

FOR YOUR CONSIDERATION

# CALVARY

**BEST ORIGINAL SCREENPLAY**

*Written by  
John Michael McDonagh*



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FATHER JAMES LAVELLE, fifties, is idly reading *Moby Dick*. Dressed in an old-fashioned black soutane. He hears someone enter the confessional. Marks his page. Waits --

MAN'S VOICE (O.S.)

I first tasted semen when I was seven years old.

HOLD CLOSE on LAVELLE.

MAN'S VOICE (O.S.)

Nothing to say?

LAVELLE

It's certainly a startling opening line.

MAN'S VOICE (O.S.)

What is that, irony?

LAVELLE

I'm sorry, let's start again. Are you...What do you...What do you want to say to me? I'm here to listen to whatever you have to say.

MAN'S VOICE (O.S.)

I was raped by a priest when I was seven years old. Orally and anally, as they say in the court reports. This went on for five years. Every other day for five years. I bled a lot, as you can imagine. I bled a terrible amount.

LAVELLE

(after a pause)

Have you spoken to anyone about--

MAN'S VOICE (O.S.)

I'm speaking to you now.

LAVELLE

I mean, have you sought professional help?

MAN'S VOICE (O.S.)

Why, so I could learn how to cope? So I could learn how to live with it? Maybe I don't want to cope. Maybe I don't want to learn how to live with it.

LAVELLE

Why don't you make a formal complaint? You can testify--

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

MAN'S VOICE (O.S.)

The man's dead.

There is silence for a moment.

LAVELLE

I don't know what to say to you.  
I have no answer for you, I'm sorry.

MAN'S VOICE (O.S.)

What good would it do anyway, if he were still alive? What'd be the point in killing the bastard? That'd be no news. There's no point in killing a bad priest. But killing a good one? That'd be a shock, now. They wouldn't know what to make of that.

(pause)

I'm going to kill you, Father.  
I'm going to kill you 'cause you've done nothing wrong. I'm going to kill you 'cause you're innocent.

(pause)

Not right now, though. I'll give you enough time to put your house in order. Make your peace with God. Sunday week, let's say. I'll meet you down on the beach there. Down by the water there.

(with a laugh)

Killing a priest on a Sunday. \*  
That'll be a good one.

(pause)

Do you not have anything to say to me, Father?

LAVELLE

Not right now, no. But I'm sure I'll think of something. By Sunday week.

There is a pause. Then the MAN laughs. The confessional door is heard opening and closing. LAVELLE waits.

**INT. CHURCH - DAY**

LAVELLE emerges from the confessional. Looks around --

The church is empty. He stands alone.

**INT. OPENING TITLES - PHOTOGRAPHS - DAY**

Sepia, b/w, colour photographs, from the '20s to the '90s, of children with priests.

**INT. OPENING TITLES - CHURCH - DAY**

LAVELLE and his altar boy, MICHEÁL O'SULLIVAN, serving Communion to his PARISHIONERS.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

Some of whom -- MILO HERLIHY, GERALD RYAN, SIMON ASAMOAH, JACK BRENNAN and VERONICA BRENNAN -- we will encounter in due course.

LAVELLE

Body of Christ.

VERONICA

Amen.

She receives the Eucharist. She is wearing shades to cover a black eye. LAVELLE moves on to the next PARISHIONER.

5

**EXT. OPENING TITLES - EASKEY, CO. SLIGO - DAY**

5

The town's main street. Houses brightly-painted as in a Jacques Demy film. A GRUMPY BASTARD zips by in a wheelchair. \*

\*

A young priest dressed in a black clerical suit -- FATHER TIMOTHY LEARY -- exits the village store with the Sunday newspapers. \*

\*

6

**EXT. OPENING TITLES - O'DOWD CASTLE - DAY**

6

TOURISTS exploring the picturesque castle, a thirteenth-century structure overlooking the shoreline.

7

**EXT. OPENING TITLES - EASKEY BEACH - DAY**

7

One of the finest surfing destinations in the world, renowned for its two reef breaks.

SURFERS riding a massive wave that eventually comes crashing down.

8

**EXT. OPENING TITLES - CHURCH - DAY**

8

A large wooden church on a hill. The PARISHIONERS exit. OPENING TITLES end.

9

**INT. SACRISTY - DAY**

9

TITLE -- "Sunday".

LAVELLE and MICHEÁL enter. MICHEÁL slouching.

LAVELLE

A little too much wine in the chalice again, there, Micheál.

MICHEÁL

Sorry, Father.

LAVELLE

(taking off his chasuble)  
I'm wondering is this some kind of ploy on your behalf.

(CONTINUED)

MICHEÁL

A ploy, Father?

LAVELLE

(untying his cincture)

A ploy, Micheál. I've noticed my stocks of booze appear to be somewhat diminished of late. I'm wondering is this some kind of ploy you're working to cover up for the wine you've been imbibing on the q.t.

MICHEÁL

I have no idea what you are talking about.

LAVELLE removes his stole. Studying MICHEÁL all the while.

MICHEÁL

Father Leary noticed nothing amiss. \*

LAVELLE

Father Leary does not know you as well as I do, Micheál. I'd say he may well underestimate the depths of your Machiavellian chicanery. \*

MICHEÁL

Can I go now, Father? \*

LAVELLE

What's the hurry? Have they called a meeting at Mafia Headquarters?

They look blankly at one another.

LAVELLE

On your way.

**INT. RECTORY (KITCHEN) - DAY**

FATHER LEARY is pouring the tea. LAVELLE reading the Sunday newspapers. \*

LEARY

The things you hear in confession these days, it's depressing. \*

LAVELLE

You have to detach yourself from it. We're here to provide solace. Your personal feelings don't come into it. \*

(CONTINUED)

LEARY

I know that. What d'you take me for? It's very difficult, though. The mess people make of their lives.

\*

LAVELLE

What's the problem? Without going into details, obviously.

LEARY

Your one with the big black eye on her, have you seen her?

\*

LAVELLE

Veronica Brennan. I have, yeah.

LEARY

She's an odd one. The things she comes out with. It's like she's trying to drag you down into the muck. D'you know what felching is?

\*

LAVELLE

I do know what felching is, yeah.

LEARY

I had to look it up.

\*

LAVELLE

This is you not going into details is it?

LEARY

Oh sorry. Anyway, whatever's going on with her it's obviously all gotten out of hand and she's being knocked around now.

\*

LAVELLE

Well if you speak to her she'll raise holy hell and say it was on the basis of something she said to you in the confessional.

LEARY

I know, I know. We can't have that. She'll get me excommunicated, the cow.

\*

LAVELLE

I'll have a word with her. Jack as well. Part of my pastoral duties and what-have-you, nothing to do with her confession or anything. See what's going on.

LEARY

And that coloured fella, the Ugandan? He's one of her lovers, I think.

\*

(CONTINUED)

LAVELLE

Simon's from the Ivory Coast.

LEARY

Right, right. I knew it was that,  
or Guyana. One of those African  
countries.

\*

LAVELLE

Guyana is in South America.

LEARY

I don't think so, now, Father.  
I was always pretty good at the  
auld geography.

\*

LAVELLE glances at him. Sips his tea.

CLOSE on the skirts of LAVELLE's black soutane as he walks  
across the sandy beach. He pauses at the water's edge and  
looks out.

\*

\*

CLOSE on a picture -- a fair representation in charcoal of the beach scene, but with the addition of two black figures in a corner of the paper.

REVERSE-SHOT -- LAVELLE looking over MICHEÁL's shoulder, impressed. MICHEÁL ignoring him as he scratches away.

LAVELLE

Not bad. Surprisingly.  
I was expecting a daub.

MICHEÁL

I was thinking, though, Father,  
what if I was no good at all?

LAVELLE

How do you mean?

MICHEÁL

I mean, what if there's something  
you really want to do, or something  
you really want to be, but you're  
no good at it at all?

LAVELLE

That's most people's lives, Micheál.  
Sadly.

He looks up at the beach. Looks back at the picture.

12 CONTINUED:

12

LAVELLE

Who are those two lads supposed to be?

MICHEÁL

Don't know. I've been reading these ghost stories. Maybe it's got something to do with that. Spooky.

LAVELLE looks at MICHEÁL. Pats him on the head.

13 INT. LAVELLE'S ROOM - NIGHT

13

LAVELLE enters, turning on the light, closing the door. The room is spare --

Wooden bed, where his Golden Retriever, Bruno, is sleeping. Grey wool blankets.

Whitewashed walls without adornment, save for a crucifix. Cupboard. Writing desk with a large white seashell. Two chairs, one at the desk, one beside the bed.

He tosses *Moby Dick* onto the bed. Bruno yawns. He sits on the chair beside the bed. Thinks.

Removes one of his black leather Oxfords. Then the other. Pauses, the second shoe still in his hand. Thinking.

Puts down the shoe beside its comrade. Gets up and goes to the desk. Takes off his clerical collar. Pauses.

He looks out the window over the writing desk.

14 EXT. SLIGO CATHEDRAL - DAY

14

TITLE -- "Monday".

The cathedral is an imposing structure. A handsome modern edifice, with a massive tower.

15 INT. BISHOP'S OFFICE - DAY

15

BISHOP GARRET MONTGOMERY is eating a large cream scone the size of a baby's head. A silver tea-set in front of him. His office opulently furnished and decorated.

MONTGOMERY

So do you know who it was?

REVERSE SHOT -- LAVELLE seated opposite. Bereft of tea.

LAVELLE

Yes, Your Excellency.  
I know who it was.

MONTGOMERY

Do you know him well?

(CONTINUED)

LAVELLE

Well enough.

MONTGOMERY

Knowing this man as you do, do you think it was an idle threat?

LAVELLE

I don't know. I'm not sure.

MONTGOMERY

"Not sure" means it's possible.

LAVELLE

Yes. I suppose.

MONTGOMERY puts down the scone. Licks his fingers.

MONTGOMERY

You didn't grant him absolution, obviously.

LAVELLE

He didn't ask for it.

MONTGOMERY

Well there you have it. The man is not penitent. There is no contrition. He's threatening to commit a crime, not asking for forgiveness for one. The inviolability of the sacramental seal does not apply.

LAVELLE

You're saying I should go to the police?

MONTGOMERY

I'm not saying anything. The choice is yours.

A train exits the station to reveal FIONA LAVELLE. Thirty, attractive, her wrists bandaged. A suitcase at her feet. [Note: she has an English accent.]

LAVELLE appears.

LAVELLE

Don't tell me. You made the classic error.

FIONA

You're supposed to cut down, not across.

16 CONTINUED:

16

LAVELLE

(after a pause)

I don't know what else to say.

They look blankly at one another. LAVELLE opens his arms.  
FIONA stands up. They embrace.

17 **EXT. SLIGO TRAIN STATION - DAY**

17

CLOSE on a little red convertible sports car. Bruno in the  
passenger seat. He barks.

REVERSE SHOT -- FIONA and LAVELLE looking at the car.

LAVELLE

Always wanted a fast car. A red one.

FIONA

I thought you'd already had your  
mid-life crisis.

LAVELLE shoots her a glance.

18 **EXT. COUNTRYSIDE - DAY**

18

The sports car crests a hill and zips by, LAVELLE at the  
wheel, FIONA beside him, Bruno in the middle.

19 **EXT. SPORTS CAR - DAY**

19

LAVELLE accelerating ever faster, Bruno barking, FIONA  
throwing her arms up in delight.

20 **EXT. LYNCH'S BAR - DAY**

20

Bruno sitting calmly in the car.

21 **INT. LYNCH'S BAR - DAY**

21

MILO HERLIHY, twenties, polka-dotted bow-tie, an oddly  
blank look about him. FRANK HARTE, a good-looking older  
man with a clinical air. Guinnesses in front of them.

HERLIHY

You're a very nice-looking young  
woman.

REVERSE SHOT -- FIONA and LAVELLE waiting for their  
drinks. FIONA laughs, glancing at LAVELLE, who smiles.

FIONA

Thank you. I like your bow-tie.

HERLIHY

It's got polka-dots.

(CONTINUED)

LAVELLE

This is my daughter, Fiona, Milo.  
She's over from London.

HERLIHY

You're having me on.

LAVELLE

I'm not having you on. What are  
you on about?

HERLIHY

You're a priest!

LAVELLE

I was married before I became a  
priest. My wife and I had a child,  
Fiona. My wife died. And after that  
I joined the priesthood.

HERLIHY

You can do that, can you?

HARTE

It would appear so.  
(noticing FIONA's bandages)  
Don't tell me. You made the classic  
error.

LAVELLE

I've already done that gag, Frank.

HARTE

You're supposed to cut down--

LAVELLE

I've already done it, I said.

LYNCH (O.S.)

Now, now.

BRENDAN LYNCH appears with a Coca-Cola bottle and glass,  
and a double whiskey. Forty, handsome. Hands the Coke to  
LAVELLE, the whiskey to FIONA --

LYNCH

A drop of the hard stuff for  
yourself, and a generous serving  
of the auld water of life to  
this beautiful and yet troubled--

FIONA

Oh fuck off.

LYNCH looks blankly at FIONA. She takes a sip of the  
whiskey as she moves towards a table. LAVELLE following.

LYNCH

You have an exceedingly dirty mouth. I like that in a hoor.

LAVELLE

Brendan. Now's not the time.

LYNCH looks from FIONA to LAVELLE.

