

SAINT PATRICK
Ambassador of Hope

by

Todd Haylock

7619 Simms Ave
Orlando, FL 32812
407-953-8086
jcrules4u@yahoo.com

FADE IN:

EXT. BRITISH COUNTRYSIDE -- DAY

CREDITS

PATRICIUS, mid-teens and athletic, gallops on horseback across the vast countryside of western Britain. His mother, CONCHESSA, waves, summoning him from outside the familys' bourgeois villa. He responds to her waving, yet throws caution to the wind as he proceeds to JUMP a narrow creek on horseback, before returning to his mothers' side. Conchessa, visibly uneasy, greets him in a concerned tone of voice--

CONCHESSA

Have you gone mad ,young man? You frighten me with your daring antics!

PATRICIUS

(laughing)

Dear mother, you know I wish you no grief!

CONCHESSA

The Lord gives us choices but we must exercise good judgment or we can fall.

He steps off of his horse.

PATRICIUS

I possess confidence in my abilities!

CONCHESSA

Well...enough for one day..come along, your father is waiting for us.

They walk casually back to the villa. The horse is attended by a VASSAL.

CONCHESSA (CONT'D)

Your father shall be leaving at dawn. He and I shall be in need of your assistance for the next few days.

PATRICIUS

(brashly)

I should have expected that.

Patricius' father, CALPURNIUS, enters the villa. A mild-mannered bearded man in his late 40s, he carries with him a pair of manuscript scrolls in his hand. He spots Patricius and Conchessa approaching.

CALPURNIUS

Aah--there you are, my boy!

PATRICIUS

You know I am never too far out of your sight...

CALPURNIUS

Come now..let us sit down to a meal while we discuss your duties.

All three enter the villa.

INT.COUNTRY VILLA -- NIGHT

Patricius and his parents have just concluded their meal at the table.They are seated in a candle-lit dining area of the villa.

The lad has just been briefed of his responsibilities by his father.

CALPURNIUS

So...I am trusting you to attend to these matters during my absence.

PATRICIUS

Yes, Father.

CALPURNIUS

(standing up)

Alas, I must rest before the dawn of a days' journey.

Conchessa begins clearing the table.

CONCHESSA

Patricius, you get some rest yourself, I suggest!

Calpurnius exits the dining area.

PATRICIUS

(slightly annoyed)

Yes , I must rest in order to balance my education and daily chores.

CONCHESSA

(irritated)

Oh enough !! You know quite well that you usually have others helping you perform your duties.Your father expects you to honor his requirements.Is that clearly understood?

PATRICIUS

Yes mother..[sighs} I understand..but you know the teacher expects so much..

CONCHESSA

(interrupting)

Not anymore than what is expected of your fellow pupils. You really are in no position to complain about these matters.

PATRICIUS

Having to recite Latin poetry falls short of amusement for me.

CONCHESSA

I am not referring just to your studies ! I am speaking of the fact that so many of the young lads across the countryside are not as fortunate as you are. We have been blessed, Patricius..in many ways.

PATRICIUS

Whatever you may say mother..fortune..good luck,or whatever. All the same,and perhaps on that thought,I shall go ahead and retire to my room.

Patricius starts to stroll to his room.

CONCHESSA

Patricius --God watches over our souls.
Good night...I love you,my dear boy.

He stops and turns his head back slightly.

EXT. VILLA -- NIGHT

The villa, visible from the exterior,with a few candle-lit windows flickering.

EXT. BRITISH LANDSCAPE -- DAY

A remarkable sunrise peers above the hills and through the trees. Several birds SING as they fly in unison,while a river flows gently,meandering through the countryside.

EXT. VILLA -- CONTINUOUS

DOMESTIC SERVANTS hand personal belongings to Calpurnius.He prepares to depart to the municipality of Bannaventa Berniae,where he serves as a *decurio*,or town councilmember.

He places his belongings on the horseback. Conchessa and Patricius stand nearby.

CALPURNIUS

The town aqueduct is producing grievances amongst our citizens. These troubles are demanding the councils' attention..now more than ever. I shall not be away more than three days. Patricius, take care of your mother.

PATRICIUS

(sarcastically)

I, Patricius, stand as a brave warrior!

CALPURNIUS

(smiling)

You better move along, young man, or you will be late for your lessons.

Calpurnius proceeds to hug his wife.

CONCHESSA

Be careful out there.

CALPURNIUS

Just a few days. I will return soon.

He mounts upon the horseback, directing the horse down the path to their hometown.

EXT./INT. INSTRUCTIONAL ROOM -- DAY

Patricius is seen through the window, seated during one of his typical educational routines. Three other pupils are also present.

INT. INSTRUCTIONAL ROOM -- CONTINUOUS

Patricius' eyelids are heavy, struggling to remain open due to sheer boredom. His TUTOR speaks..

TUTOR (O.S.)

..and perhaps *Patricius* has become so knowledgeable..

At the recognition of his name, Patricius suddenly attempts to regain his composure.

TUTOR

(sarcastically)

...that he can afford to sleep while his fellow pupils attempt to learn.

Class pupils LAUGH in amusement. Patricius is obviously embarrassed by the entire scenario.

PATRICIUS
(modestly)
I..um..am indeed sorry for the
disrespect, master.

The tutor shakes his head in a disappointed manner.

TUTOR
Hmm..very well..as I was stating, the
writings of Virgil..

EXT. INSTRUCTIONAL ROOM -- CONTINUOUS

Patricius exits the room. He continues walking, unaware that his tutor is two steps behind.

TUTOR (O.S.)
Oh..Patricius!

He manages to catch up to the lad.

TUTOR
(half-joking)
From what I observe, your attention
span appears to be my greatest
challenge.

They continue walking.

PATRICIUS
No..really, master -- it is just
that I did not sleep well last
night. Truly sorry.

TUTOR
No need for apologies. I know that
your mother and father raised a fine
young lad. Now...if he can only keep
his eyes open..

Patricius looks downward, slightly demonstrating his shame. The tutor places his hand on the remorseful boy's shoulder.

TUTOR (CONT'D)
Patricius..keep your eyes open to
your greatest possibilities, or they
will elude you.

Patricius looks up, contemplating the wisdom of his teacher.

PATRICIUS
I shall see you in class next
week. Farewell for now.

The tutor nods with an agreeable smile.

Patricius turns and continues the brief walk back home.

INT. VILLA -- CONTINUOUS

Patricius enters the villa, preparing to tend to minor duties when, through the window, he notices a middle-aged DOMESTIC HELPER praying outside. After the man has apparently concluded, Patricius cannot help but inquire.

PATRICIUS

Do you really believe He hears you?

DOMESTIC HELPER

(slightly startled)

Oh! master Patricius..forgive me..I was only seizing a moment to meditate.

PATRICIUS

(haughtily)

How clumsy of me! I would never wish to interfere in your practice of religion. [slight laughter] Whatever you may fancy..so be it! If you believe God to hear you...

DOMESTIC HELPER

Why , yes..I have complete faith in that He listens to our concerns. Do you not believe, Patricius?

PATRICIUS

Ahh, mother and father have taught me all there is to know about God. As for me..searching for holy answers only confuses the heart. I must find wisdom and courage within myself. Like a great warrior!

DOMESTIC HELPER

(sympathetically)

Indeed ,I am sure that you are a very brave young lad, and quite certain that your mother and father have instructed you wisely.

PATRICIUS

Some of it appears rather dull and useless, actually. But, of course, they have their own beliefs, and I have my own persuasions.

At about that moment, Conchessas' distant voice interrupts their rapport.

CONCHESSA (O.S.)

Patricius !!

He looks back towards his mothers' voice.

PATRICIUS

I will be right there, mother!

DOMESTIC HELPER

(smiling)

You must go now!

Just remember, my lad....faith is rewarded according to how much we invest in it.

Patricius gazes at the servant, slowly turns away, absorbing thoughts.

He greets Conchessa about halfway across the room.

PATRICIUS

You see, I told you I would be home by noonday.

CONCHESSA

You usually leave me guessing.

PATRICIUS

(smiling)

I am a man of his word.

CONCHESSA

(teasing)

Your words sometimes lose their footing!

PATRICIUS

Very well, mother. What is your wish?

CONCHESSA

Just to remind you of the horses..

PATRICIUS

(interrupting)

I have not forgotten..every duty father has entrusted me to shall be carried out.

CONCHESSA

Are you suggesting that I need not to worry?

PATRICIUS

(in a gallant manner)

Indeed! Your son has assumed his noble responsibility! You have no need for concern.

CONCHESSA
 (sarcastically)
 Thank God for that!

Patricius sits down to rest momentarily.

PATRICIUS
 I shall be out in the field by
 sunset. I can take care of the rest
 beforehand.

EXT. FIELD BEHIND VILLA -- NIGHT

It's an evening with a prominent moonlight. Patricius walks cautiously through a grassy area towards the silhouette of his favorite horse.

Certain IRISH SLAVETRADERs have been spying on the villa from a safe distance.

After spotting Patricius, they begin to communicate their plans.

SLAVETRADER #1
 (whispering)
 Looks like fortune is within our
 midst...

SLAVETRADER #2
 (sinister tone)
 Yes..he..he..he!

Patricius gently pats the horses' neck as he holds the rope to lead her back.

PATRICIUS
 Come on girl...time to go!

As he begins to guide the horse back to the stable, NOISES in the surrounding bushes catch Patricius' attention. He turns his head towards the sound, appearing startled.

PATRICIUS (CONT'D)
 Who goes there?...Is someone out
 there?

He nervously proceeds to quicken his pace.

Two human figures emerge suddenly from out of the underbrush.

Patricius runs swiftly, releasing the rope as the horse bolts away. The two pirates intercept his escape effort.

SLAVETRADER #2
 Got you, boy!!

PATRICIUS
 (with mouth covered)
 Hmnmnmf..Hmnmnmf!!

In his struggle, he manages to cry for help.

PATRICIUS (CONT'D)
 Help!!Help!!Mother !..Some one help
 me!

INT. VILLA -- CONTINUOUS

Conchessa is busy tending to household chores in the villa.Patricius'SCREAMS for help are audible.

She quickly drops everything she's occupied with and runs towards the back doorway.

PATRICIUS (O.S.)
 Help!..Someone.hmnmnmf!!

EXT. VILLA -- CONTINUOUS

CONCHESSA
 (frantically)
 Patricius!...Patricius!!

She witnesses the struggle and runs towards them ,before a pirate overpowers her , sending her violently to the ground.By the time she regains her footing , her sons' captors have disappeared into the shadows.

She attempts to ensue a chase,hysterically calling her sons' name.

CONCHESSA (CONT'D)
 Patriiicius!!

Horses GALLOP away.

She falls on her knees, her CRIES reflecting the unparalleled anguish of a mothers' loss.

EXT. RURAL CAMPSITE -- DAY

Patricius sits on the ground ,shaking.He wears a neck shackle with chains leading to wrist cuffs.His expression conveys fear and concern..

His captors keep a watchful eye.One of the slave pirates,rugged and unkempt, approaches him.

SLAVETRADER #2
 Get up boy!Come on..long day ahead!

Patricius grimaces as he struggles to stand up.The shackles RATTLE as he stands.

PATRICIUS

(trembling)

Where are you taking me?

SLAVETRADER #2

Aahh...keep the mouth shut ,will
ya?This way..move along!

He is directed to a small clearing where other pirates have assembled several other young prisoners. One of the roguish captors states his orders..

SLAVETRADER #3

Get these boys on those horses and
move swiftly!!

The six young captives are placed in pairs ,two on each horse ,while their captors escort them by horseback on either side.

For what seems like several hours, the young slaves traverse the hilly terrain , their faces gloomy from fear and uncertainty.

Patricius finally expresses his dilemma.

PATRICIUS

(to captors)

My hands...

He clenches his teeth as he looks at the contusions on his wrists.

PATRICIUS (CONT'D)

..at least remove these things!

SLAVETRADER #1

(boldly)

Quiet boy!...You were not told to
speak!

Patricius tries to restrain his unease , yet is clearly near his threshold of pain and discomfort.

The horses arrive at a small hill overlooking the sea.

One slavetrader ,acting as a look-out, spots a rather rustic-looking vessel with oars.

SLAVETRADER #2

(pointing)

Thar she is !

SLAVETRADER #1

(looking towards boat)

Ahh,..yes men,I do believe our
generous compensation is at hand.

They all look at each other and GRIN with greedy intent.

They arrive alongside the boat. A MERCHANT PIRATE, mid-50's , approaches the slave dealers as they dismount. His appearance is a bit more agreeable yet fails to mask his questionable deeds.

MERCHANT PIRATE
(eyeing the captives)
Hmm...I see your hunting journey
produced favorable results.

SLAVETRADER #3
(impatiently)
So it is done..we brought you the
merchandise. So now, our payment in
turn!!

The merchant nods, with a rather sinister smirk on his face.

Holding out a rough , aged pair of hands, he produces a sackcloth with coinage used in bartering. Coins are Poured NOISILY into awaiting hands.

He then looks briefly at the youngsters and turns as he speaks--

MERCHANT PIRATE
Now get them aboard!

EXT. IRISH SEA -- DAY

Patricius dozes in a light slumber aboard the boat. It is a moderate sized Irish sea-going vessel , primarily outfitted for the transport of human cargo, among other things.

His eyes open slowly as he first catches a glimpse of a blue sky above him. A few seagulls come into view , emanating their usual CRIES.

He is surrounded by his fellow captive shipmates. Several solemn faces stare at him , while others either WEEP or ponder about what may be in store. A youngster leans over in Patricius direction--

CAPTIVE YOUTH
These ruffians...they make a
comfortable living out of our misery.

PATRICIUS
Are they taking us to Ireland ?

CAPTIVE YOUTH
Just like they have been doing for
many a year.

PATRICIUS
(concerned)
What are we going to do ?

The light conversation is suddenly interrupted by the LOUD REPORT of a wooden cane STRIKING the shipdeck. The pirate, trying to maintain authority, approaches the two young men--

SLAVETRADER #2

Hey !..Hey!..Keep your mouths sealed...

He points the cane at the boys, indicating punishment.

