

TRIBE – A TREATMENT

ACT 1

Blood spurts from the face of a big Gypsy bare-knuckle FIGHTER in a remote field. The man staggers and falls to the ground. FELIX, a smaller fighter, waits for the bloodied big man go get back to his feet. Felix is also cut and bruised and the fight continues. The fighters are surrounded by a horde of screaming, baying Travellers.

OWEN McBRIDE is watching the fight from outside the field, sitting on top of the cab of his beat-up old scrap lorry. Owen is an enigmatic-looking young man with long hair and scruffy clothes. Owen is the half-breed son of a Gypsy father and a Gorgio (settled) mother. He's detached from the rest of the crowd and seems a cynical, lonely figure.

The big man is knocked down again. This time he doesn't get back up. Felix is carried shoulder-high by his supporters. The defeated man is dragged away by his. Pandemonium breaks out around the field, with bets being paid and other, minor fights breaking out and children and women screaming and dogs barking.

Owen slips down off his lorry. He has trouble starting the engine, but eventually he gets it going. Owen drives back into the city (**TITLE & CREDITS**), through an industrial area with eerie, threatening factories and dark warehouses – then through a run-down urban area with drunks and homeless beggars. The lorry finally stops outside an inner-city pub called “The Jolly Tinker”.

Owen enters the saloon bar, which is seedy and worn, with a few down-and-out-looking clients drinking. He's told by the barman that “pikeys” are only served in the public bar. Owen is angry, but the barman tells him that this is the only pub in town that will serve Travellers and, if he doesn't like it, he can fuck off.

When Owen opens the connecting door into the public bar, he walks into a noisy crowd of colourful Travellers, drinking, arguing and singing, which is in complete contrast to the morose, dull saloon bar. Felix is at the counter, buying drinks. The noise abates when Owen enters and all eyes are on him. Owen approaches MYLES, a young, exotically-dressed and slightly camp Traveller and asks him for his winnings. Felix approaches with a drink for Myles and he offers to buy one for Owen. Owen refuses the offer, looking round at the other Travellers, who are watching him. Felix tells Owen not to worry about them and calls for a drink for Owen. The noise resumes.

Felix asks Owen if he's short of money. Owen replies that he has his own scrap business, which was left to him by his father. Felix believes the scrap business is dead and introduces Owen to BLACKBERRY, a Romany Gypsy who breaks and trains horses. Blackberry is looking for a man, but Owen refuses the work, because he's afraid of horses. The other Travellers laugh at him for this.

Very discreetly, a man enters the public bar carrying a gun. He stands in the shadows, just inside the door and nobody seems to notice him except Owen. Owen sees the man point the gun at Felix. He tries to get to Felix, just as the man is pulling the trigger. Owen pushes Felix out of the way of the bullet, but gets hit himself. Everything goes black.

ACT 2

Owen comes to in a hospital bed. His head is bandaged. ANN, a young, uniformed policewoman is reading a magazine in a chair close by. As soon as Owen sees the police uniform, he tries to unhook himself from the drips and get out of the room, but he's handcuffed to the bed. Ann throws the mag to one side. She tells him the bullet only grazed his temple and her superiors want to question him about the shooting, as he was the only one left in the pub when they got there.

Owen tries to persuade Ann to unlock the handcuffs so he can go to the toilet. She's reluctant to do this, but she realises he has no clothes and there's a bedpan close by. She relents and Owen pulls the curtain round his bed while Ann radios through to her sergeant.

Ann gets suspicious when she hears no sound from behind the curtain. She pull it back to reveal that Owen is gone. She runs out of the ward and sees him running down the corridor, wearing only a hospital gown that's open down the back. She gives chase, but he runs out of the hospital.

Owen's running down the road. Ann drives alongside him in her police car and shouts to him that he can't get away and that he's only making things worse for himself. Owen evades her by ducking down a narrow side-street full of winos. Ann continues after him on foot, but Owen shouts to the winos, as he passes, that the police are after their cider. The winos obstruct Ann and Owen gets away.

