

Life on Water, Death on Land

a radio play

by

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Characters:

NORA CULLEN, 56

BARTLEY CULLEN, 23

CATHLEEN KEOGH, 55

SARA KEOGH, 17

PHILLY KEOGH, 21

MAN 1—FLAHERTY—MAN 2—MAN 3 (all middle-aged; can be spoken by one actor)

SCENE 1—EXT. A LAKE. MORNING.

BIRDS SING.

F/X: SPLASHING AS IF SOMEONE IS COMING OUT OF THE LAKE, OFF. STEPS ON THE SHORE. A BOY STARTS SINGING AVE MARIA BY BACH—GOUNOD FAINTLY. A DOOR OPENS SLOWLY. THE SINGING GROWS LOUDER. A WOMAN SCREAMS. PAUSE. SOFT CRYING.

FADE INTO A SECOND OF SILENCE.

SCENE 2—EXT. IN FRONT OF A COTTAGE. AFTERNOON.

NORA IS SEEING OUT A NUMBER OF PEOPLE.

MAN 1: You have my... sympathy, Nora. James was a great man.

NORA: Yes. Yes, he was. Thank you, Michael.

MAN 1: Everything's arranged here. He's laid out on the large table in the room with the chairs around for keeping vigil. Myself will set to making the coffin, and may finish it till the dusk falls.

NORA: Thank you again. Thank you all.

THE PEOPLE LEAVE.

SCENE 3—INT. THE KITCHEN.

DURING ALL SCENES TAKING PLACE IN THE KITCHEN, FIRE CRACKLES IN A FIREPLACE IN THE BACKGROUND.

SARA: Are they all gone, Aunt Nora?

NORA: Yes. (BEAT) Thank God. I am tired.

PAUSE.

SARA: You must have been frightened.

NORA: I was, Sara.

SARA: Was... he green this time, too?

NORA: Yes. And he had a beautiful voice. He himself was beautiful.

SARA: Was he –

NORA: I wouldn't like to talk about it now. (BEAT) I hope you don't mind.

SARA: Not in the least.

PAUSE.

NORA: I always thought people just... made him up. (PAUSE) It'll be awhile till Bartley and Philly get back.

SARA: Just a few hours and they'll be home.

NORA: James wanted so much to see Bartley once more... he being his only son.

SARA: But he couldn't know...

NORA: No, he couldn't. (PAUSE) But at times like this we're not granted another chance.

PAUSE.

SARA: I've laid out the black dress.

NORA: Oh. (BEAT) Oh, thank you, Sara. (BEAT) The bread... I forgot...

SARA: I'll check the oven and put the loaf by the fire.

NORA: Don't forget to cut it on the top.

F/X: THE DOOR OF THE FIREPLACE CREAKS.

SARA: Yes. (BEAT) It was but smouldering. It's lucky you were telling me to check.

NORA: We've been expecting it; it still came all too suddenly. (PAUSE) Where have you put the dress, Sara?

SARA: Here it is. I've ironed it and all.

NORA: Thank you. It looks smooth and fine.

SARA: Are you decided that the vigil be this night?

NORA: Yes. James himself would've wanted it this way.

PAUSE.

SARA: I'm after forgetting that my mother says she cannot come over. Her legs... they give her pain again.

NORA: Poor Cathleen. Of course she needn't come. She was here in the morning. Are we done? I had so much to do when James was sick. Now I just potter about.

SARA: There's nothing to do, Aunt Nora.

PAUSE.

NORA: I'm glad you're here, Sara. I'm glad my son chose a girl like you.

SARA: I try to do my best.

NORA: The wind is rising outside. I hope no harm comes to them.

SARA: It's not as strong as it was two days ago. And it blows towards the shore. They must still be waiting for the fish to fill the net.

NORA: But there's a thick fog coming. (BEAT) I think it's time that I put on the dress. Could you light the candles in the room? and we going there after.

SARA: I will.

SCENE 4—EXT. MEN IN BOATS ON THE LAKE.

PHILLY: Isn't it three days we're after catching nothing, Bartley?

BARTLEY: Yes. (BEAT) Wait a bit, Philly, and let us clean the net for it is covered in weed.

SCENE 5—INT. THE INNER ROOM.

DURING ALL SCENES IN THE INNER ROOM,
THE ROAR OF WAVES CAN BE HEARD
THROUGH THE WINDOWS. SARA AND NORA
ARE WALKING INTO THE ROOM.

NORA: (OFF) Sara!

SARA: Aunt Nora?

NORA: Help me, would you. It's so hard to put on alone.

SARA: There's no way you could tie these at the back.

NORA: What's after happening to your thumb?

SARA: Oh, it's nothing, just a bit of wax that dripped on it.

NORA: (PAUSE) Thank you, Sara. (PAUSE) He looks so calm now. I wonder... do you think he's found peace we've all been told about? Do you think he sees us now, and me touching his hair?

SARA: I'm sure he does.

NORA: He wanted to die in peace. He almost did. But then, when he heard... his mouth gaped and his eyes bulged, and then his face froze... I hardly managed to close his eyelids again.

SARA: You needn't have to... It wasn't your duty.

NORA: I don't care. I couldn't have looked at him that way. (PAUSE) I do wish they were here.

SARA: But they don't know that –

NORA: You can feel something like this. (BEAT) I think. But it doesn't matter. What matters is that they get back safe.

SARA: Yes. The dusk is getting near.

NORA: And the fog... James used to call him the Gambler. Just when you think you got the better of him... you end up deceived like you've never been deceived before.

SARA: I'm sure nothing has happened to them. After all, the Sign only appeared once.

NORA: (SADLY) Yes. Only once.

SARA: I'm sorry, Aunt Nora. I didn't mean to...

NORA: That's all right, Sara. It's all right. (BEAT) It's so hard... to know... even if just minutes before, but still, to know in advance... Sit down, Sara, please. You don't need to stand there. (BEAT) Isn't it? I mean isn't it horrible to be damned to know that something bad is about to happen?

SARA: I'm sure I don't know.

NORA: And you can't prepare yourself. For something like this, you can't. (BEAT) But here I am, wailing like the wheel of the well. I should heed James's advice... He always looked on the brighter side of things. (TO HERSELF) It was five years, he spent five years over there, on the mainland.

SARA: Yes, I know. He used to gather us around, when I was a child, and tell long tales about the things he'd seen.

NORA: After he returned, he couldn't fit in. He became... an outsider in his own village. I think that's why I fell in love with him. (PAUSE) Maybe you're right. He appeared only once.

SARA: One shouldn't think things like that, Aunt Nora. One shouldn't.

NORA: I don't care any more what one should do or what one shouldn't. It's over. (PAUSE) How old is he now?

SARA: Who?

NORA: The Sign.

