

BARE KNUCKLE

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**BLACK FRAME - TEXT APPEARS**

"Violence alone does not render bloodsports interesting. Lovers of cockfighting take no pleasure in seeing livestock butchered in slaughterhouses.

Only violence in the context of fair combat affords genuine displays of fortitude and honor.

The ability to accept violence yet place limits on it, to order mayhem with rules and a spirit of gallantry is the true measure of a civilization and surest bulwark of freedom"

-R. Payne Knight, *Eulogy of Boxing and Cock Fighting* - 1806

--TEXT fades out.

From the black we hear two heavy axes chop into thick wood.

**EXT. NORTHEASTERN FOREST - EVENING**

Four feet off the ground, two men stand on planks notched in a twenty-foot-wide American Chestnut, chopping with vigor.

Both Irish. One cut from steel, KIERAN. The other big and burly, GRADY, who begins to tire.

GRADY

I'll be glad to put these damn behemoth chestnuts behind me.

KIERAN

You're too good to be joining up with the Chichesters. A bunch of thievin' cutthroats, they are.

GRADY

I live in the slums of Manhattan, same as you. How else do you ward off all those bloody top hats?

KIERAN

Trouble's easy enough to avoid if you don't go looking for it.

Grady stops chopping, breathing heavy. Kieran's pace is relentless.

GRADY

The states have been at war for over a year now. The streets of New York run lawless. Trouble finds ya all on it's own.

KIERAN

Keep that axe moving, Grady. My girl's got her first singing gig at the Know Nothings tomorrow and I'm not missing it on account of your lazy hide.

GRADY

Know Nothings? The saloon for Irish hating bowery boys?

Grady resumes, wincing with every swing.

KIERAN

Aye, but it's good money. Destine was handpicked by Bad Jack himself.

GRADY

The bare knuckle champion? You're the one who needs a gang, lad.

KIERAN

She'll only be singing for Jack, I assure you of that.

GRADY

Destine has a grand fireside voice, but don't ya think maybe he picked her for those full bubbies and that round-

KIERAN

You mind your tongue in the matters of my bride to be.

GRADY

Bride? You sly little lobcock. When did you propose?

KIERAN

I haven't, but I aim to tomorrow, if you got the bottom to finish this job.

Grady smiles and heaves his axe into the massive trunk.

#### **EXT. STREETS OF NEW YORK - DAY**

Bloodied and maimed working-class laborers are scattered about the streets. The sounds of livestock being slaughtered in public markets and the rotten stench of open sewers fill the air.

SUPERED BELOW: EAST BOWERY, NEW YORK CITY, 1862

Amongst the wretched street life is a cluster of innocent children counting out loud, swinging a jump rope for DESTINE, a beautiful French girl in a humble dress.

Destine freezes in awe of something and the rope hits her feet. Kieran appears with his axe slung over his shoulder.

She runs into Kieran's arms and they kiss as sweethearts. The children giggle. Kieran grabs a little girl and playfully swings her around as the other kids paw for his attention.

KIERAN

You all minding your manners around  
my beloved?

CHILDREN

Yes.

KIERAN

Don't you be lettin' me hear  
otherwise.

DESTINE

Alright children. Go play. I have  
to talk to Kieran. Go on.

The children go back to jumping rope.

KIERAN

What is it?

DESTINE

Bad Jack wants me to attend his  
fight today.

KIERAN

Not a chance. It's all crooks and  
savages at those bouts.

DESTINE

Surely a strong handsome lumberman  
such as yourself can keep me safe.

KIERAN

I got no desire in watching that  
spectacle for rats.

DESTINE

Fine, but if I don't go, the whole  
thing's off. No money. Nothing.

KIERAN  
(submits)  
Alright. Let's just hope Bad Jack  
makes quick work of his man.

**INT. STONE BASEMENT - DAY**

BAD JACK, bald head, thick mustache, a dirty rotten beast of a man, sits with an American Flag draped over his shoulders. GIDEON, Jack's greasy-haired corner man, circles him.

GIDEON  
No man can best you. No one has  
your thirst for blood. All men fear  
you. That English Nance is no match  
for the beast he is to face today!

Bad Jack stands with a fury and bellows out a grunt that could only come from a wild thing. Raw emotion and power exit his lungs. Fireworks are coming.

**EXT. BROKEN DOWN BUILDING - DAY**

Half knocked down stone building packed to the brim with a boisterous fancy(crowd). A mix of pickpockets, gamblers, beggars, and working class men escaping their daily grind.

They all huddle around a boxing stage eagerly waiting for the fighters to arrive.

Near the back of the fancy, Kieran wraps his arm around Destine, staring with disdain at the devious crowd.

Kieran sees a prime viewing spot on a stack of crates. He pulls Destine to it. As they jump up a squirmy SOD takes the spot and pulls a knife.

SOD  
Fuck off.

Kieran backs away with Destine who looks on disappointed.

KIERAN  
What would you have me do? Have it  
out with the man right here?

The mob erupts as the fighters enter. Bad Jack stomps through the crowd with his armed gang of BOWERY BOYS and tosses his hat in the ring. The crowd cheers even louder.

Met with strong boos, his opponent VINCENT HAMMOND, the strong jawed British champ, throws his hat in.

The crowd is pushed back by grisly men whose job is to keep the mob from climbing in the ring, messing with the fighters.

The gamblers hands fly up with cash ready to place their wagers as the fighters peel their layers of clothing off.

Jack scans the crowd until he spots Destine. Jack nods at her. She nods back. Kieran doesn't like it.

Bad Jack smiles. He is the cock of the walk and knows it. Jack crosses the ring to Hammond.

BAD JACK

Care to make a wager, Englishman?  
Bet you three hundred I win.

VINCENT

Piss off, Jack.

BAD JACK

Think I'm gonna win as well, do ya?  
You English are soft as bread.

Bad Jack backs up to his corner loosening up. The referee, a white bearded old timer with leather skin, steps in and draws a chalk line in the center of the ring.

REF

This is the Champion of America  
facing the Champion of England so  
let's get the rules straight. When  
both fighter's have their foot on  
the line, the round begins. When a  
fighter goes down the round ends  
until both fighters again toe the  
line. No hitting a downed opponent.  
No head butts. And Jack, no  
punching the balls for fuck sake.  
Now toe the scratch!

Bad Jack's playful manner quickly transitions to focused rage as he puts his foot on the chalk line. Vincent follows and  
THE FIGHT IS ON.

Hammond throws first, but Jack bobs and weaves away from the punches. Hammond chases Jack in circles unable to connect.

BAD JACK

I knew you were slow, but come on.

Jack plays it up to the crowd, but finally stops and sticks his stubbly chin in the air.

BAD JACK (CONT'D)  
Hit me you slow mangy sodomite!

BAM! Hammond whacks him good with a right cross, then gets in close to land body shots.

Jack throws Hammond over his leg to the ground ending the first round. Hammond quickly rises and puts his foot on the scratch ready to start the second.

Bad Jack licks the blood from his lip. Like a morning shot of whiskey to the alcoholic, the blood gives Jack his FIX.

Bad Jack toes the scratch and steam-rolls Hammond with vicious punches to the face. Jack puts his forearm against the Englishman's throat and pushes him against the ropes.

Bad Jack busts open Hammond's face until his fists go wet with blood. The Englishman goes down.

As Hammond rises Jack hurls a knee into Hammond's chest sending him back to the ground. Gamblers rage at the illegal move, barely able to be held back as they bum-rush the ring.

Vincent's second, RICHARD, rushes into the ring and shoves Bad Jack back.

RICHARD  
Damned cheater!

BAD JACK  
Get the fuck out of my ring!

Gideon enters the ring and WHAP!, bashes Richard's skull with his club. Gideon drags him out of the ring. Hammond leaps towards Jack, landing a few unsuspecting blows.

Destine grows frightened as the crowd gets more drunk and wild.

Bad Jack throws Vincent into the ropes and bashes his face into mush. Jack is a rabid dog unleashing hell. Finally Hammond goes down and Jack backs away laughing.

Hammond's face is disfigured. His teeth are broken, his eyes swollen shut. Jack taunts, pointing and making faces.

BAD JACK (CONT'D)  
I don't remember you being this  
ugly when we started. Good thing  
you didn't take the bet.

Jack's laughing subsides as he grabs Hammond's head.

BAD JACK (CONT'D)  
How do you like pugilism in  
America?

One last punch and SMACK!

**INT. THE KNOW NOTHING'S SALOON - NIGHT**

Bad Jack, dressed up to the nines in fine gangster attire, stands surrounded by admirers, all piss drunk on whiskey and ale in his large two story saloon.

BAD JACK  
(hysterical)  
Did you see that ninny's face?

Jack can barely breathe he is laughing so hard. The extreme sadistic nature of this hysteria is a window into his heart.

BAD JACK (CONT'D)  
And the blood...there was so much  
blood.

GIDEON  
To the champion!

They all toast and chug their drinks. Jack spots LESTER, a uniformed municipal police officer.

BAD JACK  
Lester! You sweaty hairy animal.

An accurate description. Jack puts his arm around the copper.

LESTER  
I made a good deal of money on you  
today, champ!

BAD JACK  
And now you want to spend it.

Jack turns around and whistles. A mature, voluptuous woman, HELEN, approaches with her breasts out.

LESTER  
No, no. Younger.

Helen reveals a hint of a smile.

BAD JACK  
Look at that. The whore is happy  
she doesn't have to fuck a  
festering pig like yourself.



LESTER  
You're a shit, Jack.

He waves over the youngest whore, ELIZABETH. She cozies up next to Lester. Her innocence accentuates his repulsiveness.

On the main stage, Destine walks out wearing a low cut dress. Jack stops mid drink, enamored by her beauty.

BAD JACK  
Everyone quiet.

Some quiet, but not all.

BAD JACK (CONT'D)  
I said shut your fucking mouths!

Silence.

Destine looks down to Kieran who is standing near the stage, smiling with encouragement.

Destine launches into an elegant French song. Her sensual moves drop the jaws of all the nastiest, grimmest men in New York.

Bad Jack leans against the wall next to Kieran. Kieran double takes looking at the city celebrity.

BAD JACK (CONT'D)  
That your lady?

KIERAN  
Yeah, she's mine.

BAD JACK  
She a good fuck?

Kieran tenses up and holds his stare to Destine.

BAD JACK (CONT'D)  
Looks like she'd be a right good  
lay in the hay. Those tits. Love to  
have those bouncing in my face.

Kieran turns aggressively to Bad Jack.

KIERAN  
I kindly ask that you mind your  
mouth, champion. My lady deserves  
respect even from the likes of  
pugilistic royalty, aye?

Bad Jack sticks his alpha male chest against Kieran and speaks an inch from his ear.

BAD JACK

You put your eyes to the floor when  
I'm around, you mick sissy.

Kieran looks down to the ground, submissive.

BAD JACK (CONT'D)

You're lucky I even let a fobbing  
Irishman like you in my club.

The crowd erupts with applause, breaking the tension as  
Destine takes her fulfilled bow. Jack reaches out and helps  
Destine off the stage.

BAD JACK (CONT'D)

Truly breathtaking, darling.

Jack pulls out a wad of cash and peels off twenty dollars. He  
hands it to Destine and kisses her hand.

BAD JACK (CONT'D)

Worth every penny.

DESTINE

Thank you, Ja-

KIERAN

Better be off now.

Kieran grabs Destine and pulls her away.

DESTINE

But...

Destine looks back confused as she's dragged out of the bar.  
Jack walks to Lester.

BAD JACK

That Irishman with the singer, who  
is he?

LESTER

Connelly I think. A nobody, why?

BAD JACK

Arrange a meeting with The  
Politician.

LESTER

What for?

BAD  
I believe he owes his country a  
debt that must be paid at once.

LESTER  
Oh, dear.

**INT. CHURCH BASEMENT - NIGHT**

Moonlight shines through the lone window into the cold damp dwelling, where Kieran is stacking logs on a fire. Destine puts the twenty dollars into a small purse of mostly coins.

DESTINE  
It wasn't proper to leave so  
abruptly. Not after Jack paid such  
a high sum.

Kieran pulls Destine down next to the fire with him.

KIERAN  
Enough about Bad Jack.

DESTINE  
But I don't see why-

KIERAN  
(in French)  
Listen, please.

Destine smiles in shock hearing Kieran speak French. He proceeds with shaky nerves.

KIERAN (CONT'D)  
(in French)  
You are all that I love. I have no  
one but you and I want you forever.  
Will you take my hand in marriage?

Tears of joy pool in Destine's eyes.

DESTINE  
My love. I also have no one but  
you. Yes, you can have me forever.

She grabs his face and kisses him. Kieran picks her up and carries her to their wooden bed. He lays her down softly with one hand while unlacing her dress with the other.

Destine unbuttons his shirt. Each layer of clothing comes off until they are naked in each other's arms, making love.

**INT. CHURCH BASEMENT - MORNING**

Feeble light peaks in. Destine and Kieran lie naked still, staring, caressing each other.

DESTINE  
Why did you choose me?

KIERAN  
How do you mean?

DESTINE  
I was rotting away in the streets,  
dirty and alone. Starving. No one  
cared if I lived or died. No one  
but you.

KIERAN  
I only wanted to bed you.

She pinches him harsh. He tickles her, which she hates.

KIERAN (CONT'D)  
I tried hard to rid myself of ya,  
but you won't go away.

Kieran finally stops tickling, and holds Destine.

KIERAN (CONT'D)  
You will never starve again.

DESTINE  
Promise me our children wont. I do  
not want to raise them in squalor.

KIERAN  
Nor do I. I will build us a house  
with a big lot of land. We'll have  
an orchard with more fruit than you  
could ever eat.

DESTINE  
On a lumberman's wage?

KIERAN  
I'll find a way. There's nothing I  
wouldn't do for you.

DESTINE  
Do for me what you did last night.

She kisses Kieran when suddenly, BAM, the door is kicked in.

KIERAN  
Who goes there?

Kieran quickly throws on trousers as men stomp down the stairs. Destine wraps her naked body with a blanket.

LESTER  
Kieran Connolly?

The copper Lester arrives with a band of goons behind him.

KIERAN  
Aye, that's me.

LESTER  
Can't evade your duty any longer.

Lester holds up a piece of paper.

LESTER (CONT'D)  
This document states you are an official volunteer in the Union Army. Signed by your own hand.

KIERAN  
You're mistaken. I never signed-

LESTER  
Maybe you were drunk like every other Irishman in New York when you signed it.

Lester motions, and one of his minions steps out and bashes Kieran's temple with an iron hammer. Destine screams in horror.

