



# CINDERELLA MAN

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First Rewrite  
January 9, 2004

1

BLACK SCREEN:

1

ROARING, distant, maybe the ocean. Louder now, not waves but the DIN of VOICES. LOUDER still, cacophonous, as the screen brightens, the staccato lightning of flash bulbs REVEAL...

A GLOVED FIST-CLOSE. Held high in triumph.

ANNOUNCER (OVER)

And from the great state of New Jersey, by unanimous decision, tonight's light heavyweight winner...Jim Braddock.

WIDEN

2

INT. MADISON SQUARE GARDEN - NYC - 1928 - NIGHT

2

The capacity crowd is on its feet. That BOXER in the ring is wiry, not too tall, not too heavy. The kind of fighter you'd say had a lot of heart. Meet JIM BRADDOCK.

A little GUY rushes in from the corner, drenched in sweat, bright, intelligent eyes. By the looks of him, he may have just fought this fight himself. This is JOE GOULD and he actually leaps onto Braddock's back like a kid.

People are on their feet, SCREAMING, YELLING. Affluent faces out for a night. A world, happy, with no knowledge of the future. It's still the roaring twenties, after all.

Gould shoots Jim a wry smile. Braddock grins back. Pumps his fist in air one more time and, on cue, the crowd goes WILD.

3

EXT. MADISON SQUARE GARDEN - NYC - NIGHT

3

New York sparkled then. Ansel Adams. A world of black shadows, and clear white light. Simpler times.

Joe and Jim emerge from the side door onto Seventh Avenue, under a huge lighted sign for tonight's fight, stopping now to dispense a couple of autographs.

JOE

You give a few, leave em wanting.

BRADDOCK

Anything you're not an expert in, Joe?

JOE

Not that I can think of, no.  
(beat)  
Maybe my wife.

Braddock signs away. Glossies of him in a staged boxer pose. Naturalism is still two wars off.

FAN

Gave him a cold meat party, Jim.

FAN # 2

Way to go, Braddock.

Jim likes these guys, the fact that they love him so. A GIRL catches his eye, flashes him, underneath her flapper's dress, a glimpse of naked promise. He grins, shakes his head.

JOE

Hey, win some, lose some, huh  
Johnston?

Jim looks up to see two other MEN leaving from the smoky side door. The fellow Joe is addressing is JIMMY JOHNSTON. Fight promoter. He doesn't look happy.

BRADDOCK

Leave it be, Joe.

Joe nods as if he agrees. It's just that he has absolutely no control over his mouth.

JOE

Although you gotta figure, this one, you gotta figure maybe you get behind the wrong guys. What's Griffith, favored six to one and, oh yeah, 34 knockouts in 55 wins, outweighs my boy by, what, five pounds more than that scale you fixed says, then jab, hook...

Joe is actually moving in time with the hits. Now that Joe's started, Jim can't leave him out there on his own.

BRADDOCK

Actually it was jab, **jab**, hook-

JOE

Jab, jab, hook and your boy's hearing high ball whistles. Hell, I could hear em. You Jimmy?

BRADDOCK

I heard something.

JOE

So maybe no one's a bum after all,  
huh Johnston...?

Johnston just holds Joe's eyes. The beat lasts. Then he turns  
and walks to his waiting car. Joe smiles.

JOE

Knock out.

Joe slides two Havana's out of his pocket. Sniffs his.

JOE

All yours for the night. Last  
chance to make a break for it.

Jim follows Joe's gaze. A black limo idles curb-side.

BRADDOCK

Must have set you back some.

Jim has crossed to the car as the driver opens the door.

BRADDOCK

What would you done if I woulda  
lost?

Joe is lighting his cigar. Doesn't look up as he answers.

JOE

Wouldn't have paid for it.

Jim can't help but smile as he climbs into the car.

JOE

Keep your gloves up, Jimmy.

4 INT. LIMO - MOVING - NIGHT

4

Braddock puffs his cigar, face reflected in the side window,  
backed by the passing night city. RACK FOCUS.

Out the window, a LAUGHING clutch of folks gather in front of  
the simple door of a speakeasy, two twirling in lamp light.

Macy's gliding windows are crowded with thin manikins, decked  
out for a Twenties whose roar has yet to quiet.

DRIVER (O.S.)

Satchmo's playing the Vanguard. And  
there's a new jinny uptown.  
Anywhere special, Mr. B?

HOLD on Jim a beat. Then he smiles.

4A EXT. CLOISTERS - HIGH ANGLE - NIGHT 4A

Jim crosses a wide lawn on the edge of the Hudson. Statuary, gardens, all are patchwork white and shadow in the moonlight.

4B EXT. CLOISTERS - CONTINUOUS 4B

Jim finds a spot by river's edge, stares at the skyline.

DRIVER (V.O.)  
Everything okay, Mr. B?

Silhouetted by the lamps of the waiting limo, the features of his trailing driver are invisible, only shadow.

BRADDOCK  
Not many important things you do in your life. You get to know the where and when of.

He turns to his Driver.

BRADDOCK  
I'm getting married here tomorrow.

As he smiles, his face is illuminated by a wash of daylight and we are suddenly...

4C EXT. CLOISTERS - NEXT DAY 4C

Jim stands in the exact spot wearing a tuxedo, backed by FATHER RORICK, and facing a WOMAN in flowing wedding gown.

FATHER RORICK  
I now pronounce you man and wife.

Jim lifts the veil of a woman too beautiful to be any man's wife. Meet her by her new name. MAE BRADDOCK.

PRIEST  
You may kiss the bride.

And we PULL BACK, find the lawn lined with endless rows of guests, standing, SHOUTING, CLAPPING in dappled autumn sun.

4D EXT. WEDDING RECEPTION - DAY 4D

Guests mill at linen covered tables in the b.g. as Joe watches Jim sign autographs for a couple of saucer eyed kids.

KID

Thanks, Jim.

They race off. Jim and Joe resume walking.

JOE

So, I'm saying it.

BRADDOCK

I wouldn't. You'll jinx it, you know?

Joe shoots him a look. The two walk on in silence.

JOE

That's ten in a row, Jim. Ten goddamned in a row.

Braddock LAUGHS.

JOE

What?

BRADDOCK

Just seeing how long you could stay quiet is all.

Joe shoots him a look.

JOE

You may be one-handed, sure, but you got no stage fright or nerves, last night proved that. You never been knocked out.

Now, finally the words.

JOE

You're in line, Jimmy. You hear me? You're going all the way.

Jim has stopped, is staring across the river.

JOE

Two hundred sixty thousand tons of limestone and steel, one thousand feet tall, by the way.

Joe follows Joe's gaze. In the distance the impossibly high scaffolding that is the rising Chrysler Building.

BRADDOCK

How does something just keep on  
going up?

JOE

Make you nervous?

Jim turns to him now, his grin all confidence.

BRADDOCK

Not for one second.

4E EXT. DAY - SUNSET

4E

A few guests linger. Jim and Mae sit alone at a table of  
spent wine glasses and cake plates. A WOMAN (ALICE) stands  
holding Jim's hand.

ALICE

Beautiful ceremony, Jim.

She turns to Mae.

ALICE

Mom would have loved it.  
(kisses her head)  
All grown up.

Alice heads off in the direction of a waiting gentleman in a  
dark suit. Mae turns to her new husband. She's tipsy.

MAE

Joe left early, flat tire.

BRADDOCK

Mae, don't start.

MAE

So, does he get thirty percent of  
our wedding gifts, too?

Jim starts to respond but she stills his lips with the tips  
of her fingers.

MAE

You never told me about last night.

BRADDOCK

You could just come and watch.

MAE

You get punched, every time, it  
feels like I'm getting punched to.

BRADDOCK

They punch me?

He has taken her hands in his, kisses her knuckles. Can't help but notice the sudden, wicked glint in her eyes.

MAE

So tell me.

BRADDOCK

Tell you what?

But he's already begun to smile.

MAE

Tell me about the girls.

BRADDOCK

Were there girls?

MAE

Come on. There was one.

BRADDOCK

Maybe one.

Familiar game.

MAE

Blond?

BRADDOCK

A brunette.

MAE

Tall?

BRADDOCK

Like a gazelle. Don't know how she breathed up there.

Mae rises, moving around Jim, head bowed, eyes up and batting.

MAE

Oh, Mr. Braddock. You're so strong.

Mae slides back the table.

MAE

Your hands are so big.

She straddles Jim's lap. Jim glances nervously at the lawn.



MAE  
So powerful.

She begins unbuttoning his shirt.

BRADDOCK  
Mae, there's still guests.

Mae now climbs up standing on Jim's knees.

MAE  
(shouting)  
Jim Braddock! Champion!

Folks are staring, bemused, as Jim lifts Mae off his lap, sets her standing. She's still unbuttoning his shirt.

BRADDOCK  
Thanks everyone. For coming.

She's behind him, pulling out his shirt tails while he's trying to surreptitiously swat her off.

BRADDOCK  
Anyway--.

Shirt's out now.

BRADDOCK  
We've got to go--.

And with that he grabs her hand and they head off, LAUGHING, towards the shore and the WHISPERING cover of trees below.

5 EXT. BRADDOCK HOUSE - NEWARK - LATER 5

Evening swaddles this lovely colonial. Through windows, Jim Braddock is carrying Mae in his arms across the living room.

6-7 OMIT 6-7

8 INT. BRADDOCK HOUSE - BEDROOM - NIGHT 8

Jim, still in tuxedo pants and shirt, stands looking out the window. Mae comes up behind him in her slip.

MAE  
It was like a fairy tale.

She wraps her arm around his chest. Doesn't see him wince from the pain. He moves her hands up a bit:

MAE

How are you feeling?

His answer is a moment in coming.

BRADDOCK

Lucky.

He turns and kisses her. PUSH PAST them and HOLD on the window as the light changes and so does the window, becoming smaller, grimmer as milk bottles hit the sidewalk beyond.

REVERSE ANGLE

9 INT. BRADDOCK BASEMENT APARTMENT - BEDROOM - 1933 - 4:30 AM 9

Jim stands dressing at the bureau. Far smaller than the room we were just in. Partitioned by a hanging blanket beyond which bulb light shines. In bed, three kids sleep, (ROSEMARIE, 6, JAY, 8, HOWARD, 10) Jim pushes through the blanket into...

10 INT. BRADDOCK APARTMENT - KITCHEN - CONTINUOUS 10

The other side of this one room apartment. A kitchen with a round table and a sofa not far off make up the rest of their home. All the beautiful furniture is long gone.

Jim crosses to Mae who stands over an old gas stove cooking two thin strips of bacon. In the naked light we see Jim is thinner than before, dark circles around his eyes.

BRADDOCK

Can't find my good socks.

MAE

(turning)

Jim!

Her VOICE is a scolding WHISPER.

BRADDOCK

(now whispering too)

Sorry. God. Sorry.

But the damage is done. Stirring from the other room.

ROSEMARIE (OVER)

(sleepy whimper)

...Mama.

MAE

Great.

Mae takes Jim's socks out of the oven.

BRADDOCK

Sorry.

She shakes her head at him with resignation, already adding a third strip of bacon to the pan. Two left in butcher's paper.

MAE

I washed them last night. I took them right off your feet, remember?

Jim just shakes his head.

MAE

You were dead to the world.

Jim sits at the table, pulling on those socks.

BRADDOCK

How can I keep em this warm?

A little figure wanders out. Rosemarie.

ROSEMARIE

Mama, I want to eat too.

She climbs up on Jim's lap without a word. He reflexively smooths her hair, smells her head, eyes closed. Mae watches.

MAE

We got the third notice on the electric yesterday.

BRADDOCK

How about the jar?

MAE

What's left is gone.

Mae reaches behind her, sets a mason jar on the kitchen table. Empty.

MAE

Too many rainy days, I guess.

BRADDOCK

I'll get the milk.

Jim sets his little one on the chair and heads outside.

10A EXT. BRADDOCK APARTMENT - PRE DAWN 10A

Jim emerges onto the street of row houses. A long way from where we saw him last. He walks to the basement window in the meager light. Something skitters past. A rat. Jim ignores it.

Jim reaches down and takes the milk bottles in his hands. Both empty. Each wears a pink past due slip like a collar.

10B INT. BRADDOCK APARTMENT- MOMENTS LATER 10B

Jim ENTERS and wordlessly sets the bottles atop the fridge. Mae hold his eyes. In his averted glance, shame.

MAE

Jim-

But he shakes his head to silence her comfort. Says only...

BRADDOCK

Some left in the fridge, I think.

Jim finds a last bottle, maybe an eighth full. He hands it to Mae who begins topping it off with water as Jim sits.

MAE

Who needs a cow?

Mae slides the food onto plates, lays them down in front of each of them.

MAE

Rosy. Your fork, please.

Little one reluctantly obeys.

BRADDOCK

I got Feldman tonight. That's half a C. I beat him, maybe I can get back up to seventy five.

Mae looks up at him. A small glimmer of hope in her eyes.

MAE

(a prayer)  
You're gonna kill him.

ROSEMARIE

Mama, I want some more.

MAE

I'm sorry, honey. There isn't any more.

Rosemarie has finished her bacon, as has Mae. Jim's still sits on his plate. Mae watches Rosy eye his food.

ROSEMARIE  
But I'm still hungry.

On Mae's face, a mother's agony. Jim has risen, kisses his daughter's head, already pulling on his coat. Kisses Mae.

BRADDOCK  
You're my girls.

Before he heads to the door, he deposits his slice of bacon on their daughter's plate.

Mae watches Rosemarie devour the meager meat hungrily as Jim goes, an impossible mix of emotions in her eyes.

11 EXT. NEWARK - 1933 - 4:30 AM - THE GREAT DEPRESSION 11

Jim walks block after block. Stores are boarded up. People huddle by trash can fires. The MEN who walk the streets wear suits. Ties. Some seem to wander the world like ghosts, nowhere to go. Others sit on benches, bus stops, heads bowed.

An emaciated NEWSBOY stands on a stack of papers, CROAKS his wares, breath fogging, VOICE raw from shouting in the cold.

NEWSBOY  
Unemployed reach 15 million. New York Rens trounce Celtics, 34-29.

12 EXT. LOADING DOCK - EARLY MORNING 12

Jim and 40 other DESPERATE MEN crowd the gate of a long chain-link fence. Dawn hits the Hudson and Manhattan beyond.

A middle-aged Foreman, JAKE emerges through the gate with a clipboard in hand, stares at faces stoned by sleeplessness.

JAKE  
I need 21 and 21 only.

Jim stands, trying to make himself seen. Jake begins pointing out the lucky ones, joyless in his power over life and death.

JOE  
Seventeen, eighteen, nineteen...

Jim's gotten there early enough to be at the front of the pack but there are still too many men than are needed.

JAKE

Twenty-one.

Apparently Jim's lucky number, now among the chosen. He looks down to hide his relief. A MAN (BEN) SHOUTS.

BEN

I been here since four.

JAKE

Sorry brother, luck of the draw.

Most are already heading off to look elsewhere. That's when Ben actually pulls a gun, points it at Jake's chest.

BEN

I was here first.  
(hand shaking)  
What about it?

Jake stares at the gun a beat, clearly rattled. Looks back up at the man. Time has gone perfectly still.

JAKE

My mistake, pal. I need twenty two.

OFF Jim, in disbelief.

13

EXT. DOCKS - DAWN

13

Jim signs out a bailing hook from the Foreman. On the docks before him is a freshly unloaded mountain of flour sacks.

All the sacks have to be moved from loading palettes to shipping palettes. Hard, endless labor.

Men work in pairs. Each grabs one side of a sack with their bailing hook, then lifts and moves each bag.

Braddock finds an empty spot on the line, looks up. His partner stands staring down the line at Ben, who's put his gun away and is now working as hard as the rest.

BRADDOCK

You need a gun to get a job, they should give everybody a gun.

The MAN turns, to face Jim. Older. Handsome. Strong arms. A military hair cut and bearing. Kevin WILSON.

KEVIN

Although I don't know how he's gonna afford the bullets.

Jim looks down the row of men, all starting to work.

BRADDOCK  
Boss on the line.

Kevin nods, joins Jim as they start to hook and move bags.

KEVIN  
Kevin Wilson.

BRADDOCK  
Jim Braddock.

KEVIN  
Used to follow a fighter with that  
name on the Radio.

Jim looks at the hook in his own hand.

BRADDOCK  
Helps if you dig in on the seam,  
then lift straight up.

Kevin adjusts. That's when it happens. Three cops rush the yard and grab Ben, wrestle him to the ground, taking his gun.

Kevin and Jim exchange a look as Jake trails after the cops and handcuffed Ben. The Foreman himself looks almost sick.

JAKE  
Jesus, Ben. What the hell did you  
want me to do?

Kevin and Jim resume working, in sync now, both men noticing their easy, efficient rhythm.

14 EXT. NEWARK - MID-DAY

14

Torrential downpour. Women in rain coats ladle soup and hand out soaked bread from the open back of a truck.

TRACK down the line, past so many faces, some sad. Some embarrassed, most just emptied out by this endless loss.

FIND Mae holding a soaking Rosemarie in exhausted arms. Jay and Howard stand at their mother's side, ARGUING.

JAY  
Foxx.

HOWARD  
Babe, **jerk.**

MAE

You need to stand for a little while, honey. Mommy's tired.

Mae starts to set her down.

ROSEMARIE

I don't want to. It's wet.

Looks into her eyes.

MAE

Are you a big girl or a little girl?

ROSEMARIE

(beginning to wowl)

Little.

Not the answer she wanted.

MAE

Rosy-

VOICE (OVER)

Who's making all that racket?  
Sounds like a trombone.

Jim has appeared beside them, makes a trombone of hands and accompanying SOUND. She scrambles into his arms.

ROSEMARIE

What's a turmone?

Mae looks up, surprised but glad to see him.

MAE

What are you doing here?

BRADDOCK

Wasn't enough work for a full shift. They cut us loose early. Don't like the thought of you standing out here alone.

Flare behind his eyes.

BRADDOCK

Don't like you standing here at all.

MAE

Jim. It's everybody.



BRADDOCK

Go home now. Get the kids dry.

MAE

I've got to turn up the heat,  
Jimmy. They're chilled through.

Jim nods uneasily. He hands over his daughter.

BRADDOCK

Tonight. We'll catch a break.

Her words are a hushed window of desperation.

MAE

You'll do great, Jim.

She kisses him. As the children follow Jay turns back.

JAY

Dad, do you think Babe Ruth's  
better than Jimmy Foxx?

BRADDOCK

Foxx couldn't hit a ball if the  
pitcher walked it out to him.

Howard shoots Jay a triumphant look. Braddock watches them go. He turns forward again, collar going up in the rain.

PULL BACK AND UP to over the crowd, all inching forward, slowly, endlessly patient, impossible in number.

