

ABSTRACT

All the Living and the Dead

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During Easter Week of 1916, Dublin was caught off guard when nationalist militants barricaded themselves within key buildings throughout the city. Although the British military crushed this rising, the memory of what would later be called the Easter Rising would spark a century long struggle for Irish independence. In the words of W.B. Yeats, "a terrible beauty is born." My thesis is a screenplay that enters into this historic event. It follows James O'Leary, a professor at Trinity College, as he attempts to steer a friend's son away from nationalistic ambitions. Both men, however, find themselves within the rebel headquarters when the fighting begins, and they must join the rebels against the British in order to survive. The two main characters are very different from one another, and thus a major theme in my screenplay is "perspective". I lead two characters with imperfect points of view through a common narrative in order to demonstrate how their beliefs and attitudes toward Irish nationalism might become richer and more complete.

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ALL THE LIVING AND THE DEAD

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BY

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DEDICATION

To Jim and Melissa Neathery

INTRODUCTION

Perspectives on the Easter Rising: The Process and Purpose Behind *All the Living and The Dead*

On April 24th, 1916, as World War One preoccupied the rest of Europe, hundreds of Irish nationalists violently seized important buildings across Dublin. They barricaded themselves inside in the hope of establishing a new Irish Republic. British forces responded, and although the vastly outnumbered rebels defended themselves bravely, the British overwhelmed them through sheer numbers and devastating artillery barrages. Almost doomed from the start by its Romantic underpinnings, the Easter Rising was a violent but inspiring event that ignited almost a century of Irish conflict. But what did this event represent? The answer varies depending on whom one asks. To the British authorities, it was another rebellion in a long history of unrest. To the poorer citizens of Dublin, popular opinion may have leaned toward the nationalists, but after the British destroyed large portions of the Dublin slums the laboring class reevaluated their allegiance to the nationalist cause. Finally, even the rebels did not see the Easter Rising with the same perspective. Some saw it as a practical means to gaining control of Ireland. Others saw it as a romantic act whereby their sacrifice would inspire later movements. My thesis engages the question of what the Easter Rising meant to the participants themselves and to Ireland more generally. Through this screenplay I aim to dramatize these different points of view into a coherent story. I aim to synthesize these perspectives through the eyes of a person in the 21st century,

sifting through the good and the bad while still being true to the human emotions and character of the historical event.

The inspiration for this project did not stem from the Easter Rising, however. Rather, the journey toward this screenplay began after I read James Joyce's *Dubliners*. Ask anyone to name the best Irish writers in history and James Joyce will always be one of the first. It might be presupposed then that an author so closely associated with his nation would be sympathetic to that nation. *Dubliners*, however, exposes Dublin, and by extension the country, as a sordid, washed out underbelly of society. I could not help but wonder how an Irish author could have such distaste for his own home. After posing this question, I stumbled upon the Easter Rising in my reading. I thought that this event would prove to be a meaningful and entertaining vessel through which to examine Dublin in the early twentieth century.

The title for this project, *All the Living and the Dead*, also came from *Dubliners*. The title comes from the story "The Dead" in which Gabriel comes into contact with Irish culture and stereotypes through acquaintances met at a Christmas party. Later, he goes back to his hotel where his wife recalls the death of a young lover. The story is titled "The Dead" because Gabriel's wife and many other characters are paralyzed by fixations on the dead. Gabriel's wife laments the dead lover and says, "O, the day I heard that, that he was dead!" (Joyce 234). Then "she stopped, choking with sobs, and, overcome by emotion, flung herself face downward on the bed, sobbing in the quilt" (Joyce 234). Her memory leaves her incapacitated.

Similarly, in "Ivy Day in the Committee Room" a group of old grassroots politicians cannot move past the death of Charles Parnell, the Irish politician whose

career ended in public scandal. They say, "Didn't Parnell himself..." and "But look at the case of Parnell now," and "This is Parnell's anniversary... and don't let us stir up any bad blood" (Joyce 134-135). In both stories the characters cannot move past the memory of the dead. Gabriel's wife falls asleep after a fit of emotion. The politicians end their meeting with a sentimental poem commemorating the late Mr. Parnell (Joyce 138). Through these characters, one sees Joyce's frustration with the overly romanticized nature of Irish consciousness.

But despite Joyce's pessimism, he does end "The Dead" with the line, "All the living *and* the dead." I believe that Gabriel is able to synthesize Irish romanticism into a positive force. He looks back towards the past in order to build a hope for the present and future. He gains a connection with the dead as "his own identity was fading out into a grey impalpable world: the solid world itself which these dead had one time reared and lived in was discovering and dwindling" (Joyce 235). This connection, however, propels him "on his journey westward" (Joyce 236). Therefore, the final moment of *Dubliners* is one of progression. Gabriel realizes that everyone will die eventually, that the snow falls equally "upon all the living and the dead," but this leads him to think, "Better pass boldly into that other world, in the full glory of some passion, than fade and wither dismally with age" (Joyce 235, 236). "The Dead" acts as a threshold, which mirrors The Easter Rising. The rising was a romantic statement and was as mythologized at the time as it was later in history. The leaders were conscious of the past but were so in an active consideration of the present and future. Therefore, I thought that this title was fitting for the subject matter.

Dubliners also inspired the main character, James O'Leary. I conceived of him as a disillusioned Joycean figure. In the screenplay, O'Leary has clearly sold out to the establishment. He is comfortably employed by the British-leaning Trinity College and sees no reason to endanger his livelihood by entertaining radical beliefs. Still, he is not a mindless follower. Research into Trinity College during the early 1900s provided me with historical examples that parallel O'Leary's comfortable yet concerned attitude.

Many men associated with the Trinity College administration supported union with Britain out of a concern for Ireland, not because they adored Britain or hated their fellow countrymen. John Campbell, A Trinity College member of the British parliament had reservations about the Home Rule Bill of 1912, which in theory would have given broader political freedom to Ireland. He argued that the "Bill is no more Federalism than it is Unionism... The Bill makes futile and harassing attempts to take back with one hand the full self-government which it gives with the other" (Campbell iii, iv). Moreover, this same Member of Parliament supported political independence for Trinity College if Ireland were to receive political freedom (Luce 218). The Trinity College administration rejected this proposition, "emphasizing Trinity's roots in Ireland" and consequently Trinity College's loyalty to its native country (Luce 218). Therefore, I felt confident that I could make O'Leary into a character both complacent with the current political scheme but also supportive of Ireland's ultimate well being. When the Easter Rising shows O'Leary a different side of nationalism, it is not a contradiction of his character for him to support the rising.

I felt as though O'Leary needed a foil, however, because the Easter Rising and the following Irish civil wars were undeniably violent and horrific. As O'Leary becomes more sympathetic toward the rebellion, I needed someone to realize that violent nationalism comes with a cost. I did not want to glorify the rising past its due. Thus, John Doherty is that foil. At the beginning of the film he embodies the rash, passionate youth who wants to give his life for Irish freedom. He does join the Irish nationalists but realizes that war is much more than heroic feats and impassioned speeches. John loses his best friend Ciaran and spends most of the rebellion waiting around and doctoring wounds instead of fighting. Thus, he experiences the dark and unheroic side of war.

Ultimately, both characters meet, more or less, in the middle between their original outlooks. O'Leary and John enter the rising from incomplete perspectives, and leave with a better understanding of war and country. During the third act, I tried to give their relationship a feeling of mutual respect that symbolizes their common experience. Moreover, their understanding of revolution allows them to separate themselves from the violence. This is seen in the wedding scene where O'Leary and John celebrate their return to civil life.

Professor O'Leary and John are not the only characters, however, that represent different viewpoints on the Easter Rising. The characters of James Connolly and Padraic Pearse also act as counterpoints to one another. In *Imagination of an Insurrection*, the author, William Thompson, describes stark differences between the two men. From childhood, Pearse swore himself to the Irish nation after hearing of the legendary Irish hero Cuchulain. It affected him greatly

and “so impressed was he with the ancient hero’s deeds that when he was ten he went down upon his knees and vowed to devote the rest of his life to the freeing of Ireland. The unusual thing about the vow was that Pearse never forgot it; instead he made the fervent idealism of boyhood the governing value of his adult life” (Thompson 75). Moreover, in the tradition of romantic messianism, “the self-image of Padraic Pearse was Jesus Christ, for Pearse saw the role of the rebel as the perfect Imitation of Christ” and “the mythical image of Pearse as savior demanded the reality of crucifixion”(Thompson 118). Given these associations, it was not difficult to characterize Pearse as the wide-eyed idealist.

Connolly, on the other hand, undermines this romanticism. The historical Connolly was much more adept at the task of battle than Pearse, since he had already participated in the violent labor Lock-Out of 1913 (Wills 5). One description of the two leaders notes, “Connolly seemed much the more positive character. Forever on the prowl, he was a restless, energetic figure, continually seeking out weaknesses in the defenses, continually demanding more effort from his men. Pearse, on the other hand, appeared to be ‘lost somewhere in the clouds’; at times ‘even looked supremely futile’” (qtd. in Thompson 99). Therefore, not only do these characters show two very different sides to the rising i.e., the romantic ideal and the physical execution, but these characters mark the passing of romanticism within Irish nationalism. Although rebellion had always been violent, “Easter 1916 marks a turning point in the history of Ireland; romanticism ends, the dreamers are replaced by men who master the modern techniques of guerilla warfare” (Thompson 161). The Easter Rising was the last time two such men could stand together side by side.

While this summing up of ideologies allowed me to explore interesting themes, it also caused problems for the writing process. My first draft was full of lofty speeches about Ireland, nationalism, and heroes. Take the scene where O’Leary meets Stephen in the pub. Originally, it functioned only to reveal O’Leary’s cynicism toward Dublin. Stephen sang vague praises about Ireland and O’Leary made sarcastic remarks. In the end, the scene came off as unnatural. Plus, it didn’t serve the story well. O’Leary’s character showed itself to the audience but that was all the scene accomplished. It needed to do *more*.

In the current version, O’Leary and Stephen still hold a thematic conversation, but I cut the dialogue to be more ambiguous. The idea for the scene seemed plausible; an academic and a quirky theater director could have a joking conversation about the soul of Dublin. It was thus my job to make that conversation feel natural. In addition, I worked in plot elements that paid off later in the film. By including the theater ticket, I set up the scene where the rebel band comes across Stephen outside the bombed out theater. Also, by revealing O’Leary’s “sacred rites” of eating and earning money, the scene where his job is threatened is that much more effective. The point of these additions was to make this scene feel more natural and less arbitrary.

Another consideration for this screenplay was the large cast of characters. Historical events are especially difficult to synthesize into film because there are often very many people who play key roles in political movements. Movies, however, demand efficient use of time and casting since the audience can only sit still for so long. Thus, if there are a dozen “important” characters, then no one is

important because none of them command enough screen time. To avoid this issue, I condensed the leadership of the Irish Republic into two characters, Connolly and Pearse. There were many more men involved, but they would have served no new narrative purpose. I also took artistic liberty by placing James Connolly into the opening gun running scene. The Howth gun run was a historical event, but the man who orchestrated it was an Irish nationalist named Bulmer Hobson (Figgis 43). At the end of the first draft, I realized that Mr. Hobson never returned to the screen and I replaced him with Connolly for simplicity. Similarly, rather than dragging all of John's drinking buddies through the story, I picked one, Ciaran.

A large cast can sometimes mean that characters' appearances and personalities bleed into one another. For this thesis, I watched the movie *Michael Collins*, which told the story of the Irish politician of the 1920s from whom the film took its title (Jordan). While watching the film, I always knew who Michael Collins was (played by Liam Neeson) but it took some effort to differentiate between many of the other supporting characters. They all appeared to be dark haired Irishmen in their thirties. Hopefully I have distinguished my characters so that the audience can focus on the story rather than the characters' faces. For example, O'Leary is past his prime while John is young and "green." Ciaran has thick red hair. Both Connolly and Pearse have distinct personalities: Connolly is blunt and assertive while Pearse is wistful and poetic. Even minor characters like Stephen the theater director and Jimmy the rebel on the roof have their own quirks.

With all of these characters, one might ask the question "Who is the main character in this story?" While Connolly and Pearse are important figures, they do

not drive the plot. One must then choose between O'Leary and John. Both O'Leary and John take up large portions of screen time, but I must argue that O'Leary is the main character. He is the character that makes the decisions that pull the audience into and through the story. The main crux of the story, the moment we are thrown into the second act is when O'Leary is confronted by provost Mahaffy and chooses to confront John or risk losing his job. O'Leary's choice to follow John is an active choice and the rest of the movie is the result of O'Leary's decision. One could say that John makes an active choice to join the Easter Rising. The problem with this rebuttal is that John does not make this choice in front of the camera. John more or less makes this choice as soon as the movie starts and therefore this choice does not affect the direction of the plot.

It might seem strange then that the film opens with Ciaran and John. Although slightly unconventional, I believe that it works for the film on the whole. This is because the audience needs to feel an attachment to both characters in order to appreciate O'Leary's actions. If John is unsympathetic then it seems stupid for O'Leary to risk his life trying to keep him out of trouble. Similarly I build up the bond between John and Ciaran right away so that when Ciaran dies it means something to the audience. Moreover, it was necessary to set the political and historical context early.

The style of action in this screenplay posed a problem for me. I aimed to recreate the feel of *The Wind that Shakes the Barley* (Loach). Not only do my screenplay and *The Wind that Shakes the Barley* fall into the same genre, but I also hoped to recreate the "slow burn" atmosphere *The Wind that Shakes the Barley*

captures so well. For example, there is the opening scene where a boy is murdered for refusing to give his name in English. There is also the torture scene in the prison where Teddy's fingernails are pulled out. These scenes are filled with violence but they lack the fast paced "action" attributed to most films today. Still, the scenes are ripe with conflict and tension.

I thought that this kind of pacing would be appropriate for my screenplay because the historical research depicted the Easter Rising as a long, drawn out event. Yes, there was the moment where Padraic Pearse announced the creation of the Irish Republic. Yes, there were violent exchanges between troops, but for the rebels a good portion of the rising was full of confusion and boredom. Of course, accounts vary, but many witnesses note that much of the activity inside the GPO was unorganized. Take this account for example, which I also worked into the screenplay. Once the rebels first entered the General Post Office, "Connolly shouted, 'Everybody out!' Not surprisingly, no one took the order seriously. Indeed, a woman's voice could be heard loudly insisting that she wanted to buy stamps" (Caulfield 9). On a larger scale, the rebels failed to take key positions within Dublin such as telegraph centers and ports, and lack of ammunition was a constant issue (Caulfield 70). Therefore, I made sure that the film did not read like a typical action movie where the invincible heroes blaze through the enemy lines. I found this to be freeing as it allowed me to focus on character instead.

Still, I could not avoid action altogether. This is a movie after all, and action is important not only for progressing the story but for keeping the audience's attention. In my first draft, I opened with the scene where O'Leary and Stephen

converse in the bar and where John is later thrown out for drunken behavior. This had some action and was interesting up to a point, but I did not feel as though it possessed the dramatic hook necessary for an opening scene. Consequently, I wrote the current scene where Ciaran and John witness the police descend upon the gun-smuggling rebels. I believe that this scene was more effective for many reasons. One, it set up the context immediately: authority versus rebels. From the very beginning, the audience knows that the movie is about Irish rebels fighting against the state. This scene also gives John motivation for pursuing nationalistic tendencies. Before this scene, John came across as an angry boy who lashes out against his absent father. The relationship with his father is still a part of John's character, but now John has a reason to turn to Irish nationalism specifically. Police firing into a civilian crowd is a strong image, and ultimately the audience can better sympathize with John after experiencing the same horror he felt.

One hurdle I had to overcome during this process was the problem of writing for the form. I write both literary fiction and screenplay. I might tell stories through both mediums but each has its own strengths and limitations. Sights and sounds drive movies. That means there is less room for the kind of reflection one might find in a short story. A great short story might have the main character never leave his bedroom and the story might take place completely within his head. This would never work in a screenplay. Therefore, I found it helpful to develop dramatic scenes in which characters could act and speak naturally in a way that reveals their characters. I hoped I achieved this kind of cinematic reflection in the scene on the roof where O'Leary speaks about his childhood. Here, he is forced to use a gun. He is

exhausted. It seems natural then that he would resort to deeply engrained habits from his past. This, however, is completely new to the audience who thought O’Leary hated guns. I played off this curiosity and in doing so gave the audience an opportunity to project their confusion onto the other rebels who are also confused as to O’Leary’s marksmanship. Because the audience wants to know O’Leary’s back-story just as much as the other rebels do, the personal exposition appears natural.

Stylistically, I slipped into the habit of writing full sentences for description. Pacing is extremely important and scenes, especially action scenes, did not read as quickly as they should have when I weighted them down with words. SHOTS. FLAMES CRACKLING. GLASS SHATTERS. While these explicitly sensory descriptors might be too forward for another medium such as a novel, they were more than appropriate for my screenplay.

Irish music also heavily influenced this screenplay. Specifically, I looked to the band The Dubliners for an emotional touchstone. I have found that Irish music, more so than music from other cultures presses the emotional boundaries at both ends of the spectrum. A drinking song makes one want to dance on a table. A ballad leaves one crying over lost loves. This is why I included multiple scenes where characters sing songs. Not only does the inclusion of Irish music symbolize the different perspectives on the Easter Rising (contrast John’s defiant rendition of “God Save Ireland” with O’Leary’s contemplative rendition of “The Parting Glass”), but I also believe Irish music symbolizes the passion of the nation.