They drag Kieran up the stairs, his head hitting every step.

DESTINE  
You can't do this!

Lester rushes to Destine with a balled fist.

LESTER  
You don't want to be interfering with the law, I assure you.

Destine cowers. Lester backs off and searches around.

LESTER (CONT'D)  
What a shit sty.

He pulls open a drawer and finds the purse. Destine leaps to her feet.

DESTINE

NO!

She tries to grab the purse, but Lester pushes her back and grabs the blanket. She falls naked.

LESTER

Mmmm, you are one curvy delight.

He savors the sight, then drops the blanket and exits with the money.

**EXT. WATERFRONT - MORNING**

Through hazy eyes we see Kieran's POV go in and out of consciousness, being carried through the crowded docks.

MINION 1

This bloke is still awake.

MINION 2

After that bash to the head?

MINION 1

Thick skull, small brain.

MINION 2

I'll put him out. Bad Jack sends his regards.

The minion viciously smashes his hammer down on Kieran.

**EXT. STEAMBOAT - DAY**

The sun is at its peak, beating down on Kieran, as his eyes slowly open. His vision clears and he inspects his clothes.

He is dressed in a formfitting dark blue wool jacket with "Excelsior" stamped on the buttons. His blue wool trousers are held up by fabric suspenders.

From a higher deck an Irish soldier, CILLIAN, spies down on Kieran while polishing the barrel of his Breechloader rifle.

Kieran shakes his head in disbelief, still trying to regain his full awareness. All around him are Union soldiers dressed just as he is.

Kieran investigates the knapsack laying at his feet. Cillian approaches.

CILLIAN

A plate, knife, fork, spoon. You got a tin cup and a canteen. A wool blanket for the cold nights.

KIERAN

Where am I?

CILLIAN

On a steamboat carrying the 88th regiment of the Irish Brigade.

KIERAN

This is an outrage.

Kieran rises to his feet and scrambles through the Union soldiers. Cillian follows.

CILLIAN

Where ya going?

KIERAN

To find an officer and get off this ship.

CILLIAN

Kieran!

Kieran stops in his tracks.

KIERAN

How do you know my name?

CILLIAN

The lads that inducted you like weren't too subtle about it. The officers are the ones that ordered ya dressed and such. Question them and you're likely to get another gash on your head.

Kieran touches his head, feeling the wound.

KIERAN

Thanks for the warning, but I'm not supposed to be here.

Kieran bolsters off through the crowd.

CILLIAN

Those boys hit pretty hard!

**INT. THE POLITICIAN'S OFFICE - EVENING**

In the illustrious Tammany Hall sits THE POLITICIAN, a menacing dark shadow with red eyes smoking a cigar, wearing a large top hat.

A skinny secretary, TWIG, pops his head in.

TWIG

Mr. Politician sir, that French woman is back. Shall I have her thrown out of the city?

THE POLITICIAN

Send her in.

The secretary escorts Destine in and quickly exits.

THE POLITICIAN (CONT'D)

The French dog who won't stop scratching at my door. What do you want?

DESTINE

My husband, well soon to be husband was taken by a copper.

THE POLITICIAN

Taken where?

DESTINE

Off to war I believe. They said he signed a document to be a soldier, but I know he never did.

THE POLITICIAN

We all must do our duty to serve New York and the Union. You should be proud of your soon to be husband. He is a patriot. Good day.

The Politician takes another large puff from his fat cigar sending smoke swirling around the room.

DESTINE

That's it? But it's wrong what was done. You have to do something!

The Politician rises with furious command. Spit flies from his mouth as he berates.

THE POLITICIAN

You dare tell me what I have to do!  
This is my city you manky pratt!

(MORE)



THE POLITICIAN (CONT'D)  
Get out of my sight before I have  
you shipped back to France! TWIG!

Twig rushes in and quickly ushers Destine out. He drags her through the office and pushes her outside.

**EXT. TAMMANY HALL - CONTINUOUS**

Destine falls into a puddle of mud.

TWIG  
Don't come back!

Twig slams the door shut. Destine picks herself up from the mud and wipes off her dress.

Bad Jack is conveniently leaning back in a chair, eating an apple with a large knife, watching Destine in despair.

BAD JACK  
Don't mope for that bastard.

Destine embarrassedly looks up wiping her eyes. Jack rises, offering a slice of apple from the tip of his blade.

BAD JACK (CONT'D)  
Hungry?

DESTINE  
Bad Jack?

He pushes the fruit forward. She takes it. Jack helps clean off some mud from her dress as she eats. She smiles.

BAD JACK  
Why don't you tell me your troubles  
over dinner at my saloon.

Destine gives a look of severe skepticism. Jack returns it with a toothy smile.

**INT. STOCKADE - NIGHT**

Kieran sits in an iron cell holding a cloth over a fresh wound on his cheek. Cillian stands rolling a cigarette.

CILLIAN  
Name's Cillian. I'm sorry it didn't  
go your way.

KIERAN  
What do you care about it anyway?

CILLIAN

We're headed to Richmond to sack the Confederate capitol and end the war. We're gonna need every soldier to do it.

KIERAN

I didn't sign up for this brigade.

CILLIAN

Some high up people aim to keep ya here, so maybe it best you stop thinking about how to get out and start thinking of how to survive.

KIERAN

The Irish are brought to the front lines to do one thing -- die.

CILLIAN

It just so happens you're talking to the man who's figured out the key to beating the odds and making it out.

KIERAN

What key is that?

CILLIAN

Become really good at killing.

This grabs Kieran's full attention.

**INT. KNOW NOTHING'S SALOON - NIGHT**

Destine is right drunk now as she and Bad Jack laugh hysterically at the bar.

BAD JACK

See here wait Madame, I've found a button in my salad. That's all right, Sire, it's part of the dressing.

They continue to laugh as the bartender pours them another shot of whiskey and clears their empty plates of food.

BAD JACK (CONT'D)

Okay, I remember, I remember.

DESTINE

Let's see.

BAD JACK  
Un, deux, trois!

They take the shots. Destine spills a little down her chin. Jack wipes it with his finger and stares at her.

DESTINE  
Thank you for the food.

Jack moves in for a kiss, but Destine turns her cheek.

DESTINE (CONT'D)  
Je suis desolee, I cannot. I belong  
to another.

She hops off her bar stool and Jack quickly grabs her arm.

BAD JACK  
I do not see your Irish mate.

DESTINE  
He's at war.

BAD JACK  
Then he's as good as dead.

DESTINE  
You do not know him. Nothing will  
stop him from coming back to me.

She squirms her arm away and runs out of the bar.

Jack will not stoop to chase. He picks up a stool and heaves it across the bar. The patrons stop and stare.

DRUNKARD  
Why don't ya just drag her upstairs  
and have your way with her?

BAD JACK  
'Cause I don't get my kicks from  
rape like you, ya rat-eating  
shanker. Gideon!

Gideon comes rushing up from the crowd.

BAD JACK (CONT'D)  
Spread the word. No man gives her  
work. I want every door in New York  
slammed in her face!

Gideon nods and runs off.

**EXT. HENRICO COUNTY VIRGINIA - FIELDS - DAY**

BOOM! Clouds of smoke and bursts of light. Sounds of gunfire and death. Kieran and Cillian stand shoulder to shoulder firing volleys at the Confederate forces across a field.

Kieran trudges through the twelve step process of reloading his musket while Cillian simply puts a new cartridge in the trough of his breechloader and fires.

**INT. RUNDOWN SALOON - EVENING**

Destine sheepishly walks through a shoddy saloon full of thieves and miscreants. She approaches the bartender.

DESTINE

I was inquiring if you need some female entertainment.

BARTENDER

Maybe, gorgeous. What's the name?

DESTINE

Destine.

BARTENDER

Can't help ya.

He turns his back. Destine backs away confused and downtrodden.

**EXT. URBANA - EVENING**

Kieran sits alone against a large Oak tree a couple hundred feet from the Union tents. Rows of cannons and stacks of cannon balls surround the encampment.

The setting sun gives just enough pink light for Kieran to put ink to paper. His hands are marked with blood yet to be washed off.

KIERAN (V.O.)

My dearest Destine, how I miss you  
my love.

**VARIOUS SHOTS - DESTINE AND KIERAN'S STRUGGLES**

--Kieran and his men march through the forests of Virginia.

KIERAN (V.O.)

I have become a soldier. I march. I practice loading my musket and I march some more. It feels like I've walked across the entire world.

--Destine talks to a man in the doorway of his saloon, but he shuts the door on her.

KIERAN (V.O.)

I hope our savings is keeping you well fed and warm. Or perhaps your singing career has blossomed.

--Blood turns the fields red as men fall dead around Kieran's firing regiment.

KIERAN (V.O.)

There is only death here. I cannot count how many men have been cut down at my side. I'm not ashamed to say I fear that soon I could find myself amongst the slain.

--Destine pleads with the owner of a chicken factory but is sent away.

KIERAN (V.O.)

That fear is only a whisper when compared to the bellowing worry I have for your safety. It was Bad Jack who sent me here. I know he wants you for his own.

--Kieran weaves his way through soldiers and drops his letter in the postman's bag just before he rides off.

KIERAN (V.O.)

Stay clear of Bad Jack at any cost.  
All my love, Kieran.

# **EXT. MALVERN HILL - SUNRISE**

The birds are singing atop a large hill full of small trees and bushes. Kieran stares out over the mass of sleeping and wounded soldiers.

Cillian approaches from behind.

CILLIAN

Does it taste the way you thought?

Kieran turns to Cillian standing behind him.

KIERAN

What?

CILLIAN

Killing.

KIERAN

It's like I'm not myself anymore. I think of my old life...it seems like a dream.

Cillian sits and lights a cigarette.

CILLIAN

It was. Now you're awake and will never sleep again.

KIERAN

I feel Godless.

CILLIAN

That's good.

KIERAN

Good?

CILLIAN

Those who will survive are the fastest, smartest, the most ruthless. God has nothing to do with it.

KIERAN

And if a stray bullet was to blow a hole in your leg or a cannonball roll you over, I wonder if you would sing this same song.

CILLIAN

Hasn't happened yet.

KIERAN

You're wrong about one thing. I will sleep again. Beside my woman I will lay, and this war will be the dream.

CILLIAN

Ten thousand Confederates will surround this hill before the month is out. Your focus must remain on nothing but blood. Because the blood of your enemies is the only thing that can get you back to her.

This sparks a sharpness in Kieran.

KIERAN

Then I shall paint these lands red.

**INT. CHURCH BASEMENT - NIGHT**

Destine grabs the only item left on her kitchen shelf. She opens the jar of maple syrup and scrapes the last drop onto her tongue.

She takes off her dress. Her ribs are poking through her pasty skin. She puts on her dressing gown and lays her emaciated body in bed.

She clasps her hands and closes her eyes to pray.

DESTINE

Please God, do not let me fall into  
darkness. Do not let me starve  
again as I have before. Anything  
but that. Please.

CRASH! A burning torch flies through the window.

UNIDENTIFIED VOICE (O.S.)

GO BACK TO IRELAND YOU WHORES OF  
BABYLON!!

The wooden walls catch fire. Smoke fills the basement.  
Destine rushes from the burning building.

**EXT. ST. JOSEPH'S CHURCH - CONTINUOUS**

She joins the other scattering occupants of the church who gaze upon their home now engulfed in flames. FATHER JOSEPH has a musket and he swings it around in every direction.

FATHER JOSEPH

Where are you cowards? I'll blast a  
hole through the lot of ya!

The flames grow bigger. A shadow catches Destine's eye. A brief moment of focus and she sees Lester. He stares at her with menacing eyes. Then slyly walks off.

DESTINE

They burn our church and you do  
nothing! Nique ta mere! (fuck your  
mother) Nique ta mere.

The wind changes and the smoke swells over Destine. She drops to her knees, hacking, trying to crawl away.

**EXT. MALVERN HILL - NIGHT**

The Irish Brigade are firing volley after volley into the Confederate lines mounting there way up the hill.

Cannon fire is exploding in both directions. The lines of Kieran and Cillian's formation are scattered.

The determined Confederate foot-soldiers weave their way to the Union outfit. Cillian pulls out his bayonet and wields it like a knife. Kieran readies himself with his bayonet attached to his musket.

CILLIAN

No hesitation. Be vicious.

Cillian runs to a large leafy tree and puts his back to the trunk. Kieran and the rest of their brigade hit the Confederate forces head on and engage in hand to hand combat.

Cillian leaves the tree and slays two enemy soldiers from behind. His moves are calm, calculated, and deadly accurate.

Kieran grunts as he takes on attacks from all angles. He smacks the butt of his gun against a Confederate's chin then turns and buries his bayonet into the guts of another.

From behind a Confederate wraps a rifle firmly against Kieran's throat. Kieran is dragged back weaponless, his musket still attached to the dead man's stomach.

They struggle and fall to the ground. Kieran is being choked and is quickly running out of breath.

He reaches around in all directions with panic. His hands find nothing. He gives one last shot at elbowing his enemy's ribs, but the grip stays tight.

As the light begins to fade on Kieran's life, an unmanned horse dragging a shattered wooden coach runs rampid towards the entangled soldiers.

As the wild horse passes by, Kieran reaches out and grabs the trailing wagon. Both men are dragged and the Confederate soldier's gun is flung to the grass.

He brazenly holds on to Kieran, not wanting to let his enemy get away. Kieran viciously elbows him in the face and finally the enemy falls and rolls through the field.



Kieran pulls himself up onto the carriage and leaps onto the back of the horse. He pulls the reins.

KIERAN

Woah, woah!

The horse stops and Kieran looks around at the carnage. Across the way he sees a bevy of enemy soldiers bearing down on Cillian.

He scans the field with haste for a weapon. He looks back into the wagon. Under a mess of supplies is an AXE.

Cillian lowers his stance ready to take on the Confederate mob. He blocks the first man's strike with his bayonet and throws him to the ground.

The second man bull rushes him, but Cillian stays on his feet and struggles with him. Three more soldiers reach them and they put Cillian flat on his back.

BAM! A musket smashes Cillian's face. The soldier picks up Cillian's bayonet and raises it high overhead ready to plunge it in Cillian's heart.

KIERAN (CONT'D)

HEY!!!

Riding at full steam Kieran leaps from his horse's back and buries his axe into the almost killer's chest.

Kieran moves swiftly, blocking several swipes from the angry infantry and countering with devastating blows.

He swings his axe with the precision only a lumberman could. Cillian watches this display of bloody heroism from his back.

Blood soaks the grass where the chopped up Confederates lay. Kieran helps Cillian to his feet.

