



CLARIFICATION  
**HYLAND**  
PLACE  
APRIL 27, 1906  
SIR BACON  
RACES

*Jimmie Ryan*  
**KNOCKS OUT**  
**JACK DEMISEY**  
**IN 1st ROUND**

FOR'S ATHLETIC LIBRARY  
SCIENTIFIC  
BOXING

# MISKATON UNIVERSITY FIELD HOUSE

## THURS. EVE., JULY

### STAR BOUT,



**CHO IN ONE PUNCH K.O.**

Up-and-coming Arkham boxer, Nathaniel Cho, served nothing but pain for the Dunwich bruiser, Patrick "The Heavy" Hodgkins, this weekend at the latest Hibb's Roadhouse "Gentlemen's Brawl". Cho had less experience than "The Heavy" and out-performed both expectations and the bookies, leading Hodgkins into a lengthy dance which ended in a knock-out for the big man, and victory for Cho.

While several onlookers commented to our correspondents that the match seemed a little suspect, no action is being taken by the Sheriff's Department to investigate such claims. "It's a beautiful sport," said Sheriff Gregory E. Engle, "we like our sport."



**NATHANIEL CHO**

**"TRISH" WILLIE**



# Nathaniel Cho

*The Boxer*

**S**WEAT STUNG NATHANIEL CHO'S eyes and his arms quivered as he waded in for the final round of his training session. His training partner – a huge mountain of a man named Dutch – lumbered toward him with teeth bared around his mouth guard. Normally at this point in the session Nathaniel was lagging, his wind spent. But ever since his brother Randall had been attacked, he'd been unstoppable, his stamina never fading. Fury did that, up until the moment it burned you out.

That moment hadn't come yet though. He met speed with speed, ducking under Dutch's arm and moving in for the kill, pelting the torso with a flurry of jabs. The padded surface of his gloves impacted against skin, driving Dutch backward and forcing the breath from his lungs. He staggered, winded and exhausted. This was only a training session; the sportsmanlike thing to do would be to tap out. But Nathaniel couldn't stop. The specter of Randall's battered face haunted him. Wild with desperate fury, he swung a haymaker that rocked Dutch's head back with a crunch. The big man went down like a felled tree.

Shame and worry finally pierced the red haze that clung to Nathaniel. He dropped to his knees next to Dutch, chest tight with fear. Then the big man groaned, and relief made Nathaniel go limp. He collapsed to the padded floor of the ring and tried to catch his breath.

When Nathaniel exited the locker room, wet hair slicked back from his forehead, he was relieved to see Dutch standing next to a pile of training mats. The bridge of the enormous boxer's nose had split and one eye mostly swollen shut. Nathaniel gestured toward them with a grimace.

"Did I do that?" he asked.

Dutch grinned, showing off a gap where one of his teeth had been.

"It was a good punch," he said. "Shoulda kept my guard up."

"Sorry. I was out of line going that hard. I've just..."

Nathaniel trailed off, unable to complete the sentence. He was just what? Furious at his inability to keep his brother safe? At his decision to get mixed up with the O'Bannions in the first place? At the world?

Dutch's meaty hand clapped down on his shoulder.

"How is he?" asked the big man.

"Randall? Still not awake. The doc says he's in there and he'll come out when he's ready. But..." Nathaniel hissed out a tense breath. "I don't know."

"That's enough to drive a man crazy." Dutch's eyes locked on Nathaniel. "Any time you need to work those feelings out, you come find me. Don't go getting foolish ideas into your head, you hear me?"

As much as Nathaniel appreciated the offer, it had come much too late. But he couldn't say that.

"Of course, pal," he replied instead. "Thanks. I'd better head out; I want to catch the doc before he's gone for the night."

"Godspeed," said Dutch. "Although you're already too fast for your own good, if you ask me."

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MACHINES BEEPED AND HISSED, the noise grating against Nathaniel's senses as he looked down at the broken body of his brother. Neat white bandages circled Randall's brow, making his hair stick straight up off his forehead. He'd always had a cowlick; Nathaniel had made fun of it when they were young. But despite those early fraternal conflicts, they'd always been close. The two of them against the world. It had been a good pairing – Randall's brains and Nathaniel's brawn. Everything had been coming up aces for the both of them up until the moment Tommy Malloy had come to Nathaniel with the request to throw that fight. Maybe he shouldn't have refused.

Now his brother might never wake up.

He sat on the edge of the bed, the sheets denting beneath his weight. The bed creaked. But Randall didn't protest, didn't call him a big stupid oaf or observe that he smelled like a farm animal. His brother just lay there, silent as the dead.

Nathaniel couldn't stand it, that silence. So he did the only thing he could. He filled it.

"I nearly took Dutch's head off in the practice ring today," he said. "You would have read me the riot act if you'd seen it. But don't worry, I found him later and apologized. I'm starting to think he knows that..."

"Well, I haven't been entirely truthful with you either. Maybe that doesn't count, because I'm not even sure you can hear me in there. If you can, I bet it's driving you crazy not to be able to answer, but rest assured that I'm calling myself all the names you'd say if you could."

He chuckled, even though he didn't feel like it.