In this final section, I have decided to cast this screenplay because the development of a pitch is an integral part of any project. First, I envision Brendan Gleeson playing Professor O’Leary. I think back to his role in *Calvary* where he played a troubled Irish priest. He is of a similar age as O’Leary, carries a similar amount of bearded scruff, and possesses the world-weary yet kind look I have written into O’Leary’s character.

John’s actor was a bit harder to place. He is not a large “hunk” type character nor is he an awkward nerd character. The most fitting actor I could think of is a young Tom Hiddleston. He has a naïve look about him as well as a mischievous look. He can be both a witty and rowdy drunk as well as a wide-eyed volunteer.

I believe that Russell Crowe would play James Connolly well. He is a serious actor with name recognition and could command the screen just as James Connolly commands his troops. Moreover, Russell Crowe has a similar appearance to the historical James Connolly. Just give him a bushy moustache and he would fit the role excellently.

Finally, I would cast Padraic Delaney as Padraic Pearse. This actor also looks like his historical counterpart. Moreover, I enjoyed his role in *The Wind that Shakes the Barley*. In this film, he plays the more levelheaded and longsuffering of the two brothers and I believe would be able to transition into Pearse’s contemplative, heroic role.

In conclusion, the process of writing this screenplay has been enlightening and encouraging. Perhaps the most important thing I have learned is that I can finish a full-length script. They say that a writer who has finished a project has already set

himself apart from the countless others who haven't. This is my first feature length script and knowing that it is complete gives me the confidence to continue writing. Moreover, I am glad that I wrote historical fiction. The historical event itself, besides being interesting, provided me with a structure for my story. Instead of creating an entirely new world on my own, I let the history provide characters and scenes, and thus I was able to focus my energy on the basics of storytelling. This is how I approach creative writing as a whole. I begin by learning the basics of what works and what doesn't work. Then, once practice makes the basics second nature, I push my creative boundaries to create deeper and more complex narratives. Therefore, although I have come to the end of this project, the skills and knowledge I have acquired have in fact opened the door for countless other stories.

FADE IN:

EXT. DUBLIN HARBOR - DAY

Title reads DUBLIN, JULY 1914

A sleek green boat, the *Asgard*, moves toward an old, misty DOCK like a wandering phantom.

The dock is deserted except for CIARAN, a large young man of 19. His deep red hair flutters as he looks over the water.

As the *Asgard* approaches, DECK HANDS emerge from hidden alleyways and begin tying down the boat.

A weathered CAPTAIN stands on the deck of the ship. His eyes scan the shore cautiously.

The captain motions for Ciaran to board.

CAPTAIN

Come 'ere boy. We'll need your help now.

Ciaran stands unsure of himself. The captain motions again.

CIARAN

Yes sir.

He climbs onto the boat and follows the captain into the...

INT. SHIP'S HOLD - DAY

The boat sways side to side and with each rocking movement the seaworthy wood CREAKS.

We see large wooden BOXES piled up high. Much of the ship's cargo appears to consist of these unmarked boxes.

The captain places a hand on Ciaran's shoulder.

CAPTAIN

You're an honest man, eh?

CIARAN

Yes sir. Yes.

CAPTAIN

A true blooded Irishman?

CIARAN

Yes sir.

CAPTAIN
Excellent, help me open these boxes
then.

The captain grabs a rusty crowbar and opens one of the boxes.

CIARAN
What's in 'em, sir?

CAPTAIN
Take a look.

Ciaran removes the wooden lid. GUNS. His eyes widen.

CAPTAIN (CONT'D)
900 German beauties. When we get
these guns on deck, hand 'em out to
Mr. Connolly and the Volunteers
coming by.

Ciaran carefully holds a rifle to the faint light.

CIARAN
Of course!

The captain and Ciaran grab one of the boxes and head to the
deck. Other deck hands file past.

EXT. DUBLIN HARBOR - DAY

Four gun boxes lay scattered on the dock. A group of IRISH
VOLUNTEERS slowly approach the boat.

Their leader is JAMES CONNOLLY, a stern, stocky man with a
round head and thick moustache. An Irish Teddy Roosevelt.

JAMES CONNOLLY
Congratulations Captain. Quite a
catch.

CAPTAIN
Congratulations to yourself Mr.
Connolly sir. You've organized
quite a haul for the Irish
Volunteers.

JAMES CONNOLLY
Thank you. Soon, we'll be having a
fair fight against the English. For
once.

Connolly slips a quick smile.

CAPTAIN
May I live to see the day.

JAMES CONNOLLY
Now, can you help my men here?

CAPTAIN
Certainly.

The captain motions to Ciaran.

CAPTAIN (CONT'D)
Boy! Supply these men with guns!
Quick now, before the authorities
catch wind.

Ciaran hands a gun to an OLD MAN wearing a tattered farmers cap. Ciaran's hands shake from excitement.

Men continue to emerge from the fog.

Soon, 800 volunteers stand armed and waiting on the pier.

SILENCE except for sound of the lapping WAVES.

Then, Connolly walks onto the ship and addresses the small militia.

JAMES CONNOLLY
About face boys! Let's head home.
All should await further
instruction.

We hear faint MARCHING BOOTS.

The Irish Volunteers turn inland.

The marching grows louder. Ciaran cocks an ear.

CIARAN
Sir...

Armed men sweep Ciaran along.

EXT. DUBLIN - GRIFFITH AVENUE - DAY

Other volunteers begin to fidget. Something is wrong.

As they turn the street corner, a WOMAN SCREAMS.

HOWTH ROAD (NORTH)

At the far end of the street, a woman trips, spilling laundry across the muddy sidewalk.

PEDESTRIANS move quickly towards the harbor.

They are forced along by a large POLICE FORCE. BIG and ROUGH with PISTOLS and BILLY CLUBS.

The police men march in orderly fashion. Their uniforms are clean and tidy. Their RIFLES are even cleaner.

HOWTH ROAD (SOUTH)

The Irish Volunteers hesitate at the opposite end of the street. Ciaran breathes heavily, gathering courage.

HOWTH ROAD (NORTH)

The POLICE COMMISSIONER marches at the head of the police force. He moves with the insecure severity of a bureaucrat.

He stops and halts the squad behind him with a raise of his hand. He strokes his thin moustache before calling out.

POLICE COMMISSIONER

By the authority of Dublin Castle,
I order you to disband and disarm.
Failure to do so will result in
violent confrontation.

HOWTH ROAD (SOUTH)

Mist hangs between the two forces.

Connolly addresses the Volunteers.

JAMES CONNOLLY

Find a way home boys. Today is not
our day to fight.

He moves along the line to convey his orders. Volunteers begin to disperse into the fog.

HOWTH ROAD (NORTH)

The Police Commissioner watches helplessly as the Volunteers disband into the flanking alleyways.

POLICE COMMISSIONER
Return! Under order of the Dublin
constabulary.

The volunteers continue to disband.

He turns to the squad.

POLICE COMMISSIONER (CONT'D)
You have permission to open fire!

HOWTH ROAD (SOUTH)

BULLETS SCREAM past the volunteers. Ciaran ducks and tries to orient himself.

GET OUT OF THE WAY! SHOVING. PUSHING. MOVE!

The old man kneels down and returns fire.

In the distance, the police search for cover.

Ciaran slips down an alleyway.

HOWTH ROAD (SOUTH)

Police officers lean out from doorframes and shoot.

The Police Commissioner stands with his back against a wall. He winces with each shot.

POLICE COMMISSIONER
Keep firing, men.

Despite the precarious situation, BYSTANDERS congregate near the policemen. They heckle.

OLD BYSTANDER
Get out of our street!

FEMALE BYSTANDER 1
Bloody West Britons!

A YOUNG OFFICER approaches the Commissioner.

YOUNG OFFICER
Sir, the armed men are almost all gone.

The Police Commissioner opens his eyes and glances down the street. There are only a few Volunteers left.

POLICE COMMISSIONER
Follow them! Come on!

From the CROWD'S POV, we see the police officers carefully maneuver down the street.

They approach the Volunteer position. No one is left.

EXT. HARBOR ALLEYWAY - DAY

Ciaran peers out from behind a barrel.

EXT. HOWTH ROAD (SOUTH)

The growing crowd overflows off the sidewalk.

We focus on a certain young man, JOHN DOHERTY (19), who watches the proceedings curiously. John is handsome with thick brown hair. He wears a nice jacket. You could have plucked him from the local rowing club.

The crowd continues to yell INSULTS. An APPLE splatters against an officer.

MALE BYSTANDER 1
There's no one here! Must be
chasin' ghosts.

MALE BYSTANDER 2
Wouldn't be surprised if they
have'ta shoot someone anyway. For
the official report.

The Police Commissioner frowns in embarrassment.

POLICE COMMISSIONER
Turn back to the castle, men.

The rowdy crowd follows. More fruit. The tension grows.

FEMALE BYSTANDER 2
Too much a coward to fight the
Germans so ye join the Dublin
police, eh? My, what bravery!

An officer lunges at the bystander. He is held back.

POLICE COMMISSIONER
Hold! Get back in line.

O'CONNELL STREET

The police keep their heads low. MORE YELLING. MORE OBJECTS. A ROCK strikes the commissioner in the temple. BLOOD.

He keeps silent.

Another rock. The Commissioner raises his hand to the crowd.

POLICE COMMISSIONER

Silen...

The officers spray bullets into the crowd.

RIFLE SMOKE.

The moment ends; brief silence falls over the crowd. No one moves. The Commissioner's face falls in shock.

A woman WAILS. Twenty people lie bleeding on the ground.

CHAOS. RUNNING.

We see John Doherty standing motionless among the crowd. His face darkens with disbelief and outrage.

EXT. TRINITY COLLEGE - DORM ROOM - EVENING

Title reads DUBLIN, APRIL 1916

A window shines brightly on the face of the dormitory. Loud SHOUTS can be heard from inside.

INT. TRINITY COLLEGE - DORM ROOM - EVENING

JOHN

And the king says 'Nay!' to the highway robbers!

John and his FRIENDS sit around a small CARD-TABLE playing cards. The room is finely furnished with deep wood furniture and warm kerosene LAMPS light the interior.

John Doherty drunkenly gathers a pile of COINS, BILLS, and a PAIR OF SOCKS into his arms.

PETER, dressed in a button down shirt and tie, throws up his hands in drunken horror.

PETER

No! John! Stop! I was winning.

John, wearing a red curtain as a cape, manages to wriggle himself onto the flimsy table.

JOHN

I will give what is given and there
will be no objection!

John adjusts a makeshift crown on his head. Then, he showers his friends with cards and money.

JEREMY, who has brown hair and wears a large overcoat, bows to John.

JEREMY

God save the king!

JOHN

I am the king of un-kings!

John throws a fistful of money into Jeremy's face.

JOHN (CONT'D)

Take it! It's democracy you
tossers!

Ciaran laughs heartily, and in an attempt to shield himself from the assault, knocks over a glass of beer.

The table wobbles. John catches himself.

Beat.

JOHN (CONT'D)

Ah, I doth tread on the table of
Damocles.

Peter moans into his hands.

PETER

John! Why? My winnings!

Jeremy, moves away from the table and baits John comically.

JEREMY

Get down, John. What on earth are
you doing, John? Do be careful,
John. Don't hurt yourself, John.

John takes one step and tips over the table. Jeremy laughs.

John brushes himself off. He winces as he holds his elbow.

Ciaran examines John's arm.

CIARAN
As a medical student at the very
prestigious...

JOHN
And most litigious...

JEREMY (O.S.)
And orthodoxly superstitious...

CIARAN
....Trinity College. My official
diagnosis is...

Ciaran holds up a bottle of cheap, murky whiskey.

CIARAN (CONT'D)
A proper dose of Uncle George's
fire brandy!

John pushes the bottle away.

JOHN
But why drink that, when Peter can
buy at Barney's!

John points at Peter. Peter shakes his head.

PETER
No! I always buy.

Jeremy drags Peter over to the others. They all sway
together, arms draped over shoulders.

JEREMY
Oh, don't be stingy, Pete boy. Your
father will never know what
happened.

JOHN
(to Peter)
And if all goes according to plan,
you won't either.

They laugh and stumble out the doorway.

The door slams.

EXT. DUBLIN - NORTH MOUNT STREET - EVENING

PEOPLE and CARTS travel along the open streets that
crisscross over the RIVER LIFEY.

JAMES O'LEARY, a middle aged man in professorial garb, makes his way down the edge of the river. His walk is reserved, but a look at his large hands and greying beard suggests that his life has not been lived in any ivory tower.

O'Leary removes his cap and runs his hand through his hair.

We follow him down a narrower street and here he enters BARNEY KIERNAN'S PUB.

INT. BARNEY'S PUB - EVENING

Barney's is clean and respectable. OLDER GENTLEMEN sit around small tables musing and chatting good-naturedly. Some smoke PIPES, others sip WHISKEY.

O'Leary catches sight of John, Ciaran, Jeremy, and Peter. The students laugh loudly together.

O'Leary walks over to the short, wooden bar.

O'LEARY
Glass of gin.

The BARTENDER nods and goes to fill the glass.

O'Leary's eyes scan the patrons. The bartender returns with the drink and O'Leary gives a disinterested GRUNT of thanks.

Laying a few coins on the counter, O'Leary heads towards a table where STEPHEN GREEN sits alone.

Stephen is a short, pudgy man, balding, with thick SPECTACLES and a worn jacket. The spectacles enlarge Stephen's eyes.

Stephen smiles.

STEPHEN
Ah, Mr. Professor sir! Sit down,
sit down.

O'Leary slips into a chair across from Stephen. Stephen slides two TICKETS across the table.

O'Leary eyes them quizzically.

O'LEARY
What are these?

He places two fingers over the tickets.

STEPHEN
Tickets, James. Two tickets, for
you and the Mrs.

O'Leary still appears unsure.

STEPHEN (CONT'D)
Oh, please tell me you haven't
forgotten. My play!

O'LEARY
Ah... the play...

O'Leary sips his gin quickly.

STEPHEN
Yes, the Dublin play.

O'LEARY
Last month it was the Athens play.
And the month before that...

STEPHEN
It was the Paris play. Yes, but
those other plays are all
inconsequential now.

O'LEARY
Really? That's what you said about
Athens.

STEPHEN
No, no. This one is better. It's
the Dublin play.

O'LEARY
My point.

STEPHEN
Pah, you crusty old man. I love
Dublin. You should too. We're in
the middle of what some are calling
a renaissance. If you didn't know.

O'LEARY
I didn't.

Stephen takes a deep drink of a thick Irish ale.

STEPHEN
Just think...

Stephen waves his arms in a wide arc.

STEPHEN (CONT'D)
Ireland! All on the stage! I'll be
the next Shaw, just you see.

O'Leary raises his glass for a small toast.

O'LEARY
Carpe diem.

He drinks.

O'LEARY (CONT'D)
To a long line of tradition.

STEPHEN
And tell me, what would yours be?

O'LEARY
Traditions? Let me see.

O'Leary counts on his fingers.

O'LEARY (CONT'D)
Breakfast. Lunch. And dinner. My
sacred rites. And just because I'm
not...

STEPHEN
Yes, yes, you teach the boys and
collect your pay at the end of the
month. Classics at Trinity College
can do that to a man, make him a
cynic I mean.

O'LEARY
We prefer the term scholar.

Stephen shrugs.

STEPHEN
Anyway, there are the tickets. The
performance is in two weeks. By the
way, did you ever read through that
Gaelic grammar I lent you?

O'LEARY
Níl agam ach beagáinín Gaeilge.

STEPHEN
"You only speak a little Gaelic."
Very clever.

Across the room John Doherty stands up from among the cheery
group of students.

He proudly plants his feet and begins to sing drunkenly.

JOHN

*God save our gracious Queen, Long
live our noble Queen, God save the
Queen!*

Other patrons of the pub direct their attention toward John. His friends sit around him awkwardly, half amused, half drunk, half embarrassed.

Ciaran mumbles along.

JOHN (CONT'D)

*Send her young maids to us, Snappy
and gorgeous "Sinn Fein make love
to us", God stave the Queen.*

John throws his empty glass onto the floor. It shatters.

The burly bartender begins to move out from behind the bar. A few other men shift uncomfortably in their seats.

Ciaran hides his face.

JOHN (CONT'D)

Thy choicest gifts in store...

Winks cheekily to his friends.

JOHN (CONT'D)

On me be pleased to pour.

The bartender and another CUSTOMER grab John by the arms and lead him to the door.

The abused chorus of "God Save the Queen" fades with John as the men hurl him unceremoniously from the pub.

O'Leary and Stephen watch as the scene unfolds.

EXT. STREET - NIGHT

John lands flat out upon the cobblestones. The bartender and the other man step down from the pub's threshold.

INT. BARNEY'S PUB - NIGHT

The door closes.

O'Leary shakes his head. He sighs and turns to Stephen.

O'LEARY

Well Stephen, I've got to go fetch
a child.

STEPHEN

Those boys were long gone back when
I first saw them walk in.

O'LEARY

He'll never learn.

STEPHEN

If only Harold Doherty were here to
behold such *bold* and *courageous*
progeny. He would be so proud of
Johnny boy.

O'Leary rolls his eyes.

O'LEARY

I'll tell you this, he's not my
son. And honestly, Harold is better
off fighting in France.

O'Leary rises.

STEPHEN

Cheers.

EXT. STREET - NIGHT

The bartender stands angrily over John who sits on the damp
stone. John presses his hand against his forehead. BLOOD.

BARTENDER

What's your name?

John blinks and looks around him. The bartender kicks John
swiftly in the ribs.

BARTENDER (CONT'D)

I asked you what your name is, boy.

JOHN

John Doherty.