LYNCH

Whatever you say, Father.  
You're the boss.

LAVELLE and FIONA in a little nook. FIONA drinks her whiskey. LAVELLE pushes his Coke bottle around.

FIONA

How's that working out for you?

LAVELLE

Oh I haven't been out on the tear in a good while.

FIONA

So you say.

LAVELLE

Ah no, I've been a very good lad. And don't change the subject.

FIONA

What was the subject?

LAVELLE

You know what the subject was.

FIONA

Oh Daddy, a man, a man. What else.

LAVELLE

It's getting to be a habit, honey.

FIONA

I know. Pathetic. Can't do anything right.

She sips her whiskey. LAVELLE takes one of her hands. Rubs the bandage with a thumb.

LAVELLE

"Razors pain you."

FIONA

(looking at him)  
"Rivers are damp."

LAVELLE

"Acids stain you. And drugs cause  
cramp."

FIONA

"Guns aren't lawful. Nooses give."

LAVELLE

"Gas smells awful."

FIONA/LAVELLE

"You might as well live."

They smile.

LYNCH studies them from the other end of the bar.

**EXT. CHURCH - DAY**

CLOSE on various angles of the church's architecture --  
windows, steeple, etc. -- emphasising its simple,  
unpretentious nature.

FIONA (O.S.)

Back-to-basics, is what you're  
saying.

LAVELLE (O.S.)

Simplicity. Lack of ostentation.  
That kind of thing.

LEARY (O.S.)

All your father's idea. His baby.

LAVELLE, FIONA and LEARY are standing to the front and  
sides of the church. LEARY carrying a box of toys.

LEARY

We couldn't go on with the old  
one anyways. Falling to pieces.  
Liable to get someone killed.

FIONA

It's a good gimmick, I suppose.

LAVELLE

It's not a gimmick.

FIONA

I'm sorry, I didn't mean...

LEARY

They'd call it a rebranding in the  
advertising world.

(CONTINUED)

FIONA

I suppose you are a corporate entity,  
if you look at it in one way.

LEARY

It's the only way to look at it.  
We provide a product and a service  
and that's all there is to it.

\*

He strolls away. FIONA smiles wryly. LAVELLE gives a shake  
of the head. Glances up proudly at the church.

**EXT. BRENNANS' HOUSE - DAY**

VERONICA BRENNAN, thirties, wearing shades, pegging up the  
linen. White sheets fluttering in the wind. She looks up --

LAVELLE at the other side of the line. His black soutane  
fluttering in the wind.

LAVELLE

Nice shades.

VERONICA

Do they make me look like Jackie O?

LAVELLE

Not really, no.

VERONICA smiles. Raises the glasses up on her forehead.

VERONICA

This what you came to gawp at?  
Nasty, hah?

LAVELLE

It's an interesting colour.

VERONICA lowers the shades and continues with the laundry.

VERONICA

They say you can find beauty in  
everything, if you look hard enough.

LAVELLE

I'd say you can find beauty in  
most things, but not everything.  
That's nonsense.

VERONICA

Sure what would I know? I'm just  
an auld washerwoman.

The washing that she's hanging on the line now seems to be  
comprised solely of items of lingerie.

VERONICA

See anything you fancy?

(CONTINUED)

LAVELLE

If you don't want to talk to me,  
that's fine. I'm not here to compel  
you to do anything.

VERONICA

You never know, Father, maybe I'd  
like to be compelled. Maybe I'd  
enjoy it.

LAVELLE

I'll have a word with Jack.  
See what he has to say for himself.

VERONICA

The Grand Inquisitor, hah? Go on  
ahead for yourself so. I'm sure  
he'll be only too pleased to have  
someone else to bore the ears off.  
I stopped listening to his auld  
shite a long time ago.

LAVELLE

That's how it is, is it? I didn't  
realise.

VERONICA

You thought we were another Grace  
Kelly and Prince Rainier?

LAVELLE

That wasn't a very happy marriage,  
so it's not a great analogy.

VERONICA looks at him. Laughs.

VERONICA

Y'know that's what I've always liked  
about you, Father. You're just a  
little too sharp for this parish.

A meat cleaver comes down hard on a rack of ribs. JACK  
BRENNAN, forty, in a bloody apron, chopping up the meat.

BRENNAN

(to his ASSISTANT)  
--Mad fella altogether. Decapitated  
the two of them. Blood all over the  
place there was.

He chuckles and looks up --

LAVELLE has entered.

BRENNAN

Father.

LAVELLE

Jack.

(glancing at the ASSISTANT,  
who is serving a CUSTOMER)  
Could I have a word in private?

BRENNAN

(nervous laugh)  
Sounds ominous. Where's Johnny  
Cochran when you need him, hah?

**INT. MEAT FREEZER - DAY**

Carcasses of pigs, and sides of beef, hanging from hooks.  
The icy breath of LAVELLE and BRENNAN floating between  
them as they converse --

BRENNAN

(giggling)  
Hope we don't get locked in. We'll  
have to make love to keep warm.

LAVELLE

I had a word, there, with Veronica,  
Jack.

BRENNAN

You were over to the house?  
Is everything alright?

LAVELLE

Everything's fine. I mean, no, it's  
not fine. Mass on Sunday, with the  
shades and everything--

BRENNAN

Oh that.

LAVELLE

Yes, that. Have you been laying into  
her or what's going on?

BRENNAN

Ah that wasn't me, now. That was  
that black fella she's been seeing.  
Coloured fella, I mean, sorry.  
Didn't mean to be racist, slip of  
the tongue.

LAVELLE

You're saying he beats her up?

BRENNAN

Well don't quote me on it. I mean,  
that's what I'm assuming, like.  
She talks in riddles half the time,  
I can't get any sense out of her.

(MORE)

BRENNAN (CONT'D)

I think she's bi-polar, or lactose-intolerant, one of the two. I never know where I am with her anymore. I'm glad to have her off my hands, to be honest with ya.

LAVELLE

Even if this new fella's knocking her about?

BRENNAN

Sure what's that got to do with me? Not everyone can carry the weight of the world, Father.

LAVELLE

What about your marriage? The oaths you took?

BRENNAN

(with a laugh)  
The oaths I took!

He sees the look LAVELLE gives him and stops laughing.

BRENNAN

Listen, Father, she's been a lot happier since she's been seeing him, a lot calmer and more settled down, like. I'm not under surveillance any more either, I can reel in home whatever time I like. So everybody's happy. Now where's the harm?

LAVELLE looks blankly at him.

BRENNAN

Will I cut you a nice side of beef to be taking home with you, Father? Freshly slaughtered.

Boots sticking out from underneath a car. The skirts of LAVELLE's soutane appear. He nudges a boot with his shoe.

SIMON ASAMOAH glides out on a car trolley.

LAVELLE

Simon.

ASAMOAH

Hello, Father.  
(getting up, wiping his  
hands on a rag)  
I am rather busy today--

LAVELLE

It's not about my car. It's about Mrs Brennan.

ASAMOAH reaches for a Coca-Cola bottle and takes a swallow.

LAVELLE

You're her boyfriend?

ASAMOAH

I fuck her from time to time.  
Does that make me her boyfriend?

LAVELLE

It does around here.

ASAMOAH

She has a lot of boyfriends, I have heard.

LAVELLE

Is that right?

ASAMOAH

Do you want me to confess to adultery?  
Is that why you are here?

LAVELLE

Somebody beat her up.

ASAMOAH

She told you I beat her up?

LAVELLE

No, she didn't.

ASAMOAH

Then why are you here?

LAVELLE

Somebody beat her up. It's either you or the husband.

ASAMOAH

I do not think Jack beat her up.  
He is not the type.

LAVELLE

What is the type?

ASAMOAH takes a pack of cigarettes from his pocket and lights one, looking out over the garage forecourt.

ASAMOAH

Some of them like to be hit,  
you know.

LAVELLE

Who?

ASAMOAH

White women. Irish women. Do not ask me why. You would have to be a psychiatrist--

LAVELLE

Ah that's nonsense. A justification for your own brutality.

ASAMOAH

No, no, they like to be hit. In certain...situations. They beg for it, in fact.

LAVELLE

So she got what was coming to her, did she?

ASAMOAH

I was speaking generally.

LAVELLE

Oh you were speaking generally. Well I'm speaking specifically. Don't do it again.

ASAMOAH

You cannot tell me what to do. We are not in the Missions now.

LAVELLE

Oh the Missions, right--

ASAMOAH

Are you going to chop off my hand if I disobey you?

LAVELLE

You know your history, that's grand.

ASAMOAH

I like to read. You probably do not think that black people--

LAVELLE

Yeah, yeah, yeah, black people, white people, blah, blah, blah.

ASAMOAH looks at him. Flicks his cigarette at him. LAVELLE flinches, taken aback.

ASAMOAH

Run along now, Father, your sermon is finished.

27 CONTINUED:

27

He slides back under the car. LAVELLE exits.

28 INT. CHURCH - DAY

28

LEARY is preparing the altar. LAVELLE glancing through the large Bible set for Mass. \*

LEARY \*

You'd better watch your step there.

LAVELLE

Why is that?

LEARY \*

If it was him who was laying into her. You'll have to tread very carefully there. It's a very sensitive area.

LAVELLE

You'll have to explain this one to me, now, Father, I'm afraid you've lost me completely.

LEARY \*

Well the Church can't be seen to be getting involved in matters of diversity and the like, d'you know.

LAVELLE

You mean, like, what if beating her up is one of those ethnic rituals or something? Like when they do that thing when they shake hands?

LEARY \*

(after a pause)

You're mocking me, now, I can tell.

LAVELLE looks blankly at LEARY. \*

LEARY \*

We have to be very circumspect in those areas, is all I'm saying. \*

LAVELLE

I'll be very circumspect, Father. Don't you worry about that.

29 INT. COTTAGE - DAY

29

An older man -- GERALD RYAN -- is leaning back in a chair, deep in thought, a shillelagh between his legs.

An American, slightly bohemian, he wears an old brown corduroy suit, blue shirt, black boots. Music playing on an old record player. \*

(CONTINUED)

He leans forwards over an old manual typewriter. A stack of manuscript pages next to it. Examines the paragraph he has just written. Pauses. The sound of an outboard motor can be heard.

He gets up, using the shillelagh, and goes to a pair of large wooden shutters. Opens them to reveal --

LAVELLE upon a stretch of water in an old white wooden speedboat propelled by an outboard motor.

**EXT. SPEEDBOAT - DAY**

LAVELLE is at the stern, a box of provisions beside him --

LAVELLE's POV -- the prow of the boat, the island. RYAN framed in the window of the monastic cottage.

LAVELLE waves.

**EXT. COTTAGE - DAY**

RYAN does not return the wave. Disappears from the window.

**EXT. INISHMURRAY ISLAND - DAY**

LAVELLE navigates the speedboat to the shoreline of the island, situated four miles off the coast of Sligo.

He drags the boat onto the shore, next to an old currach. Hefts the box and tramps up the path to the stone cottage.

**INT. COTTAGE - DAY**

RYAN has returned to his seat at the typewriter. LAVELLE appears at the door.

LAVELLE

How is all?

RYAN

At death's door. You?

LAVELLE

The same. Still using the old typewriter, I see. Bit of an affectation.

RYAN

My whole life has been an affectation.

LAVELLE

That's one of those lines that sounds witty but doesn't actually make much sense.

RYAN

Caught out again!

LAVELLE crosses to the kitchen table and deposits the box.

LAVELLE

How's the latest masterpiece coming?

RYAN gets up, struggling with the shillelagh.

RYAN

Better than Cecelia Ahern, but not as good as Banville.

LAVELLE

Sure you could say that about everybody.

RYAN

What you got for me?

LAVELLE unloads the provisions -- sushi, Maker's Mark bourbon, Green & Black's organic chocolate --

RYAN

Ah, the staff of life.

-- and two books: a paperback, *Jernigan*, by David Gates, and a hardcover, *HHhH*, by Laurent Binet.

RYAN smells the hardcover and handles it reverently.

LAVELLE

Need anything else?

RYAN

A gun.

LAVELLE

Hah?

RYAN

A Walther PPK oughtta do it. James Bond's weapon of choice. Old Adolf killed himself with one in the bunker.

LAVELLE

That's the plan is it?

RYAN

I've no intention of writhing around in agony for hours on end when the time comes. Or not knowing who I am or where I am. I ain't going out like that, as the young folks would have it.

LAVELLE

Romantic nonsense.

RYAN

Pragmatism.

LAVELLE

Where would I get a gun from?

RYAN

Aw come on, now, gimme a break.  
You've never been short of guns  
in this country, have you?

LAVELLE

God, you're awful maudlin today,  
I must say.

RYAN laughs, pops a piece of the chocolate into his mouth.

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

LAVELLE is at his desk, reading *Moby Dick*. Bruno asleep on the bed. There is a knock at the door.

FIONA pops her head in, then enters, closing the door behind her and leaning against it. She glances around.

FIONA

You don't have any photos.

LAVELLE

No. I'm in agreement with the Apaches  
on that score.

FIONA

The Apaches?

LAVELLE

The Apaches. The Arapaho.

FIONA

The Hunkpapa Sioux!

She laughs. LAVELLE smiles.

FIONA

Not even one of Mum?

\*

LAVELLE

I don't need a photograph to remember  
your mother.

FIONA

Memories fade, though. That's what's  
so terrible about them.

