

TITLE

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A musical

By Your Name here

Contact:  
Your Name  
Address  
Phone  
Email

<< OR >>

Represented by:

## CAST OF CHARACTERS

BOB, an elderly doctor

SUE, a young professor

JOHN, a brilliant student

MARY, a successful attorney

## SETTINGS

Bob's office

Sue's classroom

John's kitchen

Mary's back yard

## PRODUCTION NOTES

Time and place information goes here, along with anything else that will help the reader understand the script.

Production notes go here.

## ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

The author would like to thank various people for their support and encouragement.

"I'm Coming Home" A Musical By Michael J. Finnegan

"WE ARE NOT MEN WHO APOLOGIZE" story by Mike Finnegan, Music  
by Sean Susko and David Finnegan

"I'm Coming Home" A Musical By Michael J. Finnegan

ACT I, SCENE ONE

The stage is black. The first verse of "Bold Fenian Men" is sung acapella by an old man from off stage.

"BOLD FENIAN MEN"

WHEN I WAS A WALKIN, I SPIED AN OLD WOMAN  
A PICKIN YOUNG NETTLES, SHE NE'RE SAW ME COMIN  
I LISTENED A WHILE, TO THE SONG SHE WAS HUMMIN  
GLORY OH, GLORY OH, TO THE BOLD FENIAN MEN

ITS FIFTY LONG YEARS SINCE I SAW THE MOON BEAMIN  
ON STRONG MANLY FORMS, THEIR EYES WITH HOPE GLEAMIN  
I SEE THEM AGAIN, IN ALL MY SAD DREAMIN  
GLORY OH, GLORY OH, TO THE BOLD FENIAN MEN

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LIGHTS COME UP

INT. COURTROOM IN IRELAND - 1848

A judge is sitting on an elevated bench in a darkened courtroom and is wearing a powdered white wig. On either side of the judge is an extended British flag. Three prisoners walk onto the stage with spotlights on them and face the judge with their backs to the audience. There is a desk to the left of the judge occupied by his clerk. Prisoner one is Thomas Francis Meagher, age 25, who is dressed as a gentleman. Prisoner two is Terrence McManus, age 37, dressed as a successful merchant. Prisoner three is Patrick O'Donahue, age 22, who is dressed as a workman.

JUDGE

(reading from a document)

The charges against you men are serious indeed. You have been charged with high treason and incitement to riot against Her Majesty's Government. Testimony has been offered that you did ride throughout various parts of her Majesty's Irish dominion and encourage the inhabitants to erect barricades and resist normal law enforcement efforts. Members of your group, did in fact, open fire on the Royal Irish Constabulary in Ballingary. In addition, co-conspirators from among your group did attempt to steal ships in Scotland for the purpose of transporting Irish insurrectionists from Scotland to Ireland to join in a planned general uprising. In addition, several of your members did engage in plans to blow up Her Majesty's weapon depots at several barracks located throughout Ireland.

(beat)

Now to the business at hand. When I state your name please step forward. Thomas Francis Meagher.

MEAGHER

Here!



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JUDGE

I find you guilty as charged.

(beat)

Terrance McManus

MCMANUS

Here.

JUDGE

Guilty as charged.

(beat)

Patrick O'Donahue

O'DONAHUE

(weakly)

Here.

JUDGE

Guilty as charged.

(beat)

You have removed from this court the burden of proving these allegations, by announcing in advance, through several treasonous publications, your plans to rebel against Her Majesty. However,

(reaching to lift up a pile of papers)

As a matter of post-conviction relief, I have before me writs filed by able barristers seeking clemency from this court.

(exasperated)

Let me just state for the record, that in no other country but Ireland, have men talked treason until they are hoarse and then gone about begging clemency from the courts.

MEAGHER

May I address the court?

JUDGE

You may not!

(beat)

You men have taken your birthright as Englishmen, which is envied the world over, and have repaid England with treachery and murder. We protect this island from pirates, raiders, and foreign powers with our Navy. We have built great universities and brought centers of learning here. We have built ports and railroads and other modern conveniences to serve the general populace. And, yet, this present group of criminals, christened in the press as "The Young Irish Rebellion", would seek to break the nearly fifty year old union between England and Ireland. Tomorrow, you'll be given a chance to directly address the court before you are sentenced for your actions.

(MORE)

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JUDGE (CONT'D)

Gentlemen, I suggest that you collect your thoughts and contemplate your fate. Good day.

The Bailiff moves to escort the defendants off stage and as they are exiting, the judge raises his right hand which causes the bailiff to halt the prisoners progress.

JUDGE (CONT'D)

Leave Meagher. Take the others to the holding cell but leave Meagher. Wait outside until I call for you.

The bailiff and the others leave the stage.

JUDGE (CONT'D)

Explain to me, Mr. Meagher, how all of this has come about?

MEAGHER

Your honor, I'm not exactly sure what you mean.

Judge stands up, walks down to the stage and removes his wig.

JUDGE

I need to know, damn it, how someone with your background could get caught up with this lot of idiots and be drawn into this bungling plot, conceived undoubtedly in a pint of ale, without even the slightest chance of success?

MEAGHER

Your honor, Ireland is my home and these men are my brothers. We intend to form a free and united Ireland.

JUDGE

A free and united Ireland? Would you unite Catholics and Protestants?

MEAGHER

Yes, your honor. As you know, The Young Ireland movement is made up of Catholics and Protestants.

JUDGE

You say Catholics and Protestants, but don't you mean Protestants and Catholics. After All, the Young Ireland leaders, Smith O'Brien and John Mitchell are both Anglicans, whose church considers Catholics to be heretics.

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MEAGHER

(laughs out loud)

Is it the thought of united Irishmen that frightens you then?

JUDGE

(clearly annoyed)

You insult my intelligence and call your own into question! You are a boy of 21, but I have been a barrister for over fifty years. The last Rising, about which you write a great deal about, but know nothing, was led by men calling themselves United Irishmen.

MEAGHER

I know enough! The 98 leader, Theobald Wolfe Tone, was an Anglican who believed co-operation between religions in Ireland was the only means of settling grievances.

JUDGE

All that is well and good (taking off his glasses) but we killed 18,000 United Irishmen then...the rest became divided Irishmen and united Englishmen. Today, I have nine men in my docket. That is hardly enough to justify building a gallows. We may have to hang you from a bridge. Your uprising is more of a nuisance than a menace. Why should anyone care what you have to say?

MEAGHER

I have no doubt, that one day the oppressed of this Island will rise up in mass and achieve this goal.

JUDGE

Wake up lad! Your father is the Lord Mayor of Waterford. Since the day of your arrest, he has furnished your cell with furniture and books from his home and arranged for food and drink for you and your companions. You are not part of the oppressed masses. You're self-deluded. You are more of a class traitor than a traitor to England. These men, who you call your followers, cannot even pronounce your name.

(beat)

What is it that they call you?

MEAGHER

Mar, they call me Mar.

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JUDGE

Does it not bother you that these people have never learned to pronounce the letter "G" in your name or to recognize that when two vowels come together in a word, the first is dominant? You attended Stonyhearth College, why haven't you tutored your fellow revolutionaries?

Meagher stares at the floor and the Judge begins to circle him.

JUDGE (CONT'D)

They may say Mar, but that does not change the objective reality that your name is pronounced "May Ger".

MEAGHER

(laughs softly)

Only the English would insist on dictating the proper pronunciation of a man's name whom they intend to hang.

JUDGE

Do you wish to die then?

MEAGHER

No, but I am prepared to die for Ireland.

JUDGE

Theobald Wolfe Tone, he too was prepared to die for Ireland in 98 but he flinched at the end and slit his own throat.

MEAGHER

(Meagher looks up startled.)

Why do you do this?

JUDGE

For your own good. Wolfe Tone was a politician. He was not a "United Irishman". There are no United Irishmen. There are only Englishmen and traitors. In 98, the vast majority of military in this country were Catholics - practicing catholic who were faithful to Catholic clergy and were also faithful to the British Empire. Today, the vast majority of police and military in Ireland are Catholics. How do you think the uprising in 98 and your own little disturbance were put down?

MEAGHER

The Irish want no part of being English.

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JUDGE

Those are words, but the facts are different. For God's sakes man, the French fleet showed up off Bantry Bay in 98 with 18,000 troops which they intended to land and assist in "freeing the Irish from English rule." Your hero, Wolfe Tone, he was on board with them.

MEAGHER

(moaning)

Everyone knows this story. England was spared the trouble of dealing with the French by the weather.

JUDGE

Hardly the weather. Wolfe Tone had assured the French that 100,000 United Irishmen would meet the French fleet and join in a general uprising. ....Not a solitary soul appeared on the banks of Bantry Bay to greet the French. The fleet waited ten days and then left. The could have waded ashore.

MEAGHER

I am aware of the failings of past risings but it does not deter me.

JUDGE

I wasn't done. The Irish who actually observed the French fleet off the coast at Bantry Bay advised the authorities in Cork and began to form self-defense units. The alarm was sounded and troops were marshalled to face the threat but I have to tell you something that I feel comfortable knowing you will take to your grave. If the French had landed they could have taken the entire Island. All of the provinces would have been occupied before enough reinforcements could have arrived.

MEAGHER

(moaning again)

God, why do you do this?

JUDGE

For your own good. You have come under the spell of politicians who want to establish a separate nation that they can rule. There are no "United Irishmen", there are only Catholic Irishmen and Protestant Irishmen and without the mantle of the British rule of law there will be chaos. There are only United Englishmen, Catholics and Protestants, working together for the common weel. Be careful what you let yourself believe.

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MEAGHER

I only believe the truth. I believe that for too long, Ireland has been held in slavery by England, its people enslaved, its land exploited, its cattle stolen, its produce confiscated and sold to foreigners to enrich the crown. These are facts, not philosophy. They are documented in newspapers around the country.

JUDGE

Newspapers are read by servants, street sweepers, peddlers, and pothogs. Do you count yourself among those that believe the rubbish published in these papers?

MEAGHER

I believe the truth. I have seen with my own eyes what has gone on.

JUDGE

So, you have seen with your eyes have you? Have you ever read the Belfast Morning News, The Ulsterman, or the Morning Post?

MEAGHER

No.

JUDGE

If you had, you would be familiar with the fact that in Ireland commerce is flourishing, education has improved, the vast majority of its citizens are prospering under English rule. I believe this and so do the majority of your countrymen.

MEAGHER

Then why do you find it necessary to hang Irishmen on a regular basis?

JUDGE

We do not hang Irishmen. We hang criminals convicted of High Treason.

MEAGHER

Irish patriotism is British treason!

JUDGE

Irish patriotism **is** British patriotism! We are the same nation. You are deluded.

MEAGHER

If we are the same nation, then why is there no famine in England?

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JUDGE

Because in England there is more industry, more planning, more access to commerce. Ireland is backward. There is no distribution system...for God's sake, you don't even have a fishing fleet.

(incredulous)

A nation in the middle of the Atlantic Ocean with no fishing fleet! It's almost like you planned the famine yourselves.

MEAGHER

(more heated)

It's 1848 and the potato blight has destroyed the main staple for the majority of the Irish, but there is more than enough of other food grown here to feed everyone and you know it.

JUDGE

But who owns that food? Merchants and farmers own the grain, the corn, the farm animals, all of it! If the Irish had accumulated enough wealth to purchase the grain raised here, it would be sold here. The market for the grain is overseas, so the goods are sold overseas. Free markets determine where food is sold. It is precisely the free market which will eventually free this Island from its own poverty.

MEAGHER

Gentlemen farmers, English masters, British absentee landlords, ruling over Irish land have responded to this famine by exporting farm animals and grain, **grown here in Ireland**, to avoid theft by a dying population.

JUDGE

(shaking his head)

That is an unrelated business decision that does not concern this court.

MEAGHER

Precisely.

JUDGE

(exasperated)

Precisely what?

MEAGHER

The fact that the Irish are dying on the side of the road by the hundreds of thousands like cattle, with grass in their mouths instead of food, does not concern this court.

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JUDGE

You are a hopeless fool. If the surplus population must die because they cannot produce enough food to sustain themselves, then they must die. Eventually, the number of people and the amount of food available will balance out. One takes no pleasure in making that observation, but it **is** an observable fact. You are of the merchant class, you can see these things for yourself.

Judge returns to his desk and  
busies himself with paper work.

(without looking up)

Look, if you are simply prepared to die for your beliefs, save the hangman the trouble and kill yourself. Children still sing songs to Wolfe Tone.

MEAGHER

(laughing softly)

He just wanted to be shot.

JUDGE

What was that?

MEAGHER

Wolfe Tone, he just wanted to be shot. He didn't want to hang. He slit his throat to avoid being hanged.

JUDGE

(putting down his pen)

Does hanging hold some dread for you also?

MEAGHER

If it ended this conversation, it would be a relief.

Judge stands up and walks to  
Meagher.

JUDGE

There are laws in this country. Without the Rule of Law, we are left with zealots like yourself assassinating their perceived political opponents. Without law there is chaos.

MEAGHER

Brian Boru was crowned High King of Ireland 850 years ago. He decreed no English laws.



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JUDGE

You trace your origins to a mythical figure.  
Brian Boru, if he existed at all, could neither  
read nor write. We are the keepers of history.  
We record the events of note which occur on  
this Island.

MEAGHER

And what a sterling record you've chronicled!  
Two hundred years ago, Cromwell slaughtered his  
tens of thousands. You confiscated our best  
farmland and seized our secured fortresses in  
1691.

(shaking his manacles for emphasis)

You sold 20,000 children into slavery after you  
murdered their parents.

JUDGE

Please, spare me your misperceptions of the  
past. While subduing the savage natives of this  
Island, it became necessary to employ certain  
measures to insure the peace and prosperity of  
the nation. You should be grateful these  
measures were implemented.

MEAGHER

You honestly advocate killing people for their  
own good?

JUDGE

Killing people, (smirking) would be something  
about which you would be entirely ignorant.  
During your "uprising" you publicly advocated  
the use of the sword to free Ireland.

(pause)

Indeed, the rabble refer to you as "Meagher of  
the Sword". What is curious to me is that while  
you publicly encouraged the masses to rise up  
and strike the British Empire, you personally  
never raised a sword against anyone. Are you  
"Meagher of Sword" or simply "Meagher of the  
Word"?

MEAGHER

I will confess to the revolutionary crime of  
never having taken a life,

(extending his hands)

but if you will just loosen these fetters, I  
promise you I will make immediate amends.

JUDGE

(returning once more to his seat and his  
paperwork)

If rhetoric were warfare, England would be  
chaffing under Irish rule. Tomorrow is your  
sentencing.

(MORE)

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JUDGE (CONT'D)

You can use your fine English education to either present a reasoned and impassioned renunciation of violence and hope to spare lives of your countrymen, or you can employ your rhetoric to spread venom and seal the fate of you and your comrades. Either way, don't disappoint me with your presentation.

(raising his voice)

Bailiff, remove this man.

JUDGE (CONT'D)

Bailiff enters stage and escorts Meagher off. Bailiff returns alone.

BAILIFF

Your honor, what shall I write in the sentencing memorandum?

JUDGE

(without looking up from his paperwork)

All of the defendants shall be hung by the neck until dead and then drawn and quartered.

BAILIFF

There will be diplomatic pressure from overseas to spare their lives.

JUDGE

(looking up from paperwork)

You have grown prescient while serving in my courtroom. There will indeed be a loud outcry from the public and the Queen may well commute their sentences to life imprisonment at the penal colony in Australia.

(pause)

One way or the other, however, we will send them to hell and they can never return home.

[The judge begins to write furiously and then pauses and looks up inspired by an idea.]

Tonight, I want you to go to see Meagher in his cell. Reason with him. Tell him he must seek clemency to save the life of the youngest, O'Donahue. Appeal to his emotions. Use any other leverage you can think of.

BAILIFF

Will you spare him, your honor?

JUDGE

No, but in the event the Queen commutes his sentence, it will appear she is sparing a penitent, not a revolutionary.

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BAILIFF

Very well your honor.

END OF SCENE ONE

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ACT ONE - SCENE TWO

INT. PRISON CELL - NIGHT

THERE IS DINNER ON THE TABLE.  
MEAGHER, MCMANUS, AND O'DONAHUE  
ARE EATING, DRINKING BEER, AND  
TALKING LOUDLY

MCMANUS

It's not right. They shouldn't have tried us  
all on the same day. It would have served the  
uprising better if we had individual trials. We  
would have gotten more attention for our cause.  
Maybe they'll hang us on separate days.

O'DONAHUE

Give it the hell up, will you Mac? These  
bastards will do whatever they want to do.

(beat)

God, I wish that I could have died in the  
fight.

MCMANUS

Well you didn't and we're here. Drink up.  
(downs his pint)

O'DONAHUE

(ignoring McManus)

We never had a chance. We had next to no  
weapons and we counted too heavily on the  
population rising up with us once the fight  
began.

(pause)

They just stood there and stared at us. One  
woman, who could as well have been my own  
mother, threw the contents of her crap pan on  
my head as the English led me to jail.

MCMANUS

The people were confused. We hadn't talked this  
up enough.

O'DONAHUE

No Mac. I think we were trying to liberate the  
wrong damned country. We would have had an  
easier time sparking an uprising among the  
Irish living in London.

MEAGHER

You certainly picked a terrible time to lose  
your idealism. You would use our last day on  
earth to lament our piss pour prior planning?

(pause)

Come on now! We have to use our time wisely. I  
have to give a docket speech tomorrow.

(MORE)

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MEAGHER (CONT'D)

My last chance to defame the Empire. Give me some ideas. I want to leave a legacy.

MCMANUS

That is rich. They could cut your head off and you would keep talking and you want us to help **you** with your docket speech.

MEAGHER

They will cut my head off, and my arms and legs too, after they hang me, but I will have my say before then.

MCMANUS

You know the bloody history of the English in Ireland as well as anyone. Drag their nose through it.

MEAGHER

It will do no good. They know the history better than we. They wrote it and they're proud of it.