BARTENDER

Well Master Doherty, if you want to
run about drinking with your
raucous friends I would like to
inform you that you can take your
business elsewhere.

A group of old men have gathered at the door to watch.

John leans his head back and squints in pain.

BARTENDER (CONT'D)

I run a respectable pub visited by many a respectable Dublin citizen, and I won't have ye tarnishing my name with your crass nationalistic ditties.

Professor O'Leary makes his way through the door. He then places his hand on the bartender's shoulder.

O'LEARY

Thank you sir, I apologize for the boy's behavior. I'll be taking him home now.

BARTENDER

Good.

The bartender turns back towards the pub.

O'Leary closes his fist and boxes John on the ear.

JOHN

Ow!

O'Leary grabs John by the collar...

O'LEARY

What's wrong with you! Get up! You sorry excuse for a son.

...and roughly lifts him to his feet.

The old men still hang around the door watching in silence. O'Leary turns his head to meet their stares.

O'LEARY (CONT'D)

Come on John, let's get you home.

John stumbles along slumped over O'Leary's shoulder.

INT. O'LEARY'S HOUSE - ENTRYWAY - NIGHT

John and O'Leary enter the door to the O'Leary household. John takes off his coat and hands it to O'Leary.

MRS. ELIZABETH O'LEARY, James O'Leary's wife, calls out from the living room.

She is thin and her hair is just beginning to grey. Her movements are smooth and gentle but she carries herself with strength and poise.

MRS. O'LEARY (O.S.)
Is that you James?

O'LEARY
Yes, and I've brought a guest.

MRS. O'LEARY
Oh? Who is it?

O'Leary motions for John to step into the...

LIVING ROOM

The O'Leary's living room is small and cozy. Mrs. O'Leary sits reading in a chair by the fire.

MRS. O'LEARY (CONT'D)
Oh! It's John Doherty. How are...
Oh my, what happened to you? Sit
down right here, right now.

Mrs. O'Leary leads John to an empty chair and sets him down. She dashes to the kitchen and returns with a cloth.

MRS. O'LEARY (CONT'D)
You've got quite a pretty bump here
child. Sit still and let me tend to
it.

She pours some ointment onto a rag and presses it to John's head. John relaxes like this is nothing out of the ordinary.

JOHN
Thanks, Mrs. O'Leary.

MRS. O'LEARY
James, what did you do to this poor
boy?

O'LEARY (O.S.)
Accidents happen dear, especially
to young boys.

MRS. O'LEARY
Well, it's not the first time I've
seen you in a scrape. Hold this
here. Is there anything else I can
get for you, John?

Before John can answer, Professor O'Leary walks up behind his wife and interrupts.

O'LEARY
Thank you Elizabeth, I think we are fine for now.

MRS. O'LEARY
Oh, alright. If you need anything come fetch me.

Mrs. O'Leary heads up the stairs.

O'Leary pulls up a wicker chair in front of John.

O'LEARY
What's wrong with you, boy?

JOHN
Nothing.

O'LEARY
Then what did I just see back at the public house?

John removes the cloth and looks at O'Leary straight on.

JOHN
I was caught up in the moment, that's all.

He leans his head back again.

O'LEARY
There was no moment. Just a scene. What will I tell your father?

John grits his teeth.

JOHN
That the music lessons finally paid off? Honestly, what does he care?

O'LEARY
I'm telling you John, he cares. Before your father left for the war I told him I'd watch out for you. I gave him my word that Harold Doherty's son would still be a son worth claiming when he returns.

JOHN
Is a doctor not enough?

O'Leary sits back in his chair. He sighs.

O'LEARY

Your father is fighting for something he believes in. He would want you to do the same. Can't you understand that?

JOHN

Is this an interrogation? My word, you're worse than a German spy.

O'LEARY

The spy your father is fighting against!

JOHN

But you should know, I have my battles too.

John stands up tall and places the damp rag next to a porcelain lamp on a small table.

O'LEARY

What is that supposed to mean?

John refuses to answer.

O'LEARY (CONT'D)

Let me tell you now, bar fights don't count.

John shakes his head and smiles mischievously.

JOHN

I believe I should be heading home.

O'Leary follows John as he walks to the...

O'LEARY ENTRYWAY

O'Leary grabs John's coat for him and then stops.

O'Leary pulls a pin from the inside of John's coat and holds it up to John's face.

O'LEARY

John, tell me, is that what this is about? You've joined the Irish Volunteers? Are these your battles?

John hesitates for a moment. He looks down at his shoes.

JOHN

Yes.

John then reaches for the pin, but O'Leary pulls it away.

O'LEARY

John, it's just a pin, a club. An excuse to play soldier when you should be pursuing something worthwhile. Take my advice while you can. Do something noble with your life. Finish your studies; become a doctor. Be like your father by doing something on principle.

The rigidity has left John's body and he stands with his hands in his pockets. His eyelids blink heavily.

JOHN

Don't lecture me, professor, I'm tired. And I do have my principles. Now, may I have the pin back?

O'LEARY

No, I'll be keeping this.

JOHN

Keeping it on principle?

O'Leary places the pin into his pocket. John's eyes follow the motion of O'Leary's hand.

O'Leary harshly throws the coat into John's arms. John wraps it around himself tightly.

JOHN (CONT'D)

Tell Mrs. O'Leary I say goodbye and thank *her* for the hospitality.

John steps out into the cold night and slams the door.

EXT. PHOENIX PARK - DAY

Flowers are in full bloom, and trees are budding all around the park. Children jump and run across the grass. Couples stroll and chat.

John and his girlfriend KATHY JOHNSTON walk down a sunny path. Her brown hair pairs well with her light green dress.

Far off in the distance, a small group of listeners congregate around an ORATOR giving an impassioned speech.

KATHY

It's a beautiful day. I'm glad that so many people are able to be out together.

JOHN

Yes, I agree.

Kathy picks a white LILY from beside a pond and brandishes it with a flick of her wrist. John tries to wrap his arm around her hips but she spins away deftly, teasingly.

KATHY

My father is returning from business soon.

JOHN

Oh is he? What has kept him away this time?

KATHY

Helping sell machinery to munitions workers in Liverpool.

JOHN

Is that what children want these days?

John tries to hold her again.

KATHY

Ah! You know you could speak to him; he's mentioned it before. He knows many friends who could use the medical expertise of a Trinity graduate.

JOHN

Don't know any!

KATHY

Oh, John. It would be good for you. Now, give me your handkerchief, I've muddied my hands picking that flower.

John produces a white handkerchief. Kathy rubs the mud from her hands and folds the lily into the cloth.

KATHY (CONT'D)

It's dirty. You'll have to wash it.

John grabs the handkerchief and slides it into his pocket.

JOHN

Never!

The two have looped around the park and are coming up to the gesticulating orator.

ORATOR

Give us your hands dear friends.
Join the Volunteers. The time is
coming when we will have to choose
whether blood is more precious than
freedom!

The orator passes out papers for the Irish Volunteers. John and Kathy stand, listening, from a distance.

KATHY

He is too angry. Perhaps if he
softened his words.

JOHN

He's passionate, my dear.

Kathy looks John in the eye.

KATHY

He's angry. I have seen too many
men ruin themselves with hatred and
greed. Especially in my father's
line of business.

JOHN

Said like a true mother.

KATHY

First I need to find a husband.

John flashes a boyish smile. The two continue to walk across the path. Kathy laughs.

KATHY (CONT'D)

(slightly self-aware)

And if it makes any difference, a
boy first mind you. Then two girls.
George perhaps? Or Daniel? A strong
name.

John slows his walk and focuses his sight on something in the distance.

KATHY (CONT'D)

We shall have a cottage by the western sea, away from this noisy city. Away from peddlers of foolish talk. Well, I'll let you visit occasionally I suppose.

JOHN

Look, do you see that man over there?

John points to a man in his mid 30s walking slowly through the grass. The man holds his hands behind his back and keeps head slightly tilted towards the treetops. His hair is neatly combed over a large, intelligent forehead.

This is PADRAIC PEARSE.

JOHN (CONT'D)

That is Padraic Pearse. Now there's a public speaker if I ever saw one.

Pearse walks in the direction of the couple. John hushes as Pearse comes closer.

JOHN (CONT'D)

A true Irishman, a great man.

John stands up straight and stares forward wide-eyed.

JOHN (CONT'D)

Good day sir.

John nods his head as Pearse passes. Pearse returns a polite nod and continues silently on his way.

KATHY

He is quiet.

JOHN

The quiet ones have the loudest hearts.

John and Kathy move on, John still stepping out of his mild shock.

Suddenly, John tugs on Kathy's arm.

JOHN (CONT'D)

Turn this way!

KATHY

What?

We see Mr. and Mr. O'Leary approaching in the background.

JOHN
Let's turn off the path.

KATHY
There's a flower bed!

From the other direction, O'Leary also catches sight of John.

O'LEARY
Dear, perhaps we should turn 'round
and go back the way we came.

MRS. O'LEARY
James, the path will lead us
around. What are you saying?

O'LEARY
Perhaps that side trail we passed
would have some beautiful flowers.

MRS. O'LEARY
No. I'm enjoying the sun. We are
not turning back.

John gives a last tug on Kathy's arm. The four people meet.

MRS. O'LEARY (CONT'D)
Oh, look! It's John Doherty. How do
you do?

JOHN
Very well Mrs. O'Leary. This is
Miss Johnston. I am not sure if you
have met before.

KATHY
A pleasure.

MRS. O'LEARY
A pleasure to meet you as well.
John, I see you've still a bump on
your head.

KATHY
A bicyclist knocked him down the
other day.

O'Leary says nothing. Silence, until Mrs. O'Leary steps in.

MRS. O'LEARY

This is my husband James. He's a professor at Trinity. Where John studies.

She looks to O'Leary who then addresses Kathy.

O'LEARY

Correct. Your father's Mr. Johnston, the ammunitions man? We have acquaintances in common.

KATHY

Ah, he is. I'm happy to hear that.

John turns to O'Leary

JOHN

I've also mentioned you to Miss Johnston before, professor.

O'LEARY

Oh have you?

Kathy blushes.

KATHY

I've heard you teach ancient literature.

O'LEARY

Yes.

KATHY

I've read some in my father's library. Very interesting. I've even considered studying at university myself.

O'LEARY

You would be most welcome at Trinity, Miss Johnston.

O'Leary points to John's jacket.

O'LEARY (CONT'D)

Your jacket is looking very clean and orderly today, Master Doherty. Without ornament, as a man should be.

John says nothing.

O'LEARY (CONT'D)

Well, I believe it is time we parted. The Mrs. and I have a promenade to continue. A pleasure to make your acquaintance Miss Johnston. Good bye John.

O'Leary takes his wife's arm in his and they stroll away.

EXT. TRINITY COLLEGE DUBLIN CAMPUS - DAY

O'Leary casually strolls across the college green. He enters the front door of a grand, stately building.

INT. ADMINISTRATION BUILDING - DAY

Academic portraits line the hallway. Vases rest on pedestals.

O'Leary approaches a door that reads JOHN MAHAFFY - PROVOST.

INT. PROVOST'S OFFICE - DAY

O'Leary opens the door and steps inside. PROVOST JOHN MAHAFFY sits behind his desk. He is a thick-boned man in his mid-50s with large sideburns.

It is a scholar's office lined with books on two sides. Behind Mahaffy sits a large window, cracked open. On top of Mahaffy's desk sit papers, a lamp, and a bust of Plato.

PROVOST JOHN MAHAFFY

Come in, James. Please, sit down.

O'Leary sits down in the chair

PROVOST JOHN MAHAFFY (CONT'D)

How are you, James?

O'LEARY

Fine I suppose.

PROVOST JOHN MAHAFFY

I am hoping Mrs. O'Leary is well. You both looking forward to the Easter holiday?

JOHN

Yes. We are.

PROVOST JOHN MAHAFFY
Good, good. I ask all of this as a
friend. I do.

O'LEARY
Yes?

PROVOST JOHN MAHAFFY
Yes, yes, my aim is to keep our
relationship amiable.

O'LEARY
I see. Remind me what this is
about.

Provost Mahaffy gathers himself.

PROVOST JOHN MAHAFFY
Yes, well, I never said
specifically. James, I wanted to
have a few words with you about the
incident with John Doherty a few
days ago.

O'LEARY
What?

PROVOST MAHAFFY
At the pub.

O'LEARY
I remember, but what of it.

PROVOST JOHN MAHAFFY
We are both academics, you and me.
Classical men. We understand the
value of discipline.

O'LEARY
Discipline? If you want discipline
then talk to the boy! Suspend him!
That will teach him discipline.

PROVOST JOHN MAHAFFY
I meant for you.

O'Leary's eyes burn into Mahaffy.

PROVOST JOHN MAHAFFY (CONT'D)
I heard what happened. There were
other professors there, men from
the community. It's Barney's, what
did you expect.

O'LEARY

Oh come on. And else would you have me do?

PROVOST JOHN MAHAFFY

Don't beat the boy!

Mahaffy collects himself.

PROVOST JOHN MAHAFFY (CONT'D)

Think of his father. Think of Dr. Doherty.

O'LEARY

Of course I do. Harold is my best friend.

PROVOST JOHN MAHAFFY

But publicly chastise the son of a war hero? Really, if it were any other time than this...

O'Leary nods his head.

O'LEARY

I understand. It won't happen again.

PROVOST JOHN MAHAFFY

Good! Good! And as I said, in different circumstances...

He clears his throat.

PROVOST JOHN MAHAFFY (CONT'D)

James, some of your peers have asked for your resignation. We both know your scholarship has tapered off over the past few years, and given the recent incident...

Provost Mahaffy adjusts the bust on his desk.

O'LEARY

What?

PROVOST JOHN MAHAFFY

Some think you have become a detrimental influence on the students.

O'Leary stands.

O'LEARY
Are you threatening my
professorship?

PROVOST JOHN MAHAFFY
Trinity College is not some country
grammar school! Reputation James,
reputation! I will not let this
ancient University be run into the
ground while I hold the provost's
chair.

O'LEARY
It's the boy!

PROVOST JOHN MAHAFFY
Then do something. If you can make
some sort of public reconciliation,
keep the boy in line, then I
guarantee your position will be
secure. Just don't let this happen
again. I mean this. Take a few days
to sit on the issue, and then speak
to the lad if you must.

O'Leary turns his head away in disgust. Provost Mahaffy
nervously pushes a stack of paper around his desk.

PROVOST JOHN MAHAFFY (CONT'D)
I am trying to help you, James.

O'LEARY
Let us hope so.

O'Leary rises from his chair and walks towards the door.

EXT. TRINITY COLLEGE DUBLIN CAMPUS - DAY

O'Leary walks powerfully across the college green. He barges
into the door of an old stone building.

INT. RESIDENCE HALL LOBBY - DAY

TWO STUDENTS sit around a table studying over books.

O'LEARY
Has anyone seen John Doherty?

STUDENT 1
Who?

O'LEARY
John Doherty.

STUDENT 2
Oh, I *think* I know the fellow.
Actually, I believe he just left.

O'Leary leaves the building immediately.

EXT. TRINITY COLLEGE DUBLIN CAMPUS - DAY

We see John striding briskly across the green. He is wrapped in a dark, unassuming coat.

O'LEARY
John!

John does not turn from his course.

O'Leary walks, quickly, angrily, over to the gate.

We see John disappear beyond the entryway.

EXT. DUBLIN - GRIFFITH AVENUE - DAY

O'Leary pops onto the busy afternoon sidewalk. His head turns both to the left and right.

His eyes widen as he sees John, who crosses the street and heads away from campus.

O'LEARY
(to himself)
Where are you going, boy?

O'Leary follows after him.

EXT. DUBLIN - NARROW STREET - EVENING

We follow O'Leary as he trails John at a distance. John turns a corner and O'Leary picks up the pace.

EXT. DUBLIN - LOWER CLASS STREET - EVENING

O'Leary bursts onto an empty street. To his left, there is no one. The same to his right. John has disappeared.

He hears a door shut.

It is an old faded door held in a dark green frame.

O'Leary turns. He cautiously approaches the door. He leans his ear in to listen. His bare knuckles rap the wood.

KNOCK. KNOCK. KNOCK.

MUFFLED VOICES.

O'Leary knocks harder, with force.

KNOCK. KNOCK.

The door immediately swings open revealing a STOUT MAN.

STOUT MAN
I'm sorry si...

O'Leary pushes past him into the house.

O'LEARY
I need to speak with John Doherty,
pardon me.

INT. MEETING HOUSE - STAIRWELL - EVENING

Voices come from upstairs. O'Leary follows them.

STOUT MAN
Sir, I really can't let you go up
there.

The stout man tries to grab hold of O'Leary, but O'Leary shrugs him off.

JOHN (O.S.)
Who is it, Ryan?

Upstairs, O'Leary finds an open door. Inside is a large wooden table surrounded by FIVE MEN, John and Ciaran included.

O'Leary enters the room.

PLANNING ROOM - EVENING

A map. A pistol. Two rifles. Bullets. These things lie scattered on the table.

O'Leary stands bewildered.

JOHN
Professor O'Leary, what are you
doing?

A bearded man with a tattered beret, MATTHEW DALY, raises his arms.

MATTHEW
Who let him in here?

STOUT MAN
I'm sorry, he jus' burst in on me.

O'LEARY
What is all this, John?

MATTHEW
Get him out!

John moves to push O'Leary out of the room.

JOHN
Mind your own damn business
professor.

John takes O'Leary out of the meeting room.

STAIRWELL - EVENING

O'LEARY
But...

JOHN
Shut up Mr. O'Leary, please.

The two reach the bottom of the stairs and John opens the front door to let O'Leary out.