15

INT. LOCKER ROOM - NIGHT

15

Joe stands in front of Jim, taping up his hands. Joe's clothes still show smart indications of wealth.

JOE

Guy's a bum. Pure and simple.

Jim cuts Joe a dark look as Joe keeps wrapping.

JOE

You know what I mean.

BRADDOCK

I know some guy sitting in a chair  
who'd faint if you blew on him too  
hard gets to watch you bleed and  
call you a bum. And I know I got to  
take it from him. But not you.

JOE

I see. Well. Pardon me. Let me restate. Mr. Feldman is a novice fighter whose ass you should gently kick until it is humped up between his shoulders. That is, of course, only if it doesn't offend your overly sensitive nature.

Joe switches hands. Jim winces. Joe looks down.

JOE

Jim...

BRADDOCK

Sore, that's all.

JOE

Sore or broke? Arthritis is making them more and more like glass.

BRADDOCK

(sharp)

Sore. Period.

JOE

Jeez. Take it out on the other guy why don't you?

Joe finishes taping.

JOE

Your weight's down.

Jim just shoots him a look. Gould nods.

JOE

You gotta knock him out fast, Jimmy. First round. Between his age and your bones, its the only way.

BRADDOCK

Flatter me, why don't ya?

Throws open the door to the ROAR of the crowd.

JOE

Watch your hands.

16

INT. MOUNT VERNON ARMORY BOXING RING - FIGHT NIGHT

16

Smaller. A CROWD beyond the ring lights is a sea of hats floating on smoking heads. Faces are gaunter, more desperate.

The ring is circled with JUDGES, GAMBLERS, HOTTIES, REPORTERS. PHOTOGRAPHERS sit with flashbulbs ready to sizzle.

RADIO COMMENTATOR (V.O.)

Jim Braddock, just five years ago, was considered first in line for the world championship. But in the last year he's lost ten fights without a single kayo.

Jim crawls under the rope. Jim shadow boxes in his corner as Joe massages his shoulder.

The crowd yells and stamps as ABE FELDMAN makes his way down a crowded aisle toward the ring.

RADIO COMMENTATOR (V.O.) (CONT'D)

Now Braddock faces Abe Feldman, just twenty-one years old, with seventeen wins, one draw and one loss. In less than two years he has managed nine kayos.

Jim tenses and Joe feels it in Jim's shoulders.

JOE

Who whipped Latao?

BRADDOCK

(softly)

I did.

JOE

Who k.o.'d Slattery in the 9th when everybody said he didn't have a Rainmaker's chance in hell?!

A familiar game. Humors him.

BRADDOCK

I did.

JOE

But we should pucker our assholes over Feldman?

BRADDOCK

No.

Jim's focus seems to turn inward. But Joe wants him riled.

JOE

You know what he said? He said the only way he could lose is if he fell over laughing at yer prissy little jab!

The crowd ROARS as Feldman climbs into the ring.

JOE (CONT'D)

Ah, he's a pipe. Sit down and I'll fight him.

Joe goes as if to move into the ring himself. Jim stills him with a hand on his shoulder.

BRADDOCK

No. Don't hurt yourself.

Jim's words come soft and lethal.

BRADDOCK

I'll fight him.

Joe grins.

17 INT. MOUNT VERNON ARMORY BOXING RING - MINUTES LATER 17

Jim takes a hard punch to the face, going backwards. Jim moves in but Feldman is blocking his drive.

18 INT. THE CORNER 18

Joe is literally mimicking each and every move Jim makes. Sweat dripping off him.

JOE

(shouting)

What do you want to do, fight him or marry him?

19 INT. THE RING 19

Jim is barely holding his own. He can't get a break. Everywhere he throws, Feldman isn't. Everywhere Feldman throws, Jim is.

20 INT. THE CORNER - MOMENTS LATER 20

JOE

What, you got lead in your shoes? You gotta move, Jimmy. Move.

21 INT. THE RING - MOMENTS LATER 21

But Jim is pretty lead footed, Feldman dancing all around him. Feldman lays a combination on Jim that sends him hard into the ropes. Folks in the audience are starting to BOO.

22 INT. THE CORNER/RING 22

Joe bobs and weaves in place.

JOE

Come back, Jimmy. Move.

Jim makes a lunge, throws a wild punch, hits Feldman hard. Jim moves in to hit him again but Feldman lowers his head. CLOSE on Jim's fist as it connects. Bones CRACK.

23 INT. THE CORNER - MOMENTS LATER 23

Joe is squeezing Jim's hand, his expression dark. Jim can't hide the pain.

JOE

It's broken proper, Jimmy. I'm calling it.

BRADDOCK

I can use my left.

JOE

Jim. You don't have a left.

The BELL. Jim is up and into the ring. Joe shakes his head.

24 INT. THE RING/CORNER - MOMENTS LATER 24

Jim is trying. But Joe's right, he just doesn't have a left hand punch. And he's still standing in one place.

Feldman is landing punch after punch. Jim can't even use his broken right to block. But Feldman is so hurt himself he keeps clinching Jim in a drunken waltz. CATCALLS. SHOUTS.

IN THE CORNER

JOE

Focus. Pay attention!

25 INT. THE RING 25

Jim clocks faces in the audience. SHOUTING. BOOING. Jim throws one last right cross. He connects and the pain is a flare, excruciating. Feldman scores a vicious right.

26 OMIT

26

Jim's head SNAPS back. He manages to get Feldman in a clinch and not let go. The BELL is hardly audible over the BOOING.

JOHNSTON (OVER)

An embarrassment.

27 INT. COMMISSION ROOM - NIGHT

27

Smoky. Jimmy Johnston, the promoter from that first fight, and the other two MEN who make up the Boxing Commission sit facing Joe, now standing before this makeshift tribunal.

JOHNSTON

That's what it was. An embarrassment.

JOE

Where's the purse?

JOHNSTON (CONT'D)

I wouldn't have to tell you that if you gave a shit about your fighter.

JOE

Where's the purse?

JOHNSTON

He lost his last five. Hell, he hardly gets a punch in anymore. Fights getting stopped by referees.... He's pathetic.

JOE

Everyone has a bad streak.

JOHNSTON

That it?

JOE

What do you want me to say, anyway?

The moment lasts.

JOHNSTON

We're revoking his license, Joe. Whatever Braddock was gonna do in boxing. I guess he's done it.

28 EXT. MOUNT VERNON ARMORY - PARKING LOT - NIGHT 28

The Men from the boxing commission move towards their cars, the last few vehicles left in the now abandoned parking lot.

That's when the arena door BANGS open and Jim comes out, moving fast, Joe trailing after him.

BRADDOCK

What the hell are you guys trying to pull?

Johnston stops. Turns to face Braddock who stands right in his face, Braddock's right hand hanging gamely by his side.

BRADDOCK

I broke my hand, okay? You don't see me crying about it. I don't know what you got to complain about.

Braddock's eyes are deadly.

BRADDOCK

I don't know what I did to lose my edge. But I didn't always lose. And I won't always again. You can count on that.

Pearson says nothing.

BRADDOCK

I can still fight.

PEARSON

Go home to Mae and the kids, Jim.

Pearson climbs into his car. Jim watches him drive away.

29 EXT. MOUNT VERNON ARMORY - NIGHT 29

The American Dream. Once. A white colonial sits dark, porch sunken, windows broken and empty. PULL BACK TO REVEAL...

Joe stands over a chipping white picket fence, pulling free one of the boards. He walks through a back door into...

30 INT. MOUNT VERNON ARMORY - LOCKER ROOM - NIGHT 30

Jim stares down at his hand. Doesn't look up as Joe crosses, now taping the fence post to Jim's arm in a makeshift splint.

JOE  
Until we get to the hospital.

Braddock doesn't look up. Joe's VOICE softens.

JOE  
Jimmy, listen-

Braddock looks up. See this startling sight. His cheeks are streaked with tears.

BRADDOCK  
Don't.

Joe just nods, starts silently taping fence post to hand.

31 INT. JOE'S CAR - NEW YORK CITY - NIGHT 31

Joe drives. No limo. No chauffeur. On the passing streets, long shadows and silence. Macy's windows are crossed with boards like cartoon black eyes.

JOE  
We took a good run at it, Jimmy.  
How many can say that?

They drive on. That familiar night club is closed too, people on the street warming their hands over trash can fires. Jim looks at the fresh cast on his hand.

JOE  
You'd change things, sure, who wouldn't, but sometimes you just can't, you know, end of story.

Again, nothing from Jim.

JOE  
You waiting to see how long I can keep quiet again?

BRADDOCK  
What'd you say?

Joe grins until he sees Jim's serious.

BRADDOCK  
Get me another one, Joe.

JOE  
Jimmy-



BRADDOCK

Got to have it. We're down to our last buck.

JOE

What's done is done.

BRADDOCK

Not always.

JOE

No. Not always.

In Joe's eyes, sudden awareness that this is good-bye.

JOE

But this time. I'm sorry, Jimmy.

32 EXT. BRADDOCK'S BASEMENT APARTMENT - NIGHT 32

Jim watches the car drive off. He starts the endless walk from the curb to the door.

33 INT. BRADDOCK APARTMENT - NIGHT - MOMENTS LATER 33

Mae sits at the table, sewing. She looks up, sees his splinted hand, his battered face.

MAE

Sweet Jesus.

She crosses to him in a heartbeat, touching his cast, his cheeks, his eyes.

BRADDOCK

They wouldn't pay me. Said the fight was an embarrassment.

MAE

Yeah. I bet that's what Joe told you. Sure, he'd say that-

Familiar ground.

BRADDOCK

Mae, Joe didn't take the money. It was me.

Mae looks at the empty money jar. Then back to Jim's hand. She's trying to keep the fear under control.

MAE  
How long until you're fixed enough  
to get another one?

BRADDOCK  
They took my license.

Mae just stares at him.

BRADDOCK  
I'm done, Mae. I'm sorry.

Mae opens her mouth to speak, closes it again. She begins  
walking back and forth across the room. Like a caged animal.

MAE  
We need to pack up the kids because  
we're not going to be able to pay  
the electric or the heat so they  
can stay at my sister's-

BRADDOCK  
Mae-

Her eyes are too wide, not quite focused.

MAE  
Then that way we can make two or  
three breadlines a day and then-

BRADDOCK  
Mae.

He has crossed to her, good hand on her face.

BRADDOCK  
I can work doubles, triples where I  
can find them.

MAE  
Jim, your hand's broken.

BRADDOCK  
Now listen-

MAE  
Oh, Christ, what are we-

BRADDOCK  
Mae!

His VOICE stills her.

BRADDOCK

Go and get the shoe polish out of the cabinet. Go on, now.

She just stares at him.

BRADDOCK

Baby, please. You've got to trust me, here.

Finally, Mae obliges.

BRADDOCK

Now you're right about one thing. I won't get picked, tomorrow. Not if they see this thing on me.

Jim has sat down, Mae returning now as Jim extends his cast.

BRADDOCK

So, we've got to cover it up. With the polish. Go on now.

She holds his eyes a beat. Then Mae begins painting the cast black with the polish. Doesn't look up as he speaks.

BRADDOCK

You can cut the hem out of my coat sleeve, fabric will help cover it.

Mae continues polishing.

BRADDOCK

We're going to be all right.

Finally she looks up, finding tether in his eyes. She manages a brave smile.

MAE

Guess all we need now is a nice piece of steak for your face, fix you right up.

Jim can't help but smile back at this woman, his wife.

BRADDOCK

Yeah. Get the sirloin out of the fridge. Nice and lean please.

PUSH THROUGH THE HANGING BLANKET.

Howard and Jay lay asleep in the bed in the b.g. Rosemarie stands peeking around the blanket, eyes wide, watching on.

34

EXT. DOCKS - MORNING

34

A light snow falls. Jim finds his post by Kevin. He's moving slowly. Kevin notices, says nothing. Jim's cast is painted black and hidden by his sleeve.

KEVIN

You know, pour salt on a mayonnaise sandwich, close your eyes, tastes like a BLT for about 6 seconds?

Kevin sets down his brown paper lunch bag.

KEVIN

We had a union down here, we could get ourselves a lunch break.

Jim is awkwardly trying the hook with his good hand.

KEVIN (CONT'D)

Since when did you go lefty?

That's when Kevin sees Jim's painted cast.

KEVIN

Jesus. What happened to you?

Jim looks up at him. A beat before answering.

BRADDOCK

I got into a fight.

KEVIN

What the hell would you go and do that for?

Jim has no answer. Kevin watches Jim's attempt to hook a bag. No way he's going to be able to pull his weight.

KEVIN

Boss on the line.

Jim follows Kevin's gaze to see the familiar Foreman walking towards them, inspecting the pairs of workers.

BRADDOCK

Shit.

Jim is trying to adjust the hook in his left hand but the heavy sack keeps slipping towards Kevin.

Jake is only feet away. He's going to notice. Kevin moves to the center of the bag, invisibly taking most of the weight.

Jake passes with a wordless look up and down and moves on.

KEVIN

Anything you can't handle, son, you  
shift to me.

A beat. Jim nods.

BRADDOCK

Appreciate it.

Kevin doesn't answer. The two resume work. Kevin's words when they come are as much to himself as to Jim.

KEVIN

Everyone can use a break these  
days.

35 EXT. BRADDOCK'S STREET - DAY

35

The world is dusted with snow. Mae has dropped the boys at school, is walking home with Rosemarie.

ROSEMARIE

Why can't I go to school yet? Is it  
because I'm a girl?

MAE

Maybe. I hadn't thought of that.

A CAR drives by and from within issue the muted tones of LUCK BE A LADY TONIGHT. Mae stares after it a beat.

ROSEMARIE

Who's the man at our house?

Mae looks up to see a MAN in a Con Edison uniform standing just outside the front door at their electric meter.

MAE

Can I help you, sir?

The MAN looks at her. Sad, tired eyes.

CON ED MAN

I'm sorry, Ma'am. You're past due.

Let's the meaning sink in.

MAE

You can't. There's kids. Please.

CON ED MAN

I don't, they'll let me go. They  
let two guys go for it already.

Mae stares at him.

MAE

I keep thinking this can't really  
be happening. Every day, I wake up,  
it's like I have amnesia. I know  
something's gone wrong, I just  
can't remember what it is. Then it  
comes to me. All the plans,  
everything you ever saved for, all  
just gone. This apartment, it's  
what we got left that keeps us  
hanging on.

CON ED MAN

Lady. Lady, I got kids too.

The two just stand there staring at each other in the snow.

36

EXT. DOCKS - AFTERNOON

36

The sky is close and bone cold. Kevin and Jim exit the gate,  
exhausted. Walking, Kevin opens his mouth, catching flakes.

KEVIN

I was a kid, my mom used to tell me  
you could eat a meal out of snow.

Jim walks along with him.

BRADDOCK

Wouldn't that be nice?

Jim opens his mouth and does the same. Smiles.

BRADDOCK

Now, this needs salt.

KEVIN

So, how about some powder? I'm  
buying.

Jim follows Kevin's gaze. Ahead, the flashing red neon of a  
bar sign in the distance.

BRADDOCK

Yeah. Right.

But Kevin is so serious he's smiling.

KEVIN

Who watched your back all day?  
That's just not being personable.

Finally Jim nods. They head towards the bar lights.

KEVIN

You hear about Ben Wills?

BRADDOCK

Who?

KEVIN

Guy did that stick up to get the  
job last week?

BRADDOCK

What about him?

KEVIN

Hung himself in jail that night.

BRADDOCK

Now where's the sense in that?

Kevin just opens his hands, then he looks up and opens his  
mouth again to the fresh falling snow.

37

INT. QUINCY'S BAR - NIGHT

37

Smoky. Crowded. Sawdust on wide plank floors. Booths and bar  
are jammed. Many men drink beer glasses full of water.

Jim sits with Kevin over two mugs of beer. Jim lifts his,  
takes a sip. Liquid gold. The word nurse doesn't cover it.

KEVIN

The world's broken and I say  
there's no use pretending it's not.

Jim clocks a group of men sitting in the corner over Kevin's  
shoulder. He looks uncomfortable a beat.

KEVIN

Central Park, they got people  
living in paper shacks. Calling it  
Hooversville. Folks just giving up.  
Leaving their families behind.  
Eating the sheep.

BRADDOCK

I like my legs both the same  
length, thank you.

KEVIN

After the War we had to march on DC  
just to chase our veteran's pay.  
Now the banks close up and we're  
eating sheep in the park.  
Government's dropped us flat, son.  
We need to organize. Arm. Fight  
back.

BRADDOCK

Another American Revolution?

KEVIN

People starving to death in New  
York City? May be time for one.

Jim just shakes his head. Kevin takes a long pull.

KEVIN

I know. My wife says I talk too  
much. Says I should just let life  
take its course. Her dream said  
we're gonna have a nice baby girl.

BRADDOCK

Why, you the Houdini family?

KEVIN

My wife...

Loops his finger at his temple good naturedly.

KEVIN

She says when times are bad, people  
can see the future in dreams.

Jim looks up at him.

KEVIN

I know how it sounds.

BRADDOCK

I have this dream that I'm walking  
across the city. Almost every  
night. Block after block. Just  
walking.

KEVIN

Wait and see. Maybe it comes true.

BRADDOCK

Hell, I knew, I would have dreamed  
of finding gold in the basement.



Kevin CHUCKLES.

KEVIN

Another?

Kevin has already killed his, signals for a second.

VOICE (OVER)

Jim Braddock.

Braddock turns. A MAN has separated from the corner crowd, stands at the booth before Jim and Kevin. SPORTY LEWIS.

SPORTY

You just won me two bucks.

Jim looks to the corner. A few others crane their necks. Sporty throws a few shadow punches. He's been drinking some.

SPORTY

Come on, Jimmy. How's that right?  
No hello for your old pal?

Braddock stands. Quotes words seared onto his memory.

BRADDOCK

Loughran wiped the ring with  
Braddock's career and tossed it  
into the ropes for good measure. A  
funeral with body still breathing.

That look in Braddock's eyes just killed Sporty's smile.

SPORTY

Look, Braddock, I don't fight the  
fights. I just write about them.

Braddock puts his forehead right down to Sporty's.

BRADDOCK

Save that crap for the customers.

That grin of Jim's gets wider. Lethal.

BRADDOCK

You got me?

The moment lasts. Then Jim turns to Kevin who is standing.

BRADDOCK

Gotta go, Kevin. Thanks for the  
beer.

Kevin stares after him, then looks back up at Sporty, shaken.

SPORTY

Guy was going to be Champion.

38 EXT. SIDEWALK - CONTINUOUS 38

Jim steps out into the snow, pulls at his coat collar as if it is choking him. He quickens his pace, starts to run. Running on sidewalks, the middle of the street, through alleys, anywhere, away from the past.

