

<Title>

an original screenplay by

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Three Hundred Years in Paradise

INT. LOBBY, EUROPA HOTEL - DAY

VICO (handsome, 30s) and RANDAZZO (30s, tall, jovial) navigate through a bustling crowd in a large, sumptuous hotel lobby.

VICO (V.O.)
There was this 18th century Italian
philosopher, Giambattista Vico...

Vico stops. Turns to look back, as if searching for someone.

RANDAZZO
Let's go. Winston's already pissed.

Randazzo grabs Vico by the shoulder, turns him around, and steers him toward the large, plate glass front doors.

VICO (V.O.)
Vico believed that everything which
happens eventually happens again.

EXT. SIDEWALK FACING EUROPA - DAY

Randazzo and Vico push their way through the front doors.

VICO (V.O.)
Like some giant cosmic carousel,
we'll be forced to relive it all.

They take a few steps toward a waiting limousine.

An enormous explosion from within the lobby of the hotel blows out all of the doors' glass, driving Vico and Randazzo from their feet.

VICO (V.O.) (CONT'D)
The good, the bad, the happy, the
sad, the terrifying and delightful.
Over and over again ad infinitum.

Vico and Randazzo land face-first on the pavement. Broken glass rains down around them.

VICO (V.O.) (CONT'D)
The question Vico never really asked,
but he should have, is...

Vico and Randazzo lie face down on the pavement, not moving. Shards of glass continue to rain down on them, but slower.

VICO (V.O.) (CONT'D)
Given the choice, would you want to?

INT. AIRPLANE - DAY

SUBTITLE FADES IN: ONE WEEK EARLIER

Vico stares pensively at nothing, a troubled look on his face. Randazzo, beside him, closes a Sky Mall pamphlet.

RANDAZZO

Concerned about the talks?

Vico shakes his head without turning to look at Randazzo.

The FLIGHT ATTENDANT (20s, pretty) approaches Vico.

FLIGHT ATTENDANT

(posh, English accent)

We're about to take off, sir. You'll have to straighten your seat back and put your tray table up.

Vico snaps out of his daze and looks at the flight attendant.

VICO

How long until we land in Belfast?

FLIGHT ATTENDANT

About eight hours.

The Flight Attendant nods at Vico's book on the tray table.

FLIGHT ATTENDANT (CONT'D)

Do you like poetry?

Vico snatches up the book, and closes the tray table.

VICO

My wife does, er, did.

The Flight attendant smiles, leaves. Randazzo leans over.

RANDAZZO

Very smooth, buddy.

VICO

What're you on about?

RANDAZZO

You may actually have struck upon the one other person in the world who still likes poetry. Maybe you oughta act on that.

VICO

What's the first rule of the Foreign Service?

RANDAZZO
Don't disclose secrets of state?

VICO
Okay, the second rule?

Randazzo shrugs.

VICO (CONT'D)
Don't fraternize with the indigenous population.

RANDAZZO
She's not "indigenous", she's a stewardess. Anyway, I don't recall that rule.

VICO
How'd you ever pass the Foreign Service exam?

RANDAZZO
I cheated, mostly. What's it gonna hurt to invite her to a cup of coffee?

VICO
That rule exists for a reason.

RANDAZZO
You're hopeless.

VICO
Ever heard of Hadamard's Billiards?

RANDAZZO
Is that some kind of pool game?

VICO
No, it's chaos theory. When a butterfly flaps its wings in South America it causes a tornado in Texas?

RANDAZZO
So what?

VICO
All of our actions have repercussions, often unforeseen ones.

RANDAZZO
So you ask a stewardess out and it causes an earthquake in Ulster?

VICO

Maybe, metaphorically speaking. Who knows? We get in, we do our job, we get out without upsetting the ecosystem. We can have fun at home.

RANDAZZO

Yeah, but you don't have fun at home, either.

EXT. BELFAST CITY CENTER - DAY

On the street, before a boarded-over shop, rests the nearly still-smoldering remains of a bombed-out car. Pedestrians rush past without even glancing at the charred heap.

On the sidewalk nearby, CAITRÍONA BEHAN (30, tall, strikingly beautiful) gazes at a poster of New York in a travel agency window. The green dome of City Hall towers behind her.

A TRAVEL AGENT (female, 30s) opens the glass front door.

TRAVEL AGENT

Thinking of going on holiday?

Caitriona stares wistfully at the poster of New York.

