

Song of Joy--Or the Old Reliables: A Sequel to Sean O'Casey's Juno and the Paycock--Written by David Joseph Marcou, Playwright.

For the Casts, Crews, Readers/Audiences That Make This Play Real and Ideal.

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Dedicated to the Positive Past/Present/Future Lives of My Grandparents – Agnes Fitzgerald-Marcou, David A. Marcou Sr., Roman A. Muskat, and Ida Brunner-Muskat – Sean O'Casey and Family; Our Great Musical Inspirations, Especially Friedrich Schiller, Ludwig von Beethoven, and Henry van Dyke; Thomas Ryan and Family; Jessica Traynor and the National Theatre of Ireland; S. Marie Leon Lacroix and the FSPA's; Patricia Angelin and Family; Alan Ebert and Family; Bert Hardy and Family; Blessed Mother Teresa and Extended Family; James Cameron and Family; Colleen M. Hogan and Family; Steve Bennett and Family; Steve Kiedrowski/Julie Klein and Family; Phil Addis and Family; Vicki/Don Elwood and Family; David Haberstick and Family; Ted Knutson and Family; Aquinas Schools; Irishfest-La Crosse; Patrick Stephens and Family; La Crosse Diocese; the Freiberg Family of Wausau; the Johns Family of UM-Columbia; the Yi Do-Sun Family of Seoul; the Butson and Tarrant Families of Britain; My Parents – David A. Marcou Jr. and Rose Muskat-Marcou and Family, Including Tom and Joy Marcou, and My Truly Great Son, Matthew A. Marcou, and His Mother, Suk-Hee; All Our Archivists, Designers, Printers, Readers, Audiences, Sponsors, Soldiers, Clergy, Consecrated, Creative Souls, Care-Givers, Providers, Employers, Employees, Subjects, AWPAs Members, Casts/Crews, Your Author (DJM), and All Our Families and Friends, Always!

"I believe that in a great city, or even in... a village, a great theatre is the outward and visible sign of an inward and probable culture." -- Sir Lawrence Olivier

"If a play is what it ought to be, it must be a religious function, whether it is played before a community of thousands or a community of ten." – Sean O'Casey

"But then, ain't all religions curious? If they weren't, you wouldn't get anyone to believe in them." – Joxer Daly, in 'Song of Joy—Or the Old Reliables'.

“Only God or Time can vindicate the judgment of man. To me one thing alone is certain – we are all one in the tremendous and glorious bond of humanity. Jew, Gentile, bond and free, Tory and Communist can never break away from this grand bond. We are born, we die and we must do the best we can between the day of birth and the night of death.” – Sean O’Casey

“When he reached his eighties his vision had deteriorated so rapidly that he could see nothing except the difference between light and dark... But he... remembered that Beethoven wrote his greatest symphonies when he was deaf,...and that Renoir went on painting when he was so rheumatic that he had to tie the brush to his hand... He never considered himself too old to be instructed about anything from any source.... But he was creative and imaginative and he was spiritually alive until the last moment. He had the moral courage of an idealist. Whatever his religious ideas may have been, I think God had reason to be proud of Sean O’Casey. – Brooks Atkinson

“Sacred Heart o’ the Crucified Jesus, take away our hearts o’ stone... and give us hearts o’ flesh! Take away this murdherin’ hate... an’ give us Thine eternal love!” – Mrs. Tancred, ‘Juno and the Paycock’

“I have found life an enjoyable, enchanting, active, and sometimes terrifying experience, and I’ve enjoyed it completely. A lament in one ear, maybe, but always a song in the other.” – Sean O’Casey

Introduction: ‘Song of Joy—Or the Old Reliables’ is based on five characters from Sean O’Casey’s ‘Juno and the Paycock,’ with the Dublin tenement setting and plot-line moved ahead 18 years, to 1940, with several new characters added. This sequel involves the potential for a rise in fortune of the Boyle Family -- the Captain and wife Juno, and their daughter, Mary, who married a physician after giving birth to a daughter out-of-wedlock from a previous affair. Also key is the remembrance in ‘Song of Joy’ of Johnny Boyle, murdered in ‘Juno’ when he betrayed an IRA comrade. ‘Juno and the Paycock’ was strong tragicomedy, while ‘Song of Joy’ focuses on comedy and redemption, though comedy often springs from tragedy, or the ‘tragic irritation,’ as someone once said. But the question must be asked: Is it human goodness that motivates the “reformed” characters most, or the scent of money?

Dramatis Personae: (More Than One Part Can Be Played by Relevant Actor/s)

“Captain” Jack Daniel Boyle
Juno Rosemary Boyle, his wife
Joxer Daly, the Captain’s pal
Johnny Boyle, the Boyles’ murdered son-apparition, and the IRA men-apparitions who killed him

Mary Boyle Fitzgerald, the Boyles' grown daughter
Dr. John Dennis Fitzgerald, Mary's husband
Shivaun Fitzgerald, John's adoptive and Mary's teenage daughter
John "Johnny" Fitzgerald Jr., John Sr. and Mary's teenage son
Diane Fitzgerald, a newly arrived American businesswoman
Fr. Michael "Rocky" Murphy, pastor of St. Bart's Church
Agnes (Aggie) Ida Rogers, Joxer's girlfriend
Alan Matthews, a friend of Johnny's and newsboy
Tommy Malone, a friend of the late Johnny Boyle and of Johnny's Family
Claudine O'Malley, a solicitor
Ray O'Reilly, a barkeeper
Ray's family (including wife Polly), musicians, dancers, and/or singers
Bar-flies
Mrs. Tancred, murdered Commandant Tancred's mother.

Actions:

Act I - Interior of St. Bart's Church, Dublin, day after Ash Wednesday.
Act II, Scene 1 - Living room and kitchen of the Boyles' apartment, Dublin, that night.
Act II, Scene 2 - Same apartment, next Tuesday.
Act III, Scene 1 - A pub, late Holy Thursday afternoon.
Act III, Scene 2 - Boyles' apartment, suppertime, Holy Thursday.
Act III, Scene 3 - Same apartment, two hours later.
Act III, Scene 4 - Boyles' bedroom, late that night.
Act IV, Scene 1 - Interior, St. Bart's, Good Friday.
Act IV, Scene 2 - Front steps, St. Bart's, Good Friday.
Act IV, Scene 3 - Interior, St. Bart's, before Easter Sunday service.
Act IV, Scene 4 - Grave of Johnny Boyle, Dublin outskirts, Easter afternoon.

Period of Play: Lent, 1940.

Start Music: 'Danny Boy' and 'My Wild Irish Rose'

Intermission Music: 'The Minstrel Boy'; **Closing Music:** "Amazing Grace".

Music-Interludes Between and in Scenes::

<http://www.ireland-information.com/irishmusic/irishsongs-music-lyrics-midis.htm>
<http://www.hymnsite.com/http://midihymns.homestead.com/midiindex.html>
http://www.lyricsfreak.com/b/billie+holiday/pennies+from+heaven_20017901.html
<http://www.triskelle.eu/lyrics/belleofbelfastcity.php?index=080.010.020.020>

Act 1

Action: The interior of St. Bart's Church, day after Ash Wednesday, 1940. We see a portion of the right side of the church with a confessional at back-center stage, and candles at right. The priest's area is lit with a red light. There are no penitents present. There are pews. The door of the church, off stage left, opens and shuts. Two voices are heard, arguing.

FIRST MAN (*too loud*): I'm tellin' you, Joxer, I'm not goin' to tell Father all me sins, just everyday ones.

SECOND MAN: (*half-whispering, with his finger to his lips*) Shhhh – or the father will have us for supper. But you said you're not goin' to tell him about the big one. Don't you think you should?

They enter, left. The First Man is "Captain" Jack Boyle, mid-size, once portly. In his 70s, with a semi-bald, shaggy-sided, gray head, he carries a sea captain's black hat, and wears lived-in clothes and spectacles. Though his language is coarse, he's not ugly or charmless. The Second Man is Joxer Daly, Boyle's age and his pal. Joxer is slightly taller than medium height, and slim, with spry good looks. He wears an ironic smile, and only slightly better lived-in clothes. He's wearing a dark green beret.

BOYLE (*a bit loud, grabbing Joxer's beret*): Take that thing off in here, will you? Jesus be praised, what have you got for brains? Peas?

JOXER (*looking at his cap in Boyle's hand, smiling*): Now, Captain, I was just about to remove me cap. Don't I know the right way to praise the Saviour, even if I haven't been in church – same as you – since Johnny's funeral. But then, ain't all religions curious? If they weren't, you wouldn't get anyone to believe in them.

BOYLE (*giving the cap back*): Just keep it off a little while, will you? I want to have me confession heard, and I don't need you talkin' about how negligent I've been the last 18 years, as far as church manners go. Tis true Johnny's funeral's long-past, but Johnny's dying still haunts Juno. Some folks say Johnny betrayed Commandant Tancred, but my missus has' none o' it. She thinks it was mistaken identifying.

JOXER: I hope ya know Joxer respects the time we've been together for a lot longer than 18 years, and, truth be told, I doubt Johnny was a full traitor to the Republican cause, no matter what trots about as 'truth'.

BOYLE: Yes, you're me pal, Joxer, but you don't know the first thing about church. Confession is confession, and pals is pals, and never the two should mix. Now, Johnny could've used a good priest when they did him in; Juno's

been prayin' for his soul the last 18 years, because he didn't die with one by his side.

JOXER: Do you really think Jesus doesn't want ta hear the likes of pal-talk? And if I was the Lord Himself, I surely wouldn't want to see my creatures quarreling about such paratoxes. Sure, tis Himself that'd want us talkin' all about the great emotions, the paasssions we feel, the great looves and hates inspiring us and others, too... including the men and women in our lives.

BOYLE: My goodness, Joxer, 'twas a mouthful coming from the likes of you. Since when did you learn about paratoxes?

JOXER: Oh, I just picked it up on me own, and I read a little, too.

BOYLE: Never mind, not now about yur reading. I need to go to confession. If Mrs. Boyle's ta forgive me, er – my sins -- then I need to be getting behind the curtain, NOW!

JOXER (*the priest's curtain moves*): Jeez, did you see that? What's goin' on?

BOYLE (*looking where Joxer points*): Here, here, Joxer, don't you know the priest's in his element. That's how you know he is ready, willin', and able to take us on.

JOXER (*the priest coughs -- Joxer looks twice*): By the grace o' God, the priest has a smoker's cough. Aren't you glad you never took up that wicked habit, Captain? What I mean is, with so many tempting habits in the world, it's a wonder more people don't take up smoking to rest their emotions.

BOYLE: I know what you mean, Joxer, Me Boy. Still, I'm happy none of me own family ever smoked. Mind you, I been tempted. When you sit in a pub long enough, some things start to look awfully good.

JOXER: Yes, and the women that smoke now make me think the world is in a terrible state o' chassis.

BOYLE: That it is, Joxer. Why I saw Mrs. Madigan smoking like a fiend t'other day, with her stogies and ciggies, and she in a pub besides.

JOXER: Mrs. Madigan, ya say. And wasn't it Joxer Daly beside you when you saw herself sinning against the tobacco laws o' God, pretty as ya please? I've even heard she likes women better than men. What about that?

BOYLE: Yeah, she's a regular laesbian. Anyway, it's time to prepare for my first confession in twenty-some years. (*Nodding toward altar.*) It's a church this is, so let's kneel down and say us a prayer.

JOXER: So it is, Captain, so it is. (*They make a production of kneeling, at a safe distance from confessional.*) What should we say, then, Captain, to get started?

BOYLE: First, we have to make a sign – of the cross (*doing so, gingerly*) Yes, that's how it goes. (*Completing it, Orthodox-style.*)

JOXER (*slowly signing*): I remember it, too. It's like so, then? (*finishing Western-style*)

BOYLE: Yes, well, I think you've got it right, Joxer.

JOXER: Now what, Captain?

BOYLE: I suppose next we should ask for the Lord's help. Let's see... something like: Oh Lord, what brought us here is the sort of things only You can know. Me and Joxer, we haven't been so good always, though we do our best. Help us – me – confess the sins I've done... you know, venal, not mortal. And once I've confessed them, help Mrs. Boyle forgive me for not being a bigger man the last 18 – make it 20 -- years. You know what I mean, Lord.

JOXER: I think He does, Captain. And what else about your sins?

BOYLE: Well, one is my friendship with some pretty un-particular fellows, excepting present company. And my drinking and the chassis I've brung on me family for so long, if it's my own fault, a-tall.

JOXER: That's a good start, Captain. What next?

BOYLE: Well, I could tell the Father how I got drunk the night Johnny died at the hands of the IRA, and that I haven't worked a day since, or for a while before that, either.

JOXER: That's good, too. What now?

BOYLE: Well, I don't want to tell him about, you-know-what... (*Joxer looks at him directly*), but... (*hard to say*) I suppose I could tell him that I'm lucky, through no goodness of me own.

JOXER: Ah, Captain – that’s a darlin’ proposal, a darlin’ proposal.

BOYLE: There you go again, Joxer, mixing up darlings and confessions. Don’t you know darlings don’t have anything to do with Captain Jack Boyle and his state o’ grace now.

JOXER (*sneezing twice*): Oh Lord, the air in here is gettin’ cool, don’t you think?

BOYLE: No, it isn’t. Are you editerrorizing on me own state o’ grace, you ignorant ol’...

JOXER (*gently raising hand*): Now, Captain, watch your tongue. And I don’t think you mean editerrorizing; editorializing’s more like it. You know, if we start a brawl here, Father’ll be hearing you’ve no reverence for the atmospherics in God’s House. And innocent ol’ Joxer’ll be dragged into his upset, same as if the devil himself pitched in, like the British did when the famine struck a hundred years ago.

