a pile of parchment. He glances at the Inquisitor, who beckons him. There is a muttered conference before the scribe turns and speaks in halting English.

‘Capitano Vinslade, do you speak Spanish?’

‘Very little Spanish, Sir.’ Tristram Winslade’s heart is in his throat. He can barely speak at all. ‘Some Latin,’ he adds. He is, after all, a nobleman.

The inquisitors mumble to each other, then to the scribe, who is then ordered from the room. The silence is unnerving and he can only assume an interpreter has been sent for. For thirty minutes he damns his misfortune. Less than two hours ago, he had stepped ashore, relieved at having escaped from Naples with his balls intact. Damn his fair English skin. Damn his faltering Spanish and his English speech. Damn these swooping Dominicans. With manacled hands, he crosses himself. Closes his eyes and prays. Mother Mary, full of grace. For mercy’s sake, get me out of here. Our Father, who art in Heaven. How could you let this happen? His lips move. They keep moving. How will they see this? As the prayer that it is, or as the quivering of a heretic whose soul is truly damned? They will see what they want to see. Everyone sees what they want.

There is a shuffle of feet and he opens his eyes to see a monk place a stool at the scribe's table and cast a glance at the prisoner that suggests he has grown horns. And then it begins, and Tristram is surprised when the hostile monk speaks to him in English. Looks, in fact, English. Tristram Winslade feels a squirming in his vitals. Can this man be trusted to deliver a true interpretation?

'Capitano, you appear here before the Inquisition of Spain by word of His Majesty King Philip II and the Holy Office of Rome. There is, as yet, no charge against you. However, as you are English and from a nation of heretics it is our duty before God to examine you. Please recite the *Pater Noster* and the *Ave*, and then please explain to us why you are in Spain and why we should not further examine you for evidence of heresy.'

Already, Tristram's throat has dried up. He nods. Tries to force saliva into his mouth. The Lord's Prayer. He has said it every day of his life. The corner of the black tablecloth which is draped over the edge of the Inquisition bench is embroidered in gold. It gives him something to look at, a crutch upon which to steady himself.

'*Pater noster, qui es in caelis, sanctificetur nomen tuum...*' He closes his eyes and commits himself to the certainty of ingrained memory, one prayer and then another. No one can ever accuse him of not knowing. '*... Sancta Maria, Mater Dei, ora pro nobis peccatoribus, nunc, et in hora mortis nostrae. Amen.*' He opens his eyes and focuses on the three men whose hands hold his life and can crush it at will. There is nothing to be gained by looking at the interpreter, and yet his eyes cannot help but watch the mouth from which English emerges. As though he cannot trust his ears.

'And now, please say your name, your father and your country.'

His head begins to throb. 'My name is Tristram Winslade. My father was William Winslade. I was born in Devon, in England.'

The Inquisitor glances at the interpreter and they talk quickly in a foreign tongue. It is not Spanish. Not even Latin. He cannot catch a word. Then, the interpreter speaks.

‘And now, please tell us why it is we find you in Barcelona.’

‘I am from a good and faithful Catholic family. My grandfather was executed by the heretic King of England in 1550 for his rebellion against the heretic prayer book. I am an officer in the army of your good King Philip and am here to further his cause.’

The Inquisitor inhales loudly and indicates to the monk, who nods and listens. Then, as the Inquisitor and the friars engage in a bout of whispering, the monk relays the message.

‘*Capitano*. Sir, the Grand Inquisitor has indicated that he must confer with his colleagues. He wishes you to know that here in Catalonia, we are more interested in your soul than in your service to the King of Spain.’

The Inquisitor hammers on the bench and addresses the monk, who nods – or it might be a bow – before turning his gaze upon Tristram.

‘In order to expedite matters,’ says the monk, ‘we shall proceed now with our first interview. The transcription of this interview will be sent with our correspondence to the Supremo, who will request confirmation from the King of the claims you make.’ He signals to a court functionary and receives a beaker and a jug of water. Tristram looks at it and tries to produce some saliva. ‘If you are not who you say you are, then you shall face the rigours of our Inquisition. Is there anything further you wish to say?’

He remembers to face the Inquisitor. ‘No, Your Grace.’

‘Please stand and take the oath.’

Tristram stands and swears to tell the truth. Then he is instructed to sit again. He sits. He would rather lie down. He wishes they would release his hands.

‘Please now state your name, age, occupation and place of residence.’

He feels the pressure of the chair against his thigh. The dank, cold air is like an ague upon his skin and he feels the hairs on the back of his neck rise. He needs to piss and yet craves water.

‘My name is Tristram Winslade. I am thirty-six years of age, or thereabouts. I am an unattached officer – *entretenido* – in the army of King Philip II of Spain. I have no regiment and no permanent place of residence.’

‘Where was your last place of residence?’

‘Until this week I was a lodger in the household of Antonius Marino in Naples. Father Bartelotti at the church of San Domenica Maggiore can vouch for me.’

There is a lengthy pause while the interpreter speaks and the scribe’s pen scratches.

‘Why were you in Naples?’

‘Sent on orders in Brussels to prepare volunteers for the King’s great plan. I taught them the English they will need upon the invasion.’

‘Very well. Now, please, if you will, say to us your genealogy, starting with your father’s family.’

Ottery St Mary, Devon, 1556.

‘Recite your genealogy,’ orders his father.

He feels the dry warmth of his father's hand cover his small one. Feels the lumpy stuffing inside the seat of the chair as, step by step, chair by chair, he traverses the length of the feasting table, reading from the parchment laid upon it. He is six years old. Perhaps seven. His mother is standing in the doorway. Her hands, as always, are clasped together as though ready for prayer, a remnant of her life at the abbey. Her chin, though, sits upon the point of her fingers and she smiles at him. She nods.

From high upon the chair, the dining hall looks different. He can nearly touch the low black beams and can see the top of the chest where his grandmother's fine platters are stacked. There are silver spoons and goblets in the cupboards and linen table cloths in the drawers, this much he knows, but he has never seen the embroidered runner before, nor the carved base of the iron-work candlesticks.

'Father, I want to be tall, like you,' he says. 'When I'm finished, will you show me what is carved into the candlesticks?'

William Winslade sighs impatiently. 'This is more important than candlesticks,' he says, and in his tone there is a warning. 'Start with yourself.'

Tristram, of course, knows his own name. He knows his father's name. He knows his blessed grandfather's name, too.

'Tristram Winslade,' he says, reading his name at the bottom of the tree. 'William Winslade. John Winslade, who married Jane Trelawny.' He takes a step to the next chair and obeys his father when asked to repeat the names he has just read before trying the next.

'Who is next?'

The boy sees another Jane and the H is for...

'Jane Holland,' he says. 'She was my great-grandmother.'

'Good. Continue.'

'Sir Robert Holland. Sir John Holland.'

'Repeat the Hollands.'

He does. Jane. Robert. John. What is notable about Robert? Middle one a bastard. Good. Continue. He steps to the next chair and when he looks at the tree, sees that it now has two branches. The branch closest to him has the same name as the queen.

'Elizabeth.'

Elizabeth who? Plantagenet. It is a name he knows. He is a Plantagenet. He has heard this from his father, over and over, from the time he came home from Italy. And John of Gaunt.

'Really, it is Ghent,' says his father. 'He was from Ghent. We say Gaunt. Continue.'

Tristram steps to the next chair and it wobbles beneath him on uneven flags. He knows the rest, for it is just like counting backwards. King Edward the Third. King Edward the Second. King Edward the First. He is cocky and it comes out as a nursery song.

'What are you?' his father asks.

'I am a Plantagenet.'

A firm hand upon his shoulder breaks the reverie.

'Señor –'

He opens his eyes upon subterranean Barcelona and his heart misses a beat. He tries to speak, but his throat will not work. What has he said? Has he done anything more than deliver an incoherent ramble? He trembles as he recalls... The wheel, the chains...

'Señor –' It is the interpreter.

He switches his gaze.

'Señor, you have told us you are in the service of His Majesty, King Philip II of Spain. Do you wish to confirm this under oath, or confess now to having told a lie?'

'I confirm it – .' He stops. Turns to address the inquisitors. *'I confirm it. My papers will provide the proof you require. My grandfather died a traitor's death in England for our religion and my father chose to serve the Emperor Charles in Siena rather than live amid the heretics in our homeland. Upon my coming of age, I was indentured to your King Philip. I signed the papers in front of his Ambassador to England. Sir Francis Englefield is an Englishman employed in your King's palace in Madrid. He will confirm my allegiance, my religion and my dedication to the service of your King and to the Holy Father.'*

He watches their faces as the interpreter repeats his response. Will he do it accurately? How can he possibly know when they are speaking – what is it are they speaking? What strange tongue? He watches for their reaction. Both friars lean in towards their superior. There are murmurings. All are frowning. One of them catches his questing gaze. He lowers his eyes. Crosses himself and says a prayer. It is all a game. Cat and mouse. They will do what they will. That is what he fears most. That they can and will do with him whatever they please. A cold wave washes over him. He is clammy with fear. It is bad enough that his grandfather was hanged, drawn and quartered for being Catholic. What an irony if the grandson should be fed to the flames of Spain. Oh, for the love of God, stay calm. There is no reason to fear. And yet just being here is reason to fear. He cannot help it.

Then, suddenly, everyone stands. He stands with them.

Prayers are said.

'*Señor*, it is decreed that you shall remain here as our guest. We have already sequestered your possessions and will need to examine them. We shall retain them until you are either released or relaxed to the secular body. For now, no further sequestration will be required and we shall not exact payment for lodgings. If you are who you say you are, then His Majesty will not thank us for abusing a loyal subject.'

The scribe, still scribbling, pays no attention, but the interpreter leaves. Then, the young friar who brought him from the ship is beside him. He holds Tristram steady and releases his hands from their bindings.

'All will be well,' the friar says, in English. He pours wine into a goblet. 'Drink,' he says.

Tristram pours the wine down his gullet. Feels the liquid penetrate his body and caress his tired mind.

'I am Brother Bernat,' the friar continues. 'I take you to your cell. It is my pleasure to take care of you, while you here.'

For a moment, Tristram thinks this is some allusion to torture and stares at the friar in terror.

'I bring food,' Brother Bernat explains. 'And more wine.'

'*Gracias*,' Tristram says. 'You are kind. Your English is good.' He indicates the interpreter's place on the other side of the room. 'Why –'

'Why I not take part? No Spanish. Just Catalan and bit of English. So, no good for Holy Inquisition. I make arrests. So be it.'

'But they were speaking Catalan, yes?'

'Yes. But also must have Spanish. Me – no Spanish.'

He follows Brother Bernat into a long, vaulted corridor, into which the only available light comes from high grilled windows. Then, up some stairs until they reach ground level, where the light is almost blinding. They walk along another corridor, past a series of closed doors. Then they stop.

'Here, your cell,' Brother Bernat says.

Tristram Winslade stands in the doorway. It is dry. That is the first thing he notes. And the palliase has two blankets folded on it. Very civilized. In the corner, under the window, is a table and chair. There are candles and flints. There is even a small fireplace. Perhaps they believe him. Perhaps they are mindful of having a loyal Catholic Englishman – perhaps even a cousin of their King – in their midst. He does not know. He cannot think. He wants nothing more than sleep.

A small supper of bread, cheese and wine is delivered and, as he eats, he gazes through the bars of his windows at the long shadows falling over the gardens. He wonders about the cells below. Who is in the dungeon? Then the cathedral bells toll for evensong and he kneels, like a child at bedtime, and prays to his Lord God. *I am your servant, your lamb. Please, God, deliver me unto my earthly king so that I might serve you.* He lies down and closes his eyes. Thoughts swim. Colour chases colour. Echo chases echo.

A portrait is there before his eyes. The portrait from Winslade Barton they rescued from the barn. Richard Wydeslade. He sees him now, in his mind's eye, as though he had known him. But this man, with his loose black curls and eyes like the summer sky, is from the past. A hundred years ago, even more. A man of noble countenance wearing the lace collar with the double-S of the silver spur forged upon it. The spurs are gently held in his right hand, resting upon his thigh. Might they still be warm from King Edward IV's regal touch? And what about that cool gaze? What

did he see? Was it the future? Or was he reliving the past, and the glory of his Yorkist bravery amid the Lancastrian world of Devonshire?

North-west Devon, October 1459

Hooves thud through the forest, trampling the damp leaf-fall, as the riders gallop in single file. Richard Wydeslade has watched from Hartland Point as John Dynham landed the Yorkist earls. Now, with twenty fresh and armed men, he leads them through the woods at the base of Melbury Hill, dodging low slung branches, splashing across shallow rills and lunging up muddy banks. At the Barton, they stop to rest. A future prince beneath his roof, treachery underfoot, as Marina Wydeslade supervises the provision of ale, bread and cheese. She is a Cornish woman of fine and gentle birth, heiress to her father's wealth whenever he might deign to depart the earthly world. No stranger to men of import, but nervous of these men and the trouble they might bring. Relieved when they depart, yet praying for their cause. Not a word is spoken. The servants have no idea who these visitors are. Despite the King's madness, he has spies everywhere.

On they press, protected by the coming night, in the wake of scouts sent two hours before. Can they be trusted, these scouts? Richard must have wondered. He must have feared betrayal. Eastward, then south, across the breadth of Devonshire. This escapade is a risky venture and no one knows how it might end.

Honour and treachery. Two sides of one coin. Flip the coin. It spins, it turns. It turns upon loyalty and loose lips, upon the well-timed drawing of longbow, upon a squall of rain, a muddy field, a vital act of God, a glint of sunlight upon armour. The coin, it spins and turns. And what, after everything has been thrown at it, finally falls to earth? An act of exquisite bravery to save the kingdom from evil, or an act of treachery that the victors believe did threaten some exquisite state of being?

Richard Wydeslade does not know. His coin is in the air. And as it spins, they ride and ride, through the dark Devon night. Foxes and weasels and badgers might start and scurry, but no man is out to challenge this thunderous mission, for they know not what it is. Finally, the smell of salt rises on the cold misty air above the Exe, and the iron gates of Nutwell open before them. Rush lights, lanterns, hot water and firmly shut doors. Blessed Wydeslade. Blessed Dynham. Blessed Earls of March, Warwick and Salisbury. While Devonshire has slept, God has delivered them safely, and after a day of rest there will be a ship at the quayside, made ready for Calais. Honour or treachery? Every one of them knows it is treachery and each of them understands there is no choice.

When Richard Wydeslade tossed his coin, it spun and tumbled, glinted and gleamed. It landed in the soft green fields of a golden new realm and royal gratitude. When John Winslade tossed a coin, he lost his fortune. Tristram Winslade has tossed his coin. It is still spinning.

They take him for walks in the quadrangle and for fireside conversations. They serve good food and strong liquor. That every pilgrims' hostel should provide such bountiful fare. Yet, every night he returns to his cell, his brain blazing with doubt and terror. He has been at Rheims. He has learned all the steadying tricks and exercises that should have garnered a faultless faith. Nothing comes. His fear, he tells himself, is shameful. And yet, how could it be that Dr Allen's college had failed to consider the possibility that an English adherent to the true faith might find himself before the Spanish Inquisition? And so, in the stillness of night, he comforts himself with the truth: he is an officer in the service of the King of Spain, and therefore a first-class traitor to England. Likewise, he is a true and faithful Catholic, and therefore a friend of the Inquisition. There is no other truth. There is no other story. There is no danger of even a *prima facie* case against him. His arrest was not

triggered by some anonymous enemy. The Dominican friars had been scrounging at the docks and found an Englishman. Are they now so determined to find guilt that they are trying to melt his armour with bonhomie?

But they cannot melt his armour for it has been forged in the furnace of truth. There is nothing to fear. And yet, he knows they will try everything in order to prove... And on it goes, through the night, around and around in his head. The endless burrowing into his heart, his mind, his soul, for the unholy mind, the rampant heretic.

Again, he finds himself back in that room. The manacles have been moved. He stares at the space they once occupied and feels his heart begin to stammer.

What does he know of Protestants, atheists, Lutherans, Calvinists? Does he know any Jews? Has he ever consorted with gypsies? His heart misses a beat. What do they know? They cannot know. He recovers. Lets loose with a diatribe about the Court of Queen Elizabeth and her land of no religion. The blasted earls of Bedford, whichever of them has the title now, and Sir Richard Grenville, two of the most noxious Protestants in the south-west. Not to mention Drake and his coterie of pirates. Tristram Winslade is on comfortable terrain. He could go on forever.

Every day, he is taken to a chapel within the palace where opulence reminds him of Spain's glory, its power over him. Twice, on fine afternoons, Brother Bernat brings a court official and the interpreter and they take him out into a courtyard. Here, they stroll on carefully scythed lawns, listen to the birds and watch the carp in the fishpond. This official is not interested in the welfare of Tristram's soul or the accuracy of the ancestry he has given them. He wants information. *Look at this list*. It is written in Latin. *Do you know this man? Do you know his family?* This one, he tells them, is from a good family from Dorset. He has been a faithful servant to Lady

Arundell, and through her auspice has come to the aid of the Spanish king. This one, likewise. A good and faithful Catholic. But this one... This one... Tristram Winslade does not know him. He could be anyone. Anything. What can he say? Is the man here, in Barcelona? In a cell? Is he elsewhere in the empire? He shakes his head. The moonless night is as still as death. Are they playing a game with him? His eyes are sinking into his head.

Again, they take him to the Inquisition chamber. This time, an army officer is in attendance. How much ammunition is stored at Pendennis Castle? What does he know about the Killigrews? What about Sir William Courtenay – does he know him? Sir Robert Denys, in Exeter – does he know him? Sir Francis Godolphin – what is he doing on the Scilly Islands?

Every night, he kneels beside his palliase, rosary clasped in two hands and brought close to his lips. He whispers prayers over the beads, tamps down the feverish rantings of a worried mind. On and on, until his mind has left Barcelona and has returned, somehow, to his childhood, to a place of calm and safety; to where even the anger of William Winslade has been swept away with his absence. For while his father is raging around the garrison outside Siena, Tristram is sitting upon his mother's knee, learning to sing a lullaby, listening to her stories. Until one night...

Ottery St Mary, Devon, 1553

It is the week of All Souls. His grandfather has made him a rocking horse named Esquire, a fine beast carved from oak with a silver-grey mane and tail and a saddle and bridle of polished leather. And Sir Thomas Denys has given him a pair of silver spurs. Tristram is three years old, or thereabouts, and hangs onto the mane while his mother smacks the horse's rump and makes it giddy-up, and he giggles with delight. The doorway suddenly darkens with the

shapes of men. Into the hall they come, wearing travelling cloaks and heavy boots. Four of them. And suddenly the only sound is his little shriek of terror, for his grandparents are standing stiff and silent. Then, the tallest man removes his felt cap, and stares down at the child. Suddenly, he understands that this man is his father. William Winslade has come home. He lifts his son from the horse's back and holds him high for everyone to see.

'And are you Tristram, then?' he says, and turns to his wife. 'I see little likeness to the Winslades.'

'My lord. Welcome home. Daily we have prayed for your safe return.' She bows to her husband, who looks again at his son. 'Your son, Sir, is like you in many ways.' She bows then to the older man. 'Sir Thomas, you and Gabriel are both welcome, and John Prideaux.'

Tristram is placed again on the floor, and fetches his wooden swords for Gabriel Denys. But Gabriel shakes his head.

'Sorry, young Tris,' he says. 'Not today.' But he takes the child's hand and leads him into the hall, where everyone stands around the great table. A map is unrolled and its corners are anchored by candlesticks and pewter cups. Gabriel finds a chair and sits the boy upon his lap from where he watches his new-found father, who laughs and pours wine for his friends. He watches and watches. He is mesmerised by his father's blue-sky eyes, for they burn with a strange cold fire. He listens to the men talking. They are talking about a man called Wyatt and their beloved Queen Mary. He watches old Sir Thomas Denys's hand as it sweeps across the map. He hears words like rivers and ports. Castles and keeps. He watches his father, and as he watches, he retreats into the warm safety that comes with Gabriel Denys.

Behind his eyes, even now, is the memory of a map. The map that would recreate Wessex, and tear it from the clutches of a heretic Queen.

Again, he is called to the room of chains and manacles. The scribe and interpreter are already in place and everyone stands as the Inquisitor and his friars enter the room. A jolt of fear hits him. They waste no time. He takes the oath and crosses himself.

The questions begin and he looks at the interpreter.

‘You told us that our King Philip returned your father’s lands to him. Please explain how this happened. Why did the Queen not do it herself?’

He nods respectfully to the Inquisitor. He was eight years old when it happened. How can he be sure he has the story right?

‘Your Grace, I only know what my father told me, and later, what Gabriel Denys told me. It is this: following Wyatt’s rebellion, Queen Mary was worried about loyalty among certain influential and wealthy landowners in Devonshire – by that I mean the heretics who were feigning loyalty to her. She was concerned that by returning my grandfather’s land to my father, she would enrage them. However, when her husband, your king, asked her to do it, she obeyed him. And for good reason, as they both knew my father to be true and loyal.’

He listens as the story is retold in Spanish. The Inquisitor confers with the friars and the next question is on its way.

‘And in exchange for this, what did your father offer our King?’

‘He promised his first-born son.’

‘And that would be you.’

‘Yes, Your Grace.’

‘And when was this pledge made?’

‘I do not know, Your Grace. I was not told during the Queen Mary’s reign. My parents informed me after Elizabeth snatched the throne.’

It is a short session. The Inquisitor rises; everyone rises.

His father's deception swims around in his head in a vile yellow haze.

Winslade Barton, Devon, 1558

He is eight years old; too old, really, to be jolting around on his father's shoulders and gripping his curly hair, as he runs through the thinning woodland and down a gentle grassy slope and across a stream. Then, up the other side, and William Winslade stands, catching his breath and staring to the south. Away in the distance, Dartmoor rises like an up-turned pewter platter.

'One day, Tristram, it will be yours. All the fields, the sheep, the cows, the tenants. All of them will belong to you.'

From high on his father's shoulders, Tristram surveys his fortune. The fields for scything, the crops for reaping, the cows for milking and sheep for clipping. He hears the happiness of birdsong and the hum of myriad insects. It is high summer and the world is gold and green.

'I'm told there are fish ponds, too. Big ones,' William says. 'We will go walking later and have a look at them.'

They turn from the splendid vista of west Devon and follow a narrow path through a woodland and, so, to the Barton.

'Well, what is this? Look, Tris,' his father says. 'What do you see?'

Tristram ducks his head to avoid low-slung branches and when he looks up, sees a house. 'Father, let me down now, please. Whose house is this?'

William crouches and his son leap-frogs over his head.

'Think, Tristram. Have I not just told you that all of this will one day be yours? Have you not noticed that we have brought Skipper with us, and a cart full of all our things? Did we not kiss your grandparents and say goodbye?'

Tristram's eyes are wide. He has assumed they are visiting. Always, in summer, they go visiting. The Denyses, the Bassetts, the Arundells. Always visiting. But not this time. He has heard the talk, all about reclaiming the Barton. He knows his father has been busy with Sir Thomas. He knows they have seen the Queen. He has seen maps and charts spread out upon large tables. He knows his mother has been excited and happy. But he has also felt the worry and the doubt and sometimes been afraid. His father is often angry. Tristram worries about sudden happiness. It might vanish. It might just go.

'Is it the one? Is it the Barton?'

He has been expecting something grand. Something like Holcomb, where Sir Thomas lives. Or even Orleigh Court, where Gabriel visits with his cousins. Tristram Winslade looks for spires and gargoyles, creeping ivy. He wants a knight's castle or a fortress, such as the one behind St Barbara in his mother's Book of Hours. He dare not say such a thing to his father. He only knows that the plain grey farmhouse, sitting comfortably in its patch of ground, is unremarkable. He no longer understands his parents' excitement and watches as his mother approaches. She is walking sedately down the drive, tall and glowing, leading her horse, as though she has walked this path every day of her life. As though the bluebells in the forest have graced her hall for years. As though she has never uttered a vow of poverty and chastity and never been hungry. She drops the reins and almost runs to her husband.

'It is God's will,' she says, and sobs into his shoulder and feels a kiss upon her head.

'We must also thank our Queen and the fact that she loves her Spanish husband.'

'It is God's will.'

William Winslade sets his jaw. 'Tell me, Jane. Did God smile to see my father on the butcher's block? Was that his will?'

'Soothe your anger, my love. This is a happy day.'

Tristram feels his heart shrink. Why will his mother never thank his father? She never says it. Not to anyone. She is obeyed by the servants and her children and she obeys her father and her husband and her God. It is all duty, and no one needs to be thanked.

'You are not Christ's bride any more, Jane. I am sorry for that.' There is an angry edge to William Winslade's voice. 'It has been nearly twenty years and you are mine now. Please try to remember that, if you will. Please try to remember that Sir Thomas is a very old man and has fought like a cat for us.'

She strokes his cheek. 'Let Tristram ring the bell,' she says softly.

The chain is just out of reach, so once again, his father lifts him so that he might ring the bell.

'Is Master Pollard still here?' Tristram asks. Suddenly, bell chain in hand, he is afraid.

And his father just laughs.

'No. The Pollards have no rights here and have gone. Come, let's see how well this bell works.'

He rings it. It is not the mellow tolling of a church bell, but rather a homely, happy, playful sound that echoes around the garden, and when the door opens it is Mistress Luke with an apron and floury hands.

'Fancy finding you here, Mistress Luke.' William Winslade steps inside, returns his son's feet to the floor and gazes around the room like a stranger.

'Welcome home, my lord.' The old retainer has tears in her eyes. She has been with the family for years, and this place is her home. Her memory is so vast, she remembers the day old William died. Back in the days when old King Henry still had some youth about him. *'Supper be nearly ready. Come and be sat by your fire.'* She makes a little curtsey and scuttles from the room, for William Winslade's gaze is captured by a faded patch above the fireplace. Tristram stares.

'Is something missing, father?'

William stands scorchingly close to the fire to reach up and touch the place. As he turns to look down at his heir, Tristram sees his anger.

'I believe so. Mistress Luke might remember. We will ask her. But you must never forget that Winslade Barton will be yours and you must promise to cherish it.' He pauses. *'You are old enough to make a promise.'* It is more than an observation.

'I will, my lord father.'

'Good boy. Now take your brother upstairs. See if you can find your room.'

'Father?'

William Winslade, tired from the journey, cannot be bothered with any more questions.

'What is it, son?'

'Sir, what is cherish?'

William Winslade looks down upon his first-born son and watches the details of his pleading face blur. Before he can speak, Mistress Luke rushes in with Welsh cakes.

'By my troth, Master Tristram, what questions you ask! Have some pity for your father! Here, take one of these and get along with you. Go and see what might be upstairs. Take Daniel with you.'

Upstairs, at Winslade Barton, there are three large rooms with leaded windows bringing in the yellow morning light. Tristram adopts the habit of staring through the translucent glass at the outline of trees that mark the ups and downs of hill and vale, beyond which lie the village and the church. The church is friendly enough, although above the door is a carving that his mother says must surely be older than Christ himself, as it appears to be the devil's work. She crosses herself beneath it every Sunday.

The morning is cold but fine, so he kneels upon the window seat and pulls on the latch. As he pushes on the casement, the smells of fallen leaves and smoke tease his nose and, as he leans out to catch a glimpse of his father in the southern meadow, something brushes his side. The black ears of a cat appear before him as it places its paws upon the window ledge. It too, is looking out upon the world.

'Hello, cat,' he says. 'Where did you come from?'

He scratches between the cat's ears and hears the rumble of its purr, feels the muscles in its back respond with pleasure as it nudges him, as though asking for more. Then it flops onto the window seat and rolls over, legs wantonly splayed. Tristram Winslade passes gentle fingers through the fur of its belly, up to the chin, which he scratches. The light in its bright green eyes pulsates and flares, and the black slit widens as though it wants to stare into his soul.

'What's your name?' he asks. 'Do you live here?'

They have been here, at the Barton, for four months, and he has never seen this cat before. It is not a kitten, nor an old cat. It is a cat in the prime of its feline life, glossy, supple and lithe. It squirms and purrs, then rolls over again and jumps to the floor.

By the time Tristram turns to go after it, it has gone. Instead, his mother is at the door.

'Where did it go?' he asks.

'Where did what go?'

'The cat. A black one.'

But his mother frowns and shakes her head.

'I didn't see it, but we could do with a nice house cat. Bring it down if you find it. It can have some fish.' She holds out her hand. *'Come downstairs, Tris. Gabriel Denys has just ridden into the yard and Mistress Luke is making saffron cakes.'*

Oh, joy! After some talk – for Gabriel brings messages from Sir Thomas, who is abed with his old age – Gabriel will take Tristram fishing.

The Spanish sun is warm, and Brother Bernat finds a seat that is shaded by a cork tree.

'Do you long to return?'

'I do,' says Tristram.

'What is it like there?'

'It is green and grey. Cool and damp. Misty, sometimes. I remember very little of Winslade Barton. My fondest memories are of Lanherne. I went to live there when I was ten years old.'

'What is this place?'

'It is the home of the best Catholic family in Cornwall, which is the closest of the English counties to Spain. In the days of the true faith, Lanherne was a pilgrim's place, for those coming to Spain – to your Santiago de Compostela.'

Brother Bernat nods his approval. *'You liked it there?'*

'I found my friends there,' he says. 'I found my lord and master, and all I hold dear.'

'You found love?'

Did he? How often has he wondered? How often has he imagined?

Lanherne, Cornwall, 1560

He has scarcely made it inside, into the warmth of Lanherne, when Lady Anne takes him by the hand. And although he is ten years old and has not held his mother's hand for two years, he does not resist this woman. The rush-lights have shown him a kind smile and a look in her eyes that tells him she understands. She bids him kiss his parents goodnight, for he will see them in the morning. Then, upon a nod from his mother, he lets the woman lead him away. He has heard about the orphans at Lanherne – Humphrey Arundell's children. He wants to meet them, but will they want to meet him?

By the yellow light of her lantern they walk down the garden path and onto a narrow stone bridge, where his cheeks are touched by cold and watery duckpond air. Past the church, then into dense woodland, so dark that even the lantern-light falters over the tree roots. The pine trees are so black and so thick that the snow has failed to reach the ground, falling instead upon their massive low-hung branches. There are resin smells, the hooting of an owl and, in the distance, the sharp cry of a vixen. Butterflies fidget around inside him.

'Do you like walking out after dark, Tristram?' she asks.

'No,' he says. No child he knows has ever done it without being whipped. 'Not really.'

'Then you are a sensible boy. Sir John tells me I am foolish. But I love the stars and the moon. I love the cold damp air, even when it chills my bones. Even when I was a little girl

in Derbyshire, I would sneak outside sometimes in the middle of the night and then I'd get a spanking.'

'Will Sir John spank you when you go back?'

The Lady Anne laughs.

'No. Indeed he will not.' She places a hand upon his shoulder. *'Tristram, your new friends are gathered in the woods tonight, to remember their father. Their story is your story.'*

'How is that?'

She squeezes his hand.

'Arundells and Winslades. The same passion. The same quest. Same story. Always remember that.' She sniffs the air. *'Can you smell it?'*

He can. There is wood smoke on the air. And the sound of voices. They quicken their step and then, through a space in the trees, they see the sharp orange glow of a small fire. As though by arrangement, they stop.

'The boys are older than you, Tristram, but they will be your friends. Humphrey will teach you archery and swordsmanship, and show you how to handle a bird of prey. He has a kestrel. Richard – they call him Dickon – is our trumpeter. It is an important job. He also plays the harp and my bet is he will beat you at cards. Then there is Pippa. She is about your age, and will need a husband one day soon. Until then, she helps in the nursery. Come now. It's time to meet them.'

Tristram's ten-year-old heart does not think to lurch. So, Pippa will need a husband. Is he to go looking on her behalf? He can do that, he tells himself. He will find the best husband he can for Pippa Arundell, if Sir John asks him to. Now, he sees that they have stopped their fire-building to watch the approaching lantern. What do they see coming

towards them, out of the forest and into their clearing? A black-cloaked woman with a pale face, dark eyes and a small yellow lantern. And a boy. Round-eyed and unsure.

'So, you are Tristram Winslade,' a young man says. He might have been sixteen.

'Another one dumped upon the charity of Lanherne,' says the older one.

'I will have none of that, Master Humphrey,' says the Lady Anne. 'You are old enough to know better. Like you, Tristram is a nobleman. He is here to learn the ways of a courtly warrior.'

Tristram looks up at her. Lady Anne Arundell. She stands there like a prophetess, the firelight casting strange upward shadows over her cloak and face, making hollows of her eyes.

Then the girl, Pippa who will need a husband, speaks.

'We are the Children of Martyrs,' she says. 'And we gather on the twenty-seventh day of January every year to remember them.'

She makes it sound like game played at Christmas. But Tristram knows the story. Knows the truth of it. He finds his voice.

'Is that your real name? Children of Martyrs? How many of you are there?'

'Just we three. We don't want anyone else.'

'But you only have one martyr,' he says. He sees the eldest flush with anger. 'If you could count me and my grandfather as among your ranks, then we have four of us and two martyrs.'

There is a small silence as his offer is absorbed.

'Hear, hear,' says the younger of the brothers. 'I vote for Tristram. We should admit him to our elite group.' He smiles at Tristram and extends a hand. 'I am Richard Arundell. I like to be called Dickon, like the last King Richard.'

The elder of the two observes the camaraderie being invited without his authority. He says, 'Are you any good at hawking?'

Tristram is thinking, they are Yorkists. True Plantagenets. He says, 'Are you any good at fishing?'

Pippa giggles.

'I will leave you to talk civilly, Master Humphrey,' says the Lady Anne. 'When the moon rises above the trees, you must come home. There will be soup and bread for you.'

She leaves and they gather closer to the fire. Wrapped in furs and cloaks, they ask Tristram about his home, about his father and mother. For a while, they tell stories. But the cold deepens, seeps into their bones, and the moon is now above the trees. Pippa uses a twig to light her lantern and Dickon has a rushlight. They make their way home, tripping over tree roots and laughing. In the hall, there is a small table set up in a far corner at the edge of the hearth. Humphrey joins the men playing chess, but Tristram sits with Dickon and Pippa to eat their supper. Their cheeks are flushed, their eyes are bright. Pippa's, he sees, are sparkling.

Then, it is time for prayers and bed. Tristram is given a bed in a dormitory at the top of the house. Above it, on the wall, is a simple wooden crucifix and beside it is a small cupboard for his things. Upon this, is a candlestick. The opposite wall features a row of windows from which they look down upon the moonlit courtyard, where braziers burn and shadows dance.

Tristram's bed is next to Dickon's, and this makes him happy. Together, they open a parcel his mother has left for him. Inside he finds a new leather pouch containing his favourite pens, a folio of parchment, a bright new rosary and a gold crucifix. It looks very old.

'You should put it on,' says Dickon, and so he does. 'Who did it belong to?'

Tristram is not sure. He thinks, perhaps, his poor lost grandfather. John Winslade. But there is also something wrapped in Holland.

'I know what this is,' he tells Dickon. 'It is my grandmother's Book of Hours. At least, it has come from her – from my Grand-dame Babington.' He turns the pages, seeking her out; his Lady of the Woodland. For on one of the pages, a long-lost ancestor has written her name. Alys du Bois. It is written beneath a picture of Saint Agnes, coming into the sunlight from the deepest of black forests with a lamb in her arms. And Alys has written Alys du Bois avec l'agneau perdu. Agnus Dei. And he remembers the woman he saw in the forest at Tawton. Who was she?

'No one may touch it without my permission. Promise me you won't let anyone. Especially not Humphrey.'

'My brother is not a bad person,' Dickon says. 'He is just angry.'

'Why?'

Dickon turns the pages and candlelight flickers over the gold and green, vermillion and crushed lapis lazuli.

'The same reason your father is angry, Tris,' he says. 'Anger is the reason we're all here. One day, you'll understand.'

In Barcelona, the friars are collecting books. The worst sort are discovered at the port, hidden in the false bottoms of trunks. They also turn up in the houses of Frenchmen, in bookshops, in wagons and the back rooms of printeries. Among their collection is a cache of English books. A rare and exciting find. Brother Bernat takes him to the library where they have been piled in the reading room.

'Anglès,' Brother Bernat tells him. 'But good Catholic or heretic? You help.'

Tristram Winslade feels himself recoil. How much longer will they keep him? What are they playing at? He is a guest. A polite word for prisoner. They can do what they wish. So far all has been well. Is this a step too far?

He turns the morocco cover of a thick edition and is surprised when his heart leaps. His own language! The sight of it – of something he can read – is enough to bring tears. He will do this task. He will be God's censor if that is what they wish.

For hours he scours, devours. Ancient histories, saints' lives, accounts of wars and battles. It is a treasure of pleasure, he thinks. No one will ever believe this. He marks certain pages with strips of vellum and piles up the books for the monks to take away. At the end of the fourth day, at dusk, he is taken outside of the palace. Like a visitor from another world, he stands with the friars at the top of the stairs that lead down to the King's Plaza, where a crowd has gathered. Without warning, his stomach clenches. A wash of terror engulfs him. Someone is to be burned! But no. All he sees is a pile of books. The great heap of evil writings to which he has contributed.

Suddenly, without ceremony, it is lit and the people of Barcelona clap and cheer. The blaze is furious and bright, and illuminates the great façade of the cathedral. As he gazes at it, he hears Brother Bernat make a joke in the Catalan language. He catches the word for Spain, but understands only the tone and the laughter of the other friars. It is as if the Holy Inquisition in Catalonia is playing a game with a tyrannical overlord. They are all in on it. Perhaps even the Inquisitor himself. The notion settles uneasily. How long will they keep him? Where is Sir Francis Englefield's reply? Where is the King's confirmation of all he has told them? Soon, the books are nothing but a pile of ash and there is nothing more to see. The townsfolk drift away with the smoke.

'Your home, *Señor*,' says Brother Bernat, as the doors close behind them and the bolts are shot home. 'This place Lanherne. Tell me more, if you please. What you do there?'

Together, they walk the now familiar corridors of the palace, retracing their steps to the library. Here, the fire in the grate is a reminder of what they have just witnessed. Neither comments as Brother Bernat opens a cupboard and produces a bottle of Madeira and two pewter cups. Tristram Winslade watches as the wine is poured. In the firelight, it looks richly amber. He sips. An unexpected memory is clutching, clamouring, bursting to be recalled. He smiles into the flames.

Lanherne, Cornwall, 1561

'Don't be afraid. Willow won't harm you.'

Tristram holds his breath as Dickon lowers the full weight of the kestrel onto his arm. His elbow and shoulder tense and his heart pounds. The bird's beak is terrifyingly close to his eyes. The musky, oily scent of its plumage fills his nostrils and he is not sure he wants this.

'What do I do?'

'Nothing yet. We wait until Humphrey is down on the beach and at his signal, I'll untie the jesses and remove the hood. She won't do anything until the hood is off.'

Tristram is more frightened than he cares to admit. His father promised him a bird once. But that was when he was small and was still learning to ride. There was only so much a father could do, with a new Queen on the throne and twenty manor houses to reclaim.

'Hey,' says Dickon, and grabs at Tristram's arm. 'Keep steady. She's not used to having someone moving around.'

'She's heavy.'

'Yes, and you're an eleven-year-old weakling. You wanted to learn hawking, so stop complaining and keep still.'

Tristram shivers. Here, high above the beach, the air bites.

'Sorry Dickon,' he says. His toes are tingling with cold, yet his blood is hot now, licking his body with flames of anticipation. Below, the vast breadth of the strand is firm and wet in the wake of the out-going tide. Humphrey is yet to emerge from beyond the rocky outcrop that hides the path.

'You'll be a'right, Tris. Just keep your arm straight, and when I say so, give it a jolt. Then she'll be away.'

'There's Humph!'

