

FADE IN:

INT. GREENWICH CASTLE HALL- NIGHT

BREATHING. Soft FOOTSTEPS. Faint, distant MUSIC.

Two GUARDS lead the way along an imposing hallway. Arched windows overlook a courtyard. At the far end, two more GUARDS stand outside a carved oak door.

PORTRAITS loom on the wall, haughty, imperial- the English Royal family, stretching for generations.

ENGLISH OFFICER (O.S.)

Ready... Fire!

In the courtyard, ENGLISH SOLDIERS drill by torchlight. The straw dummies that serve as targets crumple under the barrage.

INT. GREENWICH CASTLE COURT ROOM- NIGHT

MUSICIANS accompany ACTORS, who perform a comedy. The room glitters with wealth and artifice, rouge and lace.

ELIZABETH I, early 30s, watches the play. She frowns, claps sharply. The actors founder mid-line. The musicians trail off on a dissonant note.

ELIZABETH

No, no. Give us something real.

The actors glance at each other. Bow. Switch to a drama.

With a look of bored forbearance, Elizabeth leans back. COURTIERS rustle like worried hens.

INT. HALL- NIGHT

A portrait of Henry VIII glares down. The door is just ahead. The guards cross their poleaxes with a crash.

INT. COURT ROOM- NIGHT

The COURT ANNOUNCER pounds his staff. The play stops.

COURT ANNOUNCER

The Lady Grania O'Malley.

The door opens. Elizabeth leans forward. Courtiers whisper.

GRANIA O'MALLEY, early 30s, stands in the doorway, strong, tall, an egret among peacocks. She wears neither powder nor finery but stands self-possessed, eyes down. She waits for the whispers to fade. Raises her head. A fierce light burns in her eyes as she looks at Elizabeth.

Elizabeth's eyes narrow.

MAIRGRET (O.S.- FAR DISTANT)

Grania!

EXT. CLEW BAY- DAY

Restless ocean. Superimposed on the shot:

CLEW BAY, IRELAND- 1541

A ship appears, sails bellied out by a stiff breeze. Gulls CRY, sails LUFF, wind THRUMS through rope.

CLARE ISLAND comes into view, set like a gem in the gray Atlantic. Ireland's shore lies to the east. CLARE CASTLE appears, its courtyard surrounded by a stone wall.

MAIRGRET (O.S.- CLOSER)

Grania!

EXT. CLARE CASTLE- DAY

A door in the courtyard wall THUMPS open. Grania, 8, flies out. Chickens squawk and scatter from her path.

Barefoot, Grania pounds toward the bluff. Unruly hair hangs in a mop across eyes filled with a fierce, determined joy.

MAIRGRET, Grania's mother, appears in the doorway, voice rising with aggravation.

MAIRGRET

Grania!

Grania waves excitedly and leaps down the bluff. The ship drops anchor. Longboats head for shore.

IN THE LONGBOAT-

OWEN O'MALLEY stands, holding the rudder. LIAM, Owen's brother, calls the strokes. He is dashing and lean next to Owen's broad strength. SAILORS chant and row.

GRANIA

Da! Da!

Owen raises his arm, waves.

The longboat's keel drags along the sand. Owen vaults over the side into the water. Grania runs out to him. Owen scoops her up, carries her to the beach.

OWEN

Can you not even wait for me to get to dry land?

GRANIA

Can I go with you next time?

OWEN

(to Liam)

It's blowing up a storm. Get the cargo under cover.

LIAM

Aye, Owen.

CLANSFOLK help the sailors unload the longboats. Owen strides up the bluff. Grania trots at his side.

GRANIA

I'd make myself useful, Da. See?

She unties the length of rope around her waist and whips it into an array of knots.

GRANIA

Anchor bend, bow line, Bridie's knot...

Owen smiles.

GRANIA

I could help haul the nets. Seamus lets me help him.

OWEN

Does he now? And where is your

brother? He should be unloading the ship.

GRANIA

I'd help unload. Or with the cooking.

OWEN

You? And where are you, then, every time your mother needs help with the supper?

GRANIA

Please, Da?

They reach the top of the bluff. The ocean spreads out, flecked with orange light. Owen kneels by Grania.

OWEN

Grania. It's a fearsome world, the sea, and no place for a wee girl.

Grania digs a toe into the dirt, her tiny jaw clenched.

OWEN

Why do you want it so?

GRANIA

Because, Da. Because. The waves race along the hull like... like...

OWEN

Like bulls trying to break it in, when the wind's got the devil in it.

Grania sighs gustily, turns away.

OWEN

And so you'll punish me, will you, you snip? No more love for your Da if you can't get your way, is it?

She flings her arms around his broad torso.

GRANIA

I'll always love you!

He lifts her, laughing. They enter the courtyard.

CLANSFOLK tend livestock, carry buckets- a busy, peaceful evening. Owen puts Grania down, kisses Mairgret soundly. She bats at him, then submits, enjoying it.

OWEN

Where's Seamus?

WOMAN (O.S.)

Mairgret! The bread's scorching.

MAIRGRET

Well, take it out then! Honestly.

Mairgret disappears inside the castle. Owen and Grania glance at each other and follow.

INT. CLARE CASTLE KITCHEN- EVENING

Smoked meats and plaited lengths of onions hang from the beams. TWO WOMEN knead bread. REAGAN chops vegetables. Mairgret fusses over the hearth. Owen and Grania enter.

WOMEN

Good evening, Dubdharra.

Owen helps himself to a piece of bread, plunks down on a stool. Grania leans against his knee.

OWEN

And where is my son, then?

MAIRGRET

Oh, he's off with Richard.

OWEN

Mairgret!

MAIRGRET

Chop them finer, Reagan, or it'll be dawn's light we're eating by.

She lights candles as she talks.

MAIRGRET

It's not like he didn't get the work done, Owen. The fields are all planted, and when the Burkes asked for him I saw no harm.

OWEN

There's more to being chieftain
than getting the fields planted.

MAIRGRET

And so there is. Seamus'll need
allies, more than you have. The
English have garrisoned Galway
Harbor.

Owen starts to his feet, shocked.

MAIRGRET

We've known it was coming these
two years past.

OWEN

And you let my only son go running
about the countryside with Richard
Burke? Are you mad?

Liam enters, swings Grania into his arms.

MAIRGRET

He's due back in the morning.
You'll not have to scowl at me
long.

LIAM

He'll not scowl at you at all, if
he's got any sense in his head.

He leans down, kisses Mairgret's cheek.

MAIRGRET

Oh, go on with you, Liam. How were
the seas?

Liam looks at Owen slyly.

LIAM

Fair specked with ships they were.

MAIRGRET

Owen! Tell me you didn't raid any
English ships.

OWEN

The English don't own Ireland,
whatever they may think.

LIAM

Or the seas, do they, brother?

Owen glares at him.

MAIRGRET

You're a fool. That wee piss of
water between here and the
mainland is no more shelter than a
straw against the wind. And you go
and pirate English ships!

OWEN

You knew I was an O'Malley when
you married me.

Owen and Mairgret lock eyes. Grania tenses.

MAIRGRET

Well, no O'Malley is sitting to
supper with a face like that. Go
wash up. And you too, Grania.

Owen laughs, swoops his wife into a bear hug, kisses her
before she can pull away. She brandishes a spoon at him.

OWEN

Come on, Grania. Quick!

As Owen reaches the door, BRENNAN, 12, bursts in. He stares
at Owen with stricken eyes, panting.

OWEN

What now? Brennan, is it? Take a
breath now, lad.

Brennan bursts into great racking sobs.

BRENNAN

It's the Burkes, sir.

OWEN

And where's the harm in that?

BRENNAN

I've no wish... I can't. You must
come, and quickly...

INT. CLARE CASTLE GREAT ROOM- NIGHT

Finely woven tapestries hang on the walls. A long carved
table stretches in front of a fireplace. Owen enters.

RICHARD BURKE, 17, stands in front of the table, well-grown
and strong. Behind him are his FATHER, MOTHER, and other
BURKES. Richard draws himself upright, trying desperately
to be a man.

RICHARD
Owen O'Malley, the Black Oak of
Ireland, I, Richard Burke, bring
your son home for burial.

He steps aside, revealing the body of SEAMUS, 16, laid on
the table. Mairgret screams and falls to her knees.

OWEN
If this is your doing, Richard of
the Burkes, I'll see you dead and
your clan with you.

RICHARD
Not my doing, Owen, but I cannot
escape the fault of it. It was I
who suggested we ride to Galway.

OWEN
Tell me who killed my son.

Richard appeals mutely to his parents. Their faces are
stone.

RICHARD
It was the English, Owen.

Grania gazes down at her brother.

RICHARD
We were at a tavern. Seamus got
to... talking about you. He was
always... very proud to be your son.
And there were sailors, from a
ship called the Martine...

Richard falters. Owen's anger drains to a deathly pallor.

OWEN
Sweet Jesus.

Mairgret rises to her feet, grief giving way to rage.

MAIRGRET
Damn you, Owen O'Malley, you and
your murdering ways.

OWEN
Mairgret... I..

Owen spins, pushes blindly through the crowd. The heavy door thuds shut behind him.

Mother Burke crosses to Mairgret, her arms open.

MOTHER BURKE
There are no words to ease the
pain of a mother.

MAIRGRET
(stone-cold)
You still have your son.

Mother Burke drops her arms. Mairgret sinks down again by Seamus. Grania runs her hand along Seamus' arm, plays with the fingers, lifts his hand. It drops. Her eyes go wide.

MAIRGRET
Grania!

Grania backs away, staring at the body. Richard touches her shoulder. She jumps, looks up.

RICHARD
Tis only Seamus, Grania.

GRANIA
But he's dead.

RICHARD
Aye, lass. We all die. But still,
tis only Seamus.

He leads her back to the table. Grania reaches down and softly strokes Seamus' arm. Mairgret bursts out sobbing.

EXT. BLUFFS- DAY

Waves crash below. A cold drizzle falls.

At a distance, the Burkes, Grania, and Mairgret watch the filling of Seamus' grave. Owen leans against a rock, looking at the sea.

Grania crosses to Owen. She looks up at him solemnly.

OWEN

That dress your mother's wearing.
From the Martine, the cloth came.
How do I tell her that?

Grania takes his hand.

OWEN

It was a good raid, quick and
clean. I saw no need to harm the
crew. And they kill my only son.

Grania puts her small arms around him. He breaks, crying.

In the distance Mairgret turns and watches.

OWEN

What shall I do, without my son?

Mairgret's face hardens. She turns away. The Burkes follow her. Richard looks back over his shoulder.

INT. CLARE CASTLE CHILDREN'S ROOM- NIGHT

Grania in her bed. Mairgret sits beside her. There is another pallet where Seamus slept.

GRANIA

Why do you hate Da?

MAIRGRET

Get some sleep.

GRANIA

Do you not love him anymore?

Mairgret pauses- she's asked herself the same question.

MAIRGRET

I do. But it's a hard world,
Grania. You marry a man, you live
the life he chooses. And sometimes
you don't agree.

GRANIA

Then I won't marry.

Mairgret smiles at Grania's determined expression.

MAIRGRET

Not even to have a man as fine and
loving as your Da?

Grania shakes her head fiercely. Mairgret smiles again.

MAIRGRET

Goodnight, Grania.

Mairgret turns. Her eyes fall on Seamus' pallet. She covers
her mouth. Grania reaches for her hand.

GRANIA

Don't cry.

MAIRGRET

No. Goodnight.

Mairgret leaves. Grania gazes at her brother's empty bed.

DISSOLVE TO:

EXT. CLEW BAY- DAY (FLASHBACK)

Sunlight sparkles on water. A small skiff rocks on the
waves. Seamus tries to guide Grania's hands as she fishes.
She elbows him in the ribs.

SEAMUS

He'll get away!

GRANIA

No he won't. I can do it, Seamus.

Grania fights to land the fish. She loses it. Her face is
stricken. Seamus laughs.

SEAMUS

Come on, Grannie, tis only a fish.
Here, help me row.

Grania climbs onto his lap. She folds her tiny hands over his. He rows. She points.

GRANIA

Seamus! Look at that!

A great bird wheels overhead, dives toward the water.
Seamus gives an admiring whistle.

SEAMUS

That's an albatross, that is. From
the great northern ocean he comes,
like one of those gods of the
Vikings. Look at him fish. He
knows the sea like he owns it.

GRANIA

He's beautiful.

SEAMUS

Aye, he is. I bet he doesn't lose
his catch.

Grania elbows him again.

GRANIA

Seamus!

SEAMUS

You'll do as well, when you've had
as much practice as he. We'd best
be getting back.

GRANIA

Not yet.

SEAMUS

The wind's picking up. Can you not
feel it?

Grania shakes her head.

SEAMUS

Well, you'll have to learn to now
won't you, if you're to be a great

seafaring pirate like Seamus
O'Malley?

Grania nods absently, her eyes still fixed on the enormous white bird.

END FLASHBACK.
DISSOLVE TO:

INT. CHILDREN'S ROOM- NIGHT

Grania rolls over and gazes out the window at the dark sky.

GRANIA
Seamus?

She hears a NOISE below. Grania kneels on her bed, looks down. Waves crash at the base of the wall on which Owen stands, head bowed. He looks lost, broken, like a ship shattered on a foreign shore.

Grania's little chin hardens. She goes to Seamus' chest, opens it, takes out an outgrown shift.

INT. STAIRWAY-

Grania sneaks down the dark stone steps, Seamus' clothes in her arms. The castle is silent around her.

INT. KITCHEN-

Grania takes a knife. Something CLATTERS to the floor. She freezes, listening, then lets herself out the door.

EXT. CLARE CASTLE-

The small door opens. Grania peers out. She scans the area and runs to a cattle shed.

INT. SHED-

Cows low as she enters, then drop their heads back to their hay. Grania sheds her shift. Awkwardly wielding the knife, she cuts off the great mass of her hair. She picks up her brother's clothing and kisses it. She dresses.

INT. SHED- DAY

A HERDSMAN opens the door. Early morning sunlight falls on two cows, lying down with Grania asleep between them.

HERDSMAN

What are you doing in here?

Grania wakes, startled. She stares at the man.

HERDSMAN

Get along with you, lad. Go home
and take whatever punishment's
coming.

Grania grins radiantly at the word 'lad'.

GRANIA

Aye!

She runs out. The man shakes his head, clucks to the cattle.

EXT. CLARE ISLAND- DAY

Grania pelts toward the harbor. The last longboats are loading. She grabs a sack of supplies, staggers under the weight. She boldly strides past Liam, drops the sack in a boat and climbs in, jostling ROBERT, 13.

ROBERT

Hey, watch what you're doing!
Numbwit.

LIAM

Owen, we'll miss the tide!

Grania looks back, sees Owen striding down the sand. She whips forward. The boat rocks.

LIAM

Shove off!

The longboat puts to sea. HUGH, 11, steadies Grania.

HUGH

Careful, there. First time at sea,
is it?

GRANIA

No.

Hugh looks at her speculatively.

HUGH

Just look sharp and do as they
tell you. You'll do fine.

Mairgret watches the last boat load, her expression hard.
Owen goes to her.

OWEN

Will you not wish me farewell,
then?

MAIRGRET

What do you care what I wish?

OWEN

We'll need the Spanish markets now
more than ever.

MAIRGRET

If you'd pay the taxes, they'd not
close Galway against us.

OWEN

I'll not pay taxes to the English
on my own land!

MAIRGRET

Aye, you'll do what you like, Owen
O'Malley, no matter what the cost!

OWEN

Mairgret...

She glares at him, unyielding. Owen drops his gaze, turns
away. Liam crosses to her.

LIAM

Will you give him nothing?

MAIRGRET

Bring him back safe to me, Liam.

LIAM

I always do.

Liam heaves the last longboat to sea and leaps aboard.

The men board ship, weigh anchor. A gust of wind fills the sail and takes the ship out of harbor.

EXT. O'MALLEY SHIP'S DECK- NIGHT

Grania crouches behind some barrels. She peeks out at her father and the sailors, eating supper. She bites her lip, wraps herself into a ball, shivers, closes her eyes.

EXT. O'MALLEY SHIP'S DECK- DAY

The ship's boys do chores under Liam's watchful gaze. Owen calls Liam to the stern of the ship. Grania sneaks out, squats next to Hugh.