CAITRÍONA

Yes, a long one.

The Travel Agent nods to the poster.

TRAVEL AGENT

Have you ever been?

CAITRÍONA

Have I ever been?

Pause.

CAITRÍONA (CONT'D)

No, not really. I don't think so.

TRAVEL AGENT

Pardon?

CAITRÍONA

Sorry. Em, nothing.

TRAVEL AGENT

Would you like to come in and chat about a holiday, possibly to America?

CAITRÍONA

I'd love to discuss a holiday, but it's never going to happen. I wouldn't want to waste your time.

TRAVEL AGENT

Well, why not pop in for a wee cup of tea then? No shop talk, I promise.

CAITRÍONA

That sounds lovely, but I have to pick up the kids from school.

TRAVEL AGENT

I understand. Well, stop in any time. We'll be here!

The Travel Agent returns to the shop.

Caitriona lingers to study the posters a few more moments. Then, she turns and slowly walks away.

CAITRÍONA

So will I.

EXT. PARK - DAY

DARAGH BEHAN (30s, short, furtive, balding) sits on a bench reading the *Belfast Telegraph*, dated: July 1, 1995.

A BOMB VICTIM (prosthetic arm, disfigured face) walks past, his good arm around a YOUNG BOY (10, Celtic United jersey).

Seeing Daragh, a look of recognition crosses the Bomb Victim's face, and he slows down, eyeing Daragh.

Daragh quickly raises the paper to conceal his face.

AGENT BROWNE (40s, English), sits at the end of the bench.

Seeing Agent Browne, the Bomb Victim quickly walks away.

AGENT BROWNE

What have you heard, Mr. Behan?

Daragh lowers his paper and glances around. Seeing the Bomb Victim is gone, Daragh turns to Agent Browne.

DARAGH

There's been a lot of whispering of something powerful brewing.

AGENT BROWNE

The Provisional IRA?

DARAGH

Not the Provos, per se. Some of them mad lads on the periphery that tends to do their own thing.

AGENT BROWNE

The same ones responsible for that car bombing last month?

DARAGH

Aye.

AGENT BROWNE

Is this new thing related to the peace talks?

DARAGH

Aye.

AGENT BROWNE

Do you know any details?

DARAGH

No, just that it's to be something big--a statement.

Agent Browne slides an envelope to Daragh.

AGENT BROWNE

You'll let us know as soon as you know something more concrete?

Daragh picks up the envelope.

DARAGH

Aye.

(pause)

You know, I wouldn't be doing this, Mr. Browne, if it weren't for what they done to me wife's brother.

AGENT BROWNE

Yes, we know about that.

DARAGH

And I'm losing hours at the docks.

AGENT BROWNE

There's no need to explain, Mr. Behan. Thames House appreciates your service. You're a true patriot.

DARAGH

Aye...

Daragh stashes the envelope in his coat pocket. He shrugs.

DARAGH (CONT'D)
I'd invite you to a pint but...

AGENT BROWNE
Understood. You'll contact us when
you know something more?

DARAGH
Aye.

EXT. AIRPORT CAB STAND - DAY

Randazzo signals the DRIVER (graying hair under cap) of an old-fashioned, black cab, who gets out and takes their bags.

Vico and Randazzo climb into the back of the cab.

INT. BLACK CAB - CONTINUOUS

The Driver gets behind the wheel and turns to face them.

DRIVER (CONT'D)
Where to, lads?

RANDAZZO
The Europa Hotel.

DRIVER
Are yez Yanks?

RANDAZZO
That's right.

DRIVER
Ye wouldn't be with that diplomatic
delegation, now would yez?

Randazzo begins to answer. Vico shakes his head discreetly.

VICO
No, we're here on business.

DRIVER
Ah, grand. Anyways, I'm just after
telling me wife that it's about time
they gave them talks another go.

RANDAZZO
Is that so?

DRIVER
Aye. Black cabs are targets. I've
two mates was shot answering calls.

RANDAZZO

Targets? Maybe we should find a safer mode of transportation.

DRIVER

Sure, yer fine, Yank. The ones that would take a shot at this cab are under an official cease-fire.

RANDAZZO

What about the other ones?

DRIVER

There's a sort of unofficial cease-fire in place with the IRA.

RANDAZZO

That sounds promising.

DRIVER

The IRA declared a cease-fire last August, then somebody set off a car bomb in the city center last month. But there hasn't been anything since.