SARA: Ten, eleven... Twelve, I think. Or thirteen.

NORA: He looked at most ten. A beautiful, beautiful boy.

SARA: Molly Burke couldn't talk of anything else for weeks after her husband died. That he was this beautiful and that...

NORA: She always loved all children... except her own. (BEAT) But he was indeed.

SARA: I've never seen him. I'd like to, though... I being his sister and all.

NORA: You thank God, Sara, that you haven't. It's terrible to lose someone, and you don't deserve to go through all this again.

SARA: Why, on the lake, they say, on the lake, he doesn't bring death, but saves people. Like Shawn.

NORA: That's true.

PAUSE.

SARA: He was over there only once? On the mainland? Uncle James?

NORA: Yes, once. He was quite young, maybe that's why he changed that much.

SARA: That was when he started... to doubt?

NORA: He was always a God-fearing man. What he doubted were superstitions. That's why he saved your mother. He didn't believe, against all, for a minute, that she could be a witch.

SARA: From time to time, it comes to me... if it weren't for him –

NORA: She would've been killed. Wouldn't she, James? You knew it. He couldn't bear when people hurt the weak. And he was respected. Maybe that's why he managed to... And now, now it turns out that there is... the Sign...

SARA: You don't think, do you, Aunt Nora, that my mother –

NORA: No, no, no. It isn't Cathleen's fault. She must've been cursed with it like we all are. And even if James had known what was about to come, he would've done the very same thing. He was a man like that.

SCENE 6—FLASHBACK.

THE SOUND OF THE CRASHING WAVES
INTENSIFIES AND MERGES WITH NORA'S
SPEECH.

NORA: (V/O) Do you remember that day? I see it as if it all had happened yesterday. For some time, I dreamt about it every night. (BEAT) Cathleen was already in labour.

F/X: A WOMAN MOANING.

The midwife arrived in the last minute. She could hardly be persuaded to go. She was afraid. Like everybody else. I think... I think because your father, he died more than a year before. And then... it happened. *He* was born.

F/X: A BABY CRIES. A WOMAN SCREAMS.

There was... a green mark on his forehead. Not a big mark, and not even too striking, but it was enough. The midwife ran out... there were people waiting around the house...

F/X: A SMALL GROUP OF PEOPLE TALKING, A
WOMAN IS CRYING AND SHOUTING,
INDISTINCT.

She was shouting, pointing at the house... then fell to her knees and started to pray. And there came Flaherty. (BEAT) I think it was his idea. Witchcraft. (PAUSE) The people... you know, somehow I thought nobody believed that someone from the village could be a witch any more. But Flaherty... he told them that Cathleen cursed Molly Burke's pigs. It was foolish, but the people believed him... or they pretended to believe. And then he went into the house.

FLAHERTY: (ALMOST INDISTINCT, ONLY A FEW WORDS MAKE IT THROUGH THE OVERWHELMING SOUND OF THE WAVES) Cathleen Keogh! ... In the Name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Spirit... do you admit... witchcraft... trembling before the sight of God...

NORA: (V/O) I remained outside. I don't know what he said to them.

FLAHERTY: (AS ABOVE) Silent! She's silent before the Crucifix whose soul is laden with guilt... Christ our Lord... the power of Evil.

F/X: PEOPLE SHOUTING, A BABY CRYING, A JUG CRASHING ON THE FLOOR.

NORA: (V/O) They dragged her to the yard. Flaherty was showering curses on her from the Scriptures. She was lying in the mud, and they kicked her and threw stones at her; I think it was then that both of her legs were broken. I couldn't bear it, and ran away, back to our house. (BEAT) It was James. I don't know how he did it. He brought Cathleen here in his arms. Flaherty kept pestering him, praying and cursing, praying and cursing; then he went back to the street to gather... his flock again. (BEAT) He went back to your house, and took the child. You and Philly were long gone by then. (BEAT) And Flaherty decided that the child was to be killed. Sacrificed. He marched to the port, and holding high the child, prayed.

F/X: MAN SHOUTING, INDISTINCT.

He yelled. Two men were burning incense next to him. Then he twisted the limbs of the child backwards and threw him in the water.

F/X: A SPLASH.

We were tending Cathleen at the time, and it wasn't until later that we got to know what had come to pass.

THE SOUND OF THE WAVES SUBSIDES TO
THE PREVIOUS LEVEL.

SCENE 7—INT. THE INNER ROOM.

NORA: I'm sorry, Sara. I...

SARA: No, it's... all right. It isn't like it used to be. (BEAT) I could never understand... why they killed him, a baby. He was a newborn... and innocent.

NORA: I heard the like of it. But he was a creature of God, and I'm sure we shouldn't've interfered with His will.

SARA: He was innocent.

NORA: Well, they might be after killing him, but he is not dead.

SARA: I... I wanted to care for him. I had a mind to do so ever since I knew I was going to have a little brother. I would've loved him so much.

NORA: Now you can love a child of your own.

PAUSE.

SARA: How?

NORA: I mean you can have a child of your own.

SARA: Oh. (BEAT) Yes.

PAUSE.

SARA: What was the colour of himself?

NORA: The colour?

SARA: What green? 'Cause it came to my mind that a few months after my father died, Mother bathed in the lake and lost her pendant. There was a green gem in it. She searched for it for hours, but in vain.

NORA: I always felt the lake to be mysterious.

SCENE 8—FLASHBACK.

THE SOUND OF THE CRASHING WAVES
INTENSIFIES.

SARA: (V/O) And two weeks after, it started. It was then that Susan Flaherty saw... in her dream or awake... a green boy child... he was cooing and waving, and his laughter echoed on the bare walls of her imagination. (BEAT) Two days, and Flaherty breathed his last. And then, each time someone died, one in the family saw a growing green boy. Sometimes he's seen on the lake, too. Those times nobody dies. Those times he helps the ones in danger. To amend, perhaps, the sad mission. Perhaps. (BEAT) So he became life on water, death on land. That's what they call him. Life on Water, Death on Land. (BEAT) I've never seen my brother.

THE BACKGROUND NOISE FADES TO A
SECOND OF SILENCE.

SCENE 9—EXT. THE PORT AND THE VILLAGE.
EVENING.

F/X: LIGHT SPLASHING AS BARTLEY MOORS HIS
BOAT. HE TRIPS.

BARTLEY: Ah, for God's sake!

F/X: BARTLEY WALKING FIRST ON THE SHORE,
THEN ON THE MAIN ROAD AMONG THE
HOUSES.

BARTLEY: (WHILE WALKING) Timmy! (BEAT) Timmy? (BEAT, TO HIMSELF) You've started early, haven't you.

MAN 2: (OFF) Bartley!

BARTLEY: Yeah?