HUGH

Where've you been?

Grania shrugs. She picks up a needle, sews. Liam returns. Her fingers fumble.

LIAM

Have you never mended sail, lad?

He takes the needle from her hand. She keeps her head down.

LIAM

Small stitches, and double back,
like this. You've not sailed with
me before. What's your name, then?

Grania sits in momentary panic. The boys stare.

LIAM

Are you deaf? Who told you to
board this ship? Your name, lad,
now!

He grabs her chin, pulls her face up, and gasps.

LIAM

Are you daft, girl? Your father's
got more than enough to worry him.
(quietly)
I cannot protect you onboard ship.

GRANIA

Tis my own choice to be here.

LIAM

God help you, then. Captain!

Owen bellows back and crosses. Wordlessly, Liam pushes her forward. Grania stands, chin out-thrust. Owen looks at her, then back across the sea. The ocean stretches behind them.

OWEN

Turn around, Grania.

Owen takes off his belt. He whips her, three heavy blows. Grania winces silently.

OWEN

Face me, then.

She turns around.

OWEN

I cannot take you back. You'll live as the lads do, since you've such a hunger for it, do their work, sleep where they sleep. Do you understand?

GRANIA

Yes, Da.

OWEN

No. On board this ship, I am your Captain. Disobey your Da, and you'll be whipped. Disobey your Captain... Go.

She scurries aside. The ship's boys draw away, staring at her with something very near hatred.

OWEN

Make sure by the time we land she'd rather burn in hell than set foot on a ship again.

LIAM

Aye. Make an O'Malley hate the sea. Shall I just swim to Spain for you, Owen?

Owen glares and returns to the helm.

EXT. DECK- NIGHT

Owen leans against the rail, looking more desolate than the gray water around him.

Grania approaches cautiously.

GRANIA

Da?

He keeps his gaze on the endless waves.

OWEN

Do you know what this will do to your mother? She'll think she's lost you both.

GRANIA

I didn't... It's for Seamus I'm doing this, Da! And you.

OWEN

It's for your own self you're doing it. Get out of my sight. And you'll not call me Da again.

GRANIA

Yes... Captain.

EXT. DECK- NIGHT

Grania lays on the deck, shivering. The ship's boys lie wrapped in blankets among coils of rope and barrels.

Grania looks at Robert. He meets her gaze coldly, then turns over. She rolls onto her back, stares at the stars.

HUGH

Are you awake?

Grania nods.

HUGH

Did you bring nothing with you?

She shakes her head. He makes room under his blanket.

HUGH

Here.

She moves next to him.

GRANIA
What's your name?

HUGH
Hugh.

GRANIA
Thank you, Hugh.

HUGH
I just can't stand the thought of
a wee mite like you shivering half
the night. Go to sleep now.

GRANIA
Hugh? Do you believe in heaven?

HUGH
Sure, and all the saints. Why, you
can see it right there, all the
stars glittering like Mary's own
tears.

ROBERT
Some of us would like to sleep.

GRANIA
(whispers)
Aye. You can.

She looks up at them, comforted.

EXT. DECK- DAY

Grania struggles to coil a hank of heavy rope. She drops
the hank, gets herself tangled and falls. Boys laugh, then
shut up at a look from Liam. Grimly, Grania gathers the
rope up, starts again.

LATER-

The boys stand along the deck, lashing the main sail.
Grania copies their motions. The wind rips the sail from
her hands.

ROBERT
Watch it!

A rope WHIPS at her, leaving a red weal on her arm. She gasps. Robert shoves her aside, lashes the sail.

ROBERT

Some sailor. Why didn't you stay home?

EXT. DECK- NIGHT

Grania asleep with Hugh, her hands cracked and bleeding from the day's work. Owen passes, glances at her, moves on.

A WIND rises. The mast creaks ominously. Liam approaches.

LIAM

Do you think we'll skirt it?

Too late- the storm is upon them. Men leap to their posts. The wind ROARS and veers, keeling the ship dangerously. Grania and the boys waken to thunder and confusion.

OWEN

Coming about!

LIAM

Coming about!

Owen shoves the tiller. Men duck as the boom swings wildly. A sudden sheet of rain falls hard on the crew.

OWEN

Down the sail!

LIAM

Down the sail!

Sailors release halyards. Boys leap to lash the sail as it is reefed. Grania tries to help.

ROBERT

Out of the way, useless!

Robert knocks her aside. She falls into a sailor. His hands slip from the rope holding the boom.

A gust of wind grabs the sail, swings the boom into Robert, tumbles him half over the side. Grania grabs his shirt, holds on for dear life. She screams at the nearest boy.

GRANIA

Help me! Hold him!

Two boys seize Robert, heave him aboard.

Men grab for the wildly swinging boom. The loose halyard whips like a snake across the water-slick deck. Grania squints her eyes against the rain, dives at the rope. It pulls her across the deck. She hangs on grimly.

A sailor grabs it from her, pulls it tight. Other sailors beat at the sail, lashing it. Slowly the ship is brought under control.

Grania kneels on the deck, panting, hair matted to her face. Owen appears out of the pelting rain. Grania looks up. His face is harder than Spanish steel. He turns away.

The boys watch her with silent compassion. Robert gives her a look of frank gratitude. Liam watches from a distance.

EXT. DECK- DAY

The boys swing into the rigging to help with storm repairs. Grania watches them, desire obvious on her face.

LIAM

Well?

She looks at him, wary but hopeful.

LIAM

Go on.

Like a monkey she shinnies up the mast and climbs into the rigging. Liam smiles. Owen sees her and grabs Liam.

OWEN

Are you out of your mind?

LIAM

Look at her, Owen. She's an O'Malley true. And you're the only one who won't see it.

Owen turns away, his face hard.

IN THE RIGGING-

Grania works next to TEAGAN, 50s.

TEAGAN

No, lass. Over first, then back.
See?

GRANIA

Aye. What's your name?

TEAGAN

Teagan it is.

GRANIA

(indicating the ocean)
It's beautiful.

TEAGAN

That it is, lass. That it is.

EXT. DECK- NIGHT

Owen, Liam, and sailors, Teagan among them, squat in a pool of light from a lantern. They throw dice. An enormous night sky hovers over them. Waves lap against the ship's hull.

Grania and the boys watch at the edge of the light. They joke among themselves. Owen groans over a bad throw.

LIAM

Give away any more of Mairgret's
sheep and it's a cold bed you'll
be sleeping in on your return.

Owen glares at him, throws again and loses. The dice pass to Teagan. He throws and collects a coin from Owen.

OWEN

I've no luck tonight.

TEAGAN

You need a charm, Captain.

OWEN

What's yours, then?

TEAGAN

Grania! Come here.

Grania goes to him. Teagan rubs her sheared head, getting laughs from the crew. He tosses and wins again. Owen growls.

OWEN

This is no sport for a lass.

LIAM

Why not? Grania! Think you can toss?

GRANIA

I've nothing to wager.

OWEN

(to Liam, muttered)

You're not the one that has to live with her mother.

(to Grania)

Here, then.

Owen gives Grania a coin. A sailor pulls out a knife.

SAILOR

I've got a good knife says a wee lass can't beat me.

OWEN

Well? Go on then.

She scowls and tosses the dice.

EXT. DECK- DAY

Grania guts a fish with her new knife. Owen walks by. Grania grins at him. He frowns at her, then grins.

OWEN

Your mother will never forgive me.

The LOOKOUT calls down.

LOOKOUT (ALOFT)

Sail ho!

OWEN

Bearing?

LOOKOUT

To starboard, Captain. Riding low
and flying English colors!

Owen raises a spyglass. His face darkens.

OWEN
Raise the sail!

LIAM
Raise the sail!

The boys swing to the deck. Grania follows, helps feed out
The sails as sailors pull them aloft. The ship gains speed.
Grania grins, enjoying the ship's swiftness.

HUGH
You'd best hide, Grania.

The ship gains fast on the English trader. Owen shouts.
A cannon ROARS.

GRANIA
What is he doing? Da!

HUGH
No, Grania!

He grabs her, shoves her in between some barrels.

HUGH
Now stay there!

Cannons BOOM. Grania crouches behind a barrel, steadying
herself as the ship shudders. Wood SQUEALS against wood as
the ships collide.

Grania peers out, sees the English ship foundering, water
flooding the hole in her side. ENGLISH SAILORS leap onto
Owen's ship, fighting furiously. Grania's eyes widen.
Swords CLASH as men fight hand-to-hand.

Teagan goes down under an opponent's attack. Hugh runs to
help him. The SAILOR stabs Hugh, knocks him over the side.

GRANIA
Hugh!

Grania leaps onto the sailor's back, plunges her knife in-
once, twice, again. He throws her off, spins around, raises
his sword.

Owen stabs him from behind. The sailor looks at the blade
protruding from his stomach, and drops.

Gasping, Grania looks from the body to Owen.

OWEN

Come.

She follows Owen. Crewmen stand guard over the remaining
English sailors.

OWEN

What shall we do with them?

GRANIA

Do?

OWEN

You. Tell her the name of your
ship.

The SAILOR glares. Owen holds a knife to his throat.

OWEN

Your ship.

ENGLISH SAILOR

Martine.

OWEN

Last port?

ENGLISH SAILOR

Galway.

Grania beats at him, her small fists flailing.

GRANIA

You! You killed Seamus! You
English bastard!

The sailor knocks her away. Owen stabs him. He falls to his
knees. Grania climbs back to her feet. Owen looks at her.

GRANIA

Kill them.

Liam nods. Owen jerks his head toward the water. His men push the sailors toward the side.

Resolutely, Grania stares ahead as the ship comes about. The sailors' screams fade slowly behind. Tears stream down her cheeks.

LIAM

Shall I...

OWEN

What? Take it away? Would you bring Seamus back from the dead? You can't.

LIAM

She's just a wee girl, Owen.

OWEN

No more she's not. Leave her be.

EXT. DECK- EVENING

As the sun sets, the crew prepares to give their dead an ocean burial. The SHIP'S CHANTER sings.

The sailors lift a body, wrapped in a shroud. Grania reaches to help. They lower the body, allowing Grania to help bear the burden, slip it over the side.

Hugh's blanket wrapped around her, Grania stands at the rail. The knife she won hangs at her waist. Owen puts his hands on her shoulders.

GRANIA

Is this how it is, then?

OWEN

It's what the O'Malleys do.

GRANIA

You let them go, last time.

OWEN

It's custom, to spare the crew.

GRANIA

Good. You'll teach me to fight.

OWEN

Not I. Liam's the one to learn from.

OWEN (CONT'D.)

It's many a time he's saved my life. But you'll have no brother at your back.

GRANIA

So I must fight even better.

EXT. DECK- DAY

The ship heaves on the waves. Superimposed on the shot:

NINE YEARS LATER

The ship approaches Clare Island. Sailors cheer Grania on.

TEAGAN

Come on, Grania! Keep your guard up!

Liam reels back, fending off a flurry of blows.

SAILOR

That's it, lass!

Grania, now 17, pierces Liam's guard, taps his ribs. Her hair, long grown out, falls loose over her shoulders.

Liam groans, falls to the deck. Sailors laugh, pay off bets.

LIAM

It's slain I am, sure!

GRANIA

Again?

LIAM

Haven't you killed me enough times for one day?

She helps him up. Owen calls from the helm.

OWEN

Grania!

She turns. He points. An English ship sits at anchor.

OWEN

Take the helm.

Mairgret waits on the beach. LIEUTENANT BRIGGS stands near her. Thirty ENGLISH SOLDIERS stand between them and the clan. Solemn faces watch Grania bring the ship into harbor.

GRANIA

What do you think, Da?

OWEN

I don't know.

EXT. HARBOR- DAY

Owen climbs out of the longboat. Grania follows. Owen hugs Mairgret, whispers in her ear.

OWEN

Are you all right?

Mairgret nods. Lieutenant Briggs steps forward.

BRIGGS

Chieftain Owen O'Malley?

OWEN

Aye.

BRIGGS

Lieutenant Briggs. You are aware, sir, of the tax act passed by the late King Henry...

OWEN

I am no sir.

BRIGGS

My apologies. Still, it is my duty to inform you that King Edward has signed a new act. All foreign trade to Ireland is now to be levied a tariff of ten percent. I am here to collect it.

GRANIA

Da...

Owen motions for her to be silent. The soldiers face off against the sailors, standing with hands on hilts.

BRIGGS

Shall we make this as pleasant as possible?

OWEN

Do what you must.

Owen signals his men to stand aside. The soldiers loot the longboats. They load the goods into their longboat.

BRIGGS

This does not however discharge the land tax still due. I will expect you in Galway before the end of the month. Or I will be forced to send another expedition.

As Briggs climbs into the longboat-

BRIGGS

From what I've seen here, you can well afford to pay it. I'd suggest you do.

INT. CLARE CASTLE GREAT ROOM- NIGHT

Grania, Owen, Mairgret, Liam all around the table.

MAIRGRET

You will pay it, Owen O'Malley.

GRANIA

But they've no right!

OWEN

And what does that change?

(to Liam)

How many soldiers in Galway now?

LIAM

Over two hundred, the last I heard.

OWEN

That many? I'll not risk the lives
of my clan over a few hundred
crowns.

(He grins)

Not when it's so easy to come by.

MAIRGRET

You're a reckless fool, Owen
O'Malley.

OWEN

And tell me that's not why you
love me.

She glowers at him. Grania grins. Liam rolls his eyes as
Owen kisses Mairgret lustily.

EXT. FRENCH SHIP'S DECK- DAY

A strongbox sits on the deck. An axe smashes the lock.

The FRENCH CAPTAIN protests till Liam holds a sword to him.
Grania holds open a sack. Owen takes a double handful of
coins, dumps them in, but leaves the rest.

EXT. O'MALLEY SHIP'S DECK- DAY

Sailors hang from the rigging, BAYING like hunting dogs.
Grania grins. Empty ocean as far as the eye can see- except
for one overburdened trader. They close in.

INT. CLARE CASTLE GREAT ROOM- NIGHT

Grania stacks coins and puts them in a box. She locks it.

GRANIA

That's it, then.

LIAM

And all the captains between here
and Sligo will sleep easier
tonight.

GRANIA

I'm going with you. I want to see
these Englishmen.

Owen looks doubtful.

MAIRGRET

You'll take her raiding ships,
Owen.

OWEN

All right!

EXT. GALWAY WEST GATE- DAY

Grania, Liam, and Owen ride slowly through the city gates. Grania reads a carved inscription above the gate- 'From the mighty O'Flaherties, the saints preserve us.'

GRANIA

What's that, Da?

Owen looks up at it. He chuckles.

OWEN

That's been there since before I was born. The O'Flaherties are fighters, lass, the way O'Malleys are sailors. Born and bred to it.

(To Liam)

I wonder how Lieutenant Briggs did, collecting tax from them?

LIAM

I could almost feel sorry for the man.

They ride through the city. Commerce contrasts with poverty in the streets around them.

INT. ENGLISH HEADQUARTERS, GALWAY- DAY

Soldiers stand alert along the wall. Lieutenant Briggs sits at a table. Owen and Liam stand, with Grania behind them.

BRIGGS

You do have the option of submitting to the Crown. All chieftains who pledge their loyalty to the Crown are permitted to hold their lands free of tax.

Owen doesn't answer.

BRIGGS

Very well, then.

Owen, Liam, and Grania turn to go.

BRIGGS

Chieftain O'Malley. There have been a number of reports of piracy over the past few weeks.

Owen turns back to Briggs.

OWEN

And?

BRIGGS

An Irish ship, the traders say. And the oddest thing is they report a girl among the crew, a girl dressed as a man. Is this your daughter?

Briggs crosses to Grania.

BRIGGS

What a lovely creature. You must be very proud of her, O'Malley.

Owen remains stone-faced.

BRIGGS

You may go.

EXT. GALWAY MARKET- DAY

Owen and Liam weave through the crowded stalls. Grania walks ahead, entranced by the bustling market.

LIAM

Submit to a twelve year old king, indeed.

OWEN

What am I to do with her, Liam? She can't stay at sea forever.

They look at Grania. She stands out amid the swirling crowds like a diamond among pebbles.

At a stall, IRISH GIRLS serve beer to ENGLISH SOLDIERS.

