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## **Labels** **by Miriam Gallagher**

### CHARACTERS

DR. PORTER

NURSE VAN GARRDT

DR. TRAYNE

MRS. DUNPHY

LILY HORAN

TRAVELLER

MR. O'NEILL

DR. CARBIRETTA

### **PART ONE**

*(PLAY opens with verse of this song, sung in a child's voice)*

1.  
Miss Polly had a dolly who was sick, sick, sick  
So she called for the Doctor,  
"Please come quick, quick, quick!"  
The Doctor came with his bag and his hat  
And he rapped on the door with a rat-a-tat-tat!  
He looked at the dolly and he shook his head  
And he said, "Miss Polly, put her straight to bed!"  
Then he wrote on his paper for some pills, pills, pills.  
"I'll be back in the morning with my bills, bills, bills!"

2.  
Miss Polly's little dolly still was sick, sick, sick  
So they called for Nurse Molly

“Please be quick, quick, quick!”  
Nurse Molly came with her apron and her cap  
And then went to get water from the tap, tap, tap.  
She washed the dolly and she stroked her head  
And she tucked her up gently in a nice clean bed.  
“Now, Nurse,” said the Doctor  
“Give more pills, pills, pills.  
I’ll be back in the morning with my bills, bills, bills!”

*(LIGHTS now full up in Clinic. ENTER NURSE VAN GARRDT [late 30s]. She is very neat. She yawns, goes to her office, removes outdoor clothes, puts on apron and cap, tidies. Phone goes. She answers)*

NURSE VAN GARRDT. *(all on one breath)* The Wellenough Clinic can I help you? Yes, Dr. O’Rayle. Yes, yes, Dr. *(writes)* Dr. Porter isn’t back from lunch yet, Dr . . . Yes, yes *(trying to be patient)* I’ve got that *(reads her notes)* Someone from the Medical Board . . . Yes, Dr. Drug inquiry. Yes. I’ll tell him the minute he gets in. Not at all, Dr. O’Rayle.

*(She puts phone down, making a ‘face’ at it just as ENTER LILY HORAN [45 yrs], gaudy but down at hell, poor, depressed. She approaches “Ticket” office)*

LILY HORAN. I’m here to see the Doctor

NURSE V. G. Have you an appointment?

LILY HORAN. *(depressed)* I want the Doctor

NURSE V. G. Have you attended this clinic before?

LILY HORAN. *(dully)* What? Oh, no

NURSE V. G. *(takes out form, writes)* Name?

LILY HORAN. Lily

NURSE V.G. Lily What?

LILY HORAN. Lily Horan

NURSE V. G. Mrs. or Miss?

LILY HORAN. Miss *(pauses)* I was Missus

NURSE V.G. Married? *(pauses)* Are you Mrs. Horan?

LILY HORAN.                    *(dully)* No

NURSE V. G.                    *(writing)* Miss. Children? . . . No

LILY HORAN.                    *(aside)* I had

NURSE V. G.                    Date of birth?

LILY HORAN.                    Oh! Me birthday! The twelfth of May

NURSE V. G.                    How old are you?

LILY HORAN.                    Forty five

NURSE V. G.                    *(mentally calculating)* Forty five and a half *(writes)* Address?

LILY HORAN.                    Twenty four Lourdes Building, Wicklow St.

NURSE V. G.                    *(writing)* Were you sent by your doctor?

LILY HORAN.                    He's on holidays

NURSE V. G.                    Who is your doctor?

LILY HORAN.                    Dr. Track

NURSE V. G.                    Did he give you a letter for Dr. Porter?

LILY HORAN.                    *(dully)* He's on his holidays

NURSE V. G.                    *(sighs)* Are you on medication?

LILY HORAN.                    Yes *(takes out and eats pink pill. We see this)*

NURSE V. G.                    What medication?

*(LILY tries to answer as she swallows pill. NURSE brings her a glass of water. LILY coughs. NURSE claps her on the back)*

LILY HORAN.                    *(gulps pill)* Pink pills. That's me last one

NURSE V. G.                    *(takes bottle over to Lily to read label)* Sereenium *(writes on form)*  
SER-EE-NEE-UM *(gives bottle back to LILY)*

LILY HORAN.                    *(looks at empty bottle)* They're all gone

NURSE V. G.                   How often do you take them?

LILY HORAN.                   He said, "Only take them when you need them"

NURSE V. G.                   Before or after meals?

LILY HORAN.                   *(low and depressed)* When I can't get a drink

*(Phone goes. NURSE answers it)*

NURSE V. G.                   *(all on one breath)* The Wellenough Clinic can I help you? Yes, Reverend Mother. Not at all. Dr. Porter will see Sister Felicity in his private rooms at four o'clock on Friday. Good bye *(replaces phone. It rings again)* The Wellenough Clinic can I *(disappointed)* Oh! It's you, Mother . . . I'm busy now, Mother *(tense)* Yes, I'll get your throat lozenges later *(trying to be brisk)* I've got to go now, Mother. Goodbye . . . *(to LILY)* Fill in this form and give it back when you're ready *(Phone goes)* Yes, Dr. O'Rayle. At once, Dr.

LILY HORAN.                   I can't

NURSE V. G.                   *(tense as she rushes to exit to Hospital with charts)* If you want to see the doctor You must fill in this form *(smiles)* Everyone has to

*(AS NURSE V.G. EXITS to Hospital, LILY looks blankly at form, shakes head, form falls to floor. She sits on bench depressed. ENTER DR. PORTER from street after a late lunch. He is middleaged, well built, with a busy air. He wears a suit and florid tie with clashing hanky in top pocket of suit. HE passes briskly through to inner sanctum)*

DR.PORTER.                   *(passing by NURSE'S office)* Afternoon, Nurse. Charts on my desk? *(muttering)* Have to get away early today

*(LILY glances up as he passes, then sinks back again as he enters his office. He becomes the 'DOCTOR', puts on white coat, fixes hair, transfers cigarette case to white coat pocket)*

DR.PORTER.                   *(glances at desk, his watch, looks vainly for charts)* Hurry with the charts *(mutters)* I'm due on the links at four

INTERCOM.                   Dr. Porter to Outpatients please *(This is repeated)*

*(DR. PORTER reacts to this, leave his office, shuts door, ignoring LILY, who moves to him. She turns back disappointedly as he EXITS to Hospital. RED LIGHT on LILY)*

LILY HORAN.                   You're on your own now, Lily *(lights a cigarette, puffing through this speech)* On your own *(pauses)* Oh! Times is changed *(shakes head at the memory)* Plenty of fun and plenty of laughs then

*(TAPE heard: Laughter, MEN'S VOICES "Ah!, come on Lily, come on, girl!" Laughter, then LILY'S former self sings, "OH, I was the quare one, falldeeriddle–die-doh, Oh, Oh, I was the quare one, I tell you!" MEN'S VOICES "Good ole Lily!" Laughter then a MAN's VOICE "I need you, Lily, I need you" and LILY'S VOICE, happy and comforting "Come to Lily, she's here. Lily'll mind you." All taped voices fade)*

LILY HORAN.                   And I did, too (*puffs, singing in a ragged version of her former happy-go-lucky self*) OH, I was the quare one, falldeeriddle –die-doh, Oh, Oh, I was the quare one, I tell you! (*pauses*) I minded them all. . . Dolly as well . . . I minded the whole world (*sings very quietly*) Oh, oh, I had a dolly and my dolly –

*(RED LIGHT FADES as she breaks off. MR. O'NEILL has entered during last part of above, starts to speak. HE is retired, anxious, thin)*

MR.O'NEILL.                   You didn't see the nurse, did you?

LILY HORAN.                   (*dead quiet*) She's gone (*trailing off, indicates Hospital door*)

MR.O'NEILL.                   (*sits on bench beside her*) I hope she won't be long (*chatty*) I have to catch the Wicklow train (*pauses*) I see you smoke. Are you at it long? (*LILY shrugs*) Are you a heavy smoker? (*pauses*) I only ask because I used to be. Ah yes! Sixty- a- day man I was! Didn't realise what the tobacco was doing to me. Destroys the system, you know. Now, you could give it up. Just like me (*pauses, then confidentially*) Before I stopped I was always sick

LILY HORAN.                   Why are you here, so?

MR.O'NEILL.                   A good question (*laughs*) I only come the odd time, now . . . for a check up, like. With no work I have the time now (*awkward pause*) Do you know Wicklow? A lovely spot

LILY HORAN.                   No

MR.O'NEILL.                   (*eager*) I can work at anything! (*LILY doesn't react*) I was a clerk at Shamrock Shipping, an Assistant Zoo Keeper, a librarian. Not all at the same time, now . . . and (*proud*) I had my own Reptile Centre!

LILY HORAN.                   (*disgusted*) D'you mean snakes?

MR.O'NEILL.                   (*fondly*) Yes, snakes (*LILY shudders*) Women don't seem to like snakes . . . or indeed reptiles of any sort

LILY HORAN.                   I . . . I wouldn't be keen on snakes

MR.O'NEILL. My wife never cared for them, either

LILY HORAN. Used you . . . have them in the house?

MR.O'NEILL. (*smiling*) Oh, no! (*laughs*) That'd be a bit much for my wife . . . I wouldn't have minded. Easier to feed in the house than dashing out the back in the rain

LILY HORAN. Out the back?

MR.O'NEILL. The end of the garden

LILY HORAN. (*slowly*) You mean, you had snakes in your garden?

MR.O'NEILL. I had a grand place for them. . . a lovely little house only, in no time at all, I had to build another and another. Increase and multiply, you know

LILY HORAN. Wasn't it dangerous?

MR.O'NEILL. God, no! Sure, those creatures wouldn't hurt a fly . . . even if they escaped

LILY HORAN. Did they . . . escape?

MR.O'NEILL. The odd time one of them'd get itchy feet . . . Not very often

LILY HORAN. I wouldn't care for them. Not in me garden . . . too near the house . . . and people

MR.O'NEILL. (*sighs*) In the end I gave the creatures to the Zoo, to please the wife. Out of their minds they were to get such a lovely bunch of snakes

LILY HORAN. Twas for the best . . .

MR.O'NEILL. (*sighs*) Seeing all those baths and sinks lying empty out the back, I get lonesome

LILY HORAN. You could get a pet

MR.O'NEILL. I thought of pigeons

LILY HORAN. Pigeons is nice

NURSE V. G. (*to LILY*) Is your form ready? (*LILY picks up form, twists it. NURSE comes over, takes form*) What's this?

LILY HORAN. I . . . can't read

NURSE V. G. Why didn't you say so? (*takes form to her office*) Answer the questions and I'll write them down. We'll put X for your name

LILY HORAN. My name isn't X

NURSE V. G. It's simpler if we put X

LILY HORAN. (*confused*) Is it?

NURSE V. G. Yes (*reads form*) What work do you do?

LILY HORAN. That's why I came to see the Doctor

NURSE V. G. (*writing*) Out of work . . . What work can you do?

LILY HORAN. I work for meself

NURSE V. G. (*writing*) Self employed. Insurance number?

LILY HORAN. I have the welfare

NURSE V. G. (*indicates Notice on wall, realises LILY can't read, then recites*) The Wellenough Clinic advises patients that evidence of social welfare number, insurance number, work card number or private health insurance number must be shown before they can be seen at the clinic (*all above on one breath*) What is your number?

LILY HORAN. Here you are (*gives insurance book from bundle of papers in her bag*)

NURSE V. G. (*looks at book, writes*) Number 859364728399; Occupation seamstress (*gives LILY book*) Has any member of your family suffered from (*takes deep breath for list*) hay fever, high blood pressure, low blood pressure, varicose veins or quinzy?

LILY HORAN. I'm an orphan

NURSE V. G. (*writing*) No relations. Who is your next of kin?

LILY HORAN. No one

(*Phone goes. NURSE answers it*)

NURSE V. G. The Wellenough Clinic can I help? . . . Oh, it's you, Dr. Porter (*looks at clock*) Will I ask Dr. Trayne to take your clinic? Oh! You're in Outpatients. Yes, Dr. I'll do that . . . Yes, and oh, Dr. Porter, have you seen Dr. O'Rayle? . . . mmm Medical Board. Yes,

again. This time it's about the drugs inquiry. Yes, Dr. No particular time . . . Yes, I'll do that . . . at once, Dr.

*(NURSE puts down phone, gathers charts, enters his office to ready things for the GREAT MAN, fixes his desk etc.)*

MR. O'NEILL.                   The wife wouldn't mind pigeons

*(ENTER MRS. DUNPHY from street. She is tired from work and worry and wears her best coat which is torn)*

MRS. DUNPHY.               *(To All)* Bad day

LILY HORAN.                 Brutal

MRS. DUNPHY.               The wind'd cut ya

LILY HORAN.                 Twould

MR. O'NEILL.                We were just talking about -

LILY HORAN.                 Pets

MRS. DUNPHY.               We have a lovely little cat

LILY HORAN.                 Pigeons is nice

MRS. DUNPHY.               Messy. Cats are clean

LILY HORAN.                 Pigeons'd be company-like . . . with the cooin'

MR. O'NEILL.                *(wistful)* Wouldn't be the same as snakes

MRS. DUNPHY.                *(aghast)* Snakes! Holymotheragod!

MR. O'NEILL.                *(proud)* I used have my own Reptile Centre

MRS. DUNPHY.                *(quickly)* Oh, I wouldn't touch a snake . . . not for a pet, like . . .  
They're all right at the Zoo

LILY HORAN.                 Try the pigeons

MR. O'NEILL.                They're in a different class to the snakes

LILY HORAN.                 *(puffing)* They are

MRS. DUNPHY.                    *(to NURSE coming from DR. Porter's office)* I've an appointment to see the Doctor

NURSE V. G.                    *(checking her ticket)* Take a seat, Mrs. Dunphy *(tidies, sorts files etc.)*

LILY HORAN.                    What's the Doctor like?

MRS. DUNPHY.                    Oh! Dr. Porter is lovely

MR. O'NEILL.                    *(from behind magazine)* A real gentleman

LILY HORAN.                    He'd help you, would he?

MR. O'NEILL.                    Always gives you a prescription

MRS. DUNPHY.                    You could rely on him

MR. O'NEILL.                    I wouldn't touch another doctor

MRS. DUNPHY.                    Always make Gerard takes his pills. That's me son, Gerard

NURSE V. G.                    *(looks up)* Mr. O'Neill *(He goes to NURSE. WOMEN chat)* Your ticket please

MR. O'NEILL.                    *(gives her ticket)* He won't be long, will he?

NURSE V. G.                    You're rather early, you know

MR. O'NEILL.                    I don't like to keep the DOCTOR waiting

NURSE V. G.                    The doctor will see you when he's ready

MR. O'NEILL.                    It's the train, Nurse

NURSE V. G.                    That's hardly Dr. Porter's business

MR. O'NEILL.                    It's just I might be tight on time

NURSE V. G.                    Dr. Porter isn't in charge of the trains

*(A pause. He sits on bench, reads. WOMEN smoke)*

NURSE V. G.                    No smoking!

*(WOMEN exchange looks, quench cigarettes)*

LILY HORAN.           Some of them doctors give me the creeps . . .

MRS. DUNPHY.        Don't I know!

LILY HORAN.        There was one once –

INTERCOM.           Dr. O'Rayle to Ward Five Please *(This is repeated. No one reacts)*

LILY HORAN.        The last hospital I was at they nearly killed me

MRS. DUNPHY.        Go on

LILY HORAN.        They had me on thirty-four tablets a day

MRS. DUNPHY.        No!

