

Pirate Queen

by
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Based on the True Story of Grace O'Malley

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A mighty fishing vessel in the year, 1533. Masts and sails and MEN made larger than life by their backbreaking work. Up in the rigging, climbing and furling sails, fishing the nets.

They brace themselves against the cold spray of the North Sea. Under full sail, the ship cuts a sharp, neat tack through the waves.

On the upper deck stands their Captain. BLACK OAK O'MALLEY, mighty force of a man, a prized working knife stashed in his belt, and a large cutlass hanging down from his other hip. He ruled his men, stern and fair, with words of encouragement, never a punishing blow.

They, in return, would die for their Captain. His clan fished the seas dry. Herring, cod, halibut, haddock, hake, fist over fist in their nets, gulls and egrets pecking, dancing and shrieking in the sky above.

Men cheering their full hold. Black Oak calls to come about and head it home.

BLACK OAK

Ready About! Let's head her in boys! The herring have run strong, hake and haddock for tonight's supper, cod to salt down and sell, I'd say plenty a catch for this run. Thanks be to God.

MEN IN RIGGING AND ON DECK

(cheering)

Ay Captain. A good catch!

One man, JONESY BOY, sheathes his fillet knife and calls up to his captain.

JONESY BOY

Captain, we've salted down some fine haddock.

Black Oak nods.

Off in the distance, a great galleon ship cuts a thick wake through the outer waters off the Irish Coast. Black Oak slips his brass telescope from his belt to stare down the ship.

BLACK OAK

She's packed to the gunwales, look
how she moves like a dead and
bloated pig through the water.

(beat)

Let's go home to warm food and
hearth, there will plenty of time
tomorrow to help them.

Black Oak smiles as he snaps the telescope closed. His
right hand man, MORGAN, rugged mid 40s, nods out to the
ship, a gleam in his weathered eyes.

MORGAN

She's Spanish, slow and drunk, she
sails sloppy, so much gold she can
barely move.

BLACK OAK

Yes, I think she might be
venturing too close to our nets
and fishing grounds, the threats
might seem real if we are pressed
for any reason for defending
ourselves against such an imposing
vessel.

Morgan smiles.

MORGAN

Ours is a meager existence, we
catch our fill in our nets. Our
town villagers depend on us. Any
vessel that strays from the
bustling trade route, is indeed a
threat, English, Dutch, Spanish,
Turkish. They are all foreboding
to our meager nets and quiet
fishing ways.

BLACK OAK

The ocean provides for us. We use
the sea, we fish it well... of all
that it provides...

EXT. CLIFFS OFF CLEW BAY DAY

Black Oak O'Malley had but one child and it was not a
boy.

(CONTINUED)

Grace, 12, with her long hair, her Silke eyes, and her rugged beauty, so captured her father's heart that leaving her ashore nearly stopped him cold. But still she was just a girl. Men went aship, not girls.

Grace waits by the cliff's edge for her Father's return, her small frame buffeted by the winds. She holds her ground demanding he fire up the signal beacon to her ashore.

The beacon flashes aboard Black Oak's ship. Grace jumps and hollers as the ships rounded the point, racing to greet them each time.

Grace runs down to the docks, threading her way through the merchants and villagers, families and fishermen unloading their catch. They all know Grace. She beams with a smile on her face and fire in her belly.

As she throws herself up into his arms, Black Oak catches his daughter. Holding all that matters close to his heart.

BLACK OAK

There she is, my lifeline. My
beacon. The keeper of my heart.

Grace kisses her father and hugs his neck tight. She buries her face smelling the ocean's musk that courses in her father's veins.

GRACE

Why can't I be a boy? I want to go
with you. Silly women and their
silly little lives. Dresses and
petticoats, curls and chores.

BLACK OAK

Ay and a beautiful girl you are.

(beat)

Your mother, God rest her soul,
she always worried something might
happen to you if you go out to
sea.

GRACE

(infuriated)

But that's just the problem,
nothing happens on shore!

(MORE)

GRACE (CONT'D)

Nothing changes, no tides shift,
no fish run, no winds blow,
nothing but the same view from my
window leading me to the same
thing that mother did and her
mother before.

Grace tugs at her cumbersome dress and petticoats as she jumps down from her father's massive frame.

ONE OF THE MEN hurls a line to ANOTHER SEAMAN, Grace intercepts the line and coils it arm-to-shoulder better and faster than the men themselves.

The SEAMEN whoop and cheer the young gammon. Black Oak laughs and reaches down to nuzzle his daughter playfully.

GRACE

Morgan, I saw the herring run off
the tide rip at the mouth today.

Morgan smiles to her and shakes his head in awe of this fireball.

MORGAN

Captain, God bless you. You have
your hands fuller ashore with her
than with a whole crew of 100
men...

(beat)

But, no denying it, she does know
her way out there.

Morgan winks at Grace.

MORGAN

I saw you out there in your
currach, gliding along. Who'd you
get to go along with you today? I
imagine it wasn't one of your
girlfriends...

Grace guffaws him.

GRACE

What girls? I got Rory to row with
me. We shoved that school right up
against our nets. I bet we outdid
you today bushel for bushel.

Black Oak roars and grabs his feisty little girl and hauls her up on his shoulder.

(CONTINUED)

BLACK OAK

And did you sail your sail proud,
the white sea horse flag I made
for you?

GRACE

Ay!

Grace, from up on high, points out to the edge of the
breakwater.

GRACE

We were right out there. I
shouldn't tell you. Any good
fisherman never reveals their hot
spots, but one day I'll take you
there myself.

MORGAN

Ay. Strange as that may sound, I
somehow have no doubt you will. A
right Pirate Queen in-the-making,
you are, Grace O'Malley of the
Connaught O'Clan.

Grace smiles down to him as she perched up high on her
father's shoulder. Black Oak marches her off.

BLACK OAK

Ok, Miss Pirate Queen, time to go
find some supper. I could eat an
entire horse.

Grace sits silhouetted in her bedroom window, on the edge
of her bed in her nightgown. Dim candle light and the
profound sound of Black Oak snoring in the next room.

Grace unfolds the cloth, inside is her father's prized
working knife. Small and as sharp as a razor. Grace
studies the knife, her eyes are wild. She slices the
petticoats and her dresses. She attacks the clothes with
a vengeance, refusing to go on as a girl.

She sits down, sweat on her brow as she raises the knife
to her temple, overcome with madness, she swoops the
blade down...

7

INT. GRACE'S BEDROOM DAY

7

The dark before the dawn, a purple light as Black Oak enters to kiss his daughter goodbye. To his shock, he found her there...

Grace was dead. She had shorn her hair and with every ounce of determination and moxie. She stands with pants she had pirated, lashed around her with a large rope, and her hair shorn like a boy.

Her father stares in shock.

BLACK OAK

Granueile, we will call you for
Bald Grace!

Grace holds her father's working knife with her feet wide apart in a bold stance.

GRACE

Grace is dead. It's settled. I
will go with you and your men.

Her father roars with laughter.

BLACK OAK

Very well, I will bring you but
just this once. One trip out with
these men, a month of stink and
rot at sea, men and their foul
cursing and gambling and carrying
on.

(beat)

We'll see if you won't be begging
me to turn the ship around...
which I will not do!

As a smile blasts across her face, she runs to hug her father. He ushers her along and rolls his eyes, what have I done. A smile.

8

EXT. BLACK OAK'S VESSEL DAY

8

Morgan shakes his head in disbelief as he sees Grace tagging along.

MORGAN

Women on ships... a bad omen,
bringing storms and shipwrecks,
they are "the devil's ballast"!

Grace stares him down with a wink and a smile.

GRACE

Instead of wasting all that time
on the mythology of macho
bullshit, Morgan, why don't you
just teach me about the tides, the
winds, the rigging and hawsers.

(beat)

I don't believe the sea
distinguishes man from woman. She
drowns and seduces us with even
mercy. She takes us all down just
the same unless we learn to
respect her. So, teach me, ya old
hag!

Morgan laughs and waves her over.

MORGAN

Very well, you will start by
swabbing the decks. And washing
that foul mouth of yours out with
soap! Cursin' like a sailor
already and we haven't even left
the docks!

Grace opens her mouth in offense and Morgan shoves a bar
of soap in. Black Oak smiles and shakes his head.

BLACK OAK

And a Pirate Queen is born...

EXT. FISHING VESSEL SOUTHERN COAST IRELAND DAY

It's somewhere off the coast of Ireland near the trade
route when Black Oak spots the slow, fat list of the
Spanish trade ship. He smiles and they draw nearer.

BLACK OAK

(calling out)

Welcome, it would appear that you
have entered our fishing grounds.

(MORE)

BLACK OAK (CONT'D)

Allow me to inform you, it is customary for our meager lifestyle as fishermen in these cold hard parts, to levy a toll for safe passage and should you be so inclined we also levy toll for the right to sell fishing rights to foreign fleets such as the likes of yours.

SPANISH CAPTAIN

Clear out of here. We are nowhere near your fishing grounds. We are well within the trade routes. Come about or we will...

MORGAN

(stepping forward,
menacing)

Will what? Take aim upon us? To hell with that.

With that Black Oak nods and the ship moves swiftly through the water. Guns fire, a canon blasts.

BLACK OAK

Fair warning given, prepare to be boarded, Captain.

General mayhem, plunder and raiding. Grace is on deck, her eyes are wild with the prize. She has caught the fever.

Jonesy Boy comes up on deck commanding the men to clear the front hold.

JONESY BOY

That should do it.

Grace stands over the railing, she spots the ship riding low in the stern. She catches the eye of one of the restrained Spanish Captain. His eyes dart to the aft hold.

She jumps the gunwale off her father's ship and boards the Spanish vessel. She grabs Jonesy Boy.

GRACE

Not so quick, Jonesy Boy. She's riding low in the aft cabin.

JONESY BOY

Nothing but animals and shit back there.

She gets down on her hands and knees and digs beneath the shit and manure. She is covered, Jonesy Boy looks both perplexed and disgusted as she locates the ring that opens the lower hatch.

As she heaves up, the door opens revealing a stash of glimmer and bejeweled treasures.

She jumps down into the hold and pulls up a large cutlass handsome and not overly ornate with a single large emerald on the mantle of the sword.

She climbs up and holds her sword high.

The Spanish Captain, standing behind Jonesy Boy, dives at Grace as she pulls the sword high.

As he goes for her, she whirls back around and presses the sword against his throat.

GRACE

(wild eyed laughs)

I will spare your life and relieve you of your cargo, Captain.

(cocky)

You should be honored that I find your treasures so appealing.

Black Oak steps up to hear his daughter deliver this line. He rolls his eyes 'Oh Dear Lord' to his daughter.

Jonesy Boy punches the Captain who reels back landing in the pile of animal dung.

BLACK OAK

(to the Spanish Captain)

Apologies. They're new to the game. A little over the top, I'd say.

The Captain passes out from the punch, his head goes back in the dung.

13 EXT. BLACK OAK'S SHIP DAY

13

She re-boards her Father's ship as the MEN stow the plunder. She pitches her new sword to her father.

GRACE

Black Oak, hold this for me.

As he shags the sword mid-air, she strips off her shit-riddled clothing and dives down into the water off the stern to wash off.

Morgan steps to the rail, winks, and tosses her a bar of soap.

She smiles up at him, catches it. Sunlight and a bright flash of teeth.

14 INT. SHIP'S HOLD BLACK OAK'S CABIN DAY

14

Morgan escorts Grace down below, she bucks him, but he holds her firmly. She claws back to see her father. She's frightened. Morgan guides her to Black Oak's cabin. Just then he hears a skirmish overhead and must act quickly.

MORGAN

Please Grace stay here, it's not safe up top, we will get clear. I will keep your father safe.

She nods and bows her head.

The minute Morgan leaves and closes the door, she lifts her devilish eyes up, there is no way in hell she is staying put while the fight is up on deck.

She steals out after Morgan has left.

16 EXT. BLACK OAK'S SHIP DECK DAY

16

She stows away under the stairs studying the battle.

The crew with swords swung, blunderbusses fired. She makes a break and ducks her head down then sneaks up high, climbing up into the rigging, hanging from the halyard, high over the battle.

She gazes down as men are cut down. Her eyes wide in what will be the final moment she feels fear.

(CONTINUED)

Her Father's back to an English soldier whose blade is held high and poised to pierce the life from him.

Without hesitation, and no time to spare, Grace dives from the rigging falling endlessly until she lands on the English soldier with crushing force.

Her Father whirls back around to see his enemy pinned under the weight of his young daughter. He lifts her up and hugs her to him and with the other hand, drives his sword through the Englishman.

While holding on her father's eyes, Grace leans an elbow onto the butt of the sword thrusting the final inch into the Englishman's throat. He coughs and sputters and she wipes the blood from her face. Her father holds on her eyes.

She is fearless. Morgan drives a sword through another soldier. Black Oak and Morgan swap a glance.

They both know who turned this battle around as they turn to see Grace down on her knees tending to Jonesy Boy whose been wounded in the battle.

Intuitively, she feels eyes on her, she looks up to spot both Black Oak and Morgan watching her and a solemn smile.

Grace sets back to work on Jonesy Boy calmly soothing him and tying off in tourniquet his badly injured leg.

MORGAN

(to Black Oak)

At 16, she's a glimmer of bad.
That Grace. She looks angry. I
like that. Angry people make
things happen.

Black Oak whirls back around and commands his men.

BLACK OAK

Boys, while you're at it, I'm sure
there are some fine English
weapons we could help off-load
from this crippled ship.

The MEN cheer and set to stripping the English of their prized English steel blades and guns.

ONE MAN holds up a beautiful sword.

(CONTINUED)

16 CONTINUED: (2)

16

SAILOR 1

Ay, Captain, look at this one. It has the look of fine Damascus steel, Syrian and the steel of the Gods. Ay, seems our English friends here have been looting some themselves.

ANOTHER MATE raises his sword high and studies it.

SAILOR 2

And this toledo steel the finest steel from Spain.

The English watch on as their weapons are stripped of them, beaten into submission.

17 EXT. IRISH COUNTRYSIDE DAY

17

MONTAGE

Ireland 1500s is plagued with inner battles, Gaelic warring factions, clan against clan.

18 Black Oak and Grace return from their work at sea. He is struck by his countryside in danger of seizure by the neighboring O'Flaherty clan. Black Oak knows he needs to be strategic and shrewd. As is custom at the time, families would marry off to protect their interests.

18

Grace, at 16, is beautiful, wild and fearless, Black Oak with heart heavy knows what he has to do as he stares into her Silke grey eyes.

19 EXT. BLACK OAK'S VESSEL DAY

19

Black Oak sails out to meet the head of the O'Flaherty clan.

BLACK OAK

(to Morgan)

The heading is two miles due south of Slyne Head, there's a deep harbor with good anchorage. We'll anchor in the lee of the Hill of Doon. It is a safe harbor.

20

INT. O'FLAHERTY CASTLE AT CONNAUGHT DAY

20

Black Oak and Morgan are greeted by fighting men the likes of his own. The son DONAL O'FLAHERTY is different. His pompous and arrogant pose insults Black Oak who struggles to bite his tongue.

BLACK OAK

(to O'Flaherty
chieftain)

As chieftain of the neighboring Umhall region, if my daughter is to betroth your son, she will not come empty-handed. It is custom to bring a substantial dowry, "spreidh". Cattle, horses, sheep and household goods. These special sureties are to ensure that she is kept and protected.

(beat)

That a single hand is laid in vain upon my daughter by you or any of yours, know that I will strike swiftly and fully. This and the brethren law that should death come you or divorce which is completely accepted in our Gaelic aristocracy, then the marriage contract will entitle my daughter to receive in full the dowry she brought and any part of her husband's property.

Black Oak's eyes scan the castle and the vast property surrounding.

The O'Flaherty Chieftain nods solemnly.

O'FLAHERTY CHIEFTAIN

In return, we are assured your support in both battle on land and sea. Ireland is being buffeted by a new force from England. This young Queen Elizabeth has a long arm and a greedy appetite. We face an insidious attack, one that pits Gael against Gael.

BLACK OAK

Playing upon our fierce sense of independence, it is true that England sets to erode our unity even further.

(MORE)

21

21

(CONTINUED)

BLACK OAK (CONT'D)

There is no more time for battles among us. Time to turn the sword outward and protect Ireland from being carved up.

O'FLAHERTY CHIEFTAIN

The Tudor Queen, like her treacherous father Henry VIII before her, seem to use this to their advantage. Gaining a foothold on our soil by turning one clan against the next. Smart tactics to let the Irish battle among themselves as England dangles the prize out for any clan chieftain willing to surrender his land and be re-granted a title.

BLACK OAK

Surrender and re-grant, yes. All the appearance of security and freedom, only the land is no longer ours, no longer Irish, but part of the Queen's reign.

(beat)

We are but mere Earls and Lords. Never to rule our own and upon our death, neither to be passed down in generations, but simply, it all becomes property of the Queen of England.

(beat)

For this I am here today O'Flaherty. Though we have battled to the death in the past, today we stand united to face the foreign battle. Ireland can no longer afford squabbles and bickering. We face a threat out beyond our coast that will bring down the full weight of a greedy Queen and her empire of men.

The O'Flaherty chieftain locks eyes with Black Oak, these are warriors and men of honor.

A SERVANT offers them the customary drink of malt, the chieftain's son Donal, looking fully bored by all this talk of threats, storms forth and grabs a cup of the malt before Black Oak, the guest has been served. Black Oak takes note.

(CONTINUED)

The Chieftain O'Flaherty swats his son's hand. The cup sails.

O'FLAHERTY CHIEFTAIN

The laws of hospitality are all
that our Ireland was founded upon.
Do not break them in my home!

Donal seethes like a scolded spoiled child.

DONAL

Very well.

BLACK OAK

For the clan O'Malley and the clan
O'Flaherty, this pact ensures that
fortune favors the bold.

(beat)

As for my daughter, Grace, she
will not stand down against any
man. I should think she'd even
impress that Queen Elizabeth
herself. Beware Donal-an-Chogaidh,
Donal of the Battles, indeed.

Black Oak and Grace are out beyond the breakwater,
fishing together. It's early morning. The steam on the
cool morning rises off the calm water.

Black Oak stares at his daughter.

GRACE

Father, either you will tell me or
I will have to guess. Intuition
courses through my veins, a
blessing or a curse that you
bestowed me...

BLACK OAK

Yes. That it does.

(beat)

Ireland is changing and we must
face it full on. There are threats
that we cannot ignore. We are not
safe standing alone, Clew Bay our
home is in danger.