BOYLE (*holding his temper*): I suppose you’re right, but I still don’t like people sneezin’ when I’m talkin’.

JOXER (*trying to distract Boyle*): Look there, Captain. (*Pointing.*) The Father’s movin’ about. I just saw the curtain shift again, and the light blinked three times.

BOYLE: Maybe I ought to go in and talk to the good Father, don’t you think?

JOXER: I expect so, Captain, and no time to waste, either.

BOYLE: Aye, I’ll go in – just got to clear me head first. (*Shaking his head.*)

JOXER: It’s time, Captain, it’s time....

BOYLE: Right you are. I’m going in, Joxer. Let me go, let me go – while I’ve still got me courage up.

JOXER: It ain’t me, Captain, who’s holding you back, go right ahead. (*Pushing him.*)

BOYLE (*Pushing back*): Don’t you push at me, Joxer Daly, don’t push...

Suddenly, the priest – good-looking and well-built at 45 -- emerges from stall. Seeing the Captain stopped, and sensing the old man is here for confession,

the priest points back at confessional and Boyle nods. The priest re-enters stall, and Boyle, after looking back at Joxer, enters the free stall. Joxer sits, as the green light above penitent's stall turns red; whispers are heard. In a moment, the church door opens. Juno Boyle enters. Instinctively, Joxer moves toward confessional, as if to warn Captain, but Juno enters too fast, before Joxer can warn him. Juno is dressed in a dark green dress and black shoes, with red wool sweater, holes in elbows. She's a woman about her husband's age, somewhat beautiful in a hard-working way, with salt-and-pepper hair and no spectacles.

JUNO (*whispering loudly*): Joxer Daly, where's himself?

JOXER: It's beyond me knowin', Mrs. Boyle. I came in to pray, and that's all I know.

JUNO (*ironically*): You came in here to pray, Joxer Daly, and you a man who hasn't darkened a church doorstep since Johnny's fune-ril? What Shamrocks from Bantry have you been picking? Or has the brew from St. Patrick's Irishfest got to your brain? God be praised, if you weren't caught in such a lie.

JOXER: But you know how much I'm in need of prayer, Mrs. Boyle. After all (*workng it*), isn't it fair I be praying for those who've yet to make their first million? And couldn't you say one for me on the way home? (*He tries guiding her out, but Juno's firm.*)

JUNO: Don't try tricking me, Joxer. Himself's in confessional, isn't he?

JOXER (*he can't stand up to her*): Yes, himself's in there. (*Shyly pointing.*)

JUNO: And why is it he's gone to confession after all these years?

JOXER: It's beyond me ways of knowin', Mrs. Boyle, beyond me....

JUNO: It is, is it? Well, something tells me 'tis a sin or two of his I should be knowin'.

JOXER (*lying*): It's the usual sort o' tings, Mrs. Boyle, cursin' 'n' drinkin' 'n' idleness, those sort o' tings.

JUNO: Joxer Daly, that may be part of his agenda, but that's not what brought him into church after 18 years away. So what's it -- has he got a little girlfriend?

JOXER: Nothing like that, Mrs. Boyle – (*mumbling out of the side of his mouth*) though that's not a bad idea, if you ask me, if you can find one, do...

JUNO: What did you say, Joxer? Speak up, you old fool!

JOXER (*a bit loudly*): I said, it's nothing like that; it'd be a bad idea to find one, too.

JUNO: Whatever 'tis, I'll find out. Now, are you going to confess, too?

JOXER (*his smile's disappeared; speaking hesitantly*): I-I-I suppose I am, Mrs. Boyle. I...

JUNO: Good, it's about time you were makin' your peace with God. You know, a little faith could turn even you 'round, Joxer Daly, just like the Captain.

JOXER (*trying to fathom her meaning*): Yes, it's about time I was making my peace with the Lord, all right. (*Bluffing.*) I agree with you one hundred percent, Mrs. Boyle.

JUNO: Yes, you won't regret so many things when ya make a clean confession, Joxer. I go every month myself, and I always feel better after I've made my peace with God through the Father. You know, Father Michael Murphy is a gem of a man, and it won't hurt you to get to know him.

JOXER: I suppose you're right; God never closed a door when he didn't open two or three windows.

JUNO: Yes, I expect you'll have to close a door or two in confession to open up even one window for the rest o' your life. Same goes for the Captain.

JOXER: That's right, Mrs. Boyle, it goes for the both of us.

JUNO: Good, now I've got to head home. But I'm going to find out soon why the Captain's at confession for the first time in almost 20 years. Mum's the word, Joxer, or I'll have your heart for supper.

JOXER: And I know why, Mrs. Boyle, it just wouldn't be right.

JUNO: What good does it do to talk to you, confidentially anyway; your right ear is in his grimy mouth, when his grimy ear isn't in your mouth. Still, I'll get to the bottom o' this.

JOXER: To the bottom o' this, then, Mrs. Boyle, that's where we need to go, if the Good Lord is willing. (*Gesturing for her to leave.*)

JUNO: Now, when himself gets out, you pretend I wasn't here, right? But you tell him he'd best head home for supper -- tell him a little bird told you it's a special meal. It'll be liver or Dublin Coddle, he hates both, and my money says he should bet on liver, but don't tell him that.

JOXER: Yes, Mrs. Boyle.

JUNO (*exiting*): God bless you, Joxer Daly, because I doubt anyone else would.

(*Stall curtain opens; light turns green. Captain emerges and heads for a pew. Joxer is kneeling again.*)

JOXER (*nervous*): Captain, how's yourself? (*Looking back*) And how did it go in there?

BOYLE (*relieved*): Mother o' God, it's like I've been waiting a lifetime to get all those things off me chest.

JOXER: What did you tell Father Michael -- everything?

BOYLE: For a fact, I did. I even told him about the big one. I didn't want to, but...

JOXER: You told him about that, too? What'd he say?

BOYLE: He says, 'All's well that ends well.' Now, isn't that a fine thing to say in confession.

JOXER: Did he give you any ideas about how to tell your wife and family?

BOYLE: He said, 'Just leave it up to the Lord. You'll divulge the news when He wants you to.' Fine words -- but now I'm thinkin' Juno'd have a flare-up if she found out from anyone but me. And even if I tell her, I'll be lucky if she doesn't boil me alive.

JOXER I know. You'll tell your wife a lot before long. Tis your usual way o' doin' things.

BOYLE: Yeah, Joxer. Mrs. Boyle won't understand, unless I let her know I confessed. It's me only chance. She'll understand, Joxer, won't she? She's a darlin' woman, and I should be thankin' me lucky stars she's still around. Know what I mean?

JOXER (*looking back*): I'm not sure, Captain. But, I mean -- Mrs. Boyle's a darlin' woman. Didn't she stand behind Mary after your Johnny died and that four-flusher Bentham left her high and dry? But don't talk so loud, Captain. Tis a church.

BOYLE (*half-whispering*): You're right, Joxer. Bentham was nothin' but a jackass, while John Fitzgerald is next to St. Peter. God, I'm grateful Charlie and us became friends. What a darlin' man!

JOXER: Yes, Captain. A darlin' man.

The church door opens. A handsome young woman of about 28 enters, wearing a red and green dress and blue shoes, carrying a brown purse. Boyle is just starting his penance. She walks over to where Boyle and Joxer are 'praying'.

DIANE: Excuse me, Gentlemen.

BOYLE (*he's only half-praying*): G'day, Miss. Anything we can do for you?

DIANE: Yes. Is the priest hearing confessions Father Michael Murphy?

JOXER: That he is, Father Michael himself.

DIANE: Good. No one answered the rectory door. I was worried he might be out.

BOYLE: I'm not an expert on the comings and goings of priests, but 'tis Father Michael you've found.

DIANE (*looking at Joxer*): Have you been here long?

JOXER: It seems so, but we've probably been here about 15 minutes, right Captain?

BOYLE: Aye, Joxer.

DIANE: By the way, my name is Diane, Diane Fitzgerald. I've just flown in from the States, looking to learn about my family history, while doing some business, too.

BOYLE: I'm Captain Jack Boyle and this is me pal, Joxer Daly. (*They shake hands.*) Flown in? I've heard there's some aeroplane traffic about these days;

what an invention; but I didn't know you could fly in from the States. And you say you're a Fitzgerald? That's me son-in-law's name – John Fitzgerald.

DIANE: I took a roundabout route, from Chicago to New York to Paris to Liverpool to here. Where's John's family from?

BOYLE: Well, I know his ancestors came from Limerick; I don't know much more about them than that.

DIANE: My ancestors did, too, but I don't know the details yet. I'll go there to learn more.

BOYLE: My son-in-law's a doctor. He's given me plenty of relief for the pain in me legs the last 17 or 18 years. He's a real gentleman.

DIANE: My company has asked me to live here a year, to set up a branch office. Sarah & Sons is in the export-import business. I hope I meet your son-in-law, soon.

BOYLE: Oh, it wouldn't be much trouble. John's home every night by six, unless he makes a late house-call. Usually he's home until six, the next mornin'. You can phone him. His number's 1-6-8-8.

DIANE: That's a plan, Captain Boyle.

JOXER: Yes, 'tis a fine plan.

DIANE: I'm staying at the Green Coulee Hotel on O'Connell Street. Where do you live, Captain?

BOYLE: My wife and me stay at 1-4-8 Gallagher Road, a few blocks away. We even have a telly-phone. The number's 1-9-1-6. Joxer and me can take you there now, to meet me Missus and have tea. I'd invite you for supper, but Mrs. Boyle might be cookin' liver, and most people don't love it like she does, includin' me.

DIANE: I wouldn't want to inconvenience you, Mr. Boyle. Could I stop by another time? I've just arrived and have to get a bit more situated.

BOYLE: Yes, that'll be fine. Meantime, Joxer and me will stock provisions for your visit. Now, it's time for me to go to supper. Mrs. Boyle'll have a flare-up if I'm not there on-time. (*Winking to Joxer*)

JOXER: Yes, master o' her domain, she is, master o' her domain.

DIANE: Good, then I'll look forward to seeing you again soon. Maybe I can visit Doctor Fitzgerald and his family, too. Well, it was nice meeting both of you.

BOYLE: And it was decent meetin' you, too.

Captain and Joxer exit. The priest emerges from stall, and goes over to Diane.

DIANE: Hello. Are you Father Michael 'Rocky' Murphy? I'm Diane Fitzgerald, in from America.

FR. MICHAEL: Yes, 'tis me himself. *(They shake hands.)* And the Rocky comes from the rocks I knocked from guys' heads in the ring. Once or twice, they did the same to me.

DIANE: I did hear you're a boxer.

FR. MICHAEL: Make that was – *was* a boxer. Don't do it anymore. Bad for me health.

DIANE: I understand, Father, but I did hear you were a very good boxer.

FR. MICHAEL: I held me own, especially versus Billy Quinn for the championship in 1922...

Organ plays Beethoven's 'Song of Joy'; as hymn, it's, Van Dyke's 'Joyful, Joyful'.

FR. MICHAEL *(loudly)*: It's getting a bit loud here. Let's go to the rectory, to talk.

DIANE *(loudly, too)*: Yes, Father. That's a good idea.

They exit, as music comes up louder.

Act II, Scene 1

Action: The living room and kitchen of the Boyles' apartment, just before supper, same day. The Boyles have moved up modestly in class since 1922, with aid from Mary's family. There's a radio, stage right, with telephone on top. Further back, offstage right, is Juno and the Captain's bedroom. Also at back is a cabinet with delftware. Above is a picture of the Sacred Heart, with smaller picture of the Blessed Virgin below. Also on cabinet is a red votive candle. Stage left, is hallway door. Juno is cooking, also stage left. Table has

delftware and utensils on it. A small ice-box and cupboard are near. A shared bathroom is in hall. Near the fire is a rocking chair. Center right is a couch. Magazines are stacked by it, old issues of 'Picture Post'. Juno hums "Immaculate Mary," as she works. Mary, her daughter, enters from bedroom. She's auburn-haired, pretty, in her late 30s, with a bright, empathetic mind.

MARY: Ma, where are the photos you had of my brother Johnny? I remember in the old apartment you kept them on the bedroom shelf. Since you moved last year, everything's shifted. Now, I can't find them.

JUNO: They're in the cabinet out here, bottom drawer. I had them in a box until the other day. (*Smiling.*) Something just said, "We're gonna need them soon." Now they're in an album.

MARY (*she sets down her own pictures, opens cabinet drawer, and finds album*): Yes, they're here. I wanted to compare my Johnny's early pictures with Johnny Boyle's. I brought a few of my Johnny's here. (*She sits on couch with Boyle family pictures.*) I'd like to make another family album and could use one or two pictures of Johnny Boyle for it, too.

JUNO: (*turning liver in pan over fire, glancing at Mary*): What are you finding out, Mary?

MARY: There's a real resemblance in the two of them, early. Now I'm comparing their teen pictures, when Johnny started chumming with the Republicans, a couple years before he had his own troubles. There aren't many photos of my brother here, but maybe enough. Yes, there's a resemblance later, too.

JUNO (*placing a tray of sliced bread and butter on kitchen table*): I suppose it needs sayin' that your brother was a good boy and would have been a successful man, if he'd steered clear of a couple of bad Republicans, though we do have a republic today, because enough good men put it through.

MARY: That's true, Ma. I hope my own Johnny appreciates the good things we have today, but I still wish Johnny Boyle were around to enjoy them with us.

JUNO: Yes, my Johnny never had his own family, but he did add to ours while he lived.