Owen arrives in a suburban street, at the back of a big house nicknamed "The Hilton". He climbs through a gap in a fence and enters a large, rubble-and-scrap-strewn yard. There's loud music and a lot of noise coming from the house. A small caravan is tucked away in a secluded corner. The caravan has no wheels, with its axles up on bricks. Owen goes into the caravan. He throws away the hospital gown and stands there naked, examining the gash in his forehead.

Just then, something heavy strikes the outside of the caravan. Owen ignores it. It happens again. Owen opens the caravan door, naked, to see O'CONNELL standing outside the back door of The Hilton with a house-brick in his hand. O'Connell shouts to Owen that it's his birthday and he's having a party. He insists that Owen comes over for a drink – and puts some clothes on.

O'Connell is an Irish demolitions man who operates on the fringes of the local underworld and lets out rooms in The Hilton to asylum seekers and illegal immigrants. Things perpetually go wrong for O'Connell.

There are two parties going on in The Hilton when Owen arrives. In the kitchen, a group of East European lodgers are singing their own songs and playing musical instruments. The other party, in the “saloon”, is more subdued, with a group of men drinking and scowling at each other – that is, until half-a-dozen strippers turn up with champagne, a birthday gift from the Blue Bullet, a local nightclub.

The strippers are accompanied by HARSHAL, an Indian club owner and so-called “pillar of the community” and his minder, EDWIN, a huge Indian bodybuilder, who Harshal constantly denigrates. The strippers drag O’Connell out into the middle of the room and begin to take his clothes off.

One of the lodgers is passing the saloon door. He stops and his mouth falls open when he sees the strippers. He calls, wide-eyed, to the others and they all stampede into the saloon, causing chaos and trying to grope the strippers. All hell breaks loose, with beer bottles flying through the windows and breaking on the street outside. Neighbours emerge from their houses and the police arrive, including Ann. Ann arrests Owen for the second time.

At the police station, Owen is questioned about the shooting. He tells the police he doesn’t know anything about it – he must have suffered amnesia as soon as the bullet struck him. They ask him who the bullet was intended for, but he says he doesn’t know. Ann sergeant says it’s a waste of time and it’s just another “Gypsy war” and the sooner they all shoot each other, the better. They agree to let him go, but, much to her chagrin, Ann is assigned the job of keeping an eye on him, as the Chief Inspector doesn’t want the situation to escalate. Ann has applied for the CID and doesn’t want to waste her time minding a ‘gyppo’. She pleads with her sergeant, but he says it’s her arrest and, therefore, her problem.

Next day, and Owen and O’Connell are arguing on a demolition site, where O’Connell is working. Harshal is hopping mad over being arrested and O’Connell has to make it up to him by doing a “job” for him. O’Connell also needs some muscle he can trust, someone outside the criminal fraternity. He blackmails Owen into getting involved by insinuating that Owen will have to move his caravan as he doesn’t. The building/chimney behind them is blown down. Neither man turns to look, but they continue to argue and gesticulate, though their words are drowned out by the noise.

Owen needs to get some “muscle” for O’Connell and he goes to Felix and tells him O’Connell will pay £600 for the night’s work. Felix says he’ll help Owen out, but he’s not doing it for the money. Owen assumes he must be doing it because he saved Felix from the bullet. But Felix doesn’t believe the bullet was meant for him. Owen asks if it’s not for the money and not for the bullet, then why? Felix doesn’t answer.

The job is to burn down one of Harshal’s derelict premises, so he can claim the insurance money. However, O’Connell has his own agenda, to rob a safe in the building next door, while he’s at it. O’Connell is drunk on the night of the job and can’t remember where his van is with the explosives. They use Owen’s beat up old lorry instead and O’Connell has to improvise. Owen keeps watch outside, not realising that he, in turn, is being watched by Edwin and also, from another angle, by Ann. Edwin and Ann are not aware of each other.

Owen falls asleep. He's woken when a nearby nightclub turns out and a crowd of drunks and clubbers approaches. Owen is about to go inside the building to warn the others.