(staring off)

I have made a visit to the
O'Flaherty clan.

(MORE)

BLACK OAK (CONT'D)

Either we will stand together with
them or they will conquer us. They
are stronger than we.

She heaves up her line, the white underbelly of a large
codfish comes into view through the black waters. She
hauls the fish over the gunwale, pitching it into the
bilge. She stops and stares her father down.

BLACK OAK

It is decided, you will marry
Donal to secure our land and gain
their defense against the external
powers of England...

GRACE

What? Are you mad? Those brutes? I
will not. I'd rather live a-sea
than submit to that lecherous lot.
Father you are to protect me, your
only daughter! How could you?

BLACK OAK

Because it is the only way I know
how to protect you.

GRACE

Noooo! Papa, I trusted you!

Grace wails, bitter tears stream her face. She reaches
for her working knife and stabs madly at the codfish.
Blood from her butchering splatters her face and clothes.

Black Oak stops her daughter, and grabs her into a hug
and holds on tight. She sobs against him uncontrollably.

BLACK OAK

It will be as I say. I will never
stop protecting you. I will die
before I shall let a thing harm
you.

He stares into her eyes and shakes her. His eyes rimmed
with tears.

BLACK OAK

Do you understand? It must be.

GRACE

(vicious and hurt)
The sea doesn't distinguish men
from women! You taught me that!
(sobbing now)
(MORE)

(CONTINUED)

GRACE (CONT'D)

From the sea, how could you take
me from her?

(inconsolable)

I don't complain Papa, I hold my
own...

BLACK OAK

You do more than that, My lovely
Pirate Queen. You lead the men
better than I. The Irish spirit,
shrewd and charismatic and yes,
intuitive, courses through you, my
white sea horse.

(beat)

No man I've ever come across in
battle, not an O'Flaherty or any
other, will ever rival that nor
take that from you.

(beat)

My beautiful white sea horse.

He hugs her again and sobs holding his daughter tight. A
strong gust kicks up and the white sea horse flag of
Grace's skiff flaps and dances on the mast overhead.

Her father stares up at it as if searching the sky for a
forgiving God.

Grace in her boots and a dress marches down across the
muddy fields to the cove at the head of the bay. The
dress drags through the mud and she could care less. Her
eyes are drawn curiously to the heap of fishing boats
strewn on the shoreline decaying, once seaworthy and now
rotting in the mud flats.

Along the shore, the humble fishing shacks are all but
falling down.

CUT TO

The fog moves in and all becomes dream-like and ethereal
as she turns to see a WASHER-WOMAN bending over a basin.
Scrubbing the clothing. It's eerie and dreamlike to
Grace. She calls out to the old woman, who stops to look
up to her, then keeps on her work of scrubbing the blood
from the clothes. She is enveloped in the fog again and
is gone.

CUT BACK TO

(CONTINUED)

It sends a chill down Grace's spine.

She quickly peels her boots off, steps down to the water barefoot and lifts her dress, bending to inspect the hulls of the ships rotten and all but beyond repair.

She pulls her working knife from her belt and digs into the tar that binds the floorboards of the boats. The knife goes in deep. She rolls up her sleeves and sets about investigating the state of the boats lost in the process.

From behind a man, 20, TIGERNAN calls to her.

TIGERNAN

You, what are you doing?

She doesn't respond. He studies her from afar then hauls off a whistle to her.

TIGERNAN

Hey!

Grace keeps digging and calls back as she continues to dig with her knife.

GRACE

The tar hasn't dried up completely. There's still life in these boats. I come to this hellish place where people sit around moaning for hunger and what the hell good does it do them?

Tigernan laughs at her persistence.

TIGERNAN

Yes, there is life in the boats, maybe it's the people here who have had the life run out of them. When people go hungry and the great lords of the castle live fat and drunk, at their expense, there is but one thing to do. Quit.

Grace whirls around, her face dirty with muck and tar. She swipes her hand through her hair.

GRACE

Quit? Is that what you O'Flaherty's do? Yes, I have had enough of this bullshit.

(MORE)

(CONTINUED)

GRACE (CONT'D)

Lying cheats pretending wealth
only to burn these boats and the
banisters of the castle to keep
the place warm. All this land, but
no animals to provide for the
people. There, at your backs, is
the greatest provider of all, the
sea.

(hand on hip now)

Please explain to me how you
idiots don't see this? How the
mighty O'Flaherty clan doesn't
even know what the hell a bowline
is or how to cleat a line off?
Seems all you know how to do is
whistle!

Tigernan beams at her, scratching his head in mock
amusement.

TIGERNAN

Yes, well it got your attention.
(mock ignorance)
And a bowline? Is that some
English term?

Grace turns back incensed.

GRACE

Imbecile!

She turns and holds up her working knife as she swipes
the sweat from her brow. Tigernan holds his hands up in
surrender and smiles.

She sees that Tigernan mocks her. He steps forward and
hauls out his working knife.

TIGERNAN

I'm Tigernan. I agree with you so
you can't kill me.

Grace laughs. It's clear she hasn't laughed or heard
laughter in a long while.

GRACE

I hate this place. It is a
beautiful prison to me only made
worse by the endless views of the
ocean within my reach, but I can't
touch her. I am from Clew Bay, but
I belong to the sea.

(CONTINUED)

TIGERNAN

I know you Grace O'Malley. There is no other woman on earth like you.. Up to your eyeballs in muck and tar down here digging into dead timbers of ships not even worthy to burn for kindling.

GRACE

Then you know that I am back. And these ships are not dead, as long as the tar and pine have not been burned in the fireplaces to warm the rotting castle walls, then there is life in them. We will put to sea and we will fish. There is plenty of food for everyone. I may be Grace O'Malley, and yes, you may know me, but alone I can only fish one boat.

TIGERNAN

Actually everyone knows you Grace O'Malley... and we are all here to do as you say.

Grace studies Tigernan with a smile.

GRACE

You may regret saying that. Come on! Get your hands dirty, man. And let's get these boats back in the water.

TIGERNAN

Ay Captain.

With all the regalia and pomp, Queen Elizabeth knights a man, he leers as he feels the power she bestows on him. With a menacing smile and a bow, RICHARD BINGHAM begins.

Donal and HIS MEN fight a gruesome battle. Many die, many are killed, armor and swords clash. They raid the village and burn it all. Children and women wail as they salt the earth and slaughter the livestock.

ONE OF DONAL'S MEN burns the flag of the neighboring Clan's village. Donal stops him.

DONAL

You there! Bring that to me at once.

At Donal's feet lay the barely breathing CHIEF of the neighboring clan. He is badly mutilated but still alive.

Donal holds the flag over his head.

DONAL

(mad with rage)

You fool. You wage war on your own and kill the innocent. Your insolence and stupidity blind you so that you would sell yourselves out to England? A hollow victory and a phony crown? Murrough na-Tuadh, Murrough of the Battle Axes. Pardoned by the Queen and granted your newly appointed English garrison at Barony of Moycullen? Choke on your crown, you coward and traitor. Your land now goes to the Queen of England?

(Ramming the flag pole through his sternum and heart)

Over your dead body, it will.

(one last thrust)

And you will wear your flag of Ireland so that when you meet up with your new Queen Elizabeth, she will know the only victory over Ireland she held was that of the dead traitorous soldiers who rots in her Hell.

Life seeps out of the CHIEFTAIN and Donal and his men cheer a Gaelic war call.

Grace and a fleet are hand over fisting the fish aboard the boats. Tigernan calls over to Grace's boat. The earring in Tigernan's left earlobe glints in the sun.

TIGERNAN

(Taunting)

Seems we are riding lower in the
hold than you, Captain.

Grace looks into the hold, fish smashing and slapping the
decks. She climbs up the mast of the boat to strain a
view into Tigernan's boat. Clearly they are out-fishing
her men.

GRACE

All lines in boys, we're moving.

The men pull the fishing lines in and prepare to move
further off shore.

TIGERNAN

Ay captain, a sorry sport, eh?

Grace smiles to Tigernan then turns to her crew who whoop
and howl, all are in good spirits and happy to be
catching fish.

GRACE

Ready about. Hard on the leeward
oars.

(beat)

Still plenty of day left to fish.

At the shoreline where once the boats sat rotting, the
VILLAGERS begin to congregate in shock and joy.

Tigernan and his crew unload their many fish. They stop
as they spot in the dying light the barely floating ship
of Grace who's freeboard is so low its almost taking in
water. They have caught so many fish, Tigernan just stops
dead in his tracks.

GRACE

Hey you! Come help my men off-
load. In fact, they've fished so
hard today, I'm giving them the
night off to go find their women.
Your men will clean and salt the
fish.

(beat)

And swab my decks.

Tigernan smiles and bows to the Pirate Queen.

TIGERNAN

Ay, Captain, fair enough. Your eyes pierce the water and even the fish beg to be taken by you.

GRACE

(flicking the earring
in Tignernan's
earlobe)

Tell me deckhand, the seaman's practice of wearing earrings, does it really satisfy your fisherman's old superstition that pierced ears will improve your eyesight and make you more lively? How is it then that I, a woman no less, have no such earrings and out-fish you so shamelessly?

(beat)

Perhaps the women of the town find you more lively in the sack, but on deck, I beg to differ...

Grace turns with a smile and Tigernan laughs.

GRACE

(to the villagers)
Come on, tonight we feast!

The villagers all cheer her so loud that from up in the Castle, the servants all run down to the shore as well, abandoning the castle.

MONTAGE

What were once the small boats Grace and Tigernan had repaired are now a fleet of ships and men.

Fishing their vessels, with Grace at the helm, her eye scans the horizon for the trade vessels heavily laden with cargo.

Grace slips her telescope back in her belt and nods to Tigernan aboard his ship, he intuitively knows her next move.

The ships weigh anchor, haul in their fishing nets and bear down on the unsuspecting trade ship.

(CONTINUED)

The ships approach and Grace mimics what Black Oak had taught her.

GRACE

Greetings. It would appear you've strayed from the trade routes and have now entered our fishing grounds. We will demand a fee for your safe passage.

The English Captain, a WIRY small man, looks at this woman incensed.

ENGLISH CAPTAIN

To hell with that and to hell with some sea hag telling me where I can steer my ship.

Grace smiles at the captain.

GRACE

Thank you. Your insults inspire me.

The captain looks at her curiously and confused.

GRACE

Unleash it boys!

With that, Tigernan takes aim from his neighboring ship.

TIGERNAN

Oh Captain, I guarantee this is one woman you will really wish you had shown a bit more respect and hospitality.

With that he fires and blows a hole in the English flag and the Captain's ego.

As the Captain raises his gun to shoot back, Grace takes aim and shoots the man's hand. The Captain bellows like a baby and the battle ensues.

Down at the docks, near the Castle, the villagers greet the ships at the docks and help unload the plunder. Grace is cheered and heralded. She is clearly their leader and saviour.

31 EXT. CASTLE PARAPET DAY

31

Donal, battle-weary, puts down his sword and cup of malt and walks out on the parapet to see what the commotion is about.

He holds up his telescope and grinds his teeth. He is not a gracious loser and clearly Grace O'Malley has found her following.

His father steps up behind him, a look of mild amusement and admiration for her creeps across his face.

DONAL

What the hell is that bitch doing?

O'FLAHERTY CHIEFTAIN

She's taking care at home while you are away at battle. Be grateful your woman is industrious! Think how many men would literally kill for her! They once called this place Cock's Castle for your hot head, but I have come to see it should now be called Hen's Castle on account of your wife's shrewd and insurmountable presence as a leader in these parts now.

(beat)

I'll be damn'd if Black Oak wasn't right about his daughter, she is a fiery warrior, hardly one you can leave at home in dresses and curls.

Donal seethes.

DONAL

If so impressed with this wench, why didn't you marry her and leave me be?

32 INT. DONAL AND GRACE'S BED CHAMBERS NIGHT

32

Donal pins Grace against the wall. He rips at her clothing and thrusts into her violently. She cries out but he traps her mouth, nearly suffocating her.

(CONTINUED)

DONAL

You will service your husband.
Away at battle for months, I come
home to you, stinking of fish and
for all I know, fucking the
sailors.

(beat)

Tonight, I will fuck my woman too.

He throws her off him when he's finished. She claws at him and slaps him violently. He rubs his cheek and then goes for her. She winds up and double-fisted punches him in the groin. Donal goes down like a rock.

GRACE

There are only two things in the
world that stink of fish. And only
one of them is fish! You will not
spread your diseases on me. With
men, women or animal, fuck what
you can find, but you will never
touch me again. And should you
try, I remind you, I sleep with
one eye open, my knife in hand,
and my filleting skills ever honed
even on the puniest member, such
as yours.

(sheathing her knife
and grabbing her
sword, leaving)

We all fight for Ireland. But I
will fight from the sea where I
captain my own ship. And my men
are all your deserters!

She storms past Donal outside to the parapet where she
lights her beacon alerting the men she is sailing. She
exits the exterior stairs and never looks back.

He swigs from the bottle as he unlaces the bodice of a
BEAUTIFUL BARMAID lost in the moment of her body and
pleasures. Just as he is climbing deep into her, he
throws his head back up, opening his eyes in the moment
of ecstasy.

His eyes roll back and he lets go, as he comes back
around he spots the beacon lighted up on the parapet of
the castle.

He groans and rolls the woman off him.

33 CONTINUED:

33

TIGERNAN

Duty calls. Apologies...

Tigernan shoves out the door half dressed, calls to the VILLAGER MEN.

34 EXT. SHORE SLYNE BAY NIGHT

34

TIGERNAN

She's rolling boys. Prepare to sail! And something tells me we won't be back this way for a while...

He smiles as he leaves.

A VILLAGER climbs the flagpole and lights the beacon atop that starts the message signals.

All down the coast, the beacons are lit until they finally reach her father at their Clare Bay Castle.

35 INT. QUEEN ELIZABETH'S COURT LONDON DAY

35

The English captain with his one hand scarred from Grace's attack, speaks to the English court Richard Bingham and the Queen's council. He recounts the stealing and plundering against his ship by rogue Irish pirates.

Bingham grinds his teeth when he hears of the loss of the trade vessel's cargo. The Queen is not amused by the loss of cargo.

QUEEN ELIZABETH

And by whose sword have these precious goods been commandeered?

The English Captain holds up his hand.

ENGLISH CAPTAIN

Grace O'Malley.

At this, the Queen's face twists curiously.

QUEEN ELIZABETH

Repeat that Captain. I don't believe I heard correctly.

(CONTINUED)

ENGLISH CAPTAIN

A pirate queen known as Grace
O'Malley from Ireland's
southwestern Coast.

Imperceptibly, the Queen's face slides into a smile.

QUEEN ELIZABETH

A woman, you say?

The Captain nods meekly.

ENGLISH CAPTAIN

Ay, your majesty.

RICHARD BINGHAM

Captain, read off the manifesto
and all the other manifestos from
the ships that have been
commandeered by this Pirate Queen
of whom you whine about.

ENGLISH CAPTAIN

(Sheepishly)

Gold and arms, from the moors and
Muslims, Spanish and Islamics.
Ornate tapestries, exotic woods,
colorful silks, Syrian and
Damascus and Toledo steel...

As he reads off, he stops to wipe the sweat from his
brow. Bingham rolls his eyes.

CUT TO

As Grace's ship sets out from the harbor with her fleet,
the prevailing wind kicks up and the ships charge out
into the open sea leaving behind a passage in her life
that has made her stronger.

Grace stands at the helm scanning the dark waters and
staring up to the curtain of stars. She is unstoppable.

CUT BACK TO

37 INT. QUEEN ELIZABETH COURT LONDON DAY

37

RICHARD BINGHAM

If it pleases your Majesty, I
request immediate leave to address
this slight thorn in England's
side.

The Queen raises her eyebrows still amused.

QUEEN ELIZABETH

Be gone then. Off to catch your
Pirate Queen.

38 EXT. CLARE BAY DAY

38

Grace reunites with her father. Morgan is there with him.
A big reunion of the old crew. They are all awed by her,
their former mate, now (female) Captain.

GRACE

We stop only to rest and restock.
The British are on our ass. The
sea has been abundantly kind to us
in both fish and fineries. We will
stock the land with plenty of
cattle, Father.

(beat)

The rest I will use on the slight
favor I've called in to my boys up
North. We are off to collect us
the Gallowglass from Scotland.
Those boys fight hard and play
mean, loyal and strong allies. It
will be worth the payment. We are
about to up our game boys! I know
England won't quit us til they try
to break us, but they forget we
are Irish. Ruthless and
unstoppable.

(Raising her sword
high)

"go mhfearr lei lan loinge de
cloinn Conroi agus cloinn
McCAnnallaidah na lan loinge d'or"
Give me a ship full of Conroys and
MacNallys over a shipful of gold
anyday!

With that, the men cheer her.

(CONTINUED)

Black Oak toasts his daughter and leads her over to a man who stands watching on.

RICHARD BOURKE, older than Grace, a warrior in iron armor, imposing man who allows himself no emotion, but that he is struck by this Pirate Queen. Black Oak introduces them.

BLACK OAK

GRACE, meet Richard Bourke. He commands a fleet out of Rockport. He's passing to the north. His latest victories over the MacMaurice have extended his reign out from Umhall to Galway in the Mayo province.

(beat)

Richard, this is my daughter, Grace.

Richard steps to Grace. For a man who never lets emotion in, this is the one exception.

RICHARD BOURKE

(kissing her hand)

Blessed with equal brawn as beauty, it is truly a pleasure to finally meet you, Grace.

Grace knows her power and is quick to wield it. Fire in her eyes, she is intrigued, ever vigilant and strategic and not entirely repulsed by this man.

GRACE

Rockport makes a fine harbor and lookout for the entire trade run up from Iarconnacht to Lower MacWilliams. You, Richard Bourke, have eyes everywhere.

RICHARD BOURKE

I do, but all I see now is right here in front of me. Your strength at sea and mine by land, would be quite a match.

She allows him to kiss her hand...

GRACE

Mind you Richard Bourke, the sea is not all I command. I have been known to come ashore.

(MORE)

(CONTINUED)

GRACE (CONT'D)

Castles perched so picturesquely
along the coast are some of my
favorite pastimes.

RICHARD BOURKE

May you grace one of mine. It
would be a privilege to be
plundered by you, my fair pirate
queen.

Grace's eyes hold on his.

Morgan interrupts raucously with a cup of ale.

MORGAN

Apologies, but it's my turn. There
are important matters to discuss.

Morgan scoops Grace away and hands her the cup of malt.
They toast and he winks at her.