VICO

We know. It's fine. Just go.

RANDAZZO

(to Vico)

That's fine for you, but some of us actually want to go on living.

VICO

(to Randazzo)

Stop being such a baby.

(to Driver)

Let's go.

DRIVER

Don't worry yerselves, I won't take yez anywhere close to where they might have a mind to shoot at yez.

EXT. BELFAST - DAY

The cab carrying Vico and Randazzo passes the Peace Wall.

On it, graffiti can be read: "Is there life before death?"

EXT. BELFAST - DAY

The cab enters a neighborhood with a 25-foot high mural of a man wearing fatigues and a black ski mask, holding a rifle.

INT. BLACK CAB - DAY

Vico and Randazzo both stare at the mural in fascination.

EXT. BELFAST - DAY

The cab passes an OPEN FIELD containing a smattering of broken furniture and other assorted trash.

INT. BLACK CAB - DAY

Randazzo points to the trash.

RANDAZZO

What's up with all the junk?

DRIVER

Fodder for a bonfire.

RANDAZZO

What?

DRIVER (CONT'D)

Marching season starts next week.
By next weekend they'll have a pile
of trash ten meters high that'll
burn the night of the march.

RANDAZZO

A bonfire?

DRIVER

Aye. Complete with the Irish
tricolors and pictures of His
Holiness, the pope, no doubt.

RANDAZZO

Is that legal?

DRIVER

Legal? Sure, legality has never
been considered a prerequisite for
any undertaking in Ulster.

EXT. SIDEWALK FACING EUROPA - DAY

The driver retrieves the bags from the trunk, then walks over and drops them in front of Vico and Randazzo.

DRIVER (CONT'D)

Here's a bit of trivia for yez, lads.
Do yez know the name of the hotel
that's been bombed the most times?

Sorting through the bills in his wallet, Vico pauses to glance up. He appears to contemplate it for a moment, then shrugs.

RANDAZZO

Not the Europa?

DRIVER

(chuckling)

Did yez not know that? It's been bombed twenty-seven separate times since the Troubles began.

RANDAZZO

I assuredly did not know that.

DRIVER

Sure, there's no reason to worry now. Since it's been bombed so many times, it has the most elaborate security system on the planet.

RANDAZZO

That makes me feel much better.

VICO

They wouldn't've put us here if there was anything to be concerned about.

Vico hands the Driver the fare. The Driver tips his cap.

DRIVER

Yeh'll be grand, lads. With the Yanks and Brits here for the talks, security will be high. So it will.

INT. JANE AND COLM'S BEDROOM - NIGHT

JANE (9, freckles, guarded) and COLM (6, small, happy) lie tucked into twin beds. Caitríona sits on Colm's bed.

The neighbors' fighting is audible through a shared wall.

COLM

Will you read us a story, Mummy?

JANE

What about Oisín and Niamh? We just learned about that one in school.

CAITRÍONA

I don't know, love. That one does not have the happiest ending.

COLM

Who's Oisín?

CAITRÍONA

He was the son of Finn MacCool.

COLM

I love Finn! I want to hear that!

Caitriona reaches for the book, begins leafing through it.

CAITRÍONA

Alright, but I don't think we'll finish it tonight. It's pretty long.

JANE

That's okay, Mummy.

CAITRÍONA

(reading)

"One day Oisín and the Fianna were hunting in old Kerry. They stopped to rest on a hill by the sea."

EXT. MYTHICAL COASTLINE - DAY

Six FIANNA (20s to 50s, dressed in medieval warrior garb) sit atop horses on a hill that overlooks the ocean.

In the distance, three horse-riders gallop along the coastline below, the two in the rear are chasing NIAMH (20s, beautiful).

Seeing this, the Fianna stir, as if about to ride.

OISIN (tall, handsome, 20s) holds up his hand to halt them. He gallops off alone to engage the two riders in combat.

CAITRÍONA (V.O.)

Oisín routed the two riders and they fled for their lives. He then rode over to the young woman and said:

OISIN

My name is Oisín, son of Finn, king of the Fianna. Who are you, my lady?

NIAMH

My name is Niamh, daughter of Ban, King of Tir-na n-Og.

OISIN

I have never heard of such a place.

NIAMH (CONT'D)

It is a land far away, where the people know neither old age nor death.

Oisín nods.

OISIN

Ah yes, the Land of the Young.

