



THE NORTH WATER

PART FIVE: "TO LIVE IS TO SUFFER"

By

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Based on the novel by Ian McGuire

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1

INT. MISSION CABIN - DAY

1

The PRIEST sits at a table writing in a large green book, and around him are other thick leather-bound volumes, one of which he studies before writing in his own book.

ANNA comes in with a pan of stew and the PRIEST takes two white bowls from the shelf above the door and pushes back his papers and books. He spoons half the stew into one bowl and half into the other. He then gives the pan back to ANNA.

PRIEST

Thank you, Anna.

We notice SUMNER lying under a blanket of fur on the other side of the room.

The PRIEST looks over at him. SUMNER is shivering. The PRIEST drags his chair over, bowl of stew in hand.

PRIEST

Will you eat something now?

SUMNER doesn't answer.

PRIEST

Here.

The PRIEST sits SUMNER up and scoops a piece of meat onto the spoon and brings it to his lips.

PRIEST

I can feed you better if you'd
open up your mouth a little.

But SUMNER does not move; he understands what the PRIEST is saying but makes no effort to comply.

PRIEST

Come on now.

The PRIEST puts the tip of the metal spoon onto SUMNER's lower lip and gently presses down. His mouth opens a little and the PRIEST tips the spoon so the meat slides onto SUMNER's tongue. He lets it sit there a moment.

(CONTINUED)

PRIEST

Now chew.

SUMNER doesn't chew.

PRIEST

Surely you have not forgotten how to chew? You won't get any of the goodness out of it, if you don't chew it right.

SUMNER closes his mouth, chews twice and then swallows. He winces from a sharp pain in his gut.

PRIEST

Good. Good.

The PRIEST scoops up another piece of meat, but as SUMNER moves he winces from the pain. The PRIEST helps him to lie back down.

PRIEST

We'll try you with a mug of tea later. See how you do with that.

The PRIEST returns the chair to the table. From SUMNER as he lays awake, staring up at the ceiling.

CUT TO TITLE:

PART 5: "TO LIVE IS TO SUFFER"

2 **EXT. MISSION - DUSK**

2

ESTABLISHING SHOT OF THE CABIN IN THE DISTANCE, SURROUNDED BY SNOW.

PRIEST (V.O.)

The men who found you consider you an 'Angakoq'.

3 **INT. MISSION CABIN - DUSK**

3

SUMNER sits on a chair with a blanket over his shoulders. The PRIEST is there pottering around, making SUMNER tea.

(CONTINUED)

PRIEST

They believe that bears have great powers, and that certain, chosen men partake in them. Men who have the bear as their genius have superhuman strength. They are closer to the darkness, to the primitive. This makes for a better hunter, or so they believe.

He pulls another chair over to the table to join him.

PRIEST

I've seen some of their Angakoqs in action, and they're nought but conjurers and charlatans. They dress themselves up in gruesome masks and other audacious gewgaws; they make a great song and dance in the igloo, but there's nothing to it. It's nasty heathenish stuff, the crudest kind of superstition.

The PRIEST pours them both hot tea into two mugs.

PRIEST

But they know no better and how could they? They'd never seen the Bible before I got here, most of them never heard the gospel preached in earnest.

SUMNER picks up the tea and starts to sip. The warmth of it brings immediate comfort to him and the PRIEST nods his encouragement to keep drinking.

PRIEST

It's slow and painful work. I've been here alone since last spring. It took months to win their trust, first through gifts, knives, and so on and then through acts of kindness, giving help when needed, extra clothes, medicines.

(MORE)

(CONTINUED)

PRIEST (CONT'D)

They are kindly people, but they are very childlike, almost incapable of abstract thought or any of the higher emotions. The men hunt, and the women suckle children, and that forms the limit of their interests and knowledge.

SUMNER looks out of the window onto the frozen tundra.

PRIEST

They have a kind of metaphysics, true, but it is a crude and self-serving one, and so far as I can tell, many don't even believe it themselves. My task is to help them grow up, you might say, to develop their souls and make them self-aware. That is why I am making the translation of the Bible here.

He nods at the pile of books and papers on the table.

PRIEST

If I can get it right, find the correct words in their language, they will begin to understand. They are God's creatures after all, just as much as you or I.

SUMNER puts his tea down. He can feel words gathering.

PRIEST

Yes?

SUMNER

Medicines?

It is no more than a mumble and the PRIEST leans in to listen closer.

PRIEST

Say that again.

SUMNER

What medicines do you have?

(CONTINUED)

PRIEST

Oh, medicines! Of course, of course.

The PRIEST stands up, and heads into the storeroom at the rear of the cabin behind SUMNER. He calls back to SUMNER as he rifles through the chest.

PRIEST

I don't have much. I've used the salts a good deal of course, and the calomel for the children when they have the flux. Are you a doctor?

SUMNER ignores him.

SUMNER

Do you have laudanum?

PRIEST

We have none of it left. I had one bottle, but it's used up already.

SUMNER closes his eyes for a moment. When he opens them, the PRIEST has returned to the table.

PRIEST

I see you can talk plain English after all because for a while, I feared you were a Pollack or a Serb or some other Godforsaken strange denomination.

SUMNER picks up the tea and starts to drink again.

PRIEST

Where are you from?

SUMNER

It doesn't matter.

(CONTINUED)

PRIEST

Perhaps it doesn't matter to you,
but if a man is being fed and kept
in a warm spot where he would
likely die if left to fend for
himself, you might expect that a
little courtesy is due to the
people who are doing it for him.

SUMNER

I'll pay you back for the food and
the fire.

PRIEST

And when will you do that, I
wonder?

SUMNER

In the spring, when the whaling
ships are back.

The PRIEST rakes his fingers through his heavy beard
struggling to remain charitable.

PRIEST

Found in the body of a dead bear,
as if swallowed whole. Some might
call it a kind of miracle.

SUMNER

I wouldn't.

PRIEST

Then what would you call it?

SUMNER

Perhaps you should be asking the
bear.

The PRIEST yaps out a hearty laugh.

PRIEST

Oh, you're a clever fellow, I can
see that. Three days lying over
there silent as the grave, not a
word from your lips, and now
you're up and making merry with
me.

(CONTINUED)

SUMNER

I'll pay you for the food and
berth just as soon I get another.

