**Spain: Phillip II**

Narrator

Philip II

Advisor 1

Advisor 2

Artist

**Narrator**: Phillip II inherited the Spanish throne from his father, Charles V in 1556. Like his father, Phillip was very shy, serious, and deeply religious. He believed he’d be given the throne by God and therefore, had pretty much the right to do whatever he wanted. Our scene opens with Philip and a group of advisors, planning their next move.

**Advisor 1**: Well, my Lord, you have successfully taken the Portuguese kingdom, you have the largest army in Europe, 339,000 pound of gold from the new American colonies, and sent out a Crusade against the Ottoman Muslims AND the Protestants in Europe. Also, there is an artist here to meet you.

**Artist** *(enters and bow to the king)*: Sire because of Spain’s great wealth, we artists are able to spend much more time perfecting our art! We wanted to thank you by presenting you with a painting to show our gratitude.

**Philip II**: How awesome you’ve made me look! I love it. I will hang it next to my massive throne so everyone will know how awesome I am.

**Artist**: That’s a great idea, my Lord. Everyone will know that this is the Golden Age of Spanish art!

**Philip II**: I know it’s a great idea…I came up with it. Now you may go, I have wars to plan.

*Artist leaves*

**Advisor 2**: Alright, your highness, where would you like to attack next?

**Philip II**: Um…I think I would like to send my armada of ships against England.

**Advisor** **1**: Are you sure about that? It could be dangerous.

**Philip II**: Nonsense! England is ruled by a WOMAN—that ridiculous Elizabeth. Besides, she’s a Protestant. God likes me better because I’m Catholic. It will be easy to defeat her.

**Narrator**: A few weeks later…

**Advisors** *(said together, running in breathlessly)*: My king…we have some bad news.

**Philip II**: Did my wife break her crown again?

**Advisor** **2**: Um…not exactly. It turns out the Armada kind of got hit by a storm and we lost quite a few ships and…well…it was defeated by the English.

**Philip II**: What are you serious?!

**Advisor** **1**: Yes…and the Dutch are revolting against us. Protestant mobs are destroying the Catholic churches. It’s kind of crazy out there.

**Philip II**: Well I guess we are going to have to raise taxes to pay for all that.

**Advisor** **1**: I’m not sure that will go over well. Our population is growing and inflation is high. People probably won’t be able to pay them

**Advisor 2**: You know, the nobles don’t pay taxes, maybe we could raise some money by charging them.

**Advisor** **1**: Are you crazy? The nobles will never go for that!

**Philip II**: Enough, here’s what we’ll do: we’ll borrow money from Italy.

**Advisor 1**: Are you sure? I’m pretty sure that will bankrupt us.

**Advisor 2**: We’ve got to fight the Dutch somehow.

**Philip II**: We’re going to do it because I said so and I’m king. So there.

**Narrator**: The Spanish and the Dutch fought each other for another 11 years, until the Netherlands finally declared their independence from Spain in 1579. Sure enough, with high inflation, high taxes, and high debt, Spain went from being the wealthiest nation in Europe to being bankrupt. Although he had ruled through Spain’s artistic Golden Age, Philip’s inability to listen to advisors or make wise decisions ended with Philip dying in disgrace believing God was angry with him.

**England: Stuarts & English Civil War**

Narrator

Charles I

Parliament Member 1

Parliament Member 2

Parliament Member 3

Oliver Cromwell

**Narrator**: After the death of Elizabeth I, her cousin James of Scotland became the new King of England. He offended a new branch of English Christians called Puritans. The Puritans wanted to purify the English church from any Catholic practices, and James refused all of their suggested reforms. When he died, his son Charles I took the throne of England. Like his father, he believed that God had placed him on the throne and resented having to go to Parliament for money, which was English law. This would eventually catch up to him.

**Charles I** (addressing Parliament): I’m here today to ask you for some money. I want to go to war with France and Spain.

**Parliament Member 1**: I don’t think so, king. We can’t afford war right now.

**Charles I**: Well fine…I’m just going to suspend you until you change your mind.

**Narrator**: This wasn’t the only time he suspended or dissolved Parliament. It started to annoy the members of Parliament.

