



**THE SILENT  
STORM**

**SCREENPLAY BY  
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*Please note that this script  
may be subject to changes*

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1 EXT. REMOTE SCOTTISH ISLAND - DARKNESS BEFORE DAWN 1

An almighty rainstorm is swirling through this rugged island landscape.

Its full might now bearing down on an isolated stone manse.

2 INT. DOWNSTAIRS MANSE STUDY - DARKNESS BEFORE DAWN 2

Through the rattling windows and creaking wood, a Minister, BALOR, is sitting utterly motionless. He is a broad, handsome, severe looking man of forty. From deep behind his furrowed brow his eyes are staring intensely at the dying firelight of his study. On the arm of the wooden chair his worn bible holds steadfast under the pressure of his palm and now whitening knuckles. His eyes close in silent prayer. In the flickering gaslight of this blackout it looks much earlier than 1958.

Amidst the Heaven's rumblings, the faint sound of a woman suffering can occasionally be heard, as though carried on the stormy winds.

A flushed, stout woman thuds speedily down the manse stairs. Immediately the Minister's eyeballs dive across the room, his body unflinching... no, she is gone, swiftly past the study door. As he lifts his thick, strong hand from the bible a photograph of his and his wife's shy, smiling, newlywed faces is revealed resting upon it. She is looking coyly up at him, he is looking proudly forward. The fire crackles. The storm outside rages on.

A door swings open and again the overwrought woman, now laden with a bowl of steaming water and towels, rushes back past the study door and hauls herself upstairs, as quickly as she is able.

3 INT. UPSTAIRS BEDROOM MANSE - DARKNESS BEFORE DAWN 3

Her plump foot pushes the aged wooden door open to reveal a petite woman, AISLIN (30), deep in the final throws of labour - she is writhing with muted pain, the chaos of her long black hair overtaking her sweating face.

In the delicate candlelight the MIDWIFE briskly rubs her down with the wet flannels. With worried glistening eyes, limb against limb, the midwife manoeuvres the broken, barely conscious little creature to the edge of the bed, where she is almost now in a squat - her feet on the floor. The windows rattle hard under the storm's noisy battering. From deep in Aislin's soul comes a tremendous, near soundless, push.

(CONTINUED)

3 CONTINUED:

3

Now, as the baby is emerging, Aislin is in her primal power, possessed. From the floor between Aislin's feet the Midwife is growing paler.

Everything goes eerily quiet, as though the Heavens are in tune.

Delirious, Aislin lifts her wilting neck. Her dark saucer eyes foretell something is wrong.

The dumbstruck, ashen Midwife shakes her head.

CUT TO:

4 TITLE CARD ON BLACK - **THE SILENT STORM**

4

CUT TO:

5 INT. MANSE KITCHEN - MORNING - ONE MONTH LATER

5

The air is absolutely still in the kitchen. Aislin is stirring porridge oats, as if in a trance. Her beauty only a distant echo on her pale and absent face.

A small grave can be seen in the distance outside the window.

6 INT. BALOR'S STUDY - MORNING - CONTINUOUS

6

Balor is meticulously following his clerical dressing ritual, as though putting on a coat of arms.

7 INT. MANSE KITCHEN - MORNING - CONTINUOUS

7

In uniform now, the imposing Minister, walks into the kitchen and sits at the table. Neither acknowledges the other.

Aislin places some bread on the table.

The water in the stove-top kettle begins to simmer.

Balor begins to butter his bread.

Aislin cracks an egg into a bowl. The second breaks badly, its contents dripping limply off the bowl and its shell now floating.

Aislin exits through the back door. The egg cage is bare.

- 8 EXT. BACKYARD MANSE - MORNING 8  
Immediately the wild, fresh air fills her lungs. A moment of respite.
- 9 INT. MANSE KITCHEN - MORNING - CONTINUOUS 9  
Balor's grave eyes follow Aislin across the yard through the window. The kettle unleashes a piercing, ceaseless whistle. With heavy-limbs, Balor rises from his chair.
- 10 EXT. CHICKEN COOP - MORNING 10  
Aislin tenderly moves a hen and reaches for a freshly laid egg.
- 11 INT. MANSE KITCHEN - MORNING 11  
Returning to an empty kitchen, Aislin immediately lifts the screaming kettle from the stove. As silence falls, the front door to the manse can be heard opening and closing.  
  
In complete silence and solitude now, Aislin lowers herself onto a chair, eggs in hand, and looks out to the windswept island landscape blankly.
- 12 INT. KIRK - MORNING 12  
Balor is delicately dragging the fingertips of his right hand along the length of a pew in a soft, slow caress. Reaching its end, his mind abstracted, he gently moves the caress fluidly to his face, where he remains deep in thought.
- 13 INT/EXT. MANSE HALL/MANSE FRONT DRIVE - MORNING 13  
Aislin, now dressed more smartly, is putting on her over-clothes. She takes two empty bags with her and leaves through the front door.
- 14 INT. KIRK - MORNING 14  
  
MORAG SINCLAIR  
(seeing Balor frozen  
in thought - hand  
still stroking his  
face)  
Oh dear... I don't mean to disturb  
you Minister.

(CONTINUED)

Balor's body fills into the duty of the moment. Though he speaks softly now, it is clear he has a deep, rich voice with a strong island lilt.

BALOR

Mrs Sinclair.

MORAG SINCLAIR

You are here early... I saw you pass and thought that you might perhaps have left without your breakfast again.

BALOR

Yes Mrs Sinclair, I've not eaten this morning.

MORAG SINCLAIR

Oh good... I... well here are some cakes.

BALOR

Yet another good turn Mrs Sinclair. You will be rewarded in Heaven.

Middle aged Mrs Sinclair blushes like a girl. Balor takes the cake tin. They both look at the morning light casting its ray across the blank kirk wall.

BALOR

(breaking the  
silence)

I will begin my inventory today.

MORAG SINCLAIR

(gravely)

Is it that time already? Oh dear. I still can't believe it... Well, everything is already clean and dusted down...

BALOR

... I noticed your good work. Thorough, as always.

MORAG SINCLAIR

I had better leave you to it then.

BALOR

Good day Mrs Sinclair.

MORAG SINCLAIR

Good day Minister.

Mrs Sinclair gets to the kirk door.

(CONTINUED)

14 CONTINUED: (2)

14

MORAG SINCLAIR

(unable to resist)

Oh Mrs Gillies is very proud of her stew and will no doubt be offering you some later... You don't need any more surprises today.

15 EXT. DIRT ROAD - MORNING

15

A postman is cycling towards Aislin, who is on foot. Against the tones of the Nordic landscape, Aislin seems foreign, her skin and hair a little too dark to be native. The postman stops his bike, a safe distance in front of her, and digs about in his bag. He appears to be using this as an excuse not to talk.

POSTMAN

Oh here they are. I won't be needing to cycle to the manse today then. Good day.

He gets on his bike, awkwardly turns it around and pedals off, squeaking at intervals into the distance.

Aislin continues on the long, lonely dirt road, the strong, on-coming winds pushing hard against her.

16 INT. ISLAND SHOP - MORNING

16

MRS CAMPBELL

The mine will re-open and then it'll be about who comes back...

MRS MACSWAN

...and that will be the true test.

MRS CAMPBELL

Mark my words, it'll be those that couldn't control their emotions when the news came that will be lured into the sins of the mainland.

MRS MACSWAN

(taking a risk)

Well we wouldn't want them back on the island anyway!

MRS CAMPBELL

Agnes!

Aislin enters the shop.

(CONTINUED)

The women make a poor effort of hiding their surprise and curiosity at seeing her. They continue to look over at her, whilst pretending they are reading labels on various tins. They begin to whisper.

MRS CAMPBELL

She doesn't look right.

AISLIN

(to the shopkeeper)

May I have some flour, some corned beef, some paper clips...

MRS MACSWAN

The poor Minister - he took her in with all the good will in the world and look what he got in return... It beggars belief.

MRS CAMPBELL

The Devil has her, I'm certain of it...

SHOPKEEPER

Right, that will be £2 please Mrs McNeil.

AISLIN

Thank you.

MRS MACSWAN

...perhaps he *sent* her here.

MRS CAMPBELL

(wide eyed)

I can see it now... and since *the baby*.

Aislin overhears this as she collects her shopping bag.

SHOPKEEPER

Well it's good to see you after so long.

From the corner of the shop and behind Aislin's back the women eye the shopkeeper, horrified.

SHOPKEEPER

(He attempts to remain polite)

Regards to the Minister.

Aislin nods, turns and heads out.

The women abruptly switch to an attempt at decency.

(CONTINUED)

MRS CAMPBELL  
Good day.

MRS MACSWAN  
Good day.

Aislin does not reply and leaves the shop.

MRS MACSWAN  
So rude!

MRS CAMPBELL  
I told you Agnes, the Devil has  
her.

The Minister is sitting with one of his flock who appears  
distressed.

MRS MCKINNON  
(tentatively)  
...Because since the news of the  
mine's closure he's a changed man  
Minister.

BALOR  
That is of no surprise.

MRS MCKINNON  
Nothing but drink and talk of the  
past. Talk that this is punishment  
for our sins.

BALOR  
Your duty is to support your  
husband Mrs McKinnon.

MRS MCKINNON  
He scares the lads. They don't  
sleep now...

Balor's face darkens.

BALOR  
... Your husband gave you two  
strong sons...

Balor stops himself. A breath.

BALOR  
... for that you must be grateful.

Mrs McKinnon's eyes widen like a scared lamb... she  
shouldn't have mentioned her boys.

MRS MCKINNON  
Oh I am... I truly am.

BALOR

Jesus died for our sins.

MRS MCKINNON

Yes he did...

BALOR

We are sinners...

MRS MCKINNON

...I know we are.

BALOR

It is your husband's God given  
right to instil respect and  
obedience in his sons... you must  
know that.

There is silence.

MRS MCKINNON

(beginning to falter)

Minister...

Through a shame filled whisper - unable to look at the  
Minister.

MRS MCKINNON

... I'm just so unhappy. So  
unhappy.

Mrs McKinnon bows her gently shaking head, defeated.

BALOR

(quietly - almost to  
himself)

To expect happiness in this life  
is a form of arrogance.

A tear rolls down Mrs McKinnon's lean, weather beaten  
face. She quickly wipes it away.

BALOR

You are a married woman.

A sob momentarily escapes.

BALOR

Don't indulge yourself in this  
way. Has he not got a job at the  
new mainland factory?

MRS MCKINNON

Aye.

BALOR

And has he not secured you lodgings on the mainland also?

MRS MCKINNON

Aye he has.

BALOR

Then be thankful that the Lord has provided for you. Now you must fulfil your duty. Divorce is not a word looked upon lightly in our church.

With a whimper, Mrs McKinnon stiffens her body and raises her eyes to meet Balor's.

BALOR

(In a soft whisper)

We have all been blessed and protected here on the island, but the challenge has been set for us all. Don't let the Devil in Mrs McKinnon, don't let him in.

MRS MCKINNON

Yes Minister. Thank you.

Mrs McKinnon gets up to leave.

MRS MCKINNON

Thank you.

Aislin emerges from the butcher's shop looking even paler. From behind the glass, people are straining to watch her as she leaves.

Some way up the road Mrs Gillies and Mrs Sinclair are walking towards her. Mrs Gillies is carrying a large pot. In the strong and gusty island winds, the two determined old ladies are a curious sight.

They see Aislin far ahead in the distance.

MRS GILLIES

His mother died in childbirth you know.

MRS SINCLAIR

Well I had heard something, but I'm not one to go prying.

MRS GILLIES

No, quite.

MRS SINCLAIR  
 (under her breath)  
 Did she die giving birth to him?

MRS GILLIES  
 (also under her  
 breath)  
 Aye, aye. Her first child. He was  
 raised alone by his Minister  
 father.

MRS SINCLAIR  
 (shaking her head)  
 What a fate. And then now his own  
 son...

MRS GILLIES  
 ... The baby was already dead you  
 know.

MRS SINCLAIR  
 They're all saying it was bound to  
 happen... with her as she is.

MRS GILLIES  
*So unholy.*

Seeing them, Aislin looks very uncomfortable. She manages to almost make it past them. As they acknowledge her, she loses focus and drops her bags. The shopping and post scatter across the windswept lane.

Mrs Gillies and Mrs Sinclair walk on, shaking their heads.

Aislin numbly gathers the debris from the floor and continues along the blustery, island road. One letter remains stuck in a bush, unnoticed.

Balor is meticulously copying a rough pencil inventory of the kirk furnishings into a neat document with black ink. When he reaches "pulpit" his hand slips, he swipes the document off the table and with a thud drops his head to meet its wood.

A moment passes before the familiar smell of the kirk desk soothes his soul. He turns his cheek to feel it. He is almost hugging the table now.

Back at the manse, Aislin immediately lets fall the two shopping bags and walks straight out of the back door.

- 21 EXT. MANSE YARD - DAY 21
- Now outside, the winds are even higher. Aislin takes her long raven hair out of its tie. As if that is not enough release, she lets her shoes come off, one by one, leaving them and the small grave in the field behind her. She breaks into a run towards the shore.
- On this vast Hebridean beach, the free air swirls around her. The sand kicks up through her running toes. Now at the water's edge, panting, she picks up pile after pile of pebbles and heaves them into the sea until she collapses, exhausted and watches the Heavens roll on by. She is the only soul for miles.
- 22 INT. DINING ROOM - MANSE - EVENING 22
- Aislin and Balor eat dinner in silence. Neither Aislin nor Balor look very well.
- 23 INT. STUDY MANSE - LATER THAT NIGHT 23
- Balor's deep, heavy eyes are staring strenuously at the roaring fire, between making sudden vigorous notes and muttering to himself. He looks at a closed bottle of whiskey - then decides against it. He gets up and paces the floor, still muttering.
- 24 EXT. MANSE YARD - LATER THAT NIGHT 24
- Meanwhile, Aislin cautiously exits out of the back door. Under the vast blanket of stars above, she quietly crosses the yard to the shed, careful not to be seen or heard.
- 25 INT. MANSE YARD SHED - NIGHT 25
- Now safely inside the shed, Aislin moves some weathered driftwood planks carefully to one side. A makeshift apothecary of herbs and tinctures is revealed; all in various different small glass jars, bottles and tins. From here, she takes some herbs into a square of muslin from her pocket, which she knots into a parcel and drops into her steaming mug.
- 26 EXT. MANSE YARD - NIGHT 26
- Wrapped in a blanket, she sits with the animals and the stars drinking her tea.

- 27 INT. MARITAL BEDROOM - NIGHT 27  
Alone in bed, Aislin pulls the blankets over her body. Only the faint moonlight fills the room, highlighting this and that of her body's foetal position. Her brown eyes gaze blankly at the moonlight flickering on the leaves of the trees outside.
- 28 INT. MANSE STAIRS/UPSTAIRS HALL/MARITAL BEDROOM - NIGHT 28  
Balor turns out the final light and climbs the stairs. Aislin pretends to sleep. Balor, body tense, creeps past the half-open door and on into the spare bedroom. As its door shuts, Aislin's eyes immediately reopen.
- 29 INT. SPARE BEDROOM MANSE - NIGHT 29  
Balor is lying awake in the darkness.
- 30 INT. MARITAL BEDROOM MANSE - NIGHT 30  
Aislin is lying awake in the darkness.
- FADE TO BLACK
- 31 EXT. TRAILER ON DIRT ROAD - TWO WEEKS LATER - DAY 31  
A frightened ram is being jolted about awkwardly on a trailer behind a vehicle.
- 32 INT. MANSE FIELD CHICKEN COOP - DAY 32  
Aislin is cleaning out the chicken coop.
- 33 INT. MANSE STUDY - DAY 33  
Balor is in his study deeply taken by the rehearsal of his sermon.
- 34 EXT. COUNTRY LANE TO MANSE - DAY 34  
A car is heading towards the property.
- 35 INT. MANSE STUDY/HALL/KITCHEN - DAY 35  
Balor looks up from his desk. He walks into the kitchen, but Aislin is not there.