MR. O'NEILL.        You can get too much of a good thing

*(ENTER DR. PORTER from Hospital, slightly out of breath)*

DR.PORTER.           Charts all ready, Nurse? *(moves towards his office)*

NURSE V. G.         *(coming to join him)* Yes, Dr. Everything just as you like it

DR.PORTER.         *(in his office now)* Good

NURSE V. G.         Don't forget the drugs inquiry people

DR.PORTER.         What's all the big fuss for? *(fixes pill boxes on desk)*

NURSE V. G.         *(wearily)* It's the overprescribing. You know . . . the thirty doctors.  
They don't want a repetition

DR.PORTER.         Damn nuisance, these people pestering us *(mutters)* Mightn't make it  
to the links . . .

NURSE V. G.         If you ask me, it's the Junior doctors who are responsible

DR.PORTER.         *(aghast)* They're not putting those young twirps on the Board?

NURSE V.G.         No. I meant it's the . . . Junior doctors who are overprescribing

DR.PORTER. No commitment these days. No sense of balance. Right! (*turns, almost knocking flowers over. Startled, he overreacts. NURSE fixes flowers*) That's fine, Nurse

NURSE V.G. Yes, Dr.

DR.PORTER. They should all be struck off-on the spot

NURSE V.G. Yes, Dr.

DR.PORTER. I'll see the first patient immediately

NURSE V.G. Yes, Dr. (*regards him, wonders, goes to answer phone*) The Wellenough- Yes, of course, Mrs. Porter (*His phone rings*) It's your wife, Dr.

DR.PORTER. (*on phone, sighs*) Yes, yes, Margaret, any colour you like. It's your kitchen (*tetchy*) I haven't seen Rodney yet. I'm only in the door. I don't know what he has in mind for the concert . . . (*taps fingers impatiently on desk*) Are you not busy enough with the Cheese and Wine, not to mention the Builders (*quickly*) I can't talk now. I'm very busy here . . . Oh! and (*cross*) yes, yes, when I see Rodney, and let me know if there's word of Tony's exam . . . . mmm (*replaces phone, wearily passes hand over face*)

(*ENTER DR. RODNEY TRAYNE, who was at college with DR. PORTER. He wears a white coat over natty clothes. PATIENTS look up expectantly, then sink back as he goes to Dr. Porter's office*)

DR. TRAYNE. Afternoon, Nurse. Dr. Porter in his office?

NURSE V.G. He's just finished taking a call

DR.PORTER. Oh, come in Rodney

DR. TRAYNE. Ah! you're here, John

DR.PORTER. Course I'm here. Where else would I be? On the links?

DR. TRAYNE. I just wondered if I was to take your clinic today

DR.PORTER. No (*sighs*) I'm here (*sarcastic*) No need to fear, Porter's here!

DR. TRAYNE. There was (*picking his words*) something else

DR.PORTER. Yes?

DR. TRAYNE. I can nip back later. Just wanted a quick word about the concert

DR.PORTER. Rodney, there's a committee to look after it (*mutters*) That's another thing Margaret was on to me about -

DR. TRAYNE. (*trying to jolly things along*) And how is Margaret?

DR.PORTER. She has me up to my neck in builders and kitchen cupboards . . . Well for you, Rodney . . . a bachelor. . . life of ease

DR. TRAYNE. (*laughs*) How're the kids?

DR.PORTER. Elisabeth's doing well . . . takes after her Grandad

DR. TRAYNE. You should bring her up to the club for a game sometime

DR.PORTER. Doesn't play. Head stuck in the books day and night. Just like Margaret's old man

DR. TRAYNE. All work and no play, eh?

DR.PORTER. Wish she'd enjoy herself a bit more (*sighs*) If Tony did a quarter of the work she does and she did a quarter of his gallivanting

DR. TRAYNE. Ah! (*slaps Dr. Porter on the back*) Just like his old man. A touch of the vagabond!

DR.PORTER. Neighbours can't get a wink of sleep with his banger clattering all over Foxrock

DR. TRAYNE. You were the same yourself at his age (*glances at watch*) God, is that the time? Look, I'll nip in later about the concert

DR.PORTER. There's someone calling from the Medical Board . . . these allegations

DR. TRAYNE. There's no truth in it is there?

DR.PORTER. Interfering busybodies. Nothing better to do -while we're trying to keep the Nation's health in one piece

DR. TRAYNE. (*scratches chin*) Wasn't there something . . . Four medical men?

DR.PORTER. (*dismissive*) Ah! Ages ago (*scoffs*) one was senile, one an addict, another an alcoholic and the fourth, God help us! involved in Fringe Medicine

DR. TRAYNE. Ancient alcoholic quacks, eh?

DR.PORTER.                   Something like that. Oh! by the way, Rodney, take my clinic on Friday. Captain's Prize

DR. TRAYNE.                Yes, John (*suddenly remembers*) You're still on for our game on Saturday?

DR.PORTER.                 (*vague*) Oh, yes

DR. TRAYNE                 Thought we might have a bite to eat afterwards. There's a new place on the Pier

DR.PORTER.                 Hooterstwon Pier?

DR. TRAYNE.                Mm. I hear it's quite good

DR.PORTER.                 Not one of those fancy places with exotic dishes?

DR. TRAYNE.                Nothing like that (*laughs*) plain decent grub and lashings of it

DR.PORTER.                 Count me in, so

DR. TRAYNE.                Great! I'll nip in later. We might try a few of our old *numbers* (*DR. PORTER scoffs, but smiles*) Remember the year we had the best Boat Club Rag *ever* (*smiles*) You surpassed yourself, John . . .

DR.PORTER.                 (*flattered*) Get on with you, Rodney

DR. TRAYNE.                I'd better fly or it'll be a raffle for beds again

(*DR. TRAYNE EXITS to Hospital*)

DR.PORTER.                 I'll see the first patient now, Nurse

NURSE V.G.                 Yes, Dr. (*to MRS. DUNPHY*) Dr. Porter will see you now (*shows her into office*)

DR.PORTER.                 (*smiles benignly*) Take a seat, Mrs. . . .

MRS. DUNPHY.               Dunphy

DR.PORTER.                 Yes, of course, Mrs. Dunphy (*as she sits*) Now, what we can we do for you?

MRS. DUNPHY.               You asked me to come in about Gerard

DR.PORTER.                   Emmmmm,yes. Ah! I'll just out the chart (*searches on desk, phones NURSE*) There's a chart missing. Dunphy's the name

NURSE V.G.                   At once, Dr. (*searches in her office*)

DR.PORTER.                   We'll have it in a moment (*smiles*)

INTERCOM.                   All Patients with white tickets please hand them in at Outpatients  
(*repeated*)

MR. O'NEILL.               (*inspects his ticket, helps LILY inspect hers. They rise*) Is this the way to Outpatients, Nurse?

NURSE V.G.                   (*without looking up*) Through the main corridor and first door on the left

(*MR. O'NEILL & LILY EXIT to Hospital*)

DR.PORTER.                   (*fidgets, then goes to NURSE, tetchy*) Have you got that chart yet, Nurse?

NURSE V.G.                   (*knee deep in charts*) I'm looking for it

DR.PORTER.                   Be quick. There's a patient waiting

NURSE V.G.                   I'll phone the hospital (*glances at DR.PORTER who seems nervous*) Hello this is the clinic. Have you got a chart? Gerard Dunphy (*pauses*) Yes (*spelling*) G.E.R.A.R.D. seventeen years. 220789 St. Joseph's Flats. Yes, I'll hold on. They're looking for it, Dr.

DR.PORTER.                   How many this afternoon, Nurse?

NURSE V.G.                   You've got three more and there's a woman who called without an appointment. I told her you were busy

DR.PORTER                   Can't take people without appointments (*glances at watch*) I'm delayed enough as it is. Was I expecting Mrs.Dunphy?

NURSE V.G.                   Yes, you remember. Her last visit was the day of the Mixed Open Foursomes (*on phone*) Yes, yes . . . I see. They're checking on it, Dr. (*he makes impatient noises*) Hello, hello (*to him*) They must be gone to look for it (*pauses, then brightly to humour him*) How's the golf, Dr.?

DR.PORTER.                   Off my game lately. Could be the weather. Do you play, Nurse?

NURSE V.G. No, I don't have the time

DR.PORTER. Great game. Almost as good as a holiday

*(A Pause)*

NURSE V.G. Have you decided, Dr., where you're going on your holidays?

DR.PORTER. Canaries again. My wife likes it there

NURSE V.G. *(wistful)* I'd love to go somewhere sunny

DR.PORTER. Very restful. All that sun and sea. Price of drink! It's for nothing

NURSE V.G. Anywhere sunny would do. Needn't be the Canaries

DR. PORTER. Have you been to the Canaries?

NURSE V.G. No *(sighs)* Suppose I'll have to take Mother to Lourdes again this year

DR. PORTER. You should try it, Nurse. Shortens the winter *(pauses)* Where in God's name is that chart?

NURSE V.G. *(on phone)* Hello, hello. . . Yes *(to him)* They'll bring it over, Dr.

*(He sighs in exasperation then goes into his office)*

DR. PORTER. Well, Mrs. Dunphy, how are things?

MRS. DUNPHY. It's not the same as before

DR. PORTER. In what way?

MRS. DUNPHY. It's Gerard. He's kinda jumpy and edgy like . . . the way he . . . was after he started taking them new pills

DR.PORTER. Which ones?

MRS. DUNPHY. You know. Them green mind pills

DR. PORTER. Oh, yes *(scribbles on pad)*

MRS. DUNPHY. He's not himself at all. With no job his mind isn't occupied and then, like I said, he's jumpy and jerky *(edges forward on chair)* I even caught him crying the other day when I got back from the shops, and that's not like Gerard. There he was, all screwed up on the

sofa, his new suit a heapa wrinkles and he crying his heart out. "Son," says I, "If anyone should do the crying round here, it's your mother." God know, I have enough to do, Dr., that sometimes I think it's me should be taking them pills, and not him. His Da got him a new suit off the Vincent de Paul to make him take a bit of pride in his appearance, hoped Gerard'd wear it and look after himself.

DR. PORTER.                    Sound thinking, Mrs. Dunphy

MRS. DUNPHY.                Well, he wears it all right-only now he won't take it off him! Morning, noon and night! Tis a wonder tisen't on him in the bed. His Da let fly at him when he seen the cut of the good suit all bunched up into a heapa wrinkles. He was leppin' and d'you know what Gerard says? He says "You gave it to me to wear and I'm bloody well goin' to wear it"

DR. PORTER.                    Yes, Mrs. Dunphy. Is he still taking the tablets?

MRS. DUNPHY.                He takes them only he's jerky like I told you. Reminds me of the first time he was on them green mind pills

DR. PORTER.                    *(lost)* Ah! . . . A case like this takes time. We mustn't rush things

MRS. DUNPHY.                He's been like this for three years, Dr., I'm worried

NURSE V.G.                    *(on phone)* There's a call for you, Dr.

DR. PORTER.                    I'll take it *(on phone)* Yes, Rodney . . . Game ball. . . See you then  
*(replaces phone)* Where were we? . . . Ah, yes . . .

MRS. DUNPHY.                I worry about what it could be, Dr. I mean me neighbour's young fella got mixed up in drugs and they didn't know why he done it and four years later the Dr. told her he done it because he was . . . mad. What I worry about is why Gerard done what he done and will it be four years before we know . . . I mean *(plucks nervously at clothing)* know if *(timid)* he's mad

DR. PORTER.                    You can safely leave that to us, Mrs. Dunphy. That's what we're here for

MRS. DUNPHY.                I'm afraid he'll do something stupid lie before *(He ponders, lost without chart)* like the time he went off in the stolen car only he didn't know it was stolen. Phonsie O'Brien said he got a lend of it off his uncle

DR. PORTER.                    Ummm

MRS. DUNPHY.                Yes, well he only done that because of the drink. The Probation office told me, "Your Gerard is no worse than the rest but if he's caught again it'll be trouble for him and make no mistake about it!" I'm afraid, Dr., he'll go off the rails with nothing to do

*(A Pause)*

DR. PORTER. Is there something he could do to help in the house?

MRS. DUNPHY. *(laughs)* Help me, is it? You must be mad, Dr! God! That's a good one! Ah, no, Dr. All he wants to do is lie on the sofa with his good suit wrinkling away, crying or all dopey-like, listening to Pop. The noise of that stuff'd shatter yer nerves

DR. PORTER. *(writes)* Here's the prescription for yourself . . . Help you through this bad patch

MRS. DUNPHY. What is it, Dr.? Mind pills?

DR. PORTER. Eh? Yes and *(gets bottle from shelf of samples on display)* Take this sample with you

MRS. DUNPHY. *(regards bottle, takes it, smiles)* Oh, thank you, Dr.

DR. PORTER. Let me know how you're getting along at the next visit

MRS. DUNPHY. *(turns from door)* You're sure he'll be all right, Dr.?

DR. PORTER. Now, Mrs. Dunphy, just leave that to us *(smiles)* and make sure he continues with the tablets

MRS. DUNPHY. Yes, Dr. Thank you very much, Dr.

*(MRS. DUNPHY EXITS. DR. PORTER mops brow, suddenly dashes form office, knocking flower vase. Startled, he moves on)*

NURSE V.G. *(on phone)* Yes, My Lord . . . Yes *(to DR. PORTER)* The Bishop would like a word. It's his Asthma *(he ignores her)* Yes, My Lord, I'll cancel the appointment *(replaces phone)* Dr. Porter

DR. PORTER. *(hasty)* Yes?

NURSE V.G. *(notes DR. PORTER is not himself)* The Bishop can't make it. He's marrying someone

DR. PORTER. Look after it, Nurse

NURSE V.G. Is anything wrong, Dr.?

DR. PORTER.                    Just look after it, Nurse . . .

NURSE V.G.                    Yes, Dr.

*(DR. PORTER EXITS to Hospital. NURSE V.G. watches him, then goes to his office, replaces flowers, sighs wearily as ENTER TRAVELLER who has a cough.. He carries an attaché case and a throat spray which he uses from time to time. He coughs. NURSE comes from office)*

TRAVELLER.                    Excuse me, Nurse. Could I see the Doctor, please?

NURSE V.G.                    *(glancing toward Hospital door)* The doctor is very busy. Do you have an appointment?

TRAVELLER.                    *(produces his card)* No *(smiles)* I'm from Hooters, Pills, Potions and Hair Oils

NURSE V.G.                    I doubt if the doctor will be able to see you

TRAVELLER.                    Oh, if he's tied up, I can easily call back later *(shows her leaflets)* That's our latest catalogue *(as she turns away, busy with charts)* Nurse, could you spare me a minute or two. I know you're very busy

NURSE V.G.                    How can I help you? I'm not the doctor

*Night clubs, nappy service (A Chord of Music of the South Seas)*

TRAVELLER.                    *(produces brochures ready for the "Big Sell")* You might be interested in this free holiday for two . . . in the Bahamas! *(points to picture)* Look, the Prizewinner's Holiday *(reading)* two sun filled weeks at Hotel Vagabond. Sea sparkling with promise, pony riding twice daily, baby sitting, casino, escort service, night clubs, nappy service for the working mother. Oh! It's all there! Here you are *(coughs)* All you have to do is fill out this form and Bob's your uncle! Must say I prefer the Spa myself. You can't beat it! The Spa is the only man for the health *(coughs)* All you have to do is compose a slogan for Hooter's New Skin Care, "Fantasy" and send in a hundred packet tops *(gives her box with "Fantasy" written on it)* Before you try for the holiday you'd want to give the "Fantasy" a try. To get the value of it! Ah! You can't beat "Fantasy" *(Chord of Music. NURSE regards brochures)* I'll leave you the brochures and entry forms *(smiles)* Maybe the doctor'd have a minute later to see the new blood pressure machine *(snaps case shut, putting throat spray inside)* Goodbye, Nurse

*(TRAVELLER EXITS to street. NURSE looks wistfully at brochures, sighs as ENTER DR. PORTER from Hospital)*

DR. PORTER.                    *(seeing picture)* What's that you've got there? *(reads brochure she holds)* Hotel Vagabond! Hmm

*(MUSIC (South Seas) Both regard picture then speak their thoughts aloud)*

DR. PORTER.                   *(sighs, remembering)* In the evening you can smell those little mountain herbs and wild flowers

NURSE V.G.                   Like mountain thyme . . .