Jim stops, stares up at a stoop as a man and woman watch their Christmas tree being delivered. A branch falls off as the tree is carried through the front door.

Jim waits until the door closes. Lifts the branch.

39 INT. BRADDOCK APARTMENT - NIGHT 39

Jim and Mae sit by candlelight in sweaters and winter coats, change spread before them. The single branch is propped in the corner with bottle cap ornaments hanging by string.

The blanket that usually divides the apartment is piled, along with all remaining coats and clothing, over the kids crowded in bed. Mae and Jim's breath fogs as they speak.

MAE

You think about it, you gotta go to a swanky joint to eat with candles.

Braddock is counting the change. Jim looks up to see Mae warming her hands over the candle flame.

BRADDOCK

Three bucks twenty.

Jim looks at the empty mason jar on the table.

MAE

One too many rainy days, I guess.

Jim takes Mae's hands in his, rubs them between his palms.

MAE

Ow! Too hard, Jimmy.

She pulls her hands back, blows into them.

BRADDOCK

How much to turn it back on?

MAE

Three months. Twelve-ten.

Jim moves the money around on the table. Nowhere near.

BRADDOCK

All the guys you could have married. I don't know how I let everything get away from us, Mae.

MAE

I married the man I love.

(OVER) A child's WET COUGH. Jim glances up at her sharply.

MAE

Howard. Since this afternoon.

Mae reaches across, touches Jim's hand. She closes her eyes, begins to pray. Then glances up at her husband.

MAE

Jim...?

BRADDOCK

I'm all prayed out.

He stares off into the distance unable to be comforted.

40 INT. BRADDOCK APARTMENT - FIRST LIGHT 40

The light before dawn. Mae sleeps with the kids under the pile of clothes. Still freezing. She stirs. Jim is gone.

41-43 OMIT 41-43

43A EXT. JOE JEANETTE'S GYM - DAWN 43A

Jim stands holding his gym bag in the doorway of the gym. He stares up at the sign overhead. A long beat. He heads inside.

43B EXT. STREET - MORNING 43B

Mae looks around to make sure no one is watching. Then she begins breaking off pieces of wooden latticework from a billboard, hands the wood scraps to her still sleepy kids.

44 INT. BRADDOCK APARTMENT - DAY 44

Snow cakes the windows. Mae has made a fire in the open stove and is feeding broken lattice chips for fuel. She glances around, throws in the meager tree.

Mae looks at Howard, fever making him shake in the cold.  
Flames illuminate the sudden tears spilling from her eyes.

JAY

Mommy?

She looks up at her son, his fear at seeing her sadness.

MAE

It's all right sweetheart. Mommy'll  
be right back.

Mae rises, EXITS the back door.

45 EXT. BRADDOCK APARTMENT - BACK YARD - CONTINUOUS 45

A tiny square of dirt amidst the buildings. Heavy snow is falling. Mae stands alone, BREATHLESS WEEPING, inconsolable.

46 INT. JEANETTE'S GYM - DAY 46

A black fighter is in the ring, sparring with another. Steam HISSES. The floor is wet from tracked snow. A wiry BLACK MAN in T-shirt and hat coaches him. This is JOE JEANETTE.

JEANETTE

You gotta duck and weave not duck  
or weave, genius.

WIDER. Outside the ring, chewing a cigar, is Joe Gould, watching the kid. Still well dressed, that same stogie.

JEANETTE

Today, hit him **today**, not when he  
gets old, okay junior?  
(shouting)  
Close that door, you're letting in  
all the cold.  
(back to the ring)  
Enough, enough, ENOUGH.

Janette shoots Joe a dismayed look, shakes his head as another black BOXER (GEORGE) approaches from the front door.

GEORGE

Sorry I'm late, Joe.

JOE

Yeah, yeah. You're next. One bum-  
(catches himself) -  
One **contender** at a time.

Joe looks down, sees something in Ernie's hands. A pair of boxing shoes. Familiar shoes.

GEORGE

You see a ghost, Joe?

JOE

Maybe so. Where'd you get those things?

GEORGE

The old man sold them to me. Half a buck. Wanted to sell me his gloves too but I couldn't afford em. Some other guy got those.

Joe closes his eyes just for a beat. Then he looks up.

JOE

He was first in line once, you know? Couldn't move for shit. But had a right you could be outside the ring and feel the wind.

GEORGE

What happened to him?

Joe takes a beat before answering.

JOE

Same as everyone else I guess. Luck's run out all over.

Joe re-lights his stubby smoke.

JOE

So, put em on, and put em to work. Maybe **before** Springtime...

47

INT. BRADDOCK APARTMENT - AFTERNOON

47

Jim ENTERS. So deep into winter it's already night. The last cinders of Mae's sidewalk fire glow. The room is dark. Cold.

Mae sits in her coat, face empty, hollowed out. She looks up at Jim as he stares at her in the empty apartment.

MAE

Howard's cough was getting worse. And then Rosy started to sneeze.

Jim looks around. No sign of the children.

BRADDOCK  
Where are they, Mae?

MAE  
I didn't know what else to do.

She looks up at him, finally.

MAE  
They couldn't stay here anymore.

See the agony in her eyes.

MAE  
The boys can sleep on the sofa at  
my father's in Brooklyn. Rosy's  
going to stay at my sister's. We  
can't keep them, Jim.

He stares at her, his emotions impossible to express.

MAE  
We can't even keep them warm.

He turns, walks to the kitchen, stands at the sink running a  
glass of water. Sees his own reflection in the curving glass.

BRADDOCK  
No!

Jim hurls the glass, SMASHING, against the wall.

MAE  
Jimmy, please-

Jim doesn't even acknowledge her, is out the SLAMMING front  
door and gone. Mae stares after him.

48 OMIT 48

49 EXT. NEWARK - DAY 49

Jim walks the street, past an abandoned low where families  
live in their cars, windows steamed opaque with breath.

50 OMIT 50

51 EXT. FERRY - DAY 51

Jim stands on the deck, staring past the grey river at  
Manhattan beyond.

52 OMIT 52

52A EXT. CENTRAL PARK - DAY 52A

Jim walks past men building cardboard houses, can't help but clock the sheep idling amidst the well dressed squatters.

53 EXT. MADISON SQUARE GARDEN - DAY 53

Men are tearing down the light board for scrap metal. Jim stares at mounted photos of boxers in fight stances. Heads inside.

54 INT. MADISON SQUARE GARDEN - SECOND FLOOR - DAY 54

Jim stands in the hall, staring out a window, his expression impossibly sad. Only when he moves do we see what he has been staring at. The Chrysler Building.

Jim turns towards two frosted glass doors beyond which shapes move and a din of VOICES echo.

55 INT. MADISON SQUARE GARDEN - BOXING CLUB - DAY 55

Thick with smoke. Maybe twenty MEN sit around, playing cards. Loud ARGUMENTS. Johnston. Gould.

TWO PROMOTERS stand LAUGHING. They don't even notice Jim at first. Not until he's standing right in front of them.

BRADDOCK

Mr. Allen. Phil.

This is almost killing him.

BRADDOCK

Thing is. I can't afford to pay the heat. Had to farm out my kids.

Every word is impossible.

BRADDOCK

They keep cutting shifts at the dock. You don't get picked every day. Just need enough to catch up.

The shame almost too much to bear.

BRADDOCK

Sold my gloves and shoes. Got two bucks. I need ten fifty more. To pay the bill. Get them back.

This once great fighter now takes off his hat.

BRADDOCK

It pains me to ask. So much.

He holds out his hat. The moment lasts. The room has grown silent. The two men are speechless. Then one digs into his pocket, comes out with a few coins.

PROMOTER

Sure, Jim. Sure.

BRADDOCK

Thank you.

The next guy does the same. What follows is nearly too extricating to watch. Jim moves around the room, hat in hand. Even Johnston gives. The last man he comes on is Joe. Jim can barely meet his eyes.

BRADDOCK

I'm sorry, Joe.

JOE

What the hell do you have to be sorry about? Jesus, Jim.

Jim is looking into the hat.

JOE

How short are you?

Jim's been counting as he goes.

BRADDOCK

A buck-fifty, I think.

Joe winces, goes into his wallet. Fishes out a single, two quarters. Puts them in the hat.

BRADDOCK

Joe...

JOE

Don't mention it, Jimmy.

They watch him go, one of their own, nothing left, not even his pride. HOLD on JOE GOULD.

BRADDOCK (OVER)

The only thing we have to fear is fear itself...



57 INT. BRADDOCK HOUSE - NIGHT 57

Mae flicks on the lights. They work. The children spill into the glowing apartment.

BRADDOCK (OVER)  
We face our common difficulties.  
They concern, thank God, only  
material things...

HOLD on Jim, acutely aware of how fragile home is.

58 EXT. DOCKS - AFTERNOON 58

Jim and Kevin at hard, back-breaking work. Jim using that left hand. A fellow (SAM PENNY) slips and Jim reflexively grabs the falling bag, re-injuring his broken right.

BRADDOCK (OVER)  
Values have shrunken to fantastic  
levels; taxes have risen; our  
ability to pay has fallen...

59 INT. BRADDOCK HOME - NIGHT 59

Dinner is over. The kids are in bed, Jim sits at the table, READING Roosevelt's speech to Mae from the newspaper.

BRADDOCK  
The savings of many years in  
thousands of families are gone...

He is trying hard to find inspiration in the words, like fishing for water in a dry well.

60 OMIT 60

60A EXT. DOCKS- AFTERNOON 60A

Jim and Kevin are finishing their shift, dirty, exhausted, just clearing the gates when Penny runs up.

PENNY  
They're hiring extra at the coal  
yards.

Jim takes off in a sprint, Kevin not far behind him.

BRADDOCK (OVER)  
Unemployed citizens face the grim  
problem of existence...

61 EXT. COAL YARD - NIGHT

61

Jim and Kevin shovel coal. Jim's eyes are red lamps in his head and he can hardly pick up his shovel.

BRADDOCK (OVER)  
And an equal number toil with  
little return...

62 INT. BASEMENT APARTMENT - VERY LATE

62

Jim, black with coal dust, ENTERS, Mae asleep in a chair. He takes two quarters from his pocket, puts them in the jar.

Jim stumbles toward the bed, looks at his filthy self, lays on the floor, instantly asleep.

BRADDOCK (OVER)  
We face arduous days that lie  
before us...

63 EXT. STREET - DAY - WINTER

63

Jim and Kevin are walking together, passing a flask, when they spot a commotion across the street.

A PROTESTING YOUNG COUPLE and their toddler are being evicted from a neighboring brownstone by CITY MARSHALS.

Kevin starts to rush across the street, fight in his eyes. Jim grabs him by the arm, signals him to wait.

Across the street, the last of the furniture is literally put out onto the street, the padlock snapped onto the front door.

BRADDOCK (OVER)  
These dark days will be worth all  
they cost us...

ACROSS THE STREET - MOMENTS LATER

The Marshals pull away as Jim and Kevin cross. Kevin grabs a coat rack from the sidewalk and SMASHES open the padlock as Jim helps the couple begin moving their furniture back in.

BRADDOCK (OVER)  
We do not distrust the future of  
essential democracy...

63A EXT. DOCKS - MORNING

63A

The gates are chained closed.

BRADDOCK (OVER)  
The people of the United States  
have not failed...

Jake stands on the choosing platform, expression dark.

JAKE  
Sorry, boys. Ice on the inlet. No  
work today.

63B EXT. STREET - LATER - EVENING 63B

Jim stands on a bread line. He cuts his cast off with a  
pocket knife. See his withered wrist and hand.

BRADDOCK (OVER)  
We humbly ask the blessing of  
God...

64 OMIT 64

65 EXT. CHURCH - HIGH ANGLE - SPRING - DAY 65

Jim is crossing the church yard, as are a few other men,  
pilgrims towards the mighty structure and cross in the sky.

BRADDOCK (OVER)  
May he protect each and every one  
of us.

The doors of the church open, spilling folks in their Sunday  
best out into the green church yard.

66 EXT. CHURCH YARD - SPRING - 1934 - DAY 66

A group of MEN sit on green benches at the edge of the church  
yard, away from the gathering of families on the common.

Among them are Jim, Kevin, Penny and several others from the  
docks, some passing a bottle back and forth.

PENNY  
Jake hasn't been right since Ben  
died, I'm telling you.

DOCK MAN TWO  
Half shifts don't do anybody any  
good.

KEVIN  
In Russia, right now, they're  
giving the factories to the  
workers.

BRADDOCK  
 In Russia, right now, I'm pretty  
 sure they're asleep.

Kevin smiles, takes a long swig. Gestures to Jim with the  
 bottle, but Braddock just shakes his head.

KEVIN  
 Democracy hasn't failed? Shit.

PENNY  
 You need to shut up with that  
 Bolshivist crap or Jake's gonna cut  
 you and the rest of us too.

KEVIN  
 Long live America.

Kevin climbs standing on one of the benches.

KEVIN  
 Long live The Revolution!

Jim looks across the yard to see two WOMEN emerge from the  
 church basement. Each holds a frosted sheet cake lit.

BRADDOCK  
 Guess that's our cue.

KEVIN  
 Figure I'm just fine where I am.

A couple guys MURMUR agreement.

BRADDOCK  
 Come on, Kevin.

Kevin shakes his head. Jim shrugs, heads for the gathering.  
 Most follow, Kevin and Penny staying behind.

KEVIN  
 (toasting after him)  
 Long live Johnny Walker

67 EXT. CHURCH YARD - MOMENTS LATER

67

Jim joins Mae, the kids and FATHER RORICK, amongst the  
 others, as the cakes are set on the picnic table.

FATHER RORICK  
 (off the cross)  
 Still boycotting I see.

BRADDOCK

I had to work.

Rorick's smile knows there's more to it than that. Rorick ruffles Jay's hair.

FATHER RORICK

Your Dad ever tell you I used to spar with him?

JAY

You?

HOWARD

You hit the Father?

BRADDOCK

As often as possible. For a priest, he has a mean left hook.

FATHER RORICK

The Lord giveth and taketh away.

BRADDOCK

Go on, now.

JAY

I liked it more when we had our own.

BRADDOCK

I liked it more before you could talk. Now go on.

Jay grins as he and Howard take off for a picnic table where all the kids have gathered, the candles finally lit. The crowd of adults and children all begin to SING.

CROWD

Happy birthday to you. Happy birthday to you. Happy birthday dear...

A SERIES OF SHOTS - MEN AND WOMEN - SAME MOMENT

WOMAN

Mitchell.

MAN

Junior.

GIRL

Philip.

OLD MAN

Lisa.

MAE

Jay.

BACK TO SCENE

The crowd finishes.

CROWD

Happy birthday to you.

Jim looks at Rorick. Mae has come up behind them.

MAE

(terse)

James.

He follows her gaze.

67A EXT. CHURCH YARD - BENCH AREA - MOMENTS LATER

67A

Kevin is standing where Jim left him, now with his WIFE (SARA, 30's) and INFANT DAUGHTER. A couple of folks have already turned towards the COMMOTION.

SARA

I'm just saying it's enough!

Jim walks up to the two of them.

BRADDOCK

Hey, where's the ref?

KEVIN

This is between man and wife, Jim.

SARA

Everyday, fix the world. How about your family? You're gone before she gets up, home after she's sleep. And now you're too proud to cross the lawn because she can't have her own birthday cake. What kind of father are you? You're drunk at church for Christ's sake.

KEVIN

That a joke, Sara? Are you making a joke?

Kevin actually moves towards her. Not clear what, if anything, he's going to do. Jim stops him with a firm hand to chest.

BRADDOCK

(smiling)

Easy there, Kevin. Maybe you've had a couple. No harm in that. Day of rest after all.

But Kevin isn't smiling back. He's staring into Jim's eyes.

KEVIN

That the way it is? You the big fighter, that it?

Kevin shoves Braddock. Like trying to push a truck.

BRADDOCK

Stop it, Kevin!

KEVIN

Jim Braddock, big bone polisher...

Kevin throws a punch which Jim slaps away easily.

BRADDOCK

I'm serious.

KEVIN

Can't make it in the ring so why not take it out on his pal?

Throws another, which Jim's hand also dismisses, Kevin SHOUTING now.

KEVIN

What you gonna do, huh-

Kevin's combination is fast but Jim steps back and palm-guides Kevin past. Kevin can't stop the momentum and he goes down.

SARA

Jim, no-.

She's moved to Kevin who is scrambling upright. Stares at Jim.

KEVIN

Go to hell. Both of you.

And with that Kevin is gone. Sara stares at him. Then she turns to Jim, the baby WAILING in her arms.

SARA

Jesus, Jim, He wasn't going to hit me. Jesus.

And with that she's gone after her husband. Jim looks up to see Mae standing a few feet off.

MAE

Why was it so hard just to come over for the cake?

Too much adrenaline everywhere.

BRADDOCK

(flaring)

Maybe he just needed a little time, all right. It's not so damned easy. Maybe he just needed a little time.

MAE

(flaring back)

Not at me, James Braddock. Do you hear? I know its hard. But not. At. Me.

The two stand facing each other. Feet and miles away. Finally, Jim crosses the divide, bows his head to her's.

68 EXT. STREET - SUNDAY - DAY

68

Spring can still be beautiful. Even here and now. Jay and Howard play stick ball with other kids in the street.

ON A STOOP Jim sits with Rosemarie, standing on the step below him so they're the same height.

ROSEMARIE

Were you fighting with Kevin?

Jim stares at her. Shakes his head?

BRADDOCK

We were **almost** fighting.

ROSEMARIE

Teach me how.

BRADDOCK

I can't, honey.



ROSEMARIE

Why not?

BRADDOCK

Because the cops might come back.

ROSEMARIE

You mean, Mommy?

Jim nods somberly. Rosy puts her hands on her hips.

ROSEMARIE

You can too. Teach me daddy.

Jim tries to stare down his daughter. He's just no match.

BRADDOCK

Let's start simple. Jab the left.

Rosemarie obliges. Awfully serious. Awfully cute.

BRADDOCK

You got a better jab than I did.

That's when a familiar car pulls up, window rolling down.

JOE

You **are** a brave man.

BRADDOCK

Not really. Mae's at the store.

Rosemarie, taking advantage of the distraction, clocks Jim square in the jaw. Not bad for someone pint-sized.

BRADDOCK

(laughing)

Okay, darling. Good shot. Shadow punch while I talk to uncle Joe.

Rosemarie punches the air as Jim rises, walks to Joe who has emerged from the car. Jim touches the lapel of his suit.

BRADDOCK

Still looking dapper.

JOE

Gotta keep up appearances.

Joe smiles.

JOE

Good to see you, Jimmy.

Jim smiles back. Neither may have known it until now but these two missed each other. Joe looks around. Casual.

JOE

Nice day.

BRADDOCK

You drive all the way out here to talk about the weather?