SLAVETRADER #2 (CONT'D)

..or else! !

The boys look at each other then return to their loathsome monotony.

EXT. IRISH SHIPDOCK -- DAY

The slave vessel is moored to the crude structure. Captives are expedited off the boat in a harsh manner.

The RATTLING of chains is quite audible. Amidst the COMMOTION, a DOCK MERCHANT expresses his sense of urgency--

DOCK MERCHANT

Hurry it up!! I have many trade arrangements to do and very few hours of daylight to do it!

The captive boys are hurriedly urged forward, some fending off an occasional STRIKE from the pirates' whips. The tormented gaze on their faces illustrates their misery.

An IRISH CHIEFTAIN (50's) approaches the dock in quest of his purchase. He is rather tall and distinguished in appearance. A small entourage accompanies him.

DOCK MERCHANT (CONT'D)

Sir..as you can see, we have a strapping selection of lads for you to choose from !

The chieftain visually inspects the human cargo. Spotting Patricius, he makes a final decision.

IRISH CHIEFTAIN

(pointing at Patricius)
This one over here.

The dock merchant bows reverently, responding--

DOCK MERCHANT

Consider your request granted !

Shackles are removed. Patricius is guided to join the entourage as they all turn to walk away.

EXT. CHIEFTAINS' QUARTERS -- NIGHT

A member of the chieftains' tribal clan leads Patricius to his eventual habitat , using a bullwhip CRACK as a source of motivation.

The TRIBE MEMBER , mid-40's and muscular , is not any more diplomatic than his sea pirate counterparts--

TRIBE MEMBER

(harshly)

Come on , boy!! You will have the privilege of joining the other slave rubbish who work the hillsides!

He pushes Patricius with onslaught vigor. A few WHIPLASHES ensue. Flinching would be an understatement.

He appears miserable in his demeanor.

TRIBE MEMBER (O.S.)

Soon the stench of filthy sheep will be the only fragrance you will be known for !

INT. SERVANT LIVING QUARTERS -- NIGHT

Patricius is pushed onto the floor of a dusty hut-like abode-- a crude living arrangement shared by other young slaves. Several dilapidated sleeping mats line the floor.

The malicious tribe member protrudes his face through the curtain-door.--

TRIBE MEMBER

Better get rested up , boy! Tomorrow awaits you with plenty of duty !

The captor leaves. Patricius struggles on the dirt floor, tears welling in his eyes. As he dries his eyes a VOICE is heard--

SLAVE YOUTH #1 (O.S.)

Get some rest.

Patricius looks over and spots the dirt-covered faces of half-a-dozen slave boys.

SLAVE YOUTH #1

(in weak voice)

We all share in the same burden.

He hands the newcomer a cup of water.

SLAVE YOUTH #1 (CONT'D)

Here...drink.

Patricius reaches slowly ,but drinks vigorously.His thirst is obvious.The boys begin to cover up with meager garments as blankets.

SLAVE YOUTH #1 (CONT'D)
(indicating)
You can sleep over there.

Still in a state of silent shock , he finds his way to his new bed corner.He looks around before lying down.

As one side of his face rests on a pillow, his eyes focus on a single candlelight.The reflection of the candle appears in his sad weary eyes until they finally close as he drifts off into sleep.

EXT. SERVANT LIVING QUARTERS -- DAY

The boys ,dressed in their ragged attire, are assembled by a TASKMASTER ,who brandishes a whip in one hand.He is a bearded no-nonsense barbarian.

The scene is in stark contrast to the beautiful surrounding landscape of wooded areas and green hills. Several sheep graze.

TASKMASTER
(in a rough voice)
Let it be known...any foolish attempts
by any of you vermin will be dealt
with by my own hand !!

He proceeds to CRACK the whip before delegating chores--

TASKMASTER (CONT'D)
You know your duties...you three..that
way!..You two..[pointing to Patricius
and his friend]..tend the flocks on
the north side!

He sends the whip in the air once again.

TASKMASTER (CONT'D)
Get moving !!

They all scatter.

Patricius looks at his newfound acquaintance-

PATRICIUS
But...I have never done this before.

SLAVE YOUTH #1
Trust me, you will learn quickly!

The boys embark upon a rather brief journey up to a hilly region being used as pasture.

PATRICIUS

We had hired vassals at home doing
this type of labor!

SLAVE YOUTH #1

Forgive the disappointment, but this
is quite different..no payment in
kind..and.. against the human will!

He picks up a shepherds' staff and hands it to a reluctant
Patricius.

SLAVE YOUTH #1 (CONT'D)

You will be needing this.

PATRICIUS

How long have you been captured?

SLAVE YOUTH #1

(sighing)

Have yet to see my family now for
many moons. Freedom only remains a
distant dream here. These people only
hold true to their barbaric
promises. This is what they have been
doing for many years.

They continue to stroll as they converse.

PATRICIUS

And with the Roman legions now
abandoning Britain...

SLAVE YOUTH #1

(interrupting)

We are no longer protected like we
were before. They are free to roam
, pillage the towns, enslave the
young, and.. [sighs] as you see, have
even learned to speak our tongue.

He looks at the ground as they stop walking. He then looks up
towards a hill.

SLAVE YOUTH #1 (CONT'D)

Now, go on..cross to the other side
and keep your eyes on the flock. If
you are uncertain of something, just
watch me.

Witness a rather clumsy effort to manage sheep , courtesy of
Patricius. He looks up, in an attempt to mimic his fellow
shepherds' skills. The slave youth nods with affirmation.

INT. SERVANT LIVING QUARTERS -- NIGHT

The boys are all chewing heartily on their bread rations. Patricius glances over at them--

PATRICIUS

(quizzically)

This chieftain who purchased me...what kind of man is he? Must be of great importance..

SLAVE YOUTH #2

Do not be fooled by his title. His cruelty can rival that of any seafaring pirate , if he so wishes.

SLAVE YOUTH #3

Unwavering man ,really. If he were not, I suppose we could have purchased our freedom by now.

The sound of FOOTSTEPS gets their attention. Slave Youth #1 immediately places his finger over his lips indicating silence.

SLAVE YOUTH #1

Shhh...!!

The undeciphered VOICES and FOOTSTEPS of two taskmasters can be heard as they walk by the curtain. (O.S.)
The boys look at each other as they slowly continue to consume their evening meal.

EXT. TRIBAL LANDSCAPE -- DAY

Then suns' brilliant rays permeate the dawn sky, as it emerges from the horizon.

EXT. TRIBAL SHEEP PASTURE -- CONTINUOUS

Once again , Patricius continues his newfangled routine , pacing slowly towards the flock of sheep.

The taskmaster and the chieftain meet one another in the distance. They both spot the new slaveboy.

TASKMASTER

(arrogantly)

Sir, I congratulate you on your newest commodity. Perhaps I should provide a few lashes of encouragement to the boy ?

IRISH CHIEFTAIN

(showing no amusement)

Not until he is in need of disciplinary measures. I payed a handsome amount of coins for this lad. Keep a watchful eye on him. Is that understood ?

The taskmaster, showing reverence, gestures a signal of respect.

TASKMASTER

Yes , Sire.

INT. VILLA -- DAY

Conchessa is seated at the window , weeping as she thinks about Patricius. Calpurnius walks up behind her , placing his hands on her shoulders.

CONCHESSA

All I feel..is the emptiness..not knowing if we shall ever see him.

Her husband , with sad eyes , looks out the window. He tries his best to demonstrate optimism--

CALPURNIUS

I promise you, Conchessa..we will see him. We..will see him again. Our prayers will not go unheeded.

He leans over, kissing her on the cheek.

BACK TO SCENE

EXT. IRISH HILLSIDE -- DAY

Patricius sits on a large stone. His face mirrors his disillusionment as he watches over the sheep. He turns his face towards the sky--

PATRICIUS

(in a trembling voice)

God in heaven...If You hear this desperate soul, forgive him for not truly believing.

In a prayerful manner , he places his two hands together. A few tears form in his eyes.

PATRICIUS (CONT'D)

I am a wretched lad with no hope for tomorrow. Surely I must be paying for my sins. Truly I am undeserving, but if Your mercy exists..I only ask that You would make it known to this troubled heart.

His tearful eyes glance across the sky. He then closes them, bowing his head.

MONTAGE - DAILY ACTIVITIES

- Patricius fetches pails of water for the swine.
- He chases an elusive lamb.
- Bales of hay are carried on his back.
- Bread rations are meagerly distributed to slavemates.
- The lad prays at the dawn of an exquisite morning.

The voice of a more elderly Patricius quotes from his "Confession"--

PATRICIUS (V.O.)

"My spirit was growing ,so that each day ,I would say a hundred prayers and almost as many at night"...

- He carries firewood during an afternoon snowfall.
- He continues to pray on a hill, in spite of rainfall.
- Raindrops pelt his face, his closed eyes reflect faith.

PATRICIUS (V.O.) (CONT'D)

"I see now..looking back ,that my spirit was bursting within my soul".

END MONTAGE

EXT. SERVANT LIVING QUARTERS -- NIGHT

SUPER: SIX YEARS LATER

INT. SERVANT LIVING QUARTERS -- NIGHT

A slightly older-looking Patricius sleeps with only candlelight to illuminate his face.

DREAM - PATRICIUS' FREEDOM ANNOUNCED

Patricius peers through the forest trees ,moving small branches out of his path as he clears his way to an intense light source.

An angelic apparition shines through the clearing, speaking to him--

ANGEL

You have fasted well--soon you will be going home.Your ship is ready.

Patricius' eyes open wide as he awakes, startled at the dream-state revelation.He stares forward with a sense of bewilderment.

EXT. IRISH HILLSIDE -- DAY

Patricius arrives at the hillside.He looks around at the surrounding landscape.

After a few pensive moments ,he turns his head to see if anyone is around.With no witnesses in sight ,he scrambles towards the treeline and blends into the environment.

EXT. IRISH LANDSCAPE -- CONTINUOUS

MONTAGE - PATRICIUS' DARING ESCAPE

-- He runs through tall grass,then through a hilly region.

-- Desperate feet cross a stream and venture over rocky outcroppings.

-- He wades through the bogs of the central lowlands.

-- Running out of provisions ,the hungry lad consumes wild berries before swimming across the Shannon River.

-- At nightfall,he prays in the moonlight before turning over to sleep.

-- For several days, he crosses the final mountainous regions of southeastern Ireland.

-- Weariness is evident in his face as he finally climbs over a hill and spots the coastline...

END MONTAGE

EXT. IRISH COASTLINE -- DAY

Patricius conceals himself in the underbrush as he arrives near the shoreline. He spots what appears to be a small abandoned hut.

Reluctantly, he approaches to investigate.

INSIDE OF HUT

There are no occupants. It appears disheveled, as if abandoned for some time. Seeing no possible inhabitants, he proceeds to sit down and rest.

He closes his eyes and drifts off to sleep.

INT. HUT -- DAY

He slowly opens his eyes, gazing at his surroundings while sitting up.

EXT. HUT -- CONTINUOUS

He exits the hut. Arriving at a small clearing in the bushes, he stops.

To his amazement, he spots the mast of a ship. Partially hiding himself, he surveys the welcome sight for a moment.

He views the SAILORS as they place last-minute cargo on their shoulders and transport it aboard. It's apparent that the ship will set sail momentarily.

Patricius, in his desperation, decides to approach the SHIP CAPTAIN. He is a rather burly, rotund character, late 50's, with an authoritative presence.

PATRICIUS

Captain..uh sir, I have no coinage to offer, but I would like to set sail along with your crew. Certainly you could use the help of another deckhand on board?!

SHIP CAPTAIN

What..?An extra hand on deck? No, boy..no such need....

He inspects the boats' exterior as he speaks.

SHIP CAPTAIN (CONT'D)

...I have plenty of good labor available to man the ship.

PATRICIUS

But I could be of benefit..perhaps to your galley!

SHIP CAPTAIN

(interrupting irately)

Who are you? -- Where did you come from? I have never seen your face in this area..huh! You are much too young for a merchant.Now run along...As you can see, we are quite busy!!

PATRICIUS

You would not regret it!

SHIP CAPTAIN

(stops what he's doing)

Well, a young lad and a stubborn one at that!...

He glares at Patricius up close with an ugly frown...

SHIP CAPTAIN (CONT'D)

If I was in need of your services, I would have expressed interest from the very beginning !*You will not be joining my crew !*

PATRICIUS

Sir,I know you are a man of great skill and wisdom..

Patricius follows him almost like a shadow ,pleading his case.

PATRICIUS (CONT'D)

..certainly you can make exceptions to the rules?!

SHIP CAPTAIN

You are beginning to challenge my patience!

PATRICIUS

Just give me one opportunity..!

SHIP CAPTAIN

Forget this nonsense!-- There is no way that you will be going along with us!!

The captain turns away from Patricius.He continues to visually survey the boat while responding--

SHIP CAPTAIN (CONT'D)

Now go on back home or wherever it is you came from!

Patricius stares in disbelief, before he looks down and slowly turns to walk away.

With a look of bleak discouragement on his face, he moves slothfully back towards the hut. While still walking, he prays silently with eyes closed --

PATRICIUS (V.O.)

"You have brought me thus far..What must I do next ? I have placed my faith in You. Send forth Your grace oh God. I beseech You".

He continues his despondent pace of footsteps. Suddenly, meditation is interrupted by a harsh voice..

SAILOR #1 (O.S.)

Hey..boy!!

Patricius turns around.

SAILOR #1

Come back quickly -- we wish to speak to you!

The sailor and the captain are standing next to each other. It's apparent that they have exchanged a few words. The sailor motions for Patricius to come back.

Although Patricius cannot hear the conversation, he witnesses the two in brief discussion as he approaches.

SAILOR #1 (CONT'D)

Listen..uh..the captain and I have thought it over. We agree that you may earn your passage by keeping the decks clean.

Patricius demeanor shows hope as his face lights up.

PATRICIUS

(exuberantly)

Yes !..I most certainly can do that! I am at your command!

The captain looks at the sailor and then, to Patricius, with the same expressionless face--

SHIP CAPTAIN

Come aboard.