**Parliament Member 1**: You know, the king is supposed to listen to us when it comes to money.

**Parliament Member 2**: I know! It’s getting ridiculous. Who does he think he is?

**Parliament Member 3**: Well…he *is* king.

**Parliament Member 1**: Yes, but that shouldn’t allow his to take our rights away.

**Parliament Member 2**: By George, you’ve stumbled on to something! Next time he asks us for something, let’s make him agree to a Petition. We’ll make sure that it ensures the rights of Englishmen. Not even the king should be above the law

**Parliament Member 3**: What a great idea! But I’m pretty sure he won’t go for it. He does really like being king.

**Narrator**: Sure enough, Charles signed the petition, but completely ignored it. When Scotland tried to invade in 1641, Parliament passed laws to limit the power of the king, so Charles tried to arrest the leaders of Parliament. This left the people of London in a rage, led by a Puritan named Oliver Cromwell.

**Cromwell**: We cannot allow the king to have this much power! We must fight him if he will not grant us our rights.

**Parliament Member 1**: I get it Oliver, but he has way too much power. Will we ever get enough men to fight with us?

**Cromwell**: I have already raised an army of Puritan. We are being nicknamed the Roundheads by the king and his men because of our short hair cuts, but we’ll show those loyal Cavaliers who is boss in the end!

**Narrator**: Sure enough, after seven years of war, Cromwell and the Puritans finally defeated the king. Charles was put on trial for treason and was sentenced to death. The beheading of Charles was the first time an overthrown king of England had a public execution. This led to the beginning of Oliver Cromwell’s rule in England as leader of the Republican Commonwealth.

**England: Restoration & the Glorious Revolution**

Narrator

Charles II

Parliament Members

James II

William

Mary

**Narrator**: Although Oliver Cromwell took power in England as the head of a republic, he eventually turned into a military dictator. He seized control of Irish lands and gave them to his soldiers and killing thousands of Irish; he established Puritan morality laws, outlawing things like theater, dancing, and sporting events. Although he allowed Jews back into England, he outlawed Catholicism. When he died, his government quickly collapsed and Parliament was reestablished. The people were tired of military rule, leaving parliament with a hard decision about what to do next.

**Parliament Member 1**: We could appoint an emperor.

**Parliament Member 2**: Nah, too Roman. We could elect a president.

**Parliament Member 1**: Bad idea, too American. We need some strong ruler.

**Parliament Member 3**: Guys I think we’re forgetting the most obvious answer. Charles I had a son. We could let Prince Charles back into London and make him the new king.

**Parliament Member 1**: Are you sure? We did just fight a Civil War over that whole king.

**Parliament Member 3**: Sure, I hear he’s a really fun guy. We should just get it a shot. Let’s just pass some laws to make sure that he doesn’t take too much power.

**Parliament Member 1 & 2**: Sounds good. Agreed.

**Narrator**: Prince Charles was welcomed back with open arms and crowned King Charles II. This period was called the Restoration.

**Charles II** (talking to Members of Parliament): Monarchy is back, baby! Let’s get rid of all that crazy stuff Cromwell did. You guys take notes: let’s reopen the theaters and put on some good plays. Nothing religious—sex and drugs and rock and roll! And also, dancing is back on the table. In fact I’m going to throw a huge party! It’s going to be sweet.

**Parliament Member 1**: Sounds great, your highness but don’t forget…

**Charles II**: No worries, guys, I’m totally cool with guaranteeing freedom to all of you. Let’s get back on track!

**Narrator**: Things seemed great with Charles II on the throne…unfortunately, he never had any legitimate children and died without an heir. Charles’s younger brother, James, was next in line…but he was Catholic. This made the rest of England very uncomfortable. They were willing to put up with it however, as his daughter Mary was Protestant. Then everything changed…

**Parliament Member 2**: Did you hear?! The king’s second wife gave birth to a son. Mary is no longer next in line.

**Parliament Member 3**: But…they are going to raise him to be Catholic! We haven’t had a Catholic monarch since Bloody Mary!

**Parliament Member 1**: Guys this isn’t good. We’ve got to do something.

**Parliament Member 2**: I have an idea. I wrote this letter to Mary and her husband William of Orange. He’s a prince in the Netherlands and they are both Protestant. I bet we can convince them to overthrown James. I hear Mary never really liked her dad anyway.

**Parliament Member 3:** Great plan! Let’s all sign it and get it in the mail now!

**Narrator**: A few weeks later….

**James II**: Is that my daughter and her husband I see coming to see their old man?

**Mary**: Sure is! Dad, but this is no family reunion; we are here to take your throne away.

**William**: Yep, we think it’s time for some changes in this country.

**James II:** Talk about a rebellious phase. If you still lived under my roof, you’d be grounded. Besides, you and what army are going to take my throne away?

