

2010

That Cavendish Woman (Film Script) : Restoring Women's Voice to History

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Publication details

Stockwell, J 2010, 'That Cavendish woman (film script) : restoring women's voice to history', PhD thesis, Southern Cross University, Lismore, NSW.

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That Cavendish Woman (Film Script):
Restoring Women's Voice to History

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Doctoral Thesis

August 2010

I certify that the work presented in this thesis is, to the best of my knowledge and belief, original, except as acknowledged in the text, and that the material has not been submitted, either in whole or in part, for a degree at this or any other university.

I acknowledge that I have read and understood the University's rules, requirements, procedures and policy relating to my higher degree research award and to my thesis. I certify that I have complied with the rules, requirements, procedures and policy of the University (as they may be from time to time).

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Abstract

Margaret Cavendish (1623-1673) was a seventeenth-century writer and philosopher who pursued her own distinctive agenda in the earliest moments of modern science. She is a striking example of a female voice who wanted to be heard. She wrote eleven books in twenty-two editions and participated in the scientific and philosophical debates of her time on her own terms. As an aristocrat she found herself witnessing first hand the political flux around her, being buffeted by its forces and unable to shield herself from the consequences. Her experiences in the English Civil War led her to a lifelong pursuit of knowledge in an attempt to find deep explanations of nature and society. She took an unprecedented approach in overcoming her own lack of education, challenging the men of science, their theories and experiments and thereby thwarting the social expectations of her time and class. It is this determination to participate and be heard that speaks so strongly to women in the twenty-first century. However, Cavendish's subsequent disappearance from history is a cautionary tale for feminism highlighting the importance of persistence and perhaps collective continuity.

This doctoral presentation consists of two interconnected parts.

The first section is a feature film script *That Cavendish Woman*. The script tells the story of Margaret and her years in exile first as maid of honour to Queen Henrietta-Maria, wife of Charles I, and then in her marriage to William and his role in her education. The script follows their eventual return to England, and the proliferation of Margaret's writing and publications and her growing fame. Finally it explores her admittance to and the tacit acceptance of her scientific and philosophical work by the scholars of the day. The characters are drawn from documents and letters of the time, as well as the published writings of both Margaret and William Cavendish. The script is written as a historical drama which focuses on Margaret's personal story with the events of history supplying the background.

The second section of the thesis is an exegesis which explains the choices made in the creation of the script. It looks at why this particular story was an important one to tell,

restoring the female voice in the historical record, and how it was necessary to use both history and fiction to do so. I have examined how historical characters may serve the intended audience by helping them to explore an interweaving of seventeenth and twenty-first century mores from a personal as well as sociological and psychological points of view. I have also considered how creative research allows for access to a wide audience within the academic framework. This is a feminist work that aims to restore a female voice in history, and by so doing to alert present generations of women to the instability in previously won benefits of the feminist movement. *That Cavendish Woman* is a work of fiction that explores the possibility that there is more to history than that which has been reported and tells a story that highlights a female voice in history which has, until recently, been quieted.

I would like to acknowledge the assistance and patience of my supervisor Dr Moya Costello. She allowed me the space to discover and learn for myself then gently guided me back to where I needed to be. I also thank Dr Adele Wessell for being my co-supervisor.

I would like to thank my family for their support: Hannah, Hayley, Lucy and Tom, for dealing with a ‘mother who studies’ most of their teenage lives and covering their boredom to the best of their abilities, and then their wise, perfectly timed and incisive input as adults; my sisters Rose, Lilly and Jill for being a coven of support; Bill, Steve, Mark and Davy for showing interest, helping when necessary and always being positive; and Necia and Jess for helping to tidy up the end bits.

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That Cavendish Woman

By

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c 2010

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We are watching MARGARET(22) from above as she walks purposefully through the medieval corridors and halls of the palace that is her home. She is maid of honour to the exiled Queen of England, Henriette-Maria.

Words on screen:

1645

England is in the grip of civil war. The Queen, heavily pregnant, has fled before the Parliamentary forces into exile in France leaving her husband The King, Charles I, fighting for his sovereignty, his kingdom and his life. The Louvre Palace in Paris is the headquarters for the new court-in-exile. Only a few of The Queen's Ladies have accompanied her. This is the story of one of those Ladies, Margaret Lucas.

We come level with MARGARET and see she is carrying several books and a covered jug. She is keeping her eyes down so she doesn't have to see anyone. She seems uncomfortable, as if she doesn't quite fit her surroundings, though it is nothing obvious.

There are small groups of COURTIERS along her path who are curious to watch her pass and then turn back to their conversations with some whispered remark about MARGARET. We notice that MARGARET'S dress is different in small ways to the other women. It seems to have too many bows and extra ribbons. This is the way she dresses. A little differently from everyone else. Always differently enough for people to notice and look at her strangely and to comment amongst themselves. It is one of the things about her that in the future helps her to build a reputation. At the moment it is just strange.

She is a small isolated figure in the corridors of power and she is feeling overwhelmed.

MARGARET(TO HERSELF)

I miss Catherine.

MARGARET comes to a door, stops and takes a breath and enters the Queen's chamber.

2 INT. THE QUEEN'S CHAMBER. DAY.

2

As MARGARET enters THE QUEEN is studying a map spread out on the table. LADY MARY, LADY PENELOPE, LADY EMILY, three other maids of honour, are busy about the room. MARGARET tentatively approaches and places the books on the end of the table. THE QUEEN looks up. Her smile fades as she registers it is MARGARET. She looks her up and down and shakes her head.

THE QUEEN (FRENCH-ACCENTED ENGLISH)
Humph! What are you wearing!

MARGARET looks down at her dress and then back at THE QUEEN and blushes, totally embarrassed. She is unable to speak. LADY MARY, LADY PENELOPE, LADY EMILY start to giggle. THE QUEEN just wants MARGARET out of her sight. MARGARET dithers with the jug trying to find somewhere to place it.

THE QUEEN
Margaret, go and sit outside and wait for the petitioners. Make yourself useful. Assist where you are needed.

MARGARET clumsily puts down the jug sloshing some of the contents on to the table, drops a curtsy, trips over her own feet and escapes willingly as fast as she can back the way she has come. She feels embarrassed as she almost falls through the door. Again.

3 INT. OUTSIDE THE QUEEN'S DOOR. NIGHT.

3

MARGARET has obviously been sitting by the door all day. The candles are being lit around her. There is still a lot of activity around her but she seems to be separate from it. She sits with her back straight, her hands clasped on top of a book in her lap, her eyes cast down. A quiet sigh escapes her lips.

4 INT. OUTSIDE THE QUEEN'S DOOR. DAY.

4

MARGARET is once again sitting at her post outside the Queen's door. She quietly watches the coming and going around her as COURTIERS network and socialise.

LADY MARY emerges from the Queen's chamber and beckons to MARGARET. MARGARET follows her into the room.

5 INT. THE QUEEN'S CHAMBER. DAY.

5

MARGARET goes to work tidying away the Queen's bed clothes, tidying her dressing table with LADY MARY telling her what to do with silent gestures and physical poking. LADY PENELOPE and LADY EMILY are also in the room. Meanwhile THE QUEEN is pacing, reading letters, talking to her SECRETARY. MARGARET watches surreptitiously, obviously enamored. The QUEEN is her hero.

THE QUEEN turns and spies her.

THE QUEEN (IN FRENCH)

Margaret, allez à la cuisine et moi
cherchez de l'eau chaude.

(Margaret, go to the kitchens and
get me some hot water.)

MARGARET stumbles a curtsy looking desperately at LADY MARY for the translation. LADY MARY smiles serenely and ignores her. MARGARET desperately looks around the room being ignored or snubbed by everyone until her eyes come back to THE QUEEN who is looking at her quizzically.

THE QUEEN (IN FRENCH-ACCENTED ENGLISH)

How is it that you still have not
learned the language? We have been
here for months now and I see no
improvement.

MARGARET (TONGUE TIED)

Ma'am, I try but I seem to have no
aptitude. When I speak to the
servants they laugh at me.

THE QUEEN (SHARPLY)

Ask Lord Percy for some help. I see
he keeps looking at you as if he -
his, ahh, le cœur est en feu. His
heart is on fire.

MARGARET (BLUSHING)

I...I...I

THE QUEEN (SMILING AT HER OWN JOKE)

Goodness Margaret go and get the
hot water.

MARGARET

Yes ma'am.

MARGARET flees from the room followed by the tittering of the women.

6 INT.PALACE DINING ROOM. DAY. 6

MARGARET is sitting alone. All around her FEMALE COURTIERs are flirting with MALE COURTIERs. Much laughing and witty banter. LORD PERCY keeps trying to catch her eye. There is a game to be played but MARGARET reads her book and stays out of it.

7 INT. MARGARET'S ROOM. NIGHT. 7

MARGARET is sitting at a small desk in her own room. There is a fire burning in the grate and ELIZABETH, Margaret's maid, is folding clothes by the bed. ELIZABETH and MARGARET are of a similar age and are very comfortable together. Their maid/mistress relationship tends towards friendship.

MARGARET is writing a letter to her mother and sisters. We see the name CATHERINE on a previous letter. Tears are running down MARGARET'S face as she writes. She is obviously lonely for her family. ELIZABETH is aware of MARGARET'S distress but unable to help.

TIME LAPSE

MARGARET is lying in bed watching the fire. ELIZABETH blows out the candle and slides into bed beside her. Their fingers entwine as they snuggle up to each other.

8 EXT. GARDEN. ST JOHN'S. 1625. DAY 8

(BEGIN FLASHBACK)

A beautiful summer day and there is a group of children playing in the shade of a big tree in the garden of a big house. MARY(17), ELIZABETH L(15), CHARLES(12), ANNE(10), CATHERINE(8), MARGARET(2). All of the attention is on the two year old. She is totally loved and the center of the other children's world.

MARGARET

Cat, Cat, watch me.

CATHERINE turns to watch her little sister and claps at her performance then runs and picks her up and swings her in the air.

(END FLASHBACK)

9 EXT. PALAIS DU LOUVRE, PARIS. DAY. 9

It is raining and cold and we approach the window and look through to see MARGARET looking out at the rain from outside the QUEEN'S door. Again.

10 INT. OUTSIDE THE QUEEN'S DOOR. DAY. 10

Another day. MARGARET is at her post, quietly reading when there is a commotion at the other end of the room.

From MARGARET'S POV.

All of THE COURTIERS turn towards the commotion to see who it is.

WILLIAM (50) enters with the flourish of a Cavalier gentleman. He is accompanied by HIS FOUR MEN. He greets people warmly as he makes his way towards the Queen's chamber. It is obvious from how the other courtiers greet him, he is well liked and a charmer, important and influential.

WILLIAM is joined by LORD WIDDRINGTON and the two of them proceed into the Queen's chamber. Nobody, including William, notices MARGARET but Margaret has seen everything and she isn't overly impressed.

11 INT. THE QUEEN'S CHAMBER. DAY. 11

WILLIAM and LORD WIDDRINGTON enter and bow deeply to THE QUEEN. She greets them warmly. Particularly William. Maybe there had been something, a small dalliance, between them in the past. THE QUEEN is flirtatious with the two men.

THE QUEEN (FRENCH-ACCENTED ENGLISH)
Gentlemen, my heart is lightened by
your presence and support. William
I have missed your counsel.

She looks at him knowingly. Then back to business.

THE QUEEN
The King writes that he needs
soldiers and the money to equip
them. I have been doing what I can
but I long ago sold anything I had
of value. My sister-in-law has
provided for me here but I can not
ask for more. And so it comes to
you. The King wants you to raise an
(MORE)

THE QUEEN (cont'd)
invasion force here in France and
be ready to sail in the spring.

WILLIAM
Your Majesty, you can inform the
King that it will be done. I have
not long arrived from the north but
I am informed that some of those
now in exile here, in Paris, have
not lost all and that they will
assist the King in this mission.

LORD WIDDRINGTON
Did the King indicate where the
force should land and what city it
is to make for.

THE QUEEN
No. This is but a preliminary
request. Further details will come
in due time. The King's
correspondence is by necessity very
short (beat) and of course in
code. Beware of who you might once
have called friends. All is now
changed. I feel that trouble and
danger are near.

THE QUEEN indicates a group of chairs by the window
overlooking the Seine.

THE QUEEN
Come and sit with me gentlemen. We
have much to discuss. Now tell me
William, who have you been visiting
in The Hague?

THE QUEEN turns to LADY MARY.

THE QUEEN
Mary, tell Margaret to bring us
refreshment.

LADY MARY goes to the door, opens it and quietly speaks to
MARGARET. WILLIAM begins to relay travel stories.

WILLIAM
I have seen Queen Elizabeth of
Bohemia. She is well and sends her
regards.

12 INT. OUTSIDE THE QUEEN'S DOOR. DAY. 12

The doors open as MARGARET followed by SERVANT 1 and SERVANT 2 carrying heavy trays overloaded with delicacies, approach.

13 INT. THE QUEEN'S CHAMBER. DAY. 13

MARGARET enters. WILLIAM is still entertaining THE QUEEN. MARGARET indicates to SERVANTS 1 & 2 where to place the trays. WILLIAM is watching her with a smile playing about his lips. MARGARET realises he is watching and starts fumbling. THE QUEEN stares at her in disbelief as a cup goes crashing to the floor.

THE QUEEN(TERSELY)
That will be all Margaret.

MARGARET curtsies and backs away from THE QUEEN stumbling as she goes. WILLIAM nearly bursts out laughing but hides it behind a cough. LORD WIDDRINGTON has his mouth open and snaps it shut when he realises.

WILLIAM is appreciatively watching MARGARET'S figure retreat.

WILLIAM
'What grace doest youth bestow'

THE QUEEN looks at WILLIAM and smiles thinly.

THE QUEEN
Some days Margaret is my penance
and occasionally my angel. (beat)
Mostly my penance. (laughs dryly)
She came with me when I had to
leave Oxford with such haste and
she was brave when we had to flee
from Falmouth in the night. It was
treacherous and difficult.

THE QUEEN has a realisation about MARGARET'S character that leaves her a little surprised and stunned.

THE QUEEN
In times of adversity she shows
strength and wisdom beyond her
years but in daily life she finds
the smallest task so difficult to
perform.

WILLIAM looks with renewed interest as the door closes behind Margaret. THE QUEEN notices his interest and isn't pleased.

14 INT. OUTSIDE THE QUEEN'S DOOR. DAY.

14

MARGARET is in her usual position when once again there is a commotion as WILLIAM enters at the far end of the room. He flirts with the FEMALE COURTIERS in passing. He comes to the Queen's door and stops and looks at MARGARET, she blushes, but doesn't look up. WILLIAM smiles and graciously bows.

WILLIAM

My lady.

MARGARET nods her head but still doesn't look up. WILLIAM graciously bows again and hands her a letter.

WILLIAM

This is for you, my lady.

The door to the Queen's chamber opens and he sweeps inside. MARGARET slides the letter into her book aware that some of the courtiers are looking at her. There is a look of terror on her face from being noticed and made the center of attention and then blushing from the embarrassment of the attention.

15 INT. MARGARET'S ROOM. NIGHT.

15

MARGARET is sitting at her table undoing and reading the letter William passed her. We see more of her room. The books lying open on her desk. The writing materials strewn. Letters discarded. ELIZABETH is leaving the room with a bowl under her arm.

MARGARET smiles as she reads, saying parts out loud.

MARGARET

I will not say that love in you
discloses; A mingl'd bath of lilies
and of roses; In either cheek. Or
else so lovely born; For conquering
hearts all other beauties scorn.;
Or that your well-shapt and even
length; Converts love's infidels
beyond their strength.

MARGARET folds the letter and places it in a small box with a sigh. She is excited by it.

She then pulls a sheet of paper towards herself and starts to write. "TO MY BELOVED CATHERINE". She wants to tell someone.

16 INT. OUTSIDE THE QUEEN'S DOOR. DAY. 16

WILLIAM approaches MARGARET at her post and bows deeply. MARGARET blushes and doesn't look up.

WILLIAM
My lady, will you not speak to me?

MARGARET shakes her head keeping it down. WILLIAM bows again slipping her another letter which she immediately hides in her book and WILLIAM walks to the Queen's door which opens for him and looks back at MARGARET. Her head is still down. He relishes the challenge presenting itself. WILLIAM then enters the Queen's chamber.

17 INT. MARGARET'S ROOM. NIGHT. 17

MARGARET is sitting at her table. She moves her book towards her, opens it and picks up the letter. As she undoes it she looks worried because she needs him to stop giving them to her. But as she starts to read her face softens into a smile. We can see the box where she keeps such notes is filling up.

MARGARET
What is the Queen going to say when she finds out?

ELIZABETH
You don't think she knows already?

MARGARET (AGHAST)
Do you think?

ELIZABETH nods as she goes back to her stitching by the fire. MARGARET watches the fire for a moment.

MARGARET
What do we think about the idea of fame and being a woman?

ELIZABETH (PONDERING)
I think it is only possible if you are the Queen.

MARGARET
Just so. Just so.

MARGARET turns back to her desk and writing materials.

18 INT. OUTSIDE THE QUEEN'S DOOR. DAY.

18

MARGARET is coming out of the Queen's chamber as WILLIAM walks up to her. She looks into his eyes and catches herself off guard. He smiles and bows. She curtsies and blushes. He passes her another letter and moves on into the Queen's chamber.

She notices that some of the COURTIERS have seen the exchange and are commenting among themselves. MARGARET hurries to her seat putting the letter away in her book as stealthily as possible.

19 INT. OUTSIDE THE QUEEN'S DOOR. DAY.

19

The next day WILLIAM approaches MARGARET and bows.

WILLIAM

May I sit with you Madam?

MARGARET nods and indicates the chair across from her, still keeping her head down and blushing.

MARGARET

Sir, I must ask you to desist. You know what court gossip is and my reputation as a lady is most valuable to me. I wish my behaviour to be appropriate to the standing of my family and the esteem in which I hold the Queen.

WILLIAM

Madam, with humble bearing and civil respect I crave pardon for my faults. I merely wish to have conversation with you. I hold you and your family in the highest of positions. The Queen is my friend and benefactor and I would never take advantage of one of her ladies. I am asking that you grant to me nothing more than a little of your company and that I be allowed to sit beside you and speak to you of your family. For I have the acquaintance of your brothers John and Charles and am interested in their progress for the King.

At the mention of her brothers MARGARET obviously relaxes and she becomes more voluble and hardly stutters, to her own surprise.

MARGARET

I do not have much news of them but
I have had a letter from my mother
that both of my brothers are well.
John fights as Charles's second in
command and they are in the south.
I hear you have come from York?

WILLIAM looks at her appraising how much he should reveal.
Taking the opportunity to stay and talk he tells her a
story.

WILLIAM

It is true I left from the north.
My army fought valiantly against
the Parliamentary and Scottish
forces but they routed us. We had
been besieged at York for some
time. Prince Rupert came to our aid
and chased the enemy south. I
thought that we would have the
night to regroup before Cromwell
could arrive but we realised the
danger too late. There was a full
moon and they caught us unprepared.
My men were slaughtered. I tried to
pull them back but for many it was
too late. We were defeated. I rode
back to York. I had lost
everything. Cromwell had won. I
could see no alternative but to
leave the country. They would have
executed me if I had been caught. I
made for the coast with some of my
men and we came here to the Queen.

MARGARET (QUIETLY)

My brother Charles. He was captured
at Marston Moor and sent to the
Tower of London.

There is a lull in conversation.

20

INT. ANTECHAMBER TO THE QUEEN'S CHAMBER.DAY.

20

COURTIERS are standing in groups. LORD MONTAGUE walks up to
LORD AND LADY ARMSTRONG and LORD AND LADY GREENWAY who are
talking quietly.

LORD MONTAGUE

What is Cavendish up to? He spies a
pretty young thing and he is away.

LORD and LADY ARMSTRONG and LORD and LADY GREENWAY turn to look where he is looking and see MARGARET and WILLIAM deep in conversation. MARGARET'S dress is at odds with the other women. LADY ARMSTRONG laughs.

LADY ARMSTRONG

Goodness why is he wasting his time with her. She is a prize fool. I never met anyone so useless. I don't know how the Queen puts up with her.

LORD MONTAGUE

Is she that bad? She is handsome enough.

LADY GREENWAY

She has no grace and no wit. So unladylike. I don't think I have heard her say anything even slightly amusing. She is clumsy beyond understanding, coarse, and just look at her dress.

The THREE MEN in the group look at MARGARET, look at each other with that 'Oh My God! this is a clothes conversation' look, and then look at LADY GREENWAY. She understands the look and explains to them.

LADY GREENWAY

Look at the ribbons on her arms, and the amount of lace at her throat. And the colour! She is so strange.

LORD MONTAGUE

Yes, but look at the slimness of her waist, the saddle of her hips. It is easy to see what Cavendish is after.

LADY ARMSTRONG(DISMISSIVELY)

Well there is no point. I have never seen her encourage anyone.

They all lose interest.

21 INT. OUTSIDE THE QUEEN'S DOOR. DAY.

21

WILLIAM and MARGARET still deep in conversation.

WILLIAM

I have heard that Charles was released last month and has made his way south to the King.

MARGARET

I am glad to know that he is safe. (beat) It is difficult to be so far from home. Any news takes so long to arrive that it is old by its telling.

WILLIAM

That is true. It is difficult for those who are far from the action.

MARGARET

The battle may be near and one might still be frightened for her loved ones.

WILLIAM (APPRAISINGLY)

It seems you have had experience of such a situation.

22 EXT. STREET. OXFORD. NIGHT. 1643

22

(BEGIN FLASHBACK)

There is a carriage waiting in the street. THE QUEEN, heavily pregnant, is hurrying towards it. MARGARET is helping her and gets into the carriage behind THE QUEEN. TWO OTHER WOMEN who are not being as useful, follow. There are buildings exploding around them. MEN in Royalists uniforms are running past. Cannons are firing above them and gunshots all around.

MARGARET V/O

It is true, my Lord, I was with the Queen in Oxford when the Parliamentary forces over-ran the defenses and we had need to flee. And while I was frightened for my Lady and myself, my brothers were on the ramparts and my mother and my sisters were in a house nearby. I was terrified for them all as well as myself.

WILLIAM V/O
 You were very brave. The Queen has
 told me so.

(END FLASHBACK)

23 INT. OUTSIDE THE QUEEN'S DOOR. DAY.

23

WILLIAM brushes MARGARET'S hand and she draws back looking
 at him intensely.

MARGARET
 I did my duty. The Queen is a brave
 woman. She is easy to follow. So
 heroic. She was like Caesar
 directing his armies with wisdom
 and confidence. That is the
 Queen.(beat) She works so hard for
 the King and he relies on her so
 much.(beat)It is how I think a
 marriage should be. Two strong
 individuals meeting in harmony and
 mutual affection, one supporting
 the other to the utmost. Though it
 is rarely so.

MARGARET looks to WILLIAM earnestly

MARGARET (DECISIVELY)
 It is my opinion that marriage on
 the whole is an unfortunate step
 for a woman to take. It is better
 if she can avoid it.

MARGARET realises that she has overstepped a social
 boundary, blushes and looks down.

MARGARET
 Forgive me I have said too much.

WILLIAM smiles at her with a new interest in his eyes.

WILLIAM
 My Lady, no forgiveness is
 necessary. You spoke plainly that
 is all. It is refreshing, after the
 usual banter one hears at court, to
 hear honesty. Though you are young
 you have obviously given thought to
 these perplexing subjects. I have
 been married myself and I found
 that having a wife who was happy in
 (MORE)

WILLIAM (cont'd)
conversation with me and wanted my
company was a great boon to my
spirits. She died last year. (beat)
So how is a woman to avoid
marriage?

MARGARET
She can not. Unless she is
independently wealthy. Then she
would have no reason to marry.

WILLIAM
Yet they do.

MARGARET (PERPLEXED)
Yes they do. And it is beyond my
understanding.

WILLIAM
My grandmother was a very wealthy
woman in her own right and married
four times.

MARGARET (INCREDULOUSLY)
Four times she put herself and her
fortune at the whim of some man
with the law on his side? Giving
away all of her rights to do her
own choosing as well as the rights
to her wealth?

WILLIAM
Maybe she was in love? Though
knowing her I doubt she ever felt
herself in danger from 'the whim of
some man'. She was a formidable
woman who no doubt got her own way
in all matters.

MARGARET
Well it is not an issue for me, I
have no fortune. Marriage becomes
my only choice. And when it is so
then I would make it the meeting of
two minds as well as two hearts.
And by this meeting of minds, I
mean I would make the gentleman
understand the importance of my
own thoughts and that I will not
just sit by his fire agreeing with
all that he says but challenge and
debate him when I think he is
wrong.

WILLIAM

That could be perceived as an unruly fireside.

MARGARET

I think not. An engaging and lively one I feel sure.

WILLIAM

You remind me of a young horse who is learning to high-step.

MARGARET looks at him quizzically.

WILLIAM

I train horses to Dressage. Some of the best in the world are in my stables. And when I am teaching a young horse I aim for a balance between letting him find his own way and teaching him the required movement. I think you see life in a manner similar to a young horse. All eager to jump at it rather than be led through it.

MARGARET (LAUGHING)

I have never been likened to a horse before. Though in this case I don't seem to mind.

WILLIAM

Forgive me madam. (beat) Though no. My horses are beautiful just as you are. And I love to be with them just as I want to be with you.

MARGARET (LAUGHING)

I am not sure the picture this brings to my mind flatters, sir.
(beat) Either of us!

WILLIAM realises the double entendre of what he has said and reacts apologetically.

WILLIAM

Oh no, you misunderstand me.

He then realises she has made a joke and he laughs.

MARGARET becomes aware of SEVERAL COURTIERS nearby and their interest. She moves back from the intimacy of their conversation. WILLIAM tries to recover from laughing too loud and drawing attention to them. But the spell is broken.

WILLIAM
Please forgive me.

MARGARET (BLUSHING)
There is nothing to forgive.

WILLIAM
May I invite you to come for a walk
with me tomorrow.

MARGARET
I think not. Her Majesty may need
me. Thank you, sir, for the news of
my brothers but I would ask you to
leave.

WILLIAM looks a little a taken aback and looks around and
sees THE COURTIERS looking. He rises. Bows to Margaret and
walks away. She is, once again, in her straight backed
position with her eyes on her lap.

24 INT. MARGARET'S ROOM. NIGHT.

24

MARGARET is sitting at her table writing to William. Through
the Voice-Over we watch as MARGARET gives the letter to
ELIZABETH and she leaves the room. We follow her through the
darkened corridors of the palace till she finds WILLIAM'S
MAN in the Dining Hall. She gives him the letter. He looks
at it, puts it in his pocket and gets up to leave. They bow
to each other and head in different directions.

MARGARET (V/O)
Sir, I found our conversation
stimulating and at odds with what
is usual in the confines of court.
I am grateful that you took the
time to sit with me and hope I was
not impertinent with regard to your
horses. I am obliged to tell you
that I can not form any liaison
with you as I am duty bound to
protect my honour. In the past an
indiscretion occurred which
affected the fortunes of my family
at court. My aunt fell in love
against the wishes of her Queen to
disastrous effect. This must not be
allowed to re-occur. I greatly
admire your disposition and was
surprised at my ability to converse
without stumbling. This made our
interaction all the more enjoyable

(MORE)

MARGARET (V/O) (cont'd)
 for me. Thank you for your
 attention but I beg of you to
 desist, your servant Margaret
 Lucas.

25 INT. THE QUEEN'S CHAMBER. DAY.

25

MARGARET is assisting THE QUEEN with her dressing along with LADY PENELOPE and LADY MARY. She is passing a pendant on a ribbon to LADY PENELOPE which she drops, retrieves clumsily, and tries to pass again.

LADY PENELOPE (HISSES)
 Earrings.

MARGARET jumps at the rebuke and looks to see what mistake she has made.

MARGARET
 I... I am sorry.

MARGARET turns to retrieve the earrings, stumbles over her own feet and starts to fall, saves herself and nearly tips over the dressing table.

THE QUEEN(EXASPERATED)
 Margaret, allez, allez! I don't have
 time for your foolishness this
 morning.

MARGARET
 I...I am sorry, Madam.

MARGARET steps back, tries to curtsy and turn to leave all at the same time. It's not a good outcome. THE QUEEN starts screaming at her as she escapes out the door.

26 INT. ANTECHAMBER TO THE QUEEN'S CHAMBER.DAY.

26

WILLIAM sees MARGARET come out of the Queen's room.

27 INT. OUTSIDE THE QUEEN'S DOOR. DAY.

27

MARGARET takes up her post. Her head down, tears sliding down her cheeks. WILLIAM approaches and sees her distress. So he quietly sits beside her.

WILLIAM

I know you told me to stay away but
it seems to me that you don't have
any friends. I can be one.

He sits quietly beside her till the tears stop and she
regains some composure.

WILLIAM

Let us go into the garden and take
some air. It will make you feel
better. And if you like you can
tell me what has happened.

MARGARET looks at him as if he has just handed her a life
raft. She nods and they both get up and leave.

28 EXT. GARDEN. DAY. 28

MARGARET and WILLIAM are walking slowly through an
ornamental garden. The Louvre is behind them. They are
laughing and talking as they walk. From a distance we see
that MARGARET is at ease and talking comfortably and
animatedly.

29 INT. MARGARET'S ROOM. NIGHT. 29

MARGARET enters her room excitedly and pulls a letter out of
her pocket. She starts to read, she smiles as she sits at
her table and finishes the letter. She pulls some paper
towards her and starts to write. The letters from William
are now over-filling the box.

30 INT. PALACE DINING ROOM. NIGHT. 30

MARGARET and WILLIAM are deep in conversation oblivious to
the noise around them. OTHER COURTIERS are watching and
commenting amongst themselves. Bets are being placed
obviously about how long it will take WILLIAM to bed her.

31 INT. OUTSIDE THE QUEEN'S DOOR. DAY. 31

MARGARET is at her post when a servant arrives and hands her
a letter. She smiles takes it and puts it in her pocket.

32 INT. THE QUEEN'S CHAMBER. DAY.

32

MARGARET is tidying the bed as THE QUEEN is being dressed.

THE QUEEN

So I hear, Margaret, that the Marquis of Newcastle is paying you some attention. Oui? He has a bad reputation when it comes to young women, you know?

MARGARET (BLUSHING)

Oui Madam. We ...we are just friends. Nothing else.

THE QUEEN

Bon. You must keep it that way.

MARGARET

Yes Madam.

33 EXT. GARDEN. DAY.

33

MARGARET and WILLIAM are walking together. There is a growing intimacy between them.

MARGARET

People seem to feel the need to warn me of you. Are you bad?

WILLIAM

No, not really. I like to pretend, it is true but if the truth be known I like a quiet life, practising with the sword and my horses. Every morning I fence for at least an hour and then I spend time with my horses. I enjoy the time spent on the repetition involved in both pursuits. There is something so soothing in the practice. (beat) And the animals are all so individual. I have been looking for horses here in Paris that are suitable to train but as yet I have not found what I am looking for.

MARGARET (JOKING)

So I don't need to worry. When you are flirting with me you are actually thinking of your horses?

WILLIAM(LAUGHING)

It could be so but I am hardly going to own to it. (beat) Actually there is a great similarity between the temperaments of women and of horses. Not that I would ever tell that to the other Ladies. See, you have me making confessions where I should hold my tongue.

MARGARET (LAUGHING)

You can trust me to hold your confidence. And I will trust you to hold mine.

WILLIAM looks at her and nods in agreement. She obviously has something she wants to say.

MARGARET (CONFIDENTLY)

I think that fame is the mark of a life lived and I desire to leave such a mark. I don't want to live a quiet life.

WILLIAM realises that MARGARET has just told him a secret. He encourages her to continue.

MARGARET

Well it seems to me that while we are here on the earth we should do something to mark our existence. Something that has meaning and will last. Heroic deeds like Caesar. Or ideas or writings that change the course of history, like Ovid. Something new and un-thought before. Or beautiful art that will hang in palaces and great houses for generations. Something to be looked at, with every new eye and to leave the viewer speechless. Fame for creating something that changes humanity. Maybe even changes the lives of women. That is what I want.

WILLIAM

My Lady sets herself a high challenge.

MARGARET

I know it's not simple. It even seems impossible. But that makes it
(MORE)

MARGARET (cont'd)
 more tantalizing. It feels so unlikely, so unable to be done. Yet it is precisely this that I am drawn to.

WILLIAM
 What is it you have thought to do?

MARGARET (THOUGHTFULLY)
 Heroic deeds could be difficult being that I am a woman and not a Queen. Her Majesty is very heroic. The way she led the army from the north to the King. 'The She-Majesty Generalissima!' And of course you have led an army. But I never will.

WILLIAM (WRYLY)
 I have led an army. But I doubt I will go down in history with much favour.

MARGARET
 You never can be sure. It may not be an instant fame but a fame that grows with time. When you or I are long gone. And because of the slow burn of recognition, a fire may light that in turn changes the course of history.

WILLIAM (SMILINGLY)
 I think you have a little of the poet in you.

MARGARET
 That is the solution, as to which of my deeds might bring me fame. I plan to write. I think I have the capacity though not the skill as yet to be a writer. I have had little or no education but I have been writing my own stories for some time.

WILLIAM
 Truly? Could I read them?

MARGARET (BLUSHING)
 No, no. They are just my scribblings. The scribblings of a child. No, I need to be able to

(MORE)

MARGARET (BLUSHING) (cont'd)
write on great subjects. Of
philosophy or science or with great
skill. Like yourself or Mr
Shakespeare.

WILLIAM
So you like Shakespeare then?

MARGARET
Oh yes. He is a whip.

WILLIAM
I find many of his plays overly
long and lacking in humour.

MARGARET
But not all of them, surely?
Twelfth Night is very witty.

