

3rd Draft (1993)

"GANGS OF NEW YORK"

INT. ROOM OLD BREWERY DAY

Half in shadow, a man named VALLON, dressed in black, fastens a clean white clerical collar around his thick neck. He raises a jagged razor to his face, RAKES it across his right cheek, drawing BLOOD. He does not flinch.

The sharp SCRAPING of the jagged blade against skin is the first SOUND we hear. VALLON cuts himself similarly on the left cheek, then hands the razor ceremoniously to a BOY standing beside him. The boy, no more than twelve years old, looks at VALLON worshipfully, keen eyes shining with fear and excitement. He starts to wipe the razor blade on the bottom of his jacket.

VALLON

No. Never. The blood stays on the blade, son.

He hands the boy a dark red velvet pouch. Very carefully, the boy, known as AMSTERDAM, wraps the razor up, hands it back to his father. From the shadows, VALLON now raises a long pole with a beautiful golden crucifix mounted on the end, then holds his free hand out to his son.

Amsterdam squeezes tight. VALLON nods toward the door. Amsterdam pulls it open. Outside is a dim hallway. We hear SOUNDS that might be animal or human. MUSIC begins: a steady, driving cadence somewhere between a march and a hymn.

CUT TO

INT. HALLWAY

VALLON strides in long measured steps. Amsterdam has trouble keeping up with him. They are walking down a long corridor that's like a tunnel. Patches of LIGHT stain the darkness. Sometimes Amsterdam glimpses a FACE peering out from the gloom. Once or twice he almost stumbles over a BODY stretched across his path.

CUT TO

INT. ROOM

Another room, even smaller. The only decoration is a bizarre rendering of a Madonna and child painted on the wall.

A beefy man picks up a home-made PIKE, its iron tip sharpened to a lethal point. He is smiling. The grin is huge, but cockeyed. It

occupies only half of his face. The grotesque, unending grin is the result of facial paralysis, and has given him a nickname: HAPPY JACK MULRANEY. Jack lifts the pike carefully, then takes a candle from the wall and bends down over a wooden cage full of rabbits. He slowly moves the candle back and forth across the cage top. Wax falls on the cage, splattering an unlucky rabbit.

Jack thrusts the pike between the wooden bars, impaling the rabbit's body. He pulls the pike from the cage and leaves.

CUT TO

INT. HALLWAY

Jack falls into step beside VALLON and Amsterdam. He holds the pike with the dead rabbit high, next to VALLON's cross.

HAPPY JACK

Did you bring the boy for a charm, Priest?

VALLON

No, Jack. For a baptism.

Now a WOMAN joins them. She's dressed in man's clothes, her pants held up by suspenders. She wears a set of IRON CLAWS. MUSIC builds, growing more insistent and more ominous. Now a figure looms before them. Over his street clothes, this WARRIOR wears a rig of home-made armor made from fragments of steel, lengths of chain and bits of leather. He carries a battle-axe as lightly as if it were a twig.

RABBIT WARRIOR

We'll send a few across the river today, Priest.

He joins the procession. Another woman, as tough as the first and half again as large, and several more men, all armed with implements of destruction, fall in beside him. Their faces are marked with blood, like Vallan's, or covered with ritual markings made with paint and ink. The group grows ever larger and more forbidding. occasionally PEOPLE dart around them in the tunnel and scamper out of their way like animals frightened in a burrow.

CUT TO

INT. ROOM

Vast and dank, like a cavern. We start CLOSE on... the body of a dead rat being filled with some pieces of lead. Then a little WIDER to reveal: an eager boy, SHANG DRAPER, about the same age as Amsterdam. He drops the last few pieces of lead into the mouth of the rat, then sews it closed. He hefts the animal by the tail, swinging it as he stands up.

He is near a primitive forge where a half-drunk SLACKSMITH hammers crude weapons into shape and distributes them to OTHER MEN and WOMEN. The floor is covered with bits of lead and steel, which Shang has been using to sew into his rat.

Shang FOLLOWS the crowd of men and women with their weapons. And now we see this room full. It is huge: the main room of the Old Brewery, crowded with families huddled together for warmth and comfort, or out of fear; men and women, together or separately, drunk or passed out. They are like zoo animals in a pit. There are sticks of furniture jammed in corners, or, more often, arranged at angles in the middle of the room to form tiny enclaves where the ancient brewery machinery forms irregular boundaries.

Above Shang's head, VALLON and his gang walk across a plank bridge that spans the room a hundred feet beneath them. Armed men and women from the Brewery are climbing a rope ladder to join them. Shang SCURRIES up after them.

The men and women from the Brewery fall in behind VALLON and the others in the lead. Shang SPOTS someone near his own age toward the front: Amsterdam. He presses through the crowd like a hunting dog.

SHANG

What's the fight?

AMSTERDAM

The Dead Rabbits against the Native Americans, same as ever. But it'll
all
be settled today.

SHANG

Are you Native or Rabbit?

AMSTERDAM

(points to rabbit on pike)
What do you think?

SHANG

Looks alright. I'll stand by you, then.

CUT TO

INT. HALLWAY

The group now turns down the last corridor, as dim and long as a tunnel. In the distance, there's a faint glimmer of light and the figure of a MAN (MONK EASTMAN). VALLON stops near the door.

VALLON

I don't know you.

MAN

(lightly)

I suppose there's to be a fight.

VALLON catches the heavy Celtic inflection in the man's voice.

VALLON

Derry?

MAN

Donnegal. Name's Monk Eastman.

VALLON

And you want to fight, Mr. Eastman?

MONK

If there's money in it.

VALLON

Fight for the Natives. They have a proper war chest.

MONK

Well, I might at that. But I thought I'd ask you first, seeing as how
I'm
not quite a Native American myself.

VALLON

Let's see your skills, and we'll talk of payment later.

MONK

Fine. But if you like what you see, pay me double.

Monk turns to the door with the grace of a dancer and delivers a SHATTERING kick, sending it flying off its hinges. Clear white LIGHT streams in, and we see Monk Eastman plain for the first time: a huge man, in stature and girth, wearing a small DERBY that intentionally makes his head look even bigger.

VALLON

(as the door splinters settle)
Stand with us then.

CUT TO

EXT. STREET DAY (WINTER)

WINTER WIND blows across a scene as strange and bleak as an alien planet.

VALLON, carrying his cross high, steps through the doorway. The OTHERS slowly follow VALLON out of the building, which is three stories high and maybe a block long. A dilapidated sign identifies it as the 5 Paints Brewery.

It is the tallest structure in the midst of low, squalid SHACKS, winding ALLEYS as narrow as a snakes back, and DIRT STREETS filled with ruts, mud and filthy snow. A few PIGS wander forlornly about, rooting for garbage. WASH hangs stiff, in the middle of the square, from a peculiar monument erected to some forgotten war hero.

The Brewery occupies one side of a SQUARE surrounded by some storefronts and a couple of collapsed wooden sidewalks. If this place resembles anything at all, it's a horrible hybrid of London's Limehouse and a pioneer town in the American West whose best days have long passed—or never came at all.

VALLON stands still, staring across the square past the monument. His battalion of irregulars waits for his signal. Now... very, very slowly...from around both sides of the monument comes ANOTHER GANG, in size the same as VALLON's, men and women both, armed like Visigoths with HOMEMADE WEAPONS: knives, pitchforks, building blocks and bricks, boards with sharp nails protruding from the ends. Every member of this second group is dressed in a long DUSTER which reaches to the ankles. Several MEN in front of the group sport dusters made of leather.

VALLON

Bill Poole! on whose challenge are we assembled?

A MAN in a leather duster (BILL THE BUTCHER) steps forward. He is young, lean and fierce. And then there are his eyes. They do not match. One is real. The other is a huge, bulging PEARL upon which has been engraved, instead of a pupil, a full-color portrait of the AMERICAN EAGLE.

On the side of the square, arranged to get a good view of the impending combat, is a group of STREET KIDS, girls and boys, none older than eight. They talk and laugh excitedly among themselves, picking their own favorites among the gangs as if the warriors were players on a team.

BILL THE BUTCHER

On the challenge of the Native Americans, to settle for good and all who holds sway.

VALLON

Bene.

BILL THE BUTCHER

By the ancient laws of combat, we offer our bodies to the ghosts of those warriors who have gone before us. Valor is avid for glory, and glory is in our wounds.

VALLON

But this time can you bear to look on the glory when it comes, Bill? Can you see it clear with your single eye?

BILL THE BUTCHER

Whoever fights untouched in battle has skill, but the warrior who returns wounded has been touched by God.

VALLON

It wasn't God who touched your eye.

BILL THE BUTCHER

It was God gave me guidance. Will you be able to look on the death blow like a gladiator, and not look away? No honorable man turns an eye from his death.

VALLON

I don't expect a death blow from your hand, Butcher. Let's have at it.

BILL THE BUTCHER

There is another matter.

VALLON

Say it out and quick, before spring gets here.

BILL THE BUTCHER

No Native American Warrior will dishonor himself with the blood of the halt and maimed.

VALLON

So?

BILL THE BUTCHER

So we would like to know whether Squire Jack Mulraney of the Dead Rabbits can smile out of both sides of his face.

A pause of a single second. Then HAPPY JACK takes the dead rabbit off the tip of his pike and hurls it across the square. It lands right at BILL THE BUTCHER's feet.

In a flash, BILL THE BUTCHER opens his coat. Inside, on a special belt he carries a CLEAVER, a CARVING KNIFE and other instruments of the butcher's trade, all stained with blood and gristle. Now the MAN standing next to him removes the broad BELT from around his coat. The brass buckle is sharpened to a point, the leather studded with glass. The gallery of Street Kids tenses for action: they are thrilled.

VALLON reaches up to the CROSS, pulls off the top piece, to disclose, underneath, a gleaming sword point. He folds the arms of the cross down, like the blades of a jackknife.

VALLON
Prepare to receive the Lord.

And the air is full of screams and battle cries as the two gangs hurl across Paradise Square into BATTLE. VALLON draws first blood. He impales a Native American on the sword end of his cross and turns to fight again.

Amsterdam and Shang exchange a glance of frightened, worried wonder.

Then a Native American rushes at them, shouting for blood. The boys act together. Amsterdam dives down in front of the man, sending him sprawling. Shang BLUDGEONS the fallen warrior, using his lead-filled rat like a blackjack as Amsterdam kicks him savagely; the Native collapses unconscious at their feet. Before the boys can thank one another, however, they are separated by the SURGING GANGS all around them. BILL THE BUTCHER leaves his meat CLEAVER imbedded in the middle of a man's skull, then WADES through the combat as if shielded by a charm.

The gallery of Street Kids is thrilled by this display and reacts with CHEERS.

VALLON BATTLES three Natives who come at him at once.

Monk Eastman grabs a Native in his arms like a groom hugging a bride. He raises his knee and brings the man crashing down across it, BREAKING his spine like a Thanksgiving wishbone. The gallery of Street Kids is awed by this display of power from a new star in the making.

The Rabbit Warrior in the home-made armor grins at an intrepid Native and lowers his battle-axe. The Native rushes as the Rabbit Warrior swings and SEPARATES the man from his legs.

A NATIVE WOMAN lowers her head and charges her Dead Rabbit adversary, delivering a shattering BUTT to his stomach.

A NATIVE BOY holds a rusty old pistol, which he uses at pointblank range against several Rabbits.

A RABBIT WOMAN flies into a Native, using her IRON FINGER EXTENSIONS to GOUGE his face.

The NATIVE with the deadly belt uses it to TEAR a piece out of a Rabbit's face.

Amsterdam, beginning now to be overwhelmed by the hellish fight, looks

around in growing PANIC for his father.

SHANG uses his lead-rat blackjack to clear an escape back toward the Brewery. The Street Kids can tell he's trying to escape, and start BOOING him...as Shang's GRABBED from behind and pulled off his feet by a PEG-LEGGED NATIVE. He THROWS the boy to the ground and pins him by holding the sword-sharp point of his wooden leg against Shang's throat.

SHANG
(desperate)

I run with you! I'm one of you! Born a Native American from the blood of five generations!

PEG-LEG
Yeah? Then you oughta be a red Indian.

He pushes down. Shang starts to bleed. But now PEG LEG is distracted by the sudden SOUND of bells and whistles. He watches the BOY trembling on the ground, then moves off him, making for the sound of the bell, leaving the BOY quaking.

The SOUND grows louder as TWO HORSE-DRAWN CARTS full of battle ready POLICE tear around the curve of a narrow thoroughfare and stop in Paradise Square. The BELLS on the carts toll loudly and work magic. The fighting stops.

The POLICE, all carrying clubs and wearing leather helmets, LEAP OFF the wagons.

There are several moments of ABSOLUTE SILENCE, broken only by the SOUND of the wind and the GROANS of the wounded. Then, as one, the Dead Rabbits and the Native Americans RUSH the police together, hurtling stones and brandishing weapons. Even the Street Kids get into the act, kicking and biting and generally having a fine time. The gangs SWARM all over the police, driving them back. Some lucky cops climb back on the wagons and try to get away. The unlucky police remain behind, dead on the ground.

The GANGS cheer, jeer and continue to throw things at the retreating POLICE. When the second wagon disappears from view, the GANGS confront each other once again. Another brief moment of QUIET. The Street Kids settle back into their spectator role. Then the GANGS go at each other with fresh intensity. Amsterdam finally SEES his father and starts to PUSH his way toward him.

VALLON and BILL THE BUTCHER stand facing each other in the midst of battle like two titans: then they rush at each other, joining with a terrible fury.

Shang, still blindly SWINGING his blackjack, makes his way closer to the relative safety of the Brewery, his face stained with tears of

fear. He hits someone. The MAN turns, swats him down. Shang sprawls on the street, which is a SWAMP of mud and blood and dirty snow, and finds himself face to face with a departed PEG LEG. Someone has removed his artificial limb and driven it through his heart. Across the square, Amsterdam has reached his father in time to see a NATIVE AMERICAN sneaking up behind him. Amsterdam grabs a long TRUNCHEON from a fallen warrior and uses it to hit the man a strong blow behind the knees.

The MAN falls, howling. AMSTERDAM HITS him again. And again. He is hysterical.

VALLON and BILL THE BUTCHER keep fighting. Amsterdam sees, with a single look, that his father is in the fight of his life. He looks for a weapon to help...sees a HATCHET lying by the body of the Rabbit he has just beaten senseless. He grabs it and runs forward, looking for an opening between the Butcher and his father...

As the two combatants move, Amsterdam MOVES. Bobbing, weaving, feinting, falling back looking for his chance...as Bill deals VALLON a blow that ROCKS him back and throws him off balance...

...just as Amsterdam has made his move. He RUSHES forward, sees his father FALLING, tries to turn but...too late. The boy's hatchet SLASHES his father in the leg. VALLON falls to one knee, gestures frantically to the stunned Amsterdam to get away...and Bill is upon VALLON, SINKING his knife into his chest. VALLON screams and falls on his back, Bill kneeling over him. He looks into his enemy's eyes and VALLON'S EYES LOCK ON HIS. For all his suffering, VALLON'S eyes HOLD Bill ... he forces himself to look at Bill...it's a terrible struggle... but VALLON will not look away. Amsterdam, hysterical, RUSHES at the Butcher. The Butcher grabs Amsterdam by the arm, making him drop his hatchet.

BILL THE BUTCHER

You need a weapon? Use a knife.

He puts the struggling boy's hand on the hilt of the knife that the Butcher sunk into his father's chest.

BILL THE BUTCHER

It makes a deeper cut.

And, HIS HAND GUIDING THE BOY'S, he RAMS his knife deep into VALLON'S heart.

BILL THE BUTCHER

Say a benediction, Priest.

VALLON bellows in agony. Amsterdam screams at the very same moment, his cry mingling with his father is tearing through the air.

BILL THE BUTCHER
(to Amsterdam)

Hold this close to mind, boy, should you ever think of going up
against the Native Americans.

Bill the Butcher rises and all around him, as if on some mysterious
signal, the fighting subsides. A DEAD RABBIT sees the fallen Vallon,
takes a battered brass HORN from his belt and sounds THREE NOTES,
quick and sharp. As the notes fade away, the fighting stops
completely.

BILL THE BUTCHER
(announcing)

Ears and noses will be trophies of the day.

The Rabbits SCAMPER to collect their dead and wounded before the
Natives can get to them to slice off the battle souvenirs. But there
are many corpses maimed. The Street Kids DISPERSE. The main battle is
over, and the Natives have clearly carried the day.

The Rabbits file past Vallon, forming a protective CIRCLE around him.
Amsterdam kneels at his side. Vallon tries to speak. Blood bubbles in
his throat.

VALLON

Can't..can't cross the river... with steel through my heart.

Amsterdam looks around. None of the Rabbits makes a move. This is
clearly something he is meant to do himself.
Amsterdam grabs the tortoise handle of the knife, PULLS on it. Vallon
tries not to cry out. The knife does not move. Amsterdam tries again.
He can't budge the knife. Vallon MOANS. Nearly wild, Amsterdam PULLS
with all his strength. Vallon SCREAMS in agony. Amsterdam is pulling
so hard he raises his father's back four inches off the ground. Still
the knife will not move. Vallon passes out from the pain.

Now, finally, someone steps forward: Monk Eastman. He leans over but
Amsterdam, berserk with grief, pushes him away, turns back to his
father, and, with a last desperate pull, DRAWS the knife from his
father's heart. He throws it on the ground. Monk picks it up, wipes
the blade on his arm, closes the knife and hands it to Amsterdam.

MONK

That's yours, rightfully.

Now Monk leans over the lifeless body and reaches inside Vallon's
coat, REMOVING some money.

MONK

And this is mine. Only what's owed. Use the rest for funeral.

AMSTERDAM

No!

He tries to shove Monk away from his father, when the Native Warrior intervenes.

HAPPY JACK

It's fair.

Amsterdam, wild with shock and grief, turns back to his father as Monk takes what's owed him. Amsterdam bends over to KISS Vallon on both cheeks, then on his left eye.

The boy is just about to kiss his father's closed right eye when the lid springs OPEN - Amsterdam jumps back despite himself. Vallon stares at him: a last moment of recognition.

VALLON

Hon ...

AMSTERDAM

No, Pa!

VALLON

... honor me... think of me ... don't never look away.
Vallon convulses and DIES. Amsterdam shakes him to revive him.

RABBIT WOMAN

Take the body. Bring the boy.

Several RABBITS take a step or two forward, but Amsterdam springs up at

them, like an animal.

RABBIT WARRIOR

Come an, lad. There's nothing to be done now.

AMSTERDAM

Get away! Get away!

HAPPY JACK

Leave him be. He's his to mourn.

And the RABBITS turn away, going back to the Old Brewery or vanishing down the narrow streets.

Now a few CITIZENS venture out into Paradise square. A couple of SCAVENGERS scoot about, looting bodies. Amsterdam stays in the center of the square unmoving, undisturbed, keeping solitary vigil over his father.

A TITLE is superimposed across this scene:

NEW YORK CITY 1844

EXT. HARBOR DAY WINTER (MATTE)

The same afternoon. As the sun goes down, we have our first full look (MATTE) at the low pale outlines of the city. The harbor is crowded with the high masts of sailing ships. Just north of the island tip is the steeple of the city's tallest structure, Trinity Church. The buildings of Wall Street are masses of concrete and wood, the streets surrounding them paved with cobblestones. Just above the financial district are the sloping buildings and rutted avenue of the Five Points. The Old Brewery stands tall and forbidding over Paradise Square.

Above the Five Points, in the distance, we can glimpse some finer, newer buildings. One wide street--Broadway--seems to run from the very tip of the island clear up into the woods just a few miles north of the harbor. The only SOUNDS are the lapping of the harbor water against the boats, the creaking of masts in the winter WIND.

CUT TO

EXT. HARBOR DAY

A closer view - The TITLE fades off. We see an imposing edifice on the edge of the harbor with a wooden sign identifying: "IMMIGRATION DEPARTMENT, UNITED STATES OF AMERICA."

The sun has nearly set. A boy--about 10 years old--sits on the edge of the Castle Garden dock, gazing down at the frozen Hudson. He can just about make out his reflection in the dull sheen of the ice. His name is JOHNNY SIROCCO, and he watches himself with bewildered seriousness.

Abruptly, he reaches down and SMASHES through the ice with his fist. In SLOW MOTION, we watch the ice fragments drift apart in the river current, each bearing away a REFLECTION of Johnny's face, like pieces of a puzzle.

POLICEMAN

Where's your family, sonny?

Johnny sees a POLICEMAN scrutinizing him.

JOHNNY

(lilting brogue)

My mother's just there.

He gestures toward a ship, where MEN are unloading cargo. In a hoist, they are lowering a thin pine COFFIN to dockside.

JOHNNY

On the trip, her insides all broke up. She wasn't dead and there was three others fighting for her bed.

POLICEMAN

And your father? Where's he, then?

JOHNNY

I never knew him.

POLICEMAN

(taking Johnny's hand)

We better see to you, then.

CUT TO

EXT. STREET NIGHT

The Policeman leads an awed Johnny through the TEEMING streets of the Five Points.

POLICEMAN

Where all those streets come together right ahead is the true Five Points. But most speak of the Five Points and mean anywhere between the Battery and the Bowery.

Although the night's cold, the streets are jammed. WHORES painted like carnival Gypsies sell themselves to any man sober enough to stand up. SOUNDS of laughter and combat filter out from garish SALOONS like the Little Naples, the Hell Hole, the Egyptian Hall. In the midst of all this highlife are BEGGARS and the SICKLY, looking for charity, scrounging garbage in the street. An INDIGENT battles a CRIPPLE for a meager scrap of food. A richly dressed WOMAN, riding by in a carriage, hides her eyes by raising a HUGE BOUQUET OF FLOWERS in front of her face.

POLICEMAN

Streets hereabouts are lively of an evening. The city comes here to sport. But there's places to put up a boy on his own.

Three WOMEN, exquisitely costed, burst from the door of the Egyptian Hall.

Under the harsh glare of a nearby gas lamp, their faces are no longer striking. Johnny STARES; there is something not right about these faces.

JOHNNY

And those? What are those?

POLICEMAN

Well, those. Those are, as you might say, a sort of...

We SEE one of the women's faces, suddenly harsh under gaslight: under thickly caked make-up is a smiling TRANSVESTITE.

POLICEMAN

... sort of whatnot.

TRANSVESTITE

Say, policeman. I'll buy your bonny friend.

The Policeman fetches the Transvestite a strong WHACK with his nightstick. The Transvestite screams and falls ... and Johnny RUNS.

POLICEMAN

Hey!

But Johnny's off, already lost in the mad street life.

CUT TO

INT. MORTUARY NIGHT

A funeral chapel.

Vallan's body lies in state. He is wearing his gang regalia, and all the Dead Rabbits FILE PAST his coffin in solemn tribute. A WOMAN bends down and kisses the body. Happy Jack Mulraney holds Vallon's crucifix, which he has obviously inherited. As a disreputable looking Minister mutters PRAYERS, Happy Jack whispers to a silent Amsterdam.

HAPPY JACK

We passed the plate amongst ourselves. Come up with enough ned to carry all this, and carry you a while, too.

He stuffs some money in Amsterdam's pocket.

AMSTERDAM

Where will my father rest?

HAPPY JACK

Potters Field, with everyone else.

AMSTERDAM

My father won't be buried with everyone else. He'll lie separate in fresh ground, facing east.

HAPPY JACK

What difference where he faces?

AMSTERDAM

He'll face east for the second coming of Christ.

HAPPY JACK

Fine, son. When Jesus gets to the Battery you show Him the way from there.

The Minister finishes the service. MR. CORNELIUS, a funeral director who resembles one of his own customers, ushers in a WOMAN (MAGGIE) pulling a lovely 10 year old GIRL (JENNY EVERDEKNE) by the hand. The woman is obviously drunk, the girl frightened.

MR. CORNELIUS

Will you have music, entlegen

WOMAN (MAGGIE)

My daughter'll do any song you like.

HAPPY JACK

Not tonight, Maggie, we got...

Monk Eastman interrupts from the Background.

MONK

How much?

MAGGIE

Any ned in your pocket, sir.

MONK hands MAGGIE some coins.

MONK

She sing sweet as she looks?

MAGGIE

Pure celestial, sir.

(to girl)

Go on, Jenny.

Jenny's voice is sweet as promised. The song she SINGS, however, is a bawdy saloon song. Maggie cuts her off fast.

MAGGIE

No, Jen, the other.

Jenny starts to sing a HYMN. To avoid looking at the corpse, she lets her eyes rove all around the chapel until she SEES Amsterdam. She looks straight at him until the hymn is over. And he does not take his eyes off her.

CUT TO

INT. MORTUARY HALLWAY NIGHT

Mr. Cornelius is about to escort Maggie and Jenny into another room crowded with mourners when a smartly-dressed man (DANIEL KILLORAN) gestures to him from the shadows.

KILLORAN

Mr. Tweed would like a word, Mr. Cornelius.
(Cornelius hesitates)
Tweed of Tammany.

At the mention of the name, Cornelius shoos Maggie and Jenny into the mourning room and shuts the door behind them. Then he gives Killoran his full attention.

KILLORAN

In your office. At your pleasure, of course.

CUT TO

INT. MORTUARY OFFICE

As the door opens, we see a man gazing out the narrow window onto the spectacle in the next building. He is in his late 20s, already a little fleshy but dressed with dash: WILLIAM TWEED... "BOSS" TWEED. He shows a bemused, almost scholarly interest in the goings-on next door. This mortuary is located next to a bordello, where the windows are uncurtained and the energy and variety of the activities inside is astounding.

Tweed finally TURNS as Killoran opens the door.

TWEED

Mr. Cornelius. With a view like this I'm surprised the dead can rest in peace.

CORNELIUS

Is there anything I can...

TWEED

(interrupting)
Yes. A favor.

CORNELIUS

Happy to serve, Mr. Tweed.

TWEED

Excellent. Lend me something.

CORNELIUS

(puzzled)

Oh, I don't know what I could ...

TWEED

I believe in form and appearance, you see. Just like yourself, sir.

And I

believe in law, and the power of example. Our city is a lawless wilderness, sir. I'm asking you to help chasten it.

CORNELIUS

A matter of civic duty, then.

TWEED

And civic pride. I want you to help me set an example.

(smiles)

I only need to borrow one of your clients.

CUT TO

INT. MORTUARY NIGHT

Two native Americans open the door where Vallon is laid out and Bill the Butcher STRIDES into the room. There is immediate TENSION, like an electric charge, as other Natives stand in the doorway and crowd the hall stand while Bill walks over to the coffin. He places a BLACK ROSE in Vallon's folded hands.

BILL THE BUTCHER

Tomorrow your cortege will cross Paradise Square, into territory protected by the Native Americans. You will be permitted undisputed passage both ways. That is our tribute. After that, any Rabbits wishing to join the Native Americans and willing to swear blood loyalty will be welcomed. All others will be dispatched.

He starts out of the silent room, but STOPS when he sees Mank Eastman looking at him with easy interest. Bill the Butcher STARES him down, but Monk's gaze never wavers.

BILL THE BUTCHER

I'll expect you first.

MONK

Me? Oh, I don't know. All that talk of blood loyalty makes me quake. I'll spill blood when the price is right. But blood for ceremony? Prefer holy communion.