Kieran stands, looks, and breathes as a beast. He and Cillian move out into the fray ready for more.

#### **EXT. STREETS OF NEW YORK - NIGHT**

Destine huddles behind a crate in the putrid streets where men piss in corners and whores fuck in alley ways.

Destine curls up in a ball shaking, alone and afraid.

**EXT. MALVERN HILL - NIGHT**

Kieran sits by a fire, his skin, even his face, coated in blood. He uses his bayonet to carve notches into the handle of his bloody axe. Cillian watches from the shadows.

CILLIAN

What are those for then?

KIERAN

Each man I kill is a lesson. I want to remember all I learn here.

**EXT. ST. JOSEPH'S CHURCH - MORNING**

All that remains of the church is black rubble. The postman walks up to the ruins with Kieran's letter in his clutches. He reads Destine's name and looks around confounded.

**EXT. STREETS OF NEW YORK - DAY**

Destine's filthy withered body lays against a brick warehouse baking under the sun. A PASSER BY weasels up to her. He puts his stinking hands on the collar of her dressing gown and pulls it down to take a peek.

WHAP! The man's head is kicked into the bricks. Two strong hands grab Destine and pick her up.

BAD JACK

I got ya now. Jack's gonna make everything alright.

**INT. BAD JACK'S SUITE - EVENING**

Destine is freshly bathed, ravaging a feast of chicken and vegetables in Jack's giant apartment above the saloon. He has lavish furniture, paintings, a large piano, and the best linens money can buy.

Jack's cock of the walk confidence he portrays in the ring is just as effusive in his bedroom with a woman.

BAD JACK

I see you're enjoying the food.

DESTINE

(mouth full)

Very much. Thank you.

She washes the bite down with wine. Her plate is clean. Jack immediately fills her empty glass with more wine.

BAD JACK  
Drink up and forget the pains of  
your former life.

DESTINE  
Former life?

BAD JACK  
I thought this was clear. I mean to  
have you for my own.

Destine gulps her wine as her demure turns reticent.

DESTINE  
I told you, I am promised to  
another.

Jack stalks his prey.

BAD JACK  
Can you not see, I only want what's  
best for you. Your circumstance is  
quite dire. Without me you'll end  
up dead or selling your fruitful  
vine for nickels? Is that what you  
want?

DESTINE  
No.

He strokes her hair and touches her face. She lets him.

BAD JACK  
I've never seen such a precious  
thing in all my life. I will give  
you everything. Let me take your  
troubles away.

DESTINE  
I cannot give you something I do  
not have. My heart is with Kieran.  
It forever will be.

BAD JACK  
If your man is still alive, do you  
not think he is doing whatever it  
takes to get back to you, no matter  
how ugly, no matter how hard. His  
hands are not clean either.

Destine turns away. Jack leads her face to look at his.

BAD JACK (CONT'D)  
If you truly loved him, you would  
do whatever it takes to survive  
until his return.

Jack moves in and kisses her. She lets him. He backs away.

BAD JACK (CONT'D)  
Then we are clear?

DESTINE  
(painfully)  
Yes.

Jack lifts her out of her seat and carries her to his bed. He throws her down and rips her dress from her body. He pulls his trousers down, turns her over, and mounts her from behind.

She digs her fingernails into the fine sheets as she is taken roughly. She lets her mind go, separating it from her body. She goes blank as she says goodbye to that former life and painfully embraces a new one.

#### **EXT. UNION CAMP - DAY**

WHACK! An axe explodes through a log sending the two pieces flying off the chop. Close in on the blood stained metal. Then move up the handle with over a hundred notches.

Kieran now with long hair and beard sets up another log and smashes through it with his favored killing weapon. Patches of melting snow are scattered around his feet.

He stops and turns hearing soldiers yell and cheer on the other side of camp. A crowd has formed to watch something. Kieran goes to inspect, taking his axe with him.

CROWD

Kieran moves through the crowd to the center where rowdy soldiers are bare knuckle boxing.

An overexcited spectator rushes back, knocking into Kieran, bouncing backwards off Kieran's strong Irish frame.

Kieran grabs the soldier's collar. The soldier looks down at Kieran's notched axe with fear and tries to remove Kieran's grip, but it is too strong. Kieran stares like a madman.

CILLIAN  
Kieran! Come watch from up here!

Kieran sees Cillian and a few soldiers atop barrels of provisions. Kieran releases his grip and the soldier scurries away. Kieran jumps atop the barrels next to Cillian.

CILLIAN (CONT'D)  
An entire winter fighting in  
Virginia has taken its toll.

The soldiers below are punching each other bloody and loving it.

KIERAN  
A bunch of cockered louts, wasting  
their energy.

A giant brawny soldier stands looking for an opponent.

GIANT  
Who wants to fight?

CILLIAN  
They saw the headline and decided  
this was the best way to get out  
their frustrations.

Cillian grabs the HERALD laying on an ammunition crate and hands it to Kieran.

CILLIAN (CONT'D)  
Bad Jack won again. Bloody killed  
the man.

Kieran looks at the nearly full page picture of Bad Jack raising his hand in Victory.

CILLIAN (CONT'D)  
A true farewell fight for James  
Sullivan.

Kieran looks closer to see Jack accepting a KISS FROM DESTINE.

GIANT  
Nobody?

Kieran's eyes go red with rage. He jumps off the barrels and paces with fury, taking deep breaths of violent anger.

GIANT (CONT'D)  
Bunch of Ninny's!

The anger seethes and grows until it boils over. Kieran pushes through the soldiers to the giant.

KIERAN  
I'll fight you!

Kieran digs a line in the dirt with his axe, then tosses it aside and toes the scratch.

The second the giant's foot hits the line, Kieran unleashes a fury of cracks to his jaw. The giant throws back, but is slow and Kieran dodges.

Three full power haymakers send the giant flopping to the mud. The soldiers hoot and holler with bluster.

KIERAN (CONT'D)  
Get up, ya dandy!

The giant flings some dirt into Kieran's eye and whacks him with a heavy punch to the temple.

Kieran shakes it off and returns fire, smashing the flubby soldier's face until he falls on the flat of his back. He scoots away, wanting no more from the lumberman.

KIERAN (CONT'D)  
Who's next! I said who's next!

None of the soldiers dare engage with this barbarian. Kieran stares with an unrelenting need for violence.

#### **INT. KNOW NOTHING'S SALOON - NIGHT**

A bunch of drunkard gamblers crowd the stage at Bad Jack's saloon, getting their kicks from TOPLESS WOMEN BOXING.

Wearing gloves, the women bounce up and down with no skills, just instincts. Blood and spit fly as they batter each other.

Bad Jack sits with Destine. Lester is reading The Herald just behind them.

BAD JACK  
How do you like the new business?

DESTINE  
I prefer the cocks.

BAD JACK  
You cheeky beauty.

Jack grabs the low cut collar of Destine's dress and pulls her in for a sloppy drunken kiss.

BAD JACK (CONT'D)  
Anything about me in the herald  
today, Copper?

LESTER  
It's been nothing but war  
propaganda all winter. Headline is  
about a lumberman who uses his axe  
to chop off Confederate heads in  
the night. Puts a notch on the  
handle for every kill.

DESTINE  
A lumberman?

Jack snatches the paper from Lester and scans the article.

LESTER  
It's all bollucks. Doesn't even  
give his name.

One of the rowdy gamblers is pushed back into Destine,  
hitting her harshly. Jack drops the paper and rises.

BAD JACK  
You spongy maggot-pie!

Jack violently smashes his head into the gamblers nose over  
and over until they are both covered in blood and the man  
falls limp to the ground. He looks dead.

BAD JACK (CONT'D)  
Get this glock out of my saloon!

Gideon runs up and drags him away. Jack looks at Destine.

BAD JACK (CONT'D)  
Are you alright?

Destine shakes her head "yes." Jack looks down at his blood  
drenched clothes.

BAD JACK (CONT'D)  
Fucking hell.

Jack strips off his clothes and head upstairs to change.  
Destine picks up the Herald and tucks it under her arm.

Lester sits next to Destine. She does not hide her disdain  
for him. Her body language is crystal clear.

LESTER  
I've never seen Jack go all  
deranged for a woman. Not ever.  
(MORE)

LESTER (CONT'D)  
You got some kind of magical muff  
down there?

Lester touches Destine's hair. She knocks his hand away.

DESTINE  
Don't you ever touch me, pig.

LESTER  
You have grown confident since Jack  
shoveled you up off the streets.  
Make no mistake, lass, Bad Jack is  
a grizzly bear. It feels safe  
behind those deadly fangs of his,  
but one day you'll wake up and  
those teeth will be gnawing at your  
flesh, eating you alive.

Destine sneers and turns back to the female boxers who  
continue beating the piss out of each other.

**EXT. ONE MILE OUTSIDE THE UNION CAMP - NIGHT**

Kieran is leading a horse through the woods, careful to be  
quiet, constantly looking over his shoulder.

CILLIAN  
They hang ya for stealing horses  
'round here.

Kieran sighs seeing Cillian waiting for him with a satchel.

KIERAN  
Don't try and stop me. I've made my  
decision.

CILLIAN  
And here I was thinking you had  
become a true blue patriot.

KIERAN  
I have no choice. I won't let my  
woman get used up and tossed away  
by Bad Jack.

CILLIAN  
You aim to desert then?

KIERAN  
Desert? I am not capable of  
desertion. I am not a soldier, I am  
a prisoner.

(MORE)



KIERAN (CONT'D)

I have fought every battle beside you as if I were a member of this brigade. Have I not earned the right to go save her? Tell me I do not deserve that and I will stay.

CILLIAN

You won't get ten miles in that uniform.

Cillian holds out the satchel. Kieran takes it and pulls out the plain clothes inside. He changes quickly.

CILLIAN (CONT'D)

There's no point in killing Bad Jack if his boys are going to put you down right after. Be smart.

They embrace as brothers. Cillian nods to Kieran's axe.

CILLIAN (CONT'D)

The story of the lumberman and his notched axe has become legend. Careful not to be drawing any unwanted attention.

KIERAN

Aye.

Kieran mounts the horse.

CILLIAN

I'm taking furlough back to my farm at the end of spring. The address is in your trouser pocket.

KIERAN

You're a farmer?

Cillian slaps the horse's haunch and Kieran bolts off into the black night.

#### **INT. BAD JACK'S SUITE - NIGHT**

Destine gets out of Jack's bed, tiptoeing as not to wake him. She pours herself a large chalice of wine, drinks half the glass, and fills it up again.

BAD JACK

Still not comfortable in my bed?

She turns with jump.

DESTINE  
Thirsty is all.

BAD JACK  
Pour me one.

She does and hands him the glass. She sits back against a window and they look at each other.

BAD JACK (CONT'D)  
Do you want to know how I got the name Bad Jack?

DESTINE  
From prize fighting?

BAD JACK  
No. It's a much darker tale.

Jack chugs his wine.

BAD JACK (CONT'D)  
I never met my mother. She died during my birth. My father blamed me. Said I murdered his wife. From my first breath, and every one after, the only thing he felt for me was hate.

For the first time, Destine looks at Jack with pity.

BAD JACK (CONT'D)  
He would lock me in a cage like an animal. I was six years old and I'd been locked up for three days without being aloud to relieve myself. I cried for him to let me out. I held it as long as I could until I...

Jack hesitates to continue. Destine's sympathy permits him.

BAD JACK (CONT'D)  
I pissed and shit all over myself. When he saw, there was no pity, only shame. He dragged me out by my hair. Took off his belt and whipped me with the metal buckle until my flesh was scraped down to the bone. All the while yelling, bad Jack, bad Jack, bad Jack.

Destine is nearly crying hearing this tale.

BAD JACK (CONT'D)

I've never told anyone that before.

Destine sets down her chalice and climbs into bed on top of Jack, hovering over his body, her lips inches from his.

DESTINE

My heart would weep for you, but it  
is still far away...with him.

She kisses Jack, then rolls off him, laying with her back to him. Jack reaches out to grip her throat, but instead drapes his arm over her, holding her body tight to his.

**EXT. NEW YORK CITY OUTSKIRTS - DAY**

Kieran ties up his horse to a tree just outside the main streets of the city. He looks at his trusty axe. He leaves it and pulls his bayonet from his satchel and slides it down the side of his trousers, concealing it with his shirt.

**EXT. NEW YORK CITY STREETS - DAY**

Walking by a hat merchant, Kieran quickly looks over the inventory, and buys a flat cap. He pulls it down low to hide his face and continues to walk through the impoverished city.

**EXT. KNOW NOTHING'S SALOON - EVENING**

Kieran sits across the street from the familiar saloon. He watches as men enter and exit the seedy watering hole.

He has a good view through the front door, the open window, and the balcony above. He scans for any sign of Bad Jack.

PASSER BY

Shit, God damn fucking horses!

Kieran looks at the old codger get livid after stepping in horse manure. He drags his boots across the ground.

Kieran looks back to the balcony to see BAD JACK, peering out over the streets. Kieran ducks his head and lowers his hat.

Seeing Jack sparks a rage in Kieran. He wants to climb the walls and kill him where he stands. He slows his breathing and walks across the street into the bar.

**INT. KNOW NOTHING'S SALOON - CONTINUOUS**

Kieran tucks himself in the corner, hidden behind the gruff crowd of drunkards. He waits and observes. A waitress approaches.

WAITRESS

What are ya having?

Not wanting to look suspicious Kieran orders.

KIERAN

Whiskey.

She grabs a bottle and pours it. He takes the prop.

After a few moments, with his hat down, he makes his move towards the stairs.

Engrossed in the wildness of a cock fight, no one notices as Kieran clears the top step and sneaks down the hallway towards Bad Jack's suite.

**INT. OUTSIDE BAD JACK'S SUITE - CONTINUOUS**

Kieran peaks in through a small crack in the door. He sees only darkness. He pulls his bayonet from his trousers.

Kieran slips through the door ready to bury his blade in Jack's heart. From the shadows, five bowery boys jump out and attack Kieran. Jack lights a lantern and watches.

Kieran unleashes the beast, a scary sight to behold. He blocks the first man's attack and slashes his face open.

Another goon hits Kieran with a club, sending Kieran flying into another man, spearing him with his bayonet.

Kieran straight kicks a cutthroat to the ground and slices open another one's arm, but Lester approaches from behind, pointing his pistol at Kieran's head.

LESTER

I'd stop right there unless you  
want a hole through your melon!

The henchmen quickly grab Kieran, take his bayonet, and hold his arms behind him.

Jack moves to Kieran, who even with a gun to his head is barely able to be held back by the now four men with one laying dead on the ground.