WILLIAM
True, not all of them. A little
magic can be a delight.

MARGARET (LAUGHING)
Yes. I do have to agree with
you.(beat) Though not magical, his
Julius Caesar is one of my
favorites. With this one I am
doubly pleased. It is about one of
my heroes and it is beautiful to
read.

WILLIAM
So writing is to be your spur to
fame.

MARGARET (THOUGHTFULLY)
It could be, though I have a
life-time of learning before me. I
believe it is a task I will relish.

WILLIAM
I have an idea. I too have a
brother Charles and he has a
reputation as a teacher. He is one
of the greatest minds in Europe.
You could meet with him.

MARGARET
Oh no, no. I can't talk with great
minds. I don't know anything!

WILLIAM

You must take a first step.

MARGARET

Not one so great, I beg of you.

WILLIAM

Well no matter. He is still in England so you won't be meeting him anytime soon. Come it is time to head back to the viper's nest.

MARGARET (LAUGHING)

Ah! You feel the same way I do.

They turn and head back towards the palace.

34

INT. HALL IN THE PALACE. DAY.

34

WILLIAM is talking to WIDDRINGTON as they walk.

WIDDRINGTON

She has no dowry, man! You can't be serious. And while her brother is a good fellow, you have heard about her mother?

WILLIAM laughs out loud and claps him on the shoulder as they walk on.

WILLIAM

When have you ever taken notice of court gossip.

WIDDRINGTON stops and pulls on WILLIAM'S arm turning him to face him.

WIDDRINGTON

No one likes her. The other women think she is foolish. She never speaks. You could not stand the company of such a woman.

WILLIAM

Let me tell you, friend, she is neither foolish nor silent. She is like a fine young horse. Shy, frisky, intelligent with a core of pure determination. She has ambition. Have you ever heard of such a woman before? And a real beauty. What more could a man want to keep him interested?

WILLIAM walks on leaving WIDDRINGTON scowling after him.

35

INT. THE QUEEN'S CHAMBER. DAY.

35

THE QUEEN is sitting at the window by the river talking with WILLIAM who is seated opposite.

THE QUEEN

How goes the gathering of the invasion force?

WILLIAM

It goes moderately well, Madam, considering the impediments. It is proving a little difficult to procure the money, though many promise. The sources in England are finding it difficult to liquidate and there isn't as much help abroad as we had hoped. People are hesitant to commit when it seems the King is not doing well.

THE QUEEN

Mmm yes. I wouldn't say this to any other, William, but the tide is turning. Things haven't been going well for the King. I am concerned for his safety. He can become too distracted with the matters before him and neglects those that are not and they may be of greater benefit or consequence. Our sons are with him in the west and I am concerned for their safety. There are conspiracies everywhere.

WILLIAM

The King has benefited from your counsel these last few years and I am sure he misses both it and you, Your Majesty. But perhaps it is time that the boys were brought to France.

THE QUEEN

It is true, it is true. (beat) Is there something else that you are wanting, William?

WILLIAM is caught a little off guard by THE QUEEN'S pointedness and wonders if it is the right moment to put his request. He decides it is.

WILLIAM

Your Majesty I wanted permission to ask young Margaret to marry me.

THE QUEEN

Young Margaret? Margaret Lucas! William, leave the girl alone. She is not for you. I have told her to keep away from you. It would be no match. She has no money (beat) and that could be important.

WILLIAM (PUZZLED)

I have enough money.

THE QUEEN

But it isn't here in France and you have just been telling me how difficult it is to raise in England.

Putting her hand up to stop his reply.

THE QUEEN

But more than that she would be useless in society. She has no wit. Come, William, surely you are looking for a little wit to keep you entertained in your dotage.

WILLIAM(LAUGHING)

Madam, you have me old before my due. (beat) I find she has wit and intelligence. As well as kindness and a degree of thoughtfulness unusual in one so young.

THE QUEEN

She is playing some game with you. (beat) Or have you been bewitched by her youth? No, William, this will not be.

THE QUEEN dismisses him allowing no further conversation.

36

INT. THE QUEEN'S CHAMBER. DAY.

36

MARGARET enters with LADY PENELOPE and finds THE QUEEN ready to pounce.

THE QUEEN

Margaret, I told you to stay away
from William Cavendish.

MARGARET (BLUSHING)

B.. but I ..I

The LADY MARY, LADY PENELOPE, LADY EMILY look in surprise
and get ready to laugh at the show they know to anticipate.
MARGARET takes a deep breath.

MARGARET

Your... your Majesty, he sits with
me in the antechamber in front of
the entire court. Or we walk in the
garden in plain view of the whole
palace. I have done nothing wrong
nor do I see any impropriety on my
part.

THE QUEEN

I told you not to encourage him.

MARGARET

Nor have I, Ma'am.

There is opened-mouthed silence from LADY MARY, LADY
PENELOPE, LADY EMILY and even THE QUEEN looks a little taken
aback at MARGARET'S clarity.

THE QUEEN

That will be all.

MARGARET turns and leaves the room a small sense of triumph
about her as she doesn't trip over anything.

37

INT.PALACE DINING ROOM. NIGHT.

37

MARGARET is once again sitting on her own eating her dinner.
She can overhear a nasty conversation between LADY ARMSTRONG
and LADY STANDISH about herself.

LADY ARMSTRONG

Apparently it was the longest
sentence anyone had heard her
speak. And Penelope said she didn't
fall over or trip the Queen or any
other of her ridiculous
performances. A truly memorable
day.

LADY STANDISH

So, the Marquis of Newcastle. He would be a catch for the likes of her.

LADY ARMSTRONG

The queen forbids it.

LADY STANDISH

It would give her family something to crow about. I hear she has no dowry.

At this MARGARET turns to the women and graces them with a withering stare. She stands and leaves the table.

LADY ARMSTRONG

Little upstart. Very little breeding. They say her parents weren't married. And her father had to leave the country over some crime.

38 INT. MARGARET'S ROOM. NIGHT. 38

MARGARET is sitting at her desk writing a letter to William. She stops to read what she has written.

SCENE CHANGES TO:

39 INT. RIDING ARENA AT THE ACADEMY. DAY. 39

As she reads we see WILLIAM discussing his new horse purchase with CAPTAIN MAZINE.

WILLIAM is in the middle of the arena watching as the horse circles around him. CAPTAIN MAZINE is holding the lunge rope and whip as he is starting to train it.

MARGARET (V/O)

My Lord, the Queen forbids us to see each other. And already the vipers give me the personage of a robber with the cunning of a simpleton. They say I am deluding and cavorting, pressing myself toward you and treating you with less honour than you deserve. It is not so. For I give you all of the love that I have, yet 'tis too little for your merit. Could I wish

(MORE)

MARGARET (V/O) (cont'd)
 for more love than ever was or
 shall be, yet my wish could not be
 so copious but you would still be
 far beyond it as your worth is
 beyond other men's. The attention
 at court makes our affection
 difficult. And though my affection
 is large, a woman must love
 silently for fear of her honour and
 reputation. I hope my innocence
 will guard me, and that your
 discourse with me does not
 prejudice your affairs. But if you
 think me a bad choice, consider,
 and leave me, for I shall desire
 nothing but to see you happy. Your
 humble servant, Margaret Lucas.

40 INT. MARGARET'S ROOM. NIGHT. 40

MARGARET is at her desk, signing and folding the letter. She gives it to ELIZABETH who takes it in silence and leaves the room.

41 INT. OUTSIDE THE QUEEN'S DOOR. DAY. 41

MARGARET is sitting at her post when WILLIAM approaches. He comes and sits in the chair opposite and she reacts silently and withdraws even more if that is possible. WILLIAM looks at her and smiles at her reaction.

WILLIAM

There is nothing anyone can say
 about me being here. I am waiting
 to see the Queen and if you happen
 to be here at the same time, so be
 it.

MARGARET looks at him with a smile and sighs.

MARGARET

You don't understand she ...

MARGARET looks toward the Queen's chamber then back at her lap.

MARGARET

... can make my life more difficult
 than it already is.

WILLIAM

We are doing nothing wrong. She doesn't frighten me. I have known her too long.

MARGARET

But her manner towards me already encourages the other ladies against me.

WILLIAM sighs and gazes around the room seeing THE COURT for what it is - a nest of arrogance and self-interest. He turns to her and sees a quiet, kind, intelligent young woman. The decision is made.

WILLIAM

This is a poor situation. We sit here playing a game that interests neither of us. We are surrounded by people who we both feel better without. (beat) Do you want to marry me? I think we would both be happier away from here.

MARGARET looks at him with big eyes forgetting where she is and who might be watching. She continues to look for several beats. She nods silently.

WILLIAM

Well then, I say this situation is ridiculous. I will speak to the Queen again. And I will continue to do so till she gives her permission. Write to your mother and get her agreement.

MARGARET nods again still looking scared. WILLIAM gets up and knocks on the Queen's door and enters.

42

INT. JOHN LUCAS'S LONDON HOUSE. DAY

42

Through the V/O we watch as CATHERINE lovingly shepherds John's (her brother) FOUR SMALL CHILDREN and NANNY out of the sitting room. She comes back and is tidying up after them. She is quietly humming as she moves about the room. John notices and smiles to himself. He is also happy with Margaret's news. His wife sits near him stitching contentedly. Catherine goes to the window and gazes out.

CATHERINE V/O

My dearest sister, Mother tells me you are to marry the Marquis of

(MORE)

CATHERINE V/0 (cont'd)
 Newcastle. Our brothers, John and Charles, say he is a good man. They were together at Marsten Moor. I am happy for you if you are happy. Write and tell me that you are. Is he a man who will esteem you? You know you would not be happy if you can not be true to your own aspirations. Do you love him? Is he someone who you can admire and question in the same breath? I only ask so as to reveal your thinking and to know of your happiness. I know your soul as well as you do, as you do mine. So write and tell me of your thoughts on the matter of this love. Your loving sister, Catherine.

43 INT. HALL IN THE PALACE. DAY.

43

MARGARET is standing looking out the window at the Seine River lost in thought. We see WILLIAM approaching. He comes and stands beside her. MARGARET looks at him then back at the river.

MARGARET

I will speak to the Queen and tell her of my mother's letter. Maybe it will change her mind.

WILLIAM takes her arm and turns her towards him.

WILLIAM

Are you ready to face her?

MARGARET nods and looks at him with fear in her eyes but determination on her face. WILLIAM bends to kiss her lightly on the cheek.

WILLIAM

Don't be afraid. You have such spirit and it will carry you to your audience with the Queen and back here again to me. (beat) I love you.

MARGARET looks in to his eyes hers welling with tears. And he takes her in his arms and kisses her with passion. She responds passionately but gently. Then pulls away quietly.

MARGARET

I believe the world judges according to what may be, the show of something rather than according to what is, the truth of the situation. Let us hope the Queen sees the truth of this matter for I am not good at the show. I hope she can see we love each other. (beat) I hope she will release me with little trouble.

With that MARGARET turns away and slowly walks towards the Queen's chamber.

44 INT. THE QUEEN'S CHAMBER. DAY.

44

THE QUEEN is standing in front of her mirror and she is looking at MARGARET as a reflection. There is a look of frustration on her face.

THE QUEEN (EXASPERATED)

I told you to stay away. Now look what you have done. I suppose you expect to stay here and remain one of my ladies?

MARGARET

No Your Majesty, I would rather vacate my position.

THE QUEEN (GETTING ANGRY)

Rather! Rather! Now what am I to do? I have to find someone else, get used to someone else. There are so many other things I have to do. The King is in trouble but what is that to you.

MARGARET

I am sorry, Madam.

MARGARET sees the QUEEN in another light. Maybe she isn't as noble as she thought. THE QUEEN turns to face MARGARET.

THE QUEEN (SEETHING)

It will not work. He is superior to you in every way possible. He is a gentleman of the highest order. I would not want to see him diminished! By you. An upstart. A dolt! My god, why do you cause me such pain?

MARGARET

Madam, I **am** sorry. But I will not take less than my heart's desire. And for reasons that escape me my Lord Cavendish chooses me as his wife. I want no other and he is in agreement.

THE QUEEN goes to strike her but turns away looking for something else to throttle. She turns back.

THE QUEEN (FURIOUS)

Get out! Marry him. What do I care. If he wants you then he can have you. Fool that you are.

THE QUEEN picks up something to throw. Margaret bows low and escapes with the sound of things crashing behind her.

45 INT. HALL IN THE PALACE. DAY. 45

We see MARGARET coming towards WILLIAM. He turns from the window concern on his face until he sees her. He goes to her and sees that she is crying. He gently wipes away her tears. She looks up at him. Then he breaks into a big smile and picks her up off the ground and swings her around. They kiss passionately.

46 INT. SMALL CHAPEL. DAY. 46

It is winter outside. We can see the snow falling. Inside the small private chapel it is warm and intimate. MARGARET and WILLIAM are standing at the alter and a priest is marrying them. There are only a few witnesses SIR RICHARD and LADY ELIZABETH BROWNE, ELIZABETH, William's man JOHN PROCTOR and LORD WIDDRINGTON.

47 INT. PARIS, SITTING ROOM. DAY. 47

MARGARET and WILLIAM are sitting in front of a fire in a beautifully appointed room. A couple of weeks have passed since their marriage and there is an air of normality in the room. The dinner table is being cleared very efficiently behind them by TWO SERVANTS. WILLIAM has settled comfortably into married life. MARGARET is not so sure that she is comfortable yet.

WILLIAM

I am looking at some new horses this afternoon at the Academy to

(MORE)

WILLIAM (cont'd)
 see if there are any suitable for
 my stables. It has to be just the
 right animal. A quick learner. It
 takes a particular temperament, you
 know.

MARGARET looks at him with some skepticism - *Yes, she knows.*
 WILLIAM continues not having seen her.

WILLIAM
 It is about finding an animal who
 wants to learn the steps. It is a
 fascinating thing to watch. Would
 you like to come this afternoon and
 see some of the horses working?

THE SERVANTS leave the room.

MARGARET
 I would. If only to have some
 knowledge to base our conversations
 on. But you speak of buying new
 horses, I thought that there was no
 money for such things?

WILLIAM(LAUGHING)
 There is always money for horses.

MARGARET (THOUGHTFULLY)
 After my father died my mother was
 sometimes truly heroic in providing
 for us. There were times we had no
 money and that meant a shortage of
 food to eat. (beat) She even took
 on Parliament, trying to get our
 possessions returned after the mob
 attacked us.

THE SCENE CHANGES TO:

48

INT. ST JOHN'S HALL. DAY

48

Parliamentary soldiers with muskets and peasants wielding
 farm implements burst into the room while the family and the
 servants are sitting at their midday meal.

There is fighting and screaming as MARGARET, HER MOTHER,
 ANNE, CATHERINE and ELIZABETH LUCAS get dragged from the
 room. We can see people looting and fire blazing outside the
 window in another building.

MARGARET V/O

Our house was sacked early in the war. Some local louts with the help of the parliamentary militia threw us in jail while they stole everything we owned. They made such a mess. They destroyed most of the buildings. Burnt them to the ground. Desecrated the dead in the church. After three days they let us out. My mother decided that we would be safer in London. I lived there with my sister for awhile. But then I got it into my head that I wanted to follow the Queen.

THE SCENE RETURNS TO:

49 INT. PARIS, SITTING ROOM. DAY.

49

MARGARET is pacing about the room obviously agitated.

MARGARET

We had been through so much. It was a terrible time. And she was so strong and seemed so brave I wanted to be just like her. (beat) She arrived in Oxford without some of her Ladies after leading the troops from the north. So I pestered my mother till she agreed to let me go. I was not suited to the life at court. And there was not enough money to support me there but she found it. (beat) Are you sure it is a good idea to buy horses?

WILLIAM not sure about being questioned. He is uncomfortable and so a bit short with her.

WILLIAM

Friends are helping out till my money comes from England. I am a Marquis so they know the money is coming. We get along fine. It really is something you don't have to think about. More importantly, will you come this afternoon and look at the horses with me?

MARGARET (QUIETLY)
I have said I will.

WILLIAM looks at her and sees that she is preoccupied with her own thoughts and leaves her to them unsure of his own.

50 INT. RIDING ARENA AT THE ACADEMY. DAY. 50

MARGARET and WILLIAM are sitting on a raised dais looking over at the horses that are parading in the middle. It is cold outside. William is pointing out different aspects and Margaret is utterly involved in what he is saying and asking questions. They look very cosy together enjoying the time in each other's company.

From MARGARET'S POV.

The camera pulls back and we become aware of a group of servants just out of WILLIAM'S eyeline. WILLIAM spies them and starts barking orders. They all jump into action. Something that was there is now gone. This is a different William that she is not so sure of.

51 EXT. BACKYARD PARIS HOUSE. DAY 51

WILLIAM is chatting up one of the young maids who is hanging out lines of washed sheets. We know he gets what he wants which is to have sex with her. William always gets what he wants. It is expected. It is normal. This isn't the first time the maid has acquiesced.

The camera pulls back to show that MARGARET is watching the scene from an upstairs window. In that moment she grows up.

52 EXT. LADY BROWN'S HOUSE. DAY. 52

MARGARET is alighting from the carriage which is obviously wealthy and her clothes are lively and noticeable. It is spring. She approaches the front door which is opened by A LIVERIED SERVANT who bows her into the house with a raised eyebrow at her manner of dress.

53 INT.LADY BROWN'S SITTING ROOM. DAY. 53

It is comfortable well-used room.

MARGARET is sitting with LADY ELIZABETH BROWNE and her daughter MARY EVELYN (12). There is a feeling of comfortable friendship between Margaret and Lady Elizabeth who is about fifteen years older than Margaret.

THE MAID has just finished delivering the tray and is leaving the room. The women are already talking as LADY ELIZABETH leans forward to pour the chocolate. MARGARET accepts the cup offered and speaks to LADY ELIZABETH with pleading and embarrassment in her voice.

MARGARET

I am finding it difficult to adjust to married life. I am never quite sure what I am to do next and there are so many people who seem to want to tell me. Or want me to tell them.

LADY ELIZABETH

There is a settling time with a new marriage, my dear, and it can be a little difficult when one of the persons has an established household as well as being a peer of the realm. You know second marriages have their problems also.

MARGARET

I wish they would just leave us alone.

LADY ELIZABETH

They can't do that. They have been looking after William for a long time and now you have arrived. But you must make a space for yourself. You must change the pattern at once if you don't like it. You must persist.

MARGARET

I would happily avoid everyone and spend my time on my own or with only William.

It dawns on LADY ELIZABETH that Margaret has married for love. An unusual situation for the aristocracy.

LADY ELIZABETH

You love him?

MARGARET nods hesitantly. This changes things.

LADY ELIZABETH

Then you must be careful. You have more to lose than he.

MARGARET (EXPLAINING)

I greatly enjoy the time we spend together I find I am eager to know the varied aspects of his past. It has been colourful, you know?

LADY ELIZABETH (HONESTLY)

Yes I know. And I also know he will never change. He is the man he is, and he has never been any different. (beat) You will have to find ways of living with his infidelities because there will be many. Regardless of what you feel for him.

MARGARET is embarrassed but continues to confide.

MARGARET

Don't misunderstand me. I am aware of the, umm, difficulties. But what concerns me more... (beat) It is just a bit ... (beat) What I am worried by is getting used to being married. Making time for him because now he is my Lord and Master. (beat) Everything is at his bidding not mine. I know it is the way things are but I am not used to having someone oversee my life who is not the Queen or my mother. And even with them I was able to retire to my rooms with my own thoughts. (beat) I never knew my father, so having to think first of a man's, umm, requirements is a situation my mind has never had to submit to.

LADY ELIZABETH

In their own houses men are kings. And a wife his servant. And as...

MARGARET (INTERRUPTING)

I will be his servant in name only. The one man I must be servant to is the King and I am not even certain of that.

LADY ELIZABETH looks a bit surprised by the force of the statement. MARGARET explains with some passion.

MARGARET

As his subject I am beholden to the King's law, but as a woman I have no rights under that law. A woman is the property of her husband. And as this is so then why must I bide the King. (beat) This is a poor situation for women to find themselves in. It puts us at the mercy of men. Our choices are so few. No wonder marriage becomes a place of pitched battles or deadly silences. Or both.

LADY ELIZABETH (SOOTHING)

Now, now. (beat) It is true what you say. A marriage can be difficult. But I have found that each person moves with the dictates of their own nature. Personally, I find companionship is a most important virtue.

MARGARET (EXPLAINING CAREFULLY)

I feel as if I have a need to create a place for myself within our marriage that is separate from William. A place of my own. I have a separate voice and I want it to be heard. But yet I want to be with him. I enjoy our conversations immensely, our time together. I have so much to learn and he is so patient with my ignorance. (beat)

MARGARET is impassioned and finding it difficult to stay seated. She is pacing about the room.

MARGARET (AGITATED)

But there is more for him to learn of me. I have much to say as well, and he needs to listen. I feel there is a place within marriage where I need to walk a practical road. I have to be able to balance my own desires with those that are William's. (beat) This, marriage, is a new skill that takes time to learn.

LADY ELIZABETH

Margaret, you have told me something that, though I know it, I
(MORE)

LADY ELIZABETH (cont'd)
 could not have told you. A woman
 must keep a place for herself. A
 place where you can have your own
 company or those you invite to
 share it. Like the ladies of the
 salon. These women keep their own
 counsel regardless of the men in
 their lives.

MARGARET (SMILES)
 I hear the salon of Madame de
 Montspan is the place to be seen if
 you are a 'female with a
 temperament'. But it has too many
 visitors for me. I need a quiet
 room for my own particular use. A
 place I can retire to and write.

LADY ELIZABETH
 And that, my dear, sounds like the
 perfect request for William to
 grant.

MARGARET'S face lights up at the thought. She comes and sits
 down again opposite LADY ELIZABETH and picks up her
 chocolate.

MARGARET
 Yes Elizabeth, the very thing. It
 makes perfect sense. A room that is
 for my own particular use.

54 EXT. GARDEN. DAY.

54

MARGARET and WILLIAM are walking away from the Palais du
 Lourve, through the formal gardens. It is summer.

WILLIAM
 The Queen was in good spirits I
 thought.

MARGARET
 Yes she even seemed pleased to see
 me.

MARGARET catches WILLIAM'S arm and flashes him a big smile.
 But then it turns to a frown.

MARGARET
 But the King's situation worsens as
 Parliament's power grows. It is
 difficult to see where it will end.

WILLIAM (CONCERNED)

He no doubt understands that he needs to consolidate both men and money. He may even need to leave England. (beat) He might have the divine right to rule but now parliament has the power to change the stakes. Though I can not see them doing so. The country needs stability and time to recover from the civil war if it is to stay out of the clutches of both Spain and France.

MARGARET

What of the invasion force you have been readying?

WILLIAM

It is not going to come about. We can't get the men to the King and it seems less and less likely that the King can hold his position. (beat) The Queen has asked me to follow Prince Charles to the north. And I feel I must.

MARGARET

North? (beat) To where?

MARGARET looks at him with surprise and can see that WILLIAM is ambivalent about the idea.

MARGARET

Well if we must. When do we go?

WILLIAM

You don't mind?

MARGARET

No, of course not. It will be an adventure. As long as I am with you I care for nothing else. You know that.

WILLIAM turns to MARGARET and looks lovingly into her eyes. He pulls her to him. It is a very tender scene.

WILLIAM

You know you have my heart and I am forever charmed by your unpredictable reactions. I love that you are different to other women. That you keep me guessing.

WILLIAM becomes more serious and bows low over her hand turning the situation into something more formal.

WILLIAM

Before we married you talked of achieving fame. Well, I want to assist you. I want you to know that I am happy for you to pursue whatever course you need. To achieve the ends you desire. I am happy for you to do whatever you wish and I will help you to the best of my ability.

MARGARET (BLUSHING)

I am embarrassed that you remember.

She holds his face tenderly with one hand and kisses him gently on the cheek. Then grabbing the moment herself. She has already given this thought.

MARGARET

I want you to talk to me about what you know. About more than the horses and fencing. About other subjects. About science, mathematics, astronomy, theology, philosophy. And I want to hear stories of war and tactics and politics. And I need a parlour of my own in which to write.

WILLIAM appraises her and begins to smile seeing the pleasure that will be gained by watching others watch his wife.

WILLIAM

It shall be done. (beat) My brother arrives next week. He can help with the teaching.

MARGARET(HORRIFIED)

No, no,no. William.

WILLIAM just laughs at her as they walk off arm in arm.

55

INT. PARIS SITTING ROOM. NIGHT.

55

CHARLES CAVENDISH, WILLIAM'S brother has arrived in Paris and is staying with WILLIAM and MARGARET. He is a little younger than William but just as good looking and affable. The two men obviously get on very well and like each other.

WILLIAM, MARGARET and CHARLES are sitting in front of the fire after dinner with drinks at hand. MARGARET has a book in her lap which she is mostly reading while the men are talking about the war.

WILLIAM

The King has gone to the Isle of Wight. I don't know that it is a good strategy. He puts his life in the hands of Hammond and I for one do not trust him.

CHARLES

He has done it before hasn't he?
The King I mean?

WILLIAM

The King is vulnerable and wants to believe in Hammond's allegiance but the man's protestations are empty. He will take the gain where he finds it. The tide has moved. Parliament seems to be winning on all fronts.

CHARLES

Do you think you might go home.

WILLIAM

They would lock me up as soon as I stepped foot on land. I am better here, helping the Queen and the Prince of Wales where I can. The Prince wants me as an adviser once more and I feel I must. We need to follow him North. I know you have only just arrived here in Paris but you will come with us, won't you?

CHARLES

Yes I did think I would. I can keep Margaret company while you are off doing all of that advising.

CHARLES winks at Margaret and she blushes. Then speaking straight to her.

CHARLES

We have some things to learn I believe?

MARGARET blushes even more, if that is possible.

56

INT. PRINCE'S ROOM. NIGHT.

56

WILLIAM is standing at a table covered in maps and papers with PRINCE CHARLES and ADVISERS 1,2 & 3. The room is dimly lit and the wind is howling. The Prince is deferring to William.

PRINCE CHARLES

We need to set sail soon if we are going to reach the King in time. We are to meet up with the others in Holland and then make for the South coast. William, what do you think of the plan?

WILLIAM

We don't know the ship's condition, Sir. And this wretched weather is of no use. But the King is in great need and we don't know how long he will remain where he is. (beat) I think we must proceed with haste as well as caution.

All the men nod in agreement. The PRINCE turns to Adviser 1.

PRINCE CHARLES

Go now and make the ships ready. We will follow you after I have seen my mother. We leave tonight.

ADVISER 1 bows and leaves the room. The remaining men look at each other then down to the maps.

PRINCE CHARLES comes over to WILLIAM and takes his hand.

PRINCE CHARLES

Thank you William. You always were my voice of reason. In my strange life you were always a true voice by which to steer.

WILLIAM

Sir. As a boy and now as a man you have shown sense. And I have been proud to guide you where I can but take care who you trust. Things seem to be going from bad to worse for the King and at such times men can not be relied on. Listen to your own judgment more than any other.

PRINCE CHARLES leans in and embraces WILLIAM warmly and then leaves quickly.

57 EXT. PARIS HOUSE. DAY. 57

MARGARET and WILLIAM'S coach is pulling away from the house. It is autumn. Six other carriages and assorted conveyances are following with servants and luggage.

58 INT. CARRIAGE. DAY 58

MARGARET and WILLIAM are both looking out the windows as they pass through the suburbs of Paris.

WILLIAM

We'll be fine in Antwerp, Peg.
We'll find a fine house and meet
some good society.

WILLIAM takes MARGARET'S hand, gives it a squeeze and then continues.

WILLIAM

The Prince has made it to Holland
but it seems he has been unable to
go any further. He will be
frustrated by more than the weather
no doubt.

MARGARET

The whole plan sounds ill-conceived
to me.

MARGARET snatches her hand back.

MARGARET

I am glad you weren't sailing as
well. He can't trust those ships.
They were under Parliament's rule
just weeks ago. Surely their sea
worthiness isn't to be trusted.

WILLIAM

I advised him to seize them. It is
the only good luck we have had for
a while. I was to sail with him but
now it is unlikely.

MARGARET (VEHEMENTLY)

Good.

WILLIAM is surprised by the strength of her reaction and purses his lips in displeasure as he turns to look out of the window. The camera swings around and we see that CHARLES is in the seat opposite. A smile is playing about his lips as he too looks out the window.

59 EXT. ANTWERP. DAY. 59

Establishing shot of a new city, spires in the distance. It is autumn and raining. The carriage is traveling to the new residence. The House comes into view. It is grand.

60 INT. CARRIAGE. DAY 60

MARGARET is looking out as the carriage stops in front of the house.

MARGARET

It never ceases to amaze how you
juggle the creditors.

WILLIAM flashes a brilliant smile. He knows.

61 INT. HALL. ANTWERP HOUSE. DAY. 61

We follow ELIZABETH as she comes in from the street with parcels. It has been snowing. We follow as she walks through the hall. There are hats and coats on the table. She passes doors into other well appointed rooms that we glimpse as she passes. One of them has WILLIAM entertaining A GROUP OF GENTLEMEN. She ascends the stairs and moves towards Margaret's rooms. There are a series of rooms including a drawing room, a private study where MARGARET and CHARLES are sitting at a desk, heads together, pouring over books, a student/teacher relationship. ELIZABETH unobtrusively takes the parcels through to MARGARET'S bedroom.

62 INT. HORSE ARENA. DAY. 62

MARGARET is watching WILLIAM and CAPTAIN MAZINE work in tandem as they train a magnificent horse which is on the end of a lunge rope. She watches for awhile then quietly picks up a book and reads.

63 EXT. ANTWERP. DAY.

63

We watch as MARGARET comes out of the front door accompanied by ELIZABETH and gets into her carriage. It is summer. We follow Margaret's carriage not far through the streets to another wealthy house.

They both alight, the front door opens and they enter.

64 INT. DUARTE'S SALON. DAY.

64

MARGARET enters the room and warmly greets LEONORA DUARTE and ISABELLA DUARTE, two sisters about Margaret's age. The women sit comfortably with each other.

LEONORA (EXCITED)

I am glad you have come Margaret.
We have a surprise for you today.
Our brother is home and he wants to
meet you. We have told him all
about you.

MARGARET (AGITATED)

Leonora, you know I am not good at
introductions. Can't we make it a
little less complicated. Now I will
have to leave.

MARGARET makes moves to leave.

ISABELLA (LAUGHING)

No, no. We will tell him not to
come. (beat) But when are you going
to get better at this. He is just
our brother. He isn't at all
threatening. You are an important
part of the society for our
little community. You know
everyone looks to William as a
leader. There is so much coming and
going from your own house. How do
you cope? What do you do when he is
entertaining all those
distinguished men from all over
Europe as guests for dinner?

MARGARET

I keep quiet at my end of the table
and leave as soon as I can. And I
spend an inordinate amount of time
in my closet writing and thinking.
Though usually when William is

(MORE)

MARGARET (cont'd)
entertaining he wants me to stay at
the table. And the conversation can
be quite entertaining. So I have
been making myself stay a little
longer each time.

LEONORA
You poor thing. What do you do when
someone asks you a question?

MARGARET
Well, I try to answer, though
Charles has got very good at
jumping in and saying the answer
for me.

ISABELLA (THOUGHTFULLY)
Charles is a nice man!

MARGARET (KNOWINGLY)
Yes, and he is very patient with
me. (beat) He has been giving me
books of philosophy to read because
a lot of the men who turn up for
dinner seem to be philosophers. And
scientists. And mathematicians. It
can be overwhelming but I love the
challenge of it. William says
philosophy is a good way of
strengthening the mind.

LEONORA (SKEPTICALLY)
Independent thought for a woman.
William is very accommodating.

MARGARET
Yes. William is accommodating. But
for poor Charles it is not so
simple. He is the one who helps me
to sort through these difficult
ideas.

ISABELLA
Speaking of difficult ideas, I hear
Descartes is coming to dinner.

A maid enters with a tray of refreshment. She places it on a
table at the back of the room and serves each woman
independently as the conversation progresses.

MARGARET

Oh, yes that will be excellent.
Charles knows him. It should make
for an interesting dinner.

ISABELLA (AMAZED)

What would you talk to him about?

MARGARET

Well I didn't say that I would
talk. But I should like to listen
to what he has to say. I don't know
that I agree with him, though. How
can we know anything if we don't
use our senses to know it?

LEONORA

By trusting in reason?

MARGARET

But then anyone could be making up
anything. Surely any understanding
of life must come from one's
experience of it.

LEONORA

But I can sit here quietly and
think about it to the same effect!

MARGARET

But as a human we react to what our
senses tell us. If a fire is too
hot we remove from it though if it
is not hot enough we move closer.

LEONORA

It will be hotter for some than
others. What then?

MARGARET

All the more reason to follow the
senses.

LEONORA

But your hottest and my hottest
might be two different things.
There must be some way of measuring
the heat independently?

MARGARET

But then you are putting your
knowledge into something outside of
the self and trusting its reading.

(MORE)

MARGARET (cont'd)

What if it is broken and you don't know? You are left with something that, though it may be independent, it may be wrong. Or does the temperature tell me anything about the difference in how hot it is for you compared to how hot it is for me?

LEONORA (LAUGHING)

I can see that Charles has been doing his work well. You argue like a philosopher.

MARGARET

That is good to know. It is all practice. I find endeavouring to understand the natural world are the most interesting thoughts one can have.

ISABELLA

Maybe we should come to dinner when Descartes comes to dine with you. I should like to hear what he has to say as well.

MARGARET

Oh would you? Then I won't have to endure it on my own.

ISABELLA

We would love to come. To be part of the Newcastle set. (beat) You do know you have quite a reputation.

MARGARET looks pleased.