BILL THE BUTCHER

You saw us fight today. You know we can pay any price.

MONK

Not mine. Not now, and not any time after.

BILL THE BUTCHER

We'll see. Independence is a slippery thing. But being a rival ...
well, that's dead dangerous.

Bill brushes past Monk and leaves, followed by the NATIVES. Now the RABBITS file out, with Monk among them.

HAPPY JACK

Come on, boyo. I'll put you up tonight.

AMSTERDAM

I'll do for myself, Jack.

HAPPY JACK

You can't.

(Amsterdam stares at him)

There's no mistaking you're his son.

Happy Jack leaves Amsterdam alone in the room.

Now, by himself, sure of no one seeing, Amsterdam CRIES.

CUT TO

INT. MORTUARY NIGHT

Mr. Cornelius is seated in his office, enjoying a late supper while looking out his window at the bordello activity across the alley. A NOISE at the door disturbs him: Amsterdam.

AMSTERDAM

What's the cost to bury my father proud and proper?

MR. CORNELIUS

For a plot, a headstone, hands to break the earth...

AMSTERDAM

How much?

MR. CORNELIUS

What are your current means?

Amsterdam turns out his pockets, which contain Bill the Butcher's pirate knife as well as the cash Happy Jack pressed on him. Cornelius TAKES it all.

MR. CORNELIUS

Of course you'll have to wait three days for a city permit. But all this may do for part.

AMSTERDAM

No.

Amsterdam takes the knife back from Cornelius.

AMSTERDAM

That's owed another.

CUT TO

EXT. STREET/PARADISE SQUARE DAY

A grey day. Amsterdam stops in front of a window. He STRUGGLES with his scarf, trying to keep himself warm. His eye strays for a moment, and he sees he is outside Mr. Cornelius' Establishment. Then he NOTICES something else...his FATHER, propped up in a coffin, on public display. There is a large sign beside the body: "The Dead End of Lawlessness. Tammany Abhors Crime. Tammany Means Justice." A sizeable CROWD is goggling at the body. Amsterdam BULLS his way through the people to the street. He looks in the gutter, then looks up quickly. Someone is watching him: Johnny. He's carrying an armful of wood.

JOHNNY

Firewood?

Amsterdam grabs the longest plank Johnny has.

JOHNNY

It's a penny the load.

AMSTERDAM

Later.

He turns with the plank in his hand and starts to RUN back through the crowd.

JOHNNY

Hey!

Johnny manages to GRAB the other end of the plank. But Amsterdam's so strong he YANKS him right along. The Crowd YELLS as it parts for Amsterdam, who CHARGES through using the plank like a battering ram, with Johnny on the far end, born along by stubbornness and momentum...toward Mr. Cornelius' window. Amsterdam SHATTERS the window and the Crowd SCATTERS in a blizzard of GLASS. Amsterdam stumbles into the window and against the coffin, which falls over, spilling Vallon's BODY, knocking the boy over. Amsterdam picks himself up as Johnny stands frozen.

AMSTERDAM

Help me.

He starts to pull his father's body from the window.

AMSTERDAM

Come on! Help me, goddamn it!

In a daze, Johnny steps forward and HELPS Amsterdam pull the body onto the street.

Now: the SOUND of WHISTLES and WHEELS and RUNNING HORSES as a wagon full of POLICE arrives on the scene. Behind them, the Crowd returns, yelling insults.

The police RUN toward the window. Mr. Cornelius dithers at the front of the crowd.

Amsterdam and Johnny exchange a look. Then Johnny RUNS for it. Amsterdam stays with the body...as the cops close in, SWINGING clubs. Amsterdam's grabbed and hit a couple of times. The Crowd yells. A COP swings his arm back to give Amsterdam a good wallop...and someone grabs his arm: Bill The Butcher.

BILL THE BUTCHER

Easy, crusher. What's this all about?

CRUSHER

Ask the boy.

AMSTERDAM

I paid Cornelius for my father to rest in honor. He told me I had to wait on a permit, but he only wanted time to...

BILL picks up the Tammany sign from the ground.

BILL THE BUTCHER

Make another Arrangement, looks like. For advertising.
(to cop)

Better go along. I'll see to all this.

COP

The boy...

BILL THE BUTCHER

Take the little malefactor.

The Cops YANK the wildly flailing Amsterdam to his feet and DRAG him off to their wagon. Bill The Butcher approaches Cornelius.

BILL THE BUTCHER

Give the boy what he paid for.

CUT TO

EXT. STREET/PARADISE SQUARE DAY

Amsterdam is HURLED into the police wagon. The door is locked behind him. He pulls himself to his feet, looks out the tiny barred window, SEES...Dead Rabbits join up in a rough funeral procession. SEVERAL help LOAD Vallon's body back into the coffin and place it onto Mr. Cornelius' fancy funeral wagon. Monk Eastman LEAPS up onto the wagon and closes the coffin lid tight.

There are PEDDLERS everywhere. One dispenses drinks from a portable samovar. A SAILOR hawks ships in a bottle, repeatedly shouting the same advertisement: "Encourage the work of a landswamped sailor!" A SILHOUETTE ARTIST offers to draw portraits of passersby.

Funeral music is furnished by STREET MUSICIANS: a drummer, a fiddle player, and a horn player, with a couple of BUSKERS performing along side for good measure. Mr. Cornelius takes the wagon reins and guides the horses out of the square. The gang FOLLOWS solemnly behind.

And across the square, the police wagon carrying Amsterdam starts MOVING OFF in the opposite direction. He keeps looking out the tiny wagon window. The funeral procession leaves the square and activity returns quickly to normal. Peddlers' CRIES once again fill the air. The Buskers start PLAYING a snappier tune. SNOW begins to fall.

CUT TO

INT- TOMBS DAY

A huge, awful prison building modeled on an Egyptian mausoleum. Amsterdam--trying to hide his growing fear--waits on line with other PRISONERS, all of them older than he. At the head of the line, prisoners are being processed by a JAILER and a couple of COPS. Each prisoner is asked several cursory questions, then told to strip. Every one of the men is SCARRED in some way. AMSTERDAM nears the front of the line. The MAN just ahead of him undresses. His left buttock is missing, and his back is covered with whip scars. A PRISONER behind Amsterdam WHISPERS loud enough for Amsterdam to hear...

PRISONER

Ain't his first Tombs trip.

AMSTERDAM steps up to the desk. The JAILER hardly takes notice of him.

JAILER

What do they call you?

And this is the first time in the film we have heard his name.

AMSTERDAM
Amsterdam.

The JAILER looks him over.

JAILER
Your full name.

AMSTERDAM
Vallon.

The JAILER writes this down with a scratchy pen.

JAILER
First name?

AMSTERDAM
I told you.

JAILER
(skeptical, resigned)
Address?

AMSTERDAM
Got none.

JAILER
I'll put city. Now what's your age?
(Amsterdam shrugs.)
Maybe twelve. Got a family?

AMSTERDAM
No more.

JAILER
Well, where was they from when you had one?

AMSTERDAM
(beat)
City.

JAILER
(writing)
Disrobe.

As Amsterdam obeys, the Jailer turns to the Cop in the leather helmet standing at his side.

JAILER
What's the charge, Asbury?

COP
Theft. Assault. Creating a ...

The Jailer finishes writing. Amsterdam stands naked.

JAILER
Through that door there.
(lowers his voice)
And don't stand too near no one else.

CUT TO

INT. CREMORE NIGHT

The largest, noisiest, gaudiest dive we have yet seen, full to bursting with bawdy CUSTOMERS even at this late hour. There's a long bar, where men and women stand three deep; lots of small tables; a dance floor; and a stage on which four blowsy DANCING GIRLS are giving out with a ribald number titled "My Father's Teeth Were Plugged With Zinc."

One end of the bar is entirely taken up by a huge woaden keg with an attached hose. BAR ATTENDANTS DUMP the unfinished contents of glasses into the open barrel top as a line of FAR GONE DRUNKS wait their turn for the hose. Maggie, Jenny's mother, is close to the front of the line, very drunk, hanging on to a mush-faced HOODLUM.

Two VISITORS watch. One has a pad and makes quick SKETCHES.

VISITOR ONE
Ought to be served in a trough, properly. Will you try some?

ARTIST
Probably. What is it?

VISITOR ONE
All-Sorts. It's made of all that's poured and not drunk, and any they
can
salvage that's spilt.

Maggie GRABS the hose, staring at the Artist as she takes a drink. His hand moves quickly on the page, SKETCHING her.

VISITOR
(to Maggie)
Your health.

She SPITS at him, insulted. The Artist steps forward, puts some of the All-Sorts from the hose into his glass, and toasts Maggie. She nods and turns away...as Johnny enters, dragging a large SACK across the crowded floor toward a far door.

CUT TO

INT. CREMORE BACK ROOM NIGHT

Johnny RUSHES toward a wooden pen in the center of the room. There are cries from the crowd of SPORTSMEN of "Hurry it up" and "More speed!" Johnny dodges a kick or two before he finally arrives at the pen. He UPENDS the sack over the pit and a dozen live RATS tumble out. A GAMEMASTER slips Johnny a couple of cents as he starts his spiel.

GAMEMASTER

Alright, gents and ladies, your bets now on Towser against the vermin, the count to beat is ten rodents in three minutes.

The crowd starts to place bets. A sleepy Johnny settles down close to ringside to watch the show.

At a signal from the Gamemaster, a TRAINER tosses TOWSER--A fierce mongrel--into the ring. The crowd cheers lustily, continuing to shout out bets, as the dog goes after the rats. The rats, fighting for their lives, bite the dog, attaching themselves to his body. Towser retaliates by gnawing the rats, SNAPPING them in half and spitting them out.

As the CROWD cheers, and Towser kills, and money changes hands, Johnny curls up and goes to sleep.

CUT TO

INT. TOMBS NIGHT

A row of cells, noisy and cold. The GUARD shoves Amsterdam into a cell.

GUARD 2

You get to live private until they come from the orphan's asylum. On account of your tender years.

There is nothing in the cell but a board for a bed, and a window through which Amsterdam can see the late winter moonlight. He looks for stars in the sky, but can see none.

CUT TO

INT- MAIN ROOM/OLD BREWERY

Jenny Everdeane and a girl FRIEND, her own age, huddle together in a dark corner of this huge space. The Friend opens her hand to show Jenny a glimpse of what she's clutching: a penny.

JENNY

Let me see! I don't believe it.

FRIEND

(closing her hand)

No! It's a danger.

JENNY

Oh come on! It's not.

(Friend shakes her head)

Then tell me where you got it.

FRIEND

From some man. He took me in his carriage. He only wanted to do something to me fast.

JENNY

What?

FRIEND

(shrugs)

I didn't understand.

JENNY

Would he do the same with me?

FRIEND

I won't tell you if he's around again.

(clutches penny tight)

He's my secret.

JENNY

Better keep it more careful, then.

The Friend GETS UP and starts across the Brewery floor, acting nonchalant. But she looks around her, across the sleeping, passed-out bodies, past the desperate families and their squalling infants, to see if she's been noticed.

A man and two women cast a glance her way. She looks away, but the TRIO keeps watching her... then FANS OUT and starts to FOLLOW her. The Friend looks over her shoulder again. SEES the Man. Locks in another direction, SEES: the woman. And then: the second woman. All closing on her. The Friend starts to RUN. The Trio runs after her. And no one else pays attention. The Friend PLUNGES into one of the warren of TUNNELS that lead off the Brewery floor. CAMERA plunges through the darkness, after her. Her footsteps ECHO; there is the SOUND of stumbling, falling, an angry CURSE and a BLOW being struck. The FRIEND picks herself up out of the darkness and keeps running, CAMERA following down the dank halls.

Suddenly the TRIO runs AHEAD of the camera. There is a SCREAM. CAMERA staps. And others SOUNDS follow quickly now: the dull THUD of a heavy object against bone, REPEATED several times; and then, very soon after, the most terrible sound of all: silence.

Then Two Women emerge from the darkness of the tunnel, fighting over the penny. The Man, several steps behind them, throws an object to the dirt floor: it's a STONE, and it is covered with blood. He comes up behind the

Two Women quickly and GRABS the penny from them with a hand that still DRIPS blood and gore. They CHASE after him across the crowded Brewery floor.

CUT TO

INT. HALLWAY/TAMMANY NIGHT 2

CAMERA races along the ornate corridor, past PORTRAITS of many affluent and self-important GENTLEMEN... through a door and into...

INT. TWEEDIS OFFICE/TAMMANY NIGHT

... Tweed's domain. Small in size, but there are dozens of CAGES OF CANARIES all around. Tweed looks up startled as the door flies open. The birds set up a COMMOTION.

CAMERA bears down on Tweed as a pair of HANDS grabs him and hurls him against the wall.

Bill The Butcher GLARES at Tweed. Some NATIVES come into the room behind him.

BILL THE BUTCHER

You come into the Five Points and you stole from me.

TWEED

I don't know...

BILL THE BUTCHER

You stole Vallon. He was my kill. My example, of my power. You took
him
and made him yours.

TWEED

You're a lunatic to come here like...

In the background, some of the NATIVES have begun to play CATCH by removing the CANARY CAGES from their places and tossing them all over the room.

BILL THE BUTCHER

Thank you. Just listen good. The Native Americans holds the Five Points.

We have prevailed. What you do outside the Points is your deciding. Outside is your city. Inside the Points is mine. Anyone who says different, or does different, or thinks different...

(smiles)

... they'll draw my unwelcome attention. You understand?

BOSS TWEED

I do understand, yes.

BILL pushes him away and starts out.

BOSS TWEED

But you don't understand at all.

Bill keeps walking.

BOSS TWEED

There's a whole city to share and all you see is your own narrow streets.

BILL THE BUTCHER

(turns now)

You just stay out of my place.

BOSS TWEED

Yes, alright. Gladly. It's all blackjack jobs and panel games and killings for a fiver.

Bill waits for Tweed to continue. But Tweed stoops and tries to soothe a canary in a cage.

BILL THE BUTCHER

It's good work.

BOSS TWEED

As far as it goes.

BILL THE BUTCHER

You wouldn't be talking to me otherwise.

BOSS TWEED

But we're talking about different things, Bill. You describe the present.

I see the possibilities. Look to the future. There is so much more.

The Butcher starts to look interested.

CUT TO

INT. TWEED'S OFFICE NIGHT

Later. The Natives have cleared out; only Tweed and the Butcher remain.

The cages have been restored to their proper places and the room has been straightened. Bill stands beside the door, while Tweed relaxes in a chair.

BOSS TWEED

There's things demanding to be done that no police force can do, not even an obedient one. There's contributions from every dive and brothel. Loyalties to be secured and debts to be collected.

BOSS TWEED (Cont'd)

And now you and your Natives have emerged as the foremost force in the Five Points, I'm prepared to extend you an opportunity. You can work for Tammany...

BILL THE BUTCHER

We work for no one.

BOSS TWEED

... beside Tammany... in the performance of these civic obligations. And for a satisfactory... I'm prepared even to say equitable... financial participation. It's not the sort of responsibility the founding fathers might have recognized. But then, the founding fathers never imagined the city New York has become.

BILL THE BUTCHER

Maybe you Tammany boys should do your own lifting and carrying and muscle work. Might build you up.

BOSS TWEED

We'd like to. I do miss it. But it's wiser for men in the public life to give an appearance of probity.

BILL THE BUTCHER

Then get cops to do it.

BOSS TWEED

Oh Jesus, no. The appearance of law must be upheld, especially while it's being broken.

BILL THE BUTCHER
Appearance means nothing.

BOSS TWEED
Perhaps not within the Points. But the smart man could go higher.

Bill looks at Tweed for a long moment. The he SHOVES himself away from the wall, pulls away the chair on which Tweed has been resting his feet and sits down close to him.

BILL THE BUTCHER
If you can talk plain, maybe we can do business.

EXT. STREET NIGHT

A small slum thoroughfare congested by a splendid FIRE-WAGON labeled "Americus Co./Tammany Hall." Curious SPECTATORS and panic-stricken RESIDENTS crowd around to watch a ramshackle building going up in FLAMES.

As Johnny presses through the crowd to get a good look at the fire, Tweed, in a white coat and fancy fire helmet, steps off the fire wagon to address an ONLOOKER.

TWEED
Anyone inside?

ONLOOKER
No, praise God, but all we own...

TWEED places a bucket over the only fire plug in the vicinity, then
sits
on it.

ONLOOKER
Well?

TWEED
Waiting on reinforcements.

The SOUND of another bell, nearby. Down the street from the opposite direction come TWO MORE FIRE-WAGONS. The crowd starts cheering. Tweed does not move from the plug.

TWEED
That's not them. It's only the Black Jokes. Seems your fire interrupted their festivities.

The wagons pull up next to the fire plug. Each of them has the words "Black Joke Fire Co." written large on the side, but the FIREMEN wear party costumes, not regular uniforms. Some are dressed as British

Redcoats, still others as Indians.

The FLAMES continue to devour the building, but Tweed does not budge from the plug. He is approached by the Black Jake chief, who is dressed as an Indian chief.

CHIEF

May I point out that the building is burning to ashes?

TWEED

Certainly. And may I then remind you, Pocahontas, that this entire area is the province of the Americus company, and you will kindly keep your distance.

Impasse. The rival Fire Companies size each other up and start toward each other. The building continues to burn. Tweed remains regal and unperturbed atop the fire plug. As the two COMPANIES are about to close with each other, a second BELL sounds. Tweed's "reinforcements" have arrived: the Native Americans, led by Bill The Butcher. They PILE OFF the wagons before the horses halt. Now the Black Joke Co. is outnumbered, and it FALLS BACK. As the Crowd CHEERS, Tweed takes the bucket off the fire plug.

TWEED

Alright, boys! To work!

The MEN of the Americus Co. give a great SHOUT and start firefighting: a hose is hitched up to the plug, buckets are filled, a primitive pump sends water spluttering everywhere.

But there is not much blaze left to combat and the Men quickly grow frustrated. Tweed realizes this immediately.

TWEED

Next building over, boys! Mustn't let it spread!

The men charge into a neighboring building, STOMPING down doors, CLIMBING through windows and SWINGING AXES with gusto, all to save a building that is in no danger at all.

A local poll named DANIEL KILLORAN detaches himself from the crowd and approaches Tweed, giving him a hearty SLAP on the back.

KILLORAN

Another proud night for Tammany, Bill.

TWEED

Just tell them...

(lowers his voice)

... to take enough to share. And not to steal so in the open.

Indeed, the Men are leaving the building with lots of LOOT. CITIZENS who question their right to do this are promptly KNOCKED DOWN. Killoran GRABS Bill The Butcher as he rushes by.

TWEED

Jesus! Boss says to tell you to fight the fire from the front and loot out the back.

Bill grins and leaves to spread the word as an angry WOMAN approaches Tweed.

TEARFUL WOMAN

The Black Joke could have saved my house!

TWEED

Black Joke had no business here, Madam.

TEARFUL WOMAN

Their business was to save my house!

TWEED

Tammany's your business. When we're here to call upon there's no need of other. We understand loss, Madam, and take care of our own.

As Tweed leads her off, away from the blaze and the thieving, he passes a boy sitting on the curb, watching the fire ... and watching Tweed ... with admiration. It's Johnny.

The FLAMES light up his EYES as we...

DISSOLVE TO

INT. BREWERY NIGHT 2

Jenny's face, as she tries to sleep on a narrow, filthy mattress. Her mother Maggie lies beside her, crowding her, THRASHING about in a troubled, drunken sleep.

DISSOLVE TO

INT- ROOM/HIGH BRIDGE ORPHANS ASYLUM 2

Amsterdam, eyes wide, lying on a cot in the middle of a long room crowded with KIDS - This place is a step or two up from the Brewery-- but not a big step. He stares at the ceiling, eyes grave, untroubled by the small cries of loneliness and fear that come from some of the beds surrounding him. As we move CLOSE on his EYES we...

DISSOLVE TO

EXT. HIGH BRIDGE ORPHANS ASYLUM DUSK

... the same eyes. But OLDER. Smart and full of savagery. It is Amsterdam. He is now in his early 20s, fully grown and no man to trifle with. Moving with jungle stealth and strength he ...BURSTS out the door within the massive frame of a great iron gate over which hangs the sign "High Bridge Orphan Asylum." He starts to RUN and a TITLE comes up...1852.

Pursued by GUARDS, Amsterdam runs hell-for-lather for a long vaulted bridge. It's a beautiful, stern old Romanesque span across the Harlem River with rolling banks of leafy trees on the far side. Even in the twilight, we can see that it is late spring, the end of a long afternoon.

CUT TO

EXT. HIGH BRIDGE DUSK (MATTE)

Amsterdam is on the bridge. But he does not slow up until ...two orphanage GUARDS suddenly TACKLE him. A THIRD GUARD beats him with a billy club. Amsterdam moans and curses, as much from frustration as pain.

SECOND GUARD

It's Blackwell's Island certain now, boyo.

The SECOND GUARD pulls AMSTERDAM up by the hair.

THIRD GUARD

Are you hurting? Let's hear you!

Amsterdam won't give him the satisfaction. The Guard hits him. Amsterdam goes down, biting his lip so he won't cry out. Instead, he forces a SMILE.

SECOND GUARD

There's nothing funny, boyo! You been beat and turned back four times now.

AMSTERDAM

But every time you bring me back... you got to come further to catch me.

CUT TO

EXT. CORLEAPS' HOOK PIER NIGHT

Through the THICK FOG comes a ghostly apparition: a tattered SKULL AND CROSSBONES, made of rags, fluttering from the mast of a leaky, unstable vessel.

The bow of the small boat breaks the fog, and on board we see: a hulk called SHEENY MIKE KURTZ and a huge black kid named JIMMY SPOILS, manning the cars. Johnny Sirocco, grown wary and wiry, peers into the fog like a lookout, while Shang Draper, at the tiller, looks anxious. The HULL of a large boat suddenly laoms in front of them, not five yards away.

JOHNNY
Hard starboard, Shang! Hard starboard!

SHANG
(panic)
I told you forget that sailor stuff! Which way's star...

Too late. Their Ticket craft crashes into the side with enough force to make a LOUD THUMP and to send Shang sprawling.

SHEENY MIKE
(sarcastic)
Why don't we just knock on their front door?

Shang gestures for QUIET. They wait and listen. No sound from the deck of the boat above them. The boys throw two ROPE LADDERS over the rail of the larger ship and start climbing.

CUT TO

EXT. SHIP NIGHT

The boys board the ship and gather on deck. They look around uneasily, spooked by the silence and the fog.

SHANG
Spread out and make for the cabin.
Moving slowly, the boys FAN OUT and move toward the cabin at the far end of the deck. Johnny stays close to Shang, holding onto the ship's rail for support.

SHANG
(whispering)
Nothing. Looks picked clean.

Johnny stops. His hand, on the railing, is BLOODY. On the other side of the deck, Sheeny Mike discovers more traces of blood and SIGNALS Shang.

SHANG
Bill and the Natives must have got here first.

Johnny freezes in terror.

SHANG
What ...

A long SHADOW falls across his shoulder. Shang jumps.

Standing before him, holding a musket and covered in blood, is the ship's CAPTAIN. A BUTCHER'S CLEAVER is imbedded between his neck and shoulder. With his dying energy, the Captain takes AIM at a petrified Shang and fires his musket.

Jimmy Spoils JUMPS the Captain from behind, sending the musket ball way wide. But the SOUND of the musket is thunderous, and echoes through the harbor. The boys panic and head for the side.

SHEENY MIKE
That'll bring the Harbor cops for sure.

JOHNNY
(about the dead man)
Wait! Take him. If he's still alive he's good for ransom!

SHEENY MIKE
Hels dead as Good Friday, can't you...

JOHNNY
Then we'll take Bill the Butcher's cleaver and sell the body to the medical students. They'll go five dollars for it anyway.

SHANG
Come on. We'll get something out of this.

Shang and Johnny start DRAGGING the body. Pushing, pulling and mostly panicked, the others help. As they boost the body over the side, the SOUND of a bell cuts through the fog.

SHEENY MIKE
The Harbors!

Shang shoves the body off the side and into the boat. It lands with a resounding THUD. The boys CLAMBER after it.

CUT TO

EXT. BOAT/RIVER NIGHT

PUSHING OFF with cars, tearing their rope ladders from the side of the ship, stumbling over the captain's body, the boys slip off into the fog.

The Harbor Police are so close to them they can see a police LANTERN shining. The boys stay absolutely still. Suddenly, WE SEE: the POLICE BOAT, breaking through the fog, then DISAPPEARING again.

SHEENY MIKE

We can't go back to Corlears Hook, they'll be watching...

SHANG

We'll make for Blackwells.

JIMMY SPOILS

And which way's that through this fog?

Johnny throws his hands up for quiet. From close by comes the SOUND of COP'S VOICES. They are near. Very near. The boys stay as still as they can...and the VOICES recede again in the thick fog.

JIMMY SPOILS

Should have asked them directions as they drifted by, Shang.

SHANG

You'd have liked that, wouldn't you Coal Face? You're the only one they'd miss in the dark.

SHEENY MIKE

Let's quiet, or we'll all be found out!

As the BOYS stay still, their boat DRIFTS against an outcropping of land and STOPS.

SHANG

Alright. We lay up here till first light. Then we run back across the river.

JIMMY SPOILS

(contemptuously)
River pirates!

Spoils settles back and tries to sleep. Johnny watches Shang in the bow. Shang is too agitated to notice Johnny's stare. He looks away, waiting for the sun.

CUT TO

EXT- BLACKWELLS ISLAND DAWN

Shang drowns in the boat, fighting fatigue, then succumbing to it. But h's brought awake suddenly by a loud SPLASH. He looks in the direction of the noise, SEES ...the BODY of the slaughtered ship's captain floating away in the company. He starts to cry out but Amsterdam GRABS him, locking his throat in the crook of his arm.

AMSTERDAM
(to everyone)

Push off! Or his pipe snaps!
The other boys are too stunned to resist. They push the boat away from
the
island.

AMSTERDAM
Head straight out, then turn for the current.
He pushes Shang away from him. The two boys stare at each other,
finally remembering...

SHANG
(breathing hard)
Figured you for dead.

AMSTERDAM
Close enough.

SHANG
This is my crew. And welcome to join, if you've the mettle. We're
river
pirates and quick thieves and street brawlers...

AMSTERDAM
(casual disdain)
You're lost.

SHANG
Yeah? You've no business saying anything against us! Do you know how
much
you cost us? You know how much that body's worth?

AMSTERDAM
I doubt it's worth the water it's floating in.

SHANG
Fifteen dollars! Fifteen dollars from them medical ghouis.

AMSTERDAM
I'll make it back for you whatever it is, once we're in the city. Just
keep sailing, or we're all done for.

SHANG
(beat; to crew)
Go ahead then.
(beat; to Amsterdam)
He was in his prime. He'd have fetched thirty dollars easy.

CUT TO

INT. HIDEOUT DAY

A ramshackle room near the docks. It is part meeting hall, part living quarters for the gang, and part clearing house for stolen goods. SHANG presides over a boisterous meeting.

JIMMY SPOILS

You're as flat as Broadway going north. We can't run the river no more.