PATRICIUS

(smiling brightly)

Yesssir !!

EXT. SHIP AT SEA -- DAY

MONTAGE

-- The ship tosses back and forth slightly. The wave action greets the bow with spectacular splashes.

-- Crewmembers are busy with typical sea-faring duties.

-- Patricius scrubs a portion of the deck, staying loyal to his claim.

-- Finally, the silhouette of the vessel is seen at dusk.

EXT. BRITISH COAST -- DAY

Sailor #1 and the captain are on deck, viewing the shoreline. The sound of WAVES against the boat are overheard.

SAILOR #1

The winds must have shifted more than we expected..

SHIP CAPTAIN

(sternly)

We are probably thirty or forty miles north... Nevertheless, we must make landfall. Our supplies are too limited to sail back south. Prepare your men for arrival.

He points at a spot on the coastline.

SHIP CAPTAIN (CONT'D)

We will bring the ship into that lagoon.

SAILOR #1

Yes sir!

The captain continues his stern lack of emotion as he looks at the coastline. The sailors' commands echo--

SAILOR #1 (O.S.)

You heard it men! Prepare for land! All hands prepare for land!

Sailors scramble to their respective duties. Mooring ropes are unwound.

The boat turns sharply towards shore.

EXT. BRITAIN -- NIGHT

The SAILORS are all assembled at a makeshift campsite. Most are resting on blankets while some meander about, TALKING amongst themselves.

Patricius sits near the fire, occasionally staring at it. Sailor #1 walks up to the captain--

SAILOR #1

Sir...I must mention that some of the men are sharing their misgivings about your plan.

SHIP CAPTAIN

(showing authority)

And I suppose you have a better suggestion ? As I stated -- we leave the cargo on board. At dawn we set out with our food supplies. Surely there must be a farm or village within a few days walk from here. We will send a crew to recover the ship later. ...Are there any further questions, sailor ?

SAILOR #1

No sir..that will be all.

SHIP CAPTAIN

Very well. Tell the rest of these men to get some rest.

SAILOR #1

Right away!

The sailor turns away as the captain continues to stare out into the night sky.

EXT. BRITISH COUNTRYSIDE -- DAY

MONTAGE - SHIPCREWS' JOURNEY

-- The crewmen cross over hilly terrain and flat green fields.

-- They travel parallel to a small brook, some pausing to refill containers with water.

-- One sailor climbs a boulder using the new vantage point to peer at the horizon. He looks back at fellow castaways, nodding his head in disappointment.

-- a tired soul pours water over his face.

-- Nightfall arrives once again .

END MONTAGE

EXT. SHIPCREW CAMPSITE -- NIGHT

Evening campsite is established. It's characterized by bonfires, sailors consuming portions of food or wine, others playing dice-like games of chance or getting restful sleep.

In spite of the MEDLEY OF SOUNDS, Patricius finds opportunity to pray silently during the noisy endeavors.

Two sailors, drinking from wineskins, notice his expression of faith.

SAILOR #2

Amusing lad, really. Ever since we set sail, he seems to occupy much of his time praying to his god or something.

SAILOR #3

(sneering)

Ha..ha..! I have noticed. Perhaps he could ask his god to find the shortest route back to our village. [he laughs]

Patricius finishes his prayer and lies down, using an old garment as a blanket. He closes his eyes.

EXT. BRITISH COUNTRYSIDE -- DAY

SUPER: "THREE WEEKS LATER"

The crew walks down a trail-like road. It's evident in their haggard appearance that they are both tired and desperate.

Their movements are slothful. Some stumble out of weakness.

They pause on the side of the road for momentary rest. Sailor #1 looks at the captain-

SAILOR #1

Three days now with no food. Sir, these men are at the end of their senses..

PATRICIUS

(intervening)

Keep your eyes open to hope.

The captain wipes the sweat from his brow. He glares at Patricius.

SHIP CAPTAIN

(skeptically)

Well.. "christian", what are you going to do? You say this god of yours is so great and powerful -- why don't you pray to him for us? We are dying of starvation here! I do not think we shall ever see a living soul again!

Patricius looks directly at him and responds with divine confidence.

PATRICIUS

Just turn with your whole heart to the Lord God because nothing is impossible for Him. Today He is going to send food right into your path -- plenty to fill your bellies..because His abundance is everywhere.

The captain turns to at sailor#1, who shakes his head in a pessimistic manner. Suddenly, sailor#3 points his finger towards the road--

SAILOR #3

Look !!

A herd of swine cross the road. The sailors first look at each other in disbelief.

They quickly grab their weapons of choice as they bolt towards the herd. Daggers, swords, and spears end the pursuit as SQUEALS are heard.

EXT. CAMPSITE -- NIGHT

The entire crew rests around a campfire. The fire CRACKLES as several scalawags devour the fleshy reward. A large section of pork roasts over the fire.

A weak-looking dog chews on left-over bones. Suddenly, sailor#1 stands up to speak to the crew. He appears as a humbled man --

SAILOR #1

Men, we must confess that today , we witnessed nothing less than a miracle. We should be ashamed of our doubt..

Most of the crewmembers faces suggest repentance. Out of nowhere, one skeptical seaman lashes out-

SAILOR #4

Ohh..spare us the doubletalk! Nothing occurred out of the ordinary! Mere coincidence. Nothing more. Surely there must be a simple explanation for it all.

SAILOR #3

(irritated)

Oh yes!..And I am certain that your unquestionable wisdom will provide a simple explanation for us all!...Well, go on...!

The sailor looks around self-consciously, deciding to refrain from possible ridicule. Meanwhile, Sailor#3 walks towards the captain, glancing at Patricius before speaking to his superior--

SAILOR #3 (CONT'D)

Captain, we cannot deny that the prayers of the Christian lad must have been heard...by something..or someone ..

He looks up at the starry sky as if to search for an otherworldly presence. Sailor#2 stares into the heavens.

Before long, all three are focused on the celestial space above.

The pessimist sailor#4 sneers.

SAILOR #4

Humpf!...

SAILOR #2

(looking upwards)

Indeed, we must give thanks to this God, whomever he might be.

EXT. CAMPSITE -- CONTINUOUS

Everyone is asleep. The campfire has diminished but still CRACKLES.

Patricius sleeps a short distance away from the others. His eyes open suddenly with a frightful stare.

His body shakes, his hands tremble as he begins to GASP and HYPERVENTILATE. It almost appears an invisible force binds him.

The sun's rays appear on the horizon as he trembles in discomfiting agony.

PATRICIUS

(shouting)

Father in Heaven! Father in Heaven!

Two sailors rush to his assistance. Sailor#2 places a hand on Patricius' shoulder.

SAILOR #2

Hey!..Hey there boy! You alright?
What happened? A nightmare?

The young lad appears startled yet coherent. He looks up at the confused sailors.

PATRICIUS

I felt the weight of the enemy on my
spirit! My soul cried out..

The two men look at each other as Patricius turns to look at
the sunrise.

PATRICIUS (CONT'D)

Once again...the Lords' mercy has
not failed me.

EXT. COUNTRY VILLA -- DAY

Conchessa stands at the doorway, her head resting on the
doorframe. She stares at a HANDMAID who slowly feeds Patricius'
favorite horse.

Conchessas' face shows a sense of loss. The handmaid suddenly
pauses as she spots something in the distance.

HANDMAID

(pointing)

My lady!...look over there!

She looks in the same direction. The sad mothers' eyes open
wide in disbelief.

Patricius runs towards her, his arms waving vigorously.

CONCHESSA

(almost whispering)

Patricius..?

The young man's clothing appears tattered. His energetic run
punctuates his long-awaited return.

PATRICIUS

Mother!..Mother!

His mother's pace begins to speed up to a steady run. Her
arms are open for embrace.

CONCHESSA

Patricius!

They meet, embracing fervently. Tears well up in
Conchessas' eyes.

CONCHESSA (CONT'D)

Oh dear God..I cannot believe it!

Patricius becomes teary-eyed.

CONCHESSA (CONT'D)

Oh my dear boy...We did not know
what to think! I was so scared.. but

(MORE)

CONCHESSA (CONT'D)

you are here..you are back, alive
and well !Oh thank God!

They discontinue their embrace.Patricius holds both of his
mothers' hands.

PATRICIUS

(smiling)

It's all over ,mother.It's all over.I
went through hopeless misery, at
first.Did not know what to think.But
,in the midst of it all, God began
to shine His light, mother.Even the
chains of captivity could not keep
me from returning home.

She hugs him again.

CONCHESSA

Ohh..dear boy..

They proceed towards the villa.

CONCHESSA (CONT'D)

Come on..your father is soon to be
overjoyed!

The walk with arms around each other.She throws her head
back in joyful laughter.

INT. VILLA -- NIGHT

Calpurnius, Conchessa, and Patricius sit at a candlelit
table.They are jubilant in their mealtime conversation.

PATRICIUS

...so that is how I made my escape.The
dreams.The inspiration...the
opportunity.And..of course, I knew
that both of you would be staying at
the villa this time of year.Father..it
truly was nothing less than a miracle.

CALPURNIUS

Ohh..my dear son.You have certainly
provided a miracle for your mother
and I on this very day.

Everyone smiles at each other as Calpurnius pats his son on
the head.

PATRICIUS

Oh, by the way, how is that favorite
horse of mine?I neglected to greet
him out there today.

CONCHESSA

I am certain that he missed you terribly. But you need not worry. I can assure you that he was watched over with the best of care in your absence. A bit fatter, perhaps..

PATRICIUS

(interrupts)

Ahh..it appears he needs me to exercise those legs to keep his stomach smaller.

His parents LAUGH.

CONCHESSA

There will surely be plenty of time for that..but right now, I know how weary you must be..

She stands to clear the table.

CONCHESSA (CONT'D)

Why not get yourself some rest now and you can tell us more in the morning.

Patricius rubs his face.

PATRICIUS

(sighs)

A lad cannot quarrel with the wisdom of his mothers' best intention.

He stands up.

PATRICIUS (CONT'D)

Indeed..if you both will excuse me now I believe I should retire to my room and bid farewell to the day.

He proceeds to hug his mother first.

PATRICIUS (CONT'D)

So good to be home.

CONCHESSA

This is the best day your father and I could have imagined.

He hugs Calpurnius.

CALPURNIUS

Welcome home, my son.

EXT. HILLSIDE -- DAY

Patricius struts down a low-angle hillside near the villa. His hair blows across his face by windy gusts.

He sits on the grass, eyes focused on the coastline in the distance.

The wind WHISTLES through the air. He gazes at the ground, spotting several shamrocks protruding from the soil.

He picks one up, stares at it, looks back at the coastline.

It reminds him of the land of the Irish. Thoughts traverse his mind as he stares at the coast.

INT. VILLA -- CONTINUOUS

Three cups sit on a table. Conchessa POURS water in a cup. Patricius sits in the near distance.

CONCHESSA

Your cousins will be so delighted to see you alive and well again..

Pours another cup.

CONCHESSA (CONT'D)

Of course , just about everyone else has expressed their deep concern for you as well-- including that pretty damsel you so admired.

A cup is handed to the lad , as he exhibits a slight smile.

PATRICIUS

(softly)

Hmm..God bless them. I have missed them all.

He takes a sip.

PATRICIUS (CONT'D)

Mother, while in Ireland, I heard rumors of continued struggles throughout the empire. Of disorder, invasions..

Calpurnius silently emerges , interrupting the conversation.

CALPURNIUS (O.S.)

The world you once knew..

He walks towards the table.

CALPURNIUS

..seems to be in a constant state of change these days.

Patricius looks immensely curious.

CALPURNIUS (CONT'D)

Ever since the Gothic warriors crossed into the Roman territories, the empirical landscape has been anything but stable.

He stops to retrieve a cup of water.

CALPURNIUS (CONT'D)

Between the barbaric unrest, civil strife, and failure on the battlefield, we can only pray for a more promising time ahead, if that is indeed possible....

He glances out the window.

CALPURNIUS (CONT'D)

Of course, even our beloved homeland has felt the consequences of foreign turmoil.

CONCHESSA

(clearing the table)

Well.. let us just remain grateful for what we still have. Tomorrow is yet another day to behold...

She looks at Patricius.

CONCHESSA (CONT'D)

Would you not agree, dear?

It's obvious that Patricius contemplates his parents' words seriously. He stands up, walks towards the open door.

PATRICIUS

(looking outside)

Yes..yes..I cannot help but feel as though I have been offered a second chance. Now I am truly beginning to cherish what I was once blind to before.

EXT. COUNTRYSIDE - CONTINUOUS

MONTAGE - PATRICIUS' TYPICAL ACTIVITIES

-- He gallops across the field on his cherished horse.

-- He swims in the nearby creek.

-- He helps his father accomplish a woodcarving project.

-- He pets a young goat, while smiling in amusement.

INT. VILLA -- NIGHT

Patricius sleeps rather soundly in his corner.

DREAM - VOICE OF THE IRISH

Patricius views a mysterious apparition stepping off of a boat at the shoreline.

The man carries scroll-like letters as he walks towards Patricius.

A scroll is handed to Patricius, who curiously proceeds to open it and read the inscription out loud.

INSERT - THE SCROLL

PATRICIUS

"The voice of the Irish".

He is interrupted by harmonic voices of Irish people requesting his presence. He looks up to listen. The mysterious man is no longer in sight.

IRISH VOICES (V.O.)

"We beg you ,holy lad..come here and walk among us."

Patricius looks at the horizon towards Ireland. The ethereal summoning continues.

IRISH VOICES (V.O.) (CONT'D)

"We beseech you..to dwell among us once again."

His face grows more and more sympathetic with their pleas.

IRISH VOICES (V.O.) (CONT'D)

" Return to us..return and walk among us once again.Fulfill you destiny".

INT. VILLA -- NIGHT

Patricius awakes with a shudder. A concerned expression is written all over his face.

He lies back down ,staring at the ceiling in utter astonishment.

INT. VILLA -- DAY

Patricius stands near the window ,observing the lush landscape. Conchessa ,standing behind him, folds clothing

garments in a meticulous manner. Calpurnius then enters the same room.