LAVELLE

No they don't. Not really.

LAVELLE and FIONA are walking briskly up the incline of the road, Bruno running in in front of them.

FIONA  
I should buy a cane.

LAVELLE  
It'd suit you. You're old beyond your years.

FIONA  
Yeah. It'd give me a feeling of... imperiousness.

She looks at him. They laugh.

LAVELLE  
And you could lean on it.

FIONA  
I could lean on it. Reflectively.

LAVELLE  
Point things out.

FIONA  
Club someone to death with it.

LAVELLE  
A blunt instrument, yeah.  
Who, though?

FIONA  
A certain young man from Rathmines.

He glances at her. She is looking at the ground as she walks.

FIONA  
Aren't all instruments blunt?

LAVELLE  
Flugelhorns?

He looks blankly at her. She laughs.

On the road ahead, MICHAEL FITZGERALD appears on a fine black thoroughbred. Handsome, suave, Forties. He turns the horse in front of LAVELLE and FIONA.

FITZGERALD  
Who's this now?

LAVELLE  
This is my daughter, Fiona.

FITZGERALD

Oh right. Like a French novel or something. What's the fella's name? Bernanos.

(to FIONA)

Michael Fitzgerald. I bought the Big House, up the road a-ways there, beyond.

Fiona nods, unimpressed.

LAVELLE

I haven't seen you at Mass lately. I was wondering--

FITZGERALD

Haven't had the time. I'm actually thinking of building a chapel on the grounds, y'know like in *Brideshead Revisited*? You could pop round then, freelance, like, save me the trouble.

They look blankly at one another. FIONA pats the horse.

FIONA

Lovely creature.

FITZGERALD

Really expensive, too. Prime horse flesh.

FIONA looks up at him. He smiles a bright flashing smile.

FITZGERALD

He's an interesting man, your father.

FIONA

Is that right?

FITZGERALD

A good man. A fine man. No one has a bad word to say about him. Makes me wonder what he's hiding.

FIONA

God, you're a fucking prick--

FITZGERALD

Oh! Feisty!

LAVELLE

Fiona--

FITZGERALD

Ah I'm only coddling. No offence meant, as they say. Do me a favour, though, Father, and swing by the house one afternoon.

(MORE)

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

FITZGERALD (CONT'D)

I have a proposition that might interest you.

LAVELLE

Really.

FITZGERALD

Yes, really. A financial proposition. That interests you, doesn't it? Sure it'd be a black day altogether the day the Roman Catholic Church is no longer interested in money, hah?

He laughs jovially, gives an Edward G. Robinson salute, and spurs his horse away between them.

**EXT. BEACH - SUNSET**

LAVELLE and FIONA are walking along the deserted beach. The waves rolling in. Bruno noses at something in the sand. They pause, look down --

Their POV -- a dead seagull, insects swarming over it.

LAVELLE squats. Extends the gull's wingspan, examining the white feathers, curious.

FIONA

Dirty thing.

He lays it back down. Stands. Turns --

LAVELLE's POV -- a FIGURE has appeared at the end of the beach, lending a sinister aspect to the scene.

LAVELLE strolls on, seemingly unconcerned. FIONA dallies with Bruno. After a moment, LAVELLE glances back --

LAVELLE's POV -- the FIGURE is approaching.

LAVELLE

Let's head back.

He quickens his pace. FIONA and Bruno catching up. After a good few strides, he glances back again --

LAVELLE's POV -- the FIGURE has disappeared.

FIONA

What is it?

LAVELLE scans the horizon. Puzzled, but relieved.

LAVELLE

Nothing.



STANTON

I've nothing to hide from Leo.  
Have I, Leo?

LEO

Your life is an open book, Gerry.  
Like your ass.

Flanagan & Allen's "Run, Rabbit, Run" begins to play. LEO dances as if he were a little rabbit. STANTON laughs.

STANTON

Is this a police matter, Father?

LAVELLE

No, it's a personal...a personal thing.

STANTON

It's a personal a personal thing.

LEO

You look worried, Fada. My advice?  
Take it on the lamaster. You don't  
wanna drop in for the phonus-bolonus  
and wind up with a sock in the  
kisser. Get me?

LAVELLE looks blankly at LEO.

STANTON

He's not in the mood, Leo.

LEO

Maybe I can cheer up the old sour-  
puss. I'll show ya a good time,  
Fada. Good Time Leo, that's me!  
Although it'll be extra if I let  
ya wear the cassock. I know what  
you holy-rollers are like when ya  
get goin'! Hell's bells!

LAVELLE looks blankly at LEO. LEO and STANTON look at each other and laugh. LEO grabs his leather jacket.

LEO

I'm oudda heah!

He tap-dances out the door.

STANTON

He's a character, hah?  
What's troubling you, Father?  
You seem agitated.

LAVELLE

I need a favour.

CLOSE on a Webley Revolver, circa 1920, laid out in a beautiful velvet case.

STANTON

My great-grandfather's. Said he took it off one of the Cairo Gang when they shot them all on Bloody Sunday. The first Bloody Sunday, obviously.

LAVELLE

Ever had call to use it?

STANTON

Yeah. I killed a man with it once. In the Wicklow mountains.

He hefts the gun, sighting along it, straight at LAVELLE.

LAVELLE

What case was that?

STANTON

Ah he was just pissing me off, like.

LAVELLE is not sure if he's joking. STANTON hands him the gun. Passes him a carton of bullets. LAVELLE flips open the chamber. Loads it.

STANTON

Somebody been threatening you, Father? What have you been up to, now?  
(with a smirk)  
Not you as well, hah?

LAVELLE flips shut the chamber. Sights along the revolver, straight at STANTON. STANTON looks blankly at him.

STANTON

What did you say you wanted it for, Father?

LAVELLE

I didn't say.

He replaces the revolver in the case.

STANTON

I'd say you wanted it for your dog. The dog's dying, it's in pain, you're worried you might have to put it out of its misery one of these days. Isn't that right?

LAVELLE looks round at STANTON. Understands --

LAVELLE

My dog's dying. It's in pain.  
I'm worried I might have to put  
it out of its misery one of these  
days.

STANTON

An act of compassion, hah?  
Well I can't argue with that.  
I'm a compassionate man meself.

**EXT. STANTON'S HOUSE - NIGHT**

LAVELLE and STANTON exit the house. LAVELLE carrying the  
case. \*

STANTON

I had one of those, y'know.  
Early on.

LAVELLE

One of what?

STANTON

Paedophile priest. Twenty years ago  
now this was, in Dublin. Young girl  
made a complaint. A rape.

LAVELLE

What happened?

STANTON

Ah sure, what d'ya think happened?  
I arrested the bastard and forty-  
eight hours later I was packing my  
bags and making my way out West.

LAVELLE

They moved you on?

STANTON

Reassigned, yeah.

LAVELLE gets into his car. \*

LAVELLE

What happened to him? \*

STANTON

I was told they were sending him  
to one of the missions overseas.  
Africa. He could do whatever he  
wanted over there, I suppose.

(CONTINUED)

40 CONTINUED:

LAVELLE \*  
Well thanks, anyway. \*

STANTON \*  
Like the man in the dicky bow \*  
says, Father, "Protect yourself \*  
at all times!" \*

LAVELLE drives off. \*

41 INT. RECTORY (FIONA'S ROOM) - DAY 41

TITLE -- "Tuesday".

FIONA awakens, wearing a man's shirt. Sits up in bed, contemplative. Through a window, LAVELLE can be seen walking away with a fishing rod, Bruno at his side.

42 EXT. EASKEY RIVER - DAY 42

FIONA raises the hem of her skirt to her thighs and steps down into the cool clear water. Bruno watching her.

She paddles out to where LAVELLE is standing in waders, fly-fishing, the skirt of his soutane floating out over the water.

FIONA  
How long you been at this craic?

LAVELLE  
Last coupla years. Supposed to be therapeutic.

FIONA  
Maybe I should take it up.

LAVELLE  
Maybe you should.  
(pause)  
Have you been seeing anyone, in London?

FIONA  
I'm assuming you mean professionally rather than--

LAVELLE  
Ah come on now, let's stop with all that carry-on.

There is a pause.

LAVELLE  
If you can't talk to me, you should talk to someone.

(CONTINUED)

FIONA  
I suppose I should.

A further silence between them.

LEARY (O.S.)  
Enjoying yourselves?!

\*

LAVELLE and FIONA look up to see FATHER LEARY looking down on them from the nearby bridge, smoking a cigarette.

\*

LAVELLE  
We are indeed!

LEARY  
Lovely day!

\*

LAVELLE  
It is indeed!

LEARY  
(esoterically)  
Stamps!

\*

He looks at them a moment longer, then disappears over the bridge.

FIONA  
That's the future of the priesthood.

\*

LAVELLE looks at her. They laugh.

LAVELLE is distributing hymnals to all the pews. Suddenly he senses something, looks round --

MILO HERLIHY is standing there, having materialised seemingly out of nowhere.

LAVELLE  
Milo.

HERLIHY  
I need to speak to you, Father.

LAVELLE  
Take a pew. Literally.

HIGH-ANGLE SHOT -- They sit in separate pews. A large wooden cross looms above them.

HERLIHY  
Why do people kill themselves,  
Father?

LAVELLE

Why do people kill themselves.  
That's jumping in at the deep  
end. Lots of reasons, I suppose.  
Why do you think yourself?

HERLIHY

I dunno. The drink. Depression.  
Lack of sex, maybe.

LAVELLE

You're a presentable young man.  
I wouldn't have thought you'd have  
too much trouble in that area.

HERLIHY

I don't have the gift of the gab.  
Never had it.

LAVELLE

And it's making you feel suicidal?

HERLIHY

More bored than anything else.  
It's either committing suicide or  
joining the Army.

LAVELLE

Those are pretty drastic choices,  
either way.

HERLIHY

You can learn a trade if you join  
the Army.

LAVELLE

You can learn a trade if you don't  
join the Army.

HERLIHY

You can experience more of life.

LAVELLE

You think you can become a more  
authentic person by fighting in a  
war? By killing people?

HERLIHY

You're against me joining the Army,  
is what I'm sensing.

LAVELLE

Let's put it this way, I've always  
felt there was something inherently  
psychopathic about someone who joins  
the Army in peacetime. As far as  
I'm concerned, people join the Army  
because they want to find out what  
(MORE)

(CONTINUED)

LAVELLE (CONT'D)

it's like to kill someone. I don't think that is an inclination that should be encouraged in modern society, do you?

HERLIHY shrugs, non-committal.

LAVELLE

Jesus Christ didn't think so either. And the commandment "Thou Shalt Not Kill" does not have an asterisk beside it, referring you to the bottom of the page, where there's a list of instances where it is okay to kill people.

\*  
\*  
\*  
\*

HERLIHY

What about self-defence?

LAVELLE

(after a pause)

Well that's a tricky one, alright. But we're hardly being invaded, now, are we?

HERLIHY

The War on Terror has no borders.

LAVELLE

I don't think Sligo is too high on al-Qaida's agenda, Milo, do you?

HERLIHY

Who knows what goes on in the Muslim mind?

(pause)

I have had murderous feelings, though, I have to admit. Not getting laid. It's starting to make me feel really angry towards women. And so I thought, well, if I joined the Army, those inclinations as you call them would be seen as a plus. On your application, like. I mean, they don't come right out and say that's what they're looking for, in the advertisements, it's all about seeing the world and all that shite, but I would assume that wanting to murder someone would be like having a degree in engineering or something, y'know? It would outweigh my lack of qualifications.

LAVELLE

Right.

(pause)

Do you use pornography at all?  
I'm assuming--

(CONTINUED)

HERLIHY

Ah, I feel I've exhausted all the possibilities of pornography.

LAVELLE

All of them?

HERLIHY

Well nearly all of them. I'm onto transsexual pornography at the moment.

LAVELLE looks blankly at him.

HERLIHY

Chicks with dicks, y'know?

LAVELLE looks blankly at him.

CLOSE on HERLIHY and LAVELLE. HERLIHY putting on goggles.

LAVELLE

Maybe there's a simpler solution. Leave home and go somewhere your chances of meeting available young women with loose morals are increased proportionately.

\*

HERLIHY

Sligo Town, you mean?

LAVELLE

No. I was thinking more Dublin, London, New York--

HERLIHY

New York? I'd only end up getting the Aids. Knowing my luck.

PULL BACK to reveal HERLIHY is astride a motorbike.

HERLIHY

Thanks for taking the time to talk to me, Father. I can't say it's been of much help, but it's good to get these things out in the open, I suppose.

He zooms off down the hill.

\*

45

CONTINUED:

36.

45

\*

46

**EXT. MANSION - DAY**

46

A bright blue sky.

FITZGERALD (O.S.)

Pull!

Two fluorescent orange targets appear in the sky and are summarily shot to pieces --

FITZGERALD, in a corduroy three-piece suit and a red cap, standing next to a voice-activated clay pigeon trap, ejects the shells from his shotgun and quickly reloads.

FITZGERALD

Pull!

Two more targets are launched --

FITZGERALD hits both. Ejects the shells. Pauses in the act of reloading --

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

FITZGERALD's POV -- LAVELLE is standing on the crest of the path leading up to the mansion.

FITZGERALD clicks shut the shotgun.

**INT. MANSION - DAY**

FITZGERALD fixes himself a large whiskey.