We're poaching the Natives and the Harbor cops are looking for us.

SHANG

The cops can go to blazes. Who cares about them?

SHEENY MIKE

You're all sand when it comes to cops, Shang. But do you have the sand to go against the Natives?

SHANG

It ain't the time to go against the Natives. We've got to build first. Then we go.

JIMMY SPOILS

If we go like we did in the river, all of us'll sink.

Amsterdam is sitting off to the side, watching this ongoing debate with contemptuous detachment. Johnny sits next to him.

AMSTERDAM

Does Shang have the sand to ever go against the Natives?

JOHNNY

I don't know. He acts like it.

AMSTERDAM

If he only acts, he'd be better on the stage.
(looks away)
Like her.

His tone of voice has changed. Jenny Everdeane passes before him; she's ravishing. Amsterdam STARES, as if he's trying to see into her heart. Jenny pays him scant attention as she moves across the room toward Shang.

JOHNNY

Jenny Everdeane. Shang turned her into the best bludget in the Points.

Jenny gives Shang silk scarfs, wallets and several purses from her coat.

AMSTERDAM

Shes his mort, is she, as well as his best provider?

JOHNNY

Yeah. But Jenny says she's anyone's she chooses.

Jenny's haul is impressive. Shang picks a BRIGHT RED SILK SCARF with a distinctive PAISLEY design from the pile of stolen goods. He examines it with a shrewd, appreciative eye.

SHANG

That's the prize of the month. Spice Islands silk.

He puts the scarf in his coat pocket with a FLOURISH, then throws his arm about Jenny in a proprietary way.

SHANG

You'll learn our way if you're going to be one of us, Amsterdam.

Jenny reacts slightly to the mention of the name: she looks over and RECOGNIZES Amsterdam now.

SHANG

Every one of us gives a portion of all they steal to the gang. Morts
more
than men, being morts.

AMSTERDAM

Yeah? And why is that?

SHANG

Because morts have more resources. Men can work only on their feet,
but a mort can turn out on her back.

AMSTERDAM

I mean, why give at all? Why don't they keep for themselves?

SHANG

If you think there's something off about my way of running things, you
got no place in this gang.

AMSTERDAM

I got no place anyway, and you got no gang. This ain't a gang, no
matter what you say. It's a mob.

There's a tense hush in the grubby room. Shang takes his arm from around Jenny, wanting to be restrained.

JENNY

(smiling)

It's all your play now, Shang. Maybe you can set him right.

Jenny hands him a cane. Barely managing to hide his reluctance, he starts--slowly--toward Amsterdam, who stands his ground. The gang steps back to give them room in this tiny space. Shang pulls the cane apart: it's a SWORD CANE, but Amsterdam shows no fear. He shifts his weight a little, watching ... and they're interrupted by a...

VOICE (HAPPY JACK)

You boys settle with me before you settle each other.

They turn to him.

HAPPY JACK

I've come for my due and proper, Shang.

Happy Jack Mulraney (the Dead Rabbit gang member with the halfparalyzed face) stands before them in a POLICEMAN'S UNIFORM--sparkling clean and splendid--a leather helmet and long coat. In his hand, he twirls a NIGHTSTICK.

SHANG

As agreed, then, Jack. Refreshment?

Shang OPENS the top of the gold-handled sword cane. Inside are large, solid LUMPS of cocaine. Jack reaches for the choicest.

AMSTERDAM

Still smiling, are you?

HAPPY JACK

(sizing him up)

It's the young Vallon, is it? I hardly recognized you.

AMSTERDAM

I hardly knew you under that hat, Jack.

By now, Jack has taken not only the cocaine, and the money and swag Shang offers, but several of the purses and wallets Jenny delivered. Jenny stares at him with contempt, and he laughs, tossing one of the purses back at her.

JACK

There. For your respect.

Jack turns to leave but a BRASH BOY blocks his way. Moving fast and fancy,

Jack bashes the Boy to the floor with his nightstick.

HAPPY JACK

Anybody else? Any number at all, come on.

Several of the gang make a move toward Jack, but Shang WAVES them back. Jack departs UNHARMED, to general disgust. Jenny walks back across the room to help the Brash Boy. Shang GLARES at Amsterdam, slides his sword back into his cane and follows Jenny, trying to explain himself.

AMSTERDAM

Is that sand we've just seen?

JOHNNY

It's politics.

CUT TO

EXT. PARADISE SQUARE DAY

A hot summer day. All the TRADESMEN are out in force, jamming the square and the side streets leading to it. Amsterdam walks fast through the crowd, enjoying the freedom and the bustle, as Johnny tags along close behind him.

AMSTERDAM

I've got my own way to go, why don't you find yours?

JOHNNY

Because your way's different, and I want to see where it goes.
(Amsterdam looks at him)

Unless you say otherwise. Amsterdam shrugs and keep walking.

JOHNNY

You act like you have something in mind, like you know every day what you'll be doing the next. Me, I don't figure on tomorrow.

AMSTERDAM

Well, if you shut up a while maybe it'd come on its own.
(he stops, looks)

Now what the hell's that?

JOHNNY

(following his glance)
Oh that's heaven.

WE SEE what they're looking at: the Old Brewery. In worse shape than ever before, but shut-down, abandoned. A tattered banner flaps against the front door: "Future Home of the Five Points Mission/ Praise God!/ The Reverend Shadrach Raleigh, Pastor."

JOHNNY

The city shut down the Brewery as unfit to live and Tammany gave it over to this minister.

AMSTERDAN
What's Tammany?

JOHNNY

Why Tammany ... you don't know? Tammany makes the city run. A political organization that's like... like the Native Americans, only ranging over the whole city.

CUT TO

MONTAGE

As Johnny continues to speak, we see Tammany tactics in action: WARD-HEALERS dispensing coal to the poor, and TOUGHS stealing meat off of butcher's wagons; a political PARADE with fife and drum-and politicians--including Boss Tweed--in ceremonial Indian costume, and a group of GOONS busting up a saloon; Tweed making a speech to enthusiastic CONSTITUENTS and a Tammany Fire Company tearing through the streets, scattering everyone in their way, finally revealing they are not rushing to a fire but are CRASING OFF a rival fire company.

JOHNNY

They seem like the law, but they got a way of acting outside the law. Anything that happens in this city, on the straight or on the sly, Tammany's a part of, and Boss Tweedls the heart of Tammany.

CUT TO

EXT. PARADISE SQUARE, /OLD BREWERY DAY

Amsterdam studies Johnny's enthusiastic face.

JOHNNY

They're the best gang there is.

AMSTERDAM

So if Tammany's the best, go with Tammany. What are you running with this mob for?

JOHNNY

'Cause they're more my size for now. With Tammany, you got to do something large, something that makes them take notice of you.

AMSTERDAN

You're better off without their notice. You can run free, work your own schemes.

JOHNNY

But if your schemes have size, you need size to bring them off.

AMSTERDAM

What are you thinking?

Johnny shrugs, grins: he doesn't want to give anything away. Amsterdam understands, turns toward the Brewery.

AMSTERDAM

Let me in if you ever get it figured.

Amsterdam starts toward the Old Brewery, Johnny keeping step.

AMSTERDAM

I'll go on my own from here.

Johnny STOPS and Amsterdam continues on by himself.

CUT TO

INT. MAIN ROOM/OLD BREWERY

Echoing. Dank. Amsterdam holds a candle high for light. RATS skitter. He crosses the main floor, enters one of the side tunnels.

CUT TO

INT. ROOM/OLD BREWERY

A tiny room we recognize from the first scene: this is the place where Amsterdam lived with his father. He crouches and TEARS UP some floorboards, then quickly LOWERS HIMSELF into the hole.

CUT TO

INT. UNDER FLOOR/OLD BR.EWERY

A short tunnel under the Brewery floor, the kind a kid might make. Amsterdam has trouble crawling through it. DIRT and ROCK sprinkle him until he finds what he wants stuck in a shallow hole; a battered leather MONEY PURSE; and a PAPER-WRAPPED PACKAGE.

Amsterdam snaps open the purse to make sure the little bit of MONEY is still there, then turns his attention to the package. He TEARS it open. Inside is the PIRATE KNIFE that Bill the Butcher used to kill Amsterdam's father.

Amsterdam handles the knife carefully as he opens it. The candle light makes the blade GLEAMS.

CUT TO

EXT. ALLEY/OLD BREWERY DAY

A shock of summer SUNLIGHT as Amsterdam emerges from one of the back entrances of the Brewery onto a fetid alley filled with rotted barrels, broken glass and insensible drunks.

Amsterdam looks carefully up and down the alley, letting his eyes adjust to the bright light. Ahead of him, he SEES ...

Shang Draper, in jovial conversation with a SECOND MAN we do not recognize. The man is bareheaded, and has a deep scar running back to front clear down the center of his bald head. Amsterdam waits, WATCHES.

Shang takes the RED SILK SCARF he got from Jenny's swag and hands it to the Second Man. He and Shang SHAKE HANDS, as if they have concluded a business deal, and the Second Man walks away.

Amsterdam PRESSES himself close to the door as Shang LOOKS AROUND... doesn't see Amsterdam... and walks off in the opposite direction, across Paradise Square.

CUT TO

INT- RECEPTION ROOM AND TWEED'S OFFICE DAY

The main room is as loud and as prosperous as the stock exchange. Bill the Butcher makes his way past Small GROUPS of men engaged in heated political dealings of dubious virtue.

Bill knocks on the door to Tweed's private office while he's opening it. Inside is Boss Tweed, seated in a large WOODEN BOX like a primitive sauna.

Around him are various PETITIONERS, and his assistant Daniel Killoran.

TWEED

I dread city stimmers. They bring illness and beget vermin.

PETITIONER #1 (GLEASON)

My plague box fends off all pestilence. Its elixir combats ill humors...

KILLORAN

We can't have every citizen of the Five Points boxed up like cargo.

TWEED

But the season is vicious, and I must take thought of our constituents.

Mr. Gleason, I'd like you to shake hands with Mr. Barnett Baff...

Gleason, dubious, shakes hands with PETITIONER #2 as Bill the Butcher looks on with amusement.

TWEED

A friend and owner of an estimable carting service. Work out an arrangement whereby the citizenry can receive the benefit of Mr. Gleason's wondrous elixir outside this excellent box. At a cost, Mr. Gleason, of how much the barrel ...

GLEASON

(figuring rapidly)
Oh, perhaps twenty-five dollars.

TWEED

...and how much, Mr. Baff, for haulage and distribution...

BAFF

The same again. At least.

TWEED

At least. That's a price of fifty dollars. And greedy, low piracy at that (Gleason and Baff splutter)
But a price that Tammany, in its generosity, will meet. Merely submit a bill for a hundred. We'll each have half. And I'll retain this box for further experiment. Hello, Bill.

Killoran LEADS the astonished Gleason and Baff away as Bill APPROACHES.

TWEED

Bolt the door.

Bill complies. As Tweed speaks and the anti-plague VAPORS SWIRL around his head, he keeps his eyes closed.

TWEED

Scotchy Lavelle's gone wrong in his accounts.

BILL THE BUTCHER

I know. Scotchy's a good man.

TWEED

Not good enough to rake thirty percent of our share from Sparrow's and use it for his own.
(opens his eyes)
You got to give him over, Bill.

BILL THE BUTCHER

I can't do that. No matter what he steals, I still get more from him than any two others. As do you.

TWEED

Alright then. What about Charles McGloin? He's running a panel game off to one side. Did you know that?

(Bill shrugs)

I can't get a day's work done for all the good citizens pouring in here complaining about crime and corruption all over the Points. They accuse Tammany of carelesoness. Some even suspect ... a few practically suggest.

(eying Bill significantly)

... our complicity with this rampant criminality. We must show them Tammany stands behind the letter of the law. We need to set an example.

BILL THE BUTCHER

(beat)

Charles McGloin will do.

TWEED

I'll set the trial for Friday.

CUT TO

44 EXT- TOMBS DAY

CAMERA moves high along the outside wall, past small rectangular slits that pass for jail windows. EYES peer out, as if a peep show is underway directly below in the Tombs courtyard. A PRISONER is being readied for the gallows by having a hood tied to his head.

The CROWD is in a carnival mood; HOT CORN GIRLS, STREET VENDORS, "HOKEY-POKEY" (i.e., ice cream) MERCHANTS, even BUSKERS, all add to the holiday spirit.

Jenny works through the crowd, pushing and smiling her way past groups of raucous merrymakers. She stops once or twice to have a word with a GENTLEMAN, flirts for a moment, then moves on.

Further back in the crowd, Amsterdam NOTICES her. He watches her go through the crowd with an admiration that quickly turns to FASCINATION as he realizes what she's doing: picking pockets. The best bludget in the Five Points. He starts to FOLLOW her.

Jenny has worked her way close to the hanging platform, but she's so intent on her job she has not noticed Amsterdam. The closer the platform, the closer the spectacle and richer the pickings: Jenny's concentration is absolute. On the platform, an ASSISTANT HANGMAN addresses the Crowd.

ASSISTANT HANGMAN

Those interested in the effects of the condemned please come forward.

Part of the Crowd PRESSES in toward the platform, temporarily blocking Amsterdam's view of Jenny. He is right against the platform.

ASSISTANT HANGMAN

What am I bid for this coat? A coat of some wear but excellent cut...
containing a rather remarkable pocket silk...

MAN IN CROWD

Bid a quarter!

HANGMAN

A quarter, thank you. Do I hear fifty cents? Fifty cents?

The Hangman is holding up the condemned man's coat which contains the
RED
SILK SCARF Amsterdam saw Shang give away. Amsterdam flips the HANGMAN
a
quarter, reaches out and GRABS the handkerchief.

AMSTERDAM

Here. Just for the silk.

He stuffs it into his pocket and starts to PUSH his way through the crowd. On the platform, the WARDEN steps forward holding a primitive megaphone.

WARDEN

Do you have any last remarks, Charles McGloin?

McGloin grunts from underneath the hood.

MCGLOIN

Not from under this hood I don't.

Crowd near the platform begins to CHANT "No hood, no hood, no hood!" The Warden puts his hand on the hood, starts to remove it...and the Crowd CHEERS. Amsterdam turns, SEES: Charles McGloin. Bald, with a deep scar running front to back on his head. The very SAME MAN he saw in the alley with Shang.

McGloin acknowledges the cheers of the crowd. The Warden holds to megaphone close and McGloin bellows...

MCGLOIN

I never struck a foul blow or turned a card and may God greet me as a friend!

The Crowd ROAR approval at these words. Amsterdam PUSHES through the crowd, looking for Jenny ... SPOTTING her finally...while up on the

platform, the NOOSE is placed around McGLOIN's neck, and he is HOISTED UP in no time. We hear his neck SNAP. His feet kick after death. The Crowd raises a zighty cheer.

CUT TO

EXT./INT. BROADWAY AND BROADWAY STAGE DAY

Amsterdam walks with a crowd toward a waiting Broadway stage, a vehicle that looks like a horsedrawn train car. The stage will take spectators back uptown from the hanging.

He is working his way toward Jenny, who is now BOARDING the stage. Amsterdam DASHES through the crowd and SQUEEZES onto the stage, which moves forward with a JOLT.

Once on board, Amsterdam looks through the jammed car, SEES: Jenny, about to sit down - A MAN has offered her his seat. She smiles dazzlingly as she sits...and arranges her hands genteelly on her lap. The Man looks down on her and she smiles up at him again. He is bequiled.

Amsterdam manages to get a little closer.

MAN

I hope you won't think me rude if I speak.

JENNY

No, sir. You look a proper Gentleman down to the ground.

As this conversation continues, we watch-not only Jenny and The Man in conversation, and Amsterdam watching them; but we begin to notice what Amsterdam SEES. Although Jenny's hands apparently remain folded on her lap, her RIGHT HAND moves SLOWLY out from her wrap... toward The Man...

MAN

Well, I wouldn't want you to think me forward, you see.

... and BRUSHES past his jacket. He does not notice or feel a thing. Jenny's hand GLIDES past his THIGH ... nearly brushing it ... moving up across his pelvis and around his buttocks...

JENNY

Does it matter to you what I think?

MAN

Well, I might like it to.

JENNY

Oh.

...toward his pocket. The Man is in Jenny's thrall. He feels nothing and continues to have no idea what is going on. But Amsterdam KNOWS. Every silken, surreptitious move of her HAND across The Man's body is like a CARESS that Amsterdam can feel. Jenny's grace is balletic and EROTIC. As she picks The Man's pocket, she is, without knowing it, also seducing Amsterdam

MAN

I mean, if you would like.

JENNY

I might like, sir. But I can't say now.

Her hand HOVERS above his pocket, waiting for the SWAY of the stage to match and mask her movement....

MAN

Why?

... and she starts to get up as soon as the stage JOSTLES. The entire car full of passengers LEANS into one another...and Jenny's hand SLIDES the Man's WALLET from his trousers as he recovers his balance. Amsterdam watches her withdraw her HAND in a flash and hide it beneath her wrap.

JENNY

Because this is my stop.

MAN

May I walk with you a little, then?

JENNY

(firmly)

That would be too bold.

MAN

But I'll never see you again.

JENNY

I come every Thursday to the Tombs to see my father.

MAN

I'll look for you.

Jenny fetches him another fine SMILE--it's almost demure--and takes her way off the rear entrance of the stage.

It PULLS AWAY up Broadway and Jenny walks briskly toward an alley.

CUT TO

EXT. ALLEY/BROADWAY DAY

Jenny looks to make sure she has the alley to herself, then moves her body a little...and her arms seem to come off. She has been wearing a set of ARTIFICIAL ARMS, hollow inside, which she can leave folded on her lap misleadingly while she goes about her pickpocketing.

She's folding up the appliance--cotton sewn over a soft form--when a VOICE behind her makes her turn.

AMSTERDAM

May I walk with you a little, then?

CUT TO

EXT. BROADWAY DAY

As Jenny and Amsterdam walk through the noisy bustle of the city's main thoroughfare.

JENNY

Are you a spy, then?

AMSTERDAM

Got no one to spy for. I'm an appreciator, you might say.

JENNY

Appreciator of what?

AMSTERDAM

A good touch.

She STOPS in the street, looks him straight in the eye.

JENNY

Don't bother with the chat. If you want me, we come to a business arrangement. If the terms is right, then I decide how you suit me. Then I do it or not.

AMSTERDAM

Just take a minute, I was Just...

JENNY

I know what you was just. I had years already of what you was just. You know how I got so good at thieving? So's I wouldn't have to lay down for everyone who had the ned. Now I do it when I want to for how much I want to. Otherwise I don't do it, and don't have to do it, and to hell with anyone's rules but my own.

AMSTERDAM

What about Shang's rules? You pay a lot over to him. The better your
day,
the better his. It don't seem gute right.

JENNY

(a little curious now)
What's it to you?

AMSTERDAM

Give him this.

He hands her the RED SILK SCARF. She recognizes it instantly as the
same
one she gave Shang.

AMSTERDAM

And you can keep a little more of what you earned.

JENNY

How'd you come by this?

AMSTERDAM

I got my own touch.

JENNY

Are you making me a present, or making an Arrangement?

AMSTERDAM

It's your rules, right? So you decide.

She looks at him for a moment, then starts to TIE the scarf around her
neck like a kerchief.

CUT TO

INT. HIDEOUT

A gentlemen's WALLET skims across a pitted wooden table, straight into
Shang's hand. Jenny is giving him her CUT. He opens the wallet, looks
up at Jenny. No more goods are forthcoming. Amsterdam, hanging back,
watches them both.

Shang SEES the RED SILK SCARF, tied around her neck.

SHANG

Pretty slim cut for a hanging day. Where'd you get that?

JENNY

From Amsterdam.

SHANG

(beat)

It don't suit you.

CUT TO

EXT. STREET AND PARADISE SQUARE NIGHT

A SWELTERING evening. The streets are jammed with REVELERS and RESIDENTS. Some people sleep in doorways in futile search for fresh air. Happy Jack Mulraney leads a group of apprehensive UPTOWN CITIZENS past drunks and whores.

JACK

Commissioner Brunt said to spare you nothing concerning conditions.

CITIZEN

Nothing but our safety, of course.

JACK

All's snug around Paradise Square in my company, squire. See there.

He gestures toward the street, down which one oi Mr. Barnett Baff's CARTS is being drawn by a team of WHEEZING NAGS.

The cart bears massive barrels of what a colorful banner advertises as "an anti-pestilence influenza-thwarting solution... a service of Tammany Hall." As the wagon draws abreast of a large group of languishing RESIDENTS, HOSES spurt waves of solution all over the streets. Many people are SOAKED. Jack and his Citizens jump back just in time.'

JACK

Tammany makes the streets nanitary, I make 'am safe.

WOMAN CITIZEN

(apprehensive)

Even against them?

A small distance behind the anti-plague cart, moving in rough formation, come some of Shang's mob, heading aimlessly across the Square cruising for action

JACK

Against them especially. Let me demonstrate.

Jack takes out his GOLD WATCH AND CHAIN, which he HANGS carefully over a nearby lamppost. Then, very casually, he leads the Citizens off.

JACK

We'll be back for this at our leisure.

WOMAN CITIZEN
You dare leave it here?

JACK
Safe as a vault, lady. Since all knows it's mine.

The Gang draws abreast of the lamppost. No one makes a move to take the watch until one of the YOUNGEST BOYS reaches out ... but

Shang knocks his hand away. Jack, at a distance, NODS approvingly.

SHANG
You know that's Jack's.

BOY
So what?

AMSTERDAM
It should be hangin' off Jack's vest, then. Not here, like some war flag.

SHANG
That watch is a small price for free run of the Points.

AMSTERDAM
If it's free, how come we pay so much? Wo shouldn't pay for what's our due.

SHANG
We don't tight when we don't have to. It's not warring that counts.
It's
the living day to day.

ANSTERDAM
(smiles)
Is that right? Did I hear that correct? John, did we hear that correct?

Eyes now on Johnny. Jenny looks at him with great interest.

JOHN
(uneasy pause)
We heard the same.

AMSTERDAM
So then.

He reaches for the watch.

CUT TO

EXT. STREET AND PARADISE SQUARE NIGHT

Happy Jack stands at the lamppost, aghast. A WOMAN lowers her head and retches. Jack's watch and chain are still in place.

But the watch has been SMASHED. And hanging from the chain is a BLACK CAT, skinned and strangled.

CUT TO

51 INT- HIDEOUT

Happy Jack stands with his Citizens. The room QUIETS as, one by one, the mob notices him.

JACK
You!

He GRABS the Young Boy who had reached for his watch on the lamppost and starts to BEAT him.

JACK
What'd you do to my watch, you dirty little bastard...

Jack breaks the Boy's hand with his nightstick. The Boy SCREAMS and FAINTS. So does one of the Women in the group. Jack takes the Boy's other hand.

JACK
Hands won't be so quick in future.

SHANG
That's enough sport this evening, Jack.

JOHNNY
(stepping forward)
It wasn't him.

All turn to look at Johnny. Jack drops the Boy's hand.

JOHNNY
I have word for you from who did it. You're to meet him at Sparrow's Chinese Pagoda.

CUT TO

INT. SPARROW'S CHINESE PAGODA NIGHT

A low and lunatic place: a combination of an opium dream out of the Arabian Nights and a panel from a Bosch triptych. FAN-TAN games played by Orientals; WOMEN and CHILDREN of various colors suspended in cages

from the ceiling as MEN and WOMEN in a secondfloor GALLERY point at them and JOKE. On the main floor, a long line waits for a shot at the barrel of All-Sorts. Jack charges in the front door, looks around.

JACK

All right, step out, you yellow...

All the NOISE subsides. Only the Fan-Tan game continues; nothing is so interesting that these Orientals will stop gambling. Now Amsterdam STEPS right in front of him. It's a grandstand play.

AMSTERDAM

Hello, Happy Jack. I'm the one you're looking for.

JACK

Then you're marked for dead.

Jack lunges ahead, swinging his NIGHT STICK. Amsterdam throws a chair across his path. Jack stumbles, goes down, dropping his night stick. Amsterdam grabs it, jumps on top of him, HITS him twice on the side of the head. There is a CRACKING SOUND. The PATRONS of the Pagoda gather round.

CUT TO

INT. SPARROW'S CHINESE PAGODA NIGHT

Later. Festive again. And no sign of Amsterdam.

Two PATRONS step away from the all-sorts barrel. Hanging from the spigot like the cat from the watch chain is the BODY of Happy Jack Mulraney. The belt has been removed from his trousers, tied like a NOOSE around his throat, then looped over the spigot. His TEETH lie scattered on the floor around him. His NIGHT STICK has been jammed down his throat.

CUT TO

EXT. DOCKS/HIDEOUT NIGHT

Amsterdam holds the FANCY COAT from Jack's uniform over his arm. Carefully, he DRAPES the coat over Jenny's shoulders. SHANG steps forward.

SHANG

I gave no order for this.

Amsterdam says nothing at first, just holds his hand out: he's holding the RED SILK SCKRF.

AMSTERDAM

(very quietly)

Never mind giving orders. What were you giving this for?

SHANG

I'm calling you out, Amsterdam.

AMSTERDAM

I got this at the hanging. It was Charles McGloin's. Everybody here
saw
you take it from Jenny. What was MCGloin doing with it? What'd you
give it
to him for?

SHANG

I didn't give it to him. Why would I give it to him?

AMSTERDAM

I gaw you give it to him. Last week, behind the Old Brewery.

SHANG

(to group)

He's gone flat. I got no reason to trade with the Native Americans.

AMSTERDAM

What about stepping up in the world, as it were, and leaving the rest
of
us behind. There's a reason. Making a separate arrangement for
yourself
with the one Native so stupid and luckless that he got hung. That's
you to
the ground, Shang.

SHANG

(very edgy now; to group)

Who believes what he's saying? Can any of you believe what he's
saying?

AMSTERDAM

Bene. We'll see. Any of you that believes I did proper by Happy Jack
Mulraney tonight, stand beside me. Any of you that still likes Shang's
way

with the cops, and Shang's way with the Natives, go to him.

(to Shang)

Or should we settle right now, you and me, and just see which of us is
left standing?

SHANG

Let see where they stand.

Jenny rises, stands next to Amsterdam. Jimmy Spoils, Johnny, Sheeny
Mike are next. Now the other members of the mob move in clusters to
all STAND with Amsterdam.

AMSTERDAM

What's your pleasure, Shang?

One of the YOUNG BOYS has a dead rat blackjack hanging from his belt. Shang grabs it. He BITES the head off the rat and spits it across at Amsterdam. Amsterdam almost smiles at him. Shang sneers, drops the body of the rat, and LEAVES.

AMSTERDAM

This mob ever have a proper name?

JOHNNY

We was called after Shang when we was named at all.

AMSTERDAM

We're the Dead Rabbits from now. They were the best. They were history.

They were legend, and we'll live up to them.

CUT TO

EXT. DOCKS/WATERFRONT NIGHT

Amsterdam sits on an empty pier, watching the ships in the river. There's a SUDDEN RUSTLING NOISE as a NOOSE coils around his neck.

It's Jenny. She's slipped the SILK Amsterdam gave her close to his throat, and she's TIGHTENING it. Amsterdam starts to resist. Then he sees how's she's looking at him.

She uses the silk to bring his face closer to hers. She KISSES him.