DR. PORTER.                   There's something sublime about mountains

NURSE V.G.                   *(grim)* Oh, yes! The mountains

DR. PORTER.                   *(trying to recall)* What was the name of that restaurant in the hills?

NURSE V.G.                   They're very steep and full of awkward steps

DR. PORTER.                   The food! Ummm! Good wholesome dishes

NURSE V.G.                   *(mimes pushing her mother in wheelchair)* Up, up, and round we go,  
Mother

DR. PORTER.                   None of your Paella and indigestible garbage

NURSE V.G.                   *(patient)* I know, dear. It IS hot

DR. PORTER.                   And the wine! Ambrosia!

NURSE V.G.                   *(trying to keep her temper)* Steady, Mother, only two more turns . . .

DR. PORTER.                   Pity it doesn't travel *(sighs)*

NURSE V.G.                   *(puffing)* We're almost there, Mother

DR. PORTER.                   That's the trouble with those foreign wines

NURSE V.G.                   *(pointing out front)* You can see the nuns in the distance

DR. PORTER.                   Heaven over there. Vinegar once you get them home

NURSE V.G.                   *(labouring)* Up, up, and up again! Here we go round the mulberry bush! *(out of breath)* Whoops!

DR. PORTER.                   What was that restaurant called?

NURSE V.G.                   There! *(wipes brow)* Look at the view

DR. PORTER.                    Those dancers'd show you a thing or two

NURSE V.G.                    (*quickly*) Look at the view (*pauses, then surly*) All right, don't bother

DR. PORTER.                    All castanets and flashing eyes

NURSE V.G.                    I know you can't see it properly (*grimly, under her breath*) If you could, **dear**, you wouldn't be here, would you?

DR. PORTER.                    Ah! Those liquid eyes! All fire! (*hums to the tune of **Ramona**, rolls eyes in memory*) All fire! (*sings*) Ramona, da da da da da da da dah! Ramona, dada da da da da da da

DR. PORTER./ NURSE V.G.    (*sighing at the same time*) Ah!

NURSE V.G.                    It would be lovely . . . just once

(*Phone rings, disturbing their reverie*)

NURSE V.G.                    (*on phone*) The Wellenough Clinic can I help you? Yes, yes, of course, Mrs. Porter. I'll check if he's available (*officious*) It's your wife, Dr.

DR. PORTER.                    Emmm. Oh yes, Nurse. I'll take it in my office

(*He goes to his office phone. NURSE tidies brochures. MR. O'NEILL ENTERS during this and sits on bench*)

DR. PORTER.                    Hello, Margaret. Listen, I thought I told you I was busy (*upset*) God! No! Not again. He couldn't have failed Tck! Tck! What do you mean, hard on him? Look, there's no one who's done more for that fellow (*hits desk, spilling pills*) Margaret, it wasn't studying that kept him from his sleep (*affronted*) Didn't you hear that banger of his waking the neighbours? That's another thing. If I told him once I told him a hundred times . . . (*a bit mollified*) Oh? At the Yacht Club? Tonight? That's very nice of them. I'll try and make it. No, no, I haven't seen Rodney yet about the concert . . . (*cross*) Oh! Whatever you like for the walls. I don't give a hang if they're black. . . No, no, Margaret, I meant YOU get on with it .And don't be ringing me about the Builders (*strained*) Yes, yes, yes. Bye, dear (*replaces phone, tensely seizes fistful of pills*)

(*NURSE V.G. ENTERS, notes his clenched fist. He drops pills*)

NURSE V.G.                    (*notes pills on floor, desk*) Mr. O'Neill is next, Dr. (*pauses*) Is everything all right, Dr.?

DR. PORTER.                    *(absently) show him in, Nurse (as she tides charts, picks up pills etc.)*  
Thank you, Nurse

NURSE V.G.                    *(gives him a strange look)* Not at all, Dr.

*(She comes out of his office and over to bench)*

NURSE V.G.                    *(to MR.O'NEILL)* You can go in now

*(He enters DR. PORTER's office)*

DR. PORTER.                    Yes?

MR.O'NEILL.                    *(glances around furtively)* Yes, well . . . at my age, Dr., I suppose it's  
only to be expected

DR. PORTER.                    Yeh..es? *(ponders over chart)*

MR.O'NEILL.                    I usen't to be like this . . . Never had the slightest trouble when I was  
working

DR. PORTER.                    And now you have *(smiles)*

MR.O'NEILL.                    Tissues like elastic. Regular as clockwork. The wife could tell the time  
by me. Clockwork

DR. PORTER.                    And now you're not . . . ?

*(embarrassed, MR.O'NEILL glances around furtively, goes to whisper in DR. PORTER'S ear)*

DR. PORTER.                    Ah yes! Can you go and give a sample *(phones)* Nurse

NURSE V.G.                    *(on phone)* Yes, Dr.

DR. PORTER.                    Please come in, Nurse

NURSE V.G.                    At once, Dr.

DR. PORTER.                    *(She is in his office now)* Nurse, could you *(mutters to her. She nods.*  
*MR.O'NEILL looks worried)*

NURSE V.G.                    Of course, Dr. *(to MR.O'NEILL)* Please follow me

*(She leads him to her office, gives him a bottle, points to Hospital door. He EXITS sheepishly)*

DR. PORTER. No sign of that chart yes, Nurse?

NURSE V.G. No. I'm still waiting for it, Dr. I'll bring it in to you when it turns up

DR. PORTER. (*sarcastic*) *When* it turns up! That could be too late

NURSE V.G. Oh, Dr., Mrs. Porter has your tickets for the fundraising evening. Will you be bringing a party with you?

DR. PORTER. I leave all those details to my wife

NURSE V.G. The committee felt a concert might draw the crowds (*artful*) I believe you and Dr. Trayne used perform together . . . He mentioned it . . . in passing

DR. PORTER. (*quite pleased*) Oh, he did , did he? (*dismissive*) That was ages ago. I'm quite rusty now

NURSE V.G. I'm sure you're being modest, Dr.

DR. PORTER. Maybe a concert isn't such a bad idea. Better than fashion shows

NURSE V.G. Yes, and the Swimming Gala didn't go too well (*pauses*) Hooterstown infirmary had a bonfire last year. Burning the Minister for Health

DR. PORTER. Good idea

NURSE V.G. In effigy , of course

DR. PORTER. Of course

NURSE V.G. It never got off the ground

DR. PORTER. Oh?

NURSE V.G. Rain

DR. PORTER. Ah yes! The weather (*Both sigh at the same time*)

NURSE V.G. We thought a garden party would be nice

DR. PORTER. Wouldn't do

NURSE V.G. Oh?

DR. PORTER. No sun

NURSE V.G. Oh, yes

DR. PORTER. Hardly the climate for garden parties

NURSE V.G. No

DR. PORTER. Celtic mist

NURSE V.G. Yes

DR. PORTER. Barely able to play golf in it

*(A Pause)*

NURSE V.G. Is your mother still alive, Dr.?

DR. PORTER. Alas, no! She passed away some years ago

NURSE V.G. *(sighs enviously, then)* Yes, Mother, No, Mother, Three bags full, Mother

DR. PORTER. *(musing)* I wonder if Mother would have liked the Canaries

NURSE V.G. *(quick and fierce)* I wonder, Mother, if you'd like the Canaries *(voice trails off)* for a change?

DR. PORTER. What was that place called?

NURSE V.G. *(grudgingly, as if to her Mother)* Yes . . . it would be rather warm

DR. PORTER. It might have been too hot for her

NURSE V.G. *(fierce)* Not half as hot as all those melting candles and bodies

DR. PORTER. La Pagoda. That's the place

NURSE V.G. I know, *dear*, it wouldn't be the same *(fiercely as she moves deeper into fantasy)* Not the same at all *(pauses, then manically)* We'd get drunk, Mother

DR. PORTER. And the wine! Ambrosia! *(smiles fondly)*

NURSE V.G. *(whispers fiercely)* We'd get drunk with Ambrosia

DR. PORTER.                    (*musings*) You could drink an ocean of it

NURSE V.G.                    So light and delicate

DR. PORTER.                    Pity it doesn't travel

NURSE V.G.                    (*dancing*) And I could dance, Mother- in one of those dresses with flounces (*mimes this*)

DR. PORTER.                    (*conclusively*) Somehow, I don't think she'd have liked the Canaries

NURSE V.G.                    Any maybe, Mother, one evening (*voice takes on an urgent rhythm*) with the wine and the wildflowers and the music, I'd dance to the sound of my own castanets (*mimes, clicks fingers for castanets of shakes pill bottles*)

DR. PORTER.                    Ah no! It might have been too hot for her

NURSE V.G.                    And, I'd put a rose between my teeth-or is it somewhere else they do that kind of thing?

DR. PORTER.                    She preferred the quiet game of Bridge-back at the hotel

NURSE V.G.                    Mother, which would it be? Castanets –or a rose?

DR. PORTER.                    Of course, there's a lot to be said for Bundoran

NURSE V.G.                    (*grim*) Castanets –or a rose? (*deliberate*) **Both** would be vulgar

DR. PORTER.                    Best links in the country!

NURSE V.G.                    (*softly, gathering momentum*) And, maybe, one of those dark dancers with slender hips would fancy me

*(DR. PORTER mimes limbering up for a golf shot, looks out front, back to ball, shifts feet in fierce concentration, his breath escapes in little puffs)*

DR. PORTER.                    Puh, puh, puh (*etc.*)

NURSE V.G.                    (*breathing almost in gasps*) And, when you were in bed, we'd dance and dance, our castanets snapping (*mimes this*)

*(DR. PORTER sighs the sigh of the **Great Putter**, prepares for the Big Shot)*

NURSE V.G.                    And, the rhythm of the dance and the wine, Mother, would beat and beat and beat (*voice rises in gasps*)

*(DR. PORTER lifts club for shot as NURSE continues)*

NURSE V.G. Till our eyes and our hearts were full of it, Mother *(voice rises to a climax as DR. PORTER hits ball out front)*

DR. PORTER. *(exhilarated, hitting ball out front)* Whoosh!

BOTH TOGETHER:

DR. PORTER. . . . Hah! . . .

NURSE V.G. *(sighs deeply with pleasure)* Ah!

*(A Pause as BOTH look out at his golf shot and her dream)*

DR. PORTER. Mmm. Bit off my game lately

NURSE V.G. *(wistful)* It'll be nice for you to get away, Dr.

DR. PORTER. I can't wait *(hums a snatch from **Ramona**)*

*(MR.O'NEILL, who has ENTERED, coughs tentatively)*

DR. PORTER. *(gruff)* Nurse! How many times must I tell you, you can't stand here daydreaming *(goes into his office)*

NURSE V.G. *(raises eyes to Heaven)* Yes, Dr. *(takes bottle from MR.O'NEILL, turns away to test its contents, disposes of it, comes to DR. PORTER, mutters to him)*

DR. PORTER. Thank you, Nurse *(to MR.O'NEILL, now seated nervously)* Nothing to worry about, this time

MR.O'NEILL. *(on edge of chair)* It's not serious? You said to come back if I didn't feel well

DR. PORTER. *(nods)* Always better be safe than sorry

MR.O'NEILL. I was worried

DR. PORTER. There's no need for that .Anxiety is a killer

MR.O'NEILL. I wasn't worried sick-just a bit uneasy . . . as I used to be so regular

DR. PORTER.                    *(interrupts)* Probably something you ate

MR.O'NEILL.                    Ah, now, Dr.! Diet is the one thing I'm very particular about

DR. PORTER.                    *(interrupts)* You wouldn't want to believe any of the rubbish you read about nutrition. If you're well and eat sensibly, you'll be all right

MR.O'NEILL.                    *(worried)* But if you're not well?

DR. PORTER.                    *(matter of fact)* then you need medicine

MR. O'NEILL.                    I'll tell the wife, so *(pauses, then as if schoolboy with Head)* I'm much improved since I gave up the cigarettes

DR. PORTER.                    Very good

MR. O'NEILL.                    It's all right to have a drink, isn't it?

DR. PORTER.                    The odd drink never did anyone any harm. Moderation is the thing

MR. O'NEILL.                    *(nods, pauses, then anxious)* I'm not as springy in myself, these days

DR. PORTER.                    You must keep busy. Concentrate on your work

MR. O'NEILL.                    Oh! . . . I'm still looking for a job, Dr.

DR. PORTER.                    *(brisk)* Good, good

MR.O'NEILL.                    It's hard to get fixed up . . . but I'll take anything

DR. PORTER.                    Stick to the blood pressure tablets

MR.O'NEILL.                    *(nods, then worried)* I don't seem to have the same energy, now

DR. PORTER.                    And *(writing)* if you've trouble sleeping . . .

MR.O'NEILL.                    *(gratefully takes prescription)* Oh! Thank you, Dr.

DR. PORTER.                    And keep busy

MR.O'NEILL.                    I'll do my best, Dr.

DR. PORTER.                    A man is as old as he feels *(laughs)* We're all mortal

MR.O'NEILL.                    *(rises)* Am I finished?

DR. PORTER.                Yes

MR.O'NEILL.              *(still worried)* I'm glad there's nothing to worry about

*(MR.O'NEILL goes to NURSE'S office. As they talk, DR. PORTER nervously searches, overturns things from shelves, then finds bottle of whiskey in drawer and takes a swig)*

MR.O'NEILL.              I'm to make an appointment

NURSE V.G.                *(opens book)* Mmm. I can give you one for May 24<sup>th</sup>

MR.O'NEILL.              But that's not for six months

NURSE V.G.                That's right. Three thirty p.m.

MR.O'NEILL.              *(helpless)* If that's the earliest . . .

NURSE V.G.                It is *(writes on his ticket, gives it to him)* Goodbye, Mr. O'Neill

MR.O'NEILL.              Goodbye *(glances at clock, then scurries to EXIT to street)*

NURSE V.G                 Some people, honestly!

*(ENTER DR. TRAYNE from Hospital)*

DR. TRAYNE.              Anyone with Dr. Porter, Nurse?

NURSE V.G.                No, Dr. *(comes out, intercepts him as he goes to DR. PORTER'S office)* Oh! Dr. Trayne

DR. TRAYNE.              Yes?

NURSE V.G.                I don't like to fuss but Dr. Porter . . .

DR. TRAYNE.              Yes?

NURSE V.G.                He doesn't seem to be himself today

DR. TRAYNE.              What do you mean?

NURSE V.G.                He's em . . . well, a bit . . .

DR. TRAYNE.              I was with him earlier. He seemed perfectly all right

NURSE V.G.                    Yes, I know, and I don't like to fuss but lately he's been . . .  
*(awkward)* behaving . . .

DR. TRAYNE.                Peculiarly?

NURSE V.G.                *(uncomfortable)* It seems ridiculous. He's been dropping things and eh  
*(embarrassed)* talking to himself

DR. TRAYNE.                Oh, I wouldn't worry, Nurse. We all do that

NURSE V.G.                *(weakly)* I suppose we do

DR. TRAYNE.                *(mutters to self as he goes to DR. PORTER'S office)* Talking to  
himself!

DR. PORTER.                *(muttering)* Can't even pass his bloody exams *(clenches fist)* Bloody  
kitchen cupboards! *(goes to drink, but hides bottle at knock on door. Trying to be calm, gets  
prescription pad and pen)* Yes ?