PRIEST

(leaning forward)
You were sent here for a reason. A
man doesn't just appear like that
from nowhere.

SUMNER

Why does there always need to be a
reason?

PRIEST

Because there always *is* a reason.
(a beat)
I just don't know what the reason
is yet, but I know the Lord must
have one.

SUMNER

I want no part of that rigmarole.

In the distance, they hear the sound of approaching dogs.

4

INT. MISSION CABIN - DUSK

4

SUMNER watches through the window as the PRIEST and ANNA
talk to URGANG and MEROK.

SUMNER steps away from the window as the PRIEST comes
inside, followed by ANNA.

PRIEST

Do you know whose this is?

He holds up OTTO's bible. SUMNER walks over to take it
from him.

SUMNER

Yes.

PRIEST

Whose is it?

SUMNER

He was from the ship. Otto. One of
the harpooners.

(CONTINUED)

PRIEST

They found his frozen body.

ANNA

And two dead Esquimaux.

She makes the gesture to indicate the stabbing of a throat. The PRIEST watches SUMNER closely and then turns to ANNA.

PRIEST

(to ANNA)

Tell the hunters we know nothing.

5 **INT. MISSION CABIN - DUSK**

5

SUMNER and the PRIEST warm their hands by the fire.

PRIEST

Were they dead when you left them?

SUMNER

Only the Yaks.

PRIEST

Who murdered them?

SUMNER

A man named Henry Drax.

PRIEST

Why?

SUMNER

He wanted their kayaks and their clothes.

PRIEST

But why kill them?

SUMNER doesn't answer. The PRIEST shakes his head and picks up his pipe, filling it with tobacco. His hand is trembling as the charcoal crackles in the stove beside them.

PRIEST

He must have travelled north. The northern tribes of Baffin Land are a law unto themselves.

(MORE)

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

PRIEST (CONT'D)

He may be dead, but more likely he
has traded the sledge for shelter
and is waiting for spring.

SUMNER watches the candle's shimmering ghost hovering in
the darkened windowpane. Beyond that, he sees the pale
template of the igloo, and beyond that, the blackness of
the mountains.

The PRIEST stands and gets a bottle of brandy from the
cabinet near the door. He pours them both a glass, his
hands shaking.

PRIEST

(his back to SUMNER)
And what is your name?

SUMNER

My name?

PRIEST

Yes.

Does SUMNER get a perverse enjoyment from thinking that
the PRIEST worries he could be Drax?

SUMNER

Not Henry Drax.

The PRIEST turns around.

PRIEST

I'm pleased to hear it. Then what
is your name?

SUMNER

Patrick Sumner.

The PRIEST returns and hands him a glass of brandy.

PRIEST

And your history?

SUMNER

I have none to speak of.

PRIEST

Every man has his history.

(CONTINUED)

SUMNER

Not me, not now.

PRIEST

Do you think you have been reborn
from the belly of a bear?

SUMNER does not answer at first. He takes a sip of his
brandy.

SUMNER

If I have been reborn, it doesn't
mean I wish to learn anything
anew. I see nothing worth learning
that I don't already know.

6 **EXT. MISSION CABIN - DUSK**

6

SUMNER walks away from the cabin to the edge of the hill.
The wind is fierce and bitterly cold. It takes SUMNER's
breath away as he stands looking out towards the frozen
sea.

7 **EXT. MISSION CABIN - NIGHT**

7

The cabin sits alone in the vastness of the arctic night,
the northern lights flicking in the sky.

8 **EXT. MISSION CABIN - DAY**

8

URGANG and MEROK have returned to the cabin and talk to
the PRIEST and ANNA. SUMNER watches them as he fills a
bucket with snow.

9 **INT. MISSION CABIN - DAY**

9

The PRIEST shuts the door behind him.

PRIEST

They say they want you to hunt,
but they don't really want you to
hunt.

SUMNER

So why do they ask?

(CONTINUED)

PRIEST

They just want you to be there.
Despite what I tell them, they are
convinced, more than ever, you
have magical powers. They think
the animals will be drawn to you.

SUMNER

How long would I be gone?

PRIEST

A week. They're offering you a new
set of furs and a fair portion of
what they catch --

SUMNER

Tell them yes.

PRIEST

Are you sure? You will not have
the comfort of the cabin.

SUMNER

I will gladly do it. There is
nothing here to keep me occupied.

The PRIEST looks at SUMNER carefully.

PRIEST

Maybe you will be able to act as a
good example of the civilised
virtues while you're amongst them.

SUMNER

I'll be no such thing.

PRIEST

You're a finer man than you think.
You hold your secrets tight, I
know that, but I've been watching
you awhile now.

SUMNER

Then I'd thank you to stop
watching. What I may or mayn't be
is my business, I think.

(CONTINUED)

PRIEST

It's between you and the Lord,
true enough, but I hate to see a
decent man miscount himself.

SUMNER

You should save your good advice
for those who need it most.

10 **EXT. SEA ICE - DUSK**

10

SUMNER is perched on the back of URGANG's sledge pulled
by a pack of dogs across the frozen bay.

He is dressed in clean and warm clothes, his britches
made of bear-fur. He wears Inuit snow goggles made from
walrus ivory with narrow slits.

The speed is exhilarating for SUMNER, the wind fierce on
his face but his body warmed and cocooned by thick furs.

They arrive at a small igloo on the middle of the ice as
the sun is setting. The warm light on SUMNER's face feels
good. He closes his eyes and relishes the sensation.

11 **INT. IGLOO - NIGHT**

11

SUMNER sits wrapped in furs and listens to the hunters
telling stories.

12 **EXT. SEA ICE - DAY**

12

SUMNER watches URGANG hunt for seal. It is a world away
from the brutality of the British whalers.

URGANG kneels by a crack in the ice, resting on his
sealskin bag. He holds a spear against his thighs with
his body tilted towards the hole.

It is silent now. The wind has dropped as URGANG waits,
motionless, ready. SUMNER lights his pipe and exhales
smoke into the air.

Then suddenly, URGANG straightens and in one indivisible
flash of movement, he raises the spear and plunges it
down into the water.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

URGANG grips the line with both hands and digs his heels into the snow, yanking it against the thrashings from below.

MEROK comes to help him and stabs into the hole in the ice with his own spear.