Behind the stall a QUARREL breaks out between RORY O'FLAHERTY, 50s, hard and seasoned as an ash bow, and PADDY JOYCE, of similar age, cunning rather than strong.

RORY

Have you no pride, man? Putting your clan's own daughters on display for those English pigs!

PADDY

If there's money to be made off the English, why shouldn't we?

RORY

You're a bloody fool.

PADDY

I'm less a fool than you. Your pride will be the death of you, Rory O'Flaherty, you and all your headstrong clan.

Rory looks ready to swing a heavy fist, but the quarrel has attracted the attention of the soldiers.

RORY

I'll have my eye on you, Paddy.

Rory stalks off.

OWEN

Rory!

Rory looks back at Owen, jerks his head. The soldiers watch as he saunters away. Owen, Liam, and Grania follow. They turn a corner. Rory sweeps Owen into a bear hug.

RORY

Owen O'Malley! You fish. How are you? Is this your lass, then? Grania, is it?

GRANIA

Aye.

OWEN

What was that about?

RORY

Oh, just Paddy Joyce and his spineless ways. It's bad enough putting up with the English, without treating them like they've the right to be here...

GRANIA

Aye, but will fighting with The Joyce make them leave?

Rory cocks a surprised eyebrow.

RORY

Is she always this outspoken?

Owen grimaces. Grania throws him a look, moves to a nearby stall. She looks over the wares. Rory looks her over.

RORY

What brings you to Galway?

OWEN

Paying their bloody tax.

RORY

You didn't!

OWEN

We've not the men to fight them.

RORY

Ah, they're a nuisance. Do you know, that Briggs sent thirty men to my castle at Ballinach?

LIAM

And what happened?

RORY

(far too innocent)

I've no idea. They never arrived. And no one's seen them since.

Owen laughs. Rory looks over at Grania.

RORY

She's a handsome lass, Owen. Quick?

OWEN

As a whip.

Rory chuckles at the chagrin in Owen's tone.

RORY

I think Donal may be coming to visit you soon. He's a strong lad, but... he needs a woman with sense. He's got little enough of his own.

OWEN

He's welcome any time, Rory. As you are yourself.

Rory leaves. Liam raises an eyebrow.

OWEN

Can you think of anyone better?

LIAM

What about Richard?

OWEN

Richard Burke brought my son home dead. He'll not come near my daughter.

INT. CLARE CASTLE GREAT ROOM- NIGHT

Members of the clan sit around the long table. Candles and platters line its length. A PIPER plays a soft air.

Grania sneaks curious glances at DONAL O'FLAHERTY, 30, Rory's son and heir. CURRAN and CASEY, Donal's younger brothers, stand behind his chair like guards.

DONAL

The Joyce has submitted to the English.

OWEN

All the more need for the rest of us to stand firm. Grania! What do you think of our guest? Is he not a great strong man?

The women giggle.

GRANIA

Aye. He looks it.

OWEN

Would you have him as husband,
then?

Grania is thunderstruck. She struggles to recover herself.

GRANIA

I'd no thought of marriage.

DONAL

Then you'd best think of it now.

Mairgret hisses in her ear.

MAIRGRET

Don't be a fool.

GRANIA

Da, I...

She stands abruptly and flees the room. Donal is shocked.

DONAL

Did you teach her no manners at
all?

Mairgret motions to Owen to go after Grania. He pushes to
his feet. Liam looks disapproving, but keeps his silence.

EXT. CLARE CASTLE- NIGHT

Grania looks down to the harbor. Owen comes out.

OWEN

How dare you shame me like that?

GRANIA

I don't even know him, Da!

OWEN

And what does that matter? He'll
be The O'Flaherty one day.

GRANIA

So?

OWEN

I have no son! There'll be none to
lead the clan after I die.

GRANIA

I'll lead them.

OWEN

You will not!

GRANIA

They obey me at sea.

OWEN

That's different, and you know it!
Already in the east they're
throwing the Irish off their own
lands!

GRANIA

But Da...

OWEN

I have given Donal my answer.

GRANIA

You... You didn't even ask! You gave
me away like I was nothing at all!

OWEN

You are a chieftain's daughter.
Now act like one.

INT. CLARE ABBEY- DAY

Candles burn on the altar. The PRIEST chants in Latin.
Grania and Donal kneel. He places a ring on her finger.
Curran and Casey stand, as always, just behind their
brother.

EXT. CLARE HARBOR- DAY

Donal and Liam load two cows into a barge. Owen approaches.

OWEN

Grania. We do what we must.

GRANIA

Aye. Captain.

She turns away.

EXT. SHIP'S DECK- DAY

Grania stands in the bow, still in her wedding dress. She does not look back.

EXT. ROAD- NIGHT

Grania glances about as the cart passes cottages. They're little more than hovels. Sullen O'FLAHERTY CLANSFOLK watch as they pass.

Ahead looms a huge stone slab of a castle. WARRIORS patrol its walls.

EXT. BUNOWEN CASTLE COURTYARD- NIGHT

The gates CREAK open. Silent WOMEN unload the cart.

DONAL

(To the brothers)

Water the horses.

(To Grania)

Come.

INT. BUNOWEN CASTLE GREAT ROOM- NIGHT

Donal pushes the door open. A low fire flickers in the great room. Shadows dance over racks of spears.

Donal pins Grania against the wall, kisses her. She tries to push away. He ignores her, runs his hands up her front.

GRANIA

Not here! Not like this, for God's sake!

DONAL

Why not?

(beat)

All right then.

He grips her arm tightly and pulls her up the stairs.

INT. DONAL'S BEDCHAMBER- NIGHT

Donal lays in bed. Grania sits at the window, gazing out.

DONAL

Come to bed.

GRANIA

It hurts.

DONAL

It'll stop soon enough. I was... I was rough.

He crosses to her, puts his hands on her shoulders.

DONAL

You'll be a good mother, Grania.
We'll have sons...

Gently, he leads her to the bed. Despite his attempts, she feels no response. Trapped under him, she winces silently.

INT. BUNOWEN CASTLE KITCHEN- DAY

Grania rakes a brush violently across the great hearth, her arms coated in soot. Under her direction, AILEEN, 26, SIOFRA, 16, and other WOMEN scour away years of grime.

SIOFRA

Donal'll not like your changing things.

GRANIA

Never you mind. Where is he?

SIOFRA

Hunting, most like. It was a poor harvest last fall. The men bring in what meat they can.

Grania looks up, surprised.

GRANIA

Have you no livestock?

AILEEN

Aye, such as it is. We had to kill most of the yearlings this winter past.

GRANIA

Why did you not slaughter the old ones?

AILEEN

Donal does not care for tough meat.

GRANIA

Donal is a fool.

A shocked silence. Aileen grins sourly. Grania takes a deep breath.

GRANIA

Show me the livestock. And three of you, get baskets.

EXT. BUNOWEN CASTLE- DAY

An air of disrepair and neglect. Fields lie untended. Matty sheep BLEAT in rickety pens. Women gather cattails nearby. Grania points at a sheep.

GRANIA

That one.

The HERDSMAN prods a old ewe into the pen, ropes it. Grania kneels by the sheep and slits its throat.

INT. BUNOWEN CASTLE GREAT ROOM- NIGHT

Candles gleam, reflecting in newly polished wood. A fire roars on the hearth. CLANSFOLK stand in knots, murmuring.

Donal enters with the HUNTING PARTY, including GLENN, 24. Donal stops, aghast. His face flushes red.

Grania and the women enter from the kitchen, bearing trays of steaming food. Two men carry a great platter of meat.

DONAL

What is this? What is this?

Siofra drops a dish. The room goes silent.

GRANIA

It's your wedding feast, to be sure, Donal.

Donal's face darkens further.

CASEY

I told you an O'Malley'd be more trouble than she's worth.

DONAL

Shut up, Casey. You'll not change things without my permission, woman!

GRANIA

Sure and you have no time to bother with every detail of running a household. There's more to having a wife than a warm bed, you know.

The men laugh appreciatively. Women giggle. Curran frowns.

GRANIA

Now here is all your clan, waiting to toast their chieftain. Will you not come raise a glass, Donal?

The clansfolk cheer, calling "Donal, Donal!" Flustered and furious but flattered, Donal takes the goblet she offers.

DONAL

You've met her already, but I give you my wife, Grania O'Flaherty!

More cheers. Casey and Curran look thunderous.

DONAL

Now let's see if she can cook.

EXT. BUNOWEN CASTLE- DAY (ONE MONTH LATER)

Grania kneels on a cottage roof, laying sheaves of thatch with COLIN, 27 and his brother, MICHAEL. Below, Aileen scrubs laundry in a tub, joking with the other women. MERIEL, 4, and other children run among the cottages.

AILEEN

Slow down, Meriel!

COLIN

Let her run, Aileen.

AILEEN

And you're no help, Colin
O'Flaherty, the way you spoil that
lass.

Grania laughs. She looks up. A HERDSMAN approaches, leading
two oxen. She climbs down to meet him.

Grania inspects the oxen, running her hands down their
legs, checking their hooves. She nods and hands him coins.

OLDER WOMAN

Are you going to plow the fields
all by yourself, then?

GRANIA

It's no trick at all. The oxen do
most of the work. I'll be happy to
show you how.

The women groan, laughing. They've obviously taken to her.

Donal storms out of the castle, his face full of thunder.
Curran and Casey follow one step behind.

The clansfolk fall silent. Grania turns.

DONAL

No more!

CASEY

I told you, Donal.

GRANIA

The fields must be planted, Donal.

DONAL

What good is it if we've no fields
to plant? Paddy Joyce has seized
half my father's land!

GRANIA

How well will your warriors fight
with empty bellies?

Donal slaps her, snapping her head to the side.

DONAL

You're not on an island any more,
girl. You know nothing about it.

Grania's jaw clenches. Curran laughs. Grania whirls and runs to a horse, leaps on and rides away.

EXT. BEACH- DAY

Grania tumbles from the horse and wades into the water. Bitter tears run down her cheeks.

GRANIA

Da! Oh, Da.

She turns away, dispirited, leads the horse up the beach. Her eyes catch something.

She breaks into a run.

On the beach is the hull of a ship, neglected but still stout. Grania runs her hands along the weathered wood.

INT. BUNOWEN CASTLE GREAT ROOM- NIGHT

A sullen fire flickers on the hearth. Donal and his men stand around the long table, studying a map. Grania enters.

GRANIA

I'll not interfere with your clan
any more. Nor your fields. Nor
your house.

DONAL

The Burkes will join us. A hundred
men they've promised. My father
will lead the horse.

GRANIA

There is an old ship, on your
beach. I want it.

CURRAN

Pirates all, the O'Malleys.

Donal glances at him. Curran shuts up.

GRANIA

I can bring in fish. Smoked,
they'll keep for months. And
they're light to carry.

GLENN

We must have supplies, Donal.

Donal turns away. Grania waits, then goes up the stairs.

INT. DONAL'S BEDCHAMBER- NIGHT

Donal climbs into bed, reaches for Grania. She pulls away.

DONAL

You'll not defy me tonight!

He pushes up her shift.

GRANIA

Give me my ship.

Donal grabs her. Grania crosses her legs. He hits her. She
grabs the knife from beneath her pillow and holds it
against his chest, or lower.

Donal freezes. Stalemate.

GRANIA

Give me my ship and you can do
whatever you like.

Donal stares at her like she's grown hooves. Then he
laughs.

DONAL

Why not? You'll never get it to
sea.

She throws the knife with deadly accuracy into the wall. He
takes his part of the bargain fiercely, and in silence.

EXT. BEACH- DAY

Grania, Aileen, Siofra and a handful of women carry
supplies toward the beach.

AILEEN

And did you see the look on his face? You've no idea how to handle a man, Grania.

GRANIA

Are they made of glass, then, that we need to be so careful?

SIOFRA

I'm going to marry a man who loves me just the way I am.

AILEEN

Oh, are you, now? Who is this paragon, Siofra? It wouldn't be a certain Glenn O'Flaherty you've been making eyes at?

OLDER WOMAN

He's as long as a spear, that one, with a willie to match.

Siofra blushes. The women laugh. They top the rise. The derelict ship lies before them. They fall silent, staring.

AILEEN

She's mad.

SIOFRA

Do you think it'll float, Grania?

GRANIA

It'll float.

Her eyes gleam. The women look dubious.

EXT. BUNOWEN CASTLE COURTYARD- NIGHT

Arms lie in piles. BLACKSMITHS hammer at their anvils, sending sparks flying. FARRIERS shoe neighing horses.

Rory O'Flaherty rides through the gate. O'FLAHERTY WARRIORS march behind him, carrying torches. Donal comes out.

RORY

It looks well. You're ready, then?

DONAL

Aye.

RORY

Where's your wild O'Malley wife?

Donal scowls. Rory raises an eyebrow.

RORY

She's not a bit of livestock,
Donal.

Donal stomps sullenly into the castle. Rory sighs.

EXT. BEACH- DAY

The hull is complete, if unlovely. The women heave at levers. Siofra shouts at the oxen, tugs on their halters. They flip the ship over onto rollers.

The women roll the ship into the ocean with a splash. It stays afloat. They look amazed, then cheer. Grania wipes sweat from her face, nods once.

INT. BUNOWEN CASTLE GREAT ROOM- NIGHT

Grania and the women sew sails. Aileen spins wool. The men gather around Donal and Rory, laying battle plans. Colin winks solemnly at Aileen. She winks back. Grania smiles.

RORY

It's a clan matter. The English
will not get involved.

CASEY

Aye, not till it suits them.

Rory gives his youngest son a cold stare.

CASEY

Is it afraid you are?

DONAL

Shut your mouth, Casey.

CASEY

I will not!

Rory BANGS the table with a heavy fist.

RORY

I've no fear of the English, as
you know full well. But we will
take our battles one at a time.

A SHOUT goes up outside.

WARRIOR (O.S.)

The Burke! The Burke is here!

Richard Burke, now 27, strides in, followed by BURKE
WARRIORS. He extends an arm to Rory, who clasps it.

RICHARD

As you stood by my father, now I
stand by you and yours. Donal.

Donal nods back.

RORY

The Burke was a good man. I was
grieved to hear of your loss.

RICHARD

What news of...

He sees Grania and trails off. Donal bristles a bit.

RICHARD

I know you.

DONAL

My wife. Grania of the O'Malleys.

RICHARD

Grania.

(beat)

And how is your father? I've not
seen him in many years.

GRANIA

I know.

An old grief crosses Richard's face.

RICHARD

Do you remember me, then?

GRANIA

I do. You were... kind.

DONAL
Get the drink.

INT. KITCHEN- NIGHT

Grania fills a pitcher, puts it on a tray. She cracks open the door and peers out at Richard. Then she enters.

EXT. BUNOWEN CASTLE COURTYARD- DAY

Men and horses, ready for battle. Meriel runs to her father. Colin tousles her hair, kisses Aileen passionately.

COLIN
Be a good lass and help your
mother. We'll be back soon.

Donal and Richard on horses. Grania stands, arms folded.

DONAL
Will you not give us a kiss
farewell?

He heaves her up like a sack of potatoes, kisses her. Richard looks away. Grania's face burns.

RORY
Are you a fool?
(to Grania)
My clan I leave in your care.

Grania studies him a moment, then nods.

RORY
Ride out!

Richard glances at Grania, then follows Rory.

EXT. JOYCE VILLAGE- DAY

Rory gazes across an empty field. Curran stands by a barn, holding a torch. He looks at Donal, who nods. Curran thrusts the torch into the thatch. Inside, terrified cattle moan.

Richard glances at Donal, swings off his horse, kicks open the door. The cattle scatter. Donal scowls.

Across the field, Joyce warriors come out of the woods, form into a line. Donal starts forward. Rory doesn't move.

DONAL

Let's get it done.

RORY

We were friends once, Paddy and I.
Did you know that?

(beat)

I don't like this. Something's not right.

DONAL

We've twice their numbers!

RORY

So why do they not surrender?

DONAL

Because they're fools. Attack!

Donal pounds straight for Paddy, his sword swinging. Paddy unseats Donal. Rory rushes against Paddy. They fight hand to hand, the battle swirling around them. Rory falls.

DONAL

Da!

He catches his father. Rory looks up at Paddy.