There is a loud banging on the cell door followed by the voice of a guard.

GUARD (OFFSTAGE)

Visitor! The Judge's bailiff wishes to visit with you. Make yourself presentable.

O'DONAHUE

For God's sake, you'd think they'd leave us alone on our last night. I'm not speaking with him. I have to take a leak anyway. Tell me when he is gone.

O'Donahue picks up a large pan and walks across the stage. He encounters the bailiff as he is admitted to the cell.

BAILIFF

(to O'Donahue)

Where are you going?

O'DONAHUE

To shake hands with the unemployed.

O'Donahue arrives at the end of the stage, kneels down, puts the pan in front of him, pulls a blanket over his head for privacy, and urinates in the pan.

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MEAGHER

Bailiff, I'm so glad you could visit. I'm confident, and hopeful, that there will be no Bailiffs where we are going.

(motioning to the table)

Can I offer you a drink.

BAILIFF

This is not the time for levity. I am here to urge you to plead for clemency.

MEAGHER

And why would it be in your good nature to urge me to plead for clemency?

BAILIFF

(gesturing towards O'Donahue)

I do this for him. Renounce violence, admit your guilt, and seek clemency from the Queen. Time is short and, at the very least, the youngest member of your group may be spared the gallows as a gesture of benevolence by the Her Majesty.

MEAGHER

It's not the Queen's clemency I'll be begging for. I'd sooner drink her bathwater than seek her clemency.

BAILIFF

I was hoping you would have a change of heart. I was mistaken.

(turning to go and then stopping)

I almost forgot. I have a letter for O'Donahue. It is from his wife, Colleen.

The Bailiff hands the letter to Meagher and exits. O'Donahue hurries across the stage and takes the letter from Meagher's hand, retreats to the side of the stage and bends down to read the letter. As he reads, a spotlight on the right side of the stage goes up on Colleen. She is speaking the words of her letter to the audience as O'Donahue reads the same.

COLLEEN

Damn it Pat, it's over. Your long night talks with all of those ruffian men. Your reading, writing, and public speaking on behalf of the future of Ireland, it's all led to this. We haven't seen you for almost two years.

(pause before raising her voice)

You have no right. What of our children.

(MORE)

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COLLEEN (CONT'D)

They need you more than Ireland needs another martyr. What were you thinking? This isn't a game. They will kill you tomorrow. You must renounce this Irish madness and plead for your life and the lives of your men. You can go to America and start fresh. We can cross the ocean. My sister said they are hiring miners in Pennsylvania. I don't want to sleep alone anymore. Patrick, think of me. Think of your children.

Spotlight on Colleen goes dark.  
Spotlight on O'Donahue goes up.  
O'Donahue sings "Sweet Colleen" by  
David Finnegan

"SWEET COLLEEN"

[BY DAVID FINNEGAN]

LEAVE IRELAND BEHIND TO GO WORK IN A PENNSYLVANIA MINE  
WHERE THE DAY IS DARK AND THE NIGHT IS FULL OF FIRE  
THROUGH THESE DARK SKIES LOOKING IN YOUR BRIGHT BLUE EYES  
JUMP BRIGHTNESS DISAPPEARS WITHIN THE NIGHT

ON IRELAND'S GREEN SHORES  
YOU WAVE YOUR HANDS AT ME AS THOUGH I'M DYING  
THE WINDS THAT FILL THE SAILS  
THE THOUGHTS OF YOU INSIDE OF ME ARE DYING

EVERY NIGHT I CLOSE MY AND GET A VISION OF YOU  
MY SWEET COLLEEN I'M COMING HOME SOON

ITS BEEN TWO LONG YEARS MY MEMORIES SO UNCLEAR  
HOW MUCH HAVE THE CHILDREN GROWN  
THIS PRISON CELL, WON'T LOCK ME IN THIS ENGLISH HELL  
TO AMERICAY A PARDON WAITS FOR ME.

ON IRELAND'S GREEN SHORES  
YOU WAVE YOUR HANDS AT ME AS THOUGH I'M DYING  
THE WINDS BLOW THROUGH THE SAILS  
THE THOUGHTS OF YOU INSIDE OF ME ARE DYING  
EVERY NIGHT I CLOSE MY AND GET A VISION OF YOU  
MY SWEET COLLEEN I'M COMING HOME SOON

ON IRELAND'S GREEN SHORES  
YOU WAVE YOUR HANDS AT ME AS THOUGH I'M DYING  
THE WINDS BLOW THROUGH THE SAILS  
THE THOUGHTS OF YOU INSIDE OF ME ARE DYING  
EVERY NIGHT I CLOSE MY AND GET A VISION OF YOU  
MY SWEET COLLEEN I'M COMING HOME SOON

The spotlight on O'Donahue goes  
down and the spotlight on the  
other side of the stage goes up on  
the court room.

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The Judge and the Bailiff are walking quickly to their respective chairs and the Judge is adjusting his wig.

JUDGE

(speaking to himself)

It is always a compromise when deciding whether to condemn men to death. It would be far better to be rid of them but at the same time, one adds to the list of martyrs with each execution which inevitably produces another bad song or poem which we must all pretend to revere in requiem. Still, in this matter, it's almost as if Meagher wants to die. Should I deny him his wish? It is a difficult decision.

Spotlight on the center stage as Meagher, wearing manacles walks in followed by a [Death Dancer]. The Death Dancer dances around Meagher as he gives his gallows speech.

MEAGHER

To lift this island up, to make her a benefactor to humanity instead of being the meanest beggar in the world, to restore her to her native powers and her ancient constitution, this has been my ambition, and this ambition has been my crime. Judged by the law of England, I know this crime entails the penalty of death, but the history of Ireland explains this crime, and justifies it. I hope to be able with a pure heart and perfect composure to appear before a higher tribunal, a tribunal where a judge of infinite goodness and justice will preside, and where, my lords, many of the judgments of this court will be reversed.

Spotlight on Meagher goes dark and he exits as the dancers vanish. Stage lights go up on Judge and his clerk.

CLERK

(to the Judge)

Your honor, death is the only fitting punishment for this double crime of treason and insolence from the docket, but the political reality is that the executions will probably not be carried out.

JUDGE

I am aware of the political realities of this case.

(MORE)



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JUDGE (CONT'D)

I wish, however, for them to contemplate their fate for a night before I announce the grant of clemency.

CLERK

Then you have heard?

JUDGE

Yes, I have received word from London, that Her Majesty wishes to commute the death sentences of these nine members of the Young Ireland Rebellion. It appears that due to the relatively small loss of life, and because of diplomatic pressure being applied by the United States government, the Queen has commuted their sentences to banishment for life to the penal colony in Australia.

CLERK

(shaking his head in disbelief)

But why do the Americans care about Irish rebels?

JUDGE

Votes, my young man, the American government needs the votes of Irish-American immigrants to remain in power so they curry favor with this electorate by interfering with the administration of justice in Ireland.

CLERK

You don't seem terribly upset.

JUDGE

I'm not. Our penal colony in Darwin, Australia is 10,853 nautical miles from Ireland. We have seen the last of Thomas Francis Meagher and his "rebellion". He will fade from memory. He will die with a whimper in a remote corner of the earth and no one will care. The merchants, priests, and engineers who actually keep this island operating will take no note.

Lights go down on the courtroom and go up on the prison cell on the other side of the stage.

INT. PRISON CELL - NIGHT

Meagher, O'Donahue, and McManus are having what they believe to be their last meal on earth. They are laughing loudly as the scene opens. They are drinking beer.

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MCMANUS

It's not so much the thought of hanging and drawn and quartering that bothers me. What really made me squeamish was when His Honor said

(feigning a British accent)

"That afterwards your head shall be severed from your body, your body divided into four quarters, to be disposed of as Her Majesty shall think fit."

(looking around dumbfoundedly)

Now what is God's name would Her Majesty Victoria, by the Grace of God, of the United Kingdom of Great Britain and Ireland, Queen, Defender of the Faith, Empress of India, think fit to do with my severed head? It gives me the beejesus to think about it.

MEAGHER

She will use it for a royal spittoon no doubt.

MCMANUS

You're not content to let the Brits hang and dismember me? You have to torture me with that mental image. Her spitting into my severed head lying on the floor.

(pause)

Do you think my severed head will be able to look up her dress?

MEAGHER

If you do you will be the first man to have done that.

(laughter)

MEAGHER (CONT'D)

Relax, Mac, in the end, all they can do is kill us.

MCMANUS

Now there's a comforting thought. Here I am, sitting here, thinking we are in real trouble and all they can really do, is kill us.

O'DONAHUE

Do you think it hurts for long...hanging that is?

(The laughter stops and the mood changes)

MEAGHER

Not for long Patrick. When you drop, you'll close your eyes and when you open them you'll be face to face with the living God.

O'DONAHUE

Will he be angry with us?

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MCMANUS

(interjects)

Hell no! It's not like we're committing suicide or anything. We're dying for Mother Ireland. We're dying for our faith.

O'DONAHUE

That's what I mean. It's not like we have the croup or anything. We're not exactly dying. It's more like we're being killed...like we went out of our way to be killed.

MCMANUS

We are martyrs for the Irish cause. Heaven is sure to welcome us!

O'DONAHUE

(drawing closer to McManus)

Mac, save that for the obituary. What I would like to know is whether the fact we went out on our way to court disaster will have any bearing on our eternal destination?

(pause)

And speaking of suicide, wasn't it you who recruited me for this rising by telling me it was a suicide mission?

MCMANUS

(stands up and confronts O'Donahue)

Don't you think it is tad late for that introspection?

Meagher stands up and steps  
between McManus and O'Donahue

MEAGHER

Patrick, you're supposed to be hung before you're drawn and quartered. If you keep up this discussion, Mac's going to rip your arms and legs off without the benefit of a proper hanging.

O'Donahue slumps down in a chair

O'DONAHUE

Face it, we're dead men. Every time we quit laughing and I think about what is about to happen, a great feeling of weakness sweeps over me and I tremble. Mar, am I a coward?

MEAGHER

No Patrick, you're not a coward. If you were, you wouldn't be in this cell with me. This is no different from the day of the rising. We were all scared and we all expected to die. That was half of the problem.

(MORE)

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MEAGHER (CONT'D)

While we were willing to die for our cause, we had no cold blooded killers on our side... just frightened men trying to do what's right.

O'DONAHUE

I am afraid to die.

MEAGHER

I am too, Patrick. I am too.

Meagher sits next to O'Donahue and puts his arm around him to comfort him.

O'DONAHUE

It's not just the thought of dying that is bothering me. I...know...that I'm serving my country. It's ...it's... my wife, my children. What will they do without me?

MEAGHER

There is a long line of men who went before you and have done the same. Your children will know you were a hero...a martyr.

O'Donahue pulls away from Meagher and grabs fistfuls of Meagher's shirt.

O'DONAHUE

Mar, don't let them kill me. I don't want to die their way. Wolfe Tone slit his own throat to deny them the satisfaction of killing him. My gut is frozen at the thought of them killing me. Slit my throat Meagher. Do it! Slit my throat!

Meagher takes O'Donahue by the arms and shakes him.

MEAGHER

Damn it Patrick, don't do this now. We can't let them change us this way. Everyone is going to die some day. We just happen to know that for us, it is tomorrow. Come help me finish this beer my father sent.

Meagher pours three mugs of beer from a pitcher and hands one to O'Donahue and McManus and proposes a toast.

MEAGHER (CONT'D)

To Ireland and all that unites us.

"I'm Coming Home" A Musical By Michael J. Finnegan

They drink the mugs straight down which takes a full 20 seconds of silence. They then slam the mugs down and begin a song ensemble.

OUR FATAL DREAM  
WRITTEN BY: SEAN SUSKO

**MCMANUS**

(BOYS ITS TIME TO)[DM] BE HONEST, I ALREADY FEEL THE NOOSE  
[C]AROUND MY NECK.  
(AND LOOK AT WHERE THE) [BB] TRUTH GOT US. IN A PRISON CELL  
[A]WITH TWO DEAD WALKING MEN.

**ODONAHUE**

(WHY COULDN'T THEY HAVE)[DM] JUST SHOT US? HISTORY WILL WIPE  
(C)AWAY OUR NAMES.  
SO TELL ME WHAT YOU THINK [BB] THOMAS. WILL OUR EXECUTIONS  
[A]ALL HAVE BEEN IN VAIN?

**MEAGHER**

[DM]GENTLEMEN, GENTLEMEN, GRAB AHOLD OF [A#6] DIGNITY  
[A7]TONIGHT.  
[DM]ITS NOT FOR TREASON BUT FOR FREEDOM WE [A#6] WILL  
[A7]DIE.  
[BB]UNDERSTAND THAT IRELAND, NEEDED MEN LIKE US [F] TO START  
A FIGHT.  
[A] AND MEN LIKE US DO NOT APOLO[A7]GIZE.

**MCMANUS**

(IF WE FOUGHT FOR) FREEDOM, [BB] WHY ARE WE THE ONES TO  
[F]RISE AND TAKE THE FALL?

**ODONAHUE**

(IF THIS IS OUR) DUTY [BB] HOW DO YOU SEE THIS AS [A] VICTORY  
AT [A7] ALL?

**MEAGHER**

[DM] GENTLEMEN, GENTLEMEN, THINK A LITTLE [A#6] DIFFERENTLY  
[A7]TONIGHT.  
[DM] IT WOULD BE BENEATH US TO LET ENGLAND [[A#6] HEAR US  
[A7] CRY.  
[BB](WE) FOUGHT FOR PEACE AND LIBERTY, GAVE THEM [F] ALL A  
GIFT THEY WON'T RETURN.  
[A] THE GREEN AND WHITE AND ORANGE FLAG [A7] TO BURN.

**MUSICAL INTERLUDE**

[DM] [BB] [F] [A]

**MCMANUS**

[BB] AND WRITTEN IN THE PAPERS WE'LL BE TRAITORS...

**MEAGHER (SARCASM)**

...[F]BREAKS THIS REBEL'S HEART

**ODONAHUE**

[BB](AND KNOWING THEY'LL USE) HORSES ON OUR CORPSES...

**MEAGHER (SARCASM)**

...IS JUST [A] TEARING [ME] ME APART.

**MEAGHER**

[DM]GENTLEMEN, SETTLE IN. HAVE A LITTLE [A#6] DRINK WITH  
[A7]ME TONIGHT.  
[DM] TOAST UNTO A REBEL FLAME THAT WE [A#6] HELPED TO  
[A7]IGNITE.

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[BB]GRAB YOUR CUP AND FILL IT UP AND LET THEM HEAR [F]YOU SCREAM.

[BB]THAT WE DEFENDED IRELAND AND IT HAS BEEN OUR [A] FA[A7]TAL [DM]DREAM.

Music fades. There is a loud knock on the cell door.

GUARD (OFFSTAGE)

You have a visitor, make yourselves presentable.

The cell door opens and the Judge's clerk is admitted.

CLERK

I come bearing exceedingly good news. Your sentences have been commuted. Queen Victoria, in her benevolence, has chosen to spare your lives. You will serve life at hard labor in the penal colony of Australia.

The three inmates grab fistfuls of each other's clothing but attempt to mute their celebration because of the clerk's presence.

MEAGHER

Why this change of heart on the part of the government? Would our deaths not serve the interests of the Queen?

McManus tries to physically restrain Meagher by grabbing his shirt from behind to prevent him from getting any closer to the clerk.

CLERK

You leave as soon as suitable steerage can be arranged on a prison ship.

Clerk departs, door is locked behind him, and McManus releases Meagher.

MCMANUS

I'm sorry you took the news so hard about not being hung tomorrow. Hell man, we're alive.

MEAGHER

I may kill you myself. Don't you see that they spared our lives for their own political motives.

(MORE)

"I'm Coming Home" A Musical By Michael J. Finnegan

MEAGHER (CONT'D)

Now they will send us to the furthest reaches of the Empire and wait for us to die quietly. I don't want to die either but when I die I want it to have some meaning.

MCMANUS

I don't think I've ever seen a man take it so hard to find out he is **not** going to be hung, drawn and quartered in the morning.

Meagher turns away from McManus and O'Donahue approaches Meagher.

O'DONAHUE

We can still fight! We can write letters. We can petition for clemency while planning a prison break. We can publish a prison newspaper. We can be an Irish pain in the ass.

(pause)

Come on Mar, now there is hope I may see my children some day.

MEAGHER

You're right Patrick. This is good news. Death can wait. We will make the best of this opportunity. We will organize the convicts, recruit sons of Erin to our cause, seize the moment.

(pause)

Although I could imagine the look on your face had I slit your throat just before the clerk's arrival.

**END SCENE TWO**

"I'm Coming Home" A Musical By Michael J. Finnegan

**ACT 1, SCENE THREE**



"I'm Coming Home" A Musical By Michael J. Finnegan

SCENE THREE TAKES PLACE THREE YEARS LATER. THERE IS A BRIDGE WHICH SPANS A SMALL STREAM IN THE AUSTRALIAN COUNTRYSIDE. IN THE MIDDLE OF THE BRIDGE THERE IS A TABLE SET FOR TWO. MEAGHER AND MCMANUS ARE SITTING AT THE TABLE ENJOYING A HEARTY LUNCH. THEY ARE ALSO DRINKING BEER AND TALKING LOUD.

MCMANUS

Why do you suppose they sent us here. Half the residents are petty Irish criminals who, with one word from you, would go AWOL and try to return to Ireland for another go at the rebellion.

MEAGHER

No where to run, Mac. This place is so vast and isolated, it is one big jail. What they want more than anything else is for us to live and die quietly, separated, in this immense expanse of wilderness. This parole of prisoners to separate districts is designed to muzzle us, isolate us, settle us down, and domesticate us.

MCMANUS

I am mostly just bored. It just seems that the authorities could have done much worse to make our lives hell.

MEAGHER

I talked to a clerk who works at the prison and he said that a letter from the colonial office arrived before we did instructing Governor Denison

(feigning a British accent)

"In consideration of the prisoners' superior rank in society, the colonial office strongly recommends that they not be immediately subjected to hard labor. They should instead be granted special parole status, each to a separate district in the vast expanse to prevent fraternization. If they violate their parole, he can be placed back in confinement among the ordinary criminals."