MAN 2: Bartley, listen, it's your father. He's...

BARTLEY: Ah. (BEAT) Is he?

MAN 2: Yes.

BARTLEY: When?

MAN 2: This morning.

BARTLEY: Was...?

MAN 2: Everything's taken care of. She herself asked Michael for the coffin.

BARTLEY: Ah.

MAN 2: (BEAT) I'm sorry.

BARTLEY: Uhm.

F/X: AFTER A PAUSE, BARTLEY CONTINUES WALKING. HE MOUNTS THE STEPS OF THE CULLENS' HOUSE.

SCENE 10—INT. THE INNER ROOM.

F/X: DOOR OPENING AND CLOSING.

BARTLEY: I came back.

NORA: (TAKES A FEW STEPS) Your father –

BARTLEY: I know.

NORA: (STARTS CRYING, SOFLTY)

BARTLEY: It's alright, Mother.

SARA: You came late. What happened?

BARTLEY: I'm hungry.

SARA: Is Philly come with you?

BARTLEY: No. I came alone.

SARA: What happened?

BARTLEY: I'm hungry. I'll tell you after.

NORA: Cut up the bread, Sara.

SARA: I'll go and check if it be ready.

NORA: Cut up the bread.

F/X: STEPS AS SARA GOES TO THE KITCHEN.

NORA: Any luck?

BARTLEY: None.

NORA: May He help us to get through until after everything is arranged.

PAUSE.

F/X: STEPS AS SARA COMES BACK.

SARA: Here you are. Two slices and they still be warm.

BARTLEY: (EATING) He died peacefully?

NORA: Yes.

BARTLEY: (EATING) That's good.

NORA: But... The... Sign appeared. It terrified him.

BARTLEY: (EATING) There is no Sign.

SARA: But they're after seeing him, and...

NORA: He was here.

PAUSE.

BARTLEY: (EATING) If you say so. (PAUSE. SWALLOWING THE LAST BITE) So he didn't make a good end. (TAKES THE OTHER SLICE) And what was he like?

NORA: Who?

BARTLEY: (EATING) The... *Sign*.

NORA: Like they said. Green. A small boy. And he was singing.

BARTLEY: (EATING) Ah. (PAUSE) The priest?

NORA: He was here right after James died.

BARTLEY: (SWALLOWING THE LAST BITE) I hear he died in the morning.

NORA: Yes. Shortly after you left.

BARTLEY: I left early to... He wanted to see me, didn't he.

NORA: He said your name several times. I don't believe he had anything important to say.

BARTLEY: (PEEVISHLY) You surely know. (LONG PAUSE) Did they help?

NORA: All the neighbours came over. They washed him and dressed him and Martin said he weighed the same as years ago. (BEAT) Margaret helped with the room. Sara was also helping.

BARTLEY: Right. (BEAT) The funeral?

NORA: I asked Michael for the coffin and gave him the boards you bought. I didn't want to while... James was alive. You know the place, next to his parents. I have to talk to the priest –

BARTLEY: Right. (BEAT) So it's tonight. We keep vigil tonight.

NORA: I thought it would be best. (LONG PAUSE) So you had no luck today.

BARTLEY: None.

SARA: How come you came back alone, Bartley? Where's Philly?

BARTLEY: God! (BEAT) I told you I'd tell, didn't I? Just give me a moment of peace.

NORA: What's the matter with you?

BARTLEY: What's the matter with me? My father is after dying. I wanted to be here. I almost lost my way in the fog when I came back, and I find candles instead of himself!

SARA: (SOBS)

NORA: (GENTLY) Sit down, Bartley.

BARTLEY: (LOW) No, thank you.

SCENE 11—FLASHBACK.

THE SOUND OF THE ROARING WAVES
INTENSIFIES.

BARTLEY:

(V/O) We lost our way. In the fog. Yes, we lost our way.
 (BEAT) During the morning... there was hardly anything in the net. We threw back all that came out. Then we went farther in. The shore, we couldn't see the shore anymore. We were waiting. We were waiting all day.
 (BEAT) And then Philly saw the water rippling farther on. Hundreds of pikes were there swimming. We turned the boats and rowed gently towards them. (BEAT) Nothing. We caught nothing. The largest shoal I've ever seen was there just minutes before, and we didn't catch nothing.
 (BEAT) It was getting dark already and we not knowing what to do. We rowed up and rowed down, but it was calm and the water was smooth and no fish was swimming underneath. We were alone; the others stayed closer to the port. (BEAT) And then Philly saw the tiny waves again. A little more farther in. We dipped the oars in the water as gently as we could and the boats moving silently towards the fish. I know not how they did it. They remained there, swimming and wriggling and frolicking till the first mesh of the net touched the waves. We caught nothing. (SOBS) Nothing. (BEAT) But we didn't give up. We cleaned the net for it was covered in weed. It was then that Philly saw the water rippling for the third time. I said let us come back. Try our luck closer to the shore. I told him to come back.

F/X: VOICES OF MEN MINGLING WITH THE SOUND OF THE WAVES.

I told him, but he didn't listen to me. He turned his boat and rowed deeper and deeper into the fog and the darkness that has gathered. I didn't... dare to follow. Then I heard him lowering the net once again. I followed the sound, but didn't find him it being dark and the lake covered in vapour.

F/X: MAN SHOUTING.

I shouted and shouted and pleaded and argued till my voice became hoarse and then faint and then there was no voice no more. (BEAT) I knew he was stubborn and he not listening to a soul once he is decided. I didn't know how far I was from the village, so I turned and tried to row back before the wind changed. I drifted almost up to the small islands in the fog till I reached the shore and I rowed along the land to the port. (BEAT) I moored the boat and came.

THE SOUND OF THE WAVES SUBSIDES.

SCENE 12—INT. THE INNER ROOM.

SARA: You... left my brother out on the lake alone?

BARTLEY: You know how he is! Once he decides on something, God alone may change his mind, and not easily either.

NORA: Philly knows the lake very well, Sara. I'm sure no harm has come to him.

SARA: (LOW) I can't believe it.

BARTLEY: Sara... Philly is a friend to me. Almost a brother. I'd do anything to... But there was no good in chasing those fish.

SARA: And so you left him out on the lake.

BARTLEY: If I don't come back, I could've only come late in the night when the wind turns the second time.

SARA: One can always come back along the shore.

PAUSE.

BARTLEY: And... I had a sense that something bad had happened. (PAUSE) Yes, maybe I shouldn't have come back. But I'm after doing it.

SARA: Should evil come to Philly, I will not forgive you, so God help me.

BARTLEY: What? What can happen to him? And *he's* after leaving me on the lake!

NORA: Don't talk of the devil, Sara.

SARA: You yourself said there's a terrible fog on the lake, Aunt Nora.

