

The World's Mad Business

By

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Based on

The 17th Century Irish Slave Trade

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FADE IN:

EXT. DUBLIN, IRELAND - EMBANKMENT OVERLOOKING LIFFEY RIVER - THURSDAY, JUNE 3RD, 1655 - DAY

FINN MCQUILLEN, (15), thin, dark brown hair, muddy, climbs up and over edge of embankment, anxious.

CAOIMHE O' MAOILRIAIN, (12), (KWEEvah) wiry, short, blue eyes, light blonde hair, twirls, drops rock into a pail.

CAOIMHE

Where are you going, Finn?

Finn looks away. She shrugs, dances away. Caoimhe gone, men take Finn at musket point, force him down the hill.

INT. DUBLIN, IRELAND - WOODEN SHANTY HOUSE - KITCHEN - SUNDAY, JUNE 6TH, 1655 - DAY

Six boys, two to ten, blonde, YELL. FIONNUALA O' MAOILRIAIN, (35), (Finoolah), pregnant, worn housedress, blonde bun, breast feeds year old child.

FIONNUALA

Boys, get yourselves ready for church. Father O'Doul will tan your hides if you're late.

Caoimhe, tattered blue dress, pirouettes past her mother. Her new blue shoes are incongruous with her attire.

FIONNUALA (CONT'D)

Caoimhe, take off the shoes. You'll wear them out.

Caoimhe stops dancing and faces her mother.

CAOIMHE

But they're so pretty.

FIONNUALA

Mind me now, child.

Boys' yelling escalates.

FIONNUALA (CONT'D)

Boys, outside! Caoimhe, the shoes, take them off, now!

Caoimhe pouts, twirls once more and looks at her shoes. Fionnuala moves the infant to the other breast.

CAOIMHE

May I show them to my friends?

FIONNUALA

Away with you. Be back at half
past the hour. Keep them clean!

CAOIMHE

Thank you, Mama.

DANIEL O' MAOILRIAIN, (37), husky, curly red hair, enters,
a solemn look.

DANIEL O' MAOILRIAIN

Fionnuala, darling, last night
William McQuillen announced that
his oldest, Finn, is gone.

FIONNUALA

What, the fever, pox?

DANIEL O' MAOILRIAIN

He's no dead. He disappeared.

Caoimhe frowns, deep in thought. Daniel grabs Caoimhe and
twirls her on his feet. Caoimhe giggles.

DANIEL O' MAOILRIAIN (CONT'D)

You've become a bit old for this.
Let this be the last time.

Daniel holds Caoimhe's hands. Together they waltz.

DANIEL O' MAOILRIAIN (CONT'D)

Thank you, milady, for the
pleasure of dancing with you.

Caoimhe bows and curtsies. Daniel sees Caoimhe's shoes.

CAOIMHE

You are most welcome, kind sir.

DANIEL O' MAOILRIAIN

Now, where would you be getting
such a fine pair of shoes?

CAOIMHE

They're for church, but dancing
with you is as good a reason to
wear them as going to Mass.

DANIEL O' MAOILRIAIN

Just as good, if not better.

FIONNUALA

She can't go to church every
Sunday looking like a tramp.

CAOIMHE

I need to look like a dancer if
I'm to become one.

FIONNUALA

Enough of this tom foolery. After
church, remember to practice your
ciphering and letters.

DANIEL O' MAOILRIAIN

Try hard and you can do anything.

CAOIMHE

I want to be a dancer.

Caoimhe kisses his cheek, then she runs to the door.

DANIEL O' MAOILRIAIN

Don't you be straying far, with
that boy missing.

Caoimhe nods, darts outside, slamming the door.

DANIEL O' MAOILRIAIN (CONT'D)

She can write her name, and that's
at the very least a start.

FIONNUALA

If she doesn't continue with that
silly notion of becoming a dancer.

DANIEL O' MAOILRIAIN

She's young with hopes and dreams.

FIONNUALA

Marriage will take that out of
her.

EXT. STREETS OF DUBLIN - JUNE 6TH, 1655 - DAY

LIAM, (13), small, weak, and DECLAN, (12), sturdy, bounce a
ball as Caoimhe follows. The boys splash in a mud puddle.

LIAM

Caoimhe. Why are you not coming?

CAOIMHE

I'll no dirty my new shoes.

DECLAN

You're becoming a girl.

Caoimhe sticks her tongue out at Declan, then laughs.

CAOIMHE

I am a young lady, silly. It isn't proper to jump in the mud.

DECLAN

Would it be proper for a young lady to be sticking out her tongue?

LIAM

You're leaving us, Caoimhe. We can't have that.

Caoimhe admires her shoes. The church bell rings, startling the children. They run towards the church.

DECLAN

We're going to be late, hurry!

Caoimhe, her hands on her head, stops dead in her tracks.

CAOIMHE

My hat and gloves!

Caoimhe RUNS towards Bay of Dublin, a tall sailing ship sits tight by the shore. She slides down the muddy hill, spying on men loading barrels. Scrambles up hill, muddy.

CAOIMHE (CONT'D)

Jesus, Mary and Joseph. I'm going to catch it from Mama, now.

INT. DUBLIN - CHRIST CHURCH CATHEDRAL - SUNDAY - JUNE 6TH, 1655 - DAY

Caoimhe, sweaty, hat askew, sits beside her mother.

FIONNUALA

What have you done to yourself?

CAOIMHE

I slid down a hill to get a better look at the tall ship in the bay.

FIONNUALA

You're here. That's what's important.

Father O'Doul stands at the pulpit.

FATHER O'DOUL

Before my sermon we all need to bow our heads in silent prayer for the McQuillen family.

The congregation bow their heads.

FATHER O'DOUL (CONT'D)

On Thursday their son, Finn, went missing. They have requested we meet at the theatre on Werburgh Street after today's service to search for the boy.

Liam, two rows behind Caoimhe, throws rolled up paper at her hat. She scowls. His mother smacks his head.

FIONNUALA

(frowning at Caoimhe)
Listen to Father O'Doul.

CAOIMHE

Yes, Mama.

Caoimhe turns and smiles at Liam.

FIONNUALA

Pay that boy no mind.

CAOIMHE

But Mama, I like him.

Caoimhe blushes. Fionnuala hugs her. Caoimhe smiles.

EXT. CHRIST CHURCH CATHEDRAL - SUNDAY - JUNE 6TH, 1655

The congregation spills out onto the street. Liam and Declan give Caoimhe a shove, sending her spinning.

CAOIMHE

Hey!

FIONNUALA

Stop that horseplay with Caoimhe. Shame on you.

DECLAN

We were just doing it in fun, Mrs. O' Maoilriain. She's our friend.

FIONNUALA

Can you not play with girls, Caoimhe?

CAOIMHE

Boys are much more fun.

SIOBHÁN MCQUILLEN, (12), thin, dark brown hair, waves to Caoimhe as her family exits the church.

SIOBHÁN

Hello, Caoimhe.

Caoimhe ignores her. Fionnuala gives her a gentle push.

FIONNUALA

She's speaking to you.

CAOIMHE

I can see that.

FIONNUALA

Well? Speak when you're spoken to.

Fionnuala points to Siobhán. Caoimhe makes a face.

CAOIMHE

I'm sorry to hear about your brother, Siobhán.

SIOBHÁN

My parents are going to search with the townspeople.

CAOIMHE

Mama has to tend to the babies.

SIOBHÁN

Would you care to come over to my house today after the midday meal?

CAOIMHE

Perhaps. I'll be playing with Declan and Liam. Will you join us?

SIOBHÁN

I'm not allowed to run with boys.

Caoimhe makes a disapproving face.

CAOIMHE

I'll be there this afternoon.

Siobhán smiles. Caoimhe turns to her mother and whispers.

CAOIMHE (CONT'D)

She probably wants to play dolls or something equally annoying.

FIONNUALA

Stop that talk. She's who you
should see, not those wild boys.

CAOIMHE

I'll be home soon for some stew.

Daniel O' Maoilriain joins Fionnuala.

CAOIMHE (CONT'D)

We're going to see the tall ship.

DANIEL O' MAOILRIAIN

There is no tall ship in Dublin.

CAOIMHE

A tall ship sits in the cove.

DANIEL O' MAOILRIAIN

(smirking)

They sail from London to India to
buy tea and spices.

CAOIMHE

Maybe it's here to deliver tea and
spices to us.

DANIEL O' MAOILRIAIN

Not bloody likely. Oliver
Cromwell cut us off from trade
benefits.

CAOIMHE

The ship is there, no matter.

FIONNUALA

Perhaps the sun was in your eyes,
and you only spotted Joseph
McCready's fishing boat.

CAOIMHE

Does Mr. McCready's boat have
three masts aft and a small sail
in the front?

DANIEL O' MAOILRIAIN

That McQuillen boy, Finn, has
disappeared. Don't be going off
alone until we find him.

Caoimhe hands her hat and gloves to her mother.

CAOIMHE

I won't be needing these, and I'm

CAOIMHE (CONT'D)
not going to be alone.

Caoimhe and the boys run off together.

FIONNUALA
(shouting)
Caoimhe, change your clothes. That girl, if I didn't know better, I'd say she was a boy.

DANIEL O' MAOILRIAIN
She'll cry at the drop of a hat, unlike any boy I've ever known.

FIONNUALA
Right you are there. She is tough, underneath her feminine side.

DANIEL O' MAOILRIAIN
Everyone needs a little of what she has if they're going to survive this world.

Daniel leans over and gives Fionnuala a kiss.

DANIEL O' MAOILRIAIN (CONT'D)
Stop your worrying, woman. If only her imagination didn't run wild. Tall ships with three masts?

EXT. STREETS OF DUBLIN - JUNE 6TH, 1655 - DAY

Liam and Declan play ball, run into alley. Caoimhe twirls, sees boys on each 360 degree turn.

SUDDENLY, Caoimhe stops with fear. Young boys' SCREAMS echo from narrow alley, then silence, except for a lone seagull, SQUAWKING overhead.

MRS. O'LEARY, (25), black box hat, pushes a pram.

MRS. O'LEARY
Caoimhe, darling, what are you doing there, all alone?

Caoimhe turns her head to look at Mrs. O'Leary.

MRS. O'LEARY (CONT'D)
You're as white as a sheet. Caoimhe, did you hear me? What's wrong with you, child?

Caoimhe's eyes dart to Mrs. O'Leary's sides. Two men grab Mrs. O'Leary's arms. She's taken, screaming, kicking.

MRS. O'LEARY (CONT'D)

(yelling)
Caoimhe, take wee Mary. Run now.

MAN ONE
What about the girl?

MAN TWO
Nay, she's skinny, weak. More trouble than she's worth.

Caoimhe picks up infant, when the first man is upon her. She drops the baby back into the pram.

MAN ONE
I came back for ye. Can't be going telling anyone now?

CAOIMHE
(screaming)
Help? Eeeeeee, someone, help, help?

He grabs her, covers her mouth. His hand bitten, her chest squeezed to quieten her. She bites his arm, he lets go, chases her, knocks her out, pulls her by arms, drags her heels on road, leaving left shoe.

INT. POTATO STORAGE UNIT - SUNDAY, JUNE 6TH - NIGHT

Caoimhe, feet shackled, awakens, unable to see, but hears people moaning, whimpering. A familiar voice rings out.

DECLAN
Caoimhe, it's me, Declan. Are you feeling well enough to answer me?

CAOIMHE
Where are we? My head hurts so. My feet, they're bound in chains?

Declan wipes away strands of hair stuck to her face.

DECLAN
They beat Liam, so hard. He couldn't even cry, Caoimhe.

CAOIMHE

I've lost my left shoe. I can't walk without my beautiful shoe.

DECLAN

Did you hear what I said?

CAOIMHE

I want my shoe. Did you see it?

Declan puts his arm around her shoulder. Caoimhe sobs, tears streaming down her face, leaving dirt streaks.

DECLAN

Try to smile. You're pretty when you laugh and smile.

CAOIMHE

I want to go home.

The two huddle. Tears run down their faces. Large doors slam shut and lock. Caoimhe's body jumps, startled. A small sliver of moonlight filters through crack in door, Sobbing is heard throughout the storage unit.

INT. WINDSOR CASTLE - MONDAY, JUNE 7TH, 1655 - DAY

RICHARD CROMWELL, (29), has a private discussion with his father, OLIVER CROMWELL, (56) LORD PROTECTORATE.

RICHARD CROMWELL

Father, how can we ensure that the scourge of the British Empire will continue to be eliminated even after your death?

OLIVER CROMWELL

Upon my demise, you, Richard, will become Lord Protectorate of the Commonwealth, which encompasses England, Scotland, and Ireland. As such, you will rule absolutely.

RICHARD CROMWELL

Will there be a restoration of the monarchy?

OLIVER CROMWELL

My will states that I, Oliver Cromwell, will pass the throne onto you, my rightful heir. Rest assured, the King will not return.

RICHARD CROMWELL
 Meanwhile, allow me to assist you
 in any way necessary.

OLIVER CROMWELL
 How does it look for the latest
 shipment?

RICHARD CROMWELL
 My guards have given me their word
 that THE GREY PHALAROPE is ready
 to set sail today for Barbados.

OLIVER CROMWELL
 Perhaps these will possess
 physical supremacy, compared to
 the last shipment.

RICHARD CROMWELL
 Disease and pestilence caused the
 demise of most of them. This
 cannot happen twice.

Oliver Cromwell snaps his fingers to call a BEEFEATER,
 (21) standing by the door.

OLIVER CROMWELL
 Guard, fetch me a servant girl.

BEEFEATER
 Yes, your Highness.

The Beefeater turns, opens the door, exits momentarily,
 returning with a SERVANT GIRL, (18) in uniform.

SERVANT GIRL
 Your Highness?

OLIVER CROMWELL
 Pour each of us a glass of gin.

SERVANT GIRL
 Right away, your Highness.

The servant girl pours Caorun Scottish gin.

RICHARD CROMWELL
 I shall have a dram or, ... two.

The girl hands Oliver Cromwell his glass, then as she
 hands Richard Cromwell his glass, she leans over. Oliver
 rubs his hand on her rear, smiling up at her. The girl
 jumps in surprise, turns, and smiles back.

OLIVER CROMWELL
I'll be seeing you later.

The servant girl giggles and scurries out of the room.

OLIVER CROMWELL (CONT'D)
Let's get down to essentials,
Richard. We cannot afford to lose
any more indentured servants. This
is supposed to be a profitable
arrangement.

Richard Cromwell takes a large sip of his gin.

RICHARD CROMWELL
Is that what we're calling them?

OLIVER CROMWELL
They will serve for a limited
number of years, before being
allowed to go free.

RICHARD CROMWELL
It is temporary slavery, then.

OLIVER CROMWELL
We cannot very well refer to them
as slaves, now, can we?

RICHARD CROMWELL
I never knew image was a concern
of yours. Besides, once they
arrive at their destination they
will know better.

OLIVER CROMWELL
If they possess the intellect to
tell the difference. And, it had
better be 'when' they arrive, as
opposed to 'if' they arrive.

RICHARD CROMWELL
Measures have been taken. I have
Captain Percival Leggett's
assurance that this aforementioned
incident does not occur again.

He drinks the rest of his gin in one mouthful, then he
puts down the glass, and bows to Oliver Cromwell.

RICHARD CROMWELL (CONT'D)
If that will be all, your
Highness.

OLIVER CROMWELL

Mark my words. Heads will roll if there is to be another sinking or outbreak of disease..now, I believe that there is a young lady

OLIVER CROMWELL (CONT'D)

awaiting my services.