Suddenly, there's a huge explosion inside the building next door to Harshal's warehouse. A metal safe door comes flying through the wall and lands in the street, just at Owen's feet, followed by a cloud of banknotes. The nightclub crowd go into a frenzy, trying to grab the money. Owen waits for O'Connell and Felix to emerge, but they don't appear. He doesn't know what to do. Ann starts up her police siren and drives towards the chaos. Owen panics and decides to scarper, but his lorry won't start. Edwin makes himself scarce when he hears the police siren and Owen evades Ann in the scrum of people.

Owen arrives back at his caravan in the yard of the Hilton, but Harshal, Edwin and a group of HEAVIES are already there ahead of him, beating up the lodgers and searching for him and O'Connell. Owen knows the gangsters, as well as the police, are after him now and his life is in danger. He has no choice, there's only one place he can run to.

Owen arrives, dirty and dishevelled, at the Gypsy camp at dawn. He wanders through the camp, getting suspicious and distrusting looks from the Travellers. Dogs bark at him and children stare at him. He sees LITZY, a beautiful Romany woman, for the first time and he can't take his eyes off her.

Myles interrupts his thoughts, assuming that Owen's changed his mind about Blackberry's job. Myles introduces him to Blackberry's horse crew - BIG BILL, a tough-looking Irish Traveller, who also fights, NATHAN, a young teenager and LOUIS, a musician, who carries a fiddle across his back. Owen asks Myles if he's seen Felix. Myles tells him a Traveller is a Traveller and it's not unusual for Felix to go off for days or even weeks at a time. Owen says no more.

At the horse fields, Blackberry puts Owen working with TOLUI, a tall, superior-looking Mongolian, who Blackberry smuggled into the country. Tolui is an expert horseman and Blackberry is reluctant to allow him to go back to Mongolia, even though he wants to return to his family. When Owen first meets Tolui, he's handling Juggernaut, Blackberry's huge shire horse and Owen is scared out of his wits. Tolui sees his fear of the horses and keeps him away from the animals, giving him menial jobs to do, like mucking out and hauling hay.

Tolui is quite a philosophical character and decides to make Owen confront his fears and his identity crisis. Owen is nervous and reluctant to go near the horses at first, but Tolui encourages him and begins to teach him "horse language".

Back in the City, both Harshal and the police are searching for Owen and O'Connell. The Hilton is raided by both and the lodgers are pushed around by Harshal's men and then arrested by the police. Not only has O'Connell failed to burn down Harshal's building, but the spotlight has now fallen on Harshal and his business dealings. Ann's superiors give her a ticking off for letting Owen give her the slip. She's told she'd better find him – or there'll be no promotion.

Back with Owen, the horse crew load up a “sulky” cart and Blackberry’s pacer horse and they all travel to a remote stretch of straight road where a large crowd of Travellers are congregated. An illegal pacer race takes place, with the Travellers blocking off the road with lorries that are driven by young boys.

Tolui drives Blackberry’s pacer horse, dressed in his traditional Mongolian riding clothes. As Owen watches Tolui, he begins to feel a kind of admiration for the man – a man who’s comfortable with his own identity and who seems to understand many things that Owen doesn’t.

Owen bets all the money he has on Tolui. Four pacer carts race neck and neck for half a mile, with the drivers lashing out at each other with their whips and screaming hordes of Travellers speeding behind in their pick-ups, cheering and cursing. Tolui, wins the race and Owen makes some money.

Police sirens sound in the distance and flashing blue lights can be seen. The Travellers make a run for it and, in the pandemonium that ensues, Owen gets left behind. He’s alone on the road, with the police approaching fast. Litzzy pulls up in a van and calls to him. She has her young daughters in the back. She speeds away down small winding country lanes, eventually giving the police the slip.

Litzzy wants to know why Owen’s been enquiring about Felix. Owen learns that she’s Felix’s wife. Owen is nervous and evades her questions, but he finds out about Felix – who the man is – a husband and a father with hopes and dreams and not just a thick ‘pikie’ fighter.

