

ACT IScene Two

SETTING: Summer of 1914. Greenwich Village & Hell's Kitchen, NYC.
Driscoll's Flat. The same.
The stage remains in blackout, but spotlights are used to create a "Golden Age of Hollywood" feel.

AT RISE: DARRICK [DRISCOLL] is asleep at the desk.

NO.5. "WHEN MIDNIGHT COMES"

(BREYA [ROBYN] knocks. A beat.
She enters.)

BREYA

SIR?

DARRICK

THE BARON CAPTAIN SEANE.

(BREYA's terrified.)

BREYA

APOLOGIES! I THOUGHT YOU GONE... THEN DEAD...

DARRICK

DIPLOMACY: TURNS DESKS TO BEDS.

(DARRICK lusts for her.)

BREYA

I SEE, MY LORD.

(He clears his throat.)

YES!

(She gets to work under DARRICK's lustful eye.)

DARRICK

BORING AS HELL, FOR A CAPTAIN.

'COUSE I WOULD BE FORCED BY PARLIAMENT!

REVOLT IN ULSTER, BUT HERE INSTEAD!
 (BREYA can no longer hide her
 fear at the mention of Ulster.)
 IRISH NORTH... LOOKS I FOUND AN IMMIGRANT...
 SOUTHERN?
 YOU GAEL?

Answer me!

(He assaults/kisses BREYA.)
 IF YOU WANT ME TO STOP SOON...

BREYA
 WHATEVER BE YOUR PLEASANTRY, MY LORD!

DARRICK
 NOW YOU PATRONISE ME!

(He assaults/kisses her again.)

BREYA
 YES, M'LORD! YES, PLEASE!

DARRICK
 GET OUT, GIRL.

BREYA
 Y-- YES, RIGHT, SO...

DARRICK
 YOU GODFORSAKEN SIREN! GO!

(BREYA exits. Scene change:
 DARRICK off, EVIE [CHER] on.
 QUINN [ANTON] enters.)

EVIE [CHER]
 I ADVISE YOU NOT TO GAWK, FOR MODESTY FORBIDS IT.

QUINN [ANTON]
 I FORGET WHEN WORSHIPPING THE GOLD HAIR OF A GODDESS.

EVIE
 YOU BEAT BREYA.

QUINN
 WONDERFUL! I GOT PEACE.

EVIE

DEAR QUINN, WHEN WILL YOU FORGIVE HER?

QUINN

WHEN SHE STOPS HATING ME.

EVIE

IT'S NOT THAT SHE HATES YOU--

QUINN

ONLY MY MONEY.

EVIE

NOT SIMPLE AS IT SEEMS.
CAUSE A MALE'S PAYCHECK PAYS MORE THAN A WOMAN'S
I WAS FORCED TO MARRY AT EIGHTEEN.
SHE SEES WHAT SHE NEEDS TO SEE.

QUINN

YOU SAY SHE BLAMES ME?

EVIE

SHE ACTS LIKE YOUR SAYING.
THE MORE YOU BEAT ME DOWN, THE MORE I FIGHT TO STAND.
MY WORTH NEVER DROWNS, EVEN IN THE SEA OF OPPRESSION.
I HOLD MY HUMANITY IN HISTORY OF STRUGGLE AND GLORY,
AND NOTHING EVER STOPS MY FIGHT TO PROVE!
FOR, THE MORE YOU TAKE, THE LESS I HOLD,
AND THUS, THE LESS I LOSE.
AND THERE YOU HAVE YOUR ANSWER TO WHY BREYA PROTESTS.
YOU BRING BACK THE FOUR-YEAR-OLD WHO FLED IRELAND.
YOU PROVIDE ME, PROVIDE US, WHERE SHE FAILED.

QUINN

EVELINA, YOU THINK I CARE?

(EVIE sees a picture of a river.)

EVIE

OH, WHAT A LOVELY SCENE!

QUINN

THE LIFFEY, IN THE EAST.
DEEP AS AN OCEAN, YET CURRENT OF A STREAM.
ON THAT COBBLESTONE I WORKED AS THE SUN ROSE,
AS THAT CITY WOKE AROUND ME.
DIVINE.

DESPITE THE STRIFE FROM THE REBEL'S STALEMATE,
DUBLIN LIVED, TO FIGHT.

BOTH
FOR, THE MORE YOU BEAT ME DOWN, THE MORE I FIGHT TO
STAND.
MY WORTH NEVER DROWNS, EVEN IN THE SEA OF OPPRESSION.
I HOLD MY HUMANITY IN HISTORY OF STRUGGLE AND GLORY,
AND NOTHING EVER STOPS MY FIGHT TO PROVE!
FOR, THE MORE YOU TAKE, THE LESS I HOLD,
AND THUS, THE LESS I LOSE.