BAD JACK

You thought you could get the drop  
on me in my city?! This is New  
York! Everyone is under my thumb!

Bad Jack clocks Kieran across the face, but it does not have  
the intended effect on the lumberman's thick skull.

KIERAN

I'm gonna eat your bloody heart!

Kieran head-butts one of the goons and tries to get to Jack,  
but the other three hold their grip tight. Lester pistol  
whips Kieran across the face. He feels it.

LESTER

Don't test me, sonny. I'll shoot ya  
dead right here.

BAD JACK

You survived the front lines. How  
impressive.

KIERAN

Where is she?!

Jack pulls out dirty brass knuckles from his drawer.

BAD JACK

Let me put your mind at ease. I'm  
taking great care of that sweet  
cunny of hers.

WHACK! Bad Jack smashes the brass across Kieran's jaw.

KIERAN

(spitting up blood)

You sent me to war you coward! Call  
off your thugs and let's settle  
this!

POW! Another punch. Kieran head now droops almost limp.

BAD JACK

Only time an enemy faces me alone  
is in the ring. This is America. It  
doesn't matter what's right or  
wrong. The meanest son of a bitch  
willing to slit any man's throat  
who gets in his way -- he wins --  
every time.

Jack smashes his heavy knee into Kieran's face and the goons  
let him fall to his back. He mumbles to himself.

KIERAN  
Destine -- Destine.

Bad Jack moves to Lester.

BAD JACK  
Take him to the woods, gut him, and  
bury him.

Lester smiles at the request.

**EXT. STREETS OF NEW YORK - NIGHT**

The henchman drag a nearly unconscious Kieran outside to a horse drawn wagon fitted with steel bars for transporting prisoners.

Lester walks to the wagon driver, a fellow copper.

LESTER  
It's a shame, I don't think this  
one is going to make it.

Lester winks at the driver who nods back with acknowledgment.

One of the thugs bashes in Kieran's ribs with his club.  
Kieran falls to the ground as the bullies laugh.

LESTER (CONT'D)  
Quit messing about and get him  
chained up back there.

As they lift him up, Kieran's blood filled eyes open just enough to see Destine crossing the road towards him. A surge of energy rushes through him.

KIERAN  
DESTINE!

Destine's gaze snaps to attention. She squints to see who has called her name.

The thugs struggle to keep hold of Kieran. Lester grabs Kieran and throws him in the wagon, slamming the door shut. Kieran reaches his arm through the bars.

KIERAN (CONT'D)  
DESTINE!

Getting closer, Destine finally sees it is Kieran calling her name. She can't believe her eyes.

One of the goons jumps on board with the driver as Lester slaps the horse and they rush off.

DESTINE  
Kieran? KIERAN!

She gives chase, bounding after the wagon. Lester jumps in her path. He wraps her up tightly holding her back.

DESTINE (CONT'D)  
Let me go. KIERAN!

LESTER  
Get a hold of yourself woman.

She squirms even more ferociously.

LESTER (CONT'D)  
God damn it! Settle your hysteria!

He shakes her firmly. Destine spits in his face and wriggles free. She runs down the street after a hope that is gone.

#### **I/E. WAGON - NIGHT**

In the back of the wagon Kieran is elbowing and kicking wood with all his might.

DRIVER  
Settle down back there, cock robin.

KIERAN  
I'll kill all of you!

He continues to bang and kick.

DRIVER  
I said shut your hole!  
(to the goon)  
Stupid Irish prancer.

Kieran stifles his rage. He scans around. Shackles lay empty on the ground.

He puts the iron cuffs around his wrists. He clangs the shackles against the steel bars.

KIERAN  
Come shut it for me you rump-fed  
codpiece!

He continues to make noise with the shackles.

KIERAN (CONT'D)

Take these chains off and see what happens. I'll rip off those pint size twiddle-diddles and shove them down your fucking throat!

The horse clamors as the driver pulls harshly on the reigns until the carriage halts. The driver pulls out a billy club.

GOON

Wait 'til we get to the woods.

The driver leaps from the wagon and puts the key in the door.

DRIVER

Ready to take a nap, boy.

As the driver flings the door open, Kieran furiously leaps out of his cage sending the unexpected copper on his back.

The goon pulls a knife and jumps off the wagon onto Kieran's back. Kieran catches his arm just inches before the blade slices his throat.

Kieran rolls on his back with the driver still beneath him. The driver wraps his arm around Kieran's neck. The goon pushes with all his might to put the blade in Kieran's neck.

Kieran thrusts his head back into the driver's nose. Two more times until his grip loosens. He pushes his thumb deep into the goon's eye.

Kieran grabs the driver's pistol, and POW! The goon looks down in horror at the hole blown through his chest.

Kieran stands over the barely conscious copper who looks up at Kieran with trepidation.

KIERAN

You lose.

BOOM! The shot echoes through the starry sky.

STREETWALKER

Help! Somebody help! Police!

An onlooker spots the chaos. Kieran jumps on the carriage and bolts away as torches light up across the way and chase him.

#### **EXT. NEW YORK CITY OUTSKIRTS - NIGHT**

Kieran rides hard towards the tree and his tied up horse. He jumps off the moving wagon and rolls through the dirt.



He mounts his horse and watches the torches stay on the trail of the wagon, then he rides off the other way

**INT. BAD JACK'S BEDROOM - NIGHT**

Glossy eyed drunk, Jack sits at the edge of his bed putting a wet washcloth to fresh bloody wounds on Destine's face.

BAD JACK

You shouldn't have ran after him.  
What did you feel when you saw him?

DESTINE

Intense pleasure. Something you  
could never give me.

Jack rubs her busted lip harshly. Destine winces.

BAD JACK

War has mangled the mans mind. He  
is no longer the man you loved.

DESTINE

Where did your men take him?

BAD JACK

It was not my men. The law took  
him. He is off to die a deserter's  
death.

Destine looks away, trying to fight back her tears, not  
wanting to cry in front of Jack.

BAD JACK (CONT'D)

Don't be sad. Now your heart is  
free for me to capture.

Destine looks at Jack with pure malice.

BAD JACK (CONT'D)

Easy my dear. We don't always  
choose where we end up. Fate has  
brought you and I together and we  
are going to see it through.

Jack gently pulls her bloody face into his chest and strokes  
her hair.

BAD JACK (CONT'D)

That means there will be no more  
running off. No more teasing. And  
not one word about your Irishman.  
You're mine now. In every way.

Tears pour down Destine's face, soaking Jack's vest through.

BAD JACK (CONT'D)  
You hurt me tonight. Don't do it  
again.

**EXT. PHILADELPHIA BROTHEL - MORNING**

Kieran trots, exhausted, to a brothel in the heart of Philadelphia. Flies buzz, landing on his crusty wounds.

Kieran drops from his horse and submerges his head in a troth of dirty water.

JUST DOWN THE WAY

A beautiful black harlot, EMILY, is scurrying away from a fat grisly monster of a man, GRISLY.

EMILY  
Now I done told ya, I ain't gonna  
lay with you again. Not after all  
them bruises you left last time.

GRISLY  
Listen whore, I want that black ass  
bouncing on my cock and that's  
exactly what I'm going to get.

EMILY  
I'm sorry I can't oblige. Plenty of  
other girls can attend to you.

As they approach the front of the brothel, near Kieran, the grisly man grabs Emily's arm and violently spins her around.

GRISLY  
Nobody says no to me. Especially  
not some blackie whore.

He balls his hand into a fist. Emily looks around with fright. She spots Kieran.

EMILY  
I'm not saying no, sir. I've  
already been paid for the entire  
morning.

GRISLY  
By who?

EMILY  
Why he's right over here.  
(to Kieran)  
There you are. You finally arrived.

Kieran looks around befuddled and is shocked when he realizes she is talking to him.

EMILY (CONT'D)  
Now we can go inside.

Emily wraps her arm around Kieran and helps him to his feet.

GRISLY  
This red haired piece of horse  
dung? He can barely stand, how is  
he supposed to fuck?

EMILY  
Oh, we'll manage.

GRISLY  
I'll double what he's paying and  
that'll be the end of it.

Kieran is finally figuring out the situation.

EMILY  
I can't back out on this fella.

GRISLY  
I'm not going to-

KIERAN  
The lady made herself quite clear,  
so why don't you be on your way.

GRISLY  
Do you know who you're talking to?!  
I'll finish the job somebody else  
started on that face.

Kieran musters up all the strength he has left and pulls his  
axe from under his gear.

KIERAN  
Finish it then!

Grisly looks at the notches.

GRISLY  
(to himself)  
The lumberman.

Kieran steps aggressively forward.

KIERAN

Go on!

GRISLY

Apologies. She's all yours, sir.

Grisly cowers off down the street.

EMILY

Thank you mister. I'm sorry to drag you into my mess.

KIERAN

It's quite al-

Kieran get's dizzy. The light-headedness takes him over and he collapses.

#### **INT. KNOW NOTHINGS SALOON - DAY**

Amongst the clangorous drinkers, Bad Jack sees Lester walk in. He waives him over.

BAD JACK

Is it done? Connelly?

FLASHES OF LESTER FINDING HIS MEN DEAD AND THE WAGON EMPTY.

LESTER

Course it's done, Jack. You know you can always count on me.

Jack shakes Lester with jubilation.

BAD JACK

What a great fucking day!

Lester can only fake joy, knowing the truth.

Destine watches from the stairs above with a full chalice of liquor, keeping herself numb with drink. She stares with blank eyes over the crowd.

#### **INT. EMILY'S ROOM - NIGHT**

Kieran wakes in a cast iron bed to Emily nursing his wounds.

KIERAN

Have I...how long was I out?

EMILY  
All day. Here.

She grabs a cup of water. Kieran sits up and takes a sip.

EMILY (CONT'D)  
That man has caused me a lot of  
grief. I don't reckon he'll be back  
any time soon.

KIERAN  
I'm glad I could help, but I can't  
lay up here in your room. I have no  
means to pay you.

EMILY  
You don't worry about that.

KIERAN  
You can't make any money with a  
bloodied up Irishman in your bed.

Kieran stands up, but struggles to gain his bearings. Emily  
looks with wonder at a man without judgement, only concern  
for her pocketbook.

KIERAN (CONT'D)  
I have to find a bare knuckle club.

Kieran stumbles and grabs the wardrobe for balance. Emily  
runs to his aide.

KIERAN (CONT'D)  
I'm going to become champion of  
Philadelphia.

He gets woozy and Emily helps him back into her bed.

KIERAN (CONT'D)  
I have to fight Bad Jack for the  
title.

EMILY  
Honey, Bad Jack's the hardest man  
alive, you don't want to fight him.

Emily looks at all the gashes on his head.

EMILY (CONT'D)  
Somebody did a number on you.

She puts a wet washcloth on his head. Kieran goes  
unconscious.

**INT. THE POLITICIAN'S OFFICE - DAY**

SMACK! Bad Jack slams his fists down on The Politician's desk. The Politician and Lester stand close.

BAD JACK

That cock loving sissy! Calling me  
a dandy in the fucking Herald!

THE POLITICIAN

Con Orem is no sissy. He's  
mastered.

BAD JACK

I will bash that minnow's face in  
and feed him to the fishes.

THE POLITICIAN

I want insurances, Jack. We can't  
have the champion of the west  
coming into my city and winning.  
Only thing worse would be a filthy  
Irishman. Can you imagine every red  
bearded leach thinking he could  
rise up and join our ranks of  
power? This is no game.

BAD JACK

Do not forget, the last man I faced  
now lies in the dirt.

THE POLITICIAN

He was well past his prime and your  
bottom is not what it used to be.

Jack raises his finger, walking aggressively towards The Politician. Lester steps in.

LESTER

Settle it down now, Jack.

BAD JACK

My bottom will not be tested in the  
least! I'll mash him up in less  
than ten.

THE POLITICIAN

I do not care what you think! I  
will have my insurance! When Orem  
arrives, have your slimy friend  
round him up.

Jack stares at The Politician, hinting at something sinister to come.

**INT. EMILY'S ROOM - DAY**

BANG, BANG, BANG, BANG! Kieran wakes to the sounds of a headboard slamming against the wall from the next room.

Moaning from the man and woman penetrate his ears. He gets out of bed with new vigor. His energy is back and he doesn't intend to spend it listening to that. He rushes out.

**HALLWAY**

Kieran walks past corset wearing busty women scattered about drinking and smoking, who all perk up at Kieran's presence.

Kieran pays no attention as he heads for the door. Emily, sweaty and out of breath, pops out into the hall.

EMILY

Hey!

Emily runs up to him, tieing up her dress, walking alongside him as they exit the brothel.

**EXT. BROTHEL - CONTINUOUS**

EMILY

Where are you going?

KIERAN

I told ya, to fight bare knuckle.

EMILY

You were serious? I'll go with you.

KIERAN

These clubs are for the lowly scum.  
Not a place for a lady.

EMILY

I've laid with all those fellas. I  
know just where to go and I can  
even steer you with the fightin'.

KIERAN

You don't owe me anything.

Emily grabs his arm and stops him.

EMILY

I want to. I feel safe around you.

KIERAN

Fine. Lead the way.

Emily smiles.

**INT. SONNY'S TAVERN - NIGHT**

The fancy is out and yearning for blood at this large Philadelphia tavern. The people create the ring as they group around two fighters in a bare knuckle match.

Kieran and Emily hug the edges of the mob, sitting on the window near the front door. Emily holds onto Kieran's arm to keep the drunkards at bay. The TAVERN OWNER approaches.

TAVERN OWNER

You've got the next fight. Against Jim Burke.

EMILY

The giant?! Can't he start with a normal size man?

KIERAN

It's fine.

TAVERN OWNER

What's the name?

Kieran thinks for a moment.

KIERAN

The lumberman.

Emily looks curiously.

TAVERN OWNER

Alright lumberman. If you win I'll get you another fight. Now get moving.

The owner looks to the ring where the huge, six foot five, Burke stands, waiting to fight. Kieran and Emily move through the crowd towards him.

EMILY

Burke talks in bed more than any other man. Always bragging about how no man can take his left.

Kieran takes off his shirt and enters the circle.

KIERAN

Time to test the mettle.



EMILY

Stay away from his left!

Kieran walks to the chalk line drawn on the wood floor. His toe touches it and Burke throws a lightning fast left to Kieran's jaw, dropping him. Emily winces.

Burke smiles watching Kieran shake off the punch and get up. Kieran toes the line and they engage.

Burke's height makes it hard for Kieran to land anything, but easy for Burke to pummel Kieran's head from above. The lumberman goes down again.