DR. TRAYNE.                Sorry, John! Hope i'm not interrupting anything . . . *(catches sight of  
bottle sticking out of drawer)*

DR. PORTER.                No, no *(sighs)* Just the usual hectic round

DR. TRAYNE.                I won't keep you, john

DR. PORTER.                Is it the concert?

DR. TRAYNE.                Yes. We want to make a profit for the new Leg Transplant Unit

DR. PORTER.                *(absently)* Mmmm

DR. TRAYNE.                John, are you listening?

DR. PORTER.                What? Oh, yes. . . yes

DR. TRAYNE.                *(jolly)* We've three spots on the programme. Tom Payne from E.N. T.  
Will do a recitation and there's Pandit Singh from the Lab with his Indian Rope Trick and if we  
don't come up with a third item . . . you know what's going to happen

DR. PORTER.                What?

DR. TRAYNE                It'll be Matron with *(mimes Kathleen Ferrier)* "Blow the Wind  
Southerly, Southerly" or a gaggle of nurses with *(mimics Sopranos)* "Nymphs and Shepherds,  
come away!"

DR. PORTER. *(forced to laugh)* I'm sure, Rodney, you'll come up with something

DR. TRAYNE. Come on, John! Remember College!

DR. PORTER. This isn't College, Rodney

DR. TRAYNE. And that's another thing. The students . . . Remember last time

DR. PORTER. *(distastefully)* Yes

DR. TRAYNE. We can't have them taking over with their bawdy jokes and *(mimics Student Chorus)* "Give the Woman in the bed more *(points to DR. PORTER)* Porter!"

DR. PORTER. *(winces)* No, Rodney. *You* look after the concert

DR. TRAYNE. Remember the Black and White Minstrel numbers we used to do ?

DR. PORTER. *(secretly proud)* that was years ago

DR. TRAYNE. Don't be an old fuddy duddy, John! Remember the fun . . . the best Boat Rag ever!

DR. PORTER. *(allows himself to be reminded)* Rodney!

DR. TRAYNE. Let's give them something to sing about! Cure all their Celtic Melancholia! *(suddenly)* Remember the Boat Club! How we raised the roof!

*(MUSIC of "Swanee." LIGHTS change. Cat calls etc.)*

TAPED INTRO: And now for those newly qualified Medicos! The pair with the unbeatable talent! The unsurpassable . . . Rodney Trayne and John Porter!

*(They perform "Swanee" very fast, miming to Music if they can't sing. LIGHTS change. We see them smiling at the memory)*

DR. PORTER. *(shakes his head)* Rodney!

*(ENTER NURSE V.G.)*

NURSE V.G. *(glances at them in surprise, coughs)* Dr. Rayle is delayed at Casualty. Would you take the conference, Dr. Porter?

DR. PORTER. Oh. Yes, Nurse

*(NURSE V.G. presides at table in his office for case conference)*

NURSE V.G. Are we ready? *(DR. PORTER looks OSL.)* Dr. Porter? *(looking at DR. TRAYNE, who glances at DR. PORTER)* Dr. Trayne, would you like to start?

DR. TRAYNE. Eh *(looks at DR. PORTER, then at NURSE)* Yes, Nurse

*(They sit)*

NURSE V.G. Dr. Porter *(coughs)* em Dr. Porter *(exchanges a look with DR. TRAYNE)*

DR. PORTER. Eh? *(turns and joins them)*

NURSE V.G. *(tight smile)* Ready? *(pauses, DR. TRAYNE nods to her. She reads chart)* Adams, James, thirty five years . . . Dr. Porter

DR. PORTER. Oh . . . One of yours, Rodney

DR. TRAYNE. Ah! . . . yes. I've seen him twice . . . Back pain is psychosomatic . . . just needs T.L.C.

NURSE V.G. *(writing)* T.L.C.

DR. TRAYNE. *(smiling at her)* Tender Loving Care

NURSE V.G. Yes, Dr., I know *(looks at them)* anything else? *(pauses, opens chart)* Ganley, Mary, aged fifty *(looks at DR. PORTER)*

DR. PORTER. Eh *(puzzled)* Emm Is that the patient with gallstones?

NURSE V.G. No, Dr. *(reads)* Varicose Veins and recurring attacks of Epistaxis

DR. PORTER. *(vainly tries to recollect)* Emmm yes. Coming along. Yes. Gradually improving

NURSE V.G. *(writing)* Makes progress slowly *(takes out chart)* Henry Murphy, sixty five years *(pen poised, looks at them)* Yes?

DR. PORTER. Ah! Mr. Murphy . . . Man seems crackers

DR. TRAYNE. No doubt about it. Plumb crazy

DR. PORTER. How often have we had him?

NURSE V.G.                    (*reads chart*) Clean bill of health till four years ago, then Hooterstown Infirmary twice, four times to the Staywell, twice to Baggage St. Hospital, and this is his fifth visit here

DR. TRAYNE.                Treat us like a hotel

NURSE V.G.                His life is one long holiday

DR. TRAYNE.                Admitted under false pretences

NURSE V.G.                Taking a bed from someone who needs it

DR. TRAYNE.                What's your opinion, John?

DR. PORTER.                (*mops brow wearily*) What are his complaints?

NURSE V.G.                (*reads*) Rheumatoid Arthritis, Sciatica, Bronchitis, Tonsilitis

DR. TRAYNE.                (*interrupts*) He's faking

DR. PORTER.                But how can you prove it?

DR. TRAYNE.                We don't have to prove anything

NURSE V.G.                He should prove he's sick

DR. TRAYNE.                Some of these chaps spend all their time, nipping in and out of here

NURSE V.G.                It's a hobby

DR. TRAYNE.                Saves the rent

NURSE V.G.                And gas bills

DR. TRAYNE.                He's an actor. Give him any illness in the script and he'll play it

DR. PORTER.                Eh . . . (*he is preoccupied*)

DR. TRAYNE.                All we have to do is bang him straight back into Matron's lap in Hooterstown Infirmary

NURSE V.G.                (*pen poised*) Shall I, Dr.?

DR. PORTER.                Emm. Better not rush things

NURSE V.G.                    (*glances at DR. TRAYNE, reads chart*) Kismet O’Ryan

DR. TRAYNE.                Ah yes! Kismet! The Fateful One! . . . Depressed teenager. Off her food, off her parents. Failing exams

NURSE V.G.                Yes?

DR. PORTER.                Your patient, Rodney

DR. TRAYNE.                She won’t eat food and she won’t eat pills. A boyfriend is what she needs (*glances at NURSE V.G.*)

DR. PORTER.                Rodney, we’re not a Marriage Bureau

DR. TRAYNE.                (*laughing*) Whoever mentioned marriage? You married men are all the same (*winks at NURSE*) Isn’t that so, Nurse?

NURSE V.G.                I don’t know, Dr. Trayne . . . (*suddenly DR. PORTER leaves them and EXITS to Hospital*)

DR. TRAYNE.                What’s got into him all of a sudden? . . .

(*Phone rings. NURSE takes it*)

NURSE V.G.                Yes, Dr. Trayne is here. Please hold

(*He takes phone. She goes to her office .LILY ENTERS and sits. NURSE ignores her, then EXITS with charts to Hospital*)

DR. TRAYNE.                (*on phone*) Yes, My Lord. Indeed, most uncomfortable. Yes, yes, I’ll tell him. Goodbye . . . Same to you (*replaces phone*)

(*DR. TRAYNE leaves DR. PORTER’S office. LILY sits waiting and we hear **TAPE** of MEN’S VOICES in her head. “Come on, Lily, be a sport! Laughter, then LILY’S VOICE) “Sh! You’ll wake Dolly! Sh! Don’t cry, Dolly! Don’t cry, Love!” **End of Tape**. As DR. TRAYNE passes by, LILY rises*)

LILY HORAN.                Oh, Dr.

DR. TRAYNE.                It must be Dr. Porter you want

LILY HORAN.                If only you could help me -

DR. TRAYNE. Let me see your ticket (*She gives it*) Ah! That's a pink one. You must be waiting for a bed in the Gynae Ward

LILY HORAN. What?

DR. TRAYNE. Actually, I'm on my way over there, now. Come along with me and we'll sort you out

LILY HORAN. I don't want a bed . . . I want help

DR. TRAYNE. (*pleasant*) Well, if you don't want a bed that means less of a squash for the others. However, I must warn you if you've been referred for an operation, then it's in your own best interests-

LILY HORAN. (*interrupts*) I don't want an operation

DR. TRAYNE. Of course, you don't (*puts arm unctuously around her shoulders*) Sometimes an operation can be just what you need

LILY HORAN. It's me head

DR. TRAYNE. Your head?

LILY HORAN. I get noises in me head

DR. TRAYNE. There's nothing else wrong, is there? (*pauses, then gently*) There's nothing wrong with you (*pauses*) as a woman?

LILY HORAN. (*in a dead tone*) No

DR. TRAYNE. Ah! Well, in that case, perhaps you shouldn't have this ticket at all. Better wait here for Dr. Porter. He's the man for you (*She looks helpless*) Wait here. Sit down. There's a good woman

(*DR. TRAYNE EXITS to Hospital*)

LILY HORAN. Where are they? (*looks around*) Yer on yer own, Lily! (*sings in low voice between puffing cigarette*) I had a dolly and my dolly died. Oh! fall dee riddle die doh, fall dee riddle dee! Oh, Oh, I had dolly and my dolly died on me (*FADE This as ENTER NURSE and DR. PORTER*) Fall deeriddle die doh, fall dee riddle dee

(*LILY rises, They ignore her*)

NURSE V.G. It's time for your tea, Dr.

DR. PORTER. Thank you, Nurse (*He seems nervous*)

NURSE V.G. (*brings him tea tray*) Your tea, Dr. I'm off for mine now (*pauses*) All right?

DR. PORTER. Yes, yes . . . Thank you (*sighs*)

(*NURSE glances at him, EXITS to Hospital. LILY sees his half open door, decides to enter*)

LILY HORAN. Oh, Dr. (*He is startled, A knife falls. She hands it to him*) Here you are (*He takes it absently*) You know what they say when a knife falls ?

DR. PORTER. (*confused*) Oh?

LILY HORAN. What falls to the floor will come to the door (*dramatic pause*) A Dark Stranger! . . . that's for a knife, now (*busies herself, tending to him*) One or two spoons?

DR. PORTER. Two

LILY HORAN. (*almost mistakes pills for sugar, puts two lumps in his cup*) Go on . . . Have your tea (*ensures all is to his liking, then in a tone of deadness, recites her symptoms*) I have this terrible pain in me chest, Dr.

DR. PORTER. Oh? (*between mouthfuls of scone*) Mmm

LILY HORAN. Me own doctor used give me pills for the noises in me head

DR. PORTER. Who is your own Dr.?

LILY HORAN. Dr. Track. Only he's on his holidays. He said I needed an X-Ray for me chest only I missed the appointment. I was afraid to go out with the banging in me head in case

DR. PORTER. Eh

LILY HORAN. In case I'd collapse and ended up in hospital with them tubes hanging out of me like the last time

DR. PORTER. (*sipping*) You were in hospital before, then?

LILY HORAN. The time I collapsed I was carried off to the Staywell. When I woke up I was fulla tubes. I couldn't remember a thing

DR. PORTER. How long were you there?

LILY HORAN. They kept me there two months (*troubled*) The banging in me head went away for a while but then, even all the pills and the tubes (*looks at him*) Me own Dr. done his best only he's away so I'm here. Is the tea all right?

DR. PORTER. (*taken aback*) Yes . . . thanks (*trying to regain control*) Now, let me see . . .

LILY HORAN. Don't send me to the Staywell

DR. PORTER. I . . . eh

LILY HORAN. (*over to him*) Please, don't send me there. I couldn't (*pleads*) Please, Dr.

DR. PORTER. (*awkward*) Hmm yes eh (*coughs*) You mentioned an X-Ray

LILY HORAN. For me chest (*pauses, then close to him*) Please, Dr., Don't . . . send me back there

DR. PORTER. (*rises, tries to speak calmly but is breathless*) Now, the best thing would be for an X-Ray . . . Yes, that's it (*writes on pad, gives note to her*) Take that over to (*points waveringly towards Hospital*) X-Ray. Emm what is your name? I shouldn't see you without an appointment, you know

LILY HORAN. Lily Horan

DR. PORTER. Miss or Mrs?

LILY HORAN. (*low*) Miss

(*DR. PORTER writes on paper, crumples it, writes another, gives it to her, indicating door*)

LILY HORAN. (*taking it*) You'll see me when I'm finished there?

DR. PORTER. (*nods, mutters to self grimly*) Get out . . . Go

LILY HORAN. (*turns from door*) Thank you, Dr.

(*He clenches fists, tensely forces himself to nod at her. She EXITS to Hospital. He shuts door, paces as if having an Asthma attack*)

DR. PORTER. Pull yourself together, John! You're Head of the Clinic, remember – Post of responsibility (*Phone rings. He jumps, pauses, suddenly swoops on it, swallows hard*) Yes (*falsely calm*) Yes, of course, Dr. O'Rayle . . . I'll see to it (*laughs hollowly*) Checking up on us, are they? . . . Perfectly ridiculous (*mops brow*) Ah! (*laughs*) Yes. No, no, never fear (*replaces*

*phone*) Give me a break, all of you (*searches frantically for bottle, takes a few swigs*) Patients swarming round the place like locusts round a honey pot (*grim*) Never fear, Dr. Porter's here! Leave me alone ALL of you, swarming like locusts (*Phone rings. He seizes it savagely*) No, not here NO! NO! (*bangs phone down, sits at desk, head in hands, very strained*) Just leave me alone! Get away ! Get away out of my head All of you!

*(VOICEOVER of HIS WIFE'S VOICE as he stares at tea things. He goes to take cup of tea as her voice is heard)*

WIFE'S VOICE.                   *(solicitous)* Come on, John! Have your tea

HIS VOICE                       *(Taped)* I'm not hungry

WIFE'S VOICE.                   What's wrong? You haven't touched a thing

HIS VOICE *(Taped)*               Leave me alone, Margaret

WIFE'S VOICE.                   You're not yourself, lately *(gentle)* What is it?

*(A Pause)*

HIS VOICE *(Taped)*               They think I'm God Almighty

WIFE'S VOICE.                   *(sensible)* That's because you help them

HIS VOICE                       *(Taped) (helpless)* I can't help them

WIFE'S VOICE.                   *(coaxing)* Drink your tea

DR. PORTER.                   *(pushes away tea things in a burst)* I can't! *(dashes from office to SC.)*

WIFE'S VOICE.                   *(distorted in his head like a nightmare)* You can help them help help help help help help

DR. PORTER.                   *(as the "Helps" get louder, puts hands over ears distress)* HELP!

*(TRAIN SOUNDS: Clickety Click gaining speed, then sudden brake sound as if Train is out of control)*

***(END OF PART ONE)***

## **PART TWO**

DR. PORTER.                    (*coming from his office*) Nurse, make an appointment with Dr. Track for the 24<sup>th</sup>

DR. NURSE V.G.                (*writing*) Yes, Dr. Who is the appointment for?

DR. PORTER.                    I'll tell Dr. Track myself (*cross, as she hesitates*) Just make the appointment, Nurse

NURSE V.G.                    Yes, Dr.

*(ENTER DR. ELENA CARBIRETTA from street. She is Irish-Italian, attractive, intelligent, wears smart street clothes)*

DR. PORTER.                    (*to NURSE*) If that's another patient without an appointment

*(NURSE V.G. nods at DR. PORTER, who goes into his office, then smiles frostily at DR. CARBIRETTA)*

NURSE V.G.                    (*icily*) I'm afraid you're too late

DR. CARBIRETTA.              Oh! (*thoughtful*) Oh, I see (*pauses*) You mean, the Medical Board has all the details from Dr. Porter?

