

AT SWIM-TWO-BIRDS

Adapted by
Brendan Gleeson

From the Book by
Flann O'Brien

Original Treatment
Donal O'Kelly &
Brendan Gleeson

25th JUNE 2009

Parallel Films
Somerset House
Stradbroke Rd
Blackrock
Co Dublin
Ireland
Ph: +353 1 236 0757

AT SWIM-TWO-BIRDS

JUST SO YOU KNOW...

IN THIS STORY, THERE IS CONTINUOUS MOVEMENT BETWEEN THE REAL WORLD OF THE HERO, MYLES, AND THE PARALLEL WORLD OF HIS IMAGINATION.

TO EASE CLARITY,

THE WORLD OF MYLES' IMAGINATION IS WRITTEN IN BLUE ITALICS.

AS THE CHARACTERS OF HIS IMAGINATION ARE INSPIRED BY THOSE IN REAL LIFE,

THEY WILL BE PLAYED BY THE SAME ACTORS.

WHO BECOMES WHOM WILL BE IMMEDIATELY CLEAR, VISUALLY, IN THE MOVIE, HOWEVER IT MAY NOT BE ALWAYS SO OBVIOUS IN THE TEXT.

TO ALLEVIATE CONFUSION,

A GLOSSARY OF CHARACTERS AND THEIR COUNTERPARTS IS INCLUDED AT THE BACK.

- 1 *INT. MORNING. RED SWAN HOTEL. FURRISKEY'S ROOM.* 1
- In a bare hotel room, a young man, JOHN FURRISKEY, wakes up.*
- He is lying semi-naked on the floor. We do not fully see his face.*
- He doesn't know who or where he is.*
- We hear the clacking of a typewriter...*
- To his left, he notices a cigarette burning in an ashtray.*
- 2 *INT. MORNING. RED SWAN HOTEL. TRELIS' ROOM.* 2
- In a different room, we see a typewriter being punched by awkward fingers.*
- As the last few words are being typed, we read the following:*
- "JOHN FURRISKEY WAS TWENTY-FIVE YEARS OLD AND OF MEDIUM HEIGHT. HE WAS A SMOKER AND A TERRIBLE MAN."*

We pull back to reveal DERMOT TRELLIS sitting in bed, his typewriter on his knees, concentrating fiercely on what he has written. We do not fully see his face.

He is an author (of sorts). Around him on the bed are some typewritten pages and some books.

He is creating JOHN FURRISKEY for his next work.

He continues..

"HE COULD BLOW SMOKE RINGS."

3

INT. MORNING. RED SWAN HOTEL. FURRISKEY'S ROOM.

3

We see Furriskey reaching over and taking the cigarette. He blows three perfect smoke-rings, much to his own surprise.

FURRISKEY
(under his breath)
How did I do that?!

He rises, bewildered, taking in his surroundings.

We hear the typewriter resume its tentative rhythm.

Trellis mutters as he writes..

TRELLIS (V.O.)
HIS SUIT WAS...

Furriskey moves to the corner of the room, where he finds a suit of clothes in a heap on the floor.

He examines the suit, gingerly lifting up the jacket. He smells the material.

TRELLIS (V.O. CONT'D)
..VERY SMELLY.

Furriskey recoils in distaste. We hear a mocking chuckle...

4

INT. MORNING. RED SWAN HOTEL. TRELLIS' ROOM.

4

Trellis is sniggering over what he has written. He pauses, a little lost for inspiration, then types/mutters..

TRELLIS
SO IT WAS.

Trellis pops the last full-stop triumphantly, then stops to think, staring into space. He taps his finger as he thinks...

We hear the scratch of a pencil.

5 INT. MORNING. MYLES' BEDROOM. 5

MYLES, a student, is in bed, writing in pencil. We read:

"TRELLIS PAUSED IN THE CREATION OF THE VILLAIN OF HIS TALE."

Myles is creating a novel, chiefly about TRELLIS.

On his knees is a thin sheaf of handwritten pages - his manuscript.

Myles continues...

"HIS FINGER MOVED INEXORABLY TOWARDS HIS NOSTRIL."

6 *INT. MORNING. RED SWAN HOTEL. TRELLIS' ROOM.* 6

Trellis' finger moves inexorably towards his nostril, then stops.

We hear the scratch of the pencil.

Trellis' finger goes into his nostril, then stops.

The pencil scratches again.

Trellis' finger jiggles about in his nostril.

We hear chuckling (Myles).

Suddenly...

7 INT. MORNING. MYLES' BEDROOM. 7

UNCLE

TELL ME THIS, DO YOU EVER OPEN A
BOOK AT ALL?!

Myles jumps, startled. His UNCLE has snuck open the door to his bedroom.

His Uncle seems familiar. He is, in fact, the inspiration for Trellis.

(As with Myles' other creations, the same actor will play both real-life inspiration and fictional character.)

Myles is not impressed with the intrusion.

MYLES

Uncle, I open several books every day.

UNCLE

You open your granny. I never see you at it. Why aren't you at the college?

MYLES

I study better in my bedroom.

UNCLE

Aren't you very fond of your bedroom, now? I know the studying you do in your bedroom. Damn the studying you do in your bedroom.

The Uncle sucks at his teeth, making little chews. Very annoying.

UNCLE (CONT'D)

Tell me this, did you press my Sunday trousers?

MYLES

I forgot.

UNCLE

Well, that's very nice, very nice indeed. What in God's name is going to happen to a boy your age who gives himself up to the sin of sloth? The Devil makes work for idle hands.

MYLES

I'm getting up.

The Uncle glares.

UNCLE

Will you forget my trousers again today?

MYLES

No.

UNCLE

Make sure of it.
Go to your college.

The Uncle leaves. A fart escapes him before he closes the door.

Myles goes to the door and locks it.

He gets back into bed, takes up his pencil and paper and returns to his writing.

We re-enter his world...

8 INT. MORNING. RED SWAN HOTEL, TRELLIS' BEDROOM. 8

Trellis, the author, still uninspired, peruses the finger he has removed from his nose. He finds no inspiration there.

Among the books on his bed are some Western novelettes. He picks up "JAKE'S LAST RIDE".

He flicks through it, stopping at a picture of a cowboy. He circles the cowboy with his pen.

TRELLIS
(muttering)
I'll have you, mister.

He muses for a bit, staring at the typewriter as his finger wavers.

8a EXT. DAY. UNCLE'S HOUSE 8a

Myles emerges from the front door of his Uncle's neat red-brick house.

A woman is walking towards him on the street. She is middle-aged and well-dressed and smiles pleasantly at Myles as she passes. (We will know her later as *Teresa*.)

PLEASANT LADY
Hello. Lovely morning.

Myles instinctively smiles back and returns the greeting, his manners overcoming his mood and brightening his spirit.

He walks across the small green in front of the house.

We pull back and up to reveal the respectable lower-middle-class square.

CAPTION:

DUBLIN. 1935

9 EXT. DAY. ST. STEPHEN'S GREEN. 9

Myles is walking through St. Stephen's Green. He is late for College. He hears the flap of a bird's wings. He catches sight of a heron taking flight among the trees.

He stops to watch.

It is extraordinarily graceful. Myles is entranced.

We hear:

PROFESSOR HYDE (V.O.)
 Sweeny flapped his wings and a
 feather fell to earth..

10 INT. DAY. LECTURE-HALL, U.C.D.

10

Establishing shot of University College, Dublin.

Myles enters class, late.

Professor Hyde, Head of the Faculty, is at the end of his
 lecture. His name is on the lectern.

Behind him on the blackboard is the legend "SWEENY IN THE
 TREES"

PROFESSOR HYDE
 The Madness of Sweeny is one of the
 most evocative of legends; poor
 Sweeny, the outcast king in exile
 amongst the tree-tops, half bird,
 half man, raving in beautiful,
 mournful poetry to the dumb
 creatures of the wild.
 (sigh)
 I know how he feels.

The class laughs.

Myles sits in beside his friend BRINSLEY as Prof. Hyde
 continues..

PROFESSOR HYDE (CONT'D)
 The paradox of his plight is, of
 course at the centre of the
 artistic dilemma: Is separateness
 compatible with peace of mind? Must
 the artist always remain...etc.

Myles whispers to Brinsley as Prof Hyde lectures on.

*

MYLES
 I have created Dermot Trellis, a
 writer. He is unattractive and he
 picks his nose. He robs most of his
 characters from other books, but
 his villain is of such depravity,
 he has to be created from scratch:
 a dark man called.....Furriskey.

Professor Hyde pauses and looks directly at them..

PROFESSOR HYDE
 (pointedly, to Myles)
 By the way, a number of you have
 been dragging your heels.
 (MORE)

PROFESSOR HYDE (cont'd)
You, also, will find yourselves
cast out, Sweeny-like, unless you
get down to work now...

MYLES
(whispering, oblivious)
John..... Furriskey.....

Professor Hyde calmly eye-balls Myles.

Things go quiet.

PROFESSOR HYDE
Am I boring you?

MYLES
Think nothing of it, Professor
Hyde, we all have our off-days.

The class tingles.

PROFESSOR HYDE
You appear to have more than most.
This is not the first lecture you
have missed this year.

MYLES
I'm flattered it didn't go
unnoticed, though of course your
vigilance is legendary. I suppose I
could run but I could not,
Professor, hide.

The class chuckles. Myles is pleased with his reaction but
eager to check how it went down with a particular girl across
the room.

She appears amused.

PROFESSOR HYDE
(unperturbed)
You are an idiot. Mind what you've
been told. Do not leave things to
the last minute; your examinations
will arrive a lot sooner than you
imagine.
Get the book.
(indicating the title on the
blackboard)
Class dismissed.

The students gather their things.

Myles follows the girl's progress as she leaves. Raven-
haired, rosy-cheeked, milky-complexioned - ROISIN DUBH.

She passes by, eyes averted under lazy eyelids.

11 EXT. DAY. ST. STEPHEN'S GREEN. 11

Myles walks home through the park. He looks at the trees, wishing for another heron. The heron doesn't oblige.

Myles' gaze falls on a young man in the distance who stands up from a bench and starts to brush his clothes down. Myles recognizes him and walks towards him.

12 INT. MORNING. RED SWAN HOTEL. FURRISKEY'S ROOM. 12

Trellis' villain, Furriskey, brushes himself down. He is now dressed in the suit he found in the corner. He is mortified by the vent at the back and examines a loose button on the torn cuff of the jacket.

He is standing in the middle of the room, lost.

We get a quick flash of the long, empty corridors of the Red Swan Hotel.

Furriskey feels his face with his fingers, as if to work out what it looks like.

FURRISKEY
(ruefully)
*It's a nice pass when a man doesn't
know the shape of his own face.*

13 EXT. DAY. ST. STEPHEN'S GREEN. 13

Myles reaches the park bench, where the young man, KELLY, has sat back down and is holding his face in his hands, hung over.

Kelly is striking in appearance, though unkempt, having spent the night on the bench. He is slightly older than Myles, having been thrown out of college a few years before.

He is the inspiration for *Furriskey*.

MYLES
Mister Kelly.

KELLY
I'm dying.

MYLES
I see that.

KELLY
Fancy a jar?

MYLES
(amused)
I don't drink.

Kelly doesn't care.

Myles, bored, looks about him. He comes to a decision.

MYLES (CONT'D)
Any money?

KELLY
Come on.

Kelly goes. Myles follows.

14 INT. DAY. GROGAN'S PUBLIC HOUSE

14

Myles and Kelly stand at the bar.

KELLY
What'll you have?

MYLES
A bottle of beer?

KELLY
Not at all.
The pint of plain porter is your
only man.

He makes a gesture to the barman for two pints of plain porter.

KELLY
How's that arse of a college?

MYLES
Bad as ever.

KELLY
Hm.

Kelly eyes the pints being poured. He needs the cure.

KELLY (CONT'D)
College: Analysing life, to keep it
at a safe distance.

Though maintaining his dignity, Kelly is practically drinking the black liquid from ten yards. Myles regards it with anxiety. It will be his first alcoholic drink.

The barman eventually tops up the two pints.

KELLY (CONT'D)
Live life is the better way. Fuck
the analysis.

The barman brings over the two drinks and places them on the counter.

BARMAN

Language.

Myles is apologetic.

MYLES

Sorry.

Kelly isn't. He stares down the Barman who gives him daggers and heads back up the bar.

KELLY

(re the Barman)

Terrible man for talk.

Your health.

MYLES

Good luck.

Kelly dives into his pint. Myles follows with some trepidation. The liquid is bitter but he fights to put a good face on it. Kelly slaps his lips.

KELLY

Ah!

MYLES

(struggling)

You can't beat a good pint.

KELLY

What did I tell you?

The pint of plain is your only man.

Myles nods sagely, sucking and licking his lips with great relish. Privately, his face tells a different story.

15 INT. NIGHT. UNCLE'S STREET.

15

Later, Myles totters up the street. He is very drunk, merriment and dizziness dancing within his head.

MYLES

(muttering)

I am Sweeny...

...Poet-King...

He staggers up to his Uncle's house, struggling with the key and resisting the impulse to puke all over the front door.

MYLES

..King Sweeny..

He clacks the key against the latch.

MYLES

Poetic King... Poeticking..

SWEENY (V.O.)
I am Sweeny... King and Poet,

16 EXT. DAY. THE CAVES OF KEASH.

16

We see King Sweeny, teaching in a field. He is in his pomp, prior to banishment; aesthetic looking, noble, with a fine sensibility. His young listeners are seated in a circle before him.

Behind him, away up on the mountain, are the white Caves of Keash.

SWEENY
Nature my kingdom,
Honey-words my subjects,
The trees hold their secret..

A strange clacking sound like a bell is heard coming down from the caves.

SWEENY (CONT'D)
These Caves of Keash,
These Holes of Connaught,
These Voids of ...

The clacking continues, interrupting his concentration.

SWEENY (CONT'D)
These....
Peadar, would you ever ask Saint
Ronan to quieten it down a bit,
good man, thanks.

The young lad runs off on his errand.

SWEENY (CONT'D)
These Voids of Erin,
Punctured in the Mountain
By the mighty sneeze of Balor..

Sweeny smiles benevolently at his pupils.

The clacking resumes.

There is a little shred of annoyance behind the smiling eyes.
Clack! Clack! Clack! ..

17 EXT. NIGHT. UNCLE'S HOUSE.

17

Clack!... Clack!...

Myles' key makes a clacking noise against the latch.

He is completely out of it as he struggles to stick the key in the door.

He becomes slightly irritated, but in a mellow way.

MYLES
Once free, once gentle,
I am banished for ever,
Cheerless is existence
Without a downy bed..

He tries to ram the key in a little too hard.

Suddenly the door opens and the Uncle's head is there.

UNCLE
(long pause)
Do I smell drink?

MYLES
No.

Myles can barely stand.

UNCLE
Are you drunk?

MYLES
No.

UNCLE
What's that?

There is sick on Myles' jacket.

MYLES
Soup.

UNCLE
Is that sick?

Myles rescues a piece of pea from his lapel and sticks it in his mouth.

MYLES
No.

Myles breathes in and steps into the house. He makes to pass the Uncle and escape upstairs.

UNCLE
I won't tolerate drink in this
house. I won't have it.
Your father works hard enough for
your education.

Two men, MESSRS CORCORAN and CONNORS, can be seen through the open door seated at the dining-room table. They stick their oar in for amusement..