(pause)

Why were those ruffians chasing you?

NIAMH (CONT'D)

Those men serve an evil druid who kidnapped me. I am in your debt for rescuing me, brave Oisin.

OISIN

It is nothing, my lady.

CAITRÍONA (V.O.)

Oisin signaled the men from his party.

The other Fianna ride down to join Oisin and Niamh.

OISIN

Can my men and I assist you in returning to your homeland?

NIAMH

The Land of the Young can only be reached by enchanted mount, and the druid cursed me so that I cannot return until a prince weds me.

OISIN

Will I do, my lady?

NIAMH

The prince must truly love me or the spell will not be broken.

OISIN

Set your heart at rest, Niamh. You'll be returning home today, for I loved you the moment I laid eyes on you.

NIAMH

And I, you, noble Oisin.

CAITRÍONA (V.O.)

The two then knew they'd never love another all the days of their lives.

INT. JANE AND COLM'S BEDROOM - NIGHT

Caitriona closes the book, stands and kisses each child.

Daragh appears in the doorway.

CAITRÍONA

Do you want to kiss the children
good night, Daragh?

Looking put-out, Daragh steps into the room and kisses Colm's forehead. He kisses his fingers and waves them at Jane.

UPSTAIRS HALLWAY

Caitríona and Daragh step into the hallway, closing the door.

DARAGH

I'm running over to Brennan's to
catch the friendly between Celtic
United and Newcastle.

CAITRÍONA

I thought you were done 'til next
paycheck.

DARAGH

I saw a lad who owed me a few quid.

CAITRÍONA

Oh...alright. Just don't be buying
any rounds.

Daragh kisses her on the forehead and begins to walk away.

DARAGH

No worries, that I won't!

INT. LOBBY, EUROPA HOTEL - DAY

Vico crosses the lobby alone. Randazzo, seated at a table
in the lobby drinking a glass of whiskey, sees Vico and calls.

RANDAZZO

Hey, buddy, where you off to?

Vico pauses, turns back to Randazzo.

VICO

Just going for a short walk.

RANDAZZO

Try not to interact with anybody!

EXT. BELFAST - DAY

Vico makes his way through the city center.

He stops across from St. Mary's (old, red brick church).

Vico glances around indecisively. Pause. He shrugs.

He crosses the street and enters the church.

INT. ST. MARY'S CHURCH - DAY

The church is nearly deserted. Caitríona, occupies a pew toward the rear. Vico doesn't notice her as he passes.

Vico selects a pew in a middle row, slides in, and drops onto the kneeler. He makes a hurried sign of the cross.

Digging something out of his pocket, Vico clasps his hands around the object and squeezes his eyes shut in prayer.

Vico quickly gives up trying to pray and leans back.

He looks at the concealed object in his hand. Closing his eyes, he leans forward and tries to pray again.

After several moments, he gives up again and sits all the way back on the pew. Vico glances around the church.

He catches his first glimpse of Caitríona. She's reading a book. The path left by a solitary tear glistens on her cheek.

Sensing Vico's gaze, Caitríona looks up. They lock eyes. She makes no attempt to wipe away the tear on her cheek.

Caught, Vico instantly looks away, then turns around.

But Vico soon glances back again. The tear is now gone.

Caitríona breaks into a bemused, but kind, smile. Caught again, Vico performs a double-take. Then he stares forward.

Caitríona closes her book, stands, and exits the building.

Seeing her go, Vico leaps to his feet and bounds after her.

EXT. STREET - DAY

Vico trails Caitríona in a near-comical effort to be stealthy.

Caitríona nears a seedy-looking pub.

THUG #1 (shaved head, tattoos) and THUG #2 (same, but older) stand in the pub entrance, drinking beer and smoking.

Seeing Caitríona, the THUGS step onto the sidewalk to block her path. They menace her and begin harassing her verbally.

Vico pauses momentarily, then rushes over to rescue her.

VICO

Hey!

Vico steps in between Caitriona and the two thugs. THUG #1 immediately headbutts Vico in face. Vico drops.

FADE TO BLACK:

FADE IN:

EXT. SIDEWALK IN FRONT OF PUB - DAY

Vico is stretched out on the sidewalk. The thugs have fled. Caitriona dabs his face with a wet rag. Vico's eyes open.

VICO'S P.O.V.

A hazy woman's face, wreathed in light, hovers over him.

BACK TO SCENE

Vico squints his eyes and struggles to speak.