RICHARD CROMWELL

Rogue!

Richard Cromwell stands, and leaves the room, smiling.

INT. POTATO STORAGE UNIT - MONDAY - JUNE 7TH, 1655 - DAY

Unit doors open. Caoimhe squints. A large man, ISAAC WILSON, (25), enters, makes choking sound, buries his nose in his sleeve. Urine soaks the floor. Piles of feces line the corners.

ISAAC WILSON

Saints be to heaven, what kind of stench have we?

Five men enter, three carry shackles and neck chains. Two carry flintlock muskets, aimed at prisoners to prevent their escape. A man tries. Gunfire rings out, echoes in storage unit. He's shot in the back. Caoimhe screams.

DECLAN

You have to be quiet, Caoimhe.

The prisoners' necks are shackled to each other's.

ISAAC WILSON

Now, step lively.

Walking into the bright sun, Caoimhe takes a deep breath.

CAOIMHE

Ahh, Declan, can you smell it?

The mist slowly rolls in from the sea.

DECLAN

It's clean, sweet Dublin air.

CAOIMHE

Who would have thought damp mist would bring so much pleasure?

Isaac Wilson hits Caoimhe in her solar plexus with a baton. Caoimhe doubles over in pain, gasping for air.

ISAAC WILSON
Quieten down.

DECLAN
There's no need for that.

Isaac Wilson hits Declan with the baton.

ISAAC WILSON
Sticking it out for your little girlfriend? That'll cost you.

Finn emerges from the mist. Caoimhe recognizes him.

CAOIMHE
(gasping)
Declan, it's Finn.

DECLAN
Pretend not to notice. Keep your head down.

Isaac Wilson bellows a deafening order in Finn's ear.

ISAAC WILSON
Finn, get over here.

Caoimhe cries out. Wilson threatens her with a fist.

ISAAC WILSON (CONT'D)
Shut your mouth! One more scream and you'll be put in the hold.

CAOIMHE
I won't cry anymore. I promise.

They board The GREY PHALAROPE single file.

EXT. THE GREY PHALAROPE - TOPSIDE - DAY

Wilson undoes their neck chains and checks their mouths.

ISAAC WILSON
All of you, fold your clothes and lay them down in front of you.

Caoimhe faces Declan, who takes off his shirt.

CAOIMHE

(whispers)

I don't want to remove my dress.

DECLAN

I think he means trouble if we don't do as he says.

CAOIMHE

I'm embarrassed.

DECLAN

Now isn't the time to be shy. I won't look.

Caoimhe puts her dress in front of her. Wilson hits her stomach with his baton, Finn close by, watching.

ISAAC WILSON

All your clothes.

Caoimhe slides her drawers down. Wilson puts his hands between her legs. She shivers in fear.

ISAAC WILSON (CONT'D)

Ne'er been touched by men, girly?
Not even by your boy over there?

Caoimhe's knees knock together.

ISAAC WILSON (CONT'D)

Answer me, or you'll be feeling
the stick.

CAOIMHE

No, he's never touched me.

ISAAC WILSON

We'll have to see to it that your
virginity is rectified. Tell me,
Finn, boy? How would you like to
do the honors later. You can have
her in the Captain's quarters.

FINN

Yes sir.

ISAAC WILSON

Afterwards I'll have a go at her.

Isaac Wilson licks Caoimhe's face who recoils, then he sees Declan making a fist.

ISAAC WILSON (CONT'D)

What are you going to do, boy?
Strike me? Think twice.

Declan unclenches his fingers, relaxing his fist.

ISAAC WILSON (CONT'D)

Smart decision, lad.

Declan slides his pantaloons down his legs. Wilson fondles his genitals, causing Declan some distress.

ISAAC WILSON (CONT'D)

You're a fine specimen of a man.

Isaac Wilson turns to Caoimhe.

ISAAC WILSON (CONT'D)

You'd be wise to stick with this
lad. He's hung like a horse.

Wilson goes down the line. Finn exchanges glances with Caoimhe. She and Declan exhale a sigh of relief.

EXT. STREETS OF DUBLIN - JUNE 7TH, 1655 - DAY

MR. O'LEARY, (29) kisses baby MARY, (6 WEEKS). WILLIAM, (38), and PHYLLIS MCQUILLEN, (35), Siobhán and Daniel run through the streets, frantic.

PHYLLIS MCQUILLEN

(yelling)

Finn, my dear boy, please, where
are you? Come home.

DANIEL O' MAOILRIAIN

Caoimhe, come back. Your mother
and I love you.

Daniel spots something lying by the side of the road.

DANIEL O' MAOILRIAIN (CONT'D)

Caoimhe, darling, we're not angry
with you. I want to dance with...

Daniel bends down and holds Caoimhe's left shoe to his heart. He walks along the Liffey River, scowling at the The Grey Phalarope, sailing out to sea.

DANIEL O' MAOILRIAIN (CONT'D)

Oh, my wee girl, where did you go
and what has happened to you?

INT. THE BLIND PIG PUB - WEDNESDAY, JUNE 9TH, 1655 - NIGHT

Daniel and two others, CONOR, (35), and TADHG, (32), (Taig), drink beer.

DANIEL O' MAOILRIAIN
We all know about this sort of

DANIEL O' MAOILRIAIN (CONT'D)
thing. Now it's hit our families.

TADHG
So, you think it's that rat
bastard, Cromwell?

CONOR
He'll stop at nothing. It's been
six years since he took Drogheda
and burned it to the ground.

DANIEL O' MAOILRIAIN
If he would kill those innocent
people, I wouldn't put it past him
to take our women and children.

Tadhg finishes his beer and bangs the glass on the table.

TADHG
(yelling to barmaid)
Wench, get me another.

DANIEL O' MAOILRIAIN
We've been looking for our
children for three nights and
there's no sign of them. (Points
to the redcoats) It's time we kill
each and every one of them.

Stare at Redcoats, and Barmaid puts down Tadhg's beer.

DANIEL O' MAOILRIAIN (CONT'D)
(raised voice)
Do you suppose they have anything
to do with our five, who recently
went missing, without a trace?

TADHG
Sit down, Daniel, if you know
what's good for you.

DANIEL O' MAOILRIAIN
I'll no be sitting down, Tadhg.
Whoa, men, listen to what I say!

All three tables of Redcoats turn to hear Daniel.

TADHG

They'll go after your woman and
the other children next.

Daniel, drunk, waves Tadhg off, as if shooing away a fly.

DANIEL O' MAOILRIAIN

Three days ago, my wee girl,
Caoimhe, just a bit of a thing,
spun gold hair, blue eyes, and
dances like a Queen...

A Redcoat, RALPH APPLEYARD, (23) interrupts him.

RALPH APPLEYARD

Take a seat and drink your beer.

Daniel approaches him, holding his stein of beer.

DANIEL O' MAOILRIAIN

My wee girl was snatched whilst
playing with her friends. She is
twelve years old, a child.

The first Redcoat and a second one stand.

RALPH APPLEYARD

Are you accusing us of taking her?

DANIEL O' MAOILRIAIN

I believe that bastard Oliver
Cromwell ordered all the
kidnapping around here.

RALPH APPLEYARD

Perhaps you would prefer we take
your fat cow of a wife, instead
of a useless split assed girl?

Daniel makes a fist. He lunges at Ralph Appleyard.

DANIEL O' MAOILRIAIN

Be careful or you'll be picking
your teeth up off the floor.

RALPH APPLEYARD

I'll say whatever pleases me.

JOHN ROBERTSON, (20), a redcoat, approaches Daniel.

JOHN ROBERTSON

You're speaking treason, accusing
our Lord Cromwell as you have.

DANIEL O' MAOILRIAIN

It can't be treason if I speak out
against someone who's not my Lord.

A brawl breaks out involving all the men. John Robertson
pulls out a short sword. The Irishmen back down.

JOHN ROBERTSON

Say anything against Cromwell and
your throat will be slit.

Tadhg and Conor pull Daniel to his feet.

CONOR

He's had too much to drink, to
drown his sorrows. If you'll be
kind enough to be lenient with
him, we'll take him home.

John Robertson puts his sword away. Redcoats sit down.

DANIEL O' MAOILRIAIN

A mob of lackeys is all you are.
You're no welcome here.

All the Redcoats stand and take a step towards Daniel.

DANIEL O' MAOILRIAIN (CONT'D)

And why I should scruple to call
such a set of people a mob, I
can't conceive, unless the name is
too respectable for you.

CONOR

You're going to get us all hanged.

DANIEL O' MAOILRIAIN

We have men waiting for our word
to start, and then we will march
upon your camp and gut each and
every one of you like the pigs you
are whilst you sleep.

REDCOAT, RALPH APPLEYARD

You threaten us with your men?

DANIEL O' MAOILRIAIN

We are prepared to fight for our
daughters and sons.

RALPH APPLEYARD

What is your name?

A redcoat pummels Daniel's stomach. He doubles over.

DANIEL O' MAOILRIAIN

I'll never tell the likes of you.

Ralph Appleyard struts around the pub like a peacock.

RALPH APPLEYARD

His name? I will have all of you
on charges of sedition. Barkeep?

Redcoats drag Daniel out of the pub, which is silent.

INT. THE GREY PHALAROPE - THE BRIDGE - WEDNESDAY, JUNE
16TH, 1655 - EVENING

The Captain, PERCIVAL LEGGETT, (40), QUARTER MASTER ANDREW
GRAHAM, (30), look out. Leggett holds the whipstaff.
(Vertical stick attached to the tiller to steer the ship)

CAPTAIN PERCIVAL LEGGETT

Do you see what I see?

QUARTER MASTER ANDREW GRAHAM

The squall line moving rapidly,
and the sky ahead is also dark.

CAPTAIN PERCIVAL LEGGETT

One week at sea and we have a
storm to deal with.

QUARTER MASTER ANDREW GRAHAM

In an hour, we won't have enough
visibility. Should I fasten down
the passengers on the top deck?

CAPTAIN PERCIVAL LEGGETT

Women and children won't withstand
the rain. Put them below.

Isaac Wilson and Finn enter the Bridge.

ISAAC WILSON

Rats made their way into barrels
of food. Our reserves are rancid.

CAPTAIN PERCIVAL LEGGETT

How long can we last?

ISAAC WILSON

A week, perhaps two.

CAPTAIN PERCIVAL LEGGETT

We have nine more weeks at sea.

Finn stands quietly in the corner, listening intently.

CAPTAIN PERCIVAL LEGGETT (CONT'D)

If our cargo starves, we won't get paid. We need the insurance money.

QUARTER MASTER ANDREW GRAHAM

This does not sit well...
Captain, should I deliver them to their final resting place?

Finn's eyes open wide. Isaac Wilson grabs him by the arm.

ISAAC WILSON

You, boy, the cooper's taken ill,
Go through the hogsheads and throw the poisoned food overboard.

FINN

And the passengers? Are we to throw all of them overboard?

ISAAC WILSON

Get rid of the food first, then we'll decide. Boy, don't mention what you've heard here.

FINN

You have my word. I'll remain mum.

EXT. THE GREY PHALAROPE - PORT SIDE - WEDNESDAY, JUNE 16TH - EVENING

Finn approaches Caoimhe.

CAOIMHE

You're one of them. Away with you.

FINN

I have to obey. They watch me.

CAOIMHE

You? You're not a prisoner.

FINN

We must go to the Captain's quarters. If you refuse, you will be raped and thrown overboard.

CAOIMHE

You will not hurt me!

FINN

Do as I say and you will not become shark food.

CAOIMHE

You have the entire townspeople fooled. They're looking for you.

FINN

I was taken forcibly when I stumbled across this ship.

CAOIMHE

I've seen you doing their bidding.

FINN

I'm their cabin boy, just as much a prisoner as you.

CAOIMHE

What are a cabin boy's duties?

FINN

To please the masters, every which way.

CAOIMHE

Are you to be trusted?

Finn pulls Caoimhe to her feet.

FINN

At the moment, I'm all you've got.

The two descend the stairs to the captain's quarters.

INT. CAPTAIN PERCIVAL LEGGETT'S QUARTERS - THE GREY PHALAROPE - WEDNESDAY, JUNE 16TH - EVENING

Finn pulls Caoimhe inside. Captain Leggett faces them.

CAPTAIN PERCIVAL LEGGETT

I suppose you want me to leave?
Unless you need some pointers,
boy, or do you want an audience?

FINN

I'd like to be alone with her,
Sir, if you don't mind.

CAPTAIN PERCIVAL LEGGETT

Fair enough. I'll be right outside
at the ready to take over.

Caoimhe cringes at the prospect of him touching her.

FINN

We'll be fine on our own.

Captain Leggett leaves.

FINN (CONT'D)

Don't worry, He won't touch you.

CAOIMHE

What's going to happen?

FINN

There is little food. Tonight they
are doing away with many of you.

CAOIMHE

You're a liar.

FINN

What makes you say that?

CAOIMHE

I'm no idiot. Why would they take
so many of us without enough food?

FINN

The food is putrid from the
unusual heat wave in Ireland.
You're worth more to them dead.

CAOIMHE

I doubt you know anything.

FINN

I overheard them. You may hide
behind the rain barrels.

CAOIMHE

For how long?

FINN

Until I can get you out.

CAOIMHE

Declan? Can you hide him as well?

FINN

I'm taking a chance with you.

CAOIMHE

Why are you helping me?

FINN

You remind me of Siobhán. They're coming. Lie down on the bed.

Finn pulls covers over them. A loud BANG on the door. Leggett enters with an Irish woman, both inebriated, kissing. She is not resisting.

CAPTAIN PERCIVAL LEGGETT

Get out, boy! It's my turn.

Caoimhe and Finn slip out of bed and through the door.

EXT. GREY PHALAROPE - TOPSIDE - WEDNESDAY, JUNE 16TH,
1655 - NIGHT

Caoimhe stands beside Declan, port side.

DECLAN

Did he hurt you?

CAOIMHE

(whispers)

No.

DECLAN

Your reputation has not been besmirched, then?

CAOIMHE

I've done nothing wrong.

DECLAN

You need to guard your chastity.

CAOIMHE

I was shackled, lined up naked, examined like cattle at auction. I will fend them off, but saints preserve us, I want to live.

Declan crouches, snuggling into the wall of the ship.

DECLAN

I've managed to upset you. Perhaps
I'll make more sense tomorrow.

CAOIMHE

Perhaps, but not bloody likely.

Declan curls up to sleep. Caoimhe, notices a shadow.

FINN

Caoimhe, come, follow me.

She follows the sound of Finn's voice in the night mist.

EXT. THE GREY PHALAROPE - TOPSIDE - WEDNESDAY, JUNE 16TH,
1655 - NIGHT

Rain bursts through the seams of the clouds, emptying
onto the ship. Deck hands unchain the women and children,
take them to the cargo hold. The boat rocks and lists.
Finn slips, crashes into a barrel where he hid Caoimhe.

CAOIMHE

I do not want to stay here alone.

Finn removes her ankle shackles, throws them overboard.

FINN

I moved you here for your safety.
Later I will bring food and water.

Finn leaves. Lightening flashes, Caoimhe sees Mrs.
O'Leary and Declan thrown overboard. Lightening splits
center mast, toppling the crows nest.

EXT. GREY PHALAROPE - TOPSIDE - THURSDAY, JUNE 17TH -
MORNING

Sun filters down through clouds, over calmer water.
Debris clutters the deck. BARNABY SINCLAIR, (30) deckhand,
stops Finn on deck.

BARNABY SINCLAIR

Boy, we lost an outrigger last
night. Help me secure this by
tying it to the mast.

