

# Martin Eden

Novel

by

Jack London

Screenplay

by

David O'Neill

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FADE IN:

EXT. PACIFIC OCEAN - DUSK

The Pacific cold and windy gray molten sea evenly, infinitely swells and heaves. A distant dark and angry squall cracks with lightning, followed by a distant rumbling thunder.

EXT. REAR OF SEA TRAWLER - PACIFIC OCEAN - DUSK

A fisherman, broad in the shoulders, sturdy, steady on his feet, stands to the rear of the fishing vessel. He stares out to the sea before him - inside the strength of his even gaze, he knows all too well the sea both gives abundant life and takes it back when it wants to without warning.

His name is MARTIN EDEN (27).

**SCREEN READS: NORTHERN CALIFORNIA - 1909**

In Martin's hands is a small wooden box. On the top of it, inscribed: BELOVED - THOMAS and ELAINE EDEN.

Martin's rough and sea-worn fingers carefully opens the box. He peels back the brown wrapping paper which reveals the cremated remains of his very parents.

From the vessel's pilot house, CAPTAIN BETZER (60'S) approaches Martin from the side, rests his arms on the ship's rail and shares a look out to sea.

BETZER

(beat)

It's a hellava' thing.

MARTIN EDEN

I just wish I could've made more of myself and have'em seen it.

BETZER

You gave them what you could.

Betzer turns back to the pilot house. A light rain begins to fall. Martin takes a last look at the box of ashes.

Martin gradually lifts up the open box with arms reaching skyward.

Sea winds above lick and scoop out the white ash from the wooden urn upward.

MARTIN EDEN

I wish I could've been more for ya'.

EXT. HARBOR FERRY ALLEYWAY - NIGHT

Caught on the wrong side of town, a young and handsome, upper-class gentleman named ARTHUR MORSE (26) clutches a package while running for his life.

A steady rain continues. The harbor's cutting wind blows.

Arthur slips and falls - picks himself up - frantically looks for an escape.

EXT. WAREHOUSE - NIGHT

FIVE POWERFUL MEN (40's) break from the warehouse corner.

EXT. PIER - NIGHT

Jittery dock lamps push wearily about sweeping broken shadows over tar-covered ties.

Arthur gets to the end of the empty pier, out of breath, panting. He looks down - freezing splashing ocean water below - nowhere to run, nowhere to hide!

ARTHUR

Jesus...

Arthur slowly turns back to see five hungry, tough and hardened faces. The men gather within striking distance from the unarmed men.

MAN # 1

You're one of the Morse's.

One man carries a led pipe, another brass knuckles, the third, a long blade, the other two - tight gripped billy clubs.

ARTHUR

Why do you want me?

MAN # 2

Some are saying it was your family who burned down the warehouse - put 200 men out of work.

MAN # 1

You may be dressed like a fancy boy, but I bet you bleed like the rest of us.

The move to Arthur is swift and merciless.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

ARTHUR

NO!

Brass knuckles connect to Arthur's soft jaw. POW!

ARTHUR MORSE

Ahhhggg!!!

Arthur goes down. Closed, tight and weathered fists hold him down while the others circle.

MAN # 4

Looks like the fancy Morse boy falls like everybody else! That right, fancy boy?

Hands begin to rip and tear at Arthur's pockets. Money and personal items blow wildly about the pier.

With unleashed anger, they tear him apart.

ARTHUR

Arggh... I'll give you what you want!!

Martin Eden's still figure appears over the thugs and Arthur Morse.

Martin places the wooden urn down next to his feet.

MAN (O.S.)

Get away from him.

The Men turn to see the powerfully built, still, and shadow, covered man - Martin Eden.

The Men hustle fists of money into their pockets and give some room but not much.

MAN # 2

We can share, hey boys? Plenty of meat on his bones for all. We're not greedy.

Martin, still - exacting, profiling.

MAN # 1

It's not trouble we want mister.

Martin Eden moves swiftly! He's on them with speed and fury. Martin swings hard and connects with the biggest and most formidable.

Blood flows across the dock!

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED: (2)

MAN # 1 (cont'd)  
Ahhhggg.

A second man swings wildly with the pipe. Woooosh! Martin ducks, spins and takes the pipe away from him.

MARTIN EDEN  
Was this yours?

Martin hits the man between the eyes with a closed, rock, solid fist and throws the pipe off the pier.

Man # 2 goes down!

MARTIN EDEN (cont'd)  
I take that as a "yes?"

MAN # 3  
Get him!

The three men then rush him. Martin squares off and quickly gives a lesson in fast hands.

POW! POW! POW! The third man goes down.

MAN # 3 (cont'd)  
Ahhhggg.

The fourth and fifth attempt to square off.

An overhand right is thrown - Martin shoulders the blow then cocks his hips, and lets a short right hand fly.

The fourth man drops to his knees gnashing with a shattered nose.

Martin turns to the fifth man.

The last man rushes Martin. Martin steps aside, grabs the man's coat and ties him up - then, a left, right squarely to the face.

The attacker drops. Arthur crawls to safety arriving near Martin's wooden box. He reaches for it, sees the names Thomas and Elaine Eden - keeps it safe.

Arthur now looks on in absolute fascination to the brawling spectacle before him.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED: (3)

MARTIN EDEN  
(adrenaline pumping)  
You want any more of this? Cause I got  
plenty of it!!

The pier is littered with groaning bodies. They've had  
enough.

The men pick themselves up and begin limping back through the  
fog from where they came.

Martin gets Arthur to his feet.

MARTIN EDEN (cont'd)  
You all right?

ARTHUR MORSE  
I think so. I found myself a bit lost  
down near the Tenderloin. They came out  
of nowhere.

Arthur hands Martin the small wooden urn.

ARTHUR  
Here's your box.

MARTIN EDEN  
Thanks. I've never seen 'em before. Scabs  
probably looking for work at the mill.  
C'mon, let's get out of the rain before  
they come back with more men.

EXT. DOCK LANDING TACK HOUSE - NIGHT

Martin leads Arthur out from the rain beneath an extended  
canopy.

ARTHUR MORSE  
I'm in quite a debt to you, Mr.?

MARTIN EDEN  
Eden. Martin Eden.

ARTHUR MORSE  
Most men I know would've kept their fair  
distance. If you hadn't shown up, I'm  
afraid it wouldn't have been a different  
story.

Arthur extends his wounded arm along with his calling card.

ARTHUR MORSE (cont'd)  
My name is Arthur Morse.

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They shake hands. Martin glances at the card.

ARTHUR MORSE (cont'd)  
Please, Mr. Eden you must let me repay  
the favor. I'm just over the hill in the  
Valley of the Moon. Only a few miles from  
town. My card.

INT. DARK ALLEY TAVERN - NIGHT

A drunken, PIANO PLAYER (60's) plays and leads an overflowing  
inebriated, working-class seaman's, raucous crowd in a  
ragtime melody of...

SAILOR PATRONS  
"In the light, of the silvery moon, I  
want to spoon, to my honey, I'll croon  
love's tune."

Martin enters, looks around to see familiar faces.

Struggling Irish class natural beauty, LIZZIE CONNELLY (27)  
moves between her tables, picking up glasses and plopping  
down jugs of slushing beer. She's the kind of woman who  
doesn't suffer fools, carries both a glint in her eye and a  
care for others.

SAILOR PATRONS (cont'd)  
Honey moon, keep a-shinin' in June...

Martin sees Lizzie in the distance.

MARTIN  
(hums)  
Your silvery beams will bring love's  
dreams...

Bartender MIKE (50's) puts out four pitchers of beer onto the  
serving station.

MIKE  
Lizzie? Beer's up! Table four.

LIZZIE CONNELLY  
(Irish accent)  
Table four, coming up, Mike!

Lizzie sweeps the pitchers away and carves her way back  
through the drunken, hustle-bustle.

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Incognito, Martin straddles up to the bar. Mike turns to see his old friend.

MIKE  
Hey, Mart! What the hell? Sneakin' up on me like that!

MARTIN EDEN  
Hey, Mike.

BARTENDER MIKE  
Wondering if you were ever coming back?  
Long stretch this time.

Mike pushes forward a tall, cold beer.

MARTIN EDEN  
Two months straight out. From Salina Cruz to Ketchikan and back. Big hauls. It'll keep me for a while.

Martin refers to a wad of money. Mike refers to Lizzie.

BARTENDER MIKE  
She's been waitin' for ya', Mart. Anxious as a school girl on Christmas morning.

MARTIN EDEN  
Act like it's nothin' hey, Mike? Let's play a little.

Martin sips. Nonchalant. Looks around.

BARTENDER MIKE  
Okay. But I'm not in on this!

Lizzie then turns to see Martin sippin' on a cold beer like he'd been there all night. She brushes back a long natural curl of hair covering her eyes.

LIZZIE  
Martin...

Martin gradually turns fully towards her with a wide and charitable smile.

LIZZIE (cont'd)  
(breathless)  
Mart!

Lizzie drops her pitchers heavily on the table - spilling.

(CONTINUED)



CONTINUED: (2)

PATRONS  
Heeeeey?! Lizzie.

Lizzie rushes her way from one end of the bar to the other.  
Martin steps off from his bar stool and turns to her.

Lizzie leaps up off her feet and throws herself into Martin's  
extended arms.

LIZZIE CONNELLY  
MARTIN!!

Martin catches Lizzie in mid-flight in his wide-open arms -  
staggers backwards.

MARTIN EDEN  
Woow. Lizzie.

She holds on tightly, kissing him, holding him, inspecting  
him - inventories Martin's hands, arms, cheeks.

LIZZIE CONNELLY  
You're in one piece, back, safe. Let me  
look at ya'!! Nothing missin'?

MARTIN EDEN  
A few lashes but all in one piece!

Lizzie then breaks from Martin's clutch - her anger flares!

LIZZIE CONNELLY  
You been sittin' here just like that? All  
this time? How long you've been?

Lizzie throws her eyes to Mike. Mike shrugs.

MARTIN EDEN  
Ah, oh, I don't know, what's it been,  
Mike? Half hour or so?

BARTENDER MIKE  
Yeah, Mart. Half hour 'bout right.

LIZZIE  
Mike you saw him sitting here?! You  
didn't tell me?

MARTIN EDEN  
I was trying to get your attention.  
Waving and all. It's like you were  
looking right over me.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED: (3)

LIZZIE CONNELLY

Oh, shush! I should give you what sea  
couldn't! A good smack! Come here now.  
I'm off for the next twenty, Mike! Take  
me off the clock.

Lizzie unties her barmaid's apron. She leads Martin through  
the drunken crowd across the room to an empty table for two.

MORE - SECLUDED TABLE

Lizzie and Martin sit. Martin places the wooden urn on the  
side of the table.

LIZZIE CONNELLY (cont'd)

Look at ya'! Damn ya'! Handsome as ever.  
How long you in town this time? Gonna' be  
awhile, Mart?

MARTIN EDEN

I'll be picking up day-trawler trips  
while the run slows down but no long  
hauls. Captain's makin' repairs. It was a  
good catch. It'll keep for a bit if  
Bernard don't throw me out first.

LIZZIE CONNELLY

I missed ya'.

MARTIN EDEN

(smiles)

I missed ya' too, Liz.

He reaches in his pocket and pulls out an engraved piece of  
Abalone Shell.

MARTIN EDEN (cont'd)

I brought ya' something.

LIZZIE CONNELLY

What's this now?

We see a beautiful carving of a man and woman standing on the  
back of a trawler.

MARTIN EDEN

I made a trade for it with a deckhand  
from Australia. He says if you look at it  
in the light a certain way, it will speak  
to you of the future.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED: (4)

LIZZIE CONNELLY

Sounds like a Martin Eden folktale. If it were only that easy. It's beautiful. Thank you.

Lizzie grows quiet - concerned.

MARTIN EDEN

What's wrong, Liz?

LIZZIE CONNELLY

Some of the boats coming in were talking of the storms. Pretty bad ones. Some men didn't come back. We all were all worried 'bout you, Mart.

Lizzie reaches over and rubs the scar on Martin's neck.

MARTIN EDEN

Main boom-lift carried away. Caught me at the last minute.

LIZZIE CONNELLY

I'd be lost forever if something happened.

He reaches up for her hand.

MARTIN EDEN

You know the seas are never going to take me, Liz. Unless I go out on one of those oversized ocean-liners. Then I'll be doing it first class and all.

LIZZIE CONNELLY

You're the only man I know who can smile bright in the face of a squall and just because of that, it'd go on right on by ya'.

Martin pulls out a wad of cash - broad, grinning smile.

MARTIN EDEN

Then, let's drink to it. A round for the house, and two rounds for you and me.

EXT. BOARDING HOUSE - LATER - NIGHT

A rock smashes up between the letters of a sign that reads: HIGGONBOTHAM'S BOARDING HOUSE. CRASH!!

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CONTINUED:

Martin stands below looking up - a little tipsy. He takes out Arthur's card from his pocket and places it in the wooden box.

MARTIN EDEN  
(sotto)  
Purgatory, I'm back.

INT. BOARDING HOUSE STAIRWELL - NIGHT

Darkness fills the stairwell.

Martin reaches for the handrail, making his way up the dark and steep steps.

Nearly at the top, Martin's foot then finds a child's skate beneath it. Stepping with all his weight, the skate skirts out from below him driving Martin to hit face-first on the step below him.

Martin's body slides backwards face down to the bottom of the stairwell hitting every step on his way back down.

He comes to a crashing thud.

MARTIN EDEN  
Ahhhggg...

INT. OWNER'S ROOM - BOARDING HOUSE - NIGHT

GERTRUDE EDEN HIGGONBOTHAM (45), Martin's older sister and her husband BERNARD (52) are awakened by the noise below.

Bernard furiously rips back the covers - lights a lamp and paces.

BERNARD  
You hear that? I knew it. Not in town for even a night and he's coming home staggering! We advertise a quiet place!

Gertrude quickly gets out of bed, secures her robe and makes for the door.

INT. BOARDING HOUSE HALLWAY/STAIRWELL - NIGHT

Martin gathers himself up below. Boarders crowd the top of the stairwell looking at the bruised sailor below.

Gertrude pushes her way through.

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GERTRUDE

Go on, now. Back to your rooms. I'll take care of it. Go on, now! Back to sleep. Breakfast at 7:30 sharp.

Gertrude rushes down the stairs. Martin picks himself back up.

GERTRUDE (cont'd)

Martin? You can't come home like this! Waking our paying boarders and all.

Martin, bent over backwards, produces a child's skate from beneath his pant-leg.

MARTIN EDEN

Five men can't lay a glove on me, but a five-year-old named Alfred takes me down like a prize-fighter.

Gertrude laughs a bit. Martin and Gertrude work their way back up the steps.

GERTRUDE

C'mon, let's get you cleaned up.

MARTIN EDEN

The kid's got it in for me.

INT. LAUNDRY ROOM - NIGHT

Gertrude wets a washcloth and dampens her brother's face.

GERTRUDE

You smell like fish and whiskey. Here, take a fresh cloth and wash up before Bernard gets whiff of ya'!

Martin reaches for the cloth revealing his bruised and battered knuckles.

GERTRUDE (cont'd)

You fightin' again?

MARTIN EDEN

It wasn't much of one. A fancy boy down at the docks got leeward from the main drag, bunch of scabs jumped him. Invited me over for dinner tomorrow. Arthur Morse. Morse Industries. Will have to dig out that old suit of Bernard's he gave me.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

GERTRUDE

Fancy. I'll make sure it's ironed.

Gertrude turns away and rinses the washcloth in the tray.  
Martin places the wooden box down on the laundry table.

MARTIN EDEN

They're in heaven now, Gert. I took their  
ashes with me like you wanted, said a  
prayer like you said. Put 'em out at sea.  
They're at peace now.

Gertrude turns back to her brother - quiet.

GERTRUDE

(beat)

It's done then.

INT. GERTRUDE'S ROOM - NIGHT

Bernard is now up and pacing. He's a tight-faced, nervous,  
gaunt, wiry of-a-man who wears a thin, menacing mustache.