'A'right!' Dickon removes his gloves and shoves them into his belt. 'See that big bit of driftwood? When he gets there, he'll give us a signal and start running so that Willow gives chase.'

His body almost bursting with anticipation, Tristram harnesses his strength to keep the bird steady. Dickon moves closer. There's a shout from the beach. Deftly, Dickon unties the jesses and removes the hood. For a terrifying moment, the bird's surprised gaze finds Tristram's eyes and the boy instantly knows a rabbit's terror.

'Now!'

Tristram stiffens his arm, and the action nudges the bird. With a mighty flapping flurry of blue-grey feathers, it surges forward and even through the gloves, Tristram feels the sharp pressure of its talons, then the release and relief left behind. The bird is away, its wings beating fast as it heads out over the sea, drawing an arc against the bleached sky. Down on

the beach, Humphrey is calling, but the ocean's sigh and the expanse of wilderness have drawn the bird away. They stand, helpless, on the clifftop, watching its euphoric celebration.

'What's it doing?' Tristram does not want to be the one to have set Humphrey's bird on the loose, only to lose it forever. The bird continues its wheeling. It finds an updraft and soars and glides. Around and around, all the way over Trenaunce before circling again over the sea. Humphrey is still calling, almost dancing a jig on the beach. Finally, the bird seems to focus. Has it seen him? Has it recognised its master? It circles again, tighter this time, as though with a new purpose. As straight as a Cornish arrow, it heads for the beach. Humphrey is running again, calling, waving his hand. The bird comes. Swoops low on a screaming surge of speed. Low over the water, with one target; one goal. Humphrey's arm is aloft and they can sense the thud. The bird is home and the impact jars. Humphrey's foot is stuck in the sand and he sprawls on the beach, a muddle of boots, jerkin, hat and feathers. But then, he is on his feet and the bird is there, on his wrist, tearing at a bit of fresh killed mutton.

'Did you see the speed of her!' Dickon pats him on the back and Tristram's heart swells.

They run down the steep and slippery path to join Humphrey on the beach and revel in his bird's prowess. As they walk through the sand, Tristram sees the silhouettes of people above, watching. It is Edward Arundell with his young nephews, and a maid, holding the younger one's hand. Pippa, he thinks. She has come to watch her brothers and their hawk. Edward waves and Tristram waves back. And he knows, in this instant, that this is his family now. This is his home. The idea fills him, but he is only eleven years old. What about his father? His mother and his brothers?

'C'mon, Tris!'

He looks at Dickon, striding ahead. Perhaps Dickon will be his brother.

Brother Bernat pokes at the fire. Pours more wine. Settles into his chair. And education? Oh, yes. Of course. Endless hours of schooling.

Lanherne, Cornwall, 1564

He is fourteen years old, or thereabouts. Mid-thought, he lets his gaze drift to the world beyond the leadlight of the schoolroom window. He can just see the shape of the outer-most branches of an oak, bending to the gale that is howling around the eaves. Lanherne's young bucks are writing; all apparently confident in their task. Master Williams is prowling, prying over shoulders.

'It is only wind, Winslade,' he says. 'You've seen it before, and you'll see it again.'

'But you can't see it, Sir. Only where it is and where it's been.'

The others laugh.

'That's true,' the tutor concedes. 'And there's another essay for you. When you've successfully debated the meaning of your family motto firstly against the Christian philosophy of Erasmus and then against the teachings of the true faith, you can write a dialogue between the wind and our Lord Saviour, Jesus Christ.'

The others hoot.

'And that goes for all of you.'

A groan goes up. Their wrists are already aching from hours of translation: first, from the vulgar to Latin, then, from the Distichs of Cato, translation from Latin to English. After breakfast, there was dictacum – this morning's letter, in Latin, an apology to her Ladyship over the destruction of a trellis upon which she has been cajoling a grape vine. Before they could have lunch, there would be conjugations in Latin and French. No boy in this room wants such recitation delayed by another writing exercise, and Tristram Winslade knows he

will find his punishment in some prankish place. A short-sheeted bed, pine-cones in his slippers, rabbit droppings in his soup. It will not be the first time, and will not be the last. And they have all been victims of prankish retribution for some idiotic reason or other. They are schoolboys, after all. They are friends.

'How much have you written?'

'Five lines, Sir.'

'Quills down, gentlemen. Winslade will read his five lines for us.'

Tristram stands, scraping his bench across the floorboards. He takes a deep breath and lets the whole thing rush out.

'Deeds, not words. That is the Winslade motto. No one can say my family has not lived it to the full, but it is true to say that the deeds carried out by my grandfather were carried out for the true faith and not for any heretical view published by Erasmus.'

'Was Erasmus entirely heretical?'

'Sir!' It is young John Easton this time. 'No one can be partly heretical. That would mean it is possible to be partly true to God.'

'What would a proponent of Erasmus argue? Prideaux?'

'That actions, or deeds, reveal the mark of a man and the nature of his person. Erasmus says a Christian person must perform acts we might have expected in Jesus Christ,' says Prideaux.

'Is he wrong? Winslade?'

'No, sir,' says Tristram.

'But is he completely correct?'

Suddenly, still standing, Tristram is infected by a surge of inspiration. He sits, picks up his quill and resumes writing. Master Williams watches, signals for silence and the boys get back to work.

Deed, not words. The Godless tyrants who cut the heart from my grandfather's living body and fed his stomach to the crows were committing foul deeds in the name of a bad prince. A bad prince, so Erasmus says, cannot command the obedience of his people. And the bad prince had a very bad father – a more tyrannical prince never lived in England. Just ask his wives. And so, it can be said that neither Erasmus, nor the Pope, nor the Archbishop, could condemn the deeds of my father and my grandfather, for they were Godly deeds, carried out justly, and without words. Deeds, not words.

Wrists ache, quills scratch. Boys breathe quietly as the wind howls and the windows tremble in their casements. The bell for vespers startles them all.

'Tomorrow,' says Master Williams, 'we continue with Magdalia.'

Boys and wrists sigh with relief.

The following week, there is a buzz of excitement in the dining hall. Sir John is back from London, and to show off their Latin, the scholars are cast to recite, in unison, the Priest Antronius, opposite Lady Arundell's Magdalia. Tristram stands among them, not the eldest, nor the youngest, and yet among the tallest, for at fifteen he is all arms and legs, slightly awkward, but with large intelligent eyes, a dusting of freckles and a ready smile. They are preparing for some foolery, for Lady Anne will, of course, outwit their collective brainlessness, a parody not entirely inconsistent with the order of things at Lanherne. The Arundells have never shied from educating their women, and Sir John will not abide an

unlearned clergyman. This colloquy of Erasmus, he has told the boys, demonstrates the importance of the Exeter College at Oxford to the families of the west. There is no longer any tolerance among the Catholic nobility for fools like Antronius.

And so, the boys stand before the massive hearth, awaiting Lady Anne who, even while heavy with child, cannot resist the temptation to show off in front of her boys, and to show them off to her husband. She enters upon a ripple of harp music and a short sharp blast from Dickon's trumpet. She is dressed in a marketplace cloak and, carrying a wicker basket, blows a kiss to her husband and picks her way around little John and George, who sit cross-legged on the floor at Pippa's feet.

'What say you? Is that a monastery priest, I see come hither?' she asks the audience. Everyone claps and cheers, for nothing delights them more than her ladyship in a playful mood.

'It is, my lady,' shouts Edward Arundell. 'It is a shameful fool of a priest!'

'Then shall I have a game with him? What say you? Shall I play?'

'Yes, my lady!'

At which she turns to the throng of scholars assembled at the hearth.

'Are you ready to be addled, Father?'

'Yes, my lady,' her boys reply, bowing as one as she becomes Magdalia.

'Let the fun begin, please!' Sir John puts in, from his place by the window. 'I can hardly bear the suspense.'

And so, it begins.

'So tell me, Father,' Magdalia says, 'is it right, pray tell – are court ladies the only ones allowed to improve their minds and enjoy themselves?'

'You are confused my lady. Growing wise is not the same as enjoying yourself. Besides, it is not becoming of a lady to be brainy – she should be having a good time.'

'But, Father, should not everyone live well?'

'I believe it should be so.'

'But who can have a good time without living well?'

*'No, no, my child! Much better to ask, who can enjoy himself who **does** live well?'*

'I see, Father. You would approve of those who choose to live basely, so long as they have a good time?'

'Blessed are those who are having a good time, for they must be living well.'

Magdalia falls silent. There is nothing more to say. The foolish monastery priest has failed the test. He has blessed the lives of sots, gamblers, robbers and other assorted degenerates.

'Hurrah!' calls Edward Arundell, and Sir John claps his hands in slow appreciation.

Master Williams steps forward and the company bows to the Lady Anne and she nods her appreciation.

'Shall we have some singing?' she says. 'It's time the female members of our family had a turn. Pippa, what about you?'

Tristram sees Pippa's lips part in surprise and a blush colours her cheeks; she meets his gaze and quickly looks away.

'Let us have a small choir, my lady,' he says.

'Well, bold words from Master Winslade!' Lady Anne is astonished that a mere scholar might speak in such a way, but Sir John is already clearing a place for her harp and

there is nothing more to say. A note is struck, a song begins, and across the gathered choir, one pair of smiling eyes cannot help but find another.

Tristram smiles to himself. Pippa's voice in song would have been for everyone, he thinks. But the glance of gratitude, the slow blink of her eyes and hint of a smile – well, they are solely for him. He is still standing there, with the others, teasing John Easton for a slip of the tongue, when a hand lands upon his shoulder.

'My boy,' says Sir John. 'A word in my study, if you please.'

Ten minutes later, Sir John's words have reduced Tristram Winslade to a pile of ashes. The Queen has taken it all. There is nothing left. His father is worth nothing. Tristram is worth nothing.

'What will he do? Where will he go?'

'I will find a tenement for him. It will be enough until he can reclaim the Cornish estates.'

The Cornish estates. Tristram's gaze is upon a pear tree worked into the tapestry that hangs upon the cold stone wall of Sir John's study. He is imagining Tregarrick. He has never set a foot inside Tregarrick, for his grandmother's new husband refuses to admit a Winslade.

'Sir John, what did my father promise the King of Spain? Why am I really here?'

'Do you like being here?'

'More than anything, Sir. I just don't understand why I am here.'

'Winslade, you are here for the same reason all of the boys are here. You are here to be trained as Catholic gentlemen fit for a Catholic royal court. One day it will happen. When it does, Cornwall will be at the heart of the enterprise.'

'And London? You go there?'

Tristram remembers his first trip to London. But that was years off.

'Not when we were children. Edward Arundell would take us to Exeter. It is a great city in Devon, next to Cornwall. In Exeter, we would get our clothes made and our tutor would buy books for our schooling. We would stay three nights, for it was quite a distance. Sometimes we stayed at Powderham Castle, with Sir William Courtenay. My father had lived there for a time, when he was a young man, and so they knew me, in a manner of speaking.' He pauses. 'Courtenay is a quiet friend of your King,' he adds. 'I know many who are friends of your King.'

Lanherne, Cornwall, 1571

Tristram is freshly bathed and shaved, and ready to celebrate, for it is his twenty-first birthday. At his side, Edward Arundell has reduced himself to service, tying the black and gold aglets which secure the top edge of his black velvet sleeves to the shoulder of his doublet. In the glass, he sees the detritus of joy, still rumpled and crunched on his bed. No, not Pippa, lying there in some wanton and wicked bliss. No indeed. This still life is nothing more than a tangle of string, and a swathe of scarlet silk and waxed paper, all of which he has broken into just an hour ago. For this morning, in front of everyone at breakfast, Sir John and his Lady Anne had presented him with their token – a bulky parcel containing the fully tailored gentleman's fit-out, for which he was measured on a recent visit to Exeter, the measurements being sent up to London. And while the excitement of unwrapping has now fled, in so fleeing it has transformed into something new as his skin absorbs the sensation of fine linen and wool, feels the freedom of movement offered to his arms by supple velvet, so that he might rejoice in strength of sinew, the body that houses his happiness. And yet so stuffed it is at front and back, that he can barely move his torso; any dancing he might do tonight will bear

the imposed posture of courtly dignity. This minor discomfort is overwhelmed by the significance of his patron's generosity.

'Look at you!' It is Dickon, standing at the doorway.

'I am looking at me.' He flashes his friend a smile. 'But I am not ready. Go and look at yourself.'

'You look like a Spanish prince.' Then Dickon calls down the corridor. 'Humphrey, come and look at Sir Tristram!'

Tristram opens his mouth to object.

'Don't call him that.' It's another voice, tired and soft, pushing past Dickon and bringing a fusty cloud of damp wool smells into the room. Tristram's heart swells, for six months have passed since he last saw his father.

'Oh! You've ridden in the rain.' His arm is still beneath Edward's gaze, but with another two aglets still to be tied, Tristram Winslade is released. He greets his father with a fast and warm clasp of hands. 'I am so pleased to see you.'

'Happy birthday, my boy. It would take Thor's wrath to keep me from Lanherne tonight. A little Cornish mizzle is nothing.' William Winslade drops a satchel to the floor and turns to Edward. 'You do me and my son proud, Sir, to attend him as a servant. He does look splendid. Here, shall I continue with the tying? You must have other things to do.'

It is a manoeuvre that leaves the son with his father behind a closed door. Tristram watches as his father's fingers, once so clean and slender but now engraved with the grime of tenement life, continue with the aglets.

'This is beautiful velvet,' William says. 'So generously padded, and yet supple.'

'The colour would look better on you.' Tristram pulls at the discreet ruff collar. He is so used to the modest smocks and rural russets and browns he wears around Lanherne, and

the blue and yellow of his servant's livery, that the deep and glossy black is overwhelming. 'You have the high colour to subdue it. Against my freckled skin, I feel as though my doublet is the guest of honour, whom I must accompany to the ball.'

'Sir Doublet, then!' says William. 'Do not let him intimidate you. His colour will fade as your star rises.' He stops, and Tristram senses there is more important news to come.

'My mother?'

'Downstairs, waiting for you.'

'So, all is well?'

'Very well, if one can forget the humility of life on a tenement.' The loss of Winslade Barton still bites hard. Tristram cannot imagine his father at this place called Northam and does not wish to think about it. And yet, land, or the lack of it, is at the heart of everything. 'Has Sir John said anything?' his father asks.

'About what?'

'I thought he might have taken you aside.'

Tristram's heart quakes and anxiety tightens a strange little knot in his stomach, a reminder of the night he arrived, all those years ago. It has been there all day, hidden amid the celebration of such a birthday. He knows he is to be indentured to a foreign prince, the start of the great promise his father made. But will he be sent away? The thought is unbearable, and he tells himself there is no need. Others have gone into exile, but Sir John has pledged his fealty to the Queen, time and time again, and is still tolerated at Court. Tristram is among those who know that such a pledge is very truly at odds with everything that goes on down here on the Cornish coast. Outside the walls of Sir John's study, no one speaks a word.

'No, father. He just got back from London two days ago, and has been busy with estate matters. He has said nothing to me.'

In silence, now, he submits to his father's attention. There is much to say and not enough time to say it. Instead, velvet sleeves are tugged and tweaked so that the pinks reveal the startling white of his undershirt. Black hose and black boots and a black velvet cap with a multi-hued rosette of Arundell and Winslade colours. He is all done up, like a cart-horse on Rogation Day.

Finally, it is time to go down. At the bottom of the stairs, he greets Sir John in a confusion of embarrassed delight, gratitude and pride, and he kisses the Lady Anne's hand, and old Aunt Jane's. He kisses his mother, who has tears in her eyes, and his sister who would like half as much velvet for a new gown. Young Daniel has grown six inches, of that he is sure. His friends – the numerous gentlemen servants here at Lanherne – pat him on the back and young ladies of obscure identity hang back, watching and wondering. The Tregians are here, of course. Where else would they be? The rebuilding of Golden, their beautiful home, goes on and on for ever. More welcome are the Prideaux, Courtenays and Denyses. All the important, respectable, quietly simmering Catholics of Cornwall and Devon have gathered. The Stradlings have even sailed from Glamorganshire.

'T'll warrant few of Sir John's servants are so honoured upon attaining their majority,' someone says.

Others agree. They all know something is afoot. Some say it is Tristram's time to go abroad. Perhaps to Douai, for the priesthood. That he will depart tonight on a stealthy boat bound for Cadiz. That tonight, is in fact, goodbye. Others say, no. He will stay on to help his father regain their lands and that all of this is a nod to his nobility and as heir to an old fortune. Everyone notices, but no one will dare say it, that almost everyone here is of Plantagenet affinity. That would be a dangerous observation, even here in this enclave, surrounded as it is by Tudor Cornwall. Francis Tregian has heard that Richard Grenville, whose temperament ensures he is never invited anywhere, is sorely jealous that the grandson of a traitor should be so feted and, at the same time, sorely grieved that he has not been

invited to the party. Tregian laughs; Sir John scowls and turns his back. Everyone knows Sir John dislikes his nephew, son-in-law, whatever relation-name his family's convoluted marriage contracts have created. Francis and Mary have lived here for too long and have worn out their welcome.

The feast is extravagant, even by Lanherne standards. Quail, pigeon, pheasant, duck, venison and gammon is served on platters the size of royal barges, and roasted onions and swedes and parsnips abound. Half-way through dinner, Dickon blasts his trumpet and the Spanish ambassador struts in. Everyone stands, the heavily burdened hostess directs a little shuffling as crates of madeira are stacked at the side of the room. There are also documents, and Sir John tucks them into his belt. Finally, His Excellency is appropriately seated at Sir John's right hand, directly opposite Tristram, whose glance catches that of Lady Arundell, now easing her expectant self into her chair. They exchange smiles, and it suddenly occurs to him how much a part of this family he has become. How fond he is of them all and how he would miss them if he were to be sent abroad. Is that what will happen? Or is it expected that tonight he will become betrothed to one of their little daughters? Not even Dorothy is old enough for marriage, but no age is too young for a settlement, an understanding. If only he could make known his own preference for an understanding. After all, Pippa is not unworthy. She has her own king and queens – a list of Scottish ones. But tonight, she is up in the nursery, watching over the precious clutch of tiny Arundells, all the little swallows in the nest. Tomorrow she shall have the red silk wrapping for a kerchief.

Anxiously, Tristram waits. But nothing happens. Too much wine has been drunk, and feet are sore from dancing. He has danced with a Prideaux maid, an Easton, a Bray. He has indulged young Dorothy in a reel. He needs a piss, and so goes outside. He waters a lavender bush and then locates the lighted window of the nursery. He picks up a stone and gently

tosses it. He does not wait for long. She pushes the casement open. She would not do this if anyone was with her. Can she see him in the darkness? Does she suspect it is he?

He stands there for a moment. He dare not call up to her. Instead, he returns to the hall, pours some wine and wraps some small tarts in a napkin. He takes the stairs two at a time. The musicians in the gallery pay no attention. He sidles along the corridor to the nursery. It smells of babies. Of urine, of milk, and hot moist air.

'Pippa!' he whispers loudly.

Her movement makes her suddenly visible in the firelight.

'Tris!' She smiles at him.

'Aye. I thought I would smuggle you some wine and pastries.'

She takes a pastry from him and tears it in half. Apple. She bites into one half and smiles at him.

'Here,' she says. And he opens his mouth to receive her offering.

They stand there, he still holding food and wine, both tasting the sweetness of late harvest apples.

'For heaven's sake, Pip. Let me put this down.'

She laughs. Takes the goblet and drinks from it, before placing his offerings on the mantle. His eyes take in the waist-length hair that ripples down her slender back.

'Well, Tris.' She returns to him, gesturing with up-turned palms. 'You are twenty-one. And look at you. Look at this wonder in courtly black and pure white sleeves.' She places her hand upon the velvet that covers his heart. 'Our Tristram is grown so handsome.'

He takes her face between his hands and looks into her eyes.

'If I am twenty-one, then so are you. And yet no one offered you as much as a piece of figgy duff.'

'I am nought but a rebel's maid.'

'Then, I am nought be a rebel's lad. Just like Humphrey and Dickon.'

'We two more so,' she says. 'I was born the day my father left Helland, and he never came home. You were your father's seed, planted to replace him should he die in battle. I heard Aunt Jane say once that all men do it, before they go to war. But you were also born to replace your grandfather. You have a destiny to fulfil. I just have mewling babies to tend.'

He removes one hand from her cheek and rummages in his pocket.

'I have something else for you. It is as red as Christ's blood. Feel it. It is silk, from Sir John's tailor in London. Keep it. It is my gift to you.'

He watches as she takes it, spreads the yard of silk with outstretched arms and then scrunches it up, soft against her cheek. Her blue-green eyes are smiling at him.

'What shall I do with it? Perhaps – oh, no. I daren't wear such a colour.'

A shaft of light from a lantern suddenly floods the doorway and Lady Arundell walks in.

'So this is where the birthday boy has hidden himself,' she remarks. 'Sir John's study, young man. Straightway, if you would be so kind.' She sighs, and examines the occupant of each crib, tucking in this one and that one.

Tristram places his hands upon Pippa's shoulders and kisses her softly and squarely on the mouth.

'One day –'

She silences him with a kiss of her own.

'All sound asleep,' says Lady Arundell, and by the time she turns to look at the nurserymaid, Pippa is alone. Licking her lips.

Outside, in the quiet, as the first light of dawn bleeds into the eastern sky, one might hear the ocean building a swell, might detect a sudden fury of waves dumping down upon the beach as the tide brings in a small sailing boat. Despite the spring flowers, it is a cold bleak morning and within the walls of Lanherne, few people have stirred. Upstairs, a solitary lamp is lit and a fire is stoked. Around it are seated Sir John, Edward Arundell, William Winslade and Tristram. There is a knock on the door and a servant ushers the Spanish Ambassador, Señor de Spes, into the room. There is idle conversation and then there is a knock that seems to come from behind a tapestry. Sir John and his brother move quickly to hold it away from the wall. A door is revealed. It opens inwards and two men in black cloaks sidle into the room. Tristram looks askance at his father, whose face is suddenly filled with joy.

'Welcome,' Sir John is saying, as he stands to take an elbow. 'As you see, Excellency, gentlemen, we are honoured to welcome Dr Allen and our dear friend Gabriel Denys.'

Wet cloaks are shed and the room becomes humid.

Gabriel Denys. Tristram searches the face to recall the young man he had tried so hard to impress with a little wooden sword. Their eyes meet. Gabriel nods, smiles, as though he too has remembered.

'You sailed overnight, without incident?' Edward asks.

'As far as Tregony, and across from there to Padstow yesterday. It so pleased God to send us a kindly breeze tonight,' William Allen replies.

Chairs are brought close and everyone settles.

'And so, to business,' says Sir John. 'We must make haste and get this done before Mass – you will say Mass for us, Reverend Father?'

'Indeed,' Allen says. 'I should be honoured.' He looks at Tristram. 'Well, then. I believe you are the one to have attained your majority.'

'Yes, Reverend Father.'

'And doth it please you to serve the Lord as it doth please the Spanish king, to whom you are pledged?'

He has long suspected it. But confirmation comes as a shock. By whom? His father? Or Sir John? When? Why? For the return of Winslade Barton, which is now so long gone? All of the ale he has consumed, all of the wine, churns around in his stomach and the room is swaying.

'Are you alright, Winslade?' asks Sir John.

'Too much drink, Sir. I am sorry.' The act of speaking steadies him. He turns to the Reverend Father. 'I know that my duty here at Lanherne is to work for a Catholic England. That is what I know.' His heart, now, is pounding. He does not want to leave. The people here are family. He loves them. His love is here. Pippa. He does not want to leave.

Sir John picks up the lantern and crosses the room to a table by the window. He examines a parchment weighed down at the corners by chunks of granite, and picks up a quill.

'Well, Tristram –' It is their cue. The time has come. Father and son rise. 'Herewith your commission.'

Tristram glances at his father, whose attention is, quite oddly, elsewhere. And then Tristram understands. His father has done this. Years ago, when he was a child. Surely, something done so long ago, for a benefit long since lost, can be revoked? The great scrolling

Latin script of the Spanish Court, resplendent with his curlicued name, suggests otherwise. Herewith his commission. He closes his eyes and sees, behind them, a red blaze of anger. Must he give his life for the two short years of joy at Winslade Barton – years he can barely remember?

‘Think of the glory, Tristram.’ It is Gabriel Denys. ‘And I will be alongside you. We two, working together.’

He turns to Gabriel. Of course. Yes. The glory. To be there at His Majesty’s side on the day England is returned to its true and rightful path. With good planning, it could happen in a year or two and the entire fortune will be returned. So much property, so much wealth, that Winslade Barton will seem a mere cottage. Besides, what choice is there? A son must obey his father’s command, for that command is God’s will and there is no room for question. And if perchance the thought of refusal should still the quill, what would he do and where would he go? He would be a Catholic exile in exile from his Catholic friends. Here, now, at the age of twenty-one, he will become first among equals – a signed-up member of King Philip II’s Holy Spanish empire.

He does not even read it. For to be seen to scrutinize might be seen by some as doubt. He takes the quill. He signs. Sir John witnesses and passes the quill to William Winslade and it goes on to Gabriel Denys, Edward Arundell and the Reverend Father, William Allen.

‘Congratulations, my son,’ William Winslade says. ‘And may the Lord protect you always.’

Tristram can think of nothing to say, for he has no idea what it means or what is required of him. Sir John clears his throat.

‘Gabriel, let us see your map.’

Gabriel Denys bends to spread a parchment on the floor and Sir John crouches to anchor it. For a moment, Tristram does not understand it. Candlelight and morning light

play their shadows upon a coastline that is not Cornwall. There are ships. Great galleons. Then, upon what he perceives as land, he notes the words St David's Head. It is the Welsh coast. And the warships have Spanish flags.

Gabriel straightens, and looks at Tristram Winslade.

'Quite frankly, Winslade, the Pope and the King wish to embark on an ironic mission: to rid us of this poxy queen by imitating her grandfather. As you can see, this is a massive invasion of Wales, and the north coast of Cornwall is integral to the strategy. We will work on it here, together at Lanherne.'

Sir John stands. 'Of course, Winslade, the sooner England is back in Catholic hands, the sooner your father's lands will be returned to you, and your life in servitude to me can cease. Not only will your Devon estates be returned, but the Cornish lands too. Trevanion will have no hold over your grandmother, and she will ensure the title deeds return to your father. So. What say you?'

Tristram can scarcely believe it. He looks at his father, who nods, and then turns his gaze to Sir John.

'You mean, I am to stay? I am to work for the Spanish king here, at Lanherne?'

'But of course! Did you think we would pack you off to Madrid? No, no! You are one of us.'

Of course.

Gabriel Denys sets up the planning. With him, locked in an upstairs room full of maps and parchments, lists and catalogues, are Tristram Winslade, John Easton and Humphrey Arundell. The maps are of the Cornish coast, the Welsh coast, the Irish coast, the Breton coast. They are coastlines of places where ancient tongues and ancient traditions live on

beneath the skins of people steeped in loss, resentment and a boiling ambition to be rid of the English Queen.

The lists and catalogues are endless. First are the catalogues of gentry. Gentry and their servants; gentry and their arms; gentry and their money, and land. Gentry and assessments of allegiance, trustworthiness and Godliness. These are cross referenced against parishes, with an assessment of priests and the extent to which they might be bought. Every parish in Cornwall and Devon, every parish in Wales. There is little need to assess Ireland, but on moonless nights there are boats from Munster and rendezvous on the strand at Mawgan.

There are lists of tides and currents, with the best and worst times of year. How long does it take to sail from Lisbon to Pembroke? How much longer to Glamorgan? Will the Severn be kinder in Summer or in Spring? Then there are the Menai Straits. How well will the currents on the north Welsh coast suit their purpose? Who has been bribed, threatened, silenced? Who can be trusted?

There is talk that Gabriel must return to Antwerp, for he has come into Cornwall without a licence. There is talk that Tristram Winslade will continue to serve him. What does this mean? Must he go into exile, or can he send reports from Lanherne? The answer comes in the dead of night. Someone shakes him until he is half awake.

'Don't speak. Come with me.'

Tristram forces himself to waken. Gabriel stands there in the light of his own candle, dressed in travelling clothes. Tristram pulls a blanket around himself and together they creep out to the long gallery. They stand in silence. Waiting for a follower. Praying there will be none. The house is silent. Gabriel leads the way to the minstrel gallery. They pull the curtain behind them, snuff out the flame and sit on the floor.

'What's going on?'

'I've been ordered back to Antwerp. I'm leaving now.' Gabriel sighs. *'Sir John is worried about spies. He fears there's one in the house, and he knows it's not you. That's why you're not coming with me. He needs you here.'*

'What do I need to do?'

'It's what you need to know. All of the plans, all of the lists, are in a chest hidden in the ground under the far end of the haystack in the big barn. The key is in the nursery. Lady Arundell hides it there.'

'And when she's not here?'

'Pippa.'

Pippa!

'She knows what's going on?'

'Only that the key is top secret. My lady knows she is loyal. Pippa has no one else and is entirely trustworthy.'

'Aye. I believe it.' He reaches for Gabriel's hand. *'Christ's wounds, Gabe! I will miss you!'*

'And I you. You're a good man, Tristram Winslade. In Antwerp, I will list your name with mine among the exiles so that, so far as Rome is concerned, you are working with me in Sir Francis Englefield's house. He's agreed to the arrangement. And if Sir John is ever asked in London, he will deny you are here. Your situation here is dangerous, but you will need to keep gathering information as if nothing has changed.'

'How will it reach you?'

'You don't need to know. Honestly, the less you know about that, the better.'

'But who can I trust?'

'Sir John, Lady Anne, Edward. And me.'

'I go down to the barn with secret documents. Who do I trust in the barn?'

'The steward. William Ham.'

'But what about Prideaux and Easton? What about Dickon and Humphrey? Am I not to trust my friends?' He feels his world crumbling.

Gabriel Denys places a hand on his shoulder. 'Hunt with them, hawk with them. Sir John will decide who you will work with. Now, I must go.'

Still seated on the floor, they embrace.

'God go with you.' Winslade wonders whether Gabriel has heard the crack in his voice. He feels foolish.

'But only if he might remain close by you.' Gabriel uses a musician's chair to haul himself to his feet and looks down into the hall, where the remnants of the fire casts a sombre light. 'Stay here for a few minutes,' he says, and then, with the barest flick of the curtain, he is gone.

'It will come,' says Brother Bernat. 'I give his Grace's letter to horseman – it go.'

Tristram's gaze darts sharply from the flames.

'He has written to Englefield? At El Escorial?'

Brother Bernat nods. 'I tell you – I see it go.'

'What does it say?'

Brother Bernat laughs. He shrugs. Did he write it?

Of course. Of course. Tristram Winslade prays it will reach the King. When paper burns, it is gone forever. When hope burns, it lives.

Lanherne, Cornwall, 1576

If a muster were to be carried out, officials would find – if they knew where to look – an armoury big enough for two units of cavalry. He is twenty-five years old, or thereabouts, and works in Sir John’s study, a room increasingly guarded and isolated. Outside, the estate is being slowly, secretly, fortified; it is guarded night and day. The Queen’s vigilance provides Sir John with endless alibis for sending his young men on useful fact-finding missions. They scour the Mount, Pendennis, St Mawes and Padstow and count weapons. Their findings are sent to London in two separate packages: one addressed to her Majesty and the other to His Excellency, the Spanish Ambassador. In London, Sir John serves at Court with obsequious devotion to Her Majesty, all the while enjoying the friendship of so many other Catholic men of influence. He plays tennis with Southampton, drinks wine with Vaux and Tresham and serves tea to his cousin, Sir Matthew Arundell of Wardour. They are all his Catholic friends, and yet his lifestyle is so outwardly frivolous that it bears up to scrutiny and keeps him in the Queen’s favour. More and more intriguingly, the poor young Earl of Oxford’s impending financial ruin has earned her Majesty’s wrath. Sir John invites him to play cards, and watches as the debts pile up. He encourages him to desist, listens as he moans. Waits until he begs. Cannot a fellow Catholic and a neighbour in Cornwall find it in his heart to alleviate a misguided young noble of his Cornish manors? After all, they are so remote. So difficult to keep an eye on. Sir John shakes his hand and engages a lawyer. It is his very great pleasure. Six new estates surround Lanherne like layers of fat around a piggy in the oven.

A new year begins and Richard Grenville has been appointed Sheriff of Cornwall. At Lanherne, fears of a spy have revealed nothing. Traps have been set. Not one has been sprung. If there is a spy at Lanherne, he is too clever. More likely, Sir John believes, any spy – if one

exists – is hiding elsewhere. His eyes have turned to the south. No one must visit the Tregians over at Golden.

There is no illegal mass at St Columb Major this morning. Instead, the private chapel is stuffed to groaning with as many of Lanherne's occupants as can be spared from their duties. The scents of roses, marigolds, lilac, great bunches of skeet, sea daisies, lavender – all picked yesterday for a bigger nave – mingle with the smell of beeswax and incense. He breathes in one heady cloud of it and a headache looms. Everyone is out of sorts. Everyone watches as Father Greene raises the host. No one is seeing it. Everyone is reeling at the news of Francis Tregian's arrest. Everyone enjoyed the mass given by his priest, Father Mayne, but Francis has been reckless. He's been careless. Someone at Golden has let loose their tongue. Perhaps someone is on Grenville's payroll. Now, Edward Arundell, rushing in late and finding a place with the servants, kneels beside him. He is trembling.

'What's wrong?' Tristram whispers.

'The worst. My brother has been arrested at Court.'

Tristram does not understand.

'Your brother? Which one?' It cannot be Sir John.

'Our John. Sir John, your master.'

'You mean –' Tristram crosses himself and mutters a prayer.

Everyone sits.

'I have just heard, ten minutes ago. Peter Coffin has ridden like the furies from London. News is spreading like a wildfire, but...' Edward Arundell lowers his voice even further, *'Her ladyship does not yet know. How can we tell her?'* Prayers interrupt and Edward's sleeves, moving as he crosses himself, remind Tristram to keep up. *'He's waiting*

in the gatehouse. Oh, God! I will have to tell her.' Everyone kneels. They follow. 'And there's been word from Robert Smyth at St Germans that Tremayne has been arrested, and now I'm hearing that Smyth himself has been arrested. I cannot believe it. It's like Kingston ravaging Cornwall all over again.'

Tristram's thoughts are starting to burn his brain. He recalls an afternoon of sparring, testing out a consignment of new, lightweight Spanish rapiers. Yes, Francis Tregian could be good company on a good day. But he is a hot-headed individual; an arrogant zealot who spurns caution because he thinks he is exempt from the Queen's harsh policies. And yet, he has spurned her. Does he think a spurned queen will look kindly upon him now? The dark, dank dungeon at Lanson will answer that question. And what about poor Sir John? What will they do with him? What will happen, now, to life at Lanherne?

'Grenville will prize your scalp if he can get it,' Edward whispers. 'He has not forgotten the raid on Trematon. He blames it for his grandfather's demise. We must warn your father, too. My God, Grenville's bloodlust must be soaring.'

Tristram feels his prayers skid over him. Must he go? And to where? To whom, if he cannot go to his father? The idea of leaving England is impossible, for despite his father's life of turmoil, he has himself been secure and loved and cherished since the day he was born, no more so at home with his parents than here, with the Arundells of Lanherne.

'I could go to Gabriel,' he says.

'No. All the ports are being shut down and examined.' Edward is beginning to calm down. 'Go up to Padstow. There's a contingent going to Ireland to serve the Queen, and they're sailing in a couple of days. Given them a false name. Pick one of Oxford's old tenants. Anything will do. Once you're there, you simply defect and find your way to Desmond.'

Ireland? He will be lucky to survive a week.

'Will there be time for breakfast, do you think?' It is an attempt at humour. He feels like a man drowning.

'Christ's wounds, Winslade,' says Edward Arundell. 'If there's no time for breakfast, we're all buggered.'

Edward Arundell crosses himself and bows. Backs his way out of the chapel.

They are half-way through breakfast when, from outside, the blast of a trumpet rents the air. Then the geese start honking. A full scale racket. Chairs scrape on the flagstones and there is a rush of servants into the hall. The solid thud of doors shutting firmly behind them, of bolts being shot home. Tristram sees a maid – Ursula Bray – gather up Lady Anne's Book of Hours from a cherry wood table by the window. She takes the crucifix from the centre of the table and says 'rosaries, everyone' with such urgency that no one disobeys. Rosaries are thrust over her outstretched arm and she runs from the hall. Lady Arundell, already tearful at the news of Sir John's arrest, is bolted to her chair at the head of the table. She is alabaster white. Aunt Jane struggles to her feet and lets loose with a tirade of Cornish, which might be blasphemy, but is probably just rage. Everyone is looking at her.

'I loved your grandfather, lad.' She thumps her stick upon the floor. 'Handsomest man in all of Cornwall, John Winslade was. Don't let them get you. Don't let the same thing happen to you.'

Edward Arundell looks at Tristram Winslade and says, 'Go!'

He is staring at old Aunt Jane. Why has she not spoken to him before now? Is John Winslade the reason she has never married? He wants to sit down beside her, and hear her story.

'Winslade – go!'

Edward is pushing him towards the door. And so his eyes take in the beautiful room, so gorgeously lit by the morning sun, and his heart starts to crack. He cannot bear it. Cannot bear the idea of leaving this place. Lanherne has been his home from the time he was ten. His coming of age is bound up here. His friends and loyalty are here. Love is here. He has nothing beyond Lanherne.

He hugs Edward, then John Williams, Humphrey Arundell, John Easton, Sir John's old steward, William Ham, and so many others – each one of them a trusted friend. He goes to Lady Arundell and kneels. She presents a small white hand, which he kisses. He glances at Pippa, seated between Gertrude and Cecily, and cannot think what to say or do, or whether he can even do or say anything. In that one glance, he sees a million questions and he does not have even one answer. Everything is sliding into quicksand. Her eyes are filling with tears. He recalls the feel of her hand in his, just over there, by the fire. Surely it was just yesterday. His lips part, as though to utter some words of hope or promise, anything at all really, but then one of the younger men says, 'I'll go with you.'

He hardly knows Richard Victor. But God bless him. He turns back to Edward.

'Bless you, Edward Arundell. Bless Sir John and all your family, your ladyship. Tell his lordship he has my loyalty to the end, whatever it might bring.' And then says to Richard Victor, 'Are you sure?'

'Yes, come on,' Richard Victor says. 'I'll meet you at the boat.'

'God be with you both,' Edward says. He places a heavy leather purse into Tristram's hand and pushes him towards the stairs. 'Remember, you are a Prince of Spain. God will be with you. Look after each other.'

Tristram's heart lurches into his throat and he runs from the room. He takes the stairs two at a time, rushes into his room and snatches up a few precious belongings. He rushes into Sir John's private chamber and moves the panelling until the gap is wide enough. Richard

Victor is nowhere to be seen. Perhaps he is going through the garden. No time to wait – there are footsteps on the stairs. He takes a candle and lights it from a sconce and disappears into the wall.

As Grenville's men go up, Tristram follows the steep, stony stairs down. He knows them well – everyone at Lanherne does; the route is embedded in their brains like some animal instinct. Generation after generation has smuggled into the house oceans of French brandy, Madeira wine, olive oil, caches of pirated gold and silver and acres of silk and Holland, all carried up from silent boats on a still dark river. In more recent times, King Philip's soldiers and spies and Catholic priests have come and gone unnoticed by the outside world. Ahead, Tristram sees a vague light – a moving shadow – and he hopes it is Richard Victor. He is in a wall by the main stairs in the front hall, down, down. Farewell my friends. My lovely Pippa. On, under the church, on and on, until his eyes squint against the light of day coming through a familiar grate. It is open, and there, down at the mooring, Richard Victor is untying the boat.

'You have the key?' Tristram asks.

Victor tosses it to him, and he closes the grate, locks it, and throws the key down into the shaft for the next escapee. The tunnel is completely controlled from within the house. There is no other key.