(returning to normal accent)

Technically, I think that what we are doing presently is a violation of our parole.

MCMANUS

The British crushed the last rebellion with an iron fist and made Wolfe Tone a Catholic Saint. They are trying to do something different with us. This is the iron fist inside a velvet glove. We're alive but what can we do in Australia?

"I'm Coming Home" A Musical By Michael J. Finnegan

MEAGHER

Wait, grow stronger, find a way out. What the good Judge didn't realize was, that by sending us here, he didn't bring down the curtain on the Young Ireland Rebellion, he merely made the stage larger. The struggle continues the same. To continue, however, we must escape.

MCMANUS

To where?

MEAGHER

To America. My dream is to raise an Irish Army of Liberation among the Irish immigrants there.

A waitress, Catherine Bennett, a beautiful twenty year old, brings more beer on a tray. She collects the empty glasses while and smiles openly at Meagher.

CATHERINE

Will you be needing anything else, Mr. Meagher?

MEAGHER

No thank you Catherine. Tell Mr. Lackner that the lunch was grand and we appreciate him making these accommodations for us.

CATHERINE

I will tell him you said that but you should know that he feels privileged to help you in any way. Good day Mr. Meagher.

MEAGHER

Good day Catherine.

Catherine exits and steals on last look over her shoulder at Meagher as she leaves.

MCMANUS

I see you've been dreaming about things other than your Irish Army of American Immigrants.

MEAGHER

I've been exiled Mac, not neutered.

MCMANUS

That's all well and fine but remember, you're the one talking about getting out of here and escaping to America. It won't serve you well to sink down roots if you intend to flee at the first opportunity.

"I'm Coming Home" A Musical By Michael J. Finnegan

MEAGHER

It's too late for that. She will have to come with me.

MCMANUS

Why in God's name would you take her with you?

MEAGHER

Well, that's partially why I wanted to meet with you today. Catherine and I are going to get married.

MCMANUS

(stunned)

She is Brian Bennett's daughter!

MEAGHER

I've spoken to Brian and he has agreed to allow us to marry.

MCMANUS

Brian has agreed to let you marry.

(beat)

That's rich. Brian isn't a revolutionary like us Meagher. He is a self-respecting highway man. He robbed coaches in Ireland at gunpoint before the Brits shipped him off to this end of the earth. You...you... are different.

MEAGHER

And she was ill born but here we are, two specks on this immense continent, and we make each other happy - at least for a time.

MCMANUS

I've got to admit, on the road to raising an Irish Army in America 6000 miles away, marrying a Highway man's daughter is a minor detour.

MEAGHER

You laugh, but I will get there. It's a question of persistence and vision.

An Australian police officer walks onto the bridge.

POLICEMAN

Meagher, why do you push so hard? You know very well you are restricted to your district by the conditions of your parole.

(turning to McManus)

And you, McManus, you are restricted to your district also.

"I'm Coming Home" A Musical By Michael J. Finnegan

MEAGHER

Are we not in our respective districts,  
officer?

POLICEMAN

Aye, you know you are but you also know that  
parole is not set up to allow you to erect a  
table on a bridge spanning tow districts for  
the sole purpose of fraternizing with another  
parolee!

MCMANUS

The Queen herself, will no doubt, have a bonus  
for you for this frightful discovery. Good work  
officer, you've interrupted lunch on a bridge.

POLICEMAN

I will report this to the magistrate and he  
will revoke your parole. I hope you enjoyed  
your lunch, you will be working on a road crew  
for a month for this.

The policeman walks off stage  
quickly while Meagher and McManus  
laugh at him.

MCMANUS

How did you set this up anyway?

MEAGHER

Lackner, the pub owner, he knew my father back  
in Waterford. I convinced him to serve us lunch  
on this bridge so we could talk.

MCMANUS

Do you think you could have been any more  
conspicuous?

Meagher sips his beer.

MEAGHER

That the simple act of eating lunch on a bridge  
can cause a problem for the British  
Authorities, somehow makes the food taste  
better, doesn't it?

MCMANUS

God, I am going to miss you when the finally  
hang you.

MEAGHER

Until they do.

Meagher raises his glass and they  
both take a brief drink.

"I'm Coming Home" A Musical By Michael J. Finnegan

MCMANUS

Tell me Meagher, why does your father continue to support you when you cause him so much trouble?

MEAGHER

He would never admit it, but he envies me. He hates the Brits worse than I do, but he knows that their war ships would level the port of Waterford at the first sign of trouble. He knows it and he is too practical to endanger the whole town. So, instead, he watches me act out what he would love to do. That's my theory, ... or at least the lie I tell myself, which helps me sleep at night. Regardless, he continues to love his rebel son.

MCMANUS

I think you're wrong. I think you drive him loony with your revolutionary activities but he must love you, otherwise, he would have let them hang and quarter you back in Ireland.

MEAGHER

Well they didn't hang us in Ireland and it is our patriotic duty to make sure that the Brits live to regret it.

MCMANUS

Let's just hope we're not the ones who live to regret it.

They both drink deeply.

MEAGHER

Remember this Mac, secretly, everyone in Ireland wanted our revolution to succeed.

MCMANUS

Well, they certainly knew how to keep a secret!

MEAGHER

Forget it Mac, you can't kill my fervor with your dark humor. Our friend, John Mitchell managed to get a few poems published in Ireland before we were all arrested. My sister mailed me a copy of one of his poems about the famine.

Meagher removes a paper from his pocket and reads.

MEAGHER (CONT'D)

"I'm Coming Home" A Musical By Michael J. Finnegan

This is a verse he wrote about a village he visited in the West of Ireland trying to locate a family had visited two years prior: "There is a horrible silence; grass grows before the doors; we fear to look into any door. For we fear to see yellow chapless skeletons grinning there; but our footfalls rouse two lean dogs that run from us with doleful howling, and we know by the felon-gleam in the wolfish eyes how they have lived after their masters have died. We stop before the threshold of our host of two years before, put our head, with our eyes shut, inside the door jamb and say, with shaking voice, God Save all here! No answer. Ghastly silence, and moldy silence, as from the mouth of burial vaults! They are dead! The strong man and the fair dark-haired woman and the little ones, with their liquid Gaelic accents that melted into music two years ago; They shrank and they withered together until their voices dwindled to a rueful gibbering, and they hardly knew one another's faces; but their horrid eyes scowled at each other with a cannibal glare."

(looking up from the poem)

What do you think, Mac? The work houses report three thousand deaths a week. The Irish corpses are being eaten by their own damn dogs. Do we let the Brits silence us in this great exile?

MCMANUS

(trembling)

I'll not go silently!

MEAGHER

Relax Mac, we need to preserve our rage. It is the only thing that keeps us going. Robert Emmet's 1803 rebellion failed 45 years before our own and they sent his men to Australia as well. They died broken men. We should not forget the lessons they taught us. This must not happen to us.

END SCENE THREE

ACT ONE SCENE FOUR - NEW YORK CITY

"I'm Coming Home" A Musical By Michael J. Finnegan

MEAGHER HAS ESCAPED TO NYC AND IS IN HIS HOTEL ROOM AT THE METROPOLITAN. THERE IS A KNOCK ON HIS DOOR AND HE ADMITS AN IRISH-AMERICAN WELCOMING COMMITTEE - **MALCOLM TIERNEY CAMPBELL, THOMAS DONNELLY, ARCHBISHOP JOHN HUGHES, AND LIBBY TOWNSEND.**

CAMPBELL

For God's sake, it's really him!

DONNELLY

I told you it was him. He led the rebellion and now he has escaped from Australia to join us!

Campbell pushes past Donnelly and shakes Meagher's hand.

CAMPBELL

Thomas Francis Meagher, my name is Malcolm Campbell, but my mother's name was Tierney, and on behalf of the Irish Relief Committee, I'd like to welcome you to New York City.

MEAGHER

Thank you, I'm honored, and believe me, relieved, to be here!

Donnelly pushes past Campbell and shakes Meagher's hand.

DONNELLY

Tom Donnelly, Mr. Meagher, I'm from Tipperary.

MEAGHER

You wouldn't be related to Dan Donnelly, a tanner from Tipperary?

DONNELLY

He is my Uncle.

MEAGHER

He fought at Ballingarry during the Rising.

DONNELLY

(looking around stunned)

We had no news.

Meagher reaches out and shakes hands with Donnelly again, this time with more gusto.

"I'm Coming Home" A Musical By Michael J. Finnegan

MEAGHER

For I would have made the trip from Australia to New York City, if for no other reason, than just to shake the hand of Dan Donnelly's nephew!

DONNELLY

You're a fine man to say so. The blarney fits you well.

(turning to Campbell)

Campbell, I think it is high time to produce our gift to the new arrival.

Campbell hurriedly takes a bottle of whiskey out of a sack on his arm as well as several glasses which produces a group sigh. He gives glasses to Meagher, Lynch, and begins but thinks better than to offer whiskey to the Archbishop or Libby.

CAMPBELL

I propose a toast to Thomas Francis Meagher, Meagher of the Sword.

MEAGHER

Wait, wait, wait, I insist on proposing the first toast...To Malcolm Tierney Campbell, and to his mother, who raised such a considerate lad.

Everyone laughs, clang glasses, and drink. Meagher sips the whiskey and locks eyes with Libby. Donnelly notices the eye contact and whispers into Meagher's ear.

DONNELLY

(stage whisper)

She is Peter Townsend's daughter. She must be confined to your imagination.

MEAGHER

(still staring at Libby)

And who, exactly, is Peter Townsend?

DONNELLY

He is a very wealthy Protestant industrialist who would buy this hotel just to evict you for thinking about his daughter.

Meagher's stare is interrupted when Archbishop John Hughes of NYC steps between Meagher and Libby.



"I'm Coming Home" A Musical By Michael J. Finnegan

DONNELLY (CONT'D)

Your eminence, I would like to introduce you to Thomas Francis Meagher, Meagher of the Sword, Leader of the Young Ireland Rebellion...

Hughes cuts off the introduction in mid-sentence by extending his hand. Meagher drops to one knee and kisses the Archbishop's ring. When Meagher stands, Hughes leans into Meagher momentarily to provide a private message.

HUGHES

She is a protestant. Put her out of your mind. She's here because her father finances soup kitchens for the poor.

MEAGHER

Thank you Bishop.

HUGHES

Archbishop! Archbishop John Hughes, Vicar of New York City. How is your wife?

MEAGHER

Thank you for your inquiry. She is not in good health. She will be travelling to Ireland to stay with my family there. I will send for her when I am established.

HUGHES

And what of your Irish uprising? Everyone in New York City was sorry to see it fail.

MEAGHER

None more than myself. Perhaps the good people of New York City should have come over. We could have used the help.

HUGHES

(clearing his throat)

I'm sure you could have. Perhaps when you get your land legs, you can come to visit me for lunch. My home is at 36th street and Madison Avenue. Come soon and visit.

The Archbishop leaves and escorts Libby from the room.

DONNELLY

Well the saints have left the room.

CAMPBELL

Is it true then, are we going back to Ireland? Are you going to give it another go?

"I'm Coming Home" A Musical By Michael J. Finnegan

MEAGHER

Whoa, I haven't even unpacked.

DONNELLY

(loudly but to himself)

I'm coming home!

MEAGHER

If you do, go for a visit, not for a row.

DONNELLY

But you're Meagher of the Sword. When we go back, we'll never leave.

MEAGHER

I'm damned sure if I go back without an army, the British will make certain that I never leave.

DONNELLY

But when? When can we hope for?

MEAGHER

There are Irish armies fighting all over the world, most of them in British uniforms. We'll have to think this one through. We have to get it right. We can't go back if we don't get it right.

CAMPBELL

It's best to take your time. Talking and taking action are two different endeavors entirely.

MEAGHER

(tilting his head in wonder at Campbell)

I was about to say that exact same thing. Campbell, you're a mind reader.

CAMPBELL

Give the devil his due. The British will make it very difficult for us.

MEAGHER

Do you suppose that before I travel back over the ocean to be hung by the British, we might be able to finish off that whiskey?

Donnelly takes another bottle of whiskey from his bag and hands it to Meagher. The three actors on stage spread out and sing "Whiskey You're the Devil" ensemble. The song begins with the chorus.

"I'm Coming Home" A Musical By Michael J. Finnegan

"WHISKEY YOU'RE THE DEVIL" TRADITIONAL IRISH

WHISKEY YOU'RE THE DEVIL  
YOU'RE LEADING ME ASTRAY  
OVER HILLS AND MOUNTAINS  
AND TO AMERIKAY.

YOU'RE SWEETER, STRONGER, DECENTER  
YOU'RE SPUNKIER THAN TAE  
OH, OH, WHISKEY YOU'RE ME DARLING  
DRUNK OR SOBER.

OH NOW BRAVE BOYS WE'RE ON THE MARCH  
WE'RE OFF TO PORTUGAL AND SPAIN  
THE DRUMS ARE BEATING, THE BANNERS ARE FLYING  
THE DEVIL HIMSELF WILL COME TONIGHT.

OH FAIR THEE WELL,  
WITH ME TOO DA LOO RA LOO RA DOO DE DA  
TOO RA LOO RA LOO RA DOO DE DA  
ME RIGHTFUL TOO RA LADDIE-OH  
THERE'S WHISKY IN THE JAR

OH WHISKEY YOU'RE THE DEVIL  
YOU'RE LEADING ME ASTRAY  
OVER HILLS AND MOUNTAINS  
AND TO AMERIKAY.

YOU'RE SWEETER, STRONGER, DECENTER.  
YOU'RE SPUNKIER THAN TAE  
OH, OH, WHISKEY YOU'RE ME DARLING  
DRUNK OR SOBER.

THE FRENCH ARE FIGHTING LOUDLY  
MEN ARE DYING HOT AND COWARDLY  
GIVE EVERY MAN HIS FLASK OF POWDER  
HIS FIRELOCK ON HIS SHOULDER

AH, FARE THEE WELL  
WITH ME TOO DA LOO RA LOO RA DOO DE DA  
TOO RA LOO RA LOO RA DOO DE DA  
ME RIGHTFUL TOO RA LADDIE-OH  
THERE'S WHISKY IN THE JAR

WHISKEY YOU'RE THE DEVIL  
YOU'RE LEADING ME ASTRAY  
OVER HILLS AND MOUNTAINS  
AND TO AMERIKAY

YOU'RE SWEETER, STRONGER, DECENTER.  
YOU'RE SPUNKIER THAN TEA.  
OH, OH, WHISKEY YOU'RE ME DARLING  
DRUNK OR SOBER.

"I'm Coming Home" A Musical By Michael J. Finnegan

SAYS THE OLD WAN DO NOT WRONG ME  
DON'T TAKE ME DAUGHTER FROM ME  
FOR IF YOU DO I WILL TORMENT YOU  
WHEN I'M DEAD MY GHOST WILL HAUNT YOU

AH FARE THEE WELL  
WITH A TOO DA LOO RA LOO RA DOO DE DA  
A TOO RA LOO RA LOO RA DOO DE DA  
ME RIKES FALL TOO RA LADDIE-OH  
THERE'S WHISKY IN THE JAR

WHISKEY YOU'RE THE DEVIL. YOU'RE LEADING ME ASTRAY  
OVER HILLS AND MOUNTAINS AND TO AMERIKAY.  
YOU'RE SWEETER, STRONGER, DECENTER.  
YOU'RE SPUNKIER THAN TAE  
OH, OH, WHISKEY YOU'RE ME DARLING, DRUNK OR SOBER.

END SCENE FOUR

ACT ONE SCENE 5 - TOM AND LIBBY - TEN YEARS HAVE PASSED

"I'm Coming Home" A Musical By Michael J. Finnegan

SCENE FIVE - MEAGHER HAS MARRIED LIBBY AND IS A MEMBER OF THE MERCHANT CLASS IN NYC. HE IS SITTING IN AN EASY CHAIR, READING A NEWSPAPER. HIS AMERICAN WIFE, LIBBY, IS STANDING, LOOKING IN A MIRROR, AND TRYING ON A NEW HAT. WITHOUT LOOKING UP, MEAGHER RELATES A STORY FROM THE NEWSPAPER TO LIBBY.

MEAGHER

You know, Libby, the really amazing thing about this President Lincoln is the spirit of the man. Listen to this: "I am not so concerned about whether or not God is on my side but rather I'm more concerned with whether I am on God's side." (beat) He simultaneously offends his religious followers and confounds his non-religious opponents. (beat) There must be some Irish blood in his veins.

While still holding the hat on her head, Libby pivots around to face her husband, then walks across the floor quickly and sits on her husband's lap right on top of the newspaper.

LIBBY

Sweetheart, you just scared me. Mr. Lincoln is a politician who is trying to raise an army to settle a matter in the south. He will say anything to support his position. Just keep reminding yourself how fortunate you were to escape from Australia. Surely you didn't survive that hell to involve yourself in American politics.

MEAGHER

Relax darling, I am aware of how lucky I was to escape Australia and doubly lucky to find you. ... It's just that the Irish have been slaves in their own country for 800 years and this slavery question...

LIBBY

This slavery question is not yours to answer.  
(pushing away his newspaper)  
Tell me more about your time in Australia. You know that's why I married you. You man of mystery.

"I'm Coming Home" A Musical By Michael J. Finnegan

MEAGHER

Libby, my beloved, I know that you want me to tell you more about Catherine but there is no future in that subject.

LIBBY

Every wife has a curiosity about her husband's first love.

MEAGHER

(pausing)

She was a sunburst in my life that kept me sane in the Australian outback. My exile was her home and, when I escaped, my home became her exile. If I had not taken her from Australia, she would still be alive.

LIBBY

It wasn't your fault. The fever takes whomever it chooses.

MEAGHER

Enough! What else would you like to know about Australia?

LIBBY

I'm sorry.

(pause)

Then tell me about other women you knew in Australia. What did they look like?