BERNARD

(angered whispers)

I told you he was drunk. I can smell him  
from here. Hallway smells like whiskey  
and halibut! Do you know what kind of  
reputation this gives our business?

GERTRUDE

Alfred left out one of his skates on the  
stairwell. He stepped on it in the dark  
stairwell. He's a good boy, Bernard.

BERNARD

He spends his catch money like it's  
falling off trees then when he's out we  
carry him. It's time you see him for what  
he is!

GERTRUDE

And, what's that Bernard?

INT. MARTIN'S ROOM - NIGHT

Martin enters and closes the door behind him. The room is  
small, dingy, dirty, cramped. A washbasin sits beneath a  
broken mirror.

BERNARD (O.S.)

No prospects, and nor is he looking for  
any!

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

GERTRUDE (O.S.)  
He'll hear you through the walls, quite  
your voice.

Martin sits on the side of his bed with the wooden box. He  
rubs his thumbs affectionately over the names of his parents.

BERNARD (O.S.)  
An uneducated, working man's drunk is  
what he is! Like a dog sleeping in the  
sun.

MARTIN EDEN  
(beat)  
I wish I had been more for ya'...

EXT. GOLDEN COUNTRY ROAD - DAY

Martin walks alone on a dirt road. In his hand, a bottle of  
unopened Glengarry Blended Scotch Whiskey.

His clothes, clean but ragged, smack of his working class.

In the distance, sweeping estate grounds which lead to a  
large white country mansion.

INT/EXT. MANSION FOYER - DAY

We hear a light and bashful knock on the door. The BUTLER  
(70) turns and opens it - sizing up Martin.

BUTLER  
All help reports to the servants entrance  
in the rear. The stables are on the north  
side of the property.

The butler shuts the door in Martin's face. Martin quickly  
extends Arthur's card.

MARTIN EDEN  
Forgive me, sir but I'm here to see Mr.  
Arthur Morse? He's expecting me.

Martin extends the bottle of scotch. Butler inspects.

BUTLER  
They'll be charmed, I'm sure. This way.

INT. STUDY - DAY

The butler opens the door to the Morse's study. Martin steps  
in. The butler exits leaving Martin alone.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

He turns.

MARTIN EDEN

Hey...? Where'd... you go?

Silence. Martin - stranded. Shelves of countless books tower over him. Looking up, he backs up and bumps into a side-table.

MARTIN EDEN (cont'd)

Oh, no...

A lamp tilts and teeters but Martin stabs at it with quick hands just before it hits the ground. He puts it back.

MARTIN

Weeeeeewwww...

Looking around, Martin moves to the bookcase. He reaches for a novel by "SWINEBURNE (Swin-burn)." He opens and reads.

MARTIN EDEN

(softly)

From too much love of living, from hope  
and fear set free, we thank with brief  
thanksgiving, whatever Gods may be.

Beautiful and elegant RUTH MORSE (25), Arthur's sister enters.

MARTIN EDEN (cont'd)

That no man lives forever, that dead men  
rise up never, that even the weariest  
river...

RUTH

Winds somewhere safe to sea.

MARTIN EDEN

Winds somewhere safe to sea.

Martin lurches backward like a frightened horse. Turns.  
Youthful eyes meet.

Martin sees Ruth and nearly stammers by her poise and beauty.

MARTIN EDEN (cont'd)

I was just waiting for Arthur Morse. I  
didn't mean nothin'. The man in the suit  
told me to wait. I was fixed on this book  
here.

RUTH

No, no, no, it's quite all right. I  
didn't mean to make you jump. (Ruth

(MORE)

(CONTINUED)



CONTINUED: (2)

RUTH (CONT'D)  
smiles) I'm Arthur's sister, Ruth. Ruth  
Morse.

Ruth boldly crosses the room and extends her hand.

RUTH (cont'd)  
Hello.

MARTIN EDEN  
Oh, hello. I'm Martin Eden.

RUTH  
Arthur will be down in just a moment.  
Won't you sit down? Please, make yourself  
comfortable.

MARTIN EDEN  
Thank you. I've never been inside a home  
like this one. If I was alone, I'd need a  
sextant to get out of it.

RUTH  
Well, Mr. Eden, you are as I imagined.  
When Arthur came home last night, we were  
utterly horrified with what happened. We  
were all very eager to meet such a man  
who would so readily step in blindly on  
behalf of a stranger.

MARTIN EDEN  
Oh, you mean the fight?

RUTH  
Yes! (Laughs) The fight!

MARTIN EDEN  
That was nothin' at all, Miss. Really.  
Any guy do it for another guy.

Ruth takes notice a mark on Martin's neck.

RUTH  
You have a mark on your neck. Did that  
happen last night?

MARTIN EDEN  
Oh, this? No... last night they didn't  
touch me. This here was a sailing  
accident. A sugar steamer down near  
Salina Cruise, main boom-lift carried  
away an' next to the tackle was a wire,  
an' it was threshin' around like a snake,  
and like a fool I rushed in and got  
swatted.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED: (3)

RUTH  
Swatted?

MARTIN EDEN  
Smacked. You know, ah, hit?

RUTH  
Oh, I see.

MARTIN EDEN  
Captain wasn't too happy about it. Blood  
all over the deck. Makes deck walkin'  
slippery. Couldn't stop it, till the  
ship's cook came out with a half-dozen  
rags and a bottle of vinegar. The sting  
was worse than the slice.

Ruth, fascinated as she is dumbfounded.

MARTIN EDEN (cont'd)  
Sure are lots of books in this room. Ah,  
you've read 'em all?

RUTH  
These books? Well, most but not all. It  
would take a lifetime to get through all  
of them.

Martin reaches for the book.

MARTIN EDEN  
I haven't done much of it, but I was  
lookin' at this one, "Swine-burn" when  
you came in.

RUTH  
Who?

MARTIN EDEN  
Swine-burne? That right?

RUTH  
(warms)  
Oh, you mean Swine-burn. (Swin-burn)

MARTIN EDEN  
Yes, that's the one. How do you like it?

RUTH  
Well, Mr. Eden, Swineburn is to say,  
indelicate. Poetry is, of course,  
refinement of the finer things. His  
themes are to say, unrefined, even crude

(MORE)

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED: (4)

RUTH (CONT'D)

at times. Too harsh for the ear to really bear.

MARTIN EDEN

See? I'm afraid I just demonstrated that I have no ear at all. I thought it was great. The little I read. I had no idea he was such a scrapper. But, again I guess I ain't much on poetry, Miss.

Arthur enters wearing a sling to support his arm - all smiles.

ARTHUR

Martin, forgive me. Welcome! I see that you've met my sister? Come. Dinner has been prepared my friend!

INT. DINING ROOM - LATER - NIGHT

MRS. MORSE (50) sits at the head of the table. Arthur sits along with his brother, NORMAN (28).

An empty setting is at the head of the table where MR. MORSE would normally be. Martin sits across from Ruth.

MRS. MORSE (CONT'D)

Mr. Eden, if you hadn't come across Arthur like you did, there's no telling what would have happened?

NORMAN

Arthur certainly knows better with all the labor unrest to be going down to the docks at night.

MARTIN EDEN

I just know those guys were looking for trouble. Arthur wasn't botherin' anybody. They butted in on him, so I butted in on them. I wouldn't have missed that for nothin'.

Mrs. Morse puts down her fork in quiet horror.

Martin grows self-conscious. He places his bruised hands self-consciously under the tablecloth.

MARTIN EDEN (cont'd)

(quietly)

Did I say something wrong, Ma'am?

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

ARTHUR

(saying)

No, not at all, Martin. I think my family is fascinated with what's happened. I was trying to tell them but I'm afraid my own eloquence couldn't have matched how you've just described it. Martin gets his fighting spirit from the sea, mother. If you can't protect yourself there, one is as good as lost.

MRS. MORSE

Oh, then you served in the Navy?

MARTIN EDEN

Ah, no, ma'am. I'm a fisherman. I roll out with the fleets up and down the coast. Sometimes across the Pacific.

RUTH

That's where that mark on Mr. Eden's neck came from.

MRS. MORSE

Oh?

RUTH

Yes, as Mr. Eden recounted for me in the library, "one night on a sugar steamer off Salina Cruise, main-boom lift carried away an' next to the tackle was a wire, an' it was threshin' around like a snake..."

All eyes land on Ruth.

RUTH (cont'd)

Mr. Eden rushed in and, what was that word again? Got?

MARTIN EDEN

Swatted.

RUTH

(smiles)

That's right, "swatted."

MRS. MORSE

Swatted?

RUTH

That's right mother, swatted! You know, hit. Smacked!

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED: (2)

Brothers Morse exchange looks.

MRS. MORSE

Oh. Sounds a bit Latin to me. Then it's a dangerous occupation?

MARTIN EDEN

With crew as much as equipment, ma'am.

NORMAN

How so with crew?

MARTIN EDEN

Crew can be as treacherous as from the sea. Was hit by a ferry once in the fog and was thrown into the bay. Sealing vessel carried me out through the potato patch and all the way up toward the North Pole. Man named Wolf Larson put me to work rather than gettin' me off the boat and back home again. Shanghaied!

RUTH

They kidnapped you?

MARTIN EDEN

Told me they were three days behind gettin' out of port. Put me to work an hour after they pulled me out from the Bay.

RUTH

I've never heard such a thing.

MARTIN EDEN

Happens all the time. Those captains are mostly ruthless that way.

RUTH

What happened?

MARTIN EDEN

Finally slipped off one night with a young woman named Maud Brewster. They Shanghaied her too. Her ship was adrift needin' repairs off the Norton Sound just south of the Seward Peninsula. We both got off on one of the whalin' boats and made our way to Yokahama. We washed up ashore somewhere and found the "Ghost" washed up along with us the next day. Old Wolf was down below going mad from a boil behind his eye. Some say it was his meanness that made him blind and finally insane.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED: (3)

RUTH

But you returned to it?

MARTIN EDEN

The sea plays with men's hearts until they're broken, stout ships until they're smashed. As for me, it's just a way to make ends meet. I've always had a feeling that someday I'd find something else.

RUTH

I suspect whatever you put your mind to Mr. Eden, the world would be hard pressed to keep it from you.

EXT. FRONT PORCH - NIGHT

Martin is escorted out the front door by Arthur, Ruth, Norman and Mrs. Morse. The evening's end - a perfect night.

RUTH

Mr. Eden has some very definite ideas of your man Swineburn, Arthur. Maybe you could introduce him to your friends at the university?

ARTHUR

Splendid idea. Why not hey, Martin?

Ruth comes close to Martin. Reaches out with small collection of novels.

RUTH

Here, more poets Mr. Eden. If Swineburn struck a chord with you, I'm sure you'll enjoy these as well.

MARTIN EDEN

Thank you, Miss Morse.

RUTH

I hope you'll call again. And thank you for the whiskey. It was very thoughtful.

MARTIN EDEN

Anytime.

RUTH

Well, if you'll excuse me. Tomorrow night I'll be going to the theatre in town, the Squaw Man - Edwin Milton Royle.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

MARTIN EDEN  
Of course.

Ruth, Norman and Mrs. Morse turn back inside the home.

EXT. STAIRWELL - NIGHT

Arthur and Martin trail down the mansion steps.

ARTHUR  
See? Not so painful, huh Mart?

Martin sighs a deep breath of relief.

MARTIN EDEN  
Jumpin' in with the guys at the pier was one thing but sitting there at your table made me feel I was in prize fight with a table full of giants!

ARTHUR  
You did well, Mart. Can I arrange a carriage back?

MARTIN EDEN  
No. I think I'll enjoy the walk back home.

ARTHUR  
Call on us again?

MARTIN EDEN  
Will do when the books are read.

INT. RUTH'S BEDROOM - NIGHT

Ruth looks down through the window. An attraction stirs. Her eyes follow Martin below strolling out from the expansive Morse's grounds.

INT. FIGHT CLUB - LATER - NIGHT

Smoke and noise. Beer and women flow about.

A makeshift fight ring, TWO MEN, fight like caged beasts throwing themselves upon the other with closed and hardened fists.

Wagers are made from the onlookers throughout.

Martin sits in the back row, thumbs through various pages of books Ruth had given him.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

Friend and ring-hardened, HUNTER MARCKWARDT (50's), approaches.

HUNTER  
Hey, Mart! You're back! What've have you taken up readin' now? Is that why I haven't been seeing ya'?

MARTIN EDEN  
Been on a trawler.

Hunter reaches in, turns Martin's book over and sees that Martin is reading...

HUNTER  
Elizabeth Barret Browning? Huh? You ain't going to find much etiquette around here, Mart! Ha... When you getting back into the ring again?

MARTIN EDEN  
If my catch money runs dry, I'll be back.

HUNTER  
You'd be fightin' the one with the stripes. He doesn't have your speed. Telegraphs everything. Make it soon will ya'? I need to make some good money!

The FIGHTER in the stripe shorts throws an overpowering right hand, which lands with a thud to his opponent's face.

MARTIN EDEN  
I'll let you know.

EXT. SIDEWALK IN TOWN - NIGHT

Martin walks along in a near drunken manner. This time, not from the bottle, but from a sense of escaping his own class.

MARTIN EDEN (V.O.)  
From too much love of living...

He rolls a smoke, lights, keeps reading - new worlds for him.

MARTIN EDEN (V.O.)  
From hope and fear set free...

EXT. TAVERN - NIGHT

Martin continues on, oblivious to the inviting tavern noises and delights that would normally pull him in.

(CONTINUED)



CONTINUED:

MARTIN EDEN(V.O.)  
We thank with brief thanksgiving,  
whatever gods may be...

INT. BOARDING HOUSE STAIRWELL - NIGHT

Martin climbs the stairs - eyes on the lookout for any left-behind skates.

MARTIN EDEN(V.O.)  
That dead men rise up never...

INT. BEDROOM DOOR - FOLLOWING MORNING - DAY

Martin, dressed, up and focused, opens up his bedroom door - reading. He strides with purpose back towards the stairwell.

MARTIN EDEN (V.O.)  
That even the weariest river...

EXT. PUBLIC LIBRARY - FOLLOWING - DAY

Martin approaches the library doors - 1st time. The tiles below Martin's feet read, "COUNTY LIBRARY - FREE TO ALL."

MARTIN EDEN (V.O.)  
Winds somewhere safe to sea.

INT. LIBRARY - DAY

Between the bookshelves, Martin's workingman's hands reach out for a small and hidden novelette.

MARTIN EDEN  
(he reads)  
"Etiquette is the ceremony of polite  
society."

EXT. THEATRE BOX OFFICE - NIGHT

Marquee reads: Edwin Milton Royale's "The Squaw Man"

Martin places down his money. The TICKET TAKER (30) stares at his neck. His fisherman's knot bulges from his chinrest.

TICKET TAKER  
That's some Full-Windsor you got there.  
Next!

INT. THEATRE BALCONY - NIGHT

Martin, self-conscious of his tie, looks down below to the filling orchestra pit. He refers to his book on "etiquette."

MARTIN EDEN  
(reads to himself)  
Conventional ceremony. Code of good  
manners which governs behavior.

His eye then catches a chance sighting of Ruth and her escort, WILL OLNEY (28).

Two working-class WOMEN (20's) look up to see Martin gawking from above.

The lights go down. The curtain goes up. The last bit of light on Ruth fades.

The actors take their places. The play begins.

EXT. THEATRE - STREET - LATER - NIGHT

Martin strides about nervously hoping for a second chance sighting of Ruth.

The crowd then breaks from the doors.

Two WOMEN approach Martin from the theatre. He makes a move away from them.

WOMAN # 1  
Hold on Bill, what's your rush? You're  
not going to shake us off just like that  
are ya'?

Martin keeps his eyes focused to get a glimpse of Ruth.

MARTIN EDEN  
I'm just waiting for someone.

WOMAN # 2  
Looks like they're not waitin' for you.  
My name's Margaret and this is Suzanne.  
We've been watchin' ya'.

MARTIN EDEN  
Oh?

WOMAN # 2  
You ain't told us your name yet?

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

MARTIN EDEN

Ah, Bill. You guessed it. Just like you said.

