

START EPISODE ELEVEN

A.

PHILES

Irene prays all day.

She cries and when
we wipe
her tears away,
she says

IRENE

I don't know why
my heart doesn't stop.

I'm scared
of my own child
telling tales.

MEGARIS

Maybe he will! But he's only a little boy, he
doesn't decide anything.

IRENE

My own child.
My own child grown inside me.

MEGARIS

But remember *you* lied... You lied on the bible.
If you understand that, doesn't it give you
courage? It's not Constantine, *you* told the
lie/

THE SOUND OF MILITARY FOOTSTEPS.

IRENE

/Oh Megaris!

MEGARIS

Shhh! Stop that! If this is what is going to
happen, you are not a coward, you are my
friend, who has kept an icon in her hand all
her life.

IRENE

(whispering)

Yes. I have her in my hand. She is with me.

The CLASTS MARCH IN.

CLASTS

Irene is called!

PHILES

Where?

CLASTS

Her husband
calls her
to the Purple Room.

PHILES

He never calls.

CLASTS

(whispering on repeat.)

Things change.

NARRATOR

Irene takes her Icon out of her pocket
and kisses it.

She flaunts it in her hand.

IRENE

Whatever
my son has said.

Whatever
greater exile
comes.

IRENE starts to sing (using the
later melody from the QUARTET
SONG)

GOLDEN COURAGE

I WALK CALMLY
WITH MY ICON
IN MY HAND.

TO FIND
MY FATE.

WARM JOY BURNING COLD AWAY,
STOIC THOUGHTS STILL MY HANDS
IN FRONT OF ME!

WHATEVER LEO'S WORDS MAY BE,
PAINT ME GLOWING WITH LIGHT.

A SMALL SMILE ALLOWED
REGAL AND PROUD.

WANTED COURAGE.

NEEDED COURAGE.

GIFTED COURAGE.

GOLDEN COURAGE [*ON REPEAT*]

Irene is marched away by the
Clasts, as if she's going to her
trial or execution.

B.

CUT TO THE PURPLE ROOM.

SOUNDSCAPE: stinging, fever and
cough

A disoriented Irene fights her way
to Leo's bed.

LEO

My head,
it won't heal,

where they put
the crown on
it hurts.

PHILES

A church crown
stolen for its jewels.
One turned into a coal
that fell out
and burnt his skin.

LEO

The crown
weighs so heavy,

my skin weeps
where it bites,

where am I?

COURT

(whispering)

Staurakios has sent you
to the purple room.
A lucky place to end.
An Emperor's place to die.

LEO

Have you called my Irene?
I want her
to take my crown off
and bathe my head.

STAURAKIOS

(whispering as he leads her)

Come. Come. Come.

Staurakios pulls Irene through to
Leo.

IRENE

(speaking.)

All these faces waiting.
How strangely they look at me,

Staurakios,
do they think I'm a witch?

STAURAKIOS

(whispering)

Be quick, he's not that ill, I'm scaring him
with the purple room.

CLASTS

What's in your hand, Irene?

IRENE

Mercy.

CLASTS

What's in your hand, Irene?

IRENE

Justice.

CLASTS

What's in your hand, Irene?

IRENE

Love.

LEO

Irene,
make them carry me back to my own bed!

IRENE

No-one listens to me, my darling,

LEO

All of you go away!

I hate this room.

IRENE

Shh,
remember our son being born here?

LEO

Call him!
Bring him to me!
I must put my hands on him!

CLASTS

(bellowing)

Cyra, bring Constantine here!

STAURAKIOS

(whispering)

No! Don't let the nurse through,
the boy can wait...

Cyra is trying to bring
Constantine VI to his father, but
the crowds -- directed by
Staurakios -- seem to keep pushing
her back.

STAURAKIOS (CONT'D)

(whispering to Irene)

Make him kiss your icon *

PHILES

* then the iconoclasts are done...

IRENE

Lie easy my darling and see what's in my hand.

CYRA

Push harder, Constantine. Or we will not get to
your father!