65 INT. FRONT DOOR HALL. ANTWERP. DAY.

65

There is a knock at the front door and A SERVANT opens it. It is a MESSENGER with a letter which he hands over. It is snowing outside. The door closes.

66 INT. SITTING ROOM. DAY.

66

MARGARET is sitting by the fire reading when A SERVANT brings in the letter. She takes it, opens it and reads. We see the shock dawning on her face.

MARGARET

No, no.

The camera pulls back and MARGARET seems to get smaller in the room with the edge of the room falling into darkness.

67 EXT. WHITEHALL. DAY. 67

Snow is falling as the KING walks across the scaffold. We can see the CROWD is screaming but we can only hear silence. The king is in shirtsleeves, bare-headed.

68 INT. SITTING ROOM. DAY. 68

WILLIAM enters and finds MARGARET sitting staring out the window the letter still in her lap.

WILLIAM (BEWILDERED)

The King has been beheaded.

She nods in agreement but is unable to say anything for some time. WILLIAM continues to pace the floor. MARGARET watches him then catches his hand as he passes and stops him.

MARGARET

What will we do?

69 EXT. WHITEHALL. DAY. 69

The KING is standing in front of the block. He puts out his hand and catches some snow. He looks intently at its melting beauty. Then kneels. The CROWD is still screaming but the scene is silent.

70 INT. SITTING ROOM. DAY. 70

WILLIAM

The Queen? The Prince? The other children, will they be safe? How could this be? I don't know what to think. I don't know what to do.

MARGARET turns and looks at WILLIAM as he resumes pacing up and down the room. She is having trouble forming the words.

71 EXT. WHITEHALL. DAY.

71

The KING bends and puts his head on the block. POV changes as his eyes fix on the snowflakes falling on to the boards of the scaffold. A thin layer of snow quietly accumulating. We can see the CROWD still screaming in the background. There is no noise. The shot zooms in on the snow and we see a ghost of a shadow fall across the snow. We then see red spots fall into the snow and little puffs of steam rise where they hit.

72 INT. SITTING ROOM. DAY.

72

MARGARET'S eyes follow WILLIAM as he paces.

MARGARET(DISTRAUGHT)

After the horror of what they did putting my brother Charles in front of a firing squad, I suppose we should have expected something. But this ...

MARGARET bends forward and pulls her knees under her chin and wraps her arms around herself.

MARGARET

Losing mother, then Thomas and Mary last year. Then Charles this year. Now this. It is too much. The world has become unknowable. I'm not sure I can live in it.

WILLIAM comes to MARGARET'S side and places a hand on her shoulder. She looks up at him the grief raw on her face.

WILLIAM (BEWILDERED)

There were plans for another rescue attempt. Now what? I am not even certain where Prince Charles is.
(beat) What will become of us now?
(beat) Oh my god. We may be stuck here forever.

WILLIAM goes to sit on a stool in front of the fire. His head in his hands. We can see the snow falling outside through the window.

73 EXT. MARGARET'S PRIVATE ROOM. DAY. 73

We see MARGARET from outside the window lying in bed. She is obviously ill.

74 INT. MARGARET'S PRIVATE ROOM. DAY. 74

The DOCTOR is talking to her but she is very weak. There are leeches on her arms which the DOCTOR is pulling off.

DOCTOR

I have prepared a concoction, my Lady. My Lady?

The DOCTOR turns to her maid, ELIZABETH.

DOCTOR

You must make sure you give it to her. You must administer it precisely. She must have this suppository three times a day. And I have put the leeches on now and I will again in the morning. And she must drink this spa water three pints in the morning before rising. It will make her vomit but it is to purge the bad humours from her body.

The DOCTOR turns to look at his patient with concern on his face.

DOCTOR

She will never become pregnant in this state.

ELIZABETH takes the instructions competently and ushers the DOCTOR from the room. She comes back to the bed and puts a cool cloth on the patient's forehead. ELIZABETH is worried. She tries to make MARGARET more comfortable but MARGARET is oblivious to her ministrations.

75 EXT. GARDEN. DAY. 75

WILLIAM and CHARLES are walking from the horse arena to the house. William has just finished working the horses. There is old snow on the ground. WILLIAM looks despondent.

WILLIAM

Parliament has confiscated my land and all of my possessions. I am now

(MORE)

WILLIAM (cont'd)
 considered an outlaw and to be
 arrested on sight if I land in
 England. And then executed.

CHARLES (GRIMLY)
 Well then you have your answer to
 these months of uncertainty at
 least. You can't go home. You are
 now a permanent exile and Margaret
 with you. You will have to get the
 family to send you money. (beat)
 People may change toward you now,
 William. Credit may become more
 difficult to obtain.

WILLIAM
 I think we will be alright. There
 are others in much worse situations
 than we are. Poor old Porter is
 nearly starving. He has had to
 leave Paris because his credit is
 no good.

WILLIAM stops mid stride and turns to CHARLES, a plan
 forming in his mind.

WILLIAM
 I know, we must invite the new King
 to stay. That is the way to show
 everyone that everything is fine
 and we have friends that count.
 Though he has money problems of his
 own.

They continue walking.

WILLIAM
 This is a poor show. To have a
 beautiful wife and not to be able
 to give her what she deserves. And
 she doesn't need more worry. All of
 this bad news has left her bereft.
 I am at a loss to know what to do
 for her.

CHARLES
 Just be kind with her. Be patient.

They have reached the door of the house and WILLIAM stops
 and looks at CHARLES intently. CHARLES enters the house
 blushing a little. WILLIAM thinks "I am always patient". And
 then he wonders if he heard more in CHARLES'S comment than

just brotherly affection. WILLIAM looks after his brother, dismisses the thought and enters the house.

76

INT. MARGARET'S PRIVATE ROOM. DAY.

76

MARGARET is sitting in a chair by her bed looking out the window watching as WILLIAM enters the house. A book is lying in her lap. She is still looking pale but obviously getting better. She picks up the book, tries to read it then replaces it on her lap with a sigh. CHARLES taps on her door as he enters. He sits opposite her and looks at her with deep concern. He leans forward and takes her hand. She slowly turns and looks at him.

MARGARET

Charles, I feel so sad all of the time. I just can not seem to feel anything else.

CHARLES

There is no need to feel any other way than what you do. But everyone wants you to feel better. I miss you at the table in the evenings and while William is useful to talk to I so enjoy it when it is the three of us. The conversation is much more lively.

MARGARET

I feel such emptiness. Do you think it will ever improve?

CHARLES

My dear Margaret, when we lose loved ones they never leave our hearts. The scar of their departure lasts forever and becomes part of the fabric of who we are. So while you say that the sadness feels as if it will never leave, in a way it never will. It is now part of you and though you will find ways of carrying your scarred heart that make the rest of your life bearable again, you are changed forever.

MARGARET looks at him with big eyes. The tears start. He leans in to embrace and comfort her. We see in his face, in an unwatched unguarded moment, that there is more than brotherly affection involved.

He collects himself and stands to leave.

CHARLES

It can be your inspiration for your writing.

She nods as he leaves the room. He has given her an inkling of how things might change. Something other to think about.

77 EXT. GARDEN. DAY. 77

MARGARET is wandering around the garden as part of her convalescence reading the philosopher, Epicurus. It is a warm morning and her health is improving.

78 EXT. CATHEDRAL. DAY 78

MARGARET and WILLIAM are alighting from a line of carriages along with other dignitaries and making their way into the cathedral. The exiled English court are there. MARGARET and WILLIAM are among the highest ranking members and people bow and make way for them. MARGARET has regained her health and her dress is noticeably different from the other womens' dresses and the other women are commenting. Just like old times.

79 INT. CATHEDRAL. DAY 79

A very elaborate service is in progress. A gilt and glitter, aristocratic and cultural occasion. MARGARET and WILLIAM are seated in the front row because of their high status.

The showiness of the situation is having an impact on Margaret's more restrained English sensibilities. For the first time she realises her place in society, the wealth that she has access to, the power inherent in her role. It is the moment where she understands that she can grow into the woman she might become.

80 INT. SITTING ROOM. DAY. 80

MARGARET comes into the room and casually flops down in the chair across from William. It is quite hot outside. WILLIAM looks up from his desk and what he is writing and smiles at her lack of pretension and welcomes her intrusion.

MARGARET

How goes the play? (beat) I must agree with Epicurus that man, or woman for that matter, need only good food, good friends and

(MORE)

MARGARET (cont'd)
comfortable accommodation to master
pleasure and thus achieve the
highest potential for a human
being. A happy life.

WILLIAM (READING)
Any philosopher that recommends a
contented stomach as the root of
all pleasure and the requirement of
a fulfilled life has my attention.

MARGARET
But what do you think of his idea
that a chance combination of atoms
has created the world and all that
is in it. That we are here by
chance? (beat) It is another way of
looking at things.

WILLIAM shrugs his shoulders. MARGARET sits forward in her
chair excited by the prospect. The potential of the idea
just keeps expanding.

MARGARET
If the world is the chance coming
together of atoms, that means that
there are endless alternatives to
be found. And if the prospect is
endless, then anything is possible.
People coming together is random.
What happens to them is random.
Just like a Civil War. (beat)
William, God doesn't run people's
lives - they just happen. There is
no overall plan. Gracious, the idea
could just keep getting bigger.
(beat) There might even be endless
worlds. Anything that might seem
unusual is no more unusual than the
original.

MARGARET is excited and sits back in her chair letting go of
the breath she didn't realise she was holding.

MARGARET
Now that makes for some interesting
thought. The existence of life
being the chance coming together of
the right atoms?

MARGARET is quiet for a moment as the possibilities multiply then her mind comes back to the room and she looks again at WILLIAM reading what he has written and makes up her mind to broach a subject she doesn't really want to.

MARGARET

William, do you think there is any point in my going to London to make a petition to Parliament. Charles thinks I may have a chance in gaining a hearing and convincing them that as your wife I am allowed a portion of your estate or at least a pension. It would help with some of the bills and gain us more credit. We may have to live in exile forever and this might be the only opportunity to get back a little of what you have lost.

WILLIAM (CROSS)

It is not only I who have lost. My children have lost their inheritance, their prospects. You have lost too my darling.

WILLIAM pushes back from his desk and looks at her with some embarrassment.

WILLIAM

We hardly live a glittering existence as members of the aristocracy. This is a very quiet round for you to be involved in.

MARGARET comes over to his chair and leans over from behind so she can hold his hand.

MARGARET

You know I don't care for that kind of entertainment even if we could afford it. I am more than content just being able to spend the time in your company. But what about me going to London?

WILLIAM (MATTER-OF-FACTLY)

Well yes. I can't go, but you do need to. Charles and I have spoken about it. He needs to petition Parliament as well. And you will need some moral support and someone to squire you around Whitechapel. I

(MORE)

WILLIAM (MATTER-OF-FACTLY) (cont'd)
 can't imagine they will make it
 easy for either of you. The process
 may take a long time.

She sits on his lap to lighten the mood.

MARGARET
 I won't want to be from you for too
 long. Who will bother to listen to
 me as I go on about philosophy.

81 EXT. BALCONY, ANTWERP HOUSE. NIGHT.

81

It is a clear warm night. MARGARET, WILLIAM and CHARLES are excitedly taking turns in looking through the telescope. WILLIAM is excited about seeing Mars and hands over the eyepiece to MARGARET. She looks. She then turns to William who is as excited as a child. And she once again looks through the glass.

MARGARET
 Yes, but what good is it?

CHARLES laughs loudly and slaps WILLIAM'S back as if he has won a bet.

82 INT. DINING ROOM. NIGHT.

82

Dinner is in progress in the beautifully appointed dining room. There are many candles. There are mirrors reflecting the candle light. The talk is lively. MARGARET is the only woman sitting at the table with WILLIAM, CHARLES, THOMAS HOBBS, WIDDRINGTON, JOHN EVELYN, PIERRE GASSENDI.

HOBBS
 William, I have a new telescope for you. Petty says it is even larger than the last. The fellow who made it is a genius. When you look at the night sky you can see the satellites of Saturn and of Jupiter and a much improved Venus. The illumination is wonderful.

WIDDRINGTON
 He doesn't need another, surely?

WILLIAM
 You know I can't resist such things. I have as fine a collection
 (MORE)

WILLIAM (cont'd)
 as anyone. Even Charles is working
 on an improved version.

We see MARGARET at the end of the table shaking her head.

WILLIAM
 How is the writing coming on
 Thomas?

HOBBS
 You know how I am. It is a long,
 long process. In fact I can't see
 but the final result is years away.
 I want to impart a thorough picture
 of this philosophy and I did feel
 Descartes may have been a bit soon
 with his. Published too early. We
 do agree on some things but I can't
 understand why he pursues this idea
 of space filled with atoms.

GASSENDI (EXCITEDLY)
 No, No. We have talked of this
 before. There is nothing there.
 There are no colourless, odourless
 atoms. There is not something
 other, Mr Hobbes. There is nothing.
 Decore?

WILLIAM (LAUGHING)
 Calm down Pierre, Thomas agrees
 with you.

GASSENDI
 Ah oui. Of course. I was
 forgetting.

WILLIAM
 While we may agree on this I want
 to re-visit the point you were
 making last week, Thomas. About the
 nature of man. You were saying that
 there must be a 'head' for the
 'body' to work. That there must be
 someone to rule the masses.

HOBBS
 Yes of course. Otherwise there are
 peasants doing what they want. If
 there is nothing to stop them they
 will eventually descend into
 fighting and anarchy. The only way

(MORE)

HOBBS (cont'd)
 to have order of any sort is to have control. A man will always follow his own self-interest. There must be a leader, a head of state. Otherwise life would be very unpleasant. Nasty, quite nasty. And short, I believe.

CHARLES (STATING-THE-OBVIOUS)
 Well true, true. You would have the mob taking over the country and lopping off the King's head. What a disgrace. (beat) Though doesn't someone always come to lead. Doesn't the place always get filled. Cromwell has filled it. Isn't what you are talking of having to happen, happening regardless? It is the natural state of the world.

MARGARET looks from Charles to Hobbes. She looks as if she wants to say something but can't make the words come out. HOBBS has continued talking about the need to control the masses. She turns to CHARLES who is seated next to her and says quietly so only he can hear.

MARGARET
 What if how it is, is not. That how it is hasn't been looked at from any other angle? Maybe it is the way it is because men have made it so. That it isn't a natural state but **man**-made.

CHARLES looks at her appreciatively understanding dawning on him. He answers her quietly.

CHARLES
 Well that could be so. So you are saying that if women were in charge that things would be different?

MARGARET (FLUSTERED)
 Well a woman might bring different eyes to a problem. Men seem to talk much of reason and yet follow the way thereof so seldom.

At this MARGARET decides she has said too much. She looks mortified, closes her mouth and shakes her head. CHARLES understands and goes back to the other conversation.

MARGARET and ELIZABETH are talking as Margaret is getting dressed.

MARGARET

You will need to ready things for our departure. We might need to sell some of the jewelery to pay for lodgings.

ELIZABETH

Yes ma'am. Do you want to take the small trunk as well.

MARGARET

Yes I need to take the books.

ELIZABETH

Yes ma'am.

WILLIAM enters and leans against the door frame to watch the packing.

WILLIAM (LAUGHING)

How are the preparations? Will you be ready in time for the boat?

MARGARET puts down what she is holding and goes to William.

MARGARET

I don't want to leave you. We have no idea how long this will take.

WILLIAM

True, but we decided it was going to be worth the effort. This could be the only chance we have to regain some of the wealth stolen from us.

MARGARET

I know. And it may remind some that you are still alive and could do with a little financial help. Friends can be so forgetful when they don't see one's face. (beat) I have the letters for your children. Thank heavens Charles is coming with me. I wonder if they will like me?

MARGARET takes his hand and leads him to a chair. He sits and she sits on his lap. She is being serious.

MARGARET

I am going to publish my book of poems while I am in England. You know the ones. What do you think?

WILLIAM

I think it a fine idea. You have my permission and support. But you know that. My god I will miss you.

WILLIAM buries his face in her neck and she strokes his head absentmindedly.

MARGARET

What do you think about me putting my own name to it?

WILLIAM

What do you mean?

MARGARET

Just what I say. Publish it with my own name on it. Like a man does.

WILLIAM stares at her.

WILLIAM

Truly?

MARGARET nods watching him intently.

MARGARET

I know it may not go smoothly. The printer may refuse the task. But I think it is time to begin letting others know what I think. I want to be seen and heard as if I were a fellow at Cambridge or Oxford. I want to be known as a thinker and a writer. You know this is my way to fame. If you agree no one will dare thwart me.

WILLIAM sits back and looks at her admiringly.

WILLIAM

Now Peg, this will be something to see. What a shame I will miss it.

She hugs him about the neck and then jumps up.

MARGARET

You know, when it is just us I sometimes behave poorly. I promise to behave as a Lady should while I am in London.(beat) Apart from getting my book published, of course.

WILLIAM (LAUGHING)

Of course.

84 EXT. LONDON. DAY 84

Establishing shot of the city. As the camera pans the streets there seems to be a restraint to all of the action seen. Everyone and everything is quieter than might be expected. There is no colour, no fun to be had. It is autumn and cold.

85 EXT. GOLDSMITH'S HALL. DAY 85

This is an imposing and oppressive building.

A well-appointed carriage is pulling up to the front door in the rain.

86 INT. CARRIAGE. DAY 86

MARGARET and CHARLES are seated looking out the window at the Goldsmith's Hall. CHARLES leans over and takes her hand. He continues to look out of the window as MARGARET looks at him with great trepidation.

CHARLES

My dear, are you ready? I do not think they are going to be moved by your story but you must try.

MARGARET

I hope you have good luck too Charles, with your petition. It is time.

87 EXT. GOLDSMITH'S HALL. DAY 87

CHARLES and MARGARET alight from the carriage and proceed to the forbidding entrance.

88

INT. COMMITTEE HEARING ROOM

88

MARGARET is seated in front of a long table. On the other side of the table are SIX PURITAN GENTLEMEN looking self-satisfied, pompous and a little sinister. They have kept her waiting a long time.

HEAD OF THE COMMITTEE

Madam, your husband is one of the greatest traitors to this state. He fought with the King, directed his armies, acted as a spy for the Royalists, supported the Pretender and other family members as they tried to undermine the Commonwealth. His actions mark him as a traitor and as such he is an excepted person. He has no rights under the law to make a claim for any of his estates.

At this point the HEAD looks at MARGARET. He is an unpleasant looking man who seems to be relishing his job.

HEAD OF THE COMMITTEE

As a traitor he forfeited his estates. You married him only since he became a delinquent. So at the time of marriage he had no estate and you therefore also have no claim on the aforementioned estates.

MARGARET is mortified. Too shy to speak, too proud to show her disappointment. She rises with no indication of having heard and leaves the room.

89

EXT. GOLDSMITH'S HALL. DAY

89

MARGARET comes hurrying down the steps and makes for her carriage. The COACHMAN opens the door for her. She is obviously upset as she climbs in and seats herself. The tears are rolling down her face. The COACHMAN notices and quietly closes the door and climbs on to the carriage and drives away.

MARGARET and CHARLES are having dinner. They are discussing their appearances before the Committee.

CHARLES

I do not know how long it will take but I presume it will be drawn out. They have to inquire into whether there is any charge against me but they will find none as I played no part in the war and told them I was abroad for my health. Which is true enough. But these things are tedious. But you, you must apply again. There must be other avenues for us to take. We will speak to the solicitor, Purfoy.

MARGARET

I couldn't go through that again. It was too humiliating. You will have better luck than I and then we can talk of arrangements.

CHARLES

I have to think about the others in the family as well. William's daughters need dowries and young Charles needs some sort of inheritance.

MARGARET (RELUCTANTLY)

What else can I do. They are determined to punish William and so me as well.

CHARLES

Perhaps you could apply as a widow. Apply for The Widow's rights. As a widow you would be entitled to a portion of the estate and with William exiled and certain to be executed if he returns then maybe...

MARGARET

Really? (beat) If I must. I will do what I can. There is something most unsavory about all of this. Those men sitting in judgment on someone as fine as William. It is wrong.

CHARLES

It is the outcome of war.

MARGARET

War! It is the result of killing the King.

CHARLES

That is the nature of war.

MARGARET

I find the people have changed. London has changed. The war has changed everything. Something that was so certain is now lost. It has become somehow ... ill defined. Random.

MARGARET reaches over to take CHARLES'S hand and he looks into her eyes with obvious love before he looks away. MARGARET looks a little longer registering what has just happened and then takes her hand away.

91 EXT. CARRIAGE. DAY 91

MARGARET is in her carriage with ANNE and CATHERINE, two of her sisters, driving through Hyde Park in the spring.

92 INT. CARRIAGE. DAY 92

MARGARET and CATHERINE are seated across from ANNE. It is one of the few times we see Margaret totally relaxed when in company other than William or Charles. Both of the women are looking at MARGARET aghast.

ANNE

Charles loves you?

CATHERINE

Margaret what have you done?

MARGARET (LAUGHING)

I have done nothing. It is Charles. I couldn't do anything. Nothing has happened and nothing will.

ANNE

You can't lead him on.

MARGARET

I have no intention of seducing my brother in-law.

CATHERINE (WISTFULLY)

Are you sure. He is very nice.

MARGARET looks at her sister and laughs.

MARGARET

He is my brother and I love him for the good and kind man he is. The question is how do I not hurt him? I need his continued support.

The three women ponder this for a moment.

ANNE

You don't have to do anything. He will love you from afar for as long as he does.

MARGARET

That is true. I am not very skilled in romance and neither am I one of those women who see the world through the eyes of love. So if I just be me then nothing will come of it.

CATHERINE (WISTFULLY)

It does seem such a shame.

Margaret looks at her sister with different eyes.

MARGARET

Catherine, what do you mean?

Catherine blushes but refuses to say anything. MARGARET and ANNE look at each other knowingly.

93

INT.MARGARET'S ROOM COVENT GARDEN. DAY

93

CHARLES enters and finds MARGARET writing at her desk. He slumps into a chair.

CHARLES

They have agreed to me collecting the rents from my estates so there will be money again but it is only for the time being. They haven't released the estates to me so I can't do anything with them.

MARGARET jumps up from her desk and rushes to sit next to him. He is despondent so she waits quietly for him to tell the rest of the news.

CHARLES

But they have started selling off William's estates. All of it is to go. You know I have nothing when compared to William's wealth. All of the houses, woods, meadows, farms, watermills. Everything. Welbeck Abbey and Bolsover Castle. It is all to go.

MARGARET'S anger rises and she jumps up and starts pacing about the room. She comes back and sits next to CHARLES and looks at him directly.

MARGARET

I am so angry and yet I know there is nothing to be done. To not be able to do anything is the worst feeling of all.

CHARLES

I can try to buy some of it, to buy parts of the estate back, but there is so much that is lost to the family already.

CHARLES puts his head in his hands.

CHARLES

To be caught in these events that swirl around me and not to be able to act resolutely. And all because of loyalty to the King. What else was William to do? (beat) The family has always championed the monarchy. But this time who could have thought things would go so wrong. We shouldn't be surprised if all is lost.

MARGARET looks at him and wants to reach out and touch his arm but restrains herself.

MARGARET (QUIETLY)

We have been caught up in these strange times. These years of war have brought such pain and loss that it is difficult to remember a time that was worry

(MORE)

MARGARET (QUIETLY) (cont'd)
 free. At least you will be able to
 continue petitioning for your
 lands. That is something to be
 hopeful for.

CHARLES
 Yes but the fight is so tiring. It
 is like fighting phantoms in the
 dark.

CHARLES takes her hand.

CHARLES
 Everyday so little progress is
 made. Thank heaven you are here
 with me. I wouldn't want to face
 this on my own.

CHARLES looks at her meaningfully. MARGARET looks at him and
 gently removes her hand. He gets the message.

94 INT. MARGARET'S PRIVATE ROOM. DAY. 94

MARGARET is at her desk writing. She gets up to open the
 window because it is warm. As she looks out the window she
 sees CHARLES riding back to the house. She watches him
 feeling sad. Maybe...

95 INT. SITTING ROOM. DAY. 95

CHARLES and MARGARET are finishing breakfast. Margaret is on
 the front foot.

MARGARET
 Charles, I must talk about my work.
 You know I want to say something
 about the power of nature and the
 irrelevance of god in the scheme of
 things but I am a little frightened
 to be so obvious at such a time.
 You know, with Cromwell in charge.
 Do you think I can write the poems
 so that the intent can be obscured
 without subverting the idea?

CHARLES
 That would seem to be a
 difficulty.(beat) There is so much
 more freedom on the continent to
 speak of new ideas. It is so closed
 (MORE)

CHARLES (cont'd)
here.(beat) But, I think, the most
overwhelming problem you have is
that of being a woman.

MARGARET (NOT HEARING)
I was thinking that I could mix
scientific ideas with fantastic
realms so as to disguise the ideas.
And they are poems after all. That
way no one might be upset. And I
know it is not the way things are
done but you know how I love to do
other than what is expected of me.

CHARLES
I do not know if you are right. But
I do know that this writing is
something that could destroy you in
society. London will not be as
forgiving as the Continent. But you
are aware of that.

MARGARET
Charles you know that means nothing
to me and to be published means
everything. I cannot rest till I
have secured a small place for
myself in history. And I think my
philosophy gives answers where
there have been none.

CHARLES
Well I am with you. You know that.

MARGARET
Yes and so is William but I am
afraid of what may happen.

MARGARET gets up to leave the table and turns to him and
looks at him meaningfully.

MARGARET
Thank you for your help and
understanding. All of it.

She turns and leaves the room. CHARLES is left looking at
the breakfast dishes.

96 EXT. LONDON. DAY 96

A carriage is moving down The Strand. It comes to a stop outside the printers at the sign of the Bell. ELIZABETH alights and enters the premises.

97 INT. PRINTER'S SHOP. DAY 97

We enter the shop and slowly scan the interior, the chaos and noise of the normal workplace is at odds with the beautiful spaces in which Margaret lives. There is a conversation going on between ELIZABETH and JAMES ALLESTRYE, the printer, about the layout of the script and other details when ELIZABETH stops and looks at him directly.

ELIZABETH

My Mistress requires that you put her name on the cover.

JAMES ALLESTRYE (BLANKLY)

Madam?

ELIZABETH

My Lady wants you to print the cover of the book with My Lady's name on it. Here is a letter from her telling how she wants it to look.

ELIZABETH hands over a letter which JAMES ALLESTRYE reads

JAMES ALLESTRYE

Poems and Fancies written by the Right Honourable, The Lady Margaret Countess of Newcastle.

JAMES ALLESTRYE looks at ELIZABETH like she is asking something in a foreign language.

JAMES ALLESTRYE

Are you certain?

ELIZABETH nods then turns to leave the shop.

98 INT. PRINTER'S SHOP, BACKROOM. DAY 98

JAMES ALLESTRYE comes up behind his partner, JOHN MARTIN, as he is setting type.

JAMES ALLESTYRE

John, a strange thing has happened.

JOHN MARTIN turns to him without speaking.

JAMES ALLESTYRE

We have just been given a manuscript of the Countess of Newcastle's poetry and it is to be printed with her name on it.

JOHN MARTIN

What's that? Her name? Where?

JAMES ALLESTYRE

On the front.

JAMES ALLESTYRE shakes his head looking perplexed. JOHN MARTIN is looking at him taking in the news and then we see an idea dawning.

JOHN MARTIN

This could be a good thing. Just think. She is a Countess, isn't she. And a Lady doesn't usually put her name on a thing like this. She already has a reputation for being strange. This is good. Yes good. The people will want to see it. Want to read it. I am sure. This could be a good thing for us. Very good.

JAMES ALLESTYRE breaks into a smile as he realises the potential.

99 INT. SITTING ROOM. DAY.

99

MARGARET is sitting at a table with stacks of books surrounding her and reading a letter from the publishers. She finishes the letter and picks up one of the books and we see her name printed on the front. She looks at it lovingly and traces the name with her finger.

100 INT. SITTING ROOM. DAY.

100

JOHN EVELYN is announced as he walks into the room with a purpose. He bows to MARGARET and approaches her. She indicates a chair for him and they both sit. He is obviously relaxed and friendly in her company. Though she is still a little flustered to begin with.

JOHN EVELYN

Oh My Lady you are causing a stir.
What have you done? Does William
agree?

MARGARET

Of course he agrees. I would not
risk his reputation without
informing him first. Is it truly
being talked of?

JOHN EVELYN

Yes, indeed. Wives are asking their
husbands to procure it and the
husbands are doing so.

MARGARET

Speaking of which, how is Mary?

JOHN EVELYN

Yes, she is perfectly well. Except
she thinks you are a little crazy.

MARGARET dismisses the point.

MARGARET

I wanted to write something that
people would want to read. That
they might find interesting.
Something that shows freedom of
thought and independence of mind
and a different way of viewing the
world that is around us.

JOHN EVELYN

Well you have done that, though I
am not sure that is why they are
reading it. They are reading it
because you wrote it. You know
people already think you eccentric.
Now it is more so. They are even
saying that you didn't write it,
William did.

MARGARET (FRUSTRATED)

That is why I put my name on it. I
wanted it to be noble. To show wit
and fancy. I didn't want anyone
saying that it was not my work. The
whole point is for me to be
remembered. William has done enough
glorious deeds to be remembered.

JOHN EVELYN looks at her then gets up and goes to the window. He turns to her obviously worried about what he is about to say.

JOHN EVELYN

Some of the language can be hard to read. And there are mistakes.

MARGARET

The printers have done a poor job. There are as you say many mistakes. But as for the language I would prefer to mark myself as an aristocrat than a scholar. Invention and originality are far more valuable than university protocol and form.

JOHN EVELYN

An aristocrat or a scholar? I think the most difficult part of your writing is that it is masculine in its subject. You write of politics and war where other women might write of romance or scripture. But more than this you claim that nature is the creator, that there is no divine. No god.

MARGARET

John, you know I can't abide romance. It is for a frivolous mind. And as for scripture...

MARGARET joins him at the window and looks at him earnestly trying to make him understand.

MARGARET

I do really think that everything contains its own intent within. That the god we talk of is the inner spark in every atom. The spark that gives the atom and consequently everything in the universe, life and motion. And because of this the atom must have reason, knowledge. There is an innate wisdom in nature that provides the answers to all of our questions. We don't need to ask god when we can look to nature. If we could replace the word god with the word nature all sorts of problems would fade into history.

JOHN EVELYN

Are you not concerned that this kind of talk may be trouble for you.

A SERVANT arrives with a tray of refreshments and MARGARET moves toward the chair next to the low table on which the tray has been placed. THE SERVANT hands her a cup. JOHN EVELYN comes to join her. She is dismissive of his comment.

MARGARET

I don't care about those things. I wanted to make people think.

JOHN EVELYN feels like he is getting nowhere.

JOHN EVELYN

I am worried. For you. And William. We have been friends a long time so I must be frank. I think this is no time for you to unsettle the powers that be. Parliament rules in a different way. It is law by committee and that can be difficult to mold to one's own design.

MARGARET

What more can they do to us? They have taken everything. We will never be able to come back and live here, so what do I care of their judgments. Society on the continent is much more open to new ideas and ways of thinking as you know. They have no problem with heroic women. The only reason I published here was because the result would be in English and you know I am hopeless in any other language. (beat) Actually now that I think about this I should get my book translated to Latin so it can be read on the Continent.

She has become distracted.

JOHN EVELYN

Margaret?

MARGARET

John, I really do not care. I write what I write and so be it. I write as a man but I am a woman. I don't

(MORE)

MARGARET (cont'd)

care what anyone says of me. (beat)
I have no need to stay here in
England any longer and William
writes to me to come back to him.
Charles has been given back his
properties and he and William's son
are arranging things to provide for
the family once again. And young
Charles seems to have managed to
gain control over his mother's
estates. So there will be money.
(beat) And so no reason for me to
delay my return to William. Yes it
is time. I must tell Charles.

MARGARET makes to move, so JOHN EVELYN knows it is time to
leave.

JOHN EVELYN

Well my Lady, just remember that
you and William are vulnerable to
those who are in power in this
country. They could decide that you
need to be reminded of the roles
you are to play.

MARGARET (LAUGHING)

You sound so serious. And I do
understand but I know I am beyond
caring.

101 EXT. ANTWERP. DAY. 101

Margaret's carriage pulls up in front of the house and
MARGARET alights before the door is even fully open. It is
winter. There is snow on the ground. She runs up the front
steps as the door opens for her.

102 INT. FRONT DOOR HALL. ANTWERP. DAY. 102

WILLIAM enters the hall from the parlor and moves quickly
towards MARGARET, picks her up and holds her tight. There is
laughter and tears from both at the relief of the home
coming. There is no concern for 'the niceties' in front of
the servants. They walk together into the parlor.

103

INT. MARGARET'S PRIVATE ROOM. DAY.

103

MARGARET is writing at her desk. WILLIAM is sitting nearby reading.

MARGARET

Your Lordship is an extraordinary husband. Giving me leave to publish my work is a favour few husbands would grant their wives. Assisting me in establishing myself in a literary career is more than can be ever understood by others. They would think you too fond and indulgent.

WILLIAM

My darling girl I am just glad to have you returned to me.

MARGARET (LAUGHING)

And I am glad to be returned.

WILLIAM looks at MARGARET as if choosing his moment.

WILLIAM

I have had a letter from Sir Edward Hyde questioning that you have written the book at all. He suggests that it is so full of learning, so many terms of art and expressions proper to science that a woman would have been unable to achieve such a task. I will write him immediately and inform him of his error, of course.

MARGARET

The same was being said before I left London. People believed it too masculine to be the work of a woman. I care not. I have chosen a title for my next book 'The World's Olio'. It is a selection of essays. Though there is still much to be done in the mending of the work. (beat) I always think there is more pleasure and delight in making than in mending. Don't you find my Lord?