Finn grabs the end of the material and holds it up.

FINN

What else needs repairing?

BARNABY SINCLAIR

The mizzen mast aft, but I'll take care of that, a Bimini top, then, the chamber pots down below flipped, spilling their contents.

Finn makes a face.

BARNABY SINCLAIR (CONT'D)

It has a stench all its own. I've been saving that job for you, boy.

Sinclair leaves. Finn squats behind the rain barrel in front of Caoimhe, who opens her eyes to see Finn's face.

CAOIMHE

(gasps)
Don't frighten me like that.

FINN

There is a lot of damage and I must help fix the ship. Stay put and I'll be back.

Caoimhe reaches out and pulls Finn's sleeve.

CAOIMHE

I dreamt that some of us were sent over the side last night. It wasn't a dream, was it?

Finn looks down, averting his eyes away from Caoimhe.

FINN

A few of us aren't here today.

CAOIMHE

Don't let that happen to me. I must and I will return home.

FINN

For now, you need to stay hidden.

Finn leaves. A sudden storm flashes lightning and the deafening roar of thunder splits the air.

Hands over ears, Caoimhe sucks one thumb and rocks back and forth. Twelve foot high waves toss the ship.

Finn returns with a blanket, dried out meat and potatoes. Caoimhe gorges on the food, shoving it in her mouth.

FINN (CONT'D)

Slow down, or you'll be sick.

CAOIMHE

I am very hungry.

Caoimhe's left foot is torn and scabby. Finn hands her a pair of women's shoes.

FINN

Wear these. They belonged to one of,...well, now they are yours.

Caoimhe removes her right shoe, puts them on. Finn takes her shoe. She rips it from him, tucks it in her pocket.

EXT. OFF THE COAST OF BARBADOS - GREY PHALAROPE - BOW -
FRIDAY, AUGUST 20TH, 1655 - MORNING

The sailors spot land, jump, screaming and cheering.

BARNABY SINCLAIR

Hi ho! It's land off the bow.
Look, an island!

CAPTAIN PERCIVAL LEGGETT

We'll arrive in no time now, as we
have a prosperous wind in our
sails.

Finn crawls behind the barrel and whispers to Caoimhe.

FINN

We made it. I'll sneak you off by
slipping you into line.

The Grey Phalarope floats into harbor, drops anchor. Sailors their neck chains, leaving their ankles shackled. Finn discreetly removes Caoimhe's neck chain, pushes her in the queue.

Rope ladders hang overboard. Rowboats fill to capacity. Finn and Caoimhe climb into one, sit next to TARA WAUGH, (20). The sun is hot.

TARA WAUGH

How is it you became not to be
manacled?

Finn answers before Caoimhe has a chance to speak.

FINN

Gastroenteritis. The boatswain
untied her so she wouldn't offend
the others around her.

Finn looks at Caoimhe, opening his eyes wide.

FINN (CONT'D)

Pray tell, you're feeling better now, are you not?

CAOIMHE

Captain Leggett gave me some peppermint. It straightened my stomach right up.

TARA WAUGH

They have peppermint?

CAOIMHE

For emergencies such as mine.

TARA WAUGH

I never saw any. Tell me more about this peppermint.

Wilson forces them into the waist deep water.

ISAAC WILSON

Enough palaver. Go.

Caoimhe turns to Finn, who is right behind her.

CAOIMHE

I thought she'd never stop asking questions.

FINN

She's what my father used to refer to as a 'fish wife.'

Caoimhe laughs.

FINN (CONT'D)

You should do that more often. You're pretty when you laugh.

Caoimhe smiles, looks out to sea. Tears form in her eyes.

CAOIMHE

Someone else once told me that.

Warm ocean salt water stings Tara's open, sore covered legs. She cries out.

TARA WAUGH

Owww. The water burns my legs.

Wilson clouts her on the side of her head.

ISAAC WILSON

Shut your mouth!

Caoimhe, cracked lips, sore foot, she lines up.

INT. DUBLIN COURTHOUSE - FRIDAY, AUGUST 20TH, 1655 - DAY

A British Judge sits at the front of the courtroom.
Beefeaters line the side walls with Daniel, shackled.

JUDGE

All rise. And the defendant.

Daniel remains seated. The befeater pulls him up.

JUDGE (CONT'D)

For the crimes of sedition and
treason against Oliver Cromwell
and the Commonwealth, I pronounce
that at sunup tomorrow, you,
Daniel O' Maoilriain, shall be
hung by the neck until dead.

DANIEL O' MAOILRIAIN

You can't do this. I've committed
no crime. My wee one was taken.

JUDGE

Order, we must have order.

DANIEL O' MAOILRIAIN

Don't hang me, please, I throw
myself on the mercy of the court.

JUDGE

This being the high court of
justice, I must follow the orders
laid out by Oliver Cromwell.

Daniel cries out.

DANIEL O' MAOILRIAIN

What you are about to do is a
crime. You are nothing more than a
murdering, sinning, English wharf
rat.

JUDGE

You will be punished accordingly.

DANIEL O MAOILRIAIN

No good will come from killing me.
It is a sin against God.

JUDGE

It is no more a sin to kill an
Irishman than a dog or any other
brute. This is the law.

The Judge slams down his gavel.

JUDGE (CONT'D)

Take him away.

EXT. BARBADOS - BRIDGETOWN PORT - DAY

LELAND BROMWELL, (45), brown hair, grey, distinguished,
inspects the line with a discerning eye.

LELAND BROMWELL

A little on the light side of
lean, but I'll take them.

BARNABY SINCLAIR

It's nothing a little stew and
bread shouldn't fix in no time.

Leland casts him a hard look.

LELAND BROMWELL

They should have been fed properly
on board. I paid plenty and not
for starving castaways.

Leland snaps his fingers. Hired hands round up the
slaves, shoving them into horse drawn carts, each one
commandeered by Bromwell's men. Caoimhe sits next to Tara
and across from Finn. She studies his face.

CAOIMHE

(mouthing the words)

Thank you.

The cart winds through jungle roads arriving at the base
of a large, dark grey stone, austere building, red roof,
in Parish of St. George. Small windows grace each side.

FINN

I don't like that building.

CAOIMHE

Do you suppose it's haunted?

FINN

Most likely with witches.

Tara Waugh shakes and whimpers.

CAOIMHE

My baby brothers are braver than you. Witches won't hurt you.

Tara looks at her, wide-eyed and frightened.

CAOIMHE (CONT'D)

What is nervous Nellie afraid of?

Tara points to three African slaves, a woman and two men, skin shining blue-black, who pull the slaves off the cart, ankle chains impeding their ability to walk.

Men hold Tara while the woman brands her forearm with a hot poker from a nearby fire pit.

TARA WAUGH

Eeeeeeeeeee!

Tara collapses in shock. Caoimhe stares at her arm.

CAOIMHE

Ell bee. LB? What does that mean?

African men and WEGAHTA, (23), angry, stare at her.

WEGAHTA

You know what that is?

Caoimhe's eyes widen in shock.

CAOIMHE

I didn't know witches could speak.

WEGAHTA

(angry)

What did you call me?

CAOIMHE

Witch. Aren't all of you witches?

WEGAHTA

What makes you to go calling us witches?

CAOIMHE

Are you not the devil's help? Your skin is burnt blue-black. Your hair appears to have been fried and shriveled. You must be from under the ground and stood too close to the devil's fire.

WEGAHTA

You are just a poor White girl,
who don't know anything.

The men grab Caoimhe who fights but is branded, also.

CAOIMHE

(yelling)
Ahhhhh, owwww. You hurt me!

They brand men on their right buttock, women's arms.

WEGAHTA

Everyone, back in the carts.

Slaves climb into carts and are pulled up a hill.

EXT. BARBADOS - CHATTEL SLAVE HOUSES - PLANTATION -
FRIDAY, AUGUST 20TH - DAY

Horse drawn carts arrive at the plantation, six foot
square rectangular huts line perimeter of the field.

Built of inferior wood, makeshift roofs layered with
plantain leaves, serve as shingles, prevent water
seepage.

Caoimhe's cart pulls up to 40 chattel houses amid white
sand, turquoise water, blue sky, sugar cane other side.

A slave girl, KIBIBI, (16), Nubian, long, slender neck,
extremely short hair, exits the house.

KIBIBI

You, yellow haired girl, come.
You'll stay here, with me.

Kibibi tries to take Caoimhe's hand. Caoimhe, scared,
pulls her hand away, a disgusted look on her face.

CAOIMHE

Don't touch me.

Kibibi stands tall and proud.

KIBIBI

Don't you take that tone with me.
I'm here to help you.

CAOIMHE

I don't want my skin to burn.

KIBIBI

What's that you say?

CAOIMHE

Your skin is all burnt, by the devil's fire.

KIBIBI

(laughing)

You never seen a Negro before?

CAOIMHE

Only the other three, who met us

CAOIMHE (CONT'D)

with the branding iron.

KIBIBI

Come on then, I won't touch you.

Caoimhe jumps from the cart, stands next to, but away from Kibibi. Finn's cart leaves. Kibibi opens door and motions for Caoimhe to follow her inside.

INT. CHATTEL HOUSE - DAY

Caoimhe stands in open doorway, looks inside.

CAOIMHE

So, this is to be where I stay?
Where am I to sleep?

The African slaves laugh.

CAOIMHE (CONT'D)

I fail to see what is so amusing
that which I spoke?

KIBIBI

What you saying?

CAOIMHE

Where do I lie down at night?

Kibibi points to the floor. Caoimhe stomps her feet. Dust billows around her ankles. Wegahta enters the house.

CAOIMHE (CONT'D)

I will not lay my head down on
wood. Where is my feather bed?

WEGAHTA

You be dreaming, girl. We sleep on the floor. The Massa, he be kind enough to give us boards to put over the dirt.

CAOIMHE

Where I come from, our chickens live in nicer coops than this.

WEGAHTA

We don't talk about where we came from. That's all gone. This is where we are, from now on.

A cockroach, three inches, black, shiny, DARTS across the dirt floor. Caoimhe spots it.

CAOIMHE

(screaming)
Ahhhhhhhhhhh!

Caoimhe jumps up and down, stomping feet. Kibibi takes Caoimhe by the arm, settles her down.

KIBIBI

Thass' just a little ole bug, now. It won't hurt you.

Caoimhe stares at Kibibi's right hand holding her left arm and gazes into Kibibi's eyes for a brief moment while running her right hand along Kibibi's left arm.

CAOIMHE

Your skin is warm, like mine, not hot at all.

KIBIBI

What'djou expect? We's no different, you and I, excepting our colour. And it's the way Wegahta said, we's all here, together, for good.

CAOIMHE

This may be where we are but not forever. I'm returning to Ireland.

WEGAHTA

You sure got a lot to learn.

Caoimhe looks around. In one corner rests a small table, three low stools, an earthen jar, pail, iron pot, copper kettle, and calabashes of various sizes.

CAOIMHE

What is that?

WEGAHTA

Haven't you ever used a bowl before? Maybe you is the witch. I hear that they don't use dishes.

Caoimhe smiles at her.

CAOIMHE

The colour of my skin must seem odd as opposed to yours as well.

WEGAHTA

If it is the colour of my skin that makes you think I is a witch, then the colour of your skin makes me wonder if you is a ghost.

CAOIMHE

That's preposterous. Everyone knows that ghosts aren't real.

WEGAHTA

Just witches?

CAOIMHE

Of course. Where I come from, I once heard of four witches being strangled and afterwards, burned.

Caoimhe removes her shoes, limps to a crude rope hammock, slung from ceiling beams.

CAOIMHE (CONT'D)

What is this contraption?

Wegahta looks shocked by Caoimhe's swollen, bloody foot.

WEGAHTA

What happened to your foot?

CAOIMHE

I lost a shoe. These don't fit.

Kibibi rushes to Caoimhe, sits her down, rests on a low stool. Kibibi takes her foot, inspects it.

KIBIBI

Wooheeee, girl. That foot is nasty. It's got to be soaked.

A large male African slave pokes his head in the door.

MALE AFRICAN SLAVE

Work time! You coming?

WEGAHTA

Not yet. Kibibi and I are staying here to remedy this girl's foot.

Wegahta takes copper kettle from sideboard and leaves.

WEGAHTA (CONT'D)

I will get some hot water to clean that. It's starting to fester.

Kibibi takes bark from a jar. Caoimhe looks, interested. Wegahta enters with kettle. Kibibi drops bark into the hot water, stirs it until the water turns brown.

CAOIMHE

What is that?

KIBIBI

Jambos bark. We used it in Africa to fight cuts and sores.

WEGAHTA

If flesh turns black, it has to be cut off. This is good medicine.

Caoimhe's foot soaks, Kibibi takes her foot out, dries it and wraps a linen bandage around her foot.

WEGAHTA (CONT'D)

I'll look at it tomorrow. Stay off it until it heals.

Wegahta and Kibibi leave. Caoimhe cries herself to sleep.

INT. BARBADOS - CAOIMHE'S SLAVE HOUSE - PLANTATION - DAY

Caoimhe wakes up. The others eat from the calabashes.

KIBIBI

Woohee, girl, last night you were curled up like an unborn baby, hiccuping from crying.

CAOIMHE

I was not crying.

Wegahta hands Caoimhe a bowl.

WEGAHTA

You was real tired. You missed
last night's meal.

Caoimhe peers into the bowl and sniffs the food.

CAOIMHE

What is it?

WEGAHTA

Cassava, corn pone with plantains.

Caoimhe tries some and smiles approvingly at Wegahta. She eats the entire bowl.

EXT. BARBADOS - BROMWELL'S SUGAR PLANTATION - 1656 - DAY

Slaves cut cane with scythes. Mulatto overseers ride horseback. Caoimhe examines her burning, blistered skin. (KISO), 25, pulls out a whip and hits her.

KISO

Don't stop working.

Caoimhe gives him a look of hatred as blood stains her dress from being whipped. Kiso dismounts.

KISO (CONT'D)

Take off your clothes.

CAOIMHE

No, I will not.

Kiso grabs her dress and rips it off. Caoimhe stands, naked, her whip marks becoming large welts. Kiso hits her again. He stands back. Finn intervenes.

FINN

Leave her be.

KISO

Go about your business.

Finn charges Kiso who snaps his whip, hits Finn's face. Finn covers his face. Kiso hits Caoimhe again.

CAOIMHE
 (screaming in pain)
 Ahhhhh.

KISO
 Get back to work.

Finn, holding his eyes, tries to escape. Kiso follows.

KIBIBI
 Woohee. It's not easy to run
 through the dense cane. One's got
 to be crazy to try.

Kiso returns, sits astride his horse. Caoimhe, naked,
 barely able to stand, harvests sugar cane. Kiso watches.

Kiso rings bell. Slaves drop scythes leave for lunch.
 Caoimhe is stopped by Kiso.

KISO
 You, stay here and stand still
 until I tell you to go.

Caoimhe stands in the hot sun, burning her red. Kiso
 leaves. Caoimhe falters, trying not to sit down.

Kibibi and others return. Kibibi looks at Caoimhe, sadly.
 Woman's screams. Crowd gathers. Tara cries hysterically.

CAOIMHE
 What would you be carrying on
 about, now?

Tara points to Finn lying on his back, dead. His skull
 crushed, bloody rock nearby. Face, torn apart, scores of
 flies buzzing around his body.

KIBIBI
 It's your friend.

Caoimhe stares at Finn, then covers her eyes.

CAOIMHE
 What happened to his face?

KIBIBI
 The rats got to it. They devour
 the dead, quick as anything.