WOMAN # 1

C'mon. Give it to me straight, Bill. What is it?

MARTIN EDEN

Bill'll, do.

WOMAN # 2

You sounds' like you's fibbin' a bit. But you look good just the same to me.

Martin then sees Ruth exit the theater.

WOMAN # 1

That's some fancy tie. She must be really something!

The Girls laugh but Martin takes no notice. Ruth and Will Olney stand beneath the marquee making small talk with others.

WOMAN # 1 (cont'd)

Heh, Bill. What's the matter with you? Why so distracted?

MARTIN EDEN

Oh, I've got a date already. I'm on my way to meet her now.

WOMAN # 1

Look at him. To the moon and back and he ain't even left the sidewalk.

Ruth and Will Olney step up unto a boarding carriage. They're soon gone.

EXT. HILLTOP ABOVE THE MORSE MANSION - NIGHT

Martin stands alone bathed in the moon's soft light.

He looks onto the Morse home - light years away from this girl named Ruth, and the upper-class from which she comes.

INT. LAUNDRY - FOLLOWING MORNING - DAY

Martin, over the wash basin, scrubs the dirt out of his elbows. Young nephew ALFRED (6) and his three other brothers stand at attention nearby.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

MARTIN EDEN  
Alright Alfred. Again. "Manners..."

Clutched in young Alfred's hands is his book on etiquette.

ALFRED  
"Con-duct... measured by, po-lite  
society."

MARTIN EDEN  
That's right, Alfred. No skates left  
behind on the stairwell.

ALFRED  
Okay.

Gertrude enters.

GERTRUDE  
Now what's all this about? What are you  
teachin' 'em, hey Mart?

She takes the book from Alfred.

MARTIN EDEN  
Alfy here was just giving me a lesson on  
manners weren't you, Alfy?

Gertrude reads from the book.

GERTRUDE  
Lessons on polite society? What's in your  
head now, Martin?

Bernard enters - scowling.

BERNARD  
What's this now?

He takes the book from Gertrude.

GERTRUDE  
Mart's schooling the kids on the  
refinement of being well-mannered.

MARTIN EDEN  
You know Bernard, it's actually impolite  
to just barge in and take over a  
conversation like you did.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED: (2)

BERNARD

"Twentieth Century Etiquette - A Ready Manual for All Occasions." Oh, that's rich. This is going to carry you through, Martin?

Bernard gives the book back to Gertrude - grabs up each of the kids up and out the hallway.

BERNARD (cont'd)

C'mon...

MARTIN EDEN

Hates me when I'm dirty, hates me when I'm clean. (smiles) He's a hard man to please, Gerty.

INT. BOARDING HOUSE PHONE BOOTH - DAY

Martin's fingers tremble possibly for the first time. Dials the operator...

MARTIN EDEN

May I have the Morse household in the Valley of the Moon please?

INT. MORSE HOME - DAY

Ruth picks up the phone. Her close friend, CHRISTINE (20) stands nearby.

RUTH

Hello?

MARTIN EDEN (V.O.)

Miss Morse, this is Martin Eden. From the other night. The sailor.

The girls share a look. (It's Martin!)

RUTH

Yes, Mr. Eden?

EXT. VALLEY OF THE MOON - DAY

Gentle wheat blows against the rim of the horizon.

Wearing a suit, Martin's clothes now smack that of a gentleman. Books clutched under right arm.

EXT. FRONT PORCH OF MORSE MANSION - DAY

Ruth answers the door herself. Her eyes sweep completely over Martin who now stands with creased trousers and slight bit of sophisticated change in him.

Martin holds out the borrowed books like an eager school-boy.

MARTIN EDEN

Hello, Miss Morse. I have your books.

INT. ENTRY WAY - DAY

Ruth trails behind Martin. She throws a look up to friend Christine to the stairs above.

INT. DRAWING ROOM - DAY

Ruth leads Martin inside.

RUTH

Please, sit. Make yourself comfortable, Mr. Eden.

MARTIN EDEN

Thank you. Thank you. Call me, Martin.

RUTH

Are you all right, Martin. You look a little preoccupied?

MARTIN EDEN

I might be at that.

RUTH

Well what is it? Can I be of help?

MARTIN EDEN

Um. I was wondering, Miss Morse? It's probably not right for me to ask you, but I was wondering if I might get some advice?

RUTH

Advice? Oh, why of course. What can kind of advice can I give?

MARTIN EDEN

Well, ya' see, when I came here the other night, it ah, it left an impression on me.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

RUTH

Oh?

MARTIN EDEN

Yes. You see, I've never been in a house like this one before in all my life. Ever. The butler looked confused, which made me confused, and I didn't know whether to "wait in the sitting room" or "sit in the waiting room". And seeing it all with your brothers and mother, well, it was something. Really somethin'.

RUTH

I see.

Christine peers from around the corner - listens intently.

MARTIN EDEN

See, where I come from, the air I breathe, is all filled with booze and fighten', certain smells, certain people. Kind of like a barnyard in a way.

RUTH

Booze and fighten'?

MARTIN EDEN

Nothing ever changes in that way, and you can expect the next day to be filled with the same booze and the same fighten'... But when you crossed the room with your mother the other night, it was the most beautiful thing I've ever seen.

RUTH

Oh, well I wasn't aware.

MARTIN EDEN

The few steps the both you took getting to the table, was somethin' - just really somethin'.

RUTH

How so?

MARTIN EDEN

The best I can break it down, a man who works like me, knows the value of a good design. A good design takes time to achieve. Years, study, practical work in the shop. Like the way a strong hull is built in a ship, or a vessel. It cuts through the water with ease, or it steadies the boat in a storm. That just

(MORE)

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED: (2)

MARTIN EDEN (CONT'D)

doesn't happen. Someone has to think about it, study it, commit to it, draw it up, make it work. As I see it now, a man can either be a deckhand, or the man who designs the hull. Do you see what I mean?

RUTH

Go on.

MARTIN EDEN

You see, I've seen a whole lot in this life but suddenly, somehow, it feels like I haven't seen a thing that actually mattered. Up to now, it's all been, moment to moment. Rudderless. My brother-in-law has referred to me as being "a dog lying in the sun". I think he might be right about it. Never thought too much about tomorrow. I can cut my way through a heavy squall, but I've never thought of what to do once it's passed. My thinking never went beyond that. Do you see?

RUTH

I think so.

MARTIN EDEN

I know there's more to life than just knockin' about but I never had any reason to think otherwise. Knockin' about was fine. But there I was, and there I stayed. Until now. You see, I'm startin' to feel, I don't have the slightest idea of where to start.

RUTH

I can see your dilemma.

Martin stands - animated against the tall shelves of classic novels behind him.

MARTIN EDEN

I can make most men sick when it comes to hard work once I get started. Mebbe' you think it's funny, me askin' you? I know you're the last person in the world I ought to ask but I don't know who else to ask? If I asked these questions to the people around me, they'd just bring me back to the squall I'm trying to avoid. I'd like to begin, but I just don't know where to start.

(CONTINUED)



CONTINUED: (3)

RUTH

Well, why don't we start from right there, from the beginning. Your background? Is there any formal training?

MARTIN EDEN

Well, sure. I know how to run a ship from top to bottom. I worked in a slaughter house for two years.

RUTH

I mean with any formal education?

MARTIN EDEN

Oh, education. No. None, really. You see both my mother and father are dead. I've two sisters but one's not even my real sister but a woman who took care of me when I was growin' up. She's married with four kids and runs the boarding house in town. That's where I stay when I'm in from the sea. My other sister is married and lives in the east. Then I've got a string of brothers, I'm the youngest, but they never helped anybody. I don't even know where they are!

Martin moves from the window then sits back down at the edge of his chair.

RUTH

Well... Will you excuse me?

MARTIN

Of course.

Ruth gets up and leaves Martin alone.

INT. HALLWAY - DAY

Christine awaits. Ruth approaches.

RUTH

Well? What do you think of him?

The two look on to Martin sitting alone - nervous.

CHRISTINE

He's not Will Olney that's for sure. He's much more handsome, rugged.

RUTH

Will seems completely boring compared to him. Should I help him?

INT. DRAWING ROOM - DAY

Ruth re-enters.

RUTH  
By the way Mr. Eden, could you explain  
"booze" to me? You've used it several  
times now.

Martin stands, Ruth sits, Martin sits.

MARTIN EDEN  
Oh, booze, that means whiskey an' beer,  
anything that will make ya' drunk.

Ruth moves her chair closer to him, intimate.

RUTH  
First thing, don't use "you" when you are  
impersonal. "You" is very personal and  
your use of it just now was not precisely  
what you meant.

MARTIN EDEN  
It wasn't?

Ruth refers to the book on grammar.

RUTH  
Come sit next to me. I'll show you.

Martin moves to her and cautiously sits. Ruth refers to her  
pages.

RUTH (cont'd)  
What you just said now, to me, "whiskey  
an' beer, anything that will make you  
drunk. Make me drunk, don't you see?

MARTIN EDEN  
Well, it would wouldn't it?

RUTH  
Yes, of course it would.

Their heads nearly touch. Martin lilts being so close. Ruth  
turns to him.

RUTH (cont'd)  
It would be nicer not to bring me into  
it, to substitute "one" for "you" and see  
how much better it sounds. "Anything that  
will make "one" drunk." See how that

(MORE)

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

RUTH (CONT'D)  
sounds? Great writers like Swineburn  
arrive from knowing these things.

MARTIN EDEN  
(beat)  
I'm going to have to work extra hard so  
"one" could arrive.

RUTH  
You mean, so "you" can arrive?

MARTIN EDEN  
My head hasn't spun this much since the  
main boom lift carried away.

RUTH  
And you got "swatted?"

MARTIN EDEN  
Yes.

RUTH  
A thorough education can feel that way,  
Martin. Do you feel to be up to it?

EXT. MORSE VINEYARD - DAY

MR. MORSE (60) a distinguished, powerful industrialist of a  
man overlooks his workers in the field.

Mrs. Morse stands nearby preparing a picnic beneath an oak  
tree overlooking vast parcels of owned land.

MRS. MORSE  
She's been so backwards where men are  
concerned. Nearly out of college and no  
prospects. He's the first man ever to  
draw a passing notice from Ruth.

MR. MORSE  
You mean the fisherman?

MRS. MORSE  
Wouldn't be a bad thing if he aroused her  
interest in some slight way. She's thrown  
all the others to the curb even without  
warning.

MR. MORSE  
More like you've sent them to the curb  
when you've had enough of them, good  
wife.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

MRS. MORSE

I could talk to the boys about having Martin around? Easy enough.

MR. MORSE

Who's fishing now? Suppose she falls in love with him? Shall we move him in to the barn?

MRS. MORSE

Nothing could ever come of it. Trust that part to me.

INT. BOARDING HOUSE HALLWAY - DAY

Martin is drunken by the day he had spent with Ruth. He carries more books with him this time under his arm.

INT. MARTIN'S ROOM - DAY

Martin opens the door. His face quickly turns pale. Lizzie sits motionless on his bed, thumbing through novelettes on "etiquette".

MARTIN EDEN

Hello, Lizzie.

She keeps her head down, thumbing through the underlined pages.

LIZZIE

Bernard let me in. I thought I'd wait for you. Social conduct? What fork to use in a formal setting?

Gertrude comes in.

GERTRUDE

Martin, Bernard said that. Lizzie, is here. Hi, Lizzie.

LIZZIE

Hi, Gertrude. I'm sorry if I'm intruding? Looks like I've caused a mess.

Grows awkward.

GERTRUDE

No, Lizzie, of course not. You're always welcome here. Well, I'll be gettin' on with my chores, be leaving you two alone.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

Gertrude exits. Lizzie keeps strong in the face of a losing battle.

LIZZIE  
Creased trousers, ironed shirt, a book on propriety? Might this all be for the Morse girl?

INT. KITCHEN BOARDING HOUSE - DAY

Gertrude enters. Bernard tends to chores. She glares at him like a devil.

BERNARD  
Don't look at me that way, Gertrude.

GERTRUDE  
You sent that girl in there. You not only embarrassed him, but you destroyed her. She did nothing to you! Do you have to always be this mean, Bernard?!

BERNARD  
(sharp)  
If he wants to grow up, he can't be complicit with his relations, now can he? He'll find that in the latter pages in his book on good form.

INT. MARTIN'S ROOM - DAY

Lizzie stands and inventories the numerous novellas, which sit on Martin's nightstand.

LIZZIE  
Bernard said that's where you were. Out in the Valley of the Moon making a call on her. She must be quite beautiful for someone like you to seek out a creased trouser and an ironed shirt?

MARTIN EDEN  
(beat)  
I jumped into a fight at the dock. Arthur had me over, his sister Ruth gave me a couple of books. That's all.

LIZZIE  
Is it?

MARTIN EDEN  
I come back to this place, it smells of work, and grime, fightin' and booze. I smell like work and grime. This country  
(MORE)

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

MARTIN EDEN (CONT'D)

is tearing itself apart figuring out how it's going to run itself. I'm just thinkin', maybe there's something out there more than this.

LIZZIE

And, now you're seeing me as just the tavern girl.

MARTIN EDEN

I didn't say that.

LIZZIE

I see it in the distance in your eyes. Is that what you think of me?

MARTIN EDEN

No, Liz. I was referring to the drunkards who sleep here. My sister's blood, the kid's blood, my own, just to work hard enough to hand it back over to a man like Bernard. To see it, to be invited into it. I didn't even know there could be more. You can't blame a man for that!

LIZZIE

No one's blamin'. But you should know Martin, people like the Morses are merely amused at people like us. It's an affront to them that we even breath the same air as they do. If they could tax it and make us pay for it, they'd find a way.

MARTIN EDEN

Lizzie, please...

LIZZIE

In the end, she'll betray you, Martin. You're not one of them and never will be.

INT. NORMAN'S BEDROOM - NIGHT

Arthur feigns a sickness. Norman is bedside with a bucket of hot water and a hot damp rag. Norman pats down Arthur's head.

NORMAN

Stay still, remember, you've got a fever.

ARTHUR

And you! Obligations elsewhere! Remember that!

NORMAN

Ruth? Ruth? Could you please come in.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

Brothers steady their feigned, sickly expressions. Norman pushes the hot bucket of water underneath the bed.

Ruth enters.

RUTH  
What is it?

ARTHUR  
(coughing)  
I'm afraid I have bad news. I've come down with a fever.

Ruth approaches and touches Arthur's forehead.

RUTH  
You're burning up.

ARTHUR  
Yes. I'm sure it shall pass but the Professor's lecture is tomorrow tonight. Might be wise to find a another escort...

RUTH  
Oh, I didn't think of that. Norman?

NORMAN  
I have other obligations.

ARTHUR  
With Will away, might you wish to consider, Mr. Eden? That's of course if you consider him an appropriate escort? He would fit in nicely, wouldn't he?

INT. MARTIN'S ROOM - DAY

Like a sea of butterflies, Martin's ceiling is covered with small pieces of paper - written words, scribbled definitions.

Martin closes his eyes and falls into a daydream.

EXT. SKY - FLASHDREAM - DAY

Martin's daydream - words on paper fly over his head like a squall of migrating butterflies i.e., words glide and float by.

Bernard then abruptly pounds on the door.

INT. MARTIN'S ROOM - DAY

Martin is startled back to reality.

MARTIN EDEN  
(annoyed)  
What is it, Bernard?

BERNARD (O.C.)  
It's a lady's voice on the phone.

Martin leaps to his feet! Opens the door. Bernard leans in.

BERNARD (cont'd)  
A fine lady's voice.

INT. BOARDING HOUSE HALLWAY - DAY

Martin is quiet. Gertrude and Bernard listen in from down the hall.

MARTIN EDEN  
Yes, Miss Morse. That would be fine.  
That'd be exceptional, Miss Morse.

Martin hangs up. Gertrude approaches.

GERTRUDE  
Well?

EXT. BUSY STREET - NIGHT

Martin strolls with Ruth. He dutifully takes his position curbside of her.

MARTIN EDEN (V.O.)  
I'm going to a lecture tonight! By a  
professor from Stanford!

