

Outline: 2nd draft

ONE DAY AT KINGSBRIDGE

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Anticipated 100,000 words

2nd draft outline

31 August 1989

The story takes place on Easter Sunday in the year 1162.

I: NIGHT

1. In the early hours of the morning a secret meeting is held by candlelight at a lonely priest's house a few miles from Kingsbridge. The bishop of Kingsbridge, Waleran Bigod, is hatching a plot.

The post of archbishop of Canterbury has been vacant for a year (since Archbishop Theobald died on 18 April 1161). It hardly needs saying that Waleran Bigod wants the highest office in the English church. Three power groups are involved in the election of the new archbishop: the king, the English bishops, and the Canterbury monks. Waleran explains to his ally, the sheriff of Shiring, William Hamleigh, that King Henry II wants the job to go to his chancellor, Thomas of London. Within the last few weeks Henry has summoned the bishops to a conference in Normandy, at which he seems to have persuaded many of them to support Thomas. However, the aging but still powerful Bishop Henry of Winchester did not attend the conference, and (here history ends and fiction begins) he now leads a faction of dissident bishops who plan to put forward an alternative

candidate.

Waleran is determined to be that candidate.

He is now 56 years old. He has never realised the promise of his early career, mainly because of his lifelong feud with the prior of Kingsbridge. This will surely be his one and only shot at the top job. He positively lusts after the power, the prestige and the influence that would be his - obeyed by every Christian in England, bowed to by half the world, respectfully consulted by kings and cardinals. This one achievement could blot out the memory of all his years of disappointment and defeat at the hands of Prior Philip. Waleran will stop at nothing for this chance.

Several dissident bishops will be at Kingsbridge today - although they would normally be expected at their own cathedrals on Easter Sunday - to see Waleran at work and make a final decision about whether he is their man. Waleran is not the type to leave such a thing to chance, and he is planning to impress them in a major way. He is going to work a miracle.

He has already made his preparations, and now he is giving a final briefing to William Hamleigh and a hired ruffian called Griff Baldhead.

Waleran will preside over the main midday service and preach a sermon on the subject of demonic possession. On cue, Griff and five of his fellows will start to act as if possessed - yelling and screaming, hitting themselves and lashing out, dribbling and

spitting, falling down and rolling around. Waleran will declare they have been possessed by demons, and with the help of the Weeping Madonna - Kingsbridge's most potent holy relic - he will cast out the devils. At that point Griff and his men will suddenly return to normal, saying "Where am I? What happened?" and so on. Two more of Griff's men have already established themselves as beggars in Kingsbridge - one pretending to be blind and the other partly paralysed - and at this point they will touch the Weeping Madonna and be "cured". The visiting bishops will realise that Waleran is a man of exceptional powers.

Waleran points out to his collaborators that other members of the congregation, who are not in on the conspiracy, may well be "possessed" and "cured". False miracles often spark real ones - which is their justification.

The whole meeting takes place in an atmosphere heavy with guilt and fear. Everyone present genuinely believes in demonic possession and miracle cures, and they all feel they are playing with supernatural fire. William in particular is terrified, and Waleran needs to exercise the full force of his authority and persuasiveness to secure his collaboration.

They fall fearfully silent when they hear a horse go by. Nobody travels at night. Looking out, they see the horseman, lighting his way with a flaming torch. They do not see his face, but they can tell by the fringe on his cape that he is a Jew, and therefore one of the damned.

The meeting ends in a mood of superstitious dread.

2. Also up late is Tommy Jackson, the eighteen-year-old son of Jack and Aliena.

Jack and Aliena have built their castle at Millmead, a village an hour's walk from Kingsbridge. Jack, 38, is at the peak of his career, completely absorbed in the building of his masterpiece, the nave of Kingsbridge Cathedral. Aliena, 43, is caretaker of the earldom of Shiring, acting on behalf of her brother Richard, who is still in the Holy Land. Aliena has Easter guests: the earl of Bedford, a childhood friend, has been here for two weeks with his family and an entourage of knights and squires.

Tommy has his father's good looks and red hair, but there the resemblance ends. Jack was always an oddball - reflective, imaginative, obsessive, a genius. Tommy is intelligent but he is no genius. He has an honest good nature and an open, straightforward masculinity with is tremendously attractive.