O'LEARY
John, wait. What's going on?

EXT. MEETING HOUSE - EVENING

John pauses at the threshold.

JOHN
There is nothing at all that should
concern you here.

O'LEARY
This is no time for games, John.
Please, come back to the house with
me.

JOHN
No.

O'LEARY
Come, this is enough!

JOHN
Yes, it is enough!

John holds an old PISTOL to O'Leary's head.

JOHN (CONT'D)
Let's try to keep our wits about
us. Until tomorrow.

John lowers the gun.

O'Leary shakes his head.

John unceremoniously shoves O'Leary out into the street and
SLAMS the door.

INT. O'LEARY HOUSEHOLD - STAIRS - NIGHT

O'Leary slowly climbs the creaking staircase. At the top, he
turns to enter the...

BEDROOM

Mrs. O'Leary sits in a large feather bed wearing a night
dress. An oil lamp burns warmly on the nearby table.

MRS. O'LEARY
You're home. I didn't think you
would be out so late.

O'Leary slumps onto the edge of the bed. He holds his head in
his hands, tired.

O'LEARY
I had some things to attend to.

O'Leary begins taking off his shoes.

MRS. O'LEARY
Yes?

She waits. O'Leary finishes removing his shoes.

O'LEARY
It's John.

MRS. O'LEARY
Again?

O'LEARY

Again.

O'Leary lays down on the bed.

O'LEARY (CONT'D)

I went to check on him today. I found him with some strange men.

MRS. O'LEARY

What for?

O'LEARY

I wish I knew. There were guns.

MRS. O'LEARY

Oh dear. Do you think we should try to alert his father?

O'LEARY

I don't think so. You can see it in his eyes, Elizabeth.

MRS. O'LEARY

What, James?

O'Leary stares up to the ceiling.

O'LEARY

Harold should never have gone off leaving that boy here alone.

MRS. O'LEARY

They said the war would be quick.

O'LEARY

They always say that.

MRS. O'LEARY

And with the mother passed away as well. Poor dear.

O'LEARY

We all have our principles I suppose.

Mrs. O'Leary reaches over and places a reassuring hand on O'Leary's shoulder.

MRS. O'LEARY

Well, don't worry about it too much. You've done well with him so far.

(MORE)

MRS. O'LEARY (CONT'D)
Just think, a relaxing Easter
Weekend will do us all a bit of
good. We can even ride out to the
sea shore Monday morning for a
change of scenery.

O'LEARY
That sounds lovely.

MRS. O'LEARY
I think so too. I'm turning off the
lamp now. Let us get some sleep.

Mrs. O'Leary extinguishes the lamp.

INT. O'LEARY HOUSEHOLD - KITCHEN - DAY

Mr. and Mrs. O'Leary are enjoying a late morning breakfast.
Eggs. Sausage. Tomato. On the counter sits a basket packed
for an afternoon outing.

Rich sunlight streams onto the quaintly set table.

Suddenly, an explosion sounds faintly in the distance.

Mrs. O'Leary looks up slowly. James O'Leary freezes mid chew.

MRS. O'LEARY
What was that?

O'LEARY
I'm not sure.

O'Leary pushes his plate away. Mrs. O'Leary stands up and
looks curiously out the window.

Another explosion.

MRS. O'LEARY
It's the day after Easter. What
could possibly be happening?

O'Leary walks out of the room.

EXT. O'LEARY HOUSE - DAY

O'Leary opens the door and steps into the fresh spring air. A
few NEIGHBORS stick their heads out of windows. The street is
clear, even birds are CHIRPING.

A BOY rides his bicycle down the empty street.

O'LEARY

Hullo! Boy! Do you know what those noises were all about?

The boy pulls over. He is out of breath and his face is flushed with youthful excitement.

BOY

Yes, sir. I seen men run into the Post Office breaking the windows and such. I'm off quick to tell me pa!

The boy begins to ride away.

O'LEARY

Get back home, your pa will be wanting to know where you've been.

No response. O'Leary returns to the house.

INT. O'LEARY HOUSEHOLD - ENTRYWAY - DAY

O'Leary leans against the heavy door. Mrs. O'Leary comes from the living room and leans over O'Leary to peer through the slender door windows.

MRS. O'LEARY

Well, did you see anything.

O'LEARY

A lad said that armed men have stormed the Post Office. They must have captured the guards there.

Mrs. O'Leary places her hand on O'Leary's shoulder looking him in the eye.

MRS. O'LEARY

What? But why?

O'Leary jerks and rips his jacket from the coat hanger. He barges into the...

LIVING ROOM

MRS. O'LEARY

James, where are you going?

O'LEARY

John's there.

O'Leary continues into the...

KITCHEN

O'Leary grabs a small loaf of bread from the picnic basket.

MRS. O'LEARY
How can you be sure?

O'LEARY
I'm sure. I'll be home soon. I love
you, dear.

O'Leary kisses his wife softly. Mrs. O'Leary fails to see the tenderness in the kiss.

MRS. O'LEARY
James!

O'Leary leaves the house.

EXT. GENERAL POST OFFICE - DAY

A ragtag bunch of 100 REBELS armed with RIFLES, PISTOLS, and PIKES march toward the pillared entrance of a large stone building. This is the GENERAL POST OFFICE (GPO).

It is a stone temple to bureaucracy, grey, angular. Three classical statues apathetically watch the force approach.

John holds his gun tightly and stares ahead.

A woman pushing a baby carriage and a man carrying a bag of vegetables watch as the group proceeds.

The rebels march silently up the severe, mercantile steps. Among them is Ciaran.

MONTAGE - VARIOUS

A) EXT. DUBLIN CASTLE - DAY - 20 REBELS march up to DUBLIN CASTLE. As they walk through the open gate, a large, friendly-looking POLICE OFFICER asks that they stop. One old rebel raises a pistol and fires point blank into the officer's head.

B) EXT. ST. STEPHEN'S GREEN - DAY - Another group of REBELS strides into a beautiful city park. They are armed with guns and shovels. At the command of COUNTESS MARKIEVICH, an older woman in military uniform, the rebels begin digging trenches.

C) EXT. TRINITY COLLEGE - DAY - A third group of REBELS step hurriedly towards Trinity College

D) INT. TRINITY COLLEGE - DAY - TRINITY STUDENT OFFICERS arm themselves with guns.

E) EXT. DUBLIN CASTLE - The police officer falls down dead. Order disintegrates among the rebels. With the rebels beyond the walls, the gate closes and shuts them out.

F) EXT. ST. STEPHEN'S GREEN - The rebels at this position continue to dig their trenches.

G) EXT. TRINITY COLLEGE - The Trinity officers have erected sandbag barricades. We see the rebels fire upon the students, but they make no progress.

END MONTAGE

INT. GENERAL POST OFFICE - DAY

As the men cram themselves through the doorway, CLERKS look up from their desks. Throughout the expansive marble lobby, CUSTOMERS turn around, annoyed at the interruption. No one panics.

John looks around unsure of what to do. Ciaran throws a stack of papers onto the ground.

CIARAN

This post office has been
commandeered by the Irish Republic!
You are ordered to evacuate.

An older SECRETARY glares at Ciaran. Two rebels jump behind a counter.

SECRETARY

What is wrong with you, sir?

WOMAN 1

Ma'am, where can I deliver this
letter to my granddaughter?

One of the rebels brandishes a pistol.

REBEL 1

Hands up! Leave the building
immediately.

A few workers slowly begin gathering their things, but for the most part everyone remains still.

Rebels continue SHOUTING.

Finally, we see James Connolly emerge from the confusion and climb up onto a table. He FIRES a round into the air.

JAMES CONNOLLY

The GPO has been taken by the Irish
Volunteers. Leave now or you will
be shot!

He fires another bullet. People quickly gather their things.
Fear finally sets in.

REBEL 2

Move! Get out!

John stands still amidst the commotion. He pushes over a
wooden chair, but does nothing else.

James Connolly points to John and Ciaran.

JAMES CONNOLLY

You two! Take these desks and
barricade that window on the far
wall.

CIARAN

Yes sir.

EXT. GENERAL POST OFFICE - DAY

A SMALL CROWD has gathered outside the GPO. People are trying
to peek over one another to see inside the windows.

O'Leary walks towards toward the building. He flinches. A
rifle butt breaks through a window. Glass showers down from
every side of the building.

O'LEARY

Excuse me, excuse me.

O'Leary pushes past the onlookers. Two DIRTY MEN stop him and
point to the Post Office.

DIRTY MAN 1

Ey, help my friend with a lift
'ere?

DIRTY MAN 2

Yeah, I'm trying to see inside.
There's been a take over ya know.

O'Leary says nothing as he wipes the two men off his person. By a good amount of pushing and shoving, he manages to wriggle past the front door of the GPO.

INT. GENERAL POST OFFICE - DAY

Commands fly across the room. BRING THAT HERE. REINFORCE THAT WALL. EXTRA AMMUNITION UPSTAIRS.

Men punch out windows with their rifles and construct barricades with desks and chairs.

For a moment, O'Leary is lost in the chaos.

JAMES CONNOLLY

(to O'Leary)

You sir, run upstairs and tell me whether we've secured the back offices.

O'LEARY

What? No, I'm not here for this.

JAMES CONNOLLY

Move!

O'Leary scans the room looking for John. John is nowhere to be seen so O'Leary heads upstairs as Connolly commanded.

STAIRWAY

A REBEL is carrying a large wooden chair down the stairs. He squeezes past O'Leary.

O'LEARY

Oh, have you seen a boy named John Doherty?

REBEL 1

No sir.

The man continues on his way.

SECOND FLOOR

O'Leary enters at one end of a long hallway. Doors have been thrown open and MEN continue to transport large, solid pieces of furniture to the floor below.

At the end of the hall, a group of men ram a BOOKSHELF into a thick wooden door.

A bearded man with a beret calls out to the crew. From his tattered clothes and his thick forearms, he probably lives in the country. It is Matthew Daly from John's meeting.

MATTHEW

Heave!

CRASH

MATTHEW (CONT'D)

Heave!

CRASH

John Doherty mans the battering ram.

MATTHEW (CONT'D)

Heave!

The door bursts open. Three terrified POST OFFICE GUARDS sit inside. They hold rifles.

GURAD 1

Don't shoot!

GUARD 2

We have no ammunition!

Guard 2 reveals an empty barrel.

Matthew rips the guns out of their hands and then calls out to John.

MATTHEW

Knock out those windows!

John smashes a window loudly. The guards wince. Matthew positions himself imposingly in the doorway.

MATTHEW (CONT'D)

We are not here to kill you. But we do ask that you exit the building immediately.

Matthew steps aside to show the guards the way out. The guards take their escape gratefully.

O'Leary steps over broken glass as he makes his way toward John. John is clearing paper out of a desk drawer.

O'LEARY

John.

John says nothing. He continues his task.

O'LEARY (CONT'D)

John, this is madness. Listen to reason, for once in your life. This is criminal for goodness sake!

John sweeps an ink bottle onto the floor. The ink spills out into a black pool. He looks O'Leary in the eyes.

JOHN

Would you help me carry this desk downstairs?

O'Leary surveys the chaos of the room. His body relaxes.

John exerts himself against the desk, scraping it along the floor by inches.

Then, O'Leary positions himself to lift the desk.

At that moment Ciaran runs into the room.

CIARAN

Hurry! Quick! Mr. Pearse is about to announce the new Irish Republic.

John drops the desk immediately and O'Leary follows.

EXT. GENERAL POST OFFICE - DAY

A large crowd congregates outside the GPO. It is a mixture of REBELS and CIVILIANS.

Padraic Pearse stands solemnly and confidently on the top step of the GPO. In his hands he holds a large document, like a scroll.

He stands up straight. The crowd hushes. He reads:

PADRAIC PEARSE

Irishmen and Irishwomen. In the name of God and of the dead generations from which she receives her old tradition of nationhood, Ireland, through us, summons her children to her flag and strikes for her freedom in full confidence of victory.

CHEERS. A few HISSES.

PADRAIC PEARSE (CONT'D)
We declare the right of the people
of Ireland to the ownership of
Ireland and to the unfettered
control of Irish destinies.

John is absolutely rapt in the speech. We move to see O'Leary
and he too keeps his eyes transfixed on Pearse.

PADRAIC PEARSE (CONT'D)
We place the cause of the Irish
Republic under the protection of
the Most High God, Whose blessing
we invoke upon our arms, and we
pray that no one who serves that
cause will dishonor it by
cowardice, inhumanity, or rapine.

A FEMALE CITIZEN points upward

FEMALE CITIZEN
Look!

The crown looks to the roof of the GPO.

PADRAIC PEARSE
In this supreme hour the Irish
nation must, by its valour and
discipline and by the readiness of
its children to sacrifice...

A BOY perilously hangs on the flagpole of the GPO. He takes
down the Union Jack and replaces with a green flag that reads
"IRISH REPUBLIC" in gold letters.

PADRAIC PEARSE (CONT'D)
...themselves for the common good,
prove itself worthy of the august
destiny to which it is called.

JOHN
Hooray!

Other rebels follow suit, cheering exuberantly. Pearse then
pastes the proclamation on one of the massive stone pillars
while James Connolly steps up next to Pearse.

JAMES CONNOLLY
Return to your positions men! Today
we defend the new Irish Republic!

INT. GENERAL POST OFFICE - DAY

John and Ciaran sit against the wall of the cleared out lobby area. Now that defences have been built, supplies have been organized, and jobs have been assigned, the building is strangely quiet except for the quiet hubbub of chatter.

JOHN

We're all ready to fight but
there's no one to fight with us.

CIARAN

Brits are in Europe being killed in
trenches. It'll be a while before
they dig their way back.

John stares at his boots.

CIARAN (CONT'D)

Hit 'em when they're weak. That's
how we'll win. They can't fight the
Germans *and* the Irish from two
fronts. Can they?

At that moment a young woman, MARY (21), with light brown hair, bounds over to where John and Ciaran sit. She wears a thick beige dress and even in her modest clothes she is stunningly beautiful.

MARY

I couldn't help but hear one of
you've said the word "Germans".

Ciaran looks up at her and puffs out his chest.

CIARAN

Yes, I did.

MARY

Well, can I share some *confidential*
information with you?

Mary leans in a whispers.

MARY (CONT'D)

Secrets?

John shrugs his shoulders.

JOHN

Sure.

MARY

I knew you would say yes.

She winks at John as she sits down between John and Ciaran.

MARY (CONT'D)

I've been told that three thousand German soldiers have landed at Kerry this very day.

CIARAN

You're mad.

MARY

Am not! James Connolly orchestrated the whole thing himself.

CIARAN

I don't believe it.

MARY

Ask him then!

CIARAN

No. I'm sure he has enough on his mind already.

Mary turns to John.

MARY

You believe me... Didn't catch your name.

She smiles a big, straight-toothed smile.

JOHN

John Doherty.

Ciaran butts in, sticking out his hand.

CIARAN

And I'm Ciaran.

Mary takes his hand and they shake. She turns back to John.

MARY

A pleasure to meet both of you.

We see O'Leary pacing on the other side of the room, hands behind his back.

CIARAN

What's Professor O'Leary doing here?

JOHN
Nannying I suppose. What else does
he do?

MARY
Who?

John points.

JOHN
He's our professor, from Trinity.

MARY
Hmmm.

Ciaran raises his hand to his mouth.

CIARAN
Professor O'Leary!

O'Leary starts and looks around quickly.

Ciaran waves.

CIARAN (CONT'D)
Professor O'Leary! Come here!

O'Leary approaches and stands at the edge of the group.

CIARAN (CONT'D)
We want to know what you're doing
here.

O'LEARY
I... I heard the news. I came to
see what had happened.

JOHN
And for me.

O'Leary looks down at his feet.

O'LEARY
Yes, and for John.

MARY
Most of the spectators are outside
you know.

O'Leary gazes toward a boarded up window.

JOHN
Anyway, if you do decide to leave.
Would you mind dropping by Kathy's
and telling her I'm doing well?

Mary cocks her head to the side.

MARY
Kathy?

O'LEARY
I may.

JOHN
That would be helpful.

A REBEL OFFICER approaches. The three youths stand up.

REBEL OFFICER
You two men, you're on bomb duty
now. Assembly line is on the third
floor. You lass, go help with the
foodstuffs.

JOHN
Sir, I've never made a bomb before.
We are medical students.

The officer looks him up and down.

REBEL OFFICER
Fine, infirmary.

The officer continues his rounds.

As the three youths move to their assignments, O'Leary slides
toward a side door, now the only way in and out of the GPO.

EXT. GENERAL POST OFFICE - EVENING

O'Leary steps out into the fresh evening air.

Three LOOTERS wrestle with a chair piled onto a large
barricade. A REBEL GUARD yells to him.

REBEL GUARD
Ey! Get away!

LOOTER 1
Aw, shuttup!

The looters continue trying to remove the chair.

REBEL GUARD

Now!

He fires a shot into the air and the looters disperse.

O'Leary picks his way around the barricade and hugs close to the shop fronts lining the street. The buildings cast ominous shadows in the red light.

At that moment, FIVE LOOTERS, men and women, run up to O'Leary. O'Leary flinches as they run past.

Two men hurl a barrel toward a large window: "Gillian's Sweets and Delicacies."

Upon impact, the window shatters into a thousand pieces of blood red glass.

O'LEARY

Oy! What are you doing?

One of the looters stops in front of O'Leary and slurs heavily.

LOOTER 1

Vict'ry est so sweet monsieur.

Another looter throws his arms around his friend.

LOOTER 2

You're a poet Duggie.

The second looter turns to his friends.