WILLIAM (LAUGHING)

In the making, ha. I have missed your making in my bed.

WILLIAM goes to MARGARET and pulls her out of her chair and into his arms. He kisses her on the mouth and brushes her neck with kisses. She swoons in his arms.

MARGARET

Maybe we can retire and try a bit of 'making' now.

WILLIAM looks at her appreciatively, takes her by the hand and leads her to the bed.

TIME LAPSE

MARGARET is sitting at her desk writing by the light of a candle, in her nightgown. WILLIAM is in the bed asleep in the background.

104 INT. SITTING ROOM. DAY.

104

A servant arrives with a letter while WILLIAM and MARGARET are having breakfast. WILLIAM takes the letter casually and opens and reads it. There is an intake of breath and he looks at MARGARET earnestly, desperately. He hands her the letter. She begins to read it and we see the writing.

"Sir Charles Cavendish has died of a fever while residing in the country..."

MARGARET is shocked and devastated. She slowly gets up and leaves the room without looking at WILLIAM. WILLIAM has tears streaming down his face.

105 INT. MARGARET'S PRIVATE ROOM. DAY.

105

MARGARET is lying on the floor by her desk absolutely shattered. ELIZABETH comes in and gently gets her up and puts her to bed.

TIME LAPSE

Time passes with ELIZABETH coming and going. Trying to get her to eat. The DOCTOR coming. MARGARET just lays there staring out her window.

WILLIAM comes in and sits on her bed and takes her hand. He sits quietly looking at her.

WILLIAM

I loved him.

MARGARET (ECHO)
I loved him.

The light fades from the room.

106 INT. MARGARET'S PRIVATE ROOM. DAY.

106

MARGARET is sitting in her room surrounded by new books just from the publisher with "World's Olio" printed on the cover and her name in bold gold letters.

There is a growing confidence in her. She picks up one of the books and places a letter inside the front cover. Then proceeds to tie a ribbon around it to hold the letter in place.

WILLIAM enters.

WILLIAM
The new books are here?

He picks one up, looks at it then at her appreciatively.

WILLIAM
They look excellent. You are now a seasoned writer. Are you happy with your success?

MARGARET
It is wonderful to hold them in my hands. Knowing they are mine. I do not think I will ever tire of that.

She picks one up and holds it to her chest.

MARGARET
It is mine.

She speaks to WILLIAM as if she is admitting a secret. Tears welling in her eyes.

MARGARET
In a way they are like my babies. Because I can't have real ones these are all the more precious, somehow. It is difficult to send them out into the world.

MARGARET laughs at herself.

WILLIAM

Oh, Peg.

Is all WILLIAM can say. MARGARET looks at him. Smiles and changes the subject.

MARGARET

I have almost finished the next manuscript. It is nearly ready to send to the printers. Would you like to read it? I have approached the writing a bit differently. I have written a whole treatise of my scientific theory.

MARGARET goes to her desk and picks up the sheets of paper that make her new book.

WILLIAM

I would love to read it. (beat) I am so proud to be your husband. It is a wondrous thing to see a woman do what many men can not. It seems to me that a woman could do anything a man could if she were allowed.

MARGARET gives the papers to WILLIAM and walks to the window where there is a fly buzzing. She opens the window to let it out. As she closes the window she sees a GROOM going to the stables with one of William's horses.

MARGARET

True enough. But men don't want their power threatened and so keep women quiet. And the women keep themselves quiet. Women can be the harshest on each other I have found. I have something to say for women, to women, yet it is the women who are the unkindest in their discussion of me. I wish to be known to the world by my wit not my folly. Yet it is my folly they focus on. I find it all so tedious. (beat) With this book, I will claim a place in the history of the world and still unwise persons tell me I can not.

WILLIAM is shuffling the pages, reading bits. Then he smiles at her.

WILLIAM

I can write something for your new book to say that it is your work alone and I think it is wonderful that my Lady writes.

MARGARET bows to WILLIAM with a smile on her face.

MARGARET

I would be most honoured sir.

She bows to WILLIAM and then carries on with her tirade.

MARGARET

It is my opinion that women would be of a different temperament if they were accorded other than the contempt of men, when they pursue any endeavour towards knowledge. When women are treated thus they lose their intellectual capacities and become like worms that live only in ignorance. I would like the world to know me as a woman who can think like a man. I would like other women to see that it is possible.

WILLIAM looks a little shocked at this. She comes and sits next to him at the edge of her seat.

MARGARET

Don't be outraged, my love. I will behave myself. (beat) But I do want to turn things upside down. I want to change conventions, unsettle people. I saw it in England even more so than here but women are kept like birds in cages to hop up and down in our houses and not afforded to fly abroad to see the changes in the world for ourselves.

She jumps up and starts pacing in front of WILLIAM and the fireplace, thinking. WILLIAM looks up from the papers once again.

WILLIAM

I think this book is best suited to the fellows at Cambridge and Oxford. It is more of an academic study and they are more likely to take it seriously and on its own

(MORE)

WILLIAM (cont'd)
 merits than those at court or in
 London. And I think they will be
 less likely to attack you with
 false aspersions because you are a
 woman.

MARGARET stops pacing and whirls around to face him,
 clapping her hands.

MARGARET
 I could dedicate the book to them.
 Because if true understanding were
 to reside anywhere surely it is in
 learned universities. Yes, that is
 it. (beat) I must write the
 dedication.

MARGARET rushes towards her desk and sits and prepares to
 write. WILLIAM is sitting looking at her with a smile on his
 face though still managing to look skeptical. He picks up
 the papers again to read.

107 INT. HORSE ARENA. DAY.

107

CAPTAIN MARZINE is performing dressage in the arena as
 WILLIAM and PRINCE CHARLES and a RETINUE OF LADIES AND
 GENTLEMEN watch. WILLIAM and PRINCE CHARLES chatting
 amenably. The horses perform beautifully and there is
 gasping and clapping. MARGARET is sitting next to WILLIAM
 and included in the conversation but still separate to the
 group. Her dress is quite outlandish compared to the other
 Ladies. There is no way WILLIAM could compare the the
 restricted movements of the horse and the untamed creature
 beside him as he once thought to.

108 EXT. LONDON. DAY

108

Establishing shot down a busy London street. It is early
 summer. There is a different feel in the air from the last
 time we were in London. There are celebrations because the
 Restoration has occurred. Charles II is on the throne. There
 are banners in the streets proclaiming the King. There is
 more activity on the streets, more people with purpose, more
 carriages. The theaters have reopened, the taverns are busy
 again, more fun. The atmosphere feels upbeat.

109 EXT. LONDON DOCKS. DAY.

109

WILLIAM is coming down a gang plank on to the wharf. His servants are following and JOHN PROCTOR is waiting on the wharf. WILLIAM takes a purposeful step on to the dock.

JOHN PROCTOR

Welcome Sir. This is a great day.

WILLIAM

John. Unbelievable. The gods have smiled on us.

JOHN PROCTOR

The King has said he will receive you and all that is left of your estates is in midst of transfer. It will take time.

WILLIAM

My god man. Can you believe it? Now tell me of Bolsover castle. Do we get that back?

The two men walk off followed by THE SERVANTS.

110 EXT. NEWCASTLE HOUSE. DAY

110

We follow William's carriage as it returns to Newcastle House from the Palace. There is a feeling of celebration as the carriage comes to a halt at the door. THE STAFF are all lined up and excited to greet the new Duke and Duchess. MARGARET and WILLIAM alight from the carriage in all of their finery and JOHN PROCTOR leads the rest of the staff in bowing low.

JOHN PROCTOR

The Duke and Duchess of Newcastle.

Smiles all round. There are gifts of money for all of the servants.

111 EXT. NEWCASTLE HOUSE. NIGHT

111

The house is a blaze with lights on this beautiful late summer evening. Carriages are arriving. People are making their way to the front door. There is much excitement in the CROWD.

112 INT. NEWCASTLE HOUSE. NIGHT

112

MARGARET and WILLIAM are seated in the Grand Hall on a dais at the head of the room. They are decked out in all of their finery and their guests are being presented. Margaret is nervous being the center of attention. She is fidgety and a little flustered.

JOHN EVELYN and MARY EVELYN approach with LORD PERCY.

MARGARET and WILLIAM are mid discussion. They are having a heated personal moment in amongst the pomp.

MARGARET

Women talk because they want to be heard and understood.

WILLIAM

Oh for goodness sake, Peg. No they talk because they can't hold their tongues.

MARGARET

Have you ever known me to be such a case? You are speaking a generalisation. (beat) John, Mary, Lord Percy we are most happy to greet you.

The three bow deeply before MARGARET and WILLIAM.

JOHN EVELYN

My Lady Newcastle. I am sorry.
Duchess! The name suits you well.

TIME LAPSE

The party is in full swing. There is dancing and general merriment. PRINCE CHARLES, now KING CHARLES II, walks into the great hall. Everybody stops and turns and bows as he enters. He arrives with two of his MISTRESSES. People are impressed that the King has turned up and there are nods and murmurs of approval as well as the expected looks regarding the MISTRESSES.

CHARLES II makes his way through the crowd to MARGARET and WILLIAM. They are with LORD GEORGE VILLERS and LADY MARY, his sister.

CHARLES II

Good to see you William, as always.
And Margaret, you are looking particularly fine tonight. George

(MORE)

CHARLES II (cont'd)
are the bailiffs backing down? Lady
Mary?

They all bow in acknowledgment. CHARLES II's eyes lingering
on LADY MARY'S breasts.

WILLIAM
You are looking well, Your Majesty.
We were just discussing George's
new poems and saying he should give
up writing.

LORD GEORGE
William that is most unfair. You
know my poetry is a quiet passion
close to my heart. And it is the
way it will stay. Margaret, on the
other hand, continues to amaze with
her writings.

LORD GEORGE bows toward MARGARET and the focus shifts to
her. She starts to blush and to fidget. WILLIAM notices but
CHARLES II is already looking at her.

CHARLES II
Madam, you have been publishing
again? You are gaining quite a
reputation, I hear. I will have to
be watchful or the English people
will know you better than me.

MARGARET (SMILING)
Your Majesty. You have nothing to
fear on that count. I have no
illusions as to how people see me.
They will always love you more than
me. My work, such as it is, is more
of an attempt to show people that
there are different ways to
conceive the world so they might
question how they live. (beat) I
find most people do not think on
their actions.

CHARLES II looks at her with a new appreciation.

CHARLES II
You may be right, Madam, but for
myself I find that my actions are
those of my ministers and as such
always unthought.

The SURROUNDING LISTENERS laugh at this jest though there is some discomfort in the SURROUNDING LISTENERS with the truth of the statement.

LORD GEORGE looks around the group and CHARLES II turns to him, with a mischievous look.

CHARLES II
Ah! Here is one now.

The others laugh and LORD GEORGE looks suitably miffed.

LADY MARY looks at CHARLES II as she says

LADY MARY (BOLDLY)
Why George what discomfort have you
been causing the King?

CHARLES II is bewitched. MARGARET is non-plussed. LORD GEORGE looks at his sister glumly and WILLIAM has a big grin on his face.

LORD GEORGE
Nothing to worry over. The King
knows the game and how it is
played.

CHARLES II still looking at LADY MARY.

CHARLES II
Indeed I do.

TIME LAPSE

MARGARET and JOHN EVELYN are sitting quietly talking. The party is winding down. WILLIAM is in the distance chatting up a PRETTY YOUNG THING. LORD PERCY is asleep snoring on a sofa. LORD GEORGE is talking conspiratorially with A GENTLEMAN in a corner.

MARGARET is casually watching her husband.

MARGARET
It seems that the ladies of the
Court who are beautiful are
elevated as saints regardless if
they be sinners.

JOHN EVELYN (MUSING)
Sainted for the beauty and not for
their piety.

Looking into his drink. He is embarrassed by WILLIAM'S behaviour

MARGARET

For their outward form not their inward grace. (beat) Though they can not be blamed. It is mostly all they have to trade. Beauty, wealth, titles are all worthless in the end but they keep us at Court, playing the marriage game. And luckily for youth it doesn't know that it is transient.

JOHN EVELYN

Titles and wealth are worthless? That is difficult to defend from your place in society.

She still has her eye on William and his companion.

MARGARET

I know but what I am saying is that a woman is forced into a place of using her youth and beauty to procure a life rather than using any other talent she may have. She is never given the chance to use her wits. To learn to think useful thoughts. How much better if women had a choice other than marriage? This lack of choice puts her in the path of misuse.

JOHN EVELYN

Misuse! But marriage is the path ordained by god. It gives us a society that keeps the balance stable.

MARGARET (INCREDULOUSLY)

John after all that has happened to us all, in these past years, you still believe that?

JOHN EVELYN

I can believe nothing else.

MARGARET

How can you be a man of science and believe that? Surely theology has no place with science?

JOHN EVELYN

Surely it can be no other way?

MARGARET

But nature has its own power.
Innate and arbitrary.

JOHN EVELYN

But the hand of god can be seen in
all things. There is in science a
propensity to believe and this is
granted by god.

MARGARET shakes her head as she looks at him intently.

JOHN EVELYN

You should meet Robert Boyle and
the others at the Royal Society.
They would change your mind.

MARGARET

I do not want my mind changed.
Perhaps I could change Mr Boyle's?
(beat) The problem arises when you
add god to a scientific inquiry. As
Descarte might say, 'God is the
hand that winds the clock'. With
nature there is no need to wind the
clock. It takes its momentum from
within.

JOHN EVELYN

We have had this argument before
and you will never convince me of a
world without god. I do not know
why you would want to live in such
a world.

MARGARET

And I can not conceive of any good
reason to rely on god when man is
capable of creating a world of
drama and nightmare all on his own.
There is just no logical argument
for god.

JOHN EVELYN goes to speak but MARGARET is done as she
watches WILLIAM leave the room with PRETTY YOUNG THING. She
stands and smiles at John, bows to him and moves away to
join another group of guests.

113 INT. NEWCASTLE HOUSE. DAY 113

Some weeks later, WILLIAM and MARGARET are having breakfast. MARGARET gets up from the table and walks to the window and thrusts it open with some force. And breathes deeply. The autumn garden is in evidence. WILLIAM watches her.

WILLIAM

There is no reason for me to stay in London. The King has no intention of giving me a position in the Privy Council or his household. The Dukedom was the end of the matter. I think it is time we went home. I no longer have the stomach for the game of politics.

She turns back to him with relief on her face.

114 EXT. WELBECK ABBEY, DAY 114

This is a grand house that is revealed after driving through an extensive park and woodland. It is beautiful from a distance but as we come closer the disrepair becomes obvious. The number of people working on it are significant.

MARGARET and WILLIAM are within the carriage that is approaching the house. There is a flurry of activity around the main entrance as the way is cleared and the servants line up to greet the returning Duke and Duchess.

115 INT. CARRIAGE. DAY 115

WILLIAM is looking out at the activity as they approach.

WILLIAM

Excellent! It is time to restock the stables.

116 INT. MARGARET'S WRITING ROOM, WELBECK ABBEY. DAY 116

MARGARET is unpacking books, organising her room. Then she sits at her desk feeling the sense of the space. Listening to the noises from the garden through the wide open window. She appreciates the view, through her window, that she has while writing. She is settling into her new home.

117 EXT. WELBECK ABBEY, DAY 117

The weather is getting colder. MARGARET is walking in the garden. There is still a lot of activity going on with repairing the house. People working in the garden. WILLIAM is in the distance watching a groom leading a horse. MARGARET smiles to herself and moves toward a quieter area of the garden. None of the activity has anything to do with her.

118 INT. MARGARET'S WRITING ROOM. DAY 118

MARGARET enters her writing room and there are books lying open on her desk as evidence of recent activity. There is a roaring fire warming the room. It is snowing outside.

RODGER, her new clerk, is sitting at his desk writing studiously. He doesn't look up as she comes in. He is obviously working on preparing a manuscript for publication. She sits at her desk seemingly distracted. But she goes through a ritual of straightening paper, inspecting quills. and then quietly settles to her writing.

119 INT. WELBECK ABBEY. SITTING ROOM. NIGHT. 119

It is an evening Christmas celebration. MARGARET and WILLIAM are seated comfortably with THE GUESTS. There are drinks being passed around and the conversation is lively and friendly. WILLIAM once again is the life of the party. There is a blazing fire and music. Dancing is likely to breakout at any time.

MARGARET is speaking with her step-daughter-in-law, FRANCES. Neither MARGARET nor FRANCES are very comfortable.

MARGARET

You know we want you to visit with us. We love having Sweet Harry here. He can be with us at anytime that so pleases you. It has been difficult for William returning to the house when so much has been lost, but he has been very active in the repairs and replacing the goods stolen. I have been staying quietly in my room with my books as is usual. But having Harry around makes the house more jolly. You lived here for a time before we returned. Do you find it much altered?

FRANCES smiles grimly not answering the question. MARGARET has put her foot in it somehow though she doesn't know what she has done and so tries harder.

A SERVANT brings in the tea things and offers around the cups with much ceremony.

MARGARET

William has had some tea brought from London. We used to have it when we were in Paris years ago and it has become very popular here since the King's return. I find it beneficial for my digestion.

FRANCES takes the offered tea with a pained smile on her face. It is clear she would rather be anywhere else rather than talking to Margaret.

FRANCES

Harry loves to visit with William.

FRANCES sips and tea and says nothing more. She is snubbing MARGARET. MARGARET is suitably mortified not knowing what she has done.

WILLIAM and his son HENRY, FRANCES'S husband, are watching MARGARET and FRANCES from a little distance. They look at each other with pained expressions at their wives obvious discord.

WILLIAM

I'll go. Otherwise the grandchildren won't be allowed to visit.

HENRY

She doesn't like Margaret publishing. She thinks it brings the family into disrepute. I agree with her, father.

WILLIAM

Well that's a shame because there is no stopping her.

WILLIAM moves away toward MARGARET, smiling. HENRY looks as if he has more to say. He thinks his father is weak not stopping MARGARET'S publishing.

120 INT. MARGARET'S WRITING ROOM.DAY 120

MARGARET is engrossed in her work. The weather is warming. It is early spring. RODGER is working at his desk.

MARGARET (V/O)

The arrogance of the scientist who thinks that man is outside and above nature, claiming some power over natural causes and effects. While all that man surely is, is merely a small part of nature, inconspicuous and unremarkable.

121 EXT. WELBECK ABBEY, DAY 121

It is a beautiful summer day and the work on the house is finished and the gardens look magnificent.

There are GROUPS OF ARISTOCRATIC LADIES AND GENTLEMEN in the garden dressed beautifully, walking, watching the falconry display, playing bowls, watching the horses perform. Gossiping.

LADY ALBEMARLE

They say she dresses like a man. I had to come and see for myself.

LORD ALBEMARLE

William was always a bit showy. So it doesn't surprise me that his wife is the same.

LADY GREENWAY

I knew her in Paris. She was always strange. Always drawing attention to herself. And the way she went after William ...

They wander off.

It is clear the gathering is a lavish affair as the groups eventually make their way down the jasmine walk to the water garden where the fountain is working.

There is a GROUP OF MUSICIANS playing music to match the waterplay of the fountain.

As the guests come closer some of the statues in the water turn in to nubile young women who move with the music. There are gasps of wonder at the moving statues.

MARGARET and WILLIAM appear at the top of the stairs as if part of the show. Their costumes are brilliant, made especially for the day. The guests cheer and clap at their appearance.

MARGARET and WILLIAM move down the stairs and lead the way to the banqueting hall that is being revealed as they approach. It is a room situated off to one side of the garden with access via stone arches that were hidden behind tapestries. It is very unusual to eat outside and this is a highly original event.

Everyone makes their way to the tables that are lavishly set including forks. The newest invention of the time. It is the event of the season.

122 EXT. LONDON. DAY 122

Establishing shot of London. Spring is flowering in the parks and countryside around the great houses on the edge of the city.

123 INT. LONDON SALON. DAY 123

FRANCES is sitting with a group of women gossiping about MARGARET.

FRANCES

She is difficult to like. So opinionated. So rude. She tells the Duke what to do all of the time. She treats him as an old man. Henry thinks she is trying to take over more of the estate and that his father is in her power. She claims to be interested in the running of the estate but is only involved with herself and for her own gain.

JANE

I heard that she was wearing a man's waistcoat while riding which is strange enough. But then greeting people with a bow, one leg outstretched and sweeping the ground with her hand. Is it possible that she mocks men in general or is she mocking her husband?

CAROLINE

She is clearly perplexing.

FRANCES

Maybe. I know Henry is worried to protect his and the children's inheritance from her.

OLIVIA

Do you think she is strange? I admit she does seem unusual and it is a different thing to see a woman making herself stand out. Usually we would only see and hear of the Duke. His wife would live in retirement. But this is a woman who is noticed. And while it is unexpected I think it is good to see. Times have changed.

CAROLINE

My dear, you have spent too long on the Continent. It is not the way a Duchess should behave.

FRANCES

Oh I didn't tell you. (beat) She has a clerk.

The women all gasp.

FRANCES

He is in her closet all of the time.

Many raised eyebrows.

124

INT. PRINTER'S SHOP. DAY

124

It is raining outside and cold but inside the shop is warm and inviting. There is an air of success about the place that wasn't there before. Several of the Duchesses books are on display in the window.

RODGER is explaining to the printer, JOHN ALLESTYRE, what he wants done with the manuscript he is handing over. This new book is titled 'Observations upon Experimental Philosophy'.

125 EXT. NEWCASTLE HOUSE. DAY 125

MARGARET and WILLIAM are arriving in the carriage. The servants are lined up on the front stairs.

126 INT. NEWCASTLE HOUSE. HALL. DAY 126

MARGARET and WILLIAM enter. There are servants scurrying. JOHN PROCTOR is filling WILLIAM in on what's been happening at the house. MARGARET is following with ELIZABETH planning the visits she needs to make.

127 INT. NEWCASTLE HOUSE. MARGARET'S ROOMS. DAY 127

MARGARET is seated with JOHN EVELYN, MARY EVELYN, WALTER CHARLETON and CHARLES HOWARD.

She is relaxed - for her, speaking with people is still a trial and she has developed ways of making it easier for herself. However, some of her mannerisms come across as a bit too much. She laughs a little too hard.

JOHN EVELYN

It is wonderful to have you back in London, Duchess. We have missed you greatly. Haven't we, Mary?

MARY smiles but says nothing.

MARGARET

It is wonderful to have returned though I love the quiet of Welbeck. I enjoy the gardens when I have them to myself.

JOHN EVELYN

I hear there is a new book printed.

MARGARET (LAUGHING)

Is there no way to keep anything quiet in this town? Yes there is a new book arrived and I have another nearly ready for the printers.

WALTER CHARLETON

Another so soon? You are by far the most prolific writer I have known. And I know me.

Everybody laughs at the jest.

CHARLES HOWARD

The book that has just been published, what is its subject?

MARGARET

It is a collection of observations of natural philosophy. I have tried to write in a way that explains fully the system of nature as it is clear to me.

WALTER CHARLETON

You have chosen your subject well. There can be no greater life's work than to understand the nature of the world. Have you followed a particular ancient?

MARGARET

I might upset some of your friends at the Royal Society for I have chosen to make reflections on some of our modern experimental writers. Particularly those who use the dioptrical arts.

JOHN EVELYN

Well you will be upsetting most of the company. The Gentlemen of the Society put great store by their microscopes and telescopes.

MARGARET

And what good does it do us. I enjoy the marvels as much as the next man but it is purely a distortion of the truth of nature.

CHARLES HOWARD

That may be so but science is dedicated to the finding of the cause as well as telling the truth of things. Surely investigation is a worthwhile pursuit?

MARGARET

Truly it is, but reason must always be engaged.

CHARLES HOWARD

Surely it is the nature of science to utilize reason?

MARGARET

Once again we agree. So then tell me why these scientists persist in bringing god into it. John knows the next part of my argument. That if you have reason there is no rationale to include god. He knows that I do not believe that nature is run by god as if it were some machine.

JOHN EVELYN (FLIRTING)

And Margaret knows that without god there can be no nature.

MARGARET (DECISIVELY)

Motion, perception, life and reason are inherent within every part of nature.

WALTER CHARLETON

Well I think you should come to the Royal Society and make your case.

MARGARET

I will do no such thing. I am happy to discourse with you, my friends, here in my closet. But you will not find me speaking anything to the Gentlemen of the Royal Society.

MARGARET makes herself busy serving tea to cover her embarrassment. A significant look passes between JOHN EVELYN and WALTER CHARLETON

128

EXT. LONDON. MARY EVELYN'S DRAWING ROOM. DAY

128

MARY EVELYN is sitting with her friend CHRISTINA talking about MARGARET

MARY EVELYN

Never did I see a woman so full of herself, so amazingly vain and ambitious.

CHRISTINA

Is her conversation as airy, empty, whimsical and rambling as her books? Aiming for science and high notions but terminating in nonsense?

MARY EVELYN

Even though I have known her for many years I was surprised to find so much extravagancy and vanity in any person not confined by four walls and a lock.

CHRISTINA

I do not understand why gentlemen, men who are esteemed, learned and wise find her poetry of any value.

MARY EVELYN

Or why John encourages her in those scientific pursuits. Discoursing at length about philosophy and science is so unfeminine I was embarrassed to be a witness. I can assure you I made my escape as early as was civilized.

129

INT. NEWCASTLE HOUSE. MARGARET'S DRESSING ROOM. DAY

129

MARGARET is standing in the middle of the room as ELIZABETH helps her to undress. It is quite a detailed process as she takes off the layers. She needs to be cut from her dress. Her wig, her make up, patches and jewelery are removed. She is washed and then dressed in more comfortable clothes.

WILLIAM is sitting with her while the process takes place.

MARGARET

It was quite exciting. I met the Queen in her apartments. She is a wise and witty woman. I feel she and I could become friends. And I was there about fifteen minutes when the King arrived. It caused quite a stir for the King to come. Especially to see me. I can tell you the tongues will be wagging. Apparently I caused a problem as I had one of my women carrying my train and it should have been one of my gentleman or myself. There is no way I could have dragged that thing by myself. But no matter the Queen didn't seem to mind. And who can keep up with the current etiquette anyway. You would have to be at court everyday to keep up. Anyway the King arrived and that

(MORE)

MARGARET (cont'd)

was fun. I think he came to flirt with me and cause a stir. The Queen joined in the fun of it. He is such a handsome man. We played a hand or two of 'rough and honours' before the King took his leave. I then went with the Queen for a walk in the garden and she showed me the fruit trees she has had brought from Portugal. She said she missed her home but that she was finding the court life to be entertaining. Though when she said *that*, I wondered at her meaning. I was telling her about everyone thinking that one of my plays was being performed but that it was your play at the Lincoln's Inn Fields. She said she had seen it. She was surprised to hear that it was yours. It is anonymous, I had forgotten. Oh well no matter. I think everyone should know it is yours anyway.

At this point MARGARET draws breath and WILLIAM laughs out loud.

WILLIAM

I am glad you enjoyed yourself, my love. And I am sure it does not matter that the Queen knows about my play. Did the King seem fit?

MARGARET

Oh yes. He is nearly as handsome as you.

WILLIAM

Well I must admit I am proud of him. He has turned into a fine man. He seems to be able to juggle the politics, and more importantly the politicians, the court, the expectations and his women with much aplomb.

MARGARET

He certainly doesn't seem to feel the burden of the past. All those years of war and exile don't show. All that upheaval and tragedy for

(MORE)

MARGARET (cont'd)

what good? War is such a waste. Men pay with their lives but women seem to pay over and over. Rape, loss, destitution. There has to be a better way to resolve a dispute?

WILLIAM

I believe there is but I think some men take themselves far too seriously to allow it. (beat) But we have left that place behind and everyone seems to be thriving. Except, Peg?, sometimes I feel old. I think it must be nearly time to go home. What do you say? I know you are having fun and I don't want to end it for you. But what do you say for the quiet of Wellbeck?

MARGARET

Well I do have much work to get back to. And while I admit there are some entertainments that are fun, you know me, I prefer the quiet of just the two of us. I was spoiled for so long that now I find that it is more to my taste than all the goings on in London. (beat) I do want to visit the Royal Society, though. I would be entranced to see some of their experiments. Walter was to ask if I might be permitted. But I haven't received their agreement yet.

WILLIAM

Well let us at least wait for that then.

She is finally undressed. All of the servants are gone. Margaret moves to sit next to William and snuggles up to him. He puts his arm around her. They are very comfortable together.

MARGARET

You are the best of husbands. You do know that don't you?

WILLIAM smiles and kisses the top of her head.

MARGARET

You have allowed me so much room to write. I think the King is the man he is because he had you as his teacher and I think I am the woman I am for the same reason. You are the rare sort of man who knows his own soul and is not threatened by others' judgments of you. You do what you want and allow and expect others to do the same. You are generous, patient and wise with me and so have allowed me to pursue my dreams. (beat) It is strange but I feel such a push to look into the future. Maybe there is something of me there. I am not interested to compete in a personality contest now. I want to paint pictures with words that will be seen in times to come and understood in a different way. I don't understand it but I am so compelled to write that I can not do anything other.

WILLIAM takes her face in his hand caressing it, and moves his fingers to lift her chin and looks intently into her eyes.

WILLIAM

I know my darling. It has been a fascinating thing to watch. I might be the man who is not threatened by a famous wife but you are a singular woman who took her destiny seriously.

She smiles at him and snuggles closer. They remain quietly together as the light fades.

130 EXT. HYDE PARK. DAY

130

SAMUEL PEPYS and his friend WILLIAM PENN, are driving in a coach around the park. It is summer and a fashionable scene is in action. Everyone with any status can be seen driving slowly by, watching one another. Maybe stopping occasionally to chat.

131 INT. PEPYS COACH. DAY.

131

WILLIAM PENN'S POV.

SAMUEL PEPYS is leaning out the window trying to see where MARGARET'S coach is and yelling at his driver to find her.

SAMUEL PEPYS

For gods sake man look to where all
of the coaches are and make haste.

People in other coaches notice him and wave and call his name to get his attention which he ignores or is irritated by, depending on the quality of the carriage and the jewelry and feathers on display.

He comes back in the window and answers WILLIAM PENN'S silent question.

SAMUEL PEPYS

I have been trying to get a view of her for some weeks now. All the town-talk is of her extravagance. Her very many footmen have velvet coats. Can you believe? I have to see for myself. This woman creates a story wherever she goes. And I have to record her.

WILLIAM PENN

Well Samuel, I don't know for how long I will put up with this dust.

SAMUEL PEPYS

Just a little longer. And if we have no success I will stand you a drink at the Bell on the way to Clerkenwell. We may catch her on her way home.

WILLIAM PENN

Why are we chasing this woman about London?

SAMUEL PEPYS

I have to see her. The whole story of this lady is a romance and all she does is romantic.

WILLIAM PENN

You don't think you take it too far?

SAMUEL PEPYS
Look for yourself.

We have a view of an elaborate black and silver coach in the distance being followed by a large number of people running and making a fuss, as well as other coaches trying to get close. It is chaos.

MARGARET'S COACH DRIVER is under pressure to get her out of the melee. We only get a glimpse of her waving to the crowd.

132 EXT. NEWCASTLE HOUSE. DAY 132

There are three carriages lined up at the front of the house.

Margaret is going to visit the Royal Society. It is a huge undertaking. The preparations have taken weeks.

There is a lavish and active scene being played out.

The preparations, as befits the wife of one of the richest men in England, are made and carried out to assist MARGARET'S SIX GENTLEMEN into the first carriage and MARGARET'S SIX LADIES into the third.

All of the necessary LIVERIED SERVANTS are decked out in their new uniforms, waiting to take their places.

MR TOPP is directing proceedings

133 INT. NEWCASTLE HOUSE. MARGARET'S DRESSING ROOM. DAY 133

MARGARET is standing in the middle of the room in front of a long mirror. ELIZABETH is finishing dressing her. MARGARET is obviously nervous as she straightens her outfit. Her dress is what would be classed as very masculine. A very low cut bodice, a wig of dangling corkscrew curls, patches on her face, a close fitted knee length coat, cavalier hat with feathers. She makes eye contact with ELIZABETH to say they are done.

As she makes her way across the room she straightens herself, adjusts her gait and inhabits her role of 'The Duchess'. ELIZABETH opens the door, nods to her and then follows her out.

134 EXT. NEWCASTLE HOUSE. DAY

134

MARGARET emerges from Newcastle House and makes her way to the middle carriage. Everything is in order. MR TOPP hands her into the coach with the appropriate solemnity.

The coaches leave the forecourt.

135 INT. ROYAL SOCIETY MEETING ROOM. ARUNDEL HOUSE. DAY.

135

The rooms are packed. There is a meeting going on but no one passed the first three rows is interested. There is an anticipation in the air that is palpable.

JOHN EVELYN is talking to JOHN BERKELEY off to one side.

JOHN EVELYN (NERVOUSLY)

I do hope everything goes well. This is an extraordinary event to be witnessing. I hope she is not too nervous. You know how she can be. And this is a difficult situation for her to be part of.

JOHN BERKELEY

It is, it is. But I am sure she will do fine. It is extraordinary that she is coming. The first time the fellows have beheld a lady in their midst, I'd say. I don't know whether old Harry Oldenberg will be able to stomach it. He holds such old-fashioned views about such things.

JOHN EVELYN

Oh, he will have to cope. The question is whether Robert Hooke will behave appropriately. Surely he won't do anything to embarrass the Society.

JOHN BERKELEY

No, no. He will behave well. I spoke to him earlier. (beat) They have devised a ceremony to greet her. Brouncker has brought out the King's mace for the occasion. And the fellows have put together a series of experiments and every one ends in a dramatic effect. Just as they should for a visiting Lady.