Caoimhe vomits. Tara screams. Caoimhe grabs her arm.

CAOIMHE

(shouting)

Tara, stop. Enough! Finn is dead.
Screaming will draw attention.

Tara screams. Caoimhe slaps her face. Tara stops, pushes Caoimhe who pushes back, knocking her down.

CAOIMHE (CONT'D)

No more histrionics. Jesus, you shan't be carrying on this way.

Kibibi points to Kiso. He is suddenly upon her.

KISO

Did I say that you could move?

CAOIMHE

No, sir.

KISO

No, sir? Then punishment is due.
Cut cane for the rest of the day.

CAOIMHE

I'm not able. My skin is burning.

Slaves harvest sugar, do not look at Caoimhe.

KISO

Perhaps you are not good for this work. You would be better suited for some other work.

CAOIMHE

Perhaps, yes.

KISO

Start cutting the cane.

Caoimhe turns, bends to cut cane. Kiso undoes his pants, grabs her waist, holding her neck in choke hold.

KISO (CONT'D)

Perhaps you are good at this?

Kiso starts to penetrate Caoimhe. Leland rides on horseback, jumps Kiso, punches his jaw.

LELAND BROMWELL

Kiso, get to work, now! This is your last warning. I do not want to hear that you have touched this girl. Understood?

Kiso stands, adjusting his pants.

KISO

Yes, Massa. On your feet, girl. I told you to get back to work.

Kiso walks away as Leland watches. He turns to Caoimhe.

LELAND BROMWELL

Did he hurt you?

Caoimhe tries to hide her body from Leland.

CAOIMHE

No, sir. I'm all right.

Leland removes his shirt and hands it to Caoimhe.

LELAND BROMWELL

Take the rest of the day. After sunrise, come up to the house.

Leland rides away. His shirt hangs past her knees. She sits down, weak. Kibibi gives her a calabash of water.

KIBIBI

Must watch out for the Mulattoes. They's bad ones. And the Whites.

Caoimhe points to Leland as he disappears.

CAOIMHE

What about him? I saw him once, on the dock, the day I arrived.

KIBIBI

Massa? Why, that's Massa Leland. He comes and goes. He is back now.

CAOIMHE

Where does he go?

KIBIBI

He doesn't tell us, but he's all right. You can trust him.

Kibibi looks at Caoimhe sympathetically, then points to Caoimhe's legs and grins. Blood is drips down her legs.

KIBIBI (CONT'D)

Ooh, you sho is lucky. You got the curse. Least ways you won't be having no baby slaves for them.

CAOIMHE

For whom?

KIBIBI

Mulattoes hate the White man for raping their mothers, so they hurt and rape White women, who then have their babies. The babies become the property of the Massas.

CAOIMHE

They breed us like cattle as well as buying us?

KIBIBI

Massa Leland won't be giving you any babies.

CAOIMHE

He won't?

KIBIBI

No, I been around here long enough to know he's never sired a child.

CAOIMHE

Maybe his wife is barren.

KIBIBI

No woman has had his baby.

INT. LELAND BROMWELL'S BEDROOM - NIGHT

Leland, in nightshirt, climbs into bed. Afton, long nightgown, kneels praying, then joins him.

Leland blows out kerosene lamp. Full moon bathes the room in blue. Leland reaches over to touch Afton.

AFTON

Don't be disgusting, Leland.

LELAND BROMWELL

Afton, am I that repulsive to you?

AFTON

This is a marriage of convenience. Allow me to remind you once more that my father bought this plantation for you to run. I am a woman of means. Without my father's money, you are nothing.

LELAND BROMWELL
 (rubbing his forehead)
 What of it? You are my wife. I
 have needs, after all.

AFTON
 Lustful, vulgar needs. I merely
 tolerate you.

LELAND BROMWELL
 The act of intercourse can be the
 most pleasurable of acts between a
 man and his wife.

AFTON
 Men are nothing more than
 lecherous, raunchy beasts with
 animal desires. Your friend,
 Thomas personifies the stereotype.

LELAND BROMWELL
 You're not well, Afton. God knows
 I have been more than patient with
 you. In our years together we've
 had marital relations seven times.

AFTON
 Are you keeping score?

LELAND BROMWELL
 How can I not? Seven times. In as
 many years.

AFTON
 None of you is better than those
 filthy slaves we keep.

LELAND BROMWELL
 What's wrong with you?

AFTON
 Leave me alone.

LELAND BROMWELL
 As you wish.

He rolls onto his side, away from Afton, eyes wide open.

INT. CAOIMHE'S CHATTEL HOUSE - NIGHT

Caoimhe sunstroke, shivers, wrapped in cotton sheet. BANG
 on door. Kibibi opens it to QUASHEE, (18), muscular,
 handsome. Kibibi points to Caoimhe.

KIBIBI

She's over here.

QUASHEE

I's here to help you. I'm Quashee.

Quashee rips open aloe plant, applies gel to Caoimhe's left shoulder.

QUASHEE (CONT'D)

That should take out the sting.

CAOIMHE

Kibibi, is he going to hurt me?

KIBIBI

No, he's a good man. Come to fix your burns and whip marks.

QUASHEE

Lie down on your stomach.

Kibibi nods to a doubtful Caoimhe. Quashee pulls sheet to her waist revealing severe sunburn and deep whip marks.

QUASHEE (CONT'D)

I's gentle.

Quashee applies the gel to the burn, avoiding whip marks.

CAOIMHE

I can't bend my legs. They hurt.

Quashee covers her upper torso, then lifts the bottom half of the sheet to reveal red legs, yellow blisters.

KIBIBI

Woohee. Look at that. I's never seen anything that bad before.

QUASHEE

You must surely be hurting. It will be better. Quashee is here.

Quashee applies aloe vera jelly all over her legs.

QUASHEE (CONT'D)

I'm sorry that I have to touch you, Missy.

CAOIMHE

Why?

QUASHEE

You being a White woman and all.

CAOIMHE

You're trying to help me, are you not?

QUASHEE

That's all I's trying to do. You won't tell the Massa, will you?

Caoimhe sits up, holds sheet up. She looks at Quashee.

CAOIMHE

Give me your hand.

Caoimhe kisses his hand. Quashee pulls it away, quickly.

QUASHEE

That ain't proper, Missy.

CAOIMHE

You are mistaken. You are one of the only proper things to have happened to me.

Quashee puts his head down and turns to walk to the door.

QUASHEE

Drink lots of water, and the juice from the coconut.

Kibibi escorts him out. Kibibi, angry, faces Caoimhe.

KIBIBI

You should not have done that.

CAOIMHE

I like him. How come I've never seen him here before?

KIBIBI

Don't you know it ain't proper for a White girl to kiss a Negro?

CAOIMHE

But it's proper for a Negro to whip a White girl, then force his penis into her privates?

Kibibi shakes her head from side to side.

KIBIBI

Girl, you got a lot to learn about
slave overseers.

Caoimhe smiles and lies down on her stomach.

CAOIMHE

Does Quashee have a girl?

KIBIBI

Let me warn you about Quashee.
He's only here for a few days. He
comes from Frax Hall Plantation.

Caoimhe sits up and takes notice.

CAOIMHE

The biggest plantation on the
island?

KIBIBI

And the worst for beatings. It's
no good to be friends with anyone
from Frax. They don't live long.

INT. BARBADOS - CAOIMHE'S SLAVE HOUSE - PLANTATION - DAY

Kibibi wraps Caoimhe's breasts in linen, pulling the
material tight to flatten her out.

KIBIBI

If those get any bigger the
Massa's going to know you is now a
woman.

CAOIMHE

Pull tighter. Make me appear flat.

Kibibi pulls the material and Caoimhe exhales.

KIBIBI

Has Massa Leland touched you?

CAOIMHE

No, but I catch him staring at me.

KIBIBI

Is he kind to you?

CAOIMHE

All he makes me do is dusting,
cleaning, and tidying up.

CAOIMHE (CONT'D)

He's teaching me to read. I think he's a good man, unlike Kiso.

KIBIBI

For a White man, he sure is handsome.

Caoimhe laughs, then winces.

CAOIMHE

You've outdone yourself with the wrap today. It hurts to laugh.

KIBIBI

Is learning letters hard?

CAOIMHE

It's taking time. He shows me a little every time I have a minute.

KIBIBI

He's not so bad, like I told you. Now, you get yourself up to the house before he comes looking.

Caoimhe walks out the door ahead of Kibibi.

INT. BARBADOS SUGAR PLANTATION - BROMWELL HALL - DRAWING ROOM - 1663 - DAY

Caoimhe sets a tea and crumpet tray on the table next to THOMAS, (34), fat, bulging eyes, pink puffy skin.

AFTON BROMWELL, (35), small hazel eyes, brown hair, large cross hangs from neck, watches Caoimhe with distaste.

LELAND BROMWELL

Thank you, Caoimhe. Thomas, help yourself to the refreshments.

As Caoimhe walks by Thomas, he grabs her arm.

THOMAS

Is this fine young filly one of the refreshments?

Caoimhe looks to Leland, scared.

LELAND BROMWELL

Caoimhe is an indentured servant. She's only a girl. Leave her be.

Thomas stares at Caoimhe, making her uncomfortable.

THOMAS

I was hoping for a virgin tonight.

LELAND BROMWELL

Thomas! There are ladies present.

THOMAS

(laughing)

I'm sure Afton is well acquainted with the needs of men.

AFTON

I am well acquainted with men and their acts of pure desire and lust. It's a misuse of intercourse when they fall short of what God intends.

THOMAS

Does not God intend for us to go forth and procreate?

AFTON

God intends for us to be chaste. For that is the purity of the mind as well as body.

THOMAS

(smirking)

You poor chap. Now I see why you keep this pretty housemaid around.

AFTON

Leland, like myself, does not feel the need to struggle to be chaste.

Afton glares at Thomas. Caoimhe picks up the tray.

CAOIMHE

Pardon me, Sir, will that be all?

LELAND BROMWELL

Bring us some more refreshments.

CAOIMHE

Right away, Sir.

Caoimhe exits. Thomas watches her and licks his lips.

LELAND BROMWELL

I'm sure you don't need me to procure women for you.

THOMAS

She stirs my manhood. I want her.

LELAND BROMWELL

(smiling)

Not this one. She's mine.

Afton scowls at Leland.

THOMAS

Pity. She would have been exciting. How very selfish of you, keeping all the pretty ones for yourself. I won't forget this.

Afton glares at Thomas. Thomas looks Afton in the face.

THOMAS (CONT'D)

Forgive me if I have offended you. I find no shame in enjoying the company of women nor do I hold your opinion that both men and women should be chaste.

AFTON

Failure to live chastely leads to a self-centered existence that blinds us to the needs, joys, and

AFTON (CONT'D)

the beauty of the world around us.

Caoimhe brings tray of coffee, cream and sugar. Leland smiles. Afton stands, leans over Leland's shoulder.

AFTON (CONT'D)

(low voice)

You'd be wise to keep your eyes averted the other way when the help is nearby.

INT. LELAND BROMWELL'S OFFICE - DAY

Leland sits at a desk. Caoimhe walks by, carries duster.

LELAND BROMWELL

Caoimhe, I would like to talk to you in my office.

CAOIMHE

I'm almost finished my work, Sir.

LELAND BROMWELL
Never mind cleaning. Come now.

She enters, puts down duster. Leland holds out a chair.

CAOIMHE
Thank you, Sir.

Leland opens desk drawer, takes pipe and tobacco. He stuffs tobacco into pipe, takes ember tongs from fireplace mantel, pulls out a burning ember.

LELAND BROMWELL
How old are you?

CAOIMHE
Sir?

Placing the red hot ember in his pipe, he sucks in until pipe is lit. He returns the tongs on the mantel, leans.

LELAND BROMWELL
Come, come, dear. Rumor has it that you appear to be somewhat younger than you really are. True?

CAOIMHE
I don't quite know how to respond to that, Master Leland, Sir.

LELAND BROMWELL
You've proven yourself to be a good worker, efficient, and rather attractive, I might add.

CAOIMHE
(blushing)
Thank you.

LELAND BROMWELL
Come into Bridgetown with me. Buy yourself a nice dress and proper, fancy shoes.

CAOIMHE
I couldn't do that, Sir.

Leland raises one eyebrow.

CAOIMHE (CONT'D)
I don't have any use for a dress or fancy shoes. Also, I have no money for women's finery.

LELAND BROMWELL

I am not asking you. It's an order. You cannot be seen out with me in public wearing clothes only worthy of a maid.

CAOIMHE

Sir?

LELAND BROMWELL

Caoimhe, haven't you questioned why I have been teaching you to read?

CAOIMHE

I am extremely grateful, but it is most unusual, Sir.

LELAND BROMWELL

I have been grooming you to fit in with the class of people with whom I associate. I believe you are now ready to accompany me on outings.

Leland hands a red leather journal to Caoimhe.

LELAND BROMWELL (CONT'D)

Use this book to record all the new words you have learned.

EXT. ST. JAMES PARISH - MT. STEADFAST PLANTATION - 1663 - NIGHT

COLONEL GEORGE STEADFAST, (45), stately, greets guests arriving by carriage. Leland, two carriages behind, steps out, takes Caoimhe's hand, helps her down. She wears long sleeved yellow dress, hiding branding mark, red sash, white shoes, clutch. Hair swept up in red bow.

Leland takes Caoimhe's arm, enter the mansion, where Colonel Steadfast's wife, HAZEL, (42), brunette, elegant.

INT. ST. JAMES PARISH - MT. STEADFAST PLANTATION - DINING HALL - 1663 - NIGHT

The guests finish dinner. The men stand as the women leave the room. George Steadfast addresses the men.

COLONEL GEORGE STEADFAST

Gentlemen, let us retire to the front room, for our brandy.

EXT. MT. STEADFAST PLANTATION - VERANDA - NIGHT

Slave, LULA, (18) brings rum punch to the women on the veranda. She hands one to Caoimhe.

CAOIMHE

Thank you. What's your name?

Lula looks at Hazel, afraid to answer, then at Caoimhe.

LULA

Lula, Missy.

CAOIMHE

What a pretty name. My Irish surname starts with 'O'. Studying origins of names holds great fascination for me.

HAZEL

Really? Who would have thought you studied anything, judging by your accent. Lula, back to work, now!

CAOIMHE

For example, yours is actually a shortened form of a nut.

Lula shuffles into the house. Hazel, KATHERINE, (27), ELIZABETH, (28), stare at Caoimhe. CECILIA, (25), laughs.

Hazel casts hateful look at Cecilia, turns to Caoimhe.

HAZEL

Don't you know that fraternizing with the help is frowned upon?

CECILIA

And we never thank them for anything that's required of them.

HAZEL

They are nothing more than slaves, after all.

CECILIA

(to Hazel)

Did you hear that Alice is hosting a cotillion next Saturday?

Hazel shifts gaze to Cecilia, darts her eyes to Caoimhe.

HAZEL

I'll just have to buy another new outfit. Will the tailor in Indian Bridge whip something up in time?

KATHERINE

I was there yesterday. He off loaded two entire bolts of silk, from a Chinese merchant ship.

ELIZABETH

My dear Hazel, Bridgetown hasn't been Indian Bridge for years.

CECILIA

I still refer to it as Indian Bridge. Wasn't it better in those days when the slaves would listen, and not complain?

HAZEL

Our slaves are becoming a little uppity too. I thought I was the only one with grievances.

KATHERINE

In my opinion, we did them a service, removing them from that savage continent of Africa.