CONCHESSA

Soon it will be time to return to the village.

She looks over at Patricius.

CONCHESSA (CONT'D)

Just imagine.. you will be able to rekindle your old life with all your friends..the way things used to be.It is going to be wonderful.

His eyes remained focused at the scenery outside the window.

PATRICIUS

I foresee great changes in store.Changes that one would never have imagined.

CALPURNIUS

(quizzically)
Changes?

PATRICIUS

Yes.

CALPURNIUS

And exactly what type of change are you anticipating?

PATRICIUS

(reluctantly)
I um...I really cannot fully explain it.You two would probably not understand it.

CALPURNIUS

Well..you have certainly provoked our curiosity.What is it Patricius?

The lad turns to face his parents.Conchessa grabs a cup of water to drink.

PATRICIUS

I have had several dreams over the last few nights..uh.. dreams of revelation! I have been spoken to by His Spirit! I sense the burden on my soul.

Conchessa looks at Calpurnius.

PATRICIUS (CONT'D)

Ahh..you see..I knew that attempting to explain..

He looks downward, shaking his head before looking out the window again.

PATRICIUS (CONT'D)

I witnessed..the desperate souls of the Irish!It was just as real as my speaking to you right now!I have been commissioned for a very special assignment..

CALPURNIUS

(slight interruption)

Now..now..Patricius..

PATRICIUS

(interrupts)

You do not understand.It is a task that know that I must fulfill.I must return , for the Lord has instructed me to walk among them.

His parents are baffled.

PATRICIUS (CONT'D)

I have decided.I am returning to Ireland.

The cup of water falls from Conchessas' hand ,breaking into innumerable pieces.

CONCHESSA

(flabbergasted)

What ?...Have you lost your mind?..I do not believe what I am hearing!!

CALPURNIUS

(annoyed)

Of all the madness!...Patricius!

PATRICIUS

No..no..wait..

CALPURNIUS

Young man..you know better than to imagine such absurdity!

CONCHESSA

After nearly losing you to ruffians in a land of bondage and suffering...how could you dare think of such ?!!

PATRICIUS

You do not understand..

CALPURNIUS

Understand what?..By Gods' grace ,
you were fortunate enough to emerge
alive ,Patricius.What would possess
you to dream of this preposterous
notion ?

PATRICIUS

(desperate)

Father ,you never questioned your
vocation..what you felt God was
calling you to do..!

CALPURNIUS

(interrupting)

I never overstepped my reasoning to
place myself in harms' way, either!

PATRICIUS

But it is not..

CONCHESSA

(interrupts)

That is enough Patricius!

She wipes her hands on a cloth.

CONCHESSA (CONT'D)

Now..you are a very sensible young
man.Dreams can be..well..just
dreams!Allow it to remain as
such.There are a multitude of ways
to use your abilities for God's
Kingdom.It will all reveal itself at
the proper time!

He shakes his head in a frustrated sigh as he exits the room.

CONCHESSA (CONT'D)

Patricius?

No response.

Calpurnius and Conchessa look at each other, wondering if
their words were effectual.

EXT. HILLSIDE -- DAY

Patricius walks through wind-blown grass with a bag over his
shoulder.

He pauses to look back. His parents' villa is visible from a considerable distance.

After staring at it briefly, he turns away to continue his personal journey.

NARRATOR (V.O.)

... And so , with his newfound belief
and doubtless spirit...

Looking towards the horizon, he ventures onward through the lush countryside.

NARRATOR (V.O.) (CONT'D)

... Patricius set off upon his quest
for the life that he felt the Lord
had destined him for.

EXT. RURAL CHURCH -- DAY

Patricius stands at the door of the structure, staring at the cross on top.

SERIES OF SHOTS - PATRICIUS' VOCATIONAL QUEST

A) Patricius converses with a clergyman.

NARRATOR (V.O.)

Searching for guidance and wisdom
throughout this devout journey would
be no ordinary task ...

B) He shares his beliefs with a group of village folks.

NARRATOR (V.O.) (CONT'D)

... but the burden upon his soul was
indeed forthcoming in his manner ...

C) He studies Biblical scriptures ,while seated under a tree.

NARRATOR (V.O.) (CONT'D)

... in his devotion ...

D) He provides charitable coins to indigent village beggars.

NARRATOR (V.O.) (CONT'D)

... and spirit of servitude towards
others.

E) He places a prayerful hand on the head of a sick elderly man, petitioning for Divine healing.

NARRATOR (V.O.) (CONT'D)

Indeed , his willingness to listen
and seek the Kingdom of God would
remain an unwavering ambition ...

F) A clergyman anoints Patricius' head with oil.

NARRATOR (V.O.) (CONT'D)
 ... that ,although challenged many
 times, would ultimately define his
 faith in His Creator.

INT. CHURCH -- DAY

SUPER: "FIFTEEN YEARS LATER"

Patricius, now a distinguished looking clergyman, late 30's,
 sits in a church. He writes a letter to his parents.

PATRICIUS (V.O.)
 Dearest mother and father...Although
 I have expressed my apologies for
 leaving you from time to time, I can
 only hope that you would find
 tranquility, knowing that Gods' spirit
 continues to work abundantly in my
 wellbeing. I was still a deacon last
 time I wrote, but have now been
 recently ordained to the priesthood. I
 feel prepared to undertake whatever
 challenges have been set before me. It
 is with great joy that I bring you
 these favorable tidings....your son
 Patricius.

He looks at a crucifix attached to the church wall.

EXT. LOCAL BISHOP'S HOME -- DAY

Patricius arrives at the local bishop's home, by way of a
 well-trodden path. The BISHOP, a rather rotund man, late 50s,
 stands in front of his abode.

He nods a welcoming gesture as the younger priest approaches.

PATRICIUS
 Greetings..in the Name of our Lord.

BISHOP
 Ahh..Patricius..so pleased that you
 could stop by at your convenience.

PATRICIUS
 One of the deacons mentioned that
 you were requesting my presence.

BISHOP
 Ahh..yes indeed.

The priest appears bewildered.

PATRICIUS

Is there something wrong?

BISHOP

(grins)

Why..on the contrary!

They stroll down the path.

BISHOP (CONT'D)

The purpose behind our meeting is for my discussion of possible choices in the furtherance of your religious training.I know...before you say anything, perhaps you feel compelled to remain close to your roots here in Britain, and I shall never debate your preference.I simply wanted to expound upon various ideas..should you care to lend your ear to them.

PATRICIUS

Since you have mentioned it..admittedly..my curiosity beckons me.I am quite interested in your suggestions.Please, by all means..

BISHOP

Now, as we both know, Bishop Germanus of Auxerre was recently here in Britain.

PATRICIUS

Ah..undertaking a formidable task, to say the least.Traveling all the way from Gaul to help refute the Pelagian heresy.I have only the deepest of admiration for the bishop.

BISHOP

Indeed, he has confronted doctrinal challenges that most others would flee from without hesitation.A remarkable man, by all means.

PATRICIUS

So I have heard..

BISHOP

The point being..that several bishops in Gaul, including Auxerre have expressed interest in your vocational guidance and training.You know that, God willing, you are most welcome to remain in our midst.But, concerning your future, I feel

(MORE)

BISHOP (CONT'D)
obligated to share advice within
your best interest.

They pause from walking.

BISHOP (CONT'D)
Now..Germanus himself has left the
door of invitation open.We here feel
that you are a fitting candidate for
continual study, and have conveyed
that to virtually every parish this
side of Rome.. [pauses].Even the
great monastery at Lerins,for that
matter.

PATRICIUS
(flabbergasted)
Really ?!.er..Bishop..I do not know
what to say!

BISHOP
No necessity for it.

The bishop's smile is calm,but with a celestial sincerity.

BISHOP (CONT'D)
Ultimately Patricius..it is clearly
a matter between you and God.We fully
respect your final decision and, of
course, shall offer prayerful support
regarding your choice.

The bishop observes the sun's position in the sky.

BISHOP (CONT'D)
Oh my..It is getting late in the day
and much remains to be accomplished
before sundown.Must be on my way.Until
we meet again Father Patricius.God
be with you.

PATRICIUS
God be with you as well.

The bishop turns to walk away.

PATRICIUS (CONT'D)
ah..Father..

The bishop turns around.

PATRICIUS (CONT'D)
Thank you kindly.

A considerate smile emerges on the bishop's face, before
turning to resume his walk.

Varieties of colorful flowers surround their midst. A few fruit-bearing plants line the pathway.

GERMANUS (CONT'D)

This may well be a window of opportunity.

PATRICIUS

In what way?

GERMANUS

It is no secret that Ireland holds a..shall we say..unique place in your heart.

PATRICIUS

It has been a source of great inspiration...from the first dream till the moment I felt called to the priesthood. I knew that Ireland clearly remained visible in my future..without a moments' doubt.

GERMANUS

Precisely, because of your heartfelt vocation, you are the most likely candidate to supplement the ministry that Palladius and others nurtured in Ireland.

Patricius halts. He looks at Germanus quizzically.

GERMANUS (CONT'D)

Patricius, As of now, the Holy See has yet to commission a replacement. This could be an answer to a prayer.

Patricius looks out over the river. He smiles.

PATRICIUS

Indeed, Providence is at hand.

INT. CELESTINE'S BEDROOM -- DAY

It's 432 AD. Pope Celestine is near death. His bed is surrounded by upper-ranking CLERGYMEN.

The somber mood is obvious. With a weak voice, and a pale face to match, he issues a decree.

POPE CELESTINE

I need not to explain that my days are numbered. I know that I can rely upon you all to ensure that these pressing matters I mentioned are addressed.

(MORE)

EXT. MONASTERY IN AUXERRE -- DAY

SUPER: "SEVERAL YEARS LATER"

The picturesque river Yonne flows gently in front of the monastery founded by Germanus. Several swans move gracefully across the water.

DOORS OF THE MONASTERY

Patricius emerges from the monastery along with GERMANUS OF AUXERRE. A mid-aged cleric with an enthusiastic flair, matched with a God-fearing spirit.

GERMANUS

...a most unfortunate occasion! I mean..Palladius' ministry to the Irish seemed so promising..so full of hope.Everyone seems quite bewildered,to say the least..

PATRICIUS

I was wondering myself.

GERMANUS

Whether the seeds of discouragement or fear overwhelmed him, is still in question.I know personally, he is a genuine servant of God.His courageous efforts have been a solid testament to that fact.

They both stop walking.Germanus continues his puzzled expression.

GERMANUS (CONT'D)

His sudden retreat to Britain is uncharacteristic of him.This troubles me greatly.As a matter of fact, just about every member of clergy from Pope Celestine down to the local archdeacons have expressed their concern.

PATRICIUS

Palladius...a monument of faith..retreating?Certainly there has to be some explanation somehow..somewhere!!

GERMANUS

I wish there was,Patricius. But unfortunately, we have no clear answers as of yet.

IN THE MONASTERY GARDEN

POPE CELESTINE (CONT'D)

I know that the list is somewhat lengthy, but please make certain that the mission to Ireland be of utmost importance. You already know of the suggestions that have been made to me...

HEAVYSET CARDINAL

(appearing pensive)

Yes..your Holiness.

EXT. IRISH SEA -- DAY

Waves CRASH against the side of the modest vessel, carrying Patricius and his crew to Ireland.

EXT. IRISH COAST -- DAY

The boat is beached with a crude anchor, as Patricius stands on the shore, accompanied by a small entourage of BELIEVERS.

They look around at the vivid green landscape. One CHRISTIAN SAILOR interjects.

CHRISTIAN SAILOR#1

Ahh..such splendor could only have been created by the Hands of the Almighty.

Patricius scans the horizon.

CHRISTIAN SAILOR#2

The land of the Irish...perhaps a land of extremes might be more appropriate. What do you think, Father?

PATRICIUS

Yes...one might say that, for many years, it has been a battlefield of the heart and soul.

He points to a grassy plateau.

PATRICIUS (CONT'D)

Over there..it appears to be suitable for the nights' rest. We must move quickly. Darkness will be upon us soon.

CHRISTIAN SAILOR#1

(motions with hands)

Come along..my friends. We must not tarry!

EXT. CAMPSITE -- NIGHT

Everyone's seated, appearing in a restful state. A sailor and Patricius sit near each other; the bonfire's glow reflecting off their faces. The sailor sips from a container.

CHRISTIAN SAILOR#1

Indeed, God's mercy provided safe passage for our arrival..but, of course, we must be vigilant...it is, after all..full of the the unexpected ..this land.

PATRICIUS

Yes, brother..you know we mean no harm, yet our presence could be interpreted otherwise by some. Yes , we must be of good courage , yet revealing God's patience and love by the same measure. We will be considered unwelcome by many. But, remember..there are those who have anticipated our arrival as well..

CHRISTIAN SAILOR#1

Ahh..there is no doubt!

PATRICIUS

Might you recall that it was the Irish Christians who issued a request to Celestine for a priest , or bishop..if possible...

CHRISTIAN SAILOR#1

(interrupts in a smile)

And you have met that requested demand!!

PATRICIUS

Hm..if I knew no better , I would remain mystified. But..knowing... it is undeniable that I sense being chosen for this purpose. I have spoken to you of this.

CHRISTIAN SAILOR#1

It is truly as if a dream or prophecy is fulfilling itself.

Patricius peers at the night sky.

PATRICIUS

All I know..is that His appointments so often abound in mystery. Myself..I am just an unworthy lad who, somehow knew that he would, one day, return to this land.

EXT. CAMPSITE -- DAY

The campsite is cleared. Crew members carry items of necessity. Patricius slings a bag over his shoulder, as an abrupt interruption follows...

DRUID PRIEST (O.S.)

Whhoa..there!!

The entire crew turns their attention to an elderly bearded DRUID PRIEST.

He stands on an outcropping with a small ENTOURAGE behind him. The mutual tension of a threatening presence fills the air.

DRUID PRIEST

(sternly)

Who are ye?...From whence do you come?

The half-puzzled crew glances at one another, collecting their thoughts.

PATRICIUS

Ahh..greetings..we arrived from across the sea. I am Patricius..and these are my friends. We have traveled here from Gaul..by way of Britain.