'Hurry,' Victor says. 'Grenville will have scores of men.'

Tristram throws his leather sack into the boat and boards carefully. He picks up an oar and, the moment Richard Victor is aboard, he pushes away from the bank. Here, the water is deep, and fast-flowing on the ebb tide. They do not speak. The need for silence, the sudden panic and the impending sense of loss have rendered them mute. Finally, the river emerges from its protective banks, and they surge into its mouth. Against the will of nature, they force the vessel into the shallows and hit the great broad strand at Mawgan Porth. They drag it

onto the beach, haul it through the gritty sand, then along the beach, their boots unable to avoid the fast running wave-breaks surging across the sand – which will at least wash away all trace of their passage – to the tricky cliff path up to Tom Flamank at Trenance. Here, a little stable of horses and crates of weapons are discreetly kept for priests and smugglers and anyone else who might need a quick escape. Sir John pays well for secrets well kept.

By nightfall, the smell of Padstow harbour fills their nostrils. Tristram Winslade is haunted by the notion that he might not see Cornwall – or Devon, or anywhere else in England – for a long time. He is not ready for this. There are legal proceedings to consider if they are ever to reclaim Tregarrick. But what can he do? He cannot seek his father's advice. It is too late – the danger is too great. Grenville might not have jurisdiction in Devon, but he has friends there. Plenty of them. The Pollards will not shy from another war against the Winslades, neither will Trevanion. He lets the horse carry him down into the harbour, where the rush lights are reflected in quayside puddles. As he dismounts, someone pushes past him, unnecessarily close, and he is about to object when a piece of paper is shoved into his hand. Still leading his horse, he finds a place that is bright enough for reading.

'I write at this dire hour to assure you of my love and of our mission which I must, I fear, entrust all now unto you. Understand that the heretic Mohun, who is a cheat and a liar and guilty of forgery, will use every trick and fight to the last to keep in his clutches all the lands in Cornwall that are in every respect rightfully mine, and upon my death, yours. Our struggle is one of faith, but do not lose sight of these lands, for without our land, we are sunken into poverty, our dynasty gone. This must not be our fate. There are those among our most trusted friends who may perceive my ideas as a change of heart. I assure you that this is not the case. All I

say unto you is that our land and our faith, our past and our future, are held within my heart as two things entwined and entirely inseparable, and so a fight for the true faith is a fight for our land; a fight for our land is a fight for the true faith. Our ancestry makes it so. Always remember this, no matter whose allegiance is promised or whose cause you must serve. Tonight, for the last time, I ask for your obedience. Kiss this paper as though it were my cheek, and feed it to a kindly fire. God be with you, and may the Virgin, Holy Mother of God, keep you safe from harm. I will write to you at the English College. You will be safe there, with Allen. Remember, I am your loving Father. Now, burn this.'

He holds it to a rushlight and lets it float off into the night sky. There it goes, his father's voice. Bright as a star, and then to ash, and gone.

Three weeks and five days after his ship arrived in Barcelona, he is returned to the room that reeks of terror. A functionary sits him upon the hard chair. The chains, the manacles, the wheel. All still there. The interpreter comes in and takes his seat. There is no scribe. His head begins to swim.

The door behind the dais opens and the Inquisitor enters. Tristram Winslade stands. Bows his head. Fingers his rosary. Please God, have mercy. Please God, have mercy ...

The Inquisitor utters something and Tristram hears the interpreter instruct him to remain standing. His knees want to sit. He instructs them to stop shaking.

There is another deluge of words. He understands 'Supremo' and something about the truth.

'*Capitano*, the Inquisition of the Holy Roman Church finds there is no case of heresy against you. Sir Francis Englefield, an English nobleman working for the glory of the true faith in Spain, has confirmed your identity, your faith and your true allegiance. The King of Spain, Philip II, summons you to El Escorial.'

His knees give way. He sinks to the chair. Then, in a moment of lucid thought, he turns weakness to gratitude. He kneels before this court. The Inquisitor continues.

'The journey to El Escorial is a hard one, and so to ease your way, the Archbishop of Zaragoza will provide hospitality and demonstrate to you the finest expression of the King's pursuit of purity.' The interpreter stumbles over the last sentence but the Inquisitor stands, and Tristram hefts himself to his feet. A prayer is said. The sign of the cross is made.

'God be with you,' the Inquisitor says, and the gentle thud of the door closing behind him echoes through the room.

Tristram sits. He watches the interpreter stack his papers and depart. Behind him, the door through which he has come and gone from this place opens and Brother Bernat appears. For the last time, they traverse the corridors of Barcelona's palace of the Inquisition. They come to the cloak room, where the items he had in his cell are waiting on a shelf. Then, his other belongings are taken from boxes, pegs and shelves. Everything has been numbered. Everything is there. The sword made by the King's armourer in Madrid, his leather water bottle, his writing pouch and papers, money pouch and money, leather hat and dagger. Then, his Book of Hours, the piece of red silk – what they made of this he cannot know – his knife and spoon and an ivory fork given to him by Nonna Marino, before the great misunderstanding. He is

given new papers and a sealed document for the Archbishop of Zaragoza. He stares at the great flourishes of ink and the majestic seal and wonders when he might be free of scrutiny.

Brother Bernat takes him to the big double doors and opens it. Together, they stare down upon the square, when the book burning has left nothing but a black stain on the cobbles.

'You must suffer Zaragoza,' Brother Bernat says. 'It is required, and they are waiting for you.' He examines Tristram Winslade as though some revelation is about to unfold. 'If it will make it easier – some news for you.'

He feels his skin crawl. 'What is it?'

'We hear news. Your English queen – she murder Scottish Queen.'

There is something wrong in Brother Bernat's English. That is what he thinks.

'No. That cannot be right.'

'It is true. She lose her head.'

'Ahhh – she lost her temper!' Queen Elizabeth was frequently losing her head. It was the problem of being without a husband. Common knowledge, even among the exiles. She was always fearful; always angry.

Brother Bernat continues with a chopping motion. The side of his hand is like a cleaver.

'They cut it off.' And mimics the slicing of his throat. 'Queen of Scots, she lose her head. And now, King of Spain – he need men like you. And now, I must return to the library. You go Zaragoza. I wish God be with you.'

Tristram Winslade can say nothing. He hears nothing but a roaring in his head. That vile virgin whore has murdered Mary, God's anointed Queen of Scots.

Who now can they turn to? Who now can possibly take the throne of England, if not the King of Spain? What plot had been hatched? How had this happened? It is too late, now, to ask Brother Bernat. His friend has gone inside. The bell for mass begins to ring and so he walks across the square to the cathedral. He finds a seat near the door. And although his cloak is warm, he begins to shiver. Great heaving sobs gather in his chest and surge up his throat. He clamps them down with a massive intake of breath. *It's all right. It's all right. They have freed you. You have your life. You have a mission. Focus the mind.* He fingers his rosary and sets his gaze upon the thousand candlesticks which reflect each other's candles and send the light of bright orange flames towards the paintings and icons. Here, the gold gleams golder than gold. Even the silver gleams gold. He no longer expects, upon entering a church, to find the misty grey of Cornish granite. Nature has offered up so many palates and designs, and he has delighted in many new things: Italian marble, limestone, vast pointed arches and spires that seem determined to reach Heaven. Today, though, there is no comfort from the familiar cadence of a Latin Mass. There is no Latin Mass today. He knows enough now to recognise Catalan. If his father and grandfather had won their battle, Cornish prayers might still be heard in little grey Cornish churches. But still he trembles, and the heat gives way to a wave of cold that clutches at his shoulders, his feet, his hands, his head. He feels as though he will never be warm again. Breathe. Breathe. Calm yourself. Take control. And so, he wills himself to resume mastery of his senses. He is a soldier. His father was a soldier. His grandfather too. The White Spurs had come from soldiering, and would one day be returned through soldiering.

He struggles to his feet and joins the line for the communion rail, where he kneels, and feels the priest's hand upon his head, the Host upon his tongue. A stranger, he thinks he hears. God bless you and stay with you. Body and blood. He tilts his head, closes his eyes, swallows, and feels his humours steady themselves. He

is all right. All will be well. He is himself. The Holy Roman church has seen his goodness and delivered him from the Inquisition, and so how bad can it be? He barely registers the Benediction and the shuffling feet as the nave slowly empties. He rises, wanders, thoughts loose now and his eyes skimming over monuments, ornate carvings and effigies of those whose wealth has granted eternal virtue. Then, on a watery cool breeze, a sudden farmyard scent snaps at his thoughts and brings them to heel. Geese? By the time he comes upon the cloister pool where the cathedral geese swim and preen in quiet contentment, Lanherne has already rushed upon him.

The sun is hot on their backs and as they ride through the gates of Lanherne, even before they dismount, they start tugging at aglets and shedding the hot padded jerkins that denote their status and command the obedience of Sir John's new tenants. In the narrow lane that leads to the stables, they form a single file. Dickon with his trumpet, Richard Victor, Tristram Winslade and John Easton. Humphrey is straggling along behind, his horse skittish and misbehaving.

'I wonder if Oxford knew he was handing Sir John enough weapons for a cavalry,' says Easton.

Tristram meets Dickon's eyes. He is twenty-six years of age, and knows better than most just how vast their master's armoury has become. With bills, pikes and other assorted weapons, he has enough for two regiments. What the Earl of Oxford was thinking, apart from the relief of clearing his debts, they have no way of knowing. Just as they have no way of knowing what the Queen would think if she ever found out. One thing is certain, neither Oxford nor Sir John will be the one to tell her.

He hands his horse to a stable hand, tosses his jerkin and gloves onto a sun-bleached oak bench and sits there, waiting for the others to finish at the water pump. Richard Victor is

dousing his head and filling his mouth with the cold, clear water, and Easton is all but pushing him out of the way.

'Your cousin should learn to keep his mouth closed,' Dickon murmurs as he sits beside him. 'The stable hands don't need to know the extent of Lanherne's amoury.'

Tristram agrees. Discretion is everything. It is the reason Gabriel has taken control of the plan for north Wales.

'He'll find himself working with Pippa in the nursery if he's not careful,' he says.

'My pretty sister. You fancy her, don't you?' Dickon says. 'You should have a word with Humphrey if you want her. She's not young any more.'

'You've failed to notice something, Dickon,' he says. 'Sir John has managed to produce five little girls and I am my father's heir. As soon as we have our lands back, I will become a suitable bit of nobility. Husband material – but not for the likes of poor fatherless Pippa.'

'For Dorothy?'

'Christ help me. Who knows? Every time one of them has a birthday, I find myself expecting to be told.'

They watch Easton douse himself at the pump and drink his fill. On the other side of the courtyard, the last of the horses is being unsaddled as Humphrey rides in.

'Mother of God, Dickon!' He dismounts in a rush. 'Our sister could use a thrashing. She's just let Cicely and Gertrude loose among the new lambs and they've chased the poor creatures right across the orchard, down to the pond and then back again. The geese are bloody everywhere and one of them has just had a go at Thunder's hock. He just about threw me. Look at this!'

It is Lady Arundell's habit to have some of the new lambs and their mothers close to the house, and the orchard provides good shelter and plenty of grass. She had lambs as a child, and wants her daughters to enjoy them. Humphrey's rant will go nowhere.

Dickon elbows Tristram.

'Come on. I'll help you play Sir Knight.'

Tristram catches the mischief in Dickon's eyes, smiles and nods. They gather up their livery and weapons and, leaving the others to examine Thunder's hock, saunter back down the lane towards the back of the house. The honking of cranky geese and the wailing of small girls reach across the wall and as they push open the gate, nothing is as it should be. Pippa has placed Gertrude on a low branch of an apple tree, and is trying to shoo the geese away from Cicely, who is backed up against the wall, having trampled a bed of daisies, and two geese are hissing and poking as though she has stolen their young. The ewes are skittish, heading this way and that, rounding up their lambs and shielding them from whatever danger they perceive is at hand. No one in this orchard is happy, so when Pippa turns to see her brother, she is ready to scold him for the grin on his face.

'What are you laughing at, brother?' she demands. 'This is not funny!'

'Pardon us, sister dear' says Dickon. 'We heard the commotion and thought to investigate.'

'If everything is under control, we'll let you be,' says Tristram, who contradicts himself by placing his bundle on the grass. 'What are you doing up there, Miss Trudie?'

'I want to come down,' she says.

'So you shall, in a minute. First, we need to get Cicely out of danger.' He strides between the geese and feels his riding boots take a nip. He takes Cicely under the arms and lifts her high, out of their range, and gives her to Dickon. 'Here, little one, your uncle will look after you.' Upon which, the threat over, she begins bawling. Five minutes later, the

geese are out of the orchard, flapping and screeching down the path, back towards their pond. Gertrude is taken down from the tree and placed at Pippa's feet.

'Well,' he says, looking at her lips and recalling their taste. 'A fine way to look after a pair of helpless infants. Pity help the man who marries you.'

He means it for a joke. But as he smiles at her, he sees tears fill her eyes. He understands, right in this terrible moment, that he is no longer the boy she took a care for, one night around a campfire, all those years ago. He understands, upon a rush, that she cares for him, just as he cares for her. As a man and a woman.

'Please don't tell Lady Anne,' she sobs. 'If she sends me away, where can I go?'

Dickon steps forward and places Cicely by her sister and pushes at Tristram's shoulder.

'Idiot,' he grunts, and departs.

Tristram steps forward and places his hands upon her shoulders.

'Pippa! I didn't mean that. You know I didn't. I'd do anything for you, and I certainly won't say anything to Lady Anne. Neither will Dickon.'

She lowers her head and wipes her eyes. The sun lights up the strands of gold and copper in the brown of her hair. Her little woollen cap is crooked, and he tries to set it straight. Grazes her temple with a fingertip.

'Cicely just wanted to hold one of the lambs.' She sighs. 'I am not much of a shepherdess.'

Tristram can see how things have unravelled. Pippa must have upset the sheep and they took off through the unlatched gate, down to the pond. The geese turned on them, and chased them all the way back, coming across Humphrey and Thunder on the way. Now, the sheep are at peace, grazing on the lush grass beneath the apple trees. A single lamb is

standing away from its mother, wobbling a little, blinking, and bending its legs for rest.

With the lightest of strides and in a single sweep of his arm, he plucks it up upon a tiny bleat.

'Here. Here is your lost lamb.'

She takes hold of the trembling animal. The orchard's dappled shadows play upon her shoulders and her tears give way to a smile. The shining eyes of St Agnes, or is it Alys du Bois? No, no, these eyes belong to his Pippa. Their shining gaze is full of gratitude and perhaps something else. Might it be love? Perhaps it is love. For his own heart has just lost itself and he knows in this instant that he cannot bear the idea of marrying one of Sir John's daughters. His jaw seems slack, then his knees. His strength drains out of him. Down through his feet, into the grass, down, down towards the very centre of the world.

Part II

Zaragoza, 1587

He is a trained soldier, and yet the two men who greet him outside the hostel opposite the Archbishop's palace frighten him beyond reason. In a pouched tucked inside his jerkin is a copy of letter from the Supremo and another from the Holy Inquisition, both testifying to his quality of person and purity of soul. But through the thickness of his clothing on this chilled morning, the comfort they ought to provide does not touch his heart. They take him to a bakehouse and sit by a brazier, eating sweet bread and goats' cheese, drinking coffee. Like kinsmen. And they watch each other as the sun rises over the hills and hits the Basilica's Moorish domes in a play of gold.

'Our Lady of Pilar,' one of them says.

'Magnificent,' he says.

'Describe your church,' says the second man. And so, Tristram takes a lead stylus from his pouch and draws for them the church at St Columb Major, with its square, squat tower. It is small and grey and humble. And Sir John Arundell? Describe him. Describe his house. Who lives with him at his house? He tries to tell them that Sir John is in prison and the very notion serves as a cue.

They walk through the town to the prison courtyard, where the penitents are being marshalled. Here, fear is in the air. The place is rank with stale sweat, urine and excrement. There is skin of all types, and although the poor creatures have been bathed in honour of the celebrations to come – their last prayers, last suppers, last chance for the mercy of strangulation before the fire – not one bears the fair, clear skin of youth. Not even the young. Floggings and other acts of cruelty have left their signatures upon legs and arms and cheeks. Hollow eyes speak of sleepless nights

and endless prayer, of wishing and hoping and regret and remorse, and the rising inevitability of abject pain and terror.

And, draped in their yellow *sanbenitos*, violently daubed with the red cross of sin and humiliation, among them can be found every aspect of humour: some defiant in their refusal of God and the saints and held their heads high; some with their resolve in silent collapse; others howling with remorse and repentance. At least half are women, and one – an old woman, who reminds him of old Aunt Jane Arundell, God rest her soul – tries to fight the guards. She uses tooth and nail and is knocked unconscious for her effort, then splashed with water to bring her back to her senses. He clamps down upon the instinct to object.

In the distance, still within the precincts of the penitentiary, he sees twenty or so halberdiers milling around as though celebrating a nephew's baptism. When the penitents have eaten, these armour-clad warriors will lead them into the arena. Already, two of their number are positioned to ensure that only citizens and approved witnesses gain entry to the *auto*. Forty favours for you, and you, and you. Reward for honouring the Inquisition's holy work.

Tristram's companions do not wish to linger, and they guide him back towards the gates. It is expected that they will have taken their seats before the procession finds its way to the *plaza*, and so they return to the riverside, and follow the Ebro as far as the marketplace. By the time they arrive, the crowds are pushing and shoving. Young men have climbed upon scaffolding which has been erected in front of doorways, old women sit knitting or dandling babies on window balconies, fathers sit small children upon their shoulders. One of the halberdiers makes way for them, as their seats are among the officials at the front, where the glitter and pomp make him wonder if the King himself might be in attendance. One of his escorts takes himself off, leaving him to wonder upon the green cross which has been

erected on the platform. Discreetly, Tristram follows him with his eyes, and sees him reporting to another official. On the Englishman's demeanour, perhaps? Gazes seem to press upon him from everywhere.

The sun is well up by the time he hears the drums. There is a sudden escalation of tension and a chilling silence in which mothers and fathers quiet their children before craning their necks to see and reluctantly make space for those pushing in from behind. Only a strong row of guards prevents the crush from sweeping forward, and he must stand and turn in order to see. Above the crowd, the halberdiers' steel helmets and the tips of their halberds mark the procession as it enters the plaza. Then, higher and more visible, comes the black-draped cross of the parish, mourning the fallen souls of those whose sentences are to be pronounced. Finally, the penitents and heretics begin to appear: a long line of shuffling, shackled creatures, pelted by rotting tomatoes and grapes, and cowed by yelled obscenities he can only guess at. His eyes cannot help but seek out the old woman who fought the guards. It is a full half hour before he sees her. And there she is, at the end of the procession, naked to the waist and shrivelled, with her thick grey hair hacked off, and sat upon a donkey with her feet tied beneath like a girth. Alongside the donkey comes a flogger and another functionary whose task is to count each flail as it tears at her thin, dry skin. She emits not one sound. How will she go to her death? And what, a tiny little niggling voice asks, if she is innocent? For he cannot help but put Aunt Jane there, upon that donkey, and feel his heart quake. He prays for her. May death come quickly.

As the crowd on the ground pushes and the people on the balconies yell abuse, all sense of God's love is gone. There is no room here for love. At least, that is the message impressed upon him. This church is an angry man abusing his children, yet without even the loving kiss to heal the hurt of punishment. Naples has refused the whole thing. Naples is a place where people will forgive; where the people

search for innocence. The Neapolitanos do not want their simple lives disrupted by the presence of a rotten soul, or the interrogations and punishments that blacken the air. They are content to go to Mass and know they are forgiven. In Barcelona, there is something subtle in the air. The smell of resistance. Something that reminds him of the clanking bolts on the courtyard at Lanherne. Here, though, he senses the blunt sword of cruelty. The shadows are sharp and black. And the shape of a dark-clad woman against the harsh light comes upon him like a vulture, a warning carved out of the blue. Their black eyes pry easily into English souls and they do not pray for one's innocence. They will search for it. They will call for evidence. But in the seeking they hope to fail. What they crave is guilt, and the terror of its consequences. Only by severe punishment can a soul be saved, only through the ritual of penance, the *auto da fe*, will purity be found.

The yellow *sanbenito*-clad prisoners, with their humiliating conical hats, are lined up in front of him now. His insides squirm, and he looks away. His eyes meet those of the companion on his left, dark and gleaming as though windows to a forge fired by black Welsh coal.

'I had not expected such a glorious occasion,' he says.

'No? Strangers are often taken by surprise,' says his knowing companion. 'Let it serve you well.'

Tristram Winslade has no response to such a statement. It is a threat, a warning. It is designed to control him. To instil within him more of the fear he already feels. Then, and only then, he realises that his terror and his protection are the same thing. He has no choice but to be loyal to the Spanish king. For disloyalty is heresy and heresy will lead him here, among the wretches paraded before him. Suddenly, he understands that they have brought him here for his own protection. A double-bind that will rule his every action.

As the sun's warmth begins to reach the plaza, the officials of the Inquisition enter the arena. Upon arriving at the central dais, they bow to the Archbishop and take their thrones of power, omnipotent and fearsome in their purple, black and gold, surveying the entire scene with God's all-seeing eyes. Queen Elizabeth would envy them their gold and silver and jewels and chains; magnificence her pirates have so far failed to steal. And his thoughts flash to the rancid jealousy of Richard Grenville and the aftermath of his rabid attack.

The feast begins, and it occurs to him that this is the strangest meal ever conceived. He watches as the officials are served, and then trestles are set up for those at the front, and they move their wooden stools to best advantage. The Archbishop's men rise to guide him to the dais, where he joins a table just below that of the Holy Inquisition. There, crammed between his consorts, he settles to a banquet of roasted beef, Madeira wine and ale, breads and olives and cheeses. On a cold, cobbled space between themselves and the massing crowd, the prisoners are ordered to sit. They, too, are required to eat. It is their last supper and it is to sustain them through the day's proceedings, for they have only just begun. He smiles and laughs with his new friends, and drinks to the glory of a Spanish God.

After the banquet, a tall, grey priest takes to a pulpit erected at the side of the dais and leads Mass. Amid its quiet Latin rhythm, Tristram Winslade quells the endless churn. Familiarity blunts the sickly edge of doubt which has started to rise within him and which, he has begun to suspect, might not be quelled while he remains in this country. Confession can no longer be his comfort, for a true and honest confession of his discomfit will only lead back to the midst of this holy court. To the donning of a *sanbenito*; the scourging of flesh and the terror of the flame. As he recites the oath of allegiance to the Holy Inquisition, his whole sense of being in the world – his sense of belonging beneath the sun and sky of King Philip's empire – shrinks inside him until it becomes a hard, little walnut. Then, as the afternoon melts

away towards the night, and charges are read and sentences pronounced, he sees himself as though from an inner eye implanted in the top reach of the Inquisition's great green cross: an Englishman who has forgotten how to smile.

He is so far beyond himself, so distracted and disturbed, that he is scarcely aware of the fates of the penitents. His escort explains. Two have been repatriated to a room beneath the dais, for further quizzing, for they have recanted prior to their sentences being pronounced. If fortunate, they might be strangled before being set to the fire. Then, to the crowd's great pleasure, six are straightway relaxed to the secular jurisdiction, which will take them to the *Mercado*, to the bonfires; it is unfit for the church to burn its own flock. Then, somewhere above the roar, comes the gut-wrenching sobs of a woman's grief, but it subsides quickly, for she must surely know that such grief contains within it her own brand of heresy. The remainder of the penitents are reinstated into the auspices of the penitentiary. For them, there will be floggings, endless imprisonment, public humiliation, the galleys, or excommunication and exile. The old woman has escaped his attention. He prays for her soul, for her body is surely beyond mending and its time upon this earth is over. *What if she were innocent?* It is the question he cannot ask, let alone answer. All he longs for now, as the smell of smoke drifts over Zaragoza, is solitude. To hear his own heart beating. To listen to his thoughts. In the secret recesses of his mind, he prays they will not take him now, to witness the fires.

'Your trial is done with, sir.' One of his companions reaches inside his jerkin and pulls out a parchment. 'Here is your *asciento*. Your commission from the Archbishop of Zaragoza to proceed to El Escorial. When you get there, you should ask for your countryman, Sir Francis Englefield. It is a great pity that you will not be here tomorrow for the great burnings at the marketplace.'

Tristram is astonished. He has passed yet another trial. He is done with Zaragoza. He nods his thanks, for he cannot think of words that will not offend.

'Good night,' is all he can manage before finding himself standing alone, one among thousands, gazing at the fireglow reflected, even here, in the Moorish domes of the cathedral. The great edifice of this place appears to be ablaze while the people celebrate the day to come. Already, the pungent smells of meat seem to have taken on a tincture of human demise and the people of Zaragoza are ripe for anything. Singing, fighting, plundering. It is no place for a solitary Englishman. He retreats to the pilgrims hostel, which is dark and empty apart from a candlelit corner where a nun sits by a steaming cauldron of soup. He watches as she ladles soup into a bowl and tears a hefty chunk of bread from a loaf, then, searching through his satchel, he finds his Book of Hours. It falls open at the Mouth of Hell. He tries again. Sunday. Hours of the Trinity. Trinity with Dove and Infant Christ. Carefully, he tears it out and gives it to her. She smiles as he crosses himself, puts his hands together and bows upon a prayer. He sits on a bench and spoons hot liquid into his mouth and, with his crust, mops up the dregs. Then he finds his *palliasse* and pulls up a blanket.

Outside, the celebrations continue and the noise of it all creeps in with the moonlight. The sounds of brawling and music, laughter and song, muddle with the dark green shape behind his eyes and in the vague spaces between merging dreams. It is eyes-closed sight. In the black heart of night, the shape of his eyes is haloed with scatty purple-black edges, all pulsing and merging. Green sways, settles, then drifts away. It is the colour of the outside of his eye and it struggles with... Something. The world inside his head – inside the misshaped dome of his poor skull – is seething with colour. He sees, in vivid brilliance, painted angels against a pale blue sky and suddenly recalls a painting lesson. Master Williams is showing the boys how to find a colour's opposite. *Stare at it, a hard-etched shape of vivid colour, and then shut your eyes.*

Like God's sleight of hand, the same shape appears behind the dark, behind their eyelids, but the colour is strange and unsettling. And so they all lie upon the soft grass in the garden at Lanherne on a bright day and stare up at the blue, blue sky, then close their eyes to watch the raging bonfires that burn inside their skulls. It is a game they employ for their own amusement and at Christmas they feast their eyes upon the emerald silk of Lady Arundell's gown then close them down to see a Moorish princess robed in cochineal. The world is strange, inside his head. It is turning inside out. And here, as the clouds settle over Zaragoza, the pure white goodness of the true faith, as it is found in Spain, recasts itself. The white light of truth, in this disturbing place where his thoughts reside, has become as dark as the devil's blackest work. A line of Barcelona friars, brandishing tarnished crosses ablaze with green flames, exhorts him to kill the heretics of Cornwall. All heretics must be slain. And so, old Aunt Jane – pious Aunt Jane – is stripped of her grey woollen kirtle and fed to a fire while King Philip II of Spain feeds upon the ducks that once rippled the waters of Winslade Barton's fishponds. The inside of his head is a place he no longer knows. The clear green gaze, with which he views the world, has become the violet-grey storm cloud that huddles over the cliffs at Mawgan and cracks with rage above the house. Fear sears his thoughts. Arrows of it, all shooting in from the world outside where good is good and bad is bad, and people know what is right and wrong and do not hesitate to correct and punish. The lining of his skull, like the painted inside of a cupola, presents a paradox.

Where in Spain, he wants to know, are all the loving angels? His heart shrinks, misses a beat. He must be calm himself. Be calm. Be, and be calm. Eyes open and fill his vision with a moonlit wall. Surely, what has happened here today is beyond God's wishes, beyond His terms of justice and any sense of reason. His

fingers clasp his gold crucifix and he crawls from a sweat-drenched bed to kneel upon the hard, stone floor. Such sinful thoughts rage inside his brain. Who might he confess to, when such sin might return him to the Inquisition? What did Father Gerald teach him back in Rheims? It seems a life-time ago. The quiet of the teaching. The quest for discernment. Wrong from right. The path to God, or the path to Satan. The interior path forward. It was the only course open to him now.

One foot. Another foot. Dry, cracked leather, boot buckles broken. One foot, then the other, following each other along the chalky road. Sun beats down upon a weathered face that is unaccustomed to such fierce heat. On the horizon, a cluster of trees tantalises with the notion of water. He imagines it, cold and wet in his parched throat. He squints into the distance. A pool lies on the road. Step follows step, towards water. Saliva responds to anticipation. But no. It is a lie lying there. A lie pooled upon the road. Another lie. Another false hope. Another disappointment. The road is an uphill climb, a test against the weight of exhausted limbs and his moaning stomach. He stops to lean upon a rock, takes off the scarf that protects his neck and feels the limpid breeze upon his skin. He drinks the last remaining drops of water from his canteen and stares at the riverbed, far below. It too is parched.

An eagle soars against the deep blue sky and he thinks that never before has he seen such a colour as this deep azure, this lapis, which seems to hint at night-time blackness even in the brightest light. He has had this thought before. In Naples, perhaps. The sun burns bright white and the eagle sweeps low and fast, now nearly lost against the grey-brown escarpment. It wheels and swoops, then straightens, racing just above the rock-strewn pastureland. Nothing can touch it. Fearless warrior of the skies, keeper of clouds and rainbows, lord of nature and answerable to no one. With the speed of an arrow, it scoops up its quarry.

Distance, height. The sound of wind among the rocky tors. Up here, above the wide, wide land, there is no place for the splash or the squeak of a small animal's shock. The bird beats powerful wings to rise again, prize dangling. Victorious. And yet oblivious to its own majesty, its own singular beauty, and ignorant of the fears and doubts and terrors that plague the soul of the human watching on. Careless of observation. Unwavering in purpose. Destination sure. Home! Home! Home to the eyrie. To the mother of the eaglets in the nest, the young he will teach to fly.

Home! Home! He tells himself as he pushes away from the boulder. Higher, along the dusty track. His shoulders ache, his head pounds from heat and want of water. Ahead is a clump of trees, shimmering in the haze. This time it is no mirage. A stony village emerges from the dust and beneath a massive sycamore, two old men are playing chess. One of them stands and begins to walk along the road in his direction. He carries an earthenware carafe and Tristram thinks there must be someone – a friend – coming along the road behind him.

But no. The leathery old face, with kind, fading eyes, has stopped in front of him. Holding it out for him.

'Para ti.' For you.

Thank you! Thank you!

'Gracias.' The skin of his tilted neck is tight and the muscles of his throat struggle. He can barely swallow. But he closes his eyes on emotion and relief, and feels the motion of drinking as though he has never drunk water before. Cool, blessed cool. *'Gracias.'*

And so, he drops his bag against the trunk of the tree and sits upon a lush clump of grass that never sees the sun. Closes his eyes and feels the water replenish skin, sinew and blood. When he opens them, his gaze falls upon the distant walls of

a massive granite structure. There is no need to ask what it is. The King of Spain has built a monument to God's glory and his own indomitable faith. It is evident, even from this distance, that it is the greatest thing in Christendom.

El Escorial Monastery and Palace

Spain, October 1587

He waits in a freezing ante-chamber and gazes through a fine new leaded window at dry, rolling hills still redolent with yesterday's late summer heat. He had cursed that heat yesterday. Now, he wishes a remnant of it might blow around his ankles. It is two hours since he arrived on the back of a cart laden with great oak barrels of olive oil and wine. The barrels were welcomed with much ado and paperwork, so much pointing and ticking, even arguing, or so it seemed, until the clerk and the carter doubled up with laughter and the barrels were rolled away. Tristram was another matter, and yet nothing out of the ordinary. Just another *Inglese*, desperate for the King's mercy and money. He was directed to the gatehouse, where his papers were examined and the register signed. Then it took half an hour to find someone who could take him to someone who could ask someone else to take him to Sir Francis Englefield. And here, after all that, he waits.

Finally, a door opens and a little man appears. Very little, with a large head. A dwarf. Dressed in a grand livery of velvet, cut down to size. He bows low enough to clean the floorboards with his tongue and with the sweep of a stumpy arm, bids Tristram enter.

The room is massive. Its marble floor and vaulted ceiling seem endless. At the far end, three men in smocks are watching a fourth, who traces the outline of a robed woman onto the wall. There are ladders, trestles, the smells of tinctures and oils.

Every comment, every movement, is echoed four-fold or more by the cavernous space. This end is occupied by the library and an office, where business seems to abound. There are columns and shelves, and at each set of shelves is a drop-down secretaire piled with documents, and seated at each, a clerk engaged in an intensity of reading, scribbling, stamping, piling. Standing at a table in the middle of all this is a man who could, by his dress, be Spanish, but whose fading golden hair suggests a long-gone Viking raid. He turns and faces Tristram with his gaze fixed somewhere on the wall and an oddly vacant expression in his eyes.

‘Tristram Winslade, is it? Goodness me, sir! We meet at last. Welcome to El Escorial.’

‘Thank you for seeing me, Sir Francis.’ Winslade crosses the room to greet him and they clasp hands.

‘Anything for a friend of Gabriel Denys. All that work in Antwerp. That wretched Italian banker and poor, poor Norfolk. The Duke’s heart wasn’t in it, I fear. He was pushed too hard. As for the poor Bishop of Ross. Didn’t stand a chance once they got him into prison.’

‘Not to mention our poor Queen of Scots.’

‘God rest her soul and damn that of Cecil. I despair for our country, Winslade. I suppose you heard about your poor cousin, Anthony. Terrible business.’

Tristram’s brow furrows. ‘Anthony? Babington? What about him?’

‘Mixed up with the Queen of Scots— You mean, you haven’t heard?’

‘I’ve heard about the Queen, God bless her soul. What about Anthony? Is he all right?’

‘Oh, I hate to tell you, Winslade. They gave him a traitor’s death.’

Tristram Winsade does not know how to feel. His mother's cousin was scarcely known to him, even though their fathers met frequently in London and were on friendly terms. Another kinsman martyred. That is all he can make of it.

'God rest his soul. I did not know. And you, Sir Francis? Are you well? Gabriel mentioned your sight was causing you problems.'

'Nothing has improved. Even from here, all I see of you is a dark shape against the light that bounces off the wall. I can tell you are tall and lean and that you wear a cloak and large boots.'

The man is nearly blind, Tristram thinks. He is doing all this work, and he cannot see. He watches as the rheumy gaze struggles to put together the man before him.

'You know, Winslade, every day, I look at the pleadings of Englishmen who believe Spain should pay them a pension. I look into their eyes. I look, and I try to see. I try to find. I seek. But when I seek, I find that very few have a pedigree of Godly sorrow to match that of your father and of your good self. Your father named you well.'

'Not all in life is sorrowful, Sir Francis. I must thank you for ensuring our friends in Barcelona dealt well with me. I am in your debt.' He glances away at the busy work of courtly officialdom that surrounds them. 'But I see you are busy.'

Sir Francis Englefield drops his hands to his side as though he has, in this instance, given up a quest.

'Yes, indeed. One must keep on working. Busy, and getting busier. I have promised our friends in Brussels that I will keep at it for as long as is possible. Some desperate supplicants send me their sons. Good boys they are, too. More and more, they are my eyes and my ears. I sit mostly, and they come to me every morning, one

at a time, to read to me from their lists and to get instructions for each applicant. It is all very ordered. Just as the King likes it, for he is himself a man who likes detail. At any time, he might walk in here and say, "Tell me, Englefield, who has asked for money this week?" or "How much am I giving to the English Catholics each month?" He is unpredictable and fastidious.'

'And do all of your boys speak both English and Spanish?'

One of them looks up, smiles cheerfully and nods, and resumes his happy work.

'I insist upon it,' Sir Francis replies. 'I must have English boys to read the petitions that come in, for some are as long as a miracle play, and of course the applicants are always saints. On and on they go. Largo, though – my pint-sized friend who brought you in – he speaks not a word of English. Understands his name and my tone. If I say 'fetch my stick' he will do it, but he has no idea what a stick is. Or what the word fetch means. Fetch my stick, Largo! My stick!' Sir Francis laughs at his own joke as Largo obeys. The ungainly gait sends his left hip towards the floor and his right one lurching back and forth, as his knees take on the precarious wobbling of something that is indeed on its last legs. 'He was a present from the King, you see. Well, well. Tristram Winslade. You are not here for a pension, are you? You are here for the greatest armada the world has ever seen, are you not?'

'I am, Sir Francis.' He watches the poor creature retrieve a walking stick from a remote corner and shuffle back towards his master. This display of cruelty has all been for his own amusement and he finds his jaw is clenched.

'And how good is your Spanish?' Sir Francis asks.

Tristram sighs.

‘It is adequate for the marketplace and a bit of military work. I am not sure how I will fare in a room full of garrulous Spanish nobles and officials.’

‘Not to worry. I will be there to translate for you.’ Englefield takes his stick and leans upon it. ‘The King’s men from Madrid will arrive tomorrow, and the meeting will be held some time after that, as the King decrees. In the meantime, perhaps you will allow me to show you something?’ There is a curious smile on Englefield’s face. ‘Come with me.’ He turns to scan the room. ‘Come, Largo!’

And so the faithful idiot leads the blind, and the blind leads the soldier. For a short distance, they retrace the steps Tristram has just taken. But then, instead of going into the main courtyard, they traverse a long stone gallery. From the outside, the palace had seemed completed, but inside there are men of trade, plying their crafts and adorning this monument with Godly splendour.

‘Some months ago,’ Englefield continues, ‘the King received the holiest of gifts. It was intended for the palace but he has changed his mind – as he does – and has created for us all a great deal of work. Some of my boys are working on it in the seminary.’ He opens a massive door onto a cloistered courtyard and they walk along the granite paving to a bell-pull that is bolted onto the blocks around the doorway. ‘The seminary is not generally open to we seculars. However, this gift, as you will see, must be housed within holy walls, and yet there are not enough monks to do the work. The King will not allow it to leave the palace until the catalogue is in perfect order. But when it does leave, you must travel with it, Winslade. The King wants armed Englishmen to go with this gift to Lisbon. Where he expects me to find such men at a whim, he did not say. But you are here, so this is good news. It will add an edge to the gift, if you understand my meaning. It’s a blessing for the Armada, and for all the Englishmen sailing with her. You, of course, will be among them. And among the first to reclaim your lands.’

It is too much to digest. Had the King ordered his release from the Inquisition in order to undertake this mission? Had Sir Francis petitioned the King in such a manner in order to have him freed? Did his freedom have anything at all to do with past events? His grandfather's martyrdom? His father's service? In the midst of his confusion, the door opens and a young monk in a newly stitched habit leads them across another courtyard. There are men dealing out lengths of twine, and pegging them into the ground. There are men with barrows of soil and on the ground lie great slabs of finely hewn stone.

'There is to be a *tempietto* in the centre, here,' says Englefield, 'with four small ponds and a *parterre* garden. Daily I pray that, should it please God, heaven might deliver unto me the joy of being a monk in Philip's Spain.'

And I will move heaven to board the holy armada, Tristram Winslade thinks. They are stopped at the entrance to yet another cloister by the King's guard and sign another register.

'Largo! Stay!' Sir Francis prods his fool with his stick and makes him sit by a wall. 'He'll wait,' he mutters to Tristram, and leans upon his arm. Together they enter yet another vast granite and marble hall. Winslade stops and stares. Before them, taking up its entire length, is a row of tables cluttered with gold and silver artefacts, of skulls on platters, of crystals, of jewels. His eyes take in crosses and boxes, strange and exotic caskets, engraved, enamelled and inlaid with mother-of-pearl and precious gems.