FITZGERALD

They've all left me, you know.  
That's why the place is so empty.  
Like a tomb.

LAVELLE is wandering about the opulently furnished and decorated room, examining various objets d'art, a glass of sparkling water in his hand.

LAVELLE

Who's left you?

FITZGERALD

The wife. The kids. Even Consuela, and she's from Ecuador. You'd think she wouldn't have a lot of options, but apparently not.

LAVELLE

Well I'm sorry to hear that.

FITZGERALD shrugs, takes a swallow of his drink.

LAVELLE

You mentioned a financial proposition?

FITZGERALD

I want to make amends. Do penance for past sins. Although I suppose all sins are past, aren't they, or they wouldn't be sins, they'd just be evil thoughts floating around in your mind. Why do you wear the auld soutane, by the way? Trying to make a statement or something?

LAVELLE looks blankly at him. Sips his water.

FITZGERALD smirks. Shoots back a cuff to reveal a gold Tag Heuer watch at his wrist.

FITZGERALD

This watch, now. This watch is making a statement. It's a Tag Heuer. Really expensive.

LAVELLE

Are you going to get to the point,  
Mr Fitzgerald, or are you just going  
to ramble on--

FITZGERALD

Let me ask you something. What do  
you see when you look at me?

LAVELLE looks blankly at him.

FITZGERALD

I'll tell you what you see. You see  
a handsome, sophisticated, eminent  
man in the prime of his life.  
A Colossus, let's say. A Colossus  
who once bestrode the world of  
high finance and became profoundly  
influential in certain spheres,  
not to say inordinately wealthy,  
not to say sickeningly wealthy,  
let's face it.

(knocks back the whiskey,  
pours another)

Sure I can't tempt you?

LAVELLE

I'll stick to the water.

FITZGERALD

I heard you liked a drink.

LAVELLE

I liked it too much.

FITZGERALD

There's no such thing as too much,  
there's only not enough.

LAVELLE exits the room.

LAVELLE is examining a display of antique and contemporary  
firearms. FITZGERALD joins him.

FITZGERALD

Where was I?

LAVELLE

Talking about money, what else.

FITZGERALD

Now now.

LAVELLE

Got out in time, did you? Before it  
all came crashing down?

FITZGERALD

'Twas the perfect getaway, Father. They say charges are going to be filed against me, for various so-called irregularities, but sure the Guards are always threatening guff like that. They'd have to charge half the financiers in Ireland, and half the bank managers along with them, and troop into government then and charge those cunts as well, and we all know full well that's not going to happen. No, there'll be no punishment forthcoming for a man such as myself. There never is. Still, I do feel a modicum of guilt about the whole thing.

LAVELLE

A modicum. Do you?

FITZGERALD

Well. I feel like I ought to feel guilty. And sure isn't that the same thing?

CLOSE on a painting -- Holbein's *The Ambassadors*. LAVELLE pauses in front of it. FITZGERALD at his shoulder.

FITZGERALD

I love this one. Really expensive. Not sure what it's supposed to mean, though.

LAVELLE

Why does it have to mean anything?

FITZGERALD

Everything has to mean something, otherwise what's the point? Of course, I don't have to know what it means. I own it. That's enough.

LAVELLE

That's all that matters? Ownership? Possession?

FITZGERALD

How much land does the Church own? How much gold?

LAVELLE

That's the Church, that's not me.

FITZGERALD

But you're a representative of the Church, are you not?

LAVELLE

If you say so.

FITZGERALD

I do say so. I think you're a very judgemental man, Father.

\*

LAVELLE

Yes, I am. But I try not to be.

FITZGERALD

You think I have no feelings?  
You think I don't care about--

LAVELLE

I think you don't want to do penance at all. I think you asked me here to make fun of me. But when you do want to do penance, sincerely, you can give me a call, at any time, and I'll try my best to help you.

He walks towards the front door.

FITZGERALD

You know, I could piss on this.  
(gesturing at the painting)  
I said I loved it, but I don't.  
It doesn't mean anything to me.  
I could take it down right now  
and piss on it. Do you want me  
to do that?

LAVELLE

Why would I want you to do that?

FITZGERALD

I don't know. So I could have  
some kind of spiritual revelation?  
Some fucking epiphany?

LAVELLE

Well I don't know, now. People like  
you have pissed on everything else,  
I suppose, so why not that, too?

FITZGERALD nods. Grins. Takes down the painting and drops it onto the floor. Looks at LAVELLE as he opens his flies.

LAVELLE goes out the front door.

FITZGERALD pisses on the painting.

49

**EXT. BEACH - DAY**

49

LAVELLE's POV -- a MAN walks out of the sun, his image blurred, raises a gun and fires, point-blank --

50

**EXT. SPLIT-ROCK - DAY**

50

LAVELLE lying supine, a straw hat over his face. He jolts. Pauses. Removes the hat. Sits up and looks around.

FIONA is reading H P Lovecraft and eating an apple. The remains of a picnic close by. Bruno sleeping.

Behind them, a massive Ice Age boulder, split in two, in the middle of a field.

LAVELLE

How long was I out?

FIONA

Ages. Eons.

He nods. Glances round at the split-rock.

LAVELLE

Did I ever tell you the story of Fionn Mac Cumhaill and another big strong lad named Cicsatóin? They were up the top--

FIONA

They were up the top of the Ox Mountains. Cicsatóin challenged Fionn to throw a boulder into the sea at Easkey, claiming he couldn't do it. Fionn accepted the challenge. Cicsatóin's boulder landed on the Easkey shore, where it created such waves that the sea hasn't been the same since, which is why the Easkey coastline is internationally renowned for surfing. Fionn's boulder fell short and landed here. Fionn drew his sword and split the rock in two. It's said that should anyone be foolhardy enough to pass through the rock three times, the two halves will come together and they will be squashed into tiny little lumps. Unceremoniously.

LAVELLE

Not a lot of poetry in that recital. Not a lot of romance.

FIONA

I'm sick to death of romance.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

LAVELLE studies her as she continues to read.

LAVELLE  
How's the book?

FIONA  
I am filled with cosmic horror.

LAVELLE  
I know the feeling.

FIONA smiles, despite herself.

**EXT. HOSPITAL - NIGHT**

The moon shining over a monolithic hospital.

**INT. CORRIDOR - NIGHT**

FRANK HARTE, who happens to be a doctor, watching LAVELLE fussing with the contents of a black Gladstone bag.

HARTE  
You have your totems, I see.

LAVELLE  
Who is it?

HARTE  
French couple. Head on. She was totally unscathed. He got fucked.

LAVELLE  
Wrong side of the road?

HARTE  
Car full of young ones hit them.  
Drunk, of course.

LAVELLE places a stole about his neck.

LAVELLE  
How many?

HARTE  
Five including the Frenchman.

LAVELLE  
Dear God.

HARTE  
Marine biologist he was.  
That's where I'd like to be.  
Under the sea.

LAVELLE  
Where are the young ones?

(CONTINUED)

HARTE

The morgue. Best place for them.

LAVELLE

Every life is sacred, Frank, for God's sake.

HARTE

Some are less sacred than others.

**INT. HOSPITAL ROOM - NIGHT**

LAURENT ROBERT lies dying, his face and body bandaged, tubes sticking out of him. TERESA, his wife, holding his hand, her mascara wet around her eyes.

LAVELLE looks at them both.

DISSOLVE through CLOSE-UPS of LAVELLE, TERESA, LAURENT.

LAVELLE

Through this holy anointing may  
the Lord in his love and mercy  
help you with the grace of the  
Holy Spirit.

DISSOLVE through CLOSE-UPS of LAVELLE's fingers, the oil, and LAURENT's forehead, as the anointing of the forehead takes place.

TERESA

Amen.

DISSOLVE through CLOSE-UPS of LAVELLE's fingers, the oil, and LAURENT's hands, as the anointing of the hands takes place.

LAVELLE

May the Lord who frees you from  
sin save you and raise you up.

TERESA

Amen.

**INT. CHAPEL - NIGHT**

CLOSE on the face of Christ. A stained-glass window. The faces of LAVELLE and TERESA.

TERESA

Have you performed the Last Rites  
many times?

LAVELLE

Yes. Usually with older people, of course. You have time to prepare for it. Everybody knows what's coming.

TERESA

It is easier?

LAVELLE

It's never easy. More understandable, let's say. Less unfair.

TERESA

Unfair.

LAVELLE

Situations like this one, people are shocked. The randomness of it. They curse God. Curse their fellow man. They lose their faith, in some cases.

TERESA

They lose their faith? It must not have been much of a faith to begin with, if it is so easy for them to lose it.

LAVELLE

Yes. But what is faith, at the end of the day? For most people it's the fear of death, nothing more than that. And if that's all it is, then it's very easy to lose.

TERESA

(after a pause)

When we are children we are told to say our prayers. Our parents tell us, our teachers. Then we grow up and we think people who say their prayers are stupid. They're ridiculous. Unless we want money, of course, or a good job, or we have a child who is sick, or a lover who is dying. Then we are allowed to pray again. Then it is okay.

LAVELLE

Yes. But the prayer must be answered.

TERESA

Yes, the prayer must be answered. And if the prayer is not answered then there is no God and it is all a lie. If God does not pay attention to us, because we are so important, then God does not exist.

LAVELLE

Yes. We must be paid attention to.

(pause)

He was a good man, your husband?

TERESA

Yes, he was a good man. We had a very good life together. We loved each other very much. And now he has gone. That is not unfair, that is just what happened. But many people do not live good lives, and they do not feel love. That is what is unfair. I feel sorry for them.

LAVELLE

(after a pause)

Will you say a prayer with me, Teresa?

TERESA

Yes.

LAVELLE

Hail Mary, full of grace--

TERESA/LAVELLE

--the Lord is with thee. Blessed art thou amongst women, and blessed is the fruit of thy womb, Jesus. Holy Mary, Mother of God, pray for us sinners, now and at the hour of our death. Amen.

HARTE is smoking a cigarette. LAVELLE steps outside.

HARTE

Finished with all your gobbledegook?

LAVELLE does not acknowledge the insult.

HARTE

How's she holding up?

LAVELLE

She's a strong woman.

HARTE

Good-looking, too. I could be in there. I have a thing for widows, did I ever tell you?

LAVELLE

I think you might have done. Your material is getting a little stale after all.

HARTE

Ah sure, the atheistic doctor, it's a clichéd part to play. There's not that many good lines.

(MORE)

(CONTINUED)

HARTE (CONT'D)

One part humanism to nine parts  
gallows humour. Playing you,  
though, that might be interesting.

LAVELLE

Playing me. Who's "me"?

HARTE

The good priest.

They look at each other. Then HARTE looks up at the moon.

HARTE

I heard a story once about one of  
the astronauts who slept on the moon.  
He had a dream where he was driving  
one of those moon buggies across the  
surface of the moon, and he rode and  
he rode until he came upon another  
buggy that was exactly like his.  
He looked into the face of the man  
who was driving the buggy and he saw  
that it was himself. And his double  
said to him, "I've been waiting for  
you for thousands of years."  
And that was the end of the dream.

LAVELLE studies him. HARTE turns aside, opening the door --

HARTE

Excuse me, won't you. I have to go  
kill somebody.

TITLE -- "Wednesday".

MICHEÁL is in his vestments, swinging a thurible to and  
fro, the incense rising. LAVELLE moves in and out of  
frame, preparing for Mass.

MICHEÁL

They're mad auld things thurifers,  
aren't they?

LAVELLE

That's a thurible. You're a thurifer.

MICHEÁL

I'm a thurifer?  
(pause)  
Thurifer. Funny word.  
(pause)  
I like the smell of this stuff.  
It gets me high.

LAVELLE

What do you know about "high"?

(CONTINUED)

MICHEÁL

I know plenty.

LAVELLE

Micheál, why did you become an altar boy? I ask this because it can safely be said, without fear of contradiction, that you have no vocation whatsoever.

MICHEÁL

My Ma told me they give you money at weddings and christenings.

LAVELLE

I see. It was purely a moneymaking scheme on your part.

MICHEÁL

Yeah. To pay for my oils.

LAVELLE

To pay for your oils.

MICHEÁL

Yeah. And I haven't had a sovereign off anybody. People round here are pure mean.

HIGH-ANGLE SHOT -- LAVELLE and RYAN walking through the remains of an early Irish monastic settlement. They enter the cemetery. RYAN leaning heavily on his shillelagh.

LAVELLE

Is this where you want to be buried?

RYAN

Why in the hell would I want to be buried in this godforsaken place?

LAVELLE

(with a laugh)

Where then? Pere Lachaise? Next to dear old Oscar?

RYAN

No. Next to Apollinaire and Max Ophüls.

LAVELLE

Oh very fancy, I must say.

(pause)

I have your gun for you, by the way.

RYAN

Yeah right.

LAVELLE

I do so. A Webley. Circa 1920.  
Still in good working order, though.  
Or so I've been told by a man who  
would know.

RYAN

Hand it over, then.

LAVELLE

I don't have it on me.

RYAN

I knew it. Worried I might follow  
through with it, huh?

LAVELLE

You might take a potshot at me,  
for all I know.

RYAN

Why would I do that? What have  
you ever done to me except talk  
garbage?

LAVELLE

Sure that doesn't mean anything.  
Bloody idiots can't even be bothered  
coming up with a reason for murder  
these days. They wake up in a foul  
mood and it's bang bang bang.