BARTLEY: I had enough this day.

F/X: BARTLEY LEAVES THE ROOM.

NORA: Where are you going, Bartley?

BARTLEY: (OFF) Outside and with my pipe.

F/X: BARTLEY GOES OUT, IN THE KITCHEN, THE DOOR OF THE FIREPLACE CREAKING, A DOOR CLOSING. BARTLEY PUFFING.

SCENE 13—EXT. IN FRONT OF THE HOUSE.

BARTLEY: Damn. Damn. (BEAT) I hope his boat never returns.

SCENE 14—INT. THE INNER ROOM.

NORA: Don't fear the worst, Sara.

SARA: I'm worried, Aunt Nora. He's not like staying out alone.

NORA: Yourself said the Sign only appeared once.

SARA: Here. Who knows where else they're after seeing it.

PAUSE.

NORA: However hard it might be, try to have faith in Philly. And in Bartley. I'm sure he wasn't meaning ill.

SARA: (TO HERSELF) Yes.

NORA: Especially as Philly left him, as Bartley tells us.

SARA: Yes.

PAUSE.

NORA: Let us hope all will be well.

PAUSE.

SARA: (PULLING HERSELF TOGETHER) We've got no food left. Apart from the loaf of bread that I cut up for Bartley.

NORA: We'll take care of that tomorrow. We won't be needing more food tonight.

F/X: DOOR OPENS, CLOSES, COUGHING, STEPS.

SARA: Bartley...!

BARTLEY: Has my little dove calmed down?

SARA: Yes, yes. I'm sorry.

BARTLEY: Everything will be fine.

PAUSE.

NORA: You caught nothing then, did you?

BARTLEY: No. Nothing.

SARA: I hope Philly has more luck.

BARTLEY: If anybody can catch those fish, he will.

NORA: (MATTER-OF-FACT) We'll see.

PAUSE.

BARTLEY: I would've never thought that this would come. I mean Father.

NORA: Everything comes, sooner or later, even the things we least want to. (BEAT) Who told you that –

BARTLEY: Martin was out and he smoking a pipe when I came. He told me.

NORA: At least you knew beforehand.

BARTLEY: No one believes such a thing, I think, till seeing...

NORA: Yes. (BEAT) I don't think I believe it, not even now.

PAUSE.

BARTLEY: So, next to his parents, there will he be buried?

NORA: Yes. It was his will that we go to his. My parents but lie a bit farther afar.

BARTLEY: He always got what he wanted.

NORA: It was his will and me being close to follow, it fits me well.

BARTLEY: Don't say things like that. (BEAT) He was always stubborn.

NORA: (GENTLY) Just like you. (BEAT) You argued day and night.

BARTLEY: He always wanted me to travel around the continent.

NORA: You, of course, weren't willing...

BARTLEY: What was good for him was good for everybody else, he thought.

NORA: And your desire was the lake alone.

BARTLEY: It's what's done in this village.

NORA: Going out every day, fishing, and coming back...

AWKWARD SILENCE.

SARA: Maybe I should go and tell Mother what's after happening.

NORA: It's not that late, Sara. We can wait a bit more. Isn't it bad to make Cathleen worried and afraid when Philly might soon be returning?

SARA: If you say so, Aunt Nora.

PAUSE.

BARTLEY: Father was always telling tales in the evenings.

NORA: You, Sara, and Philly, you were often here. Staying up till the wind gathered strength for the second time listening to him.

SARA: Yes... I remember... Especially when he told us about his travels. It must've been wondrous to see all those things... that far from here...

NORA: I myself didn't know sometimes what he really saw and what he added to amuse you.

BARTLEY: I think it didn't matter.

NORA: I liked it best when he told his own stories.

SARA: The one about the black goat... everybody knew that one in the village.

SHORT PAUSE.

NORA: Oh!

BARTLEY: What?

NORA: The candle...

BARTLEY: I'll bring a new one.

NORA: They are by the door in the kitchen.

THE BACKGROUND NOISE FADES INTO A
SECOND OF SILENCE.

SCENE 15—INT. THE INNER ROOM. NIGHT.

SARA: The wind has risen.

NORA: Yes. (BEAT) But it's still but a little breeze.

BARTLEY: It was a few weeks ago that there was a strong wind. The waves were so high they reached the ash behind the house.

NORA: (SLOWLY) Yes, I remember. I was talking with James about your wedding that day and the windows shaking with the wind. (BEAT) Have you selected the day yet?

BARTLEY: I'm not sure, Mother, that this is a time to –

NORA: We have a whole night ahead of us. And James, he kept hastening the wedding.

BARTLEY: (SIGHS) He didn't live to see it.

PAUSE.

NORA: So?

BARTLEY: I really don't know now, Mother.

NORA: Well, I do know that James never wanted to be a burden to anyone and that he'd be glad to see you happy.

BARTLEY: And what do *you* want?

NORA: Why... that it be as soon as God permits.

BARTLEY: Let us talk about it later. First, get Father a clean burial.

SARA: By the grace of God.

PAUSE.

NORA: I... I'll go cut a thin slice of bread and eat for I'm half falling down.

F/X: STEPS AS NORA GOES OUT TO THE KITCHEN.

SARA: (LOW) What... What are you doing, Bartley?

BARTLEY: (LOW) You're so beautiful, Sara.

SARA: It's not fitting to put your hands where you've put them.

BARTLEY: Nobody can see us.

SARA: Aunt Nora is in the kitchen.

BARTLEY: Yes she is.

SARA: She may come back anytime.

BARTLEY: Can't you see that what I want is to –

SARA: Bartley, I beg you.

BARTLEY: What if you stole to my boat again next evening?

SARA:	Don't, Bartley... I will be screaming, I swear... if you don't stop... Bartley, Bartley, that's... that's –	BARTLEY:	Under the moon, just the two of us... Just let me touch your face... a kiss... come here –
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F/X: SARA STARTS FROM HER CHAIR; THE CHAIR MAKES A LOUD NOISE. STEPS AS NORA RUSHES BACK.

NORA: What happened? Where are you going, Sara?

SARA: (EXCITED) Nothing... I just... thought... I should tell mother. I'm sure she be worried and it be late.

NORA: Isn't herself be sleeping?

SARA: She never shuts an eye while Philly's out on the lake.

NORA: Maybe she should come here. Bartley can tell her what happened, and it might be easier for her to spend the night with us, however sad our house be.

F/X: DOOR OPENS, SARA RUNS DOWN THE STEPS.

SARA: (OFF) I'll be back right away.

F/X: NORA SLOWLY CLOSSES THE DOOR.

NORA: Let us hope all will be well.

SCENE 16—EXT. ON THE ROAD OF THE VILLAGE.

F/X: CATHLEEN, WITH WALKING STICKS, AND SARA STUMBLE ON THE ROAD.

