

## **The Ottomans**

An historical episodic TV drama

**Treatment by Savannah Morgan**

## The Ottomans

**LOGLINE:** Koprulu Mehmet, taken by the Ottomans as a child, brutally forges his way through the perils of war, the harem, and three mad sultans to become the most powerful grand vizier in Ottoman history. He's the founder of a dynasty that leads the Empire- on the brink of collapse- to its final days of glory.

### **THE WORLD:**

Early in the 1600s the Ottoman empire is stagnant. The harem has grown into a city, sucking up the dwindling remains of the royal treasury, while a series of incompetent, indulgent sultans have given rise to a new power known as the Sultanate of Women. It is nonetheless a time of opportunity. Slaves or the elite alike can rise through merit alone to top positions in the empire, some second only to the sultan. A favorite concubine can command more power than a princess, and corruption runs rampant.

Koprulu Mehmet, an uneducated Albanian of humble origins, was taken as a youth and enlisted in the janissaries, an elite force of soldiers devoted to the sultan. He fights his inner demons in pursuit of justice and a better future, much to the disgust of Tayyar, a twisted janissary with a penchant for torture. Koprulu and his sons are destined to be the most powerful grand viziers in history, forever changing the balance and rendering the sultan a mere figurehead. The path is bloody. He's joined by his fun-loving friend Kemankes (“Archer”) Mustafa Pasha, an ambitious soldier who loves the ladies and plans to be grand vizier, but fortune can prove a fickle mistress, especially when she's controlled by the likes of Cinci Hoca, a witchdoctor with cunning greed and friends in high places.

Kosem, the valide sultan who remains the power behind the thrones of three mad sultans, weaves a web of alliances to hold the scattered realm together. Sumbul, an African slave turned eunuch, will unwittingly start a war that will last for decades. Ali, a mute, must work with Halil the dwarf to learn official sign language and survive the intrigues of court, the peril of a forbidden love, juggling, and his own turmoil at being made the sultan's personal murderer. In the midst of all this, Nora of Kelmendi disguises herself as a man and fights for her people, but her secret is discovered and a war is started for her hand. A war, perhaps, that only Koprulu can end.

As for the sultans, Murat IV is a cruel and unpredictable drunk who ventures from the palace in his nightgown and slices up his subjects at midnight. Ibrahim, confined to a cage for most of his life, overcomes his fear of women through a concoction of pornographic books and aphrodisiacs, but his newfound libido turns him mad with lust. His son Mehmet IV is just as addicted to hunting and deathly afraid of the palace. Battles are won and lost. Treaties signed. Friends ripped away. Yet before the sun sets on the Osman line, the Ottoman empire will have her last hurrah.

### **SEASON ONE:**

We begin in 1621 and continue through the end of Ibrahim's reign in 1651. Here we encounter our main characters: Koprulu, Kemankes, Kosem, and Ali the mute. We also meet Tayyar and Cinci Hoca, our villains. Several recurring characters including Evliya and Sumbul show their heads as well, with much greater roles awaiting them in the coming episodes.

### **PILOT:**

#### Act One

KOPRULU is a dark, ruthless janissary soldier in the Ottoman army. His only friend is KEMANKES

(“Archer”) Mustafa, the light-hearted but deeply ambitious deputy to the janissary captain. The army is on a fool's quest to capture Poland from the Commonwealth in 1621 as the 17-year-old sultan Osman II strives for the glory of his ancestors, a quest which would have been cut short were it not for the heroics of Koprulu in the midst of a suicidal enemy attack. He is rewarded with the title of “pasha”, or general, a key rung on the long ladder to power. Back at the palace school, the sultan's brothers wonder what will become of them thanks to the long-standing practice of fratricide to eliminate competition for the throne. Koprulu reveals his troubled past on the eve of the siege of Khotyn.