MR. CORCORAN

We need a secretary! Bring him in!

MR. CONNORS

Yes! Bring in the young man!

The Uncle is caught. He eyes Myles and gestures for him to do as bidden.

Myles reluctantly follows him into the dining room.

18

INT. NIGHT. UNCLE'S DINING-ROOM.

18

The Uncle sits down. It is a committee meeting.

UNCLE

Gentlemen, my nephew.

(to Myles)

Take a seat. Although we are nearly finished. There seems little point...

The others disagree and enthusiastically invite Myles to join them. Myles pulls over a seat.

His Uncle gives him a black notebook. It is unnerving to be this close, this drunk. He keeps the notebook on his knee rather than on the table.

The others beam at him. His Uncle gets on with business.

UNCLE (CONT'D)

You were saying, Mr. Connors?

MR. CONNORS

One old-time waltz is all I ask.
Nothing foreign about the old-time waltz.

MR. CORCORAN

I don't agree.

The Uncle raps the table. Myles observes him with swirling curiosity laced with contempt. Things are spinning.

UNCLE

Order, Mr Corcoran! I'm sick and tired saying this is a Committee Meeting! There is such a thing as Procedure. Have you a Point of Order, Mr. Corcoran?

MR. CORCORAN

I have.

UNCLE

Well and good. If you have a Point of Order, well and good. Proceed.

MR. CORCORAN

I don't agree with the old-time waltz. Nothing wrong with it, Mr. Connors, nothing actually wrong with it...

UNCLE

Address the Chair, address the Chair.

MR. CORCORAN

I mean, we have our own. We have plenty of our own dances without crossing the road to borrow what we can't wear, see the point? Leave the waltz to the jazz-boys.

Myles finds this extraordinary. He starts to feel giddy again.

MR. CONNORS

Oh, settle it whatever way you like. It was just a suggestion. Just because a thing is foreign doesn't stand to reason that it's bad.

UNCLE

Those in favour?

Mr. Connors puts up his hand.

UNCLE (CONT'D)

Those against?

Mr Corcoran puts up his hand. Myles finds this hilarious. He involuntarily laughs out loud. The Uncle tries to ignore him.

UNCLE (CONT'D)

My casting vote is in the negative. Now, a Reception Committee. I appoint Mr. Connors, Mr. Corcoran and myself.
(To Myles)
Have you recorded the names of the Reception Committee?

Myles nods and writes.

UNCLE

With due respect I think a red carpet might be a bit too formal. A brief address in Irish and I don't think the clergy would object to a few bottles of stout. That is everything, I think. Anything else?

MR. CORCORAN

(smiling at Myles)

A vote of thanks to our efficient secretary.

Myles smiles back cheekily.

The Uncle cuts it short.

UNCLE

Oh, certainly. Passed unanimously. I declare the meeting adjourned, seeny day.

The Uncle raps the table.

Myles heads upstairs. He stumbles on the way out.

The Uncle gives him a horrible look.

19 INT. MORNING. UNCLE'S KITCHEN.

19

The following morning Myles, ill, is staring at his Uncle who is draining his tea-cup.

His Uncle is in a mood with him.

MYLES

Could you give me five shillings for a book, please?

UNCLE

Five shillings? Well, dear knows it must be a great book altogether that can cost five shillings. What do they call it?

MYLES

"SWEENY IN THE TREES".

UNCLE

I see.

MYLES

(pointedly)

It's about a man driven to distraction by a Saint.

(MORE)

MYLES (cont'd)
 To the extent where he'd rather
 live in the bushes than suffer the
 sanctimony any further.

UNCLE
 And is it going to be read, tell me
 that much? Or drank?

He counts out five shillings like his life's blood.

Myles looks at the Sacred Heart picture on the wall as the
 Uncle bleeds his money on the table. The red lamp glows under
 the picture.

20

INT. DUSK. RED SWAN HOTEL, FURRISKEY'S ROOM.

20

*Furriskey notices a red glow through the window. He goes
 over and pulls back the curtain to reveal a neon sign: RED
 SWAN HOTEL.*

The sign means nothing to him.

Suddenly there is a knock on the door, Bam!

Furriskey jumps with fright.

Through the door comes the voice of Trellis, his creator.

TRELLIS
 FURRISKEY!

FURRISKEY
 (shakily)
 Yes?

TRELLIS
 I want you to mind what I'm going
 to tell you.

FURRISKEY
 Yes, sir.

TRELLIS
 My name is Trellis. I am your
 creator. You are now in my
 employment for my buke.
 You will do as you are told. Do you
 hear me?

FURRISKEY
 Yes, sir.

*Furriskey glances through the glass in the door. He gets a
 distorted view of Trellis's face that frightens the shit out
 of him.*

TRELLIS

*I'm here to tell you that you are,
by vocation, concerned only with
the ravishing and destruction of
women! Do you follow?*

FURRISKEY

Well...

TRELLIS

*Your orders are to go to Donnybrook
as an initial duty where you will
meet and betray a domestic servant
by the name of Peggy.*

FURRISKEY

Yes, sir.

TRELLIS

Hm?

FURRISKEY

YES, SIR!

TRELLIS

*Right, off you go.
(yawns)
Tired, now.*

Trellis shuffles away..

*Furriskey mulls this over. He does not really want to be a
villain.*

He goes to the door and listens. Nothing.

*He opens the door and looks out carefully just in time to see
Trellis entering his own room up the corridor. Trellis may
fart at this juncture.*

21 EXT. DAY. STREET.

21

Myles and Brinsley are walking to the bookshop.

Myles is recounting the night before.

MYLES

*It's mostly a blank.
Two hours later I arrived home
covered in vomit.
The Uncle nearly had a seizure.
I denied all knowledge, of course,
but I did eat a little to let on it
was soup.*

BRINSLEY

You are a revolting specimen.

MYLES

Here it is.

They stop in front of the bookshop. SWEENEY IN THE TREES is in the window. There is a bizarre picture of a half-man-half-bird on the cover. They peer at it.

There is the sound of beating wings..

SWEENEY (V.O.)

*I am in summer with the herons of
Cooley
With wolves in winter,
I do not relish
The cold clack of humans..*

The lads become engrossed in the picture.

BRINSLEY

He looks mad, doesn't he?

MYLES

He looks lonely.

A third reflection joins theirs in the window. It is Kelly.

KELLY

You're not thinking of buying that,
are you?

MYLES

It's on the course.

KELLY

I can tell you all you need to know
about that.

BRINSLEY

Of course you can.

KELLY

Swear to God, we did that just
before I was thrown out. I love
Sweeny.
Free as a bird, mad as a hatter.
Deadly.

They look at the illustration.

Kelly sees the price of the book.

KELLY (CONT'D)

Five Shillings!

(to Myles)

Have you got Five Shillings?!

Myles nods, warily.

KELLY (CONT'D)

Ah, here.
Pints.

22 INT. DAY. LATER. GROGAN'S PUBLIC HOUSE.

22

Three fresh pints arrive on the counter.

Myles and Brinsley are seated at the bar. Kelly is in the toilet.

Myles is finishing off his first pint, Brinsley is half-way down his and Kelly's glass is empty.

Myles is pontificating to Brinsley.

MYLES

Furthermore, I consider it undemocratic to deny free will to any characters used by an author, especially a bad author.. and let's face it, Dublin is full of bad authors...
No. All characters should have the right to independent thought, free will and the pursuit of decent conditions of employment.

BRINSLEY

"I see", said the blind man.

Myles peers through the smoke of the midday pub. He examines the customers - shift-workers, chancers, betting men. Many of these will feature in various guises in Myles' writing.

The drink is getting to him.

His gaze alights with predatory intensity on the barman, who is grimly surveying his volatile clientele from behind the counter.

The barman looks over to return Myles' gaze in steely fashion, then produces a ten-gallon hat and pops it on his head. He has become, SHANAHAN, cowhand of the old West. He squirts some tobacco-juice into a spittoon.

Myles blinks away the image and switches his focus to Kelly, who is wise-cracking and generally cutting a dash on his way back from the toilet.

Myles reckons Kelly has cracked it. Fuck the analysis. Live life.

Kelly sits on his stool and raises his glass to Myles and Brinsley.

KELLY

The drink first, the women come later.

(to Myles)

By the way, sorry for puking on you last night.

Myles is aghast.

Brinsley laughs out loud.

Myles remembers a pea.

MYLES

I am remembering a pea.

He looks queasily at his new pint.

He drinks it anyway.

23

EXT. NIGHT. STREETS.

23

The three lads wander unsteadily down the street. Brinsley takes his leave and heads home. Kelly and Myles are joined by a small man who jabs Myles in the chest and argues vociferously about Rousseau and the like.

Myles is too drunk to follow a word and moves off, but Kelly averts his head, apparently in rapt attention. Without warning, Kelly does his trick - he opens his mouth and covers the man in vomit.

Myles staggers away in a vague deja vu. He looks around. Kelly is gone. The small man is down a lane wiping his coat along a wall. (We will know him later as *Jem Casey*.)

24

INT. EVENING. MYLES' BEDROOM.

24

Brinsley is in Myles' bedroom, reading and chuckling at his manuscript.

BRINSLEY

This is the pig's whiskers.

MYLES

Have a look at this bit.

Myles, hung-over, gingerly hands over some more pages.

The door is pushed open and the Uncle puts his head in, looking severely at Myles, who gets in first.

MYLES

This is Brinsley, a friend of mine.
He hopes to land a job from the
Christian Brothers when he gets his
B.A.

This is news to Brinsley, but the Uncle's face lights up on
cue.

UNCLE

That would be a great thing.
Teaching is a job that calls for
great application and love of God.
There is a special crown for those
who give themselves up to that
work. A special crown.

Horrible silence.

UNCLE (CONT'D)

Mr. Brinsley, what are we going to
do with this fellow at all?

BRINSLEY

(innocently)

You mean this lying in bed during
the day?

UNCLE

I do. I don't understand it at all.

BRINSLEY

(piously)

Well, we're all of us lazy. We all
have it in us. It's just a question
of making a special effort.

UNCLE

We all have it in us. We have a
Devil on one shoulder and a
Guardian Angel on the other. Just a
question of who we listen to.
The Devil makes work for idle
hands.

The Uncle fingers a boil on the back of his neck. The others
share a look.

UNCLE (CONT'D)

But long faces won't get us very
far, eh, Mr. Brinsley? I am a great
believer in the smile and the happy
word.

BRINSLEY

Solemn remedy for all our ills.

UNCLE
Very nicely put. Well, mind
yourself now and keep the coat well
buttoned up. The Flu is the boy I'd
give the slip to.

He exits the room. Brinsley exhales.

BRINSLEY
Holy God!

The door bursts back open, the Uncle re-enters.

UNCLE
(to Myles))
Did you get that book?

MYLES
I have to collect it at the end of
the week.

UNCLE
Eh?

The Uncle exits, disgruntled.

There is a sigh of relief.

BRINSLEY
(improvising)
The neck to Trellis was house-thick
and house-rough and was guarded
against his enemies by his old
watchful boil.

They chuckle.

Brinsley returns the manuscript to Myles.

BRINSLEY
We'd better get going.

MYLES
You go ahead. I'm going to give him
something else to think about. I'll
see you later.

BRINSLEY
You're a quare bloody man.

Myles gets his pencil and starts writing.

Brinsley heads out the door.

25

INT. DUSK. RED SWAN HOTEL. CORRIDOR.

25

The door opens to the corridor of the Red Swan Hotel, and Trellis comes out of his room. He has a laundry bag with his underpants in it. He moves along the corridor and down the stairs.

He pads through the empty hall, past a painting of a naked woman on the bank of a river.

Trellis examines the painting with equal measures of fascination and disapproval. After a bit he drags himself away, tut-tutting. He shuffles down to the laundry-room.

26

INT. DUSK. RED SWAN HOTEL. LAUNDRY ROOM.

26

The laundry-room is beflagged with hanging sheets, shirts and underclothes.

Teresa, the maid, is at the stove, her thighs presented to the fire. (Her face is that of the Pleasant Lady Myles met earlier)

There is steam and heat everywhere. Trellis shyly drops his laundry bag on a table. He examines a pair of laundered underpants with appraising fingers and smiles approvingly. He finds himself gazing rather too long at Teresa.

Teresa returns his gaze.

TERESA

Just as you like them, Sir.

She smiles at him.

Trellis is unnerved. He smiles awkwardly, nods and heads out taking his fresh undies.

27

INT. DUSK. RED SWAN HOTEL. CORRIDOR.

27

Trellis runs upstairs in a bit of a state. He passes the painting of the naked woman and turns it over to the wall. It's all too much.

He tears up to Furriskey's room and knocks heavily on the door.

TRELLIS

FURRISKEY!! IT'S HIGH TIME YOU WENT
ABOUT YOUR FILTHY BUSINESS... YOU
DEPRAVED GUTTERSNIPE!

We get a quick glimpse of a distressed Furrisky inside the room.

Trellis goes to his own room, where there is a sign:

Mr. Trellis' Room. Do Not Enter.

He enters.

28

INT. DUSK. TRELIS' BEDROOM.

28

Trellis gets into bed and places his typewriter on his lap. He has to fix himself to allow it to sit properly.

He takes a moment to recover from his sinful thoughts.

He places his hands in a typing position.

No inspiration.

He picks up a book entitled:

"POOKAS AND FAIRIES: GOOD AND EVIL IN IRISH FOLKLORE".

He opens a chapter entitled "THE POOKA". There is a terrifying illustration of a devil. Trellis is alarmed by it. His typewriter sits a little better on his lap. Or maybe not.

He starts to type:

"THE DEVIL..."

29

INT. MORNING. U.C.D.

29

Myles enters the college. The place is abuzz with students to-ing and fro-ing between lectures.

He sees Brinsley.

BRINSLEY

Hyde was looking for you.

MYLES

Trellis' book is going to be about the wages of sin.

BRINSLEY

Nobody will read the like of that.

MYLES

Yes, they will. Trellis is appalled by the loose morals of the day but he wants his book to be read by all, so he is putting plenty of smut in it.

BRINSLEY

Now you're talking.

MYLES

The Devil and the Good Fairy will
vie for supremacy.
Smut, debauchery and filth, can't
get enough of it..

As Myles gets into full flow, Roisin, the girl he fancies,
passes quite close. Myles doesn't see her till too late.

MYLES (CONT'D)

..thick thighs and ample bosoms and
seedy rummaging of a repulsive
nature...

Roisin passes.

Myles tails off...

She definitely heard.

We hear typing..

30 *INT. DUSK. RED SWAN HOTEL, TRELLIS' ROOM.*

30

Trellis finishes his title:

"THE DEVIL MAKES WORK FOR IDLE HANDS."

*He thinks for a moment. His finger starts to move towards his
nostril. He disciplines himself and takes it away, placing it
back over the typewriter, determined to wait for inspiration.*

Nothing comes.

*He rummages among his books again and comes across "Jake's
Last Ride". He opens it at the page where he had circled the
cowboy. He stares at the cowboy for a while.*

He grunts and re-works his title.

"THE DEVIL MAKES WORK FOR IDLE ~~HANDS~~ COWHANDS"

Pleased with himself, he thinks for a bit, then falls asleep.

31 *INT. DUSK. RED SWAN HOTEL. CORRIDOR.*

31

*Furriskey opens the door of his room tentatively. He is
miserable.*

*He moves along the corridor. He comes to Trellis' room and
listens. He can hear snoring.*

He is confused.