AMSTERDAM

What's this then?

JENNY

Payment for the silk.

Then DROPS the silk from his throat and starts to touch him. Then his hands are under her skirt. Then, under the cloudy moonlight, they start to make love.

CUT TO

EXT. DOCKS/WATERFRONT NIGHT

Later. Amsterdam pulls Happy Jack's uniform COAT over Jenny to keep her warm in the chill air.

JENNY

You were waiting for me out here, weren't you?

AMSTERDAM
Maybe I was, yeah.

JENNY
You was that sure of me?

AMSTERDAM
Sure enough to wait, anyway. Waiting don't cost nothing.

JENNY
It don't do to be sure. I could go away just as easy.

AMSTERDAM
Alright.

He sweeps the coat away from her body, allowing her to leave.

JENNY
I'll say when I want to, not you.

AMSTERDAM
Stay then.
(beat; smile)
One way or another, I get what I want.

JENNY
(looking at him)
Yeah. If it was just a shag you wanted.

AMSTERDAM
You're a gypsy, are you, come to tell my fortune? Go ahead then. Tell
me
what I'm wanting.

JENNY
You got blood in your eye for someone.

AMSTERDAM
It's just I can't look away, that's all.

JENNY
Who from?

AMSTERDAM
Bill Poole.

JENNY
You better get someone else in your sights. No one's ever taken him.

AMSTERDAM

'Cause he's mine, that's why. I'll take his one eye, and then the rest
of
him, piece by small piece.

JENNY

You have a plan for this? You going to raise a militia? I'll wager
Bill
the Butcher don't even know about you or care if he does.

AMSTERDAM

He'll know about me soon enough.

JENNY

And after the Butcher?

AMSTERDAM

You.

JENNY

Is that so?

AMSTERDAM

You'll be in love with me.

JENNY

Love you? You just had me. You can have a mort any time you want. So
why
look for more than that.

AMSTERDAM

That's taking love, not giving it. I want it to be just you and me, no
one
else for either.

JENNY

Why?

AMSTERDAM

'Cause none of us means nothing in life except one to the other.

JENNY

I don't know I want to mean something, to you or anybody. Can there be
good in that?

He stares at her.

AMSTERDAM

We'll see.

Jenny pulls the coat tighter around her.

JENNY

It'll take a while if we do. If we ever do.

AMSTERDAM

And what about the meantime?

JENNY

Meantime's business.

CUT TO

EXT PARADISE SQUARE DAY

A CROWD gathers in one of the main thoroughfares bisecting the 5 Points. A beefy SPEAKER is making an anti-Irish speech on behalf of James W. Barker, a mayoral candidate supported by Tammany's current rivals, the Know-Nothing Party. Hand-painted signs are everywhere, bearing Barker's unsavory likeness. A couple of BUSKERS provide a musical score for the political spiel.

SPEAKER

The potato is a thick vegetable. Heavy. Meaty. Comes out of the ground dirty and stays that way unless you scrub it and boil it to death!

(cheers and laughs from crowd)

We don't want to keep lem out of the country! We'll even give 'em a place
at our table! But we ain't gonna vote 'em into office.

Much CHEERING and jovial approval from the Crowd. On its fringes, Amsterdam and the Dead Rabbits make their way roughly across the Square.

SHEENY MIKE

Any Irish hears that will be out for blood.

AMSTERDAM

The Irish is too busy building up Tammany. That's where their brains and muscle goes. Once they're inside with their cronies, they turn on their own outside. Tammany'd steal the air and rent the daylight if they could.

SHEENY MIKE

We'd do the same.

AMSTERDAM

Not against our own we wouldn't. That's the difference.

JOHNNY

Tammany earns better. That's the difference.

AMSTERDAM

I ain't seen their ned yet.

Johnny stops walking, betraying slight annoyance that he has to explain the day's deal.

JOHNNY

You will at day's end, that's our arrangement. A quarter a voter,
whether
they're repeaters or not. I'm telling you, we got a square deal.

SHEENY MIKE

It's sound, Amsterdam.

AMSTERDAM

Yeah? Well, it's ned anyway. Just make sure you count it when we get
it.

JOHNNY

It's just a day's job, we don't have to make it a life's work. We work
for
Tammany today and kill them tomorrow, if that's our pleasure.

JIMMY SPOILS

So we're politicians just for today.

AMSTERDAM

Not for a minute. We're better than that. We're thieves.

CUT TO

MONTAGE

The Dead Rabbits go about the business of rounding up Tammany voters. They pick up DRUNKS in alleys; Jenny and some of the Dead Rabbit MORTS raust PATRONS in a whore house; Rabbits shanghai SAILORS from saloons; corral CITIZENS as they walk along the street, either wheedling or bullying to get them to vote. It's the strong arm of democracy.

CUT TO

EXT. POLLING PLACE DAY

On one side of the door, some Dead Rabbits, with a RABBLE of potential voters; on the other, POLICE doing their best. Behind and all around, various WARD HEELERS and SMALL-TIME POLITICIANS, representing both the Know-Nothing candidate Barker and Tammany's Fernando Wood. Varicus factions push and pull at one another as they wedge their VOTERS into the polls.

JIMMY SPOILS

He's got the right to vote, damn you!
 COP Not four times he don't.
 (shoves a Voter)
 There'll be no damned repeaters here!

The Cop and Jimmy play tug-of-war with a besotted VOTER, while other gang members rush to GRAB VOTERS leaving the polls.

PANDEMONIUM.

CUT TO

INT. TAMMANY HALL DAY

The main floor is jammed with CLUBMEN and PARTY RACKS. Daniel Killoran bustles from group to group, making promises, taking notes and searching out Boss Tweed, who is holding court in a far corner, surrounded by JOURNALISTS.

BOSS TWEED

I would never speak ill of a rival. I would never say that every Know-Nothing is a horse thief. It is my observation, however, that every horse thief is a Know-Nothing.

Good-natured LAUGHING all around. Even TWEED seems amused. Killoran catches the Boss' eye and whispers to him.

KILLORAN

The Know-Nothings are already finished, and there's four more hours at the polls yet.

BOSS TWEED

Keep our men voting. Everybody works today. It's not a victory we need, Daniel. I want a triumph.

CUT TO

INT. DON WHISKERANDOSO BARBER SHOP DAY

Amsterdam roughly deposits REPEAT VOTERS in the barber chairs, as the BARBERS work FRANTICALLY to cut their hair, prune beards, and otherwise alter appearances. As soon as one customer is done, Sheeny Mike douses him with bay rum and pushes another REPEATER down in his place. Johnny keeps count of the turnover.

DON WHISKERANDOS (BARBER)

Now that's eight... and how many still to come ...

He looks toward the door, where more Repeaters are lined up, waiting their turn under close supervision.

REPEATER

I already voted once today. Cast for Tammany, by God, and Fernando Wood.

AMSTERDAM

Once? Come here and do your duty.

Amsterdam GRABS him and SLAMS him down in a chair.

CUT TO

INT. FAN-TAN PARLOR DAY

Amsterdam and some RABBITS BURST into the front door, frightening and scattering all the Chinese GAMBLERS.

AMSTERDAM

(barking orders)

Line up like soldiers!

SHEENY MIKE

They got no notion what you're talking about.

AMSTERDAM

(To Johnny)

You explain their democratic right. Illl see they unerstand.

Amsterdam GRABS the nearest two CHINESE by their PIGTAILS and HURLS them against the wall.

CUT TO

INT. OPIUM DEN

Amsterdam and the Rabbits PROWL the murky darkness where OPIUM EATERS lie in bunks stacked high against the walls. The Rabbits start ROUSING and rounding up the Opium Eaters. Jimmy Spoils SLINGS a couple over his shoulder like flour sacks. Amsterdam SHOVES two more out the door, past an admiring Daniel Killoran.

KILLORAN

(to Johnny)

I come to see if our counts square. You boys have made a remarkable showing....

AMSTERDAM

Who the hell's this?

JOHNNY

He's our Tammany man.

Killoran compares his figures to the piece of paper where Johnny has
been
keeping his own count.

KILLORAN

... remarkable...

AMSTERDAM

(With an edge)

Our own Tammany man. We are coming along. Happy to meet any friend of
Johnny Siroccols.

KILLORAN

Likewise. Pleasure to meet the best but one in the whole Five Points.

AMSTERDAM

Best but one? Who's better?

Killoran looks up. Johnny, standing behind Amsterdam, SHAKES his head
"NO" VIGOROUSLY. Killoran gets the message.

KILLORAN

(smooth)

Maybe nobody. But when the count's done the numbers will tell who's
come
out in front.

AMSTERDAM

I'm in no race. Just pay us what you owe.

KILLORAN

Tonight. At the victory celebration.

CUT TO

INT. SPARROW'S CHINESE PAGODA

A Tammany victory celebration. When we last saw this place--as
Amsterdam confronted Happy Jack--the place was busy, alive. It's
RIOTOUS now, jammed to bursting with POLITICIANS, CRIMINALS, GANG
MEMBERS, MORTS, WHORES, HANGERS-ON, UPTOWN THRILL-SEEKERS, JOURNALISTS
and COPS, not all of them off duty. The SOUND of the place is a
cacophony of SHOUTING, SINGING, GAMBLING and STRANGE MUSIC--which we
can't identify at first. We START CLOSE on a huge ruby ring and we
HEAR...

BOSS TWEED

(V.O.)

Read what it says there, alongside the ruby...read it out ...and WE
MOVE OUT as a WELL-WISHER reads the Latin inscription.

CONTINUED:

WELL-WISHER

"Fortuna Juvat Ordentes."

TWEED

A grand victory gift from the men of Tammany. Now, tell 'em what it
means,
Mayor Wood.

WOOD

"Fortune favors the bold."

TWEED gives him a resounding slap on the back.

BOSS TWEED

What do you think? Would that make a fit motto for our fair City?

WOOD

Well, I could certainly see ...

KILLORAN

(interrupting)

We've got a motto.

BOSS TWEED

what is it?

(no one knows)

Well, hell, let's get one we can remember. We're going to build a new
City

hall, we better have something to put over the front door. And Mayor,
you'll make sure the Latin's right?

As Wood nods his assent, CAMERA MOVES across room...past the gilded
CAGES suspended ten feet over the floor, where the women and children
look down at the action just below them with a mixture of trepidation
and resignation. Occasionally a REVELER will jump up to try and GRAB
one of the caged inhabitants. Still MOVING, CAMERA...passes a stage,
where we finally SEE the source of all the strange MUSIC we've been
hearing: the music is provided by

CHINESE MUSICIANS, a woman SINGER, a DANCER and some ACROBATS. They
perform some weird, mangled Five Points version of Chinese opera. The
music and performance continues as we MOVE PAST...across a PEWTER FAN-
TAN TABLE, where CHINESE GAMBLERS play with fierce animation and

concentration. By comparison, the Occidental types playing beside them seem like tourists.

Everyone SHOUTS and SCRAMBLES to place bets with the FAN-TAN DEALER.

Above the Dealer is an oval opening in the ceiling, through which OTHER PLAYERS may watch the action below. These FAN-TAN PLAYERS lean over an elegantly carved rail, peering at the action on the table below, placing their bets and collecting their winnings by means of a BASKET attached to WIRES that whirrs constantly overhead. We continue to MOVE PAST...until we are at the door of the place, where Amsterdam, Johnny and the Rabbits are having words with a BOUNCER.

BOUNCER

I don't know you, you don't enter.

AMSTERDAM

(enjoying himself)

Come on, what are you saying? If you don't know us now, you'll know us tomorrow and you'll be working for us next week.

JOHNNY

(more temperate)

Daniel Killoran knows us.

BOUNCER

Oh he does?

JOHNNY

We work for him.

AMSTERDAM

The hell we do.

JOHNNY

(to Amsterdam)

Tampen down, will you?

BOUNCER

Why don't you all get the hell out of here and go fix on a story? Go on!

He SHOVES Johnny, who STUMBLES back into Amsterdam. They're both mad now, and they step forward together toward the Bouncer...until Killoran intervenes.

KILLORAN

(to Bouncer)

It's all right, Nat. They're saying the truth. They gave a good day's work
for a good wage.

Killoran HANDS OVER a paper-wrapped parcel of money, which Amsterdam takes firmly.

KILLORAN

A fine first showing. But second best.

AMSTERDAM

Second, eh? You don't say so.

KILLORAN

It's no shame to be bested by veterans. The Native Americans always
sweep
the field.

AMSTERDAM

What?

KILLORAN

We count on them sure as mass comes an Sunday.

AMSTERDAM

(to Johnny, glaring)

Did you know this? Is this some scheme of yours?

JOHNNY

No, I didn't have no idea ...

AMSTERDAM

I was working the same side as the Natives? The Natives?

KILLORAN

That's only right. Bill the Butcher's our ambassador throughout the
Points, as you might say. It's deemed an honor to work with him.

Everyone

knows Bill Poole, everyone fears him, everyone ...

AMSTERDAM

I sure as hell don't fear him. And I sure as hell won't stand with
him, or
any who calls him one of theirs.

KILLORAN

Well, if it's matter of personal honor, the money can only be a
further
insult. I have no wish to rile you further, so if you'll allow me...

He REACHES to take back the parcel of money, but Amsterdam BATS his
hand

away.

AMSTERDAM

Where is he? Where's Bill the Butcher?

KILLORAN

Listen, buck. This is a Tammany night. If you and Bill Poole have
 matters
 to settle, you can do it any other time, any other place, I don't give
 a
 good dancing goddamn. But you do it here tonight and all the Five
 Points
 will be down on you like the righteous wrath of heaven. or you could,
 as
 the Book says, put away childish things. Join the celebration.
 Personally,
 I always find the least strenuous solution the most appealing. Don't
 you?

Amsterdam stares at him as we...

CUT TO

INT. SPARROW'S CHINESE PAGODA

As a CHINESE ACROBAT TWIRLS in the air, off the stage, and lands in
 the middle of the audience. The crowd is raucously appreciative as the
 Acrobat does GYMNASTIC MOVES among them...past a table where the Dead
 Rabbits have settled. it is later in the evening, and everyone has
 been drinking. Amsterdam, sullen, intense, WATCHES ...Bill the
 Butcher, across the room. He is like a prince regent. Everyone
 pays him court, including several uniformed COPS, TAMMANY HANGERS-ON,
 and NEWSPAPERMEN. Bill receives the attention as his due...while
 Amsterdam keeps watching, contempt and hatred gleaming in his
 eye. He pays attention to none of the gang around, including Jenny.
 Johnny takes advantage of the situation.

JOHNNY

I got experience. It's the education I lack.

JENNY

And you heard I was a good teacher?

JOHNNY

I don't listen to talk, I figure for myself. And I figured you'd be
 good
 at everything you did.

JENNY

That's right.

JOHNNY

And tonight I got the ned.

JENNY

And now what?

JOHNNY

Now I'm ready for you. Unless there's an arrangement between you and Amsterdam.

JENNY

(glancing over at Amsterdam)

Not to my thinking.

JOHNNY

(needs to be sure)

Amsterdam... listen up, Amsterdam...

Amsterdam glances over at them.

JENNY

(to Johnny)

You going with me or him? It's my thinking matters here. You don't have to ask him nothing.

AMSTERDAM

What?

JOHNNY

(makes his decision)

How's the evening passing?

AMSTERDAM

Fine. Why?

JOHNNY

(puts his arm around Jenny)

'Cause it's treating me fine too.

She gets up and starts toward the stairs to the second floor, Johnny following her, holding her hand. As they pass Amsterdam he LEANS toward Jenny.

AMSTERDAM

This is no game, you and me. Don't go on like it's a game.

JENNY

I said already, it's not a game. It's business.

Johnny pulls her away. As he watches her go through the crowd, Amsterdam's gaze falls on Bill the Butcher again...and for the first time their EYES MEET. Bill's eyes rest on Amsterdam, take him all in... but DON'T REMEMBER him. He looks away as a TAMMANY HACK steps up to pay court...and a MASTER OF REVELS, center-floor, SHOUTS ...

MASTER OF REVELS

Gentlemen and gentlewomen, if you please ... we will now... raise the cages and start the bidding!

The Crowd CHEERS and KIDS PULL on a series of ropes and pulleys to RAISE the CAGES further above the floor until they are parallel with the second-floor gallery of the Pagoda. WOMEN AND MEN call out BIDS even as the cages rise through the air. Depending on their age, the Women and children inside the cages respond to the auction with grim resignation, trepidation or fear. A few, drugged or drunk on all-sorts, lie insensible in their impossibly cramped space.

Johnny and Jenny make their way along the second floor gallery until she spots a COUPLE LEAVING a room and walks inside. Johnny CLOSES the door behind them as a BURST of APPLAUSE...rises from the main floor, where Bill the Butcher stands in the dead center of the room. He slowly removes his coat and hands it to a FLUNKY.

He is wearing his battle vest underneath, and it is fully rigged with all his butcher's implements.

The place QUIETS. KIDS swarm silently, like busy ants, all over a huge wooden CHANDELIER, LIGHTING its HUNDREDS of CANDLES. Only the noise from the Chinese playing fan-tan in the far corner of the room can be heard now.

The Kids finish lighting the candles and the chandelier is RAISED toward the Pagoda ceiling, casting the whole place into a new riot of LIGHT and SHADOW as The Butcher prepares himself.

Now the Chinese Opera DANCER steps forward and stands near Bill. He NODS. The unsprung MUSIC begins. The DANCER starts to move, sinuously...and Bill, with amazing skill, starts THROWING his KNIVES. The knife MISSES the Dancer by a hairsbreadth, landing in the floor near her foot.

She doesn't flinch. She keeps dancing. And Bill keeps THROWING...the KNIVES, which follow the Dancer around the room in a careful, deadly choreography. They land just inches from where she has just been, or will be: in a wall; a pillar; the apron of the small stage; the bar; the barrel of all-sorts. After each knife LANDS, kids retrieve it. When one of the KNIFE KIDS pulls the blade from the all-sorts barrel, DRUNKS knock each other over to drink from the stream that flows from the hole.

Native Americans, meanwhile, WORK THROUGH the awed, attentive Crowd. They AVOID Cops, Tammany Members and anyone who looks too prosperous or too sober. But when one of the Natives SPOTS a MARGINAL CITIZEN, they GRAB his hand and examine it as if they were telling fortunes.

Center floor, Bill pulls TWO KNIVES out, BALANCES one in each hand ... as a WHORE in the crowd pushes a guy who's groping her toward a couple

of Natives. Hels wearing a large RING. As soon as the Natives SEE the ring they throw their arms around the GROPER like a long-lost pal and escort him to Bill ...who THROWS both knives rapidly at the Dancer. They land on the floor, inches from her dancing feet. She SPINS AWAY to great applause as the Natives bring the Groper to Bill.

BILL THE BUTCHER

Evening, sir. Are you prepared to be celebrated? Are you ready to be famous?

GROPER

How much will it cost?

BILL THE BUTCHER

Just a moment of your time. My men will assist you.

They do quite a bit more than that: they GRAB the Groper and KNOCK him to the floor. In the crowd, one SPECTATOR turns to his companion.

PAGODA SPECTATOR

Watch this careful. I've never seen the like, not even in Barnum's Museum.

The Groper CRIES OUT as the Natives PIN HIM to the floor, SPREADEAGLED. Bill has one weapon left... in a special pocket, inside his vest. It's his CLEAVER. He takes it out slowly, SAVORING the moment.

The Pagoda goes QUIET. Only the gambling continues. The MUSIC dies. The only SOUND beside the noises of the Chinese at their fan-tan is the Groper, who HOLLERS for help as soon as he sees the cleaver.

Bill HEFTS the cleaver in his hand, feels its weight, calculates timing, figures distance and starts THROWING it in the air... CATCHING it by the handle ... then throwing it again... higher, FASTER and HARDER with every toss.

BILL THE BUTCHER

(in full control)

What's it so quiet for? I don't need quiet.

The Chinese opera MUSIC commences with a dissonant CRASH...and Bill catches the cleaver again. But EVERY TIME he throws it and every time he catches it by its handle ...he also MOVES CLOSER to the terrified Groper. Now... standing very close... he gives the cleaver a mighty toss ...sending it SPINNING high in the air... up past the cages ... past the second-floor gallery, jammed with appreciative spectators until it SLOWS seems to HANG in the air... then starts its descent...FALLING FASTER... towards Bill's waiting, STEADY HAND.

The Groper SCREAMS in fear. Bill SMILES confidently, holding his hand out until ... just as smoothly, just as confidently...he PULLS his

hand AWAY and the cleaver FALLS with terrific impact on the SPLAYED HAND of the Groper, cleanly SEVERING it at the wrist. The Groper FAINTS dead away as a TREMENDOUS CHEER greets Bill's amazing feat.

One of the Natives TOSSES Bill the severed hand. Bill SLIDES the ring off the finger and TOSSES it to the Chinese Dancer.

BILL THE BUTCHER
There's for your beauty and your song.

The Dancer puts the ring on her finger and DANCES OFF. Bill TOSSES the hand to the floor and walks back to his table. The Crowd PARTS, murmuring compliments on his dexterity, and the Knife Kids reverently RETURN the Butcher's implements.

Now two DOGS from the rat pit in the back room RUN through the crowd and FIGHT FRENZIEDLY over possession of the bloody hand.

The Crowd PASSES the Groper overhead and WE SEE from ABOVE: the Groper's unconscious BODY being passed from hand to hand. The Crowd looks like a wave bearing the body toward the door. The Groper's stump BLEEDS on them as he passes overhead, sprinkling drops of blood and flesh like a moveable sacrament.

Bill approaches his table, acknowledging the continuing adulation, and is about to sit down when a VOICE rises above all others.

AMSTERDAM
Mr. Poole!

Bill turns, searching out the voice ...

AMSTERDAM
Bill Poole!

And SEES Amsterdam, standing at his own table. His attitude is calm, smiling, respectful. But his eyes are demonic.

AMSTERDAM
My compliments on your exhibition, sir.

BILL THE BUTCHER
Thank you, sir.

AMSTERDAM
It was like watching a dance.
(Bill nods his thanks)
Some great grand goddamned dance. (Bill looks at him more closely)
You know me, sir.

BILL THE BUTCHER
Do I? Are you missing a finger?

Appreciative laughter from the crowd.

AMSTERDAM
No. A father.

The laughter turns a little uneasy. Bill the Butcher sizes up the younger man.

BILL THE BUTCHER
Do you have a name?

AMSTERDAM
Amsterdam.

BILL THE BUTCHER
That's a New York name.
(suddenly smiles)
shall we drink to it?

AMSTERDAM
Indeed.
(they drink)
And to my other name. Vallon. Will you drink to that?

BILL THE BUTCHER
Priest Vallon's son?
(Amsterdam nods)
Of course I'll drink to that. Your father was a worthy man.

AMSTERDAM
Not worthy of you. Those dogs ain't worthy of you. You ain't worth
what
they feed on, and what they shit's too good for you.

DEAD QUIET. Absolute. Breathless. Only the Chinese Gamblers at their fan-tan ignore this confrontation.

BILL THE BUTCHER
What do you want, boyo?

AMSTERDAM
I got to give you something, Butcher. Something from my father.

Amsterdam PULLS OUT the piratels knife which Bill the Butcher used to kill his father almost 12 years before.

BILL THE BUTCHER
You got the sand to draw a blade in front of me? You will make good sport.

Come ahead and give it here, you son of a bitch.

And Amsterdam THROWS the knife, the bright blade FLASHING OUT of his
hand
like lightning.

And just as quickly the Butcher PICKS UP his table, sending glasses
flying and breaking, using it as a SHIELD...

... and the knife THUMPS into it dead center. The Butcher HEAVES the
table at Amsterdam...sending PATRONS yelling and SCATTERING.

Amsterdam LEAPS out of the way of the table, then RUNS AT Bill the
Butcher...

... who's already coming for him. As they CLASH and GRAPPLE with each
other...

... PATRONS all over the Pagoda crowd around for a good view of the
action
and start to MAKE BETS on the outcome. The odds do not favor
Amsterdam.

And neither does the fight. Amsterdam fights with real blood lust, but
he doesn't have the Butcher's skill, or experience, or dispassion. He
breaks the Butcher's CLINCH... HITS him once in the face... then a
second time... and then gets FLOORED by a well placed kick. The Crowd
cheers.

And, on the second floor, Jenny and Johnny come out of the room. Still
arranging her clothes, Jenny looks over the gallery rail onto the
floor below, sees the fight... and starts to RUN down the stairs.
Johnny WATCHES her go ... looks at the fight again, for a second...
then follows Jenny to the main floor.

The Butcher is on top of Amsterdam now. He HITS him upside the head
with the wood and brass handle of his cleaver. Then hits him again.
AND AGAIN.

In the Crowd now, Jenny finds Sheeny Mike.

JENNY

The Butcher'll kill him if we don't do something.

SHEENY MIKE

It was Amsterdam's own doing. And it'll be our death too if we try to
stop
it.

JOHNNY

(finally catching up)

That's the truth.

JENNY

The truth is you don't give a damn about him.

SHEENY MIKE

Yeah, well, if he gave a damn about us he wouldn't have called out the Butcher in the first place.

Jenny looks at him with contempt, then STARTS into the crowd. Johnny grabs her ARM but she pushes him off.

On the floor, Bill uses the FLAT SIDE of the cleaver to SMACK the barely conscious Amsterdam on one side of his face... then on the other...REPEATEDLY... until Amsterdam is barely sensible. Bill grabs him by the hair. Amsterdam's body is slack.

BILL THE BUTCHER

What do you say? Loin or shank? Rib or chop?

The Crowd YELLS their choices. Jenny tries to PLUNGE through toward Amsterdam, but a HALF-DOZEN MORTS and WHORES put hands on her and HOLD her back.

BILL THE BUTCHER

Come on, let me hear you!

(the Crowd yells louder)

You're all talking at once, I can't hear you!

(a near frenzy)

I don't hear the choicest cut! The best, the vital!

(they quiet a little to listen)

The heart. I think I must have the heart!

This is greeted with the biggest CHEER of the night. The newlyelected Mayor Wood seems to feel as if he should do something to stop the slaughter, but Boss Tweed calms him with a single dismissive GESTURE. Even the Boss himself is excited by the prospect of this ritual sacrifice.

BILL THE BUTCHER

Come on, look at it! You fancy yourself a gladiator, act a gladiator!

(raises his cleaver)

Watch the death blow when it comes to you. Go to hell with open eyes!

Bill the Butcher readies himself to deliver the blow... and a HAND GRABS his wrist, STOPPING his arm.

Who would dare do this to Bill the Butcher? Bill turns, incredulous, to look into...

... the untroubled face of Monk Eastman.

MONK EASTMAN

It's been a full evening's fun now, Butcher. It's enough.

BILL THE BUTCHER

You got nothing to do with this, Monk.

MONK EASTMKN

Well I'm the game warden, you might say. I'm telling you this buck's too young yet. Wait till he's aged for a proper kill.

BILL THE BUTCHER

The hell.

With his gigantic strength, Monk actually PULLS the Butcher off Amsterdam and onto his feet.

MONK EASTMKN

Just settle yourself Bill ...

... and he part SHOVES, part THROWS Bill back a good twenty feet.

MONK EASTMKN

... and let the merrymaking continue.