'*Et voila!* The *recebimento!* A gift of holy relics,' says Sir Francis. 'From Don Juan de Borgia. The King has decreed that they be gifted to the church of São Roque. Let us stop at the fourth table.' Tristram's eyes are everywhere at once and Sir Francis continues with lowered voice. 'There is a relic here of St Otto of Bamberg,

and in a casket on the other side is the arm of St John the Almsgiver. Tendons, too, so I'm told. It is a favourite of mine.'

'Mother Mary!' Tristram whispers. Never has he thought to see the likes of this. He thinks of the wretched little reliquary at Bodmin and the skull of St Petrock. How flimsy, how futile. How safe is that from the likes of Grenville? As for all of this – what will it mean for the King's great fleet? How much saintly power is needed in order to harness the help of God? If the King of Spain needs all of this, what will it take for Tristram Winslade to reclaim his grandfather's lands?

Suddenly, Sir Francis releases his grip. He genuflects and Tristram follows suit. Crosses himself. Fingers the rosary that hangs from his belt. Endless days of trudging have drained him of nicety and ritual. Of course, one must honour the sacrifice laid out before them. The endless, bloody sacrifice.

He feels Sir Francis reclaim his elbow and they walk slowly down one side of the hall, taking in the awesome sight. At the far table, a slight-built man in great leather boots and billowing satin sleeves is checking off items, one by one. A secretary, he thinks and notices a silence gradually taking hold in the air. Probably his head will roll if any one of these relics is lost along the way. He watches the man as he picks up a document. It is attached to blue silk ribbon which, in turn, ties it to the clasp of a silver casket with gleaming windows. The man marks something on his list. Everyone watches. They genuflect, bow, step away.

'Come, Winslade.' Sir Francis is tugging at his sleeve. 'It does not do to disturb His Majesty when he is busy with his relics.'

'His Majesty?'

'Hush! Yes.' He lowers his voice, and leans into Tristram's shoulder. 'I sense his aura. You have detected the silence. There is no other silence like it. It ripples.'

He might utter a word but no one dares speak. He is here every day. Every day he checks lists of relics. I will let him know of your presence here tomorrow, and get paperwork done for the expedition. But now, he will demand to be left alone. We must go. Come, come. We must go.'

Tristram cannot take his eyes from the King, who looks up suddenly at a hand that has stretched too far across the table and slaps it away with a regal yap. The King's eyes survey the room and catch those of a stranger. Just then, Sir Francis grabs at his arm. But Tristram's gaze is glued to the regal eyes of the Spanish king to whom his father has been bound, and in turn bound him. He bends his knees and bows.

Sir Francis misunderstands the movement.

'No one must touch the relics,' he says, and suddenly loses his balance. A minor stumble, but together they cause the trestle to rock. 'Oh, Holy Father, forgive me. Winslade, I have insufficient sight for rushing, and yet we must leave.'

'But the King!'

'He will not want us here!'

Indeed, the King's attention has been diverted by a clerical matter. His nose is buried in a catalogue and a secretary is quaking in his velvet slippers. Winslade is aghast and yet relieved. Such a close thing. They retrieve Largo and walk through cloisters and courtyards, up a flight of marble stairs, along great halls. At every corner, the day's end catches the granite walls with pink and orange, and long shadows fall across the gardens.

'You must rest with me in the village tonight,' Sir Francis says, as they re-enter the library, where he fetches his cloak and gloves and waves a hand at Largo. 'Go, Largo. Go home. My friend will guide me tonight.' Then he turns to Tristram. 'It

will be a treat for my poor wife to hear about Barcelona's rather curious Inquisition. A change from the endless stream of Englishmen who are grasping around for sympathy and a pension and telling us horror stories about Zaragoza.'

Pondering over the idea of sympathy, Tristram retraces his steps through the vast Escorial palace and walks with Sir Francis Englefield to a free-standing house in the Escorial village. It is a strange sight. The old village is small, but there are newer buildings everywhere.

'Lady Englefield will never be happy in Spain,' Sir Francis tells him, as they walk through a garden that is trying to be English. 'But these houses are so well built and the windows fit so tightly, there is not a draught anywhere. Not even in winter. Marvellous system. You see, it was only when new tradesmen had proven their skills in the village that Herrera would suffer them to work on the King's great palace. Three thousand men working here. And women, of course, with their lace and needlework. It was like an army garrison. Much of it pulled down, now, of course. But can you imagine? A boon for the village, and a blessing now to be able to live here, especially when one considers the state of England.'

The next morning, as though to confirm her husband's opinion, Lady Englefield piles a yellow omelette onto an earthenware platter while her maid brings bread and bacon from the kitchen. After the bacon and omelette, there is toast and honey, and a spicy mulled wine. This realm, he sees, beyond the horrors it rejoices in, is awash with comforts and sweets, with gold and silver, with rosaries and saints. Can it be God's reward? Does He truly condone the cruelty that ensures such compliance?

Sir Francis is expounding upon the risk to the relics of bandits and Winslade has just poured more wine, when they hear the village clock chiming.

‘It is time for Mass,’ Englefield says. ‘You cannot enter the King’s palace without a clean soul.’

Four days later, he sits beneath a willow and watches the horse take its fill from a gently rippling stream. The meeting had taken three days. He had sat through hours of Spanish spoken too quickly for his comprehension and was beyond exhaustion. He had, at least, worked out who was who. The Cardinal of Toledo was obsessive about the conversion of England’s heretics. The King’s Secretary of War was obsessive about the weapons being transported to Lisbon. The Secretary of State was obsessive about the number of apparently aimless people wandering around the Escorial village. The Duke of Medina Sidonia wanted no part of any Armada and had spent half of yesterday pleading his lack of seamanship before storming out in a fit of fury. On the second day, Tristram Winslade was called upon to report on the true nature of Catholic sentiment in Cornwall and Devon, being the two counties closest to Spain. The people there, he told them, would follow a respected leader into any cause, but they were particularly fond of their old religion, and would rise again if necessary. Were they not heretics, the Cardinal insisted. No, your Grace. Just trying to stay alive and pray to God as best they could. The path they are forced to tread tears at their souls and gnaws at their consciences.

Suddenly, a cold breeze springs up and the willow’s tendrils shimmer around him. Of course. Willow. The name of Humphrey’s kestrel. It is something he has forgotten without realising. Now it sits at the front of his head, and he realises the stream he sits beside is lined by the trees of this name. He laughs at his own absurdity.

Willow. What he would give to see her again, soaring against the sky.

Lanherne, Cornwall

There she is, plummeting to skim the fields, hovering, hovering, before darting at her prey. Mouse, rat, dormouse, lizard. Whatever it was. Gone in seconds. Or sometimes tasted and spat out. And Humphrey running across the fields like a lunatic, gloved fist aloft. Calling, calling. Willow! Willow!

It is a clear autumn day. He is eighteen years old, or thereabouts, and stands alone by the hearth in the hall, his face still tingling with cold winter air. They have ranged widely, he on horseback as guardian of Pippa and little Dorothy who, at eleven, is fast becoming quite a lady of Lanherne and must ride out whenever she so desires: today, to watch Humphrey fly Willow across the icy hard countryside. The kestrel has soared, glided, plummeted, hovered. A dark speck against a silver sky, a streak against the farmland. But it is too cold outside for little Mistress Dorothy, and so while the other young men stay with Humphrey and take their time coming home, he has been forced to return to the house. Now, he is in the hall, alone by the fire and pouring a cup of mulled wine. A door creaks and Pippa appears with a cloth-lined basket. She brings to him the spicy scent of hot saffron cakes.

'The minx has demanded a bath,' she murmurs, as she places the basket on the table and stretches her hands out towards the fire. 'So I've been sent with the cakes.'

'She is a demanding young woman,' he observes.

'She exhausts me,' Pippa says. 'I would rather be put to work with the sheep.' She laughs at herself. 'Well, no, not really.' She turns to Tristram, eyes bright. 'Promise me you won't tell anyone I said so.' Her gaze stays upon him, as though she has never looked at him before. What is she seeing?

He sees that her green shawl has been constructed from patched pieces of cloth in a myriad of forest colours, from brown to green to blue-bell blue. It is the green that dominates,

but the blue-bell picks out the colour of her eyes. Blue, like his father's. He wonders what her father was like, the renegade captain who led Cornwall into war.

She sighs happily and her hands drop to her sides as she stretches and straightens her back. It is a natural movement, but the intake of breath lifts her breasts and lengthens her neck. She is lovely, he thinks. His finger wants to trace the outline of her jaw, her neck, her delicate shoulder; instead it finds her left hand and tugs at the longest finger of her glove. Tug, tug. It moves, and so he finds another, and gives another gentle pull. Tug, tug.

'I promise,' he says, and smiles back. 'No sheep for Pippa, but a funny little black one for petting.' He senses her held breath and tugs again, and the glove comes away. He folds it into the warmth of his palm, and with a gentle finger, strokes the inside of her wrist. 'Be mine,' he whispers.

Does she hear him above the rowdy bustle as the doors are thrown open and boots hit the flags? Does he feel, or simply imagine, in the second before she reaches for the jug of wine, the gentle pressure of her thumb upon his wrist?

In a tiny tavern, a round, dark serving woman places before him sausage meat of hearty heat, eggs cooked in a meaty broth, some wholesome bread and a jug of water, so cool and clear it may have sprung from a holy well. Even in winter, the full force of the Spanish sun is in the food. Is this what raises their blood-lust? Enables the Spanish soul to forebear their Inquisition? He begins to think that the coolness of his homeland ensures a temperate populace, which even when aroused will balk at over-zealous passion.

He tries to ask her, through a sort of mime, whether the heat of the food heats the heart and heats the head. But his antics frighten her. She shakes her head. You go, she says. Next place is Aravelo. Good bed for you. He nods. *Si*. And so, in

anticipation of a good bed, he walks and walks with a weak winter sun upon his back and a cold wind in his face. His cheeks are raw with weather. His eyes water and his nose runs. With more relief than he can express, he enters the town of Aravelo and makes his way to the marketplace. On a corner, opposite a church, is a hostel and an ostler is touting for business. Gratefully, he dismounts and hands over the reins. A sudden sweat overwhelms him and he shivers uncontrollably. There are people sitting outside, around a brazier. There are dogs snarling for a fight. Inside, it is dark and warm. Only a few sparse candles light the faces of those playing cards or chess. He sits upon a high three-legged stool at the bar and is enveloped by the dim, smoky room. Can he smell apples, baked with cloves? It is enough to have his mouth watering, and soon he is a trembling mess; the sick and weary traveller is so common that the hostess pays no mind.

'Inglese?' she asks, and he nods. *'From Madrid, how long since?'*

Tristram struggles to remember. Five days. Five slow days. The blackened rafters swell and the ceiling dips as though to meet the floor.

'You need rest. Si?'

He nods. *Si. See.* Watches as she pushes a register and quill towards him.

'Your name here, Señor Inglese.'

She has deep brown eyes. Almost black. Like Giuliana's. And beneath her woollen bodice, she wears pristine white linen that contrasts with her Spanish skin. He takes the quill, and signs. Tristram Winslade. Then, as he crosses the second 't' with his usual flourish, the implement shakes in his hand and skids across the page. Ink splashes her white sleeves. He goes to apologise, but the blot is suddenly everywhere. The whole world is ink and he hears something like panic.

When he wakes, it is to a bright room. Whitewashed walls and nothing at the window to keep the midday light away. He squints and pulls the blanket up over his face. Closes his eyes, ready to drift away, where it is peaceful and he does not have to think. But the bed is damp. He is drenched. He pushes the covers back and tries to sit, but the room moves and it is hard to balance. *I am sick*, he thinks. *Someone has taken care of me*. Pippa? But no. Reality creeps onwards. Outside, a loud Spanish argument is brewing. Is he in Spain? He shifts back towards the wall and rests his head against it. He pulls up his knees and drags the thick feather quilt up to his chin. He sits there, trying not to shiver. His feet feel strange and when he reaches down to touch them, finds they are bandaged. On a small table, just within reach, is a small jug and a crudely shaped earthenware cup, and so he leans carefully and pours. A homely aroma of warm lemon juice, honey and garlic works at his throat and he gulps it down. And as he sits, still and silent, he feels the stealthy bitter-sweetness nudging his life force. His God is still with him. His fingers seek his gold crucifix. It is still there.

'Señor Vinslade! You awake.' A woman is standing in the doorway with a book in one hand and crossing herself with the other. She mutters a prayer. *'It is God's will.'*

He stares at her. Who is she? And where is he?

'Inglese, many here in Spain like you.' She screws up her nose. *'Catholic Inglese who do no good. But you – you have good papers. You will sail, I think. Sail for our King.'* She looks at him, as though awaiting confirmation. She furrows her brow. *'You sleep for one whole day, Señor, but you are not well yet.'* She drags a chair from the other side of the room. *'Sit. I fix. Then, more sleep.'*

She pushes him onto the hard, wooden chair. He is weak and the air is cold. He nearly falls to the floor. Instead, he leans into the wall and watches as she pulls

and pushes at the bed. When the mattress is pummelled and softened, she goes to the fireplace, takes a thick glove from a peg and lifts a warming pan from the embers. His eyes follow her, as she slowly touches the heat to the mattress and quilted cover. Her kindness, he thinks, is almost unbearable.

‘Good now,’ she says. ‘Come.’ And she takes him by the shoulder and guides his wilting frame into the nest she has made. ‘Sleep,’ she says, and covers him with blankets.

He tries to open his mouth, to thank her...

Sleep, sleep. More sleep. Then more, and more. Giddy dreams, murky with confusion and dread. Water and preserved lemons. Water and preserved oranges. Sleep, sleep and more sleep. Feet and bandages. Sit up, lie down. Tea made with God knows what. Thudding raindrops on the window pane. Groaning winds. Thunder and lightning. Light-filled mornings, squinted at through heavy lids. Chicken broth brings on a sweet green dreamscape: new rapiers and sword-play in the courtyard at Lanherne; hawking on a russet moor with Humphrey; galloping his horse – his own beautiful bay mare – along the spume-ragged beach at Mawgan, a howling winter gale at his back. And as Tristram Winslade tosses and trembles, a night of scudding clouds sails by, its drifting moonlight playing over the Madonna on the wall. Days and nights go by. He is standing at a fireplace, with cake and mulled wine, suddenly aware of Pippa’s life-force, right there beside him. Her smiling eyes, her pretty teeth. I love her, he thinks. I truly do. His eyes open and he blinks with the shock of being awake. *I think you will sail.* Who said that? When? Where?

He lies perfectly still, listening to his body. His head is quiet, his heart beats. His stomach growls with hunger.

'I have been ill,' he says aloud, and wonders at the strangeness of his voice.

Suddenly, someone rushes from the room and he hears Spanish being shouted all around the house. There are footsteps rushing up the stairs.

'*Santa Maria, Mater Dei!*' She is standing in the doorway, eyes wide in astonishment. 'Oh, *Inglese*, you live!' Sinks to her knees, and mutters her thanks to God. Then, her smile wide, she tries to regain her composure. She hauls herself to her feet and brushes a strand of black hair from her eyes. 'Your feet, *Inglese*. Let me show.'

Powerless to prevent it, Tristram Winslade watches as the blankets are peeled back from the foot of the bed, to reveal his own two feet, covered with knitted socks that are tied at the ankles with blue ribbon. It is the most absurd sight he has ever beheld. He snorts with laughter and ends up coughing. Then he hears children laughing, and notices that the room has filled with people. She shoos them away and sits by his bed, breathing heavily, as though she might cry.

'You not die, but – close. Father Pedro, he come. But I say to God, I fix feet of *Inglese*, so you save his life. I tell God, this is the way it is. He owe me. That is what I tell to God. He owe me.'

Tristram Winslade almost quakes. Who – what – is this woman?

'My feet? They were bad?'

'Pooh.' She holds her nose. 'Like pigs. Good now?'

He flexes muscles, wriggles his toes. He smiles.

'My feet – they are very good.'

'Now, we look.'

Gently, she moves pillows so that he might sit up and wonder at his lower extremities as the socks, upon removal, release a clean whiff of menthol. Before his eyes are the cleanest, softest, pinkest feet ever known to grace an adult Cornish leg. Can this pristine landscape really be his skin? Where are the callouses, the corns, the infected sores, the cuts, the bruises, the torn nails? Are these specimens really his? He can almost hear the cat-calling in the dormitory at Lanherne and flushes with embarrassment. But something else has entered his mind...

'How long have I been here?'

She flashes her fingers at him. Ten, twenty, thirty, forty.

'Forty days?'

'*Si*. I think, *Inglese*, he die. But no. I say to God, no. *Inglese* must live!'

He reaches for her, takes one of her work-hardened hands in his.

'God bless you. Thank you.'

Christmas, it seems, has come and gone. Deep winter is upon Castile and nothing has ever felt as cold as the blast coming down from the north. Not just wind, but sleet and snow, and colder than anything he has known in Cornwall. He is still weak and cannot walk further than the well. When he gets there, he lowers the pail by rope until it cracks ice, then lowers it further into the chilled depths. But he cannot wind it up again; the weight of wood and water drags at his shoulders, arms and heart.

'*Inglese*,' she says, seeing his struggle with the pail. 'You silly man. That how you say?'

He seeks the help of a boy to steady it, yet still they splash the snow-slush cobbles as the water spills. He sighs his despair and struggles back to the kitchen, where the fires are too tempting to ignore. His money has run out and he now scrapes carrots and peels beans and onions in return for the lodgings that have kept him alive.

Her name is Agueda and he learns to pronounce it with a lilt she can abide. Everyone in Arevelo knows Agueda by one single name. She is not Agueda, daughter of some simple-souled bean grower. Nor is she Agueda, daughter of the mayor, or the doctor, or anyone at all. She is simply Agueda. Sole heiress of an old man whose father, and father before him had run the hostel at the sign of two angels, near the marketplace. Gradually he learns that despite her best ministrations two years ago, her betrothed had succumbed to an *ague*. So, when the man who collapsed to the floor of her tap room proved to be an Englishman in the service of the Spanish King, Agueda decided it was her duty to save him. And now, as he slumps onto a stool and rests his forearms upon her workbench, as he looks into her smiling face, he knows she has laid a claim to him.

The notion gives pause for many thoughts. She might say he is a silly man, but the fire is warm on his back and he sips on her strong fortified wine. A man could be happy here with Agueda. She has a good business, with good profit and no debt. The property, she owns outright. She goes to Mass twice a week, but says her prayers thrice daily. Every morning, she oversees the departure of guests; every afternoon she welcomes more and the smells from her kitchen ensure that travellers and pilgrims are willing to pay in advance. The kitchen itself is a cavern of steaming pots. There are two cooks, and servants for the washing and cleaning, but still there is no room for rest.

Tonight, by the inadequate light of three candles, she is repairing the sleeves of his linen shirt, and disguises fraying cuffs and ruffs with solid Spanish black work. He has had ruffs before, but never such embroidery. His pleasure is surprising, and he suddenly thinks he could marry her. Have handsome children who would never know a day's misery. Spanish children, wearing white linen with black stitching over their beautiful Spanish skin. He longs to touch her. To caress her cheek with the back of his hand. His breath catches in his throat and he feels his face burning. He reaches for his jar of ale and drinks.

The next day, they walk to the market. Agueda needs grain for tomorrow's bread, as well as pork and beans. It is the same, day after day. The bounty of Castile reflects a country too far from the sea. When did he last taste fish? Barcelona? Suddenly, his imagination conjures up the oily taste of mackerel, of plaice, bass, cod, monkfish. It overwhelms his tongue and the salty smell of sea spray is in his nostrils. From the marketplace, while Agueda sifts grain with her fingers, he looks out across the square, where just last week a torrent washed away part of the cobbled road leading to one of the city gates. A group of men is shaping new stones. It is like pre-history, he thinks in amazement. When men spent a day to sharpen a solitary flint, just to shape a spearhead. What is he doing here, with this woman? Has she set out to tame him? Has she succeeded?

Then, a bolt of lightning. 'Tristram Winslade!'

The sound of western Cornwall leaps into his heart and he turns to find the familiar face of Dickon Arundell. He is standing on the side of the road in a sheepskin jerkin and fleecy-lined boots, a black felt hat pressed hard upon his forehead.

'Dickon! What joy to see you!'

‘We do fetch up together in the strangest of places,’ says Dickon. ‘I believe we are both headed for Lisbon?’

‘You’re not sailing with the fleet, surely?’

‘No! No! I have a cargo of books. I am bound first for Valladolid, then Lisbon.’

‘I left Escorial with a litter of the King’s relics,’ Tristram says. ‘But I fell ill and have no idea where they’ve got to, or even if they’re safe. I’ve been here for weeks.’

‘Englefield heard you were taken ill. It’s all right. The relics were well guarded, as you know. Have you recovered?’

‘Well enough, I think. But forty days gone from my life. How good it is to see a countryman!’ Questions tumble into his head as the English language pushes for release. He is suddenly tired of Spain. Despite Agueda, he is exhausted. Tired of not understanding the local dialect. Tired of the mistrust. Tired of the assumption of heresy, and the ever-present need to prove his faith.

Spanish children? What has he been thinking? Illness and winter might have softened the black shadows of this country; turned them to harmless shades of grey. But they have turned his resolve to muck. Come summer, the pounding heat and endless light will send out Spain’s prying torch-bearers and have them searching every heart and every soul for any jot of heresy. And the sharp black shadows of cruelty and punishment will return.

‘Tristram, word came to El Escorial – I’m sorry, but your father has passed into the next world to be with God. God bless his soul.’

He sees Dickon cross himself, but is incapable of moving. Of speech.

‘He was in the care of the Jesuit Fathers at São Roque, above Lisbon,’ Dickon explains. ‘They sent his worldly possessions to Sir Francis Englefield, such as they

were.’ Dickon retrieves a small drawstring pouch from his own sack of belongings. ‘Apparently this arrived at the Palace just a few days after you left.’

Tristram takes it. He cannot bear to look inside. He hangs the pouch around his neck and it hangs there, in front of him, next to his poor faltering heart, like something dead. Something hunted, now gone. A rabbit or a hare. Quite dead. And gone. Still, he cannot speak. He waits for the lump to form in his throat. Waits for the tears. There is nothing. Just as there always has been. He does not notice that Dickon is steering him towards the church, for his head is full of thinking. Did the traveller pass him on the road? Did he stay at Agueda’s hostel while Tristram was upstairs, in the grip of his illness? Did they pass on the road from El Escorial? How could he not have sensed it?

They push open the door of the Church of Santa Maria and make their way to the chapel of the Holy Virgin Mary, where for the smallest of coins one can light a candle. He has no coin, and so Dickon buys one for him and he rails at his ancestors for their deeds. He rails at his grandfather for risking so much and losing it. He rails at his father for dealing with the Spanish king and using him as a pawn. And for leaving him with no choice but to pound his way, step after relentless bloody step, across Europe. All so that he might return to where he started from.

He sits in the church in cold, grey Aravelo and rants in anger and disbelief as Dickon quietly listens. At some point, the priest comes to see what is wrong, for Tristram is disturbing prayers. Dickon sends him away with a gold coin. Finally, as the insipid daylight begins to fade into night, they wander to an inn at the edge of the town. They are served beef with peppers, pickled onions and olives, a loaf of wheaten bread and a carafe of red wine.

And suddenly, as his anguish subsides, he finds himself loving Spain all over again. Spain did not execute his grandfather. Spain did not kill his father. Spain has

not taken his lands. Nor is it full of putrid heresy. Spain is hard; it is cruel in its godliness. Its shadows might be forbiddingly sharp and black, but Spain is hope. Spain is his only hope. And it is not the hope of rest, marriage and procreation. It is the shining hope of going home, as lord of his people. Already, in his mind, he sees sunlight upon the sails of great Spanish galleons as though he were standing on the cliff-top at Porthleven. Watching. He sees sunlight upon the sandy beaches of Cornwall and the green hills of Devon. He sees sunlight, even as the moon rises over Arevelo's dark streets.

The next morning, he rises early and is distressed by Agueda's tears. Where had he been last night? Did he have no care for her feelings? She had thought he had gone without saying goodbye. He is distressed. But why? Because she is distressed? Or because he has been the cause? Was it the fact of the distress itself? Or was it the woman herself? What did he feel for her?

He cannot answer the questions that flood his mind. She has dedicated herself to his wellbeing. To the body that houses his soul. That was her choice. Perhaps it was her duty, for he is an officer in the King of Spain's army. His body must be fit for its purpose. And his purpose is to reach Lisbon before the end of winter. First, he must rebuild his heart and muscle.

Tristram Winslade picks up the handles of a brick-laden wheelbarrow, and pushes it up to the bridge. The men making the road fail to understand. Isn't he ill? He does it for four days. For four afternoons, they send him home exhausted to Agueda's warm kitchen. Every night, alone in the room that has become his, he opens his father's pouch and examines its meagre contents. His cherry wood rosary. The familiar gold crucifix, with Christ's figure wrought in pewter. And a piece of folded parchment holding a discoloured pressed flower. Tiny, white flowers with a

hint of pink at the centre, amassed along a stem. The leaves, long and slender, have all but disintegrated. But Tristram knows this flower. He knows why his father carried it. Meadowsweet. It was growing at Fenny Bridges, and on Clyst Heath, all those years ago. When England slaughtered its own countrymen. And there is a key. He returns the remnants of his father's life to the pouch and ties its leather thongs. All except the key. He turns it over and over between his fingers. What did his father leave behind in England? What happened to his oak chest, and why had he not left the key with Daniel? What about the books he had brought back from Italy? The court rolls? The ancient family papers? And whatever became of the White Spur patent, complete with the King's signature? And where is his sword?

There is nothing he can do to find the answers to such questions and it is time to go. He sits upon his bed and takes his Book of Hours from his satchel. Soon he will be home. He tears a handful of pages from their binding and leaves them on the table where, day after day, week after week, Agueda has placed her healing tonics. He looks one more time around the room, fastens his great leather coat and goes downstairs; she will be in her little office.

He puts his leather hat upon the counter and looks at her. Looks at the frown line between her brows, the strong line of jaw and cheeks, the startling contrast between the dark of her eyes and their whites, and the way she purses her lips. It is here that he signed his name so many weeks ago. Where a feverish quill splattered her pristine linen with ink.

'Agueda, I owe you –'

Upon a short intake of breath, she silences him with a raised hand.

'*Inglese*, you do God's work for the King. He pay. You pay. All is paid.' But the effort to sustain an imperious gaze is betrayed by tears. With her right hand, she reaches across the blackened oak counter and the bulky register to take hold of his

head. Draws him to her and kisses his dry, cracked lips with her plum-wine mouth. 'When you do your work, come back. We dance to Tommaso's fiddle. You shall be my handsome Spanish Prince, *Inglese*. My English Prince of Spain.' She tries to laugh. 'You see how good my English is now?'

Her hand is in his hair, and he covers it, takes her fingers, kisses them.

'God knows –' He tangles her fingers in his, and stops himself. He cannot let it be. There is nothing left to do but kiss her again. Heat rises, thoughts fly. He is close to lost. A cold blast comes from the outside door as it opens, and footsteps ring upon the tiled floor. He lets her go, picks up the quill and signs his name.

Lisbon, April 1588

The tepid warmth of candlelight descends like a blessing after the chill wind coming up from the Tagus. It is like walking into a freshly-hewn cherry wood jewel box, with its square-cornered, windowless altar, fully endowed with gilt and colour, gloriously rich with the King's relics. For weeks, now, São Roque has become a site of pilgrimage for the Englishmen bound for home. Like many of them, Tristram's gaze is distracted by the scaffold and pulleys which adorn the left side of the nave and as he follows their lead, he sees the painter, Francisco Venegas, lying on his back on a wide plank, adding a motley purple hue to a series of oddly angled arches. An illusion of domes under construction.

Tristram stands quite still. He inhales the scents of tallow smoke, bees wax, frankincense and charcoal and releases them on a sigh. His humours settle and his heart slows after the hard up-hill walk. And so, he watches another man's work, marvelling that one might lie up there and be paid by the King of Spain – and of Portugal – to do such work. All across Europe, it is happening. Great churches are being adorned for God's glory, and while Europe paints, creates and lavishes love on

their places of worship, the English are forced to worship in churches stripped of their ancient friezes and plundered of their gold and silver. Here, in Lisbon, the beating heart of God is alive and strong and true. He thanks the Lord for allowing his father to rest here.

He lights candles. For John, for William. For poor Anthony Babington. May his kinsmen rest in peace. Another for Pippa, the thought of whom rallies hope that the fleet will sail strong and true. Respect, duty and hope. Deeds, not words. He wanders, still marvelling. At the front, the flattened stone arch, rosy pink in the candlelight, is an eon from the gloomy granite arches he knows at home. And at the side, light pours in. He kneels to pray. Blessed Virgin, Mother of God. Blessed Saint Roche, keeper against the plague. But Tristram has no prayer to make. Despite the peace, despite his wonder, his mind is too busy for deep, uncluttered thought. The King's armada is a great enterprise, of that he is sure. But so much depends upon its success, and so much might go wrong. And yet, and yet... Surely, God will see them through. Surely. It does not bear thought, here in this wondrous place, that the Lord might back the heretic queen. She surely deserves the onslaught being prepared down at the harbour.

His thoughts continue to wander and his stomach growls. He has been assigned a place upon the *Rosario*, a great merchant ship converted to the massive galleon that will carry a third of the *empresa's* wealth. Gold that will convert the doubtful, buy favours from the willing, enable the Spanish invaders to trade peaceably with their English subjects, for the King was once the Queen of England's husband and he has no quarrel with those with true Catholic hearts. And there are thousands of them. Today, the *Rosario* is leading her squadron down to Belem, where it is to be loaded with extra guns – stone throwers, for more effective attack against the personnel on enemy ships. Valdés is clearly anticipating close contact with the heretic's navy.

He rises and seeks the confessional. The Portuguese priest neither understands, nor has the patience for an Englishman and so Tristram walks out into the square and across to the hospice. He rings a bell but, once again, there is no one who can understand him. Then, in a grassy space between the hospice and the church, he finds a small cemetery, fenced off from the square. He opens a creaking gate and wanders among the wooden crosses erected for the penniless. It takes less than five minutes to find it. There, on a cross by the church wall, he makes out the name, painted and already faded. Villem Vinsglade. Even in death, he has been mangled and lies forever in a pauper's grave beneath a foreign sky. How he died no longer matters. Plague, pox, fever. It is now all the same, and means nothing.

Tristram sits upon the stony ground, his back against the wall of the church, trying to recall the last time he ever saw his father. His coming of age? Surely not so long ago. There must have been Christmases. Hadn't he once sailed up to Northam? He has a memory of seeing his mother, but his father... No image comes to mind. All he can see is the face of a man who hands him a quill, watches as he signs his life to Spain and then will not meet his eyes. He struggles to his feet on the sandy sloping ground and looks down upon Villem Vinsglade.

'Farewell Father. May God protect your soul. I'm sorry you will not see the success of this Armada. It is bound for glory. And when I have our lands back, I shall come back for your bones and take them to Cornwall.' Finally, emotion fills his throat. 'You never were a Devonshireman, were you? You were Cornish, through and through. Perhaps that was half your problem.'

He walks across the small square and stares out across the city, where the river is a blinding swathe of light.

The walk down from São Roque is a blessed contrast to the muscle-cruelling walk up. He pulls at his scarf and holds onto his hat, for the wind threatens to toss it away. At the bottom of the hill, he turns straight into the westering sun. It is a long way from sinking, though, and pounds into his face. It hits water and sand, and the sparkles of light amid the swarming ships and small craft remind him of Penzance in mid-summer. Finally, he locates the *Rosario*. As an unattached officer, a soldier and an Englishman, there is no place for him until the fleet is ready to sail and so he has a room in the house of a widow, right in the midst of a port that never sleeps. Dickon, of course, has a cavernous room in the cathedral precinct and is wakened only by bells.

It is mayhem here at Belem. Watched by the guards in the great *Torre*, hundreds of people have gathered as the galleons are armed and loaded. The soldiers and sailors are mostly Spanish, but the Portuguese have turned out in their gaudy colours, jangling as much gold and silver as will not weigh them down. Never has he seen such a display of opulence, for this is a city where anyone with the merest thought towards making money can achieve his goal. Merchants, grocers, butchers, cleaners, washer women, vintners, milliners, icon makers, barrow boys, tailors, brewers, inn-keepers, apothecaries, soothsayers, touts, gamblers, prostitutes. This massive port, with endless ships unloading endless cargoes of spices, sugar, coffee beans, silk, gold and silver, is unlike anything he has imagined. There is a market for everything and, from the incessant noise, it seems as though everyone wants something. Away from the quayside, beneath some trees, he smells smoke and fish. Some fishermen have set up open-air fires and are selling squid and cod, cooked on a griddle and served on slabs of bread. The sound of duelling mandolins rings out and, in a dusty square, young girls begin a dance. This is no place for the soulful *fado*. It reminds Tristram of the furry dance. He smiles at the thought of these people, starting an impromptu line and weaving in and out of other people's houses.

Here, away from the walled city and its shadows, cathedrals and strutting officialdom, is a celebration like none other. The city has simply erupted with the excitement of a great expedition.

He buys a sardine and some olives and finds shelter from the wind beside the trunk of a wide-spreading cypress. He sits on the ground, his back to its trunk, and feels the cooler air caress his neck.

'A'right,' he grunts to the grizzled fisherman who might have been asleep there. It does not pay to speak Spanish to the Portuguese, but their language is beyond him. He takes off his hat and the loose Spanish jerkin Agueda made for him, and as his eyes adjust to this shaded world, he notices the man's hands are knotted and hard, almost blackened with misuse. He passes the olives, and watches, intrigued, to see the fingers nimbly take one. Hears grunted thanks.

And so they sit, side by side, beneath this enormous tree, between its gnarly roots. The old man takes up a ball of twine and Tristram watches as he pulls out the thread and winds it around his flattened hand, which rests palm-down upon his thigh. Twice around his hand, and crossing over, then on the third time around, making a braid with the first two rounds. And then again, and again, making a tight, circular braid. The old man's fingers grasp and pull, tug and tie, as agile as a boy's. Then, from a grimy leather pouch, he takes a shell and threads it onto the twine for the final round of braiding before hacking off the end with a knife. A bracelet, decorated with a shell.

'Show me how?' Tristram wags a finger to and fro and points to his palm, flat against his thigh.

The old man unthreads a length of twine – a long length, too much, Tristram thinks – cuts it, and gives it to him. Then he takes up the end for his own use.

'Como isso.'

Tristram feels the tug of a smile break the hard, crusting skin around his mouth as he copies each move the old man makes. His own hands are weathered now, freckled and spotty with hard bits of skin that he pulls off only to notice them again, two weeks later. Not even Agueda's oils, liberally plied, have managed to rid him of them. But this is good. This camaraderie in a foreign land is soothing.

The fine movement tests his fingers, and he fumbles. But a clumsy bracelet begins to emerge and he gratefully takes the offered shell. The thread, though, will not pass through the tiny hole in its smooth white surface and starts to fray. He sucks on it, trying to bring the strands together. He feels the jab of an elbow and finds the old man smiling at him.

'Aqui!'

The old man is holding a jar of fat, and dips a finger into it. He wipes it over the thread, drawing the frayed ends together and passes it easily through the fragile shell. Then he takes the braid from Tristram and completes it with some expert tightening, a final round of knotting and another application of fat to seal the ends.

Tristram pats him on the shoulder.

'Gracias!' He gasps at what might be a mistake. He has spoken in Spanish. 'I'm sorry,' he adds. 'I do not speak your language.'

There is no reply to this. What can the old fisherman say? The olives are gone and so they sip on ale from their canteens. Tristram fingers the braided bracelet, runs the tip of his thumb over the edge of the shell. For Pippa, he thinks, and with his thoughts turning to the *Rosario*, the ship that will take him to her, he gets slowly to his feet. He shakes the old man's hand, slings his canteen over his shoulder and makes his way through the crowds, into the blinding sun.

There are several hundred soldiers aboard the *Rosario*, among them seven Englishmen. To portside, the Scilly Islands rise out of the sea, and Tristram Winslade imagines the soldiers at Godolphin's fortress standing stock-still with fascination. Might they forget to light their bonfire – the warning sign for the miners and fishermen of Penwith?

Valdés is fuming and orders all extraneous personnel out of the way as the fleet takes on the formation Medina Sidonia has insisted upon. Many of the fleet's officers believe it will lead to catastrophe. How can a tightly packed, crescent-shaped formation work upon a rolling swell, with winds coming from any which way as day turns to night? It is designed to protect the flagships, and among these is the *Nuestra Señora del Rosario*, leading her Andalusian squadron. Armed with forty-six guns, she carries 150,000 escudos in gold and towers over the fourteen vessels which are to protect her.

A sudden roar of command is heard, and a flurry of activity and unfurling of sails follows. There is nothing for a soldier to do but watch and try to control the soaring sense of anticipation that is stewing in his guts. He feels for Valdés, whose resentment at having his opinions ignored by a man with no naval experience is becoming more apparent by the moment. But his orders are clear, and midshipmen scramble and climb, ropes slide and fly. A call comes from the bow – the anchor is aweigh – and with precision timing, sails unfurl. The old, oak-framed hull heaves and groans, and the grand old merchant ship launches herself, drawing her flotilla around her as cygnets to their mother until the soldiers and sailors on board the squadron's various smaller vessels can converse over the sound of the sea's heaving swell.

On the crowded poop-deck, Winslade's grimy hands, knotted and knuckled, clutch at the bulwark as the galleon rears and falls. Salt spray hits him in the face

and the wind chills him to the bone. His eyes water and his cheeks tingle. There is no choice but to remove his hat, and let his close-cropped head feel nature's fury. His coat, its buttons gone, flaps around his thighs. His armour might help, but it is below in the stinking cabin and he does not want to lose his place. To forget the cold, he tunes his ears to any signal from the boy in the crow's nest that might mean 'Land Ho'. It will surely only be a short time before the Lizard rises as a pale grey blur above the horizon. Home. Nearly home. It is so close, he can taste it.

Then, it comes. Land ahead. A sudden skirmish of jostling soldiers comes up from below deck and presses in behind him, everyone craning for a look at England. And to be sure, even though the view ahead is blocked by the *Rosario's* magnificent sails and the rolling rumps of the other ships, a few minutes later, those on the poop deck espy Cornwall's great southern peninsula. Tristram's breath is stuck in his throat. How long has it been?

Each of the fourteen ships in the squadron is now trimming its sails, heeding the call to tighten formation. Indeed, the entire fleet, all one hundred and thirty ships, is so expertly sailed that a soaring gull might look down upon a great fist of oak, calico, bronze and gunpowder, all adrift yet moving as one great indestructible force. God's army on the high seas, destined to liberate England from the evil clutches of heresy.

Then, as they veer to round the Lizard, a massive swell causes a great lurching of men. *La Trinidad* has come up on the port side, almost within touch. It is like a toy beside the *Rosario*, and Tristram can only imagine how its crew will feel when her hatches open and the massive bronze guns are wheeled out. He leans over and recognizes a couple of soldiers he has shared wine with back in Lisbon.

'Welcome back to home, Sir Tristram!' one of them calls in his broken English, and they all laugh.

He stares at the Cornish coast and can barely swallow his tears.

There is nothing more useless than a regiment of soldiers on a stricken ship. All they can do is watch from atop the galleon's magnificently crafted rump. What they see causes their jaws to drop. It began not half an hour ago when something aboard the *San Salvador* exploded and now the vessel is being towed to the centre of the fleet for protection. The crush of ships and the manoeuvring to make room for it is, on this rising swell, fraught with risk. Viewed from the deck, it is obvious that any number of collisions are avoided by pure chance.