MEAGHER

Well, when the prison ship first arrived, they separated from the other rebels and made us all live in different districts so that we couldn't associate together. I remember that when I first arrived in my district in the town of Ross, I rented two rooms from a woman and her husband. She was the first woman I laid eyes on in five months.

LIBBY

What did she look like?

MEAGHER

She was a nice enough woman but of stupendous proportions.

LIBBY

Is that the first thing you notice about women?

MEAGHER

No not really, it was just that her husband looked like there was a famine in the land and she looked like she caused it.

"I'm Coming Home" A Musical By Michael J. Finnegan

LIBBY

You are a terrible person!

MEAGHER

I'm serious. His wife could easily be described, with the strictest geometric propriety, as his better half and three quarters.

LIBBY

You are wretched!

Meagher laughs at Libby's distress.

MEAGHER

(still laughing)

Will you please quit asking me about women in Australia?

LIBBY

Fine then. Tell me something else. Have you truly left Australia behind you?

MEAGHER

I am a retired revolutionary. I have a family. I have business interests. I am really looking forward to settling down.

LIBBY

(incredulous)

Settling down! You just toured all of the southern states of America, walked across the country of Nicaragua, and returned from a cross country train trip to San Francisco.

MEAGHER

Libby, my dear Libby, you know that I will always return to you.

LIBBY

But why, why do you have to return to me at all? What is the purpose of all of this travel? You're thirty-four years old. When will this travel last end? Why can't you settle down?

MEAGHER

Look at where we are. This is your father's mansion. I love you dearly and your father has been so good to allow us to live here, but you know that I must strike out on my own at some point. Your father did not become rich by living with his father-in-law!

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LIBBY

You're a Manhattan lawyer. The work will eventually come. You'll become established in time.

MEAGHER

When? When Tammany Hall needs another lawyer to look the other way. Face it, I'm not a politician. I'm an Irish immigrant in a country that is sick to death of them. I will have to find another way.

LIBBY

Tom I swear you could start an argument in an empty house.

Meagher crosses the room, kneels and kisses Libby's hand.

MEAGHER

Sweetheart, you are the greatest love of my life - an angel sent down by God to comfort this mad Irishman. Forgive me for arguing with you.

LIBBY

Thomas Francis Meagher, before I knew you, I loved you. I used to listen to that wild eyed Irish Revolutionary with his volcanic anger against the British and I was drawn like a moth to the fire. That is why you worry me.

Pulling her hand away and taking a step back.

LIBBY (CONT'D)

When I hold you at night, I can still feel the rumblings of that volcano deep within you. You scare me Thomas.

MEAGHER

Libby, precious Libby, I led a failed rebellion in Ireland. I live in my father-in-law's house and I have a law practice with no clientele. I have done so much to have accomplished so little.

LIBBY

But, Tom, we are alive and in love. That should be good enough. Why do you cling so tenaciously to your past?



"I'm Coming Home" A Musical By Michael J. Finnegan

MEAGHER

You know me Libby. You know how I feel about Ireland and you knew I would align myself with others in America who love Ireland.

Libby pulls her hand away and walks to the other side of the stage.

LIBBY

You travel to San Francisco and meet with men who you tell me I can never know. What is your obsession with these secret meetings? Who are these men? What are you planning?

MEAGHER

Libby, Libby, Libby, you are the center of my life and my reason for waking up and smiling every day and it is a small thing for me to ask you not to inquire about these meetings.

LIBBY

You are planning something and I know it. And I also know it will affect us, both of us. It's not fair. I have a right to know.

MEAGHER

(closing his eyes, gritting his teeth, and moaning)

Alright then, the truth - I have to tell you anyway. I have been approached by the Fenian Society about accepting a commission in an Irish Brigade being formed to help put down the rebellion in the South.

LIBBY

What are you talking about? There are no Irish Brigades in the United States Army.

MEAGHER

The Fenians have petitioned the War Department and have received permission to form a Brigade made up entirely of Irish born American immigrants. We will be outfitted with weapons and uniforms and paid like any other US Army unit. This is what I've always wanted.

LIBBY

(cutting him off)

Stop it! You can't seriously believe that the Fenians care about the plight of African slaves in the American South.

MEAGHER

Libby, you're going to have to trust me on this.

(MORE)

"I'm Coming Home" A Musical By Michael J. Finnegan

MEAGHER (CONT'D)

Irish immigrants are flooding the shores of the America. Today there are more Irishmen in New York City than there are in Dublin. Americans look at us like some kind of biblical plague.

(pause)

We have to change this. The Irish Brigade will give pride to Irish Americans everywhere. We will fight for this country. We will earn their respect and in the end we will have an army of Irish American combat veterans to liberate Ireland.

LIBBY

Oh, that's the plan?

MEAGHER

Yes, that's the plan.

LIBBY

(sarcastically)

For a second, I thought it was just some insane Irish pipe dream that didn't have a prayer of succeeding.

MEAGHER

(exasperated)

Libby...

LIBBY

Really, you should have just let them hang you in Ireland. You refuse to face an obvious fact. You, and your "conspirators" are not soldiers and you are impersonating revolutionaries. Revolutionaries have to kill people to get what they want. Forgive me Tom, but when your uprising occurred in Ireland, did you kill anyone.

MEAGHER

I was prepared but we were betrayed.

LIBBY

Of course you were. Tom, you were not willing to kill anyone. You simply insisted on being put to death to show your adversaries that you were serious.

MEAGHER

(turning away)

Sometimes candor can kill you know.

LIBBY

(pursuing Meagher)

If you go to the south, you will die. This is not a group of men sitting around a table drinking beer and plotting revolution.

(MORE)

"I'm Coming Home" A Musical By Michael J. Finnegan

LIBBY (CONT'D)

There are hundreds of thousands of men on both sides with guns and cannons and the resources to wage war. This is a long simmering dispute Thomas. You have not part in it.

MEAGHER

Save it Libby. I cannot sit out while my adopted nation needs me. I know what it is to be the victim of prejudice.

LIBBY

I know what you believe what you have just said but I must tell you, you have never been the victim of prejudice. You have never been a slave. You are the victim of delusion. In Ireland, your father's wealth in a poor country made you feel guilty so you joined the uprising. When you escaped Australia, you felt guilty about the comrades you left behind. Now you're feeling guilty about sitting safely in New York City while the Irish Brigade marches south to fight the Confederacy.

Meagher runs his hands through his hair in exasperation.

MEAGHER

You are the dream slayer Libby.

LIBBY

And you are the victim of delusion. This is not about revolution. This is not about preserving the Union. This is about your incessant death wish. You can never relax in your blessings. I am not enough. Escaping your imprisonment is not enough. America is not enough.

MEAGHER

God, I hope you are wrong.

LIBBY

Admit it then, you feel guilty about being spared. You will never lead a normal life and you refuse to die a natural death.

MEAGHER

What you don't understand, and what you will never understand, is that dying in the fight and struggle is a natural death for an Irishman. Dying in bed as an old man, surrounded by loved ones, is completely foreign to me.

LIBBY

(moaning)

What is wrong with dying in bed?

(MORE)

"I'm Coming Home" A Musical By Michael J. Finnegan

LIBBY (CONT'D)

This Irish obsession with death is ruining our marriage. When will you stop living for a free Ireland and simply begin living?

MEAGHER

I know you don't mean that about our marriage. There is too much rage to our passion to mean those words.

There is a knock at the door. The visitor lets himself in. The visitor is dressed in a Union Army uniform with a green sprig in his hat.

CORPORAL 1

Captain Meagher, Confederate forces have commenced a bombardment of Fort Sumpter in South Carolina. The South is in open rebellion. The Irish Brigade marches in the morning.

**END SCENE 5**

"I'm Coming Home" A Musical By Michael J. Finnegan

ACT TWO, SCENE 1

SCENE ONE - MEAGHER AND HIS DYING HORSE

Meagher is standing with his back to the audience. He is dressed in the long coat worn by Union Army officers. He is now a brigade general. In front of him is a horse lying prostrate on the ground. [stage directions - either a ballast rising and falling under a blanket, or simply, an imaginary horse] there is a corpsman attempting to revive the horse.

Corporal 1 runs onto the stage from the right. He is breathless.

CORPORAL 1 (CONT'D)

General Meagher, sir. The retreat has been halted. The men are holding the field. The retreating units ran right through our ranks and there was no way to stop them. The Brigade, however, stood their ground, sir.

MEAGHER

And the enemy?

CORPORAL 1

Set back on their arses, sir. Most fell from musket fire, those that broke through regretted it, sir. I think they will find another way around our unit after this, sir!

MEAGHER

What are our losses?

CORPORAL 1

Forty-eight dead, at least twice that many wounded. The wounded have been brought to the rear. Three men went missing when we crossed the creek and are presumed dead, sir!

Meagher closes his eyes and tilts his head backwards.

MEAGHER

Creek? I nearly drowned myself crossing that creek and I was on horseback. What the hell do you have to do to be called a river in Virginia?

CORPORAL 1

It's called the Chickahominy Creek, sir. It's flooded from the rain.

"I'm Coming Home" A Musical By Michael J. Finnegan

MEAGHER

Fine, How the hell am I supposed to write their parents and tell them their sons drowned in the Chickahominy Creek when I can't even spell the damned name of the creek? Where are we Corporal?

CORPORAL 1

This is Malvern Hill, sir.

MEAGHER

(Meagher sways slightly)

Can you tell me Corporal, why General McClellan's men never break and run on a flat dry surface? Why do we always have to back them up knee deep in mud?

CORPORAL 1

Sir, are you alright?

CORPORAL HOGAN runs on stage from the left. He is breathless. Meagher turns and faces Corporal Hogan.

CORPORAL HOGAN

Sir, General McClellan sends his commendation to the Irish Brigade for holding the position at Savage Station yesterday. General McClellan's entire army has now safely crossed the Chickahominy Creek and has reached the James River. General McClellan, however, is concerned that the Confederates are deliberately allowing the Irish Brigade to hold its position in order to cut it off from the main force.

MEAGHER

Do you suppose that the enemy could be a little more convincing in **allowing us** to hold our position. Damn it, General Stonewall Jackson's Brigade nearly overran us this morning. We will need torches tonight to untangle our dead from theirs.

CORPORAL HOGAN

Sir, General McClellan requests the Irish Brigade fight a rear guard action tonight and rejoin the Army of the Potomac by dawn tomorrow at the James River. We will be evacuating by boat and re-positioning in the north.

"I'm Coming Home" A Musical By Michael J. Finnegan

MEAGHER

Re-positioning? I assume, Corporal, that you did not chose that term yourself and that "repositioning" is the Command Staff's invention to describe this retreat?

CORPORAL HOGAN

That would be correct, Sir.

MEAGHER

Thank you for your candor. Has the General made any provisions for the wounded?

CORPORAL HOGAN

The normal procedures are in effect. The ambulatory wounded should walk at the head of the column. Non-ambulatory are to be left behind. He wants the Irish Brigade to drop back and re-group as quickly as possible at the James River.

MEAGHER

Could the General be so kind as to ride out to Malvern Hill himself and explain to the wounded men of the Irish Brigade that after slaughtering countless members of the Confederate Army, they are being consigned to that same Confederate Army for safe keeping?

CORPORAL HOGAN

(taking Meagher by the arm and stage whispering)

Steady, Mar, this will work out. We are going to be fine.

(returning to normal voice)

Excuse me General, the Brigade has halted the route and is dug in on this hill. We can retreat in an orderly fashion as requested.

MEAGHER

Yes, of course.

The corpsman stands up from attending the dying horse and approaches Meagher.

CORPSMAN

Sir, I can't save the horse. There is internal bleeding and bone fragments around the wound from the shell exploding. She will have to be put down.

MEAGHER

Thank you corpsman for trying.

(fighting emotion)

Dolly has been a very good horse for me.

(MORE)

"I'm Coming Home" A Musical By Michael J. Finnegan

MEAGHER (CONT'D)

(staring intently at the horse)

She has never retreated from the clash of spears.

(pause)

Although the stupid Fenian bitch almost killed me three times!

CORPSMAN

General?

MEAGHER

It's OK Corpsman. You are dismissed.

(to Corporal Hogan)

Requisition me another horse.

The Corpsman and Corporal Hogan exit.

CORPORAL HOGAN

General Meagher, by halting the advancing Confederates today, the Irish Brigade saved the Army of Potomac from complete annihilation. I am certain we will win a unit citation.

MEAGHER

A unit citation would be a small tribute indeed for the blood shed back there.

CORPORAL HOGAN

Sir, today we won the admiration of the Union and Confederate Armies.

MEAGHER

When it comes to the Confederate Army, I would prefer anonymity.

CORPORAL HOGAN

I don't know if it is true or not but rumor is that General Lee said the Irish Brigade fight like devils.

MEAGHER

Lee doesn't understand the Irish. Our men are not devils - changelings perhaps - but not devils. They are good natured drunks one night who frighten themselves at their own capacity for slaughter the next day.

CORPORAL HOGAN

Changelings or devils, the men fought well.

MEAGHER

That they did. Check on the rations and ammunition for each man. We'll fight tonight and march in the morning. Be off with you. I need a word with my horse.



"I'm Coming Home" A Musical By Michael J. Finnegan

Corporal 1 exits and Meagher and his horse are alone on stage. The horse is breathing slower. Meagher kneels down next to his horse and speaks tenderly to her.

MEAGHER (CONT'D)

You should know that I was once condemned to be drawn and quartered by four of your kind.

(pause)

Dolly, I don't know why I find this so particularly difficult. You're just a horse.

Meagher draws his side arm.

MEAGHER (CONT'D)

It's just shooting someone who has been so good to me... I guess I'm just jealous that you get out of this so cleanly.

Meagher raises the gun in his right hand and points it at his horse's head. His hand begins to tremble and the trembling increases until he puts both hands on the gun to steady the barrel. Both hands begin to noticeably tremble and Meagher drops down to his knees to get closer to his target. Meagher speaks to the horse through clenched teeth.

MEAGHER (CONT'D)

You know, of course, I hate leaving the wounded. Then again, you're not probably thrilled about being shot in the head either.

(beat)

This is not the way it was supposed to be.

Meagher rocks back on his heels and lets the gun dangle at his side. He leans into Dolly to be heard.

MEAGHER (CONT'D)

Today, as we were riding to the assembly point, there were children, dead children, lying along side the road. You saw them too. I know you did.

Bending over the horse, Meagher speaks more intimately face to face.

"I'm Coming Home" A Musical By Michael J. Finnegan

MEAGHER (CONT'D)

I knew that their parents had left them there because they were too weak to bury them. They were hoping that we would stop and bury the children. My men just stared at them but I knew what they were thinking. They had seen this sight before in Ireland with their own children perishing on the side of the road. Only this time we had the guns, and horses, and provisions, and a military mission. I knew we couldn't stop and bury the children. We are too deep in the Confederacy. We have become what we hate most and we can't admit it to each other and yet we know it nonetheless. To these people in the South, we are the oppressors.

Raising the pistol to the horse's head.

MEAGHER (CONT'D)

Dolly, when you get to the other side, be sure to ask God why he has kept me alive this long.

Meagher leans forward and shoots the horse in the head and the breathing stops.

**END SCENE 1**

"I'm Coming Home" A Musical By Michael J. Finnegan

**ACT TWO - SCENE 2**

IT IS ST. PATRICK'S DAY AND THE IRISH BRIGADE IS HOSTING A ST. PATRICK'S DAY PARTY. EVERYONE IS DRINKING MUGS OF BEER AND GLASSES OF WHISKEY AND THERE IS AN ARM WRESTLING CONTEST GOING ON AT A TABLE ON STAGE. EVERYONE IS CHEERING ON THE CONTESTANTS. EVERYONE IS SLIGHTLY DRUNK. IT IS LOUD. THE BACKGROUND NOISE LESSENS AS THE DIALOG BEGINS. IRISH DANCERS AND A FIDDLE ARE INCLUDED IN THIS SCENE.

CORPORAL HOGAN  
(to Meagher)

General, when are we going to Ireland?

MEAGHER

When I'm convinced we're ready. We have this little matter of 500,000 Confederate soldiers arrayed against us on the battlefield which must be dealt with first.

CORPORAL HOGAN

You know there are Irish troops from Louisiana who would gladly leave the Confederacy to fight the English in Ireland. There are Fenians on both side of this conflict.

MEAGHER

It would be best soldier, not to speak of this matter openly.

CORPORAL 1

It's true General, One Armed Tom Sweeney had a talk with an Irish unit on the Confederate's side about stealing ships and sailing to Ireland together to fight the English.

MEAGHER

Now there's a grand idea. Yankee and Confederate soldiers on the same ship for a trip across the Atlantic. There would be no one left alive when we got there.

CORPORAL 1

Sweeney says if we are going to die in a fight, we may as well die in Ireland.

(pause)

It's not just the liquid courage talking either.

MEAGHER

It's the liquid candor that's talking right now and it could get us all court martialed. Button up.

"I'm Coming Home" A Musical By Michael J. Finnegan

Irish step dancers and a fiddler  
enter the stage from the left.

CORPORAL HOGAN  
General the dancers are here.

MEAGHER  
(approaching the dancers)  
Thank you, 100,000 thank you's for coming to  
the aid of the Irish Brigade this holy night.  
(sternly addressing the soldiers)  
Gentlemen!

The soldiers all attempt to sober  
up, putting glasses down,  
straightening clothes, smoothing  
hair, etc. The dancers perform a  
three minute Irish reel step  
dance.

MEAGHER (CONT'D)  
(to dancers)  
Do you suppose you could dance a jig for the  
troops. It might help them sleep tonight.

Dancers perform three minute jig  
and dance off the stage.

CORPORAL 1  
General, did you see the one with the hair as  
long as her legs. She will visit the dreams of  
many men tonight.

MEAGHER  
She danced in front of my eyes but she didn't  
dance in my heart...You see, when I was  
commissioned, my wife cut my heart out and is  
keeping it safely for me back in New York City.