The Dead Rabbits have scampered forward, and they're picking Amsterdam up off the floor. Monk looks at Jenny and Johnny, who each have Amsterdam by an arm.

MONK EASTMAN

It was his father took me in first, and it's thanks I'm returning now.

BILL THE BUTCHER

Eastman!

MONK EASTMAN

(ignoring Bill)

This squares any debt. Get him out of here.

BILL THE BUTCHER

Monk Eastman!

As the Rabbits CARRY Amsterdam toward the door, Monk finally turns his attention back to Bill.

BILL THE BUTCHER

I'll have you then!

MONK EASTMAN

Come ahead, Bill. Unless you're wanting to shout me to death.

And Bill comes forward, BRANDISHING his cleaver. Monk Eastman stands his ground, unmoving, untroubled. Everyone looks on in awe at this contest ...except Boss Tweed.

BOSS TWEED
(to Killoran)

If these two are going to combat, it aught to be a worthier occasion.
And more rewarding for all.

Tweed SIGNALS to Bill: STOP. The Butcher sees the signal but can't believe it. He SHAKES his head. His blood is up. He won't stop.

Tweed SIGNALS AGAIN. Bill KEEPS COMING.

Tweed signals Killoran, who STANDS himself. And, when he stands, every COP and TAMMANY LOYALIST in the place--a hundred of them anyway--STAND behind Boss Tweed.

As Bill keeps coming, and Monk stands easy, waiting...

... the Natives and their ALLIES now stand, facing the Tammany crew. The Tammany backers, dressed flush and fancy, face the scruffier, more savage Five Points bunch: the twin factions of the criminal underworld, so different in style and so similar in purpose, SIZE EACH OTHER UP from opposite sides of the room.

Bill STOPS. The odds are shifting, the stakes are climbing. Even the Chinese STOP GAMBLING. For the first time all evening the room is absolutely STILL. Even the Dead Rabbits have turned, at the door, to see what will happen.

Tweed and the Butcher LOCK EYES: neither blinks. Then after a moment ...a very long moment ... a calm, bemused Tweed RAISES his glass.

BOSS TWEED

I only wanted to thank you, Bill, for the customary good job today...
and an equally bright future for us both.

Another pause. Bill does not look placated. The whole place seems ready to explode...until Boss Tweed RISES to his feet, and RAISES his glass higher.

BOSS TWEED

Will you drink with me, Bill, as a friend? An honored friend.

Bill weighs the proposition... then looks to his men, NODS his head to call them off. He GRABS a glass off a table to join Tweed's toast.

The MUSIC begins again. The gambling recommences. Patrons take their seats. The Dead Rabbits help Amsterdam out the door.

Monk Eastman sidles up to Bill the Butcher.

MONK EASTMAN

If there's one thing I can't abide, it's fighting for free.

He takes the Butcher's glass from his hand, raises it in salute, DRINKS DEEP and hands it back to him.

At the door of the Pagoda, a badly beaten Amsterdam starts FLAILING and fighting by brute instinct. He HITS Jenny, and she goes down. Johnny grapples with him as Jenny PICKS HERSELF up and struggles to help SUBDUE Amsterdam.

JENNY

Go easy! Go easy. It's over.

JOHNNY

He knew what he was doing, hitting you.

JENNY

Let's get him up.

She grabs Amsterdam's arm and, with Johnny's help, tries to HOIST him
back
to his feet.

JENNY

(Looking at Amsterdam's bloody face)
There's too damn little of him left to know anything.

They start across Paradise Square, holding him up...

... as the rest of the Dead Rabbits join to help them... all growing smaller in the distance against the primeval nighttime landscape of the Five Points...and the Bouncer CLOSES the door.

DISSOLVE TO

INT. DON WHISKERANDOS BARBER SHOP DAY

Another DOOR OPENS, and Amsterdam stands on the threshold. A week or so has passed since the big night at Sparrow's Pagoda, but Amsterdam's face still shows the marks of Bill's beating.

Don Whiskerandos is ministering to Monk Eastman with a straight razor, giving him a close and careful shave. Monk is thoroughly relaxed, doesn't even glance over when the door opens, hardly reacts when Don Whiskerandos says

DON WHISKERANDOS

Someone's here for you.

MONK EASTMAN

That so? What's he look like?

DON WHISKERANDOS
He looks pretty damned sorry.

MONK EASTMAN
(looks at Amsterdam)
Indeed.- Can I buy you a shave?

AMSTERDAM
No thanks.

MONK EASTMAN
Face is too sore, eh? I understand.

AMSTERDAM
No. I'm beholden enough to you as it is. I don't like to be beholden.

MONK EASTMAN
We're all even, son. There's nothing more between us.

AMSTERDAM
I'd like it if there was.

MONK EASTMAN
Are you proposing employment?

AMSTERDAM
A collaboration. The Dead Rabbits got to get strong before we make
another
move. I figure you're the one to make us strong. There's a lot we can
learn from you.

MONK EASTMAN
Boyo, I'm a freebooter and a mercenary, not a teacher. I can't learn
nothing from you and I can't earn nothing from you either.

AMSTERDAM
The Dead Rabbits is going to be glorious again. We're going to reign
over
the Points.

MONK EASTMAN
And Bill Poole's Natives? What will they have to say?

AMSTERDAM
Nothing. They won't have tongues left to speak.

MONK EASTMAN
Don't worry about what they'll have in their mouths. You think about
what
they got in their hands.
(beat)

Listen, son... take a word from a man who was honored to fight beside
 your
 father. Temper yourself like a sword, and pay attention to balance.
 Anger
 spoils an edge.

AMSTERDAM
 Then you say no?

Monk SIGHS and points to a huge WAR CLUB which hangs in a place of
 honor above the shop mirror. It has deep marks running along its
 front, like NOTCHES-

MONK EASTMAN
 You see my instrument there? First notch represents two dollars and
 fifty
 cents. That's how much I got for my first kill. There are forty-eight
 more
 notches after it, and my fee has grown with each one. I can
 accommodate
 you alright, but you got to afford me. So do business with me or do it
 on
 your own.

AMSTERDAM
 Everything I got is still to come. So I guess it's on my own, then.

MONK EASTMAN
 Fair enough. You'll find independence a fine thing, a fierce thing.
 Although I do hold money preferable to all.
 (Amsterdam turns to leave)

But I'm sure we'll have news of each other.

AMSTERDAM
 Bound to.

As he shuts the door of the shop, Monk Eastman gestures to Don
 Whiskerandos for another hot towel.

CUT TO

EXT. STREETS OFF PARADISE SQUARE DAY

A large wagon bearing a Tammany banner and carrying dozens of small
 sacks of coal moves slowly down the narrow street. Boss Tweed sits on
 the front seat, next to the driver, as his minions HAND him coal
 sacks. Tweed distributes them with a smile to the NEEDY who trot next
 to the wagon.

BOSS TWEED

(to the people as they grab the coal)

Tammany's here to take the chill off the winter and the weight off your heart. It's Tammany can make this city a fit place, with the help and vote of all you good people...

As he continues, Bill the Butcher JUMPS onto the wagon and sits down beside him. Boss Tweed hardly gives him a glance.

BILL THE BUTCHER

You sent me word.

BOSS TWEED

We could use help here. Grab a sack.

BILL THE BUTCHER

I keep my hands clean.

BOSS TWEED

(now he looks at him)

So I've observed.

BILL THE BUTCHER

(tense)

Better be on your mark to talk like that to me. It was you stopped me at the Pagoda. I would have cut Monk inside out.

BOSS TWEED

What if you hadn't? Think of the embarrassment. And what if you had? Consider the waste. Next time you're in a dust-up like that, think ahead and make proper plans. It'd be a grand source of revenue, whoever prevails.

BILL THE BUTCHER

It touches my heart how you always have our best interests in mind.

BOSS TWEED

Our mutual interests. That's why I want you to contact Monk Eastman. (Bill's incredulous)

I want you to extend a proposition. I want him to join US.

BILL THE BUTCHER

What?

BOSS TWEED

Oh, not Tammany, of course not. We could no more have him there than you.

But he should throw in with the Native Americans, become aware of our Arrangement and ... well, use his influence, shall we say, to enrich us all.

BILL THE BUTCHER

You're saying I can't do everything you need? You don't think the
Natives
has been doing good and right? You think there's something more he can
do
that I ...

BOSS TWEED
(interrupting)

It's none of that, Bill. None of that. His independence is like a
rebuke
to Tammany. And an insult to you.

BILL THE BUTCHER

Then you should have let me have him at Sparrow's.

BOSS TWEED

I should. If I'd been confident-absolutely certain--that you would
have
prevailed. Monk is an unpredictable power, and a figure of size. He
needs
to be reckoned with.

BILL THE BUTCHER
He needs to be killed.

BOSS TWEED

No. He's an elemental force. Them you don't destroy. But you can
contain
them and use them for the good they give off.

He hands Bill a sack of coal.

BOSS TWEED
Coal?

Bill doesn't answer. He HOPS DOWN off the moving wagon, and the Needy
give way quickly before him, then regroup and SWARM after Tweed and
his coal. The Boss continues with his Tammany spiel-enjoying all the
attention--as the Butcher watches, disdainful of Tweed but filled with
angry frustration. From his face we ...

DISSOLVE TO

INT. DON WHISKERA.NDOS BARBER SHOP DAY

... the incredulous face of Monk Eastman, as he looks at Bill the
Butcher.

MONK EASTMAN
And this is your offer?

BILL THE BUTCHER
It's Boss Tweed's offer.

MONK EASTMAN
How do you think we'd sit as allies, Bill?

BILL THE BUTCHER
The only way we could tolerate being near each other would be stretched out dead.

MONK EASTMAN
My thoughts exactly. Then why are you here? Because you were asked to be. You were ordered to be. And who would order me among the Natives? You? And would you follow my orders, even if they were being relayed from William Marcy Tweed himself?

He EASES himself out of the barber chair. The Butcher TENSES as Monk comes toward him.

MONK EASTMAN
Dubious and doubtful, my friend. But your offer--pardon, the offer you bring--is the most generous that's ever been extended. I favor the terms, if not the personalities. So let us decide the way any Native American would appreciate. We'll do it the democratic way.

He throws open the door of the barber shop and stands there, beside Bill the Butcher, his arm thrown carelessly around him. PASSERSBY stop in wonderment as Monk ADDRESSES them.

MONK EASTMAN
Citizens of the Five Points! It seems the Native Americans have come to trouble. They have grown so weak that now they seek my help. They can pay any wage I ask. But I ask you now. Even for money, should I carouse and conspire alongside a boyo like this with gristle on his knife and spittle on his chin every time his cock gets hard?

Monk is beaming, the Butcher is appalled. His body tenses like a snake ready to spring. But the people in the street just STARE- They can't believe what they've just heard.

MONK EASTMAN
(to Bill)
There. You see. I'm afraid the people have spoken.

BILL THE BUTCHER

I'll see you again, you bog Irish bastard.

MONK EASTMAN

Well, if it's a fight you want now, Bill, remember to come back with a bankroll.

Monk returns to the shop and the comfort of his chair. Bill GLARES at the people in the street. One look from him starts them moving fast. But they do not look away from him quite so fast, or at him, either, with quite the same fear.

CUT TO

INT. MISSION (FORMERLY OLD BREWERY) NIGHT

The vast main room has been changed into a dance floor and decorated for the evening. An altar has been hung with bunting; SHIP'S LANTERNS and CANDLES illuminate the place. The REVEREND SHADRACH RALEIGH GREETs everyone. The room, already crowded with CELEBRANTS of all ages, grows quiet as the Dead Rabbits, done up in their party best, show up for the revelry.

REVEREND RALEIGH

Ah, the Native Americans, is it now?

AMSTERDAM

Are they coming?

JENNY

We don't want a ruckus, minister.

REVEREND RALEIGH

Nor do I. I intended no disrespect. I'd heard the Native Americans were figures of the greatest prominence here.

AMSTERDAM

Indeed they are, just for the moment. Let them come. Happy to have them. Everyone's welcome in a house of God, isn't that right, Reverend?

REVEREND RALEIGH

As all are welcome in heaven.

SHEENY MIKE

Ild like to go to heaven. Ild like to go to heaven and bite off Gabriells ear.

REVEREND RALEIGH

You're still welcome, even with such peculiar appetites.

AMSTERDAM

But if the Natives do come, Father...

REVEREND RALEIGH

I'm not a priest, son ...

AMSTERDAM

... there's no accounting for what may follow.

REVEREND RALEIGH

I'm sure God's hand will guide us in that. Just as He guided you here
at
the right perfect time, with a right perfect regent. The young lady
with
the sunset hair. Miss ...

JENNY

Everdeane. Jenny Everdeane.

REVEREND RALEIGH

Miss Everdeane. Step forward, please.

Radiant and curious, Jenny joins the Reverend Raleigh in the center of the room.

REVEREND RALEIGH

And the evening's regent chooses her evening's partner.

There is much MUTTERING about this from everyone. Someone makes a wet, farting SOUND.

REVERAND RALEIGH

(unfazed)

Here we make only joyful noises to the Lord.

Under the instruction of the bustling Reverend and his HELPERS, the Women skeptically stand away from the Men, who allow themselves to be arranged into a LINE. The Reverend Raleigh escorts the delighted Jenny to a chair that has been placed, by itself, in the center of the room. Jenny sits down, facing away from the rest of the guests. She holds a MIRROR in her hand.

REVEREND RALEIGH

Now. The men, please. One by one.

The first volunteer Reverend Raleigh brings forward is a reluctant Sheeny Mike. There are RUDE COMMENTS as he leads Mike slowly to the center of the room, coming up behind Jenny until she can see Mikels face reflected in the mirror. She SHAKES her head.

REVEREND RALEIGH
Next Gentleman, please.

More laughing. The BOYS push out one CANDIDATE. Rejected.

Now ANOTHER CANDIDATE comes forward. And STILL ANOTHER- Jenny rejects each with the composure of a princess.

Now it is Johnny's turn. He WALKS slowly across the big room, and stands behind Jenny, trying to look confident. The moment is long, the room's tense... until--just once but very decisively-Jenny SHAKES her head.

Jenny watches Johnny's face in the mirror. She stays still. Finally, he walks back to the GANG.

Now Amsterdam starts toward the center of the room. He keeps his eyes fixed on Jenny.

Jenny catches Amsterdam's reflection in the mirror. He STOPS. She NODS her head. Yes. Him.

A small BAND strikes up a barely recognizable version of "A Mighty Fortress Is Our God," arranged in waltz time. Jenny rises and holds out her arms to Amsterdam. They start to DANCE, a little clumsily, as other COUPLES join them.

AMSTERDAM
So you accept?

JENNY
What?

AMSTERDAM
You accept to be my mort and no one else's.

JENNY
(teasing)
No, it's just that I didn't recognize you in the mirror. You still got some of the face the Butcher gave you.

AMSTERDAM
(going along with the joke)
It's not the Butcher, it's the dancing. It shifts my face all around.

JENNY
Maybe you'll look better later.

The Reverend Raleigh and his Helpers DASH among the dancers, distributing LIGHTED CANDLES, which the COUPLES take and hold as they move around the floor.

AMSTERDAM

I will if we're together later.

(she smiles)

And what about after that? After tonight?

JENNY

I chose you just for tonight. If that's not good enough I'll go with someone else.

She takes a candle from the Reverend and holds it so the light

FLICKERS on

Amsterdam's face.

AMSTERDAM

I'll have tonight. But after this don't come to me no more till you're ready. No more.

His eyes, in the candlelight, show both his love and his Resolution. Jenny NODS and they DANCE AWAY ...losing themselves now among the dancers, all moving and holding candles. As they dance, their movement becomes SPLIT, SEQUENTIAL, a study in motion like an old Gjon Mili photograph. Their bodies create a RUSH OF YELLOW LIGHT ACROSS the screen like the tail of a comet.

CUT TO

INT- DEAD RABBITS HOUSE NIGHT

In the hallway. JOHNNY stands pressed against a door.

JOHNNY

(whispering)

Amsterdam.

(louder; hissing)

Amsterdam!

AMSTERDAM (V.O.)

Who is it?

JOHNNY

Me.

AMSTERDAM

Come on in.

JOHNNY

I don't want to come in! You come out.

AMSTERDAM

Just a damn minute.

AMSTERDAM comes to the door, half-dressed and sleepy. We see Jenny asleep on the floor inside.

AMSTERDAM
What do you want?

CUT TO

EXT. PIER/DEAD RABBITS HOUSE NIGHT

Just before dawn. The streets are empty, the river is quiet. AMSTERDAM follows JOHNNY out of the house.

JOHNNY
I'm going to fight you.

AMSTERDAM
Oh, Jesus, Johnny, I'm tired. How about sometime else?

JOHNNY
Now.

AMSTERDAM
You want to tell me what this fight's over? Is it The Butcher? Jenny?
(Johnny turns, determined)
Alright, alright. Then tell me why like this?

JOHNNY
So when I lose no one will see.

And he SLUGS him. Hard. Harder even than he thought he could. AMSTERDAM stumbles, stunned, then pulls himself up. And CHARGES at Johnny, knocking him down.

The two friends PUNCH, WRESTLE, BITE and PUMMEL EACH OTHER with such extravagant energy that they soon...

... ROLL OFF the pier...

CUT TO

EXT. PIER DAWN

... onto the muddy ground underneath the pier. They LAND with a shuddering SPLASH in the soggy earth, but they keep fighting ...as a PACK OF ORPHANS, eyes glinting like night animals, scatter like wild beasts disturbed in their burrow.

Amsterdam has the physical advantage, and more skill. But Johnny has the fury. All the feeling and the frustration rain out of him physically, making the match nearly even.

The Orphan Pack watches the fight silently, showing no favoritism or emotion, just an edge of curiosity.

Amsterdam HITS Johnny a wicked combination that makes him SINK to one knee in the mud. But Johnny will not go down. Amsterdam, hurt himself, just stares at Johnny in wonderment.

AMSTERDAM
Satisfied?

JOHNNY
Satisfied? It wasn't me that's been dancing and shagging all night.

And he pulls himself to his feet and THROWS a roundhouse at Amsterdam, who half-staggers out of the way. The moment throws Johnny off balance, and he falls in the mud again, this time on all fours. Amsterdam SINKS down beside him.

AMSTERDAM
Enough.

Johnny won't stop: he throws a punch that Amsterdam can see coming a block away. But he's too tired to duck; or maybe he's just fed up. He takes the punch and FALLS on his back.

AMSTERDAM
That's it then.

JOHNNY
The hell.

And he THROWS HIMSELF on Amsterdam. It's more like he rolls over onto him than anything, but he's on top of him now, hitting him in the face with all he's got left in him.

AMSTERDAM
Goddamn it.

Amsterdam HEAVES Johnny off and pops him a solid SWIPE to the jaw. That does it. Lights out. Johnny falls unconscious into the slime beneath the pier.

The Orphan Pack keeps staring from the shadow with their ferret eyes. Still silent. Amsterdam STRUGGLES to his feet, stops at the river's edge to get a handful of water to revive himself. Then he looks over, sees his unconscious friend.

AMSTERDAM
Goddamn you anyway.

He grabs Johnny's body by the shoulders and pulls him to the river's edge.

He gets some water on his hand, lets it drip over Johnny's face, washing away a little of the blood. Not enough. He draws some more water, and RUBS it gently onto Johnny's face.

CLOSE: on the motion of his hand. It is nearly gentle.

CUT TO

INT. DON WHISKERANDOS BARBER SHOP DAY

As Don Whiskerandos' hand, holding a razor, travels over the great plains of Monk Eastman's face. His hand is shaking.

MONK EASTMAN
What's the trouble, Don?

DON WHISKERANDOS
There's someone here.

Monk bestirs himself in the chair, SEES: Bill the Butcher, standing in the doorway.

MONK EASTMAN
It's just a man of commerce.

Monk settles back in the chair as Bill the Butcher walks into the shop.

BILL THE BUTCHER
You're right enough this time, Monk.
(to Don Whiskerandos)
Go ahead.
(the barber hesitates)
Go on with your work. I'll finish my business.

Don Whiskerandos picks up a pair of SCISSORS and NERVOUSLY starts to TRIM Monk's hair.

MONK EASTMAN
Come out with it then.

Bill NODS emphatically at Don Whiskerandos, who is clearly terrified. Bill nods again, almost vehemently. Don Whiskerandos SHAKES his head. Bill GLARES at him. The Barber takes a STEP BACK. Monk opens his eyes, starts to size up the situation.

BILL THE BUTCHER
You damn craven, do it!

Bill LEAPS forward, grabs the trembling barber's arm and pushes it toward MONK...

MONK EASTMAN
 (rising from his chair)
 What the hell...

...and the scissors, held by Don Whiskerandos and pushed by Bill the Butcher, meet Monk full in the face as he bolts from the chair. The long scissor BLADE SINKS into Monks right eye.

MONK BELLOWS, staggers toward Don Whiskerandos, who shrinks against the wall. The scissor protrudes from Monk's eye as he RAGES, blinded by blood, now reaching out for the Butcher

BILL THE BUTCHER
 Your eyes was open for that alright. And you still got one to see this.

Bill the Butcher reaches above him for Monk's war club, which hangs on the wall. He grabs tight hold of it and, with Monk nearly upon him, swings it viciously at Monk's head. The BLOW sends the scissor FLYING out of Monk's eye, with the eyeball still attached. It also SMASHES in the side of Monk's face. He FALLS, still GRABBING desperately for the Butcher...

... who now stands over him, beating him incessantly with the war club. CAVING his head in. KILLING him.

Don Whiskerandos looks at Bill in a virtual paralysis of terror. The Butcher lets the CLUB FALL, reaches in his pocket and throws some MONEY at the barber.

BILL THE BUTCHER
 If I was you I'd use that to open in a new location. Consider St. Louis.

The enormity of what he's done is beginning to sink in. He turns to leave the shop ... but STOPS in the doorway.

Outside, CITIZENS of the Points are staring at the fallen Monk in mute wonder. They have just witnessed a moment in history.

Bill the Butcher surveys them all silently, then calls out to Don Whiskerandos.

BILL THE BUTCHER
 The war club.

The barber steels himself to CARRY the bloody club to the Butcher, who hefts it slowly in his hands, in view of all.

He takes a knife from his vest, and CUTS the LAST NOTCH in the club. Then, slowly...he steps down into the crowd, which PARTS before him.

He walks among them in regal splendor, the war club at his side, dripping gore.

As the crowd falls back, Bill spots Amsterdam, Johnny and some of the other Dead Rabbits, watching his every mave. He STOPS.

HOLDS OUT the bloody war club in front of him... straight in front of him... POINTING IT right at Amsterdam.

BILL THE BUTCHER

I promise you, Amsterdam. I promise you.

Then he grins, turns away and walks through the crowd: prince of all he surveys.

CUT TO

INT. RESTAURANT/PARK ROW

Boss Tweed reigns in the banquet room of a vast, gaslit restaurant, at a long table overburdened with food. Seated along both sides of the table is an array of the city's POWER BROKERS, with whom Tweed and his Tammany MINIONS mix easily. Their attitude toward the Power Brokers is a mixture of ribald fawning and fine condescension; the Power Brokers, in turn, enjoy the food, and the MUSIC from a small BAND, and the DANCING GIRLS who flirt and entertain them, while exuding the unmistakable impression of amateur anthropologists exploring a decaying civilization.

Tweed is courting and joking with a bewhiskered HORACE GREELEY, editor of the influential Tribune.

GREELEY

I may enjoy the bounty of your table and the pleasures of your company,
Mr. Tweed ...

BOSS TWEED

And the pleasures of the company provided you, Mr. Greeley.

GREELEY

...without the Tribune endorsing your politics.

BOSS TWEED

I suppose you can at that. Take with one hand, flay with the other. Virtuels on your conscience, Horace, but Tammany's in your heart.

Killoran materializes at Tweed's side and whispers something quickly, discreetly in his ear. Tweed EXCUSES himself, rises quickly and WALKS across the restaurant floor...

... past the Band and the Dancing Girls ...

... to the swinging doors of the kitchen. As he pushes open the SWINGING DOOR, his face has lost its humor.

CUT TO

INT. KITCHEN/RESTAURANT/PARK ROW

A madhouse of activity. WAITERS in black suits, vests and serving outfits STREAM by carrying huge TRAYS of food while the KITCHEN STAFF works double-time to keep up with the unceasing volume.

As Boss Tweed walks in, Bill the Butcher PLUCKS a piece of roasted poultry off a tray as it's carried out the door.

BILL THE BUTCHER

I'm not good enough for your table, so I eat where I can. (takes a big bite)

It's good, what is it?

BOSS TWEED

Pheasant.

BILL THE BUTCHER

Is that like pigeon? I killed a pigeon once but it didn't taste nothing like this.

BOSS TWEED

You killed a bull this morning. I told you to make an Arrangement with him, and you come back with his blood on your hands.

BILL THE BUTCHER

(chewing his food)

He insulted me. He aggravated me. I couldn't stand for that, for no one.

BOSS TWEED

You stand for anything if I tell you.

BILL THE BUTCHER

You think I should be afraid of you. You act like lightning strikes when you talk.

As they talk, and the tension builds between them, the two men are constantly BUFFETED by the swinging doors and the unending stream of WAITERS.

BILL THE BUTCHER

I never was afraid of you, so don't think I was or act like I was, you ain't earned it.

BOSS TWEED

What did you earn us, killing Monk?

BILL THE BUTCHER

Where'd you earn the right to ask that question? You raised some dust
in
the streets a while back, but no more. You got power but you ain't got
muscle and you ain't got a notion what it means to be a warrior.

BOSS TWEED

I see it lost you a lot of God's sense, along with that eye.

BILL THE BUTCHER

You don't know nothing about that! It was my doing! It says in The
Book,
"If thy eye offend thee, pluck it out." I followed that law with my
own
knife and hand. The first I ever fought Priest Vallon, he bested me.
And
when he came to bring me to death, I looked away and he watched me and
he
let me go. The shame was worse than the killing. I would have cut out
both
eyes if I could still have fought, but cutting just the one gave me
heart.
When I killed Priest Vallon, that restored me. Now I sent Monk Eastman
over I got glory. I got all there is, and small thanks to you, squire.

BOSS TWEED

(measured, conciliatory) You need two eyes to see the depth, Bill.
That's
how we help each other. If it wasn't for me would be happy enough to
plunder the Points and put the fear into people who don't know nothing
else. But Bill, I'm only saying... I'm counselinm... look in the
distance.
You want to sit at my table, fine. But you must always remember who
the
host is. It's not a matter of courage welre talking. It's manners.

Bill grabs another piece of food from a tray.

BILL THE BUTCHER

Howls these manners?

BOSS TWEED

Fine, if you're hungry.

BILL THE BUTCHER

I'm always hungry.

BOSS TWEED

I've always told you, Bill. There's plenty for all, and more for us together than separate. We'll dine together sometime.

Bill the Butcher nods, appeased, and leaves, swaggering his way through the kitchen chaos, making everyone get out of his way. Boss Tweed watches him go, his expression changing from bemused appeasement to molten rage.