### Act Two

TAYYAR, a cruel and corrupt janissary, goes to Kelmendi in the Albanian highlands to collect taxes for the Ottoman war. While there he encounters fierce defiance from NORA, a young woman disguised as a man, but her resistance melts when he gouges out her friend's eye. He gives them one week to come up with the money. On his return, he forces Nora to reveal her true nature and to take their pitiful taxes to the nearby Ottoman pasha as a woman. He also pockets some for himself.

Kemankes and Koprulu are outnumbered and losing but they rally valiantly when the enemy's commander dies. The Commonwealth is forced to sign a peace treaty, but it is a compromise for both sides and the sultan's soldiers are unhappy. The tired men return home to find a rebellion in full swing, aimed at deposing the sultan. KOSEM, one of the most powerful women in Ottoman history and soon to be valide sultan, spins her web in a desperate effort to protect her sons from the change in regime. EVLIYA, a boy destined to be a renowned traveler, is fascinated by the gruesome murder of the grand vizier. Koprulu rescues him from the hooves of a rebel horse. One day Evliya will have a chance to repay the debt.

### Act Three

The sultan and his advisors are brutally murdered in front of the stowaway Evliya. It is the first instance of regicide in Ottoman history, and Koprulu knows no good will come of it. Osman's mother accuses Kosem of planning the rebellion, but she's pointing at the wrong woman. Cicek, mother to Mustafa -Osman's the mentally ill uncle- is the mastermind along with her son-in-law DAVUT. Kosem remembers her past with sultan Ahmet, tricking him into saving Mustafa. She hopes she made the right choice. Cicek, now the de facto ruler of the kingdom thanks to her son's infirmity, drowns Osman's mother and hatches a plot to eliminate the princes but Kosem thwarts her with the help of the CHIEF BLACK EUNUCH. The villains behind the plot are hanged in the courtyard as a warning and Davut shares the same fate as poor Osman.

### Act Four

Kosem aids in Mustafa's downfall and places her 13-year-old son MURAT IV on the throne. She assumes the position of valide sultan and regent, boldly taking control of the government. Kosem's son-in-law HAFIZ is made grand vizier and Murat's brothers are marched to the Cage where they can't threaten the throne. For only the second time in the long line of sultans, fratricide is avoided. SUMBUL, an Ethiopian slave, is made a eunuch with knives and boiling oil. His younger brother doesn't survive the ordeal. ALI, a mute, is imprisoned with him and the two form a strange friendship. Both are bound for the palace and their adventures together have only just begun.

### Act Five

Koprulu babysits Murat as he takes to the streets disguised as a commoner. While exploring, he meets

BEKRI, a drunk passed out in the mud. It is an innocuous meeting but the consequences will shadow the kingdom in the years to come. Ali and Sumbul cause a fuss at auction and are nearly killed, but Koprulu intervenes and they are brought to the palace at Murat's request. Ali meets HALIL the head dwarf. Bekri introduces Murat to the pleasures of drunkenness and they plot to throw Ali out the window in a vicious experiment.

## SEASON ONE EPISODES:

### Episode 2

Ali is saved from death, and yet as fate would have it he must also take a life on the sultan's order. He celebrates his near brush with death with some fresh air, where he encounters NASIRA, a beautiful cook. The spark is instant, but the punishment for seeing a woman from the harem is death for them both... Murat and Bekri become fast friends, but their fondness for drink knows no bounds and Murat's mischievous nature has an edge. Murat reluctantly chooses a concubine, torn by his infatuation for his page Musa, but she bears him a son and he celebrates in grand style, adding the marriage of his sister Ayse to Tayyar to the festivities. The grand vizier Hafiz leads a failed attempt to retake Baghdad from the Shah. Their reinforcements fail to arrive thanks to a detour by Vutsi Pasha to marry Nora by force, so Koprulu, Kemankes, and Tayyar must form an uneasy alliance to get the Ottoman army out alive. There is no respite as they're faced with a rebellion of their own men on their return to the palace. Musa and Hafiz are among many sacrificed to the angry mob in the guise of reforming the government. The sultan swears revenge, and none can predict how bloody and cruel his new reign will be.