36

EXT. MANSE YARD - DAY

36

He emerges onto the yard brushing himself down.

BALOR  
 (he cannot look at  
 her)  
 Somebody is coming! Go and put the  
 kettle on please.

Aislin puts down her broom and heads into the house.

The car and trailer pull up to the manse as Balor comes to greet the visitors.

BALOR  
 Good day Mr McKinnon.

MR MCKINNON  
 (removing his hat)  
 Good morning Minister. Come on  
 Anne.

MRS MCKINNON  
 (sheepishly)  
 Good morning Minister.

BALOR  
 To what do we owe this visit?

MR MCKINNON  
 We have to leave the island early  
 Minister...

Balor looks at Mrs McKinnon severely.

MR MCKINNON  
 ...I've had news that my mother is  
 unwell. We all start at the  
 factory next week and the only  
 window we have to pass through  
 Inverness is now.

BALOR  
 (somewhat relieved)  
 That is unfortunate news. Is it  
 serious?

Aislin is listening from behind the front door.

MR MCKINNON  
 Old age Minister.

BALOR  
 These are testing times for us  
 all. I will pray for her...

(CONTINUED)

MR MCKINNON

(diving straight in)

... There's been no break from clearing out the mine for closure. And they've not listened Minister... no overtime, no compensation... no time to board up our houses.

Balor is surprised by Mr McKinnon's lack of propriety. This is not how his flock address him.

BALOR

When the time is right they will listen and you'll come home. Now is the time to bolster your faith Mr McKinnon... before the sins of the mainland ravage your weaknesses.

MR MCKINNON

To think we're leaving all I've worked for on the whim of a Glasgow man who knows nothing of our ways. The men are not happy at all.

BALOR

Happiness does not come into it Mr McKinnon. These are matters of godliness, duty and fate.

Silence falls.

MRS MCKINNON

We came to apologise as we won't make your final sermon.

BALOR

My final sermon?

MR MCKINNON

The final sermon before we leave.

BALOR

(his mood blacker)

Do you want tea? Aislin!

MRS MCKINNON

(eyes widening)

Thank you, yes.

MR MCKINNON

Oh no Minister... no, thank you, we have too much to do.

(CONTINUED)

Aislin emerges from the house and walks towards the group.

Her presence changes the dynamic. As her husband talks, Mrs McKinnon seems quietly fascinated with Aislin.

MR MCKINNON

(getting straight to the point)

The Galbraiths can take our ewes and lambs with theirs straight to the mainland after the sermon, but they can't take our ram with them. You see he's... he's...

BALOR

Mr McKinnon?

MR MCKINNON

You are staying on the island Minister, we hoped you might be able to keep the ram until we can find a way to get him to us or return to collect him... when the mine reopens or maybe before.

BALOR

(distractedly)

Yes, yes, we can do that for you.

The men drag the scared ram out of the trailer. Balor takes the lead and is clearly the stronger. The two women stand awkwardly together in silence. Mrs McKinnon eyes the small grave and is affected. Then just as it looks like Mrs McKinnon is going to speak to Aislin...

BALOR

(winning over the squirming ram)

Aislin can you open the gate to the field please?

AISLIN

Aye, of course.

Now back at the car, some moments later.

MR MCKINNON

(Coming down from his earlier agitation - resigned)

Thank you Minister.

(MORE)

37 CONTINUED:

37

MR MCKINNON (CONT'D)

For all that you have done for our family over the years and for all your efforts with the mine.

BALOR

I will see you soon.

MR MCKINNON

(masking doubt)

Aye. We shall see you again soon.  
Come on Anne.

MRS MCKINNON

Farewell.

38 INT. CAR - DAY

38

Balor and Aislin are standing outside the manse becoming ever smaller as the car pulls away.

MRS MCKINNON

(looking back)

I feel sorry for the Minister's wife... what with the baby.

MR MCKINNON

Don't be ridiculous! Ever since that damned woman washed up on our shores from nowhere we have had nothing but trouble. She is of the Devil and the dead baby proves it!

The car trails into the distance as Mrs McKinnon continues to look back with sorry eyes.

FADE OUT.

39 INT. STUDY MANSE - DAY

39

A constant hammering can be heard coming from outside.

Balor is at his desk reading a letter.

LETTER

Dear Rev. McNeil,  
Although we appreciate your ongoing correspondence and commitment to this cause, we can only reiterate that the decision to close our Diatomite mine is dictated purely by the economics of our changing times.

(MORE)

(CONTINUED)

## LETTER (CONT'D)

We understand your personal decision to remain on the island, in spite of the workforce and their families leaving, however there remain no plans whatsoever for the mine to reopen in the future. Therefore, we can only continue to advise you that the post at the new factory kirk can again be made yours. I await your hasty response as the factory opens in two weeks.

Yours Sincerely,

John Dalgleish  
Assistant to the Director  
McDonald & Sons Ltd

The hammering continues. Balor rises to his feet, fuming.

Balor marches outside, where Aislin is nailing down planks to the roof of the crumbling animal shelter.

Aislin immediately drops the hammer. Balor stops, his hand unclenching behind his back.

BALOR

(frustrated)  
Please...

He turns, heavy limbed, back towards the house. At safe distance, she calls after him.

AISLIN

The ram needs a shelter, the rain storm is coming. You agreed to take care of him.

Balor looks up at the bright blue sky and shakes his head. Her folly is testing.

BALOR

God will decide the ram's fate...  
not you and not I.

As the back door swings shut after him he mutters to himself...

BALOR

Lord, forgive me.

41 INT. MANSE DINING ROOM - THAT EVENING 41

Aislin and Balor sit eating in silence as wild rain beats down on the manse.

42 EXT. MANSE FIELDS - THE NEXT MORNING 42

The calm after the storm. Trees still dripping, birds tentatively beginning to sing. Fences have fallen down.

Aislin is in her nightdress and overcoat calling for the ram that has bolted from the field.

43 INT. MANSE STUDY - THE NEXT MORNING 43

Balor and his study are a mess. It is clear that he has been up all night nervously working, as he is in his underclothes, absentmindedly still wearing his clerical collar.

BALOR

(barely audible)

You are all... No... we are all held by the thread of God's mercy... Better... By his grace and his grace alone are we not cast to the Devil...

Suddenly he is interrupted by a loud clatter from the kitchen.

44 INT. KITCHEN MANSE - MORNING - CONTINUOUS 44

Aislin is picking up the pile of boots that have fallen to the ground in her attempt to get at her Wellington boots.

BALOR

What are you doing?

AISLIN

(putting on her right boot)

The fences came down in the storm and the roof is off the shelter. I've found the geese but the McKinnon's ram is gone.

BALOR

I have to work.

AISLIN

(putting on her left boot)

(MORE)

(CONTINUED)

AISLIN (CONT'D)

Maybe he went to the beach... I am going to look further afield.

BALOR

In less than 24 hours I am before my flock. Do you understand?

AISLIN

I will take care of it Balor.

BALOR

Do you hear me? A whole community are looking to me.

AISLIN

I'll be back shortly. Breakfast will be on time.

She gets her scarf and walks out the door.

BALOR

(in pursuit)

You are not dressed!

AISLIN

No one will see me Balor - the mine is shut... There will be nobody for miles.

BALOR

I order you back here at once!

AISLIN

Balor, please, the animal may be hurt.

BALOR

Damn him! Get back here!

Aislin takes a breath then carries on towards the beach.

Balor also crashes the pile of boots by the door, looking for his own. As he sees her moving farther away he is forced to run out of the house in his thermal underclothes and socks. He chases her, grabs her by the arm and starts violently dragging her back towards the house.

AISLIN

Let me go!

She is trying to hit back at him.

BALOR

Not a chance!

AISLIN

Let me go now!

BALOR

I will not tolerate your  
disobedience any longer!

Aislin is putting up as strong a resistance as she can - both are struggling with each other and the strong island winds.

AISLIN

(in a lot of pain  
from his grip)

Disobedience! I am nothing but a  
slave!

BALOR

(bursting into mock  
laughter)

Useless, that's what you are!

AISLIN

(desperately wanting  
to hurt him back)

This life is a lie...

Balor begins to slap her, one swift hand after the other, into the sitting room through the garden doors.

BALOR

...You ungrateful, rootless whore!

From the belly of her soul, Aislin's once-soft voice is unleashed into its deepest power as she scrambles to her feet and pushes Balor hard away from her and into the wall.

AISLIN

It is you being punished Balor!

Aislin makes a dash for the other side of the sitting room.

BALOR

Oh no Aislin... I have been saved!  
For now I know as God and my son  
have rejected you...

AISLIN

Thank the Heavens that your mother  
was spared seeing how you turned  
out.

(CONTINUED)

BALOR

(advancing)

...Don't you dare talk about my mother! At least I *remember* my father...

Blindly he grabs the nearest thing to him and launches it.

AISLIN

(ducking)

*The Minister*, who taught you the way of God with his beatings?!

BALOR

(now completely livid)

I took you in Aislin ... You washed up on our shores from nowhere. God be my judge, I prayed by your bedside for months for the colour to return to your mysterious cheeks... I allowed the women to take care of you!

AISLIN

And when I wasn't what they thought I was you all stopped!

BALOR

I have let you keep your ways... in the face of all the shame.

AISLIN

(Her voice breaking)

Keep my ways?! I cannot even let my hair down! How dare you even think that? How dare you? I had your child in me. YOUR CHILD! You forced me to walk to that damned kirk in the gales, the snow, the rain in the name of God! To be publicly humiliated! You have killed our child, just like you would let that ram die.

BALOR

I saved lives Aislin! I fought for our country's freedom and built this community back from nothing after the war... Forgive me Lord, I took you as an omen, a gift, a reward for my duty. A woman returned to me for the one taken away.

(CONTINUED)

AISLIN

Always all about you...

BALOR

(growling deeply)

How wrong I was! God has punished you Aislin for resisting his church. You are a Devil's witch and I should have known it.

As he says this Balor's arm terrifyingly wipes the shelf of its goods, smashing them all to the floor.

AISLIN

(almost hysterically laughing)

You are all crazy! These men are miserable alcoholics. Their cruel women their slaves. God has nothing to do with you or them. You are parasites on this island - God is in the land, the sky, the water, the air!

Balor makes a run for Aislin, chasing her through into the dining room as he booms.

BALOR

God is in structure, obedience and respect! Your own body has spoken louder than your feral tongue.

Aislin screams as Balor climbs and jumps over the dining room table. She is fighting back.

BALOR

You are a failed mother and a failed woman. You will rot in the belly of hell!

AISLIN

Come on, hit me, finally, let it out... Don't let me down...

They tumble violently across the dining room floor. Suddenly, from nowhere, the sound of a car pulling up to the manse takes over.

Balor and Aislin freeze momentarily, then jump to their feet. A car is parking on their drive and people are getting out of it. Aislin desperately scrapes her hair back from her face, quickly covers her mud stained clothes under the apron that she hastily ties and overcoat she swings on. Balor scrambles to find some shoes and covers his thermal outfit with an overcoat.

The door bell rings.

(CONTINUED)

In a chaos of adjustments Balor and Aislin get to the front door, stand side by side, in their curious outfits, and open it.

Right there before them is a small, official-looking, rather odd man in a Dickie Bow and an athletic, scruffy youth of about seventeen.

MR SMITH

Ah Minister McNeil and Mrs McNeil!  
How wonderful to meet you.

Both odd couples stand before each other at the door. Balor and Aislin have no idea who these people are and in the disorientation let their hands be shaken by the man, whilst otherwise remaining very still and completely silent.

MR SMITH

The road is indeed very long to get here. However the crossing was, thank the Lord, calm. I personally have been known to suffer from sea sickness, but got away unscathed.

Balor and Aislin nod politely.

MR SMITH

What a lovely, sizeable manse you have.

Balor and Aislin make murmurs of gratitude.

MR SMITH

Built for a big family as the Lord intended!

Balor and Aislin remain silent.

MR SMITH

Well then, this is Fionn.

FIONN

(awkwardly)  
Pleased to meet you.

MR SMITH

The lad has never been on the water at all, have you lad?

FIONN

No sir.

MR SMITH

Luckily he seems to have no problem with it - which I take as the Lord's sign of support in the lad's move... Wouldn't you agree Minister?

BALOR

(masking his shortness of breath)

The Lord brings favour to those on the righteous path, of course.

MR SMITH

The Devil has had enough of a hand in this lad's life... I am pleased he has kept his trickery away on this important occasion!

Mr Smith laughs at his own joke... no-one else does. Fionn is noticing Aislin's loose hairpin and the red mark on her arm and that Balor is wearing Long Johns under his coat. Mr Smith, so consumed with his own voice, remains oblivious.

MR SMITH

It is because of God faring people like you that I maintain my faith in humanity. Good upstanding married folk - as God intended it - and to open your house in this generous way...

Now Mr Smith expects to be invited inside out of the bad weather, but this is impossible for Balor and Aislin. Momentarily confused, Mr Smith relaunches into his sycophantic monologue.

MR SMITH

We at the Glasgow rehabilitation mission were very pleased that you signed up to our project last year. Very pleased indeed! These orphan lads **must** return to the flock! The lad here is a sinner, no doubt about that. Born into sin a bastard child of sinners, probably a prostitute or a thief or some such coupling. Turned out at fifteen into the city, the Devil gnaws at them, at their lustful, filthy, adolescent minds. Am I right?

FIONN

(flatly)  
Aye Sir.

(CONTINUED)

MR SMITH

However, we feel that, within the Church family, we can extend our arm and give such lads one **final** chance at rehabilitation. If living in a manse on one of the Lord's natural miracles does not cast the Devil out of the lad... the Devil can have him!

Mr Smith again laughs at his own joke, alone.

BALOR

Mr Smith?

MR SMITH

Yes.

BALOR

... My wife and I are very glad to see you... although your arrival is unexpected.

MR SMITH

Unexpected? We dispatched correspondence to you last month notifying you of the lad's arrival.

Aislin's fingers quietly pull her sleeves over her wrung wrists.

BALOR

Well this is the first we have heard of it. Aislin?

AISLIN

A lot has been happening on the island Mr Smith...

MR SMITH

Oh indeed it has Mrs McNeil! These far flung places are a world of their own! I only found out on the ferry crossing that your Diatomite mine is shutting down, this very week.

Balor is brought back into focus.

BALOR

We are in ongoing discussions with the mining company. This closure is a temporary measure Mr Smith.

(CONTINUED)

MR SMITH

Oh, it all sounded rather final to me when...