Felix wants to live in a house and take his family off the road and send his daughters to school, so they’ll no longer be discriminated against and can take their place in the Gorgio world. Felix also owns the piece of land where the Travellers are camped, but he can’t get planning permission to build there because he’s a Traveller and, if he sells the land, the other Travellers will have no-where to go. The audience begins to see the Travellers’ predicament and Owen begins to feel responsible for Litzzy.

Litzzy has her own identity problems, which reflect the problems of the Gypsy community as a whole, which is changing radically and finding itself in the Catch 22 situation whereby it’s becoming more and more difficult to remain a Traveller, due to Gorgio laws, yet hostile Gorgio communities don’t want them to be assimilated into their society and live on their doorsteps either.

Litzzy drops Owen outside Blackberry’s trailer. Inside, a crowd of Travellers are celebrating the race and discussing Traveller life. Owen asks where Tolui is and he’s told that Tolui stays at the fields with the horses. It’s his own choice, he prefers it that way. Blackberry insists that Owen has his fortune told, it’s “the rule” with new men. The FORTUNE-TELLER is horrified when he reads Owen’s fortune. He speaks cryptically and in Gypsy language, apart from saying he “sees the fighter in pieces”. He leaves the caravan hurriedly. The others want to know what’s going on and the situation looks threatening for Owen.

There's a commotion outside the trailer. Police have arrived at the camp, led by Ann. They're looking for Owen and they have a search warrant. There's an argument between the police and the Travellers. Blackberry gets Owen away in the confusion. He tells him to take the pick-up and go stay with Tolui at the horse fields.

Next day at the fields, Blackberry is angry with Owen for bringing trouble and unsure how long he can keep him on for. But Owen has nowhere else to go. Blackberry insists that, if he stays, he must work and that means getting over his fear of the horses. The rest of the crew are surly and suspicious of Owen and keep giving him threatening looks. Tolui is now the only friend Owen has and the Mongolian keeps helping and encouraging Owen with the horses so that he won't have to leave.

Tolui teaches Owen to ride and Owen is beginning to feel proud of himself and is coming to terms with himself. He gets a little carried away with his success and forgets, for the time being, about Felix and O'Connell and the danger he's in. The others watch Owen as he works and have to give him some grudging admiration because of the determination he's showing, despite setbacks.

During the day, Big Bill has an argument with Tolui. Bill is a fighter like Felix and he challenges Tolui – this is part of Traveller code and how they solve their differences. Tolui is a Buddhist and won't fight. Bill continues to push and Owen steps in on Tolui's side. Owen has, for the first time, got off his fence and taken a side, but this now leads to him having to take Tolui's place in the lunge ring to fight Bill, reinforcing his previous conviction that he should never get involved.

Owen gets beaten, but the others respect his courage and are warming to him again, despite the Fortune-Teller's words. Nathan even invites Owen to his engagement party. Owen sees that his gesture has led to him gaining the respect of the others, so maybe it wasn't a mistake after all.

Later in the day, Owen sees a suspicious-looking man outside the fields watching – he takes a closer look and sees it's the man who shot at Felix in the pub. The man leaves when Owen begins to approach him. Owen follows in Blackberry's pick-up.

The man drives to the Blue Bullet nightclub, an establishment owned by Harshal. As Owen is watching the club, he's spotted by Ann and she arrests him again. He tries to convince her not to take him to jail. He swears he had nothing to do with the shooting or the explosion and he'll help her solve both crimes, if she doesn't take him in. She takes some convincing but he finally convinces her that they'll get nothing out of him in jail and she decides to take a chance, probably for the first time in her life because, if he could help her do it, it would mean certain promotion to the CID. She reluctantly agrees, on condition that they stick close together from now on.

Owen and Ann's relationship develops from this point in the film and they find out that there's more to each other than the stereotyped "knacker" on the one hand and "wob" on the other. Owen is forced to take Ann to Nathan's engagement party and Ann sees Gypsy culture up close. Ann is nervous and drinks pucheen (moonshine), not knowing it's illegal and, by drinking it, she's committing an offence.