LOOTER 2 (CONT'D)

Sweets for everyone!

O'Leary watches the scene unfold in disdain. He looks back to the GPO, strong and powerful in the waning light. REBEL GUARDS stand watch dutifully along the roof.

O'Leary regards the looters again. All down the street stores have been broken into and pockets of SCAVENGERS can be seen slipping in and out of windows.

O'Leary leaves the scene.

O'LEARY

Dublin.

INT. O'LEARY HOUSEHOLD - ENTRYWAY - NIGHT

O'Leary steps heavily into his house. As he hangs up his coat, Mrs. O'Leary rushes to his side. She has a stern look on her face

MRS. O'LEARY
James, what's happened. What took you so long?

O'LEARY
They've taken and barricaded the Post Office.

Mrs. O'Leary checks her husband over looking for injuries.

O'LEARY (CONT'D)
But I'm fine.

O'Leary floats into the

LIVING ROOM

He lowers himself into an armchair.

MRS. O'LEARY
What's wrong? Did you see something?

O'Leary sighs and looks into his wife's eyes.

O'Leary rises from the chair.

O'LEARY
It wasn't what I thought it would be.

MRS. O'LEARY
What?

O'LEARY
These are good men. Brothers, fathers. Sons.

O'Leary pauses with his hand inside his jacket. He pulls out JOHN'S PIN.

Mrs. O'Leary takes it softly from O'Leary's hand.

MRS. O'LEARY
And so are you.

She raises the pin and examines it under the light.

MRS. O'LEARY (CONT'D)
Did you happen to find John?

O'LEARY
Yes. I went by Miss Johnston's house, the girl we met at the park. I told her that he was holed up in the Post Office.

Mrs. O'Leary faces her husband quickly.

MRS. O'LEARY
You didn't bring him back?!

O'LEARY
No, I left him.

MRS. O'LEARY
James, what if he is hurt. You can't leave him out there. No one wants to come home to a tombstone.

O'LEARY
Don't worry. I'm returning tomorrow.

Mrs. O'Leary places her hands firmly on O'Leary's shoulders

MRS. O'LEARY
This is the strangest Easter I've ever witnessed. I know, I've lived through a few things myself.

She smiles and attaches John's pin to O'Leary's shirt.

MRS. O'LEARY (CONT'D)
Looks smart.

O'Leary stands in front of the mirror over the side table. He examines the pin thoughtfully.

MRS. O'LEARY (O.S.) (CONT'D)
Would you like some dinner? I've got it in the kitchen.

O'LEARY
Yes dear, I'll come get it.

O'Leary gazes at his ageing face.

INT. O'LEARY HOUSEHOLD - LIVING ROOM - MORNING

O'Leary stuffs tins of meat and beans into a satchel. He rummages through the pantry and pulls out a loaf of bread.

Mrs. O'Leary comes down the stairway.

MRS. O'LEARY
What are you doing?

O'Leary continues looking for things.

O'LEARY
I'm packing a bag. I am going back to the Post Office.

MRS. O'LEARY
What do you need a bag for? You're only going there to get John.

O'LEARY
I'm going back.

Mrs. O'Leary grabs the bag.

MRS. O'LEARY
No. You're not.

O'Leary holds up a hand.

O'LEARY
Please Elizabeth.

O'Leary pulls the bag away from his wife.

O'LEARY (CONT'D)
I've heard that the Germans are landing 10,000 troops.

MRS. O'LEARY
No one has landed anything! These are just rumors. Remember, you're an old man.

O'Leary turns to his wife.

O'LEARY
I know. I'll be back. I'll be back before it gets bad.

MRS. O'LEARY
If you hurt yourself fooling around...

O'LEARY

I won't.

He hugs Mrs. O'Leary and walks to the front door.

EXT. O'LEARY HOUSE - MORNING

The door opens and out steps O'Leary. Mrs. O'Leary appears in the doorway after him. Her face is steeled and her arms are crossed as she watches her husband leave.

EXT. GENERAL POST OFFICE - DAY

A MESSENGER BOY speeds under a barricade and enters the
GENERAL POST OFFICE

On the second day of the Rising, the GPO is now a model of efficiency. REBELS move smartly from task to task. A few men sing a rousing SONG as they clean their shotguns.

The messenger boy approaches a WOMAN carrying a crate.

MESSENGER BOY

Scuse me madame. Where can I find
one James Connolly?

REBEL WOMAN

Don't know exactly, check the third
floor.

The boy races upstairs.

THIRD FLOOR

The boy enters the hallway and peeks into the

BOMB ROOM

BOMB MAKERS are crafting homemade bombs and piling them in dangerous-looking piles.

MESSENGER BOY

Connolly in here?

One of the men raises his head quickly. His face is red and strained.

BOMB MAKER

Get out before you blow us all to bits. He ain't in here.

The messenger boy tips his little hat and returns to the

HALLWAY

Further down the hall the boy finds an open door, which leads to the

MEETING ROOM

In this room stand James Connolly, Padraic Pearse, and Tom Plunkett poring over some ragged maps. One electric light bulb illuminates their serious faces.

MESSENGER BOY

Connolly here?

James Connolly raises his head.

JAMES CONNOLLY

What is it?

MESSENGER BOY

We may be in big trouble sir. I heard say there's 15000 British coming up from the harbor.

Connolly rolls up the map he was studying.

JAMES CONNOLLY

I see. Here boy, just hand me the message. I need to see these things for myself.

MESSENGER BOY

Oh!

The messenger digs through his pockets. He pulls out a rock, a piece of candy, and then a crumpled up PIECE OF PAPER.

MESSENGER BOY (CONT'D)

Here!

He hands Connolly the message. Connolly's mouth tightens.

JAMES CONNOLLY

Thank you sir. But next time, tell the captain at your outpost to send someone a bit older. But thank you.

MESSENGER BOY
Oh, yes sir. Yes sir.

Connolly moves to the doorway.

JAMES CONNOLLY
Come with me downstairs.

INT. GENERAL POST OFFICE - LOBBY

Connolly scans the lobby momentarily. He then points a finger at Ciaran.

JAMES CONNOLLY
You! We need men to reinforce the bridge. Wait here for my commands.

Connolly circles the room looking for other able men. O'Leary approaches.

O'LEARY
Mr. Connolly sir. Excuse me.

Connolly looks past him.

JAMES CONNOLLY
What do you want?

O'LEARY
Well, sir. I thought that I...

JAMES CONNOLLY
Make it quick.

Connolly continues walking through the lobby.

O'LEARY
Sir, I would like to volunteer for your cause as I watch out for a friend.

JAMES CONNOLLY
I see.

O'LEARY
Please let me know where I can help.

Connolly grabs a PISTOL from a table and hands it to O'Leary.

JAMES CONNOLLY
Fine, help defend the bridge.

O'Leary awkwardly pushes the gun away.

O'LEARY
This is something I can't do. I can
help in any other way.

The two men share a moment of understanding. Connolly nods.

JAMES CONNOLLY
Can you put together a bomb?

O'LEARY
No.

JAMES CONNOLLY
Ladle?

O'LEARY
Yes.

JAMES CONNOLLY
Then off to the kitchen then.

O'LEARY
Yes, sir.

Connolly passes two other men, Matthew and RYAN. Ryan is an angry looking old man who would just as rather be fighting in a bar if he were given the chance.

JAMES CONNOLLY
You two. We need your help
defending Mount Street Bridge.

EXT. MOUNT STREET BRIDGE - DAY

Ciaran, Matthew, and Ryan march towards a wide building overlooking a stone bridge. This is CLANWILLIAM HOUSE. As the men enter the door, Ciaran tries to casually look across the bridge in order to catch a glimpse of the British troops.

INT. CLANWILLIAM HOUSE - DAY

CAPTAIN REYNOLDS approaches. He is a portly man with a weeping willow moustache. His uniform, besides being unique in that it is an actual uniform, is spotless.

CAPTAIN REYNOLDS
What is your business here?

CIARAN
We've come to help defend the
bridge. Sent by Mr. Connolly, sir.

CAPTAIN REYNOLDS
Just the three of you?

CIARAN
We should be more than enough to
hold off the English.

Captain Reynolds shrugs.

CAPTAIN REYNOLDS
I suppose it's happened before.

He leads the squad up to the...

THIRD FLOOR

They find themselves in a wide open room without furniture.
The room runs almost the full length of the building.

Reynolds claps his hands.

CAPTAIN REYNOLDS
Right! You three take the right
windows. Sean and Michael will have
the left and I will take the
center. We have ten or so men
already positioned in the
surrounding buildings.

Through the window, we see the British forces advancing. They
stop at the other end of the bridge.

CIARAN
God's mercy to us all!

EXT. MOUNT STREET BRIDGE - DAY

A whistle blows. The British troops funnel down the bridge in
a solid mass.

INT. CLANWILLIAM HOUSE

CAPTAIN REYNOLDS
Fire! But choose your targets
wisely. Only shoot when you've a
good shot.

CRACK! CRACK!

CIARAN
I've hit one!

EXT. MOUNT STREET BRIDGE

British soldiers collapse. Some cry out in pain.

INT. CLANWILLIAM HOUSE

MATTHEW
Flee the teeth of Sinn Fein you
bastards! Haha!

The holed-up rebels continue firing.

CIARAN
What are they doing?

Ciaran mechanically reloads his rifle.

CIARAN (CONT'D)
They've got no cover. They keep
coming across the bridge.

CAPTAIN REYNOLDS
Keep shooting.

EXT. MOUNT STREET BRIDGE

Khaki bodies begin to pile up along the bridge. Soldiers,
most of them young, no longer charge the bridge on foot but
rather crawl along the gutters, over and around the dying.

Gun smoke pops from the face of Clanwilliam House.

One young British soldier lays covered in grime. Suddenly he
grabs his arm and SCREECHES in pain.

INT. CLANWILLIAM HOUSE

RYAN
By St. Peter, we'll all be damned
heroes.

CIARAN
I second that my friend!

Captain Reynolds frantically raises his hands.

CAPTAIN REYNOLDS

Hold! Stop!

Down below we see a PRIEST and two teenage GIRLS. BYSTANDERS have gathered behind the activity.

CIARAN

We can't stop! They'll regroup.

CAPTAIN REYNOLDS

I said stop.

EXT. MOUNT STREET BRIDGE

The priest shows his palms peacefully.

PRIEST

Sir! Let us remove the dead and wounded.

The two girls run to and fro giving the fallen soldiers water.

INT. CLANWILLIAM HOUSE

MATTHEW

(calling down)

Traitor! Leave them be.

CAPTAIN REYNOLDS

Enough.

EXT. MOUNT STREET BRIDGE

CAPTAIN REYNOLDS

(to the priest)

Good sir, provide the boys assistance. We will give you respite.

The priest solemnly attends to the soldiers' wounds. So do the two girls.

Wounded voices cry out for water.

On the other side of the bridge, the British troops regroup.

INT. CLANWILLIAM HOUSE

MATTHEW

Capn' look! They're reforming.

CAPTAIN REYNOLDS

Stay yourself, man. Those boys
don't need to die like this.

MATTHEW

They're getting ready to make
another charge.

Captain Reynolds calls out to the priest.

CAPTAIN REYNOLDS

Father, quicken your care or you
may be tending to your own
countrymen soon enough.

CIARAN

Unless they take another route, I
think we can hold them as we are.
The bridge is narrow and we have
the ammunition.

Ciaran tosses a rifle shell into the air.

EXT. MOUNT STREET BRIDGE

More British soldiers file into ranks.

INT. CLANWILLIAM HOUSE

Ciaran glances out the window. Then freezes.

EXT. MOUNT STREET BRIDGE

A HEAVY ARTILLERY GUN rolls into the street. Massive, like an
elephant, the barrel aims straight at the rebel position.

INT. CLANWILLIAM HOUSE

CIARAN

Captain...

Captain Reynolds springs up.

CAPTAIN REYNOLDS

Move father! Move!

Reynolds cracks a rifle shot.

British return fire. Bullets pelt the chandelier hanging from the ceiling. Diamond glass JINGLES to the floor.

EXT. MOUNT STREET BRIDGE

The priest grabs the two girls.

The British soldiers charge. They drop one by one.

INT. CLANWILLIAM HOUSE

Captain Reynolds reloads his rifle.

CAPTAIN REYNOLDS
Don't let them across the bridge!
Ciaran!

CIARAN
Yes sir.

CAPTAIN REYNOLDS
Don't let the artillery fire!

We look down Ciaran's sights. KRAK!

We see a GUNNER fall.

EXT. MOUNT STREET BRIDGE

A British soldier plunges into the MURKY WATER.

Another soldier lies behind a pile of bodies, motionless.

Suddenly...

BOOM!

A shell rocks the outside of Clanwilliam House.

INT. CLANWILLIAM HOUSE

Everyone lies prone.

MATTHEW
This house will be rubble in
minutes.

CAPTAIN REYNOLDS
We're not lost yet!

Through the window we see soldiers SPRINTING across the bridge.

Matthew takes a shotgun and heads downstairs.

Captain Reynolds crawls over to Ciaran.

CAPTAIN REYNOLDS (CONT'D)
I'm moving downstairs. Keep firing through the window.

INT. CLANWILLIAM HOUSE - DOWNSTAIRS

Through the window, British soldiers seek cover. CONFUSED.

Matthew and Captain Reynolds shoot them.

BOOM!

TREMORS. PLASTER falls. The back corner of the house has vanished. We can now see straight out to the street.

Captain Reynolds brushes dust from his head.

CAPTAIN REYNOLDS
Once we clear some space, we'll evacuate. Keep them down.

He SPRINTS to the stairs.

CAPTAIN REYNOLDS (CONT'D)
Everyone regroup! We are heading out!

INT. GENERAL POST OFFICE - BASEMENT - NIGHT

The basement has been converted into a makeshift infirmary. A few BOXES of linens and bandages line the wall. Four BEDS sit evenly spaced on the dirt floor.

DR. BLACK is a thick butcher of a doctor. Dressed in a white apron he nervously arranges scalpels on a tray. The entire room is DARKLY EXPECTANT.

A WOUNDED MAN sits on an observation table. John tightens a bandage around the man's hand.

JOHN
Stay still, man!

WOUNDED MAN
'Pologies Doctor. It hurts though.

JOHN
You do know that there are usable
exits, correct?

WOUNDED MAN
Right, Doctor.

JOHN
And that you don't have to jump out
the windows and cut your hands on
the glass?

WOUNDED MAN
I see, Doctor.

JOHN
I am not a doctor.

WOUNDED MAN
Well, you probably know more than I
do, Doctor.

John rolls his eyes and turns away.

Behind him is Dr. Black.

DR. BLACK
Looks like a job well done.

JOHN
Thank you.

DR. BLACK
I must step upstairs for a quick
minute, alright? Find me if you
need me.

Dr. Black leaves.

Mary approaches with rags and hot water.

JOHN
Could you help me clean up?

BLOOD is wiped across his apron.

MARY
Of course!

John motions to the wounded man.

JOHN

You can go. See if you can be useful somehow. If not, try going home.

MAN 1

Thank you, sir. You're a good doctor, sir.

The man plods away.

Mary dabs at the stained apron.

MARY

Have you done much doctoring before?

JOHN

How do you mean?

MARY

Clean wounds often?

JOHN

Pulled a piece of glass from my dog's leg once. And we've touched on it in class.

Mary hands John a clean rag. He scrubs his hands.

JOHN (CONT'D)

Briefly.

Mary laughs.

MARY

I don't think I could do it. Just hold it all in until the real doctor's in, that's what I tell 'em.

The two of them share a SMILE.

JOHN

It's funny. I thought I'd have killed a hundred men by now, fighting and shooting, but here I am fixing up hands and bandaging bruises.

MARY

Well, don't worry, doctor boy. Stick with me if the time ever comes for the dirty work.

Mary untucks her shirt, lifting it high up her side to reveal a PISTOL holstered around her waist.

John's eyes widen.

JOHN
Are you a good shot?

MARY
Good as any.

John hands the rag back to Mary. She places it and the bucket of water onto the observation table

A beat.

MARY (CONT'D)
It's possible we'll die here.

JOHN
Yes.

Mary looks into John's eyes. He notices and stares back.

She smoothly places her hand on his shoulder.

Suddenly Captain Reynolds and other MEN burst in. They carry an unidentifiable BODY.

CAPTAIN REYNOLDS
Clear off that table!

Two men lay the body down.

It is Ciaran.

Ciaran is shirtless. His shirt staunches a stomach wound.

JOHN
Oh God! God!

Ciaran BLEEDS from the abdomen. His hands are dark red.

Ciaran's wild eyes recognize John.

CIARAN
John! Help me!

The men step back. Captain Reynolds stands at the head of the table.

John's hands shake. Captain Reynolds nods to him. No one moves.

JOHN

Ah, hold this there... How long has he been bleeding?

CAPTAIN REYNOLDS

We've carried him back from Mount Street Bridge.

John thinks, trying to calculate the distance.

MATTHEW

He's been shot near the stomach. May not live through it, but he's got a while.

JOHN

He hasn't an exit wound does he? You think we can find the bullet?

James Connolly pounds down the stairs.

JAMES CONNOLLY

What is this?

CAPTAIN REYNOLDS

Pushed back from Mount Street sir. This young man's taken a terrible hit.

JAMES CONNOLLY

We need more men sniping from the windows.

He points to Matthew and Captain Reynolds.

JAMES CONNOLLY (CONT'D)

You two especially.

CAPTAIN REYNOLDS AND MATTHEW

Yes sir.

Connolly pushes his way to the table. Mary is pressing down on Ciaran's stomach.

Connolly's face softens as he touches Ciaran's forehead, FATHER-LIKE.