DRUID PRIEST

(suspiciously)

Traveled here?...And ,on exactly what account? What purpose do you seek?

A lower-ranking DRUID (mid 50's) whispers to his elder counterpart.

DRUID#1

This may be the forbidden one. The one predicted by the soothsayer in his omens.

PATRICIUS

We come here only on peaceful terms, as God is our witness.

DRUID PRIEST

Ohh..really? And.. excuse my curious nature, but which..God might this be?

PATRICIUS

Why..the God of Abraham, of Isaac, of Moses.. and anyone else willing to accept Him in spirit.

DRUID PRIEST

There are many gods representing all forms of nature..whether it be the trees ,the moon ,the ocean..or what may.But ,I assure you..there is no such god of whom you speak about.By what authority do you believe to make such claims?

PATRICIUS

My friend ,we can only testify to what has been revealed to us in spirit and truth.What we have experienced by God's grace is all we are qualified to share.

DRUID#1

(whispering)

You see..? Such strange words are *proof* of the misfortune that was foretold.

An INDIGENOUS WOMAN,late 30's, average build,runs towards the druidic master from out of nowhere.

INDIGENOUS WOMAN

Most High One..forgive me, but your presence is urgently requested back at the village!I was only told that it was of utmost importance.They are expecting you.

The reluctant Druid dignitary nods.

DRUID PRIEST

Very well....I am on my way.

He glances back at the crew of believers.

DRUID PRIEST (CONT'D)

This is a place of sacred tradition and beliefs.Your strange deity, if you choose to call him as such, is not welcome here.My own suggestion is that you return from wherever you came from.You are destined to encounter more fearsome opposition across this land.You may not be as fortunate on your next meeting...

Patricius ponders.They druidic ensemble turns to walk.

PATRICIUS

Having spent part of my youth here,I am no stranger to the diversity of beliefs amongst the people of this

(MORE)

PATRICIUS (CONT'D)

land. We must continue..moving ahead..showing *by example*, God's love for all people. Just like the apostles of old, we must be innocent as doves, yet wise as serpents. If we meet with disdain, we simply shake the dust off of our feet.

He repositions his shoulder bag.

PATRICIUS (CONT'D)

Let us move along now. We shall sail northward..following the coastline, and, of course..wherever His Spirit may leads us.

EXT. IRISH COAST -- DAY

The boat carries it's missionary crew along the northeastern coastline.

NORTH IRELAND

The crew arrives on shore. They are greeted by IRISH PEASANTS.

NARRATOR (V.O.)

..And so Patricius continued in the footsteps of the Lord's work, which had already begun to take root by the time of his arrival...

EXT. IRISH COUNTRYSIDE -- CONTINUOUS

An outdoor congregation of PEASANTS, SLAVES, WOMEN, and CHILDREN are gathered on the grass. Patricius preaches fervently.

NARRATOR (V.O.)

..sharing the good news of redemption and forgiveness..providing hope for the desolate at heart..and shining a light for those who believed tomorrow would only render darkness.

MONTAGE - ACTS OF FAITH

-- Patricius shares bread with hungry children.

-- He prays over a kneeling ELDERLY WOMAN, placing hands on her head in a healing miracle.

-- He prays in solitude, during a sunrise, as morning birds SING.

EXT. HILLSIDE -- DAY

Patricius exits a modest hut-like structure which serves as a home. A youthful MESSENGER (30's) waits nearby on horseback. The energetic priest walks up to him with a substantially rotund bag of coins.

MESSENGER

I arrived here as soon as I could.

Patricius reaches up and hands the bag over.

PATRICIUS

Ah..I would say your punctual timing far exceeds anything I am capable of.

Messenger can't help but smile.

MESSENGER

..And exactly what is the destination of your request ,Father?

PATRICIUS

Friend , I have a simple delivery request of utmost importance. One might say..ooh..that ,it is a personal debt that is long overdue. Here is what I need for you to do..

INT. IRISH CHIEFTAIN HOME -- DAY

A wiry hand places the coinbag on a table in front of the now-aged chieftain. The typical chime-like NOISE of coins making contact, breaks the silence.

This chieftain, who originally purchased Patricius, now appears elder and gray-haired. His wrinkled face appears puzzled at the sight of the coin sack.

His ENVOY (50's), a slim man with a diplomatic flair, looks at his boss, after letting go of the bag.

IRISH CHIEFTAIN

What is this?

ENVOY

Sir, a certain messenger delivered these coins, claiming that a former slave called "Patricius"..extends his apology for escaping some time ago..

The reticent warlord's face spells utter astonishment.

ENVOY (CONT'D)

Why..there must be enough coins in
here to pay for ten captives!

The chieftain remains speechless.

EXT. HILLSIDE -- DAY

The wind blows through Patricius' hair as he stares in the direction of his former captor's village somewhere over the horizon. He turns and walks away.

EXT. CHURCH CONSTRUCTION SITE -- DAY

SUPER: "SEVERAL YEARS LATER"

The sound of nails HAMMERED into wood echo as Patricius and two CHRISTIANS place finishing touches on a modest church edifice.

The two diligent co-workers are fellow missionaries, AUXILIUS (40's) with boundless energy, and ISERNINIUS (50's) bearded and slightly heavysset.

AUXILIUS

(stops hammering)

Not much longer men... !

Patricius and Iserninius refrain from hammering.

PATRICIUS

Amen..conclusion of the task is nigh.

AUXILIUS

You know..If I knew no better, I would say that it has almost been *amusing* the way doors have been divinely opened for us. I mean..

(turning to Patricius)

AUXILIUS (CONT'D)

you.. narrowly escaping the challenges of the druidic priests or whatever you call them.. receiving an animal barn for a church..not to mention, donating silver coins to chieftains just to allow the spread of God's word! Who would have imagined?

They chuckle in unison.

PATRICIUS

Indeed, you speak the truth, friend! He does not always provide in a predictable manner...but in a *faithful* one, nevertheless.

A fair maiden ,GWENDOLYN(30's),spies on Patricius from behind the trees.Her manner of observation is suggestive of romantic interest.

ISERNINIUS (O.S.)

Considering all of the obstacles that we have grown accustomed to..I must commend the local chieftain..considering some others have resembled..the likeness of tribal warlords....

AUXILIUS (O.S.)

He he..you and your well-defined descriptions!

PATRICIUS (O.S.)

Oh, he never has a short supply of such.!

Gwendolyn's secrecy is compromised by the noisy SNAP of twigs.

AUXILIUS

(looking around)

Huh?..what was...who goes there?

PATRICIUS

Ahh, look!... Gwendolyn!Is that you among the trees?..What a surprise.

GWENDOLYN

(caught off guard)

Ohh..yes. Greetings to you all.I..was just..uh taking an afternoon stroll.Thought that I would pick some flowers.Tis a lovely day for it is it not?

PATRICIUS

Oh by all means!Who would not seize the chance? If we were not engaged in the details of our tasks, we would most likely join a similar pursuit.Anyhow,as you can see, we are almost finished ...The believers in this area will now have a more permanent sanctuary of worship.

She looks over the chapel-hut.

GWENDOLYN

And quite a commendable effort..I might add!

AUXILIUS

Ahh,..miss Gwendolyn..all because of *His* grace and favor.

Patricius nods with approval.

GWENDOLYN

I certainly would not debate your claim. And surely you will have many of the local folk surrounding you with gratitude..if they have not already. Well, forgive my interruption I..

ISERNINIUS

(interrupting)

No..No!!! On the contrary..

PATRICIUS

We are pleased that you stopped by..

GWENDOLYN

I really must be going. But, it pleases me to see that all appears to be going well. I shall be going for now. So long.

PATRICIUS

Good day to you miss Gwendolyn.

AUXILIUS

So long now!

Iserninius waves and smiles.

They continue to apply their trade as Gwendolyn walks on.

AUXILIUS (CONT'D)

The fact that she has yet to find a husband simply mystifies me!

PATRICIUS

It is quite curious-- but then again, everything in its' own purpose..in its' own time.

AUXILIUS

Well ,just look at us three ,for instance!

All three share mild LAUGHTER as they return to their tasking.

INT. LIVING QUARTERS -- NIGHT

Patricius splashes water on his face from a bowl, preparing for evening rest. A dry cloth soothes his tired face. Suddenly a female voice emanates--

GWENDOLYN

I have noticed --

Patricius spins around ,obviously caught off guard.

PATRICIUS

(shocked)

Ahh? --Miss Gwendolyn!!What in
heaven's name??...

Gwendolyns' attire reveals more skin than the cleric is accustomed to.Her pose is suggestive and brash, as she twirls a strand of her auburn hair in her finger.

GWENDOLYN

(coquettish)

I have noticed that your need for
rest is long overdue.

She walks over, gazing at him.

PATRICIUS

(obviously surprised)

I beg your pardon..

She places her hand on his chest.He steps back, avoiding temptation.

PATRICIUS (CONT'D)

Miss Gwendolyn!

She moves closer.

GWENDOLYN

You carry out your work so
diligently...I have the utmost
admiration for you.After such a
strenuous day, surely your bones
must ache from ..

She places both hands on his face.

GWENDOLYN (CONT'D)

..the overbearing tasks.

Patricius grasps her hands by the wrists ,pushing them away.

GWENDOLYN (CONT'D)

Aww..[tsk!..tsk!]Do you find me..
strangely interesting?

PATRICIUS

I would say that the only thing
strange is this meeting between us.

He lets go of her hands.

GWENDOLYN

Ohh..come on now..

PATRICIUS

Now..in reference to this awkward occasion..we shall forget it ,simply as if it never occurred ,correct?I am well aware of the fact that you have the admiration of many eligible young men in the village..

GWENDOLYN

But it is only you who captures my interest..

PATRICIUS

I believe , woman..that this exchange here ,has reached its' conclusion.Now, with all respect, I request you to return from whence you came from.

GWENDOLYN

But really..

PATRICIUS

(interrupting)

You are well aware of my vocation...what vows I have chosen to make to the Lord.Now..*go on about your way!*

GWENDOLYN

But one cannot deny the truth of one's nature!

PATRICIUS

(authoritative)

With all due respect...miss Gwendolyn!!I will not *ask* you to go!!I am *commanding* you to leave this place at once!!

Gwendolyns' sultriness hits a sour note.Her mannerisms show insult from rejection as she steps back.

GWENDOLYN

(spitefully)

Welll!...such a demonstration of arrogance!And just who might you believe yourself to be? Hah..claiming to be superior in judgement or above the reproach of the rest of us common folks? Blahhh...you are apparently unworthy of my efforts anyhow..I shall now leave on my own accord!

She storms out,but turns around..

GWENDOLYN (CONT'D)
I need not waste any effort on your
foolhardy stubbornness.Ha..!!

The cleric appears sidetracked, attempting to refocus his thoughts.

INT. PATRICIUS' SLEEPING QUARTERS -- CONTINUOUS

Patricius crouches, his face sweating as he prays.His countenance spells out the spiritual dilemma.It's obvious that his soul has been under attack.He gazes towards heaven before dropping his head.

AT DAYBREAK

He sleeps peacefully as daybreak arrives.Shadows bounce across his face as a noose-like strap is suddenly placed around his neck.

He awakes ,astonished, GASPING for air as the strap is tightened by unknown hands.

PATRICIUS
(struggling)
Aaagh...Whaa..Ahh!!

Three CELTIC HENCHMEN (late 40's and roguish), struggle with him.Patricius' movements are all but restrained.

CELTIC HENCHMAN #1
(maliciously)
Sooo..!You believe yourself to be a
mystical prophet of sorts..ehh??

PATRICIUS
Hmmmff...!!

CELTIC HENCHMAN #2
Spreading guile and misfortune amongst
the Irish landscape...he has noooo
shame!!

The strap is loosened, giving the poor saint an opportunity for rebuttal.

PATRICIUS
I know not of which you speak!

A fist PUNCHES his side without remorse.

PATRICIUS (CONT'D)
AAAGH...!!

CELTIC HENCHMAN #1

Denying your wretched purpose, are you? Now..now..quite clever ! But you know we have been aware of your insidious plan ever since you set foot on Irish soil!{laughs} Shall we say..*much* explaining is going to be required on your behalf!

PATRICIUS

You appear not to..

A hand covers his mouth.

CELTIC HENCHMAN #1

Let us get him out of here at once!!Hurry! Hurry!

Patricius offers resistance but is subdued as they drag him from the room.

EXT. STOCKADE -- CONTINUOUS

Patricius is shackled to a post, as merciless LASHES from a whip make contact.His face is bruised, his appearance disoriented.

PATRICIUS

(Grimacing in pain)

Ahhhhgh...!!

One of the brutish captors pulls Patricius' head up by the hair.He WINCES.

CELTIC HENCHMAN #2

As you can see..we do not take too kindly to impostors of your kind!

PATRICIUS

I am not an impostor!

CELTIC HENCHMAN #2

(sarcastically evil)

Ahh..yes..and I suppose you are a Druidic priest of the highest order.Pardon the..*misunderstanding!*{laughs}

He lets go of his hair.It offers little reprieve to the cleric.

CELTIC HENCHMAN #3

You have witnessed the way he speaks...! Like a misguided sorcerer, charming the crowds with his venomous words!

CELTIC HENCHMAN #1
 Building places of worship to practice
 a message of deception!

PATRICIUS
 (shaking his head)
 No..you have it all wrong! I only
 come here bearing a testimony of the
 living God. His message..is simply
 one of love, hope, and redemption. I
 did not come here to spread strife
 and confusion amongst the people...

Cruel hands pull his hair back again.

CELTIC HENCHMAN #2
 (interrupting)
Enough... of your sentimental
 rubbish!! Our ears have grown weary
 of it!

He strikes Patricius on the cheek.

INT. AUXILIUS'HUT -- DAY

Auxilius carries a stack of foodbowls to a crude
 table. Iserninius enters the hut through the opening.

ISERNINIUS
 Auxilius!

He turns around abruptly.

AUXILIUS
 Ohhh..greetings..come on in!

ISERNINIUS
 Just wondering of Patricius..have
 you seen him all day?