Then a cry from the *Rosario's* rigging goes up and, forward on the starboard side, just furlongs away, a foremast can be seen hanging limply. It belongs to a mid-sized ship with twenty-five guns. The *San Juan de Portugal*. Any fool can see that Sidonia's rigid crescent formation is collapsing. Ships are lurching, bucking, veering. Anything to avoid colliding with the two stricken vessels and anyone else. Then the *Rosario* shifts its course to starboard. Tristram cannot understand the orders being given. It seems Valdés has decided to go to the aid of the *San Juan*. But why? Its mast is broken, but it did not appear to be in danger of sinking. To protect the guns, perhaps? Yes, of course—

'Oh, Blessed Mother of God!' It is Richard Burley. They had boarded together at the widow's house in Lisbon, but Winslade wants nothing to do with this piratical creature. He is the worst sort of Cornishman, and in cahoots with the equally piratical Killigrews. God only knew how many young maids he has stolen from beaches along the Barbary coast. If only he might use them to free all the stolen Cornish maids. Truth be told, Winslade has no interest at all in Richard Burley's adventures.

But he cannot ignore the sea-born horror unfolding before them. One of the squadron's smaller ships is struggling to respond to the *Rosario's* changing course. Its crew scrambles and swears and battles with sails and ropes as they plough towards catastrophe. These lumbering vessels are not horses. You cannot pull upon the reins and swerve. Valdés had presented his little friend with a wall of hull it cannot avoid. The crunching of wood and metal sends a terrible juddering along the length of the vessel. It has been all very well to be aboard a massive galleon like the *Rosario*. Now, though, the bows of smaller ships are deadly weapons that can wreak havoc upon the hulls of larger ones. This one has pierced the flagship's gun deck and, suddenly, the lower ranks of its idle regiment have something to do. As he holds tightly to the railing on the trembling deck, a series of shocking thoughts run through Tristram's mind. But surely not. The Duke will ensure everyone is rescued before any English ships close in on them, should they founder.

By the time the sun sets on the windblown sea, the *Rosario* is listing uncomfortably, the damage to its hull perilously close to the waterline. Dozens of men are engaged in applying tarred canvas to the broken woodwork, but the rent is large and the repairs are taking time they do not have. Finally, impatiently, Valdés gives the order to set sail. It is imperative they keep up with the fleet. Then, as the *Rosario* lurches forward, but with the halyard still to set, the foremast snaps and crashes onto the main mast. The ship pitches and veers drunkenly to the portside. Another crunch snaps the weakened mast as the hull is hit again. One of the sails is shredded, and hangs like Nonna Marino's *pasta*.

Valdés then orders the firing of a distress signal, and three rear guns let loose. Minutes go by. The sails are brought down and the *Rosario*, filled to the brim with the fleet's money and guns, comes to a standstill. The Andalusian squadron has been kept to the rear of the fleet, to protect its flagship's precious cargo. Now just a few small fighting ships sail by, too small to help and their captains too afraid of the

isolation that will come with rendering assistance. Only the *San Francisco* remains; one faithful little friend, whose captain tries everything to help

Finally, over the pitching swell, two *pataches* appear, and Valdés sends one back to the Duke with details of the damage. Then the *Zuniga* sails close and tosses a tow rope aboard, and immediately a group of sailors work at securing it. Their knotting skills are superb and the speed with which they work is impressive. Valdés signals to the captain of the little ship and the crew of the *Rosario* watches, collective breath held, while the rope become taut across the sea. Upon the waves, it is almost impossible to tell if the ship is moving or just bobbing around like a cork. They hear the crew of the *Zuniga* counting as they haul, trying to coax the *Rosario* forward.

Please let this work, Tristram prays. And then the rope breaks. Capture suddenly becomes a clear possibility. He must get off this ship.

That is when Valdés calls for his seven English soldiers. A priest is going for help and will take four of them with him in a row boat. Who wants to go? What a question! And so more time is wasted while straws are found and whittled and the Englishmen pondered the odds. Best not to go first. Better to go second or third. Even last. Somehow it is settled and Tristram watches with dismay as four of his compatriots draw long straws before his chance arrives.

‘Bad luck, Winslade,’ Burley says, as he boards the priest’s craft.

Winslade’s response is stuck in his throat. He stands alone, staring across the water at the flickering rush lights of Plymouth harbour. Above the town, the bonfires burn. Who is up there? Who is watching? Who is returning his gaze? The thought of lowering a dinghy into the sea, even just lowering himself, is never far from his thoughts. But over and over he reminds himself that his quest is far greater than personal safety. His duty and allegiance have been pledged long ago. No matter how much his heart craves to be in England, he is bound to honour his

father's wishes; bound to the Spanish king. He sits down to a game of cards, his ears constantly pricked towards the stream of Spanish fury drifting up from the cabin of Don Pedro de Valdés.

No boats come to rescue the three Englishmen left aboard the *Rosario*. The next morning, they watch as a small group of ships sail out of Plymouth. One of them is the *Revenge*. Its captain is Francis Drake. Tristram Winslade tears up his *asciento* and his Spanish *passe port* and throws them into the sea.

Part III

Tower of London, September 1588

Hell arrives with four men lowering him onto the frame, and the binding of wrists and ankles. This is followed by the cranking of a lever to raise the rack's platform. His heart pounds and a firestorm of panic shoots through his body. They cannot do this. They cannot do this.

'No! Stop! You cannot do this!'

'Ah, but we can!' Sir Richard Grenville fans Winslade's face with the Privy Council's permit.

'I have told you everything I know.'

'Really? Funny. We don't believe you.'

'You three. Three Dicks. Did you know, Dick Young, that your friend Dick Grenville chews on glass when he doesn't get what he wants. Did you know that?'

He has forgotten that this is not Master Williams' schoolroom. When one is strapped to the rack in the Tower of London, it does not pay to dick around with the torturers.

There is barely a sound. The machine is well oiled. A gentle tug, at first – a strain, a little pain, but not unbearable. And then it starts. The strain, the burning as they pull him apart. Fire shoots from his thighs; scorches his groin, tears sinew and gristle and gnaws at his bones, thrusts towards his heart. The agony of his throat and lungs – each breath as hot as Baal's kitchen.

The pain, the pain... Enfolds. Fills him. He is agony, a world of purple and red and black. No longer a body, no longer flesh. No muscle or sinew. Just a universe of horror. Interminable torment. And there is a noise that fills his ears and he wishes it would stop. The screaming. The screaming. On and on and on. Someone shut it up! Oh, God! Give him strength. Give him strength, or let him die. Give him strength to do his father's bidding, or give him to God.

A strange sound fills his head. What is it? Something beautiful beyond this? Is it heaven? Is he dead? Can it be angels? Perhaps his father's harp? A gentle plucking; the honeyed notes that fill the air and drift into the wide blue sky. Where is he? Is he yet home, in Cornwall? For he can taste the salt of the sea upon his lips.

A chill shock smacks his face and he struggles in the roiling waves. He cannot move his feet. Cannot stand, nor swim. Another shock. His eyes open to a raging red darkness. Oh, Christ's torment! And the salt on his lips is nought but sweat and tears.

'Tell us about your time at Lanherne.'

He stares at Grenville. Hateful bastard. Hate swims before his eyes, and behind them. His body is reduced to hate, pain and a dwindling will to live. God can have him. He sees Grenville nod to the guards. They move to place him – where? Back on the rack? From somewhere unexpected, comes a surge of resistance. What can he tell them that will stop this?

'I went to Lanherne when I was ten. I worked for Sir John Arundell until he was arrested, and then I went to Ireland.'

'What work did you do for him?'

'I collected information required by the Queen.'

'What sort of information?'

'Mostly it was muster reports. We visited the garrisons at Pendennis, St Mawes, and the Mount. We took musters of tenants' weaponry. Pitchforks, pikes. That sort of thing. Horses, too.'

'And who else received this information?'

'No one. It was top secret. Sir John kept copies safe from most of the servants in case there were spies in the house.' All true, he tells himself. Every word true.

'Do you know Gabriel Denys?'

'Yes.'

'How?'

'He visited my grandfather's house when I was a child. He used to visit with his father. He gave me a wooden sword.'

'Oh, how charming! Tell us about Ireland.'

His head is swimming.

'I joined a troop going to Ireland from Padstow.'

'What were your instructions?'

'I had no instructions. I answered to Sir John, and he was in custody here in London. There was no means for him to tell me what I should do.' He thinks of Sir John. Still here in custody. He will not incriminate him in any way.

'And yet, you joined Sander.'

'No. All I wanted to do was get out of the place. Have you been to Ireland? England has turned it into hell on earth. It was a shambles. It was hell. I found a boat and ...'

Step after pounding step, breath steaming. The hammer of his heart. Chest, ears, head. All ready to burst. Behind him, smoke billows from the village and screaming fills the putrid air. Further back, in the mountains and woodlands, more horror than he has ever witnessed as English swords and muskets ripped through legs, arms, chests, necks. Kerry is a bloody mess, a disaster of ruined settlements, burnt crops and the desperation and shame of women and children stripped naked. The crack of musket-fire is just behind him. His feet pound, air rips down his windpipe, tearing at the back of his throat. His side aches with a stitch and he longs to stop, double over and gasp for a proper breath. Keep going, keep going. Behind him, a dog yelps and he hears a rush of footfall in the dry leaves. Keep going. Don't stop. To stop is to be murdered by an Englishman. One of his own countrymen.

He is almost blinded by exhaustion. Can barely see the feet that shoot out before him – one, two, one, two, one, two – pounding the old dirt track, so heavily compacted he won't leave a mark. Then, long wet grass, vivid green, as though lit from within. Lush, slippery. He slows, he must, to wade through the reed-beds. The river bank. And the water, fast-flowing with the ebb-tide. To where? To what? On and on, through the reeds until he reaches the well-trod muddy place where, he prays, a little boat awaits. His boots sink into the silty bank. There it is. The boat. Bobbing as though losing patience. Not much better than a raft, but a boat nevertheless. His panicked fingers grasp at the knot and a rush of movement comes from behind. A musket-ball. Nothing hits. And then, a blur, and a skinny grey dog leaps for the boat ahead of him. Tristram swallows down great gulps of air. The knot loosens, comes free, and he rushes at the little vessel, pushing it afloat as he tumbles into its wide, flat bottom.

He lies there, face down, and feels the current turn him, carry him. He tries to steady his breath, his heart. Desmond is dead, but his own foray into the forest, to shit behind a tree, has saved him. He has survived. And so has a dog. Does he still have his money? He dare not move to check but senses the hard lump of his coin pouch against his thigh. Thank God!

Then, a blast from behind and an explosion of water rains down. They are right behind him. Right behind. But the river bends, it bends to the left. The lucky left, for it is taking him beyond their reach. He lies there, out of sight. Lies there, while the dog nudges and sniffs at the back of his head, whimpers in his ear. Beneath him, beneath the floor of this boat, the river moves. He lives. He breathes. Goes inside himself, to the beat of a pounding heart. He closes his eyes and his senses are filled with the sweet muddy scent of fresh water. And while the river removes him from danger, his cheek melds into the boat's damp boards. Behind his eyes, where light flickers and flares, another scene emerges. A memory. Another place, another time. Another life...

He is walking barefoot, through the Barton's coppice wood. He is nine years old, or thereabouts, and the midsummer sun reaches down through the trees, its rays dancing on the path like the dapple on a pony's rump. In his right hand, he holds a fishing net and uses it as a staff to measure his gait. It is taller than he is. Much taller. In a pocket inside his jerkin is his mother's Book of Hours, taken without permission. At his side, Skipper trots at a good pace, getting side-tracked, sniffing at this and that, while behind, at a safe feline distance and keeping to the edge of the path, comes the little black cat. She appears at the word 'fish', at the sight of a net or a rod, at the smell of the worms he uses for bait; she will not be left behind. They have called her Chat Noir, and she follows along with her tail in the air.

He crosses a grassy field, where sheep graze, and climbs a low embankment. Before him, before his squinting gaze, lies the flat, shining surface of the fish pond. To his left, tied to a straggling rowan tree, is a small wooden boat, crafted by who knows who, and who knows when. Tristram likes to think it was made by his grandfather, when he was a young man, in the days before he went off to Cornwall and got the family into all that trouble. But no one knows who made the boat. It's one of those things that no one will ever know. It is just an old boat and it has two old oars.

Chat Noir puts a paw in the water and shakes it dry. It is not for her, but Skipper leaps into the boat, and Tristram tosses in the net. He drags the boat into the water, which is cold around his ankles, and stirs up the muddy bottom. Feels the slippery mud claim his toes and heels. Feels the whole watery, grassy, sunny sense of summer. He leans against the side of the boat and hoists himself over, splashing the mud from his feet as he goes. Picks up the oars and rows out to his island. Gentle rhythm, gentle splashes; oars and fish, oars and fish. Ties the boat to a great pole his father has driven into the ground, just for this purpose, and steps ashore onto soft green grass, crushing meadowsweet and clover. He sits down and dries his fingers on his jerkin, then retrieves the Book of Hours and opens it.

The sun beats down upon his head. A dragonfly whizzes above and a fly lands on his hand. Down in the pond, a fish jumps. A lazy little plop. Not even a splash. Nothing else moves. Somewhere, though, a blackbird sings.

Beneath a tree, watching and waiting, Chat Noir settles down in the grass. She knows the wait will be worthwhile and eventually falls asleep.

The cry of gulls unsettles him. Has his boat found its way home? His eyes flicker awake. There is no ship. There is no cat. The gulls are outside, screeching above the Thames. And he is sprawled upon a straw pallet, a stinking wreck dumped upon an unlovely shore. He lapses in and out of consciousness. Beneath him, life's fluid warms the straw and then turns to a reeking chill. As his mind throbs its way towards thought, he wonders whether his blazing legs will ever walk again. His throat is parched. Then, he realises that he is trembling. His entire body is shaking. Pain and misery force salt water from his eyes.

Hours later, he wakes. He wants to move. Tries to turn over. Instead, he eases himself to one side and scours the walls with his gaze. Is this where they held his grandfather? Might he have lain here, in dread terror of the end that awaited him?

He wonders about the story that poor John Winslade had offered up his life so that William might live? So that Tristram might one day exist? A son might be the most glorious thing in the world. It might be a lump of lead around a neck. He thanks the Lord he does not have one. He breathes in, and out. Long exhale. Ignore the pain. Forget the trembling. A chant of Hail Marys, little prayers from childhood. He tries to remember the sound of Mary Tregian's lute, as his father played the harp. A Christmas long ago.

The next day, the guards haul him back. Or, they try to. He cannot walk. They pull him upright – a cruel stretching of his wrecked limbs – and half carry him in. They sit him on a hard stool with no back and manacle his wrists and ankles. What do they think he will do? Scale the walls? Run them through with a toasting fork? They are ignorant of their own work. If they had tested it, they would know that just sitting has become a torture of its own.

The three Dicks are there, waiting. Grenville, Young and Topcliffe. This time, they have their bench set in front of their beast. In facing them, he faces it. And yet, he knows he cannot face it. He will not survive another session on this monstrosity. His mind races. How much can he safely tell them? Surely, nothing he knows will be of use now. They will have got everything retrievable from the *Rosario*. They will know the names of all the Englishmen who sailed. Perhaps he will share some family secrets. All useless. He will share with them his travels. All useless. He will tell them he is Catholic. *Oh, really?* As for Spanish orders, he does not speak good Spanish, and understands even less. He knows only what other officers have told him in their broken English.

The scribe shuffles in, all pasty-faced and brown. The heretic priest arrives and sits apart. Someone wipe the smirk from Grenville's face, for if they don't he

swears to God he will remind him exactly who his father was, and what he did to the old King's favourite war ship. If ever he has a daughter, she shall be named for the *Mary Rose*.

Grenville clears his throat and reminds the prisoner that this is a court of law and he is required to swear before God to tell the truth, the whole truth and nothing but the truth. For all the world, Tristram Winslade would like to remind Sir Dick that their Gods are hardly on speaking terms. He refrains.

'You admit to being Catholic?'

'Is that a question? It sounds like a statement. But yes, it is stating the obvious to tell you that I am a Catholic.'

'When did you leave England?'

'In 1577, when your men arrested Sir John Arundell.'

'And when did you begin your service to Spain?'

'In 1586. I was sent to Brussels.'

'By whom?'

'Doctor Allen. I went to the college at Rheims.'

English College, Rheims, August 1583

The heat in the stone wall at his back is baking him and he closes his eyes as though to shut out the searing summer. The scent of honeysuckle and roses comes through the archway at the end of the cloister, strangely so, when there is not a whit of breeze to carry it. He breathes slowly, steadily, as though to slow his body and cool himself from within. Some water would help. If only someone might bring him some.

He waits. Listens to the silence. Then, nearby, the cathedral's iron bell tolls the hour and within minutes a line of novices, yet to be tonsured, enters the cloister and shuffles past him. He casts his eyes downwards – he does not wish to intrude with his gaze – and watches the parade of cracked heels, jagged nails and thick leather sandals. He hears the clang of an iron bolt in a wooden gate and then they are gone. He looks up, and from the other direction – from where the novices have gone – sees two nuns, hands clasped in prayer even as they walk. They nod to him, a young soldier, whose sword and musket are not common in this peaceful place. He is glad to have kept his jerkin on. To have exposed his throat, even the suggestion of skin through a linen shirt sleeve, would have affronted them. Or maybe not. Before they have passed, one of them has turned her eyes upon him and smiled. They walk on, through the stone arch and into the garden. They laugh. He feels his lips crack as he smiles. Oh, for some water.

Finally, the door opposite opens and a functionary appears.

'The Reverend Father will see you now,' he says.

Tristram stands, straightens his breeches, and follows, his boots ringing loudly in the dark corridor. Summer has yet to permeate the stone and the cool is a blessed relief. Finally, his guide opens a heavy door, bids him enter and then departs. Tristram looks into the long, narrow face of Canon William Allen and sees his dark round eyes examining his own.

'Winslade. I had not thought, all those years ago, to one day meet you in Rheims.'

'Nor I, Reverend Father.'

'However, you have survived the terror meted out to Sander and I am more than happy to see you here. That said, I am sorry to say your timing could not be worse. Hundreds of young Englishmen, and more and more priests, are arriving each day, all wanting shelter, food and a place at our college. Besides which, you are too old for entry and are already pledged to His Majesty's service. Tell me, was Ireland as bad as they say?'

'Worse. I hope never to witness such cruelty again.'

'And if you could go anywhere, do anything, what would it be?'

'Reverend Father, I have great knowledge of south-western England and its convenience for an invasion. I would very much like to use my experience in Rome. To help form policy.' Dryness catches at his throat and his eyes stray to an earthenware pitcher sitting on William Allen's table. *'Reverend Father, do you think I might have something to drink?'*

'Of course.' Allen rings a bell, a servant appears, instructions are given.

'I thank you,' Tristram says, and continues. *'Reverend Father, there is an old plan, devised when the Lady Jane Grey was being prepared for the throne. Created by friends who wanted to ensure the Lady Mary – our good Queen Mary, as she became – would have a throne and a homeland over which to rule. Do you recall Sir Thomas Denys?'*

'No. But I travelled with his fifth son, Gabriel, to Lanherne, if you recall.'

'Of course. I remember it well. Anyway, Sir Thomas was much loved in Devon and after my grandfather's execution was like a father to my father. He was a great favourite of the Princess Mary until Wyatt's rebellion caused trouble in Exeter – she suspected him of colluding with Wyatt and Sir Peter Carew. He was desperate to prove his loyalty, which was sincere, as you would know. So, he devised a map, a plan, if you will, to rebuild the ancient realm of Wessex. A south-west land for Mary to rule over.'

'The ancient land of the Wessex kings is history familiar to all boys of gentle birth. But I've never heard of this plan. Where did you hear of it?'

'Reverend Father, I was my mother's eldest son and while my father was away, she told me many stories. Some of them I do not believe – they were childish entertainments for cold winter nights. When I was older, she told me that when I was a very small child, I sat

upon Gabriel Denys's lap and watched this map being drawn.' He pauses. 'The sweep of an old man's hand across a map is one of my earliest memories.'

'And you wish to work towards making this kingdom a reality?' Allen asks. 'Is that the calling you receive from God?'

To Tristram, nothing else makes sense. Visions pour into his head: land, tenants, manor houses, crops, wife, children. His long dynasty revived, renewed, fertile and prosperous. As before, in his great-grandfather's day.

'It is. And I wish to be of use in any concern that might bring it about. I am a trained soldier and have already served His Majesty. I remain his humble servant in the cause of England, but cannot go back there.'

'And I cannot make promises,' Allen says. 'Men of gentle birth are not always of use, but in you, Winslade, I do see a man committed to our cause. I will write to Rome and tell Father Agarozzi of your situation. In the meantime, I will require a bond to enable you to stay here in Rheims to meet the cost of your board and two meals a day, plus the opportunity to attend Mass in this town's magnificent cathedral. You will also be expected to attend a course of lectures at the university. What money do you have?'

'I have sixteen crowns, sir. In gold. It is all I have in the world, given me by Edward Arundell of Lanherne.'

Finally, the servant arrives, and pours cloudy amber fluid into a glass jar.

'Pierre,' says Doctor Allen. 'Would you please check the delivery room to see if there is anything for Tristram Winslade?'

The servant nods, and Tristram, quashes the urge to swallow great gulps of liquid, drinks politely. Suddenly, he is longing for something from home. Anything at all. In the silence, he hears a choir going over and over the same few bars of a chant.

'Have you any idea how long it might take before a response comes back from Rome?'
he asks.

William Allen's smile is soft and sincere. 'Now, that really is one of God's mysteries. Sometimes I think it would be quicker to go there every few weeks with a list of questions, and then turn around to come back to deliver the responses. I will put in a good word for you, Winslade. Your family's sacrifice does not go unnoticed and your nobility is beyond challenge.' He takes a deep breath. *'So many of your ancient line have been eliminated by the usurpers of the English crown. Whoever would have thought our land would be conquered by a Welshman and that, so many years later, his bastard grand-daughter would be sitting on our throne?'* He interlaces his fingers and rubs his thumbs together, contemplating them as though Tristram Winslade is not there. *'Is there anyone left of Plantagenet stock who might mount a credible challenge?'*

Tristram knows it is a rhetorical question, but it is one being asked again and again. Who remains? Who might inspire the people? Who stands out in such singular style among the remaining nobles of the Plantagenet families that there can be no argument, no challenge? Behind whose name might be found a new Arthur?

'May I think upon it?'

The door opens and Pierre, the servant, returns.

'Just the one parcel, your grace,' he says, and hands it to William Allen.

Tristram feels his heart leap as he watches the small object make its way towards him across the table. It is wrapped in a well-oiled cloth. Even without unwrapping it, he knows it is his Book of Hours.

'I have a meeting with the Mayor,' says William Allen, rising. 'You are more than welcome to remain here and open your parcel. Dinner is in the refectory at midday, should you care to join us.'

Tristram nods. He rises and thanks His Grace. Then, alone, he unties the string and unfolds the layers of oil-cloth. His heart leaps at the sight of red silk. And beneath it, his mother's Book of Hours. And, inside its cover, a letter secured with Lady Anne Arundell's seal. Joy grips at his throat and he can barely temper his excitement. He pulls a dagger from his garter to slice beneath the thick red wax and carefully unfolds the letter. Immediately, he recognises her writing.

Dear boy, how we miss you here at Lanherne and pray constantly for the day you might return to us. A special hearing is being convened to examine the status of your father's lands, but we are worried that Grenville will ensure the outcome his friends require. Daniel, however, will be there in your stead, your father still also being away. Our dearest Pippa has asked me to send you her friendship – that is what she calls it. All she has is this red silk kerchief, which looks to me as though it has come from our tailor. I cannot imagine how she has come by it. Perhaps it is yours, and so, with that possibility in mind, I do as she has asked, and wrap it around your Book of Hours.

Shortly, I will go up to London, and remain at Stourton House until they free Sir John. It breaks my heart to leave Lanherne, as I am sure it broke yours. If you can, write to me there. I shall be there by Lady Day.

I send you love from all of us here,

Your mistress,

Lady Anne Arundell.

His heart almost stops. What has Lady Arundell done with Pippa's message? Has it been forgotten, or is it here, in his hand? In this piece of bright red silk. He unfolds it. It is smaller than it once was. Only half the size. Its edge is torn and the top has been cut in a curve. Now he understands. Each of them has half a piece of scarlet silk. Together they will make one heart. This, he knows, is Pippa's message.

He waits. And waits. News from Rome is a slow trickle. He sits at a table outside a tavern, nursing a jar of wine and listening to three of his countrymen reliving the torment of Munster. Of villages razed, of women raped, of children run through with swords, of dogs tossed onto fires, families burned alive. Like them, he still hears the musket-fire, still hears the terrible screaming. Sometimes, in the still of night, he can feel the fearful pounding of his heart, smell the river, feel the boat beneath him. Unlike them, he has no wish to relive it every day of his life and is easily distracted by the sound of men yelling on the other side of the square and a glimpse of flame. And yet, not a flame. It is a girl's bright red skirt, revealed by a woman who has ripped away her cloak. He sees her arms outstretched before her accusers. What is going on? Has she stolen something? Is she showing her innocence? He puts down his jar and stands for a better view, for men from the nearby tables are crowding around.

'Catch her, catch her,' goes the chant.

He primes his pistol, cocks it, and places it in his belt.

'What the hell are you doing?' someone asks. 'It's a gypsy.'

He ignores the comment and strides across the marketplace, where the shadows of the buildings stretch across the square. The crowd is surging down the road beside the town hall, past forges, apothecaries and printing shops. He breaks into a run and passes old men and women and a gaggle of urchins before catching up with the mob. Before them, the city wall

riser. He prays that the gates are open, but knows the road through them is narrow. She might be crushed.

Then, suddenly a group of men is in his way, and they turn on him. Ordering him to stop. A fist smashes into his face and he stumbles backwards, the cobbles catching at his bootheels. But he does not fall. He unsheathes his sword and, with his left hand, reaches for his dagger. Feels the faint swipe of a knife as it cuts his upper arm. His blood is hot and it tingles. His sword knocks the knife from his attacker's hand and its point presses into his padded doublet.

'Do you want to see how sharp it is?' he says.

The other two are hanging back. Three against one, and it's already over?

'Elle est une putaine,' one of them says. She's a whore. The gypsy girl is a whore.

Tristram's face is throbbing. He keeps the point of his sword at his attacker's chest, and moves himself so that the others are on his left side. Blood is seeping from his wound and trickling down the back of his hand. He sheathes his dagger, wipes his palm on his breeches, then reaches for his pistol. If he pulls on the trigger, will it fire? How long before more blood will render his hand a useless, slippery mess?

'You sleep with her, do you? Or do your fathers? Vos pères, peut-être? Ils couchent avec elle? Oui?' The man on his far left pulls a pistol from his belt. What a fool. Cannot he not see he is in Tristram's direct line of fire? 'Careful,' he says. 'You don't want to die because of a whore, do you?'

Then, suddenly, the man in the middle thrusts a knife at him. Tristram's sword takes off his hand and his pistol fires into a foot. The hand, palm-up on the ground, seems to tremble, and blood is everywhere. It has become a nightmare. One man lies screaming on the ground. The other two run. No one wants to be involved in this.

Then, two of the priests from the college appear at his side. No one in Rheims will argue with them. No one argues with a priest. Tristram Winslade is escorted across the square, bundled inside the college gates and straight to the hospice where a nun cuts off his shirt-sleeve and attends to his arm. It is washed clean and a poultice is applied. Then it is bandaged. Within an hour, he is facing interrogation.

'Well, Winslade.' William Allen stares at him with unknowable deep-set eyes. 'I'm sure it won't come as a surprise. There's been a complaint from the city burghers. What on earth were you thinking? You've set off a firearm in a public square and left a baker with four children without a hand and a foot.'

'Reverend Father, they assaulted me. I had done nothing to provoke them.'

'Oh well, it is no longer a matter of who did what. The results speak for themselves. And you have demonstrated a complete lack of judgement. I am sorry, Winslade, but I can no longer support any notion that you might be suitable for Rome. And there is certainly no way you can stay here in Rheims. You know, don't you, that we are only here out of the kindness of Rheims while plague ravages Douai? Strangely, the French are not happy with the idea of English soldiers running amok in their town. You will report to Brussels and when William Stanley arrives, you will join his new English regiment and serve the Archduke of Flanders. You may leave immediately after breakfast tomorrow morning.'

He is winded. Shaken to the core. Never has he been reprimanded like this. The injustice is impossible to comprehend.

'I am truly sorry, Reverend Father. I went to the aid of a gypsy girl being hounded by a mob. What would you have had me do? She was being persecuted. We, of all people, understand persecution.'

'I will not deny that, but I am not going to argue with you.' Allen pauses, as if for effect. *'For heaven's sake, Winslade! We expected greatness from you in the name of Spain, not idiotic escapades in the name of gypsy virtue. I know that you mean well, I know that you are loyal – and so, this pains me.'* Allen rises and takes his stole from its hanging place and drapes it over his shoulders. *'At least Sir John can be spared this. He is not allowed correspondence from abroad, nor even from his wife. Come then. Relieve yourself of this burden – I will hear your confession.'*

Tristram draws an angry breath. 'Reverend Father, I have nothing to confess.'

The Reverend Father ignores him. He moves to a chair at the other side of the room, where an intricately carved screen shields the sinner from any semblance of human judgement. Tristram knees upon a cushion, crosses himself and gazes up at Jesus Christ who, had his eyes been open, would have stared upon him from his crucifix.

'Forgive me, Father, for I have sinned.' And a litany of crime spews forth. He has disappointed the King of Spain. Gone against the laws of the city of Rheims and placed its citizens in danger. Failed to meet the expectations of the Reverend Father. Been tempted by the fiery flash of a red skirt. Shown more concern for heathens than for God's own flock. He spews them out, these so-called crimes, one after another. He crosses himself somewhat too vigorously and is about to submit to his Father Confessor's penance when one more sin erupts from his mouth.

'Oh, forgive me Father, for doing as your son Jesus Christ would have done. For that is my sin.' Tristram stands. *'I will not submit to your penance, Father. I have done nothing wrong. But I expect you and the King of Spain will find a way to make me pay, and I hope it is more meaningful than a pocketful of Hail Marys.'*

Doctor William Allen, rector of the English College, is dumbstruck. He comes out of the confessional.

'Ireland is doing dreadful things to our men, Winslade. I can see you have not been immune to its horrors. Your spirit is alive and your soul is pure, and for that we must thank God. I will pray for you as you make your way to Brussels. There, you will have no choice but to obey your masters. Let us hope you find a way to obey with greater grace, for the king has a great project, and you, I think, should be part of it.'

In the Tower of London, the scribe has much writing to do and so Tristram Winslade is not required until tomorrow. In his cell, he finds water and some tepid broth have been set on the floor. As if it's been left for the dog. There is a clean pallet. Reward for so much talk? It is a cheap pallet. But it is dry and there is a blanket, too. He pulls it up and thinks this is what a dog lives for. Water, food and a dry place to sleep. Warmth would be good, as would a sign from a friend. Does anyone know he is here?

A doctor comes. He pulls at his arms and wonders why he shrieks. He rubs something that stinks to hell and back into the swelling and tells him to rest. As if there is some ploughing he might wish to be doing. Worse than useless. His body continues to shake. Bodies know. He believes a body knows. Any soldier will tell you. Any wise woman. A body is wounded. It shivers and shakes to warm the blood. To stay alive. But his eyes close. He senses the coming of a dream and cannot – will not – fend it off. Is it Agueda? His own Saint Agueda. Where is she now, when his body needs healing? Or perhaps it is Pippa, bringing sunshine and laughter, children and spring lambs...

The body shivers and shakes to warm the blood, but the mind yearns to slink away.

Brussels, 1586

He is seated in a small room. Plain and whitewashed, it has a small fireplace, bookshelves stuffed and groaning, a table with six chairs and, upon the wall, a massive golden crucifix. He has handed Dr Allen's letter to a functionary and is in the Archbishop's library, waiting to be seen. Waiting, he expects, for someone to bless him before he is taken to enlist. The door opens with a rush of air and he is facing Dickon Arundell. He is on his feet in seconds.

'Tristram Winslade!' They slam together; hold each other like brothers. 'When I heard about Sander, I never thought to see you again! Thank God you survived.'

'Good God, yourself, Dickon. What are you doing here?'

'Assistant to Richard Bray, who is the Archbishop's legal advisor on matters relating to England.'

'You and Bray? Working here together?'

'Aye. Safe as houses, too. Warm and cosy, no shortage of food. Endless supply of books. But you're looking a bit rough at the edges.' Dickon Arundell pauses. *'I've just read Allen's letter. He wants your vigour put to good use.'*

The brief moment of joy fades. What does this mean?

'Believe me, Dickon, I've had enough of soldiering to last a lifetime. What's to happen?'

'Dr Allen's letter is a recommendation that you join the army. It would not do to resist him. As an English nobleman, my guess is that they'll sign you up as an unattached officer – an entretenido.' Dickon smiles. *'Actually, Tris, your timing is perfect. I need an officer to accompany me to Milan. Bray will see to it.'*

'Milan? How do we get there?'

'There's a tavern beside the clock tower. Meet me there at the strike of two and I will buy us some dinner.' He stares at Tristram Winslade, as though searching for Ireland's horrors in the lines around his eyes. Then he claps his hands together. *'What a joy it is to see you! If only every day could hold such a moment.'*

Sir Richard Grenville is in fine form this morning.

'Winslade, we know you attended a meeting at the King's grand palace. Sir Francis Englefield was there. Who else was there?'

Tristram Winslade is taken aback. Sir Francis had warned him about spies. Had they been in the room? In the monastery, with the relics? Or is Grenville simply firing this bullet into the dark?

'It was a large meeting, and conducted mostly in Spanish. I do not know all the names and I could barely understand them. The Cardinal of Austria was there. There were two Irish Bishops. The Duke of Medina Sidonia was there. Most unhappy. And Count Fuentes. There were several military advisors and there was much arguing. I was only there because I wanted to see Sir Francis Englefield.'

'Why?'

'He secured my release from the Inquisition in Barcelona.'

'You have been in the service of Spain all of your adult life, haven't you, Winslade?'

How could they know? He would never admit to the events at Lanherne back in 1571. Not while Sir John was still alive.

'I came of age in 1571. I served Sir John Arundell until 1577. So, no.'

'Was not serving Sir John Arundell simply a proxy for serving Spain?'

'Sir John has always been a loyal servant of Her Majesty, even though he does not agree with everything to do with the new church. I served him as a gentleman servant, along with many others.'

'There are others who will testify.'

Winslade has nothing to say to this. His body is aching and he wants desperately to lie down. No one is saying anything. They want him to speak. So he speaks.

'You are making statements again. And since statements seem to be the order of the day, let me make some of my own. All you ever wanted, Sir Richard, was to be invited to Lanherne. You wanted to hunt with us, hawk with us, dance with us, dine with us. Your family wanted to marry with the Tregians, and never forgave them for choosing the Arundells of Lanherne. I have no great love for Francis Tregian, for he is ruled by self-love. His self-love is nothing compared to your base envy.'

'I am not envious now,' says Grenville. 'Besides, you are wrong: it is your family I loathe.'

'My family? What for? What have my poor mother and my brothers and sisters ever done to you?'

'You know damned well what your father did.'

'He put your grandfather in the cells at Lanson to protect him from the fighting. He was kept warm and fed.'

'It killed him.'

'That is a lie. Humphrey Arundell released him and then surrendered himself into his custody. Your grandfather was in good health.'

'He was an old man.'

'SO WAS MY GRANDFATHER!'

'Your family has done nothing but lie.'

'About what?' And so, thinks Tristram Winslade. Who is asking the questions now? 'Enlighten me,' he says. 'I had not been born.'

'Well, I had been. I remember the raid on Trematon. I was there, and I saw your father's men take my grandfather away. He was all I had.'

'Now who's lying? You had a grandmother, a mother and a step-father.'

'I loved my grandfather.'

Winslade keeps his mouth shut and the catch in Grenville's voice fills the silence. Young and Topcliffe glance sharply at each other. Young places a hand on Grenville's shoulder and rises to his feet.

'Master Winslade, please tell this inquiry what you know about a plan to invade Cornwall.'

'I understand invasion planning is carried out in Brussels, sir. I have never worked there and have never heard of a plan to invade Cornwall. As you know, the Armada was setting out for London.'

'And who keeps all of these invasion plans?'

'I suppose the Archduke does. He controls everything there, for the King. I expect you know that.'

'What was it you did in the service of Spain, Winslade?'

'I received an *asciento* – a commission as an *entretenido*. An unattached officer. I was sent from one place to another and answered many questions. I had no desk,

no office, little pay and the same amount of food. I crossed the Alps. That was memorable.'

The Swiss air is so pure and fresh. No sea-drenched salt, no seaweed. No stinking canal, no fish market, no rancid cheese, no rank and sickening stench of meat gone fly-blown on a hot summer day. It is warm – the sun is hot on his face, his skin stiff with burning – but the wind coming down from the snow-capped peaks has a chill that stirs the senses, enlivens the gait. Heartens a man and keeps him to his path.

Tristram walks beside the flat shining river with Dickon. They have talked endlessly of Cornwall, but now they are silent. Contemplating nothing. Their guide, Gustave, breaks into the steady tramping sound of their feet to tell them that the Rhine is swollen with melting snow. He reminds them that their path will soon climb into the great Alps, where they will find snow that is capable of resisting the sun's warmth, year after year after year. This journey has been remarkable. Hot days – too hot, some of the time – give way to mild nights and soft breezes and while a mule carries armour, swords, muskets and a range of daggers and knives, Tristram has lost all sense of soldiering. His papers, including the pliego de asiento, signed by the Archduke in Brussels, designate him entretenido – unattached officer. He keeps them tucked safely in the pouch at his side and every so often, at a city gate or a hostelry, he must retrieve them to prove himself and obtain the accommodation guaranteed, in Catholic areas, to Spanish soldiers. It is easy to keep to the friendly towns, and as they make their way into the mountains, the friendlier their encounters become. For now, he is given to the mindless freedom of walking through a landscape that is not his, that does not threaten and demands nothing, as long as he keeps moving. One foot, another foot, free of care, free of fear, that is how they go.

In a small village, they stop at a well, and a man sitting against the stone wall of his house nods to them that they should help themselves. Through Gustave, speaking German, he tells them it is the best water in all of Europe as it flows ceaselessly through the mountains,

filtered and sweet and cold, right to the place where they have arrived. His house is, in fact, a small hostel. It is looking at the world through blind eyes, for he has removed all the windows, frames and all, for cleaning. Beautifully carved with owls and leaves and nuts, they are stacked up beside him, leaning against the wall. The pine frames are golden with linseed oil and Tristram cannot but recall the dusty summer windows at Lanherne, where such clever engineering was never employed, where the timber weathers to the same grey as the granite walls and where the inside glass might be clean, but not the outside. It occurs to him that he has never, not for one moment, even thought about cleaning anything but his own flesh, his own pistol and his own sword. This man's care for his own lodging is surely an everyday concern, but it has never been Tristram's.

In the shade of the building, they fill their cups and sit beside the man while he polishes glass with a rag. Tristram runs a hand over a carved frame and tells him, in English, that he admires it; he can tell the man is pleased, as he maintains some conversation with Gustave. Soon, Tristram and Dickon understand that, although his son helped him to remove the frames, the younger man has departed for Baden, leaving the father alone to replace them. If the two Englishmen will do it for him, they shall have a good dinner and warm beds. It is a prospect which pleases them. They have come to understand this style of hospitality. The people are tired of great regiments of Spanish soldiers and their arrogance and bad behaviour. Two English gentlemen are a better prospect, and hospitality has been served out most handsomely since they left Cologne. Fair-skinned and fair-haired girls, with caps styled to reveal thick plaited tresses, have served them ale, beer, wine, great chunks of pork knuckle, cabbage and beans, apples spiced with nutmeg, stewed pears and plums, topped with thickened cream, and more cheeses than Tristram ever thought possible. Demure girls, whose blue-green gazes sweep their floors with modesty. And these floors, they are impeccable.