RYAN

Oh I don't know about that.  
Some people have very good reasons.

CLOSE on FIONA and LAVELLE. The shadow of the grille  
playing across their faces. DISSOLVE THROUGH --

FIONA

There was a Japanese writer  
committed suicide. He wrote out  
a list beforehand of all the  
famous suicides throughout history.  
He included Christ.

LAVELLE

Sounds like a smartarse.

FIONA

In the Middle Ages they would've  
said I was possessed by demons.

LAVELLE

Maybe you were. Maybe they were  
nearer the mark back then.

FIONA

You think what happened was unimportant. Insignificant in the great scheme of things. To provoke such a reaction. But what may mean nothing to you may be very important to me.

LAVELLE

I'd never say it was unimportant. I'd just say that the choices you make when you're thirty are not the same choices you'd make when you're sixty.

FIONA

That's irrelevant. Every moment of living has its own logic.

LAVELLE

Maybe so. Maybe you're right, there. I'd have to have a think about that.

(pause)

It's a tired old argument, I suppose, but what about those you leave behind.

FIONA

I belong to myself, not to anybody else.

LAVELLE

True. False. \*

FIONA smiles. LAVELLE waits, attentive.

FIONA

Funny, in the old days it was the priests who'd tell you you were sick. Now it's the psychiatrists. \*

(pause)

You know Freud had cancer of the gums at the end of his life. The smell from his mouth was so bad even his own dog wouldn't go near him. He asked his doctor, an old friend of his, to give him an overdose of morphine. Which he did. \*

LAVELLE

Not a big fan of Freud. Never have been. \*

FIONA

(after a pause)

The absurdity of existence versus the absurdity of nothing.

(CONTINUED)

LAVELLE

Tough choice when you put it like that.

FIONA laughs. There is silence for a moment.

FIONA

You'll tell me it would've been a mortal sin, I suppose. Would I have suffered eternal damnation, Father?

LAVELLE

(after a pause)

God is great. The limits of His mercy have not been set.

A GUARD escorts LAVELLE around the prison.

GUARD

Which of the lads are you here to see, Father?

LAVELLE

Freddie Joyce.

The GUARD pauses and looks at LAVELLE.

LAVELLE

Freddie Joyce? He's--

GUARD

I know who he is. What in the hell d'ya want to see him for?

LAVELLE

He's an old pupil of mine. He asked to see me.

The GUARD stares at LAVELLE. Then proceeds.

FREDDIE JOYCE at a table. Thirties, thin, hair all over the place, hands cuffed behind his back.

JOYCE

Y'know I've asked them to hang me.

LAVELLE opposite. A Bible and rosary in front of him. The room is gloomy, lit by a single lightbulb.

LAVELLE

There's no capital punishment in Ireland, Freddie, as you well know. Why do you want them to hang you?

JOYCE

'Cause that's the way Lesley Ryan died.

LAVELLE

You're saying you feel remorse.

JOYCE

I'm not a monster. Do I look like a monster?

LAVELLE

What do monsters look like?

JOYCE

"To thine own self be true," they say. Well I was, and look where it's got me.

LAVELLE

They've never really thought that one through, you're right.

JOYCE

It's a terrible world. When you think about it.

LAVELLE

Yes it is. And a beautiful one.

JOYCE

It wasn't for me.

LAVELLE

You're not the whole world.

JOYCE

That's a matter of opinion.

He watches a cockroach scuttling around in a corner of the ceiling.

JOYCE

I'm reading *Paradise Lost* at the moment. You know that one? "Better to reign in Hell--"

LAVELLE

"--than serve in Heaven." Yeah. Yeah I know that quote. Yeah.

JOYCE

You're making fun of me.

(CONTINUED)

LAVELLE

Have I hurt your feelings?

JOYCE stretches his arms, flexes his fingers.

JOYCE

I had the cops in here the other day. The third degree. Wanting to go over all the gory details.

LAVELLE

Which I'm sure you were only too happy to provide.

JOYCE

They're obsessed with cannibalism. "What did it taste like?" Told 'em it tasted like pheasant. Bit gamey.

LAVELLE

Good for you. Make a joke about it.

JOYCE looks blankly at him.

LAVELLE

Why were they--

JOYCE

Same as always. They want to know where the last one is. The one I connected up. The one they never found.

LAVELLE

Why can't you tell them, Freddie? Give the family some kind of peace.

JOYCE

I wanted to, Father, but for the life of me I can't remember. I know it was out in the woods somewhere--

LAVELLE

Where did I leave my keys.

JOYCE

No. I wasn't in my right mind. The LSD. It was like a fairytale--

LAVELLE

Yeah you said all that at the trial. It's getting kind of tiresome now.

JOYCE

She was a lovely girl...Y'know she told me she'd been abused before. So I said, "Well once more won't make any difference, then."

He laughs to himself. LAVELLE reaches for the rosary. Fingers the beads absently.

JOYCE

You see the light go out in their eyes and you become God.

LAVELLE

No you don't. No. You don't.

JOYCE smirks. Watches LAVELLE fingering the beads.

JOYCE

"The woods are lovely, dark and deep, but I have promises to keep."

(with a laugh)

It's like that joke. You know that joke? There's a fella with this young lad driving into the woods, right. It's getting darker and darker the deeper into the woods they go, and the young lad says, "I'm getting scared, Mister." And the fella says--

LAVELLE

Yeah I do know that joke. I've heard it before.

JOYCE

You're always one step ahead, aren't you, Father? It's like when we were back in school--

LAVELLE

(angrily)

Why am I here? For the love of God.

JOYCE

(taken aback)

I just wanted somebody to talk to.

LAVELLE

I don't think you feel any guilt whatsoever about anything you've done.

JOYCE

(suddenly sobbing)

I do, Father, I do.

(sniffing; wiping his nose on his shoulder)

I believe what the Bible teaches. I believe if I repent my sins I'll be forgiven and I'll be able to go up to Heaven and see those girls and tell them how sorry I am, and I'll hug them and I'll kiss them and I'll love them with a real true love, and have no desire to hurt

(MORE)

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

JOYCE (CONT'D)  
 them in any way.  
 (sobbing again)  
 God made me, didn't he? I mean,  
 didn't he? He understands me.  
 He must do.

LAVELLE looks blankly at him.

JOYCE  
 I mean, don't you think?

LAVELLE  
 I think if God can't understand you,  
 Freddie, no one can.

**EXT. LYNCH'S BAR - EVENING**

LYNCH is keeping up a ping-pong ball with a table tennis bat. The sound of Irish music can be heard. LAVELLE appears, nods to LYNCH.

LYNCH  
 You know they're foreclosing on me.

LAVELLE  
 Who?

LYNCH  
 Who? The banks. Who else.

LAVELLE  
 I'm sorry to hear that.

LYNCH  
 How come I never hear your mob  
 preaching about that?

LAVELLE  
 About what?

LYNCH  
 All these bankers who've brought  
 the country to its knees. Still  
 throwing people out of their  
 homes, though, when they can't  
 make their payments. Never hear  
 your mob talking about that.  
 Those are sins, too, aren't they?

LAVELLE  
 Yes they are.

LYNCH  
 Ah sure, I suppose when you have a  
 history of screwing the Jews out  
 of their money and collaborating  
 with the Nazis then, it's like the  
 pot calling the kettle black, hah?

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

LAVELLE

Yes, I suppose it is. Been getting  
the full use out of your library  
card, there, Brendan.

LYNCH

The library's been shut down,  
did you not hear? Cutbacks.

**INT. LYNCH'S BAR - EVENING**

A rowdy CEILIDH BAND is playing on a dais in a corner.

FIONA waves to LAVELLE as he enters. Then returns to her  
conversation with some SURFERS. \*

LAVELLE notices JACK and VERONICA BRENNAN at a table  
together, not speaking. SIMON ASAMOAH is the other side of  
the room, talking to a blonde SURFER CHICK.

STANTON and HARTE are knocking back shots at the bar.  
STANTON sees LAVELLE. Raises his shot glass in salute.

FATHER LEARY is talking to a handsome blond SURFER DUDE. \*

MILO HERLIHY is sitting on his own with a Guinness.  
LAVELLE sits down beside him.

LAVELLE

You not dancing, Milo?

HERLIHY

I don't like this music.

LAVELLE

What music do you like?

HERLIHY

Dolly Parton.

LAVELLE

Dolly Parton's good, yeah.

**INT. TOILETS - LATER**

VERONICA is snorting cocaine, while HARTE waits his turn,  
singing like The Count from *Sesame Street* --

HARTE

"Bones, bones, bones, bones,  
bones inside of you!"

LAVELLE enters. Pauses. HARTE and VERONICA turn.

HARTE

It's purely medicinal, Father.

VERONICA laughs. LAVELLE betrays no emotion. Exits.

## INT. LYNCH'S BAR - NIGHT

LAVELLE and LEARY are standing at the bar, nursing Diet Cokes. STANTON seated beside them, bleary-eyed. \*

LEARY \*

How was your man, Joyce?

LAVELLE

It's been a tough day, let's put it that way.

LEARY \*

How can you ever hope to connect with someone like that?

LAVELLE

"Nothing human is alien to me."  
Or shouldn't be, anyways.

LEARY \*

I can't see the point in it myself.  
Dead loss.

STANTON

Who are you talking about?  
Not Freddie Joyce?

LAVELLE

I visited him in prison today.

STANTON

Why?

LAVELLE

Prisoners deserve spiritual guidance as much as anyone else. Maybe more so.

STANTON

Is that right? So they can find God and then say God has absolved them of all their sins and what they did didn't really matter anyways 'cause now they're saved?

LAVELLE

Something like that, yeah.

LEARY \*

(to STANTON)

Calm down. You don't know what you're talking about.

STANTON looks blankly at LEARY. Then suddenly clamps a hand over his face and shoves him backwards -- \*

(CONTINUED)

Sending him flying into the table at which sit JACK and VERONICA BRENNAN, glasses shattering --

BRENNAN

Jesus, lads, mind the drinks, for Christ's sake!

HARTE, HERLIHY, ASAMOAH, FIONA and the SURFERS look round. \*

Then continue on as if nothing has happened. \*

LAVELLE and STANTON look at each other.

STANTON

He's had that coming a long time.  
You know yourself.

LAVELLE is standing next to FIONA, watching HARTE dancing with the SURFER CHICK. \*

with the SURFER CHICK. \*

FIONA

Fine-looking man.

LAVELLE

I'd watch yourself around him.

FIONA

Oh I gave up the cocaine a long time ago.

LAVELLE

You took cocaine?

She shrugs. She smiles. \*

FIONA

How about a dance? Or what did they call it in your day, a jive? \*

they call it in your day, a jive? \*

LAVELLE

Ah now, I'm not cut out--

FIONA

Ah come on. \*

She hauls him onto the dance-floor. \*

HIGH-ANGLE SHOT -- LAVELLE and FIONA dancing together, alongside HARTE and the SURFER CHICK, VERONICA and ASAMOAH, and OTHERS. \*

alongside HARTE and the SURFER CHICK, VERONICA and ASAMOAH, and OTHERS. \*

66

**INT. LYNCH'S BAR - LATER**

66

VERONICA pauses beside LAVELLE at the bar.

VERONICA  
Forgive me, Father, for I have sinned.

LAVELLE  
Say ten Hail Marys and an Our Father.

VERONICA  
Ah, I've sinned more than that.

LAVELLE  
Make an ascent of Croagh Patrick,  
then, on your knees.

VERONICA  
On my knees, is it? What made you  
say that?

She looks blankly at him. He finishes his Diet Coke. She  
laughs and moves on. LYNCH appears, inside the bar.

LYNCH  
Your church is on fire.

LAVELLE  
Brendan, I'm not in the mood--

LYNCH  
Your church is on fire.

LAVELLE looks up -- LYNCH is gazing straight past him --

LAVELLE looks round --

REVERSE SHOT -- through a large rectangular window, the  
church can be seen burning at the top of the hill.

LAVELLE  
Jesus Christ.

67

**EXT. CHURCH - NIGHT**

67

The burning church. LAVELLE arriving at the scene.  
Followed by OTHERS from the bar.

LAVELLE is frozen to the spot for a moment, stunned. The  
flames look beautiful in the dark of the night as they  
lick up the sides of the wooden structure.

67A

**INT. CHURCH - NIGHT**

67A

A burning beam collapses. The pews burn. Wooden plinths  
around two statues burn. The Stations of the Cross burn.

67B

**EXT. CHURCH - NIGHT**

67B

JACK BRENNAN runs up to LAVELLE --

BRENNAN  
I've called the fire brigade,  
Father. For all the good it'll do.

He stares at the fire, his mouth open, enthralled.

HARTE lights a cigarette.

HARTE  
They won't get here in time.

LEARY looks on, a hand to his head in shock. \*

LAVELLE circles the church, realising there is nothing to be done, the entire building is afire.

LAVELLE  
Why didn't anybody see?

FIONA finds him, pulls at his sleeve --

FIONA  
Come away, Daddy.

LAVELLE  
Why didn't anybody see?

MILO HERLIHY laughs childishly, a pint of Guinness still in his hand.

VERONICA BRENNAN and SIMON ASAMOAH glance at each other.

VERONICA  
You'll probably get the blame  
for this.

They laugh. Turn away from the scene.

67C

**INT. LYNCH'S BAR - NIGHT**

67C

\*

STANTON and LYNCH look on dispassionately.