NURSE V.G.                    Medical Board?

DR. CARBIRETTA.              Yes (*smiles*) I'm Dr. Carbiretta

NURSE V.G.                    Oh! I beg your pardon. I didn't realise. Yes, of course (*flustered*) We're expecting you (*phones to DR. PORTER*) There's a Dr. Carbiretta from the Medical Board (*to her*) This way (*shows DR. CARBIRETTA into DR. PORTER'S office*)

DR. PORTER.                    Eh! . . . eh (*shakes her hand*)

DR. CARBIRETTA.              You seem surprised, Dr.

DR. PORTER.                    It's just that I didn't think (*admiring her*)

DR. CARBIRETTA.              (*laughs*) That I'd be a woman, is that it? (*smiles*) Even the Medical Board has to move with the times

DR. PORTER.                    (*tight smile*) Dr. Bogey didn't say who'd be coming . . . What can we do for you?

DR. CARBIRETTA. You realise why I'm here (*pauses*) It's a bit delicate

DR. PORTER. No need to beat about the bush. It's these Junior Men overprescribing, isn't it?

DR. CARBIRETTA. (*quizzical*) Junior Men?

DR. PORTER. (*defensive*) Well, who else is it? . . . That's if there's any truth in it

DR. CARBIRETTA. (*guarded*) We can't say without the full facts and, of course, I'm not here to make accusations or to

DR. PORTER. (*benign*) Of course not (*pauses*) Will you have tea?

DR. CARBIRETTA. No thanks. I'm sure we're both very busy people

DR. PORTER. You don't believe the allegations, do you?

DR. CARBIRETTA. It's too early to say

DR. PORTER. Thirty doctors accused! . . . It's a bit steep, isn't it?

DR. CARBIRETTA. That's what we're here to find out

DR. PORTER. What's going to happen to the ones found "Guilty"?

DR. CARBIRETTA. That's up to the Board. They could be suspended from prescribing for a time . . .

DR. PORTER. Serves the twirps (*breaks off as their eyes meet*)

DR. CARBIRETTA. That avoids striking them off

DR. PORTER. Yes. Striking a fellow off the Register seems pretty barbarous

DR. CARBIRETTA. We'd need documentation first . . . Now, if I could see your figures for prescriptions, that kind of thing . . .

DR. PORTER. You're welcome. Nothing unusual at the Wellenough (*on phone*)

DR. PORTER. Nurse, would you please look up our monthly list of prescription for Dr. Carbiretta . . . (*replaces phone, smiles*)

DR. CARBIRETTA. What would you prescribe, monthly?

DR. PORTER. Puh! Couldn't say, really . . . I'm against dishing out drugs for every symptom (*She nods*) . . . Prefer to talk to the patients. Give them my time (*laughs*) only I don't have the time (*tight smile*) so I give them pills

DR. CARBIRETTA. Does that help?

DR. PORTER. Does anything help?

*(They stare at each other, break off as ENTER DR. TRAYNE in hurry. He knocks briefly on door, enters, stops short)*

DR. TRAYNE. Sorry, Dr. Porter. Didn't realise you were with a patient

DR. PORTER. Rodney, this is Dr. Carbiretta (*coughs*) Dr. Carbiretta, this is Dr. Trayne

DR. TRAYNE. (*full of charm, shakes hands*) Ah! One of ourselves

DR. PORTER. She's from the Medical Board

DR. TRAYNE. (*disappointed*) Oh!

DR. CARBIRETTA. We were just discussing the drugs inquiry

DR. TRAYNE. These addicts are everywhere. No one is safe (*to DR PORTER*) Do you remember Maxie Quinn? (*to DR. CARBIRETTA*) He was at College with us. Well, he left his car out side the Yacht Club and it was picked up in Liverpool, containing thirty tons of Cannabis

DR. PORTER. Rodney, I don't think that –

DR. TRAYNE. Forgive me, John, but this is one subject I get very hot about (*to her*) If I got hold of some of those fellows . . . coming in here looking for prescriptions . . . It's a good kick up the backside they need (*cross*) Living a false life! Drugs for food, drugs for drink! Bah! They can't last a second without artificial stimulants (*offers cigarettes. They refuse. He lights up*)

DR. CARBIRETTA. (*waves away smoke*) We're setting up a Centre to prevent our -

DR. TRAYNE. (*interrupts*) Nothing will prevent those addicts

DR. CARBIRETTA. (*smiles*) A Centre to help those of our profession who could be at risk

DR. TRAYNE. (*laughs*) You mean practitioners?

DR. CARBIRETTA. A patient expects an awful lot from a doctor

DR. PORTER. God Almighty in a white coat

DR. TRAYNE. Superdoc!

DR. CARBIRETTA. Yes (*looks slowly at them. DR. TRAYNE smiles*) A special Centre to support doctors needing help (*Both look vague*) and prevent them being (*gently*) . . . struck off

DR. TRAYNE. (*laughs*) We're not all heading for a nervous breakdown

DR. CARBIRETTA. A doctor needing help is often the last to notice (*rises*) Dr. O'Rayle is expecting me (*smiles*)

DR. TRAYNE. Let me show you the way

DR. CARBIRETTA. Thank you but I know my way around (*to DR. PORTER*) You'll remember the figures?

DR. PORTER. What? Oh, yes (*shows her from his office*)

DR. TRAYNE. (*watching her admiringly*) Whoo! That Dr. Carbiretta is really something. You can't beat those foreigners. Did you see her eyes, John?

DR. PORTER. Rodney! You never change

DR. TRAYNE. (*mocking*) What is Life if, full of care, we have no time to stand and stare? –especially at what's worth staring at

DR. PORTER. Do you give the women no peace at all?

DR. TRAYNE. Plenty of attention that's what women need. They love it. They can never get enough . . . but sure, you know that, yourself

DR. PORTER. Me?

DR. TRAYNE. (*joking*) God! Weren't you the fierce one for paying attention where Margaret was concerned? John, be honest! Was there ever another woman in your life, apart from your mother?

DR. PORTER. Leave my mother out of it

DR. TRAYNE. All right. Sorry

(A Pause)

DR. PORTER. Listen, Rodney, Matron was onto me about the raffle

DR. TRAYNE. Don't tell me Christmas is here, already

DR. PORTER. Not that raffle

DR. TRAYNE. (*pauses*) Look, it's very simple. There were three beds and eleven patients, so we had a raffle

DR. PORTER. Rodney, you can't gamble with patients

DR. TRAYNE. The women didn't seem to mind

DR. PORTER. I want an undertaking you won't do it again

DR. TRAYNE. But this is only the second time

DR. PORTER. Twice too many

DR. TRAYNE. What would you have done in my place?

DR. PORTER. It's not me we're talking about

DR. TRAYNE. (*aside*) Touchy! (*to DR. PORTER*) How you've changed, John, since College. You wouldn't think twice then about a bit of fun. And now, when I bring up a few ideas for the concert you pour cold water over them

DR. PORTER. Head of this clinic brings responsibilities (*pauses*) You can't keep doing this, Rodney

DR. TRAYNE. Yes, Dr.

DR. PORTER. Very funny

DR. TRAYNE. No, Dr.

DR. PORTER. Come off it, Rodney! Will you or will you not promise to stop raffling beds in the Gynae Ward?

DR. TRAYNE. I don't know, Dr.

DR. PORTER. Will you or won't you?

DR. TRAYNE. OK, you win. No raffles

DR. PORTER. That's settled, then

DR. TRAYNE. Pity, though. Added to the excitement

DR. PORTER. I'll tell Matron, so

DR. TRAYNE. (*mischievous*) On one condition

DR. PORTER. What's that?

DR. TRAYNE. That you help with the concert

DR. PORTER. Oh! (*hesitates*) Oh! All right!

DR. TRAYNE. How about a quick runthrough, now? Emm let's see. I was thinking of . . .

DR. PORTER. Now, don't expect me to go dancing round the stage. Anyway, I haven't the time

DR. TRAYNE. Look, it won't take a minute . . . And I'll do all the tricky bits, like producing

DR. PORTER. (*protests feebly*) Oh! Rodney, I don't know, really

DR. TRAYNE. A quick runthrough won't do any harm . . . How does it go? (*sings*) Oh! I went down South for to see my gal . . . singing Polly Wolly Doodle, all the day! . . . Or maybe . . .

DR. PORTER. Oh, Rodney . . .

DR. TRAYNE. (*sings with gusto*) I went to Alabama with my banjo on my knee. Oh, Susanna!

(*NURSE V.G. knocks, enters his office, is surprised by the Doctors' antics*)

DR. TRAYNE. Ah! Nurse V.G. . . . Maybe you could help us

NURSE V.G. Oh, yes (*doubtful*) Of course . . . em. How can I help?

DR. PORTER. Dr. Trayne here is . . . eh

DR. TRAYNE.                    *(decisively)* I'm the producer and we're just having a quick runthrough of our numbers

DR. PORTER.                    Remember, Rodney . . . We used to . . . How did it go?

DR. TRAYNE.                    *(eager)* Which one, John? *(to NURSE)* There were so many

DR. PORTER.                    *(serious)* Let me see *(quietly moves DS., kneels on one knee, hand extended, repeats this, singing)* Climb upon my knee, Sonny Boy! *(kneels on L. knee on the word KNEE)*

DR. TRAYNE.                    The other knee, John! It looks better from where the Audience is

DR. PORTER.                    *(remembering)* Oh, yes, Rodney! *(repeats using R. Knee)*

DR. TRAYNE.                    Great, John! Now, Nurse, will you *(indicates she should sit on DR. PORTER'S knee)*

NURSE V.G.                    You want me to? *(diffidently mimes DR. TRAYNE'S instructions, then goes to DR. PORTER, sits on his knee)*

DR. PORTER.                    Look, Rodney, it's Climb upon my knee, Sonny Boy! Sonny BOY!

DR. TRAYNE.                    *(as Calm Producer)* I know, John, I know. But we could give it a bit of a twist . . . make it different from the other times

DR. PORTER.                    *(raises eyes to ceiling, sings)* Climb upon my knee, Sonny Boy!  
*(NURSE V.G. comes over shyly, sits stiffly on his knee)*

DR. PORTER.                    *(sings)* You mean all the world to me, Sonny Boy!

DR. TRAYNE.                    Just lean back, Nurse *(she obeys, looking strained)* That's it! And smile!

DR. PORTER.                    *(as she smiles tentatively)* Oh! I've a cramp in my knee  
*(She gets off his knee)*

DR. TRAYNE.                    All right! Off we go again!  
*(As they repeat the song with movement, she throws herself into it exultantly)*

DR. TRAYNE.                    That's it!

*(Phone goes in NURSE's office. She goes to her office)*

DR. TRAYNE.                    Very good, Nurse *(to DR. PORTER, who is completely puffed)* God!  
John! You never lost it !

NURSE V.G.                    *(on phone)* Yes. . . Look. Mother, I can't talk now . . . Ring Mrs.  
O'Rourke

*(She replaces phone, gets out files etc. as ENTER TRAVELLER from street. She ignores him)*

DR. PORTER.                    Oh, Rodney *(puffed)* It's a long time

*(DR. TRAYNE'S bleeper goes off in his pocket)*

DR. TRAYNE.                    Have to rush *(claps him on back)* Keep it up, John!

*(DR. PORTER sits wearily at desk, takes swig from bottle. As DR. TRAYNE EXITS to Hospital, he winks at NURSE. She smiles, takes up phone. It rings in DR. PORTER'S office)*

NURSE V.G.                    *(on phone)* Oh! Dr. Porter . . . em

DR. PORTER.                    *(gruff)* Yes

NURSE V.G.                    I'm just taking those figures over to Dr. Carbiretta

DR. PORTER.                    Very well *(sighs)*

*(NURSE V.G. EXITS to Hospital, unaware of TRAVELLER. He knocks on DR. PORTER'S door)*

DR. PORTER.                    *(weary)* Yes

TRAVELLER.                    *(enters office, smiling, then coughs)* Hello, Dr.

DR. PORTER.                    *(weary)* Sit down *(as TRAVELLER sits, case on his lap, coughing)*  
What's your name? *(hunts vainly for chart)*

TRAVELLER.                    Matt O'Shea

DR. PORTER.                    *(writes)* Where are you from?

TRAVELLER.                    Dublin, now but I'm really from the County Off-all –ee. Do you know  
it?

DR. PORTER.                    Em no

TRAVELLER. Oh, now they made a pig's dinner of the All Ireland (*conspiratorial*)  
They should of –

(*During Above, NURSE rushes back to her office. Phone rings*)

DR. PORTER. What is the trouble?

NURSE V.G. (*on phone*) Yes, I can give you a specialist appointment

TRAVELLER. Oh! There's no trouble . . . If they could get hold of the back line  
(*coughs*)

NURSE V.G. (*speaking on phone during his cough*) Three months is the usual  
waiting time for an appointment with a specialist-

DR. PORTER. I see you have a cough

NURSE V.G. (*putting down phone*) Some people!

TRAVELLER. Oh, that's nothing. Just a touch

NURSE V.G. (*as he coughs again*) Think we're here for their pleasure (*takes out  
brochures to compose slogans*)

TRAVELLER. (*taking out throat spray*) I have this spray for my throat

DR. PORTER. If you're sick

TRAVELLER. (*quickly*) Oh, I'm not sick. I'm . . .

NURSE V.G. (*concentrating*) Now, let me see

DR. PORTER. (*puzzled*) What are you here for?

TRAVELLER. (*affable*) Didn't the Nurse tell you? I didn't disturb you earlier as you  
were so busy (*coughs, opens case for the Big Sell*) Hooters are expanding their products for  
hospitals (*shows leaflets*) This is the new machine to help patients with High Blood Pressure.

DR. PORTER. (*realising*) You mean, you're not a patient?

TRAVELLER. No. I'm from Hooters, Pills, Potions, Hair Oils and . . .

NURSE V.G. (*concentrating*) A touch of Fantasy is what you need

DR. PORTER. You mean, you're a traveller?

TRAVELLER. Yes, I'm . . . (*coughs*)

DR. PORTER. I can only see you if you're sick

NURSE V.G. (*during cough*) For Healthy Skin and Healthy Hair, Try Hooter's Magic Beauty Care!

DR. PORTER. You'd better see the Nurse

NURSE V.G. No, that won't do

TRAVELLER. Oh, the Nurse gave me some time earlier (*coughs*) but I'm sure you'd like to hear about this new machine

DR. PORTER. Look, I'm here to look after the patients. I've no time to waste on catalogues, or whatever

TRAVELLER. (*polite*) I quite understand how busy you are, Dr. (*opens case, takes out machine*) Here's the gadget I was telling you about (*confidential*) Only beginning to catch on in this country. It's the latest thing!

DR. PORTER. Eh?

TRAVELLER. Oh! The Latest Thing! Now, this machine (*places it over DR. PORTER'S heart, tying it on with Velcro straps, placed out of Audience's view*) Now, the beauty of this is (*talks while fixing it*) when the Blood Pressure goes up, you hear a (*HOOT! HOOT! Sound come form machine. Both react*)

DR. PORTER. What's that noise?

(*TRAVELLER removes machine, reads it like a thermometer*)

DR. PORTER. (*as if he were the patient*) What . . . Let me see it

TRAVELLER. (*dismissive*) Oh, this one must be wrong. We'll get another

DR. PORTER. How do you work it?

TRAVELLER. You clip it on, here. It's magnetic. These strips hold it on, as well

DR. PORTER. (*clips it on his chest*) Here?

TRAVELLER. That's right. Next to your heart. It measures the Blood

DR. PORTER.           What?

TRAVELLER.           Pressure

DR. PORTER.           *(anxious)* What happens when I read it?

