

**Mag:** I don't like Father Walsh – Welsh – at all.

**Ray** He punched Mairtin Hanlon in the head once, and for no reason.

**Mag** God love us!

**Ray** Aye. Although, now, that was out of character for Father Welsh. Father Welsh seldom uses violence, same as most young priests. It's usually only the older priests go punching you in the head. I don't know why. I suppose it's the way they were brought up.

**Mag** There was a priest the news Wednesday had a babby with a Yank!

**Ray** That's no news at all. That's everyday. It'd be hard to find a priest who hasn't had a babby with a Yank. If he'd punched that babby in the head, that'd be news. Aye. Anyways. Aye. What was I saying? Oh aye, so if I give you the message, Mrs, you'll be passing it on to Maureen, so you will, or will I be writing it down for you?

**Mag** I'll be passing it on.

**Ray** Good-oh. Me brother Pato said to invite yous to our uncle's going-away do. The Riordan's hall out in Carraroe.

**Mag** Is your brother back so?

**Ray** He is.

**Mag** Back from England?

**Ray** Back from England, aye. England's where he was, so that's where he would be back from. Our Yankee uncle's going home to Boston after his holiday and taking those two ugly duckling daughters back with him and that Dolores whatyoucall, Healey or Hooley, so there'll be a little to-do in the Riordan's as a goodbye or a *big* to-do knowing them show-off bastards and free food anyways, so me brother says ye're welcome to come or Maureen anyways, he knows you don't like getting out much. Isn't it you has the bad hip?

**Mag** No.

**Ray** Oh. Who is it has the bad hip so?

**Mag** I don't know. I do have the urine infection.

**Ray** Maybe that's what I was thinking of. And thanks for telling me.

**Mag** Me urine.

**Ray** I know, your urine.

**Mag** And me bad back. And me burned hand.

**Ray** Aye, aye, aye. Anyways, you'll be passing the message on to that one.

**Mag** Eh?

**Ray** You'll be remembering the message to pass it on to that one?

**Mag** Aye.

**Ray** Say it back to me so.

**Mag** Say it back to you?

**Ray** Aye.

**Mag** (*long pause*) About me hip . . . ?

**Ray** (*angrily*) I should've fecking written it down in the first fecking place, I fecking knew! And save all this fecking time!

*He grabs a pen and a piece of paper, sits at the table and writes the message out.*

Talking with a loon!

**Mag** (*pause*) Do me a mug of tea while you're here, Pato. Em, Ray.

**Ray** *Ray* my fecking name is! Pato's me fecking brother!

**Mag** I do forget.

**Ray** It's like talking to a . . . talking to a . . .

**Mag** Brick wall.

**Ray** Brick wall is right.

**Mag** (*pause*) Or some soup do me.

**Ray** *finishes writing and gets up.*

**Ray** There. Forget about soup. The message is there. Point that one in the direction of it when she returns from beyond. The Riordan's hall out in Carraroe. Seven o'clock tomorrow night. Free food. Okay?

**Mag** All right now, Ray. Are you still in the choir nowadays, Ray?

**Ray** I am *not* in the choir nowadays. Isn't it ten years since I was in the choir?

**Mag** Doesn't time be flying?

**Ray** Not since I took an interest in girls have I been in the choir because you do get no girls in choirs, only fat girls and what use are they? No. I go to discos, me.

**Mag** Good enough for yourself.

**Ray** What am I doing standing around here conversing with you? I have left me message and now I am off.

**Mag** Goodbye to you, Ray.

**Ray** Goodbye to you, Mrs.

**Mag** And pull the door.

**Ray** I was going to pull the door anyway . . .

*He pulls the front door shut behind him as he exits.*

(*Off.*) I don't need your advice!

*finish*  
As **Ray's** footsteps fade, **Mag** gets up, reads the message on the table, goes to the kitchen window and glances out, then finds a box of matches, comes back to the table, strikes a match, lights the message, goes to the range with it burning and drops it inside. Sound of footsteps approaching the front door. **Mag** shuffles back to her rocking chair and sits in it just as **Maureen** enters.

**Mag** (*nervously*) Cold, Maureen?

**Maureen** Of course cold.

**Mag** Oh-h.

*She stares at the TV as if engrossed. Maureen sniffs the air a little, then sits at the table, staring at Mag.*

**Maureen** What are you watching?

**Mag** I don't know *what* I'm watching. Just waiting for the news I am.

**Maureen** Oh aye. (*Pause.*) Nobody rang while I was out, I suppose? Ah no.

**Mag** Ah no, Maureen. Nobody did ring.

**Maureen** Ah no.

**Mag** No. Who would be ringing?

**Maureen** No, nobody I suppose. No. (*Pause.*) And nobody visited us either? Ah no.

**Mag** Ah no, Maureen. Who would be visiting us?

**Maureen** Nobody, I suppose. Ah no.

**Mag** *glances at Maureen a second, then back at the TV. Pause.*

**Maureen** *gets up, ambles over to the TV, lazily switches it off with the toe of her shoe, ambles back to the kitchen, staring at Mag as she passes, turns on the kettle, and leans against the cupboards, looking back in Mag's direction.*

**Mag** (*nervously*) Em, apart from wee Ray Dooley who passed.

**Maureen** (*knowing*) Oh, did Ray Dooley pass, now?

**Mag** He passed, aye, and said hello as he was passing.

**Maureen** I thought just now you said there was no visitors.

**Mag** There was no visitors, no, apart from Ray Dooley who passed.