BALOR

... My wife and I are to stay on the island. Let this reassure you of our confidence in the transience of this situation. Supplies, somewhat limited, will be delivered by boat as usual and there will remain two sheep farms as well as three lighthouse keepers on rotation. I survived the brutalities of the war Mr Smith, I ask that you retain perspective. Collinsay is not far... look at the glory all around you, we will not be left wanting.

Mr Smith is clearly taken aback by the sudden appearance of Balor's force of character.

MR SMITH

Of course not Minister.

BALOR

Now Mr Smith, no letter arrived...

MR SMITH

Well...

BALOR

... But that is of no matter. I did agree to take part in this scheme, albeit last year, and the Lord has brought the lad to us now for a reason that only He knows. Who are we to stand in his way? I must warn you that I will be busy with preparations (cough) due to the temporary loan of my pews and such like to the kirk at the mainland factory. The boy will be put to work and will learn the way of God... Have no doubt. If he strays from the path he will be punished appropriately. Now Mr Smith, I think it is about time we took a turn in the fresh air... You are a Glasgow man - it will do you some good.

(CONTINUED)

MR SMITH  
(satisfied with this  
exclusive gesture)  
Oh indeed it will Minister.

BALOR  
Aislin will show the lad to his  
room and arrange things.

Aislin understands the covert instruction.

MR SMITH  
(trailing off into  
the wind swept  
distance)  
It is a great pleasure to...

Aislin and Fionn find themselves left alone, a little  
awkwardly.

AISLIN  
Well then... Here we are. You are  
very welcome.

Fionn is taken aback by the sudden beauty dawning on her  
now smiling face.

FIONN  
Shall I get my bags?

AISLIN  
Aye, aye of course.

Fionn walks to the car to collect his suitcase. Aislin  
enters the house and snaps quickly into tidying up. From  
the window she can see Fionn walking towards the house  
again. He does not know she can see him. He seems broader  
and older from a distance, not the hunched boy that  
skulked next to Mr Smith at the door.

AISLIN  
Come in.

FIONN  
Thank you Mrs McNeil.

AISLIN  
(distracted)  
If you head up the stairs and turn  
right, the first room is yours.  
My... The Minister and I are on  
the left. I'll get some fresh  
sheets.

Aislin watches Fionn head up the first few stairs  
politely, then rushes to clear the final debris.

45 INT. MANSE UPSTAIRS/SPARE BEDROOM - MORNING

45

Fionn gently presses open his bedroom door. Suitcase in hand, he observes the room's details. Someone appears to have been living in this room.

AISLIN

(flying in)

Perhaps you had better wait downstairs. You must be tired from your journey.

FIONN

I am used to making my bed Mrs McNeil. Please don't trouble yourself.

AISLIN

Don't speak of it, you are a guest.

FIONN

Thank you Mrs McNeil.

Still carrying his suitcase, Fionn goes downstairs and waits in the hall. Aislin gathers all of Balor's things.

46 EXT. MANSE FIELDS - MORNING

46

The strong morning winds are blowing the two men about and, as Balor is still not properly dressed and Mr Smith's comb over appears to have come alive, the sight is rather peculiar.

MR SMITH

The gentleman was adamant the lad be spared a prison sentence.

BALOR

Well he is a Christian in the truest sense of the word.

MR SMITH

He insisted that the lad have a chance at rehabilitation through our Church... I must confess, had I been beaten black and blue, and I assure you he was, I may not have extended such charity.

BALOR

All for his pocket watch you say?

(CONTINUED)

MR SMITH

Aye. I'm afraid it is yet another  
sign of the Devil's greed  
festering in the mind of the city  
child.

As Mr Smith is talking Balor notices his son's small  
grave. Sorrow casts a shadow across his face.

MR SMITH

(Following Balor's  
gaze)

Oh dear...

BALOR

(Cutting in)

... Well there most certainly are  
not the temptations of the Glasgow  
Docks here.

MR SMITH

Quite right. I'm sure you know  
these lads are all the same when  
the Devil has them; lustful,  
devious, with no respect for their  
elders.

BALOR

... Indeed, Mr Smith, since the  
war our society has lost its  
way...

47 INT. MANSE HALLWAY - MORNING

47

Fionn is standing awkwardly in the hall, drinking in  
details.

48 INT. MANSE SPARE BEDROOM - MORNING

48

Upstairs, Aislin continues to hurriedly make the bed and  
clear the room. She has opened the window and a breeze is  
blowing in.

49 EXT. MANSE FIELDS - MORNING - CONTINUOUS

49

BALOR

It is good of you to give me such  
a full picture of the lad.

MR SMITH

It is unfortunate that the picture  
is as it is, but that, it would  
appear, is the lad's destiny.

(CONTINUED)

BALOR

We are prepared.

MR SMITH

Right, well, the term that is standard for these placements is three months.

BALOR

Yes, I am aware.

MR SMITH

If there are any problems that you cannot rectify with your own judgement, then you must call me and we can decide what action to take.

BALOR

There will be nowhere for the lad to hide from the light here on our island Mr Smith.

MR SMITH

By the sounds of it there will be no people to distract him either!

Mr Smith laughs, Balor does not.

BALOR

The island will empty after my sermon tomorrow.

MR SMITH

A big day then? You can't be looking forward to the goodbye.

BALOR

Every day I rise full of joy in the knowledge that my flock are good and true. As evangels they will return with new blood for our island when the time is right... this is the true mission before us. So, Mr Smith, it is not saying goodbye.

They have done a full lap of the field and are again at the front door.

BALOR

After you.

MR SMITH

Thank you.

They enter the house.

50

INT. MANSE HALLWAY - MORNING - CONTINUOUS

50

MR SMITH

(rather embarrassed)

What are you doing standing around  
lad?

FIONN

Mrs McNeil is making up my room.

MR SMITH

(to Balor)

This is exactly what I am talking  
about. Get up there at once and  
make the room up yourself lad.

BALOR

(calling up the  
stairs, also  
embarrassed)

Aislin, come down here dear!

Fionn hesitates momentarily and then begins to make his  
way up the stairs, suitcase still in hand.

MR SMITH

Don't let the lad fool you. He has  
been out of the orphanage in  
lodgings for well over a year and  
can more than look after himself.  
He's been making up his own bed  
since he was four!

BALOR

No doubt my wife's naivety has  
played a hand here.

MR SMITH

Women are not known for their  
discerning eye... Wouldn't know a  
murderer from a saint at the best  
of times!

Aislin crosses Fionn at the top of the stairs. They can  
hear the conversation below.

BALOR

Ah, Aislin! We must not let Mr  
Smith leave thinking that we are  
going to spoil this young  
criminal.

MR SMITH

I am certain you will not Minister  
McNeil. Well then, it has been  
lovely to meet you both and  
deliver the lad in person.

(MORE)

(CONTINUED)

50 CONTINUED:

50

MR SMITH (CONT'D)

My work here is done and so I must  
be setting off.

BALOR

You must stay for a cup of tea at  
least.

MR SMITH

Thank you, truly, but duty calls.  
I have the crossing at ten and  
then a very, very long drive back  
through the Highlands Minister. I  
deliver another lad tomorrow.

51 EXT. MANSE FRONT DRIVE - MORNING

51

Aislin and Balor stand side by side in front of the manse  
seeing off Mr Smith as he climbs into the car and drives  
off into the distance.

52 INT. MANSE UPSTAIRS HALLWAY - MORNING

52

Fionn is at the window on the landing, watching the scene  
from behind the curtain. Mr Smith's car goes into the  
distance.

As soon as the car is out of sight, Fionn observes Aislin  
and Balor in a brief exchange, of which he hears only  
Balor's last words.

53 EXT. MANSE FRONT DRIVE - MORNING

53

BALOR

No Aislin. For pity's sake, he is  
a criminal. Treat him as such.

Balor turns on his heels and heads in towards the house.  
Aislin stands still for a moment, looks up towards the  
window, takes a deep breath and follows.

54 INT. MANSE SPARE BEDROOM/DOWNSTAIRS HALLWAY - MORNING

54

Fionn darts back to his bedroom and manages to shut the  
door, just before Balor thuds into the manse, along the  
hall and straight into his study, closing the heavy door  
behind him.

55 INT. MANSE STUDY - MORNING

55

In his study now, Balor slowly walks to his desk and sits  
on his chair. Awkwardly, his eyes look around his room.  
He is in shock.

56 INT. MANSE KITCHEN - MORNING

56

Aislin enters the manse, then the kitchen. Uneasily, she goes to the sink and immediately washes her face in cold water. Briskly she dries it, examining her jaw in the small mirror as she does so. There is no bruising yet. Just about composed, she fills a glass with milk, takes a deep breath and makes her way upstairs.

57 INT. MANSE SPARE BEDROOM - MORNING

57

Aislin knocks on the bedroom door.

FIONN

Come in.

AISLIN

Is everything OK for you?

FIONN

Aye Mrs McNeil... The room is very nice...

There is an awkward silence.

FIONN

...and the trees there are beautiful.

Looking out of the window.

AISLIN

Aye, so very beautiful. They struck me when I first got here too.

She places the glass of milk on the table.

FIONN

Thank you.

AISLIN

The minister would like you to go to his study...

There is an awkward pause.

AISLIN

(more quietly)

... A lot is going on at the moment here on the island and he is under a lot of pressure... I'm sure that things won't be as daunting as they might first seem.

(CONTINUED)

57 CONTINUED:

57

FIONN

Shall I go now?

AISLIN

Please, finish your milk. His study is on the opposite side of the house to the kitchen. Turn left at the foot of the stairs.

58 INT. MANSE STAIRS - MORNING

58

Aislin closes the door behind her, then dream-like descends the stairs.

59 INT. MANSE SPARE BEDROOM - MORNING - CONTINUOUS

59

Still in his room, Fionn gulps down the milk as he straightens his clothes. He takes his tobacco with him, then dithers and leaves it behind on the table. As he does so, he is momentarily distracted by the small grave in the yard outside the window... he dithers again, then hides his tobacco under his pillow.

60 INT. KITCHEN MANSE - MOMENTS LATER - MORNING

60

Aislin moves safely out of view from where she is concealed at the end of the hallway as Fionn passes it. She hears the knock, the study door open and close. Fionn is in Balor's hands now.

She waits a moment and then attempts to busy herself, but it is futile. She stops and sits anxiously, trying to listen. Only a murmur can be heard.

Time passes, she tries to ignore the grave outside. She sets about rooting deep into the cupboards.

61 INT. MANSE STUDY - MORNING

61

BALOR

When I have not given you a direct task, I expect you to be going through the tasks we have discussed... in order. And I expect you to see the completion of every task as a manifestation of your remorse. The sorrier you are, the harder you will work... and you should be sorry. The Lord is watching you lad.

FIONN

Aye Sir.

(CONTINUED)

61 CONTINUED:

61

Balor moves from behind his desk and paces menacingly, like a panther, around his lair.

BALOR

By the time you leave my house lad, you will know the Good Book like you know your own hands. He will be your father as He has been my father, the best father. With this work and study you will make your way to the light. The Devil in you must be broken. Never will I see you lying idle. This is not a holiday. The Lord has sent you to my house because it is my way to the light he has chosen for you. There is no-one to protect you from your sins here boy. The time for change is now.

62 INT. MANSE SPARE BEDROOM - SOMETIME LATER - DAY

62

Aislin knocks on his door.

FIONN

Come in.

Fionn looks pale and alone.

AISLIN

I made you some scones.

FIONN

Thank you.

AISLIN

Is everything alright?

FIONN

Aye, everything is fine. Thank you.

AISLIN

Have a rest for a wee while. I'll show you around the house and the land later... The island is beautiful, you'll see. Oh, the bathroom is down the hall on the right if you need it and... I imagine that Balor, the Minister, won't be joining us for lunch as he must prepare for his sermon tomorrow... possibly not dinner either. Now, you can have a rest.

(CONTINUED)

FIONN  
 (as she gets to the  
 door)  
 Mrs McNeil.

AISLIN  
 Aislin, please.

FIONN  
 Mr Smith only met me to drive me  
 here. Not everything he'll have  
 said to you or the Minister is  
 true. Please don't be afraid of  
 me.

AISLIN  
 Don't worry my boy, I don't take  
 everything here as Gospel.

FADE TO BLACK.

The bare kirk is crammed full of wide-eyed islanders. Balor is delivering the sermon of his life. Mrs Sinclair and her row of elder ladies look on at Balor's masculine form with total devotion and hunger. Fionn is in the far corner dressed in a suit, looking rather traumatised, surrounded by strangers. Aislin is not present.

BALOR  
 The world is changing. What have  
 we done to bring this upon us?  
 What does the Lord want from us  
 now? We must not falter from the  
 light... This we know because  
 (pause) He can see you... He can  
 hear you. We must not falter from  
 the light! Even in the deepest  
 silence of your heart... you are  
 being watched. We are all hanging  
 on by the slightest thread from  
 His hand..

Balor's voice begins to break... He pulls it back.

BALOR  
 Yes we are. And that is a  
 blessing! Now you must look  
 inside, where you will find me,  
 look inside where you will find  
 the strength of our family. Look  
 around you, together we are  
 strong.

(CONTINUED)

Again his voice falters... more this time. To compensate he comes back like thunder.

BALOR

Stronger than Mr Dalgleish and his lurid island folk whose Devil nature has been sent to drag us to the burning furnace of Hell for all eternity! Stronger!

Balor thumps the pulpit loudly. Then returns to almost a whisper.

BALOR

Have no doubt, his filthy swine will gather round you. They will do their best to pull apart our family. We know this, so cast your pearl carefully... (in a whisper) wisely. As Evangels, my Evangels, the true test before you is to spread the word of our Lord Jesus Christ. Trust that I will guard the purity of our island with every drop of my blood for you. I will be here for you, like the cliffs of this island I will weather this storm for you, God's children. We shall be here, together again, united. A family. Now go fulfil your duty. Go! (long pregnant pause - then very quietly) Amen.

Aislin is trudging up a hill, collecting herbs into her skirt as she goes. A dark bruise has formed on her face.

All of the islanders are congregated in clusters outside the kirk. Balor is clearly very in demand, moving from group to group. The islanders hang on his every word, the ladies consistently captivated.

From the sidelines, Fionn observes this curious Puritan population and eavesdrops in and out of various exchanges - taken in by those that deepen the mystery surrounding Aislin's absence from the sermon.

The chattering women don't notice Balor approaching.

MRS CAMPBELL

She didn't even turn up!

MORAG SINCLAIR

It has been five weeks since the Devil had her baby - would you not have been straight to kirk to repent?

Balor's face momentarily darkens. A breath then he continues towards them.

MRS CAMPBELL

Aye, before heading out in public to the shops!

MORAG SINCLAIR

(immediately coy)

Oh here you are Minister! What a sermon!

Fionn turns to his right.

MR STEWART

I heard from the McKinnons that they went by the manse when they left the ram and saw her for themselves. She is up and about... looked well enough to them.

MR MCDONALD

Now there is another sinner sent to that house, did you know?

MR STEWART

Aye, the orphan boy from Glasgow.

MR MCDONALD

At least we know from the outset that he has come from the Devil.

MR STEWART

Well he didn't wash up on the shore did he?

MR MCDONALD

(laughing)

He arrived by car!

They both find this very amusing.

MR STEWART

(both men still laughing)

Never heard of God sending a messenger by car!