CATHLEEN: Not so fast, Sara, I can hardly keep up with you.

SARA: I'm sorry, Mother.

CATHLEEN: You say Bartley came back without Philly?

SARA: Yes.

CATHLEEN: Why is he after doing such a thing?

SARA: Himself will tell you.

CATHLEEN: The Lord have mercy on Philly's soul for it be late surely.

SARA: It is.

PAUSE.

CATHLEEN: And Nora, how's she?

SARA: She became a tired, old woman, not like herself a few days ago.

CATHLEEN: She tried to be prepared for a thing one cannot prepare for. (BEAT) But here we are.

F/X: THEY MOUNT THE STEPS.

SARA: Aunt Nora!

NORA: (STEPPING OUT) I'm here, Sara. Cathleen! Cathleen! I'm glad you could come.

CATHLEEN: (GROANING AS CLIMBING THE STEPS) Nora! Sara's after telling me you be keeping vigil tonight.

NORA: Yes, I though it was best. Come in!

THEY ENTER THE HOUSE.

SCENE 17—INT. THE KITCHEN.

NORA: (GENTLY) Sit down, Cathleen.

CATHLEEN: Thank you. My legs, I fear, will never regain their strength. (BEAT) Bartley?

BARTLEY: Welcome, Aunt Cathleen.

CATHLEEN: (SLOWLY) I'm sorry, Nora, and what James, the Lord rest his soul, is after doing to me. The Lord spare us with the last fine man in this whole world be dead.

NORA: He was doing what his heart told him.

CATHLEEN: He had a fine heart, saving my life against all.

NORA: It was a long time ago.

PAUSE.

CATHLEEN: Sara's after telling me that you know of Philly, the Lord spare him, and Bartley coming from the lake alone.

NORA: Yes, he came late tonight.

AWKWARD SILENCE.

BARTLEY: I told you, why don't *you* tell what happened?

NORA: Bartley, please.

BARTLEY: We were after a shoal of pikes and we rowing farther and farther away from the shore. I told Philly we should come nearer but he, without a word, left me and went after the fish. After sitting alone in the fog for a while, I went to look for him, but he wasn't near or didn't reply to my calling, so I came ashore. There was nothing more I could do.

PAUSE.

CATHLEEN: It's so unlike him.

NORA: But they're after catching almost nothing for three days; Philly might've decided to try his luck with that shoal.

CATHLEEN: I'm worried still, it's past the time he's back every day.

NORA: There's nothing to be done with the darkness and the fog on the water.

BARTLEY: There's still hardly a breath of wind in the air. No harm can come to him.

CATHLEEN: But they say the water's never calm in the south. Oh, Philly, the Lord spare your soul.

NORA: I'm sure, Cathleen, that he'll soon be back.

PAUSE.

CATHLEEN: I would not tell, if I were you, Bartley, many people of what happened today. Fishermen do not like it when one fails the other.

BARTLEY: (ANGRY BUT RESTRAINED) I have not failed him. I did not want to chase a shoal we had no chance of catching. He left me and after he did, I searched for him in vain for two and a half hours. Nobody dare say I failed him. Not even you.

NORA: I don't think Bartley is to blame, Cathleen.

CATHLEEN: I'm sure you be right, Nora, I'm sorry. Forgive me, Bartley. I've kept myself awake with worry and I am tired and foolish. Sara was silent and I was angry with you before I got to know what had happened.

SARA: I'm sorry. I didn't want to –

CATHLEEN: It was just me, my dear. I'm sure everything was as Bartley told us. Philly is stubborn sometimes, even though he's not gone this far.

NORA: We are all worried, Cathleen.

CATHLEEN: I'm sorry, Nora. I didn't want to... especially this day...

NORA: I know what it's like to have a son out on the water and it being dark.

CATHLEEN: Yes. This is our lot. (BEAT) Well, then –

NORA: Wait, Cathleen, don't you want to wait up for Philly here? It sure would be better than waiting and spending the night with worry alone.

CATHLEEN: It's kind of you, but I fear what Philly would think he coming back and our house be dark and empty.

NORA: He'll know where to look for you and Sara. And James, I'm sure he would like to see you here.

CATHLEEN: (GROANS AS TRIES TO STAND UP) Just a few minutes then, and I must be going.

F/X: THEY ALL GO TO THE INNER ROOM.

SCENE 18—INT. THE INNER ROOM.

NORA: Cathleen, did Sara tell the Sign had appeared?

BARTLEY: Oh, God.

NORA: Bartley!

CATHLEEN: No, she didn't. Was it James and you that saw him?

NORA: Yes. He came and sung just before James was gone.

CATHLEEN: Where did he come from? And where did he go? Did you see where he went?

NORA: He came and went like an earthly being, but strangely I moved to follow him but after he was already gone. It wasn't like I couldn't, somehow I didn't think of it.

CATHLEEN: He came through the front door?

NORA: No, he came by the back door, from the lake. When he left, I ran out but he was nowhere to be seen. Only the water was rippling; the lake had been disturbed close to the shore.

CATHLEEN: I've never... I've never... believed... hoped... I thought people were telling stories to... make that past murder just. Not that I would've accused anyone, ever. What has passed has passed, and I am content. But if you too say so, Nora... (BEAT) I'm sorry. It's all my fault.

NORA: It is not. (BEAT) Maybe our fancy played tricks with ourselves. Guilt made Susan Flaherty see the child, and people are willing to see things that make them innocent. The boy—the Sign—was alive, they said, he wasn't murdered in front of our eyes and we doing nothing. (BEAT) Maybe I... we saw him because we feared to see him and know things not of this world.

BARTLEY: I always told you the Sign didn't exist.

NORA: There's hardly a cobweb between the realms of fancy and the world of the sun.

CATHLEEN: That cobweb is called faith, Bartley. You're your father's son, the Lord bless your soul. (BEAT) I wish I knew what to believe. I'm old and broken and my wit's not in its place anymore.

PAUSE.

SARA: The wind's strong now.

CATHLEEN: (PRAYS, HARDLY AUDIBLE)

NORA: There are still some fishermen out on the lake even at this hour, we needn't fear the worst. (PAUSE) Sara, could you check on the fire? I don't want it to burn out.

SARA: Yes, Aunt Nora.

F/X: SARA GOES TO THE KITCHEN.

BARTLEY: We can always get fire from the neighbours.

NORA: It's not fitting to trouble them in the middle of the night.

BARTLEY: If you say so.

PAUSE.

F/X: **SARA RETURNS.**

SARA: I've fed it; it'll last till dawn.

CATHLEEN: (THE END OF HER PRAYER) Amen.

SCENE 19—INT. THE INNER ROOM.

