

OUTSIDE MULLINGAR
by John Patrick Shanley

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OUTSIDE MULLINGAR by JPS

Scene 1.

It's December, 2008. The sound of cattle, doves, and wind. The bachelor farm kitchen of a cattle and sheep farm outside Killucan, in Ireland. Over the sink, on a shelf, is an old T.V. A turf stove sits on a torn linoleum floor. A small table by a window still has some uncleared dishes. A vinyl chair, with stuffing visible here and there, is set up in a nook created by a staircase. The first of two doors opens and shuts, Off. The second now opens into the kitchen, revealing TONY REILLY, a wily old Irishman in a serviceable dark suit and Greek fishing cap, followed by ANTHONY REILLY, his son. Tony is 75 or so, and his eyes are sly. Anthony is 42, and his eyes of those of an intense dreamer.

ANTHONY

Jesus, what an experience. My heart feels like a stone. It's a physical sensation.

TONY

Why did you do it? That's what I want to know.

ANTHONY

The whole half of me cut across the shoulders down is horrible. It's grief, that's what it is.

TONY

We'd be done with it now if it wasn't for you.

ANTHONY

Done with what?

TONY

What do you think? Our obligations. Our social obligations.

ANTHONY

Obligations? There are no obligations.

TONY

All that was left to do was goodnight, and sorry for your trouble. But you had to say come by.

ANTHONY

Are you that selfish, Daddy?

TONY

I can't be bothered.

ANTHONY

You don't mean it.

TONY

Ah, you're half woman. You'd better see to those dishes now.

ANTHONY

Jesus, you're right. Mother of God, look at this. They'll think us tramps.

TONY

Your mother would die again if she saw the state of this house.

Anthony puts on an apron and starts washing dishes.

ANTHONY

Don't mention death. And us staring at poor Christopher Muldoon's headstone this very day.

TONY

It took me back to the last time he died.

ANTHONY

The last time he what?

TONY

Chris Muldoon. The last time he died.

ANTHONY

If this is your notion of humor, no one's laughing.

TONY

Where's me pipe?

ANTHONY

Upstairs. And you're not getting it.

TONY

I'll have it when I want. Muldoon died before.

ANTHONY

Would you stop?

TONY

He was a great one for the pub years ago. Never missed a Sunday with his mates. Until that night his son was born.

ANTHONY

The Muldoons never had a son.

TONY

They did. Years gone by. They had a son, but the poor gossoon was born broken and died a few weeks in.

ANTHONY

I couldn't not know.

TONY

It wasn't spoken of.

ANTHONY

Everything's spoken of in Killucan.

TONY

They didn't put it about as the baby was born half size and got smaller from there.

ANTHONY

He shrank?

TONY

Like a sock in the wash. They named him Christopher after his father, and he died right before he was baptized.

ANTHONY

No.

TONY

Yes. Off to limbo he went.

ANTHONY

Don't talk about this when they come.

TONY

So they put it in the paper that Christopher Muldoon was dead, and didn't the lads down in the pub think their mate had passed. They showed up at the wake half pissed, and what do they find sitting there but a little white coffin one foot long. And the one of them cries out, 'Jesus! Look at that! Is that all that's left of Chris Muldoon?'

Tony has a good laugh.

ANTHONY

They thought it was Chris Muldoon?

TONY

Well, it was and it wasn't.

ANTHONY

Chris Muldoon had a son.

TONY

He did. For a minute. Yer man went a bit daft after that. Took up the shotgun and went to war with the birds.

ANTHONY

He did like to shoot the crows.

TONY

We're lucky there's any left in Ireland. He tore holes in the sky with that gun.

Anthony is washing dishes. Tony chuckles. AOIFE walks in, dressed in black. She's 70, in bad health, short of breath, walking with a cane, a bit ravaged with grief.

AOIFE

What's funny?

Anthony tears off the apron.

ANTHONY

Are you alright, Aoife?

AOIFE

Alright, is it? Look at me. I'm in pieces. Get the door.

TONY

Aoife, come and sit with me.

AOIFE

Were you having a laugh?

TONY

We were.

ANTHONY

We were not.

AOIFE

What about?

ANTHONY

Can I get you some tea?

AOIFE

I've eaten.

ANTHONY

A stout then?

AOIFE

In the bottle or the can?

ANTHONY

The bottle.

AOIFE

No, thank you. The bottle tastes of glass.

ANTHONY

Does glass have a taste then?

AOIFE

Glass tastes like teeth.

TONY

Oh the taste of glass, sure I know it. It tastes like mirrors.

AOIFE

I've come to think it's not me tasting the glass, but the glass that's tasting me. I see jaws and teeth and meself chewed up like poor Chrissy.

ANTHONY

So no to the stout. Well, I'm making a cup of tea and you'll have one.

TONY

It's an awful thing to get old.

AOIFE

I know. It happened to me.

ANTHONY

You? You're a girl.

AOIFE

I was this morning, but now I'm old.

TONY

When the husband goes, the wife follows, it's true. You'll be dead in a year.

ANTHONY

She will not. She looks perfect.

TONY

Oh, the fruit still looks good when the worm starts his work.

ANTHONY

Shut up.

AOIFE

I'm gasping like an old hurdy gurdy with the emphysema. I've got the pacemaker on board. You can feel it with your hand. It sticks half out of my chest right where I used to keep the smokes. Justice isn't pretty, is it? Feel it. Put your hand there.

ANTHONY

I will not.

AOIFE

Tony's right. I'll be dead in a year.

TONY

Half a year.

ANTHONY

She will not.

AOIFE

I don't mind. Except to desert Rosemary and leave her orphaned altogether.

ANTHONY

What about you? When are you packing up?

TONY

Me? I'll be dead in two months.

ANTHONY

Just don't. Where is Rosemary?

AOIFE

She's here.

ANTHONY

Where?

AOIFE

Outside.

ANTHONY

In the rain?

AOIFE

She won't smoke in front of me, and she's always smoking, so I never see her. Now, Tony, have you signed the farm over to Anthony?

ANTHONY

What? Just like that you ask him?

AOIFE

I'm thinking of my own situation now. What would be best for Rosemary.

ANTHONY

Right.

AOIFE

Or are you going to wait and leave it to him?

ANTHONY

Who else would he leave it to? The others have all fled.

TONY

I haven't made up me mind.

ANTHONY

About what?

TONY

I would have thought yer man Chris Muldoon would have laid out a plan before he was done.

AOIFE

He did. What was his to leave, he left to me.

ANTHONY

As he should have done.

AOIFE

It's only arrangements for Rosemary I'm thinking of now. The future.

ANTHONY

Rosemary's standing out there in the rain?

AOIFE

She is. Smoking. She always manages to find a dry spot though, not so much for herself, as for the smokes.

ANTHONY

Well, she'll catch pneumonia.

AOIFE

No, she's crazy. The cracked ones never get sick. Her father's curse is hers. Stubborn to the point of madness.

ANTHONY

I never noticed it.

AOIFE

That's because you never notice anything, Anthony. You're famous all over Westmeath for what goes by you.

ANTHONY

What do you mean, you don't know if the farm is coming to me? Are you serious?

TONY

I don't see a clear path.

ANTHONY

From where to where?

TONY

From me to you. The way your eyes are set in your head, and the color of them--it has to be said, it's not right.

ANTHONY

Here we go. Are you saying that my eyes are a mistake?

TONY

I'm saying that you come up from some other people. It's as plain as Tuesday. Your eyes are from Limerick.

ANTHONY

My eyes are from Limerick, are they? That I have to listen to this.

TONY

The Reilly's are from Cavan.

AOIFE

The Muldoon's are from Fermanagh.

TONY

And it's the Kelly's that are from Limerick. There's no argument to be made. It's like wool and white paper. You're more Kelly than Reilly.

AOIFE

He has his mother's face, that's true.

ANTHONY

But my name is Reilly. I'm a Reilly.

TONY

No. The Reillys have more bone. You're Kelly. You take after John Kelly, and that man was half ghost and mad as the full moon.

ANTHONY

Stop there.

TONY

I won't stop. You're the same. It's not in you to stand on your ground, Anthony. It has to be said. You never stood up on the farm like a king.

ANTHONY

I've been breaking my back for this place since I was five.

TONY

Not the same.

ANTHONY

As what?

TONY

You don't stand on the land and draw strength from it. As I did. Till Mammy died.

AOIFE

Don't feel bad. Chris Muldoon didn't like farming either. He told me more than once. He only loved life when he was in bed or eating beef. The farm took it out of him.

ANTHONY

The two of you. You know your whole generation has killed this country with your negativity.

TONY

It wasn't us that went boom and bust.

ANTHONY

No, you just went bust and stayed bust!

TONY

Point me towards heaven then.

ANTHONY

Careful what you say. Heaven might hear.

TONY

I do say it.

ANTHONY

Well, don't!

TONY

Why? Are you going to get weepy?

ANTHONY

You're the one for that!

TONY

(To Aoife.) He cries at the tv.

ANTHONY

No more. You broke it.

TONY

And good riddance! He made me watch the Olympics till I almost went blind!

ANTHONY

Would you complain about the Olympics now? Nothing suits ya. The Olympics were grand! Weren't they, Aoife?

AOIFE

Chris loved the torch. You know, when they light the torch. He said it was better than Easter Sunday. I didn't care for it.

TONY

And there was no soccer.

ANTHONY

There was. They called it football.

TONY

Not an Irishman on the field!

ANTHONY

Ireland took three medals!

TONY

Not in soccer!

ANTHONY

Nevertheless three medals is not nothing!

TONY

No gold. Two of them bronze. And all in boxing. Sure, we're good with our fists. No surprise there.

ANTHONY

There's more than one way to land a blow.

AOIFE

And the whole show in China, with them parading. 'Oh, look at us. We're Chinese.' Rosemary was taken with them. Sent away for travel books.

But she'll never go. She'll never get further than Mullingar, that one.

ANTHONY

That's it. If only for want of better company, I'm getting Rosemary.

AOIFE

She doesn't like you, you know.

ANTHONY

What?

AOIFE

Rosemary has a grudge with you.

ANTHONY

She does not.

AOIFE

She does.