LYNCH  
Professional job. I'll say that  
for them.

STANTON  
Any fool can start a fire, for  
fuck's sake.

67D

**EXT. CHURCH - NIGHT**

67D

HIGH-ANGLE SHOT -- LAVELLE looking on impotently as the timbers in the church start to give way.

MATCH CUT TO:

68

**EXT. CHURCH - DAWN**

68

TITLE -- "Thursday".

HIGH-ANGLE SHOT -- LAVELLE looking on at the blackened embers. FIONA, STANTON and LEARY nearby. \*

LAVELLE

So now we're being burnt out.

LEARY \*

Who'd do a thing like this?

LAVELLE

Somebody with a grudge against the Church, obviously.

STANTON

Sure that could be half the country.

LEARY \*

Burning the place down, though?

LAVELLE

People are angry. They've a lot to be angry about.

STANTON

Unless there's a personal angle.

LAVELLE glances at him. FIONA noticing the look.

FIONA

How d'you mean?

STANTON

Nobody with a grudge against you, Father, no?

LEARY \*

Why would anyone have a grudge against us? \*

STANTON shrugs. Toes the embers with his shoe.

STANTON

Maybe this is the future, hah?  
 Maybe it'll all be ruins one day.  
 Maybe one day kids will say to their  
 parents in amazement, They used to  
 believe in what? An auld lad up in  
 (MORE)

(CONTINUED)

STANTON (CONT'D)

the sky? And if we're good we'll go  
to Heaven? And if we're bad we'll  
go to Hell?

LAVELLE

Y'know for a policeman you seem to  
know very little about human nature.

STANTON

Maybe you're right. Sure you'd know  
more than me. Don't touch anything,  
now, I'll have to get the forensic  
boys down, the supercilious pricks.

He exits. LAVELLE, LEARY and FIONA stand in silence for a  
moment. \*

LEARY \*

What do we do now?

LAVELLE

We'll have to rebuild it, I suppose.

FIONA

Maybe use bricks next time, might be  
a good idea.

She looks at LAVELLE. He smiles.

LEARY \*

Sure that'll take ages.

LAVELLE

Is there somewhere you have to be?

**EXT. SLIGO CATHEDRAL (GARDEN) - DAY**

BISHOP MONTGOMERY is on his cellphone, strolling along a  
path, beautiful flowers arrayed on every side --

MONTGOMERY

--Inspector Stanton's handling all  
that, as far as I'm aware, you'll  
have to speak to him...It looks  
like arson, yes...Young lads losing  
the head, I suppose, sure isn't that  
always the way?...No, we haven't had  
any trouble before now...Thank you.  
Goodbye. \*

He flips shut the cellphone and pauses in front of a large  
rosebush.

MONTGOMERY

You'll have the press and TV people  
round at some point. \*

(CONTINUED)

LAVELLE has been trailing in his wake.

LAVELLE

No doubt.

MONTGOMERY inhales the scent of the roses.

MONTGOMERY

Who is it?

LAVELLE

I don't know who it is.

MONTGOMERY turns and looks at him.

MONTGOMERY

You said you did.

\*  
\*

LAVELLE

I have no evidence it's the same man.

MONTGOMERY

It's the same man. Takes a lot of nerve to burn down a church. Helps if you have a burning sense of grievance. If you'll pardon the...

He walks on. LAVELLE following.

MONTGOMERY

We have to ask ourselves, What does this man want? Well, he wants to be loved, of course. We all want to be loved. Failing that, he wants to be admired. Failing that, he wants to be feared. And failing that, he wants to be hated and despised. We should beware the man who wants to be hated and despised. Don't you think?

LAVELLE

(after a pause)

I think you read that in a book.

MONTGOMERY smiles. They move on.

LAVELLE

I think he wants to stir up some sort of feeling in others, that's true. He doesn't want to be ignored anymore. He wants to make contact.

MONTGOMERY

Well he made contact alright.  
Who is it?

\*

(CONTINUED)

LAVELLE looks blankly at him. MONTGOMERY nods. \*

MONTGOMERY

Those roses'll want cutting.

VERONICA emerges from the water to find LAVELLE waiting for her. \*

VERONICA

Is this about the coke? \*

I can take it or leave it. \*

LAVELLE

Really? \*

VERONICA

Yeah. Most people can. The only ones who can't, had problems to begin with. \*

LAVELLE

We shouldn't write them off, though, the ones who had problems to begin with. \*

VERONICA dries her hair with a towel. Studies him. \*

LAVELLE

What do you want to do with your life, Veronica? \*

VERONICA

Nothing. "Consider the lilies of the field, how they grow. They toil not, neither do they spin." \*

LAVELLE

That's a very nice quotation. \*

VERONICA

Ah sure everybody knows that one. \*

LAVELLE

It's hackneyed, yeah. Like "Turn the other cheek," and "Judge not, lest ye be judged."

They look at each other. \*

VERONICA

I'd like to be an actress, maybe. \*  
I've got an absent father and a \*  
domineering mother. \*

LAVELLE

Well it's a start. When did your father leave?

VERONICA

He didn't leave, he was killed. \*

LAVELLE

He was murdered? \*

VERONICA

Hunting accident. \*

(pause) \*

Completely random. \*

(pause) \*

So there's no use persevering, \*  
Father. I'm a lost cause. \*

LAVELLE

No one's a lost cause, Veronica. \*

VERONICA glances at him, then strides away. \*

71

**INT. RECTORY (STUDY) - DAY**

71 \*

FITZGERALD with a big smile on his face.

FITZGERALD  
Dreadful business, I must say.  
Some little blackguard running  
riot, I wouldn't wonder.

He is standing between two desks, jingling the change in his pockets. LAVELLE at one desk. LEARY at the other. \*

LEARY  
Sure what can you do, in this day  
and age. \*

FITZGERALD  
True dat.  
(to LAVELLE)  
Sorry about the other day, Father.  
That was the drink talking.

LAVELLE  
What can we do for you?

FITZGERALD  
Well it follows on from what I was  
saying. And it seems more necessary  
now than ever.  
(producing a cheque-book)  
I'd like to make a donation.

LEARY  
(getting up)  
Oh that's grand! \*

LAVELLE  
To salve your conscience?

FITZGERALD  
Surely that's in the nature of all  
philanthropy? The expiation of guilt?

LEARY  
I'm sure you have nothing major to  
feel guilty about, Mr Fitzgerald. \*

(CONTINUED)

FITZGERALD

Oh you'd be surprised, Father.  
And call me Michael.

LEARY

Michael it is. Any charity is always  
gratefully received. \*

FITZGERALD

I know. I believe that's Church  
doctrine. And the Church needs all  
the help it can get these days, hah?

LEARY

Why would you say that? \*

FITZGERALD

Well, y'know, what with all the  
compensation that's been paid out  
over the years.

LEARY's superficial smile freezes on his face. \*

FITZGERALD

I read where it's up to two billion  
now. And that's just the Yanks.  
And sure we all know they weren't  
the worst, now, don't we?

LAVELLE looks blankly at him. Then blankly at LEARY to  
gauge his reaction. \*

LEARY

I don't know about that, now. And  
anyways, most of those cases were  
forty or fifty years ago. Raking up  
old ground, it's always seemed to  
me. It's time to forgive and forget. \*

FITZGERALD

Oh I agree with you, I agree with  
you. It's time to move on. What's  
past is past. Et cetera, et cetera.

LEARY

Ah...Would you like a cup of tea,  
Michael, or something-- \*

FITZGERALD

No, no, can't stop.

He sits in LEARY's chair. Waves the cheque-book -- \*

FITZGERALD

What are we talking? Ten? Twenty?

LEARY

Twenty thousand? \*

(CONTINUED)

FITZGERALD

Twenty thousand euros, yeah.

LEARY perches himself on the desk. Excited. \*

LEARY \*

Why that'd be grand. That'd help  
with getting the initial building  
work off the ground.

FITZGERALD

Twenty it is, then.

(producing a beautiful

Pierrot White fountain pen)

This is a David Oscarson pen.

Really expensive.

LEARY \*

It's lovely.

LAVELLE

Why not make it fifty?

FITZGERALD and LEARY look at him. FITZGERALD smiles. \*

LEARY \*

Ah now, Father--

LAVELLE

If money's no object, make it fifty.

FITZGERALD

Why not make it a hundred?

LEARY's jaw drops open. He looks at LAVELLE. \*

FITZGERALD

Means nothing to me.

LAVELLE

I know it doesn't.

FITZGERALD

A hundred thousand euros, Father.

For your pet project. What do you

say to that?

LAVELLE

I say, Thank you, Mister Fitzgerald.

FITZGERALD grins.

FIONA is playing with Bruno, rubbing his belly, flopping  
his ears around.

(CONTINUED)

FIONA

Good dog. Aren't you a good dog.  
Yes you are.

LAVELLE appears. He watches them in silence, smiling.

**EXT/INT. SLIGO TOWN RESTAURANT - DAY**

LAVELLE and FIONA eating.

LAVELLE

It's my fault. \*

FIONA

How is it your fault what some  
crazy person--

LAVELLE

I should have done something.  
Said something.

FIONA

(after a pause)  
What was Stanton was getting at?

LAVELLE

If I could tell you I would.  
You know that.

FIONA

I thought I was the one supposed  
to be in trouble, not you.

They look at each other.

VERONICA (O.S.)

How's the fish?

They look up to see VERONICA BRENNAN, coked up, standing  
over them. Glamorously dressed, a gin-and-tonic in her  
hand. \*

LAVELLE

Too many little bones.

VERONICA

Isn't that always the way.

She grabs a chair and sits at their table. FIONA looks at  
her, then at LAVELLE.

VERONICA

I'm not stopping. Meeting the fella.

LAVELLE

You're informing me of your adultery  
in advance?

(CONTINUED)

VERONICA

Isn't that more honest than in the confessional when it's all done-and-dusted and there's nothing you can do about it?

FIONA

What are you expecting him to do about it now?

VERONICA

Stop me from committing a mortal sin.

LAVELLE

You have to stop yourself. I can't stop you.

VERONICA

Then what good are you at all?

FIONA shoots another look at LAVELLE.

VERONICA

You're right, though. I mean, who are you to lecture anyone when it comes to sex?

FIONA

He has as much right as anyone else--

VERONICA

I don't think virgins have any call to be dictating--

\*  
\*

LAVELLE

What makes you think I'm a virgin? Fiona's my daughter.

VERONICA

Oh I thought she was just some young one you were fiddling around with.

LAVELLE almost flinches.

FIONA

Oh you bitch.

LAVELLE looks at VERONICA with utter disgust. She notices this, and smiles.

VERONICA

You want to hit me now, don't ya? Go on. Hit me.

LAVELLE looks blankly at her. She grins.

Suddenly, FIONA hits her a massive slap to the face ---

(CONTINUED)

OTHER DINERS glance around. One of whom is LEO MACARTHUR. He laughs as he picks at his teeth with a toothpick --

VERONICA rubs her reddened cheek. Tears in her eyes. But still defiant. She glares at FIONA.

VERONICA

Nice shot. But I've taken better.

LAVELLE

What is this, exactly?  
The Theatre of the Absurd?

VERONICA

Oh you're very fond of your high-falutin' phrases, aren't you, Father. I do think you do look down on us country people.

She knocks back her drink. Glancing out the window, she sees SIMON ASAMOAH approaching.

VERONICA

There's my ride, as it were.  
Let's do this again some time.

She exits. Leaving startled DINERS in her wake.

FIONA

Do you have to put up with that kind of shit on a regular basis?

Through the window we can see VERONICA as she reappears and throws her arms around ASAMOAH. ASAMOAH looks blankly at LAVELLE and FIONA.

LAVELLE

There's a lot of it going around,  
let's put it that way.

LAVELLE and FIONA walking along.

LAVELLE

We really should talk, you know.  
Get it all out.

FIONA

Like in one of those shit plays at the Abbey? \*

LAVELLE

I don't know what the third-act revelation would be, though.

FIONA

Neither do I.

LAVELLE

Your mother dying killed a little something in both of us, I know that.

FIONA

It was a long goodbye if ever there was one. I sometimes wish she hadn't hung on as long as she did.

LAVELLE

She was stubborn, alright. But brave, too. I wonder if I'll be that brave, when it comes down to it. \*

FIONA

It wasn't just her dying. You were missing in action a long time. Before and after. When I needed you the most.

LAVELLE

Was it really that bad?

FIONA

I don't know, maybe I'm exaggerating. You were a highly-functioning alcoholic, I'll give you that.

LAVELLE

I've always thought the "highly-functioning" part should cancel out the "alcoholic" part. Like a double negative.

FIONA smiles. They come upon MICHEÁL sitting in an old wooden boat, staring out to sea, a Davy Crockett hat on.

LAVELLE

What are you up to, there, Micheál, if you don't mind me asking?

MICHEÁL

Thinking.

LAVELLE

Thinking. Thinking about what?

MICHEÁL

Things.

LAVELLE

Thinking about things. How profound.

FIONA

What's that you're wearing?

MICHEÁL

A hat.

(CONTINUED)

LAVELLE

A hat. You don't give much away, do you, Micheál? You should've been in the French Resistance, they could've done with men like you.

FIONA laughs.

**EXT. EASKEY SHORELINE - EVENING**

LAVELLE and FIONA manoeuvre between the rock-pools.