The soldiers have begun drinking  
again when Corporal Hogan snaps  
his boot heels together to  
announce the arrival of Union  
General George B. McClellan.  
McClellan is a native born  
American without an accent. There  
is a collective moan as the  
soldiers are forced to put down  
their glasses and salute.

CORPORAL HOGAN  
ATTENTION!

MEAGHER  
Happy St. Patrick's Day General McClellan.

"I'm Coming Home" A Musical By Michael J. Finnegan

MCCLELLAN

You thought you could have a St. Patrick's Day without McClellan?

MEAGHER

Nonsense General, we were just waiting for the General's arrival to begin the festivities.

Meagher motions to one of the soldiers who brings a tray of glasses filled with whiskey. Meagher and McClellan take a glass and McClellan sniffs at the liquid.

MCCLELLAN

You wouldn't serve the Commander of the Army of the Potomac rot gut whiskey on St. Patrick's Day, would you Meagher.

MEAGHER

General this fine whiskey was personally delivered to us by the Ancient Order of Hibernians of New York City in honor of our service to the nation.

Meagher and McClellan both drain the whiskey in their glasses and Meagher smiles while McClellan winces.

MEAGHER (CONT'D)

General where are your people from?

MCCLELLAN

Well, I was born in Philadelphia and my father was born in Woodstock, Connecticut.

MEAGHER

(steals a glance at Corporal Hogan)

No, I mean in Ireland. Where were your people from in Ireland.

MCCLELLAN

Actually, my people are from Scotland.

MEAGHER

Oh.(looking away)

Meagher and the other soldiers discreetly put down their glasses.

"I'm Coming Home" A Musical By Michael J. Finnegan

MCCLELLAN

But we did fight with the Jacobites and my grandfather was a General with the Revolutionary Army that drove the British out of the United States.

There is a general eruption of enthusiasm from the troops in support of McClellan. Meagher motions to a soldier who brings a tray with fresh drinks.

MCCLELLAN (CONT'D)

However, I came here to share more than a drink with you. I have an official document from the Office of the Secretary of War which I am sure you will find interesting.

McClellan takes a few steps forward, removes a document from his breast pocket and begins to read loudly.

MCCLELLAN (CONT'D)

"The Secretary of War has informed the General Command that the attrition rate for the Army of the Potomac is that two soldiers die of disease or accident for every soldier killed in combat.

(looking up from the text and scanning the soldiers)

We lose two men to disease and accident for every man we lose in combat. You will be proud to know however, that according to the Secretary of War's latest records

(returning to the prepared text)

"The Irish Brigade has reversed that ration and there are two battle deaths in the Irish Brigade for every one lost to disease or accident."

McClellan looks up from the letter excitedly and there is a moment of dumbfounded silence before Meagher breaks the ice and begins applauding politely but alone.

MEAGHER

What this means men is that the men of the Irish Brigade know how to remain healthy in camp and on the march so that they can make their sacrifice where it counts, on the field of valor.

"I'm Coming Home" A Musical By Michael J. Finnegan

Everyone applauds prompting another round of whiskey which goes down wordlessly followed by another toast proposed by McClellan.

MCCLELLAN

I propose a toast to the Irish Brigade.  
(pause while glasses are refilled)  
I drink to those who wish them well. To all the rest go to hell!

Everyone empties their glasses followed by applause by the men on stage. Meagher takes McClellan by the arm and leads him to the side of the stage for a private chat.

MEAGHER

General your warm words for the Brigade greatly encouraged the men. Thank you. But tell me General, why did they let us form this Brigade in the first place?

MCCLELLAN

The Union Army needed men.

MEAGHER

True, and we still need men, but why did they let us form an exclusive Irish Brigade? There are no Italian Brigades, no German Brigades, no Polish Brigades. Why did the United States Army Brigade permit the formation of a Brigade made up exclusively of soldiers born in Ireland?

MCCLELLAN

Where are you going with this Meagher?

MEAGHER

General, I started with 3,000 men, I have been reinforced three times and I am still down to 1,200 men who can fight. Casualty counts indicate that the enemy has killed this Brigade three times over. If I didn't return to New York City regularly for recruiting, I would be marching alone.

MCCLELLAN

What conspiracies are you entertaining?

MEAGHER

Just this sir, the valor of my men outstrip my ability to recruit worthy replacements.

"I'm Coming Home" A Musical By Michael J. Finnegan

MCCLELLAN

A rather dark observation on St. Patrick's Day,  
don't you think?

MEAGHER

I'm sorry General, but may I speak in  
confidence with you?

MCCLELLAN

You have my word.

MEAGHER

Some of the Irish newspapers in New York City  
are circulating stories that the War Department  
are deliberately placing the Irish Brigade in  
the thick of the fight to kill off the Fenians.

MCCLELLAN

And who are the Fenians?

MEAGHER

We both know who they are General, and after  
this war is won, we will return to Ireland and  
liberate it from English domination.

McClellan walks away from Meagher  
briefly, collects his thoughts,  
and then returns.

MCCLELLAN

And do you think the British are ignorant of  
your plans? Every Irishman in both armies are  
talking about this endless quest to free  
Ireland and *meanwhile* we are locked in the  
greatest land war in the history of the world.

MEAGHER

I'm sorry sir, I didn't mean that you would do  
anything...

MCCLELLAN

General Meagher, I watched you advance, walking  
on top of your own writhing dying men at  
Antietam to take the bloody lane. As soldiers,  
your Brigade have my utmost admiration and  
respect. I have used your Brigade as a stop gap  
to prevent the division and destruction of my  
Army on two separate occasions and you have  
never let me down. Do you think, for a moment,  
that I would contemplate the destruction of the  
Irish Brigade for political reasons?

MEAGHER

General, I would never... Forgive me, Sir, I  
misspoke.



"I'm Coming Home" A Musical By Michael J. Finnegan

MCCLELLAN

At any rate, it doesn't really matter because I am being relieved of command of the Army of the Potomac and General Burnside's will be my replacement.

MEAGHER

(surprised)

General, I am saddened to hear the news. Is there anything I can do...someone to contact...to remand your orders. I will contact the President himself, he has been keenly interested in the Irish vote in New York. I will respectfully ask him to look into this.

MCCLELLAN

(laughing)

Thank Brigadier General Meagher, but the order came directly from President Lincoln himself. It seems I have not been solicitous enough of his opinion on matters of war, about which, of course, he knows nothing.

MEAGHER

General, the men of the Brigade will sorely miss you. Your regard for the Brigade has been well known and well appreciated.

MCCLELLAN

Well, I knew I could count on the Irish to fight regardless of the circumstances and I used it to good advantage. Your dream of future wars can wait, none of us may survive this one. Perhaps General Burnside's will be less demanding of the Irish Brigade.

MEAGHER

A drink before you go then?

(Meagher motions to his men)

General George McClellan, after meritorious service as Commanding Officer of the Army of the Potomac, has been promoted back to Washington to prepare strategy to allow us to end this conflict in victory. I propose a toast to his health.

Everyone takes glass in hand.

MEAGHER (CONT'D)

To McClellan!

ENSEMBLE

To McClellan!

Shots drank down and empty glasses pounded on table.

"I'm Coming Home" A Musical By Michael J. Finnegan

MCCLELLAN

And I, General George McClellan, Commander of the Army of the Potomac, take my last drink of the night to honor those Irish Brigade members who have died in battle in service to our great nation.

CORPORAL HOGAN

(drunk slur to McClellan)

General, tell me, do you think the dead care whether or not we drink to them?

MCCLELLAN

I certainly hope not to find out too soon. Now, it is time for me to go. Reveille comes early.

CORPORAL HOGAN

General we appreciate your visit with us on St. Patrick's Day and the men would like to sing you a song. It's an Irish lullaby. It may help you sleep tonight.

MCCLELLAN

That would be a comforting. Thank you.

ENSEMBLE

"WHEELA WHEELA WHYLIA" TRADITIONAL IRISH

THERE WAS AN OLD WOMAN WHO LIVED IN THE WOODS  
AH WEILA WEILA WAILA  
THERE WAS AN OLD WOMAN WHO LIVED IN THE WOODS  
DOWN BY THE RIVER SAILA

SHE HAD A BABY SIX MONTHS OLD  
AH WEILA WEILA WAILA  
SHE HAD BABY SIX MONTHS OLD  
DOWN BY THE RIVER SAILA

SHE HAD A PEN KNIFE, THREE FOOT LONG  
AH WEILA WEILA WAILA  
SHE HAD A PEN KNIFE THREE FOOT LONG  
DOWN BY THE RIVER SALIA

SHE STUCK THE KNIFE IN THE BABY'S HEAD  
AH WEILA WEILA WAILA  
THE MORE SHE STUCK IT  
THE MORE IT BLED  
DOWN BY THE RIVER SAILA

TWO BIG MEN CAME KNOCKING AT THE DOOR  
AH WEILA WEILA WAILA  
TWO POLICEMEN AND A MAN  
DOWN BY THE RIVER SAILA

ARE YOU THE WOMAN WHAT KILLED THE CHILD

"I'm Coming Home" A Musical By Michael J. Finnegan

AH WEILA WEILA WAILA  
ARE YOU THE WOMAN WHAT KILLED THE CHILD  
DOWN BY THE RIVER SAILA

I AM THE WOMAN WHAT KILLED THE CHILD  
AH WEILA WEILA WAILA  
I AM THE WOMAN WHAT KILLED THE CHILD  
DOWN BY THE RIVER SAILA

HE GOT CHOPPED AND SHE GOT HUNG  
AH WEILA WEILA WAILA  
HE GOT CHOPPED AND HE GOT HUNG  
DOWN BY THE RIVER SAILA

THE MORAL OF THE STORY IS  
AH WEILA WEILA WAILA  
DON'T STICK KNIVES IN BABY'S HEADS  
DOWN BY THE RIVER SAILA

MCCLELLAN

Brigadier General Meagher, the key to your  
heartiness in camp life and your success on the  
battlefield may well be that none of you are in  
your right minds.

MEAGHER  
(sincerely)

Thank you General.

MCCLELLAN

I must leave now or risk joining your ranks.

CORPORAL HOGAN  
(shouting)

Attention!

The assembled soldiers snap to  
attention. McClellan collects  
himself and walks unsteadily off  
stage. Corporal 1 walks over to  
Meagher and stage whispers.

CORPORAL HOGAN (CONT'D)

Meagher, it's time.  
He is gone now. Bring the light.

The men on stage form a circle in  
the middle of the stage and set a  
lantern in the middle of the  
circle and the stage lights go  
down. They kneel and hold each  
other's wrists and lower their  
heads.

"I'm Coming Home" A Musical By Michael J. Finnegan

CORPORAL HOGAN (CONT'D)

May God forget the Fenians if we ever forget our purpose to return to Ireland and deliver our brothers, mothers, and children from slavery.

MEAGHER

Never retreat from the clash of spears.

CORPORAL HOGAN

Never retreat from the clash of spears.

CORPSMAN

Never retreat from the clash of spears.

CORPORAL HOGAN

I have good news to report. Our ranks are increasing. Fenian circles have been formed in most of the New York, Pennsylvania and Massachusetts Divisions.

MEAGHER

How the hell can our ranks be increasing with this endless slaughter going on around us? The Irish have lost more lives in this conflict than in all the Risings combined!

CORPORAL HOGAN

The leadership has dealt with this matter. O'Donovan Rossa himself has stated publicly that these are nothing but English landlord lies. They are trying to divide us.

MEAGHER

This may well be a British lie, but enough with the slogans. We're at thirteen hundred men, barely Brigade strength, and there is still hard fighting ahead of us.

CORPORAL HOGAN

Mar, you're talking like a Union General. We have circles on the Confederate side as well.

MEAGHER

(looking away)

I know. I hear them singing in Gaelic at night around their fires. Yankee and Rebel sons of Ireland, singing Irish songs at night and slaughtering each other in the morning.

CORPORAL HOGAN

Your are forgetting why we are here. Our job is to fight well but always remember why we make this sacrifice.

(MORE)

"I'm Coming Home" A Musical By Michael J. Finnegan

CORPORAL HOGAN (CONT'D)

This present conflict will soon end and when it does, we will have several hundred thousand combat veterans within our ranks. They will be put to good use.

Corporal Hogan takes a paper from his pocket and reads.

CORPORAL HOGAN (CONT'D)

The American Consul in Dublin is paying full fare to America plus \$700 to any Irishman who is willing to enlist in the US Army. The boats are full.

MEAGHER

Coffin ships.

CORPORAL HOGAN

(angrily)

Mar, sometimes your privileged past blinds you. Seven hundred dollars is ten years wages in Ireland for these lads and they'll join the fight just fine.

MEAGHER

I know you're right and God knows we can use the men. It's just that as fast as we recruit them, just as quickly we lose them. You don't suppose the papers are right and US Government is onto us?

CORPORAL HOGAN

Why would you even suggest such a thing?

MEAGHER

It's just the US Government could ill afford a confrontation with the Brits after this slaughter ends. If they knew what we were planning, they might be inclined to have us spend ourselves on these battlefields so that they don't have to deal with us at the end of the war.

CORPORAL HOGAN

Mar, I know your history and I know that you come by your paranoia honestly. Now is the time to end this speculation. The Irish love to fight and we fight well. This and this alone explains our high casualty rates.

MEAGHER

I just hope the rebels run out of bullets before the Union runs out of Irish.

"I'm Coming Home" A Musical By Michael J. Finnegan

CORPORAL HOGAN

Damn it Meagher, are you with us or not. Who  
the hell's side are you on?

Lights dim and Corporal Hogan  
takes center stage in a spot  
light. He sings and the other  
soldiers are the chorus.

ENSEMBLE

"I'M COMING HOME"  
BY SEAN SUSKO

[CORPORAL HOGAN]

DEAR BABY I REALLY HOPE YOU GET THIS LETTER  
JUST A LITTLE NOTE FROM ME TO MAKE YOU FEEL A LITTLE BETTER  
HAVEN'T HEARD A WORD FROM ME IN THREE LONG YEARS  
SO I HOPE THESE WORDS GROW ARMS AND HELP YOU DRY YOUR TEARS

CHORUS

OH OH OH OH OH OH OH OH I'M COMING HOME (THIS IS THE END OF  
MY STORY IN THE IRISH BRIGADE) I'M COMING HOME (BUT A NEW  
BEGINNING FOR THE FUTURE PROMISES THAT I'VE MADE) I'M COMING  
HOOOME, I'M COMING HOOOME, I'M COMING HOOOME  
I'M COMING HOME  
I'M COMING HOME

[CORPORAL HOGAN]

HEY BABY I NEVER THOUGHT IT'D GO THIS FAR  
BUT I'VE SEEN EVERY SOLDIER SHAKE THE HAND OF THOMAS MEAGHER  
I'M HANGING UP MY MUSKET JUST TO HOLD YOU IN MY ARMS AGAIN  
NOW THIS MAY SOUND A LITTLE CRAZY BUT I FEEL YOU NOW AND  
AGAIN

CHORUS

OH OH OH OH OH OH OH OH I'M COMING HOME (THIS IS THE END OF  
MY STORY IN THE IRISH BRIGADE) I'M COMING HOME (BUT A NEW  
BEGINNING FOR THE FUTURE PROMISES THAT I'VE MADE) I'M COMING  
HOOOME, I'M COMING HOOOME, I'M COMING HOOOME  
I'M COMING HOME  
I'M COMING HOME

**END ACT TWO, SCENE 2**

**ACT TWO, SCENE 3 - FREDERICKSBURG**

"I'm Coming Home" A Musical By Michael J. Finnegan

EXT - NIGHT

MEAGHER IS LEANING ON HIS SWORD WITH BOTH HANDS. MEAGHER IS STARING AT SEVERAL DEAD SOLDIERS ON THE GROUND. MEAGHER'S UNIFORM IS SPOTLESS. HE HAS A LEG INJURY AND USES THE SWORD AS A CRUTCH. CORPORAL 1 ENTERS FROM OFF STAGE. CORPORAL ONE IS DYING FROM A CHEST WOUND. HE APPROACHES MEAGHER, DROPS TO HIS KNEES, AND SITS BACK ON HIS FEET IN EXHAUSTION.

CORPORAL 2

(weakly)

General, the Brigade suffered over nine hundred casualties in the past hour. Marie's Heights is still in the hands of the enemy.

(beat)

We are down to two hundred and sixteen men left standing

(dropping to his knees)

and I am not among them.

Meagher drops his sword and kneels next to Corporal 1. Corporal 1 collapses into Meagher's arms.

MEAGHER

I'll get a Corpsman!

Meagher attempts to rise but Corporal 1 grabs a handful of Meagher's uniform and stops him. Corporal convulses for a moment before speaking.

CORPORAL 2

It doesn't seem right to die here. Who the hell ever heard of Fredericksburg, Virginia?

Corporal coughs, convulses, and dies.

MEAGHER

Don't die damn it! We're going back to Ireland.

Corporal slumps lifeless but with open eyes in Meagher's arms. Meagher lays Corporal 2 on the stage, manually closes his eyes, and allows his hand to rest on the Corpsman's face for five seconds. Meagher then jerks his hand away as if receiving an electric shock. Meagher then begins responding to dialog from the Corpsman that the audience cannot hear.

"I'm Coming Home" A Musical By Michael J. Finnegan

MEAGHER (CONT'D)

What do you mean?

(pause)

The sacrifice can't be made here! Do you know what we could have accomplished in Ireland with the 900 dead we lost out there today?

(pause)

Of course I remember the men we lost at Bull Run, Chancellorsville, Savage Station and Antietam.

(pause)

What are you doing? What are you saying? Are you mad as well as dead? Clooney fought with Garibaldi's Army defending the Papal States. Gossen fought with the 7th Hussar Regiment in Hungary, and for God's sake, O'Grady was decorated for fighting with the British Royal Marines before emigrating. They joined the Irish Brigade for the express purpose of returning and fighting the British.

(pause)

I know. I know. They're all dead now but you can't possibly be right.

(pause)

The sacrifice can't be made here.