ANTHONY

She does not.

AOIFE

You pushed her and she fell down.

ANTHONY

What are you talking about? Pushed her? When? I never did.

AOIFE

You did.

ANTHONY

When?

AOIFE

When she was six. It was your birthday. She was doing a little ballet and you pushed her down. And she holds it against you.

ANTHONY

Is that what she says?

AOIFE

She does.

TONY

You pushed a little girl?

ANTHONY

I don't remember, but if I did, I would have been twelve.

AOIFE

Thirteen. That day.

ANTHONY

Thirteen then.

AOIFE

I wouldn't bring it up. She's still hot about it.

ANTHONY

Why would I bring up something that happened thirty years ago?

TONY

So you admit it.

ANTHONY

Does it ever seem to you that this country is just too small?

TONY

Maybe you should emigrate?

ANTHONY

And what would you do with the land if I did?

TONY

Give it to the church.

AOIFE

Well, don't do that.

TONY

If no one loves the land, then why not?

ANTHONY

I love it.

TONY

You don't. I've seen you with your magazines. He's mad for the machines. He'd sell the land and buy a helicopter if no one was watching.

ANTHONY

I'd love to get a helicopter. I'd ride it to the moon.

TONY

There. You see. You're not a farming man.

ANTHONY

I'm more the farmer than you ever were.

TONY

You take no joy in it.

ANTHONY

But I do it. Who modernized the shed? You? I don't think so. Who moved the bales from the box shape to the round?

TONY

I don't like the new bales.

ANTHONY

Why not?

TONY

They're too big. You can't sit on them.

ANTHONY

Sit on your chair and thank your Maker for a modern son. You'd be bankrupt and the farm gone if it wasn't for my agricultural mind.

TONY

But you don't love it. There's no joy.

ANTHONY

Don't criticize me, Daddy. Some of us don't have joy. But we do what we must.

Is a man who does what he must though he feels no pleasure less of a man than one who's happy? You'd grudge me my magazines, you old cutthroat? Living as I do here with nothing but the rain and cold, and Mammy gone? So I look at the electronics to take my thoughts away. You know I'll tell ya. Sometimes lately I can't breathe in this house. You'd hold back the farm, would ya? You stun me. You stun me.

Anthony goes out.

TONY

Well, look at him.

AOIFE

Don't tease him then.

TONY

I wasn't teasing.

AOIFE

You were, and don't. He's sad. You know he feels more deeply than most. God love him. He never got over Fiona.

TONY

He was sixteen.

AOIFE

A tender age.

TONY

He is now forty two.

AOIFE

Time means nothing. Love is love.

TONY

She never had use for him. I never saw it. The whole thing happened in his mind.

AOIFE

And where else do things happen? We all can't have the love I had. Or you. Look at this. More tears. Oh, where do they come from? What's it all for, Tony?

TONY

Ask a priest.

AOIFE

I've buried husband, son. Was I only born to bury and be buried?

TONY

That's about it maybe.

AOIFE

Don't say it. That leaves off the best bit.

TONY

And what would that be?

AOIFE

The middle. The middle is the best part. The middle of anything is the heart of the thing. I think of Rosemary.

TONY

She's only watching the clock spin, waiting for you to go.

AOIFE

I know.

TONY

But she's waited too long. They both did. Mine and yours.

AOIFE

It's natural.

TONY

But with Rosemary, it's a shame.

AOIFE

She's had no lack of men come by.

TONY

Oh I know. But youth and beauty pass smartly by, and that parade has gone.

AOIFE

You'd think a girl of twenty five is past prime.

TONY

Twenty five? She'll never see thirty five again.

AOIFE

You'll not see tomorrow if you keep talking.

TONY

I will see it. I have a cool eye on tomorrow. The future of this place is what keeps me sharp. And the funeral today reminded me that time is in short supply. Biscuit?

AOIFE

I'm stuffed. But you're not serious what you were saying? You can't begrudge Anthony the farm?

TONY

There's no marriage in the man. He's strange. Stranger than you know. He takes after John Kelly and that's a fact. I'm sworn by an oath or I'd tell ya. So what happens then? When he's gone, it's all gone.

AOIFE

Either way, it's all gone.

TONY

No. There's another route.

AOIFE

What?

TONY

America.

AOIFE

What?

TONY

I have my brother there, Frank, and he has a son. Adam.

AOIFE

You would not.

TONY

I'll do what's right. Watch me. I will.

AOIFE

You can't do it. What would become of Anthony?

TONY

There'd be money for him. He'd move to Dublin and love it.

AOIFE

He'd move to Dublin and die you mean. Who the hell is Adam?

TONY

He's a Reilly. Frank brought him last Christmas. You met him.

AOIFE

The square little fella?

TONY

He loves the land.

AOIFE

I remember him. He looked like a stump.

TONY

He looks like a farmer. He's a Reilly through and through. He has hands like feet.

AOIFE

He laughed at the wrong things.

TONY

He was born to come home, that one.

AOIFE

This is a folly, Tony Reilly, and don't you do it.

TONY

So Rosemary's getting your farm there?

AOIFE

Of course. Who else?

TONY

It makes sense. There's some kind of hope there. She may yet marry a man who has a child. Or if she jumps on it, she could even squeeze one out.

AOIFE

I don't see it.

TONY

Once you're gone, she'll give a fella a chance.

AOIFE

She hates them all.

TONY

She has a better shot than Anthony.

AOIFE

Tony, don't lose faith in your boy.

TONY

I've been patience itself. I gave him his mother's ring three years gone and he's done nothing with it. And he never will. That's not my fault. He has strange ideas.

AOIFE

You're going the wrong way.

TONY

This is my family's farm a hundred and twenty years and it won't stop with Anthony. No, it will not.

AOIFE

Things end when God says they do. (Stricken.) Oh, I can't believe my Chrissy's gone.

TONY

Aoife.

AOIFE

Half my house is gone.

TONY

Should we speak of it?

AOIFE

What?

TONY

A topic of concern. The topic.

AOIFE

What are you talking about?

TONY

There was no point while Chris was living.

AOIFE

Are you taking a step towards me?

TONY

What? Jesus, no. The land. I'm talking about the land. The strip of forty meters like a blockade in the middle of my driveway, keeping my house from the road.

AOIFE

You have only to open the gate.

TONY

And close it. And open the second gate, and close that as well.

AOIFE

Are you that lazy?

TONY

Have you gotten out of my car in the rain and drowned yourself working those damned gates? And all over a patch of nothing.

AOIFE

It rains on us all.

TONY

I'll give you a fair price for it.

AOIFE

Did you broach this with Chrissy?

TONY

I did, and never had he a word in reply. But he's passed over now.

AOIFE

Just.

TONY

He was a good man, but stubborn.

AOIFE

He was a bulldog. That man would fight the sky.

TONY

He did, and the sky won.

AOIFE

In truth it did. He's gone to God.

TONY

It's mine.

AOIFE

It is not.

TONY

It should be. Can you deny it?

AOIFE

I do deny it.

TONY

The one reason you own that bit a land is hate and spite.

AOIFE

That's two reasons.

TONY

Hate and spite and a love of the upper hand.

AOIFE

What kind of twist is that on the truth? You were down on your luck and Chris took pity.

TONY

There was no pity in it. All I needed was the loan of two hundred pounds and for that he took my right of way.

AOIFE

You sold it to him.

TONY

It was a loan.

AOIFE

It was not. I have a bill of sale.

TONY

I was back to him in six months with the money.

AOIFE

He didn't need the money.

TONY

He didn't need that bit a land, but he held on to it thirty years.

AOIFE

Yes he did.

TONY

Why did he? Why?

AOIFE

Maybe there was no why.

TONY

No. Something went unsaid.

AOIFE

The situation does you no real harm.

TONY

It does you no good.

AOIFE

Leave it. Why go into it now?

TONY
Because my time is almost done.

AOIFE
Tut tut.

TONY
And I need to pass the farm down as it was given me.

AOIFE
To an American?

TONY
He has an Irish passport.

AOIFE
He's no Irishman.

TONY
He means to marry Irish. Some day.

AOIFE
Who'd have him?

TONY
Half the women of Killucan and beyond Killucan.

AOIFE
I'm glad you can speak for so many.

TONY
I need that roadfront back, Aoife.

AOIFE
Why?

TONY
Frank's son Adam won't buy the farm without it.

AOIFE
So he's buying it. Adam is.

TONY
I have to give Anthony a stake. I can't put him out on the road with nothing.

I'll get a fair price with Adam and keep the family's name going to boot. But I need access to the road.

AOIFE

I see. Well. I don't own it.

TONY

What?

AOIFE

The frontage Chrissy bought from you I do not own. All the rest is mine, but not that.

TONY

Did he sell it to someone else?

AOIFE

No. He gave it to Rosemary.

TONY

Just the little bit in front of my house? Blocking my house from the road. Just that?

AOIFE

Yes. He signed it over to her when she was a wee girl.

TONY

A girl?

AOIFE

Not more than seven.

TONY

He gave a seven year old girl my right of way?

AOIFE

She asked him for it.

TONY

What did she want with it?

AOIFE

It's the spot where Anthony pushed her down. She was all in a rage, and nothing would soothe her but to know he was banished from that spot.

TONY

You mean I've been opening and closing two gates for thirty years to please the pride of a vengeful child?

AOIFE

Yes. And now, if you want that land, you'll have to get around her.

TONY

Talk to her, Aoife. She'll listen to you.

AOIFE

I'm not stepping into this. If she'd been in the Olympics boxing, sure Ireland would have taken the gold.

Scene 2

Outside. The manger. Straw and stone. It's raining, but there's an overhang that shelters. Anthony arrives to find Rosemary smoking her pipe. It's dark.

ANTHONY

Rosemary? What are you doing out here, away from the house?

ROSEMARY

Smoking.

ANTHONY

Out here in the rain?

ROSEMARY

There's a bit of roof.

ANTHONY

And it's dark as tar.

ROSEMARY

I can see.

ANTHONY

You have the eyes of a goat. You're smoking a pipe now?

ROSEMARY

I ran out of cigs. It's Da's ole chimney.