CECILIA

Not to mention the Irish. Who would want to live on that damp, barren wasteland with nothing to eat but potatoes, when they can enjoy good food, sunshine, and a better way of life here?

Caoimhe holds her temples and closes her eyes.

CECILIA (CONT'D)

Oh, dear. I'm sorry. Your family comes from Ireland, isn't that so?

ELIZABETH

As merchants or plantation owners?

Caoimhe puts her head down. Hazel leans over to Caoimhe.

HAZEL

Not feeling well?

CAOIMHE

I think the drink has gone to my head. I feel a little ill.

CECILIA

Perhaps that cheap Irish swill you're used to would sit better. What do you call that? Ale?

Caoimhe shoots a look of hate, It does not go unnoticed.

HAZEL

I do believe you've upset the little waif, Ceecee.

The four women watch Caoimhe rise and enter the house.

INT. COLONEL STEADFAST'S FRONT ROOM - NIGHT

Caoimhe bursts in straight over Leland.

CAOIMHE

I must leave now, Leland.

LELAND BROMWELL

Are you feeling poorly?

CAOIMHE

I have a splitting forehead pain.

Leland turns to the men in the room.

LELAND BROMWELL

Gentlemen, I'm afraid I'll have to cut this evening short. Let's get together again, soon.

EXT. MT. STEADFAST PLANTATION - VERANDA - NIGHT

Lula hands Leland his hat. They walk past the women.

CAOIMHE

It was a pleasure meeting you, Lula. If ever you're near Bromwell Plantation, be sure to come and see me. We will have a pot of tea.

Lula is wide-eyed. Leland pulls Caoimhe down the stairs. He nods at Lula and smiles.

HAZEL

I wonder what Afton will think of this arrangement.

Leland turns and looks at Hazel. He stops on the stairs.

LELAND BROMWELL

Idle prattle turns beautiful women, such as yourselves, into dull, sluggish spirits. This is an action to be avoided, of which I'm certain.

The women are shocked. Caoimhe gives them a wide grin.

HAZEL

Well, I never in all my born days.

Leland helps Caoimhe into the carriage, sits beside her.

LELAND BROMWELL

Care to tell me what happened?

CAOIMHE

You heard what they said.

LELAND BROMWELL

About telling Afton about us?

CAOIMHE

There's an 'us'?

LELAND BROMWELL

(taking her hand)
Confide in me. I'm not the enemy.

CAOIMHE

They were rude, insulting. I don't like the way they treat Lula.

LELAND BROMWELL

You're right. They are nothing but an insufferable bunch of boors.

CAOIMHE

(starts to cry)
Don't you see? You can dress me in a fancy outfit, but I do not fit in, nor do I want to. I hate them.

LELAND BROMWELL

Where do you fit in, Caoimhe? With the Negro servants, like Lula?

CAOIMHE

They treat me better. We respect each other.

LELAND BROMWELL

You're not one of them, either.

Caoimhe turns her head away as the carriage veers down the dirt road, the driver pulling on the reins.

CAOIMHE

If I'm not one of them, then send me back to Ireland where I belong.

Leland holds her face, kisses her. Caoimhe pulls away.

LELAND BROMWELL

If I could, I would send you back.

CAOIMHE

I was so wrongheaded to believe you were kind. You have the means to send me home, but you never will.

LELAND BROMWELL

You're right. I'm a very selfish man. You see, Caoimhe, I've fallen in love with you.

EXT. BROMWELL'S PLANTATION - 1663 - DAY

Sun filled field, SUDDENLY, sky's black. Kibibi and Tara see swarm of locusts descending on them. Slaves drop machetés, attempt to shield faces. Wegahta falls. Locusts

fly into mouths and eyes. Covering their heads, they try to beat them off. They numerous, causing confusion.

INT. LELAND BROMWELL'S BEDROOM - 1663 - DAY

Afton packs a steamer trunk. Leland watches from the bed.

LELAND BROMWELL

You won't reconsider?

AFTON

Didn't you realise that my friends would tell me about your sordid little affair with that girl?

LELAND BROMWELL

(head in hands)

I'm sorry if I've disgraced you.
Afton, I crave your affection, in
and out of the bedroom.

AFTON

There is no jewel in the world so
valuable as a chaste and virtuous
woman. So it is in the Bible.

LELAND BROMWELL

My God, woman. I cannot endure
this anymore.

AFTON

You do not have to after today.
And, it would please me immensely
if you did not take our Lord's
name in vain.

Leland stares at Afton with utter contempt.

LELAND BROMWELL

That has been the problem with
this marriage. Three of us share
the bed, you, me, and God. One of
us has to leave.

AFTON

One of us is leaving. And, I have
no intention of returning to you,
Leland. First, the scandalous
liaison with that diabolical
little hussy, and now the locusts,
wiping us out financially.

Afton exits and yells over the broad, winding staircase.

AFTON (CONT'D)

Boy, come here and bring someone
with you. Don't bother to get up.
The houseboys will carry my trunk.

Afton puts on her gloves and straightens her hat in the
mirror. The houseboys enter and pick up the trunk.

AFTON (CONT'D)

Good-bye, Leland. My father will
be in contact with you shortly,
regarding the running of the
plantation.

Afton exits the room. Leland seethes with anger.

INT. BROMWELL'S PLANTATION HOUSE - 1667 - DAY

Leland puts on rain gear as Caoimhe hugs and kisses him.

CAOIMHE

Leland, please be careful out there. I wouldn't want you to get swept away in this hurricane.

LELAND BROMWELL

I must check on the chattel houses, to make sure they're not in ill repair.

CAOIMHE

Make sure the workers are not in need of anything?

EXT. BROMWELL'S PLANTATION - 1668 - DAY

The entire sugar cane crop is burnt dry and destroyed. Leland stands with Kiso, overlooking the plantation.

KISO

This drought's bad, Massa.

LELAND BROMWELL

This, so soon after last year's hurricane will destroy me.

KISO

Can we plant again?

LELAND BROMWELL

Once we have some rain.

INT. BARBADOS - BROMWELL HALL - DRAWING ROOM - 1669 - DAY

White man in uniform, EDWARD HILL, (40), led by African, DIJI, (28), enter drawing room, are greeted by Leland, (59), grey, and frail.

DIJI

Sir, a Mr. EDWARD HILL to see you.

Leland turns to see Edward, smiles feebly.

EDWARD HILL

Leland, a letter from Carolina's Governor, Sir John Yeamans.

LELAND BROMWELL
 I'm shocked it didn't float away.
 You may be dismissed, Diji.

Diji exits the room.

EDWARD HILL
 One never can tell with rain here.
 It's either feast or famine.

LELAND BROMWELL
 It's a damn deluge, man.

Leland rips open letter with silver opener. Edward stands at attention while Leland reads the letter.

LELAND BROMWELL (CONT'D)
 I am able to ship out my slaves to
 Carolina, and will be handsomely
 rewarded. That will please Afton.

EDWARD HILL
 Sir?

LELAND BROMWELL
 Don't be coy with me, Edward. You
 know very well that I am quite ill
 with consumption. It's only a
 matter of weeks, now.

EDWARD HILL
 Have the doctors given you this
 news, or is it your assumption?

LELAND BROMWELL
 Both.

EDWARD HILL
 This letter came at a good time?

LELAND BROMWELL
 Very fortuitous. I was wondering
 how on Heaven and Earth Caoimhe
 was going to carry on after I'm
 gone. Now this letter arrives.

EDWARD HILL
 An act of God, perhaps?

LELAND BROMWELL
 Why would God bring such good
 fortune bound in a silk lining of
 bad fortune for me, as opposed to
 Sir John Yeamans?

EDWARD HILL

Perhaps he is not as God fearing a man such as yourself, Leland.

LELAND BROMWELL

In any event, this is a fine opportunity to shed myself of the slaves and turn a profit in return. I doubt I'll get a good price for Bromwell Hall after all these years of hardship.

EDWARD HILL

Have you not made any money?

LELAND BROMWELL

Between locusts, hurricanes, drought and now flooding, I'm in serious trouble. Inform the slaves that they are leaving.

Edward Hill nods, turns and exits.

INT. BROMWELL HALL - DRAWING ROOM - 1669 - NIGHT

Caoimhe sits in the drawing room. Leland enters.

LELAND BROMWELL

I just received word that Afton will be returning from London in a fortnight to sell the plantation.

CAOIMHE

May I continue to sleep with you in the house after her return?

LELAND BROMWELL

Yes, but after, it looks as though

LELAND BROMWELL (CONT'D)

our days here are over.

CAOIMHE

Where will we go if it sells?

LELAND BROMWELL

I will be dead by Spring. You are going to another plantation.

Caoimhe is shocked and hurt.

CAOIMHE

Leland. Don't send me away. I love you and I will tend to you in your illness.

LELAND BROMWELL

If only that were possible.

Caoimhe looks down at the floor.

CAOIMHE

You won't send me to Frax Hall, please, Leland.

LELAND BROMWELL

What do you know about Frax Hall?

CAOIMHE

The word amongst the slaves is that they're treated with great brutality at Frax.

LELAND BROMWELL

You needn't concern yourself with details, but rest assured, I would never sell anyone to Frax.

Leland caresses Caoimhe's shoulder and kisses her.

LELAND BROMWELL (CONT'D)

I'm quite ill with consumption. It's time I gave up this plantation.

Tears well up in Caoimhe's eyes.

LELAND BROMWELL (CONT'D)

Don't go to pieces. I'm an old man. You should be comforted in the knowledge that you helped me get through these twilight years.

CAOIMHE

Please, Leland, don't say those things.

INT. BROMWELL HALL - LELAND'S BEDROOM - MORNING

Leland watches Caoimhe sleep, kissing her forehead. Caoimhe opens her eyes, smiles weakly.

LELAND BROMWELL

Good morning. Did you sleep well?

CAOIMHE

I always sleep well in this bed.

LELAND BROMWELL

You should not become used to it.

Caoimhe sits up, wraps the sheet around her small frame.
Leland coughs up blood into his handkerchief.

CAOIMHE

Leland, you're bleeding!

Leland puts his pants on and looks at Caoimhe sadly.

LELAND BROMWELL

I don't want you getting sick
because of me. A cotton plantation
owner in the Americas has agreed
to take some of my slaves.

CAOIMHE

I don't want to leave you in this
condition.

Leland turns away so she doesn't see his tears.

LELAND BROMWELL

It's for your own good. I've been
promised that you will be a free
woman in a couple of years.

CAOIMHE

If you must send me away, send me
back to my people, in Ireland.
Please, Leland? I beg of you.

Leland does not look at her. He walks out of the room.

EXT. THE ALBERMARLE - SLAVE SHIP - AUGUST - 1669 - DAY

Caoimhe boards ship. Albermarle's sails billow in the
trade winds. Barbados slips away in the distance.

CAOIMHE

(mumbling)

Leland, how could the man I love
turn on me in his final hour?

She stretches her neck, searches for someone. The
Albermarle's seats line the Starboard and Port sides.

Sailors attend to the slaves, hand out bowls rice and beans with some chicken. Caoimhe approaches Tara.

TARA WAUGH

I'll no have the likes of you sitting with me. You betrayed your own kind by cavorting with Master Bromwell. Away with you, now, go.

Caoimhe sits next to MOLLY SULLIVAN, (30).

MOLLY SULLIVAN

Molly Sullivan. Looking for someone?

CAOIMHE

I'm Caoimhe...a friend. He may not be here.

MOLLY SULLIVAN

What does it matter? All the friends I made disappeared.

CAOIMHE

How did you lose them?

MOLLY SULLIVAN

Some had fever, pox, scurvy, consumption, childbirth, thrown overboard, and those who survived died at the hands of our master.

CAOIMHE

I, too, have witnessed cruelty done to us I did not think one Christian could inflict upon another, causing such pain and even death.

MOLLY SULLIVAN

I want to die. I don't matter.

CAOIMHE

We're being saved, are we not?

MOLLY SULLIVAN

If only I shared your enthusiasm.

CAOIMHE

My father believed I mattered and could be anything if I tried hard. I am not going to let him down.

MOLLY SULLIVAN

Perhaps your father lied to you.

CAOIMHE

I'm going to the Americas, to be freed in a wee while and return to Ireland to be with my family.

MOLLY SULLIVAN

I've been violated so many times. It will be the same. We'll never see our homeland again, not ever.

CAOIMHE

Even in the depths of despair, we can have hope.

Theresa rolls her eyes and scoffs.

MOLLY SULLIVAN

That concept will vanish from your thoughts soon enough.

Theresa turns away. Caoimhe looks upon her sadly.

CAOIMHE

Where there is life, there is hope. Don't wish yourself dead.

EXT. NORTH CAROLINA, CAPE FEAR RIVER - HARBOR - DAY

Albermarle enters Cape Fear River, glides into harbour.

EXT. CAPE FEAR - HARBOR - DAY

A large, stern looking man, ARTEMIS BARTLOW, (32) stands on the shore, waiting to pick up his shipment of slaves who are chained to a concrete wall. The Captain, CALEB JONES, (40), hands a bound envelope of papers to Artemis.

CAPTAIN CALEB JONES

I am Captain Caleb Jones. Here is the file containing the slaves' paperwork, Mr. Bartlow. Everything should be in order.

ARTEMIS BARTLOW

Thank you, Captain Jones. I trust they all made the voyage, safe and sound?

CAPTAIN CALEB JONES

Yes sir.

ARTEMIS BARTLOW

Here, then, is the compensation as agreed upon.

Artemis hands envelope to Jones. Artemis inspects slaves.

EXT. CAPE FEAR PLANTATION - COTTON FIELD - DAY

Caoimhe picks cotton, looking around. Artemis approaches.

ARTEMIS BARTLOW

Who are you looking for?

CAOIMHE

A friend.

ARTEMIS BARTLOW

You have no friends here, just
Negras and Irishmen. Neither is
worthy of your friendship.

Artemis turns to the others working the field.

ARTEMIS BARTLOW (CONT'D)

Everyone, listen up. All the boys,
I want you to bark like dogs.

The men look at each other in disbelief.

ARTEMIS BARTLOW (CONT'D)

You heard me, and the women, I
want you to bleat like sheep.

The men bark, Artemis grins. The women make sheep sounds.
Artemis taps a man on the shoulder.

ARTEMIS BARTLOW (CONT'D)

Why aren't you barking?

MAN IN COTTON FIELD

I's a man, not a dog.

ARTEMIS BARTLOW

Bark now boy, or you'll get
lashes. And you'll refer to me as
'Master', from now on.

The man stands straight, not flinching, and not barking.

ARTEMIS BARTLOW (CONT'D)

Are you disobeying my command?

The man does not move. Artemis drags him aside, pulls lashing out of his pocket and ties the man to a tree, takes out a whip and hits the man.

An African slave, eight months pregnant, cries. Artemis shifts his attention to the woman.

ARTEMIS BARTLOW (CONT'D)

Why aren't you bleating? Did I say you could stop?

MAN IN COTTON FIELD

She's my woman. Don't force her to make noises like an animal.

Artemis, angry, picks up a shovel, hands it to Caoimhe.

ARTEMIS BARTLOW

Caoimhe, dig a hole the size of her stomach.

He points to the woman. Caoimhe begins digging.

CAOIMHE

Like this?

ARTEMIS BARTLOW

So she can lie down in it and put her big belly in the hole.

Caoimhe removes ten shovels of dirt from the ground. Artemis forces the woman to lie down in the dirt.

ARTEMIS BARTLOW (CONT'D)

Now lie down in it, face down.

AFRICAN SLAVE WOMAN

No, please, Massa, don't make me do that? Please don't hurt me.