They both wrestle with the seal for a while as spumes of water pulsate upwards through the cleft in the ice until it is dead.

Finally, they drag the seal out. SUMNER watches with a sense of awe.

URGANG pulls out the harpoon head and fills the wound with a plug to save the precious blood.

13 **INT. IGLOO - DUSK/NIGHT** 13

Seal blood heats on a blubber lamp. URGANG then passes around a cup of this warm blood, each of them taking a sip. SUMNER is grateful, his lips stained red.

14 OMITTED 14

15 **EXT. SEA ICE - DUSK** 15

SUMNER catches a seal on his own this time. MEROK helps to drag the animal out from the sea. He feels a sense of achievement, even joy.

16 **INT. IGLOO - NIGHT** 16

SUMNER is wrapped up warm as URGANG and MEROK snore gently. It feels comfortable and reassuring for SUMNER to be in their presence and he closes his eyes to sleep.

17 OMITTED 17

18 **EXT. SEA ICE - DUSK** 18

SUMNER stand with URGANG and MEROK and looks out across the ice, the light glowing red and pink. A freshly caught seal is beside them. The dogs are quiet and resting.

(CONTINUED)

URGANG

Quviannikamut.

SUMNER gestures that he doesn't understand. MEROK raises his hands and points across the landscape before touching his own chest.

MEROK

Quviannikamut.

SUMNER is not entirely sure of the meaning, but he feels the sentiment, or at least feels something close to it. It means *'to feel deeply happy'*.

SUMNER

Quviannikamut.

It is the first word SUMNER has uttered since being with the hunters. URGANG and MEROK smile broadly to each other and get something from inside their warm coats.

URGANG gives SUMNER a hunting knife with the handle carved in the shape of a magnificent bear. MEROK gives him a necklace with a carving of a bear's head.

SUMNER stares closely at them in his hand. He is deeply moved.

SUMNER

Thank you.

SUMNER looks back over the ice, a warmth inside him. But it doesn't last long and the smile fades. He knows he has to return.

19

INT. MISSION CABIN - DUSK

19

SUMNER walks inside to find the PRIEST stretched on his cot, laid low and groaning. ANNA, by his side, presses a warm poultice on his abdomen.

SUMNER

What's wrong?

PRIEST

Badly bunged up, that's all.

SUMNER sits by the stove to get warm.

(CONTINUED)

PRIEST

Did you encourage their
superstitions?

SUMNER

I let them believe what they want
to.

PRIEST

You do them no service by keeping
them in ignorance.

SUMNER

I have no better truths to tell
them.

PRIEST

To me they seem closer to the
animal world, don't you think?

SUMNER

Perhaps we are too far removed.

PRIEST

But they lead such a brutish and
primitive kind of life.

SUMNER

Unsentimental but no, not brutish.
They accept the reality of their
existence, of the world as it is.
They have no great desire to force
a change upon it. I don't think
that makes them primitive.

The PRIEST suddenly winces in pain and vomits violently
on the floor.

The PRIEST cries in agony. SUMNER wakes up on hearing
him. The PRIEST holds his hand out to SUMNER. SUMNER gets
up to help. He takes the PRIEST'S hand, his own gut
twisting in sympathy. SUMNER pulls back the fur blanket
and presses his fingertips into the PRIEST'S abdomen, he
howls from the pain.

SUMNER

Where is it Father, show me? Show me.

PRIEST

AARRRGHHHH!

SUMNER

Your cecum is abscessed or possibly ulcerated, the difference is unimportant. The best thing to do is make a cut in the belly here to allow the diseased matter to flow out of you.

21

INT. MISSION CABIN - DAWN

21

PRIEST

How do you know?

SUMNER

I'm a surgeon.

PRIEST

Have you done this before?

SUMNER stands above him now as he writhes in pain.

SUMNER

I've neither done it myself nor seen it done. I read about it being performed by a man named Hancock in the Charing Cross hospital in London some years ago.

PRIEST

And?

SUMNER

On that occasion, the patient lived.

PRIEST

We're a good way from London.

(CONTINUED)

SUMNER

I'll do what I can under these conditions, but we'll need a large amount of luck.

PRIEST

You do your best and I expect the Lord will take care of the remainder.

SUMNER

(to ANNA)
I need your help.

22 **INT. MISSION CABIN - NIGHT**

22

SUMNER pours the Ether onto a pad and hands it to ANNA. She holds it over the PRIEST's nose and mouth until he falls silent.

The two of them remove his clothes. SUMNER lights some extra candles for added light as ANNA immediately gets on her knees to pray.

SUMNER

There is no time for that. Stand at the end of the table and apply more Ether whenever he shows any sign of waking.

SUMNER places a metal bucket by his side, preparing for what is to come. He then presses down on the PRIEST's abdomen. He feels the line of hardness and give.

He tests the sharpness of the lancet against his thumb and presses the blade down into the PRIEST's flesh. He makes a lateral cut from the top of his hip bone to the navel.

As he presses deeper with the blade, blood wells to the surface. He wipes it away with a cloth. It takes three tries to penetrate the layers of muscle and fat.

He finds the cavity wall and looks up at ANNA. He waits a long agonising moment as he prepares for what is to come before finally piercing the abscess.

(CONTINUED)

Out it squirts, a pint or more of foul pus, pinkish grey with a roaring stench. SUMNER jolts backwards as it explodes across the table, coating his arms.

ANNA screams as SUMNER grabs the bucket to try catch the discharge pulsing from the narrow wound like a monstrous ejaculation.

SUMNER

Help me!

The two of them work together by tipping the PRIEST on to his side to help the abscess drain. SUMNER presses down on the skin around the wound, pushing out as much of the remaining foulness as he can.

23

INT. MISSION CABIN - DAY

23

SUMNER wakes up to see the PRIEST, alive and well. SUMNER lifts the blanket to check the dressing.

SUMNER

For a man who puts his faith in the life everlasting, it appears you're awful keen to linger on amidst the toil and strife of this one.

PRIEST

What did you find inside me?

SUMNER

Nothing good.

PRIEST

Then best be rid of it, I'd say.

SUMNER

You try to get your rest now, and if you need any help just call or raise your hand.

PRIEST

You'll be watching over me?

(CONTINUED)

SUMNER

There's precious little else to do
around here until the spring
arrives.