Anthony goes into the shed and
switches on a light.

I suppose I can't blame you whatever you choose to do
on the night your father died.

ROSEMARY (cont'd)

He died three days ago.

ANTHONY

During the general time that your father died.

ROSEMARY

So I have special rights tonight?

ANTHONY

I suppose.

ROSEMARY

Then I'll use them. Will you answer me a question?

ANTHONY

What?

ROSEMARY

Have you ever heard from Fiona?

ANTHONY

Is the human race against me this night?

ROSEMARY

Don't answer then.

ANTHONY

Never. I have never heard from Fiona since our
childhood days.

ROSEMARY

And your heart's still broken?

ANTHONY

Yes.

ROSEMARY

Do you know where she is?

ANTHONY

I do. In Wicklow. With a husband and three daughters.

ROSEMARY

Why didn't you just get over her like other people do?

ANTHONY

I don't know what other people do and I don't care. Why do you do what you do? Why do you stay over there in that lonely house?

ROSEMARY

It's not lonely.

ANTHONY

You should fly. Once your Mam... Once you're alone. You should make plans to fly away.

ROSEMARY

Why don't you fly?

ANTHONY

It may come to that.

ROSEMARY

Ha. You'll never leave.

ANTHONY

I might. Tony's up to mischief.

ROSEMARY

What kind?

ANTHONY

He says I don't love the farm.

ROSEMARY

Do you?

ANTHONY

He says I'm not a Reilly.

ROSEMARY

Then what are you?

ANTHONY

He claims I'm a Reilly in name, but a Kelly in the face. He's making noises like he might not sign the farm over to me.

ROSEMARY

Well, that's not right.

ANTHONY

He's always been half craft. Not like your Da, may he rest in peace. He was full on.

ROSEMARY

It was me that found him. I looked in on him, and then I was going to go, but for his hand. His one hand lay outside the sheet and I found myself looking at it. And it came across me that there was no life in it and he was dead. Then I called, and Mam came, and her face went white, so I gave her a drink of water. But didn't the glass have his teeth in it.

ANTHONY

No.

ROSEMARY

Oh it was awful. She was wild. She won't drink from a glass since.

ANTHONY

I can testify to that. She said it tastes like teeth.

ROSEMARY

Says it tastes like teeth.

They laugh.

ANTHONY

But really. Your Da. He was here and now he's not. Where do we go? Do we go into the sky?

ROSEMARY

The ground.

ANTHONY
Then what's the sky for?

ROSEMARY
Now. It's for now.

ANTHONY
Now. Seize the day, is that it? Seize it and do what
though? What do you do?

ROSEMARY
Me? I smoke.

ANTHONY
You should quit that.

ROSEMARY
Why?

ANTHONY
I don't know but do it.

ROSEMARY
Girl needs a reason.

He looks into the night.

ANTHONY
I hear a voice sometimes when I'm in the fields, and
the voice says Go.

ROSEMARY
I came upon a patch of white heather this morning.

ANTHONY
White? You did not. That's only in shops.

ROSEMARY
Wild.

ANTHONY
Wild white heather? That's good luck.

ROSEMARY
They say. So is Tony right? Do you not love the farm?

ANTHONY

Love? I hate it for a prison. I came up out of it like a tree and here I am with it around me.

ROSEMARY

Then let Tony do what he wants and follow the voice.

ANTHONY

Do you mean it?

ROSEMARY

I'm saying it.

ANTHONY

Run off. Where? The airport?

ROSEMARY

Take Lufthansa. I hear it's good.

ANTHONY

No. It's all here. It's sitting on top of me.

ROSEMARY

The voice said Go.

ANTHONY

And what am I? St. Joan following voices? My life is fixed down with a rock on each corner.

ROSEMARY

By what?

ANTHONY

There's the green fields, and the animals living off them. And over that there's us, living off the animals. And over that there's that which tends to us and lives off us. Whatever that is, it holds me here. No. The voice I hear in the fields wants me in the fields.

ROSEMARY

Then why does it say go?

ANTHONY

I don't know. Everything doesn't tally.

ROSEMARY

I don't feel the land like you do.

ANTHONY

Count your blessings.

ROSEMARY

Your eyes have pagan things in them sometimes.

ANTHONY

My eyes, is it? Your mother says you're mad.

ROSEMARY

I'm not.

ANTHONY

I am. Should we go in?

ROSEMARY

How are you mad?

ANTHONY

People don't appeal to me that much.

ROSEMARY

That's normal. Who likes people? Nobody.

ANTHONY

I don't know what I'm saying. I'm just more with nature...than people. Stories I heard when I was a boy got hold of me. Should we go in then?

ROSEMARY

I'm grieving.

ANTHONY

Of course you are. When my mother died, Jesus, I couldn't see colors anymore.

ROSEMARY

My Mam's coming apart. She needs new hips, but she can't get 'em cause her lungs and heart are cooked. She's not long for it.

ANTHONY

You think not?

ROSEMARY

I know.

ANTHONY

And will you take over the farm?

ROSEMARY

I will.

ANTHONY

But you can't.

ROSEMARY

I must though.

ANTHONY

It's too much.

ROSEMARY

You do it.

ANTHONY

I don't. And what I do get done, it murders me. It's no work for a woman, I'll tell you that.

ROSEMARY

I can hold my own.

ANTHONY

What about pulling calves?

ROSEMARY

I'll hire someone then.

ANTHONY

Takes money.

ROSEMARY

We're alright. What would Tony do with the farm if he didn't leave it to you?

ANTHONY

He might give it to the church.

ROSEMARY

He's too cheap. He'd sell.

ANTHONY

He wouldn't get his price for it.

ROSEMARY

Why not?

ANTHONY

Who would take it on without the road?

ROSEMARY

Ah. Right.

ANTHONY

No one would sign on without that strip of land by the road.

ROSEMARY

Maybe not.

ANTHONY

Be realistic. No one else would open two gates just to get to your own front door.

ROSEMARY

You do.

ANTHONY

And look at me.

ROSEMARY

So you're lucky then.

ANTHONY

How am I lucky?

ROSEMARY

He can't sell without the right of way. He's too cheap to give it to the church. So you'll come to it by default.

ANTHONY

Unless your Mammy sells it back to him now that your Da's gone.

ROSEMARY

Why would she do that?

ANTHONY

Well, it's the right thing.

ROSEMARY

I don't know.

ANTHONY

Oh you do. It was part of our farm for well wide of a hundred years.

ROSEMARY

And then it wasn't.

ANTHONY

It does your place no good.

ROSEMARY

I think it does.

ANTHONY

You couldn't graze one heifer on that patch. Half of it's taken up with fence.

ROSEMARY

Do you mind it so much?

ANTHONY

I do. At the first gate I see my father's stupidity, and at the second, your man's greed. May he rest in peace.

ROSEMARY

Greed is it? That little bit cost us two hundred pounds.

ANTHONY

Even thirty years ago two hundred pounds was nothing.

ROSEMARY

It was two hundred pounds. He could've bought himself a new shotgun.

ANTHONY

God love him, him with the shotgun. He'd go after the crows like Satan.

ROSEMARY
He loved hating the crows.

ANTHONY
He did.

ROSEMARY
He was perfect.

ANTHONY
He was, he was. Do you hate me?

ROSEMARY
Why do you ask?

ANTHONY
I hear you hate me. Your Mam said.

ROSEMARY
Well, she's talking a lot tonight, isn't she? I don't hate you. I just don't like you.

ANTHONY
Why not?

ROSEMARY
I'm fed up. You're a bit of a lump.

ANTHONY
How's that?

ROSEMARY
You never do anything.

ANTHONY
I work all day and half the night.

ROSEMARY
To keep things going on the way they already were. But where's your stamp?

ANTHONY
I'm not in the business of stamping. I'm in the business of carrying on what was going on when I stepped on the bus.

ROSEMARY

But then it's like you're nobody.

ANTHONY

I don't need to shout my name. God knows me. I'd as soon go unnoticed.

ROSEMARY

But you have to push back, man, now and then, or they'll eat you alive, the people of this world. You can't let people, Tony or no one, destroy your chance. Go in there and face him down.

ANTHONY

I don't like a fight.

ROSEMARY

Who does?

ANTHONY

Half of Ireland. Just not me.

ROSEMARY

See beyond the fight to the prize then.

ANTHONY

It's not in me to live that way.

ROSEMARY

So you'd let him run ruin over you?

ANTHONY

Maybe. I don't know. Oh, get out of this place why don't you? The land isn't holding you.

ROSEMARY

It is though.

ANTHONY

Don't be a lump yourself. You saw the white heather. Let it be a sign. Get past Mullingar. I'm useless but not you. Go somewhere and set up fresh.

ROSEMARY

I'll do what I want and you can go to the devil!

ANTHONY

What are you hot about?

ROSEMARY

Trying to push me out.

ANTHONY

I'm the one on the point of being driven out maybe.

ROSEMARY

Maybe. Have you ever seen Swan Lake?

ANTHONY

What's that?

ROSEMARY

A ballet.

ANTHONY

A ballet? I've never seen a ballet.

ROSEMARY

Alright. I'm the White Swan.

ANTHONY

When did you see a ballet?

ROSEMARY

My Da took me to one.

ANTHONY

Doesn't sound like him.

ROSEMARY

It was him. He took me to Swan Lake and he told me I was the White Swan. And so I am.

ANTHONY

I thought he hated birds.

ROSEMARY

Just crows.

ANTHONY

A man like that at the ballet. I guess I never knew him.

ROSEMARY

To watch him walk was to know there was grace in the world. He had the blood of kings in him.

ANTHONY

He kept his counsel like a king. That's sure. No one knew his mind.

ROSEMARY

I did. He wasn't much of a talker, but he always had his reasons. As do I.

ANTHONY

Then tell me this if you know. Why did he buy that right of way?

ROSEMARY

Because your Da came begging.

ANTHONY

You'd like to think so. My man just wanted a loan is all.

ROSEMARY

Either way.

ANTHONY

There was no hat in hand.

ROSEMARY

Bloody hell, his hand was out.

ANTHONY

Would you stand there and lord it over us?

ROSEMARY

Have you never heard of gratitude?

