

DAVEY. I didn't touch the poor fella, I swear it! In the road I saw him lying...!

DONNNY. In the road me arsehole!

DAVEY. And I wasn't hairting at all, I was going slow. And a black lump ahead in the road I saw, and what the devil's that, I said to meself ...

DONNNY. After you'd rode over him, aye, and then probably reversed!

DAVEY. Ahead in the road, I'm saying, and don't be slinging reversed at me.

DONNNY. I'll be slinging what I like!

DAVEY. And I was off me bike be that time anyway and just wheeling it along, and when I saw it was Wee Thomas didn't I scoop him up and run him into you as quick as me legs could carry me?

DONNNY. The first thing the books say is don't be moving an accident victim till professional fecking help arrives, and a fool knows that!

DAVEY. Well, I don't be reading books on cats being knocked down, Donny!

DONNNY. Well, maybe you should, now ...

DAVEY. Because there *are* no such books!

DONNNY. ... And maybe Thomas would still be with us then.

DAVEY. A car it must have been clobbered him.

DONNNY. No cars have been down that road all day, and when do cars ever come down that road? You're the only bastard comes down that lonely road and why? Because you're a cowshite comes with nothing better to do than roar down roads on your man's bicycle for no reason other than to feel the wind in that girl's mop o' hair of yours!

DAVEY. If you're insulting me hair again, Donny Osborne, I'll be off right this minute. After going out of me way to bring your car in to you ...

DONNNY. After squashing the life out of me cat, and he isn't my cat at all ...

DAVEY. So as not to let the owl flies be picking the meat off him. A favour I was doing you.

DONNNY. It's a favour now! With half of that cat's head poking

Strokes

out of the spokes of your wheels, I'll bet, and it's a favour you're doing me! *(Davey stares at Donny a moment, then darts out through the front door. Donny goes over to the cat and strokes it sadly, then sits in the armchair stage left, looking at the cat's blood on his hands. Davey returns a few moments later, dragging his mum's bicycle in through the door. It is pink, with small wheels and a basket. He brings it right over for Donny to see, raises its front wheel so that it's almost in Donny's face, and starts slowly spinning it.)*

DAVEY. Now where's your cat's head? Eh? Now where's your cat's head?

DONNNY. *(Depressed.)* Scraping it off on the way wouldn't have been a hard job.

DAVEY. There's no cat's head on that bicycle wheel. Not even a stain, nor the comrade of a stain, and the state of Wee Tommy you'd have had lumps of brain pure dribbling.

DONNNY. Put your bicycle out of me face, now, Davey.

DAVEY. Poor Wee Thomas's head, a bicycle wouldn't do damage that decent. Damage that decent you'd have to go out of your way to do.

DONNNY. Your bicycle out of me face, I'm saying, or it'll be to your head there'll be decent damage done. *(Davey leaves the bike at the front door.)*

DAVEY. Either a car or a big stone or a dog you'd need to do that decent damage. And you'd hear a dog.

DONNNY. And you'd hear a car.

DAVEY. *(Pause.)* You'd probably hear a big stone too. It depends on how big and from what distance. Poor Wee Thomas, I did like him, I did. Which is more than I can say for most of the cats round here. Most of the cats round here I wouldn't give a penny for. They're all full of themselves. Like our Mairread's car. You'd give him a pat, he'd outright sneer. But Wee Thomas was a friendly car. He would always say hello to you were you to see him sitting on a wall. *(Pause.)* He won't be saying hello no more, God bless him. Not with that lump of brain gone. *(Pause.)* And you haven't had him long at all, have you, Donny? Wasn't he near brand new?

DONNNY. He isn't my fecking cat at all is what the point of the fecking matter is, and you know full well.

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DAVEY. I don't know full well. What...?

DONNY. Only fecking looking after the bastard I was the year.

DAVEY. Who were you fecking looking after him for, Donny?

DONNY. Who do you think?

DAVEY. *(Pause.)* Not ... not ...

DONNY. Not what?

DAVEY. *(With horror.)* Not your ... not your ...

DONNY. Aye.

DAVEY. No!

DONNY. Why else would I be upset? I don't get upset over cats!

DAVEY. Not your Padraic?!

DONNY. Aye, my Padraic.

DAVEY. Oh Jesus Christ, Donny! Not your Padraic in the INLA?!

DONNY. Do I have another fecking Padraic?

DAVEY. Wee Thomas is his?

DONNY. And was his since he was five years old. His only friend for fifteen year. Brought him out to me when he started moving about the country bombing places and couldn't look after him as decent as he thought needed. His only friend in the world, now.

DAVEY. Was he fond of him?

DONNY. Of course he was fond of him.

DAVEY. Oh he'll be mad.

DONNY. He *will* be mad.

DAVEY. As if he wasn't mad enough already. Padraic's mad enough for seven people. Don't they call him "Mad Padraic"?

DONNY. They do.

DAVEY. Isn't it him the IRA wouldn't let in because he was *too* mad?

DONNY. It was. And he never forgave them for it.

DAVEY. Maybe he's calmed down since he's been travelling.

DONNY. They tell me he's gotten worse. I can just see his face after he hears. And I can just see your face too, after he hears your fault it was. I can see him plugging holes in it with a stick.