TRAVELLER.           Oh, here's the leaflet. It explains everything

*(DR. PORTER looks at leaflet, then hearing a loud HOOT! HOOT! drops it. He rips off machine, compares leaflet with reading on machine while TRAVELLER looks over his shoulder, like a benign G.P.)*

TRAVELLER.           *(coughing)* Oh! You've got problems

DR. PORTER.           *(upset)* Is this thing accurate?

TRAVELLER.           Of course, it's accurate. It's been tested

DR. PORTER.           According to this, my reading is above normal

TRAVELLER.           What you need to do is relax

*(DR. PORTER looks upset, puts machine fiercely to his chest. It goes HOOT! HOT! He rips it off and looks at TRAVELLER)*

TRAVELLER.           Whatever you do, don't get upset or you'll send the old Blood Pressure up *(picks leaflet away, smiles)* I'll leave you the machine for a day or two *(coughing)* Mind your Blood Pressure, Dr.

*(DR. PORTER, looks afraid, sits mutely at desk. LIGHTS FADE on his office. He freezes)*

TRAVELLER.           *(shuts door of office)* Whew! *(turns)* Ah, Nurse!

NURSE V.G.           Oh, it's you

TRAVELLER.           I was just in with the Dr. *(takes leaflets from case)* Here are some details about the new Blood Pressure machine *(coughs)* By the way, is the Dr. . . . Is he all right?

NURSE V.G.           *(feigns calm)* I don't know what you mean

TRAVELLER.           I only asked because he seemed a bit upset

NURSE V.G.           Oh?

TRAVELLER.           Is his Blood Pressure OK?

NURSE V.G.                    (*looks away, concerned, then brightly to him*) Dr. Porter was never better and his Blood Pressure is no concern of yours

TRAVELLER.                Well, with that machine, he'll soon know whether he has problems or not

NURSE V.G.                You can leave those with me

TRAVELLER.                Thanks very much, Nurse. Some of the new machines are so good, soon we won't be needing doctors at all

NURSE V.G.                (*glances at DR. PORTER'S door*) Really?

TRAVELLER.                (*amiably*) Of course, we'll always need the Man with the Knife, The Coroner and the Baby Doctor but for the common or garden complaints you wouldn't want to be bothering the doctor

NURSE V.G.                Quite

TRAVELLER.                People annoying them with every little sniffle when there's a carving job waiting on the operating table

*(LILY HORAN ENTERS)*

LILY HORAN.                The Dr. said to come back when I had me X-Ray

NURSE V.G.                Oh?

LILY HORAN.                I was in earlier. Lily Horan

NURSE V.G.                (*consults book*) There's no mention of an X-Ray here

LILY HORAN.                He said to come back after the X-Ray for me chest. Me own Dr. sent me to Baggage St. Hospital only I couldn't go with me head

NURSE V.G.                (*interrupts*) Did the Dr. give you a green ticket?

LILY HORAN.                I gave the card to the girl

TRAVELLER.                (*coughing, uses throat spray*) Sorry, I get caught up

NURSE V.G.                (*writing*) You'll have to go back to X-Ray and bring over your ticket

TRAVELLER. (to LILY) Maybe you'd like to hear about Hooter's Magic Skin Care (LILY looks blank. NURSE attends to her work) FANTASY? Does wonders for you (proffers jar to LILY, who sniffs it) Just a little bit, last thing at night. Go on! Try some

LILY HORAN. Wouldn't wash me feet in the stuff

TRAVELLER. (takes it, gives more holiday forms to NURSE, snaps case shut but omits to take his throat spray) The best of luck!

INTERCOM: This is a Fire Warning. This is a Fire Warning

(LILY goes to bench, sits, dazed)

TRAVELLER. (to LILY) Are you all right?

NURSE V.G. (to DR. PORTER) Are you all right?

INTERCOM: To your Stations without delay. Surgeons to Station X. All Nursing Staff to Station Y. Clinical Staff and Patients to Station Z. (All listen to this)

TRAVELLER. There's a fire

NURSE V.G. It's the fire warning, Dr. Porter

LILY HORAN. Don't mind me. Is Dolly all right?

TRAVELLER. We must go now. There's a fire

INTERCOM: (as they all listen intently) Go to Your Stations. Do not panic. Quietly to your Stations

NURSE V.G. We have to go to our Stations

DR. PORTER. Don't panic, Nurse

LILY HORAN. A fire (dazed) I must get to Dolly (rises) I must

TRAVELLER. (coughing) I'll take you. Come on

(He leads her, taking his case, but not the spray. They EXIT to Hospital. He is coughing, she muttering)

DR. PORTER. We must move from here, Nurse

INTERCOM. All Hospital and Clinical Staff should be at their Stations (*DR. PORTER & NURSE exchange looks of panic*) DO NOT panic!

DR. PORTER. We must move, Nurse. Which Station?

NURSE V.G. I'll look it up

DR. PORTER. (*anxious*) Calm the patients, Nurse. Tell them what to do, where to go

NURSE V.G. Yes, Dr. (*goes to Waiting Area, surprised patients are gone, shrugs, goes to office, looks in book*)

DR. PORTER. (*leaves his office, looking around*) Well done, Nurse. I see you've sent the patients off safely

NURSE V.G. (*gulps*) Ah! . . .

DR. PORTER. Where do we go, now? Be quick, Woman (*sniffs*) Can't smell any smoke. Fire must be in the Laundry

NURSE V.G. (*reads*) In case of Fire (*DR. PORTER sniffs for smoke*) Close all doors and windows (*runs to shut his door*) Ensure all patients are calm (*glances around, then reading*) Quietly proceed to your Stations. Note positions of Fire Extinguishers

DR. PORTER. (*looks around searchingly*) Ah . . .

NURSE V.G. There's one in your office

DR. PORTER. Oh! Yes (*rushes to his office, brings one to NURSE*)

NURSE V.G. (*looking up from book*) The door, Dr.

DR. PORTER. Eh? . . . Oh! the door (*shuts his office door, clasping Fire Extinguisher*)

NURSE V.G. (*reads*) Proceed to your -

DR. PORTER. (*interrupts*) Yes, yes . . . Where is that?

NURSE V.G. (*reads*) Surgeons to Station X. All Nursing Staff to Station Y. Junior Houseman to . . . Matron and her Staff . . . (*turns over pages to DR. PORTER'S annoyance*) Outpatient Personnel

DR. PORTER. Hurry up !

NURSE V.G.                   *(reading)* E.N.T. . . . Housekeeper . . . Ah! Here we are *(DR. PORTER wipes brow, still clasps Fire Extinguisher)* All Clinical Staff and Patients to Station Z

DR. PORTER.               *(urgent)* Station Z

NURSE V.G.               Yes

DR. PORTER.               Come on, then

NURSE V.G.               *(shutting book)* Coming, Dr.

*(As they move to EXIT, he turns to her)*

DR. PORTER.               Where is it?

NURSE V.G.               What?

DR. PORTER.               Station Z?

NURSE V.G.               Station Z? *(realises)* Oh! Dr.!

DR. PORTER.               *(sighs)* Oh! Nurse!

*(NURSE dashes frantically to book, opens page,)*

NURSE V.G.               *(reading frantically)* Station Y at rear of Surgeons's Car Park . . . Station. . . Station Z . . .

INTERCOM.               *(interrupts)* This is a Fire Drill. This is a Fire Drill. There is no Fire. Return to your Stations and carry on, as usual. There is no Fire

*(They exchange looks. She's relieved. He's speechless with rage)*

NURSE V.G.               *(sighs)* Whew!

DR. PORTER.               Ugh! *(bangs down Fire Extinguisher)*

*(NURSE looks at him, shocked as HOOT! HOOT! Sound comes from machine on his chest. A PAUSE, then Phone rings. NURSE still looks at DR. PORTER, undecided)*

NURSE V.G.               *(unable to speak)* Dr. . . . D

DR. PORTER.               *(turns from her, rips off machine, hurls it from him, shouts)* The phone, Nurse! Man the Stations! The phone!

*(NURSE goes to her phone as ENTER DR. CARBIRETTA from Hospital. As DR. PORTER hurls machine, she catches it)*

DR. CARBIRETTA. Whoops!

*(DR. PORTER sees her, then distraught, enters his office, bangs door. DR. CARBIRETTA notes NURSE is on phone, knocks at DR. PORTER'S office, pauses, knocks again, enters)*

DR. CARBIRETTA. You dropped this *(hands him machine)*

DR. PORTER. *(gruff, his back to her)* What is it?

DR. CARBIRETTA. Looks like a . . . toy, or something

DR. PORTER. Just some yoke one of those Traveller types was trying to palm off

DR. CARBIRETTA. *(curious)* Oh?

DR. PORTER. Yes, some old rubbish or other . . . We were . . . I was giving it a tryout

DR. CARBIRETTA. *(sits)* I see *(watches him as he behaves restlessly)*

*(TRAVELLER brings LILY back into the Waiting Area)*

TRAVELLER. *(to NURSE)* She got a bit of a turn

NURSE V.G. Just a Fire Drill. Nothing to get alarmed about

DR. CARBIRETTA. I almost got side-tracked with the Fire Drill

TRAVELLER. *(to LILY)* You're all right, now. Here's the Nurse

DR. CARBIRETTA. *(laughs)* Honestly! You should have seen the mad dash in Outpatients

LILY HORAN. *(weak)* The Doctor . . . Is Dolly All right?

DR. CARBIRETTA. You'd think they'd never had a Fire Drill before

TRAVELLER. *(calm)* She's grand. Don't be worrying yourself

DR. CARBIRETTA. Just as well it wasn't the real thing

TRAVELLER. *(to NURSE)* It's her child *(whispers)* Dead. Thinks she's still alive

DR. PORTER. Did you see Dr. O'Rayle?

DR. CARBIRETTA. Yes. And I got your figures. Thanks for being so co-operative

DR. PORTER. Not at all (*strained*) Any time

TRAVELLER. (*to LILY*) You're all right, now, aren't you?

(*LILY nods, manages to smile. TRAVELLER EXITS to street*)

DR. CARBIRETTA. You remember the Centre I mentioned. We'll need a committee

DR. PORTER. Eh? . . . Oh, yes . . . yes. I suppose, as you say, some of our chaps could do with a helping hand from time to time

DR. CARBIRETTA. I wondered if . . . you'd like to be on it

DR. PORTER. (*flattered*) Mmm. I have a lot on my plate at the moment

DR. CARBIRETTA. Yes. But with your experience (*He smiles*) We want a cross section

INTERCOM. Would those nurses going to the Zoo please take their places in the coach. Those nurses going to the Zoo please go to Outpatients entrance where their coach is waiting

LILY HORAN. (*to self, confused*) The Zoo!

DR. CARBIRETTA. We want a doctor in trouble to know there's someone on the committee who understands. Someone like himself

DR. PORTER. But not identical

DR. CARBIRETTA. (*pauses*) Well (*smiles*)

DR. PORTER. I'd be delighted to consider it

DR. CARBIRETTA. Thank you (*rises*) I must go

(*ENTER DR. TRAYNE in jolly mood*)

DR. TRAYNE. Ah! Dr. Carbiretta! I lost you in the Fire Drill. You're not leaving us?

DR. CARBIRETTA. Yes (*moves to go*) Lecture on Acupuncture

DR. TRAYNE. Oh! *(laughs)* None of your fringe medicine at the Wellenough

DR. PORTER. We don't go in for fancy treatment, here

DR. CARBIRETTA. *(laughs)* It's not fancy. It's been used in China for centuries

DR. TRAYNE. But we're not Chinamen. No! Give me the traditional methods, every time

DR. CARBIRETTA. *(smiles)* Well, I must be off

*(SHE EXITS to street)*

DR. TRAYNE. Whoo! Some dame! I'd say the men wouldn't mind a few pricks of the acupuncture if she was holding the needles!

*(DR. PORTER secretly drinks. DR. TRAYNE pretends not to notice)*

DR. TRAYNE. Did you invite her to the concert?

DR. PORTER. Rodney! The woman was here on business

DR. TRAYNE. Ah! Yes *(coughs)* Do you know anything about this? *(hands out letter)*

DR. PORTER. *(taking it)* Can't say I do

DR. TRAYNE. These law cases are all the same. DEMANDING a detailed report on his condition

DR. PORTER. Lawyers never want the plain facts

DR. TRAYNE. *(takes letter back)* I'll check it out on the ward

DR. PORTER. I'll come with you

*(EXEUNT to Hospital. Then ENTER MRS. DUNPHY from Street)*

MRS. DUNPHY. *(upset)* Where's Dr. Porter?

LILY HORAN. *(wakes with a start)* Oh!

NURSE V.G. Mrs. Dunphy, what do you mean barging in here upsetting the patients?

MRS. DUNPHY. *(very upset)* It's Gerard. He's gone

LILY HORAN.                   Gone? Who's gone?

NURSE V.G.                    Calm down, Mrs. Dunphy. What is the matter?

MRS. DUNPHY.                *(breathless)* Gerard. He's disappeared. I'm distracted. Took his Pop records and went. What'll I do, Nurse?

NURSE V.G.                    Have you been to the Guards?

MRS. DUNPHY.                *(shakes head)* the last time they told me it'd be Borstal. Let me see the Doctor

NURSE V.G.                    Dr. Porter isn't here

MRS. DUNPHY.                This is an emergency. God only knows where Gerard is and what he's at. If he met the gang from the flats, he'd be led astray. Very easily led is Gerard. He's softhearted

NURSE V.G.                    If he's such a nice boy, he'll probably turn up soon

MRS. DUNPHY.                I know Dr. Porter will help me. Where is he? I must see him

LILY HORAN.                    You can have my place, love

MRS. DUNPHY.                Thanks. I'll never forgive myself if anything's happened to Gerard *(looks at LILY)* He's the baby

LILY HORAN.                    Your baby? *(pauses)* Dolly's gone, too *(sobs)*

MRS. DUNPHY.                *(concerned)* Are you all right? You don't look too good *(feels her hand)* You're perished. Tell you what, I'll go next door to the coffee machine and get the pair of us a nice cuppa tea

*(MRS. DUNPHY EXITS to Hospital. Phone rings. NURSE V.G. answers it)*

NURSE V.G.                    *(on phone)* The Wellenough Clinic can I help you? *(disappointed)* Oh! It's you, Mother . . . Yes, yes, I'll do that . . . All right so, YOU do it! Look, Mother, I'm up to my eyes here. No, No Mother, I told you not to take your sleeping pills . . . Not till tonight. No! Hold on till I get in *(replaces phone, mutters)* Yes, Mother, No, Mother, Three bags full, Mother!

*(ENTER MRS. DUNPHY. She gives cardboard cup to LILY. They sip)*

MRS. DUNPHY.                Get that inside you and you'll warm up in no time. Have a fag *(lights two cigarettes. They smoke)*

NURSE V.G.                    (*without looking up*) No smoking, please

(*WOMEN exchange looks, quench cigarettes*)

LILY HORAN.                Is your baby gone?

MRS. DUNPHY.             He's a big lad. I still think of him as the Babby. I have seven

LILY HORAN.                (*voice has echolalic quality*) Seven

MRS. DUNPHY.             Four boys and three girsl. The girls is all married and one of the fellows. He's away in England (*pauses, upset*) I'll die if Gerard's in trouble (*sips*) He'll get it this time

LILY HORAN.                Is he all you have?

MRS. DUNPHY.             Ah! No (*patient*) I have seven but he's the youngest. The baby like

LILY HORAN.                Like Dolly?

MRS. DUNPHY.             Are you married?

LILY HORAN.                Not really

MRS. DUNPHY.             Drink up your tea

LILY HORAN.                (*drinks, then*) Dolly's gone

MRS. DUNPHY.             Who's Dolly?