As part of the ceremony, Nathan's father takes the fiancée to the centre of the floor with a bottle of brandy wrapped in a brightly coloured silk cloth. A necklace of gold coins is attached to the bottle. He places the necklace round the fiancée's neck and drinks from the bottle, then offers the bottle to each man standing round in a circle. When he comes to Owen he hesitates. Nathan takes the bottle and gives it to Owen, signifying his acceptance.

Meanwhile, in the city, Harshal is using his influence with a corrupt council official to seize the Gypsy land (*in absentia*) for next to nothing, because Felix failed to respond to a legal challenge over a trumped-up land registry discrepancy. It transpires that the land is worth a fortune, as there's a lucrative development pending.

While the engagement celebrations are going on, bailiffs, accompanied by Harshal and the corrupt official and Ann's sergeant, are posting an eviction order on the Gypsy site. The only one left on the site is the old Fortune-Teller. He can't read the notice and he tears it down and urinates on it when the bailiffs leave.

Owen dances with Litzy at the engagement party and there's something developing between them. Ann watches them and feels a little jealous, even though she doesn't know why and certainly won't admit it to herself. Owen asks Litzy why she wants to come off the road. She replies that only someone who's playing at being a Gypsy could ask that question – someone who can go back to his house and his comfort and his Gorgio woman any time he likes. He tells her, if he had a woman like her, he'd never go back. Litzy is upset by this remark.

Suddenly, a middle-aged woman interrupts the celebrations. She's wearing black clothes and a black shawl and the Travellers all seem to be afraid of her, they back away and allow her through to Litzy. She's MARY, Felix's mother, who's come over from Ireland and she's called The Black Widow, because she killed two men in Ireland with a tua (ceremonial axe) which she carries in her belt.

Mary wants to know why Litzy is dancing with Owen, instead of with her son, Felix. Owen back off. She kisses her daughter-in-law and Litzy is rigid and fearful.

Mary goes to the middle of the hall and announces that Felix is dead, she's seen it in a vision and she's come over to avenge his killing. Litzy screams at this announcement and falls to the floor. Traveller women attend to her and Owen is pushed further away. Mary wants to know why the wobs (police) are at the ceremony. The Travellers are puzzled by this, but she points Ann out to them. The situation gets ugly and Owen has to get Ann away before she's hurt.

Owen takes Ann back to her house – she used to share it, but the other girl got married and moved out. Ann's a little drunk from the putcheen and she asks Owen if Litzy is his woman. He says Litzy is married. She asks about Owen's family. He tells her his mother was Gorgio and his father was killed by police in a pub brawl. Owen wants to leave, but Ann doesn't want him to and she confides that they found one body at the scene of the explosion, but it was unidentifiable. Owen doesn't know if it was O'Connell or Felix, but he's very upset.

Ann produces a bottle of whisky and they drink together. She asks why he doesn't live at the Gypsy camp and he tells her the Gypsies believe he's unlucky, like his father, who danced the Baraka, which Mary Magdalene danced for Jesus before he was betrayed by Judas. Ann asks Owen if he can dance the Baraka. They end up dancing close together and making love. Owen sneaks away in the morning.

Owen goes back to his caravan to pick up some clothes. He sneaks in the back way again and sees that his caravan has been ransacked by the heavies. He collects some clothes and is about to leave, when he hears a scream from the house. Owen is reluctant to go near the house, but he has to find out who it is. He goes up to the back door, climbing over the rubble and scrap to get there.

When Owen gets to the saloon, he finds O'Connell tied to a chair with his bare feet on concrete blocks. A bloody hammer is nearby and O'Connell's feet are broken and he's only semi-conscious. Owen knows now the body found by the police was Felix's. He unties O'Connell and gives him some whisky.