DAVEY. *(Dropping to his knees.)* Oh please, Donny, I swear to God it wasn't me. Don't be saying my name to him, now. Sure, Padraic would kill you for sweating near him, let alone this. Didn't he outright cripple the poor fella laughed at that girly scarf he used

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to wear, and that was when he was twelve?!

DONNY. His first cousin too, that fella was, never minding twelve! And then pinched his wheelchair!

DAVEY. Please now, Donny, you won't be mentioning my name to him? *(Donny gets up and ambles around. Davey stands also.)*

DONNY. If you admit it was you knocked poor Thomas down, Davey, I won't tell him. If you carry on that it wasn't, then I will. Them are your choices.

DAVEY. But it isn't fecking fair, Donny!

DONNY. I don't know if it is or it isn't.

DAVEY. I knew well I should've up and ignored the bastard when I saw him lying there, for if a black cat crossing your path is bad luck, what must one of the feckers lying dead in front of you be? Worse luck. I killed Wee Thomas so, if that's what you want to hear.

DONNY. How?

DAVEY. How? However you fecking want, sure! I hit him with the bike, then I banged him with a hoe, then I jumped up and down on the feck!

DONNY. You hit him with your bike, uh-huh, I suspected. But an accident it was?

DAVEY. An accident, aye. A pure fecking accident.

DONNY. Well ... fair enough if an accident is all it was.

DAVEY. *(Pause.)* So you won't be mentioning my name so?

DONNY. I won't be.

DAVEY. Good-oh. *(Pause.)* When'll you be informing him of the news?

DONNY. I'll give him a ring in a minute now. He has a mobile.

DAVEY. He'll be furious.

DONNY. I'll tell him ... I'll tell him Wee Thomas is poorly, I'll tell him. Aye ...

DAVEY. Sure he'll know he's more than poorly, Donny, when he sees them rains bubbling away ...

DONNY. He's poorly but there's no need to be *rushing home*, I'm saying ...

DAVEY. I'm with you now, Donny ...

DONNY. Do you get me? He's just a tadeen off his food, like, I'll tell him. And in a week I'll say he's going downhill a biceen. And

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SCENE NINE

Donny's house, night. As the scene begins the blood-soaked living room is strewn with the body parts of Brendan and Joey, which Donny and Davey, blood-soaked also, hack away at to sizeable chunks. Padraic's two guns are lying on the table. In the adjacent bare room, Padraic is sitting on Christy's corpse, stroking Wee Thomas' headless, dirt-soiled body. Through Christy's mouth, with the pointed end sticking out of the back of his neck, has been shoved the cross with "Wee Thomas" on it. Padraic has a sad, faraway look about him. He cannot hear the quiet conversation Donny and Davey are having.

Start

DONNY. Won't your man be upset, your Mairread joining the paramilitaries, Davey?
DAVEY. She knew it was to be coming some day. I think she'll have resigned herself to it, though I think she'd have preferred it to be the IRA if anybody. Y'know, they're more established.
DONNY. They are. And they do travel further afield than the INLA.
DAVEY. The IRA do get a good bit of travelling done, aye.
DONNY. They do. They go to Belgium sometimes.
DAVEY. You never see the INLA going to Belgium.
DONNY. You're lucky if they leave the Falls.
DAVEY. You never see the INLA shooting Australians.
DONNY. Still, I suppose it isn't the travel that attracts people to the IRA.
DAVEY. No. It's the principle of the thing. I'll tell ya, I'd shite meself having to shoot fellas, but Mairread seems to have no qualms.
DONNY. I'll say this about Mairread. She's fecking accurate. Knock your eye out from a mile.
DAVEY. I always knew that cow practising would pay off some day.

End

DONNY. Padraic has an entirely different style.
DAVEY. Padraic goes all the way up to ya.
DONNY. Padraic goes all the way up to ya, and then uses two guns from only an inch away.
DAVEY. Sure, there's no skill in that.
DONNY. I think the two guns is overdoing it. From that range, like.
DAVEY. It's just showing off, really.
DONNY. Mairread sees more of the sport. *(Pause.)* Is he still sitting on the fella and stroking the dead cat?
DAVEY. *(Grinning his neck.)* He is. Morbid, that was, digging up his dead cat. After all the trouble we went to burying it, and without a word of thanks.
DONNY. I suppose it does help the mourning process.
DAVEY. *(Pause.)* Digging up the corpse? *(Donny shrugs. Mairread has entered through the front door, wearing a pretty dress and carrying a rucksack and air rifle.)*
MAIREAD. Less gabbing and more chopping would be more in ye's two's line.
DONNY. I don't see you or your boyfriend giving us a hand ...
DAVEY. What the hell's that you're wearing?
MAIREAD. A dress! I do have them!
DAVEY. Hrrm ...
MAIREAD. Why should we be giving ye a hand?
DONNY. It's yere mess, sure.
MAIREAD. Well, it's your house. And you don't be getting off-icers doing this sort of dirty work, anyways.
DAVEY. Oh, you're an officer now, are ya?
MAIREAD. I'm a second-lieutenant. Just awarded be Padraic. Padraic's just awarded himself a full-blown lieutenantship, and he deserves it.
DONNY. Ye're all going up in the world.
MAIREAD. Be knocking them teeth out them mouths, now. It does hamper the identification process.
DONNY. She's awful on the ball.
MAIREAD. I am.
DAVEY. What did Mam say to you when you left?
MAIREAD. She said good luck and try not to go blowing up kids.
DAVEY. And what did you say?

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