CUT TO

INT. RESTAURANT/PARK ROW

Later. Everyone's gone except some WAITERS, cleaning up, and Boss Tweed and Daniel Killoran, who sit at the end of the banquet table. Leftover plates of food have been massed at Tweed's place and, as he talks, he PICKS from them.

BOSS TWEED

Let me put this to you, Daniel. Now that the Butcher has killed the
single
most prominent figure in the Five Points--a man of myth and moment--
who is
there to take his place?

(as Killoran starts to answer)

Of course. Then what do we do about the Butcher? He's too useful to be killed, but he must be checked.

KILLORAN

It could be a police matter.

BOSS TWEED

Impossible! Any cops who might have the mettle to go against the
Butcher
have blood ties to the gangs. They can't be trusted. And any cops that
can
be trusted are too craven to be any use. If Bill's to be checked, it
must
come from within the Points, not without.

KILLORAN

The Dead Rabbits did a proud job for elections. That Amsterdam boy has sand.

BOSS TWEED

That so? The last time I saw him he was under the Butcher's knife
looking
like a fine filet. Who else is there?

KILLORAN

Well, the Rough and Tumble Boys over to Slaughterhouse Point. There's Country McCleester's bunch, too, and the Plug Uglies, but there's none

that have the promise of the Dead Rabbits, or the stake, neither.

BOSS TWEED
What would that be?

KILLORAN
The boy Amsterdam has a blood feud with the Butcher. He's sworn
revenge
for the death of his father, and he's got the heart to carry it
forward.
He'll have the skill and power soon enough.

BOSS TWEED
Blood will make a man intrepid. Bring them along, then. Nurture the
Rabbits with neglect. Let them roam where they like.

KILLORAN
And if they roam into some portion of our own revenues?

BOSS TWEED
I'd tolerate a little trespassing if it was for a higher good and use.
They'll cross with the Natives soon enough and keep each other
occupied.

KILLORAN
Bill's got to be a lot more than occupied.

BOSS TWEED
I'll hold Bill in check. If he becomes unwieldy ... well, damn it all,
Daniel, I might just have to oil up my old musket. What do you think
of
that, eh?

Boss Tweed gets up from the table. A WAITER is DIMMING the gaslights,
filling the room with deep shadows.

KILLORAN
It'd be gratifying, Mr. Tweed. Even edifying.

BOSS TWEED
But poor politics, eh? Well, we musn't have that.
(as he walks away)
I do miss those roistering days, though. Oh, and bring some of that
food
for the canaries.

CUT TO

EXT. STREET/THE BLOODY ANGLE DAY

The sharply-angled turn of Doyers Street, nicknamed "The Bloody Angle." SOUND of a horse and cart as we see a row of UPTURNED mostly WOMEN and YOUNG CHILDREN.

A NATIVE AMERICAN drives a cart carrying large barrels of MILK. A SECOND NATIVE rides beside him on the seat, holding a rifle, looking impassively at the faces turned up to him. A WOMAN holding a BABY in one arm and a CHILD by the hand steps in front of them. They almost run her down.

WOMAN

We ain't had no milk this week.

NATIVE 2

You can have as much as you can pay for.

(to crowd)

Anyone that's got the ned, step up with your pitchers. Any not, come back when you do.

The Woman gives her children to other WOMEN in the crowd and advances toward the wagon. Native 2 cocks his rifle...

... and Jenny steps from the watchful Crowd.

JENNY

I got ned enough for all. See? Fair enough?

She holds her hand out as she WALKS slowly toward the milk wagon. She's carrying a huge fistful of GLEAMING COINS. The Natives on the wagon watch her warily...

... and are JUMPED from behind by a couple of Dead Rabbits. Amsterdam grabs a milk pitcher from a WOMAN in the crowd, AXES open the spigot on a milk barrel and FILLS the pitcher to overflowing. Jenny JUMPS up on the wagon seat.

JENNY

(to Amsterdam)

What's our rate? What do we charge?

AMSTERDAM

Johnny worked it out to a nickel less than the Natives. Just till we're

established. Then we raise it a penny more than now.

JENNY

Raise it? Is that what you want?

AMSTERDAM
You say, then.

JENNY
(beat; then, to Crowd) There'll be no paying at all this day. Or this week, neither. This is Dead Rabbits business from now on.

The Crowd scrambles for milk and the Rabbits try to keep ORDER.

JENNY
(to Crowd)
We'll take ned if you got it, now or in future. But no one will go without.

AMSTERDAM
(to Jenny)
Except us. You opening a charity?

JENNY
They'll pay us what they owe, in loyalty if not in cash. Tammany gives coal, we give milk.

AMSTERDAM
They can afford it.

JENNY
Can't we?

CUT TO

INT. MOTHER JOYCE'S BORDELLO DAY

The midday sun shining through the windows makes the place look tatty and slightly desperate: this is a place that needs low light and long shadows to look good.

Amsterdam and Johnny are at a long bar, talking to Mother Joyce, a beefy, wised-up woman with pornographic tattoos an both forearms.

MOTHER JOYCE
This place is so clean it's the next thing to chaste. And safe as a convent, too.

AMSTERDAM
From the Natives, maybe. But not from us.

MOTHER JOYCE
You're saying I got to worry about your mob too?

JOHNNY

No worries at all. You throw in with the Dead Rabbits and we'll worry about the Natives.

Across the room, Jenny is sitting talking to a few of the WHORES, one of whom is a mixed-blood Eurasian with long black hair named Emma Loss. She gets up lazily and heads for the bar. As she passes a DRUNK, he reaches out to grab her. She's used to this, and she knocks his hand away. He keeps after her.

At the bar, Mother Joyce notices Emma being hassled, but pays no attention: her girls can take care of themselves.

MOTHER JOYCE

(to Amsterdam and Johnny)

And if someone else comes along, do I pay them too?

AMSTERDAM

You only pay us. We see you safe from everyone.

Johnny has been watching the drunk bothering Emma Loss. Without saying anything to Amsterdam or Mother Joyce, Johnny LEAVES the bar, walks over to the drunk and SHOVS him away.

JOHNNY

Leave off her. She don't want you. Not even if you could pay her.

EMMA LOSS

Hey, just a minute.

JOHNNY

(to Emma)

He can't pay. I can pay.

AMSTERDAM

(watching this)

Maybe I should offer Johnny as a bouncer for your busy nights.

MOTHER JOYCE

(laughs)

A bouncer! I don't know if he could bounce on a feather bed. He wants to be a character like you, is that it?

AMSTERDAM

He's got his own ideas. Too full of Tammany, maybe, but he's a fast friend.

Across the room, Johnny is talking to Emma Loss. She NODS and starts to LEAD him upstairs.

MOTHER JOYCE

But in my trade you go on your instincts. My instincts says to heed
you,
and my memory of your father says I'm right. We'll shake on it.
(Amsterdam grabs her hand)
And have one of my best to seal the bargain. Megs!

A lanky blonde, seated across the room near Jenny, bestirs herself.

MOTHER JOYCE

Come here and show my new friend why we're worth special care.
Jenny watches MEGS move toward Amsterdam.

CUT TO

INT. ASSIGNATION ROOM/MOTHER JOYCE'S

Big enough to contain a half-gutted mattress supported by a rickety bed, some worn sheets and a few GUTTERING CANDLES.

Johnny undresses as Emma sits on the bed and starts to take off her dress.

JOHNNY

You liked that old man? You would have gone with him?

EMMA LOSS

I like anyone that pays, that's all.

JOHNNY

Tell me what he wanted you to do.

EMMA LOSS

He mostly wanted comforting.

JOHNNY

I never seen hair so black. Can you take the pins out?

EMMA LOSS

It takes so long to do back up.

He sits beside her and starts slowly, almost tenderly, to remove the pins.

JOHNNY

Did your mother have the same color?

I don't know.

JOHNNY

(as the hair cascades over her bare shoulders)

Lie back, I want to look at you.
 (his eyes glide along her body)
 What's that mark?

EMMA LOSS
 I always had it.

JOHNNY
 (touching her lightly)
 And there? Is that a scar?

EMMA LOSS
 (she looks at her naked belly)
 There was a baby. They cut it out.

JOHNNY
 And that on your shoulder? That looks old.

EMMA LOSS
 Yeah, I got that when I ...

JOHNNY
 (interrupting, quiet)
 I don't want to know when. Don't tell me about before or what you used
 to
 be, I don't want that.

EMMA LOSS
 What about your scars. Do you have scars?

JOHNNY
 None I ever seen. Maybe you can find them.

Her hands and mouth cover his body. He closes his eyes.

CUT TO

INT. ASSIGNATION ROOM/MOTHER JOYCEIS

Another room. Amsterdam and Megs are undressing each other when Jenny
 walks in.

AMSTERDAM
 Go on. I can see you later.
 Megs leaves, brushing past Jenny.

JENNY
 What are you doing?

AMSTERDAM
 I couldn't decline what Mother Joyce offered. It's in the interests of
 business. You understand business.

JENNY

Sure I do. But there's something else I still don't understand. At Sparrow's Pagoda, did you hit me, knowing it was me?

AMSTERDAM

Yeah. I did.

She HITS him. In the face. Hard. Not a slap. A solid PUNCH. His nose starts to gush blood. He puts his arm under it to staunch the flow, keeping his eyes on her.

JENNY

Meantime's over.

AMSTERDAM

Oh fine. That's fine. I'd be celebrating but I'm losing too much blood.

Jenny tears part of the sleeve from her blouse and puts it against his nose.

JENNY

Put your head back.

AMSTERDAM

That don't work.

JENNY

Put your head back I said.

AMSTERDAM

(as she tends to him)
So why so sudden, then?

JENNY

Sudden? Every day I see you and you complain I can't decide. Now I decide,
you say it's sudden.

AMSTERDAM

It's the whore did it, then.

JENNY

Don't flatter yourself.

AMSTERDAM

It's because you're jealous.

JENNY

It's because you didn't lie about hitting me.

AMSTERDAM

Christ, I wish I had. Come here, then.

He reaches to pull her down on the bed.

JENNY

Not here. There's too much past.

CUT TO

INT. ROOM/DEAD RABBIT HOUSE

The room where Johnny fetched Amsterdam out for the fight. Amsterdam and Jenny have just made love.

JENNY

It must be morning.

AMSTERDAM

I don't care, I'm not getting up.

JENNY

This is what you meant, then? It's going to be just the same from now on?

AMSTERDAM

What?

JENNY

Every morning I wake up next to you.

AMSTERDAM

Or you don't wake up at all.

JENNY

We only just started in and you're already threatening me.

AMSTERDAM

It's not a threat.

(no teasing now)

It's a declaration of love.

JENNY

I prefer my kind. This kind.

She reaches beneath the pillow and pulls out a fine DIAMOND RING, which she slips on his finger. Amsterdam reacts with surprise, gratitude and (of course) suspicion.

AMSTERDAM

What's this? Where'd you get this?

JENNY

You said I was the best thief in the Five Points. But I got restless. Will you wear something I got?

CUT TO

EXT- UPTOWN STREET DAY

A long street of tree-shaded houses. Spacious lawns. North of the Five Points. Considerably north. This is the first time we have been outside the Five Points and Paradise Square. The city rent place.

Jenny and Amsterdam stand near a residence at the end of the street. Amsterdam, dressed in a suit, can't quite conceal his wonder as he stands staring at the house.

AMSTERDAM

What is this place?

JENNY

My jeweler's.

She GESTURES for him to follow her and we see now that she is dressed in a maid's outfit.

JENNY

Come on.

AMSTERDAM

I don't see nobody.

JENNY

That's the best time. They're all having lunch.

CUT TO

EXT. UPTOWN HOUSE DAY

At the back door of the grand house, as Jenny OPENS it slowly and glances inside.

AMSTERDAM

You're off your head.

JENNY

(pleased, showing off)

You can wait on me a minute. Or I'll see you back in the Points if you're scared.

(Amsterdam looks at her)

Don't worry. I know every house on this street. They all leave their doors

open. They live like they're not in New York.

She GOES IN the house. Amsterdam WATCHES through the window, sees her going up stairs. Then he looks at the dining room, visible distantly through an open kitchen door.

He WATCHES, fascinated, fragments of the everyday rituals of a world he's never seen. As SOUNDS drift listlessly from the street beyond, and a light BREEZE blows, WE SEE IN A SERIES OF DISSOLVES the serving of a meal; SERVANTS carrying and passing plates; FAMILY MEMBERS reaching for dishes and passing them; the LOW KURMUR of Konversation in accents he has never heard. It's not so much that these people and their life are foreign to him. It is as if he has stepped into another Dimension.

He loses his sense of time, and of danger. So that when Jenny TOUCHES his arm she surprises him thoroughly.

JENNY

Come on. I might still be taken for a maid. But you're nobody's notion of a butler.

EXT. UPTOWN STREET DAY

As Jenny and Amsterdam walk away from the house. She holds his arm. They look young and full of hope, like a servant couple just over from the old country enjoying a day off.

JENNY

The Police Commissioner lives the next street over. I was thinking of visiting him next month, but cops don't buy goods. They keep all their graft in cash.

Amsterdam looks at the houses with wonder that he tries to make casual. She opens her satchel a little way, then NUDGES him to have a look at the swag inside.

JENNY

How's that for ten minutes?

AMSTERDAM

It's a lot to fence.

JENNY

I'm not going to fence it. I'm going to keep it and take it where no one will recognize it.

AMSTERDAM

Where would that be?

JENNY

Somewhere west. Far west. Past the Mississippi River, somewhere into
that
territory.

AMSTERDAM

That's a hard journey for a woman alone.

JENNY

You'd be with me.

AMSTERDAM

You got it all planned and straight, is that it?

JENNY

Once I said I'd be with you I wanted someplace we could be together.
Someplace better than here. What's the matter with that?

AMSTERDAM

Nothing. Except there's no place but here for me right now. I got to
settle things.

JENNY

Yeah, I know, but I'm talking about settling down, not settling debts.

AMSTERDAM

You don't have my obligations.

CUT TO

EXT. PARADISE SQUARE DAY

The Dead Rabbits SWEEP across the bustling square, Johnny and
Amsterdam in the lead.

JOHNNY

It's a fair day's wage. We just move the people out of the building,
and
collect.

AMSTERDAM

Who from?

JOHNNY

Who owns the building.
(points)
Them.

The gang approaches a tumbledown BUILDING called Jacob's Ladder
because of the iron rungs that run straight up its front to the roof.
Two well-dressed GENTS stare at the building fretfully.

GENT 1
(to Johnny)

I'm glad you came in force. There's half a hundred people still in there.

GENT 2
Maybe more.

GENT 1
And not one's given rent the whole year.

AMSTERDAM
You live here?

GENT 1
No, no, of course not.

AMSTERDAM
I mean in the city. A ways north, I'll bet.

GENT 2
Yes. Why?

A RIFLE SHOT sounds from an upper window and a Rabbit falls wounded. They all DUCK FOR COVER.

JOHNNY
It's not just citizens in there?

GENT 1
Of course it is.

JOHNNY
with arms?

GENT 2
From their damned gang. Some of them live there.

AMSTERDAM
Some of who?

GENT 2
The Native Americans.

JOHNNY
We didn't contract for that.

GENT 1
We'll pay extra for the danger.

AMSTERDAM
No danger. But you will pay extra.

(turns; to gang)
Let's go and greet some Natives.

Under SCATTERED RIFLE FIRE and a barrage of ROCKS, the GANG STORMS the building, charging inside and starting up the ladder as if they were attacking a medieval fortress. ARMS reach out from windows to try and pull them off. The Rabbits respond with knives and PISTOL SHOTS. As they charge inside, the CAMERA RISES to an OVERHEAD shot and we ...

DISSOLVE TO

EXT. PARADISE SQUARE DAY

Later. The same OVERHEAD ANGLE. BODIES litter the street everywhere. Some dead and wounded Rabbits lie near NATIVES who have gone to their reward. Some BUILDING RESIDENTS wander the street in a daze. JOHNNY is collecting money from the Two Gents, who look very pleased as Amsterdam approaches with Jenny. He's carrying a rifle he took from the building.

AMSTERDAM
(to Gents)
Alright, then?

GENT 2
Very much alright. Quite a spectacle.

AMSTERDAM
Oh really? Just the entertainment you favor, is it? Pardon me for a moment, gents.
(he turns to Jenny)
You wanted to settle, you and me. That's so, isn't it? You did agree, did you not.

JENNY
I did, yes.

AMSTERDAM
Good, because I didn't want to act hasty. I can never tell for sure what you're thinking, and sometimes I'm not always sure what you're saying...

GENT 2
(interrupting)
Excuse me, we have to finish and...

AMSTERDAM
(to Gent 2)
Excuse me. We'll conclude in a moment.

(back to Jenny)
Where do you settle?

JENNY
Amsterdam, what are you saying?

AMSTERDAM
I'm asking, where does anyone settle?

JENNY
I don't know, you mean a place, a home?

AMSTERDAM
A home yes.

GENT 1
Excuse me, but we really must conclude.

AMSTERDAM
(ignoring him)
Well, I'm saying to you then, Jenny Everdeane, welcome home.

No one sees it coming. Amsterdam FLASHES around, swinging the BUTT of his rifle into Gent 1's midsection, doubling him over and sending him breathless to the ground. Amsterdam SPINS again and swings the butt into Gent 2's face, knocking him cold.

AMSTERDAM
Fine place. Room enough for all.
(to Johnny)
Get them out of here.

GENT 2
They'll come back looking for you.

AMSTERDAM
With whose help? The Natives? They won't help these flourishing bastards even for ned.
(to Jenny)
Tell any who wants they can stay. If they can't pay rent they can join the gang. But make sure the best rooms go to us. Look around ...

JENNY
(interrupting)
I know this building.

CUT TO

INT. UNDERGROUND/JACOB'S LADDER

As Jenny leads Amsterdam through a narrow tunnel. The place is like a weird catacomb: it is narrow and dank, filled with bones of dead animals, of the two- and four-legged variety.

JENNY

These lead all under the Square, into the Brewery and out again from there. They're closed off and forgotten since the Reverend opened the mission. Pass me the candle.

Amsterdam hands Jenny a stump of candle, which she holds high enough to see...that the tunnel has opened onto a small room just above the foundation of Jacob's Ladder. It's a graveyard, memorializing gang members gone to a better world--or worse. Trophies from many gangs--including the bones and skulls of some Dead Rabbits--litter the place in loose ritual fashion, as if this were a catacomb in Palermo.

Stooping low, Jenny walks to a narrow corner of the room, where several PAVING STONES have been laid in the rough pattern of a cross. A slab of slate serves as a headstone, and on it, in fading paint, barely legible, is the name "Maggie Everdeane."

JENNY

We lived in this building till she lost her seamstress work and we went to the Brewery. One day she slept so drunk she never woke and I brought her back here. Dug this myself.
(beat)
Families. Give here what I gave you.

Amsterdam hands her a chest that looks like a small version of Blackbeard's treasure box. She opens it and holds the candle close: inside is the swag from all her cat burglaries. There's a lot of it, GLITTERING with promise in the GUTTERING flame. Jenny starts to dig in her mother's grave.

JENNY

She'll keep an eye on this for us. How about some help?

He KNEELS beside her and they dig at the grave with stones and bones.

AMSTERDAM

You trusting me with your treasure, then?

JENNY

Just take another look at it to remind you. I can always do fine on my own.

Amsterdam reaches inside the chest, pulls out a ring and SLIPS it onto Jenny's dirt-covered finger. She KISSES him.

JENNY

What's mine is yours, is that it?

AMSTERDAM

I could use this, too.

From the bag he holds up a small GOLD CROSS.

JENNY

You making an offering to the Reverend Raleigh?

Amsterdam slips the cross into his pocket without answering and starts to dig again.

AMSTERDAM

Are you sure we can trust your mother?

CUT TO

INT. HALLWAY/TAMMANY

BOSS TWEED listens to an angry BILL THE BUTCHER as they walk briskly down a long marble corridor lined with formal portraits of former Tammany worthies.

BOSS TWEED

The building and how many?

BILL THE BUTCHER

A dozen at least of my Natives.

BOSS TWEED

The Dead Rabbits are a wooly bunch alright.

BILL THE BUTCHER

I want at them. All of them, and Amsterdam especial. Now.

BOSS TWEED

Not just now. It's between too late and too soon. They've become a little too prominent for comfort, but they're still too small for you to soil your hands. The man who killed Monk Eastman pushing around a mob of upstarts. It's practically undignified.

BILL THE BUTCHER

To hell with any of that.

Tweed stops under a grand new PORTRAIT of himself.

BOSS TWEED

Very well, and to hell as well with any plans you and I may have for growth and change and even greater reward. You'll never advance anywhere beyond the limited perimeter of your imagination.

BILL THE BUTCHER

I don't got to advance anywhere further.

BOSS TWEED

Got to, no. But ought to.

He hands him a fancy embossed envelope.

BILL THE BUTCHER

What's this?

BOSS TWEED

(eyes merry)

An invitation. To dinner.

CUT TO

INT. JENNY AND AMSTERDAM'S ROOM/JACOB'S LADDER DAY

Better by a little than their place in the old hideout. There's even a window that throws some LIGHT an the few bits of castoff furniture in the room... an the bed where Jenny sleeps with her face turned to the dawn light... and an Amsterdam, who is dressing quietly in the corner. He checks in his coat Pocket,...finds the gold cross ... and leaves.

Jenny
does nat stir.

CUT TO

EXT. GRAVEYARD DAY

START CLOSE on: Amsterdam's hand, as he places the gold cross in a small hole at a grave site, then covers it over with dirt.

Then WE SEE: Amsterdam is kneeling at his father's grave.

AMSTERDAM

He never had his own cross. Thanks.

Now he STANDS and TURNS. Jenny is half-hidden behind an elm tree.

AMSTERDAM

Your touch is light, but as a tracker you work awful heavy. Come ahead.

Now that I met your mother, you should come and meet my father.

As Jenny starts to WALK towards the grave, we see for the first time ...that we are in the country, a graveyard in an open field with an astonishing PANORAMA of New York and the East River. (MATTE) The cemetery is atop a hill, and the East River, busy with ferries and vessels of trade, glistens in the near distance. Just beyond it is Manhattan Island: low buildings, winding narrow streets, houses surrounded by open land. A BREEZE off the river rustles Jenny's dress and blows her hair as she steps up to the grave site, looks at the headstone and sees ... it is blank. No name, no date. Clean stane.

JENNY

You should finish the stone.

AMSTERDAM

It'll be finished when everything's finished. That's when he'll rest.
The
hand that killed him is the hand that will bury him in peace.

He holds up his open hand, covered in dirt.

JENNY

It was Bill killed him, not you.

AMSTERDAM

With my hand on the knife.

JENNY

And his hand on yours!

AMSTERDAM

And me feeling the life go out of my father! He looked at me ... he
looked
at me and he swore me with his eyes. I could feel his spirit... I say
I
could feel it rising... flowing through the knife like blood into my
own
heart.

JENNY

You talk like he lives in you.

AMSTERDAM

I don't want him to live, I want him dead! I kill Bill and I'm free of
them both!

JENNY

You think you can be free that easy? You need your way so clear, and
you'' use anything to clear it. Anyone, too. Me, everybody, we're all
just a way for you to settle your damned ghosts.

AMSTERDAM

You're part of me now, like the gang is part of me and my father both.

If

I can bring us to glory, then my father... like The Book says...my
father
can enter his house justified.

As Amsterdam continues to talk we ...

DISSOLVE TO

MONTAGE

The growth of the Dead Rabbits, as we continue to HEAR Amsterdam speak passionately to Jenny. We first see the Rabbits surrounding and OVERTURNING a fire wagon; this starts as a live action scene but soon BLEEDS into SEPIA, then freezes like an old magazine illustration.

AMSTERDAM (V.O.)

All of us is set on the same road together. The gang can have
everything
they ever wanted and get me what I want while they're doing it. We're
not
interfering with each other, we're helping each other. It's all the
same,
we're all one together.

We CONTINUE with sepia illustrations: of Dead Rabbit morts picking pockets and purses along a crowded Broadway; climbing onto a wagon distributing newspapers and tossing off the occupants, taking over the route themselves; swarming all over a merchant ship in the harbor as the captain doles out protection money to have his cargo unloaded.

AMSTERDAM (V.O.)

We'll all have a share of the profit like we'll all have a portion of
the
fame. If we come to be notorious, that only means we're strong, and if
we're strong that means we're ready.

A sepia illustration of a fire wagon rounding a corner, refurbished and manned by Rabbits, all wearing striking uniforms with short capes called TAMLAS. (N.B.: they will be seen wearing the tanlas from these uniforms during all gang activity throughout the rest of the film. Only Johnny, Amsterdam and Jenny do not wear them.)

The sepia illustration turns to live action as the fire wagon TEARS around Paradise Square, SCATTERING everyone in its path, the Dead Rabbits laughing, their tamlas FLYING behind them.

AMSTERDAM (V.O.)

And I'll know that time, know it right off when it comes. Just like I
knew you.

The live action DISSOLVES TO...

... the last image in the montage: an ILLUSTRATION of Amsterdam, a half-decade older, turned out in fancy clothes, but with all his fierceness intact. This is a magazine illustration, and there is a dated headline over his picture: "Fresh Scourge of the Five Points." The date reads "June, 1863.11

AMSTERDA.M (V.O.)

And just like that, there'll be no way of stopping till it's ended.

From this illustration, we quickly...

DISSOLVE TO

EXT. RIVER DAY

... Amsterdam, as he is in the picture, but in live action, SPRINGING to his feet and YELLING at a couple of PRIZEFIGHTERS doing battle in a ring.

AMSTERDAM

Now! Finish him now!

Far up the sparkling Hudson, a RAFT floats slowly upstream. It's a huge thing (perhaps half a city block in size) crowded with SPORTSMEN. They form a LARGE RING around two mammoth PRIZEFIGHTERS who are brawling with bare knuckles. Amsterdam and Johnny are among the spectators.

JOHNNY

Our man will take him in another five. What puts you in such a hurry?

FIGHTER 1 fetches FIGHTER 2 a powerful roundhouse punch that sends him CRASHING to the deck. As soon as he hits the floor, a CARD GIRL appears carrying a sign announcing "Round 37.11 SECONDS drag the stupefied Fighter 2 to his corner, while two BOYS minister to Fighter 1, SUCKING THE BLOOD off his knuckles.

A GONG sounds to announce the appearance, in the center of the ring, of the fight promoter, a florid and fulsome P.T. Barnum .

BARNUM

I want to extend thanks and admiration not only to our two combatants today, but to their sponsors, the Dead Rabbits ...

(indicates one side of the ring)

... and the Native Americans.

He FLINGS an expansive arm toward the opposite side of the ring, where

Bill the Butcher sits with Daniel Killoran and a large group of Natives. Amsterdam and the Butcher eye each other with all the old animosity: it's almost ceremonial now, part of the Tradition.

BARNUM

Their generous support allows me to bring you this splendid exhibition.

With their indulgence I'd like to remind you also of the further wonders that await you at my new Museum, located on Broadway...

There are BOOS from the crowd at such untoward commercialism.

BARNUM

... P.T Barnum's gallery of wonders from worlds natural and unnatural, from nature and from myth!
(continued boos)

And to encourage you also in the view that new Albany ordinances forbidding sportive violence on land shouldn't dampen your enthusiasm for wagering. Bets down, entlegen, and you gents..
(indicated fighters)
... fists up!