MORGAN

My turn to gaze upon my little
Gracey all grown up.

She hugs her old Morgan. He battles back the emotion.

MORGAN

It's good to have you home.

GRACE

Yes, I'm home...

He pulls her away and studies her eyes, rimmed with
tears.

MORGAN

What you learned from that
O'Flaherty clan has shaped what
you will be destined to do. You
now command a fleet of ships. Your
men will leave their homes, sail,
fish, fight, and yes, die for you.
That accomplishment is yours
alone. And it would never have
happened from under your father's
command. You are not only a
survivor, you are a great leader
of men.

Morgan shakes his head at her in amazement.

MORGAN

I don't know what the hell courses
in your veins, but it eclipses all
of us.

(suddenly solemn)

40

Your Father was adrift without
you. We'd come round the point
heading home, he scanned the
cliffs for you like when you were
a little pip standing there, hand
on hip and the beacon lit.

40

Morgan squeezes back the tears. Grace struggles to make
light of the painful truth.

GRACE

(nodding to her
father across the
way)

Ahh, yes, so much so that he's
already trying to marry me off
again.

MORGAN

(taking offense)

Absolutely not! That Richard
Bourke is as persistent as the
gout! Your poor father has nothing
to do with that.

Grace smiles and turns back to look at her father who
catches her eye as Bourke speaks. There is a deep
unspoken love, father to daughter. She winks and toasts
Black Oak. He nods, his eyes ask her forgiveness.

41

EXT. GRACE'S SHIP NIGHT

41

The men haul in the last set of their nets. Full with
fish and battling the elements, Grace hears the timber of
her mast crack.

She glances up and quickly shoves a YOUNG APPRENTICE out
of the way and they take cover as the halyards slat the
deck and the mast crashes down.

Chaos as the ship heaves under the pressure of the storm.
Night befalls them, the crew is weary and looks for
shelter from the storm.

42

EXT. IRISH COUNTRYSIDE NIGHT

42

They near Howth Castle, the closest port. Grace and her men are spent. Their ships put in at port for water and provisions. Grace seeks hospitality at the Castle of local Earl of Howth, St Lawrence.

As she arrives to the castle gates, an Irish flag slaps in the wind, but higher up above on the flagpole reigns the English flag. Grace studies it and grits her teeth.

Banging on the large gates with the butt of her sword, the GATEKEEPER stare at her and her sorry crew with disdain. The gates of the castle are locked against her.

GRACE

You will tell your Lord of Howth
that Grace O'Malley and her men
seek shelter from the Lord.

The gatekeeper sneers at her.

GATEKEEPER

Yes, well, the Lord of Howth is at
dinner and will not be disturbed.

GRACE

(eyes wild)

The Irish Laws of Hospitality
state that any man seeking shelter
is to receive the graciousness of
food at the table and a bed to
rest! Damn'd you are you not
Irish, Man?

Grace looks up to the English flag slatting the flagpole above the Irish. Wild with rage, she removes her blunderbuss and shoots a hole through the English flag.

GATEKEEPER

(angry)

My heritage has nothing to do with
the fact that The Howth Castle
lies in the English Pale, no such
Gaelic customs of automatic
hospitality apply.

(beat)

Besides, you are not "a Man" and
the Lord of Howth is hardly
expected to take in a woman. The
Lord will not entertain such
advances particularly by a woman
as vulgar and insolent as you.

(CONTINUED)

42 CONTINUED:

42

With this, Tigernan throws himself at the gate going for the gatekeeper's neck through the bars. The gates rattle against his blows, but remain locked.

Grace and her men hurl every expletive as they collect themselves and leave.

43 INT. GRACE'S SHIP NIGHT

43

Grace stands beside her cook and prepares the heartiest of beef stew for her men, she and the cook serve up the hot meal to the exhausted men. She smiles at them, toasts them.

GRACE

It's not much boys, I have been accused by my father of managing to burn water, but it is with great thanks for all that you do. We will eat well, drink too much and gamble it all away. Hold onto your family jewels because I intend to take every valuable thing you have...

TIGERNAN

Ahh we will see about that. In the meantime, we will report back to your father, that you have indeed treated us kindly, unless you poison us all on this meal you've made us. If so, no finer a way to go out...

All laugh. Grace smiles at Tigernan.

TIGERNAN

(exaggerated bow but
genuine gratitude)

Thank you, my Lady Grace O'Malley, the protector and avenger, a title only reserved for the greatest Irish chieftains. To our Grace, the nurse of all rebellion.

A YOUNG DECKHAND chimes in.

(CONTINUED)

YOUNG DECKHAND

To our Irish Captain, a downright beauty she is, daring, bold, the matriarch of clan and family, and the most feared leader everywhere by sea..."

Grace salutes her men.

GRACE

Now eat!

A MATE takes a bite and pretends to spit it out in disgust as if the food is awful. Then laughs and cheers.

MATE

And she can cook!

GRACE

Ya ya, eat up. I have winnings to earn off you boys! Dust off the dice, it's time to gamble it all.

The Men are raucous and festive. All are drunk. The SAILMAKER has prepared his needle for tattooing.

Grace stares at him, half in the bag, and salutes him.

GRACE

(drunkenly)

Ay, Sailmaker, tattoo me, Man. The Roman Catholic sailors, had it right. I shall want the form of a crucifix, here.

She rips open her shirt revealing her bodice and the pearly white flesh above her left breast.

GRACE

The sailors used it as a means of identification for bodies so they would be assured of the sacred rites and burial.

(beat)

God knows I will die at this life one day and I would like to be sure I am not mistaken for some English Protestant. Give me the crucifix of our Catholic Lord.

The sailmaker looks at her apprehensive and just plain drunk. But, she throws herself down on the table in front of him.

(CONTINUED)

43 CONTINUED: (2)

43

GRACE

Do it Man!

(to Tigernan)

Hey Poof, with your gold earring,
get me some more rum.44 Tigernan laughs and douses her chest with the rum. The
sailmaker wipes the area clean and sets to work.

44

TIGERNAN

A steady hand, Sailmaker.

SAILMAKER

Ay, indeed. This is my greatest
canvas yet.

45 EXT. BEACH HEAD - DAY

45

The "morning after", everyone is brutally hung over.
Grace makes her way down to the beach. She is sitting
leaned up against some driftwood, just gazing out on the
calm ocean.

She suddenly remembers the night before and the pain she
feels on her chest. She pulls back her shirt and stares
at the crucifix tattoo.

She moans.

GRACE

Unhhh... what have I done...

Her ship is docked, beaten up by the storm, but the bad
weather has cleared out and it's the calm morning after.

A YOUNG BOY, 13, is walking on the beach. He is skipping
stones. She nods to him.

GRACE

(moving very slowly)

You think you're pretty good at
that, huh?

BOY

I can skim 20 skips, I counted.

Grace climbs up, everything hurts. She moans again.

BOY

Are you alright? You don't look
very well.

(CONTINUED)

GRACE

Uhh. Even my hair hurts.

She leans over feeling the perfect skimming stone, flat and disc-like. She launches it to the waves. It skims for what feels like minutes. The boy watches counting as quickly as he can until he can't.

BOY

1,2,3,4,5,6,7,8,9,10,11,12,33,
34,36...

(Beat)

52!!!!

Grace claps the sand off her hands and smiles.

BOY

How? What? That's impossible and you're a girl!

GRACE

So I've been reminded. What is it with you people around here? By the way, what is your name?

(exaggeratedly)

Boyyyy?

BOY

I'm Nathaniel Beann Edair of Howth.

Grace stares at him, stunned.

GRACE

(Pointing to the
castle up the road)

Are you a relative of that castle over there?

NATHANIAL

It is my home. My Grandfather is Lord of Howth, yes.

Grace laughs and pitches a perfect skimmer to Nathaniel who catches it midair and sends it skimming out over the waves.

GRACE

Quite a storm last night. I hope you didn't have any disturbances or damages from the storm.

(CONTINUED)

NATHANIAL

Oh no, we were fine.

GRACE

Yes, I'm sure...

NATHANIAL

And you? What is your name?

GRACE

My name is Grace O'Malley. I live aboard that ship.

As she points to it, the boy's mouth drops in love-struck awe.

NATHANIAL

You live on a ship?

GRACE

I do, why don't you come on over. I'll give you a tour and you can meet my men.

NATHANIAL

Your men? What is your husband the captain? And if so why would you, the wife, be onboard? Women don't put to sea with men. It isn't appropriate!

GRACE

Oh no, I'm no one's wife. I am captain to my 200 men. Come and we will have breakfast together aboard. I could use some food in my stomach.

She reaches out her arm and Nathaniel holds her hand as she gingerly steps down off the rocks. She is playing dainty and fair. He is the gracious young man, cavalier.

GRACE

Most hospitable of you young Nate, I shall call you.

As she comes aboard her ship, she immediately drops her daintiness and jumps up on the deck. Nate is struck by her agility and her command and her change in demeanor.

(CONTINUED)

GRACE

Set a place for our guest
Nathanial Beann Edair of Howth.
Seems he lives right over there in
that castle.

Tigernan looks back at the castle curiously, and very
hung over.

TIGERNAN

Welcome Nate, get me a warm cup if
you would.

Nate is ecstatic to be aboard.

As they sit down to breakfast, Grace calls to her
skipper.

GRACE

Cast off. We will set sail for
Mayo. We can make full repairs
there.

NATHANIAL

(startled, getting up
to leave)
No, but I must go ashore.

GRACE

Actually Nate, my boy. You are
staying with us for a little
while. I like your company.

Nathanial stares at her perplexed and now nervous.

NATHANIAL

But I can't just leave my
family....

GRACE

Well you can if you're being
kidnapped.

NATHANIAL

Kidnapped?

GRACE

You heard me. Nothing against you,
Nate. I quite like you. It's that
whole Howth thing.

(MORE)

GRACE (CONT'D)

Tell me Nate, if a weary Irish traveler were to stop by your home. What would you do?

NATHANIAL

I'd let him stay I suppose.

GRACE

Well, then we are going to teach your Grandfather the old ways of young children and old Irish law. Hospitality and compassion are preserved in the young before they grow old and frugal and mean and they unlearn the only thing that holds Ireland together across all the tribes and clans. We are going to teach your Grandfather what really matters.

NATHANIAL

I don't understand.

GRACE

Last night we came to seek shelter, your Grandfather turned us away. The storm pounded us pretty hard. We needed a warm meal and a bed.

Nathanial bows his head. Grace lifts his chin.

GRACE

Don't worry. I'm not. If your Grandfather has a soul and a heart, you will be home by evening.

(beat)

You restore my faith that it's still not too late to teach all us Irish that we must never forget to be descent and kind to our own. You are a gentleman and I thank you for skinning stones with me and taking such fine care of me on the rocks in my somewhat compromised state.

NATHANIAL

It was an honor and is a privilege.

(CONTINUED)

47 CONTINUED: (2)

47

He holds his hand out to hers, she places hers gently into his and he kisses it like a gentleman.

GRACE
(TOUSLES his hair,
smiles)

Come on, you may as well put to work while we go. We have quite a lot of repair work to do. Go help Tigernan with the lines on the front deck.

Nathanial bows and smiles, excited by his adventure.

48 INT. HOWTH CASTLE DAY

48

Nate's grandfather is astounded and furious.

GRANDFATHER
What? He what? Kidnapped? By whom?
This is nonsense!

The Gatekeeper from the night previous speaks meekly.

GATEKEEPER
She has sent these demands.

He holds out the paper. The old man is flummoxed as he opens the letter sealed with Grace's white sea horse wax emblem.

GRACE (V.O.)
To Lord of Howth, your Grandson Nathanial is delightful. However, he is our captive now and will remain so until you do as I demand. We may exchange your Grandson for our terms when you arrive to Mayo, where we have sailed out to in order to repair our ships from the storm.
- Sincerely Grace O'Malley

The old man waves and shakes the letter at his staff.

GRANDFATHER
What on earth kind of terms could she want for my Grandson and for what do I owe this rude and undeserving treatment? What kind of trick is this? A crazy woman!

(CONTINUED)

GATEKEEPER
(sheepishly averting
the question)
Shall we prepare the gold and
silver for the ransom?

GRANDFATHER
Yes of course! And hurry. I don't
want anyone that insane to lose
her mind and kill my Grandson.

CUT TO:

51 EXT. GRACE'S SHIP DAY

51

The ship lists in the mud. The tide is out and the men
are working to repair the stove-ins to the front portion
of the hull from the storm. Nate pounds the mallet and
helps. He smiles proudly.

CUT TO:

52 EXT. GRACE'S SHIP DECK - DAY

52

The ship sets afloat on the incoming tide until it rests
even keeled. Grace teaches Nate how the telescope opens
and how to read the horizon.

He is completely captivated by her and her men.

She takes the telescope from him and stares off at the
ship in the distance as it creeps closer.

53 EXT. LORD OF HOWTH'S SHIP DAY

53

The Grandfather stands top deck with his CAPTAIN.

CAPTAIN
They're anchored up in harbor near
the shore waiting for the high
tide to float them off the mud.
They must have repaired their
ships.

GRANDFATHER
Get me over there at once.

54

EXT. GRACE'S SHIP DAY

54

The old man comes alongside in his small prow. He looks up at Grace's ship. He seems small and frail and scared.

GRANDFATHER

My Grandson? Where is he? Please?
Tell me he's not injured.

GRACE

Do you suppose that is the best
way for you to approach me? I
would expect a salutation first.
It is after all only polite.

Her hand on hip, she then relaxes.

GRACE

Come aboard Lord of Howth. Please
join us.

The Grandfather comes feebly aboard, Tigernan helps him up. There is the Gatekeeper from the other night. He tries to get up on the deck. Tigernan offers a rugged hand to the gatekeeper who instantly recognizes him from the other night and pulls his hand away. Tigernan turns and shows Lord Howth the way.

GRANDFATHER

I bring a substantial ransom to
please you and to assure my
Grandson's safe return.

GRACE

I'm afraid that's a little too
late My Lord...

The Grandfather looks shocked.

GRACE

Too late to please me...
(beat)
Stop looking so feeble, old man.
Your act doesn't fool me.

GRANDFATHER

What do you mean? And why do you
play with an old man?

Grace delivers her terms with a vengeance. She pulls her sword to the Gatekeepers throat.

(CONTINUED)

From down below the deck a small set of eyes peers out from Grace's cabin. Nate watches on, he is scared and breathing shallowly.

Grace points the end of her sword at the startled Gatekeeper.

GRACE

First of all, do not ever offend me again with your gold and silver. If I started to count how much I own now I'd never even finish in one lifetime. Secondly, your Grandson Nate is worth far more than that. Thirdly, how dare you deny the Irish laws of hospitality and turn me and my men away in the deep dark night of the storm, barring the gates and denying us while you sat and dined at your table. With each gulp of wine you knew you had turned away fellow countrymen, who fight for the Ireland you once believed in. How dare your English treachery, fly higher up the pole than our Irish flag. How dare you.

Grace flicks her sword at him.

GRACE

So Lord of Howth, my terms are simple and very clear: you will promise that the gates of Howth Castle will never again be closed to a fellow traveler and that an extra place will always be set at your table for anyone, man or woman, seeking your hospitality.

The Grandfather looks at Grace stunned.

GRACE

I should kill your gatekeeper for his insolence, but that is hardly this simple man's fault. It is yours, great old feeble Lord of Howth. And who better to report to me that these terms are carried out, but your very own grandson Nathaniel whose manners and hard work clearly do not come from you, old man.

(CONTINUED)

54 CONTINUED: (2)

54

Nate steps up onto the deck.

NATHANIAL

I will promise you, Grace. But
only if you come back and visit me
to check for yourself.

He steps to her and she hugs him. He hugs her back.
Tigernan clasps his shoulder and Nate turns to his
grandfather who embraces his young grandson, relieved and
somewhat amazed by this infamous Pirate Queen.

CUT TO

56 EXT. GRACE'S SHIP DAY

56

Grace and her men move up the coast, the GALLOWGLASS, a
rugged lot of warriors, await her up north. As they pound
the coast beating north ahead of the weather.

57 EXT. CLARE ISLAND DAY

57

Grace gallops along the cliffs and slows to see a ship
heading up the coast way off in the distance. She watches
it, sensing something peculiar. She closes her eyes,
communing with the sea, the wind as if lost deep in
mediation.

She opens her eyes and spies the ship one last time. She
gallops off to come around to the front of the castle.
She calls up to her father, impatient and in his face.

GRACE

Father!? What is taking you so
long? We are going to be late.
It's Saint Brigid's Day today,
Father, not tomorrow, but today.

She harrumphs, hand on hip.

GRACE

Black Oak!

She hauls off a deafening whistle. Black Oak pops his
head out of the castle window above.

BLACK OAK

Good Christ woman. Where did you
learn that trick? You'll wake the
dead.

(CONTINUED)

Grace just smiles up at her father like the sun on his face. He smiles back and shakes his head.

BLACK OAK
(Mumbling to himself
as he shuffles down
the stairs from
inside)
Incorrigible.

GRACE
I heard that!

BLACK OAK
(Mumbling again)
Impossible.

GRACE
Heard that too!

Black Oak and Grace, Tigernan, Morgan and the whole crew ride up to the holy well up on Clare Island for the Ceremony of Saint Brigid's Day.

By late afternoon they arrive, the candles blaze around the holy well. The PRIEST stands delivering his sermon to the VILLAGERS and ENTIRE PARISH.

PRIEST
Here to Saint Brigid's Well where
the candles do burn for this
entire night and the great walls
do shine on the graves of the dead
both on land and at sea...

With that, all bow in prayer, cross themselves Amen in unison. Grace settles her father in to rest under the stars. He caresses his daughter's cheek.

As she turns back to check on her men, she see Tigernan lost in lust of some YOUNG BEAUTY. Tigernan salutes Grace.

TIGERNAN
Quite a nice ceremony. I fancy
myself a changed man, yes, a
religious man, a believer.

Grace rolls her eyes and heads off. Suddenly her young DECKHAND ALDEN seeks her out.

DECKHAND ALDEN

Captain, a ship has foundered off
the rocks at Achill Head.

GRACE

Type of vessel, was she a galleon?
She was carrying cargo?

The young Deckhand is awed by Grace's intuition.

DECKHAND ALDEN

Aye, Captain. She was.

GRACE

I saw her this morning. She was
riding heavy to the starboard, her
cargo must have shifted. The wind
and seas have kicked up. She must
have been shoved off course,
struck aground at Achill Head.
Call the men. We will go now.
Whatever she was carrying, must
have been worth a good fortune to
risk traveling in this weather.