MARY: Yes, he did. I remember when he was 6 or 7, pulling home turf on his rickety, old wagon from them that had plenty, to burn on our fire.

JUNO: Yes, I wish I had a picture of him doin' that. He was a scrapper then.

MARY: Who was to know they'd kill him. I don't know what Johnny did to anger those men, but something wasn't right about it. My God, this country asks a lot from its young people. It's almost too much for some – impossible for others.

JUNO: I was glad enough when your little Shivaun, then your own Johnny, came along. And none of you might be here today, if it weren't for John. What a lifesaver.

MARY: Yes, imagine, meeting a doctor soon after Johnny died, because Da was tryin' to relieve (*exaggerating her father's accent*) “the pain in me legs”, and John marryin' me, with another man's child just-born, and few prospects for Shivaun and me.

JUNO: Well, he fell for you as fast as you for him. Now, you couldn't have a church weddin', but, thank the Lord, you were able to get back with the Church later. It might have been different if you'd been divorced. Thank God you never married Bentham, because any man who loses our inheritance, by mis-writing the Will, and makes you pregnant, leaving you high and dry, deserves Hell on Earth.

MARY: Yes, we're happy we're still Catholic. It would've been terrible, if we hadn't been allowed back in. I don't know why it's taking Da and Joxer so long to turn round. They can be such bloody fools.

JUNO: Yes, they're not truly good yet. But your Da did have a revelation. He told me the other day he woke up one night in a cold sweat. He'd seen himself lyin' still, killed by a bullet, like my Johnny. It must have been too much for him; he went to confession today.

MARY: You're teasin', right?

JUNO: No. But tis a secret that helped turn him round. If I'm any judge of me power, he'll be tellin' me this Lent what that secret is. (*Putting pitcher of milk on table. The entry door opens and in comes Boyle.*) Well, it's about time you're home. Mary's here, too. She had to be in the neighborhood this noon, to visit Mrs. Murray, so she stopped in here for supper.

BOYLE: Hello, Mary. How are you?

MARY: Fine, Da, and you?

BOYLE: Fine.

MARY (*teasing*): The liver smells good, and I know how much you love liver.

BOYLE (*grimacing*): You do, do you? (*Thinking better of it.*) Well, at least my lovely daughter and wife will be here to enjoy it with me.

MARY (*pleased*): My, Da, why are you in such a good mood?

BOYLE: Just put it down to good livin', for once in my life.

JUNO: Like I said, what's up, Captain?

BOYLE: Well, Joxer and me were just saying our prayers... first time in 18-plus years. It helped me insides.

JUNO: That isn't all it helped, I'll wager. Anything else you want to be tellin' us?

BOYLE (*hesitating*): No, there's nothin' else needs tellin' now. But I do feel like a terrible weight's been lifted from me chest.

JUNO: Really? Well, you're goin' to have to be unburdening more of yourself soon.

BOYLE (*defensively*): What are you sayin', Mrs. Boyle? I said a terrible weight's been lifted from me chest. It doesn't need to be lifted again, does it?

JUNO: We'll see. (*Changing subject.*) Mary, tell your Da about the pictures?

MARY: Oh, Da, I just found some old pictures of the two Johnnys, and I know you'd like to see them. (*She motions to couch, and they sit.*) First of all, here's a picture of my brother Johnny at two, and here's one of my own Johnny at three. What do you think?

BOYLE: Like twins. (*Showing Juno.*) Isn't it amazin', Mrs. Boyle? We're all family, no doubt about it.

JUNO: 'Tis striking. I wonder what my Johnny'd say today if he could see his nephew.

MARY: He'd probably kick a football with my Johnny, teach him about girls and shavin'.

BOYLE: Aye, tis too bad our Johnny wasn't more impressed by girls.

MARY (*looking to her right.*) Should I turn on the new radio while we eat, Ma?

JUNO: That'll be fine, Dear. It's a beautiful device.

MARY (*getting up and turning radio on*): It's 6 o'clock, time for BBC News.

ANNOUNCER: I'm Molly Zita-Robbins. Britain is still at war. In accounts from Warsaw smuggled out by Polish resisters, it appears Germans are rounding up Jews and herding them onto trains. The British Prime Minister said: "We shall not abide the despotic power of Hitler, in Poland, Britain, or the rest of Europe. This is developing into another Great War, and Britain shall not let freedom die in any land. We will restore democracy on the Continent, without unfairly sacrificing our sons and daughters.'"

MARY (*turning radio off*): Ma, what do you think about the Germans? Are they as evil as the Brits say, in this so-called Emergency?

JUNO: It's not the German people we need fear, but their leaders. Hitler's greedy for land and blood; he has people cowed. I don't know what Britain can do about it, for now.

BOYLE: Great Wars are evil, and this one is, too. I hope John doesn't enlist. We need him here.

MARY: He's not talking about enlisting, Da. He knows we've few doctors in Ireland. But he's said he hopes the war, and that's what it is, doesn't come here.

JUNO: Well, if it does, we'll have to put up or shut up. And then we'd be forced to fight.

BOYLE: Aye, put up or shut up, that's what we Irish would have to do.

MARY: But wars are such bloody businesses, sometimes you end up fighting when you don't know what you're fighting for. Look at Johnny Boyle. He was fighting a kind of war here, and he ended up killed by his own side. They may have thought him a traitor, but that doesn't mean the IRA was right about everything. He was just a scared kid, who didn't know how to protect himself in close company.

JUNO: And for all the fighting in Ireland, the North's still not free. Now, let's eat.

BOYLE: You're right, Mrs. Boyle.

(Mary and Boyle sit down at table, and Mrs. Boyle serves, after they say silent grace.)

BOYLE *(eating)*: You know, this liver tastes better than I remember. What did you put in it – champeen?

JUNO: Just a pinch o' this and a pinch o' that, and the finest calf's liver in Butcher Bob's shop. Ever since he came from London last year, he's been creatin' masterpieces with his tools and cuts of meat.

MARY: Yes, tis delicious, Ma. I've got to stop at Bob's, and get your new recipe, too.

JUNO: That's what I'm here for, Daughter-o-Mine.

The telephone rings and Juno answers it.

JUNO: Hello, Mrs. Boyle here. *(Listening.)* Yes, John, Mary's here... *(Listening, then motioning to Mary, who comes over.)* John said he's going to be a bit late tonight; he's got to make a house-call.

BOYLE: He's always makin' house-calls; wouldn't be a good doctor, if he didn't.

MARY *(taking the receiver from Juno, who sits at table)*: Hello, John. Where are you? Oh, you're still at the office. When will you be home? 9:30? Good. I'll start out from here in about an hour and be home before you. Ma and Da, John says he's looking forward to seeing you soon.

JUNO *(Loudly)*: Same here, Dear.

MARY: Well, my supper's getting cold, John, so I'll see you at home about 9:30? Yes, I love you, too. *(She hangs up, and sits back down.)*

BOYLE: It's too bad John's parents have passed on, Ambrose and Caroline, because they'd love to know more about our family. It's nice to track your family's whole story, don't you think?

MARY: Yes, Da, it's sad about their passing, but they raised a good, strong son, and still have grandchildren, like you and Ma have. What about your family, and Ma's? Do ya know much more about them, these days?

JUNO: We know my Ma, along with my sister, raised not only me, but a bit of you and Shivaun, too, before they died, but my Da died before he saw either of his grandkids -- you know that. What about you, Captain?

BOYLE: I know me Ma and Da died before they saw their grandkids, and they went to a finer place than they ever knew here. But you know about cousin Ellison and all that, Mary. I didn't have brothers or sisters, really. The kids I was raised with were cousins, and it took me a long time to talk about the nasty things we did to each other.

MARY: Like what, Da?

BOYLE: Like when my cousin Larry and me run up against the law for stealin' candy from Ol' Mr. Kennedy's store. God Almighty, I thought the gard'd put us in jail for sure. But he just kicked us each once in the seat o' the pants and told us to straighten up, fly right. Larry told the gard he hadn't swiped the sweet poison; I had. Never did I steal candy again after that. (*Looks.*) Well, almost never.

JUNO (*smiles at Mary, who smiles back*): Tell Mary about when you and Kenny O'Kelly went off the deep end of the Liffey pier, and had to be pulled up by your bootstraps.

BOYLE: Yes, well Kenny 'n' me, we went down to the Liffey, to meet some fish. There was some sort of fryin' kind we were after. Before I knew what happened, Kenny was pokin' me with his pole and I was pokin' him back. Next thing you know, we poked each other into the river! By the grace o' God, there was a fisherman close-by who saw us and pulled us up. Neither one of us boys could swim, though I'd go to sea later. I was good at sea, because I knew me limits, at least it seemed I did: I stayed away from the railings and close to the innermost. In any case, Kenny 'n me were blessed that day, I tell you.

MARY: And your other cousins, Da. Did they go fishing with you, too?

BOYLE: Just little Sheila, the runt o' me Aunt Susie's litter. She may have been small, but she could fish with the best. And she was cute to boot.

JUNO: She was your only cousin still free when I married you, Captain. Tis a pity she married that Australian gentleman at 17 and moved there with him. She was cute and fun.

BOYLE (*sipping milk*): Aye, I'll bet she grew to be six foot tall, a regular Amazon! (*The women laugh.*) Well, stranger things have happened, Ladies.

(*The telephone rings again. Juno finishes eating, then clears table.*)

MARY (*answering phone*): Hello. Yes, this is Mary, Mrs. Murray. Is everything okay? It's your heart? Well, the pills are on top of your bedroom dresser. I told you that when I was there this noon. I'll wait while you get them. Ma, I'll help you with those when I'm off the phone.

JUNO: That's okay, Mary. You take care of Mrs. Murray first.

MARY: Da, will you bring my coat from the bedroom. Even if Mrs. Murray finds her medicine, I'll need it before long.

BOYLE: Aye, Mary. (*Boyle enters bedroom; Juno hums "Danny Boy", working. Boyle emerges with coat and a sweater.*) Here you are, Mary. It may be getting colder tonight, so you'd best take this sweater, too. (*He gives them to her, sits down on the couch, and looks through a 'Picture Post'.*)

MARY: Thanks, Da. I just might need it. (*On phone again.*) Yes, Mrs. Murray, I knew they'd be there. Can you take them okay? Remember: One now, and one at bedtime. Then you'll be fine. I know it's scary when your chest hurts, but the pills will help. After you've taken each one, lie down a while. You should feel better soon. If not, give me or John a call, here or at home. Now, take your pill. (*Waiting.*) That's it, Mrs. Murray. I hope you feel better soon. Have a good night. Yes, good-bye. (*She hangs up, goes to kitchen, and begins drying dishes.*)

JUNO: Is Mrs. Murray okay, Mary?

MARY: Yes, she found her pills. I don't know what she would do without them. They help in two ways -- they're part crutch, but they also stimulate her heart, when the blood's not flowing right.

JUNO (*continuing to work*): I probably could use one myself, at times. I've plenty of stress on my old heart in bad times. Thank goodness, we're going through a better time.

MARY: Yes, we've been fortunate lately. The poor people on the Continent are fighting a war, but at least it hasn't touched us yet.

JUNO: We should be thankful; our situation used to be much worse.

MARY: It's true, Ma. When John came into our lives, Johnny Boyle had just left. But when the Lord closed one door, he opened a window. He truly works in mysterious ways.

JUNO: Do you think you should check on Mrs. Murray again? I can get the dishes, Mary.

MARY: Would you mind, Ma? I'd just like to make sure she gets her pills, and lies down.

JUNO: You stop there. But it'll be dark soon; so get to your house by sunset.

MARY: All right. (*She puts on sweater and coat and kisses Boyle.*) Bye, Da, I have to go.

BOYLE: Aye. 'Twas good seein' ya again, Darlin'. Will you be all right?

MARY: I'll be fine, Da. Thanks for looking at the photos with me. (*She picks up her photos plus two of her mother's.*) Ma, will it be okay if I borrow these two of Johnny Boyle?

JUNO: Of course, Dear. Just make sure you get them back to me after you make copies. Paul's Camera can do them reasonably. (*Coming out of kitchen.*)

MARY: I'll have them back to you soon. I can even drop them by before I visit Mrs. Murray this weekend. Or maybe Teddy Nelson, Paul's man, can drop them back to you. I can talk with him.

JUNO (*drying her hands on apron, then buttoning Mary's top button*): Either way's fine, Dear. In any case, twas good to see you, Mary. See you again soon. (*Hugging her.*)

BOYLE (*getting up and kissing his daughter on the cheek*): Yes, Mary. By the way, me and Joxer met an American lady today, Diane Fitzgerald; she said her ancestors are from Limerick no less. We should have her over for supper, so she can meet you and John. She's nice -- said she'd phone us soon. We'll all get on like Kenny O'Kelly and me did, before we went into the Liffey. (*They laugh.*)

MARY: I hope so. Thanks for supper.

JUNO: Say hi to Mrs. Murray from us. Tell her to take her pills, eat, and sleep right. After Mr. Murray's death, she was almost a shut-in, but thank goodness she's allowed you and your family to visit her lately.

MARY: Yes, she's got more faith in people now than she did right after her husband died. That was 10 years ago already. She's holding her own at 82.

JUNO: It doesn't hurt that Father Michael hears her confession and brings communion Sundays. He may have been a boxer once, but he takes off his gloves for the Lord's work.

MARY: Yes, he's a fine man and priest. Well, thanks again. (*Juno and Boyle smile and nod.*) We love you two very much, so take care, until we see you next.

JUNO: We will, Dear. Say hi to John and the children.

MARY: I will. See you soon. (*She opens the door and exits.*)

BOYLE (*waving*): Don't talk to any strangers, Mary.