*A cow wanders up the corridor with a room-key in her mouth,
looking for her room.*

She is confused.

Furriskey hears noise from another room and tiptoes over.

Someone is softly singing "Home on the Range".

He gingerly opens the door and peeks inside.

32

INT. DUSK. RED SWAN HOTEL, SHANAHAN'S ROOM.

32

Inside, singing to himself by the fire, is SHANAHAN, a Dublin man. (We recognise him as the Barman in Grogan's. He is also uncannily like the cowboy Trellis had circled in "JAKE'S LAST RIDE".)

SHANAHAN

*Ah, the hard Furriskey!
Come in my good man!*

Furriskey enters hesitantly.

FURRISKEY

You appear to know my name.

SHANAHAN

(winking)

*And I know your nature too, but
we'll keep the fun clean, eh?
I say, we'll keep the fun clean.
Pleased to make your acquaintance,
Shanahan is my name.*

They shake hands.

SHANAHAN (CONT'D)

*I'm in the same boat as your good
self. Trellis next door brought me
here for his book and I'm awaiting
further orders since.*

(his anger rises)

*He's an awful blackguard, God
forgive me.*

FURRISKEY

Really?

SHANAHAN

*Keeping us all here beside him in
this dump of a hotel because he
doesn't trust us, if you don't
mind.*

(Slyly)

Well, maybe he has a point.

FURRISKEY

How so?

SHANAHAN

Come here till I tell you.

Furriskey moves closer.

SHANAHAN (cont'd)

(confidentially)

What our friend next door doesn't realise, of course, is that he holds no sway over us WHEN HE'S ASLEEP.

Hah?

What do you think of that, my newborn friend? HOLDS NO SWAY OVER US WHEN HE'S ASLEEP!

And, sure, he's ALWAYS falling asleep!

We can do what we want! FREE WILL!

Shanahan finds this hilarious.

Furriskey doesn't quite get it.

FURRISKEY

Well, I should really be on my way..

SHANAHAN

Take your ease, his nibs won't wake for a while yet.

May he die roaring... Wouldn't mind but he's a brootal writer.

(big sigh)

You're looking at a man that's used to better, let me tell you.

FURRISKEY

(taking a chair)

Is that right?

SHANAHAN

Oh, don't talk to me.

The last job I was on, now, "JAKE'S LAST RIDE"; we were treated like royalty, man.

FURRISKEY

Really?

Furriskey sits beside Shanahan at the fire.

SHANAHAN

"JAKE'S LAST RIDE".

By the great William Tracy, R.I.P. Oh, he put us up in the best of digs, with school-marms and musicianers and no end of chow...

33

EXT. DAY. STREET.

33

We pull back from a cinema poster showing a cowgirl in a Western. We will recognise her later.

Myles and Kelly come out of the cinema.

Kelly has a half-finished bottle of whiskey in a brown bag. He takes a swig. He hands the bottle to Myles, then poses, cowboy-style, for a shoot-out.

Myles takes a swig and responds.

Two young women pass by the stand-off.

Kelly tips his imaginary hat.

KELLY

Ladies!

The women giggle but keep moving. One looks back flirtatiously.

Myles sees her look but can't harness it. The girl is too confident. The moment is lost.

The stand-off with Kelly continues in the middle of the path.

SHANAHAN (V.O.)

So, one day Tracy sent for me and gave me my orders and said it was for one of his cowboy books.

34

INT. DAY. MOVIE STUDIO.

34

We pull back from Shanahan's weather-beaten gaze. He is wearing a cowboy hat.

SHANAHAN (V.O., CONT'D)

Two days later I was cow-punching in Ringsend with SLUG WILLARD, the toughest boyo you'd meet in a day's walk..

We continue to pull back to reveal Shanahan and Slug Willard sitting on horses, with a Western back-projection behind them, like in an old black-and-white movie. (Slug looks like Mr.Connors.)

They look into the middle-distance.

SLUG

That was quite the night we had last night, what with the school-marms and the saloon-girls and the musiciansers.

SLUG speaks in a very odd mix of Cowboy and Dublinese.

Shanahan has a similar accent.

SHANAHAN

*Oh, you can't beat the fiddle. In
the right hands, of course..*

A fiddle moans.

35

EXT. DAY. STREET.

35

Myles plummets through a hedge onto a lawn, landing in a heap, as two middle-aged women come out the front door of a suburban house.

He and Kelly are drunkenly playing cowboys.

Myles attempts bravado.

MYLES

Ladies!

One of the women is outraged.

INDIGNANT LADY

I'M CALLING THE POLICE!

The other is concerned. It is the Pleasant Lady he passed earlier.

PLEASANT LADY

Are you alright, Dear?

Myles looks at her, embarrassed. She has a kind face. She looks like *Teresa*.

Myles is a bit fazed. He gets up hastily and rides off back into the street.

He watches as Kelly throws the empty whiskey bottle in the air and shoots it with his finger. It shatters on the path.

Myles doesn't really approve. He runs off into the next street, trying to get away from the gaze of the ladies.

36

EXT. DAY. NEXT STREET.

36

Kelly follows, kicking over garden ornaments with venom.

He yanks up a bunch of tulips and bashes Myles over the head with them.

Myles' misgivings are abandoned and he reciprocates. He grabs a bunch of flowers and they flay each other, laughing wildly in the delirium of wanton destruction.

Roisin and some friends stroll around the corner, unseen by the boys.

Kelly reefs up a huge bunch of plants and chases Myles, who turns and flees, knocking a bird-table into the street and stumbling straight into Roisin.

The world stops.

Kelly smashes the flowers over Myles.

Roisin looks at him.

It's no longer funny.

KELLY
(tipping his hat)
Ladies!

Myles dies under Roisin's gaze.

37

INT. DUSK. RED SWAN HOTEL, SHANAHAN'S ROOM.

37

Shanahan and Furriskey by the fire.

SHANAHAN
*Oh, you can't beat a good Western.
In the right hands, of course.*

They hear a noise.

SHANAHAN (CONT'D)
Sh!

FURRISKEY
What?

SHANAHAN
Me man's awake!

Furriskey panics and scrambles under the bed.

Trellis pounds on the door.

TRELLIS
WHAT THE BLOODY HELL IS GOING ON?!

Thump! Thump!

TRELLIS (CONT'D)
FURRISKEY! ARE YOU NOT GONE YET?!

Furriskey shivers under the bed.

TRELLIS (CONT'D)
*I suppose you think you're a smart
fella.*

(MORE)

TRELLIS (CONT'D)

Well let me tell you what I do with
smart fellas.

SHANAHAN! Tell Mr. Furriskey what I
do with smart fellas.

Shanahan opens his mouth to speak but nothing comes out.

TRELLIS

Finn McCool, for example. The
finest hero of ancient Ireland.
Fifty fosterlings could play
handball against the flat of his
backside.

We get a flash of a heroic Finn in his pomp, with appropriate
Mythic background. (He looks like Mr. Corcoran.)

TRELLIS (CONT'D)

Do you know where he is now?

SHANAHAN! Where is he now?

SHANAHAN

(querulously)

Working on the trams.

Trellis guffaws.

We get a flash of Finn in his conductor's hat... miserable.
(he looks even more like Mr. Corcoran.)

TRELLIS

Correct! With neuralgia down one
side of his jaw! Ha! Ha!

(slyly)

How about Jem Casey?

At the mention of Casey, Shanahan forgets his fear and goes
into over-drive. Jem is his hero.

SHANAHAN

Jem Casey! Poet of the Pick and
Bard of Booterstown. A plain
upstanding labouring man, Mr.
Furriskey, the same as you or me.

We see Jem in a ditch with his pick, looking noble. We
remember the man who spoke to Myles of Rousseau,)

SHANAHAN (V.O.)

But by God, at the heel of the
hunt, there's only one poet for me.

Jem throws his head back and begins to recite. The voice we
hear is Shanahan's, though, as we cut back to him in
rapture..

SHANAHAN (CONT'D)

*When money's tight and it's hard to
get,
And your horse is also ran...
When all you have is a heap of
debt..*

Trellis goes ape.

TRELLIS

*AND WHERE IS HE NOW?!
JABBERING TO RABBITS IN A BUSH!
THAT'S WHERE!*

*Shanahan shuts up. We get a flash of Jem talking to two
rabbits..*

JEM CASEY

*..A pint of plain is your only
man..*

Shanahan and Furriskey shake like rabbits..

TRELLIS

*FURRISKEY! GET OUT AND PLUNDER THAT
WOMAN BEFORE I WRITE YOU INTO A
RAILWAY ACCIDENT!*

Trellis stomps off back to his room.

*Furriskey waits till he hears Trellis' door shut then
climbers out from under the bed in terror and heads out the
door.*

38 INT. DAY. MYLES' BEDROOM. 38

*Myles, wrapped in his blankets, looks out his bedroom window
and contemplates the Roisin fiasco. He has stubble.*

There is a rattle on the door. Myles doesn't seem to hear.

*A pigeon lands on his window-sill. It looks tatty. Myles
stares at it. It stares back. They both look miserable.*

It starts to rain.

39 EXT. NIGHT. STREETS. 39

*Furriskey moves through the dark streets, his collar up,
menacing and unhappy. There is doom in the air.*

40 EXT. DAY. ST. STEPHEN'S GREEN. 40

*Myles walks through the park. His physical appearance is not
good.*

Brinsley comes along and walks beside him.

BRINSLEY
Haven't seen you in a few days.

No answer.

BRINSLEY (CONT'D)
Heard yourself and Kelly made tools
of yourselves in front of some
ladies?

Myles grimaces.

BRINSLEY (CONT'D)
Are you coming to this thing
tonight?

Myles doesn't appear interested.

BRINSLEY (CONT'D)
Your woman will be there.

Brinsley heads off towards college.

BRINSLEY (CONT'D)
You'd better do yourself up.

41 INT. DAY. MYLES' BEDROOM. 41

Myles makes a list:

OPTIONS.

1. TERMINAL DEPRESSION.

2. ASK HER OUT.

He ticks No. 2.

42 INT. DAY. MYLES' BEDROOM. 42

Myles does himself up.

He looks at his reflection in the window.

He looks good.

He sits on the bed and begins writing a speech.

43 EXT. EVENING. STEPHEN'S GREEN. 43

Myles walks to the soiree in the college.

He takes his speech out of his pocket and starts going over it.

44 EXT. EVENING. UNIVERSITY COLLEGE, DUBLIN. 44

Myles stands outside the College gates.

He asks a passer-by the time. He's early.

He walks up and down for a bit, then crosses the road into the pub.

45 INT. EVENING. GROGAN'S PUBLIC HOUSE. 45

Myles sits down in the empty snug and takes out the speech.

He practises quietly to himself with great sincerity.

MYLES

"Forgive me, but I know my
behaviour has been odd this past
while and, if you don't mind, I'd
like to let you know why.

The truth of the matter is, I am
completely distracted by thoughts
of you.
You have enchanted me..
..to the point where I don't know
what I'm doing from one minute to
the next.

I have only one desire and one
salvation...

Will you walk out with me?"

The barman arrives.

BARMAN

What'll you have?

MYLES

Just a half- pint please.

The barman exits.

Myles goes back over the speech, this time giving what he
imagines as Roisin's responses, muttering perfunctorily
through his own speech as though he were saying the rosary.

MYLES

Forgive me, but I know my behaviour
has been odd this past while and,
if you don't mind, I'd like to let
you know why.

ROISIN/MYLES

Mm-hmm....

MYLES

The truth of the matter is, I am completely distracted by thoughts of you. You have enchanted me.. to the point where I don't know what I'm doing from one minute to the next.

ROISIN/MYLES

(interested pause)

Oh...

MYLES

I have only one desire and one salvation..

ROISIN/MYLES

Uh-huh?

MYLES

Will you walk out with me?

ROISIN/MYLES

(pause)

Um..

(then, unable to contain a smile)

I'd love to.

Myles is in mid-grin when the barman comes in with the glass of porter.

BARMAN

There you go.

Myles is elated.

MYLES

Actually, I'll have a small one with that. Sorry. Thanks.

46

EXT. NIGHT. DONNYBROOK.

46

Peggy, the domestic servant, emerges from a side-door in a dimly-lit alley. She is sexy, but vulnerable in the gloom. (She looks like the Flirtatious Girl outside the Cinema.)

Peggy senses some dark presence as Furriskey's shadow tilts menacingly along the wall - enveloping her, Jack-the-Ripper-style. In close-up she opens her mouth as if to scream like Fay Wray in King Kong. Instead...

PEGGY

Ah, God Almighty, not another one!

FURRISKEY

Beg your pardon?

PEGGY

You're not here to assault me, are you?

FURRISKEY

Well... are you Peggy?

PEGGY

Ah Jesus, first the dirty oul'-fella with the cowboy hat, then the dirty oul'-fella with the beard and now you. At least you're half decent-lookin'.

FURRISKEY

Thanks. Well, you see, I think Mr. Trellis's book is about sin. I'm a degenerate who... What dirty oul'-fellas?

PEGGY

Shanahan and that other Finn McCool fella.

FURRISKEY

Who?

PEGGY

Finn McCool, or whatever his name is. The hero fella. Didn't much look like a hero to me. Trellis brought him in to be my father and to chastise me for me moral transgressions. But sure as soon as Trellis fell asleep, your man tried to jump on me.

FURRISKEY

(shocked)

The bowsey!

PEGGY

Shanahan the same.

FURRISKEY

Bowsies!

PEGGY

I sent them packin', back to the Red Swan. Dirty oul'-fellas. But you're nice.

FURRISKEY

Thank you, but I'm afraid it is my duty to ravage and betray you.

PEGGY

Ah, that's only oul' Trellis, don't mind him. Sure, he's asleep again, now. What he doesn't know won't hurt him.

FURRISKEY

How will we get around it when he wakes up?

PEGGY

Give us a kiss and I'll tell you.

Incredibly for Furriskey, they kiss.

47

INT. EVENING. UNIVERSITY COLLEGE, DUBLIN.

47

The soiree is in full swing. China-cups of tea and glasses of port and all very nice.

Roisin is chatting with some people, looking happy.

We follow Myles' POV as he sees her and slowly approaches.

When we are quite close, she turns and faces him.

They are alone in the crowd. The perfect moment.

MYLES

Fugihmee bureyenomye beaviou
hashbinodd thishpashwile angh,
ivyudunmine ah... dlikalehyunuh
weye.

He's as pissed as a fart.

She can't understand a word. Sincerely, Myles continues.

MYLES

Ahhdatruda madderiz, I am
completely disdradabeh thozz ovyou.
Yavenshantemit.. tadapoinwa
hadoennoh whahdem doin!
Frummuminnah dada neh.

Though she doesn't proffer an answer, Myles is confident in the power of his words. He goes for the knockout punch.

MYLES

Eyevoney wundezeeye..myoney
salvashen iz...
(a dramatic pause)
Wih-ya wahhadameh?

Roisin drops her eyes to his lapel.

ROISIN
Is that soup or sick?

Slowly, it hits Myles that her silence wasn't a result of a touched heart. It is over.

48 EXT. NIGHT. UNCLE'S HOUSE. 48

Myles arrives at the front door. He is very down and very drunk. He takes some hedge and wipes his jacket.

He takes some more hedge and eats it, breathing into his hand to see if it improves his breath.