CUT TO

The CAPTAIN is pounded by the sheets of wind and now
driving rain. Night is falling. The Captain calls in vain
to his crew. The wind squelching his voice.

CAPTAIN

Heave harder on the port oars.
Pull! We're going aground.

With that the last crashing wave tosses the ship against
the rocks, stoving in the starboard hull. The ship
splinters, men are crushed and lives lost.

CUT TO

The English war vessel captained by Richard Bingham
pounds through the storm to reach Donal O'Flaherty's
imposing castle set high on the dark coast.

(CONTINUED)

The English vessel lays on anchor waiting. Richard Bingham spies the castle through his telescope. He spots the white sea horse flag flying high off a small seaside shack.

CUT TO

She beats straight to Achill Head. The weather and surge pound the hull as they come around the point. Alden, the deckhand, is first to spot the floating drown bodies.

A horse, thrusts through the waves, it is a violent and tragic sight, thrashing and spent. Grace takes aim and shoots the poor animal.

Casks and barrels, cargo and debris float past as they approach the ship splintered and aground. The ocean pours in through the gaping hole in her side as waves pound her.

Grace stares at the ship for any signs of life and a way to tow the ship off the rocks. Tigernan comes to her side.

TIGERNAN

If we could haul the debris off the starboard side, we could pry her open and get at what she's carrying.

GRACE

Big risk in that. Don't know if it's worth it...

Grace scans the waters and ship again. She climbs up the mast when something catches her eye. It is a shining reflection. She sees it again. She squints. And again.

GRACE

Tig, get the prow in the water. We can't get in closer with the ship. Let's go.

2 MEN row Grace and Tigernan, Alden and a FEW OTHERS out to the sinking vessel. Grace climbs up on the bow to scan the waves and rocks. There, she points and calls to the men.

(CONTINUED)

GRACE

There! Pull starboard oar. Over there!

His belt buckle catches and reflects off the burning torches and lanterns of Grace's ship. There is flashes again. Tigernan spots it.

They ride a wave in and Grace jumps off to the rocky outcrop. She times her dash in between the crashing waves.

There, pinned and trapped each wave thrusting the broken body under water. Horrifying thrust of the surf crashing against this body. She sees him, he lifts his head and is pummeled again.

Grace crawls/swims to him and is smashed by the wave. Tigernan follows her, screaming at her.

TIGERNAN

Grace. No! Don't do it!

She dives down underwater into the rock as if possessed. She dives down digging the lifeless and broken body. She frees the body but then the next waves crashes and smashes them both against the rocks.

Tigernan dives in to save Grace. She has the body by the belt buckle and heaves him with Tigernan pulling her up by the hair. When they finally spit to the surface, Tigernan yanks her up. She coughs and Tigernan helps her up. She smacks him.

GRACE

Ouch! That is my hair!

TIGERNAN

Good Christ! Woman! Better bald Grace than drowned!

She hoists the dead weight of a body. Tigernan helps her.

TIGERNAN

What the hell are you lugging this dead meat around?

GRACE

I dunno, I don't think it's dead yet.

(CONTINUED)

TIGERNAN

Jesus woman. Hard headed to the
death of ya!

Alden and the crew hoist them all up on deck.

Grace swipes the hair back to see the corpse's face. A
YOUNG MAN her age, 22. A gash on his forehead bleeds
profusely. She shoves her fist on his diaphragm and pumps
the water from his lungs. He coughs and rouses.

TIGERNAN

(surprised)
Well by God, Huh! What do ya know.
You robbed the grave. How the hell
did you know he was there and
worth keeping?

She's too busy and lost in saving this man. The man
stares up at Grace. She is completely taken and tender.

GRACE

What is your name?

YOUNG MAN

Hugh de Lacy...
(beat)
Thank you...

He passes back out. Grace smiles. Tigernan pats her on
the head and leaves her, completely spent by the rescue.

TIGERNAN

Captain, I'm sorry about pulling
your hair.
(Beat)
He's a lucky corpse.

As he speaks, what's left of the foundering ship splits
and collapses under the waves.

TIGERNAN

Nothing else to salvage from that
wreck...

Grace smiles curiously staring at Hugh.

Bingham's men ride out to the Castle. Donal and his men
fight valiantly, but all is lost.

(CONTINUED)

62 CONTINUED:

62

Cattle and livestock are stripped, VILLAGERS are killed and Donal's castle is overcome. A bullet from Richard's blunderbuss pierces the armor.

Behind Richard stands the son of the CHIEFTAIN from the Irish clan whom Donal had killed with such heinous disrespect in the battle for their Ireland.

Donal goes down. His father Chieftain O'Flaherty is overcome. He weeps by his son's side.

MONTAGE

63 EXT. GRACE SHIP DAY

63

Hugh heals and joins the crew as they prepare their stores for the trip. Stowing their weapons. Fishing their nets.

Grace and Tigernan pour over charts to plot their course. In a chest of spoils they have claimed for cargo, lies an astrolabe. A round sphere used for navigation.

Hugh collects the brass orb and polishes it on his shirt sleeve.

Grace watches him.

GRACE

Nothing but ballast that
contraption is.

HUGH

Unless you know how to work it.

GRACE

No good on a ship's deck. Too much
list and heel to her when she's
underway. Just give me the tides
and currents, I can tell you where
we are...

Young Deckhand Alden stands by. Hugh and he are lost in talk. Grace is back to her charts with Tigernan.

65 EXT. GRACE'S SHIP NIGHT

65

The ship is steady at anchor. The night calm. Young Alden holds the astrolabe up while Hugh teaches him. They laugh, Alden is pleased.

(CONTINUED)

Grace steps beside them.

DECKHAND ALDEN
Captain, it works!

GRACE
(smiling at his
enthusiasm, she eyes
Hugh)
Yes, Alden. Now tell me then,
where is the direction of your
bunk? Tomorrow we sail at dawn.
And you best set straight course
into the arms of Morpheus, my
young one.

DECKHAND ALDEN
Yes Captain. good night Hugh. May
I keep this with me?

Hugh nods a good night. Grace and Hugh stand in silence.
He stands closer now and turns to her.

HUGH
I haven't had the chance to thank
you properly for saving my life.

Grace smiles curiously as Hugh removes the belt from
around his waist. The silver buckle that had caught her
eye gleams in the moonlight.

HUGH
It isn't much, but I'd like you to
have this.

She stares at the glimmer of silver. She looks at him as
he wraps it around her waist.

GRACE
Well now how will I find you again
should you go under?

HUGH
Maybe it's my turn to save you
great Pirate Queen...

HUGH
(With a tug on her
belt, he smiles.)
Good night Captain.

She watches him go, rubs the buckle... Something about
this one...

67 EXT. GRACE'S FLEET DAY

67

Beating to the North, Grace's fleet sails trimmed to the wind, she cuts a fast and lethal path to the Hebrides Islands off Scotland. There she is greeted by the fierce GALLOWGLASS WARRIORS.

Tigernan braces himself as in what is she getting us into now...

68 EXT. GALLOWGLASS ENCAMPMENT DAY

68

Grace leads her men to their encampment. ARGUS, a towering mass of a man, greets Grace with a hearty welcome.

ARGUS

When word came that O'Malley was coming, why should I have thought it would be Black Oak himself and not his daughter?

Argus laughs and hauls Grace into a crushing hug. He pulls her back to study her.

ARGUS

Once you were but a glimmer of bad, now look at you. The most beautiful Pirate Queen in the flesh.

GRACE

On behalf of Black Oak and the O'Malley clan, accept our humble offering for your assistance in the campaign against the English intruders. Black Oak is currently under siege himself and calls for his great friend and loyal warrior Argus McDoughan to help us.

With that Argus smiles as the chests of coins are delivered.

ARGUS

(studying the loot)
Black Oak underestimates me.

Tension palpable as Grace looks at him questioningly. Then Argus roars.

(CONTINUED)

ARGUS

Ah it's for the glory, O'Malley!
(with a laugh, he
kicks the top down
on the chests of
gold)

For you, it's in the honor of
battle beside Grace, this most
notorious chieftain and director
of thieves and murderers at sea!

Grace smiles to Argus.

ARGUS

And of course the chance to see
that Ole Black Oak again.

She smiles, moved by this man's loyalty.

ARGUS

Hurry up! Tonight we eat and
drink. Tomorrow is for battle.

They corral the men and head to the fires where pigs
roast on the spit. The MEN drink and celebrate.

Littered with drunken men and women.

GRACE

Tigernan, you stay here with the
men. I won't leave the ship.

Tigernan waves back over his shoulder. From behind he
sways as if relieving himself.

GRACE

Tigernan, did you get that?

TIGERNAN

Ay, Captain. All set here.

Just then a young woman's head pops up.

Grace stands on her deck, nude and beautiful in the
moonlight. Her breath catches in the chill of the night.
She dives off the ship. The phosphorescence dances around
her as her body is enveloped in the ink black water.

(CONTINUED)

She gasps at the cold EXHILARATION as she pops her head back up. She stares up at her ship taking it all in. Then lies back in the water, her body silhouetted in the bright moonlight. She breathes deeply and watches her breath in the night's air. The sound of water and waves comfort her.

GRACE

(Meditative,
trancelike as she
lies there)

Take me. You are all I need. My
companion, I hear the voices of
your waves. I am yours.

She slides from the water, climbing strong up the ladder. Her muscles gleam and her body steams against the cold night.

Wrapped in a large blanket, she sits on deck staring out at the sea, the stars watch her. She doesn't turn as she speaks. She just knows.

GRACE

We think ourselves so grand, but
really we are but driftwood on
this ocean. Overhead the desert of
sky in a crowd of silent stars
watching on. Herodotus had already
written in the fourth century BC
of the use of a lead and line to
tell our bearings at sea. "When
you get 11 fathoms and ooze on the
lead, you are a day's journey out
from Alexandria. Those were great
discoveries we still use to this
day.

She looks back over her bare shoulder to Hugh as he steps out from the dark corner where he has watched her.

Her eyes flash, he burns to have her. Tender, vulnerable Grace. Just this once.

He comes to her. He brushes her hair back gently off her face. He pulls her up to him. Her eyes glisten with moonlight and he kisses each one softly, then her lips.

He kisses her again, then stronger. She relaxes into him. He pulls her down to him and she slides onto him.

(CONTINUED)

71

CONTINUED:

71

He twists his coat around her and pulls her deep. She pulls him in. He finishes with the most tender kiss she could ever imagine, a kiss that breaks her heart so gently that she buries her head in the crook of his arm to wipe the tears that leak from her eyes.

He pulls her face up to him, she tries to tug to the side, but cannot hide. He stares at her long and hard, kisses her tears that track her cheeks, his own tears mingle and she smiles as his tear catches the moonlight like a fleck of phosphorescence. She kisses it. They face one another clinging to each other's complete surrender.

HUGH

Take me. I am yours, Grace
O'Malley.

CUT TO

72

EXT. FLEET DAY

72

Argus and his fleet set sail with Grace's ships, leaving the Scotland Hinterlands in the distance. It is an impressive armada of marauders.

From the helm, Grace is strength, power and focus. For a brief moment, she allows herself to catch Hugh's eye. The slightest stern to bow glance. It is their precious secret.

GRACE

We should make Connaught Bay by
end of day. Old Argus is slower in
the water with his heavy load.
We'll wait for him here. Meantime,
let's fill the hold for the people
of poor O'Flaherty land. Cheap
bastard Donal probably hasn't fed
them since I left.

(beat)

I hope you won't mind if we don't
stay long Tigernan? I don't have
much to say to that old brute
Donal. Though I did like his
father alright. Let's fish boys!

The crew whoops and sets their nets and fishing gear.

TIGERNAN

I'm sure folks will be happy to
see you and stock us up on their
home baked bread.

(MORE)

(CONTINUED)

TIGERNAN (CONT'D)

Donal's most likely off pillaging
some poor bastard's castle...

Grace and Hugh are joined by the crew as they set lines
and slop chum over the ship's side.

HUGH

Donal?

GRACE

My husband. Well, he was my
husband.

Hugh's looks somewhat surprised.

TIGERNAN

That bastard Donal comes within a
ship's length of her, you kill
him!

Hugh smiles.

HUGH

Pleasure.

GRACE

Such chivalry. I'm touched.

Off the stern Grace spots Argus's fleet. She gives the
whistle to haul lines.

GRACE

We've ploughed the seas boys,
plucked the fish from her troughs.
Let's head it in.

As they round the point bearing down on Castle
O'Flaherty, Grace stands top deck, her telescope at her
eye. She gazes in dread as she spots black smoke curling
up into the sky beyond the point.

GRACE

Tigernan, call Argus forth!

Tigernan turns to follow her gaze. His eyes go cold as
they round the point. English war ships with their flags
flying high are anchored in the harbor that was their
home, Connaught Bay Castle.

Grace sends her black flag up the mast, ready for battle.

74 EXT. ARGUS'S SHIP DAY

74

He spots the flag flying black, he sees the flurry of activity aboard Grace's ship as they come about and change their course.

Once her ship clears out of his line of sight, he sees the smoking village in ruins, and the fleet of English war ships.

ARGUS

Man the oars, prepare the ship.
Pull boys, quickly get us up in
there!

75 EXT. CONNAUGHT BAY DAY

75

Grace and Argus flank Tigernan's charge.

As they set to engage, in the frenzy of battle preparation, there is a moment when time freezes. Hugh climbs high in the rigging, stops and turns.

Grace busy with command, stops as if fated to see Hugh, a speck of a man up high in the rigging.

They hold on each other, Hugh with his sword and gun strapped to his back. Grace, her eyes on him, head high and proud. Hugh nods, theirs is a love unspoken but there's something else...

She nods and turns back to her command.

76 EXT. ENGLISH SHIP DAY

76

Bingham places his teacup on silver platter and sends the servant away.

RICHARD BINGHAM

How good of them to show.

(beat)

Prepare, our guests have arrived.

77 EXT. SHIPS CONNAUGHT BAY DAY

77

The battle clashes. Argus and his Gallowglass, along with Tigernan with his men, shore up the edges and Grace delivers crushing blows from her ship. Loss of lives, casualties, fierce hand to hand battle as men engage on decks, swords raised, shots fired.

(CONTINUED)

Tigernan's ship is hit hard and going down, he's thrown clear from the ship. Grace wheels around when she hears the explosion. She gasps.

GRACE

Tig!

With their battle axes, the Gallowglass claw the sides of the English ships scaling the sides of the hull. They climb over the sides and deliver deadly blows.

Bingham battles on, his eye always on Grace's ship.

RICHARD BINGHAM

Get me on her ship!

Bingham is rowed in closed in a smaller boat. Hugh spots him, something different about Bingham's uniform, too clean, more decorated. Hugh jumps down to the deck eyeing the boat. His eyes never leave sight of Bingham. Hugh searches for Grace.

Through the smoke and battle, Hugh makes his way to Grace. As he reaches her, Bingham moves in from closer range now, draws his gun up and trains it on Grace.

Hugh stares at her and then quickly pulls Grace behind him along the gunwale of the ship and in a flash of gunshot, the bullet pierces Hugh's chest and fires through him.

Grace is struck through the shoulder. Both go down, thrown over the side of the ship by the impact. They flounder in the water.

GRACE (V.O.)

Death's dance has no tempo. It's
over before the heart can beat,
and for those who survive, the
pain is a lifetime long.

In the chaos, Tigernan turns from climbing aboard a small pram and sees Bingham's aim. He calls out but it all just happens.

Tigernan rows fiercely to rescue Grace and Hugh. He pulls Grace from the water by the silver belt buckle that had been Hugh's, she clings to the dead weight.

She has Hugh by his sword strap wrapped around her wrist. Tigernan can't lift her and Hugh, but in shock, she won't let go.

TIGERNAN

Gracey, you have to let go now. I
can't lift ...

Grace is frozen. Tigernan reaches down and with his knife, he slices the sword strap from her wrist, Hugh sinks down.

Grace looks lost and scared. Tigernan pulls her up from the cold waters. He hugs her and wipes her hair from her face and hushes her, then wraps her in a jacket forced to turn back to the battle at hand.

CUT TO

Bingham stares at the small boat focused on Tigernan and Grace. When Bingham's boat strikes the side of Grace's ship, Bingham loses his balance.

Tigernan, in a violent move, yanks the blunderbuss from one of the men's sheathes and fires it directly at Bingham. Somehow in Bingham's falling, the bullet misses.

Bingham flounders in the water until Tigernan fires another shot at his head, suddenly Bingham dives underwater adeptly and the bullet misses again.

Tigernan drops the gun down into the bilge and collects Grace. Her eyes frozen in sorrow and shock.

GRACE

(staring lost at
Tigernan)

I don't want to go ashore, I don't
want to leave. Keep us out here at
sea.

Tigernan nods, she is in shock.

TIGERNAN

As you wish, Captain.

CUT TO

81 INT. GRACE'S SHIP'S DECK DAY

81

Time has passed, Grace's arm heals. She emerges out into the sunlight. She stares longingly at the sea, scanning for something, someone who is gone.

Tigernan and the ship's doctor share their concerns for her slow recovery.

TIGERNAN

We are nearly back home. It's been months. She is still forlorn. She won't eat, yet the wound heals
Doctor.

DOCTOR

The wound is of the heart. And she won't eat because, though she has no appetite, yet still she seems to grow. Don't you see?

The doctor smiles sadly and shakes his head at the beautiful Grace standing in profile to the sea.

TIGERNAN

By God...

By night fall, Tigernan comes to her and covers her with a blanket. She turns to him slowly still lost in her world.

Tigernan is bold but caring. He hands her a cup of ale. It is a test. She takes it and can't bring herself to drink it, something that she never has had a problem with in the past.

TIGERNAN

You are still ill, yet your wound is long healed. Your heart breaks, yet you are hardly one to belabor this. We reach land tomorrow. You have had your time, now you will lead.

Tigernan places his hand on her belly.

TIGERNAN

I have known enough women in my day and most likely have left them with my own parting gift. And you after all are no different, woman. Hugh lives in you.

(MORE)

(CONTINUED)

TIGERNAN (CONT'D)

You are with child, my Captain.
Stranger words have never been
spoken.

Grace defies him and takes a swig of ale to prove him
completely wrong, and quickly and completely vomits all
over Tigernan.

TIGERNAN

Thank you for that.

GRACE

Nonsense.

TIGERNAN

I should say several months along,
judging by the bulge.

Grace looks at Tigernan. Her eyes seek help. It is a look
Tigernan has never seen in her.