MARY (*in the distance*); I won't, Da. Thanks!

BOYLE (*closing the door*): That girl is magical, Mrs. Boyle, don't you think?

JUNO: Yes, she is, Captain... Oh, I just remembered -- Mrs. McCarthy is baking a cake for her grandson's birthday tomorrow, and asked me for some flour. (*Going to the kitchen, she pours flour from canister into a bowl.*) I need to talk with you about earlier today, but it'll have to wait. Meanwhile, you be on your best behavior, and don't go out nippin' brew with Joxer. Though you two have been better lately, Joxer still likes mischief. Did you hear, Captain?

BOYLE (*nodding as Juno exits*): You can count on me, Mrs. Boyle. I'm never going to drink again -- Never! (*As front door closes, Boyle goes to phone and dials.*) C'mon, Katie Lynn McShane, answer the bloody telly-phone! Katie -- it's Captain Boyle. Is Joxer there? Then let me talk to him. (*He drums his fingers on the radio, then pulls something from his pocket.*) Joxer, the Missus just left. I don't feel right about me confession. Juno might find out about the big one, too soon. And I've got to contact you-know-who. If Mrs. Boyle finds out too soon, something bad'll happen. I've got her phone number, but I don't want to call her till you and me have talked. Okay, I'll meet you at McGinty's in 10 minutes. Maybe I can get back home before Mrs. Boyle misses me. Very

funny – if you were married, your missus'd be used to missin' you, too. (*He slams the receiver down.*) Damn that Joxer -- he's a smart one now, and forever will he be one! (*He gets his coat from bedroom and exits. Lights out.*)

Act II, Scene 2

Action: The Boyles' apartment, the next Tuesday. There are extra chairs at back. The guests haven't arrived. Juno stirs a pot of stew and replenishes the fire with turf. Next, she goes to cupboard and retrieves two loaves of bread. She gets butter from icebox, humming "If You Ever Go Across the Sea to Ireland" There's a knock at the door. Juno opens it. It's Joxer, holding beret.

JUNO: Joxer! What a surprise. (*He's suddenly deathly afraid to come in, slams his beret back on his head, and turns to leave.*) Oh no, you don't, Mr. Joxer Daly! (*She grabs his belt in back and pulls him into apartment. She walks him over to the couch and forces him to sit.*) Now, what brings you here?

JOXER (*Out-of-place, but with a bit of courage*): I, I, I came to meet Captain Boyle, and I didn't think you were here. Mrs. Madigan said I should be here... (*half under his breath*) Bloody Madigan Mischief... (*louder*) but I don't know why she said that.

JUNO: Okay, you're here, so tell me more about the other day – the Captain's confession, and how you figure in. You don't have to stumble over words, just tell me what happened, and what the good and bad news is.

JOXER (*nervously moving beret in hands*): Well, I'm not used to puttin' my mind at rest like this. No disrespect, Mrs. Boyle, but it's been a long time since I've been in your home when you've been present and accounted for. But, it's like this – the Captain is settin' on somethin', somethin' like, well, like a... good deal... yes, a good deal. You see, we are about to do some work in trade for some furniture. That is, if we play our cards right. But the Captain thinks if he tells you now, he won't get the deal that's cookin' It's part superstition, yet 'tis strong superstition just the same.

JUNO: When is this good deal going to happen, Joxer Daly?

JOXER: Oh, around Easter.

JUNO: Doesn't sound like superstition to me, but guilt for mixing business and Easter comings and goings. How do you propose the Captain let the cat out of the bag?

JOXER (*More guarded*): Well, I don't know, but the Captain'll know -- when it's time. If he tells you when it's right, it will be because he's handled things right and gone away from sin. And if he thinks he's done that, maybe it'll be because he has.

JUNO: He has a funny way of doing things, but I think that's a fair summ'n' up, Joxer, though the Truth will win out. I'll know what to do when the time's right. Now, you'd better go find the Captain and bring him home. We'll be eating as soon as Mary and John's family and Diane get here, so hurry. One other thing, Joxer, why did you tell me this? For 18 years we haven't spoken a civil word to one another?

JOXER: Well, Mrs. Boyle... I've met a lady meself. And she likes me just for being me! I don't want to jinx my chances with her by seeing my pal foul it up any more with you. I know it sounds strange, but stranger things have happened. Mum's the word, Mrs. Boyle?

JUNO (*smiling*): Mum's the word. I'd guess that's a good confession, so, out you go. But tell the Captain to bring you along for supper this time. Cook up a reason. Tell him you saved my life on the street today, and I asked you to join us, in thanks. Then relieve his misery by letting him know that what you did, any Paddy off the street could do, and that you didn't really save my life, just made me laugh. Tell him that.

Having pushed Joxer out the door, Juno returns to the fire, to stir and taste the stew. She then turns on the radio. Billie Holiday sings "Pennies from Heaven", and Juno dances. Next, she slices bread, to the beat. She plates slices. There's a knock -- she turns radio off and answers it. It's Mary, John, and their children. John Sr. is tall and handsome, about 45, with brown beard, full head of hair, and wire-rims. He wears a brown suit with black shoes and tie. His heavy overcoat is dark blue; he has two bottles of wine. Shivaun is 16, pretty and firey, with red hair. She wears a bright red dress, dark blue shoes, and coat. Her freckles stun. John Jr. is 14, medium build, with brown hair. He's less presumptuous than his quick-wit half-sister, but a bit feisty, too. He wears black pants and tie, white shirt, and heavy brown overcoat. His shoes are black. He's handsome, intelligent, empathetic.

JUNO: Hello, all. It's good to see you.

MARY and JOHN: Hello, Ma.

KIDS: Hi, Gran'.

JUNO (*motioning them to couch*): Come and sit. The Captain and Joxer should be here soon. I asked Joxer to come, too, so it'll be an unusual supper for a couple reasons. What's become of Diane Fitzgerald?

MARY: Oh, she'll be here soon, Ma. She had to go back to her hotel to change clothes. She won't be long.

JUNO: Good, I'm looking forward to meeting her.

JUNO (*She grabs the coats, goes into the bedroom, emerges, and hands the teenagers some 'Picture Post's.*): Children, I know these magazines once were your parents, but if you haven't read far in them, you can read more now. (*Pointing to something.*) I see there's a story on animals at the London Zoo here. I read the whole story; it's first-rate. Tells all about the funny things the animals do for people, and how the kids love them. Look at the picture of a penguin reading a newspaper. It's very funny!

SHIVAUN (*laughing*): He reminds me of a teacher of mine, Mr. Engen. Shouldn't say this, but I'll bet old Mr. Engen would look just like that penguin, if you dress him in tie and tails and hand him a newspaper.

JOHNNY: Mr. Engen'll be on your case a year, if he finds out you're comparin' him to a readin' penguin.

JOHN SR.: That's enough, you two. Mr. Engen taught you to read and write, Shivaun, not berate teachers. (*To Juno*) He teaches English at Patrick Pearse, and better than this photo suggests.

(A knock at door. Mary answers it, as Juno returns to the fire and stirs stew.)

MARY (*opening door*): Oh hello, Diane. Mother, it's Diane Fitzgerald.

Diane enters, wearing a dark green overcoat, which Mary takes from her. Underneath, Diane wears a dark blue dress with a bright red scarf and shoes.

JUNO (*shaking hands*): Welcome to this humble home, Miss Fitzgerald. It's a pleasure to meet you.

DIANE: The pleasure's mine, Mrs. Boyle. I've heard a lot about you – do call me Diane.

JUNO (*laughing*): Fine. All great and grand, I hope!

DIANE: Yes. I've looked forward to meeting you and seeing Captain and Joxer again.

JUNO: Yes, Captain and Joxer'll be along soon. Meantime, Mary, get a chair or two. (*Mary obliges. Juno to Diane.*) I've got some photographs for you to look at. (*Juno goes looking for the album.*)

JOHN SR.: Children, move over. You sit on chairs and let Diane and your Gran' have the couch. (*The two teenagers do as told.*) Now, what would you like to drink? I've brought two bottles of good French wine. It's a bit dry, but will wet your whistle.

DIANE: Yes. This bottle will be fine. (*Sipping the cup just poured.*) It's Merlow, isn't it?

JOHN SR.: Right. Do you know it?

DIANE: I used to drink it by the half-gallon at suppers with customers. It went well with beef, and there's a lot of that consumed in Chicago.

JOHN SR.: The American Midwest – Heart of the U.S.A?

DIANE: Heart and Soul.

MARY: Yes, you must have been happy in Chicago.

DIANE: Reasonably, but the adventure of living there began to wear thin, which may be why I was transferred here – that and I couldn't drink with the big-shots anymore. Too much of it makes me sick. One glass now hits the spot. This morning, I signed a deal with a new customer worth 100,000 pounds. Before, I'd drink half the night over that, but no more of that early death for me.

MARY: Your business was very good today. Have you learned anything new about the Irish, so far?

DIANE: Well, I learned your John's da fought in the trenches at Arras in 1915, same as my da. What did the poet Sassoon say? "When all is said and done, the war was mainly a matter of holes and ditches."

JOHN SR.: Yes, men mowed down by the thousands by machine-gun fire, charging across "No Man's Land" -- all to move the line inches. It must have been Hell for those men. My da used to say he'd never enlist in anybody's army after that, even if they asked him to fight Hitler.

MARY: Hitler is evil, and our men may have to fight him more, but I still don't see why the Great War had to be fought. It was two-way power politics. Neither side was just.

JOHN SR.: Some people say Hitler would have never come to power, if the Great War hadn't been fought. It had to do with war reparations the Germans had to pay – they depleted their economy, making Hitler's rise possible. That, and America's Army left Europe. President Wilson was sick, didn't live long enough to see his League of Nations take hold. Some say he lived longer than he should have. Either way, the Great War wasn't Great, and led to this war, which should be called 'World War II'.

SHIVAUN: Hitler's a twirp! He wants land and power and will stop at nothin' to take them. It says so in this magazine.

JOHNNY: Oh Shivaun, rest up. What do you know about Hitler?

SHIVAUN: I know he came to power in 1933 and hates Jews and Catholics.

MARY: Who told you that, Shivaun?

SHIVAUN (*mischievously*): Funny thing: I learned it from Mr. Engen.

JOHN SR.: Well, Mr. Engen knows more than you first gave him credit for, doesn't he, Daughter?

SHIVAUN: I may have been a little hasty, Da, but he still looks like a penguin.

DIANE: What's this?

MARY: The children were looking at a magazine photo of a penguin looking like he's reading, and Shivaun said it looked like her English teacher.

JOHN SR.: It's a bad habit of hers – comparing teachers to animals. I've tried to break her of it, but she's as notoriously tenacious as ever.

JUNO (*returning with picture album*): I got lost a minute in me own bedroom. I thought I knew where this family album was, but it was in the closet, not where I put it. Here, have a look. (*She hands it to Diane, then stirs pot.*)

MARY: Ma, I put it in the bedroom closet, after we looked at it last week. Didn't I tell you?

JUNO: Either my mind or my hearing must be slipping.

MARY: Look here, Children. That's your Uncle Johnny Boyle when he was small. You know a little about him, but you don't know about when he was small. He was a real character then.

JOHNNY FITZGERALD: What kind o' character, Ma?

MARY: When he was just a tyke, he'd pull his rickety, old wagon to the neighbors and gather a few pieces of their extra turf, to bring home for our fire. When he got home, he'd look so proud and tell Gran' he'd saved the fire again. It was great theater, if a little sad.

JUNO: I was so proud of him. I'd have given my life to not see Johnny die at IRA hands.

JOHNNY FITZGERALD: And why did he die?

JUNO: The IRA said he gave away a Republican man. He didn't really turn traitor, but they murdered him all the same. It must have been a case of mistaken identity. Our Ireland is still a cruel mistress.

DIANE: It seems that way, sometimes.

(The front door opens and the Captain and Joxer enter.)

BOYLE: Hello, everyone. How you doin'?

JUNO: Where have you been, Captain?

BOYLE: Joxer and me have just been transacting some business – makin' a deal. I'll tell you about it later.

JUNO *(only partly mollified)*: Okay, as long as you tell us sooner rather than later. I'm glad you brought Joxer round for supper; he made me laugh today.

BOYLE: Aye, Mrs. Boyle, I know. As for everybody else, how's my fav-rite group of humanity?

SHIVAUN: Grandda, how many Nazis does it take to screw in a light bulb?

BOYLE: You've got me, Shivaun -- how many?

SHIVAUN: Twenty-one – 20 to kill the Communist ladder-holder and one to study a year to figure out how it goes in.

JOHNNY: And you know the Communist ladder-holder don't ya, Sis?

BOYLE: That's a good one, Shivaun. But what does the Pope say for grace?

SHIVAUN: In the name of the Father, Son, and Holy Ghost. Whoever eats the fastest gets the most!

BOYLE: You're learnin', Darlin', you're learnin'.

JUNO: Speaking of eating, everything's ready. Come and sit, Everyone. (*The group sits.*) Now Captain, since you're the expert on grace, you say it for us.

BOYLE: I'm not an expert on anything, except eatin' and drinkin', but here goes: Lord, thank you for bringin' us all together today, to eat this food and drink this wine... and milk. If You're willin', let us all be together at Easter, too. And let us be treasures on this Earth for a very long time, before You lead us to Heaven when our days are done.

EVERYONE: Amen! (*Lights out.*)

Ten-Minute Intermission.