VICO
Laura? Is this heaven?

CAITRÍONA
That's the first I've heard Belfast
mistaken for heaven.

Vico attempts to sit up. Caitriona gently places her hand on his chest to keep him from exerting himself.

CAITRÍONA (CONT'D)
Easy. Do you know where you are?

VICO
Um, yes...Belfast...Northern Ireland.

CAITRÍONA
Fair enough, I gave you that one.
Do you know the date?

VICO
I flew in yesterday. It should
be...July 2nd?

CAITRÍONA
And the year?

VICO
1995.

CAITRÍONA
Grand. Try to sit up.

Caitriona helps Vico to a seated position.

VICO
What happened to those guys?

CAITRÍONA
They ran--scared they'd murdered
you. Thanks for rescuing me.

VICO
Usually the hero remains conscious.

CAITRÍONA
It's not exactly the stuff of fairy
tales, but you got rid of the wankers.

Vico rubs the back of his head.

CAITRÍONA (CONT'D)
How's your head?

VICO
A little sore, but I'm okay.

She takes his hand and helps him to his feet. The embrace
lingers a bit too long. They both look shy and embarrassed.

CAITRÍONA
You're American?

VICO
Yes.

CAITRÍONA
I've always wanted to visit.

Vico smiles and nods.

CAITRÍONA (CONT'D)
Are you here for the negotiations?

VICO
Um, no. I'm here on business.

CAITRÍONA
You're not a very good liar.

Caitriona checks her watch.

CAITRÍONA (CONT'D)
I'm sorry, I must be going. Thank
you for your help Mr...

VICO
Vico.

CAITRÍONA

You're sure you're alright, Mr. Vico?

VICO

I'll survive.

Caitriona nods as though not entirely convinced. Then, glancing at her watch again, smiles and turns to leave.

Vico stares after her as she walks away, then glances around.

Vico sees a folded-up piece of paper on the ground near where Caitriona had stood. He picks it up and opens it.

NOTE

Sisters night out this Thursday at Madisons. See you then. Siobhán

Vico looks for Caitriona, but she is gone. He glances at the note again, and then stuffs it in his coat pocket.

INT. CONFERENCE ROOM EUROPA HOTEL - DAY

Seated on one side of a conference table, WILLIAMS (20s) and BURNETT (female, 30s) converse quietly. Randazzo sits on the other side talking to JENNINGS (40s, balding, sardonic).

RANDAZZO

So what're we dealing with here?

JENNINGS

Did you ever go to the circus?

RANDAZZO

(laughing)

Of course.

JENNINGS

You know those animal trainers who get the tigers to form a pyramid?

RANDAZZO

Yeah?

JENNINGS

We're like them, only instead of trained tigers, we're working with rabid, feral cats.

RANDAZZO

Vivid image.

Randazzo glances around, continues in a hushed tone.

RANDAZZO (CONT'D)
Winston--are the rumors true?

JENNINGS
You've never worked with him?

Randazzo shakes his head.

JENNINGS (CONT'D)
Just be careful. The word is people
who cross him end up posted to
countries with "-stan" in their names.

RANDAZZO
Why's he take it so personally?

JENNINGS
He's in line for an ambassadorship
if these talks are successful.

Randazzo whistles quietly, impressed.

RANDAZZO
An ambassadorship?

JENNINGS
Yeah, hopefully in Tehran.

RANDAZZO
Well, what about Senator Mitchell?

JENNINGS
He's in Washington most of the time,
which leaves Winston to run the show.

RANDAZZO
And that's not great?

JENNINGS
George Mitchell is like a kindly old
professor who only shows up for
lectures, while Winston is the bipolar
grad assistant who runs the class.

Vico enters. He nods and waves to Williams and Burnett.

He walks over and shakes hands with Jennings, slaps Randazzo
on the back. Vico sits in an empty chair beside Randazzo.

JENNINGS
Tweedle dee is here.

RANDAZZO
So I'm Tweedle dum?

Jennings grins, nods. Then he turns and talks to Williams.

Randazzo glances at Vico, notices Vico is grinning from ear to ear and does a double take. Randazzo eyes Vico curiously.

RANDAZZO

Say, what happened to you?

VICO

What do you mean?

RANDAZZO

Two things. First, you've got a welt under your right eye. Second, you seem somehow less sullen.

VICO

Sullen?