PRIEST

We have a long dark winter ahead
that is true. I thought you'd be
off hunting with your new knife.

SUMNER

I'm not a seal hunter.
(with a smile)
I don't think I have the patience
for it.

PRIEST

Will you sit with me a while?

SUMNER pulls over his chair. The PRIEST smiles, nods, and
then closes his eyes. He seems to be drifting to sleep,
but then opens his eyes again.

PRIEST

You're a strange fellow, aren't
you? A great source of mystery.

SUMNER

Try to sleep.

The PRIEST thinks for a moment before speaking again. He
reaches out his hand to SUMNER which he accepts and holds
firm.

PRIEST

I know you have suffered, Patrick.
I know you have suffered a very
great deal.

There is something in his words, in his understanding of
his struggle that brings a sudden wave of emotion, tears
instantly welling SUMNER's eyes.

SUMNER

I have brought the sufferings on
myself. I've made mistakes
aplenty, so many.

(CONTINUED)

PRIEST

Show me a man that hasn't, and I
will show you a saint or a great
liar. And I haven't met too many
saints in my lifetime.

The PRIEST smiles gently, keeping hold of SUMNER's hand.
There is a beat of silence, the wind outside rattling on
the window frames.

PRIEST

And what will you do?

SUMNER

(shrugging)
I'm a surgeon.
(a beat)
I'll try to start again, the best
I can manage at least.

FADE TO BLACK

24 **EXT. SHIP / DISTANT HULL - DAY**

24

SUMNER stands at the bow of a ship as he approaches the
distant city of HULL.

25 **EXT. HULL STREETS - DAY**

25

SUMNER is led through the busy town by STEVENS, BAXTER's
right-hand man. It seems to sway as if he is still on the
ship. He sees a man dressed as a bird, another as bear,
all out of the corner of his eye.

SUMNER

What's going on?

STEVENS

It's May Day. It will be lively
tonight.

A huge black-bearded harpooner dressed as a woman leads a
donkey through the street. It is as if the world has gone
mad.

26

INT. BAXTER'S HALLWAY - DAY

26

STEVENS and SUMNER walk down the hallway to Baxter's Office. BAXTER, wearing pin-striped trousers and a frock coat, opens the door. He throws out his hand, which SUMNER accepts.

BAXTER

I hardly believed it when I read
your letter from Lerwick.

He does not let go of SUMNER's hand.

BAXTER

We thought we'd lost you, drowned
or frozen with all the other poor
bastards, yet here you are.

Finally, he lets go of SUMNER's hand and laughing now, he slaps him on the shoulder.

BAXTER

Would you take something to eat?
Can I get you a plate of oysters
or a pork sausage? Stevens, get
this good man a nice morsel of
calf's tongue?

SUMNER

I've come for my wages; then I'll
be on my way.

BAXTER

What? Oh no, you will not.

BAXTER wears a look of mocked-up outrage.

BAXTER

You're not leaving here until
you've sat down and taken a drink
with me. I won't allow it.

27

INT. BAXTER'S OFFICE - DAY

27

BAXTER leads the way into the office, the floorboards creaking. There are a bundle of papers on the desk, a low crumbling fire.

(CONTINUED)

BAXTER

Sit your arse down.

SUMNER hesitates, but does as is bidden and pulls a chair towards the desk.

BAXTER

Both ships sunk and you are saved
by passing Yaks. Miraculous, don't
you think?

SUMNER

So I've been told.

BAXTER pours some brandy giving a glass to SUMNER. BAXTER then sits on the other side of his desk.

BAXTER

It's certainly quite a story to
tell the waiting world.

SUMNER

Indeed.

BAXTER

(taking a sip)
Yes. Indeed.

SUMNER takes a long sip too, aware that BAXTER is staring at him, waiting for more.

SUMNER

But I won't be telling it anytime
soon.

BAXTER

And why is that?

SUMNER

I wish to move on in the best way
I can manage. I don't want to
become known as the one man who
survived the Volunteer.

(CONTINUED)

BAXTER

There are widows and orphans aplenty in this town who would like nothing better than to meet a man who could tell them the first-hand truth about what happened.

SUMNER

Just because you saw something it doesn't mean it can be explained. The truth won't help any of them, anyway.

BAXTER clears his throat and licks his lips.

BAXTER

Keeping quiet may be the greater kindness, I suppose. Let the poor bastards rest in peace, I say. It was a terrible accident, but such things must be endured.

SUMNER shifts in his seat. He wants to stay silent, to pick up his wages and leave, but he can't help himself.

SUMNER

You read my letter, I assume, about the killings.

BAXTER

(whispering)
Horrifying. Just horrifying. I couldn't believe what I was reading. Cavendish? Brownlee? A cabin boy?

SUMNER

When he signed on, you had no idea?

BAXTER

About Drax? What do you take me for? The man was a great heathen, of course, but he seemed no worse than average for a harpooner.

SUMNER looks into the flames of the fire, his chest suddenly tightening, a stab of anger.

(CONTINUED)

SUMNER

Maybe someone should search for him.

BAXTER

Henry Drax is either dead or he's in Canada, which if you ask me is near enough the same thing.

SUMNER

I spent much of the winter asking if I should look for him but --

BAXTER

You're a surgeon, not a detective. What business do you have chasing after murderers?

SUMNER

Yet someone should bring him to justice.

BAXTER

You put Henry Drax behind you, far behind you. He'll be judged soon enough, one way or the other. It's what you do next which is important.

SUMNER is silent a moment, then nods his head. He reaches into his pocket.

SUMNER

I need employment then. I have a letter.

He passes the letter over to BAXTER.

BAXTER

And this is from the missionary you wintered with?

SUMNER

Yes.

BAXTER reads.

BAXTER

Says you saved his life.

(CONTINUED)

SUMNER

I did what I could. Most of it was
raw luck.

He keeps reading for a moment as SUMNER shuffles in his
seat, then refolds the letter and hands it back.

BAXTER

I know a man in London, a surgeon
by the name of Gregory, James
Gregory. Have you heard of him?

SUMNER

No.

BAXTER

He'll find you something that
pays. I'll write him today. We'll
get you a bed for tonight; then
when we hear back from Gregory, we
can put you on the train. London's
the place for your kind, there is
nothing here for you anymore.