RORY

Paddy...

Rory dies.

DONAL

No. No!

Donal charges Paddy with murder in his eyes, screaming. From the cover of the forest, ENGLISH TROOPS ride forth.

Donal and the warriors falter, shocked.

Paddy has grace enough to look ashamed of himself. He turns aside. Donal's face hardens. With an echoing cry, he swings his sword and leaps to the attack. Richard follows.

The English charge, sweeping the warriors away.

INT. DONAL'S BEDCHAMBER- NIGHT

SOUNDS of shouting in the courtyard rouse Grania.

CURRAN (O.S.)
Will you not avenge him?

Grania runs down the stairs.

EXT. BUNOWEN CASTLE COURTYARD- NIGHT

Rory's and Donal's bodies rest on a wain. Aileen keens over the body of Colin. Other women lament their dead. Richard stands to one side. Curran rages at the unresponsive clan.

CURRAN
Do you call yourself O'Flaherty?
My father and brother lie dead.
Now I call on you to follow me and
avenge their deaths!

Grania glances around, assessing the situation.

CURRAN
I am your chieftain now!

WARRIOR
They slaughtered us like pigs,
Curran!

The crowd grumbles agreement.

CURRAN
Are you all cowards? My father was
not afraid of the English.

MICHAEL
If your father hadn't slain the
thirty that rode to Ballinach, the
English wouldn't have stood with
The Joyce!

Grania walks toward Donal's body. Casey moves to block her.

GRANIA
Will you keep me from my husband?

Richard looks at him. Casey steps back reluctantly.

CURRAN

The English have returned to Galway. We've only The Joyce to deal with. Who will ride with me?

The crowd stays silent. Desperately, Curran yells again.

CURRAN

Who will ride with me?

GRANIA

I will.

CURRAN

What?

Grania turns to the crowd.

GRANIA

The fastest way to Doona is by sea.

CURRAN

Now wait...

CASEY

You'll not...

GRANIA

Will you sail with me?

A momentary pause. The crowd is utterly still. Casey grins. Then, in one voice, the clan roars out- "Grania!"

Casey's grin falters. Curran looks shocked. Richard grins.

EXT. BEACH- NIGHT

Later. Men load the longboats. Women hand them supplies. Grania directs them. A sword hangs at her side.

RICHARD

This is not how good Irish women grieve, Grania.

GRANIA

Do I look like I'm grieving?

Richard chuckles. Curran rides up.

CURRAN

Be careful, Grania. People get
killed in battle.

Grania does not reply.

CURRAN

I lead this clan now, do you hear?

He wheels his horse, canters off.

EXT. A BEACH BELOW DOONA CASTLE- NIGHT

Grania, Richard, Glenn, and Burke warriors lie on the
ground behind bushes. SOUNDS of battle above them on the
hillside. A BOY comes skidding into their midst.

BOY

They've routed him, Grania. He's
coming.

GRANIA

Are the gates still open?

BOY

Aye. The Joyce have come forth in
all their strength.

GRANIA

Richard, up the far side of the
hill with twenty men. We'll loop
around the back and meet between
them and the gates.

RICHARD

You're mad.

GRANIA

Shall we go back to the ship,
then?

Richard sweeps his gaze over his men. One raises an
eyebrow. Richard nods to Grania.

GRANIA

Silently. Now.

The men split up. They sprint up the back of the hill as
Joyce warriors pursue Curran down the front.

Grania's men reach the castle wall. Richard's group joins them. They circle to the gates. Richard and Grania plow into the GUARDS, slaying them, enter the castle.

On the beach, Joyces encircle the O'Flaherty warriors. Paddy approaches, sword drawn. Casey falls to his knees.

GRANIA (O.S.)

Joyce!

Paddy turns. Grania stands on the castle wall. Beside her, Glenn holds Paddy's WIFE. Curran looks like he'd rather be skewered by The Joyce than be witnessing this.

GRANIA

Will you trade?

PADDY

Who in hell is that?

O'FLAHERTY WARRIOR

The Cock's hen.

GRANIA

Will you trade? A life for a life.

Paddy stares up at his terrified wife. He drops his sword. His men follow suit. The O'Flaherties gather them up.

GRANIA

Your families will join you. No harm will come to them. But this castle I will take in payment of my husband's life, and you will renounce all claim upon it. Do you accept?

JOYCE MAN

Leaves us no choice, does she.

PADDY

And if I do not?

GRANIA

Then you die where you stand.

PADDY

I accept.

GRANIA

Swear it.

PADDY

I give you my word.

Casey stares at Grania with hatred in his eyes.

EXT. DOONA CASTLE COURTYARD- NIGHT

O'Flaherty men plunder the castle. Women and frightened children leave the gates. Paddy stands watching, hands still bound. Curran saunters over and spits on him.

Grania rides a horse between the men. The horse rears.

GRANIA

He is a chieftain, Curran!

CURRAN

As am I, woman! As am I.

With a grin, he turns away. He CALLS to the men.

CURRAN

The Cock of the O'Flaherties is
avenged! Now we lay him to rest.
Home!

INT. CELL- NIGHT

Torchlight flickers on the bodies of Donal and Rory, prepared for burial. A MUTED DIN from Curran's battle celebration underscores the silence.

Grania stands in the doorway. She crosses to Rory, touches his cheek gently.

She turns to Donal. Her face hardens. She removes her wedding ring, puts it in Donal's mouth.

GRANIA

And may you choke on it.

INT. BUNOWEN CASTLE GREAT ROOM- NIGHT

The O'Flaherty men celebrate, drunk as pigs. Richard and his men watch, disgusted. Curran sits at the head of the table. Casey fondles a terrified GIRL.

Grania enters.

GRANIA

Let her go!

CASEY

Piss standing up, and I will.

Grania draws her knife. Casey stands, eager for this fight. The girl scurries out of the room.

CURRAN

Enough! Woman, you'll give no orders here.

GRANIA

Then I will leave.

CASEY

And go where?

GRANIA

Doona Castle.

CASEY

That castle belongs to the O'Flaherty!

GRANIA

It belongs to me.

CURRAN

Let her have it. She'll not hold it long.

GRANIA

And I will take my ship.

CASEY

Will you sail it all by yourself, then?

GLENN

I'll go with you.

MICHAEL

And I.

More men stand. Curran glares. Grania turns slowly, moved by this show of support.

GRANIA

We sail at dawn.

With a strangled cry of rage, Casey charges Grania, knife in hand. Richard knocks him flying. Burke warriors stand.

RICHARD

She will sail in the morning,
unharmmed. Or Burke will fight
O'Flaherty until one is dead.

EXT. DOONA CASTLE COURTYARD- DAY

Grania's ship lies at anchor. Grania and her men unload meager supplies from the boat. Richard stands beside her.

RICHARD

It's a handsome castle, Grania.
But I think you'll starve in it.

Grania darts a glance at him, her eyes unreadable.

RICHARD

You've no supplies, the harvest
isn't for months...

He groans.

RICHARD

Pirates all, the O'Malleys.

Grania grins. She heaves a sack to her shoulders and starts toward the castle. Richard walks alongside.

RICHARD

You'll do as you like, I know. But
won't you... if you wanted to... Think
about it, at least.

GRANIA

Think about what?

RICHARD

Marrying me.

Grania stops short.

GRANIA
Go home, Richard.

He turns to leave, his face wooden.

GRANIA
Richard Burke. You're a true
friend. If you ever need, call for
Grania O'Malley. She will come.

He brushes her cheek gently.

RICHARD
Aye, lass. I know it.

She looks away. He drops his hand. She turns away. He
watches her go.

EXT. DOONA CASTLE- DAY

Glenn holds the great door open for her with a teasing bow.

GLENN
My Lady of Doona.

Grania frowns at him and enters.

INT. DOONA CASTLE GREAT ROOM- DAY

Grania stands in the center of the deserted room. The
chamber is echoingly empty. Grania spins in a circle. She
laughs, hugging herself.

INT. ENGLISH HEADQUARTERS, GALWAY- DAY

Paddy Joyce argues with Lieutenant Briggs.

PADDY
The damned woman threw me out of
my own castle, and you'll not lift
a finger?

Briggs stuffs papers into a traveling case, slams it shut.

BRIGGS
It's not my choice! The regiment
has been recalled to London.

PADDY

Is this the protection the English
Crown offers its subjects?

BRIGGS

The Crown has its own troubles at
the moment, and they're a bit
larger than the concerns of some
petty chieftain who insists on
raiding his neighbor's land!

Briggs stalks toward the door, throws it open.

BRIGGS

Good day, sir.

PADDY

I submitted to you! And now you're
leaving?

BRIGGS

Precisely. Now, good day!

INT. WESTMINSTER ABBEY- DAY

Regal CORONATION MUSIC. The hem of a train, encrusted with
jewels, drags slowly across the checkerboard marble floor
of the Abbey.

Superimposed on the shot:

LONDON- 1559

ELIZABETH TUDOR, 25, approaches the high altar. Her red
hair falls loose down her back. She kneels.

The ARCHBISHOP anoints her with holy oil and seats her in
the Coronation chair, an enormous throne resting on carved
gilt lions. He sets Saint Edward's crown on her brow.

Elizabeth raises her head. Determination burns in her eyes.

EXT. DOONA HILLSIDE- DAY

Grania and Glenn sprawl on the heath, looking toward the
bay. Grania raises a spyglass.

GRANIA

There.

GLENN

I don't see it.

She hands him the spyglass and points. Glenn focuses on a proud caravel, flying an English flag. He looks at her.

GLENN

That's a warship.

GRANIA

Aye.

GLENN

They have cannon.

GRANIA

Aye.

GLENN

You're mad.

She looks at him, a schoolyard dare in her eyes. They grin, leap to their feet hollering, and pelt down to the beach.

In the longboat, Grania pulls madly for her ship which is fishing in the harbor. She and Glenn swing aboard.

GRANIA

Cast off those nets!

MICHAEL

But we've almost a full catch!

GRANIA

To your posts! Raise sail!

The ship arrows after the caravel. Eyes widen as the men see Grania's prey. They look at each other nervously.

The English ship veers, trying to swing broadside for a shot. Grania's ship swoops alongside. Grania leaps to the caravel. The ENGLISH SAILORS stand dumbstruck for one crucial second as she crashes into their midst, hair flying, sword swinging.

The O'Flaherty men grin. With a fierce battle cry, they follow.

EXT. DOONA CASTLE- DAY

Richard Burke rides toward the castle. Fat flocks of sheep bleat on the hillside around him. Stout cottages are newly thatched. Clansfolk work cheerfully in fertile fields.

He rides to the harbor, where Grania and her men unload longboats. Off to sea, a storm builds.

Grania straightens up, sees him. She waves. He dismounts.

RICHARD

You've done well.

GRANIA

Well enough.

They stand close, suppressing grins.

GRANIA

Did you see the cattle?

RICHARD

I did. And the fields, and..
Grania. It's grand.

The naked admiration in his eyes is too much. She turns back to her work, hiding her flushed cheeks.

RICHARD

You've not heard the news.

GRANIA

What news?

RICHARD

England has a new Queen. Your
father wanted me to tell you.

GRANIA

My father will speak with the man
who brought his son home dead, but
in eight years he cannot once come
to see me?

RICHARD

He misses you.

GRANIA

Then let him tell me so himself!

She strides away. Richard turns to follow. He knocks over a small barrel. Gunpowder spills out.

RICHARD

What...

He looks at the caravel in the harbor. Onboard, Glenn is just ripping down an English flag. He dumps it overboard.

Richard races up behind Grania. Thunder rumbles overhead.

RICHARD

Where did that ship come from?

She glances at him, strides on.

RICHARD

Do you have any idea how foolish that was?

She rounds on him.

GRANIA

What are you here for?

Nearby, women haul buckets of water from a spring, carry them toward the castle.

RICHARD

There's no spring inside the walls?

GRANIA

What do you want, Richard?

Rain begins falling. They glare at each other.

INT. DOONA CASTLE- NIGHT

Tapestries and furnishings reflect Grania's prosperity. Glenn sits with his arms around Siofra, who is pregnant. Richard and Grania sit by the fire. Outside, the storm beats against the castle walls.

RICHARD

I just want you to be careful.
Ireland is changing, Grania.
You're isolated here, you don't feel it.

(beat)
What would become of your people
if anything happened to you?

She glances at the men and women who follow her.

GRANIA
All right.

The door opens and Michael comes in from the storm.

MICHAEL
Grania! There's a ship laid up on
the rocks. A trader.

GRANIA
Where?

MICHAEL
Just north of the bay. Shall we go
after it?

GRANIA
Gather the men!

Richard favors her with a baleful glare.

GRANIA
Don't look at me like that. The
ship's already done for.

EXT. GALWAY- NIGHT

Horse hooves clop into thick mud. A double line of SOLDIERS
nears the gate. The GUARD calls through the pelting rain.

GUARD
Hold!

At the front of the line, a MASSIVE FIGURE shifts under a
long cloak. A great broadsword hangs at his side. His black
horse nickers. The cloaked man raises his head.

The guard motions. The gate swings open. The black horse
steps out. The soldiers follow.

EXT. BLACKSOD BAY- NIGHT

The storm HOWLS across the ocean. Caught in its teeth, a Spanish ship is being battered against the rocks. Waves pound a breach in her side. Dead bodies float in the water.

The caravel sails dangerously close to the wrecked ship. Crewmen pull salvage from the water.

Amidst the wreckage, a lone SAILOR flails at the end of his strength.

MICHAEL

There's one alive yet. God.

Grania looks at the doomed sailor, then shoves the tiller, pushing the caravel even closer. Wind whips her hair.

GLENN

It's too dangerous, Grania!

GRANIA

What if that were you? Get the net!

Sailors haul the half-drowned man from the sea.

INT. DOONA CASTLE- NIGHT

Michael shoves open the door. Richard starts to his feet. Glenn and Grania enter, supporting the rescued man between them. His shirt is torn, displaying a well-muscled torso.

Grania rips a hank from her own shirt to dab the blood from his face. Richard scowls.

GRANIA

Get him upstairs. Siofra, get bandages.

Glenn and Michael carry him upstairs. Grania rushes to the table, grabs a jug of mead. She runs upstairs without so much as a glance at Richard.

Richard stands in the suddenly empty room. He looks up the stairs. Silently he goes to the door and lets himself out.

INT. GALWAY TAVERN- NIGHT

Paddy Joyce sits at a trestle near the hearth with six of his men. He hefts his mug, stares sullenly at the fire.

At a nearby table, four Irish SAILORS laugh.

BALD SAILOR
She didn't!

SHORT SAILOR
She's got more rocks than an Irish
field.

TALL SAILOR
Aye. Took a fancy caravel right
from Her Majesty's Captain.

SHORT SAILOR
Remember how she took the Joyce's
own castle and left him standing
there with his mouth hanging open?
Like a bloody gaping fish.

BALD SAILOR
No!

SHORT SAILOR
(raising his voice)
Isn't it true, Paddy?

Paddy glowers, shoves past the men.

SHORT SAILOR
He slew the Cock, but the Hen
chased him out of his own home!

Raucous laughter chases Paddy out the door.

EXT. GALWAY STREET- NIGHT

Paddy stomps through the mud. His men huddle behind him.

PADDY
I'll be laughed at no more!

He turns a corner. The black horse rears over him,
neighing. A lantern swings wildly.

The light reveals SIR RICHARD BINGHAM, 40s. Professional
swordsman, professional soldier, killer by trade and
nature. The face of England's new policy in Ireland.

Paddy steps back.

Bingham rides on. The soldiers slog past through the rain. Paddy stares after them.

FURTHER DOWN THE STREET-

Bingham turns to his Lieutenant.

BINGHAM

The maps were aboard too, I take it.

LIEUTENANT

Yes, sir. And the gold.

BINGHAM

And the gold?

The lieutenant swallows.

BINGHAM

I want the woman who took that ship.

LIEUTENANT

Yes, sir. I'll make inquiries at once.

BINGHAM

Make inquiries? You will find her and hang her.

INT. DOONA CASTLE BEDCHAMBER- NIGHT

The rescued sailor lies in Grania's bed. Grania eases off his shirt, revealing an old scar. Siofra helps her.

SIOFRA

Have you ever seen a man so handsome?