Ruth rests her arm in his. Martin blisters with pride.

RUTH  
Professor Caldwell will be speaking on  
sociology this evening.

EXT. STREET INTERSECTION - NIGHT

Martin looks up, he sees Lizzie Connelly and two of her friends crossing the street and coming right at him.

Martin stiffens. Lizzie approaches. Her eyes fly past Martin and onto Ruth. Ruth smiles to Lizzie - unaware.

(CONTINUED)



CONTINUED:

RUTH  
Good evening.

Lizzie and friends sweep by with an incendiary glance.

LIZZIE  
Evening.

Martin tips his hat and gestures.

MARTIN EDEN  
Ladies.

EXT. TICKET LINE - NIGHT

Martin keeps his focus on Ruth yet keeping Lizzie in the corner of his eye.

RUTH  
What a pretty girl she was.

MARTIN EDEN  
Who?

RUTH  
The one with the hat that just passed by.

MARTIN EDEN  
Oh, I didn't notice.

RUTH  
You referred to them, Martin.

MARTIN EDEN  
A reflex, I guess.

RUTH  
Why, there isn't one woman in ten thousand that has features like hers. Her eyes were beautiful.

MARTIN EDEN  
Do you think so?

RUTH  
Do I think so? If that girl had the proper opportunity Mr. Eden, you would be fairly taken by her. That, I am assured of.

MARTIN EDEN  
Maybe...

INT. LECTURE HALL - NIGHT

UNIVERSITY PROFESSOR CALDWELL (60's) lectures at the podium.

PROFESSOR CALDWELL (CONT'D)  
 Individualism, and anarchism...  
 Frequently used as synonyms. Social  
 activism, and America's current  
 progressive movement now have America  
 gripped in its clutches. Yet how do we  
 differentiate between moving forward as a  
 nation, or disrupting what others would  
 like to keep as "the status quo?"

Surrounding Martin, dozen of handsome, smart, well-groomed,  
 university co-eds.

Martin checks for the dirt under his own nails, hides his  
 fingers into his palms.

MARTIN EDEN  
 They all look so smart below, well-  
 dressed.

Martin, a fish out of water. The distance between himself and  
 Ruth now appears to be even greater than imagined.

RUTH  
 Shhh... The professor.

MARTIN EDEN  
 Yes...

EXT. OPEN PACIFIC - DAY

Martin works from the stern of a day-trawler. Large spools of  
 nets spin and roll out from the stern to the open sea.

Martin, sits, writes in his journal.

MARTIN EDEN (V.O.)  
 Like Bernard said, "A dog asleep in the  
 sun". Dogs whine and bark. But can't tell  
 you why they whine and bark?

INT. MARTIN'S ROOM - NIGHT

Martin lies on his bed.

Scores of new words hover above him taped to the ceiling.  
 Each word, one more clue, one more stepping stone.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

MARTIN EDEN (V.O.)

And, now I realize that's all I've ever  
been - a dog asleep in the sun.

INT. MORSE'S LIBRARY - DAY

Martin and Ruth sit next to one another. The Butler pours  
refreshments. Ruth warms to her student.

RUTH (CONT'D)

There's something in your speech that I  
noticed. You say "don't" when you  
shouldn't. "Don't" is what's called a  
"contraction" and stands for two words.  
Do you know them?

MARTIN EDEN

Do - not.

RUTH

Right, but you use "don't" when you  
actually mean "does not."

MARTIN EDEN

Show me what you mean.

RUTH

Well, let's say the phrase, "It doesn't  
help to be hasty."

MARTIN EDEN

It doesn't mean to be hasty.

RUTH

So, for the word "doesn't" you're saying  
"don't," which actually is the  
contraction for "do - not". So, how  
you're saying it is, it "do not" help to  
be hasty".

He thinks for a moment.

RUTH (cont'd)

My lips almost snapped in two even saying  
such a thing. Doesn't that jar your ear?

MARTIN EDEN

Can't say that it does.

RUTH

But why didn't you just say, "can't say  
that it do?"

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

Martin smiles.

EXT. MORSE'S CROQUET FIELD - DAY

The afternoon is a peaceful one. MR. WILSON (60's), overweight and tired struggles with a croquet maillot.

Arthur and Norman are off to one side. Opposite them - their parents, the Morse's.

RUTH

Do you see Mr. Butler?

MARTIN EDEN

Yes.

RUTH

His father had been a bank cashier and died when he was a boy - early on, like you he was alone.

MARTIN EDEN

And now he's a lawyer?

RUTH

He entered my father's firm as an "office boy." He cooked for himself and lived on five dollars a week. He saved the rest so he could go to school.

MARTIN EDEN

He must have eaten like a dog?

RUTH

But now he makes close to thirty thousand a year. Think of what he can afford now?

Will Olney, who carries a bit of an air about him, strolls over to Arthur and Norman.

NORMAN

Well, what do you think?

WILL OLNEY

I actually like Martin. It's nice not to be someone's "project" for the time being.

Martin and Ruth.

RUTH

He even refused the United States Senate several times. Father says he could

(MORE)

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

RUTH (CONT'D)

become a Justice of the Supreme Court any time there's a vacancy.

MARTIN EDEN

That guy, huh? I think all that depriving' made him old. He looks like he never had a good time in all his life.

RUTH

But he's worked hard all his life to arrive.

MARTIN EDEN

Respectfully, Miss Morse, I think that thirty thousand came a bit too late.

EXT. COUNTRY ROAD BY THE SEA - DAY

The hill bellies up to the crest of the sky. Norman, Arthur, Will Olney, Ruth and Martin negotiate their overly large, wheels (bicycle) up and down the hillside.

EXT. FORKED ROAD - DAY

Arthur, Norman and Olney go to the right. Martin leads Ruth fork left.

MARTIN EDEN

This way.

EXT. FIELD OVERLOOKING THE SEA - LATER - DAY

Martin and Ruth sit on a blanket overlooking the Pacific expanse before them.

The sea blankets the horizon with a calm fury.

RUTH

Father took to you nicely this morning.  
He said you were a very polite young man.

Martin falls quiet. He reaches in his pocket for his poem.

MARTIN EDEN

I've written something.

RUTH

You wrote something?

MARTIN EDEN

It's not much but I thought I'd try my hand at it. It's no Swinburne of course.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

She takes it. Martin waits - nervous. She reads. Ruth's expression grows hopeful to sympathetic.

RUTH  
It's very sweet. Where did you get the idea to write something?

MARTIN EDEN  
Well, I've been thinking about a lot of things.

RUTH  
Such as?

MARTIN EDEN  
Being more than what I am, who I am. My station in life I mean. I'm fine in the world I live in if I want to stay there - the boarding house, picking up trawler work... but I know if that's all I want, that's all I'll ever get. And, that's where I'll stay.

RUTH  
I see.

MARTIN EDEN  
I think the way to break free is to write.

RUTH  
To break free?

MARTIN EDEN  
To get things started. To move things ahead.

Ruth puts down the poem.

RUTH  
You mean write for a living?

MARTIN EDEN  
I've been thinking that way.

RUTH  
Martin, writing is like a trade, there are so many who would love to write in this world, who try to write.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED: (2)

MARTIN EDEN

But at some point, they had to make the  
decision to begin? I have to begin  
somewhere don't I?

RUTH

(sympathetic)

That's true but I've never heard of a  
blacksmith who first didn't serve his  
apprenticeship. It takes years before you  
could make a living at it.

Will Olney rolls up his wheel out of view. Drops his wheel  
and sits in the grass eavesdropping.

MARTIN EDEN

That's true isn't it?

RUTH

Yes. If you want to change things, you're  
going to need a thorough education. You  
just can't set out to accomplish  
something like that unless you have a  
plan. And, even then, whether or not you  
become a writer, an education will be  
critical to you regardless. These things  
take time.

MARTIN EDEN

(crestfallen)

I suppose.

The breeze picks up. Martin - defeated. Will Olney lights a  
smoke and picks up his wheel, works his way down the hill.

MARTIN EDEN (cont'd)

I just wanted to make good.

RUTH

You will make good. You have so much in  
you that I want to see perfect, Martin.

INT. MORSE FAMILY ROOM - NIGHT

Martin restlessly sits.

Will Olney's had too much to drink. Arthur and Norman sit  
smoking cigars.

NORMAN

(chuckling)

So, Martin, Ruth tells us you want to be  
a writer?

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

MARTIN EDEN

I was thinking that way but I'm afraid I may not have completely thought it out.

NORMAN

With my sister's guidance, no doubt?

MARTIN EDEN

Well, if willing. Yes.

RUTH

(satisfied)

We've come to the conclusion today that after Martin's first attempt at writing, he'll have to be equipped with certain disciplines.

Will Olney pours a drink.

WILL OLNEY

"Disciplines" Ruth? A general education will suffice, Martin.

RUTH

Not if he wants to be a writer. If Martin wants to get anywhere, he must understand the fundamentals of say, Latin.

WILL OLNEY

(sharply turns)

Latin? Latin? The only men who should understand Latin are the doctors and lawyers. You'll squander his time filling his head with the stuff he doesn't need. Writers find their specialties then look 'em up.

RUTH

That's far-fetched I'm afraid. These disciplines will lead him to have a varied understanding of our culture.

WILL OLNEY

Let me make a point, Ruth.

RUTH

The floor is yours.

WILL OLNEY

This morning when we were all playing croquet, I noticed on your roof there were chimney sweeps. When they're done, you'll have clean chimneys. Easy enough.

(CONTINUED)



CONTINUED: (2)

RUTH

And?

WILL OLNEY

Do you know anything about chimneys, Ruth? No. They know them, and they clean them. See, your father sought a specialist in the matter? Right? He knew where to look. That' my point.

RUTH

That's quite esoteric.

WILL OLNEY

Oh, on the contrary. Remember your literature, Ruth. Spencer sought out the findings of a thousand specialized investigators, then wrote about them.

MARTIN EDEN

He would have had to live a thousand lives to do all that work alone. I don't have that time.

WILL OLNEY

That's right, Martin. Time. You feel hard pressed for it. Time's the great teacher but unfortunately it kills all of its students. You see? You know how to look. You know what you're after.

RUTH

But if he's not versed in the varying disciplines beyond a general education, he'll fail!

Will Olney pours another.

WILL OLNEY

He won't fail. Let me be so bold. You say that Martin needs "culture" and that he'll be at quite a loss if he doesn't acquire it.

RUTH

Yes...

WILL OLNEY

But anybody can read French or Italian and acquire this thing you praise so much, Ruth!

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED: (3)

RUTH

But you speak of culture as if it should be a means to something. We all know that culture is an end in itself.

WILL OLNEY

And that's where Martin will get off your train. Maybe that's what you want Ruth but it's not what Martin wants.

RUTH

Oh, and you know what he wants?

WILL OLNEY

I've been listening to him all day in all the different ways he's been trying to tell you!

RUTH

Well then, all right. Why don't we just ask Martin? He's sitting right here.

WILL OLNEY

Let's do it.

RUTH

Martin, please settle this tortured line of reasoning. What do you want? Culture or something else?

Martin stammers - chokes.

MARTIN EDEN

Well, yes of course I want culture.

NORMAN

Bravo!

RUTH

You see, Will?

WILL OLNEY

Does anybody in this room believe that? He wants to write but he's afraid to be too vocal about it because you're not going to encourage him! He thinks he'll be laughed at like you dismissed his efforts today.

ARTHUR

That's nonsense, Will.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED: (4)

WILL OLNEY

No, Arthur it's not. I've heard his ideas about the things he's been reading and the new thoughts he has. And the funny thing, they're on a collision course with our culture and eventually even you, Ruth.

RUTH

You've had too much to drink.

WILL OLNEY

Maybe, but it doesn't mean I'm speaking the truth any-less. He intends to go beyond all of us, even if he doesn't know it yet.

RUTH

You're intent on making your point so make it.

WILL OLNEY

Why does Martin want to write? Because he isn't rolling in wealth. Why do you fill your head with Saxon culture? Because you have so much wealth around you, you don't know what to do with yourself! You don't have to make your way in this world. We're so soaked in general culture that if our fathers went broke today, we couldn't qualify for a real job tomorrow.

Will Olney reaches for his coat.

WILL OLNEY (cont'd)

You leave him alone, Ruth. He knows what's best for himself. His writing is will him somewhere. We should all envy him. At least he's got somewhere to go.

EXT. TAVERN - NIGHT

Martin passes by and sees Lizzie working.

A table of seaman make her life miserable by spilling beer, laughing too loudly and lightly groping her.

INT. BOARDING HOUSE HALLWAY - NIGHT

Martin approaches his room. Gertrude appears.

GERTRUDE

Mart, can we talk?

INT. MARTIN'S ROOM - NIGHT

Worried Gertrude notices the ceiling covered with bits of paper and scribbled words.

GERTRUDE

Bernard thinks you're wasting your time.  
He's worried about the money for the  
room. Will ya' be able to make the board?

MARTIN EDEN

I've picked up a few day trawlers shifts.  
I'm all right for another month or so.  
I've always been good for it, you know  
that.

Gertrude hates asking.

GERTRUDE

Can ya' keep it coming in though, Mart?  
He'll pay ya' to drive the wagon.

MARTIN EDEN

I'm not Bernard's junk collector, Gert.

GERTRUDE

If it goes out on ya', he's gonna' ask  
you to leave and we'll have to get the  
room ready and word out.

Martin sits and looks at his sister.

MARTIN EDEN

Don't ya' worry about a thing. I'll find  
a way to keep it comin' in. Consistent.  
You won't have to worry about, Bernard.

INT. FIGHT CLUB - DAY

Smoke and smell. A large painting of two bare knuckle  
fighters hangs over a small fight ring.

Two men train in the ring. Martin approaches Hunter  
Marckwardt with a book in his coat pocket.

Hunter turns.

HUNTER

Hey, hey, hey. The Flying Dutchman!

Martin looks up at the Men in the ring.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

MARTIN EDEN

Who's up on the board this month?

INT. HIGH SCHOOL COUNSELOR'S OFFICE - DAY

Martin sits at a school desk. He tests alone in a large room filled with other empty desks with head down.

Before him, placement counselor, MRS. BELLINGSWORTH (60's).

INT. HIGH SCHOOL HALLWAY - DAY

Martin morally defeated. Ruth approaches.

RUTH

What happened? How'd it go?

MARTIN EDEN

Mrs. Bellingsworth said I have the rating of a fourth grader.

RUTH

Oh, Martin.

MARTIN EDEN

All that livin' but not so much in the formal department. What am I going to do?

RUTH

I would go to night school, Martin. That would leave your days open to write or to find a position.

MARTIN EDEN

But I'd lose the time I need to write in order to catch up.

RUTH

But to pass these tests and to move on you need the things that they would offer.

MARTIN EDEN

I know. But I'd only be able to learn as fast as they could teach me.

RUTH

What's wrong with that?

MARTIN EDEN

With other students I'd be slowed down.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

RUTH

What?

MARTIN EDEN

I can do it without them. I can get the curriculum myself. I can do it faster that way.

RUTH

Teach yourself by yourself? That's fool-hearty, Martin. Any student needs oversight, needs direction.

MARTIN EDEN

Ruth, the speed of the fleet is determined by the speed of the slowest ship in that fleet. This way I can sail faster under the power of my own sails.

RUTH

Martin, it's a mistake.

MARTIN EDEN

It's their job to show students who might get lost, but I don't get lost easily. I've never been lost in my life, Ruth. And with you by my side, there's no way of ever getting lost.

INT. FIGHT CLUB - WEEK'S LATER - NIGHT

Noise grows - smoke plumes. Bets are placed and fists are wrapped. Martin gracefully moves around his larger OPPONENT.

Martin - very skillful fighter.

The crowd now is on their feet screaming for the "THE FLYIN' DUTCHMAN."

**MONTAGE BEGINS:**

EXT. AN OCEAN HILLSIDE - MONTHS LATER - DAY

Ruth and Martin walk along the pounding surf. Ruth, beginning to believe, reads from one of Martin's manuscripts.

MARTIN EDEN (V.O.)

I know now I would rather be ashes than dust.