JAMES CONNOLLY

We are going to keep you alive.

Connolly, Matthew, and Captain Reynolds exit.

John cleans a pair of forceps one last time. He places them on the metal tray and returns to Ciaran.

MARY
Just hold it in, will ya? Here,
bite!

She gives Ciaran a clean CLOTH.

JOHN
Ciaran, we're going to get this
shot out. And then we'll make you
good as new. Promise, I tell you,
promise.

Mary removes the bloody rags and pushes her full weight onto
Ciaran. She gives John a questioning look.

MARY
Can you do this?

JOHN
Of course I can.

Dr. Black shoves John aside.

DR. BLACK
Why didn't you call me! We're
trying to save his life, not end
it!

Dr. Black examines the patient.

DR. BLACK (CONT'D)
John, get the forceps.

John returns with the FORCEPS.

DR. BLACK (CONT'D)
I am going to need you to hold open
the entrance wound.

John brings the forceps down to Ciaran's stomach. He pulls
the flesh apart revealing the stomach.

DR. BLACK (CONT'D)
Hold it steady, damn it!

Dr. Black inserts a pair of tweezers.

Ciaran lets out an intense WHIMPER.

INT. GENERAL POST OFFICE - BASEMENT STAIRWAY

From the top of the stairway we hear a muffled YELL.

INT. GENERAL POST OFFICE - KITCHEN - NIGHT

James O'Leary organizes two dozen cans of food with two other WOMEN. He moves slowly, monotonously. This is not the first time these cans have been stacked.

We can hear faint SHOTS coming from above.

O'Leary sighs as he places another can.

The door opens. James Connolly and Captain Reynolds enter.

JAMES CONNOLLY

Sir, come take this gun and follow us.

O'Leary turns holding the can of beans.

O'LEARY

Excuse me?

JAMES CONNOLLY

We need more men on the roof.

O'LEARY

Remember sir...

JAMES CONNOLLY

Selfish man! Take this gun!

Connolly walks over and shoves a rifle into O'Leary's chest. O'Leary hesitates.

JAMES CONNOLLY (CONT'D)

If it weren't for your age and my Catholic mercy I would justifiably shoot you dead for treason against the Irish Republic.

O'Leary straightens up and firmly takes the gun.

INT. GENERAL POST OFFICE - LOBBY

Padraic Pearse stares blankly at the commotion around him. Men reinforce the barricades and scavenge for ammunition.

O'Leary notices him.

O'LEARY

Sir. Do you need assistance?

PADRAIC PEARSE
We must continue to fight. The
wheel of revolution continues to
turn 'round and 'round' and 'round.

O'LEARY
What?

PADRAIC PEARSE
Do not worry. The pyre will soon be
lit and it will set the heart of
Ireland ablaze. We will spread
sweetly across this beautiful isle
as a spirit of victory.

Pearse places his arm tenderly on O'Leary's shoulder.

O'LEARY
Once we take Dublin of course.

Pearse laughs.

JAMES CONNOLLY (O.S.)
Damn it man!

O'Leary nods to Pearse and hurries off.

EXT. GENERAL POST OFFICE - ROOF - NIGHT

O'Leary and Matthew look out over the Dublin rooftops. A
slight breeze blows against O'Leary's face.

Dublin rests.

JIMMY
You come up to bring us food?

O'Leary and Matthew find a small, wiry man, JIMMY, creeping
from the shadows.

O'LEARY
No, we've been posted here. By
Connolly.

Two dirty BOYS, TED (15) and JOE (16), appear as well.

TED
They didn't bring food?

JOE
If they didn't bring it yesterday,
why'd they bring it today?

JIMMY
Welcome to Captain Jimmy's
brilliant brigade!

TED
Ain't missed a shot yet. An' that's
the truth.

MATTHEW
You haven't eaten?

JOE
Nope. Not for three days.

TED
Four days.

JOE
Couldn't tell you.

O'Leary leans his gun against the wall.

JIMMY
Oi! Pick up that gun. You're on
duty.

O'Leary retrieves the gun.

MATTHEW
If it's dark enough, you may be
able to get down to eat. Fighting
is probably done for the day.

JIMMY
No sir. We're stationed here until
noted otherwise.

O'LEARY
And so are we.

TED
We've got to prevent a surprise
attack.

JOE
Or an unsurprise attack.

TED
Especially those.

O'LEARY
I see.

O'Leary crouches down and rests his elbows on the low roof wall. He exhales.

Below, O'Leary sees two HEADS peek around a street corner.

O'LEARY (CONT'D)
What is that?

He points.

JIMMY
Prob'ly looters. They been all
around. Don't shoot them.

O'LEARY
You sure?

JIMMY
They're not the enemy.

O'Leary quints his eyes into the darkness.

O'LEARY
No, come look. See, around that
corner.

We see the heads appear again. The heads poke out from the tops of khaki uniforms.

JIMMY
Ah! I don't think those are
looters.

Matthew stiffens to attention.

MATTHEW
Where?

O'LEARY
There.

JIMMY
Looks like a damned scouting crew.

O'Leary silently raises his rifle.

A BEAT

He fires. Face hardened like a veteran.

Jimmy and Matthew jump.

A khaki soldier falls.

JIMMY (CONT'D)
Good shot man!

Jimmy motions to Ted and Joe.

JIMMY (CONT'D)
Be on alert boys.

The other soldier retreats behind the wall.

O'Leary keeps his gun to his eye. He hasn't breathed in a minute.

A flash of khaki sprints across the open square. O'Leary fires again, only once. The figure drops.

O'Leary slowly releases his breath. Jimmy looks impressed.

The sun begins to creep over the horizon.

EXT. GENERAL POST OFFICE - ROOF - DAWN

MATTHEW
A scouting party to be sure.

JIMMY
Of course, they've been amassing over yonder all yesterday. We had a few fire fights. Kept 'em off.

MATTHEW
They overpowered us on Mount Street Bridge.

JIMMY
Ah...

Everyone is once again sitting with their backs against the small roof wall. Jimmy turns to O'Leary.

JIMMY (CONT'D)
So, what do you do?

O'LEARY
In what regards?

JIMMY
Who taught you how to use a gun?

O'LEARY
I learned when I was young. It's stuck with me I suppose

JIMMY

Stuck with you? I've seen very few men in my life who can shoot like that.

MATTHEW

I couldn't hardly see the targets myself.

Jimmy smiles mischievously.

JIMMY

So tell me the truth now, did you spend time in the Brotherhood?

O'Leary twists a bullet casing between his fingers.

O'LEARY

No.

MATTHEW

You must have.

O'LEARY

No, I didn't. I've never wanted to be in the Brotherhood. I've even persuaded a certain young man against it.

JIMMY

Ha! We all want to be in the Brotherhood whether we know it or not.

O'LEARY

And that young man happens to be right here in the Post Office at this very moment.

The men share a laugh.

O'Leary wipes a bead of sweat from his brow.

TED

You didn't say where you learned.

O'Leary flicks the bullet casing over the wall. It CLINKS against the hard stone below.

O'LEARY

It was my father. He took my three brothers and me, and he'd parade us around like his own little militia.

(MORE)

O'LEARY (CONT'D)
We'd shoot and march for hours,
looking ridiculous. Nearly ruined
us too.

JIMMY
A Fenian?

O'LEARY
He was. In the Kerry rising no
less. I was born years after, but
my eldest brother remembers. He's
in London now.

Jimmy looks off.

JIMMY
Ah yea, the Fenian Rising of 1867.
If only some men weren't such
cowards. That they wouldn't turn on
their own country men...

O'LEARY
That they would leave their losses
be.

JIMMY
You are not serious. Give up?

O'LEARY
Yes.

The men sit silently. The sun has risen fully over the
eastern horizon.

MATTHEW
Well, you're a good shot anyhow.

TED shuffles his boot heels across the roof.

JIMMY
Boys, upon this momentous occasion,
I would like to propose a song be
sung by all in attendance who know
the tune, and mumbled and debauched
by those who don't. It's a lullaby
me mother sang to me as a babe, and
perhaps that's sayin' a lot about
my mother. Anyway...

Jimmy takes a deep breath.

JIMMY (CONT'D)

(singing)

*Well it's all for me grog, me jolly
jolly grog/ It's all for me beer
and tobacco/ For I spent all me tin
with the lassies drinking gin/ Far
across the western ocean I must
wander!*

The other men laugh and join in, singing into the silent morning.

ALL

(singing)

*Where are me boots, me noggin',
noggin' boots?/ They're all gone
for beer and tobacco/ For the heels
they are worn out and the toes are
kicked about/ And the soles are
looking out for better weather!*

INT. GENERAL POST OFFICE - BASEMENT - DAY

John is sitting on a bench. He is sleeping with his head leaned back against the wall. Mary is beside him with her head on his shoulder.

Daylight slips through slits in the reinforced windows.

A distant BOOM.

Dust falls from the ceiling. It lands on John's nose. He bolts awake.

JOHN

Oh my, I must have fallen asleep!

Mary jolts awake too.

JOHN (CONT'D)

Mary, how long was I asleep?

MARY

I don't know.

John dashes toward Ciaran's side. The torso is heavily bandaged. Bloody. Very bloody.

JOHN

He's still breathing.

MARY

Dr. Black took care of him. We were there.

Another explosion, this time closer.

Scalpels RATTLE against the metal tray.

Ciaran's eyes open.

CIARAN

What was that?

He hisses in pain.

MARY

Shhh...

Mary peers cautiously toward the windows.

MARY (CONT'D)

It's nothing. Perhaps a bridge knocked out.

JOHN

Yes, probably.

MARY

Stay here, Ciaran. Stay still.

Ciaran closes his eyes.

Mary and John leave Ciaran and head upstairs. John looks back anxiously at his dying friend.

INT. GENERAL POST OFFICE - LOBBY - DAY

The lobby is permeated with a sense of unease. People perform tasks quickly and anxiously.

A group of three REBELS sorts BULLETS on a table. Each one receives only a handful.

Two WOMEN break the legs off of an upturned table.

John and Mary move through the lobby to the stairs.

INT. GENERAL POST OFFICE - SECOND FLOOR OFFICE - DAY

John opens the door to an abandoned office. Mary follows behind him.

They peer through a crack in the boarded window.

JOHN
Really, what do you think those
noises were?

Not more than fifty yards away a BOMB EXPLODES.

BOOKS fall from the bookcase.

RUBBLE pelts the window.

Everything TREMBLES.

John instinctively covers his ears and folds his body over Mary. They wait until the world settles.

Even after the explosion ends, they remain curled together.

EXT. DUBLIN STREET - DAY

A large piece of artillery smokes in the morning light.
BRITISH GUNNERS adjust a second canon.

BRITISH OFFICER
Gun set? Fire!

A massive shell rockets out of the gun.

INT. SLUM HOUSE - DAY

A FAMILY of six huddles within a dingy, one room apartment.

The FATHER holds two toddlers to his side. A crying
GRANDMOTHER says her ROSARY quietly to herself. The MOTHER
holds the hand of a YOUNG GIRL.

We see them only for a second before the artillery shell rips
through the ceiling.

EXT. GENERAL POST OFFICE - DAY

Looking from the GPO we see the apartment burst into flames.

Small people struggle out from under the wreckage. Wails rise
to the sky. One or two neighbors come out to examine the
extent of the damage.

INT. GENERAL POST OFFICE - ROOM - DAY

John and Mary are still at the window.

MARY

That was very close.

John turns away from the window.

JOHN

We need to help them.

Mary grabs his arm.

MARY

How? We can't. There's bound to be snipers. And the Germans should be coming any moment now. International support!

John returns to the window and looks at the wreckage.

EXT. SLUM HOUSE - DAY

A POOR MOTHER claws at a large wooden beam laying across a collapsed wall. Despite her screams, her eyes are dry.

POOR MOTHER

Where is he? Where is he? Joe!

The young GIRL stands terrified in the smoldering street.

The mother brings her scraped fingers to her mouth, turns, and stares darkly up at the GPO.

INT. GENERAL POST OFFICE - ROOM - DAY

John catches her gaze and steps away from the window. His face is solemn.

JOHN

I'm returning to the infirmary.

EXT. GENERAL POST OFFICE - ROOF - MID AFTERNOON

The rebels on the roof crouch behind the low wall. They are dirty and tired.

JIMMY

Bastards! They'll flatten the whole city.

TED

Does it matter? If we don't die of a bullet we'll die of starvation. I wanna eat!

Ted gets up.

MATTHEW

Get down now! There are snipers.

TED

Not till I come back with breakfast!

Ted waves his hand in the air.

Beat.

He waves his hand in the air again and a bullet flies by.

MATTHEW

You idiot, get down.

A bullet hits Ted in the hand. He cradles his wound. He hisses in pain but smiles too.

JIMMY

Ted! You're shot!

Jimmy tries to stand up.

MATTHEW

Sit down!

He grabs Jimmy by the shirt and drags him down.

TED

Breakfast.

Ted stumbles down the stairs. There is a look of envy in Jimmy's eyes.

O'Leary is wrapped in contemplation.

O'LEARY

"Perhaps one day you will even delight in remembering this."

JIMMY

What did you say?

O'LEARY

It's Virgil. "Perhaps one day you will even delight in remembering this."

The other men fall silent too.

JIMMY

Poor Ted. I thought he had more in 'im.

MATTHEW

Let's hold boys. Let's make our fathers proud.

JIMMY

(Singing softly)

*"But since it falls unto my lot
that I should rise while you should
not/ I will gently rise and I'll
softly call/ Goodnight and joy be
with you all."*

The building behind Jimmy explodes into flames.

The flames lick dangerously close to the GPO. SMOKE BILLOWS. The area quickly becomes a hellish inferno.

A stream of British soldiers flood the square.

The rebels on the roof begin shooting.

EXT. GENERAL POST OFFICE - STREET LEVEL -DAY

An abandoned CAR rolls into the street. Three SOLDIERS follow behind it for cover.

The entire side of the GPO is covered in little PUFFS OF SMOKE as rebels shoot from inside.

EXT. GENERAL POST OFFICE - ROOF - DAY

O'Leary's face beads with sweat.

Joe cups his hand to his mouth.

JOE

Hold on! We've got reinforcements coming in from County Wexford. I heard the news when we first stormed HQ.

O'Leary lines up his next shot down the sights. He FIRES.

EXT. GENERAL POST OFFICE - STREET LEVEL -DAY

A sprinting SOLDIER crumples to the ground.

EXT. GENERAL POST OFFICE - ROOF - DAY

O'Leary aims. again. His eyes are cold in blank anger.

EXT. GENERAL POST OFFICE - STREET LEVEL - DAY

A SOLDIER peeks from the car.

GLASS SHATTERS. The car's windows are gone.

EXT. GENERAL POST OFFICE - ROOF - DAY

O'Leary cocks the rifle again.

EXT. GENERAL POST OFFICE - STREET LEVEL -DAY

CRACK!

The soldier looks up in panic. He's shot through the collarbone.

As he crawls back behind the car another soldier falls. Again, it looks as though the rebels will hold.

EXT. GENERAL POST OFFICE - ROOF

The flames from the nearby burning building leap hungrily over to the GPO. EMBERS catch on the open roof.

MATTHEW

Put it out!

Matthew ducks and scampers to the flame.

Jimmy's face is black with SOOT. He COUGHS.

JIMMY

Lay your jacket over it!

MATTHEW tries to smother the flames with his JACKET, but that too begins to burn. The jacket is lost.

With his arms and legs out LIKE A CRAB, Matthew stomps the spreading fire with his boots.

MATTHEW

We're going to need water. And quickly!

O'Leary continues to fire down into the square. He wipes his face revealing a stripe of clean skin.

JIMMY

I doubt there's enough to put this out. We haven't had a single drink this whole day!

Joe crawls over to O'Leary.

JIMMY (CONT'D)

James boy! We're going to have to get off the roof soon. When I say go, we're going to break for the hatch.

Below, the British soldiers have retreated into the rubble.

O'Leary spots a SMALL SHAPE dart from a ruined building. He looks closer.

EXT. GENERAL POST OFFICE - STREET LEVEL - DAY

It's the messenger boy.

He sneaks across to the abandoned car. He opens one door, slides across the ripped seat, and climbs out the other.

Then he sprints to the GPO.

EXT. GENERAL POST OFFICE - ROOF - DAY

JIMMY

Go!

Jimmy and O'Leary sprint to the roof hatch, closely followed by Matthew and Joe.

INT. GENERAL POST OFFICE - HALLWAY - DAY

SHOUTING. RUNNING.

MEN dash between hallways. PAPERS from a gutted desk lay scattered over the ground.

The entire building GROANS.

REBEL 1
Any soul have ammunition? I'm all
out!

REBEL 2
Anyone seen Frank?

O'Leary and the group pass an open door.

It is the BOMB-MAKING ROOM. O'Leary stops. He slips into the room.

INT. GENERAL POST OFFICE - BOMBMAKING ROOM - DAY

O'Leary's chest heaves. Dirty sweat runs down his face.

The room is dark. A KEROSENE LAMP sits perilously close to a tin can full of gunpowder.

The BOMBMAKERS are busy filling casings with gunpowder. The large room is lined with boxes upon boxes of grenades.

O'LEARY
Everyone halt! We need to move
these weapons down to the basement!
The roof's about to cave in.

The Bombmakers slowly realize what O'Leary is saying.

They freeze.

O'LEARY (CONT'D)
Now!

As carefully as possible, everyone begins gathering the homemade shells and grenades.

Matthew enters the room. His face drains white as he is handed a a box filled of explosives.