Artemis beats her back. The man screams at Artemis.

MAN IN COTTON FIELD

Beat me, Massa, Sir, not her.

ARTEMIS BARTLOW

She's in the hole so her stomach won't feel the strike of the whip.

MAN IN COTTON FIELD

Yes Sir. That is an act of kindness, to be sure, but allow me to be beaten instead.

Artemis stops beating her and turns to the man.

ARTEMIS BARTLOW

I see chivalry isn't dead. Very well, but first, I will conduct some business with your woman.

Artemis undoes his pants and is about to rape the African woman when he notices Caoimhe giving him a hateful stare.

ARTEMIS BARTLOW (CONT'D)

What's the look for? Do you need a whipping?

CAOIMHE

No, Master. The sun hurts my eyes.

ARTEMIS BARTLOW

Perhaps it's time we get you out of this bright sun. Come with me.

Artemis pulls Caoimhe to the plantation house.

INT. CAPE FEAR - MAGNOLIA MANOR PLANTATION HOUSE - MASTER BEDROOM - DAY

Artemis throws Caoimhe onto his bed.

ARTEMIS BARTLOW

Take off your clothes.

CAOIMHE

I don't want to.

Artemis slaps her face. Moisture forms in her eyes.

ARTEMIS BARTLOW

I am your master, and as such, I own you, all of you. Understood?

CAOIMHE

I understand.

Artemis undoes her shirt. He licks her right breast, scratches it, digs his nails in hard. Caoimhe squeals.

ARTEMIS BARTLOW

Take off your clothes.

Caoimhe hesitates. Artemis leans over to the night table and picks up a sharp knife. He cuts her left breast until it bleeds. Caoimhe cries out in pain.

ARTEMIS BARTLOW (CONT'D)
I said to get undressed. Are you
deaf as well as stupid?

Caoimhe complies. She stands, naked.

ARTEMIS BARTLOW (CONT'D)
(undoing his pants)
On your knees and take care of me.

Caoimhe kneels before him. Caoimhe slides his combinations down over his hips, and hesitates.

ARTEMIS BARTLOW (CONT'D)
You know what to do with it.

Reluctantly she strokes his penis. Artemis grabs her hair and holds her in front of him.

ARTEMIS BARTLOW (CONT'D)
(growling)
Take it in your mouth.

CAOIMHE
I cannot, Master.

Artemis punches her eye, sends her off balance onto her back. Caoimhe stands, holding her eye.

ARTEMIS BARTLOW
Do you know what happens to slaves
who don't obey?

Artemis pushes her down on her stomach. He punches continuously. She groans with each hit.

He is rough. Caoimhe yells out in pain. He stands, adjusts his pants while Caoimhe lies sobbing.

ARTEMIS BARTLOW (CONT'D)
Get out! Go back to your Niggers.

Artemis hits her in the side of her head with her shoe.

ARTEMIS BARTLOW (CONT'D)
I want you back here tomorrow at
noon. You'll do what I request.

INT. VENEKA'S SHACK - NIGHT

Caoimhe has black, swollen eye, bloody, battered face and deep cuts on her breasts and torso. VENEKA, (23), slim, African, takes damp cloth to her face.

VENEKA

Open your legs, girl. Let me see what that bastard did to you. Caoimhe, you must, please?

Caoimhe exposes swollen, badly bruised vagina, oozing congealed blood. Veneka gasps. She wipes away blood, finding a tear in Caoimhe's labia.

CAOIMHE

I refused him so he beat me.

VENEKA

He's a twisted, mean animal.

CAOIMHE

He cut me, and raped me. You seeing this hurts me more.

VENEKA

I'm your friend. We help friends.

Caoimhe cries QUIETLY. Veneka wipes away her tears.

CAOIMHE

He kept punching me.

VENEKA

It's over now. Try to forget.

CAOIMHE

I pretended I was with them, my mother and father.

Veneka pats her on the thigh.

CAOIMHE (CONT'D)

We were on the coast, looking for starfish. Father lifted me onto his shoulders.

VENEKA

That's a good memory. Tell me what else you thought about.

EXT. IRISH BEACH - DAY - (FLASHBACK)

Twelve year old Caoimhe runs along the seashore with a pail and shovel. She squats on the craggy rocks.

CAOIMHE

Papa, look! I found a starfish
with only four legs.

Caoimhe's three brothers run over to her side.

BROTHER 1

What do you suppose happened to
its other leg?

BROTHER 2

A large fish attacked and ate it.

BROTHER 3

It might have been a shark.

BROTHER 1

No, sharks are too big.

CAOIMHE

Maybe he just lost it when it got
caught on something.

END OF FLASHBACK

INT. VENEKA'S SHACK - LATER - SAME NIGHT

CAOIMHE

My brothers argued for days about
what might have happened.

Veneka puts a blanket around her shoulders and gives Caoimhe a hug. Caoimhe's demeanor changes to sadness.

CAOIMHE (CONT'D)

Artemis groaned like a pig and
pulled my hair. I thought of Mama
and Papa. It was a very good day.

Caoimhe lets out a cry that is in between a HOWL and a GROAN. Veneka holds her and rocks her like a baby.

VENEKA

It's going to be fine. One day
he's going to pay for this. Va
doky! It means kill the devil!

CAOIMHE

Please, Veneka, don't let me be alone tonight?

VENEKA

You can stay here with me.

The two young women lie on the bed. Veneka pulls the blanket over Caoimhe, and strokes her hair.

EXT. MAGNOLIA MANOR PLANTATION - CAPE FEAR - COTTON FIELDS - DAY

Veneka stands close to Caoimhe picking cotton.

VENEKA

I hear tell of another slave ship that arrived from the Islands.

CAOIMHE

What of it?

VENEKA

Maybe your friend was on the ship.

Caoimhe stands and stretches her back.

CAOIMHE

The best thing to do is not to get one's hopes up.

VENEKA

I hear that they took off a big African man.

CAOIMHE

That would hardly be an unusual occurrence, now, would it?

VENEKA

He goes by the name of Quashee.

Caoimhe runs to Veneka. The overseer approaches.

CAOIMHE

Quashee? Someone said his name?

Veneka sees the overseer and goes back to picking cotton.

VENEKA

(under her breath)
Go back to work, Caoimhe. Now.

Caoimhe is struck across the head, sending her reeling.

OVERSEER

Back to work.

The overseer lifts his whip when Veneka steps in.

VENEKA

Stop, don't hit her. It was my fault. I called her over to me.

The overseer turns to Veneka.

OVERSEER

In that case, you deserve this.

CAOIMHE

(pleading)
No, Veneka, don't do this.

The overseer strikes Veneka until she crumbles into a pile, lash marks bleeding. Caoimhe tries to go to her.

OVERSEER

I told you to get back to work.

VENEKA

I'll be fine. Leave me, Caoimhe.

Caoimhe resumes picking cotton, a small smile, a look of hope on her face.

EXT. CAPE FEAR PLANTATION - COTTON FIELD - DAY

Fire breaks out. Molly's clothes are on fire.

MOLLY SULLIVAN

(screaming)
Caoimhe? Save me, please?

Caoimhe goes to Molly who screams as she dies. Caoimhe stops running. Caoimhe kicks the ground, eyes water, choking. Slaves douse flames, others beat them branches. Caoimhe hears man cry for help. Heavy smoke blinds her.

CAOIMHE

Quashee? Quasheee!

Quashee makes his way to her voice. The two hug.

CAOIMHE (CONT'D)

I thought I'd never see you again.

EXT. CAPE FEAR - SLAVE SHACK PORCH - NIGHT

Caoimhe and Veneka use woven leaf fans.

CAOIMHE

It never gets this hot in Ireland.

VENEKA

Tell me more about the verdant
fields and cold water of Ireland.

SCREAMS. Caoimhe and Veneka run, find Artemis standing
beside two Irishmen, in chains. Overseers stand by.

A third hangs from a tree, lower extremities in flames,
slack-jawed, purple tongue hanging, eyes bulging. Caoimhe
covers her eyes. Veneka stares, wide-eyed.

CAOIMHE

Is he dead?

VENEKA

As dead as your grandfather's
grandfather.

Artemis hits him with a stick. The man makes no sound.

ARTEMIS BARTLOW

I demand everyone's attention!

Overseers push the two Irishmen into a clearing.

ARTEMIS BARTLOW (CONT'D)

What we have here are three
examples of insubordination. These
men disobeyed a direct order and
for that they must pay, as he did.

Artemis points to the dead man. Overseers hang the two
men to the tree branches by their arms.

ARTEMIS BARTLOW (CONT'D)

(points to a man)

I want you, boy, to beat these
men, as hard as you can.

An overseer hands the man a whip.

AFRICAN SLAVE

Oh, no, Massa. I couldn't do that.

ARTEMIS BARTLOW

Do it, or you will die along with
them tonight.

AFRICAN SLAVE

Please let them be, Massa.

ARTEMIS BARTLOW

They are Irish vermin, not to be pitied, but to be punished.

The African slave hits the men, one by one, lacking conviction. With each beating, the men cry out.

ARTEMIS BARTLOW (CONT'D)

Harder.

Tears form in the African's eyes. Artemis strides over to him, angry. He pulls the whip from his hands.

ARTEMIS BARTLOW (CONT'D)

Fool. Let's get on with this.

Two overseers pick up kindling wood. They build a fire under the two men. One of the men screams in fear.

ARTEMIS BARTLOW (CONT'D)

This will be your fate if any of you disobey. The women will be spared no exception.

Flames shoot high, reach their waists, loud screams.

CAOIMHE

We need to stop this.

VENEKA

We don't dare interfere. Such is life and life we must live it.

Caoimhe rolls her eyes.

CAOIMHE

Ridiculous way of thinking.

VENEKA

Your way of thinking will get us killed.

Artemis smiles, two men die, upper bodies in flames. Caoimhe and Veneka cover their faces.

CAOIMHE

The smell of burning flesh offends my nostrils.

Artemis pokes four African males, using a stick.

ARTEMIS BARTLOW
 You, boys. Dig a hole big enough
 to hold these men and bury them.

The overseers hand each man a shovel.

ARTEMIS BARTLOW (CONT'D)
 Now! That's an order.

The men dig. One slaves leans on his shovel.

AFRICAN SLAVE
 Massa Bartlow, Sir? A question?

ARTEMIS BARTLOW
 This had better be important, boy.

AFRICAN SLAVE
 We got nothing to bury them in.

ARTEMIS BARTLOW
 What do you mean, boy?

AFRICAN SLAVE
 I was just wondering. Do we make
 their coffins, or does you have
 some for these three men?

ARTEMIS BARTLOW
 Do you bury a dog in a coffin?

AFRICAN SLAVE
 No, uhhh, uhhh, Sir.

ARTEMIS BARTLOW
 A dog's life is worth more than an
 Irishman's. Throw them in the hole
 as is and then cover it with mud.

Artemis overseers satisfied, leave. Caoimhe leans over to
 Veneka, staring at Artemis leaving.

CAOIMHE
 We Irish are no better than dogs?

VENEKA
 That's a fact here, in this place,
 in this time. Yes Ma'am. That's a
 fact.

EXT. CAPE FEAR - PLANTATION - COTTON FIELDS - 1670 - DAY

Veneka, nine months pregnant sees Artemis approaching.

VENEKA

Here he comes, Caoimhe.

Caoimhe looks up and makes a face. She turns to Veneka.

CAOIMHE

I don't know how much longer I can bear this.

VENEKA

Close your eyes and imagine that you are far away from here.

QUASHEE

Don't go with him, Caoimhe.

Artemis is practically upon them.

CAOIMHE

It won't be long before we're together.

ARTEMIS

Caoimhe, I need you at the house.

Caoimhe hands cotton basket to Veneka, follows Artemis.

VENEKA

Thank the Lord my skin is dark. He only likes the White girls.

QUASHEE

When will he leave her alone?

VENEKA

Knowing that pig, he won't leave her be until he sees the top of his baby's head.

QUASHEE

I might have to kill him first.

Veneka smiles.

VENEKA

You don't wanna go to talking bad about the Massa, now, do you?

Veneka tickles Quashee's ribs. He cracks a smile.

INT. CAPE FEAR - MAGNOLIA MANOR - MASTER BEDROOM - DAY

Artemis disrobes Caoimhe, dress falls in one fell swoop, large abdomen protrudes. Artemis rubs her stomach, kisses it. She cringes but does not let him see her. Artemis removes his clothes, forces Caoimhe to lie down.

EXT. CAPE FEAR - PLANTATION - COTTON FIELDS - NIGHT

Caoimhe returns to the field. Men and women sit front of the houses, enjoying cool night air. Caoimhe returns to Veneka's shack to find Quashee.

QUASHEE

Did he hurt you?

Caoimhe puts her head down.

CAOIMHE

He can't hurt me anymore.

QUASHEE

When the baby is born, we must go.

Caoimhe walks over to Quashee, puts her arms around him.

CAOIMHE

It's no use.

They hug each other.

QUASHEE

I dream that I am in Africa,
laughing. I don't laugh anymore.

CAOIMHE

Sometimes when I am asleep, I
dream I am in Dublin, dancing with
my father, happy, then I wake up.

QUASHEE

You dance?

CAOIMHE

One day, once I'm reunited with
family, I will dance again.

QUASHEE

Am I not family?

CAOIMHE

(smiles)
Of course.

Caoimhe stands, pulls Quashee to his feet, they waltz.

INT. CAPE FEAR PLANTATION - 1670 - SLAVE SHACK - NIGHT

Veneka and Irish slave, DEIRDRE, (30) cross hangs from neck, stand over Caoimhe, (27), in labour. Floor, straw covered, to soak up blood.

VENEKA

Caoimhe, I think you're close.
Deirdre, get me some rags.

Deirdre rips sheets. Veneka holds a sharp knife.

CAOIMHE

What will you be doing with that?

VENEKA

I saw my Mama and her Mama use
this when catching babies, for
cutting the rope that joins you to
the baby, Mama said.

Caoimhe is dripping. Deirdre holds her up to squat.

VENEKA (CONT'D)

It's time to push, Caoimhe.

DEIRDRE

Push hard, then stop.

QUASHEE (O.S.)

(yelling outside)
May I come inside yet?

LOUD baby's cry, Quashee does not wait but rushes inside. Deirdre packs Caoimhe's vagina with sheets.

Veneka wipes infant with cloth. Caoimhe lies exhausted.

DEIRDRE

Praise be to the Lord, It's a boy.

QUASHEE

Was it very terrible?

Caoimhe smiles and takes his hand in hers.

CAOIMHE

I dreamt that I was with you, and
it stopped the pain.

Veneka hands linen wrapped baby to Quashee. Deirdre

sweeps up blood soaked straw.

QUASHEE

I don't know how to hold a baby.

CAOIMHE

Give him to me. Hand me my son.

Quashee frowns and hands the baby to her.

CAOIMHE (CONT'D)

How effortlessly the words slip
from my tongue, yet I have only
had a son for ten minutes.

Caoimhe rocks the baby and kisses him on the forehead.

INT. SLAVE SHACK - DAY

Artemis and girl, ISSA, (16), enter shack. Caoimhe nurses baby. Artemis tears baby from her breast. The baby cries.

ARTEMIS BARTLOW

I'll take him now.

Caoimhe stands and chases after Artemis.

CAOIMHE

Give him back. Daniel is mine.

Artemis hits Caoimhe, hard, across the face.

ARTEMIS BARTLOW

His name is Nathaniel, the name of
my father and my grandfather.

Caoimhe, head reeling, makes attempt to take son, lunges at Artemis. He pushes her away, hands baby to Issa.