F/X: **A BOY SINGS AVE MARIA, OFF. A DOOR
OPENS, THE SINGING BECOMES LOUDER AS
THE BOY ENTERS THE HOUSE.**

CATHLEEN: Oh, the Lord have mercy on my soul! (BEAT) Sara! Are you asleep? Sara! Bartley! Wake up! The Lord spare us! It's the Sign! Nora! I see you're awake and your eyes be open. Why don't you move?

F/X: **THE SINGING ENDS.**

In the Name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Spirit, Amen. The Lord give me strength in my hour of need. (BEAT) Is it you? What did you do to Sara and Nora and Bartley? (BEAT) You *are* beautiful. (BEAT) Surely I'm after falling asleep. (LOW) Wake up, Cathleen, you good-for-nothing, wake up. This cannot be. (PAUSE) Are you really here? Is it not just a shadow and a light? I must... stand up...

F/X: **GROANING AND SHUFFLING AS CATHLEEN
STANDS UP AND TAKES A FEW STEPS
TOWARD THE BOY.**

(SCREAMS FAINTLY) Christ our Lord fail not my poor soul now! You are here surely, for I can touch your hand and your skin be as cold as the water beyond the islands. Can you speak? ...my son? You sang before, can't you utter a word? Who taught you this melody? have they never shown you how to speak? (BEAT) Why are you here? Oh Lord, what I am to do? I'm old and broken and I cannot bear to learn things I am not to know. (BEAT) But you cry... I'd hold you in my arms and warm you but without these sticks I'd fall. Hush, hush, don't cry, (ALMOST BURSTS OUT CRYING) for your mother's crying with you. (PAUSE) What happened since... that day? (TO HERSELF) Does any of you and me know of these things? You were but a baby then, and you be growing up only since. (BEAT) I'm too weak, my Lord, to stand before this angel appearing in the form of a son. For you've become an angel surely. A harbinger of sad news, but you help us still living sometimes, and never do no one no harm. (BEAT) Do you understand what I'm after telling? I can do nothing any more but talk... (BEAT) Why are you here? What are you after and me not knowing any more than you do? (BEAT) Or maybe I do know more, if angels can't see their beginning like the memories of little children on earth are blind. (BEAT) So it started... Slowly, bit by bit, I gathered the pieces of the story. I tried to remember what led to the next; with what it began and with what it ended. I told your story to myself over and over again during the long nights I lay not able to stand or sit or move about to make some sense of it, but to my mind, there was none. (PAUSE) It started, I think, with a dream I dreamt when caring for Matthew, my husband; he was sick and was to leave me soon forever.

SCENE 20—FLASHBACK.

THE SOUND OF THE WAVES INTENSIFIES.

CATHLEEN (CONT'D): (V/O) I saw a wooden cottage... it was grey... next to a lake... on the shore. The water was smooth and calm and green and bright. A man and his wife were living in that cottage, and they were also grey, their hands and faces alike. I saw the man leaving, and I knew he did so every morning. He must be a woodsman, I thought when I was seeing all this. The woman stayed at home. She sat on a rock by the lake and she doing needlework until the man came back. It was beautiful the things she made, branches and leaves, one after the other. She was sitting there all they long every day. She was waiting. That's what my feeling was. (BEAT) And then, one day, a beautiful man emerged from the water. His skin was green, like yours now, and it was dazzling to look at his figure. The woman just looked at him and stared and after a while, frightened, she ran back into the house. (BEAT) The man left every morning after that day like before, but the woman didn't sit by the lake. Never again. (PAUSE) Then, as time passed, her hair turned whiter and her clothes darker and herself was growing old. One day, as her clothes became black like the coal below and her hair white like the snow on the mountains, she fell, and sitting up she was after finding a child that was green and bright and dazzling to look at. She crawled to the shore on her knees and she holding the boy next to her grey and wasted breasts and, tears streaming down her cheeks, she let the child sink in the water. The lake became cloudy that moment; waves troubled its calm face with the woman lying on its shore. The waves grew until they reached well into the sand and the white-crested ones lapping the black clothes of the woman. Slowly, bit by bit, they washed her body into the lake. (BEAT) The man did not return that day. Or after. Ever again.

LONGER PAUSE.

(V/O) A week after that Matthew was dead. I... did not think much of that dream; I was tired and weary and I was after dreaming strange dreams. (BEAT) What came next didn't come but months after. I was getting water from the lake for it is nearer to our house than the brook streaming down from the mountains; and my pendant fell in the water, myself stooping to get the bucket full. There was a green gem in the pendant, and I could not find it for is the water not full of rocks near the shore? I grieved over it, for it was my mother's, but I was after getting my fingers bleed on the sharp rocks near the shore. (BEAT) I remembered the dream and the pendant the minute I first saw you, which was also the last till now. I don't know if these things belong together for I'm aged and broken and I have no hope but that the Lord will have mercy on my soul and yours and all. (PAUSE) The next winter I felt you inside me and it was days till I overcame my fright for there was no reason for you. I prepared brews that they were telling could help, but nothing happened... and now I might be seeing why. For some time I managed to keep it from Philly and Sara, but soon it was known in all the village, and the people were after stopping to talk to me. The midwife couldn't be made to come, only in the last minute, when I was already in labour, and she fell with fear when you were born, for you had a green patch on your forehead, and herself was believing it was a sign of the Devil. Then she gathered herself and ran out and me begging her not to leave me for my body was aching and we both needed help. There was blood flowing out of me and a minute later, I fainted. (BEAT) I was raised by the voices of the men and women of the village, who were around shouting and praying and throwing things and holy water at me; myself they dragged out to the yard and then I felt a kick on my head, and an instant later I awoke in this very room. James was after bringing me here and he saving me from the fear and the wrath of the people; he to whom you came earlier today. (BEAT) My legs, I didn't feel them for they were broken. Nora told me what had come to you, for herself learned it after you were drowned.

THE SOUND OF THE WAVES SUBSIDES.

SCENE 21—INT. THE INNER ROOM.

CATHLEEN (CONT'D): This is all I know. I hope this is what you wanted to know. Is it? (BEAT, FRIGHTENED) The Lord have mercy! Why are you here and after singing to me? Life on water, death on land, is it not what they call you? You bring the news of the passing of one of the family. Is this why you're after coming to me? Sara's here, is it Philly that I won't see alive in the morning, the Lord have mercy on his soul? (CHOKING WITH TEARS) Couldn't you save him like all the others on the lake? Was it too late when you got there? Will the lake swallow him with Bartley leaving him behind? (BEAT) Oh Lord, haven't I suffered enough for my sins and now the water claiming Philly my son and me knowing it untimely? Deliver me, oh Lord, your aged and broken servant, from knowledge and evil.

F/X: BOY SINGING.