Act III, Scene 1

Action: A pub on O'Casey Avenue, late Holy Thursday afternoon. Stage right is the bar. The bartender is Ray O'Reilly, a friend of Captain and Joxer's. Tyler and Joy's Sporting Pub is owned by the Yeatses. "Belle of Belfast City," also called "I'll Tell Me Ma," is played and sung by Ray's family. Customers are at bar and tables, worker-types. A well-dressed woman. Solicitor Claudine O'Malley, wears a smart green dress, red coat, and blue hat and shoes. She nurses a gin and tonic; everyone else drinks stout. Father Murphy is talking with a man at table. Ray's wife, Polly, asks her daughter to dance. The daughter does a jig, to music. Music ends, as newsboy enters.

RAY: Hey, Alan, how's it going?

ALAN (*handing Ray a paper*): Good, Ray. Traffic's picking up on O'Casey Avenue.

RAY (*giving Alan a coin*): That's just fine, because I like it busy in here, too.

ALAN: It should be busy tonight, even if it is Holy Thursday.

RAY: Yeah, and I'm glad of it. It would make me and my family mighty poor, if people didn't patronize me place, even on religious holidays.

ALAN: Know what you mean, Ray. Well, see ya later.

RAY: Thankin' ya, Alan. Give me best to your Ma.

ALAN: Will do. *(He exits.)*

The fiddler begins plucking the melody for 'Danny Boy,' until dialogue recommences.

CLAUDINE: Barkeeper, what time is it?

BARKEEPER: It's quarter to five, Ma'am. Why?

CLAUDINE: I'm waitin' on a couple fellows; can't wait much longer.

RAY: Which coupla fellas?

CLAUDINE: Captain Jack Boyle and Joxer Daly.

RAY: Haven't seen 'em since Monday, but they come by often enough. You got business with them?

CLAUDINE: You could say that. Did you ever know a man named Charlie O'Keeffe?

RAY: Matter o' fact, I did.

CLAUDINE: Well, I'm his solicitor, Claudine O'Malley.

RAY: Pleasure to make your acquaintance, Miss O'Malley. *(They shake hands.)*

CLAUDINE: Do the fellas I'm lookin' for ever talk about Mr. O'Keeffe?

RAY *(watching his p's and q's)*: Not ta speak of.

CLAUDINE: That's good. I don't need them spreading rumors about poor old Charlie.

'Danny Boy' is plucked again, but two men start a fight; words overcome the tune.

FIRST MAN: Well now, Jerry, what makes you think you can take me, even on your best day?

SECOND MAN: Paddy, I can take you on me worst day, and today ain't me worst.

PADDY: Well then, go ahead and try it, you paltry-poor excuse for 'Two-Ton Tony'.

JERRY: I will, then, you loudmouthed hooligan.

PADDY: Loudmouth yourself.

Jerry throws a drink in Paddy's face, and Paddy punches Jerry's nose. The pair wrestle, and Ray comes out from behind bar. Father Murphy tries to referee.

FR. MICHAEL: Marquis of Queensberry Rules, Men, Marquis of Queensberry Rules!

Ray isn't able to pry the two brawlers apart, so he goes back behind bar and pulls out a handgun. He fires it into the ceiling, and the two men stop fighting, stunned by the noise.

RAY: Now, you two shake hands and make up or I'll put some lead into your bottoms and elsewhere, too. Anyone else want a piece o' me pistol? (*Silence.*) They don't call me Old-Reliable Ray O'Reilly for nothin', just like a great Army unit. (*He stashes the gun.*)

The two brawlers shake hands, then begin talking, as another customer exits.

THIRD MAN: Hey, that's my drink, Paddy.

PADDY (*drinking some*): Not anymore.

RAY: That's enough, me buckos. Make peace, not war. Remember: There are Shamrocks in Bantry, and brew enough here for every one of you, just like at St. Patrick's Irishfest.

FR. MICHAEL: Right ya are, Ray, right ya are.

PADDY: Yeah, right ya are, Ray. (*Smirking*) Let's drink to peace and love, then; 'tis as good as anything.

He drinks up. Ray fills others' glasses, while Miss O'Malley gives both Paddy and Jerry her card. Polly has signaled Ray, and now comes over to get half-pints, then heads back.

POLLY: Hey, Ray, can we get some halves.

RAY (*filling glasses, then...*): There ya go, Me Beautiful Wife -- that should keep the family happy a while.

POLLY: Thanks, Dear. I hope business picks up again, after that tiff.

RAY: It should, Me Darlin' Polly, it should.

Captain and Joxer enter. Captain's wearing a green shirt..

BOYLE: What happened here, Ray? A tiny typhoon?

RAY: Sort of. We had us a near-donnybrook, but I took care of it with me pistol. So, what'll you have, Fellas? Or are ya still on that no-Guinness-for-me regime?

BOYLE: Aye, Ray. Two orange juices.

RAY: I'll set 'em right up for you.

BOYLE: Thanks. (*Turning to Claudine.*) Miss O'Malley, 'tis a fine day today. My pal Joxer and me have been noticin' the weather, inside and outside. (*The two brawlers exit. Priest moves to where they'd been and sits; the man he'd been talking with, comes over and also sits.*) What's our deal today? What did Charlie want us to have -- before he died suddenly in that auto accident in America?

CLAUDINE: You know the deal, Captain: you get 60%, 40% for me, like I've been saying all along.

BOYLE: Well now, t'other day, Joxer and me were talkin' with another solicitor, and he says it's highway robbery, that deal you been cookin' up this Lent.

CLAUDINE: Take it or leave it, Gentlemen.

BOYLE: Not so fast, Miss O'Malley. Our friend says we can take you to court and get a lot more than 60% from you. That's what Charlie wanted -- he had it in his Will.

CLAUDINE: Well, to be truthful, I could hold this whole matter up in court a few months, or even longer. You might never see a penny of Charlie's money.

BOYLE: That's a possibility, but I say 'tis time we both put up or shut up.

CLAUDINE: What do you mean?

JOXER: Tell her, Captain.

BOYLE: Miss O'Malley, I been chewin' on this...I need three-quarters of Charlie's 100,000 pounds, or 75,000. My solicitor-friend says no good solicitor takes more than 25%. We got Rights on our side -- not like when my daughter's first man-friend fouled up our inheritance from cousin Ellison, 18 years ago.

CLAUDINE: You may have your Rights, but I have mine, too, and I deserve a decent share of Charlie's inheritance. His estate was in a big mess, until I started working on it. You're just lucky he stuck to his guns about you two. It seemed like a drinkers' night out to me. Not to Charlie O'Keefe. But you'd still best be taking what I offer, because no one will think you were longtime friends of Charlie's.

BOYLE (*he's memorized this*): We respect that, Miss O'Malley, but maybe this will do better. If you'll take just a little bit less than 40,000 pounds, say 30,000, we can do business. If that ain't good enough, we won't have any choice but to take you to court and draw things out, even if neither one o' us gets the money.

CLAUDINE: Seeing you put it that way, Captain, we might have a deal, if you're willing to sign the papers soon. But I want 35% for my work, 35,000 pounds. Your take will be 65,000. Should I draw up the papers?

BOYLE (*looking at Joxer, then Miss O'Malley, then back at Joxer*): That you should, Miss O'Malley. Joxer, Me Boyo, what d'ya say you and me head to my place for a tasty beef and potato supper?

JOXER: Sounds grand, Captain. (*Drinking up.*) Ah! I'm getting in the habit of me orange juice, and Miss O'Malley brings out the best in me thirst.

BOYLE: Miss O'Malley, if you'll call me when papers are ready, we'll do real business.

CLAUDINE: Yes, we will. I'll phone you when they're ready. (*Boyle nods.*) I have to be goin' myself. I'll be in touch. (*She starts to pay.*)

BOYLE: It's me treat, Miss O'Malley. (*Puts coins on bar.*) I'm feelin' right 'bout us now.

CLAUDINE: Thanks, Captain. (*They shake.*) I'll see you and Mr. Daly soon, then?

BOYLE: Aye, we'll see you soon.

(*Miss O'Malley exits.*)

BOYLE: Joxer, this might work out better than I thought. I used ta think someone like Miss O'Malley was a pretty bit o' skirt, but sometimes it pays to go back to the old-reliables: finding out what's what, making your mind up, and sticking to your guns. We liked Charlie, before we knew who he was, what money he had. We were good friends of his soon enough.

JOXER: Aye, Captain, you're making a lot o' sense these days. It reminds me of school. Sr. Ellen Anita Bernard used ta say, "Find the truth, and act on it." I didn't know what she meant then, but I'm startin' to now. Old-reliables is what's needed today, like Ray's nickname. And Sr. Ellen Anita was one of them, just like all the FSPA's. In America's Wisconsin, those sisters pray without stop, and have, more than 50 years. Sister also used to say, "Humans do what's possible; and FOR humans, God does what's impossible."

FR. MICHAEL: Did I hear someone say 'Old-Reliables'. (*He goes up to bar.*) I know Ray here goes by that moniker, but it was also what they called Donny O'Toole, whom I fought in 1920 and '21. Now, there was a bloody old-reliable, excuse the pun. I bloodied him in both fights, and knocked him out, too. Neither fight was very pretty, but they led to me championship bout with Billy Quinn in 1922. O'course, Donny got his chance at the championship, a while later, and won it.

JOXER: You fought for the championship with Billy Quinn, Father? How'd you do?

FR. MICHAEL: Well, it wasn't very pretty either. I was waaay ahead on points, mind ya, and I was bobbin' and weavin' like any good fighter'd do. All of a sudden, Billy hits me with an uppercut, and BOOM, down I go!

Couldn't get up by the 10 count either. 'Twas a sad day for the Murphy Family, yes a very sad day. But I rebounded. I fought two more fights and won both. Just didn't get another shot at the title.

BOYLE: Well, you're a good priest, Father, and the ring's loss was our gain. You know, we just did a little business with solicitor, and it's workin' out fine, what you and me talked about, early Lent. Won't be long 'til that inheritance is me and Joxer's. And we'll make sure the Church gets a share, too.

FR. MICHAEL: Good, Captain. Ya know, if more people spent more time in confessional *and* boxing ring, and less time pulverizin' pubs, the world'd be a lot nicer.

BOYLE (*looks at his hands*): Sayin' the rosary last night musta helped... Ray, where are the Yeatses, Tyler and Joy?

RAY: They're doin' a play cross the river. A family ting, OJ for the soul sort o' drama.

BOYLE: Seoul's in Koraea, Ray. A man said Koraea's the Ireland of Asia and Seoul's its center. It's a pun. I hope play's a hit. (*Hands Ray extra coin.*) Thanks for settin' 'em up.

RAY: Anytime, Captain. Thankin' ya. See you two later.

BOYLE: Yeah, see you, Ray. See you, too, Father. I'm glad I donned me green shirt. Things seem ta have come round in good shape today.

FR. MICHAEL: G'day, Gentlemen. See you in church.

RAY (*He nods, then...*): And there go a couple of Old-Reliables, too.

(*The dynamic duo exit. Music up; 'Wearing of the Green' is played and sung. Lights dim.*)

Act III, Scene 2

Action: Boyles' apartment, Holy Thursday, pre-supper. Extra chairs. Juno's humming 'Amazing Grace', checking meat and potatoes. Mary comes from bedroom with album.

MARY: Ma, your sewing and ironing for neighbors is keen. How do you do so much?

JUNO: It's not so much, Mary, when you think of what others do.

MARY: Ma, isn't it nice Mr. Penney took photos when Johnny Boyle and I were young?

JUNO: Mr. Penney'd a gift. Pity we didn't see him every day, but he'd his business to run.

MARY: He was a good grocer. (*Putting album on table by couch.*) Lucky he had help -- he could take pictures when he delivered. It's too bad grocers don't deliver anymore; doctors still do.

JUNO: Tis a different business now. And there's unfinished business to address tonight.

MARY: What d'ya mean, Ma?

JUNO: Oh somethin' your Da needs to reveal. (*Knock*) At last, by the grace o' God. Who's knockin'?

MALE VOICE: It's most o' the rest o' the Fitzgerald family.

MARY (*opening door*): Hello, My Darlings. Where have you been?

SHIVAUN: We've been talking to Diane on the telephone. She'll be here soon.

JOHN SR. (*Sets down black bag*): Yes, sorry we're late. Hope we haven't missed supper.

MARY: Not a-tall, Dr. John, not a-tall. (*They kiss.*)

JOHNNY: Diane is goin' to bring me a present. Isn't that what she said, Da?

JOHN SR.: She did, Son. I'm lookin' forward to that myself.

JUNO: Good, but has anyone seen the Captain and Joxer?

JOHN SR.: Diane saw 'em on O'Casey Avenue. Didn't say what they were doin'.

JUNO: 'Tis a mystery they've been settin' on, all Lent. I hope they do well with it.

Another knock.

MARY (*loudly*): Who is it?

FEMALE VOICE: It's Diane. (*Mary opens door.*) Hello, Mary, hope I'm not late.

JUNO: Better late than never, Diane.

DIANE: I was running ahead of schedule till I ran into Father Michael. He said we should come to Easter Sunday services and others, too. He also gave me more information about my great-grandfather, who turns out to be John's great-grandfather, too, Sean Fitzgerald.

MARY: What was that?

DIANE: Well, it seems Great-Grandfather Sean was a gardener, something your husband and I share an interest in. Sean loved to raise roses and gladiolas, to send the church in Limerick, St. Rose's, a bouquet every Sunday, in-season. Father Michael knows the priest there well. We brought along a photo you'll want to keep, plus a pair of good boots Sean wore once. He died the day after he bought them. He had his picture taken, wearing them, with his family, and that picture and the boots are yours, Johnny. Enjoy.