ARTEMIS BARTLOW (CONT'D)

Get away, wench. I am taking my
son and I'll hear no more of it.

Issa touches her arm in sympathy.

ISSA

Don't you go to worrying now,
Missy Caoimhe. I's a gonna take
good care of Nathaniel.

Caoimhe glares at Artemis.

ARTEMIS BARTLOW

I'll give you a week, then get to
up the house for our daily visits.

Artemis, Issa leave, Caoimhe punches the bed, hard.

EXT. FOREST - NIGHT

Quashee and Caoimhe lie on a blanket, hugging.

QUASHEE

Do you care for me?

Caoimhe sits up and looks at him, concerned.

CAOIMHE

Why would you ask that?

QUASHEE

The Massas teach us that we's
inferior because we is Negroes.

Caoimhe lies down close to him, kissing his face.

CAOIMHE

I've never let others' opinions
interfere with my thinking, or my
ability to reason.

QUASHEE

How so?

CAOIMHE

The Negroes have been good to me,
and one White man. Are any of us
inferior to another?

Quashee pulls her closer.

QUASHEE

I do not know that answer.

Caoimhe furrows her brow in thought.

CAOIMHE

Is not an Irish Wolfhound the same
animal as a Glen of Imaal terrier
or an Irish Setter? All are dogs.

QUASHEE

Once more, I do not know.

CAOIMHE

Kibibi said that we were no different from each other, only the colour of our skin.

QUASHEE

That is a fact...Is what we're doing, wrong?

CAOIMHE

How can two people, any two people, who treat each other with kindness and compassion, be wrong?

QUASHEE

They make us feel bad for feeling good.

CAOIMHE

I love you, Quash.

QUASHEE

I love you, more than you know. And it bothers me when you go to the house with Massa Artemis.

CAOIMHE

I want you and only you. I hate I hate him to his very bones.

Quashee sits up.

QUASHEE

I never seen his bones, but his outsides I hate and his mean face.

Caoimhe bursts out laughing. Quashee lies down. She runs her hand through his long, tightly wound hair.

CAOIMHE

I have striven to understand not his actions. I must admit, it presents a problem for me.

QUASHEE

We have to do something about him.

A slight pause. Caoimhe looks to be deep in thought.

CAOIMHE

I am with his child again.

Quashee sits up and puts his shirt back on.

QUASHEE

We can run away with the baby. I hear they's nice folk up North.

CAOIMHE

Be practical. At the first sign of us together, they'll be catching us and you'll be lynched.

QUASHEE

Is escaping from beatings a crime?

CAOIMHE

Only in the eyes of the master. Rape, though, is a punishable act, and can be prosecuted under the law, resulting in the death penalty if found guilty.

QUASHEE

How do you know that?

CAOIMHE

Leland taught me how to read. Artemis has many books on his shelves. After he has forced himself on me, he passes out, usually from the spirits. I have read many books in his library.

QUASHEE

What does it mean, for us?

CAOIMHE

Nothing. As slaves, we have no rights under the law.

QUASHEE

We have no choice but to run away.

EXT. MAGNOLIA MANOR PLANTATION - CAPE FEAR - 1675 - DAY

Extremely HOT. Veneka falls with a soft thud. Caoimhe rushes to her side. Quashee gives her some water.

CAOIMHE

Are you not feeling well, then?

VENEKA

The hot sun got to me. Help me up.

Veneka drinks water. Caoimhe and Quashee pull Veneka up.

CAOIMHE
Are you able to work?

VENEKA
(smiling)
Not for too much longer.

The three pick cotton.

VENEKA (CONT'D)
I tried boiling cotton root and
drinking the water, but nothing
happened.

CAOIMHE
Cotton root, you say?

VENEKA
How do you think most of us here
don't keep having baby after baby?
If you drink before and after
you're with a man, you don't get
with child.

Caoimhe stares open mouthed.

CAOIMHE
You're saying it prevents...?

VENEKA
(rubbing her stomach)
Not all the time.

CAOIMHE
I haven't told you, but so am I.

VENEKA
Well, don't that just beat all.

INT. VENEKA'S SHACK - 1676 - NIGHT

Caoimhe, 9 months pregnant, Deirdre, hover over Veneka.

DEIRDRE
There, a girl.

Caoimhe stares open mouthed at the baby. Deirdre rubs the
baby in a towel. It makes no noise.

Deirdre thumps the baby's back, turns her upside down and
slaps her, wipes the inside of her mouth with a towel.
Veneka, frantic, sits up and tries to take the baby.

VENEKA

Is she,..?

DEIRDRE

I've been catching babies a long time, and I know when one is dead and with the Lord.

VENEKA

I want to hold her.

Deirdre wraps the baby, hands her to Veneka, who sobs. Caoimhe looks down at a puddle on the rough wooden floor.

CAOIMHE

Deirdre? I've been having twinges all day.

Deirdre gets a bed ready, Veneka rocks her baby girl. Caoimhe pulls Deirdre towards her face.

CAOIMHE (CONT'D)

(whispering)
Why is her baby White?

DEIRDRE

Albino. Her eyes are as red as a rabbit's. I saw it once before.

INT. VENEKA'S SHACK - MORNING

Caoimhe, squatting, groans, in throes of active labour.

VENEKA

Is it time to push, Caoimhe?

Caoimhe nods, grunting slightly and begins pushing.

DEIRDRE

I see the baby's head.

VENEKA

One more time. You can do this.

DEIRDRE

She's done it before.

VENEKA

Each time they forget the last.

Caoimhe strains, the head slips out. Deirdre turns it and the shoulders and body slide into her hands. Caoimhe lets out a sigh, lies on the bed, exhausted. The baby cries.

CAOIMHE

Boy or girl?

Deirdre and Veneka stare at each other, saying nothing. Caoimhe smiles, then delivers the placenta.

Deirdre wraps the baby in a blanket, hands it to Caoimhe.

VENEKA

We mustn't tell the Massa.

CAOIMHE

Tell Quashee that he has a son.

VENEKA

We ain't telling anyone about this baby, especially Quashee.

DEIRDRE

If Master knows, he will surely beat you, maybe to death, then he will kill the boy and Quashee.

Caoimhe looks at Veneka who nods in agreement.

CAOIMHE

But, don't they want us Irish girls to have African babies?

DEIRDRE

Not you. You are considered to be Master's personal property.

Caoimhe looks to Veneka for confirmation.

VENEKA

That's so.

DEIRDRE

You and Caoimhe need to lie back and rest now. Artemis is out of town, but we have to be ready with a plan before he returns home.

Caoimhe nurses her baby. Deirdre sits beside Caoimhe.

CAOIMHE

He'll ne'er kill my wee baby, nor Quashee.

DEIRDRE

He's not to be trifled with. We must switch babies.

CAOIMHE

Pardon me?

VENEKA

You had a baby girl, stillborn. I raise the boy as my own. If Massa wants to see your baby, she's White, and he will believe you.

CAOIMHE

No, I'll be wanting to keep my baby boy.

DEIRDRE

You'll still see him, every day, and God knows he's yours, but it's the only way to be safe.

EXT. CAPE FEAR - MAGNOLIA MANOR PLANTATION - 1676 - DAY

Artemis, drunk, staggers, approaches Nathaniel, (6) who plays marbles with musket balls, with three slave boys.

ARTEMIS BARTLOW

Nathaniel, come here, immediately!

Nathaniel, frightened, stands up, dropping his musket balls to the ground. One of the boys picks them up.

NATHANIEL BARTLOW

Yes, sir.

A square with a grid in the middle in the dirt. Artemis wipes it out. Boys stare at it and then at him.

NATHANIEL BARTLOW (CONT'D)

That was a game of Nine Men's Morris and now you've ruined it.

ARTEMIS BARTLOW

It was nothing.

Artemis kicks Nathaniel in the centre of his back, knocking him down, then grabs Nathaniel's ear, pulls him up. Nathaniel winces. Artemis drags him to the house.

ARTEMIS BARTLOW (CONT'D)

(shouting)

What have I told you about carousing with the Negro children?

NATHANIEL BARTLOW

But, Papa, with whom shall I play?

ARTEMIS BARTLOW

There's to be no playing. I forbid
you to associate with those
children. You are their master.

NATHANIEL BARTLOW

Yes, Papa.

Nathaniel looks back, sadly. One of the boys waves.

ARTEMIS BARTLOW

Sometimes I think that you have
more of your no good, stinking
mother in you.

NATHANIEL BARTLOW

Papa, just who is my mother?

ARTEMIS BARTLOW

That Nigger loving Irish slave,
Caoimhe. The no good swine!

Nathaniel's eyes open wide, a look of shock on his face.

EXT. CAPE FEAR - MAGNOLIA PLANTATION HOUSE - VERANDA -
1679 - NIGHT

Nathaniel, (9) runs across veranda, over the lawn,
through cotton field, reaches Caoimhe's shack, stands on
apple box by side of the house, peers into the window.

I/E. - CAOIMHE'S SHACK - CAPE FEAR PLANTATION - NIGHT

Veneka enters the house, with Liam, (3), in tow.

VENEKA

Liam, be a good boy for Caoimhe.
I'll be back soon.

LIAM, CAOIMHE'S SON

Yes, Mama. I'll be good.

CAOIMHE

Thank you for allowing us time
together.

Caoimhe sits with Liam on a rocking chair. Veneka leaves,
closes door. Caoimhe reads. Nathaniel watches, listens.

CAOIMHE (CONT'D)

In Adam's fall, we sinned all. Thy
life to mend, this book attend.

Liam points to the picture in the book. Nathaniel strains to see, standing on his tip-toes.

LIAM, CAOIMHE'S SON
Look, Caoimhe, a kitty.

CAOIMHE
The cat doth play and after slay.

LIAM, CAOIMHE'S SON
Is the cat going to catch the mouse?

CAOIMHE
Yes, little one.

LIAM, CAOIMHE'S SON
Why?

CAOIMHE
It's just what cats do. They hunt mice. Let's continue reading.

LIAM, CAOIMHE'S SON
Yes.

CAOIMHE
A dog will bite a thief at night.
The eagle's flight is out of sight.

Nathaniel falls with a loud THUMP. Liam and Caoimhe look up. She puts him down, goes to window, looks out.

CAOIMHE (CONT'D)
(calling)
Who's there?

Nathaniel runs back to his house.

LIAM, CAOIMHE'S SON
Caoimhe, come back and read to me.

Caoimhe turns, smiles and returns to the rocking chair.

EXT. CAPE FEAR - PLANTATION - COTTON FIELDS - 1682 - DAY

Artemis enters the field, points to Veneka.

ARTEMIS BARTLOW
You, yes, you. Get your half-breed bastard and come to the house.

Artemis walks away. Veneka looks at Caoimhe, worried.

VENEKA

I won't let him hurt Liam, no matter what he does to me.

Veneka walks with Liam (6) to Magnolia Manor. Caoimhe follows, hides under veranda. Loud screams from within the house. Horse and carriage approach. Artemis drags badly beaten Veneka and Liam to the carriage. Caoimhe peeks out to see BARTHOLOMEW MORGAN, (60), fat, sweaty, step out of the carriage and greet Artemis.

ARTEMIS BARTLOW

This one may need a regular beating to keep her in line, Bartholomew, but you've made a fine purchase.

BARTHOLOMEW MORGAN

I have a nice leather strap and chain which works well on the Negras. What about the boy?

ARTEMIS BARTLOW

A good beating never hurt. Their skin is tougher than ours. They can take it. Veneka, say hello to your new master, Mr. Morgan.

Caoimhe places her hand over her mouth to prevent making noise. Bartholomew climbs back onto the carriage.

Artemis goes down hill, Caoimhe follows keeps her distance.

Caoimhe arrives, Quashee hangs by his neck from a Spanish, moss covered bald cypress tree. Caoimhe pushes past Deirdre.

DEIRDRE

(excitedly)

Don't look at him, Caoimhe.

His legs still twitch, drool drips from his mouth. Caoimhe watches Quashee die. Caoimhe lunges at Artemis.

DEIRDRE (CONT'D)

Don't be foolish. Let it be.

Artemis spits in Caoimhe's face. Caoimhe brushes the saliva from her cheek and wipes it on her dress.

ARTEMIS BARTLOW
 This is what happens when you
 befriend them.

Quashee's shadow covers Caoimhe's face.

ARTEMIS BARTLOW (CONT'D)
 I'll be waiting at the house.

Artemis climbs the slight incline to his house.

CAOIMHE
 They've been sold, Deirdre.

Deirdre looks at her, sympathetically.

DEIRDRE
 Veneka will take good care of your
 boy. Don't cry.

Caoimhe falls to her knees.

CAOIMHE
 I'm at my tether end! I cannot go
 on anymore.

DEIRDRE
 You have to, so one day you can
 find your boy and be together, so
 you may return to Ireland.

CAOIMHE
 Molly knew I'd never see my family
 or Ireland again.

Caoimhe stands, focuses on Quashee, still hanging.

CAOIMHE (CONT'D)
 (broad sweeping motion
 with her arms)
 How is it this race of human kind
 has come to see each other damned?
 This is the world's mad business,
 not mine.

Deirdre puts her arms around her, trying to console her.

CAOIMHE (CONT'D)
 I've done nothing to deserve these
 daily assaults on my spirit, nor
 the violence against my soul,
 necessitating me to beget day to
 day compromises.

Deirdre crosses herself.

DEIRDRE
 Maybe if you pray to God things
 will improve.

Caoimhe pushes Deirdre away. Caoimhe stops crying.

CAOIMHE
 (angrily)
 That's your solution? Look around
 you, Deirdre. There is no God!

DEIRDRE
 (shocked)
 God will punish you if you say
 those things, even if you think
 those things.

Caoimhe bursts out laughing.

CAOIMHE
 Who is going to punish me? I am 39
 years old. Since I was twelve all
 I have been is punished. For what?

DEIRDRE
 Master Bartlow will be punished by
 God on the day of judgment.

Caoimhe wipes away tears, picks up metal object, turns.

CAOIMHE
 That day is today! God's taking
 too long.

Deirdre gets in front of her and holds her back.

CAOIMHE (CONT'D)
 Step aside, Deirdre. I don't want
 to have to hurt you.

Caoimhe, a determined look on her face, pulls the sharp
 metal object from her pocket. Deirdre stares at it.

DEIRDRE
 I cannot let you do this.

Caoimhe puts her index finger in her face.

CAOIMHE
 Don't be trying to stop me.

Caoimhe walks away, puts curved serrated metal shank into

her pocket. Deirdre watches her disappear.

INT. CAPE FEAR - MAGNOLIA MANOR - MASTER BEDROOM - DAY

Artemis, fully clothed, unbuttons Caoimhe's dress.

ARTEMIS BARTLOW

I want to see your body.

CAOIMHE

In a minute, but first...

Artemis pulls her close. Caoimhe hits him in the heart. Metal cracking ribs, then thud. Horror on Artemis' face, he falls back, broken bagging hook in his chest.

CAOIMHE (CONT'D)

That's the last time you'll be touching me. Va Doky!

Blood gushes, drenching Caoimhe. Wipes hand on Artemis' pants. Nathaniel, (12), enters, scared. She runs by him.

NATHANIEL BARTLOW

Caoimhe? No, Papa? Papa?

Artemis is in an ever widening pool of blood. Nathaniel puts his hand in blood, holds it up, stares in shock.

NATHANIEL BARTLOW (CONT'D)

Papa? Get up, please, get up.