CONSTANTINE VI

I'm being crushed!

Leo groans in pain and disgust.

CYRA

LET ME THROUGH,
THE HEIR TO THE THRONE WILL TELL YOU WHAT
WITCHCRAFT HIS MOTHER HAS IN HER HAND/

IRENE

/Remember how I bled in this
bed?
She saved me.

LEO

I'm....

COUGH, COUGH.

IRENE

No, no, no, kiss her.
Ask her to
save you too.

Irene holds out the ICON in her
hand.

IRENE (CONT'D)

My darling,
our son is ten,
kiss my lady to live
and be a father
to your son.

Irene holds the ICON to Leo's
lips. He kisses it weakly.

A GASP

ALL

He kissed it.

CYRA

Hear his breathing,
how it breaks...

Leo gasps dreadfully.

Staurakios pauses.

STAUAKIOS

No all is better now, Cyra,
all is forgiven. Our Emperor is restored!

IRENE

Staurakios...

CYRA

He's dead!

Irene holds the icon again to
Leo's now lifeless lips.

Irene is shocked. How can the icon
be powerless?

IRENE

But...
I prayed for him to live.
Why does she do this to me?
Why does she reject my prayer?

CYRA

She knows that inside you is a will
darker than magic.

(to Constantine VI)

Look what your Mother
has done to your Father.

But no-one is more shocked than
Staurakios.

STAUAKIOS

(whispering)

He's dead?

NARRATOR

And now in the histories a totally new argument
starts....

IRENE

(whispering)

He's dead...
Then...

My Lady
gives me power/

CYRA AND THE CLASTS

(sharply)

/to hold
for your son!

PHILES

To serve him.

CYRA AND CLASTS

We won't let you rise again!

IRENE

Staurakios?
What do I say?

He stares at Irene.

NARRATOR

Staurakios, who always knows where he is, sees
that everyone is standing in a different place
to where he thought he put them. When Irene
handed the icon to Leo, for a moment, he'd been
almost in her body, handing an apple to Leo and
watching him bite. Now he's spinning high above
the room. They've done something bad, Empress
and Eunuch, in the Garden of Eden. Tried to get
more power and broken the rules.

IRENE

Don't stare at me like that. Why are you
staring at me like that?

STAUAKIOS

Eve,
we're outside of Eden,
where are we going to go?

IRENE

STAUAKIOS!
What do I say?

STAUAKIOS

Oh...
Say you are Regent for your son and no-one
else.
Say you serve him until he's grown.

IRENE

(abashed)

Until he's grown,
I serve my son.

I serve
my son.

Irene, Staurakios, Constantine VI
and Megaris sing as a quartet. The
Four parts run simultaneously.

QUARTET

CONSTANTINE VI

A cold pain
deep inside.

I watch
my Mother
rising high.

Cold getting
colder, missing
the warmth of
my father.

Growing older
in the shadows
of a eunuch mother.

I kiss her
to please the court.

Sickness.
I kiss
the icon.

Strong men's
scorn on
my lips,
saving me.

STAURAKIOS

Leo lies
in his grave

Old times
like his body
decay

The son he loved
he left unsafe

Watched by
a wife
he never knew.

The earth
seems free
of any rules.

To manage shame,
I kiss her icon/her icon
I choose this Eve.
as we change

Time tells
us all to kneel,
start again

IRENE

Warm joy.
Burning
cold away.

Loyal kisses
on the ground
in front of me!

My thoughts
are words
obeyed
as laws.

Paint me
glowing
with light.

A small smile
allowed,
regal and proud.

Only a
tiny pain,
ice again,
looking down
at my son.

MEGARIS

My friend
Irene
lives free
again.

Warm joy
to see her
crowned
like Mary.

Sing thanks
for how
she saves
our icons.
Sing prayers
ov'r my
doubting, lonely
in ceremony

Damaged hearts
beating faster.

Don't let
cold fears
feed old pains.

END OF AUDIO EPISODE ELEVEN