INT. LIBRARY - MORE MONTHS LATER - DAY

Numerous books on academia lie about - mathematics, philosophy, literature.

Martin, writing with a fever pitch, adds page after page to his growing pile.

MARTIN EDEN (V.O.)  
I would rather my spark burn out in a brilliant blaze than be stifled by dry-rot.

INT. FIGHT CLUB - MONTH'S LATER - NIGHT

Martin's pugilist skill is too much for another fighter. Quick, and forceful hands routinely drop another opponent.

MARTIN EDEN (V.O.)  
To be a superb meteor, every atom of me in magnificent glow, other than a sleeping and permanent planet.

INT. MORSE MUSIC ROOM - LATER - DAY

Ruth tutors Martin on grammar. She corrects from Martin's own manuscript.

MARTIN EDEN (V.O.)  
And, somehow, here I stand on the edge of a new world so wonderful, I'm almost afraid to look in.

INT. FIGHT CLUB - LATER - NIGHT

Martin drops another fighter to the canvas. Crowd cheers. Money is exchanged. Beers are poured - Martin, working class hero.

MARTIN EDEN (V.O.)  
Man's proper function is to live, not only to exist.

INT. DAY TRAWLER - MONTH'S LATER - DAY

Martin muscles in the day's catch. Notebook and pen nearby.

MARTIN EDEN (V.O.)  
I shall not waste my days in trying to prolong them. I shall use my time.

**END OF MONTAGE:**

INT. MORSE HOME FAMILY ROOM - NIGHT

Ruth lays her head comfortably across her mother's lap. The fire softly burns.

MRS. MORSE  
Winter's coming. Has he decided what he's going to do?

RUTH  
I don't think he even notices the changes of seasons with the way he's going. He's so determined. Almost blinded by it.

MRS. MORSE  
My little girl should be more careful.

Ruth rises to meet her mother's eyes.

RUTH  
I know that now, mother. Being together with him would be impossible. He's not...

MRS. MORSE  
Our kind?

RUTH  
I didn't want to say it. It sounds, indelicate. It's not his fault. He's traveled.

MRS. MORSE  
And has seen the world?

RUTH  
Yes.

MRS. MORSE  
And the kinds of people he's been with - the women he must have come across?

RUTH  
I know. I get afraid of him sometimes.

MRS. MORSE  
Threatening?

RUTH  
No. Never. But how he sees things. His dreams. The way he tells me how he'll go about them. He talks about things as if he alone can overcome nearly everything.

(CONTINUED)



CONTINUED:

MRS. MORSE

One just can't recklessly go about things  
and hope to have any success.

RUTH

It's just that it doesn't feel reckless  
anymore. It feels like all he says is  
merely a forgone conclusion. I lecture  
him about life and the wrong way he's  
going about it, but he worships me. It's  
hard to put up a defense with the way he  
says my name, or brushes the hair away  
from my eyes. The way he speaks so  
conclusively, he almost has me believing  
these things myself. But it does make me  
feel grown up though. I feel I'm in  
possession of something. He's made feel  
like other girls do, like other women do.

MRS. MORSE

Is he in love with you?

RUTH

Yes.

MRS. MORSE

Has he mentioned it?

RUTH

No. He's working all so hard to get these  
things in place, so that I'll have no  
other choice in case by miracle somehow  
they arrive.

MRS. MORSE

Then it might be time to distance  
yourself before he does speak of it.

RUTH

I know. But his money can't last. The sea  
will soon take him back. I'm sure of it.

EXT. SEA CLIFF - DAY

Martin and Ruth sit quietly on picnic blankets. The dull gray  
molten sea before them ebbs and fades.

MARTIN EDEN

Might be our last picnic here for some  
time. There's a storm at the rim of the  
horizon. Probably more behind it.

RUTH

I wasn't aware a storm was coming.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

MARTIN EDEN

There. See? If you look out far enough,  
it's sitting there on the edge. Where the  
sky meets the sea. Knowing that is a part  
of a seaman's trade.

Ruth's shoulders flinch closer to his.

RUTH

I don't like the winter. It's so  
isolating.

Martin adjusts his navy, blue pea coat so Ruth is warmed. He  
brings his chin down and moves closer behind her.

Ruth unconsciously nestles her face behind his warmth of his  
protective arms.

RUTH (cont'd)

Martin. I've never been this comfortable  
before.

Ruth brings her eyes to meet with his - knowing her "goodbye"  
is coming.

MARTIN EDEN

What is it?

RUTH

It's important we don't...

Ruth brings her lips to meet his for the very first time -  
intoxicated.

The young couple keep their lips pressed - the world of the  
lowly, now greeting the world of the privileged.

Ruth's body moans with warmth, pulls back - whispers out of  
breath.

MARTIN EDEN

What is it?

RUTH

This isn't suppose to happen.

Ruth moves in again towards Martin's lips. Ruth lilts having  
never been kissed in the way Martin is kissing her now.

RUTH (cont'd)

My goodness. Mother...

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED: (2)

MARTIN EDEN

Mother?

RUTH

She'll forbid this. Us, this.

Martin reaches for her hand. Their fingers intertwine. Ruth, delightfully delirious. (A woman for the first time).

RUTH (cont'd)

This is so different from what I thought love would be like.

MARTIN EDEN

How did you picture it?

RUTH

I don't know. Sometimes you scare me, Martin. Is this what it is? It's without thought, or the feeling of time, without worry, brimming with a quiet confidence. This is what it is, isn't it? I've never been in love before.

MARTIN EDEN

Nor, I.

RUTH

But you're a sailor. And, sailors?

MARTIN EDEN

Have a girl in every port?

RUTH

Yes.

MARTIN EDEN

But that isn't love. I've been in many ports but have never known the passing touch of it until I saw you that very first night.

INT. RUTH'S BEDROOM - NIGHT

Mrs. Morse paces frantically back and forth. Ruth is panicked-in tears.

MRS. MORSE (CONT'D)

You did what?

RUTH

He kissed me. Or, I kissed him. I was going to tell him like we planned.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

MRS. MORSE

Well then what happened?

RUTH

He never said a word. I was just as surprised as you are now!

MRS. MORSE

Let me talk to, Mr. Eden. He'll understand. He'll release you.

RUTH

No! I don't want to be released.

MRS. MORSE

Ruth, you're our daughter. We're not going to let you have your life ruined by the one kiss of a fisherman.

RUTH

Mother!

MRS. MORSE

He wastes time over his writing. He's trying to accomplish what great men sometimes accomplish! How will he support you? Have you thought of that?

RUTH

Yes, I have thought of it. But didn't father achieve what great men sometimes accomplish? And could you ever stop from loving him?

Ruth bursts into near hysterics!!

INT. MR. AND MRS. MORSE'S BEDROOM - NIGHT

Mr. and Mrs. Morse get ready for bed.

MR. MORSE

So, now she thinks she is in love with the great, pugilist, fisherman. Meddling, Anne Marie. Nothing but meddling!!

MRS. MORSE

Let's take it slow. Let her see all she wants of him. The more she knows the less she'll love.

MR. MORSE

Confident of that like you were with your first plan? What if the more she sees, the more she loves?

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

MRS. MORSE

We'll show him what real culture looks like, he'll be stammering at the door. He'll be embarrassed for who he is. He'll run back to the comfort of his working class boarding house and be happy to do so. We'll give Ruth plenty of suitors. The entire valley. The most eligible from the wealthiest families. A contrast of men - university boys. She'll then see him for what he is.

MR. MORSE

And what is that?

MRS. MORSE

A mere fisherman in a sea of educated men.

INT. MORSE'S HOME - MAIN ROOM - WEEKS LATER - NIGHT

A small orchestra plays.

A MAN (40's) in a tuxedo sings. He is the momentary centerpiece of the Debutante Ball.

Handsome UNIVERSITY MEN and WOMEN fill the room, tables prepared with the world's finest foods - no expense spared.

EXT. COUNTRY ROAD - NIGHT

Martin, with a new suit, stands confidant and handsome looking down to the valley below.

Unbeknownst to Martin below, await a den of social vipers.

INT. MORSE ENTRYWAY - NIGHT

Martin is escorted by the butler into the main room.

BUTLER

Mr. Eden. May I take your coat and hat?

MARTIN EDEN

Thank you.

Arthur approaches.

ARTHUR

Martin? Hello, old boy.

The men shake hands.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

MARTIN EDEN  
Hello, Arthur.

ARTHUR  
You look smashing.

MARTIN EDEN  
I've smashed but have never been called  
"smashing." And, you as well. Smashing!

Norman approaches - all smiles.

NORMAN  
Martin Eden! Fantastic, welcome.

MARTIN EDEN  
Norman. You look, smashing.

NORMAN  
Ha!

MARTIN EDEN  
May I ask, who is that singing?

NORMAN  
He's our chef actually. Baldascare  
Fabbri.

MARTIN EDEN  
Chef?

NORMAN  
Yes, came over from Italy some years ago.

MARTIN EDEN  
He sings masterfully.

NORMAN  
Well, we thought to bring out all of our  
cultural delicacies tonight. Nothing  
spared for our sweet sister.

Martin steps forward into the main room hear the Aria. The  
brothers lag behind.

ARTHUR  
(whispers)  
I don't like this at all, Norman. He was  
a friend to me and now mother and father  
throw a party to discredit him?

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED: (2)

NORMAN

Blood first, my good brother. Then God,  
then family, then country, then, Martin  
Eden.

INT. MAIN ROOM - UPSTAIRS BALCONY - NIGHT

Like a queen, Ruth gloriously appears.

She glides gracefully along the banister and peers down upon  
her admirers from above. Martin - spellbound.

She meets her father at the top of the stairwell. He extends  
out his arm - she takes it.

MR. MORSE

Darling, the evening is yours.

Both proceed to walk graciously down the long stairwell. Ruth  
captivates with every well-placed step.

With each step she takes, Martin's continued devotion only  
grows.

MARTIN EDEN

Ruth.

Ruth stops at the bottom of the stairs.

BALDASCARE FABBRI (40'S) nods his head in respect to the  
young Debutante. He finishes up. Guests applaud.

RUTH

Thank you, Baldascare... And, thank you  
all for coming. I want you all to have an  
exquisite time. Let the party begin!

Ruth steps forward and is quickly surrounded by all the  
available handsome men.

The orchestra and music kick us off! The evening is on!

INT. KITCHEN PANTRY DOOR - NIGHT

Martin, distracted follows Baldascare Fabbri into the  
kitchen. The chef finds his way back to his workstation.

He begins slicing tomatoes.

Norman follows Martin and pulls him back inside to the main  
floor.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

NORMAN

Martin? Have you met the other fellows?  
Let me introduce you! Come!

INT. MAIN ROOM - LATER - NIGHT

The orchestra strikes up an upbeat tempo. Mr. and Mrs. Morse mingle.

MRS. MORSE

This is just the tonic. She'll be so  
dizzy by those of her own class she'll  
soon be forgetting about Mr. Eden.

MR. MORSE

Expensive tonic.

MRS. MORSE

Not easy being a woman. Count your  
blessings she's your only daughter.

MR. MORSE

(drinks)  
Believe me. Fingers and toes.

LATER - MORE - VARIOUS

Waiters crisscross the party with serving trays of food.

A large hand scoops up a fistful of servings and brings them  
to his mouth. He is a burly, handsome and fiercely  
intelligent man named, RUSS BRISSENDEN (60'S).

Mr. Morse glares.

MR. MORSE (cont'd)

Russ Brissenden. What's he doing here?

MRS. MORSE

We couldn't have a party like this and  
not invite him. We would have read about  
it everywhere. Keeping enemies close,  
dear.

Brissenden approaches.

BRISSENDEN

Robert!

MR. MORSE

Russ. It's good you made it.

(CONTINUED)



CONTINUED:

Brissenden kisses the top of Mrs. Morse hand.

BRISSENDEN

Anne Marie, you look beautiful. I do appreciate the invitation. Ruth is now a woman isn't she? It always affords me to enjoy...

MR. MORSE

...a lifted bottle of our finest champagne? (laughs) I "don't" want to find you in the garden like last time. There are youngsters here.

BRISSENDEN

No anarchy tonight, I promise. Just some tightly knit observation and a quiet byline.

MR. MORSE

Good. Let's keep it that way. Now, let's get a drink!

CONTINUED - MORE - VARIOUS

Martin stands on the edge of the dance floor along with Arthur and Norman. Ruth dances with a handsome UNIVERSITY MAN (20's).

She twirls and spins, delighted to be the center of attention.

Will Olney approaches Martin, Norman and Arthur.

WILL OLNEY

Hello, Mart? Boys.

MARTIN EDEN

Will.

WILL OLNEY

Well, Arthur your sister sure pulls it off. Every man here I'm sure would love to marry into Morse Industries. She does look beautiful doesn't she?

MARTIN EDEN

More than beautiful.

ARTHUR

I'm sorry my mother feels compelled to have a party like this, Martin. It flies in the face of your feelings for her.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

MARTIN EDEN

Mothers can always be counted on such things. Not a worry, Arthur.

Ruth comes to the edge of the dance floor in the arms of another man.

RUTH

Martin, I want you to meet everyone. Don't be a wallflower, introduce yourself!

She is swept away and once again surrounded by others.

MARTIN EDEN

She can sure light up a room.

WILL OLNE

Like a whirling dervish. But, to catch her is quite another thing.

MORE - VARIOUS - LATER

Brissenden feeds well at the buffet. Reaches for the expensive champagne. He sees Martin and keeps a watchful eye.

A Group of FOUR STANFORD MEN decide to pay Martin a visit.

STANFORD MAN # 1

Say, old man, we hear you're a seaman by trade?

MARTIN EDEN

By trade, yes.

STANFORD MAN # 2

Must be awful lonely at sea for months at a time.

MARTIN EDEN

That can be true.

STANFORD MAN # 3

Is it true that a sailor has a woman in every port?

Will Olney steps in.

WILL OLNEY

As true as a Stanford oarsman getting buggered in the boat house whenever they take to the water.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED: (2)

STANFORD MAN # 4  
We're just having some fun here, Will.

WILL OLNEY  
So, am I.

The men leave.

MARTIN EDEN  
Why'd you say that?

WILL OLNEY  
They were setting you up, Martin.

Ruth sees Martin and comes to his side. Will trails off for another drink.

WILL OLNEY (cont'd)  
Incoming.

RUTH  
I see you've met my schoolmates?

MARTIN EDEN  
Some. Yes.

RUTH  
Come with me. There's someone else I want you to meet.

Martin and Ruth arrive to the side of the brilliant PROFESSOR CALDWELL (40's)

RUTH (cont'd)  
Professor? I would like you to meet someone. This is Martin Eden. Martin, this is Professor Caldwell, from the university.

PROFESSOR CALDWELL  
Very nice to meet your acquaintance, son!

RUTH  
I'll let you two get to know one another.

The Orchestra continues to play. Brissenden then moves within earshot of Martin and the Professor.

Mr. and Mrs. Morse look on close by.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED: (3)

MRS. MORSE

This should tell Ruth something of her Mr. Eden.

MR. MORSE

She does worship the professor.

MINUTES LATER: The Professor slowly puts down his drink and listens to Martin intently.

MARTIN EDEN (CONT'D)

Yes, but professor, with all due respect, you see I fear what weakens your argument is the lack of biology in it. It's missing from your theory, from the ground up, from your first argument to your last. You see, I mean this with all due respect, sir.

PROFESSOR CALDWELL

No, please go on.

MORE - VARIOUS

Young men talking with young women. The dancing continues. The music is beautiful. The night is perfect.

ARTHUR

Mother, I'm sure Martin feels quite inadequate by now. You've seen well to that. May I remind you he too is a guest of this family and he saved my life?

MRS. MORSE

Yes, dear. And now we're saving your Ruth's.

Arthur, outmuscled, trails off.

MORE - MARTIN - PROFESSOR CALDWELL

PROFESSOR CALDWELL

(Laughs)

Do you know I've had the same criticism passed on to me before? By a great man, a scientist named Joseph LeConte. He's dead and I thought to remain undetected and now you come along?

The Professor laughs. Ruth approaches.