INT. CAPE FEAR - MAGNOLIA MANOR - LIVING ROOM - NIGHT

Slave patrol duty officers, JAMES WALKER, (32), DONALD MARTIN, (35), Artemis' brother, HENRY BARTLOW, (47), and Nathaniel. Donald Martin addresses Nathaniel.

DONALD MARTIN

Now, boy, are you sure it wasn't any of your father's slaves who killed your father?

NATHANIEL BARTLOW

I'm positive, Mr. Martin. It was a big, ugly White man, whom I never saw before.

JAMES WALKER

And you overheard them arguing?

NATHANIEL BARTLOW

I did, Mr. Walker. I walked in as

NATHANIEL BARTLOW (CONT'D)
 that man drove the sickle through
 my father's chest.

Henry turns to the two men.

HENRY BARTLOW
 Gentlemen, I believe the boy has
 told you what he knows.

DONALD MARTIN
 Mr. Bartlow, the piece of metal
 and handle we found in the body is
 consistent with the broken off
 blade of a bagging hook.

JAMES WALKER
 Identical to the ones used by your
 slaves to cut down dead plants.

HENRY BARTLOW
 All the plantations use the same
 bagging hooks.

James Walker looks back as he walks to the door.

JAMES WALKER
 We don't have much to go on, but
 we'll keep looking for him.

HENRY BARTLOW
 I'll be here, James. I am now in
 charge of the boy and my brother's
 plantation.

The two slave duty patrol officers open the door.

HENRY BARTLOW (CONT'D)
 Good day, Donald,.. James.

EXT. NORTH CAROLINA - CAPE FEAR - TOWN'S SQUARE - 1714 -
 DAY

AUCTIONEER, (40), long black sideburns, stands in centre
 of town. A FEMALE AFRICAN SLAVE, (20), shackled, is
 hoisted onto the wooden plank, pushed to the middle where
 she stumbles, but does not fall.

AUCTIONEER
 What am I to get for this fine
 young slave? She'll give years

AUCTIONEER (CONT'D)

of hard work.

NATHANIEL BARTLOW, (44), red hair, TURQUOISE eyes, and
FREDERICK, (45) look without interest.

FREDERICK

Are you going to bid on her, then?

NATHANIEL BARTLOW

Not today, Frederick.

FREDERICK

It's time you acquired slaves.

NATHANIEL BARTLOW

I will decide when the time is
right.

A man drags the woman from the podium. A man, LIAM,
CAOIMHE'S SON (38), brown wavy hair, muscular, is pulled
onto the podium. His torso, rubbed with possum fat to
make his skin glisten. Nathaniel walks around the podium.

AUCTIONEER

For the last slave transaction of
the day, I am presenting you folks
with a fine example of manhood.
Strong as an ox. He can pull a
plow. What do I hear for this boy?

A few people snicker. OLD WHITE MAN, (75), sweaty, mops
his forehead with a handkerchief, stares in disgust.

OLD WHITE MAN

I'll give you 5 sterling.

AUCTIONEER

I'm not even going to dignify that
offer by responding. Do I hear 60
sterling?

OLD WHITE MAN

He's too old. I don't want him.

AUCTIONEER

He's worth more than a Negro boy.
Come now, this strong Mulatto boy
is a bargain at any price.

Nathaniel speaks to the auctioneer in a low voice.

NATHANIEL BARTLOW

What is this man's origin?

AUCTIONEER
I just sell 'em. I don't ask
questions.

NATHANIEL BARTLOW
Does he have a name?

AUCTIONEER
He has an Irish name, Liam. (To
crowd) Do I hear sixty?

MAN IN CROWD
(yells)
Sixty.

NATHANIEL BARTLOW
(yells)
Seventy.

AUCTIONEER
I hear seventy. Do I hear eighty?

MAN IN CROWD
Seventy five.

AUCTIONEER
I have seventy five. Do I hear
eighty? Eighty? Anyone?

The auctioneer points to Nathaniel. No one speaks.

AUCTIONEER (CONT'D)
Seventy five. Going once,...

NATHANIEL BARTLOW
(yells)
Eighty.

The auctioneer looks to the man in the crowd who shakes
his head from side to side and walks away.

AUCTIONEER
Eighty once, eighty twice. Sold to
the gentleman in the front.

The old White man watches as Liam is taken off the stage.

OLD WHITE MAN
You seem to have an interest in
this particular slave. Why?

Nathaniel takes Liam by the chain attached to his neck
and helps him into his cart on the buckboard.

NATHANIEL BARTLOW

I do indeed. Good day, Sir.

Nathaniel climbs onto horse drawn carriage, picks up the reins, shakes them and the horses pull the cart.

OLD WHITE MAN

Fool.

INT. NORTH CAROLINA - CAPE FEAR - MAGNOLIA MANOR -
KITCHEN - 1714 - SAME DAY - AFTERNOON

Liam talks to COOK, (23), short, stirring a pot of soup.

LIAM, CAOIMHE'S SON

The Massa, he has a Missus?

AFRICAN COOK

No, too much for him to take care of his old Mammy. She was poorly, withered up with the pneumonia.

LIAM, CAOIMHE'S SON

I ain't seen her.

AFRICAN COOK

Her room's at the top of the staircase. Not right in the head, I figure.

LIAM, CAOIMHE'S SON

How's that?

AFRICAN COOK

In the night, she danced on the lawn, a twirling and a spinning.

EXT. MAGNOLIA MANOR - FRONT LAWN - NIGHT (FLASHBACK)

Caoimhe, (71) in a long pale blue gossamer gown and pale blue mules. She spins and bends to touch her slippers.

CAOIMHE

(becoming agitated)

Papa, twirl me on your feet.

Blood on my hands, no, Artemis.

Nathaniel stands on the veranda, watches Caoimhe stumble.

CAOIMHE (CONT'D)

(yelling)

My shoe is covered in blood. So

CAOIMHE (CONT'D)
 much blood. It's everywhere!

Nathaniel runs over, and guides her towards the house.

CAOIMHE (CONT'D)
 It is such a relief to see you.
 Look at my new blue shoes. I'm
 afraid they're ruined, Nathaniel.

NATHANIEL BARTLOW
 It is all right, Mother. I'll
 clean it up. Let us go inside.

Nathaniel leads her by the hand, while she hugs him.

NATHANIEL BARTLOW (CONT'D)
 You need some rest.

CAOIMHE
 Shall we dance tomorrow?

NATHANIEL BARTLOW
 Of course we shall.

CAOIMHE
 I do not know how I would manage
 without you. You're a good boy.

END OF FLASHBACK:

INT. NORTH CAROLINA - CAPE FEAR - MAGNOLIA MANOR -
 KITCHEN - 1714 - SAME DAY - AFTERNOON

AFRICAN COOK
 I dunno. She went plain loco.

LIAM, CAOIMHE'S SON
 Some old peoples go that way.

AFRICAN COOK
 The Massa kept her here after the
 death of his Uncle Henry. Took
 good care of her until she passed
 away two months ago.

Cook looks at Liam while taking a bowl from the cupboard.

AFRICAN COOK (CONT'D)
 You have her expression in your
 eyes. She was always crying for
 her baby, born dead, it was. Some
 says it was a girl, but she

AFRICAN COOK (CONT'D)
 yelled the name, Liam, same as
 Liam. Strange, you having the same
 name as a stillborn girl.

LIAM, CAOIMHE'S SON
 How you figure?

AFRICAN COOK
 Her being Irish and all. Thass a
 Irish boy's name, that is.

Liam leaves the kitchen and enters the hallway.

INT. MAGNOLIA MANOR - LIVING ROOM - AFTERNOON - 1714

Nathaniel waves Liam into the living room. Nathaniel
 motions for him to sit down. JUBA, (23), petite, enters.

NATHANIEL BARTLOW
 Bring us a couple of glasses of
 scotch, with ice water.

JUBA
 Right away, Massa.

NATHANIEL BARTLOW
 I hope you like scotch, Liam.

LIAM, CAOIMHE'S SON
 I've never tasted spirits before.

NATHANIEL BARTLOW
 Don't drink it too quickly. It has
 a tendency to go to one's head.

Juba returns with the drinks, places them on a table
 between the two men and stands, waiting for orders.

NATHANIEL BARTLOW (CONT'D)
 That will be all, Juba.

JUBA
 Thank you, Massa.

Juba leaves.

NATHANIEL BARTLOW
 You were born on this plantation
 thirty eight years ago, to
 Quashee, and Caoimhe, our mother.

LIAM, CAOIMHE'S SON
 Veneka was my mother.

NATHANIEL BARTLOW
 (shaking his head)
 No. She raised you as her son but
 Caoimhe was your mother and mine.

Nathaniel picks up his glass, and Liam does the same.

NATHANIEL BARTLOW (CONT'D)
 Here's our mother's Irish toast...
 May you have food and raiment, a
 soft pillow for your head. May you
 be forty years in heaven before
 the devil knows you're dead!

They sip their drinks. Liam coughs. Nathaniel laughs. He
 stands, motions to Liam to follow.

INT. CAPE FEAR - MAGNOLIA MANOR - LIBRARY - AFTERNOON

Nathaniel points to floor to ceiling book shelves.

LIAM, CAOIMHE'S SON
 (dismayed)
 I never learned to read.

NATHANIEL BARTLOW
 Every book ever written is here.
 When I was a young boy, I used to
 watch Mother read to you as I
 peeked in the window.

LIAM, CAOIMHE'S SON
 She was truly my mother?

Nathaniel leans into the hallway and calls to Juba.

NATHANIEL BARTLOW
 Juba, bring the bottle of scotch.
 It will be a long night...and some
 of those little...

JUBA
 I know, I know, I will bring some
 of those little petit fours, the
 lemon ones you like so much.

NATHANIEL BARTLOW
 She can read my mind sometimes...
 This is our mother's diary.

Nathaniel opens an old, worn red journal. Sunlight fills
 the room, scotch is half full. Dusk approaching. Liam
 opens his shirt, leans forward.

INT. CAPE FEAR - MAGNOLIA MANOR - LIBRARY - NIGHT

Dark room. Bottle one quarter full. Juba lights the kerosene lamps and leaves. Nathaniel talks excitedly, waving his arms. Liam is shocked. Nathaniel shuts diary.

NATHANIEL BARTLOW (CONT'D)

That is how it came to be that we were born and my father died.

LIAM, CAOIMHE'S SON

She ought not to have killed your father. I'm sorry.

NATHANIEL BARTLOW

Don't be. He was a cruel and sadistic dog who deserved to die. I just wish I was the one who had the honors.

LIAM, CAOIMHE'S SON

I do not think it right to wish a parent dead.

Nathaniel stares into space, casting his eyes downward.

NATHANIEL BARTLOW

It is obvious you never knew my father. What I have not told you, was that she was not an indentured servant upon her arrival here.

LIAM, CAOIMHE'S SON

How is that possible?

NATHANIEL BARTLOW

Her servitude ended six years after arriving in Barbados. Leland kept her as his personal concubine before selling her to my father.

LIAM, CAOIMHE'S SON

Did she know?

NATHANIEL BARTLOW

She had been so disillusioned. More important, I could never bring myself to be the one to destroy her undying love for Leland and mankind.

LIAM, CAOIMHE'S SON

(eyes tearing up)
How is it she came to live here,

LIAM, CAOIMHE'S SON (CONT'D)
at Magnolia Manor?

EXT. MAGNOLIA MANOR - BACK LAWN - 1690 - DAY (FLASHBACK)

Nathaniel, (20), townspeople, Minister, watch four men lower a coffin into a grave using ropes. Dirt shoveled onto coffin, raining hard.

Nathaniel covers his head with his blazer, runs to house, glances sadly at tombstone. It reads, 'Henry William Bartlow, 55 years old, Born, 1635 - Died 1690, consumption'.

He grimaces at the next tombstone. 'Artemis George Bartlow, 45 years old, Born 1637 - Died 1682'.

INT. CAOIMHE'S SHACK - PLANTATION - 1690 - DAY

Nathaniel enters Caoimhe's shack. They exchange glances.

CAOIMHE

I was saddened by the loss of your uncle. He was a good man. What is it you'd be wanting, then?

NATHANIEL BARTLOW

In one of his many intoxicated stupors, my father revealed to me that you are my mother.

CAOIMHE

Did he now?

NATHANIEL BARTLOW

As such, this place is not fitting for a plantation owner's mother to inhabit. I will arrange a room in the house for you to occupy.

CAOIMHE

I never did thank you for keeping my secret.

NATHANIEL BARTLOW

No need. If it hadn't been you, it would have been me.

END OF FLASHBACK:

INT. CAPE FEAR - MAGNOLIA MANOR - LIBRARY - NIGHT

Nathaniel hands the diary and right blue shoe to Liam.

NATHANIEL BARTLOW (CONT'D)

Her last wishes were for me to find you, that history would record that Irish slaves were brought here, plucked from their land, against their will.

LIAM, CAOIMHE'S SON

The last line in her diary?

NATHANIEL BARTLOW

She wanted you to have the diary to pass down to your descendants. She carried this shoe on her person her entire life. It meant everything to her.

LIAM, CAOIMHE'S SON

What purpose would one shoe serve?

NATHANIEL BARTLOW

It was her link to her past and her family... It's yours now.

LIAM, CAOIMHE'S SON

(staring at shoe)

My mother lived locked in chains, not knowing she had the key.

NATHANIEL BARTLOW

She made me promise you would reside here, as my butler. You are my brother, however, keep in mind that you are also my slave and so you shall always remain.

Nathaniel nods in the direction of the hall entrance.

NATHANIEL BARTLOW (CONT'D)

Let us retire for the night. Juba will show you to your room.

LIAM, CAOIMHE'S SON

Good night, Massa Nathaniel. All in all, it's been a good day.

Liam, holding the diary and the right blue shoe, exit the room with Nathaniel following behind him.

FADE OUT.

JONATHAN SWIFT : THE DAY OF JUDGMENT

WITH A WHIRL OF THOUGHT OPPRESSED,
 I SUNK FROM REVERIE TO REST.
 A HORRID VISION SEIZED MY HEAD,
 I SAW THE GRAVES GIVE UP THEIR DEAD!
 JOVE¹, ARMED WITH TERRORS, BURSTS THE SKIES,
 AND THUNDER ROARS AND LIGHTNING FLIES!
 AMAZED, CONFUSED, ITS FATE UNKNOWN,
 THE WORLD STANDS TREMBLING AT HIS THRONE!
 WHILE EACH PALE SINNER HANGS HIS HEAD,
 JOVE, NODDING, SHOOK THE HEAVENS, AND SAID:
 'OFFENDING RACE OF HUMAN KIND,
 BY NATURE, REASON, LEARNING, BLIND;
 YOU WHO, THROUGH FRAILTY, STEPPED ASIDE;
 AND YOU WHO NEVER FELL—THROUGH PRIDE:
 YOU WHO IN DIFFERENT SECTS HAVE SHAMMED,
 AND COME TO SEE EACH OTHER DAMNED;
 (SO SOME FOLKS TOLD YOU, BUT THEY KNEW
 NO MORE OF JOVE'S DESIGNS THAN YOU)
 THE WORLD'S MAD BUSINESS NOW IS O'ER,
 AND I RESENT THESE PRANKS NO MORE.
 I TO SUCH BLOCKHEADS SET MY WIT!
 I DAMN SUCH FOOLS!—GO, GO, YOU'RE BIT'

JONATHAN SWIFT (1667–1745) (1731 ?)

FOOTNOTES

- 1 JOVE IS ANOTHER NAME FOR THE ROMAN GOD OF THUNDER AND SKIES, JUPITER