He goes in.

49 INT. NIGHT. UNCLE'S DINING-ROOM. 49

Myles enters to find his Uncle there with Mr. Corcoran.

UNCLE
Well, fellow-my-lad, what are we at tonight?

MR. CORCORAN
I hope we're not disturbing you at your work.

UNCLE
(Big laugh)
Faith, you would want to be a clever man to disturb that fellow at his work, Mr. Corcoran. That would be a miracle, certainly. Tell me, do you ever open a book at all?

Myles decides to let that one go.

His Uncle is at the gramophone, winding it irritatingly slowly and carefully.

UNCLE
Moderation in all things is the trick that won the war.

He looks up and sniffs.

UNCLE
Have you been drinking?

MYLES
No!

Myles haws his breath at the Uncle.

The Uncle is reluctant to pursue it in Mr. Corcoran's company.

Instead, he places the needle on the record and a piece from the opera *Patience* plays thinly. He is somewhat soothed.

UNCLE

I could listen to that tune from
early morning to late at night and
never tire of it. Ah, it's a lovely
thing. There's a great lilt to it,
Mr. Corcoran.

Mr Corcoran is smiling and about to speak when the smile is suddenly transfixed and he sneezes violently, splattering himself all over his coat.

Myles retches slightly. The Uncle hurries to his friend's assistance and they go to work with their handkerchiefs.

UNCLE

There's a catching cold going. You
need to keep yourself well wrapped
up.

Myles bales out.

50 INT. NIGHT. MYLES' BEDROOM.

50

Myles comes into the room and sits on the bed.

He looks at his list.

He draws a line through No. 2, leaving only No. 1.

OPTIONS.

1. TERMINAL DEPRESSION.

2. ~~ASK HER OUT.~~

He curls up in a ball.

51 INT. NIGHT. RED SWAN HOTEL, CORRIDOR.

51

Furriskey comes creeping home from his tryst with Peggy, his shoes in his hand. He wears a wedding-ring. He stops at Trellis' door.

He kisses his ring and takes a sleeping draught from his pocket. We know it is a sleeping-draught because it's written on the bottle, along with a badly-drawn heart and a kiss from Peggy. Furriskey kisses Peggy's kiss. He is besotted.

He listens at the door. On hearing snoring, he passes inside.

52 *INT. NIGHT. TRELIS BEDROOM.*

52

Trellis is asleep and snoring. The room is filled with strange light. Furriskey creeps up to Trellis' side-table.

He pours the draught into Trellis' jug of water and tip-toes out. There is a rumbling sound as though the gods disapprove, but he makes it out of the room.

53 *INT. NIGHT. RED SWAN HOTEL, SHANAHAN'S ROOM.*

53

Furriskey enters Shanahan's room. He is elated. Shanahan is at the fire.

There is an old man (FINN MCCOOL) sitting in shadow on the bed. (He now looks exactly like Mr. Corcoran.)

SHANAHAN

*The bould Furriskey!
By God, you weren't long.*

FURRISKEY

*(sitting)
Myself and Peggy are ... Who's
this?*

SHANAHAN

*This is the legendary Finn McCool,
ancient hero of old Ireland.
He could block a mountain pass with
the breadth of his hempen
drawers...*

We get another splash of Finn in his pomp.

SHANAHAN (CONT'D)

....one time.

Furriskey seems confused by Finn's present incarnation.

SHANAHAN (CONT'D)

*Trellis landed him here like the
rest of us. He's past his prime,
but.*

FURRISKEY

*(with resentment)
Doesn't seem to have softened his
cough when it comes to innocent
poor girls. Does it, "DADDY"?
No more than yourself.*

Shanahan feigns innocence. Finn appears asleep. Furriskey lets it go.

FURRISKEY (CONT'D)

Is he asleep, or what?

SHANAHAN

Maybe he is, but it didn't sound like it five minutes ago. He's a terrible man for talk. Don't ask me how I know, look at my grey hairs. Still, I like to meet a man who can take it in hand to tell a story and not make a balls of it while he's at it.

FINN MCCOOL

(from the bed)

I will relate, with honey-words and melodious recital, the account of the madness of King Sweeny, and he on a madman's flight through the length of Erin.

SHANAHAN

Draw in your chairs, boys, we're right for the night. We're away in a hack...

54 INT. DAY MYLES' BEDROOM.

54

Myles is curled up morosely on his bed among his papers. He is writing, though somewhat distracted.

He scratches his head, increasingly vigorously.

A head-louse falls onto the page.

Myles can't believe it.

He fires it off the paper in horror.

There is a knock on the door.

BRINSLEY (V.O.)

Anybody home?

Myles gapes at the door. He is utterly distressed. He freezes till he hears Brinsley go off.

He looks to the window.

The tatty pigeon scratches on the window-sill.

The Angelus bell rings.

Myles hangs his head in his hands.

We hear..

FINN MCCOOL (V.O.)
Now Sweeny was a King and a Poet,
and a man not easily moved to the
tides of anger.

55

EXT. DAY. THE CAVES OF KEASH.

55

We see Sweeny in the foreground, the caves behind. He is breathing in the morning air and composing poetry, or trying to. His kindly demeanour is deserting him, however.

SWEENY
Nuts at terce and cress-leaves,
fruits from an apple-tree at
noon...

We hear the clacking start up again. We move towards the caves to see Saint Ronan, at his matins, epitomizing spiritual bliss. He is rattling his bell piously.

FINN MCCOOL (V.O.)
Near his house was the cave of a
saint called Ronan.
Now, Saint Ronan was out ringing
his bell in the morning and when
Sweeny heard the clack of the
clergyman's bell, his brain and his
spleen and his gut were exercised
by a flaming anger...

SWEENY
A lying-down to lap chill waters...
(roaring)
WILL YOU SHUT UP!

Clack! Clack! Ckack!

SWEENY
SHUT UP, YOU BASTARD!

Sweeny swings and fires his spear.

FINN MCCOOL (V.O., CONT'D)
... and he cast his spear at Ronan
and broke the great man's bell.

Away up on the mountain, we hear a jagged clack, then a muffled cry.

Silence.

FINN MCCOOL (V.O., CONT'D)
(Pause)
Whereupon, the cleric cursed Sweeny
and uttered this melodious lay:

Ronan in close-up, apoplectic. His bell is in flitters around his neck.

RONAN
 MY CURSE ON SWEENEY!
 HIS GUILT AGAINST ME IS IMMENSE,
 HE PIERCED WITH HIS LONG, SWIFT
 JAVELIN,
 MY HOLY BELL.

(quietly)
 The holy bell that thou hast
 outraged
 will banish thee to branches,
 it will put thee on a par with
 BIRDS-
 the saint-bell of saints with
 sainty-saints.

Just as it went prestissimo
 the spear-shaft skyward,
 YOU TOO, SWEENEY, GO MADLY MAD-GONE
 SKYWARD!

Sweeny is swept up into the air.

He lands on the bough of a tree. He clothes are stripped from him in a sudden swipe.

He is shocked.

He gingerly takes stock and inspects under his oxter where he finds a web of skin has formed like the beginnings of a wing.

There are small feathers on his shoulder.

He is perched, bird-like, coughing like a gosling.

He takes fright and leaps from the bough.

There is a flutter and he is gone.

A feather floats to earth.

56 INT. MORNING. MYLES' BEDROOM.

56

A tuft of hair floats into the wash basin. Myles is crouched over, going through his hair with a fine-comb. He crushes a louse, then tears through his hair viciously with the comb, frantically trying to exorcise both lice and self-loathing.

The frantic scratching merges with a strange beating of wings..

Here we will intercut between Sweeny's flight and Myles in his bedroom over the next number of days, as he loses himself in a fug of depression... sometimes moping, sometimes writing, sometimes both.

57 EXT. DAY. WOODS AND HOLY PLACES.

57

Sweeny's flight.

We catch glimpses of a creature amongst the tree-tops of old forests. He is elusive, magical, almost more like a monkey than a bird.

Sweeny swoops onto the forest bed and alights among the mosses. He finds water-cress by a stream.

We see him from a distance, foraging for the cress. He is misshapen. The cress isn't particularly tasty.

We see Sweeny, now half-bird, perched on a crag among the cliffs. He has more plumage but looks tatty and distressed. It is raining.

He hobbles towards a single tree in a sea of rock on the Burren. He leaps into it. He is utterly alone. There is a time-lapse as the sky behind him goes from day to night and back to day.

Sweeny flies out of the tree and away.

We soar above the trees and lakes and over higher ground. We span the cairns at Carrowkeel, finding him atop the mountain on the highest passage-grave, alone in the space between the land and the heavens. He spreads his wings like a cormorant, part of everything and nothing at the same time.

58 INT. DAY. MYLES' BEDROOM.

58

We hear rain on the window.

Myles looks up from his writing.

He stares at the pigeon scratching about on the sill.

Myles is gaunt and unkempt - Sweeny-like.

We hear the Uncle's voice from downstairs.

UNCLE (V.O.)
COME DOWN!! COME DOWN OUT OF THAT!!

Myles ignores him.

UNCLE (V.O. CONT'D)
COME OUT OF THAT BLOODY PERCH
BEFORE I COME UP AND...
(MORE)

UNCLE (V.O. CONT'D) (cont'd)
 GOD BETWEEN US AND ALL HARM..
 YOU'LL HAVE ME IN AN EARLY
 GRAVE... COME DOWN AND GO TO YOUR
 COLLEGE!!!

Myles continues to stare into space.

We hear Finn McCool..

*FINN MCCOOL (V.O.)
 For seven years Sweeny travelled
 throughout Erin, till he came to
 the church in the ancient hollow at
 a place called Swim-Two-Birds.
 I will now recite how Swim-Two-
 Birds got its name..*

*SHANAHAN (V.O.)
 Ah, no, you're grand, carry on
 about Sweeny..*

*FURRISKEY (V.O.)
 Yeh, you're grand..*

*FINN MCCOOL (V.O. CONT'D)
 (heavy sigh, miffed)
 At Swim-Two-Birds, Sweeny perched
 atop the church and said another
 melodious poem on the subject of
 his personal hardship...*

59

EXT. DAY. THE CHURCH AT SWIM-TWO-BIRDS.

59

Sweeny is on the gable of the church.

*SWEENY
 Chill, chill is my body,
 Lice-ridden, the rain-torrent hurts
 it,
 Water-cress is my lot at meal-time,
 Its colour is my mouth.*

*A woman (LINCHEHEEN) appears like a vision from behind the
 wall of the church. She is a version of Roisin; beautiful,
 soft-spoken.*

*LINCHEHEEN
 I am Lincheheen and I am come to
 beseech you to be trustful, and to
 alight from your isolation.*

*SWEENY
 The curse of Ronan stops me from
 putting my trust or mad faith in
 man or woman.*

LINCHEHEEN

Sad it is, Sweeny, that your last
extremity should be thus, without
food or drink or raiment, like a
fowl.
The same man that had cloth of silk
and of satin,
hosts and tenants and men-at-arms,
Sad to see you as a hapless air-
fowl.

SWEENY

Cease now, Lincheheen, and give me
tidings.

LINCHEHEEN

Your Father is dead.

SWEENY

This has seized me with a blind
agony.

LINCHEHEEN

Your mother is likewise dead.

SWEENY

Now all the pity in me is at an
end.

LINCHEHEEN

Dead is your brother.

SWEENY

Gaping open is my side on account
of that.

LINCHEHEEN

She has died, too, your sister.

SWEENY

A needle for the heart is an only
sister.

LINCHEHEEN

Ah, dumb dead is the son who called
you pop.

SWEENY

Truly, that is the last blow that
brings a man to the ground.

Sweeny falls in a heap on the ground.

From his POV we see Lincheheen smiling sweetly down at him.

LINCHEHEEN

I was only messing.

She walks away.

We look down on Sweeny, who is lost.

Dissolve..

60

INT. EVENING. MYLES' BEDROOM.

60

Myles is staring at his reflection in the window.

The Uncle bursts in.

UNCLE

Get out to college before I lose
the run of myself!

Myles ignores him.

UNCLE (CONT'D)

Are you trying to turn this place
into a hotel?!

MYLES

I've done that already.

UNCLE (CONT'D)

(apoplectic)

WHAT?!! WHAT?!!

IT'S ALL FINE AND DANDY TO SPEND
ANOTHER YEAR HERE DOING YOUR
REPEATS, I SUPPOSE!!

That prospect hits Myles hard.

MYLES

That would be appalling.

UNCLE

YOU'RE SUPPING WITH THE DEVIL MY
FINE YOUNG FRIEND AND DON'T THINK I
DON'T KNOW WHAT YOU'RE UP TO!
DRUNKENNESS.. SLOTH.. AND... AND..
GAWPING AT FEMALES!!

MYLES

What??

TRELLIS

WELL, YOU WON'T DO IT UNDER THIS
ROOF!
WHERE'S THAT BLOODY BOOK YOU WERE
GOING TO GET?!

MYLES

I left it in college.

UNCLE
WELL, GO THE HELL IN THERE AND GET
IT!! AND DON'T COME BACK HERE TILL
YOU HAVE IT!

61 EXT. DAY. ST. STEPHEN'S GREEN. 61

Myles sits on a bench, a la Kelly. He is in limbo.

He watches two swans swimming on the pond. They are in perfect harmony.

A park attendant in an official cap approaches with a long pole. He separates the two birds and drives one towards a colleague with a cage.

Myles watches morbidly as the swan is taken into custody.

He takes out his pencil and some folded-up paper.

62 INT. DAY. RED SWAN HOTEL. TRELIS' ROOM. 62

Trellis wakes up. He has a head-ache.

He sniffs his glass of water. He doesn't drink.

He takes up a religious book and reads,

"VILLAINY WILL ATTEMPT TO CORRUPT THE BEST AS WELL AS THE WORST."

He follows the words with his finger, then goes back to the word, "BEST".

He thinks for a moment, then has an idea which pleases him greatly.

He types:

"SHEILA LAMONT WAS THE PINNACLE OF WOMANLY VIRTUE - "

He chooses his words,

"- CHASTE, BEAUTIFUL AND REFINED."

He is lost for a moment in a kind of creative bliss.

63 INT. DAY. RED SWAN HOTEL. CORRIDOR 63

Trellis gives a gentle knock on Sheila Lamont's door.

TRELIS
(softly)
Miss Lamont?
(MORE)

TRELLIS (cont'd)

*I am here to tell you that you are,
by vocation, concerned only with
chastity, refinement and the
embodiment of the highest virtues
of womankind. Do you follow?*

No response.

TRELLIS (CONT'D)

Do you understand?

Trellis knocks harder on the door.

It slips its lock and creaks open.

What he sees inside knocks him for six; he is gob-smacked.

He gawks.

TRELLIS (CONT'D)

A villain by the name of...

Trellis struggles visibly with himself.

TRELLIS (CONT'D)

.. Furriskey...

He swallows.

TRELLIS (CONT'D)

will assail you...

He moves inside the room towards her.

64 INT. DAY. SHANAHAN'S ROOM.

64

Shanahan, Furriskey and Finn McCool hear noises from Sheila's room.

They look at each other quizzically.

65 EXT. DAY. ST. STEPHEN'S GREEN.

65

Myles is sitting on the park bench, his writing on his knee, watching the single swan.

Kelly appears and sits beside him. Kelly looks awful.

So does Myles. He puts away his pencil and paper.