66 INT. MANSE SHED - MORNING

66

Aislin is holding a moist pouch to her bruised face, which she periodically dabs into a mixture she is concocting.

67 EXT. KIRK - MORNING - CONTINUOUS

67

Fionn is still lingering around the clusters of island folk. Nobody is talking to him. He clearly wants to leave but can't. The Minister walks past him and so he seizes the opportunity.

FIONN  
Minister McNeil.

BALOR  
Yes lad?

FIONN  
May I head home? I've no Long  
Johns and this island wind is...

The cluster around the Minister laugh.

BALOR  
... You'll need to toughen up to  
survive on our island lad!

There is a ripple of agreement amongst those that can hear.

FIONN  
Yes Minister.

BALOR  
(Turning to his  
admirers)  
Mainland folk! You had better not  
all return so vain.

Everybody laughs. Fionn ducks away as this new cluster swarm in around the Minister.

No one notices, but instead of taking the road, Fionn clambers down to the beach. Once everyone is out of view, he seems enormously relieved and sits down to smoke a, much needed, roll-up cigarette. The majesty of the deserted, kilometre-long, stretch of sand and the crystal waters, set against the enormous fast moving sky, slowly bring him down from this traumatic experience and into pure awe.

68 EXT. FIELDS - DAY

68

Some time later, Fionn is walking through fields reciting some of the sermon to himself, laughing, shaking his head in disbelief and occasionally throwing a stone. It is as though he is trying to make sense of what has just happened, of what he has just heard.

All of a sudden, Fionn is startled by a movement in the long grass. It is a ram, *the* ram. It is injured and limping.

With great care he begins to gently herd it towards the direction of the manse.

69 EXT. BEACH - MORNING

69

Aislin is laying salt down onto the razor clam holes in the sand. Her bruise has almost disappeared.

In the distance she sees Fionn in the fields zigzagging rather strangely. She collects her things, leaves them on the sand dune and heads inland onto the field towards him.

AISLIN

(Calling to him in  
the distance)

You found your way back along the  
beach then?

FIONN

(arms out wide -  
calling back)

I think I've found the missing  
ram.

AISLIN

Have you?

FIONN

He's injured.

AISLIN

I'll get my things. Head towards  
the manse.

70 EXT. FIELDS/MANSE YARD - DAY

70

Rather absurdly they navigate the ram across the field to the manse yard and get him into the pen.

AISLIN

You're a natural.

(CONTINUED)

FIONN

(modestly)

I didn't really do anything.

AISLIN

(heading into the  
shed)

Just a minute.

FIONN

(to the ram)

Come on boy, don't be scared. It's  
OK to be penned in with a view  
like this. The nice lady will help  
you and you'll be fit in no time.

AISLIN

(returning from the  
shed)

Right, I'll need you to hold him  
still for me.

FIONN

Me?

AISLIN

You're not in Glasgow now Fionn...  
It's OK, just grab him by the  
horns and hold him still.

Getting hold of the ram is proving to be quite a  
challenge.

AISLIN

You're stronger than that... Put  
your back into it.

Gradually Fionn rises to the challenge and becomes much  
more assertive. He holds the ram still... just about.

AISLIN

It's not so bad is it?

FIONN

The most straightforward thing  
I've done all morning.

The corner of Aislin's mouth briefly turns up.

FIONN

(still struggling)

What's that?

AISLIN

It's a mix of herbs.

(CONTINUED)

FIONN

Herbs?

AISLIN

...you know, plants. To heal  
sprains, breaks, bruises -  
injuries.

FIONN

Looks like mud.

Aislin continues to rub it in gentle circular motions.

FIONN

Where did you get it?

AISLIN

I made it.

FIONN

You made it?

Surprised at his continuing interest.

AISLIN

I made it fresh this morning.

FIONN

That's amazing!

Fionn leans in and reveals his cheek and daring...

FIONN

...if it works.

Caught off guard Aislin laughs. As she does so, the faint  
bruising can be seen under her jaw.

AISLIN

Oh it does work.

FIONN

Lucky for him you had some made  
up.

AISLIN

It's nice when that happens.

Aislin becomes conscious that Fionn may have seen her  
bruise and be very savvy...

AISLIN

OK, let him go.

The ram hobbles off.

(CONTINUED)

AISLIN

Balor will be back. Get changed  
and eat some lunch. He will expect  
you to be studying.

As she says this she is starting to lift heavy buckets of  
water into the trough.

FIONN

Should you be doing that?

AISLIN

(busy lifting)  
What's that?

FIONN

Shouldn't you be taking it easy? I  
can do that for you.

AISLIN

(choosing to ignore  
his true meaning)  
This is what I do lad.

FIONN

Well I'm here now so...

AISLIN

... You can't do anything in those  
clothes anyway.

She carries on her work with even more gusto.

FIONN

Then I'll head in and get changed.

Fionn heads off and into the manse. As Aislin labours, a  
tear rolls down her face in response to this alien  
display of kindness.

71 INT. MANSE KITCHEN - DAY

71

Fionn enters through the back door and passes a heartily  
laid table for one. It is clear that Aislin has gone to  
some trouble.

72 INT. MANSE UPSTAIRS - DAY - CONTINUOUS

72

As he reaches the upstairs landing window, his now  
saddened eyes are captivated by Aislin's small female  
form undertaking such heavy work.

73 INT. MANSE DINING ROOM - THAT EVENING 73

Aislin, Fionn and Balor eat dinner. There is no conversation, only the chime of cutlery and the howl of the wind. Aislin's chair grinds as she gets up to get more peat for the fire.

FIONN

I can do that.

Balor's hand sternly blocks Fionn from rising.

BALOR

We each have our duties in this life lad.

They continue to eat in silence as Aislin puts peat on the fire.

74 INT. MANSE MARITAL BEDROOM - THAT NIGHT 74

Aislin lies in bed looking out at the trees.

75 INT. MANSE SPARE BEDROOM - THAT NIGHT 75

Fionn smokes a roll-up, hanging way out of his window.

76 INT. MANSE STUDY - THAT NIGHT 76

Balor takes his bottle of whiskey from the cabinet and pours himself a dram. His eyes fixed on the letter. The islanders are leaving tomorrow.

FADE TO BLACK.

77 INT. MANSE KITCHEN - THE NEXT MORNING 77

Aislin and Fionn are eating breakfast. Balor's place setting is untouched.

78 EXT. MANSE YARD - DAY 78

Sometime later, out on the fields working.

FIONN

Would you like a glass of water?  
I'm just heading in to get one.

AISLIN

I'm alright, I'll be starting on lunch in a minute.

(CONTINUED)

FIONN

(looking back at the  
field's crumbling  
wall)

Doesn't look like I've done much,  
but I've been at it for hours.

AISLIN

The life of a crofter... you'll  
get used to it.

79 INT. MANSE KITCHEN - DAY - A LITTLE LATER

79

At the sink, peeling potatoes, Aislin can see Fionn collecting rocks from one end of the field and carting them to the other, where he deposits them in a pile then proceeds to climb the ridge, rocks in hand, to where he is re-making a wall.

Balor, emerges for the first time this day. He looks very, very rough as he enters the kitchen.

AISLIN

(masking her shock)

I put breakfast away, but lunch  
will be ready soon.

Balor appears to ignore her as he drinks lots and lots of water down. He exits through the back door. The light burns his eyes.

AISLIN

(calling after him)

The lad is doing well out there.

80 EXT. MANSE YARD/FIELDS - DAY

80

Calling across the fields.

BALOR

Put down what you are doing lad.

FIONN

I've almost finished...

BALOR

Put it down - right there, where  
you are. The Lord has a wider  
plan.

Balor turns on his heels and sets off with resolve across the fields. His face is coming back into its own with every step. Fionn puts down the rocks, as instructed, and deposits the wheelbarrow and tools at the shed as he runs to catch up with Balor.

(CONTINUED)

80 CONTINUED:

80

Together now, they walk into the distance. Fionn is having to jog to keep up with Balor's pace. Before disappearing out of view, Fionn looks back at the manse, where Aislin has come out from the kitchen onto the yard to see what is going on. He gesticulates to her with a shrug of his shoulders. Aislin turns in, looking annoyed.

81 INT. BOAT - DAY

81

Rain is pounding down on Balor and Fionn, wind blasting their faces.

BALOR

(still out of breath  
and sweating)

This will all have to be washed down. Everything else will come off and you can break up any wood to burn.

FIONN

Aye sir.

BALOR

Other materials must be bagged and brought up to the house with the wheelbarrow. I'll need you to clean the engine out and oil her. We'll need about ten more hooks put in along the sides. Get started on this right away.

Balor jumps onto dry land and walks into the distance leaving Fionn, looking exhausted, with a wreck of a boat to sort out.

82 EXT. BOAT SHED - DAY - CONTINUOUS

82

Aislin hides behind the corner of the boat shed.

83 INT. BOAT SHED - MOMENTS LATER - DAY

83

Balor is maniacally rooting about and filling his tool box.

84 EXT. BOAT SHED - DAY

84

Balor is walking resolutely up the dirt road, toolbox in hand. The strong winds pushing hard against him.

85 INT. KIRK - DAY

85

Fired up from the morning and still sweating, Balor resolutely begins the extraordinary task of taking the kirk apart on his own, with a sudden, surprising, lightness of touch.

86 EXT. BOAT - DAY

86

Bare chested, Fionn is ripping the insides of the boat out as it continues to rock and roll in all directions.

AISLIN

Hey there.

FIONN

Hey.

AISLIN

What's this in aid of?

FIONN

(still hauling)

I don't know. The Lord's want is mysterious.

AISLIN

Balor isn't here then?

FIONN

No.

AISLIN

Do you want me to bring you some lunch.

FIONN

I could eat a horse right now. Do you want to climb in and take a look?

AISLIN

I...

FIONN

She needs a fair old clean up.

He extends his hand to Aislin.

AISLIN

I haven't been in a boat in years.

FIONN

I'd never been in one 'til the other day and look at me now.

(MORE)

(CONTINUED)

86 CONTINUED:

86

FIONN (CONT'D)  
 She's all tied up - I'm here,  
 you'll be fine.

AISLIN

OK.

Aislin gets into the boat and seems to be somewhere else for a minute.

87 INT. KIRK - DAY - CONTINUOUS

87

Balor is half undressed and glistening with beads of sweat as he continues to take the pews, alter and doors apart, grunting and sighing. The scene is somewhat sexual.

88 INT. MANSE KITCHEN - THAT EVENING.

88

Aislin is serving up food to Fionn as Balor comes in and straight past the kitchen door.

AISLIN

(calling)  
 Are you eating?

BALOR

I'm having a bath.

AISLIN

I'll put a plate in the oven for you then.

The bathroom door shuts. Aislin is embarrassed.

FIONN

...This looks lovely.

AISLIN

Thank you. Please begin.

They begin to eat.

89 INT. MANSE KITCHEN - SOMETIME LATER - EVENING

89

Balor comes into the kitchen.

90 INT. MANSE SITTING ROOM - EVENING

90

Aislin hears Balor enter the kitchen. She rises from her sewing.

91 INT. MANSE KITCHEN - EVENING - CONTINUOUS

91

Balor sits at the table, waiting to be served. Aislin enters and begins to prepare his dinner in silence. Moments pass.

AISLIN

Why do you need a boat Balor?

BALOR

I'm taking the kirk parts to the mainland in it.

Aislin is taken aback and almost drops the plate she is removing from the oven.

AISLIN

To Mallaig?

BALOR

No, to Ayrshire.

AISLIN

Ayrshire... What happened to the space in the lorry the mine offered?

BALOR

I offered that to Morag Sinclair.

AISLIN

To Morag Sincla...

BALOR

.. She's a widow.

AISLIN

But couldn't she go with Mrs Gillies? Isn't she a widow?

BALOR

You know full well... Mrs Gillies has her sons.

AISLIN

Could they not help Mrs Sinclair?

BALOR

My Kirk has no business in the Mine truck anyhow.

AISLIN

Who's going to drive the boat?

(CONTINUED)

91 CONTINUED:

91

BALOR

I am. I'm going to take my kirk  
down and bring it to them  
myself... God be my judge.

AISLIN

You don't need to do this...

BALOR

It is my kirk... I will deliver it  
however I choose. Just leave me  
eat woman.

Aislin exits.

92 INT. MANSE SPARE BEDROOM - DAWN

92

Fionn is fast asleep in his bed.

93 INT. MANSE MARITAL BEDROOM - DAWN

93

Aislin is asleep in her bed.

94 INT/EXT. MANSE FRONT DOOR/MANSE FRONT DRIVE - DAWN

94

Balor quietly exits through the front door and down the  
lane. He is walking towards the darkness. Behind him, the  
house is framed by the growing pink sky.

95 INT/EXT. KIRK - MORNING

95

Balor is powering through building a make-shift scaffold  
platform. Deep in the flow, his clothes ripped and  
stained with sweat, it is clear that he has been working  
hard all morning.

Inside, strewn across the grey stone kirk floor are the  
undone doors, pews and Altar. Balor has taken the process  
to the extreme, obsessively packing even the hinges and  
nails into labelled boxes. A pile of Bibles has toppled  
into a heap in the corner, the wind blowing their pages  
as it swirls in through the missing door.

96 EXT. MANSE YARD - DAY

96

Aislin and Fionn are planting for the Spring season.

AISLIN

OK. Now pass that along.

FIONN

Like that?

(CONTINUED)

AISLIN

Aye, that's great.

FIONN

Why don't I stay and do this and  
you do the boat?

AISLIN

(dryly)

We all have our duty...

Fionn grins.

97 EXT. KIRK - DAY

97

Against the vast grey sky, Balor is now on the roof of the lonely kirk, precariously tied on with rope to the bell tower that has no bell. The treacherous winds are visibly pulling at his clothes and rattling the scaffold tower as he now begins to remove the dark grey slate tiles - one by one.

98 EXT. BOAT SHED - A LITTLE LATER - DAY

98

FIONN

So there's that to do too - on top  
of the rest of it. If this is  
anything like the mechanics of a  
car - it'll need taking apart and  
putting back together...

Moving to stealthily cover the wall of her apothecary.

AISLIN

You are putting that  
apprenticeship to good use...

FIONN

Aye, by taking a boat apart.

AISLIN

You know what I mean. You're on an  
island now, your skills will come  
in handy - make no bones about it.

FIONN

You're right, I am on an island...

99 EXT. BOAT SHED/PIER - DAY

99

Aislin is working hard collecting mussels for dinner, as Fionn is still clearing out the boat that rocks in the bay. Both are humming tunes.

100 INT. KITCHEN MANSE - A LITTLE LATER - EVENING 100

Aislin is bearding the mussels in the sink.

Balor comes in through the back door, filthy, sweaty and charged.

AISLIN

Looks like you've been labouring today.

BALOR

I have.

AISLIN

But the kirk is almost bare.

BALOR

I'm surprised you remember.

Balor kicks off his boots. It is no time for conversation.

BALOR

I'm going to have a bath.

AISLIN

Fionn is in the bath right now.

BALOR

He's in the bath is he?

AISLIN

Just finished working on the boat about ten minutes ago. I told him to be in for five and I'd run it for him.