The word comes that Margaret is at the gate and the meeting stops. WALTER CHARELTON and CHARLES HOWARD head out of the room to meet her. BROUNCKER goes to get the King's Mace from the relevant place. He makes his way to the door. There is much moving as the gentlemen try to get the best vantage point.

136 EXT. ARUNDEL HOUSE. DAY 136

Margaret is exiting her coach. The party forms up with MARGARET in the middle. Her SIX LADIES carrying her train behind her. Her SIX GENTLEMEN form a phalanx on either side. They approach the front door.

137 INT. HALL. ARUNDEL HOUSE. DAY 137

The hall is packed as MARGARET'S group make their entrance. There is much gasping as everyone takes in her 'masculine' dress.

WALTER CHARELTON and CHARLES HOWARD come forward and bow and escort MARGARET to the stairs. They are very excited, full of smiles.

138 INT. TOP OF THE STAIRS. ARUNDEL HOUSE. DAY 138

We see Margaret climbing the stairs. Everyone is watching and applauding. She looks radiant like a queen. There is a smile playing about her lips that lets us know that she has achieved the fame she always wanted.

THE END

Introduction

It has been the nature of the historical archive that few women have been recorded therein (Lerner 1986, 1993). This number drops significantly when it comes to the recording of what those women actually said. Some of these rare women whose voices have been recorded told the world that they were intelligent, capable and thoughtful human beings, with ideas and concepts that were not only lucid and coherent (women were often thought not to be able to think clearly) but also meaningful and useful. However, very few of them were tolerated by the prevailing hegemonies of their time. Throughout history, attempts to change the status quo pertaining to the relative importance of women in society have been thwarted or greatly ignored. As a result, changes to the social situations of women, that of their dependent children and to society at large have occurred only by the smallest of increments. Even now, when more and more women are being heard in Western society and significant programs such as the United Nations' focus on bridging the gap in gender inequality worldwide by introducing a raft of measures including assisting member nations to strengthen their laws regarding violence against women (United Nations 2008-2015), huge numbers of women live in the deepest poverty, unheard and unseen (ICRW 2007). Still, as time passes and more women attain some semblance of their 'voice' along with the ability to use it, and sometimes the chance to be heard, we can see positive changes occurring to the status as well as the social and political situations of women in societies around the world.

In pursuing the amplification of the female 'voice'¹ it is important to look into history and resurrect some of the women who have been muted or silenced. These re-amplified representatives allow us to hear important information 'lost' in history and re-examine our

¹ Female or women's 'voice' – a collective term that describes being heard about and/or from as a gender grouping. This is discussed further in chapter one.

thoughts and ourselves in reference to this information. The owners of these female ‘voices’ can also be used by contemporary women, regardless of their personal circumstances, including a difference in economic or social situations, as effective role models who may help them to find the inspiration and strength to pursue their own basic right to be heard. This thesis, comprising a film script and an exegesis, is an effort to bring one woman’s ‘voice’ to a wide audience. Margaret Cavendish (1623-1673) had something to say that was worth listening to but her ‘voice’ has been mostly disregarded like so many others before and since, because of her sex.²

There was an applied logic, on my part, involved in choosing Margaret as the central character for my story but like so many individuals whose heroic stories speak through time, she also seemed to suggest herself for this exercise. It seemed to me that during her life, in many of her lived moments, the seventeenth-century Lady Margaret Cavendish (nee Lucas), Marchioness (and later Duchess) of Newcastle, was a very modern woman: a woman who might feel comfortable in the twenty-first century with its interest in the possibilities available to women. In creating this project I wondered if I could encourage the audience to combine a little intuition, with some openness to new ideas, and a modicum of imagination regarding the historical Margaret’s perceived eccentricities of character and behaviour, and by this blending help the audience begin to see many aspects of her life and its comparability with our own current sensibilities. So while there are many reasons for writers wanting to write stories, in this filmic experience I wanted to encourage the twenty-first-century audience to connect with

² Margaret’s work was academically ‘rediscovered’ in the 1970s and 1980s. The numbers of books, articles and chapters written about her and her work increased from approximately 6 in the 70s, approximately 16 in the 80s, and more than 70 in the 90s (Fitzmaurice J, Margaret Cavendish Bibliography).

Margaret's character and ideas, and in the process come to understand something of her and ourselves and the use of the female 'voice'.

When compared to other women of her time, Margaret was willing to seize what were new and foreign ideas and pursuits. She seemed to constantly push boundaries, and her achievements were numerous and varied. Her work in science and philosophy put her at the cutting edge of seventeenth-century thought and as such brought her into contact with, and allowed her to measure her ideas against, many of the male scholars of the day.³ She embodies the modern concept of personal female power. This concept which has only been formally codified in the last fifty years by the women's liberation/feminist movement and feminist theory is now being reflected by the individualist action of third-wave feminists. These ideas are explained in the first chapter of this thesis. Margaret wrote about a myriad of subjects that are still topical today, such as the inequality of marriage for women, the repressive attitudes of many religions regarding the status of women, and the right of women to publish their work. She wrote in many genres, such as letters, poetry, novellas, plays, orations, an autobiography and a biography of her husband. She also wrote three books of natural philosophy which was unprecedented for a female author (James 2003). She was the first English woman to write prolifically and deliberately.⁴ She provokingly, for the time, published her books under her own name. She was the first woman to be invited to visit the Royal Society where a spectacle of experiments was conducted for her own private audience.

³ Interestingly, the science occurring at the end of the twentieth and beginning of the twenty-first century, with phenomena such as quantum physics, climate change and gene mapping, has an eerie resonance with Margaret's research and writings from over three-hundred and fifty years ago.

⁴ Margaret wrote and published thirteen books printed in twenty-two editions (Fitzmaurice 2004). Many of the second editions were heavily reworked.

She was the first person to write science fiction (Pohl 2003, p.58).⁵ She was, in short, the sort of woman who caused a sensation. Yet after her death her scientific and philosophical works were ignored and her other writing disregarded. It is only since the last decades of the twentieth century that her work has once again become the focus of some interest.

I felt Margaret's life-work held a story that would benefit from being broadcast to a wide audience. I also believed that the best way to tell her story was to put her into the mainstream (popular) culture in a dominant, forceful medium. A fictional novel was a possible vehicle. However, film has a unique way of imprinting itself onto the psyche of an individual, which seemed more appropriate to the calibre, artistry and flamboyance of Margaret. Film is able to bring a sense of instant involvement to a story that other genres lack and I felt that an accessible film with a wide appeal could facilitate the acceptance of Margaret as an unforgettable character. In the process she would embody the broad themes I wanted to highlight for discussion, such as how recorded history has treated women, the role of women in history, the concept of female power through a proto-feminist exemplar, and the external versus internal power of the individual. I felt she had the potential to come off the pages of history and take up a role that was credible and efficacious. Film was the obvious choice for telling this story as I discuss in chapter four. This exegesis has no specific discussion of the content and/or comparison of genre films, since its framing device is a consideration of the socio-technical aspects of film. However, this script's connection to history, gender, feminism and other topics has been addressed throughout.

⁵ Pohl (2003) explains that in Margaret's 1666 edition of *Observations Upon Experimental Philosophy*, Margaret included the fictional explanation of her scientific ideas with the addition of story titled *The Description of the New World, called The Blazing World*.

There were several more reasons for undertaking the writing of a film script. One of these was to assist a new generation of young women to understand the extensive work done by previous feminists and proto-feminists. I wanted to help them understand their position with regards to the knowledge that many women in previous generations had experienced a burgeoning of their social rights only to lose them. My academic background in sociology, philosophy and women's spirituality and my liberal feminist, individualist approach to gender issues had alerted me to this cyclical pattern found in the historical evidence which denoted a rise and fall in women's social power. Secondly, I was aware that film can offer itself as a mirror, in a Jungian (1916, 1991) sense, where the film characters' performances can trigger memories, emotions and feelings that can generate insight on the part of the audience. Film is a place where people and technology converge, making it a site where social change may occur. As McQuail (1985, p.96) points out, "changes in communication are a primary cause of social change". Thus, I felt that the character of Margaret-as-hero is one that an audience might relate to and possibly use as a 'mirror' to access the self. She could be a psychological device that could carry the desires of many through changes in cognitive processes to the awakening of a new or different self. In so doing she might provide insight into the value of women's 'voices' and the need for vigilance in maintaining the continuance of those 'voices'. I was also interested in the application of creative research to a project and the 'freedoms' this approach might allow in an academic undertaking including the writing of this exegesis.

The script is set in a historical period that saw England experience great flux both politically and socially.⁶ These upheavals, particularly the act of regicide, reverberated throughout the entire social structure of the country, leaving it irrevocably changed. Following is a brief

⁶ The country was known as England till 1707 when it became Great Britain and then in 1927 it became the United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland.

construct of the historical time line in which the script's action unfolds. The script begins in 1645; the characters are already several years into the English Civil War and are exiled in Paris. The King, Charles I, was still in England engaging in battles with the Parliamentary forces. William Cavendish, Margaret's future husband, was in charge of the Royalist armies of the north. He engaged in and lost what was to become known as the Battle of Marston Moor. He fled from the battlefield into exile in Europe. His reputation as a Civil War general was severely undermined by this departure. The King was eventually captured on the Isle of Wight and taken to London where he was beheaded in 1649. This act of regicide shocked not only the people of England but also their trading partners in Europe. Parliament, led by Oliver Cromwell, took control and previous Royalists were dealt with harshly. At this time William Cavendish was declared a traitor to be hanged if he re-entered the country. The King-in-exile was Charles I's son, Charles II. He lived in several different European countries till 1660 when the English Parliament asked him to return to the throne. This Restoration of the King to the throne of England ushered in a period of peace that saw the return of Royalists from exile as well as the flourishing of arts and sciences including the establishment of the Royal Society. However, the occurrence of the plague in 1665, the Great Fire of London in 1666 and the Dutch sinking of the English navy moored in the Thames in 1667 left the capital and the country reeling. Margaret's visit to the Royal Society, as depicted in the script, was in 1667 just before the sinking of the fleet. After her visit Margaret and William left London and the court for their estates in the north.

The first chapter of this exegesis, 'Factors relevant to the telling of this story', discusses different aspects of storytelling relevant to this project. It begins with a discussion on the need for the restoration of women's 'voices' into the historical narrative and the theoretical

underpinnings of this research, including feminism (liberal), feminist and historical theory, misperceptions of historical behaviour, as well as the validity of personal expression as public discourse for those formerly silenced. Following this I discuss the necessity of creating a credible fictional story from history while making it entertaining. This requires the narrative of the film script to be woven from historical sources and fiction creating a fictional story strongly embedded in history. Taking this approach allows for fully rounded and believable characters to be created. These characters emerge from and reside comfortably in their historical milieu and speak in a relevant and accessible vernacular to a modern audience.

The second chapter is 'The historical Margaret'. This chapter provides details of her life that are relevant to the writing of the film script and gives an insight into her character which then leads to understanding the creation of her filmic character. The creation of a strong narrative required sifting through Margaret's life, her words, other's opinions of her, and her relationships to achieve a solid character on the page. The following questions guided my research: What stamp of principal character should Margaret be? What type of journey should she undertake? How do I display the historical setting and Margaret within it? An audience needs to relate to the filmic characters, so what production values are valid? Is a British aesthetic, as opposed to an Australian or a Hollywood one, workable for attracting a wide audience? In creating Margaret's story I wanted to base my answers on criteria that are relevant to the making of a popular film while maintaining the story's roots firmly in history.

The third chapter, 'Forming a filmic character for Margaret', outlines the development of the filmic version of Margaret. It discusses Margaret's suitability in the role as hero and how she goes about fulfilling this role. The importance of other influences in Margaret's life are also

highlighted in this chapter, demonstrating the complexity of making a filmic tale that tells a ‘whole’ story. Film is, by its nature, a simplified version of events, in this case about a woman’s life, that has to portray the complexity of personalities and relationships in a life and which, in the process, elevates the story and gives it resonance and meaning. This chapter highlights these personalities and relationships and how they shape the woman we see on screen.

The fourth chapter, ‘The social impact of the genre of film’, explores the psychological and sociological aspects of film as useful tools in both the transmission of cultural information and the transformation of social constructs. It discusses the argument for such changes being effected through popular culture in the form of a commercial script. It also delivers a discussion on the validity of creative research and its value as illustrated by this thesis.

This exegesis is an exploration of the creative process of writing a film script. It is not a study of film criticism or film theory, nor is its primary focus the conflict of the history/fiction debate. This script employs usual filmic methods to convey the story of Margaret including the nominal use of extensive dialogue to explain some of her more complex ideas. There is no sound direction included in the script as it is written as a ‘spec’ (speculative) script for eventual sale rather than as a shooting script used as a guide for production. This creative research applies a socio-technical, liberal feminist and postmodernist approach, which is underscored by my academic background in sociology, to the idea of social change through fictionalising a historical figure in a film script. I have used historically informed fiction to shape the story, concentrating on the strategies needed to transform a historical character into a filmic one, with the focus on the individual character’s, or hero’s, journey. This is a study in

filmic storytelling where the essence of the journey is myth-making, which will, in turn, encourage the audience to examine their personal role models and their social choices.

This exegesis is an analysis of the decisions made in writing the story of one woman and her attempt to say something meaningful. Margaret Cavendish was a woman from the seventeenth century who, when looking at her own cultural heritage, could see no reason for women to be silent. She therefore set herself the task of doing something to counteract this situation in her own life. Her voice is a representation of the many, many voices of women who have passed through history unheard or silenced.

A note on language use.

I have used 'Margaret' as the name of my character when referring to her in this exegesis rather than calling her 'Cavendish', as might be expected in an academic context. Cavendish is how she is referred to in academic literature; however, during the process of writing the film script she became so vital in my imagination as Margaret that it felt as if I were writing about two different women when I called her Cavendish in the exegesis. In her own lifetime, Margaret actually referred to herself as Newcastle and never as Cavendish. Calling her Cavendish is a modern academic practice and it seemed strange to adhere to a form with which she did not agree and which felt so uncomfortable for my use.

I have used Margaret's words in some places in the script, updating the spelling and some of the grammar as well as using other literary devices in an effort to make her thoughts and research more available to a contemporary audience. Writing dialogue to be spoken by seventeenth-century characters in a way that gives the impression of historical speech while

being instantly recognisable and comprehensible for twenty-first-century actors and audiences is challenging. I began by taking the letters written between Margaret and William and transposing them into a conversation. This proved almost impossible because of verbosity and the complexity of the grammar. I then looked at the meter of a given conversation in the script and attempted to make it sound historically relevant, stilted and uneven to the modern ear, without it becoming too jarring. Finally, I discovered that while Margaret's words were valid as they were, manipulating them in an effort to make them suitable to the required structure of contemporary dialogue and scene construction meant they became something else altogether. Eventually, I decided to use a modern construction of language with a peppering of anachronistic words to create dialogue that was useable but that was in keeping with a period setting.

Chapter one

Factors relevant to the telling of this story

Women's 'voice' and history

In the film script the lead character is written as a socially privileged woman who works independently against the entrenched cultural system. Margaret is isolated in her endeavours and she negotiates alone the power structures with which she is confronted. She must therefore rely on her own strength of will. At times, though, she does use the abilities of those around her, particularly her husband William and her brother-in-law, Charles. This character profile for Margaret does not necessarily follow nor represent a typical feminist ideology. However, Margaret does represent the individualistic, liberal-feminist motif of working from reduced institutional power (though in her case one of social and economic privilege) with the determination to find ways around the hegemonies in place. It is within these actions we could claim that Margaret found her 'voice':

Feminists have used the word 'voice' to refer to a wide range of aspirations: cultural agency, political enfranchisement, sexual autonomy, and expressive freedom, all of which have been historically denied to women. In this context, 'voice' has become a metaphor for textual authority, and alludes to the efforts of women to reclaim their own experience through writing ("having a voice") or to the specific qualities of their literary and cultural self-expression ("in a different voice"). This metaphor has become intrinsic and pervasive to the feminine discourse. (Dunn and Jones 1996 p. 1)

By focusing on Margaret's 'voice' in the script, I am placing gender at the forefront of this inquiry. It is also instrumental in shaping the script's construction.

Margaret can be seen as an unusual though willing choice to showcase the issues surrounding women's 'voice'. She can be seen as willing because she chose to write about herself. In taking this action she wrote a version of herself into existence which caused her to transform from a private person into a public one. This action revealed a willingness on her part to move outside her cultural milieu, thus taking a form of social action that can be seen as an act of disobedience (Walker 1995 p. 6). The movement beyond her 'comfort zone' in creating her narrative marked her as unusual – she, in fact, identified herself as 'singular' (Cavendish 2004b) – and allowed her the space to create her 'voice'. This conscious choice by Margaret to allow a version of herself to exist outside of her milieu proved unusual because she lived in a time when the modern notion of 'the individual' was emerging. In previous time periods, the fundamental working unit of society had been established within the confines of the family and each member played his/her part for the betterment of the whole. The transition from fourteenth-century Feudalism to the fifteenth- and sixteenth-centuries' Renaissance and Reformation had an enormous impact on social structures across Europe. However, for women the social situation hardly changed. Ben-Yehuda's (1980 p.16) work on the emergence of witchcraft at this time identified that women were considered chattels and possessions to be used as the head of the family saw fit. A woman continued to be considered less than any male. As Wiesner (2000) identifies, a woman's value as an individual, if she had any at all, was intimately tied to the male members of her family whether it be father, brothers or husband. Margaret's familial situation was unusual in that her mother effectively held the position as head of the family (Whitaker 2002 p.13). This highly unusual situation had a bearing on the choices available to Margaret including how she might choose to direct her own life which was a very uncommon occurrence for a woman at that time. I discuss these experiences and choices, in detail, in the following chapters.

Margaret's freedom of thought and what we in the twenty-first century might understand to be her 'feminist consciousness' would lead her to develop a desire to leave something of herself in history. She was determined to use her 'voice' for this purpose. She said in her first publication *Poems and Fancies* (1653), "tis a part of honour to aspire toward fame. For it cannot be an infamy to seek or run after glory, to love perfection, to desire praise" (Cavendish cited in Whitaker 2002 p.153). Fame for Margaret was an honourable way for a woman to gain recognition. Just as now we talk of 'voice' which is identified as a vehicle of empowerment, self-representation, self-expression, authentic knowledge and agency (Weidman 2003), fame was Margaret's understanding of a woman's 'voice' and writing was her way of achieving it. Her conversation with William about its importance in her life and how she would achieve fame is a pivotal scene in the script, which is discussed in chapter two.

She wrote of her willingness to allow her writing to go into history. She hoped that it would eventually receive the attention she wanted for it and herself:

But say that Book should not in this Age take,
 Another Age of great esteem may make;
 If not the second, then a third may raise
 It from the Dust, and give it wondrous praise:
 for who can tell but my poor Book may have
 Honour'd renown, when I am in the Grave?
 And when I dye, my Blessing I will give,
 And pray it may in after Ages live.

(Cavendish, *Natures pictures drawn by fancies pencil to the life* (1656), cited in Rees 2003 p.186)

The 'voice' as a political tool has a value (Couldry 2010) and I believe it is no accident that Margaret has been rediscovered in a time which is seeing a shift from second-wave (1960s and 1970s) to third-wave (1990s to present) feminism.

Feminism does not have a starting point but it does have a momentum. This momentum saw the gradual public acknowledgement, over centuries, of a few women who believed that women should be educated in a manner similar to men (de Pizan (1405), (2000); Cavendish (1664) (2004b); Woolstonecraft (1792), (1995)). Consequently, this slow gathering of a female focus on the potential to make social change a reality saw the rise of groups in both Europe and the Americas willing to politicise their efforts in the attempt to be given the right to vote. This was the emergence of the suffragettes and what is now considered the first wave of feminism. They realised their political goals at the beginning of the twentieth century in achieving political equality for women and their right to vote. As time moved on so did the concept of women's equality to men. However, contrary to this, there was also a common understanding which became the impetus for forming the second wave of feminism that when women used power, in any form, their actions brought a quick retaliatory response from men (Baker 1976).

The second wave of feminism saw the establishment of the Women's Liberation Movement. This group had the political purpose of achieving equal rights for women in terms of employment, justice, pay and other identified areas of inequality. As the women in the second wave were being heard and creating the social changes they desired, sub-groups began to

emerge who felt their specific needs were being subverted for the 'greater' good (Amos and Parmar 2005). The second wave began to divide into different expressions of feminism where the common ground of the patriarchal nature of the structures within society were but a starting point. Liberal feminism emerged aiming to achieve full equality of opportunity in all spheres without radically transforming the current social and political systems. However, the newly formed radical feminists believed that there was a need for a new social order so as to establish the situation where no one group in society was subordinate to another. Toril Moi in her ground breaking work, *Sexual and Textual Politics* (1985), coined the term postfeminism in a attempt to deconstruct this two-sided pull between liberal feminism and radical feminism (Ferguson 2004). However 'the ball had been set in motion' and other versions of feminism emerged, including the essential feminists, who claimed that 'woman' stood outside cultural construction where she became 'other' and as such gained further social knowledge. Or the determinist feminists who claimed that 'woman' was a social construct upon which patriarchy depended for self perpetuation (Cooey 1994). With these and so many other choices as the 1990s progressed, a common theme materialised encouraging the examination of the relevance of the personal journey. Thus, the third wave of feminism emerged concerned with the individual woman being able and allowed to choose her own path to satisfaction. This understanding of feminism became about the choices a woman had in her life rather than the particular path she chose and her adherence to a particular dogma. As a third-wave feminist spokesperson, Rebecca Walker (2001) agrees with Margaret's and the second-wave's liberal feminist approach to change by identifying with women as a group who are caught in patriarchal social constructions. However, as a third-wave feminist, Walker also embraces rethinking what is or is not good for women individually and/or collectively and allows for an

individual, personal response (Snyder 2008). Margaret as an individualist herself would have recognised this thinking.

In writing a script that tells the story of her life I have used the inclination inherent in third-wave feminism towards the expression of the individual and personal experiences. I have taken the notion of choice, 'the multiplicity of individuals and experience' which defines the third wave, and encourages a woman to live her life and to prioritise her own choices and experience above the collective (Baumgardner and Richards 2003 p.166), and applied it to Margaret and her story. But as with any woman, Margaret has a complex human personality. Through her portrayals of herself in her writing, she has given posterity a version of self which I have used to help create the on-screen persona. She may or may not fit the parameters of a particular type of feminism, and we certainly can not know her as the woman she was, but the script version of Margaret is a legitimate portrayal of her and her choices which also resonates with the politics of third-wave feminism. It is important to remember that the third wave, like the second, is not a uniform perspective but a variable number of diverse and analytical approaches (Mann and Huffman 2005). Black feminist writer Barbara Smith agrees indicating that feminism is a broad based political movement that seeks freedom for all women who are oppressed: women of colour, working-class women, poor women, physically challenged women, lesbians, old women – as well as white economically privileged heterosexual women (Dicker and Piepmeier 2003 p.8) such as Margaret.

Women have been and still are obscured in the recording of history. Margaret is a case in point with her limited entry in the historical record up until the end of the last century⁷.

⁷ Before 1900 there are approximately fifteen references to Margaret in the work of other writers and scholars though usually the references concerned her dress or behaviour with 'her writing being generally thought to be quaint or quirky' (Fitzmaurice 2004).

Contemporary narratives continue to be written relying on the same influences that have come from previous Eurocentric and patriarchal historicising. History continues to be retold with the same reflections of a masculine ethos. As evidenced below, the second wave of feminism questioned such constructs. In the opening lines of her text *The Women's History of the World*, Rosalind Miles (1988) decries the process of patriarchal historiography:

The story of the human race begins with a female. Woman carried the original human chromosome as she does to this day; her evolutionary adaptation ensured the survival and success of the species; her work of mothering provided the cerebral spur for human communication and social organisation. Yet for generations of historians, archaeologists, anthropologists and biologists, the sole star of the dawn story has been man. Man the hunter, man the toolmaker, man the lord of creation stalks the primeval savannah in solitary splendour through every known version of the origin of our species. (p.19)

It continues to be an important task to question the validity of history that has been predicated on subjective class and gender notions of what is of value. From the lessons learnt, it is deemed important to continue to contribute to a de-normalisation process that ultimately undermines the male-centric discourse of history. Black (2006) tells us that history textbooks in schools and universities, in this case in the United States, continue to marginalise women's roles in history and that these texts are the predominant source for disseminating historical information within the educational system. Clinchy (2002) supports this saying that women's silence is entrenched in structures and systems of society and they are excluded, as individuals, from selected communities. By making history inclusive – rather than a counter-

narrative to the privileging of the masculinised story – women have a chance to regain some balance in the narrative.

In an effort to explain the entrenched imbalance of the narrative and the deep-seated structures that continue to exclude women it is useful to explore the concept of ‘voice’. Bakhtin (1981 p. 348), a twentieth-century philosopher, was one of the first to identify ‘voice’ as a structure in connection to an individual’s truth. He identified that the truth is not a single entity and used the term ‘polyphony’ to indicate that there may be many ‘voices’ and each is capable of speaking the truth. An individual truth and its accompanying ‘voice’ can only be identified when they are engaged with other ‘voices’. This polyphony can become an equivocal exploration of difference (Wallraven 2007). In 1973 Robin Lakoff identified that ‘voices’ and how they are heard is a gender issue. She asked if the very nature of how women speak places them in a marginal position which is reflected in the way men speak to women and how women speak about themselves. She identified ten commonplace ways in which women’s speech differs from men’s – for example; hedging around a topic, being overly polite, speaking less often. Some of these traits might seem outmoded nearly forty years later, but she brought to women’s attention their own complicity in the inequality debate. This added a whole other dimension to the impetus of women changing the status quo. Julie Kristeva (1980) furthered understanding of ‘voice’ by identifying the connection between the subject (the personal) and the production of meaning (language) and by identifying that language is the combination of the semiotic – the material representation in language of our bodily origins and unconscious drives – and the symbolic which represents simple, univocal, and direct meaning (Joy 2001 p. 85). This identification of semiotic/symbolic language explains many of the perceived differences in communication between men and women and

how women's voice can go unheard in a society. Language itself is a symbolic system, and so when women speak, it could be construed, that they are speaking a foreign tongue or a second language. Crawford (1995) explains this phenomenon as the two-cultures approach. Thus, Cooley (1994) suggests the term *jouissance* as a constructive alternative to phallogocentrism to define how a woman's body is connected to language, and how this experience of language is different from the reason and logic of male language, which in turn identifies, explains and clarifies the bias of the existing narrative.

However, by the mid 1990s scholars such as Hare-Mustin and Marecek (1995 p.41) felt that while ever gender is framed as difference an impasse is reached in furthering our knowledge about gender and so we are stifled and unable to bring about the political and social change that is desired. Further, ten years later, Moi (2005 p.4) stated that, "the distinction between sex and gender is simply irrelevant to the task of producing a concrete, historical understanding of what it means to be a woman". She goes on to explore de Beauvoir's (1988) stance from the fifties as the most useful guide because it suggests that eliminating sexed subjectivity be the goal of change. She further states that what is needed 'is a feminism committed to seeking justice and equality for women, in the most ordinary sense of the word' (2005 p.9). This paring back of the rhetoric and attempting to simplify the complexity of what can be seen as an amorphous concept, 'voice', links into a place where the third wave of feminism has already arrived. Women have looked at the problem of gender and 'voice' from all sides and the result is the acknowledgement that each woman has her own experience of her life and that it is for her to choose how she wants to live it (Maushart 2005) unrestrained by the way she talks or the language she has learned. However, the continuing difficulty for any version of feminism is that it finds itself still fighting the old battle against entrenched social norms

and cultural pressures of what it is to be a woman, and the ongoing, every-day, real difficulties that come with being a woman and attempting to use her 'voice'.

The act of restoring women and their 'voices' to the historical narrative has been occurring over the last forty years. As historian Jenkins (1991 p.9) says, "feminists are writing women back into history". Many writers and researchers have highlighted the previous work of female writers, poets, critics and social activists, drawing women out into the public sphere and giving them a place in the narratives of history and literature. They have returned their 'voices' to the public record. Historians, such as Lerner (1986, 1993), have gone some way in righting the situation, explaining why women have had no 'voice' and the residual effects of this 'lack of voice' on society and culture. She explains in her books *The Creation of Patriarchy* and *The Creation of Feminist Consciousness* the social cost resulting from the exclusion of women from the construction of abstract thought through the ages: society has lost ideas and outcomes from the potential endeavours of academically trained women as generation after generation of women have been excluded from education. Helene Cixous and Catherine Clements (1996) in *The Newly Born Woman* discuss the attempts made to reclaim the female 'voice' and its cultural meaning in the last decades of the twentieth century. They argue that women emerging from patriarchal thought face a lack of self-definition – existential nothingness. This is why increasing the presence of women's 'voice' in the historical narrative is such important work. Women need to have a myriad of role-models from which to learn and understand who they are. Being able to see and emulate other women makes it possible for women to change their consciousness (Lerner 1993). Nichols (1983) agrees discussing self-referentiality in terms of the owner of the voice speaking out for themselves. In his example he is referring to documentary film making and dismisses the

voice of text as illegitimate. However, I would argue that in a historical restoration project, such as the script for this thesis, the same ideas apply in putting historical figures on film.

Words spoken by characters in film have the most impact when they are being spoken by the individual, not a voice over or voice-of-god commentary. Hearing the voice of the individual is paramount and in so doing he/she creates a personal history, interviewees in documentaries and historical figures in film alike.

However it is also good to note that while the appearance of any woman at all in the public record is to be applauded, the position of women in relation to public history can be complex. Because so few women have been recorded in history, those who do appear can be problematic in terms of their subjectivity within the dominant discourse. It might be argued that the female who became visible in the patriarchal version of history and who remains widely known for her role as a public figure has been carried forward in the narrative because she has been acceptable to the patriarchy. She has supported the ideals expected of women by society (Lerner 1975). Florence Nightingale and Hildegard of Bingen are good examples of historically acceptable roles for women – the nurse and the nun. However, in these two situations the unusual ability of the women involved to navigate their individual patriarchal worlds and understand the discourses of power that they found therein meant they discovered ways of operating within their given systems that allowed them to form institutions to educate other women. It is this action, women educating women, that brings about change in women's lives. Lerner (1993) claims that, when women can gain a perspective on the overall situation of women in a given society, they are able to see how the manipulation of women in that society is considered normal. This perspective is usually conveyed through women educating the next generation of women and instilling an understanding of the reality of a women's

position in the society. It is a lack of education of women by women that keeps them from introspection and/or self-reflection which in turn would allow them to create a desirable future.

In writing a film script I wanted to make space in the historical discourse for Margaret because I believe she has something worthwhile to say about the world and how women can live in it. While she operated in an overtly patriarchal society, her life is an example of how a woman can garner influence and use it to move outside the socially accepted behaviour of the time and in the process have her 'voice' heard.

Amalgamating fact and fiction in storytelling

In making the decision to write a film script about a historical person who lived three-hundred and fifty years ago, I had to rely on a fusion of fact and fiction to make a palatable story for a modern, cinema-going audience. I had no option but to use fiction when filling out the details of Margaret's life so as to create a reasonable filmic character. We have the basis of Margaret's story from the historical record but we do not know the particulars of her life and so necessarily this script is a work of both fact and fiction – historically based fiction. The fact is drawn from the historical record of the time while the fictional narrative is tied as closely as possible to that history. This melding is intended as an imaginative enrichment process of a past account. And while this account holds a sketch of an extraordinary woman, the tumultuous events surrounding her and her part in history, the melding process clothes her in everyday normalcy so an audience may then empathise with her. Following is a discussion of the historical narrative: how it is woven, how postmodern strategies are applied to historical

creations, how fictional characters can be merged with the historical personality and how a fully rounded filmic character is created from the historical record.

Historical fact is included in the script both explicitly and implicitly. Historical figures appear explicitly in the meta-narrative which gives the film script its historical basis. These figures include English Royalty such as Charles I, Charles II, Queen Henrietta-Maria; world-renowned philosophers and scientists such as Rene Descartes, Thomas Hobbes and Pierre Gassendi; and popular journalists of the time, Samuel Pepys and John Evelyn. On the other hand the script's narrative is driven by the actions and conversations of the characters where historical fact is embedded implicitly in the detail as subtext, thus enhancing the script's characterisations, settings and events. These details of history include: seventeenth-century mores of the English aristocracy; the conditions, culture and politics of seventeenth-century English Court life both at home and in exile; the daily lives of the women embodied by Margaret, Queen Henrietta-Maria and other aristocratic Ladies; and the events and conditions that impacted on a woman writing and publishing her work in seventeenth-century England.