INT. GENERAL POST OFFICE - HALLWAY

The men from the roof head towards the end of the hallway. James Connolly approaches from the other direction.

JAMES CONNOLLY
What is going on here? Who gave you
the orders to move this ordinance?

Connolly scowls.

MATTHEW

We have to move them sir! The roof
is on fire.

Connolly's scowl hardens.

A BEAT.

The messenger boy enters from the stairway. BREATHLESS. He
clutches a bleeding forearm.

JAMES CONNOLLY

(angrily)

What is it, boy?

The messenger boy hands Connolly a note.

Connolly's eyes shut.

JAMES CONNOLLY (CONT'D)

We've lost the Green.

O'Leary, Jimmy, and Matthew watch Connolly rip the note.

JAMES CONNOLLY (CONT'D)

We'll press on! Move the
explosives.

As everyone else moves past, O'Leary kneels down on one knee
in front of the boy.

O'LEARY

Let me see your arm, boy.

MESSENGER BOY

No sir, it is not hurt badly.

Still, he sticks out his arm and allows O'Leary to examine it
quickly.

O'LEARY

What is your name?

MESSENGER BOY

Peter, sir.

O'LEARY

You're a brave boy, Peter. Tell me
honestly, why are you aiding the
Irish Republic?

Peter stands tall.

PETER
Because I am no coward, sir.

O'Leary ruffles Peter's hair.

PETER (CONT'D)
I'm sorry sir, but I've got to go.

In a flash, Peter disappears into the confusion.

INT. GENERAL POST OFFICE - BASEMENT

Five WOUNDED REBELS lie on makeshift cots.

One clutches his temple. His hand cannot completely cover the gaping hole in his skull.

Doctor Black attends to a bleeding arm. NURSES try to placate the suffering men with I'M HERE and YOU ARE SO BRAVE.

Ciaran's arm drapes over his eyes.

CIARAN
'S anyone got a drink of water
about them?

A nurse approaches Dr. Black.

NURSE
Can we spare some more water
Doctor?

Dr. Black looks toward a nearly empty barrel.

DOCTOR JOHNSON
Not with what we have.

The door to the infirmary bursts open. Men carrying boxes and explosives file down the stairs.

DOCTOR BLACK
No! Get out!

JIMMY
We've got to move these grenades!
The roof's caught on fire.

DOCTOR BLACK
Don't bring them in here then!
We've wounds enough as it is!

JIMMY
This is the safest place!

DOCTOR BLACK

Get out!

Jimmy throws an exasperated look up to the ceiling before turning around.

JIMMY

Back up the stairs!

Doctor Black turns to John and Mary. Both John and Mary are busily rigging up a mans bleeding arm to hang over his heart.

DOCTOR BLACK

You two! Go bring back water for these brave men. Hurry now!

John and Mary immediately finish with the man's arm and then run up the stairs.

INT. GENERAL POST OFFICE - LOBBY

John and Mary scan the lobby. Mary points across the space.

MARY

Believe the foodstuff's in that room.

Mary leads the way to the door.

INT. GENERAL POST OFFICE - KITCHEN

There are only a few cans of food left. Two women sit in chairs looking nervous.

WOMAN 1

There's none else left.

WOMAN 2

An' we won't give you what we do have.

John stops in front of them.

JOHN

We need water, now.

WOMAN 1

We all need water, the damn roof's on fire.

Woman 2 begins to laugh.

JOHN

There's got to be more. We have wounded men to tend to.

WOMAN 1

Again, we all need water, an' I don't think it'd be wise to spill it all over a bunch of dying bodies.

WOMAN 2

Have you checked upstairs though?

She begins to laugh again.

WOMAN 1

Upstairs, downstairs, all around stairs

Mary tugs on John's sleeve.

MARY

Come on. Let's go.

INT. GENERAL POST OFFICE - HALLWAY

John and Mary enter the second floor hallway. Their heads jerk left and right as they try to look past rushing bodies. John leads Mary by the hand.

REBEL 1

Ammunition? Anyone?

Halfway down the hallway, John is about to push open a door, but Mary stops him.

We hear shouting from inside.

MARY

Stop, John. Listen.

John and Mary place their ears to the door. It opens just slightly and we see into a darkened meeting room.

INT. GENERAL POST OFFICE - MEETING ROOM - DAY

One incandescent BULB hangs wearily from the ceiling.

James Connolly stands over a large desk and a torn MAP. Padraic Pearse sits quietly off from the group.

There are other Irish leaders as well: JOSEPH PLUNKETT, TOM CLARK, and SEAN MAC DERMOTT.

JAMES CONNOLLY

We're not giving up the GPO! We still have healthy men ready to defend the building.

We see the map. Four locations have been marked out with red crayon. Only the building marking the GPO remains unmarked.

The leaders speak quickly, BACK AND FORTH.

TOM CLARK

Not for long! The building is falling down around our heads.

SEAN MAC DERMOTT

The whole of Dublin is falling down around our heads. We must consider the movement's future.

TOM CLARK

He's right, the enemy is flattening the entire city. Who's going to support us when half the population is dead or put out on the streets?

Plunkett sticks a finger in Connolly's face.

JOSEPH PLUNKETT

You know where the people's opinion lies, James. You know what we can salvage and what we've already lost.

James Connolly pushes away from the desk and begins pacing.

We can still hear shots ringing out around the GPO as the rebels continue defending against the British advance.

PADRAIC PEARSE (O.S.)

We must make a sacrifice.

Everyone turns to Pearse. His chin is down, face covered in shadow.

TOM CLARK

What? Speak up!

PADRAIC PEARSE

We are not going to win Ireland's freedom today or tomorrow. We know this. We see it.

James Connolly peers through the barricaded window.

PADRAIC PEARSE (CONT'D)
But if we stay here, then we die as
villains. If we give ourselves up,
if we hand ourselves over to the
enemy, then we become martyrs.
Either way...

Pearse trails off.

The whole building shakes in a deafening CRASH. Everyone
ducks. Tom Clark glances hesitantly up to the ceiling.

James Connolly remains frozen in thought.

JAMES CONNOLLY
We're evacuating the GPO.

A beat.

JAMES CONNOLLY (CONT'D)
We're evacuating the GPO and that
is final!

INT. GENERAL POST OFFICE - HALLWAY - DAY

The door opens. John and Mary are hardly able to step away.

We follow the leaders of the Irish Republic as they exit the
meeting room and proceed down the hall.

TOM CLARK
Finish moving those explosives and
assemble downstairs!

JAMES CONNOLLY
Quickly!

INT. GENERAL POST OFFICE - LOBBY - DAY

Word of an announcement has traveled through the GPO and 100
rebels have gathered in the open lobby.

James Connolly stands up on a large desk in the middle of the
room. His eyes are ringed and dark. His sleeves are rolled to
his elbow.

To Connolly's right on one side of the room, we see O'Leary,
Matthew, and Jimmy.

To Connolly's left on the other side of the room, we see John and Mary.

Connolly scowls like John Wayne.

JAMES CONNOLLY

Fellow Irishmen and Irishwomen! You have held out bravely against the English enemy. I know that nations across the world will see what we have done this Easter. They will praise our fine example.

REBEL 1 (O.S.)

The German troops have finally landed!

JAMES CONNOLLY

It is clear to all that God provided us with courage to outlast this siege, an ancient courage deeply rooted in our blood.

Connolly begins striding along the desk.

JAMES CONNOLLY (CONT'D)

This small band of Irishmen has stood up to the greatest army in the world. And no one of you should hang his head in shame at whatever the outcome.

Jimmy beams with pride.

JAMES CONNOLLY (CONT'D)

But in the interest of our friends and the countless civilians suffering from Britain's cowardly tactics, I must sound the call for retreat.

Connolly ends abruptly and steps down from the table.

A murmured GASP ripples through the audience.

The building shakes as the third floor collapses. CONFUSION. PUSHING. CRIES OF DESPAIR.

Connolly takes a moment to compose himself.

JAMES CONNOLLY (CONT'D)

We'll move out in waves and in different directions!

(MORE)

JAMES CONNOLLY (CONT'D)
Head towards the apartments and
then burrow through the basement
walls. May God be with you all. Now
form up and keep your damn
composure!

John turns to Mary.

JOHN
I've got to find Ciaran.

INT. GENERAL POST OFFICE - BASEMENT - DAY

John stomps down the stairs with Mary close behind him.

JOHN
Ciaran!

The remaining NURSES are preparing to move the wounded. A nurse pushes a WOUNDED MAN on a rolling cart. The cart tips over and the man YELLS in pain.

John slides past without helping. He runs to Ciaran's bed.

JOHN (CONT'D)
Ciaran, there you are. We're going
to have to move you onto a
stretcher.

Ciaran releases a slight grunt.

Mary whispers into John's ear.

MARY
John, he doesn't look very good.

JOHN
Ciaran, we're evacuating
headquarters. Mary and I are going
to take you home.

Ciaran manages a faint smile.

CIARAN
I know you will.

John makes stern eye contact with Mary and she obediently gets on the other side of Ciaran. John grabs a canvas stretcher and he places it next to Ciaran.

JOHN

We're about to lift you on both sides. We'll move you slowly. One. Two.

Mary's hands shake.

JOHN (CONT'D)

Three.

He presses up against Ciaran's body with the heel of his hand. Ciaran SCREAMS like a whipped pig.

MARY

Leave him! Put him down.

Mary throws her hands over her ears.

John returns Ciaran to his original position. He breathes heavily.

Mary lowers her hands.

Sweat rolls down John's forehead. He takes out a handkerchief to wipe his face. It just so happens to be handkerchief holding Kathy's lily.

The lily falls out of John's hands onto the floor. John stoops to pick it up. He places it to his nose. Carefully, he wraps it back into the handkerchief.

JOHN

Again. One. Two. Three.

John raises Ciaran just slightly. Mary rams the stretcher under Ciaran and he manages, with John's help, to roll over.

Ciaran trembles and wheezes.

A hand rests on John's shoulder. It is O'Leary.

O'LEARY

John, I'm glad I found you.

JOHN

Professor O'Leary.

O'LEARY

Come with us. We've a man who says that he knows a way out of the neighborhood.

JOHN

What?

O'LEARY
We are leaving.

John solemnly nods his head.

O'LEARY (CONT'D)
We will get you home. I promise.
Oh, and take this.

O'Leary pulls a pistol from the back of his waistband and hands it to John. John takes it hesitantly.

JOHN
I don't know how to use this. Give
it to someone else.

O'LEARY
There's no ammunition left; it's
useless. But the enemy doesn't know
that. Keep it.

John tucks the pistol into his belt.

INT. GENERAL POST OFFICE - LOBBY - DAY

John, Mary, O'Leary, Matthew and Jimmy line up against the front wall of the GPO. The lobby is almost deserted. James Connolly and a few other leaders remain.

A small escape passage has been opened in the barricade, large enough to allow one crouching man at a time.

Matthew crouches and points outside, across the street.

MATTHEW
We're headed for that wall over
there, see?

The rest peer through the breach. They nod.

JOHN
Ready.

John and Mary grab the ends of the stretcher. Jimmy points at Ciaran.

JIMMY
Do you want me to take 'im for you
ma'am?

MARY
No.

Connolly approaches.

JAMES CONNOLLY
On the signal.

Matthew crosses himself.

James Connolly raises a silver WHISTLE to his lips. It
BLASTS.

The group exits the GPO for the last time.

EXT. GENERAL POST OFFICE - DAY

The small group stumbles disoriented. The light blinds them..

John looks back over his shoulder. SMOKE billows up from the
roof of the GPO.

Everyone SPRINTS.

MATTHEW
To the wall! To the wall!

Mary's hand slips from the stretcher. Ciaran grunts loudly.

MARY
I'm sorry. I'm so sorry.

They look like beetles running over the ruined cityscape.

The group makes it to the first wall. John and Mary put down
the stretcher.

Jimmy looks stunned.

JIMMY
We made it. We made it!

Matthew checks around the corner.

MATTHEW
Looks clear. We'll cross the street
and then hug the wall until the
first left.

We can see a line of blasted STOREFRONTS. The ruined
buildings contain enough rubble to provide adequate cover.

Further down is a small CROSS STREET.

MATTHEW (CONT'D)

After that, well move down to cross the next street. There should be a series of rundown apartments we can burrow through.

Matthew wipes his sweaty forehead.

MATTHEW (CONT'D)

I think.

JOHN

You think?

MATTHEW

Follow me.

A moment of silence. Then Matthew throws himself around the corner. He sprints across the street and all follow.

ZOOM! A BULLET SCREAMS past John's head. He almost drops the stretcher.

JOHN

Move!

O'Leary reaches the line of storefronts and peers down the street. British soldiers are holed up behind a barricade.

More bullets.

O'Leary crouches in what used to be a butcher shop. A SKINNED LAMB hangs behind his head. He raises his rifle and fires a round toward the enemy.

MATTHEW

What are you doing? Save your bullets!

Jimmy cowers behind some stone steps. O'Leary pulls him roughly by the front of the shirt.

O'LEARY

Come on! We'll die here!

JIMMY

I can't. I can't. Let's go back to the Post Office.

He's crying and shaking.

O'LEARY

Get up!

JIMMY

Go!

O'LEARY

Oh, have some respect!

He SLAPS Jimmy and lifts him by the front of his shirt. They continue running down the street.

The group crosses the street and piles into an open door.

INT. ABANDONED HOUSE - DAY

Shattered GLASS litters the floor and window sills. Ceramic PLATES lay shattered below their holders.

The five rebels hurry down into the BASEMENT.

A delirious OLD WOMAN appears from upstairs.

OLD WOMAN

Get out of my house! Look what
you've done!

No one gives her any notice.

INT. ABANDONED HOUSE - BASEMENT - DAY

John and Mary set Ciaran down softly near an old loom and rest their arms.

John feels Ciaran's pulse. Ciaran's bandages are soaked in blood and his face is dangerously pale.

JOHN

He doesn't look well.

MARY

(nodding)
I know.

Matthew feels the packed dirt wall. Some of it crumbles off in between his fingers.

MATTHEW

The houses are all built close
together in this area. We should be
able to dig through to another
basement.

O'Leary finds an OLD HAMMER nearby. He swings with unexpected strength, catches the wall, and pulls out a small chunk.

O'LEARY
It will have to do.

Everyone begins to work away at the wall.

Sweat shows on Mary's brow.

The door slams upstairs.

MARY
Shh...

INT. ABANDONED HOUSE - ENTRYWAY - DAY

Three British SOLDIERS enter the damaged house. The old woman appears once again from upstairs.

OLD WOMAN
Get out! This is my home!

BRITISH SOLDIER 1
Shut up! We're looking for a small band of rebel fugitives who passed this way.

The old woman pauses.

BRITISH SOLDIER 1 (CONT'D)
Where are they?

The old woman glances at the ajar basement door.

OLD WOMAN
I've seen no rebels.

INT. ABANDONED HOUSE - BASEMENT

The group stands still with bated breath. Jimmy breathes heavily, whimpers.

INT. ABANDONED HOUSE - ENTRYWAY

British Soldier 1 approaches the old woman. He towers two feet over her.

Beat.

He knocks the wind out of her with the butt of his rifle. She doubles over, but does not fall down.

BRITISH SOLDIER 1
Tell us! Or we'll turn over every
bloody room and piece of furniture
in this shite city.

INT. ABANDONED HOUSE - BASEMENT

John pulls out his EMPTY PISTOL. He creeps towards the
basement stairs.

Something ceramic SHATTERS upstairs.

O'Leary gestures to John, but makes no noise. He tries to
offer John his own gun, but John does not look back.

A stair CREAKS.

INT. ABANDONED HOUSE - ENTRYWAY

The British soldier looks up from the old woman.

BRITISH SOLDIER 1
What was that?

The other soldier walks purposefully towards the door.

INT. ABANDONED HOUSE - BASEMENT

John freezes. He is inches from the door. He is tense, ready
to pummel anything to come through the door.

INT. ABANDONED HOUSE - ENTRYWAY

The soldier crouches to look the old woman in the eyes again.

OLD WOMAN
You want to know where they went?

The interrogating soldier looks expectantly.

The old woman wheezes.

INT. ABANDONED HOUSE - BASEMENT

John swallows hard. A slit of light illuminates his eye.

JOHN
(whispering)
Please don't.

INT. ABANDONED HOUSE - ENTRYWAY

The British soldier crouches down to the woman's face.

BRITISH SOLDIER 1

Tell us.

The old woman bites her lip. Then she sticks a thumb up through her fist and shoves it in the soldier's face.

OLD WOMAN

That's where they went.

The soldier rises up. He bares his teeth like a dog.

BRITISH OFFICER

I will beat your head into damned
blood pudding, used up whore!

The old woman finally cowers. She points a finger. It points out the door.

OLD WOMAN

I saw them run past, they went into
that open door three doors down
across the street.

The British soldier looks behind him.

BRITISH SOLDIER 1

Let's check it out.

The soldiers leave without another word.

INT. ABANDONED HOUSE - BASEMENT

John gives a sigh of relief. He hobbles down the stairs and they all continue digging in silence.

INT. ABANDONED HOUSE 2 - BASEMENT

A HAMMER breaks through the dirt wall. More dirt falls and the group crawls, one by one, from the small hole.

MATTHEW

Right, let's start on the next one.

INT. ABANDONED HOUSE 3 - BASEMENT

The rebel group emerges from yet another hole. Mary's hands are scraped and black. John's face is streaked with grey.

Matthew knocks his fist against the wall. He seems concerned.

MATTHEW
This one feels different.

O'LEARY
How so?

MATTHEW
Denser.

O'Leary knocks too. The sound is hard and compact.

Matthew addresses the group.