The Fighters come to center ring, circle each other, then start slugging. A flurry of punches, and Fighter 2 GOES DOWN again. As he hits the deck, the round automatically ends and the between-rounds ritual takes place again.

JOHNNY

Dobbs will take him this round. That'll be something. The Natives has never lost before.

AMSTERDAM

Because there's never been a Dead Rabbit fighting before.

JOHNNY

That'll shame them thorough.

AMSTERDAM

There'll be worse than shaming. We only got the Natives in range.

It's time to squeeze the trigger, John.

The next round begins and the Fighters set to, MAULING each other furiously.

JOHNNY

Don't push the Natives too far, Amsterdam. Otherwise it'll be Tammany pushing back.

AMSTERDAM

That don't matter any more.

JOHNNY

It does matter, and it's going to matter even more. Tammany's the
heart
and future of this city. If the Rabbits is going to keep growing,
we're
going to have to throw in with Tammany some way.

The action in the ring is FURIOUS. The Crowd cheers. Fighter 1 seems
about to go down, but recovers and starts returning punishment to
Fighter 2.

JOHNNY

They got that Conscription Act from Washington keeping them busy, but
they
won't leave us alone forever. And the Natives is strong as they ever
been!

In the ring, Fighter 1 drives Fighter 2 to the deck again, and this
time KNOCKS HIM COLD.

AMSTERDAM

(indicates Fighter 1)

You call that strong, John?

In the ring, a couple of agitated NATIVE AMERICANS are trying to get
at the Rabbit-sponsored winner. RABBITS start to RUSH the ring but
Amsterdam WAVES them back.

AMSTERDAM

(to Johnny)

This is our time now!

BARNUM

(trying to make official announcement)

The winner... gentlemen, please! ... the winner in the 39th round is
the
Dead Rabbits champion, High Water Dobbs ... please, gentlemen!

The unofficial ring COMBAT continues, knocking Barnum about, as the
new
champ throws marauding Natives around like empty flower sacks.

Amsterdam

iumps into the fray, PUSHES some Natives away. They start for him but
the
champ stands them off while Amsterdam WHISPERS to Barnum.

BARNUM

Just a moment, please, gentlemen! There's a word for us all. Amsterdam
promises ...

(Amsterdam whispers to him briefly)

... something large, something grand, something epic. The greatest
these
are my own words, of course the greatest righting of the gravest wrong
ever done in the Five Points.

The crowd quiets, their sporting blood still up, curiosity engaged.
Only Johnny seems glum, concerned.

This is to be a duel not for money, but for honor! A fight to the
death...

AMSTERDAM

(interrupting, emphasizing)

To the death. If he can stand up to it.

BARNUM

... on which money, I hasten to add, may certainly be wagered. The
names
of the two champions are Amsterdam Vallon, here beside me, and ... and
Mr.

William Poole, known to all as ...

BILL THE BUTCHER

(leaping up)

They know me by any name, you son of a bitch!

The crowd ERUPTS: this is a death match between Olympians. Only Johnny
does not rejoice. He looks at Amsterdam's face, flush with the belief
that the right moment has finally come, and he has to turn away. He
walks away from the ring as Killoran tries unsuccessfully to PULL the
Butcher down and cool him off.

BILL THE BUTCHER

(yelling)

I'll have him stretched on a spit!

Killoran is beside him now, whispering urgently. Bill the Butcher
shakes his head vehemently.

BILL THE BUTCHER

(to Killoran)

You got no more to say about this now.

AMSTERDAM

Come on, Bill! Let go of your Tammany wet nurse! My challenge, your
terms.

KILLORAN

(to Bill)

Don't do it, you can't do it! There's the Conscription to deal with,
and
elections coming, too. That's your calling now, not these ancient
quarrels.

BILL THE BUTCHER

I'll do my work. But this is a shame, a public shame. It demands my
attention.

(yelling to Amsterdam)

Fine, then! Fine and welcome! Day after elections, we'll meet with
seconds
on neutral ground to work out time and terms. It will be done and
done.

He walks to the ring, holds his HAND out to Amsterdam.

BILL THE BUTCHER

You know this hand. Last time it was this close, it was on your
throat.

AMSTERDAM

I remember it better from another time.

He takes the Butcher's hand. The duel is on.

CUT TO

INT./EXT. DRAFT REGISTRATION OFFICE

START CLOSE ON: money being counted out: \$300. And a RECEIPT quickly
written and given. We think at first this must be a bet being made on
the duel between Amsterdam and Bill the Butcher-

But we go WIDER to reveal: an office, tables and chairs, and a line.
Two lines, in fact. One, very long, filled with young man. And the
second, very short, in which a CLERK is handing the receipt to a
PROSPEROUS YOUNG MAN.

CLERK

Your release from service, according to the terms of the Conscription
Act.

Keep it somewhere safe.

PROSPEROUS YOUNG MAN

I'll keep it with me.

There is only one OTHER PERSON standen behind the Prosperous Young
Man, and he steps up quickly and hands \$300 to the Clerk as the
Prosperous Young Man heads for the door...past the second line, which
snakes out into the street, filled with draftees who SHOUT at the
Prosperous Young Man as he leaves.

DRAFTEE 1

Hey, tell your Papa to pass me three hundred dollars too.

DRAFTEE 2

Tell him if he don't we'll come get you on our way to Gettysburg.

The Prosperous Young Man HURRIES away, but spots Boss Tweed and Daniel Killoran as he leaves.

PROSPEROUS YOUNG MAN

Oh, Mr. Tweed, I'd take the time to say proper thanks but...

BOSS TWEED

No thanks owed, son. Conscription's Federal Law, and so's the \$300 exemption. You might remind your father, though, that you saw me here today, minding that the law's strictly and equitably enforced.

The Prosperous Young Man hurries out, as the Draftees continue to holler abuse. Boss Tweed HEADS for them, followed by Killoran.

KILLORAN

You see how much they like this damned law? Enforcing it's going to hurt
us in elections.

BOSS TWEED

It's not my law, and not my liking, either. But Washington's always treated us with sufferance, and we must extend the same regard to them.

(to Draftees)

Boys, we are bound by honor and love of country to fight in this time
of
crisis!

DRAFTEE 4

We're bound by our wallets and the emptiness in them, that's what!

BOSS TWEED

Boys, the union is in distress, our land is wounded deeply, our future
is
suddenly a frail and finite thing. We must ask ourselves how...

DRAFTEE 5

Yeah, you could talk a dog off a meat wagen, Tweed. But let's see you fight!

DRAFTEE 6

That'd be worth twice three hundred dollars to see!

BOSS TWEED

(as he backs off)

Thank you, boys, thank you for your understanding.

(to Killoran)
Holy Mother.

Tweed hustles Killoran outside, where the line of Potential draftees snakes down the block and into Paradise Square.

BOSS TWEED

Daniel, between the blindness of Washington and the damned brass of
Bill

Poole Tammany will fall like an autumn leaf. We must take what
measures we
can. Attend to the Butcher. After the elections, of course. Unless you
think Amsterdam will do our work for us first.

KILLORAN

He could at that. Then he would become a fresh concern

BOSS TWEED

Not so daunting as this.

(turns to the Draftees in the street)

Boys, I've just had a word with your compatriots inside, and if you
show

half the sand and a fraction of the spirit they have manifeste for
joining
this great struggle...

There is a chorus of BOOS and JEEPS from the Draftees outside.

OUTSIDE DRAFTEE

Put a rope around it, Tweed, and swing in your own wind!

BOSS TWEED

Great weeping Jesus, Daniel, whatever happened to the halcyon days?

CUT TO

EXT. POLLING PLACE/PARADISE SQUARE DAY

Election Day pandemonium. The Dead Rabbits aren't working the repeaters this day, but Johnny observes the action as Native Americans—identifiable because of their long dusters—strongarm REPEATERS into the polls.

His attention is drawn to a HARRIED TELEGRAPH OPERATOR, who is being SHOUTED at by Natives as he is inundated by pieces of paper and teetering volumes of the voting registry. It's chaos. The poor Operator can't cope.

CUT TO

INT. TAMMANY HALL

It's chaos here, too. The large main room is filled with TELEGRAPH OPERATORS receiving election returns. There is SHOUTING and CONCERN throughout the room. Even Boss Tweed shows signs of worry.

BOSS TWEED

I swear that science will be the death of industry.

KILLORKN

The telegraph moves the voter tabulation by wire faster than we can get the repeaters in and out.

BOSS TWEED

(losing patience)

Your role is to expedite, Daniel, not to explain.

(Killoran looks at him blankly)

Do something!

JOHNNY

If you'll allow me.

They both TURN to see Johnny standing coolly before them.

JOHNNY

There's a scheme we might try.

KILLORAN

You got no place among us, get the hell out of here however you come in.

BOSS TWEED

A moment please, Daniel. One moment.

(to Johnny)

You're a Dead Rabbit, aren't you? Friend to Amsterdam?

(Johnny nods)

And therefore no particular friend to us. What brings you here?

JOHNNY

Opportunity. Science and opportunity.

KILLORAN

You got opportunities enough among your own.

JOHNNY

I did have. But times change faster than people. Some people, anyhow.

And

I like to stay with the advantage.

BOSS TWEED

Well, then, a Gentleman of foresight! Are you suggesting... or perhaps you're even saying... that your friend and your gang may be ... well, lagging behind the great march of history?

JOHNNY

Something like that, yeah.

BOSS TWEED

Well fine, step up to history then and tell us what you have in mind.

CUT TO

EXT. POLLING PLACE/PARADISE SQUARE DAY

START CLOSE ON: telegraph wire, HUMMING with the election returns. And, below it--far below--Johnny, Killoran and a couple of TAMMANY BOYOS, looking up at the wire.

BOYO 1

I ain't goin' up there. I got my election suit on.

JOHNNY

This election'll be over unless we get up there.

KILLORAN

"We?" This was your notion, you go up there.

BOYO 2

(looking at polling place)

Him. He looks likely, and he ain't workin'.

He points over at Sheeny Mike Kurtz, who is observing the action at the polls.

JOHNNY

(calls to him)

Sheeny Mike, you want to make ...

(to Boyo 1)

...how much?

BOYO 1

A dollar.

JOHNNY

(to Sheeny Mike)

Five dollars? Just to help us?

SHEENY MIKE

(a bit wary)

What's the pitch, Johnny? Amsterdam wouldn't like it, working with Tammany.

BOYO 2

Well, now, if Amsterdam wouldn't like it ...

JOHNNY

(interrupting)

He knows about it. Welre working a whole new scheme. But I won't tell
him
youlre helping, if that's the way you want it. And you can keep the
full
five. Just start climbing.

SHEENY MIKE

(beat)

Where's the ned?

Boyo 2 hands Sheeny Mike five bucks, which he pockets as Boyo 1 gives
him
a large pair of SHEARS. Mike wipes his palms on his pants and STARTS
UP the pole.

For Killoran and the Tammany Boyos, this is like a circus stunt. They
watch Mike's ascent with pleasure.

Sheeny Mike is quite pleased with himself as he nears the top of the
pole. He turns to look at Johnny and the Tammany group below. A
couple of SPECTATORS have stopped to watch as well.

Mike gets to the top of the pole, REACHES OUT--STRETCHES OUT-toward
the telegraph wire with the shears...

... strains... reaches ... MAKES THE CUT.

On the ground, Johnny looks relieved. The Boyos offer a partmocking
round of applause.

In the spirit of things, Sheeny Mike TURNS to acknowledge the
applause. Just briefly. But long enough so he's distracted. He sees
the upturned FACES fill suddenly with fear, and he TURNS when he
HEA.RS a sharp, odd WHISTLING NOISE.

A LIVE TELEGRAPH WIRE is coming at him. He doesn't even have time to
scream. The wire hits him, whipping around him as JOLTS OF NT leap
through his body and he FALLS to the ground.

CUT TO

EXT. PARADISE SQUA.RE DAY

HANDS pick up the lifeless body of Sheeny Mike and start to carry it
off... past Amsterdam and Jenny, who stand on one side of it,
watching...and Johnny, who is on the other.

JOHNNY

He was working a Tammany job, Tammany will see to him.

AMSTERDAM

He wasn't Tammany. Not like you.

JOHNNY

He made the right choice.

AMSTERDAM

You don't know what you're saying! You killed one of our own. One of
your
family!

JOHNNY

(slowly)

I didn't know he was going to die, Amsterdam. And don't tell me what's
my
own and what isn't. You're not my family. And I swear, I swear on the
Virgin Mother's eyes ... I know what I'm doing, Amsterdam. It's you
that's
always been blind.
(they look at each other)
I'll say my farewells.

Johnny KNEELS down beside Mike's body, brushes the hair from his brow.

JOHNNY

You still smell like drink.

He nods to the Rabbits to carry the body on and, as he RISES a half-
dozen NEWSBOYS DASH into the square, carrying fresh copies of the
Tribune and crying...

NEWSBOYS

New Tammany victory! Fernando Wood elected to third term! Tammany
ticket
prevails by narrow margin! Boss Tweed vows
Armageddon for crime!

JOHNNY

(looking at Amsterdam and Jenny)
Can't you hear the future?

He walks away from the gang, through the rushing Newspaper Boys.

CUT TO

INT. SPARROW'S CHINESE PAGODA

The place has been cleared out for a war council: Amsterdam with a couple of Dead Rabbits, and Bill the Butcher with a few Natives. They sit at a round poker table with a green felt top.

JIMMY SPOILS

We say the Square is the place. Let Barnum sell the tickets for a share of the price...

NATIVE SECOND

(interrupting)

A small share.

JIMMY SPOILS

And the Rabbits and Natives will split the majority portion equal.

NATIVE SECOND

Who works the crowd?

AMSTERDAM

Nobody. This is a day of honor. No pickpockets, no lush-rollers, nothing.

BILL THE BUTCHER

I'll cut their hands off. After the fight.

NATIVE SECOND

We got to fix positions for everyone so there won't be no other fighting.

I know for fact the Roach Guards has sworn blood against the Black Birds,
and the Forty Thieves don't tolerate the Chichesters.

As these delicate negotiations continue, the only two outsiders in the place, Mother Joyce and a Bartender, are listening intently on the far side of the room.

BARTENDER

Amsterdam will make the Butcher a fine banquet.

MOTHER JOYCE

My ned's on the boy. He's got the youth, and he's got the hunger.

BARTENDER

Is he so hungry you'll put up a hundred?

MOTHER JOYCE

Two.

CUT TO

EXT. PARADISE SQUARE DAY

OFFICIALS stand on a high wooden platform facing a JEERING CROWD. Banners announce a "DRAFT LOTTERY." OFFICIALS are preparing to draw the first numbers as Boss Tweed gives out with a speech.

BOSS TWEED

Your honor... yes, and the law of the land... lies in the balance. The Conscription Act of 1863 was handed down by President Lincoln himself

...

CROWD MEMBER

(shouting)

If Lincoln signed it, then let Lincoln fight!

CROWD MEMBER 2

It's an army of the poor fighting for a bunch of rich slackers!

CROWD MEMBER

Tammany's been our voice, let Tammany pay the exemption for all!

A YOUNG MEMBER of the crowd steps forward as Boss Tweed turns to look at those backing him on the platform: Killoran, a CAVALRY OFFICER in fancy dress ... and, out of sight of the crowd, Johnny Sirocco. Their expressions are not reassuring.

YOUNG CROWD MEMBER

Your first payment, m'lords.

The Young Crowd Member hurls a STONE through the front window of a nearby store. The CROWD cheers and runs to sack the store, and others SURGE toward the platform. Johnny and Killoran grab a fearful Tweed and rush him to safety. But the Cavalry Officer stands his ground with sword and pistol. He SHOOTS.

That STOPS them. But only for a fractured, eerie moment. Then they jump on the Cavalry Officer, PULL him to the ground, begin to KICK and BEAT him.

CUT TO

EXT. STREET/JACOB'S LADDER NIGHT

A building burns at the end of the street, spreading a silhouette of smoke and flame in the air...

... as a LION CHARGES down the street, growling, scattering RIOTERS in its wake. It's a mad, frightening sight, like a fulfillment of the

Biblical prophecy produced by P.T Barnum, whose Museum is burning in the distance.

SCREAMS, YELLS, CURSES and GROANS. CRIES of pain and fear as RIOTERS jump out of the way of the wild animal, then course up the street toward Broadway burning in the distance.

From ABOVE, on the roof of Jacob's Ladder, Amsterdam and Jenny watch the madness below.

AMSTERDAM

(watching lion)

That must be the vanguard of Barnum's army.

JENNY

This city will burn like Gomorrah.

AMSTERDAM

Then we'll take what we can before it gets too hot.

JENNY

I think it's past that already.

AMSTERDAM

It'll never come to that. These people ain't gang-led and they have no purpose.

They'd rather die for themselves than the army, that's the purpose.

What

would you do?

AMSTERDAM

Fight better and not get so mad. They're only doing what they should have done years ago. Why'd they ever think there was another way to live?

JENNY

They believed what people told them, that's all.

AMSTERDAM

What people is that? The Reverend at the mission? Boss Tweed? Daniel Killoran? People like Johnny Sirocco?

JENNY

You believed Johnny.

AMSTERDAM

Hell.

JENNY

And I believed you.

AMSTERDAM

I ain't done nothing different than what I told you, Jen.

JENNY

I believed what you said about being with me, with me alone. But you
 lied
 to me. It's not me alone, it's just you and Bill Poole. You're so
 blood-blind you can't see nothing else, not even this!

AMSTERDAM

I don't care a fine damn about what they want! It's what I want! They
 won't dare harm the Points, that's all I care about! Let them turn the
 rest of the city into hell! It's another country anyway.

JENNY

It's not a country for me, Amsterdam. I don't know about you. Will you
 come with me?

AMSTERDAM

Not now.

JENNY

Now is when I'm going. Will you come?

AMSTERDAM

I don't want all this fighting to go to waste, Jen. I want to come out
 of
 it with something. And I got to be waiting for the Butcher.

CUT TO

INT. UNDERGROUND/JACOB'S LADDER

Jenny digs out her treasure from her mother's grave, throws open the
 box, starts to GRAB all the swag she can and hide it on her person...
 in her pockets, under her clothes, anywhere. She takes as much as she
 can, but she has to travel fast.

CUT TO

EXT. STREET NIGHT

Beginning a swift series of scenes that are like a laudanum nightmare.

The street is JAMMED with people fleeing and people fighting... as
 Jenny forces her way through, trying to escape.

A small mob starts to ATTACK a house where a TERRIFIED FAMILY stands
 in the doorway.

FAMILY MAN

We're with you, don't harm us!

MOB MAN

Show us your spirit and come out with us then!

MOB WOMAN

And put a candle in the window to show you're one with us! Every light
is
a flame against the draft!

The WIFE begs her husband not to join the mob, but they PULL HIM out into the street. The Mob Woman hands the Wife a candle, then runs back to join the mob.

Jenny starts to cross Paradise Square now... tries to cross, anyway... and passes the stand where Tweed delivered his speech that very morning. She sees: the Cavalry officer. Several MOB WOMEN have revived him with water. He has been beaten terribly, but as he MOANS and starts to regain consciousness, the MOB WOMEN fall upon him with fresh fury, KICKING and HITTING his helpless body. They BREAK his bones with rocks and TEAR OFF the fancy braid of his uniform to hang around their necks.

Now a SECOND MOB RUSHES toward the first from the opposite side of Paradise Square. Chaos. Jenny is buffeted wildly. It's like being in a whirlpool. She grabs a LITTLE GIRL whose face is bruised and bloody but whose eyes shine wildly.

JENNY

What is it?

LITTLE GIRL

Cops has everything closed to the north, and the militia's coming.

CUT TO

EXT. STREET/FIVE POINTS NIGHT

As Jenny presses her way through the mob-devoured streets. She sees: MEN, WOMEN and CHILDREN attacking a small group of BLACKS.

BOY

My Daddy don't have to die for you! Why should he fight and die for you?

Jenny looks ahead, sees: the river, in the distance. And flames. She runs forward, STUMBLES. Some of the swag FALLS to the street. She SCRAMBLES to pick it up as Rioters rush by her.

CUT TO

EXT. PIERS HUDSON RIVER NIGHT

MATTE: The surface of the water looks like a mirror made of flame. The piers are BURNING. The docks are ash.

SAILORS battle a MOB for possession of a small rowboat. As they fight, the boat starts to DRIFT. Jenny spots it, RUNS for it

... but so does ANOTHER GIRL. Younger than Tenny--20 maybe, Jenny's age when Amsterdam fell in love with her. They both get to the boat at the same time. Each grips it by a gunwale, and they STARE at each other like two jungle beasts over a kill.

JENNY

I'd kill you for this.

The Girl lunges at her with a knife, and Jenny SHOOTs. The GIRL slides into the flame-reflecting Hudson as if she's drowning in a pit of lava.

Jenny climbs into the boat and frantically starts to row. We stay CLOSE on her ... working the oars clumsily, furiously ... moving the boat across the water, trying to get away from the city...

... and we go WIDER now. A huge line of IRON--like the side of a glacier... bisects the frame, then starts to move. Jenny turns, SEES it. It is ...

... the looming hull of an ironclad war ship (MATTE). It LOBS cannon fire into the city, setting off tremendous explosions. Jenny TURNS back for the shore...

... as cannonballs land, devastating rioters.

CUT TO

EXT. SHORE/RIVER NIGHT

MATTE: Police and MILITIA push the rioters back toward the river like rats. A cannonball EXPLODES in their midst...

... injuring many more cops and militia than rioters. The rioters rally, RUN over the bodies of fallen cops and soldiers. Now the advantage is theirs; cops and militia are in retreat.

Jenny climbs up on shore and joins the mob as it presses back inland.

CUT TO

EXT. DOYERS STREET/THE BLOODY ANGLE NIGHT

Further from the docks. Shells still exploding in the distance. Jenny moves with the marauding mob, recognizes Doyers Street. She splits away from the mob, moves stealthily into the street known as the Bloody Angle. And STOPS.

Weird shadows dance on the walls of the buildings. SMOKE and EERIE LIGHT. The angle is lined with lampposts. And from every lamppost dangles the BODY of a black man. Or woman. Or child. Some are still smouldering.

At the base of a lamppost, a group of RIOTERS have cut open the hog-tied CORPSE of a black man and are pouring oil into it. One of the Rioters sees Jenny, grins and holds out the TORCH he's holding. She shakes her head and starts to BACK out of the alley.

The Rioter touches the torch to the oil in the wound of the corpse. The body IGNITES in flame. The RIOTERS pull on a rope and the body rises, burning, to the top of the lamppost ...

... where its awful shadow joins all the others in the madhouse refractions on walls all up and down the street. On the street, as the flames dance and the bodies burn, rioters DANCE and SING. Walpurgis Night. From these mad SHADOWS, we...

DISSOLVE TO

EXT. ROOF/JACOB-S LADDER NIGHT

... the face of Amsterdam, stepping out of the SHADOWS of the roof. There are flames in the distance. The whole gang is assembled, facing him as he speaks.

AMSTERDAM

No we ain't going to fight, but we can take something for ourselves
out of
this.

JIMMY SPOILS

I want to know who hung them bodies in the Bloody Angle. I want to
address
who done it.

AMSTERDAM

Five thousand people in the street done it! Boss Tweed done it! Abe
Lincoln done it! There's nothing you can do about any one of them but
stay
with us. You'll have a little of your own back.

JIMMY SPOILS

How's that?

AMSTERDAM

These riots are a gift. They...

... he PAUSES just for a moment as he sees a hand on the last rung of the outside ladder leading to the roof: it's Jenny, returning.

AMSTERDAM

... they've made everything clear, as you might say.
(to Jenny)
Are you with us, then?

JENNY

Until I can get out. I'll go with you...
(straight at Amsterdam)
...meantime.

AMSTERDAM

Good. We're going for the Armory at Canal Street.

JIMMY SPOILS

The Armory! We'll have to beat the militia to get there.

AMSTERDAM

There's a way through the lines. Jen, did you see the cops and militia?

JENNY

I can show you from here where they are. I doubt they'll get to the Armory in force before midday tomorrow.

AMSTERDAM

We'll get there first. We'll take everything we can carry, and destroy the rest so no one else has the use of it, the militia, the Natives, nobody. Then we'll turn to real business. We'll go down to the Battery.

JIMMY SPOILS

Why, we going to take a sail to Europe?

AMSTERDAM

No. But we could, after this. We're going...
(slowly, savoring this)
...we're going to take the banks. The government banks.
(awed silence from all)
Are we not?

JENNY

(beat; steps forward)
Seems we are.

One by one, then in small groups, the entire gang FOLLOWS her. They are uncertain, reluctant, even frightened at the audacity of the scheme. But they stand with Amsterdam.

CUT TO

NT. MAIN ROOM/TAMMANY HALL NIGHT

The crowded main room of Boss Tweed's domain, jammed with anxious POLITICOS and OFFICIALS, as well as a harried group of TELEGRAPH OPERATORS who receive news of the riots from all over Manhattan. There is a huge map of the city against one wall: the place has been converted from a political principedom to an operational headquarters. Johnny Sirocco and Bill The Butcher are there. Other guests include the GOVERNOR, Mayor Fernando Wood, and a badly shaken Horace Greeley.

GREELEY

They attacked me! I had every sympathy for them at first...

BOSS TWEED

Too much sympathy, Horace. Writing these riots were a rising against "unjust laws and unsuitable law-givers." The shame!

GOVERNOR

I suspended the draft at noon but the mobs only grew more virulent. It is a criminal rising of the lowest class, of the Gangsters and rabble who have been allowed by Tammany to run lawless!

BOSS TWEED

It was Tammany and the rabble that elected you, Governor. And it's
Tammany
and the gangs who'll stop it. Isn't that so, Bill?

BILL THE BUTCHER

(nods at Johnny)

I won't say nothin' in front of him. Who knows what business he's here
on?

BOSS TWEED

He's here on our business and my invitation. He's already been of
great
help. What's the opposition strength, John?

To answer, Johnny yanks back a CURTAIN drawn across a high window. The view, looking downtown, is one of almost continual ILLUMINATION—every place the eye falls, CANDLES burn in sympathy for the rioters.

JOHNNY

Each candle is against you, gents.

MAYOR

"Against you," sir? Don't you mean "us".

JOHNNY

(diplomatic)

Some of us come from those people, Mayor. I'll not deny they still
claim
part of me.

MAYOR

Which part? Perhaps your heart.

BOSS TWEED

Gentlemen, I'm sorry you find it necessary to question the loyalty of
my
friend here, and by extension, my own judgement. So as proof ... John,
where will the mob go? What will the gangs do?
(Johnny is uneasy about answering)
Go on, tell them what you told me.

JOHNNY

There's no telling about the mob. Or the small gangs. But the Dead
Rabbits
... if I was Amsterdam...

BOSS TWEED

(interrupting)

As indeed you nearly was. Were.

JOHNNY

... if I was ... I'd figure to take the Rabbits to the Armory.

BOSS TWEED

Would you agree with that, Bill? Wouldn't you do the same? If you were
fighting against the militia instead of beside them?

BILL THE BUTCHER

Beside them? What are you talking... ?