### Episode 3

Murat's mood is black, growing darker still with each drink. His loyal janissaries, led by Tayyar, take to the streets and murder any rebels they can find, hunting the survivors through the forest like beasts. He orders all the coffee shops in the kingdom closed for harboring whispers insurrection. He shoots people for looking at him as he passes through the gardens overlooking the Bosphorus, and orders all taverns demolished. Bekri dies, his son is taken by the plague, and his madness worsens. He prowls through the streets at midnight clad only in a nightgown, slicing up anyone he encounters. His own brother calls him "the Butcher," and the imprisoned princes live in constant fear of death, a fear that is soon justified for Beyazit and Suleyman. No one can control him. His ferociousness is unparalleled and he personally leads a campaign into Persia against the Safavids and captures Revan, his cruelty surpassing even that of Tayyar. Kosem and Cinci Hodja take advantage of Murat's absence to strengthen their positions and prepare for the inevitable succession of one of her other sons, while Ali steals time with his beloved. Koprulu and Kemankes try to maintain their honor in the midst of the slaughter, but they will never be the same. Evliya, a soon-to-be-renowned traveler, witnesses the battle firsthand. The grand vizier is killed and Tayyar is named in his place. The battle is fierce. Tayyar sacrifices himself valiantly and the Ottomans are victorious, but at a heavy price.

### Episode 4

Kemankes is named grand vizier at long last, and marries Princess Ayse. Evliya entertains the court with recitations of poetry and a battle of wits with the mad sultan, earning him a place amongst the favorites where he strikes an instant friendship with Ali and Sumbul. There is unrest in Kelmendi again; the sultan orders Koprulu to fix it, and bring back the beautiful Nora. He goes, but when he sees her he can't bring himself to put her at the mercy of the sultan's cruel whims so he fakes her death and hides her against her will. There is an uneasy peace. Then the Persians recapture Revan. Murat, in a

fury, orders another attack, this time on Baghdad itself. To show his power and document his assets, he orders a grand Procession of the Guilds which lasts for three days and involves 1001 guilds, each passing before his kiosk. Koprulu sets Nora free as he goes to fight. Kasim wishes Murat good luck with the war but Murat has him strangled, leaving only Ibrahim, who starts to go mad himself from the isolation and fear.

### Episode 5

The battle is fierce. The Ottomans lose 100,000 men but no one can dissuade the sultan from his goal. Nora sneaks into the army dressed as a man and aids them. Koprulu is furious but he can't reveal her secret or she'll be killed. Finally Murat returns victorious, with 22 Baghdad nobles forced to walk at his stirrup. Koprulu is sent to govern Trebizond Villayet. Nora joins him and they wed in secret and she becomes pregnant. Murat's health is failing and he spends all of his time attending drunken banquets and killing people at will. Impotence fuels his anger. His final command is to kill Ibrahim, thus ending the Ottoman line, but Kosem and Kemankes work together to stop him. Ibrahim, fearing a trick, refuses to come out and take the throne until the body of his brother is laid outside the Cage.

### Episode 6

Ibrahim is nothing but a terrified shell, having been locked up for his entire life. He has no interest in ruling or creating an heir. Kosem regains her position of power as valide sultan, but cannot find a woman to turn her son's head. The Osman line is on the brink of extinction. She must call on Cinci Hoca. He manages to cure the sultan with a mix of pornographic pictures and aphrodisiacs, forever cementing his position as the sultan's most trusted friend and Kosem's right hand, despite vehement opposition from Kemankes. He rightfully doubts Cinci's motivations. Mehmet Pasha, a greedy young soldier with an eye on Kemankes' position, has no trouble toadying up to those in power. He, Cinci, and Kosem form a terrible triumvirate, with no one save Kemankes to keep them in check. Ibrahim's favorite concubine Turhan Hadice bears him a son, Mehmet IV. A beautiful young slave girl is brought to be his wetnurse, but she's pregnant. Sumbul falls in love with her and swears to protect her and her unborn child. The sultan's sexual appetite rages out of control and he spends vast amounts of the treasury on his concubines. He covers his chamber in mirrors so he can view his conquests from all angles.