Go, you green angel, harbinger of the saddest news, you can do no more harm to me. (BEAT) For thine is the kingdom, and the power, and the glory, for ever and ever. Amen.

F/X: THE SINGING FADES.

SCENE 22—INT. THE INNER ROOM.

BARTLEY: (SUDDENLY) There's hardly anything left of those candles.

CATHLEEN: (SOBS)

SARA: What's that, Mother?

CATHLEEN: I'm after seeing him.

SARA: It was but a dream. You fell asleep.

CATHLEEN: No, not I! You were all asleep when he came by the... Oh but yes, Sara. I fell asleep. That was all.

NORA: Would you bring some new candles, Bartley?

BARTLEY: Yes, Mother.

F/X: BARTLEY STANDING UP, GOING OUT TO THE KITCHEN.

SARA: The wind's as strong as in the morning.

BARTLEY: (RETURNING) Yes, the dawn will soon be here.

PAUSE.

NORA: Look out for the wax is burning your thumb.

BARTLEY: Oh, 'tis nothing.

CATHLEEN: The dawn will be here; oh Lord, have mercy.

SARA: Be easy, Mother; all will be well.

THE BACKGROUND NOISE FADES INTO A
SECOND OF SILENCE.

SCENE 23—EXT. THE PORT. EARLY DAWN.

MAN 3: (SHOUTING) Hey! Who's there?

F/X: MEN SHOUTING IN THE DISTANCE,
INDISTINCT.

MAN 3: What? Is that Philly you're bringing to the shore?

PHILLY: (OFF) It's me, Shawn! (BEAT) Jimmy and Dave want to go back to the lake, could you help me mooring the boat? I can hardly pull the oar any more.

MAN 3: Throw the end of the rope and I'll pull you ashore!

F/X: SPLASHING AS THE BOAT NEARS.

PHILLY: Pull gently, 'tis an old boat.

MAN 3: There, I'll fasten the rope and you're secure.

PHILLY: Thank God you were here.

MAN 3: My Lord, you can hardly keep yourself up and there's blood on your head and your hair be sticky with it.

PHILLY: It's nothing.

MAN 3: Here, Philly, take my arm. What's after happening to you, my son?

SCENE 24—INT. THE INNER ROOM.

BARTLEY: (LOUDLY) A new morning.

NORA: Shhh... let her sleep.

SARA: Should I wake her?

NORA: No, no. Is it not almost a year she scarcely sleeps and she working hard to save a bit of bread?

SARA: She works hard but she's weak and old. I'm telling her to stop for I'll do it for her and she could rest awhile, but I tell her in vain.

NORA: She must be content to work for you. Is it not good to know that one can still be useful?

BARTLEY: (YAWNS)

NORA: Cathleen worked all her life to see you happy, Sara.

SARA: And Philly.

NORA: And Philly. (BEAT) May God have mercy on his soul, and on James's soul, and on the soul of each and every one of us.

SCENE 25—EXT. THE PORT.

PHILLY: I'm alright, it's but a scratch.

MAN 3: Something must be after happening!

PHILLY: I went farther into the lake than I used to and could not get back before the wind changed.

MAN 3: And your head?

PHILLY: There was a wave and I tripped and almost lost my oar.

MAN 3: You must be cold and hungry.

PHILLY: Neither; I am tired. I caught nothing, and I must be going home.

MAN 3: Let me go along with you for you're hurt and almost falling down.

PHILLY: Thank you, Shawn, but I'm not as lost on the land.

MAN 3: As you wish.

PHILLY: Thank you for helping me ashore. God bless you.

MAN 3: Ask Sara to dress your wound.

PHILLY: I will.

F/X: PHILLY STARTS WALKING ALONG THE ROAD.

MAN 3: (OFF) The people are already up in the village if you need help. (TO HIMSELF) Something's after happening, surely.

SCENE 26—INT. THE INNER ROOM.

BARTLEY: Should I carry her to the pallet?

NORA: She would wake up surely. Let her rest. We've got time.

BARTLEY: We have.

PAUSE.

NORA: James always told Matthew not to let her do so much work... but Cathleen was working till she was able.

BARTLEY: Uncle Matthew never liked it when Father meddled with their affairs.

NORA: That's true. But James kept warning him, for Cathleen's sake.

PAUSE.

SARA: I hardly remember my father. He must've been a good man, for Mother is telling but the best about him.

NORA: Cathleen loved him very much. She loves him still. (BEAT) But Matthew... he was older by almost seven years, and...

SARA: Yes... Philly's after telling me they were often at odds.

NORA: So were we... with James. I fear I was oftentimes unjust to him.

F/X: PHILLY'S STEPS OUTSIDE START TO MINGLE WITH THE DIALOGUE. GRADUALLY, THEY BECOME UNNATURALLY LOUD.

BARTLEY: Don't blame yourself, Mother.

NORA: I was, Bartley.

BARTLEY: He was unjust often enough to you.

NORA: No, no. He was a man of principles. He was often right and always just. Just.

SCENE 27—INT. THE INNER ROOM.

F/X: THE KITCHEN DOOR BURSTS OPEN, AND, A SECOND AFTER, SLAMS SHUT.

SARA: Philly! Philly! My God, you're safe! Mother, Mother, look who's here!

PHILLY: How, Mother is here?

SARA: Yes, she's after coming here for she... Maybe she be sleeping still...

CATHLEEN: (WAKING) Philly?

PHILLY: I'm here, Mother.

CATHLEEN: (FALTERING VOICE) Philly? Philly... (SHOUTING) Philly! Oh, the Lord have mercy!

F/X: THUD AS CATHLEEN SLUMPS ON THE GROUND.

NORA: Cathleen! Oh, my God!

PHILLY: Sara, bring some water, quick, for she's fainted.

NORA: Wake up, Cathleen! Oh, it was too much for her, she be weak and old as myself.

PHILLY: She'll be alright soon surely.

SARA: Here's the water.

NORA: Put some on her face.

PHILLY: There, there. It's alright, Mother. We're all here. We're all here.

CATHLEEN: (FAINTLY) Oh Lord.

PHILLY: Drink this much of water and yourself will be better in a minute.

PAUSE.

SARA: (TERRIFIED) Philly...

PHILLY: Yes, Sara?

SARA: Your head... what's after happening to it?

PHILLY: Nothing.

NORA: Philly, you're hair is sticky with blood. What happened?

PAUSE.

PHILLY: (SLOWLY) Bartley did not tell... did he?

NORA: No.

BARTLEY: (WORN VOICE) What? What didn't I tell...?

PHILLY: Well, he did not tell, surely. (BEAT) What did you tell them, Bartley? They surely asked why you were coming home alone?

PAUSE.

CATHLEEN: (FAINTLY) He's alive, see, Sara? Philly's alive...