SUMNER

I'll need my wages now.

BAXTER

Of course. I'll get them sent over
to your room at the De La Pole,
and when you're settled in, I'll
have Stevens send you a nice plump
whore to ease you back into the
ways of civilised living.

BAXTER sits at his desk and ponders the situation, his
tongue flickering from side to side in his mouth as if an
idea is forming.

BAXTER descends into the damp cellar and at the bottom
knocks once on the door. He enters without waiting for an
invitation.

The room is small with high windows letting in the sun. There are empty brandy bottles scattered on the floor and a thunder pot brimming with dark piss. BAXTER walks over to an iron bed, covering his nose.

DRAX

So tell me?

BAXTER

It won't do, Henry. He knows too much, and what he doesn't know he can piece together easy enough. It was all I could do to stop him running off to the fucking magistrate.

DRAX turns around and yawns. His eyes are glassy from lethargy and drink. He swings his feet onto the rugless floor and pushes himself up into a sitting position.

DRAX

He don't know about the sinking.
He can't know that.

BAXTER

He may not know, but he suspects. He knows it wasn't right. Why turn the ship north when every other fucker is sailing south?

DRAX

He said that?

BAXTER

He did.

DRAX reaches under the bed and finds a near-empty brandy bottle. He drinks it off.

DRAX

What did he say about me?

BAXTER

He swears he'll find you. He says he'll hire a man if need be. I think he is making enquiries in town as we sit up here talking.

(CONTINUED)

DRAX

What man?

BAXTER

Someone in Canada. To find out what became of you, to track your movements since.

DRAX

He won't find me.

BAXTER

He won't stop looking. He swore to it on his mother's grave. I told him you were most likely dead by now, but he wouldn't believe me. A man like Henry Drax doesn't just die, he must be *killed*?

DRAX

Killed? He's just a fucking surgeon.

BAXTER

He was in the army though, the Siege of Delhi. He's got some vinegar in him, I'd say. And he spent time with the Yaks too.

DRAX peers into the empty bottle and sniffs as BAXTER wipes the chair with a handkerchief and sits.

DRAX

Where is he now?

BAXTER

I got him a room at the De La Pole, but we need to do this tonight. We can't delay. If he gets to a magistrate in the morning, there's no telling what trouble he'll cause for us.

DRAX

I've been drinking all week. Get that lazy sod Stevens to do it.

(CONTINUED)

BAXTER

I can't trust Stevens with a task like this one, Henry. All our fortune is riding on it. If Sumner blabs, they'll throw me into jail and hang you by the neck.

DRAX

What the hell do you pay Stevens for, if not this?

BAXTER

Stevens is a good man, but he doesn't have your experience, nor your coolness under pressure. You've had a drop or two of my brandy, but that makes no odds. If you do it right, there won't be any struggle.

Even DRAX is susceptible to flattery.

DRAX

It can't be in the De La Pole. Too many people about.

BAXTER

We'll lure him out then. I'll send Stevens over with a message. You wait for them somewhere else, wherever you want it to be.

DRAX

Down by the river. In the timber yard on Trippet Street, past the foundry.

BAXTER nods and smiles.

BAXTER

There aren't too many men out there like you, Henry. There's plenty who will talk, precious few who will pull the trigger when required.

DRAX nods and then lies back on the bed.

(CONTINUED)

DRAX

I'll be needing a bigger share.

BAXTER sniffs and picks a tangling piece of cobweb from the thigh of his pin-striped pants.

BAXTER

Five hundred guineas is what we agreed on. It's more than I offered Cavendish, you know it is.

DRAX

But this is extras, int it? Above and beyond.

BAXTER thinks this over for a moment, then nods and gets to his feet.

BAXTER

Five and half then.

DRAX

I like the sound of six better.

BAXTER makes to speak but doesn't. He looks at DRAX, and then checks his pocket watch.

BAXTER

Six then. But six is the end of it.

DRAX nods complacently, then picks up his feet and lies back down on the bed.

DRAX

And if you could send that cunt Stevens down with another bottle of brandy, and get him to empty out this pisspot while he's at it, I'd be monstrous grateful, I'm sure.

BAXTER walks along the corridor, a plan becoming solid and clear. He shouts out to STEVENS as he returns to his office.

30

INT. BAXTER'S OFFICE - DAY

30

BAXTER shuts the door behind STEVENS and then walks over to the window.

BAXTER

You have the revolver I gave you,
and the bullets.

STEVENS

Yes.

BAXTER

Show me?

STEVENS takes the gun from his pocket and places it on the desk between them. BAXTER looks it over and then gives it back.

BAXTER

I have a task for you tonight. You
listen carefully now.

STEVENS

I'm listening.

BAXTER

At midnight you go to the De La
Pole and tell Sumner I need to see
him urgently. Tell him I have
important news.

STEVENS

About what?

BAXTER

I don't know. Tell him it is about
the Volunteer. It doesn't matter.
Now he doesn't know the town or
where my house is, so he'll follow
wherever you lead. Go up Trippett,
past the foundry, until you reach
the timber yard. Walk on through
the building and if he asks, tell
him you are taking a short-cut.
Henry Drax will be waiting.

(CONTINUED)

STEVENS

Drax?

BAXTER

Yes. He'll shoot Sumner, and after he shoots Sumner you'll shoot him. You understand me?

STEVENS

I don't need Drax there. I can shoot the surgeon myself.

BAXTER

That's not to the purpose. I need Drax to shoot Sumner and you to shoot Drax. After you've shot him, you put his revolver in Sumner's hand, empty out his pockets and Drax's too, and then you make yourself scarce.

STEVENS

The constable at the dock will hear something for sure.

BAXTER

The noise of the festivities will hide the shots and even if they do come running, when he gets to the yard he'll find two dead men each holding the gun that killed the other one. The peelers will scratch their dumb heads for awhile, then take the two bodies to the morgue and wait for them to be claimed. No-one will claim them. And what will happen next?

BAXTER stares at STEVENS who shrugs.

BAXTER

Nothing will happen next. Nothing at all. That's the beauty of the scheme. Two unknown men have killed each other.

(CONTINUED)

STEVENS

The crime solves itself.

BAXTER

Yes. And I am free of Henry Drax at last, free of his threats and his gouging, and free of his mad fucking stench.