EVIE
Excuse me; I must prepare dinner, Quinn. My dear husband.

(She exits. BREYA enters.)

BREYA
QUITE A SHOW.

QUINN
A SHOW?

BREYA
PLAY DUMB; EYES NEVER MISLED ME CATHÁN.
YOU SEAR PROPAGANDA IN HER BRAIN!

QUINN
YOUR EVIL PROPAGANDA COERCE HATE [OF] WHAT SHE IS!
I SIMPLY QUELL THAT FEAR OF HER HERITAGE!

BREYA
WE LIVE IN A PLACE CALLED "HELL'S KITCHEN!"
WHERE GANGS RULE THE STREETS TO KEEP US SAFE FROM POLICE!
YOU READ THE NEWS LATELY?
YOUR ISLE DESCENDS INTO ANARCHY!

QUINN
THE HOME RULE CRISIS--

BREYA
CUTE NAME FOR THE FRENCH REVOLUTION WITH MACHINE GUNS AS
A GUILLOTINE!

QUINN
YOU WANT TO STOP ME?
YOU KNOW MY TIES TO THE I.R.B.

TELL EVIE; SHOW HER MY STRATEGY.
FIND HER WITH ME, SHARING A CIGARETTE.

(BREYA slaps him.)

BREYA
You touch her; I kill you.

QUINN
Not your jurisdiction.

BREYA
You believe in your construction?

QUINN
I trust in its production.

BREYA
A delusion.

QUINN
Your delusion.

BOTH
I NEVER MET ANOTHER MATCH MY MASQUERADE OF ILLUSION!
FOR THE MORE YOU BEAT ME DOWN, THE MORE I FIGHT TO
STAND.
MY WORTH NEVER DROWNS, EVEN IN THE SEA OF OPPRESSION. I
HOLD MY HUMANITY IN HISTORY OF STRUGGLE AND GLORY,
AND NOTHING EVER STOPS MY FIGHT TO PROVE!
FOR, THE MORE YOU TAKE, THE LESS I HOLD,
AND THUS, THE LESS I LOSE.

(Scene change: QUINN off, BREYA
and DARRICK on.)

BREYA
THE BARON CAPTAIN SEANE.

DARRICK
YOU THOUGHT I WAS GONE?

BREYA
AROUND THE BOARD MY THOUGHTS RACE,
I'VE TRIED TO CHASE THESE THOUGHTS AWAY,
FOR, MY LORD, IT'S BATTERY, A BARON AND MAID.

DARRICK
SIREN'S CALL! DEFILE ME!
FIRST DISGRACE,
NOW IT GROVELS AT MY FEET.
OH, IRISH BEAUTY...

BREYA (CONT'D)
M'LORD I'M SORRY!
PLEASE, M'LORD, FORGIVE ME!
I'LL BE YOURS TO COMMAND!
NEVER SHOULD HAVE RAN!

BREYA (CONT'D)
GIVE ME TIME, AND I WILL PROVE MY EXCEPTION
TO THE IRISH BLOOD THAT PLAGUES ME.

DARRICK
YOUR NAME?

BREYA
BREYA MAEVE NEELY.

DARRICK
BORING AS HELL FOR A CAPTAIN...

(DARRICK gives in to his lust.
QUINN and EVIE enter.)

QUINN
SOMETHING WRONG?

EVIE
WHY QUESTION WITH HER GONE?

(Scene change: BREYA and DARRICK
on, QUINN and EVIE off.)

BREYA
What do you mean, you have to fight in the Great War? I love
you! Our baby--

DARRICK
Already nearing its end, they say. Oh, but when you see
London...

BREYA
My sister, Darrick.

DARRICK
Happily married with Quinn.

BREYA

Leave her with him! He... Darrick, Quinn has ties--no, he is--I.R.B.

DARRICK

The Irish Republican Brotherhood? The group that coined the name terrorist? And you said nothing?!

BREYA

He bought his way into my home and has become the lord of it! He-- he threatens me, Darrick, he taunts me...

DARRICK

Get them. I arrest him the moment we dock in London.

(Scene change: DARRICK off, EVIE on.)

EVIE

MY HUSBAND IS A HERO, BREYA, YOU THE VILLAIN!
WHY LIVE IN FEAR WHEN WE COULD HAVE IRELAND?

BREYA

PLEASE, EVELINA YOU CANNOT LISTEN!
A REVOLUTION IS NOT THE WAY TO SURVIVE!