'This journey will come to an end too soon,' says Dickon.

Tristram cannot think of a good reply. Dickon's journey will end in a comfortable office in Milan, while he will continue to Naples, which – Dickon says – is teeming with volunteers for the King's great project. For now, though, time is fluid. Clocks might ring out upon the hour, but days are flowing into weeks and right now, in this moment amid the endless procession of stars and moons, his eye is on a young woman leading a black and brown goat along the road and constantly turning to make sure its twin kids are running along behind them. Really, he thinks. No Cornish farm maid would be so stupid. She would be picking a careful path between the gorse and mud puddles and cow pats, knowing for certain that there was no risk such tiny creatures would stray from their mother. He thinks for a moment of Pippa and in his mind's eye she glances at him, catches his gaze. It is a smile that tugs softly at her mouth. He finds one tugging at his own.

The next morning is market day, and Tristram purchases a new leather water flask and a sturdy stave of beech topped with a carved figure. The seller tells him it is an exact likeness of St Christopher. He nods politely, for it is not in his nature to offend, but later Dickon laughs at it. It is the ugliest St Christopher they have ever seen. Then they visit the baths, where the heat of the mineral-steeped water seeps into sinew and bone, restores the humours and improves one's very outlook upon the world. As clean as alpine zephyrs, they walk back to the hostel, wondering whether the Spanish king would approve of their recreation and growing reluctance to leave this idyllic existence.

Three days later, Fritz's hostel has its eyes back, glinting, sparkling with the reflections of bright blue sky and gleaming river. The next morning, Tristram brings out his Book of Hours and tears out St Anthony in thanks for the bounty of Fritz's verdant green pastures and fat juicy pigs. Fritz does not what to say, but accepts the gift. And so they bid him farewell and puff their way up a steep path beside the greenest hill in all the world offering up the greenest grass to a small herd of golden cows. Small beasts, with great brown eyes and inquisitive velvety ears. Their bells clink and clank as their necks stretch down, seeking the best tufts, shifting marginally from left to right, right to left. Back and forth,

munching on Swiss loveliness. Cornwall is perfect, and Devonshire too, even though both have their imperfections, he thinks. Too much rain in winter can make perfection of a dry summer, just as too much fog on an autumn morning makes perfection of clear, cold sunshine, and too much cheerless cloud makes perfection of a bright friendly fire. Perfection is only perfect when received with gratitude, and this can only come from little flaws and faults, from tiny tugs upon one's soul. This here, this world, is perfect perfection and as such is all wrong. How do the people live up to its expectations? The answer lies in pure white linen and the pristine rooms they have enjoyed, night after night, and clean hands softly met in prayer. Nothing here is out of its place.

Thoughts ramble as they walk, and the St Christopher on Tristram's staff sets up a steady rhythm. Hearts and lungs are working well, limbs are loose and free, untroubled by the climb. They are not young men, but are well nourished, with clean souls and sound minds. Their hearts beat, their blood sings, their feet march on. So when the distant beating of drums reaches their ears, they do not immediately recognise it. It takes Gustave to alert them to the approach of an army coming towards them, down the path they are climbing. Snorting horses, tramping feet and the drums, beating time, beating a steady rhythm. The sun glints upon metal helmets, metal weapons, metal armour, and a regiment of the Spanish King's army on the way to Flanders.

They clamber from the path, to the safety of some trees and boulders, with only seconds in which to salute as the vanguard rounds a bend. There is nothing to do but rest and watch this great spectacle pass by. No one will stop to speak with them, for the path is too narrow and any cessation of movement would cause mayhem. And so they are left to wonder who it might be and which town or city they will lay waste to this year. Last year, it was Passi's regiment. Bringing plague and laying waste to half of Cologne, before arriving in Brussels and fighting with the regiment already there. As if Spain had no enemies.

On and on it comes, and goes. Armour clatters, and the horses champ and heave and huff, some shitting as they go, and the path is turned to a putrid slurry. It takes two hours. Finally, as peace envelops the mountain pass, they continue on their way, treading carefully, slipping in the churned-up ground and resenting such an unpleasant intrusion. The path narrows and becomes rocky. In the deep shade of an overhang, they find a large swathe of snow. Like Cornish children in wintertime, they stop, shed weapons and gloves, toss aside their staves, and fight each other with fistfuls of the stuff. They mash it into cheeks and necks, and Tristram feels it run down his back. He scrambles to his feet and throw balls of it at Dickon, receiving the same in return. Gustave watches on, amazed and bemused. But he is no humourless idiot. He cheers them on, delighting in the playful antics of these foreigners, clapping his hands and stamping his feet to keep them warm, until finally they have exhausted themselves with effort and with laughter.

On they walk, until nearing the crest of a rocky climb, Gustave bids them stop. He holds up one hand, to stay them, and puts the other to his ear.

'We listen?' Tristram wants to know.

The guide nods, and then turning his back on them, walks a little way further until he is a silhouette against the sky. He puts his hands to his mouth and lets out the yodelling call they have heard in songs along the way. Then, the echo. Clear and loud. Perfect. Tristram has heard nothing like this before, but knows that from the place Gustave has attained, just above them, some vast space, something close to heaven, must be visible. As they climb towards him, the peaks of enormous snow-capped mountains rise above the ridgeline like the sun. Just a few steps more and they gaze upon a whole valley. Its flat floor is a patchwork of green and brown and yellow, its foothills edged with the black-green of pines and firs, massive thick forests which creep up the slopes until they can go no further; where the tundra and rock give way to the snow and ice that adorns the peaks in shades of white and silver-blue.

He thinks of Pippa, and wishes she could see this. If he could, he would imprint it on his mind, like an etching, and make a picture for her to wonder at. So vast, so magnificent, she might spend a lifetime gazing at it. It is so still. Nothing moves, only the patterns on the valley floor which shift at the whim of little white clouds as they pass in front of the sun, and, as time passes, the shadows, which lengthen and deepen. There is birdsong, but the birds are hidden in the trees, except for an eagle, soaring above them on a hidden draft of wind.

Within a few days, they are in the piedmont and Milan looms before them. The two men renew their vow of brotherhood. The indescribable power of God's creation has bound each of their souls to the other. But here they must part, for Winslade is to travel on to Naples.

Another day. Same routine, same scribe. This time, Sir Richard Young takes over. He is cold and direct. His heart – if he has one – is hidden up his sleeve, not pulsating on it, like Grenville's. Richard Young, is more interested in Spain. Tell us about Valdés. Valdés is about fifty years old. His instructions were to meet with Parma. And then to London. That is all he knows. If he knew more, he would tell. They were to sack London and do away with the people. It goes on and on. He can scarcely think for hunger. No, he did want to be part of it. He had gone to Lisbon to light a candle for his father, who is buried at the hospice by church of São Roque. He was forced to board the *Rosario*. He was kept aboard. Then he wonders: what is Valdés telling them? Where is Valdés, anyway? But there is no time for thinking. The questions keep coming.

Then it is over. Day after day, he is kept in a cell with only the lapping of the stinking canal to remind him of the outside wall. There is water. Foul. There are rats. There is no food. He will starve. His body, after two weeks, is wasting away. Then Lady Arundell, God bless her, sends a kitchen maid and man-servant. They bring a

basket with bread with cheese and pickle and a pot of broth that may have left her kitchen hot, but which by now is stony cold. But, as he is spoon-fed the soup, he can taste the onion and turnip, the suggestion of mutton. *Give us this day our daily soup.* Perhaps he might write a prayer about the sensation of food as it seeps through the body, heats the blood, restores hope and settles the mind. Or perhaps it is not so much the food, as the knowledge that beyond this hellhole there is a friend who knows where he is. Who even sends a napkin so, when the soup is gone, the bristles on his chin might be wiped. He could write a prayer or a poem, but his fingers are a long way from holding a quill. The pain that comes from suppressing his sobs is almost as unbearable as their leaving.

Another doctor visits. Lady Arundell's physician. He helps him to stand. Lifts his arms and tries to make him lift his legs. Frontways, sideways, to the back. Can he squat? How are the knee joints, ankles, hips, wrists and elbows? This doctor has a salve that smells of hope. Menthol and lavender, and he leaves a jar of it. But he only comes once. He has found the wreckage, rubbed it and said a prayer, and returned to Lady Arundell's genteel aches and pains. It is a week before the left hand can reach the right shoulder, two weeks before the knees can bend enough for him to rub his ankles. If nothing else, the smell of the stuff is enough to fill his nose and for a time he can forget the stinking shit-water flowing beneath the barred window.

Naples, 1587

His students are idiots. They do not wish to learn English. The garrison is little more than a rabble of disaffection and resentment, for most of these men have been rounded up for the King's great plan. And being a plan built upon piety and the mindset of God's holy warriors, this classroom is no place in which to enliven a lesson with a few curses and profanities. He resorts, instead, to teaching them about English women. How they dress, how they speak.

How, if an invading force wishes to have their favour, they must address them. He cannot bear the thought of the women of Lanherne being raped by these grimy, stinking buffoons.

In the afternoons, he leaves the port behind for the cool, dark alleys of the old quarter. His eye has been caught by a pale-skinned woman serving wine beneath a trailing vine outside a quay-side tavern. The tendrils of hair that escape her bonnet as she carries trays and trenchers are the colour of fire and she has freckles on her nose. She surely is not Italian. Irish, perhaps? Scottish? He is contriving in his mind the circumstances of her arrival in this amazing city and devising a conversation he might have with her, for he cannot imagine that she speaks no English. He is engrossed with this notion, all the while stepping aside for merchants, dodging muleteers, deflecting the sunlight that bounces off the cobbled road and the baking walls of the house; still thinking of the cool ale against his parched throat and wondering whether he will find the nerve tomorrow or perhaps the next day. For now, though, he has an appointment with a boot-maker and will then take a meal at his favourite pensione. This is a clean city. Taxes are collected and the Spanish king can pay his officers. Now, with the port behind him, the town closes in and the smells of salt and pilchards give way to the aroma of hot bread, garlic and oil, which float on the cool, stony air. Above, great strings of pasta decorate the ancient alleyways, hang down like washerwomen's work. By now he is musing on the strange beauty of this great city when a sudden bout of screaming brings him to a halt. His response is immediate. He bursts through the gates of a villa, charges into the dim cool shadows of a house and – nothing but silence. The screaming has stopped and here he stands, an intruder. An open doorway reveals a courtyard. He sees geraniums and herbs in pots. He sees three mangy cats, stirring with as much panic as sleeping felines might manage, and an old grey dog with his hackles up.

'Aiuto!' Help! A wail from a helpless person. Then he sees her. A leathery old woman has entered the courtyard, black-clad, wringing distressed hands and almost writhing in agitation. Tears stream down her face. For a second, the gypsy girl in Rheims shoots through

his mind. Will he ever learn? He strides towards her. Backs away when he sees her fright, but when he shows his open palms, she grabs his arms with gnarled fingers.

'Aiuto, senior. Prego?'

He nods and indicates his sword. When her eyes widen in gratitude, he draws it then finds himself being dragged through an arch, up a flight of cool, draughty stairs, along an arched gallery and into someone's private chambers. There, behind a torn muslin curtain, on a bed, a thrashing of human limbs. A girl with her mouth stuffed with a dirty bit of cloth is being stripped of her gown, her hose, her chemise. Three soldiers from the regiment. And one Tristram and one old woman. You wouldn't place your last escudo on it. He turns to his ancient ally to discover she has reached behind the door. She stands there, wizened and frail, a tiny shrunken thing armed with a terrifying spiked club. His grandfather had something similar at Babington Hall. An ancient kind of mace, wrought of the heaviest iron and wielded – if wielded – with a short thick chain attached to a hefty oak handle. It makes the self-flagellation devices made by the monks at Rheims look faintly absurd, for this thing has all the agonies of hell imprinted upon it. She holds it out for him to take, and taking his sword in his left hand, he takes it. Wields it. The roar that follows could surely be heard in Rome.

At Villa Marino, the Capitano Vinsglade is synonymous with Giuliana's virginity. There is nothing they will not do for the Capitano. Life in Naples has turned on one girl's saleability. It has taken five minutes for Tristram's act of bravery to become the talk of the neighbourhood and so, between bouts of teaching English, he finds the old men wanting to teach him bocce and play chess in a dusty square down by the harbour. Beneath a sycamore tree, he rewards their hospitality with stories of whitewash, hacked-up rood screens, smashed-up altars hewn from Italian marble. Oh, the travesty of it all. And the more he feeds their outrage, the more they reward his cause. They give him coins for the new statues and candles and altars. For roodscreens and coloured glass and bells and chalices and pyxes and vestments and chasubles. Whatever England needs to restore its true religion, he has money

for it now, for a modest parish. The old men cannot get enough of the horrors meted out upon England's good Catholics and if their prayers had been tidal waves, Cornwall and Devon would surely soon be inundated.

And so, in return for a little chopped firewood, Tristram returns from the garrison each day to good food and a comfortable bed. When Nonna's invective ricochets around the house with accusations about the soldiers who are ruining the city, she pats him on the cheek. Not you, chiara. Not you. She is Vesuvius; all steam and grumblings. But she prays for him three times a week, and for his poor father. She gives him an old rosary made of the wood from Christ's true cross. She teaches him to suck the flavour from an olive, to enjoy their brutal red wine, to dip bread in olive oil and to eat pasta with spiced fruit. She wags a finger at his peeling nose.

More and more he escapes from the regiment. He is, after all, pledged to Philip of Spain in deed and word, as per his family's motto, and yet his commitment is not, he has determined, to be weighed up by so many miserable hours to the day, day to week, week to year, or year to bloody lifetime. Deeds, not words. Not words, deeds.

As word of his presence in the Marino household spreads, so too do the number of visitors. On Sundays, cousins, uncles and aunts join the family around the great trestle in the courtyard. Shaded by a massive grapevine, they eat and drink until overcome by the need for sleep. At night, the dining hall comes to life. Fine embroidered linen appears from some secret cupboard and a Venetian glass bowl is placed upon a walnut credenza the widowed Antonius bought from a Tuscan trader. Old tin knives are replaced by silver ones with carved ebony handles, and friends and associates are invited to dinner, each one bearing gifts of wine or a torte or some preserves. They look at him, wonder at his sword and marvel at his lineage which, at Antonius's insistence, he draws for them, all the way to King Edward I.

There, in the candlelight, Tristram Winslade looks from face to face, trying to remember who is who, and as conversation swells in Italian, he lets his mind wander to the

last breakfast at Lanherne. Who was there? Who was who? And sometimes, when Antonius returns from counting sheep and goats and collecting taxes, and speaks tenderly to his children, he cannot help but try to remember: is this how it was at Lanherne? At Winslade Barton? Was I an obedient boy like little Lorenzo? Did I answer yes, sir? No, sir? He believes so, as the vague memory of slaps and thrashings is overwhelmed by the imprint in his head of Devonshire and the sweet, damp moss and grass, of mud and wet leather and steaming ponies. He blinks sharply once or twice, drains his goblet of its wine, laughs at little Lorenzo and avoids meeting Giuliana's eyes.

There are days when he walks into the hills to wander the stony terraces. When the sun is high, he takes from his pouch a loaf of Nonna's bread, made with olives and herbs, and a flask of water and he sits on a low stone wall, staring out at the dazzlingly blue sea. On some days, the world is so blue, the horizon cannot be found. How can such a colour be possible? And yet, he knows this colour from his Book of Hours. Surely the lapis lazuli that the monks ground up for azure has been placed in the earth for a reason. It is for this sky and this sea – the sea at the middle of the world.

Then, one night, just after Father Bartelotti has bid the family goodnight and the gates and the doors are bolted, Antonius, his knowing eyes glowing, comes to Tristram with two delicate glasses filled with golden liquor. He hands one to him and raises his own.

'To our Capitano.' And he smiles without parting his lips. *'It is time, is it not? You have become like a son and all of my friends and neighbours approve. When will you ask me for my daughter's hand?'*

What a fool he is. Why has he not understood? He is a nobleman. He is descended from three kings. Antonio believes he is from a family with money. He has rescued their daughter, and now he will pay for their generous thanks. How has he got it all so wrong? One deed is surely cancelled out by the gratitude they have shown. Is it not?

'Why, sir – I...'

'You do not like my precious Giuliana?'

'Of course I like her. She is very pretty and gentle and shy. But I do not know her, and she is too young. Besides, I have no money.'

'Of course you have money. You are noble. Or do you lie to me about that?'

'Sir, I have no money because our noblemen fought for our religion. We fought for God, and we failed. England's queen has got my money, sir. She will never give it back.' His thoughts race. He cannot stay here and marry Giuliana. The very idea is preposterous. Despite what he has just told Antonius, he has land to reclaim, he has a Spanish king to serve... *'Sir, I am pledged to King Philip. I am pledged to his service in order to bring England back to its true religion and to reclaim my lands. I must do this.'*

Fury pulsates in Antonius Marino's dark eyes. 'And when you do, you will return and marry my Giuliana. It is a matter of my honour. My friends and my family expect it. Giuliana expects it – sir, you have seen my daughter's flesh, and she wishes so much to give it to you again. You remember, how sweet she is. And so it must be. I must have your promise.'

The shock of it rattles. All he can recall is a tangle of legs and arms beneath a brutal assault. Yes, he saved her from violation. Her virginity is intact. Somehow, it has become his to take. And therefore, in this absurd world, he is hers. He cannot promise. Why should he? He saved the girl; he didn't rape her!

The next morning, he is greeted with silence, and Giuliana has not come down. He gathers his belongings and strides through the neighbourhood, smiling at all of the people who wave to him; the people who know, whose expectations are suddenly as clear as this bright new day. He must leave before they all find out. At the garrison, he requests permission to see his commanding officer.

'Sir, as you and I both know, the King is planning a great armada for the invasion of England. We both know that I have been here to train your men in speaking English for precisely that purpose. Sir, I would like permission to depart early for the King's forces in Lisbon. My father is there, and is very ill. I would like to see him.'

'You want to go alone, to Spain? To travel alone, across Spain? When you could go with an army?'

'Yes, sir.'

The commander laughs. 'You have displeased Signor Marino, yes? Ah – the Neapolitano is not to be dishonoured, Captain. Well, then. The men – they have had learned enough of English, no? And so, if Signor Marino come looking for you, I tell him a message come from the King himself. Because the King, he is your cousin? And he have other plans for you? This is true, I think. Yes?'

Tristram smiles. God bless his commanding officer. He is still smiling when the ship from Genoa pulls into the dock in Barcelona. He has scarcely spoken on the journey. Only a handful of soldiers is aboard, although half the volunteer regiment, including the remaining English-speakers, is preparing to follow within the month. The ship is full of priests, merchants, troubadours, pilgrims and wanderers, most speaking in either Italian or Spanish. There are one or two Irishmen among them who might be tolerable, but Tristram is in no mood for idle banter with foreigners. His thoughts are still in Naples.

Before him, now, lies Barcelona. He watches, almost unseeing, as ropes are tossed and the ship is secured. Finally, his attention is drawn to the shifting and bumping of other passengers as they haul their belongings towards the gang plank. He stands, stretches, gazes up at the massive fortification that dwarfs the harbour, notes the distant ridge of mountains that rise behind the city and breathes in a surprisingly sweet smell of toasted wheat wafting on the warm, dry breeze. He is suddenly hungry and scans the port for signs of somewhere to eat. Thanks to Nonna and Naples, he is no longer afraid of foreign food, especially in the

portside towns of this blue, blue sea. In this warm climate, there is always something fresh. A peach, perhaps. Or a sea creature cooked in oil; a sausage seared over an open fire.

He can feel his money pouch against his chest as he gathers his bag and swaggers down the gang-plank towards a curious crowd, all dressed in patinas of black and gold and silver. The first person to speak to him is a port official who asks to see his documents.

'Inglese?' And the official glances behind him as the black robes of a Dominican friar move into view.

'Yes,' he says. 'I am here to –' And then he realises. Oh, no! 'Catholico! Catholico!' He thrusts his papers towards him. 'Unattached officer! Entretenido!'

But his elbows are taken, and, scarcely able to hold onto his belongs, he is hauled away along the quay. He turns to see what has happened to the Irishmen, but they are watching on, helplessly, while their papers are examined and stamped. He feels the cool of tall buildings shading narrow streets as he is thrust forward, onward along a wide, handsome boulevard, then into a baking dirt square dominated by a massive palace. Please. No.

'Catholico! Catholico!' Please! I'm Catholic!

'Inglese,' one of the friars says. And the gate, swung open, now closes behind them.

Sir Richard Grenville is captivated by the notion of such an arrest. He buries his head in his hands and then looks up with shining eyes. 'Tell me, Winslade. What does it take for someone of your ilk to give up on your Popish nonsense?'

Winslade stares at him as if he has declared night to be day.

'Someone of my ilk? Sir Richard, someone of my ilk is the very ilk that never will. Why is it that your ilk cannot understand that? Your ilk worships in a cesspit of non-religion, and my ilk wants nothing to do with it.'

'Your ilk will never win.'

'Win what? The fight for Heaven?' He smiles. 'I'll send you a sign when I get there.'

Every day, the pigeons sit. They sit and shit upon the ledge, between the bars that keep the prisoner from leaping into a boat that might, by some underhand connivance, appear below. From his dirty pile of straw, the prisoner watches. Can even catch a tormenting glimpse of summer sky. How long do the pigeons stay, sitting there upon the ledge? For hours, sometimes. So long, he wishes he could move to shoo them off. He could move on his backside, in a sort of a crawl but, having gained the wall, his arms would not be capable of the work required and he would simply be shat upon. The prisoner remains where he is.

In his haze- and pain-filled mind, he is sitting up there beside them, looking out across the Thames to the burgeoning south London, where certain people are choosing to live and work. Pippa appears and sits beside him. There they are, the two of them. A pigeon pair on the window ledge, ready to fly. For she has come to take him home. They smile at each other and join hands.

'Remember?' she asks.

And he does. He remembers everything. And so, they push off.

They are lifted upon a breeze and wheel over the Tower of London. Everyone out on the green is watching, pointing, and condemned men break free from their shackles and rise from their hurdles. Soldiers are shouting and firing muskets into the air. But to no effect, for he is soaring now, with Pippa at his side. There is nothing anyone can do. Farewell to the Tower and Saint Paul's, farewell to Westminster Hall. There is the Abbey, and beside it, the Queen, taller than its massive towers and weeping with rage. Out into the countryside. They see flocks of black-faced sheep, fields of rye and barley and wheat. They see oxen pulling

ploughs and wains, and cows coming home for milking. Suddenly, appearing below, are the magnificent gardens of Hampton Court Palace, planned and scythed to within an inch of perfection. Windsor Castle rises like some ancient fortress.

Neither speaks. Their linked hands make God's fist. He feels a surge of power. Faster, faster now, and the fields and village speed by. The glistening sea is before them. The Severn estuary. And so they follow the coastline, homeward. There is Somerset, here are the great cliffs of north Devon. Look, see – there is his father, waving at them! There is Hartland Point. And there, if they wheel to the left, they can see the rise of the Tamar as it comes mysteriously out of the land. There is Tintagel and Padstow. Granite, sand, little harbours, great long beaches. Green, green grass.

'We are nearly there,' says Pippa. 'What would you like for your supper?'

When he turns to look at Pippa, she is a peregrine falcon. They are both peregrine falcons. They are feathered masters of the sky. And there is the beach at Mawgan, with the stream running fast and low. And there is Humphrey, on the beach, searching the sky for them.

Pippa grips his hand tightly and they wheel up, soaring against the whitened sky. They are way out to sea now. They cannot afford to miss. They level themselves. They are weightless and yet powerful. Faster, faster, low now across the green, whitecapped sea. The yellow sand sparkles and Humphrey stands there, like a headland. He is bigger and bigger. They hit with a great crash. Talons grip, feathers ruffle, eyes engage with sharp fury as birds and master tumble into the sand.

The thud wakes him to a heart beating with exhilaration. He cannot bear to open his eyes.

An hour later, they bring him a document to sign. He refuses, until he has read it. They bring an extra candle and slam the cell door behind them. Three weeks later, they manacle his wrecked joints and dump him in a cart. It takes him to Newgate, where they dump him in a cell. It is appalling, but at least there are people. He gossips with Father Harrison, from Devon, and Lady Arundell visits every week to pay the keeper. There is talk, there is barter, food and bribery. And where there is life, there is hope.

Weeks, months, seasons pass. Newgate is a living hell, full of filth and despair, quarrels and jealousies. Humanity is reduced to its base elements. Food and shit; life and death; hope and despair. Every hour of every day is marked by the tolling of the bell at St Sepulchre's and every tolling of that wretched bell is a reminder that for a man with no freedom, no means of expression or movement, time's progress is slower than lichen growth.

In Cornwall, the daffodils have long since breached their snowy blankets. How long do they last? He does not know. Is it two weeks? The end of winter is a strange thing, marked by oddities of nature that have nothing to do with the cold or the rain. In Newgate, the weeks that promise springtime are tediously long, remarkable only for the interminable coldness. There is a pervasive sense that unless one retreats into the most secret, warm places of one's being and finds there some sustenance, some wellspring of purpose and resolve, then one will simply freeze over and die, and everything will have been for nothing. And so, everyone prays. They say their rosaries. In doing so, over and over, simply to remind themselves they are human, they convince their jailors that their religion, for which they are imprisoned, is indeed the fanatical expression of a zealotry so excessive, so all-consuming, that any hope of a normal life of sowing and reaping, riding and fishing is forsaken.

Lady Arundell sends servants, but never comes. He learns that Mary Tregian, her daughter, is living with her now at Clerkenwell and beloved Francis is living in splendid luxury in the Marshalsea. Francis spends his days with Nicholas Roscarrock and they go over and over the saints' lives so that Roscarrock can put them to paper. Francis has permission to play tennis. Even in Newgate, he has trouble getting away from Francis Tregian. Pippa, he learns, is still in Cornwall. At least he can imagine her there.

Tristram Winslade's belongings, taken from him by Sir Francis Drake, have followed him from torture room to tower cell and now to Newgate. By some miracle of a saint somewhere, his Book of Hours remains wrapped in its little leather package and so, when away from vile creatures who would snatch and rip for nothing more than a moment's laughter, he takes solace in the Lady of the Woods and allows his imagination to revel in the mysteries of Alys du Bois, who through the meanderings of his mind becomes Pippa, saver of lambs lost, protector of vanquished souls, redeemer of all who are good but are denied the means to show it.

He spends hours trying to understand his father. He wonders whether he would have sold his son and heir to a foreign king on the slightest hope that one day, that foreign king would be able to return lost lands. When did William Winslade make the promises he made? Was it in return for his intervention over Winslade Barton, when the Spanish King was also the English King? Was it after good Queen Mary's death, when hope began to ebb? One day, he will ask the King.

On a bleak day in early March in the year of 1590, a prison guard comes to the cell Tristram Winslade shares with Father Harrison, unfurls a parchment and reads from it. There is an eruption of cheering and someone slaps him on the back. The Privy Council has decided to release him. He scarcely knows how to feel, for the conditions are plain. He cannot leave England. He must remain where he can be

summonsed once more. He must appear before them within ten days of such a summons. He stares at the bundle of clothes tossed at his feet.

‘Your duty is to God,’ Father Harrison whispers. ‘Do as they ask, but only so that you might follow the right path. Remember, the parole they have set for you could have you back on the rack. More likely, they will put you back in here to spy on the rest of us. Go to Lady Arundell. She has powerful friends.’

‘They have not returned my sword.’

‘No,’ says Father Harrison. ‘I doubt you will see it again.’

The guards will not tolerate any more of this and within minutes, the clanging of the prison gate is a mere echo in his ears. He is out on the wintry street.

So, this is London. He marvels at the fact of his first day as a free man in the great city. He is covered in Newgate filth, hungry and quite lost. But he is free and has a few coins in his pocket. His queasy stomach, sick with uncertainty, begs retreat, and so he enters an inn full of Tuscan sailors and settles into a dark unwanted corner with a glass of Portuguese madeira. It slides down his throat like warm silk and he sits still as the heat soothes his mind. Then, with his fist, he tries to wipe the smoke and grime from the little window and through the resultant smears, stares at the world outside. Opposite is the tragic ruin of a chapter house where urchins kick their way through the rubble looking for anything they might sell. He wanders towards the smell of the river and stands by the embankment watching the myriad ships, wherries, pilots all going about their dockside business. His knees and hips moan and so he goes gently until he reaches a little market, where Elizabeth’s England greets him with goods for sale: leather, semi-precious gems, glassware, pottery, and endless stalls of pamphlets and books. There are books of plays lampooning the

Pope, there are books of poetry by people trying to curry favour with the Queen. There are engravings of portraits of Court favourites – you can buy Sir Francis Drake and hang him on your wall, or cauldrons of heretics with which to terrify your children. This is London, an unholy place where people believe that a bag of money sits at God's right hand. With his coins he buys a block of soap then, as he casts his gaze in a quest to find his bearings, he espies something familiar. The sign of St Gabriel. He turns. There. Greystone Tailoring. Home of lustrous velvet and red silk wrappings. Dare he, in his present condition, enter such premises?

He pushes the door open. Good afternoon, sir. Servant of Sir John Arundell. Trying to find Clerkenwell. Does the tailor have anything ready-made that might fit, and if so, might he put the cost of a linen shirt and hose on Lady Arundell's account? Master Greystone vaguely remembers the black velvet consignment because of the tricky mingling of Arundell and Winslade insignia. Complicated. But Master Winslade is in luck, for an order, finished and paid for, has been waiting six months for collection. The owner is nowhere in the known universe.

'Forced to flee the country, I expect. Difficult times for so many.'

Tristram nods. 'Indeed.'

The tailor brings a hand to his chin. 'Sir, forgive me – am I right in thinking you have been a guest of Her Majesty, in her nearby illustrious hostel?'

'Newgate. Yes. And I apologise for contaminating your premises.'

'My advice to you – get yourself to Clerkenwell before dark. There is a fitting room at the rear. My man will fetch a bowl of water and assist you.'

By the time he is ready to leave, he is half clean, but feeling nearly new in modest clothes, in greens and browns, that will not draw attention. He thanks the tailor and hobbles to the door.

'Sir –'

He turns. The tailor has come after him.

'Sir – your gait. Topcliffe's mistress, if I am not mistaken? Let me get a carriage for you.'

They are standing on the roadside, when a young nobleman struts by – a billowing swathe of crimson velvet, gold and silver buttons and aglets, feathers and lace – tossing coins to his servants, who bound off to haggle at the market.

'Who is that?' Winslade asks.

'That exquisite vision is the Earl of Southampton.'

'Do all English noblemen dress in such a manner?'

Tristram Winslade notes the tailor's curious expression. How many years in prison, is what the man really wants to know. Or else, where have you been, and why?

'Do not bother about the carriage,' he says. 'If I go easily, I will get there, eventually.'

'The city gates close at sunset. Have a care.'

The shadows are long and he is nearly crippled with pain. He has passed through into the suburbs and is about to enter a tavern, when three men barge out past him – out of the way, you wreck, is what he hears – and nearly knock him over before striding off down the street. One of them, extremely tall and ungainly –

'Stop!' he calls. 'Easton!'

They all turn. There is no recognition and one of the shorter men draws a dagger. It is John, he is quite sure.

'John Easton?' he repeats.

'Who's asking?'

Tristram feels his shoulders sag. 'Am I so ruined?'

'Sweet Jesus, it's Winslade.' John Easton rushes back and embraces him. 'Christ, man. What've they done to you? And where've you been? We've been scouring London for you. God, Tris, you stink to high heaven.'

'I know. But I found Sir John's tailor – and then... I've been trying to get to Clerkenwell.'

'You went to *Greystones*?' John Easton turns to his companions. 'My cousin has walked out of Newgate and gone straight to Greystones! There's a certain Spanish panache about that. Well done, I say! You two go ahead,' he instructs his companions. 'Tell her ladyship I've found him and we're on a slow walk home.' He puts an arm around Tristram, trying to help ease his pain and awkwardness. It does little to help. 'You know, Tris, our ladyship nearly jumped over the moon when she heard you were to be released. She misses young John, since he and Richard Victor went back to manage Lanherne.'

'Richard's back at Lanherne? Well, well. And who was the charmer who called me a wreck?'

'You didn't recognise little George Arundell?'

'He clearly didn't recognise me.'

Lady Arundell greets him with tears in her eyes and, ignoring the stink of him, draws him into her embrace. 'My dear boy,' she says, over and over. As though

he had never had a mother of his own and she no sons. 'Always so dear to us, you were. My dear, dear boy.' Within half an hour he is seated in a tub of hot water, with a servant pouring suds over his head and down his back. Carefully, he draws his knees to his chest and fights the tears that are pounding at the back of his eyes. When the servant leaves, the shuddering begins and the tears pour out.

James Opie is a Truro lawyer brought to London with the Tregians to help with their case against Sir George Carey, whose unseemly rush to usurp ownership of Golden had a heavily pregnant Mary almost tossed out of her window. Opie is a man of ruddy fair complexion whose cheeks suggest a preference for shooting pheasants rather than fighting his battles in court. Tristram faces him across a small table in a room dominated by the Madonna that Mary Tregian has become during the past decade. There are children and babies and nannies and toys and puppies and kittens all over the place, and it does not seem to occur to them that two men setting themselves a legal brief might want some quiet; that their business cannot be dealt with in a public place. But these are two saintly women, mother and daughter, and have suffered so much for their faith; who is Tristram to suggest such a thing?

Ignoring the children who try to use them as trees for climbing, they set forth upon his ancestry and the lands that might by some stretch of circumstance be deemed vulnerable to attack. Opie's questions are boundless. Does Sir John hold any land Tristram has a claim to? What is the status of the claim against Mohun regarding the Cornish estates? What is the basis of a claim William Winslade had made regarding Ogmores in Wales? Who is residing at Winslade Barton? Is there any familial link with the last Earl of Devon? Was the link with the Hollands solid? Could there be a claim to the de Bathe land at North Tawton? Had his grandmother, Jane Trelawney, come into an inheritance before she died? If so, was it part of the

estate confiscated in 1549? What had happened to the White Spur bestowed upon his great-great grandfather by King Edward IV? Were any lands attached to this odd artefact of heraldry? Any income? If so, where might the money be now? James Opie has stirred and stirred until the ink upon Tristram's lineage is a slurry of mud. Nothing seems certain any more. Uncertainty, he knows, has its advantages.

As for the terms of his release, there is much, yet little, the lawyer can say. Certainly to stay in London is dangerous. They can recall him at any time; at any time he might be back upon the rack. At any time, he might be put back inside to spy on other Catholics. On the other hand, they may be prepared to wait. Perhaps they expect him to flee, and are ready to follow. Perhaps that is why the injuries he has sustained on the rack did not kill him; did not render him bedridden for life. No one knows why he was released. It might even have been a mistake brought on by Walsingham's demise. No one knows what to expect. No one knows what to do with him, and so he is allowed to sit in the spring sun and heal. That is, until a message arrives. From Devonshire.

Near Exeter, 1590

The horse Sir George Trenchard has loaned him is lame by the time he reaches the top of St David's Hill. He dismounts and looks down upon Exeter. It was once a familiar sight. Aged ten years, he sat here astride a grey pony while his father described the ragged army that had followed the priests' high-held pyxes, singing hymns until the city was encircled. Years ago, all of that. A lifetime. The city has burst through its stone skin; top-heavy, wood-framed houses cow the crooked lanes; roads wind their way up the valleys and across the streams and rills that flow into the Exe. The billowing smoke from the soldiers' campfires has been replaced by tight

little plumes from family hearths. Only the tolling of the cathedral's bronze bell returns his thoughts to the present and, as it tolls, he senses he is being watched. It is not the first time. Why did they release him? Only they know. But nothing is surer than that a price will be exacted. His release has not been granted for the simple fact of freedom for one truly innocent Tristram Winslade. Oh, no! His freedom is not recognisable as freedom to any other Englishman. And there are countless among their number who might play at cat-and-mouse with him, enjoying his freedom for as long as the surveillance is entertaining and useful. But then – two can play at that game and he is not quite as defenceless as the poor mouse.

He stands perfectly still, but then wonders whether that very stillness will betray his awareness to his pursuer. He knows that they know... But must they know that he knows? As he stands there, his eyes on the southern horizon, there comes at his back the thudding presence of home. And how it tugs. It takes all his strength of will not to turn around and ride out of this city. For a glimpse of Winslade Barton, for the smell of Lanherne. One day. Yes, one day... But not today. For Sir William Courtenay is expecting him at Powderham and he must lose the follower. The *pursuivant*. He must employ the arranged subterfuge amid the city's madding snarl.

He leads the horse into the bustling area near the city's North Gate and hands it over to Courtenay's ostler. Then, before the considerable burden of his pathetic bundle of ragged possessions can pull too hard at his shredded shoulder joints, he scans the street, seeking out the tavern. There. Between a fruit barrow and a laneway leading to a mews. The doorbell jangles as he enters and he finds a stool beside the hearth, where he can lean his back into the warm stone wall of the ingle. From here, he can survey the room. Yet, there it is again. That needling sensation. Despite Walsingham's descent into Purgatory, one of his spies is still on his tail. From his

place by the hearth he can survey the entire room. Which one of this raucous crew was following him? How has he entered the tavern unseen? That is easy enough to answer – the man must have been right behind him, entering on the same jangle of the bells above the door. And what about the boy? From where might he appear?

A serving maid places a trencher of bread and cheese on the up-ended barrel beside him. Outside, a clock chimes five. There are, perhaps, two or three hours of daylight left, and he must find his way to Powderham. He pours his ale down his throat, tears a chunk of bread away from the crust and stuffs it into his mouth. How can he manage this? He cannot outpace a pursuivant on foot. Discreetly, using the barrel as a shield, he feigns a problem with his boots, all the while taking his dagger from the strap around his calf. With the handle in his palm, he hides blade in the fold of his sleeve. Then, watching for a response from among the drinkers, he stands and proceeds with slow deliberation to the doorway. He takes two steps out onto the street and then turns back. There is the follower, in the doorway. They are face to face. He is about to confront the pimply-faced wretch when the publican appears on the scene.

‘That’ll be sixpence, y’ thiev’n tubbin,’ he shouts at the follower, and hauls him back inside.

While an argument erupts over payment, Winslade removes himself. Another friend of Courtenay, perhaps? He has no idea. He makes straight into the shadows of the adjacent laneway and slides down the wall, crouching into the blackest of shadows behind a pile of fish-smelling garbage. He waits. He cannot see a thing from here. He must wait for the password. Has the follower peered into the lane? Has he headed down to the port? Or is he still haggling with the publican? Fifteen minutes must have passed when he hears it.

‘Any’un need a boat?’

The sudden utterance of the expected password is disarming. Slowly, he rises to his feet. It's a young man, slender and fair, little more than a boy. He responds with the agreed set of words.

'Which way are you going?'

'With tide, o'course.'

'Right you are. Did you see the follower?'

'Aye, sir. He's headed for the port, 'specting you to go Powderham. 'ere, this will help, sir.' He tosses Tristram a knapsack. 'Change of clothes.'

And so, the boy stands, humming, at the entrance to the lane, while Tristram removes the contents of the knapsack. An old brown scarf, a battered old-style square felt cap and a dark green demi-cloak. Suddenly, the publican appears and hands the boy a walking stick.

'Your master left it behind, boy,' he says. He winks at Winslade and goes back inside.

Tristram Winslade is astonished.

'He's a friend of Sir William?'

'Verra good friend, sir. Best place in town for gettin' rid o' vermin.'

'And how is Sir William?'

'Verra well, sir.'

Tristram wishes it were darker. It is almost impossible to keep from scanning the throng gathered at the little port and a searching gaze might be enough to betray him.

'You're watching for him, aren't you lad?'