**William** (indicating his large force): That one.

**James II:** Oh, dang it. I was just kidding. I was thinking about retiring anyway. Throne is all yours.

**Parliament members:** yay!

**Mary**: That was easy.

**Parliament Member 3**: Not so fast, before we make you king and queen, there’s a catch.

**Parliament Member 2**: Yeah, we want to avoid all those past mistakes, so we’d like you to sign this document.

**Parliament Member 1**: It’s called the English Bill of Rights. Basically, Parliament is going to be more powerful that the king or queen. You can dissolve us or overrule our laws, and you definitely can’t take rights away from the citizens.

**Parliament Member 3**: So do you agree to make England a Constitutional Monarchy?

**William**: Sounds good to me. We’ll sign.

**Narrator**: And so William and Mary became king and queen in this bloodless rebellion called the Glorious Revolution. They agreed to the Bill of Rights and limited their own power for the sake of the people. This system of government still exists in England today.

**France: Louis XIV**

Narrator

Louis XIV

Advisor

Noble 1

Noble 2

Noble 3

**Narrator**: When Louis XIV became king, he was only four years old. With the help of advisors and a history a strong French rulers, he became one of the greatest kings of all time.

**Louis XIV**: Hmm…I have a problem. The nobles of France have it in their heads that they are better than the king. I cannot let that happen. In order to ensure the excellence of France, I must be the only one in control! After all as king, I am the state.

**Colbert**: I have an idea. Make them all come to your palace here at Versailles! That way they’ll be out of Paris and won’t be able to stir up trouble.

**Louis XIV**: What an excellent idea! But I shall go one better. I will ensure that they wait on me hand and foot like servants. It will be a great honor for them to serve their king in this way. Then, instead of arguing over who should control what territory, they will argue over who gets to tie my shoes!

**Narrator**: This culture of luxury that Louis surrounded himself with earned him the nickname the Sun King. Nobles were completely dependent on the king and he was able to control them. Versailles was like a small royal city and became a symbol for the French monarchy. Louis then turned his attention to helping France obtain economic, political, and cultural power.

**Louis XIV**: Jean Baptiste Colbert! My minister of finance. Please give me the report on my nation’s economics.

**Colbert**: I am happy to say that we have stopped being dependent on other nations for our wealth, you majesty!

**Louis XIV**: Bravo mon aime! How have you done this?

**Colbert**: We now have Frenchmen manufacturing all of the goods we need at home, as well as giving tax benefits to French companies. We are getting many resources from our New World Colonies as well.

**Louis XIV**: That is all well and good, but there must be away to make France completely self-sufficient. I will have no trading with those blasted English!

**Colbert**: Let us place a tariff on imported goods. That tax will make goods from other countries so expensive that no one will want to buy them!

**Louis XIV**: That is brilliant. What would I do without you, Colbert?

**Colbert** (to himself): Run the nation bankrupt, I suppose.

**Narrator**: And sure enough, after Colbert’s death in 1685, Louis created policies that hurt the French Economy more than helped it. But that wasn’t the only mistake he made…

**Louis XIV** (to a group of nobles): Now that I have complete control, I must extend the borders of France! We shall be the largest empire in Europe.

**Noble 1**: That’s not a great idea your highness. Wars will hurt our economy and make our people suffer.

**Louis XIV**: How dare you speak out against me! Be gone! To prison with you. (*The noble is taken away, Louis turns to his other nobles)* Do the rest of you agree with me?

**Nobles** (*Afraid, they all agree...mumbling incoherently, Yes, Absolutely, Sure thing!)*

**Louis XIV**: Good, first I will fight the Dutch.

*Louis fights and loses.*

**Narrator**: It doesn’t go well…

**Louis XIV**: Maybe I’ll have better luck with Spain.

**Narrator**: He didn’t…

(At Louis’s funeral, crowded around his body)

**Noble 1**: I can’t believe that the king is finally dead.

**Noble 2**: It’s been a looooong 70 years!

**Noble 3**: It wasn’t all bad.

**Noble 1**: Speak for yourself; you didn’t go to prison just for disagreeing with him.

**Noble 3**: True, but there was the economy help with Colbert. And he increased France’s prestige in Europe.

**Noble 2**: Yeah, but all those wars nearly bankrupted us.

**Noble 3**: We had a Golden Age of art.

**Noble 1**: And lost all our power as nobles.

**Noble 3**: Still…it could have been worse. We could have been conquered by England.

**Noble 2**: True that.

*The all laugh and exit.*

**Holy Roman Empire: Thirty Year’s War**

Narrator

Catholic

Protestant

French Diplomat

**Narrator**: Ever since Martin Luther turned the world on its head, the Non-Holy, Non-Roman, Non-Imperial Holy Roman Empire couldn’t agree on whether to remain Catholic or become Lutheran. These German states quickly divided and their princes viewed each other with suspicion. Catholics and Protestants each joined together in two separate groups and tensions were high. Germany was a powder keg, and it seemed like even the smallest spark could set it off.