O'Connell relates the story of the botched job and how Harshal and his heavies found him and broke his toes with a hammer, because they believe he got away with a lot of money after the explosion. He's given Harshal a fictitious location for the money, because they wouldn't stop hitting him until he told them something. When Harshal discovers there's no money, he'll be back. O'Connell has to get away, but Harshal has left his men outside the front of the house and his feet are too badly broken to get out the back way, over the rubble in the yard. Owen decides to go get Ann's help.

When Owen returns to the Hilton with Ann, there's a police cordon outside and O'Connell's body is lying in the street and an upstairs window is broken.

Owen tells Ann that Harshal killed O'Connell, but she won't believe him without evidence. Her colleagues at the scene believe it was an accident – O'Connell was drunk and fell through the upstairs window. Owen is angry and frustrated by this and believes the Gorgio will never believe a Gypsy. He runs off, leaving Ann behind.

Owen gets drunk and ends up back at the horse fields, crashing Blackberry's pick-up into a fence post. Tului throws water on him to sober him up. Tului knows Owen is in some kind of trouble and offers his help. He performs a shaman ceremony, to protect Owen and to ward off evil spirits, then they smoke an ambiguous long pipe together. The two of them get high and there's a surreal sulky race, round the fields and out into the traffic along the country roads. Tului lets Owen win the race.

Owen wakes early next morning in the hay of the stables, with a donkey nuzzling at his ears. He doesn't know that Mary is approaching across the fields. Owen tries to wake, with a hangover, as Mary gets closer all the time, until she's standing in the doorway of the stables, with the axe glinting in the early sunlight.

Mary tells Owen she knows who he is – he's Jack McBride's son. She was promised to Jack McBride many years ago in Ireland but, instead, he ran off with a Gorgio woman and disgraced her. Her brothers caught up with Owen's father in an English pub and started a fight with him. The police came and Owen's father was killed.

It becomes clear to Owen why Felix helped him on O'Connell's job – if Felix knew his uncles were responsible for Owen's father's death, then he would have believed he had some responsibility for Owen. Owen asks if Felix knew, but Mary just wants “a death for a death” and for the cycle of revenge to continue.

Owen keeps the donkey between himself and Mary and manages to escape outside. Mary comes after him and corners him, with Juggernaut in his way. Owen is in turmoil, Mary's axe is getting closer to him and Juggernaut is blocking his only means of escape. Despite his fear of the big horse, Owen jumps onto Juggernaut's back. The horse rears and paws the air and Mary has to back off. Owen can't control the animal and Juggernaut jumps a fence and gallops off down the road with Owen clinging to his back.

Owen gradually brings the horse under control and the two trot along the country road. A black car approaches behind them. Owen is suspicious and puts the horse into a canter and then into a gallop, but the car gains on him. The car draws alongside the galloping horse and the back window winds down. O'Connell's SOLICITOR looks out. He stretches out of the moving car and gives Owen a business card, asking if he can drop into his office at a more convenient time.

At the solicitor's office, Owen finds out that O'Connell has left him the Hilton in his will. He's also left a large amount of money to Alcoholics Anonymous to buy whisky for the membership once a year, this occasion to be known as Skiddledeidledumadiddledum Day, with an alternative proviso, in case the AA turn down his donation, that the money be ceremoniously burned outside the Blue Bullet Nightclub. It seems to Owen that maybe O'Connell did get away with money after all. There's also an envelope, addressed to Owen.

Outside on the street, Owen opens the envelope and reads the note inside. O'Connell's voice can be heard telling Owen he wants to be cremated and he wants a wake. Owen curses O'Connell. He doesn't want the Hilton, because it'll make him a Gorgio, something, like responsibility and taking a stand, he's always resisted. There is one positive thing – Owen believes, now O'Connell's dead, he's off the hook with Harshal and the gangsters.

Owen and Ann hold a wake for O'Connell's ashes. The wake is a 'dead' affair, as neither of them know what they should be doing. Some of the ex-lodgers turn up and, after they've livened up the wake with music and singing. They sing O'Connell's Skiddleedidlediddledum song, which makes Owen laugh.