The historical evidence is derived from several collections of sources. Principally it comes from Margaret Cavendish's biography by Katie Whitaker (2002) *Mad Madge: The Extraordinary Life of Margaret Cavendish, Duchess of Newcastle, the First Woman to Live by Her Pen* and Anne Battigelli's (1998) exploration of Margaret's intellectual life, *Margaret Cavendish and the Exiles of the Mind*. These books provide much of the detail for Margaret's world. Information is also derived from the works of devoted Margaret Cavendish scholars who have produced recent editions of her work and thus easy access to her words. These books include: Susan James's (2003) focus on Margaret's political writing, James

Fitzmaurice's (2004a) updating of her volume of letters, Anne Shaver's (1999) work on several of her plays, Kate Lilley's (2004) updating of her stories, and Eileen O'Neill's (2001) review of her natural philosophy. These works gave me Margaret's actual words to weave into the script's dialogue. Further guidance came from the work of historians: Fraser (1979, 1984), Hill (1962, 1996), Coate (1924) and Greer (2007) who each added to the background minutia of everyday life in and around the seventeenth century. The writings of Margaret's husband William are also used, particularly the dialogue from their letters to each other (Cavendish cited in Fitzmaurice 2004a). These letters gave me an insight into this couple's use of language, their ideas on behaviour and a sense of their relationship. The adequacy of these secondary sources relieved the need to access primary sources such as The Cavendish family papers and The Portland family papers which are held at the University of Nottingham in the United Kingdom. These primary sources informed and enriched the factual components and the fictional elements of the script through the work of other scholars. I was able to explore and use these historical sources to understand how individuals might have walked through the world at this point in history and to construct imagined details for the characters' lives. Additionally, other films of a similar genre such as *The Duchess*, *Elizabeth*, *The Other Boleyn Girl* and *Young Victoria* have helped guide me cinematically. Using *The Duchess* I was able to consider the application of the theme of the lead character's unusual dress sense as a comparison for my lead character as well as writing a female protagonist without political aspirations as the lead character in a period drama. I also considered the final scenes from *Elizabeth I* as an impressive statement about a woman achieving her personal pursuits. Further, I wanted to attempt to replicate the openness of the relationship between the lead characters in *Young Victoria* for my own lead characters' relationship, as well as replicate the texture of the scenes from *The Other Boleyn Girl* that showed the main characters, Anne and

Mary, as children. These films assisted me in the scriptwriting phase to consider the outcomes of differing approaches and decisions. I have discussed some of these points of interest in later sections.

Blending fact and fiction has led me, and others, to consider; the nature of history and fiction, how history is derived from events recorded by an individual or by collective agreement, and how reliable these sources might be. This has led to questioning of the nature of historical truth, and the role of fiction within it. In any given historical narrative, what is real and what is the result of the political motivations or cultural influences of the person writing the history? These are old yet still contemporary questions that were expertly raised by Jenkins in 1991 and have been in continuous debate ever since (Clendinnen 2006; Fulbrook 2002; Southgate 1996; Zajda and Whitehouse 2009). For example, Zajda and Whitehouse argue that history being taught and learnt in schools has been overtaken by political and ideological imperatives that are concerned with creating and promoting a national identity in a global culture. Mc Kenna (1998), Clendinnen (2006), Grenville (2008) and others have weighed into the debate in Australia with a robust discussion on where the fiction/history/politics divide might lie. The above questions are relevant to the weave of my film script's narrative and how it is created from other possible historical (re)constructions. Research into how others have dealt with the constructions of history helped me to visualise a direction for the structuring of the unification of history and fiction in my own script. For example Plumb (1975) uses a neo-traditional approach that relies on the re-traditionalisation of history via a reworded patriarchal discourse or Curthoys and Docker's (2005 p.5) explanation of a postmodern approach where they resist the idea that a historian can "objectively establish" the truth. These diverse approaches gave me an insight into what might be possible in my own situation.

My initial action was to create a framework for Margaret's story that was concerned with giving an account of her life from a contemporary cultural point of view. I wanted to provide a history that would be familiar to the general public and relevant to their reality as a way of encouraging their connection to the film. Accordingly, it became important to search for issues, events and stories that provided links and showed similarities between life in the seventeenth century and that of the twenty-first century. These stories and events would help to bed the film's story in its time frame while enhancing the storytelling potential and making a connection with a contemporary audience. Attention to relationships, particularly the relationship between Margaret and William, became the crux of the script. The tenor of this relationship comes to us from Margaret and William's letters, and these letters, with their honesty, style and wit, gave me the central theme for the script. Hence, the script has a personal relationship at its centre and the events of history are the canvas on which the relationship is drawn. I believe it is obvious that historiography informs all of this film script's characters' actions and so while the momentous events of history are broadly drawn it is the personal relationships that are at the heart of the story.

First and foremost I wanted to write an historical script which would speak to a contemporary audience. I therefore needed to search for existing examples of the genre which resonated with my style of storytelling to see how other writers dealt with the merging of fact and fiction. One of the films that was released while I was researching Margaret was *The Other Boleyn Girl*, written by Peter Morgan (2008). This film characterises the style, though not necessarily the politics, of the script that I wanted to write. Some of these characteristics include a primarily female-driven drama, a historical narrative with an English setting and

production values, and historically relevant costumes and sets to tell the story. The movie was based on a novel of the same name written by Philippa Gregory (2001). Both the novel and film are accounts of the lives of the two Boleyn sisters, Anne and Mary, and their relationships with Henry VIII and each other. In the novel, Gregory refers to the closeness of the relationship between the sisters and she places them together at the end of Anne's life. However, historically there is no record of Anne and Mary seeing each other for the last two years of Anne's life as they do in the film. For example, there is no evidence that Mary visited Anne at the Tower of London in Anne's last days. This lack of historical evidence could be a question of record-keeping at the time (Fulbrook 2002) though should we trust the lack of evidence of their meeting? There is little written by or about Mary; she is a quiet and elusive figure in history who will probably never become more clearly defined. Gregory introduced a "version of truth" (Jenkins 1991) to her historical narrative and in doing so was able to bring Mary out of the shadows. Gregory put forward an account of history which is both non-verifiable and irrefutable. Accordingly, some of William and Margaret's conversations can be read in the same way. For example, we do not know what was actually said in their conversations while they were courting, but by taking the information that is available about their relationship from their letters, I was able to chronicle the history with imagined dialogue that fitted the situation and thereby merge fact and fiction.

I found Gregory's 'fluid' or postmodern use of history in the construction of historical fiction to be instructive. In an article published in 2005, she examines the idea that the narratives for her novels are historical though her writing resists restraining her story within traditional historic norms. These traditional norms might be seen as a patriarchal reworking, as the previous example of Plumb's (1975) re-traditionalisation of history mentions, where an

individual commentator/historian maintains a view of historical events using the same theoretical decisions, and hence intellectual constructions, as those responsible for writing previous versions of that event. However, Cuthoys and Docker's (2003) postmodernist approach, as suggested, allows for the questioning of the agendas of all the commentators/historians involved and the deconstruction of any attending personal beliefs or professional stances. Southgate (1996) adds that the sceptical approach of a postmodern theorist questions the absolute validity of concepts such as 'facts, objectivity and truth' and concludes there can not be one position in relation to the past and so history is no more than a 'tentative hypothesis'. Gregory (2005) validates these claims saying that when writing history she selects a few elements from an "enormous range of facts" from the given year in which the story is set and strings them together to tell the story, just as any historian might. This postmodernist approach argues for a subjective awareness of the process without damaging the basis of the history and allows for the subjective views of the historian to be identified and credited. She asserts that the facts recorded should always be correct but the point of view will be biased.

I wished to use this flexibility in historical narrative as an influence in my work. I wanted to garner fresh insights into past understanding for the audience and in the process realign and inform their understanding of the present. This approach also allows us to move away from a patriarchal, two-dimensional depiction of characters and their behaviour and to re-imagine circumstances with less rigidity. A delicate balance is needed in the blending of fictional with factual elements in a narrative. Once again, using Margaret and William's relationship as the example, I did not want to feel pressured into writing what might be perceived as a traditional version of a seventeenth-century marital relationship. Instead, I chose to use the feelings that

might be more recognisable to a current audience to imbue their relationship with passion and what might be perceived as twenty-first century sensibilities. The characters needed to reflect an honesty of emotion and a truth of self that was evident in their letters to each other, as well as providing a context for their relationship that an audience could believe. Consequently, I applied a postmodern sensibility to their relationship, that is to say a departure from the idea of 'truths' of historical artefacts, and in so doing supported the 'truth' of their relationship.

Discovering and understanding the process of historiography was an important step in creating my script. I was able to use the historian's interpretation of primary sources which contained the spoken and written words of the participants, and then proceed to fill in gaps in the factual record with fiction informed by the history. I came to understand the power of the historian when constructing the political, social and economic values of my characters. I also discovered the ability of the writer to deconstruct the historian's version of events and bring a fresh telling to the story and in the process perhaps to highlight the flexibility of the historical narrative and the boundaries of the interpretative act. The information presented in the script can be taken away by an audience to ponder at their leisure and so to construct their own narrative and maybe even elicit potential insight. This makes history a living, breathing thing that can inform and enrich lives (DeGroot 2009).

Having found Gregory's novel (2001) and Morgan's script (2008) of the novel to be instructive I have used a similar strategy for my own creation, using history to inform the actions and lives of their characters. My script uses the information from historical documents to place my characters in situations which then provides them with a basis for action. I then added character traits and foibles which I have also sourced from historical accounts. This

blending provided a sound narrative basis from which to further layer emotional subtext, thus helping scenes to develop a sense of fluidity in their visual detail that, along with the dialogue, gives a full rendition of the character. For example, in the opening scene Margaret is walking through the corridors of the Louvre with her head bowed trying to be inconspicuous (script sc:1). It is historically true that she was living in the Louvre at the time as one of Queen Henrietta-Maria's maids of honour and as such would have performed errands for the Queen throughout the palace. However, we do not know if Margaret was to be found walking the corridors on just such an errand for the Queen in precisely this manner. This scene gives the audience a visual cue that informs us about Margaret's character and explains her state of mind immediately. This 'picture' of Margaret begins the story and we 'see' her physically and emotionally which encourages us to connect with Margaret's character and be drawn immediately into the story.

One further way to assist in the construction of Margaret's personality and inner motivations was to take what she had written as fiction and use those stories, language and details (or as one of Jane Austen's characters might say "the particulars") as autobiographical material. To this end the feature film *Becoming Jane* (Williams and Hood 2007) interested me. The narrative of this film is constructed by taking an overview of Jane Austen's six novels and plucking from them scenes and anecdotes to build a life for Jane that is not evident in the historical record. With this in mind I read Margaret's fictional works and saw the potential in some of her characters for a way into Margaret's psyche. Luckily, in constructing Margaret's world, I had access to her prolific published material. For example in her fictional narrative, *Assaulted and Pursued Chastity* (Cavendish 2004a), Margaret has one of her characters, the Mistress, reading to another, the Lady:

The mean time her Mistriss began to read her Lectures of Nature, telling her she should use her beauty whilst she had it, and not wast her youth idly, but to make the best profit of both, to purchase pleasure and delight; besides, said she, nature hath made nothing vainly, but to some usefull end; and nothing meerly for its self, but for a Common benefit and generall good, as Earth, Water, Aire and Fire, Sun, Moon, Starrs, Light, Heat, Cold and the like. So beauty with strength and appetites, either to delight her Creatures that are in being; or to the end, or ways to procure more by procreation; for nature only lives by survivors, and that cannot be without communication and society. Wherefore it is a sin against nature to be reserved and coy, and take heed, said she, of offending Nature, for she is a great and powerfull Goddess, transforming all things out of one shape into another, and those that serve her faithfully and according as she commandes, she puts them in easie and delightfull forme; but those that displease her, she makes them to be a trouble, and torment to themselves; (p.3)

The Lady learns that her youth and beauty permit her to purchase pleasure and delight, and to be not ashamed to do so, because this is nature's way to achieve procreation. It is therefore a sin against nature for a young woman to be reserved and coy. We can take this character's pronouncement and find within it Margaret's lack of belief in society's restrictions on the behaviour of young women. There is perhaps, also, a lack of tolerance for the lies of a society that disdains vanity and other such 'sins' in an effort to control individual behaviour, but uses beauty to judge and measure success. Thus, I wove a character for the young Margaret who revels in her interactions with William and enjoys matching the flirtatious, and even bawdy, tone of his letters (Cavendish cited in Fitzmaurice 2004b). However, in a preface to her

aforementioned work, she does tell her readers to be careful of their virtue because if beautiful young women do venture out alone they may find “but rude entertainment from the masculine sex” (Cavendish 2004a). We can deduce that Margaret was not as naive as the other women at court assumed. Her quiet demeanour belied her awareness of the necessity to guard her reputation, particularly in the hot-house that was life at court. From reading Margaret’s work I was able to take these examples as an illustration of her solid values and add a complexity to her fictional persona and begin to glean a real and full character for Margaret. In summary, the fictional Margaret is informed by the historical Margaret and her fictional creations.

When I began the writing process I did not understand the complexity of the experience in which I was engaging. Historiography – the suppositions of history, the power of the historian to construct political, cultural and social narratives – and my ability to deconstruct it and re-negotiate a new ‘truth’ was both exciting and daunting. As a feature film writer, I was able to use historical situations and manipulate them into more than their bare factual accounts and in the process magnify the characterisations of the figures from history. By using film to tell a story, the visual enhances the historical ‘recollection’ and, in so doing, says much more than a few spoken words might indicate. One of the motivating factors in the early choices I made in writing a script was being able to move beyond the restrictions of “proper history” and its “old-fashioned” tendencies of the sweeping narrative about the “big events” (Jenkins 1991). I wanted to be free to write an intuitive, personal-experience-focused life story that was concerned with the ordinary details of life which could be used to tell an extraordinary story. It was not the historical events marking a timeline that drew me into the idea of a film script but the possible portrayal of the intimacy of the relationships. I believe that using facts drawn

from historical sources and creating characters who have a full range of human sensibilities and behaviours has enabled me to add to the body of knowledge in the historical narrative.

Creating ficto-historic characters for the screen

Creating a script that is believable and engaging was the goal I had in mind when I began writing. Making the decision to write a film script for this thesis came from looking for a format that would tell the story I wanted to write in the way I required. It was not a matter of exploring particular discourses or alternative approaches to scripting. Steven Maras' (in Ganz 2010 p. 205) identifies five roles that a screenplay as a document might fulfil. These are the creation of a document to attract producers; a description of the means of producing a set of emotions, ideas and images to be experienced by the audience; a guide for the industrial process of film making; a legal document of the production; a way to market a yet-to-be-made film. Maras (2009) also suggests that the evolution of a script through the production process is a lesson in collaboration; however this collaboration is a clarification of the work put forward by MacDonald (2004) with reference to his 'screen idea'. The concept of the 'screen idea' sees the script as the essence of future screen work which is discussed and negotiated by those involved in the script's development. MacDonald (2010 p. 8) has also clarified his idea saying that "screenwriting is now a broader academic subject than the industrial process of the same name". I have approached the process of scriptwriting as a conception and practice in a manner more analogous to the starting point ascribed by Nelmes (2007) and Maras (2009) where the writer initiates the beginning or original idea adding concerns, dramatic quality and emotions. This form of progress where intertextuality is not uncommon though the writer does have a sense of ownership, is more akin with the idea of film making as part of an industrial process rather than that of an academic discussion. The notion of the collaboration

of a group forming around the creation of the script was always seen as beyond the scope of this project.

In creating the script, it is the creation of characters that is the actual task – without characters there is no script. Therefore the making of suitable characters to propel the story is paramount. I have used Whitaker's (2002) biography of Margaret, *Mad Madge*, as an aid to help me flesh out the lives of many of the characters in the script. Her attention to the detail of everyday life in the seventeenth century meant that I was able to easily visualise historically informed situations for all of the characters. It was not only Whitaker's attention to detail that was useful in these constructions but also the 'writerly' skill she brought to the historical information. Her writing in the biography is a skilful weave of historical elements and storytelling that produces a dynamic reading experience. Historian Hayden White (cited in Curthoys and Docker 2006) makes the observation that history cannot escape literature because it partakes of the same literary forms in its construction. I was able to use Whitaker's writings to create some of the scenes that were particularly applicable to developing the filmic versions of the characters. For example, I used Whitaker's detailed description of a seventeenth-century medical treatment given to Margaret and with little difficulty build a scene that relates the horror of what was considered normal procedure at the time (script sc: 74). The doctor's ministrations to Margaret and her incapacitation resulting from his remedies helped to build the resulting stoic demeanour into the fibre of her filmic character. Whitaker's information regarding medicine, as well as the running of a 'great house' in England in the 1600s; the movement of money around the society; and the wealth of the landed gentry, informed the creation of the script's characters, their behaviour and their social milieu in the external world as well as their internal motivations and desires.

In the process of developing and writing a fictional character for a film script it can be useful to employ the writing aid of a backstory. This literary device can be used in creating fictional characters that when applied to script-writing explains the past history of the character up to the point where he/she appears in the script (Hauge 1989; Drouyn 1994). From the writer's point of view, a backstory might help to clarify what type of action or conversation is 'normal' for the character. The backstory not only fills out the physical detail but also informs the creation with the mental, emotional and spiritual attributes that can make a character a fully rounded person. However, there is also a case to be made for the character to maintain a sense of mystery, by not relying on 'simple flashbacks or easily identified Freudian complexes' to reveal the character (Horton 1999 p.10). A film that has a deeply affecting sense of mystery about the human condition can also ring true for the viewer. McKee (in Fryer 2003) suggests that characters who challenge our conceptions and move in unusual directions are the ones we find most interesting.

Following is an explanation of the creative process undertaken in generating a fictional character for the script. This was my own particular process and not meant as an exemplar for other writers. Each of my significant characters received what could be termed the backstory treatment where the historical facts about the character were recorded. These facts were then manipulated into a fuller version of who the person might have been and some of the traits and foibles they may have displayed. I then used this information when writing the character's dialog to give the character mannerisms, reactions, speeches and attitudes that were intimately tied to the individual creation.

For example, I began by using Whitaker's (2002) factual information and created a thumbnail sketch of the minor character, Lord Widdrington:

Lord Widdrington was a cousin and fellow officer of William's and he served with William in Prince Charles' household in the 1630s. He advised William against marrying Margaret. In Margaret's autobiography (Cavendish 2006) she talks of entertaining him in Paris and that he was a "hot-tempered, handsome, big man". He left Paris with Margaret and William, travelling as part of their household. Soon after leaving Paris he went to chase Prince Charles, by leaky boat, across the North Sea. An escapade which Margaret refused to let William participate in. Widdrington followed the Prince to Scotland and died in a battle in Lancashire against the Parliamentary forces.

I then took this information and developed it further, fleshing out his backstory with fictional details to create the character he became on screen. This is a small sample from my notes:

Widdrington believed that he and William had important roles to fulfil for the King and that they were in Paris to provide support for the Queen and to raise money for the King's army. He considered William to be his best friend and became jealous of Margaret when William was diverted by her attentions. He did not understand William's willingness to leave the fight behind to pursue a pretty girl. They were brothers-in-arms and had been most of their adult lives. He became more distant during the time that William and Margaret were courting, feeling hurt and ignored. He finally confronted William telling him just what he thought of Margaret and her gold-digging ways which put their friendship on the line.

Each of my significant characters has a backstory which, in the writing of the script material, was culled to create an astute and dynamic dialogue, both visually and verbally, that is true to the character's values and behaviours. A backstory can be used to give a character both depth and creative stability. It can provide glimpses of the character's past which can be instantiated within the script, and in this example the using of historical information in the backstory to help create fictional characters may further assist with a connection between the characters and the audience, as discussed further in chapter four.

Chapter two

The historical Margaret

Margaret's 'career'

Margaret's life, and what we would now describe as her career, were inspired by both great ideas and people who pursued great deeds. She saw role models for her aspirations in the prominent women from her own life. These included Queen Henrietta-Maria who described herself as "her she-majesty generalissima" (Whitaker 2002 p.43) as she was heavily relied on by the King in matters of war counsel; Anne of Austria, Queen Regent of France as the mother of the future Louis XIV, who was reigning over France and residing in the Louvre at the same time as Margaret was in residence; and her own mother Elizabeth who she saw enjoy the independent governance of the family estate. These were all aristocratic women who 'worked'. They were proactive in choosing the path their lives took. These women's ability to influence their lives was unusual for the time as well as unusual when compared to the expectations held by society for most women's lives. Margaret was very fortunate to have such strong and accessible role models.

Margaret developed her taste for heroic deeds early in her life. Much of her childhood reading centred around classical histories and their Greek and Roman heroes (Whitaker 2002 p.20) as well as the works of Shakespeare:

[I] confess'd I only was in love with the three dead men, which were dead
long before my time, the one was Caesar, for his valour, the second Ovid,

for his wit, and the third was our countryman Shakespeare, for his comical and tragical humour. (Cavendish 2004b p.225)⁸

From her early literary experiences Margaret derived a classical understanding of the concept of heroic fame which gave her ensuing career its focus. It also provides a possible explanation for her joining Queen Henrietta-Maria's household when her mother, and her brothers and sisters, were against such an undertaking. Margaret saw the Queen as a hero and felt compelled to join her (Whitaker p.43). In 1643, the Queen had ridden at the head of an army of 5000 men to bring support to the embattled King. This action was very heroic and romantic to a young woman who was keen to support the Royalist cause and who wanted to go "from home and see the world abroad" (Cavendish 2006). However, she was not at court long when she realised that, while the Queen might be brave, and a wonderful example of the life she wished to emulate, the rest of the courtiers were disappointing role models (Battigelli 1998 p. 24). In 1656 Margaret wrote of this experience in her book of essays *The World's Olio* saying, "but to study court-ship, is rather to study dissembling formality, then noble reality" (Cavendish cited in Battigelli p.25), thus explaining how life at court fell short of the heroic dimensions to which she had aspired and how emulating the women she found there would not fulfil her desire for a career. Margaret would have to look beyond court life to find another way to pursue her 'heroic' aspirations.

Early in the film script, Margaret and William discuss Margaret's desire for a career and they proceed to have a conversation about her choice of writing as a way for her to achieve the heroic persona she desires (script sc:33). This scene, based on her writings, sets up the motive

⁸ Interestingly, while Margaret was certainly the first woman to write a critical appreciation of Shakespeare's work as one of her letters in her book, *Sociable Letters* (Cavendish 2004b p.176), Whitaker (2002 p.258) and Fitzmaurice (2004a p.24) agree that she was the first **person** to do so.

for Margaret's entire filmic journey by explaining her deep desire for fame. I wrote this to highlight the unusual situation of a woman writing for public consumption and, specifically, Margaret's need for public recognition. I also used the scene to advance Margaret and William's relationship. Historically their courtship was short in that it was less than six months between when they met and when they married. In the scene, by admitting to her suitor her desire to write as a career, Margaret reveals herself intimately and places their relationship on a footing that helps to explain William's later willingness to support her publishing career. She also reveals her understanding of heroic fame. In this way the audience can appreciate a measure of the woman she is, as well as her unique perspective of the world. This then allows them to believe in the journey that she takes in the script in the pursuit of her career.

In her writings Margaret acknowledged William's continued support as an important part of the maintenance of her writing and publishing career. She considered William her mentor. In many of her publications she begins with a foreword dedicated to William's prowess and tolerance as her teacher. My previous research on executive women (a category in which I would place Margaret) showed that women who have had mentors early in their careers see much of their success stemming from that time (Stockwell 2006). Margaret's career was dependant on this relationship. The scenes of William teaching Margaret as she looks through the telescope (script sc:81), of them watching the horses train (script sc:50), and of the quiet evenings spent in front of the fire with William telling her stories (script sc:55) are all scenes that underscore the mentor/student relationship. He also encouraged the teacher/student relationship between Margaret and his brother Charles, further facilitating Margaret's learning where possible.

Margaret lived in an era when the economic and social circumstances dictated that a woman of her social class should behave in a particular manner. Margaret understood what was at stake. Her family knew only too well the disadvantages which accompanied heedless actions at court. The courtly indiscretions of her father's duelling and subsequent exile and her aunt's banishment for eloping for love against her Queen's wishes had left an indelible mark on the behaviour of the rest of the family (Whitaker 2002 p.7). However, Schiebinger (1991 p.4) statement that, "the duchess was not properly modest for an English woman of the seventeenth century" makes reference to Margaret's career, as her personal choice, and in this situation she was heedless of the societal expectations placed on a woman of aristocratic birth. She flouted the norms of her time by publicly pursuing a career, writing on 'masculine' subjects and publishing under her own name. William's willing and vocal championing of her career gave her the material, emotional, intellectual and moral support she needed to maintain her resolve. Their pairing created an unusual and intellectual environment that directly assisted Margaret in her writing and gave her the opportunity to fulfil her desired dreams of being heroic and achieving fame.

Philosophy and science in Margaret's life

Margaret and her work have to be viewed within the context of her time, to gain some understanding of who she was and just how curious was the life's work she chose. She made herself very visible by her 'masculine' career choice of science and philosophy and was labeled as 'mad' by some of her contemporaries (Whitaker 2002 p.293, p.310). Consequently, she has been easily dismissed over the last three-hundred years (Whitaker p.354, p.355). Yet even though she was admired by a few of her peers, her continued obscurity in the world of

philosophy and science is perhaps the result of several points: her writing style, in which her views and their articulation appear to be possibly postmodernist and so, incomprehensible to an earlier time; her unconventional pursuit of fame and a writing career which were considered to be masculine activities and therefore alienating; her choice of subjects, philosophy and science, which, when being a woman scientist and/or philosopher, was an anathema to most of her contemporaries – if a woman chose to write then her subjects of choice were usually religion or perhaps romance and the circulation of copies of her work was restricted to family and friends (Whitaker 2002 p.151); and her willingness to publicly engage with scientists of the Royal Society. All of these points demonstrate just how atypical she was.

Over the last three hundred years, Margaret's writing has developed a reputation as being difficult to read. This negative perception of her work arises because she was seen to be either behaving in an unseemly/unfeminine manner or she refused to stay within expected societal bounds (Nicholson 1948 [cited Bowerbank 1984]; Pepys 2008; Smith 1982 [cited Hiscock 1997]; Woolf 1979). Since the early 1980s there has been an increasing academic focus placed on Margaret's work. Much of this has concentrated on her plays and stories as they have been the most accessible (Bowerbank 1984; Lilley 2004; Sarasohn 1984; Shaver 1999). In recent years, work has increased in deconstructing Margaret's extensive writings in other genres, particularly philosophy and science, in the hope of gaining a much more informed picture of the woman she was (Akkerman 2004; Battigelli 1998; Fletcher 2007; Hutton 1997; James 2003; O'Neill 2001; Stevenson 1996). Stevenson explains that, up until now, Margaret's philosophical and scientific writing has been categorised as either proto-feminist because it resists the logic of phallogocentric discourse, or incoherent because of the patriarchal denunciation of feminine discourse. Margaret's work can seem confusing because of its

complexity and at times the appearance of self-contradiction which is not assisted by its multi-genre form. However, by looking at her work in the light of the psychology of the seventeenth century, as Stevenson suggests, we gain a much clearer view of it and its meaning.

To understand Margaret's stance more fully we need to examine further the science and philosophy of the time. Margaret was writing at a time when there was intense scrutiny of the construction of matter and an equally intense search for an explanation of what the soul might consist. Theology and science were still intricately woven together and most scientists regarded the mind and the soul as the same. This was enough 'evidence' to explain a world containing God (Stevenson 1996). It was thought that the immanent ability of the mind was proof of a soul and as such was the potential point of contact between God and humanity. Thus, God was in action in the world through the human mind. The mind was also the seat of intelligence and the birthplace of discourse. The seventeenth-century's empirical philosophers believed in a version of science that was predicated on the idea that the spirit/God resided in the soul/mind (Whitaker 2002 p.260). Therefore, God was fundamental to man and consequently to life and science. The seventeenth-century scientist, almost to a man, regarded the world as God-centric and masculine.

Margaret, on the other hand, was a woman and focused on the inherent movement in nature to explain her science. She believed that God was irrelevant to scientific debate with nature answering the relevant questions. In England, at the time of Margaret's first publication, her preferred philosophy, atomism, was known primarily as a threat to Christianity (Battigelli 1998 p.49). This perception of her as being outside or 'other' may have been the reason for

her unorthodox writing style (Chalmers 1997; Hiscock 1997). She does seem to have cultivated this perception of herself by the general public, and by others who should have been better informed, as an unusual woman. She was often seen as an eccentric at best or “ridiculous” and “mad” (Pepys 2008) at worst. She may have encouraged this confusion in an effort to disguise her intentions and her atheistic stance. She was deeply concerned for William’s reputation and the effect her writing might have on it, but she also had an aristocratic lack of regard for the opinions of others, particularly “the lower classes” (Whitaker 2002). While she respected William’s position in the class system she was not willing to compromise what she was doing because of social expectations. At times she did seem to provoke a situation to upset the status quo but she was always able to fall back on her position as an “unlearned thinker” to explain her imperfections (Battigelli p.46). Stevenson (1996) believes this was done to disguise the radical nature of her ideas. In the film script I have used this idea and created a scene (script sc:95) that places Margaret in conversation with Charles Cavendish, her brother-in-law, about what methods she could use to disguise her ideas, because of her fear of a Puritanical backlash to her unusual thinking and its publication.

Margaret’s ‘different’ philosophy and her lack of conviction in a ‘relevant’ God had sent her looking to nature for answers, and there she saw reflected the disorder of the social world in which she lived. This was a world where everything of value could disappear so easily and with apparent randomness:

A Civil War doth not only Abolish Laws, Dissolve Government, and
 Destroy the Plenty of a Kingdom, but it Unknit the Knot of Friendship, and
 Dissolve natural Affectation, for in Civil War, Brothers against Brothers,

Fathers against Sons, Sons against Fathers, become Enemies and Spill each others Blood Triumphant on their Graves; for when a Kingdom is inflamed with Civil War, the Minds of all the People are in a Fever of Fury.

(Cavendish 2004b p. 174)

Margaret's experience of social disorder was intensely personal and emanated from the time of her family's home being ransacked by a mob early in the English Civil War. It was these experiences that resonated when she was describing the random ability inherent in nature.

The script touches on some of these random events in Margaret's life to help explain her approach to her philosophical writing and its seeming contradictions. For example, the scenes where the mob attacks her family home (script sc:48) and the scene which sees her having to flee Oxford in the dark with the Queen while the battle rages around them (script sc:22) are both constructed to underline the social and political instability that was occurring at the time, as well as Margaret's intimate involvement in these historic events. These devastating experiences sent Margaret looking for an explanation that had meaning in the scheme of universal concepts. Exploring nature, seeing the parallels between it and her life-experience, and creating a philosophy to explain such a congruence were ways for her to deal with the horror of the English Civil War.

The devastating circumstances of the English Civil War deeply affected her and her closest family members, leaving her pessimistic and distrustful of government. In placing her writing in the public domain and dealing with the subsequent critique that this might initiate, she needed a lifelong disguise to protect her from the fluctuations of social fortune that might once again take everything from her. Margaret described herself as an "anomalous champion

of randomness” in her *Poems and Fancies* (cited in Whitaker 2002 p.156), perhaps explaining her understanding of the machinations of society and the reason for her deliberate efforts to disguise her unorthodox, atheistic ideas. Stevenson (1996) believes that Margaret dramatises the act of writing by foregrounding the unreliability of authority. This interpretation reflects her experience and beliefs. Her writing, with all of its attending eccentricities, gave her a way to safely question the political and patriarchal status quo while science and philosophy gave her a way to explore her life experiences.

Writing, fame and the women around Margaret

There was a burgeoning of women’s writing in the second-half of the seventeenth century in England due, in no small part, to the breakdown of state control of the printing establishment during the Civil War (Graham, Hinds, Hobby and Wilcox 1989). Margaret was at the forefront of the ensuing wave of feminine literature. At the time of publishing her first book, *Poems and Fancies* in 1653, she was thought to be vain, impertinent and thoroughly unfeminine for writing and publishing books. This was not only because of the masculine subject matter of philosophy and science (Whitaker 2002 p.146) of which Margaret wrote, but also because, for an English woman, this behaviour was unheard of and for an aristocrat it was unthinkable. For her then to insist that her name be placed on the front cover of the offending volume was too much for some, particularly some of her own sex. Publishing under her own name was tantamount to admitting to promiscuity (Wall 1993 p.281). Her pursuit of fame was not only seen to be masculine, it also showed a lack of breeding.

Most of the women who were writing at the same time as Margaret, such as Dorothy Osborne and Margaret’s own stepdaughters, Jane and Elizabeth Cavendish, wrote only for a

circumscribed audience and they thought Margaret foolish for wanting to publish her work.

Osborne told her fiancé in a letter: “Sure, the poor woman is a little distracted, she could never be so ridiculous else as to venture at writing books, and in verse too” (Whitaker 2002 p. 156). Others who knew her socially, such as Mary Evelyn, who was well-read and had a lively correspondence with Oxford academic Ralph Bohun, were particularly harsh in their criticism. Mary called into question Margaret’s sanity: “I was surprised to find so much extravagancy and vanity in any person not confined within four walls” (Whitaker p.293). Many women were not only offended by Margaret’s behaviour, believing her to have taken leave of her senses, but also threatened by Margaret’s willingness to put herself forward as something ‘other’. Mary Evelyn called her a “Chimera”, a monstrous creature from mythology and queried why “men who are esteemed wise and learned” encouraged her (Whitaker p.293). These men included Mary’s husband, John Evelyn, who followed Margaret’s career closely. Few women have left a historical record of their support for Margaret’s writings. The poet Bathsua Makin and the astrologer Sarah Jinner both left their admiration in print though they remained unacquainted with her personally (Whitaker p.314). There is no record of what Margaret’s sisters thought on the subject and her step-daughters were also silent though Whitaker (p.233) believes a poem from William’s grand-daughter Elizabeth to her mother, also Elizabeth, where she asks “not for praise” is a direct reference that explains the females of the family’s negative attitude to Margaret’s public career.

It is important to note that Margaret was also well known for her shyness. It was a lifelong affliction and as she aged she acquired strategies to help her cope in stressful situations.

However, sometimes the mannerisms she adopted made her seem distant and awkward. Mary Evelyn commented that when visiting Margaret “her careful politeness – her way of address

to people more than necessarily submissive; ... by repeating affected, generous, kind expressions; endeavouring to show humility... was seen as officious and condescending, a form of false modesty to 'improve her present greatness'" (Whitaker 2002 p.290). Margaret admitted that her speech sometimes became "extravagant" and "unnatural" leaving her blushing and tongue-tied (Whitaker p.291). The apparent contradiction between the courage and self-assertion in her search for fame and her debilitating shyness helped to make Margaret an object of curiosity to her contemporaries, puzzling and fascinating them and, indeed, in time helping her to achieve the fame she desired (Whitaker p. 28).