JOE

Maybe I was in the neighborhood.

BRADDOCK

Joe, this is Jersey.

JOE

A point.

A beat. Then...

JOE

I got you a fight.

BRADDOCK

Go to Hell.

JOE (CONT'D)

You want it don't you?

BRADDOCK

What about the Commission?

JOE

They'll sanction it. This one time and one time only. This isn't a comeback. This is one fight.

BRADDOCK

Why?

JOE

Because of who you're...

BRADDOCK

Never mind. How much?

JOE

Just once ask me who you're fighting.

BRADDOCK

How much?

JOE

\$250.00

Jim shakes his head, starts to walk away.

JOE

You're on the big show at the Garden...tonight.

Joe is trailing him.

JOE

You fight Corn Griffin, Jimmy. Number 2 heavyweight contender in the world. Pre-show fight before the championship bout.

Jim finally spins on him, intense, dangerous.

BRADDOCK

Joe, this isn't funny.

JOE

Wake up, Jimmy, it's real. Griffin's opponent got cut and can't fight. They needed somebody they could throw in on a day's notice. Nobody legit will take a fight against Griffin without training so... I told 'em with you they could use the angle that...

Joe looks away. Looks back at Jim.

JOE

I told them they could use the angle Griffin was gonna knock out a guy that'd never been knocked out. You're meat, Jimmy. They're paying to see you fall.

BRADDOCK

Joe. Are you really on the level?

JOE

It ain't no favor. Griffin's 55 wins with 35 kayos. He'll hit you so hard it'll put knots on your grandkid's heads. Johnston's promoting the fight. He cut me the deal. You just got to stay up six rounds and you get paid.

BRADDOCK

Joe...

Gould looks away, steps back, looks him up and down.

JOE

How much do you weigh?

BRADDOCK

170 somethin'.

JOE

(scowling)

He's got 40 pounds on you. Take  
some line of bullshit to sell 'em  
on why you can't make the weight...

(shaking his head)

Ah, screw it... I just knew how bad  
you needed the money.

Jim's still looking at his friend. Then he smiles.

BRADDOCK

Joe. For 250 bucks I'd fight your  
wife.

JOE

Now you are dreaming.

BRADDOCK

I got to tell Mae.

JOE

(off his watch)

Jimmy, it's now.

Jim just shakes his head. Can't be happening. He CALLS out to  
the boys.

BRADDOCK

Howard, watch your sister.

(turns to Rosemarie)

Honey, tell mommy daddy got some  
work.

HOLD on Rosemarie as she watches the car drive off. Something  
working in her tiny mind. Then she races to her two brothers,  
small head moving in sudden and intense consultation.

69

INT. BUTCHER SHOP - AFTERNOON

69

(OVER) TAPPING. SAM, a butcher, emerges from the back, walks  
towards his closed door. Rosemarie stands TAPPING the glass.

SAM  
(opening the door)  
We're closed, today.

Sam looks around outside. The two boys stand silently with her. She follows his gaze to them.

ROSEMARIE  
Let me do the talking.

Sam can't help but smile as the three march in.

SAM  
Where's your folks?

Rosemarie walks past him to the counter.

ROSEMARIE  
I need a piece of meat, sir.

She eyes the case and the few remaining cuts of meat.

ROSEMARIE  
Shirley.

SAM  
Sirloin?

Rosemarie nods seriously.

SAM  
You got any money?

Rosemarie shakes her head no.

SAM  
I can't give it away, see, not even  
to a stray little lady and her  
bodyguards.

Howard and Jay couldn't like that designation less.

ROSEMARIE  
It's not for me.

SAM  
Who's it for?

ROSEMARIE  
You got to give it to me first or I  
won't tell you.

Sam stares at her. Intrigued by so small a person this intense and complete.

ROSEMARIE

How about something you dropped on the floor?

Sam shakes his head. Goes to the garbage and takes a scrap of fatty meat from the can. Wipes it on his hanging apron.

ROSEMARIE

My Dad. He needs it so he can win a boxing fight.

HOLD on Sam's perplexed expression.

70 OMIT 70

71 EXT. MADISON SQUARE GARDEN BOWL - LONG ISLAND CITY - NIGHT 71

The MARQUEE reads: **PRIMO CARNERA vs. MAX BAER**  
**HEAVY-WEIGHT CHAMPIONSHIP**  
**TITLE FIGHT!**  
**- And 6 Other Fights -**

72 INT. DRESSING ROOM - CONTINUOUS 72

Jim, in his trunks, is staring at his taped hands. Big toe pokes through a patched hole in his sock that has reopened.

JOE (OVER)

I mean, Chrissakes, 55 and 0 once, for God's sake, never been knocked down, who goes and sells his gear?

Joe is rifling locker after locker, emerges carrying someone else's boxing shoes and drops them in front of Jim.

JOE (CONT'D)

Out of my mind here looking for shoes for a fighter.

Jim tries a shoe on. It's big, real big, like a clown's.

BRADDOCK

Maybe I oughta get an Aogga horn, chase him around the ring.

JOE

You been drinking?

BRADDOCK

No.

JOE

Well, you're too loose, you're spooking me.

BRADDOCK

Come on, Joe, we both know what this is, right?

Braddock smiles, a deep, sad smile.

BRADDOCK

I get to put a little more distance between my kids and the street. And say good-bye at the Garden with a full house night of a big fight.

Joe has begun lacing his shoe.

BRADDOCK

What's Griffin gonna show me that I ain't already seen?

There is a loud GROWLING NOISE.

JOE

What the hell was that?

BRADDOCK

They ran out of soup on the line this morning.

JOE

You gotta stay up six rounds. You can't fight on an empty stomach.

73 INT. MSG BOWL - RINGSIDE - DAY

73

DON DUNPHY, the Radio Announcer, is on the air...

DUNPHY

Good Evening! Welcome to tonight's broadcast of the Primo Carnera - Max Baer fight for the heavyweight championship of the world!

The Garden is filling up.

74 INT. DRESSING BOOM - DAY

74

Jim is sitting calmly, waiting. Joe enters, carrying a bowl.

JOE

Hash is all they had. Eat quick.

BRADDOCK  
Where's the spoon?

JOE  
It's not there?

Joe glances at the clock on the wall.

JOE  
You gotta go anyway.

BRADDOCK  
(sniffing again)  
One bite.

Jim starts to dip his hand into the hash.

JOE  
Hey! I don't have time to re-tape  
you!

The door opens and a GARDEN OFFICIAL looks in. He sees Jim  
with his head down in the bowl, eating like a dog.

OFFICIAL  
Good God...

Jim looks up, his face smeared with hash.

OFFICIAL (CONT'D)  
You're on, pal.

Jim looks at Joe.

BRADDOCK  
What about a robe?

Joe shakes his head, looks again to the lockers.

75 INT. RINGSIDE - DAY

75

Sporty Lewis, amidst other reporters, sits ringside, nose up  
against the cloth. All look at their fight programs.

YOUNG REPORTER  
Who's Jim Braddock?

Jim and Joe appear, have begun making their way through the  
crowd in the b.g. Few pay them much attention.

SPORTY  
Get your pencil out, kid. I got  
your lead line for you.  
(MORE)



SPORTY (cont'd)  
The walk from the locker room to  
the ring was the only time tonight  
that old Jim Braddock was seen on  
his feet.

Jim climbs into the ring to warm up. He is wearing a robe  
with the name Fred Carston written on the back.

YOUNG REPORTER  
(even more confused)  
Who's Fred Carston?

76 INT. QUINCY'S BAR - CONTINUOUS 76

Packed with water drinkers. Quincy couldn't be less thrilled.  
A few guys from the dock sit with Kevin as the RADIO warms  
up.

DUNPHY (V.O.)  
...Well! It seems Braddock has come  
out of retirement just for tonight!

All look at each other.

DOCK GUY  
Can't be...

They all look at Kevin, who shakes his head and opens his  
hands, as shocked as everyone else.

77 INT. THE RING - CONTINUOUS 77

The crowd is WILD with CHEERS.

RING ANNOUNCER  
...Corn Griffin.

At 6'2", 210 lbs., GRIFFIN claps his gloves, powerful,  
confident, the "Golden Boy" of heavyweight contenders.

RING ANNOUNCER  
And in this corner, weighing 190  
pounds...

Jim looks down at his own thin frame to see where he is  
carrying that weight.

RING ANNOUNCER (CONT'D)  
...from North Bergen, New Jersey.  
Jim Braddock.

No reaction from the crowd.

GRIFFIN

If you weigh 190, I'm 400.

They touch gloves.

BRADDOCK

Big feet.

78 INT. RING - NIGHT 78

The BELL. Griffin comes out punching hard and fast. Jim is doing all he can to keep the blows from connecting. But Griffin's hands are like a storm coming from everywhere.

It only takes a second to realize this fight was a bad idea. Griffin is in perfect form. His jabs and body shots are perfect. Jim clinches. Corn straightens him with an uppercut.

79 INT. THE CORNER 79

Joe is blocking in time with Jim, his arms and body dancing in an echoing shadow play of the fight. Like the old days.

JOE

Six rounds. Just six rounds.

(shouts)

Stay out of his way!

80 INT. THE RING 80

Griffin throws a right which Jim blocks with his left. Jim seems surprised by his own move.

Griffin throws a haymaker that connects to the side of Jim's head. Jim looks as if he's trying to do a cartwheel. Jim goes down, hard, onto the mat.

81 INT. QUINCY'S BAR - CONTINUOUS 81

DUNPHY (V.O.)

Oh! And Braddock is down! A  
thunderous left hook from Griffin  
sends Braddock to the mat!

MURMURS all around. What else could be expected? Only Kevin gestures for quiet, stares at the radio.

82 INT. THE RING 82

The Ref stands over Jim.

REF

One...Two...three...

JIM-POV. He looks up and impossibly, watches himself getting hit. He runs the moment backwards and forwards in his mind.

REF

Four...five...six...

And Jim finally stands. Shaky on his feet as a new colt, blood streaming from a cut inside his mouth.

REFEREE

It's over, Braddock.

Jim looks over the Ref's head at Griffin. Manages a smile.

BRADDOCK

He don't look that bad!

The Ref shakes his head, starts to raise his hand to stop the fight. Jim puts his gloves on the Ref's arm.

BRADDOCK (CONT'D)

Please. Let me go.

The Ref hesitates then steps aside. Griffin practically runs into Jim's corner. He misses Jim's head but lands a left to the body with an ugly thud. Jim gets in two jabs with the left before the BELL. No one seems more surprised than Jim.

83

INT. THE CORNER - SECONDS LATER

83

Jim's face is swelling with knots. Joe stands in front of him and pours water, which Jim spits out, puts his head down.

JOE

Five more rounds.

BRADDOCK

(not looking up)

I may have seen something.

JOE

Yeah, what? Stars.

As he looks up now, something new in his eyes.

BRADDOCK

What if I stay up more than six rounds?

Joe shoots him a look.

JOE

You hang back or we don't get paid.

Joe shakes his head.

JOE

Jimmy. You just worry about not going down.

84 INT. THE RING - CONTINUOUS 84

The Bell CLANGS.

Jim moves out and Griffin is on him again. A terrible series of blows. Jim's just taking it, waiting for something.

Griffin is knocking him around the ring. Jim is doing his best to dance and stay out of his way. Drawing the punches.

Griffin throws another punch and Jim lands a hard left jab that *pops*. It halts Griffin in his tracks.

85 INT. CORNER - CONTINUOUS 85

Joe was shadow punching, throwing his right. Looks down at his own left hand. More stunned than Griffin.

JOE

What the hell was that?

86 INT. RING - CONTINUOUS 86

That jab just pissed Griffin off. He pounds Jim mercilessly. A series of powerful blows. Body, head, body, body, head, into the ropes. Jim can't even mount a defense, just stares at THE CLOCK, ticking down. Finally, the BELL.

87 INT. QUINCY'S BAR - CONTINUOUS 87

The crowd is riveted.

DUNPHY (V.O )

If ever a man was saved by the bell...

88 INT. THE CORNER 88

Joe is kneeling in front of Jim. He sticks a towel into Jim's mouth and it comes out with bloody flesh on it.

JOE

Here's an idea. If you're gonna dodge him, get out of his way.

BRADDOCK

Got him figured now. I'm gonna give him something to remember me by.

JOE

What? Your teeth. Just get through the round we're halfway there. Jim-

The bell *CLANGS*. Jim stands. Griffin stands.

89

INT. THE RING - CONTINUOUS

89

And this time, Jim goes to him.

Jim throws two hard rights, disengages, keeping his left down. Now Jim moves in, throws a series of rights that connect, disengages again. He is trying to provoke something.

Jim makes another assault. Finally, Griffin throws one of those haymakers, opening up some.

It's the same punch that floored Jim earlier. This time Jim moves, hits him straight in the face with a tremendous left hook.

(OVER) The CROWD shares an intake of BREATH. Griffin just stares at him, as if in shock. The moment lasts. Then Griffin goes down head first, as if his skull has suddenly filled with thoughts too heavy to hold. And he stays there.

Absolute stunned silence. Sporty Lewis is frog-eyed.

90

INT. QUINCY'S BAR - CONTINUOUS

90

DUNPHY

This is unbelievable! Corn Griffin, the number 2 contender in the world, has been knocked out by Jim Braddock in the 3rd round!

Quincy's is utter MAYHEM. In the center of it all, Kevin can't help but grin, shake his head in wonder.

KEVIN

That a boy, Jim. That a boy.

91

INT. MADISON SQUARE GARDEN BOWL - LONG ISLAND CITY - NIGHT 91

The Ref is holding up Jim's hand in triumph. Joe jumps onto Jim's back. The crowd is on their feet, SCREAMING.

92

INT. DRESSING ROOM - LATER

92

Jim, in civvies, finishes that cold hash with a spoon. Door SLAMS and whirlwind Joe blows into the room.

JOE

Jesus, mother and Joseph, Mary and all the saints and martyrs and Jesus, ---did I say Jesus---, where the hell did that left come from?

BRADDOCK

Yeah, you did. Say Jesus.

Their old easy rhythm.

BRADDOCK

(of the spoon)  
Good they invented these.

JOE

The left, Jimmy.

BRADDOCK

Ambidexterity is a useful tool for the modern man.

Jim looks at his own left.

BRADDOCK

When my hand was broke. On the docks. I had to use my left to work.

Opens and closes that fist.

BRADDOCK

Got lucky, I guess.

JOE

That's something you ain't been in a long time.

BRADDOCK

Everybody's due.

JOE

Due or not, I'll take it.

Joe pulls a thick wad of cash out of his pocket. Grins.

JOE

What we got here is a man's living wage.

He peals off a bunch of bills.

JOE (CONT'D)

And here's the price of why your wife hates me.

BRADDOCK

That was on Hash. Imagine what I could have done on steak.

He hands Jim his cash.

JOE

Wipe your mouth. Still remember how to feed the dogs?

Joe has already put his hand on the door, turns back.

JOE (CONT'D)

That was one hell a good-bye.

Joe pulls open the door to several SHOUTING reporters.

JOE

Here boys.

REPORTERS

Braddock! Jim! Braddock!

93

INT. MSG BOWL - OUTSIDE THE DRESSING ROOMS - LATER

93

Jim and Joe are heading down the corridor. They stop at the edge of the ring, look up at the fight that's raging.

MAX BAER, the young lion of the boxing world, is 6'3", 210 beautifully proportioned pounds, handsome. He is fighting...

PRIMO CARNERA, 6'7" 270, an awesome giant and Heavyweight Champion of the World.

JOE

(off Baer)

Imagine *that* hitting you?

BRADDOCK

Hitting you, maybe.

On this theatre in the round, Baer is smashing Carnera to the mat with his fists. Carnera, bloody and beaten, staggers to his feet. Baer arrogantly taunts the giant.

94

INT. THE RING - CONTINUOUS

94

DUNPHY (V.O.)

Primo Carnera has been knocked down for what has to be a record 11 times! And Max Baer struts around the ring in utter contempt of the Heavyweight Champion of the World!

Carnera's massive bulk is heaving with fatigue and shock. He pushes the Ref aside and staggers toward Baer.

Baer waits, smiling, steps out from the corner and blasts Carnera off his feet. Carnera goes down and will not rise.

JOE

Corn Griffin was supposed to fight Baer next.

Jim and Joe can't believe their eyes. The crowd is stunned.

JOE (CONT'D)

He ought to come out here and kiss you on both cheeks for saving him.

The Ref grabs Baer's hand and raises it in triumph. Jim and Joe start away.

BRADDOCK

Which cheeks, by the way?

JOE

Ass, obviously.

PUSH IN ON Sporty, near the ring, watching them go.

95

EXT. BRADDOCK HOUSE - NIGHT

95

Jim stands facing the front door. He hasn't touched the knob when it swings open, Mae standing to face him.

BRADDOCK

I won.

The kids SHOUT in triumph behind her. Mae just stands there, entirely unsure what to say.



96

INT. BRADDOCK HOUSE - MINUTES LATER

96

Jim is staring in awe at the piece of raw meat that Rosemarie is holding up to him.

ROSEMARIE

Put it on your eyes.

BRADDOCK

Where in the world did you get this?

(to Mae)

We don't have money for...

MAE

They snuck off, which we had a long talk about.

(scowls at Rosemarie)

I tried to take it back, but the Butcher said he gave it to her.

ROSEMARIE

It's **Sher**-loin. For your face.

(a tiny Mae)

Fix you right up.

BRADDOCK

Darling, we've got to eat this.

Jay and Howard WHOOP, fully supportive.

ROSEMARIE

No! You have to put it on your face.

Jim looks at the boys, sighs, sits down, tilts his head back, and lays the meat over his eyes.

BRADDOCK

How long do I leave it on?

Mae looks at Rosemarie who shrugs that she doesn't know.

BRADDOCK (CONT'D)

Oooo, I think it's working.

97

INT. BASEMENT APARTMENT - LATER

97

Mae and Jim sit at the table, the money between them. Four plates with steak juice on them.

MAE

Joe got his blood money, I see.

BRADDOCK

Is there a maximum number of times  
a woman can say a thing?

MAE

Nope.

Jim smiles. There is a light in his eyes not seen lately.

MAE

I'll put what's left in the jar.

Jim licks the last bit of steak juice from the plate.

BRADDOCK

You should have seen the way he  
dropped. Timm-berr.

Mae is smiling at him. Everything but her eyes.

BRADDOCK

What?

MAE

It's not I'm not proud or grateful.  
Boxing put food on the table.

Mae takes a beat before going on. Something gathering.

MAE

Hard as it was, we got off easy  
when you broke that hand. What if  
something worse happened? What if  
you couldn't work? We're barely  
managing now.

She is holding his eyes.