STEVENS

So after he shoots Sumner, I shoot him.

BAXTER

In the chest, not the back. In the back will only provoke questions. And put the gun in his right hand, not his left. Do you understand?

STEVENS

Yes.

BAXTER

Good. Now take a bottle of brandy down to the cellar. Empty his pisspot while you are there, and if he speaks to you say nothing back.

STEVENS

That filthy bastard's time is coming, Mr Baxter.

BAXTER

Indeed it is.

31 **INT. DE LA POLE ROOM - NIGHT**

31

SUMNER sits on the edge of the bed and looks out of the window at a brewing rainstorm over the rooftops of the city. The sound of the festivities drift into his room. There is a loud knock at the door.

32 **EXT. HULL STREETS - NIGHT**

32

STEVENS leads SUMNER through the drunken crowds, many in strange pagan costumes, some with fire torches.

(CONTINUED)

The rain starts to spit as they pass the Apothecary and turn down a quieter alleyway.

SUMNER

How far is it?

STEVENS

Ain't far now. We'll get to the docks, take the shortcut through, and we'll be there in no time.

SUMNER

What exactly does he want to see me for at this hour?

STEVENS

Just important news he said.

SUMNER

Yes, about what?

STEVENS

About the Volunteer. The sinking.

SUMNER

What about the sinking?

STEVENS

I ain't sure. Just that it sank. Mr Baxter don't trouble me with the details.

SUMNER feels a growing sense of unease as they turn down another alleyway, the docks at the end of the street. A sudden blast of lightening surprises them both and it is followed by a loud crack of thunder.

Another blast of lightening illuminates DRAX who crouches in the shadows of the timber yard up on the second floor, the ground around him strewn with broken bottles, crates and casks.

The rain clouds have broken and rattle the roof as DRAX takes a swig from a brandy bottle. He loads his revolver, but the bullets drop to the ground.

DRAX curses and reaches down. He loses his balance and staggers sideways. He wretches, his mouth filling with vomit. He swallows it down before taking another sip of brandy. He picks up the bullets and loads the pistol.

DRAX
(mumbling, drunken)
Others make oaths and promises,
but there are precious few who
will do. Henry Drax will do.

DRAX sits back and peers down the stairs to the entrance, into the vague and uneven blackness. He hears two distant voices, muted by the sound of the rain.

DRAX gets into position as the door grinds open with an almighty screech, and in comes SUMNER and STEVENS.

DRAX cocks the revolver and steadies himself to shoot as STEVENS shuts the door, throwing them all into a murky darkness.

SUMNER
(to Stevens)
What are we doing in here?

STEVENS
This is just a shortcut.

DRAX squints to see the two men side by side, but in the darkness, their shapes are featureless and blank. But it is time for DRAX to act. He hears the scurry of a rat. He licks his lips. He breathes in and fires.

The first bullet hits a cask of blubber oil. The second hits the man on the left who crumples to the ground with a muted thud while the other man runs away. DRAX lowers the revolver and runs down the staircase.

DRAX crouches over the body and lights a long lucifer. He peers down the yellow flame as it lengthens in his hand to find that he has killed STEVENS, shot him in the back of the head.

He spots that STEVENS has a revolver in his hand. DRAX picks it up at looks it, shaking his head. He knows it belongs to Baxter. DRAX stands and calls out to SUMNER.

(CONTINUED)

DRAX

Why don't you show yourself? If you plan to capture me, now's your best chance, you won't ever get a finer one. Lookie here, I'll even lay down my gun.

DRAX places his gun on the ground, blubber oil slinking around it from the cask that was shot. DRAX holds up his hands.

DRAX

I'm offering a fair fight. No weapons, and I've got a drink or two inside me to help even things up.

DRAX pauses, peering into the darkness, but there is no sound or movement.

DRAX

Come on now. I know you're in there. Don't be bashful. Baxter says you plan to hunt me down but I'm here right in front of you. Alive in the flesh. Why not take your chances when they're offered?

With the lucifer illuminating his face, DRAX enters what looks like a maze of blubber casks, stacked high to the ceiling. His lucifer slowly fades...

We find SUMNER hiding in a corner, trying to keep his breath steady. He holds a rusted saw-blade tightly with both hands as he hears DRAX's voice echo through the building..

DRAX (O.S.)

He's a sneaky cunt indeed, that Baxter. I would say it weren't just the one Irishman he wanted dead tonight.

SUMNER makes a decision and steps out from his hiding place, edging slowly forward into the darkness, his eyes and ears alert.

As he creeps through the warehouse, the rain starts to soften. All SUMNER can hear now is his footsteps and his own beating heart.

SUMNER searches the dark shadows but cannot find DRAX. However suddenly we see him, appearing from the gloom behind SUMNER.

He gets closer and closer to SUMNER, his footsteps oddly silent, until he is barely a foot behind him.

SUMNER cannot hear him but he can smell him. He breathes in his stench and swivels around swinging the rusty blade forward in a fast flat arc.

DRAX pulls back -- avoiding contact by an inch. SUMNER tries again but DRAX kicks him hard in the stomach, the blade clattering to the floor.

DRAX lunges with an explosion of strength grabbing SUMNER by the throat pushing him against the casks. He fights and struggles but DRAX is too strong.

DRAX

If it's an eye for an eye you're
after -- or a tooth for a cabin's
boy's tooth, then you're looking
in the wrong place.

SUMNER tries to pull at DRAX's hands, gasping for air.

DRAX

But I should thank you for your
pretty ring. It came in very
indeed

SUMNER

You're a fucking monster.

SUMNER's anger comes out in splutters and rasps. DRAX leans in closer, almost intimately close.

(CONTINUED)

DRAX

You and me int so different. Not
so different at all.

DRAX lifts SUMNER up from ground, gasping, desperate for air. But with a final burst of desperation SUMNER reaches to his waist, stretching for something as his eyes start to close.

DRAX leans in closer still -- their faces touching as he closes his own eyes in some kind of foul ecstasy. Then, all of a sudden, the *bear-handled* knife given to SUMNER by the Inuits is at DRAX's neck.

DRAX's eyes dart open at the sensation of the blade on his rough skin. SUMNER's grip is weak, his hands shaking.

DRAX

I wonder if your bollocks are
mighty big enough.