### Episode 7

The kingdom is failing under the lusty sultan, who raises people to top positions on the whim of his women. He becomes obsessed with his brother's widow Ayse, but she wants nothing to do with him. Taxes are exorbitant. Koprulu gets in a fight with Mehmet Pasha and Kemankes must end it fairly, no matter how he wishes to side with his friend. Koprulu is sent to govern Egri, while Mehmet Pasha is sent to govern Egypt in a desperate attempt to weaken the ruling triad. Ayse finds her loyalty torn between her husband and her mother. The slave girl's son is raised in the harem with the sultan's son, but the sultan prefers her son to his own. Turhan is infuriated and throws a fit, but the sultan doesn't repent. Instead he throws his son into the cistern, where the toddler would've drowned but for the heroic efforts of Nasira. Poor Mehmet forever bears a physical scar from the traumatic event, but the mental one will prove far worse... Sumbul and the slave girl flee for their lives, setting sail for Mecca.

### Episode 8

The palace is slipping out of Kosem's control. The janissaries are restless and underpaid. Kemankes

grows more outspoken by the day, fighting her at every turn, trying desperately to curtail the wasteful spending. Kosem convinces Ibrahim have him executed, and his rival Mehmet Pasha regains his place in court. Koprulu is devastated and vows to make his way back to the palace and take control. Kemankes' wife Ayse swears revenge on her mother. Ibrahim becomes bored with his concubines and seeks inspiration. He finds it in the form of a female cow. He's so enamored of her parts that he has hundreds of golden replicas sent across the kingdom and asks that such a woman be found and brought to him. She turns out to be a 300-pound woman Albanian woman in Istanbul, and Ibrahim is besotted with her. She soon holds more sway over him than Kosem, which she can't allow. Kosem has her secretly murdered. Meanwhile another tragedy is happening at sea. Sumbul's ship is attacked by Maltese pirates. He's killed and the slave girl and her son are captured and taken to Malta. Grief shatters Ibrahim's fragile mind and the heretofore peaceful sultan declares war on Crete for harboring the pirates. His desire for the widow Ayse is all-consuming and he tries to rape her. Kosem intervenes and he banishes her to the Old Saray to limit her power. Hadice Turhan, with keen perception, takes advantage of Kosem's absence to increase her own web and makes friends with the new Chief Black Eunuch Suleyman Aga, wooing his loyalty away from the weakened Kosem.

### Episode 9

The war on Crete runs wildly in favor of the Ottomans. A young 6-year-old girl named Rabia Gulnus is captured and brought to the harem. Mehmet, a young boy himself, feels the strange urge to protect her. Ibrahim, in an effort to prove his power, has his men drag the daughter of his holy advisor to his harem, where he rapes her for days. Eventually her crying grates on his nerves and he sends her back to her father, who calls for him to be overthrown. Kosem throws her power behind the uprising, as do the janissaries at the not-so-subtle urging of Koprulu. They take the palace and lock Ibrahim in a small room, where he weeps piteously until Kosem orders him strangled. Ali and his beloved take advantage of the uprising to run away, with Koprulu's aid. Six-year-old Mehmet IV takes the throne. His mother, only 23, wishes to be valide sultan and his regent but Kosem usurps her position, unwilling to give up her power. The head of the janissaries backs her, but Turhan has allies of her own, namely Suleyman Aga and the grand vizier Siyavus Pasha. They sway the sipahis to her cause, and the battle for the throne begins.

### Episode 10 (Finale)

The sipahis rise in revolt in Uskudar. They're brutally put down by the janissaries, but the fight spills into the streets of Istanbul and the people march on Topkapi Sarayi. Kosem decides to overthrow Mehmet in favor of his younger brother Suleyman, who has a more pliable mother, but Ali the mute overhears the plot and warns Hadice Turhan. The grand vizier obtains a fetva for Kosem's execution. Kosem's buffoon tries to protect her as she hides in the clothes press, but to no avail. The most powerful woman in the kingdom is ignominiously stripped and dragged by her feet to the gateway of the third court, where Hadice orders her strangled. She fights them ferociously and it takes four men. They leave her for dead but she struggles to her feet and tries to run. They catch her and garrote her again until she breathes no more. It is the end of an era. Koprulu takes over the governorship of Anadolu, moving closer to the capitol. Hadice Turhan is named valide sultan, but the kingdom comes with a price: unruly soldiers, a continuing war with Crete, unrest with the Cossacks, and debt.