MAE

We've got to protect what we have.  
You get hurt-. What happens to us?  
To the kids again? We don't have  
anything extra left, Jim. We don't  
have anything left to risk.

BRADDOCK

I'm not going back to it, Mae. I  
don't even have a license.

He starts to stack the plates.

MAE

I always hated it when you'd walk  
out that door for a fight.

He turns to her, surprised by her words.

MAE

Let a man beat you bloody so you  
could lay money on the table. Come  
home rich or with nothing to show  
but starting all over again. I  
guess I didn't know it then, how  
much I hated it when you fought. It  
was just our lives, just what I was  
used to. But I know it now. We lost  
something when you quit fighting.  
But we got something too. Something  
unexpected. Peace, maybe.

She touches his hand.

MAE

Jim, promise me.

BRADDOCK

It was just one fight.

He heads off with the dishes. She stares after her husband.

98 INT. BASEMENT APARTMENT - CRACK OF DAWN 98

Everyone still asleep. Jim is up, dressed. Everything hurts.

99 EXT. NEWSSTAND - 4:30 AM 99

Jim crosses the street past men coming awake, smoothing slept-  
in clothes, leaving their families still sleeping on stoops.

The familiar NEWSBOY waves editions in the air.

NEWSBOY

U.S. abandons gold standard.  
Underdog Braddock Kayos Griffin.

Jim stands staring at the Boy a beat. Then heads on.

99A EXT. DOCKS - MORNING 99A

Jim's stands at the front of the group. By the looks of  
things he's not getting picked.

JAKE

Eighteen, nineteen, twenty....

Jake spots Jim. A beat. Then the magic finger points his way.

JAKE  
Twenty one.

Jim closes his eyes in relief.

100 EXT. DOCKS - MOMENTS LATER 100

Jim is coming through the gates. A couple of the guys notice him as he passes. Jake to Jim.

JAKE  
Listened in, last night.

GUY  
Hey, Braddock, that really you?

SECOND GUY  
Way to go.

Jake drops a newspaper on one of the containers. HEADLINE:  
AMAZING! BRADDOCK KO'S GRIFFIN IN 3.

JAKE  
Didn't think I'd be seeing you back here again.

BRADDOCK  
One night only. The purse was two fifty. We owed two thirty five.

JAKE  
(laughs)  
Makes you a rich man.  
(serious now)  
Good fight.

Something is stirred in these men. To come up against what you can see and beat it back. Maybe what they all wish for.

Jim just nods, takes his place near Kevin on the line. The two begin working in thick silence. Finally...

KEVIN  
I heard your name. I couldn't even picture you.

The two keep working.

KEVIN  
I would never have hit her.

BRADDOCK

Look, Kevin-

KEVIN

Don't know how I could have lived  
with myself if I had hit her.

Hank's silent nod is apology and gratitude at once.

BRADDOCK

Griffin was tough. But me, I'd  
watch out for your wife.

KEVIN

You get so angry with all of it,  
you got to push somewhere. I'm  
getting things under control.

Jim nods. Hook, haul, drop...

KEVIN

Man. A night like last night. And  
the next day you end up back here.

BRADDOCK

You're good enough company.

KEVIN

You know what I mean.

BRADDOCK

Yeah. Sure I do.

Hook, haul, drop. Endless. Then...

KEVIN

So, how about you talk me through  
that second round?

Jim, a sudden, small fire in his eyes.

BRADDOCK

Griffith comes out of his corner  
like a freight train, I swear...

Jim is using his right hand as he TALKS. Then, with a small  
smile, switches back to his left.

102 EXT. BRADDOCK'S BLOCK - DAY

102

Mae and Rosemarie are heading home, wrapped butcher's paper in Mae's hand. The boys play pink-ball against the ally wall.

MAE

No more. Now, say it, Rosy.

ROSEMARIE

(a rush)

Don't trade daddy's autograph to the butcher for free meat.

Mae bites back her laugh.

MAE

Why can't you ever listen to me?

Rosemarie thinks on it a bit.

ROSEMARIE

(little kid serious)

I don't know.

Mae can't help but smile. Her expression quickly darkens as she sees Joe's familiar car pulling away from their house.

MAE

Go play with the boys.

103 EXT. BRADDOCK BACKYARD - DAY

103

Jim, staring up at the trees. Mae walks out.

MAE

Your daughter is now a celebrity in Sam's butcher shop.

Jim turns, smiles at her. She can see it in his eyes.

MAE

What was he doing here, Jim?

BRADDOCK

Joe thinks the Commission might be willing to reverse their ruling. He thinks he can get me another fight.

Mae says nothing.

BRADDOCK

I'd have to quit working, you know, get back into boxing shape.

He's already in his pocket.

BRADDOCK

He fronted us one hundred and seventy five dollars, Mae. So I could train.

Jim pulls out a wad of cash.

BRADDOCK

This is a second chance. I can get us out of all this.

Mae takes a long beat before speaking.

BRADDOCK

I can start winning again.

MAE

Jimmy. Please. I'm begging you.

BRADDOCK

I'm sorry, Mae.

The moment lasts.

BRADDOCK

This is what I know how to do.

104 EXT. PIER - NEW JERSEY - MORNING 104

Mae is wearing her best, which aren't very good. She boards the ferry, pointed towards Manhattan's silver spires.

105 EXT. EIGHTH AVENUE - NYC - MORNING 105

Mae walks the block, past a group of children on dirty knees, doing laundry in the water runoff at the curb.

WOMAN'S VOICE (OVER)

Go ahead you piece of shit.

Mae looks up. A WOMAN hangs out a brownstone window, SHOUTING, rage so great she seems not to know she is crying.

WOMAN

Go on. We don't need you.

The MAN walking away down the block is holding a small, twine tied suitcase. He doesn't even turn, back bowed by shame.

HOLD on one of the children in the gutter, staring after.

106 EXT. PARK AVENUE - MORNING 106

Mae walks up to a tall Park Avenue apartment building. Stares up the giant stone facade. She heads inside.

107 INT. PARK AVENUE APARTMENT BUILDING - MORNING 107

Another world. Mae travels the finely papered hallway. Touches her tattered clothes self-consciously.

She comes to an apartment door. Checks a scrap of paper from her purse. Matches the door number. She KNOCKS.

Movement inside. Motion at the key hole. Then nothing. Just stillness beyond the portal. She KNOCKS again. Still nothing.

MAE

Open the goddamned door Joe. You're not going to hide in your fancy apartment and use my husband as your punching bag all over again. We're starving and you're taking him from his work and worse than that you're using his dreams just to feed yours and he can't be disappointed like that again do you hear me I won't let you. What the hell kind of man are you-

That's when the door swings slightly open to reveal Joe. They stare at each other in silence.

JOE

I guess you better come in.

Joe opens the door.

A WOMAN (LUCILLE GOULD), stands in an apartment totally empty, only high windows and wood floors. No furniture.

108 INT. GOULD APARTMENT - MOMENTS LATER 108

Joe, Mae and Lucille sit on three folding chairs in the middle of the empty living room, sipping tea.

JOE

How is it?

Joe looks at his wife who nods, smiles.

LUCILLE

Too sweet per usual.



He smiles back, looks at Mae.

JOE

Yours?

Mae nods. She's still off balance.

JOE

(gestures to the door)

Sorry. You just don't want folks to see you down is all. Image is a lot of what you got going in my line.

He gestures to his wife.

JOE

Should have listened to her, just let you in in the first place.

LUCILLE

You should always listen to me.

MAE

I didn't know. I thought....

JOE

Yeah. That's the idea.

(smiles)

Always keep your gloves up.

Mae realizes that's been Joe's saying all along.

JOE

Sold the last of it two days ago.  
So Jimmy could train.

It takes Mae a moment to respond.

MAE

Why?

JOE

Sometimes you see something in a fighter. You don't even know if its real, you're looking for it so bad.

Joe glances out the window.

JOE

You can't have no hope at all. You got to have hope in something. I guess Jimmy's what I hope for.

Mae is startled, had no idea they shared this.

MAE  
This is crazy.

No argument there.

MAE  
You don't even know if you can get  
him a fight, do you?

JOE  
I'll get him a fight.

But we can see that's bravado talking.

JOE  
He's all any of us have left, Mae.

LUCILLE  
Honey, get us some more tea, would  
you?

Joe rises, smiling.

JOE  
I know who wears the pants.

He winks, goes into the kitchen.

LUCILLE  
Can you ever stop yours? When he  
sets his mind to a thing.

MAE  
No. I wish I could. No.

LUCILLE  
I never know who it's harder on,  
them or us? We have to wait for  
them to fix everything. But they  
have to do it. And everyday they  
feel like they're letting us down.  
Like they're failing us. And really  
it's just the world that's failed,  
you know?

Passing clouds dapple sunlight on wooden floors.

MAE  
It's...this is a lovely apartment.

LUCILLE

Yes. It was. Could be again.

The two sit together in silence, sipping tea.

109

INT. JEANNETTE'S GYM - DAY

109

A BOXING BAG-CLOSE. Being hit. Really, really fast. (OVER)  
The loud RINGING beat of a tambourine.

JOE (OVER)

Focus.

WIDER. Jim is killing the bag. Jeanette stands behind him beating a tambourine in Jim's ears. Joe is outside the ring.

BRADDOCK

You get me that fight yet?

JOE

I tell you how to do your job?

BRADDOCK

Yeah.

Jim catches the bag.

JEANNETTE

Now, I got me five fighters  
thinking it would be an honor to  
get their heads beaten in by you.

A few potential sparring partners stand at ringside. Big. White. Strong. Jim looks them up and down.

BRADDOCK

No offense, fellas.

Jim climbs out of the ring. FAVOR JIM as he begins looking around the gym. He's not looking at bodies. He's looking at feet. Finally, he spots a familiar pair of shoes.

TILT UP to George, sparring on a mat. Fists like lightning. Moves the wind would envy. George quits to see Jim staring.

BRADDOCK

Him.

George looks Jim in the eyes. Then past him to Janette.

GEORGE

He's still gonna have to pay me  
even after I whup his ass.

Braddock smiles.

110 INT. JEANNETTE'S GYM - LATER 110

Jim is sparring with George. Jim is fast but George is faster. That left of Jim's, now almost good as his right.

JANETTE

Okay, okay, you got a left, big deal, you gotta pay attention, what is it with you?

Two GIRLS stroll in, ringside. They begin a strip-tease. Jim stays focused. George takes one on the chin.

111 EXT. JEANNETTE'S GYM - DAY 111

Jim is heading home. A perfect summer's day. Kids loll on parked cars. They know him.

VOICE (OVER)

Braddock.

Jim turns to face a familiar figure. Kevin.

KEVIN

Just don't show up for work, one day? Now what kind of pal is that?

Kevin is grinning as he clasps Jim's hand.

BRADDOCK

How you doing, Kevin?

KEVIN

Had to see for myself. Jim Braddock's making a comeback. That's one for the papers.

BRADDOCK

Funny papers more like it. How's Sara and the baby? You keeping up?

Kevin smiles.

KEVIN

I just came to say. After that day at church. I pretty much quit the hootch. Guess I kind of owe you.

BRADDOCK

You don't owe me a thing, Kevin.

KEVIN

So, I mean, you ever need anything.  
A corner man, anything. I'd drop  
the rest in a second. I can pull my  
weight, you know that.

Something about Hank's eyes.

BRADDOCK

Jesus, Kevin. I'm on a stake here.  
I wish I could.

Jim's eyes narrow.

BRADDOCK

You doing okay? Whatever I can  
spare-

KEVIN

Easy, brother, I'm doing fine. Even  
got a few of the boys on the docks  
thinking a union might just be a  
damn good idea. Hell, we'll be the  
first dock with a local.

BRADDOCK

Kevin, you sure?

KEVIN

I'm here offering, son, not asking.  
Unless the picket lines get rough,  
then I'm going to come calling.

BRADDOCK

You can count on me, Kevin.

Kevin puts his hand on Jim's shoulder. A beat. Then he CLAPS  
Jim's back and heads off, SAYING something Jim doesn't catch.

BRADDOCK

What'd you say?

Kevin turns to Jim, eyes warm in the late day sun.

KEVIN

Proud of you, soldier.

Jim watches him go.

112

EXT. MADISON SQUARE GARDEN - DAY

112

Joe looks up the familiar building. Lights the stub of a  
cigar. A beat. He puts on his game face and heads inside.

113 INT. JOHNSTON'S OFFICE - DAY

113

Gould sits across the desk from Jimmy Johnston.

JOHNSTON

Now what am I going to go and do that for?

JOE

You saw the papers. News had to run two printings day after Braddock's fight. People are sentimental.

JOHNSTON

Yeah. So, tell me why I care.

JOE

You're still sore over the way Braddock took down Griffin, okay, fine, I can understand that. But you're on the Commission now.

Joe slips two fresh, expensive cigars from his jacket, slides one across the desk towards Johnston. And he starts to sell.

JOE

Lewis is your number two in line for the Championship. He already beat Braddock once in Frisco. Say you put Braddock back in the game. Set him up against Lewis. Lewis wins, you get your revenge on Braddock, your boy's got more momentum going into the Lasky fight and what happens? You make money.

Joe's words are, impossibly, coming even faster now.

JOE

Now say by some chance, Braddock wins, you got a sentimental favorite to go up and lose against your boy Lasky and what happens? You make money. Either way you're a richer man with Braddock back in the ring than if he's not. And we both know the name of this game...

Joe rubs fingers to thumb, the universal sign for money.

JOE

And it sure as hell isn't boxing.

Johnston shakes his head in awed dismay.

JOHNSTON  
They should put your mouth in a  
circus.

JOE  
Yeah. So what do you say?

Johnston lifts the cigar, turns it over in his hand.

114 OMIT 114

115 INT. JEANNETTE'S GYM - DAY 115

Braddock's sparring with George. Joe comes up behind him.

JOE  
Keep your gloves up.

BRADDOCK  
You gonna do a striptease too?

JOE  
I got you a fight.

That gets his attention. George takes the opening. But Jim blocks it anyway. Holds up his gloves, and George backs off.

116 INT. LOCKER ROOM - SECONDS LATER 116

Joe and Jim stand together. Nearly everyone else in the gym knows what's going on, all give them a wide berth.

JOE  
You're gonna fight John Henry Lewis  
again.

Jim looks at him. Nods.

BRADDOCK  
I could kiss you.

JOE  
I'm begging you not to.

Jim takes a a beat.

BRADDOCK  
Isn't Lewis one of Johnston's boys?

JOE  
You let me worry about that.

BRADDOCK

No wonder you won't pucker up. Bet you're all kissed out all ready.

JOE

I ain't gonna bullshit you. You know the game. Right now you're fodder. But you win one and I can get you another. Win again and things maybe start getting serious.

BRADDOCK

Don't talk about it. I don't like a lot of words about it.

Joe nods, Braddock heads for the door.

JOE

Jimmy.

Jim turns back to him. That old fire in Joe's eyes.

JOE

Win.

117

INT. BUTCHER SHOP - AFTERNOON

117

Sam is weighing up some ham when the bell over the door TINGLES. He peers over the counter and sees Rosemarie standing there with her two stoic bodyguards.

ROSEMARIE

What would it be worth to you if I could get my dad to shake your hand?

118

EXT. BRADDOCK APARTMENT - EVENING

118

Jim stands out front, facing Mae in this perfect summer evening. A few city crickets SING.

BRADDOCK

I know this isn't what you wanted.

He looks down. Back up at her.

BRADDOCK

But I can't win if you're not behind me.

An endless beat.



MAE

I'm always behind you.

She leans in and kisses him. As Mae's face moves OUT OF FRAME Jim is hit from the other side by a hard glove. WIDEN...

119 INT. BOXING RING - MADISON SQUARE GARDEN - NYC - NIGHT 119

A fist snaps Jim's head back with a left. Then another. Then another. WIDEN FURTHER...

JOHN HENRY LEWIS, black, at 6'1" and 190 pounds with a perfect physique, rips into Jim with a series of combinations. He's a fighter ahead of his time, fast, lethal.

DUNPHY (OVER)

Lewis the uncrowned heavyweight champ, having beaten Rosenbloom twice in nontitle fights, is here to repeat his Frisco performance.

His speed is dazzling. His force, impossible. But Jim is showing surprising footwork, mounting a remarkable defense.

DUNPHY

And beat Jim Braddock.

Jim suddenly comes in with a hard left of his own. Then another. And another. Lewis is surprised.

The rule is set, no ground will be given on either side.

INT. LEWIS CORNER - MOMENTS LATER

Lewis is breathing hard. His COACH stands over him.

COACH

Come on. What are you doing? You beat this guy easy last time.

LEWIS

He's a different guy.

120 INT. BRADDOCK CORNER - SAME MOMENT 120

Jim is slumped on his stool. Joe is trying to rub some life into Jim's arms.

BRADDOCK

Faster than I thought.

JOE

You gotta keep moving right, fast,  
always right, he favors the jab.  
Jim, you listening?

BRADDOCK

Yeah. I'll move fast.

121 INT. RING - LATER

121

Jim and Lewis stand trading blow for blow. It's impossible that either man is still standing. Jim is on the aggressive. He stalks Lewis who dances away, now seems wary of Jim.

DUNPHY (V.O.)

And they are still toe to toe, no one is giving an inch! I have never seen a fight this ferocious go on for this long!

Lewis knocks Jim back with a lethal combination. Jim throws a sudden uppercut. Lewis goes down on one knee.

Jim steps back.

The Ref is counting.

The crowd is ROARING.

Lewis gets up.

The Ref waves Jim in.

Jim staggers back to center ring and HAMMERS Lewis again. One, two, three jabs. Lewis can't keep his guard up.

Jim goes to the body and then throws a powerful right to the head and Lewis is KNOCKED OUT OF FRAME.

The crowd EXPLODES.

JIM-CLOSE. Realizing he has won. His head is snapped back by a powerful white fist. WIDEN TO REVEAL....

122 INT. RING - MADISON SQUARE GARDEN - NYC - 1935 - NIGHT

122

Jim is now fighting Art Lasky. Lasky is moving in fast. What's dazzling about Lasky is the combination of force and endurance. Jim's landing punch after punch with no effect.

DUNPHY (VO)

After his dazzling victory against John Henry Lewis, the comeback of Jim Braddock has just hit a wall named Art Lasky. In the ninth...

Lasky has Jim in a corner and he is pounding bone jarring shots into Jim's ribs. Jim can't seem to find the punches before they connect.

FLASH - Jim standing in the parking lot after being decommissioned.

FLASH - Joe splinting Jim's wrist.

FLASH - Jim sells his shoes and gloves.

Jim endures a storm of punches to the head and body. (OVER) The bell CLANGS.

Lasky walks to his corner with his hands raised in triumph!

123

INT. BRADDOCK'S CORNER - MOMENTS LATER

123

A CORNERMAN works on Jim, bleeding from his nose. Jim stares up at the ceiling lights which suddenly drop towards him.