101 INT. MANSE STAIRS/UPSTAIRS - EVENING 101

Balor walks out of the kitchen and up the stairs. Worried, Aislin rushes to the foot of the stairs but retreats under the thunder of Balor's gaze. He continues up the stairs.

Upstairs he pushes open every door as though he is about to ransack the place. The door to a room with a cot in it is revealed, another with a rocking horse.

102 INT. MANSE SPARE BEDROOM - EVENING 102

Increasingly agitated, Balor walks into Fionn's room. At first he doesn't know what to do, then he starts rifling through his things.

103 INT. MANSE BATHROOM - EVENING 103

In the bath tub, Fionn can hear Balor trudging about and so washes himself in a hurry.

104 INT. MANSE HALLWAY - EVENING 104

Aislin looks ashen as she holds on to the banister at the foot of the stairs. She can see all the upstairs doors are open. Balor emerges having found some books.

105 INT. MANSE BATHROOM - EVENING - CONTINUOUS 105

Fionn is quickly getting his dripping, naked body out of the bath. Balor's heavy footsteps are approaching.

The door pushes open. Startled, Fionn jumps into the corner of the bathroom, only just managing to preserve his dignity with a towel.

BALOR

So you decide to come into my manse and bring your filth in with you?

FIONN

No sir, they were not intended to bring insult...

BALOR

Well that they have done lad.

FIONN

They're stories, poetry, there is nothing in there...

BALOR

I know what they are and I know what kind of person you are. Do you think I was born yesterday? This scum fuels your dirty, city mind into acting out its devious desires. This is the Devil's work and it has no place in my house.

Fionn looks at Aislin who has appeared in the hallway a safe distance from the door. She looks at the floor.

FIONN

I've been reading the bible as you instructed, these are just recreational.

(CONTINUED)

BALOR

Do you think that you have the right to indulge yourself?

FIONN

No sir.

BALOR

These belong in the rubbish. You prove to me that I will have to deal with you properly when I get back. Now go to your room. Make yourself decent.

Balor partially obstructs the door as Fionn hobbles out in his towel. As Fionn passes her, Aislin again casts her eyes awkwardly to the ground.

BALOR

(to Aislin as he brushes past her and thunders down the stairs)

You indulge this lad, like you indulge the Devil in everything.

AISLIN

Balor...

BALOR

... Not a word I tell you, not a word.

Fionn shuts his bedroom door behind him. Downstairs, Balor shuts the back door behind him. Aislin is left standing outside the bathroom.

106 INT. BEDROOM - EVENING

106

Fionn is angrily getting dressed.

107 INT. MANSE KITCHEN - SOMETIME LATER - EVENING

107

Fionn comes downstairs and begins to get his boots on. He is not at all happy.

AISLIN

Where are you going?

FIONN

To check on the animals.

AISLIN

Well remembered... Fionn?

(CONTINUED)

FIONN

What?

AISLIN

(in a whisper)

I just wanted to tell you that  
everything is going to be  
alright...

FIONN

Everything is going to be alright?  
All I know is that I have to be  
here.

As he leaves the backdoor.

FIONN

What's your excuse?

The backdoor swings shut.

108 INT. MANSE DINING ROOM - THAT NIGHT

108

Aislin, Fionn and Balor eat dinner in silence. The rain is tapping on the window and a fence is creaking in the distance.

109 INT. STUDY - NIGHT

109

Balor is at his desk... Temptation on his brow. Fionn's books are on his desk staring at him. Half a bottle of whiskey sits on his table. There are other empty bottles around the room and it is a mess. Maps of the ocean are all over the floor with red routes marked on them. With a sideward uncomfortable glance he picks up the first book and opens it.

Aislin knocks at the door.

AISLIN

Can I come in?

Startled, he quickly puts the book down. It remains open.

BALOR

Come in.

Aislin has not seen the room like this before and walks delicately around the map strewn floor.

AISLIN

Is this your route?

BALOR

Yes.

(CONTINUED)

AISLIN

It's a long way.

BALOR

200 nautical miles round trip.

AISLIN

A very long way. Balor?

BALOR

Yes.

AISLIN

Ought you take the lad with you?  
It makes the most sense. You will  
need an extra pair of hands much  
more than I will here. I manage on  
my own here anyway...

BALOR

... Do you understand nothing of  
what is going on here woman?

AISLIN

(suddenly annoyed)

I know that your flock is gone,  
our child is dead and you are  
behaving like a man possessed.

BALOR

I am a man of God Aislin, a man of  
God. I took a vow and I stick to  
it, I have stuck to it and I will  
die by it if I have to.

Now at the window looking out and almost talking to  
himself.

BALOR

This is the greatest test that God  
has put before me and I will rise  
to it, lest I be judged... I will  
rise to it in the name of my  
mother, my father, and all those  
that fell beside me at sea. Why  
would I ever want a lad with me  
when the task calls for a man...  
one man? Regardless, I am a sailor  
and the lad has never even been on  
the water. For Heaven's sake, why  
can't you just leave me alone?

Aislin notices Fionn's open book. Balor sees her.

AISLIN

No doubt you are right Balor...

(CONTINUED)

109 CONTINUED: (2)

109

Aislin turns and exits the door

AISLIN  
(under her breath)  
... You will be judged.

Aislin exits.

110 EXT. BOAT SHED- THE NEXT MORNING

110

Fionn violently rips out the last of the fishing baskets and paraphernalia and angrily launches them overboard onto the beach. As he does this, his vindictive eyes keep returning, over and over, to the old, dirty engine... Revenge is heavy on his brow. His mood is black, as are his hands.

The boat is much cleaner than when it first arrived, but Fionn looks much rougher, much older.

111 EXT. MANSE YARD - MORNING

111

Aislin angrily chops wood, as all the stupid animals stare at her.

112 INT/EXT. MANSE KITCHEN BACKDOOR - DAY

112

Balor comes in just as Fionn is coming up over the brow of the hill from the beach, exhausted.

BALOR  
Aislin, there is no time to lose  
now. The lad must work through -  
all night if he has to.

Blocking the doorway and calling out to Fionn.

BALOR  
I'm leaving tomorrow. I need you  
to place planks from the kirk all  
the way to the jetty.

FIONN  
(calling back)  
I still have a way to go with the  
boat.

BALOR  
Everything must be finished! God  
has spoken to me and the time is  
tomorrow.

(CONTINUED)

112 CONTINUED:

112

FIONN  
 (nearing the manse,  
 deflated)  
 Can I get me some waterproofs then  
 please? The water is freezing.

BALOR  
 Get the lad some waterproofs.

AISLIN  
 The spares are in the shed.

BALOR  
 I'll have tiles that will need to  
 be held down tight... You'll need  
 to look out extra ropes and  
 latches from the shed too. You'll  
 need to eat something to keep your  
 strength up - there is so much to  
 do and time is running out.

As he says this, he is grabbing some bread, cheese and  
 meat, throwing it in a paper bag, then into another which  
 he thrusts into Fionn's hand by the manse. Then he is  
 gone.

Awkwardly, Fionn turns back around and walks to the shed  
 as Aislin turns back away into the house.

113 INT. SHED - DAY

113

Fionn moves stuff about. Some loose planks suddenly fall.  
 Fionn just manages to catch them, averting an almighty  
 crash. Relieved, he lets out a huge sigh. Balor's  
 marching footsteps can be heard on the distant gravel. As  
 he looks up, he notices Aislin's herbalist cornucopia,  
 hidden behind the false wall. Fionn's angry face softens  
 as he eyes this weird and wonderful collection curiously.  
 An animal bleats, Fionn jumps. Delicately and quickly he  
 covers his discovery back up.

114 EXT. MANSE FIELDS - DAY

114

Fionn walks into the distance, waterproofs in hand.

115 EXT. BOAT ENGINE - DAY

115

The boat is banging relentlessly onto the jetty with  
 every wave. On board, Fionn is hunched over the engine,  
 which he is re-instating with a heavy browed resolve.

116 INT/EXT. MANSE/FIELDS - DAY 116

Angrily, Aislin puts on her overcoat and heads out of the house, the door slamming behind her.

117 EXT. MANSE FIELDS - DAY 117

Sometime later, she is at a vantage point on a hill, from where she is spying on Balor.

A tile slips from Balor's fingers and tumbles through the air, smashing on the ground metres below.

The kirk is an empty shell, bare and exposed. Around it, the debris of the deconstruction and mountains of slate tiles and shards.

Aislin's eyes, no longer angry, are welling up.

118 EXT. MANSE YARD/FIELDS/BOAT/BEACH - THE NEXT DAY 118

The vast Hebridean sky is rolling, tumbling and turning. Set against it, Balor's small human frame carries the heavy pews along the long line of planks to the boat. He looks like Jesus carrying the cross to the crucifixion.

On the boat, Fionn is running on empty, lifting, moving and preparing, with heavy, lack-lustre limbs.

On the shore, Aislin is deep in concentration, meticulously tying various baskets together.

119 EXT. BOAT - DAY 119

Sometime later, Balor delivers the final load. He is covered in blisters and bruises and scratches. He looks gaunt, his ringed eyes bulging out of their sockets from the stress and strain.

Now Balor and Fionn are on the boat making adjustments - both are tired and have a short fuse.

BALOR

Did you use extra hooks for these?

FIONN

No, I just doubled the rope back and used what was there.

BALOR

This isn't some sort of casual teenage hobby lad.

(CONTINUED)

FIONN

I know...

As this conversation has been unfolding Aislin has been negotiating the jetty towards them with supplies from the house for the voyage.

BALOR

If I requested extra hooks on the boat, that is what is needed.

Balor is getting mad.

FIONN

I've been working all night - so I thought, of all the things that I had to do, I could save time and double the ropes back...

BALOR

Save time?

AISLIN

(climbing on board )

There must be no talk of saving time now, Balor is right. If there is a job that needs doing, then it needs doing.

Balor looks genuinely surprised. Fionn looks betrayed.

AISLIN

(focused)

I'm storing this in the baskets and then they can be tied down. It should withstand the worst of weather.

BALOR

(to Fionn)

Four more hooks.

Again, Balor is against the huge sky. This time he is dragging the wide-eyed ram along the planks to the boat.

Aislin and Fionn stand at separate ends of the bay - looking on at this desperate scene. Like a deranged Noah, Balor drags the terrified ram onto the boat and sets off into the distance. He does not look back.

Fionn turns and marches back up to the house. Aislin lingers watching the boat disappear.

FADE TO BLACK.

- 121 INT. MANSE SPARE BEDROOM - DAY 121  
Fionn collapses face down onto his bed, exhausted.
- 122 INT. MANSE KITCHEN - DAY 122  
Some moments later, Aislin enters and sits at the kitchen table.
- 123 EXT. ISLAND SEQUENCE - DAY 123  
Hours pass. Outside on the island are clues that people were once there. Now they are all gone.
- 124 INT. MANSE KITCHEN/SITTING ROOM/DINING ROOM - DAY 124  
Inside the manse, Aislin is clearly in turmoil. Gradually, as she is pacing about the empty house and casting her eye up the stairs, it is clear that something dawns on her.
- 125 INT. MANSE HALLWAY - EVENING 125  
Half asleep and grumpy, Fionn opens his door. In his stupor, he is baffled to find his confiscated books, a little damaged, sitting there, adorned with a slice of cake.  
He goes down the hall to the bathroom.
- 126 INT. MANSE KITCHEN - EVENING 126  
In the kitchen, Aislin nervously puts the kettle on and sits upright in her chair, waiting.
- 127 INT. KITCHEN MANSE - EVENING 127  
Fionn, now dressed, enters the kitchen with an empty plate and his books.

AISLIN

Did you have a good rest?

FIONN

Yes thank you.

AISLIN

After all the hard work that you put in, you must have needed it.

(CONTINUED)

FIONN

I really did.

AISLIN

Would you like a cup of tea?

FIONN

Yes please.

AISLIN

An awful lot has gone on since you arrived... I can't even imagine... Anyway, take a seat. We both need a hot cup of tea I think.

FIONN

Thank you.

AISLIN

(Aislin fills the  
teapot)

No bother.

FIONN

For my books.

AISLIN

...I got them out for you straight away...

FIONN

...They are the only things that I own. They mean a lot to me.

AISLIN

As they should Fionn.

FIONN

I've been reading the Bible too.

AISLIN

It's alright. Here you go.

FIONN

Thanks.

AISLIN

They look interesting.

FIONN

They are. Do you like poetry?

AISLIN

Well, Aye, Aye I do.

FIONN

This one here is my favourite.

(CONTINUED)

AISLIN

Read it to me.

FIONN

Now?

AISLIN

I think so. Why not?

FIONN

Well I thought...

AISLIN

There is nobody here, nobody  
anywhere near here. The island is  
empty.

FIONN

That's strange.

AISLIN

We are safe and warm here, we'll  
be alright.

FIONN

You mustn't take offence.

AISLIN

I'm not a child.

FIONN

*He reads a poem.*

128 INT. MANSE MARITAL BEDROOM - NIGHT

128

From under her covers, Aislin is looking out at the  
leaves rustling the moonlit trees.

129 INT. MANSE SPARE BEDROOM - NIGHT

129

From under his covers, Fionn is looking out at the leaves  
rustling the moonlit trees.

130 EXT. MANSE FIELDS - MORNING

130

The sun is shining and the sky is blue. Aislin and Fionn  
are working together to get the animals fed and watered.

AISLIN

Will you bring in the fire wood  
and then we are done?

FIONN

Right away.

(CONTINUED)

130 CONTINUED:

130

AISLIN

I'll head inside, pack us a bag  
and we can go.

FIONN

OK.

131 EXT. MANSE FIELDS - A LITTLE LATER - MORNING

131

Fionn joins Aislin - who is dressed and ready.

AISLIN

Did you get your jumper?

FIONN

Aye.

AISLIN

Are you wearing your thermals?

FIONN

Aye. I brought my book too... You  
liked it last night and...

AISLIN

Aye I did. Of course, bring your  
book.

Aislin and Fionn climb over the fence and head off into  
the island. In the distance, Fionn can be seen trying to  
take the bag from Aislin, her resisting and then  
conceding.

132 EXT. HILL VIEWPOINT - DAY

132

Colour is back in Aislin's cheeks and she seems genuinely  
happy, for the first time.

AISLIN

Hurry up, this view is  
breathtaking.

FIONN

(panting up the hill)  
I'm still knackered from the boat.

AISLIN

That was a lifetime ago! Come on,  
we're almost there.

Fionn joins Aislin at the top of the magnificent,  
windswept hill.

FIONN

You can see for miles!

(CONTINUED)

AISLIN

This is Heaven right here on Earth. Everything working together in harmony, as it should.

FIONN

All the bluebells are coming through over there, look.

AISLIN

I haven't been up here in months.

FIONN

Why not?

Aislin seems not to hear this, as she takes in the 360 degree view.

AISLIN

Look over there.

FIONN

Where? I can't see anything.

AISLIN

(laughing)

Because there is emptiness, nobody is here! No fishing boats! I can't believe it!

Aislin saunters off, her long raven hair, half out of its tie, is whipping about in the wind.

Fionn looks at the sight of Aislin so energised and is taken. He collects his things and follows her.

FIONN

You suit it out here.

AISLIN

Out here... with nobody here.

FIONN

Don't you get lonely?

AISLIN

Everybody gets lonely.

FIONN

I've never been somewhere like this before.