'I am, sir. But he ain't watchin' for an old man with his grandson. You look like a right old man, hobbling along for all the world to see how ancient 'e be.'

They reach the Water Gate and make their way to the quay, where all manner of river craft and fishing boats are tied up and all manner of people are pushing and shoving. Fishwives are trading lobsters for onions, women are looking for their husbands, men are looking for work. With one arm around the boy's shoulder, he casts his gaze to the handle of the walking stick and wonders what on earth happened to the St Christopher staff he bought in Switzerland. It was the day of sunshine and mineral baths. He cannot remember the last time he saw it.

'Here we be,' says the boy. 'This little 'un. 'T'es in need of a bit of paint, but 'tes strong enough for the two of we.'

Tristram stares at the battered little craft. It is less than noteworthy.

'Can you see him?'

'Aye sir, he be scroungin' on the other bank. 'e edn't lookin' at we.'

'You're good at this.'

'Get in, sir. Best be off.'

The boy has tied up next to a much larger boat, and so slipping out into the current without being seen is a simple matter. Within an hour, Exeter is behind them and the port of Topsham comes into view. Tristram notes the galleons tied up there and feels his mouth go dry as the memory of his arrest aboard the *Rosario* floods him with horror. He has no need to worry. Expertly, the boy steers the boat along with the strong ebb flow, past the galleons, carracks, barks and fishing boats. Finally, the busyness of the port gives way to reeds and grasses. They see redshanks, a pair of widgeon and a couple of geese. Tristram finally smiles at the splash of friendly otters

and an aimless osprey, gliding overhead. One day, he will find such simple pleasure in life. One day.

Finally, they arrive at the castle's little docking place and once again, the boy takes charge, leading him up the path, beyond the main entrance to a door in one of the towers. It opens, then closes silently behind them.

'I shall leave you here, sir.'

The boy bows and takes his leave. Then, out of the gloom, a soft circle of candle-glow appears and Tristram makes out a deeply lined and whiskered face shaded by the brim of a broad cap worn low.

'Mr Winslade.'

'Sir William?'

'This way.'

He follows the flame along a low-ceilinged corridor and it is only at its end that a door is opened onto a small, dark room lit only by a fire. The answer to a chilled traveller's dreams. Behind him, he hears the door close. He looks around. Two walls are lined with bookshelves, and heavy tapestries cover whatever windows there might have been. Believing himself alone, he begins to ease himself into a chair.

'Tristram Winslade,' a voice says. It is deep and refined. Tristram's eyes search the gloom for the speaker.

'Aye, sir.' He straightens, still leaning upon his stick.

'Welcome to Powderham.' Sir William Courtenay rises, a shape of muted hues among the shadows. It appears to Tristram that he has been squatting before a

low shelf and has, just at that moment, found the scroll of parchment he sought. He extends a firm, dry hand and has it shaken. 'Sit, sit. You must be tired. I will have Hannah bring you something. I have to say, it is good to see you. We were keeping an ear to the ground on your case.'

Courtenay is watching him intently, and Tristram feels a frisson of uncertainty, a dislike he has not expected. Has Sir William been afraid that he might expose friends in the south-west? Men – and their womenfolk – who were so vital to the cause?

'You cannot believe I would ever have traded names for my freedom! As you see, I have paid dearly for silence.'

Courtenay is taken aback. Opens his mouth, then closes it. Then he opens it again.

'No offence meant. You're a true Winslade, then. Your grandfather would be proud of you. And may I say, I was sorry to hear of your father's death. At least he died among the righteous.'

'Thank you, sir. He rests above a hot blue harbour, so very far from home. I cannot help but think he would wish it were otherwise.'

'So much to regret. One of my regrets is that you and I never knew each other as children. Of course, your father and mine would never have seen eye to eye. Not that I remember mine, of course, but he would have turned in his grave to know what my guardian did to my conscience. Anyway, I was sorry to hear of your father's death and sorrier that I could never drink to him in company. There are too many people in these parts for whom his name rang with danger, although scratch a little skin and you will find hearts filled with sympathy and admiration.' He paused. 'Tell me, Winslade – do I look as old as you do?'

It was only now that Tristram remembers that Sir William and he are about the same age. He smiles ruefully.

‘No, sir, you don’t. I’m sure Topcliffe’s rack has added years to me. Or taken them away. That rack is the most appalling device.’

‘So I’ve heard. Anyway, Grenville’s off on some sea voyage or another. With a bit of luck, he won’t come back. I suppose you heard he put Valdés up at Esher with his sister’s boy. Writing up a dictionary and sitting on a pile of gold and silver from the *Rosario*.’

‘The ghost of Wolsey will no doubt be counting it.’

They pause their conversation as a maid comes in with a tray, sets it on a small table, pours two glasses of Madeira and leaves without even looking at her master’s visitor. Tristram eats in silence, while Courtenay shuffles papers somewhere behind him.

‘I believe you know Gabriel Denys,’ Courtenay says. ‘You may even have seen this before.’

Tristram eases himself out of the chair, and urges his stiffening knees to bend. On the table behind him lies a map, anchored to the table by a book at each corner. He stares at it.

‘By God, Sir William. I think I have. And, yes. I know Gabriel well – or at least, I did. It’s been years since I saw him.’

‘And you know the plan it was designed for?’

‘I do.’

‘Winslade, you have been lucky so far – at least since your release. They have not called you back. But they will. Things are happening in Brussels and your

friends are there. Believe me. The Privy Council has not done with you yet, and so it's quite convenient, I think, that Gabriel Denys and Sir William Stanley want you in Brussels.'

'Stanley? Lady Anne's cousin?'

'That's right. You'll have heard of his defection.'

'Yes. Indeed. And what am I to do there?'

Courtenay smiles, and sweeps his hand across the map.

'Your task will be to make this happen. Persuade King Philip that the idea is good, that the timing is good, that it can be done.'

Tristram Winslade hears the past. It is marching up the corridors and pounding at the door.

'Can it be done, Sir William?'

'You will leave that to me and my friends across the south-west.'

'It won't work without Cornwall.'

'I know that. So do the Cornish. That's the thing about the Cornish, Winslade – as I'm sure you know – they'll never pass up a fair chance.'

'After last time?'

Courtenay folds his arms and continues to gaze at the map.

'Especially after the last time,' he says. 'You know that as well as I do. Every man in Cornwall knows how close they came to changing history, and they did it without any foreign help.' In the half-light, Courtenay looks at him with unflinching eyes of uncertain colour. 'Can you imagine what the entire south-west can achieve with Spain's help? Of course, there remains the problem of who should rule

England. English folk will not have a Spaniard, but someone of his choosing – that is a matter we can work upon. Turberville stands by me. Wadham, Seymour. Fitzjames. Countless others, of course.'

Tristram raises an eyebrow. 'Lady Arundell will remain steadfast, and down in Cornwall we still have—'

'Godolphin. Yes. And Lanherne is now back in Arundell hands, although poor young John's influence is nothing like his father's. First, though, we must get you out of here. Out of England.'

Winslade stares into the fire, his thoughts paralysed.

'I cannot,' he says. 'I cannot bear the thought.' The urge to run from the room, to mount a horse and gallop all the way to Lanherne is almost too much.

'You must. You might be safe here tonight, but I cannot risk them finding you beneath my roof. It is vital to our cause that I am believed to be entirely trustworthy.'

Sir William is right, on every count and yet his words run cold in Tristram's veins. Yes, he must be the man in whom Elizabeth places her absolute faith, not to mention her money, weapons and men. It is such a simple matter for such a man to let the cause fail.

'It has been fourteen years already, Sir William. My life is sliding away. Time is pulling it out from beneath my feet. Every step I take, every breath, seems to take me further and further from home, when home is where I yearn to be. And when I am here, I cannot stay. Why can I not throw myself at the Queen's feet, as did my lord, Sir John Arundell, and pledge her my loyalty? My Catholic loyalty. Just as all of our ancestors were once English Catholics, why cannot some of us choose to be so now?'

‘You are talking nonsense now, Winslade. Been away too long. The Queen’s advisors will never allow her to accept that there is such a thing as a loyal Catholic subject. It has been that way for years and I am sorry to say your great Armada did not help.’

Tristram feels his heart pounding in his ears. How much does Courtenay really know? Does he know the truth of Sir John’s duplicity? Does he know about the maps of Wales, the priests, the Spanish ambassador? Does he know of Tristram Winslade’s early work for Spain? Exactly what has Gabriel told him?

He dare not reveal anything, and so Courtenay continues. ‘It so happens, that I still have prisoners from the *Rosario* down here and the Queen has given me licence to make exchanges for ransom.’ Courtenay pauses. ‘There is a ship leaving Topsham on Friday. On board will be provisions for the Marshal of Calais, and also prisoners whose exchanges have been approved. The list of prisoners I sent over last week includes the name of Rodriguez Fernandez. Sadly, Señor Fernandez died a few days ago and cannot board the ship in Topsham. What I propose is that mid-way across the Channel, a small boat carrying an imposter and the old list – which I have here – will rendezvous with the ship ... You undersand my meaning, of course.’

‘But I cannot go to Calais!’

‘Have faith, Winslade. We have friends everywhere, including Calais. A friend at the port will delay you, challenge you – for you speak so little Spanish – and take you away for interrogation. When that happens, you will know you are safe.’

‘That’s safety, is it? And what will danger look like, Sir William? For God’s sake. Is there no other option for me? A tenement somewhere? Can I never leave this quest alone?’

'A *tenement*? When a successful invasion will return to you all of your lands! Please, you are tired. I understand that. But you cannot let us down now. You cannot let your brothers down.'

Tristram Winslade opens his mouth. *His brothers?* He closes it.

He does more than simply shut his mouth. Next morning, he submits to a prisoner's shave and prison garb and spends the day in seclusion. Then, with his belongings hidden beneath a cloak, he climbs aboard a rowboat that will meet with a vessel off the coast. Courtenay's boy servant is among the rowers, but the lad says nothing to the man whose hand sat gentle on his shoulder as they walked the streets of Exeter. The boy rows. He does not speak. He has been well trained.

Slowly, for his shoulders and knees are weak, Winslade climbs a swaying rope ladder and hefts himself over the ship's gunwhale. The light of a single lantern finds him a place to sit where he can avoid the gazes of Spanish sailors who cannot quite believe they are being sent home. His logical mind tells him they have nothing to gain by betraying him to the officials in Calais, but his heart pounds. Who knows what a desperate and hungry man might try? And yet, it is almost certain that they will not risk being returned to the slavery enforced upon them by Sir William Courtenay; not when someone has paid for their release. No one knows who to trust and so no one speaks. The ship sails on beneath a wind-blown moon, its crew alert to Spanish plunder, the released prisoners buried in their thoughts and in silent prayer.

Was this is the journey his ancestor made? From Exeter to Calais? Perhaps via Guernsey. On board, the Earl of March. The young earl who was about to become king. And with him, Richard Wydeslade. What were they thinking? That the old king might fight on, might continue to slaughter the sons and brothers and cousins

of York? That, in so fleeing, in so abandoning so many to whatever fate might befall them, they might never be welcome in England again? Or was their faith so true, so pure, that they simply trusted in God's given moment. A sudden tempest, a well-fired arrow, a thick fog. An unexpected death.

Part IV

Brussels, 1595

The candle is the room's only light and its feeble warmth means nothing to the winter wind that is sucking up the freezing mist above the Willebroek canal. It pushes through the city gates, cuts a swathe across the marketplace and seeps through every gap in every door and window. The chill gnaws at his skull and torments joints ruined, years back now, by the rack.

He sits quite still, at a small oak table that has been crammed into a room above a tavern, just inside the city gates, a gaunt man, with large grey eyes. The flickering shadows play with the arch of his eyebrows and cast an odd angularity over his cheek bones. His closely cropped hair, upon which Gabriel's wife has rather too vigorously employed blunt scissors, reveals a receding hairline. Around his neck he wears a rough scarf loosely knotted, and beneath it a gold chain bearing a crucifix is just visible before it disappears into the folds of a lightly ruffed cambric shirt worn beneath a coat tailored years ago, for a heavier man.

He is not extremely old – at home, the old are ancient – but the bright expectation of youth was vanquished years ago, leaving only the faded freckles on his narrow straight nose and, beneath his skin, the grey pallor of malnutrition. More and more, his thoughts wander home to drowsy Cornish summer days that slowly transform to a mist-drenched leaf-fall, howling gales and snow in winter. A young man can cherish all that nature has to offer when there are solid walls, blazing fires and firm friends around him. It would be easy, tonight, to take to his bug-ridden bed and pull up his blanket, and dream.

As he struggles with his thoughts, the candlelight reveals the long fingers of his left hand. Stilled by the moment, they are tense, stretching out from bony hand

and wrist as though about to leave the scene. In search of something? Someone? Between the fingers on his right hand, also stilled, is a quill, and it threatens to drip ink onto the sleeve of his coat. Once a good sturdy chersey cloth, this sleeve is grimy and stained but the cloth is dark and the candlelight weak. He will never notice the inky smudge.

With a sigh, he returns the quill to its stand and picks up the parchment and blows on it. He has not done as much as Stanley might have expected.

On the Present Condition of Cornwall and Devon, the Two Counties nearest Spain

Cornwall is the English county nearest Spain and has 17 towns, which are busy with commerce and trade, and more than 200 parishes. Sixteen or seventeen thousand cavalry, at most, are enlisted, effective trained men for waging war on land; and at sea, more than three thousand sailors in addition to the nobles and all their attendants. In the general census of the whole county are found about 31 or 32 thousand fit for bearing arms from their eighteenth to their sixtieth year. Cornwall has a port called Falmouth, the equal of any English port, able to hold a thousand ships, even the largest. It also has another port called Mounts Bay, quite capable of receiving even large ships. Devon lies next to Cornwall and from this province 34 or 35 thousand men are enlisted and trained in military service.

A coastal landing in either of these two counties can be supported by the geography of the south-west peninsula, which is almost separated from the rest of England by means of two rivers: the Wier, which flows north into the sea and the Stour. The gap between the heads of these rivers is small and impassable. As soon as horses step into the sticky mud, they stick and sink and are swamped by the currents. With such a natural separation, the south-west of England can protect a Spanish landing from any attack coming from the east.

Dare he suggest that once His Majesty's Spanish forces have landed, it might please the King to spare from danger and harm the good people who live in Cornwall and Devon who, as he well knows, wish with all their hearts to pray to their Lord according to their twelve hundred year-old religion? Dare he? And dare he ask His Majesty, once England is returned to its senses, to return to one Tristram Winslade all the lands stolen from his father? And to allow the said Tristram Winslade to settle upon his said lands with Pippa Arundell, daughter of poor old Humphrey? So many things he wishes to say to King Philip II. So many things he wishes for.

Your Majestie, I was born in Devon and have both in that county and in Cornwall kinsmen, marriage relations and friends...

There are footsteps on the stair. His eyes sharpen, and his gaze swings to the door. In the gloom he cannot see the bolt. Sometimes he forgets... But then – Yes! A distinctive four-tap knock; two semi-crotchets followed by crotchets. A friend; at least that is what it should mean. He takes his dagger from inside his boot and grimaces with pain as he straightens his spine and hobbles on numb feet to the door.

'Name?' he shouts hoarsely.

'Gabriel Thomas Aloyisius Denys,' comes a familiar voice.

He opens the door and finds him there, dragging a woollen cap from his greying tangle of curly hair and stamping his feet.

'Good day to you, Tristram,' Gabriel says, breathing fog. 'I don't like to interrupt, but Stanley's back and wants a meeting.'

'Ah.' He stands aside to admit his friend. 'I was just thinking of you. And your father.'

‘God bless his soul. He did what he could.’ Gabriel puts a squat black bottle on the table and looks around for goblets.

Tristram takes an earthenware cup from a shelf. ‘There’s only one. And only one chair.’

‘Landlord losing patience?’

‘Aye. Lucky to still have a palette to sleep on.’

‘Then I will drink from the bottle – you have the chair.’ Gabriel fills the cup and pushes it back to Tristram, who eases himself back onto his chair. ‘There have been developments. Word from Rome suggests the King will instruct the new Archduke to implement a final push on England.’

Tristram Winslade feels the thumping of his heart. ‘My plan?’

‘Early days, Tris, but we know Stanley can be persuasive. How goes it?’

‘Slowly, and yet I try to push it along. I just don’t know how many more of these I can prepare. It’s been the same thing, over and over. Everyone wants to invade England, but there’s no money. And around we go again. It’s a bit like my life, you know.’

‘You’ve heard the news from Devon?’

‘Of course. Courtenay has money for six thousand men.’ Tristram Winslade touches his cup to Gabriel’s bottle. ‘To Sir William Courtenay. God bless him six thousand times. Without our friends at home, there’d be no hope.’

‘To Courtenay.’

The wine slides down Tristram’s throat and Gabriel Denys makes an uncertain descent to the straw palliase.

'We shouldn't talk about it here,' Gabriel says. 'There are cracks in your door and I saw one of Paget's spies downstairs. Sad to think we can't even trust other Catholics.'

Winslade stares at a map of the Cornish coast he has begun to draw. Mounts Bay looks too small. Unworthy of the King's consideration.

'Perhaps we could try them for treason. Or ask the Pope to excommunicate them.'

'That's the best idea I've heard all day, Winslade. Anyway, come for supper this evening. Usual crew.'

'Supper. Thank you.' Tristram cannot understand why Gabriel has come out in this weather. He could have sent a servant.

They drink in silence for a few seconds and Gabriel's eyes roam the gloom.

'So, this is the best accommodation you can get? It's surely inadequate for the work you are doing.'

'They tell me I am on a list somewhere,' Tristram says. 'But I've never seen it. If it actually exists, then I suspect there are more than a few who must die of starvation before I shuffle to the top.'

'Still no money?'

'Lady Anne sends me some every so often. Good English silver, generally. But her troubles are increasing by the day and I haven't seen an escudo for three months. But lucky for me, there's a surplus of gabardine in Madrid this season, and so they have sent it all to Brussels. If only I could go to London. I could sell it to Lord Burghley's tailor for his spring wardrobe.'

'And what about your shoulders?'

Tristram closes his eyes against the searing memory of the rack. It is an irony Topcliffe would have found exquisite: the colder the day, the more his joints burn.

‘They serve well enough. And gabardine is light, you know.’

‘Mother of God, Tris! Give the bloody stuff to me. Elizabeth will know what to do with it. She can make a padded jerkin, or something. Stuff it up with wool. Light, but warm.’

While Tristram picks up a bundle from a dark corner beneath the window, Gabriel struggles to his feet and places the bottle on the table. They have become old men.

‘Thank you, Gabe,’ he says. He seems always to be thanking Gabriel. For this. For that. For all sorts of things.

‘You’re welcome. Come around eight o’clock.’

It is a quick walk over crunching snow – at least, it is for most. Tristram Winslade sets off at something between limp and hobble, wrapped in every layer of wool he owns. His right hip clicks and any exertion shoots pain into his lower back and down his leg. Occasionally, there is a grating sensation that reminds him of the hinged granite block in the wall of Sir John’s study at Lanherne. It would be amusing if it did not cause him so much pain.

Gabriel is a family man and, with income from home, is able to rent a good house in this rich and expensive city. Its four storeys and elegant gable frontage sit well upon a street just beyond the cathedral, and its large rooms make it a popular meeting place. Tristram is, as usual, the last to arrive. Sir William Stanley, in his regimental attire, is already absorbing the warmth from Gabriel’s fire. Hugh Owen, the faction’s spymaster, is snug in a tight fleecy jerkin and boots pulled high over

woollen hose, all of which emitted a nauseating waft of blue vein cheese. The two of them have occupied the settles closest to the fire.

‘You look worse than usual, Winslade,’ says Stanley. He has just arrived back from Scotland and, as Tristram leans his walking stick against the wall, shuffles up the bench to make room.

‘Thank you, sir. I feel it. How was Scotland?’

‘Ah, I have battle stories to make you weep. In fact, many did weep.’

‘Can we count on more of it?’

‘Truth to tell, Winslade, I’m not confident our Scottish friends really want to stir up any further trouble.’

Tristram frowns. A distraction on the Scots border was always helpful. Ask any Cornishman. He’d laugh in your face and give a sharp dissertation on German mercenaries. This time, though, it might be critical. Depending on the weather. He looks up as one of Gabriel’s daughters enters with a tray, and takes a glass. The fire of something Portuguese slides down his throat like the gift of life. Or an executioner’s blade. Then, from somewhere, tantalisingly close, comes the smell of roast pork and parsnips. Owen’s stomach growls and Gabriel draws up a stool.

‘A’right,’ Gabriel says. ‘Some quiet advice for you, and it stays here between the four of us.’ He pauses, rests elbows on his thighs and makes a steeple with his index fingers. ‘Friends in Rome are suggesting that when the new Archduke arrives, we might see a more formal push on England. Father Persons is working on it, pushing Madrid for a written policy and more money. He wants a special council, here in Brussels. The three of you are on his list.’

‘What, to be councillors for the invasion of England?’ Hugh Owen stretches out his legs. ‘And how will this be any different to what we’ve been doing?’

'Good question,' says Stanley.

'Obviously, the King has to approve it,' says Gabriel Denys. 'I get a sense there might be a more formal and direct line of reporting to this new Archduke, rather than the somewhat ad hoc system old Ernst was trying to manage. Albert of Austria has had Portugal on a short leash and will run Brussels with a tight grip. If this council comes to be, I'm hopeful there'll be a place in the palace for us.' He smiles at Tristram. 'So, a better place for you to work in, Winslade.'

'Thy kingdom come. And here was I, expecting a waste heap. Naples again, God forbid. Or Amiens.'

Stanley sighed. 'Oh, for pity's sake! You might not be the embodiment of Spain's puerile officer rating system, but you've been working for the cause for twenty years. Loyalty counts, you know.'

'Does it? I've often wondered about that. It doesn't feed me.' He pauses. 'What about you, Gabe? Are you on the list?'

'Council secretary, Archduke's liaison, or some such thing. Much the same.'

'And will there be a miracle wind to blow the whiff of money our way?'
Tristram Winslade asks.

'Father Holt will hold the purse for our endeavours.' Gabriel Denys glances from face to face. 'Sorry. Nothing we can do about that.'

'Well, I will believe the changes when I see them,' says Stanley.

'Does this mean we'll have more influence?' Winslade asks. 'We've been putting plans in front of the King for years. Is it too much to want to go home?'

'You did go home and came back with longer legs,' says Hugh Owen.

There is a tense silence during which Winslade clenches a fist and struggles to his feet. His breathing is heavy. They can all hear the fury that is boiling his blood. A younger Winslade would lay the Welshman flat.

‘What I think you’re trying to say, Hugh, is that I risked my life for the cause, survived their rack without telling them anything useful, and then escaped.’

‘You’re an idiot sometimes, Owen,’ says Stanley. ‘For all the effort you put in, all the brilliance of your work, sometimes you are a complete fool.’

‘Sit down, Tris,’ says Gabriel. ‘Please.’

‘Not before he apologizes.’

Hugh Owen is forced to look up at him. ‘I apologize, Winslade. Most sincerely. Stanley’s right. That was an idiotic thing to say and I’m sorry. I hope you will forgive me.’

Gabriel takes him by the shoulder. Sit. It’s time to sit. He sits.

‘We all want to go home to a Catholic England, Hugh,’ Tristram Winslade says. ‘Every single one of us. That’s what this is for. That’s why we’re not sitting in Paris with Charles Paget, hoping for a sign of toleration. It’s the very reason we’re all sitting here tonight talking about invading our own country.’

‘Hear, hear. And I quite fancy landing at Penzance,’ says Stanley. ‘I’d like to call in at Lanherne.’

Christ in Heaven, thinks Tristram. I’d risk everything for one more day at Lanherne.

The door swings open again, and again the Denys daughters appear, this time with trays of steaming food, which they place on a table by a diamond-paned window.

Gabriel rises. 'Please gentlemen, let us continue this over my wife's fine efforts. Thank you, daughters. You do me proud.' He glances around the room and smiles. 'There is still one available to wed, you know!'

No one responds to this. The four men take their chairs and Gabriel says grace.

'My, if only haggis might look this good,' Stanley says dryly as he piles pork onto his trencher, and Gabriel responds with a quip about the Flemish penchant for quail. Hugh Owen stuffs his mouth with bread.

Tristram does not know how well his shrunken gut will respond to a hearty meal, but he takes meat, onions and parsnip and a thick slice of bread. These men recognise his noble lineage. They sympathise with his pain. But they have no idea. No idea at all how he lives. Each of them has money coming from wealthy families at home. But, oh no! Not poor Winslade. He is expected to hawk cloth around the marketplace and is in debt all over the city. More than any of them, he needs this new arrangement. He needs an office at the palace and the good graces of the new archduke. He spoons mustard onto his bread, and places a slice of meat upon it. His mouth is watering.

The great day comes. Winslade is part of a troop of English soldiers who ride out to greet the vice-regal army as it enters the city, and lead it through the city gates. Beneath his borrowed regimental uniform, which cannot be his for he remains an *entretenido* and not of the regiment, his shirt is alive with lice. The irony is sweet. Generally, his reconfigured hips cause the discomfort, but today his tendons are content upon horseback while this wretched uniform has him twitching. He forces his mind to wander, and his inner gaze falls upon a map that has come from the memory of a dream. The fields, the beach, the cliffs, the rivers and houses. The

church, the great manor house at Lanherne. All seen from the astonishing dream of flight. In his head, it is all still there. All vibrantly green and blue, with the yellow-white strand where Humphrey once ran with Willow; where he once galloped upon his horse. Trumpets blast and horses stamp at the ground. Spain's great show of force reveals its might. Cannon are wheeled in. There are arbusquiers, halberdiers, pikeman, infantrymen. Lined up. Marching. Playing. There are lords and ladies, seated in rows. There are monks and priests, the bishops and the Cardinal. It is a Spanish force and, really, the English might as well be kittens playing with a ball of wool.

Two weeks later he is sitting in a corridor in the achingly vast Coudenberg Palace. He has lost count of the officious young men to have walked past him. Liveried to excess in blue velvet with belts and aiglets and ribbons in Habsburg yellow and black, their hard leather boots ring out like a warning on the parquet. The vaulted gallery is long almost long enough for a cavalry charge. It is also, in keeping with its name, freezing, and his cloak struggles to keep the thawing snow, which has settled on his shoulders, from seeping into his bones. He flicks the remaining flakes to the floor and watches puddles form. Another two servants approach, carrying silver trays laden with jugs, cups, dishes and spoons. It is so cold that the steam from a gilt jug creates a tormenting chocolate-scented cloud.

The guards open the double doors, admit the heavenly waft, and then close them. They open again.

'Captain Winslade?'

Tristram rises and looks down at a youth whose demeanour suggests the expectation of greatness. Perhaps this buck's father is already great, but his face belongs to a baby and is yet to know a blade.

‘Yes.’

‘Follow me, please. His Grace is ready for you.’

The buck turns on an impressive heel and the doors are once again opened. They reveal more luxury, more extravagance and opulence than Tristram has ever seen. He follows his guide across a hall lined with polished timber panels upon which hang paintings he imagines have come from across the empire: Austria, Germany, from Prague – gifts, perhaps, from the Archduke’s brother, the Emperor Rudolph II. There are marble sculptures, gilded and painted vases and, as he glances up, the ornate ceiling reminds him of São Roque.

Another door opens, this one a single door, to reveal a smaller room with a window looking out to a grey sky. A secretary sits at a desk which has been situated close to a small fire-place, within which a bright fire crackles. On the other side of the fire is a row of chairs, each one upholstered in woollen tapestry bearing the Archduke’s coat of arms.

‘Captain Winslade,’ the servant informs the secretary, and performs another turn of the heel which is mangled for a second by the nap of a Persian carpet. The secretary smiles secretly as the servant clumsily recovers himself and leaves the room, and Tristram holds his amusement in check. In the silence, the fire spits and the secretary’s quill scratches away like a chicken preparing to roost. There has been no indication that the secretary has informed anyone of his presence. *How long will this showing off continue?*

Minutes later, a low grinding noise alerts him to the movement of part of the bookcase. It is opening outwards, in the space beside the secretary’s desk. And through the gap steps a lean, luxuriantly dressed man with glossy black hair tied in a bow.

‘Captain Winslade.’

Again, he rises, quite prepared for yet another tour through the mysterious corridors of Coudenberg.

‘The Archduke is ready to meet with you,’ the man continues. ‘You will call him ‘Your Grace’. May I see your papers, please?’

Once more, he retrieves his papers. The copy of his *asiento*, his certificate of residency, his genealogy. Father Holt has even obtained fresh paperwork stamped by the Holy Inquisition to replace that tossed into the sea. Anything that might help him to impress the Archduke is here, in his dossier.

‘Sign here,’ the man says. Already he has signed at the gatehouse. He has walked across the Baille, the palace’s massive courtyard, and signed at the main door. Now, his signature is witnessed and assessed again.

‘Very well. Follow me.’

Tristram Winslade steps through the false bookcase, follows the attendant across another well-panelled room to a pair of massive gilt-and-nail doors guarded by halberdiers. Finally, the doors open to a small, stark room in which two men are playing chess and a third playing the lute. On a table is the tray he saw being delivered, its contents untouched. One of the chess players picks up a white rook and turns to view his visitor.

‘Some advice, Captain, please. My rook is vulnerable, but I fear rescuing it. I cannot quite see why.’

Tristram Winslade bows. He has only seen the Archduke from a distance. Was this man he? And if so, what game – apart from chess – is he playing?

'Your Grace.' His guess, fired across the chessboard, appears to land safely. 'Sire, your rook is in an impossible position. If you do not move it, a bishop will claim it. But your instinct is good. If you move it and ignore your queen, there is a humble pawn ready to move upon her.'

The other player throws up his hands in mock despair.

'Captain Winslade, you do me a great injustice. Just when I thought I had His Grace roasted,' he says.

The Archduke struggles to his feet and Tristram takes two steps back. Tries to hide his confusion. This is not the formality he has been expecting. He bows again and then musters the courage to look straight into the Governor-General's face. It seems benign, with its brown eyes, greying brown hair and neatly trimmed red beard. It is a fair face, one you would not remark upon should it walk through London. The freckles on his nose might belong to his mother's family.

'Winslade,' he says. 'We've heard a lot about you, haven't we Mançiçidor? Your father fought for my father, the Emperor. In Siena, I think?'

'He did, Your Grace.' So, he thinks. The other man is Juan de Mançiçidor. The Secretary of State.

'And your mother was a professed nun.' This statement is punctuated by the final notes of a little tune being played upon the lute, at which the lutenist is dismissed by the wave of a hand.

'She was, Your Grace. A more pious lady you would not find.'

The Archduke signals and Tristram realises the glossy-haired attendant has remained, and is standing behind him. There is a quiet demand for another chair. Meanwhile, Mançiçidor clears the chessboard, as though to end a game with the

Archduke is an entirely acceptable course of action. Quite suddenly, they are a threesome around the table.

‘You have suffered greatly,’ Mançiidor says.

For a moment, Tristram thinks the Count is referring to his unremitting hunger. But no. He means the Tower. The rack.

‘I have. But I am safe again now, and want to ensure the course for England does not waver and succeeds sooner rather than later.’

‘Mani, will you pour?’ the Archduke says, and turns to Tristram. ‘This chocolate is an excellent remedy for a winter’s day.’

He watches as Mançiidor is reduced to servitude. The message is clear. Admire my palace, admire my wealth, you think you are noble but, before your divinely appointed Archduke, you so-called nobles may reflect upon subservience and piety.

Tristram sips on the chocolate. On any other occasion, he might close his eyes and marvel in the wondrous richness of it, the warmth, the delight. This morning, however, he is waiting for – What is he waiting for? A *coup de grace*? Something to complete his misery? Or is his luck about to change?

Mançiidor clears his throat, wipes his nose with a linen kerchief and smiles.

‘You understand, I’m sure, Winslade, that his Majesty’s purse is somewhat depleted.’

‘I do, Sir.’ *Can you not hear the rumbling? Where is my salary?*

‘You may also have heard that His Majesty and His Grace have come to an arrangement with Rome that the course for England shall continue, but with much more rigor and accountability. However, we cannot employ every English exile who

comes begging for our escudos. We shall have a tight group of skilled men in whom we have absolute faith.'

'I understand.'

The Archduke rises and Tristram goes to follow. He is waved back into his seat.

'You have a plan for an *empresa*, I believe, Captain. What makes you think it will work?'

Tristram gestures to the folio on his lap. 'May I?'

'Please. Impress me.' The Archduke watches over Tristram's shoulder as the invasion plan for Cornwall and Devon is spread the map upon the table. 'I am told you claim to be a direct descendant of Edward the First and the Second and the Third. And that you are therefore related to His Majestie. Is this true?'

The implication is clear. No one in Tristram Winslade's position must dare lie to the Archduke. To do so would be treachery. It would be exile from exile. It would be the galleys. It would be death. Tristram straightens, and turns. The chocolate in his mouth has turned bitter.

'Yes, Your Grace. It is true. The only –'

The Archduke holds up a hand.

'The Bastard of Exeter? That is of no concern. You've heard of Don Juan? Of course you have. Same thing. Yet, he is the King's half-brother. Blood is blood. He is noble, as are you.' He glances at Mançiqidor, then leans over the map. 'And you want your lands back. Is that right?'

'I do, Sir.'

‘And if the Queen of England were to return them to you tomorrow, what would you do?’

‘Your Grace, I cannot live in that country while it remains a cesspit of Calvinism.’

‘Is that a legal problem or a religious one?’ asks Mançiçidor.

‘It is a matter of my soul – so, a matter of faith.’

The Archduke smiles. ‘We have no reason to question your loyalty, Captain. You have already proved yourself. So, please – explain to me your plan.’

For twenty minutes, Tristram explains the ports, the men, the money and arms. He talks about Cornwall’s entrenched love for the old faith, the cruel crushing of the population nearly fifty years ago, the seething resentment that remains to this very day. He points out the forts, the great houses of the nobility and gentry who, when the time is right, will open their country to Spain and turn their men to face those of Elizabeth. He indicates the Brue and the Wier, the boggy marshlands which will hold the south-west secure in the initial phases of the *empresa*, but through which Sir George Trenchard will enable the western men,, with their Spanish allies, to cover the south and join with the onslaught coming from Flanders.

The Archduke straightens and scratches his beard.

‘Very good. Mani, my dinner awaits. I will leave you to explain things to Winslade and you can join me in ten minutes.’

Tristram and Mançiçidor rise as the Archduke stands, and exits via a door disguised as a wall panel. Mançiçidor blows his nose again and they both sit down.

‘Captain Winslade,’ he says. ‘The Archduke has just indicated to me that you are to join his personal staff as an advisor on military matters concerning the south-

west of England. You will take strategic direction from Colonel Stanley and liaise closely with Hugh Owen. Father Holt will take care of your wage, your expenses and your soul. You and Owen will work alternate weeks in Owen's rooms in the city and here at the Palace. You will meet with Stanley at his discretion but, because of his frequent absences, you will have access to me and the Archduke through the English liaison officer, Gabriel Denys. You have a week in the city from today. Next Monday, you and Owen will report to the palace at ten o'clock and there will be someone to show you to your office.'

Joy is slow to spread. 'Will we have rooms here – sleeping quarters?'

'Good God, man. There is no room here for staff. You will return each night to the city. You have a residency certificate – keep it safe.'

'Will we eat here, sir?'

'You may. Food you can have. But sadly, not today.' Mançidor rises. 'He liked you, Winslade. You are fortunate. Many exiles will soon find themselves without an income, and without patronage. They will be forced to ask Queen Elizabeth to let them go home. Only God knows how they will fare. Use your talent, use the power that comes from your desire. Most of all, do not disappoint him.' He smiles. 'Take your time. Finish the chocolate. Now, I must join the Archduke – he enjoys company at meals.' The Secretary of State is almost at the door Tristram entered by when he turns, grinning. 'The man needs a wife,' he adds, as the guards closed the door behind him.

Tristram smiles. So, the Archduke needs a wife. Like Pippa once needed a husband. He lets his thoughts rest on this as he picks up the jug of chocolate and empties it. He stands at the vast marble table, staring at his map and not seeing it. When will he see Pippa again? The idea of her... He swallows. No. Don't even hope. He puts his index finger to his lips, then places it upon the north coast of Cornwall.

He folds the map and returns it to his folio, he follows his guide back to the gatehouse where he collects his belongings. Outside, the snow-covered Baille is filled with people. The traders are busy, the coffee houses are full. One trader has set up a low burning brazier outside his shop. There are men, even a couple of women, standing around in cloaks and furs, holding small earthenware bowls and digging with their spoons at a whitish lump that steams. The smell is subtle, yet wholesome.

‘Potato?’ someone asks.

‘I cannot pay,’ he says.

‘You pay me tomorrow.’

‘Tomorrow I cannot – but the Archduke has just appointed me to his staff.

Next week?’

The trader looks at him, as though he is the one hundredth person today who cannot pay.

‘Next week. I will take your name and rank.’

Tristram’s mouth is watering. He takes his spoon and his old tin bowl from his belt and, as the trader transfers a potato from the fire into the bowl, feels heat seep into his hands. His first taste burns his tongue, but as the soft flesh cools it fills his mouth with goodness. There is a dish of salt on a table, and so he sprinkles a little onto the vegetable. This is better. He stamps his feet to stave off the chill and glances around. Soon, he will be a familiar figure here in the Baille. He will be paid and for his dinner he will buy hot potatoes. A smile forms upon his lips. Oh yes, today has been a good day. A chocolate and potato day.

Weeks go by. Months. Christmas. Little changes. Despite an increase in his salary, there is no money. He needs finer clothes, and so seeks help from Father Holt. Money is still coming in from England, and Father Holt, despite his vow of poverty, is accruing it like a banker. But while one rule is broken, another is held fast: *I am sorry*, Father Holt says to the starving soldiers on His Majesty's payroll, *it is against church rules to lend money. I would be breaking a holy regulation.* And so while money from England and money taken for dispensations piles up at Holt's feet, the men charged with the great English mission can barely find the strength to rise from their beds. Gabriel promises some old curtain material which Elizabeth will make into a decent suit of well-padded clothes befitting of a personal military advisor to an Archduke. Tristram Winslade despairs.

On alternate Mondays, at eight o'clock, he meets Hugh Owen in the taverna and they drink coffee by a fire before walking out to Coudenberg. On fine days, they take a long route through the Warande, enjoying the flower gardens, the ponds, the swans. At the palace, as promised, there is food for the staff. There are warm fires and there is a sense of purpose. There is also the miracle of working in such a place.

He has a desk in a massive room with a sign on the door announcing *Oficina para el estado de Inglaterra*. It is filled with Englishmen. Soldiers, strategists, activists and scribes. And in this massive room there are more plans and plots than history has ever conceived of. There are tactical manoeuvres, advisories on new weapons, treatises on the attributes of the perfect military officer. There is a team of personnel dedicated to analysing the religion of the Scottish King, which, despite all the effort, remains a mystery. Tristram completes his treatise advocating an invasion of Cornwall and Devon. He is assigned a secretary who makes two copies. The original, destined for the King, must go to Gabriel Denys in the Archduke's office. The first copy is signed off and sealed, and placed in a secure bag and sent with armed guards to the new Papal Legate, where Dickon Arundell will ensure it is

appropriately received, approved and sent on to the Vatican. Tristram watches as Hugh writes on this copy a message in Italian. A greeting for the Pope from loyal Englishmen, he says. The second copy will be kept in Owen's office above the cheese market. The two men must ensure it gets there safely without attracting the attention of anyone interested in their comings and goings. Some well-armed Spanish guards would add to their comfort, but they make their daily walk in the usual manner.