JOHNNY (*accepting gifts*): Thanks. These are great. (*He looks at the photo closely, then the beautiful leather boots.*) 'Tis a good picture of me great-great-grandda. And these boots'll fit me soon. I'll wear them, too. I love leather boots!

JOHN SR.: They are beautiful, Diane. Who gave them to you?

DIANE: Our cousin Sammy Fitzgerald in Limerick. He said these would be better for a youngster. He also talked about John's and my great-grandfather. We'd been told by an Irish man near where we live in Chicago, to look up Father Murphy about these matters. The good Father knows the priest at St. Rose's, and put us up to this. Along the way, we learned more about the Fitzgeralds, including Sean.

JOHN SR.: Mary and I raise roses, and have got a few gladiolas in our greenhouse, too.

SHIVAUN: Oh, Da, you don't raise them. Mother does.

MARY: Thanks, Daughter, for declarin' the truth. Your Da likes to putter, but I do most o' the work. (*Laughter. John looks at Mary.*) But your Da does his share o' work, as the leadin' physician in Dublin.

Boyle and Joxer enter with a friend of Johnny's. Alan Matthews, the newsboy, is a handsome 15-year-old Cockney, with broad smile, though one of his eyes is a bit ulcerated. The three are dressed in new shirts, pants, and shoes. But Boyle and Joxer still wear same caps.

BOYLE: I hope you don't mind. I found Alan Matthews about, and we asked his ma, Susan Patricia, if he could sup with us. I thought Johnny'd get a kick out of seein' him.

JOHNNY: Hey, Alan, what's cookin'?

ALAN: Hey, Johnny -- your gran's supper, by the sweet aroma o' things. (*Laughter.*)

BOYLE: Once we had Alan along the street, we had to buy him some new clothes and shoes. Show everyone, young man, like you did in store.

Alan turns slowly, to oohs and aahs. The two boys then go to couch to read magazines.

JUNO: We're getting uses from the English magazines you brought from your house, Mary. Alan, when you and your parents lived in London, did you see these magazines?

ALAN: A bit -- my family couldn't buy them, but I had a friend whose parents did.

MARY: The photos and stories live. I hope a similar magazine is made by the Irish soon.

JOHN SR.: It will be, Mary. But photo-magazines cost money, and the Irish are not rich by English standards -- though *Picture Post* caters to everyday people, too. But with shipping, it runs into some coin to purchase a subscription here.

JUNO (*looking round*): Supper's on. Let's sit and eat our humble fare.

Mary gets the boys to sit at table, bringing extra chairs first, and the group sits.

JUNO: Now, if the Captain'll lead us all in prayer...

BOYLE: Aye – Bless us, Oh Lord (*the others join in*), and these Thy gifts, which we are about to receive, from Thy bounty through Christ, Our Lord, Amen.

Juno and Mary begin handing dishes around, as do the others.

MARY: Mother, this meat is delicious. What did you add to it?

JUNO: Just salt and pepper, and a bit of wine. What do you think, Diane?

DIANE: It's a nice reminder of home. It tastes just like my mom's. Where did you get the recipe?

JUNO: Mary said you were talking about American food, and she remembered what you said went into your mother's roast. It's little enough I can do for a Fitzgerald.

DIANE: Well, thank you. What do you think, Boys?

ALAN and JOHNNY: Tastes great, yuppity, yup, yup, yup!!

DIANE: You're even talkin' like Americans, American comedians.

JUNO (*looking*): Captain, don't you have something you want to say about America?

BOYLE (*stunned*): I-I... no... except, America is a grand place to find freedom for the Irish. (*He raises a cup of milk.*) Toast to America, the Americans, and the Irish. (*Everyone joins in.*)

ALL: To America, the Americans, and the Irish!

JUNO: Now, don't you want to tell 'bout the business you been doing? Joxer told me....

BOYLE (*pressured*): Don't know what you're talking about, Mrs. Boyle.

JUNO: Oh, I think you do, Husband.

BOYLE: But Mrs. Boyle, our guests should be served, not bored. We can talk later.

JOHNNY: Yeah, Gran', the food's too good to tell stories over. Let's just eat. I'm starved. (*Scooping up food.*)

JUNO: As you say, then, Grandson, for now at least... (*Lights out.*)

Act III, Scene 3

Action: Two hours later. The group is near apartment-center, on or around couch. Chairs have been pulled up around it. Juno is putting up her apron after cleaning kitchen. Mary puts the bread away. Group is talking about a photo-story.

ALAN (*holding photo-story*): Hey, Johnny, look at this photo. The doctors are operatin' on a fish. Look at how they've got at its insides. It's a gross sight!

JOHNNY (*Half-serious*): Just think, soon you'll be takin' that fish's place, with your eye surgery and all. The doctors'll have you under knives like fishmongers on Moore Street.

MARY: Now, boys, stop. Not everyone likes talkin' about those kinds o' things. Alan will cope with his surgery just fine, won't you Alan?

ALAN: Yes, ma'am, I will.

BOYLE: Besides, Johnny, you'll embarrass the only doctor in our family, your Da, who does surgery like a great musician plays strings

JOHN SR.: I guess I've heard worse, Captain. Still, ease up, Johnny.

JOXER: Just think, a photographer gets paid to take those pictures. It seems like nothing but fun to me.

MARY: Oh, they don't get paid much, Joxer. This one's a man named Bert Hardy. The reason we subscribe to *Picture Post* is John's cousin works there, and we get a discount. This Mr. Hardy is a young photographer with natural skill and street savvy.

JOHN SR.: Yes, I've seen many samples of his work. He can be humorous or serious, with a good eye. Didn't you tell me, Alan, you want to be a photographer someday?

ALAN: Yes, Doctor Fitzgerald. I still hope to be one, someday.

JOHN SR.: Then, that's what you'll be, as soon as you've recovered from your surgery.

JUNO (*pulling rocker up to couch*): I like good photographs. We've picked up a few by Irish photographers, and there are some I'd like to hang on these walls.

JOXER: Oh, if these walls could talk. But I guess we humans make up for it.

DIANE: Mr. Daly, where do you live? I've never heard about your place.

JOXER: I used to have a room. But I just moved into me own flat. It's not much in some men's eyes, but 'tis home to me.

BOYLE: Joxer, tell them about your new friend.

JOXER: Oh, there's a lady taken a shine to me, thank goodness. Last Sunday, St. Patrick's Day, we got engaged.

MARY: Congratulations, Joxer!

JOHN SR AND OTHERS.: Yes, congratulations.

MARY: What's her name, then?

JOXER: Agnes Ida Rogers. She's younger than me, pretty as a picture, and twice as nice.

MARY: Why didn't you bring her tonight?

JOXER: She's tending to a friend, Lizzie, who wasn't very well, but is getting better now

MARY: That's decent, Joxer.

JOXER: Aggie wants to hear her favorite hymn on Easter; the congregation was singing it the day her parents met; they're both passed now, but the hymn still tugs at Aggie's heart.

SHIVAUN: Where does Aggie live?

JOXER: Near Johnny Boyle's cemetery. Captain and me see her regularly.

BOYLE: And I like the walk, too. (*Looks at magazine.*) What else's in the *Picture Post*?

JOHN SR.: Oh, talk of Hitler and Mussolini. There's even talk about the Japanese, who colonized Korea. Some people are saying the war in Europe isn't going well. Britain's PM says the West is on a collision course with Hitler. And Ireland could be drawn in, too.

MARY: I'm afraid for the young. We adults can cope; it's the young that need protection.

JUNO: You're a good wife and mother, Mary, but you're also a good daughter. The Captain and me don't want to see anything bad happen to you or John, either.

ALAN: Hey, look! (*Holds up photo-story showing young lady's legs on roller-coaster.*)

JOHNNY: Yeah, wow!

MARY: Now, Boys, relax. No decent young woman wants to be ogled like that. It may be you boys will find women just as pretty when you grow up, but you won't want them showing off their legs.

JOHNNY: Sept ta us.

ALAN: Yeah, sept ta us.

BOYLE (*chuckling*): I hope you don't have giant ideas about women. They are very nice creatures, but they're not giants, right Mrs. Boyle?

JUNO: I used to think you and Joxer thought me the giant after Beanstalk Jack. I'd say, "Jack Daniel Boyle, you make me so mad sometimes, I could bite off your head and spit it back in your face!"

BOYLE: Right, but we're reborn, and don't see you as a giant anymore, but you surely are good, like Jack. (*Winking at John Sr. Then, a knock .*)

JUNO (*loudly*): Who's knocking?

MALE VOICE: It's Father Michael Murphy.

JUNO (*opening door*): Oh hello, Father. What brings you here tonight?

FATHER MICHAEL: Mrs. Boyle, I'm here to ask if you and your family will be at Good Friday services tomorrow.

JUNO: I think we'll be there, why?

FATHER MICHAEL: Because there'll be a special petition sent to Rome with the names of all the Irish who've died from St. Bart's, in making the Irish nation. I've included your Johnny's name. Do you want to send a letter, as well? If you do, I want to know if you can write one before services at Noon.

JUNO: I'm not much of a writer (*looks round*), but with help, maybe I could manage one.

FATHER MICHAEL: That'll be fine. I'm also wondering, though, if you can read your letter to the congregation. What do you think about doing that, too?

JUNO (*more anxious*): Well, I suppose I can, but I'm not much of a public speaker either.

FATHER MICHAEL: Mrs. Boyle, I'm asking you to read it, too, for it will have a profound effect. Do you think that'll be okay?

JUNO (*pulling herself up*): Yes, it's fine. 'Tis the least I can do for the many who have died for Ireland.

FATHER MICHAEL: Good. Service is three hours long; you'll read at the start. Can you make it by 11:15?

JUNO: Yes, I'll be there then.

FATHER MICHAEL: Thank you, Mrs. Boyle, and thanks to all of you. We'll see you tomorrow, then?

JUNO: Yes, see you then.

FATHER MICHAEL (*waving, looks back*): Good night to you all.

JUNO AND THE GROUP: Good night, Father.

JUNO: Mary, bring me paper and pencil. With all your help, I've got writing to do.

(*She sits in her rocking chair, as lights dim.*)

Act III – Scene 4

Action: The Boyles' bedroom, lights low. Juno and the Captain are asleep. The Captain snores, and Juno breathes heavily. She speaks, groggy.

JUNO: Oh, my darlin' Johnny – where have you gone off to now?

The vision of Johnny Boyle appears, with Irish Irregulars. Johnny is forced to kneel, and begins to finger his beads anxiously, with his only hand. He says, "St. Patrick and St. John of the Cross, pray for me in my hour of vital-est need." He starts the 'Our Father', drops his beads, picking them up with a look of dejection, then surveys the men's faces, desperate to see a saving glimpse. "Why?" is spoken. The men prod Johnny with guns, and tell him to get back to his beads. He does, slowly. Just after "And forgive us our trespasses, as we forgive those who trespass against us," guns are pointed at him. His final words are, "... deliver us from Evil..." as shots ring out. Another figure is seen at stage-edge, and he is shot, simultaneously. Juno, who has sat up in her bed to watch, in a kind of hazy light, shouts upward now, arms imploring, as the silhouette of another mother is also seen, also imploring, "Blessed Virgin, where were you when my darlin' son was riddled with bullets, when my darlin' son was riddled with bullets? Sacred Heart o' Jesus, take away our hearts o' stone, and give us hearts o' flesh! Take away this murderin' hate, and give us Thine own eternal love!" Captain Boyle awakens.

BOYLE: What the devil? Juno, what's happened?

JUNO (*Awakened from her vision by Captain*): Oh, Captain, hold me. (*He does.*) I don't know what's come over me, but I saw Johnny's dyin', and Commandant Tancred's, too. They came and went so quickly, but it was them. I saw their dying so clearly tonight. Twas terrible. Hold me, Husband. (*She clings to Captain; he kisses and strokes her hair.*)

BOYLE: Why don't you lay back down. Twas a bad dream. But it doesn't have ta be somethin' to spoil our Easter. Maybe it's somethin' that'll make you feel stronger about what we can only touch in dreams.

JUNO (*calmed a bit*): Thanks, Captain. It's been a long time since you and me have known much happiness. But this Lent has been a relief, even if tonight's dream makes me sure this Easter will be Johnny's and Commandant Tancred's – the reasons we still believe in Resurrection, that God's forgiveness offers us, no matter how terrible our sins. I never admitted it to myself until now, but Johnny sinned against the Commandant and God. But without us thinking there's a place where we can find all sons and daughters happy and peaceful, forever, there wouldn't be any reason to hope in this world.

BOYLE: But we can hope. For somewhere's God and our children are with Him.

JUNO (*smiling*) Yes, Captain. I hope you still remember Johnny like I do – the times he used to come in from playing, and ask for somethin' good to eat – like potatoes, sassijes, and onions – Dublin Coddle -- which you hate, but he loved. We didn't often have the makings, but when we did, it was like a feast day of the Church Itself. That was before his troubles, when Ireland's troubles got in his way, and he stumbled. He'd lost an arm for Ireland, but he shouldn't have turned against his comrade and the Republic.

BOYLE (*Kissing her hair again*): Right, Me Love. I feel so terrible about our Johnny, just like you. You see, I knew what he'd done a long time ago, but didn't have the courage to tell you. Today, though, I've been thinking of you all day. Somehow, Johnny Boyle must know we were all made for each other.

JUNO (*only half-mollified*): Still, Johnny was shot again tonight, like Mrs. Tancred's son.

The Captain nods affirmatively, smiles, and tries to kiss her.

JUNO (*suddenly*): No, I'll not let you kiss me, not until you tell me what you've been hiding from me this whole Lent, You Old Dissembler. You and your excuses. I let me guard down, and what? You 'forget' to tell me anything. Why, I ought to bite off your head and spit it back in your face!