Tonight he is canoodling with one of Bedford's daughters, Catherine. In a short time the two have become seriously involved. Catherine is a cheerful, independent-minded and deeply sexual girl (very like Tommy's mother, although of course he does not see this). Tommy is captivated by her, and she by him. But they must soon part: the Bedford family will depart after Easter. Although they do not have sexual intercourse they get into very

heavy petting.

They both know that they would be an acceptable marital match. Tommy is the nephew of an earl and Catherine the younger daughter of an earl, so their social status is roughly equal, despite the anomaly of Tommy's father being a builder. They could probably get their parents' consent to marriage. Although Tommy is the point-of-view character, it is clear to us that Catherine, who is a mature 18-year-old, has already made up her mind that Tommy is the man she wants to marry. Tommy, being less mature even though he is the same age, is not ready to think about marriage; but he is in love with Catherine, and is desperately sad to be losing her.

During this night of passion (all the more intense because they draw back from the ultimate consummation) Catherine comes up with a solution to the dilemma.

Tommy has made friends with the Bedford squires, and this has solidified a feeling he has been guiltily hiding: he does not want to follow in his father's footsteps as a master builder. Instead he wants to be a knight. Catherine's plan is to ask her father to take Tommy as a squire (apprentice knight).

Tommy and Catherine are not the only people with a secret assignation tonight. From their hiding-place they see Edwin, one of Aliena's squires, sneaking over the castle wall, presumably to meet a village girl.

3. The mystery Jew who struck a superstitious chill into the heart of William Hamleigh was Matthew of Kingsbridge, 29, who is married to the daughter of the late Malachi the Jew.

Matthew is a careful man, a hard worker and a meticulous planner. But our point-of-view character is his wife Judith, 21. She is a more emotional, impulsive type, small, dark and intense. Although their difference in temperament often leads to friction, at bottom she admires his organised approach to life, and there have been occasions when he has restrained her impulses and has been proved right. They have been married five years and they have a four-year-old son, David.

At first light Judith is preparing to set up their stall in Kingsbridge churchyard, ready for the Sunday market, for she is not expecting Matthew home. When he surprises her, she and David are overjoyed - they both adore Matthew. However, she is alarmed by his recklessness in travelling overnight.

He explains what he has been doing.

Matthew used to live in Shiring, where he had a successful business as a silversmith. In 1154, William Hamleigh asked him for a loan of £100 to buy the post of sheriff of Shiring. Matthew refused, earning William's undying hatred. Bishop Waleran then intervened and forced Matthew to make the loan. Matthew had to sell all his stocks to raise the money and his business was ruined. He left Shiring and came to Kingsbridge. Judith's father, Malachi, gave him a small loan to start up

again. Matthew worked day and night and slowly rebuilt his business. After three years he was secure enough to propose marriage to his benefactor's sixteen-year-old daughter, the beautiful and headstrong Judith.

The loan to William was for seven years at ten per cent simple interest, and fell due last year, but William has never paid a penny and ignores all demands. Matthew is very bitter about this. Was it not enough that William ruined him by borrowing the money? It is outrageously unjust that he should now refuse to repay the loan. Judith, who remembers how brave and determined Matthew was in rebuilding his business, has often urged him to sue William for the money, but until now, despite his anger, Matthew has held back, taking the view that is foolhardy to sue such a powerful man as the sheriff. Now, however, something has happened to change his mind.

Judith has two brothers: Aaron, the elder, who lives in Kingsbridge in Malachi's old house; and Jake, the younger, who lives a day's journey away. Jake is now in business difficulties, having been let down by Christian partners, and he has asked Matthew for help. He needs £100, and if he cannot raise the money all his assets will be seized, which means he will lose his home. Matthew wants to help him, for the sake of Jake's father, old Malachi, who helped Matthew in similar circumstances. So Matthew has decided to sue William.

He cannot hope for justice in the county court, where

William as sheriff presides; but the king's itinerant justices are due in Kingsbridge after Easter, to hold a royal court. Matthew has been to Winchester, and has succeeded in getting the royal chancery there to issue a writ summoning William to appear before the justices at Kingsbridge. The writ will be served immediately, which is why Matthew hurried home.

He knows this is going to cause an almighty row, but he is prepared. He is also a religious man, and he has faith that God will help him in a just cause.

He will have to "prove" his case by compurgation. First he must swear an oath (on the Talmud) that his case is just. Then, more crucially, he must produce ten "oath-helpers". They swear that he is telling the truth. Matthew has already secured promises of more than enough oath-helpers, both Jewish and Christian.