LAVELLE

I was never neglectful, I don't think. I never hit you or--

FIONA

There are other forms of violence.

LAVELLE

I know there are. Attempting suicide, for one.

FIONA

Jesus. I walked into that one.

LAVELLE

Not only violence against yourself, either.

FIONA

It wasn't intended that way. I wasn't trying to hurt you.

LAVELLE

How could it not hurt me? I love you.

FIONA

I love you, too. Don't doubt that.

They look at each other. Put their arms around each other and walk on.

FIONA

And just when I thought I had you back and you were all ship-shape and raring to go, go you did. I thought it'd be another woman.

\*  
\*  
\*

LAVELLE

I have a vocation. I wasn't trying to escape or--

FIONA

I know that. I know you're sincere. But the fact remains, first she went away and then you went away. I lost two parents for the price of one.

(CONTINUED)

LAVELLE

I never went anywhere. I'm still here.

FIONA

I think you're being a little naive,  
there, Father.

They stop as they reach the edge of the rock-face, looking out over the sea.

LAVELLE

I'm still here. I'll always be here.

FIONA

Will you?  
(with a sad smile)  
You promise?

LAVELLE

(pointing to her heart)  
I'll always be here.  
(pointing to his heart)  
And you'll always be here.

FIONA's eyes well up with tears.

LAVELLE

How's that for a third-act revelation?

FIONA

It's corny. But I like it.

**INT. COTTAGE (BEDROOM) - NIGHT**

RYAN is lying fully-clothed on his bed, a multicoloured quilt beneath him. The shillelagh by his side.

LAVELLE pours him a bourbon.

RYAN

You know how you can tell when you're  
really getting old?

LAVELLE

How?

RYAN

Nobody says the word "death" around  
you anymore.

LAVELLE looks at him. Holds out the glass. RYAN pops two large pills from a vial into his mouth. Takes the glass --

RYAN

Here's mud in your eye!

Tosses back the bourbon in one go. Motions for another.

RYAN

That's great stuff! Makes me feel  
like bursting into song.

LAVELLE takes the glass. Fixes him another.

LAVELLE

Go on ahead for yourself.  
Nobody's stopping you.

RYAN raises the shillelagh as if it were a conductor's  
baton and sings --

RYAN

"You will eat, by and by, in that  
glorious land above the sky--"

LAVELLE smiles. Shakes his head.

RYAN

--Work and pray, live on hay, you'll  
get pie in the sky when you die!"

LAVELLE

God, you're an awful man altogether.

RYAN cackles. LAVELLE hands him the bourbon.

RYAN

Like the fella said, "There has to  
be a Devil before there can be holy  
water."

**EXT. FIELDS - NIGHT**

LAVELLE walks through the fields behind the rectory,  
lighting his way with an old oil lamp.

LAVELLE

Bruno! Bruno!

He goes on through the fields. Pauses, having spotted  
something up ahead. Walks on --

LAVELLE's POV -- the dog lying dead.

LAVELLE looks down at the dog. Its throat has been cut. A  
puddle of blood around its body. He crouches beside the  
body. Touches its coat.

LAVELLE

Ah what has he done to you?  
(crying softly)  
What has he done to you, Bruno?

He strokes the glossy coat, still crying.

78      **EXT. FIELD - NIGHT**

78

LAVELLE finishes digging a hole. Puts the shovel to one side, where Bruno lies enveloped in a bright red blanket.

He hefts the bundle and places it gently in the hole. Shovels earth onto the bundle until it is completely covered. Pats it down.

He puts his hands together atop the shovel and says a prayer.

79      **EXT. SLIGO TRAIN STATION - DAY**

79

TITLE -- "Friday".

The convertible screeches to a halt. FIONA jumping out with her suitcase. LAVELLE getting out --

FIONA

Oh no! I forgot to say goodbye to Bruno!

LAVELLE

I'll give him a big kiss from you.

FIONA

Oh do!

They hug and kiss --

FIONA

I'll be fine, you know.

LAVELLE

Will you?

FIONA

Well let's just say, today I'm fine.

LAVELLE

So you say.

\*  
\*

She smiles, and disappears into the station.

\*

80      **EXT. COUNTRY LANE - DAY**

80

LAVELLE strolls along, brooding. He comes up alongside a young GIRL on her own. Picking petals off a flower.

LAVELLE

Hello. Where are you off to?

(CONTINUED)

GIRL

The beach.

LAVELLE

It's nice at the beach, isn't it.  
Do you surf?

GIRL

No, my Da won't let me. He says  
it's too dangerous.

LAVELLE

Ah, what does he know. Big meanie.

The GIRL laughs.

LAVELLE

Here on holiday?

She nods.

LAVELLE

Where are you from, Wicklow? \*

GIRL

Yeah.

LAVELLE

Well never mind. We won't hold it  
against you--

Suddenly, a car screeches to a halt on the main road in  
front of them. A MAN gets out, angry --

MAN

Janine! Get in the car, now.

The GIRL quickly crosses to the car.

MAN

(softly)

Where the hell d'ya get to, honey?  
I've been looking all over for ya.

The GIRL gets in. The MAN turns to LAVELLE, angry again --

MAN

What were you saying to her?

LAVELLE

I wasn't saying anything to her.

MAN

Oh really. You looked deep in  
fucking conversation to me.

He glares at LAVELLE. Gets back in the car. Drives off.

(CONTINUED)

80 CONTINUED:

80

LAVELLE stands there. Runs a hand through his hair.

81 INT. LYNCH'S BAR - DAY

81

LAVELLE

Large one.

\*

LYNCH looks at him, as he clicks onto Sky News. He has a bandage on his hand.

HARTE, seated at the end of the bar with a whiskey, glances at him also.

ASAMOAH and BRENNAN are playing chess in a corner of the bar. BRENNAN looks round.

LYNCH

You sure about that?

LAVELLE

Whiskey, I said.

LYNCH gets the drink. Sky News playing a report from Afghanistan.

LYNCH

I wonder what's the latest in the sand-nigger war?

ASAMOAH looks up. Smirks.

HARTE

Looks like more dead to me.  
But then again, who's counting?

LYNCH passes LAVELLE the whiskey. LAVELLE knocks it back.

LAVELLE

Have one yourself. Might shut you up.

LYNCH

Ah sure that's what they call them, sand-niggers. The Marines, I mean. I read it in a book about that young one they raped and murdered, y'know? They killed her entire family, then they turned on her.

LAVELLE

That's your bedside reading, is it?

LYNCH

I like to keep up with American foreign policy. Another?

LAVELLE gives a slight nod. LYNCH turns to HARTE.

(CONTINUED)

LYNCH  
Yourself?

HARTE  
One ice cube this time.  
Two just get in the way.

LYNCH gets the whiskies.

ASAMOAH makes a chess move. BRENNAN smiles to himself.

ASAMOAH  
Who burned down your church, Father?

LAVELLE  
It's not my church. It's our church.

BRENNAN  
I'd say it was the Romanians.  
They're heathens, I think.

LYNCH  
The Romanians? What Romanians do  
we have around here?

BRENNAN  
Ah they're always hanging around,  
the Romanians. Getting up to no good.

ASAMOAH  
I think it must be someone who does  
not like you, Father. I think it must  
be one of the good people in this town.

HARTE  
You should join the Guards, Simon,  
with your powers of deduction.

BRENNAN  
Checkmate.

ASAMOAH looks down at the pieces. Then back up at BRENNAN.  
BRENNAN picks up his whiskey, and goes to the bar.

BRENNAN  
These measures, hey, Father.  
It's like a buttercup in the mouth  
of a cow. Guinness, there, Brendan.

He knocks back his whiskey. Glances slyly at LAVELLE.

BRENNAN  
So you think there's a God, then,  
Father, yeah?

LAVELLE looks blankly at him.

BRENNAN

I'm not coddling, I'm being serious.  
I'm having doubts, like. A crisis  
of faith.

LAVELLE looks blankly at him. Takes his drink and gets up.

BRENNAN

Ah now, I didn't mean to offend ya,  
I'm sorry. Really I am. As sure as  
there's a hole in a goat.

LYNCH laughs as he pours the Guinness. LAVELLE heads for  
the pool room.

BRENNAN

I'm an awful messer, Father, God  
forgive me! Don't go away mad!

**INT. POOL ROOM - MOMENTS LATER**

CLOSE on a rack of pool balls being split.

LEO MACARTHUR, practising on his own, chalks his cue as he  
considers his next shot. Looks up --

LAVELLE is leaning against a wall, whiskey in hand.

LEO

Hey Fada! Whaddaya hear, whaddaya  
say!

LAVELLE

You're back, so?

LEO

I got a lotta clients in this town,  
Fada. From the hoi polloi to the  
masses of society. I gotta keep my  
ass lubricated at all times.

LAVELLE

The hoi polloi are the masses of  
society. You're using the phrase  
incorrectly.

LEO pauses in the act of making a shot. Smirks.

LEO

That may be so, Fada. I didn't get no  
education, see. I was getting fucked  
in the ass and fucked in the face all  
the live-long day. There wasn't no  
time for any o' dat dere book-learnin'.  
I was sucking the prick of a bishop  
in his bishopric on a regular basis,  
ya get me? How d'ya like that play  
on words, smartass?

LAVELLE

Do you need help?

LEO

You're starting to sound a little screwy, now, Fada. Maybe ya need to see a headshrinker yerself--

LAVELLE

Do you need help? Are you okay?

LEO

There's nothing wrong with me, my friend, I'm feelin' fine.

He smacks in a ball.

**INT. LYNCH'S BAR - NIGHT**

LAVELLE at a table, brooding over a Guinness with a whiskey chaser. HARTE mooches over.

HARTE

Y'know when I first started working in Dublin, there was this three-year-old boy whose parents had taken him into the hospital for a routine operation, but the anesthesiologist made a mistake, and the little boy ended up being deaf, dumb, blind and paralysed. For good.

(pause)

Think of it. Think of when that boy first regained consciousness. In the dark. You'd be frightened, wouldn't you. But you'd be frightened in that way where you know that the fear is going to end. It has to. It must. Your parents can't be too far away. They'll come to your rescue. They'll turn on the light and they'll talk to you.

(pause)

But think of it. Nobody comes to rescue you. No light is turned on. You are in the dark. You try to speak but you can't. You try to move but you can't. You try to cry out but you are unable to hear your own screams. You are entombed within your own body, howling with terror.

(pause)

Your parents stand around you. They have no way to communicate with you. They have no way to explain what has happened to you. Will you ever understand what has happened to you?

(MORE)

(CONTINUED)

HARTE (CONT'D)

And that it will not end, that it  
will always be this way?

There is silence for a long moment. \*

LAVELLE \*

What the fuck? Why the fuck would  
you tell me a story like that? \*

HARTE \*

No reason. \*

LAVELLE rears up -- \*

HARTE goes into a karate stance -- \*

ASAMOAH and LYNCH look round -- \*

HARTE steps back quickly and scoots off. \*

**INT. LYNCH'S BAR - LATER**

HOLD on LAVELLE as we JUMP-CUT through his night's  
drinking, encompassing pints and shorts.

Only ASAMOAH left in the bar with LYNCH. They pass a  
spliff back and forth, glancing at LAVELLE.

LYNCH

Time to go. Come on.

LAVELLE looks round at ASAMOAH.

LAVELLE

He's still drinking. Same again.

LYNCH

Time to go, I said.

LAVELLE

What's that, an order?

ASAMOAH

You do not like taking orders, Father?  
You do not mind giving them.

LYNCH

Sure his kind are all alike.

LAVELLE

My "kind".

LYNCH

Yeah your "kind". Your time has gone,  
and you don't even fucking realise it.

LAVELLE

My time will never be gone.

LYNCH

You hear that? The arrogance of the  
man.

ASAMOAH

You need to be a little more humble,  
Father.

LYNCH

He needs taking down a peg or two,  
is what he needs.

LAVELLE looks at them both. He steps down from his stool,  
puts his hand into the pocket of his soutane, and  
withdraws the Webley revolver, aiming it at them --

LAVELLE

Take me down, then.

ASAMOAH steps back, but LYNCH doesn't flinch. He looks  
coolly at LAVELLE --

LYNCH

Go on. I fucking dare ya.

LAVELLE looks blankly at him. Adjusts his aim and fires --

Into the ranks of spirits and the mirror behind the bar,  
shattering nearly everything --

85

**EXT. LYNCH'S BAR - NIGHT**

85

The blasts from the revolver lighting up the bar --

86

**INT. LYNCH'S BAR - NIGHT**

86

The gun clicks. Empty. All six shots fired.

LAVELLE looks at LYNCH and ASAMOAH, swaying slightly.

LYNCH reaches under the bar and produces a yellow baseball  
bat. ASAMOAH grins.

87

**INT. RECTORY (BATHROOM) - NIGHT**

87

LAVELLE washing his bloody hands in the sink. His bloody  
face reflected in the mirror.

LEARY, in pyjamas, passes by the open doorway --

\*

(CONTINUED)

LEARY

Jesus Christ! What happened to you?

\*  
\*

LAVELLE

Brendan Lynch.

LEARY

Brendan Lynch? Sure he's a Buddhist.

\*

LAVELLE

So what if he's a fucking Buddhist?  
You think Buddhists don't beat people  
up? You think Buddhists don't fuck  
their kids just like everybody else?