ANTHONY

I'll tell you what I've never heard. I've never heard a decent word from you or yours on the subject of your family's shortcoming!

ROSEMARY

Shortcoming? What shortcoming?

ANTHONY

Sure if you want I can name it! The Muldoon's larceny.

ROSEMARY

The Muldoon's what?

ANTHONY

It should wake you at night. What your people have done!

ROSEMARY

What WE'VE done?! What have we done? You should thank Christ for a good neighbor!

ANTHONY

Bollocks to that! You've had us by the throat for thirty years with your landgrabbing and why? Why did your Da want our right of way?

ROSEMARY

(overlapping)

For me! For me! You eegit boy! You pushed me down, that's why! You shoved me down and left me crying in the yellow grass. And I would have mine back I would, and ran to my Da. So now you have two gates between you and what's yours, and I hope you like it, because there's none to blame but yourself!

ANTHONY

You don't mean it.

ROSEMARY

I do.

ANTHONY

Jesus, Mary, it was you behind that?

ROSEMARY

You shoved me like I was nothing.

ANTHONY

I don't even remember the day.

ROSEMARY

I remember. And I own that parcel and you do not.

ANTHONY

You mean your Mam.

ROSEMARY

No. Me. I own it. And I'll never sell it.

ANTHONY

Why not?

ROSEMARY

Because MY voice says no.

ANTHONY

Fine. Do what you want then. The lot of ya are too much for me altogether.

ROSEMARY

Because you won't fight for what's yours. Why don't you move to Wicklow? You could moon after your lost love till death takes you.

ANTHONY

I'll ignore ya now.

ROSEMARY

Nothing new there.

ANTHONY

I don't understand you. Why bring up Fiona?

ROSEMARY

The Black Swan.

ANTHONY

What do you do with your time? Why have you never married?

ROSEMARY

Why haven't you?

ANTHONY

I was ruined after Fiona.

ROSEMARY

Fiona, Fiona.

ANTHONY

I know. But there it is.

ROSEMARY

Well, I'm thinking of going to China.

ANTHONY

Just like that.

ROSEMARY

That's right. In a flash.

ANTHONY

Fine. Have a nice trip. Take Lufthansa. When?

ROSEMARY

When I'm ready.

ANTHONY

The Olympics caught your fancy, hey?

ROSEMARY

I like the Chinese. They're proud.

ANTHONY

Why do you look at me when you say that?

ROSEMARY

Because your pride is where?

ANTHONY

What would I be proud about?

ROSEMARY

You're right. What would ya? I'm stumped.

ANTHONY

I'm just a long suffering man. It's no one's fault.
I'm not to be understood, not even by me.

ROSEMARY

Oh, what are you now? Deep waters?

ANTHONY

I'm nothing. You saw your father gone as I have this day. Chris Muldoon gone! He was part of everything. Now that part's where? Like the fog wiped from a glass. And what am I, given that? A tiny thing certainly. Jesus. My own father scheming to rob me of my farm.

ROSEMARY

Then fight for it.

ANTHONY

Or wash my hands.

ROSEMARY

So you're Pontius Pilate?

ANTHONY

Maybe so. It's too much. There's no reward for the work I've done and it must be that I don't deserve any. It must be that I've done nothing right.

ROSEMARY

You mean you've done nothing.

ANTHONY

I'm mad tired for a man who's done nothing.

ROSEMARY

Then wake up and live. Oh, do what you want. You always have. And you see where it's gotten you. You're on the point of being pushed out.

ANTHONY

Pushed out? When was I in? Among people? They'd eat the legs out from under ya. You know. You know what? I tell ya. I've had enough. I'm going flying.

ROSEMARY

Flying is it? Where's your wings?

ANTHONY

Walking.

ROSEMARY

Go then. Stay off the road.

ANTHONY

No road for me. Off into the fields. I'll see you at church. Or I won't. Turn off the lights when you're done.

ROSEMARY

Take note of your cattle. You're like a brother to them.

Anthony is gone.

ANTHONY (OFF)

I'll see you at church.

ROSEMARY

'There's the green fields, and the animals living off them. And over that there's us, living off the animals. And over us there's that which tends to us.' When you say those things, Anthony, I know that I have a soul.

She heads back towards the house.

ROSEMARY (cont'd)

Good luck to him. And to me.

Scene 3.

Back in the kitchen we find Tony and Aoife.

TONY

It was a fine turn out. It was, though.

AOIFE

It's a shame, the lack of parking at our church. They should charge.

TONY

They should charge, should they? Half of Killucan would renounce the faith.

AOIFE

What grade of faith have they then?

TONY

Not much.

AOIFE

And you? Do you have faith?

TONY

Me? I'm barely devout since Mary passed. It was Mary kept the candles lit.

AOIFE

I believe.

TONY

In what?

AOIFE

I believe in everything.

TONY

You do not.

AOIFE

I believe in everything. There she is. It's time we were off.

TONY

Stay on your chair.

AOIFE

No. This is it. I'm up.

The outer door opens and shuts.
The inner door opens and Rosemary enters.

ROSEMARY

Back up. Sit down again.

TONY

Is Anthony behind you?

ROSEMARY

He went walking in the fields. Or flying.

TONY

Oh Jesus, once he starts in with that, he won't be seen till morning.

AOIFE

We should say our goodbyes, Rosemary.

ROSEMARY

No. Stay down. I'm going to make tea.

AOIFE

We should leave Tony sleep.

ROSEMARY

No we shouldn't.

TONY

Alright then. I'd have a cup.

AOIFE

What's that look on you?

ROSEMARY

I hope you have no part in this?

AOIFE

In what?

ROSEMARY

What we say now will never be repeated. Tell me there's no truth in what I just heard.

AOIFE

What did you hear?

ROSEMARY

This is Anthony's farm.

TONY

Oh, Jesus. Don't involve yourself, Rosemary.

AOIFE

Tony's right, Rosemary. This is their own business.

ROSEMARY

Steer clear, mother. Tony Reilly, do yourself a service and do not cross me.

TONY

Easy. Don't overstep now.

ROSEMARY

Since Mary died your judgement, which was never good, has faltered worse.

AOIFE

She's right about that, Tony.

TONY

She's nothing. I think I can manage my own farm.

ROSEMARY

If that were true, you would own it. To the road.

TONY

I've heard your name's on that strip of land, Rosemary. And I can tell you now, you will be selling that to me.

AOIFE

I told him it's yours. Don't fault me.

ROSEMARY

I don't. (To Tony) I fault you. Why would you think of denying Anthony what's his?

TONY

Leave it.

ROSEMARY

If you want to talk to me about the road, you will talk to me about Anthony.

TONY

What there is to say I won't say. I am bound by an oath, made on a Bible, not to speak of certain things.

ROSEMARY

About Anthony?

TONY

His mother made me swear. Have faith that I know what I'm about.

ROSEMARY

I have no such faith. You've kept him down all his life. And you've done it with the promise of this farm.

TONY

Not a word of truth. I've shielded him on every side. And his interests will be seen to, but the farm will not be his.

ROSEMARY

You have no idea what you're up against, Tony Reilly. You might as well try to stop the calendar from naming the days. I've been older than all of you since I was born, and sure I ache for my own youth. I pray the day may yet come, but not at the price of now.

AOIFE

What are you talking at?

ROSEMARY

When a person knows what will be, and I have always known, the like of you should stand aside.

AOIFE

What are you saying? What do you know?

ROSEMARY

Anthony Reilly and I were born on two farms side by side, and we will die side by side. And no old fool trying to show his muscle at sunset will bungle that.

AOIFE

Rosemary, you have secrets of your own, and once they're out, they're out.

ROSEMARY

I have no secrets. I buried my dear father today, and I'll lose no more.

TONY

Are you in love with Anthony?

ROSEMARY

More than love.

TONY

Don't be.

ROSEMARY

I don't care what happens beyond one thing. I will be on the one farm and he will be on the next.

AOIFE

Rose.

ROSEMARY

Mam, look at me and take pity. You will leave me soon.

AOIFE

Sure it's true. I can't deny it.

ROSEMARY

I feel that grief never more than today. But what preserves me is knowing there are safe roads after.

TONY

He's not normal.

ROSEMARY

I don't care what he is, and if you're bound by an oath, keep it! I don't care about anything but that that man have his land and my house be hard by!

AOIFE

Rosemary.

TONY

He'll never marry.

ROSEMARY

Then neither will I. And he will be in his house and I will be in mine. Here's your tea.

She serves the tea.

AOIFE

There is much of your father in you.

ROSEMARY

I'm proud to know it.

AOIFE

Two bulldogs.

ROSEMARY

No, I'm a swan.

TONY

I will not let this farm die with Anthony.

ROSEMARY

'You will not do this. You will not do that.' So what will you do?

AOIFE

He means to sell it to his brother's son.

ROSEMARY

In America?

TONY

He'll come and take over.

ROSEMARY

And go through the two gates?

TONY

He wants the road.

ROSEMARY

I'm here to tell you he will never get it.

TONY

You will not tell me how to dispose of my property!

ROSEMARY

And you'll have no sway over mine! Drink your tea.

TONY

Don't order me in my own house!

ROSEMARY

No one owns a house.

TONY

I own mine.

ROSEMARY

It was handed to you.

TONY

I gave my life to it.

ROSEMARY

And Anthony his.

TONY

He's not a Reilly.

ROSEMARY

Is that what you're about? Your name?

TONY

He takes after his mother's father John Kelly.

AOIFE

He does. In the face.

TONY

And in the head. John Kelly put his dog on trial for slander.

ROSEMARY

When was that? A hundred years ago?

TONY

Less than seventy.

ROSEMARY

You're the one who's daft.

TONY

Say what you want. Blood will tell.

ROSEMARY

I think it's talking right now a lot of bloody nonsense.

TONY

Anthony doesn't love the farm.

ROSEMARY

What's got hold of you isn't love, old man!

TONY

Who do you think you are?

ROSEMARY

It's pride.

AOIFE

She's right, Tony. You're out of bounds.

TONY

Oh you're the referee now?

AOIFE

What mother isn't? Now stop trying to bully the room.

TONY

This is my kitchen!