TIGERNAN

Very Well Captain. Our latest
journey has taken us far and wide,
our riches include plunder from
Spanish, Dutch, English ships and
beyond. It is time we deliver it
home. Your Father awaits your
return as do your bordering
neighbors. Richard Bourke and the
likes. We have items with which to
barter for protection and harbor.

(beat)

The colder months are upon us, you
will need to wear more clothing
and bundle up.

Tigernan eyes Grace. She understand. It is time to act.

A square tower keep, 4 storeys high, spiral staircase,
surmounted by ramparts and a wall walk. A stone privy
with an outflow down a shaft to the sea which at high
tide encircled the three sides of the castle.

Standing against the cold breeze, Grace knocks hard on
the door. Her cloaks and robes wrapped warmly around her.

She hollers up.

GRACE

Richard An Airainn Bourke, I know
you are in there. I have come to
propose marriage to you.

Richard pops his head out of his fourth storey window
then clatters down the steps.

GRACE

Strictly on my terms, mind you. As
our brethren legal system allows
in our beloved Ireland, this is a
Celtic secular marriage, nothing
more. It is in other words, a
trial one year marriage. The year
is now 1567, in case you weren't
aware and so if either one of us
wishes to withdraw from the
arrangement after that time, 1568,
we are free to do so. I bring with
me the dowry of cattle and
livestock, and the usual. You in
your castle at Burrshoole in
Umhall and I can occupy this
Castle of yours here that you
rarely frequent. Yours is a land
campaign and mine a sea. Though I
have been known to fight as solid
a battle on land to clear a castle
or two.

Richard smiles at her subtle humility.

RICHARD BOURKE

Yes, I will Grace. You will be my
Mrs. Bourke.

GRACE

I'll have none of that. You will
be my Mr. Mate. Your title as
Chieftain of the sect of Ulick
Burrishoole and Carra and me, the
most famous female sea captain
should make this a strong
strategic partnership.

RICHARD BOURKE

For me, you are fine to look at
Grace.

(CONTINUED)

GRACE

And you "Richard an iarainn", in
your old and outdated iron armor
don't lack in warlike qualities
and battle skills.

(A spark in her eye)

This doesn't entirely displease
me.

Richard bows keeping his eyes locked on her.

RICHARD BOURKE

It is a pity your timing is such.
I have been called away in the
next weeks. I ride out for a long
campaign up in the north.

GRACE

As does my campaign call me back
to sea. But nothing we can't
settle before we go.

There's respect between them.

RICHARD BOURKE

Very well, Mrs. Mate I confess, it
is an honor to stand aside a woman
whose strengths indeed overshadow
my own. I will do my best to
protect you and never get in your
way...

GRACE

(Nestling up to him)

...Unless I want to get in your
way.

Leaning into him, there's a smile, something like
companionship and a quick stab at passion.

Grace stands at the window of Rockfleet gazing out over
the calm waters.

There is a large hawser, eyebolt with a line tethered to
it that hangs on the corner of her large bedpost.

She caresses the line, following and holding it as she
climbs from bed. The line goes taut and slacks. Out the
large freight size window, she studies the calm waters.
As the tide ebbs and flows, the line slacks and snaps.

(CONTINUED)

At the end of the line, is Grace's ship, tethered to her bed like a faithful horse.

CUT TO

In an ethereal, dream-like state, a grey sky hangs low and foreboding. Down on the shore, she sees the old woman she had seen back when she was at the shore of Donal's castle. The OLD WASHER WOMAN scrubs the blood from the clothing. The woman stops and stares at Grace in the morning fog. Grace sees her. The Old Woman turns back to her work and the fog encompasses her. Again, the familiar chill up Grace's spine.

CUT BACK TO

Off in the distance the rumble of the horses and MEN. Grace watches as Richard and his MEN, trample through the fog. They are battle weary and bloodied.

GRACE stands at the parapet. Richard dismounts and runs up to find her.

He runs into her bedroom and stops overcome by her beauty.

The look in his eyes, they have seen so much death. When they see one another, Grace welcomes him. He kisses her, tears fall as he collapses to his knees, burying his head against her belly.

She does not deny him, but greets his touch. It is erotic and sensual and tender.

RICHARD BOURKE

My wife.

GRACE

Yes, in battle the days pass in death and in dying, here there is only life. Forget all the rest, my husband.

She smiles. And Richard breaks down.

RICHARD BOURKE

So much death, yes. I have missed you. And now to see you, my beautiful Grace.

(CONTINUED)

He can't tell she is pregnant and she cannot bear to tell him she is with child already, and it is not his child.

She pulls him up to her and strips his armor. She is caring and loving as she washes the death and blood from him and bathes him. Her nightgown wet and clings to her. Her breasts full. They fall into one another.

GRACE

Give me your son.

Richard is overcome by her beauty and sensuality. Richard takes her, urgent and passionate.

They lie together in stillness. Grace stares out to the distant sea outside her window. Richard sleeps, completely spent.

MONTAGE

On land, in the brutal cold, Richard rides out with his men. Black Oak greets Richard at Connaught castle. Together with an army of men, they ride out. There is urgency in their gait.

The English flag marks the cavalry of men who storm the village. They dismount and destroy everything.

Children wail and huts are burned. Cattle and livestock are stripped of the land. It is complete obliteration.

At sea, Grace on her top deck. She is wrapped and warmed by the heavy coats. Her belly has grown large.

Black Oak, Richard and his men come upon village after village of the most heinous and gruesome sights. The English flag continues to mark the pillaged villages.

Cattle are SLAIN and children wail.

A BEAUTIFUL IRISH WOMAN is violently raped by a band of the English soldiers. Over and over, they mercilessly rape her, each one decimating and inseminating her.

(CONTINUED)

87 CONTINUED:

87

As they throw her to the ground, they stomp the barrel of their blunderbuss and another the handle of his cutlass against her cheek. She reels to the ground as they suit up and leave.

88 EXT. GALLOWGLASS SHIPS DAY

88

Argus and his Gallowglass fleet are bearing down off the coast when they are completely ambushed.

Richard Bingham and his chief leader deliver a crushing and complete full-on attack of the Gallowglass at sea.

RICHARD BINGHAM

(to his Captain)

For aiding and abetting the Irish marauders and rebellions. They too shall leave this earth.

They overcome the Gallowglass. Bingham boards Argus's ship.

RICHARD BINGHAM

Bring me their Captain.

(beat)

For acts against the Queen of England, you are sentenced to a punishment fitting to the severity of this act. Who of your men still have life left in them, we will surely snuff it out.

(Beat)

Send them to their watery grave.

With that, the living men are tied to their dead fellow mates and weighted down. They are hurled overboard and sink. Argus watches on tugging to free himself and help his men.

The terror frozen on their faces as they sink down...

RICHARD BINGHAM

As for you Captain...

(turning to Argus)

Keelhaul him!

Bingham's men grab the large Gallowglass Argus and prepare him for the torturous ride down under the ship.

They plunge Argus into the sea then haul him under the keel of the ship with a line.

(CONTINUED)

His skin is shredded by the raking across the barnacle's along the keel and hull of the galleon. He is nearly drowned with each plunge deep under the coursing water, as the English ship beats through the waves.

Argus's ship off the stern is a fiery wreck.

As they haul Argus up for the last time, his blood streams into the water.

RICHARD BINGHAM

(annoyed and bored)

Is he dead yet?

The ENGLISH SAILOR nods with an uncaring shrug.

ENGLISH SAILOR

Close enough...

RICHARD BINGHAM

Cut him loose.

The sailor slices the line around his hands and slips carelessly slicing into Argus's arm.

ENGLISH SAILOR

Oops...

Argus doesn't even respond. His body, now unrecognizable and barely intact, cascades down the side of the ship slamming against the hull as it hits the water, broken and lifeless.

As the English vessel sails off, there is the slightest flick of Argus's left hand in the cold water.

Within moments, a swirl and the BLUE DOG SHARKS, vicious and frenzied, tear the remaining life and body of the great Gallowglass warrior.

Black Oak and Richard Bourke enter the village, they see the raped woman, beaten and dragging the large sword. She sees the men and drops to her knees as if pleading and searching up in a Godless sky.

One of Black Oak's MEN runs to try to stop her.

IRISH WOMAN

God, take my life before I give
life to any English bastard!

(CONTINUED)

89 CONTINUED:

89

She throws herself upon the large sword. The Man stops and staggers. Richard and Black Oak, both hardened chieftains and warriors, are stunned and turn away.

90 EXT. GRACE'S SHIP DAY

90

JONESY BOY

Captain, there is word that Argus and his men have been killed. Their ships were set asunder by the mighty hand of Bingham. The long arm of Queen Elizabeth of England extends all the way up north it would seem.

91

91

Grace is wild with rage and vengeance.

GRACE

We attack! We will chop that long bony arm off that Elizabethan Queen and we will slaughter that Bingham bastard!

At that, Grace buckles over. She stares disbelieving below her large belly as her water breaks. She is confused and startled. Tigernan collects her.

TIGERNAN

Oh Lord, and this too? I did not sign up to be your midwife!

(BEAT)

What? Woman! Don't you know anything about childbearing? God gave you ovaries, it's not all about plundering and pirating!

Grace wails as the contractions come down on her hard.

TIGERNAN

Get ready boys. This outta be interesting.

(Beat)

Jonesy Boy you hold ship's course.

Tigernan carries Grace in his arms and yes, she is heavy and yes he tells her so as he heads after the Doctor.

92

INT. GRACE'S CABIN NIGHT

92

In the throes of labor, Tigernan tries to joke. Grace claws at the headboard, long scraping nail marks. This childbearing hurts!

TIGERNAN

Ok, now I know how evil men are to do this to women. I will never ever ever...

(trying to distract her)

Grace, count the knots in the wooden beams, see there? 1,2,3...

(staring up at the heaven's)

Ay, Hugh, you seeing this? Good job mate!

GRACE

(in serious pain)

Owww, shut up!

She throws something serious like her knife at him and he ducks.

TIGERNAN

Hey!

DOCTOR

Ok push, Captain, push!

Tigernan is dumfounded by the expression "push captain" but then as the baby is born, he stares in shock. Grace is spent, but in such bliss. She holds her son. The doctor cuts the cord. Tigernan watches on until he goes grey and then passes out.

DOCTOR

A Boy! It's a boy!

GRACE

I will call you Tibbott ne Longh.
Toby of the ships.

She kisses her son. She peers over to Tigernan who's out cold.

GRACE

And there is your Uncle Tig,
passed out on the floor. Perfect.

(CONTINUED)

92 CONTINUED:

92

The Doctor and Grace smile.

MONTAGE

93 EXT. SHIP'S WATCH CROW'S NEST DAYBREAK

93

Out on the horizon, Alden spots a ship bearing down in the dusk light. He watches it with concern.

From down below, the Doctor calls out to the MEN.

DOCTOR

Tibbett ne Longh is born.

All cheer! Alden is torn, he cheers from up on high and doesn't want to believe the ship off in the distance is a threat.

A large ALGERIAN pirate boards the ship and rams his sword through the unexpecting guardsman. The baby cries and Grace wakes to nurse the newborn.

As Toby suckles and then falls back asleep, Grace hears the thud up on deck. She is half asleep but rouses ever vigilant.

Another thump overhead, she is by now out of bed in her night gown, barefoot. She grabs her sword and blunderbuss.

She holds Toby swaddled in her other arm and as she flings open the door to her cabin, she hits her sleeping GUARD. He awakens with a start. He salutes her. She hands him her newborn son.

GRACE

Wake up! Take Toby and stay out of harm's way!

The guard holds the baby clearly this is a first for him.

Grace takes off up the stairs. She screams a blood curdling scream that just wakes the dead!

94 INT. SHIP'S SLEEPING BUNKS DAY

94

Tigernan flies off his bunk and instinctively grabs his weapons.

(CONTINUED)

When he races up on deck, he sees Grace wild-eyed and in such a rage that it seems to even scare the man she has her gun trained on. And the entire pirating troop for that matter.

GRACE

Die you bastard at the
unconsecrated hands of a woman
just given birth. Not allowed to
take communion are we right after
childbirth, but perfectly willing
to kill anyone who fucks with her
or her child.

Tigernan and the men come to her aid and finish up the job.

TIGERNAN

Oh, you boys messed with the wrong
woman. Especially today!

He watches as Grace shoots them all down and buries her sword in several others.

As she turns back around, her wild hair is matted to her forehead, her victim's blood and her own sweat.

She swipes it like a crazy woman then with a deep breath, she heads back down to her cabin and newborn baby. She pitches her sword and blunderbuss to Tigernan.

GRACE

Don't suppose you boys could
manage just one day without me?

As she grabs her son from the cowering guard, she kicks her cabin door closed, strips off her nightgown now bloodied from battle, and climbs back into bed with her son.

TIGERNAN

By god, the history books would
never believe that such a woman
really did live. All we men do is
fight and fornicate, but she
battles and births.

(beat)

Men, we are in the presence of
either greatness or utter
insanity. In any case, we are in
the presence of Grace... Grace
O'Malley. God bless this woman.

95

EXT. GRACE'S FLEET COMES ASHORE DAY

95

Grace's ships arrive in port. Flags fly high at Rockfleet castle. The villagers run to greet the ship.

Grace stands on the deck, barefoot and with baby Toby swaddled in her arms. The men long for solid ground. They eye the voluptuous women waving to them from the shoreline.

TIGERNAN

(to Jonesy Boy)

Oh, any woman will do but she better be thick-hipped and as horny as I am...

JONESY BOY

Ay, I intend to take mine and whoever dares to disturb me will die by my sword.

Anchors drop, the smaller boats ferry them in. Grace jumps from the bow barefoot and into the water, she holds Toby high, the water splashes his face.

Richard Bourke rides down to meet his wife. He smiles as she comes ashore. She looks at him neither lovingly nor disapprovingly as she thrusts the baby into his arms.

GRACE

Here.

RICHARD BOURKE

What? A baby? Where on earth did you get this? Off whose ship did you commandeer this parcel?

GRACE

He is your son. Tibbott ne Longh.

RICHARD BOURKE

My son?!

(furiously pointing
to the ship)

You have given birth to my son,
out there on a ship's deck?

GRACE

(smiles)

I have.

(MORE)

(CONTINUED)

95

CONTINUED:

95

GRACE (CONT'D)

While you were away to the North,
I knew I was with child, and I
knew that if I sent word to you,
you would deny me travel at sea.
And that was not an option.

RICHARD BOURKE

Impossible.

TIGERNAN

(patting Richard on
the shoulder)

I assure you it was not
impossible. Quite a feat actually.

(beat)

Congratulations to the new Father!
I shall celebrate for you. We all
shall.

The MEN cheer, grab their gear and the WOMEN and head up
to the tavern. Festivities abound.

Richard just stares at the baby, trying to absorb it all.
He can't help but smile. Richard holds the child and
marches over to his wife.

96

EXT. DOCKS DAY

96

Grace is already busy settling the cargo tallies with the
town clerk who stands at the dock with his ledger open as
he writes furiously trying to keep up with Grace who
rattles off the contents of her cargo.

Toby begins to cry and Richard looks helpless with this
child in arms.

Grace takes the baby and hands her sword and gear to a
SERVANT.

GRACE

A warm bath and deep sleep in a
bed that doesn't rock, is all I
need.

CUT TO

97

INT. EARL DESMOND FITZGERALD'S HOME ENGLAND DAY

97

Richard Bingham visits the stately home of the EARL
DESMOND FITZGERALD. The EARL'S WIFE wafts regal and
aristocratic in her manner and her dress.

(CONTINUED)

She is curt with a young pretty SERVANT, who brings them lukewarm tea.

EARL DESMOND stares at the servant lasciviously. It does not go unnoticed by his wife, nor their guest Richard Bingham.

EARL DESMOND'S WIFE

Return this at once. How dare you present our guest with this dishwater. Bring us a new service and then be gone from my grace.

EARL DESMOND

Now Dear, that isn't necessary. I'm sure that Millie can return with...

The Earl's wife glares venomously at him as she sends the servant sobbing and running from the room.

EARL DESMOND'S WIFE

And I'm sure that Millie's services far exceed the preparation of tea...

Earl Desmond stares at his wife shocked by her insinuations.

RICHARD BINGHAM

Desmond, I will charge you with this campaign into the western reach along the Connaught Bay. We have driven a wedge between the chieftain clans there in our commandeering of the MacWilliam's land and regranteeing it. But the others, O'Malley and Bourke clans will not surrender. We will drive them to warring amongst themselves.

(beat)

Those who have succumbed to the English titles that have been regranted to them versus those who continue in their headstrong Irish ways to defend their dying Gaelic culture... let them kill each other off and we will collect the prized Irish lands at the end.

(Beat)

Have you ever watched a bald eagle fish?

(MORE)

(CONTINUED)

RICHARD BINGHAM (CONT'D)

His eyes are not as attuned to the catch so he waits until the osprey, his fish hawk cousin catches the fish for him and then he pounces. He waits for others to do his work... we will wait...

EARL DESMOND'S WIFE

(seductively over her
teacup to Richard
Bingham)

You are a man whose mind I'd like to probe...

(beat)

Perhaps while my husband is away conquering that God forsaken country, you would do me the honor of entertaining me with your knowledge of the current state of affairs while I am to remain here in London... all alone...

Richard Bingham nods to the Earl's wife as they exchange solicitous glances over teacups. The Earl is not amused.

EARL DESMOND

Very well. In the name of the Queen.

RICHARD BINGHAM

Here, here. Long Live the Queen.

EARL DESMOND'S WIFE

To the Queen.

Richard Bourke returns to find the castle doors locked to him. He calls up to Grace who whittles a small boat while Toby plays at her feet. She peers over the edge of the parapet.

RICHARD BOURKE

Grace, the door is locked, open it at once.

Toby is crawling towards her.

GRACE

(Preoccupied)

Richard Bourke, I dismiss you.

(MORE)

(CONTINUED)

GRACE (CONT'D)

It is one year since our trial marriage and, though I don't find you particularly displeasing, I have chosen to exercise my brethren rights and annul this marriage.

(beat)

As was our agreement, I will take my customary share of what is owed me. The castle which is my residence will remain in my stead. As will the dowry with which I came. You may retire to your other castle at Carraighhowley.

(turning to Toby)

No Toby, you may not play with mommy's sword.

Grace blows on her whittled boat and admires it as she glances back down to Richard.

Richard looks incensed and confused as Grace simultaneously divorces him while scolding her son. She pops her head back up over the parapet to him.

RICHARD BOURKE

What?

GRACE

You heard me, Man. We will continue to make a fine team, you from land and I from sea, but be honest, this marriage thing is not becoming to me nor you, really.