JOHN HAGGARTY, a representative from the Gaelic Society of NYC walks onto the stage. Meagher continues staring at the dead Corporal.

HAGGARTY

(awkwardly)

General, Sir, my name is John Haggarty. I am from the Gaelic Society of New York City.

(glancing around nervously)

I was sent to Fredericksburg today to present you with enough food and whiskey for the men of the Irish Brigade to celebrate Christmas!

MEAGHER

(still staring at the dead Corporal)

Merry Christmas John.

HAGGARTY

I am so sorry General.

MEAGHER

Nine hundred of my men died in twenty-two minutes, John.

HAGGARTY

(pause)

But they are covered in glory, General.



"I'm Coming Home" A Musical By Michael J. Finnegan

MEAGHER

(turning to Haggarty and shouting)

They are covered in gravel, dirt, and flies.

Corporal Hogan enters the stage  
with a confederate prisoner whose  
hands are tied behind his back.

CORPORAL HOGAN

Sir, this prisoner approached our lines and  
insisted that he wanted to speak to Brigadier  
General Meagher of the Irish Brigade. He said  
that he was born in County Donegal and that he  
would speak with you alone.

MEAGHER

Untie him.

The prisoner is untied and he and  
Meagher walk to one side of the  
stage for privacy.

MEAGHER (CONT'D)

What is it?

The prisoner reaches into his  
shirt and takes out a battered  
Irish Brigade flag and hands it to  
Meagher. Meagher inspects the flag  
and then holds it to his face and  
inhales the smell of the flag.

PRISONER

We thought you might want to have this back. We  
talked it over and decided that I would bring  
this back to you.

MEAGHER

You know your daft.

PRISONER

That is probably why they sent **me**.

MEAGHER

Did they fight well?

PRISONER

Oh it was glorious. These stout fellows led the  
charge front and center, gleaming bayonets,  
double speed, right into the middle of our  
lines. They didn't even seemed to notice the  
cannon fire raining down on top of them. Oh, it  
was a sight!

MEAGHER

Did any break and run?

"I'm Coming Home" A Musical By Michael J. Finnegan

PRISONER

Not a one. They did us all proud and we hated laying them so low. We knew you would want the flag.

MEAGHER

You know you're daft?

PRISONER

We covered that.

Meagher walks in a circle, inhales the smell of the flag again and addresses Haggarty.

MEAGHER

(to Haggarty)

How much whiskey did you bring?

HAGGARTY

Enough for thirteen hundred men.

MEAGHER

I think the gauntlet has been thrown down.

(to Corporal Hogan)

Take a detachment of able bodied men and commandeer the finest house left standing in Fredericksburg. Transport the wounded there. We're drinking for the men who can't be here tonight. This should be epic.

Corporal Hogan walks off stage quickly.

HAGGARTY

General, don't you think it should be a wake you should be holding and not a party?

MEAGHER

They're the same thing. Where did you say you're from?

HAGGARTY

I was born in Pittsburgh to Irish parents.

MEAGHER

That explains it. From the men of the Irish Brigade, living and dead, I want to thank you for making the long journey to Fredericksburg to furnish us with a Christmas party. Join us tonight if you are able.

.

Meagher hobbles off stage with the assistance his sword.

"I'm Coming Home" A Musical By Michael J. Finnegan

Haggarty and the prisoner look at each other awkwardly for a moment and then exit after Meagher. The lights dim and the dead on stage begin to stand up slowly covered in gravel and dirt and sing "Gravel Unto You".

"GRAVEL UNTO YOU" - MIKE FINNEGAN

(CHORUS)  
(WHISPERED)  
GRAVEL UNTO YOU  
GRAVEL UNTO ME  
ITS FEELING KIND OF OVER  
THIS IS WHERE I WANT TO BE

(LOUDER)  
GRAVEL UNTO YOU  
GRAVEL UNTO ME  
ITS FEELING KIND OF OVER  
THIS IS WHERE I WANT TO BE

(1ST SOLO)  
WHEN I WOKE UP THIS MORNING  
I KNEW IT WAS MY DAY  
EVERYTHING JUST FELT RIGHT  
COULD FEEL IT SLIPPIN AWAY

(2ND SOLO)  
I KNOW I'LL SEE MY OFFSPRING  
THE FRUIT OF MY OWN SOUL  
MY KNOWLEDGE IS EXPLODING  
THIS IS REALLY KIND OF COOL

(CHORUS)  
(WHISPERED)  
GRAVEL UNTO YOU  
GRAVEL UNTO ME  
ITS FEELING KIND OF OVER  
THIS IS WHERE I WANT TO BE

(LOUDER)  
GRAVEL UNTO YOU  
GRAVEL UNTO ME  
FEELING KIND OF OVER  
THIS IS WHERE I WANT TO BE

(3RD SOLO)  
TIME JUST KIND OF STANDS STILL  
DEATH PROLONGS MY DAYS  
I'M JUST WATCHING OVER  
IN A HUNDRED THOUSAND WAYS

"I'm Coming Home" A Musical By Michael J. Finnegan

(4TH SOLO)

NOW THAT ITS ALL OVER  
I'M FEELING SATISFIED  
THE FRUIT OF MY OWN LABOR  
MAKES ME FEEL ALIVE

CHORUS:

GRAVEL UNTO YOU  
GRAVEL UNTO ME  
ITS FEELING KIND OF OVER  
THIS IS WEHRE I WANT TO BE

(CHORUS)

GRAVEL UNTO YOU  
GRAVEL UNTO ME  
FEELING KIND OF OVER  
THIS IS WHERE I WANT TO BE

(5TH SOLO)

A PORTION FROM THE GREAT  
SPOILS FROM THE STRONG  
MY WAYS ARE NOT YOUR WAYS  
YOU'VE GOT IT ALL WRONG.

(6TH SOLO)

LOOK AND LOOK AWAY  
WE'RE FINISHED WITH THE SLAUGHTER  
FOR WE ARE THE CLAY  
AND THOU ART OUR POTTER

GRAVEL UNTO YOU  
GRAVEL UNTO ME  
FEELING KIND OF OVER  
THIS IS WHERE I WANT TO BE

**END ACT 2 SCENE 3 SCENE**

**ACT TWO - SCENE 4 - MONTANA**

INT - DAYLIGHT

FIVE YEARS HAVE PASSED. MEAGHER IS NOW THE MILITARY GOVERNOR  
OF MONTANA. MEAGHER IS SITTING AT HIS DESK IN HIS ONE ROOM  
CABIN, "THE GOVERNOR'S MANSION", DOING PAPER WORK WHEN THERE  
IS A KNOCK ON THE DOOR. THE VISITORS ARE WILLIAM FISK

"I'm Coming Home" A Musical By Michael J. Finnegan

SANDERS, THE HEAD OF THE MONTANA HISTORICAL SOCIETY, AND HIS  
ASSOCIATE PARIS PFOUTS.

MEAGHER TELLS THE VISITOR TO ENTER  
WITHOUT LOOKING UP FROM HIS  
PAPERWORK.

SANDERS

Good afternoon Governor and welcome to the  
Montana Territory. My name is Wilbur Fisk  
Sanders, and this is my associate, Paris  
Pfouts.

MEAGHER

(looking up) Yes, thank-you. Yes, you gentlemen  
must be with the Montana Historical Society. I  
was told to expect a visit. Would you care to  
sit down?

SANDERS

No thanks, I have just come from a four hour  
coach ride and I prefer to stand. Likewise, Mr.  
Pfouts is a grocer and has business to attend  
to in Helena.

MEAGHER

(standing and stretching)

I am honored. Four hours is a long trip for  
anyone.

SANDERS

But you are not anyone. You are General Thomas  
Francis Meagher or Irish Brigade fame. It is we  
the people of Montana who are honored to have  
you, for however brief a period of time, as our  
Acting Governor.

MEAGHER

(laughing lightly)

Would you wish it to be a brief period of time?

SANDERS

Brief or long, my job is to help you adjust to  
life in Montana.

MEAGHER

Tell me Mr. Sanders, why does the Montana  
Territory, which came into existence only two  
years ago, have an Historical Society?

SANDERS

Montana will be a state one day, and it is  
important to record the events of settling the  
territory in the proper context.

"I'm Coming Home" A Musical By Michael J. Finnegan

MEAGHER

And what would that context be?

SANDERS

Montana is mining territory, silver and gold mining. Huge amounts of money change hands daily. The need for a safe and orderly business community is self-evident. We record the events as they affect industry.

MEAGHER

That is exactly what my orders are... to establish a firm rule of law and to discourage lawlessness. I am sure you will be fully supportive of these efforts.

SANDERS

Governor, during the course of the War, we were left alone by the federal government to fend for ourselves. Men with guns and without morals tried to take over this territory and we stopped them. A vigilance committee was formed to address this emergency. Now that we have restored order, the federal government has, at last, appointed a Territorial governor to prepare the territory for statehood.

MEAGHER

I have read the field reports and I am familiar with your work with the Vigilance Committee.

SANDERS

And what do your reports say?

MEAGHER

Mr. Sanders, we are both attorneys and we both know that the Vigilance Committee is really just a group of vigilantes who perform public lynchings.

Pfouts takes a step towards  
Meagher and Sanders restrains  
Pfouts by extending his hand.

SANDERS

Spoken like a man who has spent less than a month in Montana. Sir, I was appointed as a prosecutor by the Vigilance Committee and I can personally vouch for the for the integrity of the Committee and the meticulous attention to the rule of law in every proceeding.

"I'm Coming Home" A Musical By Michael J. Finnegan

MEAGHER

I am relieved to hear that and I'm sure that is how the proceedings were recorded by your Historical Society....because if you didn't follow the rule of law, then of course, the lynchings would have been murder.

SANDERS

And when you were sentenced to be hung by the neck, was there due process? Did you receive a fair trial?

MEAGHER

I am impressed. You have taken the time to know my history.

SANDERS

We are a backward area, but we have newspapers. The editor of the Montana Post, Thomas J. Dimsdale, attended Oxford University and grew up in England and is a contemporary of yours. He has graciously provided the Montana Historical Society with the necessary background information on our new governor.

MEAGHER

Really, Oxford University to Montana? I am sure he was able to provide you with an impartial account of my experience with British Jurisprudence.

SANDERS

He is thorough. He has covered the news regarding the activities of the Vigilance Committee and the public fully supports the efforts to control crime.

MEAGHER

(long sigh, rubbing his eyes)

Well, you can dress up your Vigilance Committee any way you like but they are a lynch mob and I will deal with them as such.

SANDERS

Let me be blunt Governor, your arrogance is not becoming and your ignorance of Montana could be dangerous. Before the Vigilance Committee was formed, there was no law here. Our own elected Sheriff was robbing stage coaches and stealing gold shipments. The Vigilance Committee had to act.

"I'm Coming Home" A Musical By Michael J. Finnegan

MEAGHER

I am familiar with the case. Last year you lynched the Sheriff and 19 of his deputies with no physical evidence and no witness testimony that would be admissible in court. Your Mr. Pfouts here was the hangman.

PFOUTS

You are making an allegation you cannot prove!

MEAGHER

The truth, even if unprovable, is still true. Your legalese denial is proof enough.

SANDERS

They were lawmen who were breaking the law. They had to be dealt with.

MEAGHER

Your "committee" had no judicial authority to convict anyone of anything and you were never elected or appointed by the government to be a prosecutor.

SANDERS

I was selected to be a prosecutor by the vigilance committee.

MEAGHER

The Vigilance Committee is a nameless, faceless star chamber of rich men who grant you authority to do their killing.

SANDERS

Your narrow view of things will cause you a great deal of difficulty here in the Montana. The Vigilance Committee is the only thing that stood between us and murderers and thieves. There was no other authority.

MEAGHER

So tell me, after the lynchings, did the robberies stop?

SANDERS

(turning away)

There are always more men interested in stealing gold.

MEAGHER

Did it ever occur to you that you might have hung the wrong men?



"I'm Coming Home" A Musical By Michael J. Finnegan

SANDERS

(shouting)

It did not and it will not because that is not what happened. (collecting himself) I simply did my duty and asked others to do the same.

MEAGHER

(pause)

You served in the War?

SANDERS

I was a Lieutenant with the 54th Ohio Infantry. Resigned in 62, and came here in 63.

MEAGHER

I resigned in 62 as well. Thought the better of it and went back in. War changes people.

SANDERS

It changes some people more than others. You should know that a significant number of men in this State fought for the Confederacy, Mr. Pfouts here included. They view you with great hostility. You are the governor of all the people. Start acting like it.

MEAGHER

Why are you telling me this?

SANDERS

The challenges of transforming the wild Montana territory into a fully functioning State within the union are real. Focusing on the divisions of the people in this state will not achieve a political settlement. You should be viewed as serving all the people.

MEAGHER

What is it you propose I do to achieve this?

SANDERS

Governor, the nearest Federal troops are in Fort Benton, an eight hour ride. Because of our relative isolation, we, former Union and Confederate men, have established a protective brotherhood through the business community, a Masonic Brotherhood. If you wish, I can arrange body guards for you while you are in Helena. I wouldn't want you to have survived Fredericksburg only to be shot in the back by some claim jumper. Consider it an offer of good faith. I don't think we fully understand each other just yet.

"I'm Coming Home" A Musical By Michael J. Finnegan

MEAGHER

(laughing softly )

Freemason bodyguards for Thomas Francis Meagher, now that is rich.... However, we all live in the Montana Territory together, Union and Confederate, perhaps it would do us all good to be seen united in confronting the challenges of bringing Montana into the Union. Also, it might help put my wife's mind at ease. I accept your gracious offer and look forward to leading the entire community here in Montana.

SANDERS

Fine, then, have you had a chance to settle in?

MEAGHER

Yes I have...

Walking quickly to his desk to  
examine some papers.

and I have reviewed a recent case, James Daniels, convicted of manslaughter, and I believe it was self-defense. I have issued a letter of pardon and released him yesterday.

SANDERS

(taking Meagher by the arm)

You should have discussed this with me first.

MEAGHER

Why would I do that?

SANDERS

Because you just got here. You don't understand who you are dealing with. There are powerful men watching what you are doing. You don't know them but they know you.

MEAGHER

Well tell them to come by my office. I would like to make their acquaintance.

SANDERS

I don't think you would.

MEAGHER

Well, Mr. Sanders, I am honored that you made the long trip to see me and offer me your wise counsel and assistance.

Taking Sanders by the arm, Meagher  
gently walks him to the door.  
Pfouts follows.

(MORE)

"I'm Coming Home" A Musical By Michael J. Finnegan

MEAGHER (CONT'D)

I appreciate it and I will try to be more sensitive to local customs. I really will.

MEAGHER OPENS THE DOOR AND BOTH MEAGHER AND SANDERS STARE UP IN THE AIR WITH THEIR HEADS SLOWLY TURNING IN UNISON. THEY ARE WATCHING THE BODY OF JAMES DANIELS WHO IS HANGING FROM A TREE OFF (OFF STAGE, UNSEEN BY THE AUDIENCE) PFOUTS STANDS BACK, UNINTERESTED IN THE VIEW.

SANDERS

(pause)

Is that James Daniels?

MEAGHER

(pause)

Yes, cut him down please.

SANDERS LOOKS AT PFOUTS AND PFOUTS GOES OFF STAGE TO ATTEND TO DANIELS'S BODY. MEAGHER RETURNS TO HIS DESK AND TAKES OUT A PISTOL. PFOUTS COMES BACK ON STAGE A FEW MOMENTS LATER CARRYING A PIECE OF PAPER WHICH HE HANDS TO SANDERS.

SANDERS

(reacting to the paper)

This is your pardon affidavit. It was in Daniels's pocket. (reading and looking up in disbelief) The note says you're next.

MEAGHER

Did you know?

SANDERS

I would not have come if I had.

MEAGHER

(to Pfouts)

This is the work of the Vigilance Committee, isn't it Mr. Pfouts?

SANDERS

That is speculation. You don't know that and no one does.

MEAGHER

(laughing)

No counselor, everyone knows that, its just no one will say it out loud.

"I'm Coming Home" A Musical By Michael J. Finnegan

SANDERS

(pause)

You have no idea what you are up against.

MEAGHER

I think I do. Mr. Sanders.

SANDERS

You don't know these people.

MEAGHER

I don't know them but I know you and no matter  
what happens, I will hold you responsible.

**END ACT TWO - SCENE 4**

"I'm Coming Home" A Musical By Michael J. Finnegan

**ACT TWO SCENE FIVE**

MEAGHER AND HIS WIFE, LIBBY, ARE IN A RUSTIC CABIN IN MONTANA. MEAGHER IS WRITING AT A TABLE AND LIBBY IS SITTING OPPOSITE OF HIM, WITH A GREEN RIBBON IN HER HAIR, SORTING MAIL.

MEAGHER (CONT'D)

You know the worse part of this job is nepotism. I arrived in Montana sixteen months ago and already, there are 136 applicants for non-existent political positions in this Territory.

LIBBY

That's rich. The government has not yet paid you a penny since we got here and people are petitioning you for jobs. You're the Acting Governor and they're pretending to pay you.

MEAGHER

(looking up from his paperwork)

Libby, you know that is an oversight and I have been promised it will be taken care of this month. It takes four months for mail from Washington to reach us. This will be cleared up soon.

LIBBY

(annoyed)

You would think that with all of the gold mined in the hills of Montana they could pay us the \$2,000 they owe us.

MEAGHER

We just have to be patient and watch expenses.

LIBBY

Watch expenses? At the meeting with miners in January, you ran a bar tab of four hundred thirty-four dollars and 75 cents!

MEAGHER

The meeting you refer to was a convention and it lasted thirty-eight days! My father's advance covered the bill.

LIBBY

The convention ended on March 17th! Was that a coincidence?

MEAGHER

Of course it was. (pause) The next day was Sunday. The miners needed a rest.

"I'm Coming Home" A Musical By Michael J. Finnegan

LIBBY

(returning to the mail)

Oh, look, we got an invitation to attend the Montana Historical Society meeting in Helena. That sounds interesting.