Grania smiles noncommittally, but her hands linger on his skin. She wipes his face with a damp cloth. He mutters something incomprehensible.

SIOFRA

It's a heathen he is, for certain.

GRANIA

Hush, Siofra.

SIOFRA

What is he saying? I cannot understand a word.

GRANIA

It's Spanish. Get some soup for him.

Grania turns back to ministering to the handsome stranger. Siofra lingers at the door, smiles knowingly, closes it.

Grania washes his wounds. His hand lifts, settles over hers. His eyes open. He stares at Grania.

SAILOR

Grania?

Startled, she draws back.

GRANIA

Who are you?

He says something in Spanish. Then, haltingly-

SAILOR

I... Grania? You've grown. And your hair...

He plays with a tress. Grania pulls back.

GRANIA

Who are you?

SAILOR

Hugh.

Grania stares disbelieving. Hugh touches her cheek. His hand falls. He passes out.

She touches the scar on his chest, and leaves.

INT. DOONA CASTLE GREAT ROOM- NIGHT

Michael and Aileen sit near the fire. Grania enters.

MICHAEL

How fares your catch?

AILEEN

Whatever will she do with him,
I wonder.

Michael laughs. Grania looks at them, annoyed.

GRANIA
Where's Richard?

MICHAEL
He's gone, Grania.

Grania glances toward the stairway.

GRANIA
Oh, the bloody fool! Get my horse.

EXT. FOREST TRACK- NIGHT

Grania's horse pounds through the storm. She can just make out a form, ahead.

GRANIA
Richard!

He pauses. She canters her horse up alongside his.

GRANIA
Are you daft? Going off in weather
like this!

He rides without answering.

GRANIA
Come back, now. Be angry with me
after the storm stops.

RICHARD
At least I've sense enough to know
a storm when I feel it!

His fierceness startles her.

RICHARD
You're still on your damned
island! You must open your eyes!

In fury, he whips his horse's head around and gallops off.

GRANIA

Richard!

She rides after him.

EXT. FOREST- NIGHT

The rain pelts. Grania nods as she rides. The reins fall from her hands. Richard leaps from his horse and catches her just as she slides off.

INT. CAVE- NIGHT

Grania leans against the cavern wall, asleep.

Richard comes in, carrying the tack from the horses. He shakes off rainwater, goes to Grania. He wraps her in a wet blanket, watches her. She shivers.

Carefully, Richard wraps his arms around her, warming her with his body. She doesn't wake. He doesn't sleep.

EXT. VILLAGE- DAY

Richard and Grania ride through a village. Silent VILLAGERS stare at them sullenly. Many bear old scars. Rough shanties intermingle with the remains of burned cottages.

GRANIA

What happened here?

In the distance is a stout barracks next to a stockade fence. An ENGLISH SOLDIER stands desultory guard outside.

GRANIA

Look at the children!

RICHARD

I tried to tell you, Grania.

An OLD MAN squatting in front of a shack lifts his head.

OLD MAN

Grania?

She checks her horse. The old man clambers to his feet.

OLD MAN

Grania O'Malley?

RICHARD

Don't answer. We mustn't be caught here.

The villagers gather, hemming her horse in.

OLD MAN

They say your fields grow grain like magic...

SCARRED MAN

...Aye, and the English are afraid to step foot on your land!

The folk press closer, separating her from Richard. A BOY calls out from the crowd.

BOY

Take me with you, Grania! I'll fight for you!

At the far end of the village, the guard notices the disturbance. He disappears into the barracks.

A WOMAN presses forward, a starving CHILD in her arms.

WOMAN

Take my baby. My little girl. She'll die if she stays here!

Eight ENGLISH SOLDIERS appear on horseback. The villagers scatter. The soldiers pound toward Richard and Grania.

Richard draws his sword.

RICHARD

Ride! Ride, damn you!

He swats her horse with the flat of his sword. It bucks and sprints out of the village.

EXT. FOREST- DAY

Grania fights for control of the horse. She drags its head around and kicks in her heels. Richard crashes through the brush, leaps from his horse, grabs her reins.

RICHARD

You'll only get yourself killed!

GRANIA

I can't leave them like that!

She rips her horse's head away. It rears, spilling her. Richard catches her. She sobs in rage.

RICHARD

Shh, Grania. It's not your fault.

GRANIA

They'll not do that to my people!
They'll not!

RICHARD

Hush, now. Hush.

For a heartbeat he holds her and she leans against him, sobbing. Then she tears herself away.

GRANIA

I will not!

She leaps to her horse, gallops off. Richard stares after her, frustrated longing naked in his eyes.

He mounts his horse and rides in the opposite direction.

EXT. FOREST- NIGHT

Grania, Glenn, and Michael look out from the trees. A lone SOLDIER patrols the stockade.

Grania nods to Michael. He runs out from the trees, kneels, draws his bow, and fires. The soldier gasps and falls dead.

Glenn runs to the wall and scales it. A moment later, the gate cracks open. Grania's men slip in like shadows.

INT. SOLDIER'S QUARTERS- NIGHT

Men sleep soundly. A noise outside rouses one. He moves cautiously to the window, looks out. Nothing. He relaxes.

A knife flies through the window, takes him in the chest.

EXT. SOLDIER'S QUARTERS-

Warriors draw their bows and loose burning arrows.

INT. SOLDIER'S QUARTERS-

The roof bursts into flame. Soldiers start up in panic. They grab weapons.

EXT. SOLDIER'S QUARTERS-

Grania and her men roar and charge the soldiers. VILLAGERS join the charge. A child screams. Flames leap up.

DISSOLVE TO:

EXT. VILLAGE- NIGHT

Fire engulfs the village. The air flickers with the heat.

Grania appears, sword in hand, her face smeared with blood and soot. Warriors, villagers, and children follow her. The village burns behind them.

EXT. ROAD- DAY

Grania rides at the head of her men. The villagers follow. They pass a field. Irish FIELD WORKERS look up from their work. They drop their hoes.

A ENGLISH SOLDIER rides in front of the field workers.

SOLDIER

Where do you think you're going?
Get back to work!

Their watchful silence makes the soldier turn. He sees Grania, drops his hand to his sword, looks at the men behind her.

Grania walks her horse straight toward him. He gives way, then wheels and gallops off. Grania turns to Glenn.

GRANIA

Can you get them to Doona?

GLENN

Aye. But...

GRANIA

Bring any that'll stand with us.
Michael, you ride to Rockfleet.

Richard must call a meeting of the chieftains.

Michael nods, rides off. Glenn drops a hand on her reins.

GLENN

Where do you think you're going, then?

GRANIA

I cannot do this alone. We must have the other clans behind us.

Glenn digs for the one barb that might stop her.

GLENN

Even The O'Malley?

Grania glares, spins her horse, leaves without answering.

EXT. GALWAY GATES- DAY

The English soldier gallops up to the gates.

SOLDIER

Open the gates!

They open. He rides in.

INT. ENGLISH HEADQUARTERS, GALWAY- DAY

On the wall is a map of Ireland. Sir Richard Bingham studies it calmly as he sharpens his sword. Almost disinterestedly, he questions the soldier.

BINGHAM

You simply let her go.

SOLDIER

Sir, she had a hundred men. Perhaps more.

BINGHAM

And you did not track her.

The soldier flushes, looks down.

BINGHAM

No matter.

SOLDIER

Then... you're not angry, sir?

BINGHAM

Angry?

He wheels, throws his sword. It buries itself in the map.

BINGHAM

No.

EXT. HILLSIDE- DAY

Grania gallops her horse across a broad green moor. She crests the hill- below is Clew Bay. She reins in her horse, looks out toward Clare Island.

INT. CLARE CASTLE- DAY

Grania slams the door open, stalks in. Liam grabs her arm.

LIAM

If you've nothing kind to say,
stay silent.

He leads her in. Grania stops short at the sight of Owen. He has aged massively. Mairgret stands by him. He looks up.

OWEN

Grania.

GRANIA

Da. Oh, Da.

Grania kneels in front of Owen, drops her head on his lap. He strokes her hair.

EXT. HILLSIDE- DAY

Paddy Joyce rides with his followers. O'Flaherty horsemen gallop past them.

Curran checks his horse next to Paddy's. Paddy doesn't give him so much as a glance.

CURRAN

So you're going as well.

PADDY

Aye.

CURRAN

You know I should kill you now.
For my father.

PADDY

You can try, if you like.

Curran sneers and kicks his horse into a gallop.

EXT. ROCKFLEET CASTLE- DAY

With a last sweep of the oars, Liam beaches the longboat.
Owen climbs out with Grania's help.

OWEN

They'll not listen to you.

GRANIA

We must try, Da.

They look up at Rockfleet Castle. Assorted CLANSMEN are
camped outside the gate. Horses are tethered to a line.

Richard stands atop the bluff. He waves to Grania.

INT. ROCKFLEET CASTLE- DAY

Curran, Casey, Paddy, RYAN MACMAHON, a slim man in his 30s,
and other CHIEFTAINS argue. Richard stands with them.

MACMAHON

Three hundred horse, the English
queen has sent.

CURRAN

Have you seen them?

MACMAHON

That's what I was told. And half
of Ulster is ruins.

RICHARD

They'll not stop till they've...

PADDY

Ah, they come, they go.

RICHARD

They're not going this time.

PADDY

And it's a fortune teller you are now.

Owen and Grania enter, Liam just behind.

GRANIA

Richard's right.

CURRAN

Ah, they'll never rule Ireland.

GRANIA

They already are! I've seen them. Ride east for yourself, if you don't believe me.

CURRAN

And you know so much more than the rest of us, Grania.

Grania slams her knife into the table. It quivers.

GRANIA

I know this. They fight as a country. We fight as O'Malley, O'Flaherty, Joyce, MacMahon, Burke. We quarrel over trifles while Ireland dies around us. And we do nothing!

An uncomfortable silence.

CASEY

Over trifles, is it? Will you give Paddy back his castle, then?

The chieftains laugh. Paddy scowls.

GRANIA

Will you stand with me against the English, if I do?

CURRAN

My people are in no danger from the English. But then I don't go

about raiding their ships and
burning their villages.

GRANIA

Are you all blind? Can you not see
what they're doing? They pick away
a little here, a little there.
Until they hold the whole of it.

CURRAN

So I'm to wave my sword at the
English from behind the skirts of
the great Grania O'Malley, while
you do whatever you like, is that
it?

RICHARD

That's not...

OWEN

(over Richard)

You'll not speak to my daughter
that way!

CURRAN

And when one of us dares point out
what a hypocrite you are, your Da
steps in to save you.

Owen swings at Curran. Curran slaps him. Grania leaps to
Curran, her knife at his throat. Richard separates them.

CURRAN

It seems I can be ruled by an
English bitch, or an Irish one.
I'll take neither.

Curran storms out. Paddy glances at Grania, and follows.

EXT. DOONA CASTLE- DAY

Grania, Richard, and MacMahon ride through the gate. Grania
and Richard dismount. Her followers watch from a distance.

RICHARD

I'm sorry, Grania.

She nods.

MACMAHON

There's signal fires set for
burning on the top of Achill, and
all along the coast. If any of us
were to be attacked, we could send
a runner up and light them. You'd
come, wouldn't you, Grania?

GRANIA

Of course.

MACMAHON

And so would I.

Grania looks at MacMahon with a slight smile. Then her eyes
move past him to Hugh, coming out of the castle.

Richard follows her gaze, drops his own, silently reins his
horse around and rides out. MacMahon follows.

EXT. DOONA CASTLE- DAY

Grania and Hugh walk along the castle wall.

HUGH

They're wrong, Grania. With time,
they'll see it.

GRANIA

We have no time left. People are
dying. I can't save them alone.

HUGH

Well then. We'll just have to save
as many as we can.

Grania looks at him. He raises an eyebrow, grins.

EXT. ENGLISH FORT- NIGHT

A GUARD dozes at sentry, his helmet at his feet.

Hugh picks it up, slips behind him, taps his shoulder. The
guard startles. Hugh conks him on the head with the helmet.
The guard crumples.

With a roar, Grania leads her men over the stockade.
Unready SOLDIERS stumble to battle.

VILLAGERS peer from cottages. In one window, a BOY, his eyes glowing with hero worship, watches Grania fight.

INT. ENGLISH HEADQUARTERS- GALWAY- DAY

A COURIER hands Bingham a message, retreats quickly. Bingham scans it, slams a fist against the wall.

EXT. ANOTHER FORT- NIGHT

A line of tense SOLDIERS, more alert this time, stare into the darkness of the nearby forest. The sounds of neighing horses and jingling harness carry clear through the air.

LIEUTENANT

Damn the woman! What is she waiting for?

BEHIND THE FORT-

Grania helps VILLAGERS through a hole in the stockade. A child giggles. Grania lays a finger to her lips, smiles, shakes her head. The child mimics her, grins.

IN THE FOREST-

Grania slides down a hill, villagers tumbling behind her, to where Hugh and Michael wait, holding horses. Hugh grins at Grania, then nudges a horse so it tramps and neighs.

Michael peers out through the trees.

MICHAEL

I think they're out of patience, Grania.

EXT. FOREST- MOMENTS LATER

The lieutenant leads his men on a swift, silent charge. He dashes into the trees, fires his pistol.

At nothing.

LIEUTENANT

Damn!

INT. JOYCE STRONGHOLD- NIGHT

Smoky torches cast shadows across the filthy room. Joyce men sleep in huddled piles near a firepit. Curran lies on the table, a winesack on his chest.

CURRAN

You know, if you want her dead, Bingham's offering a reward just to find out where she is. And sure there's no one who'd know her whereabouts better than you.

He laughs, drinks.

PADDY

Why don't you tell him yourself?

CURRAN

Those are my people she's got with her. How do you think that'd sit with the rest of my clan? Ah well.

He reels to his feet.

PADDY

I thought you were staying.

CURRAN

I've got a bed at home, Paddy. I don't need to sleep on a pile of moldy hay.

He pauses at the door.

CURRAN

Sure you don't want that reward?

PADDY

I don't need some English asshole to kill a woman for me.

EXT. DOONA FOREST- DAY

Grania walks along a path by the lake, Hugh beside her. Silent for a bit. Then-

GRANIA

I thought you were dead.

HUGH

For a wee bit there I wanted to die.

(beat)

There were English sailors all around me. Most of them couldn't swim. I've never been so afraid in my life- and then when the ship left... A Spanish ship saw the smoke and came to salvage what it could. They took pity on me.

GRANIA

Why did you not come back?

HUGH

I was young, and it's a huge world, Grania. I've been to the New World, the Indies... But I wanted to see home. And the first thing I saw was you.

He bends in to kiss her. She pulls away. He grins.

HUGH

I've never known a woman so willing with a sword... and so unwilling with a man.

She frowns at him. He bends, picks up a stick.

HUGH

Sure you won't kiss me?

Apparently not. He thrusts the stick into her hands, picks up another.

HUGH

Well then. *En su protector!*

He attacks. She LAUGHS and parries. They fight through the forest. Grania swings and breaks Hugh's stick. He drops it and pulls her close.

She turns away.

HUGH

Grania...

GRANIA

I don't... I don't want to feel
these things...

HUGH

Do you not?

Gently, he draws her to him, kisses her. They make love.

EXT. FOREST- EVENING

Grania and Hugh walk back to the castle, hand in hand. As they leave the cover of the trees, she drops Hugh's hand. He looks at her and then nods, understanding.

Clansfolk stare. Someone whistles. Grania blushes. Her folk grin. After a moment she grins back, takes Hugh's hand.

INT. DOONA CASTLE- NIGHT

Michael, frightened, raps on Grania's door. Hugh opens it, takes one look at the man's expression, nods.

EXT. DOONA CASTLE WALL- NIGHT

Glenn crouches behind a buttress. He waves Grania and Hugh to him. They hear a horse whicker, faint in the distance.

GRANIA

Rouse the men. And bar the gate.

HUGH

No.

Grania looks at him. He grins.

HUGH

They expect us to be unprepared.
Let's give them what they expect.

EXT. FOREST- NIGHT

Joyce men hide within the trees.

A SCOUT approaches from the castle. He shakes his head, indicating he saw no one. Paddy signals his men forward.