LEARY

You're obviously very upset--

\*

LAVELLE

Tibetans spit on blind people in the  
street. They're killing albinos in  
Africa. You are so fucking naive.

LEARY

Please don't curse at me, Father.  
And I think it'd be best if we  
continue this conversation in the  
morning when you're sober--

\*

LAVELLE

Why are you a fucking priest at all?  
You should be a fucking accountant  
in a fucking insurance firm!

He slams shut the door.

**INT. LAVELLE'S ROOM - MORNING**

TITLE -- "Saturday".

LAVELLE lying prone on his bed, bruises all over his body,  
still wearing his trousers and socks. His soutane in a  
black pile on the floor.

He awakens. Gives a wretched groan.

**EXT. RECTORY - MORNING**

LEARY hands a suitcase to a CABBIE --

\*

LAVELLE (O.S.)

You're leaving.

LEARY turns. LAVELLE is standing there, squinting in the  
sunlight. Wearing a horrible woollen V-neck sweater.  
Drinking from a pint-glass of water.

\*

(CONTINUED)

LEARY

I think it's for the best.

\*

LAVELLE

Because of last night?

LEARY

Because of a lot of things. Not just last night, or what's happened here. I've been having doubts...about my sexuality, if you must know.

\*

\*

\*

LAVELLE

You're not gay, Father. You're not interesting enough to be gay.

\*

\*

\*

LEARY is taken aback yet again.

\*

LAVELLE

Listen, I'm sorry about what I said last night.

\*

\*

\*

LEARY

You said what you said with such venom. I didn't realise you hated me that much.

\*

LAVELLE

I don't hate you at all.

LEARY

Then why...

\*

\*

LAVELLE

It's just that you have no integrity. And that's the worst thing I can say about anybody.

LEARY

Well that's...That's just...

\*

He heads for the car.

\*

LAVELLE

I hope you find what you're looking for. Good luck.

LEARY gets into the cab. It drives away.

\*



94 CONTINUED:

LAVELLE  
Yes.

TERESA  
You must be very upset.

LAVELLE  
Yes I am.

LAVELLE glances out the window --

LAVELLE's POV -- a coffin is being escorted to the plane by TWO BAGGAGE HANDLERS.

LAVELLE turns back to TERESA. She is watching the coffin.

TERESA  
I am bringing him home to his family in Italy. Dublin and then Rome.

LAVELLE  
How have you been?

TERESA  
People here have been very kind.

LAVELLE  
I mean...

TERESA  
Some times I think I cannot go on.  
(turning to look at him)  
But I will go on.

95 EXT. AIRPLANE - EVENING 95

PASSENGERS climb the steps of the airplane, LAVELLE and TERESA among them. LAVELLE pauses at the top, waiting his turn to enter the plane. He looks down --

LAVELLE's POV -- the coffin has not yet been loaded. The TWO BAGGAGE HANDLERS are leaning against it. They laugh.

96 EXT. SLIGO AIRPORT - EVENING 96 \*

The Aer Arann plane traverses the sky. \*

96A EXT. EASKEY -- NIGHT 96A \*

LAVELLE in his sports car, speeding back to Easkey. \*

97 INT. RECTORY (LAVELLE'S ROOM) - DAWN 97

TITLE -- "Sunday".

A light breeze is blowing through the open window and gently lifting the lace curtains.

(CONTINUED)

97 CONTINUED:

97

LAVELLE is lying in bed, idly watching the curtains.  
His soutane is hanging on the wall.

98 INT. LAVELLE'S ROOM - DAWN

98

He buttons up the soutane. Fixes his collar. Kneels in front of the crucifix and says a prayer. Blesses himself.

99 EXT. DOG'S-HOLE - MORNING

99

CLOSE on the Webley Revolver.

LAVELLE weighs it in his hand. Then tosses it out into the crashing waves.

A wide crack in the cliff-face, the sea rushing in and smashing upon the rocks. The spume shooting up to where LAVELLE is standing, his soutane fluttering in the wind, an almost mythic figure looking out over the Atlantic.

FITZGERALD appears and approaches, unheard. Eventually LAVELLE turns, flinching at FITZGERALD's proximity.

FITZGERALD

Thinking of throwing yourself in?  
They say it's the easy way out.

LAVELLE

Nothing easy about it, I wouldn't  
have thought.

They look out at the ocean.

FITZGERALD

I'm in a bad way, Father.

LAVELLE looks at him.

FITZGERALD

I'm not putting you on. I've been  
in a bad way for a long time.

LAVELLE

Have you spoken to a psychia--

FITZGERALD

Ah they just load you up on pills.  
Ask you about your feelings for  
your mother. Same auld shite since  
the '20s.

LAVELLE

How does this...this feeling down...  
How does it manifest itself?

(CONTINUED)

FITZGERALD  
Not wanting to do anything. Finding  
nothing worthwhile. A sense of...  
disassociation. Detachment.

LAVELLE  
You have a lot to be thankful for,  
objectively.

FITZGERALD  
I had a wife and kids and they meant  
nothing to me. I have money and it  
means nothing to me. I have life and  
it means nothing to me.

LAVELLE  
Where do you think this sense of  
detachment comes from?

FITZGERALD  
From nowhere.  
(pause)  
From nowhere.

LAVELLE studies FITZGERALD as FITZGERALD looks out to sea.  
He is obviously sincere, and in a lot of pain.

LAVELLE  
I have to meet someone now, but I'll  
call up to the house after. We'll  
talk. Get you back on track. Okay?

FITZGERALD  
Thank you, Father. Thank you.

LAVELLE puts an arm around his shoulders. FITZGERALD leans  
into him, resting his head in the crook of LAVELLE's neck.

100 **EXT. HOTEL BALCONY - MORNING** 100

FIONA on her cellphone. Coffee beside her. Dublin skyline.

FIONA  
Y'know, you changed the subject,  
the other day when we were talking.

101 **EXT. PAYPHONE - MORNING** 101

LAVELLE on the payphone.

LAVELLE  
What was the subject?

102 **EXT/INT. EASKEY - MORNING** 102

As they speak, we see images of the locations where they  
spent time together, these locations now deserted --

Train station. Lynch's bar. Lavelle's room. Country road.  
 Easkey River. Split-rock. Confessional. Church ruins.  
 Rectory exterior. Restaurant. Beach. Shoreline.

FIONA (V.O.)

You know what the subject was.  
 I think you committed a sin of  
 omission there, if truth be told.

LAVELLE (V.O.)

Sure there are worse sins than sins  
 of omission.

FIONA (V.O.)

Well now you'd be the expert in that  
 department, Father.

LAVELLE (V.O.)

You'll have to defer to me, so.

FIONA (V.O.)

I suppose I will.

LAVELLE (V.O.)

I think there's too much talk about  
 sins, to be honest, and not enough  
 talk about virtues.

FIONA (V.O.)

You might be right. What would be your  
 number one?

LAVELLE (V.O.)

I think forgiveness has been highly  
 underrated.

FIONA (V.O.)

(after a pause)

I forgive you. Do you forgive me?

LAVELLE (V.O.)

Always.

SLOW-MOTION TRACKING SHOT following LAVELLE as he walks  
 through the town. It is still early. He sees no one.

Suddenly, GERALD RYAN appears in front of him --

RYAN

Father.

LAVELLE

Little early for Mass.

RYAN

Doctor Harte was out fishing at the crack of dawn. He begrudgingly gave me a ride. He's a wonderful doctor, but a completely appalling human being. Where are you headed?

LAVELLE

Just down to the beach there.

RYAN

Want some company?

LAVELLE

Not really, no. Maybe later.

RYAN

Fair enough. I won't keep you.

He starts to move off, leaning on his shillelagh.

LAVELLE

Did you finish your book?

RYAN

I did. Not sure how good it is...

LAVELLE

I'm sure it'll be grand.  
You're a fine writer.

RYAN

(moved)  
Thank you, James.

LAVELLE nods and walks on.

104

**EXT. BEACH - MORNING**

104

LAVELLE comes down onto the beach. Looks around --

LAVELLE's POV -- there is no one to be seen on the beach.  
But far off, some SURFERS are riding the waves.

He strides out, a lone figure out for a Sunday stroll. The surf rolling in.

105

**EXT. SAND DUNES - MORNING**

105

MICHEÁL is painting with oils. A canvas set up on an easel. He pauses --

MICHEÁL's POV -- LAVELLE looking out to sea. And then a second MAN, approaching from the right.

106

**EXT. BEACH - MORNING**

106

LAVELLE turns and sees the MAN approaching --

(CONTINUED)

LAVELLE's POV -- the MAN gradually defines himself as JACK BRENNAN. Wearing a plain white shirt, the cuffs turned up, ordinary black trousers, black shoes.

As BRENNAN nears LAVELLE, he takes a gun from a trouser pocket and holds it loosely at his side.

BRENNAN

Take your hands out of your pockets.  
Slowly.

LAVELLE

Why?

BRENNAN

I heard you had a gun.

LAVELLE slowly removes his hands from the pockets of his soutane and turns them palms up.

BRENNAN

Have to say I'm surprised. Thought  
I'd have to go looking for you.

LAVELLE

Just because I'm here, doesn't mean  
you have to go through with it.

BRENNAN

Yes it does. It's one of those...  
self-fulfilling prophecies.  
Did you really think it'd come to  
this, though, hah?

LAVELLE

I was hoping it wouldn't. I thought  
you were a friend of mine.

BRENNAN

Ah sure, a friend is just an enemy  
you haven't made yet.

LAVELLE

Cheap cynicism.

BRENNAN

No, not cheap, now. That's a cynicism  
that was hard-won. That's a cynicism  
that was earned after a hell of a lot  
of psychological and physical torture.

LAVELLE

I take it back, then. But it's  
cynicism all the same. That's the  
difference between us, I suppose.

BRENNAN

That's not the only difference.

107 **OMITTED** 107 \*

108 **EXT. BEACH - MORNING** 108

BRENNAN looks out over the waves. LAVELLE appraising him.

BRENNAN  
Any regrets?

LAVELLE  
Yeah. I never got to finish *Moby Dick*.

BRENNAN  
The whale kills Ahab.

LAVELLE  
Is that right?

BRENNAN  
Then he destroys the rest of the ship and the crew along with it. All except for Ishmael. He alone escapes to tell thee.

They look at each other for a long moment.

LAVELLE  
The burning of the church I understand. But you didn't have to kill my dog.

BRENNAN  
I didn't kill your dog.  
Why would I do a thing like that?

LAVELLE  
I found him. Out in the field.  
His throat had been cut.

BRENNAN  
Nothing to do with me. I am wholly innocent of that crime.

(pause)  
I did give Veronica a shove that one time, though. I admit that and I'm sorry for it.

(pause)  
Did it upset you? The dog?

LAVELLE  
Yes it did.

\*  
\*  
\*

(CONTINUED)

BRENNAN

Did you cry?

LAVELLE

Yes I did.

BRENNAN

That's nice. And when you read about what your fellow priests did to all those poor children down all those years, did you cry then?

LAVELLE looks blankly at him.

BRENNAN

I asked you a question. Did you cry then?

LAVELLE

No.

BRENNAN

That's right.

LAVELLE

No, I suppose--

BRENNAN

Yeah?

LAVELLE

I suppose I felt detached from it. The way you are when you read anything in a newspaper or see it on televis--

BRENNAN raises the gun and fires --

LAVELLE is hit in the lower left side and staggers back, collapsing onto the sand.

BRENNAN

Detach yourself from that.

MICHEÁL sees BRENNAN fire the shot and LAVELLE go down. He takes a step back, stunned.



He starts to sob. He moves off towards the surf, trying to regain his composure.

LAVELLE watches him, his face turning pale as the life ebbs from him.

LAVELLE

It's not too late, Jack.

BRENNAN

(still sobbing)

Yes it is. Yes it is.

He turns back, wiping his tears with his gun-hand. He takes a deep breath, then aims the gun at LAVELLE again.

BRENNAN

Say your prayers.

LAVELLE

I've already said them.

BRENNAN fires, point-blank.

114	<b>OMITTED</b>	114	*
115	<b>EXT. EASKEY - MORNING</b>	115	
	RYAN on a bench, eating an ice cream.		*
116	<b>INT. ASAMOAH'S HOUSE (BEDROOM) - MORNING</b>	116	
	VERONICA astride ASAMOAH. He rubs the bruise on her face with his thumb.		
117	<b>INT. MANSION - MORNING</b>	117	
	FITZGERALD sitting at a large oak table, dishevelled. A whiskey in front of him. He glances at his watch.		
118	<b>INT. STANTON'S HOUSE - MORNING</b>	118	
	STANTON looking through a magnifying glass, examining a bank note taken from a stack in front of him. He grins.		
119	<b>EXT. PRISON YARD - MORNING</b>	119	
	FREDDIE JOYCE being stomped on, the legs of OTHER PRISONERS kicking at him. He tries to protect himself, but does not cry out.		
120	<b>INT. BOOKSTORE - MORNING</b>	120	
	LEARY in the "Philosophy & Religion" section, flicking through Richard Dawkins' <i>The God Delusion</i> .		*



FIONA waits. Tears in her eyes.

BRENNAN looks at her. Looks at the telephone. Looks back at her. CUT TO BLACK.

The CLOSING TITLES play. Then the image of LAVELLE at the dog's-hole appears, his back to us, his soutane fluttering in the wind.

**T H E E N D**

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