"The problem is, I can't sleep. I've tried everything. Heck, I even drank warm milk. You remember how Ma used to give us warm milk when we were kids, and you poured it into the fern and killed it? It didn't help then, and it still doesn't. So instead I've been going out at night. At first I was just walking, hoping that I could tire out my brain so I could sleep. But then, well, stuff happens at night, you know? Innocent people get hurt just like you did. And I look out for them, just like I used to look out for you."



"It probably doesn't even make that much of a difference. But I have to do something. Somebody has to stand up to the O'Bannions. Somebody has to make them pay for what they did to you. I know if you could, you'd tell me to let it go. To turn the other cheek. But I tried it your way. Maybe now it's time for me to try mine."

"I just wanted to tell you what happened in case I don't come back. So when you wake up, you'll know that I tried to make you proud. I really did."

Nathaniel paused, staring down at his brother, hoping with every part of his being that Randall would open his eyes and give him what for. But nothing happened.

"Love you, brother," said Nathaniel. "I'll see you."

He closed the door softly behind him, shutting out the incessant beeping.

NATHANIEL KNEW WHAT HE WANTED TO do, despite his refusal to admit it to himself. At one AM he was still walking, shoulders hunched against the cold, misty night, hat pulled down over his eyes to hide his face. He wanted... something. A footpad or mugger, someone he could hit without feeling too guilty about it. But the streets of Arkham were empty, the residents tucked away behind drawn shutters and locked doors as if hiding from something they could neither name nor explain, something that haunted their dreams.



Only Nathaniel – desperate and sleepless – would dare to go out and chase those shadows. When he looked up to find the Clover Club across the street, he could no longer deny that this was his intended destination all along. The monsters were here; he knew that. All the bright lights and up-tempo swing music couldn't change the truth – the O'Bannions were worse than any boogeyman.

Maybe Nathaniel couldn't help cure Randall, but he could make sure the brutes understood that laying their hands on either of the Cho brothers came at a price.

He took a single step toward the doors before he thought twice. The doormen outside had shoulders like rugby players, fists like canned hams, and suspicious bulges beneath their uniform jackets. He could take one or two of them, but the numbers weren't good even without the firearms he was pretty sure they carried. If he wanted to get through to someone who could actually call off the dogs, he had to play this smarter.

With casual purpose, he ambled toward the side of the building and slipped down the alley behind the club. Maybe he could find an employee entrance and pose as a waiter. That might get him inside.

The alley was dimly lit, the moon blocked by the tall buildings. Nathaniel picked his way down the alley,

trying not to make too much noise. Randall had always said he sounded like a moose in a china shop, but he thought he was pretty quiet, and no one bothered him as he slunk around the corner toward the back of the club. It was so dark that he couldn't see his own hand in front of his face, but a light outline set into the wall suggested the presence of a door.

Energized by his success, he hurried toward the door, hoping against hope that it had been left unlocked. His footsteps crunched on the gravel, loud in the quiet. He checked the knob, heart thumping with excitement. Was he really going to do this?

It opened, revealing a monstrous figure.

It looked vaguely humanoid, with features like melted clay. Its face was nothing more than a pair of beady eyes and a flabby set of lips that hung open in slack hunger. The body was stocky and rudimentary, covered in nothing but a set of slimy scales. Everything about its proportions was just a bit off: the stumpy limbs too wide, the neck too thick, the elbows off-center somehow. The overall result was an overwhelming sense of wrongness. This creature belonged nowhere but in nightmares.

It reached for him.





Although Nathaniel was a boxer, he made it a policy not to just randomly hit people. His strength combined with his training made him potentially lethal. It was only responsible to practice control. In this moment, all of that care went out the door. This abomination did not deserve his caution. He swung at it with all of his considerable might, his fist rocketing through the air.

It landed with what would have been a deadly crunch on a normal person. But somehow, the soft flesh beneath his fist gave way, sucking at his hand. It was like punching mud; there was substance buried deep within, but the layers of quivering mass atop it made it impossible to do damage.

One of the thing's ham hands shot toward him. Instinctively, he bobbed out of the way, but it was faster than it appeared. The blow glanced off his shoulder, and he flew across the alley and smacked against the wall so hard that he toppled to the ground, dazed stars blooming behind his eyelids.

Sharp splinters pierced his palm as his hand brushed some piece of wooden debris that clattered as he scrambled back up. There was no time to waste; the thing lumbered toward him, its outline clear against the light streaming from the open door. He grabbed the piece of lumber and swung it like the bases were full at the bottom of the ninth.

It hit with such force that the wood broke with a snap and the creature let out a garbled yowl, dropping to one knee.

"Ran... dall," it said.

It knew his brother's name. The revelation stopped Nathaniel in his tracks. Nothing mattered more than his brother. He needed to survive to keep Randall safe.

He ran, hating every minute of it. As he emerged from the alley and out onto the street, he saw Malloy standing outside the club, taking to the doormen. Their eyes met. Malloy tilted his hat, a wry and knowing smile stretching his lips. A pair of the stocky doormen flanked him. Nathaniel couldn't be sure, but based on their silhouettes, he thought they were mud creatures too.

He didn't know what was happening, but he couldn't leave Randall alone and helpless, not in a world where things like the mud creature lurked in the shadows. He began to jog toward the hospital. He would sit by his brother's bed until Randall woke, and only then would he begin to train.

When they came for him and his brother, he'd be ready.