ROSEMARY

And look at it! You're lucky you're not poisoned with the dirt! Do the cattle eat off the table and drink from the sink? There's grease on the wall and a pizza box under the chair! Now drink your tea, you damn savage! You can't be the master of what comes after your time, and your time is nigh well done.

AOIFE

Now don't say a thing like that. It's morbid.

ROSEMARY

If he can play at destiny, so can I. Promise me you'll drop this plan or I swear by the stars, I'll kill you meself.

TONY

I'll promise nothing.

ROSEMARY

Do you think I won't lay hands on you? I'll deal you a mortal blow!

AOIFE

Rosemary!

TONY

If Anthony were a man through and through, if he were a Reilly, he would have at me himself.

ROSEMARY

If you were a man down to your heart, you would not have hurt him with your loveless ways.

TONY

What are you talking about?

ROSEMARY

It's Anthony who loves those fields. Not you. So what if his love makes him suffer? You just want to go on and on. You're selfish.

AOIFE

And what are you?

ROSEMARY

I'm strength. For now.

TONY

He'll never be the man I am.

ROSEMARY

Well, thank God for that. He's done everything for you. You've sat here like a king for twenty years. Tell me. When was the last time you stayed up with a ewe or clipped the hedge or even killed a rat? You're fooling no one with that captain's hat. Anthony runs the show and you're nothing but the dummy in the window.

TONY

I've earned some rest.

ROSEMARY

Lie down! Who's stopping you?

TONY

But he'll never marry. Look at it. The place would go in auction. It's not right.

AOIFE

Trust in God, Tony. Sure life has its surprises.

ROSEMARY

That it does. I have been to the doctor and I have frozen my eggs.

AOIFE

What?

TONY

You what? Mother of God!

ROSEMARY

So. Surprises, as you say.

AOIFE

Frozen your eggs?

TONY

To the purpose of what?

ROSEMARY

I will keep my options alive.

AOIFE

Jesus, Rosemary, be careful. Don't rampage over the natural order of nature.

ROSEMARY

What nature? It's only my own life I'm playing with.

AOIFE

Your life then. You can't just rage forward without a road.

ROSEMARY

I know where I'm going.

AOIFE

Well, I hope things go your way. Anthony is a bit slow.

TONY

Slow is it? You should have frozen your whole body if you're waiting for that one.

ROSEMARY

I believe he will come to me.

TONY

He'll never marry.

AOIFE

You don't know that.

TONY

I have reason to think it.

ROSEMARY

The farm goes to Anthony. Say it. Say it.

AOIFE

Don't answer wrong with wrong, Rosemary. Don't bully the man.

Rosemary takes another tac with Tony.

ROSEMARY

Think. Of his mother.

TONY

Don't.

ROSEMARY

Think of his mother. Do you remember his mother?

TONY

Remember her? What are you saying? She was my life!

AOIFE

She's right, Tony. That's the question. What would his mother want? What would Mary want?

TONY

She's gone. I can't be thinking that way.

ROSEMARY

Sitting by that stove she'd be. Her ghost is there to see right now.

AOIFE

And Anthony on her knee.

ROSEMARY

By the stove with a piece of turf in her hand. What did she care except for her children?

AOIFE

Sure Anthony was the apple of her eye.

ROSEMARY

And she was a Kelly.

AOIFE

Through and through.

ROSEMARY

And what would Mary Kelly say if she saw this farm taken from her only son BECAUSE he was a Kelly?

TONY

I can't think about it.

AOIFE

What was that song she'd sing while she washed a dish? (Sings) And we'll all go together...

AoIFE and ROSEMARY

(Sings)...to pull wild mountain thyme...

TONY

Stop! Stop! Jesus!

AOIFE and ROSEMARY break off from singing.

AOIFE

Sure she was love itself and Anthony was her baby boy.

TONY

I'm only trying to do what's right.

ROSEMARY

Right for who?

TONY

For the farm.

AOIFE

The farm doesn't know a thing about right, and it won't know. You're trying to serve the Reillys, at the expense of the Kellys, even if doing so, Tony, would overturns the living issue of your one true love.

ROSEMARY

Do you know why my Da went to war with the crows, Tony? He was shaking his fist. His son failed to live, and he was shaking his fist. You have a son. You want more than that from the sky? Are you after being struck down? Well, are you?

TONY

I hope you never know what it is to be old. And I know you'll never understand what it is to be a man. But alright.

ROSEMARY

Alright what?

TONY

Anthony gets the farm.

AOIFE

Thanks be to God.

ROSEMARY

Good.

TONY

But mark my words. He is John Kelly all over again, and that man talked to turkeys about politics.

AOIFE

Well, it was a long time ago.

ROSEMARY

It was.

AOIFE

Can we go home before the battery in my pacemaker just runs down to zero?

ROSEMARY

We can. Anthony's out there in the fields somewhere. I like knowing that. We'll go home. Where I'm to wait. Though it be years.

AOIFE

Good enough! May patience and silence rule the world.

Fade to darkness. MUSIC. An instrumental version of Wild Mountain Thyme plays.

Scene 4.

Darkness. We hear Tony.

Tony

Anthony! Anthony!

The lights come up as Anthony enters in old pajamas. Tony is lying sick in bed. There's an oxygen tube under his nose.

ANTHONY

I'm coming! I'm coming, Da. Are you alright?

TONY

Bring me my pipe.

ANTHONY

Are you serious? Your pipe? You can't have a pipe.

TONY

I will have it.

ANTHONY

Go back to sleep. You can't smoke with the oxygen.

Tony takes off the tube.

TONY

I don't want the oxygen. Get this off me.

ANTHONY

What are you doing? You need that.

TONY

I don't need it. Roll that tank out of my room. I mean it. Do it. I hate the sight of it.

Anthony complies.

ANTHONY

Alright. I'll do it. The nurse will have my head though.

TONY

The nurse won't come till morning. With that face of hers.

ANTHONY

She'll smell the smoke.

TONY

Her perfume's worse. We're not living for her. Fill the pipe.

ANTHONY

It's late.

TONY

That it is. I saw a star out the window. Down near the ground. Good. Light it for me.

Anthony does, and hands it to Tony, who puffs it blissfully and then coughs. And then laughs.

TONY (cont'd)

I'm choking.

ANTHONY

I told ya.

TONY

It doesn't matter. I like the smell, and the pipe in
me hand. Sit by me, son.

Anthony sits.

TONY (cont'd)

I'm sorry to be leaving you, Anthony.

ANTHONY

Don't say it.

TONY

I'm sorry. It's a lonely spot here at lane's end and
it will be hard to face the morning when I'm gone.

Anthony wipes his eyes.

ANTHONY

Jesus.

TONY

The farm is yours now, and I'm sorry to be leaving it
to you not as it was given me.

ANTHONY

Don't think of it. It's nothing.

TONY

There was reason. When I asked Mam to marry, sure I
had nothing to call my own. The ring I gave her was
but brass, though she took it like diamonds. Listen,
son. Your Mam. I didn't love her.

ANTHONY

What are you saying?

TONY

The truth.

ANTHONY

No.

TONY

I needed a wife, and Mary would have me. But there
was no love in it.

ANTHONY

Sure what are you saying? You loved her.

TONY

No. I was without those feelings. The want and loneliness had gotten in me and I looked at people like they were work. I don't know why she said yes. I thought maybe she wanted her own kitchen, as poor as ours was. She made a garden for vegetables so she could see it in the morning, and she'd wait for me by the front door when I came down the old boreen by night. I walked by her half the time without so much as a nod. She bore me children. Trish and Audrey. Then you. And I felt nothing. Till one day something gave way. Out in the fields and the wet grass, the quiet hand of God touched me so soft I thought it was the breeze. Something came to save me, son, and it will come for you, too. I'd drive out with the feed in the morning and split open the bag into the trough, and the cattle would walk forward... I can't name the day. The cattle were there. The rain let up. The sun shone... The sun shone on me. And I started in singing. Just like that. That old song. Mam's song. Wild Mountain Thyme. Do you know it?

ANTHONY

Sure I do.

TONY

(Sings) And we'll all go together (Anthony sings with him) to pull wild mountain thyme... (They stop) The sun shone on me. And I laughed cause I saw ME singing, and I had never been that man. Never! Singing in the field?! All the days are alike on a farm, and yet of a sudden the drudgery I had known since birth lifted off me and a joy came up into me out of the land. Out of all of it. The cattle and the sky. And when I went home to the house, a moment came there too, where all of it, you, the girls, her, even the house itself, all of it came to life in me. But it started out there in the fields that had been lonely. When the sun shone on me. And I knew it was her. Mary. Somehow she was my way into the farm and all else besides.

So I sold off the bit by the road to Muldoon for two hundred quid, went into town and bought her a real ring of gold, and took the brass one from her. And oh what days we had thereafter. Times in the kitchen. In every room. And I'm going to her now, son, cause I know she's waiting by that old front door for me yet. Can you forgive me, Anthony?

ANTHONY

For what? Selling the right of way? It's nothing.

TONY

Yes. But more. For having no faith that you would find your own way, be your own man. And most of all, for making light of your good heart. (Takes his hand) Am I proud of you too late?

ANTHONY

No, no. I don't want you to die.

TONY

I'm sorry I sold the bit by the road and left you with two gates. And that I thought of taking the rest from you. I was no good after Mam died. She was my North star. Forgive me.

ANTHONY

There's nothing to forgive.

TONY

Forgive me now son, for all of it. All my shortcomings. The things I didn't say. However I hurt you. I want to die with the slate clean between us.

ANTHONY

Surely I forgive everything.

He takes Tony in his arms.

TONY

I love you, son. I can't say it enough.

ANTHONY

I love you, my Daddy. My Daddy. My Daddy. Sure I always have.

The embrace ends.

TONY

Thank you then. Good man. You better take the pipe.

Anthony takes the pipe.

TONY (cont'd)

You were a good son.

ANTHONY

Thank you, Da.

TONY

I have faith that love will find you. Out in those fields where you wander. God bless you.

ANTHONY

And you.

TONY

I'll sleep now.

ANTHONY

You want the oxygen?

TONY

I'll try without.