Edwin arrives at the Hilton in the middle of the wake. The lodgers flee as Edwin confronts Owen. At the beginning of the film, Owen would have run too, but now he stands up to the big bodyguard. Edwin, however, only wants to tell Owen that Harshal now believes Owen's been hiding O'Connell's money at the horse fields. Owen wants to know why Edwin is telling him this. Edwin wants Harshal out of the way, so he can take over, because he's fed up being denigrated by his boss. He tells Owen he'll have to kill Harshal to stop him.

Owen rushes to the horse fields. But he's too late. Harshal has already been there with his heavies and Tolui is dead, hanging from a beam in the barn. Owen is distraught at the death of his only friend. He wanders around the fields in a daze, wearing Tolui's Shaman's coat. He lies with the horses in the fields for a long time, looking up at the stars in the sky. It begins to rain. Large drops fall on his face.

Owen ends up standing in the middle of the Gypsy camp. It's raining hard and he's soaking wet, with Tolui's coat dragging on the ground behind him. Litzzy's trailer door opens and she's standing there, watching him. They look at each other, she walks across to him in the rain and slaps his face. He asks if that's for Felix – she says no, it's for her – then she turns and goes back to her caravan. She leaves the door open. Owen goes to her. The caravan is dark, with the only light coming from the red embers of a small stove. They come together and kiss. Tolui's coat drops from Owen's hand.

Owen wakes beside Litzzy some time later. He gradually discovers that she's covered in blood – she's cut her wrists. Her eyes are open, but she's not moving or speaking – she seems to be in some kind of self-induced trance. Owen doesn't know what's happened. Litzzy's children come in from another part of the caravan. They see their mother and start screaming. Owen tries to console them.

Outside in the camp, the Travellers are being woken by the screams of the children. A crowd gathers outside Litzzy's trailer. Mary arrives and pushes her way through to the door. Owen opens the trailer door from the inside and stands there with Litzzy in his arms. Mary and the rest of the Travellers block his way.

Suddenly, the camp is invaded by bailiffs, police (including Ann's sergeant) and security men, wielding baseball bats and truncheons and firebrands. The eviction has begun and chaos reigns. The Travellers disperse to protect their property, leaving Mary still blocking Owen's way. Owen tells her he didn't hurt Litzzy, but she already knows this – Litzzy cut herself out of remorse, she shouldn't have fornicated while she was in mourning, especially with a half-breed gajikano. Now she and her daughters will be outcasts from Gypsy society.

Owen must get Litzzy to hospital, but Mary won't back away. He strikes a deal with her, to bring her “a body” to avenge Felix's death, if she lets him pass.

ACT 3

Mary takes the girls from Owen and gets them away from the violence and pandemonium of the eviction. Owen takes Litzzy to the hospital. On his way out of the camp, Owen sees Harshal sitting in his limo with the corrupt council official.

Owen waits at the hospital until Litzzy is seen by a doctor. Her wounds are not life-threatening – more symbolic than fatal. Owen speaks softly to her in her hospital bed. He tells her she didn't do anything wrong, that sometimes strange things happen to people when they're off guard, but they have to keep on living, to put things right again. There's nothing they can do about it if they run away. Although he's speaking to Litzzy, Owen is also talking to himself. Litzzy reacts to his words and there are tears in her eyes.

Owen goes to the Blue Bullet looking for Harshal. Edwin tells Owen Harshal's at a nearby snooker club. Owen goes there. The place is almost deserted, except for Harshal and three men who are playing a private game for a pile of money. Lights are low, except for the one table-light. Owen is quiet and nobody sees him enter. He fills his sock with snooker balls and approaches the table. He recognises the gunman who shot at Felix. The other two men are the corrupt council official and Ann's sergeant.

Owen hits Harshal with the sock and tries to drag him from the club. The others surround him. The gunman pulls a pistol. Owen lashes out at the man's arm and the pistol goes flying across the floor. They pick up snooker cues and brandish them.