MATTHEW (CONT'D)
Friends, I believe we've hit the
thoroughfare.

He points upwards.

JOHN
The what?

MATTHEW
No more basements. The only way out
is by street.

Mary's eyes droop. She gives a small sob.

MATTHEW (CONT'D)
But once you cross this street...

Beat.

MATTHEW (CONT'D)
You might as well be home.

INT. ABANDONED HOUSE 3 - DAY

Matthew peers out the door of the apartment.

EXT. GARDINER STREET - DAY

The street's wide lanes are split by a median. Across the way
we see a damaged building with a section of wall blown out.

The rest of the street appears silent.

INT. ABANDONED HOUSE 3

O'Leary stands behind Matthew's shoulder.

MATTHEW

Perfect, there's a hole blown out
of that house over there. And I
don't see...

Matthew freezes. We follow his gaze further down the street.

EXT. GARDINER STREET

British SOLDIERS sit entrenched behind a pile of sandbags.
Behind them stands a MACHINE GUN. Its steel barrel points
hungrily down the street.

INT. ABANDONED HOUSE 3

Matthew turns and rests the back of his head against the door
frame.

O'LEARY

What is it, Matthew?

MATTHEW

There are soldiers set up down the
road.

O'LEARY

That hasn't been a problem yet.

REBEL 1

It's a machine gun.

Jimmy becomes frantic. He picks up a MILK BOTTLE and holds it
like a club. He peers over the windowsill.

JIMMY

Where can we go? We've got to go
back. Back!

O'LEARY

No! We will not. Not today.

We hear LOUD CHATTER from near the machine gun.

John sits near the stretcher. He tries to wipe dirt from
Ciaran's forehead.

Mary moves over to John.

MARY

What now?

JOHN

I don't know.

MARY

How can we get Ciaran across?

JOHN

We'll have to carry him I suppose.

A tear leaks from Mary's eye. Silently, she throws her arms around John's neck.

John stares into the sun without returning Mary's embrace.

MARY

I love you, John.

John does not react.

Mary wipes a wayward tear.

MARY (CONT'D)

(calmly)

John, I love you. I do.

John turns and looks Mary in the eyes. They share a moment.

She places her hand on John's face and tenderly moves to kiss him.

Their lips hang suspended. Suddenly, John pushes Mary away.

JOHN

No.

Mary recoils, stunned.

MARY

No?

JOHN

No. Not like this. Not you.

He takes in the entire scene. The blood. The dirt. The fear.

Mary's eyes are red. Her jaws are shut tight.

MARY

Go to hell!

She looks down. She looks at Ciaran.

MARY (CONT'D)
(softly)
And I'll be right behind you.

John looks away.

O'Leary approaches Mary, whose eyes are now running with silent tears.

O'LEARY
We're about to move. Do you want me
to carry the stretcher?

Mary glares at him with steeled eyes and steps between him and the stretcher.

MARY
Get away, old man.

O'Leary backs off. Matthew calls him over.

MATTHEW
We don't have many choices here,
friend. The soldiers will discover
us sooner or later. And to go
forward, we'll need to give the
stretcher time to cross.

O'LEARY
What can we do?

MATTHEW
Try our best to divert its fire.
But once we get across...

Matthew sighs.

MATTHEW (CONT'D)
We'll be safe. Have a clear path
out.

O'Leary smiles.

O'LEARY
Don't worry. We'll get across.

Matthew stands and addresses the rest.

MATTHEW
Right! We're going to make a run
for the other side of this street.
There's a hole leading into the
apartment basement just there.

Matthew points to O'Leary.

MATTHEW (CONT'D)
The two of us will try to draw fire
while you two carry the stretcher.

Matthew looks at Jimmy who rips the curtains into strips.
Matthew shakes his head.

MATTHEW (CONT'D)
Jimmy!

Jimmy scurries over.

MATTHEW (CONT'D)
We're going. Pull yourself
together.

O'Leary then turns to John.

O'LEARY
John.

JOHN
Yes?

O'Leary digs around in his pocket. He removes his closed fist
and he holds it out to John.

O'LEARY
I believe I have something that
belongs to you.

O'Leary opens his hand to reveal John's Irish Republican
Brotherhood pin. John reaches out to grab it.

He catches himself.

O'LEARY (CONT'D)
Take it. It's yours.

JOHN
I know. But I don't want it. Thank
you though.

O'LEARY
Are you sure about that?

JOHN
Yes.

O'Leary places the pin onto his own shirt.

O'LEARY
You'll have your own war stories to
tell when your father comes home.

John laughs.

JOHN
Yes, yes there will be stories.

MATTHEW (O.S.)
On my mark! Professor, get into
position.

O'Leary lines up next to Matthew inside the door frame.

MATTHEW (CONT'D)
Go!

EXT. GARDINER STREET - DAY

Matthew and O'Leary sprint into the street.

They begin FIRING their guns toward the machine gun. We hear shouting from the other end of the street.

The machine gun warms up. The barrel spins slowly. A rain of bullets burst from its open mouth.

MATTHEW
Move!

O'Leary runs to the far side of the street. Bullets splinter off the cobblestones.

O'LEARY
Get over! Get over!

John and Mary run with the stretcher poles in both hands. John stumbles and almost loses his grip.

Matthew waves toward the machine gun.

MATTHEW
Hey! Hey!

With a burst of will and strength John rights the stretcher.

Jimmy SCREAMS.

O'Leary stoically fires toward the machine gun. He stands only a few yards from the building, so close to freedom.

Jimmy sprints past him in a blur. Jimmy slides feet first into the gaping wall.

The stretcher follows, finally making it to the other side of the street. John crouches to angle the stretcher.

INT. RUINED HOUSE - DAY

Ciaran scrapes against the pavement. John enters and struggles to pull Ciaran in.

EXT. RUINED HOUSE - DAY

O'LEARY

Move!

MARY

I can't get him down!

O'Leary crouches over Mary and wrestles the stretcher into the building. He then grabs Mary and barrels himself inside.

INT. RUINED HOUSE - DAY

Silence. The scream of the machine gun dies off in the distance. Jimmy sits coolly in the rubble.

John begins to laugh softly. Mary does too. O'Leary sits on the ground and breathes heavily; he is too old for this.

John looks at O'Leary.

JOHN

Thank you.

O'LEARY

For the Republic, John.

He raises an imaginary glass and smiles.

JOHN

Let's go home.

MARY

Where's Matthew?

O'Leary looks for Matthew but he's nowhere to be found.

O'LEARY

Matthew!

John peers out into the street.

EXT. GARDINER STREET - DAY

Matthew lies bleeding in the far lane. His body never even made it past the median.

INT. RUINED HOUSE - DAY

O'Leary hands his gun to John.

O'LEARY
Cover me, I'm going to get the
body.

John places a hand upon O'Leary's shoulder.

JOHN
We can't bring him in. We can't.

O'Leary stares out at Matthew's body. We see the machine gun sitting menacingly in the distance. The soldiers begin to move from behind the sandbags.

O'LEARY
He can't stay there.

JOHN
I can't think of a more honorable
death.

O'Leary performs the sign of the cross toward the body.

INT. RUINED HOUSE - DAY

MARY (O.S.)
He's dead too.

John turns quickly.

Mary's eyes are red. John collapses over Ciaran's body and SOBS. John's fingers clutch at Ciaran's hair.

MARY (CONT'D)
John...

She stands up and crosses her arms over her chest.

O'Leary bends down and softly removes John from the body.

O'Leary unpins the Irish Brotherhood pin. He carefully places it onto Ciaran's shirt.

O'LEARY
Let's go home.

INT. BASEMENT - DAY

Dust flies up and the wall breaks down revealing an exhausted John, O'Leary, Mary, and Jimmy.

INT. HOUSE - EVENING

The band comes out of the basement stairway. The front windows of the apartment are all blown out. GOLDEN LIGHT pours through the gap.

EXT. HOUSE - EVENING

O'Leary steps out into the empty street. He moves mechanically. Pushing every step. They all do.

John and Mary carry Ciaran in the stretcher as if in a daze. Jimmy follows timidly behind.

The road opens wide before them.

EXT. CUSTOM HOUSE BRIDGE - DUSK

The group passes over the Custom House Bridge. They step gingerly over shadowy cobblestones. The water below them is pitch black.

The street lamps ignite, casting an eerie glow.

JOHN
Where's Mr. Jimmy?

Jimmy is nowhere to be seen. He has disappeared.

MARY
I'm sure he's found his way.

They continue walking.

EXT. RUINED NEIGHBORHOOD - NIGHT

John looks to his left and sees a bombed out apartment building. A family sits stunned on the rubble. They have started a FIRE from the debris.

John sighs.

EXT. TRINITY COLLEGE DUBLIN - NIGHT

O'Leary runs his hands along the stone outer wall. The wall turns into a locked metal gate and O'Leary's fingers skip along every rail.

O'LEARY
It's alright, we're back.

We see John stare longingly through the bars as he passes.

EXT. PLAY HOUSE - NIGHT

An the corner of an intersection is a small PLAY HOUSE. It has not fared well.

Posters flake from the walls.

The windows, usually lit, are dark and shattered.

The sidewalk, usually bubbling with stragglers, chatterers, and critics, is vacant.

O'Leary and the others round the corner.

Stephen Green sits in the shadows of the front step. He wearing a large coat. Head in hands, elbows on his knees. We cannot see his face.

O'Leary walks up and shakes Stephen's shoulder.

O'LEARY
Stephen? Is that you?

Stephen lifts his face. His face is gaunt, drained of his former energy seen at the pub.

O'Leary snaps his fingers.

O'LEARY (CONT'D)
Stephen. Look at me. Are you alright?

Stephen gives O'Leary a sad look of recognition.

STEPHEN
James, you came.

O'LEARY
What are you doing here? You should
be at home.

STEPHEN
So should you. Where's the Mrs.?

O'LEARY
What do you mean? Why would she...

Stephen raises an eyebrow and shakes his head.

O'LEARY (CONT'D)
Oh.

O'Leary sits down next to his friend and places his arm
around him.

O'LEARY (CONT'D)
Oh Stephen. I'm so sorry.

STEPHEN
It's cancelled.

Stephen waves his arm in a large arc in front of him.

STEPHEN (CONT'D)
Obviously.

Stephen eyes glaze over.

O'Leary puts his hands in his pockets. Surprised, he pulls
out the two theater tickets.

O'LEARY
Another showing?

Stephen takes the tickets.

STEPHEN
The story's changed, my friend.
Wouldn't make sense anymore.

He rips the tickets in half.

O'LEARY
But I thought this was supposed to
be...

STEPHEN

I know what it was supposed to be!
But it's not anymore.

John and Mary watch sympathetically from a distance. O'Leary stands and gives his hand to Stephen.

O'LEARY

Come with us. You can't stay here.

Stephen stands too, but disregards O'Leary.

STEPHEN

This first.

Stephen launches a large STONE at the theater.

A pane of glass SHATTERS. Stephen sighs, almost contentedly.

STEPHEN (CONT'D)

Some first act, huh?

O'LEARY

Come on.

He and Stephen walk away.

EXT. O'LEARY HOUSE - NIGHT

The group emerges from the shadows into the light of a street lamp.

A light flickers in the front window of the O'Leary apartment. They approach the front door. O'Leary turns the handle. It is unlocked.

INT. O'LEARY HOUSEHOLD - ENTRYWAY

O'Leary stumbles into the apartment. He holds the door open as John and Mary carry Ciaran's body inside. Stephen shuffles in behind them.

MOVEMENT from the living room.

Mrs. O'Leary appears.

MRS. O'LEARY

Oh my. You're all safe.

She stands motionless and stares woundedly at O'Leary. He approaches his wife and embraces her. She softens.

O'LEARY
I'm sorry.

MRS. O'LEARY
I know.

They continue to embrace.

MRS. O'LEARY (CONT'D)
I see you brought him back.

O'Leary smiles as the two of them turn toward John and Mary.
Ciaran now lays on the dining room table.

INT. O'LEARY HOUSEHOLD - LIVING ROOM

MARY
What will we do with the body?

O'Leary approaches.

O'LEARY
Leave that to me.

MRS. O'LEARY
(to Mary)
Miss, if you need anything, or a
bed for tonight...

MARY
Thank you. But I have a home of my
own.

She proceeds towards the door.

Mary stops in the entryway and turns back.

MARY (CONT'D)
Men, it's been a pleasure. Cheers,
until we're needed again.

What that, she exits. The door closes.

John runs after her.

EXT. O'LEARY HOUSE - NIGHT

JOHN
Mary!

She doesn't turn back.

JOHN (CONT'D)

Mary!

She is lost in the darkness.

He closes the door and returns into the house.

INT. CHURCH - DAY

It is John and Kathy's WEDDING DAY.

We move toward the altar past PEWS full of GUESTS.

John and Kathy hold hands. They wear GOLD RINGS. Kathy is radiant in a traditional white dress. Her smile is brilliant.

A MINISTER, small and aged, prays behind them.

MINISTER

Heavenly father, we praise you for
bringing these two souls together.

John's smile wavers as tears fill his eyes. He looks down.

He moves stealthily to wipe his eyes with his handkerchief.

MINISTER (O.S.) (CONT'D)

Guide them safely through life's
dangers, for we know there will be
many.

The LILY flutters to the floor. Kathy gives a little laugh.

MINISTER (O.S.) (CONT'D)

And let these two grow in their
love and finish the magnificent
race set out for them. Amen.

The priest finishes praying.

John and Kathy kiss and look toward the audience. Arm in arm,
the new couple strolls out the back door.

EXT. RECEPTION - DAY

John and Kathy walk, arm in arm, through an intimate garden.
They come out into a clearing where relatives mingle, and
drinks flow.

They pass a table where John's college friends are talking,
laughing and drinking.

JEREMY

Hey! Congratulations John boy!

John pats Jeremy on the shoulder.

JOHN

Thanks, Jeremy. I appreciate it.

He points to Peter.

JOHN (CONT'D)

You're not still sore about the
cards are you?

Peter raises a glass of wine and takes a long drink.

PETER

Of course not, you've more than
made up for it.

The couple moves on. A GRANDMOTHER approaches.

GRANDMOTHER

I'm so happy for you Kathy. And
John, you'll make a fine, handsome
husband. Oh...

Tears well up in her eyes. Kathy hugs her.

KATHY

Oh, thank you, Charlotte. Thank you
ever so much.

Further on, near the back of the room we see Mr. and Mrs.
O'Leary sitting at a table drinking glasses of wine.

They sit with an UNKNOWN MAN.

The man is younger than O'Leary. He is clean shaven, and
muscular.

O'Leary catches John's eye and he stands.

O'LEARY

Make way for captain Johnny and the
beautiful bride!

John laughs.

JOHN

Don't start that again, professor.

O'LEARY

(to Kathy)

He's a bit of a wild one. Keep an eye out.

JOHN

Don't worry. I've found myself... other duties.

KATHY

He means a wife.

Everyone laughs.

O'LEARY

We all have our principles, I suppose.

The unknown man stands up and addresses John.

The laughter dies down.

UNKOWN MAN

There were days when I found myself sitting in the mud in some godforsaken trench, and all I could think about was today.

The man chokes up for a moment.

UNKOWN MAN (CONT'D)

And I'm glad I'm here. After everything.

The unknown man opens his arms. He and John embrace.

JOHN

Thanks, dad.

As John hugs his father, John stares into the distance. We hear SOUNDS OF THE STREET. Someone SHOUTS an order.

EXT. GENERAL POST OFFICE - DAY

The GPO smolders in the background. British soldiers swarm everywhere. It's a roundup.

Rebel leader, Tom Clark, holds his hands over his head. He is frisked and ushered into a long line of captured rebels. He walks slowly.

INT. PRISON CELL - MORNING

Padraic Pearse sits on the cold floor of a stone prison cell. He looks up out through the barred window. Birds CHIRP outside.

The door CLANGS open.

GUARD (O.S.)

Padraic Pearse, you have been charged with treason and rebellion against the British Empire.

Pearse rises.

GUARD (O.S.) (CONT'D)

We've been given orders that you shall face execution this afternoon. Here now, is father Jacob.

The priest enters the cell.

FATHER JACOB

Mr. Pearse.

PEARSE

Thank you father, but I fear I have nothing to confess.

EXT. PRISON COURTYARD - DAY

We see a blank wall and the backs of British soldiers. Silhouettes of RIFLES WITH BAYONETS.

An AMBULANCE approaches. It stops and the doors open to reveal James Connolly.

Connolly is badly injured. A SPLINT binds his leg. His face is deathly pale.

The EXECUTION OFFICER sweats, ugly as a bulldog.

EXECUTION OFFICER

Bring him out!

James Connolly is brought out on a stretcher.

EXECUTION OFFICER (CONT'D)

Stand him there!

He points to the far end of the wall where there is a fresh laying down of wood chips.

The guards wrestle Connolly from the ambulance. They try to make him walk. He SEETHES in pain. Two more paces. He falls.

GUARD

He can't stand, sir. Can't walk.

The execution officer runs a fat hand along his forehead.

GUARD (CONT'D)

Then strap him to that chair.

A guard drags a chair over to the wall.

Two guards drag Connolly over their shoulders. They throw Connolly into the chair.

A guard pulls out a BELT. He ties Connolly to the chair.

Connolly sits alone, barely alive, head down in the chair.

EXECUTION OFFICER

Ready!

Connolly's chest heaves.

EXECUTION OFFICER (CONT'D)

Aim!

Connolly raises his eyes and meets the guns straight on.

EXECUTION OFFICER (CONT'D)

Fire!

CUT TO BLACK.

RIFLE SHOTS

THE END

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