## **SEASON TWO:**

Mehmet IV has turned into an arrogant, impulsive young man. He's the same age as Fazil Ahmet, Koprulu's son, though the two are opposites. Mehmet cares about nothing save hunting and avoiding

the palace at all costs. It holds too many ghosts for him. His concubine and childhood friend Rabia Gulnus loves him desperately and tries to help him face his demons, but he refuses to touch her. The Ottoman army suffers the worst naval defeat in nearly a century at the hands of the Venetians outside Crete. The janissaries overthrow the latest grand vizier. Turhan, in a final desperate move, offers the position to Koprulu. He accepts, but only if the sultan and his mother promise him free rein. They have no choice, and he becomes grand vizier at the age of 71. His rule lasts a brief but bloody five years, forever shifting power from the sultan to the vizier. Tens of thousands die at his hands. He weeds out corruption with clinical efficiency, dealing with rebels, uprisings, attacks, and wars, often taking to the field himself and leading his men to victory. Evliya remains close at hand and records everything in great detail. For the first time in generations, the Ottoman empire expands again. Fazil is a serious lad in love with a woman promised to another. He lacks the hardened edge of his father, but shares his passion for justice. He's named Fazil by the people, "the Just". He also proves a formidable warrior. Candia, the defiant heart of Crete, finally falls to him, ending four and a half centuries of Venetian rule. His respect for the Venetian captain-general Francesco Morosini is so great that he allows Morosini and the pitiful remains of his men to leave the city safely. Woven into the wars and plagues there is a spark of light. It is the age of Science, of Descartes and Galileo and Lagari. Who is Lagari, you ask? Why, he straps himself to seven rockets to celebrate the birth of the sultan's son and lives to tell the tale. His brother Hezarfen is also an inventor and the first person to hanglide. Evliya eagerly recounts their exploits, witnessing them firsthand. The two cause endless trouble for Fazil and Mehmet as they navigate their destinies: one to rule an empire, the other to descend into madness.

### **SEASON THREE:**

A tired Fazil battles the Commonwealth and the Russians. A treaty is signed but the trouble is far from over as the Holy Roman Empire, Russia, the Commonwealth, and the Republic of Venice form the Holy League to oppose the Ottomans. Fazil dies in office at the age of 41 after ruling the kingdom for 15 prosperous years. The position of grand vizier falls to his brother-in-law Merzifonlu Kara Mustafa, destined to lead the ill-fated Battle of Vienna. The Ottoman defeat is resounding, and her enemies ever after refer to her as "the sick man of Europe."

Mehmet the hunter is caged by his own men, deposed in favor of his useless brother Suleyman II. Suleyman's one redeeming decision is to make Fazil's younger brother Mustafa Koprulu his grand vizier, but he dies in battle four years later. Belgrade and Bosnia are lost to the League. Suleyman dies and the throne passes to Mustafa II, Mehmet's eldest, but even Rabia Gulnus as valide sultan cannot stop the downward slide of the empire. Mustafa leads his army against the Habsburgs, but they again suffer bitter defeat and the sultan only survives by fleeing the field in disguise. They are forced to sign the treaty of Karlowitz, thereby losing Hungary and establishing their borders much as we know them today. We leave on the reign of Ahmet III, Mehmet's younger son, known as the Tulip King. He wins back Morea and Azov from the Habsburgs. He replenishes the royal coffers and promotes literature and art. The first printing press authorized to use Arabic or Turkish is set up in Istanbul. The sultan is so enamored of the tulip that rows of shelves are built to hold vases of tulips alternating with lamps of colored glass and cages of singing birds to celebrate the flower's blossoming, and festivities last for three days. The people prosper. The rest is history.