JOE

Where are you?

Jim looks up, the lights right where they should be.

JOE

Where are you?

No response. Jim's expression is dark, dazed.

JOE

You look like you're dreaming. What the hell are you thinking about out there? Come, on, Jim.

The WARNING BUZZER sounds. Jim gets slowly up.

JOE (CONT'D)

Focus. Jim. Focus. What the hell are you even fighting for?

Jim takes a different meaning. New eyes look up at Joe.

BRADDOCK

...Milk.

Jim stands, heads out.

JOE (CONT'D)

What? Shit...

124 INT. RING - LATER

124

Lasky has Jim in the corner again. Jim has his arms down, his elbows in tight, trying to protect his ribs.

DUNPHY (V.O.)

It's like a funeral here as Art  
Lasky puts an end to a story that's  
been getting a lot of attention...

Jim has left his head completely unprotected. Lasky sees his opening and connects flush on Jim's temple with an enormous right hook that makes Jim spit out his mouthpiece.

The most powerful punch Lasky has. The most powerful punch most folks in the audience have ever seen. All grow silent.

Jim just stands there, holding Lasky's eyes.

FLASH - Jim hooks a bale of rice.

FLASH - Jim counting the meager change in his hand in front of Madison Square Garden, head bowed in shame.

FLASH - Jim hooks a bale of rice.

FLASH - Mae putting on sweater over sweater on the kids in their freezing apartment, ice on the inside of the windows.

FLASH - Jim hooks a bale of rice.

FLASH - Mae adding tap water to almost empty milk bottles for the kids breakfast.

FLASH - Bale, after bale after bale.

Jim doesn't fall. He turns, walks calmly across the ring and lifts the mouthpiece.

DUNPHY (OVER)

Braddock just took Lasky's best  
punch and it didn't even phase him.  
He's showing inhuman determination.

Braddock grins, moves in on Lasky. Lasky tries to go for the clinch but Jim gives him an upper cut, won't let him in.

125 RING - HIGH ANGLE - ONE SHOT

125

All the punches in all the coming rounds are seen in a single flurry, hooks, dabs, clinches all one continuous bout while (OVER) DUNPHY clocks us through rapidly passing time.

DUNPHY (OVER)  
Round thirteen...

Jim jabs from a distance; Jim lands punches on the inside.

DUNPHY (OVER)  
Round fifteen...

Jim lands THUDDING rights; goes to the body; pounds the youngster against the ropes. The REF separates them, the CROWD CHEERING.

DUNPHY (OVER)  
This is incredible. Braddock will  
not be denied.

Jim is on him again; a series of lethal punches sends Lasky back, ropes the only thing keeping him up. The BELL.

BACK TO SCENE

The crowd is on it's feet. The fighters are still in the middle of the ring.

FIND Joe looking at Jim. He offers a little bow.

FIND Jim looking at Joe. He winks.

REF  
And the winner is...

The NOISE of the crowd becomes a ROAR.

126 INT. ATLANTIC CITY - HOTEL ROOM - NIGHT

126

The Atlantic CRASHES below giant windows. Max Baer sips pink champagne with two SHOW GIRLS. A MAN sticks his head in.

MAN  
Max, Jim Braddock just beat Lasky.

Baer offers a slow, malevolent smile.

BAER  
Remember that name. Because nobody  
else will.

127 INT. MADISON SQUARE GARDEN - NYC - LOCKER ROOM - NIGHT 127

Jim faces Joe who's stripping his hands. (OVER) A KNOCK.

JOE

I said wait! Hounds of goddamned hell.

BRADDOCK

That's redundant by the way.

Joe shoots him a look, goes back to unwrapping.

JOE

You know what this means?

BRADDOCK

Don't.

JOE

Not that again.

Joe's eyes turn serious. (OVER) Another KNOCK.

JOE

That's three contenders. You're in line again.

Remember these words. So long ago. No smiles this time.

BRADDOCK

Don't, Joe. Don't jinx it.

He's serious. Shakes his head.

JOE

Like before, huh?

BRADDOCK

No. Last time we didn't know enough to be scared.

Joe pulls open the door to the now giant gaggle of reporters.

128 INT. BRADDOCK APARTMENT - NIGHT

128

Jim ENTERS, in his hand a dozen red roses. His smile quickly dissolves. REVERSE ANGLE.

Sara sits with her baby girl, her eyes red from crying. The infant has a hacking COUGH.

MAE

Kevin's gone missing.

Jim walks over to Mae, away from the kids relegated to the bed, straining hard to listen.

BRADDOCK

How long?

SARA

Two days. I've been staying at my brother's since he stopped working-

BRADDOCK

Stopped working? When?

SARA

Jake cut him about a week after you left. Word got around. You know how Kevin gets. So much trouble.

She touches her baby's face, as if she sees Kevin there.

BRADDOCK

He said he was doing fine. That he quit drinking.

SARA

Kevin never quit a thing in his life.

She looks up at Jim again.

SARA

He was always just too damn proud to ask for anybody's help. Had to be the one to fix everything. But I made him promise he'd ask you, Jim.

The barest hint of accusation in her VOICE.

SARA

Didn't he come to you, Jim? That son of a bitch. Didn't he?

BRADDOCK

Don't know, Sara. Maybe he did.

Mae touches her arm, setting free the rest of the words.

SARA

He's been sleeping nights down in the Hooversville. My brother didn't have room for both him and us.

She's rocking the baby, now, maybe as much rocking herself.

SARA

Yesterday, he's supposed to bring money to get some syrup for the baby. He never showed up.

She's trying to keep the fear out of her VOICE.

SARA

Tonight, I go down to Quincy's, and he isn't there. Something's wrong, Jim. I know it. He'd never miss one of your fights. He just wouldn't.

He stares at her. Surprised by this.

SARA

We argue a lot, you know? But I should have known...the way he left the last time...how he said it.

Sara isn't even aware that she's started to cry again.

SARA

I give up, he says. I don't know what to go up against anymore, Sara. I just give up.

MAE

Baby has croup, Jim, I can hear it in his cough.

Mae glances at the cash in the rainy day jar. Jim nods.

BRADDOCK

You and Mae go down to the Rexall, get something to fix her up. I'll go see if I can't round up Kevin.

Jim heads towards the door.

JAY

Dad. Did you win?

He looks back at his son. Everyone's forgotten.



BRADDOCK

Yeah. I did.

He closes the door behind him. Rosemarie stares after him.

ROSEMARIE

It's the meat.

129 OMIT 129

130 EXT. CENTRAL PARK WEST - NIGHT 130

As a cab pulls away in the b.g., Jim walks to the edge of the park. Here, a few men are being hustled into a horse drawn police wagon. More cops stand by on sweaty mounts. Tense air.

Under their watchful eyes of the police, an odd evacuation is being concluded. The last of hundreds of sheep are being herded from the park into immense coral wagons.

Braddock stares a beat. Then turns and heads into the park.

131 EXT. HOOVERSVILLE - NIGHT 131

A sea of shanty huts, many made of cardboard, stretch far as the eye can see. The whole world is lit by the flickering glow of trash can fires. Jim walks down the winding path, deeper into the park and this burning city of the damned.

Hundreds of people. All men. Some wear suits and ties. Sit around broken card tables, old furniture spitting stuffing.

It begins to rain.

Jim approaches a MAN standing with a few others, cooking something over a trash can fire. Hard to tell exactly what.

BRADDOCK

Excuse me.

They look at him. Two actually tip their hats.

MAN ONE

Evening, sir. Offer you a bite to eat. It's fresh.

A second man reaches forward with a bottle. Jim just shakes his head, smiles.

BRADDOCK

Is there someone in charge?

He just looks at him, smiles.

MAN ONE

Ain't that the question of the day?

The others CHUCKLE.

MAN ONE

Frank Wilson. City National. What  
can I do you?

Jim shakes his hand.

BRADDOCK

I'm looking a friend of mine.  
Name's Kevin Wilson.

MAN ONE

Doesn't ring any bells. How long?

BRADDOCK

A few weeks. Maybe a month.

MAN ONE

Newest folks are on the outside.  
Oldest in the middle. Seniority.

BRADDOCK

Thanks.

Jim starts into his pocket. The Man just shakes his head.

MAN ONE

Don't mention it.

He turns back to the others and they continue to cook.

132

INT. HOOVERVILLE - LONG NIGHT - SERIES OF DISSOLVES 132

Jim walks past two open tents with red crosses on them. He  
looks inside. Men COUGH, their lungs wet with tuberculosis.

BRADDOCK

(calling)  
Kevin? Kevin?

DISSOLVE TO:

Jim walks the meadow near the lake where a few HOOKERS sell  
their wares for pennies.

BRADDOCK

(calling)  
Kevin Wilson?

HOOKER

You can call me anything you want.

She is perfectly beautiful. No older than twelve.

DISSOLVE TO:

Jim has walked deeper still, now near the fountain. More history, here, shanties in orderly rows.

BRADDOCK

(calling)

Kevin! Kevin!

A larger FIRE burns in the distance, seemingly from the very center of the park itself. Jim heads towards the glow.

DISSOLVE TO:

The rain has increased as Jim closes on the blaze, still roaring despite the downpour. Water streams off his face.

BRADDOCK

(calling)

Kevin Wilson! Kevin!

VOICE (OVER)

Jim. Over here. Jim.

Jim spins. But it isn't Kevin at all. Just some FELLOW who looks up at him over raccoon eyes.

FELLOW

Braddock, right?

Jim manages a smile.

FELLOW

Seen you fight.

Jim looks around. He has come to Sheep's Meadow. Here men feed the immense fire, in constant battle with the rain.

Many huddlers have come for the heat. But on the fire's edge, MEN are laid on make shift stretchers, others tending to them. The ground is torn up. Something happened here.

BRADDOCK

(hardly aware)

Hell's come to New York.

FELLOW

Yes, sir. That's for sure.

Jim seems startled that the fellow is still trailing him.

FELLOW

Cops came in and took out the sheep. Said they were getting reports we was eating them.

Braddock looks at this man, fire reflecting in his eyes.

FELLOW

Civilized people, wouldn't eat the sheep.

Jim looks around. This world here seems far from civilized.

FELLOW

Come in to clear em out. Loud, all that.... What's it called?

BRADDOCK

...Bleating?

FELLOW

A few guys got all up in arms. Got little time for politics, myself. Said flatties can't take the sheep. Said it was a point of civic pride.

Jim is looking around, at the men laying by the side of the fire. Cuts, bruises. But a few broken arms and legs too.

FELLOW

Cops bring more cops. On horses. Horses get spooked.

Not far away, two young MEN in white coats carry something under a sheet to a wagon marked with a red cross. A body.

FELLOW

You know how much force a horse's hoof comes down on you with...

Jim looks past them, to maybe six more sheet covered bodies on the ground, now covered with ice.

FELLOW

More than ten tons. I'm an actuary by trade. They died fighting. Less maybe they was drunk. Hey-

Jim has moved to the bodies, begins lifting sheets in the rain, blank faces, men with nothing left, not even breath.

## WHITE COAT

Pal, you don't want to do that.

Jim pulls away another sheet. Lightning flashes. There, below him, a familiar face. Kevin. Still as silence.

HOLD on Jim as he lowers his head. Lightning flashes again.

133 INT. MADISON SQUARE GARDEN - PRESS CONFERENCE - DAY 133

Jim looks up, now seated beside Mae and Joe at a press table facing a room of REPORTERS. Bulbs FLASH. Shouted QUESTIONS.

## REPORTER

Jim, how does it feel to be back in line for the Championship?

Jim seems to be far off for a moment. Shakes it off.

## BRADDOCK

Well it ain't too bad, I can tell you. Except for your baked wind.

Folks LAUGH. They like him.

## REPORTER

Are you grateful to be back in boxing?

Jim takes a beat before answering.

## BRADDOCK

What kind of world is it, a man can shovel coal all night and not make a living wage but can get his face beat in for two hundred dollars? Think of all the people who'd give anything for a shot at that kind of cash. Am I grateful?

Jim stares at the crowd of Reporters.

## BRADDOCK

I'm a lot of things. And I guess grateful's one of them too.

## REPORTER

Baer says he's worried he's going to kill you in the ring. What do you say?

Jim glances at Mae, almost imperceptible.

BRADDOCK

Who's Baer?

REPORTER

Any comment on Max's record?

BRADDOCK

Has he fought before? I didn't hear.

REPORTER

What changed, Jimmy? You couldn't win a fight for love or money. How do you explain your comeback?

BRADDOCK

Maybe I know what I'm fighting for, this time around.

REPORTER

Yeah? What's that?

Something changes in Jim's eyes as he says what follows.

BRADDOCK

Maybe I just got tired of the empty milk bottles.

The next VOICE comes from a familiar face. Sporty Lewis.

SPORTY

Mrs. Braddock. How do you feel about the fact that Max Baer has killed two men in the ring?

HOLD on Mae. The moment lasts.

SPORTY

Mrs. Braddock, are you scared for your husband's life?

BRADDOCK

She's scared for Baer is who she's scared for.

But there's no laughter in Jim's eyes as he locks on Sporty.

JOE

Okay, that's it boys. Save some ink for the baseball scores.

HOLD on Mae, trying to mask her anxiety.

134 INT. MADISON SQUARE GARDEN - PRESS ROOM - MINUTES LATER 134

Jim and Mae are positioned in two chairs before a giant movie camera and a DIRECTOR.

DIRECTOR

Can you sit to the right a little,  
Mrs. Braddock? Closer to Jim.

Mae obliges. She looks even more like a dear in the headlights. Joe watches from the sidelines.

DIRECTOR

Okay, let's give this a try.

135 INT. MADISON SQUARE GARDEN - PRESS ROOM - NEWSREEL FOOTAGE 135

Mae and Jim sit posed, their images grainy black and white.

MAE

We've had a lean year. But Jim's  
comeback's made all the-

DIRECTOR (OVER)

Don't look directly at the camera  
Mrs. Braddock-

136 INT. MADISON SQUARE GARDEN - PRESS ROOM - NEWSREEL FOOTAGE 136

MAE

But Jim's comeback has done so much  
for me and the kids-

DIRECTOR (OVER)

Try saying comeback slower-

137 INT. MADISON SQUARE GARDEN - PRESS ROOM - NEWSREEL FOOTAGE 137

MAE

I'm so proud of him and-

DIRECTOR (OVER)

Look at Jim and tell him how proud  
you are, okay? Mrs. Braddock?

Mae looks like she's barely hanging on.

MAE

Jimmy...

She stands abruptly and walks to the corner. Jim is up after her, standing close, WHISPERING words of comfort.

HOLD on the two empty chairs.

138

INT. BOXING CLUB - JOHNSTON'S OFFICE - LATER

138

Old wood and enough smoke to black out the noon-time sun. Joe and Jim ENTER to find Jimmy Johnston at his desk.

BRADDOCK

Boy, I hate this place.

JOE

Said downstairs you wanted to see us.

JOHNSTON

Gould. ...Jim.

Johnston lays a Daily News on the desk, opens it to the editorial page.

JOHNSTON

Right here, editorial says this fight is good as murder and everyone associated with it should be hauled into court and prosecuted afterwards.

Joe says nothing.

JOHNSTON

So, if I'm going to promote this fight, I'm going to do it with a clean conscience.

JOE

You're all heart.

Johnston ignores him, looks straight at Jim.

JOHNSTON

You will know exactly what you're up against and my attorney Mr. Mills will witness I have done everything in my power to warn you.

BRADDOCK

I saw the Carnera fight.

Johnston moves to the projector, kills the lights. Mr. Mills is striped with sneaking blind light.

JOHNSTON

Carnera's height saved him.



JOE

He was knocked down 12 times.

JOHNSTON

Exactly. It would have been worse if he was shorter. Baer had to punch up to hit him which took a little off.

Johnston turns on the projector.

JOHNSTON (CONT'D)

But it's not just the size, it's the style. A guy that can run, or bob and weave, he's got a little better chance of cutting the power of Baer's punches. Otherwise...

The wall behind Johnston's desk flickers with murky images. Johnston focuses the lens we see:

ON THE WALL.

Max Baer fighting FRANKIE CAMPBELL.

JOHNSTON

That's Frankie Campbell. Stand up fighter, good jab. His style familiar, Jim? Like looking in a mirror, huh?

JOE

He don't need to see this.

JOHNSTON

You'll see it or I'm calling off the fight.

Campbell steps forward with a good left jab.

Baer counters with a right, a punch with a strange and awesome power.

Campbell is completely spun around and collapses. He lies on the canvas, his eyes open, a blank stare.

The Ref kneels over Campbell as his corner men scramble under the ropes.

JOHNSTON

Killed Campbell on the spot.

Joe looks away. But Braddock is focused, stepping forward.

BRADDOCK

Run it again.

Johnston appraises Jim, then rewinds, begins running the film again. The same death waltz on the screen.

ON THE WALL

Baer is fighting Campbell again. But this time as Jim steps forward, he ENTERS the screen to stand in the ring with them.

139 INT. RING - SAN FRANCISCO - BAER FIGHT 139

The fight we just saw. Campbell steps forward with that jab. But this time it's color. And Jim is watching in the ring.

Baer counters with his right. Campbell spins right in front of Jim then goes down at his feet. Eyes wide.

The Ref and cornermen push past Jim, shoving him aside as they lean over Campbell's lifeless body.

JOHNSTON (OVER)

Autopsy said his brain was knocked loose from the supporting tissue.

Jim turns towards the VOICE and he is back in...

140 INT. BOXING CLUB - JOHNSTON'S OFFICE 140

Johnston turns the lights back on.

JOHNSTON

Remember Ernie Schaff, stand up fighter, nice guy. Took one of those on the chin from Baer. Ernie was dead and didn't know it. He woke up later, got another fight, and a little pitty pat jab put him back to sleep forever. Detached brain, they said.

Johnston stares at Joe and Jim.

JOHNSTON

Joe? No snappy comeback.

JOE

Guess it ain't my skull guy's going to try and stove in.

The way Joe looks at Jim you know what he's saying; it's okay Jimmy, you don't have to take this fight.

JOHNSTON

Want to think about it?

BRADDOCK

You think you're telling me something? Sitting there with all the cash you need to make the right choice? You think digging a bridge or working nights on the scaffolds or living in cardboard isn't likely to get a guy killed? Some guy just trying to feed his family. Only nobody's figured how to make a buck seeing if those guys are gonna die.

Jim's smile is fierce.

BRADDOCK

My profession. I'm more fortunate.

Jim is holding Johnston's eyes.

BRADDOCK

So, I guess I've thought about it all I'm going to.

JOHNSTON

All right then.

He hits the lights. His duty discharged. Slides a card across the table.