If William swears the opposite, and if he can find ten oath-helpers to back him up - not an easy task in an age when oaths are taken seriously - then a jury of local knights will be sworn in and called upon to attest the true facts to the justices. A medieval jury does not listen to evidence before pronouncing its verdict: the jurors are assumed to know the truth about the matters which come before the courts. And in this case they will: everyone in the county knows where William got the money to buy the shrievalty. Matthew has made inquiries and established that the two justices who will come to Kingsbridge

are neither friends of William's nor enemies of the Jews. He feels that the verdict must go his way.

He has also taken precautions against intimidation and violence. His employees (Christian as well as Jewish) can run his business if he has to lie low for a while; and finally he has hired men-at-arms to guard him and his house. He feels he is prepared for anything.

4. Judith goes to Kingsbridge Priory and tells Prior Philip what Matthew has done. Philip is painfully aware of William's ruthlessness and brutality, and he fears for Matthew and Judith; but he has spent his life fighting for justice and defying William's threats, and he promises Judith his protection and support, saying (rashly, as things turn out): "William will not harm you while I'm Prior of Kingsbridge."

Bishop Henry of Winchester is at the priory, staying in the prior's house, and several other bishops are expected for the Easter service. Henry casually explains to Philip why they are coming. Philip is horrified to learn that Waleran Bigod might be a candidate for archbishop of Canterbury, and determines to find a way to expose Waleran's true character to the bishops. However, he is not immediately able to think of a way of doing this.

He discusses the problem with another guest, Mother Floria, the abbess of Longham, who is staying here on her way home after

a trip to France. Floria has the reputation of a dragon, and Philip was very nervous about her visit, but he has found her to be an intelligent, warm-hearted and attractive woman of about 45 - a disciplinarian, yes, but no more so than Philip. They are getting on like a house on fire, much to the amusement of the younger monks.

Their discussion is interrupted. One of the nuns in Floria's entourage has gone missing: April, a very pretty girl of eighteen who entered the convent reluctantly a year or so ago. April has found it difficult to reconcile herself to the discipline and deprivations of convent life, and she tends to be rebellious. Perhaps because she is something of a black sheep, Floria feels a special fondness for her.

Floria immediately knows where April has gone. The girl came originally from Millmead and has probably gone there to see old friends.

Philip sends Jonathan, 26, the priory orphan, to Millmead to investigate.

The sun rises.

II: MORNING

5. At breakfast in Millmead Castle, Tommy presents his father with his proposal - that he will abandon his apprenticeship as

a builder and join the Bedford household as a squire. To his dismay, Jack turns him down flat. Jack is hurt by the implication (real or imaginary) that being a master builder is not good enough for his son; and he feels sure Tommy has been foolishly (and temporarily) seduced by the glamour of the knightly life. Finally, he does not want his son to risk death in battle. Tommy does not empathise with his father's feelings any more than Jack does with Tommy's, and they exchange angry words.

Tommy bitterly reports his failure to Catherine, who has in the meantime got her father's consent for the whole scheme. While they are talking, a village girl called Tilly rushes in, in great distress. She is a tall, handsome girl with large hands and feet like a man's. Tommy knows her well, in fact he has fooled around with her in the past. She is sexually very willing, and if the truth be known she taught Tommy some of the things he was doing to Catherine last night. Tilly's character is strong, not to say domineering, and it is surprising to see her distraught.

Sobbing, she explains. On a stretch of the riverside which is known as a lovers' rendezvous, she has just found her childhood friend, April, dead.

Tommy takes Tilly to his mother. Aliena sends a message to the sheriff - as she is legally obliged to - and then mounts a preliminary investigation.

She immediately establishes that April was strangled at some time during the night. Presumably she sneaked away and came here to meet someone. But whom?

Tommy and Catherine know the answer. They saw Edwin go over the wall last night, and Tommy knows that Edwin and April were sweethearts before she was obliged (by the death of both her parents) to take the veil. Tommy and Catherine find Edwin and tell him April has been killed. He immediately breaks down and confesses that he saw her last night. They made love and planned to run away together in a few days' time. Then they parted. Edwin swears that April was perfectly all right when he left her.

Both Tommy and Catherine find Edwin irresistibly credible.

They also learn that a stranger was seen in the village yesterday evening. He was dressed like a priest and rode a dappled mare.