DRAX grabs SUMNER's groin, almost tenderly, and is about to speak again when SUMNER pushes the blade hard into his neck.

DRAX's eyes widen in a strange rhapsody, a similar sense of complicated joy in SUMNER's eyes as if this is a kind of twisted consummation.

SUMNER twists and digs the knife in and a hot squirt of arterial blood hits SUMNER in the face. DRAX's hand drops from SUMNER's neck as he pushes the blade in further to sever the spinal cord.

DRAX slumps to the floor, his body in gentle convulsions. SUMNER stands above him, his own body shaking, his breath gasping.

SUMNER squats down by his side and watches DRAX die, his eyes becoming vacant. He looks at the bear-shaped handle of the knife that sticks out of the vile wound, his twisted accomplishment. SUMNER pulls it out.

SUMNER stands only his under garments scrubbing the blood from his face with water from a bowl.

CONTINUED:

There is a small mirror above but he refuses for some time to look at his own reflection. When he does it is with an increasing sense of horror and shame.

36 **EXT. BAXTER'S HOUSE - NIGHT**

36

SUMNER walks towards a large, beautiful house at the end of Charlotte Street. Once at the door, he knocks loudly until the MAID, MAE BENNET, answers the door.

MAE

What?

SUMNER

Tell Mr Baxter I need to see him.
It's very urgent.

MAE

And who are you?

SUMNER

His surgeon.

She looks him up and down, pauses for thought, then opens the door wider.

MAE

Wait in here.

37 **INT. BAXTER'S HALL - NIGHT**

37

MAE closes the door and leaves SUMNER standing in the hallway beside a stuffed polar bear. It is the one the Chemist talked of before the voyage began, claws raised, teeth bared. It brings an instant sickness to SUMNER's stomach.

He takes the revolver from his pocket, the one left by Drax next to the dead body of Stevens. SUMNER checks that there is a bullet in the chamber and hides the gun as MAE returns.

MAE

He'll see you in his study.

(CONTINUED)

SUMNER

Was he expecting me?

MAE

I couldn't say if he was or he
wasn't.

38

INT. BAXTER'S STUDY - NIGHT

38

SUMNER follows MAE down the long corridor, past paintings of arctic scenes -- dramatic representations of whaling hunts and ships beset in the ice.

As they both enter, SUMNER finds BAXTER standing with his back to him by the fire. He wears a black velvet smoking jacket and embroidered house shoes.

MAE

Is there anything I can get you,
Mr Baxter?

BAXTER

No thank you, Mae. You can leave
me for the night. Me and Mr Sumner
here have much to discuss.

Once MAE leaves, SUMNER takes out the gun from his pocket and points it towards BAXTER who can see what he is doing in the mirror above the fire.

BAXTER

You don't need that.

SUMNER

I'd say that's for me to decide,
not you.

BAXTER turns around to face him.

BAXTER

Just a friendly suggestion, that's
all. Whatever exactly has happened
tonight, we can resolve it without
the need for firearms, I'm quite
sure of that.

SUMNER

What exactly was your plan?

(CONTINUED)

BAXTER

My plan?

SUMNER

Your man Stevens is dead. Don't
play the fool.

BAXTER walks over to a small table and pours two glasses
of fine port.

BAXTER

Let me explain something to you,
Patrick, before you jump to any
quick conclusions. Stevens was a
good man -- willing, loyal, but
there are some men who can't be
controlled. That's the simple
truth of it. They're too vicious
and too stupid. They won't take
orders. They won't be led.

BAXTER walks towards SUMNER, ignoring the raised gun, and
he offers him one of the drinks.

BAXTER

A man like Henry Drax, for
example. He is a grave danger to
everyone with no understanding of
the greater good. He obeys no
master but himself and his vile
urges.

SUMNER ignores the port. BAXTER shrugs and walks to the
two armchairs either side of the fire. He puts the
unwanted drink down on the table.

BAXTER

So, when a man like myself, an
honest man, a man of good sense,
discovers that he has such a
unruly fucker in his employ, the
only question is -- how best may I
rid myself of him before he
destroys me and everything I have
worked?

SUMNER

So why pull me into it?

(CONTINUED)

BAXTER

That was wrong of me, I confess,
but I was in a tight corner.

BAXTER sits down on one of the chairs.

BAXTER

When Drax came back here a month ago, I thought to make him part of my plans. I had some doubts from the start, but when I got your letter, I understood for sure that I had bound myself to a monster. But how could I work it? He's an ignorant fucker, but he's no fool as you know. He's wary and guileful, and he'll kill a man for the joy of it. A brute like that can't be reasoned with. Force must be employed. I realized I needed to set a trap for him, to lure him away and catch him unawares and I thought I might use you as *bait*.

SUMNER

Bait?

SUMNER takes a few steps towards BAXTER and raises the gun higher, his growing anger clear.

BAXTER

It was reckless and unconsidered; I see that now. I should not have used you as I did -- and if Stevens is dead now as you say he is.

BAXTER raises his eyebrows and waits.

SUMNER

He was shot in the back of the head.

BAXTER

By Drax?

SUMNER

Yes.

(CONTINUED)

BAXTER

And what's become of that evil
bastard now?

A beat.

SUMNER

I killed him.

BAXTER

Shows some boldness, for a surgeon
I mean.

SUMNER

It was one of us or the other.

BAXTER

Was it indeed? Well, will you have
a glass with me in celebration?
Or at least sit yourself down.

Suddenly tired, his legs weak, SUMNER decides to sit down
opposite BAXTER but he keeps the gun raised.

BAXTER

You did well to come here,
Patrick. I can help you.

SUMNER

I didn't come here for your help.

BAXTER

Then what? Not to kill me too, I
hope. What would be the good of
that?

SUMNER

I don't believe I was just there
as a lure. You wanted me dead.

BAXTER

Why would I want such a thing?

SUMNER

Because it was you that had the
Volunteer sunk. It is obvious to
me now that Brownlee and Cavendish
were involved too.

(CONTINUED)

There is no reaction from BAXTER.

BAXTER

Go on; I am enjoying your theory.

SUMNER

And the only ones still alive, who might have known of this plan, are myself and Drax.

BAXTER

And so?

SUMNER

So you arrange Drax to shoot me, and then Stevens to shoot Drax. Everything is neat. Except it misfired.