RUTH

Is everything all right?

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

PROFESSOR CALDWELL

Oh, just splendid, Ruth. Splendid. This young man is poking holes in all that I thought was true.

MORE - VARIOUS

Mrs. Morse and Norman conspire.

MRS. MORSE

Arthur's heart is not in this, Norman. Why don't you introduce Mr. Eden to the other men he hasn't yet met?

NORMAN

Yes, mother.

MR. MORSE

Your subtlety is all too graceful.

Norman arrives at Martin's side with a wagonload of handsome Men.

NORMAN

Martin, excuse me. I'd like to introduce you to more of our guests.

MARTIN EDEN

Of course...

Norman leads Martin over to another group of young, handsome men.

NORMAN

This is Charles Hapgood, graduate of Stanford, member of the Nile Club and a conservative speaker.

Brissenden and Will Olney stand by and take in the ongoing attempts of humiliation.

BRISSENDEN

Whose is he?

WILL OLNEY

Ruth's new project. His name is Martin Eden. Arthur was being mugged down at the docks. He jumped in and stopped it.

Ruth comes to Martin's side. Cautious and nervous.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

RUTH

Is everything going well here?

Martin falls quiet appearing to be outclassed at every turn.

MARTIN EDEN

Yes, Ruth. Norman was just kind enough to introduce me to your invited guests.

Ruth glares at Norman.

MARTIN EDEN (cont'd)

Yes, Mr. Hapgood here, I've actually heard him speak in the park regarding the debate of the Waterfront anti-trust negotiation. You've made some good points Mr. Hapgood, but I fail to see how those arguments actually hold up in the political atmosphere we find ourselves now. The main objectives of the Progressive movement are to address the problems caused by industrialization, urbanization and immigration... By taking down these corrupt representatives in office, a further means of direct democracy would be established.

Brissenden leans into the gathering.

MARTIN EDEN (cont'd)

And Mr. Perkins here, I've had the chance to read your editorial in the Examiner. I have to say your theory of interest rates is compelling. I'm sure they serve the banks well in keeping their borrowers forever in debt to your institutions.

The men enjoy a laugh. Norman throws a losing look up to his parents on the balcony - shrugs his shoulders.

NORMAN

(whispers)

I'm trying...

EXT. BACK PORCH OF THE MORSE'S - NIGHT

Martin takes a break from the party. Will Olney approaches. Martin lights a smoke.

WILL OLNEY

I came down hard on Ruth the other day. I know she hates me.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

MARTIN EDEN

Why do you still come around then? If it's all as bad as you say it is?

Olney takes a drag off Martin's smoke.

WILL OLNEY

I make an appearance here, chase poor Ruth around a little, my father keeps me afloat. He keeps the timber contract. We have an arrangement so to speak.

MARTIN EDEN

An arrangement?

WILL OLNEY

That's the way it is with this way of life. Every ounce of it. Nothing but compromise. You know what the definition of a tragedy is, Martin?

MARTIN EDEN

No.

WILL OLNEY

"Someone who has missed their joy." Watch yourself, around here, Mart. It may look intriguing from the outside looking in, but when you get a little deeper, it's those like me who spend their time from the inside looking for a way out.

Ruth enters the porch.

RUTH

More lecturing I suppose, Will?

WILL OLNEY

No. I was just leaving.

Will exits the porch.

RUTH

Give me you hand.

INT. STABLES - NIGHT

Ruth leads Martin to a secluded area. She lights a small kerosene lamp.

There is a world between them, but for now two constellations have merged. Ruth leans into him.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

RUTH  
Kiss me. Hold me.

Martin leans in and reaches for her white long neck and brings her close to him. He softly presses his lips against hers.

Sweeping skies then dissolve across our two lovers.

**MONTAGE BEGINS:**

INT. FIGHT CLUB - NIGHT

Martin skillfully dances around a much larger opponent and makes quick work of his opposition.

MARTIN EDEN (V.O.)  
I know now that I can last forever,  
outlast the sea...

Hunter flashes the exchange of a wad of cash ringside.

EXT. SEA - A TRAWLER - DAY

Martin points out to Ruth a school of migrating whales. He demonstrates the use and skill of a seaman's sextant.

MARTIN EDEN (V.O.)  
The earth and all things that oppose me.

EXT. BACK OF THE BOARDING HOUSE - DAY

Martin reads to the kids aloud. Autumn is in the air.

MARTIN EDEN (V.O.)  
I've lasted it out as well as any.

EXT. HILLSIDE - DAY

Martin and Ruth picnic.

MARTIN EDEN (V.O.)  
I've been tried by the seas and by the  
judgement of men.

Martin reads to Ruth from a favorite passage. She appears more than pleased with what's she's hearing.

MARTIN EDEN (V.O.)  
Life is pitched high.



INT. LIBRARY - NIGHT

Martin sits alone and writes. His friend the Librarian brings to him more books and articles to peruse and study.

MARTIN EDEN (V.O.)  
I confess now I only want to drive forty-  
horses abreast with the strong arms of my  
mind.

EXT. BEACH - DAY

Martin and Ruth ride toward us on horseback.

MARTIN EDEN (V.O.)  
A sailor on horseback. A stage set from  
raw beginnings. A path cut through the  
hardened clay of millennia...

EXT. CLIFF - DAY

Martin leans over to Ruth and their lips meet. The Pacific  
expanse before them.

MARTIN EDEN (V.O.)  
The joy of creation that belongs to the  
Gods, is now ours. A fever, I pray shall  
never break.

Ruth turns to Martin.

RUTH  
(whispers)  
Is this real?

MARTIN EDEN  
Everything about it is real.

**MONTAGE ENDS:**

EXT. COUNTRY COTTAGE - DAY

Martin's new home. A wagon pulls up. Gertrude and the kids  
jump and scramble about.

A PORTUGUESE FAMILY of EIGHT looks on from next door. Martin  
jumps down with a typewriter, suitcase and all hopes and  
ambitions in his hands.

MARTIN EDEN  
Maria! I'm here.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

Maria points to the mat near the door.

MARIA  
(Portuguese)  
A porta está aberta ... a chave embaixo  
do tapete ...

INT. MARTIN'S COTTAGE - DAY

Martin places down his typewriter and his manuscripts.  
Gertrude smiles and begins to naturally organize things.

MARTIN EDEN  
Here it is, Gert. Five dollars a month  
and all the quiet I can take.

GERTRUDE  
I'm proud of you, Mart. How far you've  
come. Mom and dad, too. You know that.

Martin places the empty wooden urn on his table.

MARTIN EDEN  
I miss 'em. But I haven't come this far  
only to come this far. At least if  
nothing else, it'll keep Bernard off your  
back.

Martin places the typewriter on the table - laces white paper  
in it. He sits. Click! Click! Click!

MARTIN EDEN (cont'd)  
Music, Gerty! Pure music!

EXT. FIELD BEHIND THE MORSE HOME - DAY

Martin and Ruth stroll along.

MARTIN EDEN  
I've decided to move into a cheaper  
cottage. To save money.

RUTH  
Like, Mr. Butler, who found a position.

MARTIN EDEN  
No, I meant, I've saved enough so I can  
start another round of submissions for my  
manuscripts.

RUTH  
Oh.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

MARTIN EDEN

I meant that I was going to start on my writing, full time, no distractions.

RUTH

I see.

MARTIN EDEN

I can concentrate now.

Ruth grows concerned.

RUTH

But Martin, I don't mean to be discouraging of course, but what good are these pieces if you can't sell them? A whole year has gone by since we learned we loved each one another and our wedding day is not a day closer?

MARTIN EDEN

But they will sell, Ruth. Several of the stories were published.

RUTH

But then to collect? That becomes a whole other issue. Who would have thought that men could find a way to publish, only to have the payment for it stolen away from them?

MARTIN EDEN

Please, Ruth. Advertising in magazines has brought down the cost of a single issue... everyone has access to them now. Writers are emerging. Not the hack stuff from before but from real writers taking on real subjects that matter i.e., child labor laws, chronic poverty, political corruption. McClure's magazine is one example.

RUTH

Martin. If you have shown, even for yourself how difficult it is to see even a meager of wage, then how is it you'll ever arrive?

MARTIN EDEN

I have faith in myself, Ruth. I know what I have in me. I don't think twice of stepping into a ring with a fellow twice my size. This is no different.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED: (2)

RUTH

But why not simply find a position? One that suits you?

MARTIN EDEN

Because I think in business, I'd be a failure. I'm just not in sympathy with it.

EXT. FIGHT CLUB - DAY

Rain pours. Martin approaches. Sign reads: NO MORE FIGHTS. Martin jingles the lock on the door.

INT. EDITOR'S OFFICE - DAYS LATER - DAY

Martin stands over two magazine editors, MR. ENDS and MR. FORD (50's).

MR. FORD

It's terribly embarrassing to catch us this way, Mr. Eden. We'll mail it to you first thing in the morning.

MARTIN EDEN

I want that money now!

Mr. Ends turns away from Martin. Martin springs on him and shakes out his pockets!

MARTIN EDEN (cont'd)

Dig it out, even if it's all but two nickels! I want it!!

INT. PETERSON'S PUBLISHING OFFICE - DAY

Martin stands before FIVE MEN. Martin lunges for an EDITOR with raging fists. The Five Men are ready for him.

Secretaries run for their lives. Papers fly!!

EDITOR # 1

Watch out. He's a scrapper!

INT. PETERSON STAIRWELL - DAY

Martin's body tumbles all the way to the bottom hitting every step along the way.

EXT. STREET/FRONT OF BUILDING - DAY

Martin picks himself up. The five men peer out the window to Martin below.

EDITOR # 1

That's the publishing business, son. You signed off. An amateur's mistake. But take heart, the story was good enough!

INT. BAR - LATER - DAYS LATER - NIGHT

Martin sits alone nursing a bruised eye. He puts down his last two nickels. Brissenden bellies up down the counter.

The men share a look.

BRISSENDEN

Your name, Martin Eden?

MARTIN EDEN

I have no more fight in me so take what you want and leave me in peace.

BRISSENDEN

Russ Brissenden. Friend of the Morses. I saw you some time back at their party.

MARTIN EDEN

I remember seeing you.

BRISSENDEN

Looks like they did you in pretty good? Scabbin' at the mill?

MARTIN EDEN

Worse. Begging for my life with the magazine editors.

BRISSENDEN

Magazines?

INT. MARTIN'S COTTAGE - LATER - NIGHT

Martin's cottage - sparse. Brissenden sits at Martin's desk and reads with a lone gas lamp.

BRISSENDEN

Snapped up by the first magazine?

Martin slips out to the back-porch and lights a smoke.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

MARTIN EDEN  
Refused by twenty-seven.

EXT. BACK PORCH - NIGHT

Brissenden pushes his way through the screen door - rain and thunder.

BRISSENDEN  
What you've written is good.

MARTIN EDEN  
Good enough to get me thrown down a long flight of a very unforgiving stairwell.

BRISSENDEN  
You're cutting your own throat every day you put this kind of work before 'em.

MARTIN EDEN  
Isn't the way to a writer's fame - through them?

BRISSENDEN  
That's the short way. And what do you want with fame anyway? It's nothing but poison. Go back to your sea, Martin. Don't try to mint beauty into gold. That's nothing but a fool's errand.

MARTIN EDEN  
Fools still have to eat, I'm afraid.

BRISSENDEN  
Better to write for yourself and have no public than write for the public and have no self.

MARTIN EDEN  
It's not for fame, but for love.

BRISSENDEN  
Love? Ruth Morse? She inspired this?

MARTIN EDEN  
Of course.

Brissenden breaks out in laughter and coughing.

MARTIN EDEN (cont'd)  
It's funny to you?

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

BRISSENDEN  
Give me another smoke.

Martin does and lights it.

BRISSENDEN (cont'd)  
Now listen. Answer me this. What do you want from a girl from her background anyway?

MARTIN EDEN  
What's the matter with her background?

BRISSENDEN  
You won't be able to keep your sanity in that atmosphere. Maybe I missed my guess if it's comfort you after - but I don't think so. Pick out a great woman who laughs at life and not one who works hard to formalize you. They're woman out there like that. A woman who loves life more than just the clothes on her back, or the trinkets you can buy them, or the status she can acquire. Find the ones who are ready to risk something for you, with you.

MARTIN EDEN  
Ruth and I planning a life together.

BRISSENDEN  
Ah, my boy, your father should have told ya'.. They'll love you Martin, but they'll love their little moralities even more.

EXT. MARTIN'S COTTAGE - DAYS LATER - DAY

A carriage pulls up to Martin's cottage. It is Norman and Ruth.

RUTH  
Here, Norman. This is it. I'll just be a minute.

Ruth surveys Martin's rundown bungalow. She approaches the porch and hears an odd clicking sound coming from the inside.

She cautiously pushes her way through the screen door.

INT. MARTIN'S COTTAGE - DAY

Martin sits at his desk, perspiration dripping, typing furiously. Fatigue and exhaustion. Martin is nearly unrecognizable to her.

A smoke drips from his lips - ashes drop on his table.

Ruth looks around to the dismal conditions - the gaunt quality in Martin's face.

RUTH

Martin?

Martin pulls the pages out of the typewriter.

MARTIN EDEN

Oh, Ruth. I didn't hear you come in.

RUTH

You look terrible. How long have you been up?

MARTIN EDEN

Few days, I think. Here, sit. Let me read this to you. It's my latest and different from anything that I've ever done. I'm almost afraid of it.

Ruth cautiously sits. Looks into Martin's exhausted eyes.

RUTH

Oh, Martin.

MARTIN EDEN

Please, Ruth. Take a look.

Reluctantly she sits and begins reading.

RUTH

(growing frustrated)  
Martin, why do you keep persisting in writing these things?

MARTIN EDEN

The miserable story got away from me.  
Like holding on to a team of horses.

Ruth gets up and assesses Martin's cottage - dismal.

(CONTINUED)



CONTINUED:

MARTIN EDEN (cont'd)  
I've collected five dollars from the  
Transcontinental. They did finally pay  
up.

RUTH  
Then you'll come?

MARTIN EDEN  
Come where?

RUTH  
Thanksgiving dinner. We haven't heard  
from you. That's why I'm here.

MARTIN EDEN  
Oh, I'm sorry. I've forgotten all about  
it.

RUTH  
By the looks of you it's as if you've  
been up for a week straight. No wonder  
you've forgotten.

MARTIN EDEN  
No, I had to bring my suit to the pawn  
store, and the money I collected went to  
Maria the landlord for November's rent.

RUTH  
Then you're not coming?

MARTIN EDEN  
I don't have a suit.

EXT. FRONT PORCH OF MARTIN'S COTTAGE - DAY

Ruth pushes her way back out through the ragged screen door.  
Norman holds the carriage in the distance.

MARTIN EDEN  
Ruth, please listen to me. Next  
Thanksgiving, we'll be having dinner at  
Delmonico's, or London or Paris. I  
promise you.

RUTH  
We discussed the several local  
appointments to the Railway Mail. You  
didn't go there did you?

MARTIN EDEN  
No.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

Ruth climbs aboard the carriage and looks back at Martin standing like a ghost in the doorway.

RUTH  
It's just that I told the family to  
expect you.

MARTIN EDEN  
I'm sorry, Ruth. I'm sorry.

EXT. MARTIN'S BACK PORCH - NIGHT

Martin, exhausted, strolls out carrying his completed 490-page manuscript in hand.

He lights a smoke, sits - satisfaction.

INT. MORSE DINING ROOM - NIGHT

Thanksgiving Dinner. The room is quiet without Martin's presence, his stories.

EXT. FERRY - NIGHT

The ferry crosses the Bay. Lights flicker from the advancing port.

Brissenden and Martin stand on deck taking in the beauty of the city.

BRISSENDEN  
I'm going to show you where the real dirt  
is. The best minds of our generation...

INT. SHABBY DINING ROOM - NIGHT

A table of INVESTIGATIVE JOURNALISTS, JANE ADAMS (30'S), GRACE ABBOTT (40'S), SOPHONISBA BRECKINRIDGE (30'S) share in progressive chit-chat over drink and a Thanksgiving dinner.