Tommy reports all this to Aliena, who is impressed by her son's skill at investigation.

6. When Sheriff William arrives at Kingsbridge (after his midnight tryst with Bishop Waleran) he is met by his deputy, the under-sheriff, who hands him the royal writ.

All unsuspecting, William begins to read. "Henry, king of the English, to William Hamleigh, sheriff of Shiring, greeting. I command you to appear before my justices at Kingsbridge...."

William is livid. How dare the wretched Jew have the sheriff of Shiring summoned before the justices! William has never forgiven Matthew for initially refusing the loan, which not only insulted the Hamleigh name but also humiliated William by forcing him to beg for Waleran's help to coerce a helpless Jew.

As well as being angry, William is worried. He does not have £100, let alone £170. The shrievalty has never been as profitable as he expected. This is partly because Philip succeeded in having Kingsbridge made a borough, which took a large and wealthy piece of the county out of the sheriff's jurisdiction; and partly due to William's harshness and brutality, which in the long run is inefficient. Of course he blames Philip for everything. Be that as it may, if the justices favour Matthew - as seems almost inevitable - they will order William to pay, and they have all the authority of the king. If he then fails to pay up, he will lose his job, for Henry II has no time for delinquent sheriffs.

In a rage, William goes straight to Matthew's house. At first he tries to persuade Matthew to withdraw the suit by promising to pay the money with no hard feelings. Matthew and Judith are scared, but stand firm. William rapidly resorts to threats, whereupon - to his utter humiliation and fury - Matthew's men-at-arms appear and force William to leave.

William finds Bishop Waleran and his sidekick, Dean Baldwin, and explains his problem. Waleran is unsympathetic: he has

bigger fish to fry today.

Their conversation is interrupted by the under-sheriff with another message: there has been a murder at Millmead.

William goes to Millmead and examines the corpse with characteristic insensitivity (and a certain appalling relish). He announces that the victim had sexual intercourse shortly before - or shortly after - she died.

Aliena refuses to speak to William (Tommy does not understand why) and she sends Tommy to deal with him. Tommy tells William what they have found out, and advances the theory, first put forward by Aliena, that the mystery priest observed Edwin and April making love, became inflamed watching them, waited for them to part company, then raped and killed April.

William pours scorn on this idea and arrests Edwin. Tommy is furious because he feels sure Edwin is innocent. The people of Millmead are indignant. Tilly is practically hysterical. But William is within his rights, and Edwin is taken into custody.

7. Jews from neighbouring towns are arriving at Judith's house in Kingsbridge. Some are Matthew's oath-helpers and their families. They are doing this brave act for Matthew, for his brother-in-law Jake, and for the whole Jewish community in England (which might number two thousand Jews in a population of two million). Others are just supporters. Matthew's Christian

oath-helpers also come to call. Judith serves food and drink.

The cohen of the Winchester synagogue, a man of over seventy, recalls how the first Jews to settle in England came to London from Rouen in the year 1096, after a massacre of Jews in that city by crusaders on their way to the Holy Land in the First Crusade.

They discuss how Jews should deal with people such as William Hamleigh. Judith argues forcefully that Jews must stand up for their legal rights. Paradoxically Matthew, who is doing just that, argues anxiously that whenever possible it is best to swallow your pride and submit to ill-treatment as the price of a quiet life. Wisely, the cohen suggests that if you have a sound case and firm support from within the Christian community you should stand up for your rights, but if there is any serious doubt about the outcome you should give in.

One of the visitors mentions that a young nun has gone missing, and Judith feels an inexplicable moment of foreboding when she realised that Matthew was out all last night; but she brushes it aside as irrational. The general air is one of excitement and fear, like the atmosphere before a battle.

8. At the priory, Bishop Waleran and Dean Baldwin are taking the visiting bishops on a tour of the cathedral. Waleran tries to take credit for all of Philip's achievements, saying: "When I became bishop this church was a ruin, but it has been

completely rebuilt during the period of my episcopacy. During my time the cathedral has also acquired many holy relics, including the famous Weeping Madonna." - and so on. But Philip is a match for him, and manages to puncture most of his inflated boasts. Waleran becomes worried. He is sure Philip knows how to prevent the Weeping Madonna from weeping. He is afraid Philip will find some way to spoil his "miracle".