SARA: Drink the water, Mother.

PHILLY: You're not fit, Bartley, for the name of a fisher.

F/X: CATHLEEN COUGHS UP THE WATER AND SPITS IT ON THE GROUND.

SARA: Are you all right, Mother?

CATHLEEN: Yes. Yes. When did he come?

SARA: Only a minute ago.

PAUSE.

NORA: One of you boys tell us what's after happening. It's a day black enough without these accusations and any misdeed.

PHILLY: I will tell, Aunt Nora. Bartley hit me in the head with the oar.

NORA: Oh my God!

BARTLEY: I would never have done such a thing!

PHILLY: The edge of the oar is still stained with blood, Bartley, surely. Is it not hard to clean even with the weeds of the lake?

BARTLEY: You must've hit your head hard to say that for I was coming ashore and couldn't do such thing after that.

PHILLY: Maybe that's why you did it before. (BEAT) I should've been suspicious and we having to row farther and farther into the lake after a shoal of fish that only you were able to see!

SCENE 28—FLASHBACK.

THE SOUND OF THE WAVES BECOMES LOUDER.

PHILLY: (V/O) It didn't take long that we reached the middle of the lake far from the islands. Yourself had to wait till it was dark and foggy. You saw to it that we catch nothing; you always knew the lake better than me. And then came the perfect moment.

F/X: A THUD.

It wasn't until hours after that I recovered, but the fog was dense and me not knowing which way the village was. The bleeding had stopped but I dared not move for the wound would break out afresh and I was weak with bleeding too much already. And then it happened. A beautiful boy emerged from the water and his skin was green and bright and he was dazzling to look at. I first thought I saw him because my head was still not clear but soon I realized he must be the Sign.

F/X: A BOY SINGS AVE MARIA.

I felt... attracted toward him. I turned my boat and started rowing. The wound was bleeding again, but I kept rowing and he keeping moving away from me. I hastened the strokes and thought not of the blood dripping down on the side of my face, but by the time I looked up again he was gone.

F/X: THE SINGING FADES.

I was weak and wondered if I would be missed, for isn't it a few months only that Timmy the Younger was lost on the lake and not a soul going after him? Bartley was not to tell the truth surely, so no one would set out to help. (BEAT) But I was lucky and it wasn't half an hour after that a boat came near with Jimmy and Dave in it and they saw me and they knowing the way to the port. It was they who brought me ashore and Shawn also helping; weren't it for the Sign, they'd have missed me in the fog.

THE SOUND OF THE WAVES SUBSIDES.

SCENE 29—INT. THE INNER ROOM.

CATHLEEN: But –

BARTLEY: I... I did leave you there on the lake, Philly, that is true.
But I –

NORA: Why? Why would Bartley be after doing such a thing?

BARTLEY: I'm telling you I'm not! Not a word of it all is true!

PAUSE.

PHILLY: Why? There is a reason for him doing all that.

BARTLEY: No!

PHILLY: Yes! What were you thinking? that you'd get away with it all just by hitting me in the head and leaving me out on the lake? (BEAT) You tried to do away with me because I told you I knew that you, in your boat, had slept with Sara not a week ago.

SCENE 30—FLASHBACK. EXT. ON THE LAKE.
NOON.

BARTLEY: Philly, please, for the sake of Sara, you know you must not tell a soul. You know it surely.

PHILLY: I'm not promising you anything, Bartley. All I'm telling is that I heard you two in the boat.

BARTLEY: Philly, do not try to tell anybody, or –

PHILLY: I'll be telling anybody anything I want to! Don't you threaten me!

BARTLEY: Just stop meddling with my affairs!

PHILLY: It has to do with Sara's and so it has to do with me!

SCENE 31—INT. THE INNER ROOM. DAWN.

PHILLY: I was telling him because others could hear them, too.

BARTLEY: (TO HIMSELF) Damn!

CATHLEEN: Sara, is this true? Have you slept with Bartley like...?

SARA: (CRIES) No! It's not!

F/X: SARA RUNS OUT OF THE ROOM.

CATHLEEN: Sara! Come back!

BARTLEY: Now look 'ere, Philly. I'll put up with your slander, I'll put up with it. 'Cause... I can defend myself, you know. I'm a grown man and I can defend myself from the like of you. (BEAT) But I'll not put up with your slandering Sara, your own sister. Slandering a woman is something us fishermen like even less than when one fails the other on the lake. The honour of my bride –

PHILLY: Oh, your bride, is she? Dave's been telling me you don't hasten the marriage because there are other fair gals around!

CATHLEEN: Lord!

BARTLEY: 'Cause not like you, I do have a way with them gals!

PHILLY: And talk of the honour of Sara!

BARTLEY: I heard enough!

NORA: Bartley, no.

BARTLEY: Upon my father's honour I'll avenge what you uttered here upon his body.

NORA: Bartley, put that knife away! Give it to me! I will not have such thing in my house!

PHILLY: You're a liar, you're after ruining my sister and you want to avenge the truth? So be it, Bartley.

CATHLEEN: (GROANS AS RISES) Philly, no! Put that down! Be the one who's not after losing his head!

PHILLY: He wanted to kill me!

NORA: Bartley, it's not the way one's –

BARTLEY: Slanderer!

PHILLY: Murderer!

CATHLEEN: Philly, calm down! Nowadays these things are not –

PHILLY: Step out of my way, Mother, and sit down.

BARTLEY: Take this, Philly, mother's boy!

F/X: PHILLY JUMPS BACK.

PHILLY: Ha! Missed, yooou –

**F/X: THUD AS PHILLY TRIPS AND FALLS DOWN
WITH CATHLEEN.**

NORA: Cathleen!

CATHLEEN: (GROANS)

**F/X: STEPS AS SARA RUNS BACK TO HER
MOTHER.**

SARA: Mother! (AGITATED) Oh my God, he tripped, he just tripped, and Philly's knife, oh my God, look at this, Philly, she's bleeding... (CRIES)

CATHLEEN: (HARDLY AUDIBLE) May the Lord have mercy on your souls, Sara and Philly, and may He have mercy on mine.

**F/X: A BOY STARTS SINGING AVE MARIA. A DOOR
OPENS SLOWLY. THE SINGING GROWS
LOUDER.**

SCENE 32—EXT. THE LAKE. MORNING.

BIRDS SING.

NORA: (V/O) I saw it all. The Sign was foretelling her end. It was her fate to fall because of her son not of this world and at the hand of her first-born. (BEAT) The green boy came by the back door and ourselves not knowing what was happening, he took Cathleen's lifeless form in his feeble arms, carried her out, and step by step, descended into the lake. (PAUSE) No one ever saw his figure so dazzling to look at or heard him singing again. Neither on water, nor on land.

END