They say nothing for a while.

KELLY

Fancy a drink?

MYLES

No money.

They say nothing for another while. Kelly spots a kindred spirit at the other end of the park with a bottle in a brown paper bag.

KELLY

Hang on. I have to see a man about a horse.

He scoots off.

Myles doesn't seem to notice.

He pokes at a stone on the ground with a bit of a stick.

He turns over the stone. There are maggots and creepy-crawlies galore underneath.

66 *Omitted*

66

67 EXT. DAY. ST. STEPHEN'S GREEN (CONT'D).

67

Myles examines the maggots morosely.

Someone sits beside Myles, the opposite side to where Kelly had been, interrupting his black mood. It is Brinsley.

BRINSLEY

There you are.

Myles says nothing.

BRINSLEY (CONT'D)

What are you at?

No answer.

BRINSLEY (CONT'D)

Have you left college?

No response.

BRINSLEY (CONT'D)

There's a tutorial Professor Hyde is giving this afternoon. He's doing a few specials leading up to the exam. If you make them you might still swing it.

They watch Kelly across the park, negotiating with the man with the bottle.

BRINSLEY (CONT'D)
College or Kelly, eh?
College or Kellyge.

There is a hint of a rueful smile from Myles.

BRINSLEY (CONT'D)
Doing any writing?

Myles gives him the pages.

Brinsley tucks into them.

Kelly returns.

BRINSLEY (CONT'D)
(reading)
Trellis appears to be losing the
run of himself.

Kelly sits down.

KELLY
Who?

MYLES
A member of the author class. He
has spent the last twenty
years in bed.

KELLY
This yours?

Myles nods modestly.

BRINSLEY
Trellis is a great man who never
gets out of bed, reading books and
occasionally writing one. He makes
his characters live with him at the
Red Swan Hotel. Borrows most of
them and then doesn't know what to
do with them.

KELLY
(venomously)
There is no excuse for that.
Shoddy. This town is full of it.
Charlatans. Shit writing.

Myles is slightly taken aback, yet flattered by Kelly's
seriousness.

MYLES
Trellis' domination over his
characters is impaired by his
addiction to sleep. When he sleeps
they are at liberty.
(MORE)

MYLES (cont'd)
And of course the devil finds work
for idle cowhands. They will rebel,
of course.

KELLY
They should set the devil and the
whole lot on him.
Torture the bastard.

Myles takes this on board.

Kelly takes a slug of the bottle, then calmly spits it out.

KELLY (CONT'D)
Meths. I may give this back.

Kelly heads off.

Brinsley laughs.

BRINSLEY
(to Myles)
Might see you later.
Easy on the torture. Life's too
short.

Brinsley leaves.

Myles resumes his poking at the stone.

We go in tight on the stone.

He turns it over.

We get an XCU of the maggots. There are much more than
before.

We pull back from what is actually..

68

INT. MORNING. POOKA'S HUT.

68

*... A nest of maggots in a woman's hair. She is no ordinary
woman, but the wife of..*

The POOKA MCPHELLIMEY, a kind of human devil.

*The Pooka yawns; a tonsilled hell through jagged black teeth.
(He resembles Professor Hyde).*

*Early morning sunshine floods through the window. The Pooka
has just woken up and the maggots with him. His wife is
beside him in the bed. We can just see the back of her head.*

POOKA
Good morning, darling.

POOKA'S WIFE
Your granny, Fergus.

The Pooka takes his pipe, pen-knife and tobacco to prepare his early-morning smoke.

There is an urgent knock on the door and it opens, apparently of its own accord.

POOKA
Welcome to my poor hut.

There is nobody there.

POOKA(CONT'D)
Be pleased to come in and welcome.
It is seldom I am honoured by a
caller in the morning early.

A sweet, seductive voice sounds from within the room. It is
GOOD FAIRY.

GOOD FAIRY
I am already in the middle of your
fine house. I have come to visit
you.

POOKA
I do not see you there.

GOOD FAIRY
I have no body. My correct name is
Good Fairy. I am a good fairy.

POOKA
I hear what you are saying, but
from what quarter are you speaking?

GOOD FAIRY
I am sitting here in a white cup on
the dresser.

POOKA
There are four pennies in that cup.
I would ill like to be at the loss
of them.

GOOD FAIRY
I have no pockets.

POOKA
That surprises me. Where do you
keep your pipe?

GOOD FAIRY
It is cigarettes that I smoke.

POOKA

*My name is Fergus MacPhellimey and
I am, by calling, a Pooka. A Devil.*

GOOD FAIRY

*I knew you were a Pooka, but your
name, that escaped me.
It is high time I told you why I'm
here. I have come to inform you,
sir, about a party by the name of
Miss Sheila Lamont.*

The Pooka makes to get up.

POOKA

*I must courteously ask you to turn
your back. I have a mind to get up.*

GOOD FAIRY

I have no back to turn.

POOKA

Is Miss Lamont a man or a woman?

GOOD FAIRY

*A woman.
Created by Mr. Trellis to epitomise
all things beautiful and refined..*

The Pooka sweeps back the blanket.

69

INT. EVENING. SHEILA LAMONT'S ROOM.

69

*Sheila Lamont awakes as if from sleep. She is idyllic. She
looks like the cowgirl in the cinema poster.*

*She sees chaste, beautiful and refined clothes on a hanger.
She makes her way with great poise to dress herself. We see
only a shoulder of her nakedness.*

GOOD FAIRY (V.O., CONT'D)

*..she was to be ravished by the
villain Furriskey to show that an
evil man can debase the highest as
well as the lowest.*

There is a knock on Sheila's door. Trellis speaks through it.

TRELLIS

(muffled)

*I am here to tell you that you are,
by vocation, concerned only with
chastity, refinement...*

His voice fades as the Good Fairy takes up the story.

GOOD FAIRY (V.O.)
 Unfortunately, Mr. Trellis created
 Miss Lamont too close to his own
 heart. He couldn't stop gawking at
 her.

Sheila looks doe-eyed at the door but does not respond.

TRELLIS
 (muffled)
 Do you understand?

Trellis knocks harder on the door.

It slips its lock and creaks open.

Sheila stands perplexed.

GOOD FAIRY (V.O., CONT'D)
 Her beauty so blinded him that...

Sheila suddenly cops the situation.

Trellis' shadow falls on her..

GOOD FAIRY (V.O., CONT'D)
 He assaulted her himself.

70

INT. MORNING. POOKA'S HUT.

70

The Pooka has dressed. He contemplates the news.

POOKA
 Do you tell me so?
 (pause)
 Did poor Sheila conceive?

GOOD FAIRY
 The child is expected tomorrow
 evening.

POOKA
 That's going beyond the beyonds.
 We need to nail Trellis before it
 all goes to hell altogether.
 Hm.
 That will be quite the offspring.
 Between one world and another.
 Things are bound to get ..
 interesting.

GOOD FAIRY
 Well, whatever happens, I'll be
 there to endeavour to put the new
 arrival under my benevolent
 influence for life.

POOKA

I see.

GOOD FAIRY

That is why I'm here. To go without you would be a deplorable breach of etiquette, so let us go together and may the best man win.

POOKA

A noble sentiment. Excuse me, I wish to take leave of my family.

The Pooka goes to the bed and caresses his wife's cheek tenderly.

POOKA

Good-bye, my dear.

POOKA'S WIFE

Your granny, Fergus.

71

INT. DAY. UNIVERSITY COLLEGE, DUBLIN.

71

Myles has arrived at the tutorial. Late, but only just.

The Professor is his calm self.

PROFESSOR HYDE

Ah, the Return of the Prodigal.
Welcome. An rud is annamh is
iontach. What's seldom is
treasured.

Myles bows slightly.

MYLES

Dignum et justum est.

PROFESSOR HYDE

(not unkindly)

Indeed.
However, failure, meet and just, is
what awaits you in your exams.
As it stands, you haven't a hope.

MYLES

I will start now.

He sits, the eyes of the class on him, unsure of his sincerity. Or his sobriety.

Roisin is inscrutable.

72

EXT. MORNING. FOREST. EXT POOKA'S HUT.

72

*The Pooka emerges from his hut. The morning is glorious.**POOKA**I will start now.**GOOD FAIRY**I am in the pocket of your coat.
Keep to the left. If you walk
through that clump you are now
heading for, you will make ribbons
of your coat and a tatters of your
skin.**POOKA**I will not. There is better stuff
in that coat than what you'd get
nowadays.**He strides purposefully on.**POOKA (CONT'D)**I was once acquainted with a man
who committed himself to the folly
of a shoddy suit. What do you think
happened?**GOOD FAIRY**It was torn off his back by a nest
of thorns on the roadside.**POOKA**Not correct. It lathered in a
shower of rain.
The seams of these inferior
garments are secured with soap.
It frothed on him in the street
like a pan of new milk boiling
over.**GOOD FAIRY**Keep to the left. There is such a
thing as discretion.**The Pooka ignores him and tears straight through the clump of
thorns. The Good Fairy gives a cry in the gloom of the
pocket.**The Pooka continues.**POOKA**There was small else for the poor
man to do but to enter a barber's
shop and have the suit shaved.
Who's this, I wonder?*

They see a cowboy by a stream, drinking water from his ten-gallon hat.

73 INT. DAY. MYLES' BEDROOM. 73

Myles enters his room with a bottle of de-lousing potion and a mirror. He begins to douse his head.

74 EXT. MORNING. FOREST STREAM. 74

The Pooka and Good Fairy approach the cowboy.

POOKA

Greetings.

It is SLUG from "JAKE'S LAST RIDE".

SLUG

*God save you. I am Slug Willard.
How are you?*

POOKA

*I am well. And how are you Mr.
Willard?*

SLUG

Grand.

GOOD FAIRY

*(unseen, obviously)
Isn't it wonderful weather?*

SLUG

What's that? What did you say, Sir?

POOKA

I said nothing.

SLUG

*(suspiciously)
Maybe not.*

POOKA

*Allow me to explain. I have a
spirit in my pocket and it is he
who is doing the talking. He is
called GOOD FAIRY.*

SLUG

*You have your porridge.
Could you give us a look?*

POOKA

*Unfortunately there is nothing to
see.*

SLUG

Are you sure it's not a ferret you
have there in your pocket? You look
like a man that was out after
rabbits.

GOOD FAIRY

(belligerently)

Who's a ferret?

The Pooka's pocket becomes agitated.

SLUG

Give us a selection on your harp,
then!

GOOD FAIRY

The idea that all spirits are
accomplished instrumentalists is a
popular fallacy.
Just as it is wrong to assume that
they all have golden tempers.
Maybe your doubts would be resolved
if I kicked the jaw off your face,
Mr. Willard?

The Pooka's coat starts to flap.

POOKA

Now gentlemen, please.

SLUG

(Going for his gun)

Keep your distance, me man, or I'll
shoot your lights out!

The Pooka's coat goes ballistic.

GOOD FAIRY

C'mon, then!

POOKA

Gentlemen! Please!

SLUG

(scared by the coat)

Alright, alright, apologies all
round. Is everybody happy?!

GOOD FAIRY

I am satisfied.

POOKA

That is very satisfactory. And now
perhaps you would care to join us
on our happy mission?

(MORE)

POOKA (cont'd)

There is a very special baby to be born to Miss Sheila Lamont and I have no reason to suspect that guests will be unprovided with refreshment of the right kind.

SLUG

(politely)

It's a pleasure. I'll go and welcome.

They begin to walk.

POOKA

Let us take a short-cut through this copse here on the left.

There is a stifled cry of "Fuck's sake!" from the pocket as the comrades wheel off through the thorn bushes.

75 EXT. DAY. U.C.D.

75

Myles walks through the main hall of U.C.D. and down a corridor. Sunlight plays on him through the windows.

His hair is wet.

76 EXT. DAY. FOREST. LATER.

76

The comrades walk through the sun-dappled undergrowth.

SLUG

What about presents for the bride? It's only right to bring the full of your pockets when you're going to a hooley.

They go to gather berries and the fruit of the forest.

GOOD FAIRY (CONT'D)

What do you think I'm made of? Take that thing with prickles out of your pocket.

POOKA

Musha, you're very tender.

SLUG

There's something in there in that clump. I saw something moving.

(to the bushes, going for his gun)

COME OUT OF THERE, YOU BLOODY BASTARD YOU, OR IT'S GUNPLAY AND GRAVESTONES!

POOKA

Steady, now. Good day, Sir, come on
out till we see you.

A man emerges from the thicket.

SLUG (CONT'D)

Jem by God Casey!

POOKA

Good Morning.

JEM CASEY

Greetings all round.

SLUG

Ladies and gentlemen, this is Jem
Casey, Poet of the Pick and Bard of
Boosterstown.

My hard Casey. Tell me, what were
you doing in that clump there?

JEM CASEY

What was I doing? I'll tell you
what I was doing. I was reciting a
pome for my friends, the rabbits,
that's what I was doing.

He spits on the ground.

SLUG

Stand out there and give us a
couple of verses, so. Go on, now.

JEM CASEY

I will if you want me to.

He clears his throat.

JEM CASEY (CONT'D)

The name or title of the pome I am
about to recite is a pome by the
name of 'The Workman's Friend'.
It's a pome about a thing that's
known to all of us. It's about a
drink of porter.

Listen, now.

(coughs)

When things go wrong and will not
come right,
though you do the best you can,
When life looks black as the hour
of night,
A PINT OF PLAIN IS YOUR ONLY MAN.

POOKA

There's a lilt in that.

SLUG

There are things in that pome that
make for what you might call
permanence. Do you know what I
mean?

JEM CASEY

Can't you listen?

In time of trouble and lousy
strife,
You have still got a darlint plan,
You still can turn to a brighter
life-
A PINT OF PLAIN IS YOUR ONLY MAN.

Applause all round.

SLUG

Very good indeed. Very nice.

POOKA

Now that we've heard and enjoyed
Mr. Casey's poetry, maybe we should
be heading for the Red Swan.

JEM CASEY

The Red Swan?

SLUG

The Pooka and his opposite number
in the pocket have to wrangle for
the new arrival.

JEM CASEY

(anxious)

The Red Swan? What about Trellis?
Not that I give a curse, you
understand.

SLUG

Mr. Furriskey and the Missus are
keeping an eye on him. They have
him drugged up to the two eyeballs,
sure. He's sleeping his head off.

Casey grabs a bunch of honeysuckle and shoves it into his
pocket.

JEM CASEY

You in the pocket, can you fly?

GOOD FAIRY

Maybe I can.

JEM CASEY

*Would you ever go and tell my wife
I won't be home for dinner?*

GOOD FAIRY

*What do yo take me for, a carrier-
pigeon?*

SLUG

*If you want to make him mad, call
him a ferret.*

POOKA

*Stop the talk. I see a man in a
tree.*

77 INT. EVENING. U.C.D. LIBRARY.

77

Myles is in the library. He is struggling to stay with the book he's reading.

He looks for Roisin and sees her, She is by a particular pillar where she normally studies. The tables about her are occupied.

Myles is frustrated. He paws at his book, then lapses into daydream.

78 EXT. DAY. FOREST, SULLIVAN'S CASCADE.

78

Slug unholsters his six-guns.

SLUG

*IF YOU DON'T COME OUT OF THAT TREE
IN TWO SECONDS, YOU'LL COME OUT A
CORPSE IN THREE. I'LL COUNT TO TEN.
ONE, TWO..*

A voice wavers down from the tree.