AISLIN

Me neither. Come on, I'll show you the cave.

(CONTINUED)

132 CONTINUED: (2)

132

FIONN

But you live here...

Aislin is already running down the hill, Fionn follows her.

133 INT. CAVE - DAY

133

AISLIN

They say this cave is where the nuns from Iona hid out from the Vikings, for months and months on end. This is where I'd hide out if I had the chance.

FIONN

It's like being inside the belly of a giant whale.

AISLIN

Are you hungry?

Fionn is excited. He is running his hand along the cool stone of the cave's wall.

FIONN

(In a biblical voice)

This giant whale has swallowed us up and we are going to go on a journey, deep, deep into the ocean.

AISLIN

Do you want ham, or cheese, or both?

FIONN

Both please.

(resuming his biblical voice)

The whale will keep us safe from the ocean's harm and all the fish we need will come right to us.

Aislin is watching his wonder gladly as she fills the sandwiches.

134 EXT. CAVE ENTRANCE - A LITTLE LATER.

134

Fionn and Aislin are lounging, peacefully sheltered from the winds, with a spectacular view of mother nature's offerings laid out before them.

(CONTINUED)

FIONN

Do your family live on the islands?

AISLIN

No.

FIONN

Do they live...

AISLIN

I don't have any.

FIONN

Oh.

AISLIN

My ancestors are in my blood and that is enough for me. I can feel them there.

FIONN

My earliest memory is watching an older boy, called Doug, singing in the mirror with his face painted like a girl. He's probably a queer now.

Fionn doesn't notice, but Aislin is shocked by his casual talk.

FIONN

I must have been five because he left the year after that. I have no memory of family at all. Don't think I feel them in my blood either.

AISLIN

Maybe not now, you are young.

FIONN

I don't feel young.

AISLIN

Neither do I...

They sit and watch the big sky move.

The manse can be made out up ahead.

FIONN

Thank you for today. I really needed a day like this to come along. I'll make up the hours on the yard tomorrow.

AISLIN

(starting to run off  
into the distance  
mimicking a man's  
voice)

You can start now young man, the wall needs finishing...

FIONN

(surprised)  
Right now?

AISLIN

(laughing)  
Not a chance. Come on, I forgot to take the clothes off the line.

AISLIN

Well it feels strange just watching you.

FIONN

I'm only peeling potatoes. You've fed me since I got here, let me do this. Just relax.

AISLIN

I have some sewing to do.

FIONN

Sounds like a chore to me... and a boring one.

AISLIN

Not necessarily... Maybe you are right, I'll get my book.

FIONN

Where are you going?

AISLIN

Out for a minute.

FIONN

To the shed?

AISLIN

Have you been snooping about?

FIONN

All that stuff you have in there looks amazing. The same stuff you fixed the ram with.

AISLIN

I'll be back in a minute.

Aislin decides against boots and exits in bare feet. Fionn watches her walk into the shed. Her beauty is growing and he can see it.

137 EXT. MANSE YARD - EVENING

137

The vast sky is a canvas of twinkling stars, the wind is a delicate breeze. All the animals are nestling this end of the fields.

AISLIN

Aren't you so soft tonight? And my oh my you are more beautiful than ever! We are alone and we are alright, aren't we? More than alright.

Aislin is talking to the grass underfoot, the trees on her land and her animals.

138 INT. MANSE KITCHEN - CONTINUOUS - EVENING

138

AISLIN

(rosy cheeked)

It is a wonderful night out there and it is going to be even nicer tomorrow.

FIONN

I'm putting the joint in with the vegetables like you do.

AISLIN

You go right ahead.

FIONN

Can you tell the weather just from looking?

AISLIN

Looking and feeling. You can do it too.

FIONN

I can't.

(CONTINUED)

AISLIN

If you open up to it you'll be able to.

Adjusting herself into position on the armchair by the fire.

AISLIN

Can I just read my book by the fire here then sir?

FIONN

Yes madam, dinner will be served at eight. There is nothing for you to do.

Fionn gets his book and goes to sit down at the table near the fire.

FIONN

Actually, the fire looks like it needs some more peat.

AISLIN

You're right...

FIONN

... No, I'll go get it.

Aislin is left in the cosy kitchen alone and, for a moment, is deeply touched by the simple taste of freedom and generosity.

139 EXT. MANSE YARD - EVENING

139

Outside, Fionn too takes a moment to look at the epic canvas of stars and takes stock of his freedom. He carries the peat in.

From outside we see the warmth of their evening through the window of the manse, set against the magical, peaceful sky. Fionn adds peat to the fire, then sits at the table with his book, Aislin on the armchair with hers.

FADE OUT.

140 INT. MANSE UPSTAIRS HALL - DAWN

140

AISLIN

(rattling on his door)

Time to wake up! The weather is glorious and we are going fishing young man!

(CONTINUED)

- 140 CONTINUED: 140
- Aislin bounds down the stairs.
- 141 INT. MANSE SPARE BEDROOM - DAWN 141
- Fionn stirs from his deep sleep and rubs his eyes. He can hear Aislin still calling to him through the house.
- AISLIN
- We are going to catch us some fish today. No time to lose. There is tea by your door and clean clothes. What a day!
- Fionn opens his door as he catches the last of Aislin's sentence. There he finds a piping hot cup of tea and some folded clothes that smell fresh from the line.
- 142 INT. SHED - DAWN 142
- Through a chaos of obstacles, Aislin, determined, unearths the fishing rods, nets and bag.
- 143 INT. MANSE SPARE BEDROOM - DAWN - CONTINUOUS 143
- Fionn is hopping into his trousers and watching Aislin through the window, as she fusses about the yard preparing for the fishing trip.
- 144 EXT. MANSE YARD - DAWN 144
- Fionn emerges onto the yard still tucking his shirt in.
- FIONN
- Where are we going then?
- AISLIN
- River fishing.
- FIONN
- The weather is just like you said it would be. You've got another talent there. Can I do anything?
- AISLIN
- Aye, the hens have laid like mad things overnight. Can you bring the eggs in, lay some fresh straw and put some feed down?
- FIONN
- Will do. How exciting! Can I have some bread and jam?

(CONTINUED)

144 CONTINUED:

144

AISLIN

Already made jam sandwiches for the walk. No time to lose here, there will be no fish by 10am - so we've got to hurry!

145 EXT. RIVER - MORNING.

145

Aislin and Fionn, laden with their rods, bags, chopping boards etc are walking upstream.

AISLIN

We can stop up here. This is a good spot.

FIONN

Can you feel it and see it, or just feel it?

AISLIN

You're funny this morning are you? I can feel there will be no fish caught by the young man from Glasgow, that's for sure! And I can see that his foot is about to get wet.

Fionn looks down as his shoe begins to absorb water.

146 EXT. RIVER - A LITTLE LATER - MORNING

146

FIONN

So you're scared of the sea but not of the river?

AISLIN

Aye.

FIONN

Is that why you were strange about getting into the boat?

AISLIN

But I did it didn't I? You were there, it was safe.

FIONN

I know that. Is that how you got washed up here, on a boat?

AISLIN

I haven't talked this much since I can't remember.

(CONTINUED)

FIONN

So did you?

AISLIN

What?

FIONN

Wash up here from an overturned boat?

AISLIN

I don't ask you about your past do I? I don't care for it, I see you for who you are now.

FIONN

What are you afraid of telling me?

AISLIN

I'm afraid that the moment will be ruined if we talk about the past, that we'll miss that fish, that you will judge me. I am meant to be looking after you, not the other way around.

FIONN

Of all the people in the world, I won't judge you. I'm a criminal, a bastard and will probably never see you again after these months are over.

Both stop for a moment and reflect.

AISLIN

Well then.

FIONN

I didn't mean to make you sad.

AISLIN

Nonsense, I'm not sad. So you want to know do you? It was a Tuesday, at dawn I'm told.

FIONN

What, you can't remember?

AISLIN

No. I was barely conscious when they brought me to the Minister's house from the shore. I was lucky to be alive in a way. A fishwife washed me down and they put me to bed, in your room.

(MORE)

(CONTINUED)

AISLIN (CONT'D)

For three months I stayed there, slowly getting better. Balor, the Minister, prayed by my bedside with the Kirk Elders once a day and sometimes he came in on his own, but only briefly. He got special medicines from the mainland delivered. They saw me as an omen from God. I'd not said a word to them and they decided that I was a virgin, a gift from Heaven, some sort of Saint.

Fionn is going slightly pink.

AISLIN

Oh dear, I told you this wasn't a good idea. Have I embarrassed you?

FIONN

No... well a little. Weren't you?

AISLIN

Well of course I'm not a Saint am I?

FIONN

You come close in my book.

AISLIN

Well then you are special. Anyhow, it was decided that Balor would marry me... the Elders thought that was why I had come, as Balor's reward. There are barely any women on the island, unmarried women, even on the neighbouring islands and so... Anyway, nobody had claimed me lost, no boat was found or declared. I had no memory and, for a fair wee while, no voice. And of course, there was the all important fact that I had not a single penny to my name. One thing led to the other. I didn't understand the darker side of the faith, its severity... and I still don't. But I tried. Everything seemed to be wrong that I did and so I have made a very, very good friend of the island and less good friends with the people on it. This has been my fate.

FIONN

It's not over yet.

(CONTINUED)

AISLIN

No it isn't. You are a reminder of that, thank you.

FIONN

So you keep your book and stuff in the shed as a secret.

AISLIN

Well, aye. All that didn't go down well.

FIONN

They think you are a witch I think.

Aislin laughs.

AISLIN

Just like they thought I was a Saint! It's always one or the other for a woman. Anyhow, I've learnt not to bother with what other people think.

FIONN

That must be how come you've been so nice to me.

AISLIN

I'm nice to you because you have been nothing but nice to me. In a way they are right, but there is nothing sinful or Devilish about using nature to heal. I would never harm a fly.... I thought about hurting myself...

FIONN

... I think what you did for the ram was beautiful. I've seen so many fights, so much violence. Never really stopped to think that things can get put back together sometimes too. Where did you learn?

AISLIN

... I must have known it from before.

Changing the subject.

AISLIN

... And now that I've had four years alone with the plants here, I just get...

(CONTINUED)

FIONN

... A feeling.

Aislin laughs.

AISLIN

Aye. And then one day I was waiting for Balor on the main island when he was on kirk business and a very old fisherman, with a pair of bright green eyes that I'll never forget, gave me that book... I cherish that book.

FIONN

He just gave it to you?

AISLIN

Aye, I guess he had a feeling too.

They smile. For a few quiet moments they are lost in the rhythm of the Spring morning and the river flowing.

FIONN

(quietly)

Your herbs couldn't help the baby?

AISLIN

No Fionn, the herbs couldn't help the baby. Nothing could help the baby.

Aislin gets up.

FIONN

Aislin.

AISLIN

(quietly,  
distractedly)

... Yes.

FIONN

Mr Smith told you why I'm here.

AISLIN

He told Balor, aye...

A pause.

FIONN

It isn't how he said.

AISLIN

It is alright Fionn. You don't need to tell me...

(CONTINUED)

Fionn has started and is now abstracted in the flow of his own words.

FIONN

It was dark, late, nobody was around. I told him not to, over and over but he didn't listen.

Fionn can't look Aislin in the face as he says this.

FIONN

I swear I warned him, over and over... I warned him to let me be, that I wasn't cut that way, I swear I warned him I would put up a fight. But he didn't stop, he didn't listen, I swear. Then I let him have it... I was shaking, I took his pocket watch and ran and ran until I couldn't run any further.

AISLIN

(containing shock)

It's alright, it's alright. I believe you. You did the right thing... it's alright.

There is silence for a while.

FIONN

Didn't always do the right thing though. I used to run goods across the Glasgow Docks for the sailors, mainly American.

AISLIN

... They can be worse than pirates those sailors! So I've heard.

Aislin blushes. Fionn spares her.

FIONN

Got involved in all sorts. They liked me and I could get about when they couldn't.

AISLIN

What do you mean?

FIONN

... I could speak the language.

They laugh. The tension is relieved.

AISLIN

Was that an education?

(CONTINUED)

FIONN

The best one I've had so far.

Aislin re-casts her line.

AISLIN

How's that?

FIONN

They didn't care I came from the orphanage, I was useful and they looked after me... and I got to understand about women.

Aislin laughs.

AISLIN

What did you understand about women?

FIONN

All sorts of different stuff.

Suddenly a fish bites on Aislin's line.

AISLIN

Oh my! Clear the way.

FIONN

Have you got one?

AISLIN

Yes, yes, definitely... it's a feisty thing. Get the net ready.

FIONN

OK.

From a distance, amidst the wild, sun mottled, Highland landscape, Fionn and Aislin grapple with bringing in the fish. In the laughter and confusion, one after the other, they both manage to fall over. From their respective giggling heaps, the big fish is well and truly caught, wriggling about in the net between them.

Aislin and Fionn are two dots on the vast beach. The crystal waters are twinkling in the sunlight. Fionn has improvised a camp out of drift wood and old fishing nets.

Now at their camp, the fish is cooking beautifully, alongside some shell fish. Aislin is lying down looking at the fast moving sky. Fionn takes his book from his bag and leafs through it contemplatively.

After a few moments, he clears his throat quietly and begins to read softly. Aislin, lying nearby, continues to look at the sky.

FIONN

It's called, "A Song For An Able Bastard".

Aislin grins.

FIONN

I wish I loved an honest girl,  
Unseeking and unsought,  
Whose lips were soft as they were  
shy,  
And not as they'd been taught.

I wish - but what's the use of  
that?  
The only She in town  
Is not so honest as she's fair -  
She's light as thistle-down!

And that's my luck, for I was born  
When a March moon was mad;  
I wish I loved an honest girl -  
I wish my father had.

There is quiet as the waves lap onto the shore. Fionn continues to leaf through his book. Aislin, without averting her eyes from the sky, moves her arm and pats Fionn's leg sympathetically, then returns her hands to her stomach with a delicate sigh. A few moments later, Fionn puts his book down. Now they both lie there, looking at the clouds.

FADE OUT.

148 EXT. MANSE YARD - THE NEXT MORNING

148

The birds are singing, the sky is blue and all the sounds of Spring are swirling around the yard. Occasional laughter can be heard from inside the shed, carried on the winds.

149 INT. SHED - MORNING

149

The sunlight is gliding through the wooden planks of the shed wall, creating an intermittent warm orange glow over the clutter, between the shadow.

Aislin's herbs and pots are on the work bench glistening in the shards of sunlight. Fionn is in very high spirits, and is teasing Aislin by mimicking the severe old ladies from the kirk.

(CONTINUED)

He is holding a small grey velvet pouch in one hand and parading some of its contents with the other.

FIONN

Well it is clear to us all, this wee flower is of the Devil. Never dare to touch it. Never harbour so much as a thought about it. Most of all, never dare mix it with...

He roots around in the pouch to reveal...

FIONN

... This wee flower.

AISLIN

(laughing)

I said be careful with the pouch.

FIONN

It is quite straightforward, God made a mistake when he planted these on the 6th day, or was it the 5th day? He didn't mean to do it. It doesn't belong. We, the Elders of the kirk, know this and that is that. He, nay, *she* who touches it will be cast into the belly of Hell for all eternity!

Aislin is laughing.

AISLIN

That isn't why I haven't tried it.