**Protestant**: Bohemia is a Protestant country! Why should we have that Catholic king Ferdinand?

**Catholic**: Protestants go against church teachings! You are heretics!

**Protestant**: Your mom’s a heretic.

**Catholic**: Oh don’t you bring my mom into this.

**Protestant**: Oh yeah, that’s what she said!

**Catholic**: Oh no you didn’t! (*they get into a fight, the Protestant throws the Catholic out of the window)*

**Catholic** *(injured but still alive)* : This means war!

**Narrator**: And so Catholics and Protestant fought for the next 30 years in Germany. The rest of Europe was forced to take sides and before long it became more about politics that religion. Villages were burned and crops destroyed. Soldiers and civilians alike were killed without mercy. As many as 1/3 of Germany’s population died as a result of the war. Finally, in 1648, it was time to make peace in the nation of Westphalia.

**French diplomat:** Bonjour! As we are obviously the clear winners, I think it is time to make a treaty. We would like to take some of Germany’s territory as a reward for helping you win this war.

**Protestant**: Only if we Germans can declare our independence from the Holy Roman Empire.

**Catholic**: That doesn’t seem fair.

**Protestant**: Well you lost so can just—.

**French diplomat**: Settle down. We shall still allow a Holy Roman Emperor. We shall divide German lands into 360 separate German states, but you shall have your own laws and government and you do not have to answer to him.

**Catholic**: Won’t that make all of the German states weak?

**Protestant**: Nonsense, it will be the beginning of the modern European nation!

**French diplomat**: Oh and no more “your mama” jokes—that is sooo 14th century. These religious wars really must end.

**Catholic**: Fine.

**Protestant**: We agree.

*They all shake hands.*

**Austria & Prussia: Maria Theresa & War of Austrian Succession & Frederick II**

Narrator

Austrian Official

Maria Theresa

Austrian Soldier

Frederick II

Hungarian Noble

Prussian Army

**Narrator**: At the end of the Thirty Year’s War, some of the Germany states were growing in power, one of which was Austria. However when the emperor of Austria was on his death bed, he had no male heirs.

**Austrian Official**: Madam, I know your father requested that you take his throne, but surely you know that no one is Austria will support a woman as Empress!

**Maria Theresa**: You are a fool! I am more than capable and I will be Empress Maria Theresa!

**Austrian Official**: But my lady, Fredrick II of Prussia is threatening to attack us.

**Maria Theresa**: Ha! Prussia is weak and foolish. We will easily overtake them.

**Austrian Soldier**: Empress, Frederick II has invaded the Austrian land of Silesia! We are at war! He swears he will knock you off of your throne.

**Maria Theresa**: We will not let this happen. You go and raise the army. I will go to Hungary and beg them to send us reinforcements.

**Austrian Official**: You’ve just given birth, your majesty, you cannot travel.

**Maria Theresa**: I will take baby Joseph with me. I must plea for our country!

*(Maria and the baby go to appear before the Hungarian nobles)*

**Maria Theresa**: The clouds of danger gather above us from all directions. I do not want to hide this fact from my beloved Hungarians, as you also are affected by it. The Holy Crown is in danger, I am in danger with my child and - abandoned by all others - I solicit the help of Hungarian arms whose fame shines throughout history. I appeal to the well-known gallantry of the Magyars and to their loyalty, it is in this fidelity that I herewith lay my future and my child's future.

**Hungarian Noble**: Our lives and blood for your Majesty!

**Narrator**: The Hungarians joined the Austrians and they marched to war against the Prussians and Frederick II at Silesia.

**Maria Theresa**: Stop Frederick, you will not enter Austria.

**Frederick** **II**: Oh yeah? Watch this.

*Battle between Maria Theresa, Frederick II, Hungarian noble, Austrian soldier, and Prussian soldier.*

**Frederick** **II**: Haha, I win! I get to keep Silesia.

**Maria** **Theresa**: Maybe so. But you didn’t make it into Austria! I kept my empire in tact!

**Narrator**: At the end of the war, Prussia became a major European power to match with Austria, England, France, and Russia, though they still maintained a rivalry with Austria. Both Maria Theresa and Frederick II went on to become great rulers and were known for caring for their people by decreasing the power of the nobility and making reforms.