MEAGHER

It's interesting in a completely novel way. They formed their historical society, not to record history, but to predict the future.

LIBBY

What do you mean Thomas?

MEAGHER

Lynching and murder in the Territory are recorded by the Montana Historical Society as heroic deeds performed by brave vigilantes, when in fact, it is just the mine owners trying to keep populace in check. They're trying to make certain that when Montana receives statehood, they never have to answer to the authorities because they are the authorities.

LIBBY

But Mr. Sanders, the founder of the Society, seems like such a gentleman.

MEAGHER

He is a scoundrel. He is an attorney and he should know better than to justify the kangaroo courts that lynch suspected thieves. I came here to restore law and order to this territory and he has opposed me at every step. I tried to cooperate with him but he is a ruthless fanatic. He knows too much to turn back now.

LIBBY

He is a powerful man Thomas and he greeted you civilly when you arrived here. You should try to placate him.

MEAGHER

Libby, I am trying to form a government here. The mine owners run this place like a country estate but the miners...they have nothing. Most of them are Irish immigrants and they came here to find work. Now they're hung or shot if they try to organize for better wages. This is not right. Someone has to stand up.

LIBBY

Enough with the miners! Thomas, we have no money! Everywhere we go, you are at war with someone.

(MORE)

"I'm Coming Home" A Musical By Michael J. Finnegan

LIBBY (CONT'D)

Let me remind you, this is June 24th in Montana, it is snowing outside, and we have no indoor plumbing.

(extending her hands at her surroundings)

Fix this and then tend to the miners.

Meagher stands up and walks to a window and stares out of the window as he speaks to Libby.

MEAGHER

You're right, I must be more attentive to your needs.

(pause)

LIBBY

(extending her hand with a letter)

Here, here is a letter from Secretary of State William Seward. I know he is your favorite.

Meagher moves quickly and takes the letter, opening it and quickly reading it. Meagher walks slowly to Libby and hands her the letter to read. As she is reading, Meagher summarizes the letter.

MEAGHER

He says there is no use in trying. The President has made his mind up about replacing me. He says that we should prepare for the journey home.

LIBBY

(looking up from the letter)

You know what he doesn't say. He doesn't say when we are getting paid.

MEAGHER

He's the damned Secretary of State, not the Secretary of the Treasury.

LIBBY

(glancing back at the letter)

Thomas, what is he referring to when he mentions rifles arriving at Fort Benton.

Walking back to Libby and taking the letter from her.

MEAGHER

Libby, my love, it is my last service to Montana before we leave. I have promised to raise a militia and stop the Indian raids.

"I'm Coming Home" A Musical By Michael J. Finnegan

Libby exhales loudly and let's her head tilt back until she is looking at the ceiling.

LIBBY  
Do you have to go?

MEAGHER  
I have to. It is not an insurmountable task. I can do this Libby!

LIBBY  
I know you can do this Thomas. You can do anything but why, why start a militia when you know your authority here is waning and we will be leaving soon?

MEAGHER  
Because I know I can do it and I can do it better and more fairly than anyone else in the territory.

LIBBY  
(staring at her mail)  
It's no use Thomas. I know you want to be the United States Senator from Montana when it is granted statehood. Everyone knows.

Meagher walks quickly to Libby and kneels on one knee and takes her hand.

MEAGHER  
I could do great good here. This place could be a refuge for Irish workman to come and be treated equally. I fancy this place could be called the state of New Ireland, like New England, only different in every way.

LIBBY  
(laughing)  
You are incorrigible. This is really why I love you.

MEAGHER  
(lifting Libby from her chair and hugging her)  
But you didn't know when you married me what it would cost you.

LIBBY  
Oh but I did.

MEAGHER  
How is that dear?



"I'm Coming Home" A Musical By Michael J. Finnegan

LIBBY

My father's attorney told me I was disinherited in his will because I married in the Catholic Church. He said it would cost me just over three million dollars to marry you.

Meagher pulls Libby close as he faces the audience. He looks panicked.

MEAGHER

I am sorry I brought you here Libby.

LIBBY

(pulling back to look at Meagher)  
Don't be. This is the happiest I've ever been in my life. Marrying you was a bargain.

MEAGHER

I had no way of knowing...

LIBBY

I mean it. I have never been happier. I don't miss New York, the mansion, any of it.

(closing her eyes)

I know I am going to regret this, but money matters aside, I have loved you since the first time I heard your voice. Why should Montana be different. You are home from the war. You are mine now. I don't miss New York and I don't miss being away from you...It's just, we're going to need some money.

Meagher embraces Libby and loosens the ribbon in her hair, takes a deep breath and exhales slowly. Meagher carefully removes the ribbon allowing Libby's hair to fall on her shoulders. Meagher stares into her eyes momentarily. The mood is broken when there is a knock on the door.

LIBBY (CONT'D)

(purring)

I better see who is at the door Governor otherwise they might just walk in.

Libby crosses the room and opens the door to greet grizzled US Army Lieutenant Martin Hogan.

LIBBY (CONT'D)

Lieutenant Hogan, what brings you to the Montanan Territory?

(MORE)

"I'm Coming Home" A Musical By Michael J. Finnegan

LIBBY (CONT'D)

(To Meagher)

Thomas, it's Lieutenant Hogan from Camp Cook.

Meagher strides quickly across the room and vigorously shakes hands with Hogan. Hogan looks curiously at the green ribbon dangling from their clasped hands and Meagher quickly stuffs it into his pocket.

MEAGHER

I was just unwrapping a gift.

LIBBY

(rolling her eyes)

Lieutenant, we expect you to stay for dinner and please consider being our guest for the evening.

HOGAN

Dinner sounds grand Libby, but my men might need a bit of command presence when they return from the saloons tonight. Thank you anyway.

LIBBY

Fine, then I will leave you to your business. Dinner will be at five.

Libby exits.

MEAGHER

Lieutenant Martin Hogan, I knew you would make an excellent officer one day.

HOGAN

(laughing)

Is that why you tried to get me killed on the way to Fredericksburg.

MEAGHER

It was a gun emplacement, that's all. You crossed the river, seized the guns, and returned safely. Why do you always bring that up?

HOGAN

Returned safely? (They both begin laughing)

MEAGHER

I thought for certain Stuart's Calvary was going to catch you.

They both begin to laugh.

"I'm Coming Home" A Musical By Michael J. Finnegan

HOGAN

(Gasping) Hauling a 32 pound Howitzer behind my horse, firing over my shoulder, knee deep in water. God, that was fun.

MEAGHER

You were faster then. (laughter ebbs) So tell, where are my rifles? (laughter stops)

HOGAN

That can wait Thomas. I need to talk to you about your bodyguards. Since when did the Freemasons provide you with bodyguards?

MEAGHER

Friends close, enemies closer?

HOGAN

Thomas, you keep them at bay with a bluff. You will not always be Governor here.

MEAGHER

My brave Lieutenant Hogan, one can only play the cards that are dealt.

HOGAN

(raising his voice)

The Vigilantes have promised to hang you!

MEAGHER

(stage whisper)

Keep your voice down. I don't want Libby to hear. That note was an empty threat. No one is going to hang the Governor of Montana.

HOGAN

We both know the Helena Freemasons are just wealthy mine owners and half of them fought for the Confederacy during the war. I can't think of a group of men who have more reasons to hate you.

MEAGHER

My bodyguards do what I say and go where I send them.

HOGAN

Yea, but you haven't paid them yet and we both know who does pay them.

MEAGHER

You don't understand Marty. They are the strongest group in Montana. I need to keep them close. They're not watching me. I'm watching them. They won't do anything as long as I am Governor of this Territory. The war is over.

(MORE)

"I'm Coming Home" A Musical By Michael J. Finnegan

MEAGHER (CONT'D)

I have to be a politician. Now where are my rifles?

HOGAN

Forget about the rifles. You'll never see them.

MEAGHER

Sherman promised the rifles would arrive in Fort Benton by July first.

HOGAN

Thomas listen to me. Forget about what Sherman said. The rifles will do you no good.

MEAGHER

Damn it Hogan, I begged and pleaded for those rifles. The Indians massacred a ninety man patrol last year.

HOGAN

They were my men you are referring to, but I'm telling you the rifles are not coming.

Meagher rushes to his desk and returns with a paper to show Hogan.

MEAGHER

This is General Sherman's signature. He authorized the shipment of rifles to me to raise a militia to protect Montana from the Indians.

HOGAN

Look at me Thomas. The rifles aren't coming.

MEAGHER

And how can you be sure of that?

HOGAN

A British Secret Service agent, a Captain Wilfred Speer, of the Queens Guards, just met with General Sherman in St. Louis, and your name came up.

MEAGHER

You're mad. Why would the British Secret Service come to St. Louis to speak with General Sherman?

HOGAN

Thomas, while you have been snugged away in Montana playing the politician, Fenian Circles have made three cross border raids into Canada to fight the Brits.

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MEAGHER

That is madness. We can't possibly fight the British without the support of the American Government.

HOGAN

We had their support but the British bought them off.

MEAGHER

What the hell are you talking about?

HOGAN

President Johnson met with the Fenian Center and agreed to let us cross the Canadian border and try to seize Canada.

MEAGHER

He agree to that?

HOGAN

The British Navy supported the Confederacy during the war and had helped them sink Union commercial vessels. Secretary of State Seward demanded the Brits pay reparations and they refused.

MEAGHER

Seward would has no use for the Brits.  
(laughing)

HOGAN

Until June 6th. President Johnson issued a proclamation forbidding any further invasions of Canada by the Fenians.

MEAGHER

Why double back now?

HOGAN

On June 6th, the British Government agreed to pay fifteen million dollars in reparations for having sunk Union commercial shipping during he War.

MEAGHER

So Johnson stopped the Fenians?

HOGAN

He ordered General Ulysses S. Grant himself, to personally ride to Buffalo and disarm the Fenian Division planning a fourth raid.

Meagher walks away and pauses to take in what was said.

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MEAGHER

What does Seward think of this arrangement?

HOGAN

Seward has been marginalized. He hasn't recovered from being stabbed in the face by the Confederate assassin.

MEAGHER

What was that Black Guard's name?

HOGAN

Payne, John Payne.

MEAGHER

I remember when the Army hung him.

HOGAN

I was there too. He just kept smiling, right up until the gallows snapped his neck.

MEAGHER

It was almost like he knew something we didn't.

HOGAN

Whatever he knew, he took with him.

MEAGHER

Still, it is shame about Seward. He doesn't appear in public. He is self-conscious about how his face looks. He was one of the few people in the government who would defend me.

(beat)

I suppose it doesn't matter now.

HOGAN

Oh, but it does Thomas. Do you remember James Stephens?

MEAGHER

Of course I remember him. He was a Young Irishman in the 48 Rising with me....

(pause)

He came to New York City a while back to raise money for a new organization in Ireland.

HOGAN

And what would that new organization be?

MEAGHER

I don't recall.

HOGAN

Thomas, you are a terrible liar. Stephens founded the Irish Republican Brotherhood and you supported him.

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MEAGHER

Damn lot of good it did. He returned to Ireland, was betrayed by an informant, and got locked up by the Brits.

(pause)

I am not involved with the Fenians any longer.

HOGAN

Then let me be the first to inform you, that Captain Thomas Kelly, Active Duty, United States Army, led a contingent of Fenians and broke Stephens out of a British prison in November. Stephens was smuggled out of Ireland to New York City. He is a free man! Captain Kelly is still operational in Ireland.

MEAGHER

By God, some of the Fenians actually returned to Ireland! The Brits must be..oh...oh, so that explains Captain Speer...and General Sherman. Speer must think my rifles are meant for ...

HOGAN

Exactly Thomas. The British think you want the rifles for the Fenians and they have convinced General Sherman not to turn them over. You could cross the Canadian border from Fort Benton in a day.

MEAGHER

The Brits finally found me here.

HOGAN

Did you think you could hide out forever in this vast land.

MEAGHER

(wistfully)

I did Marty. I really did.

HOGAN

Sherman has formally introduced Captain Speer to General Sheridan.

MEAGHER

But Sheridan commands the 5th Military District in Texas.

HOGAN

You're behind the times Thomas. You made a believer of Sherman with your demand for rifles. He has brought Sheridan up to command this district and wage a campaign against the Indians. Sherman is not going to allow you to gain any political foot hold here by fighting the Indians.

"I'm Coming Home" A Musical By Michael J. Finnegan

MEAGHER

Sheridan would have a hard time finding Montana on the map.

HOGAN

Hard or easy, he is coming, and he has signed a letter of introduction for Captain Speer to the Commander of the Montana Territory to extend all manner of courtesy to Captain Speer during his stay in Montana.

Meagher turns away and walks to the window.

MEAGHER

I can't win Marty. Even if I fight my best fight, I can't win. It's almost like....

HOGAN

The war all over again?

MEAGHER

I had to leave.

HOGAN

But you didn't just leave the Army. You turned your back on the Fenians. You broke the Circle.

MEAGHER

Why do you pollute my thoughts with these memories?

HOGAN

Fair warning, that's all. Captain Speer, of the British Army, has decided to visit Montana and he is headed up the Missouri River on the steamship Octavia. He is scheduled to arrive in Fort Benton on June 20th.

MEAGHER

But that is the same time my rifles are to arrive.

HOGAN

There are no coincidences Thomas.

MEAGHER

(sarcastically)

Perhaps Captain Speer will lead my militia against the Indians?

HOGAN

You can forget about Speer. We have men on board the Octavia. He will meet with an unfortunate accident before he ever gets to Fort Benton.



"I'm Coming Home" A Musical By Michael J. Finnegan

MEAGHER

Hogan, what the hell is happening?

HOGAN

Governor Green Clay Smith, the man you replaced as Governor, is on the steamship Octavia eating dinner with Captain Speer right now.

MEAGHER

Why? Why is Smith returning now?

HOGAN

It seems your political enemy, Wilbur Sanders, made the long trip to D.C. to see the President and complain about you. Johnson has agreed to replace you permanently.

MEAGHER

I knew it was coming. I didn't know when. He got Congress to invalidate the Territorial Legislature we formed and now he wants me gone. I will request an extension from the President.

HOGAN

The request for your removal was made by Wilbur Fisk Sanders, the Grand Master of the Masonic Lodge in Helena. The request was granted by Andrew Johnson, Grand Master Mason, President of the United States. You're done Thomas. Your time here is finished.

MEAGHER

(shaking his head)

That is impressive. Sanders travelled all the way to Washington, D.C., to have me fired! I must be doing something right.

HOGAN

Irish are flooding into this territory to work the mines. You are a political threat to the mine owners.

MEAGHER

I'm not the threat. Democracy is the threat.

HOGAN

Yes, but they can't kill democracy, you on the other hand.....

MEAGHER

I will tell you a secret Marty, they can't kill me and they know it.

HOGAN

So you are the immortal Irishman?

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MEAGHER

Not at all, but I am a problem for them. My old friend, Secretary of State William Seward explained it to me. Forty years ago, the Freemasons abducted and murdered a former US Army Captain, William Morgan, who was about to publish a book exposing their secrets. The authorities never found his body but there was such a backlash that Masonic Halls all over the country were closed and padlocked and Seward himself was elected to the US Senate by an Anti-Masonic political party he helped found. They can't kill me, it would ruin them.

HOGAN

That's it? That is what you are counting on to keep you safe? They leave you notes expressly telling you they are going to hang you and you believe public opinion will keep you safe?

MEAGHER

(throwing his hands up)

So far, so good. They even provide me with bodyguards.

HOGAN

Thomas you don't take their threats seriously, but they view you very very seriously.

MEAGHER

A failed revolutionary...a failed lawyer... and now a failed governor and yet they still worry about me. Imagine if I were good at anything.

HOGAN

There is a feeling Thomas, that you are a man waiting to happen. They can't allow that.

MEAGHER

No I suppose they can't.

(pause)

Thank the Fenians for allowing you to come here today. As always, it was enlightening.

HOGAN

We will take care of Speer and the Brits but you are on your own with the Montana people.

MEAGHER

I know Marty. I've always known.

HOGAN

Well if you've taken the pledge, now would be the perfect time to admit you were wrong.

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Meagher laughs and produces two glasses and a bottle of whiskey from a shelf on his desk.

MEAGHER

What shall we drink to old friend?

Hogan extends his hand and they grasp each other by the wrist.

HOGAN

May God forget us if we ever forget our purpose to return to Ireland to free our brothers, mothers, wives, and children from slavery.

MEAGHER

(raising his voice)

Never retreat from the clash of spears.

HOGAN

Never retreat from the clash of spears.

They drain their glasses. The door opens and Libby comes on stage. Meagher and Hogan continue to stare at each other.

LIBBY

Lieutenant Hogan, what time would you like to eat tonight?

HOGAN

(still staring at Meagher)

I am very sorry Libby, but something has come up and I have to return to my men.

(releasing Meagher and looking at Libby)

Mrs. Meagher, in a desert of dog faced soldiers, you are an oasis of beauty in my eyes. However, I am going to have to decline your dinner invitation. Official matters beckon.

Libby smiles icily as Hogan exits. She walks over to Meagher and puts her arms around him.

LIBBY

Did I hear you toasting with Lieutenant Hogan?

MEAGHER

What are you the temperance lady then?

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LIBBY

No, but when I heard you toast I got a chill.

MEAGHER

It's Montana in June, of course you got a chill.

LIBBY

No, this chill was from the inside.

MEAGHER

Maybe it's you and I that should be drinking whiskey.

LIBBY

"Never retreat from the clash of spears", what does that mean?

MEAGHER

Nothing really, just two old soldiers reminiscing.

LIBBY

Hogan is a Fenian, isn't he?

MEAGHER

I wouldn't know. The Fenians are a secret society.

LIBBY

Damn it Thomas, I thought you broke with the Fenians after the war.

MEAGHER

Yes, and I'm still separated from them. What do you want from me Libby.

LIBBY

Intimacy! What is going on Thomas?