SWEENY

*I can put no faith in humans
in the place they are;
watercress at evening is my lot,
I will not come down.*

POOKA

*I think I know the gentleman. I
fancy it is a party by the name of
Sweeny. He is not all in it.*

SLUG

Do I shoot or don't I?

JEM CASEY

Keep that bloody gun down. The
voice that spoke was the voice of a
poet. Hands off the poets. Put that
gun up. It's Sweeny in the Trees.

Slug holsters his guns. One of them goes off as he does so.

Sweeny jumps, loses his balance and comes crashing down
though the branches into the river's top-most pond. There is
a big splash, a pause, then he comes flying out, down the
fall and into the second pond.

SLUG

Sweeny OUT of the Trees!

JEM CASEY

By God, he's down!

Jem Casey gives Slug a filthy look and goes to pull Sweeny
out.

Sweeny is soaked and bedraggled. They haul him onto the
forest floor. Jem begins putting moss on his wounds and
picking thorns from his flesh.

JEM CASEY (CONT'D)

You're all right, man, you'll be
alright, don't you worry.

SLUG

Give him air!

SWEENY

In the tree of Cell Lughaidh,
it was our wish to be alone,
swift flight of swallows on the
brink of summer -
TAKE YOUR HANDS AWAY!

JEM CASEY

That'll do you. Help me with him,
somebody. We'll have to bring him
along with us.

SLUG

I'm your man.

They lift him to his feet.

SLUG (CONT'D)

Mind his feathers. Never ruffle a
cock's feathers.

JEM CASEY

*Quick march my hard man. Put your
best leg forward and we'll get you
a bed before the sun goes down and
a sup of whiskey into you to make
you sleep.*

They head off into the forest.

79 INT. DAY. U.C.D. LIBRARY.

79

Myles comes into the library.

He looks over at Roisin who is at her usual seat beside the pillar. The tables around her are occupied as usual, apart from one. Myles heads towards it.

Just as he gets there, a nun returns from the loo and sweeps into the empty chair, picking up her unseen bag from the floor where she had left it.

He stares for a while, frustrated yet again, before heading for a different table. The sun is shining through the window.

He opens his book but as usual his mind wanders off, back to the voyage of liberation.

80 MONTAGE. DAY/EVENING.

80

The Pooka and the others journey through the sun-pools.

They sing as they travel - "Home on the Range" and "The Bohemian Girl" .

They pause to eat and to drink by a lake at magic hour. It is beautiful.

Torches have been lit as the twilight closes in. At the camp-fire, Jem Casey recites to rapt attention. Sweeny sits on a branch above him.

JEM CASEY

*When food is scarce and your larder
bare
And no rashers grease your pan,
When hunger grows as your meals are
bare,
A PINT IF PLAIN IS YOUR ONLY MAN.*

Applause.

Sweeny, revived, suddenly flies over their heads, blowing out the torches and the fire as he goes.

POOKA
(fondly, as to a child)
For crying out loud, Sweeny, would
you rest easy!

There is a squawk from Sweeny that sounds almost playful.

81 INT. EVENING. UNCLE'S HOUSE 81

Myles comes in the front door with his books. He sees a pile of coats in the hall. He can hear a committee meeting going on behind the door, "Through the Chair", and all the rest of it.

He sneaks up the stairs and manages to get into his room undetected.

The door shuts behind him.

82 INT. EVENING. MYLES' BEDROOM. 82

Myles at the wash-basin.

He examines the fine-comb. Nothing. It's clean.

He rests his forehead gently on the window-pane, breathing a sigh of relief and joy.

83 EXT. DUSK. RED SWAN HOTEL. 83

A thud as Sweeny flies into a pane of glass and crashes to the ground.

SLUG
Be the hokey!

JEM CASEY
Easy, man, that window's closed!

GOOD FAIRY
Sshh!

They step back to look at other windows. We see the sign for The Red Swan Hotel.

A long fingernail unlatches the ground-floor window. The Pooka and Good Fairy climb in, followed by Jem, Sweeny, and Slug.

84

INT. DUSK. RED SWAN HOTEL. CORRIDOR.

84

They emerge in the corridor, tiptoeing gingerly past Trellis' room. They make rude gestures at the door as they pass (they are scared but skittish, except Slug, who is shitting himself completely).

They arrive at a door bearing the legend:

"Sheila Lamont. Happy Event in Progress. Do Not Enter."

They shush each other, try a door opposite and, finding it unlocked, slide in.

85

INT. DUSK. RED SWAN HOTEL. CARD ROOM.

85

The room is unoccupied.

They deposit the fruits of the forest they have brought as presents at the wall.

They speak in hushed tones.

SLUG

Take a seat, boys and make yourself happy. Put a match to the fire. Give the door a knock Mr. Casey, see if the hour has come.

JEM CASEY

It's locked.

SLUG

A bullet would put the lock in, in half a tick.

POOKA

We'll just have to wait until we're invited in, I suppose.

SLUG

Anyone for a game of cards?

GOOD FAIRY

Deal out for a game of poker. There is nothing like a good game of cards.

SLUG

We are playing for money. What guarantee have we that you will pay?

GOOD FAIRY

My word of honour.

SLUG

*You have your porridge!
Where do you keep your money if you
have no pocket, answer me that?*

POOKA

(slyly)

*Gentlemen, we must accept each
other at face value as honest men
until the contrary is proved.*

SLUG

*Face value? That fellow has no
face. By God it's the poor man that
hasn't that much. Here, take the
cards, if you want them. Are you
playing, Sweeny?*

SWEENY

*The stags across Ben Boirche,
their antlers tear the sky,
I will take a hand.*

SLUG deals out the cards.

*They hear footsteps and a door opening and shutting outside
in the corridor. Jem Casey looks at his cards, folds and goes
to the door.*

86

EXT. DAY. ST. STEPHEN'S GREEN.

86

Myles sits on a bench, studying.

Kelly arrives. He is in bits.

KELLY

The hard man.

MYLES

There you are.

There is an awkwardness.

KELLY

Pint?

MYLES

No, I have to get this done. Exams.
I'm somewhat ill-prepared, as the
man says.

Kelly doesn't think much of exams but makes the effort.

KELLY

Need to know anything about Sweeny?

MYLES

No, I've kind of got that covered.

KELLY

Sound.

(uneasy pause)

I'll head off. Have to see a man
about a horse.

MYLES

I have a shilling, if you need it.

KELLY

(forced confidence)

No. I've got it covered.

Kelly heads off. He looks terribly vulnerable.

Myles is worried about him.

87

INT. EVENING. RED SWAN HOTEL. CORRIDOR.

87

Jem Casey opens the door to the corridor.

He hears some odd rumbling coming from Sheila Lamont's room.

*Suddenly Trellis' door opens. Jem nearly has a seizure until
he sees Furriskey coming out. Furriskey smiles hello and
waves his sleeping-draught bottle.*

FURRISKEY

*That should keep him quiet for
another while. Any news of the new
arrival?*

JEM CASEY

Not yet.

FURRISKEY

*Well, let us know if you get wind
of anything happening. I'm just
down here with the Missus. You're
welcome to join us for a cup of tea
if you're of a mind. Sure come in
and say hello.*

JEM CASEY

*I won't, I'm in the middle of a
game of cards.*

FURRISKEY

*Stick your head in the door at
least, and say hello to the wife,
we won't keep you.*

*Furriskey goes back down the corridor to his own room and
opens the door. Jem Casey follows.*

88

INT. EVENING, FURRISKEY'S ROOM.

88

Inside are Shanahan and Peggy, now Mrs. Furriskey, having tea.

Finn McCool is in an easy chair in the corner with his tea, beaming.

Jem stays at the door with Furriskey, unwilling to go further, keeping an eye on Sheila's room up the corridor.

PEGGY (MRS. FURRISKEY)

Oh, there he is now. Who's that with you, John?

SHANAHAN

Well, would you look who it is! The Bould Jem Casey. This is the man I was telling yiz about. Come in and give us a pome!

FURRISKEY

Now, I told the poor man we wouldn't keep him, he's in the middle of a game of cards.

(proudly)

This is my wife, Peggy, and her Daddy, Finn McCool..well, he's not really her Daddy but we're letting on.

JEM CASEY

Pleased to meet you Mrs. Mr. McCool.

PEGGY

Well, it's lovely to make your acquaintance, Mr. Casey, and a pity we won't hear one of your pomes, we were just talking about music before you came in, I was telling Mr. Shanahan and Daddy McCool, MY JOHN IS VERY MUSICAL... HE SINGS A LOT WHEN HE THINKS I AMN'T LISTENING...

Peggy speaks the last part slowly and loudly for Finn, who beams back in appreciation.

FURRISKEY

(chuckling)

When do you hear me at it, Peggy?

SHANAHAN

Don't mind him Mrs. Furriskey. Don't give him the satisfaction.

FURRISKEY

When do you hear me at it?

PEGGY

Sometimes when you're down there shaving. I'm up to all his tricks, Mr. Shanahan. He can sing like a lark when he feels like it.

FURRISKEY

Because when you were listening to my singing this morning, my good woman, I was blowing my nose in the lavatory. That's a quare one for you!

Laughter from the company. Furriskey goes and sits in giddy contentment beside his wife who cuffs him playfully. The company wave goodbye to Jem who closes the door on the domestic bliss.

Sweeny is standing outside the door. He looks distressed.

JEM CASEY

What's the matter, is it too stuffy?

Sweeny gives a shudder.

SWEENY

I hate cards. People turn mean.

He waddles over to the window and jumps up on the ledge. He turns to Jem, cocks his head in apology and flies out the window.

89 INT. MORNING. U.C.D. LIBRARY.

89

Myles waits with a number of other students for the library doors to open. He has arrived early.

They are let in.

Myles makes a bee-line for the pillar.

He grabs the seat beside Roisin's normal spot and sits down, unsure if it's a good idea.

He takes out his books.

90 INT. EVENING. RED SWAN HOTEL. CARD ROOM.

90

Jem comes in to find Slug, Good Fairy and the Pooka still involved in the game. He takes his seat. The hushed tones are under strain,

GOOD FAIRY

I will see one and sixpence.

POOKA

I will also see Mr. Willard.

Slug shows his cards.

SLUG

*Three Kings. Three Royal
Sovereigns!*

GOOD FAIRY

*Not good enough, I'm afraid. There
is a nice flush in Hearts here in
the pocket. Take it out and see for
yourselves.*

SLUG

*None of your bloody miracles! If
you try that game I'll take you out
of that pocket and give you a kick
in the waterworks!*

POOKA

*I have a full house here, by the
way. Pay up gentlemen and look
pleasant.*

*He shows his cards. Slug mutters and searches his fob pocket
for the money. Good Fairy tugs at the Pooka's pocket and
whispers urgently.*

GOOD FAIRY

*May I see you in the hallway for a
moment? I want to discuss something
private.*

POOKA

Excuse us for a moment, gentlemen.

SLUG

*Hurry up, for Barney's sake, till
we have another round.
There you are, one and sixpence.*

He throws the money down.

The Pooka and Good Fairy go to the corridor.

*Jem passes them going back into the room. He looks at them
quizzically.*

SLUG

*Will you come in, Jem and shut the
door, this place is like a railway
station.*

Jem goes in.

91 INT. MORNING. U.C.D. LIBRARY. 91

Myles watches Roisin enter the library.

He concentrates intensely on his book, wondering if she'll sit down beside him.

Eventually, she does, and takes out her notes matter-of-factly.

Myles reads on in charged contentment.

92 INT. EVENING. RED SWAN HOTEL. CORRIDOR. 92

POOKA

You have no money.

GOOD FAIRY

Exactly.

POOKA

What explanation do you offer for such conduct?

GOOD FAIRY

You see, I always win at cards....

POOKA

I'm afraid I have no alternative but to make the matter public.

GOOD FAIRY

For God's sake, don't do that! It would kill my mother.

POOKA

*I will give you one alternative to instant exposure and you can take it or leave it.
I will forget the debt... and advance a further sixpence ...
IF YOU RELINQUISH ABSOLUTELY YOUR CLAIM TO INFLUENCE THE BABY THAT IS EXPECTED INSIDE.*

GOOD FAIRY

What! You cad! You bloody cad!

POOKA

Which is it to be?

GOOD FAIRY

I'll see you damned first!

The Pooka makes for the door.

GOOD FAIRY (CONT'D)

Wait.

POOKA

Well?

GOOD FAIRY

*Alright. You win. But you wait!
I'll get you back if it takes a
thousand years!*

POOKA

*That is very satisfactory. Let us
rejoin the ladies.*

GOOD FAIRY

*If it takes a thousand years! You
wait!*

They go back in.

93 INT. MORNING. U.C.D. LIBRARY.

93

Later.

Myles is in trouble. He's cramming but can't decide what he needs to cram. The books are too big.

He holds his head in his hands in desperation.

Roisin flips over some pages of her notebook and casually pushes it across to show him...

He smiles at her.

She smiles back, somewhat chidingly.

A flood of relief and excitement flows over Myles. He takes the notebook and examines it. Roisin leans over and opens one of his books at the relevant chapter to show him what to study. Her hair brushes his cheek. He can smell her. She leans back, indicates the book and arches her eyebrows.

He grins and gets down to study, somewhat distracted, obviously.

We pull back to see the two of them working side by side. They look well together.

94 INT. EVENING. RED SWAN HOTEL. CARD ROOM.

94

There is an explosion of supernatural celebration.

The door flies open and stars whizz about in strange multi-coloured light and white smoke.

There are other-worldly noises (amongst which can be discerned Sheila, shrieking her head off).

Celestial music swells.

Through the back-lit smoke, a beautiful creature is revealed, haughty and exquisite. He is dressed in flowing robes; a Messiah in the doorway.

It is ORLICK.

The Pooka steps forward.

POOKA

Three hundred thousand welcomes. We are honoured to be here at the hour of your arrival. Please accept these offerings on the floor there on behalf of myself and my friends. I hope your dear mother is alive and well.

ORLICK

Gentlemen. I am deeply touched. My mother is fine but says she will never be the same again.

We hear Sheila screaming bloody murder. Orlick closes the door gently behind him.

ORLICK

(hushed)

When I asked her about my father's rather disappointing absence, she blushed, however, and changed the subject. I shall have to make enquiries.

POOKA

Consider those enquiries already underway, Mr...

ORLICK

According to my mother my little name is Orlick.

POOKA

Orlick Trellis. That is very satisfactory.

SLUG

Three cheers for little Orlick!
Three cheers for Orlick Trellis!

POOKA
Not too loud.

SLUG
(throwing his hat in the
air)
Hip! Hip! HOORAY! Hip! Hip! HOORAY!
Hip! Hip! HOORAY!

POOKA
(quietly, to Good Fairy)
I must ask you to leave me alone
with our host for a minute. You
remember our arrangement?

GOOD FAIRY
(sulkily)
I'll be on the mantelpiece. Don't
be all day.

POOKA
(to Orlick)
Could I have a word with you?

ORLICK
Me? Certainly.

POOKA
Excellent. Let's go out into the
passage.

They go into the corridor.

95 INT. EVENING. RED SWAN HOTEL. CORRIDOR.

95

*Sheila is still roaring. Orlick closes over the door to her
room rather apologetically.*

The Pooka and Orlick move down the hall past Trellis' Room.