RANDAZZO

Yeah, usually you act like you're half a step away from wrapping your lips around the business end of a shotgun. Now you seem almost...giddy.

VICO

I bumped my head on the armoire in my room unpacking.

RANDAZZO

That explains the welt. Maybe that bump to the head caused your pituitary to start spitting out Endorphins. Kinda like a personality transplant.

WINSTON (50s, thin, hawkish) walks into the room followed by WINSTON'S ASSISTANT (20s, Ivy League, teacher's pet).

WINSTON

We have a lot of groundwork to do. In addition to the governments of the UK and the Republic of Ireland, there are 8 different local political organizations involved in these talks and each one has its own agenda.

Winston pauses and glances around the table.

WINSTON (CONT'D)

For the next few days, we're going to focus on the three major Northern Irish political parties involved in the talks. If we can get them on board, the others will fall in line.

Winston nods to his assistant who begins to pass out folders.

WINSTON (CONT'D)

Moran, Burnett, and Williams: you've got the Loyalist/Protestant groups-- the Democratic Unionist Party and the U.K. Unionist Party. Vico and Randazzo are taking the Catholic Republicans, Sinn Féin.

As the two groups begin to go over their folders, Winston's Assistant pulls him aside, out of earshot of the others.

WINSTON'S ASSISTANT

Sir, are you sure you want to give Sinn Féin to Vico and Randazzo?

WINSTON

What do you mean?

WINSTON'S ASSISTANT

It's the one group we haven't been able to get to the table. Shouldn't we give it to the returning folks?

WINSTON

I thought I trained you better than that, Christian. Do you know who Guy Fawkes was?

WINSTON'S ASSISTANT

Of course, sir. He planned the failed Gunpowder Plot against English Parliament in 1605.

WINSTON

No, he was hung and quartered for the Gunpowder Plot. He never planned it. He was a dupe, a fall guy. Rule one: always have a Guy Fawkes.

WINSTON'S ASSISTANT

I don't follow, sir.

WINSTON

I need for these talks to work, Christian. But we're dealing with bad people here. Very bad.

WINSTON'S ASSISTANT

Yes sir?

WINSTON

To get bad people to the table,
someone might have to do bad things.
I need deniability--a Guy Fawkes.

WINSTON'S ASSISTANT

Okay, I understand putting Randazzo
on it, but why Vico? Vico's one of
our best people.

WINSTON

Because Vico does what he's told.

(pause)

If he succeeds, we get Sinn Féin to
the table and the senator and I will
ultimately get credit for that. But
he'll probably have to do something
unsavory to accomplish that.

WINSTON'S ASSISTANT

And if he fails?

WINSTON

Then he fails. That's expected. He
could use some failure on his record.

Winston's Assistant gives Winston a quizzical look.

WINSTON (CONT'D)

Either way I have something on him.
That'll make him easier to control
in the future. One never knows.

The Assistant nods. Winston walks over to Vico and Randazzo.

WINSTON (CONT'D)

Sinn Féin isn't being permitted to
participate in the talks until the
IRA calls an official cease-fire.

VICO

What do you propose we do, sir?

Winston glances around, then leans forward conspiratorially.

WINSTON

I want you two to go to the Maze
Prison in Long Kesh where they keep
all the Irish Republican Army
prisoners and talk to Brendan Dolan.

VICO

Brendan Dolan, sir?

WINSTON

He's an IRA general serving life there. If we can convince Dolan to give the negotiations a chance, we might just get that cease-fire.

RANDAZZO

I thought we didn't negotiate with terrorists, sir.

WINSTON

You think too much, Randazzo. Who said anything about negotiating?

Randazzo has the wounded look of a chastised dog.

WINSTON (CONT'D)

You're not going there to negotiate: make that very clear up front. Neither of you has the authority-- that's why I'm sending you.

VICO

So you just want us to talk to him?

WINSTON

Yes, feel him out. See what it'll take to make this happen. Randazzo--

RANDAZZO

Sir?

WINSTON

None of your bad jokes. In fact, Vico, you do all of the talking.

INT. KITCHEN, BEHAN HOME - NIGHT

Caitríona wanders around the kitchen humming to herself and tidying up. She feels in her pocket for the dropped letter.

CAITRÍONA

What did I do with Siobhán's note?

INT. JANE AND COLM'S BEDROOM - NIGHT

Caitríona stands with her finger on the light switch.

COLM

Where's Da, Mummy?