EVIE

I WANT TO SEE DUBLIN!
YOU WILL NOT KEEP ME TERRIFIED!

BREYA

QUINN CÁRTHACH CORRUPTS YOU!

EVIE

BREYA, YOU WILL NEVER TAKE MY HUMANITY AGAIN!
YOU ARE DEAD!

(BREYA exits. QUINN and EVIE join the I.R.B. EVIE, a spy, posing as a prostitute, seduces an ENGLISH SOLDIER [DRISCOLL] with a jealous QUINN behind her.)

Green looks good on you.

QUINN

THE SUN NEVER SETS ON THE BRITISH EMPIRE?
LOOK AT THE TIME!
NINE HUNDRED YEARS IS FAR TOO LONG TO FORGO MIDNIGHT!

(BREYA enters with a baby
swaddled in her arms.)

BREYA

Know that Darrick fought hard and brave in Sommes, my dear
Colleen, in the most honorable fashion.
And his family built you the home I could only imagine.
We tracked my sister down today, at last.
Evelina Ernestine Carthách, dead Easter Sunday, along with
dozens.
Massacred on Moore street with her revolutionary husband.
You will be well taken care of here, in the lap of luxury.
May you know food and laughter, know nothing of drudgery.
Dream big, hope high, live a life free from stress.
Take your father's name and title, my little baroness.

EVIE

FOR, THE MORE YOU TAKE,

BREYA

If I cannot leave my name behind, I will give you a mother's
gift.

EVIE

THE LESS I HOLD,

BREYA

May you never know the name Callie, or the curse of the
Irish.

EVIE

AND, THUS, THE LESS I LOSE.

(BLACKOUT)

THUD

BABY CRYING

(BREYA has committed suicide.)

(END OF SONG)

(END OF SCENE)

(CHER drops some glassware.)

GLASS SHATTERS

CHER

Sorry!

(She cleans it up.)

ANTON

Nein... nein... nein...

NO.8. "GERMAN IN VERSAILLES"

[This song uses the opening lines to a prayer, the "Shema," considered the holiest in the Jewish faith. When a Jew is in imminent danger, or close to death, they will often recite this for the hope of safety, or to let it be their last prayer before they die.]

ANTON

SH'MA YISRAEL ADONAI ELOHEINU, ADONAI ECHAD.
LIVING IN THE STREET, EATING IN THE STREET,
CLOSE YOUR EYES AND FANTASISE
BEGGING ON THE STREET, SLEEPING ON THE STREET!
GERMAN REFUGE IN VERSAILLES...

CLOSING EYES PASSING, FOOTPRINTS IN THE SNOW,
 HAVE TO GET PASSING, EATING IN THE COLD,
 FINGERS FREEZING, HOPE WEAKENING,
 ANY WAY TO ENGLAND... WHICH ROUTE LEADS HOME?
 Baruch shame kih'vode mal'chu'tow l'ohlam!--
 LOST SPEECH, LOST PRIDE, LOST LOVE, LOST ROOF, LOST
 FAITH,
 I AM NOTHING!
 STARVING IN JANUARY, NOTHING TO SHOW BUT SCARS!
 WOULD SWIM THE CHANNEL TO ESCAPE THE DARK.

CHER

Love?

(CHER freezes.)

ANTON

LIVING IN THE STREET, EATING IN THE STREET,
 CLOSE YOUR EYES AND FANTASISE
 BEGGING ON THE STREET, SLEEPING ON THE STREET!
 GERMAN REFUGE IN VERSAILLES--
 CLOSING EYES PASSING, FOOTPRINTS IN THE SNOW--
 HAVE TO GET PASSING, EATING IN THE COLD--
 FINGERS FREEZING, HOPE WEAKENING, ANY WAY TO ENGLAND...
 WHICH ROUTE LEADS HOME?
 LOST SPEECH, LOST PRIDE, LOST LOVE, LOST ROOF, LOST
 FAITH,
 I AM NOTHING!
 STARVING IN JANUARY, NOTHING TO SHOW BUT SCARS!
 WOULD SWIM THE CHANNEL TO ESCAPE THE DARK.

(CHER grabs his arm.)

CHER

Love? Look at me?

(He attacks her. She struggles.)

ANTON

MIDNIGHT NEVER COMES, MIDNIGHT NEVER COMES,
 HASHEM HEAR MY PLEA!

CHER

Anton, stop!