POOKA
There he is now. In there. Snoring
his head off.

ORLICK
Who?

POOKA
Your Father. The bowsey who
ravished your poor mother. That's
who. Saving your presence.

ORLICK
You astound me.

POOKA

Orlick. Look at me. Would I utter
an untruth?

*The Pooka smiles with his bad teeth. Orlick is looking at a
devil. Nevertheless..*

ORLICK

Oh, God, I wasn't saying that at
all! May I be struck down this
instant! No, I'm just a little
taken aback, that's all.

POOKA

Perfectly understandable. Well, the
good news is, you're among friends.
Not one here would refuse to back
you - one hundred per cent - when
it comes to turning the tables on
old sleepy-hole inside.

ORLICK

I see. You wouldn't happen to have
a cigarette on you, I suppose?

POOKA

It is a pipe I smoke. Now, the
question is this: can you write?
Have you inherited the gift to
fashion a fiction?

ORLICK

A fiction?

POOKA

Whereby Trellis the Despot becomes
Trellis the Damned?
The Bully Bullied?
A scenario of, so to speak:
"The Biter Bit; The Writer Writ"?

Orlick is lost.

POOKA (CONT'D)

I want you to write a book with
Trellis in it.

ORLICK

Why?

POOKA

(serious black smile)
Revenge.

96

INT. EVENING. MYLES' BEDROOM.

96

Myles is studying at the table. There are books all over the place. The Uncle sticks his face in. He takes in the unmade bed and Myles in his long-johns. Myles is intensely irritated by the intrusion.

UNCLE

Well, Mister-my-friend, and how are we this evening? Your exams are tomorrow.

MYLES

I realise it very well. I'm studying here.

UNCLE

Lying in bed half the day - I don't understand it. Tell me this, do you ever open a book at all?

Myles struggles to contain himself

MYLES

I open several books every day.

The Uncle shakes his head in incomprehension.

UNCLE

It's beyond me.
Good luck tomorrow.

He leaves.

Myles sets aside his work, takes his manuscript and begins writing with real malice.

The pigeon lands on the window-sill.

97

INT. MORNING. RED SWAN HOTEL, SHANAHAN'S ROOM.

97

We find Orlick with his quill at the table, about to start writing. He is flanked by Shanahan and Furriskey, who are highly excited.

SHANAHAN

I mean to say, a nice, simple story would do the trick.

FURRISKEY

Get him out of that bed and give him a dose of something.

The door bursts open and Sheila Lamont enters. She rushes to join the group. She looks dishevelled and more than slightly mad.

SHEILA

You're not starting without me!

Nobody objects.

SHEILA

A varicose vein across the scalp. I believe that's the last.

SHANAHAN

How about a needle in the knee? He kneels on it by mistake, drives it in and then it breaks and leaves nothing to get a grip on.

Sweeny lands on the sill of the open window.

Orlick notices and is eager to impress.

ORLICK

You overlook my artistry. We must elevate him first. You cannot drop a man unless you first lift him. Am I right?

Orlick looks to Sweeny to get agreement.

Sweeny says nothing.

FURRISKEY

There's always that. But if you don't hurry and get down to business, Trellis will get us before we get him. He'll hammer the lights out of us if he wakes up and catches us at this game.

ORLICK

(peevish with Sweeny)

I admit there may be something to your point of view. Hmm. I think we might requisition the services of the Pooka McPhellimey.

98

INT. MORNING. TRELIS BEDROOM.

98

Trellis wakes up. He is confused.

Sitting across from him is the Pooka.

Gloom.

POOKA

Good morning to you, Sir.

TRELLIS

What are you doing here? I did not
send for you.
Perhaps you bring some sweet
ointment for the relief of boils?

POOKA

I do not.

TRELLIS

Then I bid you return whence you
came. I'm going back to sleep. Good
morning, Sir.

POOKA

Allow me to inform you of my
mission here this morning. I am
here to introduce you to a wide
variety of torments and physical
scourges.

TRELLIS

Your talk surprises me. Name a few.

POOKA

Burst eye-ball, razor-cut behind
the knee, suspension by nose-ring.

FURRISKEY (V.O.)

By God, we're here at last.

SHEILA (V.O.)

Strop the razor, boys.

SHANAHAN (V.O.)

Mr. Furriskey, kindly put the poker
in the fire.
(laughter)

The Pooka stands up.

POOKA

Arise, Sir, till I inflict twin
nipple-hurts with the bevel of my
nails.

Trellis is outraged.

TRELLIS

You can't do that! By the Laws
Harry you'll pay for this!

He makes a grab for his typewriter.

SHANAHAN
HE'S GETTING HIS TYPEWRITER. HE'LL
TURN US ALL INTO MAGGOTS!

SHEILA
HE'LL TURN ME INTO A NUN!!!

FURRISKEY
AAAGH! AAAGH! AAAGH!

ORLICK
Steady..

He writes quickly...

100

INT. MORNING. RED SWAN HOTEL. TRELIS' ROOM.

100

Trellis has his typewriter, but, being a poor typist, has only time to punch three letters very slowly before the typewriter explodes in his face.

The smoke clears to reveal the Pooka advancing ominously.

Trellis is disarmed and suddenly fearful. He has bits of typewriter hanging off him.

TRELIS
Keep away, you crump you! Oh, by
God, I'll kick your guts around the
room if you don't keep your hands
off me!

The Pooka smiles.

POOKA
I will begin.

What follows is of the Itchy and Scratchy variety. Furriskey, Sheila and Shanahan continue to comment throughout with gusto.

Trellis' nipples are squeezed by The Pooka till they assume the consistency of chewing-gum and stretched accordingly.

A boil appears on the back of his neck which he reaches with difficulty and tackles. His eyes water extensively. Just when it appears that it's going to burst, one of his eye-balls explodes.

He then comes to the horrific realisation that another boil has formed, this time between his shoulder-blades, however, where he can't reach it. He dementedly tries to get at it but fails. His reaction to this is the most severe of all. He screams and screams.

The furniture is chucked about. His chamber-pot vindictively makes for him and bounces off his head.

Then the lights go out and the sound of a ticking clock is heard, mingled with the Pooka's incantations and the sound of Trellis being suspended by nose-ring..

*TRELLIS
AAAGH! BY DOZE!!!*

101 *INT. MORNING. RED SWAN HOTEL, SHANAHAN'S ROOM.*

101

There is pandemonium as the lads fall about in hysterics and bark suggestions at Orlick.

*SHANAHAN
Stick him in a concrete-mixer!*

*SHEILA
The mixture to be taken three times
after meals! Ha! Ha!*

*FURRISKEY
Then shove him under a steam-
roller! And here! Listen to this!
IT WON'T BE ABLE TO CRUSH HIS BLACK
HEART! His heart will be left there
with the rest of his body mangled!*

*ORLICK
(writing)
Patience, gentlemen. And Mammy.*

Sweeny in the window is upset.

*SWEENY
Seven years have I wandered
the crags and thorn bushes of
Banba,
Solitary among teemings,*

There is no beauty in cruelty.

Orlick ignores him. The others look to him not knowing what he's talking about.

101A *INT. EVENING. MYLES' BEDROOM.*

101A

Myles continues to write maliciously. There is the sound of beak on glass.

Myles looks up to see the pigeon looking in at him, somewhat reproachfully.

Myles taps the window. The pigeon flies away.

Myles returns to his writing.

102

EXT. DUSK. RED SWAN HOTEL.

102

Trellis comes flying out the window and lands with a splat. He looks up and the Pooka is leaning on his cane looking down at him.

TRELLIS

You black bastard! You leper's death-puke!

POOKA

Your speech is not harmonious. Sweet honey-words in the face of torment is the next injunction I place upon you.

Trellis smiles as he extracts the letter "Y" from his nostril.

TRELLIS

What an absorbing prospect. Perhaps before we continue, a glass of spring-water could be poured through this hole in my neck here, to prevent death by thirst?

With that The Pooka lets fly with a kick that takes half of Trellis' face off and sends it high up into a tree, where it gets stuck in a blackbird's nest.

TRELLIS

(The bit that's in the tree.)

Thanks very much. You're too generous altogether.

103

INT. MORNING. RED SWAN HOTEL, SHANAHAN'S ROOM.

103

Sweeny is flapping his feathers and shifting from foot to foot. He doesn't like this.

Orlick finally registers the disapproval. He pauses for thought.

FURRISKEY

Do you know, we're doing well. By God, he'll rue the day. He'll be a sorry man, now.

SHANAHAN

We're taking all the good out of it by giving him a rest. I propose with your permission to give our friend a little hiding of our own.

Shanahan makes to take the quill. Orlick refuses.

Sweeny continues to flap and make unhappy noises.

ORLICK

*I am engaged in profound thought.
(pausing for effect)
It's only now that the profundity
of my own thought is dawning on me.
I have devised a plot that will
lift our tale to the highest plane
of great literature.
A plot acceptable to all.
It will combine Vengeance...
with Justice.*

He look to Sweeny again.

Sweeny calms down.

SHEILA

Are you sure, Son?

ORLICK

I am indeed, Mammy.

SHANAHAN

(darkly)

*Do anything to spoil the good yarn
you have made of it so far and I
will arise and I will slay thee
with a shovel, eh, Mr. Furriskey?*

Furriskey nods.

ORLICK

(triumphantly)

*Mr. Trellis will stand trial.
Due process.*

*Orlick glares defiantly at Sweeny, who has settled down,
somewhat appeased, but still concerned.*

ORLICK (CONT'D)

Judgement, gentlemen. Judgement.

104

EXT. DAY. UNIVERSITY COLLEGE, DUBLIN.

104

We track Myles as he walks along the corridor towards the exam hall. He is still studying as he walks. He drops his book reluctantly on the floor outside the room, takes a moment, then joins the last few students rushing in, closing the door behind him.

A notice on the door says: EXAMS IN PROGRESS.

105 INT. DAY. COURTROOM.

105

Trellis wakes up. His face has been patched together. He is in a large cloistered hall. There is a musical quintet in one gallery. Various members of the public occupy another. There is general pandemonium.

At the head of the room there is a long bench at which Furriskey, Shanahan, Slug, Jem Casey, Finn McCool and others are seated, all dressed in robes. Each has a glass of stout.

The Pooka, also in robes, stands before Trellis.

TRELLIS

What is going to happen to me next?

POOKA

Shortly you will be judged. The judges are before you.

TRELLIS

(in trepidation)

And the jury?

POOKA

The same.

TRELLIS

I see.

With that the orchestra starts up.

106 INT. DAY. UNIVERSITY COLLEGE, DUBLIN.

106

The students pour out of the exam-hall. Myles looks stressed. Brinsley comes over.

BRINSLEY

How'd it go?

MYLES

Not great. Yourself?

BRINSLEY

(understating)

OK.

Myles watches Roisin disappear off in front of him, discussing the paper excitedly with her friends.

BRINSLEY

I'll go. I'm off home for a few weeks, I have to catch my bus. See you at the results. You'll be grand.

MYLES
Yeah, good luck.

Brinsley leaves.

Myles feels alone.

A hand is placed on his shoulder. He turns around.

It is Kelly.

KELLY
I'm afraid I'll have to ask you to
move on, Sir. You're a hazard to
shipping.

MYLES
What are you doing here?

KELLY
I've something for you.

Kelly hands Myles a tattered copy of SWEENEY IN THE TREES.

Myles is confused.

MYLES
Thanks. Didn't realise you had a
copy.
(smiling)
Bit late.

KELLY
It's for you. Not an exam.

Myles takes the point, if a little resentfully.

KELLY (CONT'D)
Heading off to Paris. Sick of it
here.

MYLES
(taken aback)
Don't blame you.
(pause)
Wow. Paris.
You might meet Joyce.

KELLY
Joyce who? Nah. Fancy a bit of
French fanny.

Kelly extends his hand.

Myles takes it.

KELLY (CONT'D)
If I ever feel like writing about
it I'll let you know.

Kelly winks and heads off.

Myles is happy and sad and more than a little jealous.

He examines Sweeny on the cover of his book.

107 INT. EVENING. UNCLE'S HOUSE. 107

Myles comes in.

The Uncle is there. Waiting.

UNCLE
Well?

MYLES
You'll know soon enough. There's
that book, by the way.

He waves the book at his Uncle and heads up to his room.

108 INT. DAY. COURTROOM. 108

Shanahan bangs his stout-glass on the table.

SHANAHAN
*Mr. Trellis, you are charged with
plagiarism, abuse of your
characters amounting to criminal
negligence and writing without due
care and attention.
Call the first witness!*

POOKA
*Samuel ("Slug") Willard, take the
stand!*

Slug takes off his robe and goes to the witness stand.

TRELLIS
A judge can't be a witness!

The orchestra strikes up and drowns him out.

POOKA
State your name and occupation.

SLUG
Willard, Slug.

POOKA
What is your occupation?

SLUG

Cattleman and cowpuncher in the Western tradition. A gentleman farmer.

POOKA

Have you ever been employed by the accused?

SLUG

Yes.

POOKA

In what capacity?

SLUG

(peevishly)

In the kitchen. Peeling potatoes. I should mention there was a potato-peeler already in the kitchen. A machine.

POOKA

And then?

SLUG

Having discharged my duties, Mr. Trellis failed to notify me my employment was at an end and compelled me to live in an unsanitary attic for six months. I suffered malnutrition and was unable to sleep due to the activities of bed-lice.

POOKA

That is all I have to ask.

(to Trellis)

Do you wish to question the witness?

TRELLIS

I do.

Trellis attempts to sweep impressively out of the chair but is still weak and totters on his feet, to derision from the gallery.

TRELLIS (CONT'D)

You say you couldn't sleep because of the bed-lice.

SLUG

That is correct.

TRELLIS

Have you ever in your life taken a bath?

SHANAHAN
 (from the bench)
 DON'T ANSWER THAT!

Finn McCool throws an empty stout-bottle at Trellis.

TRELLIS
 (ducking)
 I PUT IT TO YOU THAT THE BED-LICE
 WERE NEAR RELATIONS OF OTHER SMALL
 INHABITANTS OF YOUR OWN VERMINOUS
 PERSON!

There is uproar.

SHANAHAN
 That savours of contempt. The
 witness is excused. Next witness!

109 INT. DAY. COURTROOM.

109

(These next scenes merge into a time-lapse)

Furriskey is on the stand.

FURRISKEY
 Naked as a small pig, I was, and
 not a clue as to what I looked
 like, even - he didn't leave me a
 looking-glass on purpose. And then
 I find an old bit of a suit pitched
 in the corner, I mean to say, it
 was one of his old cast-offs, put
 there deliberately to humiliate me.
 Pre-war with a vent in the back. I
 mean to say, it provoked
 considerable mental anguish.

CROSS-FADE TO

Shanahan is on the stand.

SHANAHAN
 When I presented a petition seeking
 improved pay and conditions of
 service, I was threatened with
 certain physical afflictions, most
 of which were degrading in nature
 and carried social stigma.

CROSS-FADE TO

The cow is on the stand.

We push in slowly, as if expecting her to cry.

WHITEFOOT

I was left without attention for very long periods. I suffered intense pain through not being milked regularly.

There is a murmur of sympathy and outrage.

WHITEFOOT (CONT'D)

(sniffles)

In answer to your earlier question, I could not have milked myself even if I had hands, because my arms are not long enough.

(She breaks down, weeping)

The court is upset and appalled.