The people from Millmead arrive with the body of April. In comforting the distraught Mother Floria, Philip experiences new and peculiar emotions. This is the only time in his adult life he has had tender feelings toward a woman, and he does not recognise the symptoms of love.

Jack's daughter Sally, 16, walks around the unfinished cathedral, fascinated by every detail of the building operation, especially the stained glass. Tommy thinks angrily that Sally is the one who should be an apprentice builder.

But Tommy's main feeling now is outrage that Edwin has been falsely accused. He and Catherine go to the house where Edwin is being held in an attempt to see him. They do not get in. They are surprised to see Tilly waiting anxiously outside. As they leave, Catherine says to Tommy: "Tilly looks pregnant."

In the priory stables they see a dappled mare that fits the description of the horse ridden by their suspect, the mystery priest. Tommy asks the stable hands whom the horse belongs to.

The answer is Dean Baldwin.

III: AFTERNOON

9. Waleran tells William he is worried that Philip will find a way to sabotage their miracle. Then William tells Waleran about April. Waleran is overjoyed. "A murder - on Easter Sunday," he says gleefully. "Just what we need!" He abandons the planned miracle. He has a better idea.

The two of them go into the crypt, where the corpse lies attended by nuns. On the way there Waleran surreptitiously picks up a large wooden nail from the building site.

The nuns step back respectfully as the bishop approaches the corpse, and avert their eyes when he uncovers it. William is full of dread in the low-vaulted crypt, cold as the grave, with its flickering candles and silent nuns and the pale, dead girl. But he is not prepared for the gruesome act he now witnesses.

With the nail Waleran makes a wound in the palm of the dead girl's hand. William (who has seen far worse things done to live people without a qualm) feels his stomach turn over as blood feebly oozes from the dead hand. Surreptitiously, taking care that the nuns do not see, Waleran repeats the grisly act with the other hand, then the feet. Then he covers the body. He grins ghoulishly at William. "Crucified," he whispers. "By the Jews!"

They leave the crypt. Waleran explains his new plan.

Instead of demons, the sermon will be about Jews. William, like most people, has heard vague rumours about Jews crucifying Christians at Easter in a parody of the Passion. Waleran will have April's body brought into the cathedral, and at the climax of his sermon he will display the crucifixion wounds, declaring April to be a martyr and a saint. The two beggars will be "healed" by touching her body rather than the Weeping Madonna. And the name of Bishop Waleran will forever be associated with that of Saint April.

William gives Griff Baldhead his new orders, but adds extra ones of his own. At the end of the sermon Griff and his men will start to shout "Punish the Jews!" and they will lead the congregation to Matthew's house, seize him and lynch him. Griff demands extra money for this. William pays him.

William checks on Matthew's movements, and finds to his surprise and pleasure that Matthew has no alibi for last night; indeed, several people seem to know that he was actually out all night.

It occurs to William that Edwin knows that April was not a virgin therefore cannot be a saint. Better if Edwin should leave town, then. William releases him and frightens him, and Edwin flees.

10. Waleran preaches a hysterical sermon, bringing tears to people's eyes as he describes the martyrdom of April in a ghastly

heathen ceremony. Philip is disgusted. When Waleran first mentions Jews, Philip is immediately suspicious and sends Jonathan out of the church to warn Matthew and Aaron.

The two beggars are healed and there are two more apparently miraculous cures in the general hysteria. April is proved a saint, and Waleran is shown to be a bishop of great power and authority.

As the crowd begin to shout "Punish the Jews" Philip intervenes and tries to take over the conduct of the service. There is an open clash of wills between him and Waleran. Philip is stunned and devastated to find that the crowd defies him despite the exercise of the full weight of his moral authority.

As the congregation, now a mob, pours out of the church he built, into the town he built, to lynch an innocent man, Philip realises that somehow he has lost his power over the people of Kingsbridge, who are now in the control of a stronger, darker force.

11. Warned by Jonathan, the Jews have barricaded themselves into Matthew's house. (Of course it makes matters worse that there is a whole crowd of Jews from other towns here today.) The mob tries to break in. Matthew's house is built of stone, with ironbound doors and barred windows, and they cannot get in easily. The crowd is discouraged, but Griff Baldhead brings axes, and they begin a serious and patient assault on the door.

Seeing that there is only one way this can end, Matthew offers to give himself up in exchange for a promise of safety for everyone else. This is agreed.

Matthew is taken prisoner, and Griff begins to build a gallows.