EMILY (CONT'D)

His head is too high! Go for the body!

Kieran rises to the start the new round.

BURKE

No shame in staying down, mate.

Kieran wobbles to the line. He covers his face with his arms as Burke goes to work again, punching fiercely.

EMILY

Fight back, lumberman! Hit him!

Finally Kieran takes a quick step back causing Burke to take a huge swing and a miss leaving him nearly turned around.

Kieran winds up as if he was going to take a chop at a sycamore and heaves a left hook into Burke's liver.

Burke winces in pain. Kieran digs in another shot and continues to attack the body as if he were chopping down a tree until Burke goes down hard.

Kieran waits for him with his foot on the scratch. Burke takes a few seconds to stand, his insides all mashed up.

Burke steps on the line and Kieran quickly goes back to working the body. Burke can't put anything on his punches.

Kieran dismantles him, moving from body shots to uppercuts to the face. The beast in Kieran is unleashed, growling as he turns Burke into a bloody mess, putting him down for good.

The referee raises Kieran's hand in victory. Emily celebrates.

**VARIOUS SHOTS - KIERAN FIGHTING**

--Kieran faces various opponents, giving it as good as he gets it, carried through by his hard head.

--Kieran takes out each opponent with vicious body shots. Everyone focuses on the head while he crushes the organs.

--His hand is raised half a dozen times in victory, but each paying a price of more cuts and wounds.

--Kieran fighting a man twice as thick as he. Twice as slow too. Kieran finds a groove, smashing his bare knuckles into the wide man's nose, sternum, kidneys.

The tavern owner walks to Emily.

TAVERN OWNER

I've never seen a man with such a bottom, as if he will never get tired.

EMILY

Think about him fighting Mike McCooles.

TAVERN OWNER

That would be a blood bath. A damn money brewing blood bath.

They smile at each other and both look to Kieran who knocks the thick man on his ass and has his hand raised yet again.

#### **INT. EMILY'S ROOM - NIGHT**

Emily and Kieran sit on her bed, sharing a bottle of whiskey.

EMILY

That's why you have to fight Bad Jack in the ring.

KIERAN

Only way to get to him without his bowery boys and coppers.

EMILY

If he knew you were alive he'd...

KIERAN

Likely send a war party after me.

EMILY

Destine is a lucky woman.

KIERAN  
How do you mean?

EMILY  
She's got a man willing to fight  
the nastiest, hard-nosed brawlers  
to get back to her.

Kieran hands Emily the whiskey bottle. And crawls to a quilt  
and pillow on the floor.

KIERAN  
She's my reason for breathing. I'm  
going to bed.

Emily stares wanting, jealous of such a love.

**INT. SALOON BASEMENT - NIGHT**

Lester and one of his goons drag a man down the basement  
stairs of Jack's saloon. He has a potato sack on his head,  
and something in his mouth preventing him from talking.

They sit him in a chair and tie his arms and legs tightly  
with rope. He struggles mightily.

LESTER  
Calm yourself you dumb ox, or I'll  
smash your skull in.

They get him secured. Bad Jack and The Politician are waiting  
calmly, each with a drink in hand.

The Politician walks to the mysterious prisoner.

THE POLITICIAN  
You listen good you so called  
champion of the west. These boys  
are going to say some things, and  
you're going to follow every word  
as if it was God himself in your  
ear. You cross me and I'll turn  
your insides out. Your friends,  
your family, any whore you ever put  
that needle dick in will be dead.

The Politician takes a sip of whisky and winks at Jack as he  
heads up the stairs. Jack throws back his drink and gives the  
go ahead for the goon to take off the potato sack.

He does, exposing CON OREM, with a metal chain wrapped in his  
mouth. Jack steps forward with a greasy smirk.

BAD JACK

Con Orem. I hear you're mastered.  
But you ain't too smart. Nobody bad-  
mouths me in the papers.

Jack pulls out a mallet from the back of his trousers. Orem's eyes go wide with horror.

**INT. JACK'S SUITE - NIGHT**

Destine stumbles out of Jack's suite with an overflowing cup of wine spilling about. Gideon is standing just outside the door and he grabs her arm.

GIDEON

Not tonight. Jack wants you here  
when he gets back.

DESTINE

Perhaps I don't want to be here  
when Jack gets back.

Destine tries to wiggle free but Gideon's hand is clamped down like a vice grip. He pushes her back into the room.

GIDEON

Just do as your told!

He slams the door shut.

**INT. SALOON BASEMENT - NIGHT**

WHACK! Jack slams the mallet down on Orem's left hand. Orem screams through his chain.

BAD JACK

Who's a dandy now?!

CRUNCH! He slams the mallet down again on the same hand. Bad Jack tosses the weapon to the ground.

BAD JACK (CONT'D)

(to Lester)

Let him know.

Jack walks off up the stairs.

LESTER

You have a week before the fight.  
The swelling will have gone down by  
then.

(MORE)

LESTER (CONT'D)  
If you let on to anybody about  
this, if the mob finds out, well --  
I think you know.

**INT. OUTSIDE JACK'S SUITE - NIGHT**

Jack walks to his suite. Gideon stops him and whispers in his ear. Jack grimaces.

BAD JACK  
I'll take care of it.

**INT. INSIDE JACK'S SUITE - CONTINUOUS**

Jack enters to see his room in a dark disarray. Dresser drawers broken on the floor, furniture knocked over, clothes strewn about, and Destine staring at him with defiant eyes while slowly sipping her wine.

BAD JACK  
Another fit of ill temper?

DESTINE  
Did you do it?

BAD JACK  
Did I do what?

DESTINE  
Smash that boxer's hand?

Jack moves to Destine.

DESTINE (CONT'D)  
I have ears, you know.

Jack pulls her up off the bed by her neckline.

BAD JACK  
Careful, darling. Your lips can be  
your doom or your salvation.

He moves in for a kiss, but Destine springs away.

DESTINE  
I never thought the mighty Bad Jack  
would be afraid to fight fair.

Jack snatches the glass from her hand.

BAD JACK  
I see you've drunken yourself into  
hysterics again.

DESTINE  
Give it back.

She tries to take the chalice from Jack but he pushes her to the ground and drinks the remaining wine himself.

Destine rises and pushes Jack.

DESTINE (CONT'D)  
You won't fight a grown man honest,  
but you'll fight me?!

She pushes Jack again and again.

DESTINE (CONT'D)  
You're not half the man Kieran was.

BAM! Jack thumps her with an open hand across the mouth.

BAD JACK  
I'm gonna have to call the fuckin'  
head doctor on you.

Jack kicks his boots off and takes off his trousers in a huff. He gets in bed and blows out the bedside lantern.

Destine crawls into the bed. She lays her arm affectionately on Jack. He shoves it off and gives her his back.

Avoiding Jack's affection, Destine smiles in satisfaction with a mouth full of blood.

#### **INT. WASHROOM - DAY**

Kieran sits in the tub of the brothel washing himself. Emily walks in wearing a towel which is quickly discarded leaving her naked. Kieran covers up his man parts.

KIERAN  
What in God's grace are you doing?

She quickly jumps in the tub with him.

EMILY  
Bath water don't come cheap. Gotta  
share all we can.

She playfully splashes him and starts scrubbing herself.

KIERAN

Take my winnings. How much bath water will that buy?

EMILY

Don't be teasing me now.

KIERAN

I'm not. I can't have you off working. I need you with me, guiding me and such.

Kieran makes a quick jerking movement.

KIERAN (CONT'D)

Watch where you put your feet.

EMILY

(smiling)

Sorry.

KIERAN

Tell me about this bloak, Mike McCooles.

EMILY

He's stronger than a bull. When he fucks, I end up thrown all over the bed like some child's doll.

Emily bites her lip thinking about it.

KIERAN

You like that sort of thing, do ya?

EMILY

Maybe.

KIERAN

If I beat McCooles, will I get a shot at Philadelphia's champion?

EMILY

Mordecai "the man killer" Murdoch? Coburn is set to fight him next, but if you beat McCooles in convincing fashion, I might be able to jump you up.

KIERAN

What's convincing?

EMILY

Less than ten rounds.

KIERAN  
(squirming)  
Feet!

EMILY  
Ooh, my sincerest apologies.

**INT. FARMHOUSE - NIGHT**

Lanterns and torches light the scene as the fancy surround a structured ring, where hats already lie. Kieran takes off his shirt. Emily stands behind him.

KIERAN  
Less than ten rounds against him?

They look over to a bearded Goliath of a man, MIKE MCCOOLE, whose muscles sit on top of other muscles.

EMILY  
Forget his frame. Men say the soft spot is his floating rib.

McCoole stretches his hands over his head and his bottom "floating" rib pops out distinctly.

EMILY (CONT'D)  
Break that and you break him.

Kieran puts on his game face, his war face.

REFEREE  
Toe the scratch!

Each step furiously to the line and the fighting commences. Kieran takes two shots to the face getting inside, but he batters away at McCoole's ribs.

McCoole slams his fists down on the back of Kieran's neck. Kieran almost goes down, but saves his balance.

Kieran bellows out a battle cry and rushes in, mashing up McCoole's ribs with blinding hooks. McCoole throws uppercuts, but Kieran dodges and pounds McCoole's face.

RIGHT, LEFT, RIGHT, LEFT he tears his enemy down with vicious wrath. McCoole's hands go up to protect his face. Kieran loads up and smashes his fist into McCoole's floating rib.

McCoole falls to the ground. The fancy boos and curses, most of them having their money on the favorite. They look on waiting for him to get up.



The referee jumps in to examine the fighter. McCooles is curled up, twitching. He can't continue.

REFEREE (CONT'D)

It's over!

The crowd goes silent. They all look to each other in wonder.

RANDOM MAN

One round?

ANOTHER MAN

One round?

EMILY

ONE ROUND!

Kieran raises his hand in triumph. The crowd quickly cheers realizing they have witnessed something spectacular, once in a lifetime. Emily runs into the ring and hugs Kieran.

KIERAN

That convincing enough?!

Kieran picks up Emily and spins her around.

#### **INT. KNOW NOTHING'S SALOON - NIGHT**

Bad Jack stands over a congregation of his feral Bowery boys and drunkard admirers, all holding up libations.

BAD JACK

Let's be honest, that milk-livered  
Orem never really stood a chance,  
did he?

LESTER

You trounced him good, Jack!

GIDEON

To the champion!

They all drink and cheer. Destine wears the only frown in the joint, drinking alone in the corner. Jack walks to her.

BAD JACK

What will it take to put a smile on  
that fine face? An English country  
dance?

Jack kicks his feet and spins around clapping. Destine doesn't even smile. Jack moves in for a hug.

BAD JACK (CONT'D)  
There must be something I can do to  
make you-

Jack catches a whiff of something foul. He backs away.

BAD JACK (CONT'D)  
You reek of shit, woman.

DESTINE  
My apologies. Should I just go  
upstairs then?

BAD JACK  
Upstairs?

Bad Jack smolders.

BAD JACK (CONT'D)  
You must really think I'm daft.

Jack grabs her and jerks her to the stage.

BAD JACK (CONT'D)  
Look here lads! We got some new  
entertainment.

Jack rips off Destine's dress leaving her in nothing but a corset and bloomers. He hurls her onto the stage and pulls his pistol from his belt.

BAD JACK (CONT'D)  
Let me hear one of your French  
numbers.

Destine slowly rises to her feet. BAM. Jack fires a hole through the ceiling.

BAD JACK (CONT'D)  
Sing!

With a shaky voice, Destine sings a French song. Jack grabs a nearby pitcher and flings the ale onto Destine.

BAD JACK (CONT'D)  
You can do better than that!

Destine sings louder, but other men begin to chuck ale at her as well. One drunkard throws an empty bottle crashing against the wall behind her.

Destine continues to sing while being pelted with peanuts, food, and drink. She cringes with humiliation, trying desperately not to sob.

BAD JACK (CONT'D)

Enough!

The mob stops as Jack jumps onto the stage.

BAD JACK (CONT'D)

I trust now you'll bathe.

Destine rushes off upstairs.

**EXT. DOCKS - NIGHT**

This is the biggest, most rowdy, and ruthless fancy we have seen since Bad Jack's opening fight, all here to see the championship of Philadelphia.

Two teenagers push each other in argument.

TEENAGER 1

The lumberman has no chance! The Man Killer is going to trounce him good I tell ya!

TEENAGER 2

The lumberman beat McCoole in one round you twat. He's mastered! No man can beat him!

The liquored up gamblers all scream out wagers for The Lumberman and MORDECAI THE MAN KILLER MURDOCH, a dark hairy stud with a broad formidable chest and long muscular limbs.

Emily stands outside of the ropes rubbing Kieran's shoulders.

KIERAN

Why is he called man killer?

EMILY

He's killed men in the ring?

KIERAN

Fitting title. Any advice?

EMILY

Don't give up first.

Both fighters walk to the line and IT'S ON. Kieran ducks under the Man Killer's hooks and pushes him back on his heels before unloading an arsenal of uppercuts.

What proceeds is a symphony of blood. Fists smashing against flesh, against bone, back and forth, round after round as both men refuse to wear down.

Mordecai's right eye is swollen shut, Kieran's left eye is. Both fighters are red and bruised all over.

They smash against each other like butting rams, throwing all their grit and determination into every punch. Kieran is hammered across his chin and falls to his back.

He rolls to his side, his head stuck to the floor like glue. He gets an arm under him and tries to push up, but his strength fails him.

The crowd cheers for him to get back to his feet. Kieran pushes with his head and manages to get to his knees.

Kieran puts one foot on the ground and pushes himself up to his feet, somehow finding the strength to go on. The crowd explodes with noise.

Murdoch stands sluggish, exhausted, devastated that Kieran didn't stay down.

Kieran shakes out his arms trying to get the blood flowing ready for another painful round.

The fighters drag themselves to the scratch and Murdoch immediately ties up Kieran and tries to throw him down.

EMILY (CONT'D)

The body! Hit the body!

Kieran musters his last ounce of strength digging his right hand into the Man Killer's body.

Murdoch holds on to Kieran's neck. Kieran grinds out a few more body shots and strips his opponents grip.

Murdoch stumbles forward trying to grab Kieran for support, then staggers backward toward the ropes. Finally the man killer face-plants onto the floor.

Kieran watches, desperately hoping it's over, as the ref flips Murdoch on to his back. The referee waives his arms in the air. Kieran falls to his knees in victory.

Emily rushes into the ring, throwing herself into Kieran's arms as the crowd goes wild.

#### **INT. JACK'S SUITE - WASHROOM - NIGHT**

Jack sits on a stool next to the tub where Destine soaks.