FIONN

And we must listen to the Elders as they are always right. To meddle in nature is a sin.

AISLIN

I know it's a powerful mixture of dried herbs and mushrooms Fionn.

Fionn carries on teasing her. He now has found a dry mushroom from the pouch which he is parading about.

FIONN

This is a powerful mushroom! And so man must never share in its fruits... they are unnatural!

AISLIN

Can you imagine me taking this mixture alone here, with no experience of its effects and coming across Mrs McSwan?

(CONTINUED)

FIONN  
(mimicking Aislin's  
voice)  
My, you look so beautiful Mrs  
McSwan.

AISLIN  
Stop that.

FIONN  
I am healed Mrs McSwan and it is  
you I choose.

AISLIN  
It's not a love potion Fionn, it's  
an aid for deep communion with  
nature, a healing mixture.

FIONN  
OK, you've twisted my arm, I'll  
try it.

AISLIN  
Fionn!

FIONN  
I said you have persuaded me of  
its importance madam, I need a  
lifetime of healing. I'm ready.  
Are you?

AISLIN  
(coyly)  
The herbs were given to me by the  
old man when he gave me the book.

FIONN  
The old man with the green eyes?

AISLIN  
Aye.

FIONN  
You're kidding. Really? Why?

AISLIN  
I don't know why.

FIONN  
Well what did he say?

AISLIN  
He said that one day I would be  
ready to share in the knowledge  
they hold.

FIONN

Now is that time! Isn't it? It's perfect, everybody is gone and it is just us.

Aislin looks quizzically at Fionn for a moment. His wide eyes are full of encouragement.

AISLIN

Alright.

CUT TO:

150 EXT. WILD FAIRY FIELDS - SEQUENCE - DAY

150

The magical landscape has come alive. Aislin's hair is wild in the breeze, her dress dancing around her body.

Fionn's full eyes are drenched with wonder. He is drinking in the colours and sounds of the earth and sky.

Step after step they are going deeper into the woods.

Aislin drops to the ground and rolls onto her back, arms and legs spread out. Moments later, Fionn does the same. They both lie, some metres apart, with their jaws and eyes loose.

Aislin sits up then begins to giggle. Fionn, now on all fours is drooling. After a moment of confusion, he comes into the moment. He too begins to laugh.

Moments later, somewhere else, Fionn slowly opens his eyes and finds Aislin standing near him. Her face is electric and her eyes, like saucers, peer at him.

AISLIN

(enticingly)

Let's go to the fairy pools.

151 EXT. FAIRY POOLS - DAY

151

Fionn dives onto the ground and begins to hug it tenderly, completely taken by this union.

Aislin is taking her clothes off by the rock pool.

FIONN

(deeply moved)

I can feel the earth turning.

There is a loud splash.

FIONN

Aislin?

(CONTINUED)

He jumps up and sways to the edge of the water. There is no sign of Aislin. He starts to strip down in a panic. Still, Aislin does not come up.

FIONN

Aislin!?

He runs around this side of the pool trying to see if he can make her out. Nothing.

FIONN

I can't see you. Where are you?

With panic in his eyes he takes a run up, he holds his nose and jumps in. The surface of the water has swallowed them both up.

CUT TO BLACK:

In a wild rush of oxygen, they surface.

FIONN

(gasping)

I thought you drowned.

AISLIN

I did! It's wonderful!

She dives under the water straight away. Fionn follows. We now see them swimming naked through the magical waters of this natural wonder. Inhibitions fading away, as they discover other caves and ledges, rising up briefly for lung-fulls of air and laughter.

FIONN

(ecstatic)

As God intended!

AISLIN

(gasping, laughing)

As mother nature intended!

Immediately, Aislin dives under the magical waters again. Fionn follows.

Now they are in some woodland half-dressed, Fionn hanging upside down from a tree by only one foot, as Aislin is tiptoeing, delicately, quietly, around the trees with wonder.

Covered in mud, Fionn is fashioning himself a hat of twigs and leaves.

Aislin is lying at the foot of a collapsed tree, which is nevertheless still alive and thriving, with an enormous spread of upturned roots. She is staring, entirely engrossed in this meditation.

Fionn approaches with his distinguished twig hat and sits nearby. For some moments they are quiet and still, like two enchanted children, staring at the roots of the old tree.

Suddenly, Fionn starts to cry.

Aislin comes close to him and holds him. Some moments pass. Abstracted, she begins to talk in a soft voice, as if in a dream.

AISLIN

The oldest trees on Earth come  
from across this sea.

Fionn is still crying. Aislin is almost rocking him, slowly, gently.

AISLIN

They grow to be two hundred feet  
tall. They are giants.

Fionn is slowly coming into focus.

AISLIN

The oldest trees on Earth grow all  
of their giant height in the first  
one hundred years... then, for two  
thousand more years, they grow and  
spread their mighty roots.

Aislin has tears quietly streaming from her eyes now too.

They both lie down peacefully, exhausted from this release, looking up at the sun flickering through the leaves on the tree above.

Thick black clouds are moving towards the island. Fionn is standing, letting the increasing winds flow through him.

Suddenly, Aislin jumps up from beneath the tree and begins to run down the hill towards the manse, whooping and cheering, falling over, rolling, picking herself up and starting again.

Fionn is left to gather up all their debris. He runs after her, trying to put his shoes on at the same time. It is beginning to rain. They run and run and run.

153 EXT. MANSE YARD - EVENING

153

As they are nearing the manse, Fionn is about a hundred metres behind Aislin. She is beginning to cry as she runs. Fionn, as if he can see her, immediately starts to look worried and picks up his pace. The rain is falling thick and hard now. Running faster and faster Aislin reaches the grave then falls to her knees in front of it, as she lets out an almighty, primal scream. Thunder shakes the earth.

Fionn catches her just as she collapses completely. Her body small in his strong arms, the chaos of her long black hair sticking to their faces. He cradles her like a child. Aislin's huge hazel eyes rise to meet Fionn's.

There is a loud rustle. They jump. Looking out into the dark stormy distance there is nothing, no-one. A faint grunting noise. Aislin lets go of Fionn and holds her breath. A wild goat makes a dash across the yard. Relieved, Aislin and Fionn quickly gather themselves up and run into the house.

154 INT. MANSE KITCHEN - EVENING

154

Like two drowned creatures, they bundle into the kitchen. Fionn trips over himself and Aislin laughs. Outside the rainstorm is mounting to gale force.

AISLIN

Quick get the fire on.

FIONN

It's weird being inside... it's like a match box house.

AISLIN

Come on, the fire.

They are both undressing briskly out of their wet clothes as they talk.

FIONN

Please can we have a giant pot of tea?

AISLIN

Yes... and cake?

FIONN

And cake, Yes! I think I'm starving.

AISLIN

Here put these down on the floor.

(CONTINUED)

She passes him some tea towels and scatters some out herself. Thunder bellows outside.

                  AISLIN

I'm starving too. I'll get the bread and cheese out.

                  FIONN

Yesterday's leftovers?

                  AISLIN

And yesterday's leftovers.

                  FIONN

There she goes, she'll be roaring in no time.

Aislin roars like a lion. Fionn jumps.

                  FIONN

Christ! You made me jump.

                  AISLIN

You look like a wild animal.

                  FIONN

Get some food for me please!

                  AISLIN

Sorry, sorry. Here's the cake, start with that.

She is laying out as much as she can from the pantry.

                  FIONN

Oh that is amazing!

                  AISLIN

Give me a bite?

Fionn puts a bit of cake in Aislin's mouth as she runs upstairs. He continues to gorge himself. Moments later Aislin reappears in a dry nightdress, her long hair still wet over her shoulder.

                  AISLIN

(shivering)

If you thought it was strange down here, it is even stranger upstairs. It's cold up there.

                  FIONN

Eat something. Are those for me?

Fionn takes clothes from Aislin.

FIONN

Thank you for looking after me.

AISLIN

I think we've looked after each other.

Fionn passes her a plate that he has made for her in her absence. He begins to dry himself more vigorously.

The kitchen is a chaos of food and wet clothes and tea towels all over the floor. With a clap of thunder they are suddenly plunged into darkness.

FIONN

Oh my!

AISLIN

It's alright, it happens all the time!

FIONN

What are we going to do?

AISLIN

Turn the gas lights on and deal with it when the storm is over.

FIONN

I've got the matches.

There is another clap of thunder. Aislin screams. Standing there in the half-light of the hallway is Balor, looking terrifying. In his filthy, wet clothes and deranged demeanour, he is barely recognisable.

AISLIN

Balor! You made it!

BALOR

You think that God only saves you from the sea?

Balor prowls into the fire-lit room like a hungry predator.

AISLIN

Go to your room Fionn.

FADE TO BLACK.

Fionn is crouching low, peering through the crack in his door. He is straining to see and hear what is unfolding downstairs.

156 INT. MANSE KITCHEN - CONTINUOUS - EVENING 156

Balor is standing by the fire, staring at it ominously as Aislin busies herself removing his clothes and attempting to swiftly clear up the chaos as she goes.

AISLIN  
I'll run you a bath before you  
catch your death. Keep this  
wrapped around you.

BALOR  
Get me a drink.

AISLIN  
Here.

BALOR  
A drink!

157 INT. MANSE STUDY - EVENING 157

Aislin hurries into the study. With the gas lantern she negotiates the chaos of maps still on the floor and finds a bottle of whiskey. Thunder, lightning and thick rain beat down on the island outside.

158 INT. KITCHEN MANSE - CONTINUOUS - EVENING 158

AISLIN  
Here you go. I'll run the bath.  
Eat something. Sit down.

159 INT. BATHROOM MANSE - EVENING 159

Aislin runs the bath and looks at her face in the mirror. She quickly ties her wet hair.

160 INT. MANSE KITCHEN - CONTINUOUS - EVENING 160

Balor casts his eyes over the kitchen; the plate confusingly adorned with half eaten cake, ham and stew, the flowers in the vase, the mud and clothes on the floor... *the books.*

AISLIN  
The bath is running. Can I get you  
anything?

Before her sentence is finished, Balor has brushed past her threateningly and out of the room.

(CONTINUED)

160 CONTINUED:

160

Aislin looks at the books, the clothes and takes her head in her hands.

FIONN

Are you alright?

AISLIN

What are you doing? Go back to your room.

FIONN

Are you alright?

AISLIN

I said go!

Fionn takes his books and leaves. Aislin bundles all the wet clothes into a pile and throws the flowers from the vase into the bin and piles the plates and glasses.

161 INT. MANSE BATHROOM - EVENING

161

Balor is naked in the bath with only the dim, flickering candle light and the occasional lightning bolt highlighting his grave, crying face.

FADE OUT.

162 EXT. MANSE FIELDS - DAWN

162

The landscape is recovering from the storm's battering. Fences are down, flower baskets are crushed on the floor. Birds are beginning to sing.

163 INT. BALOR'S STUDY - MORNING

163

Balor wakes in his study. Bleary eyed, he sees Aislin walking out of the manse. He observes the silhouette of her body through her nightdress, now translucent against the low morning sunlight, as she bends to pick up the debris in her path.

164 INT. MANSE SPARE BEDROOM - MORNING

164

Upstairs, Fionn is also watching the contours of Aislin's body from the window. As she looks back at the manse cautiously, Fionn ducks out of view.

165 INT. BALOR'S STUDY - CONTINUOUS - MORNING

165

Simultaneously, Balor also jerks away from the window and Aislin's view.

(CONTINUED)

165 CONTINUED: 165

Balor turns to the mess all over the floor. Depressed he reaches for his bottle, takes a swig, then stares blankly into the void.

166 EXT. MANSE YARD - DAY 166

Aislin is busy mucking out the animal pens. Fionn is on the other side of the yard fixing the fences that have come down. Occasionally Fionn casts a sideward glance at her, but Aislin will not enter into a dialogue. They continue to work.

167 INT/EXT. MANSE KITCHEN/YARD - DAY 167

Aislin is preparing lunch. It is past midday and Balor has still not emerged from his study. Aislin can see that outside Fionn is setting down his tools. The study door can be heard opening. She quickly prepares a sandwich. The bathroom door can be heard closing.

As Fionn nears the house, Aislin hurries out. They begin to whisper to each other intensely.

Emerging into the kitchen, Balor sees this exchange.

168 EXT. MANSE YARD - DAY 168

BALOR  
(suddenly)  
Go and clean the boat lad. Aislin,  
come here!

AISLIN  
(whispering to Fionn)  
Do as he says, go.

Fionn turns and heads to the shed for the materials.

169 INT. BALOR'S STUDY - DAY 169

BALOR  
What is going on here?

AISLIN  
Nothing.

BALOR  
Hmm. Nothing. I have been gone for  
barely five days and you have done  
nothing.

AISLIN

What was the factory like? Did you visit their new lodgings?

BALOR

Five whole days and you have done nothing.

AISLIN

Everything is in order Balor. I tended the croft, the lad did his chores.

BALOR

This lad is a bit too big for his boots isn't he?

AISLIN

He's a good lad. He's helped out with everything...

BALOR

So you're pleased to have had this time with him?

AISLIN

I'm pleased that you are back in one piece and that you have satisfied your...

BALOR

Satisfied?

AISLIN

You delivered the pews and...

BALOR

While you were cavorting with a criminal like a half-dressed whore...

AISLIN

We were on the beach collecting clams, then the storm came, we rushed back. We were soaked through.

BALOR

So are we to have clams for lunch?

AISLIN

We dropped them running back.

BALOR

Hmm.

(CONTINUED)

AISLIN

It is all over Balor, please just get some rest. You have done what you set out to do. Things have been peaceful here. Things can be peaceful here. You are tired, worn out. Please get some rest.

BALOR

Lucky we have the lad here to keep things ticking over.

AISLIN

He is here through the kirk Balor.

BALOR

I should do as I am told should I?

AISLIN

You should sleep this off upstairs for a few hours. I have to finish lunch.

To Balor's surprise, Aislin leaves. As she shuts the door behind her, a small quiver of relief sighs from her lips.

Aislin, Balor and Fionn sit and eat dinner in silence. Balor is barely touching his food but, instead, he is staring at Aislin, then at Fionn.

With a grind of his chair he rises from the table and begins to climb the hallway stairs. There is the sound of tipping furniture.

AISLIN

It's alright. Just stay calm.

FIONN

He's in my room.

AISLIN

Where are your books?

FIONN

Under the mattress.

Time tensely passes. Balor enters the kitchen. He slaps Aislin hard around her face.

BALOR

The Devil in you couldn't resist.

AISLIN

They are all that he has Balor. He worked so hard on your boat...

BALOR

He worked hard to repent for his sins Aislin, his sins! Get out of my sight. I will deal with you later.

Holding her face, Aislin leaves the kitchen. Balor closes the door.

BALOR

On your knees lad. Right here, by the fire. You are going to watch these filthy books burn and you are going to pray. Oh you are going to pray for forgiveness.

Fionn, terrified, kneels on the cold stone floor in front of the fire. Balor throws the books in. They begin to burn.

BALOR

Pray lad! Pray! With all that you have!

FIONN

Dear Lord, please forgive me for all that I have done...

BALOR

Louder!

FIONN

Dear Lord, please forgive me for...

171 INT. MANSE MARITAL BEDROOM - NIGHT

171

Aislin is on her bed crying.