Anthony turns off the light and goes.

Scene 5.

Out by the shed. A year later. A sunny day. Anthony comes out with a pail of turf to discover Rosemary with a covered dish. She's caught smoking, and flicks the butt.

ROSEMARY

Anthony.

ANTHONY

Rosemary. Still smoking.

ROSEMARY

I brought you some stew.

She sits it down.

ANTHONY

I can cook.

ROSEMARY

You don't though. Now that Mam's gone, I've no one to do for. Keeps me busy.

ANTHONY

Right.

ROSEMARY

The sun's out. Good walking weather.

ANTHONY

One place is the same as another.

ROSEMARY

How can you say it? I was down at the bog cutting turf and the heather is everywhere.

ANTHONY

Cutting your own turf?

ROSEMARY

Who else?

ANTHONY

A bit late.

ROSEMARY

I got to it.

ANTHONY

That's a two man job.

ROSEMARY

Or one woman.

ANTHONY
That's the world now.

ROSEMARY
What?

ANTHONY
Men are useless.

ROSEMARY
It's not so.

ANTHONY
What's a man for? What's his place?

ROSEMARY
That's for you to say.

ANTHONY
Is it? I know, you know.

ROSEMARY
About what?

ANTHONY
My Da told me.

ROSEMARY
Told you what?

ANTHONY
How you went at him over the farm.

ROSEMARY
Oh that. He was talking blather, may he rest in
peace. The farm's yours, as it should be.

ANTHONY
You shouldn't have done that.

ROSEMARY
Why not?

ANTHONY
You spoke for me.

ROSEMARY

You wouldn't speak for yourself.

ANTHONY

I said as much as I wanted.

ROSEMARY

It wasn't enough.

ANTHONY

Well maybe the quiet around a thing is as important as the thing itself.

ROSEMARY

Do you still hear the voice in the fields?

ANTHONY

I don't know.

ROSEMARY

You have the farm.

ANTHONY

I do.

ROSEMARY

Are you happy?

ANTHONY

No.

ROSEMARY

Why not go ahead and be happy?

ANTHONY

I don't know how.

ROSEMARY

There's nothing in the way.

ANTHONY

No?

ROSEMARY

There's no one left to catch you laughing, Anthony.

ANTHONY

That's true.

ROSEMARY

How many days do we have where the sun shines?

ANTHONY

Not too many. Are you alright then?

ROSEMARY

Yes, I am.

ANTHONY

With just you over there in the house?

ROSEMARY

What about you?

ANTHONY

You know, I've been having such dreams! I've been dreaming about everyone who ever lived.

ROSEMARY

That's a lot.

ANTHONY

Ancestors and more than that. The whole wide circus, the history of people. And me at the front of them, like the leader of a marching band. Jesus, I sat up in me bed and I didn't know what to make of it. Here I am, alone as a castaway, and my night is spilling over with people. We're known to each other quite the while now.

ROSEMARY

We are.

ANTHONY

And now we're at the front of the group. Have you thought about what I said?

ROSEMARY

Which? We never speak. It's been a year. I'm over in me house with nothing to do if you want to come by.

ANTHONY

I see you at church.

ROSEMARY

I wouldn't go if you didn't. I hate the Bible. They should call it the book of awful stories.

ANTHONY

Have you no faith?

ROSEMARY

I do have faith, though I don't know how I came by it.

ANTHONY

It's just you now. Nothing holds you here. You should go.

ROSEMARY

Leave this place?

ANTHONY

Why not?

ROSEMARY

Do you want me to?

ANTHONY

I think you should.

ROSEMARY

I'll think about it.

ANTHONY

Do.

ROSEMARY

Come by the house sometime.

ANTHONY

I will maybe.

ROSEMARY

You won't. Girl needs a chat.

ANTHONY

I'd better take this in. I thank you for it.

ROSEMARY

Alright.

ANTHONY

You should quit the smokes.

He takes the covered dish towards the house. She calls after him.

ROSEMARY

It's a grand day for a walk.

He's gone. She stands there, looking after him. She mutters.

ROSEMARY (cont'd)

And those days are few.

Scene 6.

The lights change. We hear distant thunder and rain. We are in the field outside the Muldoon house, which is lit up. Anthony is wearing a ratty old oilcloth coat and has a metal detector and headset. He approaches, hesitates. Rosemary comes out the door holding a shawl over her head.

ROSEMARY (cont'd)

Anthony! I see ya! You've been seen now!

ANTHONY

Go in!

ROSEMARY

Come in! Don't you dare turn back!

ANTHONY

What are you doing? Don't come out!

ROSEMARY

Come on then. Don't you point that thing at me! It's too late. I've seen you now. Come in before I drown.

He follows her in.

Scene 7.

The year is 2013. A steady rain outside. The Muldoon farm's kitchen. It is neat and well kept. Rosemary is ushering in Anthony. He's dripping. She throws off the shawl.

Rosemary (cont'd)

Come in then. Give me the coat.

ANTHONY

I'm fine.

ROSEMARY

Give me the coat. Leave your Wellies off.

ANTHONY

I can't stay.

ROSEMARY

Take them off. That's it. One, the other, good. And this is the summer weather! Jesus, look at the rain. Is Noah behind you? That's it. You're in. Oh, Mother of Mercy, don't look, Anthony, for the love of God! The house is in ruins! You'll think me a clotty woman, that's certain.

Anthony

Not a bit. It's not a bad time?

ROSEMARY

What would I be about? Other than cleaning, which I haven't done in weeks.

ANTHONY

What are you saying? You're daft. The floor is gleaming. It's sterilized.

ROSEMARY

It is not. You're blind. And the walls are yellow with old smoke. My mother left me with this coughing stove and the linoleum like sludge.

ANTHONY

Your mother will never be dead while you're alive, Rosemary. You see disaster where others see green fields.

ROSEMARY

I can't deny it. If it weren't for rare signs from heaven, I'd have nothing in my mind but doom.

ANTHONY

Rare signs from heaven?

ROSEMARY

Few they are. Sit down before your legs go. Here's a towel for your head.

ANTHONY

That's alright, I have a handkerchief.

He pulls out an awful handkerchief.

ROSEMARY

How long has that been in your pocket?

ANTHONY

I don't know.

ROSEMARY

It's half alive. Take the towel and give that over.

She takes it with a pair of tongs.

ROSEMARY (cont'd)

I'll wash it if it doesn't run off.

ANTHONY

Don't bother with me. I can't stay. You know, I'll come back.

ROSEMARY

You'll come back, will you? It's your first time in my house in three years. You hang outside like a wild creature when you come at all.

ANTHONY

Why come in? All houses are strange, are they not?

ROSEMARY

What are you saying?

ANTHONY

It's like being nailed in a crate.

ROSEMARY

My house?

ANTHONY

Any house.

ROSEMARY

You're having me on. Where would you stay, in the rain? Put down that weed whacker and rest your bones.

ANTHONY

It's not a weed whacker. It's the finest metal detector known.

ROSEMARY

People think you're after bombs from Pakistan with that rig.

ANTHONY

Can't a man have a hobby without calling down Judgement Day?

ROSEMARY

Sure, I've seen you roaming the cow paths with that electric thing as often as not. You're becoming famous in the wrong way. What are you after besides the odd treasure?

ANTHONY

Unexpected stuff. Coins maybe.

ROSEMARY

If you want coins, I've got 'em spilling out of the dish there.

ANTHONY

Older coins than that. And odd bits. Metal buttons. Last week I found the keys to a Jaguar.

ROSEMARY

Now you just need the car and you're off to the races. Would you take a Guinness from the bottle?

ANTHONY

It's no use. I'm just here for the minute.

ROSEMARY

You'll visit with me or I'll know why. They say this new bottle Guinness is as good as the pub, but that's a lie. But it isn't too bad maybe.

ANTHONY

Does it taste of glass?

ROSEMARY

It does.

They share a laugh.

ANTHONY

Don't open it. I'm going.

ROSEMARY

I'm going to open it.

ANTHONY

Don't.

ROSEMARY

It's done. I've opened it.

ANTHONY

Jesus.

ROSEMARY

It's useless but to drink now.

ANTHONY

Alright, if you will open it, if you must open it, if you've opened it, share it with me.

ROSEMARY

Me? I couldn't.

ANTHONY

Pour it out in two glasses.

ROSEMARY

You're only saying that to divide the time in half you'll stay.

ANTHONY

I'm telling ya. Sit and share it or I won't touch it.

ROSEMARY

Alright then, Anthony. Two glasses. You're a demon tempting me with the drink.

He puts aside his detector and headset.

ANTHONY

I'm no worse than the weather.

ROSEMARY

Well, we know how bad that is.

ANTHONY

Sure it's a great day for the rope alright.

ROSEMARY

What do you mean?

ANTHONY

It's great day to be hanging from the rope.

ROSEMARY

Don't even joke about the rope and the suicide with half the country hanging from the trees and bridges.

ANTHONY

It's me joking, that's all.

ROSEMARY

It's not funny, with the Celtic Tiger belly up and people leaping off castles and cliffs.

ANTHONY

I should jump meself and have done.

ROSEMARY

The Chinese say if you kill yourself, your ghost is trapped to earth till it can tempt another to do the same. Imagine that. Ghosts pushing at us to destroy ourselves.

ANTHONY

The Chinese, is it? You still on that? Have there been many of them bothering you?

ROSEMARY

They believe awful things. I read a book. I'll never go there after all. Do you think about it?

ANTHONY

What?

ROSEMARY

Killing yourself.

ANTHONY

What? No. Why? Do you think about it?

ROSEMARY

Suicide? I think of little else.

ANTHONY

What are you saying? You're not serious?

ROSEMARY

The only thing that stops me is my hand. I think of Daddy and what he would want and my hand goes dead on my wrist. Otherwise, I'd be undone by now in a blast.

ANTHONY

What do you mean? What blast?

ROSEMARY

The shotgun.

ANTHONY

Your father's old cannon? You still have it? You're not serious?

ROSEMARY

I am. I keep it behind the door there.

ANTHONY

The ten gauge? But why?

ROSEMARY

Against the depression.

ANTHONY

You're depressed?