CAITRÍONA

He's out.

Jane and Colm exchange knowing glances. Jane lifts a book from the nightstand and holds it up for Caitríona to see.

JANE

Will you read some more of our story?

Caitríona smiles and nods. She walks over, sits on the edge of Jane's bed, and opens the book

CAITRÍONA

Right. Where did I leave off?

EXT. MYTHICAL COASTLINE - DAY

Oisín and Niamh stand on the shore before the ABBOT (balding). The other 5 Fianna stand in a semicircle around the couple.

CAITRÍONA (V.O.)

An old abbot who traveled with the
Fianna married the lovers right there.

The vows complete, they embrace and kiss. The Fianna cheer.

NIAMH

Now that you are my husband, you
must return with me to Tir-na n-Og.

Oisín turns with a questioning look to FINN (tall, white-haired, robust). Finn nods in permission and embraces Oisín.

FINN

I give you my blessing, Oisín. Just
promise me you will return to Éire
in 3 years time, so that I might lay
my eyes on you one final time.

OISIN

Father, you have far more than three
years of life left to you.

FINN

Just promise me, son. In this life,
we can never know what is to come.

CAITRÍONA (V.O.)

Oisín vowed to return to Éire in
three years and Finn blessed him.

Oisín climbs onto the stallion, and then helps Niamh up onto the horse behind him. Oisín grabs the reins.

CAITRÍONA (V.O.) (CONT'D)

Waving farewell, Oisín kicked the
horse and galloped off like the wind.

EXT. THE MAZE PRISON - DAY

INT. H BLOCK MAZE PRISON - DAY

Vico and Randazzo sit on folding chairs inside a narrow cell. The whitewashed walls are streaked with filth.

On the bunk sits BRENDAN DOLAN (hardened, cynical, 50ish).

DOLAN

So they let yez in, did they?

VICO

It had to come down from 10 Downing Street, but we did it.

DOLAN

I told the warden I'd only talk to ye here in me cell. He said that wasn't going to happen. So I have to give it to yez, lads, ye got in.

VICO

Why was it so important we meet here?

DOLAN

I wanted yez to see it for yerselves-- H block, that is. The stories don't do it justice. A lot of good men died in here. Can ye feel 'em?

Vico and Randazzo exchange uncomfortable looks.

VICO

The hunger strikers?

DOLAN

Aye, the strikers. I feel 'em in here every night after lights out. I'd like to say it's a comforting feeling, but it's not. They're angry.

VICO

Angry?

DOLAN

Aye, angry. Angry that the country they died for is still occupied. Angry that their spirits are left to haunt this desolate place.

Dolan nods over his shoulder.

DOLAN (CONT'D)

It was right down that corridor that Bobby Sands breathed his last. Kieran Doherty made it 73 days. He was a mate of mine. Great footballer.

Another several moments of pregnant silence pass.

DOLAN (CONT'D)

(quoting)

"His soul had approached that region where dwell the vast hosts of the dead...He was conscious of, but could not apprehend, their wayward and flickering existence..."

VICO

James Joyce.

DOLAN

Aye, Joyce. Ye feel 'em, don't ye, Mr. Vico? I can see it in yer eyes. Yer living in that "grey impalpable world" with the dead, as well.

Vico looks cut to the quick. He subtly pulls back.

EXT. HIGHWAY, VIRGINIA 1991 - DAY (FLASHBACK)

Nearing sundown. A car zips along a two-lane highway that follows alongside a low cliff.

INT. CAR, VIRGINIA 1991 - DAY (FLASHBACK CONTINUED)

LAURA (beautiful, early 30s) drives. The sun glints off of a gold cross hanging around her neck. VICO (much younger looking) emphatically sings along to the radio. She laughs.

EXT. HIGHWAY, VIRGINIA 1991 - DAY (FLASHBACK CONTINUED)

A tractor trailer traveling in the opposite direction crosses the center line and veers directly toward their car.

Their car swerves right, breaks the barrier lining the shoulder, and goes airborne, flying off of the small cliff.

INT. H BLOCK MAZE PRISON - DAY (BACK TO PRESENT DAY)

Vico blinks and shakes his head. Dolan eyes him.

DOLAN (CONT'D)

The lads told me about ye, Mr. Vico.

Vico has to focus to return to the present.

VICO

They did?

DOLAN

Aye, yer a lad what's cheated death.

Vico shakes his head.