LILY HORAN.                The Babby (*smiles*) Lovely and all she was. You never saw the like of her for curls. Big glossy curls. Here! (*shows photo from bag*) Look! D'you see the head of curls?

MRS. DUNPHY.             She's lovely. A grand little girl. What age?

LILY HORAN.                (*dead*) She's gone

MRS. DUNPHY.             Where?

LILY HORAN.                She's gone off . . .

(*A Pause*)

MRS. DUNPHY.            *(very quiet)* You mean she's . . . *(as LILY nods and takes back photo)*  
God help you!

LILY HORAN.            *(very low)* She was always getting sick *(looks at photo)* Maybe I  
didn't know how to mind her *(looks at MRS. DUNPHY)* But I tried. I done me best

MRS. DUNPHY.            Of course, you did

LILY HORAN.            It's not the same when you're on yer own

MRS. DUNPHY.            You done yer best

LILY HORAN.            *(echoes)* I done me best

MRS. DUNPHY.            *(pauses, then to NURSE)* When will Dr. Porter be back?

NURSE V.G.            Dr. Porter has already seen you, Mrs. Dunphy *(sighs)*

MRS. DUNPHY.            *(dithers)* Maybe I'd better take a dart home and see if he's back *(to LILY)* He could of got hungry or something

LILY HORAN.            Cuppa tea is nice . . . Will we have another?

MRS. DUNPHY.            All right

*(THEY EXIT to Hospital)*

NURSE V.G.            *(regards brochures)* Sunbaked beaches! Ponyriding, sparkling sea! All  
yours with FANTASY! *(sighs)* Oh! The Bahamas!

*(ENTER DR. PORTER, bustling, breathless)*

DR. PORTER.            Nurse, did you see the letters on that legal case?

NURSE V.G.            I think they've been sent out, Dr.

DR. PORTER.            Damn lawyers looking for more details

NURSE V.G.            I'll see to it, Dr. *(grimaces, searches for papers)*

*(NURSE EXITS with papers to Hospital. DR. PORTER'S phone rings)*

DR. PORTER.            *(on phone, brisk)* Dr. Porter here *(cross)* Margaret. Look . . . OK. Yes.  
Now, briefly, the news is that Rodney has persuaded me to do one or two of our old numbers  
*(furious)* What do you mean, PAST IT? Margaret, it's only a bit of fun. Be my age! Good God,

Woman, I'm not a geriatric! (*bangs phone down*) Past it indeed! What's she talking about?  
(*wipes brow. Strains of MUSIC, i.e. Al Jolson's version of MAMMY softly*) Our numbers raised  
the roof!

(*LIGHTS change. DR. PORTER, remembering, performs MAMMY*)

DR. PORTER. (*ending this song*) I'd walk a million miles for one of your smiles, My  
Ma-AA-AA-AAMEE! (*smiles proudly*)

(*DR. CARBIRETTA knocks, ENTERS his office*)

DR. PORTER. (*startled*) Ah! . . . Do come in, Dr. Carbiretta

DR. CARBIRETTA. (*masking her surprise*) You're probably wondering what's brought me  
back

DR. PORTER. (*coughs*) Always glad to see you (*gestures to chair*)

DR. CARBIRETTA. (*sits*) Thank you

DR. PORTER. You're doing a fine job on the Board, cleaning up all this business. A  
committee is better than condemning the poor devils to the doghouse for overprescribing

DR. CARBIRETTA. Dr. Porter –

DR. PORTER. (*interrupts*) I know you're keen to have me on your committee

DR. CARBIRETTA. Well, actually –

DR. PORTER. (*smiles*) And I'll seriously consider it

DR. CARBIRETTA. When I asked you to be on the Watchdog Committee I had no idea . . .  
eh I didn't realise (*falters*)

DR. PORTER. Yes?

DR. CARBIRETTA. It's very hard to . . .

DR. PORTER. Come on! Don't be afraid to say what's on the tip of your tongue  
(*smiles*) Spit it out! I won't bite

DR. CARBIRETTA. (*takes envelope from pocket*) These figures

DR. PORTER. What about them?

DR.CARBIRETTA. Are they correct?

DR. PORTER. Nurse Van Garrdt made them out herself. They must be

DR.CARBIRETTA. (*gentle*) They're rather high

*(A Pause. SHE notes disarray of his office)*

DR. PORTER. What are you suggesting?

DR.CARBIRETTA. Nothing at the moment. But, I'm sure you'll understand, the Board will have to look into it

DR. PORTER. Are you telling me that, instead of being the first ON your committee, you want me as the first Victim your damned committee gets its hands on . . . Is that it?

DR. CARBIRETTA. (*pauses*) I'm sorry

DR. PORTER. What is this? I've been Head of this clinic for three years and No ONE, NO ONE comes in here, telling me what or what not to prescribe to my patients

DR. CARBIRETTA. (*gentle*) Do you need help?

DR. PORTER. This is outrageous. I'll tell Dr. O'Rayle

DR. CARBIRETTA. (*quiet*) He knows

DR. PORTER. (*belligerent*) And?

*(SHE looks away. NURSE ENTERS, regards watch, goes to office)*

DR. PORTER. So, you and Michael have been having a little chat, eh?

DR. CARBIRETTA. (*quiet*) Do you need help?

DR. PORTER. (*shouts*) People come to ME for help

INTERCOM. Dr. Porter to Casualty, please *(This is repeated)*

*(DR. PORTER glares, then EXITS to Hospital. DR. CARBIRETTA sighs, looks around his office, goes to NURSE, who regards her curiously)*

NURSE V.G. Can I do anything else for you, Dr. Carbiretta?

DR.CARBIRETTA. No, thanks. You've done enough

*(NURSE stares. DR. CARBIRETTA EXITS to Street. ENTER LILY and MRS. DUNPHY with tea. They sit. Phone rings. WOMEN listen)*

NURSE V.G.                    *(on phone)* Yes, Matron, I'll do that. Numbers 11675 – 120963728

*(NURSE replaces phone, EXITS with charts to Hospital)*

MRS. DUNPHY.                When the phone went I thought it might be news of Gerard

LILY HORAN.                 Don't be fretting yourself

MRS. DUNPHY.                He'd never use violence

LILY HORAN.                 Of course, he wouldn't

MRS. DUNPHY.                He used jump into cars but that was joyriding.' He's not one for mugging

LILY HORAN.                 No

MRS. DUNPHY.                Five months he done in the Joy. They broke his leg there

LILY HORAN.                 That's terrible

MRS. DUNPHY.                "Son," I says to him, "Why did you sign that statement to say they never laid a finger on you?"—"Woman," says he, "You sign because, otherwise, you know you'll never get out alive"

LILY HORAN.                 Like wild animals, they are

MRS. DUNPHY.                The last time they came looking for Gerard, I knew where he was. With me brother. I wouldn't give them the Brother's address. I knew it'd do him no good having the Guards callin' askin' questions

LILY HORAN.                 Have a fag

*(They both smoke)*

MRS. DUNPHY.                I was nearly knifed some time back

LILY HORAN.                 What?

MRS. DUNPHY.                I seen these fellas gettin' out of a car and I said, "You're going nowhere till you show me your license" *(puffs)* They chased me. I was lucky not to be knifed

LILY HORAN. Did you get the Guards?

MRS. DUNPHY. I did. Three hours before they came

LILY HORAN. When you needed them

MRS. DUNPHY. Oh! Yes, they're always there when they're not wanted (*puffs*) Still, the Super, now . . . He's not bad

INTERCOM. All Patients with Blue Tickets. All Blue Ticketholders, please go to Outpatients. To Outpatients

MRS. DUNPHY. Have you a blue ticket?

LILY HORAN. (*inspects Ticket*) No. Mine's green

MRS. DUNPHY. (*showing hers*) I've a blue one. I'd better go (*joking*) Maybe we're all getting free pills

LILY HORAN. So long

MRS. DUNPHY. I'll see you

LILY HORAN. Yeh . . . and keep the heart up

MRS. DUNPHY. (*smiles*) Thanks

*(MRS. DUNPHY EXITS to Hospital. LILY relapses into depression)*

LILY HORAN. (*amid puffs*) It's not the same when you're on yer own. No one gives a tinker's curse whether you live or die (*sighs*) Still, no use in getting morbid. I had me share of good times. Plenty a laughs (*laughs low*) Ah! Now! At one time you couldn't get the beat of me for jollification. God's Gift to Men an all I was! (*sings wanly*) Oh! Oh! I was the quare one, fall deeriddle die doh! I was the quare one, I tell you! (*sick*) Oh! (*looks around*) Where is everybody? God! This place'd startle the Dead! Me . . . chest! (*faintly*) Oh! I'm – Is there no one to help me? (*groans*) Oh! The pain! . . . If anything happens to me, who'll mind Dolly? (*regards DR. PORTER'S phone*) The phone! I'll ask Peg . . . (*urgent*) Peg'll mind her or else- Oh! (*fails to reach his office phone, groans*) Oh! Me chest! (*falls in a heap behind bench or DSR. nearly in the wings*)

*(ENTER DR. PORTER in a desperate state. HE doesn't see LILY, huddled in a faint. Restless, he moves about, using the whole stage)*

DR. PORTER. *(mutters fiercely)* Where are you, Nurse? Where are you when I need you? *(darts to her office)* It's me, Nurse! Dr. Porter- Head of the Wellenough Clinic! *(laughs harshly)* That's a good one! Helping people! Can't even help myself *(sits on bench, takes swig of booze)* Pull yourself together, John. Dropeen of the hard stuff *(drinks, wipes mouth with hand)* Ah! That's better. Fit for anyone, now, I am *(stands uneasily)* Fit as a fiddle *(mocks)* Nurse! And WHO are we expecting today? Let me see *(pretends to consider)* Don't tell me, Nurse *(sarcastic)* It's that very special, intelligent – Oh! yes, Rodney! That beautiful Italian doctor, eyes like fire, the one and only Dr. Carbiretta! *(moves, as if greeting a guest)* Welcome, Dr. Carbiretta! This is OUR clinic *(looks about)* Crammed, as you can see, with grateful patients. Of course, we don't use drugs here *(laughs harshly)* NO! They all get better by themselves *(slowly as He lights cigarette)* With a little help from Dr. Trayne, who raffles beds, and Dr. O'Rayle who *(suddenly breaks off, peers out front, as if addressing DR. O'RAYLE)* It could have been YOU, Michael, Yes! *(points at 'him')* Dr. O'Rayle, Pillpusher! *(takes swig from bottle, then chatty)* Did you, by any chance, hear about Elvis? Eh? Did you? *(mock surprise)* Well, his doctor, a nice, friendly doctor, gave him so many pills- to make him better- you understand – only Elvis didn't get better, Michael. He got worse and worse *(whispers ironically)* till he died! *(paces)* Now, your patients, Michael, don't die- or Rodney's either *(goading)* They go on living and living –a living testament to your skill. . . “The Good and Lifegiving, Dr. Michael O'Rayle!” *(suddenly belligerent)* You make me sick, Michael. The whole lot of you make me sick! *(rips off white coat, flings it over LILY so she looks like a corpse covered with a sheet)* YOU! It could have been you, Michael! *(goads, wickedly gleeful)* Mmm . . . Hard to imagine but there you are! Happens to the best of us. That lovely Dr. Carbiretta said so herself *(moves suddenly)* And, what would SHE say if she found out that the “The Good and Lifegiving, Dr. Michael O'Rayle” had been, just a teeny bit, on the not-so-forgiving side, eh? She might *(winks)* even be, just a bit, mind, on the cross side. Behind those lovely eyes, Michael, she might even be a bit hard?

*(HE stands to one side, smoking, watches as LIGHTS change. MUSIC as DR. CARBIRETTA vamps in, wearing long slinky dress, feather Boa, long cigarette holder. She sings or mimes to 'Hard Hearted Hannah.' MUSIC fades as She slinks out)*

DR. PORTER. See what I mean, Michael? These foreigners know a thing or two- especially the ladies *(sighs)* Eyes like fire! *(hums a snatch of 'Ramona,' stops, then stands, as if at a debate)* Members of the Profession, it's only my reputation! And, who cares about that? Who cares about people pointing at me in the street? They could, you know. Michael, they'd point at me and say *(points DS., whispers intensely)* Pillpusher! He's the one who feeds his patients so many helpful tablets that they –die. Just like Elvis *(looks away)* Poor Elvis! Didn't get better *(takes swig from bottle)* No, no. Got worse and worse *(phone rings in NURSE'S office)* Nurse! The phone! Man the Stations! Ah! Where are you, now, Nurse? My little flower? Won't do, you know. Deserting your Post! You know the rules! MAN the Stations! Never know when you'll be needed *(Phone goes in his office)* See what I mean? *(moves to his office)* Always BE there when you're needed *(Phone stops as HE goes to it. HE peers at it, takes receiver, listens, pauses, replaces it, matter of fact)* Ah! No one needs pills today *(yawns)* Man the Stations, all the same *(holds up almost empty bottle of booze, then sadly)* Sorry, Dr. O'Rayle, Michael Old Bean! There's none left for you *(suddenly struck by an idea)* Ah! Maybe you'd like a *(opens desk drawer)* teeny weeny dose of something? *(merry)* No? *(cajoling)* Go on, Michael, Be a

devil! Ah! Go on! (*lights a fresh cigarette, then brisk*) Mustn't mix alcohol with medication. Won't do at all, will it, Michael? (*suddenly aggressive and sarcastic*) What pills? I took nothing . . . YOU, DOCTOR! gave me headache tablets to swallow with a glass of water (*mock lecturing position*) Always take pills with a good glass of water . . . otherwise they (*mocking*) stick in the gullet (*looks out front*) They were headache pills, weren't they? Because (*maudlin*) If they were something else- to soothe and comfort me- something em . . . You know what I mean, Michael (*shakes finger at 'him'*) I might have to (*whispers*) might have to tell Dr. Carbiretta (*laughs away imaginary offers of help*) You mustn't worry about ME (*slurred*) Iz not a shock, Michael. It could happen to a Bishop (*falls onto his desk in maudlin disarray*)

(*LIGHTS on LILY, who stirs faintly, slowly "Comes back from the Dead." Confused, She fumbles with white coat, hears DR. PORTER muttering. She rises, moves slowly with white coat towards his half open door. He faces SL. She holds out coat to him*)

LILY HORAN.                    Is this yours?

DR. PORTER.                    (*moves head, sees coat, in a dead voice*) Yes?

(*Sighing, He takes coat and reluctantly dons it, still with back to LILY. Then He assumes the Doctor Role, but still upset*)

DR. PORTER.                    (*turns, avoids her eyes*) Well, what is it?

LILY HORAN.                    (*quiet*) I'm sick

DR. PORTER.                    I can't see you now

LILY HORAN.                    (*wan*) I've been waiting waiting waiting

DR. PORTER.                    I'm . . . I'm busy today

LILY HORAN.                    I'm busy every day

DR. PORTER.                    (*shouts*) Can't you understand? I can't see you now

LILY HORAN.                    Don't shout . . . Why does everybody shout?

DR. PORTER.                    (*resigned*) All right. What's your name?

LILY HORAN.                    (*quiet*) I forget

DR. PORTER.                    (*loud*) What is your name? (*takes up pad to write*)

LILY HORAN.                    (*pleads*) Please, Dr! Don't shout at me

DR. PORTER.                   *(quietly intense)* What is your name?

LILY HORAN.                   Lily Horan

DR. PORTER.                   *(quiet)* Where do you live?

LILY HORAN.                   You're very nice when you don't shout

DR. PORTER.                   Are you on medication?

LILY HORAN.                   Yes. Only I took the last one

DR. PORTER.                   *(trying to concentrate)* What medication?