Richard stands with his hand on his hips. With each shift of his weight, his armor creaks. Flabbergasted and speechless. He can't even argue. He knows she's right. She smiles down to him.

GRACE

Oh you in your worn out and outdated iron armor. Shoo, I have much to do. I sail tomorrow and you, with your new and prominent role as Tainest to the Lord MacWilliams, must have something better to do than rust at my back gate.

RICHARD BOURKE

And what of my son?

(CONTINUED)

98 CONTINUED: (2)

98

GRACE

Richard Bourke, don't get all
righteous on me now. You know
where to find me and Toby too.

Toby pops his head up and holds his new wooden boat that
Grace has whittled him. He waves down to Richard smiling.

GRACE

(Waves with Toby and
smiles)

Toby, say Bye Bye...

Richard turns and creaks off in his armor, grumbling.

99 EXT. ROCKFLEET CASTLE DAY

99

As Richard mounts his horse, he looks up one last time
admiring Grace's beauty. He cannot stay mad. He is sad,
but loves her just the same.

RICHARD BOURKE

You are indeed like the sea, Grace
O'Malley. The tide that leaves the
shore. You are never still and
never captured. Fickle and yet
loyal. I know you are always to
return to us. A beautiful wave who
never ceases.

GRACE

Ay, my oath to you is good. I
shall protect you from sea and
land if I must. As I know you will
me.

With that, Toby reaches his tiny hand up to touch his
mother's face. She kisses her son, lost in him, nothing
else matters. Richard smiles sadly and turns his horse
away.

100 EXT. MACWILLIAMS IRISH LANDS DAY

100

Richard Bourke and HIS MEN ride into the village, with
English flag flying high. They stop dead as EARL
MACWILLIAMS rides up to greet them.

RICHARD BOURKE

(furiously)

English Flags fly here? What have
you done?

(CONTINUED)

EARL MACWILLIAMS

Earl Desmond Fitzgerald has
granted me my land back instead of
slaughtering us as has been the
case up and down the coast.

(beat)

I am an Earl and a man of my word
to protect my people.

RICHARD BOURKE

(hissing)

You are no Earl. You are a coward.
How could you surrender your land?
The English have merely taken it
and they pretend to give it back
and regrant you your own land. For
what? To squeeze you and protect
you from their wrath? It is no
longer yours. Nor is it Ireland's.
It belongs to that bony Tudor
Queen.

(beat)

And when you die, it will not pass
down to your sons. It will be
devoured by that rapacious English
Crown.

With that Richard thrust his sword at MacWilliams
threateningly.

From afar, the English Earl Desmond smiles watching the
Irish fight each other. He turns his horse and rides off
to his men.

A furious MacWilliams rides back to the castle and is
greeted by Earl Desmond.

There is no great camaraderie between them, but
MacWilliams seethes.

EARL DESMOND

Pay him no heed. Your title, your
land...

(an afterthought)

...oh yes, and your people, are
secured now.

MacWilliams eyes the English man. There is no trust here.

102 EXT. MACWILLIAMS CASTLE NIGHT

102

As Richard Bourke and his men dine with the MacWilliams clan, it is clear they are Irish men who share history, solidarity, and unspoken Irish Laws of Hospitality. It is a forced kinsmanship, yet they are clansmen. They eat and drink together.

MacWilliams watches on his thoughts weigh heavily. Regret and guilt.

EARL MACWILLIAMS

I'm sorry Bourke. I did what I had to do.

Bourke looks at MacWilliams questioningly and then suddenly everything goes blurry. Men buckle over in painful convulsions as Bourke's camp of men fall one by one. Richard Bourke stares up in confusion at MacWilliams in his final death throes. He sees Earl Desmond standing over him.

Desmond pats MacWilliams on the shoulder but he pulls away vehemently, turns and leaves Bourke and his men to die.

A YOUNG MACWILLIAMS clansman watches on, grinding his teeth, he re-sheathes his knife against this traitorous union.

103 INT. GRACE'S BED CHAMBER NIGHT

103

Toby, 2, sits in the darkness in his small crib. The moonlight slices his face. Calmly, he watches a shadow cross to his mother's bed.

The hand comes over her mouth. She startles as the YOUNG MAN urges her to stay calm.

YOUNG MACWILLIAMS CLANSMAN

Grace O'Malley, I mean you no harm.

Toby stand in his crib, he watches on then tries to climb out.

TOBY

Mama...

GRACE

Sshh, my son. All is well.

(CONTINUED)

YOUNG MACWILLIAMS CLANSMAN
They have killed them all.

GRACE
(wildly)
Killed who? Speak up, Man.

YOUNG MACWILLIAMS CLANSMAN
(Shaken)
They rode out and all have
perished. Poisoned by the
traitorous hand of MacWilliams at
the forcing by the Englishman Earl
Desmond Fitzgerald.

GRACE
Of whom do you speak boy?

YOUNG MACWILLIAMS CLANSMAN
Desmond, the puppet to Richard
Bingham and the Queen of England.
(beat)
He has killed them. They were
unsuspecting as they ate and drank
with us as our guests.

The young man breaks down and weeps.

GRACE
(with dread)
Who boy? Who has been killed?

YOUNG MACWILLIAM CLANSMAN
Your Richard Bourke and his men.

Grace shakes her head disbelieving.

GRACE
No! No!!

Toby begins to cry.

YOUNG MACWILLIAMS CLANSMAN
You must prepare. They are coming
to claim the Bourke lands. They
will leave at first light to
descend upon you.

Grace charges into action.

GRACE
Over my husband's dead body they
dare trample!
(MORE)

(CONTINUED)

103 CONTINUED: (2)

103

GRACE (CONT'D)

And over my dead body will they
take the land we fight for! Let
them die trying!

(Beat)

We must get the men up!

CUT TO:

104 EXT. ROCKFLEET CASTLE NIGHT

104

Grace and Tigernan and her men pry the lead roofing off
the castle until their fingers bleed.

GRACE

Stoke the fires and pry the lead
roofs off. We will boil it all.
Prepare the molten led in the
caldrons off the rear parapet.

GRACE

Tig, ready the ships. We'll need
reinforcement from the ship's
canons. We can fire at them from
behind when they attack full force
on the castle. We'll surprise and
circumvent.

TIGERNAN

Yes, Captain. Go men, you heard.
Move out, we have little time to
prepare.

As the men file out, Tigernan grabs Grace's arm.

TIGERNAN

And Toby, he must be clear of
here.

Grace stares at Tigernan, the weight of this most
important decision is apparent.

GRACE

Tigernan, I will defend from land.
You will take them from the ship.
I charge you with Toby's safety.
You can maneuver better at sea.

(beat)

You can get out of here if it goes
badly.

(CONTINUED)

104 CONTINUED:

104

TIGERNAN

I will protect Toby as I will
protect you. I will cover you from
the sea. We will drive them out.

GRACE

We'll throw down the full weight
of our Irish wrath on these
bastards. And we will keep one
cauldron smoldering...

Tigernan clasps Grace who beats back the tears as she
kisses Toby and hands him over to Tigernan. Toby clutches
Tigernan's neck and they vanish.

Grace shakes off her tears and climbs up on the roof with
her men working the roofing off the stones of Rockfleet
Castle.

105 EXT. ROCKFLEET CASTLE DAY

105

At sunrise, the band of ENGLISH SOLDIERS smile, cocky and
relaxed, as they saunter out to descend upon Grace's
hold.

The castle gives off no hint of being on alert. Grace's
men lay in wait.

106 EXT. GRACE'S SHIP DAY

106

From out on the ship, Tigernan and his men watch on. Toby
is down in his mother's cabin, sleeping soundly in his
crib.

Floating in the large silver challis on Grace's desk is
the small wooden sailboat. It rocks gently as the boat is
made ready for the ensuing BATTLE. Men's feet trample the
decks and the small wooden boat senses the vibration in
the hull and shutters in the water of the silver challis.

Tigernan closes the door on the young sleeping child.

TIGERNAN

(to the guard)

If anything comes to this ship, or
to me, your orders are to get the
young master Toby to his
Grandfather, Black Oak's ship over
in Clare Bay.

The guard nods somberly.

(CONTINUED)

106 CONTINUED:

106

GUARD

My vow. I will, Captain.

108 EXT. ROCKFLEET CASTLE DAY

108

The English advance. Off in a distance, Earl Desmond and MacWilliams ride out in front mocking and chiding the castle.

EARL DESMOND

And now for the great crowing
Cock's castle, Richard Bourke.
With him gone now, I guess this
Grace O'Malley claims her place
here, a mere hen's castle...
(suddenly wielding
his sword angrily)
Then, let us eat fowl!

109 EXT. ROCKFLEET CASTLE DAY

109

With this affront, Grace raises her sword silently and vengefully.

Her men greet the laughing English with a surprise attack.

Desmond and MacWilliams and their onslaught are met by a violent and ferocious battle.

The Young MacWilliams clansman who had alerted Grace seeks out MacWilliams. As he beheads him mercilessly, he adds.

YOUNG MACWILLIAMS CLANSMAN

For your thoughtless disregard of
the Gaelic ways, to poison your
own kin and side with the enemy?
May you wander in hell as headless
as you were on this Earth.

The sound of steel hisses through MacWilliams' TRACHEA as his last breath escapes him.

In the ensuing battle, the molten lead pours down from the parapets on the attacking English and their men. It is a gruesome battle.

110 EXT. ROCKFLEET CASTLE SHORELINE DAY 110

As the Englishmen flee to the shoreline, Tigernan fires volleys from the ships, a tactic of circumvention and complete destruction.

Left standing is Earl Desmond, he stares in shock at Grace. His sword down to his side, he is a beaten man.

Grace is wild with vengeance.

CUT TO

111 INT. BEDROOM IN EARL DESMOND FITZGERALD'S HOME LONDON DAY 111

Richard Bingham ravages Earl Desmond's wife. He fucks her violently. At first she likes it, but it grows more brutal. He hurts her.

She is left like a broken rape victim.

CUT BACK TO

112 EXT. ROCKFLEET CASTLE DAY 112

Grace marches towards Earl Desmond. She pulls her sword to his neck and walks him to the cauldron.

GRACE

You Sir underestimate this widowed
hen who holds great contempt for
cowardice. And, as for the death
by poisoning of my husband,
Richard Bourke, and each of his
men's lives you took from our
Gaelic pride.

The young MacWilliam Clansman steps in behind Grace.

GRACE

113 In your very own England, a 113
tradition for those who poison
another is a death I find most
fitting. We will treat you to our
Irish rendition.

The young MacWilliam dumps the bucket of water in and stirs the boiling cauldron pot, another MAN pitches a piece of wood on the fire.

(CONTINUED)

GRACE

"The 1531 statute of your Henry VIII made poisoning a treason when one Richard Roose, a cook, was found guilty of killing, by poisoning food intended for the household of the bishop of Rochester and for the poor of the parish of Lambeth. Found guilty of treason, he was sentenced to be boiled to death without benefit of clergy. He was publicly boiled at Smithfield. In the same year a maid-servant for poisoning her mistress was boiled at King's Lynn.

(beat)

A fine end to you Earl of Desmond. To death. Your stew we will use to chum our fishing grounds. Let us see if your boiled remains will raise the dead or fill our nets...

Desmond struggles against the men who restrain him and tie his hands together.

With a stick, they lift him by bound hands and dunk him into the boiling cauldron. They repeat this until the skin falls from him. His shrieks are blood-curdling until they are no more.

CUT TO:

114 INT. BEDROOM PARLOR EARL DESMOND FITZGERALD'S HOME LONDON 114

Earl Desmond's wife watches broken from the bed. Richard Bingham buttons up his breeches, wipes his hands on his handkerchief as if he had touched something dirty and returns it to his pocket. He leaves.

115 EXT. GRACE'S SHIP DAY

115

The remains of Desmond and his cauldron are pitched from the side of the ship way off shore.

GRACE

Tigernan, is it even worth setting the nets?

(CONTINUED)

TIGERNAN

Ney, bad bait and foul chum only
poisons the catch.

GRACE

Hoist anchor, we will go out
further. My Richard Bourke and his
men deserve a formal burial at
sea.

The bodies are weighted and slid from the ship's side.
Burial at sea, a simple yet most impressive and dignified
ceremony. The Sailmaker sews the body into the canvas
hammock with the heavy weights of several ballast stones.

GRACE

(to the Sailmaker)

Ballast stones at the feet to
weigh them down and ensure they
don't float up. And, to satisfy
superstition and ensure that the
body is actually dead, make your
last stitch of your Sailmaker's
needle, through the nose.

Grace stands stoically as the Sailmaker pierces the nose
with his final stitch and sews the bag shut. Grace
watches the bodies of her Irish clansmen slide under the
waves. She bows her head. Ensigns of ships and
establishments in the port area are all half-masted
during a funeral.

GRACE

My oath to you, Richard Bourke. A
good man, you were.

TIGERNAN

Ay Captain, and with this act
against the crown of England, we
must brace for the full
retaliation. We will see Bingham
soon enough.

Grace turns her gaze to the sea.

GRACE

We go back out to sea where he
can't find us. But first I must
secure Toby's safety. I will have
Edmund McTallen, sub chieftain of
my father's lands, foster Toby.
With Black Oak near enough, Toby
will be safe.

(MORE)

(CONTINUED)

115 CONTINUED: (2)

115

GRACE (CONT'D)

England's Bingham and his men
haven't ventured that far to the
southard. The friars there with
teach him Latin so he can
communicate with his friends and
foe. They will teach him
horsemanship, javelin, darts,
sword all the necessary military
tactics.

TIGERNAN

And he has inherited your skills
Captain and will one day inherit
your fleet. Toby will carry on, in
his father's stead.

GRACE

Thank you Tig for your loyalty in
keeping this our buried secret.
Toby will live on in the Bourke
tradition.

TIGERNAN

No Captain. Tibbott ne Longh will
live on in his mother's tradition,
of the O'Malley clan to the death.

She stares at Tigernan.

118 EXT. GRACE'S SHIP OFF IRISH COAST DAY

118

Grace and her men are greeted by a small ship. A YOUNG
HANDSOME MAN calls to her.

YOUNG MAN

Grace O'Malley, your presence is
requested at the castle.

GRACE

And whose castle and who young sir
would you be?

Suddenly a very OLD MAN stands and salutes her.

OLD MAN

My Grandson hasn't stopped talking
of you for all these years. The
table is set for you and all your
men. We will dine at Howth Castle
and you will be our most
hospitable guest.

(With a solemn bow)

(MORE)

(CONTINUED)

118 CONTINUED:

118

OLD MAN (CONT'D)
As is dictated by the Irish Laws
of Hospitality.

The old man smiles. Grace stares curiously.

GRACE
Sir Howth? Could it be? Turning to
the young man. And you? Our young
Nate all grown up?
(laughter)
We would be honored.

As they make sail for the castle, Nate jumps aboard ship.
He hugs Grace and Tigernan.

119 EXT. HOWTH CASTLE NIGHT

119

The castle is lit in full regalia. The old Gatekeeper who
had denied Grace and her men leers at her as she enters.
He has been demoted to slopping the stalls. He grinds his
teeth.

Grace eyes him knowing he has made his own fate. As he
has paused to glare at the guests, a horse lifts its tail
releasing a rather melodious fart directly into the old
man's face. It wafts his hair ever so gently. Then, a
fresh load of manure onto the old man's boots.

The young boys giggle and chide while Grace nods to him
like a regal queen.

She stops when she sees A GUARD taking down the English
flag that flies alongside the Irish. She nods to the
gesture and Sir Howth bows.

SIR HOWTH
In your honor, long live Ireland.

120 INT. HOWTH CASTLE NIGHT

120

At the long table, set for a queen, the dinner is
exquisite and rich. Wine flows, Sir Howth places Grace to
his right, the place of honor.

He waves off the servant and hold the chair out for her
himself. Grace accepts graciously.

At the end of the long table an extra place is set.

(CONTINUED)

GRACE

Your hospitality is most gracious
Sir Howth.

SIR HOWTH

You taught me an important lesson
my dear. And in honor I wish to
impart with you this.

He presents Grace with a beautiful ring. He holds her
hand up and places the ring on her right hand ring
finger.

SIR HOWTH

In honor of your beloved somewhat
paradoxical ways, you have shown
your love for countryman and our
Ireland. It was your hospitality
towards my Grandson that scolded
me all these years. I am ashamed
of my sway towards the English
ways. To that end, the extra
setting at the end of my table has
been thusly set since the day I
turned you away and you in return
did not hold it against me nor my
Grandson. The place setting is a
constant reminder that no one
should ever be turned away again.

Grace breaks protocol and rises from her seat and reaches
down to kiss the old man on his cheek. He blushes, an old
man overcome by her beauty and her ways.

SIR HOWTH

The Irish history books will not
know what to do with a woman like
you, who embraces all that we, as
a sovereign nation, are. You
embody that struggle for survival
against all odds, a woman at sea,
fighting alongside your men,
providing for your people. You are
a great warrior Queen. May no man
ever deny you your title as One of
Ireland's greatest, most
courageous and determined
chieftains.

GRACE

(Admiring her ring)
I will wear this til I die.
(MORE)

(CONTINUED)

GRACE (CONT'D)

Through battle and storm, Ireland
will prevail. It is the only way
we know how to live.

Cheers and festivities. The evening is one of celebration
and solidarity. BARDS and MINSTRELS are brought in to
entertain. A BARD stands to recite a poem:

BARD

Hand down that Muireasc surely has
its name, From lovely Muirisc of
the snowy hands, The daughter of
great Hugony the King, She was a
downright beauty, daring, bold,
And fixed her habitation near this
bay, Beneath the base of Cruachan
Aigli, where She ruled o'er hardy
sailors and great men.

Grace bows and the Men toast her, their Captain and
leader. Toby has fallen asleep at the table. She bows and
stands.

GRACE

And now I must leave you, for my
most important role of mother
calls me.

She scoops Toby into her arms. Tigernan follows with the
young Harrison and Red Hook in his arms. Nathaniel leads
them out.

NATHANIAL

Tonight, you will sleep ashore,
here. Tomorrow you can return to
your ship.

Grace kisses Nate tenderly and he escorts them off.

Toby is top deck standing beside his mother while the
young nephews play and pretend to battle with wooden
swords.

TIGERNAN

Ah, the Bourke men with swords all
of them. You Harrison and you Red
Hook, the sons of Richard's
brothers.

RED HOOK

Ay My Father is Uncle Richard's
youngest brother, Rory.

HARRISON

And my Father is Uncle Richard's
middle brother, McCallister.

