NEVER SAY DIE

THE FIFTEEN SECOND VERSION

“A shot of Bourbon saved this horse the night he was born outside Lexington. He grew up and won the Epsom Derby at 33-1. And the woman who bet on him used the winnings to open the club where the Beatles got their start.”

THE EXPANDED VERSION

PART 1
The Foal

In 1951, a foal was born at Hamburg Farm just outside Lexington, and something went wrong. He could not get to his feet and he could not get his breath. They tried everything, and eventually the barn went quiet. As a last resort, legendary horseman **John A. Bell III** grabbed a bottle of Bourbon, poured himself a shot, and then poured one down the foal's throat. Miraculously, the foal was revived, and they named him **Never Say Die**.

PART 2
The Derby

Showing promise on the turf, his owner sent him to compete in England, the epicenter of turf racing. Three years later, he lined up for the **1954 Epsom Derby**, the biggest race in the world at the time. Never Say Die went off as a major underdog at **33 to 1**. With more than 250,000 fans in attendance and millions tuning in around the world, he shocked the world by winning the race. No American horse had done so in more than 70 years.

PART 3
The Casbah

In Liverpool, a woman named **Mona Best** had fallen in love with Never Say Die's name, so she bet everything she had on him. Never Say Die winning at 33 to 1 odds allowed Mona to buy her dream home, and she turned its basement into a music club called the **Casbah Coffee Club**. The band on opening night was the Quarrymen: John Lennon, Paul McCartney and George Harrison. They ultimately changed their name to **the Beatles**, and Mona's son Pete was the drummer for two years before being replaced by Ringo Starr.

PART 4
The Bourbon

In 2015, two old university friends ran into each other at the Kentucky Derby. **Pat Madden** told **David Wild** the story of the horse born on his family's farm, and a few mint juleps later they decided to make a Bourbon that would cross the Atlantic the same way the horse had. Nobody had done it before.

THE PRODUCTION PROCESS

01 KENTUCKY
6 Years

It starts as a **sweet mash**, meaning every batch begins with fresh yeast rather than backset from the last run. That costs more and takes longer, and it gives you a cleaner, sweeter distillate. The mash bill is **75% corn, 21% rye and 4% malted barley**, so there is far more rye in here than most Bourbons carry, and the water is limestone-filtered from the deepest aquifer in Kentucky. It goes into fresh American oak at a **number four char**, the heaviest common char, and sits six years while Kentucky summers drive the whiskey deep into the wood and winters pull it back out.

In the glass: vanilla, caramel, sweet oak.

02 AT SEA
6 Weeks

This is the part nobody else does. The barrels are loaded onto a ship and cross the Atlantic. A barrel in a rickhouse only works when the weather tells it to, waiting on summer to push whiskey into the oak and winter to draw it back. **At sea it never stops.** Six weeks of constant motion keeps the liquid moving against the wood the entire crossing, and the barrel swings through heat and cold the whole way. What comes off the ship tastes and looks older than its years.

In the glass: bright citrus, color and depth beyond its age.

03 ENGLAND
1 Year

The barrels land in Derbyshire and go into the rickhouse at **White Peak Distillery** for one more year, in the same barrels they crossed in. England is the opposite of Kentucky: cool, damp and steady, with none of the seasonal swings. Aging slows almost to a stop, and what takes over is **slow oxidation**, the same process that softens Scotch and Irish whiskey. It rounds off the heat and pushes the orange forward.

In the glass: softer heat, more orange, a rounder finish.

QUESTIONS CUSTOMERS OFTEN ASK

“Is that actually Bourbon?”
Yes. Kentucky Straight Bourbon, distilled and aged in Danville. The English year is a second maturation in the **same barrel**, after it is already Bourbon.

“Why England?”
To follow the horse's legendary route across the pond and create an exceptional Bourbon. The story is so important to us that production needed to reflect it.

“What's it taste like?”
Orange peel and caramel up front, then rye spice and charred oak on the way out. It is 95 proof but drinks softer than that.

“Does the ocean really change it?”
Yes, and here is why. A barrel sitting in a warehouse needs the seasons to push whiskey in and out of the wood. At sea it never sits still, so six weeks of constant motion keeps it working the wood the entire way across.

“Is that a true story?”
All of it. There is a book about the horse by **James C. Nicholson**, the Derby win is on film, and the Casbah is still standing in Liverpool as a museum.

“Is this the whiskey that saved him?”
No, but that would make this an even better story. This Bourbon is named for **the horse**, not the bottle that saved him.