AUXILIUS
 Hmm..now that you make mention of
 hit..I do not believe that I have.

ISERNINIUS
 (puzzled)
 Hmm...strange.

AUXILIUS
 Probably ministering amongst the
 tribal clan.

Iserninius shakes his head agreeably.

EXT. LANDSCAPE -- DAY

The sun sets on a distant horizon.

EXT. HENCHMANS' QUARTERS -- NIGHT

A battered Patricius is thrown to the ground, courtesy of his ruthless captors. Two henchmen proclaim their warning..

CELTIC HENCHMAN #2

Consider this day one of your more fortunate ones! We have given you sufficient.. shall we say. *counsel*. I do believe that you better keep your wondrous tales to yourself!

CELTIC HENCHMAN #1

Next time.. you may not live to see your regret!

They both exit back.

Patricius slowly gathers his thoughts, GRUNTING as he lifts his dirt-covered face off the ground.

He kneels, surveying his immediate surroundings. He stands sluggishly, beginning his arduous journey back home.

EXT. AUXILIUS' CAMPSITE -- DAY

Auxilius has just finished gathering wood when he notices a human figure struggling through the bushes. He walks towards the stranger, quickly recognizing his friend.

AUXILIUS

Father Patricius!!..

He drops the woodstack, proceeding rapidly to the wounded cleric. Patricius issues a half-dazed glance at the arriving help.

PATRICIUS

(groaning)

Ahh... Auxilius, old friend!

AUXILIUS

Dear brother!.. What in heaven..?

PATRICIUS

I am alright.. truly my friend!

AUXILIUS

Who did this? Who is responsible for this??

PATRICIUS

(almost sarcastic)

Oh.. you need not be concerned. I just encountered a small amount of opposition. You know... quite typical in our vocation these days. Ooouchh!

Auxilius reaches down, placing his friends' arm over his shoulder as they begin to walk upright.

AUXILIUS

Here...that's it...careful though now!!

The two hobble back to the hut.

INT. AUXILIUS' HUT -- DAY

Patricius sits up, bandage wrappings covering his forehead and upper torso. Auxilius hands a cup of water to him.

AUXILIUS

Thank the Lord you were spared from certain death. You had us all concerned!

Patricius sips the water.

PATRICIUS

Certainly not the first occasion, as you know quite well. Was not too long ago when you and I stood before the Druid council, as you recall.

AUXILIUS

Ah..need you remind me?!

PATRICIUS

Brother..this journey, with it's many turns..

AUXILIUS

(interrupts)

..Is still worth pursuing..for the glory of His Kingdom! I know..you have mentioned..and I agree.

Patricius nods affirmatively, as his friend places a hand on his shoulder. Immediately, five VILLAGE CHILDREN appear through the curtain door.

TALL CHILD

Father Patricius!

PATRICIUS

Oh..greetings children! What an unexpected surprise!

TALL CHILD

(concerned)

Father..what happened to you?

All five congregate near the recovering cleric.

PATRICIUS

Ohh...

LITTLE GIRL

We heard that some evil men had taken
you away to hurt you!

He produces a slight smile as he looks across his young
audience.

PATRICIUS

Really..I will be *fine*! They were
not evil men.Let us just say..they
have a different understanding.We
cannot all agree upon everything.We
do not always see things the same
way.

CURLY-HAIRED BOY

But someone may try to hurt you again!

Patricius places his hand on the boys' shoulder.

PATRICIUS

Doing what is right may not always
be safe..but *sometimes*..

The curtain door opens.A CONCERNED MOTHER,slim, early
40's,appears.

CONCERNED MOTHER

Children! Children..run along now!You
know quite well that Father Patricius
needs rest!Ohh..forgive us father!

PATRICIUS

Ohh..no need for worry!The children
were just offering encouraging concern
for an old man,such as me!{smiles}

The children dissipate.

CONCERNED MOTHER

But you are in need of rest!{to
children} You children will have
plenty of time to visit Father
Patricius soon!

Patricius waves cheerfully in his paternal manner.They all
file out the exit door.

CHILDREN

(in unison)
Farewell, Father!..So long father!

CONCERNED MOTHER

(bowing)

Ohh.father..farewell and remember..our
prayers for your healing will not
cease!

PATRICIUS

Bless you sister.

She exits.

AUXILIUS

We must maintain the secrecy of your
location, lest we attract a wider
audience!

They both laugh.

EXT. IRISH POND -- DAY

SUPER: "SIX MONTHS LATER"

An assembly of CHRISTIAN CONVERTS stand amongst each other,
witnessing a baptism.Patricius, as a bishop, ceremonially
baptizes a NEW BELIEVER,slim,mid-30's.With eyes closed, the
young man contemplates his spiritual rebirth.

PATRICIUS

Arise in your new birth, my brother.In
the name of the Father, the Son, and
the Holy Spirit!

A priestly ASSISTANT hands the bishop a vial of anointment
oil.Patricius anoints the new believer with divine gentleness.

The newly-baptized audience hug each other, expressing
congratulatory joy.

ASSISTANT

Indeed, a day of rejoicing,
Father.That's thirty-four souls
baptized into new life!

PATRICIUS

Yes..glory be to God Almighty.His
grace has been imparted on this very
day.

INT. PATRICIUS' HUT -- DAY

He sleeps peacefully.The frantic voice of a VILLAGER
interrupts his tranquil state

VILLAGER (O.S.)

Father Patricius! Father Patricius!

Sleepy eyes open wide with a jolt. He leaps out of the bedding and through the curtain door in a bewildered effort.

VILLAGER
(running desperately)
Oohh..father!The converts!

Patricius detects horror in the young mans' face. The panic-stricken fellow is breathless.

PATRICIUS
What has happened?

EXT. COUNTRY ROAD -- CONTINUOUS

Patricius' chariot is pulled by two horses in full GALLOP.

He speeds down the pathway, face emanating both dismay and anticipation. His expression changes to pale disbelief as the chariot slows.

THE MURDER SCENE

A gruesome scenario greets him. Lifeless corpses of NEW CONVERTS litter the pathway, some strangled, some lacerated.

The presence of blood is in no short measure. It's unbearable. He collapses, weeping hysterically.

PATRICIUS
(sobbing)
No..No!!!..Dear God...nooo!!

He touches the brow of a doomed parishioner. Falling prostrate, Patricius cries in agonizing sorrow.

EXT. HEADQUARTERS OF COROCTICUS -- DAY

The burly, ruthless tyrant COROCTICUS (50's), steps out of his abode. His wiry MESSENGER LAD hands a scroll manuscript to him. Corocticus begins to unfurl it.

MESSENGER LAD
A letter for you..from a
certain..Patricius.

He stops unwrapping the document. Pensively, he hands it back to the messenger with a look of apathy.

COROCTICUS
On the other hand..I am already aware
of its'content.

MATCH CUT:

BISHOP CYPRIAN reads a duplicate of the same letter. He rolls it, glancing at surrounding CHURCH OFFICIALS.

BISHOP CYPRIAN
 God rest their souls..

Everyone is somber.

CHURCH OFFICIAL#1
 Senseless tragedy..yet, in all
 probability, could have been avoided.

CHURCH OFFICIAL#2
 (patronizing tone)
 Patricius..overstepping his boundaries
 again.

CHURCH OFFICIAL#3
 (accusatorial)
 And just how certain is he, that
 Corocticus is responsible for this?!

BISHOP CYPRIAN
 (in a sinister tone)
 Silence! This is not a matter of
 inquiry for Patricius!He has no
 authority to make such allegations.
 We..and we alone shall determine the
 next course of action and decide who
 indeed, is held accountable!

EXT. IRISH LANDSCAPE -- DAY

SUPER: "TWO YEARS LATER"

Patricius gazes at the horizon.Auxilius approaches out of
 the corner of his eye.

AUXILIUS
 I find myself staring at the horizon
 myself.

Patricius continues to stare ahead.

AUXILIUS (CONT'D)
 Hard to imagine all that has
 transpired in the last several
 years..the church inquiry..the
 negotiations..freed converts..but
 Corocticus..

PATRICIUS
 (interrupts)
 Corocticus...will confront appropriate
 justice due to him.Whether it is
 here or by the hand of God in the
 hereafter.

Auxilius places a reassuring hand on Patricius' shoulder.

AUXILIUS

Indeed, we can rest assured of that. You have done all that is possible.

PATRICIUS

I..do not know if I have, Auxilius. It troubles me at times.

AUXILIUS

You were justified in your response to the officials in Briton. They were brazen enough to question your allegations while the martyrdom of innocent converts was at stake! Not to mention..your "*friend*," who divulged things held in confidence..after you trusted him like a brother. Bahhh...!!

Patricius pulls a leaf from the tree.

PATRICIUS

Regardless of the grief caused..

AUXILIUS

I know..I know..you have been exemplary in your forgiveness! Something that most of us would be hard-pressed to nurture as gracefully..

SINEAD (medium-build, 40's) is heard CALLING.

SINEAD (O.S.)

Auxilius!!

He turns, then faces Patricius.

AUXILIUS

Ah..how could I forget? I promised to help miss Sinead stack firewood..how could I be so clumsy?

PATRICIUS

Oh..now, I know that you would not wish to neglect your duties. Go ahead now! She probably wondered whether you would keep your pledge at all!

They chuckle.

AUXILIUS

(smiling)

God be with you, Father!

PATRICIUS

And with you as well.

Patricius contemplates as his trusted friend hurries down the path.

EXT. NEW CHAPEL SITE -- DAY

Patricius, clad in the vestments of a bishop, surveys the rudimentary exterior of a new church structure. From the hilltop, he looks down at a waiting multitude.

EXT. CONSECRATION SERVICE -- CONTINUOUS

Patricius completes the ceremonial anointing on the last of a dozen priests. He looks out at the small congregation.

PATRICIUS

Indeed, brothers and sisters in the Lord, ye all bear testimony on this day of consecration. Remember this as a moment of celebration that reminds us of the continual servitude of Gods' Kingdom.

Everyone begins to disperse.

A CHILD PARISHIONER, no more than six years of age, suddenly emerges from out of the crowd, looking up at Patricius.

CHILD PARISHIONER

Father Patricius, may I become a priest, too?

Everyone LAUGHS in amusement.

PATRICIUS

(smiling)

Ahh..!

He picks up the child.

PATRICIUS (CONT'D)

I am quite certain that that could be arranged some time. And a very dedicated priest you would make, young man!

A villager, BENIGNUS, approaches Patricius. His youthful appearance sports a sense of seriousness.

BENIGNUS

Father Patricius!

PATRICIUS

Benignus!..What a surprise!

BENIGNUS

Father..Its the..

Patricius puts the child down as they begin to withdraw from the crowd.

PATRICIUS

Friend, I would say that you have a face of concern, if I didnt know you any better.

BENIGNUS

The chieftain..from the outer valley.

PATRICIUS

Ahh..why should I-not be curiously amazed!And what is it this time?

BENIGNUS

We continue to receive the decrees of threat against us.Even one of the deacons was attacked two days ago.

PATRICIUS

(lamentably)

Ahh..not again.!

BENIGNUS

At this point, we are uncertain, Father..as to what course of action we must take.Perhaps, it is time we shake off our feet and move to more welcome territory.

PATRICIUS

No need for concern..I will address this matter, rendering it one more opportunity.

Benignus scratches his head, skeptically.

PATRICIUS (CONT'D)

Benignus, you have been a testament of fortitude in Gods' work and I realize that, from time to time, you grow weary , as any of us do.Now, I shall not make any promises about our fellow neighbors, but allow me one more attempt, before we decide otherwise.

BENIGNUS

Hmm..you..if anyone, could find resolve where others failed.

PATRICIUS

Now, getting back to the deacon..how is he? Was he badly hurt?

BENIGNUS

Ahh ,a few bruises and cuts, but nothing he cannot recover from speedily, Thank God.

PATRICIUS

Thank God, indeed.It can..and usually does.. result in worse.You yourself have witnessed that.

BENIGNUS

Unfortunately.

PATRICIUS

But fear not! we will confront this as we usually do.We will proceed with caution, but not by our own authority.

Benignus ponders, looking at the bishop.

BENIGNUS

I knew you could share some light on this matter of concern.

PATRICIUS

Not I...but you know Who *does* in these cases.

They both smile.

EXT. IRISH VALLEY -- DAY

Patricius trots through the grassy meadow ,as his CHARIOTEER summons the horses.The chariot speeds off.Passing under a tree,two primitive-looking CLAN THUGS leap out in a roguish ambush.The bishop is tackled to the ground.A few muffled GRUNTS are exchanged.

INT. CHIEFTAINS'HEADQUARTERS -- CONTINUOUS

Sporting a bloody lip and facial contusions, Patricius is shoved to the floor at the feet of the VALLEY CHIEFTAIN named FINBAR.

FINBAR

Well..well.. an unlikely amusement have we here!

CLAN THUG#1

We spotted this one!He appears to be one of their leaders!One who guides
(MORE)

CLAN THUG#1 (CONT'D)
 those people that have tried to spread
 lies about foreign gods!

Patricius breathes hard, lying on the floor.

FINBAR
 Ahh..and perhaps you might be the so-
 called "Patricius"?

He nods slightly.

FINBAR (CONT'D)
 This valley echoes with stories of
 you and your followers spreading
 these tales of fancy.Trust my word..we
 have no need for your diversions and
 quite frankly, have made convincing
 gestures to your people near the
 valley.

PATRICIUS
 We do not present a threat to you or
 your people.

Patricius receives a painful KICK to the ribs, courtesy of
 thug number two.

PATRICIUS (CONT'D)
 Auuuugh!!

FINBAR
 Oh, I am certain that is what they
 all say!

Patricius writhes in his discomforting state.

FINBAR (CONT'D)
 We had no prior grievances before
 the arrival of your "kind".
 Now..nothing but trouble!Even some
 of my prized slaves managed to be
 liberated by your *fanatical* friends!

PATRICIUS
 How many?

FINBAR
 How many what?

PATRICIUS
 Captives! How many were freed?

FINBAR
 All eight of them!And *someone* is
 going to pay dearly with..

