

Scene Four

Morning. Maureen's black dress is lying across the table. Mag enters from the hall carrying a potty of urine, which she pours out down the sink. She exits into the hall to put the potty away and returns a moment later, wiping her empty hands on the sides of her nightie. She spots the black dress and picks it up disdainfully.

Mag Forty pounds just for that skimpy dress? That dress is just skimpy. And laying it around then?

She tosses the dress into a far corner, returns to the kitchen and switches the kettle on, speaking loudly to wake Maureen.

Mag I suppose I'll have to be getting me own Complán too, the hour you dragged yourself in whatever time it was with your ould dress. *(Quietly.)* That dress just looks silly. *(Loudly.)* Go the whole hog and wear no dress would be nearer the mark! *(Quietly.)* Snoring the head off you all night. Making an ould woman get her Complán, not to mention her porridge. Well, I won't be getting me own porridge, I'll tell you that now. I'd be afeard. You won't catch me getting me own porridge. Oh no. You won't be catching me out so easily. *Shark*

Pato *has just entered from the hall, dressed in trousers and pulling on a shirt.*

Pato Good morning there, now, Mrs.

Mag *is startled, staring at Pato dumbfounded.*

Mag Good morning there, now.

Pato Is it porridge you're after?

Mag It is.

Pato I'll be getting your porridge for you, so, if you like.

Mag Oh-h.

Pato Go ahead and rest yourself.

Mag *sits in the rocking chair, keeping her eyes on Pato all the while as he prepares her porridge.*

Pato It's many the time I did get me brother his porridge of a school morning, so I'm well accustomed. *(Pause.)* You couldn't make it to the ould Yanks' do yesterday so?

Mag No.

Pato Your bad hip it was, Maureen was saying.

Mag *(still shocked)* Aye, me bad hip. *(Pause.)* Where's Maureen, now?

Pato Em, having a lie-in a minute or two, she is. *(Pause.)* To tell you the truth, I was all for . . . I was all for creeping out before ever you got yourself up, but Maureen said 'Aren't we all adults, now? What harm?' I suppose we are, but . . . I don't know. It's still awkward, now, or something. D'you know what I mean? I don't know. *(Pause.)* The Yanks'll be touching down in Boston about now anyways. God willing anyways. Aye. *(Pause.)* A good ould send-off we gave them anyways, we did, to send them off. Aye. *(Pause.)* Not a dry eye. *(Pause.)* Aye. *(Pause.)* Was it a mug of Complán too you wanted?

Mag It was.

Pato *fixes her Complán and brings it over.*

Pato You like your Complán so.

Mag I don't.

Pato Do you not, now?

Mag She makes me drink it when I don't like it and forces me.

Pato But Complán's good for you anyways if you're old.

Ma I suppose it's good for me.

Pato It is. Isn't it chicken flavour?

Mag I don't know what flavour.

Pato *(checking box)* Aye, it's chicken flavour. That's the best flavour.

He returns to the porridge.

Mag (*quietly*) With all oul lumps you do make it, never minding flavour. *And* no spoon.

Pato *gives Mag her porridge and sits at the table.*

Pato There you go, now. (*Pause.*) Whatever happened to your hand there, Mrs? Red raw, it is.

Mag Me hand, is it?

Pato Was it a scould you did get?

Mag It *was* a scould.

Pato You have to be careful with scoulds at your age.

Mag Careful, is it? Uh-huh . . .

Maureen *enters from the hall, wearing only a bra and slip, and goes over to Pato.*

Maureen Careful what? We was careful, weren't we, Pato?

Maureen *sits across Pato's lap.*

Pato (*embarrassed*) Maureen, now . . .

Maureen Careful enough, cos we don't need any babies coming, do we? We do have enough babies in this house to be going on with.

Maureen *kisses him at length. Mag watches in disgust.*

Pato Maureen, now . . .

Maureen Just thanking you for a wonderful night, I am, Pato. Well worth the wait it was. *Well* worth the wait.

Pato (*embarrassed*) Good-oh.

Mag Discussing me scoulded hand we was before you breezed in with no clothes!

Maureen Ar, feck your scoulded hand. (*To Pato.*) You'll have to be putting that thing of yours in me again before too long is past, Pato. I do have a taste for it now, I do . . .

Pato Maureen . . .

She kisses him, gets off, and stares at Mag as she passes into the kitchen.

Maureen A mighty oul taste. Uh-huh.

Pato *gets up and idles around in embarrassment.*

Pato Em, I'll have to be off now in a minute anyways. I do have packing to do I do, and whatyoucall . . .

Mag (*pointing at Maureen. Loudly*) *She's* the one that scoulded me hand! I'll tell you that, now! Let alone sitting on stray men! Held it down on the range she did! Poured chippan fat o'er it! Aye, and told the doctor it was me!

Maureen (*pause. Nonplussed, to Pato*) Be having a mug of tea before you go, Pato, now.

Pato (*pause*) Maybe a quick one.

Maureen *pours out the tea. Mag looks back and forth between the two of them.*

Mag Did you not hear what I said?!

Maureen Do you think Pato listens to the smutterings of a senile oul hen?

Mag Senile, is it? (*She holds up her left hand.*) Don't I have the evidence?

Maureen Come over here a second, Pato. I want you to smell this sink for me.

Mag Sinks have nothing to do with it!

Maureen Come over here now, Pato.

Pato Eh?

He goes into the kitchen.

Maureen Smell that sink.

Pato *leans into the sink, sniffs it, then pulls his head away in disgust.*

Mag Nothing to do with it, sinks have!