Suddenly, Ann appears in the snooker club. She picks up the pistol and is unsure who to point it at, Owen or the others. Owen tells her it's the gunman who shot him and the others are helping Harshal cheat the Gypsies out of their land. Ann's sergeant tries to cajole first and then threaten her to give up the gun. She wants to know what he's doing here, where the gun came from and who owns the pile of money. He can't answer her.

Owen begins to drag Harshal from the club. Ann tells Owen he can't do that, but he keeps going. She calls for backup. Ann can't watch them all at the same time and Owen gets out with Harshal.

Owen takes Harshal to the Gypsy camp, but it's dark and deserted and Mary's not there. He then goes to the barn at the horse fields. Harshal comes to and Owen asks him if he recognises the place. Harshal says sure, it's where he killed the Chinaman. Owen says Tolui was Mongolian, not Chinese. Harshal says they all look alike and he wants to know if Owen brought him here to kill him, because that's what he's going to have to do. He sneers at Owen and says he's too weak to kill him. He admits to trying to kill Felix, but he didn't have to in the end, because O'Connell did it for him. He laughs at Owen and tells him he's a dead man walking.

Owen is not a killer and Harshal is about to leave. But he stops dead in his tracks, with a surprised expression on his face. Then, he staggers back into the barn, with an axe embedded in his back. Mary enters. She heard Harshal saying he tried to kill Felix. Harshal isn't dead and tries to crawl across the floor. Mary follows him. Owen leaves the barn. In the stables, horses rear and neigh, drowning out Harshal's screams.

Back at the Blue Bullet, Owen confronts Edwin again. Edwin is sitting in Harshal's chair and he asks Owen what's happened. Owen says Harshal won't be coming back and he's here to finish it. He doesn't want any comebacks. Edwin is glad Harshal's dead. He tells Owen it's already finished and there'll be no vendettas.

Owen goes to the Gypsy site. In daylight, the total destruction can be seen. The place is completely demolished and any trailers or other vehicles left are burnt out. All the fences are kicked down and flower baskets scattered all over the place. Gypsy children's toys are lying on the ground in blood and soot and dirty water.

The camp looks completely deserted to Owen. Then he notices a movement near a burnt out trailer. It's Litzzy's trailer and she's standing there with her children. He goes to her. Owen asks what she's going to do. She says she doesn't know yet. This was Felix's land, but now it's been stolen from him and she and her children have been outcast from the rest of the Travellers for what she did.

Owen produces the keys to the Hilton and offers them to her. She's reluctant to take them. He tells her they're not from him, they're from Felix – it's what he died for. Litzzy takes the keys. He tells her he knows a good solicitor, who'll help her get the money for the land and he gives her the business card O'Connell's solicitor gave to him.

Later, as Owen is walking across the horse fields, a plume of smoke rises into the sky. All the horses are gone. Blackberry is burning the barn and, when Owen comes up beside him, he tells Owen there's nothing left here for anyone. The fire burns fiercely, with Harshal's body inside. Blackberry walks away and Owen is left alone, watching the fire.

Ann appears beside Owen and they stare at the fire together. She says she should call the fire brigade. He says there's no need, it's just a ritual – burning the property of the dead is a Traveller tradition – burning the old to make way for the new. She asks what happened to Harshal and Owen says it got too hot for him. Ann asks if he wants a lift back to the Hilton. He says he doesn't live there anymore. She asks what he'll do now. He says he'll go back on the scrap. She tells him his lorry has been impounded and crushed. There's a silence between them.

She says one of her mounted police colleagues knows a horse breeder who's looking for someone good with the animals. She'd be prepared to give him a reference. She says he could stay with her – until he finds a place of his own, he could help pay the mortgage. He asks if he can park his caravan outside. They both laugh.

Their hands touch and they withdraw from each other self-consciously. Then they move back together, looking at the flames. They've learned that they'll have to make compromises if they're going to live in harmony together and they seem to have accepted this. It remains to be seen if the Gypsy and Gorgio communities are prepared to do the same.

The camera pans up and away and we see the city and the countryside together.

END