BOYLE (*feigning ignorance*): What do you mean?

JUNO: A little bird flew into me kitchen the day after Ash Wednesday, and told me to visit church, where my husband had come, the first time in 18 years he'd been there, and the same little bird told me Joxer Daly was there, too, for you can't walk two feet without leaving Joxer stuck to your footprints. The bird was Maisie Madigan.

BOYLE: Lord, Woman, I still don't know what you're talkin' about.

JUNO: Oh, you don't? Just ask Mrs. Madigan, next time you see her. (*Pulling his hair.*)

BOYLE: Leave me hair alone, Woman. I can't tell you now, or I'll spoil any chance we have for peace.

JUNO (*still pulling his hair*): How's that, Husband? Tell me now or the only person left to bless you will be a priest over your coffin! Why are you so keen for new furniture?

BOYLE (*his hand soothes his scalp*): Yes, furniture. I'll tell, but I don't have to enjoy it.

JUNO: Talk now, or you'll never come into my bed again.

BOYLE: Okay. Well, you see Joxer and me, we know this fellow, Mr. Fennerly, who works for Hanners, who have some nice furniture they're willin' to part with, if we sell some of their other furniture. They reclaimed the nice stuff from a rich family gone bankrupt. I feel sorry for that family, but what can you do, but pick up the pieces and make use of them, which is fine, as long as you work for the privilege, right?

JUNO: Yes, 'tis true. Where are you sellin' the other furniture?

BOYLE: Pubs Joxer and I know, to friends. Even Mary and John are buying some.

JUNO: You know, Captain, that does make a bit of sense. (*She hugs him.*)

BOYLE (*hugging her, too*): Thank you, Mrs. Boyle. You'll not regret this.

JUNO: Something tells me I will before the night's up.

BOYLE (*He strokes her hair*): Don't say that. Kiss me, Juno Rosemary Boyle.

JUNO: You do look better now than before, but the spell may end. Easter won't be easy, but tonight may be fine. Let the frog become my prince. (*They kiss. Lights out.*)

Act IV - Scene 1

Action: *The interior of St. Bart's, Good Friday. Juno is in the pulpit, reading.*

JUNO: Dear Holy Father: I'm an everyday, humble, Irish mother. Like many other Irish mothers, I lost a son to the cause of our nation's birth. My son's name was Johnny, Johnny Boyle. Now Johnny was a good boy. He once liked to try new things, and he believed in God, the Holy Family, and Body of Christ. He also believed in the righteousness of Ireland, though he soon made mistakes, especially in the death of Commandant Tancred. Still, he was my son, fruit of my womb. We cried mightily when Johnny died, and still do. So

did Mrs. Tancred cry mightily for her son. Many people have had sons and daughters who have died for Ireland. Why have they died? Who can say when any death is sensible, when some people that ask others to suffer and die, have not themselves really suffered for Ireland? The British, too, have suffered and died throughout our troubles. Their sons and daughters are members of good families, too. They've had dreams and hopes like us. The British should not rule us, but neither should we think ourselves better than them. They're human, like us, God's children all. Holy Father, please read our petition and letters. Then, say to the world that Ireland needs peace, like All the World. The South of Ireland is a Republic now – when will our entire island, our entire world, be free? Please tell the whole world that peace MUST be at hand, that we mothers and fathers, sons and daughters, do not want to die, if the world isn't free. Yes, let us stop Hitler and Mussolini, but do not let the Irish or any people die simply to die. I know we everyday Irish mothers don't have all the answers for Ireland, Britain, America, Poland, France, Germany, Japan, Korea, and Italy, but I do know if you can see a way to save the world from war and death, we will back your ways of keeping the peace. All people have some goodness in their heart, and I know you'll help find and bring it forth. Thank You, Your Holiness, for reading the poor pencil-scratchings of this feeble Irish wife, mother, grandmother, and friend. You're in our prayers, and we hope we're in yours. May God bless us all. (*Lights out.*)

Act IV – Scene 2

Action: The front steps of St. Bart's, after Good Friday service, 3:15 p.m. Juno, Captain, their family and friends, talk. Juno recounts how the family helped compose read-letter.

JUNO: The only reason I could fully write the letter was, I had a dream last night that woke me up. I finally saw that my son, Johnny, wasn't perfect – that he committed a sin against God, Ireland, and a good man. I used most of what you'd given me, and then I changed a line or two, after the dream.

MARY: Surely, God inspired you to do what you did. We only helped a little.

JOHNNY: You did the real writin'.

SHIVAUN: And you had to stand in front of the congregation and read it. I'd have been scared out o' me mind.

Father Michael enters. He wears everyday priest's garb, black cassock with white collar.

BOYLE: Father Michael, what's been keepin' you? We've been out here twenty minutes.

JUNO: Hush, Captain. The good Father has work to do.

FR. MICHAEL (*puts hand up*): Well, Mrs. Boyle, you're right about work. I had to open the windows in the sacristy to air the dampness out, and talk to Jim Larkin, the roofer, about the rains we'd been havin'. It's only been decent weather the last two days, but if we get rain before Sunday, it'll be a dim Easter. He'll start fixing the roof over the communion railing tomorrow morning.

JUNO: Easter Saturday?

FR. MICHAEL: No choice. He's got three men to help, and they'll be done by supper.

JOHN SR.: That'll require good weather, Father.

FR. MICHAEL: Yes. I'll be sayin' a rosary for it. Some of you can, too.

MARY: Yes, Father Michael. Oh, and thank you, Father, for telling Diane Fitzgerald to visit the priest at St. Rose. A lot of puzzle-pieces fell into place when you did. (*He nods.*)

BOYLE: Father, we were talking about Juno's reading. What did you think?

FR. MICHAEL: I thought it a moving tribute to those who've sacrificed much in the struggle for Irish independence. You referred to your son's mistakes, which we all make, and to the British who've died, too, for we often forget British troops and innocents have died as often as Irish Republicans and innocents.

JUNO: That was Alan's idea. Everyone helped compose the letter after supper, and Alan piped up, "What about the British?" So we had to say something about them, too. The Brits suffer and die like us Irish and the rest of the world. Even the Germans and Japanese are human. That's why they're in the letter, too.

JOHN SR.: Speaking of good writing, where'd you get the poem you read today, Father?

FR. MICHAEL: The one by A.E. Housman, the British poet? He translated an ancient Latin poem by Horace, called "To Torquatus, Diffugere Nives," meaning, "To Torquatus, the Snows Are Fled Away." (*Digging in his pocket.*) Does anyone want to hear it again?

JOHN SR.: I would, Father.

SHIVAUN: So would I.

FR. MICHAEL: Well, I'll read the excerpt from church: "The snows are fled away, leaves on the shaws./ And grasses in the mead renew their birth,/The river to the river-bed withdraws,/And altered is the fashion of the earth.."

ALAN: That's beautiful, Father. Who was this Horace?

FR. MICHAEL: He was a great Roman writer.

ALAN: What do you think of his poetry, Father?

FR. MICHAEL: Well, Alan, Horace doesn't see all life as eternal, as Catholics do. But he does see a time when life is at its fullest, and should be enjoyed while it can be. As Catholics, we believe even after the prime of life, we don't simply die and are no more. We can be reborn. Other Christians believe similarly. A kind of death is the destiny for all life, but if we live right, we can be reborn. Let's hope we all live right.

BOYLE: We know you like the poet Horace, but who is your favorite playwright, Father?

FR. MICHAEL: An Irishman many know of here, but not so, abroad. The Church doesn't praise him as highly as some, but he's a huge reader-writer of human life: Tony Dooley.

JOXER: Tony Dooley. He wrote *The Paycock Rises Again*.

BOYLE: Aye. 'Tis a small world, after all, Father.

FR. MICHAEL: He knew the man you told me about once, didn't he?

BOYLE: Indeed he did, Father – the very one.

FR. MICHAEL (*Looking at Captain and Joxer*): You owe a lot to him, don't you?.

BOYLE and JOXER: Yes we do, Father, yes we do.

FR. MICHAEL: Then we should all pray for a good friend's soul, now. (*He clasps his hands and leads the group.*) "Hail Mary, full of grace, the Lord is

with Thee, Blessed art Thou among women and blessed is the fruit of Thy womb, Jesus. Holy Mary, Mother of God, pray for us sinners, now and at the hour of our death, Amen.” Now, think of Christ’s life and death and life after death. You won’t feel low about Ireland’s state or the world’s.

THE GROUP: Yes, Father. Thank you.

JOXER: Father, is it true you once fought for the boxing championship?

FR. MICHAEL: Yes, it is Joxer, and what a fight it was. I was way ahead on points, settling in for a nice win, when...

MARY: Father, no offense, but if we've heard that story once, we've heard it a thousand times. (*Groans.*)

FR. MICHAEL (*Sadly, letting go*): And so you have, Mary. So you have.

MARY: Then we'll see you Sunday, Father, on Easter?

FR. MICHAEL: Yes, Easter Sunday. God bless us all, until then. (*All wave; lights out.*)

Act IV - Scene 3

Action: Interior of St. Bart's, Easter Sunday, 9 a.m. The church is spruced up with flowers and banner. The organist is playing the prelude 'Joyful, Joyful'. The Boyle family and friends are half-gathered by a pew, dressed well, though Boyle and Joxer still carry same caps. Juno, Mary, and John Sr. sit in pew.

MARY: John, where are the flowers?

JOHN SR. (*slapping forehead*): How could I? They're in the motorcar. I was so excited about us all being here, Easter, I forgot why we arrived early. Back soon. (*He exits, left.*)

JUNO: Doesn't the church look lovely, Mary? I think it's beautiful how the last few days have gone. It's been a decent Lent, all the way round.

MARY: Yes, Ma. Father Michael and the Ladies' Prayer Circle look after things so wonderfully. Other parishioners help, too. We've a lovely parish now that Da and Joxer attend. I never thought I'd see them darken the Church's doorstep again, but now they're back, they lighten up this place. Tis true what the Lord said about the lost-sheep son.

JUNO: Yes. But if the Captain and Joxer wouldn't have reformed, I would've killed them both. What scoundrels they were. Nippin' out for drinks more often than a pious monk says, "Glory be." And when I found out they came home drunk the night poor Johnny met his maker, I near-died of anger and sadness. Thank the Lord, they at least came home when it counted. What a strange and wonderful place Ireland is, these days.

John Sr. enters with roses and gladiolas in vase. Boyle and Joxer grin.

JOHN SR.: Do they still look as glorious and victorious as when we picked them?

MARY: Better – they look absolutely wonderful, John Dennis Fitzgerald.

JUNO: Now place them where Father left room – right by the altar, front and center.

JOHN SR.: Sure as I will.

John Sr. goes off, right.

MARY: Ma, isn't it grand everyone we know is a great human family again? I mean, you, Da, and Joxer, John and the children, Father Michael, Diane, and me. It just goes to show the power o' prayer.

JUNO: Yes, I thought I'd wear out my beads before I'd see any improvement in your da and Joxer. But they've turned the corner. And I think it's wonderful Johnny's servin' Mass. Makes an old gran' proud.

MARY: Thanks, Ma. I hope John and I are raisin' Johnny and Shivaun to grow straight and tall. They bring us great pleasure. I hope things only get better from here to eternity.

JUNO: Oh, they'll be fine their whole lives. They've good heads on their shoulders, and good family and friends. As writer Rolly Coughlin says, "What more could be fairer?"

John Sr. returns.

JOHN SR.: How do they look? I'm asking the two most important women in the world.

JUNO and MARY: Gorgeous!

JUNO: They couldn't look any better if God Himself placed them atop the Pearly Gates.

JOHN SR.: Good. Now, where's Johnny? He was to meet us here at nine o'clock.

MARY: Don't be worryin'. He'll come round to see us soon.

JUNO: What time do you have now, John?

JOHN SR. (*looking at watch*): 9:05.

MARY: Maybe Johnny got held up listening to Father explain preparations.

SHIVAUN (*Comes over*): Mother, Johnny said he'd be here, soon as he hears instructions on incense and things. I forgot to tell you. He said it'd be a few extra minutes.

MARY: Your father was wonderin' where he was.

SHIVAUN: Well, Father Michael is particular about incense especially.

JOHN SR.: Johnny needs to let us know about the Offerings.

JUNO: He'll be here soon.

JOHN SR.: Yes, Mother.

Johnny emerges, right, and moves to his dad.

JOHNNY: Sorry I'm late, Da. I had to listen to Father about incense and things.

JOHN SR.: Yes, what about the Offerings?

JOHNNY: Father says you and Ma should bring up wine, water, and hosts, after the Creed. But instead of waiting at the altar, he'll come down to the Communion Railing. He'll take the gifts from you and an usher'll bring up the collection plate with you.

JOHN SR.: We'll be ready, Son.

Boyle and Joxer come over.

BOYLE: When are we going to visit Johnny's grave? You have every Easter since he died, and now I'm finally goin' to do what's truly right by him this day.

JUNO: We'll go as soon as we've talked with Fr. Michael after Mass.

JOXER: 'Tis a glorious day for it. The sun's been shinin' four straight days, and the Church's roof is put right. Jim Larkin and his boys knew their business.

BOYLE: What have you planned for lunch afterward, Mrs. Boyle?

JUNO: Isn't it like a man to want to know his stomach feasts, before he sits at table?

JOXER: It's from all those years of Dublin Coddle and liver; the Captain doesn't trust every family meal.

JOHN SR.: I can promise you all, what Mother has cooked up will ring up tons on the scales. Be prepared to put another hole in your belts.