Margaret maintained an idealised notion of fame. Heroic fame was an important motivator in Margaret's pursuit of a career and a place in history. Once she had committed herself, writing and publishing became the vehicle for expressing a personality that desired to leave a mark in the world. "For all I desire is fame, and fame is nothing but a great noise, and noise lives most in a multitude; wherefore I wish my book may set awork every tongue" (Cavendish *The World's Olio* cited in Whitaker 2002 p.167). Almost everything she published is prefigured and/or appended with epistles asking the reader to remember her and recognise her wit. Margaret saw this desire for notoriety as an heroic act (Chalmers 1997 p.333) in the noble, and at the time, masculine sense of the word. Her actions were the conduct of a singular woman who thought that, even though she was a woman, with the special virtues thereof, it was no reason for her not to try to achieve the same things as a man (Shaver 1999 p.7).

The scene in the script in which a circle of women are gossiping and passing judgement on Margaret and her conduct encapsulates the general feeling of awe and suspicion at Margaret's unfeminine behaviour (script sc:123). With this scene I wanted to convey the distance

between women behaving in what was a socially acceptable manner – grouped together whispering and playing cards – as opposed to Margaret’s socially unacceptable choice of career and life reflected in the scenes where she is at her desk writing. I wanted to exemplify just how different and isolated she was from other women. Letting the audience see that she pursued a ‘masculine’ career in the face of so much derision and isolation shows Margaret’s strength of character and her feelings about, and the justification of, her belief in herself.

Margaret considered that women had a natural disadvantage in life with what may be considered a weaker constitution (Cavendish *The World’s Olio* cited in Whitaker 2002 p.164). But for her this was no reason to accept the restriction as immutable. She believed women could and should strive for more equality of circumstance. Women taking action in the ‘public’ sphere was an ongoing theme in her work, and her desire for fame or notoriety was her way of enacting this idea in her own life.

Challenging the men of science

There is a scene in the film (script sc:82) where Margaret and William are dining with a group of men who were part of what was known at the time as “the Newcastle Circle” (O’Neill 2001 p.xiii).⁹ This was a group of philosophers, scientists and mathematicians who formed around William and Charles Cavendish. William Cavendish had long supported the Arts, creating a courtly, learned academy and centre of artistic patronage before the war (Whitaker 2002 p. 64). Further to this, Charles Cavendish was one of the foremost mathematicians of his generation. Hence, Margaret had access to a group of men who were to become serious names in the history of ideas.

⁹ “The Newcastle Circle” is also identified as “The Cavendish Circle” by Fitzmaurice (2004a) and the “Paris Clique” by Battigelli (1998).

Included in “the Newcastle Circle” was William’s long-time friend, the philosopher Thomas Hobbes. Hobbes had dedicated his 1640 book, *The Elements of Law Naturall and Politique*, to William in recognition of William’s ongoing patronage. Hobbes was a frequent visitor to Margaret and William’s Paris lodgings after their marriage, and much of what was to become Hobbes’ (2007) famous philosophical work, *Leviathan*, published in 1651, was discussed with William and others associated with the Cavendishes throughout their time in Paris (James 2003 p.xi). These discussions of the ideas that would later appear in *Leviathan* were part of ongoing conversations at which Margaret was present. Though Margaret claims, because of her debilitating shyness, that she never felt comfortable enough to converse with many of these learned men who came to dinner, she did appear at the dinners and listened to the conversations (James p.xiii; Whitaker 2002 pp.90-94). Perhaps she used these dinners to her advantage. Happily, for Margaret, her writing process was a solitary occupation which accommodated her shyness.

Both Margaret and Hobbes were materialists. They both believed that the universe consisted of matter in motion. They were also the only voices recorded in English at the time who did not believe that it was vital to the outcomes of science that the spirit reside in the soul (Hutton 1997 p.423; O’Neill 2001). But they disagreed on many other points, including the type of materialists they were (Sarasohn 1984 p.45). For example, while Hobbes agrees with the basic confines of Margaret’s moral and political philosophy regarding personal morality as a matter of self-interest (Boyle 2006), they have very different reasoning about how it would develop. For Margaret, self-interest had a provenance that leads through a desire for public recognition and fame, which, in turn, would enhance the individual’s self-love, and because of the effect

of this self-gratification the individual would pursue a virtuous life. This concept then provides a basis on which good government could be established and maintained because of the individual's willingness to act for the good of all which is in their own self-interest (Boyle 2006). Hobbes, on the other hand, saw self-interest in terms of self-preservation and his famous quote concerning life being "brutish and short" explains his position (Hobbes 2007 chapter xiii). Both of these opposing theories indicate a path to the construction of a beneficial government. It was Hobbes' mechanical materialism that led to social-contract theory which underpins our Western version of democracy. The concept of the rule-of-law and the need of the governed society to recognise and agree on the inherent power of this idea is at the heart of Western democracy. However, Margaret's organicist alternative to mechanicalism, her vitalist materialism, describes matter as active, vital and free. She saw nature as viable and self-determining, hence the need to promote self-reflection and a virtuous life. Three-hundred years later we can see her view of philosophy and science reflected in twentieth and twenty-first century theories (O'Neill 2001 p.xvi; Sarasohn 1984 p.55), such as the Gaia hypothesis where the earth is seen as a complex interacting system that maintains its preferred homeostasis. Margaret's view of the world and our role on it are at the forefront of this 'new' thinking.

It appealed to my sense of serendipity and coincidence that Margaret and Hobbes were likely to have talked about these concepts of materialism, self-interest, vitalism and mechanicalism at the same time and maybe even in the same room, but in the end came to such different places of understanding. And so the dinner scene came into being (script sc:82). This scene is a set piece that accomplishes several things. These include: portraying some of Margaret's scientific influences; showing how someone of such "little education" might have gained the

information she needed to write what she did; and highlighting her lifelong affliction with chronic shyness and how she might have dealt in silence with the situation but still learned (Whitaker 2002 p.17). The audience sees William and Charles introducing her to cutting-edge ideas and encouraging her to think independently. Throughout the script the audience follows Margaret as she takes these opportunities and creates her individual opinions on issues that were seen by everyone else, besides William and Charles, as the provenance of men.

An explanation concerning the timing of the dinner scene

Although the dinner scene is set in Antwerp, it is unlikely this particular group of guests ever formed there. They did, however, sit down together when the Cavendishes were living in Paris (Battigelli 1998 p.46). This shift of time and place was necessary because of the need to address a structural issue within the script. It would have been difficult to have this scene occur earlier in the script where the timing would have been more accurate historically because of the need to maintain the pace of the script at that point. However, I wanted to select guests whom the audience had a chance of knowing. Descartes was not included in this grouping in Antwerp, though he would have been at the earlier dinner in Paris, because, by the time the dinner takes place in the script, Descartes and Hobbes had quarrelled and parted company forever. Nevertheless, I do allow that Descartes' name comes up in the dinner conversation to show his influence in the group.

Margaret's first published book, *Poems and Fancies* (1653), was an attempt to put her philosophical and scientific thinking into a format that she hoped would be acceptable to an audience who, she thought, would view her as unschooled owing to her lack of the traditional,

male-exclusive university education.¹⁰ This book laid out her ideas on atomist philosophy. She became enamoured with the theory of atomism when she was in exile and it may have given her a way of explaining the flux of the life she was experiencing where everyday stability was elusive (Battigelli 1998 p.60). Atomism was a philosophy developed by the ancient Greeks. It proposes that the natural world consisted of two fundamental and opposite, indivisible bodies – atoms and void – that are unchangeable and eternal. They come together in different formations to create different objects. And though later in her writings Margaret moved away from this theoretical stance, “the theory remained as a metaphor for the body politic and the mind throughout the course of her life” (Battigelli 1998 p.60). Atomism was the basis for her written expression, with its tenet of changeability reflected in her selection of diverse genres, as well as forming an avenue for the focus of her study. Over time, her study broadened and she became more confident in her assessment of other scientists and philosophers. Her book, *Observations upon Experimental Philosophy* (2001), written in 1666, showcased her work in natural philosophy against a backdrop of both ancient and modern philosophers. In this work, she was critically engaged with the scientific ideas of her time, for example the mechanicalist’s view of nature – nature is a grand machine – versus the vitalist’s view which expressed a belief that nature had its own “knowing” (O’Neill 2001 p.x). She also showcased the political and patriarchal minefield that was seventeenth-century science, with its change of focus from the philosophical to the experimental, and the establishment of social structures, such as the Royal Society, to contain the newly found information. Margaret’s science was unusual, considering the other scientific voices of the time. She took a singular approach to her work and three centuries later we can see this work as evidence of her individuality. In espousing her theories she was not afraid to question social structures that

¹⁰ Women began attending universities in the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries. However, they were not admitted as full members to Oxford University until 1920 and Cambridge University until 1947.

seemed to conform to a masculine version of the world. She assertively challenged the scientific status quo.

Throughout the script there are scenes that signify Margaret's pursuit of her scientific goals and the societal obstacles she faced as a result. One scene depicts her discussing with William the fact that some people did not believe that she had written her books herself (script sc:103) – they believed that William was writing them for her. As a way to counter this gossip, William suggests she send copies of her newly printed work to the Dons and Fellows at Oxford and Cambridge universities in an effort to garner their support. William actually made the comment that perhaps the “gown-men (academia) will be more civil to her”, less concerned with her gender and more concerned with her ideas (Whitaker 2002 p.187). She took his advice and the copies that she sent with their personal inscriptions are still residing in those universities' libraries (Whitaker 2002).

Despite the unusual nature of Margaret's science in comparison to other scientific voices of the time, she felt no compunction in withholding her opinions or following other more well-trodden paths. The characters in her works such as those in her book *The Description of a New World, Called The Blazing World* (2004c) posed her scientific and philosophical questions on her behalf, and, in the process, constructed very different worlds (Lilley 2004). She was unusual in her perceptions and conceptions of the world and once again we finally have access to some of these ideas through the recent scholastic interest in her work. It is thought-provoking to note that the fame she envisioned for herself may well come long after her lifetime as she predicted and thus we are the beneficiaries.

Chapter three

Forming a filmic character for Margaret

A short explanation concerning the usage of the word 'hero' versus the word 'heroine'

Often the heroine is seen as a female version of the hero. In fact, the The New Shorter Oxford English Dictionary (OED) (1993) explains that a hero and a heroine are the same except for biological sex differentiation. However, we must also take into account cultural ambiguities. These may occur in identifying the difference between female heroes who are seen to be taking action in a male world, such as the French warrior, Joan of Arc or Boudicca, the Briton queen defeated by the Romans in 61AD, and heroines who are passive such as Sleeping Beauty or Penelope, the wife of Odysseus, who wait for the return of the hero (Covington 1989). It seems there can be cultural differences in the meaning of the word heroine depending on: how she might act, her role compared to others in the story – particularly if there is a hero present, and whether she is taking external action or internal action. Therefore, the heroine who is active and is at the centre of the storytelling might be more aptly termed a female hero. Given that the OED places sex difference as a reason for choosing heroine over hero, and while Margaret's actions as an individual lead us to understand her as a female hero, I believe Margaret should not have to carry the outdated cultural burden of difference because of her sex. In this story, therefore, I have identified Margaret as a hero.

Margaret as hero

Somewhere near the beginning of the scriptwriting process the writer forms, if required, a template for the hero's character describing how he/she will appear on screen (Drouyn 1994).

We have all been in the situation on leaving the cinema of feeling touched by the characters

and the story portrayed in the movie. Drouyn (p.33) explains that the hero needs to be not only someone who maintains the truth of the film but also someone the audience will be able to 'see' and recognise. Thus, my filmic creation of a hero needs to be an engaging character to whom the audience can relate, as well as a lead character who has recognisable qualities for twenty-first century tastes. Margaret Cavendish is the hero.

It is the purview of heroes in any given story to have an audience that is able to connect with them. As discussed further in chapter four, the hero takes the audience along for her journey and in the process we, the audience, may learn something about ourselves. The shift in circumstance and psyche, as part of the hero's journey, is a normal human experience often described by storytelling. It is by acknowledging the similarities between ourselves and the hero in the story's physical situations, emotional states and/or mental conditions that we learn about the self (Moore 1994; Stone 1996). Margaret's journey, and that of the script, begins with her feeling small and overwhelmed in her surroundings and by the circumstances of her service to the Queen. By the end of the script she has become powerful within herself and is in control of her destiny. Though Margaret's milieu was the seventeenth century, European, wealthy and privileged, she is, however, a suitable contender for the role of hero for a general audience – she can take the role of everywoman because of her accessibility and comprehensibility to modern women. This accessibility comes through her writing and it is from here that we have come to know her. Cottegnies and Weitz (2003) believe that the late-twentieth century sees the development of concepts that finally reveal her work and allow the modern reader to gain an understanding of her world. They explain that her complex approach to genre, in which she explored many different ideas and ways of being, allows access to her work for a broad section of society and that the complex hybrid perspective and execution of

her work are a typically postmodern way to form an understanding of the surrounding world. The construction of her words and consequently her work were an individual attempt at an explanation of her vision. She was not constrained by the protocols or expectations of others. There is a sense when reading Margaret's works that she is able to reach from her time to ours with little effort. She appears to understand the world in a way similar to how we do in the twenty-first century. This makes her a fitting choice in the role of hero in the script.

Using the particular strategy of highlighting aspects of Margaret's life and personality helps to give access to the character of Margaret-as-hero. Overall in the script, her personal story takes preference over the broader historical one. This allows the relationships in the script to play out in the foreground, with history setting the background context. The script has the characters face normal life challenges which happen to have occurred in historically momentous times and settings. It was important to the themes I wished the script to express, such as integrity, personal strength and love, that the audience be able to access the realness of the people involved and not just the historical events. The audience needs to see Margaret in charge of her life and revealing her private self, thoughts and feelings, rather than her life being overtaken by the historical events happening around her. For example, this approach is also evident in the character of Victoria in the recently released feature film *Young Victoria* (Fellows 2009) where Victoria is seen from a personal point of view rather than as the public figure of The Queen, and her feelings and reactions to others are seen in this light rather than as matters of state.

I felt no moral hesitation, as the writer, in raiding Margaret's psyche for information because Margaret herself invited her readers into her private sphere, thereby making it public. She put

herself forward for public scrutiny using both her letters and the characters in her plays and stories to speak for her. Letters can be intensely personal artefacts and even though our ways of communicating have changed over time, one-to-one communication, in all its forms, is still the norm. Margaret said in the preface to her volume of letters (2004b):

... the Correspondence of two Ladies, living at some Short Distance from each other, which make it not only their Chief Delight and Pastime, but their Tye in Friendship, to Discourse by Letters, as they would do if they were Personally together, so that these Letters are an Imitation of a Personal Visitation and Conversation, which I think is better ... a Short Letter will give a Full Satisfaction. (p.42)

It is through our participation in these intimate written or other conversations that we reveal something of the self. The script uses the letter-writing scenes as a reminder of how the writer, be it us or Margaret, as a professional or private letter-writer, can reveal ourselves intimately in personal communication. As the hero of the story, we can use Margaret's self-revelation as a connection to our own journey and it can become an act of our own revelation (Campbell 2004).

In choosing to make public her personal life and making it integral to her work, Margaret left herself open to ridicule, not only of her work but also of herself personally. In fact, the public and the personal aspects of Margaret's life were so intertwined that they are inseparable. In England in the 1600s, the concepts of a public life and a private life were unknown. Only Royalty lived their private lives in the public space. Nevertheless, there was something prescient about Margaret's willingness to embrace the public sphere. It reverberated in the later action taken by the first- and second-wave feminists and their "the personal is political"

agenda (Henry 2004). Margaret's experience of having her exploits chronicled for public consumption was highly unusual for any individual. Later in her life, she was followed by the public and hounded by admirers as well as being spoken about in salons and drawing rooms all over London (Whitaker 2002 p.289). Indeed, her exploits were relayed throughout the country. "London residents kept their country correspondents abreast of all the latest news, reports [of Margaret] reached as far as Cumberland" (Historical Manuscripts Commission cited in Whitaker p.301). She was also written about in the 'tabloids' of the day: the diaries of both Pepys (2008) and Evelyn (1850).

We saw another representation of an early instance of celebrity gaze in the film *The Duchess* (Hatcher, Jensen and Dibb 2008) where the lead character cultivated and used her celebrity in her support of a political party. Interestingly, the real Duchess of Devonshire, Georgiana Cavendish, was a distant relation to Margaret by marriage. Both of these women's husbands were descended from Bess of Hardwick who was an intimate of Elizabeth I. Georgiana lived nearly one hundred years after Margaret and was also known for her sense of fashion. In the film version of Georgiana's life we see her use her dresses and accessories to enlarge her very limited independence and individuality. This is also a theme from Margaret's life which is discussed further in the next section.

In my script, as in her real life, Margaret has a personal relationship with John Evelyn (1850), the writer of the *Evelyn Diaries*, who had access to her private person which he then wrote about publicly. He inhabits the role of a would-be modern tabloid journalist, providing opinion of her personal life for public consumption and judgement. The relationship between Margaret and Evelyn, while friendly for the most part, was fraught with the tension of this

private/public discourse.¹¹ Margaret sought Evelyn's attention as much as he sought hers.

Their relationship spanned many years, from her time in Paris just after her marriage through to not long before her death, and he spoke of her in glowing terms particularly in his early journals. In depicting the relationship between Margaret and Evelyn in the script, I have changed minor details for the sake of brevity and flow. However in essence, what is shown between them is faithful to what is reported. Historically, the conversation the two characters have at the ball (script sc:112) is an artistic invention but it is based on elements of Margaret's and Evelyn's correspondence and details kept by both parties of some of their encounters.

Margaret lived her celebrity, as anyone might, having very few private places in which to retreat. She was approached and infringed upon particularly later in her life (Whitaker 2002 pp.295-299). By allowing constant observation, and indeed encouraging it, she has left history with the documentation that permits access to the heroic dimensions of her life. Through her actions and her words, she makes a connection to the celebrity-driven media of the modern era that is not only possible but also familiar.

An unconventional woman for the screen

Margaret led a normal life but her life was anything but normal. The script uses many instances taken directly from her life to put together a story of a woman who is not only of her time but also timeless. There is a sense that she transgressed the social expectations of her time as she seemed to push boundaries in the everyday execution of her life. We acknowledge that, as with most lives, Margaret's day-to-day existence was quite normal, quite unremarkable for her; however, when her life is read as biography we see that it is an

¹¹ Comparisons could be made to the relationship Princess Diana is said to have cultivated with journalists and the paparazzi.

accumulation of events that appear quite unconventional. Margaret's own lack of concern for the normal customs of her time can be seen in some of her actions. An example of this was her lifelong attachment to an unusual style of dress which she expressed publicly, for example, when greeting the Duke and Duchess of York, King Charles II's brother and his wife, in 1665 on the road to York. It was noted that she was wearing a "knee-length waistcoat like a man's" and flouted the conventions of behaviour of a high-ranking noble woman by making "legs and bows to the ground with her hand and head" rather than a curtsy (Whitaker 2002 p.264). Her apparent unpredictable treatment of social norms comes through her writing, particularly some of the characters in her plays and stories. Bonin (2000 p.339) tells us that, for example, in her plays: *The Female Academy* (1662), *Bell in Campo* (1662) and *The Convent of Pleasure* (1668) (Cavendish 1999) Margaret uses the surprising and in early modern England the oxymoronic characters of the 'educated lady', the 'mannish woman' and the 'sensual nun' to explore the utopian potential of women.¹² These alienating characters play roles in worlds that have been turned upside down and so they accommodate extraordinary visions of societies in which women wield economic, political and intellectual power (Bonin p.340). In these unconventional characterisations of women in atypical occupations we can see Margaret's own view of the world.

One explanation of her lack of concern for normal behaviour might be that she had an unusual upbringing. After Margaret's father died when she was two, her mother Elizabeth never remarried, though it would not have been considered unseemly to marry two or three times given the frequent early deaths of spouses. After her husband's death Elizabeth took control of the family estates and successfully managed what was effectively a huge business enterprise

¹² Margaret's plays were never performed in her life time. It is believed that the *Convent of Pleasure* performed in 1995 by the University College of Ripon and York St John was the first performance of this or maybe any of her plays (IMCS 1999, Findlay et al. 1999).

employing hundreds of people. A wealthy estate at the time might have not only farming and grazing land, but also mines, timber, mills and whole villages containing all manner of secondary businesses that relied on the estate for their well-being. As she was growing up Margaret watched her mother's activity and skill in running such an enterprise successfully (Whitaker 2002 p.11). She saw first-hand how a woman taking action in the world could take charge and be successful.

One of the unforeseen effects of Margaret's mother not remarrying was that the younger children, Margaret in particular as the youngest, experienced an upbringing that lacked the structure and discipline of a normal patriarchal family of the 1600s. This must have given her an unusual understanding of what was a 'normal' life and hence allowed her to see the possibilities open to women who were unburdened by husbands. The circumstances of her upbringing by her mother produced what Margaret later referred to as "virtuous children ... who were honourable, serious and sincere having been raised 'gently, rather with reason than with rods'" (Cavendish cited in Whitaker 2002 p.17). Margaret and her sisters experienced a freedom in their childhood that was highly unusual for the time. Most children were expected to work from an early age or, if from a wealthy family, were forced to behave in strict and formulaic ways. Margaret's circumstances meant that she was allowed to behave in an unconventional manner and have unusual ideas about how the world should be and how she could be in it. This is evidenced by her willingness, throughout her life, to put forward new ideas regardless of their reception. Margaret's childhood singled her out as rare. The circumstances surrounding her childhood and her upbringing were an extraordinary occurrence for seventeenth-century England.

The forwardness of her thinking, writing and publishing belies the constraints that were placed on the behaviour of women at the time. After what could be seen as a lax upbringing, her time spent as maid of honour to the strongly Catholic Queen exposed her to a very strict moral code which was played out in the games of a chivalrous court. However, the continuing privations caused by the English Civil War had the effect of loosening some strictures on women. The subsequent Puritan-led government had different views on the religious role of women in society and allowed them the freedom to preach. This was as the result of new religious sects emerging which had increased tolerance of religious difference (Hill 1962). While these changes may be seen as progressive, the general mood, particularly in London, was one of restriction, with the government closing the theatres and taverns and banning the reading of fiction because it was immoral. Old Royalist families such as those of Margaret's brothers and sisters lived quietly in London in retreat with the curtailing of their cultural milieu (Whitaker 2002 p.136). However, by this time Margaret was living on the Continent where freedom of thought for women was more buoyant than in England.

After her marriage to William and leaving the hothouse atmosphere of the English court-in-exile, Margaret was able to access people, books and information that gave her entry to new ideas. At the time when Margaret lived in Paris, there was a thriving salon culture where women were encouraged to be forthright and vocal (Chalmers 1997 p.332). There is no evidence that Margaret attended any of these forums but she would certainly have been aware of them taking place and of what was being discussed. Later in her life when she lived in London, she encouraged a little of the salon culture herself by receiving and entertaining visitors in her 'closet' or bedroom, where she reclined on her bed while her visitors would sit

on chairs or stools drawn around, discussing poetry, philosophy and other such subjects (Whitaker 2002 p.289).

In the script we see the restrictions of life in Queen Henrietta-Maria's exiled court and the impact it has on Margaret. The scene after her marriage to William where she is visiting Lady Brown (script sc:53) explains the changes that are taking place in her life with marriage, and the new obligations placed upon her, and her difficulty in accommodating these changes. The opinions that Margaret expresses in this scene are taken from her writings. She was very vocal about the downside of marriage for women. There is an inconsistency here between her beliefs about marriage and her own feelings toward her husband that is true to life. As discussed in a later section of this exegesis, Margaret felt herself blessed with her own choice of husband but was able to see the restrictions other women had to endure in their own marriages. In her book, *Sociable Letters* (2004b), she has many references to marriage; in fact it is the book's most prolific topic (Fitzmaurice 2004a p.13). She comments on and is deeply dubious of, the benefits of the institution in general for women. In the scene with Lady Brown there is also mention of the salon culture and its diversions as a way of entertaining herself and broadening her horizons while in Paris. However, Margaret declines the suggestion of attendance preferring her own solitude or spending time with William, and in the process acting in a manner opposed to that which we might expect of an on-screen heroic character, but which in fact shows her as she was.

Then as now, the choice of clothes can be an area in which women can exert some control over their lives. In Margaret's case it was one of the few avenues of expression available, within society, that permitted women who felt strongly about expressing their individualism

to be heard and noticed as individuals. Margaret's clothes were unusual and an obvious sign of her idiosyncrasy, commented on by others all her adult life. There is only one surviving reference to what Margaret actually wore, from the Duchess of Lorraine, who revealed that Margaret was wearing ribbons in an unusual manner on her arms or wrists (Whitaker 2002 p. 155). Whatever the case, Margaret seems to have embraced the scope for originality and creativity within the confines of dress-making in the seventeenth century. Clothes were not made ready-to-wear, so the individual could design her clothes and/or discuss the choice of materials and decoration with the tailors who travelled the country from one great house to the next. From an early age Margaret enjoyed being able to choose for herself. Later she made reference to "such fashions as I did invent myself, not taking that pleasure in such fashions as was invented by others" (Cavendish 2006). She saw her clothes as "a means of projecting her own individual personality" (Whitaker p.22).

I have used clothes throughout the script as a motif to highlight Margaret's difference and individuality. They are used to underscore her isolation while she is maid of honour to the Queen, accentuating her awkwardness and heightening the ridicule she receives from other courtiers, particularly the women. There is one scene (script sc:20) when the women of court are discussing Margaret's dull-wittedness and the Queen's continuing tolerance of her foolishness. The female courtiers mention her ridiculous style of dress and the gentlemen who are listening to the conversation do not understand the women's vitriol towards Margaret's clothes. This scene is influenced by Margaret's writings where, in both her autobiography (Cavendish 2006) as well as her play *The Lady Contemplation* (1662) (Cavendish 1999), she refers to her naivety and social blunders at court (Whitaker 2002 p.53). The connection of style of dress with behaviour and intelligence are a common occurrence and would be well

understood in the twenty-first century. Many women in the audience will be able to sympathise with Margaret's plight.

As Margaret's writing progressed, she donned masculine dress and masculine styles of behaviour. This is commented on by other women in the script (script sc:123). Margaret's motivation was to prompt others to take her seriously but her behaviour had the opposite effect, particularly with women. Margaret's dress becomes more masculine as the script progresses with the most significant being the final sequence where Margaret is dressed in her full costume for the audience at the Royal Society, which is an elaborate dress with a masculine-styled coat and a cavalier's hat. In the script much is made of the production of dressing Margaret for her visit to the Royal Society, which not only verifies the importance of the occasion but also highlights the importance of the statement she was making about her power and rights. Historically, those watching this event commented on how masculine her dress was for this occasion (Battigelli 1998 p.112; Whitaker 2002 p.298).

Before her visit to the Royal Society and the climax of the script, there are two scenes with dress as the theme, one of her undressing after visiting Queen Catherine (script sc:129) followed by one of her dressing for the Royal Society (script sc:133). In the first scene, the audience sees her remove layer after layer until eventually all of her 'mask' is removed and she is left 'bare', real, and in some way, vulnerable. It is in the privacy of this moment that William tells her how much he admires her and what she has achieved. We see the real Margaret being validated by the opinion she cherishes most, and all other versions of her are seen to be pretence. The second scene sees her dressing for her visit to the Royal Society. These two scenes validate Margaret's life: the undressing of Margaret, and William's

acknowledgement of her accomplishments in the privacy of her room, and then the dressing again for the performance of her life and the public acceptance of her unusual self. These two scenes encapsulate the complexity of the woman she was.

When Margaret's life is considered from the distance of time it can seem that she was constantly pushing boundaries. However, she lived her life as she saw fit. Though she seemed to flout convention, she also could be seen as quite conservative in many parts of her life, such as the attachment to her husband's position in society (Whitaker 2002 p.222). It was the confluence of her upbringing, the people and places she experienced and her willingness to delve into the new ideas of the time that make her seem so unconventional.

An unusual seventeenth -century marriage

Margaret's marriage was important for reasons other than providing her with the necessary physical requirements to protect herself while she pursued her career. William and Margaret were involved in an intellectual and literary dialogue that began at the time of their courtship. They had both come from personal involvement in the English Civil War and both were traumatised by their experiences. There is some evidence that William was not behaving in his usual manner when he arrived in Paris at the exiled English court as the losing commander of the Royalist forces at the battle of Marston Moor. Edward Hyde, the First Earl of Clarendon, asserted in his history of the English Civil War, *The History of the Great Rebellion* (1645), that William was consumed "with passion and despair" over the defeat (cited in Worsley 2007 p.168). I have used this information of William's fragile mind-set in the script to influence the initial meeting and following conversations between Margaret and William. The audience and Margaret are introduced to the flirtatious and chivalric William who, when

he first arrives at court, might be trying too hard to keep his defeat hidden. But as time progresses the audience sees that he is in fact choosing to spend time with Margaret quietly rather than in the swirl of the court and this encourages the audience to question his state of mind and her attraction to him beyond the physical. Queen Henrietta-Maria's obvious friendship and flirtatious demeanour where William is concerned explains the person he is, or was, more fully. But his pursuit of the shy Margaret and their mutual willingness to separate themselves from the action of the court plays out and the audience sees the strength and difference they find in each other, and the beginnings of the strong intellectual pull that becomes an intimate part of their relationship. With the possible exception of the Queen, they were probably the two most erudite people of the court. This was as the result of William's life-long interest in learning and Margaret's love of reading because of her shyness and unwillingness to partake in the activities at court as well as her long-held interest in all things 'academic' (Whitaker 2002).

William and Margaret's relationship is a foundational element of the script. As such, it was vital to show their marriage as a mature relationship not unduly influenced by what was occurring around them. Margaret's pursuit of her goals is a central theme of the script and the stability of the marriage is integral to this. To highlight this strength of relationship it was important to have a scene that revealed to the audience something that they would construe as shocking and then to 'walk them back' from this reaction to gain a wider understanding of the intricacies of the relationship. This is why there is the inclusion of William's possible infidelities in the script (script sc:51). Different sensibilities characterised earlier centuries: the rights of a Duke were differently understood and I felt it was important that Margaret not have an expected 'modern' reaction of being hurt and confused by infidelity, but for her to

know of the situation and to move beyond what could be considered a ‘minor’ irritant in their relationship.¹³ There is a mutual understanding that surpasses their possible individual jealousies. It was critical to show that Margaret could choose not to let William’s infidelities impact on her to the point that they might distract her from her dedicated life’s path. For the audience, she is living a heroic life and it is the place of the hero to not let such human frailties steer her off course (Campbell 2004).

In the script we come to understand that it was not just the difficult historical times that spurred Margaret on to do the work she had set for herself but also the willing support of William. Time and tutelage from his brother Charles also helped Margaret to consolidate her feeling that she had a heroic role to play and that writing was the best way to relay her thoughts and ideas to future generations. The effects of experiencing the horrors of the English Civil War so personally and the ensuing exile, left both Margaret and William questioning the value of the Royalty, the trustworthiness of government, the role of the masses and the nature of security. Their isolation in exile and the uncertainty of their return to England bound them together. Later in the script (script sc:116) we see the return of their wealth, a quiet place for contemplation and writing, and the those close to her assisting Margaret to find the security that she felt was ruthlessly taken from her by the war. This renewed sense of security permits her to scale the heights of ‘academia’ in a society that did not allow a woman do so. Her work was her life and her marriage was one of the things that made it possible. “If I had never married the person I have, I do believe I should never have writ so as to have adventured to divulge my works” (Cavendish cited in Whitaker 2002 p. 179).

¹³ The portrayal of Georgiana’s hurt feelings because of the Duke’s infidelities in the film *The Duchess* (2008) may have been unrealistic. Marriage in the English aristocracy at the time was understood as a business transaction (Knox and Schacht 2010, p.56).

Margaret's marriage was childless and wealthy which placed her in an atypical situation for the time. Her marriage gave her access to the tools she required to pursue the life she wanted to create. It gave her access to time, books, information, a clerk and a room of her own, but probably most importantly she received encouragement from the one person who could have thwarted her, her husband. In the foreword to her book *The Worlds Olio* (1655) she praised him for being "my wits patron" (Cavendish cited in Whitaker 2002 p.113). Her wholly idiosyncratic position, along with having that rare paragon, a supportive husband, meant that she had the freedom to explore her own 'fancies' and to choose her own life. We can see from our twenty-first century perspective that this was a freedom that was as necessary then as it is now.

Margaret revealed

Margaret's upbringing allowed her to identify herself as an individual. She described herself as taking "delight in singularity" (Cavendish 2006). This was a woman who was not restricted by the social mores of an aristocratic woman with all of the attending patriarchal baggage this state might entail, but who saw herself as the central character in the drama of her own life. To this end, when she decided that study and writing were to be her life's work, there was no question in her mind that it was inappropriate to pursue this masculine employment or that she should behave properly and devote herself to her home and family. She considered she had a job to do and she handed herself over to it tirelessly. In seeking validation outside the domestic sphere, she took a position in the Queen's household. This was the only 'career' move open to a young woman of aristocratic birth and her mother allowed her to go to the Queen even though she knew Margaret's temperament would not suit court life. Margaret

idolised the Queen and as a maid of honour she had a chance to observe her (Whitaker 2002 p.43). This experience was fundamental to the formation of her ideas of living a different existence from that of other aristocratic women. The position at court was a difficult situation for Margaret to have embraced because of her shyness, but this period of time in her life, probably more than any other, helped to cement the notion of living a heroic life through writing. Later in her life, she used her court experiences when writing her plays, basing some of the female characters on women she observed at the Queen's court and noting how those not skilled in courtly manners were treated (Cavendish 2006). Her life experience shaped the focus of her writing and gave her the motivation to pursue a different path from the expected. It is this inventive determination that shows the makings of an interesting hero. However, it was after her marriage to William when she delved further into the tenets of science and philosophy that her unconventionality shows itself more strikingly. Her breadth of understanding of the natural, social, scientific worlds meant she was able to vary her focus and expand her vision of what she could achieve. As she grew in confidence she was able to further reveal herself and with William's support was able to tackle some of her harsher critics. Her extensive literary output throughout her life gave her scope to trial different voices or versions of the self.