Martin and Brissenden eat and listen.

BRISSENDEN  
These men and women are taking down the  
corrupt in their offices through their  
writing. The day of the amateur in the  
magazines are giving way to men like  
these. The man at the head of the table -  
Upton Sinclair.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

MARTIN EDEN

He wrote "The Jungle" exposing unsanitary conditions in meatpacking. His writing led to the Pure Food and Drug Act...

UPTON SINCLAIR, (29) takes the lead and spars with fellow philosopher, PARRY (50'S),.

UPTON SINCLAIR

Wiley used these new regulatory powers to pursue his campaign against the manufacturers of foods with chemical additives, but the Chemistry Bureau's authority was checked by judicial decision...

BRISSENSEN

Every one of them published in McClure's - taking on corruption in politics, big business.

MARTIN EDEN

Teddy Roosevelt calls 'em Muckrakers.

Martin - in awe.

BRISSENDEN

You've read the books, Mart and thought you were alone. But you're not alone. The richest kind of men.

INT. MORSE DINING ROOM - NIGHT

The table looks extraordinary. The mood, lifeless. Ruth reaches for a utensil - measured disappointment.

WILL OLNEY

A guy named Bacon crossed the Irish channel in a balloon today. All by himself. Isn't that something?

EXT. STREET CORNER - NIGHT

Martin and Brissenden stroll together under a streetlamp.

BRISSENDEN

Here. I was lucky at the cock fights today. A few bucks. We can't have our poets starving on us.

Brissenden hands Martin a roll of bills.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

BRISSENDEN (cont'd)  
Take it.

Brissenden begins coughing. He pulls out a manuscript from his leather shoulder-satchel and gives it to Martin.

BRISSENDEN (cont'd)  
Here... I want you to have this. It's called "Ephemera." Read it and let me know what you think.

Martin takes it. Brissenden trails off down the street.

MARTIN  
Hey, Russ? Thank you.

Brissenden turns back to Martin - raises his handkerchief to his mouth.

He turns away and begins coughing - red blood blots the cloth.

INT. MARTIN'S COTTAGE - KITCHEN TABLE - NIGHT

Martin, now with his suit back from the pawn shop, sits at his kitchen table reading Brissenden's thick manuscript. (He sits in one place as we dissolve night, day, night and day again)

JUDGE BLOUNT (V.O.)  
You'll grow out of it young man. Time is the best cure for such youthful tempers.

INT. MORSE FAMILY ROOM - DAY

Martin sits completely at ease.

JUDGE BLOUNT (60's), an imposing man joins the Morses for lunch and tea.

The discussion - politics and philosophy.

JUDGE BLOUNT  
I don't believe discussion is good in such cases. It makes the patient obstinate.

MR. MORSE  
That's true, but it's well to warn the patient occasionally of his condition.

Martin laughs to himself then joins the banter in a gentlemanly manner.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

MARTIN EDEN

Undoubtedly, you're both excellent physicians but let the patient tell you that you're both poor diagnosticians. In fact you're both suffering from the disease you think you find in me. As for me, I'm immune.

JUDGE BLOUNT

Clever, clever. An excellent ruse to reverse positions.

MARTIN EDEN

Oh, no. No ruse. A fact spilled out from your own campaign speeches, Judge. I've heard them all actually. You see, you persuade yourself in the belief in the capitalist system and that the survival is for the strong, and yet at the same time, you support all sorts of measures to rape that very strength from those companies you endorse, or those who have donated to your campaign of course which would only make you sympathetic to them or at a minimum, at least obliged.

MR. MORSE

I confess sir, you sound like a Socialist?

MARTIN EDEN

Not at all.

JUDGE BLOUNT

Young man, what are you saying?

MARTIN EDEN

Mr. Morse with all due respect, the good Judge supports suffocating laws on interstate commerce regulation, regulation on the railway trust, standard oil, conservation of forests.

JUDGE BLOUNT

Do you mean to tell me that you don't believe in regulating these outrageous exercises in power?

MARTIN

I only mean to say that you are a poor diagnostician. It's you who's suffering from the microbe of socialism.

JUDGE BLOUNT

My good man?

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED: (2)

MR. MORSE

How might you explain that!

MARTIN EDEN

Judge Blount endorses powerful companies then regulates them. Regulates them and makes them weaker than they could be. That's pure socialism in anyone's book. As for me, I'm an opponent of socialism all together. I say never regulate and let the powerful dominate the market-share.

Mrs. Morse, Olney, Norman, Arthur and Ruth all sit stunned and quiet.

MARTIN EDEN (cont'd)

You see, Nietzsche was right. The world does belong to the strong. But as for me, in the end, all I want to do is love, not talk.

EXT. RIVERBANK - DUSK

Martin and Ruth. Red-orange waters.

RUTH

They think you're a radical.

MARTIN EDEN

They place derogatory words on the very things they advocate.

RUTH

Martin, you've sent out over two hundred manuscripts and have only collected five dollars. Even then you've had to squeeze it out of them. You look like your starving to death. The way you're living. I just don't know how you keep so animated?

MARTIN EDEN

I'm burning the candle at both ends I'm afraid. My style is strengthening, the way I can now see things. Even though I don't have a penny to my name, it feels like I have all I need.

RUTH

But if all the doors are closed as you've shown so conclusively, how is it possible that getting published is even possible? How are we to have a life this way?

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

Martin moves to her and looks into her eyes.

MARTIN EDEN

Ruth, it's a fair question. But these men who fill your bookshelves in your library, arrived at achieving the impossible. They did such blazing and incredible work, they burnt down all obstacles that stood in their way. They won a million to one wager placed against them. And that's what I have to do. I've got to achieve the impossible.

RUTH

And if you fail?

MARTIN EDEN

Well, if I fail? Then, I'll become an editor, and the work I've done will have proved to be the apprenticeship that you've been advocating. There's bread and butter in that at any rate, and you'll be an editor's wife.

EXT. BOARDING HOUSE STREET - EARLY EVENING - NIGHT

Gertrude and Martin stroll out of sight of Bernard's watchful eye.

GERTRUDE

(hushed whisper)

Look at ya'. Dressed like a gentleman with the pocketbook of a beggar. You walked here from the Morse's didn't ya'?

MARTIN EDEN

It's good exercise.

GERTRUDE

Not when you're starvin'.

Gertrude fumbles through her pockets and produces a five-dollar gold piece.

GERTRUDE (cont'd)

Here. I guess I forgot your birthday.

MARTIN EDEN

I'll pay you back, Gert. Before the year is over, I'll put a hundred of those yellow boys in your skirt pockets.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

GERTRUDE

But don't you think it's time to be  
gettin' a job, Mart?

MARTIN EDEN

Don't you think I'll win out, Gert?

Gertrude sadly shakes her head, "no."

MARTIN EDEN (cont'd)

I'm going to win. Don't you worry about a  
thing. I have enough faith for the both  
of us!

INT. MARTIN'S COTTAGE - NIGHT

Martin works at his desk. Loud knock on the door. Brissenden  
pushes his head through the door.

BRISSENDEN

Town hall is on fire tonight! Outsiders  
are allowed five-minute speeches.

INT. TOWN HALL - LATER - NIGHT

Packed! The room is filled with all ethnic races and class  
ranks. Martin and Brissenden take a back seat.

TOPICS: Unfair wages, interest rates, workers rights.

BRISSENDEN

HERE!! THIS MAN'S GOT SOMETHING TO SAY!!

MORE - VARIOUS - MINUTES LATER

Martin stands before the large crowd - crowd and moderators,  
pitched!

MARTIN EDEN (CONT)

The men who lend money, these shrewd men  
stepped in and made us slaves all over  
again. The strong survive! Why? Because  
we've been forced to give up our  
individuality. We've become slaves to  
those smart enough to make us slaves!

MAN # 1

What about the mill?? They're lockin' us  
out!

Lizzie then enters from the back doors and sees Martin  
speaking to the issues. She adores him - regardless.

(CONTINUED)



CONTINUED:

MARTIN EDEN

That's right!! So, stop buying their products. Hit 'em in the pocket-book! Two million of your children are toiling today under seventy-hour work weeks. Ten million of us slaves are not housed or fed properly. Are they looking out for you? NO!

INT. MARTIN'S COTTAGE - NEXT MORNING - DAY

Brissenden, hung-over, reads the headline of the morning.  
Martin makes the morning coffee.

BRISSENDEN

"A man named Martin Eden lit up last night's town hall discussion about the local labor dispute. He sees Americans enslaved to the money lenders." This'll light a fire at the Morses...

MARTIN EDEN

What's going to happen when people read this?

A knock on the door.

BRISSENDEN

I think we're about to find out.

A Young CUB REPORTER (20) leans in.

REPORTER

Mr. Eden? Martin Eden?

MARTIN EDEN

Who's askin'?

REPORTER

I heard you speak last night. I came here to possibly ask you a few questions from The Workers Revolution Review.

Brissenden lights up with laughter.

REPORTER (cont'd)

Would you object if I take a picture, Mr. Eden?

MARTIN EDEN

Picture? What kind of picture?

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

REPORTER  
Front page, sir.

FLASH!!

INT. MORSE HOME - DAY'S LATER - DAY

Mr. Morse opens the paper and sees Martin's photo on the front page from the town hall meeting.

MR. MORSE  
(deadly serious)  
Arthur? Norman? GET IN HERE!!

INT. MARTIN'S COTTAGE - DAY

Martin - alone. He opens up his cupboards and sees them empty. Brissenden has left a note behind. It reads:

BRISSENDEN  
Your manuscript "Shame in the Sun" will  
make a big hit. It will start a  
controversy that will be worth thousands  
to you just in advertising.

Something drops to the floor. It's a hundred-dollar bill. It reads: FIGHT, WRITE, LOVE.

MARTIN EDEN  
Thanks, Briss.

INT. MORSE STUDY - DAY

Mr. Morse gives Ruth the paper. She gasps and runs up stairs.

EXT. CITY STREETS - DAY

Martin leads the procession of Maria's six Portuguese children. They hold hands and walk in orderly file.

MARTIN EDEN  
And one, two, three, four. Company  
quarter flank, HUH!

The children make a quarter turn and cross the street.

EXT. INTERSECTION - DAY

Ruth and Mrs. Morse look on from the opposite sidewalk - both stand aghast!

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

RUTH  
Mother, look. That's Martin. What's he  
doing?

Martin leads the kids into the store one by one.

MRS. MORSE  
What's he doing with those people?

INT. STORE - DAY

Maria is in tears to see her children in shoes for the first  
time. Martin looks on - all smiles. Fun chaos.

MARTIN EDEN  
Get them what they need, Maria.

EXT. MORSE VALLEY - DAY

Mr. Morse has called Arthur and Norman to his side. He's  
infuriated. The estate lies below.

MR. MORSE  
Half the companies we represent have  
taken on thieves like him who try to  
organize.

Arthur stands motionless.

ARTHUR  
We arranged it, father. All of it...

MR. MORSE  
I want this "un-arranged". And, now!

EXT. OCEAN CLIFF - DAY

Ruth, devastated, stands cliff-side facing the sea - a  
relationship with Martin now made impossible.

Norman and Arthur stand nearby.

INT. WILL OLNEY'S LIVING ROOM - DAY

Norman and Arthur discuss Ruth's situation with Will. He's  
nonplussed. He reaches for a decanter of brandy.

WILL OLNEY  
So, now I'm back in again, huh? Glad I  
have so much say in the matter.

INT. RUTH'S ROOM - NIGHT

Ruth begins writing.

RUTH (V.O.)  
Dear Martin. I'm afraid my parents are  
justified. I must surrender to their  
wishes.

EXT. COTTAGE BACK PORCH - NIGHT

Martin reads the letter from Ruth.

RUTH (V.O.)  
By what's happened as of last, I do now  
see things my family's way.

INT. MACMILLAN PUBLISHERS OFFICE - DAY

A PUBLISHER of influence reads Martin's manuscript. He turns  
page after page. Martin's writing has him spellbound.

RUTH (V.O.)  
Your past life has been too wild.

EXT. BACK PORCH - NIGHT

Martin sits down reading Ruth's letter - devastated.

RUTH (V.O.)  
One regret, if you had only settled down  
and found a position - to make something  
of yourself. I suppose you were only  
acting according to your nature. You buy  
shoes for your landlord's children, and  
in doing so, demonstrate how quickly I am  
forgotten.

INT. BRISSENDEN'S HOTEL ROOM - NIGHT

Brissenden ties a rope into a noose. Pours himself a drink  
and gives a glance over to his manuscript.

INT. BAR - NIGHT

Martin drinks alone - reads the rest of Ruth's letter.

RUTH (V.O.)  
I feel I've caused mother much pain and  
worry. I shall have to do much living to  
atone for it.

EXT. STREET - NIGHT

Rain-soaked Martin enters the hotel.

INT. HOTEL LOBBY - NIGHT

Martin at the counter. HOTEL MANAGER (50'S).

MANAGER  
The maid found him in his room. They sent  
his body back east after the inquest.  
Suicide.

EXT. CITY STREET - NIGHT

Martin walks past an alley on his way back home. Rain  
continues to drive hard.

FOUR MEN follow carrying hidden clubs.

MAN # 1  
Hey? You Martin Eden?

Martin turns. CRACK!! He drops to his knees by a board to the  
head.

MAN # 2  
Socialist Pig!!

EXT. MARTIN'S COTTAGE - NIGHT

Martin arrives through the small gate - black and blue.

His cottage is covered with painted epithets - "Communist  
Organizer, Bolshevik, Freedom Hater."

Numb, head bleeding, Martin enters and shuts the door behind  
him.

EXT. MARIA'S COTTAGE - FOLLOWING MORNING - DAY

Skies are clear. Several children run out of the door with  
paint buckets. We follow them over to Martin's Cottage.

EXT. MARTIN'S COTTAGE - DAY

Martin paints along with Maria's other children. A PARCEL MAN  
arrives.

The Delivery Man sees Martin's name sprayed over the door.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

PARCEL MAN  
I take it you're Martin Eden?

MARTIN EDEN  
Yes, sir.

PARCEL MAN  
Just sign here, please.

INT. MARTIN'S COTTAGE - DAY

He sits at his kitchen table. Parcel reads: THE MACMILLAN COMPANY.

Martin opens up the parcel.

MARTIN EDEN  
(reads)  
Upon receipt of a signed contract, we shall be pleased to make an advance on royalties for the sum of five-thousand dollars. Your initial reviews from the clipping bureau are in. Mr. Eden, CONGRATULATIONS!

Martin tears the box open. Six copies of "The Shame in the Sun" fall onto the table.

EXT. MARTIN'S COTTAGE - LATER - DAY

A dozen REPORTERS from larger newspapers crowd about Martin's undersized front porch. Camera's flash and pop.

REPORTER # 2  
Some say you may have written the next great American novel, Mr. Eden. Any comment?

EXT. MORSE'S FARMHOUSE - FOLLOWING DAYS - DAY

Mr. Morse feeds his prized horses. Norman rushes in with the paper. Martin's photo - front page.

INT. MORSE BEDROOM - DAY

Mrs. Morse reads the headline, "LOCAL WRITER - MARTIN EDEN." Norman and Mr. Morse stand by.

MRS. MORSE  
Tell Ruth her I want to see her.

INT. LAUNDRY - BOARDING HOUSE - DAY

Gertrude suffers over the wash. Martin enters holding his parents' wooden urn box.

MARTIN EDEN

Hello, Gert.

GERTRUDE

Mart, didn't hear ya' get in. Didn't know you was comin'. Whatcha' doing with the box?

MARTIN EDEN

Just thought I'd stop by. Open it, Gert. Open it up.

Gertrude opens the box. Inside - gold coins.

MARTIN EDEN (cont'd)

Hold out your apron.

Martin pours even more coins into Gertrude's apron.

GERTRUDE

Mart? What is this. You rob a bank?

Martin holds out his novel.

MARTIN EDEN

Better than that. I earned it. A hundred yellow boys like I said. It's all yours for the trouble I've been.

Gertrude begins shedding tears of gratitude.