BAD JACK

I hate hurting you. All I want is  
for us to be together and care for  
each other. Why won't you let us?

Destine keeps her eyes forward. She won't even look at Jack.  
He rises knocking his stool back against the wall and exits.

**INT. EMILY'S ROOM - NIGHT**

Kieran lays on the floor. Emily, wearing only her knickers,  
looks down from her bed.

EMILY

The champion of Philadelphia  
shouldn't be sleeping on the floor.

KIERAN

I don't mind. You got word to the  
paper, the Herald?

EMILY

I did. Maybe I mind you sleeping  
down there.

She jumps off her bed and lays beside Kieran who stirs with  
heavy thoughts.

EMILY (CONT'D)

What's wrong? You did it. You won.  
You should be happy.

Kieran turns to her.

KIERAN

I'm the champ of all that is wrong  
in our society. Bare knuckle boxing  
takes the people's good moral  
fibers and turns them rotten.

EMILY

Then stop fighting.

She kisses him. He pulls away.

KIERAN

What are you doing?

EMILY

We made enough money to go anywhere  
we want. You don't have to fight  
Bad Jack to have me.

She reaches her hand down to his manhood and kisses him again. It feels good. He doesn't want to stop but has to. He pulls away.

KIERAN

We can't.

EMILY

Can you not love me because I'm a whore?

Kieran strokes her face.

KIERAN

You are more than worthy of my love. It's a wonder that every man who shares your bed doesn't ask for your hand in marriage.

Emily's heart melts and she wants Kieran even more for his words. She tucks herself into his arms.

EMILY

Can I sleep beside you, and pretend I'm yours.

KIERAN

Come here.

Kieran wraps his arms around her.

#### **INT. KNOW NOTHING'S SALOON - DAY**

Gideon bursts through the front door in a huff.

GIDEON

Jack! Jack!

Jack is sitting at the bar with Destine.

GIDEON (CONT'D)

Have a look at this.

He hands him a paper. Jack looks. He turns flush with malice.

BAD JACK (CONT'D)

Again! Calling me out in the God damn Herald! Who the fuck is this, this lumberman?!

All the patrons watch Jack explode with anger.

GIDEON  
Nobody knows his real name, sir.

DESTINE  
Lumberman? Like the killer from the war.

GIDEON  
That's right.

BAD JACK  
Won't have no axe in the ring with me. Talk to The Politician. Set the fight.

Gideon runs off.

BAD JACK (CONT'D)  
Gideon! We fight here, in New York.

**INT. EMILY'S ROOM - DAY**

Emily is packing clothes into a knapsack. Kieran enters.

KIERAN  
What do you think you're doing?

EMILY  
Getting ready for New York.

KIERAN  
You can't come with.

EMILY  
I ain't gonna put any moves on ya.

KIERAN  
It's too dangerous.

EMILY  
That's why you need me. And I figure maybe I can start a new life. Go where nobody knows me as a-

KIERAN  
You risk too much for me.

EMILY  
I want to see you get back to your woman, Kieran Connelly. I won't rest 'til that comes true.

Kieran hugs her tight.

**EXT. ROAD - DAY**

Rain pours down, thunder roars, and lightning strikes as Kieran steers a wagon with Emily laying in the back covering up. He turns the wagon down a small path.

EMILY

Stay straight. This road leads  
directly to the city.

KIERAN

We can't go into the city just yet.

**EXT. FARMHOUSE - DAY**

The harsh storm makes the midday seem like night.

KIERAN

Wait here.

Kieran gets out of the wagon. Emily curls up under a blanket.

Kieran walks around the back of the farmhouse to see a man chopping wood. As Kieran approaches, the man stops mid swing.

MAN

State your business.

KIERAN

Blood.

The man turns revealing himself to be Cillian. They shake hands and hug. Cillian examines the wounds and new scars on Kieran's face.

CILLIAN

What the devil have you been doing?  
Wrestling with wolves?

Kieran laughs.

**EXT. FARMHOUSE - MOMENTS LATER**

Kieran and Cillian approach the wagon.

KIERAN

Emily, meet Cillian. The man who  
got me through the war. A real hero  
he is.

Emily crawls out of the wagon to shake Cillian's hand.



EMILY

Pleasure to make your acquaintance.

CILLIAN

I assure you the pleasure is mine.  
Let's get you out of this rain.

**INT. CILLIAN'S FARMHOUSE - DAY**

Emily warm herself by the fireplace drinking coffee staring through the window at Cillian with girlish eyes.

**EXT. FARMHOUSE - CONTINUOUS**

Kieran and Cillian are chopping wood. Cillian is good, but can not match the intensity of the lumberman's stroke.

CILLIAN

You aim to hide out 'til the fight?

KIERAN

I aim to announce myself right out  
in the open like.

CILLIAN

If Jack sees you alive, he'll kill  
you, as sure as I'm standing here.

KIERAN

Not if we rally the people. All the  
Irish in New York are treated like  
dirt. When they see one of their  
own risin' up from nothing, not  
afraid to take on Jack and his top  
hats...we'll have a horde of  
protectors at our back.

CILLIAN

Putting your life in the hands of  
the people is a mighty risk.

KIERAN

Bad Jack thinks he's untouchable  
like some kind of King. I'm going  
to burn his castle down.

**INT. BAD JACK'S SUITE - NIGHT**

Jack stumbles in his room, visibly drunk. He takes off his shirt and trips on the foot of the piano. His pistol falls from his belt and slides across the floor.

Destine stirs and wakes. Jack takes down his trousers and tosses them.

Destine slinks back against the headboard as Jack pounces onto the bed. He climbs on top of her.

BAD JACK

You're not getting away tonight.

Jack shoves his tongue down Destine's throat. He feels her up then reaches down in between her legs.

BAD JACK (CONT'D)

Give me that quim. I need it.

Destine stops his hand. Jack grabs both of her wrists and slams them against the headboard.

BAD JACK (CONT'D)

Don't make me force you or I'll tie  
ya up on stage and let every hard  
cock in the points have a go at  
you!

Destine turns her head and lets Jack take her. Her eyes lock on an item on the floor. Jack's PISTOL.

She stares at it as Jack pounds her from the top. Each thrust feeds her vengeance and sharpens her focus on the gun.

#### **INT. WASHROOM - NIGHT**

Kieran sits with a fresh haircut, Emily now shaving his beard.

EMILY

Your war hero friend, Cillian, does  
he have a woman?

KIERAN

Why, do you fancy him?

EMILY

You hush. You didn't tell him about  
my former work in Philadelphia, did  
you?

KIERAN

Any man who looks down on you for  
that, doesn't deserve you.

Emily smiles and scrapes the last bit of his beard. She wipes clean the loose hairs and shaving cream.

KIERAN (CONT'D)  
And no, I didn't tell him.

Kieran looks in the mirror. He stares at all his scars.

KIERAN (CONT'D)  
I wonder if she'll recognize me.

EMILY  
You're as handsome a man as I've  
ever seen. 'cept maybe for Cillian.

Cillian pops through the door and Emily blushes.

CILLIAN  
I made a bed up for you Miss Emily.  
I hope it's suitable.

Cillian extends his arm and Emily takes it. He leads her out.  
Kieran gives one last stare into the mirror.

#### **INT. BAD JACK'S SUITE - MORNING**

Destine lays beneath Jack's heavy body, draped on top of her.  
She attempts to slide from beneath him, but his arms are  
wrapped tight around her.

She lifts his arm to roll him off and suddenly he pops up  
awake. He looks at Destine then sits up off the side of the  
bed, shaking his head.

BAD JACK  
Bloody southern whiskey.

He looks at his trousers on the floor and stands to get  
dressed, but Destine pulls him back to the bed.

DESTINE  
Lay back now. I'll fetch you some  
ale to cure that queasiness.

Jack grabs her arms and examines her.

DESTINE (CONT'D)  
I don't want to be on that stage  
ever, Jack.

She kisses him. He releases her and lays back, rubbing his  
eyes and smiling.

CLICK. Jack looks up to see Destine pointing his cocked  
pistol at him. He quickly stands up.

DESTINE (CONT'D)  
Stay right there!

Jack stops and stares with anger.

BAD JACK  
You're going to shoot the only man  
who cares for you?

DESTINE  
You will never hurt me again.

Jack steps closer to her.

BAD JACK  
Go on then. Put me out of my  
misery.

She closes her eyes and squeezes the trigger. Nothing. The  
gun is not loaded. Destine's courage is gone in an instant.  
Now only sadness.

DESTINE  
No.

Jack slowly closes in.

BAD JACK  
I told you not to hurt me again. I  
warned you.

WHAP! He smashes his fist into Destine's face, knocking her  
out cold.

#### **INT. SALOON BASEMENT - DAY**

Destine sits tied to a chair. Her right eye is swollen shut.  
Lester, Gideon, and Bad Jack stand across from her.

BAD JACK  
What do you think I should do with  
her, Lester?

LESTER  
I think she'd fit in just fine with  
the topless lady fighters.

BAD JACK  
With those tits. She would bring in  
a crowd, indeed.

GIDEON

I could take her off your hands.  
I'd take proper care of her.

BAD JACK

HA! Take her for your own?

Jack sits on Destine's lap facing her.

BAD JACK (CONT'D)

It seems the power of your beauty  
is still in tact, even if your face  
is not. A power that even now,  
after your betrayal, I cannot seem  
to shed.

(to the men)

Leave us.

Lester and Gideon exit. Jack softens, touching her skin.

BAD JACK (CONT'D)

Why am I so impossible for you to  
love? Other women crave to lay with  
the champion. But not you. Not the  
one I want.

DESTINE

You're an animal. A disgusting rat.

BAD JACK

You never felt anything? Not even  
in the beginning?

DESTINE

Never.

Jack begins breaking down.

BAD JACK

I'm too at home around pain. I'm  
lost without it. I'll never be Good  
Jack. My father should have killed  
me.

He blubbers all over her.

BAD JACK (CONT'D)

What if I still took care of you?  
No priggin' or nothing. We could  
just lay with each other.

DESTINE

I'd rather die.

Destine's words hit Jack harder than any fighter could. He's crushed. He floods with rage. He grabs Destine's face and squeezes hard.

BAD JACK  
How would you like to go?

Gideon enters the basement.

LESTER  
Jack! The lumberman's here. In  
Paradise square.

Destine smiles wide. Even laughs a little.

BAD JACK  
You got nothing to smile about?

DESTINE  
I read all about The Lumberman.  
They say he cannot be killed. That  
he drinks the blood of his enemies.  
Soon he will drink yours.

BAD JACK  
We'll see about that.

Jack pushes Destine to the floor by her face and stomps up the stairs.

#### **EXT. PARADISE SQUARE - MIDDAY**

Hundreds of enthused fans stand around a stage with a tent behind it. A banner reads "Bad Jack versus The Lumberman."

Emily addresses the mob.

EMILY  
Ladies and Gentlemen, I present to  
you the man who bested twenty of  
Philadelphia's finest pugilists in  
one night! The beast who put down  
Mike McCoolle in one round!

Bad Jack and Gideon push through the crowd.

EMILY (CONT'D)  
He beat Mordecai the Man Killer  
Murdoch. Now he will best Bad Jack  
for the championship of America!

Jack jumps onto the stage and the cheering fancy go quiet.

BAD JACK  
Where is he?! This man who is  
assured to beat me?

**INT. TENT - CONTINUOUS**

Kieran leans over a table steadying himself for this epic reunion. He looks at the notches on his axe.

BAD JACK (O.S.)  
You dare make the champion wait!  
I'll have your head on a stake,  
Lumberman! Do not forget what city  
you stand in.

**EXT. STAGE - CONTINUOUS**

Kieran bursts out of the tent carrying his axe. The crowd unleashes a deafening roar, the two boxers now face to face.

Shock and disbelief shroud Jack seeing a man who should be dead standing before him. Confusion. Rage.

BAD JACK  
Connelly?

KIERAN  
Ready to pay for your wrongs? The  
price is blood.

A sketch artist draws the scene. Jack looks at the axe.

BAD JACK  
You're the mad lumberman?

KIERAN  
With just enough room on my axe for  
one more notch.

BAD JACK  
For me? I hope you brought your  
brigade 'cause it's gonna take an  
army to stop me from butchering  
you.

Kieran turns from Jack, out to the fancy.

KIERAN  
I may fight out of Philadelphia,  
but I come from NEW YORK!

The crowd is all ears and excited.

KIERAN (CONT'D)

You have read about my exploits in  
The Herald, but before the war I  
labored as a lumberman while living  
underneath St. Joseph's church.  
Like you, I walked these streets  
bowing my head to the corrupt top  
hats. I bow no more. My name is  
Kieran Connelly! I FIGHT FOR THE  
IRISH!

The crowd goes off. It is an overwhelming ruckus and an  
inspiring sight. Kieran holds the axe high over his head.

BAD JACK

Well played, Lumberman.

**INT. KNOW NOTHING'S SALOON - DAY**

Jack walks up to Lester who is sweating all over an innocent  
young lady, crudely caressing her.

BAD JACK

Lester, I've been meaning to ask  
you. Which man killed Destine's old  
sweetheart Kieran Connelly?

LESTER

Umm, that would be Ed Ward.

BAD JACK

Could you round him up for me?

Jack lifts a pistol from behind his back and scratches his  
forehead. Lester quivers.

LESTER

I would if I could, but he was  
murdered just last month.

BAD JACK

You don't say?

LESTER

Yeah, stabbed by a couple of  
niggers if I remember correctly.

BAD JACK

(facetious)

Oh those pesky niggers. What did he  
do with Connelly's body?



LESTER  
What's this about, Jack?

BAD JACK  
Where's his body?!

LESTER  
S-sold it. He said he sold it.

BAD JACK  
That's odd seeing as how the man I  
am to fight for the title of  
America, the killer lumberman, is  
Kieran fucking Connolly, you laced  
up pigeon lover!

The butt of Jack's pistol flies towards Lester's face. SMACK!

**EXT. PARADISE SQUARE - EVENING**

With Lester, busted up from Jack's pistol, and Gideon, Bad Jack marches towards the mob with fifty heavily armed Bowery boys, pulling Destine whose arms are tied behind her back.

ON THE STAGE

Enthusiastic patrons of the fancy surround Kieran. Emily stands back at the steps.

FANCY 1  
I was at the McCoole fight, sir.  
You were magnificent.

KIERAN  
Thank you.

Jack and his gang become visible behind Kieran.

BAD JACK  
Lumberman!

Kieran ignores Jack and continues shaking hands.

FANCY 2  
Let me be the first to buy you a  
pint in New York.