Margaret's writing in its many genres, including poetry, fiction, plays, scientific debate and letter writing, has been the focus of academic scholarship in recent years. This research has revealed her relationship with topics as diverse as gender, politics, philosophy, science and literature and allowed a new reading of her work which Lilley (2004 p.xxix) encapsulates in her discussion of Margaret's fiction: "Cavendish ... dramatizes an heroic figure of woman, who ingeniously turns patriarchalized scenarios of power and seduction to her own benefit". It

is through Margaret's complex use of genre that she was able to express divergent and at times contradictory perspectives which left generations of commentators such as Virginia Woolf (1979) questioning her and her work:

It poured itself out , higgledly-piggledly, in torrents of rhyme and prose, poetry and philosophy which stand congealed in quartos and folios that nobody ever reads. She should have had a microscope put in her hand. She should have been taught to look at the stars and reason scientifically. Her wits were turned with solitude and freedom. No one checked her. No one taught her.” (59)

Such commentators were disadvantaged by a lack of information or access to knowledge about the individual. Margaret did, in fact, have a microscope placed in her hands and she was taught to reason. A further problem arises for these commentators from the past because of a lack of knowledge of the then future concept of postmodernism. The absence of knowledge concerning postmodernism's hybridity as form, and how it could be applied to Margaret's output, left these previous commentators unable to sort through the twisting intricacy of her writing.

Furthermore, the presentation of Margaret's ideas can not be considered outside the cultural and historical milieu in which she found herself: the English Civil War, regicide and exile (Chalmers 1997), as well as the general status of women at the time. For example, Margaret's own view of the role of women can appear contradictory and misplaced against some of her statements. Her own marriage is a case in point, with her individualist behaviour happily in tandem with her deference to William as her husband. Another contradiction was her belief in her own ability to write as well as a man though her writings were prefaced with what Shaver

(1999 p.9) argues is *topoi modesty* – a type of overreaching humility, which if written or spoken by a man would be instantly dismissed as unwarranted but at the time was normal behaviour for a woman. Margaret's contradictory behaviour and writings have left people questioning her work and her sanity but with twenty-first century hindsight her actions have become clearer and more meaningful.

All of this aside, Findlen (2002) suggests that Margaret's output equals any of the well-known gentlemen philosopher/scientists of her day who maintain an acknowledged place in history, such as Bacon, Hobbes or Descartes. Margaret is now receiving the respect and praise that she hoped she would. The concept of postmodernism, with its flexibility of perception and construction, has finally allowed a more finely nuanced reading of her work (Pohl 2003) and her 'voice' is being heard with greater clarity. She is finally being understood as an unconventional woman and as such she makes a wonderful and thrilling choice as a hero for a script.

Chapter four

The social impact of the genre of film

Film as a social-change agent

As a writer it can be quite awe-inspiring to consider that film is a socio-technical creation that offers access to a wide audience who might otherwise be unapproachable. Film, as this complex mix of social and technological forces, also offers a pathway to enter the individual audience member's motivational milieu which, in turn, may cause change in the individual on a psychological as well as a sociological level. I propose that the film script I have written uses historical characters to access these personal landscapes in what may be an innovative and imaginative manner.

The impetus for wanting to reach a wide audience came from my observation of a shift in thinking by young women. Social commentary heralds a growing lack of understanding in this group of the importance of the positive changes that have been wrought in women's lives over the last fifty years, in developed countries around the world, by the second wave of feminism (Budgeon 2001; Caro and Fox 2008; Greer 1999; Maushart 2005). This shift in thinking has been named the third wave of feminism in some quarters. It is described as being an individualist approach to feminism rather than being a collective one as other 'waves' of the past have been described (Cullen 2000; Dicker and Piepmeier 2003; Heywood and Drake 1997). However, the characteristics of this third wave of feminism indicate that women are unintentionally giving away some of the gains made by the women of the second wave without being aware of the possible long-term effects. Individuals need to be made aware of the instability of the present situation – the shift to the importance of the individual rather than the collective – and the understanding that some of the present social benefits that women

enjoy have existed in past societies and been lost (Henry 2004; Lerner 1993). The challenging concept to grasp is that what we have come to know as feminism is part of a historical pattern of change and repetition that may seem unique but actually is not. This struggle to attain and maintain female autonomy, a sense of group independence and/or in some cases real power, has occurred in different places and at different times throughout history (Carmody 1989; Dillon 2006; Wainwright 2006; Weaver 1977). One of the benefits of history is the influence it can bring to bear on the way in which we act in the present and therefore shape the future. I felt in undertaking this project it was important that this historical pattern be brought to the attention of young women. I considered a film was a culturally acceptable genre to access and influence this sizeable audience.

The space where people and technology meet is a place where social change is created. It is a place where the individual can be influenced. That this is a point of interest in our social world, with its ever-expanding knowledge and use of technology, has been understood for some time. McQuail's (1985) work effectively brings together much of the previous research in the area of people, technology and social change, highlighting the growing interchange between the humanistic and the scientific approaches and providing a basis from which to ascertain the hegemony. McQuail's research shows that the intersection between people and technology can be acquired by different paths which can also be identified within the different disciplines of psychology and sociology. As such, a film can be seen as a psychological medium that acts as an illumination of the processes of the mind, as well as a sociological tool that can highlight individual behaviour which is informed by its context.

A discussion of the psychological factors

Joseph Campbell (2004) is a philosopher who is well known for his discussions on mythology and human experience. He suggested that by taking 'the journey' through life an individual is set on a path of self-realisation. He considered that characters within a story who typify the hero provide us with the embodiment of the hero archetype. This gives us, the audience, access to our psyches and in so doing furnishes us the 'mirror' with which to view ourselves. Jung (1991) was the first to identify psychological projections, archetypes and 'mirrors' and their use and importance in our understanding of self and our particular personal growth. Film can be used as a 'mirror' for our personal lives. It can be a realistic medium of representation where the individual can explore personal stories through the journey of the hero archetype (Humm 1997; Orwin 2002). McAdams (1997 p.133) labels this type of character in film as communal and/or agentic, discussing how each character can be used as a personalised representation of a particular mode of being as an adult. The audience is able to explore different versions of the self and so discover a deeper understanding of the elements at work in their lives and just how change might be effected. Making Margaret an accessible hero, one which a modern audience can relate to, means that the audience will be able to access themselves by using her as a 'mirror' as she moves through the film. By undertaking the 'journey' in the film, Margaret's progression embodies the archetypal behaviour that can be reminiscent of an individual life. This process can be a psychological 'mirror' on which the audience can reflect.

While this concept of the mirror as a representation/reflection has been used since the inception of psychoanalysis, in her essay *Visual Pleasure and Narrative Cinema*, first published in 1975, Laura Mulvey (2001) suggested that film can be a negative experience for

the self-image of women where they have to deal with the patriarchal connotations of woman-as-object. She uses the mirror analogy to further her feminist description of the nature of the patriarchal gaze. Since Mulvey's ground-breaking work there have been many feminist researchers who have continued to trace and record the changes to female identity and its meanings on screen. For example, van Zoonen (1994) looked at gender construction in popular media and noted how the patriarchal gaze is maintained. She also observed, however, that women's gaze on men is constructed using the same patriarchal motifs, which has led to re-assessment of how women consume cinema. Tasker (1998) identified that the 'Hollywood construction' of woman-on-film was slowly changing, with women starting to take on new roles that saw them represent more than the previously normal virgin-mother/whore scenarios. One prominent example of this role expansion is the movie *Erin Brockovich* (Grant 2000) in which an independent woman is depicted as tackling political and social issues while also meeting her mother/whore image head-on.

On the other hand, Hollows (1999) talks of the social mainstreaming of feminism and how, as a consequence, the mainstreaming of feminist film producers, writers, directors and other film professionals has occurred. This in turn has led to a more normalised view of the feminine and a distancing of the constrained view of woman as 'other'. Smelik (1999) explains this phenomena using writer/director Gorris's *Antonia's Line* (1995) as an example. She shows the possibility of the establishment of a female-only genealogy, a family that exists without fathers and sons in evidence, as a way of creating and maintaining a fulfilled life.

As the slowly-expanding feminist research continues to occur there are many more alternative and/or positive views of the impact of film on the female self-image available (Buszek 2006;

Gorton 2007; Hermes 2005; Inness 2004; Willis 2008), where film reflects the broadening definitions of female. Film helps us to access a psychological adventure that is reflected, in Currie's (1995) view of film, as an experience in imagination which relies on the individual immersing the self in the filmic images. Perhaps we can draw a similarity between this immersion and the experience that a child might have when playing with dress-ups, where he/she changes personas with a change of clothes (Garvey 1990 p.89); the audience gets to 'try on' the characters on screen.

In attempting to enhance this experience of active imagining within a film format, it was important to use script construction devices that would give breadth to the story. The main device used is Margaret herself, as a historical construction, who seems modern in her thoughts and behaviours. By weaving together the mores of the seventeenth and twenty-first centuries I could bring to the screen a woman who could act as a psychological projection who might carry the desires of many (Carroll 2008). The filmic creation of Margaret allows the use of imagery for psychological convenience and so enhances the audience's personal experience (Goldberg 2007). For example, the person watching would be able to choose her psychological 'outfits' and by trying them on would be able to re-negotiate her own historical constructions. This could lead to an increase in self-understanding in a wider social context.

Helping the audience in this psychological transition means writing the main character of Margaret using principles explained by Livingston (1996) as intentionalist, where the writer consciously chooses the arc that the character is to inhabit. Depicting Margaret as having, what a modern audience would consider, a modern understanding of a given situation such as marriage, and having her understand and articulate how the restrictions of marriage have a

real impact on the lives of women then and now, shows her to be a woman of her own time as well as of ours. Margaret clearly understood the drawbacks of marriage. She once wrote to warn women of what lay ahead for them, indicating that “marriage is the grave or tomb of wit” (Cavendish *Playes* (1662) cited IMCS 2008). Furthermore, setting the action noticeably in the past imbues Margaret’s situation with a necessary perspective so that a modern viewer has the opportunity to safely identify the self with the character while perceiving the whole of the created cinematic world as a separate space. If by watching a film an individual can be placed in a position where she can find and explore other psychological personas or what might be termed psychological dress-ups, then perhaps she has been handed the tools to allow her to start experimenting with her self-perceptions. In doing this she may be able to perceive the particular cognitive processes and how possible changes to personal beliefs and actions might occur. Watching a film may be a psychologically safe way for grown ups to play dress-ups.

There is abundant research into the pursuit of goals, and we know that given the stimulus, people can change or achieve their personal goals when they desire. One example is the research by Custers and Aarts (2005) which tells us that when behavioural states are linked to positive effects, people will want to go after the goal and they may even do so non-consciously. When a person is shown an alternative way to behave which they perceive as a positive, they may change their behaviour to attempt to attain these goals. These authors also found that when goal-representation specifies both the state desired as well as information, the pursuit of the goal can indeed be of positive psychological value. It is clear that writing a film script and applying this research, incorporating showing, using images, as well as informing, using dialogue, can have a positive impact on an audience. By seeing the possibilities, the

audience will be enticed to 'try on' different states and modes of being and if they perceive these changes as positives they may be led to goal-reassessment which may bring about personal change. The above debate provides a template for script writing that acknowledges the experiencing of it as an educative medium.

Furthermore, wanting to pursue goals can arise from psychological processes that are put into action by features in our social environment that may be outside our conscious awareness, such as the meta-text of a film. Normally, human behaviour is considered to be guided by reason, and accordingly, much effort is devoted to trying to explain various, if not all, actions by studying the relations between attitudes, intentions and behaviour. Aarts and Dijksterhuis (2000) believe, however, that although the emphasis on more reason-based and deliberate processes is helpful for understanding certain behaviours, it is not the only useful concept for insight into behaviour in general. They believe that the creation of a strong mental link between a goal and an action may simulate goal-directed automaticity and thus form habits. The researchers found that the automatic activation of a habitual action is goal-dependent and it is therefore possible that an individual can create a habit out of a personal-goal change when motivation is present. This means that actions can be automatically activated, provided the relevant goal is activated first. This concept of creating habits out of goals is a critical step in understanding how a film might affect its audience and create personal change in the process. If what is presented on screen is perceived as a positive attribute by the individual in the audience, i.e. worth attaining, then there may be an automatic or non-conscious step that an individual could take to attain the desired goal. Her attitudes may change, though this may not be conscious, which is why film can be such a powerful medium sociologically as well as psychologically.

There is one final element to add to the previously mentioned psychological measures of archetypal recognition/mirroring/projection, goal-directed behaviour and habit-forming processes, which is the element of engagement of the emotions of the individual. Arnold (2005) uses the term 'empathetic intelligence' to explain the transmission of one person's feelings to another. This is her attempt to name and understand the connection that occurs between people where an individual is 'feeling' the same emotion as the person she is 'tuned into'. Arnold explains this process as an act of heartfelt, thoughtful imagination. Daniel Goleman's book *Social Intelligence* (2006), encompassing his previous work on *Emotional Intelligence* (1996), explains that he believes this is a relatively new and untapped area of science which looks into the complexity of how human beings are 'wired' to connect with each other socially. It is this aspect that comes into play in the cinema. Goleman (2006) explains that the eyes contain nerve projections that lead directly to the key brain structure for empathy and matching emotions, the orbito-frontal area of the prefrontal cortex (p.63). Film becomes the obvious choice when wanting to access personal empathy because when this area of the brain is activated, along with the aforementioned psychological processes, a context is created. This is where the act of watching a performance on screen allows us to place ourselves into a given setting and to feel the attendant emotions. We are thus able to ask ourselves what we would do with the same set of parameters that the screen character faces. Stimulating a reflective reaction that helps us decide if we want to question our reactions, and if so then set about putting these actions into place in our lives.

We can see that film sits in a perfect position to effect psychological change on a broad scale. It provides the desired image, shows the necessary behaviour, hones our desires and helps us

to feel the possibilities of change by letting us 'try on' the character's persona as a child might try on dress-ups thereby enabling a safe form of role play for grown ups.

The sociological aspects of using film

There are several points worth considering concerning the access and effect of the sociological aspects of film. Film is a form of mass communication, particularly the commercial, Hollywood variety, that many of us have easy access to. We cannot trivialise the impact that this form of communication, with its context and situation, has on an individual. There has been some research into the effects on the audience of brand advertising and smoking in films, but the most relevant research into film as a mode of sociological transformation has occurred in the area that questions the use of film as a tool in providing education. Mansfield (2001), Deci et al. (1991) and Pintrich, Marx and Boyle (1993) all promote the importance of the social-contextual factors and how these nurture intrinsic motivation and promote internalisation of learning opportunities. These researchers show the influence of contextualised perceptions on inspiration and how incentive affects the process of conceptual change. They also explain how personal goals and effective processes in a multi-person context meet to induce change in those involved. In using film as a way to teach, Casper et al. (2003) found they could increase the learning experience of their subjects due to an increase in the participants' perceptual involvement, a promotion of critical thinking and an increase in the use of analytical skills. Champoux (1999) suggests that film scenes can offer a visual portrayal of abstract theories and concepts that can significantly enhance educational instruction. And Rosser (2007) found that leadership moments portrayed in film had a positive effect on the behaviour of students, allowing them to better understand the lessons being taught when compared to traditional modes of content delivery. From this we can see that film

can be used to create a context in which those watching can be persuaded into conceptual change and accelerated modes of learning. Therefore, film can be used to inform large groups of available modes of thinking and of possible changes to perceived norms. I have followed these ideas in my script by placing Margaret to the fore and making her an instrument of change in her own life, regardless of the historical upheaval going on around her. By having a woman who is able, in her own way and within her own power (albeit with class and economic privilege), to step up and meet the challenges with which she is presented, allows the audience to take on some of these notions and put them to work in their own lives if they so desire.

Audience opinions are changed by seeing films and a writer might influence what these changes may be in an individual's thinking by more effectively transmitting her filmic concepts. As early as 1963, Levonian found that film-mediated opinion change was more likely if the perceptual motivational structure of the individual was taken into account and that there was evidence of an alignment of communication values between the writer and the audience. Forty-five years later, because of changes to the speed at which the industry operates and the speed of conceptual change within the wider community, a writer needs to be able to predict where the audience's motivation will be at the end of the film's production so as to align communication values with the expected audience. If this can be achieved, film has the ability to spark national or even international conversations. Such a conversation occurred around the release of *Brokeback Mountain* (McMurty and Ossana 2005), with reference to the boundaries of social acceptance of same-sex relationships. In this case, the film was seen to be doing the hardest of tasks – attempting to open minds. The scriptwriter's job encompasses creating drama that not only involves the audience at the time but has them walking out of the

cinema still engaged with what they have just seen. The best way to achieve this is by writing strong individual scenes which, as Straczynski (2002) comments, have their own rhythm and logic so each individual scene is compelling in its own right. And, of course, the individual scenes must follow each other in the right thematic structure so as to create a coherent and memorable story. Movies can be an effective medium for capturing the moment, and the writer can be theoretically capable of manipulating the audience's reaction. This is a compelling situation for any writer where she has access to such potential to influence through a socially powerful medium. In writing this script I wanted the persona of Margaret to be such that the audience would wish to spend more time with her. If she was a strong and memorable character then her actions and pronouncements might have a more potent and longer-lasting effect in terms of helping people think about possible changes they may wish to make in their own lives. I tried to imbue her character with the verve and spirit she had in life and to create a character that remained in the psyche after the film experience was over.

The benefits of film as a socio-technical apparatus that allows access by a wide audience are obvious. What is not as obvious is the psychological and sociological impact inherent in the process. In the contemplation of the interface between people and technology it is observable that technology can be used to support an increase in motivation and purposeful action in the individual. By engaging the emotion of the individual, the validity of the connection increases (Goleman 2006). The use of history to place the story may enable us to achieve some clarity about our own time and the issues being faced. We come to a degree of understanding and reach a commonality of perspective once the situations tackled by the historical character are compared with our own. In doing this we can renegotiate the historical constructions in our lives and change the people we are, if we so desire. It is my belief that Margaret can assist in

this 'getting of perspective' and her actions on screen can assist the individual to attempt to renegotiate her personal version of history and how it plays out her life.

It is my hope that by providing this film script as a vehicle for individual psychological and sociological awareness building, I have an impact on how young women view and remember their recent feminist past. I also hope to remind them that some of their so-called freedoms have been created and lost before. This knowledge will assist them to consciously choose 'how they want' to continue feminist psychological and sociological change.

Film as research

Writing a film script for a thesis places me in the paradigm of creative research. Denzin (2003 p.x) suggests that creative endeavours:

are situated in complex systems of discourse where traditional, everyday and avant-garde meanings of theatre, film, video ethnography, cinema, performance, text and audience all circulate and inform one another.

As is the norm with the doctoral procedure, one of the overall questions asked is whether new knowledge has been generated in the process of conducting the research. In creative research the answer is yes, because as art work it is new knowledge in its originality. However, alongside the originality of the artwork stands the relevant question of whether a new understanding has emerged with the completion of the research. When this question is answered in the affirmative it indicates that new ways of understanding have found fresh informational paths which help to articulate the human experience. As such, creative research allows for the application of theory to a creative endeavour which then enhances the experience of the imaginative or the artistic in a much broader form than might have been

possible without the contextualisation (Barrett 2007). It is possible for an artwork or other creative piece to be examined in the expanding vision of informed access, by those external to the traditional academic milieu, the general public. Creative research can lead the individual to produce new and revealing insights into life even though, as Grech (2006) explains:

some academics complain that the subjective impressionistic (and sometimes contradictory) rhetorics and logics created by such work are too tentative to be useful in a rigorous scientific or academic environment. (p.38)

Pushing past these bounds of academia may mean that creative research has a part to play in the dissemination of the artistic experience to the general public and in doing so has the potential to inform social change.

The evolution of theoretical perspectives that include poststructuralism, postmodernism, feminism, the ethnographic and the phenomenological have allowed for the rise in and the acceptance of the subjective in the scholarly process (Brearley 2008). I am reminded of Ann Oakley's (1974) call for the acceptance of the relevance of her feminist research in the early 1970s as a way of understanding the 'female' experience on its own merits rather than as a 'human' experience which was the usual perspective at the time. The ensuing years have seen academia struggle with the accommodation of these subjective or more 'emotive' rather than purely analytical ways of dealing with research material (Denzin and Lincoln 2005). But what has occurred over time is the recognition that there is some difference of approach that is valid and even desirable in assisting with the expansion of understanding of lived experience (Brien 2006; Grech 2006). Creative research provides such a conduit. However, Barrett (2007) cautions that even though this alternative logic of practice results in the generation of new ways of modelling meaning, knowledge and social relations, it is still a relatively foreign

idea to the wider academic community. In fact this struggle between what is perceived as the realm of scientific reason and what is perceived as its antithesis, the realms of emotion, is one of the issues explored by the characters in my script. My characters are based on real people who were intimately involved in the scientific/academic milieu of their time both on the Continent and in England.

There is, within the provenance of creative research, a fundamental that encourages the inclusion of the creative impulse in the furthering of scientific debate. This is an understanding that is implicit to the epistemology of creative research. There can not be any broadening of the scope of scientific knowledge without first the intuition to look in a particular direction (Brearley 2008; Grech 2006). This intuition is a creative force in itself and by following its lead, an opening appears in the scientific investigation that feels natural and appropriate, and leads to the development of a scientific hypothesis. Brien (2006) suggests that creative expression can engender further academic investigation because it provides the basis for research beyond that already existing. Bourdieu (1990) argues that tacit knowledge and the alternative logic of practice underpin all discovery. The conventional academic voice of the past, and the present, Brearley (2008) acknowledges, has shied away from alternative explanations of the experience of the creative, in an attempt to quantify the epistemological as clearly as possible without wanting to acknowledge the possibilities that might exist in alternative view points. However, there are academic possibilities missed because of this lack of flexibility. Dean (2002) believes that creativity is imperative to the furthering of the scientific realm and a dialogue between the two, the creative and the scientific, is vital. He notes the gradual increase in the acceptance of this idea over time and the practical

development of structures within the academic sphere that enhance the pace of acceptance.

Creative research as a distinct discipline is one such structure.

A further connection exists between the principal character of my script and the relevance of using creative approaches to research. Margaret was a scientist, or more correctly stated, a proto-scientist. She took her work very seriously even though history has perceived it and her as being unpredictable. This can now be seen as merely a difference in approach (O'Neill 2001). There are several reasons why her work may appear dubious, but the most obvious is that she lived at a time when modern science was just forming. It had not settled into any particular format in the 1650s and the group who were to become the original members of the Royal Society (as depicted in the script) were finding a way to approach, formulate, differentiate and organise themselves and their ideas and experiments, and thus became the form-makers of the current scientific hegemony. They eventually decided on the structure of prediction that surrounds science and academia today (Whitaker 2002 p.280), which allows for certainty in repetition. In 1666 Margaret wrote *Observation upon Experimental Philosophy*, setting out her thoughts on the limitations of mechanical philosophy and in the process challenging some of the foremost scientific minds of the day, the same minds who are now seen as the fathers of science, such as Hobbes, Boyle, Gasendi, Hooke and Descartes, some of who were also members of the Royal Society. By understanding the organisational politics involved in creating the Royal Society and the patriarchal/mechanicalist understanding of the world by those involved, we gain an insight into what and how the structures that surround modern scientific thinking came into being (O'Neill 2001). It would have been highly unlikely that Margaret would have been accepted into the Society as a

member.¹⁴ Her status as ‘uneducated’, her atheistic tendencies and her gender, as well as her scientific disagreements with many of the gentlemen involved, would have been some of the obstacles to her acceptance. However, consider just how different the situation might have been had Margaret been able to effect some change in thinking by her inclusion in the society as a “thoroughgoing materialist with respect to nature” (O’Neill p.xxxvi). Her vision of science and nature could have changed, for example, the way that society at large has approached the use of the earth’s resources over the last three hundred years by being more committed to working within nature’s system rather than disregarding it as mechanicalists are likely to do. A creative-research model approach to her philosophy and science gives immediate access and validation to her work and enhances observation of it, because of its complexity of genre and composition, as having a postmodern feel. “This style of research aims not for the resolution of ideas ... but the creation of possibilities” (Ryan 2005). The praxis not only allows for a deconstruction of the structures that have effectively obscured the singularity of her ‘voice’ but highlight the nature of Margaret’s intuitive approach to what were to become the structures of science and her possible re-telling of scientific ‘truths’. This research paradigm also underlines what Margaret was searching for when she produced the work three-hundred and fifty years ago: acceptance by some of the mainstream scientific community.

Margaret’s presumed scientific unpredictability had everything to do with her time in history. If she were pursuing her career today her work would find a response in the creative approaches to research, though traditional academia might still struggle with her ideas. Grech (2006 p.39) believes that traditional academia’s objections to creative research have more to

¹⁴ The first woman was admitted as a fellow to the Royal Society in 1945.

do with maintaining existing perceptions of truth and reality in the academic community than with the preservation and enhancement of human knowledge. Accordingly, Carter (2004) believes that the illusions of stability that underpin the critical rationalism of the scientific do so to the detriment of wisdom. Margaret would have agreed with this (script sc:100) and understood the political and informational cost involved in maintaining the scientific-knowledge business.

Another compelling foundational idea of creative research allows for the inclusion of the researcher/creator into the artistic/academic work. This inclusion not only informs my idiosyncratic view but also allows me to use that view to inform the characters and the connections they may make with the audience. I agree with Barrett (2007 p.1) that, “artistic practice be viewed as the production of knowledge or philosophy in action”. The artist creates in every moment, and in each of these moments there are decisions made, conscious and unconscious, that change the outcome of the creative piece. In the writing of a film script, I found there is a place, a moment, where the characters take on their designated performance and act as if they are independent entities unattached to the writer’s mind. I can only name this experience as inspiration though the term seems inadequate. Carter (2007 unpaginated) calls it the “condition of invention – the state of being that allows the state of becoming to emerge”. It seems that the conscious process is left behind and the process of the mind moves to another realm. The revelations that occur in this place are a valid part of the human experience and even though they are difficult for other methodologies to understand, creative research allows this experience to be credible. It is through such experiences, Barrett (2007) believes, that knowledge can be acquired. These may be applied to develop more generative research pedagogies and methodologies beyond a discipline itself.

All research hosts appearances of the author, but creative research allows for my full participation which includes my subjective experience, thoughts and inspirations. Practice-led or creative research allows for the production of knowledge about, and from, these subjective spaces of human experience. These spaces develop in the process of engaging in the speculative and imaginative exercise of researching for the creative work (Carter 2007). Brien (2006 p.56) explains that a writer might play with “ideas, impressions, hunches and insights” that assist in the creation of spaces where the action can take place. The writer carries on, and in the act of thinking, the flow of inspiration and all other minute aspects of the process, she makes subjective decisions that create the entire work. Each of these decisions are impacted by aspects of the internal and external environment of the creator. Iggulden (2002 cited in Barrett 2007) observed that it was impossible to separate the writing and the research from the circumstances of the writer’s life because the impulse to action comes from within the writer. Grech (2006) approaches from an alternative direction and suggests that if academic work is to be relevant and actually further the sum of human knowledge then it must say something about how people feel. Carter (2004) extends the understanding of the subjective and relational dimensions of the artistic process by explaining the decontextualisation of the universal to the particular experience. The point of these claims is that the creator is placed firmly in the centre of the exercise and that this positioning has to be taken into account when academically assessing the work. However, we must also be aware that in the process of this subjective inclusion, the work is not only informed by the inclusion, but indeed would not exist without it.

This subjectivity or what I can assure is “constructed knowledge” (Belenky et al. 1986) can lead to innovation and invention that allow access for others and their subjective responses. In doing this work, part of my impetus was to tap into the individual psyche of the audience member and hopefully leave an impression on or with her/him. Grech (2006) gives an insight into just this situation when he explains that the interaction of the individual with a specific art work:

produces reverberations that represent the things and events the work refers to in real life. This allows the individual who interacts with a creative work to incorporate their own experience of the world as a primary reference. (p.38)

I wanted the audience to take away images and thoughts that they might interact with over time and that might cause changes to their lives. As Carter (2004) encourages, I was very keen for part of my endeavour to be about providing a structure that might assist the reinvention of human relations – nothing less. This dynamic introduces an element of chaotic uncertainty into the work which may give the appearance of being imprecise and even counter-intuitive. These were words directed towards the historical Margaret and her work and so I feel I am in good company. My involvement of myself in the creation of the fictional Margaret is inevitable and so she and I have become intertwined. Grech (2006) believes that this involvement is necessary and unavoidable.

There are many academics who feel compelled to bring their work, with its theoretical underpinnings, to a wider audience. Using a film script as a way of disseminating ideas to a wider audience is not a departure from academic validity; it is a way of bringing the imagination of the individual into the academic arena and allowing a more formal airing for the “constructed knowledge” gained (Belenky et al. 1986). There are many examples of

academics immersing themselves in the genre of popular writing, such as Umberto Eco's intellectual, historical mystery, *The Name of the Rose* (1983), Catherine Cole's detective fiction including *Skin Deep* (2002) or Iris Murdoch's (1978) Booker Prize winning *The Sea, the Sea*. In the process they bring intellectual ideas into the mainstream, where information can be more easily spread, political ideas furthered, cultural variances acknowledged and enfolded, and economic realities shown and discussed. Through this 'popularisation' ideas can be more broadly discussed and disseminated than might have been possible in a purely scholarly treatise. Margaret, I am sure, would have agreed with the action of dispersing ideas to as wide an audience as possible.

Conclusion

As the script progressed I became more and more enamoured with Margaret Cavendish (nee Lucas), Duchess of Newcastle. I came to understand her intimately and so her voice in the script became stronger. Margaret's story unfolded before me and as the details of her life became clearer she seemed to become more accessible. I became more settled as to my choice of her as a role-model for 'everywoman' even though she was as different as a woman could be. I am grateful to Margaret for the opportunity she has given me when undertaking this research. She has helped to open my eyes to my own world and the issues I face as a woman with a clarity of perspective that is enhanced by her speaking to me from the past. I was enamoured with Margaret's bravery, tenacity and her willingness to forge on against devoted and at times energetic opposition. By depicting Margaret's life in a script, I gained clearer access to elements of my own life. It is just this experience that I hope to elicit for the audience of the eventual film.

Writing a script to access what is potentially a worldwide audience is a heady thought and was a strongly motivating factor in choosing to write in this genre. My other writing choices, of a traditional historical nonfiction research thesis or even a novel or a documentary, paled into insignificance beside the popular potential of a feature film. Film can tell a powerful story and its popularity with the public makes it a valuable tool when actively attempting to influence social norms. Using the filmic construction as a way to pass on a message that I considered to be of the utmost importance fulfilled one of the criteria that was central to the overall project. Script writing as academic creative research allows for the creation and delivery of a message with more extensive scope than might otherwise be possible in a traditional academic framework. There continues to be much research undertaken in this area.

For example, Hetherington (2010) discusses the nature of inspiration and the need to understand this and other processes involved in creative pursuits, and to clarify how these elements interact with academic research. Krauth, Webb and Brien (2010) look at the impact of changing attitudes regarding research-quality concerns in the area of creative research and consequently the broadening of research concepts within creative frameworks. While Burr's (2009) summary of the *Creative and Practice-Led Research Symposium* represents a 'reflective pause' that observes the creative practice within academia and where it may be heading. Greater acceptance of differing approaches to research by the academic community is still necessary and it is hoped that achievement of this will eventually help to disseminate expert information further and wider to the general public which in the process will assist in the education of those outside of the formal academic system. Creative research has a role to play in broadening the parameters of what is considered an academic education. When there is an increase in the subjective content admitted to the pedagogy the subsequent increase in imagination and serendipity will also enrich the overall educational experience.

It would be hundreds of years after the events depicted in the script before women as a group were allowed to gain access to academia. Margaret's vision of what was possible, what she thought women could learn and how they needed to face opposition in their lives were all relevant signposts to what was to become components of emergent feminist thought. These insights are still pertinent for women of the early twenty-first century. Margaret's philosophy and science, in which the inclusiveness of nature was a guiding principle, has a continuing relevance because of changing contemporary views on the value of nature. Her heroic stance and her determination to pursue areas that were out of bounds in her social milieu give her

endeavours a modern feel and may help to encourage women to exercise their basic right and use their 'voice'.

In writing *That Cavendish Woman* I wanted to explore one woman's efforts in history as well as exploring those constructions of history which had effectively silenced her. The script is an attempt to blend history and fiction so as to create characters that are interesting and animated and to redress some of the gender imbalance existing in the pertinent historical narratives. I was also interested to see if I could transform an academic work into a popular genre with a feminist ethos and to see if Margaret would be the type of woman an audience would want to watch. To this end, I thought it was valuable to have a woman stand up and express herself as truthfully as possible. Finally, I wanted to give Margaret an opportunity to be (re)discovered by an extensive audience and so have the potential to become a role model. I wanted to raise the awareness of a younger generation of women, including my own three daughters, and to speak to them of the possibilities for their lives and thus highlight the enduring importance of raising and maintaining the profile of women's 'voice' in the historical record. Margaret can remind women of the need for their voices to be heard in communities, in society and in history. She truly is a hero for all times.

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