The Ottomans  
(Working Title)

Pilot Episode

Based on John Freely's Inside the Seraglio

Screenplay by  
Savannah Morgan

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EXT. KHOTYN FORTRESS 1621- OTTOMAN CAMP - DAWN

The Khotyn Fortress rises black and forbidding against the ghostly pre-dawn light, still a day's march away from the slumbering Ottoman vanguard.

The Ottoman vanguard number a hundred strong and sleep haphazardly on the ground in their battle garb, their breath foggy in the morning mist, ready to continue their brutal winter march.

The vastness of the full Ottoman army stretches for miles behind them, a hundred thousand men. In the middle of the vanguard, the chaos of camp gives way to a small group of neat, ordered beds.

These are the JANISSARIES, the Sultan's elite military. In contrast to the rest of the army, their faces are freshly shaven.

KOPRULU MEHMET, early 30s, his handsome beardless face marred by several battle scars, sleeps fitfully. He rolls over and smacks his sleeping friend KEMANKES MUSTAFA, 30s, in the face. Kemankes rolls away but doesn't wake.

In the vanguard, one OTTOMAN WATCHMAN keeps watch, uneasily peering into the dark at the shapes of the Cossack fortifications jutting out of the mist at the base of the fortress.

A COSSACK HORSEMAN appears from the mist, slicing the head off the WATCHMAN.

Another follows close behind, noiseless but for the SLICE of his sword and the footfalls of his horse. All around them Ottoman soldiers die in their sleep.

Koprulu wakes to find a sword whistling towards his face. He rolls out of the way and comes up with his own sword, blocking the Cossack's swing.

KOPRULU

Kemankes!

Kemankes jerks bolt upright. Another Cossack blade slashes the blanket where he was. He lunges up and knocks the Cossack off his steed. They fight hand to hand.

KEMANKES

(to Koprulu)

When I said I want to sleep like the dead, I'm glad you didn't take me at my word.

Koprulu fends off the Cossack on horseback, simultaneously ducking another enemy blade. Kemankes backs up a step, losing to the Cossack's superior swordsmanship.

KEMANKES (cont'd)

I'll swap you.

Koprulu stabs the grounded Cossack as Kemankes, lightning fast, grabs his bow, knocks an arrow, and takes out the mounted one before he can make another pass.

KOPRULU

(bellowed)

RISE! The Cossacks are here!

The Ukranian Cossack cavalry are everywhere, thirty riders wreaking the havoc of three hundred. One slices the head off a nearby soldier, spraying blood on Koprulu's face.

KOPRULU (cont'd)

Formations!

The Ottomans struggle to form lines of defense, but they're cut off by the Cossacks, herded into small groups. An UNARMED OTTOMAN YOUTH stares, transfixed, as a Cossack charges him.

Koprulu grabs the stirrup of a passing Cossack, swings up behind him, and cuts his throat before he can do the same to the Unarmed Youth.

KOPRULU (cont'd)

(to Youth)

Pick up your sword!

The terrified Youth jolts into action, grabbing his sword and backing against Kemankes, who looses another deadly arrow.

The Cossacks abandon their attempts at mass slaughter and charge towards the grand tent of the sultan. Koprulu looks at Kemankes.

KEMANKES

Go! I'll get the Sipahi.

Koprulu nods and gallops after them, barely staying on the horse.

INT. SULTAN'S TENT, OTTOMAN CAMP, DAWN

A CONCUBINE SCREAMS in the throes of passion, locked in an embrace with OSMAN II, the impetuous, pampered 17-year-old sultan.

Her delight quickly turns to SHRIEKS of fear as a sword SLICES through the wall of the tent, killing her.

EXT. SULTAN'S TENT, OTTOMAN CAMP, DAWN

Osman emerges from his grand tent naked, coat in hand. His janissary bodyguards fight a losing battle against the horsemen. Osman hurriedly dons his coat.

OSMAN

What in the hell is going on?