The judges confer, some wiping their eyes.

They look accusingly at Trellis, who is ruining his fate.

They begin putting on their black caps.

POOKA

Have you reached a verdict?

The judges nod as one.

The orchestra plays the Dead March.

TRELLIS

No.....

110 INT. EVENING. UNCLE'S HOUSE.

110

Myles comes in. He is heading upstairs when the Uncle opens the door of the dining-room and sticks his head out.

UNCLE

Any word?

MYLES

No.

Myles heads upstairs.

The Dead March continues to play

111 EXT. NIGHT. GAOL.

111

The Pooka leads Trellis towards a gallows, where a hooded man awaits.

Shanahan, Slug, Finn McCool et al, follow behind wearing their black hats, holding torches and glaring accusingly.

FINN MCCOOL

*In the yesterday, the man who acted
the jackass with Finn was bound
naked and rammed as regards his
head into a black hole;
so that his white body was upside
down and upright in Erin for the
gazing thereon of man and beast.*

*The Pooka puts his hand on Trellis' shoulder and keeps him
moving.*

*From a low angle we see Slug, hand on holster, bow-legged as
can be.*

*He is followed by another bow-legged person. It is Sheila
Lamont.*

SHEILA

*May he shit crooked. The state he
left me in!*

112 INT. DAY. UNIVERSITY COLLEGE, DUBLIN. 112

Myles approaches the college gates nervously.

113 INT. DAY. UNIVERSITY COLLEGE, DUBLIN. 113

Myles enters the main hall.

He looks towards a cluster of students gathered around the
notice board where the exam results have indeed been posted.

He gathers himself in apprehension.

Roisin comes into the hall. She stops beside him.

She turns around and looks at him. She is terribly nervous.

Myles is emboldened.

MYLES

Are you nervous?

She nods.

ROISIN

I hate this.
I should be alright. I mean I know
I'll be alright, but..well, I don't
know I'll be alright but I... uh.
I hate this. Are you going to the
party tonight?

MYLES

Are you?

ROISIN

One way or the other.
Right. Better get it over with.
See you later. Good luck.

She makes for the notice board.

Myles prepares to meet his fate.

MYLES

One way or the other.

He heads for the notice-board.

114

EXT. NIGHT. GAOL.

114

Trellis climbs on to the platform.

The Hangman awaits.

Drum roll.

Trellis moves towards the rope.

Sweeny crouches on the gallows rail.

Trellis confronts the Hangman. It looks like Myles behind the hood.

The rope is placed around Trellis' neck. He looks for pity in Hangman Myles' eyes. There is none.

The drum roll intensifies.

The noose is tightened. Trellis and Hangman Myles stay locked in eye contact. Trellis continues to plead. Nothing.

The rain begins to sprinkle down.

Trellis turns to Sweeny, perched on the rail of the gallows.

Sweeny looks to Hangman Myles, who returns his gaze, unmoved.

Sweeny spreads his wings, and rises up into the night.

Hangman Myles' cold eyes follow him.

Sweeny hovers in mid-air, holding Hangman Myles' gaze, then begins to weave a pattern with his wings.

His movements become more and more hypnotic.

He rises up into the night, magical in the torchlight.

Everything slows down.

Sweeny's flight becomes a thing of majesty, a seduction. He soars and swoops over the bizarre pageant, challenging its intent.

Hangman Myles watches.

Sweeny hovers above Hangman Myles one final time.

The rain strengthens and begins to plummet down.

Then Sweeny flies up and away and is gone.

Hangman Myles looks to the sky.

He has pause for thought.

115 EXT. EVENING. UNCLE'S HOUSE. 115

Myles stands outside looking up at his Uncle's house, the rain on his face.

116 INT. EVENING. UNCLE'S HOUSE. 116

The latch clicks open and Myles comes in the front door. He seems morose. He is heading upstairs when the Uncle as usual opens the door of the dining-room and sticks his head out.

UNCLE

I want a word with you.

117 INT. EVENING. UNCLE'S DINING-ROOM. 117

Myles enters the dining-room. The Uncle and Mr. Corcoran are seated by the fire. They become silent as Myles enters.

MYLES

How do you do, Mr. Corcoran.

MR. CORCORAN

Ah, good evening, Sir.

UNCLE

Take a seat, Mister-my-friend, I have something to say to you.

Myles sits, somewhat insolently.

The Uncle pokes the fire for a moment in silence. Then..

UNCLE

The question of your studies has been a great worry to me. Failing your examination would be a sore blow to your poor father, and a great disappointment to me.

He turns to look at Myles. His mood changes.

UNCLE (CONT'D)

But you've done the trick. You've passed your examination and your old Uncle is going to be the first to shake your hand.

With that the Uncle smiles broadly and shakes Myles' hand vigorously. The two older men are suddenly effusive. Myles is dumbfounded.

UNCLE (CONT'D)

And a happy man he is to do it.

Mr. Corcoran is beaming away in his chair. He stands up and takes Myles' hand in his turn.

MR. CORCORAN

I don't often go wrong in my judgement of character. I think you're *all right*. And I congratulate you on your success from the bottom of my heart.

UNCLE

You have the laugh on me tonight and there's nobody more pleased than I. I'm as happy as the day is long.

Myles looks at his Uncle's genuinely happy face as if he didn't recognise him. Which he doesn't.

MYLES

How did you find out about it?

UNCLE

Oh, never you mind, now, the old boys know a thing or two. There are more things in life and death than you ever dreamed of, Horatio.

The Uncle and Mr. Corcoran laugh away in unison. Pause. Then..

MR. CORCORAN

You are forgetting something?

UNCLE

Certainly not.

He puts his hand in his pocket.

UNCLE (CONT'D)

Mr. Corcoran and I have joined together in making you a small present as a memento and sincere expression of congratulation from two friends who watched over you - a bit strictly, perhaps - and wished you well.

He takes Myles' hand and shakes it again. He presses a small black box into the other hand. Myles opens it. It contains an antique wristwatch. The dial glows slightly in the gloom.

Myles is overwhelmed. He straps it on.

MYLES

Thank you. I... It's a very convenient article to have.

UNCLE

It is indeed.

MR. CORCORAN

Oh, you are welcome.

There is a pause. Mr. Corcoran is still beaming away. Myles looks at his Uncle who has resumed poking the fire. His Uncle looks happy and contemplative. Human.

MYLES

Em... I need tea.

Myles leaves the room, flustered.

118 INT. EVENING. UNCLE'S HOUSE, STAIRS. 118

Myles climbs slowly and distractedly up the stairs. He stumbles on a step.

119 INT. EVENING. MYLES' BEDROOM. 119

He goes to the washstand and takes off his new second-hand watch. There is an audible ticking. Myles is fascinated and elated.

He starts to wash himself for the evening.

A church bell begins to peal. There is a low murmur as the Uncle and Mr. Corcoran begin reciting the Angelus.

Myles looks at his watch and allows himself a smile. His watch is crap. It says six minutes to six. It doesn't matter. He adjusts it to read six o'clock, then, on second thoughts, pushes it to six minutes past.

He slips on his good pants and shirt and takes his manuscript out from underneath the bed. It has grown over the year.

He sits on the bed, struggling to keep the pages together.

He ponders his good fortune, has a little chuckle to himself, then starts to write his ending.

120 *INT. NIGHT. TRELLIS' BEDROOM.*

120

Teresa, the maid, enters Trellis' room. The room is in a chaotic state after The Pooka's visit. Books and papers are everywhere. The window is open following Trellis' unconventional exit. His type-written pages are fluttering in the breeze, scattered in complete disarray.

She crosses tut-tutting to the open window and shuts it. She turns and looks at the pages strewn about the floor, wondering what to do with them.

121 *EXT. NIGHT. GAOL.*

121

Trellis looks to the heavens, the noose about his neck, the rain teeming down.

Trellis averts his eyes to look for a last time at the characters who have turned on him, gathered to witness his demise.

Suddenly, Slug flies up and disappears in a puff of smoke.

Trellis can't quite believe his eyes.

Then Finn goes up.

People begin to notice. The drum-roll stops.

Jem Casey goes puff, up in the air.

Pandemonium spreads as, one by one, characters disappear into oblivion.

Trellis is in the centre of the mayhem, mesmerised.

122 *INT. NIGHT. TRELLIS' BEDROOM.*

122

We pull back from Teresa's tidy hind-quarters as she bends over the fire.

She is chucking the pages of Trellis' manuscript onto the fire, in combustible bundles. She la-la-las a tune as she works. The pages curl and go up in flames and smoke. As they twist and turn black, we see The Pooka, Furriskey, Shanahan, Sheila et al go sailing up the chimney.

They utter protestations as they go. We hear The Good Fairy complaining, "Fuck's sake!"

With the last bundle, Orlick goes sailing up. He screams at the unfairness of it.

There is a knock on the front door of the hotel. Teresa looks proudly around the room, now pristine after her exertions. She peers out through the window, where she sees Trellis standing lost in the rain.

She goes downstairs to answer the door.

123 INT. EVENING. MYLES' BEDROOM.

123

Brinsley enters Myles' bedroom.

He's all dolled up.

Myles is still writing on the bed.

BRINSLEY

Are you coming?

MYLES

Go ahead. I'll see you there.

BRINSLEY

(smiling)

You're the quare bloody man.

Myles smiles back at him.

Brinsley leaves.

124 INT. NIGHT. RED SWAN HOTEL, RECEPTION.

124

Teresa opens the front door to find Trellis on the doorstep, soaking wet. She holds a lamp which throws a soft light on her face.

TERESA

Where were you in the rain, Sir?

TRELLIS

(gently)

I am ill, Teresa. I have done too much thinking, too much writing.

TERESA

You could catch your death, Sir.

He takes the lamp from her and motions for her to go up the stairs before him. In the light of the lamp, the motion of her skirt as she climbs the stairs holds his full attention. Her slip is showing, confusing him as to its attractiveness.

TRELLIS
Ars... est celare artem.

TERESA
Sorry, Sir?

TRELLIS
*I am doubtful as to whether I have
 made a pun.*

She laughs.

TERESA
Oh, now!

TRELLIS
*It means: "Art conceals its
 artistry"*

TERESA
Oh, now!

Her laugh has a particular gurgle.

Trellis follows her up the stairs, transfixed.

We hear the sound of a pencil scratching on paper.

125 INT. NIGHT. MYLES' BEDROOM.

125

Myles finishes writing, strangely uplifted by his act of mercy.

He has finished his book.

He kisses the manuscript and lies back on the bed, staring happily at the ceiling.

Teresa's laugh is replaced by Roisin's.

Roisin appears in the ceiling.

She is laughing.

She looks lovely.

ROISIN
*When are you going to ask me out,
 you poor eejit?*

She smiles invitingly.

Myles smiles back. He is in rapture.

He gets off the bed.

He puts on his tie.

He slips on his jacket.

He looks great.

As he closes the door behind him, his manuscript flutters lightly on the unmade bed.

The pigeon lands on the window-sill.

More of a dove.

It coos.

END

GLOSSARY

(A) THE REAL WORLD

THIS IS A LIST OF THE MAIN CHARACTERS WITH THEIR CORRESPONDING INCARNATIONS (IF ANY) IN MYLES' IMAGINATION/BOOK.

MYLES: A STUDENT AT COLLEGE, LIVING WITH HIS UNCLE. HE IS WRITING A NOVEL WHEREIN THE CHARACTERS REVOLT AGAINST THEIR MASTER.

UNCLE: MYLES' DETESTED AND SELF-APPOINTED GUARDIAN. IN MYLES' BOOK, HE BECOMES: *TRELLIS*.

KELLY: MYLES' FRIEND, FORMER STUDENT WHO DRINKS TOO MUCH. BECOMES: *FURRISKEY*.

BRINSLEY: MYLES' PAL AND LITERARY CONSULTANT,

ROISIN: MYLES' YEARNED-FOR IN COLLEGE. BECOMES: *LINCHEHEEN*.

PROFESSOR HYDE: MYLES' LECTURER AT COLLEGE. BECOMES: *THE POOKA*.

MR. CORCORAN: FRIEND TO MYLES' UNCLE. BECOMES: *FINN McCOOL*.

MR. CONNORS: ANOTHER OF THE UNCLE'S CRONIES. BECOMES: *SLUG WILLARD*.

BARMAN: THE BARMAN IN GROGAN'S PUB. BECOMES *SHANAHAN*.

MAN DISCUSSING ROUSSEAU: A MAN MYLES MEETS ON DRINKING BINGES, WHOM KELLY PUKES ON. HE BECOMES: *JEM CASEY*.

(B) THE FICTIONAL WORLD

THIS IS A LIST OF THE MAIN CHARACTERS IN MYLES' BOOK (MYLES' INSPIRATION IN BRACKETS, WHERE APPROPRIATE).

TRELLIS: AN AUTHOR WHOSE CHARACTERS REVOLT AGAINST HIM. (UNCLE)

TERESA: MAID IN THE RED SWAN HOTEL WHOM TRELLIS UNWITTINGLY LUSTS AFTER. (PLEASANT LADY)

FURRISKEY: INVENTED BY TRELLIS TO DEBAUCH WOMEN. FALLS IN LOVE WITH PEGGY, WHOM HE WAS SUPPOSED TO RAVISH. (KELLY)

PEGGY: DOMESTIC SERVANT INTENDED BY TRELLIS TO BE ASSAULTED BY FURRISKEY. DEVISES SCHEME TO DRUG TRELLIS. (SEXY GIRL ON STREET)

SHANAHAN: A CHARACTER RECRUITED BY TRELLIS FOR HIS BOOK. HAD PREVIOUSLY BEEN IN OTHER BOOKS, MOSTLY WILLIAM TRACY'S. (THE BARMAN IN GROGAN'S)

SHEILA LAMONT, TRELLIS' DREAM-WOMAN WHOM HE ASSAULTS. MOTHER OF ORLICK. (COWGIRL IN CINEMA POSTER)

FINN McCOOL: LEGENDARY HERO EMPLOYED BY TRELLIS AS PEGGY'S FATHER. RELATES THE TALE OF MAD SWEENEY. (MR. CORCORAN)

SWEENEY: LEGENDARY KING WHO WAS BANISHED TO THE TREES TO LIVE AS A BIRD FOR BREAKING A SAINT'S BELL. SYMBOLIC OF THE ARTIST IN MYLES.

LINCHEHEN: BEAUTIFUL WOMAN, WHO ENTICES MAD SWEENEY DOWN FROM THE TREES FOR HIS OWN GOOD. (ROISIN)

THE POOKA McPHELLIMY: A DEVIL. INFLUENCES ORLICK TO TAKE REVENGE ON TRELLIS. (PROFESSOR HYDE)

THE GOOD FAIRY: INVISIBLE SPIRIT WHO VIES WITH THE POOKA FOR INFLUENCE OVER ORLICK. (THE INDIGNANT LADY)

ORLICK: SON OF TRELLIS AND SHEILA LAMONT. BORN WITH A GIFT FOR WRITING. USES THIS TO TAKE REVENGE ON TRELLIS.

SLUG WILLARD: A CHARACTER FORMERLY USED AS A COWBOY IN THE BOOKS OF WILLIAM TRACY. RECRUITED BY TRELLIS FOR HIS BOOK BUT UNDER-USED. (MR. CONNORS)

JEM CASEY: A WORKING-MAN'S POET. (MAN DISCUSSING ROUSSEAU)