12. Tommy and Judith were childhood playmates (they are exactly the same age) and Tommy is as indignant about Matthew as he was about Edwin. He accuses Dean Baldwin of the murder, based on the evidence of the horse. Baldwin admits having been at Millmead late yesterday, but he spent the night in the guest house at Kingsbridge Priory, and he can prove it.

Surely, Tommy thinks, it must be possible to prove that the corpse had no crucifixion wounds when it was found? Tilly's testimony should be convincing: she found the body. Tommy and Catherine go in search of her, expecting to find her outside the house where Edwin was jailed. But they find that both she and Edwin have gone.

Presuming that they have gone to Millmead, Tommy and Catherine go after them.

IV: EVENING AND NIGHT

13. Philip speaks to the bishops and tries to persuade them to tell Waleran to call off the lynching. They refuse: a new saint is too good to miss. Besides, this whole affair could give their candidate just the boost he needs (a point which stiffens Philip's resolve to defeat Waleran). Philip does score a small victory: he argues that the hanging cannot take place on a Sunday, and the bishops agree that it must be postponed until dawn.

The townspeople are drinking beer and getting uglier. Philip goes around the alehouses and asks the brewers to close up shop. They are reluctant, for this is one of their busiest days of the year. However, Philip is their feudal lord, and he has the power to make life very difficult for them. He does not hesitate to use this threat. Grumbling, they give in, and close their doors.

By dawn the townspeople will be sober, which might give Philip another chance.

Now Philip goes to William and offers on Matthew's behalf to wipe out the debt. Of course Matthew has already made this offer, but with Philip's guarantee the thing would be more secure. Nevertheless William turns him down: the way things are he gets away with not paying and he gets revenge on Matthew.

Throughout the crisis Mother Floria is a tower of strength

at Philip's side. Philip begins to realise that his feelings for her are something special, something that could change his whole life. For the first time ever, he examines his commitment to the monastic life, weighing its appeal against the newly-discovered joy of intimacy with a woman.

14. William and Waleran try to persuade Matthew to confess to the murder. They promise to fake his escape and arrange for him to start a new life in Normandy. He mistrusts them at first, but they offer cast-iron guarantees. Then he refuses all the same, for even if he and his family were able to get away, such a confession would do untold damage to the Jewish community in England. This heroic stand is, of course, completely incomprehensible to William Hamleigh.

15. Tommy and Catherine find Tilly and Edwin at Millmead. But Tilly refuses to come back to Kingsbridge and tell people that April's body had no flesh wounds when it was found. She says that if she does that Edwin will be rearrested. But Edwin will at least have a trial - Matthew is about to be lynched! Tilly says: "Better to lose a Jew than a Christian." Tommy is unconvinced by this, and wonders why Tilly is suddenly so concerned about Edwin.

Suddenly Catherine says to Tilly: "You're having Edwin's baby, aren't you?" Tilly looks so guilty that it is obviously

true. Tommy realises that this explains a lot: why Tilly was so hysterical when Edwin was arrested; why she followed Edwin to Kingsbridge and spent all her time outside the jail house; and why she now refuses to save Matthew's life.

Tommy says: "But Edwin was planning to run away with April!" Only three people knew this: April, Edwin and Tommy. But Tilly does not register surprise. So how did she know? Edwin would not have told her, and April died before she had the chance... didn't she? Tommy looks at Tilly's hands, large as a man's. If Tilly knew that Edwin, the father of her unborn child, was going to run away with another woman, she could easily commit murder....

Tommy says: "Did you eavesdrop on Edwin and April last night, Tilly?"

Tilly attacks Tommy. There is a four-way fight. But Tilly is as strong as a man, and she and Edwin are too much for Tommy and Catherine. Tommy is knocked cold. Edwin and Tilly flee, never to be seen again.

16. Waleran suffers a setback when he learns that the king's justices are much nearer to Kingsbridge than he thought and in fact they will arrive tonight. But William goes to meet them and diverts them to another village for the night.

17. Judith tries to persuade the young Jews to mount a rescue.

But none of them have any weapons training - Jews are never knights - and they do not even have proper weapons. Judith rails at them, calling them cowards. Some of them look distinctly uncomfortable. She directs her most withering scorn at her brother Jake, for whose sake Matthew risked this. But the older men say a rescue attempt would be suicidal, and although Jake looks rebellious he defers to them.