**Russia: Peter the Great and Catherine the Great**

Narrator

Peter the Great

Advisor 1

Advisor 2

Ottoman

Catherine the Great

Advisor 3

Advisor 4

**Narrator**: After Peter became tsar of Russia, he decided to take a trip to Western Europe to see what his country was missing. He was surprised by what he learned.

**Peter**: Guys?! Did you know the Middle Ages is over in Europe?

**Advisors**: WHAT?!

**Peter**: Yeah, the rest of Europe is like way more advanced than we are. They have all this new technology and education. Their alphabet is so much easier to use than ours. They use machines to make things!

**Advisor 1**: That is incredible.

**Peter**: Yes, Russia is so far behind the rest of Europe! We need to bring it up to scratch. I’m going to start a new policy that I’m calling Westernization. We are going to update and improve everything! Russia is going to join the 17th Century at last!!

**Advisor** **2**: Great idea, your majesty! But won’t that take a lot of work and money? How will we ever get everyone to agree on all of that?

**Peter**: That’s the best part! As king I get to do whatever I want and you all have to listen. I’m going to make myself the most powerful monarch in Europe. Peasants will have to work for me whether they want to or not. And you…we’re starting with you guys…

**Advisor 1**: Um…ok, what do we have to do?

**Peter**: You have to cut that beard off! It makes you look to old fashion, from now on, beards are outlawed in Russia. Come on now, snip, snip!

**Narrator**: After passing laws to modernize Russia, what is now called Westernization, or becoming more like the West, he went on a mission to expand Russia’s borders by seeking a warm-water port, which would allow for more trade with the rest of Europe.

**Peter**: Ottomans! I need your port on the Black Sea, do you want to hand it over?

**Ottoman**: You silly Russian! Why would we give that to you? It is our most lucrative port.

**Peter**: But Russia is inaccessible in the winter when our ports freeze. PLLLLLLLEASE!

**Ottoman**: Nope and we will go to war if you ask us again.

**Peter**: PLEEEEEEEEEEEEEEEEEASE!!

**Ottoman**: War!!

**Narrator**: Peter was defeated by the Ottomans and never gained his warm water port, however, his loss encouraged him to rebuild his army bigger and better. Afterward, he decided to declare war on Sweden to try and gain their control of the Baltic Region, which he easily won in 1709.

**Peter**: Hmm…now that we have all this new territory, I should really build a new city here. What should I name it?

**Advisor 1**: Russia City?

**Advisor 2**: New Moscow?

**Peter**: Those names are terrible. I like St. Petersburg!

**Advisor** **1**: After yourself? That’s kind of arrogant.

**Peter**: No silly, after Saint Peter. I was named after him so it must be good enough. And I’ll build it right here.

**Advisor 2**: But…this is a swamp.

**Peter**: I don’t care; I like it. I’ll just get so peasants to drain the nasty water. And I’ll bring in Italian architects to build massive new structures. It will be Russia’s Window to the West.

**Narrator**: And it was. Peter died with a mixed legacy. He made many reforms that allowed Russia to finally compete with the rest of Europe, but he used terrible power to enforce these changes. When Peter died, he didn’t have an heir and after a series of ineffective rulers, a young German woman married the new prince. Her name was Catherine.

**Catherine**: I am sad to report that my husband, Tsar Peter III is dead.

**Advisor 3**: Well that’s unfortunate, what happened.

**Catherine**: Um…I didn’t do it.

**Advisor 4**: What?

**Catherine**: I mean, I don’t know. But now I’m the new ruler of Russia so you have to support me. Or else. And that goes for everyone. The army loves me, so you better watch out.

**Advisors**: Ok, sounds good.

**Catherine**: First things first, we’re going back to Western Ideals that Peter the Great established. And I’d really like to try for his warm-water port idea. That was a good one.

**Advisor 3**: But the Ottomans are too strong! We’ve never been able to defeat them.

**Catherine**: That’s because you’ve never had a queen before. Charge!

**Ottomans**: Oh boy…(runs away)

**Catherine**: The Black Sea is mine! I mean, Russia’s!

**Advisor 4**: Good work, Kate!

**Catherine**: It’s Catherine, dummy. Next…Poland!

**Advisors together**: Poland?!

**Catherine**: Yeah, I’ve just been talking with Frederick II of Prussia and Joseph of Austria. Poland’s pretty weak, we think we should just carve it up between the three of us…you know…for fun…we’ll leave a little bit independent, no biggie.

**Narrator**: And she did…for a while…after three more partitions in 1795, there was no longer an independent Poland in Europe. Catherine’s authoritative rule secured Russia’s absolute monarchy for another two hundred years. Catherine died in 1796 at the age of 67…on the toilet.