JOHNSTON

You guys eat here tonight. Take your wives. On me. We'll snap some pics on your way out. You change your mind tomorrow, least we got some good press out of it.

And with that Johnston turns and looks out the window.

JOE

Guess that means we're dismissed.

JOHNSTON

(without turning)  
Yes. It does.

Jim reaches into his pocket, pulls out two bills and some change. Lays them on the desk.

BRADDOCK

It ain't a bribe.

Johnston looks at him.

BRADDOCK

Two bucks ten. I already paid back  
everybody else.

141 EXT. GAGE AND TOLNERS RESTAURANT - FULTON STREET - NIGHT 141

Once the hub of Brooklyn nightlife. Joe and Lucille and Jim  
and Mae. Dressed to the nines. Hard not to be excited.

JOE

Oh yes, oh yes. Fine women and fine  
wine, that's our due.  
(to no one in particular)  
On the way out boys, on the way  
out.

Lucille shoots Mae a look that says, men. Mae manages a  
smile, but she's tense. They head through the revolving door.

142 INT. GAGE AND TOLNERS RESTAURANT - NIGHT 142

Still the same today. Long rows of intimate wooden booths lit  
by oil lamps on red carpeted floors.

FAVOR a waiter as he carries a tray of martinis down the red  
carpeted aisle and finds our four finishing their meals.

LUCILLE

All right, Captain Blood. Let them  
**see** the movie why don't you?

The CIGARETTE GIRL arrives with a newspaper. Apparently  
ordered by Joe.

JOE

Thanks doll. Put it on our tab. And  
take yourself two bits.

BRADDOCK

Big spender.

JOE

Yeah. Johnston is.

Joe opens the paper.

JOE

Little bird told me to check the  
evening edition. Let's see here.  
(reading)

(MORE)

JOE (cont'd)  
 Boxer Jim Braddock has come back  
 from the dead to change the face of  
 courage in our nation...

BRADDOCK  
 Who the hell wrote that?

Joe smiles a you'll never believe it smile.

JOE  
 Sporty Lewis.

BRADDOCK  
 You're full of it.

JOE  
 Yeah. But that don't make it true.

Joe shakes the paper at Jim. Resumes reading.

JOE  
 In a land that's downtrodden,  
 Braddock's inspirational  
 performance is giving hope to the  
 average American.  
 (grinning)  
 He's a Cinderella Man.

BRADDOCK  
**Cinderella** Man? That guy really  
 does hate me.

MAE  
 I like it. It's girly.

BRADDOCK  
 Oh, this is going to be fun.

The WAITER arrives, reaches in to clear. Mae's eyes dart  
 upwards, catching her husband's. Unspoken code.

MAE  
 Jim.

BRADDOCK  
 Not quite done here, friend.

As he vanishes, Mae takes a stack of napkins from her bag.  
 She begins folding up food scraps, putting them in her purse.

JOE  
 Ask me, I miss prohibition. All  
 that button shining, just as much  
 drinking but a lot more fun...

Mae is the first to see the familiar MAN come through the front doors, heading for the bar.

JOE

There was this little booze foundry  
down on Anne Street-

MAE

(off the door)

Jimmy.

The GIRLS walking with him both are perfect in those days before that term was defined by surgery.

Their escort is literally a giant. He's wearing a white fur coat, LAUGHING through bright, white teeth. Max Baer.

BRADDOCK

You think Johnston set it up? Few  
extra pics for the dailies.

Baer has spotted them. His eyes grow cold as his smile widens. He turns back to the bartender.

JOE

Maybe just bad luck.

BRADDOCK

His or ours?

LUCILLE

Did you ever go to a speakeasy,  
Mae?

But Mae can't take her eyes off him. Huge hands. Deadly.

BRADDOCK

Mae...?

WAITER (OVER)

From the gentleman at the bar.

Mae looks up to see the Waiter holding a bottle of champagne.

WAITER

Mr. Baer said to wish you Bon  
Voyage.

Jim is staring at Mae. The blood has run out of her face.

BRADDOCK

(rising)

Excuse me a second.

JOE

Jimmy-

But Braddock is already up. FAVOR him as he walks across to the bar. Folks notice what's going on, go quiet, watchful.

143 INT. GAGE AND TOLLNER'S RESTAURANT - BAR - SECONDS LATER 143

Jim reaches Baer who is watching him come, already rising to greet him, all broad smiles and teeth. The men shake.

BAER

If it ain't Cinderella Man.

BRADDOCK

Excuse me, Mr. Baer. You keep saying in the papers how you're gonna kill me in the ring. You're upsetting my family.

Max leans in, close, his tone unexpected.

BAER

Listen to me Braddock, I'm asking you sincerely not to take this fight. People admire you. You seem like a decent fellow. I really don't want to hurt you.

Max is staring down into Jim's eyes. He really is concerned.

BAER

There's no such thing as a fairy tale. It's just a name spun to find solace in other people's hardship.

That's when both of them are illuminated by photo flashes.

VOICE'S

Max! Jim! Max!

A FEW PHOTOGRAPHERS have rushed in from outside, now SNAPPING shots of the two. Baer disengages, suddenly all LOUD bravado.

BAER

You know I was thinking, smart thing would be to take a fall. Circus act's over, old man.

Jim locks eyes with Baer.

BRADDOCK  
I think I'll try going a few rounds  
with the dancing bear.

JOE (OVER)  
Okay...

Joe has arrived. Mae and Lucille stand not far behind him.

JOE  
Let's keep it in the ring.

Baer's eyes grow lethal.

BAER  
Cinderella's a fairy tale. You  
should talk to him, lady. You are  
sure too pretty to be a widow.

The two Girls TITTER.

JOE  
(to Jim)  
Stay cool.

BAER  
On second thought, maybe I can  
comfort you after he's gone.

Joe's on Baer like a tiny, rabid dog. One shove sends Joe to  
the ground. Jim is in Baer's face. The taller man grins down.

A storm of flash bulbs from the photographers. The moment  
lasts, endless. Joe is up in an instant, between them.

JOE  
Let it go, Jim. I'm fine.

Jim isn't moving.

JOE  
(ring voice)  
Let. It. Go.

A long beat. Jim steps aside. Baer LAUGHS. He and the girls  
turn back to the bar. Baer catches Mae's eyes. He smiles.

144 INT. BASEMENT APARTMENT - DAY

144

Jim is with the boys. Mae is washing up in the kitchen.



BRADDOCK  
(demonstrating)  
Never take your eyes off your  
opponent. Always follow me.

MAE  
(not turning)  
That's enough, now.

Jim glances up at Mae.

JAY  
What about the left, Dad?

Howard feints a straight jab at Jay.

HOWARD  
Like that?

MAE  
(shouting)  
I said that's enough.

All turn to her, stunned. She stares at them a beat.

MAE  
No boxing in the house, no boxing  
out of the house. No boxing. They  
are going to stay in school. They  
are going to be lawyers or doctors,  
they are not going to get their  
skulls smashed in, do you hear?

And with that she is gone, out the back door.

145 INT. BRADDOCK BEDROOM - NIGHT

145

Mae stands with her back to him as Jim emerges.

MAE  
All the things we lost, we couldn't  
do anything about.

She turns to face him.

MAE  
I won't lose you too.

She looks at her husband.

MAE

You remember what you told me Kevin said. About dreams coming true? Then that walk that you dreamed?

BRADDOCK

It was a coincidence.

MAE

I keep waking up with one. Me and the kids in a new house all taken care of by people who feel sorry for us. I even see the kitchen. It's got green wood walls. But you're dead Jim. Baer kills you.

BRADDOCK

It's just a dream, Mae.

MAE

We've got enough now. What is it, the papers? Joe? You have to show the world?

Jim just shakes his head.

BRADDOCK

We were down, all I'd do every second is wonder how I lost my edge, what I did wrong. So I could figure how to make it right again.

MAE

Jim, can't you see, maybe you never did anything wrong? Maybe it wasn't your fault? Just bad luck. It comes. Even to good people. Look around for God's sake. There aren't always reasons.

Jim takes a long beat before answering.

BRADDOCK

I know, Mae. I say it's the milk this time that better's my chances. Or that we're hungry, or the left. But in my heart I know it's all those things and none of them. I know I didn't deserve to lose before. And I don't deserve to win now. But I might, win, Mae.

(MORE)

BRADDOCK (cont'd)

In my heart I know that nothing's really changed, that all this is is another chance to fight. And I have to fight.

He's looking at her, trying to find the right words.

BRADDOCK

See I have to believe I have some say over my life. That sometimes, I can change things. If I don't...

You can hear Kevin's name without him even saying it.

BRADDOCK

You're right. So much of all of it is luck. But if you lay down, how's your luck ever going to change?

He looks outside the window.

BRADDOCK

I know you think it's selfish. Maybe so. But it's not for Joe or the papers or anyone else.

He looks back at her, this woman, his life.

BRADDOCK

Not even you.

She stares at him.

BRADDOCK

I have to fight-

MAE

Jim, it's just a goddamned boxing match-

BRADDOCK

I'm not talking about boxing.

She stares at him a long beat.

BRADDOCK

I need something I can come up against.

MAE

Jim, this isn't a fairy tale.

Jim's smile is philosophical.

BRADDOCK

Who knows, Mae? You got to figure they can't much feel like fairy tales. If you're inside of them.

MAE

Stop it. You lose this fight, you're going to die.

She just stares at him.

MAE

You train, Jim, all you want. Make a show of it for yourself, for the papers. But you find a way out of that fight. Break your hand again if you have to. But if you set foot out of this door to fight Max Baer.

Mae hold her husband's eyes.

MAE

I can't say I'll be here if you come back.

Jim stares at her.

MAE

I have to do something, Jim. I can't just stand by.

Jim's smile is bittersweet.

BRADDOCK

That's what I'm saying, Mae. That's just what I'm trying to say.

The two face each other in silent impasse.

146 EXT. FUNERAL - DAY

146

Perfect autumn. A casket is lowered slowly into the ground. Find Mae, face wet with tears, the children at her side.

Sara, infant in her arms, stands a few feet off, taking small comfort from Jim's WHISPERED words.

Jim heads back to his wife and children. HOLD on Mae, staring past him, to this fatherless family's endless days ahead.

147

INT. GYM - MORNING

147

Jim and George spar. Jim is wearing a flak jacket. Joe stands with Jeanette outside the ring.

JOE

How's he doing?

JEANNETTE

He's faster than he's ever been,  
that's for sure.

Joe says nothing. Watches Braddock a beat.

JOE

He's old, he's arthritic and his  
ribs are pure glass.

Jeanette can't help but nod. Somebody comes up, WHISPERS in Joe's ear. Joe nods.

JOE

Press is here. Peal that rig off or  
Baer'll see you got a rib problem.

Braddock nods warily. Strips off his flak jacket.

JEANNETTE

They say Baer, in the ring, he's  
like the devil. Sees everything.

148

INT. GYM - MORNING - LATER

148

Jim spars again with George, now no vest. A few reporters stand by the practice ring, SNAPPING pictures.

George feints and lands a haymaker dead on Jim's chin. Hard.

REPORTER

That was Baer it would have killed  
him.

ON THE REPORTERS. See the knowledge of this as it clouds Sporty's face. He turns away.

149

INT. BRADDOCK APARTMENT - DAY

149

Mae stands over a newspaper spread flat on the kitchen table. Her expression is dark, closed.

The door swings open and Jim ENTERS from the gym. He looks up at her. Tension here as, wordlessly, she turns to the stove.

Jim crosses to the table.

NEWSPAPER-CLOSE: WORLD CHAMPIONSHIP FIGHT TONIGHT. PUSH IN on the secondary headline: MANY WORRY FOR BRADDOCK'S LIFE.

150-152 OMIT 150-152

153 EXT. MADISON SQUARE GARDEN BOWL - LONG ISLAND CITY - EVENING 153

People are lining up. Many look as if they are spending their last dime for tickets.

154 INT. QUINCY'S BAR - EVENING 154

Folks are gathering around a radio. At a table by herself, Sara sits rocking her sleeping child.

155 INT. BUTCHER SHOP - EVENING 155

Sam hangs the closed sign. Goes behind the counter, glances up at an autographed photo of Jim, turns on the radio.

156 EXT. DOCKS - EVENING 156

Jake opens the gates and folks gather around a radio he's set up on a long cord on the docks.

156A INT. PARK AVENUE APARTMENT - NIGHT 156A

Lucille wordlessly finishes straightening Joe's collar, touches his shoulders with her open palms like a kiss.

157 EXT. BRADDOCK APARTMENT - NIGHT 157

Jim stands with Mae. The kids are down the block a few feet off. She leans up and kisses him softly on the lips.

BRADDOCK

I can't win if you're not behind  
me.

MAE

Then don't go, Jimmy.

The moment lasts. Mae turns. Jim watches as Mae and the kids head away down the block.

158 INT. LIMO - NYC - DRIVING - NIGHT 158

As the car pulls up to the garden, masses of people crowd the box office. Men and women. Old and young alike. Jim sits staring through his own reflection at the crowd in stunned silence. (OVER) An EXPLOSION of VOICES AND SOUND.

159 OMIT 159  
 160 INT. WEIGH-IN ROOM AT THE GARDEN - DAY 160

The NOISE is here. Handlers, officials, reporters, photographers. Johnston watches. Max Baer is on the scales.

OFFICIAL  
 210 pounds!

Baer steps off the scales and Jim climbs on.

OFFICIAL (CONT'D)  
 191 pounds!

Jim steps down. All the fun is gone from Baer. He looks at Braddock and shakes his head.

BAER  
 How's the story go? The clock strikes midnight, the coach turns into a pumpkin, and Cinderella loses her skirt.

Baer grins at Jim. Jim grins right back.

161 INT. ALICE'S HOUSE - NEWARK - NIGHT 161

The kids spill in. Mae stands in the door facing her sister.

MAE  
 No radio, Alice.

Alice nods.

MAE  
 I'll be back soon.

Alice watches her go.

162 INT. BAER'S DRESSING ROOM - NIGHT 162

Decked out like a movie star's. Photos of Baer with various celebrities. Max glances in the mirror.

MAX  
 You get it there like I told you?

Max's manager (ERNIE GOINS) stands not far off.

ERNIE  
 Yeah.

MAX

You sure?

ERNIE

It's at the back gate, Max, Jeez, I checked myself.

MAX

That's all I can do for him.

163 EXT. BEHIND THE GARDEN - CONTINUOUS 163

An AMBULANCE and CREW waiting vigil.

164 EXT. CHURCH - DAY 164

Mae walks across the church yard. People are streaming in. Odd for this time of day. Father Rorick is at the door.

MAE

(puzzled)

Father?

FATHER RORICK

Hello, Mae.

MAE

I came to pray for Jim.

He smiles at her.

FATHER RORICK

You too?

He pushes open the door. The church is full. Packed. Hundreds of people there in prayer.

FATHER RORICK

So have they.

MAE

I don't-

She stares at the full pews.

FATHER RORICK

Maybe sometimes people need to see someone do it so they can do it themselves.

Rows and rows of people, all on their knees.



FATHER RORICK

They think he's fighting for them.

As Mae looks at the people all there for Jim. PUSH IN ON Mae as maybe, for the first time. She understands.

165 INT. JIM'S DRESSING ROOM - CONTINUOUS

165

Joe is taping up Jim's hands. Jim seems far away. A heavy air permeates the room. All this is suddenly too real.

JOE

These last three fights. We already did great.

BRADDOCK

You losing faith in me, Joe?

JOE

Never. Not for a minute.

And we see it in his eyes. It's true. He never has.

JOE

Who beat Lewis?

Jim smiles. The old game.

BRADDOCK

That would have been me.

JOE

Who whupped Lasky?

BRADDOCK

That one was me too.

JOE

Who-

A KNOCK at the door. It opens. A small, familiar form stands there. Joe can't help but half smile.

JOE

I'll tell you **that's** a bet I shoulda taken-

BRADDOCK

Joe.

Joe looks up as Jim puts his finger to his lips.

JOE

Shhh.

Joe smiles. Nods slightly to Mae.

JOE

Scuse me a minute.

Joe slips past her. Husband and wife stand there staring at each other.

MAE

You can't win without me behind you.

BRADDOCK

That's what I keep telling you.

His eyes are shining. Maybe tears. Maybe just the light.

MAE

Thought it looked like rain, you know? Used what was in the jar.

She lifts a brown paper bag. Hands it to him.

MAE

Maybe I understand some.

He opens the package. In the bag, a new pair of boxing shoes.

MAE

About having to fight.

Tears are streaming down her face as he folds her in his arms.

MAE

See you at home, okay? Please, Jimmy. See you at home.

Brave despite her fear.

BRADDOCK

See you at home.

166

INT. MSG BOWL - BEHIND THE BACK ROW - NIGHT

166

As Jim emerges into the smoke of the Garden, the crowd is talking in WHISPERS.

As Jim steps into the aisle, he looks around, disturbed by the quiet. What he sees haunts him.

167 INT. MSG BOWL - THE CROWD - NIGHT 167

The cheap seats are filled with PEOPLE wearing their best shabby clothes.

PEOPLE who look as if they could stand a good meal.

PEOPLE from the street, from the basements.

JOE  
(stunned)  
God Almighty.

Jim is moved beyond words, begins one of the strangest walks that any boxer has ever taken into the ring.

As he passes, people get to their feet and stare at him. Soon the whole Garden is on their feet, silently watching.

After what feels like an eternity, someone shouts Jim's name.

168 INT. QUINCY'S BAR - CONTINUOUS 168

STATIC creeps out from the radio. Sara jumps, startled. The baby CRIES.

169 EXT. DOCKS - CONTINUOUS 169

The radio on the docks comes to life with a BUZZ.

170 INT. FATHER RORICK'S CHURCH - CONTINUOUS 170

A radio is set up in the sanctuary. Father Rorick's prayers are interrupted as his radio begins to WHINE.

171 EXT. MADISON SQUARE GARDEN BOWL - L.I.C. - CONTINUOUS 171

Those who couldn't get in crowd around speakers that SCREAM.

172 INT. ALICE'S HOUSE - CONTINUOUS 172

Alice opens the closet door to see that the children have dragged the radio into the dark, listening to the ROAR.

Alice sees the desperation in their faces as they stare up at her, the VOICE on the radio trying to cut through the NOISE.

DUNPHY (V.O.)  
I don't know if you can hear me out there. I can't hear myself. Madison Square Garden is on its feet and the noise is deafening!

173 INT. MSG BOWL - CONTINUOUS 173

Jim, nearing the ring, stunned at the EXPLOSION of HOLLERING and STAMPING that is going on all around him.

174 INT. RINGSIDE - CONTINUOUS 174

Dunphy is literally YELLING into the microphone!

DUNPHY (V.O.)

We saw people lining up to buy tickets tonight who looked as if they were spending their last dollar. But they're here now, and 35,000 strong. Listen to them!