LILY HORAN.                   Big pink pills. I had them for me head

DR. PORTER.                   I'll give you a prescription *(starts to write, crumples up page, mutters)*

LILY HORAN.                   *(as if to herself)* I get noises in me head. I think there's someone talking to me. Sometimes they shout *(upset)* Don't send me to the Staywell!

DR. PORTER.                   *(sighs in despair, rises)* What's the use?

LILY HORAN.                   Eh? You're talking to yourself. Maybe you need one of your own pills *(holds out pill bottle to him)*

DR. PORTER.                   *(quiet, strained)* Do you need help?

*(A Pause. HE sees pill bottle, then looks at her, depressed)*

LILY HORAN.                   *(rises, puts pills down, then gentle)* You need help

DR. PORTER.                   *(loudly, as if in charge)* Sit down

LILY HORAN.                   *(goes to him)* Maybe you need to sit down. Look at your eyes *(feels his forehead)* Your skin . . .

DR. PORTER.                   *(panics)* Is the Nurse outside?

LILY HORAN.                   You're not all right, are you?

DR. PORTER.                   *(more upset)* Get me the Nurse!

*(He turns away. LILY gently leads hm to bench. He sits, upset)*

LILY HORAN.                   *(comforting as she settles him)* That's it! Put your feet up

DR. PORTER.                   *(mutters)* Finished!

LILY HORAN.                   It's not finished *(HE starts to weep. She cradles his head gently in her arms)* That's it! Sh! Sh!

DR. PORTER.                   I . . . I haven't cried in years

LILY HORAN.                   *(still holding him)* Let all the hurt out

*(ENTER NURSE V.G. very briskly, stops short)*

NURSE V.G.                   *(startled)* Oh!, Dr., I had no idea you had someone with -

DR. PORTER.                   *(rises)* It's all right, Nurse

LILY HORAN.                   I'm feeling much better, now, Nurse *(looks at DR. PORTER, moves to go, hesitates)* Goodbye, Dr. *(HE nods, unable to speak. NURSE watches, at a loss. LILY and DR. PORTER look at each other. She smiles)* Thank you, Dr.

NURSE V.G.                   *(clutches charts, feigns calm)* I'm afraid Matron held me up . . . Some confusion . . . New girls in Records . . . EM *(to LILY as DR. PORTER looks away)* I'll give you your next appointment

LILY HORAN.                   I don't think I need one *(smiles at DR. PORTER. He nods)* Thank you, Dr.

*(LILY HORAN goes from office. NURSE stares after her)*

DR. PORTER.                   I'll be at the Hospital if I'm needed

*(He EXITS to Hospital, LILY to Street. NURSE stares after them, then tidies. She enters his office, notes disarray, finds hidden whiskey bottle. Suddenly, hearing sounds, replaces bottle, leaves his office as ENTER DR. TRAYNE)*

DR. TRAYNE.                   What's up with Dr. Porter? He brushed past me in the corridor just now

NURSE V.G.                   I told you he wasn't himself

DR. TRAYNE.                   Now you mention it . . . he did seem a bit . . .

NURSE V.G.                   Yes, and *(tentative)* I found him with a patient a few moments ago. He seemed to be . . . crying

DR. TRAYNE.                   Probably something in his eye (*as NURSE looks away*) Listen, Nurse!  
. . . I know it's short notice but I wondered if you –that is – if you're not already going . . .

NURSE V.G.                   (*puzzled, turns to him*) Yes? . . .

DR. TRAYNE.                   Well . . . the old Hospital Dance . . . Would you come with me?

NURSE V.G.                   (*surprised*) Me? . . . Why?

DR. TRAYNE.                   You seem surprised?

NURSE V.G.                   Well, it's just that all this time . . . You never asked me before

DR. TRAYNE.                   Will you think about it?

NURSE V.G.                   Well, yes . . . I'll consider it

DR. TRAYNE.                   (*smiles, pauses*) Yes, you know there could be something up with Dr.  
Porter. He forgot to leave his car in for servicing!

*(NURSE V.G. looks at ceiling. DR. TRAYNE shakes head, ponders. ENTER DR. PORTER, goes to his office. DR. TRAYNE follows him)*

DR. TRAYNE.                   Forgive me, John (*looks at disarray*) What's wrong?

DR. PORTER.                   You mean you haven't heard? I thought it'd be all over the Intercom by  
now

DR. TRAYNE.                   Is something wrong?

DR. PORTER.                   No . . . I only killed a patient

DR. TRAYNE.                   What?

DR. PORTER.                   (*weary*) A patient . . . a boy . . . died. An overdose

DR. TRAYNE.                   (*relieved*) Whew! You had me worried. I thought you'd murdered  
somebody

DR. PORTER.                   (*quietly intense*) He died of what I prescribed

*(A Pause)*

DR. TRAYNE.                   Suicides happen all the time. The statistics -

DR. PORTER.                   Damn the statistics!

DR. TRAYNE.                (*uncomfortable*) Don't blame yourself

DR. PORTER.                No. No, of course not! It's never the Doctor's fault (*takes out cigarette but stubs it out*) A mother looked to me –to save her son –and I failed

DR. TRAYNE.                (*trying to be light*) We all fail

DR. PORTER.                Hah! But, didn't you know? Doctors aren't allowed to fail (*They look at each other*)

INTERCOM.                 Nurses returning from the Zoo please go to the Green Room where a Cake Sale is in progress

DR. TRAYNE.                It could easily have been me

DR. PORTER.                (*laughs harshly*) And me coming the heavy on you for raffling beds

DR. TRAYNE.                (*sheepish*) I suppose it was a bit . . .

DR. PORTER.                At least you didn't kill anyone

DR. TRAYNE.                Not yet

DR. PORTER.                Good ole Rodney! You could make a cat laugh . . . You make me feel old, sometimes. All those women . . . (*As DR. TRAYNE shakes his head*) What do you mean?

DR. TRAYNE.                (*simply*) There aren't any

DR. PORTER.                But what about Gretta- or whatever her name was?

DR. TRAYNE.                All one big joke . . . a laugh

DR. PORTER..                (*protests*) But you're bringing that Swedish woman to the Hospital Dance? . . . You're coming, aren't you?

DR. TRAYNE.                Not with- She gave me up. No, I've asked (*pauses*) Nurse Van Garrdt to the dance

DR. PORTER.                (*lost for words*) Em . . . Yes. Good woman, Nurse V.G. Takes her mother to Lourdes every year (*murmurs*) More than I ever did

DR. TRAYNE.                    (*awkward*) You know, I envy you, John. You have it all made. Wife, kids, nice home, good job (*suddenly breaks off*)

(*An awkward Pause*)

DR. PORTER.                    You wanted to be Head of this clinic, didn't you?

DR. TRAYNE.                    (*looks away*) At the time, yes

DR. PORTER.                    It'll be yours, now

INTERCOM.                    A Cake Sale is in progress

DR. TRAYNE.                    Surely, you're not leaving?

DR. PORTER.                    I may have no choice

INTERCOM.                    All proceeds to the new Leg Transplant Unit

DR. TRAYNE.                    Don't be ridiculous

DR. PORTER.                    Remember Elvis Presley's doctor

DR. TRAYNE.                    This is Ireland

INTERCOM.                    To the Green Room. To the Green Room

DR. PORTER.                    (*almost to self*) Face the music

(*They EXIT to Hospital. NURSE watches. DR. TRAYNE smiles at her*)

NURSE V.G.                    (*phoning*) Mother? Yes, dear. I know . . . Yes . . . yes . . . Pink suits you. Yes, I'm sure . . . Mmmmm. Now, I may be going out on Friday. I haven't . . . decided yet. No. No, just a few hours. You'd be comfy with Mrs. O'Rourke (*tetchy*) Yes, yes, I know the cocoa was cold the last time but she couldn't help the phone ringing while the gas . . . (*sighs*) Mother, I won't . . . be out all night (*sighs*) Yes. . . No, forget it . . . It doesn't matter . . . Just an old dance here at the Hospital. Yes, dear, I'll bring it when I come. NO! I told you not to take them yet or you'll be awake all night again! . . . Yes, I'll remember (*replaces phone*) It doesn't matter, Mother! Only the old Hospital Dance. Probably only asked me cos someone let him down at the last minute. But that's not the point! (*phone goes. She answers*) Yes, Dr. No, Dr. I don't know, Dr. (*mimics DR. PORTER*) You should try Golf, Nurse, or the Canaries (*hard voice*) And you should try my mother, DR. It'd make a change and we all know a change is as good as a rest

(*ENTER TRAVELLER who is coughing*)

TRAVELLER. I wonder did I leave my throat spray behind?

NURSE V.G. *(on phone)* The Wellenough Clinic can I help you? No. You'd better try Hooterstown infirmary *(finds throat spray and gives it to him)*

TRAVELLER. *(taking spray)* Thank you, Nurse

NURSE V.G. You should get that cough seen to

TRAVELLER. Oh! It's nothing, really

NURSE V.G. You can't go around spreading germs

*(ENTER MRS. DUNPHY, breathless)*

MRS. DUNPHY. Nurse! I'm after lookin' all over for him. He didn't come here, did he?

NURSE V.G. No. He did not

TRAVELLER. Thank you, Nurse, and all the best with the holiday *(coughs)*

MRS. DUNPHY. That's a terrible cough

TRAVELLER. Oh! It's just *(coughing fit, uses spray)*

MRS. DUNPHY. What you need is a good dose of Carrigeen, mixed with the juice of a lemon. It's powerful for the Bronicals! Isn't it, Nurse?

TRAVELLER. I'll remember . . . Goodbye

*(He EXITS, coughing)*

MRS. DUNPHY. I hate to hear a cough like that

*(ENTER DR. PORTER. He hesitates, then goes to MRS. DUNPHY)*

DR. PORTER. Please come in

NURSE V.G. *(brings a letter to him)* But Dr. Porter

DR. PORTER. Take any calls, Nurse. I don't want to be disturbed *(shows MRS. DUNPHY into his office)* Please sit down

MRS. DUNPHY. Thank you *(sits)* I'm after lookin' everywhere for Gerard

DR. PORTER.                    Now, Mrs. Dunphy -

MRS. DUNPHY.                (*interrupts*) I even went to see the last girlfriend he used knock round with, but that strap wouldn't tell you the days of the week, if she knew them. Then I got in touch with the Brother. That's the one he went drinking with the night he-

DR. PORTER.                    (*interrupts*) We do have news of your son

MRS. DUNPHY.                Oh! Thank God! Thank God! I was so worried, Dr.

DR. PORTER.                    (*offers her cigarette*) Would you like a cigarette?

MRS. DUNPHY.                (*surprised*) Thank you, Dr.

DR. PORTER.                    (*after lighting her cigarette, then one for himself*) As I was saying . . . there is news -

MRS. DUNPHY.                I knew if anyone could help him it'd be you, Dr. I said to Gerard's Da," If anyone can help it'll be Dr. Porter!" and he says," If Gerard's home isn't good enough for him, he needn't come back!" (*puffs*) That's what he said. A terrible impatient man he is, Dr. Porter

DR. PORTER.                    Now-

MRS. DUNPHY.                Where is he? I hope he didn't do anythin' stupid. If he did, I swear it'll be the last time

DR. PORTER.                    (*quiet*) I'm sure it will

MRS. DUNPHY.                Tell me where he is. Oh! I was right worried that he'd gone off with an older fella like the time he got involved in the shopliftin' (*smiles*) Before your time. Sure, he was only a babby (*puffs*) Where is he?

DR. PORTER.                    He's at the Hospital

MRS. DUNPHY.                (*alarmed*) Hospital? Is he sick or something?

DR. PORTER.                    (*gentle*) Your son has been very sick

MRS. DUNPHY.                How sick? Is he hurt? (*rises*) What happened? Tell me, Dr., what happened

(*Phone rings*)

DR. PORTER.                    *(on Phone)* I told you, Nurse, I don't want to be disturbed

NURSE V.G.                    I'm sorry, Dr., but it's the Bishop about his Asthma

DR. PORTER.                    Put all my calls through to Dr. Trayne

NURSE V.G.                    *(sighs)* Very well, Dr. *(busies herself with charts)*

MRS. DUNPHY.                Is he hurt bad?

DR. PORTER.                    *(awkward, wants to help her but can't)* I'm very sorry to have to tell you . . . your son . . .

MRS. DUNPHY.                Is he . . . ?

DR. PORTER.                    He died earlier today

*(A Pause)*

MRS. DUNPHY.                HolyMotheraGod! *(shocked)* Oh! No, he can't be . . . dead *(sobs)*

DR. PORTER.                    I'll get you a cup of tea

*(He goes to NURSE'S office. MRS. DUNPHY weeps quietly)*

DR. PORTER.                    Nurse, send in some tea at once for Mrs. Dunphy

NURSE V.G.                    Tea, Dr.?

DR. PORTER.                    Yes. Hurry up. The poor woman is in a state of shock

*(NURSE goes to speak. He goes into office. She EXITS)*

MRS. DUNPHY.                *(amid sobs)* God! He was so young, Dr. He had his whole life before him. You saw the way he was. Softhearted! And . . . if he hadda got the help from you and got a bit of a job, sure, he coulda done anything. To go now . . . before even had a chance *(sobs)* Was it *(very low)* Did he *(gropes for words)* Was it bad?

DR. PORTER.                    It wasn't painful

*(NURSE brings in tea, notes MRS. DUNPHY'S distress, withdraws)*

NURSE V.G.                    If you need me, I'm in my office

DR. PORTER.                   *(takes tray from her)* Thank you, Nurse *(pauses)* This will help you, Mrs. Dunphy *(pours two cups of tea)* Do you take sugar?

MRS. DUNPHY.               *(dazed)* What?

DR. PORTER.                 Will you have sugar in your tea?

MRS. DUNPHY.               Two, please

DR. PORTER.                 *(hands her tea. She sobs gently)* Drink your tea

*(He drinks. She looks dazed. A Pause as She sobs)*

DR. PORTER.                 If you're finished, I'll take you over to Hospital

*(He puts cup on table. She copies him. He removes white coat, hangs it on hook. A Pause. SPOT on Coat. She rises, looks helplessly him, sobs. He leads her out, arm around her shoulder. She weeps. NURSE, seeing them, comes to DR. PORTER with a chart)*

NURSE V.G.                  Doctor! I've found the missing chart

DR. PORTER.                 *(to self with a sigh)* Yes

MRS. DUNPHY.               *(as They leave his office)* God knows, No one did more for him than you, Dr.

*(They EXIT to Hospital. NURSE shrugs, sighs, then takes charts to office. Train Sound builds up. Phone rings. She answers)*

NURSE V.G.                  *(on Phone)* The Wellenough Clinic can I help you?

*(Train Sounds crescendo and fade. LIGHTS out except for SPOT on White Coat. This Song is heard)*

***(SONG sung in a Mardyke accent)***

1

Oh! Doctor, Oh! Doctor, Oh! Dear Doctor John!  
Your Cod Liver Oil is so fine and so strong  
But I fear that I soon will go down in the soil  
If me wife don't stop drinking me Cod Liver Oil

2.

One day As I came into Galbally Twon  
I went into a pub and I couldn't sit down

Says I to the Barman” Me legs is near gone”  
Says the Barman to me” Go to Dear Doctor John

3.

I went on the Oil for a year or near more.  
Me legs they were strong but me stomach was sore.  
Me wife then got sick but her battle’s near won,  
Thanks to Cod Liver Oil and to Dear Doctor John.

4.

Oh! Doctor, Oh! Doctor, Oh! Dear Doctor John!  
Your Cod Liver Oil is so fine and so strong  
But I fear that I soon will go down in the soil  
If me wife don’t stop drinking me Cod Liver Oil

*(FADE LIGHTS)*

***(END OF PLAY)***

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