ON THE FIELD-

The Joyce warriors approach. Some throw ladders up against the wall. Another group carries a ram and slings it at the gate. The gate flies open at the first impact.

With a SHOUT, the warriors abandon the ladders and stream through the gate, screaming war cries.

IN THE COURTYARD-

Hugh and a handful of O'Flaherties make a show of stumbling unready into battle. The Joyce men charge wholeheartedly.

ON THE WALL-

Glenn CRIES out. Archers placed along the wall leap up, arrows at the ready.

BY THE GATE-

O'Flaherty men spring to life along the inside of the wall. They encircle the Joyce warriors.

ON THE WALL-

A torch flares in the darkness, illuminating Grania.

GRANIA

Joyce!

IN THE COURTYARD-

Paddy Joyce looks up, enraged and abashed. Hugh takes his sword and motions to two men. They drag him forward.

GRANIA

I'll not spill more Irish blood.
Not even yours.

GLENN

Drop your weapons!

The Joyce warriors do. Over half of them sit down.

PADDY

What do you think you're doing?

JOYCE WARRIOR

We're staying here.

Paddy flushes with rage. The O'Flaherty men can't help themselves; they JEER and RASPBERRY Paddy and his remaining followers as they skulk out the gate.

JOYCE WARRIOR

Will you have us, Grania?

She nods.

EXT. DOONA HARBOR- DAY

A ship anchors in the harbor. A longboat makes its way toward shore. Grania gazes out, then shouts.

GRANIA

Da!

Owen hugs Grania, looks at the men behind her, nods as if satisfied. Mairgret sits in the boat, old Teagan beside her.

OWEN

We heard you had another go with the Joyce. Your mother wouldn't rest easy till she'd seen you for herself.

Liam helps Mairgret out of the longboat.

OWEN

I was wrong. I want you to know that.

More longboats land. Sailors climb out followed by O'Malley clansfolk. Owen raises his voice. The clans stop to listen.

OWEN

Girls don't sail, Grania. Nor fight. Nor take bloody castles away from The Joyce himself.

The O'Flaherties chuckle.

OWEN

Nor lead clans. But you are.

Owen turns to the clansmen.

OWEN

I give you Grania O'Malley. Will you follow her, on land and at sea, give her your allegiance, and fight her enemies?

CLANSFOLK

Aye!

EXT. DOONA HARBOR- LATER

Grania and Owen walk along the shore. O'Malley sailors load provisions into the longboats and bid their wives farewell.

GRANIA

Stay the night at least.

OWEN

The O'Neill has promised to give what help he can. I'll be back before you know it.

Ahead, Mairgret and Liam wait by the boats.

OWEN

Seamus would be proud of you, lass. You're an O'Malley true.

Without waiting for her response, Owen strides ahead. He wraps Mairgret in his arms, then climbs into the longboat.

Liam shoves the boat out, then stands by Mairgret.

EXT. ENGLISH HEADQUARTERS, GALWAY- NIGHT

Two ENGLISH SOLDIERS stand guard outside the door. Paddy Joyce approaches, with two cloaked men.

PADDY

I want to see the governor.

The soldier looks at the other two. They pull their cloaks back so he can see their faces. He nods. They enter.

EXT. FOREST- DAY

Grania and Hugh lie drowsily in each other's arms.

GRANIA

Hugh?

HUGH

Hmm?

GRANIA

Do you think we have a chance?

HUGH

Is it afraid you are?

GRANIA

There's so many counting on me.

Hugh rolls onto his side, looks at her.

HUGH

When your father returns with a
hundred O'Neills at his back, then
you tell me if we have a chance.

She smiles at him. He picks a bit of moss from her hair.

HUGH

You're a mess.

GRANIA

You're no better.

HUGH

Ah, you're right.

Naked, he gets up, goes to the lake, and returns with a
cupped handful of water. Grania scowls, laughing.

GRANIA

Don't you dare!

He drops the water on her. Grania SCREAMS and leaps to her
feet. Hugh flees, Grania chasing him. He stops suddenly,
scoops her up, carries her into the lake.

Hugh lowers them both under the water, then heaves Grania
up toward the sky, his arms around her thighs. He kisses
her belly. Grania holds onto his shoulders, eyes closed in
ecstasy as his mouth moves lower.

EXT. FOREST- DAY

Paddy watches them from the bushes. He looks to one side at
someone concealed in the bushes, nods, and withdraws.

INT. DOONA CASTLE GREAT ROOM- NIGHT

Grania and Hugh sit together by the fire.

MAIRGRET

I never thought I'd see my only
daughter play the whore.

LIAM

There's no harm in it.

MAIRGRET

No? Why did you never marry, then?

Liam is silent. Hugh murmurs something. Grania laughs.

LIAM

I never wanted anyone else.

MAIRGRET

But I married Owen.

A silence.

MAIRGRET

It will weaken her. You know that.

Liam frowns, looking at Grania's carefree expression.

MAIRGRET

Talk to her.

LIAM

All right. Tomorrow.

EXT. DOONA CASTLE COURTYARD- DAY

Grania and Hugh, mounted on horses. Liam approaches.

LIAM

Grania.

GRANIA

(to Hugh)

Go on ahead.

Hugh rides off.

LIAM

Your mother's concerned about you.

GRANIA

Is it my immortal soul she fears
for?

LIAM

Passion can be a sickness, one
that overwhelms the mind.

GRANIA

So I'm daft now, is it?

LIAM

You are chieftain now. You cannot
afford to forget that.

GRANIA

I do not forget it.

LIAM

I've no quarrel with Hugh. But
love like that... It's a dangerous
thing. I know, Grania. You must
listen to me!

GRANIA

I married Donal for the sake of my
clan. I have given my life to my
people. And they take joy in Hugh,
in seeing me happy! Why can you
not?

She swings up onto her horse and leaves.

EXT. FOREST- DAY

Grania canters to the lake. There is no sign of Hugh.
Puzzled, she turns back.

EXT. DOONA CASTLE- DAY

Hugh's horse returns, riderless. Liam sees it, vaults to
its back, gallops toward the forest.

EXT. CLEARING- DAY

Ravens CROAK and settle in a clump of bushes. Flies BUZZ.

Grania pulls back a branch and finds Hugh. Hoof prints lead into the forest. Drawing her sword, she leaps to her horse.

EXT. FOREST- EVENING

Three ENGLISH SOLDIERS and a JOYCE MAN ride silently.

Grania crashes out of the brush behind them. The men wheel in surprise. She decapitates one soldier on her first pass.

She wheels back and takes out another soldier. The third charges her and knocks her from her horse. She pulls him down and runs him through.

The Joyce man kicks his heels into his horse. Grania whips out her knife, throws it. He falls. The horse canters off.

The beat of HORSE HOOVES approaching at a gallop. Grania looks up. Liam reins in his horse. His eyes flick over the bloody scene. He looks at Grania.

She rolls the Joyce man over. We've seen him with Paddy before. Grania looks at Liam.

EXT. DOONA CASTLE- EVENING

The clop of the horses' hooves is loud in the silence. Clansfolk stand stunned as Grania rides past them, Hugh's body in her arms.

She rides into the courtyard, mute, Liam beside her. The clan follows. She raises her head, looks around with that terrible gaze. She shifts Hugh, displaying his wounds.

LIAM

Grania. Don't. Don't do this.

If she hears him, she doesn't show it. She speaks one word.

GRANIA

Joyce.

The clan breaks silence with an appalling, united roar.

EXT. JOYCE VILLAGE- NIGHT

Flames leap from burning cottages. WOMEN and CHILDREN scream. Grania's men slay JOYCE MEN mercilessly.

Paddy and Grania fight, sword to sword. At a distance, his wife pleads. Grania and Paddy clinch, their swords locked.

GRANIA

Why?

Paddy doesn't reply. Grania presses.

GRANIA

Why?

He pushes her back and swings at her. She runs him through.

Grania stares at his body, PANTING. Paddy's wife flies at her, beating her with her fists.

WIFE

You killed my husband! Damn you!
Damn you!

GRANIA

And he killed mine!

She and the wife stare at each other. Something passes between them- a bond of grief, of momentary understanding. Then the woman drops beside Paddy, keening.

Grania looks around at the carnage she has caused.

GRANIA

You were right, Liam. You were
right.

EXT. HILLSIDE- NIGHT

Liam rides next to Grania. Men follow behind, exhausted. Grania reins in her horse.

GRANIA

Take the men back to Doona. You'll
be there before dawn if you ride
hard.

LIAM

Grania?

GRANIA

How long till Bingham hears of
this? They'll not die for me.

She holds Liam's gaze, then kicks her horse into a gallop, rides into the darkness.

GRANIA

Take them home!

EXT. HILLSIDE- NIGHT

Grania reins in her horse.

Far in the distance, the glow of the burning village paints the sky a ruinous ochre. She stares back at it, her gaze haunted and- for the first time- frightened. With a shout, she spurs the horse on.

INT. BURKE CASTLE GREAT ROOM- LATE NIGHT

POUNDING on the door. A GUARD opens it, pike at the ready. Grania stands in the doorway, dirty and exhausted. Richard Burke appears, half-dressed.

GRANIA

Is your offer still good?

RICHARD

I heard about Hugh. I'm sorry.

He nods to the guard, who withdraws.

GRANIA

Bad news has wings. Did you hear I slaughtered half the Joyces?

RICHARD

No. Sit.

She does. He sits beside her.

GRANIA

Clan O'Flaherty is divided between Curran and myself. And we O'Malleys are sailors, not warriors.

Richard snorts disbelievingly.

GRANIA

The Burkes are.

(beat)

I've not the men to hold off the English.

RICHARD

You don't need to marry me for that.

GRANIA

I know.

RICHARD

I'll not hold you, if it is not enough.

GRANIA

Nor I you.

He moves to kiss her. Reflexively, Grania draws back, then holds herself still, waiting. He pauses, studying her.

Grania drops her gaze. Richard nods, takes her hand instead, raises it to his lips. Her eyes flick to his, startled. He smiles gently.

EXT. DOONA CASTLE COURTYARD- DAY

Grania's O'Flaherty followers, O'Malleys and Burkes pack the courtyard. Children run through the crowd.

O'Flaherty clansfolk stream through the gates, led by Curran. They greet relatives. Curran approaches Grania, resplendent in her wedding dress. Casey skulks behind him.

CURRAN

Will you let us celebrate with you?

GRANIA

We are all Ireland's children.

The wedding is large and loud. MUSICIANS play. Curran and Casey hang about the edges of the joyous crowd. Siofra, just a few days from delivery, leans on Glenn's arm.

EXT. COAST-

Behind a bluff, an English warship drops anchor. Other ships can be seen behind it.

EXT. COURTYARD-

Grania and Richard dance. She smiles gently, he beams. Liam cuts in, and Richard moves to the side.

LIAM

Is this what you want?

GRANIA

Who of us ever get what we want?
He's a good man.

LIAM

Aye, he is. Use him gently,
Grania.

Richard watches his dancing wife with pride. Curran whispers to Casey, who nods and moves through the crowd toward Richard.

EXT. BLUFF-

Bingham calls ANDREWS, an officer, to him.

BINGHAM

Form the men into ranks. And keep
them out of sight.

ANDREWS

Yes, sir.

BINGHAM

The cavalry will be in position by
now. Wait for my signal to charge.

ANDREWS

Very good, sir.

EXT. COURTYARD-

A BURKE MAN slaps Richard's shoulder enthusiastically. Casey slips behind him.

BURKE MAN

You waited long enough to get that
one to your bed, so you did. But
there's no man like a Burke man
for getting what he wants!

Richard laughs, then crumples forward.

A woman SCREAMS. Casey runs. Grania throws her knife. It buries itself in Casey's throat. Casey falls dead.

Grania runs to Richard.

LIAM
Curran O'Flaherty!

The crowd parts, exposing Curran. Men drag him to Grania. She kneels, supporting Richard. His blood smears her dress.

EXT. FOREST-

Under cover of the trees, ENGLISH CAVALRY waits. Horses WHICKER quietly. ARCHERS stand between the horses.

EXT. COURTYARD-

GRANIA
How dare you?

Richard groans.

GRANIA
Shh, shh, my husband. You'll not die on your wedding day.

He struggles to raise himself.

GRANIA
No, lay back. Get him inside!
Knock him out if he won't stay still.

RICHARD
And have me miss my own wedding night?

He smiles, then grimaces as MEN lift and carry him off. Grania turns to Curran. A rock WHIZZES by her and hits Curran squarely. She smiles grimly, turns to the crowd.

GRANIA
What shall we do with him?

ASSORTED SHOUTS from the crowd- 'Death! Banish him!' etc.

EXT. BLUFF-

Bingham climbs to the top of the bluff. He waves a kerchief twice, then lies flat, watching the castle.

EXT. COURTYARD-

GRANIA

Do any of you still wish to follow
him?

Seven ILL-FAVORED MEN step forward.

GRANIA

Then leave. Now.

The gates open and the eight men ride out.

EXT. BLUFF-

Bingham leaps up, sword drawn. He raises and drops it.

EXT. FOREST-

Archers run out from the trees, kneel, and fire.

IN THE COURTYARD-

Curran falls from his horse, an arrow through his throat.
His companions go down as well. Arrows fly through the open
gate, hitting clansfolk.

GRANIA

The gates! Close the gates!

She throws her weight against them. Clansmen heave. English
cavalry pounds toward them. Arrows fly. A man screams, hit.

The gates close.

OUTSIDE THE WALL-

ANDREWS

Sir! I thought they had submitted
to the Crown!

BINGHAM

They had.

ANDREWS

But...

BINGHAM

They served their purpose.
Infantry!

IN THE COURTYARD-

LIAM

To arms!

GRANIA

Men, form ranks!

English soldiers scale the wall. Liam leaps up, throwing back the assault, seemingly everywhere at once. An archer sights, fires. Liam falls with an arrow through his belly.

The clans charge, casting back the attack. English soldiers fall like flies. A HORN SOUNDS.

OUTSIDE THE WALL-

BINGHAM

Damn! Withdraw the troops.

ANDREWS

Retreat! Retreat!

Clansmen fire arrows on the retreating troops. English archers fire back. The troops slink back under the trees.

ANDREWS

How did she rally them so quickly?

Bingham glances at him, annoyed.

EXT. INSIDE THE WALL- NIGHT

Bonfires burn in the courtyard. Grania kneels by Liam, still with the arrow in his gut. Mairgret tends him.

GRANIA

Can you do nothing?

MAIRGRET

If I remove it, he'll die.

LIAM

The spring...

GRANIA

We've twenty casks of water in the castle. We'll be all right.

LIAM

You've... guests today. Twenty casks and over four hundred men, women, and children... A week, Grania. Ten days, if you're lucky.

Richard approaches, unsteady on his feet.

GRANIA

Richard! Get back inside!

He kneels by Liam.

LIAM

Take care of her.

RICHARD

I will.

GRANIA

Don't talk so, Liam.

Liam locks his gaze on her. He grips Mairgret's hand.

LIAM

Pull it out.

Grania starts to protest, stops at Liam's look.

LIAM

A week, Grania. Remember.

She nods. Liam smiles at Mairgret. Crying, she kisses him.

LIAM

Owen will forgive me that. Now.

Grania wraps her hands around the shaft, pulls the arrow out. Liam dies. Richard holds Grania's shoulders.

GRANIA

A week.

RICHARD
MacMahon is only a day's ride from
here.

GRANIA
Aye. Gather the men.

IN THE COURTYARD-

GRANIA
Brann, Eamonn. You know what to
do.

BRANN, 14, and EAMONN, 15, nod. They are coated in soot.
Fifty men stand waiting for Grania. She mounts her horse.

GRANIA
We only need to keep them busy a
few minutes.

The men nod. Grania leads her men out. Brann and Eamonn
shinny up a rope and lay flat on the wall, waiting.

EAMONN
Now!

They slide down the rope and disappear into the night.

ON THE FIELD-

The warriors pound for the forest. Bingham's troops pour
out to meet them. English archers drop to their knees and
fire. An arrow grazes Grania's shoulder. She ignores it.

Irish fighters fall at a terrifying rate. The English
defense is silent, organized, deadly.

GLENN
We cannot hold, Grania!

GRANIA
Retreat!

They SLAM the gate closed.

GRANIA
Sweet Brigid help us all.