VICO

No. Death cheated me.

Dolan smiles slightly and nods. He turns to Randazzo.

DOLAN (CONT'D)

Ye don't say much, do ye?

RANDAZZO

I'm around for comic relief, mostly.
(coughs, clears throat)
And this isn't too comical.

DOLAN

Ah, that's where yer wrong, mate.
We Irish can find humor in anything.
Ye gotta take the piss outa death,
otherwise ye can hardly go on living.

VICO

I'm sure you know why we're here.

DOLAN

Aye. The ol' red stomachs have
finally decided we're more trouble
than it's worth so they want to talk.

VICO

Without Sinn Féin the negotiations
will not be legitimate, but Sinn
Féin can't participate until the IRA
calls an official cease-fire.

DOLAN

And if we was to agree to reinstate
the cease-fire, what could we expect
from these talks?

VICO

Peace.

DOLAN

Peace?
(laughs sardonically)
Sure peace isn't worth a damn without
political empowerment.

(MORE)

DOLAN (CONT'D)

Ask them red Indians in yer own country how much all them peace treaties they signed with yer government did for 'em.

RANDAZZO

I'm not sure that that analogy really applies to this situation, sir.

DOLAN

No? A foreign power invades a country, steals the land and the wealth from its native inhabitants, then marginalizes them both socially and politically. That doesn't sound familiar to ye? I liked ye better when ye weren't saying anything.

RANDAZZO

Most people do.

VICO

Listen, Mr. Dolan. We appreciate your position, we do.

DOLAN

I don't think ye do.

VICO

We both know things won't get better in this country until all sides sit down and try to work it out.

DOLAN

Aye. We've heard that song before.

VICO (CONT'D)

What will come of that, I can't say. But nothing else has seemed to work so far. Sometimes you just have to take a leap of faith.

Dolan stands, walks to the window and looks out.

DOLAN

I'll give it a think, Mr. Vico. Not making any promises.

VICO

Of course. That's all we ask.

Vico and Randazzo look at each other, then stand. Dolan walks over, shakes Vico's hand and holds it as he leans in.

DOLAN

(whispers)

There's a sealed letter in yer hand,
Mr. Vico. If ye want yer cease-fire,
yeh'll deliver it--unopened--to Mick
at Brennan's Pub on Falls Road.

VICO

(hushed)

You know I can't do that, Mr. Dolan.

Dolan does not release Vico's hand.

DOLAN

Quid pro quo, Mr. Vico.

VICO

What is it?

DOLAN

Rest easy, it's not any plans for
bombings or the like.

VICO

I can't just take your word on that
and deliver an envelope I don't even
know the contents of. I'm part of a
diplomatic mission, for God's sake!

DOLAN

Ye want yer talks, don't ye?

VICO

Not at that cost. Besides, it's
well known that the IRA prisoners
here have an intricate system of
communication with the outside world.

DOLAN

Aye, but at the moment there's a few
glitches in the system that need
remedied. So, what do ye say?

Vico says nothing. Dolan grins an evil grin and chuckles.

DOLAN

Sometimes ye just have to take a
leap of faith, Mr. Vico.

Dolan releases Vico's hand, and they move apart. Vico
immediately slips the envelope into his pocket.

INT. CORRIDOR MAZE PRISON - DAY

A guard is leading Randazzo and Vico out of H block.

RANDAZZO
(hushed to Vico)
What was that about at the end?

VICO
I'll tell you later.

RANDAZZO
That guy's a piece of work. What
was all that talk about ghosts?

VICO
Got me.

Vico shudders involuntarily.

VICO (CONT'D)
Still, I suppose you can understand
where he's coming from after
everything they've been through.

GUARD
I wouldn't shed any tears for that
geezer in there. Do you know what
he's in for?

RANDAZZO
Political prisoner?

GUARD
(laughs bitterly)
Political prisoner? He set off a
bomb in a Sainsbury's. Killed 23
women and children. That's your
political prisoner for you.

INT. BLACK CAB - DAY

Vico and Randazzo ride in the back. Vico glances at his
watch: it reads: "3:00".

He digs in his jacket pocket for the note Caitríona dropped.
He glances at it quickly, then stuffs it back in his coat.

VICO
(to Driver 2)
Can you drop me by St. Mary's Church?

DRIVER 2 (40s, graying, curt) nods in response.

RANDAZZO
When did you find religion?

VICO
Long story.