ROSEMARY

Are you serious? I'm shattered with depression. I'm shattered with black clouds of depression.

ANTHONY

No. But why?

ROSEMARY

Since I quit the cigarettes.

ANTHONY

Oh yeah. I heard you'd shaken off the damn smokes. Very good.

ROSEMARY

No, it isn't. I've thought of taking poison. I can't stand being alive. You can't know it. It's a madness. It's like a kettle boiling blood that comes up into me head from down below. You know. Feelings!

ANTHONY

Jesus. Your own blood turning against you. I can see it.

ROSEMARY

It's like a horror movie. It's only the rare sign from heaven that gives me hope.

ANTHONY

It's anxiety. That's what it is.

ROSEMARY

Is that the name for it?

ANTHONY

Sure, I have the same thing. Comes over me in waves. It's nothing.

ROSEMARY

But you don't smoke.

ANTHONY

I don't but maybe I should take it up. I'd be better off, with the anxiety eating me alive as it does.

ROSEMARY

It's feelings boiling up, isn't it?

ANTHONY

Sure I hate them! Feelings are useless.

ROSEMARY

It's worse in a man. I can't stand a man with feelings.

ANTHONY

A man with feelings should be put down.

ROSEMARY

You're right.

ANTHONY

The problem is there's just not enough air in the world to suit me and there never has been. That's all. Modernization has run roughshod over the spaces between things. The stars are suffocating in the sky and the dirt is choking on itself.

ROSEMARY

And you roaming the land with your gizmo, what's that but modern madness?

ANTHONY

Tis true.

ROSEMARY

First time I saw you with that outfit was the week after Mam's funeral. I was awful low. I was looking out the window, thinking, what now? And I saw you at the white hedge, swinging that stick like you were teaching the grass to grow. Why'd you take it up?

ANTHONY

Tony's not alive to stop me, and it keeps me from thinking.

ROSEMARY

Then I should get one. Thinking's worse than February.

ANTHONY

The Guinness is good.

ROSEMARY

Do you like it?

ANTHONY

Perfect.

ROSEMARY

It's not the pub.

ANTHONY

No, it's not the pub. But neither do you have to drive down to the pub and face the gardai on the way home.

ROSEMARY

It's terrible the way the guards persecute the country folk with the stops.

ANTHONY

Well, we were murdering ourselves with the automobiles on the black turns of the road. Did you read the story about the six college boys last week.

ROSEMARY

I read it.

ANTHONY

They were going a hundred on a lane as wide as my leg. Spattered themselves across the road. There was a badger licking the blood when the bodies were found.

ROSEMARY

I'll think of that detail as I drift off tonight.

ANTHONY

Don't.

ROSEMARY

I will. Imagine their mothers.

ANTHONY

I won't do it. It's too awful.

ROSEMARY

You should come by more. A girl needs a chat.

ANTHONY

Sure, and a man does, too. Rosemary, I have news.

ROSEMARY

I knew it.

ANTHONY

You did not.

ROSEMARY

I knew there must be something to get you within sight of the house.

ANTHONY

It's true. My cousin is coming from America.

ROSEMARY

Who?

ANTHONY

Frank's son. Adam Reilly.

ROSEMARY

Adam. Imagine naming your child after the first man on earth.

ANTHONY

I suppose they did. He's going to want to be brought round.

ROSEMARY

They must've had the Bible open to the first page.

ANTHONY

I suppose so.

ROSEMARY

What do you mean? Brought round?

ANTHONY

He's going to want to meet people.

ROSEMARY

Which?

ANTHONY

You'd be good.

ROSEMARY

Me?

ANTHONY

Why not?

ROSEMARY

Why?

ANTHONY

If you want to know the utter truth, I believe Adam is coming from America in search of a wife.

ROSEMARY

A wife.

ANTHONY

He has an idea that an Irish woman would be made of better stuff than these girls he meets in America.

ROSEMARY

There's truth in that. And you want me to help him find somebody.

ANTHONY

You could do that I suppose.

ROSEMARY

How about Mary O'Connor?

ANTHONY

Mary O'Conner!?! Does she still have that whistling tooth?

ROSEMARY

She does.

ANTHONY

And ankles like shackles spilling out of her shoes?

ROSEMARY

Hard worker though. She can rip an aluminum can with her hands.

ANTHONY

God love her. I was thinking more somebody like you.

ROSEMARY

Me? Who's like me?

ANTHONY

Well, you are. I was thinking you might let him take a look at you.

ROSEMARY

Take a look at me in what way?

ANTHONY

Your beauty.

ROSEMARY

My beauty?

ANTHONY

Yes.

ROSEMARY

This is the first I've heard of it.

ANTHONY

Don't pretend you don't know you're beautiful. Half of Mullingar has been to your door.

ROSEMARY

Tony Reilly, you've lived a rock's throw since the day of me birth and this is the first I've heard about beauty.

ANTHONY

Are you going to denounce me for bringing it up?

ROSEMARY

And you want to what, put me in the shop window? Like one of those euro floozies in Amsterdam?!

ANTHONY

What the hell are you talking about Amsterdam?

ROSEMARY

Amsterdam! You know what I'm talking about! Naked women on parade in the windows of Amsterdam!

ANTHONY

We're talking about my cousin! He's a solid man. He's never even been to Amsterdam I don't think.

ROSEMARY

But you'd bring him here to look me over. Like I was a red heifer.

ANTHONY

I see what you mean about the smoking and giving it up, Rosemary. You're not yourself.

ROSEMARY

How would you know?

ANTHONY

Your temper is rough.

ROSEMARY

Did he offer you money?

ANTHONY

Who?

ROSEMARY

Your cousin.

ANTHONY

For what?

ROSEMARY

Why would you go out of your way like this? You know what it is? There's a name for it. It's human trafficking.

ANTHONY

Human trafficking? It is not!

ROSEMARY

It's all over the news. You heard me.

ANTHONY

He's my cousin. He's a fine lad. And he's lonely.

ROSEMARY

Half the world is lonely and you wouldn't knock on my door about that. Look out the window at the rain and the gloom and the empty land and tell me why that hasn't made you knock on my door, if loneliness made people knock on doors. What is it about this Adam-- that he's named after the original man is still strange to me. Why for Adam do you knock?

ANTHONY

I don't know.

ROSEMARY

WHY NOT FOR YOURSELF?!

ANTHONY

What's that?

ROSEMARY

Why not for yourself? If you found me beautiful and lived a hen's kick away from the day I began, why have you not for yourself knocked on the door?

ANTHONY

Maybe I should come back another time?

ROSEMARY

Now don't make me reach out from behind the door the
shotgun. Cause I will.

He jumps up.

ANTHONY

Jesus, Rosemary for the love of God, if it's this
bad, go back on the cigarettes. There's cures for
cancer easier than your mood.

ROSEMARY

Oh, you'd put me back on the smokes, would ya? Bad
cess to yuh.

ANTHONY

Don't be cursing me!

ROSEMARY

After what I've been through. Sit down again.

ANTHONY

I won't sit.

ROSEMARY

You will.

ANTHONY

Calm down then.

He sits.

ROSEMARY

Drink your Guinness. (He does.) Are you a homosexual?

He jumps up again.

ANTHONY

What? What's happened to your mind?

ROSEMARY

Are you gay? Are you gay?

ANTHONY

No.

ROSEMARY

Sit. (He sits.) Are you disabled?

ANTHONY

No.

ROSEMARY

A morphodite?

ANTHONY

What the hell is a morphodite?

ROSEMARY

I don't know. Are you oddly put together somehow? Do you have something extra?

ANTHONY

Will you remember that you'll see me at church?

ROSEMARY

I thought you might find me ugly and there's no answer to that, but when you go and give out that you find me beautiful, and that you're not after the boys, well then why, in the name of Cinderella's shoe, would you try to give me away to a cousin you barely know?

ANTHONY

It's a solid idea.

ROSEMARY

Foisting a stranger on me? Are you a pimp?

ANTHONY

A pimp? No, I'm not a pimp. He's a cousin. He's a fine lad. He's an earner. And he stands the same height as you.

ROSEMARY

What kind of badge is that? A woman doesn't want the same height in a man. A man the same height as a woman is short.

ANTHONY

What are you talking about? Are you short?

ROSEMARY

No.

ANTHONY

Then a man the same height is not short.

ROSEMARY

He is.

ANTHONY

That makes no sense.

ROSEMARY

You stand taller.

ANTHONY

Why should you look up at me when you could look straight ahead at him?

ROSEMARY

Because men are beasts and need height to balance the truth and goodness of women.

ANTHONY

There's no answer to blather like that.

ROSEMARY

Then don't answer. You should have come for yourself, Tony. You stand on the same land I do!

ANTHONY

Which is another thing. We're neighbors.

ROSEMARY

That should be a plus.

ANTHONY

It's not.

ROSEMARY

It is. It is. I had reason to think you'd make a move, but nothing came of it. I thought maybe it was the cigarettes put you off so I quit at last.

ANTHONY

You did that with regards to me?

ROSEMARY

I did. And it brought me to my knees I can tell you. I only smoked so that I wouldn't feel while I waited. Now look at me! My eyes could set fire to Gomorrah! My emotions are unspeakable, Anthony, unspeakable.

ANTHONY

But I never said a word about the smokes.

ROSEMARY

You did. You spoke against them.

ANTHONY

I didn't mean it.

ROSEMARY

What do you mean? I have no gift for reading your mind, Anthony, though I've tried. When all seemed lost, I prayed for a sign, and sure I got one as strong as a kick. Still you never came for me and the years passed.

ANTHONY

You got a sign?

ROSEMARY

As plain as grace.

ANTHONY

The white heather?

ROSEMARY

No.

ANTHONY

What was it?

ROSEMARY

What does it matter if you didn't come?

ANTHONY

Well, I've had signs, too, that told me the reverse.

ROSEMARY

What?

ANTHONY

I should have never come today.

ROSEMARY

Is it Fiona? Are you still mooning over Fiona?

ANTHONY

To hell with Fiona. I opened my heart to her and she ran like the wind. That's all there was to that.

ROSEMARY

What did you say to her?

ANTHONY

Never mind that.