BAXTER now tilts his head to one side and gives his nose a scratch.

BAXTER

That's sharp thinking on your part but it isn't right, not right at all.

SUMNER raises the gun.

BAXTER

Take heed now, Patrick, listen carefully to what I'm saying. The plain fact is there are two men lying dead in that timber yard, one of them murdered by your hand. I'd say that puts you in fair need of assistance.

SUMNER

If I tell the truth, I have little enough to fear from the law.

BAXTER snorts at the idea.

BAXTER

Come, you're not so innocent as to believe such a far-fetched notion.
(MORE)

(CONTINUED)

BAXTER (CONT'D)

You're a man of the world, just as I am. You can tell the magistrate your theories, of course you can, but I've known the magistrate for some years, and I wouldn't be so sure he'll believe them.

SUMNER shakes his head. He has been here before. SUMNER stands up and edges towards BAXTER, his gun held high.

BAXTER

And who exactly are you? An Irishman of uncertain provenance. There would be investigations, probings into your past, your time in India. Oh, you could make things uncomfortable for me, I'm sure, but I could do the same for you and much worse if I wished to. And for what end? Drax is dead now and the ships are both sunk. No bugger's coming back to life again; I promise you that.

SUMNER

I could shoot you dead right here.

SUMNER puts the gun to BAXTER's chest. For the first time, BAXTER begins to show his fear.

BAXTER

You certainly could, but then you would have two murders on your hands and what good would that do you? You need to use your head now, Patrick. This is your chance to put everything behind you, to start afresh.

SUMNER's arm slowly drops, and BAXTER uses that moment to rise from the seat to face him.

BAXTER

How often in life does a man get such a rare opportunity?
(MORE)

(CONTINUED)

BAXTER (CONT'D)

You've done me a great service by killing Henry Drax, however it came about, and I'll happily pay you for the work. I'll give you fifty guineas on top of your wages and you can walk out of this house and never look backwards.

After a beat, BAXTER walks past SUMNER to a large iron safe standing in one corner of the study hidden under an oil painting of a ship trapped in the ice. He unlocks it, takes out a brown canvas wallet, and turns back towards SUMNER.

BAXTER

There's fifty guineas in gold for you. Get yourself down to London. Forget the Volunteer, forget Henry Drax. It's the future that matters now, not the past. And don't worry about the timber yard either. I'll make up some story about that to throw them off the trail.

BAXTER hands SUMNER the wallet. He weighs it in his hand. He seems lost, the world around him unhinged. He has been pushed to his limits, and is to be pushed once more.

BAXTER

Are we agreed?

SUMNER

Give me the rest of it and I'll leave you be.

BAXTER

The rest of what?

SUMNER

All that's in the safe. Every penny.

BAXTER smiles, taking it for a joke. SUMNER raises the gun again.

(CONTINUED)

BAXTER

Fifty guineas is a good amount.
But I'll happily give you twenty
more on top if you truly feel the
need of it.

SUMNER

I want all of it. However much is
in there. Everything.

BAXTER stops smiling. There is something about SUMNER's
tone that has changed.

BAXTER

So you came here to *rob* me?

SUMNER

I'm using my head as you advised
me to. You're right, the truth
won't help me now, but that pile
of money surely will.

BAXTER scowls, his nostrils flare but he makes no move
towards the safe.

BAXTER

I don't believe you'll murder me
in my own house.

SUMNER takes a few steps closer and pushes the gun back
into BAXTER's forehead. This time he cocks the hammer.

SUMNER

I am so very tired of men like
you. And tonight I stabbed a man
in the neck tonight and watched
him die. Do you really think
putting a bullet in your skull is
going to strain my nerves tonight?

BAXTER's jaw tightens, truly afraid for the first time.

SUMNER

Fill up that leather satchel. Fill
it up now.

BAXTER fills the satchel with money and hands it over to
SUMNER -- but BAXTER will not let it go, can't let go of
the satchel.

(CONTINUED)

BAXTER

This will not bring you the peace
you desire, Patrick. Trust me when
I say, boredom from wealth brings
it's very own particular kind of
suffering, one I don't think you
are built for.

SUMNER

I am prepared to take that risk.

SUMNER tugs it from his hand.

BAXTER

You and I both know how the world
is, how it works. This is not
something you can get away with.

BAXTER instantly regrets saying that -- forcing SUMNER to
make a decision. He stares at him for a long and painful
beat.

SUMNER raises the gun, pulls back the trigger and aims it
at BAXTER's head. BAXTER's breathing slows, as if somehow
this is a relief, a final end to his constant want and
need.

SUMNER's finger puts pressure on the trigger. His mind is
alive with the outcomes of such a choice, both practical
but more importantly moral.

And then in one swift movement, SUMNER swivels the gun
and butts the handle hard into BAXTER's head.

CUT TO BLACK

It is a bright morning as SUMNER walks through the gates
of the *ZOOLOGISCHER GARTEN*. He is clean-shaven and wears
a new suit of clothes.

He strolls along the gravel paths, smoking his pipe, and
pausing to watch the animals as they shit and scratch
themselves. SUMNER seems as bored as the captives he has
come to see.

(CONTINUED)

Then he notices a particular cage no wider than the deck of a ship with a lead-lined pit at one end, filled with water, and a low brick archway in the rear wall leading to a den.

SUMNER walks closer as a POLAR BEAR appears from the den, gazing around indifferently. It is skinny, shabby furred and lank, yellowish.

SUMNER edges closer to the bars of the cage as the BEAR slouches forward, its heavy feet scuffing the floor.

When the animal reaches the front of the cage, it pushes its nose through the black bars as far as it can manage, until its wolfish face is only a foot from SUMNER's.

The animal sniffs the air, staring at him with dark and unfathomable eyes. SUMNER would like to look away, but he can't -- the BEAR's gaze holding him tight.

The animal snorts, raw breath brushing SUMNER's face. At first, there is a moment of fear on SUMNER's face, and then, in its wake, there is something else, an unexpected stab of loneliness and need.

And as the bear shuffles away, we are now inside the cage looking back at SUMNER through the thick metal bars, a man seemingly free and yet imprisoned by life.

CUT TO BLACK

FINAL CREDITS ROLL TO "ROLL THE OLD CHARIOT ALONG".