KIERAN  
That'd be great.

BAD JACK  
Lumberman!

Still Kieran ignores.

DESTINE

KIERAN!

Kieran turns around and looks out over the crowd. Destine can hardly believe her eyes as she and Kieran finally lay eyes on one another.

Jack grabs Destine harshly around her throat.

BAD JACK

I thought maybe you would want to meet my woman. Unless, wait, do you two already know each other?

KIERAN

You call her your woman, but it is my name she screams!

The crowd looks on in awe. Behind Jack, Gideon ties a noose around a wooden street awning.

BAD JACK

You want her back? Come get her!

Jack viciously throws Destine on a chair and pulls the noose tight around her neck.

Kieran grabs his axe and leaps off the stage into the crowd. Jack kicks the chair and Destine dangles by her neck.

EMILY

Kieran, no! They'll kill you.

Kieran doesn't flinch. Lester sees Emily. He looks at her familiarly.

LESTER

(to himself)

Can't be.

Kieran barrels his way through the crowded square towards the Bowery Boys. Jack grips his pistol behind his back.

BAD JACK

Come on, lad. Come on.

Kieran readies his axe as he closes in on Jack's gang, all ready to kill the lumberman.

Suddenly a gunshot rings out. Destine's rope breaks and she falls to the ground.

All stop and look to Cillian, whose face is hidden dark by a cloak, holding his smoking breechloader, standing beside GRADY and his gang of CHICHESTERS.

Cillian quickly reloads, as Grady moves up just behind Kieran.

CILLIAN

Next one is through your skull Bad Jack.

GRADY

What's the matter champ? Too afraid to face an Irishman in the ring? Gotta mob deep on him in the streets?

BAD JACK

Come a little closer and say that, fat man. I fear nothing!

KIERAN

Then let's fight. You and me. Right here, right now.

BAD JACK

With pleasure. Circle it up!

The crowd forms a circle around the fighters. Jack hands Gideon his pistol and pulls his shirt off. Kieran follows.

Lester grabs Destine and drags her to the front row. Gideon draws the scratch with the barrel of the gun, then backs away.

GIDEON

Toe the scratch!

No hesitation. Kieran and Jack walk to the line with conviction. Just as they reach it:

KABOOM! A canon fires a lead ball through the air, smashing into the brick wall of a neighboring building.

THE POLITICIAN stands with a darkly dressed militia, all pointing rifles and pistols at the scene.

THE POLITICIAN

Nobodies turning the championship of America into a side street brawl. Disperse! The lot of you!

The crowd breaks up, and the masses flee the scene.

**INT. THE POLITICIAN'S OFFICE - NIGHT**

Smoke swirls as The Politician fumes.

THE POLITICIAN

God damn you Jack. You have run wild for too long. Hanging his woman in the square!

BAD JACK

I should have strung them both up.

THE POLITICIAN

Connelly has the Irish gangs at his back, which means you're going to-

BAD JACK

You're afraid of the Irish gangs?

THE POLITICIAN

You're going to let him alone to do promotions so that every Irishman in the city will bet on him! You saw them. They think he's their savior. When you beat him, it'll be the biggest purse in history.

BAD JACK

Unlike you fat cat, I don't care about money.

THE POLITICIAN

Do you wish to make an enemy of me?

BAD JACK

I wish to cut off Frenchy's head and send it to that blockhead on a fucking platter!

THE POLITICIAN

If she's dead Connelly won't fight! The bout is only two God damn days away so put your rage to bed for Christ sake!

Jack stares down the tubby top hat.

BAD JACK

My rage does not rest.

THE POLITICIAN

Do not fuck with me on this.

Jack spits on the floor and exits.

**INT. HOTEL BATHROOM - NIGHT**

Kieran sits in a bath. Emily pours water over him.

KIERAN

I keep imagining what he is doing  
to her. Hurting her, or worse.

EMILY

Hush now. She's gonna be fine.

Emily kisses Kieran's shoulder and holds him tight.

KIERAN

Part of me wants to walk into his  
saloon and bury my axe in his  
heart. Let his men kill me and meet  
Destine in the afterlife.

Emily strokes his back to calm his dark thoughts.

**INT. KNOW NOTHING'S BASEMENT - NIGHT**

Destine lays sleeping. A pebble hits her face and she stirs.  
A larger pebble strikes her and she wakes to see Gideon  
sitting across from her with a handful of stones.

She lunges at him, but her hands shackled and chained to  
metal rings in the wall

GIDEON

That's right. Jack doesn't want you  
going anywhere.

Destine responds with a cold stare.

GIDEON (CONT'D)

I remember that first day you was  
singing on the stage up there. You  
sure was beautiful.

Gideon wipes the grease dripping on his forehead.

GIDEON (CONT'D)

If Jack didn't make a move I think  
I was gonna have to. Do you  
remember seeing me that night?

DESTINE

I make it a point not to remember  
sewer garbage.

Gideon heaves the entire handful of rocks at Destine's face.

GIDEON  
I take back everything I said!

He pulls out his knife.

GIDEON (CONT'D)  
You're gonna start being nicer to me.

**INT. JACK'S BEDROOM - NIGHT**

Lester pours Jack and himself a glass of whiskey.

BAD JACK  
That Jack-Rabbit politician putting money before my pride.

LESTER  
Best the lumberman in the ring and then we can get nasty. What's the problem?

BAD JACK  
The problem is I want Connelly in agony now!

LESTER  
I'll do anything to help you, Jack.

BAD JACK  
That doesn't ever need be said out loud. It's a given.

LESTER  
What about his black lady friend? I could pay the bobtail a visit. Take a stroll down her cock alley or maybe even her blind cupid?

Jack nods with permission. Lester is giddy at the thought.

**EXT. KINGS HOTEL - DAY**

Emily adjusts Kieran's coat on the front steps of the hotel.

KIERAN  
Don't leave the hotel for anything.

EMILY  
I'd feel safer going with you.

Cillian approaches in his cloak.

CILLIAN  
Destine is locked up in the  
basement of Jack's saloon.

EMILY  
You been out all night?

CILLIAN  
There's only a few guards.

KIERAN  
Grady's at the square. Let's get  
him and-

CILLIAN  
This is a job for a ghost, not a  
gang, so do your promotions as  
scheduled. Emily, you stay in the  
hotel like Kieran says.

Emily huffs.

CILLIAN (CONT'D)  
Promise me.

Emily is turned on by Cillian's care for her safety.

EMILY  
I promise.

Cillian moves off down the road. Kieran walks the other way,  
immediately swarmed by a flock of devoted Irishmen.

Pulling back we see Lester watching from a distance. He  
stares deviously at Emily who walks back into the hotel.

#### **EXT. PARADISE SQUARE - DAY**

A huge crowd surrounds the stage where Kieran and Grady put  
on boxing gloves.

KIERAN  
Thanks for having my back, Grady.

GRADY  
You fight for the Irish and we  
fight for you.

#### **INT. KINGS HOTEL - DAY**

Lester walks up the stairs with a cocky grin. He lurches down  
the hallway, scraping his billy club along the wall.

He stops at a door and knocks.

**INT. HOTEL ROOM - CONTINUOUS**

Emily quickly pops up from laying on the bed. She looks around not sure what to do. More knocking.

LESTER (O.S.)  
(soft tone)  
It's the police. We have questions  
for the occupant of this room.

Instantly Emily puts her hand over her mouth in a panicked attempt to stay quiet. Her eyes go bugged with fear. More knocking.

She curls herself into a ball, frightened to the core.

LESTER (O.S.) (CONT'D)  
Anyone there? Nobody is in. I guess  
we'll be off then.

A few silent moments pass. She puts her ear to the hinge of the door. Nothing. She peeks through the keyhole.

BOOM! The door is kicked open, smashing Emily's face, sending her flying to the ground. Lester kicks the door shut behind him and stalks towards her.

LESTER (CONT'D)  
Hello dear. Recognize me?

Emily is dazed from the blow and struggles to gain focus.

LESTER (CONT'D)  
Last time I was in Philadelphia, my  
brother and I went to this proper  
bawdy house, no dirty puzzles or  
nothing. I had me this sweet  
freckled beauty who gobbled up my  
cock like it was a Thanksgiving  
feast. And if I'm not mistaken, my  
brother had you.

Emily wipes blood from her face, looking up in terror.

LESTER (CONT'D)  
He said you bounced that buttered  
bun on his whore pipe like no one  
he's ever seen. I told him there  
was no way some blackie was as good  
as my redhead, but he insisted.  
Today I find out.



EMILY  
No, please.

She scoots back and puts her hand up in defense.

**EXT. PARADISE SQUARE - DAY**

Kieran demonstrates punching on Grady for the crowd.

KIERAN  
I use my legs and hip, driving  
forward just as if I was chopping  
with my axe.

Kieran delivers a left hook softly to Grady's abdomen.

**INT. HOTEL ROOM - DAY**

Lester delivers a left hook harshly to Emily's face. He bends her over the bed and, rips her undergarments to shreds.

LESTER  
What are you crying for? This is  
your profession.

**EXT. PARADISE SQUARE - DAY**

Grady takes off his gloves and turns to the crowd.

GRADY  
Who has the sand to go a round with  
the undefeated Irishman?

Hands go up in droves, all wanting a piece of the spotlight.

GRADY (CONT'D)  
You sir. Come on up.

A short stubby man, HORATIO, quickly jumps on the stage and snatches the gloves from Grady. Horatio immediately swings on Kieran who quickly bobs out of the way.

KIERAN  
Woah, calm down, lad.

Horatio is dead serious, flailing away. Finally, BAM! Kieran punches the wild man's liver, dropping him. The crowd roars with excitement.

KIERAN (CONT'D)  
You asked for it.

**INT. KNOW NOTHING'S SALOON - DAY**

No longer cloaked, Cillian walks through the front door of the saloon as Bad Jack is walking out. They hit shoulders.

CILLIAN  
Sorry about that, champ.

Jack exits. Cillian heads upstairs where Gideon is hand feeding the roosters, his companions closest in intellect.

CILLIAN (CONT'D)  
Who's the toughest of the lot?

GIDEON  
I got my money on this one.

CILLIAN  
Why is that?

GIDEON  
Look at the size of him.

CILLIAN  
Not always the biggest cock that wins.

GIDEON  
That's not what the whores say.

Gideon laughs at his own lame joke.

CILLIAN  
What about the French whore?

Gideon's head snaps up.

GIDEON  
What do you know about her?

CILLIAN  
Nothing, but I heard you do. I'll pay ya to let me see her.

Gideon hesitates. Cillian pulls out a stack of bills.

CILLIAN (CONT'D) (CONT'D)  
You want to make some money or not?

**INT. HOTEL ROOM - DAY**

Lester is pulling up his trousers. Emily lays half naked on the floor, in a mess of blood.

Lester reaches into his pocket.

LESTER  
That's the great thing about  
trollops. You can't rape 'em. You  
just owe them money after.

He throws a few coins at Emily, then exits.

**INT. SALOON BASEMENT - DAY**

Gideon leads Cillian down into the basement.

GIDEON  
Have your look, but make it quick.

Cillian slowly moves to Destine. Her posture turns defensive,  
examining Cillian's motives.

DESTINE  
Who are you?

He moves closer.

CILLIAN  
I'll pay ten dollars to see her  
naked.

DESTINE  
You keep away from me.

Gideon walks up behind Cillian.

GIDEON  
Ten dollars? Give it here.

Instead of cash, Cillian pulls out a blade and slashes  
Gideon's throat. He holds the back of Gideon's head leading  
him silently to the ground. Cillian eyes Destine's shackles.

CILLIAN  
Kieran sent me to get you out.

Destine smiles at her good fortune. Cillian rifles through  
Gideon's pockets. He looks under his collar.

CILLIAN (CONT'D)  
Where is the key?

DESTINE  
I don't know.

He pulls off Gideon's boots. No key. The door creaks open.

GOON

Gideon! One of your damn roosters  
is running amok out here.

The goon heads down the steps. Each footstep clamors doom.  
Cillian grips his blade.

GOON (CONT'D)

Gideon?

Off the last step the goon sees Gideon dead. Cillian rushes  
him from behind and digs the blade into the goon's ribs. The  
goon backhands Cillian to the ground.

The gorilla pulls the blade from his side as if it were a  
needle prick and runs after Cillian.

CILLIAN

Shyte.

The goon grabs up Cillian and smashes him against the wall  
then bashes his heavy foot into Cillian's face.

Destine kicks the goon from behind. The monster turns to  
crush Destine when Cillian grabs Gideon's club and smashes  
the goon in the balls.

The monster goes down and Cillian bashes his head until he is  
sure there is no coming back.

Cillian rushes to Destine and tries to break the chain with  
the club. He kicks the metal ring, but it is solid.

CILLIAN (CONT'D)

I have to go before more come.

He backs away.

DESTINE

No, don't go. Please.

CILLIAN

I'm sorry.

Cillian exits, leaving Destine laying beside two dead men.

#### **INT. KING'S HOTEL - EVENING**

Kieran walks down the hall tired from the long day of  
promotion. He comes upon the splintered hotel room door.

KIERAN

Emily?!

**INT. HOTEL ROOM - CONTINUOUS**

Kieran rushes in to see Emily tucked in the corner between the bed and the wall, wrapped in a bloody sheet.

Kieran takes her in his arms and lays her across his chest.

KIERAN

What happened? Look at me, Emily.  
Look in my eyes.

Emily stares blankly, traumatized.

KIERAN (CONT'D)

You're safe now. I'm here. Say  
something. Look at me, please.

Emily doesn't move. Feeling helpless, Kieran hugs her tight.

KIERAN (CONT'D)

This is all my fault.

CILLIAN

Who did this?

Sadness and anger shroud Cillian who charges to Emily's side. Seeing Cillian breaks Emily's anguish. She finally blinks her eyes. She clears her throat.

EMILY

The c-copper. Lester.

KIERAN

That crook-pated bastard!

CILLIAN

You need stitches.

Cillian takes her from Kieran and carries her to the washroom. Kieran follows.

KIERAN

She'll be alright? I mean you know  
how to...

CILLIAN

Yeah.

Cillian cleans the blood off Emily's face with a towel.

CILLIAN (CONT'D)

I'm gonna stitch you up and you'll  
be as beautiful as ever.

KIERAN  
You come alone -- without Destine.

CILLIAN  
I tried. I killed Jack's man  
Gideon, but I could not free her.

Kieran's rage rises, passing the point of control. He grunts as a beast and exits.