MEAGHER

I'm the Acting Governor and I have all of the problems that go along with the job. That's all. I have to fight to keep order until I'm relieved.

LIBBY

First you fought the British and the Irish people turned on you, then you fought the Confederacy and the Union Generals turned on you, and now you're fighting the Indians and the entire United States Government is turning on you.

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MEAGHER

(wincing)

You know you can beat a man to death with honesty.

LIBBY

How did the Fenians find you here?

MEAGHER

Libby, my darling, it's a curse. Where ever I go, it is still Ireland. If they don't kill me soon, this whole world will turn into Ireland.

LIBBY

Don't say that. Don't ever say that. We have our life to live.

FAREWELL BALLAD

**MEAGHER**

[G]OH HOW MY [C]HEART BREAKS INTO [G]PIECES  
[G]EVERY SAD [C]FAREWELL I PUT US [D]THROUGH  
[G]THOUGH THE REBEL [C]FLAME INSIDE WILL NEVER [EM]FADE  
[G]EVERY JOURNEY LEADS ME RIGHT BACK [D]HOME TO YOU  
[C]BUT EVERY TIME THE [D]SUN SHINES [G]THROUGH YOUR WINDOW  
[C]OR WHEN MID[D]NIGHT MOON HUMS [G]YOU TO SLEEP  
[C]LIBBY CLOSE YOUR [D]EYES AND [G]MAKE A WISH AND [EM]THINK  
OF ME  
[D]THATS WHERE I'LL [G]BE

**LIBBY**

[G]I CAN ALMOST [C]FEEL YOU DISAP[G]PEARING  
[G]AS A SHADOW [C]FADES INTO THE [D]DARK  
[G]BUT I NEED NOT [C]ASK, MY DEAR, [EM]HOW LONG WE'LL BE  
[C]APART  
[C]IF YOU ALWAYS TAKE ME WITH YOU IN YOUR [D]HEART  
[C]EVERY TIME A [D]RAINBOW FRAMES THE [G]HEAVENS  
[C]AND YOU TAKE A [D]MOMENT JUST TO [G]BREATHE  
[C]THOMAS CLOSE [D]YOUR EYES TO FALL [G]ASLEEP AND [EM]DREAM  
OF ME  
[D]THAT'S WHERE I'LL [G]BE

**BRIDGE**

C D G C D G

**MEAGHER**

[C]I'M IN EVERY STEP YOU [G]TAKE - WALKING [C]RIGHT BESIDE  
[D]YOU

**LIBBY**

[C]IF YOU SHOULD EVER LOSE [EM]YOUR WAY, I [C]KNOW WHERE I  
CAN FIND [D]SUS]YOU[D]

**MEAGHER**

[C]EVERY TIME OUR [D]BOY SINGS TOO-RAH-[G]LOO-RAH

**LIBBY**

[C]EVERY TIME I [D]FEEL HIS BEATING [G]HEART

**TOGETHER**

[C]EVERY TIME YOU'RE REACHING [D]OUT TO [G]CATCH A FALLING  
[EM]STAR

"I'm Coming Home" A Musical By Michael J. Finnegan

[D]THAT'S WHERE YOU [G]ARE  
OH, [D]THAT'S WHERE YOU [G]ARE

"I'm Coming Home" A Musical By Michael J. Finnegan

**END ACT TWO, SCENE 5**

"I'm Coming Home" A Musical By Michael J. Finnegan

**ACT TWO SCENE FIVE**

MEAGHER IS AT HIS DESK READING FROM A STACK OF PAPERS ON HIS DESK.

There is a knock on the door and Libby enters from off stage and goes to the door. She opens the door to Wilbur Fisk Sanders who enters.

SANDERS

Mrs. Meagher, if I didn't know your husband personally, I'd swear Spring itself brought you to Montana. You look radiant.

LIBBY

Thank you Mr. Sanders. Please come in.  
(to Meagher)  
Tom, Wilbur Sanders is here to see you.

Meagher nods at Sanders

MEAGHER

I am glad you could come.

SANDERS

When my Governor calls, I answer the call.

Libby sensing the tension leaves the stage.

MEAGHER

Could I get you anything to drink Mr. Sanders?

Sanders picks up one of the whiskey shot glasses Meagher and Hogan were drinking from, sniffs it, winces, and then sets it down.

SANDERS

No, I will be fine. Thank you, however, for asking.

MEAGHER

Are you simply a useful idiot or was it your idea to have me dismissed?

SANDERS

Those are dangerous wild words.

MEAGHER

More dangerous than you know.



"I'm Coming Home" A Musical By Michael J. Finnegan

SANDERS

You knew you were just the "Acting" Governor. I just requested that the real Governor return to Montana to take charge.

MEAGHER

You made a three month journey to Washington, D.C. just to have me fired?

SANDERS

There were many important matters for my travel.

MEAGHER

No doubt!

SANDERS

Your baseless allegations against the Montana Freemasons and Vigilantes were dividing the people. Not all Vigilantes are Freemasons.

MEAGHER

But all Freemasons are vigilantes, aren't they Mr. Sanders.

Meagher and Sanders come together face to face in anger. (pause) Meagher quickly and walks to one end of the stage and Sanders occupies the other end of the stage. Spot lights are on both men. The following dialog is to the tune of "The Gary Owen". Meagher and Sanders switch places at the end of each verse.

MONTANA STANZA (TO THE TUNE OF "THE GARY OWEN")

**MEAGHER**

KEEP YOUR VOICE DOWN IF YOU DON'T WANT MY WIFE TO HEAR  
WHAT PASSES BETWEEN US IS NOT FIT TO SHARE  
I'M GOVERNOR HERE AND I AM MADE FOR THE JOB  
I DON'T NEED THE HELP OF SOME CRAZY LYNCH MOB  
THE MEN WEARING HOODS WHO COME AT NIGHT  
KNOW IN THEIR HEARTS THEY REALLY CAN'T FIGHT  
BULLIES IN NUMBERS THEY FRIGHTEN NO ONE  
THE LAST THING THEY'LL SEE IS THE FLASH OF MY GUN

**SANDERS**

THE MONTANA HISTORICAL SOCIETY  
HAS RECORDED THE FEATS OF PROPRIETY  
AN EYE FOR AN EYE AND A TOOTH FOR A TOOTH  
AS SIMPLE AS THAT, SELF-EVIDENT TRUTH  
YOU SLEEP THROUGH THE DAY, DRINK THROUGH THE NIGHT  
YOU CAN'T PASS UP A CHANCE FOR A FIGHT  
YOUR TIME IS PASSING YOUR FRIENDS ARE FEW

"I'm Coming Home" A Musical By Michael J. Finnegan

THE SINS OF YOUR PAST ARE COMING FOR YOU

**MEAGHER**

LYNCHING AND MURDER ARE TWO OF THE SAME  
YOUR SECRET SOCIETIES ARE CLEARLY TO BLAME

**SANDERS**

YOUR WORDS MAKE US OUT TO BE TERRIBLE GHOULS  
YOU MAKE ACCUSATIONS AND TAKE US FOR FOOLS

**MEAGHER**

YOUR THREATS AND WARNINGS ARE WASTED ON ME  
IT'S PART OF THE PUZZLE YOU REALLY DON'T SEE

**SANDERS**

THE WARNINGS ARE WISDOM THAT'S WASTED ON YOU  
YOUR WORDS INCUR DEBT AND THE PAYMENT IS DUE

**SANDERS**

YOU'RE WRONG YOU KNOW IN THE END I WIN  
YOUR KIND CAN BE BOUGHT WITH WHISKEY AND GIN  
YOUR POEMS AND SPEECHES ARE THINGS OF THE PEN  
THE ROPE AND THE GUN ARE WHAT SEPARATE MEN

**MEAGHER**

IF YOU CAME HERE TO THREATEN, MALINGER, MALIGN  
THEN JUST TAKE A TICKET AND GET IN THE LINE

**MEAGHER**

YOU SCOUNDREL

**SANDERS**

YOU FOOL

**MEAGHER**

YOU PIMP

**SANDERS**

YOU PUNK

**TOGETHER**

I'LL SEND YOU TO HELL YOU POLITICAL SKUNK.

Sanders storms off slamming the door and Libby quickly enters from the other door. The music stops.

LIBBY

What was that about?

MEAGHER

I was just explaining to Sanders how much I would like to hang him and he was, pretty much, saying the same thing to me, only louder.

LIBBY

Why, why, why do you do this? He is a very important man?

"I'm Coming Home" A Musical By Michael J. Finnegan

MEAGHER

(facing Libby)

I really wanted to be able to work with Sanders when I came here. I didn't want this fight!

LIBBY

Then why do you set your face like a flint against men you know can hurt you? Why is it you that always takes up the cause no matter what? Why you Thomas? Why is it always you?

Meagher takes Libby by the arms and leads her to the desk. She sits on the side and he steps back to address her.

MEAGHER

You know I'm incapable of lying to you?

LIBBY

I know that.

Meagher begins to pace.

MEAGHER

It doesn't matter if I set my face like a flint. It doesn't matter if I take up the cause. Men just know.

LIBBY

Know what?

MEAGHER

I see things....I know when things aren't right and need to be set right....It shows on my face...men know.

LIBBY

Men know what?

MEAGHER

That there is no other way for me. I have no choice. They can kill me but they can't change my resolve.

LIBBY

This must not happen.

MEAGHER

(looking away)

I think it is going to be alright. I will be replaced as Governor of Montana soon. We can go back east. I can pursue a career.

"I'm Coming Home" A Musical By Michael J. Finnegan

LIBBY

I wish you could just love me. I wish to God  
that you could forget everything and just love  
me.

They walk towards each other and  
embrace.

MEAGHER

I do too, Libby. I do too.

SCENE FADES TO BLACK AND PIPE  
MUSIC WITH "GARY OWEN" AND "SHE  
MOVED THROUGH THE FAIR" MIXED

END ACT TWO - SCENE FOUR

SCENE FIVE - "G.A. THOMPSON" STEAMSHIP STATEROOM

INT. - NIGHT

MEAGHER IS SITTING IN THE STATEROOM OF THE STEAMSHIP CALLED  
THE "G.A. THOMPSON WHICH IS DOCKED ON THE MISSOURI RIVER AT  
FORT BENTON, MONTANA ON JULY 1, 1867. HE IS VERY SICK,  
SHIVERING, AND COVERED WITH A BLANKET. HE HAS BEEN SECRETLY  
GIVEN UNFILTERED RIVER WATER CAUSING DIARHEA. HIS HAIR IS  
DISHEVELLED. HE IS THROWING UP IN A BUCKET. MEAGHER IS  
WEARING FRONTIER CLOTHES. JOHNNY DORAN, THE SHIP'S PILOT,  
AN IRISH IMMIGRANT, COMES INTO THE STATROOM CARRYING A  
REVOLVER AND A BOTTLE OF BRANDY. HE HANDS THE REVOLVER TO  
MEAGHER AND PUTS THE BRANDY ON A TABLE.

DORAN

(Irish brogue)

Here you go Governor, this is one of two guns I  
keep on this paddle boat. The Army provides  
soldiers when I am in Indian country but there  
is usually no problem docked here at Fort  
Benton.

MEAGHER

(coughing)

Yes, this will do just fine. I apologize for  
inconveniencing you like this Johnnie.

Meagher inspects the pistol and  
places it under his pillow.

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DORAN

No problem Governor, I consider it my good fortune to have hosted the famous "Meagher of the Sword". Wait until I tell them back home.

Meagher throws up into a bucket on the side of the bed.

MEAGHER

Johnny, you can just call me Thomas. Meagher of the sword is no longer the Acting Governor of Montana. I passed my successor on the road here. He arrived on the steamship Octavia on the 20th.

DORAN

The Octavia? Everyone on the river is talking about the Octavia because of the Englishman, a Captain Speer, was killed by a sentry on the Octavia. People say they mistook him for an Indian and shot him.

MEAGHER

It was just his time Johnnie. It was just his time. (coughs violently)

DORAN

If you don't mind me asking, what made you ride all the way to Fort Benton alone?

MEAGHER

I came with my bodyguards but, damned the luck, the new Governor took my bodyguards with him. It was really my good fortune to meet up with a fellow Irishman in this God forsaken town. Thank you again for extending me the courtesy of staying on your boat.

Meagher throws up again into the bucket.

DORAN

I hope you don't mind me mentioning it, but you look a bit piqued.

MEAGHER

I think it was the water I drank coming here. I was the only one in the party to get sick. This has me worried Johnnie. I think there are men in this town who mean to harm me. I can feel it.

DORAN

Well, you're welcome to stay on this steamship for as long as we are in port.

(MORE)

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DORAN (CONT'D)

We will be docked here for at least another three days. You will be fine here.

MEAGHER

Thank you. I'm waiting for a shipment of rifles from the federal government. They should have been here today. Perhaps they will arrive tomorrow.

DORAN

Well, you can relax Governor. You can stay here until your rifles get here.

MEAGHER

I am truly indebted to you for pffering me your stateroom.

Meagher coughs violently and shakes with tremors.

DORAN

You just need to rest Governor.

MEAGHER

Where did you say your people were from.

DORAN

(sadly)

Mayo, I still have family in Mayo.

There are two quick knocks on the door and a pause followed by one knock. Doran stands up.

DORAN (CONT'D)

Come in.

Three masked men, one carrying a rope with a noose, come in followed by Wilbur Fisk Sanders. Meagher quickly retrieves the revolver from under the pillow, places it to Doran's chest and pulls the trigger three times. The gun, which is unloaded, just makes three clicks. Meagher's hand drops to his side in exhaustion and Doran takes the gun from him and backs away. Two of the masked men go behind Meagher and tie his hands before lowering the noose around his neck. Doran begins to exit and as he passes Sanders, Sanders hands him an envelope.

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Doran inspects the contents of the envelope and stuffs it in his pocket. Meagher with his head still bowed shouts to Doran.

MEAGHER  
(shouting)

Johnnie?

DORAN  
Yes, Governor.

MEAGHER  
No hard feelings about me trying to shoot you then?

DORAN  
No, none Governor. You know they gave me no choice.

MEAGHER  
I understand...Johnnie, but if you live to spend that money...never never disinherit your daughters.

Doran shrugs and hurries out of the room. Sanders closes the door behind him and turns a chair around backwards and sits down on a chair facing Meagher.

SANDERS  
You don't seem to be feeling well.

MEAGHER  
Did they poison me?

SANDERS  
Just a little sitting water in your canteen. It was for your own good. You have a reputation for great personal violence. As I told you before, we are not barbarians. You will not be kicked or beaten.

MEAGHER  
I suppose this will be a neat orderly lynching.

SANDERS  
Yes it will.

MEAGHER  
And for what capital crime am I charged?

SANDERS  
You were sentenced to hang in 1848 by British authorities for treason.

(MORE)

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SANDERS (CONT'D)

Your sentence was commuted to life imprisonment but when you escaped, your death sentence was reinstated.

MEAGHER

(amused and delirious)

How is it counsellor, that you are so familiar with British legal proceedings?

SANDERS

A Captain Speer from the British Army was in touch with some of the brothers in the Lodge. I was to meet with him today but the Fenians prevented that didn't they?

MEAGHER

(smiling broadly)

I supposed they did.

SANDERS

Either way, it is time to put a quietus upon you.

MEAGHER

And how, Mr. Sanders, pillar of the community that you are, how are you going to explain my death to the authorities?

SANDERS

Oh, a small detail really, you drowned. You were drunk. You wobbled out of this state room and fell off of the side of this boat into the swirling waters of the Missouri River. We will bury your body in the dessert and the authorities can search the river for as long as they wish.

MEAGHER

I drowned. I who have crossed raging streams and stormy oceans...I drowned. Surely the Montana Historical Society can do better than that.

SANDERS

It will suffice. We are certainly not going to say you were sacrificed for the greater good.

One of the masked men place the rope over a beam above the stage while another places a plaque over Meagher's head with the following numbers written "3-7-77".

MEAGHER

Sanders, what the hell is this?

(glancing at the numbers on his chest)

(MORE)



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MEAGHER (CONT'D)

You need a ritual to murder a Presidentially appointed Military Governor of Montana?

SANDERS

Because I am quite sure you will keep this secret, the President has personally approved of your execution.

(Meagher strains against his restraints)

You are not losing your nerve now are you Governor?

MEAGHER

(trembling)

They will never stop looking for me.

SANDERS

Perhaps not, but they will not find you.

The vigilantes throw a black cape over Meagher and the stage goes dark. Lights go back up and a chorus of singers enter from both sides of the stage singing the finale, I'm Coming Home. Meagher also joins the chorus with a sword in one hand, a pistol in the other, and a noose around his neck.

ENSEMBLE

"I'M COMING HOME"  
BY SEAN SUSKO

CHORUS

OH OH OH OH OH OH OH OH I'M COMING HOME (THIS IS THE END OF MY STORY IN THE IRISH BRIGADE) I'M COMING HOME (BUT A NEW BEGINNING FOR THE FUTURE PROMISES THAT I'VE MADE) I'M COMING HOOOME, I'M COMING HOOOME, I'M COMING HOOOME  
I'M COMING HOME  
I'M COMING HOME

[CORPORAL HOGAN]

HEY BABY I NEVER THOUGHT IT'D GO THIS FAR  
BUT I'VE SEEN EVERY SOLDIER SHAKE THE HAND OF THOMAS MEAGHER  
I'M HANGING UP MY MUSKET JUST TO HOLD YOU IN MY ARMS AGAIN  
NOW THIS MAY SOUND A LITTLE CRAZY BUT I FEEL YOU NOW AND AGAIN

CHORUS

OH OH OH OH OH OH OH OH I'M COMING HOME (THIS IS THE END OF MY STORY IN THE IRISH BRIGADE) I'M COMING HOME (BUT A NEW BEGINNING FOR THE FUTURE PROMISES THAT I'VE MADE) I'M COMING HOOOME, I'M COMING HOOOME, I'M COMING HOOOME

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I'M COMING HOME  
I'M COMING HOME

"I'm Coming Home" A Musical By Michael J. Finnegan

THE END