One third of the men who rode out lie dead on the field.

IN THE CASTLE-

Glenn grips Siofra's hands, his face a mask of worry as she arches her back, screaming in the throes of labor.

ON THE WALL-

Grania and Richard look toward Achill. Her arm is bandaged.

RICHARD

We cannot beat them, Grania.

GRANIA

Look!

On Achill's peak, flames leap up from the signal fire. From the castle comes the WAIL of Siofra's newborn son, THOMAS.

IN THE FOREST-

Brann and Eamonn run silently through the trees, away from the fire. Bingham and English soldiers watch the boys.

BINGHAM

Track them.

EXT. ON THE WALL- DAY

The third day of the siege. Grania looks out over the forest. Richard comes up beside her.

GRANIA

You should be in bed.

RICHARD

I'm fit enough.

GRANIA

It's been three days.

RICHARD

He'll come. He gave his word.

GRANIA

Look.

Bingham rides up to the walls. He halts beyond arrow range.

BINGHAM

Richard Burke! I am Sir Richard Bingham, appointed by Her Majesty the Queen as governor of Ireland. It is the Royal policy to offer knighthood to those chieftains who choose to submit to the crown and live in peace.

GRANIA

Make him show his numbers.

RICHARD

(calling down)

And if I will not?

BINGHAM

Her Majesty has commanded me to suppress all rebellion and protect her citizens. Did you not attack the Joyce clan and slay their chieftain six nights ago?

RICHARD

I did.

GRANIA

You'll not take the credit!

RICHARD

Hush, woman!

BINGHAM

Then for those crimes your life is duly forfeit. But Elizabeth will grant you mercy, if you submit.

RICHARD

Show yourself then, if you are honest.

Bingham signals and-

-INFANTRY SOLDIERS move out from the trees in formation, rank upon rank, and take up position-

-ARCHERS pour out of hiding, coming to kneel in battle lines, with PAGES behind them holding quivers of arrows-

-The CAVALRY rides forth, a hundred strong-

-Oxen haul a CATAPULT from the cover of the trees.

Along the wall, Irish warriors turn gray. In the castle, women look out upper windows, silent children beside them.

BINGHAM

I believe you were expecting the
MacMahon, were you not? Or rather,
Sir Ryan MacMahon, I should say.

Bingham beckons, and soldiers push Brann and Eamonn forward. The boys are bruised and bloody.

BINGHAM

I'm afraid Sir Ryan won't be
coming.

The despair on their faces is obvious. Bingham smiles. He plays his final card.

BINGHAM

Richard Burke! It is my
understanding that you are
recently married to Grania
O'Malley. She is a pirate and
known criminal who has harassed
Her Majesty's ships and murdered
Her subjects. I have in my hand an
article, signed by Queen Elizabeth
herself, ordering Grania's death.

Bingham holds the paper up and then hands it to a mounted page, who gallops with it toward the castle.

ON THE WALL-

Irish archers aim at the page but Grania waves them back.

Richard holds the paper- he cannot read. Grania takes it.

GRANIA

The Queen herself! Fancy that.

BINGHAM

But if you submit, as your wife
she will be allowed to live, so
long as she observes Elizabeth's
peace, and surrenders her ships to
me.

GRANIA
Bingham! Go stuf---

Richard covers her mouth, carries her bodily off the wall.

IN THE COURTYARD-

GRANIA
You'll not submit!

RICHARD
The lives of my clan are worth
more than my pride!

GRANIA
How long will Bingham let them
have any kind of life at all?
They'll be no more than slaves.

RICHARD
Better slaves than dead.

GRANIA
Then I dismiss you.

RICHARD
What?

GRANIA
The day you submit to the English,
I am no more your wife.

Richard looks at her, his eyes blazing. His jaw clenches.
He nods, and moves to pass her. She grabs him.

GRANIA
Richard, I swear to you I will get
us out of this.

He goes to the gate. Unhappy men open it for him. Ten Burke
warriors fall in behind.

GRANIA
Richard!

She runs to him. For the first time she kisses him, crying.
Their embrace is fiercely passionate. She pulls back, her
eyes wide, finding in his steady gaze something she needs-
has always needed...

Richard brushes a lock of hair back from her face.

RICHARD
I love you, lass.

GRANIA
No...

He places a finger over her lips, shakes his head, smiles.
He and his men leave the gate. Grania runs to the wall.

ON THE FIELD-

Brann and Eamonn are released as Richard rides out. They
scurry back to the castle.

Grania watches as Richard halts before Bingham.

BINGHAM
I am duly authorized by Her
Majesty, Queen Elizabeth, to
bestow knighthood. Will you kneel?

Richard kneels before him. Bingham draws his sword, touches
Richard on one shoulder and then the other.

BINGHAM
Now we are both Sir Richard.
Ironic, that. There seems to be a
preponderance of sirs these days.

Richard looks up at Bingham, alarmed.

BINGHAM
But two Sir Richards is one too
many, don't you think?

Bingham swings the sword viciously. A dozen horsemen spur
forward, spears down, and skewer the Burke warriors.

GRANIA
RICHARD!

BINGHAM
Charge!

The cavalry pounds forward.

ANDREWS

Sir!

Bingham spares a withering glance at Andrews.

BINGHAM

Yes?

Andrews looks away.

ON THE WALL-

Grania's archers let loose a hail of arrows, uselessly.

ON THE FIELD-

The infantry pours forward with ladders.

ON THE WALL-

Grania fights like a berserker. Clansmen ROAR and parry the assault.

An English soldier attacks Grania from the rear. Old Teagan springs forward and chops him. The soldier screams.

Another attacks Teagan and slices his leg half off. Grania spins and brings her sword down. The soldier dies.

The English withdraw.

IN THE COURTYARD-

Grania and Mairgret kneel beside Teagan, who screams in pain. All around, women minister to wounded men.

TEAGAN

Make it stop, please make it stop!

GRANIA

I cannot. Lie still.

Teagan screams again. His hand clamps around Grania's arm.

TEAGAN

I'm dead anyway. Don't make me die like this.

Grania nods, grabs a spear, turns her head aside and thrusts it home. Clansfolk stare at her in the sudden silence. Night falls.

EXT. DOONA CASTLE- NIGHT

Grania stands on the wall, Glenn beside her.

GLENN

You must sleep, Grania. They'll
come no more tonight.

GRANIA

I cannot.

EXT. DOONA CASTLE- DAY

Morning. The field is thick with fog. Tense warriors stare into the whiteness, seeing nothing.

EXT. FOREST- DAY

Bingham plays chess with one of the men. A page at his side pours tea from a silver teapot into his china cup.

Andrews approaches.

ANDREWS

Sir, it's been four days.

BINGHAM

There's no hurry. Let her stew a
few days longer.

He reaches forward to move a piece.

ANDREWS

Sir...

Bingham pauses, his hand poised in mid-air.

BINGHAM

Yes?

ANDREWS

Sir, I thought our orders were to
bring these people under England's
rule. Peaceably, when possible.

BINGHAM

Well, Lieutenant Andrews. Since I must explain myself to you...

Andrews flushes.

BINGHAM

With her marriage to The Burke, Grania O'Malley has united the three most powerful clans in Connaught.

ANDREWS

Yes sir, but...

BINGHAM

We waylaid a hundred men from Sligo. They were coming all this way- to fight for a woman that they've never even seen.

ANDREWS

I know, sir, but...

BINGHAM

Throughout England's conquest of Ireland, our greatest ally has been the Irish themselves. They're continually at each other's throats. Now, Andrews, tell me. What would happen if they were to band together? If they found someone to follow?

ANDREWS

I see, sir.

BINGHAM

No. I don't think you do.

He moves his chess piece, SLAPPING his opponent's queen off the board. He leans back and sips his tea.

INT. DOONA CASTLE STORE ROOM- NIGHT

Carrying a torch, Grania enters. The light flickers over great casks, used for storing water on sea voyages. Sixteen are rolled on their sides. Four remain.

Grania sees a puddle at the base of one. She wrenches the lid off. Torchlight gleams on the bare inch of water left.

Grania sinks to her knees in the puddle.

EXT. FOREST- NIGHT

A twig SNAPS in the woods. Sentries come to attention. EIGHT HORSEMEN appear, sacks tied behind their saddles. They dismount rapidly. The horses dance.

Bingham strides up. He chokes.

BINGHAM

Dear God! How old are they?

HORSEMAN

Eight days, sir. We rode as fast as we could.

BINGHAM

The stench alone will drive them out. Bring up the catapult!

EXT. DOONA CASTLE WALL- NIGHT

Grania sleeps, propped up against the rampart. Michael wakes her. Below, men stir, bracing for another attack.

MICHAEL

I think you'd better come.

The CREAKING of the catapult carries clear through the air. In the distance they hear a SHOUT. The catapult fires.

Something WHIZZES by Grania. THUMP. It lands in the courtyard. A woman shrieks. Grania vaults down the steps.

Another THUMP. A missile arches over the wall and lands near her feet. It rolls to a stop. The battered features of Owen O'Malley stare up at her. Grania freezes in shock.

Another THUMP, and a man's scream. Women pour out of the castle. Children crowd around their legs.

GRANIA

No! Don't let the children out here!

It is too late. Children howl as the heads of Owen's crew are lobbed one by one over the wall.

Mairgret comes out. Grania sees her and grabs Owen's head, crying bitterly. She throws it back over the wall.

Mairgret comes up. One look at her daughter's face is enough.

MAIRGRET

I know. Did they... Have you...?

Grania steels herself to the lie.

GRANIA

No.

Grania wraps her arms around Mairgret. Her face, over Mairgret's shoulder, is twisted with rage and filled with one thought- Bingham's death. Grania shouts.

GRANIA

Men! Form ranks!

GLENN

We cannot attack!

Grania shouts so that all in the castle can hear.

GRANIA

We can, and will! O'Malley!

Warriors ROAR.

GRANIA

Your Chieftain is dead. Will you avenge him?

O'MALLEY MEN

We will!

O'FLAHERTY AND BURKE MEN

Aye!

Grania speaks hurriedly to Glenn, who nods.

GRANIA

Open the gates!

IN THE FOREST-

BINGHAM

In formation, men! When they
attack, give way. Draw them out!

ON THE FIELD-

Soldiers run to position and wait. Their eyes grow large as the Irish pound down on them, amazed at their ferocity. The first wave crashes into them. The line breaks.

Grania rides straight into the center, hacking and slashing. She spots Bingham, far beyond her reach.

GRANIA

Bingham!

She stabs a SOLDIER clinging to her leg.

GRANIA

Bingham, you whoreson bastard!

Bingham watches, fascinated and appalled. It is his first real glimpse of Grania. Grania guts another soldier.

GRANIA

You English coward! Fight me!

Bingham spits. To the officer-

BINGHAM

I'd not dirty my hands. Cut her
down.

The warriors push forward. Bingham's infantry give way in the middle, drawing them further from the gate. The cavalry circles behind to cut off their escape.

Suddenly, flames leap up behind Bingham. His horse rears in fright, dumping him. The catapult flares.

Behind it Irishmen flit through the glare, Glenn leading them, as they wreak havoc behind the lines and disappear.

Grania's forces retreat, but the English cavalry pounds to close the gap. Grania grabs a spear from a fallen soldier and runs a CAVALRYMAN through. Her men slip through the opening, dash back to the castle.

Andrews leads Bingham's horse back. Bingham mounts.

BINGHAM
Sound the retreat.

The English soldiers fade back into the woods, carrying their wounded. The dead are left on the battlefield.

EXT. ON THE WALL- DAY

Hot sun bakes down on the unburied bodies. Huge black ravens circle and settle.

Grania is beyond exhaustion. Beyond grief. Beyond fear. She looks at her ships, anchored enticingly in the harbor. Below in the courtyard, wounded and dying men moan weakly.

GLENN
Grania. There's only the one cask left.

GRANIA
Open it. Children first, then the men. Or none of us will get out alive.

GLENN
What about the wounded?

GRANIA
No.

EXT. COURTYARD- NIGHT

There is no way to bury the dead, so the clans burn them. Silent men stand, watching the flames.

EXT. FOREST- NIGHT

Bingham watches the castle through his spyglass. The flames dance above the castle wall.

BINGHAM
It won't be long now.

EXT. FOREST- DAY

A SOLDIER leans against a tree, watching the castle. ANOTHER SOLDIER relieves him. Birds WARBLE in the bushes.

INT. DOONA CASTLE GREAT ROOM- NIGHT

Children huddle along the walls by their silent mothers. Michael moves among them, doles out water from a single cup.

Siofra holds her new son, THOMAS.

Grania goes to Mairgret, stretched on a pallet. Mairgret's face is drawn with thirst.

GRANIA
You must drink.

Mairgret shakes her head.

MAIRGRET
Give it to those who'll...

She breaks off. An odd smile crosses her parched lips.

MAIRGRET
He's waiting for me, Grannie. I
can see him.

She reaches out, her wrinkled hand closing on Grania's.

MAIRGRET
And Seamus. Why, he's not changed a
bit! He says to tell you... Seamus
says...

GRANIA
What? Mother, what?

MAIRGRET
The roof... Ah, Owen! Grania, get
them out of here.

Siofra hands Thomas to Aileen. The baby hangs slack and unresponsive in her arms. Siofra slips out of the room.

Grania closes Mairgret's eyes, folds her hands across her breast. She mutters a liturgy in Latin. Then her eyes seem to snap into focus.

GRANIA
The roof... The roof!

EXT. COURTYARD- NIGHT

Siofra approaches Glenn, who guards the gates. She hides something behind her back.

SIOFRA

Glenn.

She raises a hand and touches his cheek. He wraps his arms around her. His hands thump against the bucket she has concealed. Glenn's eyes widen.

GLENN

You cannot.

SIOFRA

He doesn't cry anymore. He doesn't even move.

GLENN

No, Siofra!

SIOFRA

Then you go in there and watch our son die!

GLENN

All right. Stay here.

Glancing around, he opens the gate a crack, slips out. Siofra pulls the great door to, leaving it open a crack through which she watches Glenn.

ON THE FIELD-

Glenn flits like a shadow across the meadow. He reaches the spring, fills the bucket, looks back toward the castle. His eyes bulge. He opens his mouth. Blood pours out.

BY THE GATE-

SIOFRA

Glenn!

She runs at the SOLDIER beside Glenn's body. She grabs up Glenn's sword and runs the soldier through. Bingham shouts from the forest.

BINGHAM

Attack!

Horsemen pound toward the gate. Impossibly, Siofra pulls down four before she is trampled. Soldiers run up behind.

Grania appears at the front of the Irish warriors. She swings her blade desperately.

GRANIA

Inside, all of you!

Her men give ground across the courtyard, fighting all the way. They dash into the castle, slam the door.

Bingham has taken the courtyard.

English soldiers crowd in. Bingham's archers fire at the windows. There is no returning fire. Bingham smiles.

BINGHAM

She's out of arrows. Bring up the ram.

INSIDE THE CASTLE-

Men haul the great room table up the broad staircase. Grania dashes by them.

GRANIA

Get the casks! Anything that'll burn!

She runs to the top story.

Fires blaze under enormous cauldrons. Men heave a sheet of lead from the rafters. Stars shine through the gap and the fires leap up, crackling. Sparks dance into the night sky.

The men seize the sheet, fold it back and forth till it snaps, lever the pieces into a cauldron.

Behind them, more men strip another sheet of lead from the roof while others splinter chairs, chests, anything of wood.

Grania looks down. Bingham's men haul a huge battering ram into the courtyard.

GRANIA

Faster!

Her men redouble their efforts.

IN THE COURTYARD-

Bingham signals his men. The ram is in position.

BINGHAM

On my orders... Stand ready!

ON THE ROOFTOP-

Archers kneel behind the lip of the roof, out of sight.

GRANIA

Shoot at the fringes first. You
must drive them toward the castle.
We've only the one chance at it.

The castle seems to shudder as the ram swings home.

GRANIA

We've no more time. Fire till your
arrows are gone, then join us.

She looks at the men by the cauldrons. They remove their
shirts, wrap their hands in the cloth. One nods grimly.

Another BOOM as the ram hits the door.

GRANIA

Now!

She flies down the stairs.

IN THE COURTYARD-

The great door shudders and buckles.

BINGHAM

Once more, men!