In despair, Judith realises, as evening falls, that she has one weapon left: her body. She agonizes over whether to use it. She has never had sex with anyone other than Matthew. If she let another man use her - even to save Matthew's life - she knows she would never again feel the same about sex with Matthew. Nevertheless she decides to do it.

She goes to see Waleran. He lets her in out of curiosity. She tries to seduce him. But she has misjudged him. He refuses her scornfully, saying: "After I have spent my whole life in the service of my church, do you really imagine I can be deflected from my destiny by a woman?"

18. Tommy and Bedford's squires plan a rescue. Tommy has a dual motive. He is outraged by injustice and wants passionately to help his old friend Judith; but he also wants to impress his father with his military skill, in the hope that Jack will relent and let him become a squire.

They create a diversion and get into the building where

Matthew is; but they are unable to break down the door into Matthew's cell, and the rescue attempt ends in fiasco.

Tommy now feels both he and Matthew have lost their last chance.

V: DAWN

19. Philip tries once more to talk everyone out of this, to no avail. He feels a complete failure. He also realises at last that he has fallen in love with Floria, and she with him. They both decide to leave their order and get married. For the first time in his life Philip kisses a woman.

At first light people assemble in the square. The townspeople are sober and shamefaced. Most people have now heard that Tilly has been accused of the murder and has fled with Edwin, giving credence to the accusation. However, Griff Baldhead and his men are doing the dirty work, with encouragement and approval from Sheriff William and Bishop Waleran.

Suddenly Philip thinks of the Weeping Madonna. He dashes into the cathedral and gets a group of young monks to carry the statue into the square just as Matthew is brought out. On cue, the statue weeps. The townspeople murmur, awestruck, taking this as a sign that the Madonna does not approve of the hanging. But Griff's men are made of sterner stuff, and the ritual proceeds.

Suddenly there is a disturbance at one side of the square. A group of young men burst into action, fighting their way toward the scaffold, armed with sticks and household tools. At their head is Judith's brother Jake. The young Jews have decided to make a fight of it after all.

But the old men were right: their attempt is suicidal. They are up against ruffians with swords; and now the sheriff's men join in against the Jews.

Philip is mortified. He wishes he could join in, but of course monks must not fight. This is a feeling he has had frequently all through his life, and he is accustomed to resisting the temptation to lash out physically at the evildoers. But he is leaving the order, he remembers. For the first time in his life he is entitled to join in a fight. He picks up a stick and throws himself into the fray with all the relish that comes from a lifetime of restraint.

Taking their cue from him, the young monks join in as well. Still the amateurs have no chance against the professionals. But finally the townspeople, inspired by the bravery of Jews and monks, join in too. Now the ruffians and the sheriff's men are overwhelmed by sheer weight of numbers.

There is a series of eyeball-to-eyeball confrontations at the scaffold. Tommy find himself up against William, and knocks him down. Waleran tries to hang Matthew before he can be rescued, and both Philip and Judith rush to prevent him. Philip

gets there first and hits Waleran with a real haymaker, knocking him out cold. Philip will remember this as one of the most satisfying moments of his entire life. Meanwhile, Judith reaches Matthew and unties the rope.

As they embrace, the sun comes up.

20. The Jews carry Matthew home on their shoulders, none of them quite able to believe what they have done.

Tommy and Catherine prepare to part. Then Jack tells Tommy he is impressed - not with Tommy's military ability, but with his strong sense of justice. Jack has realised that his son is just the kind of man who ought to wield power. So he consents, after all, to Tommy's joining the Bedford household as a squire. Jack will console himself by fostering Sally's interest in stained glass. And Tommy and Catherine will be together after all.

Philip and Floria, however, do say goodbye. In daylight they both realise that they would be miserable if they now turned against everything they have ever lived for. Sadly but wisely, they part. Philip prepares to confess his sins - he has kissed a woman and been in a fight - but deep in his heart he has no true regrets.

William asks Waleran for the £170 he needs to pay his debts. Waleran refuses scornfully. William blackmails him: William saw Waleran mutilate the corpse. Waleran pays up.

A few weeks later, Thomas of London, also known as Thomas

Becket, is consecrated archbishop of Canterbury.

The end.

If this story is transposed to 1175:

1. William will be dead.
2. Wateran will be ~~Philip~~ a humble monk at Kingbridge
3. Philip will be 67, a little too old for a midlife crisis
4. Tommy and Catherine will be married already.