
Extract from England People Very Nice
by Richard Bean

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Characters:**FATHER CARLO**

IDA Pub landlady
LAURIE Ida's husband.
RENNIE Pub regular (originally from Barbados)

JOHN O'NEILL

ANNE O'NEILL Middle class protestant Irish

MR GASKIN

Businessman

PATRICK

MARY Poor, Catholic Irish immigrants
KATHLEEN

From Act 2

In the pub. Enter Father Carlo with a loaf of bread, and a Caravaggio painting. He is an Italian priest, but not wearing priestly clothes at this point. He is played by the boy lover.

Carlo Buon giorno!

Ida Ciao Carlo love!

Carlo How are you this day Mister Laurie?

Laurie Così, così! Grazi, for asking. The usual?

Laurie hands over the bottle of red. Carlo pays, and Laurie gives him the keys.

Carlo Si Grazi!

Carlo slinks off to the function room where he dresses as a priest.

Ida/Laurie Prego. Ahh.

Rennie He's a Catholic priest! You got communion going on up them stairs!

Ida Carlo? He runs an art appreciation class.

Rennie With a loaf of bread and a bottle of red wine!

Laurie That'll be the still life. Table, bread, bottle of red.

Ida You see a lot of shit like that.

Rennie The wine is the blood of Christ, bread is the body of Christ!

Laurie That's how them paintings work on a metaphorical level.

Rennie He's ramming Papisism down the throats of the Irish under your roof boy!

Laurie You're wrong about these country Irish. They're not Catholic. I'll bet you a shilling none of them even heard of the Pope.

Rennie The Irish not Catholic?! Two shillings! You're on boy!

Laurie Right, let's go find an Irishman.

Rennie and Laurie leave the pub. Enter to the street, John and Anne O'Neill. A boy with a barrow carries their substantial chests/cases. As they arrive two of the Houlihan brothers tumble into the street fighting. Mary follows them out.

Mary Fight in the street, will yer now! I'm trying to fecking give birth in there!

Anne The Irish that give the Irish a bad name are here, before us John.

John Aye, we'll have to grin and bear it as usual.

Anne Do you see that girl, no more than a child and already the devil's had her.

John There is no devil.

Anne You know what I mean, drink, lust, and ignorance.

Barrow boy Him there, that's Mr. Gaskin.

John O'Neill John O'Neill and my wife Anne. You got my letters?

Gaskin Mr. O'Neill, a pleasure. Madame, enchante. A good journey?

Anne It was thrilling, sailing up the Thames, so exciting!

Gaskin Your room is this way. Far from the common Irish. Where's your pig?

John I'm a publisher of Philosophical pamphlets.

Gaskin Forgive me. I thought it was a cultural thing, most of the Irish -

Anne - Sir! We don't have a pig.

The O'Neills go into their house. Rennie and Laurie stand outside the Houlihans.

Laurie Don't knock! I've heard knocking is rude in their culture.

Rennie How can knocking be rude?

Laurie The English soldiers used to knock on their doors just before they burned their houses down. "Knocking" and "burning down" became connected.

They enter without knocking. Patrick is having sex with his wife, Mary is giving birth.

Mary Did yer not think to knock?! We're busy? I'm giving birth and me brother Patrick here is forcing himself on his wife against her will.

Laurie We won't keep you. Patrick, have you ever heard of the Pope?

Patrick The Pope!? Aye, yes, yes, the Pope, aye, yes I have, aye.

Rennie Ha, ha! Two shillings please, Laurie my man!

Laurie What do you know about the Pope?

Patrick I've heard say, she's a fine powerful beast for a three year old.

Laurie Yes!

Rennie You think the Pope is a horse!?

Patrick Ain't she the filly what won on the sands there at Omey Island?

Laurie Two shillings Rennie, thank you. No rush.

Laurie hands over two shillings to Rennie. At that moment Mary gives birth with a wail. Patrick climbs off his wife to

take a look at the baby.

Mary What the feck do you think you're looking at?
Patrick Looking at me babby! I am the father ain't I!
Laurie Congratulations. We'll be going!
Patrick Agh, feck! Would you look at that!
Laurie Lord save us! The baby's only got one eye.
Mary Sure, the other one'll come through in a bit!
Patrick Ah, it's another fecking freak. Get rid of it will yer now!
Rennie See you later!

Laurie and Rennie leave passing Carlo in the doorway.

Laurie Alright Carlo?
Carlo The Irish, they are all wonderful painters. (To the Houlihans) Buon giorno!
Mary Who are you? The feckin' King of England?
Carlo Father Carlo.
Mary Mary Houlihan.
Carlo I can offer you Mass? You are Irish? You belong to Rome?
Patrick No! We're from Galway!
Carlo Agh! The bambino has one eye, in the middle, like the devil!
Mary You're a "glass half empty" kinda fella then, Father Carlo!
Carlo Who is the father?
Mary Me brother, Patrick, there, him.
Carlo Your brother is the father!?! You must know that it is wrong to make-a sexual intercourse with your own brother.
Mary Well, Carlo, on that one, we'll have to agree to disagree.
Carlo Do all your family, make love with each other?
Patrick Oh aye, yes, me auld mother brought us up right and proper, aye.
Mary "Don't sleep with strangers, it's dirty!" she'd say.
Kathleen "Keep it in the family, least yer know they've been!" That's one of her's! isn't it Mary?
Carlo Gran Dio! Sei pazzo! And you Mary such a sweet little ragazza!
Mary Ah feck off Carlo! You're a right one for the ladies eh?
Carlo You must come to mass, the room over the Britannia pub. I will try and save your soul. Ask for the art appreciation class.

Carlo leaves. In the street. Laurie, and Rennie talk to Hugo and Benny.

Laurie I'm telling you this Irish girl, she's given birth to a one eyed baby.
Hugo Boy or girl?
Rennie It doesn't matter man! It's a monster.