PATRICIUS
 (interrupts)
 ..I will compensate you!

FINBAR
 Whattt??

PATRICIUS
 I will repay you for the freed slaves.

FINBAR
 Repay?

The chieftain and the thugs look at each other in bewilderment.

PATRICIUS
 Yes..I will offer payment to cover all of your losses.

FINBAR
 I do not believe what my ears are hearing? What kind of man would..? You must be madder than I had earlier guessed!!

He LAUGHS as he turns to his henchmen.

FINBAR (CONT'D)
 Can you believe such absurdity?

The two rough faces suggest an optional idea.

CLAN THUG#1
 Sire..perhaps..

The three merge to consort privately in a mixture of chattering WHISPERS. Patricius kneels, grimacing in his state of gradual recovery.

The impromptu meeting adjourns.

FINBAR
 You..get up! I believe perhaps, we can negotiate a possible arrangement.

EXT. VILLAGE -- DAY

Several Christian VILLAGERS move to and fro between several huts. A chariots' horses TROT into view. Everyone eyes a bruised Patricius.

VILLAGE WOMAN
 (awestruck)
 Father Patricius!! Oh dear,...what has happened to you??!

Others rush to his side. Benignus emerges on the scene. He helps the cleric out of the chariot.

CHARIOTEER

I spotted him on the roadside!

BENIGNUS

Oh..I *am* to blame! Father, it is my own fault! It was the chieftains' cruelty..but I am to blame! Forgive me!

PATRICIUS

Do not be foolish. I made this decision. You, my friend, had nothing to do with this matter. Besides, I say to you that, indeed, Gods' *glory* has prevailed once again.

VILLAGE MAN

(puzzled)

By the grace of God! In which manner?? You have been *beaten* !! Why did they decide to release you??

PATRICIUS

The Lord can change even the most stubborn of hearts.

BENIGNUS

(to villager)

Fetch some water! Come on father...let us get you to a place of rest!

A YOUNG VILLAGER fetches water.

PATRICIUS

Ohh..just a few days of soreness.

He grits his teeth.

BENIGNUS

What all happened?

PATRICIUS

As expected, my presence was unwelcome. But, as a measure of bargain, I made the offer of payment..equivalent to the price of fifteen slaves. This is why you see me here now. I could have been held captive for weeks. But, quite apparently, Gods' miraculous nature changed those hearts of stone!

VILLAGE MAN

My..oh my, otherwise I would not believe it!

PATRICIUS

Surprising, perhaps.Yet then again, we have seen even stranger things.

BENIGNUS

You never fail to leave us speechless!You have been held captive no fewer than what..eight or nine times?Somehow..everytime..a miraculous release!

PATRICIUS

Their own habitual greed was the instrument God used to secure my release.You and I have witnessed that before..

BENIGNUS

Quite certain, indeed.Anyhow, enough chatter!We need to get you rested and tend to those bruises!

He places the clerics' arm over his shoulder as they hobble to the nearest hut.

PATRICIUS

(grimacing)

Thank you, brother.

INT. MONASTERY IN BRITAIN -- DAY

SUPER: "THREE MONTHS LATER"

A BRITISH BISHOP and two BRITISH PRIESTS stand in the courtyard.The same skeptical nature is shared by all three.

BRITISH PRIEST#1

You are not going to believe this!Our "beloved" Patricius was held captive *once again* by some chieftain or warlord, yet managed to escape!

BRITISH BISHOP

Whattt??

BRITISH PRIEST#2

It was confirmed by our sources on the coast.They mentioned that he...

BRITISH BISHOP

(interrupts)

Ohh..spare me the details! I should have known.

Shaking his head, he walks in a circular pattern.

BRITISH BISHOP (CONT'D)

This is absurd! Does he not *know* how to restrain his impulsive nature? It always seems to involve some ludicrous folly! Why can he not comport himself like any other bishop of the day?? He is becoming an embarrassing spectacle!!

BRITISH PRIEST#1

We shall keep you informed on any recent developments.

BRITISH BISHOP

Perhaps, it is just as well, that I not hear them!!

The two priests look at each other.

BRITISH PRIEST#1

Will there be anything else, then?

BRITISH BISHOP

No, I do believe that my ears have had the distinction of hearing enough "good tidings" for one day!

The two make a slight bow of reverence before departing.

BRITISH PRIEST#1

Farewell.

INT. SLEEPING QUARTERS -- DAY

Patrius rubs his face as his sleepy eyes catch a glimpse of donated ornaments scattered at his feet. He curiously surveys, appearing to discern who the donor was.

EXT. VILLAGE MANS' HUT -- DAY

The village man exits the hut, finding the same items at the bishops' feet. His mystified response says it all. He spots the bishop heading down a trail.

VILLAGE MAN

Father..!

He picks up two of the items, as if to question the "returned goods". Patricius stops in his tracks, sporting a humble smile.

PATRICIUS

My dear friend, your gesture has left me at a loss of words, but you know I cannot accept these gifts.

VILLAGE MAN

But, why not, Father?

PATRICIUS

You might of heard from some of your fellow villagers.

They meet each other halfway.

VILLAGE MAN

Yes, I have heard, but..

PATRICIUS

You and a number of converts have been so genuinely kind to offer me gifts. But, I must tell you, it is not I who is worthy of this accolade. You are a good man..

VILLAGE MAN

(interrupts)

Oh, but Father Patricius..

PATRICIUS

The encouragement that you and your fellow brethren have yielded to me is a gift I could never repay. Just wishing the same for all of you.

The man appears sentimental.

PATRICIUS (CONT'D)

As for myself..I must continue my own journey. But, once again..my deepest gratitude. Bless you and those around you. Farewell, brother.

He continues down the trail, as the villager remains dumbfounded.

VILLAGE MAN

And blessings to you, Father!

ON THE TRAIL

Patricius appears pensive, but with a sense of unease. His face produces a slight frown--

PATRICIUS (V.O.)

"I cannot conceal my unease..the pressing uncertainty of my devotion. Am I doing all that I can possibly do? I must remain honest with my Creator. I cannot fulfill all the tasks required of me. My heart grows increasingly heavier by the day."

He wipes his brow.

PATRICIUS (V.O.) (CONT'D)

These good people see me as one who is capable..when indeed, I do not have the courage to tell them that I cannot always provide answers, regarding the tragedies and trials of life when all we hear is silence from above.Lately, I have questioned many of my experiences.

EXT. EAGLE MOUNTAIN -- DAY

Patricius arrives at the base of the mountain which has served as a spiritual testing ground as well as a place of retreat.He stares at the rugged, yet beautiful geography, before initiating his ascent.

SERIES OF SHOTS - THE MOUNTAIN CLIMB

- A) He scales a moderate incline with the assistance of his cane.
- B) Thunderclaps ECHO as he appears challenged in his thoughts.
- C) He struggles to continue as weariness becomes noticeable.
- D) He stumbles to the ground, grimacing with unease.
- E) The tired man locates one of the cleft-like caves in the mountainous rock

INT. CAVE -- CONTINUOUS

He collapses on the mossy cave floor, out of breath.He winces before closing his eyes, drifting off to sleep.Night rolls in.

INT. CAVE -- NIGHT

He awakens, shivering from the frigid air and tries bundling up with limited garb.

DAYBREAK OUTSIDE THE CAVE

Nominal evidence of daylight peers through the overcast sky.He lies, trembling, sunlit and half-awake.

BACK AT THE VILLAGE

The village man feeds several hogs, GRUNTING in unison.Benignus and the man eye each other.The man WAVES.

VILLAGE MAN

Greetings, Benignus..on this rather splendid day!

BENIGNUS

Greetings to you! I was just out searching. Hmm..quite a curiosity. Would you perchance know the whereabouts of the good bishop?

VILLAGE MAN

Hmm..not in the last 2 days or so. I last saw him venturing down that trail. It seems..if I recall correctly, that he mentioned not where he was going.

BENIGNUS

He..he..I could imagine the possibilities, knowing Patricius!

VILLAGE MAN

On one of his ministry excursions, perhaps!

BENIGNUS

Either that or retreating to one of the mountains.

VILLAGE MAN

Mountain? Which mountains?

BENIGNUS

The ones just west of us, overlooking the sea. He has been known to seek refuge there. Perhaps a cleansing of the soul or an act of contrition. It is anyones' guess!

ON THE MOUNTAIN

Patricius sits in prayerful meditation, arms extended towards the heavens. With eyes shut, he utters unintelligible low-volume prayers. Word volume increases.

PATRICIUS

..But I know not how to confront this, Lord !!

Looking up, an obvious divine communication, in spite of silence.

PATRICIUS (CONT'D)

I have shown myself to be inept!! A man that is like a poorly armored soldier..unequipped for the battlefield! Or a sailor who is unsure of the winds' direction..

He grows exasperated.

PATRICIUS (CONT'D)

..Failing the people on so many occasions!!Struggling between a faithless heart and the clarity of your will!

The frustration is prominent in his voice, as he awaits a celestial reply.

PATRICIUS (CONT'D)

You abide in the heavenly realm!!How could you relate to the heart of humanity?!!How could you possibly experience what I feel? What I wrestle with?!!

EXT. MOUNTAINSIDE -- NIGHT

Cloudy mist forms as moonlight covers the mountainside.

EXT. DRUID ENCAMPMENT -- NIGHT

Four bearded DRUIDS sit amongst a campfire.They gaze at the sky.One of them closes his eyes in a trance-like state while the others look on.

THIN DRUID

What is it??

SHORT DRUID

Shhh !!!..

Remaining silent, the meditating druid extends his arms out.

SHORT DRUID (CONT'D)

He has been made aware..something..or someone..

Unintelligible sounds emanate from the peculiar prophet.

DRUID PROPHET

Teev bla galendev chuduma abuxu..!!
Teev bla galendev chuduma abuxu..!!

His eyes open with a mystical stare.

DRUID PROPHET (CONT'D)

Revelation has been made to us from the spirit world.He who intrudes upon our land..is upon the mountain!

BURLY DRUID

What??

THIN DRUID

Of which intruder do you speak of?

SHORT DRUID

He speaks of the one called *Patricius*
!!

THIN DRUID

You mean he who..

SHORT DRUID

(interrupting)

..Has cast his spell of abomination
over many.And continues to fulfill
that duty.We must put an end to it!

THIN DRUID

What else has been revealed to you,
brother??

DRUID PROPHET

I have seen great weakness in his
spirit.A sense of anguish.He shows
vulnerability of the soul!Now..is
the opportune time, my brothers!The
precise occasion to focus our
strength!

SHORT DRUID

(smiles maliciously)

The time..for us to exploit his moment
of weakness!!

About two dozen other DRUIDS emerge from their tents.They
meet up with the other four.

DRUID ELDER

The vision has been revealed to us
as well.We must act at once!!

ON THE MOUNTAIN

Patricius appears disheveled.In aggravation, he tosses his
cane against the cave wall.He beats his fists against the
cave floor.

PATRICIUS

I have grown so weary of pursuing a
course which finds its' way to
disappointment!Find he who is
willing..willing to fulfill his role
without grumbling!!Every time I strive
towards the triumphant..the
worthiness, it eludes my grasp!

He sulks.

PATRICIUS (CONT'D)

I could have made another choice! I could have been bound in matrimony to a fair maiden..perhaps, even a family of my own would not have been impossible! But instead. At times I feel cursed!! Why do I feel like a prisoner of fate! Or is it just the stubbornness of man within myself! You are the source of Wisdom, are ye not?

He rubs his weary face with both hands.

PATRICIUS (CONT'D)

All these prayers...all the prayers..what must I..

He slumps on the cave floor in a near-fetal position.

EXT. DRUID ENCAMPMENT -- CONTINUOUS

An assembly of druids stand, arms raised. The Druid elder leads the "procession".

DRUID ELDER

He who has bestowed this wretched scourge upon us is upon the mountaintop once again. The one called Patricius has succumbed to his inner weakness. We must seize this moment, for the hour is at hand. It is time to arrange for his demise! Unite your strength, brothers of spirit! Teev bla galendev chuduma ubuxu.. Teev bla galendev chuduma ubuxu!!!

The rest follow suit in unison, CHANTING in a mesmerizing fashion.

BACK IN THE CAVE

A test of character in progress. Patricius stammers and GROANS, dirt-covered fists, clinched and shaking. Spiritual depletion seems imminent.

EXT. DRUID ENCAMPMENT -- CONTINUOUS

A mantra of wizardry ensues. The elder CHANTS with increasing resolve.

The rumble of THUNDER is overheard. Sheet lightning FLASHES.

IN THE CAVE

The exhausted servant of God trembles in agonizing conflict. As the chorus of thunder and lightning ECHO around him, his

weak hand manages to inscribe the symbol of the cross in the dirt, using the cane.

With a look of mute despondency, he gazes towards heaven.

PATRICIUS

Hallowed be Thy Name, oh Lord!

EXT. DRUID ENCAMPMENT -- CONTINUOUS

A prominent lightning bolt of divine magnitude emerges from the clouds, demolishing the druid bonfire with a deafening CRASH.

Some participants SHRIEK, while others run for cover. Momentary chaos in the works.

IN THE CAVE

Patricius, in an expended state, falls prostrate to the floor with closed eyes.

EXT. VILLAGE AREA -- DAY

The village woman, Benignus, and several VILLAGE FOLKS congregate near the trailside.

VILLAGE WOMAN

This is much too unusual! I mean, yes, the bishop may not tell us on every occasion, but he has been gone quite some time now..

BENIGNUS

I know -- you all have reason for concern. I am beginning to wonder myself. I say we remain vigilant for a few more days. If nothing changes, I will organize a search.

VILLAGE WOMAN

Ohh -- times like these that I fear for the worst!

VILLAGE YOUTH

Someone could have captured him again!

BENIGNUS

Fear not.. I am certain that there is a reasonable explanation for this. We shall see him soon. Very soon.

EXT. CALPURNIUS' BURIAL SITE -- DAY

Conchessa sits near Calpurnius' recently dug grave as FATHER DARIUS arrives at her side.

The priest attempts to provide solace to the now-aged Conchessa.