JOXER: Sounds like it'll be a darlin' meal. (*Smiles.*)

MARY: Ma, it'll be nice to hear Father Michael leadin' us in prayer at Johnny's grave.

JUNO: He's a special prayer he wrote for the occasion. It should be fitting.

MARY: And Tommy Malone'll be there, too, the oldest Malone son, who popped up around us whenever Johnny Boyle was around. The three Malone brothers have volunteered for the British Army, because Ireland's neutral.

JUNO: And how is their mother, Teresa?

MARY: Still doing fair, but she says she wishes she could return to the old neighborhood. She sends her best wishes to you, Ma. (*Moves right, and off.*)

JUNO: And I to her, too.

Diane Fitzgerald enters. Boyle and Joxer chat. Organist plays 'Holy God.'. Lights out.

Act IV - Scene 4

Action: Johnny Boyle's grave, Dublin outskirts, 12:15 p.m. His grave is on a little rise, right. Other graves are located down from it, near back. A bit distant are hedges. Flowers have been placed around a few graves. A violet adorns Johnny's grave. A stone marker shows his name, dates, and "Johnny, we'll always love you. Your family and friends." A motorcar is heard pulling up, then another, off left. Voices near.

BOYLE (*offstage*): Okay, Mary. Joxer and me'll take these. John and Johnny get the rest.

MARY (*from offstage*): Good. We'll be over in a minute.

Boyle and Joxer enter, left. Boyle puts the roses-and-gladiolas bouquet by Johnny's marker. The two do sign of cross. Claudine O'Malley, carrying satchel, enters opposite.

BOYLE: We need be quick. Johnny knows why. You've got the papers, Miss O'Malley?

CLAUDINE: Here, take a look. (*Handing the Captain a pen.*)

CAPTAIN (*Defers to Joxer*): What do they say?

JOXER (*Reads silently*): They seem in order. Yes, same deal as we talked about at the Sporting Pub. The Captain gets 65% of the 100,000 pounds, or 65,000, and Miss O'Malley gets 35,000. Looks straightforward.

CLAUDINE: Then sign here, Captain. (*Captain signs original and copy.*)

CAPTAIN (*Taking his copy.*): Now for the money.

CLAUDINE: Here. (*She pulls out two envelopes.*) Count it. It's all there. (*Joxer does; then he extracts 250 pounds from each now-twice-divided sum, and puts the 500 pounds in a separate pocket, with a nod to Captain.*)

JOXER (*counting*): It's all here, Captain.

CAPTAIN (*extending hand, grabs his share*): Then, thanks for everything, Miss O'Malley. That'll be it for our business this Easter. I hope the Lord doesn't hold it against us.

CLAUDINE: I doubt He will. And thank you, too, Both of You.

CAPTAIN: There may be more work for you from us. We can always use a top solicitor.

CLAUDINE: Thanks, Captain. Let me know when you need my services again.

CAPTAIN: That we will. (*Claudine exits, opposite her entry.*) We both get a good cut, Joxer. And 250 from each of us will go to a sensible bet on 'Golden Paycock,' a one-time-can't-miss prospect at the track. (*Giving him an envelope.*)

JOXER (*kissing his share of the money*): Thank you, Captain. And the Good Lord be praised for it! I'm glad our bookmaker knows a peachy deal when he sees one.

CAPTAIN: Yes, he does, Joxer. Yes, he does.

The pair put the money into their pockets. Then rest of group enters. Some bring flowers; others bring photos of Johnny Boyle. A woman, 60, appears. So does Diane Fitzgerald.

BOYLE (*half-whispering*): Mrs. Boyle, this looks ta be as right a time as any to tell you, well, there's no other way to say it: we've come into a little inheritance from a friend of Joxer and me, Charlie O'Keeffe. Charlie produced Tony Dooley's greatest play at the Abbey. He died in a motorcar accident in America, and left us, well, some money.

JUNO (*half-whispering*): Captain, what do ya mean, some money? That's what you've been keeping from me all Lent? Why, you *are* an Old Dissembler... How much money?

BOYLE: 65,000 pounds, minus our tithe and Joxer's share.

JUNO (*gasping*): 65,000 pounds?!! Show me that money! (*He does, and she takes it and puts it in her bag.*) Good Lord, that's enough to build an orphanage or a church. Is it all above-board?

BOYLE: Aye, tis, Mrs. Boyle.

JUNO: Well then, quiet, we'll discuss it later. Tis Easter Sunday, but I'd guess you've been thinking on it all Lent. Confession twas, confession tis, thank God for confession.

CAPTAIN: Right you are, Mrs. Boyle. (*He kisses her.*)

JOXER (*on cue*): Isn't it Romeo and Juliet the two of you be imitatin', though a little farther along in years?

BOYLE (*louder*): Right you are, Joxer.

Diane steps forward.

DIANE: Isn't it delightful John and I are cousins, with the same great-grandfather?

JOHN SR.: Thank goodness Father Michael knew the priest at St. Rose.

DIANE: Yes, thank goodness for it.

Fr. Michael arrives, as does Tommy Malone; the group gather up.

JUNO: Well, Father, tis summer-like today, after all. Our rosaries must have helped.

FR. MICHAEL: Yes. Aren't you Miss Rogers, the future Mrs. Daly? Nice to meet you.

AGGIE: Nice meetin' you, too, Father Michael "Rocky" Murphy. I've heard a lot about you – former boxing contender and all. It will be an honor to pray and sing with you today. My parents would have loved to be here, to meet you and sing the hymn that first brought them together more than 30 years ago.

FR. MICHAEL: Yes, it would be nice to have them here, too, but maybe they are, in a way (*looking at Aggie*). As for the boxin, twas nothin' a-tall. (*Punching air, then holding his knee.*) Tis the prayin' on me knees that's hard. (*Laughter.*)

AGGIE: Father Michael, I hope you know how much I've been praying' n' singin' over the years, and this Easter is very special to Joxer and me, too.

JOXER: Yes, Father, Aggie's been prayin' 'n singin' forever, haven't you, Me Sweet Apple Blossom?

AGGIE: Tis a grand thing to spend time praisin' the Lord, when so much of the world seems content praisin' the sins of their worldly leaders.

JOHNNY: Miss Rogers, I've a friend who works for the *Irish Times*. He said I could write a story and submit it to the paper. They might even publish it. Can I quote you? It'll give my story more zing.

AGGIE: Fine with me. More good sense should mean more good things for Ireland.

JUNO: Alan Matthews has clout. He's a young man who uses initiative, just like Johnny.

Tommy Malone comes over.

TOMMY MALONE: Hello, Everyone. (*Giving Juno a photo of Johnny Boyle and Tommy.*) 'Tis grand ta see you -- especially you, Captain and Mrs. Boyle, and Mary. It brings back memories to see you, and ta think fondly of Johnny, before the troubles. Your son would have amounted ta somethin' fine, if he would have gotten past them.

JUNO: Yes, he loved you as much as family, til the end, when everything seemed to go wrong for him. Thanks for the lovely photo of the two of you; it brings back memories.

TOMMY: I grew up well, because of me big buddy, Johnny.

JUNO: Well, he had a great friend in you, Tommy Malone.

TOMMY: (*Reads watch.*) I wish I could stay longer, but we've got ta hurry. The train leaves soon, and me brothers are waiting ta go with me to Army. Our fiancés'll see us off.

FR. MICHAEL: Yes, when you volunteer for the Army, the Generals can't be kept waitin'. You have ta be the Green Bay Packers of the new Army, stick to the team, and all that. In America, the Packers are the best football team there is, and we all love football and our courageous troops.

THE OTHERS: Yes, Father, you're right.

An elderly woman appears. Juno goes over to her; they tear up and hug. It's Mrs. Tancred, the Commandant's mother. Mrs. Tancred holds a photo of her son. Juno leads her over to Fr. Michael.

JUNO: Father Michael, this is Mrs. Tancred, the Commandant's mother. We've talked recently, after not talking to one another in many years. I hope you'll give her a blessing for her son's memory, too.

Fr. Michael makes the sign of the cross over Mrs. Tancred, then over Juno, then over the group. He moves to the foot of Johnny's grave, and blesses it, too. The others move in.

FR. MICHAEL: Captain, will you hold the bouquet? (*Boyle does. The priest addresses crowd.*): Lord, we honor You today by honoring two young men long loved by family and friends, both of whom, in their way, died for Ireland. My predecessor, now-Bishop William Jerome Burke, knew them both well, and sends his blessings; he'll pass our petition and Mrs. Boyle's letter on to His Holiness soon, along with our photos and other letters. Remember: Today means rebirth – Easter Sunday. St. Matthew wrote, inspired by God's Angel: "Jesus walked by the Sea of Galilee, went up on the mountain, and sat down there. Great crowds came to him, having with them the lame, the blind, the deformed, the mute, and many others. They placed them at his feet, and he cured them."(15:29-30.) In the name of the Father, Son, and Holy Spirit...

EVERYONE (*making sign of cross*): Amen!

FR. MICHAEL: Tommy, if you'll sing the first verse of a real standard -- 'Joyful, Joyful'.

TOMMY (*Nods and sings*): Joyful, joyful, we adore Thee,/God of glory, Lord of love;/Hearts unfold like flowers before Thee,/Praising Thee, their Son above./Melt the clouds of sin and sadness,/Drive the dark of doubt away,/Giver of immortal gladness,/Fill us with the light of day. (*The crowd repeats the verse.*)

FR. MICHAEL (*smiling at Aggie*): Amen. 'Tis a great hymn's your favorite, Miss Rogers, thanks to great artists like Schiller, Beethoven, Van Dyke, and others. It reminds me of a little boy I once knew, who used to play "Song of Joy" on his recorder-flute – who became a great-good son, man, soldier, husband, father, and leader, and who made his family and many others, very proud of him. We're glad we had the talent to perform it. You know, the Aborigines of Australia say, every person must follow their song-line, to stay decent. They believe one song-line runs through Australia's center. We too must abide by our song-lines. With them, the Lord melts the clouds of sin and sadness, and fills us with the light of day.

JUNO (*Touching Father's hand*): Father, this is our most blessed Easter in more than 18 years. (*Speaking to all.*) And I hope you know that if it weren't for all of you, this day would never have been a happy one. Isn't that right, Father Michael? Will you join us for a memorial meal, Mrs. Tancred?

MRS. TANCRED: Thank you, Mrs. Boyle. I will.

FR. MICHAEL: Yes, thank goodness, 'tis a glorious day (*hands up to the sun*) to find the Lord again. Now, I hope you'll all agree, 'tis time we all go to a proper dwelling to enjoy the Easter meal of our choosin'.

BOYLE (*winking*): Sounds like paradise to me, Rocky. What do the rest of you think?

EVERYONE: Paradise it is!

JUNO (*hugging her husband*): Oh, I love you, Jack Daniel Boyle, with your different, special speeches. Now, kindly assist your lovin' wife home, so we can enjoy a fine Easter meal of lamb, potatoes, peas, wine, milk, and (*egging him on*)... dessert! Will you join us, too, Father?

FR. MICHAEL: I'll be happy to, Mrs. Boyle.

BOYLE: Me favorite, Mrs. Boyle, lamb and dessert. God be praised, from Whom all blessings flow!

JUNO: And isn't it a man's stomach that be the quickest way to his heart?

Laughter. People with photos of Johnny Boyle share them with his parents. Johnny uses a small box camera to take a photo of the Boyle and Fitzgerald parents, with Mrs. Tancred and Father Michael. Boyle speaks to Joxer, while still keeping his arm around Juno, as she keeps her arm around Mrs. Tancred.

BOYLE (*low*): We'll have to get to the track soon, Joxer, for a very safe bet on 'Golden Paycock'. 3-to-1, Dorie Banner ain't wrong. A better bookmaker there isn't, this side o' Churchill Downs, and today we ain't goin' to be down, not by a long shot. (*louder*) Meantime, let's enjoy this day to the best of our abilities.

JOXER (*arm around Aggie*): You can count on us.

MARY: What in God's green earth are the two of you talking about?

JUNO: I don't know, Mary, but 'tis a special 'Song of Joy'. For all our blessings, we should be grateful. Including for the Shamrocks from Bantry (*winking at Joxer*) and the brew from St. Patrick's Irishfest (*winking at John*). Now, let's move on, My Dear Captain Jack? Didn't I used to say, 'God bless you, Captain Boyle, "cause nobody else will?'" Well, at least a couple of us, and God, will now, too.

CAPTAIN JACK: Yes, the Lord surely works in mysterious, but satisfying ways, so let's be headin' home to a darlin' meal and dessert, Me Beauteous Juno Rosemary!

JOXER (*looking at Captain, musicians, crowd*): Well, anyone for another Old-Reliable?

JOHN: (*Winking*): Why not, Joxer? We've all passed for a bit reliable before. We're all Old-Reliables now.

STAGE-CROWD: Amen to that!

JOXER: But then, ain't all religions curious? If they weren't, you wouldn't get anyone to believe in them. Father, tis easy ta believe you fought for the championship. You look like you could go 20 rounds today.

FR. MICHAEL: Roger-Joxer -- And fightin' evil's just like me championship fight in 1922 versus Billy Quinn. I was wa-a-a-y ahead on points. I was giving him the old left-and-right, left-and-right, left-and-right, when ALL OF A SUDDEN...(*hitting himself; they are exiting, with FR. MICHAEL, hurting a bit, but unvanquished, in silhouette. As the hymn begins, Tommy Malone is still talking with others, but really has to hustle off now, and he does.*)

ALL: Amazing grace, how sweet the sound/That saved a wretch like me;/I once was lost but now am found/Was blind but now I see... (*The melody plays on small bagpipe; lights fade, and final curtain falls.*)