**EXT. KNOW NOTHING'S SALOON - NIGHT**

Kieran walks down the dark sultry streets with his axe in hand. He approaches the gang of three hundred cutthroats standing guard outside of Bad Jack's saloon. Some hold torches, all hold weapons.

KIERAN  
JACK! -- JACK!

After a moment, Jack slithers out to the balcony.

BAD JACK  
Come to mope about your dark  
skinned friend? I hear she's the  
best grind in town.

Jack laughs, taunting Kieran.

KIERAN  
You want to know how I got all  
these notches on my axe? The  
Confederates would set up pickets.  
An outpost of three or four men to  
give warning if they saw Union  
soldiers marching. I'd wait until  
the night was at its blackest. Then  
ffftt ftt. Dead before they even  
knew they were under attack.

BAD JACK  
You saying I should sleep with one  
eye open?

KIERAN  
No, you can rest easy tonight,  
Jack. I want the entire city  
watching when I put you down.

BAD JACK  
No you don't. You only want her  
watching. But that's not going to  
happen see. I already killed her.

Kieran's heart drops into his stomach.

BAD JACK (CONT'D) (CONT'D)  
Only fair after your man got my  
second Gideon.

**INT. WASHROOM - NIGHT**

Cillian cleans Emily's freshly stitched wounds.

EMILY  
I thought he was gonna kill me.

CILLIAN  
I know where he sleeps. He will not  
live through the night.

EMILY  
Do not steal my revenge. I want to  
fight like Kieran does. Like you  
do.

CILLIAN  
I will not risk your safety.

He strokes her face.

CILLIAN (CONT'D)  
I won't allow you any more harm.

EMILY  
Then help me. Help me kill him.

**EXT. KNOW NOTHING'S SALOON - NIGHT**

Kieran stares up at Jack, his heart still melting.

BAD JACK  
Don't cry now, I'm only fibbing.  
I have a place all picked out for  
Destine.

KIERAN  
When I win, she goes with me.

BAD JACK  
When you win? Don't tell me you're  
starting to believe your own  
legend? I piss on McCoole. He's  
nothing. The man killer ducked  
every one of my challenges.  
(MORE)

BAD JACK (CONT'D)  
I'm going to give you a beating you  
will never forget.

KIERAN  
When I'm done with you, you'll be  
the one keeping your eyes to the  
floor.

BAD JACK  
Enough talk, Connelly. Off with ya.  
I've got a French slave who needs  
whipping.

KIERAN  
This ends tomorrow.

**INT. LESTER'S BEDROOM - NIGHT**

Lester rouses from his slumber face to face with the barrel  
of Cillian's rifle.

LESTER  
You don't want to be doing this boy-

CILLIAN  
Shhh.

Lester slowly reaches under his pillow.

CILLIAN (CONT'D)  
Looking for this?

Cillian raises Lester's pistol, now pointing two guns.

CILLIAN (CONT'D)  
You've dug a hole there's no  
getting out of, Copper.

From a dark corner Emily steps out and buries a long knife  
into Lester's chest. Cillian rises to hold Lester down.

CILLIAN (CONT'D)  
Deeper.

Emily uses all her might to sink the blade all the way to the  
handle.

EMILY  
(to Lester)  
That's the great thing about skeevy  
raping bastards. You can't murder  
them. You only bring them to  
justice.



She watches with great pride as the light indeed fades out of Lester's dark eyes.

Emily and Cillian share an intimate moment in the midst of their murder. Their lips move closer, until over Lester's dead body they kiss in the darkness.

**INT. KINGS HOTEL - NIGHT**

Kieran sits in perilous thought. Cillian and Emily enter.

KIERAN

I thought someone had gotten you.

EMILY

Lester's dead.

CILLIAN

There's no walking away now. Lose and we're all dead. Our fate lies with your bare knuckles.

KIERAN

The spectacle for rats is the only door to salvation. After what I've seen...what we've seen...maybe pugilism is not the plague on society I once thought. Maybe it is a most graceful thing.

Cillian, with his arm around Emily, moves to the bed. Kieran ponders the weight of tomorrow.

**EXT. NEWS STAND - MORNING**

Men in suits, newspapers in hand.

MAN 1

Who do you like for the fight?

MAN 2

The Lumberman can't be stopped.

MAN 3

Bad Jack will fix it somehow. Five dollars says he stays champ.

**INT. BUTCHER SHOP - MORNING**

A hearty butcher is chopping meat for his customers.

BUTCHER

Bad Jack wins inside of fifteen.

CUSTOMER

You're drunk. Connelly's going to best him. Five rounds at most.

**EXT. FORREST - MORNING**

Two Irishmen are sawing lumber.

IRISHMAN 1

The Lumberman's the victor today.

IRISHMAN 2

First round.

IRISHMAN 1

One punch.

IRISHMAN 2

Out like a lantern.

**EXT. PARADISE SQUARE - DAY**

High class and low, men and women, cutthroats and royalty are lined up for a mile in every street of the five points, all out placing bets. The Know Nothings is in the background.

Kieran marches out with Cillian and Emily. The fanatics try and touch their new hero. Kieran embraces them.

Destine sits in a steel cage high on the wall like a princess locked in a tower. Kieran and Destine lock eyes. He tosses his flat cap in the ring as Bad Jack walks out.

Jack's Bowery Boys knock his fans out of the way clearing a path to the ring. Grady and the Chichesters look on nearby.

Jack throws his top hat in the ring and the fighters strip down.

Emily gets in Kieran's ear.

EMILY

Expect to be hit when your down,  
have your eyes gouged, and God  
knows what else.

KIERAN

I'm ready for anything.

EMILY

Good will overcome. You believe it?

KIERAN

Aye.

EMILY

Then rip his fucking head off!

THE RING

Bad Jack strides confidently to Kieran.

BAD JACK

Care to make a wager Irishman? Or do you think I'm going to win as well?

KIERAN

You have no cutthroats to hide behind. You finally face me on your own. Nothing can save you now, Jack.

The large referee steps in and draws the chalk line.

REFEREE

To your corners gentlemen!

Jack backs up into his corner. Both fighters are ready.

REFEREE (CONT'D)

This is for the Championship of America, so I don't expect to have to explain the rules. We go until one man stops. Toe the scratch!

The crowd goes silent as each man makes his way to the line.  
THEY TOE THE LINE. THE FIGHT BEGINS.

Kieran throws a hard right. Jack ducks under and slams his fist into Kieran's manhood. Kieran takes a knee.

EMILY

HEY!

KIERAN

No honor.

BAD JACK

No need for it.

They return to the scratch. Jack, throws haymakers with full power. Kieran evades and dodges, blocks and back-peddles.

Jack is relentless, a machine. A few punches make it through and smash Kieran's left eye, opening up a cut. Jack hammers his fist into the cut and blood sprays across the crowd.

Destine cries out at the gore.

Bad Jack smiles at the sight, but he needs his fix. He stops his attack and sticks his chin in the air.

BAD JACK (CONT'D)  
Hit me lumberman! Come on!

Kieran wastes no time. He winds up holding his eyes at Jack's face, but chops away at Jack's lungs. Kieran pounds the champions ribs until Jack grabs hold of Kieran.

Kieran throws Jack over his leg to the ground.

KIERAN  
Come on Bad Jack! Let's see how bad you are.

Emily grabs Cillian's face and kisses him with excitement.

Destine nods up to God with thanks.

Jack gets up and walks to the scratch. Kieran rushes Jack with a flurry of punches. Jack slips and moves out of the way still getting his wind back.

Kieran punches upstairs causing Jack to cover his face, then hits him downstairs with kidney shots. Jack goes down again.

Jack holds his side as he walks to the line. Again Kieran gives chase and again Bad Jack moves swiftly escaping damage.

Then Jack stops and brings his arms down. Kieran punches away at the body but is mostly hitting Jack's arms. He continues to punch ineffectively to the ribs before finally throwing a right hook to the jaw.

Jack falls down again and the crowd's excitement mounts seeing the challenger getting ever closer to victory.

Blood seeps from Bad Jack's mouth. He licks his wound. He gets his fix and rises a new man. A SAVAGE.

Jack puts his toe to the scratch. Kieran attacks with a fury but Jack walks through his punches as if they were nothing.

Bad Jack returns fire and crushes Kieran's nose with a right. Then smashes a left into Kieran's teeth sending him down.

With no regard for the rules Jack jumps on top of Kieran and rains down punches.

GRADY  
Bloody cheater!

Kieran kicks Jack off him and rises.

KIERAN  
Not gonna be that easy, Jack.

They toe the line and Jack takes heavy shots to the body, but grabs the back of Kieran's head and bashes his knuckles into Kieran's eyes, over and over, mashing up his face. Kieran goes down hard.

BAD JACK  
You sure about that?

What transpires over the next several rounds is Kieran falling to the floor, each time bloodier than before. Over and over he is put down by his seemingly invincible opponent.

It is pure domination. Jack pounds Kieran's flesh with a merciless fervor, savoring every second.

Even Kieran's hard head can't save him as Jack pummel's Kieran's ears sending him crashing down to the canvas.

Destine cries in her cage, her fate looming ever closer.

Kieran grabs the rope, trying to get up, but doesn't have the strength and falls back down

Emily can't watch. She buries her head into Cillian's chest.

BAD JACK (CONT'D)  
Get up Lumberman! I've still got punishing to do.

Kieran grabs the ropes again. He pulls himself up to his feet and faces Jack. Kieran trudges back to the line barely able to lift his arms.

Jack bulldozes Kieran with punches then pushes him against the ropes. Kieran bounces off and Jack heaves an uppercut into Kieran's chin sending him flying through the air.

Kieran lands as if he was throw from a ten story building. Cillian runs around the ring to Kieran who barely moves.

CILLIAN  
Don't give in, Kieran! You can't!  
You've got more in you, I know it!  
(MORE)

CILLIAN (CONT'D)

Remember the war, the focus, the  
rush when it's life or death! Get  
up Lumberman! This man won't best  
you today! Get up! Rise and fight!

Kieran stares into Cillian's eyes and sees true faith. Over Cillian's shoulder Destine comes into focus. Kieran gets that rush. He rolls himself over and stands.

Jack waits with his foot on the scratch.

CILLIAN (CONT'D)

Bring the beast!

Kieran shakes his head regaining focus. He wipes the blood out of his eyes and blinks quickly sharpening his sight. What Kieran does next utterly shocks the crowd.

Kieran runs full sprint to the scratch. He lowers his shoulder as his foot hits the line, barrelling into Jack, sending him staggering back into the ropes.

Kieran heaves a straight right to the face, imploding Jack's nose, sending blood gushing down his face and splashing into his eyes.

Blinded by his own blood, Jack fails to defend as Kieran bashes Jack's face with barbaric rage.

Jack slides out from the ropes, flailing blindly, wiping blood from his face with his forearms. Kieran pursues, but Jack throws a couple stiff jabs that land, backing Kieran up.

They engage toe to toe in the center of the ring. There is no more defense, only blood and sweat cascading through the air as the fighters trade punches. Both throwing with a fury, landing at will.

Jack starts to get the better of it, backing Kieran up. Then Kieran surges back, putting Jack on his heels. A powerful left hook sends Jack to the ground, dazed.

EMILY

Yes!

Jack is taking his time getting up, trying to get his wits back. Kieran grabs him by the neck and throws him to the scratch.

The moment Jack's foot touches the line, Kieran throws everything he has into Jack's ribs.

Jack lowers his arms to protect his ribs so Kieran moves up to the head. CRACK, CRACK, CRACK!

Kieran shatters the bones of Jack's jaw. Jack tries to stagger away, but Kieran throws him back into the ropes.

Destine stands in anticipation of victory.

DESTINE

Do it, Kieran! Finish him!

Kieran holds Jack steady with his left, and hammers Jack's already mashed up face with his right. It is gruesome as Kieran pounds away at Jack's flesh.

Jack is out on his feet. Kieran backs away and Jack stumbles forward. Kieran gets a running start and the biggest overhand right the world has ever seen.

Jack crashes to the ground LIMP. OUT COLD. The referee takes one look and waives his arms. KIERAN WINS

Never has there been a more uproarious crowd, irrepressible in their cheering. Grady and the Chichesters go mad.

Emily and Cillian stand full of pride.

The ref grabs Kieran's arm to raise it in victory but Kieran shrugs him off.

KIERAN

DESTINE! DESTINE!

Destine reaches out through the bars and yells back, but their cries are lost in the fancy's roar. Kieran rushes out of the ring and pushes through the crowd.

Kieran reaches the steps where two Bowery Boys stand guard.

KIERAN (CONT'D)

Give me the key.

The Boys hesitate, unsure what to do without Jack ordering them. Grady and the Chichesters step up behind Kieran.

GRADY

Hand 'em over!

The Bowery Boy takes the rope with the key off his neck and Kieran snatches it and runs up the steps.

SLOW MOTION as Kieran slides the key in and unlocks the door. Destine rushes into Kieran's arms. The reunion is whimsical, magical, beautiful.

Emily and Cillian smile from below watching Kieran and Destine kiss with unwavering passion, high above the fancy.

Suddenly the celebration turns dark. The Know Nothings saloon is set ablaze behind them. The bowery boys and the Irish men begin to battle.

Kieran grabs Destine and carries her down the stairs to Emily and Cillian. Destine notices the copper's pistol hanging out of Cillian's trousers.

They make their way through the crowd, away from the mayhem.

BAD JACK

Lumberman!

They all turn to see Bad Jack pointing his pistol at the group. He barely has the strength to stand.

BAD JACK (CONT'D)

America remember. Where the meanest  
son of a bitch who is willing to-

Destine grabs the gun from Cillian's belt. Two gunshots ring out. Smoke fills the air. As it clears we see Jack fall to his knees, DEAD. Destine unscathed, holding the shaking gun.

JUSTICE.

The foursome put their arms around each other and proceed away from the chaos.

DISSOLVE TO:

**EXT. CILLIAN'S FARM - DAY**

Kieran and Destine lay in the flowers holding hands, stroking each other's arms. Kieran touches her pregnant belly.

KIERAN

I told you I would do it.

DESTINE

Do what?

KIERAN

Build us a house on a big lot of  
land to raise our children.

She looks back at the newly constructed home next to Cillian's farmhouse. On the porch Cillian holds Emily as a lover.

DESTINE

What about my orchard?



Kieran tickles her.

KIERAN

You might have to roll up your  
sleeves and plant it yourself.

Kieran stops tickling and they stare at each other.

DESTINE

Was it all worth it?

He touches her face.

KIERAN

The war, the boxing...that was the  
easy bit. The hardest to bear was  
the pain inside from not being near  
you.

DESTINE

Let us never be apart again.

They kiss.

THE END