TIGERNAN

Well, the lot of you will have my
sword to beat.

With this Tigernan playfully unsheathes his great cutlass
and the young boys squeal and laugh as Tigernan runs to
capture the young pirates.

Toby stares deep into the telescope. He tugs on his
mother's leg and points to something off in the distance.
She looks up.

GRACE

What is it Toby I don't see
anything.

TOBY

A ship, mother.

Alden follows his gaze.

ALDEN

Where Toby, where do you see it?

TOBY

There...

The little boy points. Alden stands erect. The slightest
outline of the ship.

ALDEN

Bloody hell.

Grace stares down the ship. Her eyes wide.

GRACE

We move now. We can outrun them.

She turns to Nate and stares deep into the young man's
eyes.

GRACE

Nate, you know what I ask of you
is the hardest of all things.

(MORE)

(CONTINUED)

121 CONTINUED: (2)

121

GRACE (CONT'D)

Be quick. Be smart and don't fail
me or my son.

Nate nods and takes Toby and his cousins.

GRACE

(kneeling in front of
Toby)

God be with you my son.

Toby watches his mother with his big eyes, tears well up.
She is overcome and turns to hide her grief from her son.

MONTAGE

122 EXT. MCCLELLAN CASTLE DAY

122

Nate delivers young Toby and his cousins to the McClellan
clan along with a letter to be read to Toby.

123 INT. TOBY'S BED CHAMBER NIGHT

123

As Toby lay in his bed that night, A YOUNG FRIAR opens
the letter.

GRACE (V.O.)

My Dear Son:

I am sending you away to be
fostered. You are too young to
understand, but this is an ancient
custom in Ireland. Fosterage
creates strong ties between the
clan of the original parents and
that of the foster parents. Many
useful alliances are forged this
way. Know that I would have
preferred to keep you with me, but
I must think of your future. There
is a powerful woman across the
Irish Sea whom I have never met.
She does not know me, yet I can
sense Elizabeth Tudor lurking like
a great black spider high up in
the corner of a room. She sends
her men to Connacht seeking
submission to the English Crown.
They offer chieftains bribes which
they call rewards. We rebuke them,
and they are relentless. They will
return and we must be ready.

(MORE)

(CONTINUED)

123 CONTINUED:

123

GRACE (V.O.) (CONT'D)

The day may come when you are
 thankful for the bonds we forge.
 As for me, I remain Gaelic in my
 heart and soul,
 Always, Grace.

Passage of time, Toby grows stronger with his sword and arms. He recites in Latin, Spanish, French to the FRIARS who train him. At 16, his blond curls and strong body cut a handsome sight. He is Grace's son and he holds himself with determination and courage.

His cousins Harrison and Red Hook are there with him. In a mock battle, Toby has Red Hook pinned, he pulls back his sword at the final moment and reaches a hand down to Red Hook. He is a gracious sportsman and as loyal as they come.

CUT TO

124 EXT. IRISH COUNTRYSIDE DAY

124

Irish villages are burned and plundered by the English forces.

CUT TO

125 INT. TOBY'S BED CHAMBERS MCCLELLAN CASTLE NIGHT

125

Letters arrive from his mother, he takes to reading them in privacy of his room at night. He savors them.

CUT TO

126 INT. QUEEN ELIZABETH'S COURT DAY

126

Richard Bingham bows to the Tudor Queen.

RICHARD BINGHAM

The Spanish Armada with its some
 134 ships with their 30,000 men,
 sails upon us as we speak. The
 Irish and the Gallowglass from up
 in the north come to their aide,
 their catholic crusade rebels
 against our protestant beliefs. We
 must assemble our men and greet
 them with our own God's fury.

The Queen nods unmoved then sends him away.

127 EXT. LORD DESMOND FITZGERALD HOME LONDON DAY

127

As Bingham's coach passes in front of Lord Desmond Fitzgerald's house, he looks on in disdain. The house is boarded up. A note on the front door reads: "Seized Property of the Queen of England."

As the carriage rounds the corner, a WOMAN begs. Her clothing, once so elegant, is tattered and stained. She lifts her eyes to Bingham as he passes by. Bingham turns his gaze away. It's Lord Desmond's wife, unrecognizable.

128 INT. TOBY'S BED CHAMBER NIGHT

128

GRACE (V.O.)

My Dear Toby:

I am so distressed I can hardly put quill to parchment. The English have suppressed the abbey at Murrisk. That abbey was built by my clan over a hundred years ago for the Augustinian friars. Saint Patrick's own Black Bell was housed within its walls. No foreign monarch has any right to close the abbey and strip it of its treasures! Yet, Elizabeth Tudor has signed an order and our abbey is lost. My first instinct was to attack, to sail to Galway and fall on her officials with sword and pistol. My Father said a violent response would only cause our clan more trouble for our clan. The abbot agreed. "This is god's will", he assured me. "All will come right in time." Will it? I wonder. But we must have faith, Always, Grace.

129 EXT. OFF COAST IRELAND DAY

129

Grace salutes the Captain of the lead Spanish ship. He is the very same captain she had boarded her first trip out with her father Black Oak. She smiles to him as he calls to her.

SPANISH CAPTAIN

You who once commandeered my cargo. I remember you Grace O'Malley.

(CONTINUED)

Grace unsheathes her prized Spanish sword she had lifted from his ship.

GRACE

A fine sword. There is nothing like the Spanish steel.

SPANISH CAPTAIN

(Shaking his head
clearly amused by
her)

Well, at least our Spanish steel has served you well.

(beat)

And what of your father, Black Oak?

GRACE

All is well, I will send him your regards.

SPANISH CAPTAIN

To battle alongside you now where in the past you have shown my trade fleet no mercy. Ay, what times we live in.

GRACE

(Smiling)

I have never shown anything but respect and compassion for your sailors. And a fine appreciation for your treasured cargo.

The Spanish Captain nods to her.

SPANISH CAPTAIN

Hmm, indeed.

They both turn to see the daunting size of the English fleet ahead.

GRACE

(solemnly)

We fight a holy battle now
Captain, prepare your men, Gods speed.

(CONTINUED)

SPANISH CAPTAIN

Gods Speed Captain and may the sword serve you well in this battle.

CUT TO

The great Spanish galleons are taking a beating by the English fleet. The English launch fire into the heart of the Spanish fleet, breaking its formation. In the battle a number of Spanish ships are sunk, damaged and scattered.

Grace battles ruthlessly, but when she sees there is only defeat she pulls back. The ship carrying the Spanish Captain receives a crushing blow and is forced upon the rocky shoals.

In the heat of battle, Grace commands her men.

GRACE

Come about. We are going back.

ALDEN

(Shocked)
Captain?

GRACE

We will put ashore, collect the men we can before the English get them. I will not give the English that pleasure of merciless cruelty upon these men's bodies.

(beat)
Come about at once!

With that Grace's ship sets braces against the English warship as the smaller boats put in to collect the wounded and flailing Spanish crew.

The Spanish Captain turns to see Grace take aim at the English as she rides on the bow of the small boat to rescue his men. He turns back renewed by her bravery and loyalty.

He emerges from the water standing on the rocky outcropping. He pulls his gun up from under the water and fires against the English. The blunderbuss fails to fire, the wadding soaked.

(CONTINUED)

He stands vulnerable to the Englishmen. From behind, Grace shoots and kills the Englishman who takes aim at the Spanish Captain. She saves the Captain and the remaining survivors off his ship.

GRACE

We will deliver you safely back to your fleet. Order your ships to pull back, surely it will end in massacre. That is not God's will.

The Spanish Captain nods in defeat.

SPANISH CAPTAIN

No greater a she king of these western seas than you, Grace O'Malley.

Under the cover of night, small boats, headed by Alden and Tigernan, deliver the rescued sailors back to the remaining Spanish ships. Weary from battle and many wounded, they receive their Spanish survivors.

His captain knocks and enters.

CAPTAIN

You called for me, Sir.

RICHARD BINGHAM

(Not even looking up
from his charts)

Yes, I've grown weary of this silly battle. Cut us loose of here. We will beat it back to land. I have better ways to spend my time and our Queen's coffers.

(beat)

Before me are the charts for the western shores off Clew Bay. Come and tell me what you know of these waters.

CAPTAIN

Ay Sir.

They study them together. The captain marking areas.

131 CONTINUED:

131

CAPTAIN

The network of harbors, islands, channels and fortresses are a maze. They prove a good hiding place.

RICHARD BINGHAM

Yes, or a trap...

CUT TO:

132 INT. TOBY'S BED CHAMBERS NIGHT

132

GRACE (V.O.)

My Dear Toby:
Are you well, my son? Are the priests teaching you as I have instructed them? Learn your letters, study Latin, and memorize the names of the major seaports. I want more of you than to be a simple warrior, all strength and shouting. Against an enemy as powerful as the English it is necessary to fight with one's brain. Fortunately you and I have both inherited good brains and strong Irish intuition. I continue to captain the fleet and support the people of Dubhdara off Clew Bay where I aim to spend my days now for your Grandfather Black Oak is indeed that, an aging oak tree in the forest. There we will repair the ships. I cannot say what the future holds, but be assured I shall do my best. Always, Grace.

133 EXT. GRACE'S FLEET OFF CLARE BAY DAY

133

In an estuary deep in Clare Bay, Grace and her men have grounded the fleet.

The tar vats bubble and spit as the men work the seams and timbers along the hull of the beached ship that lay on their sides. Sails are hauled from their mighty masts sewn and repaired.

(CONTINUED)

The fishing nets are darned with mending needles and fishing tackle is repaired. Black Oak and Morgan join Grace who works alongside her men.

She stops to feel the sun on her back. She spots her father and comes to him.

BLACK OAK

Grace, how much longer for your repairs?

GRACE

Nearly complete.

MORGAN

Good.

GRACE

What is it?

BLACK OAK

You are too vulnerable. Best you ready the ships should you need to be on your way soon.

GRACE

But I know these waters like the back of my hand. No one else knows them like I do.

MORGAN

Your father is right. You may know the sea, Gracey, but you do not conquer her. Do not grow too comfortable, too cocky, nor too complacent or she will punish you.

(beat)

Besides, there are many out there who seek you out...

GRACE

The full moon's zenith brings the highest tide. We will float the ships out tonight.

Under the moonlight, the high tides fill into the estuary floating the large ships upright.

With the hauling back on the lines, the land crawls to life and erupts in gunfire as MEN storm the ships. Grace calls out over the deafening noise.

Tigernan jumps to the other ship and mans the helm.

GRACE

All men grab oars.

The volley of arrows have been soaked in tar and ignited. They reach the ships freshly sealed decks and ignite at once.

As the ship burns, Grace is lost in the heat of the battle. Her clothing has caught fire. She continues to defend her ship. She is completely unaware that her shirt has burned from her, leaving her breasts and torso fully exposed.

As she pulls herself up thrusting her sword, there is a break in the battle.

The YOUNG APPRENTICE she had saved once from the falling mast, spots her as she is taken by an English soldier who clasps her hands and manhandles her naked chest.

The Young Apprentice claws to reach Grace. In a rage, he fires at the English soldier who dares touch his Captain.

The Young Apprentice tears the shirt off his back and wraps it around Grace as she lies on the deck.

From behind the young and noble apprentice boy, Bingham steps and shoots the young apprentice in the back. He falls on Grace who sobs as the lad dies defending her honor and life.

RICHARD BINGHAM

Enough from you, you whore.

Grace claws to attack Bingham. Bingham pistol-whips her hard across the face. She falls unconscious.

RICHARD BINGHAM

Kill the men, keep her alive.

He turns and wipes his hand on his handkerchief, his habit after touching dirty subjects.

CUT TO

135 EXT. LIMERICK CASTLE IRELAND DAY

135

Grace's feet and hands are bound as they sling her unconscious body up onto a horse. Blood trickles down from her wound and splatters the ground.

She feels her ribs are crushed. She is hauled off the horse and dragged behind the horse before an ENGLISH MAGISTRATE who sentences her to prison.

ENGLISH MAGISTRATE
Prison this woman for her crimes
against the crown of England.

They throw her into the dark dungeon at Limerick Castle. Grace goes with no food, no water. She is treated like a hound that won't hunt. Her GOALERS curse and kick her. She pleads with them.

GRACE
What of my men?

GOALER spits on her and urinates in her water cup.

MONTAGE

136 INT. GRACE'S DUNGEON CELL LIMERICK CASTLE DAY

136

Time passes. She grows weaker and is dazed. She sleeps on a bare stone floor, no straw under her, no blanket over her. The stones are gritty against her cheek. RATS scuttle through the darkness across her feet and limbs.

She wakes and makes desperate rowing motions with her arms as she raises her upper body. Her skin and hair crawl with fleas. She claws at her flesh until she bleeds, fleabites and abscesses cover her body. She struggles to her feet and paces her cell. Three steps one way, pause, three steps back. No window, only a tiny grill through which her GOALERS watch her.

Twice a day a small meal of coarse black bread and dried fish are slid under the door. Maggots cover the fish. The bread contains small chips of stone left from the milling process. She bites into the bread, chipping her tooth and spits it out to the ground.

As she eats the fish and picks out the maggots, it makes her desperately thirsty. A slimy bucket holds a small amount of water. She drinks it and it is not refilled for another day.

(CONTINUED)

136 CONTINUED:

136

She wants to cry out, but bites back urge, never allowing her captives that pleasure.

CUT TO

137 EXT. SHORELINE CLARE BAY DAY

137

In her dreams, Grace goes down to the shore and smells the sea wind. She runs barefoot along the strand. She stops when she sees the old Washer Woman stop and look up from her scrubbing the blood from the clothes.

CUT BACK TO

138 INT. GRACE DUNGEON CELL LIMERICK CASTLE DAY

138

From time to time, MEN peer into her cell but don't talk to her. She can hear the rumble of their voices.

Once she hears the name of Lord Richard Bingham and knows he is outside the door gloating over his captive.

GRACE

(to the guard and
knowing Bingham can
hear her)

What kind of people are you English? It is Irish custom that our prisoners are treated as family. You and your bloody Queen are merciless. I suppose you believe your Protestant God will forgive you? Either way, you're all doomed for Hell where there is only fury, forgiveness does not live down there.

GRACE (V.O.)

Dear Toby:

I pray this letter reaches you. One of my goalers was sympathetic when I told him I had a son. He had a young lad himself, he said. At last he agreed if I gave him all the jewelry I wore. Unfortunately, I do not wear much when I am raiding. A few gold rings, a brooch set with gemstones. Please God, it is enough.

(MORE)

(CONTINUED)

138 CONTINUED:

138

GRACE (V.O.) (CONT'D)

My hands can't hold the pen well,
and I struggle to write, but I
force myself to find the strength.
The thought of you and the
slightest sounds of the ocean's
water lapping against the wall
outside the castle are what I
focus on to keep me strong.

If this message reaches you,
please tell your Grandfather and
Tigernan not to attempt anything
foolish. It would be unbearable if
my capture brought punishment upon
my people. Pray for me as I do for
you my son.
Always, Grace.

CUT TO

139 INT. TOBY'S BEDCHAMBER MACCLELLAN CASTLE NIGHT

139

Toby reads and rereads the letter, he is restless and
distraught as he thrusts it into his pocket and leaves.

140 EXT. LIMERICK CASTLE DUNGEONS NIGHT

140

Against the cloak of darkness, the MEN dismount from
their horses. Toby leads Tigernan, Black Oak, Morgan and
Alden to the wall.

They are well beyond the dungeon walls where they dig a
tunnel from the cliff face wall and quickly intercept the
sluice that carries the dung and excrement from the
dungeons down and out into the sea.

TOBY

This must be what Grace heard
rushing to out to sea.

141 INT. LIMERICK CASTLE DUNGEONS NIGHT

141

As Tigernan climbs up into the dungeons from the outside,
the waste pipe unloads shit and foul water upon them. He
wretches but continues on to the large waste duct outside
Grace's cell.

The Goaler, who has been sympathetic to Grace, points to
her cell, lifts his arm in surrender, openly exposing the
keys.

(CONTINUED)

141 CONTINUED:

141

Tigernan nods gratefully, collects the keys to her cell and then moves as if to slice off his left pinky to retrieve Grace's favorite ring from Sir Howth. The Goaler whimpers. Tigernan rolls his eyes, slicing the man's finger off is not his style.

TIGERNAN

Fear makes particular limbs
shrink, wouldn't your fat fingers
and puny member agree?

He kicks the Goaler in the balls, slips the ring from his left pinky finger. The man goes down in pain.

142 INT. GRACE'S DUNGEON CELL LIMERICK CASTLE NIGHT

142

The door creaks open. Tigernan steps in to collect a barely recognizable Grace in his arms. She is confused and withdrawn.

He quickly jump back down into the sluice that runs them down and out to sea. He unfurls his oversized shirt to act as a sail and a windbreak to slow their fall into the deep cold waters.

143 EXT. SEA OFF LIMERICK CASTLE PROMONTORY NIGHT

143

There, Jonesy Boy tenders the small boat that scoops them from the sea.

From the distance, guards call out in alarm at the prison escape.

144 EXT. CLIFF WALL OUTSIDE LIMERICK CASTLE NIGHT

144

At the cliff wall, Black Oak and Toby spot Jonesy Boy's lantern signal that Tigernan and Grace are clear.

Morgan and Black Oak mount up and starts off. Toby prepares his arms and follows.

He sees Black Oak intercepted as Bingham corners Black Oak and shoots. The old man is hit in the stomach and bleeds profusely.

Toby rides alongside and ties him to his saddle. Morgan falls back and rides the old man off.

A voice booms from behind Toby.

(CONTINUED)

144 CONTINUED:

144

RICHARD BINGHAM

Tibbott ne Longh, do not move.

Toby expects this and surrenders easily, throwing the reins off his horse once he is certain Morgan and Black Oak are safely away.

RICHARD BINGHAM

Having you in my capture is worth more to her than her own life. She will do nothing to jeopardize your life.

145 EXT. SEA OFF LIMERICK CASTLE NIGHT

145

From the boat, Tigernan can see the frenzy up on the cliff. He bows his head knowing something has gone wrong.

He studies Grace who has barely moved and seems to have aged in captivity.

146 EXT. IRISH COUNTRYSIDE NIGHT

146

Morgan lays Black Oak down on the ground. His breath strained.

BLACK OAK

Take care of my Grace and get our Toby back. Don't let anything come to them.

Morgan nods to Black Oak who draws his last breath. Morgan rests there a while, the moonlight gleaming off the waves.