A rider heads straight for Osman, blade raised, but Koprulu charges into him. His horse shies and he's thrown onto the sultan, knocking him down.

The leader of the Janissaries, the AGA, hurries up to the Sultan and hauls Koprulu off.

JANISSARY AGA

My deepest apologies for this oaf, my sultan.

Osman stares at Koprulu for a tense moment. Then he grins.

OSMAN

Next time leave the horse heroics to the Sipahis, janissary.

KOPRULU

Yes, my sultan.

A HULKING COSSACK breaks through the ranks on foot. Koprulu engages him. Osman is unperturbed.

OSMAN

(to Janissary Aga)

Speaking of which, where are my Sipahis?

The Ottoman Sipahi cavalry charge up, firing arrows, slashing with swords. They turn the tide of the battle, knocking the remaining Cossacks off their horses onto the waiting blades of the janissaries.

OSMAN (cont'd)  
Janissary Aga! Explain this.

Osman kicks a slain Cossack at his feet.

JANISSARY AGA  
It seems to be a small force of the  
Cossack cavalry, my lord.

OSMAN  
Where are the rest of them?

JANISSARY AGA  
Apparently this was a suicide  
mission.

OSMAN  
And the men on watch? Why had we no  
word?

JANISSARY AGA  
Slain at their posts.

The few remaining Cossacks turn and flee.

OSMAN  
Sipahi Aga!

The leader of the SIPAHI Cavalry breaks away from the  
pursuit and makes his way to the sultan's side.

OSMAN (cont'd)  
Launch a counterattack. We'll cut  
them off from the rest of the  
Commonwealth's troops.

The Sipahi Aga looks sideways at the Janissary Aga.

JANISSARY AGA  
My sultan, if I may give my opinion,  
the Lisowczycy camp is next to the  
Cossacks and are no doubt expecting  
us.

OSMAN  
Tell me you are not afraid of  
motherless sell-swords?

JANISSARY AGA  
No sultan, but half the men are yet  
undressed.

OSMAN

Then they will pay for their laziness  
with their lives! We are at war! Do  
as I command!

THE AGAS

Yes, my sultan.

OSMAN

Once we overrun their army, Khotyn  
will be ours to take!

Koprulu turns to follow his commander.

OSMAN

Wait! Janissary. What is your name?

KOPRULU MEHMET

Mehmet Koprulu, my sultan.

OSMAN

Mehmet Pasha.

KOPRULU MEHMET

I- You are too gracious my sultan.

OSMAN

Yes yes and you are ever my most  
humble servant. Be gone. We've an  
attack to plan.

EXT. KHOTYN FORTRESS 1621: COSSACK CAMP

Koprulu and the rest of the janissaries, still bloody, are  
assembling on the outskirts of the Cossack camp. The camp is  
eerily silent, the Cossack infantry crouched behind their  
defenses.

KEMANKES

I heard you knocked the sultan into  
the mud and he made you a pasha.

Koprulu's lips twitch.

KOPRULU

Yes.

KEMANKES

Lucky son of a camel. He'd have made  
me a shish kebab.

JANISSARY AGA

(Hushed)

On my command.

Kemankes readies his bow, knocking an arrow. Several other archers do the same.

JANISSARY AGA

Attack!

INT. HAREM- PALACE SCHOOL

Murat and Beyazit, solemn 10-year-old princes, discuss what is to become of them at Osman II's hands in low voices. A TEACHER teaches Ottoman history.

BEYAZIT

Where is sultan Osman II now?

MURAT

I overheard the chief black eunuch talking with my mother. Osman is returning from the battle of Khotyn. They signed a treaty.

BEYAZIT

Is that the same as winning?

MURAT

If you know what's good for you, it is.

BEYAZIT

Do you think he'll change his mind and kill us on his return?

MURAT

He doesn't have a son yet. Mother says until he has an heir we are safe.

TEACHER

Attention! Let us recount our history. First there was...

CLASS

Osman Ghazi!

TEACHER

And when did he rule?

The children raise their hands.