ACT IIScene Two

SETTING: Somewhere in England.
 A bare stage.
 As the song progresses, set pieces appear, each has a piece of Robyn's costume on it. They are, in order of arrival: a desk with a few newspapers, a folder, and high heels; Eamon's sickbed, bloody tissues and gloves, a sofa chair with Robyn's jewels, a bookshelf with Morrigan's diary, and Robyn's cigarette, a table with china and purse, a typewriter with the W.M.C. manuscript, and Robyn's hat.

AT RISE: ROBYN stands alone. Her manuscript and the knife she used against CHER are with her. Her formerly lavish outfit has been stripped to its bare necessities.

NO.11. "FINALE"

ROBYN

THERE HE LAYS:
 THE RIGHT HONOURABLE CAPTAIN DARRICK MARTIN SEANE,
 A SENTENCE AS A NAME.
 AND THERE HIS COUSIN, ARTHUR SEANE ANDREWS;
 LIEUTENANT WAITS FOR HIS WIFE...
 YOU HAD TO KNOW MY PAST, AUNT ADALINE!
 DESPITE THAT, STILL, YOU LIED,
 NEVER SAID HIS NAME TO ME, LAST BLOOD WHO SURVIVED!
 WHY FORCE HER DAD? WHY FORCE HER TO LIE?
 OH! SO YOU COULD APPEASE WHO YOU SHOULD DESPISE!
 SHE MARRIED YOU FOR NOTHING MORE THAN MEANS TO PROVIDE!
 YOU SPOKE OF MOM SO HIGH!
 READ INSTRUCTIONS AND COMPLIED?
 WHERE DOES IT SAY YOU GET ALL YOUR DEMANDS WHEN YOU
 COMMIT SUICIDE?

(Desk onstage. ROBYN puts on her heels. ANTON enters when she's finished. ROBYN reads from the folder.)

Alihu Anton... Lee-ruh? [This is a mispronunciation.]

ANTON

...okay.

ROBYN

All right... we set you up at a contact in Liverpool for the summer. Your school ran out of housing, but we own some buildings in London. One of the perks of old money: you acquire quite a bit of real estate.

ANTON

Newspapers? Quite old.

ROBYN

Mocking your interviewer, nice start. Writing something, with the papers; I never wrote fiction before, just articles and essays. Grief project, I suppose. My dad has fallen ill. You know how I feel, I would think; so many of you do. ... Your parents...?

ANTON

I think so.

ROBYN

Keep quiet about this. Parliament restricts refugees--you stay here legally through your degree, but legal loopholes cannot protect you from deportation if you make a fuss. Understand?

(ANTON nods. ROBYN hands him the folder.)

WELCOME TO ENGLAND, SIR.

(ANTON exits. Sickbed onstage.

ROBYN puts her gloves on from amongst the bloody mess.)

"LISTEN WHILE I HAVE TIME, ROBYN;

I OVERCOME COWARDICE AS I DIE.

YOUR MOTHER WROTE A DIARY, ROBYN.

I LOVE YOU.

FROM THE MOMENT I HELD YOU, YOU WERE MINE."

CAPITALISE ON A LIE, FATHER!

TEACH ME TO LOCK MY DREAMS IN MY MIND!

FIND FALLACY IN YOUR DEFINITION, FATHER!

'CAUSE AGAINST MY WILL I FIGHT, AND I AM TERRIFIED!

I HAD DREAMS, BUT THROUGH THIS TALE

THEM I ABANDON TO FIGHT FOR THE GAELS!

I HAD THE RIGHT TO KNOW THAT I HAD BEEN DAMNED!

AM I NOTHING MORE THAN A PAWN IN YOUR MASTER PLAN?

(Sofa chair onstage. ROBYN puts on her jewels. DRISCOLL enters when she's finished.)

DRISCOLL

Miss me?

ROBYN

Driscoll? You got leave?

DRISCOLL

Mum said you pretty much stopped eating and sleeping.

ROBYN

Just grief, and what does that have to do with anything?

DRISCOLL

I got a dependency discharge.

ROBYN

What?! How could you?!

DRISCOLL

Figured I could live with you in London; makes the commute easier. Take care of you.

ROBYN

Why do you always overreact?! I don't need you to--

DRISCOLL

He was my father too, Robyn!

ROBYN

I... I wanted to go to New York sometime soon. And, I moved to Bristol some time ago--about Uncle's flat--

DRISCOLL

New York?

ROBYN

I need to find my mother, Dris. He-- he always... how could you throw your happiness away?

DRISCOLL

Hey, soldier, remember?

I CARRIED HEAVIER THINGS THAN YOU.

(Bookshelf onstage. ROBYN takes a drag from the cigarette.)