172 INT. MANSE KITCHEN - CONTINUOUS - NIGHT

172

Fionn is still praying.

BALOR

If you so much as move an inch I will get my belt.

Balor leaves through the back door.

173 INT. SHED - NIGHT 173

Balor is smashing all of Aislin's secret cupboard of herbs like a madman.

174 INT. MARITAL BEDROOM - CONTINUOUS - NIGHT 174

From her bed, Aislin is frozen, listening to everything outside being smashed and Fionn still praying downstairs.

FADE TO BLACK.

175 INT/EXT. SHED/MANSE YARD - THE NEXT DAY 175

Aislin is clearing out the debris from the shed.

176 INT. MANSE HALLWAY/STUDY - DAY 176

The study door is still locked shut. Inside, Balor is passed out drunk.

177 INT/EXT. SHED/MANSE YARD - DAY 177

FIONN

Aislin, let me help you.

AISLIN

You mustn't be in here.

FIONN

I'm not scared, please let me help you.

AISLIN

I won't let him lay a finger on you.

FIONN

Please, it's alright. Stop crying.

AISLIN

It's not alright though is it?

FIONN

You can save some of this.

AISLIN

I don't want any of it... I give up.

FIONN

I can't bear to see you like this.

(CONTINUED)

AISLIN

Please you mustn't worry. It is you I'm worried about. Now go please, the animals need feeding.

FIONN

I don't want to.

AISLIN

Go Fionn!

Fionn leaves reluctantly.

178 EXT. MANSE YARD - A LITTLE LATER - DAY

178

Fionn is tending to the animals. Aislin is scrubbing the chicken droppings from the stone around the house. Balor emerges, limps across the yard and begins to chop some wood with a glistening axe. His presence is awkward and alien.

Aislin crosses over to Fionn and gives him the brush and bucket

AISLIN

Can you carry on as I have to...

BALOR

(Calling across to them)

Fionn, come here.

Fionn heads towards him. He is angry.

BALOR

You look like you need to let off some steam boy. Finish this wood. Then I want it all drying in the shelter. Nice and neat. That should keep you out of the way.

FIONN

All of it?

BALOR

All of it. I am taking my wife to bed.

Aislin is not sure she has heard correctly from across the field.

As Balor ushers her into the house by her arm, she casts Fionn a desperate, final look of reassurance.

179 INT. MANSE MARITAL BEDROOM - DAY 179

Balor throws Aislin onto the bed and begins to rip her skirts up as he unties his trousers. All the blood has drained from Aislin's face and she is limp, like an empty shell being man handled. In contrast to Balor, Aislin seems so small and weak.

Balor struggles to get himself on top of her and inside her, grunting with frustration. Moving her violently into a better position. He tries again to get inside her. He is increasingly agitated. Again he fails. Suddenly he collapses onto the bed, his body pinning Aislin down by its weight on her dress, his face away from hers.

They are both absolutely still, every breath audible. Time seems to freeze, as husband and wife lie in this strange contortion on their marital bed.

Time holds this space. Balor's body position gradually becomes more and more foetal. Both their faces tell the story of their failure, of their baby's death. Tears stream quietly down their faces, each cast away from the other. Although their bodies are touching.

180 EXT. MANSE YARD - CONTINUOUS - DAY 180

Fionn chops wood angrily, looking up at Aislin and Balor's bedroom window between every crunch of the axe.

181 INT. MANSE MARITAL BEDROOM - CONTINUOUS - DAY 181

Gradually, centimetre by centimetre Aislin prizes herself out from under Balor. Quietly she stands and, one foot after the other, makes it out of the bedroom.

182 INT. MANSE STAIRS - DAY 182

Step after step she takes the stairs, slowly, slowly.

183 INT. MANSE SITTING ROOM - DAY 183

She lowers herself onto a chair as if in a trance. Moments pass. Outside, she can see Fionn hauling the wood and this soothes her. Her breathing begins to slow and regulate. With every breath, her posture eases. Moments pass as she watches the line of Fionn's body labouring outside.

184 INT. MANSE STAIRS - DAY 184

Balor is staring down through the banisters and through into the sitting room at Aislin. Now, from his vantage position on the stairwell, he can follow Aislin's sight line to Fionn outside the window. Even with her back turned in the chair, he sees how captivated Aislin is. With a heavy, jealous heart, he descends the stairs without making a sound and emptily enters the sitting room.

185 INT. MANSE SITTING ROOM - CONTINUOUS - DAY 185

Aislin jumps, lets out a scream and drops the glass of water in her hand. There is a smash as it crashes to the floor.

AISLIN

I didn't hear you. You scared me.

As she turns her eyes suddenly meet Balor's and there is a glimmer of a distant love, a forgiveness.

From nowhere, Fionn bursts into the sitting room through the partially open garden door and rams Balor violently against the wall.

FIONN

Don't you dare lay a finger on her!

AISLIN

No Fionn, No!

FIONN

I swear I'll kill you!

AISLIN

No Fionn. Get out. Now!

In the chaos, Fionn drops Balor, who collapses in a heap on the floor. He looks at Aislin with confused, pleading eyes.

AISLIN

Get out!

Fionn runs out of the house and doesn't stop.

186 EXT. MANSE FIELDS - DAY 186

Confused and ashamed, Fionn's rage and pain drive him further and further from the manse.

- 187 INT. MANSE SITTING ROOM - DAY 187
- AISLIN  
I'm sorry Balor.
- BALOR  
Get off me!
- AISLIN  
Are you hurt?
- He collects himself from the floor and limps out, retreating to his lair.
- 188 EXT. CAVE - DAY 188
- Fionn arrives at the cave, panting. He is angry and punches and kicks things with frustration.
- 189 INT. BALOR'S STUDY - DAY 189
- Balor takes an enormous gulp of whiskey and starts maniacally rooting through the chaos of his office in search of something.
- 190 EXT. MANSE YARD - DAY 190
- Aislin is stroking her animals. She looks dreadful, dazed and confused.
- AISLIN  
(in a whisper)  
It's going to be alright... It's going to be alright.
- 191 INT. BALOR'S STUDY - CONTINUOUS - DAY 191
- BALOR  
Here you are!
- Balor sits at his large wooden desk and swipes the chaos on it to the floor. With a space clear, he takes the telephone and places it in front of him. He takes another swig of whiskey, then another.
- 192 EXT. CAVE - CONTINUOUS - DAY 192
- Now, calmer, Fionn appears entirely at a loss as to what to do, as he paces about on the brink of tears.

193 INT. BALOR'S STUDY - CONTINUOUS - DAY 193

BALOR

May I be put through to Mr Smith?  
It is Minister McNeil... Thank  
you.... Mr Smith? Yes, Hello.  
Unfortunately, you must come and  
collect the lad immediately.... No  
I am absolutely certain, you must  
come immediately. The lad is a  
thief... Yes, a thief. There is  
nothing more that I can do to turn  
the boy around. He is of the Devil  
and that is that! This is not up  
for discussion... I will not  
bestow pearl to swine Mr Smith....  
Yes, right away. Well it will take  
as long as it takes, we are here.  
I will be waiting. Good day.

Balor's eyes are sizzling with the taste of revenge. He takes another large drink of his whiskey and sits back in his chair, low and smiling.

FADE OUT.

194 INT. CAVE - THAT NIGHT 194

Fionn is curled up shivering, by the dying embers of a small campfire.

195 INT. MANSE MARITAL BEDROOM - NIGHT 195

Aislin is wide awake sitting on a chair she has moved to her window. Fionn is nowhere to be seen.

196 INT. BALOR'S STUDY - NIGHT 196

Balor is passed out drunk on his desk.

197 INT. MANSE MARITAL BEDROOM - DAWN. 197

Aislin looks out at the morning mist from her chair and can make out a form walking towards the manse. She bolts up, takes her robe and opens her creaking bedroom door as quietly as possible.

198 EXT. MANSE YARD - DAWN 198

In the morning mist, Fionn is tentatively approaching the manse, like a starving wild animal. He looks scared.

199 INT. MANSE KITCHEN - DAWN 199

Aislin enters the kitchen with a blanket in hand. She grabs the bread and hurries out stealthily.

200 EXT. MANSE YARD. - CONTINUOUS - DAWN 200

Aislin rushes to Fionn. She grabs him and holds him close.

AISLIN

Oh Fionn! Dear Fionn! I have been so worried.

She wraps him in the blanket as he shivers.

AISLIN

Take the bread. You can't come in yet. Let him get up. Sit in the shed, quick. I'll bring you more blankets and food.

Fionn goes into the shed.

201 INT. MANSE KITCHEN - CONTINUOUS - DAWN 201

Aislin rushes inside and collects more blankets. In the kitchen she fills a bottle with water and gets some more food from the pantry. All the while she is trying to be as quiet as possible.

202 INT. BALOR'S STUDY - DAWN 202

In his hung-over state, Balor is beginning to stir. The commotion in the house is jolting him out of his sleep. His neck and back are stiff and his eyes are bleary.

203 INT. SHED - DAWN 203

AISLIN

Take this. Quickly. Get warm, eat. Take whatever punishment he gives you Fionn, please - or we'll never see each other again.

She is fussing over him hysterically, rubbing him vigorously with her hands as she talks.

AISLIN

It is the only way Fionn. Just take it and things will calm down. I can't imagine life without you. I've got to go.

(MORE)

(CONTINUED)

203 CONTINUED:

203

AISLIN (CONT'D)

Let Balor have his breakfast. I will talk to him. Busy yourself with work on the yard. It will be OK when he sees you working. Be sorry Fionn, for our sake.

Aislin rushes out.

204 INT. MANSE BATHROOM - DAWN

204

Balor is urinating loudly.

205 INT. MANSE KITCHEN - DAWN

205

Aislin rushes into the house and busies herself immediately.

When Balor walks in and sits at the table, the kettle has just begun to whistle.

AISLIN

Good morning.

Balor goes to the sink and drinks down lots and lots of water. Then takes his seat at the table.

AISLIN

Here is a nice cup of tea for you. Are you happy with eggs this morning?

Aislin cracks the eggs into the frying pan. She is looking out at the shed nervously when she can.

AISLIN

There has been a lot of confusion lately hasn't there?

She moves the eggs as they begin to sizzle. Time passes awkwardly as the sizzling intensifies.

AISLIN

We've all had a chance to sleep and today is a new day.

BALOR

Did the lad come back?

AISLIN

No he didn't.

BALOR

Didn't dare.

(CONTINUED)

AISLIN

He is young Balor, he got confused. You remember being young don't you?

Aislin pours the eggs nervously onto Balor's plate. He begins to eat.

AISLIN

There is lots to do outside isn't there. We need to finish all the fences, plant new vegetables. Turn over the fields... the list is endless isn't it?

BALOR

I want some meat.

AISLIN

I have some in the pantry... I'll get it now.

Balor gets up out of his chair and prowls to the window.

AISLIN

Balor sit down and finish your breakfast.

Balor starts to unleash his belt from his trousers. He is staring at the shed, where a form can be seen moving between the slats.

AISLIN

Balor, please, come on, what are you doing? Eat your breakfast.

Balor walks out of the back door. Leaving Aislin, terrified, pacing up and down in a panic.

Balor is taking his shirt off as he walks to the shed. He is absolutely livid, a man possessed. His heavy belt buckle swaying ominously with every stride.

Suddenly Fionn bolts out of the shed door. Balor grabs him and punches his face. Fionn is scrambling to get away, not fighting back.

FIONN

I thought you were attacking her. Please, please.

Balor is in full assault. He will stop at nothing. The belt is swinging down onto Fionn relentlessly. The brutal scene moves around the yard, fast and furious.

AISLIN

Stop! Balor please stop!

Aislin is shouting from the manse.

AISLIN

You're going to kill him! Please stop!

BALOR

Get in the house woman or you are next!

Fionn's face is bleeding, his arm too. His clothes are ripped and muddied.

BALOR

You are a swine! You are the Devil. In my house you take my woman from me. In my house!

FIONN

I haven't done anything, I promise, please.

AISLIN

Stop Balor, stop! Fionn run...  
RUN!

Fionn tries to run. Aislin rushes into the house.

207 INT. MANSE SITTING ROOM - DAWN

207

Terrified and shaking, Aislin grabs the largest fire iron and runs out of the house.

208 EXT. MANSE YARD - CONTINUOUS - DAWN

208

This deranged attack is moving across the yard in chaos. Aislin is drawing nearer to it.

AISLIN

Run Fionn, get away!

Fionn pushes Balor and begins to run, Balor is at his heels. A few metres from the small grave, Fionn stumbles and collapses on the floor.

BALOR

This is the end of the road for you lad! The end...

Fionn is scrambling, edging nearer to the grave. Now Aislin is running towards them, wielding the fire iron.

(CONTINUED)

AISLIN

Leave him Balor! Leave him!

BALOR

(poised for murder,  
exhausted and  
deranged)

Why Aislin? Give me one good  
reason why?

AISLIN

(with nothing left to  
lose)

Because I love him Balor... I love  
him! (now pleading softly) Please  
don't take everything from me,  
please.

Delirious and steaming, Balor suddenly sees Fionn's  
bleeding heap before the small grave and Aislin's  
terrified face frozen in time. He staggers back, confused  
and frightened.

AISLIN

(slowly, her voice  
breaking)

I've been here all along.

Fionn's wild eyes dart between Aislin and Balor. His  
breath shallow, his heart pounding.

Balor staggers further and further back from Fionn  
towards Aislin, his body growing limp and unbalanced.

Aislin drops the fire iron and opens her shaking arms.

The wide tumbling expanse of sky frames the three  
creatures in this moment.

Aislin's small hand touches Balor's arm. Suddenly,  
thunder bursts through the Heavens.

BALOR

(desperately  
recoiling)

Go! Go... Go away!...

Fionn's catches Aislin's hand firmly.

AISLIN

You had me Balor...

BALOR

AWAY! GO! Far, far away! GO AWAY!

Faster, then faster still, Aislin and Fionn are running  
and running.

209 EXT. BOAT - DAWN 209

With a heady mixture of terror and relief, and only the clothes on their backs, Aislin and Fionn reach the jetty. Their eyes meet and meet again as they are stumbling over the obstacles to the swinging boat. It begins to rain, as they struggle to untie the ropes amid lightning passionate kisses. They sling themselves onto the boat.

MEANWHILE:

210 INT. MANSE/KIRK/ISLAND/HIGHLAND - SEQUENCE 210

All the rooms in the manse are empty.

A tile swings in the wind from the stripped kirk roof.

A frightened stag and doe clamber over the heather in the hilltops and out of view.

Balor sits in a heap by the grave of his dead child, as the rain rolls down his face.

From inside Mr Smith's car, the windscreen wipers squeak.

Through the rain, Mr Smith's car is a moving dot on the long winding road through the Highland glen to the islands, amidst the mighty, weather-beaten Scottish hills.

211 EXT. BOAT - DAWN 211

Aislin and Fionn's love is carried away by boat.

212 EXT. MANSE - CONTINUOUS - DAWN 212

Balor clambers to his feet. Muddied, he makes his way to the manse and shuts its heavy front door behind him.

CUT TO BLACK:

213 TITLE CARD: 213

They are not long, the days of wine and roses:  
Out of a misty dream  
Our path emerges for a while, then closes  
Within a dream.

FADE TO BLACK.

214 214