CUT TO

147 EXT. GRACE'S CLARE BAY CASTLE DAY

147

Grace seems to move in a daze. She takes the small boat out around the point. She hauls her white sea horse flag high and is overcome with memories of her father and her son.

She sits down at the tiller in the small pram and pulls her eyes up inspecting the luff of the sail.

The wind fills in and Grace's boat moves briskly through the water. She draws a deep breath.

(CONTINUED)

147 CONTINUED:

147

The sea once again restores her. She holds her head high, something in her gaze, she is growing stronger.

148 EXT. TOBY'S CELL DAY

148

He stares out over the sea from behind the cell bars. His food tray arrives. He turns back and nods graciously.

He is neither poorly treated nor abused. His cell is neither small nor dank. His punishment is in the waiting.

He paces his cell three feet then he pauses much like Grace had done, but then he continues, his cell is larger. But instinctively he paces three steps then pauses.

149 INT. RICHARD BINGHAM'S QUARTERS DAY

149

Bingham is impatient. He commands that a message be relayed to the Queen.

RICHARD BINGHAM

Alert the Court that I grow weary of the wait. My time in this hellish place is tiresome. I long for London.

(beat)

Tibbott ne Longh's punishment is hanging to the death for his complicitous acts against the Queen's crown. I will squeeze this O'Malley whore until she surrenders. She has nothing left, we have stripped her lands, stolen her fleet. If all she cares about is her son then we shall take that from her too.

151 EXT. CLARE BAY CASTLE DAY

151

There is little left of her land and her property. The castle is weathered and poor now.

The tall she-king leans over the parapet gazing across the bay. She is very still like the shimmering blue water. Yet, beneath the surface her mind is busy. She measures her strength, her health, her energy.

She lifts her gaze, her teeth clench. Her jaw thrusts forward and a light comes into her eyes.

(CONTINUED)

151 CONTINUED:

151

She whirls around and goes back into the tower, hurrying down the steep spiral stairs almost as nimbly as a young girl. She reaches the bottom she shouts to one of her remaining ATTENDANTS.

GRACE

I need someone who knows someone
who has a horse!

152 INT. GRACE'S SHIP DAY

152

June 1593, Grace is older now. She draws a deep breath. She sits at her desk aboard her ship.

In the silver CHALLIS floats the tiny wooden boat she had so long ago whittled for her beloved son Toby. She stares at it longingly and then a vitality returns to her as her letter begins.

GRACE (V.O.)

I write to your Highness of the continued discord that stirs and dissention heretofore longtime in Ireland especially in the manner constrained by your highness's fond subject Richard Bingham to take arms and by force to maintain herself and her people by sea and land for the space of these past 40 years... The final days have prompted me to communicate my desperate plea. The preservation of life for my son who is at the mercy of your Majesty. His capture by your subject Richard Bingham is of great concern and distress to me. His imprisonment for a treason charge that swirls with claims and counterclaims, subterfuge and intrigue, have galvanized me into action at this old age to undertake the most hazardous voyage of my career. Haste is imperative in saving my son's life. Treason is punishable by death and it is my deepest belief that Bingham will not be slow to invoke these laws against my son.

(MORE)

(CONTINUED)

152 CONTINUED:

152

GRACE (V.O.) (CONT'D)

In tender consideration and in regard to my great age your highness's granting me some reasonable maintenance for the little time I have left to live.

153

In return for all, I offer Her Majesty a surrender at your Highness's hands of the lands of my son and also the lands of my two remaining Bourke nephews. I grant unto your highness under your most gracious hand of signet, free liberty during the remainder of my life to invade with sword and fire all your Highness's enemies wheresoever they are or shall be without any interruption of any person or persons whatsoever.

153

Tigernan knocks and enters.

GRACE

Bingham will surely execute Toby soon. My instinct has never failed me.

Tigernan nods solemnly.

TIGERNAN

Knowing Bingham, yes, your instinct sadly is not wrong.

She hands Tigernan the letter. He nods approvingly.

TIGERNAN

Ingenious stroke to return to your old ways, but this time with the Queen's approval. You will achieve two goals: make yourself untouchable to Bingham as well as secure your line of work, that is pirate or shall we say privateer. Back to the sea who calls you and the raiding and commandeering that you so aptly have proven your skills. Now as the Queen's privateer free of the Bingham embargo upon you.

Grace looks up to Tigernan, the old glint in the eye.

(CONTINUED)

TIGERNAN

A glimmer of bad the old girl still has. Few Gaelic chieftains with such a long record of rebellion and piracy would dare put a foot on English soil, particularly in the prevailing political climate. The capture of an Irish ship, captained by a notorious pirate leader, that would be YOU, would be no mean prize for any English privateer.

(shaking his head in disbelief)

but you are the Pirate Queen, and only you would summons the courage to set sail into the heart of London herself to meet the Queen of England and offer yourself up.

GRACE

I have no choice. For my son and for my people. This onslaught against me by Richard Bingham need go no further. How many Irish people must be slain at this unruly executioner's hands? The blood seeps into the soil of Ireland...

(beat)

She is after all a woman and a Queen. She will listen.

TIGERNAN

Ay, Captain. She will listen.

(smiling curiously)

Likely she will want to meet the great Pirate Queen herself.

Aboard her favorite ship, Grace, barefoot as always and dressed in full Irish costume, with her troop of loyal and hardy kerne, the beautiful Irish Queen cuts an outlandish figure from her deck as she comes into London Port.

She sailed her ship around the south coast of Ireland, past the Old Head of Kinsale and into St. George's Channel, past Land's End and the Scilly Islas, through the straights of Dover and finally into the narrow estuary of the Thames River to anchor at one of the many landing places below London Bridge.

There Grace's Irish galley is dwarfed by the bulk and soaring mast-heads of international shipping in the port of London, the busiest wealthiest in the world.

Grace stands on the bow barefoot and in awe. Morgan stands beside her.

MORGAN

This is a bold ploy. Let's just hope you come home with your head still intact and on your shoulders. You have sailed into the eye of this storm. Pray the Queen hasn't agreed to your audience for the sole pleasure of personally ordering your execution.

GRACE

Faith is all we can have at such a moment. That and some good Irish intuition...

(determination)

She will hear me.

Bingham's letter is read to Queen Elizabeth's privy council.

QUEEN'S COUNCILMAN

"It is the Lord Justice Bingham's experience that Grace O'Malley, a woman that hath impudently passed the part of womanhood and been a great spoiler, a chief commander and director of thieves and murderers at sea. A notable traitoress and nurse to all rebellion in her province for 40 years."

Queen Elizabeth listens, reminded of the first time she had heard of this Pirate Queen.

(CONTINUED)

Grace holds still with her head high masking the lump in her throat. The Queen stares on, the glint in her eye, curious and impressed.

She's dressed like a woman of Gaelic nobility. The green velvet of her gown, a fabric she herself had once imported. The gown, with slit arms, beneath the bell shaped sleeves of the Ulster linen smock beneath. The bodice cut low to show that Grace's throat and bosom are still as firm as a girl's. She has attempted to hide the crucifix with crude makeup and a shawl pinned over her one shoulder held in place by her O'Malley signet in gold. Elizabeth and Grace are the same age though Elizabeth looks far the more worn.

Over her gown, Grace wears a great fur cloak lined with silk. Fringed hem sweeps to the ground over a pair of soft boots toes ornamented with gold embroidery. She hides a Spanish dagger in her belt.

Grace is brought before the Queen and fights to hide her astonishment. She had expected someone as tall as a Gaelic CHIEFTAIN a mighty monarch, a warrior like herself. But Elizabeth Tudor doesn't even reach her shoulder. She is a wee brittle thing Grace could break over her knee.

Attendants cluster around the English Queen doing everything but breathe for her. Her face is white as chalk. At first Grace thinks she is ill but she peers almost rudely a little closer to see Elizabeth's face is caked with powder.

Grace's heavy hair is pinned back with silver bodkins. Elizabeth wears a red wig of the most unnatural hue.

GRACE (V.O.)

(musing to herself)

Can it be the woman is bald?

Her costume is ridiculous. A vast lace collar surrounds her face and head. She cannot possibly see anyone sneaking up behind her. The bodice of her gown is so rigid she can hardly breathe. Jewels encrust her person from head to heels, weighing her down. Her feet squeezed into tiny shoes with heels so high she can hardly walk.

(struggling to
conceal her actual
amusement)

(MORE)

(CONTINUED)

GRACE (V.O.) (CONT'D)

What could she do if she were
attacked?

A strange sensation passes over Grace. She knows
Elizabeth. Knows her as she knows the sea and wind.

The Queen of England is a woman who has suffered as the
Irish She-King has suffered. Grace feels sudden pity for
Elizabeth. This immensely powerful woman, imprisoned
within her stiff clothes and her crowding courtiers, can
never be free.

The Queen then does something astounding.

QUEEN ELIZABETH

Come, sit beside me.

Her courtiers wait shifting from one foot to another. The
Queen does not invite them to sit.

The Queen smiles when she nods the outline and makeup
attempt to cover the crucifix tattoo.

QUEEN ELIZABETH

Your God will indeed know of you,
Grace O'Malley.

Grace shares a laugh with the Queen.

QUEEN ELIZABETH

Tell me of your son... and of your
life out there.

Her eyes dance. They are beautiful eyes.

GRACE

I am old now. 63 I believe by now.

QUEEN ELIZABETH

The very same age as I myself.

The two woman look at each other.

GRACE

You have youthful eyes, eyes that
alight.

Queen Elizabeth smiles.

QUEEN ELIZABETH

We are the same, Grace O'Malley.
The power and the peculiar fortune
to be women leaders of men.

(CONTINUED)

GRACE

Had we been born in the same place
we might have been friends. And
yet here we are in our 60's no
less, when we women in our time
should only live to be 40.

QUEEN ELIZABETH

Yes, true. Go on. Tell me more.

GRACE

I am widowed twice now. My son is
all that remains in my heart.

QUEEN ELIZABETH

And for me, "God's death, my lord,
I will have no master"

The Queen looks on, a lonely woman she must be.

QUEEN ELIZABETH

I am awed by your successes. I was
from the moment I first heard
mention of this Pirate Queen. I
have asserted that I have the
heart and stomach of a king, but
unlike you, I have never led men
personally into battle like you,
Grace O'Malley.

(beat)

And despite my claim to be
"mistress of the seas" I have
never sailed further down river
than Greenwich. I have ruled from
the protection and comfort of my
palaces, surrounded by a retinue
of loyal and able advisors. While
you Grace have fearlessly led and
ruled by land and sea alone.

GRACE

(smiling and shaking
her head humbly)

Tis I who am awed by you, your
Highness.

(beat)

All I ask now as my life winds
down, is to return to my people
and my sea knowing that my son is
safe from harm.

(CONTINUED)

QUEEN ELIZABETH

Your world has come under great hardship, yes.

GRACE

Ay, Your Highness. I ask for your help. That I can serve your Majesty to the end. My actions in the past were not rebellion, but rather acts of self-defense. The rightful inheritance from both my husbands' deaths were wrongfully withheld from me by a vengeful fever for power. A revenge that had little I believe to do with state or country.

The Queen listens intently.

GRACE

In return for my son and what little property I still have, my ship, my loyal men, and my Clare Bay Castle, I vow to use all my strength and leadership to defend the Queen against her enemies by land and sea.

The Queen has heard Grace O'Malley indeed. She places her gloved hand on Grace's shoulder.

QUEEN ELIZABETH

Go. You have work to do.

The twinkle in her eye, Grace has won back her life.

Grace rises and turns to bow to the Queen in deep respect and gratitude.

GRACE

I depart with great thankfulness and with many more earnest promises, that as long as I live, I will dutifully employ all my power to offend and prosecute any offender who threatens the Queen.

QUEEN ELIZABETH

I know you will. You are a woman trapped in a tumultuous time. Pirate Queen or privateer, yours is a hard world.

(CONTINUED)

The Queen turns to her privy council. The compassion she had for Grace is instantly replaced by her reproach for her councilmen.

QUEEN ELIZABETH

I seek an explanation for Sir Richard Bingham's treatment of Grace. Release Tibbot-ne-Longh at once from prison. As for Grace having not by the custom of the Irish any title to any livelihood or position or portion of her two husband's lands, now being a widow, that she shall with her favour in all their good causes be protected to live in peace to enjoy her livelihood in her remaining old years from any and all who threaten her.

As Grace turns to leave, she is suddenly overcome with a loud sneeze.

The Queen pulls her handkerchief from her sleeve and nods to a member of her court to give it to Grace. In an act of politeness, he hands Grace the attractive and elegant linen and lace handkerchief.

Grace takes the delicate cloth and proceeds to blow her nose loudly then tosses the handkerchief into a blazing fireplace. The members of the court are aghast that she would be so rude as to toss this expensive gift so easily into the fire.

A pin could drop. Grace turns back around unaware of her wrong. The Queen holds on her.

QUEEN ELIZABETH

The handkerchief was meant as a gift and should have been put in your pockets.

GRACE

(a slight curtsy)
With all due respect your Highness, the Irish would never put a soiled garment into their pocket.

Uncomfortable silence. "Will she have Grace executed for this insubordination" kind of silence.

(CONTINUED)

155 CONTINUED: (6)

155

The Queen breaks into a trill of laughter. She is amused. The entire court laughs nervously along with the Queen.

156 EXT. GREENWICH CASTLE DAY

156

Tigernan, Alden, Jonesy Boy and Morgan wait. Patiently impatient. A MESSENGER OF THE COURT marches out into the open square to announce the procession.

COURT MESSENGER

The Privy Council of Queen
Elizabeth's Court.

QUEEN ELIZABETH'S COUNCILMEN come through the square. They are bowed to. There is great poverty and filth in London. BEGGARS grovel at their feet. Tigernan and the boys await Grace and as she walks through the crowd, her head is high. Morgan smiles when he sees her.

MORGAN

Well, she's alive. There's a
miracle.

They all whoop as she comes into view.

GRACE

We have our permission to continue
on. Though we do so in the name of
the Queen of England, we do so
nonetheless in our own Irish ways.

Tigernan claps an arm around her and it's as if she takes her first breath since she steps foot in the palace.

As they usher her along through the crowds, the procession of Councilmen up ahead stop. Grace and her crew are tousled in the altercation.

A BEGGAR WOMAN in tattered old gowns, once aristocratic, reaches out to touch the shoe of one of the men.

BEGGAR WOMAN

Please, I seek Lord Bingham, he
will help me. My husband was Earl
Desmond Fitzgerald... His death in
the name of the Queen rendered me
without. I pray, please help me.
Lord Bingham, he knows of me.

COUNCILMAN

Yes, I'm sure he knew you as he
did so many other whores.

(CONTINUED)

156 CONTINUED:

156

The Councilman kicks the beggar woman away and turns to have his servant wipe the toe of his shoe where she has touched it.

COUNCILMAN

(scoffing)

The Earl of Bingham can help no
one now not even himself now.

As the procession moves on and the woman lies on the ground, Grace and her men stare disbelieving.

Grace meets her pleading eyes. She turns and digs into the satchel that Tigernan has strapped to his shoulder and gathers some money. She reaches down and places it in the beggar woman's hands. They are dirty, the nails black with mud and chipped. Her once regal gown is filth and torn. The woman looks up at Grace.

BEGGAR WOMAN

God bless you.

Grace turns and leaves, shaken by the fate that has befallen this woman.

157 INT. BINGHAM'S STRONGHOLD NIGHT

157

Something is wrong. Toby rises from his bed when he hears the commotion. Guards shouting.

GUARD

He's gone. Bingham has fled the
castle!

GUARD 2

We must go after him. The coward
flees the Queen's order to report
to London.

GUARD

He's taken to the north. Hurry!

Toby stands at his cell bars. His time with this guard has obviously formed a respect and it is a civil bond they have.

The guard opens Toby's cell.

(CONTINUED)

GUARD

The Queen has ordered your release
and reprimands Bingham for all ill
against you and your family. Go
now, Tibbot-ne-Longh.

Toby is stunned.

TOBY

Thank you.

GUARD

Go, there are horses and a mount
in the stable. Go Man!

CUT TO

The silver challis in Grace's bed chamber is still home
to the small wooden boat she had carved her baby Toby all
those years ago.

Up on deck, Grace's voice can be heard.

GRACE (V.O.)

Ready about boys, there she sails
sloppy and drunk with cargo. She
flies a Dutch flag.

As the ship comes about, the small wooden boat bobs in
the large silver chalice. Again the Captain's voice
booms.

GRACE (V.O.)

Toby, take the helm, Son. You know
what to do. I have seen my share
of raids.

The sound of her bare feet on the deck as she
relinquishes the helm and pads her way across the deck
and down the galley stairs.

Grace sits on the edge of her bed. She smiles as she
stares at the claw marks from her nails all those years
ago while in childbirth. Then her eyes set on the little
wooden boat she had whittled dancing in it silver chalice
"sea".

(CONTINUED)

The door opens. He steps in. Grace looks up and after all these years, it is a different look now. He closes the door behind him and lays his sword and gun on the dresser.

From behind, there is but a strong back and a glint of the earring in his left ear.

Time suddenly rolls back as he moves to her. His back aches of young, fine muscles. His arms and hands strong and agile, the hands of a younger man. Grace greets him, but when she appears there on the bed looking up at him, passion in her eyes, she too is younger, in her prime as is he.

GRACE

All these years, and no woman has claimed you.

TIGERNAN

Many women have tried yes. But there is but one who has ever had me completely.

Tigernan unbuttons her shirt and in their younger selves they kiss a long and passionate kiss as he takes her down onto the bed.

CUT BACK TO

And then, older now, he kisses her again...

TIGERNAN

You have always had me, Grace O'Malley.

FADE OUT

A YOUNG GIRL, 12, who resembles the young Grace, stands barefoot at the cliff, her hand on her hip and waiting impatiently for the ship to return.

Toby, an older man now, rounds the point and brings the ship home to his young girl. She runs down the path to the docks just as her Grandmother, Grace O'Malley, had done once long before.

Toby recounts the final chapter in this great woman's life.

(CONTINUED)

TOBY (V.O.)

Grace's life began and ended
enshrouded in uncertainty, and
because this Pirate Queen did not
fit the Irish mold of suitable
Irish womanhood, to eliminate
rather than explain her was an
easier course for nationalistic
and religious authors of the day.

(beat)

But may we never forget and may we
all be the better, the stronger,
and evermore inspired for having
known this great Pirate Queen.

(beat)

161 She died in 1603 at a ripe old age
and is buried in Cisterian Abbey
on Clare Island, an appropriate
resting place for the Sea Queen.