ROSEMARY

So there's the secret. Are you in love with another other than Fiona?

ANTHONY

Stop the cross-exam.

ROSEMARY

Are you without feelings in general?

ANTHONY

I have feelings. Though I'd rather not.

ROSEMARY

Do you have any feelings towards me? Or am I alone with this? (Doesn't answer) Have you ever wondered what I wore when I wore less?

ANTHONY

You've lost me.

ROSEMARY

Have you stripped me off down to the skin in your imagination?

ANTHONY

Jesus Christ, Rosemary! Shut up with that. I see you at church.

ROSEMARY

You say I'm beautiful. Have you thought about my beauty? Have you dwelt on my beauty, my face, my form, my shape?

ANTHONY

I don't know.

ROSEMARY

Do you know that I have a shape?

ANTHONY

I suppose.

ROSEMARY

You know I'm a woman, and that I have parts that are swollen up and exaggerated to attract the man...

ANTHONY

(overlapping)

Shut up!

ROSEMARY

(overlapping)

...to make a man look where he's not supposed to look.

ANTHONY

I refuse to know what you're talking about!

ROSEMARY

Do you know I have a shape?

ANTHONY

Yes, I know you have a shape!

ROSEMARY

Thank God for that.

ANTHONY

Sure I was raised on a farm and seen it all.

ROSEMARY

As have I. But you don't act it.

ANTHONY

How would I act? What would I do? Have my tongue swinging around?

ROSEMARY

There's a good distance between winking and drooling.

ANTHONY

Let's leave it that I know the facts.

ROSEMARY

The facts.

ANTHONY

I've seen it all.

ROSEMARY

Sure you're a master at the game. It's one thing to look at the horses and another to look at your own breed at work. Wait.

ANTHONY

What?

ROSEMARY

Are you a virgin? Is that it? Were you going to give me away to this cousin Adam out of ignorance of yourself?

ANTHONY

What's come over you, Rosemary? You've been chaste as a dove all me life. Now of a sudden you're going on like a pirate! I would never have started in talking about anything if I knew we'd end up talking about everything. I've always thought you were pretty. I didn't think it right to say. That's all.

ROSEMARY

Why not?

ANTHONY

Because one thing leads to another, and we live on top of each other. (Blushes) I mean, I mean, that is to say, close by.

ROSEMARY

Well, what's wrong with one thing leading to another?

ANTHONY

We already live on a patch, it's like sharing half a coffin. If anything went wrong, God's mercy on us! I can hear your kettle whistle when I'm in the shed. We'd be throwing daggers over the fence.

ROSEMARY

You can't live AGAINST life, Tony. You can't avoid harm by avoiding good. What? Would you spend your life swinging your electric detector over the land looking for loose buttons in the rain? Do you not want love?

ANTHONY

What about you, Rose?

ROSEMARY

What about me?

ANTHONY

You've turned down a dozen men over the years! You're notorious.

ROSEMARY

For what?

ANTHONY

Nothing. You're notorious for nothing. For wasting your life and your great beauty smoking and moping and mopping your way to old age.

ROSEMARY

Well, I quit smoking, and I'm damn well near the end of my mopping and moping. And there you are. You've done it again.

ANTHONY

What have I done?

ROSEMARY

Called me beautiful. And stopped there like a stone. Don't you understand? You're the reason I look at the shotgun.

ANTHONY

Me? What did I do?

ROSEMARY

Why did you knock for an American man and not for yourself?

ANTHONY

There's reason.

ROSEMARY

Look at my face and tell me.

ANTHONY

I told Fiona and she ran for her life.

ROSEMARY

I'm not Fiona. Tell me.

ANTHONY

Don't. I'm cracked. I'm mad. Leave it at that.

ROSEMARY

You're mad?

ANTHONY

I am genuinely off kilter.

ROSEMARY

Because you hate people?

ANTHONY

No I don't hate no one. I have the Kelly madness. Don't make me say it. Me own Mam said don't say.

ROSEMARY

And yet you will say. I've sat here in this house for more years than my grandmother LIVED, waiting for you to notice my heart lighting up the way down the old boreen to you. Tell me why you haven't come.

ANTHONY

I did come.

ROSEMARY

Never. When?

ANTHONY

Three years ago. But I turned back. Right there at the white hedge.

ROSEMARY

Why?

ANTHONY

Because I'm cracked. I'm mad.

ROSEMARY

Why are you cracked? How are you cracked?

ANTHONY

You want to know everything? Alright. Here it is. I believe that I am a honey bee.

ROSEMARY

Say that again.

ANTHONY

I believe that I am a honey bee.

Pause.

ROSEMARY

But you live in a house, not a hive.

ANTHONY

I think of it as a hive.

ROSEMARY

You can't fly.

ANTHONY

I believe I can fly.

ROSEMARY

How long have you thought you were a bee?

ANTHONY

Enough of me life that you might as well say all of it.

ROSEMARY

This is what you told Fiona?

ANTHONY

That's what I told her and she ran like Satan.

ROSEMARY

And this is why you've never told me I was beautiful?

ANTHONY

That, and the nearness of your farm to mine. And it's true, bees don't like smoke.

ROSEMARY

Well, I'm fed up.

ANTHONY

With what?

ROSEMARY

All that stands in the way. I don't care if you think you're a bee, Anthony. I don't care if you ARE a bee. I'm half dying with living for you. But wait, do you think I'm a bee?

ANTHONY

No.

ROSEMARY

You don't?

ANTHONY

You are NOT a bee.

ROSEMARY

I'm not?

ANTHONY

No.

ROSEMARY

May I know what I am?

ANTHONY

You're a flower. The most beautiful bloom that grows.

ROSEMARY

Oh. Oh. Do you really think that of me?

ANTHONY

Yes and more. And each time a fella came to try his luck with you, I suffered like Christ himself.

ROSEMARY

Oh Anthony.

ANTHONY

But I wish you had married one of those men, my dearest girl, to end my torture, because I'm no good for nothing and no one.

ROSEMARY

You're good for me.

ANTHONY

No!

ROSEMARY

You knocked me down in the yellow grass when I was six, and it was you from then. I've been cleaning this kitchen till my hands were glass hoping the day would come you would enter here and sit there. And now that day has come.

ANTHONY

That day has not come. Marry Adam. Go to America.

ROSEMARY

You really want me gone.

ANTHONY

Yes! I had a sign. I came to your door with me mother's ring three years past, but when I reached in the pocket, nothing. It was gone.

ROSEMARY

Is that what you've been doing with that gizmo? Looking for your mother's ring?

ANTHONY

That I lost it was a sign. A man who thinks he's a bee should not marry.

ROSEMARY

Why not?

ANTHONY

Because he's mad.

ROSEMARY

What do bees know of madness? The thing that makes you feel crazy is the very thing that proves you sane. You know you're a man.

ANTHONY

A man who thinks he's a bee.

ROSEMARY

But if you know it's odd that you think you're a bee, are you not sane? And why have you gone on looking for the ring?

ANTHONY

It was my mother's.

ROSEMARY

Bees don't have mothers with rings. Men do. And men bring rings to women why?

ANTHONY

Leave off.

ROSEMARY

What would you have done if you found it?

ANTHONY

When?

ROSEMARY

Ever.

ANTHONY

But I didn't.

ROSEMARY

But if you had?

ANTHONY

Oh, I'd have offered it to you.

ROSEMARY

Give us a chance.

ANTHONY

But I couldn't find the ring.

ROSEMARY

Give us a chance, man.

ANTHONY

If it was meant to be, I'd have found it.

ROSEMARY

WE SAY what's meant, Tony! Life is here! We name it!
Be bold for me!

ANTHONY

But I've told Adam about you.

ROSEMARY

Tell him to go the hell to Amsterdam!

ANTHONY

Would you leave off Amsterdam!

ROSEMARY

Tell him I'm yours.

ANTHONY

But you're not.

ROSEMARY

Make me yours.

ANTHONY

But I'm mad as a Kelly!

ROSEMARY

I don't care.

ANTHONY

I think I'm a honey bee. I fly around in my mind like
a tiny thing.

ROSEMARY

Look at me! Look how I look at you. I have no skin so
tender I am to you.

ANTHONY

And I am a virgin.

ROSEMARY

We'll solve that.

ANTHONY

But I think I'm a honey bee! Even now, I'm choking with being in the house. I'm only happy in the fields, or by the window where I can feel the wind and imagine my wings in the free air.

ROSEMARY

You can have the wind and the fields and all the windows up! Here, sure, you fool, here's the ring!

ANTHONY

What's this? You have it?! My mother's ring?

ROSEMARY

I found it by the door three years ago.

ANTHONY

Why didn't you say?

ROSEMARY

I thought it heaven sent to stop me from suicide and give me hope!

ANTHONY

Three years looking and there it is!

ROSEMARY

I prayed for a sign, and there was my prayer's answer in my hand.

ANTHONY

And the thing that stopped me from knocking.

ROSEMARY

What do I have to do? Do I have to swat at you to get you to sting me? Because I will. You see me as a flower? That's the sweetest thing.

ANTHONY

We should be thinking, Rosemary, not rash. We're neighbors. I see you at church. We'll kill each other when it goes wrong. I should go away out into the air!

ROSEMARY

Think of me as the open door.

ANTHONY

I've never thought of you without fear.

ROSEMARY

Why now fear?

ANTHONY

The pain. Of love.

ROSEMARY

Think of the pleasure. Take your ring.

ANTHONY

Bad luck! Sure it's yours, is it not? It always was.

He kisses her. It's a good one.
They breath.

ROSEMARY

I'm mad, too, you know.

ANTHONY

How are you mad?

ROSEMARY

You'll find out. When it's too late.

ANTHONY

Jesus. All those years wasted.

ROSEMARY

Who knows the way things should be? There's beauty in this.

ANTHONY

Will you take down the gates?

ROSEMARY

Never!

ANTHONY

The voice I heard in the fields. It didn't say go.
Not just that. It said "Go to her."

ROSEMARY

Look. The sky.

They look out a window. The sun is
breaking free of the clouds. The
sun lights Anthony and Rosemary's
faces. Wild Mountain Thyme plays.

The End