Once safely stowed, there is no time to contemplate the fate of this plan. It will travel where it must. Winslade begins working with Stanley on plans for Scotland, and there are more plans for Wales, more plans for Ireland. There is a fleet to be assembled at Corunna, although no one knows where it is bound. There is a raft of memos for Idiaquez, the King's foreign secretary in Madrid. Then there is the small matter of the Queen of England. In this corner of the room, there are plans to poison her saddle, poison her soup, poison the entire court. There are plans to fire poisoned arrows over the walls at Hampton Court, at Greenwich, at St James's. There are plans to kidnap her, slit her throat, stab her in her garden, strangle her in her bed, sink her barge and drown her in the Thames. Many of these are the brainchildren of desperate petitioners seeking an audience with the Archduke. Each one purports to be a flawless plan that will rid the world of the heretic queen and it is Tristram Winslade's job to assess them. He rates them on a scale of five, ranging from total lunacy to worthy of consideration, and then he rates the petitioner. Some of them are dangerously deluded; others terrifyingly committed. It occurs to him more than once that the most terrifyingly committed are frequently also the most dangerously deluded. At the end of the day, when his eyes are aching, he sometimes wonders whether he is as deluded as they are. He is no longer certain what he thinks, who he is or what he really believes.

Then comes the day. A fine spring day in the year 1597. It is almost like summer. He walks with Hugh from the city gates and, once admitted to the palace

grounds, they make their way to the western wing, climb the stairs to the first floor and meander down the corridor to the Office for the State of England. It is heaving with excitement.

‘Captain Winslade, Sir!’ A young secretary – the son of a Lancashire Catholic struggling to keep his estates – is waving a folio at him. ‘Your Armada is setting sail. It is going to be enormous!’

Winslade takes the report and sits down to read. Good Lord! It is true! Preparations are being made in Corunna. A massive armada. Bigger than 1588. The target, known only to the King and the Adelantado, is likely to be Falmouth.

‘Praise be to God!’ he says, and feels something strange welling up inside him. He pushes it down and reads on. And it’s being led by a true man of the sea – the Adelantado himself! One lesson well-learned, he thinks. The consequences of Medina-Sidonia’s land-lubberish mishandling of the fleet in 1588 are there for all of them to see, every day, in the mangled gait of Captain Winslade. He crosses himself and, ignoring the silence that has fallen over the room, turns the pages. Killigrew is on side and will keep the guns at Pendennis silent. Godolphin is ready. Courtenay is ready. Thousands of soldiers will set sail, taking with them all the English priests they can find to ease their way. The welling inside him bubbles fiercely, now, and he cannot hold it down. All he can think is that he is going home.

‘Yes!’ he cries, and tosses the report into the air. And while secretaries scramble for the pages and pandemonium takes control of the room, Winslade grabs at Hugh Owen and hugs him. ‘By God, Hugh! We’re going home!’ He turns to his audience. ‘God bless His Majesty!’

‘God bless His Majesty!’

A few weeks later, he rides out with the Archduke to inspect the collapsing siege of Amiens. He sits lightly upon his horse, buoyed by expectation. Soon, he will be going home. He wonders who they will place upon England's throne. It is something he cannot ask. He might ride with the Archduke, but there are others ahead of him in rank and influence; even they would balk at such an impertinence. Between dreams of returning to Winslade Barton – even his grandfather's great mansion of Tregarrick, which he cannot remember ever having visited – reports trickle in. The fleet has not sailed because of the weather. The fleet has not sailed because the Italian squadron has yet to arrive. As the summer subsides, as Spain's efforts in Amiens crumble into ruin, it occurs to him that the King has spread his resources too thin. It cannot pay its soldiers, because it has no money. With armies full of starving soldiers, it will never succeed. The Archduke's army returns to Brussels, leading a tattered army that trails behind it a cavalcade of wounded and dead. The Spanish advisors urge speed. It will do nothing for the Court's morale to salute an Archduke who is accompanied by such a tragic display of human detritus. They must arrive at least a day ahead, and the ragtag regiments can be diverted and sent into the city.

The palace walls rise before them and the people of Brussels are pouring through the city gates and onto the road. It is not often the entire army, headed by the Archduke, passes by. They cheer and wave. And as they do, a messenger rides out from the palace. The fleet left it too late. It did not sail until October. Cornwall did not even see it. Not even the guards upon the ramparts of Pendennis saw it. Everyone had scurried indoors to shelter from the storm that was destroying the Spanish fleet, somewhere beyond the horizon. A couple of ships had washed up at St Ives. *St Ives? On the other side of Cornwall?* How did this happen? For now, though, there are drums and trumpets. The army enters the Baille as though it has won a great victory. The lowlanders do not care, the Spanish are mildly disappointed and the English – now hearing news that further dashes their tattered hopes – are so

accustomed to failure that it makes little difference. It is like telling a ten-year-old child, orphaned at birth, that tomorrow he will not have any parents. Tomorrow, in Brussels, there will be a Mass to honour the fallen. No doubt God's guidance will be sought, for surely they must be doing something to displease Him.

As he grinds his way back to his lodgings in the city, he watches the chimney-smoke from hundreds of dwellings spiral into the twilight, dissipating its grey into orange and pink. It occurs to him that his hopes have gone the other way. They are sunk. He cannot imagine another fleet, such as the one just blown apart by tempest, ever being gathered for an assault on the Cornish coast. All of his plans have come to nothing.

A year later, as though to commemorate the loss, the King of Spain gives himself up to God. His great granite monument in the hills above Madrid becomes a royal pantheon and, in Brussels, the English regiment is disbanded. More and more, Tristram relies on his work with Hugh Owen for the wage that seldom comes.

Coudenberg Palace, 1603

The noise around the conference table is enough to hurt his head. The Archduke is losing patience with his English advisors and searches the room for an eye, a nod – anything, anyone, who might lend a voice to his raspy throat, for he has an *ague* and is wishing he were abed. Finally, he nods to his halberdier, who thumps his weapon on the floor.

'Enough! Gentlemen, please!' Gabriel Denys, diminished by the layers of fur he had donned to keep himself warm, tries to bring the meeting to order. 'Please, let us get us through the agenda as quickly as you can without casting aside anything of importance. The first matter is the succession. His Majesty's council is discussing

matters pertaining to how English Catholics should be directed in terms of choosing the Queen's successor. A report received this morning states that her health continues to decline, and so the matter is of very great urgency.'

'I don't understand,' says Stanley. 'Do they want us to tell them *what* to tell the English Catholics, or *how* to tell them?'

'It isn't clear.'

'I would have thought the what, or the who, would determine the how - the never-ending question of who.'

'How many times must we have this discussion?'

'Until we agree on someone who isn't the Scot,' rasps the Archduke, and then submits to a bout of coughing.

'There is still Arbella, of course, with a claim to the throne,' Stanley says. 'There is a question of her loyalty to us, of course. I am not convinced.'

They all know Stanley continues to harbour an obsession with a Scottish overthrow of James.

'I can't help but think we would be better served by a Plantagenet, whether it be York or Lancaster,' Hugh Owen says.

Strange words from a Welshman, Tristram thinks. He meets Gabriel's gaze with a discreetly raised eyebrow.

'What? And start those bloody wars all over again?' Stanley says. 'Father Persons would have something to say about that.'

'Order, gentlemen! You forget yourselves,' Gabriel Denys intervenes yet again. 'Some respect for His Grace and for the matter at hand.' Obedience is immediate. 'Colonel Stanley, please tell us something useful.'

‘With pleasure. Your Grace, as we know the Council in Madrid is still discussing a final armada into England. One hundred thousand escudos is promised. Anthony Dutton and Father Cresswell are there, pushing for it. Guy Fawkes, another of my men, has gone after them.’

‘The problem is that Idiaquez is opposing it,’ puts in Owen.

‘And yet he’s still badgering Spinola about logistics,’ Stanley continued. ‘Your Grace, the King is very young. He listens to his foreign secretary, who is firmly of the opinion that the cause is lost. And yet, Idiaquez must obey the King – and in doing so confuses everyone. He says it cannot be done, and then obeys the King’s orders to find out how it can be done. Your Grace, it may be helpful to the King if we were to put together our own plan to resolve the matter. Then, when the Queen dies, an intervention can be quickly carried out.’

The Archduke blows his nose so loudly that Stanley ceases. They watch the vice-regal examination of a linen kerchief, which is then folded and placed upon the table. The Archduke removes his cap, wipes his pallid brow and sighs.

‘Gentlemen,’ prompts Gabriel gently, ‘what, in your very great collective opinion, should happen when the Queen of England does in fact die?’

The Englishmen look at each other. Stanley nods at Hugh Owen.

‘Your Grace, with respect to Father Persons and those who are still pushing for an invasion, there are two considerable matters running against us: time and money. Money, as we know, is a critical problem and needs no explaining. The fact that the money apparently set aside for the *empresa* is not being employed for the purpose is testament to that fact. For us, time is the critical issue. The closer the Queen comes to death, the greater the hope among the Catholics of England, for they believe James of Scotland will deliver them freedom from persecution. Look at the

calibre of men who gathered behind Essex, supporting James for the succession. Consider the fact that his ally, the Earl of Southampton, survived that escapade. He might still be in the Tower, but the minute James is on the throne, Southampton will be out, gathering Catholics into his fold and ushering them straight into King James's Royal Court.'

'And surely this will be a good thing?' says the Archduke. He is clearly not thinking straight.

'Sadly, Your Grace,' says Stanley, 'it does not help us at all. Not unless James is prepared to let us all return to England and give us back our lands.'

'And he will not do that, will he?'

'No, Your Grace. He will not. Firstly, the Protestant population would be outraged and an outraged Protestant population in England would seriously destabilize Scotland, which he has held onto by the skin of his teeth. Which brings me to the second point: word from Scotland suggests he is leaning more and more towards heresy.'

'And yet, you're confident he'll deal well with England's loyal Catholics?'

'Yes, Your Grace. And this is why. He will split the English Catholics into two irreconcilable factions: those at home who are loyal and whom he will, I believe, welcome to Court, and those of us in exile who continue to plot against him and are constantly spied upon. He will turn those at home against us. The closer the Queen comes to death, the more intractable the problem.'

'The only solution seems to be to stop him taking the throne. If we assume invasion is now out of the question, how do we do this?'

'That would require assassination, Your Grace.'

‘But if we could –,’ the Archduke mops his brow. ‘Who among our candidates is dead and who is alive?’

Inwardly, Tristram Winslade groans. Here we go again, he thinks. The succession and the ever-dwindling number of candidates. Everyone is dying. Sir John is dead. His father and mother. Dead. Poor Humphrey is dead. Dickon, he believes, is still alive. And Pippa? He has been too afraid to ask, and now there is no one who would know. Perhaps he could write to Dorothy, out of sight behind the walls of her convent. Just last year, when news of Lady Anne’s death was brought to him, it shook him more than he had thought possible. How often has he imagined repaying her for the endless kindness? How often has he relived his arrival at Lanherne on the night she took him by the hand and led him through the moonlit forest? Always, in his mind, she is his mother. Now, he is hearing that he will never go home. He will never be able to return to England, because no king of England who is not a true Catholic will thank him for his life’s work and reinstate him to lordship of his grandfather’s estates. He cannot bear it. His life’s work – all the planning and scheming, all the convincing and persuasion. All of it drying up because of time, because of money, because Philip III of Spain is too young and does not know who to listen to. The matter of the succession has become exactly as Elizabeth always wished it to be – an unresolvable crisis that would consume everyone and drive the country to distraction. Which was proof of one thing – the Tudors had never had the interests of England at their heart. The Tudors had only wanted power; power for its own sake.

Tristram Winslade’s blazing mind is firing towards another faraway place when a knock at the door announces a page who, liveried to within an inch of his windpipe, struts towards the Archduke and gives him a sealed message. The Archduke examines the seal and grabs at the letter-opener laid upon the table before him. With two fingers pressed to his forehead, he reads. When he faces the

gathering, his expression is like that of a carved monument. He rises and signals to Gabriel Denys to follow. The door closes behind them and everyone looks at everyone else. The door opens and Gabriel returns to stand behind his chair.

‘Well, my friends, if we are to achieve our goals, let it be now. For the Queen of England is dead.’

No one moves. No one says ‘long live’. Long live, live long. And, by God, she most certainly lived too long; so long, most of them cannot remember the death of her half-sister. The handsome Virgin Queen, whom they left so long ago, is all they have known, and everything they loathed. As a brittle, dried-up hag with a caked-over face, she proceeded to turn their country against them; turned them against their country.

What will happen now? They are not ready. Tristram Winslade tries to think: what was it they were not ready for? He can barely remember. His thoughts fly. Has anyone been watching the waters? Is anything happening in Cornwall?

North Tawton, Devon, 1558

He is eight years old, or thereabouts, and is running through a woodland, kicking at the leaves. It has been a dry leaf fall, and there is no mud, no puddles to jump in. His dog, Skipper, is with him, and they are alone in this unknown woodland, for the Winslades are visiting with a group of friends at de Bathe Hall, and a boy must explore. And so Tristram and Skipper are deep in the woods. The air is smoky and full of resin. It is the charcoal burner at work, the keeper of the forest. At first, Tristram cannot see him and he puts his hand on Skipper’s collar to steady her. She can sometimes go silly, and he worries that the smoke, or the man, might frighten her. But at his light touch, she sits. She is quiet. Tristram sits too, on a log from a coppiced oak left lying where it fell. He watches the man pour a cup of

ale from a leather flask, as he stands there with his eyes streaming. Tristram is shy. He would like to talk to this man, but does not know what to say and has nothing to give him. A strange stillness settles on the forest. It becomes completely quiet. Not a bird. Not even a crackle from the woodlander's fire, and its smoke spirals straight towards Heaven. Then Skipper's ears prick up and her head turns. Her neck stiffens as though a soldier has demanded her attention, and yet her hackles do not rise and she does not growl. He follows her gaze and sees a dark shape emerge from the black-green depths of the wood. A cloaked woman, carrying a lamb. He stands up, for he knows her. It is Alys du Bois. The lady who wrote her name in an ancient Book of Hours; the one that is now his mother's. Alys of the Woods. And here she is, dressed in the deepest green cloak and a russet kirtle. He calls out to her, for he knows her. She is Alys du Bois.

He calls again, but she does not hear. She does not even turn her head. She takes a path he has not seen before, between the trunks of ash and beech, and as she walks away he sees that her feet are somehow missing. As though she walks upon another forest floor, inches beneath the fall. And then the dark shape of her cloak just fades away, and she is gone. Skipper begins to whimper, and so he turns to leave.

At De Bathe Hall, everyone is standing around the dip in the garden. A little shallow place where nothing grows. It is filling with water. Water just coming up through the ground, seeping and creeping. No one knows what to do. This pool has told of things before. The deaths of Henry III, Edward IV and poor Queen Jane.

William Winslade says, 'I fear our Queen Mary is dead.'

A servant is sent to Okehampton and returns the next day with the news. It is true. Their Queen Mary is dead and Elizabeth will take the throne. Tristram, watching his father's face, knows the world will change again.

'Well, fuck her frigid soul,' says Stanley. 'And damn it to fucking hell.'

Brussels, 1604

He has been drawing maps. Using bits of parchment rescued from piles of discarded documents that lie around Hugh Owen's office, he has recreated Lanherne time and time again. His fingers, barely thawed from the winter's chill, must do something, and if there is to be no invasion, if there is to be no regiment, what is left for him to do? His annual pension is twenty escudos. It is barely enough for a month's subsistence. Invitations to Gabriel's table keep him from starvation, but he cannot continue to accept. Not only is he indecent company for their well-bred daughters, he will never be able to repay the debts that continue to build up. He sits for as long as he can in the dying candlelight of Owen's office and, as others pack up to go home, he gathers a discreet amount of paper, folds it into the pocket inside his cloak, and takes it back to his room. How long he will have his room, he does not know. It is a bitter irony that the only thing saving him from abject homelessness in this exile built on homelessness is that the cost of living in Brussels is so extreme that hardly anyone can pay their rent. Those wealthy enough for decent rooms, own their own houses. And so, here he sits, in his cold room with a jug of water and a crust of bread on his table. He feels so wizened by hunger that he cannot imagine the well-fed body which carried him around as a young man. That body, the home of wellness, happiness and love, is a distant memory now. It had recurred in fits and starts. Enough to march him over the Alps. To traverse Spain and Portugal. But ever since –

He jumps at a knock on the door. He has not heard footsteps and the knock is not the one used by Gabriel Denys, or Stanley, or Owen. He is still sitting, alert now to every sound, when he hears something being slid beneath the door. He remains motionless, barely breathing, until he hears footsteps retreat. Then, with agonising

deliberation, he rises and moves the one step it takes to reach the window. Father Baldwin emerges from the stairs, out into the square. He tramps around in circles. Praying for prey? Father Baldwin prays, certainly, but unlike Father Holt he is not a predator. Father Holt would never have slid a letter under a door. Nothing ever came from Father Holt without the price of confession, or prayers, or – pity help their groaning guts – a donation for some worthy bell tower in Rome. No one misses him.

Tristram Winslade shuffles to the door and bends painfully to retrieve the offering. A message from Gabriel, most likely. He holds it to the light. Waxed paper. A wax seal. His name is most certainly that on the front, and when he turns it, his heart leaps to see the deep red replica of his grandfather's lapwing. It is from family! It is from Devon. His heart soars. Fingers fumble. He needs a knife. There is one here somewhere, beneath the parchments. He stops. No. There is a dagger in his boot. He retrieves it, suddenly thinking that this will not be good news. There is no good news. Someone he has not seen for forty years has died. But why bother telling him? Has someone left him something? Something he might sell? His dagger slices through the seal and, as he opens the letter, his eyes dart to the bottom of the page. John Winslade. Who is this man, who bears the name of Tristram's martyred grandfather? He sinks to his chair, and reads.

Sir, you do not know me, but we here know of you. I am your brother William's son, living these days at Bideford. I wish to inform you, Sir, of an opportunity that might be fit as a solution to your circumstances. It is a voyage, and is being sponsored by someone you once knew well but whom I shall not name here. While not bringing you home, this said voyage might create for you a new way of living in a new land – a land of like-minded Englishmen. There are those of us here who may also

partake, and so might lend a hand towards making your remaining years more tenable...

The breath leaves his body. His vision is blurred by tears. He reads on.

Sir, a certain nobleman will visit close to you and will seek you out...

A new way of living. What does that mean? His imagination is firing, and as night descends, he starts to dream.

She is there, on the other side, in her russet kirtle and blue woollen cap. Her arms are loose at her side. A strange sight. Where are the children? Where is the lamb? Where is the lamb he once placed in her arms?

Between them, the pond. White geese swimming. Behind her, the apple orchard is bathed in golden light. The leaves are turning, the apples gleam. She is waving. She has seen him, and his heart leaps. He waves back and yet – Where is he? He has no sense of himself in this place and for some reason cannot turn around. There is only Pippa, the orchard beyond the pond, and the garden where lilies and roses grow. The water is perfectly still. Like a mirror into which one might gaze for a bout of self-examination; to inform a trepid heart, forewarn of the sins for which a creeping priest might come searching.

And yet, he senses a strange lightness of being. It is the absence of priests. No Father Holt. No Persons or Baldwin. No soul-bothering, prying man of who-knows-what-god there might be, somewhere. The air here is clear of them. His shoulders have lost their aches and pains. They feel loose. And what of you, Father? His Own Father Who Art In Heaven. Art thou in Heaven? Can you tell me why did you did what you did with my life? Was your rage

so precious that it must live on and on? Was it a diamond to be worn forever? Was it a golden nugget burning bright? No, no! Do not speak.

He hears his father's anguish inside his head; a lifelong migraine, pounding, searing. So sorry for all the loss. But God forgive him, after all this time Tristram Winslade has become sorrier for his own. And so there is nothing more to be done. As quickly as anger has come, it subsides. He shakes it loose and, as it slithers away, a new understanding arrives.

She is the shepherdess, and he her lost lamb. With her, he shall not want. Where is she? She is still there, walking swiftly along the grassy verge. The pond has become a lake and the orchard is beyond view. The edge of a forest casts shadows and the golden light dapples as the lake darkens and spreads. A ray of sunshine shows him that her gown has turned to forest green and her hair pours like honey over her shoulders. The basket is on the grass, and she is tying a daisy-chain garland around her head. Then, suddenly, he sees people emerging from the forest. Everyone is there. There is Sir John and Gabriel and Dickon and Humphrey, with Willow on his arm. Lady Arundell and Aunt Jane, sitting in her chair, as if still in the corner. There is Giuliana and her Nonna. And dear Agueda. A little boy who might be Daniel. There is a milk-skinned maid with Alpine hair and a scrubbing brush. He sees a clear-eyed bride of Christ, helping a white-haired man in a silver robe. He is the grandfather Tristram Winslade never knew. She is his mother, as the nun he never knew.

They are all there. Everyone but William Winslade. Everyone he loves, or would wish to see again, or was kind to him. Can it be true? But why? Then he remembers, as though he has always known and forgotten for a silly fleeting moment. It is his wedding day. How can he not be there? He must reach Pippa, for they are to wed. But where is the bridge? Where are the stepping stones? A small sturdy boat is beached by the trunk of a spreading tree. In it, a black cat sits like a sentry, stiff and unmoving, yet as he tries try to climb in the agile animal forbids him. You will not sail, Chat Noir says. The fish have all gone and your

father has broken the oars. *He accepts the word of this knowing animal as though it were Jesus Christ. You will not sail. You will not sail. There must be another way.*

His heart is pounding and the water is rising, rising. It is over his boots and filling them. The pool. The de Bathe pool is rising. The Queen will die. The King will die. Someone will die. He knows not who. His boots are stuck in the mud, so he wrenches his feet free. In golden stockings, and fleet of foot, he finds his way to the receding shore. Finally, a bridge appears. An ancient bridge of great granite slabs, laid down by forces unknown, yet lifted now by the force of water.

He must cross. Nothing must stop him. He steps onto the first great stone and it becomes a gang-plank. A ship awaits, but it is not the Rosario. A neat little ship, with everyone already aboard. Beneath him, the sea is slick and soft. Dark and deep. Hands reach out. A thousand hands. They grab at his coat and suddenly he understands. Everything is clear.

'Tristram, where have you been?'

'We've been waiting for you!'

'Quickly, come aboard!'

He is filled with joy. Someone grabs at his shoulder. Someone takes his hand. They are all together. At last. There is hugging; there is laughter. He sees crates of food, barrels of cider, sheep and goats, furniture, piles of hoes, rakes, shovels, axes. A great ploughshare. Even an anvil. Everyone is smiling as the ship rocks and moves away from the shore. A new home beckons from far across the sea. To reach it, they follow the sun...

He shudders to wakefulness, and gasps at the wonder of it. But no, no! A dream so real it surely must have been real. Surely, it is real. They are all sailing. Together. Away. He closes his eyes against the force of waking and for a brief second glimpses

Pippa's smile. But it fades into the cold, grey dawn that is breaking into his cold, grey room. He grits his teeth and stares at the grey wooden planks above, his thoughts riven by the power of such a dreamscape. The colour. The emotion. Everyone there. Tears fill his eyes. Might it be possible? Every one of his invasion plans has failed. Is this the solution? Might they all settle together in the place they call Norumbega? All of them, in a new land. By a river somewhere, or a lake – there is a lake – he has seen it. The sense of it is still there, inside his skull: the dappled light on Pippa's hair, everyone hugging, the sense of joy. His breathing steadies and his eyes do not move. For half an hour, he lies quite still. His head is on fire.

Finally, he moves. He pulls on his boot and finds a coin for coffee, which he buys in the marketplace. He drinks it slowly, staring into the fiery ashes of the brazier that warms his feet. Never has possibility so winded him. The dream. The letter. What can it mean? He sees Hugh Owen's secretary bustling through the morning crowd, on his way to the office, and reluctantly follows. He passes the fish market without seeing the fish; traverses the cheese hall without smelling cheese. He opens a door hidden by a curtained alcove and climbs the well-trod stairs. He knocks the secret knock and hears the bolt slide away. One of Owen's clerks admits him.

'Good morning, sir.'

'Good morning.' Tristram nods towards Hugh's door. 'Can I go in?'

'Mr Owen has a visitor. Sir Thomas Arundell has just arrived in Brussels.'

Tristram Winslade finally snaps out of his dream. He stares at the door. He hears voices. Some rare laughter. Providence, he thinks, and crosses himself. The Lord shall provide. He sits at his desk and considers the blankness of a new piece of parchment. Behind his brow, the dream sits like a weight. Is it a God-given start for a rational plan, or something mazy come from the depths of desperation? How might

it work? The peace treaty has ruined so much. Without war, there is nothing for men like Tristram Winslade. They report for work, hoping for pay. Hoping for war. The founding of a new land should solve a problem, and yet the young King of Spain will not like it. Tristram Winslade has been hovering around decision-makers all his life. Self-interest is always the ruling force and who, apart from the wretchedly Catholic Englishmen already in exile, will benefit from the scheme? They are the expendables. Already, they are penniless, starving and sick. A rotting population who will perish and be forgotten.

Slowly, for his fingers are numb with cold, he begins a list of the parties who will need appeasing. He does not hear Hugh Owen's door open and only looks up when a figure stops at his desk.

'Winslade?'

Tristram looks up. He stands. He would know that mane of black hair anywhere.

'Sir Thomas.'

Sir Thomas Arundell reaches across the desk and places his huge hands around Tristram Winslade's arms.

'I'm so glad to find you still alive. Come. I've yet to have breakfast, and I think you are in the same boat. We can reminisce about the old days.' He picks up the list that Tristram has begun, reads it, blows the ink dry and folds it. He inserts it into the folio of work he has brought with him. Together, they make their way across the square to a tavern frequented by the wealthier sort – merchants, courtiers, lawyers, printers and physicks. A great fire is burning inside and the air is stuffy but warm. Arundell finds an alcove and signals for service. Winslade looks around. He has never been in here before. This is the Brussels he has never known. This is where

business is done, where favours are bought and marriages are negotiated. A serving maid places a jug of ale on the table, and Arundell pours.

‘I promised my cousin I would look out for you,’ he says. ‘And I promised his good lady wife the same thing. Now they are both gone, and I find myself of a mind to keep the promise.’

‘You have my heart-felt gratitude, Sir Thomas.’

Arundell turns his back to the room and leans in across the table. ‘Any news from Bideford?’

Winslade’s thoughts fly back to the letter from his unknown cousin.

‘Yes. My nephew. John Winslade.’

‘Good. He is a shipwright, you know, and a shareholder in the Plymouth Company. And as a major shareholder in this company, I am sponsoring an expedition that may enable you to leave this place.’ Arundell pauses as gammon and eggs arrive, with bread toasted the English way, and butter and preserved fruit.

‘Shall I tell you more?’

The Plymouth Company’s expedition to Norumbega consumes him. During waking hours, he moves trance-like through another icy Brussels winter. Hours go by and he fails to notice that the fire in his grate has gone out and so he must try to beg an ember or two from the tavern fire downstairs and hope that he might rekindle it. He forgets his hunger. He forgets his thirst and finds a headache brewing behind his eyes. On fine days, he piles on all of his clothes and goes walking in the Waranda, where the ponds are frozen and the birds are gone. Sometimes, he flashes his pass and buys a potato in the Baille, but the days when he is invited to join with Owen and Stanley to talk invasion are gone. His diminishing relevance at Court hangs over him with an anvil-like weight.

His own part of the expedition is done. He has written, he believes, a persuasive missive to Father Persons in Rome, for both Sir Thomas Arundell and Tristram Winslade know that their plan will not succeed without the support of the Church. The waiting is unbearable and at night, his dreams are haunted by visions of green pastures with frolicking lambs; of English-speaking children and their mothers. Always, the mothers in this dream turn to look at him and when they do, they are Pippa, with her smiling blue eyes and honey-gold hair. Always, she reaches for him, and touches his face. He wakes from these dreams with a gasp upon his breath and a thumping of the heart, and the glow they leave behind somehow enlivens him. He remains ill-fed and cold, but there is an ember of hope that keeps him warm. Life continues. Where life exists, there remains hope. Hope that he will see Pippa again, and feel her hands in his.

The light coming through Gabriel's window reminds him of a time, far gone now. Of a schoolroom on a windy day, of rattling panes and the shifting shape of a great old tree. He cannot remember, now, what sort of tree it was. Only that in winter, sunlight poured through its leafless silhouette and onto the floor, where it lay in odd-angled patterns. In that fleeting memory, he hears John Williams' voice and some mischief involving an apple. Light shifts now upon the letter in his hand. Father Persons' words seem to be in the wrong order.

He reads again, searching for a change in tone. For the priest's acknowledgment. For the 'however, Sir, for all the flaws...' It must be here, somewhere.

'I do not understand,' he mumbles. Then he looks at Gabriel, who is poking at the fire. 'How can he not see the merit in such a colony? How can he still think that the King and the Archduke have invasion on their mind, when they have just signed

a peace treaty? How can he believe there are still English soldiers here in Brussels fit enough to support such an enterprise? Who does he think is feeding us? Keeping us from freezing to death?' He pauses. He is ranting at the wrong person. 'Forgive me, Gabriel. I would be dead by now without you and Elizabeth. I know that. But that is precisely the point. Father Persons wants to go on and on with his great crusade, and I wish I could see it coming to something. But I cannot.' He sighs. 'You think I don't know a dreamer when I see one?' His attempt at self-deprecation sinks. He cannot even force a smile.

Gabriel rests the poker on the firedog and slowly sits himself upon the settle.

'Father Persons might be a long way from Court,' he says, 'but he knows what is going on, and still has influence. There is pressure from Rome, and he is a part of it.' He opens his mouth, then closes it.

'What?' Winslade is rolling the letter into a tight cylinder. 'What have I done?'

'Tris, your colony would undermine his objective. You were right to seek his approval, but therein lies the fatal flaw. He was never going to give it.'

Hopelessness settles like a sheet of dirty snow behind Tristram Winslade's eye. Lately, he has sensed a certain chill creeping in beneath the camaraderie that for years has been the only comfort during the bone-crushing cold of a Brussels winter. His fellow officers no longer knock on his door, or join him in the tavern.

'Please do not tell me that I am being ostracised simply for wanting to leave this hellhole.'

'No. That's not it.'

'Should I wash more often?' He bashes his wrist with the rolled-up letter and starts pacing. Gabriel laughs. Everyone in this hellhole stinks to high heaven. 'No? Smell like St Columba's at Whitsun, do I? Come on, Gabriel. What's going on?'

Gabriel reaches for a bell that sits on a shelf by his elbow and rings it. A servant appears and Gabriel orders wine and bread. Tristram Winslade watches with a detached sense of loss piling up upon loss. Nothing new. More of the same. Loss after loss after loss. His father, at least for a few years, had once had a bell like that. A bell and a servant. They should have been Tristram's. Tristram Winslade should have been ordering wine and bread from a servant who wore his livery. A livery of chevrons and the white spur. A lapwing somewhere. Somewhere in the golden past, there was a lapwing seal that said Winslade. Gone now. All gone. He wobbles. His head feels light and he grabs hold of the back of a chair.

'Calm yourself, Tris, please. Sit down.'

He is like an obedient child. He sits and wonders. How often has he sat here, opposite Gabriel? He cannot count the times because Gabriel is continuing.

'Everyone knows about your plan with Arundell –'

'Was it wrong of me?'

'Not then, Tris. But things have changed in England, and because of that, they are changing here.'

'In what way?' And why doesn't he know?

'Word has reached us that King James is going to elevate Sir Thomas to the peerage. That's the first thing. First Baron of Wardour. The second thing is that while invasions are out of fashion, there are those who are working on another project that could very well fulfil all of our objectives overnight. Father Persons knows about it and certain people are working on it in Madrid. Given the peace treaty, it is dangerous and could split our faction here in Brussels.' Gabriel pauses. He stares at his hands, splayed out on his thighs.

‘You mean, I might threaten it?’ Tristram laughs. ‘People think I might threaten an attempt to fulfil our objectives? After everything I’ve done? After everything I’ve been through? After the wars, after the rack, after all that endless planning. After losing every hope I ever had of –’

Marrying Pippa. Having children. Living an ordinary life at home with the others who somehow managed to be Catholic in a heretic land.

‘There is a plan to blow up the House of Lords.’

For the briefest moment, Tristram Winslade is confused. There is no such place in Brussels, nor Madrid.

‘What?’ Then he sees the meaning in Gabriel’s unflinching gaze. He means Westminster. Someone from among their number is going to blow the place up. ‘You mean, with gunpowder?’ Well, that would throw parliament into chaos. ‘They’re going to do this in the middle of the night?’

‘No, Tris. They’re going to blow it up when the King is opening Parliament. The King will die. Every member of the Parliament will either die or be injured. We can make England Catholic.’

Tristram cannot believe he is hearing such a thing. The blankness inside his head suddenly fills with heat.

‘God’s bleeding wounds! And how many innocents will die with him?’ He is on his feet. ‘Jesus Christ and Mother Mary, Gabriel! What have we become?’ There is a fire, now, behind his eyes. There will be no colony. There will be no peaceful Catholic England. There will be no future. Hundreds of innocent lives will be lost. Messengers. Stable hands. Cooks. Attendants. Ushers. Guards. And the blame will be lain precisely at their feet.

There will be nothing for him now, but hunger and death. He will never again see Pippa...

'And you are going along with this?' He laughs. 'Who's the stupid wretch who's going to light the fuse?'

'Winslade, it strikes me as a very great irony that of all of us, you are not involved in this enterprise. Any event involving an attack on England should have you at its heart.' He pauses. 'And between you and me, I am appalled. Yet what else can we do?'

'You all think I have become soft. I am a risk. I hanker for some peace and a bit of green grass to lie upon on a summer day and so I am a risk.'

Gabriel examines his hands, picks at a fingernail and then looks back at Tristram.

'There are some involved with this plot who are not certain they can trust you.'

'I see. Father Persons for one. I have done my dash with him, that much is very clear. And Stanley and Owen?'

'It is not for me to say.'

'So says my dearest friend, Gabriel Denys. Sounding like the perfectly trained Jesuit. A master of equivocation. Is that what Father Persons has directed you to say?' A storm is gathering in his throat. 'And what about you? Do you trust me?'

'I will always trust you,' says Gabriel Denys. 'You are all the brothers I left behind in England, just as I am yours.'

'But now that I know – What do you think I am going to do?'

'I don't know, Winslade. What are you going to do?'

Tristram stares into the eyes of all the brothers left behind. Daniel. Raphael. Little William. And Thomas. The one he never saw. He should feel something. He has vague memories of playing with Daniel, but three years was a big difference during those early years, and then all of a sudden, Tristram was ten and sent away. He should feel something, but now, in this place, whatever he had once felt is gone. He leans forward and places his hands upon Gabriel's shoulders. They bow their heads at the same time, and the tops of their foreheads touch. He sees the wrinkled lid of Gabriel's eyes, the battered old cheekbones, the line of his top lip. He has not been this close to another human being since... His memory skims past Agueda, past a whore he sometimes lays with and settles upon a kiss he stole from Pippa.

'What can I do?' He releases Gabriel's shoulder and leans back. Gabriel has tears in his eyes.

'You will do what you think best. We both will. I will always love you, Tris. From the very start, your life was carved out to be painful, and so your father named you for the sorrow he felt. Not your sorrow. His sorrow. The sorrow he felt, at the time you were born at the idea that, as his heir, your life would be so horribly afflicted. I have never seen such torment take so powerful a hold on a sun-filled disposition as it did when it took hold of your father.'

Tristram Winslade can think of no reply to this. He has little memory of a sun-filled father. His gaze shifts to Father Persons' letter, on the settle beside him. Something inside him is crumbling. Slowly, he unfurls the pages and feeds them to the fire.

The monastery

English College, Douai, 1605

He has dreamed of her again. Vibrant; eyes shining. Caught in the act of turning towards him, a secret smile on her lips. He struggles to snatch it, but the window of this monk's cell admits enough of the day to haul it away. No! No! The dream is his. He clutches at it, struggles to harvest it, to store it in a safe place in his mind. Instead, he is left lying on a hard cot, in the rising damp of his own shallow breath. Did she know, back then, how much he wanted her? Does she know, now, that he is still trying to come home? Where is she now, his Pippa? Who is she now? Who commands the wifely warmth of his true love? His lands have been stolen. All the manor houses and woodlands, the pastures and mills, the sheep and the cattle, the orchards and presses. Everything that was to be his... Stolen. Has Pippa, too, been stolen? And what would she think of him now, if he were to come ashore at Mawgan all shrunken and worn, twisted and torn? And so, here he lies, listening to his heart. Wondering when it might stop and let him go.

Outside, the autumn chill and shrinking twilight bring the monks inside earlier and earlier. He hears doors being bolted and feet shuffling. Hears quiet conversation as they make their way to the refectory. He hears a knock on his door and the latch lift. Someone places bread and cheese, some ale, upon a table. He does not move. He is no longer hungry. He craves nothing. Wants nothing. All he needs, as gusts of wind-blown rain beat against the window-pane, are his dreams. And they come to him. They come to him all the time. Night after night and all through the day. Sometimes, he sees his father and when the vision is gone he wonders whether he ever knew him. When he glimpses William Winslade now, in the periphery of his mind's eye, he is a shadow, a man who is at once nowhere and yet everywhere. What was he like when Jane Babington found him? When she found the abbey door locked behind her and convinced him to go against his father's wishes? It occurs to Tristram Winslade, in a fleeting moment, that his very existence was quite improbable.

At night, angels and devils begin to appear. That shrivelled up Queen, her Walsingham, Drake and Grenville. How do they like hell? They are sucked away by some maelstrom, replaced by images of Sir John, of Lady Anne and Edward. Of old Aunt Jane. Someone is standing behind them. Is it Pippa? Is she there? Someone is speaking. A low voice, insistent, yet comforting. At times, it is overwhelmed by the sound of the ocean. The rolling swell, the gentle surge of waves that break upon the sand. Perhaps it his heart, sougning and sighing as it struggles to keep his thoughts alive. His dreams and memories.

He loves God, yet fears his call. There is still so much to do. Where has life gone, Pippa? Where did it go? It has seeped away into a hard, dry Spanish plain, it has bled and screamed so that the stone walls in the Tower of London still shiver with the memory. It is lost in the misty blue of the hills above Naples, it wanders the streets of Brussels. It is lost upon the moors, washed away in the sea, it has frittered away in taverns, on ships, in palaces of dreams. All that is left are schemes and plans, stuck in stony castles, in leaden chests, stuck wherever they are stored, in places made by a King who buried himself in a midden of paper and ink, waiting for the right time.

The right time. And he, with so many friends, had believed it would come. Were they small cogs in God's greater plan, or had they simply backed the wrong side? Perhaps the English Queen had been right. God had looked upon her and smiled. And Daniel had woken each morning to the sweet scent of meadows, the rolling hills and flowered lanes of Devon. I fear he will pay. But listen, all of you, you who remain true to the Faith. You who still wake each morning to the sound of the sea and the wind, the smell of gorse and salt and the feel of sand, of granite, of sweet damp grass beneath your pretty feet. I pray, one day, that you all might rise again, as I have planned, and we shall all come home.

Before that, the rain must fall upon the Brue and the Stour and the levels shall flood. In the highlands, sticky mud will become a glue beneath an impassable torrent and suck down into hell the heretic armies that would bend you all to their will. And with the flooding rains, a massive rising of the sea, with the crests of waves shall fire flaming arrows into the sky that burn the churches that melted down our treasures and destroyed our pure faith and taking faithless Godless people to their destiny. It will come. He sees it. He sees a good king, a new Arthur... With it all, with the sea that comes where soldiers failed, Arthur will come and the victors shall finally cast aside their swords and start anew, in peace. Leave England to her Scottish king. Wessex will be won. It will be one. Pippa! Wait for him. Wait for King Arthur. Stay high, stay dry. He will come, and all will be good again. He feels a hand, tender and warm, upon his cold damp brow. His heart slows. His breath is quiet.

Wait for me, Pippa. I'm coming home.