FATHER DARIUS

Words are of little value at this time but at least we know brother Calpurnius now has eternal peace through the Heavenly Father.

CONCHESSA

(wiping tears)

Yes-- I find comfort in that. Thank you for your thoughtfulness Father. My only regret is that Patricius could not be here to bid final farewell to his father. {sniffling}

Father Darius places a hand on her shoulder.

FATHER DARIUS

Yes, If only there were a way that we could have informed him earlier. So unfortunate.

CONCHESSA

The letter I sent will bring both sorrow as well as comfort. In spite of the news of his father, I mentioned how we both forgave him for his decision to return to Ireland, and actually prayed for his safety and the ministry.

FATHER DARIUS

Hm..be not dismayed. I am certain that your letter will be well-received.

Conchessa looks towards Ireland.

CONCHESSA

It may be the Lords' purpose for him to remain in Ireland for the rest of his life. But, I am not a bitter woman. Patricius and his God know where he was supposed to be and I-- shall not debate this certainty. He will always remain in my heart as a son..one who showed his obedience to the Lord...

She wipes her tears.

CONCHESSA (CONT'D)

Calpurnius and I failed to understand this at first, but, I know that

(MORE)

CONCHESSA (CONT'D)

Patricius did what was right..or he would not of left us as he did.

EXT. IRISH LANDSCAPE -- DAY

Benignus and two SHEPHERDS (mid 30's) return to the village after an arduous search mission. Patricius is nowhere to be found.

SHEPHERD#1

We must have have covered the entire western valley!

BENIGNUS

I do not know..It mystifies me. Even if Father Patricius had climbed one of the mountains, he would have returned by now.

SHEPHERD#2

I have searched for many lost goats on these hills -- found most of them, but today, however..hah!

SHEPHERD#1

We will just have to wait till tomorrow. Nightfall shall be upon us soon.

BENIGNUS

We will rest for the night.. and pray for a better tomorrow.

The village woman dashes towards them out of nowhere.

VILLAGE WOMAN

Benignus!

The worried face spells it all.

VILLAGE WOMAN (CONT'D)

Ohh! What are we to do now? I do not know what to think! he could have fallen of a ledge, or perhaps attacked..

BENIGNUS

(interrupts)

Do not be concerned, dear woman..

Places a hand on her shoulder.

BENIGNUS (CONT'D)

At dawn, we shall set out again. These two men have been shepherds in this

(MORE)

BENIGNUS (CONT'D)
 region and are familiar with just
 about every trail, meadow, or hill.

He looks to the horizon.

BENIGNUS (CONT'D)
 Where are you, my friend?

EXT. GRASSY FLATLAND -- DAY

An ARCHER, trim, outdoorsy type in his 30s', releases arrows from his bow with a SNAP. All three arrows contact the makeshift target.

He walks over, removing the projectiles from their intended quarry. Inspects the sharpness of an arrowhead.

PATRICIUS
 Your practice has redeemed itself.

The archer is spooked, darting around.

ARCHER
 Father Patricius! Why -- Where have you been? You are alive! Thank God! We have had folks from three different villages searching for you!

PATRICIUS
 Oh..one might say that I have had one of those face-to-face encounters with the Almighty, but no need for concern. I am in considerably good spirits and well-being, considering all.

ARCHER
 To see you alive and speaking...haa!

PATRICIUS
 I know that you and everyone else must be curious..

He places a hand on the archers' shoulder as they walk away.

PATRICIUS (CONT'D)
 I will tell you about all that has transpired.

INT. HUT -- NIGHT

Benignus and the bishop chat in the candlelight.

BENIGNUS

Of course, at first, we all shared concern since four or five days and nights had passed. In spite of it all, I knew that somehow, there was a greater meaning in your disappearance. And you clearly demonstrated that to us.

Benignus blows out one of the two candles.

BENIGNUS (CONT'D)

Alas..I know you must be weary and I -- for that matter, need to stop talking.

PATRICIUS

As I hinted earlier, the struggle of doubt that always tempts the heart was a battleground I needed to confront, but only as an equipped soldier. There was a need for me to confront this with the Lord. Not the first time for me though, as you can attest to.

BENIGNUS

(sarcastically)

Ahh..you need not say more. But you do possess a gift of resilience.

(chuckles)

Hmm..let me guess -- tomorrow has some majestic plan on the horizon!

PATRICIUS

Actually..something of the sort.

BENIGNUS

(overlapping)

Ha! I knew it! You certainly are back to your old self! Without a doubt.

Patricius unfolds his sleeping mat. He sighs.

PATRICIUS

You know, Benignus, that our work is never a finished task..but there is never a lack of joy in the challenge. Tomorrow I shall travel to meet with the craftsmen who are about to complete the last of the eight new chapels up north. From there, the baptism and consecration ceremonies as well as everything else. Oh, and I must meet with Daire the chieftain.

BENIGNUS

Who? Oh! The chieftain..I remember -- whos' family you baptized! Not to mention, half the village as well.

PATRICIUS

I must see for myself how the community of believers there are adjusting. It has been several years now.

BENIGNUS

So we may not see you for sometime?

PATRICIUS

Whatever He wills. I may remain for sometime in the north, yet must tend to matters in the other regions, too.

He sits on the mat.

BENIGNUS

(smiling)

Ah, at least will shall have a general idea as to your whereabouts this time!

PATRICIUS

With so much territory, so many tasks to be carried out..I must approach it..hmm like a man receiving manna from heaven --each day a separate miracle! Like today.

BENIGNUS

Ah..a miracle indeed. And another small miracle is that I am shutting my mouth and preparing to retire after an eventful day. A most pleasant evening to you..

He stands.

BENIGNUS (CONT'D)

I shall most likely see you before you leave.

PATRICIUS

Farewell, and may tomorrow offer a miracle of its' own.

The young fellow smiles and waves, exiting quickly.

The philosophical cleric looks at the cross-emblem on his crosier, before blowing out the candle.

EXT. IRISH ROAD -- DAY

Patricius' charioteer WHIPS the two stallions in full GALLOP, as the bishop is transported swiftly across rural pathways.

INT. BRITISH RECTORY -- DAY

The bishop in Britain overlooks a garden from his rectory window. The priest stands near, while his superior admires the flowers.

BRITISH BISHOP

The flowers..such beauty amongst the rubble.

BRITISH PRIEST#1

Uhh..I beg your pardon..uh ..rubble?

BRITISH BISHOP

Yes -- the rubble of an empire in decline. We see it before our eyes! It is only a matter of time, of course. The so-called "great" empire, in all her splendor, being challenged on every frontier..

He shakes his head.

BRITISH BISHOP (CONT'D)

If it is not the Visigoths, it is the Scythians or Vandals carving out their like-minded causes. Who knows what is next ?

The priest wrings his hands uncomfortably.

BRITISH PRIEST#1

Indeed! You make a..valid observation, Father. I suppose -- just about anything could occur at this point in time!

BRITISH BISHOP

Meanwhile, my only concern is what pertains to ecumenical matters in this region. As for the rest of the world..bah! I have no room to inherit any more headaches!

He turns to the priest, who now feels compelled to make a follow-up comment.

BRITISH PRIEST#1

Er..your words are well-placed, Father!

BRITISH BISHOP

Many would agree that we have shown ourselves to be quite capable involving any..shall we say..regional disputes or grievances of a religious nature.

BRITISH PRIEST#1

Even regarding Patricius in Ireland!

BRITISH BISHOP

Ahh..Patricius! Need you remind me of all that?

BRITISH PRIEST#1

And I must commend you on your..act of fairness in that regard.

BRITISH BISHOP

Alright..alright! So I had a *change of heart* ! You know me -- a man of few regrets.So..I was skeptical of Patricius' strategy for the first several years.Ahh! I felt it appeared whimsical if not disasterous at first.

BRITISH PRIEST#1

(smiling sarcastically)

However...?

BRITISH BISHOP

But..what can I say? After receiving numerous commendable reports of his efforts amongst the Irish..the healing, setting the captives free, the conversions in baptism! I thought, indeed, this man deserves his opportunity.I am no longer in a position to dispute it.

BRITISH PRIEST#1

You see!?! I always knew you possessed a compassionate soul!

BRITISH BISHOP

Awww..shhhh!I ask one favor --just do not go around telling everyone, will you?

The younger cleric struggles to hold back laughter.

EXT. NORTHCENTRAL IRELAND -- DAY

It's a baptismal ceremony.Patricius baptizes an elderly WOMAN.

PATRICIUS

In the name of the Father, The Son,
and the Holy Ghost..

A cherubic YOUNGSTER is next for immersion.

PATRICIUS (CONT'D)

I baptize you in the name of the
Father, the Son, and the Holy Ghost.

The queue for baptism-in-waiting extends with several hundred
people.

EXT. DAIRE'S MANOR -- DAY

The bishop and DAIRE, 50's and surprisingly refined, exchange
a warm farewell as the chariot horses SNORT. Daire conveys
the idea of a gladiator-turned-preacher.

DAIRE

I cannot help but imagine if destiny
had leaned in the other direction. Here
I was, the most stubborn of warriors
while you baptized my family...

The noble cleric reflects with a grin, as he climbs into the
chariot.

DAIRE (CONT'D)

Only hatred and resentment dwelled
in my heart. But, one day, I too became
a man humbly indebted to the mercy
of a great God. Something I could
never have envisioned before!

PATRICIUS

We have all shown stubbornness at
times, friend, but we all exist as a
part of His majestic purpose. It is
up to each one to listen carefully
for His voice.

DAIRE

Indeed!

The traveling minister motions to the charioteer.

PATRICIUS

Ready whenever you are!

He waves to Daire.

PATRICIUS (CONT'D)

Until we meet again!

DAIRE

Farewell..and my thanks for all!!

The charioteer directs the horses. They TROT off, blending into the landscape.

EXT. RURAL COUNTRYSIDE -- CONTINUOUS

The chariot scoots over rural paths. Several rabbits scurry into the grass.

Patricius waves to a SHEPHERD tending his flock next to the road.

He cannot help but ponder his past episode as a captive amongst similar livestock.

FLASHBACK - EXT. CHIEFTAIN FARM -- DAY

Imagining, as a captive teenager on those hills long ago. Sheep scatter in a bleating symphony.

Patricius runs a downhill effort to corral.

He carries a long-lost lamb to safety.

BACK TO PRESENT DAY

The bishop shows a nostalgic twinkle in his eyes, as the NOISY contraption zips along.

EXT. AUXILIUS' OUTPOST -- DAY

Auxilius hobbles towards a hut, a cumbersome sack heaved over his shoulder. HOOFBEATS catch his attention.

At the sight of the chariot-bound pastor, he drops everything, literally. He smiles. The horses stop just shy of him.

AUXILIUS

Ah! Speak of unexpected occasions!

Patricius steps off of the chariot.

PATRICIUS

I knew I could find you in the most remote of places!

Auxilius LAUGHS as they both greet.

PATRICIUS (CONT'D)

Always good to to see you again!

AUXILIUS

Oh, much has remained the same here as far as our surroundings, but I am pleased to inform you that effort on behalf of His Kingdom continues to thrive! Amazing really!

(MORE)

AUXILIUS (CONT'D)

The hearts of many have embraced the message of Christ! Remarkable.. considering our brief duration here!

PATRICIUS

Nothing could please me more. News worthy to the ears! How about the tribal clans?

They begin a stroll as the chariot RATTLES in its departure.

AUXILIUS

Oh..so we have some disagreeable matters with some of the clan members -- Ahh..nothing but old news if there ever was such a thing! Sure to be expected! We just continue praying for them! Matters could improve! Who knows?

The bishop smiles.

AUXILIUS (CONT'D)

And you? Where might your far-reaching journey be taking you these days?

PATRICIUS

On its' neverending course. I had planned to visit all the outlying areas before returning to Sabhal.

AUXILIUS

To Sabhal?..Why of course! How could it escape me? Sabhal -- a sanctuary with its own special purpose. The barn where you preached your first sermon!

PATRICIUS

Only it no longer exists as a barn..you know.

AUXILIUS

So they tell me! Anyhow..I know that your thirst and hunger have not eluded you. We have plenty of water and food at your disposal!

A YOUTH MISSIONARY(slim, 20s') hands a vase of water to the cleric as they walk to a makeshift shelter.

PATRICIUS

Thank you, son.

They open the curtain doors.

AUXILIUS

I will have to share some of the more amusing instances..

Curtain closes behind them.

AUXILIUS (O.S.)

..some of these missionaries could heal you with laughter alone.

Patricius CHUCKLES.

EXT. IRISH LANDSCAPE -- DAY

Dawn breaks, as a radiant sun peeks out of the horizon. Birds in formation journey across the Irish sky.

From a distance, Patricius waves farewell to Auxilius and a handful of MISSIONARIES as his chariot careens towards the next destination.

The vehicle traverses the verdant geography.

EXT. SABHAL -- DAY

He arrives at Sabhal. The chariot halts as Patricius eyes the modest chapel structure that used to be a barn.

INSIDE THE CHAPEL

The humble bishop sits pensively in the place of worship. Looks at his surroundings. He prays on his knees silently.

After a session of divine petition, he opens his eyes, gazing at a cross.

PATRICIUS

Amen!

The anointed clergyman walks out the entrance, sunlight illuminating. He walks away into the lush green landscape.

NARRATOR (V.O.)

..And so the legacy of Saint Patrick and his fellow believers continued. He would uphold the vision of the Lords' destiny for his life, ministering to the poor and down-trodden, baptizing the faithful, liberating the captives, praying over the sick, and every other form of Godly servitude. Most sources agree that in his lifetime, Patrick established no fewer than three hundred churches and consecrated just as many bishops. The number of converts that he baptized was well

(MORE)

NARRATOR (V.O.) (CONT'D)

into the tens of thousands. Even raising the dead was not unknown for him. Truly, the sad irony is that this man of God has been, at best, relegated to a footnote of history, at the very least.. a figment of legendary hearsay. The entirety of his life would probably take volumes to explain. But one fact remains without argument. Patrick was a tireless crusader who carried his cross obediently for the sake of Gods' Kingdom.

FADE OUT