ROBYN

STILL, HE LEAVES,
 THE RIGHT HONOURABLE CAPTAIN DARRICK MARTIN SEANE,
 MADE MOM WED AS SHE GRIEVED.
 JUST LIKE HIS COUSIN, ARTHUR SEANE ANDREWS,
 LIEUTENANT DIED IN GLORY.
 A NAVY MAN, WAR HERO, SAVED THE DAY!
 AND BUT ONE PRICE TO PAY:
 YOU NEVER KNEW DRISCOLL; MADE HIM YOUR SHADOW!
 JUST LIKE THE DRAFT, DRIS,
 MY WORLD CRUMBLES IN MOMENTS.
 HOW COULD GLORY SO CLOSE DANGLE SO AHEAD?
 HOW MANY TIMES FOR PARADISE MUST BATTLES COMMENCE?
 WELL, YOU ALL GOT YOUR WISH!
 LOOK AT EAMON'S SUCCESS!
 THE NEW YORK GAEL, CALLIE SEANE,
 STANDS BEFORE YOU, SHATTERED! BUT ENGLISH!

(Table onstage. ROBYN puts on her purse. DRISCOLL enters when she's finished.)

DRISCOLL

Robyn? You need to eat... you never changed your clothes last night?

ROBYN

Did you know why Franz Ferdinand went to Bosnia to start World War I?

DRISCOLL

...just try to get some sleep later, okay? You must be exhausted. Now eat.

ROBYN

He married his wife Sophie for love, but they had to disinherit their children because of her Czech heritage. Tenth anniversary comes, and Ferdinand takes Sophie on a military excursion. She dies first when they get shot. Ferdinand said, "Sophie, Sophie! Don't die! Live for our children!" They became his last words.

DRISCOLL

Fun. Eat, now?

ROBYN

Driscoll--

(ROBYN faints the moment she stands. DRISCOLL catches her.)

DRISCOLL

ROBYN, JUST CLOSE YOUR EYES AND BREATHE.

(DRISCOLL exits. Typewriter onstage. ROBYN puts her hat on.)

ROBYN

"LOOK AT THE BATTLEFIELD, ROBYN;
YOUR BLOOD SPILLS IN VICTORY OR DEFEAT.
I LIVE AMONG HUMANITY, ROBYN.
YOUR TURN NOW.
TO SURRENDER IS WEAKNESS! LIVE FOR ME!"
MY OPEN EYES CANNOT FORGIVE, FATHER!
IS THIS THE WORLD PREACHED TO BE IN YOUR GRIP?!
A WORLD DEFINED BY PREJUDICE, FATHER?!
'CAUSE IF YOU CALL THAT A WORLD, I WANT NO PART IN IT!

(ROBYN sees her belt, the last piece of her outfit. But, when she tries to take it, it's pulled just out of her reach. QUINN [ANTON] and EVIE [CHER] manhandle her; she struggles but can't break free. All remnants of her old life bury ROBYN as QUINN and EVIE pull every clothing piece she's recovered off of her. Morrigan's diary falls centerstage. QUINN and EVIE throw ROBYN next to the diary. QUINN and EVIE exit. DRISCOLL enters. He picks it up, rips out the pages, and throws Brea's scarf where the diary once stood. He exits, leaving ROBYN curled on the ground.)

ADAM AND EVE, YOU EAT YOUR FRUIT!
DEATH WILL NOT DECIDE WHAT MY LIFE COMES TO!

I WILL FORCE MIDNIGHT OR I WILL BE DAMNED!
GAEL I MAY BE, PAWN BY DECREE,
BUT HOW CAN YOU WIN AT CHESS WHEN YOU LOSE YOUR
PLAYTHING?
LIKE THE SHINING FRUIT FROM THE TREE OF KNOWLEDGE
WEAVED ITS WEB OF SPELLS,
LIKE THE LIGHTNING OF BULLETS IN BOSNIA
THAT SPIRALED THE WORLD INTO DECADES OF HELL,
NOW YOUR SHOT IN THE DARK CREATES A SPARK YOU COULD
NOT COMPREHEND.
MUM, I BURN WITH IT.
FOR THE MORE YOU BEAT ME DOWN, THE MORE I FIGHT TO
STAND.
MY WORTH NEVER DROWNS, EVEN IN THE SEA OF OPPRESSION.
I HOLD MY HUMANITY IN HISTORY OF STRUGGLE AND GLORY,
AND NOTHING EVER STOPS MY FIGHT TO PROVE!
FOR A FUNNY THING HAPPENS WHEN LIFE LOSES VALUE!

(END OF SONG)