BOSS TWEED

(interrupting)

You will have to fight beside them to take the Armory. It cannot fall
into
unfriendly hands.

BILL THE BUTCHER

I can't stand with the militia against the people. I could never work
the
Points no more if I did.

BOSS TWEED

We're all of us swept up in a great tide of events, Bill. Have you
learned
to swim?

From Bill's face, struggling to make sense of this, knowing Tweed's
 right
 but not wanting to believe it, we ...

DISSOLVE TO

INT. MAIN ROOM/TAMMANY HALL NIGHT

... Johnny's face, as Tweed talks to him. It is later, and the Butcher has left. The activity is still frantic all around, but Tweed speaks in unhurried tones.

BOSS TWEED

I'm sure that Bill will do his usual splendid job. But after that ...
 well, I'm afraid he's grown away from us.

(Johnny looks puzzled)

He shows distressing signs of... shall we say, free-thinking. Crime flourishes in chaos, and these riots could encourage Bill to overstep himself. He no longer inspires in me the same trust... well, that you might. If you can prove yourself further.

JOHNNY

You already said in front of everyone you trusted me.

BOSS TWEED

In vital things. Would I be talking to you now otherwise? Vital things,
 but small things. Are you equal to greater responsibility and opportunity?

JOHNNY

Such as what?

BOSS TWEED

Ridding me of Bill the Butcher.

(Johnny is startled)

He may question your loyalty to me, but Bill would never believe you had
 the sand to go against him. He'd never expect it. Do you have the sand?

From Johnny's face, struggling to make the right answer, we...

DISSOLVE TO

INT. JACOB'S LADDER

... Ansterdam's face, as he looks up from preparing a brace of pistols for the next day's scheme.

AMSTERDAM
Let him in.

Johnny enters the common room of Jacob's Ladder, where the Dead Rabbits have gathered to ready themselves. As they work over their weapons and prepare battle dress, Johnny walks through their midst. They do not acknowledge him... except for Jenny.

JENNY
Did you miss us, John?

JOHNNY
Not a bit.

AMSTERDAM
(rising to meet him)
Are you here to spy?

JOHNNY
I don't have to spy.

Amsterdam leads Johnny off to a shadowy corner of the room where they can talk privately.

JOHNNY
(as they walk)
I know what you're doing. I told Tweed what you're doing.

AMSTERDAM
You don't know what I'm doing.

JOHNNY
You're going after the Armory.

AMSTERDAM
Am I now? Why do you think that?

JOHNNY
'Cause that's what I would do, and you and I think alike.

AMSTERDAM
No more. And it don't seem worth a visit to tell me something you
already
think I'm doing.

JOHNNY
There's something else alright. Tweed's arranged to kill Bill the
Butcher.

AMSTERDAM
(disbelieving)
Who could Tweed get to do that?

JOHNNY
One of his own.

AMSTERDAM
There's no one around him...

JOHNNY
(interrupting)
Listen, it don't matter who, it's going to be done, that's all! Tweed
ain't going to wait around
for you and Bill to settle yourselves. I'm telling you so you have a
chance.

AMSTERDAM
Chance of what?

JOHNNY
A chance... a chance to do what you want. Bury the Butcher, draw what
blood you got to. But you better make speed. The Natives will move on
the
Armory too.

AMSTERDAM
And what's any of it mean to you?

JOHNNY
It means whatever's left of friendship, I don't know. There's still
part
of me here. I don't
want to see you lose everything in your life at once.

AMSTERDAM
I'm going to lose nothing.
(beat)
If you believe me, you can stay.

JOHNNY
I got to go.

He turns so Amsterdam can't see his face and LEAVES-

JENNY
So Tammany's going to kill the Butcher. That puts you and Tweed on the
same side. Does that make the path clear enough to suit you?

From Amsterdam's face, trying to work out all the new angles, we...

DISSOLVE TO

INT. NATIVE AMERICAN HIDEOUT

... Amsterdam's face, full of resolve, staring unblinking as ...

... the barrels of two dozen RIFLES SURROUND the edges the screen, boxing Amsterdam in, as if his head were in a frame. And Bill the Butcher gazes at him with astonishment. We are, for the first time, in the Natives' lair, a house hung with American flags of all shapes and vintages, some of them torn by battle, others by years of weather and use. Some of them go back to the early days of the republic. There is not an inch of wood or wall space to be seen for all the stars and stripes.

BILL THE BUTCHER

Murder Me? No one's going to murder me.

AMSTERDAM

Then you better learn to fight locking over your shoulder, Bill,
because
that's the only way you'll ever see it coming.

BILL THE BUTCHER

I don't believe it, and I don't believe it's you telling me. You got
no
reason to care about any danger to me.

AMSTERDAM

One reason. You're my kill, Butcher. No one else is going to have you,
not
Tweed, not Tammany, not those pigs in the street. No one--not even
you,
Bill--will ever take the pleasure of your death away from me. I'd do
anything to keep you for my own, even if I have to protect you.

BILL THE BUTCHER

You protect me? Get out of here and go to hell.

AMSTERDAM

Fine, so long as I pass you on my way.

BILL THE BUTCHER

Maybe I'd believe you more if I knew who was talking to you.

AMSTERDAM

Someone I credit.

BILL THE BUTCHER

That means nothing to me. None of this means nothing to me because I
am

Tammany. Without me and my Natives they're nothing but a bunch of old horses at a trough.

AMSTERDAM

You join with me and we fight against Tammany, fight them back and out of the Points. Then you and me can settle. But if you don't join with me, then there won't be no settlement because you'll be murdered in the street and the whole Points will be mine.

BILL THE BUTCHER

I relish the thought... just the thought... of cutting you up and opening you wide. So if just thinking about it gives me such pleasure, imagine how I'm going to enjoy doing it.

AMSTERDAM

Why don't I make it easy for you, then.

He TURNS his back on the Butcher and starts to walk out, through the entire gang of Natives.

AMSTERDAM

Same as you're making it easy for Tweed.

He keeps walking... through the Natives ... dozens of ancient enemies glowering at him.

BILL THE BUTCHER

Amsterdam!

(Amsterdam looks around)

Don't be like your father. Don't make it too easy.

Amsterdam struggles to keep his temper. But he turns and keeps walking through the enemy camp as we...

DISSOLVE TO

INT. JACOB'S LADDER

...Amsterdam walking. But this time, he is WALKING among his gang. All the Dead Rabbits are assembled, weapons ready. Jenny is beside him. Then Jimmy Spoils. Then a few others.

As the group passes, others STAND and walk with them...

... until the whole gang is rallied... and bound for the passageway in the corner of the room that leads under the building.

DISSOLVE TO

INT. BASEMENT

As Amsterdam and the gang heads through the catacomb-like basement, past the graves, into a tunnel. Torchlight GUTTERS all around. Their steps echo like repeated rifle shots.

DISSOLVE TO

INT. TUNNEL

The whole gang MARCHES down a tunnel under the Old Brewery. Except for Amsterdam and Jenny, they all wear their tamias. Many have marks and gang insignia on their faces. All of them have weapons. A lot of weapons.

Frightened FACES--people seeking shelter and safety from the riots--appear in the darkness, then vanish like ghosts.

As the Rabbits walk, they summon memories of the first fight, that same march through the tunnels when Amsterdam marched beside his father. Amsterdam's face gives little away. But perhaps he is remembering that day too.

DISSOLVE TO

INT. TUNNEL

The last tunnel.. Shreds of light from a door in the distance. Amsterdam walks up to the door and--just as Monk Eastman did years before--KICKS it down. Dim dawn LIGHT FLOODS the tunnel as the Dead Rabbits step out.

CUT TO

EXT. CANAL STREET DAWN

The first thing we see is an ELEPHANT, who trumpets fearfully at the sudden sound of the sattered door. The gang stops, wary of this huge refugee from Barnum's Museum, but the animal is more frightened of them.

It hurries on down the street...

... revealing behind it a group of several dozen RIOTERS who carry a huge American flag and a long wooden plank bearing the legend "No Draft." They stare at the Rabbits with something near reverence.

AMSTERDAM

Where's the Native Americans?

RIOTER
Ain't seen them. Ain't here.

AMSTERDAM
And the militia?

RIOTER
There's a detachment coming on from two streets over. The rest is
still
north of here. What are you after?

Amsterdam POINTS to a formidable building a block away: the Armory. It
looks like a fortress.

RIOTER
The Devil himself couldn't take that place.

AMSTERDAM
That's why he sent us.

CUT TO

EXT. STREET NEAR ARMORY/ DAY

The DETACHMENT of militia proceeds warily towards the Armory. They are
a young, uncertain-looking outfit; their COMMANDER looks like an
upstate farm kid. He tenses and his eyes widen as he sees Jenny
walking toward him, carrying a BOY in her arms.

JENNY
(crying)
Help me. Oh please help me. He's shot, we need a doctor, please help.

DETACHMENT COMMANDER
Miss, we ain't a medical outfit. The main unit's ten minutes behind
us,
they'll have...

He doesn't get the chance to finish. Jenny DROPS the Boy from her arms
and shoots the Detachment Commander once, cleanly...

... as the Boy roles into a prone position and FIRES two shots into
the stunned Detachment...

... while the Dead Rabbits SWARM from every doorway along the street,
FIRING GUNS and brandishing weapons.

It's over in seconds. The Detachment has hardly gotten off a shot.
Every one of them lies dead or wounded in the street...

... as the Rabbits CROUCH over their bodies.

CUT TO

EXT. ARMORY DAY

A rifle emplacement manned by a dozen GUARDS- They stand anxious post in front of the Armory. Each window is barred and fortified, and the front door is massive. But the tension in the Guards' faces eases a little when they see ...

... the Detachment of militia heading towards them down the street. Some of the Detachment are wearing bloody uniform jackets; several are being carried. The Detachment, unrecognized by the Guards, is made up entirely of Dead Rabbits.

AMSTERDAM

Help us, we got wounded!

GUARD 1

We can't leave the post.

AMSTERDAM

Open the damn doors then! We're bad hurt!

GUARD 1

Where's the others?

AMSTERDAM

Just behind us! But I got our major here wounded so bad half his guts
is
out!

Guard 1 SIGNALS for the doors to be opened to the Armory as the Detachment draws close to the emplacement.

GUARD 1

God, it's good to see you!

AMSTERDAM

Likewise.

Ainsterdam SHOOTs him where he stands as the Rabbits OVERWHELM the emplacement.

AMSTERDAM

(shouting)

Move fast! We got to get out with everything we can before the militia gets here!

As the Armory Guards return fire, the Boy Jenny carried in the previous scene RUNS for the telegraph pole and starts to CLIMB. A SHOT makes the wood fly inches from his face...

... as the Rabbits storm into the Armory, FIRING wildly.

The Boy reaches the top of the telegraph pole and CUTS the wire. He shinnies back down the pole as the wire SWINGS ineffectually in the air and we ...

DISSOLVE TO

INT. Y HALL/MAIN ROOM 119

..a telegram, held in Killoran's hand. He passes it to Tweed.

KILLORAN

It's from the Armory Guards. That's the last before the wire went dead.

BOSS TWEED

(reading, furious)

If the Rabbits are already at the Armory, where the hell is Bill and the militia?

He THROWS the telegram onto the floor, where it joins a whole SEA of yellow telegraph forms. They are shin-high; there must be thousands of them.

KILLORAN

They got to be near.

JOHNNY

So long as they're near, it's alright. The Rabbits can take the Armory, but they can't hold it. If Bill can get into position, he can make sure they don't get out.

BOSS TWEED

Alright then, John, you pray to any God you choose that's the fact of it.

If Bill thinks he can best the Natives, that is your opportunity. That is your moment.

(Johnny hesitates)

Are you a Bible man? The Book says in Revelations, "I saw a new heaven and

a new earth." If the hand of God's not on you to fulfill that prophecy,

then the hand of Tweed will be. Go on and God bless.

Johnny looks like he is about to say something, but he stops; looks at Tweed a moment longer; then nods acknowledgment and leaves.

GOVERNOR

I don't believe he can do it, Tweed.

BOSS TWEED

Oh, I think he can. Whether it's one man against another or a mob
 against
 the city, the mathematics remain the same. You never enjoyed the
 enlightenment of poverty, did you, Governor? If you had, you'd know
 you
 can always hire half the poor to kill the other half.

CUT TO

EXT. ARMORY DAY

A TREMENDOUS VOLLEY of GUNFIRE, as if to illustrate the Tweed theory
 of class warfare. Bodies fall in the street. Bodies fall from the
 Armory. The building is under siege by the main unit of the MILITIA
 and by Bill the Butcher and the Natives. The Dead Rabbits are trapped.

Johnny SNAKES through the Native American lines, over dead bodies,
 moving towards Bill, who he sees a hundred yards away...

... running over corpses of comrades and enemies toward the MILITIA
 COMMANDER. As SHOT WIDENS, the carnage is revealed. Bodies of Natives,
 in their uniform dusters, and Rabbits, in their tamias, lie side by
 side in the street.

FIRING continues from both sides as the Butcher shouts at the Militia
 Commander.

BILL THE BUTCHER

We move now and we can drive them out! We press them and they'll
 break!

MILITIA COMMANDER

I can't spare the men or stand the risk! We stay fast and smoke lem
 out!

BILL THE BUTCHER

Tweed put me in charge of this! I say we move, and by the crucified
 Christ

we will move!

(turns to his men)

Native Americans, come with me! Any militia that wants to live upright
 instead of die hunkered down, come with us!

Bill STALKS through the lines, rallying the men. And Johnny starts to
 FOLLOW.

BILL THE BUTCHER

We'll show you gladiators' greatness! Come on!

The men start to JOIN the Butcher; even some militia fall in. Johnny SLIPS through the men gathering near the Butcher. He's closer to Bill than ever.

Bill starts to mount their BARRICADE. There is MOVEMENT and commotion all around him as Natives and militia fall into rough formation. It threatens to obscure Bill from Johnny's view. Shield him.

He has to make his move. NOW. He DRAWS a revolver as militia and Natives pass in front of him... he AIMS ... he's anxious, confused ... his HAND shakes ... he fires... too soon! ...

... and HITS a Native, who falls dead. Right near Bill.

The Butcher turns in the direction of the shot, SEES Johnny. Their eyes lock. Johnny FIRES again ... WINGS Bill ...

... and Bill SHOOTS him. Johnny FALLS with the first shot. Bill's above him now, looking down at him.

BILL THE BUTCHER

Was it Tweed or your friend put you to this?

JOHNNY

Tweed.

Bill SHOOTS him again, point blank. Johnny screams.

BILL THE BUTCHER

You'd lie to save your friend.

JOHNNY

(in terrible pain)

No. There's no friends for me.

BILL THE BUTCHER

Me the same. Pity us both.

He EMPTIES his revolver into Johnny.

BILL THE BUTCHER

(to his men)

Hold your fire!

(toward the Armory)

In there! Hey in there! I want to talk to Amsterdam!

The Militia Commander is aghast at this proposition and starts forward, gun in hand. But a Native STOPS him.

Amsterdam's face APPEARS in a front window of the Armory.

AMSTERDAM

Go on, then, talk.

BILL THE BUTCHER

You and me.

AMSTERDAM

(beat)

Come ahead then. And bring my friend's body.

Bill the Butcher SLINGS Johnny's body over his shoulder as easily as if it were an empty sack of flour...

... and starts walking through the lines toward the Armory. The Militia watches in disbelief, the Natives in confusion. The Dead Rabbits keep the Butcher in their sights. But no one fires. No one moves.

And Bill the Butcher enters the front doors of the Armory.

CUT TO

INT. ARMORY DAY

As the Butcher is admitted through the huge doors which clang SHUT quickly behind him. It's a scene of devastation inside—dozens of dead and wounded everywhere. And enough rifles and munitions to sink Manhattan island.

Bill the Butcher stands dead center in the middle of the Armory floor as Amsterdam walks toward him. The Butcher DROPS Johnny's body in a heap at his feet.

BILL THE BUTCHER

Your friend made different friends lately.

AMSTERDAM

Tammany's put us all in the same place. You want to get out alive?

BILL THE BUTCHER

It don't matter to me. I got enemies outside, enemies in here. The militia can move on me anytime. You could drop me before I get to the door.

AMSTERDAM

I don't want to lose you so easy. You'll never get past the militia unless you come with the Dead Rabbits.

BILL THE BUTCHER

You'd lay aside what's between us?

AMSTERDAM

I'm not forgetting where I put it.

BILL THE BUTCHER

If you do, I'll remind you.

(he turns, leaves)

AMSTERDAM

What's your call, Bill?

BILL THE BUTCHER

I'm considering where's my better chance.

He walks to the doors. The Rabbits guarding it don't make a move. He OPENS it himself and strides out into the street.

CUT TO

EXT./INT. ARMORY DAY

Bill walks alone toward the Native/militia lines.

From inside... from every window ... the Dead Rabbits watch him.

The sun is high, but the street is eerily quiet. There are FARAWAY SOUNDS of battle, but here there is only the sound of distant, unheard conversation between Bill, the Militia Commander and some Natives.

Amsterdam WATCHES intently.

The Butcher and the Militia Commander argue, but we still can't hear what they're saying. There is still no sound...

... until, SUDDENLY, we see the Militia Commander's face. Huge. EYES WIDE with surprise as we HEAR the thunderclap of a SHOT.

Bill the Butcher has just gutshot the Militia Commander.

As if the shot were a signal, the Natives TURN on the militia. It's hellish, close-quarter combat. Guns fired inches from enemies who had just been allies. Knives, swords, bludgeons, kids with dead-rat blackjacks, women with hob-nailed wooden planks, attacking better-armed but totally stunned soldiers.

Bill the Butcher falls back toward the Armory, the Natives following him.

Inside the Armory, Amsterdam turns to his own greatly diminished gang.

AMSTERDAM

Go ahead them, give them cover! Give them some damn cover!

The Rabbits are so stunned to be fighting on the same side as their sworn enemies that, even with Amsterdam's order, no one makes a move. It's Amsterdam who FIRES the first shots. And that unleashes a great VOLLEY from the Armory...

... toward the militia.

The Butcher and the Natives are closer to the Armory now... and the Armory doors start to open...

... when a MILITIA LIEUTENANT SIGNALS ...

... and MILITIA on the surrounding roofs, waiting for this moment, suddenly open fire...on the Natives below and on the Rabbits on the roof
of the armory. Many drop in the street and fall from the Armory roof...

... as the Armory doors SWING WIDE to admit the Natives. As they run or stagger inside, the Rabbits start to close the doors. Some Rabbits are cut down by the fire from the rooftops. Other Natives never make it to the doors. And a few are shot...

... when the doors close before they can get through.

CUT TO

INT./EXT. ARMORY DAY

The Dead Rabbits keep firing, but they have sustained grave losses. The Butcher looks around at the Natives who have made it inside with him: he has perhaps one-quarter of his original strength.

BILL THE BUTCHER

Well, it seems like between us we got two mobs that might make a gang.

AMSTERDAM

Whose gang might it be?

BILL THE BUTCHER

Not William Tweed's.

Jimmy Spoils and a crew of Natives PUSH a cannon toward the rear of the Armory.

AMSTERDAM

Which way you pointing that?

JIMMY SPOILS

Any way you say. One direction could let us out, the other will let
them
in.

BILL THE BUTCHER

They got to come in if we're going to fight them.

AMSTERDAM

Who do you want to fight, Bill?

Amsterdam MOTIONS toward the rear wall and Jimmy swings the cannon
around.

Everything surrounding them is MOVEMENT and COMMOTION as the remaining
members of both gangs TAKE whatever weapons they can carry from the
Armory stockpile...

... and Jenny steps forward with a torch, LIGHTING the fuse of the
cannon...

... which ROARS and BLOWS a huge hole in the rear wall of the Armory.

AMSTERDAM

(to Bill the Butcher)

See you in the street.

The gang members RUSH for the opening, carrying whatever they can
manage.

Outside, the MILITIA LIEUTENANT hears the cannon blast... sees no
damage to the front of the building... and SIGNALS for a frontal
ASSAULT on the Armory.

HIGH ANGLE FROM ABOVE, CAMERA MOVING as the militia CHARGES ...
following them forward, then moving ahead to the Armory

... SHOOTING straight down inside (no roof or ceiling) as the Gangs
HURTLE through the still-smoldering hole in the wall ...

... and drop twenty feet to an alley below...

... where militia on the roof try to pick them off. As the militia
presses closer from the front, gang defenses start to fall back inside
the Armory. Everyone wants to get through that hole.

Amsterdam, Jenny, Jimmy Spoils and some of the other gang members are
carrying TORCHES. Jenny HANDS a torch to the Butcher. Amsterdam
MOTIONS them all toward the back of the Armory.

But he stays behind. Just for a moment. He BENDS over the crumpled body of Johnny Sirocco, ARRANGES it, folding JOHNNY'S HANDS across his chest.

AMSTERDAM

You'll have a warrior's funeral anyway, John.

He STANDS and RUNS for the hole in the wall, where Jenny and the others stand waiting.

He TURNS, takes a last look inside the Armory. The militia is BATTERING DOWN the front doors. Then he raises his TORCH over his head... and HURLS it through the air. Jenny and the others do the same.

His single torch BLAZES a path of light across the screen. The others, JOINING it, make a fiery CONSTELLATION.

CUT TO

EXT. REAR OF ARMORY/STREETS BEHIND ARMORY DAY

As Jenny, Jimmy Spoils, Bill the Butcher and Amsterdam HURTLE through the hole into the alley below...

... and start to run through the withering GUNFIRE of the militia on the roof...

... getting away... just barely away.

As Jenny runs, her swag drops and FALLS from under her clothes. She TURNS to pick it up but Amsterdam PULLS her on....

... and just away from the titanic EXPLOSION of the Armory. The CONCUSSION throws some of the militia from their perches on the roof. It sends a fountain of FLAME and RUBBLE high into the sky. It is VOLCANIC in its brilliance and intensity. The sky turns BLACK with powder, BLAZING ORANGE with flame.

In the small streets BEHIND THE ARMORY, many gang members are CRUSHED by debris or burned by FIREBALLS breaking off from the central flame.

The Armory is gone. Much of the surrounding area is gone with it.

On the ground, everything is smoke, flame, dirt, death, confusion, Corpses everywhere. Gang members and kids running all over, desperate. It looks like the last day of mankind on earth.

Bill the Butcher HELPS a couple of fallen Natives, then SEES through the smoke and flame and storm of ash ... Amsterdam. Coming towards him.

BILL THE BUTCHER
We're finished, all of us.

AMSTERDAM
But you and me ain't settled.

BILL THE BUTCHER
We got the same now, a full share of nothing. There's nothing to
settle.
There's nothing left.

Amsterdam takes a weapon from his pocket, OPENS it for the Butcher to see: it is the pirate's knife which the Butcher used to kill Priest Vallon.

AMSTERDAM
Then let's start over.

Bill the Butcher looks tired, sorrowful. He BURIES his face wearily in his arms. And for a moment we think he has given everything up. Amsterdam MOVES toward him, through the smoke. The Butcher does not even look at him. Of all the things he could do, this is the one that Amsterdam could not anticipate and does not know how to reckon.

AMSTERDAM
Look at me. Look at me!

But the Butcher will not obey. Amsterdam HESITATES.

And it's at that moment the Butcher LOOKS UP... in a FLASH... a pistol in his hand, a grin of triumph on his face... and shoots. Amsterdam goes down.

The Butcher THROWS ASIDE his gun and takes out his CLEAVER... walking through the smoke ...

... and past gang members who FLEE the explosion around them... toward Amsterdam.

BILL THE BUTCHER
Don't look away, Amsterdam. You wanted this so long.

A HAZE of ash and gunpowder BLOWS across the Butcher's face, making him look like a phantom... but making the ground where Amsterdam lies indistinct. For just a second.

But time enough. A WOODEN PLANK filled with NAILS cuts through the haze, catching the Butcher across the middle. He goes down howling...

... and Amsterdam, wounded in the leg, kneels before him. Then SPRINGS at him, pinning him like some crazed lover. The CLEAVER flies from the Butcher's grip.

The two men STRUGGLE desperately. But the gang members FLEEING around them pay no attention. This great epic combat, this tremendous blood feud, has been reduced to its essence: it is a street fight. But a street fight to the death.

WE WATCH Amsterdam and the Butcher struggle from street level, the fight often obscured by the legs and feet of the gang members RUSHING past. These two ancient antagonists could be anyone. Anyone at all.

The Butcher is atop Amsterdam now, iron hand? at his throat...as Amsterdam's hand rises, holding the pirate's knife... searching for the strength ... and the place... for one final blow ... the Butcher's fingers TIGHTEN ... Amsterdam's hand moves ... and the pirate's knife DRIVES HOME right into the Butcher's stomach: the belly of the beast.

The Butcher bellows. Amsterdam FLIPS him over, starts to SLIT him up the front, but the knife cannot cut the pelvic bone. Amsterdam puts his knee on the Butcher's throat, PINNING HIM.

AMSTERDAM
Don't look away.

And he SLAPS his hand over the Butcher's one good eye, so he can't see the death blow, EXTRACTS the knife...and PLUNGES it like a stake into the Butcher's heart.

He takes his hand away. All the Butcher can see is Amsterdam's face as his EYE starts to roll back in his head at the approach of death.

BILL THE BUTCHER
Thank... thank God I died a true American.

And he dies. There is no triumph in Amsterdam's face. Only pain, and satiation. He SEES: the CLEAVER, on the ground a few yards from him. And Jenny, staring at him. Amsterdam GESTURES for the cleaver.

JENNY
(quietly)
Get it yourself.

Amsterdam tries to get up. He can't. So he CRAWLS through the mud... for the cleaver. Grabs it.

DISSOLVE TO

EXT. CEMETERY DAY

The headstone of Priest Vallon. Now it has an inscription, which Amsterdam is finishing. He uses the handle of the Butcher's cleaver for a hammer, the blade of the pirate's knife as a chisel. WE SEE the inscription: "Priest Vallon/ 1814-1844/ New York City... of

The blade BREAKS on the final letter. Amsterdam sits back on the ground near the grave. Behind him across the river (MATTE), the fires of the riots still burn.

JENNY

You'll have to come back to finish.

AMSTERDAM

Maybe I'll leave it.

(beat)

Are you leaving?

JENNY

I'm going west.

AMSTERDAM

Well wherever you go, you got to go back through the city. so we're going the same way for a while.

He starts to STAND, STUMBLES to one knee.

AMSTERDAM

Help me, will you?

She looks at him... a lingering moment ... then goes to him.

JENNY

Give me your hand.

She HELPS him up, puts his arm over her shoulder... and they start to walk away together through the graveyard toward the burning island beyond.

The CAMERA pulls back.... and as Amsterdam and Jenny WALK AWAY the SKYLINE OF NEW YORK starts to take shape before us. TOWERS of steel and concrete start to rise.

As the SUN begins to descend, we see, in outline, the familiar contemporary SKYLINE of New York. As the SUN FALLS, the outline of the city becomes grander still, until, in the late afternoon light, it gives off an almost SPECTRAL GLOW...

... which SHINES for a last moment on the now-aged headstone of Priest Vallon, its inscription unfinished.

As, in the distance, the sun SETS on New York and the city grows still and black in the wash of impenetrable darkness.

THE END.