MARTIN EDEN (cont'd)

Go on. It's all yours'.

GERTRUDE

You did have faith. Enough for all of us.

INT. MARTIN'S COTTAGE - WEEKS LATER - DAY

Martin opens up another package. Another letter - another large check. 3000 dollars - CONGRATULATIONS!!!

EXT. SHELL MOUND PARK - DAYS LATTER - DAY

Sign reads: BRICKLAYERS PICNIC. Martin strolls under the sign and into the park.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

A gathering of fifty or so surround a large wooden dance floor. Martin sees old friends.

JIM (O.C.)  
Hey, Mart!

Martin turns to see JIM (50'S), a familiar face from the boarding house.

MARTIN EDEN  
Jim!

Jim walks over to Martin. They shake hands.

JIM  
Hey, Mart! Where ya' been all this time?  
Out to sea? Come on have a drink!

The two men walk over to a gathering of old friends.

JIM (cont'd)  
Hey, look everybody. It's Martin Eden!

EXT. DANCE FLOOR - DAY

The gathering instantly recognized Martin and welcome him in - working class men and women. A DIXIE LAND BRASS BAND picks up and gets the crowd dancing.

JIM  
C'mon, Mart. There's pretty girls here  
and dancing to be had.

Martin's eye catches the back of a familiar staggering beauty. She dances with a young man named DANIEL (20's).

MARTIN  
Lizzie.

She turns to see Martin. Her eyes lift to meet his.

LIZZIE  
Martin.

The song ends. Lizzie's partner, Daniel excuses himself. Martin approaches. Another song follows. Martin steps up.

LIZZIE (cont'd)  
I never thought I'd see you again.

They dance.

(CONTINUED)



CONTINUED:

MARTIN EDEN

I know. I'm almost ashamed to be here.  
You look beautiful.

EXT. DIRT ROAD - DAY

Away from the gathering, Martin and Lizzie sit beneath an oak.

LIZZIE

Been about a year now. Or, more.

MARTIN EDEN

Yeah, 'bout that.

LIZZIE

Since I saw you on the street with that girl, I stopped comin' by. Was she the one?

MARTIN EDEN

That was her.

LIZZIE

She was beautiful. Upper-class, fine lady.

MARTIN EDEN

She said the same thing about you. Said there wasn't one woman in ten thousand with features like yours. She was right.

LIZZIE

Been at sea?

MARTIN EDEN

I moved out of the boarding house into a cottage near the coast. I've been writing.

LIZZIE

Writing? For a living?

MARTIN EDEN

(beat)

Yes. I'm sorry, Lizzie. For everything. For how I treated you. You were right and I was a fool. I didn't ever want to hurt you. You didn't deserve any of it.

Lizzie falls quiet and looks off to the dancing.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

LIZZIE

Seems like a thousand years ago and at the same time like it was just this morning.

MARTIN EDEN

It sure does.

LIZZIE

I'm proud to be your friend, Mart. I'd still do anything for you. You know that.

MARTIN EDEN

It's me who is proud to know you. And, I'd like now to do something for you.

LIZZIE

Do something? What's that?

MARTIN EDEN

I've come into some money from the writing and will be in the days ahead. Thinking maybe you'd like to go to school? Or, I could make it easy for you, Liz. Anything you want, business college maybe. Anything, you just name it.

Lizzie sits dry eyed, disappointed and motionless.

LIZZIE

School? Thank you, Mart. But, my money will take care of itself. I've seen to it all this time.

Lizzie gets up.

LIZZIE (cont'd)

I ain't taken care of myself since I was a kid for nothin'. I don't mind workin' that way. I know where I come from.

MARTIN EDEN

I didn't mean it that way, like I was paying for the things I've done. I just meant that things could be easier for you now.

LIZZIE

Don't let's talk about it. Not now. It's gettin' on some. We should be going back.

EXT. LIZZIE'S APARTMENT - DUSK

Martin and Lizzie arrive. Lizzie's man friend, DANIEL sits across the street alone - waiting, hopeful.

MARTIN EDEN

Go on. All you have to do is whistle and he'll come running.

LIZZIE

You don't understand - do you?

Martin holds her. Lizzie begins to weep.

MARTIN EDEN

I do. But I've made some mistakes and I've nowhere to go.

Lizzie looks off to Daniel but then shakes her head "no." She presses her lips up to his ear.

LIZZIE

(whispers)

I could die for you.

Lizzie breaks free of Martin's grasp and rushes up the stairs.

INT. THE TAVERN - NIGHT

Martin sits alone in an empty tavern. Arthur enters.

ARTHUR

Hello, Martin.

MARTIN EDEN

Arthur.

ARTHUR

May I sit?

MARTIN EDEN

Sure. Drink?

ARTHUR

Yes. I think I need one.

Martin motions for two more.

ARTHUR (cont'd)

I stopped by your cottage earlier today. Thought I might find you here.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

MARTIN EDEN

Well, when you find yourself between worlds, bars have always proved to be welcoming.

Martin remains quiet.

ARTHUR

Martin, I just want you to know. I know what happened has been terrible. I guess I brought you into a fight you couldn't have ever won. I owe you an apology for that.

Bartender brings over two drinks.

MARTIN EDEN

It's not your fault, Arthur. In this case, I was up against an opponent I never saw coming.

Arthur toasts. Both men sip.

ARTHUR

How does it feel? To achieve the million to one wager placed against you?

MARTIN EDEN

When I needed to eat, I couldn't afford a dinner. Now that I can afford a thousand meals, I can only eat but one at a time.

ARTHUR

Love can give warmth as it can destroy. She's on her way over to your place right now.

MARTIN EDEN

Ruth?

ARTHUR

I owe you at least that. After all that you've done for me. I'm sure she's even there as we speak.

MARTIN EDEN

Does she love me, Arthur?

ARTHUR

I think, yes. But then again, she's now shown herself. And, you have made a name for yourself.

INT. MARTIN'S COTTAGE - LATER - NIGHT

Ruth's figure sits in silhouette. Posture perfect. Martin, slightly drunk enters.

RUTH  
Hello, Martin.

MARTIN EDEN  
Hello, Ruth.

RUTH  
I slipped in. I wanted to see you. I've come to say I've been very foolish. I've come because I could no longer stay away.

Martin moves into the room and sits opposite her. He slouches in the chair from liquor, weariness.

MARTIN EDEN  
You're shivering. Are you cold? Shall I light the grate?

RUTH  
No, I'm just nervous a bit.

Martin says nothing.

RUTH (cont'd)  
Mother wanted me to marry, Charlie Hapgood.

MARTIN EDEN  
The Nile club member I met at the party.

RUTH  
Yes.

MARTIN EDEN  
And, so now I suppose she wants you to marry me?

RUTH  
She won't object, that much I'm certain.

MARTIN EDEN  
Your mother now considers me eligible?

Ruth nods.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

MARTIN EDEN (cont'd)  
But, I'm not a bit more eligible now than  
I was when she broke off our engagement.

RUTH  
What do you mean?

MARTIN EDEN  
I haven't changed any. I haven't a job,  
and furthermore, I'm not looking for a  
job. Did she send you here?

Ruth is quiet.

RUTH  
No one knows I'm here. Do you think my  
mother would permit this?

MARTIN EDEN  
She wouldn't object to our marriage so  
why should she object if you were here to  
tell me so?

RUTH  
Martin, don't be cruel.

Ruth moves across the room and slides into his arms.

RUTH (cont'd)  
You're as unresponsive as a stone. Just  
think of what I've dared to do by coming  
here?

MARTIN EDEN  
(quietly)  
Why didn't you dare it before when I  
hadn't a job. When I was starving? When I  
was just as I am now, as a man, as an  
artist, the same Martin Eden?

RUTH  
What do you mean?

MARTIN EDEN  
I'm basically the same I am now as I was  
when nobody wanted me.

RUTH  
Martin.

MARTIN EDEN  
That's what's puzzling. Why does everyone  
want me now? It can't be for myself

(MORE)

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED: (2)

MARTIN EDEN (CONT'D)

because myself is the same old self that nobody wanted. Then, they must now want me for something else? And, so? It's for the recognition I've received but that recognition isn't me either. And, the money. It's for that, the money is why now you want me. Or at least why it's made the idea of the future with me more bearable. At least to your mother.

RUTH

You know I love you. I am here now because of it.

MARTIN EDEN

I'm afraid I'm a shrewd merchant where love is concerned. What I mean is, if what you say is true, how was your love weak enough to deny me?

RUTH

I've loved you all the time, remember that, and I am here. I am in your arms.

MARTIN EDEN

Ruth, when I was all that I am now, nobody out of my own class seemed to care for me. When you read my stories, you thought I was too rough, too brutal. You told me and your mother told you, I was wasting my time. Get a job everybody said, except you. You told me to find a position, like Charlie Hapgood.

RUTH

I know I was weak. My mother's will was overpowering. I helped you with your studies and your schooling. I meant well you know that!

MARTIN EDEN

That's true, Ruth. But, you would have destroyed me with your well-meaning. You would have destroyed my writing and my career. All of your effort was to make me afraid of life and all of your refinements hate what's real. My ambitions were misplaced with us. It's devastating even to hear that for myself.

RUTH

Martin, please.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED: (3)

MARTIN EDEN

It never entered my mind to be ashamed of the people I knew, like Maria and the kids next door.

RUTH

Of course not.

MARTIN EDEN

Then how is it that when I buy eight pairs of shoes for a family that can't afford shoes, I'm somehow inconsiderate of you? With all of your refinement you would deny those kids such basics as shoes if somehow it put you in a lesser light.

Ruth leans against his body - quiet.

MARTIN EDEN (cont'd)

And now you want us to be together again? But what if my writing hadn't gotten published? I'd be just where I am now, and you would have stayed away.

RUTH

No.

MARTIN EDEN

What I mean is, is love such a gross thing, it depends on publication and public notice?

RUTH

I know I was weak, yielding to mother but I loved you all the time. I've heard you so often speak with broad charity toward the fallibility and the frailty of humankind. Extend that to me. I acted mistakenly.

Ruth falls into tears.

RUTH (cont'd)

I'll show you. I'll prove it. I'll leave my family. I'd be proud to be with you!

Ruth stands before him. Martin is tired - fatigued.

RUTH (cont'd)

I'm waiting. I'm waiting for you to accept me?

Martin slouches.

(CONTINUED)



CONTINUED: (4)

MARTIN EDEN

It's too late. I'm sick. I didn't even know how much until now.

RUTH

I'm waiting, Martin. I'm waiting for you to have me back.

Martin turns.

MARTIN EDEN

I have nothing left, Ruth. There's nothing left for you to have. I'm afraid it's all been given away already. There's nothing more in me to give. I'm sorry.

EXT. MARTIN'S COTTAGE - FOLLOWING MORNING - DAY

Martin stands over a small dug-out fire pit. He throws his work by the reams and volumes into it. Smoke plumes.

INT. MARTIN'S COTTAGE - DAY

Martin, packed up. He picks up the phone.

MARTIN EDEN

Yes, hello? Could you get me the Maritime Office please?

INT. HIGGONBOTHAM'S CASH STORE - DAY

Martin sits opposite of Bernard. Gertrude is pensive.

MARTIN EDEN

Including the sign?

BERNARD

Well, I didn't count on that.

MARTIN EDEN

We'll arrange it this way. You can use the principle for yourself but that's if you guarantee that Gertrude does no more work. Not an ounce of it! We got a deal, Bernard?

EXT. STREET - BOARDING HOUSE - DAY

Martin takes one last look at the kids playing with their new school clothes. We hear the Gatling clicks of typewriter keys and Martin's voice.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

MARTIN EDEN(V.O.)  
I had hooked my wagon up to a star and  
landed in a soggy marsh.

EXT. MORSE GARDEN - DAY

Ruth walks along with her mother. Will Olney stands in the  
nearby distance.

MARTIN EDEN (V.O.)  
Brissenden was right. For the love of  
women - nothing more than an ambush of  
youthful sensibilities.

EXT. S.S. MARIPOSA/PIER - LATER - DAY

From the side of the ship, Martin looks down from the deck of  
the ship.

In the mix below he sees Ruth escorted discreetly by Will  
Olney and Norman.

She looks up to him, Martin to her. Martin nods. A smokestack  
blows!

Martin then sees Lizzie down the pier. Their eyes too meet.

Lizzie stands alone - beautifully defiant. Martin's impulse  
is to call her aboard - but no.

MARTIN EDEN  
Lizzie.

The smokestack billows once again. The pier-side band strikes  
up. Music and confetti.

We hear, ALL ABOARD!! The gangway is pulled back from the  
ship.

A DECKHAND (30'S) hands Martin a note - from Lizzie Connelly.  
He opens it.

EXT. DOCKS - DAY

Lines are dropped and last whistles are blown. The Mariposa  
pulls out. Martin turns away from the railing,

EXT. STERN OF THE S.S. MARIPOSA - EIGHT HOURS OUT - NIGHT

At sea.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

Martin stands facing the open and inviting ocean. He reaches in his pocket and opens the book. Finds the book from Swineburn.

MARTIN EDEN (V.O.)  
That no man lives forever, that dead men  
rise up never.

Martin considers the unthinkable act: suicide.

MARTIN EDEN (V.O.)  
Even the weariest river winds somewhere  
safe to sea...

Martin's fedora flies gracefully like a dropped feather down to the sea below.

Martin closes his eyes - he imagines death.

MARTIN EDEN (V.O.)  
Swineburne had furnished the key. So what  
was I waiting for? Death was ready to  
soothe away to everlasting sleep.

Martin climbs up the ship's top-deck railing. Violent, dark seawater heaves below the churning of the ship's propeller.

MARTIN EDEN (V.O.)  
But what was I waiting for?

He steps off the railing forward out to sea - dark, gouging water rushes towards him.

EXT. BENEATH THE SEA - NIGHT

Martin's body plunges into the ocean.

The stern of the Mariposa passes by above like a giant dark wall.

EXT. OCEAN SURFACE - NIGHT

Martin surfaces, gasping - treading water. The lights of the Mariposa now fade from view.

Martin stops swimming. He takes a breath and plunges below.

MARTIN EDEN (V.O.)  
This hurt was not death. Death did not  
hurt.

EXT. UNDERWATER - NIGHT

Martin sinks. Bubbles bound from his cheeks.

MARTIN EDEN (V.O.)  
It was life, the pangs of life, this  
awful, suffocating feeling;

Light spins around him like a whirling lighthouse.

MARTIN EDEN (V.O.)  
It was the last blow life could deal him.

His mouth opens to breath in water and death.

MARTIN EDEN (V.O.)  
And in the moment I knew, I ceased to  
know.

EXT. STERN OF THE MARIPOSA - NIGHT

We pull back from deep within Martin's eye to find him still  
standing where we left him.

Suicide's dark frontier before him. Martin reaches for  
Lizzie's letter and opens it.

LIZZIE (V.O.)  
At the picnic I saw your eyes. Bound in  
confusion, like stars that had dropped  
one by one, trying so hard to walk out of  
your body and back into your life. I was  
there, both then and now.

Martin slowly turns back away from the sea. There, bravely,  
beautifully, bundled up from the cold, stands Lizzie Connelly  
standing alone in the swirling sea fog.

Imagined or real? Lizzie steps forward.

LIZZIE  
Martin?

MARTIN EDEN  
Lizzie?

LIZZIE  
Yes, it's me.

Lizzie steps forward. Martin turns once more, looks out to  
the dark sea below.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

The sea below rushes below him like a torrent. Lizzie moves and steps to his side. He then turns to her.

MARTIN EDEN

You're here.

LIZZIE

Yes.

Lizzie reaches for Martin's hand. In it she places the Abalone Shell Martin had once given her in the tavern.

Martin stares and sees a man and a woman standing on the stern of a trawler.

He then moves to her, she to him.

Martin refers to the shell. His eyes lift to meet with hers.

MARTIN EDEN

So what's the future say in our shell?

LIZZIE

I think it says, we're sailing right for it.

We pull back from our couple standing stern-side.

Both look out to their future. Broken water wakes behind them.

We slowly begin to,

Fade to black.

The End