Dunphy holds up the microphone.

175 INT. RING - CONTINUOUS 175

Jim climbs into the ring and looks around at the crowd, clearly overwhelmed. The crowd ROARS at him.

176 INT. MSG BOWL - BEHIND THE BACK ROW - CONTINUOUS 176

Max stands listening to the ROARING crowd, a shade of jealousy darkening his face. Finally, he smiles, taps Ernie on the shoulder, and Ernie heads up the aisle.

177 INT. THE RING - CONTINUOUS 177

A wave of respectful silence begins to roll toward the ring from the back of the Garden.

Jim sees Max Baer headed toward the ring.

By the time Max is halfway up the aisle, the Garden is nearly stilled again.

AISLE - CONTINUOUS

The silence does not bother Max. He eats it up.

THE RING - CONTINUOUS

By the time Max climbs into the ring, he is intense to the point of arrogance.

178 INT. RINGSIDE - PRESS ROW - CONTINUOUS 178

Sporty Lewis climbs over the feet of the other reporters.

179

INT. RING - LATER

179

Referee JOHNNY McAVOY has the fighters and their cornermen in center ring and is finishing up their final instructions.

MCAVOY

...I want a clean fight. When I say break, step back. And remember, protect yourself at all times!

Max gives Jim an icy smile, as if he is annoyingly amused. They touch gloves.

GARY, Max's cornerman, dangles a gold watch in front of Jim.

GARY

One minute to midnight, Cinderella!

Joe starts to hurl a response. Instead, just shakes his head.

180

INT. RING - MOMENTS LATER

180

Jim, in his corner, poised, calm. The crowd is deathly quiet.

JOE

Keep your gloves up, Jimmy.

Jim doesn't even smile.

181

INT. RINGSIDE - CONTINUOUS

181

Dunphy is now almost whispering.

DUNPHY

Jim Braddock's rise from the soup lines to number one heavyweight contender has truly been miraculous. Now, never in all my years, have I seen the arena so quiet.

The BELL rings.

182

INT. RING - CONTINUOUS

182

Jim attacks, landing a hard right to Max's face that brings the crowd to their feet.

Max grins from ear to ear. Jim sticks him again and this time Max clinches.

MAX  
 (as to a naughty child)  
 Now, now.

McAvoy separates them.

Jim has good footwork going, changes direction, goes at Baer again. Baer blocks Jim's jabs by swatting them with his right like flies. Jim keeps coming and they clinch.

BAER  
 Calm down, old man. I'll let the  
 fight go a few rounds.

The Ref separates them. Jim hits Max again, this time a right, and Max smiles with great indulgence and dances away.

183 INT. RINGSIDE PRESS ROW - LATER 183

Dunphy and the other reporters are baffled.

DUNPHY  
 A fight that no one expected to go  
 one round has gone 2 but only  
 because Max Baer is toying with  
 Braddock, there is no other word  
 for it. He's hardly thrown a punch  
 and is laughing at Braddock's every  
 strike.

184 INT. RING - MOMENTS LATER 184

Max moves around the ring, throwing light jabs.

Max has a habit of wiping his glove on the back of his trunks after he lands a punch. It looks as if he doesn't like his opponent's sweat on it.

Jim is stalking Max but to little avail.

Max grooms himself between punches, making sure his trunks are straight, his hair in place.

Finally Jim lands a good stiff jab and Max wobbles his legs as if he is about to go down.

Jim comes after him.

With shocking ferocity and speed, Max lands an explosive right to Jim's ribs that knocks the breath out of him.

Jim counters and the two explode into a flurry of punches, then finally clinch. Baer hits him dead in the bad ribs.

BAER  
That the right spot, old man.

By Jim's agonized look and his sharp GASP for air, it is. The BELL rings.

185 INT. BRADDOCK'S CORNER - MOMENTS LATER 185

Joe pulls on the waistband of Jim's trunks to help him breathe. Ray pours water in Jim's mouth but he coughs it up.

BRADDOCK  
Air!

The WARNING BUZZER.

185A INT. RING 185A

Jim is actually controlling the round, repeatedly jabbing Max. Jim's footwork has never been quicker.

Max comes at Jim, hard, but Jim slips his right, making Max look awkward and the crowd BOOS. Max is not pleased.

Max clinches Jim and SMACKS him with an illegal back hand. In the b.g Joe jumps up and begins SHOUTING.

JOE  
What the Hell, Ref? Wake up you wet  
son of a bitch, wake up.

But Jim is still coming, landing jabs. Max pulls Jim into a clinch and Jim slyly head butts Max.

Max is pissed, throws Jim against the ropes and the crowd explodes in tremendous BOOING.

Max salutes the crowd contemptuously, sticks his glove in Jim's face and grins as the round ends.

186 INT. RING 186

(OVER) The BELL. Max has had his fun. As he moves out from his corner, he is all business.

From below Jim's corner, Joe sees the look on Max's face and screams at Jim.

JOE  
He's coming for real!

## THE CROWD'S POV

The crowd senses the change in Baer and they sweep to their feet in quiet alarm. Jim goes right at him and the two fighters explode into a clash in the middle of the ring.

They see Jim throw a good jab, only to have Max fire with the right that just misses.

There is a collective intake of BREATH in the crowd.

## THE RING - CONTINUOUS

As Max misses with the right, Jim pops him with a hard jab. Then with another. Max clinches.

MAX

I'm getting bored, old man.

McAvoy moves in to separate them and Baer throws Jim aside.

MCAVOY

Watch that!

Max lands a series of punches to the sweet spot in Jim's ribs and one below the belt.

MCAVOY (CONT'D)

Keep your punches up!

Max lands a stunning combination to Jim's ribs and head. Even the ones Jim blocks knock him around with their velocity.

MAX

(to McAvoy)

That up enough?!

(taunting Jim)

Do something!

Jim is hurt, but manages a jab that snaps Max's head way back. Then Jim clinches.

As the bell CLANGS, Max pushes the Ref out of the way, switches his momentum to the right and lands a series of combinations on Jim. Jim recovers with a powerful upper cut and left hook. Both men just stare at each other.

187

INT. MAX'S CORNER - LATER

187

Ernie Goins works over Max.

ERNIE

What are you doing?



MAX

Don't worry about it.

ERNIE

Then quit screwing around.

Max gives Ernie a look that shuts him up.

MAX

Relax.

188 INT. ALICE'S HOUSE - LATER

188

Mae has entered to find her sister and children all at the open closet door. Alice glances up, riveted but guilty.

ROSEMARIE

It's the cops.

DUNPHY (V.O.)

Braddock has fought better than anybody thought he could but some would say that it is only because Baer has allowed it.

(OVER) The BELL.

HOWARD

Please, Ma.

Mae stares a beat. Then she walks into the living room, unable to listen.

189 EXT. DOCKS - LATER

189

The guys are all frozen and seem not to be breathing as:

DUNPHY (V.O.)

Oh! What a tremendous shot by Baer, flush on Braddock's chin!

190 INT. SAM'S BUTCHER SHOP - CONTINUOUS

190

Sam is glued to the set, inches from the radio, horror flooding his face.

DUNPHY (V.O.)

Braddock is reeling against the ropes while Baer stands like a wood chopper waiting for the tree to fall!

191 INT. RING - CONTINUOUS

191

Jim sags against the ropes, his eyes rolling like loose cloudy marbles. But he does not go down.

Baer is surprised. Finally he shrugs and moves in to clean up the mess he has made of Jim.

Jim pushes off the ropes and half staggers out to meet Max. He lands a sharp jab that takes Max completely off guard.

Digging all the way down in the well, Jim follows the jab with another, and another.

Startled, Max steps back and wipes the blood bursting from his lip into his glove.

Then, as is his habit, Max wipes his glove on his trunks. And Jim sees it. An opening.

Jim steps in and nails him with an EXPLOSIVE right hand.

Max staggers further back, reeling and insulted that someone would interrupt his ritual.

Frustrated and angry, Max lunges with looping rights, missing again and again.

And with each miss, Jim stabs Max with a jab, infuriating the Champ even more.

The fighters can't hear the BELL, the crowd is so LOUD. Johnny McAvoy has to pull them apart.

192 INT. BRADDOCK'S CORNER - MOMENTS LATER

192

Ray is working on a cut spreading beneath Jim's eye.

JOE

Shot almost knocked me out!

BRADDOCK

Wish I could hit like that.

JOE

He wouldn't be standing if you could!

Joe looks into Jim's eyes and at the cut on his cheek.

JOE (CONT'D)

Jimmy, win, lose, or draw...

Joe looks near tears. Jim's smile is impossibly warm.

BRADDOCK

Joe. Stop talking.

Joe smiles back. The WARNING BUZZER sounds.

193 INT. ALICE'S HALLWAY - CONTINUOUS 193

Mae is against the wall near the closet. Listening.

DUNPHY

James J. Braddock coming out for  
the 12th round is showing this  
crowd what heart is all about.

194 INT. RING - LATER 194

Max sticks his left hand into Jim's face, not to throw a  
punch, but so he cannot see the vicious right hand coming  
It's a trademark Max Baer move.

But Jim has seen it. He slaps the left aside and stings Max  
with a jab. Max is not in any way amused.

Jim moves fast, slips a Baer punch and lands two more jabs.  
Baer holds his arm out to Jim's face, blocking him.

Jim fakes Baer and lands a couple more sharp punches. Max  
goes for the clinch and hits Jim in the ribs.

Max backhands Jim as the Ref separates them. But Jim finds a  
the gap and scores two more punches.

194A INT. THE CROWD - CONTINUOUS 194A

The crowd is nearly numb with anticipation and disbelief.

195 INT. RINGSIDE PRESS ROW - CONTINUOUS 195

Even the Reporters are in shock.

SPORTY

Am I seeing what I'm seeing?

Sporty Lewis jumps up, a little out of control. The crowd  
rouses and starts SCREAMING at the ring!

CROWD

Braddock! Braddock!

196 INT. THE RING - CONTINUOUS 196

Out of pure frustration, Max suddenly charges and hits Jim with another left way below the belt.

Jim doubles up as the bell CLANGS.

Joe is over the ropes, going straight for Max.

JOE

Why don't you just kick him in the balls, you asshole!

McAvoy intercepts Joe and hauls him, SHOUTING, back across the ring.

JOE

Let me have a shot at him, you son of a bitch!

197 INT. MAX'S CORNER - CONTINUOUS 197

Johnny McAvoy comes over and points at Max. Max has a cut and a knot on his head.

MCAVOY

That last low blow will cost you the round, Max.

Max waves him away. Ernie gets into Max's face.

ERNIE

You're behind. Are you listening to me? You wanna lose the goddamn championship to this fucking nobody?

Max shoves Ernie aside.

ERNIE (CONT'D)

Knock him out!

198 INT. RING - CONTINUOUS 198

The two boxers explode out of their corners like colliding freight trains. Baer's punches are furious, lethal.

199 INT. ALICE'S APARTMENT - NIGHT 199

Mae walks into the closet to stand with her family.

DUNPHY

In the fifteenth and final round  
they are yelling for Braddock to  
stay away because Baer is going for  
the knockout!

200 EXT. DOCKS - CONTINUOUS

200

Everyone is breathless.

DUNPHY (V.O.)

Baer is delivering the biggest  
punches of the fight, maybe of his  
life! But Braddock is not only  
standing, he is moving forward!

201 INT. RINGSIDE - CONTINUOUS

201

The crowd from the cheap seats has surged forward, stamping  
and SCREAMING, pinning Joe and everyone ringside against the  
edge of the canvas. Joe is YELLING his lungs out!

JOE

Back off, Jimmy!

Sporty Lewis and the other reporters press the ring. Dunphy  
is on his feet, yelling into the microphone in his hand.

DUNPHY

This is not boxing, folks! This is  
a Walloping Ballet!

202 INT. RING - CONTINUOUS

202

Jim and Max are both knotted, bloodied, and snuffing like  
winded horses.

But who is stalking whom?

Max is sailing punches, every last one of them a knockout.  
Except Jim is still standing. And coming with his beloved  
left jab.

These seconds are an eternity for the two of them. There is  
no other place, no other time, only now, this, forever.

Jim lands a series of Jabs. But he's open, only an instant,  
turned slightly towards the ropes. All Max needs.

Max delivers a right uppercut that seems to start from below  
the floor.

This is the blow that kills him.

All goes silent.

FACES IN THE CROWD. Frozen terror.

203 EXT. THE DOCKS - CONTINUOUS 203

They know.

204 INT. QUINCY'S - CONTINUOUS 204

Sara stares up at the silent radio. All hope gone.

205 INT. SAM'S BUTCHER SHOP - CONTINUOUS 205

Sam SMASHES his hand on the counter, turns away.

205A INT.-PARK AVENUE APARTMENT 205A

Lucille, well dressed, breathless in her empty apartment.

206 INT. ALICE'S HOUSE - NEWARK - CONTINUOUS 206

The children look up at Mae, eyes wet with terror.

207 INT. RING - CONTINUOUS 207

Jim's death. Frozen in time.

But Jim has decided to die another day.

Jim avoids the right, pivots and counters with a couple of hard lefts.

As Max practically jumps onto his shoes, Jim smashes an uppercut that brings Max to his toes.

They stand there in center ring as if chained together and trade punches.

And someone is pulling them apart, away from the center of the world, into the madhouse that is erupting around them.

208 INT. ALICE'S HOUSE - CONTINUOUS 208

DUNPHY (V.O.)

It's over, the fight is over, and  
the referee is pulling them apart!

Mae covers her mouth to stifle her SOBS of relief.

209 INT. RINGSIDE - CONTINUOUS 209

Sporty Lewis yanks furiously on McAvoy's trouser leg. McAvoy tries to shake him off but Lewis won't let go.

MCAVOY

What?!

SPORTY

How'd you score it, Johnny?

MCAVOY

9. 4. 2 even.

SPORTY

Which way?!

210 EXT. CHURCH - CONTINUOUS 210

People stare at the radio in the sanctuary.

DUNPHY (V.O.)

The crowd, on its feet for almost the entire fight is still standing and yelling for who they clearly believe to be the winner of this fight...

211 INT. CORNER - CONTINUOUS 211

Jim stands in corner as Joe pulls the laces out of his gloves as Jeanette tries to stop the flow of blood from his deep cut. Joe keeps looking at the Judges.

JOE

I don't like it, Jimmy. Every time they take this long for a decision they're deciding to screw somebody.

Max suddenly appears. Joe glares at him. Max looks Jim in the eye, leans in close so he can be heard over the crowd.

MAX

You beat me. No matter what they say.

Jim starts to say something but Max is already walking away.

212 INT. RINGSIDE PRESS ROW - CONTINUOUS 212

Sporty Lewis is standing at the corner of the ring.

SPORTY  
They're robbing him.

The crowd starts YELLING for a decision and STAMPING on the floor until it sounds like THUNDER in the Garden.

213 INT. RING - CONTINUOUS 213

A silver microphone drops from the ceiling to the center of the ring. Ring Announcer, AL FAZIN, enters the ring.

The NOISE of the crowd falls quickly away.

THE CROWD - CONTINUOUS

35,000 people standing together in gradations of light.

RING - CONTINUOUS

Fazin taps the microphone and the Garden is so quiet that it sounds like someone throwing rocks at the walls.

FAZIN  
Ladies and Gentlemen! I have your  
decision!

Fazin squints and studies the card in his hand.

FAZIN (CONT'D)  
Winner...  
(looks at the card again)  
...and NEW Heavyweight Champion  
of...

The words are drowned out by an explosion of noise!

214 EXT. ALICE'S HOUSE - CONTINUOUS 214

Mae's SCREAM echoes down the block!

215 INT. ALICE'S HOUSE - LIVING ROOM - CONTINUOUS 215

The kids and Alice spring from the closet and hop about the living room as if on pogo sticks.

216 EXT. NORTH BERGEN STREETS - CONTINUOUS 216

People pour from their houses, yelling the news as SIRENS roar!

219 EXT. THE DOCKS - CONTINUOUS 219

A bunch of very tough men are crying like babies.



217 INT. QUINCY'S BAR - CONTINUOUS 217

Quincy is pouring free beer into the rioting crowd. Sara, baby in arms, closes her eyes, spilling silent tears.

217A INT. PARK AVENUE APARTMENT 217A

Lucille walks to the window, letting night air hit her face.

218 INT. CHURCH - CONTINUOUS 218

Father Rorick bows his head, unable to completely hide his wry, satisfied smile. He glances skyward.

FATHER RORICK

Thank you.

220 INT. RINGSIDE PRESS ROW - CONTINUOUS 220

The Reporters are all pushing and shoving, trying to get out of the crowd to file their stories.

Sporty Lewis sits by himself, staring up at the ring, his arms across his chest, a half smile on his lips, reliving the fight, the miracle. In no hurry to go.

221 INT. RING - CONTINUOUS 221

Max is hemmed into his corner and cannot escape through a crowd that will not go home.

Joe actually grabs Johnston and hugs him, unable to help himself, bathing in this once in a lifetime moment.

Jim stands in the center of the ring, his arm raised in victory, tears flowing from his eyes, but with a look on his face, as if his mind is somewhere else.

222 INT. BASEMENT APARTMENT - LATER 222

Jim sits in a chair with meat over his face. Rosemarie is watching closely, not allowing anyone to interfere.

ROSEMARIE

You have to leave it on exactly like before, okay?

Jim lifts a corner of the meat from his mouth.

BRADDOCK

You're just a little girl. Where do you get these ideas?

Rosemarie takes his hand away, puts the meat back in place.

ROSEMARIE

It's working, isn't it?

HOWARD

Leave it on, Dad.

JAY

Yeah and then we eat it. Dad takes  
the first bite.

HOWARD

And then Mom.

JAY

Then me, cause I'm the oldest.

Mae scowls at her superstitious band of gypsies.

MAE

Oh brother....

Mae smiles at her husband who looks at her, closes his eyes.

223

EXT. BASEMENT APARTMENT WINDOW - CONTINUOUS

223

See the Braddock Family in their single room. PULL BACK until  
the apartment window is just one dim light in city of lights.

END CARD:

2 YEARS LATER JIM BRADDOCK LOST THE CHAMPIONSHIP TO JOE  
LOUIS.

BUT NOT BEFORE DECKING HIM.

LOUIS WOULD ALWAYS CALL BRADDOCK THE MOST COURAGEOUS MAN HE  
EVER FOUGHT.

IN HIS LAST FIGHT, BRADDOCK CAME OUT OF RETIREMENT TO FIGHT  
TOMMY FARR, THE TOP HEAVYWEIGHT CONTENDER IN THE WORLD.

THE AGING, ARTHRITIC, BRADDOCK WAS AGAIN A HUGE UNDERDOG.

HE WON.

FINAL FADE TO BLACK.