The soldiers grip their swords.

An arrow WHIZZES by Bingham's head and strikes his horse's
flank. It SCREAMS and plunges.

INSIDE THE CASTLE-

Grania and her warriors wait, braced for battle.

Past them, in the great room, the women stand tense, holding hollow-eyed babies and grasping children's hands.

IN THE COURTYARD-

A storm of arrows streaks down among the soldiers. A few run for the gate. They are cut down by a second volley.

BINGHAM

Up against the wall, fools! Now!

The soldiers abandon the ram, flee for the protection of the castle wall.

ON THE ROOF-

The men grab the cauldron handles. Some scream as the scorching metal burns through the fabric. Straining, they heave the cauldrons to the wall, faces grimaced in agony.

They tilt the cauldrons up, more men levering them from behind with spears. They hesitate. Michael shouts-

MICHAEL

Go!

They tip the cauldrons over.

IN THE COURTYARD-

The shout draws Bingham's gaze up. He sees the sheet of molten lead descending. He kicks his pain-maddened horse.

BINGHAM

Run!

A white-hot spray of lead catches his cheek and burns the horse. It SCREECHES and bolts, dragging Bingham with it.

A handful of men respond quickly enough. Most are buried, shrieking, under the deadly fall. The rest flee.

One SOLDIER struggles to crawl, his feet vaporized by the molten metal. His screams are unthinkable. Grania slices his throat in passing as she leads her people at a dead run through the abandoned courtyard.

ON THE FIELD-

Bingham, on foot.

BINGHAM

Form ranks!

His remaining soldiers are demoralized and panicky. Some sprint past Bingham and disappear into the forest.

BINGHAM

Form ranks!

Grania and the clansfolk pour out of the gate. The remaining soldiers turn and make a stand, barring the way. Bingham draws his sword.

Grania slashes through the soldiers. Her warriors form a corridor through which the women run, dragging terrified children. They bolt toward the harbor.

Grania sprints past the battle. Her archers follow. On a rise overlooking the harbor, they kneel and wait.

The Irish warriors fight their way through, run for the rise. Bingham leaps to a horse, rallies his cavalry and pursues.

ON THE RISE-

GRANIA

The horses! Aim for the horses! On my signal... Wait...

The warriors run toward them, the cavalry in hot pursuit.

GRANIA

Wait...

The first of the warriors stream through the line. The rest are only feet away, Bingham's cavalry only yards behind.

GRANIA

Now!

The archers open fire. Arrows tear into horseflesh. The beasts buck and SCREAM, dislodging riders. The archers run.

BINGHAM

After them! To the ships!

ON THE BEACH-

Wind whips the waves against the shore. Clansfolk shove boats into the water. Some swim. Women toss their children into boats and grab oars, pulling madly for the caravel.

One boat is upturned, and the occupants swept away. A LONE CHILD is left, clinging to the hull, screeching.

Grania dives into the water, swims to the child. It fights her, completely terrified, as she pulls it from the hull.

Waves swamp her as she struggles toward the ship. Hands reach down, heave her and the child aboard.

Bingham's ships have already hoisted sail, and are bearing down fast. Six great warships converge on the caravel.

GRANIA

Men! To your posts!

Grania's crew rush to position.

GRANIA

Up sail and drag!

Men let out the sail. The ones who hauled the cauldrons leave bloody handprints up the white cloth as it rises, catches the wind, drags them across the deck. One man is thrown overboard, screaming.

The ship shudders and gets underway. Boys run to secure the boom. Grania plies the tiller.

ON BINGHAM'S SHIP-

Bingham stands in the bow. Around him, the other ships pull in. Grania's caravel picks up speed, ahead.

BINGHAM

Open ports!

Ports fly open, and English sailors roll cannons forward.

BINGHAM

Fire!

ON GRANIA'S SHIP-

GRANIA

Coming about!

She shoves the tiller. A cannonball SHRIEKS by and SPLASHES only feet away.

ON BINGHAM'S SHIP-

Bingham watches as his ships maneuver to block. Two collide. A third founders, its sails luffing uselessly.

The other three race to close the gap. Bingham watches like a hawk stooping on its prey.

ON GRANIA'S SHIP-

Grania sails straight for them, her gaze locked on Bingham. He moves slowly to the rail of his ship, staring at her in growing disbelief.

ON BINGHAM'S SHIP-

Grania's manic grin is clearly visible. Her eyes burn with murderous intent.

BINGHAM

She's going to ram us! Tack! Tack,
you imbeciles!

Sailors race to obey. The ship strains to change course.

ON GRANIA'S SHIP-

Grania's eyes are still locked on Bingham.

Meriel wails in panic as the English ship looms dead ahead.

Grania glances at the terrified girl, looks at Bingham, looks at Meriel again. The choice is clear- she can have her vengeance, or...

She pulls the rudder hard.

GRANIA

Tack!

Her men grab the sail's ropes and pull, and the ship veers sharply, turning broadside to Bingham's.

Timbers SQUEAL. The ships scrape along each other. Hatred shimmers on Bingham's face.

ON BINGHAM'S SHIP-

Grania's caravel leaps ahead, opening a wide gap between the clan and their pursuers.

BINGHAM

After her!

The SHIP'S CAPTAIN roars orders. Bingham's ship straightens out and follows.

The other ships close in behind.

ON GRANIA'S SHIP-

Grania hands off the tiller to Michael. She studies the pursuers. Then she moves to the base of the mast.

The ragged band of her followers squats along the deck.

GRANIA

We can outsail them. For now. But we cannot escape them forever.

She looks around at their bloody faces and the shocked, empty eyes of the children.

GRANIA

I know of only one person in the world who can stop them. But there's no guarantee she will.

She waits. The clan is silent.

GRANIA

Every one of us will die. Whether now or later, that is the end we go to. We can die here, fighting like Irishmen. And we can take those dogs down with us.

She pauses. Behind, the six ships draw into formation. The clansfolk stare at her mutely. In their eyes is the tiniest spark of a reawakening hunger.

GRANIA

The choice is yours. Die here. Or die there, as like as not.

(beat)

Will you sail with me?

One by one, they stand, battered men, weary women, even children come slowly to their feet.

With a hoarse cheer, they move into action, hoisting every inch of sail the ship carries.

Grania seizes the tiller, her eyes squinted in determination as she pushes the ship to its limits, pulling ahead of Bingham's fleet.

DISSOLVE TO:

INT. GREENWICH CASTLE COURT ROOM- NIGHT

Grania stands regarding Elizabeth. She carries herself, not as a supplicant, but as a queen in a foreign court.

Elizabeth's eyes narrow.

She beckons Grania forward, then leans back into her seat as if to imply that Grania is neither fearsome nor even of much interest, and turns to speak to her MINISTER.

Grania approaches. When she is four steps away, Elizabeth waves her to a halt and continues her conversation.

Grania interrupts the Queen.

GRANIA

Your Majesty.

Elizabeth looks up, surprised and angry.

Grania drops into a deep curtsey. She pulls out the knife hidden in her dress and presents it, handle first. In the silence, Grania's urgent whisper carries clearly.

GRANIA

Kill me now, if it is your will. I
and mine are in your hands.

Elizabeth stands in rage. Guards move forward, but she holds up a commanding hand. Grania stays, knee bent, knife held in outstretched hands to the Virgin Queen.

The door flies open. Bingham bursts in.

BINGHAM
Arrest that woman!

ELIZABETH
You dare give orders in my court?

BINGHAM
That woman has slaughtered
hundreds of your Majesty's men!

ELIZABETH
What? All by herself?

Bingham freezes, choking with rage.

ELIZABETH
And did you or did you not
unlawfully kill her husband after
he had submitted to Our authority?

Bingham stands defiantly silent.

ELIZABETH
Sir Richard. We are heartily
displeased with your guardianship
of Ireland. You are relieved of
your position as Governor.
Immediately.

Bingham stares at Elizabeth. He strides to Grania and slaps her, knocking her to the ground.

Grania leaps up, knife in hand. The guards seize her.

ELIZABETH
Take her away! Richard Bingham,
you are disgraced in the eyes of
England. Do not return.

Bingham smiles cruelly, bows, and leaves.

INT. GREENWICH CASTLE CELL- NIGHT

The cell door opens. Guards shove Grania in, fix manacles around her wrists and chaining her to the wall.

The door swings shut. Grania closes her eyes.

INT. GREENWICH CASTLE HALL- NIGHT

Elizabeth strides rapidly, furious. LADIES follow. Her minister scurries at her elbow.

MINISTER

Your Majesty, Philip of Spain is still awaiting an answer.

ELIZABETH

You will not speak to me of this!

MINISTER

With all respect, a marriage with him would give you Spain's support in your conquest of Ireland. And relieve you of the threat you face if you reject him, Your Majesty.

ELIZABETH

I will hear no more!

She enters her private chambers. The women follow her in.

INT. ELIZABETH'S BEDCHAMBER- NIGHT

Elizabeth slams the door and puts the knife on her desk.

LADY

Your Majesty?

ELIZABETH

Undress me.

They remove her ornate clothes, wig, and makeup to reveal a woman, still young and very human.

ELIZABETH

Leave me.

LADY

Yes, your Majesty.

They curtsey and leave.

Elizabeth paces, visibly distraught. She sits at the desk, scans state papers. She pushes them aside impatiently.

INT. CELL- NIGHT

Grania stands, chained. She stares into the darkness. Torchlight from the hall flickers across her features. Her face is strained, sweaty and smudged with dirt.

INT. ELIZABETH'S BEDCHAMBER- NIGHT

Elizabeth draws on a robe. Her hair hangs loose down her back. She steps quietly through the next room. Her ladies do not wake.

INT. HALL- NIGHT

The guards snap to attention as Elizabeth comes out.

ELIZABETH

Follow me.

INT. CELL- NIGHT

The door opens. Elizabeth enters. Grania raises her head.

ELIZABETH

Leave us.

GUARD

Your Majesty...

ELIZABETH

She is chained, is she not? Then withdraw.

He does, closing the door.

Elizabeth stands looking at Grania. Grania returns her gaze, then nods at the knife in Elizabeth's hands.

GRANIA

The first man that knife killed was English.

ELIZABETH

Are you simple? Give me one reason
why I should not have you slain.

GRANIA

Because you are the one woman
powerful enough to give me life.

ELIZABETH

You challenge me in front of my
own court, and then expect me to...

GRANIA

Are you queen here, or no?

Elizabeth eyes Grania. She crosses to a stone bench and
sinks down on it, looking weary.

ELIZABETH

Tell me. What does Grania mean, in
your language?

GRANIA

It means Love, your Majesty.

ELIZABETH

Does it? And yet you kill with no
more thought than a...

GRANIA

Than Bingham?

Elizabeth lapses into silence. Grania waits, then speaks.
Her voice is very gentle.

GRANIA

I've loved four men with all my
heart. And all four are dead-
because of the English.

ELIZABETH

Is that why you came? For
vengeance?

GRANIA

Vengeance is a dead man's game.

ELIZABETH

But it would seem you have nothing
left to live for.

GRANIA

Does it?

Elizabeth rises abruptly and crosses the cell. She leans against the door and looks out through the bars.

OUTSIDE THE CELL-

Torches flicker along the wall. Elizabeth looks out through the door. Shadows from the bars fall across her face.

ELIZABETH

And of the two, which would you choose, Grania? Life, or love?

INT. CELL-

GRANIA

If I had to choose? Love.

ELIZABETH

I see.

Elizabeth regards Grania for a long moment, her thoughts unreadable. Her eyes glitter. Then she calls out sharply-

ELIZABETH

Guard!

The guard hurries to let her out. The door CLANGS shut behind her. Grania stares at the door.

EXT. CARAVEL DECK- NIGHT

Grania's folk huddle in the foggy darkness. English ships loom around the caravel. SOLDIERS change guard on the pier.

MICHAEL

And what if she doesn't return?

AILEEN

Hush.

MICHAEL

We need to think of it, Aileen. It'd be impossible to fight our way out of this.

AILEEN

If she doesn't, we're dead anyway.

A child sobs quietly in the stillness.

DISSOLVE TO:

INT. GREENWICH CASTLE CELL- DAY

Guards unshackle Grania. They leave her hands chained.

INT. GREENWICH CASTLE HALL- DAY

The guards lead Grania.

INT. GREENWICH CASTLE COURT ROOM- DAY

Pale sunlight falls through high windows. The guards lead Grania in. She straightens her shoulders.

The guards step aside, revealing Elizabeth, resplendent in jewels and makeup. Elizabeth waits unmoving. At last, Grania remembers to curtsy.

Elizabeth gestures. A guard unlocks Grania's manacles.

ELIZABETH

Escort the Lady O'Malley back to her ship. You will give her provision for her voyage home, where she and all that belong to her will be allowed to live undisturbed for the rest of her days, so long as she raise no hand against Us. Is that clear?

MINISTER

But Your Majesty...

ELIZABETH

Is that clear?

MINISTER

Yes, your Majesty.

He bows deeply. The guards draw into two lines, with a corridor between. Elizabeth steps down to Grania.

ELIZABETH

We will not meet again.

GRANIA

No.

Elizabeth leans in. She whispers.

ELIZABETH

Choose love, Grania. For my sake.

She turns and stiffly reascends her throne. Grania nods. Elizabeth bends her head, just the barest inclination of her chin. Grania turns and walks between the guards.

EXT. STREET- DAY

Soldiers' bootheels echo on cobblestones. A curious CROWD watches. A GRUBBY CHILD peers from behind her MOTHER.

On the ship, tense faces watch Grania's approach.

AILEEN

What happened?

Grania grins and leaps aboard the ship. She grabs Meriel and spins her in the air.

EXT. GREENWICH CASTLE- DAY

A window, high up in the stone wall. Elizabeth gazes out.

A LADY appears behind her.

LADY

Your Majesty, the Court is waiting.

Elizabeth turns away.

EXT. DOONA CASTLE- DAY

In the distance, clansfolk herd sheep toward the harbor. Grania wanders amid the walls of the roofless castle. Birds twitter in the silence.

Grania picks up a piece of cold, twisted lead, runs her fingers over it. Squeezes it tight. Looks toward the lake.

EXT. FOREST- DAY

Grania walks along the path by the lake. Stops at the place where she and Hugh made love. Her face twists with pain.

A NOISE behind her- Grania wheels, draws her sword. There stands Bingham, sword drawn. He saunters toward her.

BINGHAM

I watched you, you know. That day.
You have beautiful breasts.

She watches him warily.

He feints at her. She knocks his sword aside. He slams a fist into her face. She falls, rolls away from him, comes back up, lunges at him. He knocks her sprawling.

BINGHAM

Elizabeth is a fool. You will
wait- a month, a year. And then
you will fight.

GRANIA

I have given my word.

BINGHAM

Your word? The word of a woman is
nothing.

He lunges. She barely avoids the thrust, struggles to keep the razor edge of his blade from her. He knocks her sword flying, slices her shoulder. She gasps. He kicks her in the stomach. She sprawls on the muddy ground.

Amused, Bingham watches as she tries to stand, falls back.

BINGHAM

Little girls shouldn't play with
swords. They might get hurt.

Grania looks at him, her eyes burning with rage. Mud streaks her skin and clothes as she rises to her feet.

Bingham sweeps his sword in a wide arc at her. She ducks underneath the blade, shoves her knife into his stomach. His eyes bulge.

He sinks to his knees, his eyes fixed on her face in shock, falls on his back, his mouth working.

Grania retrieves her sword, looks down at him, then hefts it into the air and drives it- through his body and into the dirt beneath. She strides away.

The shadow of the blade falls across Bingham's dead face.

EXT. SHIP'S DECK- DAY

Grania's caravel rides swift on the waves. Ahead are the familiar bluffs of Clare Island.

Behind her in the ship are folk from all her clans- O'Malley, O'Flaherty, and Burke. Grania stands in the bow, her eyes full of yearning.

EXT. CLARE ISLAND- DAY

Grania kneels by the grave of Seamus. Wild roses grow profusely over the headstone, their heavy blossoms nodding on the soft sea breeze. She runs her hand across the weathered stone.

Her gaze moves over the cottages and fields of Clare. Men and women peacefully at work. Children playing.

Grania stands and looks out to the great reach of the endless ocean. She smiles.

FADE OUT